

THE ANCIENT SITES IN THE BASIN OF THE HADITHA DAM ON THE EUPHRATES

The site of the Haditha Dam lies seven kilometres north of the town of that name, while the area covered by its reservoir will extend to the ninety-third kilometre in a north-westerly direction. The maximum water-level will be 150 metres above sea-level, and the various stages of the project should be completed by the end of 1983.

The preliminary archaeological survey at present being conducted in the area to be flooded has led to the recording of eighteen ancient sites, six on the west bank of the river and nine on the east. It also covers three islands in mid-river.

The area contains two big cities, one of which is the ancient city of Ana on the west bank dating back to the old Babylonian empire. The whole of this is to be immersed, together with the island bearing the name of Lubbad which lies opposite in the middle of the river and on which the most ancient part of the city stood. The other big city, Rawa, lies opposite Ana on the east bank and will be flooded only partially. Among the buildings which will be spared is a huge Ottoman castle built in 1869 on a mountainous spot overlooking the Euphrates and belonging to the time of Midhat Pasha, the famous Ottoman governor of Baghdad, who ruled between 1869 and 1872.

The ancient sites on the western bank of the river mostly date back to divers Islamic periods, though some even belong to the Kassite period (1600-911 B.C.); there are also villages and other sites of historical interest which were abandoned owing the floods, and traces of trenches for waterwheels.

The oldest sites on the eastern bank date from the time of the Parthians (248 B.C. - 226 A.D.), while others belong to the "Auquailiya" period (380-489 A.H. or 990-1095 A.D.).

The area to be flooded has irregular physical features with chalky and sandy outcrops; its geological formations are of differing periods, the earliest lying the furthest from the river. The uneven nature of the ground has always restricted the amount of arable land in the region, and hence the number of archaeological sites either here or overlooking the river is not large; it is extremely small when compared with the mounds and settlements on the river banks in the sedimentary plain. The following is a list of the ancient sites in the dam basin:

A. THE SITES WEST OF THE RIVER

1. *The "Shihma" Cemetery.* This is located 24 km. north-west of Haditha on a rocky platform at the river's edge. It is a "recent" cemetery, with Islamic and Sassanid finds at surface-level.

2. *Shaikh Tay'ie.* The remains of a tomb below a small damaged cupola, 19 kilometres north-west of Haditha. Around the grave lie stones loosened by flood water.

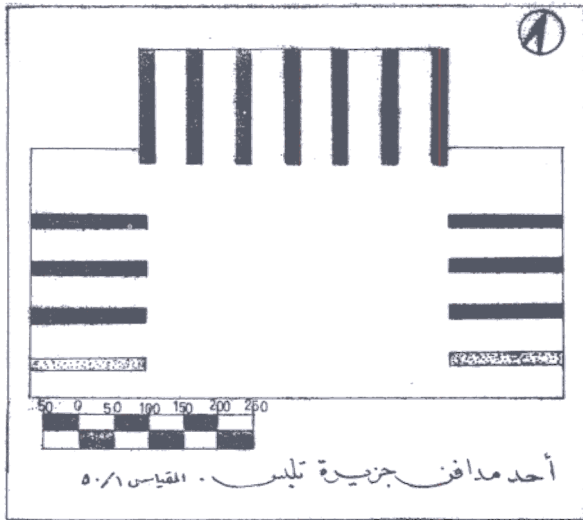
3. *Glai'a.* A large castle lying 30.5 kilometres south-east of Ana and 24.5 kilometres north-west of Rawa. It is a square building measuring 150 metres on each side and unwall on the north side facing the river. There is an inner building 100 metres square, and near the outer wall stands a rectangular mud-brick structure, on a rocky platform rising 8 metres above its immediate surroundings. Pottery and brick sherds dating from the Parthian and Sassanid periods are to be found on this site.

4. *Telbis Burial Ground.* Here there are four groups of graves dug into the sides of the cliff which stretches for 200 metres along the river, thirteen-and-a-half kilometres south east of Ana. Each group is divided into a number of oblong units, the largest of which contains fourteen graves, six at the front and four on either side. So far there have been no archaeological finds on the site (Plan 1 and Fig. 1).

5. *Mash'had Mosque.* This lies 10 kilometres north-west of Ana and is also known as the Abu Reesha Mosque after the two princes of that name. These were Ahmed Abul Reesh, who ruled over Ana in about 1025 A.H. (1616 A.D.), and Fayadh Abul Reesh who ruled over Ana and the surrounding desert around 1075 A.H. (1664 A.D.)

