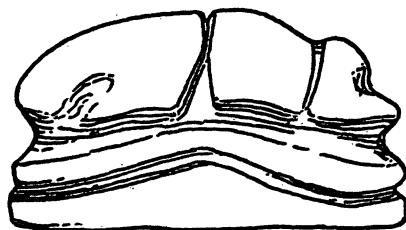
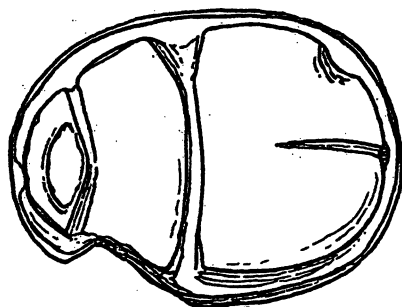


HECTOR W. CATLING

THE SEAL OF PASITIMOS

The Ashmolean Museum has recently acquired a stone scarab engraved with an inscription of six symbols of the classical Cypriot



0 1 CM.



Fig. 1. Inscribed scarab. Ashm. Mus. 1970. 519

syllabary. The site of discovery is unknown, but the former owner purchased the piece in Nicosia<sup>1</sup>.

### 1 The scarab may be described as follows:

Oxford Acc. No. 1970. 519 (Fig. 1 and Pl. I). Inscribed scarab of light green serpentine with heavy dark green, almost black striations. Length .019 m., width .015, height .01. A large chip has been broken away on the left side near the head; a crack resulting from the loss of this chip slightly mars what remains of the device. The beetle is summarily rendered; there are straight incisions (two each side) for the legs. Head, thorax and elytra are distinct from each other; neither head nor thorax has any incised detail. The carination of the back is of Boardman's 'gable' type<sup>2</sup>. The beetle appears to correspond in many particulars to Boardman's no 47<sup>3</sup>, a sixth-century orientalisising piece.

The device consists of an inscription of two lines, each of three symbols, arranged to follow the long axis of the stone. There is no divider between the lines. The device is enclosed within a hesitantly cut line-border. Because of the colour and heavily striated character of the serpentine, the device is exceptionally difficult to see on the stone itself<sup>4</sup>, and must have been extremely difficult to cut; this may help to account for some of the unusual features of the inscription.

It seems best to read the inscription boustrophedon, an unusual though not unparalleled feature in the use of the Cypriot syllabary<sup>5</sup> — the same arrangement occurs on the seal of Aristowanax,

---

<sup>1</sup> I am grateful to Mr. R. W. Hamilton, Keeper of the Ashmolean Museum, for permission to publish this object. I am especially indebted to Mrs. Anna Morpurgo-Davies, Fellow of St. Hilda's College and Professor-Elect of Comparative Philology, for discussing the inscription with me and making many valuable suggestions as to its interpretation. I have also greatly profited from the help of Mr. John Boardman and Dr. Roger Moorey. I am, of course, responsible for the opinions expressed in what follows. Figures 2—5 are intended as an aide-mémoire for the material under discussion; the individual items are drawn at a variety of scales, and are *not* intended as more than sketches. I am grateful to Mrs. Pat Clarke for this work.

<sup>2</sup> J. Boardman, *Archaic Greek Gems*, London 1968, 15, fig. 1

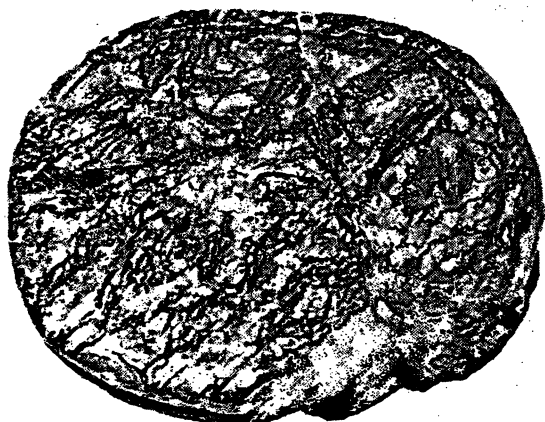
<sup>3</sup> Boardman, *op. cit.* (supra n. 2), pl. XL

<sup>4</sup> For an inscription on a similarly difficult surface, cf. the Munich scaraboid A. 1349, inscribed in two lines of what is incorrectly called 'Kypro-minoische Schrift' — E. Brandt, *Antike Gemmen in Deutschen Sammlungen*, Bd. I Staatliche Münzsammlung München, Teil I Griechische Gemmen von minoischer Zeit bis zum späten Hellenismus 31, no. 96 and pl. 11.

<sup>5</sup> T. B. Mitford, *Studies in the Signaries of South-Western Cyprus* (London, Institute of Classical Studies, Bulletin Supplement 10, 1961) 27, no. 18 is partly boustrophedon. O. Masson, *Inscriptions chypriotes syllabiques*, Paris 1961, nos. 30 and 51 are other examples.



a



b



c



1 cm.

Plate I

Inscribed scarab in Oxford (AM 1970. 519)

a) Side view b) device c) cast of an impression



1 cm.

Plate II  
Cat. No. 24

from Marion<sup>6</sup>. The interpretation offered follows from reading (in an impression) line 1 dextroverse, line 2 sinistroverse:

-ti -si -pa  
mo- se- ma

thus giving *pa-si-ti-mo-se-ma*. I should like to read this as Πασιτίμω σῆμα "I am the seal of Pasitimos". I have discussed the matter with Dr. Anna Morpurgo-Davies, who has shown me some of the problems involved in defending this reading, the most serious of which is that in Arcado-Cypriot we should have σαμα, not σῆμα, for 'seal'; this point is expanded below.

In line 1, the second sign should be treated as corrupt, since *si* in every signary seems almost invariably to be composed with two horizontal *hastae*, where ours has one only. An exception to the rule is figured by Mitford in his grid of the Middle and Late Paphian Signary<sup>7</sup>. The first sign in line 2, read as *mo*, is only partly preserved; the rest of it was lost with the missing chip. Despite this, and the light cutting of what remains, the reading seems certain. Dr. Morpurgo-Davies points out that by reading line 2 sinistroverse, as we have, we should perhaps expect the sign for *se* to face its direction, which it does not. However, as Mitford has shown<sup>8</sup> and as Dr. Morpurgo-Davies herself agrees, usage on this point can be very capricious<sup>9</sup>. At first sight the final sign of line 2 is obscure until it is realised that the apparent short oblique stroke at the top of one of the *hastae* was a blunder on the part of the gem-cutter, and not part of the sign — he was betrayed by the extremely difficult surface on which he was cutting. I am relying on Mitford's proposal that this sign should be read as *ma*; he records it in his grid of the Archaic Paphian signary as illustrated by the Palaeopaphos *temenos*<sup>10</sup>, and has suggested its possible uses among the inscriptions of the Rantidi *temenos*<sup>11</sup>. He has also read it on an inscription incised on a plain vase from Curium<sup>12</sup>. But Masson has not placed

<sup>6</sup> Below, no. 19

<sup>7</sup> See, for example, Mitford's grids. Mitford op. cit. (supra n. 5) plates IV, VIII, XV, XIX, XXII and XXIV

<sup>8</sup> Mitford op. cit. (supra n. 5) 8. Dr. Morpurgo-Davies has drawn my attention to Masson op. cit. (supra n. 4) no. 154c, where *se* is written in different directions in successive lines, both dextroverse.

