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The Scorpion in Mesopotamian Art and Religion.

By E. Douglas Van Buren (Rome).

Of all the many symbols represented in Mesopotamian art there is none, with the single exception of the serpent, which appears as frequently as the scorpion. The creature was never reduced to a formula, for no special combination of lines was invariably used to depict it. Every artist drew upon his own initiative; consequently scorpions are drawn in a variety of ways¹, big and little, with a thick, round body or with a body like a thread fringed with symmetrically arranged strokes to indicate the pairs of legs. Sometimes every detail is meticulously rendered, at other times the treatment is so abstract that only three round dots remain, the last vestiges of the articulated tail².

In his interesting study Toscanne explains how the representations illustrate the habits of the scorpion, described as *promenades à deux*, *agaceries nuptiales*, terms borrowed from Fabre's entomological study³. He argues that the scorpion was the attribute of Ištar, and that the nature and habits of the insect influenced the characteristics of the divinity to the extent that some of the stories related of her arose from the assimilation to the cruel, nocturnal creature which makes love to its mate only to destroy it ruthlessly. One would naturally expect that the distinctive peculiarities of the scorpion would lend colour to any myth, religious belief, or magic practice in which it played a part. But it is a strange fact that in early times, if one may judge from its representations in art, the only documents of that age now available, the scorpion, far from being regarded as dangerous or antagonistic to mankind, was considered to be a propitious symbol of fertility and prosperity. Its sting, which one would have thought to be its most important and obvious feature, is not emphasized in any way until the comparatively late medical and omen texts discuss the effects of and the cures for the poison, or draw conclusions from the part of the victim's body affected.

In astrological texts the constellation of the scorpion, corresponding to our *Scorpio*, was identified with the goddess Išhara⁴, and the insect itself was regarded as her attribute, for on a kudurru from Susa the image of the scorpion is labelled *diš-ḫa-ra*⁵.

¹) Toscanne, *Sur la figuration et le Symbole du Scorpion*: RA XIV, 1917, pp. 187—203, figs. 1—38. The present study is illustrated by photographs reproduced by kind permission of Prof. Dr. Walter Andrae, Direktor des Vorderas. Museums, Berlin; of the Directors of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; of Prof. Dr. Henri Frankfort, Director of the Oriental Institute Iraq Expedition; of Mr. Sidney Smith, Keeper of the Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities, British Museum; and of Prof. Dr. G. A. S. Snijder, Director of the Allard Pierson Museum, Amsterdam.

²) Langdon, *Excav. at Kish* I, p. 82, pl. XXI, fig. 2 b; Iraq Mus. K 10983; Iraq Mus. 13223 = U 12100, Woolley, *Ur Excav.* II, p. 578; Menant, *Cat. Cyl. Or. à La Haye*, p. 17, No. 4.

³) J. H. Fabre, *Souvenirs Entomologiques* (neuvième série), pp. 303, 305.

⁴) CT XXVI, pl. 42, I:9; XXXIII, pl. 3, BM 86378, Obv. II:29; Kugler, *Sternkunde, Ergänzt. I*, SS. 66, 68. II, S. 223; Weidner, *Handb. der babyl. Astronomie*, SS. 6, 37, 52, 77; King, *Babyl. Magic*, No. 7, Rev. 34.

⁵) MDEP X, p. 25, pl. XIII, 2; Frank, *Bilder und Symbole*, S. 22.

Hommel produced cogent reasons in support of the theory that *dNinâ* = *dEš-ḫan-na* (*dEš-ḫar-ra*) = *dIš-ḫa-ra*⁶. Consequently he believed that the characteristics and functions of Ninâ devolved upon Išhara who was a later aspect of the same divinity. Anton Deimel has summed up all the arguments against the acceptance of that theory so succinctly that it is unnecessary to recapitulate them⁷. It has been said that a proof of identity was the fact that both Ninâ and Išhara were connected with serpents, scorpions, and water crustacea⁸. Serpents were attributed to many deities, some of whom had little or no ophidian characteristics. The only evidence adduced to show that Ninâ was connected with the scorpion are seal impressions on two tablets, one recording fishermen's offerings to the goddess Ninâ⁹, the other a receipt for grain of the 30th year of Šulgi¹⁰. The first, an impression of the seal of Eniggal, scribe of the Women's House, is repeated on two other documents now in Paris and Leningrad¹¹, and shows a small scorpion filling a space in a scene of animal contests. The second depicts a presentation to a seated deity; apart from the main scene and next to the inscription is a scorpion. In neither case has the scorpion any visible relation to Ninâ, who is mentioned in a passage referring to water crustacea, but there is no proof that either crabs or lobsters were regarded as attributes of Išhara.

In the An: *Anum* Series Išhara belongs to the family of Šamaš-Adad¹², and not to that of Ištar, to whom in course of time she was more and more closely assimilated¹³. In a few passages she is identified with the goddess Nidaba¹⁴. She is mentioned in various lists of gods¹⁵, but her name, *dIš-ḫa-ra* or *dEš-ḫar-ra*, was omitted from the liturgies, and is not found with any frequency until the time of the Third Dynasty of Ur. For this reason she has been thought to have been a foreign deity who was adopted into the Babylonian pantheon¹⁶, although in the Boghazköi texts she seems to have been regarded as being of Babylonian origin¹⁷. Nevertheless, she was known and honoured in earlier times, for in an inscription of the time of Narâm-Sin, found at Susa, her name occurs in the form *dAš-ḫa-ra*¹⁸. Beyond the boundaries

⁶) *Die Schwurgöttin Esch-ghanna und ihr Kreis* (Anhang zu: *The Oath in Babyl. and Assyr. Literature* by Samuel Mercer; München, 1912).

⁷) *Pantheon Babylonicum*, p. 148, No. 1606, I (*dIšhara*), p. 223, No. 2749, I a—d (*dNinâ*).

⁸) Hommel, *Schwurgöttin*, SS. 54 f., 60, 64 f.; Langdon, *Tammuz*, pp. 46, 125 f., 159 f.

⁹) Pinches, *Amherst Tablets*, Pt. I, No. 1, p. 2, fig. in text.

¹⁰) Pinches, *Amherst Tablets*, Pt. I, p. 40, fig. in text.

¹¹) Allotte de la Fuÿe, DP I, pl. IX, figs. 15—18; Lichačev, *Mém. de la Soc. archéol. impér. russe* IV, 1907, p. 205, fig. 55, pl. IV, 2 a—b.

¹²) Zimmern, BSGW 63, 4, 1911, S. 117; Deimel, *Pantheon*, p. 148 f., No. 1606: *dIšhara*, p. 120, No. 1018: *dEšhara*, p. 249, No. 3061: *d min ša (g)-ud: dIš-ḫa-ra*; Meissner, BuA II, SS. 9, 26.

¹³) CT XXIV, 18, Rev. 8—9; XII, 25: 3 b; XXVI, pl. 42, I:10.

¹⁴) Luckenbill, AJSL XXXIII, 1916/17, p. 181, Chicago Syllabary, l. 230; Langdon, PBS X, 4, p. 333; see also KAV 51, b:20 f.; CT XXIV, 18:4 f.; XXV, 8:10 b; Deimel, *Pantheon*, p. 249, No. 3061.

¹⁵) CT XXIV, 6:28—32; 23:124—6; XXV, 8:10; KAV 42, Obv. I:31; 48, II:8; 51, Rev. 20 f.; 63, IV:37; 173:12; Chiera, *Sumer. Lexical Texts*, No. 122, V:11; Weidner, AfK II, 1924/25, S. 77, Col. VI:4; Falkenstein, *Liter. Keilschriftl. aus Uruk*, No. 15 (VAT 14489); Scheil, MDEP III, p. 90; KUB X, 27, III:10; XXV, 44, II:4; 48, IV:5; 50, II:17.

¹⁶) Ed. Meyer, *Geschichte des Altertums*⁵ (1926) I, 2, S. 606, § 433; Langdon, CAH I, p. 456.

¹⁷) Forrer, ZDMG 76, 1922, S. 250.

¹⁸) Scheil, MDEP XI, p. 5, fig. 1, pl. I, Col. II:7. Perhaps this explains the puzzling form given in KAV 51, b:19 and CT XXIV, 18:5.

of Babylonia and Assyria the name assumed various forms, *iš-ḫa-a-ra*¹⁹, *ê-sa-ḫ-ira*²⁰, *'šbrj*²¹, *ušbri*²², *'éšbri*, *'éšbr-t*²³. She held a position of some importance among the Hittites²⁴, and among the Hurrians she was even more highly esteemed²⁵.

The characteristics and functions of Išhara were varied and apparently incongruous. She was a goddess who guarded the sanctity of oaths, for in the invocation of deities at the end of treaties made by kings of the Hatti or Mitanni she is invoked as "Queen of the oath", or as "the goddess of oaths, Išhara, the Lady of the mountains and rivers of the Hittite land"²⁶. Consequently, she could inflict sickness upon anybody who violated his oath²⁷. On the other hand she is acclaimed in a hymn as "Bestower of life"²⁸. A text from Nippur refers to "the *pi-pi* plants of the goddess Išhara-Nigin"²⁹, and this plant is described elsewhere as having medicinal properties³⁰. She was called *be-lit bi-ri*, or "Lady of justice and of oracles"³¹, and the calendar in use at Hani on the middle Euphrates contained a month: *araḫ dBelit-bi-ri*³². Prayers were addressed to her to avert evil of all kinds³³, because she was "She who grants prayers"³⁴, and her protection was sought during a lunar eclipse³⁵. Another text names her as the mother of the "Seven Gods"³⁶. She was appealed to as "Merciful Mother"³⁷, and the personal name *Ummi-dIšhara* illustrates this aspect of her character. In contrast to this, among the invocations in a long inscription on a kudurru there is the petition "May Išhara, the Lady of victory over the lands, not hear him in the mighty battle"³⁸.

¹⁹) KBo V, 2, III:8; VI, 34, III:22; KUB X, 27, III:10; XXV, 48, IV:8; Winckler, OLZ IX, 1906, Sp. 632.

²⁰) Kretschmer, KF I, 1930, S. 9. Kretschmer argues (S. 11): „Der Name der hethitischen Göttin Išhara; als Grundform ergibt sich *isarā*, das offenbar zu ai. *isird* „rüstig, munter, kräftig“, gehört. Der Name der Göttin dürfte also „die Starke“ bedeuten“, a derivation which needs further support to be entirely convincing.

²¹) Roeder, AO XX (1919), S. 44.

²²) Friedrich, ZA XLI, 1933, S. 307; *Analecta Orientalia* XII, 1935, S. 129, Anm. 6.

²³) *Syria* XII, 1931, p. 71, No. 1:13, p. 389 f., List of gods, Obv. 7.

²⁴) Ed. Meyer, *Geschichte des Altertums*⁵ I, 2, S. 607, § 433, S. 727, § 486; Kretschmer, KF I, S. 9; Langdon, CAH I, p. 456.

²⁵) Hrozný, ArO IV, 1932, S. 122.

²⁶) Weidner, BoSt VIII, S. 30, Rev. 46, S. 32, Rev. 58, S. 50, Rev. 18, S. 54, Rev. 43, S. 68, Rev. IV:25; J. Friedrich, MVAG 34, 1 (1930), S. 16, Man. B IV:13; S. 78, Al. A. IV:14; Roeder, AO XX (1919), S. 44; Ed. Meyer, *Geschichte des Altertums*⁵ I, 2, S. 713, § 481.

²⁷) Bo 2041, Col. III:22; Friedrich, ZA XXXV, 1924, S. 186; Forrer, ZDMG 76, 1922, SS. 239 f., 245.

²⁸) King, *Babyl. Magic*, No. 7:37.

²⁹) Barton, *Misc. Babyl. Inscr.*, No. I, Col. XII:3, pp. 11, 19.

³⁰) K 71 b, III:21 (published by Kuchler, *Beitr. zur Kenntnis der assyr.-babyl. Medizin*; Leipzig, 1904).

³¹) CT XXIV, 6:30; 23:125 a; Zimmern, BBR, *Rit.* Nr. 87, I:6; de Genouillac, RA XX, 1923, p. 90, AO 5376, Col. II:11; XXV, 1928, p. 137, AO 5373:60; Deimel, *Pantheon*, p. 78, No. 362; Brünnow, No. 1574.

³²) CT XXXII, 50; Landsberger, *Kult. Kal.*, S. 37; Langdon, *Babyl. Menologies*, p. 41; Sayce, PSBA XXXIV, 1912, p. 52; Thureau-Dangin, *Syria* V, 1924, p. 277.

³³) King, *Babyl. Magic*, No. 7:47; Zimmern, BBR, *Surpu* II:171.

³⁴) King, *Babyl. Magic*, No. 7:36.

³⁵) King, *Babyl. Magic*, Nos. 7 and 57.

³⁶) II R 60:14; Strassmaier, ZA VI, 1891, S. 242, Obv. 21; Langdon, *Sumer. Liturgies and Psalms*, p. 333.

³⁷) Craig, *Relig. Texts* I, 3:17; King, *Babyl. Magic*, No. 7, Rev. 59, No. 57:2.

³⁸) King, *Babyl. Boundary Stones* (= BBS), p. 47, BM 90840, Col. IV:28; II R 43, IV:28; Peiser, KB IV, S. 72, 28.

The epithets *tiâmat*, *tâmtim*, sometimes applied to Išhara, have been believed to indicate some connexion with the sea³⁹. But Albrecht Götze has argued that in the *Enuma eliš* : *tiâmat* is an error of the scribe for *tâmtim* which means “struggle”⁴⁰. As regards Išhara the same substitution seems to have taken place⁴¹; if this is correct, the goddess was not “Išhara of the sea”, but “Išhara of the struggle”. Another of her titles, *ḫBēlit da-ad-me*, “Lady of the dwelling”⁴², recalls the fact that she was “Mistress of the *Du-ku(g)*”⁴³, the mystical chamber in the abode of the gods at Dilmun. An allusion to this title of hers occurs in the Treaty of Mattiuaza, King of Mitanni, with Šuppiliuma, king of Ḫatti⁴⁴, for among the gods invoked is (Rev. 43): *ḫSa-la, Bēlat ēkalli*⁴⁵, and then: *ḫBēlat a-ja-ak-ki ḫIš-ḫa-ra*. Weidner in a footnote explains that *ajak(k)u* means the “Chamber of the gods”, and cites other passages in confirmation; consequently here *Bēlat ajakki* is in apposition to Išhara, and the phrase means “the Lady of the chamber of the gods (the *Du-ku(g)*), the goddess Išhara”.

