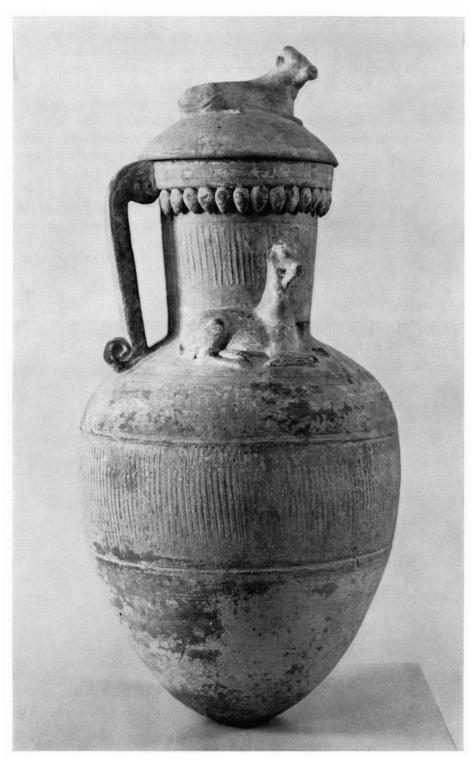
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

BULLETIN

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Painted amphora with plastic decoration. Late 18th Dynasty, ca. 1350 B.C.
 J. H. and E. A. Payne Fund. 64.9

Recent Acquisitions

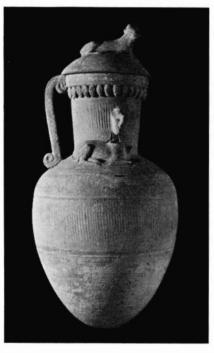
in the Department of Egyptian Art

BECAUSE the Department is frequently unable to publish extensive discussions of its recent acquisitions for quite some time after their arrival at the Museum, it would seem useful to visitors and to readers of this *Bulletin* to summarize these accessions in brief form. This does not preclude fuller discussion at a later time, either in the *Bulletin* or elsewhere, nor does what is included here represent all that has entered the collections in recent years.

EGYPT

THE most notable addition to the Egyptian collections of recent times is the great two-handled amphora of the late 18th Dynasty (Figs. 1-3). Although after the predynastic period Egyptian pottery was basically utilitarian in shape and decoration, usually covered only with a red or pink slip,2 the 18th Dynasty potter revived a longdormant tradition by covering his vessels with gay and playful designs painted usually in soft blue on a buff background with outlines and details delineated with red and black of pleasantly earthy hue. This color scheme is particularly characteristic of the royal wares found by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in its excavations of the palace of Amenhotep III (1410–1372 B.C.) at Thebes. The patterns are generally floral designs and include petals, leaves, and in more elaborate naturalistic scenes, papyrus clumps, lotus flowers, flying birds and leaping calves. These floral patterns are certainly in some cases derived from wreaths of flowers hung on vessels used at banquets and for funerary purposes. Examples have been found in burials with the millennia-old dried blossoms still in place around the necks of the pots. A very few of these vessels have decoration in relief, occasionally the head of the goddess Hat-hor and sometimes the head of a gazelle. One example, in the Metropolitan Museum, (Fig. 4)⁴ shows the head and neck of a gazelle in the round, while the body is painted on the shoulder of the vase. The Boston amphora is remarkable because of its size, its completeness, and the beauty of its conception and execution. The cover is decorated with the figure of a kneeling heifer painted blue, the eyes, nostrils(?) and the end of the tail curling over the haunch outlined in black. The cover itself bears traces of having been covered with the blue paint. Although the lid was broken in three places, the breaks were clean, and the young animal is intact. The body of the vase is also intact, although as in the case of the cover, there is some loss of paint. A curious feature of the decoration of the vessel is that it is divided in two parts, front and back. No doubt this may be attributed to the fact that the vase was probably





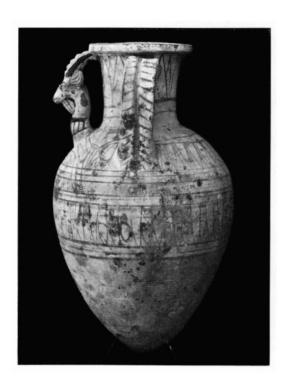
2. Above: Detail of gazelle.