The remains of this mosque belong to three architectural periods, Abbasid, Atabik and Ottoman, and its general plan dates back to pre-Atabik times. It consists of a rectangular prayer hall measuring about 27 by 13.5 metres on the inside and divided into four *riwaqs*.

The first floor consists of a series of three rooms. Round the base of the cupola over the middle room runs an Arabic in-



Plan I. - Telbis Burial Ground.

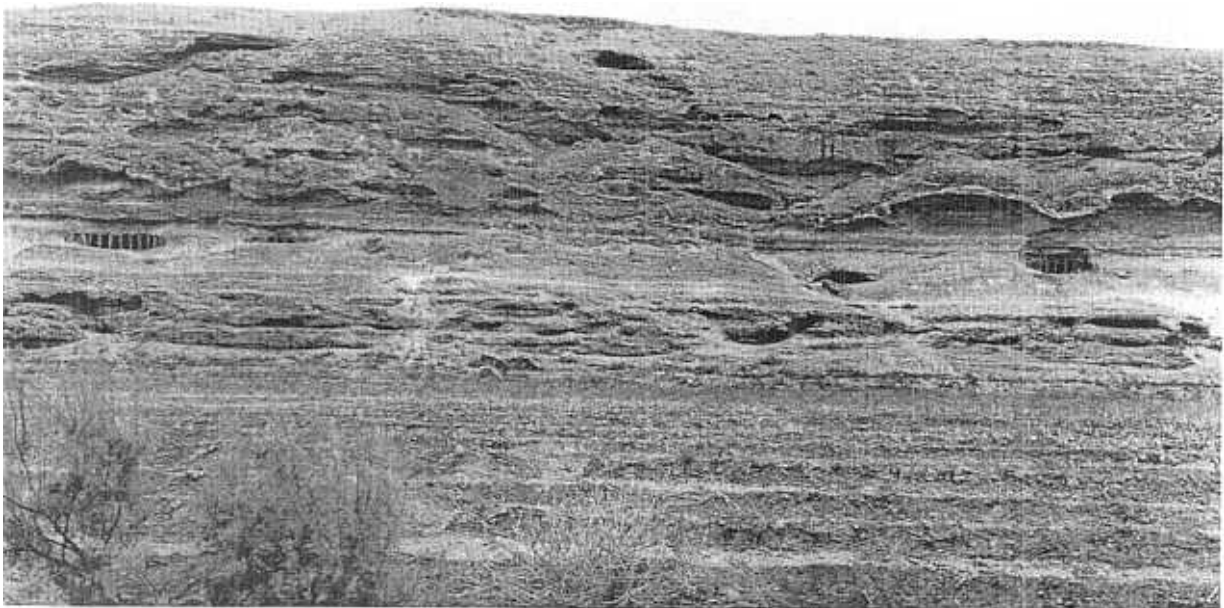
Fig. Telbis Burial Ground.

scription stating that it was built in 589 A.H. (1193 A.D.), in the reign of King Imad al-Deen Zanki bin Maudud, who governed Sinjar and its surrounding area from 566 to 594 A.H. (1170-1197 A.D.). The cupola itself is still standing.

On the second floor is a square room covered by a large dome with an octagonal base. This room, each of whose inside walls measures six metres, was not a part of the original mosque. Its four walls are plastered and have a coloured decoration, above a purple dado reaching to a height of three metres (Figs. 3-4). An inscription, now incomplete, dates the dome to the reign of Sultan Ahmed I bin Muhammed bin Sultan Murad III, who reigned from 1012 to 1026 A.H. (1603-1617 A.D.); it comprises numerous typically Islamic architectural features (Figs. 4-5).

The mosque itself contains two standing mihrabs, or niches, one of which is in the centre of the *kibla* (wall), while the other stands in the inner square in the prayer hall. Above this latter mihrab runs an inscription engraved in the plaster coating which states that Prince Abu Reesha ordered the hall to be built in 979 A.H. There was also a third mihrab older than these two which belonged to the first stage in the building of the mosque; it is now preserved in the Abbassid Palace in Baghdad.

