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THE PHRYGIAN INSCRIPTIONS FROM BAYINDIR*

The objects found in Tumulus D near Bayındır in the Elmalı Plain when it was excavated by the members of the Antalya Museum in the summer of 1986¹ were beyond all expectation. Although the site is a good distance away from the main centres of Phrygia located in the Sangarius valley, the tumulus nevertheless contained objects very similar to those found in the Midas Mound at Gordion. The omphalos bowls, small cauldrons, ladles, bowls with swivel ring handles, and fibulae are common to both tumuli². Even more surprising was the discovery of inscriptions in the well-known archaic Phrygian script³ on some of the

* I am grateful to the director of the Antalya Museum, Mr. Kayhan Dörtlük, for his generous permission to publish the inscriptions of Tumulus D and also for the warm hospitality which I enjoyed during my work at the museum. I also wish to thank the curators of the museum, especially Mr. İ. Akan Atila and the photographer Mr. İbrahim Bozova, for their friendliness and interest in my work. I owe special thanks to Atölye MAT Fotoğrafçılık Ltd., Ankara, for their willing assistance and the excellent photography (Plates I and II), and Mr. Mehmet Fehmi İmre who kindly translated from Russian L. S. Bayun—V. E. Orel, *Revue d'Histoire Ancienne* 184,1, 1988, 173—200. I am most grateful to the British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara for the privilege of using, as always, its valuable library and, above all, for the friendly environment it provided. I am indebted to my friend Dr. Chris Lightfoot who read the text and made corrections pertaining to English. I want to express my thanks to Miss Madeleine Sarley for her painstaking care for the illustration of the metal vessels.

¹ For a very brief account of the excavations and of the objects exhibited at the museum, see Kayhan Dörtlük's report in the Symposium on the 1986—1987 excavations in *Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı* X,1, 1989, 171—174; Engin Özgen—İlknur Özgen eds., *Antalya Museum Catalogue*, Turkish Republic Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Ankara 1988, pp. 32—49, 187—195 (hereafter, *Antalya Museum*); Machteld J. Mellink, *AJA* 94, 1990, 140.

² Rodney S. Young, *Three Great Early Tumuli, The Gordion Excavations Final Reports I*, University of Pennsylvania 1981, pp. 100—190 (hereafter, *Gordion I*).

³ For the archaic Phrygian inscriptions, see Claude Brixhe—Michel Lejeune, *Corpus des inscriptions paléo-phrygiennes I (Text), II (Plates)*, Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations, Mémoire No. 45, Paris 1984 (hereafter, *Corpus*). For T-03, an inscription found at Tyana (Kemerhisar), see E. Varinlioğlu, *Ep. Anat.* 5, 1985, 8—11.

pieces. The writing was clearly scratched on to the objects with a pointed utensil, after they had been finished.

I give below, first, my reading of the several inscriptions that I was able to see in the Museum, where some of those objects, which are in good condition, are exhibited while the rest are being conserved in the depot. There then follow my comments on their possible meaning in the context of a funerary ritual. Finally, I discuss the incised representation of a boat which decorates the tang of a silver ladle, and compare it with similar renderings in Cretan and Egyptian funerary contexts.

I. The inscriptions (Figs. 1–2)

Small Silver Cauldrons with Ring Sockets (1, 2)

1. The body is spherical and slightly pointed towards the bottom. There are two ring-sockets attached to the rim and shoulder on opposite sides of the vessel. Both attachments lack their carrying-rings for the handles, cf. Gordion I, Plates 52, 54 and 58. The inscription, written on the shoulder of the vessel just below the rim near the left socket, reads from left to right. Cf. Antalya Museum No. 32.

Height to rim 0.136 m. Diameter of rim 0.143 m. Inventory No. 11-21-87
Reading: *ates*

The *a* has a bent rightleg and a cross-bar slanting downwards in the same direction as the writing; the *t* is like a cross; the *e* is tailed below and has three horizontal bars slanting downwards; the *s* has six bars.

