

# SOME REMARKS ON THE LURISTAN BRONZES

With 5 plates

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When in dealing with the antiquities of Scythia I first took note of the peculiar bronzes which are now known to come from the Luristan<sup>1)</sup> there were but few of them in the public collections: some pieces in London, a little group in the Louvre and one bronze in the Musée Guimet. Both in the Louvre and in the British Museum (in the Musée Guimet the one bronze was classed with the bronzes of India) the bronzes were labelled as having been found in Cappadocia<sup>2)</sup>. I had no reason to question the accuracy of this statement. In accepting, it, however, I insisted upon the similarity of these bronzes with some Scythian ones and ascribed them tentatively to the Thraco-Iranian population of Cappadocia and Armenia.

After the war large groups of similar bronzes began to appear on the various markets of antiquities (Mr. Pope estimates the total number of them at about 2000). The first to exhibit a large set of them (mixed with some Armenian bronzes) was Heeramanek of New York<sup>3)</sup>. Other dealers followed him<sup>4)</sup>. It was, however, reserved for Prof. A. Upham Pope and of M. André Godard, director of the Archaeological Service of Persia, to trace these objects to the place of their origin and to collect all the available but rather meagre evidence under what circumstances they were found. The information collected by Mr. Pope goes back to the daring visit of a Persian dealer in antiquities, Mr. Rabenou, to the Luristan region; the source of M. Godard's information is his own visit to the region. There are some minor divergencies between the data collected by Mr. Pope and those collected

<sup>1)</sup> M. Rostovtzeff, *Iranians and Greeks in S. Russia*, p. 11 ff., pl. II, and p. 40, pl. V, 3.

<sup>2)</sup> Some of the bronzes of the British Museum were published first by C. H. Read in *Man* 1917, No. 1, and after him by O. M. Dalton, *The treasure of the Oxus*, 2nd ed., 1926, p. XLIII, fig. 25, cp. E. H. Minns, in *The Antiquaries Journal*, 10 (1930), p. 20 ff.

<sup>3)</sup> *Rare Asiatic Art in the Heeramanek Collection (Sale Catalogue)*, New York 1929. On the recent acquisitions of Mr. Heeramanek, *Alvan C. Eastman, Parnassus*, 3 (1931), March, p. 38.

<sup>4)</sup> A large collection is e. g. in the possession of Brothers R. and M. Stora in Paris. I owe to the kindness of Messrs Stora a set of beautiful photographs which reproduce objects kept in their collection. The same courtesy has been shown towards me by Mr. Heeramanek (New York). As regards the Public Museums beautiful specimens are now in almost all the leading Museums of the Old and the New World. The following Museums were kind enough to give me photographs of the Luristan bronzes which they own: the Louvre, the British Museum, the Musée Guimet, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the Metropolitan Museum of New York, the Pennsylvania Museum of Philadelphia. Some photos I owe to the kindness of the Director of the Persian Exhibition in London (1931) Prof. A. Upham Pope. They reproduce some of his own bronzes and some others which are in the hands of private collectors. I am deeply grateful to all these gentlemen and Institutions for the kind permission to use their material. Many Luristan bronzes have been published. The first to draw attention to the recent finds in Luristan was E. Herzfeld, *Illustr. London News*, June 8, 1929, p. 983. Next came many articles by A. Upham Pope connected with the above mentioned Persian Exhibition in London, where a fine set of Luristan bronzes was shown: *Illustr. London News*, Sept. 6, 1930, p. 388, and p. 418, figs 1—24; *ibid.*, Sept. 13, 1930, p. 444 ff., figs 1—5, and colored plate p. 445; *ibid.*, Jan. 17, 1931, p. 89 (Luristan bronze-vases shown in London), cp. *id.*, *Luristan bronzes in the Persian Exhibition*, *Intern. Studio*, Jan., 1931, p. 21 ff., and Leigh Ashton in *Burlington Magazine*, 58 (1931), January, p. 34 ff., and *Catalogue of the Intern. Exhibition of Persian Art*, 3rd ed. (1931), and *An Illustrated Souvenir of the Exhibition of Persian Art*, 2, 12, 14. An important group was reproduced by Messrs A. Godard and R. Dussaud in the article of the last "Haches à douille du type Asiatique", *Syria*, 11 (1930), p. 245 ff. Reproductions of other Luristan bronzes will be found in the *Bulletins* of the various Museums quoted above for 1931. General surveys of the Luristan bronzes are in print: a book by Mr. A. Godard (ed. Van Oest) and an article of R. Dussaud in *A. Upham Pope's Survey of Persian Art* (Clarendon Press). Cp. M. Rostovtzeff, *Skythien und der Bosphorus*, I, 1931, p. 208, note, and 490, note. While this article was under press the book of Mr. Godard has appeared under the title: *A. Godard, Bronzes du Luristan*, *Ars Asiatica*, Paris, G. van Oest, 1931, too late for being extensively used in this article. In order to enable the reader to use the monuments published by Godard in reading this article I inserted references to the plates of his book. I am quoting it „Godard, pl. 1“.



by Mr. Godard. On the whole, the evidence of Mr. Godard is more prosaic and therefore more reliable, while in the data collected by Mr. Rabenou there is a good deal of typical Eastern exaggeration and of probably imaginary detail<sup>1</sup>).

We know, however, that the bronzes were all found in graves, in a single region. Mr. Godard speaks of the objects as being found in valleys of the Zagros S. E. of Kermanshah, between Harsin and Khorremabad (See the map in the book of Godard p. 12). The centre according to his information is Karkavan or Kakavand. Messrs Pope and Rabenou are more explicit. According to them "the bronzes come not from one find but from a number of centres scattered through a wide area. The most important are Harsin, Kakavand, Awlad Qubad, Mumivand and Terhan". The region is now inhabited by the Lurs, a half-nomadic, primitive people dwelling in "black" tents. Archaeologically and historically the region has never been explored. Both Mr. Pope and Mr. Godard point out the existence of some *tepés*; i. e., ruins of smaller and larger villages and towns with which the cemeteries are usually connected.

Such being the circumstances, it is very precarious to deal with the bronzes and to try to assign to them a certain date and to classify them according to style. Speculations about a change in style from conventionalism to naturalism may one day be destroyed by a simple observation that objects of both styles are found in one and the same grave. We must keep in mind that we have only very vague information on the contents of single graves and not one group of objects known to come from one and the same grave. It must be said, therefore, that as long as no scientific excavations are carried out in the Luristan all statements about time and evolution will remain highly hypothetical. Even a careful study of the ornamental motives used by the Luristan artists and artisans will remain more or less guesswork as long as we have no general publication of all the material scattered in the public and private collections, a sort of catalogue of types.

