A HITTITE CYLINDER SEAL
IN THE YALE BABYLONIAN COLLECTION

By GARY BECKMAN
Yale University

Recently Professor Harald Ingholt generously donated to the Yale Babylonian Collection a Hittite cylinder seal from the empire period, which has received the inventory number YBC 16575. The piece, which is of copper and measures 24.5 x 11 mm., is in excellent condition and shows little sign of wear — see Plate XX and Figure 1. According to Professor Ingholt, he purchased the seal in the 1930s in the bazaar of Beirut, a city which lies outside of the area controlled by the Hittite empire at the greatest extent of its expansion, but which at the time of the acquisition of the seal was linked by daily train service to Adana in Cilicia, the rail line running through the heart of what had once been the southern domains of the Hittites.³

The cylinder seal was alien to the Hittites, who employed rather the stamp seal generally used throughout ancient Anatolian history, with the brief exception of the period of the Old Assyrian merchant colonies.⁴ During the time of the Hittite empire, however, the viceroys and agents of the Hittite Great King often but not exclusively made use of the cylinder in validating agreements with their Syrian counterparts, who were of course accustomed to this form of glyptic. The overwhelming majority of the impressions of Hittite cylinder seals thus were discovered in Syria and not in Anatolia.⁵

Because so few Hittite cylinders — either actual seals or impressions thereof — have been found, and because they have been published in widely scattered journals and collection catalogues, I have assembled in the following table⁶ the

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¹I would like to thank Dr. Paul Yule and Ms. Ulla Kasten, with whom I discussed aspects of this paper, Dr. Harry A. Hoffner, Jr., who kindly provided me with onomastic information from the files of the Chicago Oriental Institute Hittite Dictionary Project, and Dr. Carolyn Gould, who drew Figure 1. Acknowledgement is due also to Professor William W. Hallo, Curator of the Yale Babylonian Collection, for permission to publish YBC 16575 here.

²The seal was subjected to X-ray photoelectron spectroscopy by Professor Gary L. Haller of the Yale University Department of Engineering and Applied Science. Professor Haller concluded that, although the seal is silver in color, “XPS analysis clearly shows that it is predominantly copper. The other elements which impart the silver rather than copper color were not identified. A search for zinc, tin, lead, and aluminum suggests that these are not major impurities or alloying elements...there is a peak in the spectrum which could be reasonably assigned to nitrogen suggesting the possibility of a nitride component in the copper”.

³For the northern part of this route, see Geoffrey Lewis, Turkey, 3rd edition (New York: Praeger, 1965), p. 190, and especially the fold-out map provided in this volume.


⁵Almost all of the actual seals have been acquired from dealers and are thus without archaeological context.

⁶Here and elsewhere in this paper, transcriptions of the “Hittite hieroglyphs” have been made according to the system of Piero Meriggi, Hieroglyphisch-Hethitisches Glossar, zweite Auflage (Wiesbaden, 1962) (sigla M). Reference is also made to the system of Emmanuel Laroche, as presented in Les hieroglyphes hittites, 1re partie (Paris, 1960) (sigla L). In addition, account has been taken of the new-readings established for the signs M171 (ifja) and M387 (zafz) by J. D. Hawkins, Anna Morpurgo-Davies, and Günter Neumann in Hittite Hieroglyphs and Luwian: New Evidence for the Connection, Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen, I. Phil.-Hist. Klasse, Jahrgang 1973, Nr. 6 (Göttingen, 1974). Where the reading of the name of a seal owner is assured by a second inscription in cuneiform, it has been given in broad transcription.
relevant data for comparison with the new Yale example, which appears here as No. 13.\(^7\) Not included here are the "stamp-cylinders",\(^8\) which differ considerably in form, iconography, and possibly date\(^9\) from the group here under discussion. Also omitted in this summary are the enigmatic Morgan Library 793;\(^10\) Bo 228/d,\(^11\) an impression probably made by a ring seal;\(^12\) Bo 151/p,\(^13\) which seems to have been intended for use only as a piece of jewelry; and two seals whose designs consist solely of the name of the owner in hieroglyphic

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\(^7\) An additional, as yet unpublished, cylinder seal impression appears on a bulla recently discovered in the late thirteenth century level of a building near Temple IV in the Upper City of Hattusa — see Peter Neve's report presented by Machtejed Millenke, AJS LXXIII (1979): 333.


\(^9\) Most writers date these pieces to the Old and Middle Hittite periods. See, for example, Alp, *Zylinder- und Stempelsiegel*, pp. 271–74, and Bittel, *Die Hethiter*, pp. 149–50. Alexander, on the other hand, *Anatolica V* (1973/76): 160–61 and 169–70, suggests on the basis of both iconography and engraving technique that the seal Louvre AO 20136 belongs to the thirteenth century.


