

GLYPHTIC STYLE AND SEAL FUNCTION : THE HASANLU CONNECTION *

This article is intended as an overview of the seals and clay sealings discovered during major excavations at the Iron II period settlement at Hasanlu in Northwest Iran (see Map, Pl. XXVa) ¹. It will incorporate methods of art history with the available archaeological, functional, and historical evidence in order to best address issues of seal use and function. The study is particularly interested in the possible relationship between seal style and usage, for the Hasanlu assemblage presents an interesting dichotomy between glyptic style and artifact-type. Specifically, while the clay sealings were virtually all impressed with seals of so-called Hasanlu local style, most of the actual seals discovered represent foreign styles or imports. The present study aims to demonstrate that this pattern is meaningful; that there is a correlation between seal style and usage, with "local" and foreign-style seals holding very different functions at the settlement.

The Hasanlu finds are especially important because of their controlled stratigraphic context, providing them with a precise archaeological and cultural setting. Hence, although the site has yielded virtually no written texts ², it does provide vital contextual data—precious information in trying to understand the original usage of the seals and sealings.

* The material presented in this article is based on the author's doctoral dissertation, *The Seals and Sealings from Hasanlu IVB, Iran* (University of Pennsylvania, 1988, available through University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan). Henceforth MARCUS (1988). A revised version of the dissertation will be published in the Hasanlu Special Studies Monograph Series of the University Museum, University of Pennsylvania. I am grateful to Robert H. DYSON, Jr., Director of the Hasanlu Project, for permission to study the Hasanlu glyptic, as well as to Edith PORADA, Irene J. WINTER, and Richard L. ZETTLER for their comments on the dissertation. Further thanks go to Piera FERIOLI, Enrica FIANDRA, and Erik HALLAGER for their comments and suggestions on the paper delivered in Austin; and to Philip MARCUS and Mary M. VOIGT for their assistance. The photographs in Pl. XXVIa-b, XXXb and XXXIb are courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Pl. XXXa is reproduced by permission of the British Museum. Pl. XXVa, XXVIc, XXVII, XXVIII, XXIX, XXXIa, d-e and XXXII-XXXIII are by Denise L. HOFFMAN. Pl. XXVIIIc and XXIXa are based on site plans by Robert H. DYSON, Jr., available courtesy of the Hasanlu Project, the University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania. Pl. XXVb is by Grace Freed MUSCARELLA. Pl. XXXIc is by Steve BROULIS.

1 Excavations were conducted from 1956-77 by a joint team of the University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania, The Metropolitan Museum of Art (from 1959), and the Archaeological Service of Tehran, under the general direction of Robert H. DYSON, Jr. The objects are now divided between these institutions, with one sealing from preliminary soundings in 1936 by Sir Aurel STEIN held at the British Museum.

2 The only inscriptions from Hasanlu occur on imported objects: for instance, a macehead of the Middle Assyrian king Assur-uballit (R.H. DYSON, Jr. and V.C. PIGOTT, "Survey of Excavations in Iran, 1973-74: Hasanlu", *Iran* 13 [1975] 183) and a stone bowl that refers to the king of the land of Idi (R.H. DYSON, Jr., "Problems of Protohistoric Iran as Seen from Hasanlu", *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 24 [1965] fig. 8). With the absence of texts at Hasanlu, the situation parallels that which existed in pre-palatial Crete (also noted by E. HALLAGER in his response to my paper, this volume). On the origin of writing in Iran, see discussion and references in R.N. FRYE, *The History of Ancient Iran* (1984) 95-96, n. 29 and 30.

Although the Citadel Mound was occupied from roughly 6000 to 250 B.C., all of the finds to be discussed here were discovered in a single burned level caused by a major destruction of the settlement at the end of so-called Period IVB, around 800 B.C. (see plan in Locus Map I, Pl. XXVIIIc). Historically, this time-frame corresponds to the early Neo-Assyrian period, when Assyria was first establishing itself as a territorial empire and when the Neo-Assyrian kings, Assurnasirpal II (883-859 B.C.) and his son, Shalmaneser III (858-824 B.C.), first began to conduct military campaigns in the Zagros Mountain regions around Hasanlu. It should be stated from the beginning of this study that I am somewhat hesitant about discussing the Hasanlu material in a publication devoted to seals and administration. For in the absence of historical documents, we know virtually nothing about administrative principles in Iran in this early part of the first millennium B.C. and must depend solely on the archaeological record for this level of information.

Architectural plans of the ninth century B.C. settlement on the Citadel Mound show the remains of elite, monumental buildings formally organized around a central courtyard, with individual structures having large columned halls fitted with benches along the sides, throne areas, and hearths (see Locus Map I, Pl. XXVIIIc). Such evidence suggests that the site in fact served as a major political and administrative center, as does the discovery within the burned buildings of abundant luxury goods in precious materials.

The present article aims to demonstrate that the Hasanlu *sealings* likewise functioned on an administrative level, not perhaps in the complicated sense of government bureaucracy, but certainly in the more simple *management* or control of goods and goods storage. For the term "sealing" refers here specifically to 31 lumps of clay that were pressed when moist upon doors and containers actually to seal them shut, as the markings on the undersides indicate³. The exposed surface of these *commodity sealings* was then secondarily impressed with a seal and allowed to dry (with impressions often overlapping, upside-down, only partially impressed, and distorted). The following discussion will draw first on matters of typology and archaeological context to best understand the function of the sealings, nearly all impressed with "local style" cylinder seals; and second, on seal iconography to suggest the possible level of individual or office controlling sealing transactions at the site.

In contrast, it will be seen that the majority of actual seals discovered present an altogether different picture. Most of these finds present foreign styles, of which this paper will concentrate on cylinder seals of Neo-Assyrian style. Evidence will be presented to suggest that these cylinders may not have been used as seals in actual transactions at the settlement, but rather were collected and worn as personal ornaments, as signs of status and prestige. Related to this notion are studies by social scientists and art historians on the *affective* properties of art and the "social role of things"⁴. For instance, the anthropologist Martin Wobst has discussed the

3 In addition, there are three "tabs" or flattened, ovoid-shaped tags of clay. These objects are distinguished from "sealings" by their smooth back surface (showing no signs of having actually sealed something shut) and by the care with which a cylinder seal was rolled across their front surface, leaving a single, clear impression. See further MARCUS (1988) 33 and my comments to the paper by S. SMITH, this volume.

