

A sepia-toned photograph of a tropical landscape. In the foreground, the dark silhouette of a palm tree trunk is on the left, and its fronds are spread across the upper half of the frame. In the middle ground, a building with a thatched roof is visible, partially obscured by other vegetation. The background shows a hazy, mountainous or hilly terrain under a light sky.

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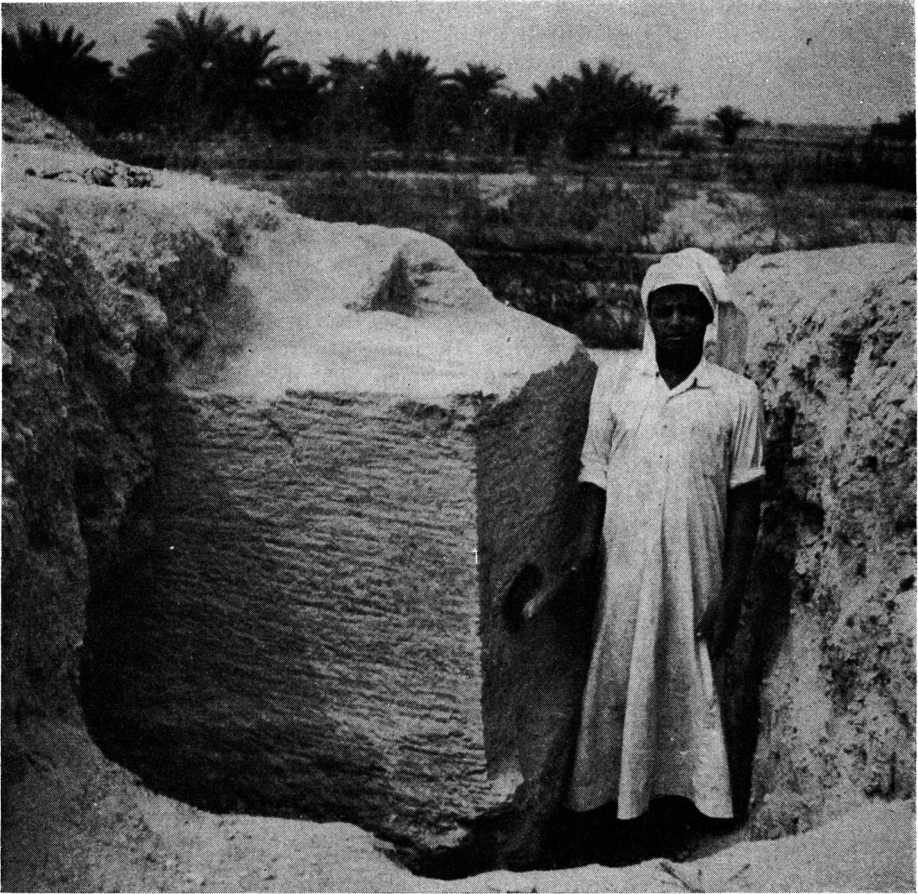


Fig. 1. Firesidet tilhugget stenblok, ved nordsiden af Barbartemplet.
Rectangular shaped stone block, at the northern side of the Barbar temple.

TEMPLER VED BARBAR

Af P. V. GLOB

Selv det mindste spor kan føre til store resultater. Under en rekognoscering i Bahraíns nordlige kystområde opdagedes i kanten af en anselig grushøj toppen af en stor stenblok med udhuggede huller, to firkantede og et rundt. Da der samtidig på højens overflade bemærkedes talrige bitte små kobber- eller bronzestykker, og da der ikke, som på de fleste højninger i dette område, fandtes den vanlige mængde af islamiske ler-

karskår, tydede alt på, at det var et anlæg fra oldtiden. Udelukket var det dog ikke, at det kunne være en ødelagt gravhøj, da banken lå som den vestligste af en række storhøje, der fra Jannusan strækker sig mod vest, parallelt med kysten. Denne høj lå imidlertid i betydelig afstand fra de øvrige, der er tæt sammenliggende, umiddelbart syd for den lille landsby Barbar og c. 800 m fra kysten.

Grushøjen, der var afrundet firkantet og c. 60 m på hver led, dannede tre terrasser, som viste sig at være fremkommet ved senere tids stenplyndring i de bygningsværker, den dækkede. Dens top lå c. 6 meter over det omgivende terrain. For at få et indtryk af dens opbygning kastedes en nord-sydgående grøft midt igennem den. Godt 5 meter fra den nordlige udkant afdækkedes en stor tilhugget, firesidet stenblok (fig. 1), samme slags som den, der først opdagedes, men kun med to firkantede fordybninger i toppen. Længere inde, 9 og 17 meter fra nordsiden, fremkom to tværgående mure, hvis fortsættelse påvistes sydligt og vestligt i banken og derfor sandsynligvis har dannet to kvadratiske figurer, den yderste med en side på 45 meter omsluttende den inderste, hvis sider er 25 meter. I den øverste og højre side på fig. 2 ses i tværgrøfter rester af den inderste mur afdækket. Murene består af et fundament af utildannede sten i gips, hvorpå en mur af kvaderhuggede sandsten har hvilet. Denne mur har omtrent været nedbrudt til grunden, da grushøjen opførtes. Senere er der yderligere ved stenplyndring bortført de fleste af de resterende kvadre, antagelig i tidlig islamisk tid, en datering, der støtter sig på fund af glaserede skår i plyndringsgrøfterne¹). De kvaderhuggede sten er af sandsten fra den lille ø Jida, der ligger en halv snes kilometer fra Barbar ud for Bahraíns nordvestkyst, hvor der gennem århundreder har været udhugget bygningssten, og hvor der brydes sten endnu²).

