

The trading system. barley was what mesopotamia

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The Kingdom of Bahrain is a small island surrounded by two seas and is located in the Arabian Gulf. The kingdom went through a rapid evolution over the years. Bahrain was once much larger than it is now it started from the Northern Kuwait till Southern Oman. Over a few periods of time the kingdom had different names. There were three old names which were Dilmun, Tylos and Awal.

In each period, a few events have taken place during then that will be discussed later on. Trade in Dilmun: The first period was known as Dilmun, the home to one of the greatest trading empire in the ancient world. This period was established in the third millennium BCE (2800-323 BCE/ lasted for 2 millennia and a half). Around 2500 BC, Dilmun was considered the suppliers of woods.

They would also trade copper, linen, bronze ' and marine spoons'. Pearls from Dilmun's own water were also famous to be traded. In a few 4 texts or written sources it would mention that merchants of Mesopotamia carried out trades with Dilmun, they might actually be the original initiators of this trading system. Barley was what Mesopotamia used to trade with Dilmun so it can feed its own people. However, after the succeeding of the old Akkadian period, Mesopotamia was not the only country to trade with Dilmun.

Trade was later opened to other countries and that's how Dilmun started to trade with Harappan (Indus) civilization, Persia and East Africa. Indus pottery has been found in several sites that are to be considered part of Dilmun's territory and the system of measurements and weights of Dilmun is also identical to Indus civilization. This proves that Dilmun had other trading

connections back then. For four thousand years, Dilmun was the main centre for trade and development along the east Arabian coast which archaeologists like to call 'the greater Dilmun trading empire'. Inscriptions: During the Dilmun period, government would collect taxes from the citizens. This is known because Dilmun is listed as number 85 in the archaic profession as *enkux* which means tax collectors. The country has been mentioned in clay tablets, written documents, in the Sumerian language. These texts were 5 found in the temple of the goddess Inanna in the great southern Mesopotamian city Uruk dated at the end of 4th millennium BC.

There's a text that mentions the use of copper, a commodity that was found in limited geological locations, in Dilmun as the contact sign but it does not include more information because the rest of the text is not clear and is broken off. Even if the text was not broken off, it will still not be certain if it's precise or not. It is said that Dilmun was a holy land or pure land, a land immune to the ills to which flesh is heir. It was considered a blessed land where sickness and death did not exist. This description of Dilmun is said to be lied behind the biblical story of Garden of Eden. It is also found in the myth of Enki and Ninhursag / Ninhursaja where it says: "Pure are the cities — and you are the ones to whom they are allotted. Pure is Dilmun land.

Pure is Sumer — and you are the ones to whom it is allotted. Pure is Dilmun land. Pure is Dilmun land. Virginal is Dilmun land.

Virginal is Dilmun land. Pristine is Dilmun land.... In Dilmun the raven was not yet cawing, the partridge not cackling. The lion did not slay, the wolf was not

carrying off lambs, the dog had not been taught to make kids curl up, the pig had not learned that grain was to be eaten.

When a widow has spread malt on the roof, the birds did not yet eat that malt up there. The pigeon then did not tuck the head under its wing. No eye-diseases said there: "I am the eye disease." No headache said there: "I am the headache.

"No old woman belonging to it said there: "I am an old woman." No old man belonging to it said there: "I am an old man." No maiden in her unwashed state ...

... in the city. No man dredging a river said there: "It is getting dark.

"No herald made the rounds in his 6 border district. No singer sang an elulam there. No wailings were wailed in the city's outskirts there.

"Through the inscriptions it can be confirmed that Dilmun was in fact an island. For example Sargon of Agade, c. 2350 BC, claimed in an inscription that ships from Dilmun arrived at his city and later on Sargon II of Assyria mentions Dilmun lying thirty beru from Sumer, meaning in the middle of the sea. The literary texts also discuss how Dilmun is notable for its fresh water springs. Seals/Stamps: Other than the texts and inscriptions, archaeologists found seals/stamps that were used back then and this helped provide evidence that there were a lot of people back then.

