

II. PREHISTORIC ART

CHAPTER 6

THE EARLY CULTURES OF SUSAN

By R. DE MECQUENEM*

THE site of Susa is the most important archaeologically that has yet been investigated in Persia. Not only is the area by far the most extensive that has been examined, but it is the only site that has been systematically and continuously explored for any length of time, now over thirty years. Furthermore, it was almost constantly occupied by a series of cultures for more than five thousand years, from the time of the first settlement, about 4000 B.C., down to the Mongol invasion in the early thirteenth century. The material from Susa thus provides the principal mass of controlled data covering practically the whole history of Iranian civilization. It includes not only examples of most of the types found elsewhere, but also many important specimens that are unique.

Susa, or, as the natives say, Shūsh, and this is undoubtedly the old name, is today a little village in the province of Khūzistān in Persia, very near the 'Irāq border. It is on the left bank of a small river, the Shāvūr (Shawr), the water of which is unfortunately saturated with sulphate of chalk, so that it is almost undrinkable. The Karkhā, a large river that comes down from the Persian plateau, is three or four miles to the west, and irrigates the district. This is the *Choaspes* of the Greeks. Its water is delicious. The rulers of the Achaemenid line had silver jars full of it taken with them when they were travelling.¹ The Āb-i-Dīz runs a half dozen miles to the east, emptying into the Kārūn above Nāṣirī (Ahvāz). This is the *Coprates* of the Greeks, as the Kārūn is the old *Pasitigris*.

Between Khurramshahr and Susa there are a hundred and fifty miles of almost flat country, a very fertile plain when well irrigated. Hard wheat, barley, sorghum, sesame, and rice grow there. Near Dizfūl are fine date and orange groves and vineyards. Some vegetables, also, are raised in this district: onions, beans, carrots, lettuce, as well as melons of various kinds. Along the watercourses there are trees: poplars, willows, alders, and tamarisks; and reeds and rushes. Where the plain is not irrigated it is covered with brush, wild caper bushes, and jujube bushes. The latter (*Konarsen persicum*), which grow into fine, very tough trees, are sometimes adopted by passers-by, who hang on the branches bits of material, making them thereby 'sacred'. They produce a rather acid berry, and the resin is used in funerals as an aromatic (Persian: *sidr*). There are a great many of these trees around Dizfūl, and formerly there must have been many around Susa. This would seem to explain Susa's designation as the City of the Cedars.

There is a good deal of vegetation in the desert: different types of thistles, a colocynth

* Translated by PHYLLIS ACKERMAN.

MORGAN, *Mémoires de la Délégation en Perse*, I (1900),

¹ HERODOTUS, Book I, Chapter 188, cited by J. DE p. 11, n. 2.

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with fine veinous fruits, mauve and rose hollyhocks, mallows, liquorice, couch grass, and a thorny plant on which only camels can graze. For two or three months in the winter the green prairie is enamelled with flowers: mustard, dandelions, pyrethrum, camomile, red ranunculus, and iris.

South of Ahvāz the soil is impregnated with salts, chloride and sulphate of soda, so that nothing can be raised without first washing them out, which is possible only near the rivers. Along the rivers in this district are great palm groves which are the chief economic resource of the country. The chemical character of the soil indicates that this plain has recently emerged geologically, reclaimed from the sea by alluvial deposits. In the time of Alexander, the Kārūn emptied into the Persian Gulf, and the Tigris and the Euphrates had separate mouths in a great salt lake. About 3000 B.C. the sea came up as far as Ahvāz. The alluvial deposits brought down by the four great rivers, the Tigris, the Euphrates, the Karkhā, and the Kārūn, filled up the lake and created the delta. At flood, the waters of the Kārūn are one-third sediment.

Near Ahvāz, a line of small hills, anticlinal sandstone of the Upper Eocene, runs from southeast to northwest, continuing between 'Irāq and Persia in a small range, Kūh Hamrīn. The sandstone makes a natural dam for the Kārūn. At this point the Achaemenids had a bridge of boats which, in the Sāsānian period, was replaced by a bridge on a dike. North of Ahvāz another anticlinal of the same sandstone makes the Āb-i-Dīz impassable to navigation. This runs about three miles (c. 5 km.) south of Susa. The sandstone, which is very friable, was used by artisans in the middle of the third millennium B.C. Above it is gypsum, which crops out north of Susa. This is used for plaster. Above it is a mixture of gravels which forms the substratum of the clay beds of Susa and which comes to the surface in heavy outcrops at Dizfūl.

Thirty miles (50 km.) north of Dizfūl the Luristān mountains begin, a range that runs along the edge of the Persian plateau with a minimum altitude of about 4,000 feet (1,200 metres) and includes some peaks 6,500 to 10,000 feet (2,000 to 3,000 metres) high. Iranian tribes, the Lurs, who live there have kept many of the feudal customs, the chivalric traditions, and the frugal habits of Achaemenid times.

From Susa a road which, during the Sāsānian and Arab periods, was used a great deal, runs north by Dizfūl and Khurramābād on to the plateau. The great imperial highway to Nineveh and Sardes, which is very exactly described by Herodotus,¹ is marked in the vicinity of Susa by a number of ruins along the Shāvūr: Tepe Sulaymān, Tepe Ja'far-ābād, and Tepe Sanjar. It passes the Karkhā at Pā-yi-pul, where there are a ruined Sāsānian bridge and the beginning of irrigation canals. A little farther down the river in a large enclosure is the Īvān-i-Karkhā, the ruins of a Sāsānian royal pavilion (see Chapter 28 A).

For the next thirty miles (50 km.) the road runs across a plateau which is arid and dry for six months of the year and can present difficulties to the traveller. Beyond is the Duvairij Valley, and the shelters, which marked a day's journey in the early periods, reappear: Tepe Pātāk, which is the *Badaca* of the Parthians and the *Madaktu* of the

¹ HERODOTUS, Book v, Chapters 52, 53.

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Elamites; Tepe Mūsiyān, which was excavated by Gauthier and Lampre in 1903; and Tepe Gurgān. The latter are the two *Bit-Imbī*, the old and the new, mentioned by Sennacherib.¹ The road then crosses the River Tīb, goes by Badra'ī which is the *Bit-ha'iri* of the Assyrians, and Mandalī, and then comes to Ctesiphon and Babylon. Or an alternate road goes by Arbela and Kirkūk to Ashur and Nineveh.

A direct route, which involves crossing the Karkhā on skin rafts, makes it possible to get to the Tigris at Amāra in three days by caravan. Crossing the Tigris on a bridge of boats, this road then followed the edge of a great salt lake, and went past Umma and Lagash to Ur and Eridu, or by Larsa and Uruk to Babylon. Ur, which was for a long time the suzerain of Susa, was distant eight days' journey.

The road from Susa to Ahvāz is similarly marked by ruins. Directly to the east, across the Āb-i-Dīz, is a rich district as far as the Kārūn. Beyond this it is possible to get up to the Persian plateau near Pasargadae by way of Bihbahān, or to go down to the Persian Gulf by way of Rām-Hormuz, passing Elamite colonies such as Liyan, and reaching the Gulf near Būshīr.

Susa's situation is especially favourable for the development of a great city. The district is bounded on both sides by a large river. Small cliffs that rise 20 or 25 feet (6 to 8 metres) above the plain are composed of a calcareous clay, well adapted to pottery making. Mixed, shaped, and dried, this made useful unfired bricks. Fuel for firing was also available in the form of wood from the forests, reeds, and straw from the grains.

