

# KUML



ÅRBOG FOR JYSK ARKÆOLOGISK SELSKAB  
1956

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*With Summaries in English*

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UNIVERSITETSFORLAGET I AARHUS

1956

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Grauballemandens højre hånd.

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P. V. GLOB

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## INDHOLD

<i>Harald Andersen</i> : Afsked med ådalen .....	7
<i>Svend Jørgensen</i> : Kongemosen .....	23
<i>S. Vestergaard Nielsen</i> : Vindblæs-fundet .....	41
<i>C. J. Becker</i> : Fra Jyllands ældste jernalder .....	50
<i>Oscar Marseen</i> : Oldtidsbrønde .....	68
<i>Haakon Hougen</i> : Vindumhede-fletningene og kærlighetsknop .....	86
<i>P. V. Glob</i> : Jernaldermanden fra Grauballe .....	99
<i>Svend Jørgensen</i> : Grauballemandens fundsted .....	114
<i>Willy Munck</i> : Patologisk-anatomisk og retsmedicinsk undersøgelse af mose- liget fra Grauballe .....	131
<i>Carl Krebs</i> og <i>Erling Ratjen</i> : Det radiologiske fund hos moseliget fra Grau- balle .....	138
<i>C. H. Vogelius Andersen</i> : Forhistoriske fingeraftryk .....	151
<i>G. Lange-Kornbak</i> : Konservering af en oldtidsmand .....	155
<i>Henrik Tauber</i> : Tidsfæstelse af Grauballemanden ved kulstof-14 måling ....	160
<i>P. V. Glob</i> : Et nybabylonisk gravfund fra Bahraíns oldtidshovedstad .....	164
<i>Harald Andersen</i> : »- Der skal ikke lades sten på sten tilbage« .....	175
<i>Peder Mortensen</i> : Barbartemplets ovale anlæg .....	189
<i>P. V. Glob</i> : Rekognoscering på Qatar .....	199
Jysk Arkæologisk Selskab .....	203

## CONTENTS

<i>Harald Andersen</i> : The Weapons in the Illerup Valley .....	21
<i>Svend Jørgensen</i> : Kongemosen - A Mesolithic Site in the Bog Aamosen, Zealand .....	38
<i>S. Vestergaard Nielsen</i> : Vindblæs - A West Himmerland Bronze-Smithy ...	48
<i>C. J. Becker</i> : A Pre-Roman Iron Age Cemetery at Nim in East Jutland ...	65
<i>Oscar Marseen</i> : Prehistoric Wells .....	83
<i>Haakon Hougen</i> : How and Why the Knot in the Vindumhede Plait was tied - and two Related Norwegian Knots .....	97
<i>P. V. Glob</i> : The Iron Age Man from Grauballe .....	111
<i>Svend Jørgensen</i> : The Finding-Place of Grauballe Man .....	128
<i>Willy Munck</i> : Pathological-anatomical and Forensic-medicinal Investigation of the Peat-bog Body from Grauballe .....	136
<i>Carl Krebs</i> and <i>Erling Ratjen</i> : The Radiological Examination of the Peat- bog Body from Grauballe .....	150
<i>C. H. Vogelius Andersen</i> : Prehistoric Fingerprints .....	154
<i>G. Lange-Kornbak</i> : Grauballe Man - the Conservation Process .....	158
<i>Henrik Tauber</i> : Dating of Grauballe Man by Carbon-14 Measurement .....	163
<i>P. V. Glob</i> : A Neo-Babylonian Burial from Bahrain's Prehistoric Capital ..	172
<i>Harald Andersen</i> : The Building by the Barbar Temple .....	186
<i>Peder Mortensen</i> : The Temple Oval at Barbar .....	195
<i>P. V. Glob</i> : Reconnaissance in Qatar .....	201



Fig. 1. Beduintelt ved Al Busaiyir.  
Bedouin tent at Al Busaiyir.

## REKOGNOSCERING PÅ QATAR

Af P. V. GLOB

Da det var sandsynligt, at de spor af bosættelse i oldstenalderen, som »Dansk Arkæologisk Bahrain-Ekspedition« havde påvist så talrigt i Bahrains ørken<sup>1)</sup>, også ville kunne følges på det arabiske fastland, foretoges i tiden 18/3–21/3 1956 en orienteringsrejse til Qatar af T. G. Bibby og undertegnede.