\(^11\) Published by Hans G. Gütersloch in *Siegel aus Boghazköy. II.* (hereafter SBo II), AFO, Beihett 7 (Berlin, 1942) as no. 22.


\(^13\) Ibid., pp. 31–32.
A HITTITE CYLINDER SEAL

script,14 because these pieces in all likelihood date to the first millennium B.C.15

[Addendum: See now also the impressions of Hittite cylinders from Emar/Meskene published by Dominique Beyer in Le moyen Euphrate, ed. J. Cl. Margueron (Strasbourg, 1977), pp. 265 ff.]

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<td>8</td>
<td>Louvre AO 11234</td>
<td>P. Amiet, Bast-reliefs imaginaires (Paris, 1973), no. 392</td>
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<td>Ashmolean 993</td>
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<td>P. Amiet, Cat. raisonné des sceaux cylindres et intailles (Geneve, 1967), no. 135</td>
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<td>YBC 16575</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>copper</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>I-haku-sa</td>
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Impressions:

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<td>E. Masson, Syria II (1975): 236, fig. 19</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>Tarsus 37.119</td>
<td>H. Goldman, Excavations at Gözlü Kale, Tarsus, II (Princeton, 1956), pl. 403, no. 42, a, b, c</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Tarsus 37.119</td>
<td>Ibid., pl. 403, no. 42, d, e, f</td>
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Between guilloche borders16 YBC 16575 presents two figures facing one another across the name of the seal’s owner in hieroglyphs, and several other

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15 See Alp, Festschrift Otten, p. 15.
16 Such borders are also found on Nos. 1, 13, 14, 18, and 19, while No. 2 has a similar border only on the bottom of the field. For guilloche borders on Hittite stamp seals, cf. SBo II nos. 184–99.
elements are scattered about the field. Both figures—the Storm-god on the left and the Sun-god under the aedicula on the right—are readily identifiable by their iconography, and in addition the Storm-god "carries" his name in the form of the W-glyph above his extended left hand. Here both deities tread upon the ground line of the composition, neither one standing above this line on the back of an animal or of inferior deities as, for example, in Nos. 16 and 19. The good state of preservation of our seal allows us to see clearly the characteristic queue and hyperextended legs of the Storm-god, as well as the details of the folds of the garment of the Sun-god. The only feature which is not immediately visible is the upper end of the Storm-god's weapon, which seems from the traces to resemble the mace carried, albeit in a different manner, by the left-hand figure in No. 1.

Directly behind the Sun-god we encounter a sign consisting of an approximately equilateral triangle below three short lines. These lines diverge from the point immediately above the triangle in such a manner that the two outer lines, if extended, would meet at a 45-degree angle, and the inner line would bisect this angle. This same sign is also found on No. 12, while signs very similar in shape and undoubtedly identical in signification appear on Nos. 8 and 17, as well as on SBo II 121 and 209, Louvre AO 1045. Paris, Cabinet des Médailles 1972 1317.155, and in the border of an Old Hittite seal in the museum of Afyonkarahisar. A more elaborate form is attested on No. 15 and Louvre AO 1015.

Emmanuel Laroche addressed himself to this sign in 1956, suggesting that it represents a royal attribute, a view proven incorrect by the presence of this form on YBC 16575 and No. 12, which were certainly not owned by kings. Laroche himself, however, seems to have abandoned this interpretation, for in his Héroglyphes, where it is listed as L152, he considers it a simplified variant of the (eya-?) tree (L151) symbolic of the god Telipinu, defining it as "prospérité." The closest analogue in all of Hittite iconography, in my opinion, is provided by the stylized depiction of flora on the stag- and boar-hunt relief from Alaca Höyük, which is almost identical in shape to the sign as it appears on our No. 17. A signification "fertility", or by extension, Laroche's

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17 Cf. Yazilikaya no. 42 and, for the smiting pose, see Dominique Collon, Levant IV (1972): 111–134.
18 Cf. Yazilikaya no. 34.
19 The sign possibly appears also on no. 3, on the ground line before the god with the bow, although the impression is not clear enough to allow a final judgment. Beran, Istanbuler Mitteilungen VIII (1958): 139, describes the figure in question as "einen von einer einfachen Palmette gekrönten Kegel".
20 Louis Delaporte, Catalogue des cylindres orientaux (Paris, 1920), pl. 102, no. 3a. This seal is discussed by D. A. Kennedy, RHA XVII/65 (1959): 153.
22 Inventory number 3507—see Alp, Athenaeum XLVII (1969): 1–3, Tl. 1.
23 Delaporte, Catalogue, pl. 100, no. 14c.
25 Masson, Syria LII (1975): 222, shares this opinion.
26 Bittel, Die Hethiter, p. 197, Ab. 225.
27 This shape is also found on a Hittite ivory panel discovered at Megiddo—see Henri Frankfort, The Art and Architecture of the Ancient Orient (Baltimore, 1969), p. 130, fig. 57. Note its presence here as a "space filler" behind the sphinxes at either end of the second row of figures from the bottom, while rosettes (M192 = L189) are placed between almost all of the other figures.
A HITTITE CYLINDER SEAL 133