2. The description and dimensions of the second cauldron are the same as those of number 1, except that the inscription is mid-way between the two ring-sockets. Inventory No. 12-21-87

Reading: *ates*

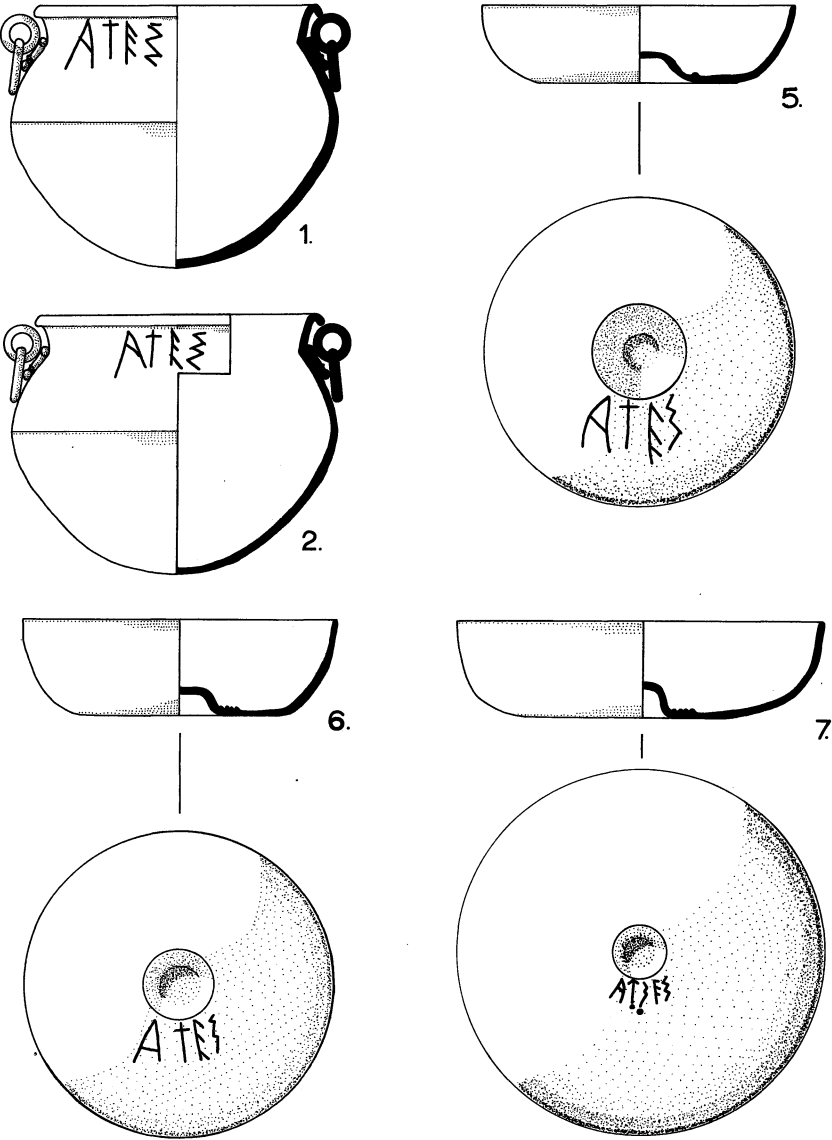
The writing is very similar to that of No. 1 above.

Silver Ladle (3)

3 (Plate I). The bowl, tang and handle are all made in one piece. The handle curves at the top to form a hook. At the top a small bolster is added to the handle by a dowel before the curve, s. Antalya Museum No. 34. The drawing of the boat and the inscription over it are incised on the back from left to right, and run from the top of the tang towards the bowl, cf. Gordion I, Plates 64 A and B.

