

INSCRIBED BULLAE FROM DASKYLEION-ERGILI

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The archaeological investigations conducted by Professor Ekrem Akurgal in the Propontis region between 1952-1955 yielded important results.¹ The Excavations at the mound of Ergili on the South shore of lake Manyas² made it possible to determine on the one hand that in this region "the Greek settlements were founded at least at the beginning of the seventh century" and on the other hand that the city of Daskyleion was buried under the mound of Hisar Kalesi near Ergili.³ Thus, the ancient Daskyleion, the capital of a Persian Satrapy⁴ has been now definitely located⁵ at the modern Ergili.⁶

¹ See E. Akurgal, *Anatolia I*, 1956, p. 20 ff.

² Ch. Texier, *Asie Mineur II* 163 ff.; J. R. Munro, *JHS* 32, 1912, p. 57 ff.; K. Bittel, *Archäologischer Anzeiger*, 1953, p. 2 ff.

³ E. Akurgal, *loc. cit.* pp. 20-24.

⁴ The Hellespontine and Propontis regions were incorporated into the Achaemenid Empire already by Cyrus after his conquest of Lydia in 546 (Cf. P. N. Ure, *The Cambridge Ancient History*, IV, 1934, p. 86). The capital of the Satrapy of Hellespontine Phrygia or Tyaiy Drayahyā, "Those of the Sea", was Daskyleion (A. T. Olmstead, *History of the Persian Empire*, 1948, p. 44). The first recorded satrap of Daskyleion was Mitrobates who was assassinated during the reign of Cambyses II by Oroctes, the satrap of Sardes (Herodotus III 126). Darius I after getting rid of the confusion caused by Bardia, had reestablished his rule over the satrapies of Western Asia Minor, viz. Sardes, Ionia and Daskyleion (R. G. Kent, *JNES* II, 1943, p. 302 ff., note 12). During Darius' campaign in Scythia (513 B. C.) the seat of Daskyleions Satrapy was occupied by the satrap Magabazus. Despite the disturbances toward the end of the reign of Darius, Megabazus kept loyal to the Empire (Olmstead, *loc. cit.* p. 242). According to Herodotus (V 32) a certain Megabates was ruling as satrap in Daskyleion after the defeat of the Persian army at Plataea (479). However, he was replaced soon by the Persian noble Artabazus in 476 as a reward for his successful retreat from Greece. This Artabazus founded a hereditary line of satraps in Daskyleion (G. B. Gray, *The Cambridge Ancient History*, IV, p. 197; Olmstead, *loc. cit.* p. 263). The royal correspondence witnessed by the royal seal impressions on the bullae was perhaps addressed to these last two satraps. The greater part probably went to Megabates who seems to have ruled during the period of the preparation for war and the fighting.

⁵ For photographs and a sketch of this place see K. Bittel, *Archäologischer Anzeiger*, 1953, pp. 7-16; Figs. 3-7.

⁶ K. Bittel has, as mentioned by Ekrem Akurgal (*Anatolia I*, p. 21, note 31),

The soundings in 1952 produced one bulla⁷, and those in 1954-1955, "about 300 complete and fragmentary bullae of Achaemenid type"⁸ in the debris in a trench on the Southern slope of Hisar Kalesi. 41 bullae out of this material contain seal impressions with cuneiform and Aramaic inscriptions. Only one bulla bears a fragmentary Greek inscription.

The seal impressions on bullae from Daskyleion along with the impressions found by E. Schmidt⁹ at the Treasury at Persepolis added to the seal impressions on tablets found at the Fortification at Persepolis by E. Herzfeld¹⁰ constitute the richest material for Achaemenid glyptic. With respect to the quantity, to richness of design the collection of Daskyleion is richer than those Achaemenid seals so far published. From the point of view of their shape, all types found by E. Schmidt at the Treasury at Persepolis¹¹ are represented among the material from Daskyleion. A thorough study of this collection is being prepared by the excavator himself. Therefore it will suffice in the following to attempt a date of bullae bearing a cuneiform inscription.

