The relationship between the local settlement HAS1 (Inqitat) and the south-arabic settlement of Sumhuram: connections and conflicts in the area of Khor Rori during the Classical Period

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Résumé

During the last two years, the discovery of a local settlement (HAS1) in the Khor Rori area has revolutionized the Dhofar’s conception, and of the cultures that inhabited it, before the arrival of the South-Arabic people. The probability that the area was uninhabited was never taken into consideration, but concrete and stratified traces that testified the presence of an organized population had never been found. The extension, the distribution and the materials found during the excavation - still in progress - of HAS1 make clear how this population had a certain social structure that allowed the co-habitation of a rather high number of individuals. The discovery of Mediterranean imported materials had initially suggested that the settlement was attributable to the Classic Period (1st cent. BC - 1st cent. AD), contemporary with Sumhuram, which may have been the center of attraction of this settlement. Some radiocarbon dating of the oldest levels, however, have allowed backdating the first traces on the plateau around to the 8th century B.C. This drastically changes the perspective, it would seems that it was not Sumhuram the center of attraction of the premises but that it was this great local center that attracted the South-Arabic people in this area. The data of the last years of research will be presented under this new perspective and we will try to answer at some of the questions raised by this discovery by analyzing the architecture, the geographical distribution of the settlements and the material culture.

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