Išhara was known also by other titles now difficult to explain, such as *ḫE-ta-mi-tum*⁴⁶, *ḫDu-du*⁴⁷, *ḫŠalmu*⁴⁸, and *ḫNigin*⁴⁹. A list of temples speaks of *E-Nigin-gar-ra* in Šuruppak⁵⁰, and *Nigin-gar-ra* is mentioned in a hymn to the temple of Innana of Uruk⁵¹. A lament for the destruction of Isin and a liturgical hymn both speak of “the Lady, Queen of *Nigin-garra*”⁵². The city-god of a place called *Mu-ru-ki* was *ḫPap-nigin-gar-ra*, and the chief goddess was Išhara, *Gašan-nigin-gar-ra*⁵³. The facts that *Nigin* was often written without the determinative for divinity and was sometimes applied to other goddesses suggest that it was merely an epithet with some general significance, such as “Lady”, or “Mistress”. Both the epithet and the name of the temple were used to compose theophoric names⁵⁴.

³⁹) CT XXVI, pl. 42, Col. I:9—10; II R 49:14; V R 46:31 b; Strassmaier, AV, Nr. 8814; Weidner, *Handb. der babyl. Astronomie*, SS. 6f., 52; Dhorme, RA VIII, 1911, p. 46, MNB 1848, Obv. III:13. ⁴⁰) Akkadian *d/tam-tum*: *Analecta Orientalia* XII, 1935, SS. 185—91.

⁴¹) In a private letter Professor Götze informs me that he fully concurs in this opinion.

⁴²) Zimmern, BBR, *Šurpu* II:171; III R 43, IV:28 f.; Craig, *Relig. Texts* II, pl. XVI, K 232, Obv. 24.

⁴³) CT XXIV, 6:28; cf. CT XXIV, 23:124; 40:59; Deimel, *Pantheon*, p. 143, No. 1494.

⁴⁴) Weidner, BoSt VIII, S. 54, Rev. 43, and Anm. 3.

⁴⁵) Deimel, *Pantheon*, p. 248, No. 3048, 4.

⁴⁶) CT XXIV, 6:31, 23:125 b; XXV, 45, K 2121:5; Deimel, *Pantheon*, p. 111, No. 859.

⁴⁷) CT XXIV, 6:29, 23:124; Deimel, *Pantheon*, p. 103, No. 741.

⁴⁸) KAV 78:28. Cf. the personal name *Ur-ḫŠalmi*, Dhorme, BA VI, 3, S. 74.

⁴⁹) CT XXIV, 18, Rev. 8—9; XII, 25:3 b; Barton, *Misc. Babyl. Inscr.*, No. I, XII:3; Deimel, *Pantheon*, p. 197, No. 2396; Jestin, *Tabl. sumér. de Šuruppak*, p. 67, No. 572, Obv. II:2.

⁵⁰) Poebel, PBS V, 157, I:6—7; II R 61:49; Zimmern, ZA XXXIX, 1930, S. 259, Anm. 1.

⁵¹) Zimmern, ZA XXXIX, 1930, S. 259, No. 15:8.

⁵²) Langdon, PBS X, 4, p. 289, CBS 3656, Rev. 8, p. 328, No. 13, Rev. 15; CT II, 59:30; XXIV, 21:17; XXV, 3:44; Deimel, *Pantheon*, p. 87, No. 530 (*Gašan-nigin-mar-ra*), p. 196 f., No. 2395 (*Nigin-gar*), p. 218, No. 2685 (*ḫNin-nigin-gar-ra*).

⁵³) II R 60:13; Zimmern, ZA XXXIX, 1930, S. 260, Anm. 2; Deimel, *Pantheon*, p. 241, No. 2977.

⁵⁴) *Ur-ḫNigin*: Delaporte, ITT IV, No. 7012; Lutz, *Sumer. Temple Records*, No. 95:112; *Ur-ḫNigin-gar*: Reisner, *Tempelurk. aus Telloh*, Nr. 94, IX:10, 19; *ḫNigin-gar*: Huber, AS XXI, SS. 119, 178, Anm. 4; *Gal-ḫDis-ḫNigin*: Reisner, *Tempelurk. aus Telloh*, Nr. 154, I:15; *ḫNigin-ne-(?)*: Barton, *Haverford Library Cuneiform Tablets* (HLCT), p. 39, I:29—30, V:15; *Šu-ḫNigin*: Lutz, *Sumer. Temple Records*, No. 95:112. There are numerous instances of masculine names without the determinative for divinity, *Nigin*, *Ur-Nigin*, *Ur-nigin-gar*, *Ur-nigin-ka-gur*, *Nigin-gar-ki-dug*, *Ur-nigin-mu*. Female names, *Gim-nigin*, *Gim-nigin-gar*, *Gar-nigin-gar*, *Maḫ-nigin*.

The first column of a lengthy text contains a list of divinities who are further defined by the mention of their main cult site; line 14 reads: *ḏIš-ḫa-ra šarrat ki-sur-ri-e^{ki}*⁵⁵. Ebeling considers that this list gives the names of the divine judges assembled in the underworld for a court of justice⁵⁶. Išhara's title "Lady of justice" is evidence in favour of this theory which may also imply that she had a chthonic side to her character.

At Babylon she had a sanctuary *e-ša(g)-tur-ra*, situated in the *Šuanna* quarter of the city⁵⁷. It has been thought by some authorities to be identical with the temple of Ištar of Babylon⁵⁸; more recently Unger has suggested that it was a shrine in Temple "Z" which he believes to have been a temple of Gula⁵⁹. The passages in question however, seem to imply that it was an independent building, probably situated in or near "the street of the goddess Išhara"⁶⁰. The ritual for the celebration of the New Year Festival in use about the time of Nebukadnezar intimates that Išhara was worshipped in the *Du-ku(g)* of *E-sagila*⁶¹. About the time of Darius there must have been a revived interest in the cult of Išhara, for the *bit ḏIšhara* is frequently mentioned⁶², as well as its priestly officials, and the provisions required for their maintenance⁶³.

Her temple at Sippar was called *e-eš-ḫar-ra*⁶⁴, and in it was the *ba-aš-mu-um ša ḏeš-ḫar-ra*⁶⁵. Documents from Sippar, dated in the reign of Hammurabi, refer to *Nūr-ḏEšharra*, priest of *ḏEšharra*, as a person of considerable importance, and also to her libation-pourer *Sin-māgir*⁶⁶, thus implying that the temple had its full complement of priests. She was worshipped at Lagaš, for an obscure text of the time of Hammurabi announces: "In *E-pa*, the shining, (are honoured) the god Ningirsu and the goddess Išhara"⁶⁷; this statement is important, for an examination of the evidence concerning the scorpion reveals why she was honoured in that particular temple. In the time of the Third Dynasty of Ur lambs were sacrificed to Išhara at Drehem⁶⁸, where she seems to have been worshipped in the temple of *ḏBe-la-at-mūš-nir ù ḏBe-la-at-dir-ra-ba-an*, enigmatic divinities whose names are known only from texts dated between the 34th and 46th years of Šulgi⁶⁹. A legal document is concerned with "the half of a house in Harbidum (situated) near the House of the goddess Išhara"⁷⁰. A letter, AO 8259, men-

⁵⁵) II R 60:14 a; see Jensen, ZA XV, 1900, S. 212 f. ⁵⁶) *Tod und Leben* I, S. 9.

⁵⁷) Strassmaier, *Nebk.* 247:6; Kohler-Peiser, *Babyl. Rechtsleben*, S. 10.

⁵⁸) Hommel, *Geogr.*, S. 311; Streck, VAB VII, S. 228, Anm. 1; Weissbach, AO V (1904), S. 26.

⁵⁹) *Babylon*, SS. 136, 141, 143, 145. But see Weissbach, ZA XLI, 1933, S. 259.

⁶⁰) Harper, *Letters* IX, No. 877, Rev. 9—10; Waterman, *R. Correspondence* II, p. 108; Unger, *Babylon*, S. 302. ⁶¹) See p. 16.

⁶²) Peiser, *Babyl. Verträge*, Nr. 107, 112 f., 119, 140, 146, 151; Kohler-Peiser, *Babyl. Rechtsleben*, S. 20; VS IV, 171.

⁶³) Peiser, *Babyl. Verträge*, Nr. 57, 91, 96 f., 108, 118 f., 152, 154 f.; San Nicolò-Ungnad, *Neubabyl. Rechts- und Verwaltungs-Urk.*, Nr. 613 f., 618, 745, 754; Meek, *AJSL* XXXIII, 1916/17, Nos. 22:4, 23:9.

⁶⁴) CT IV, 48 a:5; Daiches, *Altbabyl. Rechtsurk.*: LSS I, 2, 1903, S. 64, Nr. 15.

⁶⁵) CT II, 47:20; Schorr, *Altbabyl. Rechtsurk.*: SAWW 155, 2, 1907, S. 167, Nr. 72.

⁶⁶) Scheil, *Une Saison de Fouilles à Sippar* (=SFS), pp. 122, No. 123 bis, 129, No. 247; Th. Friedrich, *Altbabyl. Urk. aus Sippar*: BA V, 4 (1906), SS. 422—24, Nr. 12.

⁶⁷) K 11151, l. 11; Hommel, *Schwurgöttin*, S. 62; Deimel, *Pantheon*, p. 145.

⁶⁸) Legrain, TRU, p. 73, No. 282, Rev. 5; de Genouillac, TD, p. 4, AO 5514, Obv. 5; Schneider, *Drehem- und Djoḫatexte im Kloster Montserrat*, Nr. 53:11 f.; 114, Obv. 10; *Keilschrifttexte aus Drehem und Djoḫa*, Nr. 44, II:12. ⁶⁹) Schneider, *Analecta Orientalia* VI, 1933, SS. 19—22.

⁷⁰) Thureau-Dangin, LC, No. 65:42; Kohler-Ungnad, *Hammurabi's Gesetze* (=HG) V, Nr. 1092.

tions the small gifts, including a cup, destined to her and to Ištar⁷¹. At Aššur five stone tablets were set up by Adadnarâri I to commemorate his restoration of the temple of Ištar-Aššurîtu; in the inscription engraved upon them he relates that he found that various parts of the temple were in a ruinous condition, and adds: "the temple of the goddess Išhara of the court had fallen into decay"⁷². In the same city an image of Išhara was one of the ten statues of divinities which stood in the temple of *Ea-šarru*⁷³, and in the Anu-Adad temple also she was represented among the divinities in the sanctuary dedicated to Adad⁷⁴. Perhaps she was included in the first group because *kakkab*GIR.TAB-*dIš-ša-ra tâmtim* was enumerated among the Ea stars, and in the second because she was of the family of Adad.

A tablet from Kültepe contains a reference to a temple of Išhara⁷⁵, and Hurrian texts giving directions for religious ceremonies ordain that sacrifices should be made to her and to other deities⁷⁶. An elaborate liturgical purification is described as "the ritual of Ammihadna, priest of the goddess Išhara, a man of Kizwatna"⁷⁷. In the Kassite period she was among the deities to whom offerings were made at appointed seasons at Ras Shamra⁷⁸. Išhara has been identified under the forms *éšbri*, *esbr-t*, in texts from that site, but the deity who really had close affinities with her was Ashera. She is referred to as "the Mistress, *Asrtim* (translated "Ashera-of-the-sea"), the creatrix of the gods"⁷⁹. Like Išhara she was "Ashera *tâmtim*"; the supreme god asked counsel of her just as Išhara was "Lady of justice and oracles". Išhara was of the family of Adad, Ashera was spoken of as the consort or the mother of Ba'al (Hadad).

A document of the time of the First Dynasty of Babylon refers to a place called *Til-dIš-ša-ra*⁸⁰. In a few instances men were called *Arad-dIšhara*, or spoke of themselves as "the servant of the goddess Išhara"⁸¹. A limited number of theophoric names of both men and women are formed with her name⁸².

⁷¹) Lewy, RHR CX, 1934, p. 42, n. 25.

⁷²) KAH II, Nr. 34; Weidner, AOB I, S. 91; Luckenbill, *Anc. Records* I, p. 34, § 102.

⁷³) KAV 42, Obv. I:31; Unger, *Aššur*: RLA I, S. 186, § 45.

⁷⁴) III R 66, Obv. II:2 ff.; KAV 42, II, 3 ff.; Peiser, *Babyl. Verträge*, S. 262.

⁷⁵) Lewy, *Texte und Materialien der Frau Prof. Hilprecht Coll. of Babyl. Antiquities* I, Nr. 307, Obv. X:4.

⁷⁶) KBo V, Nr. 2, III:8; KUB X, Nr. 27, III:10; XX, Nr. 93:15; XXV, Nr. 50, II:17; Nr. 48, IV:5; Bo 2033, II:43; Thureau-Dangin, *Syria* XII, p. 250; Bo 470:8; Forrer, SPAW LIII, 1919, S. 1036; Hrozný, ArO IV, 1932, SS. 120—23.

⁷⁷) KBo V, Nr. 2, Obv. 1—2; Winckler, OLZ IX, 1906, Sp. 632; Witzel, *Keilinschr. Studien* IV, S. 99.

⁷⁸) Dussaud, *Syria* XII, 1931, p. 1, RŠ 29, No. 1:13; Dhorme, RB XL, 1931, p. 35.