4 Especially : A. APPADURAI, "Introduction : Commodities and the Politics of Value", in A. APPADURAI (ed.), *The Social Life of Things : Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (1986) 3-63; F. BRAUDEL, *The Structure of Everyday Life : The Limits of the Possible* (1979) 24, 31, 266-333; M. DOUGLAS and B. ISHERWOOD, *The World of Goods : Towards an Anthropology of Consumption* (1979); J.L. HANTMAN and S. PLOG, "The Relationship of Stylistic Similarity to Patterns of Material Exchange", in J.E. ERICSON and T.K. EARLE (eds.), *Contexts for Prehistoric Exchange* (1982) 237-263; M. SHAPIRO, "On Some Problems in the Semiotics of Visual Art : Field and Vehicle in Image-Signs", *Semiotica* 1 (1969) 223-242; P. WEISSNER, "Style and Social Information in Kalahari San Projectile Points", *American Antiquity* 48 (1983) 253-276; I.J. WINTER, "Perspective on the 'Local Style' of Hasanlu IVB : A Study in Receptivity", in L.D. LEVINE and T.C. YOUNG, Jr. (eds.), *Mountains and Lowlands : Essays in the Archaeology of Greater Mesopotamia* (1977) 371-386; I.J. WINTER, "Royal

aspects of dress and headgear that symbolize rank and status in contemporary Yugoslavia ⁵. One of the questions raised by the Hasanlu material is whether glyptic style can function to signal status in a similar vein.

On the basis of a stylistic analysis of the seal designs, it has been possible to divide the Hasanlu glyptic into discrete stylistic groups and to establish criteria for distinguishing imports from locally produced seals. This discussion will review five major groupings (three categories of locally produced works and two foreign styles), but will concentrate on two stylistic groups in particular : the so-called local style of Hasanlu, represented in glyptic by a few seals and virtually all of the ancient impressions on sealings; and Assyrian-style cylinder seals. These categories are particularly telling in terms of usage of seals and sealings at the site, as well as of cultural and economic relations between Northwest Iran and the major centers of the Near East in the early first millennium B.C.

"Local Style"

The notion of a "local" art style at Hasanlu was first introduced in 1962 by Edith Porada with special reference to the designs incised on the famous gold bowl and silver beaker from the settlement (Pl. XXVb) ⁶. More recently, Oscar Muscarella identified a "local" style in the majority of carved ivory plaques from the site (e.g., Pl. XXVIa-b) ⁷. But the full range of attributes of the "local style" is perhaps best represented by the design on the silver beaker. As a roll-out drawing of the decoration indicates (Pl. XXVb), there is a marked tendency towards surface patterning and geometrization, and a liveliness of the representations—as in patterned garments on the human figures; animal bodies marked by rows of half-circles, herringbone bands, and horizontal and vertical striations; joints indicated by several parallel lines; and bands of oblique hatching between registers. Human figures are rendered with large heads, prominent noses, low receding foreheads, and large eyes. Animals are featured, especially horses and lions. Lions are regularly shown with large heads, wide open mouths, prominent teeth, and squared-off muzzles.

These same characteristics can now be tied to three or four cylinder seals in terracotta or bone (e.g., Pl. XXVIc), as well as virtually all of the ancient seal impressions on clay sealings (e.g., Pl. XXVIIa) ⁸. The sealings confirm perhaps better than any other artifacts the notion of a "local" art style at Hasanlu, since they indicate how seals were used at the site in actual transactions.

Typology and Context

Among possible sealing types and functions, perhaps the most familiar to wide audiences are jar sealings. At Hasanlu, these sealings bear the imprint of the jar profile from near the rim

Rhetoric and the Development of Historical Narrative in Neo-Assyrian Reliefs", *Studies in Visual Communication* 7 (1981) 21-22; and M. WOBST, "Stylistic Behavior and Information Exchange", in C.E. CLELAND (ed.), *For the Director : Research Essays in Honor of James B. Griffin* (1977) 317-342.

5 WOBST (*supra* n. 4) 330-335. Similarly, Jeffrey L. HANTMAN and Stephen PLOG (*supra* n. 4) have interpreted certain ceramic styles in the prehistoric American Southwest as status-related innovations.

6 E. PORADA, *The Art of Ancient Iran : Pre-Islamic Cultures* (1965; first ed. 1962) 114-116 and "Notes on the Gold Bowl and Silver Beaker from Hasanlu", in A.U. POPE (ed.), *A Survey of Persian Art XIV* (1967) 2971-2977. For the best illustrations of the silver beaker, see pl. 1488A-D and fig. 1044. For the gold bowl see pl. 1487 and fig. 1043.

7 O.W. MUSCARELLA, *The Catalogue of Ivories from Hasanlu, Iran*. Hasanlu Special Studies, vol. II, R.H. DYSON, Jr. (gen. ed.). University Museum Monograph 40 (1980) 1, nos. 1-213 (nos. 75 and 165 = our Pl. XXVIa-b).

8 MARCUS (1988) nos. 1-22, Chapter 2 (nos. 1 and 5D = our Pl. XXVIc and XXVIIa).

to a point on the shoulder ⁹. They were originally pressed at the jar neck, over cord that was wrapped around the vessel to secure a leather covering in place, as indicated by cord grooves and the impressed folds and texture of animal hide (see typology drawing, Pl. XXVIIb).

More interesting for the present purposes is a working typology of sealings from a variety of small containers and doors that owes much to the pioneering sealing function studies by Enrica Fiandra and the more recent work by Richard Zettler ¹⁰. Among these is a sealing in the collection of The Metropolitan Museum of Art (drawing, Pl. XXVIIa). The back of the sealing bears the imprint of part of a small round knob with concentric wood grain lines (reconstructed diameter 2.1 cm.), the end of a dowel impressed with a string groove, and string holes near the knob. In addition, there are traces of molten electrum preserved on the back surface. All of this information suggests that the sealing was originally attached to a gilded wooden box constructed with dowels, having a small wooden knob, and secured with string before the sealing was applied (see typology drawing, Pl. XXVIId) ¹¹.

