



Presentation

The Hanging Gardens of Babylon

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Keywords

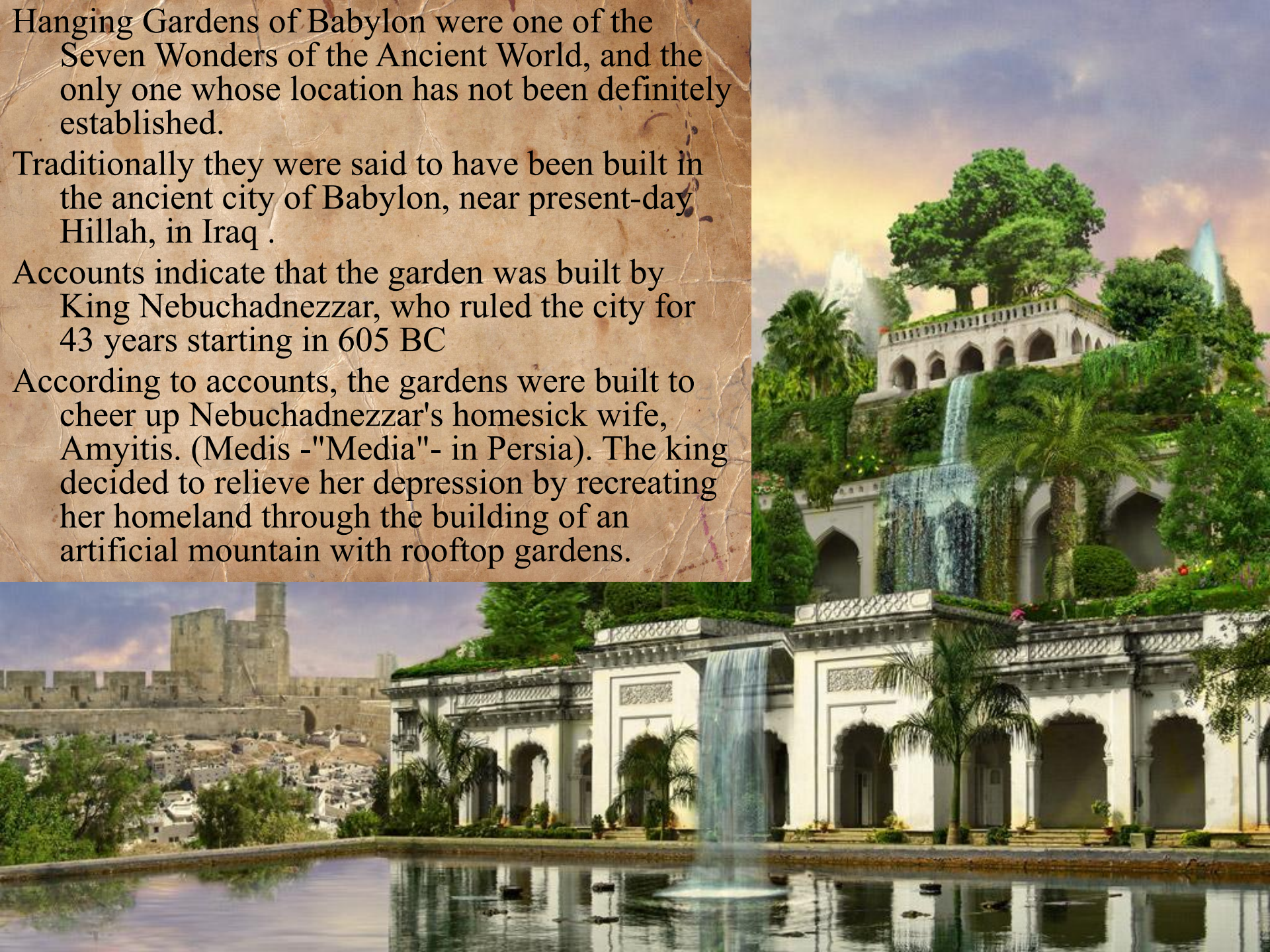
- Gardens
- Gift
- Built
- Construction
- Homeland
- Exist

Hanging Gardens of Babylon were one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, and the only one whose location has not been definitely established.