⁷⁹) Viroleaud, *Syria* XII, 1931, pp. 195, 199 f.; XIII, 1932, pp. 113—63, *passim*, p. 118, n. 1; Dussaud, RHR CIV, 1931, pp. 367—70, 373, 375; CV, 1932, pp. 249, 252, 275—7; CVIII, 1933 (Przyluski), p. 63 f.; Friedrich, *Ras Shamra*: AO XXXII, 1/2 (1933), SS. 19, 36; Zimmern, KAT³, S. 432 f.; Lagrange, *Étude sur les relig. sémit.* 2, p. 121 f.

⁸⁰) King, *Letters and Inscr. of Hammurabi* I, No. XXXI:26.

⁸¹) Meissner, BAP, S. 76, Nr. 96:1, 5, 13; Krausz, *Götternamen*, S. 86; Thureau-Dangin, LC, No. 143 bis; see also Legrain, PBS XIV, p. 225, pl. XVII, No. 268.

⁸²) Ranke, *Babyl. Personal Names*, p. 199; Tallqvist, *Neubabyl. Namenbuch*, S. 246; *Assyr. Personal Names*, p. 256. Later references are: *Gimil-dIšhara*: Clay, *Babyl. Inscr.* IV, Nos. 78:22, 83:8, 15, 17, 25, 35 f., 43; CCT I, BM 11350:15; Fish, *Cat. Sumer. Tablets in Rylands Library*, No. 468, Rev. 1; Legrain, PBS XIV, p. 271, pl. XXV, No. 451. *Nur-dIšhara*: Scheil, SFS, Nos. 123bis, 247; Thureau-Dangin, LC, No. 65:13; Kohler-Ungnad, HG IV, Nr. 949; Krausz, PBS II, 2, No. 13:40; Chiera, PBS VIII, 1, No. 25; Hunter, OECT VIII, No. 13:17. *Ibki-dIšhara*: Kohler-Ungnad, HG IV, Nr. 838, 939.

Išhara was identified with Dilbat-Venus in certain late astrological texts⁸³, but the constellation with which she was really connected was *Scorpio*. Langdon writes: "The type which developed into a water-deity, patroness of irrigation and symbolized by water crustacea, was identified with the sign Scorpio as early as 4000 B. C."⁸⁴ It may be true that even at that early date a goddess was identified with the constellation, although it might be hard to demonstrate the fact. It is at least evident that in very early times, and certainly in the Jemdet Nasr period, the scorpion had an astral significance. But the earliest representations, those on painted pottery and on stamp-seals, show the insect quite independently, and it is only after the Jemdet Nasr age that there is any hint in art of a connexion between the scorpion and a female divinity.

The beautiful pottery of Samarra was often decorated with fantastic designs of scorpions painted in greenish-brown, or in violet merging into black on a light clay, or more rarely in bright red paint on darker red clay⁸⁵. At Arpachiyah a sherd of the same ware came to light with part of a scorpion's body painted upon it⁸⁶. At Eridu numerous fragments of Al-'Ubaid ware were discovered; animal forms were rarely used as decoration, but one piece displays a scorpion painted black on a buff ground⁸⁷. Among the designs on early painted pottery from Susa were occasional figures of scorpions, one highly conventionalized specimen being painted red on a light red clay⁸⁸. In the Jemdet Nasr period animal forms were more frequently introduced into the painted decoration, and examples of scorpions on bowls belonging to that period were unearthed at Fara and at Tell Asmar⁸⁹. But the finest example is a big pot from Jemdet Nasr itself; round the shoulder are rectangular fields of decoration, one of them being filled by a scorpion⁹⁰. Clay pots decorated with scorpions in relief were found at Tepe Gaura in Stratum VII (Jemdet Nasr culture)⁹¹.

Stamp-seals and the impressions derived from them were found in large numbers in Stratum X at Tepe Gaura; but only one of them shows a representation of a scorpion⁹². The same *motif* appears on stamp-seals from other sites, the best example being a seal from Tello where a scorpion is one of the creatures surrounding entwined

1030; V, Nr. 1398; Thureau-Dangin, LC, Nos. 93:1, 128:3. *Šu-Išhara*: Fish, BJRL IX, 1925, No. 725, X:5; Lewy, *Kultepe-Texte der Samml. Blanckertz*, Nr. 14:6; *Texte und Materialien*, Nr. 342A:5, and envelope 342B:8; Gelb, OIC XXVII (1935), No. 55:40. *Kuzub-dIšhara*: Ungnad, *Urk. aus Dilbat*, SS. 101, 133. By metathesis, *Šu-dHa-iš-ra*: Legrain, TRU, No. 344:20. Female names; *Ummi-dIšhara*: CT VIII, 43:5, 12; Scheil, SFS, p. 112, No. 70; Chiera, PBS VIII, 1, No. 25; VS XIII, Nr. 15. *Raba-ša-dIšhara*: BE XIV, Nos. 58:20, 91a:14. *Išhara-šarrat* (without determinative): BE XV, No. 188, V:30.

⁸³) Thompson, *Reports*, No. 223, Obv. 5, No. 223 A, Rev. 4; CT XXVI, pl. 42, I:9.

⁸⁴) *Tammuz*, p. 159; see also p. 126.

⁸⁵) Herzfeld, *Ausgr. von Samarra V*, Abb. 2, 5, 31, Taf. I, 2, 5, II, 3, III, IV, V, 4, 5.

⁸⁶) Mallowan, *Excav. at Tall Arpachiyah, 1933: Iraq II*, 1935, p. 164 f., fig. 77, No. 4.

⁸⁷) Thompson, *The B. M. excav. at Abu Sharein: Archaeologia LXX*, 1918—20, p. 119, fig. 9, A. S. 105.

⁸⁸) Jéquier, MDEP I, p. 189, pl. XXI, fig. 14; Pottier, MDEP XIII, p. 58, fig. 185; Toscanne, RA XIV, 1917, pp. 200—2, figs. 99—105.

⁸⁹) Erich Schmidt, *Excav. at Fara: MJ XXII*, 1931, p. 214, pl. XXIV, 5; BMQ VIII, 1933, p. 40, fig.

⁹⁰) Mackay, *Anthropology, Memoirs I*, 3, p. 263, pl. LXXX, fig. 1; Martin, *Painted Pottery from Jemdet Nasr: AJA XXXIX*, 1935, p. 316, pl. XXXI.

⁹¹) Speiser, *Excav. at Tepe Gawra I*, p. 46, pl. LXXVI, fig. 11.

⁹²) Bache, BASOR 51, 1933, p. 25; seal impression of Al-'Ubaid period from Arpachiyah, Mallowan, *Iraq II*, 1935, pl. IX, No. 606.

serpents, a powerful fertility symbol⁹³, which occupy the middle of the field⁹⁴. The upper part of two seals, one of which was found at Khafajeh, are in the shape of a recumbent bull or calf; both have a scorpion engraved on the base⁹⁵. A fine stamp-seal of translucent serpentine from Tell Asmar is carved in the form of a lion's head with a scorpion on the under surface⁹⁶. Seal impressions from Susa and elsewhere have designs of a single scorpion or of several together⁹⁷. A few cylinder seals repeat the *motif* of a scorpion alone or grouped with a serpent⁹⁸, two fertility symbols, each one reinforcing the potency of the other. Occasionally the compositions are more elaborate, as when the scorpions alternate with the *motif* described as a pomegranate, bee, or spider⁹⁹; or when a high-handled vase stands between a pair of scorpions¹⁰⁰. Another seal pictures an immense scorpion reversed between two rectangular panels representing a door with both wings thrown open¹⁰¹; in the field above is a star, perhaps to indicate an astral meaning.

More complicated are the seals, quite evidently astral in significance, which show a scorpion among the four-footed beasts hastening across the expanse of the star-strewn heavens¹⁰². In the first example the scorpion with a star between its claws can easily be detected; in the second the insect is conventionalized almost beyond recognition. The importance of these two seals lies in the fact that here, for the first time, the scorpion is definitely connected with astrology. From Susa comes a cylinder seal which may have the same significance, for various creatures, including a scorpion, pursue one another across the field; but there are no traces of stars even in the shape of dots¹⁰³. There is, however, a fine seal which perhaps presents the astral idea more cryptically¹⁰⁴. Along the lower edge of the wide field lie three wild goats turned to left, each with a kid leaping up towards it. In the space between the curving horns of the first and third goats a big scorpion writhes downwards to touch the animal's back, while below the horns of the second goat are a rosette and a smaller scorpion which glides out towards entwined serpents whose chain of coils half-frames a four-

⁹³) Van Buren, *Entwined Serpents*: AfO X, 1935, SS. 53–65.

⁹⁴) Delaporte, *Cat. Cyl. Or. Mus. du Louvre* (= CCO), p. 2, T 23, pl. 2, fig. 9 a–b; Menant, *Cat. Coll. de Clercq* I, p. 36, pl. I, No. 6bis; Jéquier, MDEP VIII, p. 3, fig. 2; de Mecquenem, RA XXII, 1925, p. 2, No. 8; Legrain, *Ur Excav.* II, p. 336, pl. 192, No. 9; Herzfeld, *Arch. Mitt. aus Iran* V, 1933, Abb. 18 and 25, Tepe Ghiyan 2334, 2343, 2353; Hogarth, *Hittite Seals*, pl. III, No. 56.

⁹⁵) Oriental Inst., Case AE–7; Hogarth, *Hittite Seals*, p. 55, note 2; also Ashmolean Mus., Kish 1924.51.

⁹⁶) Frankfort, OIC 19 (1935), pp. 21–3, fig. 22; ILN, No. 4961, May 19, 1934, p. 776, fig. 17; Moortgat, *Frühe Bildkunst in Sumer*, S. 52, Rubrik V, 4.

⁹⁷) Legrain, MDEP XVI, pl. IV, Nos. 73–4; PBS XIV, p. 168, pl. LI, No. 28; Toscanne, RA XIV, 1917, p. 189, fig. 43. Two seal impressions were found at Nineveh in Stratum Nin. 5, equivalent to the Early Dynastic period, Mallowan, AAA XX, 1933, p. 138 f., pl. LXVI, Nos. 5, 15. On the butt-end of cylinder seals, Legrain, *Ur Excav.* III, pl. 10, Nos. 212, 214, pl. 20, No. 384.

⁹⁸) Jéquier, MDEP VIII, p. 24, figs. 56, 58; Delaporte, CCO, p. 38 f., S 189–90, 192, pl. 21, fig. 9 c, pl. 39, figs. 6, 9.

⁹⁹) Legrain, MDEP XVI, p. 45, pl. IV, fig. 71; Scheil, MDEP XVII, p. 14 f., Nos. 106, 108; Contenau, *Manuel d'Archéol. Or.* I, fig. 298.

¹⁰⁰) Hogarth, *Hittite Seals*, p. 27, pl. II, figs. 30–1; Moortgat, *Frühe Bildkunst in Sumer*, S. 52, Rubrik IV, 24. ¹⁰¹) MDEP XXV, p. 191 f., fig. 26, No. 1.

¹⁰²) CBS 14509, Legrain, PBS XIV, p. 172, pl. V, No. 56; U 11957, *Ur Excav.* II, p. 343, pl. 199, No. 90. ¹⁰³) Delaporte, CCO, p. 41, S 246, pl. 23, fig. 28.

¹⁰⁴) Menant, *Cat. Coll. de Clercq* I, pl. III, No. 27; Weber, *Siegelbilder*, Abb. 568.

petalled flower. Heads of ibexes and gazelles make a frieze along the top of the field, and the space between is filled with other animal heads, as well as a lizard and a dagger. This dagger, with its triangular blade and curved pommel, and the eight-petalled rosette are characteristic elements of the Early Dynastic period, or even of the earlier "time of Mesilim". Two seal impressions and a serpentine cylinder seal show the scorpion among various animals, lions attacking bulls, ibexes, a bird¹⁰⁵. Crudely drawn human figures were sometimes introduced into the composition¹⁰⁶. Two fragments of a green steatite vase, carved in a style typical of the works of Mohenjo-Daro, were found in the sanctuary at Tell Asmar¹⁰⁷; one of them depicts the characteristic humped bull, and above it are a serpent and a scorpion, both quite "un-Sumerian" in appearance.

Seals of the "time of Mesilim" are adorned with closely-set figures whose swaying bodies make a rhythmic pattern of great complexity. Bull-men and Nude Heroes with hair in wild locks strive with lions, fantastic beings, whose torsos divide into two animal bodies, hold erect their tails which end in serpents' heads; a scorpion is often introduced to fill a space, or is grouped with a spread eagle to make a decorative pattern¹⁰⁸ (Figs. 1—2). A few specimens seem to be feeble copies of this style¹⁰⁹; the scorpion appears between the struggling bodies, but in one case the field beyond the main subject is divided into two registers; above are the sun disk and crescent, below, there is a vertical scorpion. To the earlier "Mesilim" style belongs an aragonite cylinder seal displaying a fantastic being in violent action¹¹⁰ (Fig. 3). His raised arms end in serpent's heads, and he leaps forward, the space below his bent knee being filled by the characteristic dagger with downward-curving pommel. He is followed by two immense scorpions walking one behind the other. A portion of the field above them is marked off by a double line, and on the ground-line thus formed are a vertical scorpion and two crossed bulls (?) in front of a figure seated, facing to right, upon a high-backed chair. Ritual scenes are not uncommon in the "time of Mesilim". On a lapis lazuli seal from Fara the cups of two seated divinities are filled by an attendant, between whom and the person on the right a big vertical scorpion with tail upturned is inserted¹¹¹. Another lapis lazuli seal depicts a man with a bird-like head who wears a short skirt; in front of him two antelopes face each other with lowered heads as if they were grazing, and above them there is a scorpion¹¹².

The bands of undulating figures characteristic of the "time of Mesilim" developed into scenes of animal contests in the Early Dynastic period. In compositions where ani-

¹⁰⁵) Legrain, *Ur Excav.* III, pl. 11, No. 217, pl. 12, No. 233; Von der Osten, *Anc. Or. Seals in the Coll. of Mr. Edward T. Newell* (= *Newell Coll.*), p. 19, pl. VII, No. 60.

