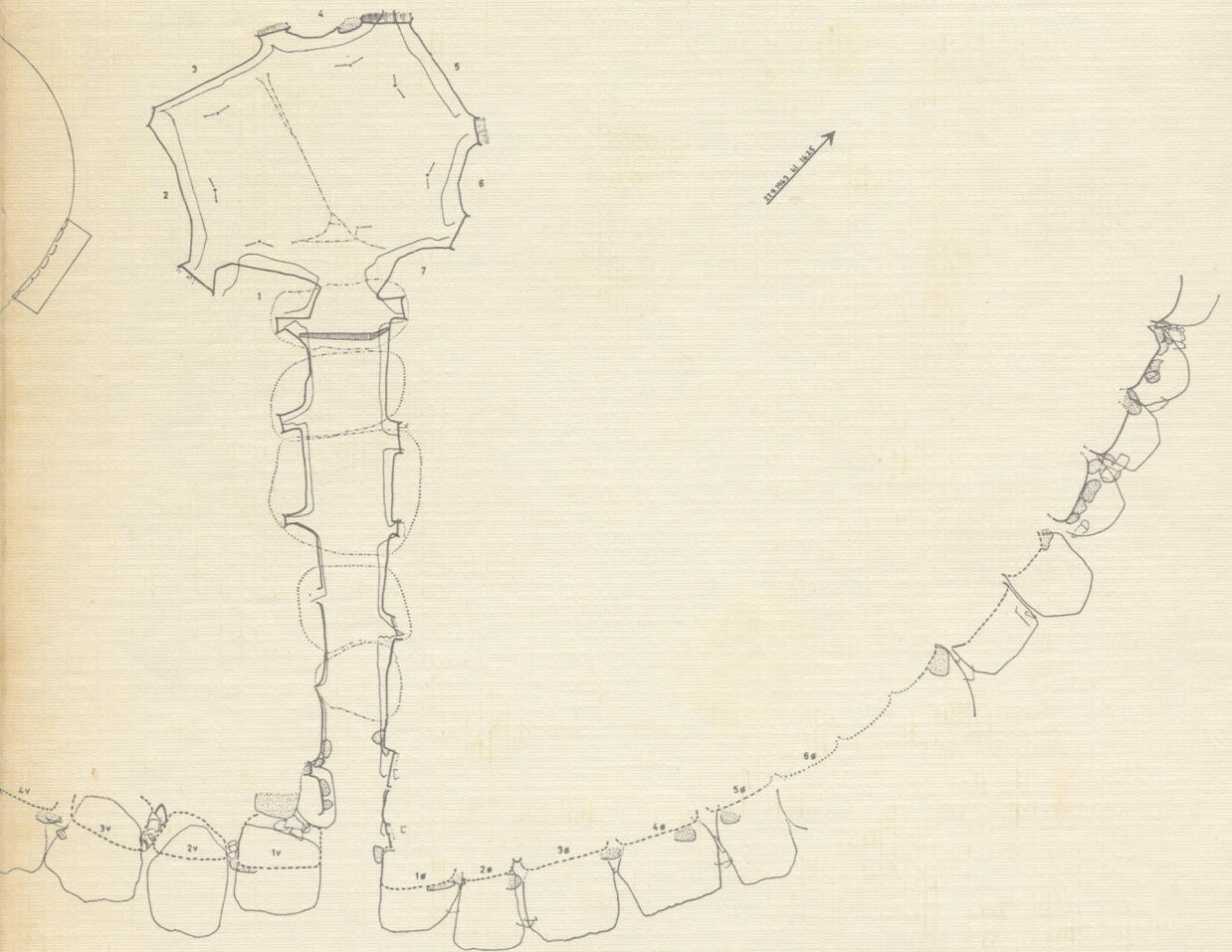


# KUML

1969



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ÅRBOG FOR JYSK ARKÆOLOGISK SELSKAB