- 3. Painted amphora before cleaning and restoration of neck.
- 4. Opposite page: Vase from Palace of Amenhotep III at Thebes (1410–1372 B.C.).
 Courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art.

intended to be seen from only the front when in use, perhaps as a great wine jug at royal banquets. The decoration is arranged in horizontal bands as follows: below the mouth is a row of grape clusters in relief, and below this the front of the neck is ribbed. On the back the ribs are replaced with a row of vertical leaves, blue with black outline, on buff ground. To the right of the gazelle is a curious palm-shaped design that seems to have been placed there to fill a void left by positioning the gazelle too far to the left. Below the shoulder is another row of painted leaves on blue ground. A band of vertical ribs lies between a lateral rib at the top and an engraved line at the bottom. Again the back is unribbed and has instead blue leaves with black outline. The lower part of the vase is solid blue. These changes between the front and back halves are further distinguished by a second layer of paint over the front, which is a deeper and more intense blue than that of the back.

Of course, the primary feature of the decoration of the amphora is the kneeling, but nevertheless alert gazelle which dominates the shoulder. This lively young animal (there seems to be an accent on youth in the decoration of these vases) is shown with his rear legs drawn up beneath his body, while one front leg is bent forward (most of it now missing). Unfortunately, the ears and horns are missing, and only the joins of the ears to the neck of the amphora may now be seen. Part of the gazelle's neck has been restored in the Museum, as shown in Figs. 2 and 3, and the head remounted in its correct position. Again the animal is painted blue, with details of eyes and nostrils added in black.

The vigorous modeling of the two animals is almost certainly to be ascribed to the artists of the Amarna period, whose delight in all things of nature seems to have

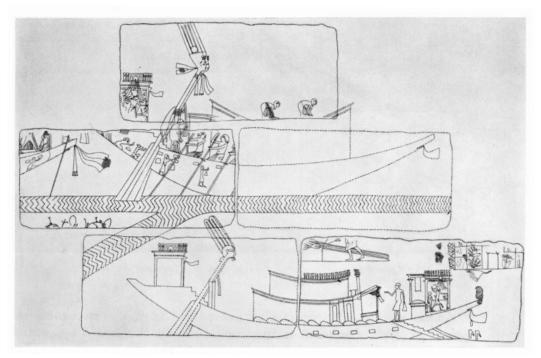


been inspired to new heights by the king himself. Parallels are not common, but a few may be cited: the vase in New York (Fig. 4), a fragment in Cairo,⁵ a gazelle's head in the Gallatin collection,⁶ and a similar head long unrecognized in our own reserve collections.⁷ These few examples underline the significance of the new vase, which is apparently the largest such vessel and the only one so far known on which the bodies of the animals are modeled in the round.⁸

An interesting relief of the Amarna period, although illustrated and mentioned briefly in the MFA Annual Report, 9 is perhaps not known by many readers of the Bulletin (Fig. 5). The limestone block, 10 with traces of blue paint in the outline of the cartouche and in the two lower hieroglyphs, shows a kneeling figure wearing the short kilt with pleated front, his arms raised in the gesture of veneration. The relief probably formed the right side of the lintel of a private house or tomb 11 and belonged to the Overseer of Works (hry k;wt), Weser-Seth. The inscription on the left reads: "Lord of the Two Lands, Nefer-kheperu-re W'-n-re (one of the names of Akhenaten, written in the cartouche), Given Life." Above Weser-Seth is written: "Giving praise to the Living Aten by . . .," and continuing in front of him, ". . . Overseer of Works, Weser-Seth." An interesting feature of the arrangement of the relief shows how inextricably interwoven are Egyptian writing and pictorial representation. For the large figure of the donor is at one time an idealized portrait of the deceased and also the hieroglyphic determinative of his name written below. This is made evident by the location of the preposition "by" (in) just behind his head. So

Limestone relief of the Overseer of Works, Weser-Seth.
 Late 18th Dynasty, ca. 1350 B.C. Seth K. Sweetser Fund. 62.1168