Another sealing probably sealed the flat lid of a reed basket (or a bundle of reed matting) that was secured with string tied in criss-crossing directions ¹². The back shows the impression of uniform coils of woven reed matting, with the grain lines of the reed visible (drawings, Pl. XXVIIc-d).

Other sealings secured the contents of leather bags, these impressed with folds of leather and multiple, uneven wrappings of heavy cord or a leather thong presumably once tied around the "neck" of the bag (drawings, Pl. XXVIIe-f) ¹³. In order to distinguish in this working typology between jar and bag sealings (both impressed with leather folds), it is assumed that bags had smaller original neck-diameters than jars.

Last, two types of door sealings can be distinguished. One type was attached originally to a cylindrical peg that projected at a right angle from the surface being sealed and was wrapped with heavy cord (drawings, Pl. XXVIIIa-b) ¹⁴. Presumably, in order to hold the door closed, a cord affixed to the door was wound around a peg set into the door jamb. A sealing was then pressed over the cord and around part of the peg to secure the room from unauthorized

9 MARCUS (1988) nos. 5F, 9, 17 and 56B.

10 Especially E. FIANDRA, "A che cose servivano le cretule di Festos", *Πεπραγμένα τοῦ Β' Διεθνoῦς Κρητολογικοῦ Συνεδρίου* 1 (1968) 383-397; "Ancora a proposito delle cretule di Festos : connessione tra i sistemi amministrativi centralizzati e l'uso delle cretule nell'età del bronzo", *Bollettino d'Arte* 5 (1975) 1-25; and R.L. ZETTLER, "Sealings as Artifacts of Institutional Administration in Ancient Mesopotamia", *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 39 (1987) 197-240. Among other recent works on sealing types and functions are H. PITTMAN on sealings from Proto-Elamite Iran (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1989) and M. ROTHMAN on the sealings from Tepe Gawra (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1988).

11 Cf. ZETTLER (*supra* n. 10) 225, n. 43 for references to similar wooden boxes from Egypt.

12 MARCUS (1988) no. 5E. Cf. P. FERIOLI, E. FIANDRA, and S. TUSA, "Stamp Seals and the Functional Analysis of their Sealings at Shahr-i Sokhta II-III (2700-2200 B.C.)", in J.E. VAN LOHUIZEN-DE LEEUW (ed.), *South Asian Archaeology 1975* (1979) fig. 2a-b. Similar forms are known, as well, from Arslan Tepe, Ebla, and Phaistos (P. FERIOLI and E. FIANDRA, personal communication). Further evidence of similar coiled basketry was found inside the side walls and bases of ceramic vessels from the Neolithic settlement of Hajji Firuz Tepe near Hasanlu (M.M. VOIGT, *Hajji Firuz Tepe, Iran : The Neolithic Settlement*. Hasanlu Excavation Reports, vol. I, R.H. DYSON, Jr. [gen. ed.]. University Museum Monograph 50 [1983] 264-267, pl. 25a-e, with a list [266] of additional parallels from Iran and Mesopotamia).

13 MARCUS (1988) nos. 5C, 11, and 19 (= our Pl. XXVIIe). Compare with a leather bag sealing from Nippur, in ZETTLER (*supra* n. 10) 223 and fig. 12. See also P.E. NEWBERRY, *Scarabs : An Introduction to the Study of Egyptian Seals and Signet Rings* (1906) fig. 10 for a drawing of a sealed bag on an Egyptian tomb painting at Medum.

14 MARCUS (1988) nos. 5I(?) 10, 16, and 20 (= our Pl. XXVIIIa). Cf. FIANDRA (1975) (*supra* n. 10) figs. 10d and e.

access¹⁵. For the purposes of this working typology, the length of the pegs (at least 5.0 - 6.0 cm.) and the thickness of the cord (approximately 0.5 - 0.7 cm.) ties these sealings to doors rather than to boxes or chests.

The second type of door sealing was attached to a larger, *knobbed* peg, and was wedged between the knob and the surface of the door or jamb¹⁶. These knobs can be related to actual knobbed terracotta wall nails and plaques found at Hasanlu and other sites in the Near East sometimes *in situ* near doorways¹⁷. However, the Hasanlu sealings probably sealed wooden knobs on a wooden surface (either a plate on the door jamb or the door itself), judging from the imprint of wood grains on the flat back surface¹⁸.

The above overview of sealing functions at Hasanlu (showing their use in securing doors and containers) acquires further significance when combined with contextual data—namely, where the sealings were found and what they were found with. Locus Maps I and II (Pl. XXVIIIc and XXIXa) present the distribution of the seals and sealings in the major Burned Buildings on the Citadel Mound. What is especially significant here is that while most of the actual seals (represented by circles) were found directly on building floors (Pl. XXVIIIc), most of the sealings (represented by triangles) were discovered in collapsed debris that presumably fell from a second storey (Pl. XXIXa). Further, it can be seen that the sealings were found primarily in three main clusters in two major buildings, so-called Burned Buildings II and V. These findspots are significant because they coincide with the major discoveries of carved ivory plaques at the site, as well as other precious goods in gold, silver, and inlaid glass.

There is then sufficient evidence, I believe, to reconstruct tentatively sealed storerooms on the second floors of two major buildings, in which were stored precious goods in a variety of sealed containers. Moreover, judging from the gilded-box sealing discussed above, some of the containers may have been luxury goods in themselves. In order to test these findings, they would need to be factored into future distribution studies of other artifacts from the site.

But even at this stage, it has nonetheless been possible to suggest *how* and *where* sealings were used at Hasanlu by drawing on precious functional and contextual data. The question of *who* controlled access to the proposed treasuries needs to be addressed, if not completely answered in the end. For this we need to turn to the iconography of the seal designs and to two most-common designs in particular.

Iconography and Function

One design can be reconstructed from partial impressions of the same seal found on ten different sealings, including the gilded-box sealing discussed above (Pl. XXVIIa)¹⁹. A composite drawing (Pl. XXIXb) displays a division of the design into two even registers with a

15 Cf. ZETTLER (*supra* n. 10) 210-213. Such a sealing system is preserved on ancient Egyptian doors and chests, where wooden knobs have survived with the cord and sealing still attached (FIANDRA [1968] [*supra* n. 10], and S. SMITH, this volume).

