Orient & Méditerranée

n° 10

South Arabian Art

Art History in Pre-Islamic Yemen

Sabina Antonini de Maigret

De Boccard

Cover illustration: *Alabaster male head from Kharibat Hadîm, 1st century AD (photo by Alessandro de Maigret).*

In the same collection

Volume 1 | 2007
Job, ses précurseurs et ses épigones, par Maria Gorea.

Volume 2 | 2008
D'Ougarit à Jérusalem. Recueil d'études épigraphiques et archéologiques offert à Pierre Bordreuil, édité par Carole Roche.

Volume 3 | 2008
L'Arabie à la veille de l'Islam, édité par Jérémie Schiettecatte en collaboration avec Christian Julien Robin.

Volume 4 | 2009
Sabaean Studies. Archaeological, epigraphical and historical studies, edited by Amida M. Sholan, Sabina Antonini, Mounir Arbach.

Volume 5 | 2009
Les échanges à longue distance en Mésopotamie au Ier millénaire. Une approche économique, par Laetitia Graslin-Thomé.

Volume 6 | 2011
D'Aden à Zafar. Villes d'Arabie du sud préislamique, par Jérémie Schiettecatte.

Volume 7 | 2012
Dieux et déesses d'Arabie. Images et représentations, édité par Isabelle Sachet en collaboration avec Christian Julien Robin.

Volume 8 | 2012
Alessandro de Maigret. Saba', Ma'în et Qatabân. Contributions à l'archéologie et à l'histoire de l'Arabie ancienne, choix d'articles scientifiques préparé par Sabina Antonini de Maigret et Christian Julien Robin.

Volume 9 | 2012
Scribes et érudits dans l'orbite de Babylone, édité par Carole Roche-Hawley et Robert Hawley.

Orient & Méditerranée

n° 10

South Arabian Art

Art History in Pre-Islamic Yemen

Sabina Antonini de Maigret

De Boccard
11 rue de Médicis, 75006 Paris
2012

Page layout by Keen srl,
Via delle Caravelle, No. 21, 06127,
Perugia (Italy)

Printed by SIFA,
Via Pievaiola, No. 45, 06128,
Perugia (Italy)

This book has been prepared with financial assistance
of the French Agence nationale pour la Recherche (ANR)
"De l'Antiquité tardive à l'Islam"

It is published with funding
from the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

De Boccard - 2012
ISSN 2101-3195
ISBN 978-2-7018-0325-8

South Arabian Art

Art History in Pre-Islamic Yemen

Sabina Antonini de Maigret

DE BOCCARD
11 rue de Médicis, 75006 Paris
2012

South Arabian Art

Art History in Pre-Islamic Yemen

FOREWORD

This book is the outcome of a series of courses on South Arabian Art that I taught at the University of Naples "L'Orientale" as adjunct professor of South Arabian Antiquities from 2002 to 2008. This preliminary historical outline of the origins, development and decline of South Arabian art and culture is based on research that I have pursued since 1997 aimed at establishing a chronology for specific classes of pre-Islamic Yemeni artworks.

Previously, I have published complete iconographic repertories featuring statues in stone, carvings from South Arabian temples and various works in bronze. This work provided me with important insights into the evolution of the historical and artistic processes of pre-Islamic Yemen. The stylistic and iconographic originality of this material has long called for a comprehensive treatment of its nature, origin and evolution. In spite of gaps that still characterise the history of pre-Islamic Yemen, recent archaeological discoveries have allowed me to propose a first general account of artistic production in ancient Southern Arabia. This volume is intended to provide the reader with a coherent overview of Ancient Yemeni art from its origins to the gradual formation of a unique local art and its later evolution moulded by external influences, and finally to its decline with the advent of Islam.

Until recently, scholars have mainly focused on the influences of Near Eastern and Classical art on South Arabian art. As a result, the history of South Arabian art and civilization has emerged as highly fragmentary and discontinuous. In 1927, at the request of the Yemeni Imam Yahyà, Carl Rathjens and Hermann von Wissmann excavated a temple at al-Huqqa dedicated to the goddess dhat-Baʿdân. Though naturalists by training and not archaeologists, these scholars identified three phases of Hellenisation of the temple: the first phase during the 2nd century BC; the second phase that includes the Roman conquest of Jerusalem in 70 AD and Petra in 106 AD, and the third phase, known as Parthian Hellenism, in the 3rd century AD. Subsequently, excavations at Tamnaʿ, Hayd ibn ʿAqîl, Hajar ibn Humayd (ancient dhu-Ghayl) and Marib (Maryab) in 1950-1952 and at Khawr Rûrî in Oman in 1952-1953, carried out by the American Foundation for the Study of Man, brought to light numerous objects that enabled scholars to form a clearer view of the artistic production in South Arabia. For example, scholar Berta Segall identified contacts with

contemporary Near-Eastern and Hellenistic civilizations and the epigraphist Jacqueline Pirenne wrote extensively on South Arabian art history. However, Pirenne's identification of specific divinities and her analysis of the influences of classical and oriental art relied on a limited sample of artworks that were intended to support the "short chronology" — now considered obsolete — for the history of South Arabian civilisation. According to this view, the art of pre-Islamic Yemen derived from classical Greek culture and could not date back further than the 5th century BC. In 1951, archaeologist Helmut Bossert published the results of a survey of monuments, inscriptions and objects in a catalogue where items were classified in categories, such as reliefs, sculptures, ceramics, etc. In 1963, historian Adolf Grohmann produced a comprehensive review of South Arabian architecture, decorative elements and figurative production including sculpture and reliefs.

From the 1970s until the present, the stratigraphic analysis at various excavation sites has clarified the area's chronological history and also provided a large quantity of new artistic material. Specifically, excavations have been carried out alongside the pre-desert strip of the Ramlat al-Sab'atayn: in the region of Hadramawt (specifically in the ancient cities of Shabwat, Raybûn and Makaynûn), in the region of Khawlân (in the ancient cities of Yalâ and Sirwâh), in Marib (the temple of Awâm and its necropolis, and the temple of Bar'ân), in the Jawf region (in the ancient cities of al-Sawdâ' and Barâqish), in the region of Wâdî Bayhân (in the city of Tamna' and its necropolis Hayd ibn 'Aqîl), on the plateau (in the sites of Zafâr and Jabal al-'Awd), in the Tihâma on the Red Sea coast and at the site of Qanî' along the Indian Ocean.

The Arabian Peninsula straddles key land and sea trade routes and has historically played an important role in the economic and political development of the Near East. South Arabian civilisation always had contact with the cultures of the Near East and provided a bridge between the Mediterranean and Eritrean Seas. However, compared to the major cultures of the Near East, South Arabian civilisation developed later and more slowly.

During the 3rd and 2nd millennium BC, Mesopotamia and Egypt were constructing temples and palaces and had established a highly sophisticated production of sculpture, pottery, glyptics and an advanced writing system. By contrast, during this same period, South Arabia was only entering the Bronze Age. People lived in villages of huts with skirting boards made of undressed stone, chipping flints and producing primitive terracotta vases. Nonetheless, the layout and organization of these villages, characterised by zones reserved for housing and others for specialised activities, demonstrate the beginnings of a community ordered in terms of social and economic functions.

Excavations in the cities of Hajar ibn Humayd, Yalâ, Raybûn, Shabwat and the recent stratigraphic investigations at Barâqish, have shown that South Arabian civilisation appeared toward the end of the 2nd millennium BC and persisted until the advent of Islam, in the 7th century AD.

But who were the South Arabians? Two theories regarding their origins have been proposed on the basis of similarities with the more northerly Mesopotamian and Syro-Palestinian cultures in figurative production, material culture and in the pantheon of gods worshipped. One theory contends that South Arabian people

migrated from outside regions, whereas the second theory supports an autochthonous origin of South Arabian people that maintained regular and continuous contact with Northern populations. The first theory appears to be supported by the evidence that Bronze Age Yemeni culture of the 3rd and 2nd millennium BC differs significantly from South Arabian culture, indicating that the latter could not have been rooted culturally and ethnically in the same geographical region where Yemeni Bronze Age culture developed. Based on this evidence, archaeologist Alessandro de Maigret suggested that the progressive establishment of a population at the foot of the South Western Arabia mountains can be linked to the great political and ethnic turbulence that affected the entire Near East around 1200 BC. This crisis, corresponding to the transition between the Bronze Age and the Iron Age, was caused by the socio-economic and political decline throughout the Near East and the consequent great migrations (Peoples of the Sea and nomads). This date is considered to mark the beginning of a period — the proto-South Arabian period — that saw the elaboration of a new form of writing, the formation of a common pantheon, the creation of a new common symbolic language, the production of a widely distributed style of pottery (characterised by carinated shapes and treatment of the surface with dark red burnished slip) and cult furnishings and images (altars, offering tables, incense-burners, statues, etc.).

The rise of new political entities in the fertile oases of Wâdî Madhâb/Jawf, that included the city-states of Nashq (today al-Baydâ'), Nashshân (today al-Sawdâ'), Kaminahû (today Kamna), Haram (today Kharibat Hamdân) and Inabba', and the valleys of Wâdî Dhana (where the Kingdom of Saba' was located), Wâdî Bayhân (Kingdom of Qatabân), Wâdî Markha (Kingdom of Awsân) and Wâdî Hadramawt (Kingdom of Hadramawt) along the pre-desert strip of the Ramlat al-Sab'atayn, nurtured the growth of a prosperous caravan trade. This trading civilization developed at an altitude of 1000 m and differed from that of the Bronze Age that had developed in plateau regions at 2000 m. This trading civilisation was characterised by intensive agricultural production based on expert knowledge of hydraulic engineering that exploited the abundant monsoon rainfall. The most important example of this technology was the water management system of the Jabal Balaq al-Qiblî mountain, with sluice gates and collector canals controlling the flow of water in the Great Oasis of Marib. The oasis was 22 km long and 8 km wide and comprised two distinct areas divided by the Wâdî Dhana - Yasrân (Southern Oasis) and Abyan (Northern Oasis). Marib was cited as "Marib and two plains" in Sabaean inscriptions and identified by the expression "two gardens to the right and to the left" in the Qur'an (Surah 34: 16-18).

South Arabian populations achieved a high level of state organisation and evolved original artistic forms of expression incorporating influences drawn from their neighbours and trading partners. These external influences become apparent during specific periods and accompany the commercial interactions between the South Arabians and the peoples with whom they traded. South Arabian art incorporates elements from Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Achaemenid, Hellenistic, Roman, Indian, Parthian, Byzantine and Sassanid derivation. However, these external forms were grafted onto a local traditional style. The most

striking expression of South Arabian artistic style can be found in bronze works of art, sculpture in the round and in sculptural reliefs. Further, the architecture is characterised by austere, monumental temples and a diverse production of funerary structures, as well as ingenious hydraulic designs.

Both in its formative period (Ancient South Arabian period, 8th to 4th centuries BC) and in the era of its greatest expressivity (Middle South Arabian period, 3rd century BC to 3rd century AD), art was essentially functional, at the service of the sovereign and the divinity, and was standardised into specific, expressive repertories that continued over long periods of time. Almost all objects had a votive or funerary purpose, as clarified by the accompanying inscriptions, and were not created for aesthetic appreciation. The figurative production should be considered as "sacred art", closely related to rituals and linked to the religious and social spheres. These works tend to maintain fixed iconographic types that persist even when Greek-Oriental and Roman influences are clearly discernable. The representations of objects and symbolic animals, devotees and offerers tend to be repetitive and stereotyped, and the stone slabs bearing incised votive dedications as well as geometric elements are realised in a synthetic, succinct style. In the Recent South Arabian period (4th - 6th century AD) cultural influences from Oriental Hellenism and the Sassanid civilization transformed local iconographies.

The Islamic conquest around 628 AD marked the end of South Arabian civilisation, even though it has remained in the collective Yemeni memory. For historians of the Islamic era, the memory of ancient Yemen was limited primarily to the history of the Kingdom of Himyar, immediately precedent to the rise of Islam and viewed as the "time of ignorance" (Jâhiliyya) in the sense of both spiritual obscurity and primitive civilisation. This controversial topic is still a matter of fervent debate among scholars of Early Islam and Ancient Arabia.

In this analysis, I will present a selection of works representing a wide range of expressive manifestations, pointing out their regional characteristics. Each chapter is preceded by a brief historical outline of the period, followed by a description of the artistic works, their comparative analysis with various local traditions and in relation to the artistic production of neighbouring cultures. The historical periods have been broadly divided according to major historical events. Further, historical subdivisions and adjustments are to be expected based on ongoing archaeological research.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my gratitude to all those who have helped me in this undertaking, providing me with invaluable advice and generously making available photographic and cartographic material for publication. I am particularly grateful to my colleagues and friends, Christian Robin, Alexander Sedov, Iris Gerlach, Mounir Arbach, Jérémie Schiettecatte, Yusuf Muhammad ʻAbdallah, Khalid al-Ansi, Marie-Louise Inizan, Paul Yule, Hélène David, Frank Braemer, Christian Darles and Giusi Stelo.

I wish to thank the Yemeni authorities for their constant support and collaborative efforts. In particular, my special thanks to Dr Abdallah Bawazir, President of the General Organization of Antiquities and Museums (GOAM) and to his collaborators Muhammad al-Asbahi, Ahmed Shamsan and Khalid Al-Hajj; to ʻAbd al-ʻAziz al-Jandari, Director of the National Museum of Sanʻâʼ; to Ibrahim Hudayd, the Museum's photographer; to Mohanned al-Seyani, responsible for the Antiquities of Sanʻâʼ Governorate; to Sharaf Ghaleb Luqman, Director of the Military Museum of Sanʻâʼ and to his collaborators, and finally to Khayran al-Zubaydi, Director of the Antiquities of Shabwa Governorate.

I wish to especially acknowledge and thank Christian Robin for his careful review and insightful recommendations. I would also like to thank Mark Weir for the initial translation of the Italian text and both Alan Stein and Simon Millington for their constructive comments and suggestions. Finally, I am particularly grateful to Antonella Antonini for her critical insights and extensive contributions in the revision and editing of the text and her steadfast support and encouragement throughout this project.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this book to the memory of my husband Alessandro de Maigret with whom I have shared my professional and personal life since 1984. Alessandro's professional and academic career focused on the archaeology of the Middle East and particularly Southern Arabia (Ancient Yemen). His original work and extensive contributions to the field are well known. Alessandro shared his enthusiasm and passion for research with his colleagues and students. His acute curiosity and intellectual sensibility led him to expand his field of interest beyond archaeology to encompass the natural sciences, ethology and human behaviour. This eclectic approach allowed him to create a comprehensive perspective on ancient civilizations.

Alessandro's work has established the framework for South Arabian archaeological studies for many years to come. His insights, support, liberality and companionship will be missed by his colleagues, friends and family.

Prehistory

The Neolithic Period

(*c*. 8,000 – 3,000 BC)

Initial information on Yemeni prehistory originated from the 1937-38 archeological excavations of ancient settlements in the Wâdî Hadramawt recognized as Paleolithic and Neolithic on the basis of geological data and lithic artefacts. In 1952, further research in the same area confirmed the Middle Paleolithic and Neolithic origin of unearthed stone manufactured objects. Interestingly, a number of lithic artefacts were fashioned from obsidian, a volcanic rock not found on site, suggesting early human contacts and possibly trade. In the 1970s and 1980s, archeological investigations were extended to the valleys of the Wâdî Hadramawt tributaries and in the region of Shabwa and confirmed the presence of prehistoric settlements. Archaeological surveys in the 1980s brought to light an intense occupation in the plain of Dhamâr and in Khawlân during the Middle and Lower Paleolithic eras. Important Neolithic settlements were also identified on the coast of the Red Sea (Tihâma), at the edge of the desert and on the Western highlands. Archaeological investigations were able to establish that the economies of these areas were based on fishing, hunting and an early phase of domestication of plants and livestock. The climate was wetter at that time and, in fact, the desert in the area of Ramlat al-Sab'atayn was a large lake (Figure 1, Colour Plate).

RUPESTRIAN ART

Rupestrian art bears witness to the artistic and symbolic expression of Yemeni prehistoric populations. Most of the petroglyphs show animals and hunting scenes featuring men and animals. The oldest pictures dating from Neolithic times are graffiti on rockfaces that provided natural shelters for the temporary or permanent camps of prehistoric hunters. The superimposition of graffiti and rock paintings, the differences in patination, in compositional styles and execution reveal that the same sites were inhabited during several millennia.

In the regions of Sa'da and al-Hadâ' graffiti and rock paintings were discovered dating from the Neolithic period. Scholars have distinguished two Neolithic styles. Style I, characterized by shallow engraving, often features a single bovine species depicted in a stereotyped, bi-angular style. The body is shown in profile, the legs are paired, and the head, surmounted by large curved horns, is depicted from a high view point, as shown in Figure 2 from the al-Musalhaqât site, 2 km East of Sa'da.

Based on the study of bones found in the caves at Sa'da, the animal images have been identified as large horned water buffalos (*Bubalus Synceris*) and Aurochs (*Bos Primigenius*), that became extinct during the 7th - 5th millennium BC. Style II, characterized by an improved carving technique with deep incisions into the rockface, presents mythological and symbolic art including human figures portrayed with raised arms and animals of various species, including ibex, dog, wild donkey, snake, ibexes. Figure 3 shows carvings of herds of antelopes and wild donkeys, deeply carved in the rock at al-Amasân, 7 km South of Radâ'. The animals are still depicted in profile as in Style I, but the representation of detailed anatomical features imparts more dynamic and realistic qualities to the images.

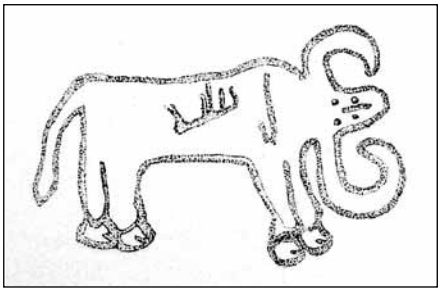

Fig. 2 - Drawing of a buffalo with long curved horns from a rock carving at al-Musalhaqât (Sa'da).

In the Neolithic site of al-Shumah, in the Wâdî Rima, Tihâma, on the Red Sea coast, the presence of equid bones, possibly onagers, kiangs or other types of wild asses, indicates that these animals were hunted in Yemen since Neolithic times. Further, the analysis of the bones suggests that only some of the animals were butchered, while others were probably captured for domestication.

Fig. 3 - Herds of ibexes and wild donkeys carved on a rock face at al-Amasân (Radâ').

The Bronze Age

(3rd – 2nd millennium BC)

In the early 1980s, surveys and later excavations in the Khawlân region revealed for the first time the existence of a Bronze Age culture in Yemen that belongs to the same tradition as Northern Syro-Palestinian cultures of the Early Bronze Age. In contrast, the 1990s excavations at the coastal area of Sabr, near ʻAdan, revealed a considerable occupation between the 2nd and 1st millennium BC that shows affinities with cultures originating along the African coast across the Red Sea.

RUPESTRIAN ART

A great number of Bronze Age rupestrian images both engraved and painted with red, black and brown mineral pigments have been located in the regions of Saʻda, Radâʻ and al-Dâliʻ. The symbolic elements become more prominent and the images reflect important social changes. In fact, as the population transitioned to sedentary village life and animals were domesticated, hunting scenes were accompanied by representations of herdsmen and herds of oxen with calves. This realistic depiction has defined a specific naturalistic Bronze Age style, Style III. Figure 4 (Colour Plate) shows the rupestrian paintings of Jarf al-Nabîra in which herds of bovines of various sizes are intercalated with the depiction of men and women brandishing objects.

For a very long period spanning from the end of the 2nd millennium BC to the Himyarite era, the rupestrian artwork continued to evolve by the addition of scenes of hunters, combats between horsemen, foot soldiers, archers, and the depiction of new animal species such as dromedaries and ostriches, as well as marks identifying tribes or herds (*wusûm*) and inscriptions, as seen in Figures 5-7. In particular, Figure 5 shows rock incisions depicting ibexes, with characteristic curved horns, a hunter on the left (see a detail in Figure 6), a feline on the right, a horse in the foreground and various inscriptions. Technically, the work is characterised by fine incision lines that expose the lighter rock below the surface and is defined as Style IV (Historical period).

At first sight, prehistoric art in Yemen is in many respects similar to what we know of artistic production in Arabian Peninsula during the same period. However, it does have a number of original features that are evident in the art produced much later during the time of the Caravan Kingdoms.

Specifically, the tendency toward extreme simplification denotes a deliberate and rigorous formality that increases the symbolic power of the image.

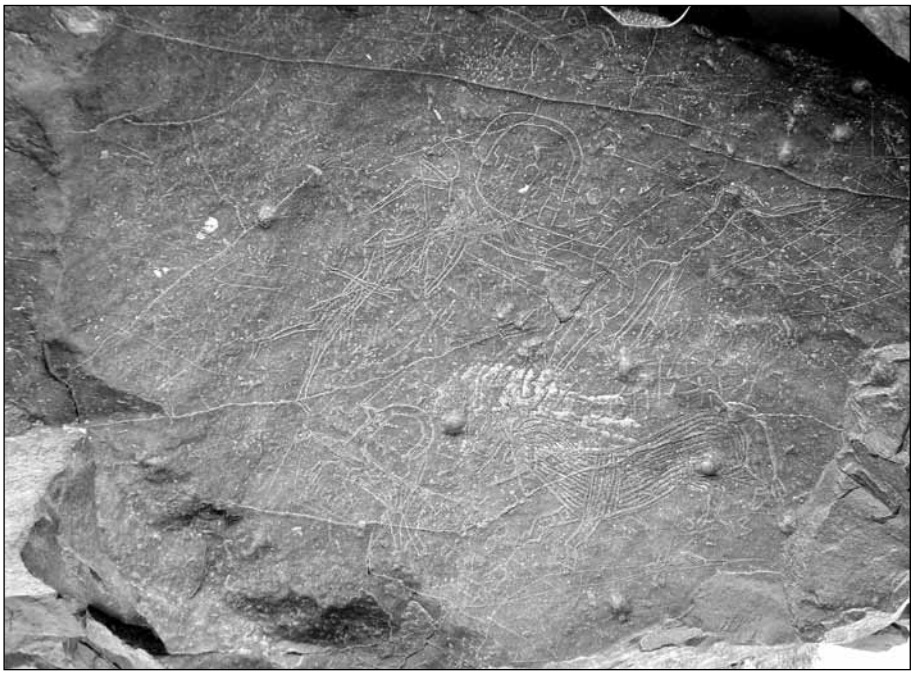

Fig. 5 - Petroglyphs dating from the Historical Period depicting a hunting scene.

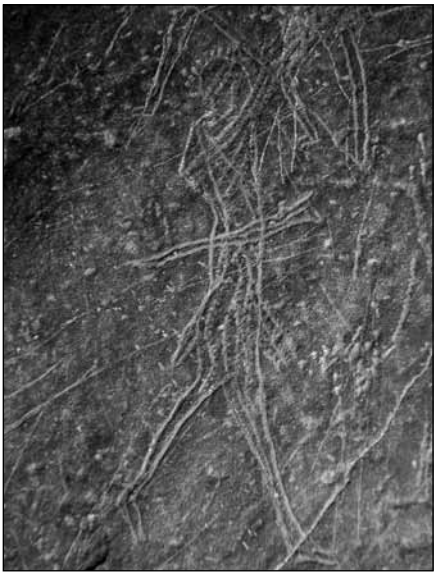

Fig. 6 -Detail of the hunting scene from Figure 5 showing a hunter brandishing a bow.

Fig.7 - Ibexes, camels and inscriptions incised on a rock in the Wâdî Bayhân.

IDOLS

The most ancient examples of Yemeni sculpture are Bronze Age idols (3rd - 2nd millennium BC) found in Hadramawt, Jawf and Khawlân al-Tiyâl. Although these idols originate in different regions separated by considerable distances, they show a remarkable uniformity of style that defines the Yemeni Bronze Age culture.

Fashioned from round, oblong or flat granite 10 to 30 cm tall, the human figures are fashioned in a closed form with the arms folded across the chest and only a small square head emerging. The gender features are emphasized by the use of deep cut away. Women are characterised by ample forms, with the waist and legs depicted in all their rotundity and abundance. In one female figure, the generous belly and soft folds of fat highlight her fertility and womanhood (Figure 8, centre). These sculptures bring to mind the marble idols worshipped in the Cyclades and probably represent fertility goddesses.

The male figures are almost all characterised by the presence of a belt at the waist and a band running across the chest, and are probably idols represented as hunters or warriors (Figures 8-9).

In their essentialised features, these stone idols show close formal analogies with small bronze figures of the Bronze Age or early Iron Age (Figure 10). Indeed, the stylistic and formal characteristics of these Bronze age figures — flat volumes, angular contours, clear separation between the bust and the legs and lack of proportionality between the upper and lower body — will persist in the sculptural artworks of the early Iron Age.

A number of idols were linked to fertility and the cycle of nature, while others were probably associated with the domestic cult of ancestors.

Fig. 8 - Male and female stone idols from Hadramawt.

Fig. 9 - Anterior and posterior views of a male idol carved from a granite pebble (Jawf).

The presence of shrines in dwellings was confirmed by excavations at Sabr near ‘Adan, with the discovery of a small square room with walls in mud brick, where a series of vertical, oblong stones were set into the beaten-earth floor along with ceramic ware for ritual offerings and incense burners. A considerable number of terracotta figurines were also unearthed at Sabr representing animals and rotund women, both symbols of fertility and reproduction.

Fig. 10 - Bronze figurine of a hunter or a warrior.

STELAE

The stone stelae found in the regions of Hadramawt and Mahra (Figure 11) have been ascribed to the Yemeni Bronze Age. These rectangular stelae, 60 cm to 1 m tall, are worked in low relief or engraved to represent a bearded warrior armed with a sword that has a moon-shaped haft. The sword is a common attribute in the Near East from the mid-3rd millennium BC. Some of these stelae are also carved on the back, with an indication of the ribs and spine. A horizontal line separates the upper part of the body from the lower portion of the stela that, when inserted in the ground, enabled the figure to stand upright. The arrangement of the stelae in pairs or as groups in a circle suggests a cultic function. The figural representation on the stelae bears close correspondence with contemporaneous rock incisions found in the Najrân area (Saudi Arabia). These rock-cut figures feature scenes of hunters and warriors armed with shields and spears, bows and arrows, quiver and a

Fig.11 - Limestone stela from Hadramawt depicting a warrior armed with a typical sword.

Fig.12 - Drawing of a hunter or warrior with bow and arrows, quiver, dagger and sickle-sword from a rock engraving in Jabal Qara (Central Arabia).

sickle-sword or a throwing-stick (Figure 12). The human figures wear feathered headdresses and characteristic clothing and most importantly, brandish daggers with large lunate or crescent-shaped pommels. According to the scholar Emmanuel Anati, the rock pictures of this group belong to the "Realistic-dynamic style". The dagger with a very broad pommel was also common in Syria, Anatolia and Mesopotamia around the middle of the 3rd millennium BC.

Ancient South Arabian Period

(8th – 4th Centuries BC)

The Caravan Kingdoms

Historical context

The populations that settled in the great oases of the desert basin of the Ramlat al-Sab'atayn (referred to as Sayhad by Medieval Arab geographers), were organized as states ruled by a king known as the mukarrib. The Kingdoms were those of Saba' in the Wâdî Dhana, of Hadramawt in the Wâdî Hadramawt, of Qatabân in the Wâdî Bayhân and Awsân in the Wâdî Markha (Figure 13, Colour Plate). The northernmost oasis was the Jawf, a territory disputed by Saba' and the local city-states of Nashq, Nashshân, Kaminahû, Haram, Inabba' (Cf. p. 7; Figure 182). The easternmost Kingdom was Hadramawt, cited in Genesis 10: 26 of the Bible as Hasarmawet, that occupied most of the territory where frankincense originated and the capital was Shabwat.

The Kingdom of Saba' is best known for the Biblical reference regarding the visit of the Queen of Sheba to King Solomon (1 Kings 10: 1-10, 13; Book of Chronicles 9: 1-9, 12). Although the Queen's name is not mentioned, the existence of a woman as a ruler during that historical era is completely plausible.

The Sabaeans were primarily interested in military and religious matters. Their capital Marib attracted pilgrims to worship the god Almaqah to whom animal sacrifices were made in July, at the beginning of the rainy season. However, Saba' must have also benefited from the duties paid by caravans that crossed the territory under its direct control. In contrast, the other Kingdoms based their economy on the production and trade of resins. This lucrative trade was based on the export of local frankincense and myrrh as well as products in transit from East Africa and India, such as aromatics, spices (i.e. cinnamon, nard), gold and precious stones. These products were transported from Hadramawt — specifically from Zufâr, the frankincense territory — to markets in Syria and Mesopotamia on the caravan route running along the Western border of the Arabian Peninsula.

Yemeni frankincense (*Boswellia Sacra*) was burned during religious rituals, and it was also appreciated for its therapeutic properties and used in cosmetic products such as perfumes. Our knowledge of the rich variety of incense — *kamkam, darw, lbny, dahab, hâdhik, rand, qust, ladn, qlm* — comes to us through inscriptions, particularly those on incense burners. The only South Arabian people whose epigraphical references cite commerce in resins are the Minaeans. Indeed, Greco-Roman authors celebrated "Minaean Frankincense", although such resin actually originated in the Hadramawt and not in Minaean territory, the Jawf. Arabian prosperity was so well recognized and praised by

classical Greco-Roman authors — from Erastothenes of Cyrene, Agatharchides of Cnidus, Diodorus Siculus, Strabo and Pliny the Elder — that the region became known as *Arabia Felix*.

During the period of the Caravan Kingdoms, the most important centre for trade migrated from Khindanu (located in the middle Euphrates) in the 8th century BC, to Gaza (present-day Palestine) during the Persian period of the 5th and 4th centuries BC, to Petra (present-day Jordan) during the Hellenistic Period from late 4th to the 1st century BC.

By the 7th century BC, the South Arabian Kingdoms were already organised into states and had consolidated their political, trading and diplomatic relationships with the states of the North. The Caravan Kingdoms reached their apogee around the middle of the 1st millennium BC when they became the southernmost pole of the Near East trading route.

Two Sabaean rulers are named as tributaries of the Assyrians in the Annals of Tiglatpileser III (744-727 BC) and again in those of Sargon II (722-705 BC), where mention is made of "Ita'amra the Sabaean" who can probably be identified with the mukarrib Yatha''amar Watâr bin Yakrubmalik. In an inscription commemorating the construction of the Temple of the New Year's Feast at Assur during the reign of Sennacherib (705-681 BC), "Karibilu King of Saba'" is remembered for his donation of precious stones and resins. This king is likely to have been Karib'îl Watâr bin Dhamar'alî, the famous Sabaean mukarrib who destroyed the Kingdom of Awsân. In short, the two Sabaeans mentioned in the Annals of the Assyrians most probably were Yatha''amar Watâr bin Yakrubmalik and Karib'îl Watâr bin Dhamar'alî, the rulers responsible for the achievements mentioned in two different monumental inscriptions found in the Sabaean city of Sirwâh.

Between the end of the 8th century BC and the beginning of the 7th century BC, the Sabaean mukarrib Karib'îl Watâr extended his dominion over South Arabia by conquering Awsân and placing the Kingdoms of Hadramawt, Qatabân and the small princedoms of the Jawf under his authority. The extended Kingdom of Karib'îl Watâr inaugurated a hegemonic Sabaean phase whose territories extended from Hadramawt across the Red Sea to the Sabaean settlement of Da'mat on the Ethiopian plateau.

At the turn of the 6th century BC, the political hegemony of Saba' faltered and the next few centuries were marked by the political and economic expansion of the Qatabanians whose kings took the title of mukarrib.

Around the 7th century BC, the Minaeans established the Kingdom of Ma'în in the Jawf. They controlled the caravan trade between Southern Arabia and the great markets of the Near East and the Mediterranean during a long period spanning from the 6th century BC, when Persia lead by Cyrus and Cambyses conquered Mesopotamia, Egypt and the Arabian Peninsula, until the 2nd-1st centuries BC, when incursions by Arab nomads in the Jawf undermined their hegemony.

The caravan trade, on which the wealth of these populations depended, was made possible and stabilised by solidly fortified settlements and intensively cultivated lands that stretched over the desert. The most important Minaean cities were Qarnaw (modern day Ma'în), Nashshân (modern day al-Sawdâ')

and Yathill (modern day Barâqish). The Minaeans also had important commercial markets (*emporia*) in the North of the Arabian Peninsula at Dedân and Taymâ' (in Saudi Arabia), and in the South, at Qaryat, Tamna‘ and Shabwat. Of note, the monumental inscription (RES 3022, dated to the middle of the 4th century BC) incised on the walls of Barâqish/*Yathill* demonstrates that the rich Minaean merchant class contributed to the raising of a rampart. This inscription is particularly significant for its reference to a conflict between Egypt and the Median state — one of the rare historical events mentioned in South Arabian inscriptions (a second historical event is recalled in the bronze plaque presented on page 57, Figure 53, Colour Plate).

The presence of Minaean traders in the populous markets of the Near East and the Mediterranean from the end of the 6th to the end of the 2nd centuries BC has been demonstrated by the discovery of inscriptions, such as that found on a stone stela in the temple dedicated to ‘Athtar dhû-Qabd in Ma‘în. This inscription cites the names of foreign women that the Minaeans, most probably merchants and traders, brought with them from the North of the Arabian Peninsula to their capital Qarnaw. The territories of origin of these women included Ghazzat (Gaza), Dedân, Lihyân, Yathrib (Medina), Msr (Egypt), Qedar, ‘Ammon and Mo'ab.

Any archaeologist who visited Yemen during the early years of the 21st century and knew about the rich South Arabian culture that extended over 16 centuries, would be greatly puzzled by the incompleteness of the archaeological record. Although the archaeological evidence unveiled to date bears witness to the grandeur of this culture, an incalculable patrimony is still buried under the sand in territories that are currently inaccessible for political and social reasons. Indeed, archaeological investigations in Yemen are discontinuous and archaeological recoveries are often found in markets out of their original context. It follows that the historical and artistic picture of South Arabian culture is still incomplete and unbalanced. An example is the archaeological record for the Kingdom of Saba' and its capital Marib. We can only speculate that at the apex of its glory, during the period of the mukarribs from the mid-8th century to the mid-6th century BC, as well as in the later period, Marib would have been a magnificent capital with rich monuments and a luxurious material culture and figurative production. Beside stone sculptures, the figurative production would have included a remarkable patrimony of bronze artefacts of which only a few examples have come to light. No other archaeological investigation has been carried out in Marib other than the partial excavation of the Awâm temple, a few tombs in the necropolis, the temple of Bar'ân and the engineering analysis of the dam.

Though tantalizing, a full understanding of the South Arabian art and architecture and its cultural patrimony must await further archaeological studies and excavations.

An important question concerns the origin of the South Arabian figurative production, the oldest evidence of which comes from the region of Jawf and dates from the 9th – 8th century BC — the Banât ‘Âd representations being the most significant example. An analysis of iconography and symbolic significance of such artefacts could shed light on their origin. The iconography includes

hunting scenes (activity that the mukarrib of Saba' and later of Qatabân performed in honour of the Gods; Figure 25) and ritual scenes enriched by specific symbols (hands, the sacred tree, palm trees, animals; Figures 19-23, 27). These figurative elements are displayed in hierarchical order and refer to the daily and religious activities of the people of the Jawf. As will be discussed in the sub-chapter *Continuity and standardisation of the iconography* (p. 35), many iconographic elements and compositional characteristics of these scenes recall the ancient Near Eastern tradition. These include the symmetrical layout of modular subjects, the hierarchy of value expressed by different size, the *horror vacui*, an array of figurative elements, such as entwined snakes, rampant animals flanking the sacred tree lodging two birds in its foliage and the figures seated under a pergola of vines. Indeed, the iconographic analogies with Near Eastern art are highly indicative of the migratory origin of South Arabians

The figurative incisions on the temples of the Banât ‘Âd

Although our knowledge of the artistic production during the Caravan Kingdoms period is fragmentary, it is clear that all the artistic forms are related to religious iconography, where symbolism prevails and the zoomorphic element is of primary importance. In the most ancient examples of South Arabian art, we find iconographies in common with the Near Eastern tradition represented in an original way. Indeed, the iconographic sequences that appear in South Arabian temples, principally from the region of the Jawf, as well as in stone and bronze works from Sabaean and Minaean sites, contain elements of clear Mesopotamian origin. However, these elements have been appropriated, developed and transformed in a highly creative and original manner and have acquired a distinct South Arabian style.

One such example is provided by temples designated as “Banât ‘Âd temples” by the inhabitants of the Jawf on account of the presence of incised female figures identified as the daughters (Banât) of their mythical ancestor ‘Âd (Figures 14-15). The figures are represented standing on a pedestal. Their faces are framed by graceful curls. A long skirt covers their calves and two bands across the chest suggest the presence of a long and ample mantle. The figures’ left hands brandish a spear or staff and the right hands hold a sickle-sword, or vice-versa. These representations are found on the monolithic pillars of temples in the cities of Kharibat Hamdân, Ma‘în, al-Sawdâ’ and al-Bayda’ in the Jawf.

Fig. 14 - Portion of a pillar of one of the Banât ‘Âd temples bearing an incised female figure standing on a podium (Jawf).

Although incomplete and fragmented, similar representations incised on stone are also found outside the region of the Jawf, in al-Jûba in the Qatabân, at Raybûn in the Wâdî Daw'an, at al-Midamman on the Yemeni coast of the Red Sea and in the temple of Yeha (Tigray) in Ethiopia.

PLAN AND GENERAL FEATURES OF THE TEMPLES

The temples of the Banât 'Âd are found both inside and outside the fortified cities. These temples, usually constructed in limestone, are sanctuaries featuring an entrance propylaeum (on the West or South side) and an open-air courtyard, porticoed on the two long sides with monolithic pillars supporting the roof. The low walls linking the pillars could have served as seats. The *cella* of the temple lies at the far end of the building, aligned with the entrance doorway.

The *extra-moenia* (outside the city-walls) temple of al-Sawdâ' (Figure 16), is the only one to have been completely excavated to date, and reveals figurative incisions covering the architrave and jambs of the doorway. The pillars of the porticoes are only partially decorated so that the incised surfaces would only be visible from within the porticoes. This arrangement suggests that access to the sanctuary was limited to the porticoes and entrance to the courtyard was restricted.

The decorations of the remaining pillars around the courtyard beyond this limit were probably only intended to be seen from one side and used for rituals performed within the temple. In fact, the temple received light exclusively from the central courtyard. The fact that not all sides of the pillars are decorated may have been influenced by this factor. Indeed, the incised representations would have been visible only at certain times of the day, which suggests that the South Arabian architects could accurately calculate the position of the sun and its relation to the courtyard's aperture and pillars.

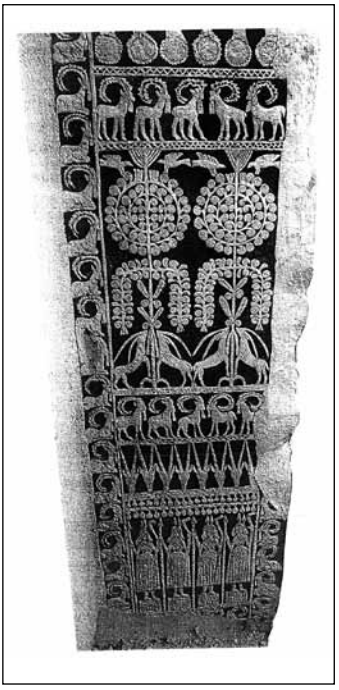

*Fig. 15 - The Banât 'Âd are portrayed in the lower part of the pillar with a spear in the right hand and a sickle-sword in the left hand (intra-muros temple at al-Sawdâ'/*Nashshân*, Jawf).*

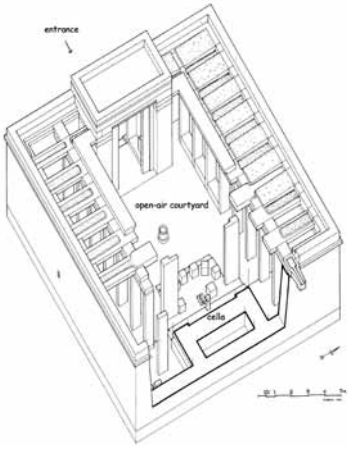

*Fig. 16 - Axonometric projection of the extra-moenia temple of Banât 'Âd at al-Sawdâ'/*Nashshân *(Jawf).*

All carvings on the Banât ʻÂd temples share a commonality of technique, as well as figurative and compositional style. The carving technique is primarily based on incision, although at times the carvers adopted a very low relief. Lines were lightly traced on the surface to provide a guide for the proportions of the overall composition. This technique was commonly used for engraving inscriptions on stone, bronze and also for monuments. After the outlines of the figures were carved, internal details were added.

ORGANISATION AND STYLE OF THE DECORATIONS

Among the best-preserved monuments are the temples of Kharibat Hamdân/*Haram* and al-Sawdâ'/*Nashshân.* Both temples display a number of repetitive decorative features. The incised decorations on the surface of the doorway and the sides of the pillars are organised in horizontal registers made up of rows of identical images divided by decorative bands (*chevron*) and framed on either side by continuously decorated vertical strips.

Some representations, such as the 'spear tips', possibly symbolising spades, and the intertwined snakes that form an elongated chain are vertically oriented. The architrave of the doorway of the temple of Kharibat Hamdân/*Haram* (Figure 17) presents in sequence from top to bottom: antelope heads, crouching ibexes and 'vegetal elements' down the sides of the central panel with female figures, the Banât ʻÂd. In general, the incisions on the architraves present a number of constant features, i.e. rows of crouching ibexes and antelope heads (*Haram*) or bovine' heads (*Nashshân*), their number varying according to the height of the architrave.

The jambs of the doorway and pillars are decorated with the following registers, from the top:

1. Beneath the vegetal elements of the architrave, the upper register presents a row of standing ibexes with beautifully rendered horns (see a detail in Figure 18).
2. The next register is formed by a decorative row of 'spear tips' beneath which are depicted ostriches, serpents and crouching ibexes.
3. The register below contains the feminine figures, the Banât ʻÂd, placed at about 1.70 m above the ground. Above the Banât ʻÂd figures are depicted antelope heads and circular objects, possibly vases or palm dates.
4. The lower half of the monolithic jambs is again decorated with a row of crouching ibexes, a row in the spear-tip motif followed by rows of crouching antelopes and intertwined serpents and a band of *chevron*.

This organization is remarkably constant, although the number of rows of ibexes, portrayed as stationary or in movement, and the number of spear-tip bands may vary.

The virtually identical repetition of the decorative elements suggests that South Arabian artisans used a template to facilitate their production.

