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SOME HYKSOS PLAQUES AND SCARABS¹

By G. D. HORNBLOWER, B. A.

The large plaque shown on Pl. XIX is of schist with traces of glaze now turned brown, and measures 105 mm. in length, 73 in breadth and 20 in thickness. It has a broad groove round the edge between the faces, and is bored through on its long axis as if it were modelled from a smaller plaque made to wear. It was bought at Luxor at the end of the war, but there is no indication of its place of origin.

The carving and treatment of the bull on the one face and the gazelle on the other, show grace and sympathy with animal life. The subject in *a*, a lion pulling down an animal, is to be found similarly treated among the hunting scenes of the Eleventh and Twelfth Dynasties at Beni Hasan² where, however, the victim is a bubale in one case and an ibex in the other

Fig. 1.

two, while on the plaque it is a bull with long horns, suggesting the domesticated animal although its slender build would fit the wild cattle of the Egyptian monuments. But the great crested bird harrying the gazelle is strange indeed. The motive is reminiscent of the

Fig. 2.

symbol of the Assyrian god Enurta, the eagle (often lion-headed) with outstretched wings, which grips a lion or a deer in each of its talons. Upon seals there are instances of the Assyrian eagle showing a treatment of the wings as on the plaque, and in one case, where he is grasping lion-headed snakes instead of the usual deer or lions (Fig. 1)³, he closely resembles that on the plaque in wings, tail and crest.

The type of the crested eagle, if mainly fanciful on this gigantic scale, may be connected with such tropical eagles as the *Spizaetus* and the African *Lophoaetus* which may have had a range different from their present one in ancient times⁴. It may also

¹ The objects illustrated in this article, except those in Pl. XX, figs. 1, 3, 4, Pl. XXI, figs. 6, 12, 24—26, are in the writer's possession.

² NEWBERRY, *Beni Hasan* I, Pl. XIII; II, Pls. IV, XIII.

³ JASTROW, *Bildermappe zur Rel. Bab. und Assy.*, No. 136.

⁴ My thanks are due to Mr. GRIFFITH for this suggestion and for several of the parallels quoted in this paper.

a

b

PLAQUE BELONGING TO G. D. HORNBLOWER, ESQ.

be compared with the type of the peacock(?) which occurs in Minoan art in a shape that with its crest, outstretched wings and long tail bears a considerable resemblance to the former; the beautiful relief showing it, carved in ivory, was found at Palaikastro and belongs to the period Late Minoan I (Fig. 2).¹ Finally, we may note in the scene on the plaque the symmetrical pair of concentric semi-circles at the base, probably indicating that the action is taking place on desert hills.

The plaque may therefore be said to have on one side affinities with Twelfth Dynasty art and on the other with Late Minoan I, which is contemporary with the early XVIIIth Dynasty. There can be little doubt that it belongs to the Hyksos period, for a characteristic of the scarabs of that period, as shown for example, in Professor NEWBERRY's book on *Scarabs*, Pl. XXV, is the seemingly meaningless manner in which hieroglyphs are scattered on the background, as was done in this plaque. Another characteristic is the frequency of animal subjects which, apparently, do not occur in earlier times, though common enough in the scarabs of the XVIIIth and following Dynasties².

As to the little cynocephalus ape looking on as if in surprise at the lion-scene, we may note its occurrence also on the Syrian cylinder from Egypt published by Mr. SIDNEY SMITH below, Pl. XXIII, fig. 3.

In the British Museum is a smaller plaque of the same shape, No. 29442, exhibited in case G, No. 286, and figured here on Pl. XX, fig. 1. This is blue-glazed and the background still retains its colour. It is grooved round the sides like the larger plaque but is bored with two holes parallel to the short axis. One face shows a hunter with bow and arrows shooting a gazelle; the subject on the other face is obscure, a man bending over and killing some animal, or perhaps a lion devouring a contorted human body, as appears if it is turned the other way up. The workmanship is rough indeed, and the drawing primitive, but with a vigour of its own as if the artist understood and enjoyed, but lacked technical equipment. There is an unusual amount of hatching on the surfaces and the technique seems to me quite unlike Egyptian work before the Hyksos period, but shows affinity with several scarabs of the Hyksos group represented in NEWBERRY, Pl. XXV, especially No. 26. Here we have what appears to me to be a foreign technique and a new class of subject for objects of glyptic art, namely the picturing of wild animals and of hunting episodes, prompted, it would seem, not by religious or magic motives but by a sporting, perhaps even an aesthetic feeling towards the beasts themselves.