1969

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Jysk Arkæologisk Selskab

## REKOGNOSKERING PÅ DEN NORDLIGE DEL AF OMAN HALVØEN

AF BEATRICE DE CARDI

### *En foreløbig rapport*

Et kort besøg i Ras al-Khaimah og Dibba i 1965 af professor P. V. Glob og T. G. Bibby viste, at det var vigtigt med flere rekognosceringer i disse sheikedømmer på den nordlige del af Oman halvøen. Med tilladelse fra Hans Højhed Sheikh Saqr bin Muhammad al-Qasimi fra Ras al-Khaimah og fra Hans Højhed Sheikh Muhammad bin Hamad al-Sharqi fra Fujairah blev det muligt for D. B. Doe, M.B.I, F.R.I.B.A., F.S.A. og for undertegnede at tilbringe fire uger i februar 1968 i de to stater. Det vigtigste formål med rekognosceringen var at finde forhistoriske pladser med indridset og malet grå keramik af samme type som den, der er fundet på pladser fra sent 3. årtusind f. Kr. i det sydøstlige Iran og, på den arabiske side af Golfen, i stengrave i sheikedømmet Abu Dhabi, nemlig på Umm an-Nar og i nærheden af landsbyen Hili i Buraimi oasen [1]. Kyststrækningerne lige over for Baluchistan var naturlige områder for en sådan undersøgelse: Ras al-Khaimah mod nord og Batinakysten fra Kalba til Khawr Fakkan på den østlige del af Oman halvøen. Ingen forhistoriske pladser blev dog med sikkerhed lokaliseret bortset fra forskellige former for stengrave, som i hvert fald er før-islamiske.

Mangelen på forhistoriske levn her forklares måske af de geografiske forhold: mod øst kystsletten, inde i landet bjergkæder, hvis stenede kløfter åbner sig vifteformigt ud mod en smal stribe alluvialt sletteland og derefter sandklitter, som strækker sig ud mod havet i vest.

Mulighederne for at finde tidlige bosættelser mellem sandklitterne forekom små, og vore undersøgelser samlede sig derfor om sletten og udløbene på de største wadier. Nær sidstnævnte viste det sig, at kun anlæg som røser og solidt funderede bygninger havde modstået det udskyllende grus. På sletten kunne de fleste af pladserne ved hjælp af overfladens potteskår dateres til portugiser-tiden (16.–17. årh.). Sandsynligvis ligger de eventuelle forhistoriske bo-pladser nu begravet under det aflejrede grus, og kun tilfældigheder vil bringe dem frem. Bjergene nordøst for Ras al-Khaimah ligger i Muscat og var ikke tilgængelige for os, og i randbjergene modsatte Shihuh folket sig vore undersøgelser.

Over tredive pladser lokaliseredes med rester af byer, fæstninger, befæstede huse (sidstnævnte fra portugiser-tiden), huler, helleristninger og forskellige typer af stengrave.