Den inderste af disse kvadratiske anlagte mure omslutter et centralt anlæg, sandsynligvis en gård, der endnu delvis er brolagt med flade sandstensfliser. Den har haft et areal på 14×18 meter i indvendigt mål og den største længde i øst-vest. Centralt i denne gård, måske forskudt noget mod syd, findes rester af to sammenstødende cirkulære anlæg (fig. 2 D-E), der før tildækningen har været nedbrudt til den nuværende højde, men senere er blevet yderligere beskadiget i nordsiden ved stenplyndringen (fig. 3). Stenene er meget omhyggeligt tilhuggede og afpasset efter hinanden, så de danner cirkelbuer. Syd for dette anlæg har der været rejst to c. 80 cm høje sten, »altersten«, hvoraf den ene endnu stod på plads, medens den anden var omvæltet, men dens fodmærke var endnu synligt i brolægningen (fig. 4). Foran disse sten stod et lille firkantet stenalter, antagelig ikke fjernet meget fra sin oprindelige plads (fig. 2 B). Bag ved det østligste af de cirkulære anlæg lå omvæltet en c. 80 cm høj sten, der er afrundet foroven og gennemboret med et rundt hul

(fig. 2 C og fig. 4). En lignende sten stod endnu på sin plads i den indre gårds sydvestlige hjørne (fig. 2 F). I gårdens nordøstlige hjørne var et udsparet rum med kantstillede sten på syd- og vestsiden (fig. 2 A og fig. 5).

Under den vestligste af de cirkulære stensætninger viste der sig rester af endnu et cirkulært anlæg, dækket af et skærvelag af sønderhuggede kvadersten, der stammer fra et ældre tempelanlæg, hvis overflade ligger