<sup>9</sup> Masson op. cit. (supra n. 5)

<sup>10</sup> Mitford op. cit. (supra n. 5) pl. IV

<sup>11</sup> Mitford op. cit. (supra n. 5) pl. VIII and see p. 23

<sup>12</sup> Mitford op. cit. (supra n. 5) 22 and pl. XIII no. 17

the sign in any of his grids; he discusses it, however, and concedes *ma* as a possible value<sup>13</sup>.

I have already referred to the problem that is involved in reading *sema*. The word is known in a syllabic text (though in its proper Arcado-Cypriot form *sama*) on a fragmentary stela from Marion, now in Oxford<sup>14</sup>, where it evidently means 'tombstone'. Dr. Morpurgo-Davies has suggested a number of possible ways in which *sema* might be accounted for, though, she tells me, none seems particularly persuasive to her. She suggests in the first place that the stone might have been cut by a non-Cypriot (i. e. by an Ionian), working in Cyprus and writing in the Cypriot script for a Cypriot patron. Alternatively, the formula might have been copied from an imported seal with an alphabetic Greek inscription, so that the gem-cutter simply transliterated *sema*, overlooking the solecism. Just conceivably, *sema* for *sama* is a mere spelling blunder.

There are still other ways in which the difficulty might be resolved. The last sign might perhaps be dismissed either as utterly corrupt, or a mere decorative feature of the kind seen on an inscribed silver ring in Nicosia<sup>15</sup>. The inscription would then read merely *pa-si-ti-mo-se* = Πασίτιμος; there certainly are instances of sealstones with personal names in the nominative<sup>16</sup>, though, if Boardman is right in thinking that nominative names are engraver's names<sup>17</sup>, this is a very unlikely solution on a stone with no device but the inscription. On the other hand, we might wish ideally to read Πασίτιμω ἡμί as the most appropriate formula — we have the stone listed no. 18 below as a parallel. Yet it seems at least as difficult to find an epigraphic explanation to show why the gem-cutter came to write *sema* when he meant *emi* as to offer a linguistic apology for *sema* rather than *sama*.

Despite the linguistic difficulties, I find Πασίτιμω σῆμα very seductive. 'Pasitimos' for the owner's name raises no problem; we already have a Pasitimos as the dedicator of a stone basin in the

<sup>13</sup> Masson op. cit. 109 no. 13 and 127 no. 35

<sup>14</sup> Oxford 1890.707 — Masson op. cit. (supra n. 5) no. 140

<sup>15</sup> Boardman, 'Cypriot Finger Rings' in BSA 65, 1970, 5—15, pl. 4 no. 18 and p. 8. Masson, op. cit. (supra n. 5), no. 367

<sup>16</sup> e. g. below, nos. 9 and 11

<sup>17</sup> Boardman op. cit. (supra n. 2) 177. More recently, however (J. Boardman, *Greek Gems and Finger Rings*, London 1970, 141) he has admitted "... this rule of thumb does not always correspond neatly with another declared criterion, that artists' names are small and unobtrusive . . . while owners' names are bolder and more easily read . . ."

Rantidi *temenos*<sup>18</sup>. We may parallel the use of σῆμα to mean 'seal' by a sixth-century scarab from Aegina, now in Breslau, to which Boardman has recently given prominence<sup>19</sup>. It is inscribed ΘΕΡΣΙΟΣ/ΕΜΙΣΑΜΑ / ΜΕ ΜΕΑΝ / ΟΙΓΕ "I am the seal of Thersis — do not open me." Boardman has elsewhere described a pyramidal seal found at Sardis, now London WA 115591<sup>20</sup>, with the Lydian inscription *mitrataliś eś sadmēs*, for which he offers the translation "This is the mark of Mitratas". Somewhat similar usage occurs on a seventh century coin, apparently of Ephesus, with the inscription 'ΦΑΕΝΟΣ ΕΜΙ ΣΕΜΑ' "I am the mark of Phanes"<sup>21</sup>.

The scarab may probably be dated towards the end of the sixth century B. C. a period at which Greek gem-cutting was highly esteemed in Cyprus, when gems were imported, when Greek craftsmen worked in the island and when Cypriot gem-cutters copied Greek work. With this in mind, *sema* for *sama* is perhaps best accounted for by the trap of transliteration. In view of the correspondances between the six signs of our inscription and the Archaic signary of Paphos it would be very tempting to suppose that Pasitimos was a citizen of Paphos who would, in fact, have been virtually a contemporary of the Pasitimos who made the dedication at the Rantidi *temenos*, to which reference has already been made. It is hardly to be supposed that they were one and the same man.

Sealstones with inscriptions in the classical syllabary of Cyprus are not rare, but the majority are seals with a pictorial device to which the inscription is subordinate, often added after the original cutting of the stone. Such inscriptions, when legible, seem invariably to preserve an owner's name. I am aware of two, possibly three, seals, where, as in the case of the Oxford scarab, an inscription forms the entire design. These are:

2 Nicosia D. 6 (Fig. 2). Scarab of green stone. .018. (Source of discovery not known). Inscription of ten signs arranged in three lines across the short axis of the stone; dividers between the lines. Sinistroverse:

1. *te- mi- si-*      2. *ti- o- a- pa-*      3. *pu- ki- se*

<sup>18</sup> Mitford, 'Prolegomena to the syllabic inscriptions of Rantidi', *Emerita* 26, 124, whence Masson op. cit. (supra n. 5) no. 57

<sup>19</sup> Boardman op. cit. (supra n. 2) no. 176 and p. 73 fig. 2

<sup>20</sup> Boardman, 'Pyramidal stamp seals in the Persian Empire' in *Iran* 8, 1970, 19—44, pl. I no. 1 and p. 20

<sup>21</sup> L. H. Jeffery, *Local Scripts of Archaic Greece*, Oxford 1961, 353 and 378



Fig. 2 (various scales)



The first five signs have been read as the name Θεμιστίω; no sense has been made of the remainder.

First published, with an inaccurate drawing, by Markides, *Ann. Rep. Cur. Ants. Cyprus* 1916, 25 no. 6. Masson, ICS no. 358.