I am writing this article in order to attract the attention of the readers of the *Ipek* to this new and important material and to make some comparisons which may help further the study of the bronzes.

The bronzes found in the graves of Luristan are of various kinds. A large group is represented by arms and weapons, especially swords and battle axes. It is not a very difficult task to classify this material according to its affinities, especially since some of them were no doubt imported and some imitate foreign originals. A good start was given to the study of both the swords and the battle axes by some remarks of Mr. Dussaud of the Louvre<sup>2</sup>). With the arms and weapons go the whetstones with their peculiar bronze caps<sup>3</sup>). Typical and rich are the bronze vases, some of them very beautiful in form and with rich decoration<sup>4</sup>). Here again our material for comparison is abundant and it will be not difficult for specialists to classify the Luristan material — if and when collected in full — according to shapes and decoration. And again many vases in all probability were imported. No great difficulties, for a careful analysis are presented by the various ornaments worn both by men and especially by women, first and foremost the pins and armlets<sup>5</sup>).

Much more peculiar are the objects most frequently found in the graves, which stand practically alone with almost no convincing parallels in the hitherto known archaeological

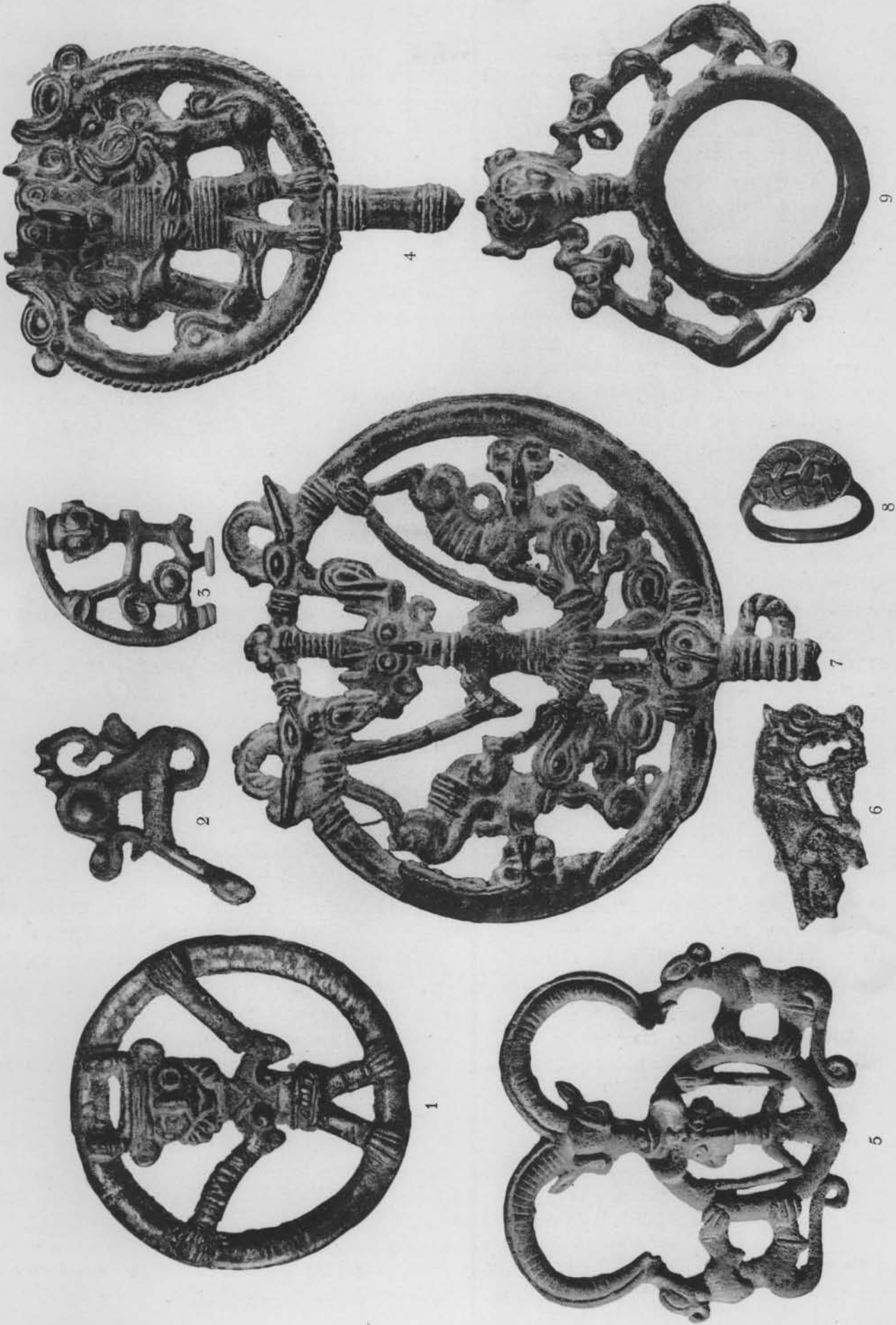
<sup>1</sup>) A. U. Pope, *Illustr. London News*, Sept. 6, 1930, p. 388; A. Godard, *Syria*, 11 (1930), p. 260ff. (More details in the Introductory chapter of the book of Mr. Godard.)

<sup>2</sup>) R. Dussaud, *I. I.*, and *Syria*, 10 (1929), p. 299. (More on this subject in the book of Mr. Godard. Indeed he made these objects the backbone of his dating and classifying all the Luristan bronzes. See pls. VII—X [swords and daggers] and XIV—XXIV [Axes].)

<sup>3</sup>) (Godard, pls. XI, XII.)

<sup>4</sup>) A. U. Pope, *Illustr. London News*, Jan. 17, 1931, p. 89. (Godard pls. LIX—LXIV.)

<sup>5</sup>) Godard pls. XXVI—XXVIII and XXXIII.)



Luristan Bronzes and Comparative Pieces

material. Among these objects there is a set which, peculiar as it is, nevertheless belongs to a well known class — the horse-bits. With these bits and horse-trappings in general we may connect the large mass of various rings — single, double, and triple. Mr. Pope adds some bells, common as parts of horse-trappings in Scythia, and a frontal<sup>1)</sup>. I personally have not seen them. Much more enigmatic are the composite aigrette-like finials or vertical ornaments of which I will speak presently. A few hub caps were found which, Mr. Pope thinks, came from chariots<sup>2)</sup>.

It is particularly difficult to deal with this material without knowing the exact circumstances of its discovery. Mr. Godard speaks of the bits as being found under the skulls of the deceased, while Rabenou insists that skeletons of horses were found in the graves and the bits were taken out of the skulls of the horses. We are uncertain, moreover, whether it is true or not that the composite aigrette-like ornaments are often found near the head of the deceased, above it. Finally we have not the slightest evidence that remains of chariots were found in the graves. Chariots have often been found in graves of various peoples: Celtic, Thracian, Scythian, Chinese and when found, they left considerable traces of their existence. A wheel is easily recognisable.

