The Use, Value and Life history of the Muweilah Camel: Its Reception and Itinerary within the Ancient Vs. Modern World.

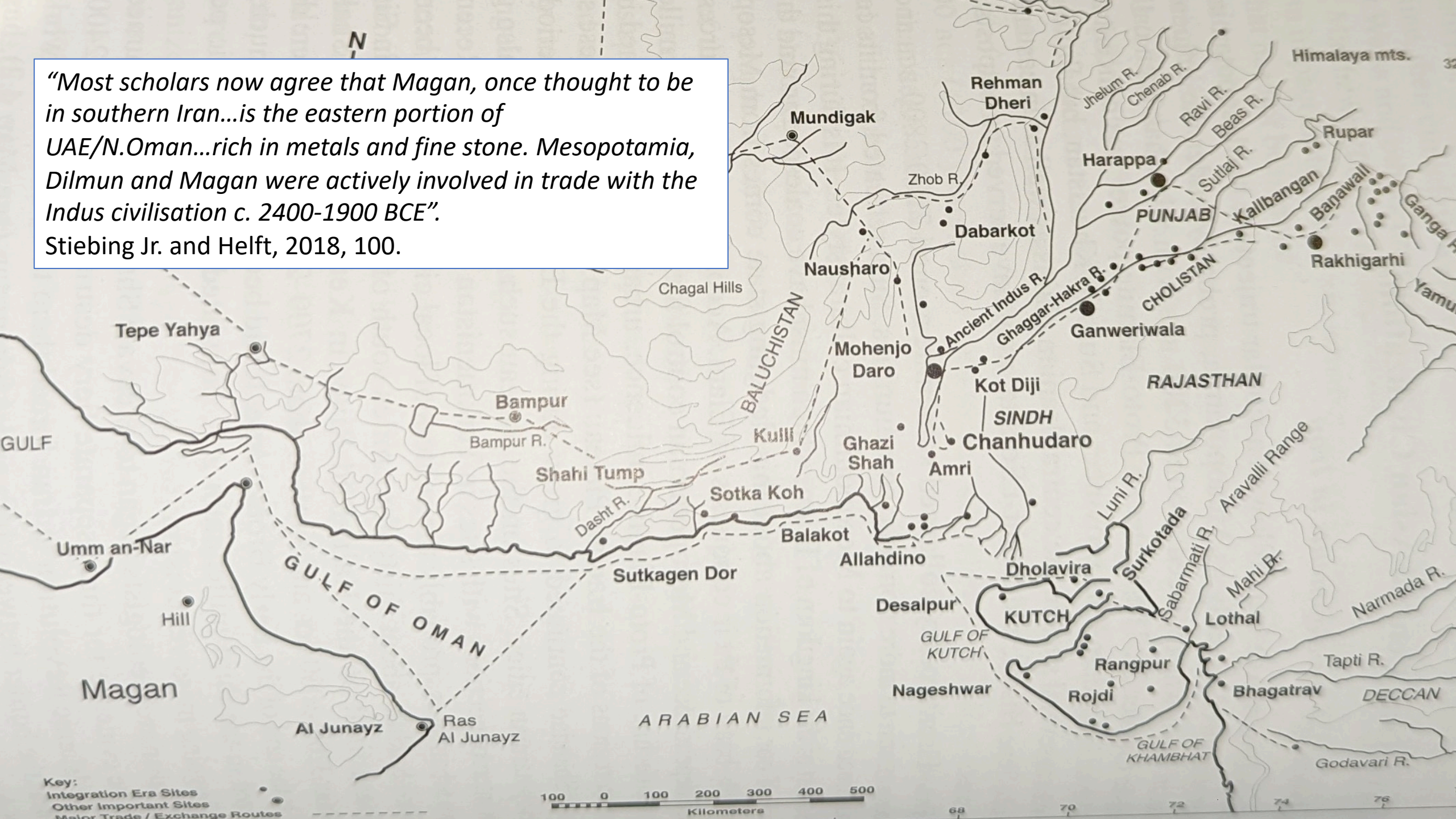


“If it were not for the endurance of Islam…scholars would hardly be trying to reconstruct the history of Arabia…not because of a lack of interest but because of a lack of reliable detailed information”

Zellentin, 2018, 157.



Regional Overview, *Mleiha Archaeological Museum.*



"Most scholars now agree that Magan, once thought to be in southern Iran…is the eastern portion of UAE/N.Oman…rich in metals and fine stone. Mesopotamia, Dilmun and Magan were actively involved in trade with the Indus civilisation c. 2400-1900 BCE".
Stiebing Jr. and Helft, 2018, 100.

Overview of use, value and life history:

- Origins could be linked with the debate surrounding domestication of dromedary.

- Excavated by Magee at Muweilah in 1996, similar figurines found at Awam temple, Marib in Yemen dating from 8-7th centuries BCE suggests use of dromedary to expand trade.