Traditionally they were said to have been built in the ancient city of Babylon, near present-day Hillah, in Iraq .

Accounts indicate that the garden was built by King Nebuchadnezzar, who ruled the city for 43 years starting in 605 BC

According to accounts, the gardens were built to cheer up Nebuchadnezzar's homesick wife, Amyitis. (Medis -"Media"- in Persia). The king decided to relieve her depression by recreating her homeland through the building of an artificial mountain with rooftop gardens.

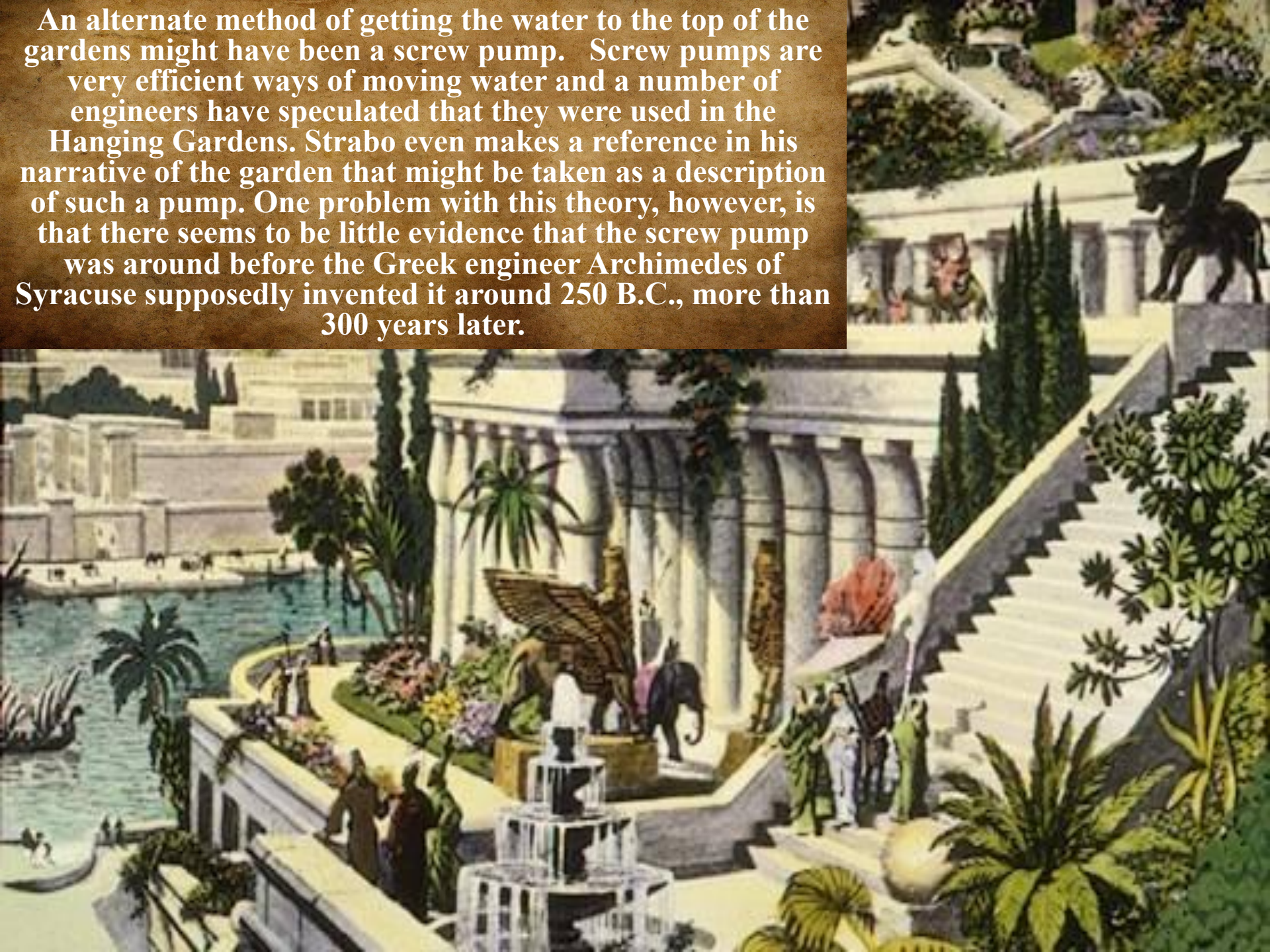


Strabo touches on what, to the ancients, was probably the most amazing part of the garden. Babylon rarely received rain and for the garden to survive, it would have had to been irrigated by using water from the nearby Euphrates River. That meant lifting the water far into the air so it could flow down through the terraces, watering the plants at each level. This was an immense task given the lack of modern engines and pressure pumps in the fifth century B.C.. One of the solutions the designers of the garden may have used to move the water, however, was a "chain pump."

The Water Problem



An alternate method of getting the water to the top of the gardens might have been a screw pump. Screw pumps are very efficient ways of moving water and a number of engineers have speculated that they were used in the Hanging Gardens. Strabo even makes a reference in his narrative of the garden that might be taken as a description of such a pump. One problem with this theory, however, is that there seems to be little evidence that the screw pump was around before the Greek engineer Archimedes of Syracuse supposedly invented it around 250 B.C., more than 300 years later.



