

# HARALD INGHOLT & PALMYRA

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RUBINA RAJA

ANNETTE HØJEN SØRENSEN

# BACKGROUND AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book grew out of the exhibition *Harald Ingholt and Palmyra*, which opened in 2015 at the Museum of Ancient Art at Aarhus University, Denmark. The exhibition is based on research done within the framework of the Palmyra Portrait Project, which is jointly funded by the Carlsberg Foundation and Aarhus University.

Learn more at [www.projects.au.dk/palmyraportrait](http://www.projects.au.dk/palmyraportrait)

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Front cover  
Harald Ingholt in Palmyra. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ingholt Archive, Rubina Raja; formerly at Sterling Memorial Library, Yale)

Back cover  
Colonnade, with funerary towers from the Valley of the Tombs in the background. Palmyra, Syria. (Photo: Rubina Raja)

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## Introduction

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Colonnade in Palmyra, with ledges for public sculpture on. In the distance, remains of the massive tower tombs that encircled the city of Palmyra and contained funerary portraits. Some tombs held over 400 portraits and served as huge ancestral galleries. (Photo: Rubina Raja)

Funerary portrait of woman flanked by animal heads. Note her prominent ears, richly adorned with earrings. This fashion in portraiture, ending as early as the late first century CE, was replaced by far more detailed jewellery. The domestic objects the woman holds also disappeared, to be replaced by richly patterned textiles and even more opulent jewellery. (Photo: Rubina Raja)

Reclining male figure and seated female figure on a banquet relief from a Palmyrene tomb. The man is depicted wearing richly adorned Parthian attire and embroidered boots of soft leather. (Photo: Rubina Raja)

## Harald Ingholt 1896–1985

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Portrait of Harald Ingholt. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ingholt Archive, Rubina Raja; formerly at Sterling Memorial Library, Yale)

## The history of Palmyra

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Map of Palmyra and environs. (Reproduced after K. Schnädelbach, *Topographia Palmyrena*, Damascus 2010)

## Ingholt, Palmyra and the Danish connection

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Harald Ingholt taking photographs in Palmyra. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ingholt Archive, Rubina Raja; formerly at Sterling Memorial Library, Yale)

## The geography of Palmyra and the site

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Map of Syria. (Photo: Google Earth)

Aerial photograph from the 1920s, Valley of the Tombs/Western Necropolis. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ingholt Archive, Rubina Raja; formerly at Sterling Memorial Library, Yale)

The waters of Palmyra. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ingholt Archive, Rubina Raja; formerly at Sterling Memorial Library, Yale)

## Ingholt in the Middle East

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At the synagogue of Dura-Europos. Left to right: archaeologist and historian Count Robert du Mesnil du Buisson; archaeologist and philologist Harald Ingholt; archaeologist and ancient historian Michael Rostovtzeff; Mrs. Janet Ingholt (Harald Ingholt's wife); archaeologist Clark Hopkins; architect Henry Pearson. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ingholt Archive, Rubina Raja; formerly at Sterling Memorial Library, Yale)

Page 1 of Harald Ingholt's first excavation diary, Palmyra 1924. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, 1924 excavation diary, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen)

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The Beauty of Palmyra, found by Ingholt in November 1928 at Qasr Abjad, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen, Inv. No. 2795. (Reproduced from the newspaper *Berlingske Tidende*, 22 December 1929, original artwork by Charles Christensen)

Excerpt from Ingholt's article "Palmyra Skønheden i Glyptoteket" ("The Palmyra Beauty at the Glyptotek"), *Berlingske Tidende*, 22 December 1928, p. 7. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ingholt Archive, Rubina Raja; formerly at Sterling Memorial Library, Yale)

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Excerpt from Ingholt's 1928 excavation diary, mentioning the green-glazed head. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen)

## Ingholt's 1924 Palmyra campaign

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Archaeologist Maurice Dunand at Palmyra. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ingholt Archive, Rubina Raja; formerly at Sterling Memorial Library, Yale)

Ingholt photographing a relief with the deities Arsu and Azizu. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ingholt Archive, Rubina Raja; formerly at Sterling Memorial Library, Yale)

'Aha, relief of female figure purchased by Ingholt in Palmyra in 1924, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen, Inv. No. 2794. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project)

Excerpt from Ingholt's 1924 excavation diary, entry dated 13 April, mentioning the purchase of 'Aha through the local interpreter Jebbour. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Harald Ingholt, 1924 excavation diary, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen)

## Private architecture in Palmyra

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Pages from Ingholt's 1924 excavation diary mentioning stuccoes in a private house. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen)

Stucco depiction of a box, from Ingholt's excavations, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen, Inv. No. 3724. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ingholt Archive, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen)

Map of Palmyra and environs. Private houses marked in blue east of the Temple of Bel and south of the wadi. (Reproduced after K. Schnädelbach, *Topographia Palmyrena*, Damascus 2010)

## The tombs of Palmyra

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The Tower of Elahbel, a tower tomb in the Valley of the Tombs/Western Necropolis. (Photo: Rubina Raja)

Plan of the Tomb of the Three Brothers, hypogeum in the Southwest Necropolis. (Reproduced after B. V. Farmakowski, 1903: “Живопись въ Пальмирѣ”, *Russkij Archaeologiceskij Institut (Konstantiniye)/ Bulletin de l'Institut Archéologique Russe à Constantinople* 8, 172–198)

Entrance to the Dionysus Tomb, hypogeum in the Southwest Necropolis. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ingholt Archive, Rubina Raja; formerly at Sterling Memorial Library, Yale)

## Funerary sculpture in Palmyra

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Public honorary statue from the agora in Palmyra, National Museum of Damascus, Inv. No. C4024. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ingholt Archive, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen)

Sarcophagi from the Tomb of the Three Brothers, Southwest Necropolis, in situ, Palmyra. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ingholt Archive, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen)

Reliefs found in Tomb 8, Southwest Necropolis, placed upright in situ, Palmyra. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ingholt Archive, Rubina Raja; formerly at Sterling Memorial Library, Yale)

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Male portrait bust, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen, Inv. No. 1043. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project)

Female portrait bust, Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, Inv. No. 1908.3. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ingholt Archive, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen)

Relief with reclining man and sitting woman, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen, Inv. No. 1159, 1160. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project)

## Ingholt's 1925 Palmyra campaign

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Sketch of the Tomb of Atenatan with Maqqai's exedra, Ingholt's 1925 sketch diary. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen)

Plan of the Southwest Necropolis, Palmyra. (Reproduced after K. Schnädelbach, *Topographia Palmyrena*, Damascus 2010)

## Colours in Palmyra – murals

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Interior from the innermost part of the Tomb of the Three Brothers, with funerary niches visible as deep indentations between the painted pilasters. The entire back room has painted decorations. Southwest Necropolis, Palmyra. (Photo: Rubina Raja)

Drawing of the Tomb of Hairan, from Ingholt's 1925 sketch diary. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen)

Watercolour by Charles Christensen depicting Hairan, from the Tomb of Hairan. (Reproduced after Ingholt, "Quelques fresques récemment découvertes à Palmyre," *Acta Archaeologica* 3, 1932, 1–20)

Drawing of the Tomb of Hairan from Ingholt's 1925 sketch diary, indicating the positions of paintings in the tomb. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen)

### Religion in Palmyra

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The Temple of Bel. (Photo: Rubina Raja)

The underground passage leading into the temenos of the sanctuary of Bel. (Photo: Rubina Raja)

The Temple of Bel in the 1920s or 1930s, with wattle-and-daub huts among the temple columns. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ingholt Archive, Rubina Raja; formerly at Sterling Memorial Library, Yale)

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Tesserae, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen, Inv. No. 2770, 3208, 2771, 2769, 3215, 3206, 3214, 3244, 1141, 3198, 3200, 3263, 3196. (Photo: Rubina Raja)

### Ingholt's 1928 Palmyra campaign

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Ingholt's 1928 excavation diary, notes on Maqqai's exedra. Southwest Necropolis, Palmyra. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen)

The central sarcophagus in Maqqai's exedra, the upper section with figures of the deceased reclining on a banquet couch, and his wife seated at left. The lower section shows three men and a horse. Southwest Necropolis, in situ, Palmyra. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ingholt Archive, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen)

### The Beauty of Palmyra

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Excerpt from Ingholt's 1928 excavation diary. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen)

External view of Qasr Abjad. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ingholt Archive, Rubina Raja; formerly at Sterling Memorial Library, Yale)

Photo of the Beauty of Palmyra during the 1928 excavation. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ingholt Archive, Rubina Raja; formerly at Sterling Memorial Library, Yale)

Photo from the excavation of the Qasr Abjad tomb in 1928. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ingholt Archive, Rubina Raja; formerly at Sterling Memorial Library, Yale)

The Beauty of Palmyra, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen, Inv. No. 2795. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project)

### The Tomb of Atenatan, and Maqqai's exedra

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The two preserved sarcophagi in Maqqai's exedra. Southwest Necropolis, in situ, Palmyra. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ingholt Archive, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen)

Drawing of the lower section of the sarcophagus on the right in Maqqai's exedra. Southwest Necropolis, Palmyra. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ingholt Archive, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen)

Drawing of the lower section of the central sarcophagus in Maqqai's exedra. Southwest Necropolis, Palmyra. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ingholt Archive, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen)

### Unfinished business: the Tomb of Malkû

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Ingholt in the Tomb of Malkû in the 1930s, with two excavated sculptures and three local workmen. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ingholt Archive, Rubina Raja; formerly at Sterling Memorial Library, Yale)

Discovery of the Malkû inscription, now kept at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen, Inv. No. 3727. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ingholt Archive, Rubina Raja; formerly at Sterling Memorial Library, Yale)

Discovery of a famous sarcophagus, now kept at the National Museum of Damascus. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ingholt Archive, Rubina Raja; formerly at Sterling Memorial Library, Yale)

Sarcophagus excavated by Ingholt in the Tomb of Malkû, in restored condition at the National Museum of Damascus. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ingholt Archive, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen)

### Funerary and founder's inscriptions

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Owner's inscription from a hypogeum, Tomb P, in the Southwest Necropolis, excavated by Ingholt in Palmyra. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ingholt Archive, Rubina Raja; formerly at Sterling Memorial Library, Yale)

### The Palmyra collection of Carl Jacobsen

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Portrait bust of Hairan, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen, Inv. No. 1038. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project)

Pages from the 1889 catalogue on "sculptures and inscriptions from Palmyra at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptothek". The portrait of Hairan, Inv. No. 1038, is seen here as item C.8. (Reproduced after D. Simonsen's catalogue, *Skulpturer og indskrifter fra Palmyra i Ny Carlsberg Glyptothek*, Copenhagen 1889)

Mummy from Palmyra purchased by Carl Jacobsen, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ingholt Archive, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen)

### Harald Ingholt and the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek

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Letter from Director Flemming Johansen thanking Mr. and Mrs. Ingholt for bequeathing parts of Ingholt's archival material to the Glyptotek in 1983. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ingholt Archive, Rubina Raja; formerly at Sterling Memorial Library, Yale)



Poster from the Ingholt Archive. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ingholt Archive, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen)

Harald Ingholt in Palmyra. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ingholt Archive, Rubina Raja; formerly at Sterling Memorial Library, Yale)

Newspaper clipping about Ingholt's doctoral dissertation and defence in 1928. (Photo: Palmyra Portrait Project)

### The Palmyra Portrait Project and Harald Ingholt

Page from the Ingholt Archive with an incorrectly restored sculpture, British Museum, London. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project, Ingholt Archive, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen)

Newer picture of the same sculpture, British Museum, London, Inv. No. BM 125058. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project)

Screenshot from the Palmyra Portrait Project database, 2015. (Photo: The Palmyra Portrait Project)

### The ravages of civil war and the archaeology of deceit

Forged artefact from Syria, seized by the police in Jerash, Jordan 2014. (Photo: Rubina Raja)

### Abbreviations in photo credits

NCG: Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek  
SML: Sterling Memorial Library  
PPP: Palmyra Portrait Project

# INTRODUCTION

## FROM STUDYING PORTRAITS TO DOCUMENTING SYRIA'S CULTURAL HERITAGE

RUBINA RAJA  
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Outside Syria, the world's largest collection of Palmyrene funerary sculpture is found in Denmark, at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen. This collection and its extensive archive are the basis of the Palmyra Portrait Project, which focuses on hitherto overlooked aspects and contextual links in sculptural portraiture from the Roman era.

Funerary sculpture from the ancient oasis city of Palmyra, in modern-day Syria, is the largest body of portrait sculpture from the Roman era outside Rome itself. That alone makes this material extremely significant, both to the study of identity in the Roman provinces and to core studies of Roman portraiture. Until 2012, when the collaborative Palmyra Portrait Project was launched, both these angles had been overlooked in the existing research.

An estimated 2600 portraits from Palmyra are scattered around the globe in museums and private collections. These objects have never been catalogued, described, dated or treated as one. That is why the project has three aims: to build a corpus of all known Palmyrene funerary sculpture; to digitize the extensive Ingholt Archive, fundamental to Palmyrene archaeology and kept at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen; and to produce several companion volumes for the corpus and deal with various aspects of Palmyrene portrait sculpture. Upon completion, the corpus and the archive will be made available online to benefit researchers around the world.

After the project began, Harald Ingholt's unpublished excavation and sketch diaries proved to be a key element, offering valuable information about the many tombs he excavated in Palmyra in the 1920s. The project will publish these diaries in transcribed, translated and commented form.

