

KUML

1965

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ÅRBOG FOR JYSK ARKÆOLOGISK SELSKAB

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INDHOLD

<i>Bjørn Stürup</i> : En jordgrav fra tidlig-neolitisk tid	13
<i>Jørgen Jensen</i> : Ulbjerg-graven. Begyndelsen af den ældre jernalder i Jylland	23
<i>Søren H. Andersen</i> og <i>Claus Malmros</i> : Norslund. En kystboplads fra ældre stenalder	35
<i>Niels Abrahamsen</i> : Arkæomagnetisme og jernalderslagge	115
<i>Geoffrey Bibby</i> : Arabiens arkæologi	133
<i>Lennart Edelberg</i> : Nuristanske sølvpokaler	153
Jysk Arkæologisk Selskab	202

CONTENTS

<i>Bjørn Stürup</i> : A New Earth-grave from the Early Neolithic Period	21
<i>Jørgen Jensen</i> : The Beginning of the Early Iron Age in Jutland	31
<i>Søren H. Andersen</i> and <i>Claus Malmros</i> : Norslund – A Coastal Settlement from the Old Stone Age	110
<i>Niels Abrahamsen</i> : Archaeo-magnetism and Iron-Age Slags	131
<i>Geoffrey Bibby</i> : Arabian Gulf Archeology	144
<i>Lennart Edelberg</i> : Silver Cups of Nuristan	193



Fig. 1. Terracotta kvindefigur af indisk oprindelse. Fra øvre lag i byhøjen Qala'at al Bahrain. Højde 5,4 cm.

Terracotta female figurine of Indian origin, found in the upper layers of the Qala'at al-Bahrain tell. Height: 5.4 cms.

ARABIENS ARKÆOLOGI

AF GEOFFREY BIBBY

Dansk arkæologisk ekspeditions 10. kampagne, 1964

D. 3. december 1963 var det 10 år siden Dansk arkæologisk ekspedition begyndte arbejdet på Bahrain, og en måned senere, d. 5. januar 1964, satte den 10. ekspedition kursen mod Golfen med 16 deltagere under ledelse af professor P. V. Glob og med T. G. Bibby som souschef. Kampagnen varede til d. 18. april, og der blev arbejdet på Bahrain, på Qatar og i Abu Dhabi, medens arbejdet i Kuwait foreløbig ligger stille. Påny blev der lejlighed til et rekognosceringsbesøg i Saudi Arabien, og for første gang nåede ekspeditionen syd for Golfen og kunne efter en rekognosceringstur tværs over Oman halvøen til Dibba i staterne Sharjah og Fujaira dykke spaden i det Indiske hav.

Økonomisk støtte til denne rekognoscering og til udgravningerne på Bahrain blev ydet af Carlsbergfondet, mens der af regeringerne på Bahrain og Qatar



Fig. 2. Lerbænk der sandsynligvis har været basis for en firedobbelt blæsebælg i et bronzestøberi. »Palads«-laget i Qala'at al Bahrain (sandsynligvis senbabylonisk).

Clay bench, probably supporting multiple bellows for a bronze foundry. "Palace" (probably Late Babylonian) level at Qala'at al-Bahrain.

og af olieselskaberne på Bahrain, Qatar og i Abu Dhabi blev givet bevillinger til arbejdet inden for deres respektive områder. Ekspeditionen udtrykker sin bedste tak for denne støtte og for hjælp under andre former fra mange firmaer og privatpersoner.

Bahrain

På Bahrain samlede anstrengelserne sig om byhøjen ved Qala'at al-Bahrain. Her indledtes et 2-årsprogram, der gerne skulle løse de vigtigste af de tilbageværende problemer, således at resultatet af ekspeditionens hidtidige undersøgelser derefter kan publiceres uden alt for mange huller.

Eivind Lorentzen var tilknyttet udgravningerne som arkitekt, mens Lillian Bue-Madsen var økonoma i lejren inden for det portugisiske forts mure, der kroner byhøjen. De øvrige deltagere vil blive nævnt i forbindelse med de forskellige udgravninger.

I det store udgravningsområde midt på byhøjen fortsatte arbejdet ledet af Karen Frifelt og Søren Andersen (indtil dennes afrejse til Abu Dhabi), og feltet blev som de foregående år udvidet mod øst, denne gang dog over en mere end

dobbelt så stor flade som tidligere, nemlig 20 m mod øst i et 15 m bredt bælte fra nord til syd. Med denne større fladegravning håbede man at få et mere sammenhængende billede af bebyggelsen i de forskellige lag, de islamiske huse (By VI) umiddelbart under overfladen, »paladsbygningen« (By IV) ca 3 m nede og den massive kassiterbygning (By III) i det følgende lag. Inden for så stort et område skulle der også være mulighed for at nå »paladsets« ydermure og i hvert fald kassiterbygningens østmur, og medmindre nye bygninger fulgte umiddelbart efter, ville der blive lettere adgang til en undersøgelse af de dybereliggende lag med By I og II, en næsten umulig opgave, hvor man først måtte gennem By III og IV's metertykke mure og massive fundamenter. Udgravningen blev planlagt til at strække sig over to kampagner.

De murrester, der var synlige på overfladen, viste sig at indgå i et større islamisk bygningskompleks bestående af adskillige rum og med gader imellem. Murene, der var bevaret i ca. 1 meters højde, var bygget op af store håndsten og enkelte større let tilhuggede blokke sammenholdt af sandholdigt ler og pudset på begge sider.

Flere ombygninger og tilbygninger kunne påvises, men skønt rummene så vidt muligt udgravedes enkeltvis, var der ingen synderlig forskel at spore i skårmaterialet. Gulvene var kun delvis bevarede, faststampede jordgulve med et tyndt afretningslag af gipsblandet ler, og om noget egentligt kulturlag var der ikke tale. De fund af mønter og keramik, perler af karneol og glas, sminkepinde og talrige armringer af kulørt glas samt klumper af et rødt farvestof, der blev gjort i rummene, er da ikke nødvendigvis alle samtidig med husene. I en senere tid er der på tilfældige steder mellem ruinerne nedgravet talrige islamiske ovne. Nær overfladen i et udpræget opfyldningslag fandtes hoved og overkrop af en lille kvindefigur i terrakotta af indisk herkomst, antagelig fra omkr. 7. årh. e. K. (Fig. 1).

De følgende 1½ - 2 m under den islamiske bebyggelse var opfyldningslag med et stort, men meget blandet skårmateriale. Derefter afdækkedes i »paladsets« niveau i tilslutning til den det foregående år udgravede 10 m lange »sal« en nord-sydgående godt 1½ m bred korridor og for enden af den mod syd et lille firkantet rum med w. c. Hermed syntes grænsen for »paladsets« østlige udstrækning at være nået, eller rettere af dets bevarede del. For øst herfor bestod feltets nordlige halvdel udelukkende af opfyldningslag, og kun i den sydlige halvdel fandtes i dette niveau murrester, der så ud til at fortsætte gadelinjen syd for »paladset«.

Op mod nordsiden af en af disse mure var bygget to ejendommelige anlæg. Med godt en meters mellemrum fandtes to ens lerbænke. De var ca. 2 m lange, knap 1 m brede og godt ½ m høje. Midt for den frie langside var påmuret en lavere trapezformet lerbænk, og i den højere bænk var med lige store mellemrum nedmuret fire fladbundede lerkrukker, hvis sider nu var afslået i højde med bænken (Fig. 2).