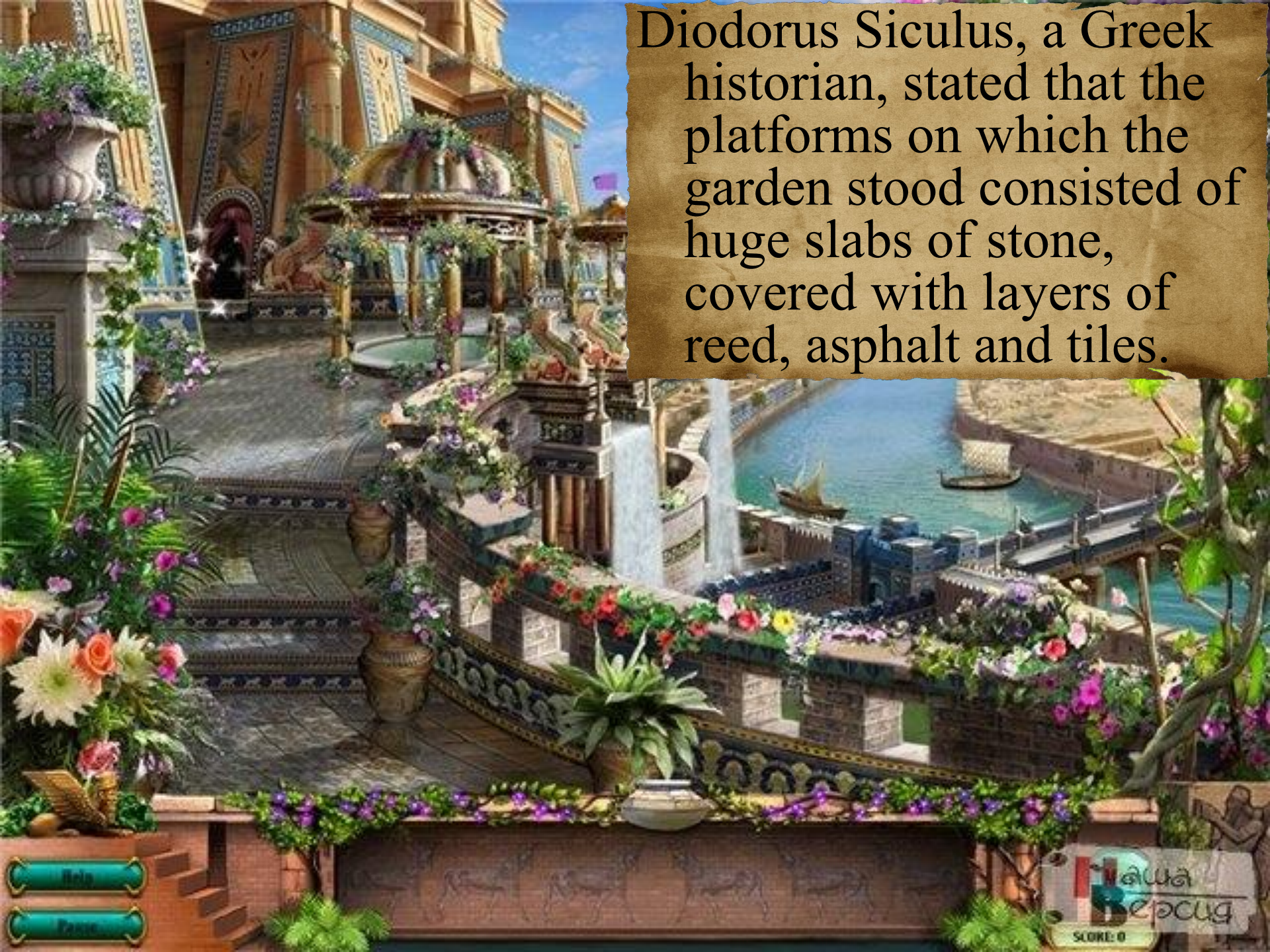
Construction of the garden wasn't only complicated by getting the water up to the top, but also by having to avoid having the liquid ruining the foundations once it was released. Since stone was difficult to get on the Mesopotamian plain, most of the architecture in Babel utilized brick. Unfortunately, because of the materials they were made of, the bricks quickly dissolved when soaked with water. For most buildings in Babel this wasn't a problem because rain was so rare. However, the gardens were continually exposed to irrigation and the foundation had to be protected.

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Garden Construction



Diodorus Siculus, a Greek historian, stated that the platforms on which the garden stood consisted of huge slabs of stone, covered with layers of reed, asphalt and tiles.



Were the Hanging Gardens Actually in Nineveh?



But did they actually exist? Some historians argue that the gardens were only a fictional creation because they do not appear in a list of Babylonian monuments composed during that period. It is also a possibility they were mixed up with another set of gardens built by King Sennacherib in the city of Nineveh around 700 B.C.