¹⁰⁶) Speleers, *Musées Royaux du Cinquantenaire: Cat. des Intailles et Empreintes orientales* (= *Cat. des Intailles*), p. 92, No. 423; Delaporte, CCO, p. 50, S 383, 385, pls. 28, fig. 16, 29, fig. 4; Pézard, *Intailles susiennes*: MDEP XII, p. 104, fig. 89; Toscane, MDEP XII, p. 179, fig. 313; RA XIV, 1917, p. 189, fig. 47; Istanbul, Asariatika Müzeleri No. 6291.

¹⁰⁷) Frankfort, ILN, No. 5082, Sept. 12, 1936, pp. 432, 434, fig. 10.

¹⁰⁸) Heinrich, *Fara*, Taf. 47, e, 51, h, m, 52, f, 56, c, f; Delaporte, CCO, A 78, pl. 67, fig. 1, A 109, pl. 68, fig. 16; Von der Osten, *Newell Coll.*, pl. VIII, No. 77; Legrain, *Ur Excav.* III, Nos. 20, 42, 258—61, 267—73, 281, 323—4.

¹⁰⁹) Delaporte, CCO, A 94, pl. 68, fig. 5; Von der Osten, *Newell Coll.*, pl. IX, No. 79; Legrain, *Ur Excav.* II, pl. 195, No. 43.

¹¹⁰) Ward, *Cat. Morgan Coll.*, p. 30, pl. III, No. 16.

¹¹¹) VA 3978, Heinrich, *Fara*, S. 126, Taf. 63, n; Moortgat, *Frühe Bildkunst*, S. 35.

¹¹²) de Sarzec, *Déc.*, p. 277, pl. 30, fig. 2 a—b; Delaporte, CCO, p. 8, T 84, pl. 3, fig. 4.

mals only take part one or even two scorpions are inserted between them, or are placed vertically to one side of the main subject¹¹³ (Fig. 4). At other times part of the field is divided into two registers, and the scorpion is placed vertically in the lower one¹¹⁴. Bull-men and male figures, nude or wearing a short skirt, were often introduced into these contests; they contend with lions or seek to protect domesticated bulls and other horned animals from their aggressors¹¹⁵. The examples from Ur can be dated approximately from the evidence of the graves in which they were found. The scorpion, gliding among the violently agitated bodies, is drawn in many different ways, and often a series of dots represent its tail or even its whole body¹¹⁶ (Fig. 5). Perhaps in these scenes it was present to intimate that the bulls and horned creatures belonged to sacred herds, and they would flourish in spite of the fact that they were momentarily assailed by wild beasts. This is brought out clearly on a shell cylinder seal where a seated deity, below whose chair there is a scorpion, fondles the head of a bull attacked by a lion; another seal depicts a scorpion scaring a lion from a man with a milk jar seated near a byre¹¹⁷.

In the lower of the two undifferentiated registers on a white marble seal four goats walk in file towards a seated deity. Up above, an eagle grasps the hindquarters of two other goats, and beside one of them is a vertical scorpion¹¹⁸. The eagle appears in the upper part of another seal where a lion attacks a goat and a lion-headed eagle rends a man-headed bull. In the lower part a hero wearing a tasselled skirt tries to rescue horned animals from ravening lions. A big scorpion turned upwards seems to link together the two registers¹¹⁹ (Fig. 6).

In this period seals are sometimes divided into two registers by double lines. One register is filled with a scene of a banquet, in the other lions attack bulls or goats¹²⁰ (Fig. 7). A seal in the Iraq Museum, W 2813, shows in the upper register two figures seated and drinking through tubes from a big bowl, and in the lower register

¹¹³ Mackay, *Field Mus.: Anthropology, Memoirs* I, 1, p. 61, No. 928, pl. VI, fig. 3; *Memoirs* I, 2, pp. 192, 194—7, Nos. 1953, 2299, 2400 A, 2810, pls. XLI, figs. 2, 15, XLII, fig. 1; Legrain, *Ur Excav.* II, pl. 192, No. 8, pl. 198, No. 68; PBS XIV, pl. V, No. 62; Ward, *Cat. Morgan Coll.*, pls. VI, No. 34, VIII, No. 45; SC, fig. 67; Von der Osten, *Newell Coll.*, pls. VI, No. 50, VIII, No. 72, *Anc. Or. Seals in the Coll. of Mrs Agnes Brett* (= *Cat. Brett Coll.*), pl. III, No. 25; Heinrich, *Fara*, Taf. 53, i; Delaporte, *Cat. des Cyl. Or. de la Bibliothèque Nationale* (= COBN), pl. I, No. 4; *Les cyl. or. du Mus. hist. de l'Orléanais: Hilprecht Anniversary Volume*, p. 84, fig. 1.

¹¹⁴ Mackay, *Anthropology, Memoirs* I, 2, p. 194, No. 2399, pl. XLI, fig. 3; Delaporte, CCO, A 37, pl. 64, fig. 5; Oriental Inst. A 11465 (from Khafajeh).

¹¹⁵ Moortgat, *Frühe Bildkunst*, SS. 10, 43, 92.

¹¹⁶ Delaporte, CCO, S 410, pl. 30, fig. 5, A 50, pl. 65, fig. 7, A 62, A 66, pl. 66, figs. 2, 6, A 92, pl. 68, fig. 1; COBN, pl. IV, No. 32; Heinrich, *Fara*, Taf. 45, a, 56, i; Iraq Mus. 2086, K 10983; Mackay, *Anthropology, Memoirs* I, 1, p. 61, No. 1312, pl. VI, fig. 14; *Memoirs* I, 2, pp. 195 f., 198, Nos. 1987, 2190, 2694, 2697 B, pl. XLI, fig. 4, 13; Speleers, *Cat. des Intailles*, p. 114, No. 617; VA 661, Weber, *Siegelbilder*, Abb. 73; Frankfort, OIC 17 (1934), p. 76, fig. 70; Legrain, PBS XIV, pls. VI, No. 68, VII, Nos. 93—4, VIII, No. 110; *Ur Excav.* II, pl. 197, Nos. 58, 62—3, pl. 201, No. 109, pl. 204, Nos. 150, 167, pl. 212, No. 302; p. 578, U 12100 = Iraq Mus. 13223; III, pl. 28, Nos. 496—7, pl. 29, Nos. 504, 513—15; Ward, *Cat. Morgan Coll.*, pl. IV, No. 19; de Genouillac, *Fouilles de Telloh* I, pl. 70 bis, fig. 1, a; VA 3421.

¹¹⁷ U 15477, Legrain, *Ur Excav.* II, p. 344, pl. 200, No. 108; III, p. 33, pl. 18, No. 348.

¹¹⁸ AO 6626, Delaporte, CCO, p. 107, A 123, pl. 69, fig. 11.

¹¹⁹ VA 636, Weber, *Siegelbilder*, Abb. 108; Ward, SC, fig. 118.

¹²⁰ Delaporte, CCO, T 86, pl. 4; Legrain, *Ur Excav.* II, pl. 195, Nos. 34, 36; Von der Osten, *Cat. Brett Coll.*, pl. III, No. 20.



Fig. 1. VA 8585.



Fig. 2. VA 6700.



Fig. 4. As. 33.204.



Fig. 3. Morgan Coll. No. 16.



Fig. 5. Iraq Mus. 2086.

what is apparently a sheep-fold; on one side of it is a reversed lion, on the other a serpent and a scorpion, symbols of fertility. The scene in the upper register is repeated as the sole decoration of a small seal found with the body of the woman No. 17 in the "Great Death Pit" of the Royal Cemetery at Ur, but behind the figure on the left a vertical scorpion extends from top to bottom of the field¹²¹. The two drinkers grouped with lions crossed, an antelope grazing, and a reversed scorpion are pictured on a seal found in the G Stratum of the archaic temple of Ištar at Aššur¹²². The scene impressed on a jar sealing from Fara depicts two seated figures drinking from cups which are filled by an attendant; an immense scorpion creeps horizontally towards the figure on the right¹²³. Much finer is a big marble seal in two registers separated and bordered by elaborately patterned bands, Iraq Museum 14334 (Fig. 8). In the lower register three attendants wait upon two seated figures holding cups. The upper register is filled by an entwined serpent and two scorpions, one horizontal, the other vertical. On another seal an attendant stands before both the seated figures; the space left free by the animal contest in the lower register is filled by a vertical scorpion and a lizard¹²⁴. The frequent association of fertility symbols, such as scorpions and entwined serpents, with scenes of this kind indicates that the subject does not represent an ordinary banquet, but a ceremonial rite, probably in connexion with the *ἱερός γάμος*.

The field of an unusual stamp-seal, VA 3192, is almost square. A deity, clad in a flounced robe which covers one shoulder and resembles a *Zottenrock*, sits facing to left, holding what may be a cup in her raised right hand. In front of her are the disk and crescent, five triangles like numerical signs, and two scorpions, one turned to left, the other to right (Fig. 9). In a seal impression from Ur two scorpions form part of a scene of worship of a goddess¹²⁵. These seals and the two already mentioned, U 15477 and AO 6626, associate the scorpion with a presumably female divinity, although they have no obviously astral connotation. It is more apparent in seals representing a god voyaging over the waters in a boat with a living being as prow. Close to the boat a lion-headed eagle perches on the back of a man-headed bull, and scorpions can be seen among the other objects in the field. The scorpion appears in other scenes of figures in boats; once with a lizard in the lower register of a seal which depicts two men in a boat in the upper register; and again in a more elaborate composition of a deity in a boat following a god with a serpent's body who holds another big snake; two scorpions courting, and a tortoise complete the picture¹²⁶ (Figs. 10—11).

On a shell cylinder seal, BM 102546, a man with raised hands stands facing a bull with a lion-headed eagle on its back, and below its head a small figure is reversed, while on its other side a "Wild Man" grasps two symbolic gate-posts. The rest of the field is divided into two registers; in the upper one there are two scorpions, one turned upwards, the other downwards; in the lower one a seated figure holds a pair of scales over the head of a small standing figure. The myth of the judgment of

¹²¹) Legrain, *Ur Excav.* II, p. 339, pl. 195, No. 40; duplicate, Oriental Inst. Case AB-1.

¹²²) VA 7963, Andrae, AIT, S. 83, Abb. 65.

¹²³) VA 8694, Heinrich, *Fara*, SS. 124, 126, Taf. 62, *g*.

¹²⁴) Delaporte, COBN, p. 27, pl. VI, No. 51.

¹²⁵) Legrain, *Ur Excav.* III, p. 35, pl. 19, No. 382.

¹²⁶) Legrain, *Ur Excav.* II, p. 346, pl. 203, No. 137; Delaporte, CCO, p. 107, A 124, pl. 69, fig. 12; Allard Pierson Mus. te Amsterdam, Frankfort, JEOL III, 1935, S. 156, pl. XV, Nos. 6, 8.



Fig. 6. VA 636.

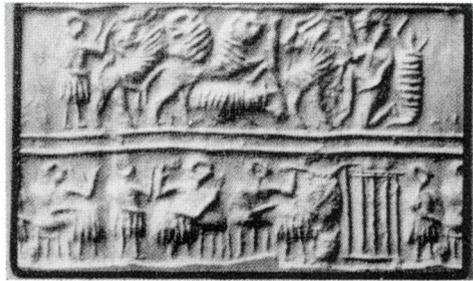


Fig. 7. BM 121546.

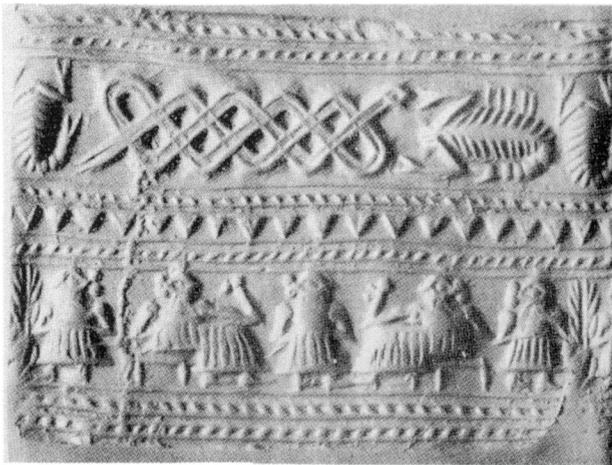


Fig. 8.
Iraq Mus. 14334.



Fig. 9. VA 3192.



Fig. 10. Allard Pierson Mus. No. 6 A.



Fig. 11. Allard Pierson Mus. No. 8 A.



Fig. 12. BM 102546.



Fig. 13. Allard Pierson Mus. No. 4 A.

souls was connected with the scales, *Libra*; scales also played a part in marriage rites, for they were used by the bride's family to weigh the silver and gold presented by the groom¹²⁷. The propinquity of scales and scorpions may be fortuitous, but astronomical texts mention them together and once the horns of the scorpion are said to form the bowl of the scales¹²⁸. The star also, strangely placed near the bull's forefoot, suggests that the subject has an astral significance (Fig. 12). A bull assaulted by a lion-headed eagle was a fertility symbol, and its efficacy would be enhanced when the scorpion was added. In four examples allusion is made to the sacred herds, for in one scene they are depicted in the lower register; in the second a stag and a sheep are close to the bull, while in the third a "Wild Man" and a bull-man slay a marauding lion; and lastly, the scorpion is between two bulls¹²⁹. A couple of cylinder seals showing a human figure near the intricate coils of entwined serpents demonstrate the connexion between the reptiles and the scorpion lurking close to them¹³⁰. Two scorpions courting followed by a third are arranged below the inscription on a seal from Ur, the rest of the field being occupied by three varieties of intricate loop-patterns, degenerate versions of entwined serpents¹³¹.