PHOTO: RUBINA RAJA



*Left: Colonnade in Palmyra, with ledges for public sculptures. In the distance, remains of the massive tower tombs that encircled the city of Palmyra and contained funerary portraits. Some tombs held over 400 portraits and served as huge ancestral galleries.*

*Right: Funerary portrait of woman flanked by animal heads. Note her prominent ears, richly adorned with earrings. This fashion in portraiture, ending as early as the late first century CE, was replaced by far more detailed jewellery. The type of domestic objects she holds also disappeared, to be replaced by richly patterned textiles and even more opulent jewellery.*



PHOTO: RUBINA RAJA

## FUNERARY PORTRAITS IN PALMYRA

Palmyrene portraiture falls into two categories, very different in scope. One is public portraits (of which few survive), and the other is funerary portraits. The public statues were erected to honour members of the local elite. Their physical position in the urban space is unique to Palmyra: They sat upon ledges jutting out about halfway up the columns lining the streets and porticoes, surveying various areas of the city – its streets, temples and important squares. Most of the male public statues were portrayed in toga. This is remarkably unlike the male portraits from the city's tower tombs and underground tombs (hypogea), which are normally depicted wearing Greek chitons or Parthian attire. Female public sculptures bore clothing that completely covered their bodies, with very little

jewellery, as was customary in the Roman world. By contrast, the women depicted in the tombs bear copious amounts of extravagant jewellery, and clothing and headwear with textiles that show a diversity and detail seldom seen in Roman work.

## THE NY CARLSBERG GLYPTOTEK COLLECTION AND HARALD INGHOLT

The Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen holds the world's largest collection of Palmyrene funerary sculpture outside Syria. It also keeps the detailed archive of the sculptures established by Ingholt. That is why the collection and the archive were an excellent and natural place to begin a larger detailed study of Palmyrene portraiture. They also underscore the strong commitment in the Middle East that has typified Danish archaeology for centuries.



FOTO: RUBINA PALA

*Reclining male figure and seated female figure on a banquet relief from a Palmyrene tomb. The man is depicted wearing richly adorned Parthian attire and embroidered boots of soft leather.*

Although scholars have studied Palmyrene portraits for more than a century, no effort has ever been made to compile a full corpus or to understand this portraiture within the context of the Roman Empire or the local society. Ingholt laid the groundwork for grasping the chronology and dating of Palmyrene sculpture in his dissertation *Studier over Palmyrensk Skulptur* (*Studies of Palmyrene Sculpture*) from 1928, centred on the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek collection.

In 1993, Gunhild Ploug and Finn Ove Hvidberg-Hansen published a catalogue of the Glyptotek's Palmyrene collection. The Ingholt Archive offers valuable insights into basic portrait chronology and contains over

800 illustrations, annotated by Ingholt and commented by Ploug. One part of our project is to digitize the archive and make it accessible to researchers everywhere, and to link the archive with the new database specially designed to collect the entire corpus.

This corpus, now near completion, holds well over 2600 portraits, all meticulously documented, and so statistically comparable in minute detail. Also, the archive has been linked to the database, allowing us to identify objects from the original archive that have since disappeared or changed ownership. Finally, all objects arriving on the global art market are entered into the database.

As a result, the Palmyra Portrait Project has already convincingly demonstrated that during the war in Syria a number of portraits have been illegally removed from Palmyra, and that forgeries of such portraits have greatly increased. As knowledge of the new database has spread, the Palmyra Portrait Project is increasingly being contacted by collections around the world that wish to consult us on purchases or are seeking expert advice on the authenticity of a given portrait.

## **INHERENT LOGIC AND LOCAL IDENTITY**

Research into Palmyrene sculpture is chiefly absent in the English-speaking world. Key publications are in French and German, and they misguidedly focus on the “provincialism” of this portraiture. *The Art of Palmyra*, a handbook by Malcolm A.R. Colledge from 1976, is the only one of its kind. A corpus in English is therefore groundbreaking and also paves the way for further studies, and an international collaborative effort based in Denmark underscores the importance of the Danish collection. Particularly in the English-speaking world, the portraits of Palmyra have been misunderstood as Roman provincial portraits, suggesting that they follow Imperial styles and fashions. They do not. Palmyrene portraiture has an inherent logic all its own. Unlike Roman portraits, those from Palmyra are not individualized but idealized, often with generic facial features. Yet through their clothing, jewellery and gestures they communicate their local identity very distinctly, mixing Graeco-Roman, Parthian

and local elements. This highly premeditated blend of elements reveals sophisticated knowledge of contemporary styles and trends in the world beyond Palmyra, and it shows how uniquely this knowledge was applied in a local context. Consider how funerary busts often wear Greek attire while banquet sculptures always wear Parthian attire richly adorned with embroidery. This reflects the importance of dressing in context, which in turn suggests that style choices did not simply mirror Roman Imperial trends. Such angles are essential to understanding local societies in Antiquity.

## **THE AGILITY OF SCHOLARSHIP IN THE ARTS**

While the initial aim of the project was to build and study the largest corpus of portraiture from the Roman era outside Rome itself, it has now expanded to monitor the international art market and advise collections world-wide. The project has also taken on an important historiographic component: the study and publication of Ingholt's archives and diaries. Today this material provides invaluable information about a Syrian site in constant danger of destruction due to the current state of affairs.

**The Palmyra Portrait Project is funded by the Carlsberg Foundation and Aarhus University**

To learn more about the project, visit us at [projects.au.dk/palmyraportrait/](http://projects.au.dk/palmyraportrait/)

HARALD INGHOLT  
1896–1985

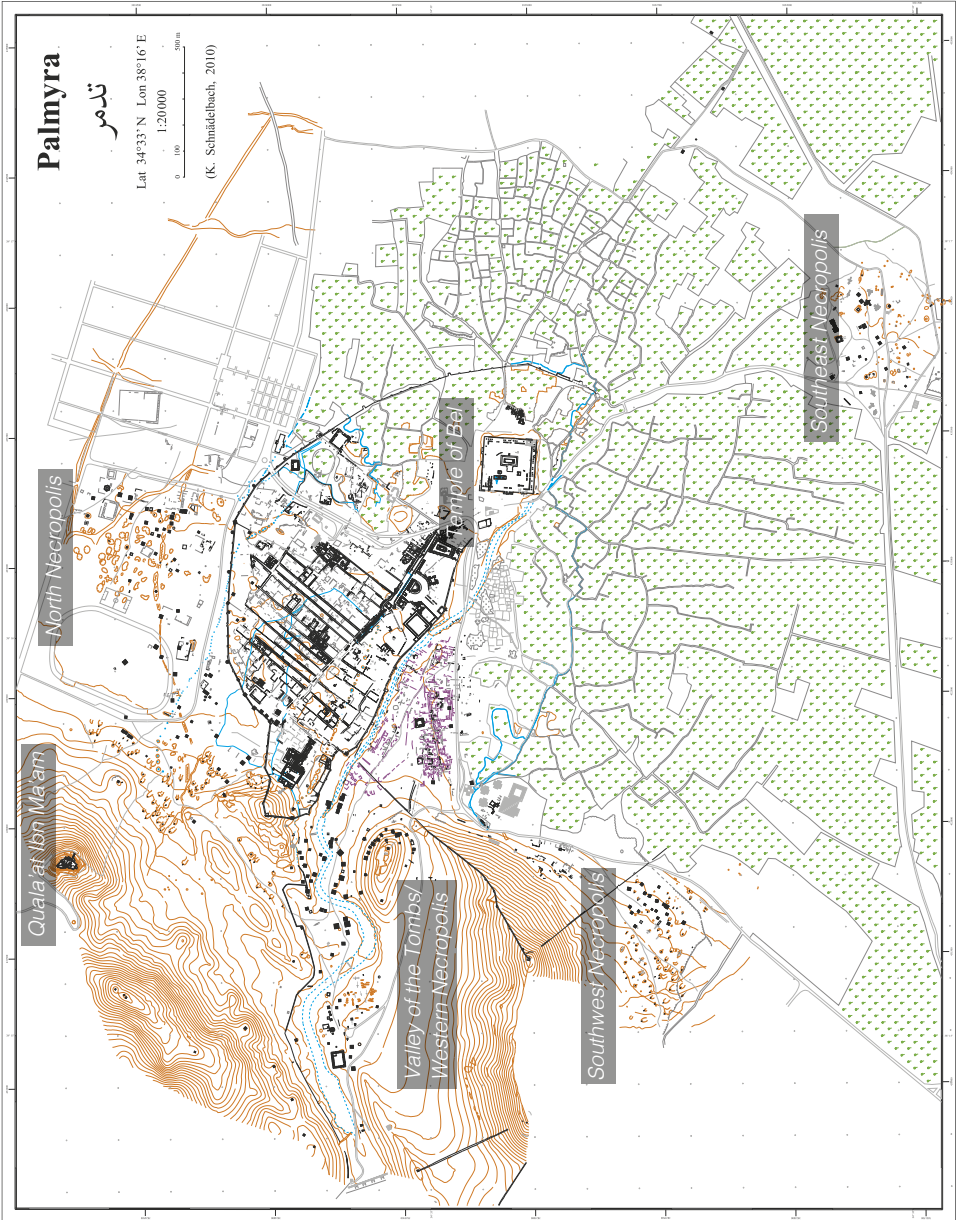
PHOTO: PPP, INGHOLT ARCHIVE, RUBINA RAJA; FORMERLY AT SML, YALE



# THE HISTORY OF PALMYRA

- 18th century BCE. Tadmor, ancient name of Palmyra, first mentioned in the Mari Archive.
- 12th century BCE. Ta-admer mentioned by the Assyrian king Tiglatpileser.
- 336–323 BCE. Alexander the Great conquers the Near East.
- 323–64 BCE. The Seleucid period, with Palmyra as a thriving centre of commerce.
- 312 BCE. The Seleucid calendar introduced (year 1 = 312 BCE).
- 64 BCE. Rome establishes the province of Syria while Palmyra retains independence.
- 14–37 CE. Emperor Tiberius incorporates Palmyra into the province of Syria, and the city has to pay taxes to Rome.
- 54–68 CE. During Emperor Nero's reign Palmyra establishes its own senate.
- 106 CE. Petra is annexed by the Romans, making Palmyra the main commercial hub in the Near East.
- 128 CE. Emperor Hadrian visits Palmyra and declares the city *civitas libera*, or "free city" (though an Imperial Curator still handled tax collection). The city is named Palmyra Hadriana.
- 212 CE. Palmyra becomes a Roman colony.
- 224 CE. The Sassanid Dynasty, set up in Persia, takes control of the trade routes formerly handled by Palmyra.
- 260–264 CE. Military commander Septimius Odaenathus of Palmyra heads two campaigns against the Sassanids.
- 267 CE. Septimius Odaenathus is assassinated.
- 267 CE. Zenobia, wife of Odaenathus, proclaims herself Augusta – empress.
- 267–272 CE. Zenobia leads military campaigns to the north and south, greatly expanding the kingdom of Palmyra.
- 272 CE. Emperor Aurelian recaptures Palmyra and leads Zenobia to Rome as his prisoner.
- 273 CE. The citizens of Palmyra rebel. Aurelian returns and destroys the city completely.
- 300 CE. Emperor Diocletian builds a city wall and installs Roman legions at Palmyra.
- 634 CE. The city is conquered by the Arabs under Khalid ibn al-Walid.
- 1132 CE. The Temple of Bel is converted into a fortress. Palmyra remains a minor commercial centre under Ottoman rule.





# INGHOLT, PALMYRA AND THE DANISH CONNECTION

- 1678 Palmyra is “rediscovered” by a group of English merchants based in Aleppo.
- 1693 Hofsted van Essen paints a panorama of Palmyra.
- 1750–1751 Robert Wood and James Dawkins travel to Palmyra, then publish *The Ruins of Palmyra*.
- 1882–1886 Carl Jacobsen buys the first objects from Palmyra for his collection.
- 1889 David Simonsen publishes the first catalogue of the Palmyrene sculptures in Carl Jacobsen’s collection.
- 1893 The Danish scholar Johannes Østrup visits Palmyra and (in 1894 and 1895) speaks to the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters of a painted tomb.
- 1918 Harald Ingholt writes his prize-winning thesis at the University of Copenhagen, in Semitic and Eastern philology.
- 1922 Ingholt earns a degree in theology at the University of Copenhagen.
- 1922 Ingholt is a fellow at Princeton.
- 1923 Ingholt studies in Paris.
- 1924 Ingholt carries out his first excavation campaign (20 March to 20 May) at Palmyra, funded by the Rask-Ørsted Foundation, collaborating with the French archaeologist Maurice Dunand.
- 1924–1925 Ingholt is a fellow at the American school of archaeology in Jerusalem.
- 1925 Ingholt carries out his second excavation campaign at Palmyra funded by the Rask-Ørsted Foundation, collaborating with the French architect Albert Gabriel.
- 1925–1930 Ingholt takes up a curatorial position at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen.
- 1927–1930 Ingholt also serves as secretary of the New Carlsberg Foundation.
- 1928 Ingholt earns his doctoral degree (*D.Phil.*) after defending the dissertation *Studier over Palmyrensk Skulptur* (*Studies of Palmyrene Sculpture*).
- 1928 Ingholt carries out his third excavation campaign at Palmyra, funded by the Rask-Ørsted Foundation.
- 1930 Ingholt explores ground for archaeological work in Hama, Syria.

