# CHAPTER 5

## GLYPTICS

*Othmar Keel*

Six objects decorated with glyptics were recovered from the Tsur Natan tomb: four scarabs, one scaraboid and one stamp seal. Two were intact, three were slightly broken and one was only half a scarab.

### THE ASSEMBLAGE

#### *Scarab 1 (Fig. 5.1:1)*

*Object:* The head of this scarab has a simple lunate shape with marked eyes. Pronotum and elytra are marked by single or two thin parallel lines. The humeral callosities are indicated by two triangles resting on the pronotum line. All six legs are clearly shown. A small piece of the base edge is missing. The material is heated steatite. The dimensions are 16.7 x 11.7 x 7.4mm.

*Base:* The design of the base is horizontally arranged. In the center is depicted a tall water pot with some hatching. This is the Egyptian hieroglyph W14 (according to Gardiner's [1957] system) with the phonetic spelling *ḥs(y)* or *ḥs(t)*, which means "to praise" or "praise" (noun) if the subject is a human being and "to bless" or "blessing" if the subject is a deity. The "vase" is flanked by two curved elements and a horizontal line with three sidelines each. Close parallels for this design are a scarab from Late Iron Age I and Early Iron Age II (Tomb 227, Cemetery 200 at Tell el-Farʿah-South [Keel 2010a: 134f, no. 248]), another from Lachish (Tufnell 1953: Pl. 43/43A: 40) and another from the Ex-Matouk collection (Matouk 1977: 408, no. 2203). There is also a second version of this same type in the former Matouk Collection (BIBLE+ORIENT Museum, Fribourg, AeS 1983.4051). Both versions correspond with the features exhibited in the scarab type shown by Keel (1994: Pls. 1:1-3 and 13:10, etc.) to be typical of the Iron Age IIA. The impression of a scarab of this kind was found on a bulla in the fill of a pool beside the Gihon spring (Reich *et al.* 2007: 157, Fig. 8 [reg. no. 25972] = Keel 2012a: Fig. 10). The meaning of this design is a "blessing" directed at the owner.

*Date:* Iron Age IIA (ca. 980-830 BCE).

#### *Scarab 2 (Fig. 5.1:2)*

*Object:* The head of this scarab is of a trapezoidal shape, broadening towards the outside. Pronotum and elytra are indicated by simple lines. The legs are reduced to one groove. Part of the head and almost one third of the base is broken and missing. The engraving is hollowed out. The material is heated steatite. The dimensions are 14.2 x 10.7 x 6.2mm.

*Base:* A horizontal arrangement shows a schematic striding lion. Its tail is bent forward over its back. Beneath the lion is a ripple of water, the Egyptian hieroglyph N35 (Gardiner's [1957] system) with the phonetic value *n*. In front of the lion is a remnant of a vertical element, similar to that in Fig. 5.1:4. Parallels for this combination of lion and additional horizontal and vertical elements come from Achziv (Keel 1997: Achsib no. 15), Bet Shemesh (Keel 2010b: Bet-Schemesch no. 12) and Tel Gerisa (Keel 2012b: Tel Gerisa no. 16). The meaning of the Fig. 5.1:2-4 designs will be discussed together with Fig. 5.1:5.

*Date:* End of the Iron Age IB-beginning of Iron Age IIA (ca. 1050-900 BCE), or 21st dynasty (1069-945 BCE) if Egyptian.

#### *Scarab 3 (Fig. 5.1:3)*

*Object:* This is a fragment of a rather coarse scarab. The engraving on the base is hollowed out. The material is heated steatite. The dimensions of the fragment are ca. 10 x 11 x 6.7mm.

*Base:* The surviving remnant of this design is not easy to interpret. There are at least two possibilities. One is the king sitting on his calves over two branches holding a flagellum and *heqa*-sceptre at his chest. Parallels for this interpretation were found at Tell el-ʿAjjul (Keel 1997: Tell el-ʿAǧul no. 210),

Tell el-Far‹ah-South (Keel 2010a: Tell el-Far‹a-Süd no. 195), Tell Jemmeh (Keel 2012b: Tel Gamma no. 33) and Tell es-Sa‹idiyeh in Jordan (Eggler and Keel 2006: Tall as-Sa‹idiyah no. 14). Nineteen more examples have been published by Wiese (1990: 41-50).