Anlæggene blev omgående døbt Bryggeriet Skorpionen. Tanken om et destilleri støttedes af, at der i karsiden i højde med lerbænken var spor af et cirkelrundt hul på størrelse med en tokrone. Alle hullerne pegede mod den trapezformede bænk. Men da det vestligste anlæg, der var en del beskadiget, blev

skåret igennem på den korte led, konstateredes det, at skønt der i fylden fandtes flere askepletter foruden små klumper af kobber eller bronze, var der absolut ingen spor af indfyringshuller eller kanaler. Også på gulvet omkring anlæggene var der tydelige brandspor i form af askelag, og der lå fyldt med kobber- eller bronzeklumper. Det kunne således se ud til, at anlæggene har været anvendt i forbindelse med metalsmeltning. Antagelig er der tale om blæsebølge (som beskrevet i Kuml 1962 af Johs. Nicolaisen).

(Ovenstående bygger på en rapport af Karen Frifelt).

På nordsiden af byhøjen fortsatte undersøgelsen af den nordlige bymur efter fire års pause her. I de mellemliggende tre sæsoner var bymuren blevet lokaliseret mod syd og vest, og man kunne fastslå to vigtige afvigelser fra den allerede kendte del. Mod syd og vest var der ingen spor af tidligere bebyggelse end muren, som her var bygget på klippen. Heller ikke umiddelbart inden for muren fandtes bygningsrester samtidig med den (Kuml 1964). På nordsiden så det anderledes ud, her hvilede muren på et mere end 1 m tykt kulturlag med mindst eet bebyggelseslag (By I), og lige inden for muren samtidig med den var der andre bebyggelseslag (By II) med gader og stenbyggede huse (Kuml 1957). Når arbejdet på bymuren mod nord blev opgivet i 1959, skyldtes det ikke udelukkende ønsket om at efterforske den mod vest og syd. Men eftertiden havde kun levnet et kortere stykke af nordmuren. Mod vest var den blevet ødelagt, da man gravede voldgraven omkring det portugisiske fort, og mod øst var den skåret skarpt af, brudt ned for at genanvende stenene, måske til fortet. Der var dog stadig 17¹/₂ m af denne del af muren, som endnu ikke var udgravet, og da man her tilsyneladende havde de bedste muligheder for at komme ned til de to ældste byer, besluttedes det at udgrave indersiden af muren og et 13 m bredt bælte indenfor. Også denne udgravning var planlagt at vare to sæsoner og blev forestået af Svend Bue-Madsen og Else Roesdahl.

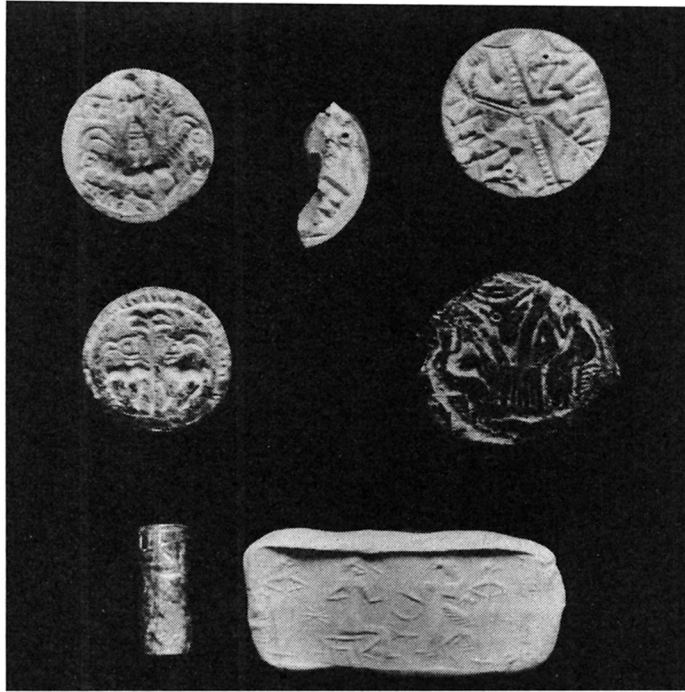
Midt i dette bælte afsattes en 2 m bred profilbalk fra nord til syd, og begge sider tegnedes, efterhånden som gravningen skred frem. Derefter udgravedes den lagvis, og alle skår herfra blev medtaget.

Det viste sig hurtigt, at det bebyggede område inden for muren var smallere end ventet, for i den sydlige del af feltet var alle kulturlag skåret væk af en tidligere grøft, som nu var fyldt med løst sand og fortrinsvis islamiske skår. Sandsynligvis er den gravet for at hente gamle sten op til nyt brug.

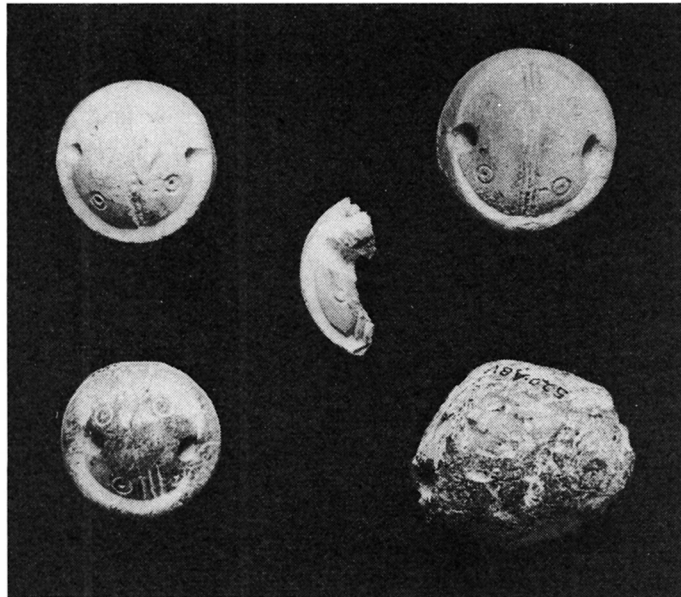
I de tidligere udgravninger vest for det nye felt var bymuren dobbelt. Den bestod af en indermur samtidig med By II med stenene sat i grønt ler og af en antagelig lidt yngre ydermur med stenene sammenholdt af gips. Vest for profilbalken nåede ydermuren op til den nuværende jordoverflade, og umiddelbart indenfor, over den formodede indermur, afdækkedes 3 værelser med mange skår fra den seleukidiske By V's tid (»de tynde skåle«s periode, se Bibby, Kuml 1957). I det ene rum fandtes bevaret 4 trin af en trappe, et andet var et lille badeværelse med 2 w. c.'er. I bymuren, der dannede nordvæggen i dette værelse, var der her en døråbning flankeret af to dørstolper af kalksten, men da dørstolpestenen lå under skillevæggen til det tilstødende rum, må døren

Fig. 3. 5 segl og et seglaftryk fundet på Qala'at al Bahrain under udgravningerne i 1965: a) forside b) bagside. Stempelseglerne er af steatit, seglaftrykket på beg og cylinderseglet af nefrit eller muligvis vesuvian eller diallag (falsk jade) (bestemmelsen udført af hofjuveler Hingelberg). Ca. 5 : 6.

Five seals and one seal impression found at Qala'at al-Bahrain during the 1964 season. (a) obverse (b) reverse. Ca. 5 : 6. The stamp seals are of steatite, the seal impression upon bitumen, while the cylinder seal is probably of nephrite, though perhaps vesuvian or diallag (false jade) (determination hofjuveler Hingelberg).



a



b

være opgivet, før badeværelset blev indrettet. Skillevæggen og gulvlagene omkring den var delvis ødelagt af en dyb nedgravning med bl. a. islamiske skår. Fundamentsten syd herfor i forbindelse med den velbevarede østvæg tyder på, at disse tre rum kun er den lille del, der har overlevet af et større anlæg.

Under dem fremkom forskellige stærkt nedbrudte murrester og herunder igen det solide grundlag for og årsagen til den megen byggeaktivitet på stedet: den inderste del af bymuren omkring By II.