- 1931–1938 Ingholt leads the Danish excavations at Hama, funded by the Carlsberg Foundation.
- 1931–1938 Ingholt serves as teacher and curator at the American University in Beirut and its museum.
- 1934 Ingholt founds the international journal *Berytus*.
- In the mid-1930s Ingholt returns to Palmyra to make supplementary notes and documentation and to excavate the Tomb of Malkû.
- 1939–1941 Ingholt is a reader in Semitic Philology at Aarhus University.
- 1942 Ingholt takes up a position in the US as associate professor at Yale University, New Haven, CT.
- 1953 Ingholt is elected to the Board of Directors of the Danish-American Rebild Society.
- 1957 Ingholt and Jørgen Læssøe head the Danish excavation at Shimshara, Iraq.
- 1960 Ingholt takes up a Chair in Archaeology at Yale University.
- 1983 The Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek receives Ingholt's photographic Palmyra archive.
- 1993 Professor Finn Ove Hvidberg-Hansen and Gunhild Ploug publish a new catalogue of the Palmyra collection at the Glyptotek.
- 2012 Professor Rubina Raja founds the Palmyra Portrait Project at Aarhus University, with funding from the Carlsberg Foundation and Aarhus University.

### The decorations and distinctions of Harald Ingholt

Knight of the Order of the Dannebrog  
Medal of Merit awarded by HRH King Christian X  
Médaille d'Honneur du Mérite Syrien, 1st Class

### Selected memberships

The Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters  
Deutsches Archäologisches Institut  
Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres



# THE GEOGRAPHY OF PALMYRA AND THE SITE

At the heart of the Syrian desert lies Palmyra, the ancient city of Tadmor. Despite its inhospitable setting, Palmyra was once a thriving oasis city, which according to the ancient author Pliny the Elder had excellent water in ample supply and fertile land.

“Palmyra is a city famous for its situation, for the richness of its soil and for its agreeable springs; its fields are surrounded on every side by a vast circuit of sand, and it is as it were isolated by Nature from the world, having a destiny of its own between the two mighty empires of Rome and Parthia, and at the first moment of a quarrel between them always attracting the attention of both sides.”

– Pliny the Elder (23 BCE–79 CE)

This description, written in 77 CE, is rendered here in H. Rackham’s translation from the Loeb series, *Pliny the Elder, Natural History* (Book V.21.).

The largest local water source is the Efqa Spring, located on the route to one of the city’s large burial sites, the Southwest Necropolis. The oasis spreads mainly southeast and east from there, where the spring waters flow.

In the Danish account of his travels, written in 1894, Professor Johannes Østrup describes the water in the oasis springs as hot, sulphurous and foul-smelling. Indeed, in the late 1800s the springs were apparently

providing much less water than in Antiquity. The ancient city sits on relatively flat terrain surrounded by slopes, and the Gabal Al-Huseyniyat and Umm el Qais hills rise up on either side of the Valley of the Tombs, or Western Necropolis. In Antiquity, these hills provided quarried stone for Palmyra’s massive edifices, numerous funerary sculptures and public buildings. The city is known for its monumental colonnaded avenue with a confluence of side streets. The southeast quarter boasts the immense Temple of Bel, with other temples dotting the site. Of the private homes located inside and outside the much younger city wall, few have been excavated.

The southern city wall borders the Wadi As-Suraysin, a riverbed that briefly fills each year after the winter rains. The wadi runs through the Valley of the Tombs, which has many of the well-preserved funerary monuments. The ancient necropoleis, or “cities of the dead”, lie along the highways leading to Palmyra and contain various types of monuments: Single-burial graves, tower tombs, underground tombs (hypogea) and smaller house tombs. The main road from Damascus to Palmyra runs through the Valley of the Tombs. Harald Ingholt mainly excavated in the Southwest Necropolis, along the road to Homs. The northeast-bound road leads to Dura-Europos on the banks of the Euphrates.

PHOTO: GOOGLE EARTH



*Map of Syria.*



*The waters of Palmyra.*

PHOTO: PPP, INGHOIT ARCHIVE,  
RUBINA RAJA; FORMERLY AT SML, YALE

PHOTO: PPP, INGHOIT ARCHIVE,  
RUBINA RAJA; FORMERLY AT SML, YALE



*Aerial photograph from the 1920s, Valley of the Tombs/Western Necropolis.*

# INGHOLT IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Harald Ingholt (1896–1985) was a Danish-born Semitic philologist, theologian and archaeologist. During his long career he held positions at several international institutions, ending with a professorship at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut. He retired in 1964 at age 68 and remained in the United States until his death in 1985.

The young Harald Ingholt completed his upper-secondary education at Østre Borgerdyd Gymnasium in 1914, then began studying Semitic and Eastern philology at the University of Copenhagen. After writing a prize-winning thesis he also took up the study of theology, earning his degree in 1922. Travelling to the United States to study further, Ingholt became interested in the ancient oasis city of Palmyra and its sculptures.

After studies in the US (Princeton, NJ), France (Paris) and Israel (Jerusalem), he began excavating at Palmyra in 1924, collaborating with the French archaeologist Maurice Dunand, who began digging at Byblos in Lebanon two years later. That is why another French colleague was involved in Ingholt's 1925 campaign: the architect Albert Gabriel. Ingholt returned to Palmyra in 1928 for his third campaign, presumed at the time to be his last. However, as his later writings indicate, he felt that he left the site with at least one piece of unfinished business – so in the late 1930s when he got

a chance to return for a few weeks and excavate the Tomb of Malkû, he seized the opportunity. This tomb revealed spectacular finds and resulted in one of the finest and best-received publications to come out of Ingholt's extensive Palmyra tomb excavations and studies.

It was in the late 1920s that Ingholt's name truly became known internationally, when he published his monograph *Studier over Palmyrensk Skulptur* (*Studies of Palmyrene Sculpture*), which earned him a doctoral degree (*D. Phil.*) in 1928 at the University of Copenhagen. Soon after the defence Ingholt went to Palmyra on his third campaign, in which the Danish architects Charles Christensen and later Johannes Prip-Møller also took part.

With support from the Rask-Ørsted Foundation, Ingholt was able to bring a variety of objects to Denmark. These were housed at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen, where Ingholt himself was employed from 1925 to 1930.

In 1930, Ingholt travelled to Hama in Syria to investigate the *tell* (settlement mound) in connection with a potential excavation. His results were favourable, and funding from the Carlsberg Foundation enabled him to begin what would be a large-scale excavation of the citadel mound at Hama from 1931 to 1938. Ingholt wrote the



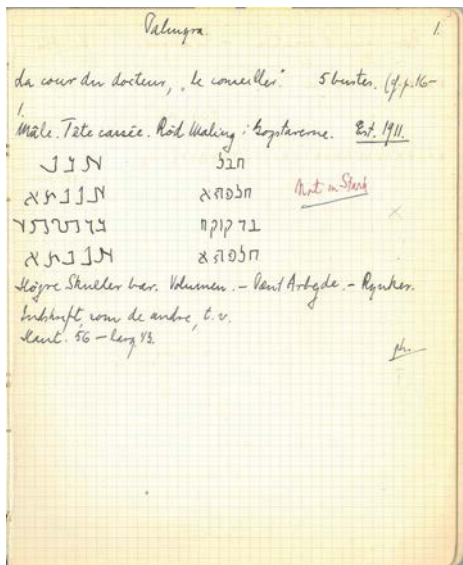
preliminary reports himself, whereas the final publications (Vol. I–IV in 10 book volumes) were completed by other specialists.

In 1930, Ingholt applied for a leave of absence from the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek to take up a position at the American University of Beirut and the museum there. Thus, with the Hama excavations he began his American career, also founding the international journal *Berytus* in 1934. Ingholt briefly returned to Denmark in 1939 to lecture at Aarhus University but left once again for the United States in 1941, setting the course for the remainder of his working life. In 1942 he was offered a position as associate professor at Yale University and held a chair in archaeology there from 1960 to 1964.

Ingholt's interest in the Middle East remained undiminished throughout his career, though during his tenure at Yale the focus of his research moved further east to areas like Gandhara in Pakistan and Shimshara in Iraq. During a three-month campaign in Shimshara in 1957 he excavated portions of the citadel mound in collaboration with Jørgen Læssøe and the Danish Dokan expedition. Here, too, final publication of the interesting findings was handled by others, and Ingholt concentrated on publishing other special studies on such topics as the sculpture of Gandhara and the banquet tokens (tesserae) of Palmyra.



At the synagogue of Dura-Europos. Left to right: archaeologist and historian Count Robert du Mesnil du Buisson; archaeologist and philologist Harald Ingholt; archaeologist and ancient historian Michael Rostovtzeff; Mrs. Janet Ingholt (Harald Ingholt's wife); archaeologist Clark Hopkins; architect Henry Pearson.



Page 1 of Harald Ingholt's first excavation diary, Palmyra 1924. According to Jean-Baptiste Yon, the inscription reads:

hbl | hlp't' | br qwqh | hlp't'

(Alas! Halafata, son of Quqa Halafata)

# INGHOLT'S PURCHASES IN PALMYRA

Harald Ingholt was a pioneer of Danish archaeology in the Near East. Between 1924 and 1938 he directed the Danish excavations in Syria, first in Palmyra and later in Hama. In 1957 he returned to the Middle East to lead the Tell Shimshara excavations in Iraq.

Ingholt's three campaigns at Palmyra in the 1920s excavated numerous tombs that held many sculptures and artefacts including glasswork, lamps and ceramics. Ingholt's main interest lay in the sculptures and inscriptions, but when strolling through the town or visiting with locals, as he would regularly do, Ingholt was offered other ancient objects as well. His excavation diaries often mention such purchases, and frequently also the price. Notable examples are the relief of 'Aha, bought for 60 francs and shipped to Denmark by way of Beirut. In the mid-1930s (in 1935 or 1937), Ingholt returned to Palmyra to do follow-up work, including the excavation of the Tomb of Malkû, which yielded an inscription now housed at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek (Inv. No. 3727).

Of the numerous objects Ingholt acquired a good deal have since gone missing, their whereabouts unknown. Still, many of the more remarkable objects (including the Beauty of Palmyra, the relief of 'Aha, the green-glazed head and some stuccoes from

a private home), most of which are depicted in this publication, were definitely purchased by Ingholt in Palmyra. Some he even unearthed himself during the excavations and later brought to the Glyptotek in Copenhagen. Among these pieces are the Beauty of Palmyra, the Malkû inscription and the stuccoes.



*The Beauty of Palmyra, found by Ingholt in November 1928 at Qasr Abjad, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen, Inv. No. 2795.*



PHOTO: PPP, INGHO LT ARCHIVE, RUBINA RAJA;  
FORMERLY AT SML, YALE

Smykkeskrin. Det umiddelbart mest imponerende Skulpturfund var dog en mælet, palmyrensk Kvindebuste, som kom for Dagen ved Udgravning af en tempelformet Grav, der laa paa Gravpladsen ved Damaskus-Vejen og af de Indfødte blev kaldt Qasr el-Abjad, „det hvide Slot“. Jeg mindes tydeligt den barnlige Glæde, min arabiske Arbejder lod komme for Dagen ved Fundet af denne Buste, de klappede i Hænderne, dansede og sang til min og den fundne Dames Ære.

Som bekendt ejer Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek Verdens største Samling af palmyrenske Gravbuster, men hverken i Glyptoteket eller andet Steds findes Eksempler paa farvelagte Buster. Vor Buste har derfor Krav paa en ganske særlig Interesse, idet den giver et

Excerpt from Ingholt's article "Palmyra Skønheden i Glyptoteket" ("The Palmyra Beauty at the Glyptotek"), Berlingske Tidende, 22 December 1928, p. 7.



Green-glazed head, given to Ingholt by one of his workmen on 23 November 1928, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen, Inv. No. 2832.

PHOTO: PPP, NOG, COPENHAGEN

Fik Perseræ et grønt glaseret ægyptiserende Solguld-Hoved  
og et andet Solguld-Hoved (Benjaminus  
3 1936 pl. 13.3) (Harpagobates)  
Benjaminus 3 1936 → hovedet  
pl. 13.2 I. N. 2832  
(9p.)

Excerpt from Ingholt's 1928 excavation diary, mentioning the green-glazed head.

PHOTO: PPP, 1928 EXCAVATION  
DIARY, NOG, COPENHAGEN

PHOTO: PPP, INGHO LT ARCHIVE, NOG, COPENHAGEN



Three glass flasks from Palmyra, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen, Inv. No. 2868, 2872, 2885.

# INGHOLT'S 1924 PALMYRA CAMPAIGN

In the spring of 1924, Harald Ingholt was working with the French archaeologist Maurice Dunand on his first investigations at Palmyra.

Syria was controlled by the French Mandate, so Ingholt was working by leave of General Weygand, the High Commissioner of Syria. The funding for his campaign was Danish, however, provided by the Rask-Ørsted Foundation.

The two archaeologists, along with a group of about 20 local men in several teams, worked at the Palmyra site for two months. During this time, digging mainly in the Southwest Necropolis, they investigated about 30 collective underground tombs, all of which had been raided. All the tombs faced east and were carved out according to the same general plan: a monumental entrance, and subterranean chambers shaped like an inverted T in a central chamber and two wings. Most tombs had inscriptions on the door lintel stating who founded the tomb, any portions later sold, who it would accommodate, and any later expansions.

Ingholt, with his academic background in philology, took a keen interest in documenting inscriptions found at Palmyra and at Syria's museums in general. By his own reports he discovered roughly 100 new inscriptions on the 1924 campaign, mainly

written in the Aramaic dialect Palmyrene but occasionally bilingual, in Greek and Aramaic. We know today that in ancient Syria the city of Palmyra conspicuously practised bilinguality in the public sphere, a fact to which many of its inscriptions bear witness.

Because all of the tombs had been disturbed, Ingholt describes, it was extremely hard to find sculptures that were more or less intact. Even so, through a local interpreter named Jebbour, Ingholt obtained a funerary bust of a young woman designated 'Aha, whose death the inscription dated to 148 CE. This sculpture was sent by way of Beirut to the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen, and there shown alongside a purchase from 1928: a unique bust known as the Beauty of Palmyra.