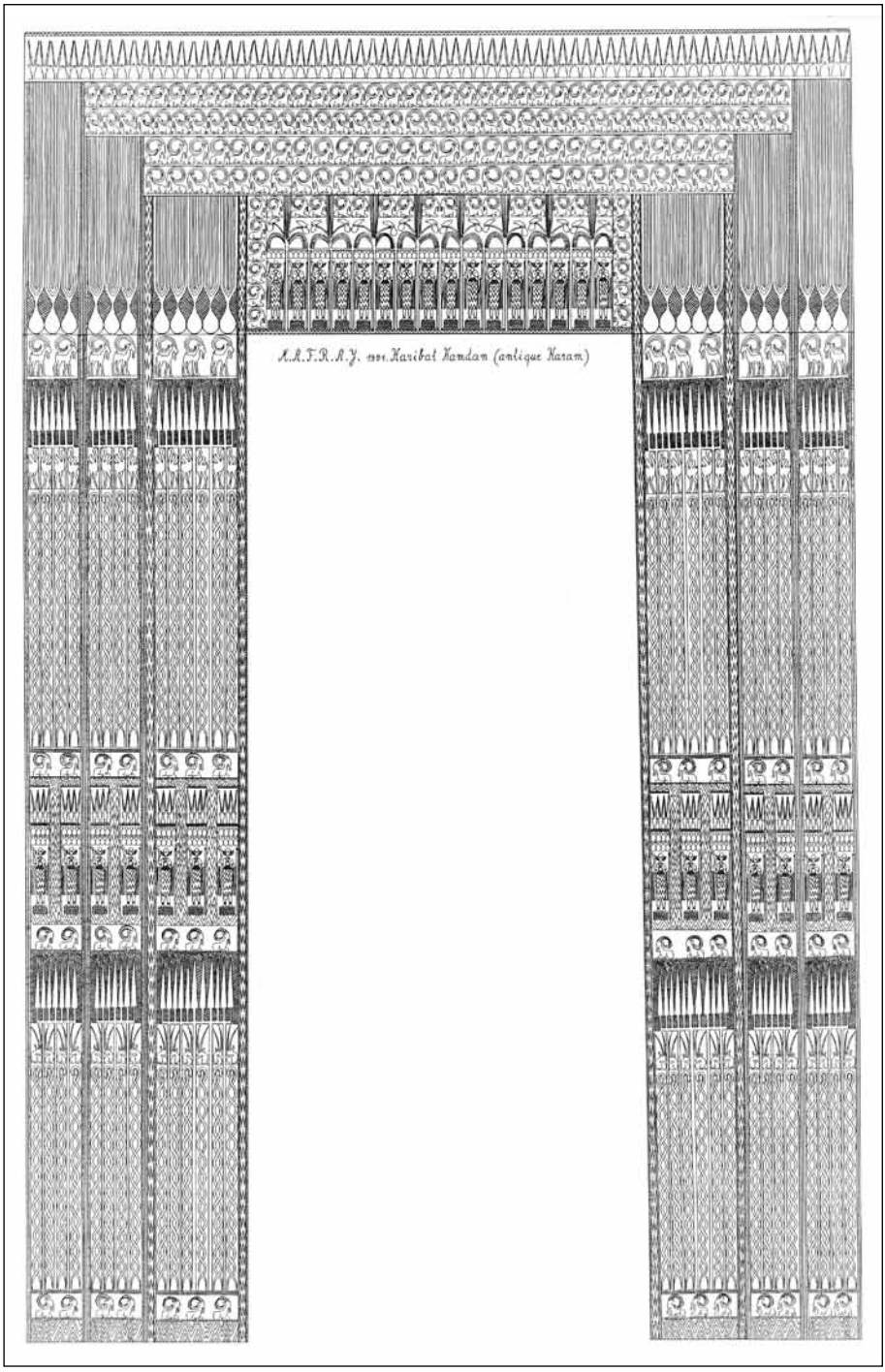

*Fig. 17 - The decoration of the doorway of the Banât 'Âd temple at Kharibat Hamdan/*Haram.

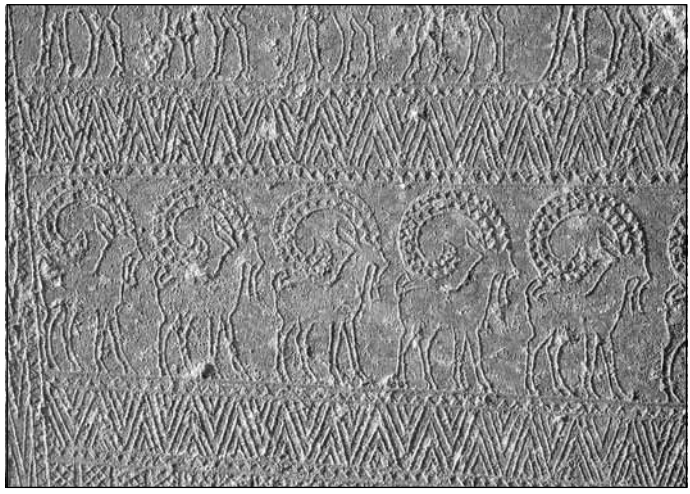

*Fig. 18 - Standing ibexes incised on a pillar at Ma'în/*Qarnaw *(detail).*

Some stylistic differences are certainly due to different archaeological periods. Other differences are probably the result of technical and artistic variations between different teams of workmen operating in the area.

The stylistic features of these incised, two-dimensional decorations are also found in local sculpture in the round and reliefs. These features include the adoption of simplified geometric forms of fixed proportions to represent figures. Just as with sculptures in the round, the figures of the Banât 'Âd temples are contained within rigid geometric schemes and follow outlines initially traced on the surface of the block. The animals (ibexes, antelopes and ostriches) are generally represented in pure profile, while human figures show composite representations. The female figures can combine a frontal view of the face and body with the legs in profile. Men's faces are in profile while their torsos are shown with a one-quarter rotation.

The composition of the figurative motifs follows a recognisable pattern. The human figures, with their attributes and inscriptions, are placed in the central panels, while animals and objects associated with these human figures are placed above and below.

THE *INTRA-MUROS* TEMPLE DEDICATED TO THE GOD ARANYADA' AT AL-SAWDÂ'/ *NASHSHÂN*

The extraordinary discovery of the *intra-muros* (within the city-walls) temple of al-Sawdâ'/*Nashshân* has raised a number of questions regarding the identification and interpretation of the figures. Although the analysis and documentation of the temple is fragmentary because only the entrance doorway and a few of the propylaeum's pillars have been partially excavated, the available archaeological repertory from the temple deserves to be presented for its remarkable artistic and historical importance.

Iconography

The usual organization in registers with rows of animals and female figures on a pedestal is still present, but the figurative repertory is enriched with new and unusual iconographies the significance of which is linked to the emergence of a great political confederation that the temple symbolised and celebrated.

The first pillar of the propylaeum, in front of the temple's doorway, rendered in the drawing in Figure 19, is decorated with six panels featuring cult scenes. These panels are set within an external frame of ibexes alternating with ostriches. The internal frame features a tree with branches laden with fruit and in the treetop two birds peck at the fruit. On each side of the tree trunk, two rampant antelopes confront one another.

Each of the six panels of the doorway presents two male figures, facing each other in different postural attitudes. The figures have long, pointed beards and are distinguished by unique clothing and attributes. Further, the figures are accompanied by inscriptions mentioning the names of divinities. In the first panel, the inscription refers to the divinity ʻAthtar. In the second panel the cited divinities are Wadd and Aranyadaʻ. The name Yathʻân, incised on the same panel, probably refers to the name of the temple. The third panel depicts two bearded figures facing each other and seated on stools under a lush pergola of vines. Between them is a table decorated with a bull's head and on the table stands a cult vase. The names of the divinities Aranyadaʻ and Almaqah are incised above the men's heads, on the left and right respectively. The figure on the left holds a staff in the form of two intertwined snakes. On the right, Almaqah is identified by his symbol, the curved staff he holds in the left hand. A woman, depicted in smaller dimensions and with a child in her arms, sits at the feet of the male figures (Figure 20).

The fourth panel features similar figures, albeit holding different attributes. One of the figures is offering a vase and a palm leaf, while the other figure is offering two antelopes. The divinities mentioned are Nabʻal (on the right) and Yadaʻismuh (Figure 21).

The fifth panel is nearly identical, except that one figure holds a staff and the other holds two antelopes. Nakrah and Hiwâr are the names of the two deities incised on this panel (Figure 22).

The sixth panel is composed of two tiers, each decorated with three dancing female figures with long free-flowing hair and dresses that fall in ample folds (Figure 23). They hold curved sickle-swords and ears of wheat. These female figures are quite different from the Banât ʻÂd that are usually depicted standing on a podium (Cf. Figures 14-15), and are similar to the feminine figure carved in relief on the miniature temple of Kamna (see Figure 24), dating from the 8th century BC.

Below the sixth panel, a row of alternating ibexes and ostriches surmounts the image of the sacred tree flanked on each side by rampant antelopes. Below, three open palm hands are depicted in a downward position, followed by the symbol 𐩢 of Aranyadaʻ (the South Arabian letter *b* was used at times to identify this god) and a foundation inscription. The decoration of this pillar ends with a row of figures bearing curved sickle-swords and an inscription bearing the name of the Banât Îl (Cf. Figure 19).

The scenes visible on the second pillar (the lower portion is still unexcavated) are the identical and symmetrical reproduction of those on the first pillar, and the names of the divinities are also mentioned.

The temple's foundation inscription is of crucial significance, as it features the name of Alamnabat Amar, son of Labu'ân who rebuilt the temple. Alamnabat Amar is one of the sovereigns of al-Sawdâ'/*Nashshân*, for whom this represents the first discovered inscription. However, since his father Labu'ân is known from other inscriptions, we can date the Kingdom of Alamnabat Amar to around the middle of the 8th century BC.

The jambs of the Southern gateway of the *intra-muros* temple of al-Sawdâ'/*Nashshân* are conventionally decorated in the style of the temples of Kharibat Hamdân, Ma'în, the *extra-moenia* temple of al-Sawdâ' and al-Bayda'.

Fig. 19 - Human figures, animals, symbols and inscriptions carved on a pillar of the propylaeum of the intra-muros *temple of al-Sawdâ'/* Nashshân *(Jawf).*

*Fig. 20 - Third panel from the al-Sawdâ'/*Nashshân intra-muros *temple. The names of Aranyada' and Almaqah are incised above the figures' heads. A seated woman with a child in her arms is depicted at the feet of Almaqah.*

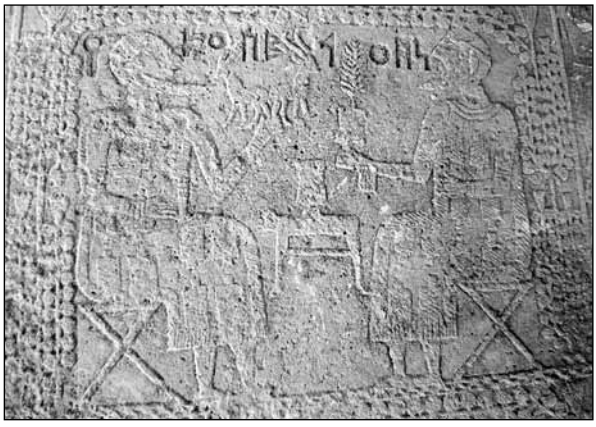

*Fig. 21 - Fourth panel of the al-Sawdâ'/*Nashshân *temple. The names incised are those of the gods Nab'al (on the right) and Yada'ismuh.*

Fig. 22 - The names of the two deities incised on the fifth panel are Nakrah and Hiwâr. As in the previous panels, a cult vase on a table decorated with a bull's head is placed between the two figures.

*Fig. 23 - Detail of the dancing female figures carved on the sixth panel of the pillar of the propylaeum of the al-Sawdâ'/*Nashshân *temple.*

*Fig. 24 - Feminine figure (detail) carved in relief in the miniature temple shown in the Figure 34 (Kamna/*Kaminahû*).*

Significance

The inscriptions of the temple of Aranyada‘ are of primary importance for the reconstruction of the history of al-Sawdâ’/*Nashshân* and its relations with Saba’, the dominant power of the period.

It has been proposed that the male figures depicted in the five panels could be the gods named in the corresponding inscription. These gods are the most important divinities associated with the Kingdom of Saba’ (Almaqah) and each of the city-states of the Jawf.

The divinities named in the panels, as mentioned above, are ‘Athtar and probably Îl, followed by the deities belonging to the city-states of the Jawf: Wadd and Aranyada‘, the main gods of al-Sawdâ’/*Nashshân*. The following gods are Almaqah, the official god of the Kingdom of Saba’ and probably worshipped in the city of al-Bayda’/*Nashq*, and again Aranyada‘. The next god is Nab‘al, a god of Kamna/*Kaminahû*, and Yada‘ismuh, a deity of Khiribat Hamdân/*Haram*. Finally, the god Hiwâr of Inabba’ and Nakrah, a god of Ma‘în/*Qarnaw* are also mentioned.

The gods are represented in hierarchical sequence and no goddesses are shown. The dancing female figures are the “daughters of Îl”, semi-goddesses who seem to have played an intermediary role between gods and men.

The presence in the temple of al-Sawdâ’/*Nashshân* of all the major tutelary divinities of the city-states of the Jawf appears to confirm a confederation of the city-states under the leadership of *Nashshân* allied with Saba’. The presence of Almaqah, the principal god of the Sabaeans, among those of the Jawf can be interpreted as indicating an alliance between *Nashshân* and Saba’ during the reign of Alamnabat Amar in the 8th century BC. As scholar Christian Robin points out, the discovery of these figurative sequences clarified for the first time how a *pantheon* was organised to reflect a particular political alliance.

Although the foundation inscription is perfectly integrated with the sequence of representations on the panels and designed during the construction of the temple, it appears that the names of the gods on the panels were added later in spaces left vacant between the figures, in order to specify the figures’ roles. The addition of the names of local gods to Almaqah, the official divinity of Saba’ may indicate the need for a strategic alliance among the states of the Jawf, without excluding the “awkward ally” — the Kingdom of Saba’ — which posed a threat. This alliance was broken shortly afterwards when the mukarrib of Saba’ Karib’îl Watâr destroyed *Nashshân* during the fifth and sixth of his eight military campaigns against Awsân and the other South Arabian Kingdoms (Cf. RES 3945).

Continuity and standardisation of the iconography

The representations in the temples of Banât ‘Âd demonstrate a striking continuity in carving techniques and subject matters with both Yemeni rock art of the previous era, as well as with Yemeni coeval rock art. Indeed, the figurative rock art depicting hunting scenes with ibexes, gazelles, wild asses, ostriches and hunters armed with bows, spears and curved sickle-swords, bears

strong similarity to the figurative art of the Jawfite temples (Figure 25). The consistency of the imagery supports the idea that the tribal populations of the Jawf originated from peoples that settled in the region at the edge of the desert towards the end of the 2nd millennium BC.

Similar symbols and images, including open hands, cult vases, snakes, spear tips, oryx heads and a hunting scene with antelope and ostrich, are also present in a 7th century BC terracotta cult tablet (Figure 26) that came from a private house in the Sabaean city of *Hafarî* (today Yalâ /al-Durayb).

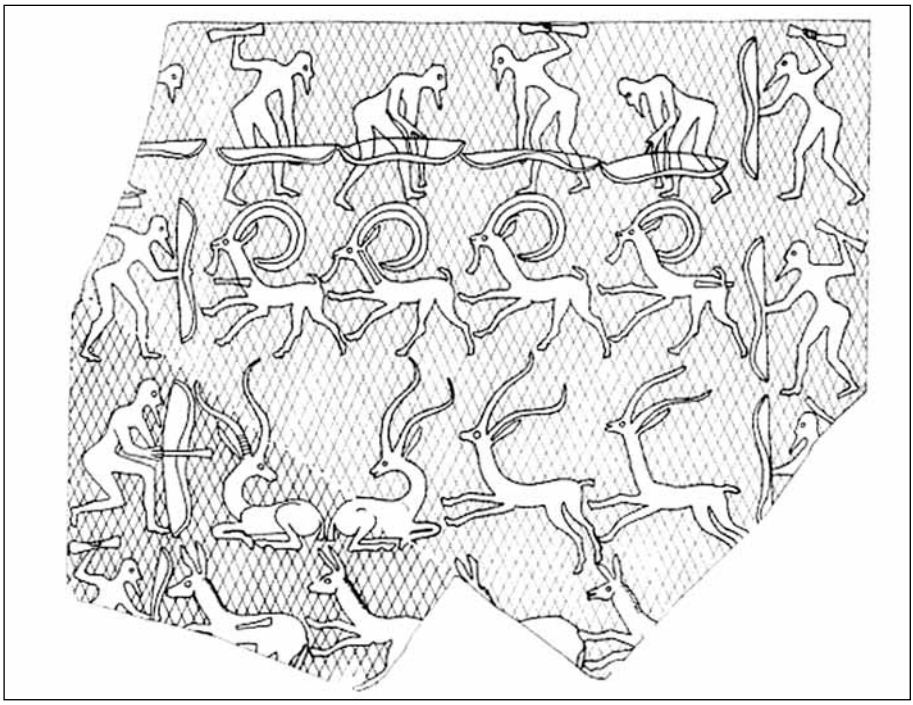

Fig. 25 - Hunting scene with hunters, ibexes, gazelles and wild asses from a Banât 'Âd temple (Jawf).

The apparent codification of images and attributes, as well as cult scenes such as those seen on the panels of the *intra-muros* temple of al-Sawdâ', demonstrate that these images were not only preserved, but were also refined and elaborated in order to achieve a sophisticated and up-to-date integration of religion and political strategy, in which temple rituals incorporated and sanctioned the figure of the king. Additionally, the figures and symbols, through an organised and reliable artistic iconography, provided a consistent and clearly understood meaning.

Here we will not focus on the iconological interpretation of individual subjects and attributes represented — their origin and development, their intrinsic contents and symbolic value. Instead, we shall propose a hypothesis that positions the individual iconographies into a general interpretation of the whole figural composition.

Each figural element can be considered a *signe* (as in the linguistic sense) involving both expression and content. The *signe* has an intrinsic meaning and value according to the position it occupies, thus establishing a 'hierarchy' of significance within the composition as a whole. For example, the central, predominant position is occupied by human figures with their specific attributes, participating in rituals such as processions, dances and sacred hunts. Immediately above and below the human figures are depicted rows of animals (ibexes, antelopes, snakes, bulls, ostriches) and the sacred tree that may be considered divine symbols or symbols of the constellations, and in this sense linked to cycles of nature. The female figures, the Banât, have been interpreted either as priestesses of the temple, devoted to the service of the divinity, or alternatively as demi-goddesses based on the adjacent inscriptions that read "Daughters of (the god) Îl".

We cannot state whether the posture of the animals (standing or seated) and their representation singly or in pairs, have any intrinsic meaning, or simply reflect an aesthetic convention. Furthermore, the repetition of the images may be no more than an accepted technique for filling the entire surface with artistic detail (*horror vacui*).

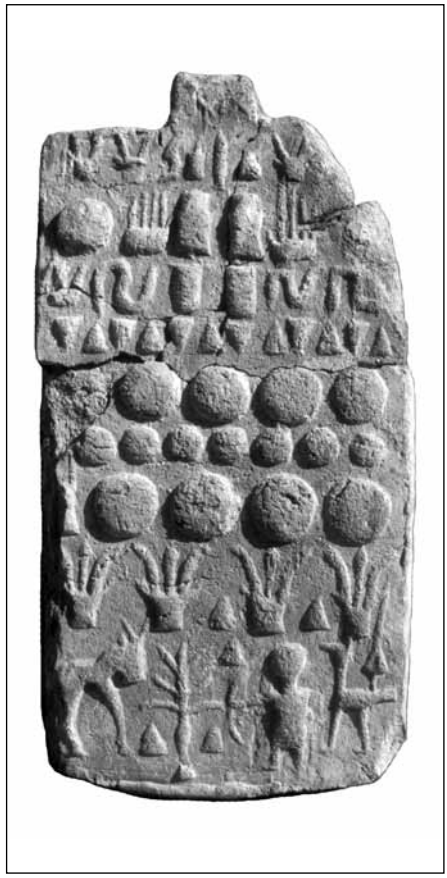

*Fig. 26 - Terracotta tablet with symbols and a hunting scene in relief from a house excavated in the Sabaean city of Yalâ al-Durayb/*Hafarî*. The symbols may be related to agricultural cycles and intended as an agrarian calendar. In particular, the discs may be associated with the lunar months, the hands and the vases may be symbols of sowing practices and the snakes may refer to the emergence of the star cluster of the Pleiades.*

Although the themes described so far certainly derive from the Mesopotamian iconographic repertory, the stylistic rendering and the associative and compositional system of the subjects are unique to the Ancient South Arabian culture and have no counterparts in other regions. In conclusion, the iconographic, stylistic and semantic analysis of the representations in the Banât 'Âd temples reveals that by the 8th century BC, South Arabian art was characterised by a largely homogeneous typology in terms of subject matter, symbolism, style and composition.

Chronology

The stratigraphic sequence of the excavation of the *extra-muros* al-Sawdâ'/*Nashshân* temple, together with the palaeography of the archaic inscriptions, enable us to date a number of the Banât ʻÂd temples back to a period that preceded the incursion of the Sabaean mukarrib Karib'îl Watâr in the Jawf (*c*. 750-700 BC). Clearly, these temples were modified several times over the centuries as they were in active use until the end of the 1st millennium BC.

The nature of the inscriptions sheds some light on the chronology of the temples. During the period of Karib'îl Watâr, the script was formalised into a coherent and harmonious style in which the letters acquired their definitive form and direction. In fact, after this period, mirror inscriptions disappeared and texts were written only from right to left or boustrophedonically (i.e. using alternate left-to-right and right-to-left lines). In contrast, the archaic form of the inscriptions found both on the gateways of the *extra-moenia* temples of Banât ʻÂd at *Nashshân* and at *Haram* appears to predate the classic script of Karib'îl Watâr's period and these inscriptions are among the most ancient monumental inscriptions found in Southern Arabia.

During the excavations of the al-Sawdâ'/*Nashshân'* temple, archaeologists noted that a number of decorated stone blocks had been re-utilised in wall structures dating from the 8th century BC, demonstrating that the Banât ʻÂd figural representations existed even before this period. It is possible that a first restoration of the temple was linked to the Sabaean conquest of *Nashshân* (second half of the 7th century BC).

The discovery of a few fragmentary Banât ʻÂd motifs at al-Midamman, on the Red Sea coast (Tihâma), seems to point to a 'Sabaean route' in the colonisation of Ethiopia, where in fact a decorated fragment of Banât ʻÂd style was found in the excavation of the temple at Yeha.

Since the region of the Jawf presents a high number of Banât ʻÂd temples by comparison with the rest of the Yemeni territory, it is reasonable to consider the origin and centre of expansion of this figurative art to be the Valley of the Jawf.

The inscriptions found in the temples of the Banât ʻÂd feature the names of the kings who built the temples, the names of the temples themselves and the names of the divinities to whom the temples were dedicated. It is unlikely that a single king was responsible for the construction of a temple. Instead, each temple seems to have been founded by an initial ruler and completed by his successors.

Although the temples of the Banât ʻÂd have been identified by different names (e.g. the temple of *Haram* was initially called Hadanân and later, at the end of the 1st millennium, Arathat), the divinity to whom they were originally dedicated appears to have been ʻAthtar, in his different forms. For example, in Maʻîn/*Qarnaw*, the temple was dedicated to the god ʻAthtar dhu-Qabd, while al-Sawdâ'/*Nashshân* was dedicated to the god ʻAthtar dhu-Risâf.

Epigraphical evidence indicates that during the last period of its use between the 2nd century BC and the 2nd century AD, the *extra-muros* temple of *Haram* was the site of the cult of the divinities Halfân and dhu-Samâwî. Dhu-Samâwî is a "Celestial God" of the Amîr tribe, the protector of Arab people to whom camel statuettes were offered. It is possible that the *extra-muros* temples were mainly visited by the farmers of the oases together with caravan traders during their stops along the long journey. In contrast, the *intra-muros* temples may have been reserved for the urban population, i.e. rulers, artisans, etc.

Divinities and Religion

Religion governed the life and social organisation of South Arabian people. The names of their divinities come directly to us through dedicatory or commemorative inscriptions. Divinities included primarily tribal, local and even household gods and each Kingdom maintained its own official pantheon presided over by a primary divinity, the Patron God. For example, Almaqah was the Patron God for the Kingdom of Saba', 'Athtar dhu-Qabd for Ma'în, 'Amm for Qatabân and Sayyin for Hadramawt. The primary divinity of South Arabian people was 'Athtar. The dedications terminate with an invocation to the gods, listed in hierarchical order as required by religious and social protocols. For instance, Sabaean dedicatory inscriptions first list 'Athtar, followed by Hawbas, Almaqah, dhat-Himyam and dhat-Ba'dân.

The temple was the abode of the god and the site for worship, but it could also serve as a refuge and retreat. The temple, in the name of the god, owned riches such as lands and herds of animals that derived not only from donations, but also from taxes or tithes on spices and special items, such as the first agricultural produce of the season. Offerings to a divinity could also involve zoomorphic statues in the form of bulls, ibexes, horses and bronze or stone votive stelae with inscriptions. Temple properties were administered by priests. Interestingly, inscriptions reveal that women could also take vows in service of the divinities.

THE NATURE OF SOUTH ARABIAN GODS

The inscriptions do not provide any information concerning the nature and appearance of the divinities. South Arabian populations were well aware of the differences between the deities, which were not reflected in their aesthetic-formal appearance, but in their intrinsic nature. The scholar of Pre-Islamic religious studies Gonzague Ryckmans discussed the futility of attempting to identify the form in which the South Arabian deities were worshipped and postulated that the divinities were represented by different iconographies in anthropomorphic or animal statues. Each deity had its own name that could also have a meaning (for example, 'Amm, "paternal uncle", Wadd, "love"), followed by an epithet (for example 'Athtar Shâriqân, "the one that rises in the East", namely Venus, visible in the morning, before sunrise). However, these details do not inform us about the physical representation of the deity itself.

Votive and commemorative inscriptions mention the name of the dedicator and the deity to which the invocation or dedication was addressed, often accompanied by symbols. The earliest and most complete compendium of symbols emerges from the Banât ʻÂd temples and from a votive terracotta tablet found in a private home in Yalâ/*Hafarî* (see above, p. 37 and Figure 26). The symbolism includes celestial bodies, plant and animal elements and divine attributes. However, the wide range of expressive typologies precludes a direct relationship between a specific object and the deity. For example, male and female South Arabian deities were associated with appellations or images of animals; however, there is not an unequivocal link between the deity invoked in the inscription and the animal to which it refers.

South Arabian texts do not explicitly refer to local myths and legends that could help identify the deities. The epithets "Mother of ʻAthtar", "Mother of Goddesses", "Daughters of Îl", "Daughters of Hawbas" allude to a theogonic myth that is still obscure. The mukarrib of Qatabân had the title of "first-born of ʾAnbay and of Hawkum", showing a close relationship between the sovereigns and the divinity, and perhaps the divinization of the sovereigns themselves.

Objects bearing dedications to the deities present different forms, including anthropomorphic and animal bronze statues, stelae, amulets, bronze vases, altars, incense burners, architectural blocks and seals. It is still a matter of debate as to whether statues with human features accompanied by dedications to the deities represent the very deities invoked in the inscription. The statues might have been a representation of offerings made by the worshipper to the deity and therefore represented the devotee himself.

THE LANGUAGE OF SYMBOLS

In Southern Arabia as in Mesopotamia, from the beginning of the Iron Age, the most characteristic element for expressing a religious concept was the symbol. Could the symbol have been a substitute for the god and played the same role as the anthropomorphic representation of the deity? In Mesopotamia this would seem to have been the case. In Babylon, for example, during the 13th century BC, the divine symbols carved into the *kudurru*, the boundary stones placed in the temples, identify the deities whose names sometimes accompany the corresponding symbols. In other examples, inscriptions refer explicitly to the divine symbols even though the latter are not figuratively represented.

In Southern Arabia, the relationship between the deity and its symbol is anything but straightforward. The only symbol that has a direct and constant relationship with the deity is the curved sign, or curved staff, always associated with Almaqah and documented from the mukarrib period until the early centuries AD. The curved sign is found at the beginning or at the end of votive inscriptions dedicated to this god and its form varies little over time.

Another type of curved staff is the sickle-sword. This object is held by men in the representation of a procession found in Maʻîn (Figure 27) and by the female figures, both carved in the Banât ʻÂd temples. The sickle-sword was a common object in Mesopotamia, represented from the 3rd millennium BC in

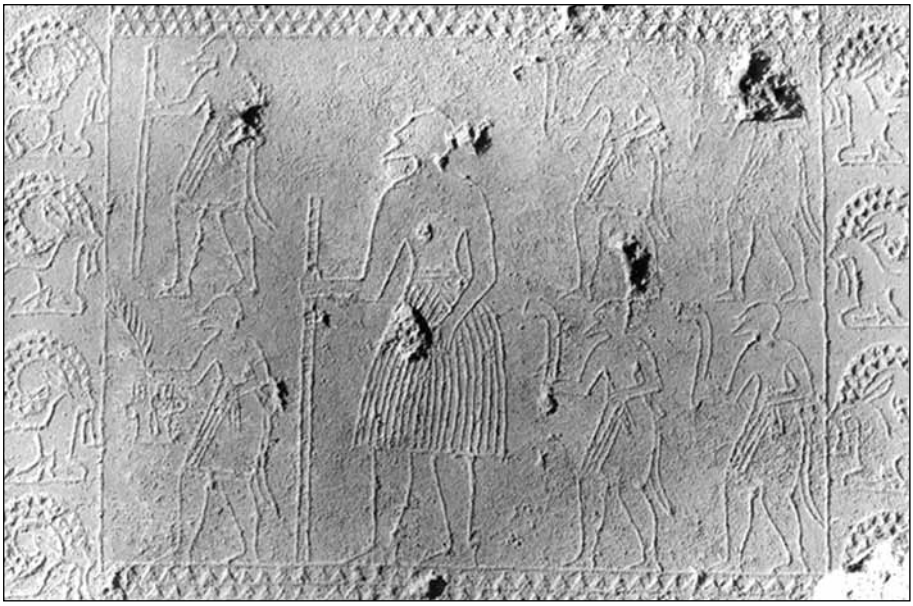

Fig. 27 - Scene of a procession from a Banât ʻÂd temple in Maʻîn (Jawf).

scenes of war and hunt where it was always associated with kings and deities.

In particular, the sickle-sword was the attribute, together with a gazelle, of the Mesopotamian god Amurru, considered to be the god of the nomadic peoples of the West.

For the rest of South Arabian religious symbols, there is not a strict correlation between a particular symbol and a specific divinity. For example, the lunar crescent combined with the planet found on objects, mostly incense burners, with dedications to Shams, ʻAthtar, Wadd and Amm, might symbolize either a sun deity or a lunar deity, or more generally the heavens. However, since this symbol does not appear to be strictly associated with a specific deity, it might be considered a talismanic image. The lunar crescent with the planet symbol is documented as early as the 8th century BC and persists into the first centuries AD. In some reliefs, the same symbol is associated with a bull accompanied by the inscription "Wadd is the father" (*Wadd'ab*, a magic formula against the jinx).

The extended hand is a symbol often found on South Arabian monuments as well as on rock art, and it is also associated with the crescent moon and heavenly disk motif. It could be the attribute to ʻAthtar and have an apotropaic significance, due to the protective nature of the god against all forms of profanation of tombs or temples. The open hand could also signify a gesture of benediction and adoration.

The South Arabian inscriptions referring to the construction of buildings dedicated to ʻAthtar dhu-Qabd are often accompanied by the Minaean symbol defined as a "door". This symbol is sometimes substituted by the monogram of ʻAthtar. This symbol might signify access to the divine presence or to the afterlife. As noted, ʻAthtar is often invoked for protection against the profanation of tombs.

The significance of other commonly found symbols is still unknown. For example, an arrow-like form with a transverse bar is found in the Jawf reliefs of Banât ʿÂd, on Sabaean inscriptions and coins, and has been interpreted as a spade for its similarities to the *marru*, a farm tool of the god Marduk. Another symbol, the rhombus, similar to the Mesopotamian lozenge, may have various interpretations — from a vulva, as symbol of fertility, to an eye with an apotropaic function, to a wheat seed as a reference to agriculture. In contrast, the cross, documented in Qatabanian inscriptions and on Sabaean seals and coins, is interpreted as a divine symbol and has precise Babylonian parallels where it is depicted on seals or around the neck of kings as amulets.

In inscriptions dating to the period of the Sabaean mukarribs, the symbols designated as "lightning rod" and "double stylus" are often paired and probably associated with Almaqah's "staff". The "lightning rod" also appears in the Minaean inscriptions near the monogram of ʿAthtar, the snake and the "door". Scholar Adolf Grohmann linked this symbol to the Babylonian cluster of thunderbolts depicted on seals and reliefs. These two- or three-pointed thunderbolt symbols are attributed to Adad, both as a beneficial rain-bearing deity or as a malevolent god of tempests.

Fig. 28 - Detail of ibexes heads decorating an offering table excavated in the temple of ʿAthtar dhu-Qabd at Barâqish (Jawf).

The symbols of the rhombus (𐩦), the cross (𐩧), the lightning rod (𐩨 𐩩) and the double stylus (𐩪) correspond to letters of the South Arabian alphabet – (𐩦) to the *f*; (𐩧) to the *t*; (𐩨 𐩩) to both *h* and *ḥ*, and (𐩪) to the *ḏ* respectively. The meaning of such association is still obscure.

A number of South Arabian inscriptions are characterized by a small circle placed at the end of the text and could have a magic meaning. This symbol has been preserved within the South Arabian culture and is present in some Muslim texts with magic significance.

The ambiguity encountered in the attribution of symbolic objects is also true for symbolic animals. The ibex, depicted in either an advancing, recumbent or heraldic position, is the animal most frequently depicted in South Arabian art on objects such as lamps, offering tables (Figure 28) and thrones, and on temple monuments. As a wild animal living in the mountains, the ibex symbolizes the force of nature and is associated with different deities, including ʻAthtar, and especially with the national patron god of the Sabaeans, Almaqah, mentioned in some inscriptions as "lord of the ibexes".

*Fig. 29 - Bulls in low-relief engraved in a pillar of the al-Sawdâ'/*Nashshân intra-muros *temple.*

Fig. 30 - Bull statue in limestone (Jawf).

The antelope is an animal that appears in the dedications to ʻAthtar, and might therefore be the symbolic animal dedicated to this deity. However, in the temple of Banât ʻÂd at Nashshân, two antelopes are held by the gods Hawar and Yadaʻsum, and in this case the antelope is believed to represent a votive offering in a ritual scene rather than symbolising a deity.

The bull, depicted on sacrificial tables, funeral stelae, statues in the round and temple friezes and gutters, is associated with Sayyin in the Hadramite culture, with Anbay in Qatabân and with Samiʻ and Wadd in the Jawf. It also appears among the animals depicted in the Banât ʻÂd temples (Figure 29). The bull is a symbol of fertility and reproduction, as well as rebirth after death (Figure 30). Given this dual function, the image of the bull appears both in temples and in funerary contexts throughout the 1st millennium BC and in the following centuries.

The snake appears on monuments, objects and inscriptions, either individu-

ally or in entwined pairs. It is generally associated with Wadd in dedications. Because of its chthonic qualities and the capacity to shed and renew its skin, the snake could be a symbol of immortality and fertility. In the Banât ʻÂd temple at Nashshân, the motif of two entwined snakes forms a sort of sceptre grasped with both hands by Aranyadaʻ who is seated before Almaqah.

In summary, animal representations on South Arabian monuments might denote the attribute of one or more divinities or their theriomorphic aspect. The defining characters of these animals — power, vigour, dexterity — appear to epitomize the qualities of the gods for whom these animals are symbols. In addition, a particular animal, such as the ibex or the bull, could represent the god's specific sacrificial offering.

QUESTIONS ABOUT DIVINE PORTRAITS

In Mesopotamia, from the Akkadian period, deities were depicted in mythological and heraldic scenes, with a characteristic diadem decorated by seven pairs of horns. The deities were portrayed with their attributes, seated or standing in their *aediculae*, or on a podium as statues of worship, or on carts and boats and next to specific natural or imaginary hybrid animals. Although deities are rarely identified from accompanying inscriptions, Mesopotamian divine representations are easily recognizable by specific contexts and attributes. There are a few remarkable exceptions. For example, in seals of the Akkadian period, the sun's rays could designate different deities, suggesting the existence of several sun gods or that a single sun god had very close affiliates. At times, the transfer of attributes from the original deity to another deity renders the identification more difficult.

In contrast, in Southern Arabia, with the exception of Almaqah who is identified by the curved symbol, the iconography of the deities remains undefined. The carvings of the *intra-muros* temple of Banât ʻÂd at al-Sawdâ'/ *Nashshân,* depicting male figures accompanied by the names of divinities (Cf. p. 31 ff.), have been interpreted as indicative of an anthropomorphic representation of the deities. However, the question is still unresolved, as the deity figures have stereotypical human forms and no specific attributes. For example, a number of deity figures of the Banât ʻÂd *intra-muros* temple are clad in a long tunic decorated with rectangular elements (Cf. Figures 19-22), recalling terracotta (Cf. Figure 26) or bronze worship tablets (Cf. Figure 32), while others wear an ordinary short robe coiled around the waist.

The interpretation of other numerous anthropomorphic and animal statues dedicated to deities in the temples remains uncertain. As noted previously, they could be interpreted as votive offerings representing the dedicators or the animals sacred to the deities, or images of worship. However, it is still a matter of debate as to whether dedicated bronze statues to the gods represented the gods themselves (see below, p. 63-65).

In summary, the analysis of South Arabian religious iconography indicates that the representation of the divine was obtained by means of a complex symbolic system in which the association between symbols, their meanings

and the various divinities is not always direct. It is likely that the South Arabians expressed and represented the divine through heterogeneous forms, including the human form. However, the human figure, although represented with symbols and attributes and a hieratic demeanour, was absolutely non-individualised.

The elusiveness of the concept of the divine in Southern Arabia is demonstrated not only by the multiplicity of representations, but also by the variety of places of worship. In fact, the deities were worshiped in the temples, as well as in specific spaces dedicated to this purpose – in the open air, in the necropolises or inside dwellings. The statuettes identified as "ancestors" (see below, p. 61-62) were worshipped as household or sepulchral tutelary deities. Sacred rocks, or betyles, the antecedents of which are to be found in proto-historic and prehistoric monuments, were worshipped in mountain sanctuaries (Jabal al-Lawdh, Darb al- Sabî, Shi'b al-'Aql) or in private homes.

RITUALS

South Arabians observed a broad complex of ritual practices that included the sacred hunt, pilgrimage, animal sacrifice, ritual banquets, public confession and offerings of statues and natural products. The ceremonies were accompanied by the ritualistic burning of resins, especially frankincense. The answer of the god was expressed through oracles and the connection with the divine occurred during dreams when the worshipper spent the night in the temple.

Scholars have always believed that the images in the temples of Banât 'Âd were the symbolic representation of a ritual linked to the sacred hunt. Indeed, these images depict the same wild animals that were featured in inscriptions describing the hunts conducted by the mukarrib of Saba' as cult practices to propitiate the gods 'Athtar and Kirwam. The inscriptions refer to the number of animals killed, rather than to the species hunted during the ritual. The sacred hunt was traditional in Southern Arabia at least until the 1st century BC, but it later lost its ritual significance to become hunting for mere entertainment (see below, Figures 159-160).

Currently, the only known hunting scene in South Arabian art is depicted on a limestone slab almost certainly originating from one of the Banât 'Âd temples of the Jawf and presently at the National Museum of San'â'. The scene depicts archers hunting wild asses, gazelles and ibexes (Figure 25, p. 36). Although there is an element of realism in the overall scene, the men, ibexes and gazelles are nevertheless portrayed in the stereotyped style that is characteristic of the pillars in the temples of the Banât 'Âd. The layout of the figures on parallel planes and the stylisation of the men's long beards recall the scenes of ritual procession depicted on two blocks from a Banât 'Âd temple in the ancient site of Ma'în (Figure 27, p. 41). Of note, images of wild asses occur for the first time in this kind of monument. The same type of equid appears in rock art dating from the prehistoric period (Cf. Figure 3, p. 14) through the Iron Age, where these animals are also shown felled by a number of arrows.

Pilgrimage was also a traditional South Arabian ritual and the most important was dedicated to Almaqah in Marib during the rainy season in July. The devotees concluded the pilgrimage by sacrificing animals on altars and sacrificial tables and participating in ritual banquets.

Numerous inscriptions on stone (Figure 31; 3rd century BC) or bronze plaques (Figure 32; 2nd century AD) from temples of the Jawf reveal the practice of confession. Indeed, ethical conduct and moral practices were carefully regulated and monitored, and the faulty observance of rituals or transgressions, particularly regarding sexual relationships, was amended by repentance following a public confession. The confession and the call for forgiveness were addressed to the Minaean god Nakrah who was also the god of healing. Generally, atonement was obtained through the payment of a fine and, at times, a number of days of penitence.

Fig. 31 - Bronze tablet bearing a public confession from a temple dedicated to the god dhu-Samâwî (Wâdî al-Shudayf, between al-Jawf and Najrân).

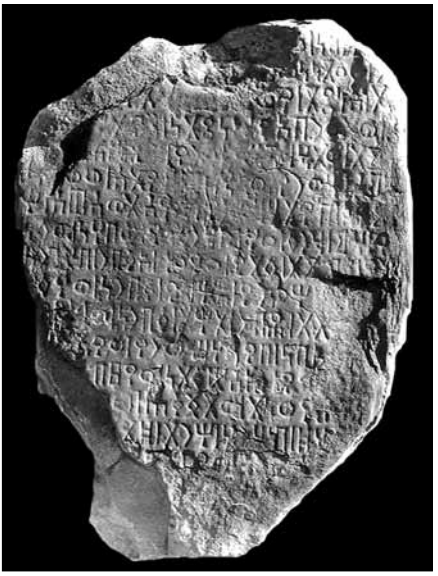

Fig. 32 - Public confession incised on a limestone block, excavated in the temple of Nakrah at Barâqish (Jawf).

Architectonic friezes and cult furnishing in the temples

The art production of the Ancient South Arabian period consists mainly of artefacts relating to worship — offertory or sacrificial tables, altars, incense burners, thrones, votive slabs and plaques, architectonic friezes of temples — adorned with geometric and zoomorphic friezes.

GEOMETRIC PATTERN

Temples were adorned with geometric panels that occupied the capitals and walls of the hypaethral (open to the sky) courtyards, as in the oval temples of Marib, dedicated to the patron god of the Sabaeans, Almaqah. The walls of the large porticoed entrance hall of the Awâm temple at Marib are covered with panels decorated with geometric elements created by recessed panel frames ("false windows") together with a series of contiguous horizontal fillets ("blinds") and dentils. These motifs were also used in the decoration of the external walls of a number of temples, as shown by two model temples carved from a block of limestone found at Kamna, in the Jawf (Figures 33-34). Both of these temple models are dated to the 8th – 7th century BC.

Objects, such as incense burners and altars (Figures 36), used during ritual practices in religious sites were also decorated with the same geometrical motifs. Incense burners were made of terracotta, stone or bronze and displayed a variety of shapes — cube-shaped with four feet (Figure 35), pyramidal pedestal, and round on a high flared ring foot. The tray where the resins were burned could be variously decorated with incised triangles, a pattern of crossed lines, red painting and architectural motifs such as recessed panels, dentils and "blinds". Often, incense burners were decorated with the crescent moon and the planet Venus (Figure 37).

ZOOMORPHIC REPRESENTATION

Geometrical patterns were often combined with theriomorphic representations — symbols of divinities represented in animal form. The ibex is the most frequently depicted animal both on the architectural friezes of temples and on objects related to cult. The wall of the temple of Sirwâh (7th century BC),

dedicated to the god Almaqah, is crowned with a frieze featuring rows of ibex heads. Lines of ibexes are frequently sculpted in low relief on votive stelae dedicated to the gods in the temples. The stelae are framed on the sides by a sequence of ibexes, with the characteristic curved horns, standing or crouching in profile and framed above by rows of ibex muzzles seen face on (Figure 39, 7th century BC).

In addition, series of ibexes in high relief are found on stone altars (Figure 38) and offering or sacrificial tables, such as the example shown in Figure 40, both found in the Jawf and kept in the Military Museum of San'â' (8th -7th century BC).

The ibex was commonly depicted on incense burners, either manufactured in stone (Figure 41) or in bronze, such as the example in Figure 42 where the animal, adorned with conspicuous curved horns, forms the handle. The practice of depicting animals on incense burners persisted up to the first centuries of the Christian era. Later, the figurative motifs changed and specimens of the 3rd century AD were decorated with vine tendrils and scenes featuring camel drivers.

The extraordinary monolithic thrones found in the Jawf depict two (Figure 43, Colour Plate) or three ibexes (Figure 44, Colour Plate) on a thick shelf, one above the other, with broad curved horns, carved in high relief along the sides of the seat back. The upper edge of the seat back is decorated with the "blinds" motif alternating with rows of dentils. The thrones may have been placed in the courtyard of a temple. The sacredness of the thrones used by the rulers was proclaimed both by the image of the ibexes and a dedication to the god 'Athtar. According to another interpretation, the actual thrones are to be considered sacred as symbolic images of the deities (divinised thrones). The names of the rulers are listed in the inscriptions on the front of the seat back or on the rear of the throne. The dedications refer respectively to the rulers of al-Sawdâ' "Malikwaqih Rayd son of 'Am'alay" and "Labu'ân Yada' son of Yada''b", who ruled at least two generations after the former during the period from the 8th - 7th century BC.

The seat back of the throne shown in Figure 45 (Colour Plate) is decorated with rows of standing and crouching ibexes. It is likely that the throne stood in a temple of the Banât 'Âd in the Jawf, as suggested by the feminine images incised on the front side of the seat and the stylistic characteristics of the figures.

Like the ibex, the bull was also represented in temples and in tombs, as bronze or stone statues in the round or in relief, or as bull's head decorative motifs on sacrificial and offering tables (Figure 46). Waterspouts with bull's heads decorated the roof gutters (Figure 47) of the temples. The bull occupied an important role in South Arabian ritual, as this animal is also symbolically associated with Almaqah and probably with other deities. As noted, the bull is a symbol of fertility, as well as rebirth after death.