On a big limestone cylinder seal a vertical scorpion is interposed between a bearded man and a bull-man who struggle together¹³² (Fig. 13). Behind the man another figure clasps the neck of a gazelle. To right four naked men run round in a circle, each one grasping an ankle of the man in front of him. Two seals from the same collection represent a divinity in rural surroundings. The first shows the seated god holding a ear of corn or branch of verdure in one hand. Behind him are a crescent, a star and a scorpion; in front of him is an altar heaped with offerings with which a naked priest busies himself. Behind him a man in a short skirt brings a ram for sacrifice. The second seal shows the deity wearing a flounced skirt and holding a spray of foliage. In front of him are a cow suckling her calf, a goat, a deer, and a scorpion¹³³ (Figs. 14—15).

In the Early Dynastic layer of the private houses at Tell Asmar an important cylinder seal was discovered¹³⁴ (Fig. 16). It depicts the consummation of the *ἱερός γάμος*; the subject was repeated on a seal from Khafajeh, and with slight variations on a stele from Tell Asmar. The seal pictures a couch on which two figures are lying. At the head of the couch is a big jar with drinking tubes projecting from it in preparation for the feast which, according to the texts, followed the divine nuptials. At the foot of the couch stands the officiating priest, and below it is a scorpion. The crescent placed

¹²⁷) Langdon, *Babyl. Menologies*, p. 7; Gordon, *A marriage of the gods in Canaanite mythology*: BASOR 65, 1937, pp. 30—3, in his discussion of the Ras Shamra text "Hymne au dieu Nikal", ll. 34, 35, 37 (Viroilleaud, *Syria* XVII, 1936, p. 223 f.).

¹²⁸) CT XXXIII, 2, II: 11; Jeremias, HAOG², S. 221.

¹²⁹) BM 22962, Sidney Smith, EHA, pl. VII, d; Heuzey, *Origines Or. de l'Art*, p. 314, fig. 14; Woolley, *The Development of Sumerian Art* (= *Sumer. Art*), pl. 69, d, i; Legrain, *Ur Excav.* III, pl. 16, No. 298, pl. 30, No. 517, pl. 14, No. 279.

¹³⁰) Coll. of Mrs. Talcott Williams, Casanowicz, *Coll. of anc. Or. Seals in the U. S. Nat. Mus.*, pl. 14, No. 6; Hogarth, *Hittite Seals*, pp. 26, 53, pl. I, No. 13.

¹³¹) Woolley, *Sumer. Art*, pl. 69, g; Legrain, *Ur Excav.* III, p. 45, pl. 31, No. 538.

¹³²) Allard Pierson Mus., Frankfort, JEOL III, 1935, S. 155, pl. XV, No. 4.

¹³³) Frankfort, JEOL III, 1935, S. 155 f., pl. XV, Nos. 5, 7.

¹³⁴) As 32.934, Frankfort, OIC 17 (1934), p. 49, fig. 42; *Iraq* I, 1934, p. 8, pl. I, b.



Fig. 14. Allard Pierson Museum No. 5 A.

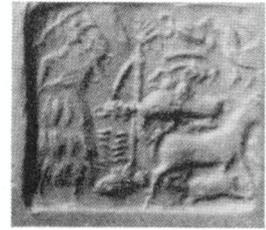


Fig. 15. Allard Pierson Museum No. 7 A.



Fig. 16. As. 32.934.



Fig. 17. As. 31.660.

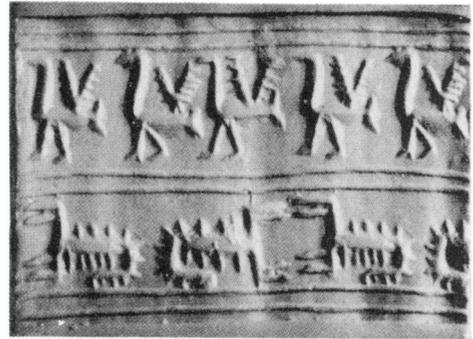


Fig. 19. VA 3880.

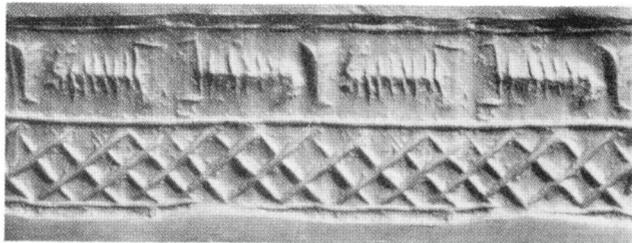


Fig. 18. VA 3893.

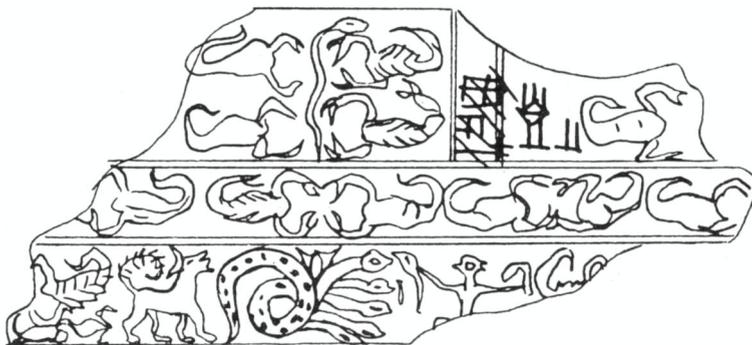


Fig. 20. As. 32.992.

in the upper part of the field indicates that the rite takes place at night during the Festival of the New Year. A seal of the beginning of the third millennium from Tell Halaf gives a primitive version of the successive episodes of the sacred marriage; (1) the goddess lying on a couch, tilted up to show the legs, with her sacred goat below; (2) the marriage act, with a schematized scorpion to left; (3) the banquet to celebrate the nuptials. Seal impressions from Ur embody the same idea, and others may, like the Tell Halaf example, illustrate the first act in the sacred drama¹³⁵. These scenes reveal the real significance of the scorpion. It symbolized the goddess who presided over the act which consummated the marriage. She was "Mistress of the *Du-ku(g)*", the mystical chamber where the rite was presumably originally performed. The fateful purpose for which the *Du-ku(g)* was designed was later expanded to include destinies of various kinds, and it became the chamber in *Esagila* in which Marduk and the other gods assembled to appoint fates for the coming year. These facts seem to explain a passage in the Epic of Gilgamesh¹³⁶. After directing that a bed should be made ready for the hero it continues: "For Išhara shall a chamber be prepared". The facts that the preparations for the nuptials were meticulously prescribed, and that the people waited in anxious crowds in the streets, suggest that the ceremony was of the nature of a *ἱερὸς γάμος*. It was not Išhara who was the object of the hero's affections, but her presence was required to ensure the consummation of the marriage. For that reason she was worshipped in *E-pa*¹³⁷, the temple at Lagaš in which the marriage of Ningirsu and Bau was celebrated¹³⁸. Probably the preparations for such a rite are alluded to in the passage in a hymn to Išhara¹³⁹:

"I have to thee a pure offering of the night poured forth,
A pure, sweet, noble potion have I offered to thee;
For thee a place for the manifestation have I appointed."

The epithet *tāmtim*, when applied to Išhara, may contain some allusion to this function of hers. Because it was Išhara who blessed the sacred marriage her intervention was sought in human marriage and in the mating of the flocks and herds, and her power was believed to extend even to the fructifying of the crops and produce of the fields. This was why the scorpion was considered a lucky token¹⁴⁰, why it figured on painted pottery and on stamp-seals from a very early age, and why in later times it was so often present in apparently incongruous settings, such as animal contests. In reference to the influence of the goddess upon nature the scorpion appears prominently on a couple of unusual cylinder seals representing two divinities ploughing¹⁴¹. In one case

¹³⁵) von Oppenheim, *Tell Halaf*, S. 197; Weber, *Stiegelbilder*, Abb. 417; Legrain, *Ur Excav.* III, p. 34, pl. 18, Nos. 366, 368, pl. 14, Nos. 268—70.

¹³⁶) Ebeling, *AOTAT*², S. 156, Taf. II, Kol. II:43—5; Ungnad, *Gilgamesh-Epos*, Taf. II, 188—93; Langdon, *Epic of Gilgamesh*: PBS X, 3, p. 218, Rev. II:22—6; *Semitic Mythology*, p. 244.

¹³⁷) K 11151, l. 11; Hommel, *Schwurgöttin*, S. 62.

¹³⁸) Gudea, Statue D, II:11—III:2; Statue G, I:13—VI:19.

¹³⁹) King, *Babyl. Magic*, No. 57:9—11.

¹⁴⁰) Professor Franz Cumont has kindly called my attention to a passage in Manilius (II, 462) concerning the influence of the scorpion according to the zodiacal mesothesis (see Houseman, note to Manilius, II, 453, for a series of analogous passages). Compare also IV, 707, and Sextus Empiricus, *Adv. astrol.* 21. For the beliefs as to the scorpion in later times see Cumont, *Catal. codd. astr. graecorum* VIII, pars I, planche, and *Astrologica*: RAr, Sér. V, Vol. III, 1916, pp. 1—22, figs. 1—2.

¹⁴¹) VA 8716, Heinrich, *Fara*, SS. 116, 119, Taf. 58, h; As 31.660, Frankfort, OIC 16 (1933), p. 46, fig. 27; *Iraq* I, 1934, p. 19, pl. III, h.

two lions, in the other one only, are harnessed to the plough which, on the seal from Tell Asmar, is formed in part of the body and head of a serpent; on this seal, moreover, a crescent and a big star are visible (Fig. 17).

A certain type of seal has either one or two registers, one of them being filled with scorpions, displayed singly, following one another or "courting"¹⁴² (Fig. 18). The earlier examples associate the scorpion with entwined serpents, a *motif* which rapidly degenerated into a meaningless lattice-pattern. Occasionally birds are added, sometimes in a separate register, or else interspersed among the scorpions¹⁴³ (Fig. 19). The type seems to have originated in the Jemdet Nasr period, but the *motif* recurred at intervals throughout the succeeding periods as two Akkadian seals demonstrate, for in the lower register scorpions are courting, or move in post-procession, but in the upper one a vase with palm branches and clusters of dates is tended by a pair of symmetrically placed human figures¹⁴⁴. The finest example is that of a seal impression from Tell Asmar which came to light in the Early Dynastic stratum underneath the palace¹⁴⁵. The band of scorpions is in the middle and narrowest of the three registers into which the field is divided, and in it scorpions in pairs are courting. The lowest register illustrates the fight between a hero and the hydra; a dog and a bird watch the struggle, and at each end of the scene there is a scorpion. The wide top register is filled with two pairs of scorpions separated by a serpent (Fig. 20).

Below the pavement of Room 31 of the Anu-Antum temple at Warka four seals, all belonging to early periods, were buried as a votive deposit. The room must have been a shrine, for it contained a base for a cult statue and a small altar. One of the seals testifies to the care of the sacred herds, for a bull walks to right, flanked by the immense coils of entwined serpents, while a big scorpion creeps just above the animal's back¹⁴⁶. Two fragmentary impressions on jar sealings help to recompose a more animated scene. A bull walks peacefully to right, for a scorpion in front of it and another above it imply that it will be safe from the vain pursuit of a somewhat morose lion¹⁴⁷. A small group of seals introduce into the scene a man who leads or drives the bull above whose back a scorpion can always be seen; in one case the man repels with a long spear a lion which seeks to molest the grazing bull¹⁴⁸. The idea of protecting the cattle from wild beasts and increasing their fertility by surrounding them with magic symbols is expressed differently on a big marble cylinder seal in two registers, BM 102427 (Fig. 21). The upper register displays a bull tethered by a rope

¹⁴²) VA 3893, VA 554, Weber, *Siegelbilder*, Abb. 549; Legrain, *Ur Excav.* II, pl. 203, No. 135; *Cat. Coll. Cugnin*, pl. I, No. 2; Delaporte, CCO, S 236, pl. 24, fig. 1; Ward, *Cat. Morgan Coll.*, pl. XIX, No. 132; de Genouillac, *Fouilles de Telloh* I, pls. 70, fig. 2, a, 70 bis, fig. 2, c, and p. 85, TG 4333; Oriental Inst., *Ishchali* I, 47.

¹⁴³) VA 3880, Weber, *Siegelbilder*, Abb. 554; Menant, *Cat. Coll. de Clercq* I, pl. I, No. 4; Toscanne, RA XIV, 1917, p. 191, fig. 58; Ward, SC, fig. 1041; Morgan Coll., No. 633; de Genouillac, *Fouilles de Telloh* I, pl. 69, figs. 1, b, h, 2, a, c, and p. 84 f., TG 3456, 4583.

¹⁴⁴) de Genouillac, *Fouilles de Telloh* I, p. 85, pl. 69, fig. 1, i; Legrain, PBS XIV, p. 192, pl. XII, No. 169. See also Istanbul, *Asariatika Müzeleri*, No. 1811.

¹⁴⁵) As 32.992, Frankfort, OIC 17 (1934), p. 54, fig. 50; Levy, *The Oriental Origin of Herakles*: JHS LIV, 1934, p. 40, fig. 1.

¹⁴⁶) Jordan, *Uruk-Warka*, S. 69, Taf. 97, d.

¹⁴⁷) VA 8642, Heinrich, *Fara*, S. 121 f., Taf. 60, l.

¹⁴⁸) Speleers, *Cat. des Intailles*, p. 208 f., No. 490; Delaporte, *Cat. Mus. Guimet*, pl. I, No. 6; CCO, S 405—6, pl. 30, figs. 1, 3, S 504, pl. 34, fig. 14; de Mecquenem, MDEP VII, p. 95, pl. XXI, fig. 2.

round its neck; in front of it a scorpion, head downwards, extends from top to bottom of the field, and on the right a lion retires ignominiously, chased away from the cattle by a bearded man. In the lower register a man protects a bull and a goat from the onslaught of a lion, while a second man ceases his farm work to watch the contest. The protection of the flocks is pictured on a badly damaged seal from Susa, for a scorpion is close to a pair of goats, and an archer takes aim at the now almost obliterated aggressor¹⁴⁹. A seal found in the "A" Cemetery at Kish is inspired by the same idea, for two goats disport themselves between three very big scorpions¹⁵⁰. A vague reference to the connexion between scorpions and cattle may be traced on a black slate cylinder seal where a scorpion, very naturalistically drawn, is above the head of a frisky bull¹⁵¹. The bull is followed by quadrupeds, probably onagers, harnessed to a chariot upon which the driver stands holding the reins. Only one steed is visible, but there must have been a pair, for the chariot-pole which passed between them is distinctly indicated.