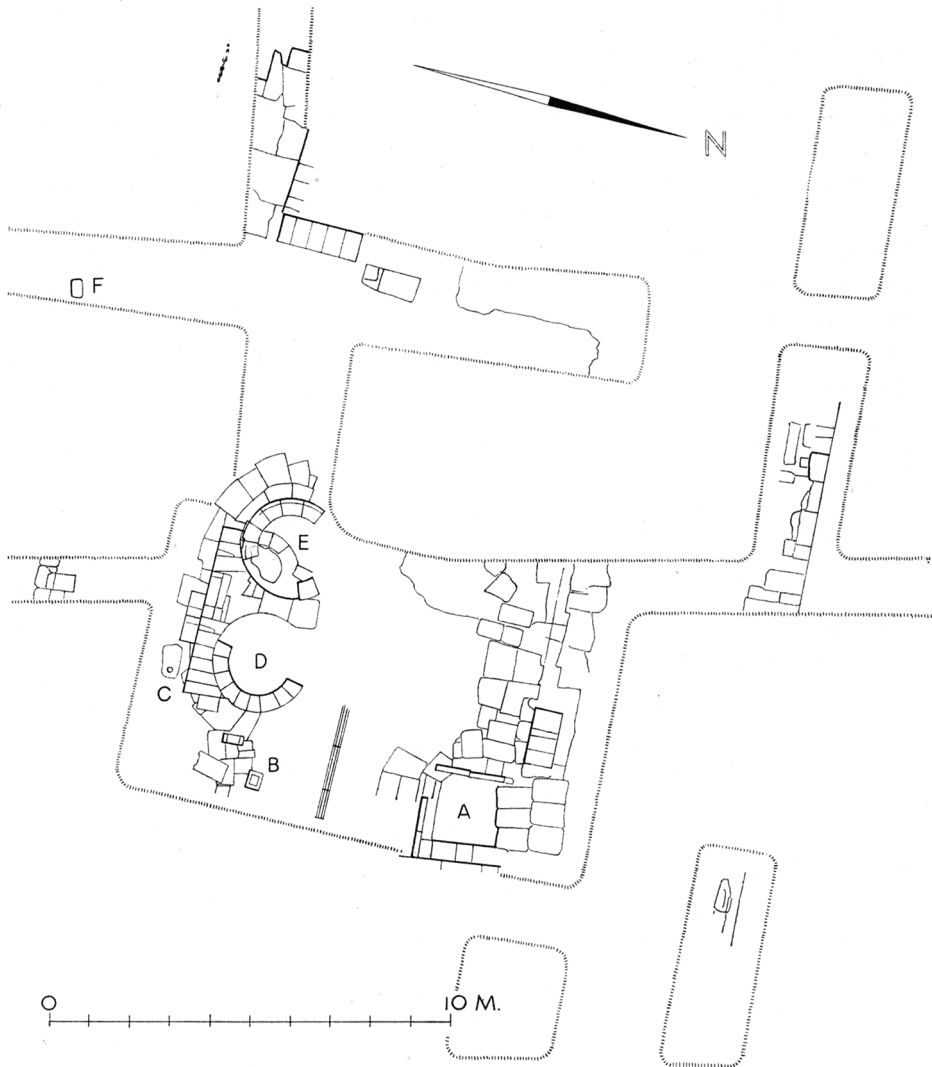


Fig. 2. Udsnit af plan af Barbartemplet. A offerbrønd, B alter og altersten, C stenblok med hul, D-E cirkulære anlæg, F stenblok med hul (opmåling Kristian Jeppesen).

Part of plan of the Barbar temple. A pit of offering, B altar and altar-stones, C perforated stone block, D-E circular structure, F perforated stone block (plan constructed by Kristian Jeppesen).

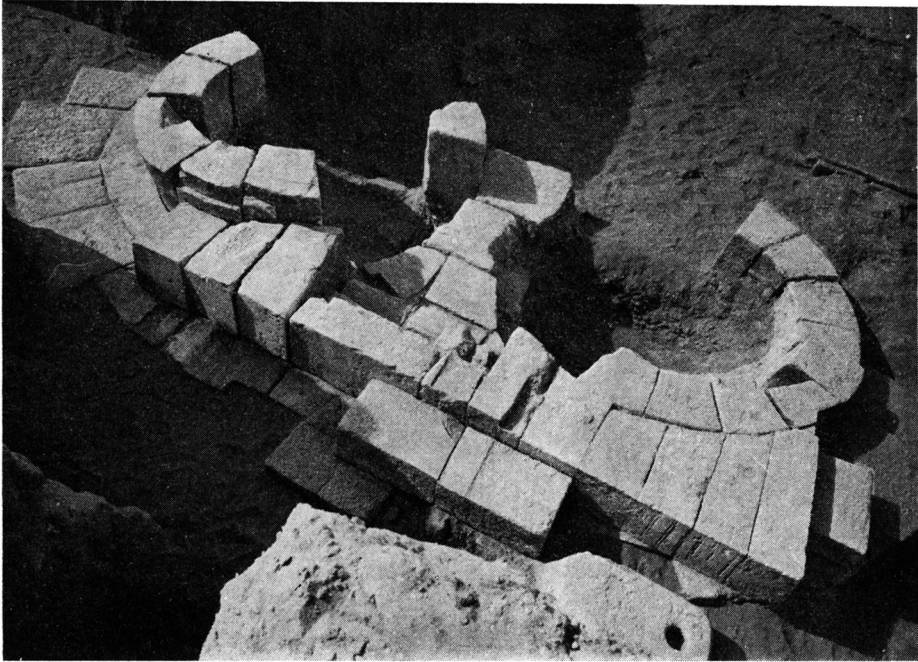


Fig. 3. Cirkulære anlæg i Barbartemplet, set fra syd.
Circular structure in the Barbar temple, viewed from the south.

c. 1 meter under den øverste gårds niveau. I den sydlige profilgravs vægge kunne dette tidligere anlæg tydeligt følges, og c. 1 meter under det påvistes endnu en bygningshorisont, således at der på dette sted må have været tre anlæg efter hinanden. Omsluttende murefundamenter omkring de ældre anlæg påvistes i den sydlige grøft.

Når disse anlæg er blevet bestemt som templer, skyldes det deres særegne form, »alterstenene« og de oldsager, der fandtes i den indre gård. Hvorledes »alterstenene« oprindeligt har været benyttet, de var begge svagt udhugget i toppen, kan ikke siges med bestemthed. Måske har der været anbragt et sæde over dem, og der er her grund til at henvise til billeder på mesopotamiske seglsten, hvorpå man ser guddommen siddende på en trone af lignende form og med et firkantet alter foran sig modtagende offergaver³). Denne tolkning støttes yderligere af de under udgravningen fremdragne oldsager, offergaver, der næsten alle lå i og omkring den firesidede fordybning foran »altersten« og alter (fig. 2 A). At stenene med hul også har haft en funktion hørende til templets kult (fig. 2 C og F) er sandsynligt, og der kan med hensyn til deres betydning henvises til ringsten fra Induskulturen⁴).