The other possible interpretation is that this image represented the king on his throne, flagellum and *heqa*-sceptre held at his chest, and standing before him a servant. Such glyptics have been found at Tell el-‹Ajjul (Keel 1997: Tell el-'Ağul no. 798) and Tell Jemmeh (Keel 2012b: Tel Gamma no. 70). Wiese (1990: 168-184) has compiled a list of 50 other examples.

*Date:* End of the Iron Age IB-beginning of Iron Age IIA (ca. 1050-900 BCE), or 21st dynasty (1069-945 BCE) if Egyptian.

### *Scarab 4 (Fig. 5.1:4)*

*Object:* The head of this scarab is of trapezoidal shape, broadening towards the outside. Pronotum and elytra are indicated by simple lines. The legs are reduced to two grooves. The rim of the base is slightly damaged. The engraving on the base is hollowed out. The material is heated steatite. The dimensions are 16 x 12 x 7.3mm.

*Base:* A horizontal arrangement shows two schematic striding lions, one above the other, their tails bent forward above their backs. In front of the lions is a vertical line and a flowering reed. This is the Egyptian hieroglyph M17 (Gardiner's [1957] system) with the phonetic value *j*. Parallels for the two lions with some vertical element in front of them were found in Achziv (Keel 1997: Achsib No. 41), Megiddo (Keel 1994: 29f, No. 11 and Taf. 8:11) and Tel Rekeš (Münger 2011: 174, Tel Rekesh No. 5). The meaning of the Fig. 5.1:2-4 designs will be discussed together with Fig. 5.1:5.

*Date:* End of the Iron Age IB-beginning of Iron Age IIA (ca. 1050-900 BCE), or 21st dynasty (1069-945 BCE) if Egyptian.

### *Scaraboid (Fig. 5.1:5)*

*Object:* Lion scaraboid. A rather coarsely-rendered reclining lion, looking straight forward. This is a very widespread seal shape found from Hasanlu in Iran to Tell Tainat in Syria, and from Matmar in Egypt to Lefkandi in Greece (cf. Keel 1995: 71f § 160). Parallels were also found in Israel/Palestine at the following sites: Achziv (Keel 1997: Achsib No. 104), Arad (Keel 1997: Arad No. 21), Tel ‹Artal (Keel 1995: 71, Abb. 104), Bet Shean (Keel 2010b: Bet Shean No. 87), Dor (Keel 2010b: Dor No. 4; in that particular case the lion's head is turned sidewise), and Megiddo (Keel 1994: Taf. 8:12 and 11:26; Sass 2000: 408, Fig. 12:43). The base is broken at one end. The engraving on the base is hollowed out. The material is heated steatite. The dimensions are 14.4 x 7.2 x 9mm.

*Base:* A horizontal arrangement shows a schematic striding lion. Its tail is bent forward over its back. In front of the lion there is a remnant of a vertical element, as on Fig. 5.1:2. For parallels of this design see also Fig. 5.1:4. One or—much rarer—two lions are often the main element on seals. Very often the lion represented the king. The very image of this powerful and impressive animal had amuletic value in itself and was thought to ward off evil and enhance the owner's strength (Keel 1995: 195-198, § 536-542; Strawn 2005). The combination of lion imagery with horizontal and vertical elements found on this piece and many other seals may be interpreted as suggesting the name of the Egyptian god Amun. However, such cryptographic readings must be considered very tenuous; the value of this approach is often overrated (Keel 1995: 177-180, § 472-180). But even with the necessary hesitations, the lion may be interpreted as *m* since the lion *m y* has no strong consonant beside it. The elements *j* and *n* accompanying the lion on seals of the type presented here suggest *Jmn* ("Amun") (see Keel *et al.* 1990: 348-351). The interpretation of this design as "Amun" is also supported by the fact that during the New Kingdom "lion" was often used as a metaphor for Amun (de Wit 1951: 216-220). In the "Report of Wenamun" (2:34) Wenamun tells the king of Byblos: "Do not desire what belongs to Amen-Re, King of Gods! Indeed, a lion loves his possessions!" (translation: Lichtheim 1976: 227).

*Date:* End of the Iron Age IB-beginning of Iron Age IIA (ca. 1050-900 BCE), or 21st dynasty (1069-945 BCE) if Egyptian.