The mosque is surrounded today by broken fragments of stone buildings; there is also an old cemetery running along its ruined eastern side. Opposite this cemetery, to the north, is a more recent one belonging to the inhabitants of the local villages. It



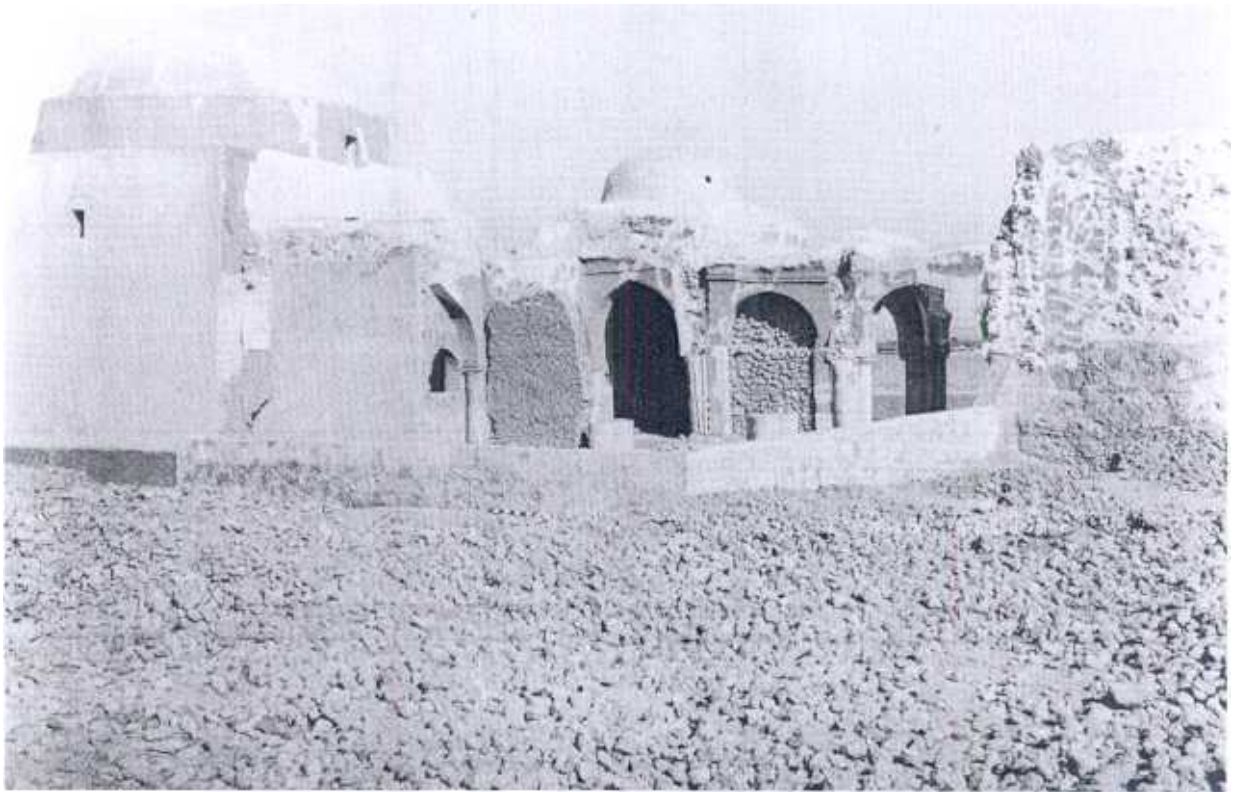


Fig. 2. - Mash'had Mosque.

Fig. 3. - The Ottoman dome of the Mash'had Mosque.



is worth noting that the State Department of Antiquities is at present engaged on technological studies with a view to the transfer of this mosque to the new location for Ana in the Al-Chabab Valley near the Al-Diniya ruin.

6. *Al-Diniya Ruin*. This is a large fortress located near a village of the same name, 32 kilometres north-west of Ana and 200 metres from the river edge. It consisted in a rectangle measuring 132 by 121 metres, with walls 12 metres thick and 6 metres high. The walls were apparently built of stones of irregular size, some of which were unusually large. In places the walls are still standing to a fair height, the longest section preserved reaching to as much as three metres. The fortress contains large quantities of pottery and brick dating from the Partian and Sassanid periods, as well as sherds from Kassite and Assyrian times. The western side of the building facing the river was not walled.

B. THE SITES EAST OF THE RIVER

1. *Imam Habib al-Najjar*. This is a small dome built of stones and mortar, lying some 700 metres from the river and 6 kilometres north-west of Haditha. It is one of the few vestiges of the Aquailiya period (4th and 5th centuries A.H.) still standing in the vicinity of the Euphrates.