Profilbalken, der denne sæson udgravedes ned til By II niveau, viste sig at følge en nord-sydgående gade belagt med tykke cementlag. På vestsiden af gaden lå det ovenfor omtalte seleukidiske hus, på den modsatte side stærkt nedbrudte og påny anvendte mure. Gaden endte foran en åbning i den ydre bymur, en bred port med stentærskel, som i en senere periode var blevet gjort snævrere og senere igen helt lukket med stenblokke sammenholdt af cement. Under gadebelægningen løb et sindrigt kloaksystem bestående af to rektangulære vandtanke med pudsede sider, en mod syd og en mod nord og herimellem en lang kanal med tilløb fra gaden og forbindelse til sydtanken.

Øst for profilbalken lå indermuren nærmere overfladen end på vestsiden, men også her med rester af senere påbygninger, og østligst i feltet var der igen spor af en nedgravning efter sten med skår af »de tynde skåle« i opfyldningen. Nordsiden af indermuren var meget ødelagt, og ydermuren var her ikke som vest for porten bygget helt sammen med indermuren. Der var et mellemrum på ca. $\frac{1}{2}$ m, der snævrede ind nedefter til 10-15 cm, og som kan være fremkommet ved at fundamentet under den her let udadskrånende ydermur er sunket. Det konstateredes, at bunden af ydermuren lå højere end den indre By II mur. En ting, som imidlertid stemmer dårligt med teorien om, at ydermuren oprindelig er bygget sammen med den ældre indermur, er den kendsgerning, at ydermurens inderside var pudset hele vejen ned. Skår af »karamelkeramik« (Bibby, Kuml 1957) i mellemrummet mellem de to mure tyder på, at afpudsningen fandt sted i kassitisk tid, og at revnen mellem murene eksisterede allerede da. En afdækning af ydermuren er nødvendig for den endelige datering af de to mure.

Henimod sæsonens slutning fjernedes de senere mure på begge sider af profilbalken sammen med udgravningen af denne, og mure og kulturlag fra By II begyndte at komme frem. Lige før gravningens afslutning konstateredes et lodret brud i indermuren, der kunne tyde på, at der under den seleukidiske port lå en »Barbar« byport (By II).

De vigtigste fund blev gjort i »Barbar« lagene og omfattede bl. a. fire seglsten og et seglaftryk i bitumen (Fig. 3) [1], en lille tyrefigur i brændt ler og talrige skår af en fin rød keramik med sortmalede geometriske mønstre.

(Ovenstående bygger delvis på en rapport af Else Roesdahl).

Det tredje projekt på byhøjen dette år var i nogen grad et skud i tågen. Tell'en måler ca. 300 m fra nord til syd og ca. 600 m fra øst til vest parallelt med kysten. Enderne på denne oval rejser sig omkring 12 m over flad strand, mens der imellem dem midt på byhøjen er en lavere strækning, kun ca. halvt så høj.

Hidtil havde alle vore udgravninger holdt sig på den vestlige del af byhøjen med undtagelse af en enkelt (Kuml 1964) i det sydøstlige hjørne, hvor der blev afdækket betydelige kassitiske lag (By III) og derunder et tyndt »Barbar« (By II) bebyggelseslag, men ikke den Barbar bymur, der var udgravningens mål.

Vi besluttede nu at stikke en søgegrøft ud i sænkningen midt på tell'en. Måske skyldtes den manglende højde, at de yngste byer ikke havde afsat deres lag her. I så fald ville de ældste lag være lettere tilgængelige. Og hvis det tværtimod var de ældste bylag, der manglede, kunne det tyde på, at de tidligste byer var begrænset til den vestlige halvdel af højen, så det var dér, vi måtte søge østmuren. Det viste sig at være den sidste antagelse, der holdt stik. Søgegrøften, der gravedes under ledelse af Torkil Funder og Birgitte Henriksen, gik gennem flere islamiske bebyggelseslag med velbyggede huse, nogle endda med mure af store rektangulære stenblokke. Kun allernederst tydeligt afgrænset fandtes en lille plet med Barbarskår. Ellers var skårene i de nederste lag fra den seleukidiske By V. Grøften forlængedes derefter 19 m mod vest, men også her fandtes svære islamiske lag, og under dem et lag med brokker fra nedrevne mure og med By V skår. Øverst i dette sidste lag fandtes et cylindersegl, det første på Bahrain (Fig. 3). Det er sandsynligvis fra Isin-Larsa eller tidlig babylonisk tid, skønt fundlaget er af langt senere dato.

(Ovenstående er et resumé af Torkil Funders rapport).

Qatar

I 1964 afsluttedes arbejdet på Qatar af Holger Kapel, Svend Jørgensen fra Nationalmuseets naturvidenskabelige afdeling og Erling Bondesen fra Danmarks Geologiske Undersøgelser. Udgravningen af bopladsen fra seleukidisk tid ved Ras Uwainat Ali blev genoptaget, men gav ikke yderligere resultater af betydning. Med henblik på en C 14 datering blev der samlet materiale fra en skaldyng *under* bopladsaflejringen. Dette blev senere behandlet på C 14 laboratoriet i København og gav en datering på 2150 f. Kr. \pm 110 (Hg 7838 NM VIII A 4742). Dette daterer naturligvis ikke bopladsen, men skalletgets beskaffenhed gør det sandsynligt, at pladsen lå under havoverfladen på den ud fra prøven bestemte tid.

Ved Al-Jubaigib øst for Umm Bab blev der fundet flere nye stenalderboplads fra forskellige perioder og ligeledes længst mod syd i nærheden af Saudi Nathil. I det indre af landet sydøst for Dukhan (ved Umm Taqa) fandtes et flintværksted med mange flækker og halvfærdige redskaber, vistnok fra mesolitisk tid, og i området sydvest for Umm Said lokaliseredes adskillige rige pladser, bl. a. en del med flækkepile, på isolerede klippeformationer i et meget ugæstfrit landskab. Desuden blev pladser fra de foregående år besøgt for at indsamle supplerende materiale.

Resultaterne fra denne sæson indgår i den oversigt over stenalderpladser på Qatar, der allerede er publiceret (Kapel, Kuml 1964) og vil blive udførligere behandlet i det første bind af ekspeditionens rapporter, der vil blive publiceret i 1967.

(Ovenstående bygger på oplysninger fra Holger Kapel).

Abu Dhabi

I Abu Dhabi arbejdede et hold bestående af Jørgen Lund, Jens Bech, Arne Noll og senere Søren Andersen i fem uger på bopladsen på den lille ø Umm an-Nar, hvorefter de fortsatte ind i landet til Buraimi for i de næste tre uger at undersøge stencirklen ved Hili.

Umm an-Nar. Formålet med dette års undersøgelser var at få en idé om, hvor længe pladsen havde været beboet. Derfor valgte man det højeste punkt på bopladsen, hvor man kunne vente de tykkeste kulturlag. Stedet lå ca. 120 m nordøst for det hus, der var udgravet det foregående år, og grænsede op til en profilgrøft gennem pladsen, der var påbegyndt i 1959, men ikke fuldført. Et felt på 13×10 m blev udgravet helt ned til klippen, der lå dybere end ventet, ca. 2,25 m under overfladen. I udgravningsvæggene og i de afdækkede husmure kunne der udskilles fire beboelsesperioder, den nederste under og altså før de ældste mure. Dette tidligste lag var ret tykt, men indeholdt kun spredte potteskår og dyrekogler. Eventuelle huse fra denne periode har været bygget af forgængeligt materiale, f. eks. palmegrene.

Den ældste periode med stenbyggede huse har sikkert været samtidig med gravhøjene (Thorvildsen, Kuml 1962), da adskillige skår af den maledede keramik, der er karakteristisk for gravene, blev fundet i dette lag (tynde skår med sort maling på rød eller undertiden grå bund).