However scanty our information on these three groups of peculiar objects found in the Luristan graves, a study of them remains both important and fascinating. Let me give a summary description of them and suggest some considerations about them.

A. Aigrette-like composite ornaments. These objects consist of the following parts (in some cases found fitted each to the other, pl. II, 2)<sup>3)</sup>. 1. Long pins surmounted by heads, half-figures, or entire figures of various animals or by circles mostly in open work with the figure of a youthful horned god with locks mastering two animals (lions or goats) filling the circle (pl. I, 4 and 7; pl. V, 5). Some pin heads are solid discs with geometric, floral, or animal decoration (Ill. Lond. News 1930, p. 369, fig. 16)<sup>4)</sup>. 2. On these pins were mounted single figures or groups of figures; in each case this part of the ornament had a tube inside through which went the pin. These figurines and groups of figurines may be subdivided into various classes:

a) Single figures of gods, goddesses and demons. Striking is a figure of a bearded standing god (pl. IV, 1) and that of a goddess (pl. IV, 5), the latter representing the usual figure of Sumerian and Babylonian art, the goddess of fertility holding her breasts. In most cases, however, the figure is a beardless god with locks on his head and probably animal legs (pl. V, 8). The figure of the god is sometimes reduced to the head only, which surmounts a simple tube (pl. V, 2)<sup>5)</sup>.

b) Figures of gods (in some rare cases goddesses) holding in their hands the necks of two highly stylised lions (pl. II, 1—3). The figures of the gods or goddesses are very archaic or rather primitive with beaklike noses, round eyes, and tubelike bodies. The lions are mostly reduced to heads and necks. It is hard to say in some cases to whom — to the animals or to the gods — belong the two legs of the lower part of the figures which, without doubt, are not human legs but the hind legs of an animal. There are many variations of this group. I cannot enumerate them all. The subtypes are characterised a) by the position of the arms and hands of the god or goddess: holding the necks of the animals (pl. II, 2 and 3), crossed on the breast (pl. II, 1), as if raised in prayer, or holding the breasts (in

<sup>1)</sup> I do not know whether by frontal he means the interesting diadem, Illustr. London News, Sept. 6, 1930, fig. 15, which hardly has served as a horse frontal. (Rings-Godard pls. XXXI, XXXII.)

<sup>2)</sup> (Hub-cap-Godard pl. XLVIII, 181; H. C. H., Bull. of the Cleveland Mus. of Art 1931, Dec., p. 193f.)

<sup>3)</sup> A complete aigrette is reproduced as found by Mr. Godard in Syria, 11 (1930), pl. XLII quater, fig. 5. (Godard pls. LII—LVIII.)

<sup>4)</sup> (Godard pl. XXXIV.)

<sup>5)</sup> Illustr. London News, Sept. 13, 1930, colored plate. (Godard pls. LVI—LVIII.)

the case of goddesses, see Godard, Syria, 11 (1930), pl. XLII quinques, figs 1—3);  $\beta$ ) by the number of faces which the divine beings possess: some have one face on the top (pl. II, 1), some a second one in the region of the breast (pl. II, 2), some others a third in the region of the sexual organs (pl. II, 3);  $\gamma$ ) by the addition to the two lions of two or four bird's heads, probably eagle's, not cock's (pl. II, 2 and 3), in a few cases there are in addition a couple of goat's heads;  $\delta$ ) by the shape and position of the animal hind legs mentioned above.

c) A modification of type b is the numerous group of figures in which the leading role is played by two heraldically disposed animals while the figure of their master — the god or goddess is reduced to mere survivals or is lacking entirely. The confronted animals are lions or goats. In some cases the animals are winged. In some others on their backs stand other highly stylised animals, mostly lions, which in their turn are sometimes winged (pl. II, 4, 5, 6).

3. Baluster-like or bottle-like hollow objects, stands or bases which supported the above described figures and through which passed the central pin sometimes last in one piece with the figures (pl. II, 1).

B. Similar in motives and style are the many bits found in the graves. "They are of three forms, says Mr. Pope, with a straight mouth-bar, with a mouth-bar curved in a low arch in the middle, or with a mouth-bar linked in the middle." The bits are very heavy and vary of sizes. The most important parts of these bits are the cheek plaques. Some of them are squares in open work. They show a horned bearded or beardless god with two locks mastering either two bulls with human horned heads and locks (British Museum) (pl. III, 6), or two standing bird-headed demons with a crest on the top of the head (Stora) (pl. III, 1), or two wingless or winged lions (Mozaffar-Cohen and Boston) (pl. III, 5), or two eagle-headed griffons (Pope). One very peculiar square plaque (Stora) (pl. III, 4) shows a bearded god kneeling and holding the necks of two goats which stand on their hind legs with their backs turned toward the god and their fronts toward stylized trees, in the well known age-old scheme of Sumerian art.

Instead of these heraldic plaques some bits have as cheek pieces single figures of geniuses or animals only which in the full composition are conquered by the god. A kind of transition is represented by a pair of cheek pieces which show human-faced bulls on whose backs we see protruding heads of the youthful horned god and near them the heads of his enemy — the lion. Note that the tail of bull is a lion's tail (Stora) (pl. III, 7). Otherwise we meet various half-mythical figures alone: human-headed bulls, eagle-headed griffons, winged bulls, winged goats or moufflons (very common). Not so frequent are cheek pieces which show naturalistic, not fantastic animals — horses (pl. IV, 4), bulls and moufflons (pl. IV, 3). I may note finally that some trapezoidal open work cheek pieces have exactly the same form as the cheek pieces of the Assyrian horse-trappings (pl. V, 3, cp. 9).

[Unique is a pair of cheek-pieces in the coll. Stora (pl. IV, 2). They show each of them a chariot driven by a fantastic lion harnessed like a horse, with a collar and two round bells on its neck. On the chariot kneels a man shooting an arrow. He wears a short tunic whit pleated border. To his waist is fastened a „gorytos“ — bow-and arrow — case with a reserve bow and arrows in it. To the waist are fastened also the reins. I will come back to these curious cheek-pieces later in this article<sup>1</sup>.)]