- Excavations at Awam revealed grave goods as being symbolic representations. Zoomorphic figurines, more often representing camels recovered, have been interpeted as symbols substituted for camel tombs.

- Stylistically similar but aesthetically very different?







Muweilah

Marib

“the only major settlement site in the Oman Peninsula” in occupation from the 3rd millennium BCE to 200 CE.”

Boucharlat and Mouton,1993.



Map of Regional Trade by 1st Century CE, *Sharjah Archaeological Museum.*

Comparisons:



1. Tell Abraq, Bronze Age.



2. Muweilah, Contemporary.





3. Lioness, Sharjah, 250BCE-400CE.



4. Camel, Sharjah, 250BCE-400CE.


SHARJAH ARCHAEOLOGY MUSEUM
متحف الشارقة للآثار



Modern Reception:

- Red and black geometric patterns perhaps most visible towards the stern indicate aesthetic value in ancient times, yet this aspect is a limited part of the experience for a modern audience.

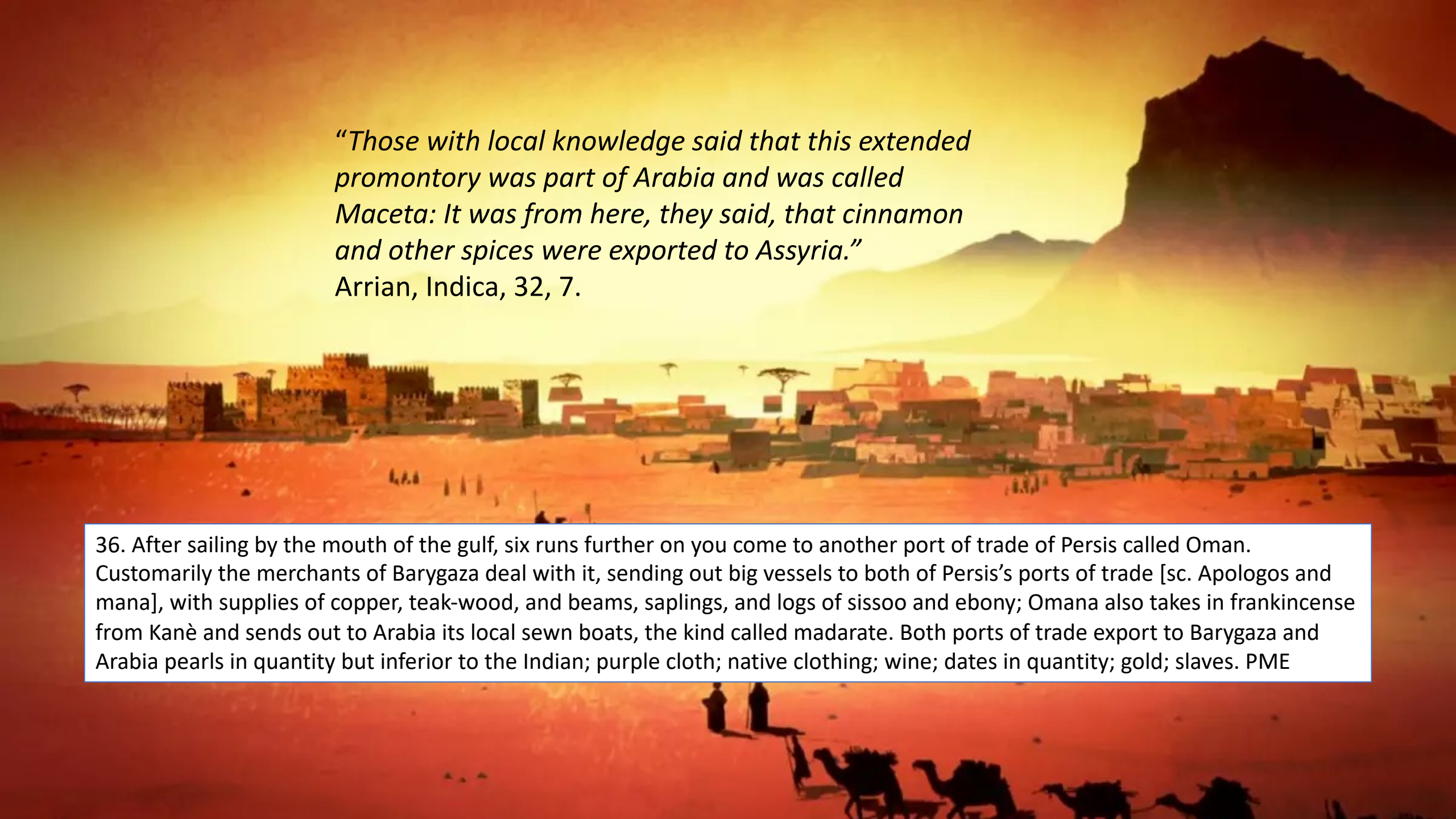
- The camel remains central to the museum experience in Sharjah highlighting value and aesthetic form.