De fleste fund blev som omtalt ovenfor gjort i og omkring det firkantede rum foran alterstenene (fig. 5). Her lå, indlejret i et sandlag

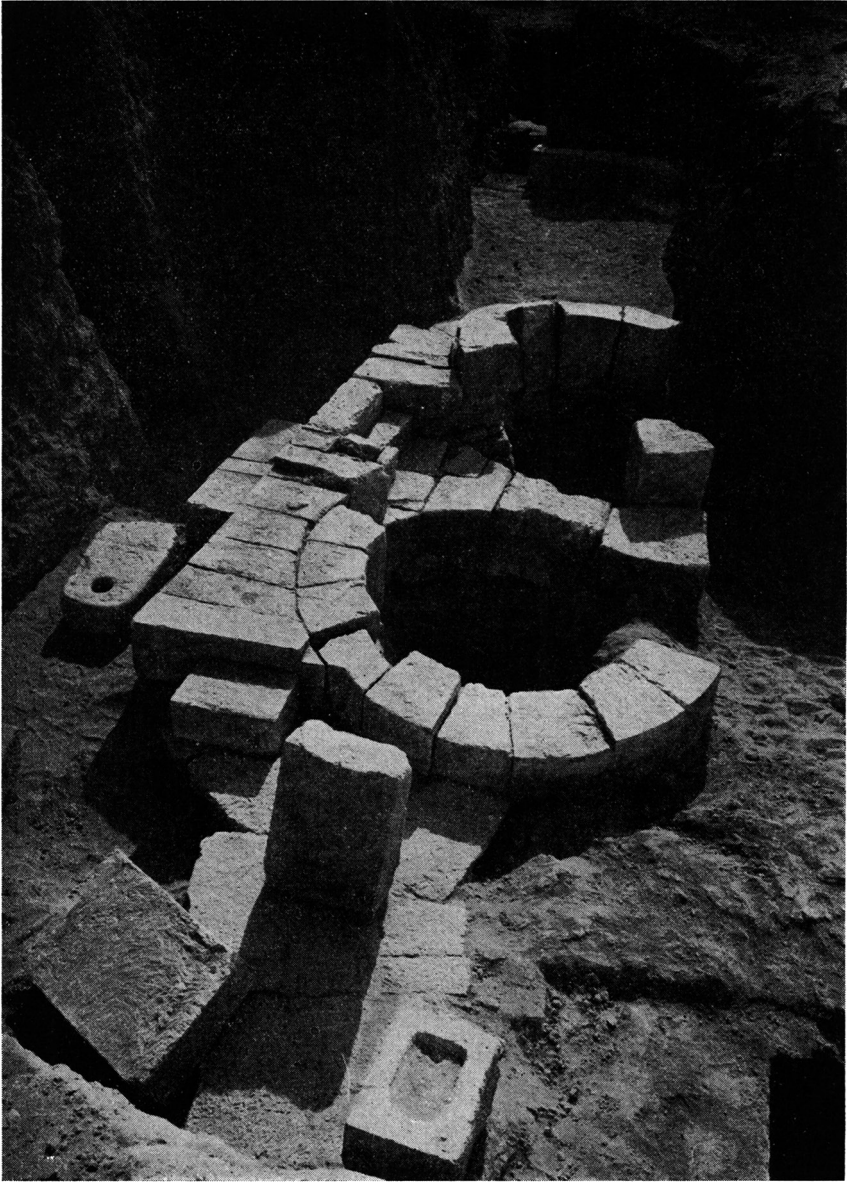


Fig. 4. Cirkulære anlæg i Barbartemplet, set fra øst. I forgrunden alter og altersten.
Circular structure in the Barbar temple, viewed from the east. In the foreground the altar and the altar-stones.

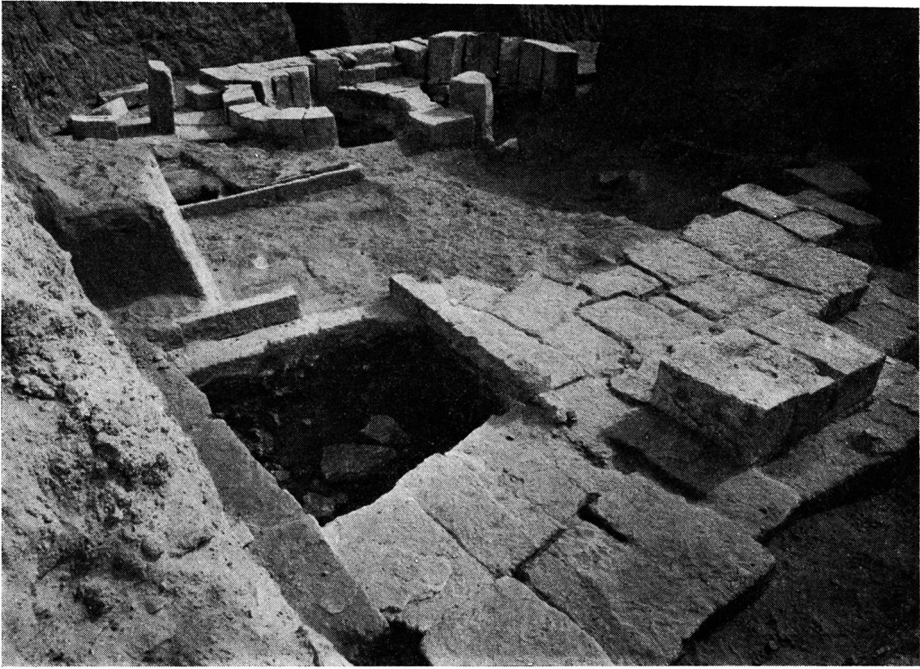


Fig. 5. Offerbrønd i Barbartemplet, set fra nordøst.
The pit of offering in the Barbar temple, viewed from the northeast.

på 30 cm's tykkelse, en mængde sager af kobber eller tinfattig bronze, der hovedsagelig bestod af itubrudte bronzekar, herimellem bunde af sikar. Under dette sandlag fulgte et svært lag af skærver fra sønderhuggede kvadre, sandsynligvis stammende fra nedbrydning og udjævning af den mellemste tempelbygning.