- 3 Paris (Louvre) AM 1187 (Fig. 2). Grey marble scaraboid from Cyprus. .015. Inscription of seven signs arranged in two lines across the long axis of the stone, no divider between the lines.

1. *ti- mo- ke-*      2. *re- te- o- se* = Τιμοκρέτεος

Published by J. Vendryes in L. Delaporte, *Musée du Louvre: Catalogue des cylindres II*, Paris 1923, 213 no. A. 1204 and pl. 106, fig. 10. Masson, ICS no. 361.

A stone now lost, once in the collection Vogüé, should perhaps be grouped here:

- 4 Whereabouts? (Fig. 2). Said to be from the neighbourhood of Athienou. Cornelian. Type of seal? Size? Known only from an indifferent drawing, that shows the stone divided into three horizontal registers by two dividers. There were apparently two signs in each of the two lower registers. Masson's gloss, "entièrement obscur; une révision serait nécessaire", seems fully justified.

Masson, ICS no. 457, with earlier bibliography.

#### Note:

There is at least one metal finger-ring whose device consists solely of a syllabic inscription:

Nicosia, from Marion, Koilada, Tomb 125, no. 1. Silver ring with leaf-shaped bezel. .02 m. Late Archaic-Classical ring, from a context of the second half of the fifth century B.C. Inscription of six signs arranged in two lines across the long axis of the bezel, without line divider. Read sinistreverse, direct from the ring:

1. *ka- i- re*      2. ? *pa- ?*

Two of the three signs of line 2 defy identification; it remains uncertain, therefore, whether this is a name, such as Chairebios or Chairekrates, or whether line 1 is to be taken as [Χαίρε], followed by a name in line 2. Such good luck inscriptions occur on Greek seals from the fifth century B.C.<sup>22</sup>

First published by K. Nikolaou, 'Ἀνασκαφή τάφων εἰς Μάριον' in *RDAC* 1964, 148-9 and fig. 5, and discussed by O. Masson,

<sup>22</sup> Boardman *op. cit.* (supra n. 17) 236

'Appendice. Petites inscriptions chypriotes syllabiques trouvées à Marion (1960)', op. cit. 187-8 with fig. 1. Listed by Boardman, 'Cypriot Finger-Rings', BSA 65, 1970, 13, no. 52.

It may be useful to make a first attempt at assembling all those intaglios that are inscribed in the classical Cypriot syllabary. I therefore offer a list of those known to me, in the certain expectation that there are many additions that could be made to it. It will immediately be clear that it is heavily indebted to the glyptic work of Boardman and the epigraphic studies of Masson.

In what follows, 'Boardman', followed by a number, is a reference to the numbered sequence of stones set out by J. Boardman, *Archaic Greek Gems*, London 1968. 'Boardman, Persian', followed by a number, is a similar reference to J. Boardman, 'Pyramidal seals in the Persian Empire', *Iran* 8, 1970, 20—43. 'Masson', followed by a number, is a reference to the enumeration of inscriptions in O. Masson, *Les Inscriptions Chypriotes Syllabiques*, Paris 1961. 'Masson, Intailles', followed by a number, refers to O. Masson, 'Quelques intailles chypriotes inscrites', *Syria* 44, 1967, 363—374. These sources should be consulted for additional bibliography and information on particular stones.

- 5 Karlsruhe 63/57 (Fig. 2). Chalcedony scarab, source of discovery unknown. .015 m. Device: centaur to left, brandishing a fir-tree club. Cypriot work of the early sixth century B. C.? (This seems a more likely attribution than the published suggestion that the stone is Greek work of the second quarter of the seventh century B. C.). The inscription is roughly cut, but seems to consist of five signs, four between the forepart of the centaur and the edge of the stone (there is no border), a fifth under the creature's belly. The inscription may well have been part of the original design of the seal. Sinistroverser:

*ta- u- ma- o- se* = [Θαυμαος]

(The reading is by no means certain).

R. A. J. Avila in 'Antike Gemmen in Karlsruhe', *Ruperto-Carola: Zeitschrift der Vereinigung der Freunde der Studentenschaft der Universität Heidelberg* 43/44, June 1968, 5—7, figs. 3—4.

- 6 Once Boston 98.715 (Fig. 2). (Lost, known only from an impression). Scarab of dark stone, from Cyprus. .018 m. Device: a bearded man working an ox-drawn scratch plough. Cypriot work of the early sixth century B. C. Inscription of thirteen signs partly surrounding the device, just within the line border,

probably part of the original design of the seal. Dextroverse:  
*zo-wo-i-ta-u-e-mi-to-te-mi-si-ti-o* = Ζωφοίτου ἡμί τῶ  
 Θεμιστίῳ

Masson, Intailles 1.

- 7 Nicosia D. 1 (Fig. 2). Scarab of chalcedony, from the neighbourhood of Galinoporni. .022 m. Device: Herakles and the Lion. Probably Cypriot work of the middle of the sixth century B. C. Inscription of three signs partly surrounding the device, between it and the line border. Not clear whether the inscription was part of the original design of the seal. Sinistroverse:

*pa-u-o* = Φαύῳ

Masson 328.

- 8 New York 74.51.4193 (Fig. 2). Scarab of brown agate, variously said to be from Curium, or bought in Smyrna. .018 m. Device: cow suckling a calf. Cypriot work of the sixth century B. C. Inscription of five signs between the line border and the animal's tail and rump, almost certainly part of the original design of the seal. Dextroverse:

*zo-wo-te-mi-se* = Ζωφόθεις.

Masson 354.

- 9 London 1947/9—11/16.1 (Fig. 3). Scarab of green jasper, source of discovery unknown. .02 m. Duel between a helmeted warrior and a griffin. Cypriot work of the sixth century B. C. Inscription of six signs enclosing the device to right and below (clearly part of the original design of the seal), apparently intended to be read sinistroverse on the seal itself (the symbols are inverted on the seal).

*pu-to-ke-re-o-ne* = Πυθοκρέων.

Masson 355.

- 10 Formerly Berlin, Staatliche Museen no. 6682 (Fig. 3). Scarab of chalcedony and red jasper, in gold swivel mount, bought in Cyprus. Lost in the period 1946—47. Device: cow suckling a calf. Probably Cypriot work of the sixth century B. C. Inscription of six signs surrounding the upper part of the device, clearly part of the original design of the seal. Dextroverse:

*ku-pa-ra-ko-ra-o* = Κυπραγόραο

Masson 357.