I de to perioder, der fulgte efter de første stenhuse, havde man til murene ofte anvendt sten fra de ældste huse og et enkelt sted stenblokke fra gravhøjene. Tiden var for kort til gennem en detaljeret stratigrafisk undersøgelse af skårene og de øvrige fund at forbinde de to yngste byggefaser kronologisk med den ældste, men keramikken så ud til at fortsætte ret uændret, og der var ingen islamiske skår. En nøjere bestemmelse må afvente endnu en gravning på stedet.

Foruden skårene fandtes mange netsynk eller vævevægte og glittesten og nogle få genstande af kobber eller bronze, såsom nåle og fiskekroge, endvidere et par glittere af stejler og flere tusinde dyrekogler.

(Ovenstående bygger på en rapport af Jørgen Lund).

Et udvalg af disse knogler er siden gennemgået af Ulrik Møhl fra Laboratoriet for kvartærzoologi ved Københavns universitets zoologiske museum. Efter en løselig gennemgang ser det ud til, at de fleste knogler stammer fra *Halicore dugong* (søko), men der er også mange af havskildpadde. Også antilope og ålekrage og en stor hval er repræsenteret. Bemærkelsesværdig er tilstedeværelsen af kamelknogler, skønt der naturligvis ikke er noget, der kan bevise, at den blev holdt som husdyr. Men mærkeligt nok var der ikke – i det ganske vist meget begrænsede udvalg af knoglerne, der hidtil er gennemgået – sikre spor af får, ged eller kvæg.

Buraimi. Nord for Buraimi i den del af oasen, der hører ind under Abu Dhabi, ligger landsbyen Hili, og et par km øst for Hili opdagedes under en rekognoscering for to år siden en stencirkel, der afmærkedes til senere undersøgelse.

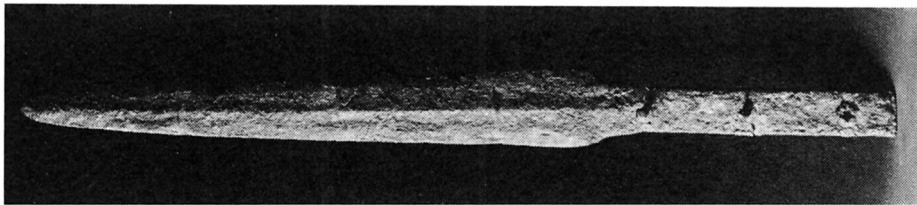


Fig. 4. Kobbersværd fra stenkredsen ved Hili, Buraimi. Længde 43 cm.
Copper sword from the stone circle at Hili, Buraimi. Length. 43 cms.

Dette arbejde påbegyndtes nu. Anlægget bestod af en lav høj, der målte ca. 20 m i diameter, men hævede sig mindre end en meter over det omgivende terræn, et buskland med spredte tornebuske og lave træer. På overfladen af højen lå flere store flade sten synlige, 2-3 m lange og over 1½ m brede. Nogle af dem var gennemboret i midten, og en enkelt aflang sten mod nordvest havde en halvval åbning. Spredt mellem dem lå mange mindre sten og brudstykker, mens en ca. 2½ m lang sten på sydvestsiden stod på kant. På alle stenene var den ene side og kanterne omhyggeligt glattede. På højens overflade fandtes en del potteskår og steatitskår og nogle få bronzefragmenter. Keramikken var tynd og sortmalet af samme type som den i Umm an-Nar gravhøjene.

Tværs gennem højen fra øst til vest blev lagt et 2 m bredt snit, hvis sider tegnedes, hvorefter et nyt tværgående snit gravedes ud fra midten af det første. Denne T-formede grøft viste, at højen var forstyrret af mange senere nedgravninger. Dog kunne det med sikkerhed fastslås, at de sten, der nu lå på overfladen eller nedgravet i højen, oprindelig havde dannet et rundt anlæg med mindst een dørhulsåbning. Ligheden med gravhøjene på Umm an-Nar var umiskendelig, men flere træk gjorde det betænkeligt at regne Hili anlægget for et gravkammer af samme type. Profilgrøfterne viste således ingen spor af skillevægge inde i kammeret, og bortset fra overfladeopsamlinger fandtes så godt som alle skårene uden for anlægget. Skeletrester fandtes overhovedet ikke. Men inden for cirklen og umiddelbart over et lag tæt pakket med skarpkantede skærver, antagelig det lag hvorpå anlægget er opført, fandtes to ting, der udmærket kan have været gravgaver, nemlig en dobbeltkonisk karneolperle og et kortsværd af bronze eller kobber (Fig. 4). Sværdklingen var 32 cm lang og foroven 3,6 cm bred med midtribbe, mens grebtungen var 12 cm lang og 2 cm bred med 3 nittehuller.

En nøjere gennemgang af Hili anlægget måtte af mangel på tid udsættes til det følgende år. Under korte rekognosceringer i omegnen fandtes flere lignende høje overstrøet med Umm an-Nar potteskår og i de fleste tilfælde med stenblokke stikkende frem. De lå alle indenfor en radius af 200-300 m.

Saudi Arabien

Hovedsagelig takket være amatørarkæologerne i Arabian American Oil Company i Dhahran lykkedes det professor Glob og Geoffrey Bibby i slutningen

af februar og begyndelsen af marts at tilbringe en uge på rekognosceringsbesøg i den østlige del af Saudi Arabien. Heraf tilbragtes to dage ved Thaj og en dag på øen Tarut, som man ikke nåede at besøge året i forvejen, og endelig to dage i Riyadh, hvor et foredrag om ekspeditionens resultater i Golfen blev holdt for et meget interesseret publikum på Riyadh universitet.

Thaj. Med en overnatning i en improviseret lejr ved Thaj blev der bedre tid til at afsøge stedet end det foregående år. Bymuren kunne følges med nogenlunde sikkerhed. Endvidere undersøgtes to store velbyggede brønde, der nu var udtørret. En overfladeopsamling af skår gav bl. a. en del importeret attisk keramik. Der var også mange fragmenter af terrakotta figurer og af firkantede røgelsesbægre af ler foruden en del kobbermønter og småstykker af steatit- og alabasterkar, således et 14 cm højt, stærkt beskadiget bikubeformet kar af alabast og hertil et rundt låg med håndtaget formet som en liggende løve (Fig. 5) [2]. Keramikken herfra svarer nøje til den seleukidiske periodes i den græske bosættelse på Failaka og i lagene fra samme tid på Bahrain.

Tarut. Den lille ø Tarut er nu forbundet med fastlandet ved en nylig fuldført dæmning. Det vigtigste fund i løbet af den dag, der var til rådighed her, blev gjort i byen Tarut midt på øen. Her var en høj med et såkaldt tyrkisk fort på toppen faldet i øjnene under en luftrekognoscering året forud. Nu viste en nærmere undersøgelse, at højen var dækket med skår af den karakteristiske rillede Barbar keramik, mens mure bygget af store stenblokke stak frem flere steder. Der er ingen tvivl om, at vi her har en betydelig bebyggelse fra Barbar kulturen, men en udgravning midt i den nuværende tætbefolkede by ville unægtelig være et besværligt foretagende.

Få km længere mod sydøst fandtes en gruppe lave høje, hvorfra der gravedes sand, og herunder var flere gravkamre blevet afdækket, lange stenkister med pudsede vægge. Rundt om lå fragmenter af alabasterskåle og steatitkar, øjensynlig fra 1. årtusind f. K.