In reports and interviews Ingholt himself calls the rediscovery of a religious relief his most important find during the first two Palmyra campaigns. This relief, showing the deities Arsu and Azizu, was photographed in 1899 by Moritz Sobernheim, after which it vanished. Ingholt was determined to bring the relief to light. It turned out the relief had been buried in a private garden by a local inhabitant to prevent it from falling into the wrong hands. After making the appropriate enquiries, Ingholt was able to have the relief unearthed in order to study it.

Tombs with painted decorations were also unearthed in 1924, and an ecstatic Ingholt was able to announce that the campaign had found three: the Tomb of Maqqai, the Tomb of Hairan, and the Dionysus Tomb.

Besides digging extensively in the Southwest Necropolis, Ingholt also found time to excavate portions of a private house west of the Temple of Bel. His diaries and report tell of a room with a niche flanked by canellated columns, and of stucco objects: masks, a box, and nudes. The stuccoes are superbly crafted, as was typical of that period. Ingholt also conveyed quite a few of these objects to the Glyptotek in Copenhagen.

The sheer volume of the excavation work done in 1924 obliged Ingholt to revisit several of the tombs in later campaigns for further study and documentation.



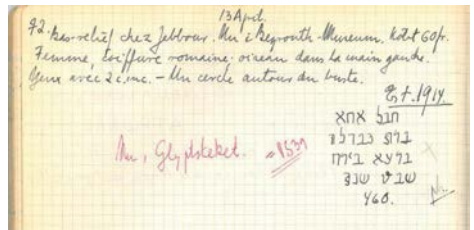
Archaeologist Maurice Dunand at Palmyra.



Ingholt photographing a relief with the deities Arsu and Azizu (enlargement on p. 62).



'Aha, relief of female figure purchased by Ingholt in Palmyra in 1924, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen, Inv. No. 2794.



Excerpt from Ingholt's 1924 excavation diary, entry dated 13 April 1924, mentioning the purchase of 'Aha' through the local interpreter Jebbour.

# PRIVATE ARCHITECTURE IN PALMYRA

Excavations at Palmyra have mainly focused on its public buildings (temples, theatres, public squares, and so on) and its tombs. Most of the ancient site still awaits archaeological investigation.

That is why just a handful of Palmyra's private houses have been excavated. These few presumably belonged to the elite, who could afford to embellish their luxury homes with stuccoes, murals and mosaics.

Most of the villas we do know of lie in the ancient northeastern quarter. Meanwhile, the most recent archaeological project to publish private architecture, directed by Andreas Schmidt-Colinet, focuses on two houses in the south quarter, outside the wall and south of the wadi.

One house, with a series of rooms set round an open courtyard, shows massive alterations over a period of 200–300 years. Almost all the rooms are found to have a combination of wall paintings and stucco, and most of the painted areas serve as decorative panels with horizontal lines in yellow, blue, red and black.

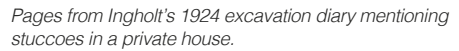
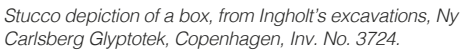
A prevalent feature in Palmyra's private architecture is its mudbrick masonry. Mudbricks are unfired, and were widely used in the Middle East during various periods. In the earliest times, mudbricks were laid upon a foundation of undressed

rocks or small boulders, then covered with a layer of plaster. The roofs were probably flat and made of wooden beams with straw-and-clay cob. In the Roman era, large limestone blocks (ashlars) were used for the lower portions of the walls, with mudbricks only used in upper structures. The walls were plastered and certain parts painted and/or decorated in stucco. Typically the houses show several phases, with visible signs of damage, rebuilding, and remodelling or expansion.

Wells ensured the city's water supply, and wastewater was led away in pipes that ran along the main street in the area south of the city wall. The Achilles House (Maison d'Achille) east of the Temple of Bel has distinctive traces of a latrine from which wastewater ran into a public sewer. The water pipes in the southern part of the city date from the Hellenistic and early Roman period, shortly before the Common Era began. They would have led clean water to the city wells or cisterns, and led wastewater away from the latrines.

The recently excavated house south of the city wall had a kitchen installation with three *tannur* ovens; a fuel-efficient design. About 1 m high, such cylindrical clay structures are used to bake bread on the inside of the oven wall, then grill meat on spits over the embers or boil food in a pot set atop the oven.





*Map of Palmyra and environs. Private houses marked in blue east of the Temple of Bel and south of the wadi.*

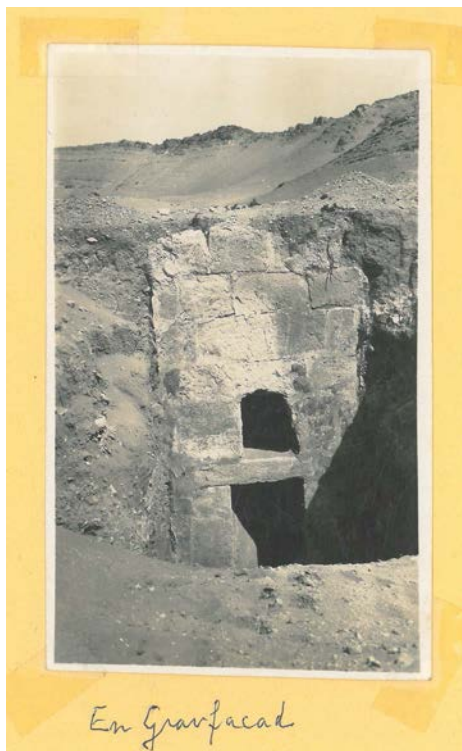
# THE TOMBS OF PALMYRA

Palmyra had several types of tombs, ranging from single-burial graves to monumental multi-burial structures above and below ground. Most single graves were located north of the city, some marked by a gravestone. The first monumental tombs appeared around the beginning of the Common Era: towers with numerous loculi, funerary niches, built mainly in the Western Necropolis (the Valley of the Tombs) along the wadi and the road to Damascus (see map p. 17).

Another later type of monumental tomb was the hypogeum, or subterranean communal grave. Such tombs, carved out underground in the necropoleis west, southwest and south-east of the ancient city, could accommodate up to 400 burials in niches along the walls and sarcophagi on the chamber floors. Most hypogea are shaped like an inverted T, with a long central chamber and two side chambers, and most have inscriptions on the door lintel stating who founded the tomb, any portions later sold, who it would accommodate, and any later expansions.

A third type was the temple tomb or house tomb, often used by wealthy families who would erect a funerary monument for their house and its close affiliates. House tombs became popular around 150–200 CE and were built inside and outside the city.

The best-preserved funerary portraits come from the hypogea, but various portrait formats were also used in the tower tombs and house tombs. Funerary portraiture could depict individuals or groups, could be full-figure reliefs or busts, and could also be found on sarcophagi and as murals on tomb-chamber walls.



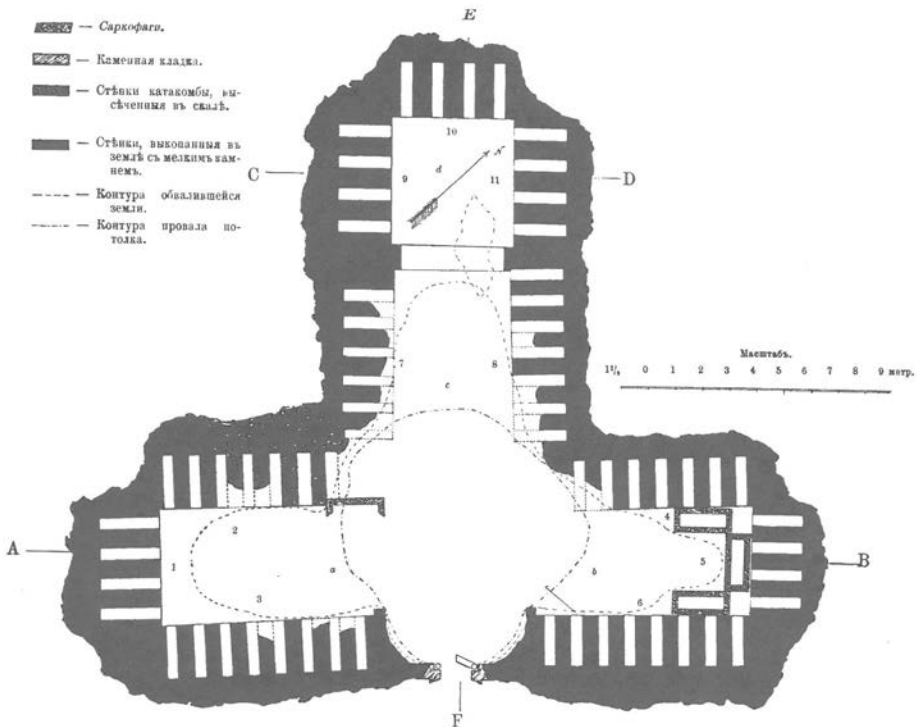
*Entrance to the Dionysus Tomb, hypogeum in the Southwest Necropolis.*

PHOTO PPP INGHOLT ARCHIVE, RUBINA RAJA,  
FORMERLY AT SIML, VALE



PHOTO: RUBINA RAJA

*The Tower of Elahbel, a tower tomb in the Valley of the Tombs/Western Necropolis.*



*Plan of the Tomb of the Three Brothers, hypogeum in the Southwest Necropolis.*

# FUNERARY SCULPTURE IN PALMYRA

Funerary sculpture from Syria's ancient oasis city of Palmyra is the largest body of portrait sculpture from the Roman era outside Rome. That makes this material extremely significant, both to the study of identity in the Roman provinces and to core studies of Roman portraiture. The database of the Palmyra Portrait Project currently holds more than 2600 portraits – far more than hitherto assumed.

Palmyrene portraiture falls into two categories, very different in scope. One is public portraits (of which few survive), and the other is funerary portraits. The public statues were erected to honour members of the local elite. Their physical position in the urban space is unique to Palmyra: They sat upon ledges jutting out about halfway up the columns lining the streets and porticoes, surveying various areas of the city – its streets, temples and important squares. Most of the male public statues were portrayed in toga. This is remarkably unlike the male portraits from the city's tower tombs and underground tombs (hypogea), which are normally depicted wearing Greek chitons, or Parthian attire for banquet scenes. Female public sculptures bore clothing that completely covered their bodies, with very little jewellery, as was customary in the Roman world. By contrast, the women depicted in the tombs bear copious amounts of extravagant jewellery,

and clothing and headwear with textiles that show a diversity and detail seldom seen in Roman work.

Particularly in the English-speaking world, the portraits of Palmyra have been misunderstood as Roman provincial portraits, suggesting that they follow Imperial styles and fashions. They do not. Palmyrene portraiture has an inherent logic all its own. Unlike Roman portraits, those from Palmyra are not individualized but idealized, often with generic facial features. Yet through their clothing, jewellery and gestures they communicate their local identity very distinctly, mixing Graeco-Roman, Parthian and local elements. This highly premeditated blend of elements reveals sophisticated knowledge of contemporary styles and trends in the world beyond Palmyra, and it shows how uniquely this knowledge was applied in a local context. Consider how funerary busts often wear Greek attire while full-body banquet sculptures always wear Parthian attire richly adorned with embroidery. This reflects the importance of dressing in context, which in turn suggests that style choices did not simply mirror Roman Imperial trends. Such angles are essential to understanding local societies in Antiquity.



Ingholt laid the groundwork for grasping the chronology and dating of Palmyrene sculpture in his dissertation *Studier over Palmyrensk Skulptur* (*Studies of Palmyrene Sculpture*) from 1928, centred on the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek collection. The 1993 catalogue of the Glyptotek's collection, by Gunhild Ploug and Finn Ove Hvidberg-Hansen, was also based on the Ingholt Archive, and to this day his work forms the basis of research into Palmyrene funerary sculpture. The Palmyra Portrait Project will release his unpublished archive and excavation diaries, sharing new knowledge about funerary sculpture and Ingholt's own excavations in Palmyra.

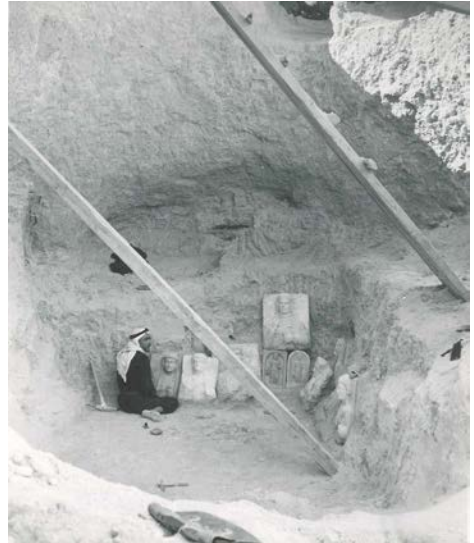


PHOTO: PPP, INGHOLT ARCHIVE, RUBINA RAJA; FORMERLY AT SML, YALE

*Reliefs found in Tomb 8, Southwest Necropolis, placed upright in situ, Palmyra.*

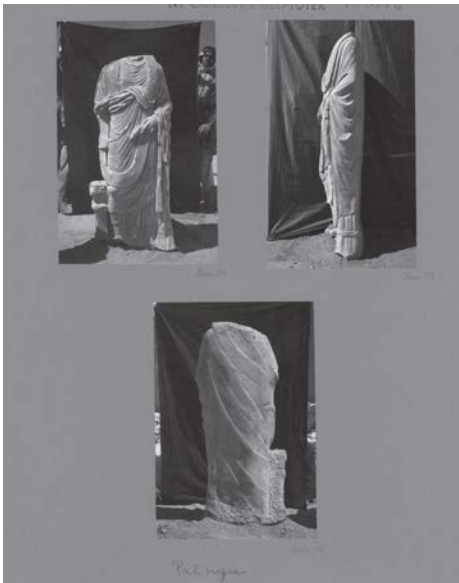


PHOTO: PPP, INGHOLT ARCHIVE, NOG, COPENHAGEN

*Public honorary statue from the agora in Palmyra, National Museum of Damascus, Inv. No. C4024.*



PHOTO: PPP, INGHOLT ARCHIVE, NOG, COPENHAGEN

*Sarcophagi from the Tomb of the Three Brothers, Southwest Necropolis, in situ, Palmyra.*

# THEMES IN PALMYRENE FUNERARY SCULPTURE

While on the one hand the funerary sculpture of Palmyra is highly idealized, on the other hand it shows a wealth of detail from which emerge a number of themes that recur in different groups of portraits.