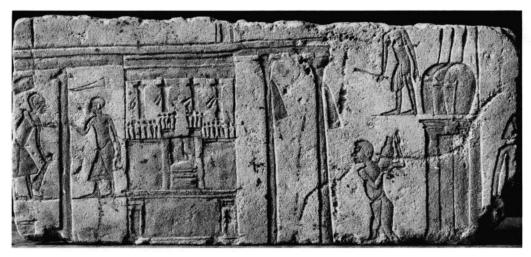




6. Reconstruction of royal boats from Amarna.

far this is the only monument of Weser-Seth to come to light, which is rather unusual in view of the fact that not many such overseers of works are known from the Amarna period.¹²

The Museum has acquired recently a number of royal reliefs of the Amarna period, two of which have been published previously in the Bulletin. 13 We take this opportunity to draw attention to two more of great interest, one of which was purchased in 1963 and the second only recently when it was discovered by one of our colleagues to join the first. Mr. John D. Cooney, Curator of Egyptian and Classical Art in the Cleveland Museum of Art, perspicaciously noticed this join while working on an extensive publication of the royal reliefs from Amarna now in America. Since his discussion will include a full treatment of these reliefs, we will do no more here than to illustrate a drawing by Miss Suzanne Chapman based on a reconstruction suggested by the writer and Mr. Cooney. The drawing (Fig. 6) shows the join of the two Boston reliefs representing a royal barge, perhaps that of Queen Nefertiti, to judge from the remarkable scene on the stern kiosk in which the Queen dominates enemies. The new relief is the upper one which completes the great steering poles crowned with the head of the Queen in her characteristic headdress. Two figures are shown on the roof of the midships cabin, bowing low to either the king or the deity. The lower relief, in the collection of Mr. Norbert Schimmel of New York, shows yet another royal boat, this time belonging to the king, as shown by his figure in the kiosk again dominating enemies. Its possible location in this reconstruction is by no means certain, but is certainly plausible.



7. Façade of Royal Palace on relief from Amarna. Late 18th Dynasty, ca. 1350 B C. Helen and Alice Colburn Fund. 63.427

Another relief from this series is illustrated in Fig. 7, in which is represented that part of the façade of the Palace at Amarna containing the Window of Appearances from which the king dispensed the "Gold of Honor" to favored officials. A curious form of spatial relationship is illustrated in the three-tiered structure of which the balcony of the Window of Appearances (crowned by a frieze of uraei) forms the middle section. The structure above the balcony is actually the columned hall that lay behind the façade. Elsewhere there are attendants totally out of proportion to the size of the building. Characteristic of Amarna scenes are the ribbons fluttering in the breeze which suggest a veristic touch unusual in Egyptian art. That this realism had soon become another convention is revealed by ribbons which in the same scene flutter in opposite directions.¹⁴

Among other recent accessions to the Egyptian collections is a group of three rings once owned by Sarah Orne Jewett, and presented as a gift by Mr. H. H. Richardson. One (Fig. 8) contains a scarab showing the name of Tuthmosis III¹⁵ in front of a seated sphinx wearing the so-called "blue" war helmet. Above the sphinx is a



8. Scarab of Tuthmosis III mounted in original gold ring. 1504–1450 B.C.

Gift of H. H. Richardson. 62.810

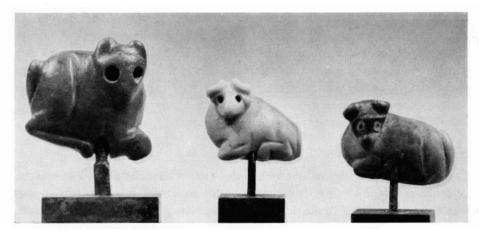
winged uraeus serpent. The scarab is mounted in its original gold setting. Another object from this group is a blue faience ring of the Amarna period and belongs to the well-known class usually thought to be New Year's gifts. The third ring is of particular interest because it represents a class of skilfully executed forgeries of scarabs of the late 19th century. Once again there is an inscription of the ubiquitous Tuthmosis III, carved in steatite and covered with a distinctive greenish-blue glaze that not quite resembles ancient glaze of similar color.