These favourable conditions, the fertility of the soil, building material, and a dominant position, explain why Susa, founded about 4000 B.C., was still an important city in the twelfth century A.D. The ruins of the successive buildings and the heaping up of the tombs have raised the level of the ground 80 feet (25 metres); that is to say, about a foot and a half (45 cm.) every century. But while Susa did enjoy these advantages, she suffered also from two disadvantages: the necessity for a canal system, and the climate. The early canal systems were amazingly extensive. They started from the Karkhā, north of Pā-yi-pul. The Sāsānian canals were not quite so imposing. The ditches actually in existence are the sad remnants of the Arab canals of the thirteenth century, destroyed, perhaps, by the Mongols.

The heat is excessive at Susa. From the first of April the soil dries out and turns white. In the early periods the vegetation must have counteracted somewhat the dryness of the air and reduced the dust clouds, though Strabo has left a striking picture of summer at Susa,² and Cyrus only lived there for the three winter months.

When Layard and Loftus³ went to Susa in the middle of the nineteenth century, they saw on the edge of the Shāvūr only one building, the little Tomb of Daniel. The Prophet Daniel, according to tradition, passed his childhood at Susa and became the favourite of Nebuchadrezar II and the Governor of Babylonia. Presumably he was buried at Susa.

¹ G. SMITH, *History of Sennacherib*, translated from the cuneiform inscriptions, London, 1878, p. 107

² STRABO, *Geographia*, Book IV, Chapter xv, iii. 10.

³ A. H. LAYARD, *Nineveh and its remains*, Lon-

don, 1849, II, p. 252, n.; W. K. LOFTUS, *Travels and researches in Chaldaea and Susiana*, London, 1857, pp. 321-3.

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His tomb, very popular with pilgrims, was the source of quarrels between two sections of the city at the time of the Muhammadan conquest. On the Caliph's order the coffin was moved and reburied right in the bed of the river.

General Williams, British High Commissioner to determine the Turco-Persian boundaries in 1840, went to Susa and opened up trenches into the ruins. This work was continued by Loftus with funds from the Royal Academy. He identified the hypostyle hall, got some coins and some figurines (see Chapter 11), and made the first rubbings of some of the inscriptions. He recognized that this was the site of the capital of Elam and of the Achaemenid Empire.

Between 1883 and 1885 the Dieulafoy, Houssaye, and Babin Expedition, sent by the French Government, explored the ruins.¹ The documents they brought back proved the interest of the site. In 1897 France received, through Nāṣir ad-dīn Shāh, the monopoly of archaeological excavations in Persia, and an expedition sent out by the Ministry of Public Instruction under the direction of Jacques de Morgan was installed at Susa.² This was to be the centre of the winter work and the rallying point after the summer explorations on the Persian plateau. A building was built of unfired bricks, while fired bricks from the excavation, great tiles a foot (30 cm.) square, and 3 inches (7 cm.) thick, served for retaining walls and for platforms on which to lay out the materials.

Dieulafoy, following Loftus, worked out a plan of Susa and his designations have been adopted here (Fig. 6). The principal ruins form a 2,300-foot (700-metre) square, with the angles at the points of the compass, to which the Donjon constitutes an annex. There are three main eminences: the Acropolis, the *Apadāna*, and the Royal City. Between the southern end of the Acropolis tell and the edge of the Royal City, which is opposite, there is a gap about 325 feet (100 metres) wide, which was originally a canal or road that has been widened by erosion, and beyond this there are two burial mounds 325 feet (100 metres) long by 165 feet (50 metres) wide, the second, which is perhaps composed of two together, connecting with still another which juts out from the ruins to the south, constituting the outermost point of the Royal City. Dieulafoy called this the Donjon.

About a half-mile (1 km.) north of the *Apadāna* there are traces of an enclosure, the gates of which are indicated by the bases of columns, and some rather low mounds, the remains of the Parthian and Seleucid cities. East of the Royal City, 20 or 25 feet (6 to 7 metres) above the plain, are the ruins of the Parthian, Sāsānian, and Arab cities. This is what Dieulafoy called the Artisans' City.

De Morgan made an extensive investigation of the Acropolis (Fig. 8). It rises *c.* 125 feet (38 metres) above the river bank level. The northern point was sounded before the expedition's headquarters were built, the rest was systematically explored, and an area

¹ M. A. DIEULAFOY, *L'Acropole de Suse d'après les fouilles exécutées en 1884-6, sous les auspices du Musée du Louvre*, Paris, 1890.

² The results of this expedition, which still continues

its work every season, are published under the auspices of the Ministère de L'Éducation Nationale, in *Mémoires de la Mission de Susiane*.

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820 feet by 590 feet (250 by 180 metres) was levelled down to a depth of 26 and 36 feet (8 and 11 metres). One great trench 260 feet (79 metres) long was dug all the way down to the natural level. The excavations carried on continuously since that date by the French Mission have yielded rich results from a wide range of periods and permit the reconstruction of practically the entire history of the city.

The founding of the city may be placed with considerable confidence at about 4000 B.C.