16 MARCUS (1988) nos. 5A (104-105) and 6A (132-134) and typology drawing, fig. 6.5b (p. 32).

17 E.g., from Tchoga Zanbil, in E. FIANDRA, "Porte e chiusure de sicurezza nell'antica oriente", *Bolletino d'Arte* 6 (1982) 1-18; Nippur, in D. HANSEN, "New Votive Plaques from Nippur", *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 22 (1963) 146-147, pl. I, and M. GIBSON, R.L. ZETTLER, and J.A. ARMSTRONG, "The Southern Corner of Nippur: Excavations During the 14th and 15th Seasons", *Sumer* 39 (1983) 187, fig. 30; Isin, in B. HROUDA, *Isin-Isan Bahriyat II: Die Ergebnisse der Ausgrabungen 1975-1978* (1981) 57, pl. 20, 2-3; and Mari, in D. BEYER, "Scellements de portes du palais de Mari", *MARI* 4 (1985) 383. See further FERIOLI, FIANDRA, and TUSA (*supra* n. 12) pls. 7, 8, fig. 6 and p. 15 on possible peg holes and pegs at Shahr-i Sokhta, Iran.

18 Cf. a wooden knob on a door-frame of Ramesses II period in the Egyptian Museum of Turin (FERIOLI, FIANDRA, and TUSA [*supra* n. 12] pl. 6).

19 MARCUS (1988) nos. 5A-J.

hatched border above and below. The upper band shows a hunter on horseback, facing left, throwing a spear at a stag whose head is turned in reverse. But of particular interest for the purposes of this discussion is the design in the lower register. At the far left is a lion striding left with a typically large head, turned in reverse, open mouth with prominent teeth, and squared-off muzzle—all features matched on "local" ivory plaques (cf. Pl. XXVIb) ²⁰. Behind the lion is a figural group: a standing attendant faces right, before a seated figure. The attendant, wearing a knee-length tunic, holds a vessel in his raised hand and perhaps a towel in his lowered hand. The vessel is tall, tapered toward the base, and divided into horizontal registers, much like the form and decoration of the silver beaker ²¹. The seated figure wears an ankle-length garment, and holds a bow before him. While both figures have the large heads and prominent noses standard in the "local" art style, the seated figure has a special prominent cluster of vertical striations of hair or a cap on top of his head. His chair has a high, slightly curved back, a type matched on several "local style" ivory carvings ²².

The particular *form* of the human figures, animals, and even vessel in the seal design are clearly consistent with what is known about the "local style", so far restricted to Hasanlu. Nevertheless, the *subject* of the lower register (a seated figure with a bow receiving a standing attendant with vessel and towel) is perhaps best known from the contemporary large-scale reliefs that decorated the palace of the Neo-Assyrian king, Assurnasirpal II, at Nimrud in northern Mesopotamia (cf. drawing, Pl. XXXa) ²³. The reliefs show the king seated, flanked by one or more attendants (often fan-bearers holding a towel and/or shallow cup), and with his bow held before or behind him.

A second, related seal design can be reconstructed from partial impressions on two sealings ²⁴. Although a composite drawing of the original seal design (Pl. XXXIa) presents a more delicate artistic hand than the first design just discussed, there is again little question as to the local production of the original seal. As before, there is a hunt scene in the upper (here narrower) register and a scene with a seated figure in the lower band. Again, the seated figure wears a long robe, but here rests his feet on a footstool. He receives a standing attendant carrying in one hand a bowl, and in the other hand a spouted jar with a basket handle. In addition, kneeling behind the seated figure is a winged eagle-headed genie, holding in his raised hand a fan, and in his lowered hand a jar similar in form to that held by the human attendant. Behind the genie is a tree with a chevron-decorated trunk and thin, curling branches.

It has already been seen that the theme of a seated figure with cup-bearers and fan-bearers is featured in the palace reliefs of Assurnasirpal II; even the footstool in this second design is standard in Assyrian portrayals of the enthroned king (cf. Pl. XXXa). Likewise, winged eagle-headed genies are prominent subjects in the Assyrian reliefs, where they are shown with or without the king, standing or kneeling, beside images of the many-branched "sacred tree" (e.g., Pl. XXXb) ²⁵. Interestingly, instead of the standard square bucket held by the demons in Assyrian art, the Hasanlu creature (as well as the human attendant) holds a long-spouted jar with a basket handle—a form characteristic of the Iron Age pottery from Hasanlu and other sites

20 Cf. MUSCARELLA, *The Catalogue of Ivories* (*supra* n. 7) nos. 163-166, 172, 175.

21 Cf. PORADA, "Notes on the Gold Bowl" (*supra* n. 6) pl. 1488.

22 Cf. MUSCARELLA, *The Catalogue of Ivories* (*supra* n. 7) nos. 116-118 and discussion, p. 177.

23 A.H. LAYARD, *The Monuments of Nineveh, from Drawings made on the Spot* (1849) pl. 5; R.D. BARNETT, *Assyrian Sculpture in the British Museum* (1975) pls. 8 and 12; WINTER, "Royal Rhetoric", (*supra* n. 4), fig. 5. See MARCUS (1988) 68-79 for a discussion of other, non-Assyrian, sources for elements in the Hasanlu "local style."

24 MARCUS (1988) nos. 6A-B.

25 V.E. CRAWFORD, P.O. HARPER, AND H. PITTMAN, *Assyrian Reliefs and Ivories in The Metropolitan Museum of Art: Palace Reliefs of Assurnasirpal II and Ivory Carvings from Nimrud* (1980) figs. 16 (= our Pl. XXXb) and 15; S.M. PALEY, *King of the World: Ashur-nasir-pal II of Assyria 883-859 B.C.* (1976) pls. 8 and 20.

in western Iran (cf. Pl. XXXIb) ²⁶. This jar type, like the silver beaker-type vessel held by the attendant in the first seal design discussed, points to the local production of the original seal, which had nonetheless been inspired by themes in royal Assyrian art.