Another plaque shown in Pl. XX, fig. 2 and measuring 3×2 cm. is of schist, grooved round the sides like the preceding ones and bored on its long axis. The blue-green glaze that covered it still remains in the protected incised lines. The workmanship is admirable, showing the firm clear line of scarabs of the Twelfth Dynasty, but while one face exhibits Egyptian royal and religious symbols—the royal falcon beneath the winged disk³—the scene on the other face, a lion attacking an antelope, is similar to that on the large plaque. The action has a child-like placidity, neither animal appearing much concerned in the matter, as in the hunting scenes in the Beni Hasan tombs; it seems as if ancient artists, Egyptian and others, were often interested only in the shapes of

¹ DAWKINS, *Excavations at Palaikastro* in *Annual of the British School at Athens* XI, p. 285 fig. 14 a; BOSSERT, *Alt-Kreta* fig. 85.

² A small scarab, however, in the University College collection on which is engraved, sketchily but in fine line, a lion of massive parts, is attributed to Dyn. IX—X.

³ Compare the scarab in NEWBERRY, *Scarabs*, Pl. XXV, No. 16.

PLAQUES AND CYLINDERS

the animals, representing them, may I say, statically and not dynamically. The branch, bush or reed may be a suggestion of jungle. The hatched basket on the other side is very frequent at this period as a basal support or filling.

We next turn to the scarabs on Pl. XXI. Figs. 1 to 5 show lions and crocodiles and cobras; fig. 4 is of scaraboid form with characteristic rope-decoration on the back.

A feature to note is that the lion is often represented with his tail flourished high behind or over his back, and heavily tufted, the engravers in some cases having converted it into a cobra. In several scarabs the lion turns his head back, as in NEWBERRY Pl. XXV no. 19 (cp. No. 40151 and others in the British Museum collection).

An exceptionally fine lion scarab of this period is shown in fig. 6, taken from the cast of a specimen in the collection of Sig. DATTARI of Cairo, to whom my thanks are due for it. The cutting is superb, going down deep and straight, and the detail is very strong and free. The filling of the spaces with mere disks is very unusual.

Fig. 7 is somewhat similar, in finer line cut fairly deep, but it has the usual scattered hieroglyphs. Apparently the artists disliked bare spaces as did those of the later Assyrian decorative designs (carried on, in one line, to early Greek and, in another, to Saracenic times). On the loins of the lion here there seem to be indications of a belt or harness, as of a tame animal.

Pl. XXI, fig. 23 illustrates a non-Egyptian scarab obtained at Alexandretta; it shows a lion with head turned back walking before a background of reeds drawn in simple outline. This reminds one strongly of the scene on the walls of Medinet Habû of Ramesses III's lion hunt amongst reeds on the road to Syria.¹

Domestic cattle may furnish a figure occasionally (cf. NEWBERRY, No. 7 of Pl. XXV and WARD, *The Sacred Beetle*, Pl. XIV, No. 288).

I now turn to the human figures. Fig. 8 shows a man kneeling, holding a cobra, with two others in the field. It is a conventional Egyptian figure but the careful hatching, the general style and the shape of the scarab, indicate the Hyksos period. The line is clear and the cutting deep. Fig. 9 may be compared with it, both men and ibex being of the conventional type, cut deep and carefully hatched.

But the human figure is usually treated with much less conventionality, commonly in clear, simple outline, sometimes with hatching. In figs. 10 and 11 are good examples, holding a lotus and palm branch respectively. With them may be compared No. 1 of NEWBERRY, Pl. XXV, No. 509 of WARD, Pl. XIV, and my fig. 12 from the British Museum collection, No. 40506, showing a man kneeling and holding before him a bow, the hieroglyph of a warrior, drawn with great simplicity and no little vigour, one would almost say an ancestor of the warrior of early Greek art. Fig. 13, a kneeling man with palm branches, also a version of a hieroglyph, namely *ḥaḥ* "a million," is simply sketched in line on a scarab of an olive green, slaty stone, and perhaps signifies, with the *nb* sign, "untold riches."