### *Ras al-Khaimah*

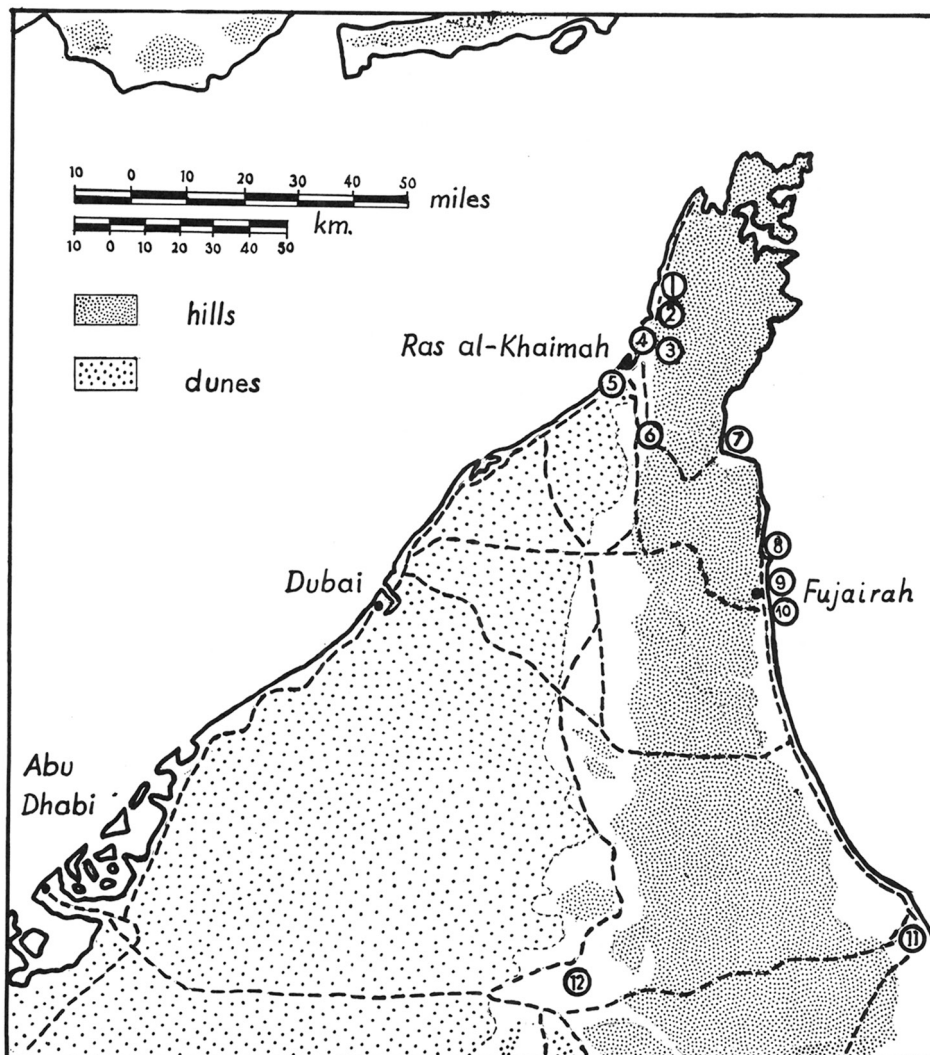
Vi startede i den nordlige del af Ras al-Khaimah. Ved Ash Sham (kort nr. 1) i nærheden af Muscat grænsen fandt vi ved foden af randbjergene resterne af en bebyggelse med seks moskeer, efter murværket at dømme opført i forskellige tidsperioder. Skønt det forlød, at stedet havde være beboet gennem meget lang tid, var de ældste skår vi fandt kinesisk porcelæn fra det 18. årh. I wadien bag stedet var der helleristninger af ryttere, udført på en klippeblok i nærheden af en brolagt sti med trappetrin op til en gammel landsby i bjergene, godt 500 fod over sletten, hvor en stor vand-cisterne var bygget op mod klippen på et velbeskyttet sted.

Fra Ash Sham løber karavanevejen sydpå langs foden af bjergene til Wadi Ghalilah (nr. 2). Her lykkedes det os at redde tre af en gruppe på fem runde stenrøser fra at blive jævnet med bulldozer. Kamrene var bygget af ret groft tilhuggede sten, der kragede ud, til de mødtes foroven og var dækket med mindre sten. De var op til seks fod høje.