Bullae with an Old Persian inscription

Thirty fragmentary pieces contain an Old Persian cuneiform inscription consisting of two lines. None of the inscriptions is completely preserved; and in most cases they are hardly visible. We can distinguish two groups of bullae on the basis of the patterns of seal impressions and their inscriptions.

1. A hero fighting a horned and winged lion.¹² The number of

visited the place and has recognized as first that this mound is to be identified with the ancient Daskyleion; cf. K. Bittel, *loc. cit.* pp. 1-15.

⁷ The objects in question here have been given different names. G. Cameron called "Sealings" (*Persepolis Treasury Tablets* [OIP LXV 1948], p. 27 ff.), E. Schmidt "Labels" (*Persepolis II* [OIP LXIX 1957], pp. 4, 44 ff.), E. Akurgal, "Bullae" (*Anatolia I*, 23). As did M. Mellink, *AJA* 1955, p. 235. We, too, shall keep the same designation in the following.

⁸ E. Akurgal, *Anatolia I*, p. 23.

⁹ *Persepolis II*, pp. 5-41.

¹⁰ Not yet published.

¹¹ *Persepolis II*, p. 7.

¹² Erg. 5, Pl. 33 a. Pattern: Hero fighting an attacking winged and horned lion; date palm; Xerxes inscription. Hero: perhaps represents the king. Head and feet in profile, body in front view. The figure has a long beard. His hair is bunched

bullae containing this scene amounts to thirty.¹³ Exactly the same scene is found on 86 more complete or fragmentary bullae but without the inscription (Erg. 34, Pl. 33 b; *Anatolia* I, Pl. XII). It is possible to maintain that all of these bullae were sealed by the same seal of the same monarch. The scene in question is the most frequent one on our bullae.

According to different fragments depicted on Figs. 1-3 the cuneiform inscription can be restored as follows:¹⁴

1. *a-da-ma*¹⁵ / *Xa-ša-ya*¹⁶

2. *a-ra-ša-a*¹⁷ / *Xšayaθiya*¹⁸

"I am Xerxes, the king".

2. Two "man-bulls" below a winged disc symbol.¹⁹ Only one sample (No. 25; Pl. 33 c) has an inscription. But there are two more variants of this pattern without any inscription (Erg. 251-252; Pl. 33 d). The first line of the inscription is badly mutilated. The name in the

at back of his neck. He wears a dentate tiara. His left arm is stretched forward and down, and holds a weapon. He pounds the head of the lion with his right fist in which he holds a sickle like weapon. Lion: standing on hind legs. Winged and horned. Its forelegs touch hero's right arm and side. Mane feathers are well marked. Date palm: appears on the right or left, or in some cases, on both sides of the scene (for single date palm see Schmidt, *Persepolis* II, Pl. s. 3-5, Seal Nos. 1, 3, 5, 7-8; for date palm on both sides *ibid.* Pl. 3, Seal Nos. 2, 6).

Insription: depending on the skill with which the seal is applied on the surface of bulla it appears on the right or on the left of the date palm, or in most cases, it is never impressed on the scene.

¹³ Erg. 1-18, 20-25, 27-32, 250.

¹⁴ My warmest thanks are due to Professor Albright with whom I had the pleasure of very helpful discussion of this material in 1956 during his stay in Ankara.

¹⁵ Nos. 1-8, 20-21, 23 (Figs. 1-2).

¹⁶ Nos. 1-12, 18-23. Erg. 11, line 1:] *ha-ša-y[a]*; Erg. 12, line 1:] *ha-šal[-]*.

¹⁷ Nos. 1-16. Erg. 10, line 2: [-*a-r]* *a-šal*; Erg. 13, line 2: [*a-ra*]-*ša-a*; Erg. 24, line 2: *a[-]*.

¹⁸ Nos. 6, 9, 11, 13-17, 24 (Figs. 1-2).

