



# ELAM VII. NON-ELAMITE TEXTS IN ELAM

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## ELAM

### vii. Non-Elamite texts in Elam

Most non-Elamite texts inscribed on Elamite territories have been found in Susiana, that is, the region nearest to Mesopotamia and most exposed to Mesopotamian political and cultural influences. They include Sumerian and Akkadian literary tablets and royal inscriptions; letters; and literary, legal, and administrative texts written in Sumerian and Akkadian by local scribes. At the end of the 3rd millennium B.C.E. Susiana was ruled successively by the kings of Akkad and Ur, and immigrants from Mesopotamia may have settled there (Lambert, p. 57). At any rate the Mesopotamian culture introduced in that period survived long after Meso-potamian political control of Susa.

During the *sukkalmah* period (ca. 1970-1600 B.C.E.; see i, above) Akkadian, a Semitic language, was used in Susa for letters, administrative records, and legal transactions. Both it and Sumerian were also used in royal inscriptions, chiefly on bricks, at Susa and Malyan (Maliān; ancient Anshan, q.v.) in this period. Despite shifting relations between Elam and Mesopotamia, Akkadian never completely disappeared from Susiana, though changes did occur after the middle of the 2nd millennium (Lambert, p. 54). Akkadian was taught and used by scholars, and, aside from such trophies of war as the stele of



Hammurabi, local versions of Mesopotamian religious, scholarly, magical, medical, and divination texts have been excavated, mainly at Susa and Haft Tepe (Kabnak). Beginning in the Ur III period (2112-2004), Akkadian written in Elam exhibited distinctive orthographic features (e.g., use of the sign *ša* to write *ša* or *šá* and of *ši* instead of *šī*) and uncommon ideograms.

Scribal exercises in the form of lexical lists are found wherever Mesopotamian culture was introduced, and many examples, some dating from the Akkadian period (ca. 2350-2000 B.C.E.), have been found at Susa (Cavigneaux, p. 612; Tanret, p. 139). Two fragments of exercise texts have been found at Malyan (Stolper, 1982l, p. 57 n. 52). Mathematical texts (van der Meer; Bruins and Rutten) written in Akkadian include some sophisticated problems involving local, as well as “Akkadian,” methods for their solution (Friberg, p. 580). Literary texts include a single bilingual religious text (in Sumerian and Akkadian), a medico-magical text, eight divination texts, and two royal letters in Sumerian with Akkadian translations, found all together at Susa and obviously written in Elam (Labat and Edzard). They have been attributed to the late 15th or early 14th centuries B.C.E. (Biggs and Stolper, p. 161). Some differ little in content from texts in the Mesopotamian tradition; others have no close parallels. Similarities in content, ductus, and orthography among the omen texts from Susa, an omen text from Chogha Pahn (Čoġa Pahān) about 23 km to the east, and an unpublished divinatory text from Haft Tepe are proof of genuine scholarship in Susiana (Biggs and Stolper, pp. 160-62). In contrast to this wholly Mesopotamian literature, the so-called “funerary texts” (Scheil, 1916; Dossin, pp. 88-91, 94) seem to represent indigenous culture, perhaps specific to Susa or perhaps rendering in Akkadian elements found more widely in Elamite territories.

Aside from a single bilingual (Akkadian and Elamite) inscription of Puzur-Inšušinak and trilingual (Akkadian, Elamite, Old Persian) inscriptions of the Achaemenid kings, official and royal inscriptions were written in Sumerian and Akkadian during the sukkalmah period and in Akkadian by the Middle Elamite kings Inšušinak-šar-ilani (or Inšušinak-sunkir-nappipir, the Elamite reading of the ideographic rendering of his name) and Tepti-ahar and occasionally Untaš-Napiriša and Šutruk-Nahhunte. Throughout these periods, including the Achaemenid period, the scribes copied and adapted classical Mesopotamian models and phraseology for foundation deposits, rock inscriptions, steles, votive inscriptions, and inscribed statues, bricks, and column bases found at Susa, Čoġa Zanbīl (q.v.), Bisotūn (q.v.), and Haft Tepe



(Scheil 1900; idem, 1902; idem, 1905; idem, 1929; idem, 1933; idem, 1939; idem and Gautier; Scheil and Legrain; Weissbach; Rutten, 1953; Steve 1987; Reiner; Vallat, 1974a; idem, 1974b; idem, 1986; Malbrat-Laban, 1995). A few letters from the *sukkalmah* period found at Susa are known only through copies (Dossin, pp. 84-87); the remainder, as well as some legal texts, are being prepared for publication by Léon de Meyer, the present author, and Florence Malbran-Labat. Along with orthographic and morphological features common to all Akkadian texts written in Elam, these letters reveal distinctive phraseology, a few unknown words, and names of deities unattested elsewhere.

Two fragments of Sumerian administrative texts have been found at Malyan (Stolper, 1982, p. 57 n. 52) and Ur III Sumerian administrative texts at Susa. Hundreds of administrative and legal documents in Akkadian have been excavated at Susa, Haft Tepe, and Abū Fandowa near Haft Tepe (Scheil 1902; idem, 1930; idem, 1932; idem, 1933; idem, 1939; idem and Gautier; Scheil and Legrain; Dossin; Herrero and Glassner 1990; idem, 1991; Beckman). In them are recorded events in the daily life of an agricultural and pastoral society; for example, the Haft Tepe texts come from the archives of a large estate over a few decades of the 14th century (Glassner, p. 115). The longer examples reflect all kinds of transactions: adoptions, inheritance, shares, grants, purchases, sales, farming leases, formation of companies, loans, and securities. They combine well-attested Sumero-Akkadian terminology with terms otherwise unknown, reflecting local custom. Jurists underscored the unusual role played by the gods, in particular the sun god, Inšušinak, and Išmekarab; the importance of acting “in good health and good faith,” that is, in sound body and mind; the divine wrath in store for offenders; and such penalties as the river ordeal and corporal mutilation (Cuq, 1931 pp. 48-61). Most of these documents, which cover the greater part of the *sukkalmah* period, originated at Susa. The so-called “Mālamīr texts,” of which about fifteen were part of legal archives from the early 14th century, probably originated from a site in Susiana, perhaps Haft Tepe (Stolper, pp. 279-80; pace Glassner, p. 117).



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