2. *Jur'a Wall*. This is a large building 300 metres square with walls 10 metres thick, containing a smaller inner enclosure. These huge fortifications lie 25 kilometres north-west of Haditha opposite the Glai'a Wall on the west bank, and 250 metres from the water's edge. Pottery finds dating back to the

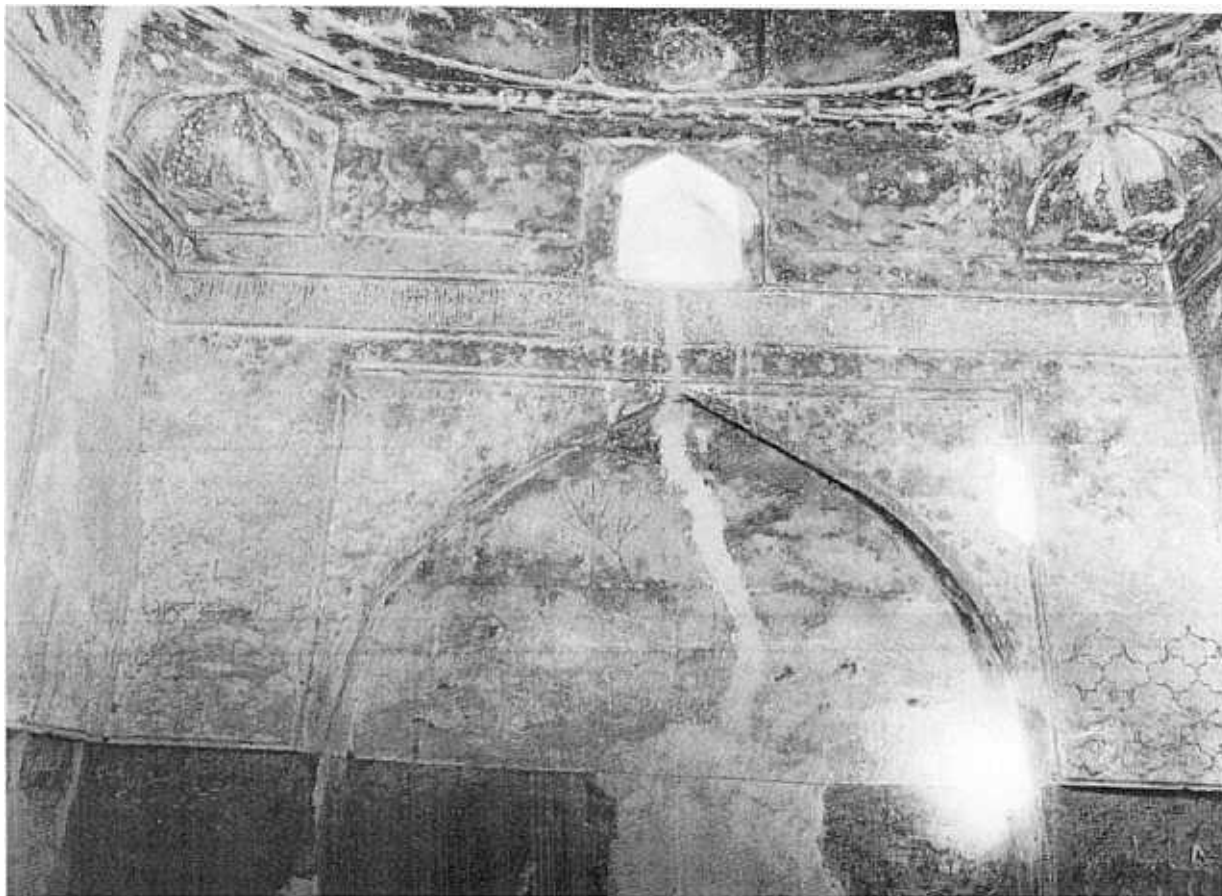
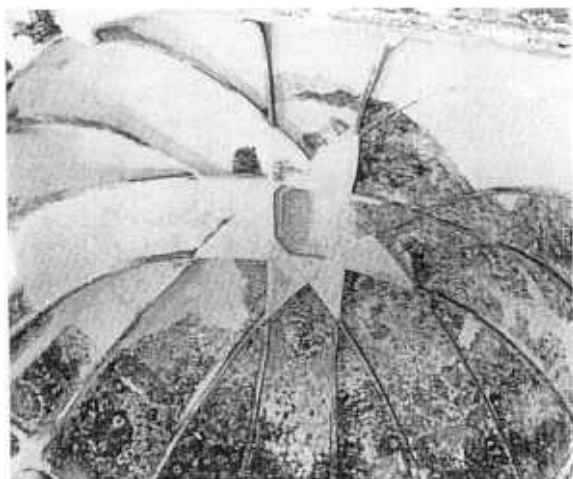


Fig. 4. - Ottoman dome of the Mash'had Mosque — interior showing coloured decoration.