<sup>1</sup>) (The type of the chariot of the cheek-plaques is well known. It is the archaic chariot of the Syrian region as known from the Egyptian pictures of the Retenu of the XVIIIth century, a type of chariot which was no more in use in the more progressive countries in the second half of the second milenium B. C. It was also the chariot used in Elam and the chariot of the Mycenaeans. See F. Studniczka, Der Rennwagen im syrisch-phönikischen Gebiet, Jahrb. d. d. Arch. Inst., 22 (1907), p. 147ff.; O. Nuoffer, Der Rennwagen im Altertum (1904), p. 16ff., cf. 33 and 85.)



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C. To horse-trappings may belong the many rings of various sizes and forms: single, double and triple. The dominating motive in them is the same as in A and B: a god mastering two animals (pl. I, 5 and 9). From the decorative point of view these rings are masterpieces. The use of the beautiful horns of ibexes to give an ornamental unity to the ring is a remarkable achievement. It seems as if the ibex head protected the god struggling with the lions (pl. I, 5).

Let me stop for a moment and try to define the use of the three classes of objects described above. There is no doubt as regards B. The objects are bits. There arises, however, a question. Are they (I mean all of them) real bits of every-day use or some of them are symbolical objects made for funeral purposes only? I am inclined to accept the second explanation: heavy, unwieldy, massive, and stiff, most of the Luristan bits are more fit for graves than for life.

Much more difficult is the explanation as to the use of the composite aigrette-like ornaments. They are certainly not amulets as Dussaud seems to suggest, though their apotropaic or protective character is evident. The general shape of the ornaments — wider and heavier at the bottom, narrower and lighter at the top — suggests that they stood erect as tops of implements. The most natural idea would be to explain them as tops of standards. It is well known that both in Egypt and in Babylonia each god had its own standard, the standard-top being formed in the shape of the totem-animal of the god or representing a symbol (e. g. the solar rosette). Many standards of Babylonian gods are represented on various monuments (cylinders, kudurrus, basreliefs, etc.). Some of them show a general composition similar to our ornaments: two animal heads and one disc in the centre, or two animal heads disposed heraldically<sup>1</sup>). This is exactly the motive which we find commonly on the Luristan pins described above (a specimen may be seen on our pl. V, 5). Similar standards were used also in the Central Asiatic regions. Tops of such standards have been found in Scythian graves of South Russia: they have the shape of an animal or a goddess; in one case, of a goddess mastering two animals<sup>2</sup>).

We may therefore suggest that the aigrette-like ornaments were tops of standards which accompanied the deceased during the funeral procession and were afterwards placed in the grave. The standards with their figures protected the deceased against the evil demons. However, another explanation may be suggested also. They might have belonged to funeral chariots.

The most conspicuous part of a Sumerian chariot, the pride of the owner of the chariot, was the rein-ring fastened to the end of the chariot-pole or to the front wall of the chariot-box. We see such rein-rings on many chariots pictured in bas-reliefs and mosaics and we still have some original rings both from Ur and from Kish. It may be added that recently very similar rein-rings were found in the Luristan (soon to be published by Prof. A. U. Pope). They are either imported from Sumer or close imitations of Sumerian originals.

<sup>1</sup>) I know of no work in which the standards of Sumerian, Elamite, Babylonian and Assyrian gods were collected, classified and reproduced. H. Prinz, *Altorientalische Symbolik*, 1915, mentions in describing the single gods their respective standards. The standard which is most similar to the Luristan bronzes he calls the Doppellöwenszepter, cp. the Löwengreifenszepter. On the Kudurrus which reproduce a rich collection of standards and sceptres J. de Morgan, *Del. en Perse Mem.*, 1 (1900), p. 165ff., and 7 (1905), p. 137ff., see esp. pl. XVI of vol. I; L. W. King, *Babylonian Boundary Stones in the Br. Mus.*, 1912; *Cambr. Anc. Hist.*, II, p. 244ff., cp. Handcock, *Mesopotamian Archaeology*, 1912, p. 396f.

<sup>2</sup>) M. Rostowzew, *Skythien und der Bosphorus*, 1931, Index (under „Aufsätze“). I may mention in this connection that the famous Assyrian or Parthian standard top regarded as part of a military standard (L. Heuzey, *Rev. d'Assyriologie* 5 (1889), p. 103f.; Sarre, *Klio* 3 (1903), p. 363ff., N. C. Debevoise, *Rev. d'Assyriologie*, 27 (1930), p. 137ff.) known in two copies, one in the Louvre, the other in the private collection of Prof. Sarre looks not unlike the aigrette ornaments of Luristan, esp. the tops of the pins.

Though no rein-rings are reproduced on Hittite bas-reliefs which show chariots of Hittite warriors, some rein-rings of bronze were found in the ruins of Hittite cities and there is no doubt that the Hittites used them, at least in the earlier period of their history.

The practice of the Assyrians was different. I have found no examples of rein-rings, either originals found in the ruins of Assyrian cities and palaces, or representations of them in the hundreds of sculptures which depict the military expeditions of the Assyrians. While for the Sumerians and the Hittites the rein-ring surmounted by figures of men and of animals was one of the most conspicuous parts of a war chariot, for the Assyrians it was rather the beautifully adorned yoke of the two horses which were drawing the chariot. It is curious how eager the Assyrian artists were to show in their bas-reliefs the yoke and all the details of its adornment. Since the yoke could not have been seen at all if represented according to the laws of perspective, the sculptors in their endeavour to show it represented the yoke as if hanging in the air above the necks of the horses and seen almost in front-view (pl. V, 9). The Assyrian yoke has various forms. The most common form shows curved ends, each of them adorned with heads or fore-parts of real or fantastic animals. In the centre of the yoke there is often a pair of protruding balusterlike ornaments, or a pin, or polelike implement surmounted either by a ring or by a half-disc in the form of a crescent, or by a combination of a ring and a crescent. These last aigrette-like ornaments of the yoke as described above had probably no practical purpose; they were purely ornamental, perhaps, of an apotropaic character, a kind of mascot, such as the figures which surmount the Sumerian and Hittite rein-rings. They might have been survivals of such rein-rings<sup>1</sup>).

If we endeavour now to find a explanation for the aigrette-like implements of the Luristan graves which look like rein-rings but are too thin and too tiny to use as such, we are tempted to compare them with the mascot ornaments of the Assyrian chariots. Our aigrette-like ornaments might have been fastened either to the pole-ends of chariots or to the yokes of the horses. The only other explanation of the mascot aigrettes which I can suggest would be to regard them as real aigrettes fastened to the heads of the horses, such as are commonly seen on Hittite, Assyrian, and Persian bas-reliefs and which were still in use in the Sassanian period<sup>2</sup>). I hesitate, however, to adopt this explanation since it does not account for their resemblance to rein-rings, nor does it take into consideration the large size and the relative heaviness of the Luristan metal implements. We must not forget that the horse aigrettes of the Assyrian and Persian bas-relief consisted either of feathers or of pompons.