Grave af en anden type fandtes nær udløbet af Wadi Haqil (nr. 3) lidt længere sydpå. Anlæggene her var aflange med halvrunde ender, fra 28 til 87 fod lange, men kun fra 8 til 10 fod brede. Alle gravene havde været dækket med store stenfliser, mens sten anbragt i en ret vinkel ud fra sidemuren markerede indgangen midt i denne. Et forsøg på at udgrave en af disse stengrave stødte på så megen modstand hos den lokale befolkning, at foretagendet måtte opgives, og det eneste udbytte blev en lille rundbundet brungul krukke fundet sammen med knuste knogler. Wadi Haqil har åbenbart engang været et vigtigt område. Ruinerne af et stort stenbygget fort lå på en højde ved indgangen til dalen, og ved foden af det var der bygget en stensat dæmning, ca. 6,5 km lang, tværs over dalen for at lede flodens vand hen mod dadelplantagerne om den gamle havneby Julfar (nr. 4).

Julfars ruiner strækker sig over 1,5 km på en sandodde nord for bugten, der skiller den fra byen Ras al-Khaimah, og overleveringen på stedet påstår, at den er grundlagt i abbasidisk tid. Dens vækst skyldes antagelig den voksende handel i Golfen i Sirafs glansperiode. Da Siraf sygnede hen, blev Qishm den vigtigste handelsplads, indtil Hormuz tidligt i det 14. årh. overtog rollen. Oman-kysten, om ikke det indre af halvøen, beherskedes siden det foregående århundrede af Hormuzfyrsterne, og deres herredømme varede til portugisernes ankomst i begyndelsen af det 16. årh. På den tid beskrives Julfar som en velstående havneby med store indtægter [2], og rekognosceringen nu antyder, at den fortsat tjente som handelsplads for det indre af landet også under portugiserne.

Importgodset omfattede bl. a. en mængde Ming porcelæn fra sidste halvdel af det 16. årh. [3], en periode da kineserne masseproducerede denne vare. Portugiserne eksporterede den i stor stil fra Macao til Goa, og derfra gik den videre til Indien, op gennem Golfen og til kysten af Østafrika. Indtil for nylig er der kun ofret lidt opmærksomhed på den mere jævne kinesiske eksportvare, med det resultat at det kniber med publiceret sammenligningsmateriale fra udgravede pladser. Det er også svært at afgøre, hvordan kinesiske fabrikker sørgede for deres forskellige markeder. Men en vis forskel er tydelig både i kva-



litet og type af de eksporterede kar. Således ligger krukker og kander bestemt for Iran klart i en højere prisklasse end de mere beskedne madskåle, bægge og fade, som nåede Oman og Østafrika i det 16. århundrede.

Foruden Ming fandtes der i Julfar også fragmenter af store brunglaserede Martabani krukker, af stentøj fra Annam og af celadon-efterligninger sandsynligvis fra Østasien, men ikke nødvendigvis fra Kina. Af lokalt lertøj er der en karakteristisk hånddrejet vare med flødefarvet overtræk, ofte i form af vandkander med en hankformet rørtud og med lodrette rødmaledede striber. Denne keramik fra den vestlige del af Ras al-Khaimah viser tillige handelsforbindelser

med fjernere steder, idet lignende kander er fundet på Bahrain og i 15.–16. årh. lag i Siraf og Kilwa [4].

Den samme keramik fandtes også blandt resterne af en næsten borteroderet bebyggelse på en skrænt ved Kashm Nadir (nr. 5) nogle få miles syd for Ras al-Khaimah by. Samlingen bestod hovedsagelig af grovere brugsting såsom hånddrejede kogepotter med fire trekantede knopører på skulderen, en form der har sidestykker i Siraf. Små flade skåle af hårdtbrændt gods med marmoreret brun glasur var talrige. De findes tilsvarende i 17. århundrede materiale fra Gedi på Østafrikas kyst [5].

Både i Kashm Nadir og på de andre pladser var persisk keramik påfaldende sparsom. Blandt skårene var nogle 17. årh. fragmenter fra Kerman med blå ornamenten på hvid bund under klar glasur. En noget ældre keramik fandtes på skrænterne omkring et ødelagt fort ved Khawran (nr. 6) sydøst for Ras al-Khaimah, en af de få pladser med før-portugisisk bebyggelse. Her opsamledes bl. a. brun sgraffiato keramik, et enkelt stykke sassanidisk-islamisk keramik og fragmenter af skåle med mørk brun maling under en svagt blålig glasur.