Fig. 5. - Architectural features of the Ottoman dome of the Mash'had Mosque.



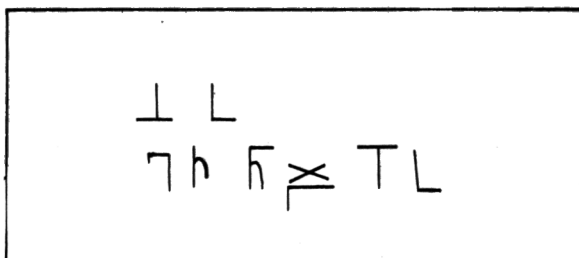
Parthian and Sassanid periods are to be found scattered over the site.

3. *Tel Gubbain (Lumaira)*. This tel is located 25 kilometres south-east of Ana at the village of New Ma'atheed overlooking the river. The name of "Gubbain" is another name for this village, though the tel was also known as Lumaira. It is not very high and contains a basement; a rectangular stone slab at its entrance bearing an engraving from the Arabian Peninsula on one of its faces may date back to the "Thamud" period (Drawing n° 1).

4. *Buttain al-Jannadiya*. This is a group of hill settlements 20 kilometres south-east of Ana and 650 metres from the river bank. Fragments of Islamic pottery, some of them dating from the Ilkhanid period (7th-8th centuries A.H., or 13th-14th centuries A.D.) are to be found at surface-level.

5. *Jafrin (Gafrin)*. This site lies 18 kilometres south-east of Ana and 500 metres from the river bank. It is in two parts, i.e. :

a) A large settlement 500 metres wide stretching to a distance of a kilometre along the river. It is built on a series of promon-



Drawing I. - Stone slab with an ancient inscription.



Fig. 6. - Minaret of the Al-Khaliliya Mosque.

tories and contains many large buildings, the chief of which stands at its northern tip and is surrounded by a massive wall about 100 metres long. These buildings are of stone and mortar, though they also contain broad bricks 5 centimetres thick. Pottery fragments to be found at surface level date from the Sassanid and early Islamic periods; some of them are glazed.

b) The Majul or Gufrin caverns, which are a series of cave-dwellings dug into the face of the cliff on which the abovementioned settlement is built. They are internally divided into small units and lie on the same level as adjoining farmlands, some of which are at a relatively high altitude.

6. *Telbis cemetery and mounds.* The site as a whole consists of three parts, located 13.5 kilometres south-east of Ana, the first of which has already been mentioned among the sites on the west bank of the river, while the third will be dealt with later on. The second consists of a number of medium-height mounds on low rocky platforms overlooking the eastern bank of the river 100 metres from the water's edge. Adjoining it to the east are some Islamic domed graves built of stones and mortar. Fragments of plain and glazed pottery are to be found

at surface level. The site is said to be that of Suri, opposite Telbis island, which represented the 26th phase in the campaign of the Assyrian king Tukulti Ninurta II (889-884 B.C.) and became the administrative centre of Seen Akisham, governor of the province of Sukhi in the days of Hammurabi.

7. *Al-Khaliliya.* The remains of this site comprise the following buildings or ruins:

i) *The settlement:* This, known as the "ruins of Al-Khabuliya", lies 9 kilometres south-east of Ana and 100 metres from the river. It originally consisted of a group of buildings surrounding the minaret and mosque of al-Khaliliya. Some of these buildings, built of untrimmed stones and lime mortar, are still standing; they extend for about a kilometre.

ii) *Minaret and mosque of al-Khaliliya*

a) The minaret is octagonal and ribbed, externally enhanced with alcoves above which are vaults with slits for lighting. It stands on a square base 1.5 metres high and its total height is 6.45 metres. It is built to the west of the mosque within the area measuring 10 by 10.8 metres which was a later addition towards the northern end of the site. An internal spiral staircase encircles a stone column 44 cms. square. The entrance, 88 cms. wide, is on the eastern side of the base (Fig. 6).

b) The mosque: this is basically rectangular in shape, measuring 17 metres on the eastern side and 10.8 metres on the northern side. The western wall extends southward for 11.1 metres before turning inwards at right angles for a distance of 3.05 metres to leave room for the base of the minaret, subsequently turning south, again at right angles, and extending a further 6.35 metres in that direction.

