

PERSISTENT PASTORALISM MONUMENTS AND SETTLEMENTS IN THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF DHOFAR

Joy McCorriston

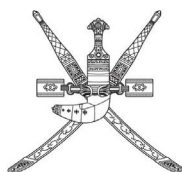


The Archaeological Heritage of Oman

PERSISTENT PASTORALISM

Monuments and Settlements in the Archaeology of Dhofar

JOY McCORRISTON



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Cover image: High Circular Tomb (D104-001) on a limestone terrace spur overlooking an eastern Wādī Dhahabūn tributary (photograph by J. McCorriston and K. Olson).

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Often have I sat in the offices of the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism in Muscat, gazing at the hazy horizon where heavy tankers ply the territorial waters. Endlessly, they stream slowly by where sea meets sky, funneling petroleum flow to a thirsty planet. Oman is at the pulse of the world, extracting copper, dates, stallions, incense, cloves, and oil across a rich maritime trade that stretches far into prehistory. And all throughout, there have been the persistent pastoralists of the interior, ancestral Omanis whose mobile lives and oral traditions left few traces in the desert lands. These pastoral folk herded cattle, goats, and camels. This other Oman sometimes engaged with maritime traders and oasis farmers, and yet at other times, the pastoralists eschewed them, living lives of relative isolation.

This book offers some results of ten years' field and analytical research into the lives of pastoral Arabians. Fundamentally, it represents the work of multi-talented, multi-disciplinary, multi-cultural teams and multi-national teams. Furthermore, the results reported here reflect the collaborations and contributions of many. While this book presents some new ideas that are mine, it presents data and results previously reported under joint authorship with the colleagues and students who produced them. To them I offer both acknowledgement and profound gratitude. Thank you, Michael Harrower, Matthew Senn, Tara Steimer-Herbet, Kimberly Williams, Jennifer Everhart, Catherine Heyne, Mas'ūd Al-Hādhari, Mas'ūd Al-Kathīrī, 'Ali Ahmad Al-Kathīrī, Ali Salim Al-Mashaanī, Ali Mehri, Prem Goel, Jihaye Park, Jared Schuetter, Dorota Grejner-Brzezinska, Louise Martin, Kyle Olson, Lucas Procter, Anne Skidmore, Mark Moritz, Ian Hamilton, Lawrence Ball, Sarah Ivory, Abigail Buffington, Tim Everhart, Konstantin Pustovoytov, Wael AbuAzizeh, Annalee Sekulic, Anna Berlekamp, Sarah Fargo Evinsky, and Jean-François Saliège.

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*In appreciation for all they taught me of Oman's history and cultural traditions,
I dedicate the book to Thuwaiba and 'Ali.*

Glossary notes

There are challenges to the consistent transliteration of Arabic place names and terminology into English/Roman orthography. In this book, there are also place names in modern South Arabian languages—Shehri, Mehri, and the vernacular Jibali. To guide the text I used the following rules:

Where a transliteration already exists in common use in archaeological and geological literature, I use it, even if the transliteration follows neither Library of Congress nor Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft convention. For example, “Wadi Suq” and “Umm er-Radhuma.”

Where researchers use non-standard transliteration throughout other books in the AHO series, I have opted for consistency, thus, “Nejd.”

Where transliteration appears on official signage and maps in Oman, such as road signs leading to “Ayboot,” or “Mudayy,” I have opted for that use. In the case of “Mudayy,” the Arabic clearly indicates that “Muḍayy” represents the correct consonant. Likewise, I retain transliterations from road signs using Mehri, Shehri, and Jibali place names.

Where a person’s name appears in published form and especially as an author, I retain the transliteration as published.

In other cases, including the names of wadis and mountains, I follow *Library of Congress* transliteration rules.