### *Batina kysten*

Fra Ras al-Khaimah fortsatte vi tværs over halvøen via Manamah, Masafi og ned langs Wadi Ham til Batina kysten. Pladserne i området nord for Kalba lå på den smalle strimmel mellem havet og bjergene og var vanskelige at datere af mangel på sammenligningsmateriale. På en øde plads lige nord for Khawr Fakkan opsamledes Ming og tillige en del celadon (nr. 8). Syd for denne havn lå grupper af små runde stenrøser ved Qurayyah (nr. 9), og over hundrede af dem lå spredt op over højderne bag Kalba (nr. 10). Ingen potteskår fandtes i forbindelse med dem.

### *Konklusioner*

Det bosættelses-mønster, der tegner sig ud fra rekognosceringen, især i Ras al-Khaimah, tyder på, at randbjergene blev foretrukket for fladlandet i de ældre perioder, med højtliggende fæstninger til at kontrollere indfaldsvejene til de større wadier. Nogle bebyggelser bestod sandsynligvis af meget usolide boliger svarende til de nuværende palmehytter, hvilket kunne forklare den iøjnefaldende mangel på bopladser i nærheden af grupper af stengrave. Kun få pladser kunne med sikkerhed dateres til den islamiske tid før portugiserne bortset fra Khawran og havnebyen Julfar, hvor en mere omfattende undersøgelse af en bosættelse, der rækker over et tusind år, nok vil lønne sig.

Fundene af sen Ming på kystpladserne i Ras al-Khaimah og de små fæstninger, der behersker en del af baglandet, markerer sikkert de områder, der direkte stod under portugisisk styre. Da portugiserne slap deres greb om kysterne langs det Indiske Ocean i det 17. årh., mistede de dermed herredømmet på havet, og handelen kom til at lide stærkt under piratangreb, ikke mindst ud for Oman kysten. Det forklarer måske mangelen på senere kinesisk gods i et område, der tidligere havde været et godt marked.



### *A preliminary report of field survey in the northern Trucial States*

A brief visit in 1965 by Professor P. V. Glob and Mr. T. G. Bibby to Ras al-Khaimah and Dibba suggested the need for further survey in the northern Trucial States. With the permission of His Highness Sheikh Saqr bin Muhammed al-Qasimi, and with the cooperation of His Highness Sheikh Muhammad bin Hamad al-Sharqi, it was possible for Mr. D. B. Doe, M.B.E., F.R.I.B.A., F.S.A., and I to spend four weeks during February, 1968, in their respective States of Ras al-Khaimah and Fujairah. A primary object of the survey was the location of prehistoric sites which it was hoped might yield incised and painted grey wares of the kind found on late third millennium sites in south-eastern Iran and in the burial cairns of Umm an-Nar and Hili, near Buraimi, in the Sheikhdom of Abu Dhabi [1]. The northern Sheikhdom of Ras al-Khaimah and the Batina coast on the east of the peninsula, from Kalba to Khawr Fakkan, seemed the obvious areas to explore since they lie within easy reach of Baluchistan. No recognisably prehistoric sites were, however, discovered apart from stone burials of various types, which can only be described as pre-Islamic.

The absence of prehistoric remains in the areas accessible to us is perhaps explained by the physiography of this part of the Oman peninsula which falls roughly into four types of terrain: the coastal plain on the east; the central mountain ranges; stony outwash fans merging into a narrow strip of alluvial plain, and the sandhills which stretch westwards to the sea.

