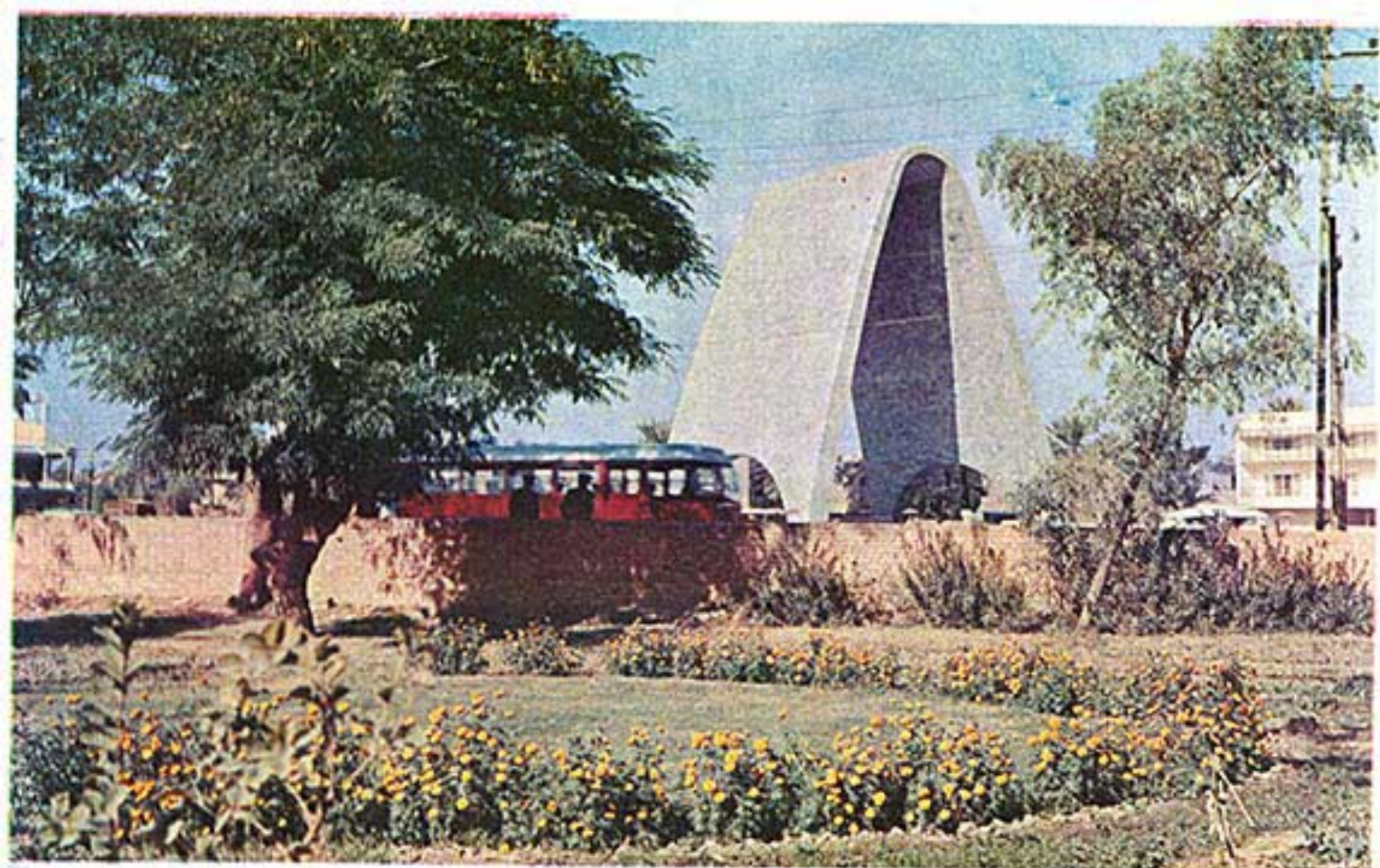


**RARE & VALUABLE  
THINGS**



Unknown Soldier, Baghdad



«Rare and valuable things come in small packages,» it is said, and Iraq is no exception. There at the crossroads between East and West stands a country of 172,000 square miles with a population of seven millions and with perhaps more dramatic «firsts» to its credit than any other country in the world. In the northern part, in Jarmo, is the earliest known example of settled, agricultural and non-nomadic life. The wheel was invented in what is now Iraq, as was possibly the earliest form of writing. The earliest known code of laws has been found there ; the earliest known astronomical observations were made there ; the earliest known university has been found there. In *Shanidar*, a cave in northern Iraq, two skeletons were found which are thought to go back nearly 60,000 years and are held to be the second oldest ever found in the Middle East.

Yet in this same «antique land» you will find today television, air travel, a traffic problem and every aspect of modern life. A country of contrasts indeed, but one where the old and the new are rubbing off upon each other and influencing each other in a most healthy fashion. You may walk fifteen minutes from your modern luxury hotel to the remains of the 13th century *Abbasid Palace* or you may drive some six miles to *Tel Harmal* where history goes back 4,000 years.

