



**5-17** Stone was used for the gateways, stairs, large columns and platforms. Small columns and the roof were made of wood. The walls were constructed of brick. Audience Hall of Darius and Xerxes, about 500 BC. Persepolis, Iran.

In 539 BC, the Persians brought an end to the Assyrian empire. Under King Darius, they built huge palaces such as the one at Persepolis (fig.5-17, 5-c). Huge, magnificent spaces had wooden ceilings supported by great columns. Atop each of the one hundred columns in a huge central room was a pair of sculpted bulls, the symbol of power (fig.5-18).

Although carved from limestone, the bulls were probably covered with silver, gold leaf and lapis lazuli.

The Persians remained dominant in this area until Alexander the Great toppled them in 331 BC, thus uniting the Greek culture with the one that had slowly developed in the land between two rivers—Mesopotamia.



**3000 BC**  
Silk first produced, China

**2500-1500 BC**  
Grid pattern city built at Mohenjo-daro, Indus Valley

**2000 BC**  
Ice cream invented, China

#### World Cultural Timeline

**3000 BC**  
Mummification practiced in S. America and Africa

**2000 BC**  
First temple-pyramids built, Peru



**5-16** The Assyrians depicted the hunting of big animals, especially lions, to show the power they and their kings had over nature.

*Dying Lioness*, about 650 BC. Limestone, height of lion 13 3/4" (35 cm), from Nineveh (Assyria). British Museum, London.



**5-18** Two of these bulls facing opposite directions formed the capital of a Persian column.

*Bull capital*, about 518-460 BC, Persian. Bituminous limestone, 28" x 30" x 12" (71.1 x 76.2 x 30.5 cm) high, Persepolis. The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri (Purchase: Nelson Trust) 50-14.

#### Lesson 5.2 Review

- 1 Why does so little remain of Sumerian architecture?
- 2 How was the function of a ziggurat reflected in its appearance?
- 3 Where were some of the finest works of art from the Sumerian period found? Describe the types of objects discovered.

- 4 Describe the palaces built by the Assyrians.
- 5 Re-read the description of the Persian palace at Persepolis on page 158. Imagine, or even sketch out, how it might have looked. What impression would the central room have made on a visitor?