That there were ample opportunities for such transmission of motifs from Assyria to Hasanlu is well-documented in the Assyrian royal annals. For, they record military activity in the Zagros regions around Hasanlu by the early ninth century B.C., and certainly by mid-century with the frequent campaigns of Shalmaneser III ²⁷. In addition, Assurnasirpal II records that he imported laborers from Zamua in the western Zagros to work on his new palace at Nimrud around 878 B.C., and that he later invited guests from western Iran to the dedication ceremonies ²⁸. Hence, verbal descriptions and/or first-hand viewings of the Assyrian reliefs could have inspired the residents at Hasanlu ²⁹.

In her discussion of the relationship between the "local" Hasanlu art style and Assyrian art, Irene Winter has argued convincingly for a model of emulation by which the Hasanlu elite attempted to absorb some of the status of the Assyrian empire ³⁰. Related to this notion is the selection by the local elite of emblems of authority and power associated with Assyrian monuments—as Winter points out, motifs dealing with military activity and the hunt ³¹, courtly activity in processions; and the embellishment of elite public buildings with glazed wall tiles ³². The sealings support this analysis and add another courtly theme to the list : attendance of a seated figure (Pl. XXIXb and XXXIa).

At this point, we might speculate as to the social rank of the seated figures in these two seal designs. For the association with Assyrian royal iconography; the seated position of the figures; the footstool in the design in Pl. XXXIa; the special hair style of the figure in Pl. XXIXb; their service by human and semi-divine attendants with vessels, towel, and fan; and the association of the actual sealings with luxury goods and alleged treasuries in Burned Buildings II and V all suggest that they represent a highly important individual at Hasanlu.

Certain questions immediately arise. Are we dealing with *personal* seals of an elite individual, used to secure and identify *private* treasuries ? Or, were they *official* seals used in a system of authority to manage and control access to royal or temple stores ³³ ? A complete

26 E.g., R.H. DYSON, Jr., "Notes on Weapons and Chronology in Northern Iran around 1000 B.C.", in M.J. MELLINK (ed.), *Dark Ages and Nomads c. 1000 B.C. : Studies in Iranian and Anatolian Archaeology* (1964) text-fig. 4, no. 8 and R.H. DYSON, "Hasanlu and the Solduz and Ushnu Valleys : Twelve Years of Exploration", *Archaeologia Viva* (1968) fig. 118.

27 A.K. GRAYSON, *Assyrian Royal Inscriptions*, 2 (1976) §§ 551 and 565; D.D. LUCKENBILL, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia*, 1 (1926) §§ 588, 607, 637. See further L.D. LEVINE, "East-West Trade in the Late Iron Age : A View from the Zagros", in *Le plateau iranien et l'Asie centrale des origines à la conquête islamique : leurs relations à la lumière des documents archéologiques* (Colloques Internationaux du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique 567 [1977]) 176 and n. 3, and "Prelude to Monarchy : Iran and the Neo-Assyrian Empire", in C.J. ADAMS (ed.), *Iranian Civilization and Culture* (1972) 39-40. On the geographical setting and the major east-west routes across the northern Zagros, see L.D. LEVINE, *Geographical Studies in the Neo-Assyrian Zagros* (1974) 3-14, 99-104 and "East-West Trade", 173.

28 GRAYSON (*supra* n. 27) §§ 565 and 682. On the mobility of craftsmen and other laborers in the Neo-Assyrian period, see S.C. BROWN, "Media and Secondary State Formation in the Neo-Assyrian Zagros : An Anthropological Approach to an Assyriological Problem", *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 38 (1986) 111 and C. ZACCAGNINI, "Patterns of Mobility Among Ancient Near Eastern Craftsmen", *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 42 (1983) 260-261.

29 See MARCUS (1988) 66-68 for a more detailed discussion of possible modes of transmission of Assyrian motifs to Hasanlu.

30 WINTER, "Perspective on the 'Local Style'", (*supra* n. 4) 381.

31 Compare the chariot scene on the silver beaker (our Pl. XXVb) with WINTER, "Royal Rhetoric", (*supra* n. 4) fig. 4.

32 WINTER, "Perspective on the 'Local Style'", (*supra* n. 4) 380.

33 As at Nippur (ZETTLER [*supra* n. 10] 222), for instance, where door sealings probably from the archive room of building Level IV of the temple of Inanna were impressed with the inscribed official seal of the

analysis of building functions in the final site publication may help to answer these questions³⁴. Yet with so little written documentation regarding the nature of administrative hierarchy in Iran in this period, we cannot know for certain who controlled the stores at Hasanlu³⁵. Nevertheless, it is hoped that by combining evidence of style and iconography on the one hand with that of function and archaeological context on the other, we are brought somewhat closer to better understanding sealing practices and goods control in at least this one particular time and place.

"Other Iranian Styles"

Geometric-Style Cylindrical Seal-beads

There are at least two other categories of glyptic objects from Hasanlu that may have been made at or near the site, although they do not represent the so-called local style, just discussed. Among these are cylinders of composite materials carved with simple geometric designs, such as crosshatching and vertical rows of chevrons (e.g., Pl. XXXIc)³⁶. Although parallels are known from sites all over the ancient Near East³⁷, there seems to be no reason to look outside Hasanlu for the place of production of these geometric cylinders.

The function of these cylinders, however, is not yet certain. Although sealings with geometric-style seal impressions have been discovered at earlier sites in southern Mesopotamia and Iran³⁸, none has been found at Hasanlu. Rather, most of the geometric cylinders from Hasanlu were discovered in groups with other beads, suggesting that they were worn as beads, and were probably not used in actual transactions.

Conoid-Knob Stamp Seals

More problematic in terms of place of production is a group of stamp seals having a truncated conical base, short indented stem with a perforation, and short conoid knob³⁹. They

chief administrator of the temple (showing a standard Ur III presentation scene). See further comments by E. HALLAGER in his response to my paper, this volume.

34 Meanwhile, preliminary remarks on building functions may be found in T.C. YOUNG, Jr., "Thoughts on the Architecture of Hasanlu IV", *Iranica Antiqua* 6 (1966) 48-71; R.H. DYSON, Jr., "The Architecture of Hasanlu: Periods I to IV", *American Journal of Archaeology* 81 (1977) 548-552; and DYSON and PIGOTT (*supra* n. 2) 183.