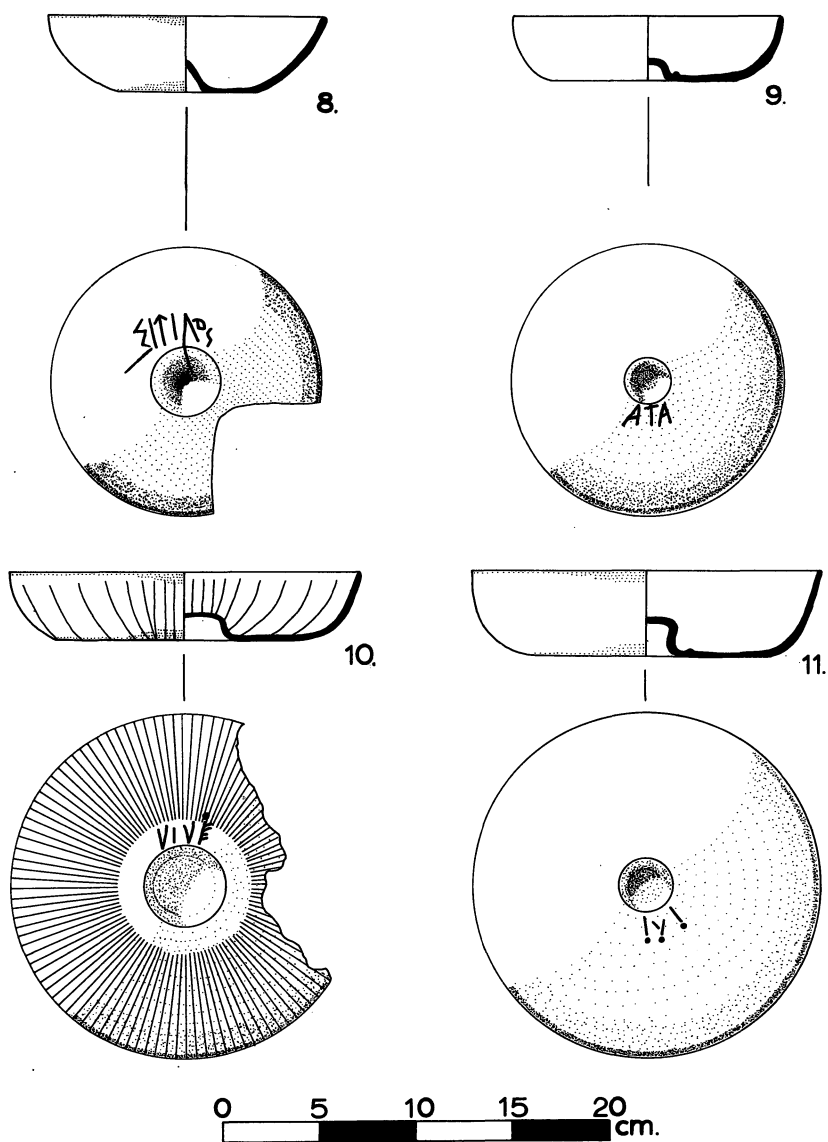
Height of ladle 0.17 m. Diameter of bowl 0.074 m. Inventory No. 43-21-87
Reading: *ates*

The writing has the same general characteristics as on No. 1.



BAYINDIR: TUMULUS-D 1987
Representations of ~THE METALWORK~

Fig. 1. The Phrygian inscriptions from Bayındır



Mads.

Fig. 2. The Phrygian inscriptions from Bayındır

Omphalos Bowls (4–11)

4 (Plate II). A plain silver bowl, from which the omphalos has become detached. It has five ridges around the base of the hemispherical omphalos. The inscription is on the reverse around the hole of the omphalos. The vessel is now mis-shapen. Cf. Gordion I, Plates 72 A and 90 A.

Diameter of rim c. 0.17 m. Inventory No. 6-21-87

Reading: *ates*

The writing is very similar to that on No. 1, except for the *s*, which has five bars.

5. A plain bronze bowl with a high omphalos. Intact. There is a single large ridge, rounded in profile, around the base of the hemispherical omphalos. The inscription is on the reverse, around the depression of the omphalos. Cf. Gordion I, Plate 72 H.

