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E. Ruppel

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(Reisen Nubien, Kordofan und dem Petraischen) :

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Reconstruction Imaginary

J.R Wellsted

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Richard Burton

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The Land of Midian :

J.R. Wellsted, Travels in Arabia. Vol. II, Austria: 1978, P 187

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Burton Richard. op.cit . P.101.

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Jaussen Et Savignac

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Alois Musil

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The Northern Hegaz

H.ST. John Philby

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The Land of

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Midian

(A.B.C.D)

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Peter Bar

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Jaussen et Savignac, Mission Archeologique ne Arabie, AII, Paris: 1997, , P. 184.

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Musil ALois – The Northern Hegaz, New York, 1926. P. 112.

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P. J. Parr, G.L. Harding and J.E..Dayton. Al-Bad "mughir shu ayb", Bulletin of ()
Institute of Archaeology,. No. 10 (Fig 17).

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Introduction

The north-west parts of Arab peninsula acquired special interest at the beginning of the first thousand before Christ where it became a vital passage for the commercial convoys coming from the south to the north of peninsula. It also formed cross point of these ways before its north direction towards Damascus and its west direction towards Ghaza, Mediterranean and Nile Valley.

Kingdoms of Madian, Qaidar, Dadan, Lahian and Anbat rose in this part of Arab peninsula. All this Kingdoms played an important role with participation in the cultural, material, intellectual production since the beginning of first thousand before Christ. But, Anbat Kingdom was having the greater portion of this production.

The region developed because of the fertility of its land, plenty of water and numerous well. So, the cultural centers and commercial stations have been flourished, where Beda was one of the important centers on the main commercial way.

Although there were many researches and studies on the front parts of sculptured graveyards in the rock at the north-west region of Arab peninsula as a cultural production in the field of Nebtian burial architecture, however, Beda graveyards names as

(Shoaib caves) did not take the enough range of study which prompted the researcher to choose topic for this research to perform the following objectives; making classified and descriptive study for Al-Beda graveyards and identifying its objectives, and have its all rooms for burying or some of them for religious rites? With the study of its architectural ornaments, also making comparative study of these graveyards with Al-Batra buries and Madaen Saleh, and on attempt for dating this buries through the comparative study and preparing information index of these buries in the old and Islamic sources in addition to the explorers books.

Before the commencement in the details of this research, many inquires have raised as follows:

What are the forms involved by the front parts of sculptured buries in the rock at Al-Beda oasis? What is the relation between the forms of these buries and the rock front parts in Al Batraa and Madaen Saleh? And what is the difference on similarity between them? What is the nature of local and coming effects on the different forms of these buries? Are these buries became exclusive for the commercial objectives or some of them have another religious objective? Finally, how can we make an approximate date of these buries? To achieve the research objectives and to answer the inquiries, the researcher has put the following:

First: The exploratory methodology, third analytic comparative methodology.

For performing this part of work, it should take the following actions: Making inclusive description of the study site, making architecture building for the plans of the buries and some of its faces and making the necessary works for the architectural building including the cleaning of dusts and sands.

Second: Field survey that helped in documentation of buries.

The architectural production in the study region reflected some cultural coming concepts which appeared beside the architectural inherited traditions as we see in the buries faces of Al Batraa and Madaen Saleh, the two comparative regions of this study.

The research is divided into three chapters as follows:

First Chapter:

We discussed the geographic place of Al Beda and reviewed the civilizations passed along the north-west region of peninsula within the first thousand before Christ according to old writers reference, book of Islamic ages in addition to the current writers who concentrated on the study region with its historical names (Madian, Shuaib caves, Al Beda).

Second Chapter:

At the beginning, we find the historical resume of the buries sculpture, then we touched on the Nabatian religion and the burial customs. Afterwards, we studied the buries of Al Beda in detail where it divided into four groups, each main group divided into sub-groups with concentration on the architectural components of the bury room and the ornaments covered it's feces. This chapter included also the statistic tables of the number of graveyards and buries with brief description of burying room.

Third Chapter:

Includes the comparison between Al Beda buries, Al Batraa buries and Madaen Saleh with analytic study in addition to the benefit from the studies produced by number of scientists and researchers who studied the two regions in addition to studying number of earthen fracture which picked up from the site in an attempt to obtain approximate date for Al Beda buries.

Previous Study:

E. Ruppel is the first European who visits the site of Beda and it's ancient monuments at the recent age in 1822 and mentioned it in his book which published in German language in 1829 under the title of "Reisn Nubien, Kardofan und dem petraischen" that enabled the Western to recognize it.