- 11 Cyprus, Pierides collection 974 (Fig. 3). Scarab (material not stated), said to be from the region of Marion. .02 m. Device:

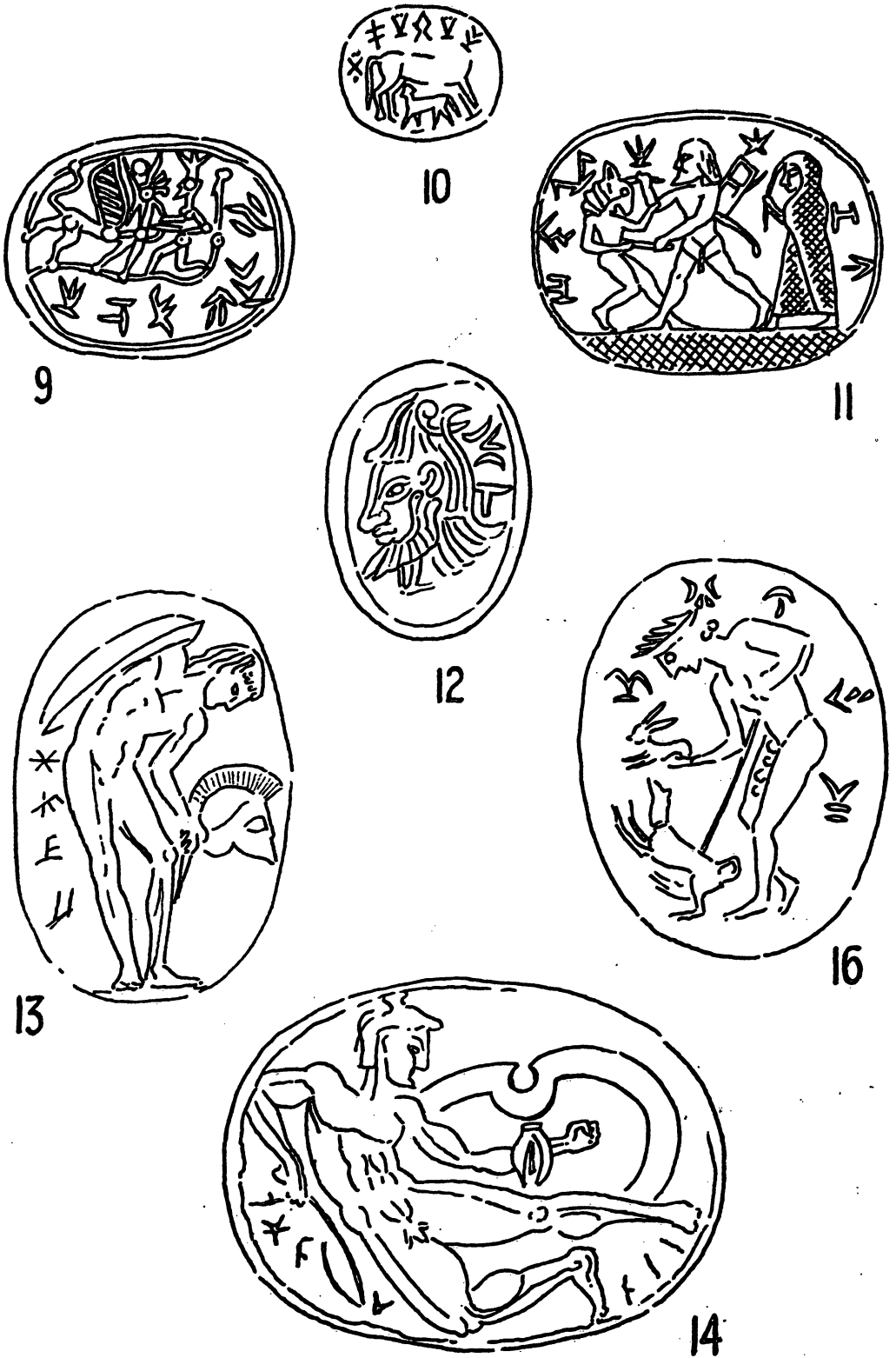


Fig. 3 (various scales)

Theseus (with some of the attributes of Herakles), the Minotaur and Ariadne. Cypriot-Greek narrative work of the sixth century B. C. Inscription of seven signs partly surrounding the device, just within the line border, probably part of the original design of the seal. Dextroverse:

*ti- we- i- te- mi- wo- se* = Διφειθέμιφος

Boardman 71. Masson 173.

- 12 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale (Babelon, Pauvert 89) (Fig. 3). Scarab of cornelian, said to be from Syria. .01 m. Device: head of a bearded man wearing a pointed cap with bird's head crest. East Greek work ('The Dry Style') of c. 500 B. C. Inscription of two signs between the back of the head and the line border, not part of the original design of the seal. Dextroverse:

*ta- ma* = Δάμα

(Perhaps the abbreviation for some such name as Damasagoras)

Boardman 226. Masson, Intailles 3.

- 13 Whereabouts? Formerly Paris, de Clercq no. 2795 (Fig. 3). Scaraboid of cornelian, from Aleppo. .014 m. Device: naked youth with shield and helmet. East Greek work, akin to the style of Epimenes and the Semon Master. c. 500 B. C. Inscription of four signs between the youth's leg and the hatched border, doubtfully part of the original design of the seal. Dextroverse:

*a- ri- se- to* = Ἀρίστω

Masson has read *a- ke- se- to* = Ἀκέστω; signs for *ke-* and *ri-* are very similar; Ἀρίστο . . . . . is perhaps the more likely name. See also no. 25, where I propose Ἀριστόδαμος in place of Ἀκεστόδαμος.

Boardman 260. Masson 364. Boardman, GGFR pl. 367.

- 14 Whereabouts? Once Tyszkiewicz, Warren and Evans collections (Fig. 3). Known only from an impression, now in Oxford. Scaraboid of chalcedony, from Cyprus. .017 m. Device: falling warrior, wearing helmet, carrying shield and machaira. East Greek work, akin to the style of Epimenes and the Semon Master. c. 500 B. C. Traces of an inscription of four or five signs between the warrior's flexed leg and the line border, not part of the original design of the seal. There are also remains of two or three illegible signs between the warrior's feet.

? — *sa- to- i- ta* = Sense?

Boardman 265.

- 15 Geneva 20463. Scaraboid of black serpentine, source of discovery not known. Size? Flying Eros with wreath and lyre. Summary version of a style akin to the work of Epimenes and the Semon Master. c. 500 B. C. Inscription of three signs:

*a- ? we = Sense?*

Boardman 277.

- 16 London 502 (Fig. 3). Scaraboid of rock crystal from Curium Tomb 73. .022 m. Device: naked youth with stick and dog, holding a hare. Late Archaic Greek work, showing some kin with the style of Epimenes and the Semon Master. Inscription of five signs partly surrounding the device, close to the edge of the stone (no border), quite probably part of the original design of the seal. Sinistroversive:

*la- wa- ti- ri- so = Sense?*

(It is suggested that this may be an Eteocypriot name).

Boardman 287. Masson 183.