Diameter of rim 0.162 m. Height to rim 0.04 m. Inventory No. 19-21-87

Reading: *ates*

The writing runs from left to right. It is incised on the swelling of the convex bottom of the vessel, which, consequently, bends both legs of the *a* forwards; the *t* is like a cross; the *e* is tailed above and below with three sloping horizontal bars that are not parallel; the *s* has five bars, the tip of the last of which slips downwards at the bottom.

6. A plain bronze bowl with a high hemispherical omphalos. Intact. The base of the omphalos has four high ridges around it. The inscription is on the reverse around the depression of the omphalos. Cf. Gordion I, Plate 72 A.

Diameter of rim 0.16 m. Height to rim 0.045 m. Inventory No. 14-21-87

Reading: *ates*

The writing runs from left to right. The legs of the *a* are not quite straight; the *t* is like a cross; the *e* has a tail below and three horizontal bars; the *s* has five bars.

7. A plain bronze bowl with four ridges around the base of a high hemispherical omphalos. The vessel is mis-shapen. The inscription is on the reverse around the depression of the omphalos. Cf. Gordion I, Plate 72 B and D.

Diameter of rim c. 0.19 m. Height of letters 0.015 m. Inventory No. 15-21-87

Reading: *ates*

The writing is different from that on the first three vessels described above: the *a* has a broken right leg; the cross-bar at the top of the *t* is

small and the letter looks like an arrow; the next 'sign' is not a new letter but, I believe, the scratch following the slip of a pointed utensil. The *e* has three short horizontal bars and the *s* five bars.

8. A plain bronze bowl with a conical omphalos, cf. Gordion I, TUM W 17. There are no ridges around the base of the omphalos. A triangular piece is broken away from one side of the bowl. The writing is on the reverse around the depression of the omphalos.

Diameter of rim 0.143 m. Height to rim 0.04 m. Excavation Inventory No. D-16

Reading: *si†idos*

The writing reads from left to right. The first letter is an *s* with five bars: the last bar at the bottom is detached and has slipped quite a long way towards the left. The third letter is evidently the arrow-letter of the Phrygian alphabet; the left leg of the *d* has made a long slip into the depression: the letter has no closing bar at the bottom; the *o* is squared, cf. R. S. Young, *Hesperia* 38, 1969, 268, Fig. 4(1:3), 41 A; the closing *s* is very small and has only three bars.

9. A plain bronze bowl with a hemispherical omphalos. It has a distorted rim on one side, and there is a single ridge around the base of the omphalos. The inscription is on the reverse of the bowl around the depression of the omphalos.

Diameter of rim 0.14 m. Height to rim 0.035 m. Inventory No. 17-21-87

Reading: *ata*

The writing is, perhaps, in the reverse direction: the horizontal bars of the *as* slant down to the left and the left leg of the *a* on the right bends towards left.

10. A petalled bronze bowl that has a single ridge around the base of the omphalos. Almost half of the bowl is broken away. The inscription is on the reverse of the vessel around the depression of the omphalos; the letters are written from right to left. Cf. Gordion I, Plate 70 L, similar.

Diameter of rim 0.18 m. Height to rim 0.035 m. Excavation Inventory No. D-18

Reading: *dide*

The reading of the open form of the letter *d* is certain, if it be compared with the same letter in No. 8 above and with that in Gordion I, p. 274 A, where the same word consists of *d* carefully closed at the bottom; the *e* has four sloping horizontals and is tailed above and below.

11. A plain bronze bowl that has a single broad ridge around the base of the hemispherical omphalos. There are corrosion holes and

cracks below the rim on opposite sides of the bowl. The inscription is on the bottom of the bowl around the depression of the omphalos. Diameter of rim 0.18 m. Height to rim 0.045 m. (?) Excavation Inventory No. D-26

Because of corrosion, neither the shape of the letters nor the direction of the writing could be determined.