The scorpion which forms the central *motif* in the upper register of a famous seal impression from Susa depicting goddesses standing or kneeling upon animals¹⁵², should not, perhaps, be reckoned among scorpions; it has a human face and arms, and is really as much a fabulous being as the others pictured in the same register. Attempts have been made to see in this extraordinary work an astral manifestation, but not one of the explanations so far advanced is entirely convincing.

The scorpion is introduced very discreetly between the lions rending their prey on the impressions of the seal of Eniggal, "steward of the Women's House" in the time of Lugalanda¹⁵³. Contests of "Wild Men" and bull-men with lions or wild steers in defence of the domesticated cattle were favourite subjects in Akkadian times. In these scenes the scorpion was placed in various positions according to the dispositions of the figures in action; sometimes it was between them, at others below the inscription¹⁵⁴. A later variant of the subject is given by a seal impression on a clay tablet which bears the name of Šulgi, and is said to come from Tello¹⁵⁵. Two Nude Heroes have captured a winged monster with the head of a dragon; below the monster the upper part of a scorpion can still be seen.

The worship of a divine symbol is illustrated on certain cylinder seals, the scorpion being usually placed below or beside the symbol which is always mounted on a tall support, and may be an aquatic bird, a crescent, or a mace-head between two curved branches ending in dragons' heads¹⁵⁶. One example shows an aquatic bird standing between two symbols, but the main subject is the victory gained by two

¹⁴⁹) Delaporte, CCO, S 514, pl. 34, fig. 16.

¹⁵⁰) Mackay, *Anthropology, Memoirs* I, 2, p. 195, No. 2810, pl. XLII, fig. 1.

¹⁵¹) Ward, *Cat. Morgan Coll.*, p. 30, pl. III, No. 15.

¹⁵²) Pézard, *Intailles susiennes*: MDEP XII, p. 119 f., fig. 128; Delaporte, CCO, S 462, fig. p. 56 f., pl. 45, figs. 11—12; Hommel, *Schwurgöttin*, S. 102; Jeremias, HAOG², S. 338, Abb. 166.

¹⁵³) Allotte de la Fuyë, DP I, pl. IX, figs. 15—18; Lichačev, *Mém. de la soc. archéol. impér. russe* IV, 1907, p. 255, fig. 55, pl. IV, fig. 2 a—b; Pinches, *Amherst Tablets*, p. 2, No. 1, fig. in text.

¹⁵⁴) Delaporte, CCO, D 18, pl. 50, fig. 3, A 107, pl. 68, fig. 15; COBN, pl. III, No. 28; Menant, *Cat. Coll. de Clercq* I, pl. V, No. 47; *Cat. Cyl. Or. à La Haye*, pl. I, fig. 2; von der Osten, *Cat. Brett Coll.*, pl. V, No. 42.

¹⁵⁵) Ward, SC, figs. 51, 563; Weber, *Siegelbilder*, Abb. 310.

¹⁵⁶) Menant, *Cat. des Cyl. Or. à La Haye*, p. 52, pl. VI, No. 29; von der Osten, *Newell Coll.*, pl. XIV No. 158; Delaporte, *Cat. Mus. Guimet*, pl. III, No. 34; COBN, pl. XIX, No. 282; Weber, *Siegelbilder*, Abb. 115.

Nude Heroes over a lion. This serves to introduce other scenes, drawn in a still more sketchy style, of heroes contending with lions in the presence of a scorpion¹⁵⁷. From the Royal Cemetery at Ur comes a seal depicting two figures facing each other on the left, while on the right there are two scorpions in a horizontal position¹⁵⁸.

At various times and places during the excavations at Ur seals came to light which in style and technique resemble those found in the Indus Valley. The majority are stamp-seals, and of these two depict a scorpion. One has a big scorpion and a rhombos on the base, the other shows the scorpion and rhombos and other signs above the back of a humped bull¹⁵⁹. The first was found sporadically, the second in the cemetery area in a ruined grave which seems, from its contents and the small depth from the surface at which it lay, to have belonged to the Sargonid series of graves. A cylinder seal of the same style was discovered in a Larsa tomb, and is engraved with a humped bull beside a palm-tree, while behind it are a gigantic scorpion and two serpents¹⁶⁰.

Dramatic action was pictured on a steatite bowl carved in low relief and now reduced to disconnected fragments. It was discovered at Ur, and according to the inscription was dedicated by Rimuš, King of Akkad, from the spoils captured in Elam¹⁶¹. A scorpion pointing upwards can be discerned on Fragment 1, and traces of two more pointing downwards on Fragment 3. Scorpions were carved on a stone bowl found in the temple dump at Bismaya¹⁶², and on the grey limestone pedestal of a vase which is attributed to the time of Gudea. It is carved in relief with "apotropaic" images of harmful animals, serpents, scorpions, centipedes¹⁶³ (Fig. 22). The images were certainly regarded as apotropaic symbols, but as such they were the very reverse of harmful, for they were believed to be beneficial images which brought good luck.

In Akkadian times the scorpion was often included when the subject represented was the presentation of a worshipper to a divinity¹⁶⁴, and the custom was continued until the end of the period of the First Dynasty of Babylon. A green jasper cylinder seal shows two fertility deities preceded by a third holding up a plough; they approach a goddess seated on a pile of reeds, with reeds in her hands and growing from her shoulders, apparently Nidaba, to whom Išhara was sometimes assimilated. But here the scorpion is not connected in any way with the goddess, for it is placed below the cylindrical object carried on a pole by the two lesser gods¹⁶⁵. This object has been explained as a measuring pot for corn; if that be so it is an interesting instance of how the powers to promote increase possessed by the goddess symbolized by the scorpion were extended even to the grain after it had been threshed. The seal of Ea-nisa,

¹⁵⁷) von der Osten, *Newell Coll.*, p. 23, pl. XI, No. 107; Legrain, *PBS XIV*, p. 182, pl. IX, Nos. 130—1. ¹⁵⁸) U 15307, Legrain, *Ur Excav.* II, p. 357, pl. 211, No. 296.

¹⁵⁹) Gadd, *Proc. of the British Acad.* XVIII, 1933, pp. 11, 13, pls. II, No. 11, III, No. 15; Iraq Mus. 4022, Legrain, *Ur Excav.* II, p. 363, pl. 216, No. 370.

¹⁶⁰) Woolley, *AJ XI*, 1931, p. 357; *Sumer. Art*, pl. 71, a; Gadd, *Proc. of the British Acad.* XVIII, 1933, p. 8, pl. I, No. 6.

¹⁶¹) BM 116455, Woolley, *AJ III*, 1923, pp. 323, 331, pl. XXXII, fig. 1; Gadd and Legrain, *Ur Excav.: Texts I*, p. 3, No. 9. ¹⁶²) Banks, *Bismya*, p. 266, fig. p. 267.

¹⁶³) BM 115710, Hall, *Sculp. babyl. et assyr.*, p. 33, pl. VII, figs. 3—4.

¹⁶⁴) Ward, *SC*, p. 96, fig. 270 a; Legrain, *PBS XIV*, pl. XIII, No. 186; NBC 5993, Van Buren, *AfO XI*, 1936, S. 33, Abb. 34.

¹⁶⁵) Carnegie, *Cat. Southesk Coll.* II, p. 44 f., pl. III, Q a 22.

the gardener, has two registers; the deity and a worshipper are in the upper one, below there are a dragon, a lion, and a scorpion¹⁶⁶. A seal from the Royal Cemetery at Ur represents a man pouring a libation on to an altar placed in front of a seated goddess¹⁶⁷. Behind her seat there is a scorpion turned downwards, and a second scorpion turned upwards is on the other side of the supplicating goddess who stands behind the worshipper. A big star is conspicuous in two examples, and another is interesting because the scorpion creeps towards the face of the seated goddess and two long serpents glide or rise vertically upon the tips of their tails, one on either side of her. Here the star is prominent between the worshipper bringing an animal for sacrifice and the god who leads him¹⁶⁸. Later examples prove that the scorpion was frequently placed close to the knees of the goddess¹⁶⁹ (Fig. 23), but it might also be in other parts of the field¹⁷⁰.

A large group of seals represent a goddess seated facing to left. Even those bearing an inscription give no clue as to her identity, but a bird of some aquatic species always near her, and once even serving as her seat, seems to indicate that she is the goddess Bau¹⁷¹ (Fig. 24). Only part of a scene is preserved by a seal impression on a clay tablet of the time of Šulgi; it shows a goddess with one hand raised in adoration standing by a tall post crowned by a crescent, while behind her are a bird and a scorpion¹⁷². The bird is associated with the scorpion in the group of seals decorated with registers filled with scorpions, but they give no hint of any connexion with a goddess; and again in scenes of the adoration of a symbol, twice figuring as the object of worship, once standing on the ground near a symbol.

In a few instances the presentation is made to a male divinity¹⁷³. The star reappears on the seal from Tell Asmar, but all the other examples have the crescent, three times with the sun-disk as well. As 30.37 and Newell Collection No. 136 display the serpent rearing vertically, and in the second example a pair of scorpions are courting below the inscription. Both the next two seals belong to "servants of Ibi-Sin", and scorpions courting appear again on the seal in the Louvre. The three big dots round the hand of the seated god on De Clercq No. 107 imply that he is Sin. These three categories of seals seem to prove that the scorpion was sometimes added in scenes

¹⁶⁶) de Genouillac, *Fouilles de Telloh I*, p. 84.

¹⁶⁷) BM 122563, Legrain, *Ur Excav.* II, p. 354 f., pl. 210, No. 258.

¹⁶⁸) Oriental Inst., Case AB-1, A 11150.

¹⁶⁹) Delaporte, CCO, T 122, pl. 5, fig. 11, A 210, pl. 75, fig. 19, A 224, pl. 76, fig. 2; COBN, pl. XI, No. 126; Legrain, PBS XIV, pls. XV, Nos. 214, 217, XVII, Nos. 252, 255; *Cat. Coll. Cugnin*, pl. III, No. 30; von der Osten, *Newell Coll.*, pl. XII, No. 129; de Genouillac, ITT V, pl. IV, Nos. 10030, 10054.

¹⁷⁰) Delaporte, CCO, A 209, pl. 75, fig. 18; COBN, pl. IX, No. 88; Pinches, *Amherst Tablets*, fig. p. 40; Legrain, PBS XIV, pl. XV, No. 221; *Cat. Coll. Cugnin*, pl. III, No. 34; Woolley, *Sumer. Art*, pl. 71, b.

¹⁷¹) Frankfort, JEOL III, 1935, S. 156, pl. XV, No. 10; Scheil, RA XIV, 1917, p. 137 f., No. 31; Delaporte, CCO, S 481, pl. 33, fig. 16, A 202, 211, pl. 75, figs. 11, 20; *Cat. Mus. Guimet*, pl. III, No. 40; von der Osten, *Newell Coll.*, pls. XII, Nos. 120, 126, 128, XIV, No. 170; Legrain, PBS XIV, pl. XVI, Nos. 233, 246; Ward, *Cat. Morgan Coll.*, pl. XXI, No. 145; Woolley, *Sumer. Art*, pl. 71, b, No. 9; YBC 9665, 9673.

¹⁷²) Legrain, PBS XIV, pls. XVIII, LI, No. 280.

¹⁷³) Frankfort, OIC 16 (1933), p. 23, fig. 15; von der Osten, *Newell Coll.*, pl. XIII, No. 136; Ward, SC, p. 23, fig. 36; *Cat. Morgan Coll.*, pl. X, No. 61; Delaporte, CCO, A 272, pl. 77, fig. 14; Menant, *Cat. Coll. de Clercq I*, pls. X, No. 88, XII, No. 107.



Fig. 21. BM 102427.



Fig. 22. BM 115710.

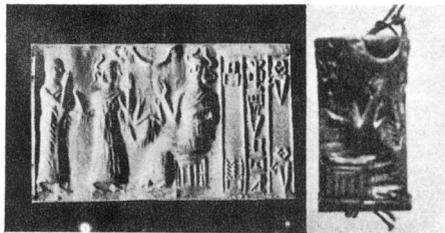


Fig. 23. Mus. of Fine Arts, Boston,
No. 34.202.



Fig. 24. Allard Pierson Mus. No. 10 A.

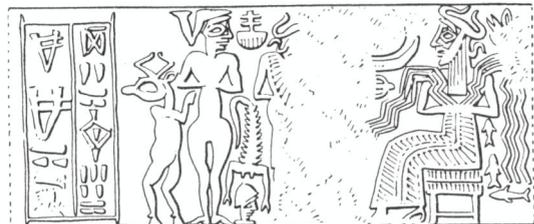


Fig. 25. VAT 9237.



Fig. 26. Mus. of Fine Arts, Boston.

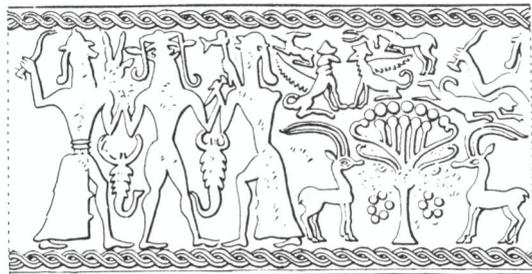


Fig. 27. VAT 6040.

of presentation to both male and female divinities; at other times the scene is reproduced in all its details with the exception of the scorpion¹⁷⁴. The explanation may be that the insect was not the attribute of the deity to whom the presentation was made, but its presence was conditioned by the nature of the worshipper's petition. If he craved a blessing on his prospective marriage or the increase of his flocks and herds the scorpion was introduced as a token that the deity, with the co-operation of the goddess Išhara, would grant his request.