Qatars regent, Hans Højhed Sheikh Ali bin Abdullah Al-Thani, gav beredvilligt tilladelse til en sådan undersøgelse, der med elskværdighed formidledes gennem hans rådgiver Geoffrey M. Hancock. Når det på de få dage var muligt at opnå et positivt udbytte af rejsen, skyldes det stor imødekommenhed fra mange sider. For hurtig rejse til og fra Qatar, samt gæstfrihed takker vi således lederen af Qatar Petroleum Company, direktør P. R. A. Ensor, for transport og vejvisere på Qatar politichef Ronald Cochrane. I Dukhan var endvidere to af Qatar Petroleum Company's medarbejdere, Geoffrey David og Gordon Payne, vore lokalkendte ledsagere.

Qatars brede, stenede ørkenhalvø skyder sig nordud fra Arabiens fastland, dækkende Bahraíns sydøstflanke. Den er ikke længere borte, end at den i klart vejr skimtes som en lysende, klarviolet linie over golfens kobaltblå vande. I nætters mørke markerer rækker af flammende, purpurrøde oliebål ved Dukhan halvøens vestkyst på Bahraíns sydøstlige himmel. Kun et godt 30 km bredt arkipe-lag skiller de to selvstændige sheikdommer.

Qatar-halvøen, der udgør hele fyrstedømmet, er omkring 80 km bred i det meste af sin 180 km lange nord-sydvendte udstrækning og dækker således godt 10.000 km<sup>2</sup> og har knapt 1 indbygger pr. kvadratkilometer. Dens arabiske befolkning bor i en række mindre byer på østkysten, mens beduinernes brune telte med de hvide striber træffes spredt omkring i det indre af halvøen (fig. 1). Terrænet er jævnt kuperet, åbent og øde med sparsom busk- og græsvækst i lavningerne mellem de åbne, stenede bakkedrag. Undergrunden er den samme som Bahraíns med dominerende eocene limstensaflejringer.

Det er klart, at der på de få dage, som stod til rådighed, kun kunne foretages en meget flygtig undersøgelse af dette store område. Fra Dukhan på vestkysten gennemkørtes strækningen til det nordvestligt liggende Qalat Murair, og derfra fortsattes østover til landsbyen Khor ved østkysten, som fulgtes ned til Umm Said i syd og derfra igen vestpå over Hazm Berich, Karanah og tilbage til Dukhan. På den lange strækning bemærkedes kun oldtidens spor som en gruppe stenrøser ved Al Rufaigh c. 30 km nordøst for Dukhan. Disse gravhøje, der måske er samtidige med Bahraíns oldtidshøje og således fra 3. årtusinde, hører vel til en bebyggelse ved fjorden Dohat al Hussain, som ikke besøgte.

Fund fra oldstenalderen af samme karakter som de på Bahrain gjorte blev opdaget på to steder en halv snes kilometer nord for Dukhan på det flade land inden for pynten Ras Uwainat Ali, hvis høje knolde har beskyttet den åbne anløbsplads på pyntens sydside. Beliggenheden her er typisk for en jægerkulturs bopladser, som de kendes verden over. Terrænet her hæver sig ikke mere end et par meter over højvandsmærket, undtagen hvor der er sammenblæste klitter. Mellem disse klitter, hvor vinden har blæst den oprindelige overgrund ren, findes tusindtallige flintspåner fra redskabstilvirkning på to steder med et par hundrede meters mellemrum.

Materialet er den samme flint, som er karakteristisk for Bahraíns palæolitiske fundpladser, varierende fra mørkebrun til ganske lys, uigennemsigtig flint<sup>2</sup>). På begge fundpladser dominerer grove knuder og skiver, medens flækker ganske mangler. Almindeligst er tykke skiver med grov, takket kant<sup>3</sup>), og fra begge pladser stammer et enkelt stykke af form og tilhugning som en lille håndspids, men med den ene sidebane afhugget.

Disse to bopladsfund, samt de ovenomtalte gravhøje, giver et grundlag for fortsatte arkæologiske undersøgelser på Qatar. Hertil har Qatars regering og olieselskab allerede ydet en bevilling, der muliggør en fortsættelse i foråret 1957.

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## RECONNAISSANCE IN QATAR

As it appeared probable that the traces of human habitation during the Old Stone Age which had been demonstrated so abundantly by the Danish Archeological Bahrain-Expedition in the desert areas of Bahrain<sup>1</sup>) could also be followed on the mainland of Arabia, a preliminary reconnaissance on the peninsula of Qatar was carried out by T. G. Bibby and the present author in the period 18th-21st March 1956.

