

Excavation report, Site A-01, season 1998

Final report on the 1998 excavation season at Site A-01, an oasis settlement of the Umm an-Nar period. The stratigraphic sequence comprises seven layers, from the modern surface accumulation down to sterile gravel.

Trench 5 exposed a circular tower structure of unworked stone, with an external diameter of eleven metres. Associated ceramics include fine red ware with black painted decoration, typical of the Umm an-Nar horizon.

Small finds include carnelian beads, a fragment of a soft-stone vessel with dot-in-circle decoration, and copper fishhooks, indicating exchange with coastal settlements.

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The falaj irrigation channel identified in the northern sounding predates the surface architecture and suggests continuity of water management from the Iron Age.

Faunal remains are dominated by sheep, goat and dromedary; fish bone is present in all layers, confirming inland-coastal exchange networks.

Radiocarbon samples from hearth contexts in layer IV returned calibrated dates in the range 2450-2200 BC, consistent with the ceramic chronology.

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Conservation measures applied to the tower masonry included repointing with lime mortar and installation of a temporary drainage channel to divert seasonal runoff.

Recommendations for the 1999 season: extend excavation to the east of trench 5, complete the topographic survey at 1:500, and initiate systematic flotation for archaeobotanical remains.

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