



SEALS FROM KÜLTEPE

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The seals and seal impressions which were discovered in the Karum of Kanesh at Kültepe from 1948 through 1951 were published by the writer as preliminary reports of the excavations¹. In 1953 we began to excavate on the city-mound and brought to light seals from that area also². In the present article, we shall discuss the seals and impressions from both areas. The material treated falls into the following classification :

- A. Seals and bullae of Kanesh (city-mound).
- B. Seals and seal-impressions from the Karum of Kanesh Level Ib.
- C. Seals from level II of the Karum.
- D. The seal-impression from level III of the Karum.

A. The seals and bullae of Kanesh (city-mound) are represented by one cylinder seal, three stamp seals, and two bullae.

The cylinder seal of blue lapis-lazuli was found in the area designated N/39 on the excavation site plan³. The seal belonged to Abu-ahi (L. 2.4; W. 1.3 cm). It bore five inscribed lines carefully executed, and a scene showing a seated god in front of whom stands and altar heaped with thin loaves of bread. A vase, libra and star appear in the background. The seal was published by K. Balkan⁴ who concluded from the inscriptin that "It can be dated towards the end of the Akkad Period, or probably in a period which followed that of Akkad". The iconographical details confirms his conclusions. However, on a stylistic basis, we may assign the seal to a more precise classification, namely, E. Porada's "post-Akkad" period⁵.

¹ Belleten 65, pp. 123; 66 pp. 303; 85 pp. 13; Tahsin und Nimet Özgüç, Ausgrabungen in Kültepe, Bericht über die im Auftrage der Türkischen Historischen Gesellschaft, 1949 durchgeführten Ausgrabungen, Ankara 1953, pp. 226.

² Belleten 77, pp. 33; 81 pp. 61; 82 p. 345.

³ K. Balkan, Letter of king Anum-hirbi of Mama to king Warshama of Kanish, Ankara 1957 Fig. 12, p. 2.

⁴ Ibid, Fig. 12. P. 2

⁵ Edith Porada, Corpus of Ancient Near Eastern Seals in North American Collections, The Pierpont Morgan library collection Pl. XL, XLI.

Two seals belonging to the first Hittite level of Kanesh were found in the large megaron type of building, one of the most important structures excavated on the city mound⁶. The use of this megaron extended over a long period, and shows several phases of use of reconstruction. Two phases of repairs are very clearly recognizable. A conflagration brought the first occupation phase of the megaron to a close. At some time, later on, the building was repaired. The second phase was also destroyed by fire. Of the two seals, here mentioned, one, a stamp seal of clay No. Kt. f/t. 402 (Pl. 2a), was brought to light in the second, later phase. During the first phase, a doorway occupied the east end of the megaron. After the first destruction, the door-opening was filled with a stone wall. The seal No. 402 was found in the mortar binding the stones in the wall. In other sites in Anatolia, i.g. Alacahöyük, Boğazköy⁷ and Fraktin ceramic votive-offerings were included intentionally in the mortar of walls. These instances suggest that the seal of the Kültepe megaron might also have been intended as a votive-offering. But we must bear in mind that the seal might have been brought accidentally to the site with the clay ingredients of the mortar. It therefore might have been manufactured in an earlier period.

The seal, of clay, is conical in shape, its handle, originally without doubt bulbous and pierced, is missing. The periphery of the cone is horizontally ribbed. The bottom is a disc (H. 1.7; W. 1.8). The seal pattern consists of a rope border around a central field with a seated bull. Its profile head looks backwards. An eagle also in profile is perched on the bull's back and pecks his head. At Alishar hüyük, a seal found in mixed fill of area GG-HH 4-5 had the same scheme, but there a bird was perched on a hare⁸. The Louvre Museum Collection has a seal with the same animals⁹ as at Kültepe, i.e. eagle and bull.

A mushroom-shaped bulla (No. kt. f/t. 397, Pl. 2b), probably a bottle-stopper, was brought to light when the north long wall of the

⁶ Belleten 71, p. 399; Anatolian Studies IV, 1954, p. 19; AfO XVII, p. 438; AJA 59 (1955), p. 232.

⁷ Belleten 75, s. 296 ve n. 6, 7 p. 302 n. 6, 7.

⁸ OIP XXIX, Fig. 259, 3097.