*Fig. 33 - Front view of a temple model found in Kamna/*Kaminahû *(Jawf).*

*Fig. 34 - Lateral view of a temple model found in Kamna/*Kaminahû *(Jawf).*

Fig. 35 - Cube-shaped incense burner.

Fig. 36 - Limestone altar decorated with dentils and horizontal fillets ("blinds") (Jawf).

Fig. 37 - Inscribed incense burner decorated with the crescent moon and the planet Venus (Jawf).

Fig. 38 - Limestone altar decorated with standing ibexes (Jawf).

Fig. 39 - Alabaster votive stela decorated with ibexes, dentils and "blinds" (Jidfir ibn Munaykhir).

Fig. 40 - Limestone libation table adorned with crouching ibexes.

Fig. 41 - Limestone incense burner decorated with a crouching ibex.

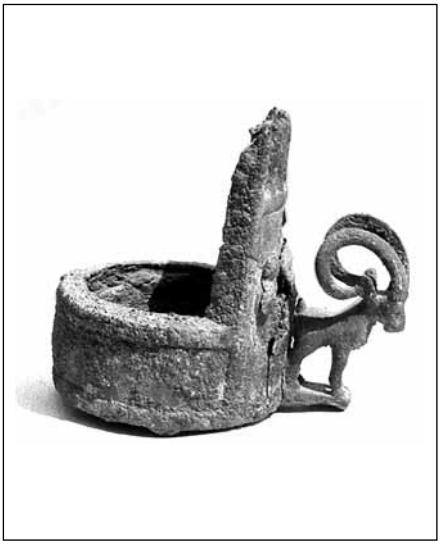

Fig. 42 - Bronze incense burner with the handle fashioned as a standing ibex.

Fig. 46 - Libation table in limestone. Note the spout shaped as a bull's head (Jawf).

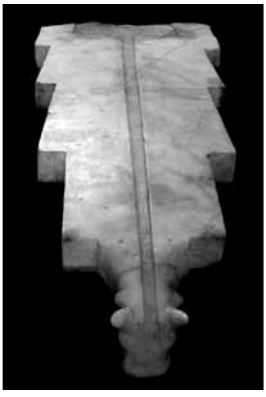

Fig. 47 - Architectural gutter in alabaster. The spout is sculpted as a bull's head (Jawf).

Celebratory and votive reliefs

The offering of votive stelae and commemorative relief-carved plaques to the temple divinities was a common practice during the Ancient South Arabian period. This religious and cultic material culture demonstrates a clear connection with the ancient Near Eastern iconographic tradition. Caravan commerce connected South Arabian populations directly to the Mesopotamian civilizations — initially to the Assyrians, and later, after the fall of Niniveh in 612 BC, to the Neo-Babylonians, a dynasty of six kings founded by King Nabopolassar (626-605 BC) and ending with King Nabonidus (555-539 BC). The Neo-Babylonian culture maintained earlier traditions, but also initiated ambitious political statements of power and magnificence through imposing architecture — grand palaces, temples, monumental doors covered with polychrome glazed bricks and the famous hanging gardens of Babylon. Mesopotamian artistic legacy and cultural influence survived for at least two centuries under the Achaemenid Empire after Cyrus' conquest of Babylon in 539 BC. South Arabian artists drew their inspiration from this enormous artistic and cultural patrimony and created works of art that expressed a marvellous blend of local and imported tradition that we will analyse through a review of selected objects.

ALABASTER VOTIVE STELAE

A typical example of Near Eastern artistic influence is demonstrated by the alabaster stela dedicated to ʻAthtar dhu-Qabd, found in the Minaean capital Maʻîn/*Qarnaw* (Figure 48).

This artwork is of particular interest for the local adaptation of foreign elements. The motifs derive from two, skilfully combined, iconographic repertories — one unmistakably local and the other of Near Eastern derivation. The stela has the characteristic concave upper shape — a reference to the curve of the crescent moon — and tapers at the base. It demonstrates the characteristic style of South Arabian stelae in having an inscription framed by a low relief decoration sculpted on three sides. On this stela, the nine-line inscription ends at the bottom with a monogram on the left (Zalmân, name of a Minaean family) and the divine symbol of ʻAthtar dhu-Qabd on the right.

The geometric/architectonic decoration on the three sides of this stela belongs to the local repertory. The motif on the upper portion consists of three single

and one double row of dentils alternating with the "blinds" motif (rows of horizontal and parallel fillets). This geometric motif is complemented on the four corners of the stela, by three orders of longitudinal panels extending along each side of the stela. Each order comprises two double recesses (small false windows) followed by two "blinds" and decorations along the top edge by three dentils. This complex architectonic composition reproduces on a small scale the decorative and functional elements (lintels, doors and windows) of South Arabian religious architecture, as shown on the model temples found in the Jawf (Cf. Figures 33-34). To this iconography also belong the animal heads that, eighteen on each side, frame the central inscription along the two long sides of the stela. A single head of a bull, with a floral ornament between the horns, is depicted frontally in the small recesses. The same representation is carved centrally, above the first line of the text.

Along with these typical motifs, the artists have inserted a number of iconographic motifs that belong to the Near Eastern iconographic repertory. Six sphinxes with the body of a winged animal, a human head and lion's paws are

*Fig. 48 - Alabaster stela dedicated to 'Athtar dhu-Qabd (Ma'în/*Qarnaw*).*

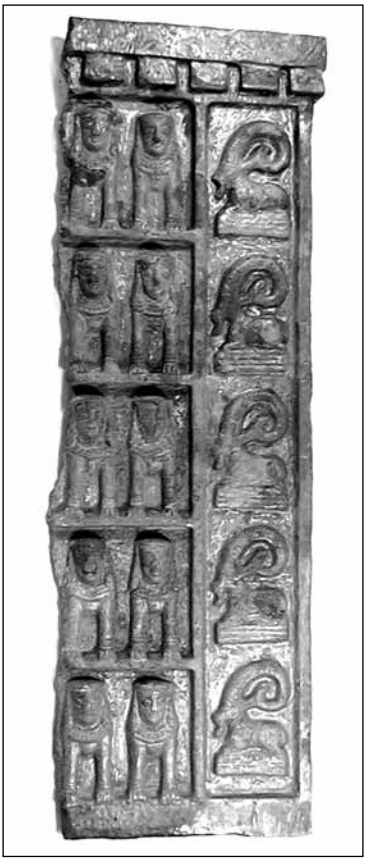

Fig. 49 - Bronze slab decorated with rows of sphinxes facing forward (Marib).

carved in low relief inside a recessed square above the inscription, symmetrically positioned on either side of the bull's head. The particular position of the sphinxes in relation to the bull's head could signify that they had an apotropaic value intended for the protection of the god, as represented by the bull. The sphinx imagery has been documented in South Arabian bronze plaques dating from the 6th century BC, as, for example, the bronze slab in the National Museum of San'â', decorated with rows of facing forward sphinxes (Figure 49). This alabaster stela demonstrates other figurative motifs of Assyrian or Persian-Achaemenid origin. In panels along the side frames of the stela and alternating with architectonic motifs, low relief, stereotyped male figures depicted in profile and facing the centre of the alabaster stela are shown in the ritual act of making an aspersion with the *situla*, a bucket containing purifying water, held in the left hand. The *situla* and the pinecone were the attributes of the winged divinities (geniuses) placed in front of the sacred tree or next to the Assyrian king, as shown in the reliefs of Nimrud (9th century BC) and Khorsabad (8th century BC). These divinities were believed to preside over cult ceremonies, during which they sprinkled holy and purifying water on the king and conferred on him supernatural abilities to triumph over enemies and evil. At Khorsabad, the human-headed winged geniuses, sculpted in high relief inside the gateways, hold the *situla* and pine cone in the act of purifying visitors as they crossed the palace threshold.

Finally, the stela presents, between the two panels with the figures just described, a human-headed winged genius, moving towards the centre, arms raised and held out sideways. The posture of this figure has parallels in Assyrian reliefs and is identical to that of a genius threatening a dragon in a

Fig. 50 - Fragment of an alabaster relief showing the inferior portion of a male figure wearing a fringed cloak and holding a situla (Marib).

relief in the temple of Ninurta at Nimrud, and of a winged divinity attacking a sphinx from another relief at Nimrud.

It is possible that the Minaean patron who commissioned the stela had in mind the reliefs of the Assyrian palaces and the artist copied these relief images from reproductions on objects, such as vases, ivory plaques and seals that circulated at the periphery of the Assyrian Empire. It is reasonable to assume that the patron had a certain familiarity with this foreign iconographic repertory and knew its significance. In fact, the intentional association of the figurative components — architectonic decorations, animals, human figures and wing-geniuses — reflects knowledge of a foreign culture and a will to transmit the concepts behind the images. The symbolic message referred to the temple and the divinities, as well as to a scrupulous respect for the rituals and rules of purification. This ideological message transmitted through symbolic images — in conformity with the characteristic South Arabian hermetic style of communication — accompanies the traditional dedicatory inscription. The palaeography of the inscription suggests a date around the 6th century BC.

A final example of this blending of traditions is represented by a fragment of an alabaster relief from Marib (6th -5th century BC), kept in the Military Museum of San'â' (Figure 50), showing the lower part of a figure wearing a fringed cloak and holding a *situla*. The iconography recalls the images that decorated gateways and walls in the Assyrian or Persian-Achaemenid Royal palaces. Of note, the presence of a bull's hoof, indicating the typical South Arabian altar or throne, demonstrates how foreign iconography was adapted to local use.

STONE FUNERARY STELAE

Sandstone and limestone funerary stelae dating from the Ancient South Arabian period are stylistically very different from coeval votive stelae described above. Figure 51 provides examples of Minaean funerary stelae found in the Jawf. The shape and carvings of these ancient funerary stelae are simple and consist of a rectangular stone block, on average 30 cm high, bearing on one side a carving of circular or rhomboidal eyes, as the symbolic portrait of the deceased, and, below, the name of the deceased.

Fig. 51 - Limestone funerary stela. The name of the deceased is incised below the circular eyes (Jawf).

The inscription of a single name, as previously recorded in a number of Saudi Arabian rock inscriptions, is thought to signify that the individual belonged to a low social class. According to epigraphist Alfred Beeston, the use of single names meant that those individuals were "in the process of being integrated into a tribe; and [...] there may have been in the towns a floating population of 'unattached' individuals with no family or clan background". Onomastic analysis has established that most of the names incised on the stelae of the Jawf have similarities with North Arabic names. Actually, baetyles (stones venerated as the "house of god") inside small temples (*naiskoi)* and stelae with schematic eyes or faces found at Taymâ', Madâ'in Sâlih (today in Saudi Arabia) and Petra (today in Jordan), closely recall the Minaean stelae. Therefore, the hypothesis that the funerary stelae of the Jawf could be related to caravaneers or nomads of both Southern and Northern Arabian origin, cannot be ruled out when one considers the role played by the Minaeans in the caravan trade.

Fig. 52 - Minaean funerary stela.

Of note, a South Arabian stela, presently at the National Museum of San'â' (Figure 52, 6th-5th century BC), bears in its upper portion the usual rhomboidal eyes and the name of the deceased (of North Arabian origin), and, in the lower portion, a male figure sculpted in relief. The clothing — a long skirt reaching the calves and a fringed cloak — can be ascribed to Assyrian or Neo-Babylonian style, confirming that individuals from the Northern parts of the Near East travelled, lived and died in South Arabia.

More recent Minaean stelae, dating from the 3rd century BC to 2nd century AD, present a variety of typologies that include, besides the name of the deceased, full faces incised or sculpted in low- or high-relief (Cf. below, p. 99, Figure 85).

VOTIVE BRONZE PLAQUES

Bronze slabs bearing a dedication were commonly used as an alternative to inscribed stone stelae for votive offerings. The bronze plaques were cast in moulds that varied in size according to the length of the dedication and could be completed with figures and symbols.

A number of bronze artefacts are contemporary to the alabaster stelae and feature a similar iconography. The first example, not found *in situ*, but acquired from the antique market, is an inscribed plaque dedicated to the god Almaqah (Figure 53, Colour Plate). The name of the city where this artefact originated can be inferred from the name of the devotee, Sabahhumû son of ʻAmmîshafaq ibn Rashwân the Nashqite, i.e. from *Nashqum*/al-Bayda', in the Yemeni Jawf. Sabahhumû was sent on a military expedition by the son of the King of Saba' and rewarded for his success. The inscription mentions the commercial emporia in Northern Arabia that were staging posts visited by the South Arabian caravans — Dedân, Lihyân, Gaza, "cities in Judah" and Kition (Cyprus). The inscription also mentions a war between Chaldea and Ionia that could refer to the Chaldean military campaign against Cilicia (a South coastal region of Asia Minor) and enables us to date the artwork between the end of the 7th and the beginning of the 6th century BC. The votive significance of the bronze plaque is clearly demonstrated by the dedication to the god Almaqah and by the action performed by the male figures, identically reproduced four times in the panels bordering the plaque. The men are shown in profile, facing the inscribed central panel. They wear a short cloak and a longer mantle with a fringed hem, thrown over the shoulders, that covers the hips and ankles. The figures have long, thick beards and curly hair reaching to the base of the neck and are holding *situlae.*

Closely related iconographic features are found in a second bronze artefact of unknown origin, currently owned by a private collector in Yemen (Figure 54). The posture and iconography of the figure — in profile with an advancing stance, hairstyle, clothing and attributes such as the *situla*, with a broad vertical handle — are identical both to those on the inscribed al-Baydâ'/*Nashqum* plaque and to those on the stone stela from Maʻîn/*Qarnaw*, previously described (Figures 48, 53). However, both the costume and hairstyle differ from the local, South Arabian style of the Banât ʻÂd reliefs. The origin of the male's iconography can be traced to the states in the Northern part of the Near East, with which the South Arabians had close trading links.

Such cultural syncretism is found in both Minaean and Sabaean contexts. In a bronze plaque relief from the Sabaean Capital Marib (Figure 55), the traditional South Arabian motif of the crouching ibex framing the scene of a central panel is associated with winged bulls on either side of the sacred tree (6th – 5th century BC). From the 2nd millennium BC, the representation of the winged bull facing the stylised tree of life was a common theme in Near Eastern art, both in low-reliefs and in glyptic art. In particular, the tree characteristically stylised as shown in Figure 55, belongs to Neo-Assyrian art, and the winged-bulls are part of the Persian-Achaemenid artistic tradition. The representation on the Marib bronze plaque vividly recalls the winged-bull on a glazed brick wall of the Achaemenid palace in Susa (5th century BC).

The lower register of the Marib bronze plaque depicts a procession of warriors victoriously returning from a military expedition. The warriors brandish the hands as trophies of their slain enemies and triumphantly raise their bows with their left hands. Similar representations are found in Mesopotamian or Egyptian contexts in which processions of warriors are shown brandishing the heads or hands of their dead enemies.

Fig. 54 - Fragment of a bronze plaque depicting a bearded man wearing a short cloak and a mantle with a friged hem. The figure holds a situla*, a bucket for purifying water.*

Fig. 55 - Fragment of a bronze plaque depicting two winged bulls on either side of the sacred tree. Below, a parade celebrating a military victory is represented (Marib).

In summary, the iconographical models for the al-Baydâ' plaque (Figure 53) and the stone stela from Ma'în (Figure 48) combine features typical of the Sabaean tradition and the Near Eastern tradition, of Persian-Achaemenid derivation. Such cultural syncretism was common to the South Arabian elite class, as demonstrated by the al-Baydâ' plaque commissioned by the high-ranking official, Sabahhumû. It is still uncertain as to whether these iconographic influences reached Southern Arabia through direct routes, or indirectly, through the "filter" of the Northern Arabian region.

BRONZE LIONS

Contemporary (6^{th} – 5^{th} century BC) to the bronze plaques is a pair of bronze lions on inscribed bases, originating from al-Sawdâ'/*Nashshân* (Figure 56). This genre of bronze artefacts was produced by casting from a single mould both the figure and the inscribed base. The result is comparable to a two-dimensional artwork, i.e. a relief in bronze that could then be attached to the walls of a

building. The two lines of boustrophedonic inscription — a dedication to the god ‘Athtar by the rulers of *Nashshân* — suggest that the lions were placed on the wall of a temple dedicated to this divinity.

*Fig. 56 - Bronze lions on bases bearing a dedication to the god ‘Athtar (al-Sawdâ’/*Nashshân*).*

The origin of the iconography of lions, depicted in a ferocious posture, as well as their use in architecture can be traced back to the Hittite (15th – 13th century BC), and Assyrian civilizations (from the end of the 2nd millennium to the 7th century BC) where lions and human-headed bulls in stone were set in pairs, facing each other as guardians of city gates, palaces and temples.

The fierce and apotropaic appearance of the al-Sawdâ’/*Nashshân’*s lions is rendered by the two large, hollow eyes framed by thick lids and decorated intarsia, and the well-defined rounded ears. The upper lip and skin around the nostrils are drawn back, displaying the canine teeth and protruding tongue. In Near Eastern iconographic tradition, apotropaic figures, such as the lion and the human-headed winged bull, present both a composite frontal and in profile view made possible by the presence of a fifth leg, visible from a three-quarter view. When seen from the side, the figures are represented walking, with their heads turned towards the spectator, and their gaze is directed toward the incoming people as if-to scrutinise and intimidate them.

In Southern Arabia, the lions acquired a typical local style. Indeed, the lion *appliques* differ from the Near Eastern iconographical tradition in that they have been restyled as low relief metal artefacts to be attached to any sort of surface. The animal’s body is compact and rounded, with massive paws and a thick tail curled up over the back. Even though the head is disproportionately large, the treatment of the animal’s anatomy and posture is quite naturalistic. The leonine bronze reliefs persisted in ancient Yemen through the Hellenistic period, as demonstrated by the lion bronzes from Tamna‘ (Cf. p. 109 and Figure 103).

A HUMAN-HEADED WINGED IBEX

The majestic and fierce hybrid animal figures in stone, guarding neo-Assyrian palaces must have stimulated the fantasy of a South Arabian visitor, as suggested by the human-headed, winged ibex found in al-Jûba (Figure 57). The bronze statue, standing only 32 cm high, is an exact reproduction of the ibexes with branching curved horns familiar in South Arabian reliefs. However the ibex has acquired wings and a human head with a long beard and thick hair. These characteristics recall the human-headed winged bulls or tutelary geniuses (*lamassu*) of the neo-Assyrian palaces and the animals set to guard the monumental gateway of the palace of Xerxes I at Persepolis.

Fig. 57 - Anthropomorphic winged ibex in bronze from al-Jûba).

Sculptures in the round

The formal and thematic principles found in ancient artistic production from the Bronze Age continue to guide South Arabian statuary in the 1st millennium BC. However, while the sculpture (idols) and graffiti of the Bronze Age are characterised by a dynamism tending to naturalism, the subsequent artistic production is distinguished by a simplification of the naturalistic forms, culminating in an abstract conventionalism where the symbolic and magic value dominates. These features will persist throughout the whole period of the Caravan Kingdoms.

Examples of sculpture in the round of the same period are few. Although stone sculptures are somewhat rough and stereotyped, bronze statues are refined and indicate that the artisans had attained a high degree of stylistic and technical skill.

STONE STATUES. THE ANCESTORS

The sole examples of anthropomorphic sculpture in stone are represented by small statues of seated figures known to scholars as "ancestors" (Figure 58). These statuettes originate from the Yemeni Jawf (al-Baydâ'/*Nashq* and al-Sawdâ'/*Nashshân*), but none have been recovered in their original context, such as tombs, temples and houses. Therefore their function is still unclear. These statuettes could represent a sort of tutelary domestic deity and kept in private homes. Alternatively, they could be funerary statues representing the deceased seated at a banquet, according to an iconographic model common in the Syro-Palestinian region at the beginning of the 1st millennium BC, reflecting the belief that the soul of the deceased was admitted to the table of the gods. An example of this iconography comes from Tell Halaf in Northern Syria, where seated figures finely carved in stone, were placed in the funerary chapels of the ruling family. The deceased were portrayed holding a cup in their hands.

The stone statuettes are generally small in size (30/40 cm) and roughly carved from a small block of limestone or sandstone. The figure is seated on a stool with the feet resting on the base on which the name of the dedicator may be inscribed. In most statuettes, the feet are rendered by short vertical lines incised on the front of the base. The arms are folded at right angles and the forearms outstretched. The face is coarsely rendered with prominent features.

The hair is either crudely represented by a squared off surface, or it can be well-sculpted with locks accurately modelled and falling on either side of the face. Like all sculptures in stone (reliefs, inscriptions, thrones, etc.), these statuettes were finished and brought to life with the application of paint — brown for the skin of the face; black for the hair, eyes and eyebrows; red for hands and feet and the outline of the eyes. The holes found in the arms and legs of some statuettes allowed the attachment of metal jewellery. South Arabian sculptors tended to simplify forms to such an extent that the figures appear fixed in a geometric, static block, separated into two distinct parts at the waist. The bust is fashioned with care, whereas the legs are barely indicated at the front and remain imprisoned in the cubic mass. The resulting figure is a small block-shaped body with a protruding head that is stylistically crude but nonetheless expressive. This mode of abstraction was intentional and emphasises the symbolic and magic value of the figure.

Fig. 58 - Statuette of seated figures in limestone, known as "ancestors" (Jawf).

The iconography of the Jawfite seated figure and the onomastics of the inscriptions point to a North Arabian origin. The iconography of hese statuettes may have been introduced into Southern Arabia by North Arabian ethnic groups or by the Minaeans with whom they traded. On the basis of a palaeographic analysis of the inscriptions, the proposed dating of these figures is around the 7th-6th century BC. In Southern Arabia, the tradition of the seated figure sculptures seems to continue to the first centuries AD, as demonstrated by a number of Qatabanian and Himyarite statuettes.

Of interest, a similar type of stone artefacts was found in Hauile-Assaraw and Houlti in the Ethiopian territory where the Sabaeans established a colony in the 7th century BC. The statue shown in Figure 59 is dressed in a long fringed tunic decorated with incised rosettes and stands on a high base bearing a South Arabian boustrophedonic inscription. The arms, resting on the legs, are bent, and each hand holds a cylindrical vase. From an iconographical and symbolic perspective, this statue bears a striking resemblance to the "ancestors" of the Yemeni motherland, but they are realised in a definite, local style.

Fig. 59 - Limestone statue of a seated woman. The base bears a Sabaean inscription (Haoulti, Ethiopia).

BRONZE STATUES

The Awâm temple of Marib, consecrated to the god Almaqah, has yielded the most ancient and important human bronze statues (Figures 60-62). The statue shown in Figure 60 represents a walking man, dressed in a short kilt with a dagger inserted in the belt. A leopard skin covers his back and the animal's paws are crossed on the chest. The two inscriptions on the body of the statue, stretching from the shoulders to the right knee, provide, respectively, the name Ma'dîkarib and, as a long boustrophedonic inscription, both the dedication to the god Almaqah to whom the statue was offered and the name of the donor.

The identity and the chronology of Ma'dîkarib statue is still a matter of debate. Some scholars maintain that a number of features clearly indicate a Mediterranean influence. In particular, the standing posture with the left leg advanced, the hairstyle in a triple row of curls framing the face and the skin in the style of a *leontè* (knotted lion skin worn over the shoulder) indicate an affinity with Phoenician-Cypriot representations of Melqart/Heracles inspired by Greek sculpture of the 5th – 4th century BC. For this reason, the figure has been identified as a divinity, specifically, the national Sabaean god Almaqah to whom the statue was dedicated, and dated around the middle of the 1st millennium BC. However, according to a more recent interpretation based on the inscription that identifies the figure as one of a group of three warriors, the statue has been interpreted as representing a high-ranking Sabaean man, a warrior (the statue probably used to hold a spear and a staff in its hands), and dated from the 6th century BC.

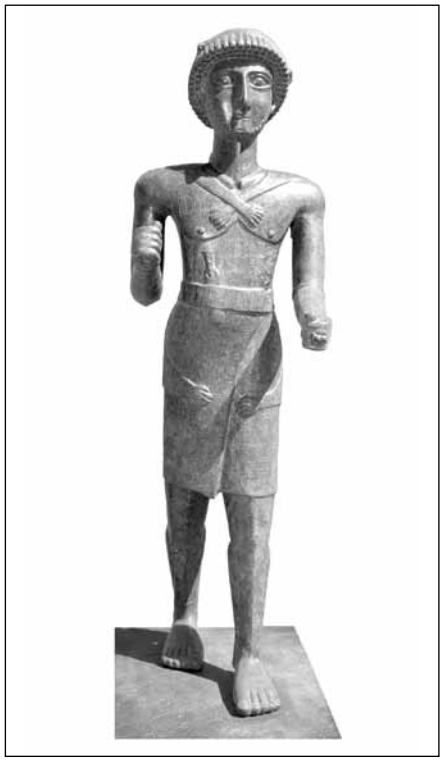

Fig. 60 - Bronze statue of Ma'dîkarib excavated from the Awâm temple in Marib.

The other two bronze statues, found together with Ma'dîkarib in the Awâm temple (Figures 61 and 62), represent two male figures with their right arms raised, the palm facing forwards and the left arm held in front of the body. The gesture of the left hand suggests the original presence of a spear. The figures' loins are clad in a simple short cloth that is rolled up around the waist. The boustrophedonic inscription on the chest of the statue in the Figure 61 gives the names of the donors, Hâlikî'amar and ''Ammîyatha' of the Khalîl lineage and notes their dedication of these two statues, again, to the god Almaqah. The custom of offering this kind of bronze statue to temples consecrated to Almaqah was

widespread, as indicated by the recent discovery in the Jawf of two bronze statues stylistically analogous to the statues described above and bearing similar dedications to the god (not shown).

The variety of artistic detail on these bronze statues indicates that these works were aulic in character and not commonly used objects such as bronze figurines or coroplastics that are characterised by an extremely simplified shape.

The function of the bronze statues was probably linked to a votive rather than a cultic significance, since they lack attributes that clearly specify a divine character. The human statues, placed in the temples, could represent the devotee who dedicated his or her own stereotyped image to the divinity for devotional purposes or in gratitude for a grace — recovery from illness, a granted prayer, protection for the devotee's family or his/her assets or even for the ruler or sovereign. This theory is supported by the very nature of the dedications to Almaqah that can be read in tens of inscriptions sculpted on the stone bases of statues found in the Awâm Temple in Marib. The dedications were commissioned by people belonging to local notable families, by sovereigns, by women and men who offered bronze or brass statues with their effigies to the god, or offered statues representing sacred animals and divine symbols.

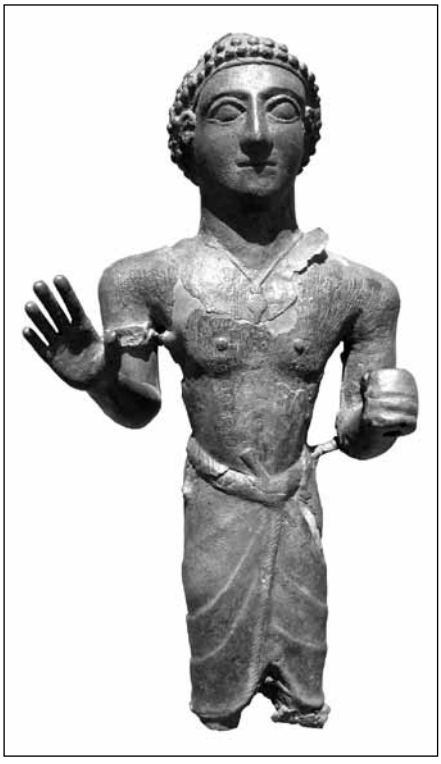

Fig. 61 - Bronze statue of Hâlikî'amar and 'Ammîyatha' dedicated to the Sabaean god Almaqah.

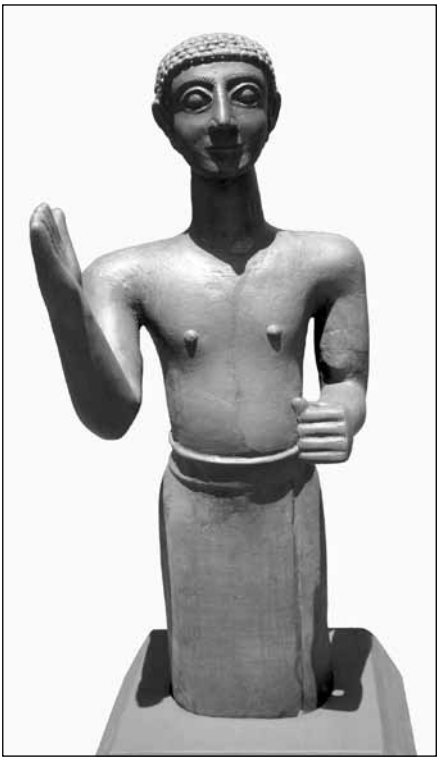

Fig. 62 - Bronze statue from the Awâm temple in Marib.

In summary, both for structure and canons of representation, the typology of South Arabian bronze statuary of the 1st millennium BC reveals the influence of traditional Near Eastern statuary of the 3rd and 2nd millennium BC. However, South Arabian traditional artworks demonstrated a considerable stylistic variety based on local artistic interpretations. Indeed, these works bear witness to the artistic liveliness and experimentation by bronze artists, whose style certainly derived from stone craftsmanship. During the 1st millennium BC, the artisanry attained a high degree of specialisation and presumably functioned in support of the temple that remained the key driving force of social life within South Arabian culture.

LANGUAGE AND WRITING

South Arabian writing derives from types of writing that appeared around the middle of the 2nd millennium BC in the region between the Sinai and Northern Syria. It had a syllabic alphabet composed of 29 characters and are listed in the same order as the ancient Ugarit alphabet called "South-Semitic" from a tablet found at 'Ayn Shams/Beth Shemesh, in Palestine.

The most ancient examples of writing are in cursive and are incised or painted on terracotta vases discovered in archaeological contexts dating from the 13th to the 10th century BC. Of note, cursive writing was also incised on small sticks or palm-leaf stalks, used for day-to-day transactions, such as accounts, contracts and letters.

Monumental inscriptions, dating from the middle of the 8th century BC and present as recently as 560 AD, are characterised by regular, geometric letters incised in stone or bronze for documenting official texts.

The inscriptions were written both from right to left and in boustrophedonic style (Figure 63, Colour Plate, 7th century BC), present until the 4th century BC, where the lines of writing are read alternatively from right to left and from left to right.

During a period of sixteen centuries South Arabian writing underwent an evolution in form, but without any radical change. The South Arabian alphabet made its way across the Eritrean Sea when the Sabaeans established settlements in Ethiopia and a number of characters continue in Ethiopian script. South Arabian inscriptions have been discovered in regions North of the present Yemeni borders, in Najrân, Qaryat al-Fâw and in the great oases in the North of Hijaz, al-'Ulâ (Dedân), Madâ'in Sâlih and Taymâ', all in Saudi Arabia. Other inscriptions have been documented at Khawr Rûrî, in Oman, and on the coast of Eastern Arabia, on the Arab-Persian Gulf.

Although South Arabian inscriptions demonstrate a single type of alphabet, the spoken languages were four: Sabaic, Minaic, Qatabanic and Hadramitic. The Minaic died out around the 2nd century BC, while the languages of Qatabân and Hadramawt declined during the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD, respectively. The Sabaean language survived during the Himyarite Kingdom until the middle of the 6th century AD, even though it was not spoken during the previous two centuries.

Two graffiti found at Umm Layla, near Sa'da, dating from the early Islamic period, are written in South Arabian alphabet and compiled in Arabic language.

Colour Plates

Fig. 1 - Landscape of the Ramlat al-Sab'atayn desert. The site of an archaeological survey of a Neolithic settlement.

Fig. 4 - Rock paintings of the Jarf al-Nabîrah site (al-Dâli' region).

Fig. 13 - Map of Ancient Southern Arabia.


Hadramawt
Mahrat
AL MAHRA
Sa'kalân
ZAFAR
Suqutra
Sakrad
roman: modern name
italic: ancient name
Qatabân : tribe or kingdom
N

*Fig. 43 - Monolithic thrones in limestone and alabaster decorated with sculpted ibexes and geometric motifs. These thrones were illegally excavated in al-Sawdâ'/*Nashshân *(Jawf).*

Fig. 44 - Inscribed limestone throne with traces of red painting (from illegal excavations in al-Jawf).

Fig. 45 - Limestone throne decorated with the Banât 'Âd figures (Jawf).

*Fig. 53 - Bronze votive slab with a dedication to the god Almaqah (al-Baydâ'/*Nashqum*).*

Fig. 63 - Alabaster votive stela with a boustrophedonic inscription. The symbols of crescent moon and planet Venus are in relief.

Fig. 64 - Map of the ancient Frankincense Route.

Fig. 69 - Alabaster male head from Kharibat Hadîm, North of Banû Bakr.

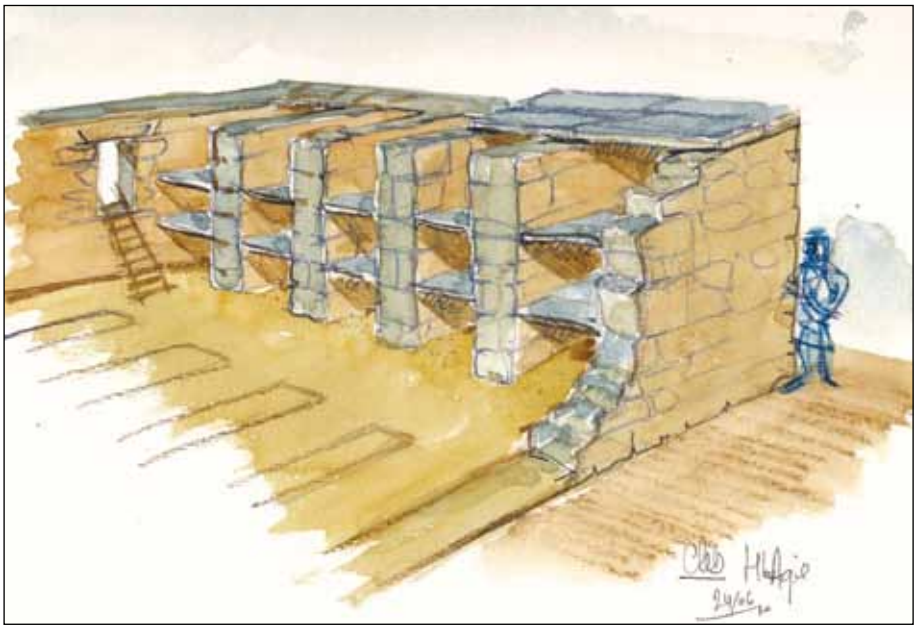

Fig. 77 - A family tomb in Hayd ibn 'Aqîl. The funerary chambers, on each side of a central corridor, are divided vertically into three loculi by means of horizontal slabs.

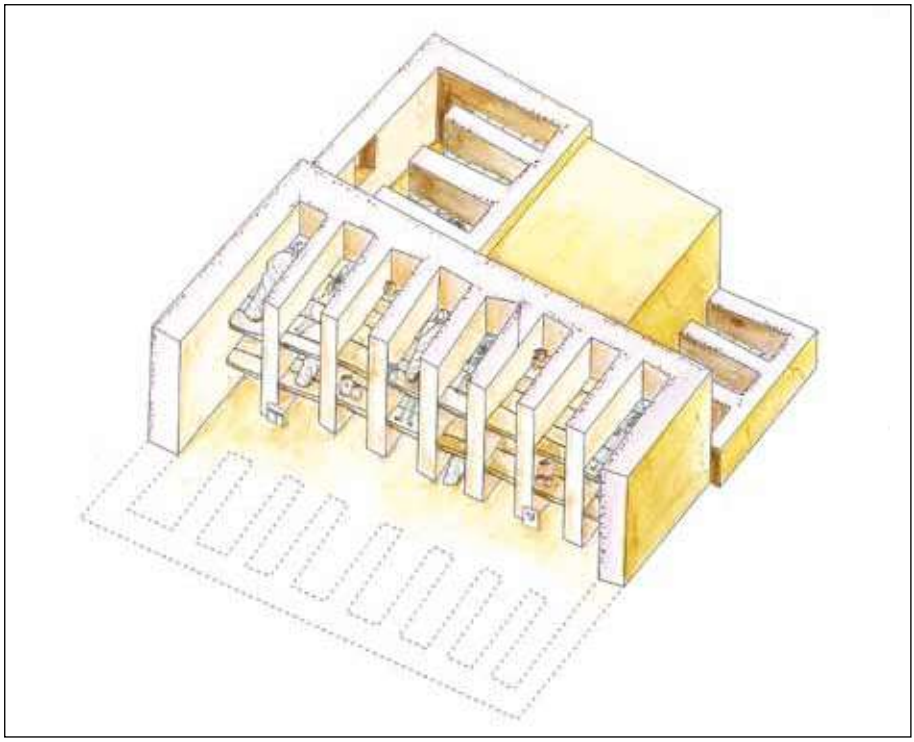

Fig. 78 - Bird's-eye view of a Qatabanian tomb showing the presumed position of the deceased and their funerary goods.

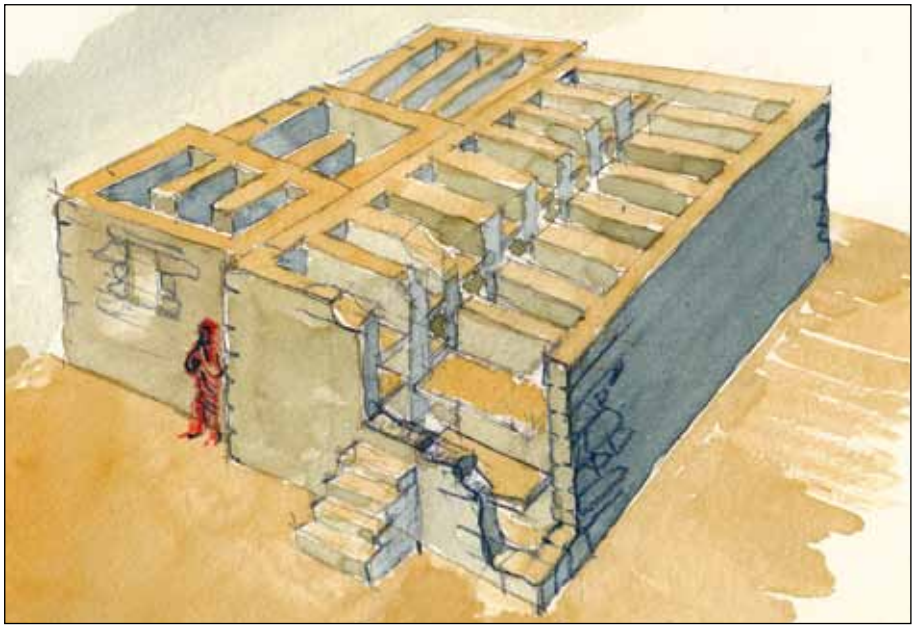

Fig. 79 - The tombs are organised in a compound quarter with shared external walls.

Fig. 88 - A ring, two pairs of earrings and a necklace - with a central decoration of two antelope heads facing each other - in gold and precious stones (Jawf).

Fig. 99 - A ring with carved gem bearing the representation of Hermes/Mercury with winged petasus (hat), caduceus and lyre (Jawf).

Fig. 100 - Gold pendant formed by a small bottle in the shape of female's head. A monogram is incised on the bottle's cap (Zafâr area).

Fig. 101 - Twisted gold bracelet which endings are decorated with rampant lions (Zafâr area).

Fig. 102 - Funerary mask in gold (Zafâr area).

Fig. 116a: A silver calathus with the representation of the Gigantomachy (Wâdî Dura'). In the centre, the goddess Artemis, wearing high boots and a short chiton, brandishes a torch against an anthropomorphic, nude and disarmed, young giant. A bearded Heracles, with his left arm covered with a leontè and armed with cub and bow, stands to the right of the goddess.

Fig. 116b: The feminine figure with a Phrygian cap in the act of hitting a giant with a torch, is the goddess Hecate. The giant holds a large, round shield. The figure to the right of Hecate is the goddess Athena, with the characteristic high helmet and the aegis bearing the apotropaic image of gorgoneion. The goddess has a shield in her left hand.

Fig. 116 - A silver calathus with the representation of the Gigantomachy (Wâdî Dura'). In the centre, the goddess Artemis, wearing high boots and a short chiton, brandishes a torch against an anthropomorphic, nude and disarmed, young giant. A bearded Heracles, with his left arm covered with a leontè and armed with cub and bow, stands to the right of the goddess.

Fig. 130 - Gold coin of the Emperor Nero (65 AD), from the Royal tomb in al-Aosabih settlement.

Fig. 146 - Inside view of the Great Mosque in San'â'. The capital in the foreground belonged to the ancient Christian church (mid-6th century AD) and demonstrates a cross in the centre.

Fig. 152 - Coloured stones used in a modern house at Zafâr.

Fig. 157b - Detail of a bronze plaque with silver inlay depicting, on both sides of monograms, a combat scene between two horsemen (Zafâr).

Fig. 161 - Alabaster relief with the representation of animals attacking preys.

Fig. 170a-b - This Byzantine column reused in the mosque of Mûsà at San'â' is decorated with different motifs shown in the drawing in Figure 170b, such as stylised acanthus leaves, palmettes, rosettes, crosses, vine tendrils and a chain pattern.

Fig. 177 - Relief of a human figure sculpted on the Eastern wall of the courtyard excavated in the Himyarite city of Zafâr. the standing male figure is depicted as a ruler identified by the symbols of power — the crown and the sceptre.

Fig. 178 - Representation of turret-houses incised on a rock-face on the plateau near Ghaymân. Note on both sides of the turret-houses pre-Islamic musnad inscriptions.

Fig. 179 - A graffito showing the monumental entrance to an ancient palace.

Fig. 181 - View of the citadel of Manâkha (West/South-West of San'â').

Middle South Arabian Period

(4th Century BC - 3rd Century AD)

The Golden Age and the Period of the Fighting Kingdoms

Historical context

During the 4th century BC, Southern Arabia saw a remarkable cultural and economic development due to the influence of the Lagid Dynasty in Egypt (4th – 1st centuries BC) that favoured trade between the Eastern coast of Africa on the Red Sea, Arabia and India. Ports were created on the Arabian and African coasts of the Red Sea, and as a consequence of the discovery of the monsoon currents, maritime trading routes extended across the Indian Ocean (Figure 64, Colour Plate).

Egyptian merchants obtained spices and resins from Arabian merchants in Syria and Palestine, but also directly from ancient Yemen, given that South Arabian merchants were known to have travelled to Egypt. One famous merchant was the Minaean Zyd'l who imported myrrh and calamus for the temples of Egypt. His wooden sarcophagus, originally from Memphis and now in the Archaeological Museum of Cairo, carries a Minaean inscription with a dedication to Serapis and the gods of Egypt (3rd – 1st century BC).

In his *Enquiry into Plants*, the Greek naturalist Theophrastus of Eresus (died *c*. 287 BC), a pupil of Aristotle, described the frankincense and myrrh trees that originated in Arabia and wrote about the Kingdoms of Sab'a, Ma'în, Qatabân and Hadramawt. Eratosthenes of Cyrene (died *c*. 202 BC) commented about myrrh, produced in Qatabân, frankincense from Hadramawt, as well as other aromatic spices that were traded in the North. Later, in the mid-2nd century BC, the historian and geographer Agatharchides of Cnidus remarked that the Kingdom of Saba' was the most powerful and dominant in the southern part of the Arabian Peninsula. The Romans took a direct interest in the territory that produced the valued resins and in the year 25 BC, they undertook an expedition to conquer the region, which ended in failure. On this occasion, the Greek historian Strabo of Amasia in his work *Geographia* provided extensive information on the Kingdoms of Arabia, their specific activities and social stratification into warriors, farmers, artisans and producers of myrrh and incense and specified what proportion of incense production went to the temples. Finally, in the 1st century AD, Pliny the Elder provided valuable and extensive information on *Arabia Felix* in his treaty *Naturalis Historia* (*c*. 77 – 79 AD).

The period stretching from the 4th century BC to the 1st century BC is viewed as the Golden Age of the Kingdom of Qatabân, when its territory extended as far as the region of Bâb al-Mandab on the Red Sea (Cf. Figure 183). This was the period characterised by an extensive and extraordinarily varied alabaster

and bronze artistic production, as demonstrated by the excavations at Tamna‘ and in its necropolis Hayd ibn ‘Aqîl. The Kingdom’s decline began during the 1st century BC due to the secession of some of the tribes on the plateau, including the Himyar that later became the supreme power in Yemen and heir to the Kingdom of Saba’ whose language they adopted. The Qatabanian capital Tamna‘ was abandoned in the 1st – 2nd century AD and the centre of power moved to *dhû-Ghayl,* modern Hajar ibn Humayd, a few kilometres South of Tamna‘. As a consequence of the endless conflicts with Saba’, Himyar and Hadramawt, the Qatabân Kingdom fell into irreversible decline and was definitively subdued by the last quarter of the 2nd century AD.