35 It is not known, for instance, whether we are dealing with a royal hierarchy or a chiefdom in this period. Sargon II records that in 715 B.C. he collected tribute from 22 Median *chiefs* (D.D. LUCKENBILL, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia*, 2 (1927) §§ 11 and 15). On this, see S.C. BROWN (*supra* n. 28) 107, n. 3 and 112-117, and P.R. HELM, "Herodotus' *Medikos Logos* and Median History", *Iran* 19 (1981) 86. For a general discussion of chiefdoms, see E.R. SERVICE, *The Origins of the State and Civilization: The Process of Cultural Evolution* (1975) 15-16 and 74 and R.L. CARNEIRO, "The Chiefdom: Precursor of the State", in G.D. JONES and R.R. KAUTZ (eds.), *The Transition to Statehood in the New World* (1981) 37-79.

36 MARCUS (1988) nos. 33 (= our Pl. XXXIc) - 42.

37 E.g., from Tchoga Zanbil (E. PORADA, *Tchoga Zanbil (Dur-Untash), IV: La glyptique* [Mémoires de la délégation archéologique en Iran 42, Mission de Susiane, 1970] nos. 128, 144, 153) and Sialk B (R. GHIRSHMAN, *Fouilles de Sialk, près de Kashan, 1933, 1934, 1937*, II [Musée du Louvre, Département des antiquités orientales, Série archéologique 5, 1939] pl. XCVII).

38 E.g., from the Proto-Elamite levels at Susa (P. AMIET, *Glyptique susienne des origines à l'époque des perses achéménides; cachets, sceaux-cylindres et empreintes antiques découverts à Suse de 1912 à 1967*, 2 vols. [Mémoires de la délégation archéologique en Iran 43, Mission de Susiane, 1972] nos. 1273 and 1331), and Tall-i Malyan (H. PITTMAN, personal communication).

39 MARCUS (1988) nos. 23-32.

are decorated on the seal face with insects (as in drawing, Pl. XXXId) ⁴⁰, as well as birds, sun disks, or geometric designs.

Although the general form of these stamps has antecedents in second millennium Anatolia ⁴¹, I know of only a handful of contemporary parallels for *both* the shape and seal designs. One or two examples each are known ranging from sites in Luristan in central western Iran to northern Syria ⁴². Although one cannot judge from numbers of extant examples where a given artifact was produced, there are hints that point to local usage and production of this stamp group. In particular, the form and details of a bird in one seal design have parallels on two "local" ivory plaques ⁴³. Further, several sealings from Hasanlu preserve impressions that could have been made by similar stamps; at least the size and shape of the seal face and some of the designs are similar ⁴⁴.

Syro-Palestinian Style

Among the *foreign*-style seals from Hasanlu, the most unexpected category has ties with the far west at contemporary or slightly earlier sites in the Levant. These include stamps of a composite material in the form of recumbent lions carved with animals (e.g., drawing, Pl. XXXIe) ⁴⁵ or human figures on the base that have parallels, for instance, at Megiddo and Beth Shan in the southern Levant ⁴⁶; and scarabs also carved with animals on the face ⁴⁷ that have matches at Lachish, for instance ⁴⁸. It remains uncertain whether these stamps reached Hasanlu directly from the Levant or, more likely, were transmitted indirectly through Assyria, where similar goods have been found ⁴⁹. Although this issue cannot be resolved at present, it has a bearing on the important question of whether Assyria controlled the trade routes to Northwest Iran in the ninth century B.C., or whether there was independent access from east to west.

40 MARCUS (1988) no. 25.

41 E.g., from Late Bronze I-II levels at Tarsus (H. GOLDMAN, *Excavations at Gözlü Tarsus, II : From the Neolithic through the Bronze Age* [1956] fig. 394, 32), and Alishar (H.H. VON DER OSTEN, *The Alishar Hüyük Seasons of 1930-32, part II* [Oriental Institute Publications 29, 1937] fig. 479). Cf. R.H. DYSON, Jr., "In the City of the Golden Bowl : New Excavations at Hasanlu in Persian Azerbaijan", *Illustrated London News* (1964) 374.

42 E.g., Surkh Dum (E.F. SCHMIDT, M.N. VAN LOON, and H.H. CURVERS, *Holmes Expeditions to Luristan* [in press], nos. xviii and xix); Assur (L. JAKOB-ROST, *Die Stempelsiegel in Vorderasiatischen Museum* [Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, vorderasiatisches Museum, 1975], No. 385); Balawat (Metropolitan Museum of Art 57.27.16, unpubl.); Halaf (M. VON OPPENHEIM, *Tell Halaf, IV : Die Kleinfunde aus historischer Zeit* [1962], pl. 28, 71). My thanks to Maurits VAN LOON and Hans CURVERS for sharing with me their unpublished material from Surkh Dum.

43 Compare MARCUS (1988) no. 23 with MUSCARELLA (*supra* n. 7) nos. 160 and 161.

44 MARCUS (1988) nos. 30-32.

45 MARCUS (1988) nos. 46-52 (no. 47 = our Pl. XXXIe).

46 Megiddo M 2796, in R.S. LAMON AND G.M. SHIPTON, *Megiddo I, Seasons of 1925-34, Strata I-V* (Oriental Institute Publications 42, [1935]) pl. VIII, 5; Beth Shan, Tomb 107, in E.D. OREN, *The Northern Cemetery of Beth Shan* (1973) 125, no. 6, illus. in A. ROWE, *A Catalogue of Egyptian Scarabs, Scaraboids, Seals and Amulets in the Palestine Archaeological Museum* (1936) pl. XXVII, 54.

47 MARCUS (1988) nos. 53-55.

48 O. TUFNELL, *Lachish III (Tell ed-Duweir), The Iron Age* (The Wellcome-Marston Archaeological Research Expedition to the Near East, 1953) pl. 45, no. 129.

49 For instance, at Tell Billa, east of Nimrud (Billa 3-219 = University Museum 33-4-102, unpubl. and Billa 3-191 = University Museum 33-4-88, unpubl.) and in graves at Assur (JAKOB-ROST [*supra* n. 42] no. 384).