Østkysten af Oman

Største delen af den arabiske kyst langs Oman golfen tilhører sultanen af Muscat og Oman, i hvis områder der ikke hidtil er givet tilladelse til arkæologiske undersøgelser. Men mellem forbjergene Kap Musandam mod nord og Batina kysten mod syd hører kyststrækningen ind under sheikedømmerne Sharjah og Fujaira. Her hvor bjergene når helt ud til kysten, åbner sig tre brede alluviale dale. Det er fra nord til syd Dibba, Khor al Fakhan og Kalba-Fujaira. I Dibba havde tropper fra Trucial Oman Scouts på øvelse gravet skyttegrave og herunder afdækket potteskår og rester af steatitkar af formentlig forhistorisk dato. De lod meddelelsen gå videre til ekspeditionen, og under et besøg hos udgravningsholdet i Abu Dhabi foretog professor Glob og Geoffrey Bibby en tredages tur til stedet. For oplysninger og for praktisk støtte på turen ønsker ekspeditionen at udtrykke sin taknemmelighed over for Trucial Oman Scouts.



Fig. 5. Alabasterlåg med en hvilende løve fra Thaj, Saudi Arabien. Diameter 9,2 cm.

Alabaster lid bearing couchant lion, from Thaj, Saudi Arabia. Diameter: 9.2 cms.

Fra Musafi, en landsby på toppen af bjergkæden, går nedstigningen til det Indiske hav gennem en hårrejsende kløft, hvor en jeep må kravle af sted som et muldyr mellem og over meterhøje blokke og med stejle klipper på begge sider. Efter et brat sving ligger sletten foran en. Skabt af sten og grus skyllet ned fra kløfterne strækker den sig med sit sparsomme græs de 10 km ud til havet.

Det var på denne flade slette ca. 1 km sydvest for Gharfa, en større landsby syd for og næsten sammenbygget med kystbyen Dibba, at troppernes grøfter ca. 1 m nede var stødt på store utilhuggede sten med knogler, skår og steatitfragmenter imellem. To års sandflugt var gået hen over, hvad der ikke fra begyndelsen var tænkt som nogen arkæologisk udgravning, og grøftens soltørrede sider gav ikke efter selv den mest energiske afskrabning sikre spor af nedgravninger til grave eller gruber. Oldsagerne fandtes i et jævnt lag nær grøftens bund og i hele dens ca. 30 meters længde. Man fik indtryk af et beboelseslag, men den mulighed, at grøften har skåret gennem en tæt pakket gravplads, kan ikke ganske afvises.

Et udvalg af potteskårene blev medtaget foruden alle steatitfragmenter. Endvidere fandtes en pilespids af bronze, 8 cm lang, bladformet, med grebtunge og midtribbe, og to cirkelrunde knapper af muslingeskal. Den ene målte 2,4 cm i diameter og havde et hul i midten, den anden målte 5 cm, og foruden midter-

hullet omgivet af to indridsede koncentriske cirkler var der seks påbegyndte huller ligeledes med cirkler omkring.

Keramikken bestod hovedsagelig af dybe skåle med en svagt afsat skulder under en 2 cm bred let udbøjet rand. De fleste af de ti randfragmenter, der alle stammede fra forskellige skåle, havde sort eller rød krydsskravering malet på mørk rød grund. Hverken grundfarven eller ornamentet strakte sig ud over skulderen. Bund- og sideskår fra antagelig de samme skåle var i nogle tilfælde ornamenteret indvendig med radiære bølgelinjer og i et enkelt tilfælde også med radiære skraverede trekanter i bunden af skålen. Figurerne var udført i sort maling på rød begitning eller i rød på det oprindelige gulbrune gods. Enkelte skår var glittede, og på et randskår var der rester af en åben tud. Desuden var der skår af to lavere, grovere skåle og to skår af krukker med udkrænget rand, den ene med lukket tud. Alle disse var uornamenterede.

De fleste steatitskår stammede fra bikubeformede kar, 8-10 cm høje med indridsede linjer, i et enkelt tilfælde med fine zig-zag linjer. Endvidere var der et skår med et knopformet fremspring, antagelig fra et kar med tre eller fire knopfødder og endelig et stykke af et rundt låg med savtakket ornament.

Med sikkerhed at datere denne samling er ikke uden videre muligt. Bronze-pilen og mangelen på glaseret keramik tyder på før-islamisk tid, måske 1. årtusind f. K. eller endnu tidligere. At det koncentriske cirkelornament, der findes på så at sige alle steatitkar i Umm an-Nar og Barbar kulturen, ikke findes her, tyder på en datering senere end begyndelsen af 2. årtusind f. K. Keramikken ligner ikke den, der er fundet i de senere gravhøje i Buraimi, som af et sværd i en af dem (Kuml 1964) dateres til ca. 1300-1200 f. K. Skulle man på det nuværende grundlag vove en datering af Dibba samlingen, ville den lyde på et sted mellem 1000 og 500 f. K. Men selv med dette spillerum ville den være meget usikker.

På en anden plads 1½ km syd for Gharfa, hvor en firkantet brønd nylig var rensat op, fandtes grove ukarakteristiske skår og en del steatitfragmenter fra lave skåle. Her var endnu mindre at gå efter for en datering, som da heller ikke vil blive forsøgt.

Arabian Gulf Archeology

The Tenth Campaign of the Danish Archeological Expedition 1964

On the 3rd of December 1963 the Danish Archeological Expedition to the Arabian Gulf could note the ten-year anniversary of the beginnings of its work on the island of Bahrain, and a month later on the 5th of January 1964 the tenth expedition left Denmark to continue the work in the Gulf area. Sixteen persons took part in this expedition, which lasted until the 18th of April and was led as usual by Professor P. V. Glob with T. G. Bibby as deputy, and while work in Kuwait was — we hope temporarily — suspended this year our teams were operating in Bahrain, Qatar and Abu Dhabi, while once again this year it proved possible to reconnoitre in Saudi Arabia. For the first time the expedition passed beyond the confines of the Arabian Gulf and, in a reconnaissance across the Oman peninsula to Dibba in the states of Sharjah and Fujaira, could symbolically dip its trowels in the Indian Ocean.

Financial assistance for this reconnaissance and for the excavations in Bahrain was received from the Carlsberg Foundation, while grants were also received from the governments of Bahrain and Qatar and from the oil companies of Bahrain, Qatar and Abu Dhabi for work within their several areas. The expedition records its gratitude for this assistance, as well as for assistance in many other forms willingly provided by a large number of firms and private individuals.

Bahrain

All the effort of the Bahrain section of the expedition was this year directed to the main site on the island, the city-mound of *Qala'at al-Bahrain*. A two-year programme was here initiated with the object of casting light on some of the major problems still outstanding (and with the hope of being able to reach a stage where the results of our investigations to date could be published without too many obvious lacunae).

Eivind Lorenzen was architect to the excavations, while Lillian Bue-Madsen, our commissariat supervisor, ran our camp within the Portuguese fort which crowns the tell. The other participants are named in connection with their separate excavations.

In the main area in the centre of the tell the excavation, supervised by Karen Frifelt and Søren Andersen (until the latter's departure for Abu Dhabi), was as in previous years extended eastwards, this time over an area more than twice as large as usual, 20 metres to the east and 15 metres from north to south. It was intended by this extensive "area-investigation" to obtain a rather less piecemeal picture of the occupation and building levels of this area, the Islamic town (City VI) immediately beneath the surface, the "palace" complex (City IV) some three metres below ground, and the massive "Kassite" (City III) building immediately below that again. And it was hoped that an area this size might finally reach the outer walls of the "palace" and the east wall of the City III building, give evidence of what lay beyond them, and perhaps give space for excavation to the deeper levels of Cities I and II, an almost impossible task in the area already excavated, where the buildings of Cities III and IV presented metre-thick walls and foundations of massive cement-set blocks of stone. The excavation was planned to take two years.

The wall remains which were visible on the surface proved to belong to an extensive complex of Islamic buildings, revealing a considerable number of rooms and the streets between them. The house walls, preserved to the height of a metre, were built of rough stones and a few larger blocks, superficially squared. The stones were set in a mortar of sandy clay, and the walls were plastered on both faces.