"prosperity", is quite possible. This semantic sphere is perhaps also indicated by the mutual exclusivity of this sign within the group of Hittite cylinders with the simple triangle (M201 = L370) which serves as an ideogram for "good; well being", corresponding to the cuneiform SIG. The bird as symbol in Anatolian glyptic has been discussed by Robert Alexander and by Nimet Özgüç. The bird has several different forms — with folded wings, with spread wings, with turned head — and it is uncertain whether we are dealing with one or several symbols. Note that in Nos. 2 and 3 of our corpus birds are "carried" by gods, suggesting that they represent the name or an epithet of the deity in each case. In general in Hittite glyptic, a bird probably stands either for the deity with whom it is associated — a common phenomenon in Hittite art — or for a desirable boon held to be dispensed by that deity.

To the K-like sign to the right of the lituus held by the Sun-god compare signs on SBo 16 and Bib. Nat. 649. These few contexts do not permit any conjecture as to its significance. From form alone an interpretation as the syllabic sign pi (M49) is possible, but doubtful due to the lack of any further context.

As mentioned earlier, the name of the seal's owner appears between the two divine figures. This name is made up of four signs which are to be interpreted as ḫ (M171)-Hāra-ki-sa-li (L104). No other occurrence of this name Ihalusa is known to me from the published cuneiform or hieroglyphic material.

The large object directly in front of the Storm-god is paralleled in form most closely by a sign on SBo II 221, where its shape is more easily recognizable as that of a large wine jug. Among the Hittite cylinders, this sign also appears on No. 12. In all of its occurrences this sign stands in isolation from other hieroglyphs, and in SBo II 69—71 and Louvre AO 22.457 it takes the doubled, antithetic, position often found with professional designations, such as "scribe".

28 In many cases it is difficult to decide whether a sign belongs with those discussed here or to L155, "grape" — cf. SBo II 27, 57, 164, etc. Clelia Mora, AS XXIV (1974): 165, interprets this latter sign as a stylized representation of fertility and views L152 as a combination of L155 and a tree. It is also possible that L155 is only a schematic variant of L152.
29 This sign is found on Nos. 1, 2, 6, 9, 20, and 22.
30 Cf. also SBo II 31.
31 A bird also appears behind each of the opposing figures of the Sun-god in the top register of the Megiddo ivory mentioned in note 27.
34 Laroche, Héroglyphes, p. 80, sub no. 135, and Syria XXXV (1958): 259, conjectures that the bird with folded wings indicates a title or function, which becomes unlikely in light of the probable presence of other titles on some seals bearing this sign, for example No. 13 — see below, p. 134, and note the scribe sign (M258) on No. 20.
35 Kennedy, RHA XVII/65 (1959): 158.
36 The vertical stroke expected in a correctly-formed ha-sign is missing here, but this emendation has been suggested to me by Mr. J. D. Hawkins, who has seen what appears to be the same name on an unpublished seal in a private collection.
37 Collation of the original indicates that this is the proper identification of the sign, and that it is not the "priest" sign (L372), as read by Buchanan, Journal of Cuneiform Studies XXI (1967): 20.
and titles, such as “king” or “prince”. Therefore, Güterbock’s suggestion\(^{38}\) that the jug (M349, L345, 354) represents a title — probably GAL.GESTIN, “great one of the wine (cellar?)”, or \(\text{L}^0 \text{ASA}_x\) (\(\text{L}^0 \text{SILA} \cdot \text{SU} \cdot \text{DU}_x \cdot \text{A}\)), “cupbearer” — is probably correct.