The Kingdom of Himyar emerged around 110 BC. Initially, it occupied the territory between Dhamâr and ‘Adan and established the capital and the royal palace of Raydân at Zafâr (Cf. Figure 13, Colour Plate). Himyar was initially part of the Qatabân Kingdom, spoke the same language and venerated the same Gods, including the chief deity ‘Amm. At the end of the 1st century BC, Himyar seized control of the Kingdom of Saba’ and its sovereigns adopted the title “King of Saba’ and dhu-Raydân” (Cf. Figure 184). Of note, Saba’ enjoyed a brief period of independence around 100 AD. However, after continuous conflicts, Himyar finally subdued and absorbed both the Kingdom of Saba’ and the Hadramawt at the end of the 3rd century AD.

The Kingdom of Ma‘în continued to play a principal role in the caravan trade up to the 2nd century BC, as documented by a bilingual Greek-Minaean inscription incised on an altar from the island of Delos bearing the dedication to “Wadd and the Minaean gods” by a Minaean merchant (A 7809, Delos Museum, Greece). However, during the last two centuries of the 1st millennium BC, the Minaean Kingdom was weakened by continuous raids by Arab tribes that occupied first the Jawf, and later the territory of Marib, Tamna‘ and Shabwat. Thus, the Kingdom must have been considerably weakened by the time one of its greatest cities, *Yathill* (modern Barâqish) was besieged and conquered in 25 BC by Roman troops led by Aelius Gallus, the prefect of Egypt, during Augustus’ reign.

The economic and political equilibrium that had thus far strengthened and maintained the roles of the cities on the “Frankincense Route” was now disrupted by invasions, revolts and struggles, leading scholars to refer to the period from the 1st century BC to the 3rd century AD as the “Period of the Fighting Kingdoms”. The 1st century BC also marks the beginning of the decline and gradual abandonment of the caravan trade in favour of seaborne transport. This commercial and economic shift was the primary cause for the decline of the cities along the “Frankincense Route”. We have evidence of intense seaborne trade between Rome and India through the Erythraean Sea (the Indian Ocean) in a portolan (handbook on maritime trade) — the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* — written in Greek by an anonymous author in the mid-1st century AD. The *Periplus* describes the ports along the Yemeni coasts of the Red Sea and Indian Ocean and states that vessels laden with precious objects and statues from the Mediterranean were directed to the courts of local princes.

The only Kingdom to benefit from this new state of affairs was Hadramawt because it owned the territories where frankincense was produced and had two

main ports on the Indian Ocean — *Qanî* (next to modern Bi'r 'Alî in Yemen) and *Samhar* (Khawr Rûrî, next to modern Salâla in Oman). The Hadramawt Kingdom became the major power in Southern Arabia and undertook military campaigns against the Kingdom of Saba', annexed a large part of Qatabanian territory and inaugurated a new series of coins. After a period of uneasy alliance with Saba', around 300 AD the Kingdom of Hadramawt fell to the pressure of Himyar, while the Western part of the Wâdî Hadramawt was occupied by the Arabs of the Kinda tribe, whose capital was *Qaryat* (modern Qaryat al-Fâw in Saudi Arabia), about 300 km North-East of Najrân, in the desert.

The 3rd century AD was characterised by a general crisis throughout the ancient world, leading to its collapse. The political, economic and indeed spiritual crisis of the civilization of the Roman Empire, which had prevailed thus far due to the *Pax Romana*, was felt as far afield as the southern confines of the Arabian Peninsula. The conflicts lacerating the South Arabian civilization were exacerbated by interference from the two major emerging powers: Byzantium in the West, through its influence in Ethiopia, and the Parthian-Sassanids to the North-East.

Signs of devotion

During the 700 years encompassing the Golden Age and the Period of the fighting Kingdoms, Southern Arabia evolved from a relatively provincial culture to one that was significantly influenced by external cultures as a result of extensive trade. Consequently, South Arabian artistic production demonstrated a wide range of styles and iconography that reflected the local tradition while at the same time, demonstrating varying degrees of foreign influence, in particular from the Hellenistic world. Most of the objects continued to serve votive or funerary purposes. However, the gradual assimilation and adaptation of foreign artistic and cultural idioms reflected the evolution in taste and customs of less isolated societies seeking a new language to express their religious and political sentiments.

In the following sections, exemplary artefacts of devotional, funerary and material culture will be discussed in terms of the traditional indigenous style and its modification as a consequence of foreign influences.

OFFERERS AND WORSHIPERS

The strength of South Arabian religious devotion is demonstrated by the innumerable alabaster and bronze statuettes depicting worshippers and offerers found in temples and tombs dating from the 3rd century BC to the 2nd century AD. Stone figures of offerers and worshippers and bronze statues and figurines show a remarkably similar linear and simplified iconography.

Most of the statues from this period come from Hayd ibn ‘Aqîl, the necropolis of the Qatabanian capital Tamna‘, from Marib, capital of the Kingdom of Saba’, or from a necropolis in the Wâdî Markha, part of the Kingdom of Awsân.

The alabaster statuettes of offerers and worshippers (Figure 65), featuring a male or female figure, stand on a base on which the name of the deceased is engraved. The arms are bent, the forearms extended with the palms upturned or closed, holding an offering. These are small statues (40 – 90 cm in height), generally lacking naturalistic proportions and intended to be viewed frontally. The head is disproportionately large, with wide-open eyes and a fixed expression that emanates an impression of strength.

Although stereotyped, the statuettes do reveal some formal variants that allow the determination of their chronology. It appears that the short skirts depicted in a number of stone figures denoted a particular class of individuals, possibly kings and dignitaries.

Fig. 65 - Alabaster statue of a female offerer.

Fig. 66 - Alabaster statue of Yasduq'îl Fâri', son of Ma'ad'îl, King of Awsân (Wâdî Markha).

This is clearly the case for two of the three statues from the Wâdî Markha, now in the National Museum of 'Adan. The inscriptions identify three consecutive Awsani kings. The first is Yasduq'îl Fâri', son of Ma'ad'îl (Figure 66), the second Ma'ad'îl Salhân, son of Yasduq'îl Fâri' (Figure 67) and the third king of Awsân is Yasduq'îl Fâri' Sharahat, son of Ma'ad'il Salhân (Figure 68).

Fig. 67 - Alabaster statue of King Ma'ad'îl Salhân, son of Yasduq'îl Fâri' (Wâdî Markha).

Fig. 68 - Alabaster statue of the Awsani King Yasduq'îl Fâri'Sharhat, son of Ma'ad'îl Salhân (Wâdî Markha).

The third and most recent of these statues (Figure 68) shows clear Roman influence in the large tunic with serried creases covered with a *himation* (draped cloak) gathered on the left shoulder. It is this costume — together with the palaeography of the inscriptions — that allowed these statues to be dated from the period extending from the 1st century BC to the 1st century AD. This late dating puzzled scholars regarding the historical chronology of the small Kingdom of Awsân. The reference to three generations of these kings clearly indicates that the Kingdom of Awsân reacquired independence and a return to prominence for a certain period following its earlier conquest by the Sabaean mukarrib Karib'îl Watâr in the 7th century BC (Cf. p. 24).

Contemporaneous with the most recent of the Awsân statues, is a magnificent alabaster male head (1st century AD; Figure 69, Colour Plate) found at Kharibat Hadîm (Qatnan, al-Hadd, North of Banû Bakr). The head must have been part of a funerary statue resting on an inscribed base. The face, carved with clear contours and delicate facial features, is that of a young man. The lively eyes, the soft and fleshy mouth, the long, wavy locks framing the cheeks and the refined outline of the moustache and beard, suggest a strong-willed personality softened by a calm and uplifting nobility.

It is worth mentioning a group of limestone sculptures that includes a refined statuette identified as "Lady of al-Dâli'" (Figure 70). These objects, named al-Dâli' from the region where production was abundant, do not differ from the alabaster statuettes from an iconographical perspective. However, the soft, whitish limestone allowed the artist to accurately incise a variety of decorative details, such as hair, jewellery (bracelets, pectorals), clothes and the *vittae*, a decorated ribbon adorning the forehead. Most of the specimens come from the necropolis of Shuka' — the city that was probably the centre of produc-

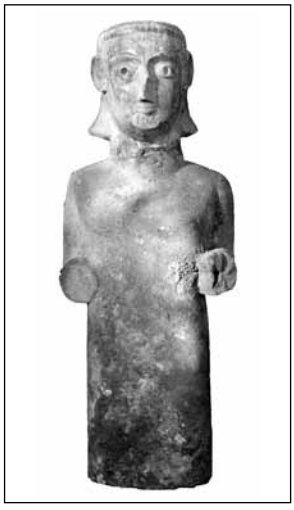

Fig. 70 - Statue in fine limestone depicting a female offerer.

Fig. 71 - Bronze statue of a priestess with a crown adorned by the crescent moon and Venus.

tion — and bear stylistic analogies to other pieces found at Tamna‘ and in the zone of Jabal al-‘Awd, dating from the 1st to the 3rd centuries AD.

Human figures made in bronze display the typical South Arabian iconography recognisable by the characteristic standing posture, in an attitude of prayer or offering. They derive mainly from temples and have a votive significance. These bronze statuettes and figurines have precise formal correspondences with the stone statuary — posture and attitude, hairstyle, treatment of the surface and volumes. The body of the figure is roughly shaped and presents flat surfaces with etched details. In contrast, the head appears to be more realistically modelled. The casting technique, revealed by the clay core coated by a thin bronze layer, can be taken as evidence of local manufacture. A representative example is the bronze statuette depicting a priestess or a goddess standing on a round base, with a crown adorned by the divine symbols of a crescent moon and astral disc (Figure 71). Her cylindrical body is covered by a long, smooth tunic and her short arms are extended in front.

Fig. 72 - Male funerary portrait in alabaster.

Fig. 73 - Limestone pillar with a funerary head in alabaster, from the Awâm necropolis (Marib).

FUNERARY PORTRAITS

After the 3rd century BC, South Arabian funerary sculpture underwent a dramatic change influenced by the naturalistic style of the Hellenistic culture. The purely schematic and symbolic depiction of the deceased in the form of stylised circular or rhomboidal eyes incised on ancient Minaean funerary stelae of the 6th – 4th century BC (Cf. Figure 51), gave way to sculpturally refined faces — the funerary portraits. These depictions characterise Sabaean, Qatabanian and, to a lesser extent, Minaean funerary artwoks from the 3rd century BC to the 1st century AD. Most South Arabian “portraiture” is idealised and standardised, rather than providing a physiognomic characterisation of the individual. However, a number of funerary heads clearly indicate a personalisation of the deceased, through the accentuation of the form and size of the nose, the depiction of a round or elongated face, the structure of the cheekbones, etc. (Figure 72). Among the Sabaeans, funerary

portraits such as those found in front of the mausoleums in the temple cemetery of Awâm in Marib, were placed inside a niche hollowed out in the upper part of a tall rectangular pillar decorated with a chequered pattern in red and natural stone (Figure 73). In the Qatabanian tradition, funerary portraits such as those found inside the tombs of Hayd ibn ʻAqîl, were inserted into small, cubic stone bases (Figures 74a-b). Both the pillars and the stone bases bear the engraved name of the deceased. The heads, varying in height from a miniaturized size of 10 cm up to 40 cm, were generally sculpted in alabaster, while the pillars and bases were in limestone. The rear surface of the statue was usually left rough-hewn and flat and the top of the head was unfinished to facilitate the application of the hair in plaster.

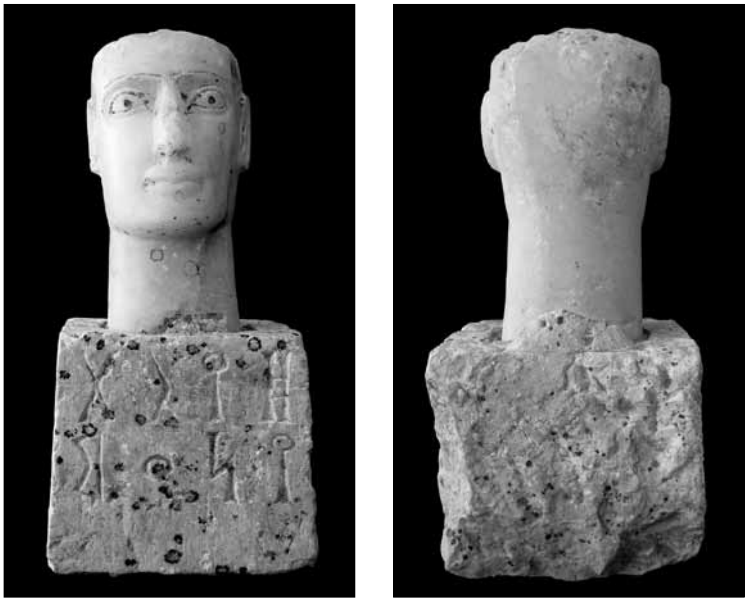

Fig. 74a-b - Frontal and posterior views of a funerary head in alabaster on an inscribed base in limestone, from the Qatabanian necropolis of Hayd ibn ʻAqîl (Tamnaʻ).

A fine funerary portrait of a woman (2nd – 1st century BC), presently in the Museum of Bayhân, depicts the head of a woman with the hair tied up into an elongated bun modelled in plaster that was probably painted black, as indicated by the colour residues (Figures 75a-b).

However, in contrast to the Sabaean and Qatabanian heads sculpted in alabaster, the ancient mode of funerary depiction still lingers in the limestone sculptures of heads found in the area of the Jawf. These sculptures seem to stylistically echo the statuettes of the "ancestors" (Cf. above, p. 61-62) and are characterised by less precise modelling, angular profiles and rough facial features.

In particular, the nose and the accentuated eyebrows forming a "T" shape, and the small and immobile mouth with thick lips, recall characteristics of the local style and are similar to some Minaean coeval funerary stelae (see below, p. 99).

Fig. 75a-b - Frontal and lateral views of a female portrait in alabaster on an inscribed base, from Hayd ibn 'Aqîl. The chignon is in plaster and applied to the back of the head and neck.

The portraits were finished with intarsia highlighting the eyes. Seashells or plaster were used for the sclera (white of the eyes), lapis lazuli, obsidian and glass paste for the iris and black plaster or black paint for the eyebrows, moustache and beard.

Specific formal features of South Arabian sculptures, such as the use of plaster for the hair, the eyes outlined in black and the large, high set ears belong to the Ptolemaic tradition. In fact, exchanges between Arabia and Egypt were particularly frequent in this period, as indicated by classical Greco-Roman authors (Cf. above, p. 87) and archaeological evidence that we shall discuss further below.

FUNERARY AND VOTIVE STELAE

During the Middle period, as during the Ancient period, the funerary and votive stelae represented the most important expression of regional practices relative to the cult of the dead and religious worship. This category comprises a vast range of stelae bearing the representation of the deceased and displaying distinctive regional characters — Sabaean, Qatabanian and Minaean — even though one can identify a common and traditional expressive language that is always symbolic in terms of the iconography and concise in style. However, toward the 1st century BC, the traditional style was partially abandoned by the introduction of stelae presenting complex narrative themes and symbologies that are of clear Hellenistic-Roman origin.

Sabaean stelae

A type of square stela in alabaster, and occasionally in limestone, is commonly found throughout the Sabaean territory. The stela, generally about 30 cm in height, depicts the face of a man or a woman sculpted in relief that represents symbolically a portrait. Female heads are characterised by long hair falling freely down both sides of the face, while male heads have the typical "collar" beard framing the jawbone, as shown in Figure 76. Such stelae were set into niches excavated in the limestone, or were occasionally carved directly onto the external wall of the funerary monument, as seen in the necropolis near the Awâm temple at Marib. The sculptural technique ranges from coarse engraving to an almost flat relief. The oval of the face was obtained by a slight lowering of the background and the features were incised or slightly raised. The name of the deceased was incised above or below the portrait. The archaic script that marks a number of these inscriptions suggests that the necropolis at Marib remained in use over a lengthy period.

Fig. 76 - Sabaean funerary stela in alabaster with a male face in relief.

In spite of the coarseness of the carved figures, one can still recognise the conventional approach to portraiture common to South Arabian stoneworkers.

The tombs in the necropolis near the Awâm temple at Marib are veritable mausoleums. Built next to one another and laid out with a system of paths, these tombs stand several metres high and are divided into tiers. The portraits of the deceased, either sculpted in the round (Cf. Figure 73) or engraved in bas-reliefs were exhibited on the external façade of the tombs.

Qatabanian stelae

The majority of Qatabanian stelae have been excavated from the necropolis of Hayd ibn ʻAqîl at Tamnaʻ. This funerary complex extended on the Western side of the Hayd ibn ʻAqîl's hill and was composed of two distinct areas. The first area was dedicated to funerary rituals and ceremonies related to the cult of the dead and is comprised of a holy well, a building supplied with benches for the offerings and a temple with a terrace surrounded by structures devoted to funerary rites and the cult of the dead.

The second area was dedicated to burials and only funerary monuments are present. The family tombs were usually organised in burial chambers symmetrically arranged on both sides of a central corridor. Each chamber was in turn divided vertically into adjacent *loculi* by means of horizontal slabs, up to a height of about 3 metres (Figure 77, Colour Plate). Every *loculus* contained

the body of the deceased and his/her grave goods (Figure 78, Colour Plate). The funerary monuments abutted one of the walls of the burial perimeter (Figure 79, Colour Plate).

Packed together, these monuments constitute burial *insulae* (quarters), joined by a network of paths forming a veritable "city of the dead."

Qatabanian stelae from the 3rd century BC to the 1st century AD presented a variety of types. It was common practice in the necropolis of Hayd ibn ʻAqîl to perpetuate the memory of the deceased not only through portraits sculpted in the round (Cf. Figures 72, 74-75), but also by a stela featuring a bull's head sculpted either in low or in high relief — as shown in Figures 80 and 81, respectively — or in the round fixed to a slab by means of a tenon.

Some of the dedicatory inscriptions on the bovine stelae include the term *mʻmr*, which recurs in other sculptural works, connoting an object symbolising the presence of the worshipper in the temple, or of the deceased in the cult of the dead. As previously discussed, the bull is a symbol of fertility and reproduction, and also represents rebirth after death (Cf. above, p. 43).

Aniconic stelae were also very common. They were made of alabaster in a variety of shapes and sizes and stood on a base where the name of the deceased was inscribed (Figure 82).

Fig. 80 - Inscribed funerary stela decorated with a bull's head in relief.

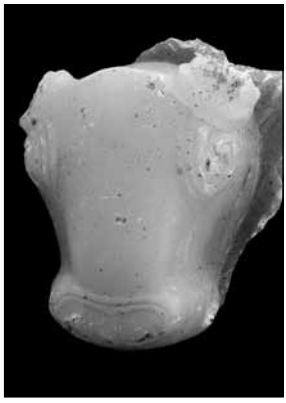

Fig. 81 - Bull's head in high relief on a funerary stela, from the necropolis of Hayd ibn ʻAqîl.

Fig. 82 - Aniconic stela in alabaster standing on an inscribed base, Hayd ibn ʻAqîl.

The Qatabanian stelae could also be in limestone, square and flat in shape, presenting a schematic face in low relief with lozenge or U-shaped eyes, finished with a border containing the incised name of the deceased (Figure 83; 1st – 2nd century AD). The eyes, like the whole face, could also have had an apotropaic function, i.e. designed to ward off anyone intent on profaning the tombs.

Another category of typical Qatabanian stelae features a standing human figure in relief. The stela depicted in Figure 84 portrays a deceased worshipper, hands clasped at the level of the waist, and standing on a base incised with the name of the deceased (1st century BC – 1st century AD). The iconography of these stelae is very similar to the statues in the round of offerers and worshippers.

Fig. 83 - Square stela in limestone depicting a schematic face in low relief.

Minaean stelae

Other stelae with a schematic representation of a human face are of Minaean production. A large number of these stelae, both in stone or wood and rectangular in shape, originate from the Jawf. Unfortunately, only limited information exists on the funerary architecture in the major cities of the Jawf, with the exception of the small necropolis with pit tombs that has been excavated at Barâqish/*Yathill* by the Italian Mission. However, for the large caravan cities such as Tamna‘ and Marib, and the city-states of Qarnaw, Haram, Nashq and Nashshân in the Jawf, we can imagine the presence of massive funerary complexes, or “cities of the dead” with monumental tombs for princes, priests or traders.

The excavation in the necropolis at Barâqish, the first of this sort to have been carried out in the Jawf, resulted in the exceptional recovery of funerary stelae *in situ*, in their original historical context. These simple pit tombs, small and square in shape, are placed next to one another, sharing a common wall, and are each identified with a stela.

Fig. 84 - The alabaster stela depicts a standing worshiper sculpted in high relief.

The stelae present a human face incised or sculpted in low- and high-relief, accompanied by the name of the deceased (Figure 85). Analysis of the onomastics has provided interesting findings regarding the origins of the people who regularly visited the region between the 3rd century BC and the 1st century AD, and has revealed a mix of South and North Arabian names, indicating both the movement of people along the Caravan Route and the presence of an North Arabian community in the Jawf. The rather modest crafting and typology of the pit graves suggest that these belonged to a nomadic community or to the caravaneers that resided seasonally in *Yathill*, outside the city's walls. Barâqish was located along the Frankincense Route and was therefore a major staging post for caravans heading towards the North of the Arabian Peninsula. It is in fact in the North of the Peninsula that similar stelae, sculpted in the round or in relief, are found. However, stylistically, the Minaean stelae present unmistakably South Arabian characteristics.

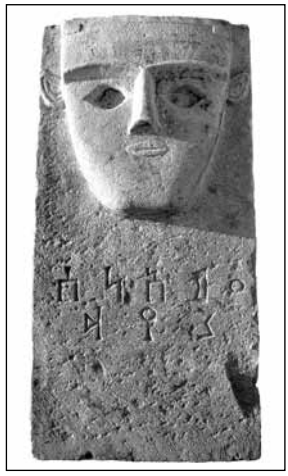

Fig. 85 - Minaean stela with a male face sculpted in high relief, found in the necropolis excavated at Barâqish (Jawf).

Divinity or human?

Fig. 86 - Alabaster stela depicting the bust of a female figure whose right arm is raised, palm facing outwards, and with the left hand resting on the breast and holding a sheaf of wheat.

Fig. 87 - Alabaster stela of a female figure wearing a necklace with a central decoration of two antelope heads facing each other.

An unusual and impressive type of South Arabian stelae, also present in the Hayd ibn ‘Aqîl necropolis and Marib, depicts a bust of a woman carved in high relief from a rectangular plaque, identified by the French scholar Jacqueline Pirenne as the South Arabian goddess dhat-Himyam (Figures 86-87).

The figure has the right arm raised, palm facing outwards in a gesture of benediction and protection. The left hand, resting on the breast, holds a sheaf of wheat — a symbol of fertility. In a Syrian context, these two gestures are typical of the Dea Syria or Atargatis and also correspond to the Greek goddess Demeter, indicating possible sources of inspiration for South Arabian artists of this period. However, the identification of this feminine representation with the local divinity dhat-Himyam is still a matter of debate, as mentioned in the Chapter on religious iconography (Cf. Chap. 3, Divinities and Religion, p. 39 ff.). It is possible that this type of funerary or votive stelae might have depicted a stereotyped image as a representation of the deceased or the offerer whose name was cited in the inscription incised on the lower edge of the stela.

In a number of stelae, the female figure wears a necklace sculpted in relief in the shape of a chain with a central decoration depicting two antelope heads facing each other (Figure 87). Interestingly, specimens of gold necklaces identical to those depicted on the stelae have been found in tombs in the Jawf (Figure 88, Colour Plate). Iconographic and paleographic analyses reveal that these stelae date from the 1st century BC to the 2nd century AD.

The same question regarding the association of the human figure either with a divinity or the deceased can be raised for a type of stela bearing a male representation. The masculine figure is depicted either frontally or in right profile and performs the characteristic gesture of benediction with his right hand and holds a sword in the left hand. The example from al-Jûba, now in the National Museum of San‘â’ (Figure 89), dates from between the 1st century BC and the 1st century AD. The figure presents stereotyped characteristics — short, curly hair and the typical local skirt.

These figures are normally accompanied by symbolic animals, such as ibexes or, as in this case, bulls’ heads with an ornament between the horns. The name “Ghawth’îl son of ‘Asm” is incised on the upper edge of the stela.

Fig. 89 - Alabaster stela portraying a male figure with the right arm raised; the left hand holds a long sword with a pommel in the shape of a crescent (al-Jûba).

A second inscription — ‘Amm’yatha‘ son of ‘Asm — not as carefully executed as the one above, runs along the lower edge of the frame and appears to be of a later date. The addition of the second name could be explained by the re-utilisation of the stela for another member of the same family. Although Jacqueline Pirenne identified this male figure as Almaqah, the patron god of Saba’ — the same identity that has been attributed to the bronze statue of Ma‘dîkarib, which dates from the 6th century BC (Cf. p. 63 f.) — the lack of consistent iconographic elements and symbols regarding South Arabian divinities does not allow a definitive identification.

Complex storytelling on funerary or cultic stelae. Aspects of Greco-Roman inspiration combined with the vernacular idiom

Two types of funerary stelae from the 1st – 2nd century AD illustrate the adoption of Greco-Roman subjects in relief artworks and demonstrate themes not previously seen in local iconography. The first type of stelae displays the divinised representation of the deceased and, at times, a funeral banquet depicted in an elegant and refined style. The second type of stela depicts, in separate registers, rural and hunting scenes with the deceased on dromedaries or on horseback that stylistically and for decorative effect recall many works of local, popular art.

The first type of stelae — sculpted in alabaster — appears to be linked to an exclusively female milieu and features a woman seated on a throne and attended on either side by family members or handmaids.

In a stela from Haram (al-Jawf), at the Military Museum of San‘â’ (Figure 90), the scene is set beneath an *aedicula* (shrine) with a full arch bearing at the ends the head of a gryphon. The arch rests on two fluted columns with Corinthian capitals. In similar stelae, the space between the edge of the relief and the arch is decorated with an angular vine leaf (as in the stela from Haram) or a bunch of grapes or a vase. The attendants of the central female figure, depicted in smaller size, hold a variety of objects, ranging from musical instruments such as a *sistrum*, cups or toiletry items, such as a mirror. The inscription incised on the upper frame of the stela from Haram cites “Image of Radakharam of the family Ha‘lal, may ‘Athtar destroy he who breaks it”.

A similar iconography is present in an elegant alabaster funerary relief at the National Museum of San‘â’ (Figure 91). The stela is divided into two registers.

*Fig. 90 - This funerary stela in alabaster from Kharibat Hamdân/*Haram *(Jawf) depicts a female figure seated on a throne and attended by two assistants. The scene is set beneath an arch bearing at each end the head of a griffin and resting on two fluted columns with Corinthian capitals.*

Fig. 91 - Alabaster funerary relief organized into two registers. In the lower register, a female figure is seated on the kline *and plays a lyre, assisted by a woman. In the upper register, the woman is depicted as deceased on a bed.*

In the lower register, beneath the arch supported by columns with Corinthian capitals, two women, in full-draped garments, are seated facing one another. The woman on the left, representing the deceased, sits on the *kline* and plays a lyre. Although fragmentary, the extant portion of the upper register shows the deceased lying on a bed, assisted by a woman. The vine leaves sculpted beneath the arch, the women's robes, the furniture and the architecture are subtly executed and engraved in detail, in sharp contrast with the neutral background. The theme and the overall composition — architecture, symmetric registers, hierarchical proportions and symbology — are all novel elements in South Arabian sculpture at this time. It is clear that the artistic culture of the Romanised Eastern provinces, in particular Syria, had a marked influence in Southern Arabia.

The second type of stelae is coeval with the first and similarly depicts complex scenes, but differs greatly in subject matter and style and was apparently associated exclusively with men. Generally sculpted in limestone, the relief is composed of panels in which the principal male character (the deceased named in the inscription) is involved in vernacular scenes and daily activities. The figure is positioned at the centre of the register and is hierarchically larger than the surrounding attendants.

The limestone stela of Figure 92, in the National Museum of San'â', features a hunting scene, depicted in a schematic manner. The central panel depicts a hunter armed with bow and arrow. His upper body, broad and square-cut, appears front on, whereas the legs are in profile. The figure of a servant appears to his right, and to his left an ibex being attacked by a dog; above, only the lower limbs of an animal, probably a camel, are still visible. The dedication, inscribed above the servant, reads "Image of Kathibat". The relief is flat and coarse and the iconographic elements are realised through heavy, square-cut and simplified forms that communicate a raw and direct narrative power.

Fig. 92 - Stela in limestone depicting a hunter armed with bow and quiver in the relief of the central panel.

The image of a farmer in the act of ploughing with oxen depicted in Figure 93 (1st – 3rd century AD, of unknown provenance in the Louvre Museum), while stylistically flat and crudely hewn, demonstrates a provincial, but highly original iconography. The inscription refers to the "Stela of Yahmad, Shufnîqên, Hassat and Khalli[..."

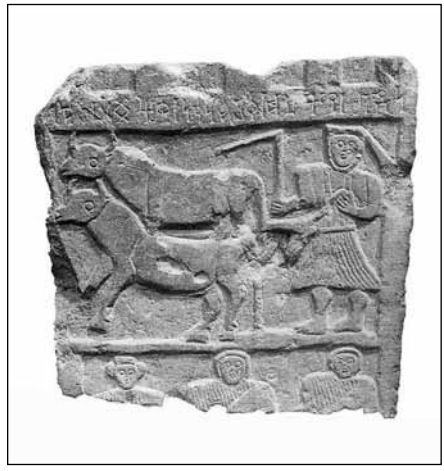

Fig. 93 - Funerary stela in limestone illustrating a farmer ploughing with oxen.

Among the popular scenes sculpted on the stelae, the camel-rider is a recurrent theme, always portrayed with a distinctive headdress, flowing full garment and a long stick or spear in one hand, as shown in Figure 94, where the rider is preceded by a hunter on foot equipped with bow and a quiver of arrows.

Another stela in the Museum of San'â' (Figure 95) is organized in a double register featuring a hunter. In the lower register, the hunter, armed with bow and arrow, is accompanied by two dogs.

In the upper register, the hunter holds a spear and rides a camel. The pivotal role of the camel in South Arabian culture — as both a beast of burden and generator of wealth — is underlined by archaeological findings at Raybûn and in the Wâdî Arf, in the Hadramawt, that revealed the presence of camel remains associated with human burials. Next to the camel skeletons lay metal tools including knives, razors and spearheads. These graves suggest the ritual sacrifice of the animal. Alternatively, it seems plausible to consider the camel

as one of the distinctive elements among grave goods, indicating the wealth of the deceased or his belonging to a specific class.

A comparison between the stelae with narrative representations and the traditional stelae from the Minaean, Sabaean or Qatabanian cultures that are aniconic or feature a schematic face or bovine representations, suggest the same dichotomy in the socio-cultural significance noted for craftwork and statuary. Indeed, the iconographic dichotomy could be the expression of a divergence in culture and social class. The complex scenes could emerge from a social milieu associated with the ruling elite more exposed to, and influenced by, the Hellenistic-Roman culture. It is matter of debate as to whether the elite could have established Hellenised images as the official iconographic language. In contrast, the simpler iconography was strictly linked to tradition and we assume that it was preferred and adopted by people who venerated ancient cults and were not significantly exposed to foreign influences.

Fig. 94 - This fragment of an alabaster stela shows a hunter equipped with bow and quiver walking in front of a camel rider holding a long stick or spear.

Votive stela dedicated to the goddess Shams

Of particular interest for its original narrative and unusual dedication is an alabaster stela (2nd century AD) found in Tan'im, a few km East of San'â' and presently in the National Museum of San'â' (Figure 96). The stela depicts a female figure seated on a folding chair. Her head and legs are shown in profile and the bust in three-quarters view. She has long, wavy tresses and wears a dress with serried creases. The woman, probably the goddess Shams, is holding a vase in her right hand and a small statuette of a crouching gazelle in the left — these are sacred objects offered to her by the male figure standing in front of her.

The man, smaller in size, is depicted on a stool perched on a bench where the woman's feet are placed. He carries a quiver on his shoulder and is armed with a spear, a bow and a dagger in a sheath on his belt. A cubic incense burner with a pyramidal foot, a common object in cult practices, stands on an altar between the two figures. The divine symbols of the crescent moon with the astral disc are depicted in the upper part of the scene.

Fig. 95 - Funerary stela in limestone. The upper panel shows a camel rider holding a spear. The lower panel depicts a hunter on foot followed by two dogs.

The inscription, added in the space above the figurative scene, reads

> Work of Lahay'athat, the Sabaean, for Shams, goddess of Abîbahath, wife of Tubba'; they drew for the goddess their booty, conforming to that which they pledged, promised and vowed. That [Shams] accords her [Abîbahath] prosperity. Tubba' son of Subh

The interpretation of the inscription could be that the male figure (Tubba'), a hunter, is offering the gain he has secured, to the goddess Shams, a divinity venerated by his wife (Abîbahath), in order to ensure her prosperity. The language and the writing style, together with the rather crude representation of the figures, suggest that the stone carver was neither a professional nor a Sabaean by culture. Indeed, the composition of the sentences differs from the aulic style of coeval standard texts and recalls the prosaic style of rupestrian graffiti written by nomads.

Fig. 96 - Alabaster stela depicting a hunter in the presence of the goddess Shams.

The winged victory as a cultic image

During the first centuries AD, the iconography of the South Arabian reliefs included the winged *nike* (victory). A remarkable example is shown in an alabaster plaquette at the San'â' Military Museum (Figure 97, and another similar example is at the National Museum of San'â', YM 16658). The Victory is represented with the head and wings in profile and the body in frontal stance. In her right hand, she holds a wreath that crosses the frame of the relief, and in her left hand a bow, as a substitute for the palm branch — her distinctive attribute and symbol of victory.

Fig. 97 - Alabaster plaque dedicated to the goddess Shams, depicting a winged Victory holding a bow and a garland (Marib).

The quiver peeks out from below her left arm. The garland of the winged victory, together with her unusual hunting attributes — the very attributes depicted in the hunting scenes of the stelae in Figures 92, 94-96 — could refer to the successful outcome of a hunt. The rigidity of the robe's folds, the rough rendering of the wing feathers and the wooden stance of the figure suggest an inexperienced craftsmanship, typical, perhaps, of commercial manufacture. An invocation to Shams is incised on the upper frame of the stela, suggesting a domestic cult of the goddess probably invoked as a personal patroness or protectress — a sort of "guardian angel" — in gratitude for a granted wish.

JEWELLERY

Many of the sculptures depicting men and women demonstrate small holes in the ear lobes, at either side of the neck and around the wrists and ankles, suggesting that precious ornaments or decorative elements were originally present. In a number of stone or bronze statues and reliefs, the jewels were sculpted in low relief, in imitation of the real jewels found buried in the tombs. The richest and most complete documentation of South Arabian jewellery is provided by male and female statues, such as the statues of the Kings of Awsân or the "Lady of al-Dâli'", adorned with her highly elaborate pectoral.

Fig. 98 - Millefiori *bead found during the excavation of the temple of Nakrah (Barâqish).*

Different materials were used in making necklaces, bracelets and rings. The most common semi-precious stones were cornelian, agate, onyx and amethyst fashioned into different shapes (spheres, discs, cylinders, bi-cones, etc.). Jewellery was also fashioned from beads of terracotta, multicoloured glass paste (imported *millefiori* from Egypt, Figure 98), bone, shells (mostly perforated *Cypraea* and *Oliva*) and coral.

Gold and silver ornaments included finely worked necklace beads, earrings, gem rings (Figure 99, Colour Plate), pendants (Figure 100, Colour Plate) and bracelets (Figure 101, Colour Plate). Of note, these gold jewels (presently in a private Yemeni collection) were part of a rich assemblage of grave goods that also included a gold funerary mask (Figure 102, Colour Plate). Most of these precious jewels (1^{st} – 2^{nd} century AD) were imported from Syria, probably from Palmyra and Dura Europos.

Classical imagery in local works

Stylistic changes in artistic works that occurred in the Near East following Alexander the Great's conquests in the 4th century BC, gradually left their mark in Southern Arabia, where local figurative production underwent various transformations. In particular, by the 3rd century BC, the production of artefacts showed for the first time a Hellenistic influence as a result of the introduction of bronze objects from Ptolemaic Egypt.

During the period extending from the 1st century BC to the 3rd century AD, local production demonstrated highly original works in which elements of Greco-Roman inspiration were blended with autochthonous stylistic and iconographic traits in order to adapt to local taste and function. The elements that clearly identify the local production are iconographic motifs, such as the figure of the offerer, the style, function and technique of manufacture.

Fig. 103 - Bronze appliques depicting cupids riding lions placed on inscribed bases (Tamna').

One feature that unambiguously identifies South Arabian bronze production is the presence of a core of heat refractory material such as clay that remains subsequent to bronze casting using the lost wax technique. It is possible that the clay core was not removed from the finished product to prevent damage to the thin layer of bronze (2 mm), or simply because the possibility of metal damage from humidity associated with the core was not an issue. The lost wax

technique was regularly used even for small artefacts that could have been cast as a solid piece of bronze.

The elements of the Classical tradition that seeped into South Arabian human statuary appear in the movement and nudity of the body, hairstyle, clothing and ornamental accessories, such as diadems and jewels. The bronze artefacts could be manufactured by foreign artisans working in South Arabian territory, either from available models, or by using imported moulds (as was common during the Greco-Roman era), or through collaboration between foreign and local artisans, or some combination of these factors. Therefore, in figural art, Classical works became the new language for expressing internationalised taste, political status and religious sentiment.

We will describe below only a few significant examples of this type of South Arabian artwork.

THE LION RIDERS

One such example is the pair of bronze *appliques* in relief depicting lions ridden by *putti* and bearing on the base a dedication in South Arabian script (Figure 103). These artworks were excavated from a house — identified in the dedicatory inscription as Yafash — near the Southern gate of the city of Tamna‘, capital of the Kingdom of Qatabân. The two pieces have a mirror image composition, similar to the pair of lions from as-Sawda’/*Nashshan*, in the Jawf (see above, p. 58-59, Figure 56). The casting technique, hollow on the posterior side, suggests that the two facing lions were attached to a wall, possibly over the balustrade of the terrace on a higher floor of the house. The inscriptions on the artworks refer to a father and a son, Thuwayb and ‘Aqrab of the Muhasni‘ family, who placed these figures on the house named Yafash. The theme of the child riding an animal, linked to the image of the child Dionysus carried by a lion or a panther, became widespread during the Hellenistic period and continued into Roman times. The Yemeni lion riders date from the end the 1st century BC to the early 1st century AD, when the King Shahr Yagill Yuhargib ruled over Qatabân.

Another example of the genus is a bronze statue of a *putto* from Amran (northeast of San‘â’) and presently in the San‘â’ Archaeological Museum (Figure 104). This iconography is strikingly similar to the Tamna‘ lion riders. The stylistic treatment of the *putto*’s anatomical details such as the abdominal folds and the cheek dimples, rendered through a stiff formalism, as well as the irregular rendering of the curls on the forehead and neck, is suggestive of local manufacture. The presence of the clay core is also indicative of the local bronze casting technique. The spiral rendering of the hair, converging toward the top of the head, is probably a provincial interpretation of the “corymb-toupet” from original representations depicting the infant Bacchus/Eros or children in Bacchic scenes. Although the arms are now broken, according to Greco-Roman iconography the *putto* originally should have held either a bunch of grapes, a bird or a duck. On the other hand, the bent posture of the left leg suggests that the child was riding an animal, possibly a lion, a panther or even a horse, as seen in a South Arabian statuette presently in the Louvre Museum (AO 6506.)

Fig. 104 - A bronze statue of a putto.

Fig. 105a-b - Tripod-footed chest decorated with Classical iconography (maenads, winged putti riding lions and panthers, Hercules), alternated with a variety of trees.

A similar classical theme is expressed in a composite scene depicted on a small cylindrical chest, of unknown provenance, standing on three feet (Figure 105). On the outside, the base is decorated by a continuous motif of pearls, above which a series of figures interspersed with trees are depicted in relief on a flat ground. The iconography of the figures is Greco-Roman — maenads holding a *thyrsus*, winged *putti* riding lions and panthers, and Hercules in *leontè* grasping a club and performing a libation. A palm tree, a vine and trees of frankincense and myrrh separate the figures. While the subject of the Dionysian myth, and the style are unmistakably late-Hellenistic, the composition with mythological figures interspersed with vegetal elements, indicates a Roman provincial idiom of the first centuries AD. The shape of the container derives from a long tradition of South Arabian ceramic and bronze production onto which the classical motifs appear to have been successfully adapted.

TWO BRONZE FEMININE STATUES FROM TAMNA'

Two bronze statues dating from the 1st century BC – 1st century AD have also been discovered at Tamna': a statue known as Lady Bar'at (Figure 107) and a female figure adorned with a diadem on a Greco-Roman hair style (Figure 106).

The Lady Bar'at statue, excavated from a house near the Southern gate of the city, depicts a seated woman whose name, Ba'rat, is incised on the limestone base. The inscription refers to the offering of the statue by "Ba'rat, priestess of the god 'Amm of Rabhu, to the goddess dhat-Himyam". The figure's arms are bent and slightly raised. The palm of the left hand is open and facing upward as if to sustain an object, possibly an incense burner, and the right hand is positioned as if holding a pinch of incense. The hair, parted in the middle, forms two wavy locks, softly framing the face and tied in a chignon at the nape of her neck. A crown and a string with four pearls adorn her head. The circular

Fig. 106a-b - Bronze statuette of a worshipper in the act of burning a pinch of incense (Tamna').

folds of the tunic are unnaturally flat and rigid and only vaguely reminiscent of the flowing wet-drapery effect of Hellenistic sculptures. The woman's ankles are decorated with tubular anklets and she wears thong sandals with thick soles. The iconographic analysis of the statue suggests that the figure may be a local interpretation of a Greco-Roman prototype whose characteristics are clearly visible in the hairstyle and diadem. However, the ornaments and the anklets clearly belong to the Eastern tradition. The clay-core casting technique again indicates that the artwork was produced locally and the artist probably took inspiration from a model from Syria.

The second statue (Figure 106) depicts a worshipper in the act of offering or burning incense. The realism in the depiction of the head, with locks carefully combed on the back of the diadem and spiral curls descending on the neck, contrasts with the rather flat and rigid modelling of the body and the stiff rendering of the wet-drapery effect. The rigid, frontal posture denotes a markedly linear style and imparts to the figure a hieratic quality that decidedly expresses an Eastern tradition.

Fig. 107 - Bronze statue of a female figure known as Lady Ba'rat resting on a limestone inscribed base (Tamna').

DHAMAR'ALAY YUHABIR AND THA'RÂN, KINGS OF SABA' AND DHU-RAYDÂN

Two colossal statues (*c.* m 2,30 high) from al-Nakhla al-hamrâ' (the Himyarite town of Yaklâ, 30 km South-East of San'â') bear witness to a break with the past and to the adoption of an important practice entirely imported from the Greco-Roman tradition — the celebration of political leaders through heroic, nude portrait-statues (Figures 108-109). The inscription incised on the chest of one of the two statues in South Arabian characters identifies the pair as father and son, Dhamar'alay Yuhabir and Tha'rân, Kings and co-regents of Saba' and Dhu-Raydân. These men donated the two statues for the decoration of the palaces of the important family of Dharânih, *qayls* (princes) of Qasham (a faction of the Dharânih tribe), responsible for the control of the borders between Himyar and Saba'. One inscription in Greek (on the left knee) records the name of the Greek artist, Phokas. The other inscription in Sabaic (on the right knee) cites the local artist, Lahay'amm. The signatures demonstrate not only the collaboration of two artists of different nationalities, but also the presence of foreign artisans in Southern Arabia. Both statues bear a dedication written on the chest stating that they were exhibited in the audience hall of a palace called Sana'.

Fig. 108 - Bronze statue of a king of Saba' and dhu-Raydân. The life-size reconstruction is based on extant fragments.