⁹ Delaporte, Catalogue de cylindres cachets et pierres gravées de style oriental. II, Paris 1923 (Musée de Louvre) Pl. 100, 7b.

megaron was cleared. The bulla was found imbedded in the mortar of the rubblestone wall (H. 2.5; W. 3.2 cm.). Of gray clay, it bears a circular stamp seal impression: a looped-rope border enclosing a double-headed eagle. The latter was a favourite motif of the later period of the Assyrian Colony in the karum area at Kültepe (Level I b), and at Alishar hüyük (Level 10T)¹⁰.

In our opinion the megaron belongs to the Hittite Imperial Period. But the two seals found in its mortar were probably brought from an earlier level of the mound. The peculiarities of the seals themselves show affinities with seals earlier than the Hittite Imperial Period. We are therefore inclined to conclude that our megaron seals are earlier than the building itself.

Another bulla of crude conical form (No. kt. g/t. 280, Pl. 1), without a suspension hole in its apex, was found in the débris of the northsouth wall of the large stone building of the first Hittite level (H. 2.3; W. 2.3 cm) which destroyed the southern part of the Warshama Palace in area Y/28. The bulla, therefore, is later than the palace.

The seal impression on the bulla represents a guilloche surrounding a fantastic animal, a two-headed creature with the body of an eagle and with outstretched wings. The two heads are in profile, one of being an eagle's head, the other a lion. The heraldic representation of the double-headed eagle is a common motif in the Early and Great Imperial Hittite Periods. But, the juxtaposition of an eagle's head with a lion's to my knowledge is unique. We know of one seal with a lion's head on an eagle's body, which belongs to the Louvre Collection¹¹, and a seal from Alishar with human head on an eagle's body¹².

The lion's head on our bulla has a very short neck. Its ear, eye, nose and mouth are clearly delineated. The eagle's beak is large, and the feathers on its short neck are clearly rendered. Its outstretched wings are composed of two parts. The difference between the wings, tail, and the breast-feathers is also pronounced. The claws are long and wiry, and the thighs are heavily feathered.

¹⁰ *Belleten* 85, p. 14; OIP XXIX, Fig. 249, b 1854.

¹¹ Delaporte, *ibid.* Pl. 99, 7 (A 985).

¹² OIP XXIX, Fig. 249, c 2310.

As we noted above, the heraldic eagle was found on stamp seals in Alishar, Kültepe, Boğazköy and Alacahöyük in well stratified levels. If we compare the examples from these sites with our bulla and others of the level Ib group, the following differences in characteristics are apparent:

a) In the one and two headed eagles belonging to the same group of level Ib¹³ examples, the wing-feathers are rendered schematically and resemble uninterrupted parallel horizontal arrows. On our seal impression the wings are divided into two parts, and the feathers lean toward naturalistic representation.

b) In the level Ib type, the torso of the bird is schematic, divided vertically into two parts. In our example the torso is a complete unit with gentle, rounded modeling.

c) Only in our bulla are the thighs feathered.

The distinctive features of our example resemble those of the double-headed eagles of the sculptures of Yazılıkaya and Alacahöyük sculptures. The lion's head of our seal impression closely resembles the lion's head on the shoulder of the Yazılıkaya Dagger God¹⁴. Thus, we may safely compare our impression with the Imperial Hittite monuments. The evidence indicates a date not earlier than the beginning of the Hittite Empire.

× Stamp seal No. Kt. g/t 309, Pl. 2c of bronze with stalk handle and disc base was brought to light in the refuse layer of the Warshama Palace (area Y/ 28 H. 2.7; W. 1.9 cm). Although badly damaged by fire, the pattern consisting of five animal heads is visible. They move in the same direction around a central point, resembling of a pin-wheel. The species of the animals can not be identified. As we have written elsewhere¹⁵, the motif is peculiar to the Karum of Kanesh Level II and Ib. For this reason the seal belongs to a period not later than level Ib. This evidence confirms the result gained from pottery found in Warshama's Palace¹⁶.

¹³ OIP XXIX, Fig. 249, d 2216, d 2222, d 1523; MDOG zu Berlin Fig. 50, 1, 2; MDOG 89, Fig. 32.

¹⁴ Bittel, Naumann, Otto, Yazılıkaya, No. 82; K. Bittel, Felsbilder, Pl. XXX, 82.

¹⁵ Belleten 84, p. 658; Anatolian Studies VI, 1956, p. 25.

¹⁶ Belleten 84, p. 658.

A Phrygian seal:

A stamp seal (No. Kt. f/t 204) from the Phrygian level of the city mound, is the last example of stamp seals found in this site with which we shall deal at the present (H. 0.8; W. 1.8. cm.). The disc is pierced horizontally. Both faces are covered with similar geometric design, consisting of three crossing lines forming six panels. similar designs on discs are also found at Alishar hüyük in the "Post Hittite-Phrygian" levels¹⁷.