ANCIENT NEAR EAST: Mesopotamia

The most significant work of art added to the Ancient Near Eastern collection is the fragment of a stone jar (Fig. 9) decorated with a sculptured frieze of bulls around the shoulder, belonging to the Sumerian Jemdet Nasr period (ca. 3200 B.C.). From the merest remaining fragment at the bottom of the preserved portion of the vessel we observe that the original bore a second frieze of which we see only part of a horn and ear, probably of an ibex or mountain sheep. ¹⁶ The noble beasts that are preserved represent a significant change that occurred in Sumerian sculpture with the succession of the Jemdet Nasr period to the Uruk period. Whereas during the earlier age, the Sumerian sculptor had been concerned with the expression of three-dimensional form in modeled relief (particularly well represented on the cylinder seals), the Jemdet Nasr artist reduced these forms to an almost two-dimensional representation, even when, as in the case of the new Boston vessel, the relief is so bold that it stands out almost in the round. Thus, we find the characteristic rendering of muscle structure with the use of sharply incised lines, and the articulation of parts of the body

 Fragment of stone vessel with bulls in relief. Sumerian, Jemdet Nasr period, late Fourth Millennium B.C. William Francis Warden Fund. 63.1258





 Three stone seal amulets. Sumerian, Jemdet Nasr period, late Fourth Millennium B.C. Helen and Alice Colburn Fund. 64.523-525

accomplished by strongly defined, even rigid, divisions of sharp relief. The aim of the artist seems to have been the bold definition of light and shadow across the surface of his sculpture. If he failed to achieve ultimate success, we must be sympathetic to this experimental period in which, as Frankfort has aptly noted, there is "a confusion of the various categories of artistic expression, the potentialities and limitations of each category being only gradually recognized."¹⁷

To the same period belong three stone seal amulets, two of which represent kneeling bulls and the third of more dubious nature, perhaps a fox (Fig. 10).¹⁸ It is particularly interesting to observe the stylistic relationship of the two small bulls to the much larger animals of the stone vessel.

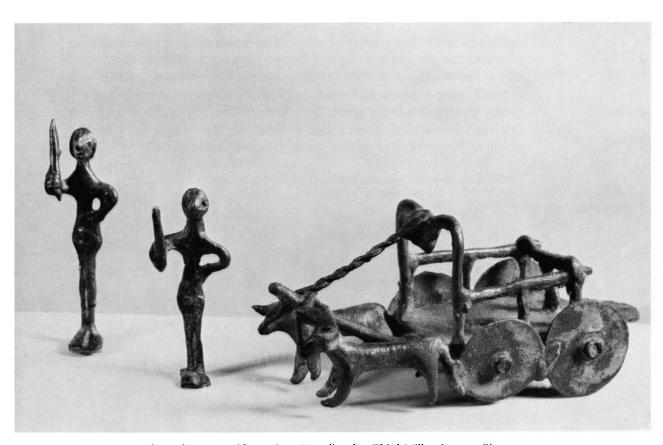
To the Neo-Babylonian period of the 7th-6th centuries B.C. belongs the splendid translucent blue chalcedony head of the demon called Pazuzu, an evil spirit who, carried along by the scorching desert wind, brought destruction and disease (Fig. 11). Presumably by carrying an amulet of the demon, his evil was redirected away from the bearer, and in the case of the Boston amulet one may imagine that he who bore it was particularly well protected. ¹⁹ This exquisitely worked masterpiece of the stonecarver represents the highest attainment of the last wholly native culture of Mesopotamia. Stylistically, the Pazuzu is most closely related to cylinder seals of the same period, one of the finest of which is in the Museum collection. ²⁰ The artist's intent to cover the surfaces of his works with the most finely carved detail is so well demonstrated by these two sculptures, that one may establish it as a principal feature of Neo-Babylonian style. This aspect of Neo-Babylonian art and its possible relationship to the art of Achaemenid Persia will be discussed in a forthcoming publication.

Anatolia

An important document of Anatolian archaeology has recently entered the collection, but its relationships are as yet far from clear. Fig. 12 shows a four-wheeled cart drawn by two oxen with two warriors brandishing blades. The report that the figures were found together has been confirmed by a technical analysis made by



Blue chalcedony head of the demon Pazuzu. Neo-Babylonian, 7th-6th centuries B.C.
 Helen and Alice Colburn Fund. 64.522

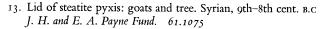


12. Copper cart drawn by oxen, with warriors. Anatolian, late Third Millennium B.C.(?) Egyptian Curator's Fund. 62.678-680

