

Stone Vases as Evidence of Connection Between Mesopotamia and the Indus Valley

By Farzand Ali Durrani

A little over four decades of explorations and excavations have produced ample evidence to define the chief character of the Indus Civilization but its origin and decline are still a matter of controversy. Its real place in the ancient world civilizations is slowly being revealed by a detailed study of the material content. In the following paper Mr. Farzand Ali Durrani, Senior Lecturer in the Department, is focussing attention on the "stone vases" as traceable in the "Ancient Orient" and draws parallels in order to establish connection, both commercial and chronological.

Introduction

Certain types of stone vases provide important evidence for the connection between Mesopotamia and the Indus Valley. The most distinctive of these vases are of steatite or a dark stone and decorated sometimes in relief, sometimes by plain incision.

These types of stone vases can be classified in three main groups:-

- I. Curvilinear and geometric designs, including triangles, hachures, rectilinear designs.
- II. Architectural scenes, facades of doorways and windows.
- III. Human and animal figures.

Geometric, curvilinear and rectilinear designs, however, are sometimes combined with representational or mythological scenes. S.E. Persia, Makran (Bampur Valley) Elam, Sumer and Akkad have yielded examples showing pictures of what appear to be facades, doorways, and windows of buildings. Such buildings may perhaps be intended to portray shrines, for there are some examples where they occur in association with magical, or mythological scenes; spread eagles, horned beasts, females with long hair (perhaps goddesses) sometimes figure in these scenes. Such figures are represented on vases discovered at Mari in Syria and at Khafajah, in the Diyalah region.

It will be seen that many of the vases show designs which combine two or three groups. For each of these groups the catalogue gives details of extant examples. Within the groups it is divided into four geographical areas (a) Indus Valley and Baluchistan, (b) Iran, (c) Mesopotamia, (d) Syria.

We will start with Mohenjo-daro where two examples occur of stone vases which have parallels further west in Baluchistan, Bampur Valley (S.E. Persia), Elam, Mesopotamia and Syria. The final section of the catalogue gives details of stone ritual slabs with handles from Iran, Mesopotamia and Syria.

CATALOGUE OF EXTANT STONE VASES

Section I.

Stone vases decorated in relief and incision with plain and geometric designs.

A. INDUS VALLEY

Pl. I. Fig. 1.

Site.

Mohenjodaro.

Description.

Well preserved compartmental square vase vessels, described as a stone box by Marshall. (*Mohenjodaro* II, 369, Pl. CXXXI).

Materials and Dimensions.

Black slate. The partitions between the compartments are 0.3 inches thick at the base and thin out to 0.1 inch at the top. Each compartment measures 1.4 inches by 1.5 inches at the base. The whole box when complete must have measured 3.8 inches square by 2.45 inches high. It has a slight rebate at rim to hold the lid and has been divided into four compartments. Below the rim a small horizontal hole runs diagonally through each corner at a depth of 0.4 inches.

Location, Level and Date.

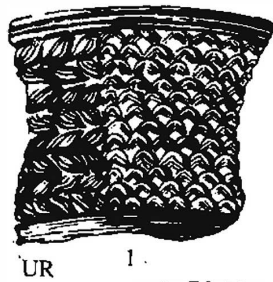
House XIII, Room No. 76, 5 ft. below the surface and therefore assigned to the late phases of the Harappa Culture.¹

Decoration.

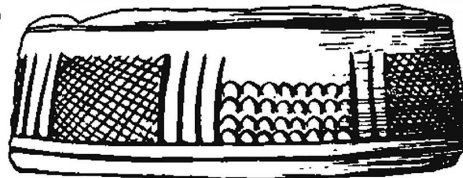
Hatched triangles and chevron in incisions. The decoration on the box has been divided into two registers by a horizontal band in the middle.

1. There is a similar box-like vessel, in the same shape and material at a depth of 7 ft. in the same area, house and room which has not been included, for it bears no decoration. (See Marshall, *Mohenjo-Daro and Indus Valley Civilization*. Pl. CXXXI, 36.)