Cheirotic Approach:

- Bailey's cheirotic approach to minaturised objects provides a possible insight towards functional reception in both ancient and modern times?

- Inclusion of opportunity to interact with the camel opposite its display highlights the intrinsic connection in desiring to touch the camel.





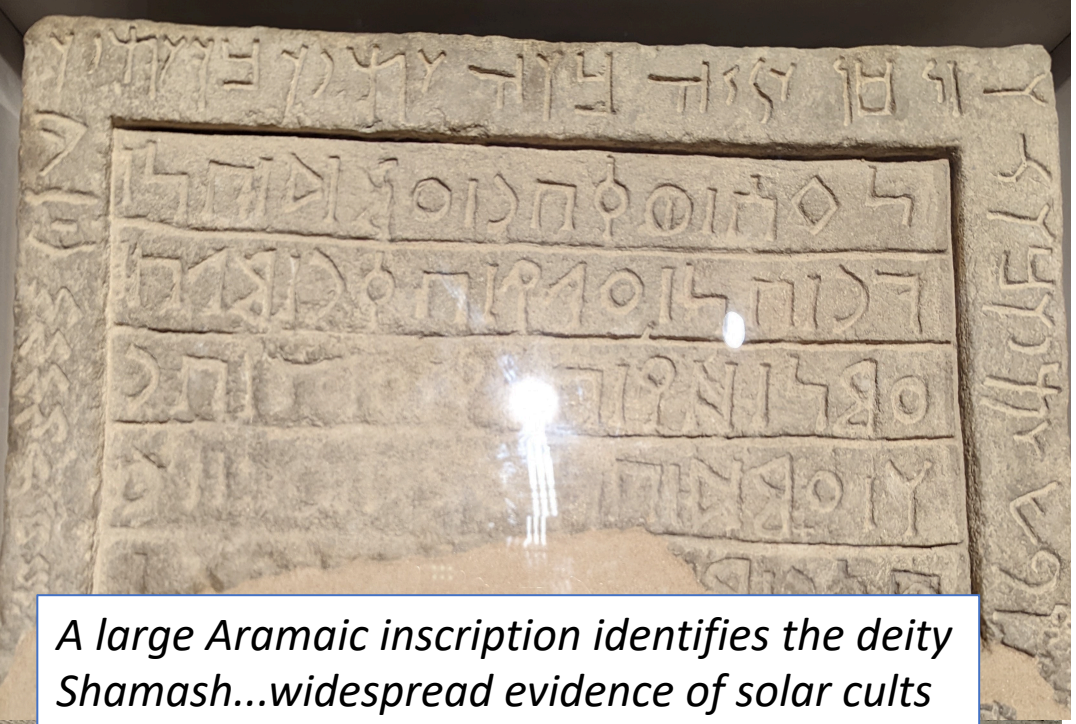
“Those with local knowledge said that this extended promontory was part of Arabia and was called Maceta: It was from here, they said, that cinnamon and other spices were exported to Assyria.”
Arrian, Indica, 32, 7.

36. After sailing by the mouth of the gulf, six runs further on you come to another port of trade of Persis called Oman. Customarily the merchants of Barygaza deal with it, sending out big vessels to both of Persis’s ports of trade [sc. Apologos and mana], with supplies of copper, teak-wood, and beams, saplings, and logs of sissoo and ebony; Omana also takes in frankincense from Kanè and sends out to Arabia its local sewn boats, the kind called madarate. Both ports of trade export to Barygaza and Arabia pearls in quantity but inferior to the Indian; purple cloth; native clothing; wine; dates in quantity; gold; slaves. PME

Map of Trade connections by 1st Century CE, *Mleiha Archaeological Museum.*



The excavations at Mleiha remain *"fundamental as source material for the local domestic and defensive architecture, and indeed the material expression of this important classical settlement in which Roman, eastern Mediterranean, southern Mesopotamian, Iranian, and Indian imports from the first centuries BC and AD have been recovered." Deman , 2022, 2.*



A large Aramaic inscription identifies the deity Shamash...widespread evidence of solar cults in this Arabian region. De Man, 2022, 2.



<u>Some further transregional considerations:</u>

What was the connection between ed Dur, Muweilah, Mleiha and the east coast?

-> This remains somewhat unclear.

Did they exchange agricultural products for those of sea and sea trade?

Did ed Dur transship goods or offer harbour services?

Did religious identity develop in line with the increased trading activity? Pagan->Christian.

Which trading sphere are the sites linked with? (Persian Gulf-Characene-Parthian OR Roman-Egyptian-Red Sea)

How do the sites at Sir Bani Yas and the newly excavated site at UAQ link with ed Dur and Mleiha?

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