On a haematite cylinder seal the Warrior-Ištar with a goddess, a divinity holding a flowing vase with a Nude Hero also holding a flowing vase, form two groups¹⁷⁵. Between them the field is divided into two registers by a band of continuous braid-pattern, perhaps derived from the entwined serpents *motii*. Three divine symbols occupy the lower part, whereas in the upper register there are a man, an enormous scorpion turned downwards, and a star. An unusual subject is, unfortunately, partly obliterated. Two figures can be seen walking towards eight scorpions, four arranged in two rows facing to left, a fifth pointing upwards, and three below turned to right¹⁷⁶. Two right hands above the insects and a third below seem to prove that the seal belongs to the time of the First Dynasty of Babylon. Owing to minor details, such as a crouching "ape", another rare subject can also be attributed to the same period¹⁷⁷. Two men, armed with long spears, attack a lion intent upon devouring a man; above the beast's back there is a scorpion which should evidently be associated with the animal still higher up, apparently a sheep grazing between a crescent and an eagle heraldically displayed. A serpentine seal depicts three warriors advancing on foot and on horseback, preceded by a scorpion, one of several symbols scattered in the field¹⁷⁸. But its meaning here is inexplicable because it is not certain whether an actual occurrence or some legendary episode is represented.

Although the engraving is badly executed and the composition (a worshipper addressing a goddess, between them a crescent and a scorpion) is unoriginal, a red limestone cylinder seal deserves attention on account of the inscription indicating that the owner was *I-bi-dSin mār Za-bu-um šarri*, for Zabum was the third king of the First Dynasty of Babylon¹⁷⁹. At that time a god holding a mace and grouped with a supplicating goddess was a favourite subject. A scorpion is often placed near the god, or is relegated to a position among the real or mythical creatures in the background¹⁸⁰. Occasionally it is found in scenes in which the Nude Goddess is prominent¹⁸¹, or close to a male divinity who holds or stands near his symbol¹⁸². A single example represents

¹⁷⁴) Delaporte, CCO, A 206, A 208, pl. 75, figs. 15, 17; Legrain, *Ur Excav.* II, pl. 216, Nos. 386—7.

¹⁷⁵) Speleers, *Cat. des Intailles*, p. 190, No. 574.

¹⁷⁶) Delaporte, COBN, pl. XXIX, No. 420; Toscanne, RA XIV, 1917, p. 188, fig. 39.

¹⁷⁷) von der Osten, *Newell Coll.*, pl. XIII, No. 147.

¹⁷⁸) Delaporte, CCO, A 861, pl. 94, fig. 15.

¹⁷⁹) Legrain, PBS XIV, p. 241, pl. XX, No. 327.

¹⁸⁰) Ball, *Light from the East*, fig. p. 12; von der Osten, *Newell Coll.*, pls. XVII, No. 217, XXXVII, No. 651; Delaporte, CCO, A 387, pl. 81, fig. 11, A 435, pl. 83, fig. 2; COBN, pl. X, No. 109; Princeton University, Garrett Coll. of Seals, No. 11.

¹⁸¹) Lajard, *Mithra*, pl. LIII, fig. 3; Delaporte, CCO, A 394, pl. 81, fig. 23; Speleers, *Cat. des Intailles*, p. 174, No. 580; Legrain, PBS XIV, p. 283, pl. XXVII, No. 501; YBC 9880.

¹⁸²) Delaporte, CCO, A 520, pl. 114, fig. 2 a—b; COBN, pl. XXX, No. 447; Legrain, PBS XIV, p. 270, pl. XXV, No. 447; Morgan Coll. No. (?).

a pair of supplicating goddesses separated by three scorpions, one above the other and all turned to left¹⁸³.

The increasing preoccupation with the invisible world and the growing absorption in and reliance upon magic rites as a means of protection or aversion inspired the creation of compositions which seem strange because their significance is now obscure. Seals of this type are engraved with few strokes, so that the figures are merely outlined; they are small, and many are much rubbed, for they were valued as talismans. Men are represented kneeling before a symbol or struggling with monsters. The aquatic bird reappears; if there is one scorpion in the field it is usually a big one, but two or even three were often introduced¹⁸⁴.

At Ur in a big building of the time of the Dynasty of Isin a stone bowl engraved on the exterior with scorpions was discovered¹⁸⁵. Two clay pots with scorpions, tortoises, and snakes in relief stood on the floor of a small serpent temple at Tell Asmar, and clay vases decorated with scorpions were found at Tepe Gaura in Stratum IV¹⁸⁶. A mould in baked clay for casting very small metal amulets of animals, sundisks, birds, fishes, and scorpions was found at Nuzi in the third stratum of the temple area¹⁸⁷.

Certain "Cappadocian" seals or seal impressions illustrate cult scenes in which scorpions figure¹⁸⁸. They are mostly scenes of presentation to a deity, and in VAT 9237 Ea, who holds the flowing vase, and the Nude Goddess are both present (Fig. 25). Two of these seals exhibit a bull upon an altar or base, with a star above it and a scorpion below it. A seal of a different type clearly illustrates the ancient belief concerning the scorpion, for the insect is depicted twice in the lower register which is separated from the upper one by a band of braid-pattern which frames the scene at the sides also¹⁸⁹.

Subjects and compositions in their main lines were taken over from Sumerian models by the Northern Syrian cycle of art; but details, such as the delineation of human and animal figures, dress and weapons, were rendered in accordance with local traditions. Twice the scorpion is associated with the flowing vase, a powerful fertility symbol; in the first example it is placed below the flowing vase held by two Nude Heroes; and in the second it touches the stream of water escaping from the vase held by a divinity¹⁹⁰. A remarkable seal pictures a god rising up out of the ground in the presence of two other deities¹⁹¹. Behind the one to right a scorpion glides towards a hare attacked by a lion, apparently a reminiscence of the ancient idea of protecting the helpless animal against its assailant. Cult scenes are confused by innumerable "filling" motifs, among them the scorpion, sometimes placed between the principal

¹⁸³) Boston Mus., Ward, SC, fig. 957; Toscanne, RA XIV, 1917, p. 196, fig. 75.

¹⁸⁴) Carnegie, *Cat. Southesk Coll.* II, pl. VI, Q b 43; Delaporte, CCO, A 452, A 455, pl. 83, figs. 19, 22, A 882, pl. 95, fig. 10; Speleers, *Cat. des Intailles*, pp. 206, 211, Nos. 472, 407 b; Legrain, PBS XIV, pl. XXV, No. 444; von der Osten, *Cat. Brett Coll.*, pl. V, No. 44.

¹⁸⁵) AfO III, 1926, S. 88.

¹⁸⁶) Frankfort, ILN, No. 5081, Sept. 5, 1936, p. 391; Speiser, *Excav. at Tepe Gawra I*, p. 68.

¹⁸⁷) BASOR 41, 1931, p. 24 f.

¹⁸⁸) VAT 9237; de Genouillac, *Céramique Cappadocienne I*, pl. B, fig. 1; Delaporte, CCO, A 866, pl. 94, fig. 20; Scheil, RA XXVII, 1930, fig. p. 189; Lewy, *Texte und Materialien*, Nos. 382, 384, Taf. 32, 35.

¹⁸⁹) von der Osten, *Newell Coll.*, pl. XXIV, No. 349.

¹⁹⁰) Delaporte, CCO, A 913—14, pl. 96, figs. 11—12; Moortgat, *Die bildende Kunst des Alten Orients und die Bergvölker* (= *Die Bergvölker*), S. 30, Taf. VII, 3.

¹⁹¹) Delaporte, COBN, pl. XXXI, No. 464.

figures¹⁹² (Fig. 26). Two of these examples introduce a *motif* which was common at the period, a row of figures all precisely alike, moving rhythmically in such a way that the lines of their crossed legs often make a decorative pattern. This *motif* is repeated in a scene where four figures advance towards a man on horseback, behind whose back a scorpion points upwards¹⁹³. It is varied on another seal divided into two registers bordered by braid-pattern. In the lower register four little men run rapidly to left, one knee touching the ground; in the upper one the ancient *motif* of scorpions in a row reappears¹⁹⁴. It is reproduced on two other seals, but fantastic beings are introduced into the scheme¹⁹⁵.

A scorpion forms the centre of the design on a seal under Egyptian influence; on each side of it is a human figure preceded by two serpents rearing upright on the tips of their tails¹⁹⁶.

The group of Northern Mesopotamian cylinder seals differs in style and also to some extent in choice of subject from those of Northern Syria¹⁹⁷. Two seal impressions made by the same seal have been preserved, and the provenance of one of them is known to have been from Kerkuk, the ancient Arrapha¹⁹⁸. The subject represents two gods menacing with their raised weapons a nude being who stands frontally between them. On each side of him a scorpion points upward. In the background there is a stylized tree between two wild goats (Fig. 27). The tree flanked by human beings or by horned animals, rampant or recumbent, figures prominently on certain seals where the scorpion is visible among the curious assortment of images which fill the remaining space¹⁹⁹. On a small haematite seal the tree, flanked by leaping goats and with an animal and a scorpion above it, is completely schematized²⁰⁰. Beside it a figure holds in each hand a reversed animal, the attitude of the *πίτυνα θηρών*. This figure recurs on three other seals, without the tree, but always with the scorpion near it, in one case as part of a revival of the ancient scheme of a row of scorpions above lattice-work²⁰¹. A spear takes the place of the tree or winged figure in one example, first between two rampant goats, and again between two immense scorpions²⁰². Two seals conform more closely to the ancient significance of the scorpion. The first has three rows of creatures; two scorpions in the top row and one in the bottom row seem to encompass a reclining gazelle attacked by a lion and a griffin²⁰³. The second seal represents recumbent bulls in the upper register, and in the lower one a male and female goat

¹⁹²) Menant, *Cat. Coll. de Clercq* I, pl. XXXIX, No. 393 bis; von der Osten, *Newell Coll.*, pl. XXIII, No. 333, *Cat. Brett Coll.*, pl. IX, No. 93; Delaporte, COBN, pls. XXXI, No. 465, XXXIII, No. 497; CCO, A 920, pl. 96, fig. 10; Ward, SC, figs. 872, 920; Boston Museum.

¹⁹³) Delaporte, CCO, A 904, pl. 96, fig. 1; Moortgat, *Die Bergvölker*, S. 32.

¹⁹⁴) Delaporte, CCO, A 912, pl. 96, fig. 9.

¹⁹⁵) Delaporte, CCO, A 946, pl. 97, fig. 18; VA 2921, Weber, *Siegelbilder*, Abb. 571.

¹⁹⁶) von der Osten, *Newell Coll.*, pl. XXXVI, No. 637.

¹⁹⁷) Moortgat, *Die Bergvölker*, S. 35 f.

¹⁹⁸) VAT 6040, Weber, *Siegelbilder*, Abb. 267; Speleers, *Cat. des Intailles*, p. 200 f., No. 237.

¹⁹⁹) Carnegie, *Cat. Southesk Coll.* II, p. 122, pl. IX, Q d 12; Delaporte, CCO, p. 197, A 945, pl. 97, fig. 10; COBN, p. 265, pl. XXXI, No. 469; Ward, *Cat. Morgan Coll.*, pls. XXIV, No. 166, XXXIV, No. 263.

²⁰⁰) von der Osten, *Newell Coll.*, pl. XXIV, No. 364.

²⁰¹) de Mecquenem, RA XIX, 1922, p. 171, No. 19, fig. p. 168; von der Osten, *Newell Coll.*, pl. XXIV, No. 363; YBC 9698.

²⁰²) Ward, SC, fig. 1021.

²⁰³) Ward, *Cat. Morgan Coll.*, pl. XXXIV, No. 262.

shielded by the protecting arms of a scorpion²⁰⁴. Sometimes the design consists of scorpions and other animals mingled seemingly without purpose²⁰⁵, although A 941 is curiously reminiscent of the Jemdet Nasr seals with astral significance, CBS 14509 and U 11957, especially as the circle of seven dots symbolizing the Pleiades here takes the place of the constellation of seven stars depicted in the archaic representation. A late version of an ancient theme is also given by a roughly cut haematite seal representing a man spearing a lion in the presence of a highly conventionalized scorpion²⁰⁶. Another revival of a primitive practice was a stone stamp-seal covered with green glaze and engraved on the base with a figure of a scorpion²⁰⁷.

A clay mould found at Tello proves that terra-cotta models of scorpions were not unknown²⁰⁸. Clay figures of this kind covered with bluish-green or yellow glaze came to light at Aššur in Rooms 5 and 6 and even in the base for the cult statue in the *cella* of the temple of Aššurītu erected by Tukulti-Ninurta I²⁰⁹. The dimensions and the attitudes of the insects vary, but some are very realistically rendered. Their purpose is more clearly revealed by numerous lead scorpions found in or close to the temple²¹⁰. Adadnarāri I describes how he restored the temple of Ištar and relates that the *bit dIš-ḫa-ra ša tarbaši* had fallen into decay²¹¹. This was evidently a chapel or room within the complex of Ištar's temple, and in it ceremonies must have been performed in which the scorpion played an important rôle. The nature of these rites is revealed by a series of lead reliefs found in the same locality²¹², and the fact that they were performed upon an altar indicates that they were symbolic acts performed as part of a prescribed ritual²¹³. Išhara, Mistress of the *Du-ku(g)*, presided over the consummation of the *ἱερός γάμος*; here in her sanctuary at Aššur rites were enacted in commemoration of the mystic union. This helps to explain the astrological omen text²¹⁴: "When a halo surrounds the Moon and *Scorpio* stands in it, holy women will approach men", and perhaps also the other elliptical phrase "the scorpion, road of Išhara"²¹⁵. The scorpions of clay or lead, symbols of the goddess, were offerings dedicated by participants in the rites.

On the kudurrus Išhara is occasionally among the deities invoked in the inscriptions, but the scorpion is almost always represented, three times with *dIš-ḫa-ra* written beside it²¹⁶. These representations seem to have had an astral significance; they are

²⁰⁴) Delaporte, COBN, pl. XXIX, No. 419.