The Ruler of Qatar, His Highness Shaikh Ali bin Abdullah Al-Thani, graciously gave permission for such an investigation, the arrangements being made through the friendly mediation of his Adviser, Geoffrey M. Hancock. That it was possible to achieve a positive result of our journey in the few days which were available was due in large measure to the generous assistance which we received from many sides. Thus we owe a debt of gratitude to the General Manager of the Qatar Petroleum Company, P. R. A. Ensor, for arranging at short notice our journey to and from Qatar, and for accommodation during our stay, and to the Chief of Police in Qatar, Ronald Cochran, for provision of transport and guides. In Dukhan we were also greatly assisted by the local knowledge of two keen antiquarians, Geoffrey David and Gordon Payne, on the staff of the Qatar Petroleum Company.

The stony desert of Qatar's broad peninsula projects northwards from the Arabian mainland, covering the southeast flank of Bahrain. It is near enough to Bahrain to be seen from there in clear weather as a light violet line above the cobalt blue waters of the gulf; and in the dark of the nights the southeast heavens of Bahrain are lit by the rows of dark-red flaming oil fires along the west coast of the peninsula of Dukhan. Only an archipelago a good 30 kms. across separates the two independent shaikhdoms.

The peninsula of Qatar, which comprises the principality, is about 80 kms. wide for the greater part of its length from north to south of 180 kms., and it therefore covers an area of well over 10,000 sq. kms. It has little more than one inhabitant per sq. km. Its settled population, Arabic-speaking, live in a number of small villages along the east coast, while the brown tents with their white stripes of the Bedouin are to be found here and there in the interior of the peninsula (Fig. 1). The terrain is gently rolling, open and waste, with sparse growths of grass and bushes in the hollows between the wide stony hills. The structure is, as in Bahrain, dominated by the strata of Eocene limestone.

Clearly, in the few days available to us it was only possible to make a very schematic investigation of this large area. From Dukhan on the west coast we drove by the inland route to Qalat Murair at the northwest of the peninsula, and from there eastwards to the town of Khor on the east coast. We then followed the coast south to Umm Said and thence struck westward via Hazm Berich and Karanah back to Dukhan. On this long route the only prehistoric site discovered was a group of stone cairns near Al-Rufaigh about 30 kms. northeast of Dukhan. These grave-mounds may well be contemporary with the prehistoric mounds of Bahrain and thus to be dated to the third millenium BC; they presumably stand in association with a settlement of the same date by the inlet of Dohat al Hussain, which was not visited.

Artifacts of Old Stone Age date, of the same type as those found on Bahrain, were discovered on two sites about ten kms. north of Dukhan, on the level ground inland from the point of Ras Uwainat Ali. Here the high outcrop of the point has sheltered the open coastland to the south, producing a location typical of the camping grounds of hunting cultures the world over. Except for wind-blown dunes the land surface lies no more than a couple of metres above high-water; and between these dunes, where the wind has exposed the original ground surface, lie flint chippings in their thousands, discards from the fashioning of flint tools on two sites only some two hundred metres apart.

The material is the same flint as is characteristic for the palaeolithic sites of Bahrain, varying from a dark brown to a light, non-translucent flint<sup>2</sup>). On both sites coarse cores and

flakes predominated, blades being entirely absent. The most common artifact was a thick flake with a roughly saw-toothed edge<sup>3)</sup>, while each of the sites produced a single specimen resembling in shape and retouche a little hand-axe, but with the one edge struck off.

These two settlement sites, and the gravemounds recorded above, give good reason for an extended archeological investigation in Qatar. For this purpose the Government of Qatar and the Qatar Petroleum Company have already made grants which will make a continuation possible in the spring of 1957.

*P. V. Glob.*

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NOTER

1) KUML 1954 s. 106. 2) KUML 1954 s. 107. 3) KUML 1954 s. 107 fig. 2 f-g og s. 108 fig. 3 b. 4) Vedrørende Catar, se endvidere: Henry Field: An Anthropological Reconnaissance in the Near East, 1950, Papers Peabody Mus. Vol. XLVIII, no. 2. 1956 s. 53. Qatar; Reconnaissance in South-Western Asia s. 95. Qatar Peninsula. S-W. J. A. Vol. 7. 1951.