In the middle of the south wall are the remains of a semi-circular mihrab 82 cms. wide and 1.03 metres deep. Elsewhere the walls — which are 33 cms. thick — vary in height from 30 to 60 centimetres.

Both mosque and minaret are attributed to the Auquailiya period (4th and 5th centuries A.H.).

8. *Tel al-Darrajiya.* This is a small mound on a rocky promontory near the river bank, 2.2 kilometres north-west of Ana, next to a village of the same name. Sherds dating from the Sassanid and early Islamic periods have been found at surface level.

9. *Al-Owaina.* Here we have the remains of a network of underground canals dug eastwards from the river for about 800 metres opposite the northern tip of the island of Al-Zafarana, 36 kilometres north-west of Ana and 29 kilometres north-east of the town of Al-Karabla. It is to be noted that this site marks the furthest point of the Haditha Dam reservoir.

THE ANCIENT ISLANDS IN MID-RIVER

1. *Telbis island.* This lies south-east of Ana on an axis connecting the cemetery mentioned earlier on among the sites west of the river with the settlement on the east bank.

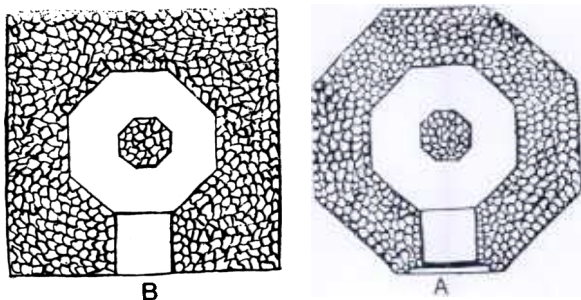
The island contains a number of interesting archaeological sites and remains of ancient stone buildings stretching for about 300 metres between its northern shore and a point near its centre. Among these ruins are to be found remains of walls and of vaults lying near the water's edge and overlooking the



Fig. 7. - Al-Qal'a Island.



Fig. 8. - Al-Qal'a minaret.



Plan II.
A. Plan of the base of the Al-Qal'a minaret as drawn by Hertzfield.
B. Plan of the same base as revealed by the excavations.

eastern bank of the river. The island is first mentioned in cuneiform texts, where it is given the name of "Tilmish" or "Tilbish".

According to the Arab historian Al-Balathari, Omair bin Sa'ad, after conquering Rass al-Ain in 22 A.H. (642 A.D.), took all the island fortresses along the Euphrates including this one.

2. *Al-Qal'a* ("castle") island. As we have already seen, this island, known as Lubbad, is the site of the most ancient part of Ana; it derives its name from its huge fortifications, some of whose towers are still standing (Fig. 7).

The al-Qal'a minaret (Fig. 8 and Plan 2) is the most outstanding relic of the Auquailiya period. It has an octagonal body enhanced by alcoves, some of which are blind. Hertzfield attributes it to the Beni Auquail, the rulers of Mosul whose influence, in the 5th century A.H. (11th century A.D.), extended from Bin Omar Island to Ctesiphon (Al-Madayn) and covered the middle Euphrates valley.

Conservation work on the building was undertaken in 1935 and again in 1963 and 1964, and today it stands 28 metres high and fully restored. Inside is a spiral stairway encircling a ribbed stone column, similar to the contemporary one in the minaret of the Al-Khaliliya Mosque mentioned earlier on. Around the building lie the remains of a mosque and some stone buildings.

The remains of the fortifications referred to above lie in the northern part of the island. They may date only from relatively late Islamic periods, but they are built above the remains of earlier structures.

The minaret is the second of the major buildings which the State Department of Antiquities plans to transfer to a site in the new Ana.

3. *Rijan island*. This lies directly opposite Tel Gubbain (Lumaira). A series of ruins of buildings built of stone and mortar extends for about 200 metres between the northern tip of the island and its centre.