A number of alterations and additions to the walling could be noted, but although each room was as far as possible excavated separately there was no appreciable variation to be seen in the ceramic material. The floors were of beaten earth with a thin levelling layer of mixed clay and gypsum, and were only partly preserved, so that there was no real occupation layer. The objects discovered in the rooms, coins and potsherds, carnelian and glass beads, make-up spatulae, numerous bracelets of coloured glass, and lumps of a red colouring matter, are thus not necessarily all contemporary with the houses. At a later period a number of ovens had been sunk at random among the ruins. Close to the surface in an undoubted fill-layer the head and torso of a little terracotta female figurine was found (Fig. 1); it is undoubtedly Indian, probably to be ascribed to the Mathura school and dated to about the seventh century AD.

The next $1\frac{1}{2}$ -2 metres below the Islamic building level consisted of a filling layer containing numerous potsherds of a very mixed character. Below this, at the level of the "palace" and immediately to the east of the ten-metre-long "hall" excavated the previous year, there was found a corridor, a little over $1\frac{1}{2}$ metres wide, which ran north-south and ended to the south in a little square room containing an earth-closet. This proved to be the easternmost end of the "palace" building, or at least its easternmost surviving extent. Beyond it the whole of the northern portion of the excavation area consisted solely of "fill" and only in the southern half were walls found at this level, apparently continuing the line of the east-west street which bounded the "palace" to the south.

Against the north face of the northern street-wall were two remarkable structures. With an interval of one metre between them stood two identical clay benches, about two metres long, a little under one metre broad and somewhat over half a metre high. In the centre of the exposed northern side was a lower trapezoid-shaped clay structure, and in the upper surface of the western bench four flat-bottomed pottery vessels had been sunk at equal intervals, their sides now broken off level with the top of the bench (Fig. 2).

The structures were immediately christened the Scorpion Brewery. The theory of a distillery was supported by the fact that in the sides of each of the four vessels, at the level of the top of the bench, there were traces of a round hole, as large as a halfcrown, in each case pointing towards the trapezoid projection and suggesting four retorts running to a common outlet. However, when the westernmost structure, already somewhat damaged, was cut through, it was discovered that there were no traces of any sort of flues or channels for stoking. Within the structure there were several patches of ash, together with small lumps of copper or bronze, while on the floor around the structures there were clear traces of firing in the form of layers of ashes with innumerable lumps of copper or bronze. It would thus appear that the structures were actually associated with the smelting of metal, and they are probably the remains of two sets of multiple bellows (such as described in Kuml 1962, pp. 73-4, by Johs. Nicolaisen).

(The above based on a report by Karen Frifelt)

On the northern outskirts of the tell excavation was reopened on a section of the northern fortification wall which had been temporarily abandoned four years before. In the intervening three years the same fortification wall had been located on the western and southern outskirts of the tell, but there were two significant differences between the northern wall and the wall on the west and south. To the west and south the wall was based on bedrock, showing that there had been no settlement in these areas prior to its building; and there were no traces within the wall of permanent buildings during the period that the wall was in function (Kuml 1964). To the north the case was different. Below the wall there was over a metre of occupation debris with at least one building level (City I), and within the wall and contemporary with it there were other building levels (City II), comprising streets and stone-built houses (Kuml 1957). The abandonment of the excavation of the northern area in 1959 had not been entirely caused by a desire to find the west and south fortifications. The surviving portion of the northern wall was of very limited extent. To the west it had been completely demolished by the digging of the dry moat around the Portuguese fort, while to the east it ended sharply, broken off by quarrying, perhaps to obtain stone for the building of the fort. However, some 17¹/₂ metres of the surviving portion of the wall were still unexcavated, and as this area seemed to give the best possibilities of learning more of the first two cities on the site it was decided to excavate the inner side of this portion of the wall and a belt about 13 metres broad within the wall. This excavation, too, was designed to cover two years and was under the charge of Svend Bue-Madsen and Else Roesdahl.

In the centre of this belt a baulk, two metres wide, was left standing. Sections were drawn of each side of this north-south baulk as the excavations proceeded, and at the end of the season the baulk was excavated level by level, and all potsherds preserved.

It soon became clear that the area within the wall available for excavation was even more restricted than expected, as in the southern half of the area all occupation levels had been cut away, to a depth greater than that reached this year, by a previous excavation, now filled with loose sand and predominantly Islamic sherds. This excavation, too, was probably occasioned by stone-quarrying. Interest was therefore concentrated on the area immediately south of the fortification wall.

It was known from the previous excavations to the west of the area now being opened that the fortification wall was double, consisting of an inner wall of City II date built of stones set in green clay, and an outer wall, probably of later date, of stones set in gypsum. In the excavation to the west of the section baulk the outer wall reached the surface, and

immediately south of it, above the putative line of the inner wall three rooms were excavated containing many sherds of the Seleucid City V date (the "thin bowl" phase, cf. Bibby, Kuml 1957). In one room were the remains of a staircase, with four steps surviving, while another was a little bathroom with two earth-closets. In the "outer wall", which formed the north wall of this room, there was a doorway with two limestone doorposts, though this doorway had probably been blocked before the bathroom was established, as the hinge-stone for the door lay beneath the party wall separating the two rooms. This party wall, and the floors on either side, were partly broken by a deep pit containing Islamic potsherds. The well-preserved east wall of this group of three rooms, and the presence of wall foundations further south suggest that the surviving rooms were only a small portion of a larger building complex.

Beneath the rooms lay the remains of several badly demolished walls, and below these the solid basis and reason for the amount of building activity in this area, the inner fortification wall of the Second City.

The section baulk, which was excavated this year down to the uppermost City II levels, proved to follow the line of a street running north-south and surfaced with a thick layer of gypsum cement. This street was bounded to the west by the east wall of the Seleucid period house just described, while its eastern side consisted of badly demolished and reused walls. The street ran north to a gateway in the "outer wall", a broad portal with a stone threshold, which had at a later period been narrowed slightly by a short blocking wall on the western side of the gateway, and later again closed completely by a slab of stones set in cement. Beneath the street surface was a sophisticated drainage system consisting of two rectangular plastered tanks to the north and to the south joined by a long offset drain, accessible from the street and running into the southern tank.

To the east of the section baulk the "inner wall" appeared at a higher level than to the west, though here too topped by remains of later building, and having towards the east a stone-quarrying hole containing sherds of the "thin-bowl" type. The northern side of the "inner wall" was badly broken up, and here the "outer wall" was not, as to the west of the portal, built immediately touching the "inner wall" but showed a gap between them. This gap, about 50 cms. wide at the top, narrowed to 10–15 cms. further down, and appeared to have been caused by a subsidence of the foundations of the "outer wall" which here leaned outwards from the perpendicular. It was indeed established that the base of the "outer wall" lay higher than that of the inner, City II, wall. A feature, however, which it proved impossible to square with any neat theory of leaning and subsidence of a wall originally built up against the "inner wall" was that the inner face of this "outer wall" was plastered from top to bottom, while sherds of "caramel ware" in the gap between the two showed that this gap existed, and the plastering probably took place, in the Kassite period (for terminology cf. Bibby, Kuml 1957). The precise sequence of events in this area can probably only be unravelled by excavation on the outer face of the "outer wall".

Towards the end of the season the later walls on either side of the section baulk were removed, and excavation below the surviving top of the "inner wall" began to reveal walls and occupation levels of City II date. Just before excavation ended for the summer a vertical breach in the "inner wall" immediately to the west of the section baulk suggested the exciting possibility that beneath the Seleucid-period portal there might lie a city gate of "Barbar" (City II) date.

Among the more important small finds of the season were, from the "Barbar" levels, four stamp seals (Fig. 3) and a seal impression in bitumen¹⁾ a little terracotta bull figurine and numerous sherds of fine painted pottery, with geometric designs in black on a red wash.