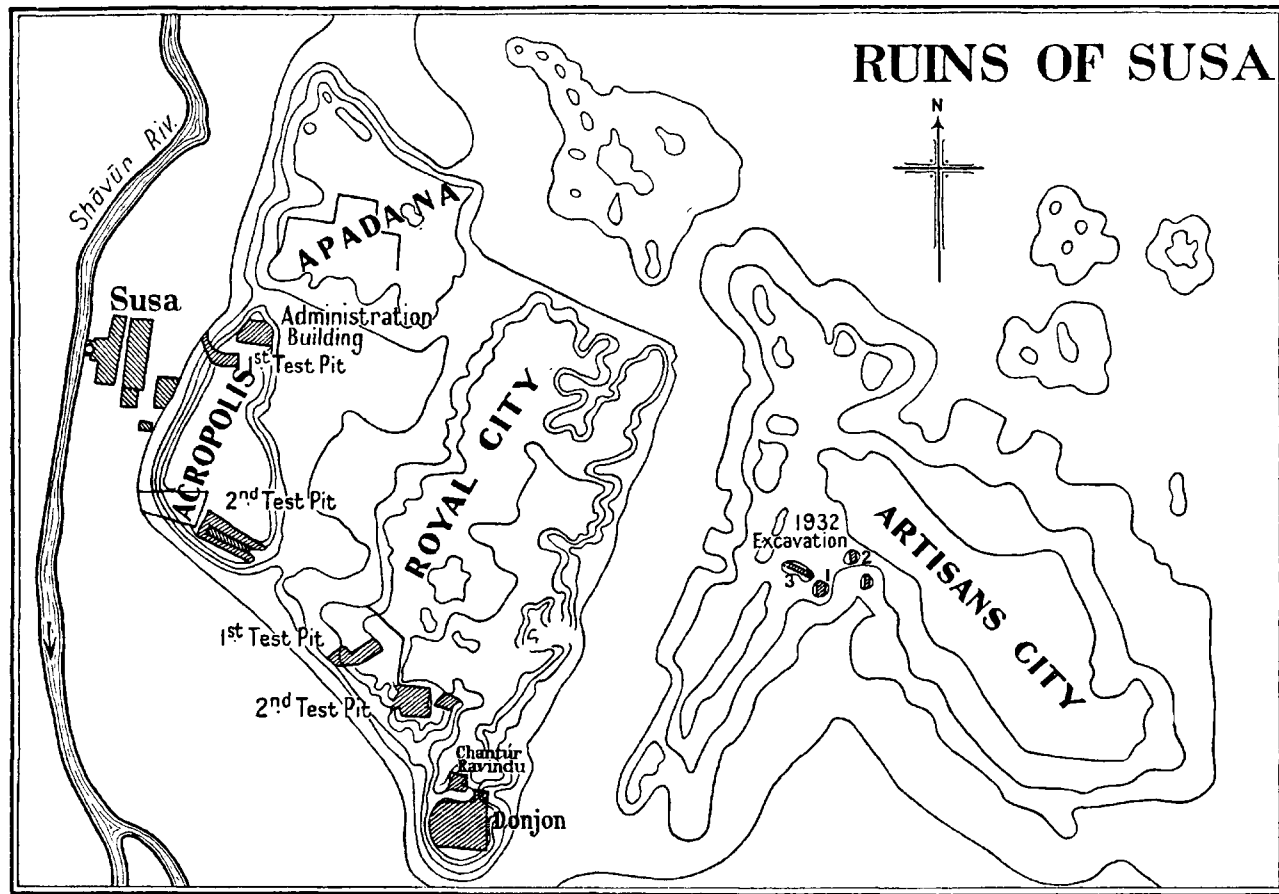


FIG. 6.

Painted pottery of the fourth millenium, of remarkable artistic quality and purely Iranian in style (Susa I; see Chapter 10 and Pls. 1-3, 4 B, C), was brought to light in 1902 from the trench excavated in the Acropolis, and by 1907 perfect specimens had been reconstructed. This material came out of a burial mound 10 feet (c. 3 metres) high and 33 feet (c. 10 metres) in diameter at the base. It was formed of a heap of tombs crushed one against the other. With the bones were, in addition to the pottery, stone and copper objects. This pottery shows that the Susa I civilization, of the Chalcolithic period, was very well advanced. These first Susians knew the bow (see Fig. 24 *t*) and the sling. They hunted with dogs (Fig. 9 *b*). They had tools of silex and obsidian, and also axes of very pure copper. The women had copper mirrors; bead necklaces of blue and white paste, lapis lazuli and bitumen; cosmetic pots of stone or earthenware, conical in form; and little manicure instruments. On certain metal objects there are still visible traces of the material of the shrouds, some of a very fine texture.¹

¹ For a detailed analysis of these see M. Z. LECAISNE, Notes sur les tissus recouvrant des haches en cuivre, *Mémoires de la Délégation en Perse*, XIII (1912), p. 163.

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Funeral rites were already developed. The tombs are of the second degree, that is to say, the flesh had been removed from the bodies either by a preliminary burial or by exposure before they were buried in the tumulus. At this time there was an active commerce bringing copper and obsidian to Susa, possibly from the Caucasus.

A sounding, which was recently (1930-2) driven down through the Acropolis¹ to virgin soil (Fig. 8), uncovered in the last 13 to 23 feet (4 to 7 metres) above the natural ground, a rich mass of fragments of this painted pottery decorated with lustrous black on a yellow ground, and bits of a red pottery, only occasionally painted, in black, or sometimes in white. A similar red pottery was found at the lowest level of the Royal City,²



FIG. 7. Pottery sherd, Susa I.

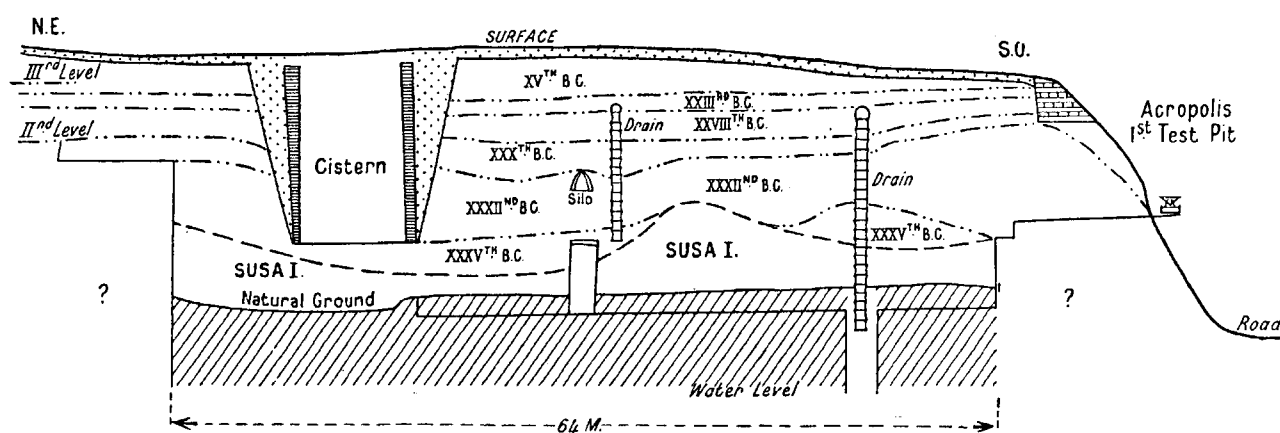


FIG. 8. Cross section of the Acropolis.

but it was turned. Very few complete painted vases were found: a medium sized goblet decorated with three serpents (Fig. 9 *a*); two large kraters with rounded walls, ornamented with rectilinear designs; incomplete fragments of a large krater showing a hunter armed with two boomerangs (?), accompanied by a hound in leash, pursuing wild goats (Fig. 7); and a series of altars on which are maces or caduces surrounded by other motifs. Two or three children's graves were found, containing small bowls with painted parallel lines, and two kilns were cleared out, as well as threshing floors of silos

¹ This was enlarged to a width of about 52 feet (16 metres) and a length of about 130 feet (40 metres). Virgin soil was struck at a depth of about 55½ feet (17 metres) below the original top of the Tell.

² Two soundings were made in the Royal City in 1930-2. In the first burial mound beyond the open space between the Acropolis and the Royal City (Fig. 13 *a*) the excavation was carried down to virgin soil, and

the results reported are from this excavation. The shaft in the second mound (Fig. 13 *b*) yielded similar material, but in the natural ground below the Tell were simple trench graves containing: handled jugs; copper lances on a plain pointed shaft with a square cross section; and a fine collection of shell cylinders, most of which are engraved with rampant animals.

or shops. No metal was found here, but silex and obsidian blades were numerous. There were a great many terracotta animal figurines, many of them painted: birds, rams, and dogs, all highly conventionalized, and also human beings, though these were less common. A good many button seals were gathered here, of soft stone, shell, or bitumen, and one very large silex seal pierced with a lateral hole and engraved with three quadrupeds, two birds, and two swastikas in a style corresponding to that of the painted