- 17 Athens, Numismatic Museum no. 6 (Fig. 4). Scaraboid of mottled red-brown limestone, source of discovery unknown. .015 m. Device: a satyr shouldering an amphora. East Greek work of c. 500 B. C. or soon after name-piece of the Group of the Tzivanopoulos Satyr. Inscription of five signs, repeated twice (a) between the satyr's knee and the dot-border (b) close to the border, behind the raised elbow. The inscription is not part of the original design of the seal. Dextroversive in each case:

*o- na- sa- to- se = Ὀνάσσα(ν)τος*

Boardman 292. Masson 362. Masson, Intailles 4. Boardman, GGFR no. 340.

- 18 Paris, Cabinet des Médailles no. 222 (Fig. 4). Scarab of cornelian, from Cyprus. .015 m. Device: a panther attacks a boar; cross-hatched exergue. Cypriot-Greek work of c. 500 B. C. ('The Group of the Cyprus Lions'). Inscription of seven signs, fitted in to convenience, evidently not part of the original design of the seal. 1st between panther's hind legs, 2nd — 5th between the panther's back and the line border, 6th between the border and the panther's head, 7th between the boar's hind feet. Dextroversive:

*pu- nu- to- ni- ko- e- mi = Πρωτονίκω ἡμί*

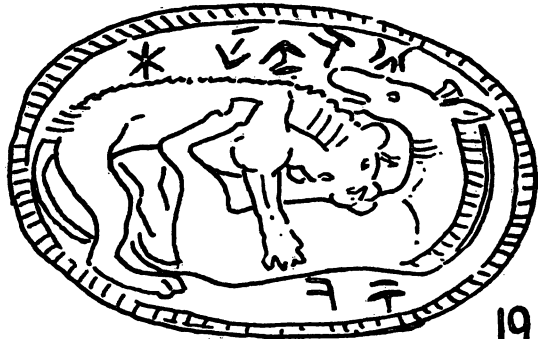
Boardman 421. Masson 356. Masson, Intailles 2.



17



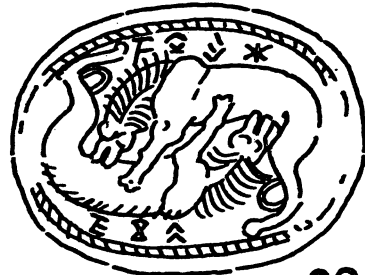
18



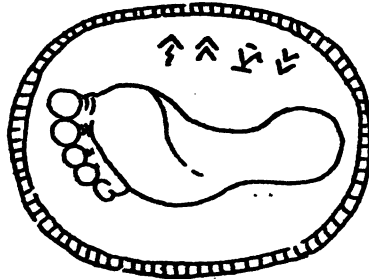
19



21



20



22



24



25

Fig. 4 (various scales)

- 19 Whereabouts? Formerly Paris, de Clercq, no. 2973 (Fig. 4). Scaraboid of onyx, from Marion, Tomb 140 (excavations of 1886). .014 m. Device: panther attacking a mule. Cypriot-Greek work of c. 500 B. C. ('The Group of the Cyprus Lions'). Inscription of seven signs, five between the hatched border and the back of the panther and head of the mule, two on the opposite side of the stone, between the mule's back and the border. The inscription seems probably to have been part of the original design of the stone. The arrangement is boustrophedon, the upper part sinistaverse, the lower dextroverse:

*a-ri-si-to-wa-na-to* = Ἀριστοφάνα(κ)το(ς).

Boardman 422. Masson, 121. Masson, *Kadmos* 2, 1963, 139—141 and fig. 1.

- 20 London, 1909/6 — 15/1 (Fig. 4). Scaraboid of black jasper, from Cyprus. .015 m. Device: fight between two panthers. Cypriot-Greek work of c. 500 B. C. ('The Group of the Cyprus Lions'). Inscription of seven signs (doubtfully part of the original design of the seal) in two groups — (a) of four (b) of three, each dextroverse, between the hatched border and a lion's back, cut so that one line is upside down in relation to the other; the stone must be rotated 180° to read the full text:

a) *a-ri-si-to-*      b) *ke-le-o* = Ἀριστοκλήο(ς)

Boardman 423. Masson 359. Boardman, *GGFR* no. 384.

- 21 Whereabouts? Formerly Paris, de Clercq, no. 2794 (Fig. 4). Scaraboid of chalcedony, acquired in Beirut. .014 m. Device: a cock perched on the back of a panther that scratches its muzzle with its hind leg; a monkey squats at the panther's head. Cypriot-Greek work of c. 500 B. C. ('The Group of the Cyprus Lions'). Inscription of three signs in a space between the back of the lion, the head of the cock and the hatched border, not part of the original design of the seal. Dextroverse:

*ka-pha-sa* = Sense?

Boardman 424. Masson 365. Boardman, *GGFR* no. 385.

- 22 Oxford 0.14 (Fig. 4). Scaraboid of blue chalcedony, from Cyprus. .016 m. Device: — print of a human (left) foot. Greek work ('The Robust Style') of the late Archaic period, c. 500—475 B. C. Inscription of four signs between the instep and the hatched border, probably part of the original design of the seal. Dextroverse:



*phi-ki-re-wo* = Πίγρηφο(ς)

Masson 360. Boardman, GGFR no. 344.

- 23 Whereabouts? Formerly Larnaka, G. D. Pierides collection. Scarab or scaraboid. Material? Size? Device: man with the head of an ass, holding a boar and a club. Date? Inscription of four signs, above the man's head, sinistroverso:

*o-na-si-lo* = Ὀνασίλω

Masson 366.

- 24 Nicosia, 1935/X — 12/2 (Fig. 4 and pl. II). Amethyst ringstone from Cyprus, without closer provenance<sup>23</sup>. .011 m. Device: Goat-fish (sign of the Zodiac for Capricorn). Dr. Moorey tells me that the stone is closely comparable to rings and ringstones from Seleucid Babylonia, datable to the period from the mid-third century to the mid-second century B. C. He refers in particular to a cuneiform tablet in Oxford, possibly from Warka in Iraq, dated to year 86 of the Seleucid era (i. e. 226 B. C.) which bears two fine impressions of bezels decorated with goat-fish and symbols. Inscription of four signs, of which one is above and three below the goat-fish:

*a-*  
*sa-pa-ri* = Sense?

Reported, without illustration, by Dikaios in RDAC 1935, 32. See also Masson in RDAC 1964, 187. The tablet is Oxford Acc. No. 1930. 576. See M. Rostovtzeff, *Seleucid Babylonia: Bullae and seals of clay with Greek Inscriptions*, Yale Classical Studies III, 1932; and R. H. McDowell, *Stamped and Inscribed Objects from Seleucia on the Tigris* 1935.