### Geographical Note

Now that we have located Iraq in time, let us attempt to do so in space. You will find it in your atlas bounded on the east by Iran and on the west by Syria, Jordan and Saudi Arabia ; on the north by Turkey, and on the south by the Arab Gulf. The central geographic fact is the magnificent river system. From the lofty mountains of Turkey come both the **Tigris** and the **Euphrates**, each bringing a river system of its own and sweeping in great long loops to irrigate the land.

From the very ancient times of Babylon and even earlier, canals have been run from these two rivers to water

the surrounding landscapes. Perhaps the peach you eat in your Baghdad hotel has been watered by a stream flowing through one of the canals built by Nebuchadnezzar's workmen nearly three thousand years ago.

### Resources

Iraq is very rich in its agricultural, mineral and human resources. It possesses two of the greatest rivers in the world. The fertile land floats on a sea of oil, the «black gold» of modern times. Exploitation of this wealth is possible because of the large income from oil revenues and the profits of local private industries and government administrations.

### Climate

In the mountainous north-eastern area, a comparatively long winter is usual with temperature falling below freezing point, between December and January.

In summer, temperatures are moderate to warm. The mountains are of great heights, covered with snow in winter. Here is some of the most beautiful scenery in the world.

The central and south area of Iraq is characterised by a moderate winter and a long dry summer. The hottest weather occurs from June to September. In the evening, however, it becomes wonderfully relaxing.

Rain falls mainly in winter. Spring and autumn, in April and November, are transitional but most delightful seasons.



The *population*, gradually increasing, is now seven millions, the majority of whom are Arabs with the Kurds next in number. There are also minorities of Turkmans, Armenians, Assyrians and other nationalities.

### Religion.

The majority is of Moslem faith with the Christians next in number. There is also a small but interesting minority of Yazidis in the north who have a religion of their own and are cheerful and picturesque people. Then there are the Sabaeans, followers of St. John the Baptist, who are famed for their silverware.

### Costumes

Visitors to Iraq will be astonished at the variety of costumes to be seen in the streets of big cities. While European clothes preponderate in urban centres, touches of colour are still added to the street scene by picturesque costumes.







Village girl.



Pretty girl in traditional finery.

## **Language**

Arabic is the official language. In the north, the two main languages spoken are Arabic and Kurdish.

English is widely understood, and the tourist conversant with this language should experience no difficulty. Attendants at all good business houses and shops, managers and stewards at all good restaurants and hotels have usually a working knowledge of English.

## **Education**

The Revolution of July 14 rebuilt the educational system on firm, well-tried foundations, starting, where it should, by organising all-out anti-illiteracy campaigns in all parts of the country. It applied the modern system of discovering talents and developing capabilities.

The most important feature of this system is that it is available for all. Barriers preventing the poorer classes from obtaining education were removed, and schooling was made free for everybody. Schools, which were scarce in the old regime, are being built to make room for the flood of people who were given, for the first time in their lives, the chance to learn.

*Iraqi Women*, now emancipated by the Revolution, are emerging, in daily increasing numbers, to take an active part in social life and revolutionary reform. Education of all types, and at all levels, is open to girls, increasing numbers of whom are now qualifying as doctors, chemists, lawyers, teachers, and social workers.

## **Administration**

For administrative purposes, Iraq is divided into 14 «Liwas», or provinces, under «Mutasarrifs», or governors, who are directly responsible to the Ministry of Interior. These «Liwas» are subdivided into «Qadhas» administered by «Qaimmaqams» and «Nahiyas» administered by «Mudirs».





The flower of the nation's youth.



## A few of Iraq's Gastronomic specialities.

One interesting facet of Iraq life is the variety of food to be found there. If the season is right, one must not leave without sampling **masgouf**, the delicious fish from the Tigris, which is cooked right on the river bank, fresh from the river. To see the fires dotting the river bank, on a warm evening under a full moon and then to taste the masgouf itself, crisp at the edges, white and succulent, is indeed an experience you will not soon forget. A most fascinating place for this is Abu-Nawas Avenue, in Baghdad.

In restaurants you may try **shishkabab**, it is usually made of lamb, skewered chunks of lamb between generous pieces of onion, tomato, pepper, etc. You should also try **Kubba**, filled with minced fat, nuts, raisins and spices. Almost anyone in the East cooks excellent **rice**, and the Iraqis are no exception. It is very fluffy and each grain stands separated from the others.

For drinks you have many choices ranging from the internationally known soft drinks to the typical local drink **leben** (like yoghurt), or coffee made very strong and sweet and with a deep sediment, or tea served in small glasses. There is even a **lemon tea** which you should at least try.



Masgouf.