II. The funerary context

The word *ata* is seen on common pottery and fine metal bowls both in tumuli and elsewhere, while *ates* occurs on the Midas Monument and on the bowls in our tumulus. Neither the material on which they are written nor their find-place helps us to understand them or find an answer to their possible meaning. *Ates* is, however, recognizable as the well-known Phrygian hero Attis⁴. The Phrygians believed that he rose again after his death and burial. It may have been believed that the prince, too, would rise again after his death and burial, like seed-corn⁵. It is in this context, I believe, that the name of Attis inscribed on the vessels placed in the grave should be understood. It is a sacred word of the Phrygian religion chosen from their funeral repertoire.

It is true that no 'ates' inscription was found in the Midas Mound, although it could be argued that names such as *ata* or *siṭidos* may have been written on wax⁶ or other items that have perished. In short, the more often we meet these words on grave goods from tumuli, the less likely is it that they are names of the persons who had them placed in the mound.

These words must have been in regular use by a people who were 'mystics', and wrote not their own names, but pious words on cup handles and bowls, as well as on grave-goods and public monuments⁷.

⁴ Attēs, with double t, seems to be the Greek variant of the Phrygian original, cf. Ἀλυάττης. What is peculiar is that there is no word in Phrygian with double t. Perhaps this sign served for both. See also L. Zgusta, *Kleinasiatische Personennamen*, Verlag der Tschechoslowakischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Prag 1964, p. 105 § 119-3.

⁵ Henri Frankfort, *Iraq* 1, 1934, 141, note 1.

⁶ Gordion I (note 2 above), p. 130, MM 68 and MM 69.

⁷ Many examples of pottery scratched with owners' marks of a non-verbal type have been published by E. Roller, *Nonverbal Graffiti, Dipinti, and Stamps*, University Museum Monograph 63, University of Pennsylvania, 1987.



Plate I

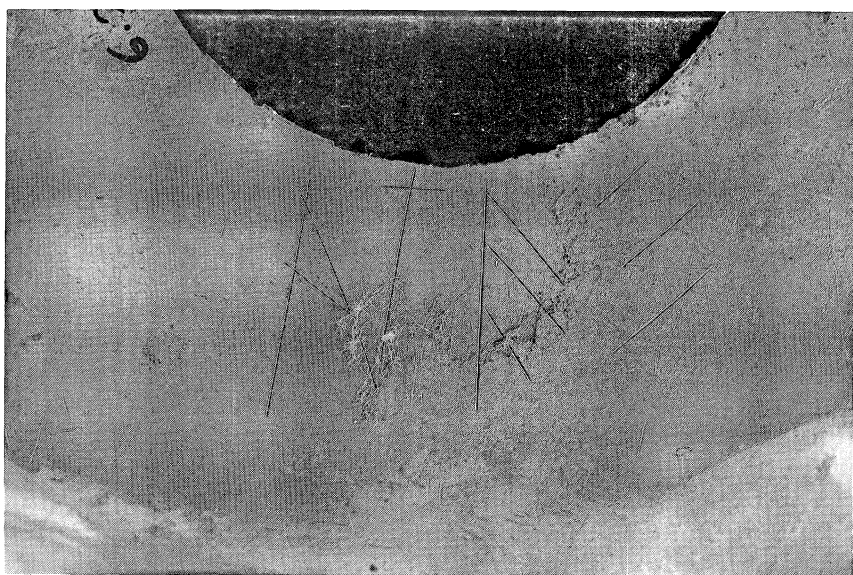
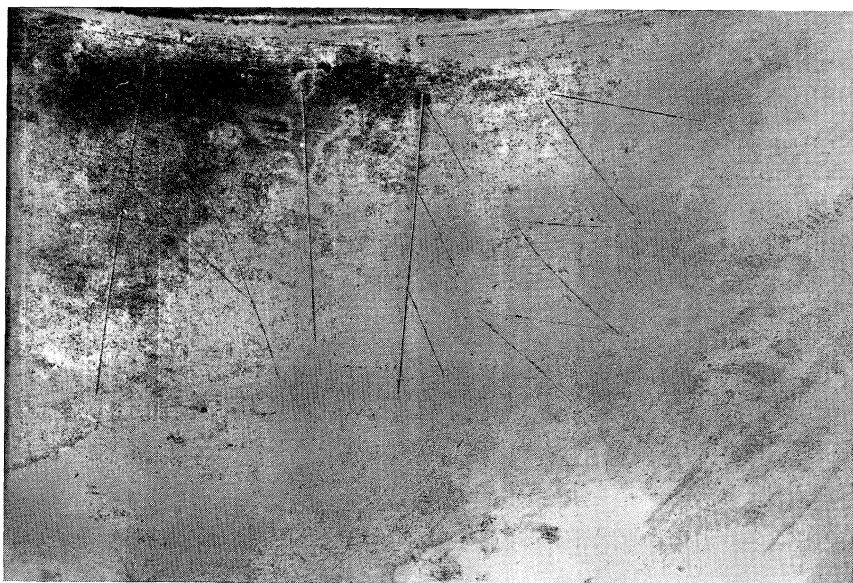