A second example whose provenance was most likely the city mound of Kültepe was purchased there from a peasant: a horizontally pierced disc of gray limestone (Kt. j/97, Pl. 2 d H. 1; W. 1.6 cm.) with only one decorated face showing a representation of a short-tailed animal on whose back is perched a bird facing in the opposite direction. They are surrounded by a single circular band. The quadruped appears to have two branched horns. If horned, then, because of the short tail, the animal is probably a stag. If the two branches are not horns, then, we must identify them as plant motives. Just above the ground line, between the hooped fore and hind-legs of the "stag" a large globular object is represented. As the disc form is a characteristic shape of the Late Hittite-Phrygian Period, we are inclined to place our seal chronologically with the above mentioned group.

a) The seals of level Ib of Karum:

Some of the seals which were found in level Ib of the Karum of Kanesh, have been published by the writer¹⁸. We shall here deal with new material which came to light during recent seasons. The material represented consists only of stamp seals of different materials.

Seal No. Kt. i/k 46, Pl. 3 a-b of bone has a stalk handle with suspension hole and disc (H. 2.4; W. 3 cm.). Despite the relatively bad state of preservation of the latter, the subject matter can be identified and is of much interest. In the center of the field a male deity is represented standing on a bull with an altar in front of him. He wears short tunic in several tiers. His arm is stretched backwards and he appears to hold a mace. His conical headdress might possibly be horned. Along the circumference of the disc, to the right of the

¹⁷ OIP XXX, Fig. 478, d1847, d 1517, c 625.

¹⁸ Belleten 85, p. 7, 13.

deity, is a long necked animal, probably a horse. Its legs are not shown. Perched on its back is a bird, looking in the opposite direction. To the left of the deity is a seated lion facing the god and along the circumference in front of the horse's head lies a fishman. Filling motives scattered over the field have not been identified, and we can not decide at present whether they represent inscriptions.

No. Kt. i/k 57, Pl. 3c H. 1.3; W. 1.5 cm. is a clay stamp seal, with conical handle, the tip of which is missing. Its periphery is horizontally ribbed. The representation on the base is surrounded by a rope pattern. The field is filled by a seated lion in profile with a long, curved, upright tail. Anatomical details are not well defined, but, comparing the figure with the lion on an Alacahöyük seal (Fig. 20b), we can conjecture its original details.

No. Kt. i/k 52, Pl. 3d (H. 0.8; W. 2.9 cm) is a gable-shaped stamp seal. It is pierced horizontally and its base is rectangular. The field is decorated with a standing stag, or antelope with two curved horns. Gable-shaped stamp-seals with naturalistic representations were also found in Anatolia at Alishar hüyük in level III¹⁹, also in northern Mesopotamia, generally in the levels of the Jemdet-Nasr Period²⁰. Our Kültepe example seems to have used a seal style which survived from an earlier period. However we can not preclude the possibility, that it was an ancient seal reused in level Ib.

The steatite seal No. Kt. j/k 96 (Pl. 3c) probably also is of ancient origin surviving in this level as Pl. 3d (H. 1.1.; W. 1.9 cm.). Its handle is small, short and pierced. The base is covered with a grid pattern of incised lines.

No. Kt. j/k 4 (Pl. 4a) is an unusually large black clay stamp seal with stalk and disc base (H. 5.5.; W. 5 cm.). The pattern is cut crudely, unusually deep, and curvilinear and represents a short-tailed animal in profile with the head looking backwards. This seal with its large dimensions and crude workmanship belongs to a type with geometric designs found at Alishar²¹.

¹⁹ OIP XXVIII, Fig. 186, e1225, b1839.

²⁰ Iraq IX) (1947, Pl. XIX, 6, 110.

²¹ OIP XXIX, Fig. 258.

A particularly fascinating group of seals consists of three examples. All are stamp seals with disc bases and pierced handles. Their chief peculiarity consists in the fact that they are covered with geometric patterns, composed of wedge (or nail) shaped forms similar to those used in cuneiform inscriptions. In three examples, the patterns are arranged around a central focal point. In seal Kt. i/k 9, Pl. 6c the center is a circular boss and the wedges around it are placed in two ranges. The inner wedges lie on their long sides around the boss. In the outer range, the apexes point toward the center.

In the second example, No. Kt. j/k 95 (Pl. 4b) the central boss is marked with (H. 1.9; W. 1.7 cm) a cross. The wedges around the base alternate in having apexes or bases pointed towards the center.