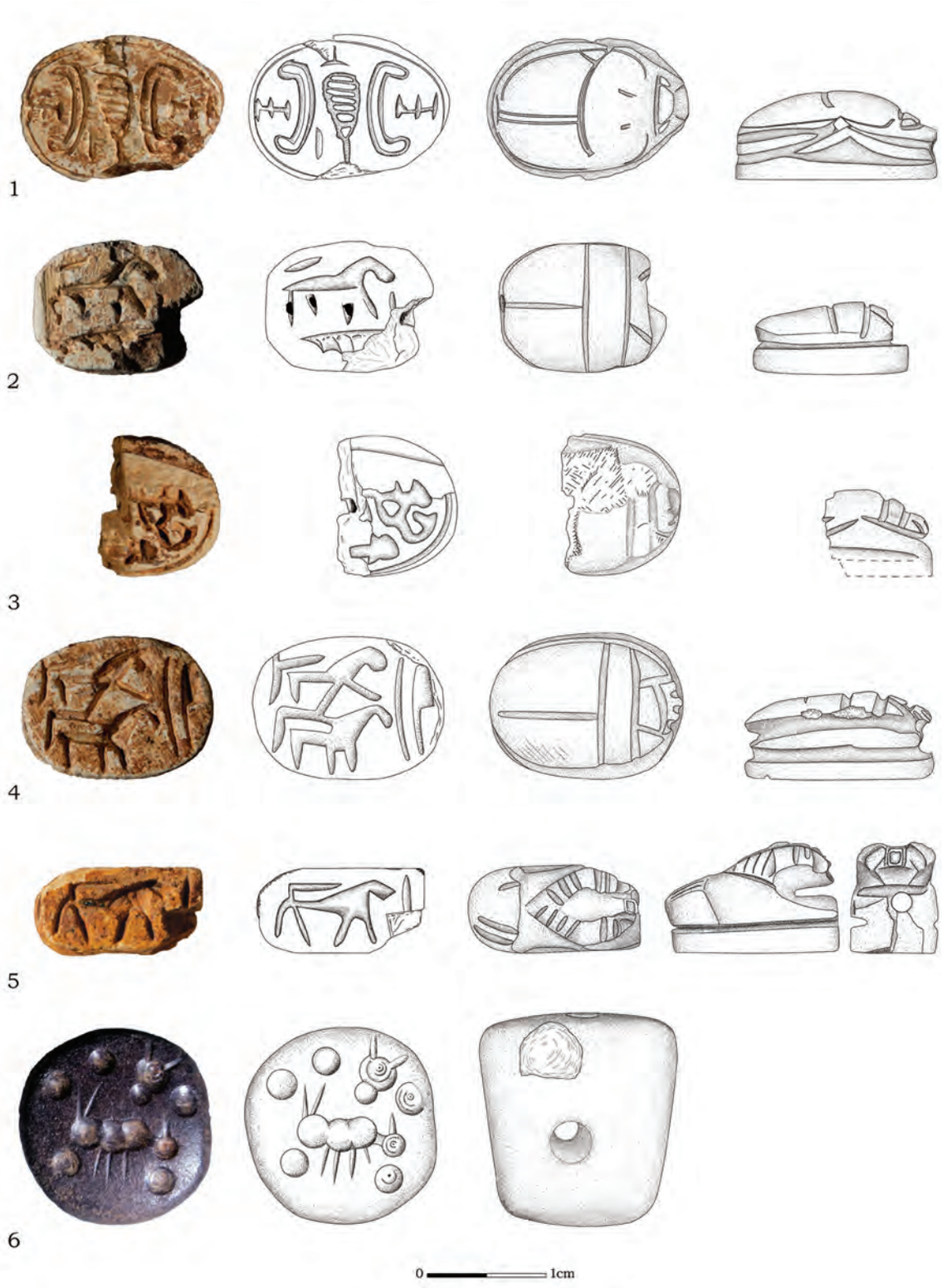


Figure 5.1. The glyptics from the Tsur Natan tomb.

