

During the four days I spent in the Oil Exploration Camp in the Libyan Desert, I enjoyed complete freedom and was given a Landrover to drive to any site I wanted to see. I was warned, however, never to lose sight of the drill towers, as otherwise one would be hopelessly lost, and an expensive helicopter search would have to be organised. The area around the camp lay in the middle of a battlefield of World War II, and hundreds of tanks had left their tracks, crisscrossing each other and utterly confusing all subsequent drivers over the area. My records show that at 09.00 hours on 10 October 1964, I wrote the following in my note book:

„In front 180° flat desert, above 180° blue sky, behind the green Landrover, my 20th century technological camel. The black line, the road of a few days, never to become a highway, leading from the old oil rig, beginning at a vertical hole 3000 m deep to the new one, another vertical hole 3000 m deep. Man's short stay of a few weeks at either end. Nothing more.

The wind howls gently through the Landrover behind me, a fly from nowhere has joined me, the Sun is getting warm. The black line crosses another line, the old Italian road from Tobruck to Kufrah, about 25 km west from here. Built 30 years ago, all that remains are the tracks of the vehicles and the sand-blasted black signposts. No name, no paint has remained.

The surface of the desert here is smallest gravel, one stone thick, and the sand below. And gravel from here, the centre, to the 180° semicircle that meets the blue sky at the horizon. Nothing moves in the desert. Different from the sea, where the waves are in constant motion and the boat must be omnipresent. And the shimmering heat in the distant sand, looking like water, is only a cruel illusion.

In the desert the Landrover is behind me, small and still, there is no sound except the wind and I am alone with gravel and sand and the sky, and above all, the Sun. The Sun that gives man his life, his plants and his food, his warmth and his energy, gives here in the desert only intense light and scorching heat.

And yet, 50 m below me, there is fossil water, pure and plentiful, but without finding it, man could not come here to make the mud to drill for oil, to live and work. Nothing moves here.

And the dead camels I saw on my way, white bleached bones, perfectly preserved skins and furs and eyeballs below. And the folds of my skin, moist, sweating in the hot Sun. I am alone with my thoughts Nothing moves in the stillness of the desert.

And it is 09.40, I return to the Landrover and back to the Noise and the Now, the oil camp.”