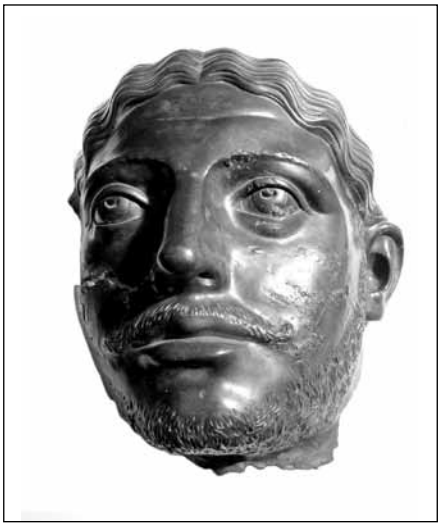

Fig. 109 - Bronze head of one of the two statues of the kings of Saba' and dhu-Raydân (al-Nakhla al-hamrâ').

To date, these statues represent the first and only examples of artworks in Southern Arabia without a votive or funerary significance. Instead, their sole purpose was to decorate private palaces as emblems of secular political power.

From an iconographic perspective, the statuary model of a ruler brandishing a spear in his raised arm while the other arm rests along the side of the body, is known from Hellenistic times. A well-known example is the Hellenistic statue of Alexander the Great, by Lysippos — a model later replicated by the Romans.

The stylistic analysis of the father and son statues reveals that the artistic rendering of the short beard in separated locks shaped as small flames is typical of the Roman period from the mid 2nd – mid 3rd century AD. In contrast, the long locks covering the shoulders derive from Classical models, in particular from the so-called "pathetic and tragic style" that disappeared around 285 AD, during Diocletian's reign. Therefore, on the basis of style and epigraphic analysis, the two statues can be dated from between the 2nd and 3rd century AD.

THE GHAYMÂN HORSE

A remarkable work, coeval to the colossal statues, is the bronze rearing horse from Ghaymân, part of the Dumbarton Oaks Collection (Figures 110a-b). This exceptional artwork was found in 1929 in a shop in Cairo. Broken into eighty fragments, it was restored by a New York antiquary and purchased for the Dumbarton Oaks Collection in 1938.

The horse originally bore a rider, as demonstrated by the hole where the human figure would have been attached astride the saddle. The statue was most likely one of a pair, as indicated by the incised inscriptions and suggested by the torsion of the head to the right, visually enhanced by the plastic folds of the skin of the neck. The horse is depicted in a rearing posture — a common iconography in Hellenistic and Roman sculpture, but also present in South Arabian imagery of combat scenes of a later period, possibly of Sassanid's inspiration (Cf. Figures 156 and 157).

The statue bears three South Arabian inscriptions, each different in style and incision technique, that have raised questions regarding the dating and significance of this notable piece. The first inscription, incised on the left shoulder of the horse, is a ten line dedication stating that a ruler of the tribe Ghaymân offered two equestrian statues to ensure well-being and prosperity for himself and his people, to entice the divinity to grant him favour and allow the humiliation of his enemies. On the basis of the palaeography, historical origin of the proper names and the typically pagan lexicon, epigraphist Jacques Ryckmans argued that the

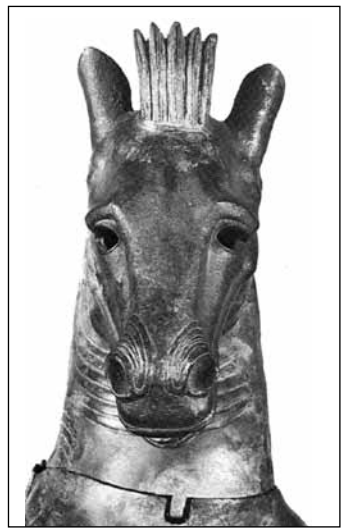

Fig. 110a - Frontal view of the head of the bronze horse found in Ghaymân.

Fig. 110b - Lateral view of the bronze Ghaymân horse.

dedication was in honour of the goddess dhat-Baʿdân and could be dated to the mid-2nd century AD.

The second inscription, written in relief on a bronze patch added to fill a hole on the left side of the saddle, contains portion of a proper name in a more ancient script. This evidence suggests that the patch was part of a restoration performed after the 2nd century AD using a piece of an ancient bronze.

The third inscription, engraved on the rear hindquarters of the horse, features a name that can be dated to the beginning of the 5th century AD. According to epigraphist Albert Jamme, this inscription is a dedication to Rahmânân, Lord of Earth and Heavens. The dedication was probably engraved when the statue was reassigned to another purpose.

ROMAN TASTE IN HOUSEHOLD OBJECTS

Aspects of customs and traditions of the faraway Roman world entered into the households of rich South Arabian families whose tombs reveal funerary goods of devotional significance (incense burners, offering tables, ceramics, etc.) manufactured locally in an unquestionable native style, together with

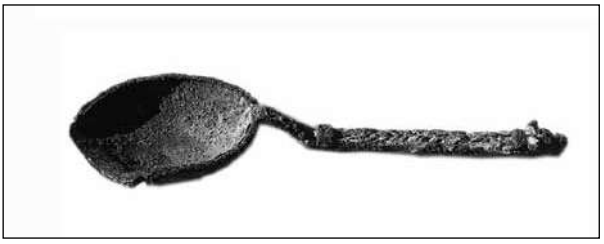

Fig. 111 - On the left side Bronze dipper with the handle terminating in a camel's head (Wâdî Dura'). On the right side Bronze patera *with the flat handle decorated with a panther's head (Wâdî Markha).*

luxury items of foreign inspiration. These luxury goods, including jugs, bowls, tripods, lamps, vessels, ladles and *paterae* were intended for banquets and could have been either imported or locally manufactured in imitation of foreign items.

Stylistically, these items recall Roman dishware from Pompeii and Herculaneum in both form and in the use of decorative, floral elements and the depiction of zoomorphic and anthropomorphic figures. This type of dishware was commonly used during meals. In particular, the jug and the *patera*, often associated with tripods, were used for the traditional ablutions that preceded the meal — a custom used to welcome guests. The *simpulum*, or ladle, was used as a standard measure for water and wine, for pouring wine into cups during banquets or for transferring fluids from the mixing vessel to drinking or libation cups. *Craters* were large vessels for diluting wine with water and were also part of dining room furnishings.

South Arabian domestic artefacts copied from foreign models fashionable during the early centuries AD, are slightly different from the originals. For example, a *simpulum* is a ladle with the handle curved as a hook and decorated at its end with an animal's head. In Greco-Roman models, the handle is a single piece decorated with swans, lions and fawns. The South Arabian version of the handle is constructed from two parts with the end decorated with the head of a gazelle, panther or dromedary (Figure 111, left side).

Another example of a domestic utensil is the *patera* — a broad and shallow dish whose handle terminates with an animal's head — that was also used for pouring fluids during sacrificial rituals (Figure 111, right side). The examples produced in South Arabia show a rather mediocre manufacture in which the bowl is smaller than Roman prototypes, with a flat handle decorated with the head of a panther or bull rather than the expected head of a ram.

Fig. 112 - Bronze oil lamp with the handle decorated with a protome of a leaping ibex.

Basic functional forms underwent stylistic transformation in the hands of local craftsmen. There are numerous examples of bronze oil lamps replicating the Roman *lucerna* model — pear-shaped body, sharp-edged nozzle holding the wick that recalls the crescent-shaped nozzle of the original. However, the handles of the oil lamps are ornamented by indigenous theriomorphic motifs, most commonly an ibex, but sometimes a bull or a horse. Often, the handle, long and curved, terminates in a leaping ibex — the back arched, the legs straight, hooves drawn together, or, as with the lamp in Figure 112, the handle culminates in a protome, from which the foreparts of an ibex burst forth, front legs raised. Usually, these lamps rest on a base and their rim is either flat and smooth, or decorated with pearls in relief.

Imported artefacts

Archaeological evidence has revealed Greek and Roman objects imported into Southern Arabia. These artefacts are statuettes of gods and luxury items such as precious silverware. Among the imported objects depicting divinities from the Hellenic *pantheon*, of note are the bronze statuettes of Dionysus (Figure 113), Heracles, Demeter, Harpocrates, Athena and Isis-Fortune.

A BUST OF ATHENA AND A REFINED HELMET

The Qatabanian, and later Himyarite, site of Jabal al-'Awd, located on a plateau (2800 m above sea level), not far from Yarîm, is of particular interest for the richness and variety of the objects found *in situ*. Today, it is still possible to see the remains of many ancient buildings, including walls, small rooms, part of the city-wall and a cemetery. The German Archaeological Institute in San'â' has assembled a collection of pieces — mainly in bronze, but also in silver and stone — excavated from the site. Based upon analysis of the inscriptions, the stratigraphy and the style of the works of art, the site can be dated from the 3rd century BC to the 3rd century AD.

Fig. 113 - Bronze bust of Dionysus.

Part of the collection comprises objects imported from the Hellenistic (Alexandrian-Ptolemaic) world, with statuettes of women and goddesses. Among the most significant works are a helmet in the shape of a male mask (Figure 114), a bronze bust of Athena (Figure 115), a sphinx and a statue of Isis holding a cornucopia. The mask-shaped helmet bears the features of a young Hellenistic ruler, possibly a member of the Ptolemaic dynasty, as inferred from the straight shape of the nose and the open, full-lipped mouth.

The free flowing hair, combed back, recalls the characteristic portraits of Alexander the Great. Beneath the chin is visible a piece of the band that passed around the head and was tied at the neck to gather the long hair flowing down the back. In Hellenistic-Roman times, mask-shaped helmets were common throughout the Mediterranean.

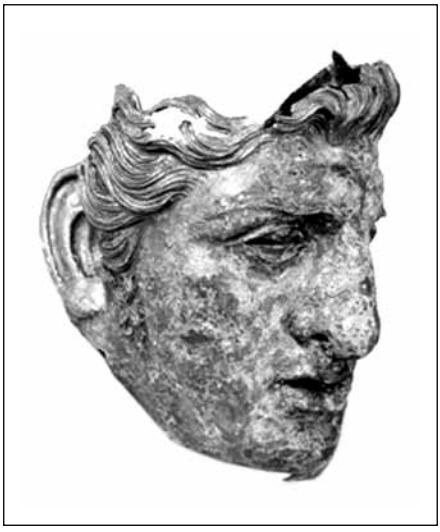

Fig. 114 - Bronze helmet in the shape of a male mask (Jabal al-'Awd).

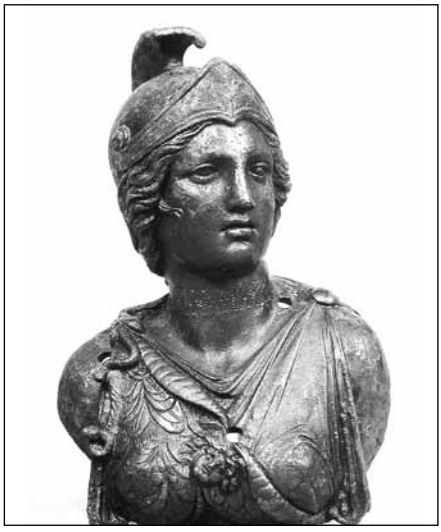

Fig. 115 - Bronze bust of Athena (Jabal al-'Awd).

The depiction of Athena is one of the most common images of goddesses unearthed at the site of Jabal al-'Awd. The bronze bust of the goddess shown in Figure 115 bears an inscription incised on the neck stating "Qasidan of the Sadqan family placed".

The type of objects from Jabal al-'Awd, together with their generally votive inscriptions, suggest that they were donations to the temple that over the centuries had received a fine array of offerings. The full significance and function of this important site has not yet been ascertained, although a possible reference to this very site and its purpose is given by Medieval sources indicating the existence of a mountain sanctuary on the plateau.

TASTE FOR LUXURIES FROM FOREIGN LANDS

The anonymous author of the *Periplus Maris Erythraei* writes about goods, such as "golden and silver historiated vases," originating from Egypt and destined to the port of Muza (al-Makhâ', on the Red Sea) to satisfy the taste of wealthy South Arabian patrons. This ancient information is confirmed by the discovery of two splendid silver vases in the tombs of Wâdî Dura' (Hadramawt) — a *calathus*, with the representation of the gigantomachy (Figures 116 a-b, Colour Plate), and a decorated *cantharus* (Figure 117, Colour Plate). Both

objects carry an incised dedication in South Arabian characters. The inscriptions, in Hadramitic language, refer to the name of the offerer Gummân, of the Habbum tribe, the names of his palaces Shab'ân and Yaghûl during the Kingdom of Yada''ab, King of Hadramawt, son of Yada''îl, King of Hadramawt. Epigraphist Christian Robin positions this king at around 200 – 210 AD.

The subject matter depicted on the *calathus* is of great interest. The *calathus*, fashionable during the Augustan and Tiberian eras when the most refined examples were produced, is a deep drinking vessel in the shape of a truncated cone, without foot, and generally provided with one vertical handle (missing from this specimen) attached at the rim and shoulder. This form makes the *calathus* well-suited for figurative decoration. Here, the lip of the *calathus* is raised and rounded, decorated with a floral band with volutes bordered by a band of alternating beaded motif and a line of *ovoli*. The base is decorated with a series of beads, a smooth band, a vine tendril with leaves and grapes and another narrower smooth band. The centrepiece, in *repoussé* relief on a smooth background, depicts the mythical combat between the Olympian gods and the Thracian giants, epitomising the struggle between good and evil. The iconographical prototype appears to be the Gigantomachy depicted on the High Altar of Zeus at Pergamon (first half of 2nd century BC; Staatliche Museen, Berlin) and, in particular, the monumental relief of the eastern frieze. The gods and giants are all identifiable from their precise attributes and poses. The scene features four pairs of characters, three comprising a goddess, Artemis, Hecate and Athena, each with a giant, and the fourth, Heracles, also with a giant. The Gigantomachy was a common subject from the Classical and Hellenistic periods through to the Roman Imperial era. The iconography and formal layout are Hellenistic in character and carried out with a lively naturalism expressed in the accurate modelling of the muscles of the male nudes and the vigorous torsion of their bodies, the supple rendering of the rich drapery of the divinities, the position of the figures disposed on two different planes and the bodies seen full face or in three-quarter view. The intersection of straight lines resulting from the extended legs and arms and the brandished weapons, alternating with the curves of the drapery, shields and serpentine coils of the giants' legs, evoke the intensity and passion of the action. The detailed, naturalistic rendering of the subject is exceptionally expressive and denotes a great refinement in technical skill and artistic vision.

The second silver vase, the *cantharus*, has a spherical body resting on a ring foot with a flat edge devoid of decoration (Figure 117, Colour Plate). The object lacks the two vertical tapering handles that are generally present in a *cantharus*. The body of this type of vessel comprises two walls. The inner wall is smooth and thin, the outer one is decorated in *repoussé* work. The rim is raised and decorated with a row of *ovoli* around its exterior face. The relief ornamentation on the body comprises two oak branches adorned with small bunches of berries. Between the 1st century BC and 1st century AD, this type of naturalistically decorated cup was very fashionable within the *argentum potorium* (drinking silvers) of rich Roman families.

These two vessels are part of the numerous funerary goods from Wâdî Dura' that include imported tableware, such as bowls, dishes, goblets, cups, dippers

and strainers, and toiletry boxes (pyxides), in silver, silver-gilt and bronze, indicating that they belonged to the elite. The Wâdî Dura's artefacts were probably made in workshops in the Eastern regions of the Roman Empire, for example in Syria, where the Hellenistic tradition was still alive during the 3rd century AD.

GLASSWARE

Small glass vases were also imported. Glassware is particularly rare in pre-Islamic Yemeni archaeological sites and most come from funerary contexts dating from the first centuries AD (Figure 118). For example, the valuable grave goods unearthed in a tomb of Wâdî Dura' include a number of glass containers, one of which is a *millefiori* bowl, presumably produced in Antiochia during the 1st century AD. Similarly, glass containers for ointments and perfumed oils - *unguentaria* — found in a hypogean tomb of Waraqa (near Dhamâr), as well as in tombs of the Jawf and Marib, most likely have an Alexandrian provenance. Glass objects found in the royal palace at Shabwat vary greatly in manufacture and provenance. For example, vitreous mosaics used in architecture and household vessels made of painted mono- or polychrome blown glass, were produced in Italy and Eastern Mediterranean regions including Syria and Egypt. The production of these items can be dated to between the 1st and 4th century AD.

Fig. 118 - Blown glass juglet with spherical body and flat bottom.

Advances in glass blowing techniques from individual handblown objects to the use of moulds made large-scale production possible. During the Roman Imperial era, glass production attained high levels of artistic excellence and spread beyond the borders of the Empire. The presence of luxury objects, such as vases and glassbead necklaces, in necropolises and cities at the edge of the Ramlat al-Sab'atayn desert and in the Yemeni plateau, shows that the great commercial exchange network reached regions of Southern Arabia that were distant from the centres of production.

The art of the architectonic relief. An iconographic convergence

The large number of architectonic fragments found at Zafâr, the capital of the Himyarite Empire (110 BC – early 6th century AD), or reused in later times in monuments of nearby villages, demonstrates the widespread use of sculpture in low- and high-relief in architectonic decoration from the first century AD onwards. Indeed, this period marked the beginning of the dominance of decorative reliefs over the sculpture in the round that had been the norm in previous centuries. Stylistically, the relief is flat and linear and the resulting image certainly favours schematism rather than naturalism and expressivity.

Fig. 119 - Capital with three rows of acanthus leaves. The abacus is decorated with a central rosette, vine tendril with grapes and cauliculi. The astragal is formed by a twisted pattern (Shibâm-Kawkabân).

During this period, South Arabian artistic production, while undoubtedly original and creative, cannot lay claim to an exclusively indigenous inspiration. The iconography demonstrates Roman-Oriental origins that, according to Jacqueline Pirenne, derived from Southern Syria, especially the area of the Hawran and Palmyra. The iconographic features of the reliefs found on Syrian monuments from the 1st century BC onwards, indicate a skilled and creative transformation of Hellenistic models. This genre of figurative production can be described as Oriental Hellenism or, specifically, as Syrian Hellenism, and it is from this iconographic and stylistic prototype that South Arabian production appears to have derived.

The new iconography features a large range of subjects, from humans, divinities and mythological figures to animals and ornamental motifs, including plant and architectonic elements. Reliefs become embellished with highly fanciful images, such as *nikai*, winged *putti* with garlands, horsemen armed with lance and shield and soldiers in Roman attire. Together with the traditional decorations of palm trees with dates, new botanical motifs are also introduced — rosettes, olives, pomegranates, bay leaves, acanthus, ivy

and vines. Indeed, during the first centuries AD, the artistic production was characterised by a marked syncretism in which figurative motifs from Oriental, Greek and Roman iconographic repertories were adapted to, or wholly or partially assimilated into local traditions.

A number of Yemeni capitals are shaped in a Corinthian style (Figure 119) on fluted columns (Figure 120), probably in imitation of prototypes from the Syrian city of Suwayda (called Dyonisias in Hellenistic and Roman times), in the Hawran.

Fig. 120 - Fluted column with twisted torus. The plinth is decorated with three rosettes framed by two rows in the "running dog" pattern (Shibâm-Kawkabân).

Frieze ornaments also demonstrate new elements, such as the motif of the meander, the Vitruvian scroll ("running dog") and *ovoli*. An example of these motifs is provided by the relief fragment shown in Figure 121, from the Zafâr Museum. This relief depicts a rampant leopard inside an *aedicula* supported by a column with the capital adorned by two rows of volutes and a human head. The outer border of the arch is defined by a triple decoration, comprising a spiral motif, the "running dog" motif and the *ovoli* design.

Among the new architectural elements represented in South Arabian reliefs, it is worth mentioning the *aedicula*, a canopied niche, symbol of a small temple or shrine, particularly widespread during the Roman period. The *aedicula* was defined by one or multiple arches resting on fluted or tortile (twisted) columns surmounted by Corinthian capitals, and, as in the Greco-Roman tradition, it could shelter images of gods or human figures, as shown in the relief originating from the village of Bayt al-Ashwal, near Zafâr (Figure 122; 3rd century AD). The women depicted underneath the *aediculae* face the viewer and hold a pomegranate in their hands, a symbol common to fertility goddesses.

Fig. 121 - Fragment of a relief showing a rampant leopard standing on a shelf inside an aedicula *or shrine (Museum of Zafâr).*

Fig. 122 - Series of small arches, resting on fluted columns, framing feminine images or possibly goddesses. The lower face of the structure presents the sculpted wings of two eagles (Bayt al-Ashwal).

GODS AND THEIR SYMBOLS

Images carved on architectonic reliefs indicate the cult of foreign gods, or a creative syncretism in which foreign divinities mingle and merge with native deities, or local divinities are depicted with the attributes of foreign deities.

The reliefs on display at the Zafâr Museum reveal a number of Palmyrene or Nabataean iconographic elements. Figure 123 shows a fragment of a frieze (1st – 2nd century AD) depicting the head of an adolescent, beardless male with a radiant halo emanating from his flowing hair — a sign that might identify him as an astral divinity. Although the image is incomplete, the similarities with the representations of the Divine Triad carved on stelae from Palmyra, in which the three celestial gods appear in Roman military garb (lorica and mantle) but wearing Persian trousers, are unmistakable.

Fig. 123 - Fragment of a relief depicting a male head with a radiate halo suggesting an astral divinity (Museum of Zafâr).

Another relief from Zafâr (Figure 124) presents interesting analogies with a relief from the Syrian city of Suwayda, in the Hawran depicting the bust of a man with two branches sprouting from his head decorated with vine leaves and bunches of grapes. Two birds symmetrically positioned and pecking at the grapes and two rosettes complete the iconography (2nd – 3rd century AD). The relief symbolizes Zeus Ammon with ram's horns. In the Zafâr relief, the bust of the Syrian prototype is replaced by a local South Arabian sacred subject, i.e. the bull's head with long horns branching into luxuriant vegetal elements.

Fig. 124 - Limestone relief (reused in a modern building in Zafâr), depicting a bull's head with long horns branching into vegetal elements.

The relief found at Shabwat (3rd – 4th century AD, Figure 125) is also exemplary of the impact of Greco-Roman iconography on South Arabian relief art. The relief depicts Hercules beneath an arched *aedicula*. The demigod wears a *leontè* draped over the left arm and holds a club in the right hand. The physical features of Hercules are exaggerated — the shoulders are disproportionately broad on the narrow chest and the torsion of the hip is overstated. The arch of the *aedicula* is too massive and supported by columns with undefined capitals. Together, these features demonstrate a naïve artistic and conceptual approach by a South Arabian sculptor in handling motifs from Greco-Roman art that clearly did not belong to his culture and iconographic tradition.

Fig. 125 - Alabaster funerary slab depicting a crowned Hercules beneath an aedicula *(Shabwa).*

The eagle

Common elements portrayed inside the *aediculae* are religious symbols, such as the eagle (Figure 126), often accompanied by a snake. In Syria, the eagle was the symbol of the sun and stars and usually represented the Semitic god Hadad, in general portrayed crushing a snake.

In South Arabia the eagle was probably adopted as the symbol of the gods Sayyin or Nasr, and the snake as the symbol of the god Wadd at Ma'în. During the Himyarite era, representations of the eagle featured the raptor viewed frontally, the body covered with feathers superimposed in a regular fashion and extended along the outstretched wings. This iconography appears to derive from Nabatean art and emphasises formalism rather than naturalistic appearance. This degree of schematisation is taken even further in later representations of the eagle, as in the 6th century AD relief in the Museum of San'â' (Figure 127) and in another relief found at Masna'at Mâriya (see below, p. 141, Figure 154).

Generally, in reliefs depicting the arched *aedicula*, the space above the arch is occupied, as we have seen in the funerary stelae, by ornamental elements such as urns, rosettes, vine leaves (Cf. Figures 90, 125-126) and bunches of grapes whose triangular form is particularly suited to filling in the corners of the tympanum.

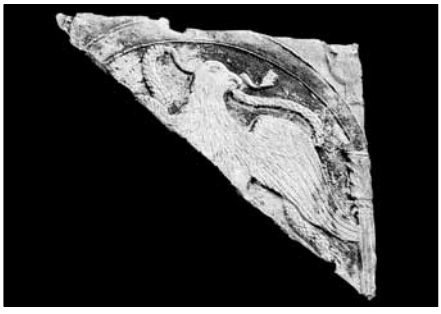

Fig. 126 - Fragment of a limestone slab depicting an eagle fighting a snake inside a naiskos. A mystic vase is shown in the upper right corner (al-Lisân).

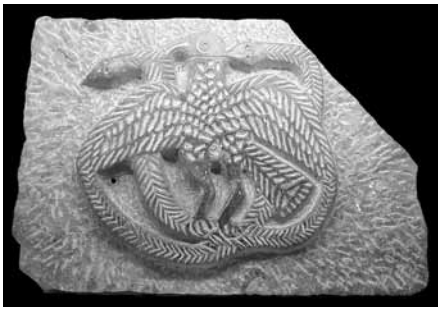

Fig. 127 - Alabaster relief showing an eagle grasping two snakes.

The mystic vase

Urns or vases are often portrayed in architectonic and funerary reliefs (Figures 126, 128-129). A typical vase, generally interpreted as a vase for libations and associated with the cult of the dead, is a two-handled urn, with a spherical or oblong body on a tall foot and a lid, similar to the Greek vase *kantharos*, symbol of the god Dionysus. This kind of "mystic vase" is found in Persia as the Mithraic vase, and in Syria it is related to the cult of the goddess Atargatis or the god Dionysus. In the Christian world the vase will be transformed into the Eucharistic chalice. It is, of course, quite possible that the assimilation of this motif into the South Arabian repertory had both iconograph ic and semantic value — intrinsically associated with the afterlife.

A figured stone block found at Marib, dating between the 1st and 3rd century AD, served as the base of a funerary stela (Figure 128). On the front of the block, inside a simple frame are two stylized birds, probably peacocks shown in profile, both facing a large bunch of grapes. Above, the two lateral projections are decorated with *kantharoi*. The row of dentils at the base of the central rectangular opening reflects the enduring South Arabian traditional decorative motifs.

Fig. 128 - Limestone block decorated with two mystic vases and two peacocks in profile and facing a large bunch of grapes.

The gryphon

The representation of animals is recurrent in South Arabian reliefs. The iconography reiterates South Arabian traditional depictions, such as the bull, ibex and antelope, but also expands into representations of other animals, such as the panther and lion, or imaginary beasts, such as the gryphon and triton. An outstanding example of a gryphon is sculpted in the splendid capital excavated from a building identified as the royal palace at Shabwat (3rd century AD; Figure 129). This gryphon combines the slender and muscular body of a panther, horns, pointed ears and eagle's wings, elaborately decorated with two kinds of feathers. The modelling of the relief indicates features of the Parthian-Sassanid tradition. The gryphon is associated with the ritual vase and the vine, elements that pertain to Dionysian and funerary symbolism. Therefore, this iconography was not merely adopted as decorative elements, but was most likely imbued with religious value that was transferred to South Arabian symbolism.

Fig. 129 - The central panel of this limestone capital is decorated with a gryphon with the right forepaw on a ritual vase. The capital is framed by regular vine tendrils with grapes and the "running dog" pattern (Shabwa).

CONCLUSIONS

From the 2nd century BC through to the 4th century AD, ancient Yemen's artistic production was enriched by iconographic elements from Greek and Roman traditions. From the 1st century AD, both the expanding Roman Empire and the inauguration of a maritime trading route with the Indian coast ensured the dissemination of foreign artefacts and cultural influences that left their mark on South Arabian artistic production.

According to a long established tradition, most of the artefacts served votive or funerary purposes. Imported domestic goods, such as bronze and silver artefacts, were also associated with the cult sphere, as indicated by the dedicatory inscriptions, and, although intended to a small elite, their use implies the continuous transformation of local customs. Imported statuettes, particularly between the 2nd century BC and the 2nd century AD, featuring foreign divinities and the local assimilation of foreign iconography, demonstrate both the introduction of new cults and/or the appropriation of foreign iconography in the representation of local divinities.

Commerce, initially by caravan and later along maritime routes, was the principal mechanism for import of luxury goods for sophisticated, wealthy and powerful clientele. However, such items were frequently copied and reproduced locally, to keep costs down, hence the necessity of importing prototypes or casts to be reproduced locally. In adapting those foreign models, South Arabian artisans often introduced elements of local taste or, when they attempted to copy the models faithfully, they did not fully understand the original meaning. However, one has to consider that the purpose and significance of a specific iconography in the new South Arabian cultural environment could have been different from that of the original model, and any transformation or interpretation was therefore justified.

Since all South Arabian figurative production had a religious significance and served the political power, it had to abide by local communicative canons. However, South Arabian art drew on other expressive repertories whenever its own traditions were no longer effective or were non-existent. For example, the colossal statues from al-Nakhla al-hamrâ' featuring heroic nudity as a sign of divinisation, were without precedent in South Arabia and were adopted in order to affirm the local power. In contrast, the traditional means for declaring kingly power had only been through monumental writings and public architectural projects.

Similarly, local architectural tradition, characterized by geometric motifs, was enriched by foreign aesthetic forms, the use of floral elements and fantastic creatures that reflected a new taste for ornamental details and narratives.

With the adoption of monotheism (the first monotheistic text known in Yemen dates from 363 – 373 AD), the artistic production and hence the dedicatory function of statues and artefacts declined rapidly.

COINAGE

International trade, whether carried by caravan or by sea involved barter or an accepted currency. The minting of coins in South Arabia began early in the 4th century BC and continued until the late 4th century AD. Only the Kingdoms of Saba', Qatabân, Hadramawt and Himyar issued their own coins that had limited circulation, indicating that the majority of trading transactions were still based on barter. The Minaeans, who were the leading caravan traders, appear not to have had any coins of their own.

The Qatabân Kingdom was the first to mint silver coins, copying the "old style" Attic models depicting the head of Pallas Athena on the obverse and the owl ("Qatabanian owl"), sickle moon and olive branch on the reverse, accompanied by the first three Greek letters of Athena's name: AΘE (Figures 131-133). The coin's value was expressed by letters of the alphabet on Athena's cheek and the issuer's identity indicated by the Royal monogram on the reverse. The other Kingdoms followed this pattern more or less faithfully. It is likely that these particular coins were only used for international trade.

Fig. 131-133 - Qatabanian silver coins in imitation of Athenian coins. The obverse bears the head of Athena and the reverse the owl, with wide, round eyes (4th – 3rd century BC).

Later coins were "national" in character, with a king's head replacing Athena and, on the reverse, local monograms and religious symbols. Around the early 2nd century BC, the "Qatabanian owl" was replaced by local iconography: on the observe a beardless male head with short curly hair and, on the reverse, a bearded male head in "Hellenised" style with a chignon, accompanied by symbols, letters or monograms (Figure 134).

Fig. 134 - Qatabanian silver coin of the "series with two heads" (2nd century BC).

Trade with Rome is evident in the design of Sabaean coins dating from the late 1st century BC to the early 1st century AD where on the coins' obverse, the head appears to be that of the Emperor Augustus, whereas the coins' reverse still features Athena's owl.

On Hadrami coins dating from around late 1st century BC to the early 1st century AD, Athena was replaced by the head of a solar or lunar divinity, adorned with a nimbus of rays and, on the reverse, a winged caduceus (the symbol of Hermes, the god of trade in Greek and Roman mythology) and monograms. In the 1st century AD, the Hadrami ruler Yashhur'îl Yuhar'ish minted coins bearing a male head (probably his portrait) with the name of the god Sayyin on the observe, and an eagle on the reverse.

In the late 2nd century BC, Himyar imitated the Qatabanian model, but "Arabised" the portrait by adopting the long hairstyle characteristic of South Arabian portraits and added Raydân as mint place. Later, in the 1st and 2nd centuries AD, Himyar produced its own unique coinage known as "two heads" (Figure 135), because both sides of the coins bear the head of the king, the name Raydân, monograms, the royal symbol and the name of the king.

Fig. 135 - Himyarire silver coin of the "series with two heads" (1st – 2nd century AD).

In the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD, the Himyarites began to use the Sabaean series of coins known as the "with bucranium" (bull's head) (Figure 136) for local transactions and later gold Aksûmite coins for their international commerce.

Fig. 136 - Sabaean silver coin of the "series with bucranium" (early 2nd – mid-3rd centuries AD).

Recent South Arabian Period

(3rd - 6th Centuries AD)

The Empire of Himyar

Historical Context

During the 3rd century AD, the Kingdom of Himyar saw the intensification of conflicts due to the emergence of new threats — the Abyssinian (or Aksumite) invasion (200 – 275 AD) along the coastal region of Tihâma, on the Western border of the Yemeni plateau, and the increasing power of the Kingdom of Hadramawt (Cf. Figure 185). By the 3rd century AD, Arab tribes that had settled in Minaean territory during the 2nd century BC, became influential in the Tihâma region through an alliance with the Abyssinians. Arab tribes that settled in the Yemeni plateau gradually integrated with the Sabaean society after initial clashes. However, by the end of the 3rd century AD, Himyar extended its dominion in the southwest through the expulsion of the Abyssinians and the annexation of Saba', and in the southeast through the annexation of the Hadramawt. Consequently, South Arabia was unified for the first time under Himyar and, by the 5th century, the Kingdom extended from the Red Sea in the West, to the Indian Ocean in the South, to Oman in the East and to the territory of Najrân in the North (Cf. Figure 186). In territories north of Najrân, the tribes of Central Arabia recognised Himyar's protectorate beyond modern ar-Riyadh, and in Western Arabia, as far as Yathrib, today's al-Madîna.

The Kingdom's demise began with the second Abyssinian invasion around 525/530 AD (or, according to some inscriptions, 529/530 AD) led by Kâlêb Ella Asbeha. This was followed by the Sassanid occupation of Yemen in 570 AD and in 632 AD, Yemen became part of the Islamic State that the Prophet Muhammad founded in al-Madîna.

The disappearance of a uniquely South Arabian civilisation is symbolised by the final collapse of the Marib dam, between 560 and 620 AD. The dam required continuous maintenance. In 456 AD, following the damage caused by excessive summer rains, the dam was repaired by Shurihbi'îl Ya'fur (son of Abîkarib As'ad, Judaic King of Himyar) and again in 547 – 549 AD by Abraha (the Abyssinian King who, in *c*. 535 AD, proclaimed himself King of Yemen). When the dam ceased to be regularly repaired, agriculture went into a precipitous decline that ultimately led to the collapse of the South Arabian civilisation.

Up until this time, the political and ethnic identity of the local populations had been closely linked to religion, with each tribe worshipping its own *pantheon* and tutelary divinities. During the 4th century, the introduction of monotheism marked the beginning of the abandonment of the ancestral gods and temples, as paganism had not yet been completely replaced by the new faith.

The first indication of the existence of monotheistic cults in Southern Arabia is revealed by a number of inscriptions dating from the mid-4th century, invoking "Ilân, Lord of the Heavens". It has been suggested that the Himyarite King Malkîkarib Yuha'min and his sons Abîkarib As'ad and Dhara''amar Ayman (*c*. 380 AD) adopted monotheism for the state religion as a political strategy rather than as a religious choice in the belief that worship of a single god strengthened cohesion among the many tribes present in the vast and heterogeneous Himyarite territory.

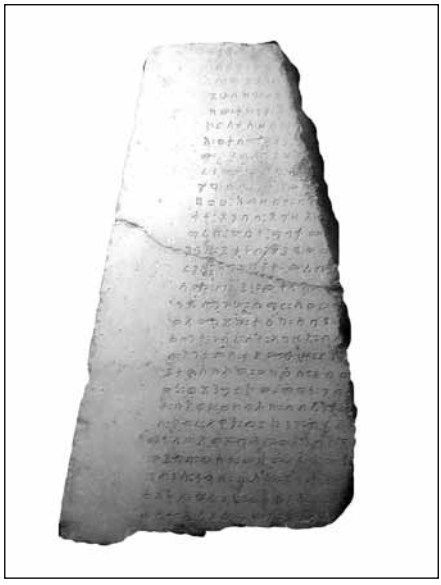

Fig. 137 - Alabaster slab with an inscription in Ge'ez (ancient Ethiopian script), describing the Abyssinian invasion of Yemen, possibly that of the Negus Kâlêb Ella Asbeha (530 AD, Marib).

During this period, the antagonism between Persia and Byzantium over control of the trade routes between the Mediterranean and India influenced political and religious developments throughout the region. Persian dominion extended from Syria to India, while Byzantium controlled the coast of the Eastern Mediterranean as far as the Axumite Kingdom in Ethiopia. Christianity had gained a foothold along the edges of the Yemeni desert and on the coast, in Najrân, in the Hadramawt, in Tihâma and on the island of Suqutra. The Greek historian Philostorgius recounts that the Roman Emperor Constantius II (337 – 361 AD) charged Bishop Theophilus the Indian with converting Southern Arabia to Christianity. Theophilus, originally from an island known as Dibu (probably Suqutra) lived in Arabia between 339 and 344 AD where he was received with honours by a Himyarite King. The King built three Christian churches — the first church was at Tapharos (Zafâr), the second at Adane ('Adan) and the third "in the Persian emporium at the mouth of the Persian Sea". Philostorgius also mentions that at this time the Jewish community was influential and greatly respected in the Himyarite Kingdom. The earliest epigraphic evidence of a Jewish presence in Southern Arabia includes a Greek inscription from a synagogue in the ancient port of Qanî' (Bi'r 'Alî, Hadramawt) dating from the second half of the 4th century and a Greek inscription (3rd – 4th century AD), found at Beth She'arim in Palestine referring to the *Homeriton*, the Himyarites.

Nearly 200 years later, following the 2nd Abyssinian invasion during which two Kings selected by the Abyssinians briefly ruled, Prince Yûsuf As'ar Yath'ar, known as dhû Nuwâs came to power (according to inscriptions in 522 – 525 or in 529 – 530 AD). He would be the last King to rule over an independent Yemen. Dhû Nuwâs was called "King of all the tribes", rather than "King of Saba', dhu-Raydân, Hadramawt and Yamanat, and the Arabs of the Mountain

and Coastal Plain", as his predecessor King Abîkarib As'ad used to be known. When Abîkarib As'ad had, together with his co-regent father and brother, proclaimed monotheism as the state religion in *c*. 380 AD (see above, p. 133), his commitment to Judaism was not explicit in the inscriptions of the period, as God was simply called "their Lord, the Lord of Heavens". However the nature of the Jewish faith professed by his heir, dhû Nuwâs is evidenced by the ferocious military campaigns conducted against the Christian Himyarites (the Aksumite residents of Zafâr and the tribes of Tihâma) in response to Ethiopian meddling in South Arabian internal affairs. Dhû Nuwâs destroyed Christian churches, persecuted the allies of the Abyssinians on the coast and exterminated part of the Christian community of Najrân, remembered as the "martyrs of Najrân". This momentous episode provoked an immediate reaction from Byzantium and in 525 AD the Abyssinians, led by the Ethiopian Negus Kâlêb Ella Asbeha, were authorised to invade Yemen (Figure 137). Kâlêb defeated the Himyarite army and Yemen became an Abyssinian protectorate for the next 50 years, first under the Christian Himyarite King Sumyafa' Ashwa' and then under the Abyssinian general Abraha who renounced allegiance to the Ethiopian Negus and ruled independently as King of the Himyarites from 535 to 565 AD.

During Abraha's reign, the dam of Marib was restored (547 – 549 AD) and the capital was moved from Zafâr to San'â', where a splendid Christian church was erected. According to the Arabic-Islamic tradition, the King sought to transform this church into the largest and most prestigious pilgrimage site in Arabia, supplanting the Ka'ba, in Mecca. Indeed, between the years 555 and 565 AD, Abraha led a military expedition to the North of the Arabian Peninsula against Mecca's Ka'ba. This failed expedition is remembered in the Quran (Surah 105: 1-4) as the "expedition of the elephant," because the King, to impress his enemies, led his army with one or more elephants from Ethiopia.

As part of the continuing struggle for regional control, around 570 AD Persia supported the Yemeni Jewish prince Sayf ibn dhî Yaz'an in his fight against the Abyssinians who were finally expelled from Yemen. Consequently, the territory became a satrapy of Persia, and later its vassal state until 632 AD, when it joined with the Islamic state of the Prophet Muhammad.

Before the advent of Islam, Yemen was characterised by a mosaic of religions — Judaism, Christian sects, Zoroastrism and Manichaeism. Politically, the country was divided into different and conflicting enclaves under Persian influence or feudal lords governing princedoms and Arab tribes. The gradual transition from the old South Arabian civilisation to Islam was characterised by considerable political instability and confusion and it is generally regarded as a time of decline. In reality, we know very little about the cultural and social significance of this period and future research will help ascertain whether it represented a true break with the past or whether there were some aspects of cultural continuity. For example, a typological study of South Arabian temples reveals that their ground plans served as a blueprint during the formative phase of Islamic religious architecture. In particular, the small Yemeni hypostyle mosques appear to derive from the South Arabian "one-room temple" type, found mainly in Hadramawt and Jawf.

Architecture, reliefs and artefacts

From the 3rd century AD, there is clear evidence of a drastic decrease in both the production of traditional sculpture and in the import of artefacts from Hellenised countries. The adoption of monotheism was undoubtedly an important factor influencing this trend, even though Arab paganism did not die out altogether. The inscriptions found in the city of Qaryat al-Fâw, the capital of the Kingdom of Kinda in Central Arabia, show that the gods worshipped were Ahwar, Sin, Shams and ʻAthtar. At Najrân, in addition to ʻAthtar, two other deities were worshipped, dhu-Samâwî, "The One of the Heavens" and a god simply defined as "Lord of Mkntn". In Arab-Islamic texts, the lexicon concerning idols comprises four main terms, *nusub*, *sanam*, *wathan* and *timthal* that might refer to cult statues venerated by the South Arabians.

This tumultuous period is artistically significant for its distinctive architectonic features and reliefs, as well as for objects displaying an amalgam of Oriental Hellenism, Byzantine and Persian elements, integrated with and complementing the indigenous style. However, contrary to the epigraphic documentation, the archaeological evidence is limited to a few reliefs and capitals of small dimensions recovered outside their original context. These artefacts were probably part of *aediculae* and small cultic edifices that, all things considered, bear witness to a modest, provincial production — a pale reflection of the more prestigious and sumptuous artwork of cities in the Romanised, Northern regions.

ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS AND RELIEFS. SHADOWS OF CHRISTIAN DEVOTION

During the Himyarite Empire, the columns in religious monuments show a variety of forms, ranging from squared pillars with cubic or cylindrical capitals decorated in geometrical pattern (blinds, dentils) following the ancient South Arabian tradition (Figures 138 and 139 respectively), to fluted or hexagonal columns surmounted by Corinthian capitals of Hellenistic design (Figure 140). It is worth noting that capitals with traditional local motifs and capitals with Hellenistic acanthus leaf motifs were often at the same sites as, for example, in Marib and on the plateau at Shibâm-Kawkabân, Tanʻim, Dâf, Baynûn, Dhamâr, Yarîm and Zafâr. The presence of traditional and foreign architectural elements at the same sites poses the question as to whether the two styles were intended

for different social or religious contexts, for example for buildings of separate cults — one pagan and the other associated with the Christian or Jewish faith. Unfortunately, virtually all architectural examples of both types have come down to us from deposits of re-used material (*spolia*), making it difficult to attribute them to a definite context or historical period.

The South Arabian Corinthian-type capitals show specific ornamental and stylistic features characteristic of capitals in the Hellenised East, in particular Southern Syria. The typological evolution of Corinthian capitals in Southern Syria has been analysed by the French archaeologist D. Schlumberger. However, as art historian Michael Avi Yonah has argued, this evolution continued beyond the 2nd century AD and led, toward the end of the 4th century, to a new style of Syrian capitals that would strongly influence the architecture of neighbouring countries during the following centuries. Indeed, a number of Yemeni capitals appear to date from the 4th century AD (Figures 141-144). Medium to small in size, the capitals feature one to two rows of leaves characterized by a solid central vein flanked by secondary parallel veins, in imitation of acanthus leaves. These leaves are rigidly rendered, small and closely adhering to the surface of the capital, with the exception of their tips that project slightly outwards. The outline of the leaves is slightly indented. The leaves are often associated with various decorative elements, such as rosettes, vine tendrils with grapes and stalks — the *cauliculi* (Figure 141). Over time, this schematic pattern underwent a transformation that involved the elimination of the *cauliculi* among the foliage, an initial expansion of the angular spirals and, later, their substitution (or alternation) with rosettes. The capitals in Jordan and Palestine underwent similar architectonic transformation. Of note, Yemeni capitals, although showing the same general abstract rendering as Middle Eastern prototypes of the same period, preserved an undeniably regional formalism characterized by a smaller size, greater simplification, rigidity and flatness in the geometry and lack of those sculptural characteristics that would enhance the *chiaroscuro* effects. Arguably, these are the marks of a traditional style not entirely supplanted by the new artistic trends of the time.