Figure 5.1.

| No. | Object | Material | Period | Dimensions (mm) | Reg. no. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Scarab seal | Steatite | IA IIA | 16.7 x 11.7 x 7.4 | 65 |
| 2 | Scarab seal | Steatite | Late IA IB-early IA IIA / 21st dynasty | 14.2 x 10.7 x 6.2 | 85 |
| 3 | Scarab seal | Steatite | Late IA IB-early IA IIA / 21st dynasty | ca. 10 x 11 x 6.7 | 52 |
| 4 | Scarab seal | Steatite | Late IA IB-early IA IIA / 21st dynasty | 16 x 12 x 7.3 | 32 |
| 5 | Scaraboid seal | Steatite | Late IA IB-early IA IIA / 21st dynasty | 14.4 x 7.2 x 9 | 84 |
| 6 | Truncated-cone stamp seal | Hematite | IA IB | 17.7 x 13.2-16,5 | 83 |

### *Stamp Seal (Fig. 5.1:6)*

*Object:* A cone-shaped, or truncated cone-shaped stamp seal of Keel's Type II (1995: 100-102 § 248 and 250). On one side the cone is slightly damaged. The engraving style is a combination of drill holes and lines. The material is hematite (Keel 1995: 141 §§ 357-360). Cone-shaped seals of hematite with drill-hole engravings were found at Tell el-Farʿah-South (Keel 2010a: Tell el-Farʿa-Süd No. 220), Lachish (Tufnell 1953: Pl. 44A/45:150) and Megiddo (Lamon and Shipton 1939: Pl. 69/70:14); all three of these are illustrated in Keel *et al.* (1990: 372, Taf. 20:4 and 21:1-2). The cone has a base diameter of 16.5mm and top diameter of 13.2mm, and is 17.7mm high.

*Base:* In the center of the stamp design is a quadruped with two horns at one end, and an unclear device at the other end which may be an awkward representation of a raised tail. Above the hind quarters of the depicted animal is another horned head, probably of a bull. The five holes form a sort of frame. This stamp design is unusual. Cone-shaped seals with animals were found in Tomb 1 of the northwest cemetery at Bet Shemesh (see Keel 2010b: Bet-Schemesch No. 48-53).

*Date:* Iron Age IB (1150-980 BCE).

## CONCLUSIONS

The Fig. 5.1:1 scarab seal probably originates in Egypt, although the above-listed parallels for its shape do not exclude a Phoenician coastal origin. Phoenician seals are often strongly Egyptianizing.

The Fig. 5.1:2-5 seals all clearly belong to the so-called Post-Ramesside mass-production group. Post-Ramesside mass-production seals are elsewhere presented and discussed as a group (Keel *et al.* 1990: 337-354; Keel 1994: 48-50; Keel and Mazar 2009: 64*-65*; Keel and Uehlinger 2010: 483f [however, not in the English version of Keel and Uehlinger 1998]; Münger 2003, 2005a, 2005b and 2011). The production of this group probably began during the 21st dynasty (1069-945 BCE) and lasted into the beginning of the 22nd dynasty (945-ca. 900 BCE). These seals are certainly Post-Ramesside because sites and levels typical of the Ramesside period, such as Deir el-Balah (Keel 2010b: 402-461, Nos. 1-140) and Cemetery 900 at Tell el-Farʿah-South (Keel 2010a: 78-90 [Nos. 123-150] and 218-375 [Nos. 447-819])—between them yielding hundreds of New Kingdom scarabs—as well as the Late Bronze Age levels at Lachish (ending ca. 1130 BCE), have given up not a single scarab of this type. The element "Post-" in the designation "Post-Ramesside" is thus fully justified. The element "Ramesside" has its basis in the fact that many mass-production scarab types continue typical Ramesside subjects, albeit in a much more schematic and coarse style.

Münger (2003: 71-73; 2005: 399f) has suggested that this scarab group was first produced during the time of Siamun (ca. 960 BCE), based on a reading of this name in base engravings on Scarab No. 21 (in Keel 2010b: 472-473) from Dor and other similar scarabs of the Post-Ramesside mass-production group. However, this reading is not feasible; the correct written form of the name Siamun is quite different from that proposed by Münger (see remarks in *ibid.*).

Therefore, it seems that we cannot be more precise than sourcing the commencement of these scarabs' production to the 21st dynasty (1069-945 BCE).

It is surprising that deities very common on Ramesside seals, such as Ptah and Hathor, are completely missing from this group. The two Egyptian deities whose names (Amun) and images (falcon-headed Re-Harakhte) *do* appear regularly on mass-production seals correspond to the cults established by the kings of the 21st dynasty at Tanis (Keel 1994: 49f). As early as 1925, Petrie had identified a group of "coarse deep cut work ... which seems to belong to the whole Delta, but which is absent from Memphis and the south" (Petrie 1925: 29). Petrie (*ibid.* 26) asserted that the scarabs illustrated in the same volume (Petrie 1925: Pl. 14, 961-968) belong to this group. In fact, they are all typical Post-Ramesside mass-production scarabs. Furthermore, Petrie's "delta" can be narrowed down to the eastern delta specifically. Other than Amun and Horus, the only deities appearing on items of this group are Seth-Baal and Reshef. This pattern is best explained by sourcing these scarabs to the eastern rather than the western delta, in part because of the aforementioned cultic associations but also due to other reasons discussed in further detail elsewhere (Keel 1994: 49f; Münger 2003: 70f; 2005: 396f). The thrust of this argument is the identification of Tanis as the center of this scarab group's production.