Plate II

In the course of time, the inscription *siṭidosakor* was recognized as two separate words, *siṭidos* and *akor*, or *siṭis*, *-idos* (of a dental stem) and *akor*⁸. Cf. Corpus G-237: *ako*.

As to the sound-value of the arrow-sign ṭ, I believe that it stood for one of the additional Greek letters, ϕ with the sound-value of *ph*⁹. Another additional Greek letter used in Corpus G-145 is ψ which was corrected and restored as *s*. A possible *kb* seems to be out of question after *k* in Corpus M-01b. The Phrygian stone-cutters had knowledge of the additional letters of the Greek alphabet, but they persisted in shunning letters other than their own. They evidently took almost no pains to extend their alphabet with additional Greek letters: the only two examples, M-01b and G-145, date from the late 7th or the 6th century¹⁰. (The museum curators and the editors have assigned all the artifacts in Tumulus D to the late 8th or the 7th centuries B.C. For the time of incision see my comment below.)

I have decided on the open form of *d*, in No. 10 above, by comparing it with No. 8 and Corpus G-105. There is no internal evidence for the form of *d* against that of *l*, cf. Corpus G-246: *dile*. For the possibility of a single-syllable root see Corpus G-103: *di*.

III. The boat-design on the ladle (Plate I and Fig. 3)

The drawing of the boat is very simple, with a punting-pole on each side (or one pole on the right and a mast), and a long rudder at the stern with a crooked tiller. The horizontal line above the deck is either the upper deck, or the lowered mast, or an awning. There are no oars, rigging or crew, no watercourse running below, and no sail above.

It seems more likely that the boat incised behind the tang under the name *ates* was a significant symbol rather than a simple decoration. In Egypt models of boats, or even real boats, were placed in tombs along with the dead¹¹, where they symbolized the hope for the after-life of the

⁸ For a possible root **siṭ-* cf. *siṭeto* in Corpus p. 51–55, W-08, W-09, W-10. It now seems that this word has almost nothing to do with the content or receiver of the cup on which it is written, cf. *ibid.* p. 100, G-105. It must be a pious word which is repeated in the same formula, perhaps as a verb: *siṭeto*; s. also C. Brixhe, *Kadmos* 21, 1982, 73.

⁹ Colloque sur la Cappadoce méridionale jusqu'à la fin de l'époque romaine, April 13–15, 1987 in İstanbul.

¹⁰ For the date of the inscription, see Corpus p. 6.