The individuality in the portraits is mainly expressed through the inscriptions the large majority of them bear. These present the person's house or ancestral lineage, often mentioning up to five generations. This was done to underscore the importance of a long family history, thereby demonstrating one's historical roots.

Although funerary reliefs rarely state a professional title, depictions of priests are very common. About 10% of all Palmyrene funerary sculpture depicts male priests from Palmyra. Even so, the inscriptions make no mention that they are priests. They are portrayed in priestly garb wearing the unmistakably Palmyrene *modius* – a round hat with a flat top – and most often holding a sacrificial drinking vessel and a small incense bowl. However, funerary sculpture never shows them actively practising their priesthood. More than anything, the priestly portrayals seem more an emphasis of their status, as sacred appointments were reserved for men of the elite.

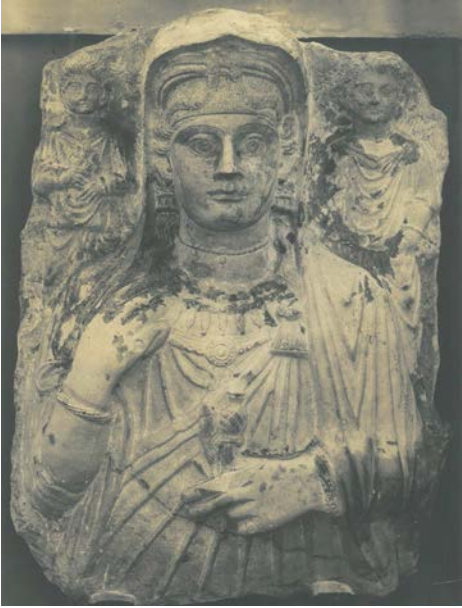
Another favourite theme is the banquet. Funerary reliefs often show a male figure,

depicted either in priestly dress or, as often seen with the banquet theme, in Parthian dress with fabrics richly decorated in detailed motifs, and costly leather boots. The man is often shown with his wife sitting in a chair at his feet, possibly with other family members and banquet servants in attendance. Banquet reliefs on sarcophagus lids are often rather more extravagantly done. These scenes show up to 10 people lined up behind the *kline* (bed or couch) on which the man is lying. Often they show several daughters and sons as well as the man's wife who, as customary, sits at her husband's feet.

The vast majority of men depicted in funerary sculpture bear the typical *chiton* (Greek costume) with a *himation* (cape) over it. Usually neither piece of clothing is decorated. This theme – *chiton* and *himation* – can be interpreted as a reference to the honorary statues erected in public and should therefore be understood as an honorary reference to the deceased demonstrated by his own family and society in the afterlife.

The female portraits as a group display the greatest diversity. The early period has women depicted with household attributes, such as a spindle or keys; symbols of the woman's accomplishments and power in the domestic sphere.

PHOTO: PPP, INGHOULT ARCHIVE, INCG,  
COPENHAGEN



*Female portrait bust, Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, Inv. No. 1908.3.*

PHOTO: PPP



*Male portrait bust, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen, Inv. No. 1043.*

PHOTO: PPP



*Relief with reclining man and sitting woman, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen, Inv. No. 1159, 1160.*

# INGHOLT'S 1925 PALMYRA CAMPAIGN

Harald Ingholt's first archaeological campaign at Palmyra in 1924 had been a great success, identifying about 30 subterranean tombs in the Southwest Necropolis.

In the spring of 1925 he once again set off on a two-month campaign to Palmyra, this time with permission from General Serrail, the new French High Commissioner of Syria, and partnering with the French architect Albert Gabriel. The Rask-Ørsted Foundation once again provided financial support for Ingholt's work.

The team had a group of 10 Arab workmen, assisted for the last two weeks by the French soldiers stationed in the area.

Their mission was to focus on the Southwest Necropolis, and Ingholt once again reported finding new inscriptions, although fewer than the year before. Most of the inscriptions they found were written in the Palmyrene Aramaic dialect, but some turned out to be in Palmyrene-Aramaic as well as Greek.

Three inscriptions were found above the entrance to the Tomb of Naṣrallath, which Ingholt later published. One of them mentions the sale of funerary niches to a woman named Julia Aurelia Amtha. Selling tomb space to women was not unknown, but

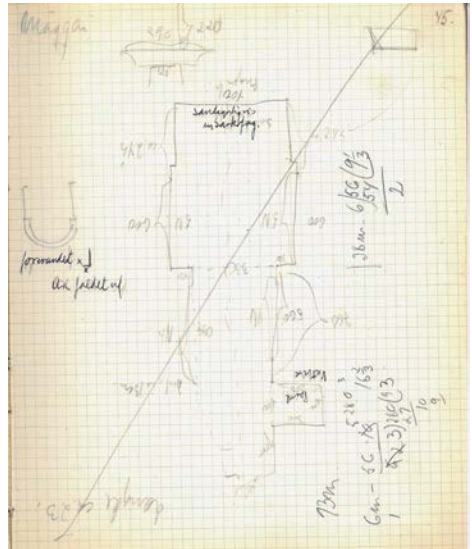
it was quite unusual. Most business by far was transacted between men.

Several tombs were identified in the Southwest Necropolis in 1925, which enabled Ingholt to bring the total number of tombs there to 51. He reported that 24 could be entered, while the rest had collapsed. One of the accessible tombs was also one of the earliest: the Tomb of Atenatan, originally carved out in 98 CE, with a later addition consisting of an exedra that was financed by a man named Maqqai. In the Southwest Necropolis, the earliest tombs were found in the northeastern part, and the majority of tombs were underground hypogea where the deceased were laid to rest on shelves in specially carved niches called loculi. Tower tombs were another type of burial facility, more common in the Western Necropolis, or Valley of the Tombs. The deceased were laid to rest in the same fashion but in a monumental tower. Both these tomb types could contain up to 400 burials. A third type, the house tomb or temple tomb, was a smaller funerary monument made to contain multiple burials.

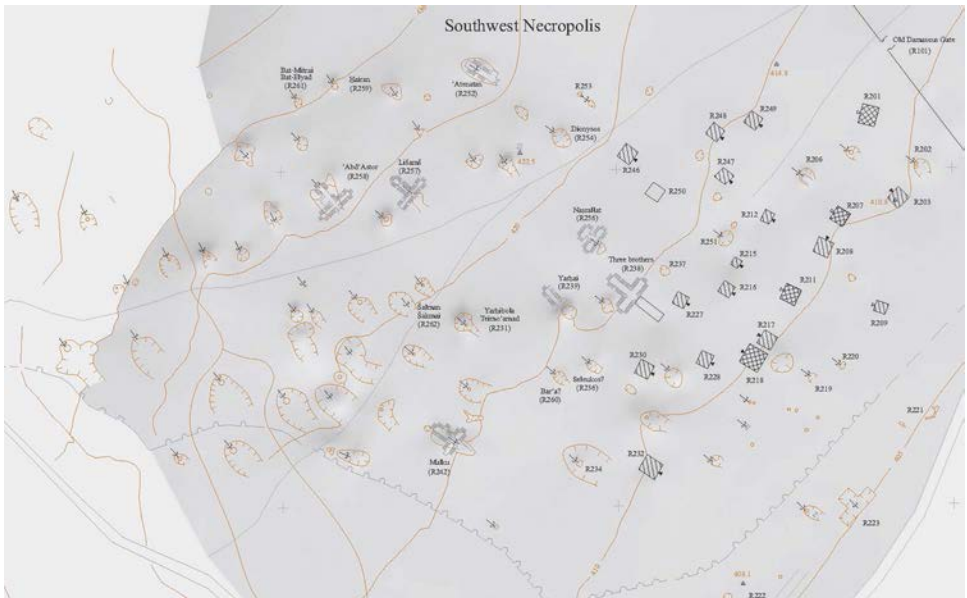
On the 1925 campaign Ingholt spent a good deal of time measuring the tomb locations relative to their orientation, and also doing preliminary measurements of the tombs.

He employed a sketchbook and noted that although most subterranean tombs had the same general plan, no two were completely identical. He measured the façades relative to the north-south axis and stated their deviations in degrees. In connection with his excavations and measurements he made a map showing the tombs' locations relative to one another, as well as their orientation.

In short, for Ingholt the plans and precise locations of the tombs was the focal point for 1925. Based on his descriptions of the arrangement and outfitting of the tombs, his sketches and his reports it has been possible to identify some of the tombs for which plans are, as yet, unpublished.



*Sketch of the Tomb of Atenatan, with Maqqai's exedra, Ingholt's 1925 sketch diary. The exedra was added as an extra chamber and is placed at the bottom of the drawing, to the right of the entrance.*



*Plan of the Southwest Necropolis, Palmyra.*

# COLOURS IN PALMYRA – MURALS

Murals and painted stuccoes have been found in private houses and in tombs at Palmyra, and sculptures found in tombs and temples are often painted. Ancient Palmyra was undoubtedly vivid with colourful – in the cities of the living and the dead.

In 1924, Harald Ingholt found murals in three tombs: the Tomb of Hairan, the Dionysus Tomb, and the Tomb of Maqqai. These he documented with photos in 1925. Some were done as watercolour replicas in 1928 by the Danish architect Charles Christensen. Most paintings found in hypogea are located in an exedra: a large, semicircular or square niche often added later. A textbook example is the Tomb of the Three Brothers in the Southwest Necropolis, where the entire back room has painted decorations. The most recent example of this phenomenon, excavated by the Syrian authorities in 2007 and likewise in the Southwest Necropolis, shows motifs most often seen on sarcophagi: men reclining at a banquet, attended by servants.

One tomb Ingholt excavated in 1924, the Tomb of Hairan, could be dated to 106–07 CE, with its painted exedra dated to 149–50 CE. The paintings show Hairan standing opposite his wife, along with a male portrait in a medallion and a large eagle that spreads its wings across the ceiling above the entrance

to the exedra. The colours are yellow, brown, green, red and black. In 1932, Ingholt published watercolours of several paintings from this tomb and the one from the Dionysus Tomb, but without a plan of the tombs.

Now, the Palmyra Portrait Project's work with Ingholt's archives has brought to light a 1925 sketch of Hairan's tomb, putting the paintings back in their original context.

Certain motifs reappear in several of the murals and also in sculptural form. Examples are the eagle, winged creatures, portraits in medallions and full-figure portraits. In this way the murals bring colour to many motifs already known from Palmyra.

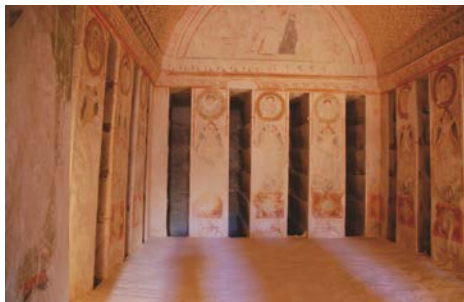


PHOTO: RUBINA RAJA

*Interior from the innermost part of the Tomb of the Three Brothers, with funerary niches visible as deep indentations between the painted pilasters. The entire back room has painted decorations. Southwest Necropolis, Palmyra.*



REPRODUCED AFTER H. INGHOULT, "QUELQUES FRESQUES RÉCEMMENT DÉCOUVERTES À PALMYRE", ACTA ARCHAEOLOGICA 3, 1932, 1-20

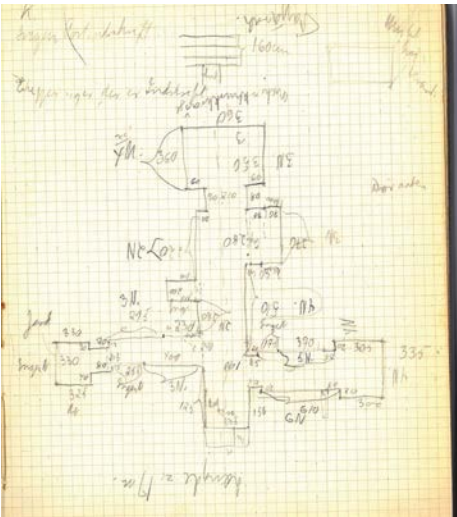


Watercolour by Charles Christensen depicting Hairan, from the Tomb of Hairan (enlargement on p. 40).



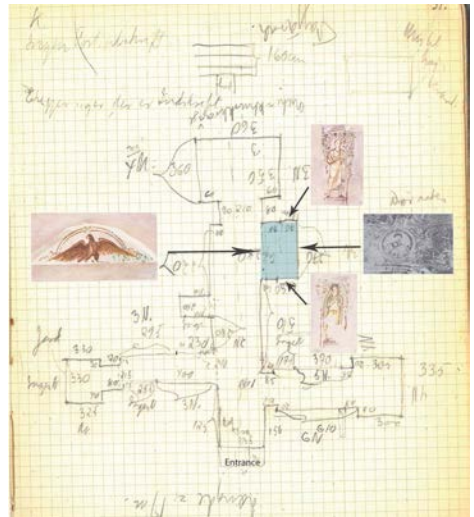
Watercolour by Charles Christensen depicting Hairan's wife, from the Tomb of Hairan.