Fig. 138 - Hexagonal pillar with a cubic capital decorated with geometrical patterns, i.e. blind and dentils.

Finally, a few Yemeni capitals adopt a new element — the cross. Confined within a schematic, but plastic row of leaves, the cross replaces the central rosette (Figure 145; Figure 146, Colour Plate). These cube-shaped capitals with broad stylised acanthus leaves surmounted by a cross have their prototype in capitals in the cathedral of Saint Mary of Zion in Aksûm, Ethiopia, built between 372 and 424 AD (Figures 150 and 151). In Yemen, the large cube-shaped Christian capitals, finished in different styles and reused in the Great Mosque of San'â' (Figures 145-149) can be dated to the Aksumite invasion of Yemen. They would have adorned the church erected in San'â' at the time of Abraha, around mid-6th century AD. Of note, Emperor Justinian is known to have sent architects, workmen and materials, including marble and mosaics, for the construction of the church. The 9th century Islamic chroniclers al-Tabarî and al-Azraqî described this magnificent church in detail, and, on the basis of their descriptions, scholars Robert B. Serjeant and Ronald Lewcock, Barbara Finster and Jürgen Schmidt have proposed a reconstruction of the building. The church, called al- Qalîs ("the Church", from Greek *ekklèsia*), stood in the oldest quarter of San'â'. Most of the materials of this church were later used in the construction of the Great Mosque (705-715 AD), as demonstrated by the presence of capitals, columns and plinths, as well as elements of the roof and the wooden door with panels featuring pre-Islamic inscriptions. From detailed descriptions in Islamic texts, we learn that the church of San'â' was surrounded by an open space that served for circumambulation, as in Ethiopian rituals. It is likely that the wall of the church was built in the style used for early Christian churches in Ethiopia. Friezes were created by inserting rows of triangular stones of alternating colours between two layers of rough-hewn stones, similar to the façade of the modern building in Zafâr shown in Figure 152 (Colour Plate). The upper part of the wall of the church was completed with bands of stones of contrasting colours — black, yellow and white — that formed a thick parapet against the sky.

Fig. 139 - Fluted column supporting a cylindrical capital decorated with dentils (Mosque Masjid al-Ju'aydan, Ghaymân).

Fig. 140 - Hexagonal pillar surmounted by a Corinthian capital (Dâf).

This construction method recalls the technique used today for building houses using ancient re-used materials. In fact, nowadays, a common building style utilizes alternate layers of coloured stones and parapets decorated with protruding stones that create a *chiaroscuro*, light/dark effect (Figure 153).

Apart from these items, there is no other clear archaeological evidence of Christianity in Yemen. We should recall that, in the first quarter of the 6th century AD, Yûsuf As'ar Yath'ar persecuted Christians and destroyed their churches. There were undoubtedly churches at Najrân and Qaryat al-Fâw in the North (Saudi Arabia), and others were erected at Marib, Zafâr, al-Mukha (on the coast of the Red Sea), and at 'Adan and Qanî' (on the coast of the Indian Ocean). A few examples of iconographic elements depicted on stone reliefs from *spolia* may bear witness to a Christian devotional past. For example, a stone arch showing a motif of stylised acanthus leaves and what appears to be a cross sculpted in the *intrados* was found at Masna'at Mâriya (11 km West of Dhamâr) and was probably part of a Christian *aedicula* (Figure 154). Above the *extrados* and flanking the monograms carved next to the centre, two eagles with hooked beaks and long necks similar to a vulture are represented. The birds have spherical bodies and the feathers on the wings are rendered in schematic patches. In this specific case, it is not clear as to whether the eagle syncretically preserved a local meaning as the symbol of a South Arabian divinity (see p. 124), or, for its ability to soar up into the sky, was symbolic of the resurrection of Christ within the Christian iconography.

Fig. 141 - South Arabian capital decorated with one row of acanthus leaves, volutes at the corners, rosettes and cauliculi. The abacus is decorated with dentils and ovoli (Mawkal).

Fig. 142 - Capital with one row of acanthus leaves and abacus decorated with the meander motif.

Another example of possible Christian significance is the representation of the peacock that was a favourite symbol of Christians for whom it was allegorical of the resurrection of the Christ. The magnificent plumage of the bird that re-grows

each spring symbolizes the Saviour who escaped the corruption of death and rose again in all his glory. In a South Arabian alabaster relief dating from the 5th – 6th century, a peacock is depicted face on, with the tail wide open (Figure 155). The provenance and function of this relief is still obscure, as no inscriptions are visible on the frame of the relief. In ancient times the peacock was a symbol of immortality, resurrection and incorruptibility. It was extensively represented in catacombs and in the mosaic flooring of Paleo-Christian churches where the peacock is seen in profile, with the tail closed and pointing downwards. In Christian iconography, peacocks facing each other on either side of a flower or a chalice became a common feature in religious monuments from the 2nd and 3rd century AD. From the 4th century, the subject was represented in all its variants — peacocks drinking at a *cantharus* sprouting vine tendrils and grapes or flanking the monogram of Christ, and so on. The peacock was also depicted together with other birds, vases and garlands that, taken together, evoke the idea of Paradise.

Fig. 143- Limestone capital with two rows of acanthus leaves.

Fig. 144 - Limestone capital with one row of acanthus leaves, plain abacus and astragal with a twisted line pattern.

Fig. 145 - A limestone cube-shaped capital decorated with stylised acanthus leaves surmounted by a cross. The capital was reused in The Great Mosque in San'â'.

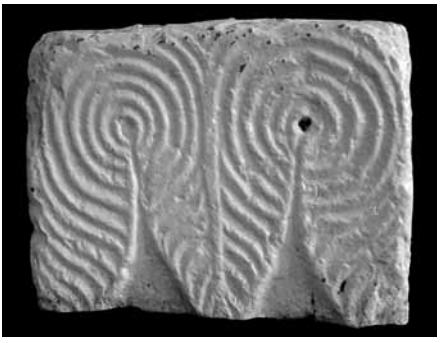

Fig. 147 - An upturned cube-shaped capital once part of the ancient church built in San'â' around mid-6th century AD (The Great Mosque in San'â').

Fig. 148 - A cube-shaped capital decorated with broad stylised acanthus leaves (The Great Mosque in San'â').

Fig. 149 - A cube-shaped capital decorated with large leaves and volutes (The Great Mosque in San'â').

Fig. 151 - Cube-shaped capital of the ancient Cathedral of Aksûm (Aksûm Museum).

Fig. 150 - A typical capital of the ancient Cathedral of Aksûm (Aksûm Museum).

Fig. 153 - Modern palace at Zafâr built with ancient architectural materials.

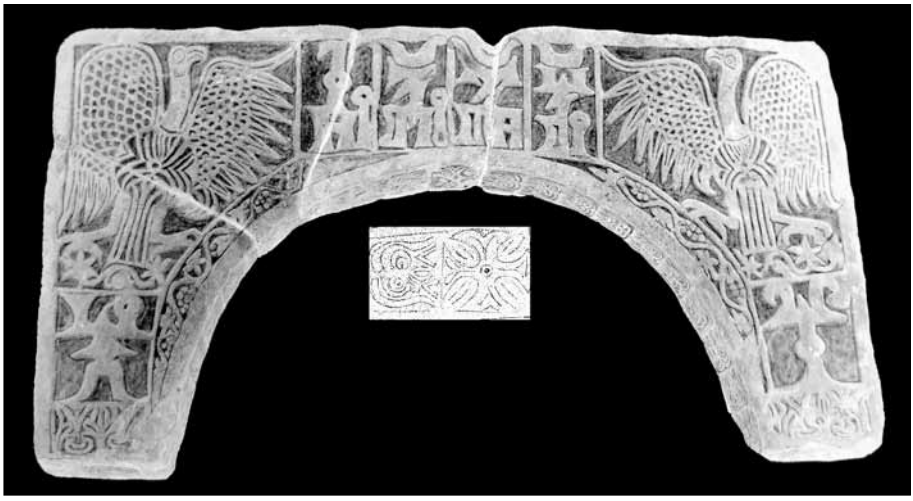

Fig. 154 - The decorations of this stone arch are composed of two eagles with spread wings, a monogram and the vine tendril motif. The intrados is sculpted with a cross and stylised acanthus leaves (Masna'at Mâriya).

Fig. 155 - Alabaster square stone with a frontally facing peacock with a large, wide-open tail.

RETHINKING HELLENISTIC AND SASSANID SECULAR ICONOGRAPHY

From the 3rd century onwards, in addition to existing influences from the Greco-Roman culture, the local iconographic repertory was enriched with new themes inspired by the Parthian-Sassanid tradition, such as the hunt and the combat between horsemen — both expressions of heroic victory. Symbols of power in the ancient Persian tradition, such as the lion-bull combat, were also introduced in South Arabian figurative representations.

The science of warfare

As we have previously noted, during the long twilight of South Arabian civilisation, relief art demonstrated its most eloquent artistic expression. Popular secular subjects in representational art favoured scenes of prowess in arms, whether hunting or warfare.

War is the subject in a fragment of a stone relief from either a funerary or commemorative stela (4th century AD; Figure 156). The scene, emerging from a neutral background, is composed of a horseman armed with a spear and an oval shield and, behind him, a foot soldier with an axe and a small round shield (right side of the drawing). A frame decorated with a vine tendril motif runs along the right side. On the top right portion of the fragment, the monogram "*ydm*" and a two-line dedication are carved.

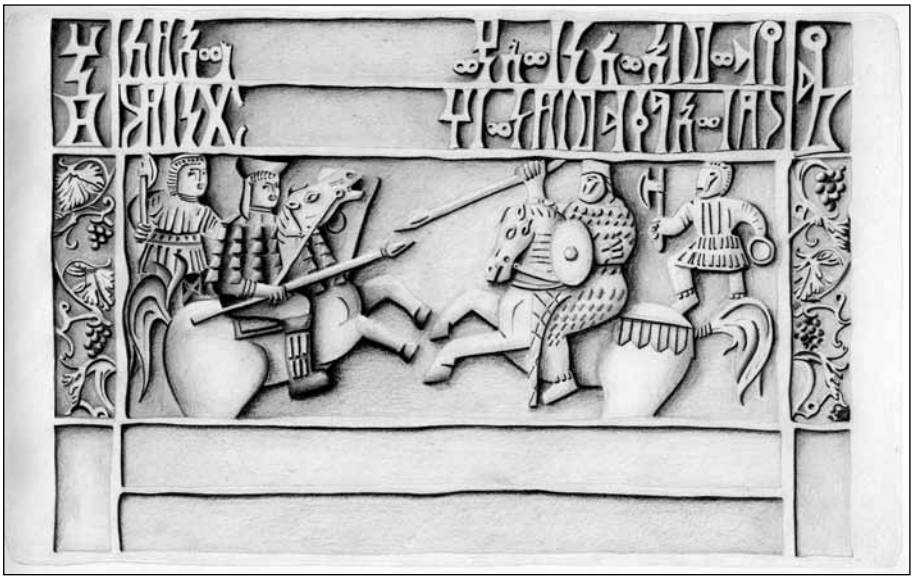

Fig. 156 - Drawing of an inscribed stone stela decorated in relief with a representation of a battle between horsemen and foot soldiers (reconstructions from two fragments).

The horseman, wearing a scaled *lorica* and helmet, is most likely confronting another horseman, as suggested by the partial relief of a horse's hooves appearing on the left edge of the fragment. Indeed, another fragment, reused in recent times for a typical Yemeni lamp, probably belongs to the same stela (left side of the drawing) and would complete the mirror-symmetrical composition of two facing horsemen. The top left portion of the piece is inscribed with another monogram (h, ḍ, n). However, the text of the dedication is incomplete and it is impossible to identify the name of the horseman.

The scene brings to mind another heroic combat depicted on a Himyarite bronze plaque with silver inlay from Zafâr that was part of a horse's harness (Figure 157a; Figure 157b, Colour Plate). The plaque is divided into three horizontal registers framed by a herringbone pattern. The top and bottom registers illustrate (on either side of a central ornamental motif comprising a *cantharus* sprouting vine leaves) two mirror-symmetrical scenes of a hunter on foot accompanied by a dog attacking a fleeing gazelle. The central register is subdivided into two panels, each portraying two horsemen confronting each other on rearing horses and, on the ground between the horses' legs, lays a human figure. The head and legs of the horsemen are seen in profile and their torsos in three-quarter

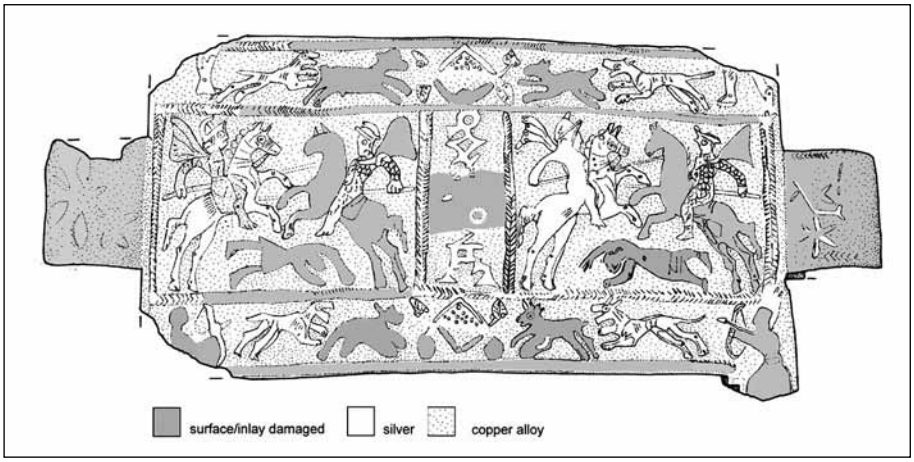

Fig. 157a - Drawing of the plaque from Zafâr. The top and bottom frames of the artwork depict two identical, mirror-symmetrical scenes of a hunter on foot accompanied by a dog attacking a fleeing gazelle.

view so that the figure on the left is viewed from the front and the figure on the right from the back. Each rider holds a lance in his right hand and the reins in the left. Each figure wears a distinct type of warrior attire — the figure on the right wears a tight-fitting suit of chainmail covering the arms and legs down to the ankles, while the figure on the left wears a tunic with transverse folds over a pair of breeches marked with creases. The iconography is particularly interesting for the cultural tradition that inspired the scene. The horseman on the right appears to be a *clibanarius*, that is, a cavalry-man protected by armour and armed with a spear, as seen on Trajan's Column in Rome commemorating victory over the Sarmatians. The cloaks of the two warriors billow out suggesting the energetic movement of the horses, especially the cloak of the left figure that is rendered more plastic by the presence of folds. The technique of silver *intarsio* (or *agemina*) is preserved only on the left-hand horse and covers the areas of the muzzle, musculature, mane, bridle and saddle depicted as a tasselled rug. From a formalist perspective, the figures are flat and the drawing is linear with only a naive allusion to perspective. Although the care for detail is noticeable, the scene lacks naturalism in the rendering of the figures.

Scenes of combat between knight-warriors, like the one on the Himyarite plaque, are not indigenous. Such hunting and knightly combat themes, compositionally arranged in mirror-symmetric scenes, derive from Sassanid iconographic models adapted for the local market by the insertion of Himyarite monograms in the central register. From the study of the onomastics of the monograms, the artefact of Figure 157 can be dated to the 5th century AD. A similar iconography recurs in Sassanid rock reliefs from Naqsh-i Rustam, North of Persepolis, and Fîrûzâbâd, the city founded by Ardashir I. In the Sassanid conventional imagery of combat scenes between horsemen brandishing spears, the horses are depicted at a "flying gallop", running over the ground with their forelegs extended forward and the hind legs extended backwards, while the defeated horseman is shown lying prone on the ground.

A fragmentary architectural element, probably a *voussoir*, presently in the San'â' National Museum, illustrates the iconography of the knight on horseback in heraldic attitude (Figure 158). The horseman is seen with head and legs in profile facing left, so that the torso is seen from the back, with lance at rest. Similar to the plaque from Zafâr (Figure 157), the horseman's triangular cloak billows to suggest the horse's movement and its arching folds mitigate the stiff rendering of the fabric. The figure on the left, although badly damaged, suggests a second horseman, in keeping with the conventional composition of facing warriors inspired by the Sassanid tradition. However, the precursor of this iconography is the image of the "Thracian Knight", a divine or heroic figure represented, from the 2nd century AD, in numerous votive reliefs and funerary stelae in Northern Greece, Macedonia and Bulgaria.

Fig. 158 - An architectonic fragment showing a horseman with lance in rest, sculpted in high relief.

The art of hunting

The themes of the royal lion hunt and animal combat that are carved on a number of Himyarite reliefs most likely derive from Sassanid iconography, although such themes are not exclusively Persian. Indeed, such themes were the favourite subjects for the mosaic cycles that adorned private homes and palaces in Italy (for example, Piazza Armerina, Sicily, 4th century AD), in Roman Proconsular Africa (Djemila, Algeria, 4th century AD) and even in the Eastern Mediterranean cities (Antioch, Syria, 4th – 5th centuries AD).

The Himyarite *voussoir* shown in Figure 159 depicts a lion hunt in high relief. The royal title in the monogram reveals the regal character of the hunt

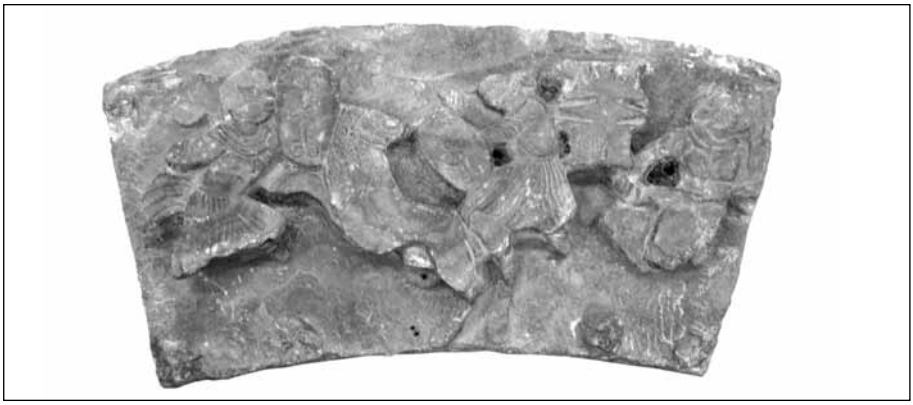

Fig. 159 - Limestone Himyarite architectonic element with a representation of a royal lion hunt in high relief.

performed with the participation of *venatores* (hunters) depicted bare-chested, wearing short skirts and armed with daggers and Roman oval shields decorated with floral motifs. The defeat of a wild beast was considered a noble privilege and understood as a symbol of the glorification of the king. It is likely that, in the relief, the king was one of the hunters represented below the monogram and in proximity to the lion. The carving does not contain any naturalistic depiction of the environmental settings of the hunt.

An interesting sequence of hunting scenes is represented in four different episodes on a squared capital originating from Husn al-'Urr (Hadramawt) and presently in the National Museum of 'Adan (Figure 160a-d). The corners of the capital are flattened and adorned with a vine tendril while each face of the capital bears a hunting scene animated with predators and prey. The four hunting episodes can be interpreted as follows:

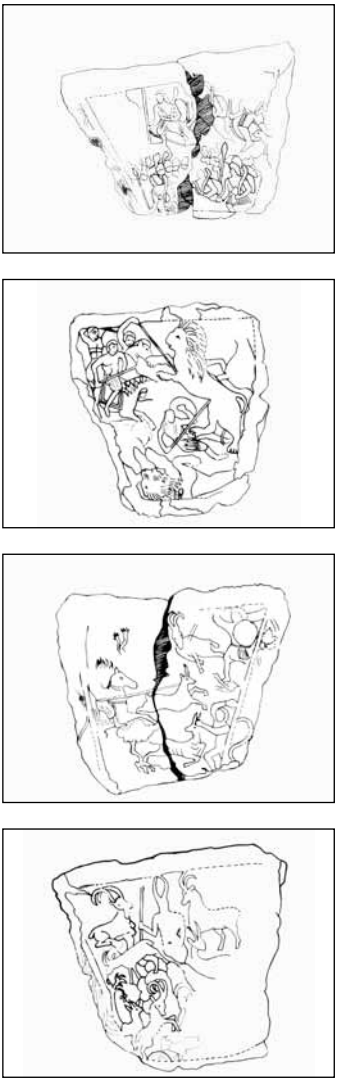

Fig. 160 a-d - Limestone capital from Husn al-'Urr depicting different episodes of a hunt.

a) The hunters, in pleated skirts similar to the hunter's attire in Figure 159, are armed with spears and bows and are accompanied by dogs. This scene could represent hunters in readiness for the hunt, or, according to archaeologist Edward Keall, it could represent the technique of driving animals inside a fence by using beaters and dogs, a practice commonly used in Persia and Roman Africa.
b) Depiction of a lion hunt, where a large lion is pierced by a spear and another lies dead in the foreground. A hunter is riding a horse while two other hunters are on foot and a fourth, armed with a spear and shield, has fallen beneath the rampant lion.
c) Depiction of a gazelle hunt in which two hunters are shown on foot while one rides a horse. The figure in the foreground holds a gazelle by the horns.
d) The scene depicts ibexes resting, grazing or involved in a sporting battle. In the centre, a human silhouette at a distance, with a staff and horned headdress, could be interpreted as a triumphant hunter or a hunter in ritual costume during a propitiatory ceremony. Because of this interpretative uncertainty, this face of the capital could either be the last or the first image of the hunting sequence.

Although the theme of the hunt is commonly found in the Sassanid tradition and in the iconography of the Roman Provinces, Edward Keall suggests that a number of stylistic and compositional elements, such as the subdivision into different sequences (here on the four sides of the capital), the proportions of the human figures and animals and finally the absence of a naturalistic environment, do not belong to these cultures. Instead, these characteristics appear to be specific to Byzantine mosaic compositions dating from the end of the 5th century to the beginning of the 6th century AD found in Constantinople and Antioch. On this basis, Keall envisions the presence in Southern Arabia of Syrian artisans whose artistic influence has been already mentioned for the series of capitals in Corinthian style (Cf. above, p. 137).

The alabaster relief in the Foster Collection (Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, MD; Figure 161, Colour Plate) is an elegant representation of a hunt between animals for which the sculptor seems to have drawn inspiration from Sassanid sumptuary art. The centre of the scene features a tree where birds are perched on the wind-tossed branches. On the left, an ibex is attacked by a dog and, on the right, a leopard leaping from a rock attacks an ibex. On the ground, in the lower part of the scene, a hare and a rodent are represented.

The composition, characterised by the symmetrical placing of the animals and the tendency to clutter the entire space in a *horror vacui* atmosphere, points to an Eastern milieu, while the subject and the iconography are specific to the Sassanid tradition. The detail of a spiral drawn on the forequarters of the hunted animals recalls the motif of the "Sassanid star" on lions in royal hunting scenes decorating luxury plates produced for the court and aristocracy and interpreted as the symbol identifying animals in royal hunts. In artistic depictions of the Ancient Near East, the ibex, the bull and the lion were often associated with celestial symbols (stars, rosettes, points) representing the constellations. The "Sassanid star" could be a reminiscence of those very ancient star symbols.

A hunting scene with a greyhound attacking its prey is featured on the handle of a bronze oil lamp (Figure 162) found at Matara, in Ethiopia. Stratigraphic analysis dates the lamp to the 6th century AD, and the French archaeologist Francis Anfray has hypothesised its South Arabian origin by analogy with lamps found in Yemen. The lamp has an elaborate body characterised by an undulating spout surmounted by beads and four protruding, stylized flamelets, and a tall foot decorated by small palm-shaped columns. The handle consists of a sculpture in the round of a hunting dog attacking a fleeing ibex by seizing the animal's hindquarters with its jaws and front paws. The base of the handle features an elegant decorative element with volutes. On the body, beneath the handle, a bull's head is represented in relief.

Fig. 162 - A refined bronze lamp with the handle in the shape of a hunting dog attacking a fleeing ibex.

The lion-bull combat

A lion attacking a bull is a common scene depicted on Yemeni objects dating from different historical periods. This motif is found on a 1st century BC – 1st century AD relief kept in the Museum of San'â' (Figure 163), on a 1st – 3rd century AD fragment excavated from al-Huqqa, in Central Yemen (North of San'â'; Figure 164), and on the handle of a 3rd – 4th century AD bronze oil lamp of unknown provenance (Figure 165).

Fig. 163 - Limestone low relief with the theme of the lion-bull combat.

Fig. 164 - Fragment of a limestone relief depicting the theme of the lion-bull combat. Note the frontal view of the attacking lion (al-Huqqa).

This iconography is evocative of the *symplegma* (group of entwined animals) depicting the lion-bull combat on the monumental sculptures decorating the Achaemenid palaces in Persepolis (6th century BC). The significance of this symbol, chosen by the Achaemenid kings as the royal emblem for their palaces, is based on the identification of the conquering lion with the king. However, the image has an even more ancient origin — appearing in an Elamite prehistoric seal from around 4,000 BC — and is without doubt the most enduring symbol of Near Eastern iconography. Indeed, the motif of the lion attacking a bull or a gazelle was also transferred to the Islamic milieu as a symbol of power. For example, the theme is to be found in an apse mosaic in a private palace in the Umayyad site of Khirbat al-Mafjar, near Jericho (724 – 743 AD), and in the Great Mosque of Amida/ Diyarbakir, a city in South Eastern Turkey (12th century).

According to German scientist and polymath Willy Hartner (1905 – 1981), the lion-bull combat originally had an astronomical meaning and symbolised a well-defined calendrical event.

> Hartner and Ettinghausen affirm that, There can be no doubt that in Assyrian and Achaemenian time, if not earlier, the old motif was re-interpreted as a symbol for the most important day in the Assyrian and Zoroastrian calendars: on one hand, the solar date indicating the beginning of the luni-solar year, in the other, the Nowrûz (i.e. *the celebration of the Achaemenid New Year*). (Hartner and Ettinghausen 1964: 164).

Fig. 165 - Bronze lamp with the handle featuring a lion attacking a bull. The body of the lamp is decorated with vine tendril, leaves and grapes.

Further, Hartner suggested that in Achaemenid times, the lion-bull motif could also have been transformed into an emblem of royal power. The lion-bull motif was later adopted during the Parthian and Sassanid eras with the same meaning — the symbol of the mighty king. Thence, from this milieu it made its way to South Arabia to become a symbol of power for the local aristocracy. For example, the monogram incised on the relief with the lion-bull motif of Figure 163 cites the name of Nasha'karib, probably a Himyarite aristocrat. According to French epigraphist Christian Robin, the writing and the style of the monogram are commonly found in the archaeological sites of San'â'.

Naturalistic designs

The vine tendril was extremely widespread in Southern Arabia during the 3rd to 6th century and was reproduced on everyday objects, funerary reliefs and architectonic elements, such as columns, *intrados*, doorjambs and pillars. Accompanied by vine leaves and grapes — ornaments of Eastern origin — the tendril seems to have entered the South Arabian decorative repertory through Syria, as early as the 1st century AD when it appears associated with *putti*, birds and tritons. From the 3rd century onwards, the same motif became more simplified, stylised and characterised by angular shapes with bulbous junctions, similar to knots, enclosing grapes alternating with vine leaves. This style can be appreciated in a stone doorway from Yemen kept at the Museum of Oriental Art in Rome (Figure 166), and on the body of the oil lamp described above (Figure 165). Jacqueline Pirenne's typological study of the evolution of this botanical motif on South Arabian reliefs suggests that it belongs to the so-called *champlevé* style of the 4th century AD. The vine tendril was often associated

with a tuft of acanthus (Figure 167) and the ritual vase (Figure 168), probably in connection with the cult of Dionysus. There is no doubt that in Southern Arabia, at least initially, the vine was associated with the Hellenistic legacy of the Greek god Dionysus that was depicted in bronze statues (Cf. Figure 113).

Fig. 166 - Limestone doorway decorated with the vine tendril motif on the lateral frames. The central panels are sculpted with door-knockers, bull's heads and a human bust.

Fig. 167 - Pillar decorated with the vine tendril motif emerging from a tuft of acanthus leaves. The pillar has been reused upside down at a side of the main door of the Sarha mosque in Yarîm.

Among Yemeni naturalistic designs, a vegetal motif makes its appearance coupled to whole or half-sized human and animal figures in an iconographic motif known as "peopled scroll". For example, Edward Keall described an elegantly sculpted portion of an architrave from the archaeological site of Husn al-'Urr (6th century) depicting the intertwined grapevine design enriched by human figures climbing the vine tendrils, a hunter stalking a deer, two women in long robes, a standing ibex and a dove pecking at a bunch of grapes. The "peopled scroll" has

Fig. 168 - Alabaster slab depicting two vases and a monogram in the central panel. The frame consists of a vine tendril motif.

its roots in the Hellenistic world, but enjoyed great popularity with sculptors, painters and mosaicists in Imperial Rome from the 1st century AD through Late Antiquity — from the time of Diocletian (244 – 311 AD) to the 6th century AD. The motif of "peopled scrolls" continued during the Byzantine era (for example, the Eastern Church of the Alahan Monastery in Southern Turkey, dating from the 5th century AD) and in Islamic art (for example, Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi in Syria, built in 727 AD during the Umayyad period). According to Keall, the Husn al-'Urr architrave can best be explained by a North Arabian influence, including Palestine and Central Syria, through the Kingdom of Kinda. As previously mentioned, Kinda was an Arab tribe that had its capital at *Qaryat* (today Qaryat al-Fâw, in the region of Najrân, Saudi Arabia). According to Arab historical tradition, when the Himyarite King Hassan extended his dominium into Central Arabia, he nominated a prince of Kinda, Hujr, as the local king.

Entwined to form a grid, the vine tendril motif was also used to decorate large flat surfaces and its significance resided both in its decorative function and symbolic meaning. Floral and vegetal motifs were also commonly used to cover whole surfaces of pillars, columns, slabs and architraves where the ornamentation was executed in flat, intaglio relief, using a technique of sculpting and grinding down, probably evolved from carpentry practices. For example, a limestone panel from Zafâr (5th – 6th century AD, Figure 169) carries a low relief decoration composed of a vine tendril, intricately entwined with leaves, grapes and the new shoots from the plant. This decoration, where the entwined double vine tendril forms a large network framing leaves and bunches of grapes or other plants, is similar to a coeval Coptic basket capital with entwining leaves and grapes from Saqqara (Egypt).

Fig. 169 - The whole surface of this stone panel is covered by a grid of entwined vine tendrils, bunches of grapes and vine leaves (Zafâr).

An ancient, re-used column from the mosque of Musa at San'â' (Figure 170a-b, Colour Plate), and a column with a decorated shaft re-used in the Great Mosque at San'â' (Figure 171) demonstrate a division of their surfaces into three zones, each decorated with distinct vegetal motifs. The sculptural technique and the ornamental style recall the slabs in the balustrades of Coptic churches. The artistic aim is to achieve an enhanced ornamental effect by completely and harmoniously filling the spaces in an evocation of the *horror vacui* of earlier Eastern tradition.

Historian Avi Yonah summarizes the evolution of the ornament in its artistic expression from the early centuries AD up to the advent of Islam,

> The evolution of ornament from the Hellenistic to Byzantine period represents in the main the transformation of the classical ornament inherited from ancient Greece into the arabesque. The latter ... is the quintessence of all Oriental ornament. However, before the complete transition could be accomplished from the sober and restrained classical ornament to the luxuriant growth of the arabesque, a long process of evolution had to be completed (Avi Yonah 1981: 158-159).

The horoscope

Astrology and the casting of individual horoscopes were important practices in Himyarite society. Therefore it is not surprising to find Zodiac signs in reliefs from Zafâr dating from the 5th century AD. Fragments from several reliefs are kept in the Zafâr Museum, but a number were also reused in the construction of houses at Bayt al-Ashwal. The Zodiac signs identified are Aries (Figure 172), Scorpio and Sagittarius (Figure 173), Cancer (Figure 174), Pisces and Virgo (Figure 175).

Fig. 171 - Column in the courtyard of The Great Mosque in San'â'. The surface of the column is divided into three zones, each depicting distinct vegetal motifs. The cube-shaped capital is decorated with stylised acanthus leaves and rosettes at the corners.

Although the reliefs are fragmented, it is evident that all the Zodiac signs are associated with inscriptions and are surmounted by animal *protomes* projecting from a frieze of acanthus leaves, interpreted as symbols of the planets. For example, the astrological sign of Virgo (Figure 175) is symbolised by an enthroned goddess, wrapped in a cloak, holding the cornucopia in her left hand and a shaft of wheat in her right hand. The inscription "the Ear" accompanies the goddess. Therefore, the astrological sign of Virgo is represented as the goddess of Fertility combined with the goddess of Fortune.

Figure 173 shows the sign of Sagittarius with the inscription *ḥzyn* that means "Sagittarius". This relief is believed to represent a foundation horoscope indicating a favourable astrological conjunction that would provide protection for the building. This hypothesis is corroborated by a 10th century document in which the Yemeni historian Abû al-Hasan ibn Ahmad ibn Ya'qûb al-Hamdânî explicitly mentions the foundation horoscope for the castle of Ghumdân at San'â'.

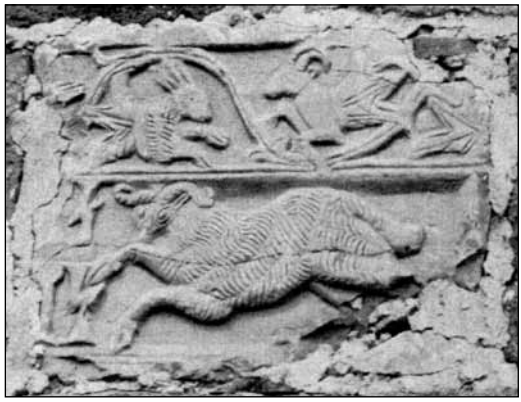

Fig. 172 - Limestone relief depicting the zodiac sign of Aries (Bayt al-Ashwal, Zafâr).

Fig. 173 - Limestone relief with the zodiac signs of Scorpio and Sagittarius.

Fig. 174 - Limestone relief with the zodiac sign of Cancer. In the upper frame, the planets are symbolised by animal protomes that emerge from a frieze of acanthus leaves.

Fig. 175 - Limestone relief with the zodiac sign of Virgo represented sitting on a throne and holding a cornucopia (Museum of Zafâr).

Fig. 176 - Fragment of a human face in stone, framed by a row of curls, a twisted band and a row of ivy (Museum of Zafâr).

Considerations on the representation of the human figures

Numerous fragmentary human figures in relief, part of the Zafâr Museum's collection, are fascinating for their complex iconography that raises questions regarding their origin, significance and stylistic inspiration. A number of stylistic features, such as the rendering of the face in a series of well-defined, sharp planes, the protruding brow, the eyes emphasised by a straight line in relief, often finished with thick eyelids, the swollen eyeball, the prominent chin, the fleshy, down-turned lips, the short curly hair and the twisted, drooping moustache, are found in Parthian artistic production. These characteristics also express conventional Byzantine and Umayyad formal tradition.

The majority of these figural representations are fragmentary and compositionally incomplete and unfortunately, because they were recovered outside

their original context, it is difficult to interpret their meaning and significance. The only exception is the remarkable sculpture of a complete figure (Figure 177, Colour Plate), carved in relief and part of the Eastern wall of the courtyard of a building at Zafâr, excavated and identified as a temple by archaeologist Paul Yule. The standing figure wears a tall crown, a richly decorated tunic and a toga over his left shoulder. He holds a sceptre in his right hand, a torch in his left hand and a sword in a scabbard hangs at his waist. The inscription is engraved in late Sabaic writing on either side of the crown and consists of the invocation *wd'b* , "(the god) Wadd (is) father". This apotropaic formula, of clear pagan character, suggests that the sculpture pre-dates the adoption of monotheism and therefore precedes 380 AD, when Judaism became state religion at the time of King Abîkarib As'ad (Cf. above, p. 134). We concur with Paul Yule in identifying the relief figure with a ruler on the basis of his symbols of power — the crown, the sceptre and probably the torch.

CONCLUSIONS

All that remains today of the illustrious past of the Late Southern Arabian period has come down to us in the form of *spolia* used in erecting mosques and other buildings during the Islamic era. Ancient columns, pillars and capitals were reused in a practical manner in the mosques, as in The Great Mosque in San'â', one of the most ancient in Yemen, built during the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad. Nonetheless, even as Islam began to assert itself, the ancient splendour of the South Arabian civilization was still visible through majestic architecture and distinctive reliefs.

Al-Hamdânî (*c*. 893 – 945) was a Yemeni scholar who belonged to one of the noblest families in San'â' and considered himself an heir to the legacy of South Arabian civilization. He wrote of the greatness of the South Arabian past — the cities, monuments, traditions and language — in contrast to the nomadic, Bedouin tradition of the most Northern regions. In Book VIII of *al-Iklil* (*The Crown*), al-Hamdânî listed the royal palaces that were still in a reasonable state of preservation. He describes the glories of the palace of Ghumdân (al-Maqlab) at San'â' (demolished in 7th century on the Prophet Muhammad's orders), the palaces of Ya'raq and dhû La'wa at Nâ'it (site of more than twenty palaces), the palace of Salhîn in Marib, five palaces at Zafâr, including the legendary Raydân, and many more. Al-Hamdânî describes the architecture of the palace of Ghumdân in terms that may strike us as hyperbolic, but that indicate without doubt the magnificence and originality of the construction.

The most direct evidence of the rich and complex architecture of the ancient palaces comes to us from rare graffiti on rock faces on the plateau near Ghaymân. Figure 178 (Colour Plate) provides an example of such graffiti depicting a group of five adjacent tower-houses. The resemblance to Yemeni architecture as seen today on the plateau is astonishing — high multi-story buildings with façades interspersed with windows and decorations culminating in terraces with parapets (Figure 181, Colour Plate). A second graffito (Figure 179, Colour Plate) represents in greater detail the monumental entrance to a palace — a

flight of stairs flanked by two columns on plinths decorated with large cubic capitals adorned with dentils. In the background stands the palace with its entrance. The graffito is remarkable for the skilful use of spatial perspective.

Finally, a block of stone from the Archaeological Museum in San'â' bears a sculpted relief of the lower part of a palace façade (Figure 180). The three entrances are artistically rendered through the customary use of inset panels. The central doorway is surmounted by an arch, while the side entrances are marked by tympani. The walls are decorated by rows of dentils and the "blinds" motif. The graphic representation of these buildings provides an extraordinary snapshot of late ancient period of Yemeni culture.

Fig. 180 - Limestone block depicting the lower portion of the façade of a palace. The South Arabian traditional motifs of blinds and dentils are associated with the tympanum and arch.

AFTERWORD

We have analysed how ancient Yemeni art advanced from its Bronze Age origins to the formation of a unique local artistic expression. From the 1st millennium BC, the Arabian Peninsula played an important role in the transfer of goods for trade, ideas, religion and culture given its strategic position on major land and sea routes. As a direct result of these external influences, South Arabian art developed through the integration of elements from major cultures that developed around the Mediterranean, the Near East and as far afield, as India and Persia. However, these external forms were incorporated into an artistic and cultural tradition that developed in a clearly autochthonous manner.

With the advent of Islam, the ancient South Arabian culture was completely displaced. However, traces of this ancient civilization have endured and Islam has benefited from this millenary legacy as regards to architectural forms, hydraulic engineering and craftsmanship. The legacy of this ancient and noble civilisation belongs to the Yemeni collective memory and is apparent today in construction techniques (building typologies characterised by stone foundations supporting multi-storey, mud-brick structures — the pre-Islamic tower houses), in urban layout and architectonic decorations, and in eclectic handicraft, such as wood intaglio and modelling in plasterwork.

The debate on the level of cultural development of pre-Islamic Southern Arabia is ongoing. On the basis of Islamic sources, scholars of early Islam consider that Arabia, and in particular Yemen, during the period preceding and immediately following the prophet Muhammad, was a land characterized by poverty, and anarchy — a primitive land in a state of "ignorance", *Jâhiliyya*. In contrast, on the basis of archaeological research and epigraphic studies, scholars of Ancient Arabia emphasize more than a millennium of prosperous and exceptionally advanced civilization.

Certainly, this perception by scholars of Islamic history is due to their focus on a limited period spanning the two centuries preceding Islam. Indeed, the profound political, economic and religious transformations of South Arabian society from the 4th century till the advent of Islam in the 7th century AD, caused a gradual, but irreversible decline of the cities, especially those of Marib and Shabwat that for centuries had been central to the identity of South Arabian tribal populations. A complete inventory of all known Himyarite inscriptions from the 4th to the 6th century AD, compiled by Christian Robin, reveals a gradual decline in epigraphic production until their complete disappearance at the end of this interval. These results are also in agreement with archaeological studies that have revealed a scarcity and modest quality in the material culture and figurative production and the reduced distribution of Yemeni settlements during this period, as reported by archaeologist Jérémy Schittecatte. The city of San'â' represents the exception, as it survived the cultural turmoil during the period from its inception in the 1st century AD to the Islamic era.

The history of South Arabian art and civilization, although fragmentary and discontinuous, speaks to a great civilization with rich cultural, spiritual and economic accomplishments. South Arabian society expanded and prospered during a period spanning over 1,500 years while interacting with every other great civilisation of the region from the Mediterranean to India. In the years to come, we can expect that further archaeological research and discoveries will provide a more comprehensive narrative that does justice to the substantial achievements of this ancient land and its people and shed further light on the history of the entire Ancient World.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC ABBREVIATIONS

AAE: Arabian Archaeology and Epigraphy

AIBL: Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-lettres

AION: Annali dell'Istituto Orientale di Napoli

ABADY: Archäologische Berichte aus dem Yemen

AJA: American Journal of Archaeology

BASOR: Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research

BMQ: British Museum Quarterly

CEFAS: Centre français d'archéologie et de sciences sociales de Ṣanʿā'

CIAS : Corpus des Inscriptions et Antiquités Sud-arabes

DSAWW: Denkschriften der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien, Philosophisch-historische

EAA: Enciclopedia dell'Arte Antica, classica e orientale

EVO: Egitto e Vicino Oriente

EW: East and West

IFPO: Institut Français du Proche-Orient

IRM: IsMEO Reports and Memoirs

IsIAO: Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente

IsMEO: Istituto per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente (then IsIAO)

LIMC: Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae

MAIRY: Missione Archeologica Italiana nella Repubblica dello Yemen

OA: Oriens Antiquus

PAFSM: Publications of the American Foundation for the Study of Man

PSAS: Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies

RC-ANL: Reale Accademia, now Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, Classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche - Rendiconti

RIS: Repertorio Iconografico Sudarabico

RSO: Rivista di Studi Orientali

RES: Répertoire d'Épigraphie Sémitique

SFD: Social Fund for Development, Republic of Yemen

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Prehistory

Amirkhanov, Hizri
(1994) Research on the Palaeolithic and Neolithic of Hadramaut and Mahra. *AAE* 5/4: 217-228.

Anati, Emmanuel
(1968) *Expédition Philby-Ryckmans-Lippens en Arabie*. Ière Partie: *Géographie et archéologie*, Tome 3: *Rock-art in Central Arabia*, vol. 1: *The «Oval-Headed» People of Arabia*; vol. 2: Part 1: *Fat-tailed sheep in Arabia*; Part 2: *The realistic-dynamic style of rock-art in the Jebel Qara*. (Bibliothèque du *Muséon*, 50). Louvain-la-Neuve.

Anati, Emmanuel
(1974) *Expédition Philby-Ryckmans-Lippens en Arabie. Rock-art in Central Arabia*, vol. 4: *Corpus of the Rock Engravings*; Part 3: *Sectors J-Q: From Wâdî Khaniq to Najrân*. (Publications de l'Institut Orientaliste de Louvain, 6). Louvain-la-Neuve.

Audouin, Rémy
(2005) Une «Venus» steatopyge au Metropolitan Museum de New York. In A. Sholan *et al*. 2005: 35-45.

Bayle des Hermens, R. (de)
(1976) Première mission de recherches préhistoriques en République arabe du Yémen. *L'Anthropologie* 80: 5-38.

Bayle des Hermens, R. (de) & D. Grebenart
(1980) Deuxième mission de recherches préhistoriques en République arabe du Yémen. *L'Anthropologie* 84: 563-682.

Bayle des Hermens, R. (de) & M. Rachad-Tardif
(1990) Note préliminaire sur l'art rupestre de la République arabe du Yémen. Mission 1988. *L'Anthropologie* 94, 1: 171-174.

Benardelli, G. & A. E. Parrinello
(1970) Note su alcune località archeologiche del Yemen. *AION* 30 (N.S. XX): 117-120.