UR 1



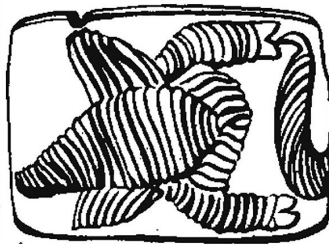
2 UR



UR 3



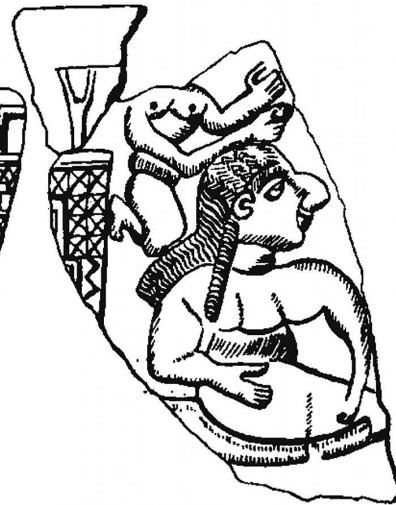
4 UR



UR 5



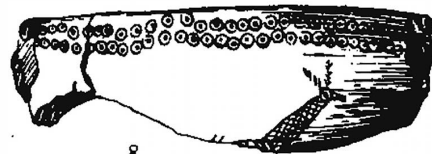
6



TELL - AGRAB



7 MARI



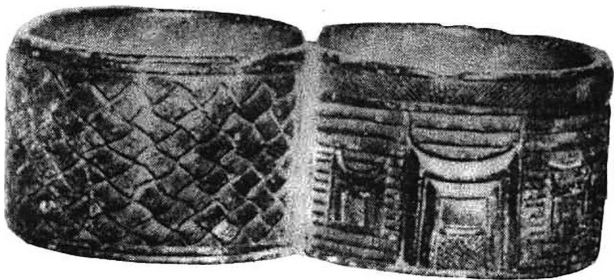
8 MARI



1. KATUKAN



2. BAMPUR



3. SUSA



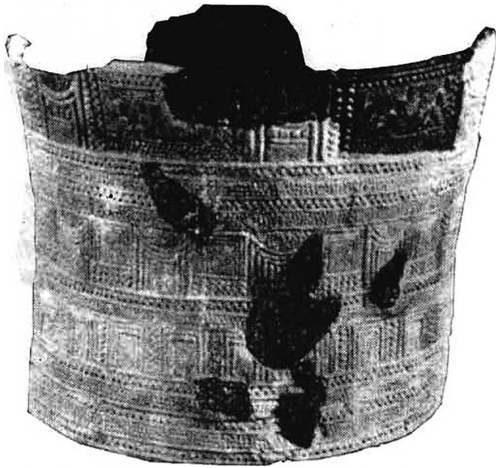
4. KHAFAJAH



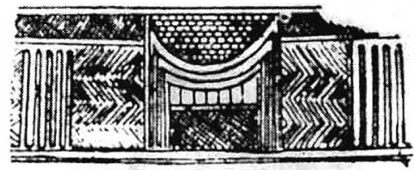
5. ADAB

DURRANI

(ANCIENT PAKISTAN



1. ADAB



IV

2. TELLOH



3. ABU-HUBAH (SIPPAR)



4. MARI

V



1. KHAFAJAH



2. KHAFAJAH



3. TELL ASMAR

VI

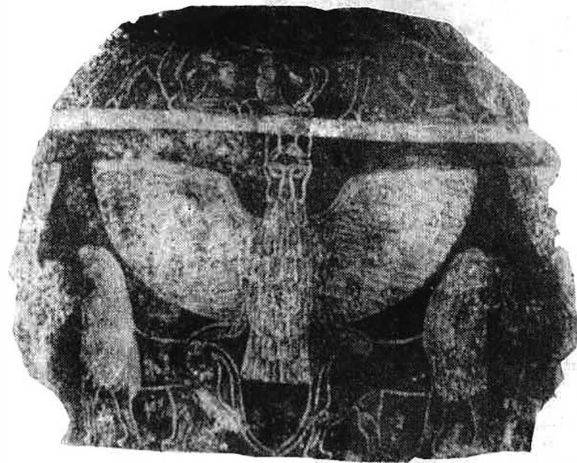


1. NIPPUR

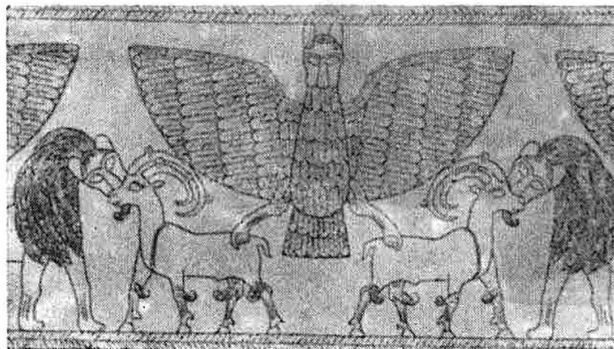
2. MARI



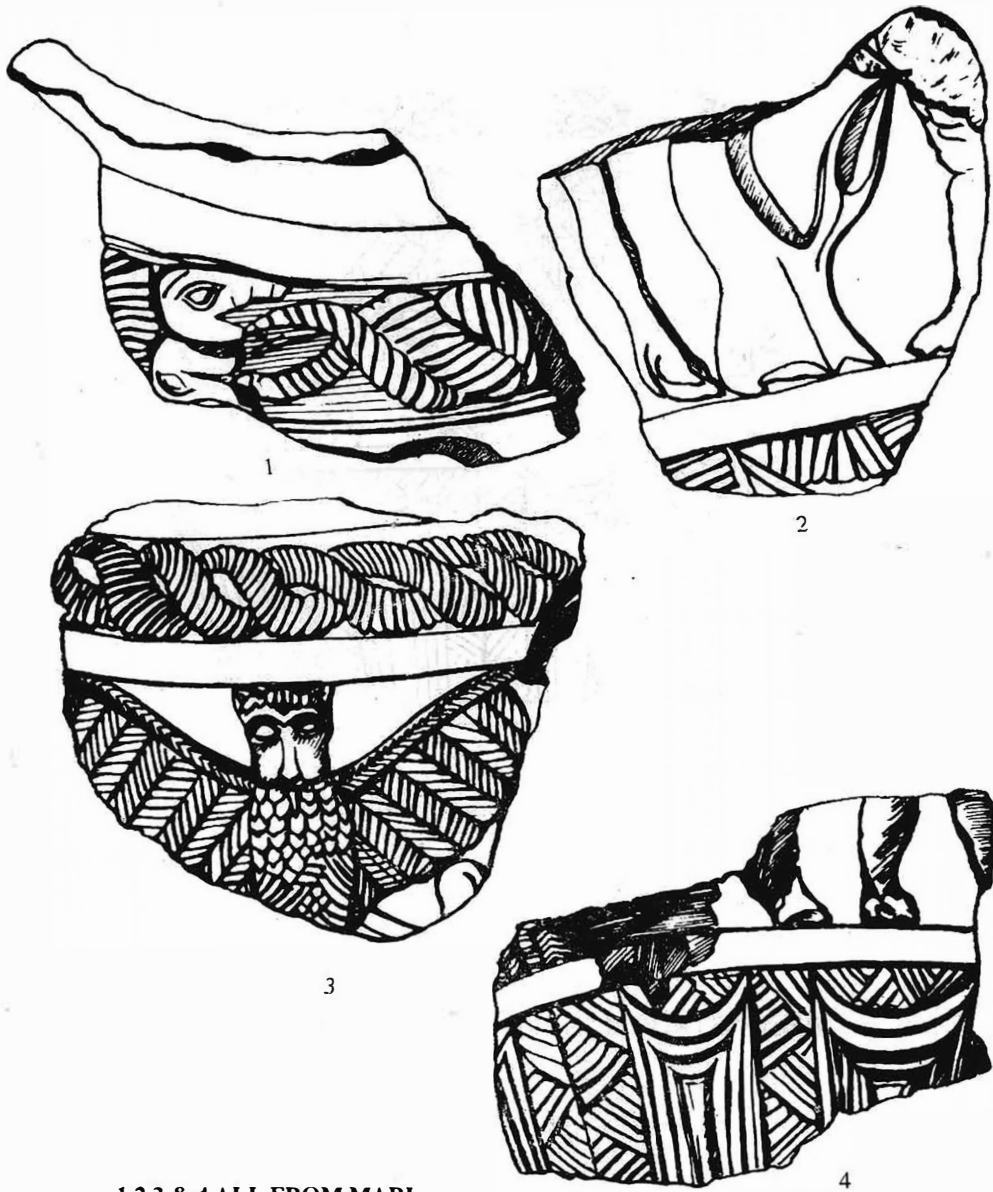
3-a. TELLOH



3-b. TELLOH

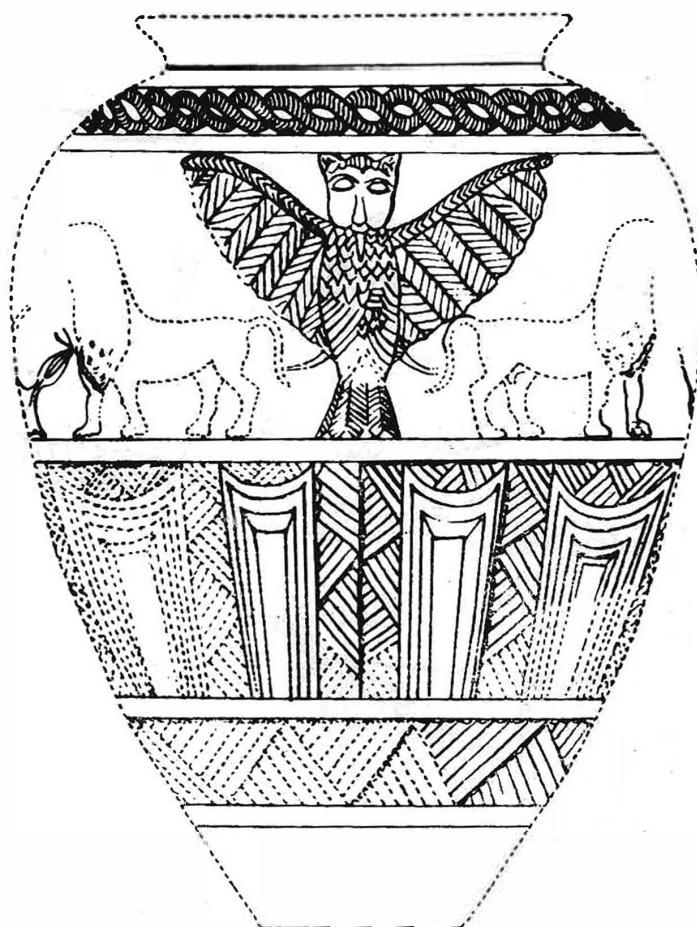


VII



1,2,3 & 4 ALL FROM MARI

VIII



Scale about

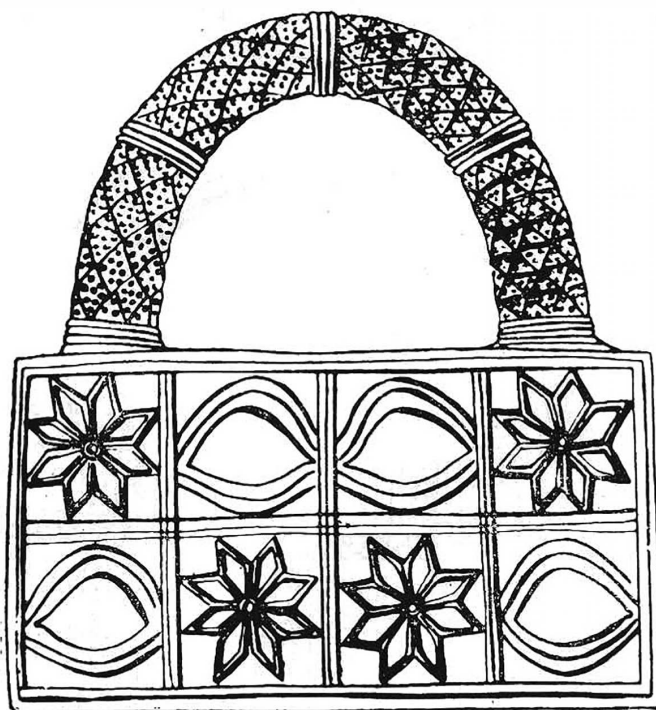
RECONSTRUCTION OF VASE FRAGMENTS FROM
MARI – SHOWN ON PL. VII

IX



1

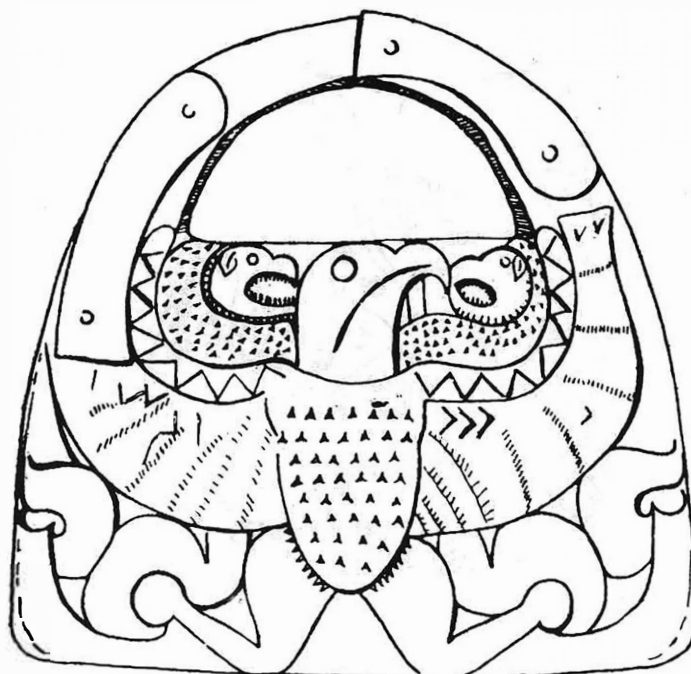
MARI



2

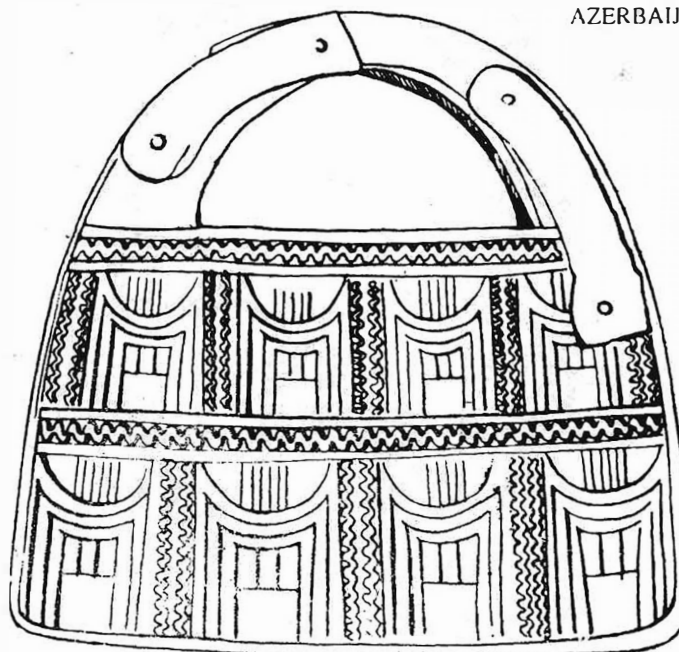
UR

X



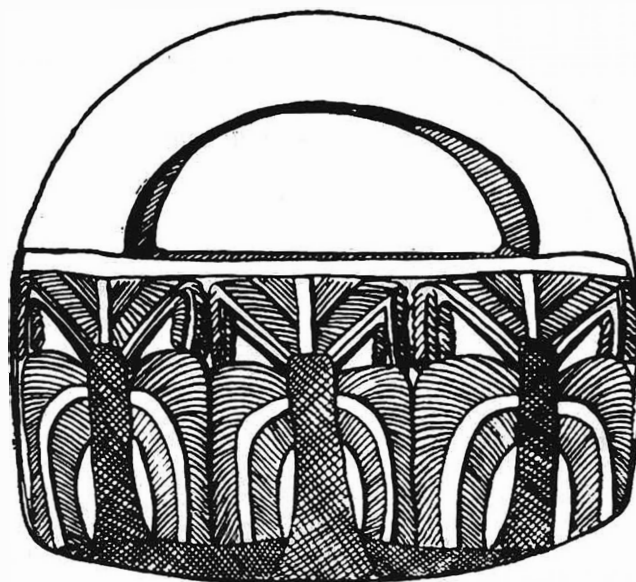
A

AZERBAIJAN



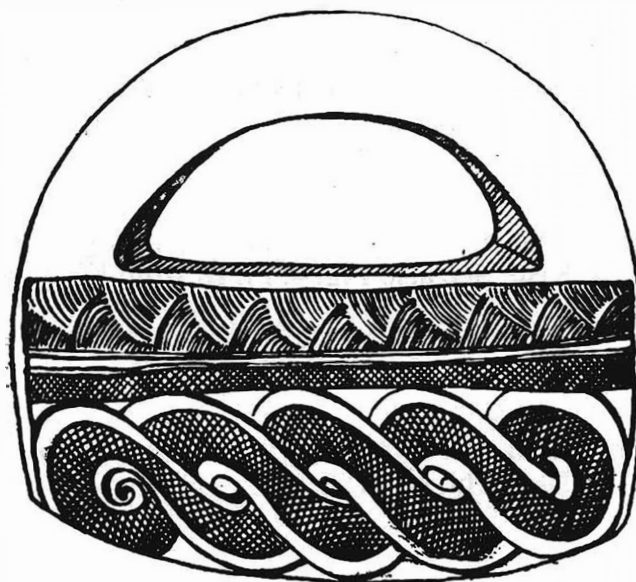
B

XI



A

PALMYRA (TODMUR)



B

Marshall suggests that these boxes were used perhaps for valuable cosmetics. He further thinks that the maker of this vessel was probably imitating Sumerian black ware pottery from Mesopotamia and that it "might have been imported from Mesopotamia".

Pl. I Fig. 2.

Site.

Mohenjo-Daro (E. Mackay. *Further Excavations at Mohenjodaro*), p. 321, Pl. CXLII.

Description.

Fragment of vessel, slightly curved. Probably the fragment of a conjoined jar like Fig. 3 on Pl. III.

Material.

Steatite. Greenish-grey.

Location, Level and Date.

House V, Room No. 53 in the DK area G southern portion, at a depth of 28.1 ft., from the early levels. Dated by Mackay to 2800 B.C. on stylistic comparisons with vases, Fig. 14, Pl. I and Fig. 3, Pl. III, but it may be assigned to the middle of the third millennium according to the revised ED dating in Mesopotamia².

It is an important discovery, for the early levels of Mohenjo-Daro are generally dated on the basis of its presence, which helps largely to establish the chronology of the earlier phases of Mohenjo-Daro.

Decoration.

Pattern resembling mat-work, worked in relief as in Fig. 3, Pl. III from Susa, D and Fig. 14, Pl. I from Kish. See also Fig. 4, Pl. III from Khafajah.

Pl. I. Fig. 3.

Site.

Mehi-Baluchistan (Stein. *An Archaeological Tour in Gedrosia*, M.A.S.I. No. 43, p. 156,7 Pl. XXVIII, Mehi, No. 1; 6; 4.

Description.

Small cylindrical vase, circular in shape and compartmented. (In the Central Asian Museum, Delhi).

2. We will follow the new dating suggested by Professor Mallowan in *The Dawn of Civilization*, Table X, p. 661.

Material.

Dark stone, perhaps steatite.

Location, Level and Date.

Section 1. 6 of the mound. Associated with painted and plain pottery, which closely resembles that from Periano Ghundai and Kulli and therefore dated typologically to the same period.

Decoration.

Geometric, in plain incision, triangles, chevrons and incised lines. It probably served the same purpose of keeping cosmetics.

Pl. I. Fig. 4.

Site.

Mehi (Stein. *An Archaeological Tour in Gedrosia*, p. 160, Mehi II 1.3).

Description.

Fragment of a large cylindrical vase, with four compartments. (In the Central Asian Museum, Delhi).

Material.

Fine-grained stone, probably steatite.

Location, Level and Date.

Section II of the mound, in association with a number of similar incised vessels and painted pottery and figurines of Kuli style, and therefore assigned to the Kuli-Mehi contexts. (For discussion of dating see the conclusion of this paper).

Decoration.

Incised in the same style of geometric decoration in hatched triangles and lines. It probably served the same purpose as Fig. 3.

Pl. I. Fig. 5.

Site.

Shahi-Tump (Stein. *An Archaeological Tour in Gedrosia*, p. 91, Shahi-Tump III, 9). Shahi-Tump is situated on the river Kej, near Turbat.

Description.

Fragment of cylindrical vessel with four compartments. (In the Central Asian Museum, Delhi).

Material.

The excavator could not be sure whether it was made of stone or of hard dark clay.

Location, Level and Date.

Section III of the mound, unstratified, but bearing a pattern of decoration akin to those found on painted Chalcolithic ware from Zhob and Sistan. Shahi-Tump cemetery dated to 2400 B.C. by Piggott (Piggott. *Prehistoric India*, p. 243 and c. 2000 to 1900 B.C. by Gordon (Gordon. *The Prehistoric Background of Indian Culture*, p. 63, Also see the conclusion of this chapter).

Decoration.

Incised, hatched triangles and chevrons.

Pl. I. Fig. 6.

Site.

From River Dasht region on the boundary of Iran and Pakistan Makran. (Piggott. *Prehistoric India*, 116).³

Description.

Fragment of a vessel, perhaps a circular one Ex-Quetta Museum, Now in Central Asian Museum, Delhi).

Material.