William J. Young, showing that the metallic structure of the several objects is the same in every case. The objects are made of almost pure copper and were cast, a remarkably sophisticated technique for the early metalworker. At the time of their discovery, there was said to have been another scrap of metal which unfortunately disappeared soon afterward. This missing fragment might have explained the means of attaching the warriors in the cart, for there is a hole in its floor which suggests the location of a platform on which the warriors stood. The cache was said to have been found near Alaça Hüyük, the site of the famous pre-Hittite "Royal Graves" of about 2300–2100 B.C. A stylistic association may be made between our oxen and certain animals from the Alaça Hüyük and Horoztepe (another pre-Hittite site of the same period) graves, but the warriors pose a difficult problem, because they most closely resemble bronze figures from the Syrian coast. A complete publication of these objects will appear later, but the significance of this rare and unusual group makes it imperative that it be made known as soon as possible.

Syria

In MFA Bulletin No. 318 (1961) we published the lid of a red steatite pyxis showing goats on either side of a tree (Fig. 13), and we can now illustrate the fragmentary sides of this ointment vessel. ²² Fig. 14 shows parts of two confronted sphinxes with an altar bearing a crescent and rayed disc, both Mesopotamian symbols used frequently in Syria from early times. The other side (Fig. 15) has the remains of a figure seated on a stool, before a high table laden with what are probably food offerings. The box was made in Syria during the 9th-8th centuries B.C.









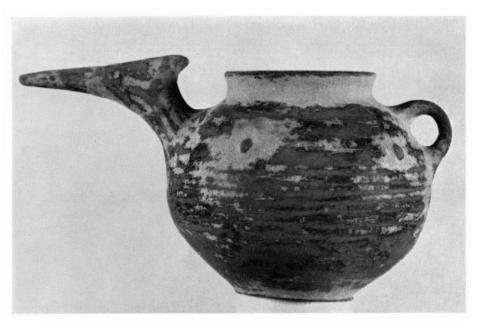
14. Side of pyxis: confronted sphinxes.15. Side of pyxis: figure seated at table.

Persia

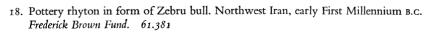
A copper statuette of a long-robed, bearded figure clutching a dagger to his breast²³ may belong to the period of Elamite sovereignty in Iran during the 12th century B.C. (Fig. 16). Our figure is most closely related to the miniature gold statuettes found in a temple deposit of Shilhak-Inshushinak at Susa (now in the Louvre). Similar in each case are the upraised right hand, the left arm holding an object to the breast, the long gown and the bag-like headdress. Although now worn to illegibility, there is a suggestion on our figure of the braid across the front of the hair which appears

16. Copper statuette of a man carrying a dagger. Elamite 12th cent. B.C. (?). Seth K. Sweetser Fund. 62.466





17. Gray-ware pottery spouted vessel. Northwest Iran, early First Millennium B.C. Gift of Miss Jane Doolittle. 61.175



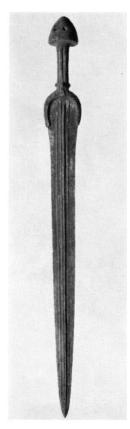


on the gold figurines from Susa. Two bronze standards in the Metropolitan Museum²⁴ have somewhat similar figures but wear short kilts and upturned boots, and are dated somewhat later.

From the Qazvin area, northwest of Teheran, comes a spouted gray-ware vessel (Fig. 17), the gift of Miss Jane Doolittle, which is related to pots found at Khurvin (also in the Qazvin region), Hasanlu, and more distantly to painted vessels of similar shape from Siyalk. From Luristan come metal vessels of the same shape.²⁵

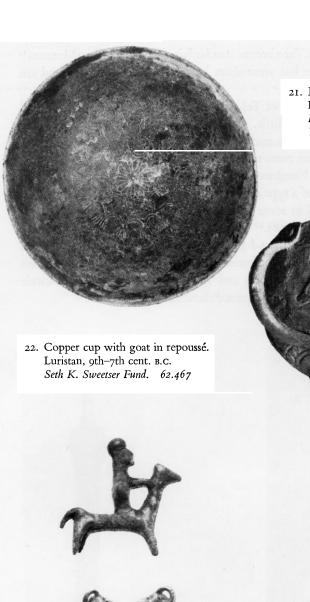
Two more terra cottas from Northwest Iran ("Amlash") are of particular interest. One is a humped bull rhyton of a type now familiar in many museums and private collections. Although restored in some parts, with repainting of the surface, the figure is substantially intact (Fig. 18).²⁶ The standing, steatopygous female vessel (Fig. 19) has a number of parallels, and the peculiarly stylized head is found on certain theriomorphic vessels from Northwest Iran of which the Museum possesses two examples. These beak-nosed figures and the characteristic concentric-circle designs which decorate them have been discussed elsewhere by the writer.²⁷