Neo-Assyrian Style

The fifth and final stylistic group of seals from Hasanlu to be discussed here has connections with Neo-Assyrian glyptic. It bears notice that Hasanlu sits on major trade routes of the ancient Near East that provided easy east-west access through passes in the Zagros Mountains to the centers of the Neo-Assyrian empire, especially Assur and Nimrud. At the same time, an important north-south route linked Hasanlu with sites in the central and southern Zagros regions (see Map, Pl. XXVa) ⁵⁰.

The presence of objects in Assyrian style has long been recognized among the discoveries from Hasanlu. These include a number of ivory carvings ⁵¹, painted wall plaques ⁵², and military equipment ⁵³, as well as 21 so-called linear-style cylinder seals ⁵⁴. As early as 1949, Edith Porada assigned a group of linear-style cylinders in the collection of the Pierpont Morgan Library to the first half of the Neo-Assyrian period or the ninth century B.C. ⁵⁵, a chronology now confirmed by the discoveries at Hasanlu.

At Hasanlu, as at contemporary sites in Assyria proper—particularly Assur and Nimrud ⁵⁶, the linear-style seals are made of soft stones, often fitted originally with metal caps and suspension pins with looped ends (see drawing, Pl. XXXIIa). The style is characterized by a dependence on outline, with finely incised designs arranged in a single register. The main themes represented include : contests between archers and wild animals or mythological creatures, between winged creatures and smaller ruminants, or between two winged creatures; animal processions; genies flanking a palmette; and a banquet scene.

To date, the Assyrian-style goods from Hasanlu have been regarded generally as direct imports from the imperial centers in northern Mesopotamia. However, an analysis of the seals challenges this assumption. Specifically, it raises the notion of a marginal site of production somewhere between Assyria and Hasanlu to explain a group of linear-style seals having stylistic elements in common with the art of Iran. Although questions of artistic production were not among the list of problems conference participants were asked to address, I believe it is necessary first to establish *where* the Hasanlu seals were produced before asking *why* they were acquired and what *function* they served at the site. In particular, this section hopes to

50 On the geography see, in general, LEVINE, *Geographical Studies* (*supra* n. 27).

51 O.W. MUSCARELLA (*supra* n. 7) nos. 280-293 and discussion, 200-202.

52 R.H. DYSON, Jr., "Digging in Iran : Hasanlu 1958", *Expedition* 1 (1959) 14.

53 R.H. DYSON, Jr., "Excavating the Mannaeian Citadel of Hasanlu", *Illustrated London News* 239 (1961) fig. 14; O.W. MUSCARELLA, "Hasanlu in the Ninth Century B.C. and its Relations with other Cultural Centers of the Near East", *AJA* 75 (1971) 265.

54 MARCUS (1988) nos. 57-77, Chapter 5.

55 E. PORADA, *Corpus of Ancient Near Eastern Seals in North American Collections, I; The Collection of the Pierpont Morgan Library*, in collaboration with Briggs Buchanan (1949) 71-83, nos. 610-689.

56 For Assur see A. MOORTGAT, *Vorderasiatische Rollsiegel : Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Steinschneidekunst* (1940) 66-76, nos. 595-795. Unfortunately, most of the material from Assur comes from unstratified burial contexts, and are thus useful only in determining *where* the seals were produced and not *when* within the early Neo-Assyrian period. For Nimrud see B. PARKER, "Excavations at Nimrud, 1949-53 : Seals and Seal Impressions", *Iraq* 17 (1955) 93-125 and "Seals and Seal Impressions from the Nimrud Excavations, 1955-58", *Iraq* 24 (1962) 26-40. The Nimrud material has its particular set of problems as well, having mainly to do with the presence of foreign imports (some perhaps even from Iran) among the glyptic assemblage. Some Neo-Assyrian style seals have been found at Tell al Rimah, as well (B. PARKER, "Cylinder Seals from Tell al Rimah", *Iraq* 37 [1975], 21-38). The limited nature of the sample of linear style seals from Assyria proper should be stressed. They come mainly from Assur and are not tightly dated. In addition, there is a range of variation within the base sample that makes conclusions based on comparative studies speculative. A much-needed study of excavated Neo-Assyrian seals and seal impressions is currently being undertaken by Susanne Herbordt (forthcoming Ph.D dissertation, Universität München).

demonstrate the existence of both a "central" and "provincial" Assyrian glyptic style at Hasanlu, which itself shall be designated as at the *periphery* of the Assyrian empire; and then to suggest where the "provincial style" seals may have been produced. But it should be noted from the beginning of this discussion that I intend to introduce a third category into the standard theoretical paradigm of center and periphery : that of the outlying province that exists *between* major centers and their peripheries⁵⁷. The aim here is not to present any firm conclusions, but rather to stimulate perhaps some new ideas on center and periphery relations—an issue that has been most explicitly discussed in recent years by social scientists and historians seeking to explain integrated regional economic and social systems⁵⁸.

"Central Assyrian Style"

Surprisingly, when compared with excavated seals from Assyria proper, only a handful of the Hasanlu seals (6 of the 21) can be confirmed as typical products of central Assyria⁵⁹. Among these is the seal illustrated in Pl. XXXIIa (drawing)⁶⁰. The subject and composition are typical of excavated central Assyrian glyptic : a kneeling archer shoots his bow at an opposing, rampant, winged griffin, with a palmette set between them⁶¹. The archer typically wears a fringed kilt under a long fringed mantle (?), tied at the waist with a broad belt. Also standard are the scabbard worn at the waist and decorated with applied metal strips, and the quiver with hanging tassels⁶². The form of the griffin is likewise characteristic of central Assyrian forms, shown with a five-part crest, upcurled tail, and belt around his body⁶³. Last, also typical of the capital seals are the modelling and musculature of the human and animal forms, the carefully defined facial features, the precision of the carving, and the simple border of horizontal lines above and below the scene⁶⁴.

It is not surprising to find Assyrian imports at Hasanlu, there having been ample opportunities for interaction. As already mentioned, we know that the Assyrians were campaigning in the region by the mid-ninth century B.C., and that dignitaries from the northern Zagros were among the guests at the dedication ceremonies of Assurnasirpal's new capital at Nimrud. As for references to the actual exchange of goods, the royal annals indicate that Assyria regularly received horses and other products from the Hasanlu area⁶⁵. Hence, the Assyrian seals from Hasanlu may be explained as diplomatic gifts or as products of a commercial exchange. They may have been brought there directly by Assyrians on campaign,

57 The model suggested here is more fully developed in M.I. MARCUS, "Center, Province, and Periphery : A New Paradigm from Iron Age Iran", *Art History* (in press).