Steatite or similar stone.

Location, Level and Date.

Unstratified, but could belong to ED III on the basis of comparison with certain vases from Iran and Mesopotamia.

Decoration.

Relief work, with knobs or raised dots, each having small lines. The neck is thickly bordered with a line in relief. Similar decoration occurs on a vase from Ur. Fig. 1, Pl. II. Professor Piggott has compared this with vessels from Queen Shubad's grave at Ur, and has even regarded this series of vases as exports from Makran to Iran and Mesopotamia. I maintain, however, that this single example be regarded as an import from the West.

B. IRAN

Pl. I Fig. 7.

Site.

Khurab, Bampur-Valley (Persian Makran) (Stein, *An Archaeological Reconnaissance in N. W. India and S. E. Iran*, p. 121, KHI. F.I. 263, Pl. VI).

3. I wish to express my gratitude to Professor Piggott for allowing me to have the photograph of Fig. 6, and showing me some of his useful drawings and notes from Baluchistan.

Description.

Cylindrical vase.

Material.

Dark pot-stone or steatite.

Location, Level and Date.

Trench F of the mound. Unstratified by the excavator; associated with large number of tall pottery jars, mostly unpainted, an alabaster cup and bronze objects, such as dishes and spear-heads. Dr. F.A. Khan assigns it to an ED period (Khan, *A.S.I.C.*, 434) while Piggott dates the Khurab cemetery to about 2000 B.C. (Piggott, *Prehistoric India*, 216) and Gordon dates the Bampur incised vessels to about 2300 B.C. (Gordon, *The Prehistoric Background of Indian Culture*, 49). A date of about 2000 B.C., contemporary with the Kulli-Mehi stone vessels is the more probable of the two alternatives.

Decoration.

Incised horizontal lines, triangles and chevrons, divided into three zones by horizontal bands, a common decoration on stone vases from Bampur.

Pl. I Fig. 8.

Site.

Tepe-Giyan (Herzfeld), *Iran in the Ancient East*, p. 90, Pl. XXIV.

Description.

A cylindrical vessel. (In the Metropolitan Museum, New York).

Material.

It is made in stone, though Herzfeld does not mention the quality, but could be steatite.

Location, Level and Date.

Unstratified, but Herzfeld thinks that it could be of ED period.

Decoration.

Divided into six horizontal bands, of two different types of work. Three of them, that is the first one at the top, third and fifth, show concentric knobs or raised dots, in relief work. This pattern of decoration is used to represent hills (in ancient Mesopotamia or depicted landscape on the objects from the near-East).

The rest of the three bands on the vase represent trees arranged in various lines with their leaves falling to the ground, they are shown laden with fruits. Herzfeld suggests that the trees resemble Egyptian aloes, but I think that Contenau, in discussing a vase showing such trees (Pl. I, Fig. 9) is certainly right in believing that they are palm and date trees.

Pl. I Fig. 9.

Site.

Alleged to have come from Susa (Elam) (Contenau, *Manual de Archeologie Orientale* II, p. 643, Fig. 448).

Description.

A cylindrical vase (In the Louvre, Paris).

Material.

Dark grey-green steatite.

Location, Level and Date.

Unstratified. According to Contenau it may be dated c. 2900 B.C. But it could be of an ED II-III period, possibly the middle of the third millennium B.C.

Decoration.

In relief and bordered by horizontal bands at the top. Below the vessel shows some palm trees, with their leaves fallen to the ground in the same style as shown in Pl. I Fig. 8 with the fruit laden branches. Contenau asserts that the fruits are shown close to the little palm tree, known as a "downi" whose leaves fall in the same fashion. But I think the trees in the background are intentionally carved in a smaller size than those in the foreground, to show the long line in which these trees are arranged.

Pl. I. Fig. 10.

Site.

Perhaps from Susa (Elam) (Contenau, *Manual de D' Archeologie Orientale* II, p. 643, Fig. 447).

Description.

A cylindrical vase. (In the Louvre, Paris).

Material.

Dark grey-green steatite.

Location, Level and Date.

Unstratified, but Contenau thinks it may be dated 2900 B.C. on stylistic basis. It could, however, be of an ED II-III period, possibly 2500 B.C.

Decoration.

In relief and is described by Contenau as "conventional curls". It is more likely to represent the flowing streams often shown on objects from Sumer and Elam rather than the style of hair, as Contenau describes it.

Pl. I Fig. II

Site.

Susa (Elam) (*L'Art de la Mesopotamie*, Le Musee du Louvre, 250).

Description.

A large cylindrical vase. (In the Louvre, Paris).

Material.

Steatite.

Location, Level and Date.

c. 2500 B.C.

Decoration.

In relief, bordered by horizontal bands on either side. The main body of the vase has been decorated with raised dots or knobs and ornamented with triangles and chevrons by two thick bands, raised in relief and itself decorated in criss-cross lines.