Aside from the Yale pieces, the jug sign appears on fourteen seals or impressions belonging to thirteen different individuals: our cylinder No. 24 (\(\text{x-na}^7 \cdot \text{UR.MA}^3 \text{H} \text{a} \text{m} \text{i}\)), \(\text{SBO} \text{ II 69} \cdot 71\) (TARHUNTA\(^{4a} \text{ZIT}^3\)), \(\text{SBO} \text{ II 179}\) (no name, but on the same bulla as the seal of Hi-tu-x), \(\text{SBO} \text{ II 183} \text{ (x-x)}, \text{SBO} \text{ II 193} \text{ (again no name, but on the same bulla as the seal of Ziti)}, \text{SBO} \text{ II 209} \text{ (Wu}^7 \cdot \text{ku)}, \text{SBO} \text{ II 221} \text{ (S-a-us-ga-M143b)}, \text{Alishar 3092}\(^{40}\) (M269-[s]\(^{41}\)), Louvre AO 1044\(^{42}\) (Pa-la-tu-wa), AO 13.162\(^{43}\) (Pi-ta), AO 22.457\(^{44}\) (S-a-r-wa-ta), Paris, Musée Biblique no. 3103\(^{45}\) (Pu-mi-ya-ar), and Hogarth\(^{46}\) no. 313b (S\(_\text{a}\) i-s-ta\(_x\)).\(^{47}\)

None of these names which can be read corresponds with that of a previously attested holder of the office of GAL.GESTIN\(^{48}\) or \(\text{L}^0 \text{ASA}_x\).\(^{49}\) Since there was almost certainly only one incumbent of the former position at any one time, while the cupbearers seem to have constituted a college,\(^{50}\) it is more likely that the thirteen persons whose seals bear the jug sign, including Alhakusa of YBC 16575, were members of the latter profession. That administrative and political activities calling for the use of a seal might fall within the duties of at least an overseer of cupbearers is illustrated by the career of Alalimi, who is a witness to the treaty of Tuthaliya IV with Ulmi-teshub of Tarhuntaša (\(\text{KBO} \text{ IV 10}\)), gives testimony concerning goods missing from the palace in the peculation iquest conducted by Queen Puduḫepa (\(\text{KUB} \text{ XLI 84}\)), and is apparently dispatched on a mission to the city of Kummanı in Kizzuwatna as reported in a letter of the same queen to the king of Egypt (\(\text{KUB} \text{ XXI 38}\)).

When we turn to the iconography of YBC 16575, the artificiality of the composition is readily apparent. Interpreted literally, the seal shows the Storm-
god advancing with raised weapon upon the unarmed Sun-god, whose right hand is outstretched in unsuspecting greeting. Of course, no such dramatic situation is intended, but we have here rather the mechanical combination of two stereotypical portrayals of the deities in question, arranged antithetically around the name of the owner of the seal. This is a composition and not a scene, in keeping with the tradition of Hittite glyptic as evidenced primarily by stamp seals.51

These two deities — the Storm-god and the Sun-god — appear together on five other Hittite cylinders or impressions — Nos. 9, 10, 16, 18, and 19 — and in addition each of these gods is found on other pieces, either alone or in the company of deities52 who often cannot yet be identified with certainty.53 In fact, of the twenty-six designs of Hittite cylinder seals which we now possess, eleven bear the image of either the Storm-god or the Sun-god, or both. The Storm-god shared with the Sun-goddess of Arinna primacy in the Hittite pantheon and proprietorship of the Hittite state.54 From these deities were derived the authority of the Great King and therefore that of his subordinates. The figure of the Storm-god impressed into a document by means of a seal was probably felt to lend his presence as witness to the agreement and his sanction to its provisions. In contrast, the Sun-god, who was apparently introduced into Hatti in the "middle kingdom" period under Mesopotamian influence,55 played only a secondary role in the pantheon. His presence here may be due to his role in the empire period — borrowed from Babylonia56 as guarantor of justice.57 On the other hand, the depiction of the human king in Hittite art is most often identical to that of the Sun-god,58 and it may well be the monarch himself who so often appears on the cylinders of his imperial officers, legitimizing their actions on behalf of him and the gods of Hatti.

51 See Bittel, *Die Hethiter*, pp. 217 ff., for a similar observation on the nature of the rock reliefs of Yazılıkaya.
52 It is unlikely that any of these figures represent human kings, as suggested by Laroche in *Ugaritica* III, p. 250, for RS 17.59 (here No. 15) and RS 17.158 (No. 16). Note that these figures bear the horns of divinity, a feature which is to my knowledge attested only twice in imperial Hittite art for a depiction which is definitely that of a human: in the relief of Hattušili III at Firaktin (Bittel, *Die Hethiter*, pp. 176–77, Ab. 193) and on the seal of Muwatalli (Berg, *Die hethitische Glyptik von Boghazköy* [Berlin, 1967], nos. 250–52). In these instances the king's image is simply a replication of that of the deity with whom he is associated.
57 Compare here the position of the Sun-god of Heaven along with the Sun-goddess of Arinna, the Storm-god of Heaven, and the Storm-god of Hatti at the head of the lists of oath gods in Hittite treaties — see G. Kestemont, *Orientalia* ns XLV (1976): 148, 156.
(a, b) Impressions of Seal, Yale Babylonian Collection. Inv. No. YBC 16575.