PHOTO: PPP, NCG, COPENHAGEN



Original drawing from Ingholt's 1925 sketch diary showing the Tomb of Hairan.

PHOTO: PPP, NCG, COPENHAGEN



Drawing of the Tomb of Hairan from Ingholt's 1925 sketch diary, indicating the positions of paintings in the tomb.

REPRODUCED AFTER H. INGHOULT, "QUELQUES FRESQUES RÉCEMMENT DÉCOUVERTES À PALMYRE", ACTA ARCHAEOLOGICA 3, 1932, 1-20



Watercolour by Charles Christensen depicting Hairan,  
from the Tomb of Hairan (enlargement from p. 39).



PHOTO: PPP, INGHOULT ARCHIVE, NOG, COPENHAGEN



*Sarcophagus excavated by Ingholt in the Tomb of Malkû, in restored condition at the National Museum of Damascus (enlargement from p. 54).*

# RELIGION IN PALMYRA

There is very little material, archaeological or literary, that tells us how the religious life of Palmyra was organized during the Roman era. The most seminal sources are collected in Ted Kaizer's book *The Religious Life of Palmyra* from 2002. What we do know of the social structure there is that the ancient city was divided into great families or houses, which written sources from the Roman period number at 4. This structure is believed to belong to the Roman era, rather than reflecting the original social structures of Palmyra. We also know that several of these great families had important temples in the city, and written sources refer to the largest, the Temple of Bel, as "the house of the Palmyrene gods". This suggests that the Temple of Bel was the sacred place where all of Palmyra would gather.

The Temple of Bel was by far the largest shrine in the city. Besides the huge temple space it included a banquet hall for about 100 people, several monumental altars, pools and an underground ramp used to lead sacrificial animals into the temple.

In the drains leading from the banquet hall, which lies outside the temple itself, countless small terracotta objects have been found. Known as tesserae, they served as tickets or entrance tokens to religious banquets. Like Palmyra's funerary sculpture, one side of these exquisite tokens conforms to a certain

iconography, whereas the other side may show a wide variety of detail within certain themes. Tesserae are the richest source we have on Palmyra's religious life, and they portray a wealth of deities, male and female. Also, they often bear inscriptions naming the priest or priesthood hosting the banquet. Sometimes they even state the amounts of food and drink to be given in exchange for the token. Apparently, though, guests did not always keep their tokens after a banquet. Given that over 1000 different series of tesserae have been identified, it is a fair assumption that the individual tokens were manufactured in serial form in connection with a certain event. In other words, they would have lost their value once the event was over.

As noted, the tokens portray a wide range of deities, so it stands to reason that the underlying events, most often held at the Temple of Bel, were in honour of other gods than Bel, to whom the temple was consecrated. This naturally raises questions about the organization of religious life in Palmyra, and there are indications that, at least in the Temple of Bel, celebrations could be held for other deities than the god Bel himself. At the same time the tokens indicate that such banquets were by invitation only, the host including and excluding people depending on the size and significance of the event.

PHOTO: RUBINA RAJA



*The underground passage leading into the temenos of the Sanctuary of Bel.*

PHOTO: RUBINA RAJA



*The Temple of Bel.*



*The Temple of Bel in the 1920s or 1930s, with wattle-and-daub huts among the temple columns.*

PHOTO: PPP, INGHOIT ARCHIVE, RUBINA RAJA; FORMERLY AT SML, YALE

# TESSERAE





TESSERAE, NCG, COPENHAGEN, INV. NO. 2770, 3208, 2771, 2769, 3215, 3206,  
3214, 3244, 1141, 3198, 3200, 3263, 3196. PHOTO: RUBINA RAJA



# INGHOLT'S 1928 PALMYRA CAMPAIGN

In the autumn and winter of 1928, having successfully defended his dissertation *Studier over Palmyrensk Skulptur* (*Studies of Palmyrene Sculpture*), Ingholt again returned to Palmyra. This time he was accompanied by the Danish architect Charles O. G. Christensen, who would later also participate in Ingholt's excavations in Hama, Syria. Once underway, the campaign was later joined by Johannes Prip-Møller, another Danish architect who assisted Christensen with the many architectural tomb drawings Ingholt wanted done. Christensen did watercolours as well. This third expedition to Palmyra was also paid for by the Rask-Ørsted Foundation in Denmark.

As on his two previous campaigns, in 1928 Ingholt worked with the tombs and also with inscriptions around the city. Furthermore he purchased a number of objects, including small terracotta banquet tokens, and took impressions of inscriptions.

Ingholt had the local workmen dig in the Southwest Necropolis at many of the tombs identified on his first two campaigns. His expedition had at least 32 workmen divided

into 8 teams. One location they worked on was the Tomb of Atenatan, which contains a feature known as Maqqai's exedra.

In the Tomb of Atenatan there is a large niche, an exedra, carved out much later than the original tomb. This exedra contained three sarcophagi and had a painted ceiling, and it had been paid for by a person referred to in the inscriptions as Maqqai. Two of the sarcophagi had sculptural decorations, with figures that had traces of paint. The practice of placing sculpturally decorated sarcophagi along three walls of an exedra was mainly done in Palmyra during the third century CE, making it one of the later phenomena in Palmyrene funerary sculpture.

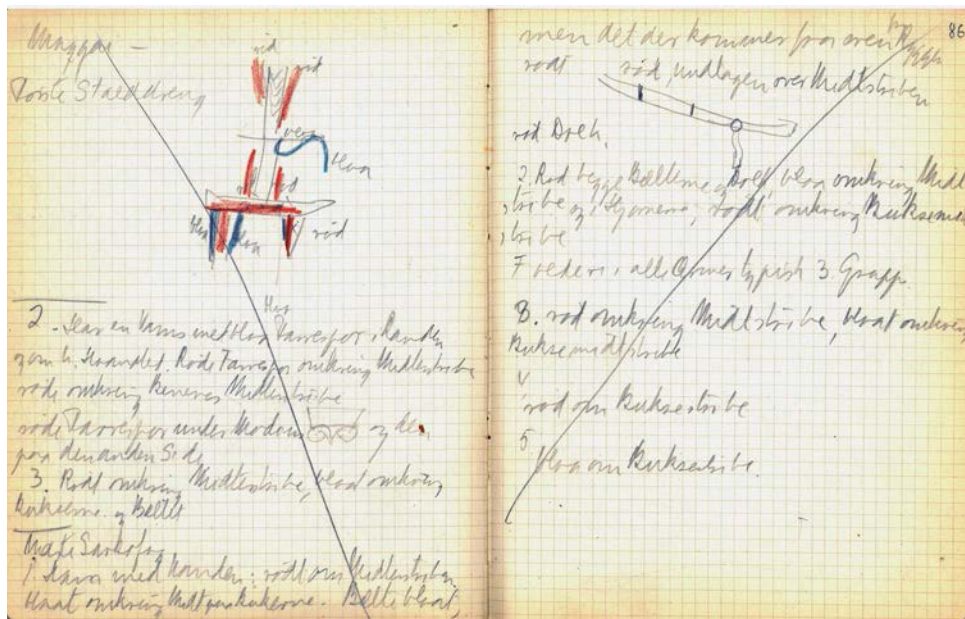
Within a period of about one week, the campaign excavated a temple tomb near the edge of the Valley of the Tombs, or Western Necropolis. The name of this tomb was Qasr Abjad ("the White Castle"). It was in this tomb the expedition found the excellently preserved female bust, later purchased for the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek collection, which came to be known as the Beauty of Palmyra.



PHOTO: PPP, INGHOULT ARCHIVE, NCG, COPENHAGEN



The central sarcophagus in Maqqai's exedra, the upper section with figures of the deceased reclining on a banquet couch, and his wife seated at left. The lower section shows three men and a horse. Southwest Necropolis, in situ, Palmyra.



Ingholt's 1928 excavation diary, notes on Maqqai's exedra. Southwest Necropolis, Palmyra.

PHOTO: PPP, NCG, COPENHAGEN

# THE BEAUTY OF PALMYRA

During Ingholt's third Palmyra campaign in 1928, one location his team excavated was the tomb later known as Qasr Abjad, in Arabic "the white house/castle", found in the West Necropolis or Valley of the Tombs. The dig took about a week, and Ingholt partially documented the work in his excavation diaries. Even so, he never published this tomb himself. That was done by those later studying the tomb, who without access to Ingholt's diaries were unable to tie their observations into the context of Ingholt's excavation and finds.

The classification of Qasr Abjad is debated in the literature, but it seems most likely to be either a temple tomb or a house tomb – rather than a tower tomb, as has been suggested. Temple or house tombs, which became popular around the latter half of the second century CE, were often built by wealthy families as modest funerary monuments for members and affiliates of the house. The dating of the sculptural finds from the tomb (nine fragments, large and small) indeed supports the tomb's dating to roughly the latter second century CE. Moreover, Ingholt himself believed Qasr Abjad to be a temple or house tomb, meaning it had only one storey, and no traces of stairs have been found inside.

In his excavation diary Ingholt mentions finding the bust of "the Beauty of Palmyra" in Qasr Abjad, describing it as "the most beautiful female bust I have seen thus far".

Ingholt arrived at the tomb one afternoon after supervising work at other locations and found the bust excavated. He had no doubt that the piece ought to become part of the collection at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek. The quality of the workmanship and, not least, its excellent state of preservation, which included colour traces, spurred Ingholt to apply to the Rask Ørsted Foundation for funds to purchase the sculpture for the Glyptotek's collection.

He received the funds, purchased the bust and shipped it to Denmark, where it was unveiled on 22 December 1929 at the Glyptotek in Copenhagen. That same day a drawing of the bust appeared in *Berlingske Tidende* newspaper along with an article about Ingholt's work in Palmyra.

Until very recently, the finding of the Beauty of Palmyra in Qasr Abjad was unknown, as the information was only accessible in Ingholt's unpublished diaries and the 1929 newspaper article. Work is now underway to make these diaries accessible to researchers and to a wider audience, as they will be published in transcribed, commented and translated form. They offer valuable information about Palmyra's cultural heritage and Ingholt's Palmyra campaigns, which can only be reconstructed by comparing the diaries with the Glyptotek's collection.

Excerpt from Ingholt's  
1928 excavation diary.

1103 (Qasr Abjad)  
Den smukkeste Kvindestatue, jeg endnu har set, med Tænder  
bevaret, var fundet da jeg en Eftersmiddag kom derind.  
Man i Gyltstødet, af Rask-Posten Fundet gennem mig kam  
Oket dertil.  
L.C. har godt mig gendat at i det sidste Kasseband  
hvor Stenene er udklede, Mitten findes denne Udklede  
endog fra den Sten, der halvt er skjult af Fjelen

PHOTO: PPP, NCG, COPENHAGEN

PHOTO: PPP, INGHOLT ARCHIVE, NCG, COPENHAGEN



Photo of the Beauty of  
Palmyra during the  
1928 excavation.

PHOTO: PPP, INGHOLT ARCHIVE, RUBINA RAJA;  
FORMERLY AT SML, YALE



External view of Qasr Abjad.



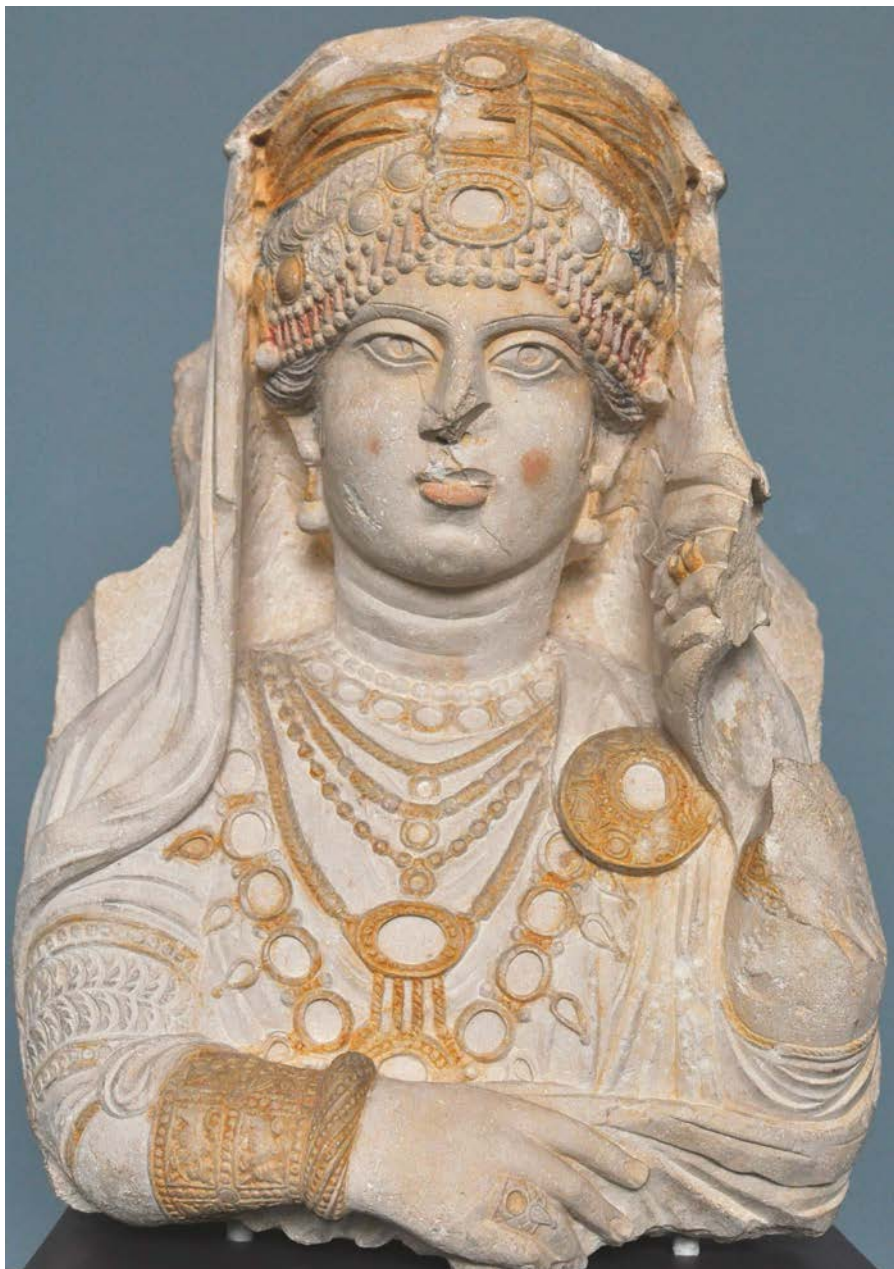
Photo from the excavation of the Qasr Abjad tomb in 1928.