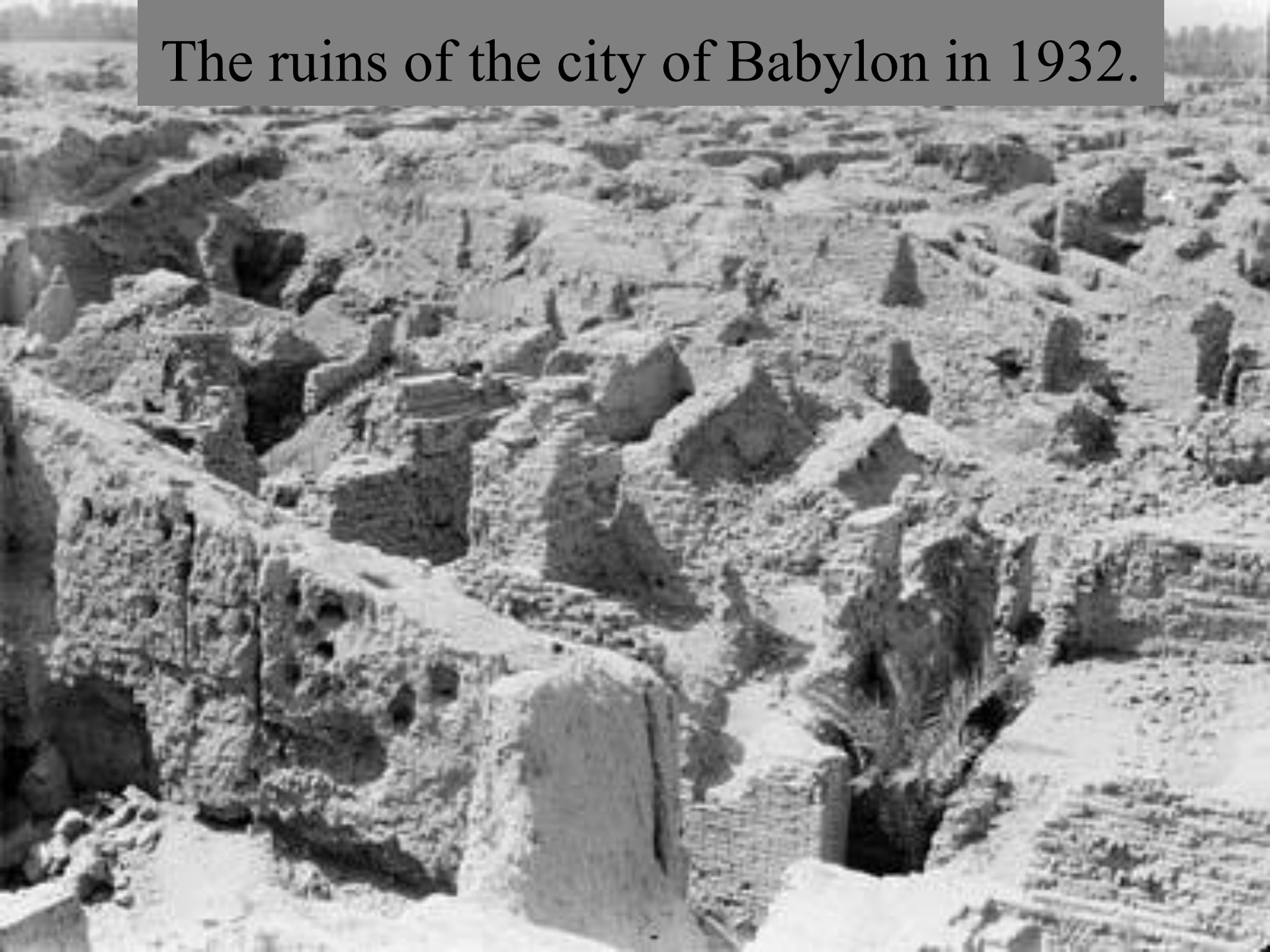
Conclusion

If they did exist, what happened to the gardens?

There is a report that they were destroyed by an earthquake in the second century B.C. If so, the jumbled remains, mostly made of mud-brick, probably slowly eroded away with the infrequent rains.

Whatever the fate of the gardens were, we can only wonder if Queen Amyitis was happy with her fantastic present, or if she continued to pine for the green mountains of her distant homeland.

The ruins of the city of Babylon in 1932.





No one knows if the gardens actually existed, or if they existed in Babylon, but the legend is a lovely one.

Dictionary

- ancient – древний
- cheer up – поднять настроение
- recreating - воссоздать
- homeland - родина
- artificial – искусственный
- Irrigated - орошенный
- chain pump – цепи насоса
- screw pump – винтовой насос
- brick – кирпич
- slabs of stone – каменные плиты
- mixed up - перепутать





List of references

- <http://www.unmuseum.org/hanggg.htm>
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hanging_Gardens_of_Babylon
- http://www.kidsgen.com/wonders_of_the_world/hanging_gardens.htm



Thank you for your attention