¹⁹ Erg. 250-252. (Pl 33 c, d) Preserved are only right part of Erg. 250 and left parts of Erg. 251-252. The scenes are variants of each other. The "man-bull" on Erg. 250: Standing on his hind legs, moves left. Forelegs are stretched forward. He wears a a dentate tiara. He is bearded, with hair bunched at back of neck. The wings are upcurved, and turned toward body. According to Erg. 251-252 there was another "man-bull" on the broken left part of the scene facing the first one. The wings of the sun disc are partly preserved.

second line is written in Babylonian cuneiform. But the traces in the first line do not favor the restoration of the name as *Ar-ta-ak-sá-as-* (or *-is*)*sa* (or *-su*) (Artaxerxes I) in Babylonian cuneiform. This line bears probably the name of Xerxes I in Old Persian. Thus it reads:

1. [*a-da-ma* / *X*]*a-ʿšá¹-y[a-a]-ʿra¹-[š]a-a/ ʿXšayaθiya¹*
2. [*a-na-ku*] ^m*Hi-šî¹-ar-šî*

LUGAL

“I am Xerxes, the king.”

One could suppose that the owner of the seal of both the two groups was the Achaemenid king Xerxes I (486-465), son of Darius I. Seal impressions bearing the name of Xerxes I were also found on the Treasury tablets from Persepolis²⁰, but strangely enough none of those seal patterns²¹ are attested in the seal impressions on our bullae from Daskyleion.²² Despite this fact the cuneiform inscription of our bullae is identical with that on the Treasury tablets classified by Schmidt as “Type 6”.²³ The fact that our bullae were found close together in a trench—disregarding the fact that they lay in debris—speaks in favor of the probability that they had been deposited in a palace archive with or without the documents to which they had been affixed.

The large quantity of the bullae bearing the name of Xerxes as well as those without any inscription (mentioned above under group 1) indicates how active were the relations between this monarch and the Satrapy of Daskyleion.²⁴ We may think that the rest of the bullae from Daskyleion had been sent by high officials of the Achaemenid palace in Persepolis or in Susa, by other satraps, or perhaps by the officials of the Satrapy of Daskyleion itself.

²⁰ G. Cameron, *Persepolis Treasury Tablets*, pp. 55-58; E. Schmidt, *Persepolis* II, p. 16 ff., Pl. 1.

²¹ Schmidt, *loc. cit.* p. 20 ff.

²² We could not compare Xerxes' seals from Daskyleion with those from Susa as the relevant publications are unfortunately unavailable in Ankara.

²³ Cameron, *loc. cit.* p. 57, Table 5 (tablet Nos. 28-33); Schmidt, *Persepolis* II, p. 21, Seal No. 6.

²⁴ In this connection see G. B. Gray, *The Cambridge Ancient History*, IV, p. 197.

Cameron has shown²⁵ that "the royal seals" which were impressed on the Treasury Tablets were also used in a time subsequent to the king whose name appears on the seal impression. Are there any among our bullae bearing cuneiform inscription which can be dated to a time later than Xerxes I? One may answer this question in the negative, because one observes that neither the name of Darius I, father of Xerxes, nor the name of Artaxerxes, son of Xerxes, appears on the impressions from Daskyleion. This fact leads one to think that this royal correspondence falls with great probability to the time of Xerxes I. One can go a step further and suppose that the greater part of the correspondence in question would fall within the first decade of the reign of Xerxes. This period covers Xerxes' war preparations, his invasion of and withdrawal from Greece, and his return to Susa. (See above note 4.)

Xerxes (who spent the winter of 481-480 in Sardes making final preparations) had in his army contingents from the satrapies of Western Asia Minor. As a matter of fact one of the five fleets of the Persian armada consisted of the fleet of the Hellespontine region.²⁶ There is no doubt that for supplies and war emergencies Xerxes' army was quite dependent on the satrapies of this region. This fact explains the close relations between the king and the Satrapy of Daskyleion, evident from the abundance of the bullae with the seal of Xerxes.

It is to be expected that the future studies by experts will elucidate the problem whether among the bullae with an Aramaic inscription (see below) and those without any inscription (excepting those mentioned above under group 1) there are any to be dated before the reign of Xerxes I, or after him.

I agree with Bittel who believes that during the long history of the Satrapy of Daskyleion, the site of the palace might also have been situated elsewhere than Ergili, very likely on the South-Eastern or Southern shore of lake Manyas.²⁷ But our bullae can be taken as an indication that during the reign of Xerxes I the seat of the satraps of Daskyleion was probably situated on the mound of Hisar Kalesi.²⁸

²⁵ G. Cameron, *loc. cit.* pp. 55-57.