Benardelli, G. & A. E. Parrinello
(1971) Note su alcune località archeologiche del Yemen. *AION* 31 (N.S. XXI): 111-118.

Bökönyi, Sandor
(1990) Preliminary report on the animal remains of Ǧabal Quṭrān (GQi) and al-Masannah (MASi). In de Maigret 1990: 145-148.

Braemer, F., T. Steimer-Herbet, L. Buchet *et al*.
(2001) Le Bronze ancien du Ramlat as-Sabaatayn (Yémen): deux nécropoles de la première moitié du IIIe millénaire à la bordure du désert: Jebel Jidran et Jebel Ruwaik. *Paléorient* 27/1: 21-43.

Buffa, Vittoria
(2000) Ma'layba: una comunità di agricoltori dell'Età del Bronzo nell'entroterra di Aden. In *Exhibition Catalogue of Rome* 2000: 71-73.

Buffa, Vittoria
(2005) Cults, symbols, and rituals in the Late Prehistory of Ancient Yemen: some questions from Ṣabr. In A. Sholan *et al*. 2005: 125-134.

Bulgarelli, Grazia Maria
(1987) Evidence of Palaeolithic Industries in Northern Yemen. In W. Daum 1987: 32-33.

Caton Thompson, Gertrude
(1938) Geology and archaeology in the Hadramawt, Southwest Arabia. *Nature* 201: 872.

Caton Thompson, G. & E.W. Gardner
(1939) Climate, irrigation and early man in the Hadramawt. *Geographical Journal* 93/1: 18-38.

Cattani, Maurizio & Sandor Bökönyi
(2002) Ash-Shumah, an early Holocene settlement of desert hunters and mangrove foragers in the Yemeni Tihâmah. In S. Cleuziou *et al*. 2002: 31-53.

Cervicek, P. & F. Kortler
(1979) Rock art discoveries in the northern Yemen. *Paideuma* 25: 226-232.

Cleuziou, Serge, Marie-Louise Inizan & Bruno Marcolongo
(1992) Le peuplement pré- et protohistorique du système fluviatile fossile du Jawf-Hadramawt au Yémen. *Paléorient* 18/2: 5-26.

Cleuziou, Serge, Maurizio Tosi & Juris Zarins (eds)
(2002) *Essays in the Late Prehistory of the Arabian Peninsula*. (IsIAO, Serie Orientale Roma XCIII). Rome.

Costantini, Lorenzo
(1990) Ecology and farming of the protohistoric communities in the central Yemeni Highlands. In de Maigret 1990: 187-204.

Crassard, R. & P. Bodu
(2004) Préhistoire du Hadramawt (Yémen). Nouvelles perspectives. *PSAS* 34: 67-84.

de Maigret, Alessandro
(1984) A Bronze Age for Southern Arabia. *EW* 33: 342.

de Maigret, Alessandro
(1990) *The Bronze Age Culture of Khawlān aṭ-Ṭiyyāl and al Ḥada'(R.A.Y.)*. IRM 24. Rome.

Di Mario, Francesco
(1989) The Western ar-Rub‘ al-Khālī "Neolithic": New Data from the Ramlat Sab‘atayn (Yemen Arab Republic). *AION* 49/2: 109-148.

Di Mario, Francesco
(2002) I siti 'neolitici' del Ramlat Sab‘atayn, Yemen orientale. In S. Cleuziou *et al*. 2002: 55-72.

Edens, Christopher
(1982) Towards a definition of the western ar-Rub' al-Khali "Neolithic". *Atlal* 6: 109-123.

Edens, Christopher
(1999) The Bronze Age of Highland Yemen: chronological and spatial variability of pottery and settlement. *Paléorient* 25/2: 105-128.

Edens, Christopher
(2005) Exploring early agriculture in the highlands of Yemen. In A. Sholan *et al*. 2005: 187-211.

Ekstrom, H. & C. Edens
(2003) Prehistoric agriculture in Highland Yemen: new results from Dhamar. *Yemen Update* 45: 23-32.

Fedele, Francesco G.
(1989) North Yemen: The Neolithic. In W. Daum 1989: 34-37.

Fedele, Francesco G.
(1990) Bronze Age Faunal Collections From North Yemen. In de Maigret 1990: 149-178.

Fedele, Francesco G. & Daniela Zaccara
(2005) Wādī al-Ṯayyila 3: a mid-Holocene site in the Yemen Plateau and its collection. In A. Sholan *et al*. 2005: 213-245.

Francaviglia, Vincenzo
(1990) Obsidian sources in ancient Yemen. In de Maigret 1990: 129-136.

Garcia, Michel-Alain & Madiha Rachad
(1997) *L'Art des origines au Yémen. Paris*. (Seuil éd.).

Garcia, Michel-Alain & Madiha Rachad
(2000) L'arte preistorica. In *Exhibition Catalogue of Rome* 2000: 49-51.

Inizan, M.-L. & L. Ortlieb
(1987) Préhistoire dans la région de Shabwa au Yémen du Sud (R.D.P. Yémen). *Paléorient* 13/1: 5-22.

Inizan, M.-L., A.-M. Lezine, B. Marcolongo *et al*.
(1997) Paléolacs et peuplements holocènes du Yémen: le Ramlat As-Sab'atayn. *Paléorient* 23: 137-149.

Inizan, Marie-Louise & Madiha Rachad
(2007) *Art rupestre et peuplements préhistoriques au Yémen. Ṣan'ā'*. (CEFAS).

Jung, Michael
(1989) Graffiti rupestri nello Yemen del Nord: I. *AION* 49/3: 271-288.

Jung, Michael
(1990) I graffiti rupestri del Ǧabal 'Asāl, del Wādī 'Uš e del Ḥūsn al-Ḏiyāb nello Yemen del Nord. *AION* 50/1: 41-59.

Jung, Michael
(1991) Research on rock art in North Yemen. *AION* 51/1, Suppl. No. 66, pp. 59.

Keall, Edward J.
(2000) Changing Settlement along the Red Sea Coast of Yemen in the Bronze Age. In P. Matthiae, A. Enea, L. Peyronel and F. Pinnock (eds), *Proceedings of the First International Congress on the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East*. Rome, May 18th-23rd 1998. Rome: 710-729.

Keall, Edward J.
(2005) Rock-Shelter paintings in the Tihāmah foothills. In A. Sholan *et al*. 2005: 341-358.

Khalidi, Lamya
(2005) The prehistoric and early historic settlements patterns on the Tihâmah coastal plain (Yemen): preliminary findings of the Tihâmah coastal survey 2003. *PSAS* 35: 115-127.

Khalidi, Lamya
(2005) Megalithic landscapes: the development of the late prehistoric cultural landscape along the Tihāmah coastal plain (Republic of Yemen). In A. Sholan *et al*. 2005: 359-375.

Marcolongo, Bruno & Alberto M. Palmieri
(1990) Paleoenvironmental history of western al-A'Rūš. In de Maigret 1990: 137-143.

McCorriston, Joy
(2000) Early settlement in Hadramawt: preliminary report on prehistoric occupation at Shi'b Munayder. *AAE* 11/2: 129-153.

Newton Lynne, S. & J. Zarins
(2000) Aspects of Bronze Age art of southern Arabia: The pictorial landscape and its relation to economic and socio-political status. *AAE* 11/2: 154-179.

Sedov, Alexander V. & A. As-Saqqāf
(1992) Stone Idols from Wādī 'Idim (Inner Ḥaḍramawt). *Yemen. Studi archeologici, storici e filologici sull'Arabia meridionale* 1: 125-129. Roma. (IsMEO).

Steimer-Herbet, T., J.-F. Saliège, T. Sagory, O. Lavigne & A. As-Saqqaf in collaboration with M. Mashkour and H. Guy
(2007) Rites and funerary practices at Rawk during the fourth millennium BC (Wâdî 'Idim, Yemen). *PSAS* 37: 281-294.

Tchèrnov, E.
(1974) Animal Engravings in Central Arabia. A Study of the Fauna from Sectors A-Q. In Anati 1974: 209-252.

Tosi, Maurizio
(1986) Survey and Excavations on the Coastal Plain (Tihāmah). IsMEO Archaeological Activities in the Yemen Arab Republic, 1986. *EW* 36: 400-414.

Vogt, Burkhard & Alexander V. Sedov
(2000) La cultura di Sabir e la piana costiera yemenita nella seconda metà del II millennio a.C. In *Exhibition Catalogue of Rome* 2000: 64-69.

Wilkinson, T. J. & C. Edens
(1999) Survey and Excavation in the Central Highlands of Yemen: Results of the Dhamār Survey Project, 1996 and 1998. *AAE* 10/1: 1-33.

Wilkinson, T. J., C. Edens & M. Gibson
(1997) The Archaeology of the Yemen High Plains: A preliminary chronology. *AAE* 8/1: 99-142.

Zarins, Juris
(1990) Obsidian and the Red Sea trade: Prehistoric aspects. In M. Taddei and F. Callieri (eds), *South Asian archaeology conference Rome* 1987: 507-541. Rome. (IsMEO).

Archaeology and history of art

ʿAbdallāh, Yūsuf M., ʿAbdu O. Ghāleb & Alexander V. Sedov
(1997) Early Qatabanian Coinage: the Aṣ-Ṣurayrah Coin Hoard. *AAE* 8/2: 203-229.

ʿAlī ʿAqīl, ʿAzza & Sabina Antonini
(2007) *Repertorio Iconografico Sudarabico*, Tome III: *I bronzi sudarabici di periodo pre-islamico*. Roma (IsIAO) – Paris (AIBL). Roma.

ʿAlī ʿAqīl, Leila
(1993) *Les bijoux d'Arabie Méridionale à la période Préislamique*. (Thèse du Doctorat, Université de Paris 1). Paris.

Akopyan, A. M.
(1996) Excavations in the Central Area of the Raybūn I Settlement. In Raybūn Settlement (1983-1987 Excavations). Moscow: 103-117.

Akurgal, Ekrem
(1949) *Späthethitische Bildkunst*. (Archaeologisches Institut der Universitaet). Ankara.

Albright, Frank P.
(1958) Catalogue of Objects found in Mārib Excavations. In R. LeBaron Bowen Jr and F.P. Albright 1958: 269-286.

Albright, Frank P.
(1958) Excavations at Mārib in Yemen. In R. LeBaron Bowen Jr and F.P. Albright 1958: 215-239.

Albright, Frank P.
(1982) *The American Archaeological Expedition in Dhofar Oman*, 1952-1953. (PAFSM, VI). Washington.

Albright, William F.
(1952) Notes on the Temple Awâm and the Archaic Bronze statue. *BASOR* 128: 38-39.

Anfray, Francis
(1967) Maṭarā. *Annales d'Éthiopie* VII: 33- 53.

Anfray, Francis
(1994) Considérations sur quelques aspects archéologiques des relations de l'Ethiopie et de l'Arabie antiques. In *Etiopia e oltre. Studi in onore di Lanfranco Ricci*. Napoli: 17-25.

Ansary, Abdulrahman Muhammad al-Tayeb
(1982) *Qaryat al-Fau. A Portrait of Pre-Islamic Civilization in Saudi Arabia*. Riyadh. (University of Riyadh).

Ansary, Abdulrahman Muhammad al-Tayeb
(2010) Qaryat al-Fâw. In *Exhibition Catalogue of Paris* 2010: 311-363.

Antonini, Sabina
(1992) Oggetti d'importazione dalle tombe di Kharabat al-Ahjar (Dhamār). *Yemen. Studi archeologici, storici e filologici sull'Arabia meridionale* 1: 3-12. Roma. (IsMEO).

Antonini, Sabina
(1996) Una tavoletta-portafortuna in terracotta dagli scavi di Yalā/aḍ-Ḍurayb (Repubblica dello Yemen). In Ch.-J. Robin (ed.), *Arabia Antiqua. Early Origins of the South Arabian States*. (Proceedings of the First International Conference on the Conservation and Enhancement of the archaeological Heritage of the Arabian Peninsula Held at Palazzo Brancaccio, Rome, by IsMEO on 27th-31st May 1991). *Serie Orientale Roma* LXX 1: 143-163.

Antonini, Sabina
(1998) South-Arabian Antiquities in a Private Collection of Ar-Riyadh (Saudi Arabia). *AAE* 9: 261-267.

Antonini, Sabina
(1999) Statuettes from the excavations of the temple of Nakraḥ (Temple A) at Barāqish (Republic of Yemen). *AAE* 10: 58-68.

Antonini, Sabina
(2001) *Repertorio Iconografico Sudarabico*, Tome 1: *La statuaria sudarabica in pietra*. Roma (IsIAO) – Paris (AIBL). Rome.

Antonini, Sabina
(2003) *Banāt 'Ād*. Figurative motifs in South Arabian Temples. In Maria Vittoria Fontana and Bruno Genito (eds), *Studi in onore di Umberto Scerrato per il suo settantacinquesimo compleanno*. (Università degli Studi di Napoli "L'Orientale", Dipartimento di Studi Asiatici). *Series Minor* LXV: 17-33, pls IV-VII.

Antonini, Sabina
(2003) Sculpture of Southern Arabia: authoctony and authonomy of an artistic expression. *Arabia* 1: 21-26, pls 1-5.

Antonini, Sabina
(2004) *Repertorio Iconografico Sudarabico*, Tome 2: *I motivi figurativi delle Banāt 'Ād nei templi sudarabici*. Roma (IsIAO) – Paris (AIBL). Napoli.

Antonini, Sabina
(2004) New South-Arabian Amulets. In Alexander V. Sedov (ed.), *Scripta Yemenica. Studies in History and Culture of Ancient and Medieval Yemen in Honour of Prof. Mikhail Borisovich Piotrovskij*. Moscow: 96-101.

Antonini, Sabina
(2005) A Himyarite artefact in the Parthian-Sasanian style. In Michele Bernardini and Natalia Tornesello (eds), *Scritti in onore di Giovanni M. D'Erme*. (Università degli Studi di Napoli "L'Orientale", Dipartimento di Studi Asiatici). *Series Minor* LXVIII: 1-15.

Antonini, Sabina
(2005) Alcune stele inedite dal Jawf (Yemen). In Alexander V. Sedov and I. M. Smilianskaia (eds), *Arabia Vitalis, Studies in honour of Vitalij Naumkin in occasion of his 60th anniversary*. Moscow: 308-313.

Antonini, Sabina
(2005) The first two archaeological campaigns at Ḥayd b. ʻAqīl, the necropolis of Tamnaʻ (2003-2004). In A. Sholan *et al*. 2005: 1-19.

Antonini, Sabina
(2005) The hypogean tombs of Kharibat al-Ahjur. In Alessandro de Maigret and Sabina Antonini (eds), *South Arabian Necropolises. Italian Excavations at Al-Makhdarah and Kharibat al-Ahjur (Yemen)*. Reports and Memoirs, N.S. IV: 53-90. Rome. (IsIAO).

Antonini, Sabina
(2005-2006) Una nuova lucerna in bronzo dall'Arabia meridionale. *Arabia* 3: 111-114, figs 68-75: 328-330.

Antonini, Sabina
(2008) Due leoni/appliques da Nashshān (Jawf, Repubblica dello Yemen). *EVO* XXXI: 213-218.

Antonini, Sabina
(2009) La sculpture architecturale en Arabie méridionale du iiie au viie siècle après Jésus-Christ. Étude préliminaire. In Jérémie Schiettecatte and Christian J. Robin (eds), *L'Arabie à la veille de l'Islam. Bilan clinique*. Table ronde tenue au Collège de France (Paris) les 28 et 29 août 2006 dans le cadre du projet de l'Agence nationale de la recherche « De l'Antiquité tardive à l'Islam », Orient & Méditerranée 3: 283-314. (de Boccard).

Antonini de Maigret, Sabina, Christian J. Robin & François Bron
(2005-2006) Nouvelles inscriptions de Maʻīn. *Arabia* 3: 273-280, figs 170-172: 364.

Antonini, Sabina & Alessio Agostini
(2010) *A Minaean necropolis at Barāqish (Jawf, Republic of Yemen) Preliminary Report of the 2005-2006 archaeological campaigns*. Reports and Memoirs N.S. IX. Rome. (IsIAO).

Antonini, Sabina & Alessio Agostini
(2010) Excavations of the Italian Archaeological Mission in Yemen: a Minaean necropolis at Barāqish (Wādī Jawf) and the Qatabanian necropolis of Hayd bin ʻAqīl (Wādī Bayḥān). In Lloyd Weeks (ed.) *Death and Burial in Arabia and Beyond Multidisciplinary perspectives*. Society for Arabian Studies Monographs No. 10, Series editors D. Kennet and St J. Simpson (BAR International Series 2107). Oxford: 215-224. (Archaeopress).

Arbach, Mounir
(2005) Un lion en bronze avec un nouveau synchronisme mineo-Qatabanite. In A. Sholan *et al*. 2005: 21-33.

Arbach, Mounir & Rémy Audouin
(2004) *Nouvelles découvertes archéologiques dans le Jawf (République du Yémen). Opération de sauvetage franco-yéménite du site d'as-Sawdâ' (l'antique Nashshân). Temple intra-muros I. Rapport préliminaire*. Ṣanʻā'. (In French and Arabic). (CEFAS).

Arbach, Mounir & Rémy Audouin
(2007) *Ṣanʻā' National Museum. Collection of Epigraphic and Archaeological Artifacts from al-Jawf Sites*. Part II. (UNESCO-SFD).

Arbach, Mounir, Rémy Audouin & Christian J. Robin
(2004) La découverte du temple d'Aranyadaʻ à Nashshān et la chronologie des Labu'ides. *Arabia* 2: 23-41, figs 20-41: 205-216, fig. 70: 234.

Audouin, Rémy
(1992) Sculptures et peintures du château royale. In Breton 1992: 166-170.

Audouin, Rémy
(1996) Étude du décor des temples des Banāt ʻĀd, in Ch. J. Robin (ed.), *Arabia Antiqua. Early Origins of South Arabian States*. Proceedings of the First International Conference on the Conservation and Exploitation of the Archaeological Heritage of the Arabian Peninsula Held at the Palazzo Brancaccio, Rome, by IsMEO on 28th-30th May 1991 (= Serie Orientale Roma LXX 1). Rome: 121-142.

Avanzini, Alessandra (ed.)
(1997) *Profumi d'Arabia*. Atti del convegno. (Saggi di Storia Antica, 11). Roma. ("L'Erma" di Bretschneider).

Avi–Yonah, Michael
(1981) *Art in Ancient Palestine*. Selected Studies collected and prepared by H. Katzenstein and Y. Tsafrir. Jerusalem. (The Magnes Press, The Hebrew University).

Barbet, Alix
(2009) Les peintures murales du Palais royal. In Breton 2009: 123-130.

Bātayā ʻAhmad B. A.
(1983) *Les autels à encens au Yémen Antique*. Mémoire de D.E.A. Paris.

Bātayā ʻAhmad B. A.
(1986) *Origine et évolution du décor architectural préislamique en Arabie méridionale, Ve siècle av. J.-C.-Ve siècle ap. J.-C*. Thèse de doctorat de troisième cycle, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales. Paris.

Beazley, John Davidson
(1943) An archaic Greek statuette from South Arabia. *ABSA* XL: 83-84. (= *Man* XLIII: 88-90).

Beeston, Alfred F.L.
(1976) *Warfare in ancient south Arabia (2nd-3rd c. AD)*. London. (Qahtan 3).

Bianchi Bandinelli, Ranuccio
(1979) *Roma. La fine dell'arte antica*. Milano. (Rizzoli).

Black, Jeremy & Anthony Green
(1992) *Gods, Demons and Symbols of Ancient Mesopotamia. An Illustrated Dictionary*. London. (British Museum Press). (6th reprint University of Texas Press, Austin, 2006).

Boardman, John
(1994) *The Diffusion of Classical Art in Antiquity*. Washington D.C./London. (Thames and Hudson Ldt.).

Bossert, Helmuth Theodor
(1951) *Altsyrien*. Kunst und Handwerk in Cypern, Syrien, Palästina, Transjordanien und Arabien von den Anfängen bis zum völligen Aufgehen in der griechisch-römischen Kultur (Die Ältesten Kulturen des Mittelmeerkreises, Bd. 3). Tübingen: 97-105, figs 1252-1403: 364-403; maps XIII, XXXV: 113, 128. (Ed. Wasmuth).

Bowen LeBaron, R. & F.P. Albright
(1958) *Archaeological Discoveries in South Arabia*. (PAFSM II). Baltimore.

Bowersock, Glen W.
(1983) *Roman Arabia*. Cambridge (Massachussets)/London.

Bowersock, Glen W.
(1992) *L'ellenismo nel mondo tardo antico*. Roma-Bari.

Breton, Jean-François
(1989) L'Orient gréco-romain et le Hadramawt. In T. Fahd 1989: 173-186.

Breton, Jean-François
(1992) Le sanctuaire de 'Athtar dhū-Riṣaf d'as-Sawdā' (République du Yémen). *Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres, Comptes rendus des séances 1992*: 429-453.

Breton, Jean-François (ed.)
(1992) *Fouille de Shabwa. II. Rapports préliminaires*. (= Syria LXVIII, 1991). IFAPO hors série 19. Paris.

Breton, Jean-François (ed.)
(2009) *Fouilles de Shabwa IV. Shabwa et son contexte architectural et artistique du Ier siècle avant J.-C.-au IVe siècle après J.-C*. Sanaa-Damas-Beyrouth-Amman. (CEFAS-IFPO).

Breton, Jean-François & Christian Darles
(1995) Les maisons-tours dans l'Antiquité. In P. Bonnenfant, *Sanaa, architecture domestique et société*. Paris: 449-457.

Breton, Jean-François & Muḥammad 'Abd al-Qādir Bāfaqih
(1993) *Trésor du Wādī Ḍura' (République du Yémen)*. (Bibliothèque Archéologique et Historique 141). Paris.

Breton, Jean-François & Thomas M. Weber
(2009) Programmes iconographiques d'Arabie du Sud et de Syrie du IIe s. av. au IIIe s. ap. J.-C. In Breton 2009: 223-242.

Bron, François
(1998) *Inventaire des Inscriptions Sudarabiques*. Tome 3, Ma'īn. Roma (IsIAO) – Paris (AIBL). Paris.

Bron, François
(2001) Antiquités sudarabiques. *Semitica* 51: 141-147.

Bron, François
(2008) L'inscription des lions de Nashshān. *EVO* XXXI: 219-220.

Bron, François & A. Lemaire
(2009) Nouvelle inscription sabéenne et le commerce en Transeuphratène. *Trans* 38: 11-29, pls I-IV.

Calvet, Yves & Christian J. Robin
(1997) *Arabie heureuse, Arabie déserte. Les antiquités arabiques du Musée du Louvre*. (Notes et Documents des Musées de France 31). Paris.

Casson, L.
(1989) *The Periplus Maris Erythraei*. Text with introduction, translation and commentary. (Princeton University Press).

Caton Thompson, Gertrude
(1944) *The Tombs and Moon Temple of Hureidha (Hadhramaut)*. (= Reports of the Research Committee of the Society of Antiquaries of London, 13). Oxford.

Chelhod, J. (ed.)
(1984) *L'Arabie du Sud. Histoire et civilization. 1: Le peuple yéménite et ses racines* (= Islam d'hier et d'aujourd'hui, 21). Paris. (Editions G.-P. Maisonneuve et Larose).

Cleveland, Ray
(1965) *An Ancient South Arabian Necropolis. Objects from the Second Campaign (1951) in the Timna' Cemetery*. (PAFSM IV). Baltimore.

Cleveland, Ray L.
(1960) The 1960 American Archaeological Expedition to Dhofar. *BASOR* 159: 14-26.

Cleveland, Ray L.
(1963) Cherubs and the "Tree of Life" in Ancient South Arabia. *BASOR* 172: 55-60.

Coarelli, Filippo
(1965) Romana, arte. *EAA* VI: 1010-1024.

Conti Rossini, Carlo
(1927) Dalle rovine di Ausàn. *Dedalo* VII: 727-754.

Costa, Paolo M.
(1973) Antiquities from Ẓafār (Yemen). *AION* 33: 185-206, pls I-XXVI.

Costa, Paolo M.
(1974) La Moschea Grande di Sana. *AION* 34 (N.S. XXIV): 487-506, pls I-XXX.

Costa, Paolo M.
(1976) Antiquities from Ẓafār (Yemen), II. *AION* 36 (N.S. XXVI): 445-456, pls I-XXX.

Costa, Paolo M.
(1989) A Bronze brazier with bacchic scenes from Ṣan‘ā’, In T. Fahd 1989: 479-484, pls 1-12.

Costa, Paolo M.
(1992) Problems of Style and Iconography in the South-Arabian Sculpture. *Yemen. Studi archeologici, storici e filologici sull'Arabia meridionale* 1: 19-39. Roma. (IsMEO).

Dalton, O. M.
(1961) *Byzantine Art and Archaeology*. New York (Dover Publications, Inc.).

Daum Werner (ed.)
(1987) *Yemen. 3000 Years of Arts and Civilisation in Arabia Felix*. Frankfurt-Main. (Pinguin-Verlag).

Davidde, Barbara
(1992) Le monete di 'Amdān Bayyin Yuhaqbiḍ rinvenute nelle tombe di Kharibat al-Ahjar, presso Waragah (Dhamār). *Yemen. Studi archeologici, storici e filologici sull'Arabia meridionale* 1: 41-54. Roma. (IsMEO).

de Contenson, Henry
(1962) Les monuments d'art sud-arabes découverts sur le site de Haoulti (Ethiopie) en 1959. *Syria* XXXIX: 64-87, pls V-VIII.

de Maigret, Alessandro
(1988) *The Sabaean Archaeological Complex in the Wādī Yalā (Eastern Khawlān aṭ-Ṭiyāl, Yemen Arab Republic)*. Reports and Memoirs XXI. (IsMEO).

de Maigret, Alessandro
(1991) The Excavations of the Temple of Nakraḥ at Barāqish (Yemen). *PSAS* 21: 159-171.

de Maigret, Alessandro
(1994) Alcune considerazioni sulle origini e lo sviluppo dell'arte sudarabica. In N. Nebes (ed.), *Arabia Felix. Beiträge zur Sprache und Kultur des vorislamischen Arabien. Festschrift Walter. W. Müller zum 60*. Geburtstag. Wiesbaden: 142-159. (Harrassowitz).

de Maigret, Alessandro
(1997) The Frankincense Road from Najrân to Ma‘an: A Hypothetical Itinerary. In A. Avanzini 1997: 315–331.

de Maigret, Alessandro
(2003) Ricerche italo-francesi nell'antico Qatabān (Arabia del Sud). Risultati delle prime quattro campagne di scavo a Tamna' (1999-2002). In M. V. Fontana and B. Genito (eds), *Studi in onore di Umberto Scerrato in occasione del suo settantacinquesimo compleanno* (= Università degli Studi di Napoli 'L'Orientale', Dipartimento di Studi Asiatici, Series Minor LXV). Napoli: 259–270.

de Maigret, Alessandro
(2005) Recent Discoveries in the 'Market Square' of Tamna'. In A. V. Sedov and I. M. Smilianskaia (eds), *Arabia Vitalis. Studies on Arab Orient, Islam and Ancient Arabia in Honour of V. Naumkin*. Moskow: 346-353.

de Maigret, Alessandro
(2006) Excavations of the Italian Archaeological Mission in the second temple at Barāqish (2004-2005). In Ch. J. Robin and A. Jāzim (eds), *Le pelerin des forteresses du savoir. Hommage au qāḍī Ismā'īl b. 'Alī al-Akwa' à l'occasion de son 85e anniversaire*. Ṣan'ā': 81-92.

de Maigret, Alessandro
(2009) *Arabia Felix. An Exploration of the Archaeological History of Yemen*. Introduction by Tony Wilkinson. London. (Stacey International).

de Maigret, Alessandro
(2007-2010) A Sabaean stratigraphy from Barāqish. *Arabia* 4: 67-95, figs 66-127: 205-240.

de Maigret, Alessandro & Christian J. Robin
(1993) Le temple de Nakraḥ à Yathill (aujourd'hui Barāqish), Yémen. Résultats des deux premières campagnes de fouilles de la Mission Italienne. *Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres, Comptes rendus des séances 1993*: 427-496.

de Maigret, Alessandro & Christian J. Robin
(1998) Le grand temple de Yéha (Tigray), Éthiopie. Après la première campagne de fouilles de la Mission Française (1998). *Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres, Comptes rendus des séances 1998*: 737–798.

de Maigret, Alessandro & Christian J. Robin
(2009) Le royaume sudarabique de Ma'īn : nouvelles données grâce aux fouilles italiennes de Barâqish (l'antique Yathill). *Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres, Comptes rendus des séances 2009*: 57–96.

Dentzer-Feydy, J.
(1985-1986) Décor architectural et développement du Hauran du Ier s. av. J.-C. au VIIe s. ap. J.-C. In J.-M- Dentzer (ed.), *Hauran I, Recherches archéologiques sur la Syrie du Sud à l'époque hellénistiques et romaine*. Deuxième partie, *BAH* CXXIV: 261-310.

Doe, Brian,
(1971) *Southern Arabia*. London. (Thames and Hudson).

Doe, Brian
(1983) *Monuments of South Arabia*. Napoli.

Dussart, Odile
(2009) Les verres. In Breton 2009: 199-219.

Dussaud, René
(1938) Tête de bronze provenant d'Arabie. *Syria* XIX: 98-99.

Exhibition Catalogue of Paris
(1997) *Yémen, au pays de la reine de Saba*. (Exhibition held at Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris, October 25th 1997 – February 28th 1998). Paris. (Flammarion).

Exhibition Catalogue of Rome
(2000) *Yemen. Nel Paese della Regina di Saba*. (Exhibition held at Palazzo Ruspoli, Fondazione Memmo, Rome, April 6th – June 30th 2000). Milano. (Skira).

Exhibition Catalogue of Paris
(2010) *Routes d'Arabie. Archéologie et histoire du Royaume d'Arabie Saoudite*. (Exhibition held at Musée du Louvre, Paris, July 14th – September 27th 2010). Paris. (Somogy éditions d'art).

Fahd, Toufic
(1988) *L'Arabie préislamique et son environnement historique et culturel*. (Actes du Colloque de Strasbourg, 24-27 juin 1987. Travaux du Centre de Recherche sur le Proche-Orient et la Grèce antique, 10). Leiden.

Fakhry, Ahmed
(1951-52) *An Archaeological Journey to Yemen (March-May, 1947)*, (Service des Antiquités de l'Egypte): Part I, 1952; Part II: Epigraphical Texts by G. Ryckmans, 1952; Part III: Plates, 1951. Cairo.

Finster, Barbara
(1980) Zu Einigen Spolien in der Freitagsmoschee von Ṣan'ā'. *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, Suppl. IV: 492-497.

Finster, Barbara
(1982) Die grosse Moschee von Ṣan‘ā’. Dritter vorlaufiger Bericht. Die vier westjoche im Ḥaram. *ABADY* I: 197-211.

Finster, Barbara
(1986) Die grosse Moschee von Ṣan‘ā’. 4. Vorlaufiger Bericht. *ABADY* III: 185-193.

Finster, Barbara
(1996) Arabien in der Spatantike. Ein Uberblick uber die kulturelle Situation der Halbinsel in der Zeit von Muhammad. *Archaologischer Anzeiger*: 287-319.

Finster, Barbara
(2010) Arabia in Late Antiquity: an Outline of the Cultural Situation in the Peninsula at the Time of Muhammad. In A. Neuwirth, N. Sinai and M. Marx (eds), *The Qur’ān in Context. Historical and Literary Investigations into the Qur’ānic Milieu* (Texts and Studies on the Qur’ān, Vol. 6). Leiden-Boston: 61-114. (Brill).

Finster, Barbara & Jürgen Schmidt
(1994) Die Kirche des Abraha in Ṣan‘ā’. In Norbert Nebes (ed.), *Arabia Felix*. Beiträge zur Sprache und Kultur des vorislamischen Arabien, Festschrift Walter W. Müller zum 60. Wiesbaden: 67-86. (Harrassowitz).

Frankfort, Henri
(1970). *Arte e architettura nell’antico Oriente*. Torino.

Gajda, Iwona
(2009) *Le royaume de Ḥimyar à l’époque monothéiste. L’histoire de l’Arabie du Sud ancienne de la fin du IVe siècle de l’ère chrétienne jusqu’à l’avènement de l’islam*. Mémoires de l’Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres, Tome 40. Paris. (de Boccard).

Garbini, Giovanni
(1966) La datazione della statua sudarabica di Ma‘adkarib. *OA* 5: 59-65, pl. VII.

Garbini, Giovanni
(1970) Un oroscopo himyarita. *AION* 30: 439-446.

Garbini, Giovanni
(1974) Il dio sabeo Almaqah. *RSO* XLVIII: 15-22.

Garbini, Giovanni
(1977) Su alcuni tipi di stele e statuette sudarabiche con iscrizione. *AION* 27: 376-381.

Garbini, Giovanni
(1984) L'art et la pensée chez les anciens Yéménites. In J. Chelhod (ed.), *L'Arabie du Sud, histoire et civilisation,* 1: *Le peuple yéménite et ses racines*. Islam d'hier et d'aujourd'hui 21. Paris: 225-248. (Maisonneuve et Larose).

Garbini, Giovanni & Vincenzo Francaviglia
(1997) I troni dei re di Nashan. *Rend. Mor. Acc. Lincei*, s. IX, v. VIII: 239-252.

Gerlach, Iris
(2002) Der Friedhof des Awām-Tempels in Marib. Bericht der Ausgrabungen von 1997 bis 2001. *ABADY* IX: 41-58, pls 1-33.

Gerlach, Iris
(2004) Un relief en bronze sabéen d'inspiration proche-orientale. *Chroniques Yéménites* 11: 9-35. Ṣan'ā'. (CEFAS).

Gerlach, Iris
(2005) Culture transfer in South Arabia during the pre-Islamic times: Evidence for mobility? In A. Sholan *et al*. 2005: 259-278.

Gerlach, Iris
(2005) What is Sabaean Art? Problems in Distinguishing Ancient South Arabian Art Using Saba and Qatabân as Examples. *ABADY* X: 31-43.

Goetz, Hermann
(1963) An Indian Bronze from South Arabia. *Archaeology* 16: 187-189.

Grabar, André
(1966) *Le premier art Chretien* (200-395). Paris. (Gallimard).

Grabar, André
(1996) *L'età d'oro di Giustiniano. Dalla morte di Teodosio all'Islam*. Milano. (Feltrinelli).

Grabar, Oleg
(1973) *The formation of Islamic Art*. New Haven and London. (Yale University Press).

Green, Anthony
(1995) Ancient Mesopotamian Religious Iconography. Sasson ed. in chief, *Civilizations of the ANE* 3: 1837-1855.

Grohmann, Adolf
(1963) *Arabien* (Kulturgeschichte des alten Orients, III. Abschnitt, IV. Unterabschnitt, in Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft). München.

Halévy, Joseph
(1872) Rapport sur une mission archéologique dans le Yémen. *Journal asiatique*, 6e série, t. XIX: 5-98, 129-266, 489-547.

Hamdānī/Fāris Nabīh Amīn
(1931) *The Antiquities of South Arabia*. Being a translation from the Arabic, with linguistic, geographic and historical notes of the Eighth Book of al-Hamdānī's *al-Iklīl*. (Princeton Oriental Texts, vol. III). Princeton.

Hartner, Willy
(1965) The earliest history of the constellations in the Near East and the motif of the lion-bull combat. *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* XXIV/1-2: 1-16, pls I-XVI.

Hartner, Willy & Richard Ettinghausen
(1964) The Conquering Lion, the Life Cycle of a Symbol. *Oriens* 17: 161-171

Hattstein, Markus & Peter Delius (eds)
(2001) *Islam. Arte e architettura*. Milano- Könemann.

Hitgen, Holger
(2000) La necropoli sabea presso l'Awām di Marib. In *Exhibition Catalogue of Rome* 2000: 194-197.

Hitgen, Holger
(2002) Magnesiumhydroxicarbonat. Ein wiederentdeckter Werkstoff in der altsüdarabischen Kunst. *ABADY* IX: 165-180, pls 1-4.

Hitgen, Holger
(2005) The Age of the "Fighting Kingdoms" in South Arabia (1. Century B.C. – 3. Century A.D.). Aspects of the Material Culture in a Period of Change. *ABADY* X: 45-67.

Honeyman, A.M.
(1954) The Hombrechtikon Plaque. *Iraq* XVI: 23-28.

Hoyland, Robert G.
(2001) *Arabia and the Arabs from the Bronze Age to the coming of Islam*. London and New York. (Routledge).

Jamme, Albert
(1954) Inscriptions on the Sabaean bronze horse of the Dumbarton Oaks Collection. *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 8: 317-330.

Jamme, Albert
(1956) Les antiquités sud-arabes du Museo Nazionale Romano. *RC-ANL* XLIII: 1-118, pls I-XII.

Jamme, Albert
(1962) *Sabaean Inscriptions from Maḥram Bilqîs (Mârib)*. (PAFSM III). Baltimore.

Jändl, Barbara
(2009) *Altsüdarabische Inschriften auf Metall* (Epigraphische Forschungen auf der Arabischen Halbinsel, Band 4). Tübingen-Berlin. (Ernst Wasmuth Verlag).

Japp, Sara
(2004). Greek and Roman Table Ware and Glass in South Arabia. *Arabia* 2: 99-109.

Keall, Edward J.
(1995) Forerunners of Umayyad Art: Sculptural Stone from the Hadramawt. *Muqarnas* 12: 11-23

Kensdale, W. E. N.
(1953) The Red Granite Stela of Ma'īn. *JNES* 12: 194-6.

Kitchen, Kenneth Anderson
(2009) A glimpse of the wealth of the Shabwat nobility at the fall of the kingdom of Hadhramawt. In Breton 2009: 243-275.

Laffitte, Roland
(2003) Sur le zodiaque sudarabique. *Arabia* 1: 77-87, pls 9-11: 214-216.

Le Baron Bowen R. Jr e F. P. Albright
(1958). *Archaeological Discoveries in South Arabia*. (PAFSM II). Baltimore.

Lewcock, Ronald
(1987) The Medieval Architecture of Yemen. In W. Daum 1987: 204-211.

Liverani, Mario
(1988) *Antico Oriente. Storia, società, economia*. Roma-Bari. (Laterza).

Macdonald, M. C. A.
(1990) Camel hunting or camel raiding? *AAE* 1: 24-28.

Macdonald, M. C. A.
(1997) Trade Routes and Trade Goods at the Northern End of the 'Incense Road' in the First Millennium B.C. In A. Avanzini 1997: 333-349.

Mackay, D.
(1949) The jewellery of Palmyra and its significance. *Iraq* XI: 160-187.

Monneret de Villard, Ugo
(1966) *Introduzione allo studio dell'archeolgia islamica*. *Le origini e il periodo omayyade*. Venezia-Roma.

Mouton, Michel
(1997) Les échanges entre l'Arabie du Sud et la péninsule d'Oman du 3e s. av. J.-C. au 4e s. ap. J.-C. In A. Avanzini 1997: 297-313.

Munro-Hay, Stuart C. H.
(2003) *Coinage of Arabia Felix. The Pre-Islamic Coinage of the Yemen*. (*Mare Erythraeum* VI). Munich.

Parlasca, Klaus
(1989) Bemerkungen zu den Archäologischen Beziehungen zwischen Südarabien und dem Grieschisch-Römischen Kulturkreis. In T. Fahd 1989: 281-287.

Philby, H. St. John
(1981) *The Queen of Sheba*. London.

Phillips, Wendell
(1955) *Qatabân et Sheba. Exploring Ancient Kingdoms on the Biblical Spice Routes of Arabia*. New York.

Phillips, Carl S.
(1997) Al-Hāmid: a route to the Red Sea? In A. Avanzini 1997: 287-295.

Picard, Ch.
(1955) Les lions chevauchés de Timna' et la sculpture alexandrine de 1'Arabie Félix. *Revue Archéologique* XLVI: 74-78.

Pichworth-Wong, Diana
(1992) *South Arabian Bovine Stelae: On the Function and Significance of Theomorphic Statues from Qatabān*. (Thesis of Master of Arts in Near Eastern Studies in the Graduate Division of the University of California at Berkley). Berkley.

Piotrovsky, Michail
(2000) Le cause di una scomparsa. In *Exhibition Catalogue of Rome* 2000: 259.

Pirenne, Jacqueline
(1955) *La Grèce et Saba. Une nouvelle base pour la chronologie sud-arabe*. (Mémoires présentés par divers savants à l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-lettres). Tome XV. Paris: 88-196, pls I-XI.

Pirenne, Jacqueline
(1957) Le rinceau dans 1'évolution de 1'art sud-arabe. *Syria* XXXIV: 99-127.

Pirenne, Jacqueline
(1960) Notes d'archéologie sud-arabe, I: Stèles à la déesse Dhât Ḥimyam (Ḥamîm). *Syria* XXXVII: 326-347, pls XIV-XV.

Pirenne, Jacqueline
(1961) Arabie préislamique. Histoire générale de l'Art. (Encyclopédie de la Pléiade, t. I). Paris: 900-929.

Pirenne, Jacqueline
(1961) Notes d'archéologie sud-arabe II: La statuette d'un roi de ʾAwsān et l'hellénisation dans la statuaire sud-arabe. *Syria* XXXVIII: 284-310, pls XIII-XVI.

Pirenne, Jacqueline
(1965) Les phases de l'hellénisation dans l'art sud-arabe. *Le rayonnement des civilisations grecque et romaine sur les cultures périphériques* (Huitième congrès international d'archéologie classique, Paris, 1963). Paris: 535-541, pls 133-135.

Pirenne, Jacqueline
(1977) *Corpus des inscriptions et antiquités sud-arabes*. Tome I, Section 2: *Antiquités*. (AIBL). Louvain.

Pirenne, Jacqueline
(1986) *Corpus des inscriptions et antiquités sud-arabes*. Tome II, Fascicule 2: *Le Musée d'Aden* (AIBL). Louvain.

Pirenne, Jacqueline
(1989) Des Grecs à l'aurore de la culture monumentale sabéenne. In T. Fahd 1989: 257-269.

Pirzio Biroli Stefanelli, Lucia
(1990) *Il bronzo dei romani: arredo e suppellettile*. Roma. (L'Erma di Bretschneider).

Pirzio Biroli Stefanelli, Lucia
(1991) *L'argento dei romani: vasellame da tavola e d'apparato* (con contributi di Maria Elisa Micheli e Barbara Pettinau). Roma. (L'Erma di Bretschneider).

Pritchard, James B.
(1969) *The Ancient Near East in Picture*. Princeton.

Radt, Wolfang
(1973) *Katalog der staatlichen Antikensammlung von Ṣan'ā' und anderer Antiken im Jemen*. (Deutsches Archäologisches Institut). Berlin.

Rathjens, Carl
(1950) Kulturelle Einflüsse in Südwest-Arabien von den ältesten Zeiten bis zum Islam, unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des Hellenismus. *Jahrbuch für Kleinasiatische Forschung* I/1. Heidelberg: 1-42.

Rathjens, Carl
(1953) *Sabaeica, Bericht über die archäologischen Ergebnisse seiner zweiten, dritten und vierten Reise nach Südarabien*. (Mitteilungen aus dem Museum für Völkerkunde in Hamburg, XXIV). I. Teil, Der *Reisebericht*. Hamburg.

Rathjens, Carl
(1955) *Sabaeica, Bericht über die archäologischen Ergebnisse seiner zweiten, dritten und vierten Reise nach Südarabien*. (Mitteilungen aus dem Museum für Völkerkunde in Hamburg, XXIV): II. Teil, Die unlokalisierten Funde. Hamburg.

Rathjens, Carl & Herman von Wissmann
(1932) *Vorislamische Altertümer*. (Hamburgische Universität, Abhandlungen aus dem Gebiet der Auslandkunde, Bd. 38). Hamburg.

Retsö, Jan
(1991) The domestication of the camel and the establishment of the Frankincense Road from South Arabia. *Orientalia Suecana* 40: 187-219.

Retsö, Jan
(1993) The Road to Yarmuk: The Arabs and the Fall of the Roman Power in the Middle East. In L. Rydén and J.O. Rosenqvist (eds), *Aspects of the Late Antiquity and Early Byzantium*. (Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul.), Transactions, vol. 4. Stockholm: 31-41.

Rinaldi Tufi, Sergio
(2006) *Archeologia delle province romane*. Roma (Carocci ed.).

Robin, Christian J.
(1981) Le calendrier himyarite: nouvelles suggestions. *PSAS* 11: 43-53.