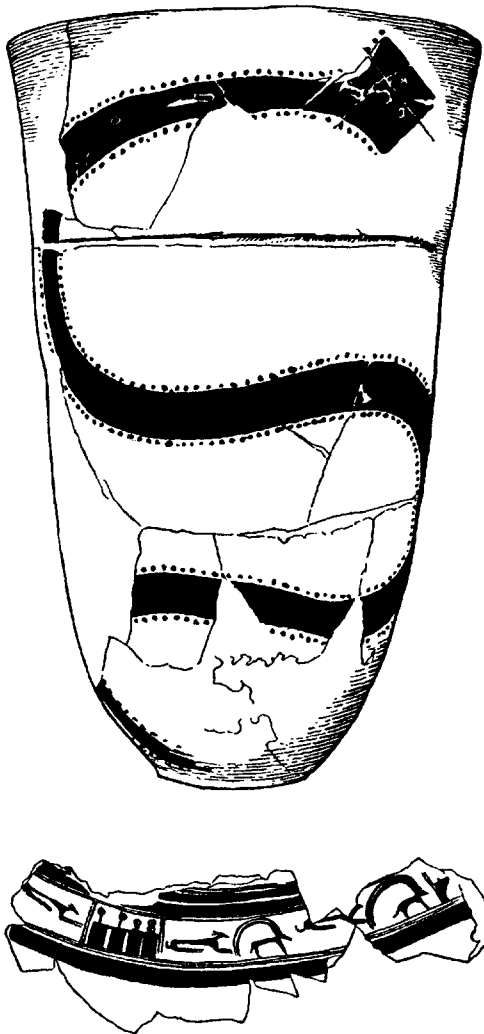


FIG. 9 a, b. Pottery, Susa I.

vases (Pl. 17 F). Another trench nearly 325 feet long (100 metres), which was driven down some 80 feet (25 metres) to virgin soil on the south end of the Acropolis in the subsequent season (1933), uncovered, 30 feet (9.60 metres) below Level II, a quantity of fragments of Susa I style pottery and of a pottery covered with a red slip, but again there were only two pieces relatively intact. A kiln was also found, with a round chamber 5 feet (1.76 metres) across, and a fire chamber with a central column.

An inscribed calcareous boulder 10 by 4 inches (25 by 12 cm.) found in the same season's work¹ provides us with an example of script very probably from this culture (Fig. 10). Evidently it was a funeral stele. It is covered with lines of writing, made with a *qalam*, which reads from right to left, and recalls, in general effect, the Demotic script, Aramaean and Pahlavī. The characters are drawn accurately and with style, but evidently different lines were written by different people, and one is reversed. They include three swastikas and four signs formed of a line ending at the top with a circle with two horns. The swastika is a common motif on the Susa I pottery. As boulders of this type have appeared in considerable numbers in this excavation, it is hoped that other inscribed ones will come to light.

In the level above this in the same excavation² there were traces of unfired brick constructions, pavements, and walls. The bricks are rather crudely made, but are not plano-convex. Just above the lowest level in the 1930-2 Acropolis trench there appeared a very carefully made and fired unpainted pottery consisting of bottles with a round body and high cylindrical neck, with a flat rim around the mouth, and vases with spouts, and both here and in the level above, more kilns were uncovered, and also grain storage chambers dug out of the ground, with the walls faced with chalk. The grain seems to have been unhulled rice.

¹ Found at a depth of 29½ feet (9 metres) below Level II. The traces were followed for some 13 feet (4 metres).

² Found at a depth of c. 26 feet (8 metres) below

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This pottery is related to, though not identical with, another unpainted type, also well turned and well fired, which was found in the early excavations above the Susa I level. Pottery of the same class has also been found at Tell 'Ubayd near Ur and ascribed to the middle of the fourth millennium.¹ The Susa examples include jars with handles, sometimes twisted (Fig. 11); pots with an applied spout which turns down; little jugs with long spouts; and covered bowls with a long pierced handle that serves as a spout. With

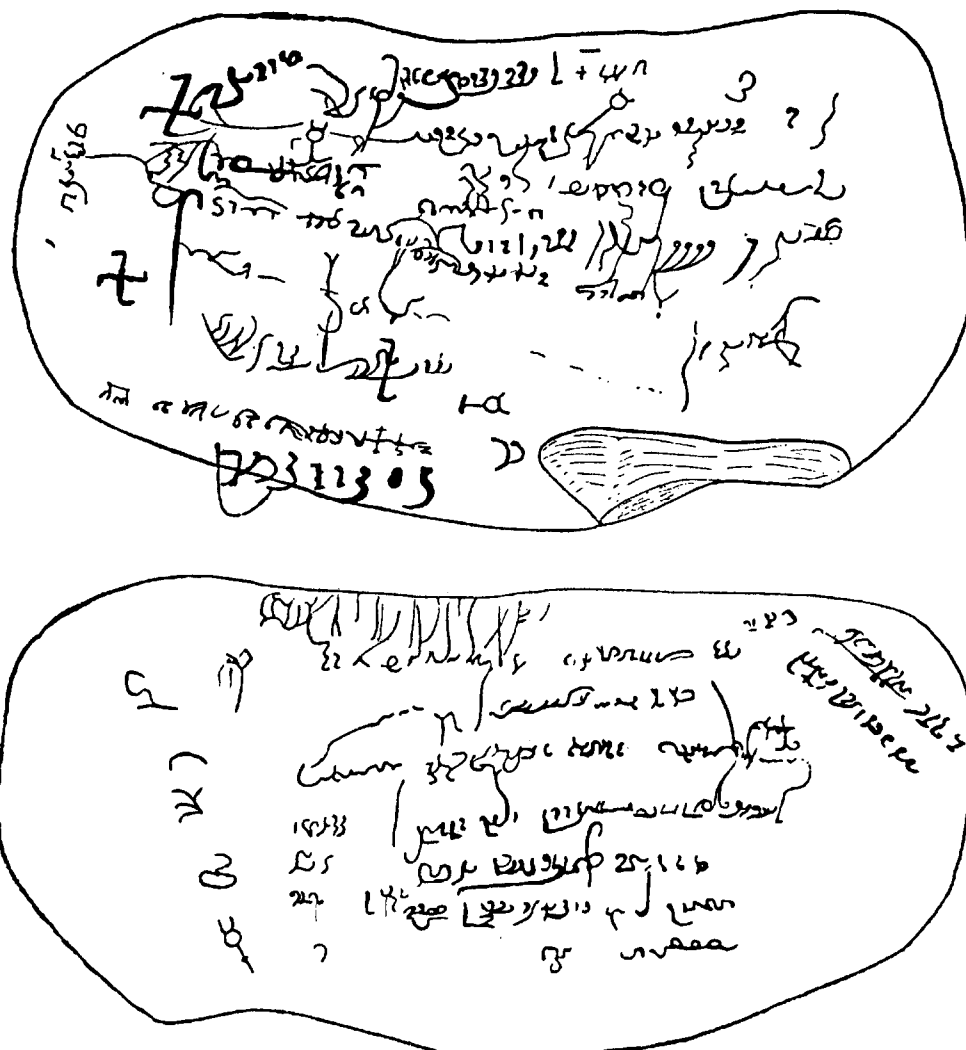


FIG. 10. Inscribed boulder, 4th millennium.

it were found potters' tools, terracotta sickles, punches and stilettos in bone, and copper burins and punches. A considerable amount of this ware was found also in the 1930-2 Acropolis trench, together with a quantity of bowls of varying coarseness and a number of potters' tools, terracotta polishers, coarse stone axes, and copper or bone stilettos with bitumen handles. The collection of tool handles and polishers in gazelle bone, often decorated with primitive designs (Fig. 12), included about a hundred pieces. Few metal tools were found, a two-edged axe, a copper hoe; but there were obsidian and silex blades, terracotta sickles, some vases of soft stone, and vessels of carved sandstone, gypsum, and bitumen. There were no inscriptions.²

¹ See J. JORDAN, Vierter vorläufiger Bericht über die von der Notgemeinschaft der Deutschen Wissenschaft in Uruk unternommenen Ausgrabungen, Berlin, 1932.

² This layer varied in thickness from 23 feet (7 metres) at one end of the trench, to 18 feet (5 metres) at the other end near the edge of the Tell.