- 25 Péronne, Musée Danicourt no. 36 (Fig. 4). Pyramidal seal of chalcedony, source of discovery unknown. .019 m. Device: griffin attacking a stag. Greek style of the fifth century B. C., on a shape of seal adopted in the Persian empire from a regular Babylonian type. Inscription of six signs in two adjacent groups of three a) between the stag's neck and forefoot b) between its head and horns. Not part of the original design of the seal. Dextroverso:

*a-ri-se-to-ta-mo* = Ἀριστοδάμω

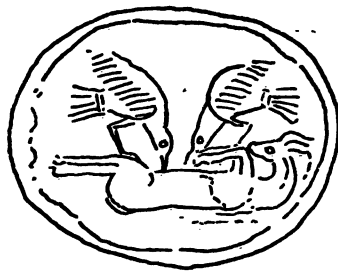
<sup>23</sup> I am grateful to Mr. K. Nikolaou, Curator of the Cyprus Museum, for allowing me to publish photographs of this stone, and to Mrs. Ino Michaelidou-Nikolaou for having the photographs made.

Masson has read *a-ke-se-to-ta-mo* = Ἀκεστοδάμω. I think Ἀριστόδαμος the more likely name; *ke-* and *ri-* are very similar, and easily confused at this tiny scale. See also no. 13, where I have suggested Ἀριστο . . . . . in place of Ἀκεστο. Masson 363. Boardman, Persian 13.

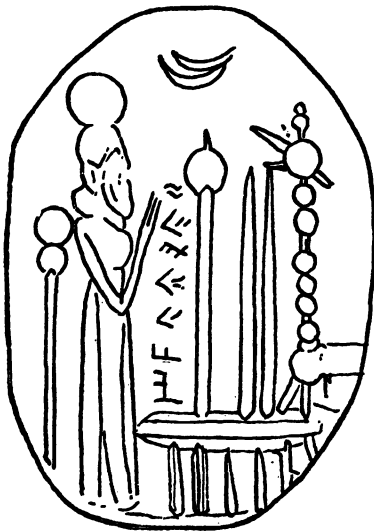
- 26 Whereabouts? Once de Bellesme (Fig. 5). Probably a conoid stamp seal of haematite, from Syria. .019 m. Device: two birds (vultures?) at the carcass of a calf. Greek style of the fifth century B. C. on a type of seal current in the Persian empire. Inscription of four signs in the space between the backs of the birds and the edge of the stone; uncertain whether the inscription was part of the original design of the seal. Sinistrouse:

*a- ? la- ti* = Sense?

Boardman, Persian 15. Masson, Intailles b.



26



27



29

Fig. 5 (various scales)

- 27 Aberdeen, Marischall College collection no. 18 (Fig. 5). Eight-sided chalcedony stamp-seal, source of discovery unknown. .025 m. Device: bearded priest standing among a variety of sacred symbols. Neo-Babylonian. Sixth century B. C. ? Inscription of seven signs across the long axis of the stone, between the figure of the priest and one of the symbols. Not part of the original design of the seal. Sinistroverse:

*zo-si-ke-re-wo-to-se* = Ζωσικρέφο(ν)τος

Masson 353.

- 28 Paris, Cabinet des Médailles, de Luynes 250. Serpentine scaraboid, said to be from Cyrenaica. .022 m. Device: 'Master of Animals', frontal, in very summary style. Cypriot work of the sixth century B. C. ? Inscription of eight signs surrounding the device, five to right, three to left, part of the original design of the seal. Sinistroverse:

a) *pu-ru-ti-lo-so*      b) ?? *su-ne-ko*

No sense has been made of the inscription. In view of this and of the obscurity of some of the signs, and of the unusual provenance, Masson includes the stone only among his 'Dubia et Spuria'. Yet he rightly dismisses the possibility of forgery, since the stone first came to light between 1848—1850.

Masson 456.

- 29 New York 74. 51. 4291 (Fig. 5). Cornelian ringstone from Curium (in modern gold setting). .012 m. Device: frontal bearded head, possibly of Dionysus. Inscription of eight signs surrounding the head, part of the original design. The reading is disputed and the sense extremely obscure. The stone appears among Masson's 'Dubia et Spuria', though its early date of discovery (Cesnola) argues strongly against forgery. The most recent attempt at interpretation is that of Mitford, who reads:

*te-o-sa-ta-ra-te-lo* = Θέω + sense?

Masson 458. Mitford, BICS Suppl. 10, 24-5, with pl. XIV no. 6.

Dubia: A number of seals exist with inscriptions of uncertain character, for which a Cypriot identity may from time to time have been suggested. The list that follows is for the sake of example only, and deliberately confined to reference only. Boardman nos. 63, 173, 184 and 295. Boardman, GGFR, pl. 349.

### Summary

By comparison with the lands by which she is surrounded, Cyprus came relatively late to the use of engraved sealstones. It was not until the Late Bronze Age that the island, stimulated at last by her contacts with the orient, began to make and use her own seals<sup>24</sup>. Mitannian influence is detectable on some of the best work, but Aegean ideas, too, can be shown to have permeated some of the studios<sup>25</sup>. Many of the cylinders exhibit a *Kyprios character* of their own. From time to time, Cypriot engravers incorporated brief inscriptions in the so-called Cypro-Minoan syllabary into the designs of their cylinders<sup>26</sup>, inspired, no doubt, by the frequent occurrence on oriental seals of owner inscriptions in cuneiform script. With the disturbed political conditions at the end of the thirteenth century B. C. that brought refugees from the Aegean to Cyprus, and admitted fugitives from the troubles in Syria and Palestine, there developed in the island a very distinctive — and distinguished — material civilisation that lasted for much of the twelfth century B. C., and left its mark on the eleventh. During this period a fine class of conoid stamp seals appeared, making much use of Aegean motives<sup>27</sup>, though the form of seal itself is alien to the Aegean. Occasionally, brief Cypro-Minoan inscriptions were cut on these seals, too<sup>28</sup>. Although the Cypro-Minoan script is at present undeciphered, we could conjecture that these seals, cylinders and conoids alike, were inscribed with their owners' names.

Several centuries after the close of the Bronze Age, Cyprus was using a syllabic system of language notation, a system that here and there continued in use until the Hellenistic period<sup>29</sup>. As is well

<sup>24</sup> E. Porada, 'The Cylinder-Seals of the Late Cypriote Bronze Age', *AJA* 52, 1948, 178—198. Briggs Buchanan, *Catalogue of Ancient Near Eastern Seals in the Ashmolean Museum*, Oxford 1966, 186—192

<sup>25</sup> V. E. G. Kenna, 'The seal use of Cyprus in the Bronze Age' Pt. I, *BCH* 91, 1967, 255—268; Pt. II, *ibid.* 552—577. Boardman, *op. cit.* (*supra* n. 17) 64—65

<sup>26</sup> Examples are Porada *op. cit.* (*supra* n. 24) pl. IX, no. 20; Kenna and Masson, 'An unpublished Cypriote Cylinder', *BCH* 91, 1967, 251—254. Boardman, *op. cit.* (*supra* n. 17) pl. 206.