Pl. I Fig. 12.

Site.

Susa (Elam) (*L'Art de la Mesopotamie*, Le Musee du Louvre, 250).

Description.

Conical-shaped vase. (In the Louvre, Paris).

Material.

Steatite.

Location, Level and Date.

2500 B.C.

Decoration.

Raised dots or knobs, in horizontal bands, in relief.

Pl. I Fig. 13.

Site.

Susa (Elam) (*L'Art de la Mesopotamie*, Le Musee du Louvre, 250).

Description.

A dish-shaped vase. (In the Louvre, Paris).

Material.

Dark stone, perhaps steatite.

Location. Level and Date.

c. 2500 B.C.

Decoration..

In relief, in raised dots or knobs, in four zones, divided by thin lines.

C. MESOPOTAMIA

Pl. I. Fig. 14.

Site.

Kish (Field, *Steatite vases from Kish, Antiquity*, VII, Pl. III, 84-5).

Description.

Fragment of a vase (Now in the Natural History Museum, Chicago).

Material.

Dark greenish steatite.

Location. Level and Date.

All fragments of this type from Kish (three known so far) come from trenches Nos. 7, 8 and 10, Section C of the site, generally found at a depth of 6-7 meters. They have been dated to about 2800 B.C. Field assigns this date, by comparing this with Fig. 3 (Pl. III) and Fig. 2 (Pl. I) which are similar. He assumes that this dating would agree with the dating assigned to Susa II D, by de Mecquenem, (see Fig. 3, (Pl. III). But according to the revised dating assigned to Susa. II D by Professor Mallowan, it should be 2500 B.C. (Mallowan, *The Dawn of Civilization* p. 66).

Decoration.

This is the same type worked in an intricate mat-pattern in relief, as Figs. 2 and 23. Thus it is possible that this fragment like Fig. 2 belonged to the same type of vase as the one from Susa, Fig. 3, Pl. III.

Pl. II. Fig. 1

Site.

Ur. (Woolley, *Excavation at Ur*, IV, Pl. XXXV. u. 19085).

Description.

A spindle-shaped vase. (In Baghdad Museum. No. B. 19839).

Material and Dimensions.

Steatite. Height 0.06 Dimension 0.12 m.

Location, Level and Date.

Pit X of the series, grave Royal Cemetery. ED III, or Early Sargonide.

Decoration.

Decorated in relief in two registers, one showing raised dots or knobs in concentric shape, and the other rhombic or lozenges.

Pl. II. Fig. 2.

Site.

Ur. (Woolley, *Excavation at Ur*, IV, Pl. XXXV, u. 18865).

Description.

A dish-shaped vase.

Material.

Steatite.

Location, Level and Date.

Royal Cemetery. ED III or Early Sargonide period.

Decoration.

In relief in raised dots or knobs and divided by four vertical lines carved in relief.

Pl. II. Fig. 4.

Site.

Ur. (Woolley, *Excavation at Ur*, II, Pl. CLXXVIII, u. 10523, Type 10).

Description.

A cylindrical vase. (In the British Museum).

Material and Dimensions.

Steatite. Dark grey, Height 0.10 mm. rim 0.18 mm. base 0.17 mm.

Location, Level and Date.

Queen Shubad's grave. No. P.G./800. ED III period.

Decoration.

Raised dots or knobs and is ornamented with two zig-zag lines, making triangles and lozenges on the body of the vase. It has been bordered by two horizontal bands, having a third zig-zag line in between them.

Pl. II. Fig. 3

Site

Ur. (Woolley, *Excavation at Ur*, II, Pl. CLXXVIII, u. 10522, Type 10.).

Description.

A small cylindrical vase. (In the British Museum, B.M. 121698).

Material and Dimensions.

Grey-green steatite. Height 0.5 mm, rim 0.95mm, base 0.09mm.

Location, Level and Date.

Queen Shubad's grave. No. P.G./800. Royal Cemetery, ED. III period.

Decoration.

In relief in concentric knobs. A horizontal band in the middle divides the vase into two lateral zones.

Woolley also refers to other stone vases, from two graves, Nos. P.G. 337 and P.G. 1633 but neither of them have been illustrated. It should, however, be noted that P.G. 337 is a Royal Tomb, ED II-III.

The second grave P.G. 1633 was found at a considerable depth, 6.3 meters below the surface and therefore cannot be later than the others. It is worth observing that usually at least two of the graves which contained these vessels belong to important persons. It therefore follows that these vessels were highly prized objects. Thus it is not surprising that parallels for them have not been found as far distant as Iran and India.

D. SYRIA

Pl. I Fig. 15.

Site.

Mari (Parrot, *Mission Archeologique de Mari, Le Temple de Ishtar*, p. 116, Pl. XVIII).

Description.

A large globular vase with flat base. Found in two pieces and restored, (here reduced from the original size).

Material and Dimensions.

Steatite. Height .205 mm. diameter .205 mm. diameter at neck .128 mm.

Location, Level and Date.

Courtyard A 20, under the pavement of flooring, next to the statue of Ebil-il. Level A. ED II or III period. The temple is said to have been destroyed either by a Sumerian king of Lagash, probably Eannatum or by Sargon of Agade.

Decoration.

The upper half is in relief with a double tress; the holes suggest that it was inlaid. It has also been thought to represent two serpents interlaced.

Pl. I. Fig. 16.

Site.

Mari (Parrot. *Mission Archeologique de Mari, Le Temple de Ishtar*, p. 118, Pl. LI.

Description.

A large globular vase, (here reduced like Fig. 15).

Material and Dimensions.

Steatite. Height .240 mm. dimension .202 mm.

Location, Level and Date.

Courtyard A 20, near the statue of Ebil-il, level A therefore ED II-III.

Decoration.

Elaborately worked in six lateral zones, in relief, divided by a zig-zag line carved within horizontal bands.

Section II. Stone vases representing facades of doorways and architectural scenes.

The second group of our vases have designs representing facades of doorways and architectural scenes, in relief and sometimes incised decoration. They are sometimes elaborately decorated and in a few cases combine with mythological scenes.

It has, however, been noticed, that none of our vases from the Indus Valley, Baluchistan and Bampur Valley, except Figs. 2 and 6 (Pl. I) have been decorated in relief. Fig. 2 (Pl. I) might belong to a stone vase, similar to Fig. 3 (Pl. III) and therefore must have been imported from Elam or Mesopotamia. The rest of the specimens have been worked in incision.

Two of our vases from group II, Nos. 1 and 2 (Pl. III) Bampur Valley, are not made in stone and are instead made in hard, dark clay. But they are worth illustrating, for the similar ware and the style of decoration is common.

A. IRAN

Pl. III. Fig. I.

Site.

Katukan (Bampur-Valley) Stein, *An Archaeological Reconnaissance in N. W. India and S. E. Iran*, p. 117. Pl. VI. Kat. 019).

Description.

A large cylindrical jar.

Material.

Hard dark clay.

Location, Level and Date.

About 2000 B.C. For further discussion of the incised vessels from Bampur see p. 94

Decoration.

Incised, in hatched triangles on the shoulder and bottom, whereas the main body of the vase shows central doorways with lintels and side windows. The front of the doorways is decorated in wicker-work, in incision.

Pl. III. Fig. 2.

Site.

Bampur Valley (Stein, *An Archaeological Reconnaissance in N.W. India and S.E. Iran*, p. 117, Pl. IV, Bamp. A. 161).

Description.

A globular vase.

Material.

Hard dark clay.

Location, Level and Date.

See the discussion for the date of these incised vessels from Bampur on page 94

Decoration.

With geometric designs, hatched triangles in incision on the shoulder, while on the main body it shows a facade of a central doorway, with lintels and side windows in the same wicker-work or mat pattern.

Pl. III. Fig. 3.

Site.

Susa (*M.D.P.* XII, 69).

Description.

A double conjoined jar. (in the Louvre, Paris).

Material and Dimensions.

Dark green steatite. Length 18.5 cm.

Location, Level and Date.

From the Temple of Shusinak in Susa II D. Originally dated by Mecquenum to c. 2880 B.C. on the basis of the comparison of Susa II D period with ED periods, but according to the revised dating of ED periods in Mesopotamia Susa II D should be dated to the middle of the third millennium. (This date agrees with the dating assigned to this vase in *L'Art de la Mesopotamie* Le Musee du Louvre, 250).

Decoration.

On one side it shows the architectural scene, in relief carving, and on the other side it has the same pattern and style of decoration in relief as the specimen from Mohenjo-Daro (Fig. 2 Pl. I) and Kish (Fig. 14, Pl. 1) represent. On the former side of this vase representing an architectural scene it shows geometric decoration on the neck of the vase, and the main body represents the central doorways and side windows with lintels. It is in the Louvre Museum, Paris (*L'Art de la Mesopotamie*, Le Musee du Louvre, 250). This vase is interesting enough to throw light not only on the diffusion of these types of vessels, but to enable us to determine the chronology of the Indus Valley. A fragment of a similar vase (Fig. 2, Pl. 1) which was found in the earliest levels of Mohenjo-Daro (see page 64) remains one of the main points of evidence in establishing the early contacts of the Tigris and Euphrates (as shown by Fig. 14 Pl. I from Kish).

B. MESOPOTAMIA

Pl. III. Fig. 4.

Site.

Khafajah Diyala region (Frankfort, *O.I.C.* 19. Fig. 56).

Description.

A cylindrical vase.

Material.

Dark grey stone, perhaps steatite.

Location, Level and Date.

Sin Temple IX. Room Q 43: II ED II period. (Delougaz and Seton Lloyd, *Pre-Sargonic Temples in the Diyala Region*, p. 69).

Decoration.

In the centre it shows the facade of a doorway with three lintels carved in relief. The doorway is decorated in wicker-work design, or mat pattern, showing reed work, while the upper portion on the doors is carved into three different blocks, divided by four thick lines in relief. The rest of the vase round the doorways is decorated in relief, in hatched triangles, vertical and horizontal lines and the same with woven intricate decoration as on vases Figs. 14 Pl. I and 3 Pl. III.

Pl. III Fig. 5.

Site.

Adab (Bismaya) (Herzfeld, *Iran in the Ancient East*, p. 90. Fig. 179).