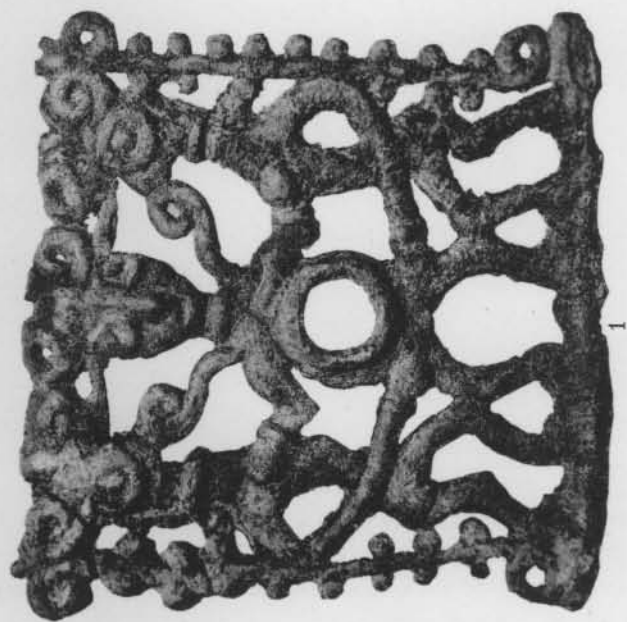
I may add that implements of the same type consisting of a pin and a tube are often found with other remains of chariots in Celtic and Celto-Roman graves (see M. Rostovtzeff, *Syria*, 12 (1932)).

Whatever the use of the aigrettes may have been, their main interest as well as the interest of the bit-plaques and harness rings consists in the peculiar motives of their ornamentation and in their peculiar style. A study of the three groups of bronzes described above has made it seem probable both to Mr. Pope and to Mr. Leigh Ashton that these objects evince an evolution in style. Some of them are stiff, conventional, very primitive, some are much more developed, full of life and movement, elegant, and much more natura-

<sup>1</sup>) On the chariots of Sumer, of the Hittites and of Assyria, their rein-rings and yokes see my article "Dieux et chevaux", *Syria*, 12 (1931), p. 48ff. On the yoke of the Assyrian chariots in particular F. Studniczka, *Der Rennwagen im syrisch-phönikischen Gebiet*, *Jahrb. d. d. Arch. Inst.*, 22 (1907), p. 154ff.; Hancock, *Mesopotamian Archaeology*, 1912, p. 356; Lefebvre de Noettes, *La Force motrice animale à travers les ages*, 1924, p. 32ff.

<sup>2</sup>) R. Pfister, *La décoration des Etoffes d'Antinoé*, *Rev. des Arts Asiat.*, 5 (1928), pl. IV, cp. some fragments of Sassanian stuffs in the Musée Guimet which show the head of a horse with an aigrette which consists of the crescent and a star and is exactly like the aigrettes of the yokes of the Assyrian chariots.





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listic. I may add that this division coincides completely with another division of the same bronzes in to two or three groups, that which I have suggested in my description.

In all the three classes dealt with above we have certain objects which show a complete mythological scene the triumphant struggle of a god with two animals, mostly lions. Alongside these full groups, however, we have other objects of the same type which gradually eliminate the figure of the god and reduce the group to two heraldic animals in our group A and to single fantastic or real animals in group B.

Now this division according to subjects coincides entirely with the division in to two groups according to style. Those objects which show the more primitive and conventional style give mostly the full heraldic group of the god and the two animals, those of the more developed style drop the figure of the god and retain the figures of the animals only. We may therefore in a tentative way suggest the existence of two groups among the three classes of bronzes described above: one older and more primitive, another younger and more developed. The other alternative — to regard the first group as a deterioration and barbarization of the second — is hardly acceptable, for many reasons.

Before proceeding farther let us consider who the men were that lay buried in the graves of Luristan, those who made the Luristan bronzes. There can be no doubt that the inhabitants of the Luristan from very remote times and down probably to the present day were, as Mr. Minorsky<sup>1)</sup> has shown, the Cossaeans or Cassites, a group of pre-Indo-European tribes connected probably with their pre-Indoeuropean neighbours, the pre-Aryan residents of Media in the North and the Elamites in the South. It is very probable that the Cossaeans in the 2d millennium B. C. were conquered by a small group of Indo-Europeans and then under their leadership attacked and conquered Babylon, where they ruled for more than 500 years, from about 1746 B. C. on. It is a pity that we do not know whether the Babylonian Cassites remained in touch with their kin in Luristan. In any case the Luristan Cossaeans were still in the Luristan in the time of Alexander the Great and later. The country, like the neighbouring Nisaia, was famous for its horses, which were used by the Persian kings and armies and later by the Seleucids, the Parthians and the Sassanian Persians. We find these typical horses portrayed both in the Luristan bronzes (pl. IV, 4), and on the Parthian graffiti and the Sassanian sculptures and frescoes. The typical features of these horses are heavy bodies and necks and fine nervous long heads.

A people who for centuries had as their nearest neighbour the highly civilized Elamites and for more than five hundred years was connected with Cassite Babylonian should certainly show in its art strong Elamite and Babylonian connections. And this is exactly what is revealed by an analysis, of the motives and style of these bronzes.

The dominating figure which appears on all the implements described above and which gives them their own peculiar religious cachet is the figure of a god mastering two animals. The god is generally beardless. Two curls are seen on each side of his head. Horns or a horned crown adorn the top his head. In many cases he has animal legs and looks like a bull-man. In a few cases a goddess takes the place of the god. She is represented as a goddess of fertility holding her breasts.

It is well known that from a very early period in their history the Sumerians and probably also the Elamites worshipped two heroes or demigods who were represented in art and literature as great fighters against wild animals and who finally mastered them and triumphed over them. These heroes were the man Gilgamesh and the bull-man Enkidu. They are represented hundreds of times on Sumerian, Elamitic, and Babylonian seals and later in the Hittite Empire and in Assyria as either fighting with animals or triumphing over

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<sup>1)</sup> V. Minorsky, *The Luristan bronzes*, *Apollo*, 13 (1931), p. 141ff.

them. These two heroes had had a long life in Asia Minor before they were replaced by a goddess, the Great Mother of men and animals, the *potnia theron*<sup>1)</sup>.

Note that while in Sumerian and Babylonian art the two heroes are fighting with real animals (even the bull with human face is practically a real bull), the Hittites in many cases substituted fantastic for real animals. This was borrowed from them by the Assyrians. Most of these Hittite and Assyrian fantastic animals are winged. Note also that in many cases in the Hittite world the two Sumerian-Babylonian heroes disappeared and were replaced by Hittite gods, while in Assyria the divine being fighting the animals and triumphing over them was a winged genius (pl. V, 4). Finally it must be noted that in Persia the representation of a divine being fighting animals was as popular as in the other Oriental lands. Like the Assyrians, the Persians had a marked predilection for fantastic animals. However, for the god as fighter and master of animals the Persians substituted their king<sup>2)</sup>.