Comparable material was found in the 1933 excavations,¹ coarse bowls predominating, together with terracotta sickles, engraved bone tools, stone grinders, potters' tools, and alabaster weights. Immediately above this² were, in addition to the coarse bowls, bottles, kraters with four knobs, pots with twisted handles, terracotta figurines, and terracotta nails, found with quoits in children's graves. Cylinder seals were missing, but in their place were seals that are either flat or in the form of bell-shaped buttons (Pl. 75 D, O, Q, R, T, U).

An exceptionally interesting object found in the excavations of 1933³ must be attributed to approximately this same period, the middle of the fourth millennium. It is a small carving in the round in bitumen (Pl. 17 A, B), 5½ inches (13 cm.) long and 2 inches (5 cm.) high, showing a lion couchant, in repose, but closing his jaws on the head of a tiny personage seated between his forepaws. It is a man, nude save for a narrow belt, his body leaning slightly forward, his right leg bent under him, the left out flat, the knee flexed. His hands rest on his thighs. His face is calm save for a horizontal wrinkle across the forehead; his nose is straight and wide at the base; his eyes are large and look directly ahead. The corners of the mouth droop a little. The cheeks are muscular, the face rather broad. The lion's upper teeth mark the hair-line. The man's expression indicates reflective determination. The features of the lion seem to convey an ironical mood rather than ferocity. The workmanship is masterly, without trivial detail. The bottom of the piece is perfectly finished, showing the lion's paws and claws and the man's legs, so that it could not have been a statuette to put on a stand, but must rather have been, since it was found in a necropolis, a burial offering.

Since, judging from the level, it must date from the middle of the fourth millennium,

¹ At a depth of 14½–26 feet (6–8 metres).

² At a depth of 19½ feet (6 metres).

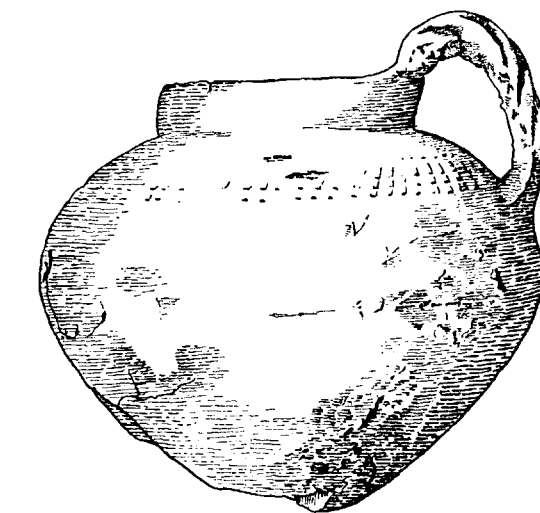


FIG. 11. Pottery, 4th millennium.



FIG. 12. Incised bones, 4th millennium.

³ At a depth of 29½ feet (9 metres).

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it is the most ancient representation known of a lion in relief, for the small lion couchant in ivory found by de Morgan at Negadeh¹ is from the first Egyptian dynasty. But we cannot claim that it is contemporary with the Susa I pottery even though fossil bitumen was used in that culture to make small cosmetic horns, for no lions are represented in that period. The general character of the carving recalls the Sphinx of Gizeh, suggesting that this figure is intermediary between the motif of a lion overcoming a man, found in Babylon and on Iranian burial monuments, and the enigmatic compound figure of Egypt. The group may have been created to render homage to a hero who was the victim of combats for justice and independence (see Chapter 38).

Copper pinheads in the form of small animals of about this date, that is, prior to 3000 B.C., have also been fairly numerous in these recent excavations, and they are especially important because of their analogies to Luristān bronzes (see p. 243-4), a similarity which is also apparent in a socket of about 2500 B.C. It is evident that there was a continuous intercourse between Elam and the mountain people and probably there was also some more definite relation. Perhaps, as Susa was more or less specifically a vassal of Chaldaea, so, too, she had recognized an Iranian sovereignty. There are no records to answer this problem, for Anzanite texts are few, and the poverty of Susa in Achaemenid, Parthian, and Sāsānian texts indicates that the Iranians did not write much.

Through these earliest periods Semitic influence seems to have dominated at Susa. Five out of six of the proper names are Semitic. But, on the other hand, the engraving on many of the cylinders of 2000 B.C. is similar to that on Kassite cylinders, and since documents are lacking, the evidence of Iranian influence must be sought in the arts, so that a proper recognition may be accorded to the Iranian contribution to the formation and progress of the Assyro-Babylonian civilization.

The next level above has a pottery more similar in style to the first type, especially kraters with four knobs (Susa II; see pp. 181-2 and Pls. 4 A, 5 A). This period seems to coincide with the inception of the Awan dynasty, but the same type of pottery was continued into the succeeding Simash dynasty. At this level there are also seals in the form of knobs, and crude stone vases in sandstone and alabaster.

Still higher there are more stone vessels, great basins cut out of alabaster and charming little jars in alabaster and aragonite, very varied in shape and sometimes painted, often with designs of animals: eagles, chickens, bears, boars, hedgehogs, foxes, and frogs. There are also perfume and cosmetic containers. The painted pottery continues, with the decorations more freely executed. Another ware, consisting especially of large kraters with four raised knobs, is decorated with incised designs. There are also small stone figurines, flat seals, and tools and vessels of copper. At this level appear inscribed tablets, for example inventories of provisions and animals, in a pictographic script. The earliest tablets have been catalogued as proto-Elamite,² but the type continued in use

¹ *Mémoires de la Délégation en Perse*, VIII (1905), p. 160, Fig. 320. *Perse*, VI (1905), pp. 59-128; *Mémoires de la Mission de Susiane*, XVII (1923), xxvi (1935).

² By V. Scheil: see *Mémoires de la Délégation en*

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down to the twentieth century B.C., concurrently with documents in cuneiform. The cuneiform documents are in two languages, Babylonian Semitic and Anzanite, which is presumably Turanian. A number of these tablets were found just below the second level in the 1930-2 Acropolis trench,¹ with flat seals with die engraving (Pl. 75 B, C, F, G,); cylinder seals usually showing kneeling women (Pl. 75 P); vases sometimes round, sometimes conical, with a turned down spout; and kraters with four small ears pierced laterally, and incised decoration.

In the clearing on the south side of the Acropolis well defined tombs of this period were