Another type of abrupt novelty and not found after this period is exemplified in figs. 14 and 15 (cf. NEWBERRY, Pl. XXV, Nos. 5 and 6). These may represent some non-Egyptian deity, a mother-goddess, perhaps the equivalent of early Hathor, *i. e.*, Ishtar, or perhaps 'Anath, judging from the Hyksos royal name, 'Ant-her, known from

¹ MARIETTE, *Voyage*, Pl. 54.

a scarab¹; or again they may be connected with the female figurines in terra cotta &c., placed in graves from pre-dynastic times down to the Twelfth Dynasty, or others dedicated in Hathor temples about the beginning of the New Kingdom². The scarab figures are in most cases nude, like our No. 14, which is closely paralleled on the cylinder Pl. XX, fig. 3 (see below); compare also NEWBERRY, Pl. XXV, Nos. 5 and 6. But fig. 15 is clothed, as in NEWBERRY, Pl. XXV, No. 17, as is the front-faced figure in the cylinder just mentioned, whose dress, however, is more complete.

Such nude figures survived the Hyksos period in the form of mirror-handles. Pl. XXII represents a bronze mirror of the Seventeenth Dynasty: the woman holds her hand to her breast and in it a vague object that may represent a dove. Similar mirrors in the Cairo Museum with handles of bronze or ivory are illustrated in Pls. X to XIII of BÉNÉDITE, *Catalogue of Mirrors*; unfortunately in no instance can the object held against the breast be clearly identified.

Hawk-headed men are frequently depicted on Hyksos scarabs, v. figs. 16—18 and Pl. XXIII, fig. 6, similar to WARD, Pl. XIV, No. 93. Compare also Ward No. 323 on the same plate, British Museum No. 26988 exhibited in Case G under No. 1373 and No. IIA on Pl. XI of PETRIE, *Scarabs and Cylinders with Names*, which seems to me typically Hyksos in style and not necessarily to be connected with Antef V. The most obvious interpretation identifies them with Horus, or at least, with priests or temple attendants wearing Horus masks. Temerity might even suggest a connection with the eagle-headed winged creatures on the slabs from Kouyunjik sculptured with scenes from the Assyrian New-Year Festival referred to by Mr. SIDNEY SMITH in his article on *Marduk, Ashur and Osiris* (above p. 43) and in his article on the cylinder (below p. 207). Fig. 16 shows a finely cut scarab of good blue glaze with a palm leaf or reed decoration on the pro-thorax, and a plant by the advanced foot of the figure who holds up an adoring hand before symbols of Hathor and the moon, with which this goddess is closely connected. This Hathor symbol is a favourite subject on Hyksos scarabs, v. NEWBERRY, Pl. XXV, Nos. 13, 14, 15, 28 and 30. Figs. 17 and 18 carry staves and wear, like No. 16, the conventional stiff apron of high personages. Fig. 19 is strange—a lion seated, facing a kneeling hawk-headed man who stretches an arm to the lion; has this a ritual signification with the lion as king and the man as priest, or is it a mere artist's fancy? Fig. 20 shows the hawk of Horus with three cobras.

Finally, mention may be made of monsters, which on scarabs appear for the first time in the Hyksos period. These include the Sphinx, see fig. 21 and NEWBERRY, Pl. XXV, 7—10 (in No. 9 he is fully royal), and the griffin, see NEWBERRY, Pl. XXV, No. 11. Though the king is represented as a griffin in the Fifth Dynasty³, this mightiest of all animals is not again met with till its appearance among the desert creatures in the tombs at Beni Hasan⁴.

Traces of this Hyksos art in scarab engraving are fairly frequent till the middle of the Eighteenth Dynasty, as in No. 8 of NEWBERRY, Pl. XXVII with the name of Thutmosis I, and in the British Museum No. 37740 (Case A 370; v. also No. 381) and the unexhibited Nos. 30628, 28785 and 40753. A specially noticeable example is the

¹ FRASER, *Catalogue of Scarabs*, No. 180.

² GRIFFITH, *Oxford Excavations in Nubia in Liverpool Annals of Archaeology* VIII, p. 87.

³ BORCHARDT, *Das Grabdenkmal des Königs Saḥu-re'* II, Bl. 2.

⁴ NEWBERRY, *Beni Hasan* II, Pls. IV, XIH.