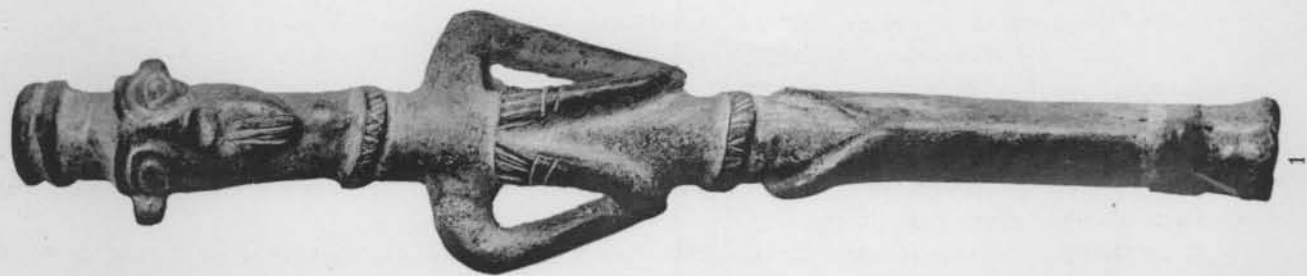
The Kermanshah bronzes certainly inherited from the Sumerians and Babylonians the figure of the god fighting animals. He is a kind of Gilgamesh or rather Enkidu as these appear in their later development: he wears the horns like Enkidu, has sometimes bull legs like him and has the same typical side-locks as both Gilgamesh and Enkidu. Of course the Cossaeon god is neither Gilgamesh nor Enkidu. He is a native master of animals. Some of his pictures are not like Gilgamesh or Enkidu (pl. IV, 1). Usually however, he is represented exactly like the two Sumerian heroes. There is no doubt therefore that the image of their own god was borrowed by the Cossaeans from the Sumerians, Elamites or Babylonians.

At what time? The study of the style of our bronzes may help us in dating them. The first thing to note is that while the idea of the group representing a god fighting two animals goes back certainly to early Sumerian and Elamitic times there is very little similarity between the style of the Luristan bronzes and that of the few early bronzes of Sumer and Elam. Much closer is the connection between the Luristan bronzes and some Babylonian monuments of the later Cassite period. It is especially close between the Luristan bronzes and the boundary stones, the Kudurrus. The Kudurrus are literally covered with symbolical representations of gods and especially with figures of their various standards. Now some of these standards, those surmounted by heads of animals "mostly lions": (one or two, or two and a disc in the centre) are similar to the Luristan bronzes of our class A. The same shape, the same heraldic scheme, a similar style. Especially striking is the same stylization of cock-like eagle heads in Luristan and in Cassite Babylonia. I note also the popularity in Cassite Babylonia of winged demons. There is also a certain similarity in the style: the same heaviness and clumsiness with gradual transition to the later, Assyrian and neo-Babylonian slenderness and elegance<sup>3)</sup>.

<sup>1)</sup> On Gilgamesh and Enkidu in the history of Oriental art O. Weber, *Altorientalische Siegelbilder*, 1920. Early Elamite cylinders with the figure of a god or genius holding two animals, Delaporte, *Catalogue des cylindres etc. du Louvre*, p. 389ff., cp. the god between two lions *id.*, *ibid.*, A 79. On the locks as a symbol of divinity Sarzec-Heuzey, *Dec. en Chaldée*, p. 293, 295; Heuzey, *Catal. d. anat. Chald.*, No. 125; Weber, *l. c.*, p. 19.

<sup>2)</sup> The *πότνιος θηρών* of the Hittites E. Pottier, *l'Art Hittite*, I (1926), p. 25; my article "Dieux et chevaux", *Syria*, 12 (1931), p. 48ff. Struggle of Gilgamesh and Enkidu with lions in Assyrian and Persian art Weber, *l. c.*, p. 25, fig. 54, esp. p. 87ff., cp. figs 26 and 310 (the locks). The animals which are connected with the god in Assyria and Persia are the same as in Luristan: sphynxes (male and female), lions, lion-griffins, bulls (winged and wingless), goats or ibexes, gazelles, eagle-griffins, birds, horses (wingless fig. 344 and winged fig. 343). Cp. the Persian cylinder L. Speleers, *Catal. des Intailles etc.*, 1927, No. 565.

<sup>3)</sup> See the references in p. 49 note 1. Let me quote some of the Kudurrus which give good examples of the various standards of which I speak in the text. The best reproductions of Kudurrus will be found in the book of L. W. King, *Babylonian boundary-stones*, 1912. An interesting standard with the head of a lion in very peculiar stylization is



Luristan Bronzes

Still closer, however, are the similarities in motives and style between the Luristan bronzes and some so-called Hittite bronzes and bas-reliefs. Let me begin with the motives. Compare, e. g., the cheek plaque of pl. III, 4, with the well known figure of the kneeling "Gilgamesh" who is mastering a bull and a lion on the basalt slab of Carchemish, two lions on the pedestal of the statue of Hadad of Sendjirli (pl. V, 12)<sup>1</sup>). The motive of a kneeling fighter or hunter appears again on one of the well known bronze bowls of Nimrud in the British Museum (pl. V, 11) and later in the Persian Achaemenid art. Let me adduce in this connection three Luristan bronzes which are closely similar to the Nimrud bowl: a bronze belt with a scene of hunting in repoussée (Wilfred Buckley, pl. V, 1), a peculiar jug or cup (Rabenou)<sup>2</sup>), and a bronze ring (Stora, pl. I, 8). For another parallel, compare the two winged genii of the cheek plaque (pl. III, 1) and a single bronze figure from Luristan (pendant, Stora, pl. III, 2 and 3) with the well known slab of Carchemish showing the same type of genius with the same crest, wings, and dress, and in the same style (pl. V, 13)<sup>3</sup>). Still closer is the connection in style between some Hittite and some earlier Luristan bronzes. This connection has been noted by almost all the students of the Luristan bronzes. The similarity is especially striking in the treatment of the human figure (nose, eyes, lips); less so in the treatment of animals. It was no wonder that prominent scholars assigned the first Luristan bronzes to post-Hittite Cappadocia and Armenia.