 Pottery figure of a steatopygous woman. Northwest Iran, early First Millennium B.C. Frederick Brown Fund. 62:582

^{20.} Bronze sword. Luristan, early First Millennium B.C. Loaned by Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius C. Vermeule, III





Gift of Mrs. Kojiro Tomita. 62.1106

Several bronze objects have been loaned to the Department through the kindness of Mr. and Mrs. C. C. Vermeule, III. These include a great sword, perhaps ceremonial in function, the handle of which possibly once contained ivory or bone plugs (Fig. 20). A bronze bowl is decorated on the interior with a frieze of floral pattern around a central rosette (Fig. 21). From such simple beginnings developed the great silver bowl of Achaemenid Persia, acquired by the Museum several years ago.²⁸ The sword and bowl are from Luristan in the Zagros Mountains of Western Persia and are to be dated between the 9th and 7th centuries B.C. A handled copper cup from Luristan (Fig. 22)²⁹ is decorated with a file of goats interspersed with stylized palmettes (9th–7th centuries B.C.). Belonging to a somewhat earlier period (ca. 10th–9th centuries B.C.) are a small bronze horseman (Fig. 23) and a bronze openwork bell with iron clapper from the Amlash region, northwest of Teheran (Fig. 24)³⁰.

Mrs. Kojiro Tomita has generously given to the Museum a charming silver bracelet with finials of rams' heads (Acc. no. 62.1106, Fig. 25). The bracelet comes from Achaemenid Persia, but cannot be dated more explicitly than 6th to 4th centuries B.C.

EDWARD L. B. TERRACE

Notes

- Acc. No. 64.9. J. H. and E. A. Payne Fund. H. 74.5 cm. (2938 in.).
- 2. A notable exception of the 4th Dynasty are the elegantly shaped vessels covered with a hard, highly burnished red-brown slip from the burial of Queen Hetepheres, now in the Cairo Museum and the Museum of Fine Arts. See G. A. Reisner and W. S. Smith, History of the Giza Necropolis II, Cambridge, Mass., 1955.
- Typical of the finer examples are those shown in W. C. Hayes, Seepter of Egypt, Part II, p. 249, fig. 150.
- 4. *Idem*, top row, right (front view).

 MMA Acc. No. 11.215.460. H. 39.5 cm.

 (15½ in.). Courtesy of Metropolitan

 Museum of Art. Thanks to Dr. H. G.

 Fischer we can illustrate the vase here.

 MMA Bulletin 7 (1912) p. 188, fig. 5, shows the body of the gazelle painted on the shoulder of the vase.

- Cairo Museum no. JE 66739. Bernard V. Bothmer kindly helped to track down this piece in Cairo and made photographs for comparison.
- Ancient Art in American Private Collections (Exhibition held at Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Dec. 1954-Feb. 1955) no. 46, pl. XIII.
- 7. Acc. No. P5840. Gift of Egypt Exploration Fund (Provenience uncertain).
- 8. From the tomb of Tutankhamon are several famous alabaster vases, the lids of which bear sculptured animals. See, e.g., P. Fox, Tutankhamon's Treasure, London, 1951, pl. 22. T. G. H. James has kindly communicated information about the fragments of a very large pottery vase from Amarna with a young animal modeled in the round (BM 59276); and W. S. Smith has noted the head of a gazelle found at Giza and now in the Cairo Museum.