The third example, No. Kt. g/k 262, Pl. 4c has six inner wedges suggesting a wind-blown "pinwheel" surrounded by twelve wedges, whose apexes point toward the center.

A stamp-seal with pierced stalk-handle, made of black burnished clay No. Kt. j/k 98 Pl. 5a was brought to light in area P/20 (H. 2.3; W. 2.1 cm.). The design differs markedly from the others of the same level. It consists of two hatched lines crossed at right angles forming four panels filled with rayed discs. They probably symbolize the sun or stars. The rays are windblown giving a feeling of movement. The pattern is surrounded by a circular band from which lines forming a fringe-like border are suspended.

We now come to the last example of the collection from level Ib. No. Kt. i/k 8, Pl. 5b (H. 1.7; W. 2.2 cm) is a carefully made stamp-seal of clay with a conical handle (tip missing), whose periphery is horizontally ribbed. The base is surrounded by a double rope, the central field is covered by a four-looped guilloche of three strands. In the free space between two of the loops, and the rope-border is a chevron, its apex pointing toward the center of the field. We have not interpreted the symbolism represented. There can be no doubt that the guilloche and chevron carried a specific meaning on this seal. The guilloche delineated on our seal as a central motif is the first example of its kind that we know of in Anatolia.

c) *Cylinder seal of the level II.*

Two cylinder seals from level two were previously published by

the writer²². An additional cylinder seal was found in the excavations of 1958 in area H/22, in the refuse layer under level II. No. Kt. j/k 94, Pl. 5c (H. 2.1; W. 1 cm.) of serpentinite represents an adoration scene consisting of Adad standing on his bull with three standing worshippers facing him. Adad is crowned with a conical horned head-dress and wears a short tunic horizontally banded. In his left arm he carries an ax, with his right hand he holds a three pronged lightning bolt and a rope attached to the bull's nose. The worshippers wear long robes decorated with horizontal bands. Their headdresses are of the "calotte" type. The angular details of the individual figures, their accessories and the fork-shaped hands of the adorants are characteristic features of the Old Assyrian style of level II. Our seal, being typical of this style, despite its provenance, without a doubt belongs to this context, i.e. level II.

d) *Bulla of level III*. Until the 1958 excavations at the Karum of Kanesh we had found only one stamp seal in situ in level III. During the 1958 season, a fragment of a black clay bulla No. Kt. j/k 99, Pl. 6a (H. 3.7; W. 3.2 Th. 1.3 cm.) came to light in this level in area K/12. Originally the bulla bore two cylinder seal impressions of the same seal, but only some traces survive. The figures of half of one seal impression can be identified. The design consists of a grotesque horned animal appearing vertically. The line of its back continues and curls sideways forming a hook, it is impossible to determine whether this is meant to be a tail or a leg. To the right is a stylized monster suggesting a heraldic eagle with spread wings. We have not found any parallel among the seals of level II or elsewhere for this.

FOUR STAMP SEALS IN THE KAYSERI MUSEUM

The Kayseri Museum possesses a collection of stamp seals which, without doubt came from Kültepe. Some have already been published by the writer²³. The present article deals with seals which seem to belong to the group from level Ib of the Karum of Kanesh. On the basis of comparison with level Ib seals we are able to place them in a definite period.

²² Ausgrabungen in Kültepe 1949, Pl. LV, 519, 520.

²³ *Artibus Asiae*, X/3, p. 237; Ausgrabungen in Kültepe 1949, Pl. LXXV, 739.

Three are conical-shaped with pierced bulbous end, and ribbed periphery. They are characterized by schemes with heraldic animals. In a previous article when we discussed this type of iconography, we concluded that the scheme first appeared in Anatolia in level Ib of the Karum of Kanesh²⁴.

Stamp seal. Kayseri Museum No. 1845 (Pl. 5d H. 1.4; W. 1.9.) is of baked clay. Part of the handle is missing. The scheme consists of two confronted griffins flanking a moulded pillar. The group appears above a crouching hare. A seal found in the excavations of Düdartepe near Samsun (Pl. 6b) in the Imperial Hittite level shows confronted eagles over a hare with a pillar represented as a vertical line. At Kültepe, in the Karum of Kanesh, two confronted eagles appear over a bull. Here, the pillar is lacking. In our opinion, its absence indicates an abbreviation of the heraldic scheme. An example found in K/20 a/1 and below level 2 at Boğazköy shows two confronted eagles over a hare²⁵, while another seal made of clay found in level IV shows two confronted eagles over a goat²⁶.

