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HITTITE AND RELATED HIEROGLYPHIC SEALS FROM GREECE

1. In *Kadmos* IV (1965) 5f. Professor Meriggi has rightly pointed out that the 'Inscribed Mycenaean Amulet' from a tomb at Perati published by Jakovidis in *Kadmos* III, 1964, 149ff. (and Vermeule, *Greece in the Bronze Age* 303, fig. 46) is in fact a Late Hittite bulla with a hieroglyphic inscription. Shape and material (or at least colour; we would expect serpentine rather than haematite) agree for this identification, and if there are any lingering doubts about the signs carved around the edge of each face, these too can be readily paralleled on, for example, a bulla in Paris (Delaporte, ii pl. 102.10, A 1048 = *Rev. Hitt. et As.* XVII (1959) pl. 2.18). He is not, however, right in calling it the 'erste hieroglyphisch-hethitische Siegel aus Griechenland'.

2. In Chamber Tomb 523 at Mycenae Wace found a 'steatite' semi-bulla, of a class closely related to the seal from Perati. Evans pointed out its Hittite features, but since the signs on it could not be read as Hittite it has been disregarded as a probable import. Jakovidis mentions it (*op. cit.*, n. 15) and it has now appeared, well illustrated, in *CMS* i no. 156. The shape has only been described, 'Lentoid plankonvex', but there can be no doubt about its identification as a semi-bulla. For the signs on it (Fig. 1) Dr. Gurney has observed to me that although non-Hittite they have a superficial resemblance to Hittite hieroglyphs and he compares the seal from Beyce Sultan published in *Anatolian Studies* VIII (1958) pl. 26a, which has been claimed to be Hittite (*ibid.*, 97). We would have expected the back to have been inscribed or decorated also. Hogarth described this general class of seals in *Hittite Seals* (1920) 87—91, publishing several in Oxford. It is not yet possible to tell whether some of them represent an Anatolian language other than Hittite, or are simply illiterate or garbled versions of Hittite inscriptions. At all events, their Anatolian origin is assured.

3. Long before the Mycenae find the British Museum acquired from the Biliotti excavations at Ialysos in Rhodes another red serpentine bulla of this class (Fig. 2). It had been variously described but Hogarth recognised it for what it was (*op. cit.*, 15, 91,

fig. 115) although Walters in his 1926 Catalogue of Engraved Gems (no. 88) ignored the ascription. There was no pottery in the tomb (33: Furtwängler-Loeschke, *Myk. Vasen* 75 with pl. E 8, 8a) but the cemetery was Late Mycenaean. On side B some Hittite signs can be distinguished: *i*₅ (Laroche, no. 336) or *li* (no. 278), *la* (no. 175), and possibly *ta*₆ (no. 82) and *tu* (no. 89) below, though in a much simplified form and with other signs which seem not Hittite.

4. The seal illustrated in Figs. 3, 4 is a red serpentine bulla said to have been found in Mirabello (Neapolis), Crete. It is in Cambridge, GR. 55.1901 (width 23mm.). Only one side has Hittite hieroglyph signs. Dr. Gurney observes that the volute sign is a variant of the character for GREAT, while the cross beneath it might be a version of the TABLE sign. This could be part of a name, and the combination GREAT-TABLE is found at Suvasa (Laroche, no. 302). The other side has what might be taken to be a degenerate border pattern. There is no particular reason to doubt the alleged provenience of the piece, but we cannot be certain that it belongs to the Late Bronze Age. This class of seal continued to be made in the Early Iron Age, notably in S. E. Anatolia and N. Syria (cf. Hama ii. 3 131, 159, with references).

Three of the seals listed here come from intelligible excavated contexts. Their appearance in Greece at a time when we have other sources of evidence for Anatolian and Hittite interest in Greek affairs is not surprising. Aegean archaeologists will await the decipherment and identification of the origin of those not yet fully read with some interest*.

* I am indebted to Dr. Gurney for comment on the inscriptions. R. V. Nicholls (Cambridge) and R. A. Higgins (London) kindly provided me with photographs and impressions. The drawings are from impressions.



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

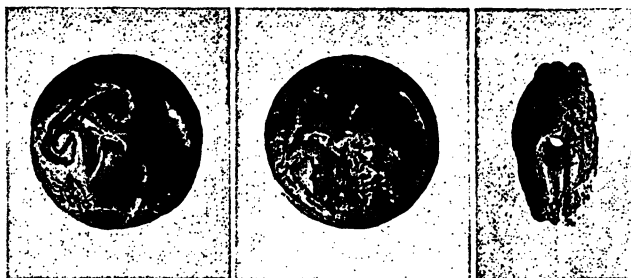


Fig. 4



Abb. 1



Abb. 2

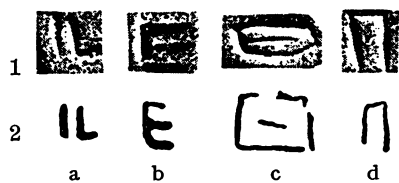


Abb. 3



Abb. 4



Abb. 5



Abb. 6