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Treasures from the National Museum: Traditional Arms and Armour, Archery

Since time immemorial, the traditional arms and armoury of Oman, made of natural materials, have always fascinated historians and art enthusiasts. Here, the National Museum’s Director-General, Jamal al-Moosawi, as well as the Museum’s Head of Curatorial Unit, Moza al-Wardi, showcase well-preserved relics of a bygone era. (With photography by Saleh al-Ruzaqi/The National Museum).

Flint projectile points first appeared in Eastern Arabia around 8,000 BCE in association with mobile groups of hunters and gatherers. Known as ‘Fasad facies’ or ‘Fasad points’, they were fashioned from blanks by bifacial retouching and had sharp, unmodified tips. Between 6,500 and 4,500 BCE, Neolithic cultural transitions led to the appearance of ‘trihedral points’, consisting of three faces which were chipped by pressure and sometimes ‘fluted’ or grooved along the central axis. Toward the end of the Neolithic Era, a new

cultural innovation emerged, in the form of slender projectile points with a diamond-shaped cross-section and a tapered, double-ended ‘fusiform’ silhouette. These fusiform points, known as ‘Suwayh facies’, were the product of a society that had mastered domestication and formed cohesive groups. Living in coastal settlements, they fully exploited marine resources such as shark teeth, which were probably attached to shafts for use as arrowheads.

Shark teeth, arrowheads, arrowheads with feathered shafts and tools. (Experimental reconstruction)

Material: Shark teeth, wood, reed, vegetable raffia, fish glue and copper

Period: 15th c AH/21st c CE



Fasad points

Region: al-Haddah, Ra’s al-Jinz and Ra’s al-Khibbah (South ash-Sharqiyah Governorate)

Material: Stone (flint)

Period: 8,000–7,000 BCE (Holocene)



The National Museum: Visitor Information

Telephone: (+968) 22081500

Facebook: NationalMuseumOman

Twitter: NM_OMAN

Instagram: NM_OMAN

E-mail: booking@nm.gov.om

The National Museum is open daily from 10:00am – 5:00pm (except on Fridays 2:00pm – 6:00pm). The ticket desk closes half an hour before the Museum’s closing times.

Shark teeth, arrowheads, flint drills and pins

Region: Ra's al-Hadd (South ash-Sharqiyah Governorate)

Material: Shark teeth, stone and copper

Period: 4,000 – 3,000 BCE (Bronze Age)



'Suwayh facies' projectile points

Region: Ja'lan Bani bu Hassan, Ra's al-Hadd, as-Suwayh, Ra's al-Jibsh (South ash-Sharqiyah Governorate), Wadi Fad and Wadi Suq (North al-Batinah Governorate)

Material: Stone (flint)

Period: 5,000–4,000 BCE (Neolithic)



Trihedral points

Region: Ra's al-Hadd, Khor al-Hajar and as-Suwayh (South ash-Sharqiyah Governorate)

Material: Stone (flint)

Period: 7,000–5,000 BCE (Neolithic)