Metallet er meget angrebet af forvitring og er endnu ikke færdigkonserveret. Nordligst i rummet lå en lille nøgen mandsfigur, der står på et forneden afrundet fodstykke, støbt i eet (fig. 6). Selve figuren, der har hænderne samlet foran på brystet, som de mesopotamiske gudestatuetter, er 11 cm høj, og heraf udgør hovedet de 2,5 cm. Ansigtstrækkene kan lige skimtes, og tydeligt kommer en bred, trekantet næse frem. Figuren viser derved stor lighed med en kobberfigur fra Chouchinak-templet i Susa⁶). Den stammer fra midten af 3. årtusinde⁶). Denne figur, der har nøgen overkrop, holder en fugl i hænderne, måske en due. En fuglefigur af samme art blev optaget på fliserne lige nord for rummet (fig. 7). Den måler 12,6 cm fra bryst til halens yderste ende og er 12,8 cm høj. Den er som mandsfiguren massivt støbt og sandsynligvis af kobber.

Fremtrædende mellem bronzesagerne er et stort antal stavformede

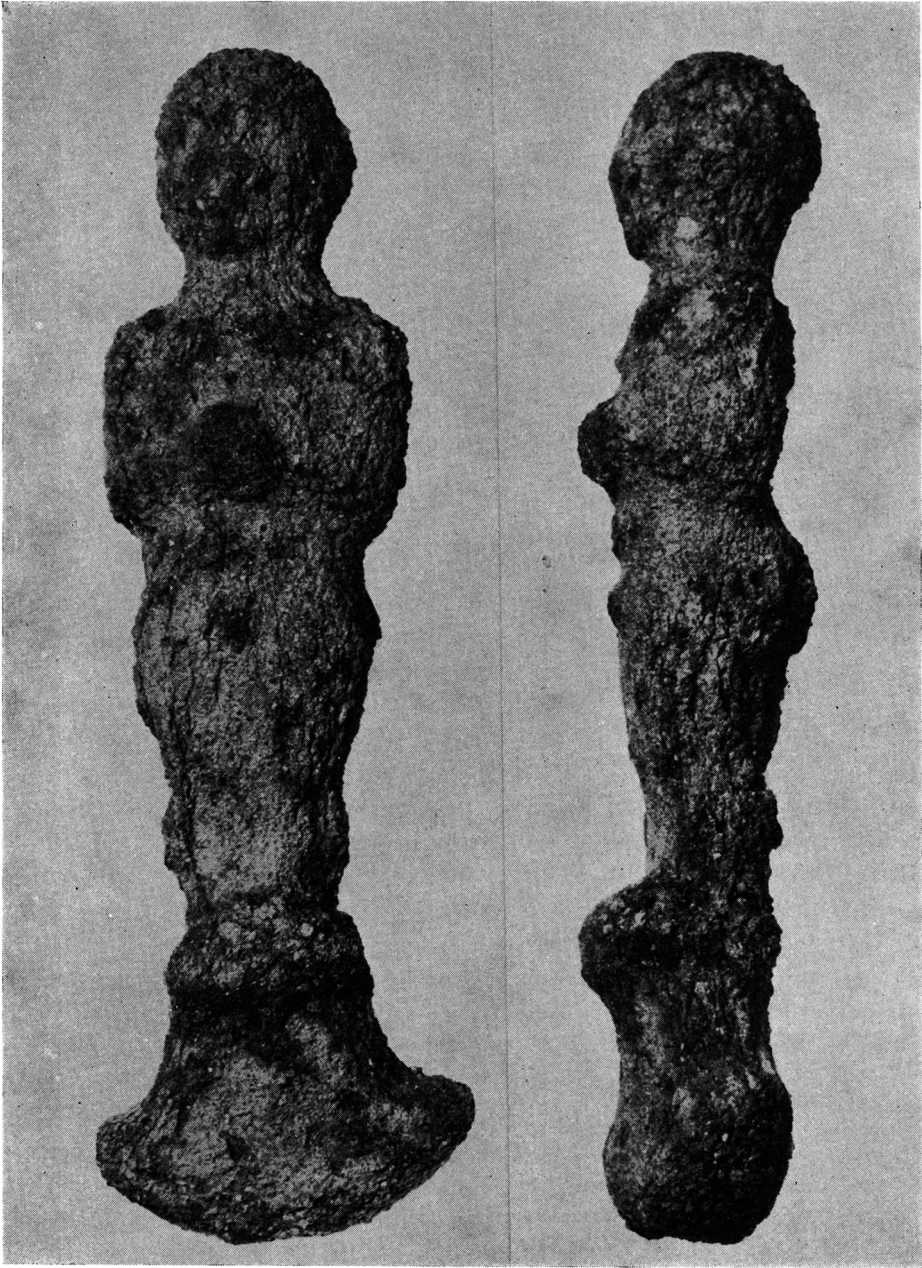


Fig. 6. Mandsfigur fra Barbartemplet. 16/15.
The male figure from the Barbar temple. 16 : 15.