¹¹ J. Garstang, *Burial Customs of Ancient Egypt*, Archibald Constable, London 1907, Chapter V, pp. 101–2; for the religious decorative scenes on the walls, cf. p. 21; E. A. Wallis Budge, *The Mummy*, Cambridge 1925, p. 463–4; Martin P. Nilsson,

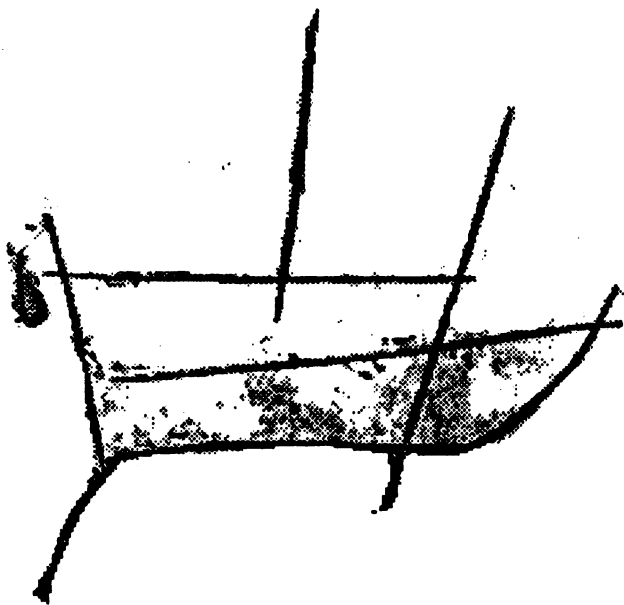


Fig. 3. The boat incised on the silver ladle (item 3)

person who was to be conveyed to the West¹², the land of the dead. In Minoan Crete, on the famous sarcophagus from Hagia Triada, three men approach the mummy of the dead with funeral gifts, among which there is a boat¹³. In later belief, the voyage of the dead led over the sea to a distant land at the borders of the world on the shores of Oceanus¹⁴.

It appears that the idea that the dead required a boat for the passage to the Other World came to the Greeks, via their Minoan heritage, from Egypt¹⁵, for there were offerings of ships in Cretan as well as Egyptian graves¹⁶.

The Minoan-Mycenaean Religion and its Survival in Greek Religion (2nd ed.), C. W. K. Glerup, Lund 1950, pp. 625–6.

¹² Garstang, *op. cit.* (note 11 above), p. 102. Veronica Ions, *Egyptian Mythology*, The Hamlyn Publishing Group, London 1988, p. 127.

¹³ Nilsson, *op. cit.* (note 11 above), p. 426, 428, 438–9 and note 25, 629.

¹⁴ Nilsson, *op. cit.* p. 622, 625, 626.

¹⁵ Nilsson, *op. cit.* p. 625–6, 632; Doro Levi, *AJA* 49, 1945, 280; Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood, *Kadmos* 12, 1973, 152–3, 157; *Kadmos* 28, 1989, 97–100.

¹⁶ Sp. Marinatos, *BCH* 57, 1933, 170 ff., esp. pp. 180–182; Sourvinou-Inwood, *Kadmos* 12, 1973, 152. For boats in general in Crete see J. G. Younger, *The Iconography of*

In the Egyptian Book of the Dead the deceased stands in a boat which moves without external impulse¹⁷. Early parallels to such animated self-propelled boats are found in Mesopotamia¹⁸ and Crete¹⁹. Later, the Phrygians, who had contact with Mesopotamia through North Syria²⁰, adopted the concept of life-after-death²¹; indeed, the boat or ship as the symbol of a happy life after death survived in the local culture²².

In addition to the inscriptions and the drawing of the boat, there were other symbolic objects in the grave, including a phallic standard²³, doubtless a symbol of fertility and regeneration. The many omphalos bowls, bowls with swiveling ring handles, cauldrons, etc.²⁴ in the grave recall the tradition that the deity in his divine boat took a symbolic pot²⁵ or pots²⁶, on his journey to the other world. It seems that scarabs are replaced in the Phrygian graves by numerous fibulae²⁷.

Among the statuettes from Tumulus D is one of a woman holding a female child with her right hand and grasping a nude male child who straddles her left shoulder²⁸. It calls to mind the cylinder seals of the goddess holding a child on her lap²⁹. Ishtar accompanies the divine

Late Minoan and Mycenaean Sealstones and Finger Rings, Bristol Classical Press, Bristol 1988.