The chances of finding early settlements amidst the dunes seemed singularly remote and our survey was consequently restricted to the alluvial plain and to the entrances of the major wadis. Reconnaissance showed that only structures such as cairns and buildings with solid foundations had survived on the well-scoured gravels at the mouth of the wadis. In the plains, the majority of sites discovered could be dated by the surface pottery to the period of the Portuguese occupation (16th-17th centuries) and it is likely that any prehistoric sites which may have existed now lie below alluvial deposits and will only be revealed by chance. The mountains to the north-east of Ras al-Khaimah lie in Muscat territory and were not accessible, while the xenophobia of the Shihuh prevented exploration in the foothills.

Within the regions surveyed, about three dozen sites were found including ruined towns, hillforts and fortified houses, the latter belonging to the Portuguese period, caves, rock-carvings and cairns of various types.

#### *Ras al-Khaimah*

Our survey started in the northern zone of Ras al-Khaimah. Near Ash Sham (map, No. 1), which marks the start of Muscat territory to the north, a ruined settlement was found at the foot of the hills with six mosques, built at different periods to judge by their masonry. Although the settlement is said to have been in occupation for a long time, no pottery earlier than some 18th-century Chinese porcelain was identified. In the wadi behind this site rock-carvings representing horsemen were noted on a boulder near a stepped and paved track leading to an ancient hill-village. This settlement had been built at well over 500 ft. above the wadi bed, a feature of importance being a large water cistern set in a well-protected position against the rock face.

From Ash Sham the caravan route runs southwards at the foot of the hills to the Wadi Ghalilah (No. 2). Here it was possible to save three out of a group of five found cairns from bulldozing. They consisted of roughly-dressed masonry with corbelled roofs covered by smaller stones and stood in some cases to a height of six feet.

Graves of a different type occurred near the entrance to the Wadi Haqil (No. 3) further south. These were roughly oblong stone-built structures with apsidal ends, their length varying from 28 to 87 ft., but their width only ranging from 8 to 10 ft. Each grave had been covered by large stone slabs and stones set at right angles marked the single entrance placed midway along the perimeter wall. An attempt to excavate one of these graves aroused much opposition locally and had to be abandoned after the dis-

covery of a small round-based buff ware pot beside some crushed bones. The Wadi Haqil was evidently an area of importance in antiquity and other remains included a large stone-built hillfort guarding the entrance to the valley. At its foot, a stone-faced dam had been built across the plain for about four miles to divert flood water towards the date groves near the old seaport of Julfar (No. 4).

The ruins of Julfar stretch for over a mile along a sandspit north of the creek which separates it from the town of Ras al-Khaimah. Julfar is said locally to have been founded in Abbasid times and it probably owed its rise to the growth of trade in the Gulf during the period when Siraf was at the height of its prosperity. When Siraf declined, Kish became the chief entrepot until the rise of Hormuz in the early 14th century. Coastal Oman, if not the interior, had come under the control of the Kings of Hormuz in the previous century and their suzerainty continued until the arrival of the Portuguese at the beginning of the 16th century. At the time, Julfar is described as a prosperous port yielding good revenues [2] and the recent survey suggests that it continued to serve as a distribution centre for the hinterland during the Portuguese occupation.

Among the goods imported by its merchants was much Ming blue-on-white porcelain ascribed to the latter half of the 16th century [3], a period when this ware was being mass-produced by the Chinese. The Portuguese were exporting it in quantity from Macao to Goa, and from there it was widely distributed through India, along the Gulf and down the East African coast. Little attention has been paid to the coarser Chinese export wares until recently, with the result that adequately published comparative material from excavated sites is scarce. Nor is it easy at this stage to determine to what extent the Chinese factories were catering for different markets. Some differentiation is evident both in the quality and type of vessels exported; for instance, the vases and ewers destined for Iran are clearly in a higher price range than the humbler eating-bowls, cups and dishes which reached Oman and East Africa in the 16th century.