nagler⁷), 2,5–3,5 cm lange. Ved stor imødekommenhed fra dr. techn. Paul Bergsøe er en af disse nagler blevet analyseret. Resultatet viste kobberindhold på 72,9 %, tinindhold på 1,8 %, for en stor del tilstede som sulfider, og spor af bly, sølv, kadmium, arsen og jern, samt kalcium, kalium, magnesium og kiselsyre, de sidste fire antagelig stammende fra den omgivende jord. Foruden brudstykker af lerkar fandtes der her adskillige skårdele af alabasterkar, samt to hele kar. Det ene af disse alabasterkar havde en svajet profil og er af nøjagtig samme type, som kendes fra Ur fra midten af 3. årtusinde⁸). Det andet alabasterkar er cylindrisk og er forsynet med et låg med fals⁹). Af særlig interesse mellem fundene fra »brønden« er desuden nogle brudstykker af lapis lazuli, lange cylindriske perler, samt en lingaformet spillebrik, der kendes i ganske samme form og materiale fra Induskulturen¹⁰).

De fund, der er gjort i Barbar-templernes øverste anlæg, hvoraf kun en meget lille del endnu er undersøgt, knytter således forbindelse både til Mesopotamien og Indien i 3. årtusinde, hvilket tidsrum det øverste anlæg må henføres til, vel nærmest dettes slutning. Hvor meget ældre de dybere liggende anlæg er kan endnu ikke afgøres, men der er grund til at fremhæve, at de lerkarskår, der fandtes i de horisonter, som hørte til dem, ikke afviger synderligt fra dem, der er fundet i det øverste tempel.

Mærkværdigt er det, at to tidligere templer efter hinanden er blevet jævnet til grundstenene. Den samme skæbne er blevet det sidst opførte tempel til del, men her har man desuden opkastet den 3 meter høje grushøj over det. De centrale kultanalæg har man dog rørt mindst muligt, men dog væltet den ene »altersten«. Sandsynligt er det også, at man ved samme lejlighed har rodet op mellem offergaverne, da disse lå dels i og dels omkring det firkantede rum, og mange af dem var søndrede. Disse forhold afspejler vel uroligheder og religionsskifter. Man har til-dækket templets helligplads og fundamenter med den store grusbanke for at hæmme og kvæle dets kraft. De mange spørgsmål, der rejser sig, kan imidlertid først besvares, når en udgravning af Barbartemplerne er fuldført. Den store grusbanke kan endnu gemme mange overraskelser.

Temples at Barbar.

Even the smallest clue may lead to important results. During a reconnaissance in the northern coastal area of Bahrain the top of a large block of stone, in which two square holes and one round hole had been cut, was noticed protruding from the side of a gravel mound of considerable extent. As numerous almost microscopic fragments of copper or bronze were at the same time seen on the surface of the mound, while the usual quantities of Islamic potsherds, which cover the majority of the hills in this area, were here absent, everything pointed to this mound being a prehistoric site. It was, however,

not impossible that it was actually a destroyed burial tumulus, as the hill lay as the westernmost of a row of giant tumuli which extend westwards from Jannusan parallel with the coast. This mound, however, lay at a considerable distance from the remainder, which stand close together, and was located immediately to the south of the little village of Barbar, about 800 yards from the coast.

The gravel mound was square in shape with rounded corners, and measured about 60 yards in each direction. It consisted of three terraces, which proved to have been formed by a process of stone-robbery from the buildings which the mound covered. Its highest point was about 6 meters above the surrounding country. In order to gain an impression of the mound's construction a trench was driven through the centre from north to south. A little over 5 meters from the northern edge this trench uncovered a large square hewn block of stone (Fig. 1), of the same type as that first found, but with only two depressions in the top, both square. Further south, 9 and 17 meters respectively from the north edge, appear two walls crossing the trench. The continuation of these walls was confirmed further south and west in the mound, thereby making it probable that they have formed two square figures, the outer with a side length of 45 meters surrounding the inner with a side length of 25 meters. At the upper righthand side of Fig. 2 the remains of the inner wall can be seen uncovered in the trench. The walls consist of a foundation of rough stones set in plaster, upon which a wall of sandstone ashlar masonry has rested. This wall was razed almost to the ground when the gravel mound was raised, while later stone-robbery has carried off the greater part of the remaining building stones. This robbery probably occurred in Early Islamic times, a dating which is based upon the discovery of glazed potsherds in the trenches dug by the robbers¹). The ashlar masonry is of sandstone from the little island of Jida, which lies about six miles from Barbar off the northwest coast of Bahrain. There building stone has been quarried for centuries, and the quarries are still in use²).