Robin, Christian J.
(1984) La civilisation de 1'Arabie méridionale avant 1'Islam. *L'Arabie du Sud. Histoire et Civilisation* I: 195-224.

Robin, Christian J.
(1991) *L'Arabie antique de Karib'îl à Mahomet. Nouvelles données sur l'histoire des Arabes grâce aux inscriptions* (= Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Méditerranée, 61). Aix-en-Provence.

Robin, Christian J.
(1992) *Inventaire des inscriptions sudarabiques*, Tome 1: *Inabba', Haram, Al-Kāfir, Kamna et al-Ḥarāshif*, fascicule A: Les documents, fascicule B: Les planches. Roma (IsMEO) – Paris (AIBL). Paris: 11-126.

Robin, Christian J.
(1995) Des villes dans le Jawf du Yémen? *Semitica* 43-44: 141-161.

Robin, Christian J.
(1996) Le royaume hujride, dit "royaume de Kinda", entre Himyar et Byzance. *AIBL*: 665-714.

Robin, Christian J.
(1996) Les premiers États du Jawf et la civilisation sudarabique. In Ch. J. Robin (ed.), *Arabia Antiqua. Early Origins of South Arabian States*. Proceedings of the First International Conference on the Conservation and Exploitation of the Archaeological Heritage of the Arabian Peninsula Held at the Palazzo Brancaccio, Rome, by IsMEO on 28th-30th May 1991 (= Serie Orientale Roma LXX, 1). Rome: 49-65.

Robin, Christian J.
(1996) Sawdā' al-. *Encyclopédie de l'Islam*: 93-95.

Robin, Christian J.
(2008) Inventaire des documents épigraphiques provenant du royaume de Ḥimyar aux IVe-VIe siècles. In J. Schiettecatte (ed.) with the collaboration of Ch. J. Robin, *L'Arabie à la veille de l'Islam. Bilan Clinique*. Actes de la table ronde tenue au Collège de France (Paris) les 28 et 29 août 2006 dans le cadre du projet de l'Agence nationale de la recherche « De l'Antiquité tardive à l'Islam ». Orient & Méditerranée, No. 3. Paris: 165-216. (de Boccard).

Rodinson, Maxime
(1984) L'Arabie du Sud chez les auteurs classiques. In J. Chelhod 1984: 55-89.

Roes, Anne
(1953) Un grand bronze hittite trouvé en Arabie. *Syria* XXX, 1-2: 65-71.

Ryckmans, Jacques
(1973) Notes sur le cheval de bronze de Dumbarton Oaks. *Revue des Archéologues et Historiens d'Art de Louvain* VI: 38-74.

Ryckmans, Jacques
(1975) The Pre-Islamic South Arabian Bronze Horse in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection. *PSAS*: 287-303, figs 1-6.

Ryckmans, Jacques
(1976) A Bust of a South Arabian Winged Goddess with Nimbus in the possession of Miss Leila Ingrams. *Arabian Studies* III: 67-78.

Salles, Jean-François & Alexander V. Sedov
(2010) *Qāni'. Le port antique du Ḥaḍramawt entre la Méditerranée, l'Afrique et l'Inde*. Fouilles Russes 1972, 1985-89, 1991, 1993-94. Indicopleustoi Archaeologies of the Indian Ocean. Institut d'Études Orientales Académie des Sciences de Russie – Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée. Turnhout. (Brepols Publishers).

Schiettecatte, Jérémie
(2009) L'évolution du peuplement sudarabique du Ier au VIe siècle. In J. Schiettecatte (ed.) with the collaboration of Ch. J. Robin, *L'Arabie à la veille de l'Islam. Bilan Clinique*. Actes de la table ronde tenue au Collège de France (Paris) les 28 et 29 août 2006 dans le cadre du projet de l'Agence nationale de la recherche « De l'Antiquité tardive à l'Islam ». Orient & Méditerranée, No. 3. Paris: 217-249. (de Boccard).

Schiettecatte, Jérémie
(2009) Shabwa, Ma'rib et Ṣan'ā'. Le devenir des capitales sudarabiques à la veille de l'Islam. In J. Schiettecatte (ed.) with the collaboration of Ch. J. Robin, *L'Arabie à la veille de l'Islam. Bilan Clinique*. Actes de la table ronde tenue au Collège de France (Paris) les 28 et 29 août 2006 dans le cadre du projet de l'Agence nationale de la recherche « De l'Antiquité tardive à l'Islam ». Orient & Méditerranée, No. 3. Paris: 251-281.

Schiettecatte, Jérémie
(2010) The Arabian Iron Age funerary stelae and the issue of cross-cultural contacts. In Lloyd Weeks (ed.), *Death and Burial in Arabia and Beyond Multidisciplinary perspectives*. Society for Arabian Studies Monographs No. 10, Series editors D. Kennet & St J. Simpson (BAR International Series 2107): 191-203. Oxford. (Archaeopress).

Schiettecatte, Jérémie
(2011) *D'Aden à Zafar. Villes d'Arabie du Sud préislamique.* (Orient & Méditerranée, No. 6). Paris. (de Boccard).

Schlumberger, D.
(1933) Les formes anciennes du chapiteau corinthien en Syrie, en Palestine et en Arabie. *Syria* XIV: 283-317.

Schmidt, Jürgen
(1982) Der 'Attar-Tempel bei Ma'īn. *ABADY* I: 143-152.

Schmidt, Jürgen
(1987) Ancient South Arabian Sacred Buildings. In W. Daum 1987: 78-98.

Schmidt, Jürgen
(1987) Antiken aus dem Stadtgebiet von Mārib. *ABADY* IV: 131-142.

Sedov, Alexander V.
(1988) Raybūn. A Complex of Archaeological Monuments in the Lower Reaches of Wādī Dau'an and Certain Problems of Its Protection and Restoration. *Ancient and Mediaeval Monuments of Civilization of Southern Arabia.* Moscow: 61-66.

Sedov, Alexander V.
(1995) The Coinage of Ancient Hadhramawt. The Pre-Islamic Coins in the al-Mukalla Museum. *AAE* 5: 17-31.

Sedov, Alexander V.
(1996) Raybūn – The Complex of Archaeological Monuments in the Lower Reaches of Wādī Dau'an. *Raybūn Settlement*, vol. II (1983-1987 Excavations). Preliminary Reports of the Soviet-Yemeni Joint Complex Expedition. Moscow: 19-30.

Sedov, Alexander V.
(1997) Sea-Trade of the Hadhramawt Kingdom from the 1st to the 6th centuries A.D. In A. Avanzini 1997: 365-383.

Sedov, Alexander V.
(2000) Le sepolture di cammelli. In *Exhibition Catalogue of Rome* 2000: 249.

Sedov, Alexander V.
(2000) Qāni', un grande porto tra l'India e il Mediterraneo. In *Exhibition Catalogue of Rome* 2000: 235-239.

Sedov, Alexander V.
(2001) The Coinage of Pre-Islamic Yemen: General Remarks. *Adumatu* 3: 27-38.

Segall, Berta
(1955) The Arts and King Nabonidus. *AJA* 59: 315-319, pl. 93.

Segall, Berta
(1955) Sculpture from Arabia Felix. The Hellenistic Period. *AJA* 59: 207-214, pls 56-61.

Segall, Berta
(1956) Problems of Copy and Adaptation in the Second Quarter of the First Millenium BC. *AJA* 60: 165-170, pls 63-65.

Segall, Berta
(1957) Sculpture from Arabia Felix: the Earliest Phase. *Ars Orientalis* II: 35-42, pls 1-4.

Segall Berta
(1958) The Lion-Riders from Timna. In R. LeBaron Bowen Jr and F. P. Albright 1958: 155-178, pls 97-109.

Serjeant, Robert B. & R. Lewcock
(1983) *Ṣan'ā'. An Arabian Islamic City*. London.

Seyrig, H.
(1940) Ornamenta Palmyrena antiquiora. *Syria* XXI: 277-337.

Seyrig, H.
(1941) Sculptures palmyreniennes archaiques. *Syria* XXII: 31-44.

Shahīd, Irfan
(1984) *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Fourth Century*. Washington D.C. (Dumbarton Oaks research Library and Collection).

Sholan, Amida, Sabina Antonini & Mounir Arbach (eds)
(2005) *Sabaean Studies*. Studies in honour of Yūsuf M. 'Abdallāh, Alessandro de Maigret and Christian J. Robin in occasion of their 60th birthdays. Naples-Ṣan'ā'.

Simpson, John (ed.)
(2002) *Queen of Sheba. Treasures from Ancient Yemen*. London. (The British Museum Press).

Smith, Sidney
(1936-1937) Bronze Lion's Head from Najrān S. Arabia. *BMQ* XI: 154-156, pl. XLII.

Smith, Sidney
(1952) Two Luristan Bronzes from Southern Arabia. *Archaeologica orientalia in Memoriam Ernst Herzfeld*. New-York: 203-207, pls 1-2. (J. J. Augustin Publisher).

Tawfīq, Muḥammad
(1951) *Āṯār Ma'īn fī Ǧawf al-Yaman*. (Publications de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire, Etudes sud-arabiques, I). Cairo.

Vogt, Burkhard
(1994) Death, Resurrection and the Camel. In Norbert Nebes (ed.), *Arabia Felix*. Beiträge zur Sprache und Kultur des vorislamischen Arabien, Festschrift Walter W. Müller zum 60. Wiesbaden: 279-290. (Harrassowitz).

Weidermann, K.
(1983) *Könige aus dem Jemen.* Mainz.

Will, Ernest
(1989) De la Syrie au Yémen: problèmes de relations dans le domaine de l'art. In T. Fahd 1989: 271-279.

Will, Ernest
(2000) Le arti alla scuola di Grecia e Roma. In *Exhibition Catalogue of Rome* 2000: 253-254.

Yule, Paul
(2007) Ẓafār, Capital of Ḥimyar. Fifth Preliminary Report, February–March 2005. *Zeitschrift für Archäologie Außereuropäische Kulturen* 2: 105-120.

Yule, Paul
(2007) *Himyar. Late Antique Yemen*. Aichwald. (Linden Soft Verlag e. K.).

Yule, Paul
(2009) Ẓafār, Capital of Ḥimyar. Seventh Preliminary Report. http://archiv.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/propylaeumdok/volltexte/2009/303/.

Yule, Paul & Christian J. Robin
(2005-2006) Ḥimyarite knights, infatryman and hunters. *Arabia* 3: 261-271, figs 157-169: 358-363.

Yule, Paul, Kristina A. Franke, Manfred Rösch & Cornelia Ruppert
(2008) Ẓafār, Capital of Ḥimyar. Sixth Preliminary Report, February-March 2006. *ZOrA* 1: 208-245.

Yule, Paul, Kristina Franke, Cornelius Meyer, G. Wilhelm Nebe, Christian Robin & Carsten Witzel
(2007) Ẓafār, Capital of Ḥimyar. Ibb Province, Yemen. *ABADY* XI: 479-547, pls 1-47.

Zayadine, Fawsi (ed.)
(1990) *Petra and the Caravan Cities*. (Proceedings of the Symposium organised at Petra in September 1985 by the Department of Antiquities of Jordan and the LIMC. Department of Antiquities). Amman.

Religion

Beaucamp, Joëlle, Françoise Briquel-Chatonnet & Christian J. Robin (eds)
(2010) *Juif et Chrétiens en Arabie aux Ve et VIe siècles*. Regards croisés sur les sources. Collège de France – CNRS, Centre de Recherche d'Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance. Monographies 32. *Le massacre de Najrân* II. Paris.

Beeston, Alfred F. L.
(1984) The religions of pre-Islamic Yemen. In J. Chelhod 1984: 259-269.

Dostal, Walter
(1983) Some remarks on the ritual significance of the bull in pre-Islamic South Arabia. In R. Bidwell and G.R. Smith (eds), *Arabian and Islamic Studies*. London: 196-213.

Dostal, Walter
(1999) Stier und Ritual im Jemen: Fortleben antiker Traditionen in heutigen Volksbräuchen. In W. Daum, Walter W. Müller, N. Nebes and W. Raunig (eds), *Im Land der Königin von Saba* (Catalogue of he Exhibition held at München, in the Staatlichen Museum für Völkerkunde, July 7th 1999 - January 9th 2000). München: 131-136.

Gajda, Iwona
(2000) Les débuts du Monothéisme en Arabie du sud. *Journal Asiatique* 290/2: 611-630.

Garbini, Giovanni
(1974) Il dio sabeo Almaqah. *RSO* 48: 15-22.

Garbini, Giovanni
(1984) L'art et la pensée chez les anciens Yéménites. In J. Chelhod 1984: 225-248.

Grohmannn, Adolf
(1914) *Göttersymbole und Symboltiere auf südarabischen Denkmälern*. DSAWW 58, Abh. I. Wien.

Fahd, Toufic
(1968) *Le panthéon de l'Arabie centrale à la veille de l'hégire*. (Institut français d'Archéologie de Beyrouth, Bibliothèque archéologique et hisotorique LXXXVIII). Paris. (Geuthner).

Ibn al-Kalbī, Hishām
(1969) *Le Livre des idoles de Hicham ibn al-Kalbi [Kitāb al-Aṣnām]*. Translation by Wahib Atallah. Paris. (Klincksieck).

Jamme, Albert
(1947) Le panthéon sud-arabe préislamique d'après les sources épigraphiques. *Le Muséon* LX: 57-147.

Jamme, Albert
(1956) La religion sud-arabe préislamique. *Histoire des religions* 4. Paris: 239-307.

Müller, Walter W.
(2000) La religione pagana dell'antica Arabia del Sud. In *Exhibition Catalogue of Rome* 2000: 155-157.

Robin, Christian J.
(1981) Les montagnes dans la religion sudarabique. In R. Stiegner (ed.), *Al-Hudhud. Festchrift Maria Höfner zum 80. Geburststag*. Graz: 315-319.

Robin, Christian J.
(1994) L'Égypte dans les inscriptions de l'Arabie méridionale préislamique. In *Hommages à Jean Leclant*, vol. 4, *Bibliothèque d'Étude* 106/4: 285-301.

Robin, Christian J.
(2000) Les "filles de dieu" de Saba' à La Meque: reflexions sur l'agencement des panthéons dans l'Arabie ancienne. *Semitica* 50: 140-192.

Robin, Christian J. & Jean-François Breton
(1982) Le sanctuaire préislamique du Jabal al-Lawḏ (Nord Yémen). *Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres, Comptes rendus des séances 1982*: 590-629.

Robin Christian J. & Jacques Ryckmans
(1988) Le sanctuaire minéen de NKRḤ à Darb aṣ-Ṣabī (environs de Barāqish). Rapport préliminaire (Seconde partie), Étude des inscriptions. *Raydān* 5: 91-159.

Ryckmans, Gonzagues
(1942) Rites et croyances Préislamiques en Arabie Méridionale. *Le Muséon* LV: 165-176.

Ryckmans, Gonzagues
(1960) Les religions pré-islamiques. *Histoire générale des religions*, II. Paris: 200-228, 593-607. (Aristide Quillet).

Ryckmans, Jacques
(1972) Les confessions publiques sabéennes: le code sud-arabe de pureté rituelle. *AION* 32 (N.S. XXII): 1-15.

Ryckmans, Jacques
(1975) Notes sur le rôle du taureau dans la religion sud-arabe. In *Melanges d'islamologie* (dédiés à la mémoire de A. Abel par ses collègues, ses élèves et ses amis, vol. II, *Correspondance d'Orient*, No. 13). Bruxelles: 365-373.

Ryckmans, Jacques
(1976) La chasse rituelle dans l'Arabie du sud ancienne. *Al-Bāḥit*, Festschrift Joseph Henninger zum 70. Geburtstag am 12. Mai 1976 (= Studia Instituti Anthropos 28). St. Augustin bei Bonn. (Verlag des Anthropos-Instituts): 259-308.

Ryckmans, Jacques
(1976) An ancient stone structure for the capture of ibex in Western Saudi Arabia. *PSAS* 6: 161-166.

Ryckmans, Jacques
(1987) The Old South Arabian Religion. In W. Daum 1987: 107-110.

Ryckmans, Jacques
(1989) Le panthéon de l'Arabie du Sud préislamique. Etat des problèmes et brève synthèse. *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* CCVI: 151-170.

Ryckmans, Jacques
(1992) Arabian Religions. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, (15th Ed.): 115-119.

Ryckmans, Jacques
(1993) Rites du paganisme de l'Arabie méridionale avant l'islam. *Bulletin de la Classe des Lettres et des Sciences Morales et Politiques* (Académie Royale de Belgique), 6e série, Tome IV, 1-6: 125-142.

Ryckmans, Jacques
(1993) Sacrifices, offrandes et rites connexes en Arabie di sud pré-islamique. In J. Quaegebeur (ed.), *Ritual and Sacrifice in the Ancient Near East*. (Proceedings of the International Conference organized by the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven from the 17th to the 20th of April 1991) (*Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta*, No. 55). Leuven: 355-380.

Serjeant, Robert B.
(1976) *South Arabian Hunt*. London.

INDEX OF NAMES

Dharânih: Dharāniḥ
dhat-Baʿdân: *ḏt-Bʿdn(m)*, dhāt-Baʿdān(um)
dhat-Himyam: *ḏt-Ḥmym*, dhāt-Ḥimyam
dhu-Ghayl: *ḏ-Ḡyl(m)*, dhu-Ghayl(um)
dhû Laʿwa: dhū Laʿwa
dhû Nuwâs: dhū Nuwās
dhu-Qabd: *ḏ-Qbḍ(m)*, dhu-Qabḍ(um)
dhu-Raydân: dhu-Raydān
dhu-Risâf: *ḏ-Rṣf(m)*, dhu-Riṣāf(um)
dhu-Samâwî: dhu-Samāwī
Fîrûzâbâd: Fīrūzābād
Ghawth'îl: *ḡwṯ'l*, Ghawth'īl
Ghaymân: Ghaymān
Ghumdân: Ghumdān
Ghurqat al-Qalîs: Ghurqat al-Qalīs
Gummân: *Gmn*, Gummān
Habb: *Ḥb(m)*, Ḥabbum
Hadanân: *Hdnn*, Hadanān
Hâdhik: *ḥḏk*, ḥādhik
Hadramawt: Ḥaḍramawt
Hafarî: *Ḥfry*, Ḥafarī
Hajar ibn Humayd: Hajar ibn Ḥumayd
Halfân: *Ḥlfn*, Ḥalfān
Hâlikî'amar: *Hlk'mr*, Hālikī'amar
Hasan: Ḥasan
Hassân: Ḥassān
Hassat: *Ḥs³t*, Ḥaśśat
Hawkum: *Ḥwkm,* Ḥawkum
Hawran: Ḥawrān
Hayd ibn ʿAqîl: Ḥayd ibn ʿAqīl
Himyar: Ḥimyar
Hiwâr: *Hwr*, Hiwār
Hujr: Ḥujr
Husn al-ʿUrr: Ḥuṣn al-ʿUrr
Ḥzyn: Ḥaẓiyān
Îl: Īl
Îlân: Īlān
Jabal Balaq al-Qiblî: Jabal Balaq al-Qiblī
Jâhiliyya: Jāhiliyya
Jarf al-Nabîra: Jarf al-Nabīra
Kâlêb Ella Asbeha: Kālēb Ella Aṣbeḥa
Kaminahû: *Kmnhw*, Kaminahū
Karib'îl Watâr son of Dhamarʿalî: *Krb'l Wtr bn Ḏmrʿly*, Karib'īl Watār son of Dhamarʿalī
Khalîl: *Ḫll*, Khalīl
Kharibat Hadîm: Kharibat Hadīm
Kharibat Hamdân: Kharibat Hamdān

Khawlân al-Tiyâl: Khawlān al-Ṭiyāl
Khawr Rûrî: Khawr Rūrī
Labu'ân: *Lb'n*, Labu'ān
Lihyân: Liḥyān
Ma'ad'îl Salhân: *M'd'l S¹lḥn*, Ma'ad'īl Salḥān
Ma'dîkarib: *M'dkrb*, Ma'dīkarib
Ma'în: Ma'īn
Madâ'in Sâlih: Madā'in Ṣāliḥ
Mahram Bilqîs: Maḥram Bilqīs
Makaynûn: Makaynūn
Malkîkarib Yuha'min: *Mlkkrb Yh'mn*, Malkīkarib Yuha'min
Manâkha: Manākha
Masna'at Mâriya: Maṣna'at Māriya
Matara: Maṭarā
Misr: *Mṣr*, Miṣr
Mo'ab: Mo'āb
Muhammad: Muḥammad
Mûsà: Mūsà
Nâ'it: Nā'iṭ
Najrân: Najrān
Nakrah: *Nkrḥ*, Nakraḥ
Nashshân: Nashshān
Qanî' : *Qn'*, Qanī' (Arab *Qny*)
Qarnaw : *Qrnw*, Qarnaw or Qarnā
Qaryat al-Fâw: Qaryat al-Fāw
Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbî: Qaṣr al-Ḥayr al-Gharbī
Qatabân: *Qtbn*, Qatabān or Qitbān
Qust: *qs¹ṭ*, qusṭ
Radâ': Radā'
Rahmânân: *Rḥmnn*, Raḥmānān
Rashwân: *Rs²wn*, Rashwān
Raybûn: Raybūn
Raydân: Raydān
Sa'da: Ṣa'da
Sabahhumû: *Ṣbḥhmw*, Ṣabaḥhumū
Sabr: Ṣabr
Sadqân: *Ṣdqn*, Ṣadqān
Salâla: Ṣalāla
Salhîn: *S¹lḥn*, Salḥīn
San'â': Ṣan'ā'
Sarha: Ṣarḥa
Sayf ibn dhî Yaz'an: Sayf ibn dhī Yaz'an
Sayhad: Ṣayhad
Shab'ân: *S²b'n*, Shab'ān
Shahr Yagill Yuhargib: *S²hr Ygl Yhrgb*, Shahr Yagill Yuhargib
Shâriqân: *S²rqn*, Shāriqān
Shibâm-Kawkabân: Shibām-Kawkabān

Shufnîqên: *S²fnqn*, Shufnīqēn
Shurihbiʾîl Yaʿfur: *S²rḥbʾl Yʿfr*, Shuriḥbiʾīl Yaʿfur
Sirwâh: Ṣirwāḥ
Suqutra: Suquṭra
Taymâʾ: Taymāʾ
Tell Halaf: Tell Ḥalaf
Thaʾrân: *Ṯʾrn*, Thaʾrān
Tihâma: Tihāma
Wâdî Bayhân: Wādī Bayḥān
Wâdî Dawʿan: Wādī Dawʿan
Wâdî Dhana: Wādī Dhana
Wâdî Duraʾ: Wādī Ḍuraʾ
Wâdî Hadramawt: Wādī Ḥaḍramawt
Wâdî Madhâb: Wādī Madhāb
Wâdî Markha: Wādī Markha
Wâdî Rimaʿ: Wādī Rimaʿ
Watâr: *Wtr*, Watār
Yadaʿʾîl: *Ydʿʾl*, Yadaʿʾīl
Yadaʿismuh: *Ydʿs¹mh(w)*, Yadaʿismuh(ū)
Yaghûl: *Yḡl*, Yaghūl
Yahmad: *Yḥmd*, Yaḥmad
Yahyà: Yaḥyà
Yaklâ: Yaklā
Yalâ / al-Durayb: Yalā / al-Durayb
Yarîm: Yarīm
Yasduqʾîl Fâriʿ Sharhat: *Yṣdqʾl Frʿ(ᵐ) S²rḥt*, Yaṣduqʾīl Fāriʿ(ᵘᵐ) Sharḥāt
Yashhurʾîl Yuharʿish: *Ys²hrʾl Yhrʿs²*, Yashhurʾīl Yuharʿish
Yasrân: Yasrān
Yathʿân: *Yṯʿn*, Yathʿān
Yûsuf Asʾar Yathʾar: *Ys¹(w)fʾs¹ʾr Yṯʾr*, Yūsuf Asʾar Yathʾar
Zafâr: Ẓafār
Zalmân: Ẓalmān
Zufâr: Ẓufār

SOURCE OF THE FIGURES

Abbreviations

ATM: ‘Ataq Museum

BM: BayhânMuseum

DAI: Deutsche Archäologische Institut (German Archaeological Institute, San‘â’).

GOAM: General Organization for Antiquities and Museums

MAIRY: Missione Archeologica Italiana nella Repubblica dello Yemen

MiM: Military Museum, San‘â’

MNAOr: Museo Nazionale d’Arte Orientale, Rome

NAM: National Museum, ‘Adan

YM: Yemen National Museum, San‘â’

Figure 1: By courtesy of MAIRY.
Figure 2: Inizan-Rachad 2007, p. 142, Fig. 62.
Figure 3: Inizan-Rachad 2007, p. 225-226, Fig. 182-184 (by courtesy of M.-L. Inizan).
Figure 4: Inizan-Rachad 2007, p. 123, Fig. 14 (detail) (by courtesy of Fr. Braemer).
Figure 5: By courtesy of H. David.
Figure 6: By courtesy of H. David (detail).
Figure 7: Inizan-Rachad 2007, p. 127, Fig.19 (by courtesy of M.-L. Inizan).
Figure 8: By courtesy of A.V. Sedov.
Figure 9: YM 8983.
Figure 10: NAM 2582 B.
Figure 11: Exhibition Catalogue of Rome 2000, p. 292, Fig. 64.
Figure 12: Anati 1968, vol. 2, p. 62, Fig. 13.
Figure 13: By courtesy of H. David.
Figure 14: S. Antonini.
Figure 15: By courtesy of Chr. Robin.
Figure 16: Exhibition Catalogue of Rome 2000, p. 165 (drawing by G. Robine).
Figure 17: Robin 1992, Pl. 60 (drawing by R. Audouin).
Figure 18: S. Antonini.
Figure 19: Arbach-Audouin 2004, Fig. XII-XIII, XVI (drawing by R. al-Qubati, A. Sayd al-Bassi, R. Audouin).
Figure 20: Arbach-Audouin 2004, Fig. IV.
Figure 21: Arbach-Audouin 2004, Fig. V.
Figure 22: Arbach- Audouin 2004, Fig. VI.
Figure 23: Arbach-Audouin 2004, Fig. VII (detail).
Figure 24: MiM 3630 (detail).
Figure 25: Arbach-Audouin 2007, 102 (drawing by S. Antonini and R. Audouin).

Figure 26: By courtesy of MAIRY.
Figure 27: Antonini 2004, Pl. 29a (by courtesy of Chr. Robin).
Figure 28: By courtesy of MAIRY.
Figure 29: By courtesy of Chr. Robin.
Figure 30: MiM 199.
Figure 31: By courtesy of MAIRY.
Figure 32: Exhibition Catalogue of Rome 2000, p. 333, Fig. 201.
Figure 33: MiM 188.
Figure 34: MiM 3630.
Figure 35: Private Collection, San‘â’.
Figure 36: Military Museum, San‘â’.
Figure 37: MiM 185.
Figure 38: MiM 120.
Figure 39: YM 18349.
Figure 40: Military Museum, San‘â’.
Figure 41: Calvet-Robin 1997, p. 100 (DAO 19).
Figure 42: NAM 1423.
Figure 43: Private Collection.
Figure 44: Private Collection (by courtesy of M. Arbach).
Figure 45: Yemen National Museum, San‘â’.
Figure 46: MiM 7384.
Figure 47: MiM 365.
Figure 48: Private Collection (by courtesy of Chr. Robin).
Figure 49: YM 266.
Figure 50: MiM 4562.
Figure 51: YM 2260.
Figure 52: YM 10881.
Figure 53: Private Collection (by courtesy of Chr. Robin).
Figure 54: Private Collection (by courtesy of Kamal al-Rubay, San‘â’).
Figure 55: YM 13981.
Figure 56: Private Collection (by courtesy of J.-F. Bron).
Figure 57: Antonini 2003, p. 210, Pl. 5e.
Figure 58: YM 161.
Figure 59: Anfray 1994, p. 52, Pl. 42.
Figure 60: YM 262.
Figure 61: YM 263.
Figure 62: YM 264.
Figure 63: YM 18350.
Figure 64: By courtesy of H. David.
Figure 65: Antonini 2001, Pl. 48, C63.
Figure 66: NAM 661.
Figure 67: NAM 612.
Figure 68: NAM 609.
Figure 69: By courtesy of MAIRY.
Figure 70: Private Collection (al-Dâli‘).
Figure 71: Private Collection (by courtesy of Kamal al-Rubay, San‘â’).
Figure 72: Private Collection (by courtesy of Kamal al-Rubay, San‘â’).

Figure 73: By courtesy of DAI.
Figure 74: Bayhân Museum (by courtesy of Khayran al-Zubaydi).
Figure 75: Bayhân Museum (by courtesy of Khayran al-Zubaydi).
Figure 76: YM 1090.
Figure 77: Drawing by Chr. Darles.
Figure 78: Drawing by G. Stelo.
Figure 79: Drawing by Chr. Darles.
Figure 80: YM 387.
Figure 81: By courtesy of MAIRY.
Figure 82: By courtesy of MAIRY.
Figure 83: BM 629.
Figure 84: YM 1088.
Figure 85: By courtesy of MAIRY.
Figure 86: Bayhân Museum (by courtesy of Khayran al-Zubaydi).
Figure 87: YM 71.
Figure 88: Private Collection (by courtesy of M. Arbach).
Figure 89: YM 69.
Figure 90: MiM 3826.
Figure 91: YM 1954.
Figure 92: YM 1131.
Figure 93: Calvet-Robin 1997, p. 110 (AO 20893).
Figure 94: BM 41.
Figure 95: YM 341.
Figure 96: YM 386.
Figure 97: MiM 3256.
Figure 98: By courtesy of MAIRY.
Figure 99: Private Collection in San‘â’.
Figure 100: Private Collection in San‘â’ (by courtesy of M. Arbach).
Figure 101: Private Collection in San‘â’ (by courtesy of M. Arbach).
Figure 102: Private Collection in San‘â’ (by courtesy of M. Arbach).
Figure 103: Exhibition Catalogue of Rome 2000, p. 399, Fig. 423-424.
Figure 104: YM 195.
Figure 105: Costa 1989: Pl. 1-12.
Figure 106: Exhibition Catalogue of Paris 1997, p. 204.
Figure 107: Exhibition Catalogue of Rome 2000, p. 399, Fig. 425.
Figure 108: Weidemann 1983, p. 14.
Figure 109: YM 197.
Figure 110a-b: Pirenne 1977, p. 375, 377.
Figure 111a: Breton-Bafaqih 1993, Pl. 14, Fig. 33.
Figure 111b: By courtesy of MAIRY.
Figure 112: YM 2399.
Figure 113: Private Collection in San‘â’(by courtesy of Kamal al-Rubay).
Figure 114: By courtesy of DAI.
Figure 115: By courtesy of DAI.
Figure 116a-b: Private Collection (by courtesy of Chr. Robin).
Figure 117: Private Collection (by courtesy of Chr. Robin).
Figure 118: YM 1958.

Figure 119: Exhibition Catalogue of Rome 2000, p. 397, Fig. 418 (YM 24).
Figure 120: YM 32.
Figure 121: By courtesy of Kh. al-Ansi.
Figure 122: S. Antonini.
Figure 123: By courtesy of Kh. al-Ansi.
Figure 124: S. Antonini.
Figure 125: Exhibition Catalogue of Rome 2000, p. 377, Fig. 354 (ATM 162).
Figure 126: By courtesy of Chr. Robin.
Figure 127: YM 269
Figure 128: YM 1869.
Figure 129: Exhibition Catalogue of Rome 2000, p. 326, Fig. 182 (NAM 1218).
Figure 130: By courtesy of Kh. al-Ansi.
Figures 131-133: By courtesy of A.V. Sedov.
Figure 134: YM 23111.
Figure 135: YM 23109.
Figure 136: By courtesy of GOAM.
Figure 137: Exhibition Catalogue of Rome 2000, p. 391, Fig. 403 (YM 1049).
Figure 138: Military Museum, San‘â’.
Figure 139: S. Antonini.
Figure 140: By courtesy of Chr. Robin.
Figure 141: By courtesy of Chr. Robin.
Figure 142: YM 675.
Figure 143: YM 1802.
Figure 144: YM 1716.
Figure 145: By courtesy of Chr. Robin.
Figure 146: By courtesy of Kh. al-Ansi.
Figure 147: By courtesy of Kh. al-Ansi.
Figure 148: By courtesy of Kh. al-Ansi.
Figure 149: By courtesy of Kh. al-Ansi.
Figure 150: By courtesy of Chr. Robin.
Figure 151: By courtesy of Chr. Robin.
Figure 152: S. Antonini.
Figure 153: S. Antonini.
Figure 154: By courtesy of GOAM.
Figure 155: YM 63.
Figure 156: By courtesy of Chr. Robin.
Figure 157a: Yule 2004, p. 204, Fig. 19 (by courtesy of P. Yule).
Figure 157b: S. Antonini.
Figure 158: YM 73.
Figure 159: YM 263.
Figure 160a-b: Pirenne 1986, p. 247, 243, 245, 249.
Figure 161: By courtesy of The Walters Art Museum (Baltimore).
Figure 162: Anfray 1967, p. 47, Fig. 10.
Figure 163: YM 549.
Figure 164: Rathjens-von Wissmann 1932, p. 60.
Figure 165: Private Collection in San‘â’(by courtesy of Kamal al-Rubay).
Figure 166: Exhibition Catalogue of Rome 2000, p. 408, Fig. 438b (MNAOr 12965/15977).

Figure 167: By courtesy of Kh. al-Ansi.
Figure 168: YM 67.
Figure 169: By courtesy of Kh. al-Ansi.
Figure 170a: By courtesy of Kh. al-Ansi.
Figure 170b: By courtesy of C. Borchert and P. Yule.
Figure 171: By courtesy of Kh. al-Ansi.
Figure 172: Costa 1973, Pl. XX, No. 1.
Figure 173: Garbini 1970, Pl. Ia.
Figure 174: By courtesy of Kh. al-Ansi.
Figure 175: By courtesy of Kh. al-Ansi.
Figure 176: By courtesy of P. Yule.
Figure 177: By courtesy of C. Hilbrig.
Figure 178: By courtesy of Kh. al-Hajj.
Figure 179: By courtesy of Kh. al-Hajj.
Figure 180: YM 1320
Figure 181: S. Antonini.
Figures 182-186: By courtesy of J. Schiettecatte.

Maps

Historical maps of Pre-Islamic Yemen.

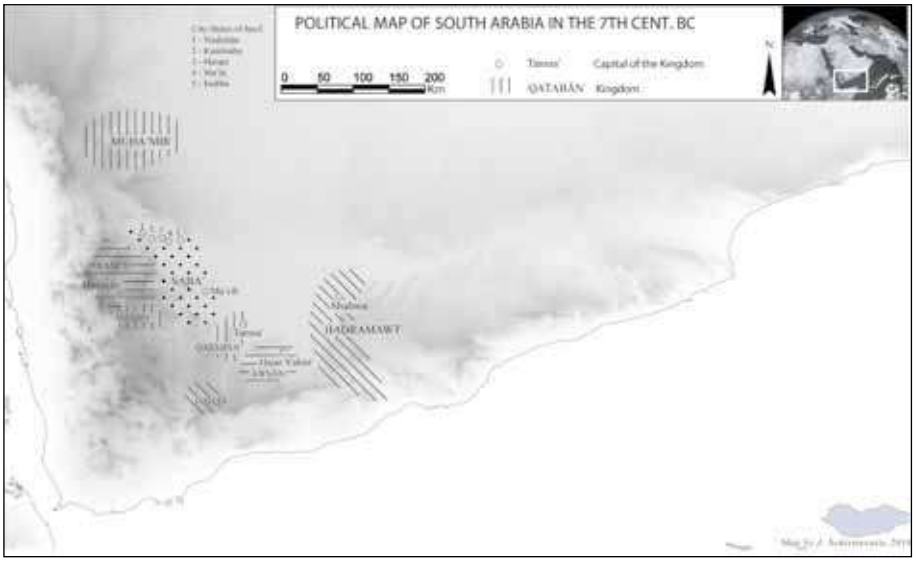

Fig. 182 - Political map of South Arabia in the 7th Century BC.

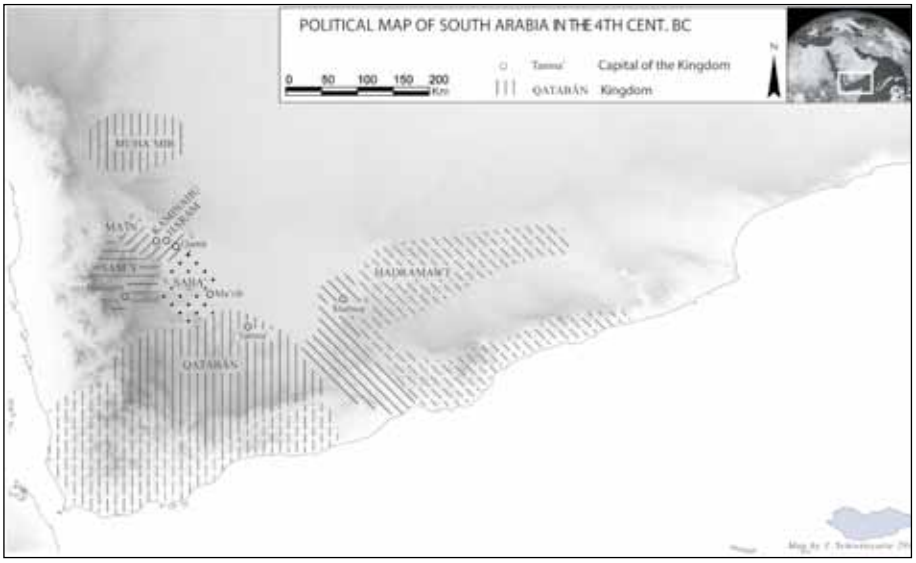

Fig. 183 - Political map of South Arabia in the 4th Century BC.

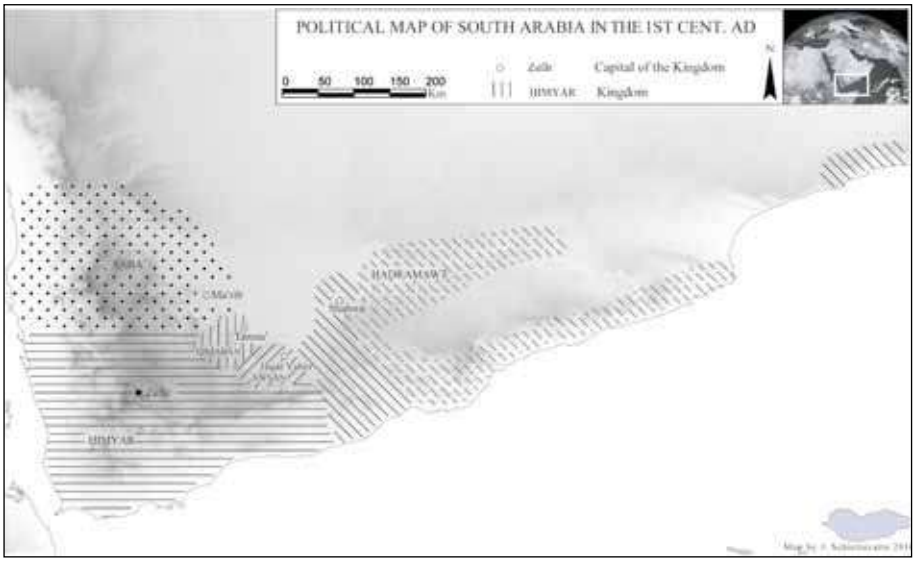

Fig. 184 - Political map of South Arabia in the 1st Century AD.

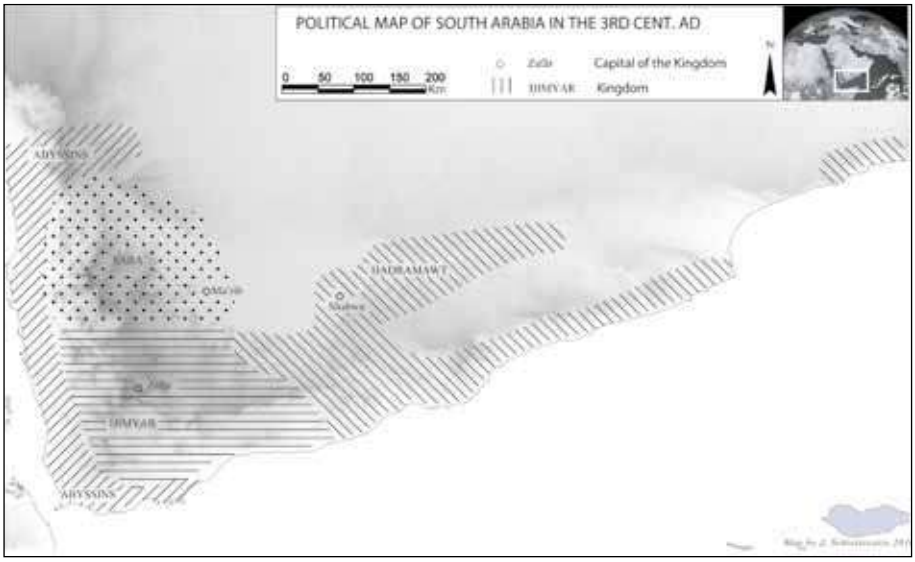

Fig. 185 - Political map of South Arabia in the 3rd Century AD.

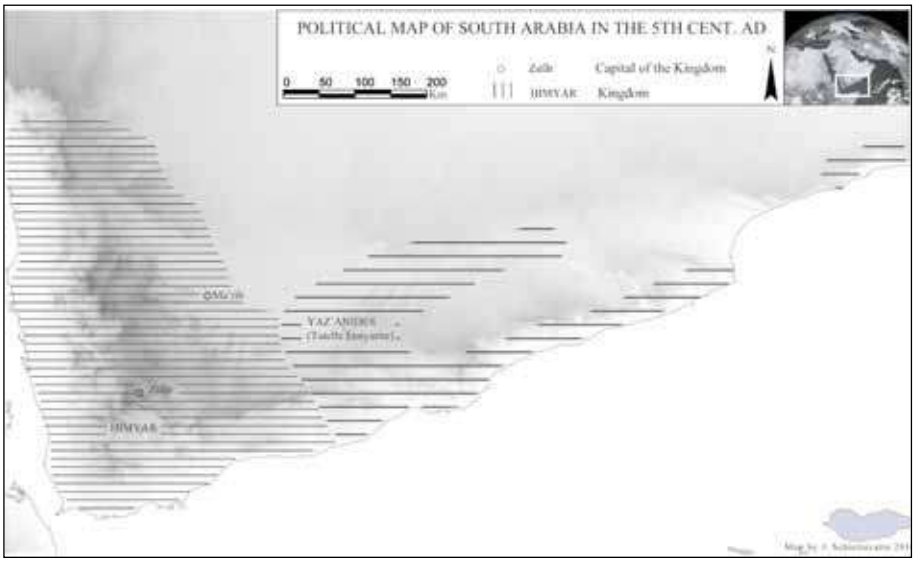

Fig. 186 - Political map of South Arabia in the 5th Century AD.

Table of Contents

Finito di stampare
nel mese di Luglio 2012
da Grafiche Lorem Ipsum - Dolor Sit (Am)
per conto di Lorem Ipsum srl

The ancient Kingdoms of South Arabia *have been recognized as the cradle of civilization for the Arabian Peninsula and their contribution to the identity of Arabia cannot be underestimated. For the first time, this volume provides scholars and students a coherent synthesis of South Arabian art, from its origins, to its gradual development in a distinctive local art and, finally, to its decline with the advent of Islam. Each chapter provides a historical summary of the period, a review of representative art and a discussion of the distinctive character, stylistic and iconographic originality of South Arabian art, shaped by a creative interpretation of external influences.*

Since 1984, *Dr Sabina Antonini has participated in numerous archaeological excavations and surveys in Yemen with the Italian Archaeological Mission directed, from 1980 to 2010, by Prof. Alessandro de Maigret. Dr Antonini has actively pursued her research interests at important archaeological sites, including Yalâ, Tamna', Barâqish and more recently, Ghaymân.*

Dr Antonini obtained a BA in Classical Archaeology at the University of Perugia and a PhD in Archaeology and Art History of the Near East at the University of Naples L'Orientale with a thesis on South Arabian sculptures. From 2002 to 2008, she was an adjunct Professor at the University of Naples L'Orientale, where she taught a series of courses on South Arabian Antiquities.

Dr Antonini is the author of a numerous monographs and articles on South Arabian Archaeology and Art History and is currently Director of the Italian Mission in Yemen.

De Boccard - 2012
ISSN 2101-3195
ISBN 978-2-7018-0325-8