These stamps were used to show ownership of an item or goods. Through the drawing on the stamps archaeologists were able to indicate how life was like in Dilmun. For example the clothes they wore, the animals they raised
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(sheep) and the fact they used to do fishing. In the strings, they would tie knots on the goods and were covered in a lump of clay to show if the item was tinkered with or not. The concept of this was also used to lock doors with a lump of clay. One interesting use of it was buttons or tokens of clay.

These tokens have been found around in different sites and this hints out that these tokens were probably used for authorization or identification of a person back then. 7 Two tokens were found in a site in Saar which was similar to the ones in the temple of Barbar and Qala'at Bahrain. The citizens of this nation themselves have used cuneiform scripts as well; they even used the Akkadian language for writing purposes. It is said that the Akkadian language could be their spoken language.

However, the scripts are said to be not of their own because of the lack of archaeological evidence. Dilmun's Historical Periods: Dilmun can be divided into 4 main historical periods. First would be 'Formative Dilmun' (3200-2200 BC) which had the earliest mention of Dilmun in Mesopotamian inscriptions. Second period would be 'Early Dilmun' (2200-1600 BC) and it was the golden age for Dilmun, it reached the peak of its prosperity and influence. It was also when they controlled the trading routes between Indus Valley and Mesopotamia increasing the economy of Dilmun. This is all due to its location which lies along the sea trade routes linking Indus and Mesopotamia.

The round stamp seals are the evidence that Dilmun traded with outside countries. 'Middle Dilmun' (1600-1000 BC) is the third period where Dilmun started interacting with Mesopotamia. 'Late Dilmun' (1000-330 BC) is the last period out of the four and it was marked by the decline of copper trade

and switched to a less important role in the new flourishing trade of incense and spices. Unnoticed Cuneiforms: When interpreting any ancient culture it is important that it is based on well integrated documentation on archaeological textual data to make it a reliable interpretation. For some apparent reason archaeologist 8 in the gulf have not payed attention or were probably unaware of the presence of cuneiform records of the Early Dynastic IIIb by Ur-Nanshe of Lagas. These cuneiform texts have mentioned Dilmun somewhere but have not been taken to account to be re-evaluated in the Gulf chronology. The texts might not provide an exact understanding on the geographical, economic and political of Dilmun, but the fact they mention Dilmun somewhere in their text shows that the country's political and economic importance was well-known. Through these records, it can be seen that Dilmun was a centre of international commercial fame that the shekel was internationally recognized.

Archaeologists Now: The location of where Dilmun has been argued by scholars for a long time. After a while, they decided that most of the stuff that was found can conclude that Dilmun was in Bahrain, the land between two seas. About 50 years ago, a Danish team under professor Glob, Professor Mortensen and Geoffrey Bibby went to Qala'at al-Bahrain and were able to find pottery work from the mid-third millennium BC to the Hellenistic period. The work has been continued in more recent years but under a French team. From the Danish team, Professor Mortensen discovered a temple of the same date as the city wall at Barbar and this gave more clues on that period. The professor found objects that were used to be imported inside the temple and this help strengthen the image of the fact that Dilmun was an important

trading nation. 9 Findings and interpretations: The well in Barbar that was found indicates that sweet water had an important in the lives and religion of Dilmun and this is supported by the myths of Mesopotamia and of Enki and Ninhursag connecting Garden of Eden to this nation.

Water usually always plays an important part to semi dry countries such as Dilmun. Figuring out the religion that was most common during that period was difficult. However, archaeologists have interpreted that citizens of Dilmun in the past believed in an afterlife since their belongings, food and drink was to be kept in the grave with their body. The burial mound now in Bahrain is probably one of the largest prehistoric cemeteries in the world. It is located in the village of A'ali.