The inner wall of this square complex surrounds a central area, probably a courtyard, which is still partly paved with sandstone flags. Its inner dimensions are 14×18 meters, its greater length being east-west. In the centre of this courtyard, perhaps a little to the south of the actual centre, stand the remains of two circular structures which touch one another (Fig. 2 D-E). Before being covered with earth these were razed to their present height, and they have later suffered further damage on the northern side at the hands of the stone plunderers (Fig. 3). The stones have been very carefully cut to fit together so as to form the two circles. South of this feature two stones of about 80 cms. in height, "altar-stones", had been raised. One of them still stood in situ, while the other lay overturned, but the mark left by its foot could still be seen in the paving (Fig. 4). In front of these stones stood a little square stone trough, apparently not very far from its original position (Fig. 2 B). Behind the eastern half of the circular feature there lay, overturned, a stone about 80 cms. high, rounded at the top and pierced by a round hole (Fig. 2 C and Fig. 4). A similar stone still stood in situ in the southwestern corner of the inner courtyard (Fig. 2 F). In the northeastern corner of the courtyard there was a pit bordered by slabs standing on edge along its south and west sides (Fig. 2 A and Fig. 5).

Beneath the western of the two circular stone structures were found the remains of another stone circle, covered by a layer of chips of shattered

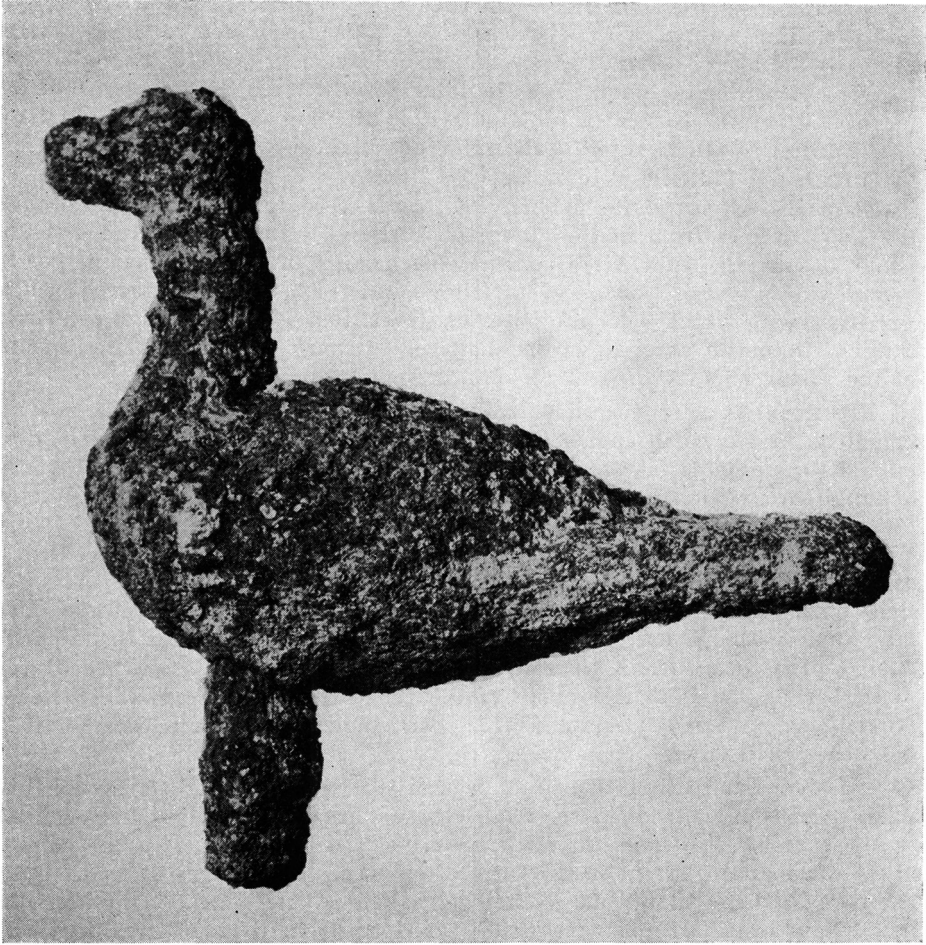


Fig. 7. Fuglefigur fra Barbartemplet. $\frac{5}{6}$.
The figure of the bird from the Barbar temple. 5 : 6.

masonry. This circle belongs to an earlier temple structure, and its surface lies about one meter under the level of the upper courtyard. In the southern portion of the wall of the section-trench this earlier phase of temple building could be clearly followed, and about one meter further down still another building level could be identified, showing that there have here been three buildings one above the other. Foundations of walls surrounding the earliest structure were found in the southern part of the trench.

The identification of these structures as temples is based on their distinctive form, on the "altar-stones" and on the objects found in the inner courtyard. How the "altar-stones", which were slightly hollowed at the top, were originally used, cannot be definitely stated. It is possible that a seat originally rested on them, and here there is reason to make reference to scenes represented on Mesopotamian seals, where the god is seen seated on a throne of similar

form, with a square altar before his feet, while he accepts offerings³). This interpretation is further supported by the objects discovered in the course of the excavation, "offerings", which almost all lay in or around the square pit in front of the "altar-stone" and the altar (Fig. 2 A). It is probable that the perforated stones also had a function within the cult of the temple (Fig. 2 C and F), and for their significance reference may be made to ring-stones belonging to the Indus civilization⁴).