Ruppel has defined the site of Al Beda on map of the north-west part of the Arab peninsula under the name Beden. May be he misnamed the place. He drew two faces of Al Beda buries which represents the fourth group in this study (Plaque 31) according to the division followed in this study: Graveyard 1A, 2B of this group and reconstruction imaginary with increase in some ornaments where we can observe sixth balcony of high. Efreiz of graveyard 2B. J.R. Wellested followed Ruppel in visiting the region in 1833 where he visited the coasts of Al Aqapa Gulf and the north part of the Red sea, he stopped at Magna, Al Mwaileh, Debaa, Al Wajah and the opposite islands on the Red Sea Coast, but he didn't visit Al Beda – it is far 35 km from the coast 0 (Map 3). In some cases, he delved from the coast as he did in Al Wajah, where he reached at Al Wajah Castle (Al Zoraib) and visited the valley of water and also copied Thamodi sculpture which he found on the rock in the valley.

At the middle of nineteenth century, the orientalist and Finland traveler George August Falien, who named himself (Abd Al Wali), he described Madian, its site and its relationship with Shuaib (peace be upon him).

British Richard Burton is one of first travelers who visited Madian in 1853. Then he made another visit in 1877, where he headed mission sent by the Egyptian government at age of Khedive Esmael, this mission surveyed the western sites of Beda

for discovering the mining places which the region is famous with it. Madian is the sole part of the Arab countries which the European managed to find out the mineral treasures.

Burton seized the opportunity during his stay in the region and visited Al Beda oasis with surveyors of Egyptian officers where he mentioned that the graveyards seem like vaults of the dead named by the Arab people as (caves). He divided it into four groups as: group in north, graveyards of kings and caves are two groups the south group. He also named all these groups as “city of the dead”.

But the opposite party called “City of the Live”, may be he means the site of “Al Maleha”. During the two trip of Jaussen Et Savignac in 1325H and 1328H/1907 and 1910G and their arrival to Tabuk, they decided to visit the coast region including Al Beda.

In 1910, Alois Musil made a visit to north-west region of Arab peninsula where he visited Al Beda and he left some photos of buries and drawings plans for each other in addition to exclusive plan of Al Beda (Map 4). Musil published this photos and plans in his book the northern Hejaz in 1929 where many travelers and searchers have benefited from its importance.

The fourth-western traveler visiting Al Beda, H. St. John Philby has provided detailed description of the site depending on

the map published by Musil in his book “the Northern Hejaz”. In particular index in his book end of “the land of Midian” which was translated in wrong “the land of the prophets”. Philby divided Al Beda into four groups (A.B.C.D.) each one consists of a number of graveyards. He gave the internal and external measures for some of them, he also mentioned number of graves in each graveyard in addition to its state. But he ignored number of this graveyards and he didn't document the graveyards with the photos and enough illustrative drawings.

The last foreign mission visited Al Beda was from London University headed by Peter Bar and Harding Dayton. The mission presented scientific report under the title of “the first survey of the north-west region of Arab Peninsula in 1968”. The report included exclusive planning of site which considered the first inclusion after the plan described by Musil (Map 5). The survey also included several site of ancient monuments in the north-west region of the Kingdom with Al Beda. The mission also supported the results of Musil and Philby that the ruins of Al Beda were Nabatian important remains and their recent discoveries reflect their point of view.

Most likely, the pottery is Nabatian and Romanian, some of the color fractures derive from the first century before Christ and the first century after Christ. The scientific report of the mission published at monuments institute magazine in London University.

On the local level of studies, the north-west region of the Kingdom acquired special importance by the general administration of monuments in the ministry of education where it listed in the exclusive program of monument survey. In 1400/1480H, scientific team made exploratory survey for both coast plans on the red sea and the valleys of north and west region where many monument sites in the region have been identified including Al Beda site.

In 1402H/1982G, it also made the survey including Al Beda and the next areas in the north-west region of the Kingdom.

In 1404H/1984G, the scientific mission from the agency of monuments and museum in carrying out program for surveying the rock sculpture in addition to registering the rock drawings and the old Islamic writings in the north-west area of the Kingdom. The scientific report of the mission has been published in 1405H/1985G.

Al Beda has gained special interest in the studies executed by Ali Ghabban in his thesis of Doctorate where he made general survey for the monument sites in Al Beda oasis including the old city. The surface of the site has many types of Nabatian pottery fracture which derived from the first century before Christ and the first century after Christ.