PHOTO: PPP, INGHOLT ARCHIVE, RUBINA RAJA;  
FORMERLY AT SML, YALE

50 HARALD INGHOLT  
& PALMYRA

# THE BEAUTY OF PALMYRA

PHOTO: PPP



*The Beauty of Palmyra, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen Inv. No. 2795.*



# THE TOMB OF ATENATAN, AND MAQQAI'S EXEDRA

During all three of his campaigns at Palmyra, in 1924, 1925 and 1928, Ingholt worked with the Tomb of Atenatan and the finds made there.

The Tomb of Atenatan was a hypogeum, a subterranean multi-burial facility, located in the northeastern corner of the Southwest Necropolis. Carved out in the year 98 CE, this tomb had an elongated central chamber without the usual side wings next to the entrance. The door of the tomb was made of massive limestone slabs, both intact at the time of excavation. The Tomb of Atenatan was used for decades, and in 229 CE it was expanded with a side niche, an exedra, inaugurated by a man named Julius Aurelius Maqqai. The inscription declares that this exedra was built for Maqqai's own money, for his sons and their sons. Maqqai also had the ceiling of the niche painted and three sarcophagi installed along its walls.

These sarcophagi were made of limestone, probably from a local quarry, and decorated with relief motifs most probably depicting Maqqai and his children, wife and servants. In 1928, Ingholt made detailed studies of the sarcophagi from Maqqai's funerary niche and recorded quite a few colour traces on their decorative reliefs.

These traces of colour are occasionally mentioned in the literature, but they have never been portrayed. Through the Palmyra Portrait Project's work with Ingholt's archival material, it is now possible to show drawings that in all probability are Ingholt's own, illustrating the traces of colour on two of the sarcophagi from the Maqqai exedra. The colours are red and blue, and they were especially used for the fine borders on the clothing worn by the depicted figures, and on the horses' harnesses. The figures wear outfits consisting of trousers, long tunics and jackets. Most carry swords, and one carries a bow and a quiver of arrows.

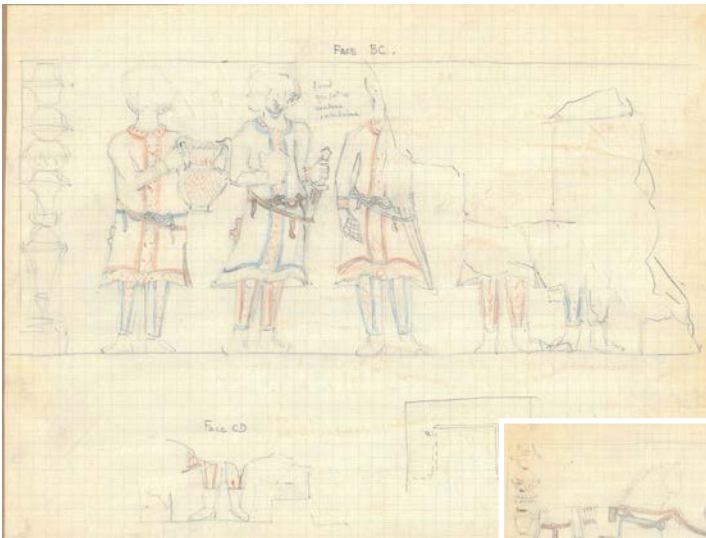
As with the Beauty of Palmyra, here it is possible to get an impression of how the sculptures were painted and installed in a tomb in combination with painted ceilings. Because the tombs were funerary chambers used for many generations, they were also places occasionally visited by the living. Hence, besides embellishing the eternal resting place of the dead, the colours on the murals and sculptures may also have served to display the wealth of the family and the house.



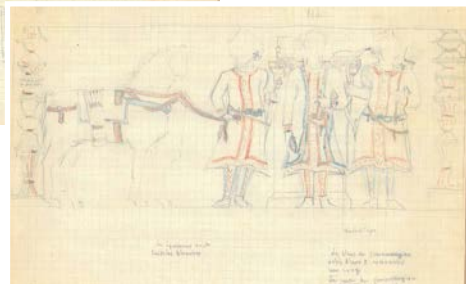


PHOTO: PPP, INGHOLT ARCHIVE, NCG, COPENHAGEN

*The two preserved sarcophagi in Maqqai's exedra. Southwest Necropolis, in situ, Palmyra.*



*Drawing of the lower section of the sarcophagus on the right in Maqqai's exedra. Southwest Necropolis, Palmyra.*



*Drawing of the lower section of the central sarcophagus in Maqqai's exedra. Southwest Necropolis, Palmyra.*

PHOTO: PPP, INGHOLT ARCHIVE, NCG, COPENHAGEN

PHOTO: PPP, INGHOLT ARCHIVE, NCG, COPENHAGEN

# UNFINISHED BUSINESS: THE TOMB OF MALKÛ

In the mid-1930s (1935 or 1937), Harald Ingholt was again able to return to Palmyra for a few weeks. During this brief campaign Ingholt was accompanied by a friend, Dr. Douglas Cruikshank from the American University of Beirut. Ingholt had felt since 1928 that there were certain unresolved issues in Palmyra, mainly regarding the Tomb of Malkû in the Southwest Necropolis. As yet he had only recorded the existence of this tomb and the inscriptions at its entrance, but because it was collapsed he had not excavated it. Working with the local antiquities authority, Ingholt and Cruikshank were permitted to live in a house inside the Temple of Bel for their campaign.

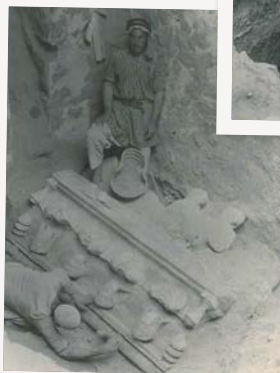
The tomb in question was built in 116 CE by "Malkû, son of Malkû, son of Nûrbel the doctor, for himself, his sons and their sons". As it turned out, the tomb was used for burials until 267 CE, according to the last of its 14 inscriptions.

On their 1930s campaign the team found that several funerary sculptures had been removed, although quite a few interesting and well-preserved portrait busts, an inscription and a sarcophagus with a gallery of figures remained. The sarcophagus is now at the National Museum of Damascus, while the inscription is part of the Glyptotek's collection.

The Tomb of Malkû and its artefacts are among the most thoroughly described in all of Ingholt's many published articles on the tombs of Palmyra.



PHOTO: PPP INGHOLT ARCHIVE, RUBINA PAUA,  
FORMERLY AT SML, YALE



*Discovery of a famous sarcophagus, now  
kept at the National Museum of Damascus.*

PHOTO: PPP, INGHOLT ARCHIVE, RUBINA RAJA, FORMERLY AT SML, YALE



*Ingholt in the Tomb of Malkû in the 1930s, with two excavated sculptures and three local workmen.*

PHOTO: PPP, INGHOLT ARCHIVE, RUBINA RAJA, FORMERLY AT SML, YALE



*Discovery of the Malkû inscription, now kept at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen, Inv. No. 3727.*



*Sarcophagus excavated by Ingholt in the Tomb of Malkû, in restored condition at the National Museum of Damascus.*

PHOTO: PPP, INGHOLT ARCHIVE, NCG, COPENHAGEN

# FUNERARY AND FOUNDER'S INSCRIPTIONS

The monumental tombs of Palmyra, whether hypogea, tower tombs or house/temple tombs, were all founded by one person, not by a collective. This person, most often the head of a family, would have an inscription prominently placed at the front of the tomb. Such founder's inscriptions tell us who paid to build the tomb. They tell us of the family's long history, retold again in extremely economical form in the inscriptions found on Palmyrene funerary reliefs. But often such inscriptions were also legal declarations testifying to the purchase of the land for building a tomb, and forbidding others to damage or take over the tomb without permission. Some inscriptions even had incantations meant to bring potential intruders and grave-robbers to their senses by threatening them with curses.

Frequent expansions and occasional closure of certain portions of a tomb called for the continuous addition of legal inscriptions. These could be added on the tomb entrances and inside the tomb itself. Such texts laid down rules for how a new owner of certain parts of a tomb would be allowed to organize their funerary niches (*loculi*); which other niches he or she was allowed to terminate; and how many new ones they could install. These inscriptions, which have nothing at all to do with the individual burials, are actual

legal documents that may also have been kept in written form in the city's central records office.

Founder's inscriptions were often long, and carved into places that made them difficult to see. We can therefore reasonably presume that they were also found elsewhere. Conversely we can conclude that it must have been important to have them in the tombs, since so many of them have been found.

Palmyra was a bilingual city, and the official languages were Palmyrene-Aramaic and Greek. Both these languages are found in numerous official inscriptions in the city. By contrast the inscriptions in the funerary sphere, be they legal or burial-related, are overwhelmingly Aramaic, and written in the Palmyrene dialect. This circumstance is interesting, as it suggests that in this sphere people were concerned more with emphasizing the city's local traditions, and less with showing that they were part of the Graeco-Roman world. This is, nevertheless, no surprise. By looking at the huge body of funerary portraiture, all the signs indicate that local Palmyrene roots and traditions were attributed great weight in the funerary sphere.



PHOTO: PPP, INGHOLT ARCHIVE, RUBINA RAJA; FORMERLY AT SML, YALE



*Owner's inscription from a hypogeum, Tomb P, in the Southwest Necropolis, excavated by Ingholt in Palmyra.*

# THE PALMYRA COLLECTION OF CARL JACOBSEN

The Danish brewer and benefactor Carl Jacobsen is best known among art lovers for his fabulous collections of Roman and Greek antiquities, initially purchased for his private villa. This building is now the Carlsberg Academy, situated in Copenhagen's emerging Carlsberg district on the old brewery estate. The Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek was later built in the city centre to house his art collections. But the brewery magnate not only had an eye for Roman and Greek art. He also assembled superb collections of Etruscan, Palmyrene and other artefacts. One of his contacts in Beirut was the Danish consul Julius Løytved, who helped to source sculptures in the area. Their correspondence shows that Carl Jacobsen had firm views on the quality and variation in the Palmyrene sculpture collection he envisioned. His active involvement with and knowledge about these objects are what initially created such a strong core collection at the Glyptotek, making its current Palmyra collection one of the world's finest. Besides having several magnificent pieces, unlike many other famous collections it also shows the enormous diversity in Palmyrene sculpture.

Carl Jacobsen's collection of Palmyrene art is a broadly representative selection of the various types of portrait sculpture present in ancient Palmyra, including individual portraits, double portraits, and banquet reliefs, and it covers the entire period, from the late first century BCE until the late third century CE. And not only did Carl Jacobsen

demonstrate an interest in sculpture. He also acquired a Palmyrene mummy in order to show what lay hidden behind the many funerary reliefs in the great Palmyrene tower tombs and underground hypogea.

The Palmyra collection at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek was begun around 1886, and in 1889 at the request of Carl Jacobsen it was catalogued by Chief Rabbi David Simonsen of Copenhagen. Later, while digging at Palmyra, Ingholt purchased more local sculptures and objects to complement the Glyptotek's collection.