¹⁷ Budge, *op. cit.* (note 11 above), p. 465; Sourvinou-Inwood, *Kadmos* 12, 1973, 153; Albert Champdor, *Le Livre des Morts*, Éditions Albin Michel, Paris 1963, p. 138.

¹⁸ H. Frankfort, *Iraq* 1, 1934, 19.

¹⁹ Sp. Marinatos, *BCH* 57, 1933, 223 ff.; Doro Levi, *AJA* 49, 1945, 278–9; G. R. Levy, *The Gate of Horn*, Faber and Faber Ltd., London 1963, p. 233, 238–9 and Fig. 115; 240; Sourvinou-Inwood, *Kadmos* 12, 1973, 149 ff.; *Kadmos* 28, 1989, 97–100.

²⁰ See notes 32 and 33 below.

²¹ Tammuz had votaries even in the Middle Ages in Harran; *Iraq* 1, 1934, 145; cf. also note 30 below.

²² For a modern boat scene in the Elmalı area, see M. J. Mellink, *AJA* 80, 1976, 380.

²³ Antalya Museum (note 1 above), p. 34, No. 31 and p. 187.

²⁴ Antalya Museum, pp. 32, 35–37, Nos. 32–40; 187–189 and see p. 1 above; cf. Gordion I, in note 2 above.

²⁵ Frankfort, *Iraq* 1, 1934, 19; Cylinder Seals (note 26 above), p. 68: "... three symbols are always depicted ... together with the Sun-God's boat: a quadruped, a plough and a pot."

²⁶ H. Frankfort, Cylinder Seals (note 26 above), Plate XIX f.

²⁷ The scarab was the emblem of re-birth in the other world and of the Sun-God, cf. John Ward, *The Sacred Beetle*, John Murray, London 1902, pp. 2–7, esp. p. 6: "Scarabs were also suspended to the neck and wrists and put among the wrappings of the mummy." Compare this usage of scarabs with fibulae in Gordion I, p. 101: "... some bronze fibulae were found resting upon the body and embedded in the 'matress'".

²⁸ Antalya Museum (note 1 above), the front cover and p. 39, No. 42; p. 190.

²⁹ H. Frankfort, Cylinder Seals (note 26 above), p. 129: "She (the Great Mother-Goddess) must also be the subject of a number of cylinders which depict a goddess holding a child on her lap ...".

child³⁰, and the female child here may be his double who stays for a season in the underworld³¹.

In short, the inscriptions, considered together with the funeral objects, point to ties with North Syria³², where Mesopotamian and Egyptian cultures came together, notably in the belief in an after-life, expressed in the worship of Tammuz, Adonis or Osiris³³.

As to the date of the inscriptions, they doubtless correspond with those of MM in Gordion. Unfortunately, we have no date for the tumulus itself, which may have represented the 'Mountain' under which the good princes wait for the season to regenerate³⁴?

³⁰ Machteld J. Mellink, *Hyakinthos*, Utrecht 1943, 79: "'Tammuz' serves us here as a general designation and collective idea. His name describes him as a son (*dumu*), accordingly he is thought accompanied by the mother goddess *Ishtar*."

³¹ Mellink, *op. cit.* 47: "*Hyakinthos* as a divine child", 48: "... on *Bathykles* altar-relief *Hyakinthos* is accompanied in his ascent to heaven by *Polyboia*", 49: ".... she is like a female double of *Hyakinthos* ...".

³² For the historical facts, see *Ep. Anat.* 5, 1985, 8, notes 2, 3, 4.

³³ H. Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods*, Chicago 1948, 287: "... the dying god (with) features common to the myths of Egypt, Mesopotamia and Syria."

³⁴ H. Frankfort, *Cylinder Seals*, London 1939, 100, 116, 117: "Both in the *Tammuz* cult and at the New Year's festival the goddess seeks and at last finds the god in the 'mountain', the land of the dead."