SCARABS (scale $\frac{3}{4}$)

cylinder of Amenophis II (NEWBERRY, Pl. VIII, No. 6). On a scarab in the University College collection, in the compartment labelled "Fighting," is a spirited representation of one man felling another with an axe, done in fine thin line resembling that in my fig. 13. Similar workmanship is found in scarabs of the beginning of Dyn. XVIII, but the freedom of the scene recalls the Hyksos spirit, the fighting is rendered for its own sake, free of paraphernalia, royal or religious; again, as in fig. 15, one is reminded of early Greek art. The scarab of fig. 22 is dated to the Seventeenth Dynasty by style and workmanship. The subject is unusually realistic, the upper register showing a man on his knees attacked from behind by a lion, and the lower a hippopotamus. Meaningless signs are engraved in the field, and the marks of Hyksos influence are evident.

The general characteristics of the technique are two, usually blended:—first, rough drawing, usually but not always vigorous; second, firm, sweeping outline. In many cases, as the illustrations show, the drawing is of a character new to Egypt and to my mind due to foreign influences. The strong line seems, on the other hand, to have originated in the glyptic art of the Twelfth Dynasty as shown in the scarabs and cylinders decorated wholly or in part with scroll designs, good examples of which are figured in NEWBERRY, Pls. XIX and XX and Pl. VII, Nos. 8 and 9. The manual skill necessary to produce these beautiful curves and loops is admirably developed in the succeeding age. I would draw special attention to my fig. 10, where the sureness of effect and the economy and strength of line can be well compared with the work of the ancient Greek vases. A very interesting example is a cylinder in the British Museum, No. 15700, exhibited in Case G, No. 228, and here reproduced in Pl. XX, fig. 3. The figures upon it are in pure outline with a little hatching, well ordered. They are, on one half, a hawk-headed male kneeling on a , a clothed woman standing represented in full face, a man standing on and a hawk-headed male standing; on the other half, a crocodile-headed man kneeling on a , and holding a palm branch, a hawk-headed male standing with palm branch, a crocodile-headed male, and a nude female full-faced with arms symmetrically down the sides. These figures may represent deities, Horus, Sebek and Hathor, the last both clothed in the Egyptian style and nude as in Mesopotamia¹.

Another British Museum cylinder, No. 30722, has been published in NEWBERRY, Pl. VII, No. 12 but is repeated here in Pl. XX, fig. 4 as the photographic reproduction makes clear its peculiar style. With it may be compared the cylinder No. 153 in FRASER, *Catalogue of Scarabs*. The hieroglyphs upon the former suggest the name of Antef V, Kheper-nub-re', which would date it to the intermediate period between the XIIth Dynasty and the Hyksos. BREASTED, *History of Egypt*, p. 212, brings out well the connection of this king with the foreign invaders of Egypt, and the cylinder illustrates unmistakably the beginning of new influences in Egyptian glyptic art. Their full development in cylinders is shown in the Khyan examples, NEWBERRY, Pl. VII, Nos. 7 and 10.

Addendum (1). In the British Museum collection are many scarabs of the types shown in this article as Hyksos, mostly of rough make and white, obtained largely, as Sir ERNEST BUDGE kindly informed me, from the Delta. For the benefit of students who may be interested in the matter, I give some numbers. In Case G, 27005 (287), 27952 (288), 17304 (289), 21852 (304), 28154 (305), 27323 (306), 45531 (284 bis); (the numbers in

¹ See also Pl. XXI, Nos. 14 and 15.

brackets are the case serial numbers). In Case H, 40766 (1178) and case numbers, 574—584, 590—602, and many of the following up to 790. Not exhibited:—Nos. 5388 (Anubis and two crocodiles), 4151, 40165, 43555, 42684, 42935 and 48748.

Addendum (2). In looking for scarabs of Hyksos style I found three interesting specimens, perhaps of much later date, shown here in figs. 24—26. They are all in the British Museum, Nos. 53584, 38863 and 46745. The first represents a vase on a wooden stand flanked by winged uraei; and the other two show vases of quite foreign types, made undoubtedly of metal. I do not venture to offer suggestions, but have reproduced them as likely to interest students.

Fig. 27 is a scarab of the Treasurer Har, a personage whose name appears more commonly than any other on scarabs (*e. g.*, PETRIE, Pl. XV, Bu and XVII Bt to CE; FRASER, *Catalogue of Scarabs* Nos. 68 and 89); it is included here only on account of its ornate back.

BRONZE MIRROR