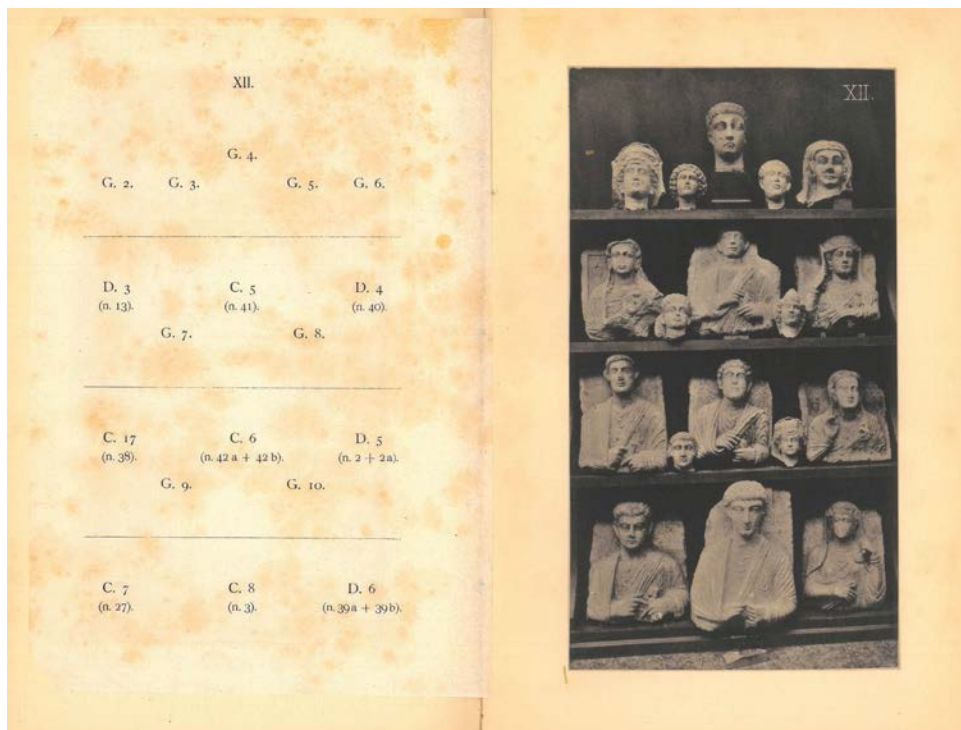


PHOTO: PPP

*Portrait bust of Hairan, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen, Inv. No. 1038.*



REPRODUCED AFTER D. SIMONSEN'S CATALOGUE: SKULPTURER OG INDSKRIFTER FRA  
PALMYRA I NY CARLSBERG GLYPTOTHEK, COPENHAGEN 1889



Pages from the 1889 catalogue of "sculptures and inscriptions from Palmyra at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptothek". The portrait of Hairan, Inv. No. 1038, is seen here as item C.8.

PHOTO: PPP. INGHOULT ARCHIVE, NCG, COPENHAGEN



Mummy from Palmyra acquired by Carl Jacobsen, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen.

# HARALD INGHOLT AND THE NY CARLSBERG GLYPTOTEK

On 25 October 1928, Harald Ingholt defended his doctoral dissertation at the University of Copenhagen. It was entitled *Studier over Palmyrensk Skulptur* (*Studies of Palmyrene Sculpture*), and his opponents were the Copenhagen professors Knud Friis Johansen (classical archaeology) and Johannes Pedersen (Semitic philology), with questions from J. Sebelien of Oslo, who was in the audience. The proceedings were chaired by the dean, Professor Johannes Østrup, who was the first Danish scholar to discover and describe a tomb in Palmyra. Professor Pedersen was later appointed as director of the Carlsberg Foundation.

In 1928, Harald Ingholt had already been working at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek for three years. He was employed there in 1925 by Director Helge Jacobsen, son of Carl Jacobsen – brewery magnate and founder of the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek. In addition, Ingholt served as the secretary of the New Carlsberg Foundation from 1927 to 1930. During his employment at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Ingholt expanded the museum's collections, most notably with artefacts from Palmyra. These objects originated from excavations done by the citizens of Palmyra themselves and from Ingholt's own excavations, and usually they were sent to Denmark by way of Beirut. These objects included sculptures, glass, stucco and banquet tokens (tesserae). However, even before Ingholt's excavations in Palmyra, the collection of Palmyrene sculpture at the Ny Carlsberg

Glyptotek was impressive, mainly thanks to the Danish consuls in Beirut and to Carl Jacobsen's personal interest in the sculptures. Carl Jacobsen asked Professor David Simonsen to compile the first catalogue of these collections, which appeared in 1889. Ingholt was employed at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek until 1930, when he applied to Director Frederik Poulsen for a leave of absence from his position for five years – or, as Ingholt phrased it, asked “to stand outside the official list as an employee at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek.” Ingholt was offered two models to accommodate his application, and he chose to have his position remain “vacant” for five years, conceding that after this period he would be terminated and have no influence on the choice of his successor. Ingholt ended up not returning to the Glyptotek. He pursued his career in Beirut and only briefly returned to Denmark to lecture in Semitic philology at Aarhus University before going to the United States to work at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut, first as an associate professor and later in a professorship. He lived in the US until his death in 1985, at the age of 89.

Ingholt remained active for many years after retiring, and in December 1981 he contacted the director of the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Flemming Johansen, offering the museum his large photographic archive and his collection of special imprints, which had formed the basis of his 1928 dissertation, written while Ingholt served in a curatorial position at the museum.

The Glyptotek paid to have the archive shipped, and in the spring of 1983 the material was safe in the museum's library. For a number of years Gunhild Ploug worked at the Glyptotek with the archival material, and she and Finn Ove Hvidberg-Hansen collaboratively wrote the museum's most recent catalogue of its Palmyrene Collection, published in 1993. Parts of Ingholt's archive remained at Yale University, where he had held his chair. This material mainly dealt with his excavation of the Tomb of Malkū in the mid-1930s and contained additional newspaper clippings and reports. This suggests that Ingholt endeavoured to sort his archive into the photos and diaries that pertained to the Glyptotek and the material that did not. Part of the archive from Yale University is now kept at Aarhus University, following its transferral from

the Sterling Memorial Library to the Palmyra Portrait Project.



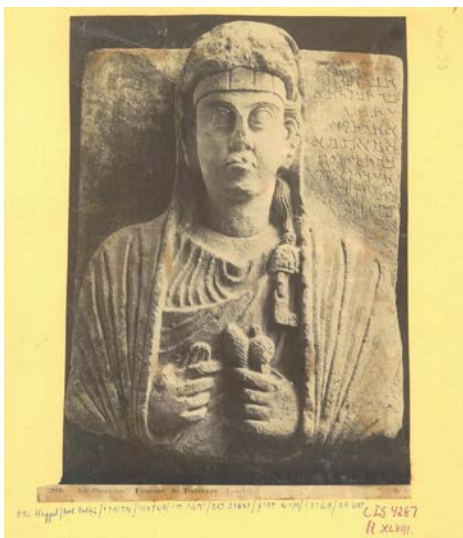
Letter from Director Flemming Johansen thanking Mr. and Mrs. Ingholt for bequeathing parts of Ingholt's archival material to the Glyptotek in 1983.



Harald Ingholt in Palmyra (enlargement on p. 63).



Newspaper clipping about Ingholt's doctoral dissertation and defence in 1928.



Poster from the Ingholt Archive.



*Ingholt photographing a relief with the deities Arsu and Azizu (enlargement from p. 27).*



PHOTO: PPP, INGHOLT ARCHIVE, RUBINA RAJA;  
FORMERLY AT SML, YALE



*Harald Ingholt in Palmyra (enlargement from p. 61).*

# THE PALMYRA PORTRAIT PROJECT AND HARALD INGHOLT

Funerary sculpture from the ancient oasis city of Palmyra, in modern-day Syria, makes up the largest body of portrait sculpture from the Roman era to be found outside Rome. That in itself makes this material extremely significant, both to the study of identity in the Roman provinces and to core studies of Roman portraiture.

Since 2012, the Palmyra Portrait Project has been assembling information on Palmyrene portraits in a database which, in early 2015, is 2600 entries and counting – a number far larger than hitherto assumed. Previous studies have included 800 to 900 portraits, and Harald Ingholt's monograph from 1928 covered 527 sculptures. It was Ingholt who laid the foundation for understanding the chronology and dating of Palmyrene sculpture with his dissertation *Studier over Palmyrensk Skulptur* (*Studies of Palmyrene Sculpture*) from 1928, with emphasis on the collection at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek. To this day, his work is fundamental to the research in Palmyrene funerary sculpture.

Under the auspices of the Palmyra Portrait Project, his unpublished material and his excavation and sketch diaries from the Ingholt Archive, which are kept at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen, will be published.

This material will bring new knowledge about funerary sculpture and about Ingholt's excavation campaigns in Palmyra. In the material, the project group has already uncovered plans of unpublished tombs, colour sketches and the discovery site of one of the most renowned Palmyrene sculptures: the Beauty of Palmyra. On display at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, this piece has now been proved with certainty to originate from Qasr Abjad, a tomb Ingholt himself excavated in Palmyra.

In 1993, Gunhild Ploug and Finn Ove Hvidberg-Hansen published their catalogue of the Palmyrene collection at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, based on the Glyptotek's own Ingholt Archive material. By digitizing this archive the Palmyra Portrait Project has rejuvenated the material with up-to-date images and descriptions.



A black and white photograph of a standing marble statue of a man, likely a Roman figure. The statue is shown from the waist up, wearing a draped garment with a visible fold across the chest. The figure's hands are clasped in front of him. The statue is displayed on a white rectangular pedestal, which has the number [564] inscribed on its front. The background is dark, and the entire image is framed by a light-colored border with dark corner mounts.

*Page from the Ingholt Archive with an incorrectly restored sculpture, British Museum, London.*



*New picture of the same sculpture, British Museum, London, Inv. No. BM 125058.*

PHOTO: THE PALMYRA PORTRAIT PROJECT

*Screenshot from the Palmyra Portrait Project database 2015.*

# THE RAVAGES OF CIVIL WAR AND THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF DECEIT

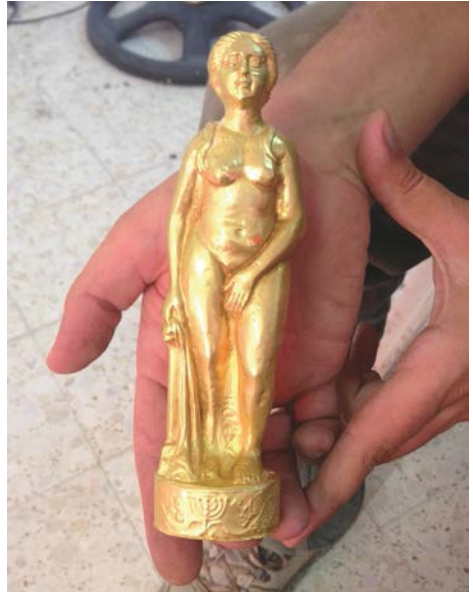
In the wake of the civil war in Syria, since 2011 there has been increasing destruction of Syria's cultural heritage, and a new market has arisen for the purchase and sale of original Antique artefacts and counterfeit imitations. One such fake reproduction is shown here. It was seized in the summer of 2014 as part of a large consignment of counterfeit goods that had passed the Syrian border into Jordan. The local police in Jerash, north of Amman, handled the operation jointly with the Department of Antiquities of Jordan. The figurine is interesting as a blatant imitation of a well-known sculpture of Venus, covering her sex with her left hand. However, the plaster-of-Paris figure is covered in imitation gold leaf and combined from modern elements. In addition, the figurine's base shows a menorah, a seven-armed candlestick that is a symbol in Judaism. This is not the only counterfeit artefact from Syria bearing such Jewish symbols, which is noteworthy as a clear indication that the counterfeiting workshops in Syria are conscious of the value of objects that underpin Jewish presence in the region in Antiquity, even despite current political and religious opposition to Jewish culture and religion. In their attempts to bear testimony to Jewish presence in the past, these fraudulent workshops invent artefacts that never existed – at least not in the composition of elements found in the counterfeit objects.

So far, numerous archaeological sites in Syria have been destroyed in the ongoing civil war. Casualties include the Citadel of Aleppo, the ancient city of Apamea, Dura-Europos on the Euphrates River, several ancient villages in northern Syria (known as the Dead Cities) and, not least, the famed desert city of Palmyra, located in the Syrian desert approximately halfway between the Euphrates and Damascus.

The escalating war in Syria has led to extensive destruction in Palmyra and wide-spread grave robbing, both in the underground hypogaea and in the tower tombs where the characteristic Palmyrene funerary portraits were set up to honour the dead. Over the years they became enormous portrait galleries where entire families and even distant relations were entombed for generations.

The Syrian conflict has brought many of these funerary portraits to the illegal international market for ancient artefacts. Less than a year after the civil war began there was a remarkable increase in the volume of Palmyrene portraits available on the illegal and the legal market for antiquities. Many of these portraits were offered as ostensibly belonging to “old private collections in Lebanon”, allowing them to be legally sold on the international market. The surge in original

funerary portraits offered for sale was paralleled by a huge production of fake funerary portraits. The original portraits, often half-busts portraying the upper torso of the deceased, vary greatly in quality, both due to the properties of the local limestone they are carved from and due to the inconsistent quality of the workmanship. Because many originals were poorly made, imitators have been able to rapidly produce large numbers of counterfeit artefacts, which find their way to the antiquities market and are even sold with “authenticity certificates” on the internet.



*Forged artefact from Syria, seized by the Jordanian police in Jerash, 2014.*



## THE PALMYRA PORTRAIT PROJECT

Funerary sculpture from the ancient oasis city of Palmyra, in modern-day Syria, is the largest body of portrait sculpture from the Roman era outside Rome itself. That alone makes this material extremely significant, both to the study of identity in the Roman provinces and to core studies of Roman portraiture. Until 2012, when the collaborative Palmyra Portrait Project was launched, both these angles had been overlooked in the existing research. An estimated 2600 portraits from Palmyra are scattered around the globe in museums and private collections. These objects have never been catalogued, described, dated or treated as one. That is why the project has three aims: to build a corpus of all known Palmyrene funerary sculpture; to digitize the extensive Ingholt Archive,

fundamental to Palmyrene archaeology and kept at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen; and to produce several companion volumes for the corpus and deal with various aspects of Palmyrene portrait sculpture. Upon completion, the corpus and the archive will be made available online to benefit researchers around the world. After the project began, Harald Ingholt's unpublished excavation and sketch diaries proved to be a key element, offering valuable information about the many tombs he excavated in Palmyra in the 1920s. The project will publish these diaries in transcribed, translated and commented form.

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