²⁶ J. A. R. Munro, *The Cambridge Ancient History*, IV, p. 247.

²⁷ *Archäologischer Anzeiger*, 1953, p. 16.

²⁸ For the sculptures found previously on this mound see H. Th. Bossert, *Altanatolien*, 1942, p. 320, figs. 1216, 1218; Ekrem Akurgal, *loc. cit.*, pl. XI b.

Bullae with Aramaic inscriptions

Ten pieces²⁹ bearing impressions with Aramaic inscriptions add new material to the Aramaic documents from Asia Minor.³⁰

As is well known, from Cyrus on, the use of Aramaic as the official written language of the chancellery helped to facilitate political, commercial, and cultural relations between the state and various nations of the Achaemenid Empire.³¹ As Dupont-Sommer expressed pertinently³² the use of Aramaic, without disturbing the native languages of different ethnical groups of the vast Empire, fulfilled a function very similar to that of English in the Commonwealth countries. Aramaic was also used in the correspondence between the Persian officials themselves.³³ It was preferred by the Western satrapies. This fact is substantiated by the discovery of the hoards of bullae from Daskyleion, suggesting the existence of an archive containing documents in Aramaic.

Aramaic inscriptions occur also on the seal impressions on tablets³⁴ and bullae³⁵ from the Treasury at Persepolis. They all represent impressions of seal cylinders, none of them contain names of kings.

Aramaic inscriptions on our bullae from Daskyleion occur on stamp seal³⁶ and cylinder seal impressions.³⁷ One bulla has one cylinder and one stamp seal impression.³⁸ The inscription is on the latter. All the inscriptions consist of one line.

We leave the identification of the seal owners and paleographical data of the writing to the experts in the field. The reader will find copies of the inscriptions Nos. 26-34. on Fig. 3. (For the photo of No. 26 see *Anatolia I* Pl. XII.)

The only Greek inscription on the bulla Erg. 263 is given under No. 35.

Ankara

Kemal BALKAN

²⁹ Erg. 253-262.

³⁰ Cf. A. Dupont-Sommer, *Les Araméennes* 1949, p. 91.

³¹ Recently Olmstead, *loc. cit.* p. 481; Cameron, *loc. cit.* pp. 20, 30; Dupont-Sommer, *Les Araméennes*, pp. 89-98.

³² *Les Araméennes*, p. 90.

³³ *Ibid.* p. 91.

³⁴ PT 4 262 (Schmidt, *Persepolis II*, Pl. 10, Seal No. 33, pp. 11, 31; G. Cameron, *loc. cit.* p. 92); PT 4 675 (Schmidt, *ibid.* Pl. 10, Seal No. 33).

³⁵ PT 3 363 (Schmidt, *ibid.* Pl. 7, Seal No. 20; pp. 10, 26); PT 4 870 (Schmidt, *ibid.* Pl. 11, Seal No. 39; pp. 11, 32).

³⁶ Nos. 26, 27, (Pl. 34 a) 29, 32 (Pl. 34 d) (Fig. 3).

³⁷ Nos. 28, 30 (Pl. 34 b), 31, 33-34 (Fig. 3).

³⁸ No. 31 (Pl. 34 c).