From the study of the archaeological sites in the basin of the dam we can see that the strategic importance of the area had led to the building of huge fortifications in many places, some of the islands being exploited to serve the needs of the nearby settlements. The west bank of the river had been a military and commercial route ever since the days of the old Babylonian empire (2000-1600 B.C.), though the earliest period of which traces have been discovered during the survey is the Kassite

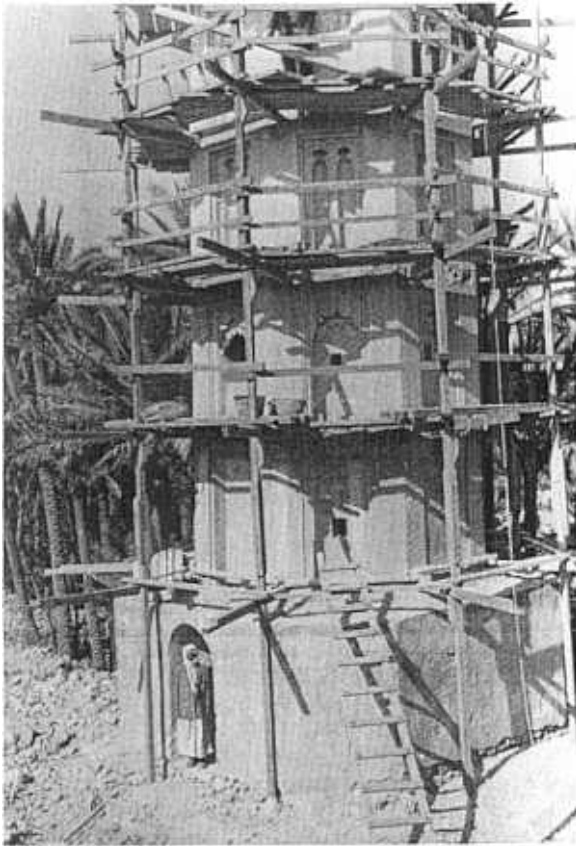


Fig. 9. - Conservation work on the Al-Qal'a minaret, 1963-1964.

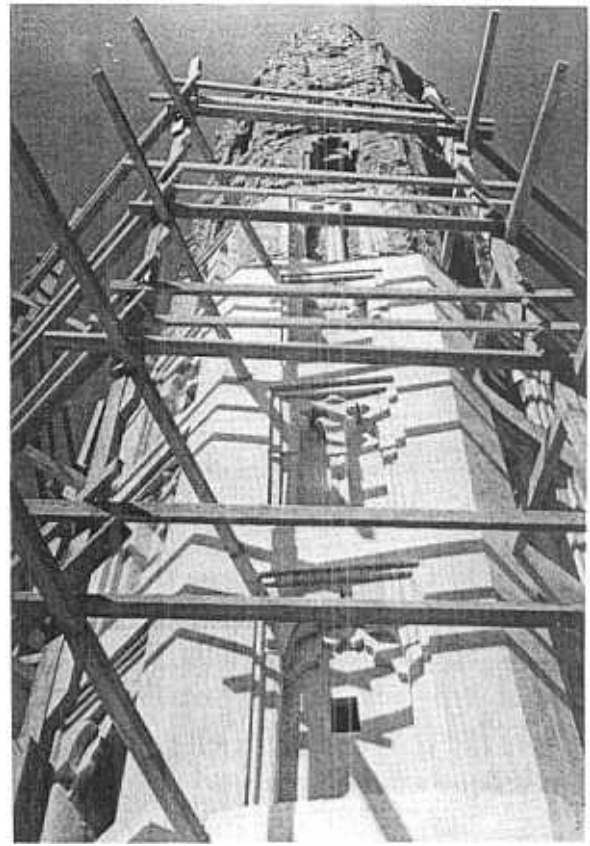


Fig. 10. - Conservation work on the Al-Qal'a minaret, 1963-1964.

period (1600-911), sherds dating from which are to be found scattered over the site of the Al-Diniya ruin.

The earliest historical period represented by the east bank sites studied in the course of the preliminary archaeological survey is that of the Parthians. But more intensive exploratory operations undertaken in an attempt to find further ancient sites in the dam area recently revealed the existence of an Assyrian site among the buildings of a small village called Al-Zawiya overlooking the river, about 4 kilometres south-east of the site of Sur Jura. This site, which is still being studied, has yielded multicoloured glazed bricks on which a variety of subjects are represented: on one there is a glazed cuneiform sign.

With regard to the removal of the Al-Qal'a minaret and the Mash'had mosque, we believe, in the light of initial reports and

opinions, that the minaret should be sawn vertically by electric saw into eight vertical sections, each bearing one face of the octagon, and removed to a new site in Ana. During removal and re-assembly these parts should be wrapped and protected by a special technical process. For the removal of the buildings and domes of the Mash'had Mosque it will be advisable to cut them into relatively small blocks numbered for ready re-assembly on the new site selected.