The other two examples from the Kayseri Museum with animal designs differ from No. 1845 which had a regular scheme. On these, two superimposed animals cover the entire field surrounded by a rope. In our opinion, in general, the superimposed animal is attacking the one below, and we consider that a symbolical meaning may be intended, i. e., that the stronger attacking animal is defeating the weaker or lower animal.

Kayseri Museum No. 365 (Pl. 6d H. 2.2; W. 2 cm.). A stamp seal of red stone shows an attacking eagle over a hare occupying the field surrounded by a rope border. At Alishar hüyük, the same scheme and animals has been found²⁷.

Kayseri Museum No. 334 (Pl. 7a H. 2.3; W. 1.9 cm.) stamp seal of stone bears a griffin over a bull attacking with its claws, surrounded by a rope pattern.

The shape of the latter two seals is similar, but the style of execution of the animals differ. The difference is pronounced, especially

²⁴ *Bulleten* 85 (1958) p. 13.

²⁵ *Abhandlungen der Deutschen Orient Gesellschaft*, No. 2. Boğazköy III, Pl. 32, 41.

²⁶ *MDOG* 89, Fig. 32b, p. 42.

²⁷ *OIP* XXVIII, Fig. 249, 3097.



in their heads. In No. 365, the rendering leans toward naturalism. In. No. 334 the exaggerated eyes and other details are linear and geometrical.

A conical stamp seal No. 14890 (Pl.7d, 8a H. 3.6; W. 2.7 cm.) similar to those of the Kayseri Museum, was bought by the Ankara Museum from a peasant of Alacahöyük. It bears a striking resemblance in subject matter to the two seals of the Kayseri Museum just discussed. It surpasses them in the superiority of its craftsmanship. Although unstratified, the style of rendering leave no doubt that it is contemporary with seals of the Karum of Kanesh level Ib. A rope border encloses three animals which cover the field: a crouching bull, a lion facing in the same direction, its front paw on the bull's neck. In the intermediate space between their heads is a hare looking backwards in the same direction as the lion and bull. It appears to be seated on the bull's horn, and its body closes the revolving movement of the pattern. While the lion's paw is on the bull's neck, his open mouth seems to be threatening the hare.

The three animals are modelled in soft relief, but their details, particularly of the head reveal a linear technique reminiscent of seal No. 334 (Pl. 7a) in the Kayseri Museum. The Alacahöyük seal is a rare example of fine craftsmanship and clarity of details. Stylistically it throws light on seals in the Kayseri Museum and other collections in this category.

The Kayseri Museum stamp seal No. 263 (H. 0.8; W. 3 cm.) is the last example of the Kayseri collection with which we shall deal here. It differs in all respects from the others described above (Pl. 7 bc). It is disc shaped of white stone, perforated vertically and horizontally. The latter hole belongs to the original state of the seal. The central vertical hole which disturbed the original pattern on both sides indicates a secondary use. The design consisted of a central round panel separated by a wide outer border, in its turn framed by a circular line parallel to the circumference. Originally the field probably bore a hieroglyphic inscription, but it is defaced. The border is covered with a pattern of alternating variants of guilloches. One space between them has a rosette and three leaves; in the other space, a triangle and eight leaves. On the second face of the seal are four guilloches with date-palm branch, rosettes and scattered leaves. The plant motives are stylized.

A disc seal in the Louvre Museum resembles these seals in form, motives and arrangements²⁸. Another example, which was purchased from a peasant at Boğazköy, was assigned by T. Beran to period 1/3-4 of Boğazköy²⁹. It bears a striking resemblance to the Kayseri seal, and an example from Karahöyük near Elbistan which also was purchased from a peasant³⁰. Güterbock published seals belonging to this category³¹ and dated them in the Hittite Imperial Period or possibly the Late Hittite Period.

Although we already have published (*Artibus Asiae* X, 13, pp. 237) an exceptional seal with a religious design from the Kayseri Museum Collection, the photograph presented at the time did not show all the details clearly. We are therefore including a new photograph in this article (Pl. 8b).

Ankara

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²⁸ Delaporte, *ibid.* Pl. 100, 14 (A 1015).

²⁹ Boğazköy III, Pl. 31, 33.

³⁰ Tahsin und Nimet Özgüç, *Ausgrabungen in Karahöyük. Bericht über die in Auftrage der Türkischen Geschicht Kommission in 1947 durchgeführten Ausgrabungen.* Ankara 1959, Pl. XLVII, 6 a-b.

³¹ MDOG 78, Fig. 7, 2.