Description.

A fragment of a vase.

Material.

Perhaps steatite.

Location, Level and Date.

Unstratified, but probably ED II-III.

Decoration.

Interesting representations of doorways and windows of two houses, one over the other, probably a double storey building. It has been decorated in incision and the doorways, representing lintels, have another rather elaborate design, showing small blocks over the doorways, decorated with mat pattern like Fig. 3, Pl. III. Above the lintel on panels, it has zig-zag and straight lines in incision. The building is shown on the bank of a river, which undulates between hills in landscape, in ancient Sumer.

Pl. IV. Fig. I.

Site.

Adab (Delougaz, *Architectural representation on Steatite Vase. Iraq* Vol. XXII, pp. 93-94. Pl. IXC.

Description.

A large cylindrical vase found in various pieces and restored.

Material.

Steatite.

Location, Level and Date.

Unstratified, from a rubbish dump but may belong to ED II or ED III on stylistic basis.

Decoration.

In relief, with bands of zig-zag lines, raised dots, divided in three registers of scenes, representing door and windows, in the usual manner. The topmost register, however, represents a peculiar structure of battlement or towers.

Pl. IV. Fig. 2.

Site.

Telloh (Woolley, *Ur. I, Al-ubaid*, pp. 68-69, Fig. 26).

Description.

A fragment of a vase.

Material.

Stone.

Location, Level and Date.

Unstratified, probably ED. II-III.

Decoration.

Woolley thinks that this perhaps represents a facade of a primitive Sumerian building, which serves as a link between the hut dwelling of Al-ubaid and the Nin-Khursag Temple. He believes that the main construction is of half-timber and matting. The gate tower, according to Woolley, is made of bricks. Woolley thinks this design of the building, certainly, leaves little doubt as to the wooden origin from which the pannelled brick-work of the Sumerian temple was derived. Woolley is inclined to assert this view because of the actual panelling in wood, surviving in one case, in the building of A-anne-padda⁴.

Pl. IV. Fig. 3.

Site.

(SIPPAR) Abu-Habah (Woolley and Hall. *Ur I, Al-ubaid* pp. 68-69, Fig. 27.)

4. C.L. Woolley, "*Ur*", Vol. I, p. 69.

Description.

Fragment of a vase (Now in the British Museum, B. M. 118275).

Material.

Steatite.

Location, Level and Date.

Unstratified, probably ED. II-III.

Decoration.

The figure also represents the same style and pattern of wood construction, with bricks, used in the panels. It has the same zig-zag lines of wicker-work.

Pl. IV. Fig. 4.

Site.

Mari, Syria (Parrot, *Mission Archeologique de Mari*, Pl. XLVI.)

Description.

A large cylindrical vase.

Material and Dimensions.

Steatite. Height. 115 m. 220 m. thickness at base .02 m.

Location, Level and Date.

Cellar 18, level A, Temple of Ishtar, Pre-Sargonide context. ED III. Could be ED II-III.

Decoration.

Above the shoulder it shows hatched triangles, in relief, and raised dots, while on the body of the vase it represents facades of doorways, with lintels. The doors in this case have raised knobs or dots. It also has carved triangles between the doorways. At the base it has been ornamented with a double tress, or guilloche style of decoration, with dots in the centre. Dr. Khan, while discussing this vase, describes the decoration at the base as ropes, associated with the buildings,⁵ but Parrot suggests that it may perhaps be the symbol of the water of fertility, the foundation on which according to Mesopotamian Mythology, the world stood and from which it received its life. Thus it may perhaps express the Sumerian mythological belief, of the fertility of the earth. It may even be the symbol of two streams, referring to the two rivers, Tigris and Euphrates, with which the goddess with flipper-like hands on a Kassite monument is associated⁶.

5. Khan, *A.S.I.C.*, 266.

6. Frankfort, *A.A.A.O.*, Pl. LXX, a.

Section III. Stone vases representing animal and human figures.

The third group of such stone vases, depict animal and human figures. These figures are often shown in magical or ritual attitudes and may represent mythological scenes. Sometimes they are shown on the vases, combining these mythological scenes with architectural scenes. It is, however, worth noting that these types of stone vessels do not occur in Persia or the Indus Valley, and we only find them in Mesopotamia and Syria.

A. MESOPOTAMIA

Pl. V. Fig. 1.

Site.

Khafajah Diyalah Region (Frankfort, *A. A. A. O.*, Fig. 9, 19).

Description.

A cylindrical vase (In the British Museum, B.M. 12887).

Material.

Dark green steatite. Height 10 cm.

Location, Level and Date.

Unstratified, but may belong to an ED II-III period⁷. This vase has been illustrated and discussed by Frankfort⁸, (c. 2500-2700 B.C.) and also by E.D. Van Buren⁹.

Frankfort asserts that this quality of stone was rarely used in Mesopotamia before the ED period.

Decoration.

Three scenes of different types are depicted on this vase. In the first group, a female figure is shown as astride, behind the two humped bulls of a type familiar to Mohenjo-Daro seals. She has been interpreted by Mrs. V. Buren as a rain goddess. This interpretation is no more than a conjecture. Professor Mallowan, however, maintains that this figure is a male rather than a female, with long locks of hair and a scalloped skirt, which is not typically Mesopotamian. (M.E.L. Mallowan, loc. cit). He considers the whole is Indian in character. In Mesopotamia such double representation of water is usually interpreted as symbols of

7. Mallowan in *The Dawn of Civilization*, p, 69.

8. *A.A.A.O.*, p. 19, where there is a discussion of the scenes and Frankfort admits that the interpretation is uncertain, but that the representation of two waters in the first scene may in some way be connected with the fertility of the earth. He writes that the humped ox is foreign to Mesopotamia, perhaps an Indian breed.

9. *Analecta Biblica*, XII 1959. Fig. 1.

the two great rivers, i.e. Tigris and Euphrates. In this connection a famous Kassite monument from Mesopotamia, found at Warka, depicts in relief on the brick facades of a temple a series of gods and goddesses, with flipper-like hands associated with such streams.¹⁰ On a wall painting from the palace of Mari (before 1750 B.C.) we have picture of a horned goddess, associated with two streams of water, and fish swimming amid them. Water and fish also occur on the famous Ishtar statue from Mari, and these representations seem to be strong evidence that the artist thus intended to signify the two rivers of Tigris and Euphrates.

On the vase the scene continues and in the second group the same personage appears, standing between two panthers, this time grasping a snake in each hand. Frankfort suggests that the snakes may stand for the power of the earth, and balance the fertilizing power of the water in the first group.

Of all the three scenes the third one is most interesting. It is also shown in a photograph (Frankfort, loc. cit. Pl. II B) with one of the snakes, and a panther of the second group. The scene depicts the humped bull of the first group being overthrown and attacked by a lion, and rent by a bird of prey, probably an eagle. This scene on the vase also includes a scorpion and a bear with a palm tree.

Now, as Frankfort points out, the style of carving and quality of stone can be paralleled elsewhere in the Diyala Valley. This vase (Fig. I) which is already seen, possibly comes from the Diyala Valley, is Indianesque in character, for the bull strongly resembles those depicted on the Indian seals. One of the seals from Mohenjo-Daro represents the bull, with two birds.¹¹ In one case, two cobra snakes have been shown on one of the amulets from Mohenjo-Daro with a deity.¹²

Moreover there is another seal of Indian style, from Ur, of Isin-Larsa period having been discovered in a vaulted tomb,¹³ and discussed by Professor Gadd.¹⁴ It is a stone cylinder seal, from a Larsa tomb which had been hacked down into a wall dividing two apartments in the north-west annex added by Bursin, king of the Third Dynasty of Ur, to the funerary buildings of his father. The seal represents a palm tree, fronted by a humped bull, with a round manger for fodder; behind the bull is a scorpion and two snakes, with a horizontal human figure, having a rayed head, above. Gadd suggests that this seal can either be of the Indus style, or made under a strong Indian influence. Wheeler, in his discussion of the seals of Indian style from Mesopotamia, asserts that "the general style of this seal is that of the Indus Valley, though the very large circular eye of the bull is perhaps of Kulli culture".¹⁵

10. See Frankfort, *A.A.A.O.*, Pl. 70-1.

11. Sir John Marshall, *Mohenjo-Daro and the Indus Valley Civilization*, p. 338, Pl. CXI.

12. Sir John Marshall, *Mohenjo-Daro*, pl. CXVIII, VS 210 where a seated figure is worshipped by two persons, who are flanked by two cobra on either side.

13. *Antiquaries Journal*, XI, 351.

14. Seal of Ancient Indian style, found at Ur-CJ. Gadd, from the *Proceedings of the British Academy*, XVII.1. Pl. 1, No. 6

15. Sir Mortimer Wheeler, *The Indus Civilization*, p. 86,

Pl. V. Fig. 2 a-b.

Site.

Khafajah Diyalah Region (O.I.C. 19, Fig. 54-55; also O.I.C. LXVIII, Fig. 63, 69).

Description.

The fragments of a large vase (Preserved in the Baghdad Museum).

Material.

Dark green steatite.

Location, Level and Date.

Room No. Q 43/II Sin Temple IX, ED II period.

Decoration.

The scene divides itself into two parts, different from one another. The upper portion of the vase is rather interesting, for it represents a mixture of scenes, perhaps mythological. On the top a bullman is shown struggling with two lions, which is a common scene occurring on most of the cylinder seals from Mesopotamia. Next we see a jackal-like animal, with big ears. Can this be an equid, a jackal, or onager? Further right is a human figure in Sumerian sheepskin; he seems to have grasped an unidentified object, because the scene is discontinued. Below it another series of the scenes has been represented. On the left some broken figures of animals, a wild goat, spread eagles having wild goats under each claw. On the right another bull-man, different from the first, seems to have grasped a bull by its horn.

The wild goat is a native animal to ancient Mesopotamia, which was commonly found in the neighbourhood of ancient Sumer. The eagle and the Sumerian sheepskin dress shows Mesopotamian origin. But the bull may either be Indian or Indianesque.

The lower portion of the vase represents geometric designs, incised decoration and facades of doorways and windows and linters with wicker-like work.