We are at present trying to determine the best method of preserving the coloured wall-paintings from this mosque, which have already suffered serious damage owing to long neglect of the whole building — apart from changes in design and building methods before the original structure was completed.

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RESUME

Un barrage est en construction sur l'Euphrate, près de la ville d'Haditha. Lorsque ces travaux seront terminés, en 1983, la retenue d'eau ainsi créée sera longue de 93 km. Mais la zone qui sera submergée est, par comparaison, moins riche en vestiges archéologiques que le large bassin sédimentaire du fleuve, en aval.

Le Service des Antiquités de l'Irak a effectué une étude archéologique soignée de cette zone et a dénombré 18 sites archéologiques et historiques importants,

- six sur la rive ouest,
- neuf sur la rive est,
- trois dans les îles sur le fleuve,

qui sont en cours d'exploration. Ces sites archéologiques et ces monuments appartiennent à des époques très diverses qui vont de l'empire assyrien (site d'Al-Zawiya) à la période ottomane (coupole de la mosquée de Mash'had, forteresse de Rawa, datant du 19^e siècle, qui sera d'ailleurs au-dessus du futur niveau des eaux).

Plan I. Site funéraire de Telbis.

Plan II. A Plan de la base du minaret ancien d'Ana (d'après un dessin d'Hertzfield).

B. Plan du minaret ancien d'Ana (relevé au cours des fouilles).

Dessin I. Dalle de pierre portant une inscription ancienne.

Fig. 1. Site funéraire de Telbis.

Fig. 2. Mosquée de Mash'had.

Fig. 3. Coupole ottomane de la Mosquée de Mash'had.

Cette région a, en effet, toujours présenté un intérêt stratégique et la rive ouest de l'Euphrate, en cette région, constituait déjà une importante voie militaire et commerciale à l'époque babylonienne.

Le Service des Antiquités de l'Irak envisage le déplacement de deux importantes constructions situées dans la zone condamnée :

- le minaret octogonal d'Al-Qal'a serait découpé à la scie électrique en huit tranches verticales, et remonté ensuite dans un site nouveau à Ana;
- l'ensemble de la mosquée de Mash'had et sa coupole ottomane devrait être démonté, en morceaux plus petits numérotés, qui seront remontés sur le site choisi; la conservation des peintures murales très altérées de cette mosquée pose, d'autre part, de délicats problèmes.

Fig. 4. Décor polychrome de la coupole ottomane de la mosquée de Mash'had.

Fig. 5. Détail architectural de la coupole ottomane de la mosquée de Mash'had.

Fig. 6. Minaret de la Mosquée de Al-Khaliliya.

Fig. 7. L'île d'Al-Qal'a dans la ville d'Ana.

Fig. 8. Minaret dans l'île d'Al-Qal'a.

Fig. 9. Travaux de restauration du minaret d'Al-Qal'a (1963-1964).

Fig. 10. Travaux de restauration du minaret d'Al-Qal'a (1963-1964).

RESUMEN

Un embalse está construyéndose sobre el río Éufrates, cerca de la ciudad de Haditha. Cuando estas obras se acabarán en 1983, el embalse medirá cerca de 93 km. Pero la zona submergida es, en comparación, menos rica de vestigios arqueológicos que la ancha cuenca sedimentaria, río abajo.

El Servicio de las Antigüedades iraquí ha procedido a un cuidadoso estudio arqueológico de dicha área y ha notado diez y ocho lugares arqueológicos e históricos importantes, que se siguen ahora explorando. Estos lugares arqueológicos y monumentos pertenecen a épocas muy diversas, desde el imperio asirio (Al-Zawiya) hasta el periodo otomano (cúpula de la mezquita de Mash'had, fortaleza de Rawa, del siglo XIX, que se quedará arriba del nivel futuro de las aguas). Esta región

hubo siempre, en efecto, un interés estratégico y la orilla oeste del Éufrates en esta zona constituía una vía militar y comercial importante ya en la época babilónica.

El Servicio de las Antigüedades iraquí piensa en trasladar dos importantes construcciones situadas en la zona condenada :

- el alminar octogonal de Al-Qal'a sería cortado en ocho trozos verticales con una sierra eléctrica y levantado en un nuevo lugar en Ana;
- el conjunto de la mezquita de Mash'had con su cúpula otomana sería desmontado en pedazos más pequeños, numerados, y reconstruido en otro lugar; la conservación de sus pinturas murales muy alteradas plantea, por otro lado, delicados problemas.