<sup>27</sup> Kenna, 'The seal use of Cyprus in the Bronze Age III, Cypriote Stamp Seals', *BCH* 92, 1968, 142—156. See, too, C. F. A. Schaeffer, 'Cachets et cylindres caractéristiques du Chypriote Fer I (1200—1050)' in *Enkomi-Alasia*, Paris 1951, 69—78.

<sup>28</sup> Kenna, 'The Kouklia Ring from Evreti' in *BCH* 92, 1968, 157—161 and fig. 1

<sup>29</sup> Masson, *op. cit.* (*supra*, n. 5) 38—47. For the use of the syllabary in the Hellenistic period, cf. for example Mitford, 'Kafizin and the Cypriot syllabary', *CQ* 44, 1950, 97—106.

known, the system was used both to write Greek and for the unintelligible tongue called, for convenience, 'Eteo-Cypriot'<sup>30</sup>. It is tempting to look for evidence for an unbroken continuity of literacy in all this, from the Late Bronze Age onwards. Proof of such continuity, however, is still lacking, and it is surely a matter for comment that there should be a gap of several centuries between the inscribed seals of the Late Bronze Age and the earliest of the (post-Bronze Age) seals described above; long before any of these had been cut, there is evidence for the use of the syllabary in other media<sup>31</sup>. This strongly suggests, though it does not prove, that the practice of inscribing sealstones with owners' names was re-introduced to Cyprus from an outside source.

A definitive account of post-Bronze Age glyptic in Cyprus has not yet been attempted<sup>32</sup>, though Boardman<sup>33</sup> has erected some sign-posts to its main stages and divisions. The development, not surprisingly, is composed of numerous dissonant elements that reflect the complexity of the influences at work in Cyprus in the centuries after the end of the Bronze Age. To quote Boardman himself, "The native (sc. Cypriot) styles in glyptic are determined largely by eastern standards and fashions . . . We may pick out a number of scarabs, in black serpentine for the most part, with human figures of a roughly Geometric type no closer to Greek than Syrian in style, and probably all post-Geometric by Greek standards. Later still the same soft material is used for seals, mainly scaraboids, cut by hand, with animals in a rough Archaic style. And throughout this period, scarabs and some stamp seals were made with poor linear devices closer to Syrian than to Greek"<sup>34</sup>.

Beside this category of what may reasonably be called native seal-engraving, mention may be made of the 8th century B. C. 'Lyre-Player' group of scaraboids, recently shown by Boardman<sup>35</sup> almost certainly to have originated in Cilicia, not a few of which have been found in Cyprus, especially in the sanctuary deposit at

<sup>30</sup> Masson *op. cit.* (*supra* n. 5) 85—87

<sup>31</sup> V. and J. Karageorghis, 'Some inscribed Iron Age vases from Cyprus', *AJA* 60, 1956, 351—359

<sup>32</sup> See, however, E. Gjerstad, and others, *Swedish Cyprus Expedition II*, Stockholm 1935, Appendix II, 831—845.

<sup>33</sup> Boardman *op. cit.* (*supra* n. 2), 23

<sup>34</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> J. Boardman and G. Buchner, 'Seals from Ischia and the Lyre-Player Group', *JdI* 81, 1966, 1—62

Ayia Irini<sup>36</sup>. As well as the Lyre-Player seals, this very important deposit contained a considerable number of specifically Cypriot seals cut on soft stone and a number of glazed composition scarabs with Egyptianising devices<sup>37</sup>. Many of these last must, in fact, be Egyptian imports, but their number may well include local plagiarisms. If so, the most probable source for such plagiarism would be among the Phoenician community of Cyprus, in particular the colonists established at Kition. Undoubtedly, too, Phoenician glyptic, properly speaking, played a very important rôle in Cyprus.

Boardman has argued convincingly that Phoenician gem-cutting studios in Cyprus provided the stimulus and the guidance in technical expertise that enabled East Greek engravers to develop their Early Archaic styles of gem-stones<sup>38</sup>. It even seems possible that there were East Greek studios working on Cyprus during part, at least, of the sixth century B. C. It is certainly remarkable that nearly one-third of the Archaic Greek gems whose source of discovery is known have been found in Cyprus. The presence of such stones with syllabic inscriptions might be taken to suggest the same thing. Equally, the emergence of a specifically 'Cypriot-Greek' style of engraving<sup>39</sup> is best explained on the assumption that Cypriot and East Greek engravers were in very close contact with each other. It is against this background that we must seek the origin of our inscribed seals. From at least the ninth century B. C. onwards in Syria and Palestine there appeared a class of seal inscribed in Aramaic or Hebrew, much more rarely in Phoenician<sup>40</sup>, whose device consists entirely of an owner's name or, alternatively,

<sup>36</sup> Boardman and Buchner *op. cit.* (supra n. 35) 35—36, nos. 125—132

<sup>37</sup> Gjerstad *op. cit.* (supra n. 32), pls. CCXLIV—CCL

<sup>38</sup> Boardman *op. cit.* (supra n. 17) 139—141

<sup>39</sup> In particular the 'Group of the Cyprus Lions' — Boardman *op. cit.* (supra n. 2) 130ff.; Boardman *op. cit.* (supra n. 17) 403

<sup>40</sup> K. Gallig, 'Beschriftete Bildsiegel des ersten Jahrtausends v. Chr. vornehmlich aus Syrien und Palästina', *Zeitschr. des deutschen Palästina-Vereins* 64, 1941, 121 ff. A. Reifenberg, 'Some Ancient Hebrew Seals', *PEFQ Statement* 1938, 113—116; the same, 1939, 195—198; the same, 1942—43, 109—112. Cf. also D. Diringer, *Le Iscrizioni Antico-Ebraiche Palestinesi* 1934, 159—261. For an example of the relatively rare Phoenician seals of this class, see G. A. Cooke, *A Text-Book of North-Semitic inscriptions*, Oxford 1903, pl. XI no. 5 and p. 361. For a combination of pictorial device and Phoenician inscription, see W. Culican, 'The Iconography of some Phoenician seals and seal impressions', *Australian Journal of Biblical Archaeology* I, 1968, 50—103, in particular 70, pl. III no. 2, Seyrig collection. Notice also N. Avigad, 'Notes on some inscribed Syro-Phoenician seals', *BASOR* 1968, 44—49.