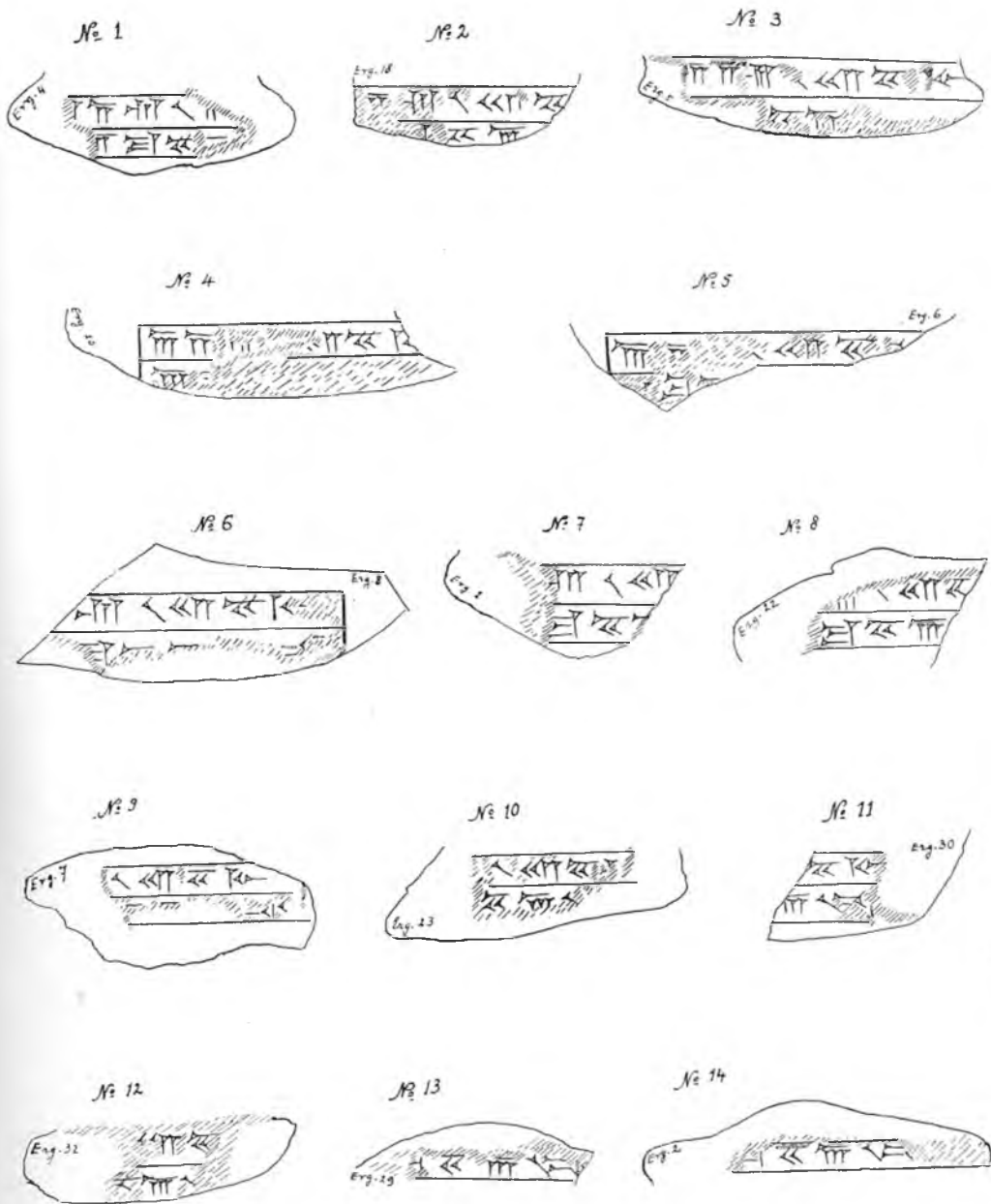


Fig. 1

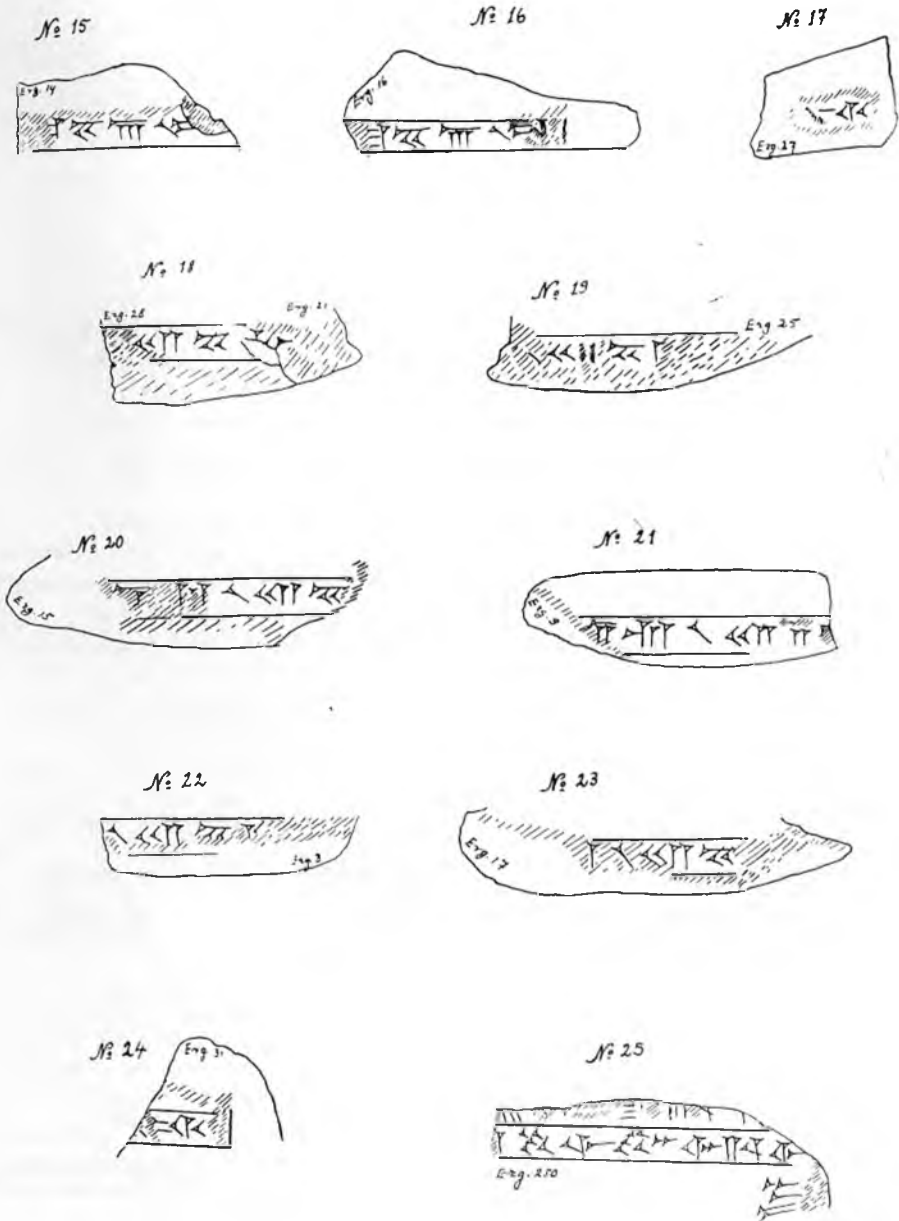