As mentioned above, the majority of objects were discovered in and around the square pit in front of the altar stones (Fig. 5). Here, in a sand layer of about 30 cms. in depth, lay a considerable number of objects of copper or of bronze with a low proportion of tin. They consisted mainly of sundered bronze vessels, among which were the bases of sieves. Beneath the layer of sand was a thick stratum of chippings from shattered masonry, presumably the remains of the razing and levelling of the middle temple building.

The metal is very corroded, and the process of conservation is not yet complete. At the north end of the pit lay a little naked male figure, standing on a base which is curved at the foot and cast in one piece (Fig. 6). The actual figure, which holds its hands clasped at the breast like the Mesopotamian figures of gods, is 11 cms. high, and of this the head occupies 2.5 cms. The features can just be made out, and a broad triangular nose can be clearly seen. The figure shows thereby a close resemblance to a copper figure from the Chouchinak temple in Susa⁵), which is dated to the middle of the third millenium⁶). This figure, of which the upper part is naked, holds in its hands a bird, perhaps a dove. A figurine of a bird of the same type was discovered at Barbar on the flags just north of the pit (Fig. 7). It measures 12.6 cms. from breast to tip of tail and is 12.8 cms. high. Like the male figure it is solid-cast, probably of copper.

Prominent among the objects of bronze is a large number of stove-shaped nails⁷), 2.5-3.5 cms. long. Dr. Paul Bergsøe has very kindly analysed one of these nails. The result shows a copper content of 72.9 %, a tin content of 1.8 %, mainly present in the form of sulphides, and traces of lead, silver, cadmium, arsenic and iron, as well as calcium, potassium, magnesium and silicic acid, the last four presumably derived from the surrounding earth. In addition to fragments of pottery vessels there were also found here several sherds of alabaster vases, as well as two complete vessels. One of these alabaster vases possessed a curved profile and is of exactly the same type as those found in Ur and dated to the middle of the third millennium⁸). The other alabaster vessel is cylindrical and provided with a rebated lid⁹). Of particular interest among the objects from the pit are moreover some fragments of lapis-lazuli, long cylindrical beads and a linga-shaped games man which is known from the Indus civilization in exactly the same shape and material¹⁰).

The discoveries made in the upper level of the Barbar temples, of which only a small area has yet been investigated, thus show connections with both Mesopotamia and India in the third millenium, to which period the upper complex must thus be ascribed, and most probably to the latter end of the period. How much older the structures lying deeper are cannot yet be determined, but there is reason to emphasize that the potsherds found in the levels belonging to these earlier structures do not differ in any important particular from those associated with the upper temple.

It is remarkable that the two earlier temples have been successively razed to the foundations. The same fate also overtook the last temple, but here

in addition a 3 meter high gravel mound was heaped up over the building. The central cult feature was, however, disturbed as little as possible, though one of the "altar-stones" was overturned. It is probable that the offerings were at the same time rummaged through, as they lay partly within and partly around the square pit, and many of them were broken. These circumstances seem to reflect a period of disturbance and of change of religion. The large gravel mound was thrown up over the temple sanctuary and foundations in order to suffocate and destroy its powers. The many problems, however, which arise cannot be satisfactorily solved before the excavation of the Barbar temples is completed. The broad gravel mound may still conceal many surprises.

P. V. Glob.

★

NOTER

¹⁾ Som fig. 3 i Arthur Lane: *Early Islamic Pottery* (7.-8. årh. e. Kr.).
²⁾ James H. D. Belgrave: *Welcome to Bahrain*, s. 107 (1953). ³⁾ K. Galling: *Der Altar in den Kulturen des alten Orients*. Taf. 6, nr. 34-36 (Berlin 1924); H. Frankfort: *Cylinder Seals*. Pl. XVIII og XXIV. ⁴⁾ J. Marshall: *Mohenjo-Daro and the Indus Civilization*, p. 61-62 (London 1931). ⁵⁾ *Mémoires Délégation en Perse*, Tome VII, pl. XV, 1-3 (Paris 1905). ⁶⁾ H. Schäfer und W. Andrae: *Die Kunst des alten Orients*, s. 496 (Berlin 1925). ⁷⁾ se note 5, som fig. 222, s. 85. ⁸⁾ C. Leonard Wolley: *Ur Excavations Vol. II*, pl. 178 u. 7645 og pl. 241, nr. 5-6. ⁹⁾ se note 8, pl. 250, nr. 100, hvor falsen dog har en anden udformning. ¹⁰⁾ se note 4, pl. CLV, nr. 16-17; E. J. H. Mackay: *Further Excavations at Mohenjo-Daro* pl. CXXXIX₂₁, CXL₁₂ og CXXXIX₁₈ (Delhi 1938).