The scenes on the upper part of the vase are interesting, as they represent some of the mythological symbols of Mesopotamia. For instance, the bull-man which constantly appears on the Mesopotamian seals, shown fighting or struggling with the wild beasts and animals, the Sumerian dress, and the winged eagle.

Pl. II. Fig. 6 a-b.

Site.

Tell-Agrab Diyalah Region (Frankfort, *Tell-Agrab*, *I.L.N.* Sept. 12th, 1936).

Description.

Two fragments of a store vase.

Material.

Green steatite.

Location, Level and Date.

ED Temple and therefore assigned to ED II-III.

Decoration.

On one of the fragments, Fig. 6b (Pl. II) shows a figure, resembling the figure shown on our vase, Fig. I (Pl. V) with another figure, perhaps a female, standing on its knees, with its head completely missing and grasping something in its hand.

The scene has been shown in front of a facade of a building, which is unluckily missing. The other fragment seems to have been connected by the facade of the building above. It shows a humped bull of Indian origin, which is consequently shown in the same fashion, with a manger in front, on Indian seals, and is convincingly enough of Indian influence in the production of this vase and therefore suggests strong evidence for contacts between the Indus Valley and Mesopotamia in the early-dynastic period.

Pl. V. Fig. 3.

Site.

Tell-Asmar Diyalah Region (Herzfeld, *Iran in the Ancient East*, p. 90, Fig. 197b).

Description.

A small fragment of a vase.

Material.

Steatite.

Location, Level and Date.

Herzfeld assigns it to the Jamdat Nasr period while Dr. Khan thinks that it might be of ED II period (Khan, *A. S. I. C.*, P. 267).

Its stratigraphy and its close relation to the one from Adab (Fig. 5 Pl. III) inclines Herzfeld to date it to the end of Jamdat-Nasr period. Dr. Khan believes that such a high dating is rather an exaggeration and dates the vase under discussion to the ED II period.¹⁶

16. Dr. F.A. Khan, *A.S.I.C.*, p. 267.

Decoration.

The decoration combines a mythological and an architectural scene. On top it represents a similar scene to that shown in Fig. 2, Pl. V, a spread eagle having a wild goat under each claw, while below it shows the same type of facades of doorways and windows, with lintels. The doorways are again decorated with wickerwork below and divided into different zones or vertical blocks, as in the case of Fig. 2 (Pl. V) and Fig. 5 (Pl. III).

Pl. II. Fig. 5.

Site.

Ur 9 Woolley, Ur. IV, p. 173, Pl. XXXV, u. 7145.

Description.

A cylindrical vase.

Material.

Steatite.

Location, Level and Date.

Royal cemetery grave. Probably ED III.

Decoration.

In relief, the decoration shows scorpion in procession on the surface of the vase. The body of the scorpion is carved in relief.

Pl. VI. Fig. I.

Site.

Nippur (*I.L.N.* Sept. 9th, 1961).

Description.

A cylindrical vase.

Material.

Steatite.

Location, Level and Date.

ED Temple, period II, c. 2700-2600 B.C.

Decoration.

In relief, showing a serpent and a lion, fighting with one another. The bodies of both the animals have holes, probably for incrustation. The lion is shown grasping the body of the serpent.

C. SYRIA

Pl. VI. Fig. 2.

Site.

Mari (*Les Annales Archeologiques de Syria*, 2/1952, Fig. 5, Pl. III).

Description.

A cylindrical vase. No detailed description published. Base probably cylindrical.

Material.

Grey-bluish steatite.

Location, Level and Date.

From the Temple of Ishtar and therefore not later than ED III period.

Decoration.

There is an interlocking band of Guilloche with dots in the centre, and this is framed by zig-zag border, a type of decoration familiar on the vessels of this series.¹⁷ The scene on the body of the vase is in two registers, represented by a vertical panel, with cross-hatching which may possibly be a conventionalized representation of a palm tree; in one we have series of horned animals possibly domesticated. In the other panel there is a kneeling figure apparently female, with bird-like head. Her torso also appears to be bare, and she is wearing a lion cloth below the waist. A strange, curved object is represented, in relief, in front of her legs; like her lion cloth it is carved in hatching, and may be a part of her dress. Can this be a train, a bushy tail of the kind sometimes depicted on early dynastic Mesopotamian carvings?

She is bending down in front of a leafy tree; a second, larger one, may be seen in the background behind her. Larger trees similar in character are incised on north Syrian pottery of the ED period. This therefore is a good figured example of our Indianesque series. It must, however, be admitted that for the present we find it difficult to offer a parallel for our allegedly Indian goddess although she is clearly not normal to Mesopotamia.

Pl. IX. Fig. 1

Site.

Mari (Parrot, *Mission Archeologie de Mari*, p. 116. Pl. XLIX, 267).

Description.

A fragment of a vase.

17. Parrot, *Le Temple d'Ishtar* I, 21.

Material and Dimensions.

Dark grey steatite. Height .121 mm. Diameter at base 138 mm. Diameter at the top .082 mm.

Location, Level and Date.

Temple of Ishtar. Level A. ED II-III.

Decoration.

It has a similar scene to the one shown on Fig. I (Pl. VI) with a lion grasping the serpent.

Pl. II, Fig. 7, 8.

Site.

Mari (Parrot, *Le Temple d'Ishtar*, Pl. XLIX 156, 117).

Description.

A fragment of a vase.

Material.

Dark green steatite.

Location, Level and Date.

Temple of Ishtar. ED. II-III.

Decoration.

Ornamented with small circles with small holes in the centre, on the shoulder of this piece while below an animal figure, probably a deer or stag with short horns and a long neck has been depicted.

Pl. VII. Fig. I

Site.

Mari (Parrot, *Le Temple d'Ishtar*, Pl. XLVII 165, p. 115).

Description.

A fragment of a vase.

Material and Dimensions.

Steatite. Length .266 mm. x 135 mm.

Location, Level and Date.

Temple of Ishtar. Courtyard Room 20. Level A. ED II-III.

Decoration.

It shows two snakes struggling with each other, probably biting each other's tail.

Pl. VII. Fig. 3.

Site.

Mari (Parrot, *Le Temple d'Ishtar*, Pl. XLVII, 150, 114).

Description.

A fragment of a vase.

Material.

Steatite.

Location, Level and Date.

Temple of Ishtar. Courtyard Room 20. Level A. ED II-III.

Decoration.

A spread eagle in relief.

Pl. VII. Fig. 2.

Site.

Mari (Parrot, *Le Temple d'Ishtar*, Pl. XLVII, 171, 115).

Description.

A fragment of vase.

Material.

Steatite.

Location, Level and Date.

Temple of Ishtar. Courtyard Room 20. Level A. ED II-III.

Decoration.

In relief, and the objects seem to have been in a bad condition, but still from what we can see, are the legs of two animals and probably the trunk of a tree (see the reconstruction and discussion of these four figures on Pl. VII).

Pl. VII. Fig. 4.

Site.

Mari.

Description.

A small fragment of a vase.

Material.

Steatite.

Location, Level and Date.

Temple of Ishtar. Courtyard Room 20. Level A. ED II-III.

Decoration.

These fragments seem to be part of the same vase, as our reconstruction on Pl. VIII will show.

Parrot is probably right in suggesting that these four pieces (Pl. VII, 1, 2, 3, 4) belong to one vase, and we know that all of them were recovered from the same room (Courtyard 20). The lion headed eagle (No. 3 Pl. VII) representing the symbol of IMDU-GUD is known from many sites in the near east portrayed in a similar fashion; for instance on the famous bronze plaque from Al-ubaid now in the British Museum¹⁸, where a lion headed eagle is holding two stags.

After a possible reconstruction, however, the vase may look like the one shown on Pl. VIII. This is divided into three registers, with a fourth band at the bottom, showing triangles. (These fragments showing triangles belong to the same vase and are illustrated by Parrot on the same plate as the rest of them).

Above these triangles the third register shows the architectural scene, while the top shows the two interlaced serpents. The scene in the middle, however, is most interesting, as it has its exact parallel on the silver vase of Entemena of Lagash.¹⁹ Parrot's arguments are not to be accepted that the leg of the animal (Fig. 2, Pl. VII) on the right with its thick dewlap is probably that of a bovine;²⁰ then we are perhaps right in thinking that on this side of the vase the eagle held two lions, as is shown on the silver vase (Fig. 3, Pl. VI). The animal on the left, has comparatively slender and taller leg (Fig. 2, Pl. VII) and so it could probably be a gazelle or an antelope, while in the middle of the two animals is perhaps a tree. If this is true then the scene would probably be two gazelles or antelopes, held by the similar eagle, facing the lions (on the front) across the sacred tree, just as on the silver vase of Entemena, Fig. 3b, Pl. VI, where the gazelles face the two lions. The scene on the topmost register (the interlaced serpents) on this side of the vase, would end in the two serpents biting each other's tail (Fig. 1, Pl. VII).

This reconstruction, if accepted, will confirm the ritual function of these vases, by combining the mythological symbols of sacred tree, and bird, with the stylized

18. H. Frankfort, *A.A.A.O.*, Pl. XXVII, A.

19. *Ibid.* Pl. XXXII.

20. A. Parrot, loc. cit. p. 37.

doorways of shrines or temples. It will further help in dating our vases from Mari, on the basis of its comparison with the silver vase of Entemena to late ED III period. Finally it would combine all the three groups of our vases, i.e. a, b and c (see p. 2).

STONE RITUAL SLABS WITH HANDLES

A IRAN

Pl. X. a-b.

Site.

Said to have come from Azerbaijan (Godard, *Athar-e-Iran*, III, 1938, Fig. 210-II, 336-7).

Description.

A small bag-like object (In the Tehran Museum). The object has a handle which, by means of some iron plate, has been crudely rivetted to it in pairs.

Material.

Dark sling stone.

Location, Level and Date.

Might belong to an ED period on stylistic grounds, although dated to the Akkadian period by Madame Y. Godard and c. 2500 B.C. by Vanden-Berghe (Vanden-Berghe *Archeologie-del' Iran Ancient*. 120).

Decoration.

It represents two different scenes. On one side there is a spread eagle with its head turned towards the right. Eagles in this fashion occur on our vases Figs. 1, 2 and 3, Pl. V, and also appear often on other objects showing ritual scenes from Mesopotamia. Its body and feet are stretched; between the head and wings can be seen two serpents, with their bodies curled round towards the feet of the bird. The bodies of the eagle and serpents are engraved with small triangle and dots.