**Qouzi (Stuffed and decorated lamb), the foremost Arab dish.**



**Kubbah Mosul, filled with minced fat, nuts, raisins and spices.**

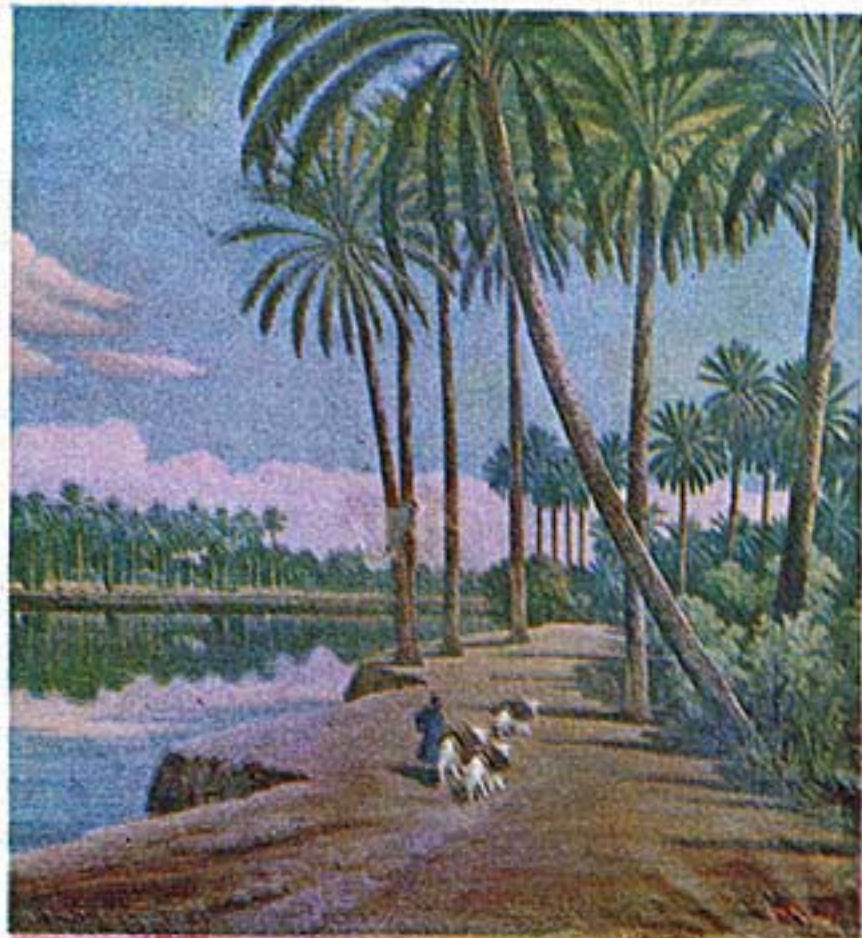


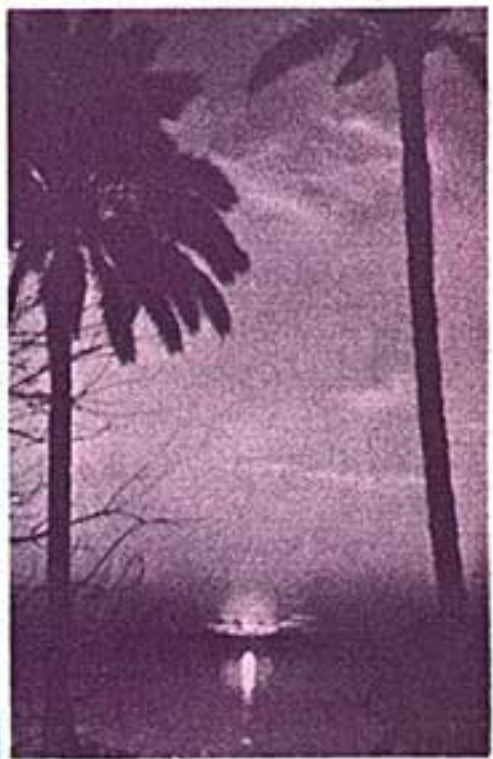
## Iraq's Eternal Plant

The age-old date palm had already cast its shadow upon the **Garden of Eden**, when Adam and Eve exhibited the first proof of human frailty.

There is archaeological evidence that the ancient races of Sumerians and Akadians lived in houses roofed with date palm fronds. The date palm is, therefore, often thought of as the most ancient tree in the world and is frequently referred to as the « **Eternal Plant** ».

The home of the date palm is Iraq, **the Eternal Land of Sunshine**. Here, where climate conditions are ideal for date growing, more than 80 per cent of the world's supply of date is grown.





Near Basra.



## Artists & Dates !

« Iraq's production of artists is second only to its production of dates ! », said one recent visitor to Baghdad, marvelling at the numerous art exhibitions he had witnessed, during his brief stay in the capital.

The real marvel, however, is in the superior quality of these exhibitions. The work has the mysterious poetry of life and man at their most elemental.

Iraqi artists are no outsiders in their country. They can hardly meet public demand. At every exhibition, they sell almost everything they show.



Village mother.



Modernistic !



The afternoon tea.