In addition to Ming blue-on-white porcelain, Julfar yielded fragments of large brown-glazed Martabani jars, Annamese stoneware, and imitation celadons made probably in south-east Asia, but not necessarily in China. Local wares included a distinctive hand-made, cream-slipped pottery used often for bridge-spouted ablution jugs painted with vertical red stripes. Although this ware had a westerly zoning in Ras al-Khaimah it provides a useful link with more distant regions since comparable jugs occurred in the Islamic Palace levels at Qala'at al-Bahrain and in 15th-16th century contexts at Siraf and Kilwa [4].

This ware was also present in the debris collected from an eroded cliff-site, Kashm Nadir (No. 5), a few miles south of Ras al-Khaimah town. The assemblage was essentially utilitarian and included a number of hand-made cooking-pots with four sharply triangular lugs set on the shoulder, a form which has close parallels at Siraf, Site E. Small saucers in a hard fabric with a mottled brown glaze are also numerous and can be matched by 17th-century material from Gedi on the coast of East Africa [5].

Both at Kashm Nadir and elsewhere, Persian wares were notably scarce but they included a little 17th-century Kerman underglaze blue-on-white pottery. Some earlier wares were found on the slopes of a demolished fort at Khawran (No. 6), to the south-east of Ras al-Khaimah, one of the few sites with pre-Portuguese occupation. Sherds found there included some brown sgraffiato ware, a single example of Sasanian-Islamic ware, and fragmentary bowls painted in dark brown under a light bluish glaze.

#### *The Batina coast*

From Ras al-Khaimah we crossed the peninsula via Manamah, Masafi and down the Wadi Ham to the Batina coast. Sites in the region north of Kalba lay in the narrow strip between the sea and the mountains but they were difficult to date in the absence of recognisable wares. Ming porcelain and some celadon was found on a deserted site just north of Khawr Fakkan (No. 8) South of that port, groups of small circular cairns, built in cloverleaf complexes of up to three, were noted at Qurayyah (No. 9) and over a hundred studded a hillside behind Kalba (No. 10) in neither case was any pottery associated with these structures.

### Conclusions

The settlement pattern emerging from the survey, particularly in Ras al-Khaimah, suggests that the foothills were occupied in preference to the plains during the earlier periods, with hillforts guarding the approaches to the major wadis. Some camps were probably of flimsy structures comparable to the present *barastis*, which might account for the conspicuous absence of occupation near concentrations of cairns. Few sites could be ascribed with certainty to the Islamic period, apart from Khawran, and the port of Julfar, where occupation covering a period of about a thousand years would repay examination.

The distribution of late Ming porcelain on the coastal sites of Ras al-Khaimah and the fortlets overlooking the interior probably reflect those areas directly under Portuguese rule. When the Portuguese abandoned their hold on the coasts around the Indian Ocean in the 17th century, they also lost control of the sea, and merchant shipping, particularly off the coast of Oman, suffered much from piracy. This may explain the paucity of later Chinese export wares in a region which had previously provided a good market.

*Beatrice de Cardi*

### NOTES

1. B. de Cardi, Excavations at Bampur, S. E. Iran: A brief report. *Iran* VI (1968), 147–150, Pl.IVa and Fig. 12; K. Thorvildsen, Burial Cairns on Umm an-Nar, *Kuml* 1962, 191–219, Fig. 20; T. G. Bibby, Arabian Gulf Archaeology, *ibid.*, 1966, Figs. 11 and 12.
2. The Book of Duarte Barbosa, I. Trans. M. L. Dames. *Hakluyt Society*, 2nd series, XLIV (1918), pp. 73–74.
3. I am greatly indebted to Mr. James Ayers, Mr. R. J. Charleston, Dr. Margaret Medley, Mr. R. H. Pinder-Wilson and Dr. Mary Tregear for examining this material.
4. D. B. Whitehouse, Excavations at Siraf: First Interim Report. *Iran* VI (1968), 15–16, and note 44.
5. Information kindly supplied by Mr. J. S. Kirkman.