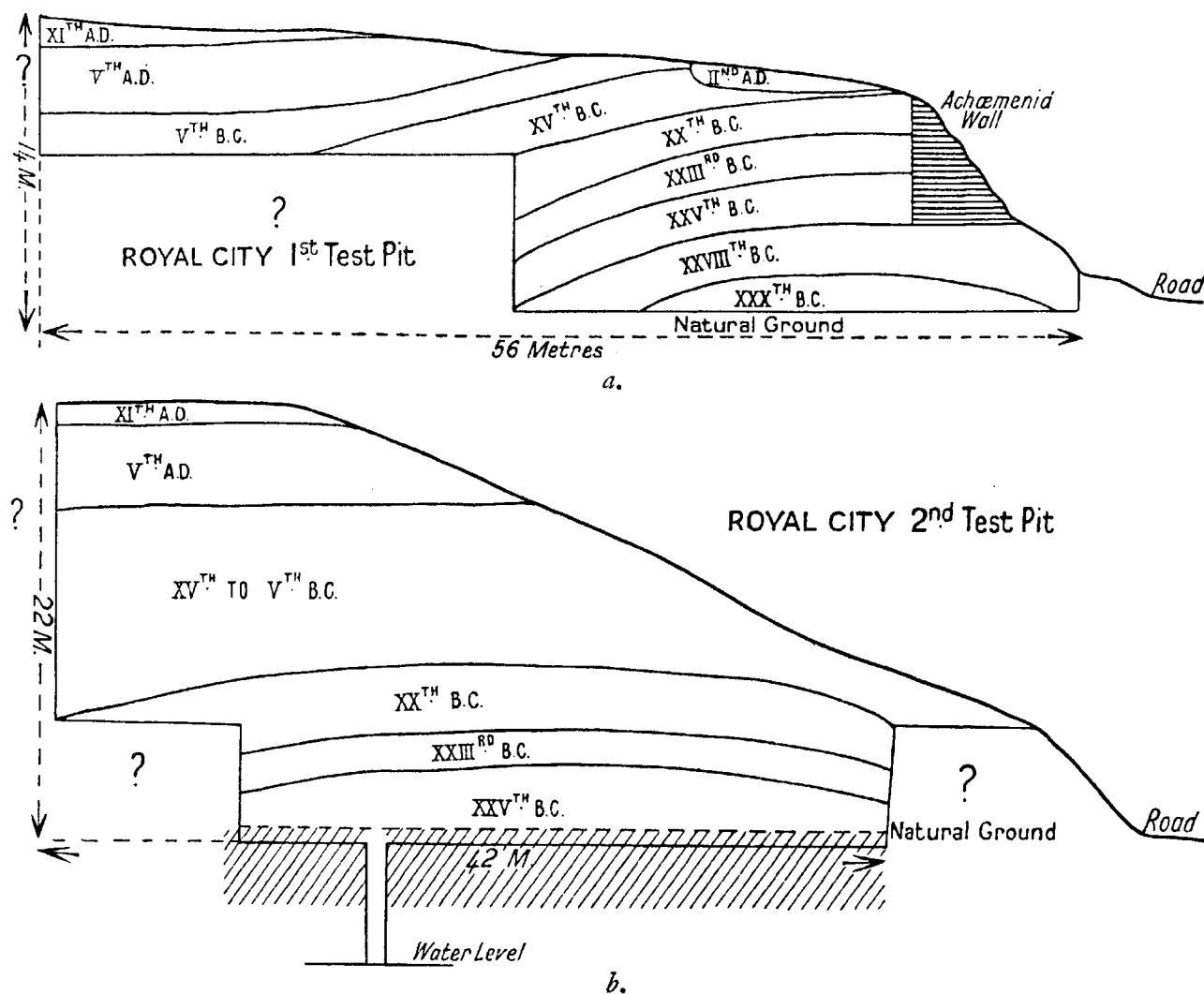


FIG. 13.

found, covered, for about 3 feet (1 metre) above the contents, with a bed of pebbles or boulders. In these were principally maces, cane heads, stone balls, and beads. The excavation also yielded a great many amulets in stone, shell, and terracotta, some very large cylinders of blue paste representing primarily lions and oxen (Pl. 75 K, L, M), die-engraved cylinders, and flat seals, some in the form of animals, some of lions' heads. But the most unusual thing was an alabaster game board divided on one side into squares, blue, white, and yellow. Immediately above this were trench graves. The bones had almost disappeared, but the burials could be identified by the grouping of the grave pottery, together with small alabaster or aragonite vases, small stone figurines, stone maces, and

¹ This level was a yard (1 metre) thick at this part of the excavation.

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necklaces of calcareous stone beads. Fragments of round vases were found here, with red or black decoration, and cylinders of paste or soft stone, with both geometrical and floral ornaments (Pl. 75 H, J).

On the corresponding level at the Royal City (Fig. 13 *a*, *b*) were the usual stone vases, alabaster and aragonite bowls; copper vessels, including pots, some with long open spouts, bowls and sieves; and axes, stilettos, javelins, and daggers. With these were found also copper nails to attach the leather to the frame of shields; copper mirrors with a handle; long copper pins with a top in the shape of a bull's head; and long-handled spoons, with five teeth on the bowl, like one type of modern dessert spoon. The painted pottery of the period was also found here. Immediately above this level were tall jars with handles ornamented with human figures (Fig. 14), high goblets, large pots with mouldings, and a very few pieces with painted decoration.

The historical period begins in the middle of the third millennium, with a fairly clear chronology. The history of Susa bears out Strabo's impression: 'Susiana never had much power, but depended always on greater empires, save perhaps in the very early period, the heroic age.'¹ She was first under the control of Agade, then of Ur, then of Babylon, and then she became part of the Achaemenid Empire.

It was Sargon the Elder (*c.* 2530 B.C.) who, after having obtained control of Chaldaea, conquered Elam for the dynasty of Agade (twenty-ninth to twenty-seventh centuries). Elam at that time was ruled by the eighth king of the Awan dynasty, of which there were four subsequent kings who ruled under the house of Agade.² Sargon's third successor, Narām-Sin (*c.* 2500 B.C.), pillaged Susa and carried off to Sippar the statue of the goddess Nanā. A vice-regent governed Susa.

The architectural remains from this period that have been uncovered at Susa consist of an aqueduct, at a depth of 25 to 30 feet (8 to 10 metres) on the Acropolis, which surrounded the temples and palaces; the foundations of the first temple of Susa; and the masonry of a lifting machine. The chief smaller finds of the period are a series of gypsum statuettes of the time of Naram-Sin, which were in a basin, and pottery. This is, again, painted, but polychrome now, red, black, and white, the colours very impermanent, often soluble in water as if they had been applied only to attract a purchaser. There are great kraters

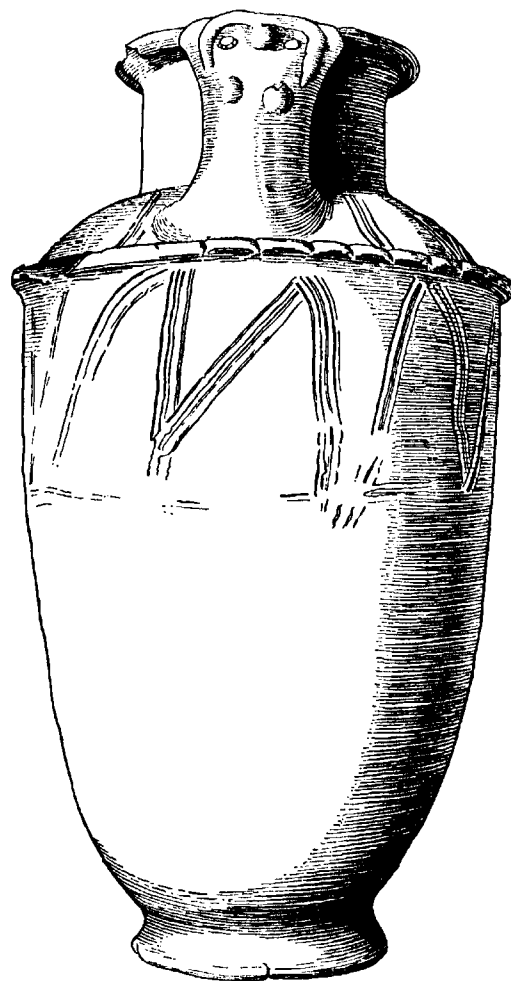


FIG. 14. Pottery, 3rd millennium.