In dealing, however, with the so-called Hittite bronzes we must not forget that those found in Asia Minor and in Northern Syria represent but one branch of this style. Bronzes of the same style are found all over the Western Iranian section of Central Asia. This accounts for the many similarities in style between the earlier Luristan bronzes and some of the Scythian Bronzes. In my various contributions to the study of the Scytho-Sarmatian animal style I have repeatedly mentioned the close similarity in style and workmanship between some Scythian and some Hittite bronzes<sup>4</sup>). The same similarity exists between the Scythian and the Luristan bronzes.

A far reaching similarity may be found especially between the Luristan bronzes and some parts of horse-trappings of bronze found shortly before the war in a rich grave in the Kuban region. The contents of this grave are widely scattered all over the world (Petersburg Hermitage, Berlin Antiquarium, Philadelphia University Museum, New York Metropolitan, Musée Cernuschi in Paris). Most of the bronzes are in Berlin and Petersburg. Some of them show figures of Scythians on horseback (see our pl. V, 6; cp. Rostovtzeff, *Iranians and Greeks*, p. 40, pl. V, 5), the riders carrying a Scythian quiver (gorytos) and holding the reins. A certain similarity between the horsemen of Kuban and the gods of the aigrettes from Luristan cannot be denied: the same straight, heavy, beaklike nose, the same circular eyes of both men and horses, the same lips, even the same torques around the neck. Still more striking is the similarity between the Scythian horseman and the Luristan chariot-driver (pl. IV, 2<sup>5</sup>). Not less interesting is the comparison of a ring that has the figure of a god inside in open-work from Kuban (pl. I, 3) with similar rings from Luristan (pl. I, 1). Note in the Kuban bronze the typical Scythian eagle head reduced to

reproduced on his pls LXXVIII and XL; the lion-standard is in both cases accompanied by an eagle-standard. The two lion's heads — pls LXIV and LXXXIII. Two lion's heads and a disc in the centre — pl. LXXXII and lithographic plate 24.

<sup>1</sup>) Hogarth, Carchemish, pl. B, 10; Berlin, Mitt. Or. Samml., 14, p. 363, pl. LXIV.

<sup>2</sup>) Illustr. London News, Jan. 17, 1931, p. 39.

<sup>3</sup>) Hogarth, Carchemish, pl. B, 12.

<sup>4</sup>) On the connection between the Hittite and Scythian art see the references in my *Skythien und der Bosphorus*, I, 1931, p. 273f., 307, 309. On the hind legs of animals in Scythia A. Alföldi, *Jahrb. d. d. Arch. Inst., A. A.*, 46 (1931), p. 416f.

<sup>5</sup>) (Cp. Godard pl. XIV, 59 and XLV, 174; for the horse-trappings XLIV, 172 and pl. XLVI, 176.)

beak and eye which recurs, e. g., in the Luristan cheek plaque (pl. III, 5) under the feet of the god, and elsewhere in the Luristan bronzes.

The animal figures of the Kuban bronzes show some similarities with many of the animal figures of the Luristan bronzes. A mere glance at the selection of these bronzes which I reproduced in my *Animal Style*, pl. XI (cf. *Iranians and Greeks*, p. 194, fig. 21, and p. 196, fig. 22, and *Borovka, Scythian Art*, pls 7 and 17, and our pl. I, 2 and 6) will make this plain. Especially convincing is the resemblance in the mode of treatment of the heraldic group of two animals, especially lions. The Kuban find belongs probably to the late Vth or early IVth century B. C. The oldest heraldic group of two lions, however, in South Russia goes much farther back, at least to the early or the middle VIth cent. B. C., as is shown by the two lions from the Zukur grave with which a Rhodian oinochoe was found (*Iranians and Greeks*, p. 40, and pl. V, 4). In publishing this bronze in 1922 I was struck by the far reaching similarity in style between this group and the bronzes which then were regarded as Cappadocian (*Iranians and Greeks*, pl. V, 3).

Still another parallel may be drawn between the Scythian and the Luristan bronzes. I have pointed out earlier in this paper that among the peculiarities of the group in which a god masters two lions in the Luristan aigrettes are the animal legs, as to which we cannot be sure whether they belong to the gods or to the animals (pl. II, 1—3). The stylization of these hind legs is strikingly similar to what we find in the Scythian horse-trappings, where such legs appear as an independent ornament not connected with either an animal or a human being. Hundreds of such ornaments are known. They were very popular in South Russia and came with the Scythians to Eastern Europe, as is shown by recent finds both in Bulgaria and Rumania (Rostowzew, *Skythien und der Bosphorus*, p. 491ff. und p. 539). A selection of these peculiar ornaments will be found in *Borovka, Scythian Art*, pl. 19.

This evident and striking interconnection between the so-called Hittite, the Scythian, and the Luristan bronzes, rather than the highly hypothetical migration of Nisaeian horses from Luristan to China, explains also some coincidences in motives and style between the Luristan bronzes and some Middle Asiatic bronzes of the Han period, coincidences which were recently emphasised by Mr. Yetts<sup>1</sup>). Mr. Yetts forgets that I have many times pointed out that China received her Central Asiatic animal style from the Sarmatians, who were near relatives of the Scythians and were bearers of a new form of animal style very similar to that practised by the Scythians. With the Sarmatians some early motives of the proto-animal style of Middle Asia came to China.

It is to be stressed, however, that the above mentioned similarities in style and workmanship between Scythia and Luristan are the only links which connect the Scythian and the Luristan animal style. The Luristan animal style belongs to the Western, Sumero-Babylonian branch of the animal style and develops on the same lines, while the Scythian has its own peculiar development, now and then slightly influenced by the development of the Western and Southern animal style. It is very probable, however, that both branches have a common origin, and this explains those similarities between them to which I have referred.

Different connections may help us to explain the Luristan bronzes of the second style. While some of the peculiarities of the first style remain (e. g., stylization of the lions, formation of the eyes, etc.), the whole spirit is changed. Not all the new features of the second style however, are creations of the Luristan artists. Most of them recur in exactly the same features on the numerous late Assyrian and early Persian seals which show the struggle of a wingless or winged god with wingless or winged animals. We observe in the Assyrian

<sup>1</sup>) W. Perceval Yetts, Chinese contact with Luristan bronzes, *Burlington Magazine*, 59 (1931), August, p. 76ff.



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seals the same elegance, the same movement, the same slender forms, the same dancing grace of both the animals and the gods which are so typical of the animal figures of Luristan belonging to the second style (compare the Luristan bronzes of pl. IV with the Assyrian seals reproduced on pl. V, 4, 7, 10). There is not the slightest doubt that the Luristan artists were acquainted with late Assyrian and early Persian art and were strongly influenced by it<sup>1</sup>).