Fig. 2

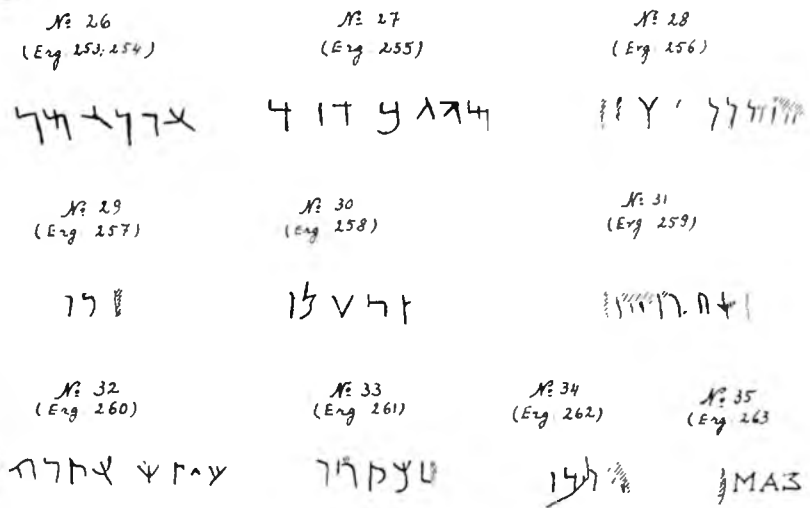


Fig. 3