¹ STRABO, *Geographia*, Book IV, Chapter xv, iii. 2.

² The transcription of a tablet found in the 1930-2 excavations gives the names of twelve kings of the Awan dynasty and twelve kings of the Simash dynasty.

The last king of Awan was Puzur-Shushinak, who was responsible for sculpture and for lapidary texts in two scripts, Semitic and proto-Elamite.

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with four knobs, sometimes decorated only with a red slip, but also with geometrical designs; large pots decorated with animals; and bowls and bottles. The same type has been found at Tepe Mūsiyān and at Kish,¹ and a very similar style appears in Zohab² and at Rayy. With it, at Susa, are beautiful cylinder seals, aragonite vases, stone vases with bas-relief decorations, and copper arms. The graves of this period also yielded pottery and arms as well as jewels. There are sometimes several bodies together in the same tomb.

In the 1930-2 Acropolis trench, fragments of hard stone sculpture of this period were found: joined hands, a torso, and the corner of a seat showing soldiers in low relief, followers of Sargon the Elder or of Narām-Sin (Pl. 18 A); and in the next season, in the trench on the south side of the Acropolis, more pottery of this period was uncovered, together with alabaster and aragonite vases with a conical bottom and a wide flat rim around the neck; cylinder seals with incised geometric designs; and a few copper arms. At the next level, contemporary with the Simash dynasty, were the same kind of graves, but these contained a different type of pottery: monochrome painted vases permanent in colour; a style of unpainted jug with a small handle; and a form of chalice with a broad cup on a high stem, the last two ornamented with incised patterns.

During the Simash dynasty, Susa was under the suzerainty of Ur (2300 B.C.). The Kings of Ur had temples built at Susa to the Susian gods, Inshushinak and Ninhursag. They had in Elam a vice-regent or *Sukkal*, and his son was the king of Susa. In all, the names of about forty kings are known between the beginning of the Awan dynasty and the first Babylonian dynasty, about 2000 B.C. During the Simash period the Elamites plundered Babylonia (2183 B.C.).³

The two temples built by Dungi, king of Ur, on the Acropolis, have been excavated, and deposits of votive offerings were found, consisting of little copper statuettes and stone tablets. Under the tiles were many valuable objects: jewels, rings, and medallions, metal statuettes, and small animals cut in hard stones. Graves of the Ur period were found in the cemetery on the *Apadāna*. In these the corpses were laid on their sides covered with an oval terracotta tub. The legs were bent, the fingers often placed in a small copper bowl. The tub is generally reinforced on the outside with mouldings, and the top is sometimes decorated with an oval projection which may be divided into four or six sections. The little basins which are thus formed seem to have been used for offerings or funerary libations. Around each tomb were small vases in stone, carved bitumen,

¹ E. MACKAY, Report on the excavation of the 'A' Cemetery at Kish, *Field Museum of Natural History, Anthropology Memoirs* 1, Chicago, 1925; H. R. HALL—C. L. WOOLLEY, Ur, Excavations, 1, Al-'Ubaid, London (British Museum), 1927, p. 157; S. LANGDON, Excavations at Kish, 1, Paris, 1924.

² *Mémoires de la Délégation en Perse*, xx (1928), pp. 126-7.

³ Valuable light is thrown on the history of Susa between 2500 and 1900 B.C. by a series of 327 tablets of unfired clay comprising a collection of Susian legal

acts, found in the 1930-2 seasons. Oaths binding contracts mention the name of great *Sukkals* of Elam, and of kings or patesis of Susa itself, officiating under their authority, forming in all a list of twelve great *Sukkals* and about ten kings of Susa. Kutir-Nahhunte is the fourth name on this list, which is, however, not complete, for we already have from other sources the names of four other great *Sukkals* that do not occur here. See V. SCHEIL, Actes juridiques susiens, in *Mémoires de la Délégation en Perse*, xxii, xxiii (1930, 1932).

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or terracotta. The pottery of this period is all in squat shapes, with the neck sometimes painted red. There are also arms and tools in copper.

The bodies were wrapped in a shroud. A diadem of gold or silver was sewed on a veil that covered the head. The breasts were covered with silver pectorals. Some also had rings, earrings, bracelets, and anklets. The children were buried either directly in the ground, or sometimes in jars.

In one of the many drains that cut across the 1930-2 Acropolis trench was gathered, bead by bead, a necklace of semi-precious stones which included three little recumbent lions in carnelian and one inscribed carnelian cylinder which dates the necklace in the third dynasty of the Kings of Ur, while from terracotta sarcophagi found in the other trench on the south side of the Royal City were recovered jewels, bowls cut out of bitumen decorated with animal heads in high relief (Pl. 17 C-G, D, E), a cylindrical painted vase (Fig. 15), a black painted pottery with incised designs brought out by filling the lines with white chalk (Pl. 11 D),¹ and cylinder seals. A number of small terracotta bas reliefs of this period have also been found (Pl. 18 C, D), as well as terracotta figurines (Pl. 18 E, F).



FIG. 15. Pottery, painted, 3rd millennium.

After the revolt of the last Ur vice-regent, Susa fell into the hands of Hammurabi, king of Babylonia (1917 B.C.). His dynasty was ended by a Hittite invasion, and there followed, about 1750 B.C., the long rule of the Kassites, mountain people who were neighbours of the Elamites. About this time there was apparently a colony from Lower Chaldaea living along the southern edge of the Royal City. The Elamites seem to have had a good understanding with their new conquerors. One of the Elamite kings, Untash-gal, had a brilliant reign about 1500. A Kassite king, Kuri-galzu, pillaged Susa in 1340 B.C.

In the rooms of the temple of Dungi on the Acropolis were found *kudurrus*, deeds of gift of consecrated lands given by Kassite kings to religious foundations. There was also a heavy bronze statue of the Queen Napirasu, the wife of the King Untash-Gal. In the approach to the temple were found lions of enamelled terracotta and of stone which are characteristically Elamite, dating from the later construction of Shilhak-Inshushinak.

In the *Apadāna* cemetery, in the level above the Ur period, appear small individual vaults built of unfired brick or fired brick. Here were buried jars, the coffins of children. Later the tombs became larger and more skeletons were put into each one, in some instances as many as twenty. The door, which was closed with tiles set flush, had in front of it a small square construction in which there was sometimes a grave. The latter was probably made for a provisional burial. When there was another death in the clan or family to which the vault belonged, the skeleton would be dug up and put into the vault proper, and room would be made for it by pushing back the bones already there.

¹ For exactly the same ware found in Mesopotamia, see G. CROS, *Nouvelles fouilles de Tello*, Paris, 1910, p. 244.—*Ed.*

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The grave equipment has usually suffered severely from this manœuvre, most of the vases being broken.

One second millennium cemetery in the Royal City has been explored (Fig. 13 *b*). The burials here, also, are simpler than in the preceding millennium, the corpses often being in jars, and children were always buried in this way. In many of these graves there were scales with stone weights. Presumably this was the merchants' cemetery, while the necropolis on the *Apadāna* was for people of a higher class.

In 1260 B.C. while the Assyrians, who had come into power on the Upper Tigris, were pillaging Babylon, the King of Elam seized his chance to sack Lower Chaldaea. In 1187 B.C. Shutruk-Nahhunte, King of Elam, entered Chaldaea while the Assyrians were operating farther to the north, and took an enormous amount of plunder at Sippar and at Eshnunna. The stele of Naram-Sin, the copies of the Code of Hammurabi, the statues of the Patesis of Eshnunna, all documents of primary importance found in Susa, are the fruits of the raid of Shutruk-Nahhunte. After this raid the Elamites kept the territory between the Tigris and the mountains. The King Shilhak-Inshushinak established himself there solidly. He founded Madaktu, a secondary capital of the kingdom, which served to protect Susa against Assyria.