- 9. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Annual Report, 1962, p. 45 and ill. p. 44.
- 10. Acc. No. 61.1168. Seth K. Sweetser Fund. H. 26 cm. (101/4 in.), W. 24.5 cm. (95/8 in.).
- See Frankfort and Pendlebury, City of Akhenaten II, London, 1933, pl. 23.4.
- 12. Weser-Seth was evidently on a lower level of importance than the other known officials of this rank, whose titles always read "Overseer of All Works" or "Overseer of the King's Works."
- 13. MFA Bulletin, no. 322, 1962, pp. 134-5.
- Three Boston reliefs: boat, Acc. No. 63.260, Helen and Alice Colburn Fund, L. 53 cm. (2078 in.), H. 23 cm. (9 in.); steering poles, Acc. No. 64.521, Egyptian Curator's Fund, L. 53 cm., H. 23 cm.; palace façade, Acc. No. 63.427, Helen and Alice Colburn Fund, L. 53 cm., H. 23 cm.
- 15. Written as usual, Mn-hpr-r'; the style makes it likely that the name is that of the famous 18th Dynasty ruler, 1504–1450 B.C., rather than that of the much later and far less certain man of the same name.
- 16. Acc. No. 63.1258. William Francis Warden Fund. H. as preserved 16 cm. (6¼ in.). Apparent widest diameter at shoulder, 22 cm. (8½ in.). The jar had a wide shoulder, fairly narrow mouth, and the body tapered downward, perhaps to a very small base.
- Art and Architecture of the Ancient Orient, Harmondsworth and Baltimore, 1954, p. 12.
- 18. Acc. Nos. 64.523, Helen and Alice Colburn Fund. Fox, L. 2.6 cm. (1 in.); 64.524 (inlaid eyes preserved, L. 2.3 cm. (76 in.); 64.525 (eyes missing, L. 2 cm. (34 in.). The stones are red and white forms of silicous material. The inlaid eyes of 64.524 are made of bone.
- Acc. No. 64.522. Helen and Alice Colburn Fund. H. 4.6 cm. (178 in.). A hole is drilled axially from top to bottom. Said to have been found at Tarhan, near Kuh-i-Dasht in Luristan. Other examples of Pazuzu: Hall, Assyrian and Babylonian Sculpture in the British Museum, Paris and Brussels, 1928, pl. 58. (Yellow stone, 91876); R. D. Barnett, BM Quarterly 26,

- 1963, p. 94, pl. 40.c. (Bronze, 132964.) Photographs of these examples for comparison were kindly supplied by Dr. Barnett. Frankfort, *Art and Architecture of the Ancient Orient*, pl. 118 B (Louvre). The last is a complete figure in bronze with four wings, hands in form of claws, the feet are talons of a bird of prey, and the rib-cage indicated to represent an emaciated form.
- Acc. No. 27.649. Terrace, Art of the Ancient Near East in Boston, Boston, 1962, no. 28.
- Acc. Nos. 62.678-680. Egyptian Curator's Fund. L. of cart, 18.3 cm. (7½ in.);
 H. of tallest warrior, 10.5 cm. (4½ in.).
- Acc. No. 61.1075. J. H. and E. A. Payne Fund.
- 23. Acc. No. 62.466. Seth K. Sweetser Fund. н. 8 cm. (3 1/8 in.).
- MMA Bulletin, October 1957, p. 49 left, and MMA Bulletin, April 1960, pp. 254-8, with fig. 17.
- Gray-ware vessel: Acc. No. 61.175.
 H. 14 cm. (5½ in.); Luristan metal vessel: Acc. No. 30.551. For these sites see L. Vanden Berghe, Archéologie de l'Iran Ancien, Leiden, 1959, s.v. Index des noms géographiques, p. 251.
- Acc. No. 61.381. Frederick Brown Fund.
 L. 25.5 cm. (10 in.). MFA Annual Report 1961, p. 59 and ill.
- Steatopygous female: Acc. No. 62.582.
 Frederick Brown Fund. H. 43.5 cm.
 (17½ in.). See Terrace, op. cit. (supra n. 20), nos. 31-33, and Terrace, "Some Recent Finds from Northwest Persia," Syria 39, 1962, pp. 212-24.
- 28. The Achaemenid bowl is published in Terrace, op. cit. (supra n. 20) no. 61; in Illustrated London News, September 8, 1962 (color supplement); and in Terrace, "Two Achaemenian Objects in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts" in Antike Kunst, 6, 1963, pp. 72–80.
- 29. Acc. No. 62.467. Seth K. Sweetser Fund. н. 6.3 cm. (2½ in.).
- For the implications of the horseman in early Iran see Terrace, Syria 39, 1962, p. 212 ff.