²⁰⁵) Delaporte, CCO, p. 197, A 941, pl. 97, fig. 13; D 139, pl. 53, fig. 29; Ward, *Cat. Morgan Coll.*, pl. XXIV, No. 169; von der Osten, *Newell Coll.*, pl. XXXIII, No. 554, *Cat. Brett Coll.*, pl. IX, No. 105; Coll. Poche No. 143. ²⁰⁶) Legrain, PBS XIV, p. 284, pl. XXVII, No. 508.

²⁰⁷) Delaporte, CCO, A 981, pl. 99, fig. 3 b.

²⁰⁸) Van Buren, *Clay Figurines of Babylonia and Assyria*, p. 184, No. 924.

²⁰⁹) Andrae, *Die jüngeren Ischtar-Tempel*, S. 94, Taf. 37, h—k.

²¹⁰) Andrae, *Die jüngeren Ischtar-Tempel*, SS. 25, 102, Taf. 44, a—f.

²¹¹) KAH II, Nr. 34; Weidner, AOB I, S. 91; Luckenbill, *Anc. Records I*, p. 34, § 102; Unger, *Aššur*: RLA I, S. 186, § 45.

²¹²) Andrae, *Die jüngeren Ischtar-Tempel*, S. 103 f., Taf. 45, a—r.

²¹³) Andrae, *Die jüngeren Ischtar-Tempel*, Taf. 45, a—b, 46, n.

²¹⁴) Thompson, *Reports*, Nos. 94, Rev. 2—4, 108, Obv. 1—3, 143, 7—9.

²¹⁵) CT XLI, 39, Obv. 17; Labat, *Commentaires assyro-babyl. sur les Présages*, p. 100, No. XIII (uncertain).

²¹⁶) MDEP X, p. 95, pl. 13, fig. 2, No. A 6100; XIV, p. 35, No. 12866; I, p. 171, No. 3182; Steinmetzer, *Die babyl. Kudurru*, S. 143; RA XIV, 1917, p. 194 f.

extraordinarily varied, for no two are identical²¹⁷. With the incursion of the Kassites the conception of the goddess underwent some modification, for to these northern people she was a powerful deity whose aid to avert evil was invoked in magic rites. It is this phase of her character which is emphasized by the scorpion represented on Lamaštu tablets²¹⁸, and on a stone tablet of the same nature from Nippur which has engraved on the obverse a dog, a dagger, a rhombos, and entwined serpents, and on the reverse a scorpion, a solar disk, and a symbol like two adjoining triangles²¹⁹

A blue paste cylinder seal belongs to the same category, for it illustrates the magic rites necessary to heal a sick man²²⁰. In the lowest of the five registers the Lamaštu monster can be seen, and a group of beneficent symbols to combat her malign influence. Among them are two scorpions, one enormous, the second also of considerable size. The same subject is treated on another seal which, however, has only four registers²²¹; in the fourth two scorpions lurk under the head and tail of the great serpent whose body forms the boat upon which the Lamaštu stands astride.

Representations of scorpions on Neo-Babylonian cylinder seals are very rare, but two examples exist in the Morgan Collection²²². The first shows a winged god on each side of a sacred tree; a scorpion turned upwards is placed beyond the being on the right, so that when the cylinder was rolled out to its fullest extent the scorpion was between the two gods. On the second seal a man in the attitude of prayer gazes upon the ancient theme of a lion attacking a bull(?), while a scorpion with an immensely long tail of dots is the most important of the many symbols in the field.

An alabaster vase found at Aššur bears an inscription stating that it was the property of Tašmetum-šarrat, wife of Sanherib, as well as her personal mark, a scorpion^{222a}. This was an appropriate emblem for a queen-consort because it was evidently still believed to be essential that Išhara should bless the royal marriage which was the earthly counterpart of the divine nuptials. The name by which the queen was known after her marriage cannot have been the one bestowed upon her in childhood, and it suggests that she had once played the part of the goddess Tašmetum in a ritual mime in which Sanherib impersonated the god Nabû.

In the Seleucid age seal impressions on clay *bullae* sometimes bear the imprint of a scorpion²²³, and on stamp-seals of that or subsequent periods the same design is found²²⁴. To the Parthian period belong stamp-seals with a very peculiar subject which has never been satisfactorily explained. It is highly conventionalized and coarsely engraved, details being gradually simplified or eliminated until the later

²¹⁷) MDEP I, figs. 379—80, 382, 387, pls. XIV, XVI; VII, figs. 452, 454, 456, pl. XVI; RA XVI, 1919, pl. II; Caillou Michaux; King, BBS, BM 87220, 90827, 90835, 90840—1, 90850, 90858, 102485, 102588, 104404—5, 104414; VA 212, 3031, 3614, 3663; Hinke, *A New Boundary Stone*, pp. 117, 120, 238; AJ V, 1925, pl. XXXIX, a.

²¹⁸) Menant, *Cat. Coll. de Clercq* II, pl. XXXIV; Asariatika Müzeleri, Istanbul, Salle XI, Vitrine 42, No. 7074 (Aššur 8592 d). ²¹⁹) Legrain, PBS XIV, p. 361, pl. XLIX, No. 1052.

²²⁰) Delaporte, CCO, p. 180 f., A 831, pl. 93, fig. 7.

²²¹) Ashmolean Mus., Langdon, JRAS 1934, p. 50 f., fig. in text; Meissner, AfO X, 1935, S. 160 f., Abb. 1.

²²²) Ward, *Cat. Morgan Coll.*, pls. XXIII, No. 159, XXXIV, No. 260.

^{222a}) Asariatika Müzeleri, Istanbul, Salle XI, Vitrine F—G, No. 4622; Essad Nassouhi, *Guide sommaire*, p. 34; KAH I, Nr. 50; Luckenbill, *Anc. Records* II, p. 194, § 472; MDOG 21, 1904, S. 12.

²²³) Delaporte, CCO, A 803—4, pl. 122, figs. 3 c, 4 a; A 810, pl. 123, fig. 3 a.

²²⁴) Debevoise, *Berytus* I, 1934, pl. I, figs. 3—4; Delaporte, CCO, A 1275—9, pl. 108, figs. 31—5.

examples would be unintelligible were it not for the clearer definition of some of the earlier ones. It has been described as “a bearded man, legs spread, holding two sticks, and standing over an animal”²²⁵; or as “personnage phallique, debout de face, les jambes écartées; de chacune de ses mains il tient un mât terminé par une étoile, appuyé sur l’un de ses pieds. Au-dessous de ce personnage, lièvre courant, de profile à droit”²²⁶. The animal, however, can be more clearly seen on three other examples which show that it is of an equine nature, and they also offer certain variations, for a bird instead of a star crowns the top of each staff, and there is a scorpion on the left and a serpent coiled round the staff on the right²²⁷, thus the very symbols which are so often grouped together with magical significance. The work is so crude that it is difficult even to be certain that the figure represents a bearded man. With considerable hesitation I venture to suggest that the theme may be derived, very distantly and schematically, from that depicted on the Lamaštu tablets. The animal is the ass which supported the monster on its back; the sticks or spears crowned by stars or birds are all that are left of the ends of the boat; the snakes which the monster originally held have now been reduced to one serpent twisted round the staff; the scorpion is the last of the beneficent symbols introduced to counteract the monster’s powers for evil. If this is really the derivation, the reason why the subject was repeated with such frequency, often in such an abbreviated version, was because a representation of such magical potency was a safeguard against many evils, and was so well known that merely the main lines of the composition sufficed to recall the whole scene to the mind of whoever beheld it.

Astrological texts dealing with the signs of the zodiac often allude to *kakkab*GIR.TAB²²⁸, mostly in a purely technical sense.

At Babylon the New Year’s Festival lasted from the first to the eleventh day of the month *Nisan*, and detailed information is extant as to the proceedings on the second to the fifth day²²⁹. On the third day the High Priest summoned four priestly craftsmen, a goldsmith, a metal-worker, a wood-carver, and a weaver, and commanded them to make two images to be used in a ceremony of expiation on the sixth day. One image was of cedar-wood, the other of tamarisk-wood, overlaid with gold and set with precious stones, for all of which he furnished the necessary materials from the treasury of Marduk. The images were clad in red garments and bound round with palm branches. Both of them raised their right hand in prayer to Nabû; one held in his left hand a

²²⁵) von der Osten, *The Art Bulletin* XXXI, 2, 1931, p. 12, figs. 21—7.

²²⁶) Delaporte, CCO, p. 79, D 152—7; Zakharov, *Material for the Corpus Sigillorum Asiae Anterioris Antiquae*: ArO III, 1931, S. 510, Nos. 12—17; *Some Caucasian Seals*: AAA XIV, 1927, p. 56, figs. 2—3, 5; Menant, *Cat. Coll. de Clercq* II, p. 31, pl. III, No. 65.

²²⁷) Delaporte, CCO, p. 218, A 1254—5, pl. 108, figs. 9—10; Legrain, PBS XIV, p. 322, pl. XXXIV, No. 711.

²²⁸) Weidner, *Handb. der babyl. Astronomie*, SS. 6 f., 37, 77, 121; Thompson, *Reports*, Nos. 109, Obv. 1, 112, Obv. 7, Rev. 3, 151, Rev. 2, 200, Obv. 2, 213, Obv. 1, 214 A, Obv. 1, 215, Obv. 4, 7, 223, Obv. 3—5, 223 A, Rev. 4, 272, Obv. 7—17, Rev. 1, 277 H, Rev. 3, 277 T, Obv. 5, Rev. 2, 277 AB, 3; Dhorme, RA VIII, 1911, MNB 1848, III:13; Neugebauer, *Quellen und Studien zur Ges. der Mathematik, Astronomie und Physik*, Abt. B, III, 2, 1936, S. 373—7.

²²⁹) II R 1, IV:1—27; Zimmern, *Zum babyl. Neujahrsfest*: BSAW LVIII, 1906, S. 149; LXX, 5, 1918, S. 37; AO XXV, 3 (1926), S. 5; Thureau-Dangin, *Rituels accadiens*, pp. 129—46; Meissner, BuA II, S. 95 f.; Ebeling, AOTAT², S. 297.

serpent of cedar-wood, the other held a scorpion. The images were kept in the "house of the divine judge" until the sixth day when they were brought before Nabû. A sword-bearer then struck off their heads with his sword, a fire was kindled and the figures were cast into it. The reason for this ceremony of expiation is not stated. The figures were carefully made of costly materials, and were clad in red garments like the *urigallu*-priest, for they were themselves divine priests. They held in their hands two symbols, serpent and scorpion; the second of these played an important part in the marriage of Marduk, celebrated apparently on the sixth day of the Festival. It seems as if the rite of expiation must have taken place after the celebration of the marriage, for then the symbol would have served its purpose. It may be that because they revealed the mysteries to the public gaze these images were condemned to be expiatory victims, thus rendering it safe for men in general to participate in the rites during the course of the year. A hymn which was chanted during the New Year's Festival may, however, offer another explanation of the holocaust. It describes how the gods created the world and then asked: "What shall we do? What shall we create"? And two of them replied²³⁰: "In Uzuma, rope of Heaven and Earth, let us slay two gods, the craftsmen, from their blood let us make man. The tribute to the gods shall be their tribute".

Scorpions seem to have been regarded merely as natural phenomena in the omen texts where auguries of all kinds are drawn from their actions²³¹. Nevertheless, they had at times a deeper meaning, for the fourteenth tablet of the *ĪAR.RA* = *hubullu* series enumerates (ll. 365—9) scorpions of the five magic colours, light (white), dark (black), red, many-coloured (spotted), and yellow²³².

An incantation to heal the sting of a scorpion is difficult to understand²³³. R. Campbell Thompson interprets it as follows: "It seems as if the patient puts the scorpion in the model of a house, which Bêl is supposed to have made, and after fastening the door, he takes it out with his little finger by a hole in the wall"²³⁴. Lines 10 and 11 run: "His little finger shall Bêl put therein. Water . . . the offering shall he take for himself". The last phrase may refer to the perquisites of the priest. These curious instructions suggest that to remind the scorpion that its proper function was to symbolize the goddess in the *Du-ku(g)* it was imprisoned in the model of a house which Bêl was supposed to have made because it was he who made the *Du-ku(g)* in *Esagila*, and perhaps because the happy consummation of his nuptials was supposed to be a propitious augury for all marriages celebrated in Babylon during that year. As the text is incomplete the meaning of the other symbolic acts is uncertain, but the results obtained by the ceremony were satisfactory, for the incantation ends (l. 12) "And into a deep sleep shall the man fall. Recite the incantation".

²³⁰) Ebeling, KAR I, Nr. 4, Obv. 24—27; ZDMG LXX, 1916, S. 533; AOTAT², S. 135; Langdon, *Semitic Mythology*, p. 313.

²³¹) Jastrow, RBA II, S. 681, where the texts dealing with scorpions are enumerated; Geers, *A Babyl. Omen Text*: AJSL XLIII, 1926—27, p. 32; Clay, *Babyl. Records* IV, p. 33, No. 13, I: 66; Hunger, *Babyl. Tieromina*: MVAG XIV, 3 (1909), S. 127—35; Nötscher, *Orientalia* 39—42, 1929, S. 155 f.; Labat, *Commentaires assyro-babyl. sur les Présages*, p. 30, II, Obv. 1—6; Dennefeld, *Babyl.-assy. Geburts-Omina*: AB XXII (1914), S. 192, 27 r, 3.

²³²) Landsberger, *Die Fauna des alten Mesopotamien*: ASAW XLII, Nr. VI, 1934, philol.-hist. Klasse, SS. 29, 136—9; Van Buren, AfO XI, 1936, SS. 31—5.

²³³) Rm II, 149, Rev. 5—12; Hunger, *Babyl. Tieromina*, S. 131; Langdon, BE XXXI, p. 54.

²³⁴) *Disease and Medicine (Assyro-Babylonian)*: ERE IV, p. 746.