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Author(s): Leonard W. King

Source: *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, Vol. 1, No. 4 (Oct., 1914), pp. 237-240

Published by: [Egypt Exploration Society](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3853769>

Accessed: 09-01-2016 08:01 UTC

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SOME NEW EXAMPLES OF EGYPTIAN INFLUENCE AT NINEVEH (*continued*)

BY LEONARD W. KING, Litt.D.

[See Plates XXXV and XXXVI]

II. Egyptian *motifs* in Assyrian and Phoenician design.

WE saw reason to believe that the ivory figure of Ishtar, described in the first part of this paper¹, was the central feature in a larger composition, which may well have been an inlaid panel resembling those found by Layard at Nimrûd. Additional support for this suggestion may be seen in the fact that the same chamber of the south-west palace at Kuyunjik yielded three ivory and paste fragments, which may have formed parts of that composition and of another panel of the same character. These are reproduced on Plate XXXV, Nos. 1—3, and it will be seen that they, too, exhibit clear traces of Egyptian influence.

The most interesting of the three is No. 2, a fragment of ivory carved in relief with a finely conceived pattern of lotus-flowers and buds². The buds fit in below the open blossoms, the outer edges of which are joined conventionally. A pleasing variety is introduced into the design by an alteration in the angle of the stalks, each row of buds and flowers springing from right or left alternately. It can be seen in the photograph that the lowest row of lotus-flowers curves round at a slight angle to the main surface of the ivory; this was evidently the lower edge of the patterned area, as in that row no buds are carved beneath the open flowers. In the top left-hand corner part of the original edge is also preserved, for the back of the ivory has here been chamfered off at an angle, cutting through one of the lotus-petals. From the apparently irregular shape of the piece preserved, it seems probable that the pattern was employed to enrich the field of the panel between figures in higher relief.

Conscious imitation of an Egyptian model may be seen in the employment of a cartouche with garbled hieroglyphs, possibly as the centre of a panel arranged like one of those from Nimrûd³. The cartouche (No. 3)⁴ is of blue paste and the upper portion, which is all that is preserved, is carved with the hieroglyphs , a garbled

¹ See above, pp. 107 ff.

² Ki. 1904-10-9, 430. The fragment measures $1\frac{3}{8}$ in. by 2 in.; the thickness of the ivory is $\frac{3}{8}$ in. The back was probably flat, but the surface has flaked off.

³ See above, p. 108, n. 5.

⁴ Ki. 1904-10-9, 432; see above, p. 108, n. 4.

Objects from Kuyunjik (Nineveh).

form of the Egyptian royal name Seti. Egyptian influence is less apparent in the other ivory fragment, which represents part of the legs and torso of a male figure, wearing a tunic and belt (No. 1)¹. The border of the tunic was inlaid with lozenges of different coloured paste, arranged alternately, and the belt with a single piece which is wanting. The method of inlaying was probably suggested by Egyptian work.

A different class of object is represented by the limestone cylinder reproduced on Plate XXXV, No. 4. The upper end of the stone is bored to a depth of $\frac{3}{4}$ in. for fixing to another surface, and the edge at the base is cut round as though to fit into a metal socket². The stone probably formed part of the handle of a mace or sceptre. Around its centre is carved a pattern of alternate lotuses and leaves, springing from a continuous stalk; and above and below are borders representing water in the conventional Egyptian style. The central *motif* of the design is familiar enough, though veined leaves here take the place of the more usual lotus-buds³. But the adoption of the Egyptian convention for water, , is novel. The Assyrian method of representing water, by means of parallel curves and scroll-work, is quite distinct.

The last example of an Egyptian *motif* in work from Nineveh is the engraved shell which is figured on Plate XXXVI. While it is permissible to ascribe an Assyrian origin to such an object as the stone cylindrical handle, No. 4, there can be little doubt as to the Phoenician parentage of the engraving on the shell. Shells of this species, *Tridacna squamosa*, decorated with line engraving, have been recovered on Mediterranean sites as well as in Mesopotamia, and it is probable that in every case they are the work of Phoenician craftsmen of the viiith and viith centuries⁴. Of the Mesopotamian series the first to be published was that found by Loftus at Warka, which is engraved with the heads of two horses, evidently harnessed to a chariot, while the field is filled in with lotus-flowers and buds⁵. One of the finest specimens hitherto recovered is a nearly complete shell, of the 82-9-18 Collection, in which the thick centre of the base is carved in the form of a human head fitted with wings represented by the expanding body of the shell⁶. The principal designs engraved upon its outer surface, a god rising from a solar disk flanked by two riders on horses, are thoroughly Asiatic in treatment; and here too Egyptian influence is only traceable in

¹ Ki. 1904-10-9, 431. The fragment measures $1\frac{3}{8}$ in. by $1\frac{1}{4}$ in.; the greatest thickness of the ivory is $\frac{1}{2}$ in. The original surface of the reverse is preserved and shows the trimming of the ivory to fit the fragment into the design.

² Th. 1905-4-9, 361. The stone measures $2\frac{1}{8}$ in. in length, and from $1\frac{7}{8}$ in. to $1\frac{3}{8}$ in. in diameter, tapering slightly to the top. The diameter of the boring in the upper surface is $\frac{5}{8}$ in.