(The above based largely on a report by Else Roesdahl)

The third project on the Qala'at al-Bahrain tell this year was more frankly a "wild-cat" dig. The tell measures approximately 300 metres from north to south and runs about 600 metres east to west parallel with the shore. At either end of this oval it rises to a height of some twelve metres above sea-level, but between these two areas of high ground there is,

across the centre of the tell, a lower-lying area only about 6.5 metres above sea-level. To date all our excavations had taken place in the western half of the tell, except for one excavation (Kuml 1964) in the southeastern corner, which had found considerable depths of Kassite (City III) remains and a shallow "Barbar" (City II) building level below, but which had not found the City II fortification wall which we had been seeking. We decided to sink a sondage in the centre of the depression between the two halves of the tell. It was possible that the depression was due to the absence here of levels representing the later cities, in which case we should here find remains of the earlier cities easier of access. If on the other hand remains of the earlier cities were lacking it would suggest that the city in its earliest phases was confined to the western half of the tell, and that the missing eastern fortification wall should be sought there. In fact the second alternative proved to be the case. The sondage, made by Torkil Funder and Birgitte Henriksen, passed through several building levels of Islamic date, revealing well-constructed houses, some incorporating quite massive squared stones. Only at the very bottom, in a sharply restricted area, was there a small patch containing "Barbar" potsherds, while elsewhere the lowest levels gave potsherds of the Seleucid City V. In the final month the excavation was therefore extended by a trench dug towards the west for a distance of 19 metres, but this trench too showed no trace of remains of the earlier cities, deep Islamic levels here overlying a destruction level containing City V sherds. At the top of this latter level a cylinder seal was discovered, the first cylinder seal to be found in Bahrain (Fig. 3). It is probably of Isin-Larsa or Old Babylonian date, although the layer in which it was found is clearly of later date.

(The above condensed from a report by Torkil Funder)

Qatar

During 1964 a final season's work in Qatar was carried out by Holger Kapel, Svend Jørgensen of the Natural Sciences department of the Danish National Museum, and Erling Bondesen of the Danish Geological Survey. The excavation of the Seleucid-period site at Ras Uwainat Ali was continued without further significant result. Material for a radioactive carbon dating was collected from the deposit of shells *below* the settlement deposit and this material was later dated at the C¹⁴ laboratory in Copenhagen to 2150 BC ± 110 (HG 7838 NM VIII A4742). This dating naturally has no bearing — other than a *terminus post quem* — on the date of the settlement, but the nature of the shell layer makes it probable that the site was below sea-level at the date of the sample.

At Al-Jubaigib east of Umm Bab several new Stone-Age sites of various periods were located, while new sites were also found in the far south near Saudi Nathil. In the interior southeast of Dukhan a large tool-making site was found (at Umm Taqa) with many blades and half-fabricated implements, probably belonging to the Mesolithic phase. In the area southwest of Umm Said several good sites were discovered, including a number belonging to the blade-arrowhead culture, on isolated cliff formations in very inhospitable country. Previously known sites were also revisited and supplementary material collected.

The results of this season's work have been incorporated in the survey of Stone-Age sites in Qatar previously published (Kapel, Kuml 1964), and will be given more fully in the first volume of the expedition's reports to be published in 1967.

(The above based on an account by Holger Kapel)

Abu Dhabi

In Abu Dhabi a team consisting of Jørgen Lund, Jens Bech and Arne Noll, later joined by Søren Andersen, worked for five weeks on the settlement on the island of Umm an-Nar, and then proceeded inland to Buraimi where they spent three weeks investigating the stone circle near Hili.

Umm an-Nar. The object of the excavation this year being to obtain some indication of the duration of the settlement, work was started at the highest point on the settlement mound, where the occupation levels might be expected to be thickest. The site chosen was about 120 metres northeast of the house excavated during the previous season, and adjoined

a section trench through the settlement commenced in 1959 but not completed. An area 13 by 10 metres was excavated down to bedrock, which proved to lie deeper than expected, about 2.25 metres below the surface.

In the sides of the excavation, and in the house walls uncovered, four periods of occupation could be distinguished, the lowest lying below, and anteceding, the earliest walls. The earliest level, though of some thickness, contained only sparse potsherds and animal bones. Any houses that may have existed in this period must have been constructed of perishable materials, such as palm branches.

The earliest phase of stone-built houses can with a high degree of probability be considered contemporary with the gravemounds (Thorvildsen, Kuml 1962) since comparatively numerous sherds of the painted pottery characteristic of the gravemounds (thin sherds with black paint on a red, or occasionally a gray, surface) were found at this level.

The two phases subsequent to the first stone buildings contained stone walls in which stones were often reused from the earlier phase, while at one point stone blocks from the gravemounds were employed. In the short time at our disposal it was not possible to make a sufficiently detailed stratigraphy of the sherds and other objects found to relate these two later building phases chronologically to the first, but there did not appear to be any significant change in pottery, and certainly no sherds of Islamic type appeared. A further excavation based on this year's sondage would enable the relation of the various phases to be more accurately determined.

In addition to potsherds the excavation yielded a number of net-sinkers or loom-weights and of rubbing stones, as well as a small number of objects of bronze or copper, particularly pins and fish-hooks. Two smoothers of antler were also found. Several thousand animal bones were collected.

(The above based on a report by Jørgen Lund)

A sample of these animal bones has since been examined by Ulrik Møhl of the Laboratory of Quaternary Zoology of the Copenhagen University Zoological Museum. A cursory survey suggests that the majority of the bones are of *Halicore dugong* (sea-cow), while the marine turtle is also well represented. There are also bones of a large whale, of antelope and of cormorant. Most significant is the presence of bones of camel, though of course there is no evidence to show whether the camel was domesticated. Contrary to the belief of the excavators there were not — in the very small sample so far examined — any bones certainly ascribable to sheep, goat or cattle.

Buraimi. Towards the north of the oasis of Buraimi, in the portion of the oasis belonging to the territory of Abu Dhabi, lies the village of Hili; and about one mile east of Hili lies the circular stone structure, discovered two years previously, which was the object of this season's investigation. It consisted of a fairly low mound, some twenty metres in diameter, rising about three-quarters of a metre above the general ground level. It lies in an area of sparse bushland, clothed with low trees and thorn bushes. On the surface of the mound several large stone slabs lay exposed, 2-3 metres in length and more than 1.5 metres broad. Some of these stones had circular holes in the centre while one large elongated stone to the northwest possessed a half-oval shaped portal. A large number of smaller stones and fragments lay scattered among the larger ones, while to the southwest one stone slab, about 2.5 metres long, stood on edge. All these stones had been carefully smoothed on one side and on all edges. On the surface of the mound lay in addition a quantity of potsherds and steatite sherds, together with a few small fragments of bronze. The pottery, thin and ornamented with black paint, was identical with that from the Umm an-Nar gravemounds.

A trench, 2 metres wide, was dug completely across the mound from east to west, and after the sides of this trench were drawn and described a further trench was cut from the centre of the cross-trench to the south. This T-shaped trench showed that the mound had been disturbed by a very large number of earlier pits and excavations, but nevertheless it could be determined with certainty that the stones on and below the surface of the mound

had originally formed the walling of a circular structure with at least one porthole entrance. The resemblance of this structure to the grave-chambers of Umm an-Nar was unmistakable, but there were some anomalies which made it unsafe at this juncture to claim with certainty that the Hili monument was a grave-chamber of the same type. No traces of inner wallings were found in the section trenches, while, apart from the surface deposits, practically all the potsherds were found *outside* the line of the walls. Moreover, no trace of skeletal remains was anywhere found. However, within the circle of the walls, and immediately above a layer characterized by quantities of unweathered stone chippings which must mark the construction level of the structure, lay a biconical carnelian bead and a short bronze or copper sword (Fig. 4) which may well have accompanied a burial. The sword had a blade 32 cms. long and 3.6 cms. broad at the shoulder, with a central rib; the tang, in one piece with the sword, was 12 cms. long, 2 cms. wide and possessed three rivet holes.