If I am correct in my parallels, what conclusions may be drawn from the above facts? Of course the exact date of the "Hittite" bronzes and sculptures quoted above is hypothetical. The bas-reliefs belonging to the late Hittite style are, not to be dated before the IXth cent. B. C. Some of the bronzes which show similarity with those of Luristan may, however, be earlier. Much later are the early Persian and late Assyrian seals and other monuments which I have compared with the Luristan bronzes of the second style (not earlier than the VIIth cent.). The Scythian things of the same style as the Luristan bronzes tentatively assigned by us to the first Luristan style must be dated some of them in the VIth, some some in the Vth, most, however, in the IVth century.

So much for our parallels. They must of course be checked up by analysis of the arms and weapons, vases, personal ornaments etc. and by careful study of those bronzes which are dated by cuneiform inscriptions (some of them soon to be published by Mr. Pope) before we draw any conclusions which may be regarded as final. However, even these preliminary comparisons show that it is impossible to date all the Luristan bronzes in one and the same short period of time. Their popularity had without doubt a long life. When they began is hard to say. They may have grown up in the track of imports from Sumer and Elam. The Cossaeans might have created their own style — a combination of Western Central Asiatic style and workmanship with Sumero-Elamitic motives — as early as the II<sup>nd</sup> millenium B. C. The blooming of the style seems, however, to be much later. Its beginnings are not before the early centuries of the 1<sup>st</sup> millenium, its pitch may be dated in the late Assyrian and early Persian (Achaemenid) period, from the end of the VIIth to the IVth cent. B. C. A group of personal ornaments and vases may be dated with certainty in the Achaemenid period<sup>2</sup>). I am inclined to regard the IVth century as the latest date for any bronze which I have seen. The fact that not one of them shows any influence of Greek art prevents me from dating any group of the bronzes in the Hellenistic or Parthian period as some scholars are inclined to do.

PLATE I

1. Ring. Horned god. Paris. Stora (Godard, pl. XXXII, 116).
2. Scythian horse-troppings. Koban. Goat. Petersburg, Ermitage.
3. Scythian horse-troppings. Ring. Inside god and eagle's Head. Berlin. Antiquarium.
4. Head of a pin. Horned god between two lions holding the necks of two highly stylised lions. Paris. M. and R. Stora. (Godard, pl. XXXVI, 154.)
5. Ring. Moufflon's Head, two lions, horned god. Boston. Museum of Fine Arts.
6. Scythian horse-troppings. Lion. Paris Musée Cernuschi. Kuban.
7. Pin. Youthful horned god holding two goats. Boston. Museum of Fine Arts.
8. Engraved bronze-ring. Luristan. Fighting soldier. Paris. R. and M. Stora.
9. Ring. Horned god and two lions. Paris. Stora (Godard pl. XXXII, 117).

<sup>1</sup>) See the references p. 52 note 2. Compare especially with the Luristan bronzes such Assyrian cylinders as Delaporte, *Cat. d. cyl. etc.*, pl. 87, 2 and 5 (A 656 and A 658) and pl. 87, 13, and many other cylinders of the same style.

<sup>2</sup>) See the jug with the figure of Ahura Mazda in the Rabenou collection A. U. Pope, *Illustr. London News*, Jan. 17, 1931, p. 89, (cp. Godard, pl. LXIII, 225). The fragments of a cup with the figure of a seated Persian king are in the collection Sambury at Baghdad. Some of the heraldic animals of the aigrette ornaments show an unmistakable Persian Achaemenid style, see e. g. our pl. II, 5.



PLATE 2

1. Heraldic group of a god and two lions. Paris. Louvre.
2. Baluster-like base and heraldic group of a god mastering two highly stylised lions. Necklas and belt, eagle-heads, second face, animal kindlegs. Paris. Louvre.
3. Heraldic group of a god and two lions. Two supplementary faces, eagle-heads. Paris. Musée Guimet.
4. Heraldic group of a god and two lions. The figure of the god is reduced to the mask-like face only. Boston. Museum of Fine Arts.
5. Heraldic group of two goats. Realistic Achaemenian style. Philadelphia. Pennsylvania Museum.
6. Heraldic group of two highly stylized lions. Boston. Museum of Fine Arts.

PLATE 3

1. Cheek-plaque of a horse-bit. Human headed bull. On his back a horned head of a god and a lion's head. Paris. R. and M. Stora.
- 2, 3. Two pendants showing two winged genii with stylized trees in their hands. Paris. Stora.
4. Cheek-plaque of a horse-bit. Horned god holding two eagle headed monsters with human bodies. Note the rests or horns on the heads of the monsters. Paris. R. and M. Stora.
5. Cheek-plaque of a horse-bit. Heraldic group of a horned god and two lions. Note near the waist of the god two animals probably lion's heads and under his feet two stylized eagle's heads of scythian style. Boston. Museum of Fine Arts.
6. Horse-bit with two cheek-plaques. Horned god holding two human faced bulls. London. British Museum.
7. Cheek-plaque of a horse-bit. Kneeling horned god holding two goats which climb a tree. Paris. M. and R. Stora.

PLATE 4

1. Hollow pillar-like statuette of a goddess holding her breasts. Diadem, necklace, belt. Paris. M. and R. Stora. (Godard, pl. LVII, 207.)
2. Horse-bit with two men on a car. Paris. Stora.
3. Cheek-plaques of a horse-bit. Mouflon. London. British Museum.
4. Cheek-plaque of a horse-bit. Boston. Museum of Fine Arts.
5. Hollow pillar-like statue of a bearded god. Belt and necklace. Paris. M. and R. Stora. (Godard, pl. LVI, 204).

PLATE 5

1. Belt plaque. Repousse work. Hunting scenes. Luristan. London. Mr. Wilfred Buckley Esqr.
2. Tube surmounted by the head of a horned god. New York. Metropolitan Museum of Art.
3. Cheek-plaque of a horse-bit. Assyrian type (cf. pl. 5, 9). New York. Heeramanek.
- 4, 7, 10. Assyrian cylinders. Paris. Louvre.
5. Pin. Youthful horned god holding two goats. Boston. Museum of Fine Arts.
6. Scythian horse-trappings. Scythian horseman. Koban. Berlin. Antiquarium.
8. Hollow statuette of a god. Locks, necklace, belt, animal-legs. Paris. M. and R. Stora.
9. Assyrian bas-relief. King Assurnasirpal travelling in a rocky country. Showing the assyrian yoke and assyrian horse-trapping. London. British Museum.
11. Part of a bronze bowl. Repousse work. Man or god hunting a lion. Nimrud (Kalah). London. British Museum.
12. Hittite bas-relief. God and lion. Carchemish. London. British Museum.
13. Hittite bas-relief. Two eagle-headed monsters. Carchemish. London. British Museum.