like the famous seal of 'Shama, servant of Jeroboam'<sup>41</sup>, of a pictorial device and an owner's name. It is commonly supposed that a good many of these seals were engraved by Phoenician artists, though the question of their identity is obviously a delicate one. There are one or two Archaic Greek seals designed in this fashion; Boardman cites the scaraboid in New York, said to be from Gytheion<sup>42</sup>, whose device, set out in two lines with a double line-divider in the Phoenician manner, is the owner's name, 'Charidemos'. It is difficult to see this as anything but a direct copy of the Semitic owner-seal. I think we must take the same view of the seal of Pasitimos, 1 above, and its companion pieces and suppose that both Greek and Cypriot gem-cutters worked for patrons who were anxious to possess a name-seal in their own script. Such patrons do not seem to have been many, however, and were considerably outnumbered, both Greeks and Cypriots, by those who had their names added to a seal with pictorial device. Sometimes their names were incorporated into the design of the seal, sometimes they were added later; often it is difficult to be sure which happened. Unfortunately, the dating of Cypriot seals is at present far too vague for us to decide whether Cypriots or Greeks were the first to copy this type of owner-name device. If they were Greeks, the date will not have been before the second quarter of the 6th century B. C.<sup>43</sup> The only evidence that bears even indirectly on this point is negative, and turns on the chronological distribution of our inscribed stones.

We may reason as follows. Greek gems were most popular in Cyprus in the Archaic period when, as we have seen, East Greek gem-engravers may have been working in the island. As the catalogue above makes clear, it is to this period that all the Cypriot inscriptions on gems of Greek style belong. In the changed political conditions of the fifth century B. C. it is extremely doubtful whether Greek artists continued to work in Cyprus. Although Greek gems of the classical period have been reported from the island, their numbers are greatly reduced by comparison with the Archaic period, and they are not found with inscriptions in the Cypriot syllabary. It may, therefore, have been the Greek engravers of the 6th century whose presence stimulated a Cypriot liking for gems

<sup>41</sup> G. Schumacher and C. Steuernagel, *Tell el-Mutesellim I*, Leipzig 1908, 99—100, fig. 147

<sup>42</sup> Boardman *op. cit.* (*supra* n. 2) no. 21

<sup>43</sup> The earliest date for the start of the Archaic Greek gem series — Boardman *op. cit.* (*supra* n. 17) 139.

with owner-inscriptions; if so, it may have been Greek taste rather than Cypriot that was first influenced by the Phoenician custom of engraving owner-inscriptions, so that the Cypriots accepted it from a Greek source, not directly from the Phoenicians. But the case is slim.

The wide influence exerted in Cyprus by Greek gem-engravers during the later part of the Cypro-Archaic period is only one of many symptoms of intense Greek activity in the island during the 6th century B. C. As Boardman has argued<sup>44</sup>, Cyprus's nominal position of subordination to Egypt at this period greatly simplified her relations with the Aegean, and provided very favourable circumstances for Greek initiative in the island. Circumstances changed with the rise of Persian power, so that Cyprus slipped away from the West and, despite great efforts on the part of Greece during the course of the fifth century, never quite restored the degree of intimacy that had marked the 6th century B. C.

<sup>44</sup> Boardman *op. cit.* (supra n. 2) 171

#### APPENDIX 1: PROVENANCE

##### A. Cyprus

Athienou, region of. 4

Curium. 8?, 16, 29?

Galinoporni, region of. 7

Marion. 19

Marion, region of. 11

Source unknown. 1, 2, 3, 6, 10, 14, 18, 20, 22—24.

##### B. Levant

Aleppo (bt. in?) 13

Beirut, bt. in. 21

Syria. 12, 26

##### C. North Africa

Cyrenaica. 28

##### D. Source Unknown

5, 9, 17, 25, 27

#### APPENDIX II: SEALS GROUPED BY CLASS

	Total
Cypriot — 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 28	7
Cypriot (Inscriptions only) — 1, 2, 3, 4	4
East Greek — 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 22	7
Cypriot-Greek — 11, 18, 19, 20, 21	5



	Total
Achaemenid/Greek — 25, 26	2
Neo-Babylonian — 27	1
Unattributed — 23, 24, 29	3

## APPENDIX III: INDEX OF NAMES

Each name is followed by the catalogue number of the stone on which it appears. Where appropriate, this is followed by a list of other instances of the name in Cypriot epigraphy. Numbers prefixed by Masson continue to refer to the enumeration of inscriptions in ICS.

*Αρίστω (*Αριστο.....)	13	Occurs as an abbreviation on Masson 26 (Paphian staters)
*Αριστοδάμω (*Αριστόδαμος)	25	Masson 40, 436, 447 and 450
*Αριστοκλήο(ς) (*Αριστοκλέφης)	20	Masson 352, 395
*Αριστοφάνακτο(ς) (*Αριστοφάναξ)	19	BICS Suppl. 10, 41—42 (Bulwer Tablet)
Δαμα (Δαμα.....)	12	
Ζωφόθεις	8	BCH 89, 1965, 294—5 = RDAC 1967, 170
Διφειθέμιφος (Διφειθέμις)	11	Masson 178, 217, 266?
Ζωφοίταυ (Ζωφοίτας)	6	
Ζωσικρέφο(ν)τος (Ζωσικρέφων)	27	
[Θαυμας]	5	
Θεμιστίω (Θεμιστίος)	2, 6	BCH 90, 1966, 355
Κυπραγόραο (Κυπραγόρας)	10	Masson 155, 393?
*Ονάσα(ν)τος (*Ονάσας)	17	Masson 15b, 83, 132, 154, 317, 444a, 444b, 444c
*Ονασίλω (*Ονάσιλος)	23	Masson 81, 82, 111, 135, 147, 217, 307, 310, 331a, 339, 384, 434, 436
Πασιτίμω (Πασιτίμος)	1	Masson 57
Πίγρηφο(ς) (Πίγρης)	22	
Πνυτονίκω (Πνυτόνικος)	18	
Πυθοκρέων	9	
Τιμοκρέτεος (Τιμοκρέτης)	3	Masson (30), 80, 88a, 103, 113, 120, 162b, 305
Φαύω (Φαῦος)	7	
Garbled or otherwise indecipherable	4, 14, 15, 16, 21, 24, 26, 28, 29	

## APPENDIX IV: RELATIONSHIP OF INSCRIPTIONS TO DEVICES

Note has been made in the descriptions of the stones to show whether the inscriptions were part of the original design or later additions. This information may be summarised as follows.

Inscriptions forming part of the original design:

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 16, 19, 22, 24, 28, 29

Inscriptions added to the original design:

12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 21, 25, 27

Doubtful:

7, 20, 26

Unknown:

15, 23

Of eleven specifically Cypriot stones, ten have inscriptions that are part of the original design. Of seven East Greek stones, two have inscriptions that are part of the original design. Of five Cypriot Greek stones, two have inscriptions that are part of the original design.