The reverse of the object shows the facades of doorways as represented on our vases of Group II.²¹ The scene occurs in two registers divided by a zig-zag band drawn across the middle of the object. A similar band also appears on the neck. The decoration is executed in relief.

Madame Godard's suggestion that this object was the property of a temple which belonged to a solar God, and that it was solemnly carried in certain processions, may well be true in the latter part of this proposition, but the first hypothesis is uncertain.

Y. Godard considers that perhaps it was an import from Mesopotamia.

21. There is one example of a similar object in the Louvre from Susa which has not been decorated.

B. MESOPOTAMIA

*Pl. IX. Fig. 2***Site.**

Ur (*British Museum Quarterly* IX-L, Pl. XII, 43. B.M. 19700).

Description.

A similar object to Pl. X a-b (Preserved in the British Museum).

Material.

Pale yellowish stone.

Location, Level and Date.

Dated to ED period, again on stylistic grounds. It can be dated on stylistic grounds to ED period, probably ED III, because the rosette and eye decoration is similar to the gaming board of that period, from the Royal Cemetery at Ur.²²

Decoration

Unlike Pl. X a-b and Pl. XI a-b this example has been decorated on one side only. Its handle is boldly sculptured in imitation of basket-work, with bindings and punctuated lozenge designs.

The main body of this object depicts eyes, and eight petalled rosettes, rectangular in shape, and the designs are in two rows of four square compartments.

C. SYRIA

*Pl. XI. a-b.***Site.**

Said to have come from Tadmor (Palmyra) (Godard, *Athar-e-Iran*, Fig. 212-3, 310-11) though this origin is doubtful.

Description.

A similar object.

Material.

Dark greenish stone, perhaps steatite.

Location, Level and Date.

Madame Godard believes that it was probably made in the time of Entemena (c. 2500 B.C.). It could be assigned to 2500 B.C. also on stylistic grounds and on the basis of comparison with our vase from Susa Pl. I, Nos. 8 & 9. It is difficult to believe that this object really comes from Tadmor for such an origin would make it without parallel in the mid-Syrian desert, and indeed no contemporary material whatsoever has been found anywhere in Tadmor. Madame Y. Godard believed that it was probably made in the time of Entemena (c. 2500 B.C.) of Lagash, some-

22. Woolley, *Ur Excavations* II, Pl. XVIC, 951.

where in Mesopotamia from where it was imported. A date of about the middle of the third millennium B.C. could be accepted on stylistic grounds and on the basis of comparison with vases from Tepe-Giyan and Susa (Pl. I, Figs. 8 and 9).

Decoration.

The handle of this object is undecorated, though we find some scratches on the surface of the handle, which could only be accidental.

The body of this object represents two different scenes. On one side of Fig. III, we have palm trees executed in a style similar to that of our vessels Figs. 8 and 9, with the trunks of the trees hatched and carved out in relief.

On the other side it depicts a double tress or plaited ornamentation in style identical with that of our vase from Mari (Fig. 15, Pl. 1) with the difference that there (Fig. 15, Pl. 1) the decoration has holes for inlay or incrustation, whereas the object under discussion has a criss-cross hatched design, which is probably intended to represent two interlaced serpents. Above the double tress is shown a raised band in relief with a criss-cross design, drawn across the object horizontally. The neck is decorated with hatched triangles.

Y. Godard suggested that this object was consecrated to the God of Vegetation.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In our review of these stone vessels we have been able to illustrate and discuss 41 examples of stone vases and three of Ritual slabs, some bearing identical patterns and designs from the Upper-Euphrates to the Indus-Valley. Some of these stone vases recovered in Mesopotamia show a strong Indian influence in symbols and craftsmanship.

The following table will show the number of vases, discovered at sites in the different regions.

Table No. I-Distribution.

<i>Indus Valley</i>	<i>Baluchistan</i>		<i>Persia</i>			<i>Mesopotamia</i>	<i>Syria</i>
			Makran		Elam & Luristan		
2	4		3		7	16	9
Mohenjo-Daro	Mehi	2	Katukan	I	Susa	Ur, Kish, Kha-	All
	Sahi-Tump	1	Khurab	I	Tepe-	fajah, Adab,	from
	Dasht		Bampur	I	Giyan	Tell-Asmar	Mari
	Valley	I				Tello, Abu-	
						Habba, Tell-	
						Agrab, Nippur	

The above table shows that the greater number of these vessels come from Mesopotamia. Of the nine examples from Syria, all come from Mari; of the Persian examples, three come from the Persian Makran in the Bampur Valley, only

one from Tepe-Giyan and six from Susa. From Baluchistan two are from Mehi, one from Shahi-Tump and one from River Dasht in South Baluchistan. In the Indus Valley, the two examples come from Mohenjo-Daro.

Our second table will indicate the type of material used for these vessels.

Table II—Material.

<i>Persia</i>					
<i>Indus Valley</i>	<i>Baluchistan</i>	<i>Makran</i>	<i>Luristan</i>	<i>Mesopotamia</i>	<i>Syria</i>
Mohenjo-Daro. Fig. 1, Pl. 1. Black Slate. Fig. 2 Pl. 1. Steatite	Mehi Fig. 3. Pl. I Black-stone and Fig. 4 Pl. I. fine grained grey-stone Shahi-Tump Fig. 5, Pl. I material unknown. Fig. 6, Pl. I from the Dasht River is in Steatite.	Kharan, Fig. 7, Pl. 1, Steatite Katukan Fig. I Pl. III, Hard- dark Clay, Bampur Fig. 2 Pl. III Hard-dark Clay	Figs. 9, 10, 11, 12 13 Pl. I & Pl. III Fig. 3 all in Steatite Luristan Tepe- Giyan, Fig. 8 Pl. I Steatite	Ur, Figs. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, Pl II all in Steatite Khafajah Figs. 4 Pl. IV I. & 2 Pl. V Steatite Tell Asmar Fig. 3, Pl. V Steatite. Tell-Agrab Fig. 6 a-b, Pl. II. Steatite. Tello-Fig. 2 Pl. IV Steatite Abu Habba, Fig. 3, Pl. IV. Steatite. Adab Figs. 5 Pl. III & I Pl. IV Steatite. Fig. 1. Pl. VI. from Nippur in Steatite.	Mari, Figs. 15 16 (Pl. 1) 4 (Pl. IV) 2 (Pl. VI) I (Pl. IX) 1, 2, 3. 4 Pl. VII. & Nos. 7 & 8 (Pl. II) all in Steatite

The above table shows that of the total illustrated examples, one is in slate, one is in unknown material, one in Black stone, one in fine grained grey stone (probably these two are in Steatite), two in clay, and all the rest are made in Steatite. Of the ritual slabs, one Pl. IX, 2, is in yellowish soft stone, the other two are in Steatite.

At the beginning of this paper we divided these vases in three different groups based on the decorative motifs used by the craftsman. We pointed out that these groups are not always exclusive, and Group I can be combined with Group II

or Group II designs occur with Group III, but for the classification used here where a vase combines designs from two different groups the vase is classified according to the main design.

These groups are as follows:-

- I. Curvilinear and geometric designs. This includes also the compartmented vessels.
- II. Architectural scenes.
- III. Human and animal figures including Mythological Scenes.

Table No. 3 will show the distribution of these groups:

Table No. 3—Distribution of Designs.

<i>Indus Valley</i>	<i>Baluchistan</i>	<i>S.E. Iran (Bampur)</i>	<i>Elam & Luristan</i>	<i>Mesopotamia</i>	<i>Syria</i>
Group I:-2	4	1	6	5	2
Group 2:-x	x	2	1 (Susa)	5	1
Group 3:-x	x	x	x	6	6

Technique.

It is important to note that the vases from Indus-Valley, Baluchistan and Bampur-Valley are all decorated with incision,²³ almost all the examples from Elam, Luristan, Mesopotamia and Mari are worked in relief.

Compartmented Vessels.

From a study of the compartmented vessels the following considerations arise:

It is clear that while all the specimens from the Indus-Valley and Baluchistan are made with four compartments,²⁴ no compartmented vessel is known outside the Indo-Pakistan borders.

A further distinction can be made among compartmented vessels, regarding the shape and material. From Baluchistan the three illustrated examples (Figs. 3, 4 and 5, Pl. 1) are made in Steatite or fine grey-grained stone and are circular in shape. The Indus-Valley specimens²⁵ are made in slate and are square; they also have provision for a lid.²⁶

23. Except Fig. 2 and 6 (Pl. 1) which are decorated in relief, but are not local and are regarded as imports.

24. Except Fig. 2 and 4 which certainly are an import from the west.

25. Including Fig-1 and another which has not been illustrated because of decorative reasons.

26. One circular vase in white Steatite from Ur. U. 12491, preserved in Baghdad Museum. Iraq (B. 8914) is made with a lid, and is circular in shape.

The shapes of these vessels vary from tall cylindrical vases to small circular vases, including some which are large and globular and others which are circular or square but the most prevailing shape is cylindrical.

There is considerable variation in size.

Summary of Dating Evidence.

Finally, we will briefly summarise the dating evidence, discussing problems concerning their place and period of origin.

1. Indus Valley.

Pl. 1. Fig. 1 from Mohenjo-Daro, and a similar vase from the same site, (undecorated) which has not been illustrated for reasons already shown, were recovered from late levels and are therefore assigned to the late Harappan period, to which a date of c. 1950 B.C.²⁷ may be assigned.

Fig. 2 (Pl. 1) From Mohenjo-Daro was recovered from a very early level, at a depth of 28.1 ft. and therefore belong to the early phases of Harappan culture, assigned by Mackay to c. 2800 B.C. This high dating can however be modified and Colonel Gordon is probably correct in dating this specimen to about 2450–2400 B.C.²⁸

This view is based on comparison with Iranian and Mesopotamian vases (Figs. 14, Pl. I and 2, Pl. III) and probability that the Mohenjo-Daro example forms a part of a vase which is an import from the west, belongs at latest to the period known in Mesopotamia as Early Dynastic II-III. De Mequenem dating from Fig. 3 (Pl. III) from Susa II D, c. 2800, inclined Mackay and Field to date Fig. 2 and 14 (Pl. I) to the same period. We would, however, consider the revised dating, of Susa D and ED periods, given by Professor Mallowan (See "*The Dawn of Civilization*" table on page 66) and assign date of about the middle of the 3rd Millennium B.C. to our Indus-Valley examples.