³ For the latter, cf. PERROT and CHAPIEZ, *Hist. de l'Art*, II, p. 320, Fig. 136, from the decoration of a doorway at Kuyunjik; or the borders of diapered paving-slabs, carved in imitation of carpets (*op. cit.*, Figs. 131 and 135, and *Brit. Mus. Guide*, p. 36), which have been found both at Kuyunjik and at Khorsabad.

⁴ For the latest discussion of the subject, see the work of the Danish scholar Frederik POULSEN, *Der Orient und die frühgriechische Kunst* (1912), pp. 65 ff.

⁵ For woodcuts of the fragment, see LAYARD, *Nin. and Bab.*, p. 563; it is exhibited in the Babylonian Room in the British Museum, Case H, No. 177.

⁶ This specimen was found at Abû Habbah (Sippar), not at Nimrûd, as stated by POULSEN, *op. cit.* p. 69, who republishes it from *Bull. de corr. hell.* 1896, pl. XXXII f. With it may be compared the complete shell found in a tomb at Vulci (Brit. Mus., First Vase Room, Case E, 52-1-12, 3), and the interesting little fragment from Delphi (POULSEN, *op. cit.* p. 70).

Engraved shell from Kuyunjik (Nineveh).

the lotus-flowers and buds which decorate the disk and the field of the composition. In the fragment figured on Plate XXXVI¹ Egyptian elements predominate, as, in addition to the presence of the lotus, the principal figures in both the exterior and interior designs are winged sphinxes wearing the Double Crown. The shell, in fact, falls into the same category as two fragments from Naukratis and Camirus in the British Museum, on which sphinxes of the same character are represented². As in so much of his work, the Phoenician craftsman has not been very happy in his attempt at handling a foreign subject; his sphinxes are mere caricatures, though the general effect of the engraved surface of the shell is not displeasing.

It may be of interest to add that the engraved fragment recovered at Kuyunjik by George Smith in 1873³ is almost certainly part of the same shell, though the two fragments do not join. Each has the same discoloration of the under surface, and on the exterior of S. 2274 part of a sphinx is preserved with precisely the same hatched circle to represent the hind quarters. The Smith fragment is probably from the right-hand portion of the shell: the sphinx there faces to the right, below a similar border of lotus-flowers and buds. This latter may possibly have been the outer edge of a conventionally elaborate disk, flanked by the sphinxes, above which may have risen the figure of a male deity.

III. Direct importations from Egypt.

The objects which fall under this category are figured on Plate XXXV, Nos. 5—8.

The smaller scarab, No. 8⁴, is inscribed with the formula , and commemorates "a coming to Āpt-āsut (Karnak)"; it is the earliest of the objects found, as it dates from about the eleventh or tenth century B.C. Considerably later is the larger scarab, No. 7⁵, which dates from the period of the xxivth—xxvth Dynasties. Here, in the right half of the field, is a Nile-god kneeling in adoration before the obelisk of Amen, beside which is a disk; on the left is a cartouche containing the prenominal of Thothmes III, and below are a bee, emblematic of Lower Egypt, and a second disk. That scarabs were brought to Nineveh for use, and not merely as curiosities, is convincingly shown by the tablet figured on Plate XXXV, No. 5⁶. The receipt for barley, with which it is inscribed, is sealed with the borrower's seal. In place of an Assyrian cylinder, or a conical seal, a scarab has here been twice impressed on the soft surface of the clay. The upper part of its design is blurred, but below can be

¹ Ki. 1904-10-9, 425. The fragment measures 5½ in. by 3½ in. Some colouring matter has been rubbed into the engraving, before the photograph was taken, in order to bring out the design.

² First Vase Room, Case E, 86-4-1, 1597 and 64-10-7, 1976. In *Naukratis*, I, pl. XX, No. 16, the wings, hind quarters and tail of the sphinx can be made out if the plate is held upside down.

³ See Bab. Room, Case H, No. 175; its registration number is S. 2274. It should be noted that this is the fragment republished by PoulSEN, *op. cit.* p. 68, Fig. 69 (after *Bull. de corr. hell.* 1896, pl. XXXI), as from Nimrūd. As a matter of fact, Smith found it at Kuyunjik. The small fragment Th. 1905-4-9, 460 may also have been part of this shell; very little of its engraving is preserved.

⁴ Ki. 1904-10-9, 448; see above, p. 108, n. 1.

⁵ Th. 1905-4-9, 222; see above, p. 108, n. 2, and cf. HALL, *Catalogue of Scarabs*, p. 152, No. 1559.

⁶ Ki. 1904-10-9, 56; see above, p. 108, n. 3.

made out the prenomen of Thothmes III, within a cartouche, above the *neb*-sign; and on each side of it are two *nefer*-signs and two uraei wearing the White Crown. The two scarabs, like that used for sealing the tablet, may have been brought to Nineveh by merchants trading from Egypt or the Mediterranean coast.

The small bronze, figured on Plate XXXV, No. 7, represents the Egyptian god Ptah-Tanen¹, and dates from about the viiith century B.C. The presence of Ptah-Tanen's figure at Nineveh suggests possibilities of Egyptian influence in the religious sphere; for the later literature of Assyria exhibits a marked readiness to adopt new gods and incorporate them in its all-embracing pantheon. In the ivory figure of Ishtar as an Egyptian goddess we see how this breadth of view, which characterised the closing epoch of Assyrian history, could modify religious convention on its artistic side.

¹ Cf. BUDGE, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, vol. I, pp. 502 ff.