The Susian tombs are all anonymous. All kinds of tablets are found in them, but these have no personal relation to the interred. There are cylindrical seals but without individual inscriptions. In one vault of about 1200 B.C., but one only, the tablets did have a funerary character. They were prayers relevant to the judgement which the deceased anticipated, referring also to a liberating water, and giving assurances of a future life. The offerings that were placed near these tombs were pots of food, fruits, especially dates, meats, drinks, and perfumes. The pottery includes bowls, drinking vessels, and lamps. Often near the tomb there are great basins which must have served in slaughtering the sacrifices or for purifications.

A sanctuary of the twelfth century uncovered on the *Apadāna* was dedicated to Inshushinak, according to the inscriptions on numerous brick and relief tiles. A pavement 65 feet (20 metres) square, walls of unfired earth, and two figures from decorative panels in relief bricks were found. These represent a truly local art. One (Pl. 19 A)¹ shows a bull-man, wearing a horned bonnet, standing up and grasping with his hands the trunk of a conventionalized palm (see Chapter 38). The bearded face and the human torso are affronted. The other shows a woman affronted, dressed in a long robe, her hands holding her breasts. Other enamelled Elamite bricks with relief decorations representing divinities have been found elsewhere. Blue enamel is the commonest, but there is also a yellow. Blue enamel or frit was also used to make small human and animal figurines and also an unusual type of cylindrical covered jar, with both the body and the cover ornamented with floral patterns (Pl. 11 F, Fig. 16). Until these discoveries were made, no enamelled frit after the period of Puzur-Shushinak had been found.

¹ For a similar figure see the 'door guardian demon' at Ur, 1930-1, *The Museum Journal*, xxii (1931), on the chapel of Pa-sag: C. L. WOOLLEY, Excavations pp. 247-82, p. 270, Pl. xxxviii, Fig. 1.—Ed.

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Because of family ties, community of interest, or vassalage, Elam, though less dependent on Babylon, always took the part of Chaldaea in the raids, almost annual events, of the Assyrians.¹

In 652 B.C. Shamash-shum-ukīn revolted against Ashurbanipal with the co-operation of the Elamites, but was overcome. Tammartu became King of Elam, but was dethroned by chiefs of clans. The Assyrians reinstalled him and he was dethroned a second time. Ashurbanipal then decided to be really ruthless and Susa was pillaged. The 'Imperial Bulletin' lists the plunder: royal treasure, battle chariots, statues of divinities, priests and artisans were all carried off to Nineveh. The towers of marble and of brass, the winged

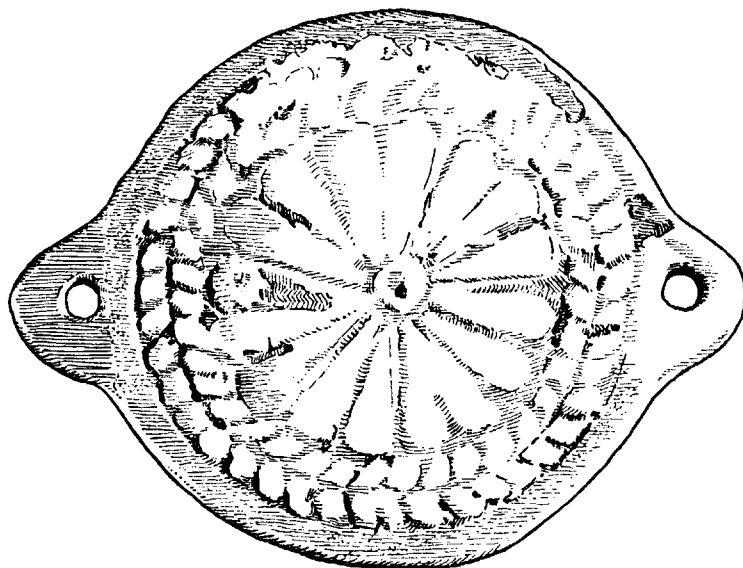


FIG. 16. Cover, enameled, c. 12th century B.C.

bulls and the lions of the palace were all thrown down, and the royal tombs were violated (640 B.C.).

The vaults of the end of the Elamite period in the *Apadāna* Necropolis are quite large, 16 to 26 feet (5 to 8 metres) long. The inside was whitewashed at this period. The bones form a half-pulverized layer on the paving. In some cases there are compartments and the corpses were laid on brick beds. In some of these there are fine arms and enameled vases with reliefs. The children were buried either in these vaults or in jars. Some of the jars for adolescents are very large and are reinforced with mouldings. In other instances the jar is clearly too small to have held the body, or else the placing of the bones shows that they were put in at the time of a second burial.

In many vaults heads in high relief of unfired clay have been found (Pl. 18 B). The eyes, very carefully rendered, have been modelled separately and inset. The neck, which

¹ Humbanigash supported Merodach-baladan against Sargon II, King of Assyria. The city of Sippar was pillaged in 693 B.C. Huban-immēna made an alliance at a price with Mushēzib Marduk, and undertook an indecisive battle against the Assyrians on the Tigris, c. 690 B.C. Esarhaddon, king of Assyria, 681–68 B.C., installed one of his sons, Shamash-shum-ukīn, as vice-regent of Babylon, Humban Hattash II being

king of Elam. Ashurbanipal became king at Nineveh (668 B.C.). The Elamites, under Urtaku, invaded Babylonia, were defeated and their king killed (663 B.C.). A usurper, Teuman, became king at Susa. Ashurbanipal went to Susa to re-establish order. Teuman was defeated at Tulliz, and the kingdom was divided among the sons of Urtaku.

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is very crudely treated, is pierced as if to permit the head to be fixed on a base, possibly while it was being modelled. A number of these heads have been gilded, others have been painted, the hair and the beards being indicated in black by means of bitumen. The white of the eyes is also marked. Two of the men's heads are very similar to each other. Possibly these represent the same man, but, on the other hand, the type must have been common among the Elamites, and indeed it resembles also Assyrian representations of Elamites. The feminine heads have features that appear also on the little Susian figurines. These heads were presumably used in the reburial services.

After the middle of the seventh century the Assyrian Empire declined under the attacks of the Scyths and the Medes. Nineveh was taken in 612 B.C., and the Median Empire extended as far as the Halys. Nebuchadrezar II reigned at Babylon and married the daughter of Cyaxares, king of the Medes. Elam was divided into two parts: Anzan, which is today Luristān, and the Bakhtiyārī mountains together with Fārs; and Susiana which became a province of Babylonia; but when Cyrus marched against the Lydians, Susiana took his part (539 B.C.).

In the Neo-Babylonian period large vaults were still in use in the *Apadāna* cemetery, made usually of unfired clay. Very fine grave furniture has been found in these, including terracotta jars enamelled in polychrome designs, glass vials, cups and kraters of metal, arms and rings.

Another type of grave found at this period consists of a long narrow excavation closed with great jars placed side by side. These excavations are sometimes larger and contain more than one body. The children were buried in jars.

Enamelled relief tile decorations of this period in blue, yellow, white, and black have been recovered, and there is also quite a quantity of enamelled figurines, personages, and little animals, sometimes rather cleverly executed.