

Table of Contents

Foreword	5
PREHISTORY	11
The Neolithic Period (c. 8,000 – 3,000 BC)	13
<i>Rupestrian art</i>	
The Bronze Age (3rd – 2nd Millennium BC)	15
<i>Rupestrian art</i>	15
<i>Idols</i>	17
<i>Stelae</i>	18
ANCIENT SOUTH ARABIAN PERIOD (8th – 4th Centuries BC)	21
The Caravan Kingdoms	
Historical Context	23
The figurative incisions on the temples of the Banât ‘Âd	27
<i>Plan and general features of the temples</i>	28
<i>Organisation and style of the decorations</i>	29
<i>The intra-muros temple dedicated to the god Aranyada’</i> <i>at al-Sawdâ’/ Nashshân</i>	31
Iconography	
Significance	
Continuity and standardisation of the iconography	
Chronology	
Divinities and Religion	39
<i>The nature of South Arabian gods</i>	39
<i>The language of symbols</i>	40
<i>Questions about divine portraits</i>	44
<i>Rituals</i>	45
Architectonic friezes and cult furnishing in the temples	47
<i>Geometric pattern</i>	47
<i>Zoomorphic representation</i>	47
Celebratory and votive reliefs	52
<i>Alabaster votive stelae</i>	52
<i>Stone funerary stelae</i>	55
<i>Votive bronze plaques</i>	57
<i>Bronze lions</i>	58
<i>A human-headed winged ibex</i>	60

Sculptures in the round	61
<i>Stone statues. The ancestors</i>	61
<i>Bronze statues</i>	63
BOX LANGUAGE AND WRITING	66
MIDDLE SOUTH ARABIAN PERIOD	
(4th Century BC – 3rd Century AD)	85
The Golden Age and the Period of the Fighting Kingdoms	
Historical context	87
Signs of devotion	90
<i>Offerers and worshipers</i>	90
<i>Funerary portraits</i>	93
<i>Funerary and votive stelae</i>	95
Sabaeen stelae	
Qatabânian stelae	
Minaean stelae	
Divinity or human?	
Complex storytelling on funerary or cultic stelae. Aspects	
of Greco-Roman inspiration combined with the vernacular idiom	
Votive stela dedicated to the goddess Shams	
The winged victory as a cultic image	
BOX JEWELLERY	107
Classical imagery in local works	108
<i>The lion riders</i>	109
<i>Two bronze feminine statues from Tamna'</i>	110
<i>Dhamar'alay Yuhabir and Tha'ran, Kings of Saba' and Dhû-Raydân..</i>	112
<i>The Ghayman Horse</i>	113
<i>Roman taste in household objects</i>	114
Imported artefacts	116
<i>A bust of Athena and a refined helmet</i>	116
<i>Taste for luxuries from foreign lands</i>	117
BOX GLASSWARE	119
The art of the architectonic relief. An iconographic convergence ..	120
<i>Gods and their symbols</i>	122
The eagle	
The mystic vase	
The gryphon	
<i>Conclusions</i>	126
BOX COINAGE	127

RECENT SOUTH ARABIAN PERIOD (3rd – 6th Centuries AD)	131
The Empire of Himyar	
Historical context	133
Architecture, reliefs and artefacts	136
<i>Architectural elements and reliefs. Shadows of Christian devotion</i>	<i>136</i>
<i>Rethinking Hellenistic and Sassanid secular iconography</i>	<i>142</i>
The science of warfare	
The art of hunting	
The lion-bull combat	
Naturalistic designs	
The horoscope	
Considerations on the representation of the human figures	
<i>Conclusions</i>	<i>155</i>
Afterword	156
Bibliographical abbreviations	159
Selected bibliography.....	160
<i>Prehistory</i>	<i>160</i>
<i>Archaeology and history of art</i>	<i>165</i>
<i>Religion</i>	<i>187</i>
Index of names	190
Source of the figures	194
Maps	201