The shortness of the Buraimi season prevented further investigation of the Hili mound, but it was planned to return the following year. In the course of reconnaissance in the neighbourhood about half a dozen other mounds of similar type, covered with Umm an-Nar potsherds and in most cases with shaped stones protruding above the surface, were discovered within a radius of 2-300 yards.

Saudi Arabia

Once again this year it proved possible to make a short reconnaissance in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia, thanks largely to the enthusiasm of the amateur archeologists of the Arabian American Oil Company in Dhahran. Professor Glob and Geoffrey Bibby accordingly spent a week in Saudi Arabia at the end of February and the beginning of March. Of this period two days were spent on the city site of Thaj and one day on the island of Tarut, which was not covered by last year's reconnaissance, while two days were spent in Riyadh where a talk on the results of the expedition's work in the Arabian Gulf sheikhdoms was delivered to an extremely interested audience from Riyadh University.

Thaj. Arrangements made to spend a night in camp at Thaj enabled very much more time to be spent in surface reconnaissance than the previous year. The line of the city walls could be determined with some certainty, while two very large and elaborate wells, now dry, were examined. A large representative pottery collection was made from the surface, including quantities of imported Attic ware. Many fragments of terracotta figurines and of square clay incense-burners were found, as well as a number of copper coins and fragments of vessels of steatite and alabaster. The most noteworthy discovery was that of fragments of a large beehive-shaped alabaster vessel, 14 cms. high, with a circular lid, the handle of which was formed as a couchant lion (Fig. 5) [2]. The pottery conformed closely — as in the previous year — to the ware of Seleucid date found in the Greek settlement on Failaka and in the levels of the same date in Bahrain.

Tarut. One day was spent investigating sites on the small island of Tarut, approached by a recently completed causeway from the mainland. Here the most important discovery was made in the centre of the town of Tarut which lies in the centre of the island. Here a conspicuous mound, crowned by a fort said to be of Turkish origin, had been noted on the aerial reconnaissance the year before. Ground investigation showed this mound to be covered with sherds of the typical "Barbar" ridged ware, while walls of massive shaped stone could be seen protruding from the mound. There can be no doubt that there is here an important site of the Barbar culture, though the situation of the site, in the centre of a crowded town, would make excavation very difficult.

About two miles to the southeast an area of low sandy mounds was found where considerable quarrying of sand was in process. Here several grave chambers had been exposed, long cists lined with gypsum plaster, and around these, and on the surface of the mounds, lay quantities of fragments of alabaster and steatite vessels, apparently of First Millennium BC date. A representative collection was made.

Gulf of Oman Coast

The greater part of the Arabian coast of the Gulf of Oman lies in the territory of the Sultanate of Muscat and Oman, in which permission to carry out archeological reconnaissance has not yet been received. However, between the mountainous promontory of Cape Musandam to the north and the Batina coast to the south lies a stretch of coast belonging to the Trucial Sheikhdoms of Sharjah and Fujaira. Here, between the mountains running down to the sea, there are three broad alluvial valleys, from north to south those of Dibba, Khor al-Fakhan and Kalba-Fujaira. Taking advantage of a visit to the expedition team working in Abu Dhabi Professor Glob and Geoffrey Bibby made a three-day trip to the northernmost of these valleys, that of Dibba, in which troops of the Trucial Oman Scouts, in the course of digging practice trenches, had two years before discovered quantities of supposedly prehistoric remains, sherds of pottery and of steatite vessels. The assistance of the Trucial Oman Scouts in enabling this trip to be made and in guiding us to the sites discovered is here gratefully acknowledged.

The descent from Musafi, the village at the crest of the mountain chain, to the coast of the Indian Ocean is by way of a hair-raising gorge where a jeep must pick its way, like a mule, among and over 4-foot boulders, with sheer cliffs rising on either hand. Abruptly the canyon turns a corner, and in front lies level gravel, a plain of sparse grass stretching the six miles to the sea, formed of the outwash of debris from the mountain gorges such as that just traversed.

It was in this featureless plain, about one kilometre southwest of Gharfa — which is a largish village or small town south of and almost adjoining the coastal town of Dibba — that the trenches of the Scouts had struck, at a depth of about a metre, a number of large unshaped stones, and among them bones, potsherds and pieces of steatite vessels. Two years of sand-drift had since then obscured what had never been designed as an archeological excavation, and the weathered sides of the trench, even with energetic scraping, gave no certain indication, in the uniform gravel, of the sides of pits or graves. The potsherds and other remains found protruding from the sides of the trench were at a uniform level close to the bottom of the trench, and were found over its whole length, perhaps 30 metres. The general impression was of an occupation level, though the possibility that the trench was dug through a close-packed cemetery could not be dismissed.

A collection of representative potsherds was made, while all fragments of steatite were collected. In addition a bronze arrowhead, 8 cms. long, leaf-shaped and with a tang and central rib, was found, as well as two buttons of shell, one a simple rough circle 2.4 cms. in diameter with a central hole, and the other 5 cms. in diameter with a central hole ringed by two incised circles and surrounded by six half-bored holes similarly ringed.

The pottery showed a preponderance of deep bowls with a slight shoulder below a 2-cm. deep slightly outturned rim. Most of the ten fragments of these rims, all of different bowls, were painted with a cross-hatching of black or red on a dark plum-red ground. Neither the ground colour nor the decoration extended further down than the shoulder. Base and side sherds, probably of these bowls, were in some cases decorated on the inside with radial wavy lines, combined in one case with hatched triangles radiating out from the centre of the bottom. The decoration was in black on a red wash, or in red on the original light buff. Burnishing occurred on a very few sherds, while one rimsherd showed the beginnings of an open spout. There were in addition sherds of two simpler, shallower bowls, and two sherds of vase-shaped vessels with out-rolled rims, one with a bridged spout. These were undecorated.

The majority of the steatite sherds were of beehive-shaped pots, 8-10 cms. in height, with incised linear decoration, in one case formed of minutely zigzagging lines. There was also one sherd with a protuberance suggesting an original vessel with three or four knob-feet, and a piece of a circular lid with a sawtooth ornamentation.

Dating of this assemblage is not at the moment possible. The bronze arrowhead, and the complete absence of glazed ware, suggests a pre-Islamic date, probably First Millennium BC or earlier. The absence from the steatite vessels of the dot-and-circle motif found on practically speaking every steatite vessel of the Umm an-Nar and the Barbar cultures would suggest a date later than the beginning of the Second Millennium BC,

while there was similarly no resemblance in the pottery to that found in the later grave-mounds of Buraimi, and dated by the sword found in one of them (Kuml 1964) to about 1200-1300 BC. If one should risk a guess for the Dibba complex it would therefore be somewhere between 1000 and 500 BC. But such a guess would be hazardous in the extreme.

A second site, 1½ kms. south of Gharfa, where a square well had recently been cleaned out, yielded coarse pottery of indeterminate character, and a number of steatite fragments, all of shallow bowls. This complex was even less dateable than the former, and no guess will here be hazarded.

Geoffrey Bibby

NOTES

1. The design on the seal impression is notably similar to (though not identical with) that impressed on a tablet in the Yale Babylonian Collection, probably from Ur, which is dated precisely to the tenth year of Gungunum of Larsa, or 1923 B.C. in the "middle chronology". Published by Hallo and Buchanan: "A 'Persian Gulf' seal on an Old Babylonian mercantile agreement" in "Studies in Honor of Benno Landsberger", Chicago 1965.
2. Two very similar alabaster lions, clearly cut from lids of the same character, exist in the British Museum (BM 125160 and 130903). Both are believed to have been acquired from South Arabia.