One problem, however, is that scarab features (head, back and side) in the group are not as homogenous as they are are in clearly identified groups such as the Omega- or the Green Jasper Group (Keel *et al.* 1989: 39-87, 209-242) or the "Neo-Hyksos – Lotos-Kopfschild Gruppe" (Keel 2003). One might prefer to be on the safe side and suggest a long production period, during which more than one workshop was in operation, accounting for the higher degree of variability. Tanis remains a reasonable candidate as the main production location, but scarabs with Reshef or Seth-Baal may have been produced in a workshop in the southern Levant. The numerous Post-Ramesside mass-production scarabs from all over Israel/Palestine indicate that relations between Egypt and the southern Levant did not cease completely during the last phase of the Iron Age I and the beginning of Iron Age IIA.

While the origin of these mass-produced Post-Ramesside seals must be sought for in the Eastern delta or the southern Levant, the hematite seal (Fig. 5.1:6) most likely hails from northern Syria (see Keel *et al.* 1990: 367-377; Keel and Uehlinger 1998: 143-146).

Alhough six seals amounts to a small group, this assemblage shows that even in the dark period of the 11th and 10th centuries Palestine was in contact with its southern and northern neighbors.

## SOME REMARKS ON GLYPTICS IN IRON AGE SOUTHERN LEVANTINE MORTUARY CONTEXTS

*Conn Herriott*

Scarabs are the most prevalent Egyptian or Egyptianizing amulets in Iron Age burials (Bloch-Smith 1992: 83). They are found in all tomb and inhumation types and are associated with all ages and genders, except infants. Scarabs have been interpreted as an Egyptian emblem of rebirth and renewal (*ibid.* 84, citing Bianchi 1983; Petrie 1914: 22). Whether this meaning was maintained in the Levant is difficult to confirm or deny. Scarabs are frequently found with Egyptian and Philistine pottery, and less with Cypriot and Mycenaean. They are also found with other jewelry or items such as seals, arrowheads, stamps or amulets—which indeed was the case at Tsur Natan. From the 10th century on, scarabs in mortuary contexts were more associated with Phoenician and Cypro-Phoenician wares. Also, from this time scarabs began to be deposited in highland tombs, where once they had been almost entirely restricted to the lowlands.

Regarding the truncated cone-shaped stamp seal from Tsur Natan (Fig. 5.1:6), such objects have been found throughout the southern Levant except in the remote highlands of Judah (*ibid.* 88). These stamp seals have been found in richer 12-11th century tombs that have Egyptian and other imported items (Bloch-Smith 1992: 89). Subsequently these stamps and seals seem to have diffused into the hill country. But Bloch-Smith (*ibid.*) is of the impression that they remained intended indicators of wealth and status.

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# CHAPTER 6

## BEADS

*Hagar Ben Basat*

### INTRODUCTION

The following chapter presents 35 beads, one pendant and one shell from Tsur Natan. The chapter includes three parts: a typology of the beads, a synthesis of the finds and a detailed catalog.

In this study 'bead' is defined as an object which is perforated at its center, is relatively small, and can be easily worn on the body or garment. A bead is usually threaded by itself or alongside other beads to create a composite item of beadwork. Objects that are not perforated in their center are defined as 'pendants'.

In many cases beads were threaded into necklaces, but archaeological findings have shown that beads were integrated into many other items such as hassocks (Friedman 1998: Fig. 12) or dolls (*ibid*. Fig. 65).

Beads can serve as chronological indicators but sometimes they are survivors from earlier periods. Therefore this study will not discuss their chronological distribution.

The typology presented in this chapter was developed in my M.A. thesis (Ben Basat 2011: 41). The types are characterized by raw material, length (measured along the bead's stringing hole), and by morphological characteristics (globular, tubular, oblate, etc.).

The terminology used here is based on the studies of Beck (1928), Spaer (2001) and Golani (2009).