(Baluchistan) Mehi.

Figs. 3 and 4 (Pl. 1) come from Mehi, unstratified, but Dr. Khan has suggested an ED II-III dating for them.²⁹ Gordon, however, has proposed a much lower date of about 2100-2000 B.C. for the incised Mehi vessels, a date slightly higher than our Indus Valley incised specimen,³⁰ (Fig. 1, Pl. 1). Gordon has based this view on the following reasons: firstly, that the incised Kulli-Mehi stone vessels are only third hand derivatives of the vessels with architectural scenes (Group II recovered in Mesopotamia and Iran, with the difference that we do not have architectural

27. Col. D. H. Gordon, *Prehistoric Background of Indian Culture*, p. 72.

28. Mackay's dating is now unacceptable because we have no reason to believe that anything found at Mohenjo-Daro is earlier than ED II, which centres round 2600 B.C.

29. Dr. Khan, ASIC Geographical table, p. 434.

30. Gordon, loc. cit.

scenes on these Baluchi pots). Secondly, that such a specimen occurs at Mohenjo-Daro (Fig. I, Pl. 1) in a late context, which cannot be dated earlier than 2000 B.C. Hence we would agree with Colonel Gordon that these incised stone vessels at Mehri probably belong to a general date of about 2100-2000 B.C. though whether, as Gordon suggests, they were directly derived from vases of Group II from Iran and Mesopotamia at this period is more open to doubt.³¹ Fig. 5 (Pl. 1) from Shahi Tump. This again is unstratified, but probably Gordon's dating for the whole series of these Baluchi stone vases could be accepted.³²

Fig. 6 (Pl. 1) Dasht Valley:- It is unstratified, but probably belongs to an ED III period on stylistic basis. Iran (S.E.) Bampur Valley.

From Bampur, we have three examples; our (Fig. 7, Pl. I) comes from Khurab cemetery, (Fig. I, Pl. III) is from Katukan which was bought from a villager while the one from Bampur (Fig. 2, Pl. III) comes from a burial of Bampur cemetery. Dr. Khan assigns these vessels from the Bampur regions to ED III period, before 2400 B.C.³³ Both Piggott and Colonel Gordon have dated these cemeteries of Khurab,³⁴ to circa or post 2000 B.C. Gordon does, however, suggest a slightly earlier date for the Bampur stone vases,³⁵ at the same time considering the Khurab painted pottery as contemporary both with Bampur painted ware and Bampur incised ware vessels. It is certainly possible that these vases might belong to late ED or Sargonide, by which period the contact between Sumer and the Indus Valley must have been established, through land as well as sea.

Fig. 8 (Pl. I) from Luristan. This was said to have come from Tepe Giyan. It has not been stratified but Herzfeld has dated it to the ED period and it probably belongs to a late ED II or ED III period.

Of the six vases from Susa illustrated here, Fig. 3 Pl. III, comes from Susa II D, in the temple of Susinak, and was previously assigned to c. 2800 B.C. It is, however, possible now, owing to the revised dating³⁶ for the Early Dynastic period in Mesopotamia, that it may be assigned to the middle of the third millennium B.C. Figs. 9 and 10 (Pl. 1) may be dated to about the middle of the 3rd. millennium B.C. Fig. II has been dated to about 2500 B.C. while the remaining two Figs. 12 and 13 (Pl. I) have also been assigned to about 2500 B.C.³⁷

These dates have been, however, assigned tentatively to these vessels in the Louvre publication *Encyclopedie Photographique de l'art*.

31. Col. D. H. Gordon, *Loc. cit.*

32. *Ibid.* (also see Gordon's Chronological table, Fig. 7, p. 48).

33. Dr. Khan, *ASIC*. Geographical table III, p. 433.

34. S. Piggott, *Loc. cit.*; p. 218, also Maxwell-Hyslop, *Iraq*, Vol. XVII, 1955, note on a shafthole. Axe-pic, from Kurab, see Gordon *loc. cit.*

35. "Not later than 2300 B.C." Gordon, *loc. cit.*

36. Mallowsan, *Iraq*, Vol. XXII, P. 13. In the present state of our knowledge the whole of the Royal Cemetery may be accommodated into the end of the Early Dynastic period, and particularly that part of it known as ED III with the possibility that it began in ED II. A date of something in the order of c. 2750-2500 B.C. with a not inconsiderable margin of error on either side is perhaps in the present state of our knowledge the best we can offer for the bulk of the material in the pre-Sargonide tombs and for commoner's graves that are contemporary with them.

37. See script, pp. 71-72 and 73.

2. Mesopotamia.

The specimen illustrated from Kish Cemetery A (Fig. 14, Pl. 1) was originally dated by H. Field, along with other such fragments from this site, to about 2800 B.C. This date, however, can be modified and be lowered to ED II-III period, which will agree with the general period, in which these vessels were popularly used in Mesopotamia.

All the vases illustrated from Ur, come from the Royal Cemetery; two of them, Figs. 3 & 4 (Pl. II) may be contemporary.

Vases from Adab Figs. 5 (Pl. III) & 1 (Pl. IV) have not been exactly stratified, as they only occur in an ancient dump rather than a chronological context, but Delougaz considers them to belong to the Early Dynastic period.³⁸

Fig. 2 (Pl. IV) from Telloh. This again comes from a pit and so could not be stratified, but probably belongs to ED III.³⁹

Fig. 3 (Pl. IV) from Abu-Habba (Sippar) is not stratified, but probably belongs to the same period as the two examples mentioned above.

Fig. I (Pl. VI) from Nippur. Found in ED II temple and therefore may be dated to about 2700 B.C.

From Khafajah two of the illustrated examples (Figs. 4, Pl. III and 2, Pl. V) were found in Sin Temple IX, room 43-II, which is a pre-Sargonide Temple of ED II period.⁴⁰ Fig. I (Pl. V) which is in the British Museum and illustrated and discussed by Frankfort and Mrs. Van-Buren, is unstratified, but Professor Mallowan has dated it to c. 2500-2700 B.C. (*Dawn of Civilization*, p. 69). This view is again strengthened by its comparison with the ones from Tell-Agrab, Nippur and Mari, i.e. Figs. 6 (Pl. II), I (Pl. VI) and I (Pl. IX).

Fig. I (Pl. V) from Tell-Agrab. It was found in the ED II-III temple, while the one from Tell-Asmar is unstratified but Herzfeld has suggested an ED II dating for it.

3. Syria.

All the examples from Mari come from the Temple of Ishtar which was several times rebuilt, and its earliest levels are believed to be as early as Jamdat-Nasr period.⁴¹ Figs. 15 (Pl. I), 16 (Pl. I), 4, 2 (Pl. VI), I (Pl. IX), 7 & 8 (Pl. II), I, 2, 3 and 4 (Pl. VII) were recovered in cellars 18 and Courtyard No. 20 which belong to level A of the temple. Level A is the last level before the temple was destroyed

38. P. Delougaz *Architectural Scenes on Steatite Vases, Iraq*, Vol-XXII, pp. 93-94.

39. P. Delougaz, loc. cit.

40. P. Delougaz and L. Lloyd, pre-Sargonide temples in the Diyala-region, Pl. II.

41. Parrot, "*Mission Archeologique de Mari*", Vol. I. "Le temple de Ishtar" Pl. XLIX, 267, P. II

by a Sargonide enemy (either Sargon or Lugal-zaggisi). Therefore, we can conveniently regard them as pre-Sargonide. Fig. 2 Pl. VI though not exactly located, also belongs to this latest level of the temple before it was destroyed, and hence should be regarded of the ED II-III period.

Professor Stuart Piggott has suggested that our Group I originated in Baluch-Makran, and was exported from here both east and west.⁴² He further maintains that the examples, illustrated here, from Mari and Telloh, Figs. 4 & 2 (Pl. IV) respectively belong to these series which originated in Makran,⁴³ and were exported to Mesopotamia and Syria. He also suggests that the two Steatite Cups from Queen Shubad's grave, Figs. 3 & 4 (Pl. II), which have similar decoration to that on a fragment of an unstratified vase (Fig. 6, Pl. 1) from the River Dasht-Valley may be regarded as an import to Mesopotamia.

It is possible, however, to question this interpretation of the evidence for several reasons. The Mesopotamian vases are not the compartmented type, and as we have seen compartmented vessels have never been found outside the region of Baluchistan, with the exception of the two examples from Indus-Valley (Fig. 1, Pl. I). These specimens are both different in shape and material from those found in Baluchistan, and have a lid over them. Secondly the number of the cups similar to those found at Royal Cemetery at Ur, (including Queen Shubad's grave) is far greater in Sumer and Elam than Makran. The presence of one single vessel in the river Dasht region (Fig. 6, Pl. 1) suggests that it should be regarded as an import from Sumer rather than an export from Makran.

One may therefore assume that of the Group I series, only the compartmented vessels originated in Baluchistan and the Indus Valley. The people of the latter region improved the idea of making such vessels by attaching lids to them.

Of Group II, there are only two examples, Fig. 1 and 2 (Pl. III) from Bampur region in clay and a few other fragments of similar vessels in the same material. A fragment of a vase of such a series, (Fig. 2, Pl. 1) is the only example from Mohenjo-Daro, which is believed to have been imported from the west. So we are perhaps right in thinking that the vases of Group II originated somewhere in Mesopotamia. As only one vase (Fig. 3, Pl. III) of these series (Group II) comes from Elam, therefore we cannot be sure of their origin in that region, whereas all the vases from Group I found in Luristan and Elam show their local origin.

No vases of Group III have been found outside Mesopotamia and Syria (Mari), and therefore we should suggest that their origin should be somewhere in these two regions.

Finally, one may say that the vases of Group II originated in Mesopotamia, and were in use throughout ED II-III, and that the idea of depicting such scenes was borrowed by the people of Iran where it was adopted and used decorated both in bitumen and pottery vessels.

42. S. Piggott, *Prehistoric India*, p. 117.

43. S. Piggott, *Antiquity*, Vol.-XVII, 1943, p. 176.