58 The major theoretical references can be found in M. ROWLANDS, M. LARSEN, and K. KRISTIANSEN (eds.), *Centre and Periphery in the Ancient World* (1987); T.C. CHAMPION (ed.), *Centre and Periphery : Comparative Studies in Archaeology* (1989); S.W. GREEN and S.M. PERLMAN (eds.), *The Archaeology of Frontiers and Boundaries* (1985); and K.M. TRINKAUS (ed.), *Politics and Partitions : Human Boundaries and the Growth of Complex Societies* (1987).

59 MARCUS (1988) nos. 57-62.

60 MARCUS (1988) no. 58.

61 Cf. PARKER (1955), (*supra* n. 56) pl. X, 4.

62 Cf. MOORTGAT (*supra* n. 56) no. 639.

63 Cf. colossal gateway figures from Assurnasirpal's palace at Nimrud (Metropolitan Museum of Art 32.143.2, in CRAWFORD, HARPER, and PITTMAN [*supra* n. 25] fig. 18).

64 Cf. MOORTGAT (*supra* n. 56) nos. 639 and 691.

65 LUCKENBILL (1926), (*supra* n. 27) §§ 588 and 607. See further S.C. BROWN (*supra* n. 28) 112 and n. 14; F.M. FALES, *Notes on Some Nineveh Horse Lists* (Assur I [1974]); LEVINE, "East-West Trade", (*supra* n. 27) 183-184; J.N. POSTGATE, *Taxation and Conscription in the Assyrian Empire* (Studia Pohl, series maior 3 [1974]) 7-18; J.E. READE, "Hasanlu, Gilzanu, and Related Considerations", *Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran* 12 (1979) 175-181.

or indirectly by way of some intermediary site on the campaign trail; or they may have been brought back by Iranian visitors to Assyria.

"Provincial Assyrian Style"

In contrast to the small number of linear-style seals from Hasanlu that can be confirmed as legitimate central Assyrian imports, the majority (15 of the 21) consistently exhibit certain non-Assyrian features ⁶⁶. These disparities suggest that this larger seal group represents a "provincial" as opposed to a "central" Assyrian style, produced somewhere outside the imperial center.

Most notably, the "provincial style" seal group exhibits a marked tendency towards surface patterning and a liveliness of the representations—features absent from the excavated central Assyrian products and held in common with seals of "Iranian" and "local" style. For instance, human faces are often defined by horizontal incisions (e.g., drawings, Pl. XXXIIb and XXXIIIa) ⁶⁷; animal bodies are divided into segmented parts, marked by overall surface patterns, especially horizontal and vertical striations (e.g., Pl. XXXIIa, XXXIIIa-b); and the animal legs in some cases are arranged in an even, geometric format (e.g., Pl. XXXIIIa). These are all patterns that do not conform to the natural anatomy of the animal.

In contrast, when excavated Assyrian seals show incisions on animal bodies, as they often do, they selectively follow the natural forms of the animal to indicate the muscles or rib cage ⁶⁸. In general, the capital seals do not present the same degree of elaborate overall patterning that sets certain examples of the Hasanlu group apart.

The attention to elaborate surface patterning is perhaps best illustrated by a black marble seal showing a procession of winged horses (drawing, Pl. XXXIIIb) ⁶⁹. This is an enlivened version of a central Assyrian theme that usually features ostriches in procession ⁷⁰. Here, the bodies of the winged horses are filled with horizontal and vertical incisions, and their hair is indicated by an unusual vertical series of tiny serrations. Also un-Assyrian are the pendant triangles below the upper border line, which, together with the curved back legs of the horses, creates an unbalanced, lively composition. This contrasts with the symmetry displayed in most of the "central" Assyrian seal designs.

In addition to a marked tendency towards surface patterning, the provincial-type seals often exhibit non-Assyrian border patterns, such as oblique hatching (e.g., Pl. XXXIIb). Further, they often display unusual iconographic details, such as irregular five or nine-pointed stars (e.g., Pl. XXXIIIa), as opposed to the standard eight points in Assyrian glyptic ⁷¹.

Last, there is a carelessness in the carving of some of the linear-style seals from Hasanlu that is not found in most excavated central Assyrian glyptic. For instance, the pose and garment of the kneeling archer in the seal in Pl. XXXIIIa are awkwardly rendered, with the fringes of his tunic even extending beyond the hem line and down his leg. A similar carelessness may be noted in the seal in Pl. XXXIIb in the intrusion of elements from the main scene into the borders and in the omission of the archer's feet altogether for lack of space.

If some of the linear-style seals from Hasanlu were not produced in central Assyria, as the comparative evidence suggests, then where were they carved? While a number of hypotheses might be suggested, including, for instance, production at an Assyrian province near the capital,

66 MARCUS (1988) nos. 63-77.

67 MARCUS (1988) nos. 63 and 67.

68 E.g., MOORTGAT (*supra* n. 56) no. 639 (from Assur).

69 MARCUS (1988) no. 74.

70 E.g., MOORTGAT (*supra* n. 56) no. 712.

71 Cf. MARCUS (1988) nos. 67, 70, and 72 with MOORTGAT (*supra* n. 56) nos. 640, 642, and 681.

the noted tendency towards surface patterning makes them most at home in Iran ⁷². In fact, as already discussed, it is one of the hallmarks of the so-called local art style of Hasanlu itself, as seen in metalwork (Pl. XXVb), glyptic art (Pl. XXVIc-d, XXIXb and XXXIa), and ivory plaques (Pl. XXVla-b). While the particular human and animal forms of the "local style" are so far restricted to Hasanlu, the marked tendency towards surface patterning is found all over western Iran. Among the more spectacular examples are decorated gold vessels from the site of Marlik, northeast of Hasanlu ⁷³; however, it is also featured in earlier seals from southern Iran. Examples from Susa ⁷⁴ and Tchoga Zanbil ⁷⁵ of the second millennium B.C. show the same segmentation of animal bodies and overall decorative patterning already seen in the Hasanlu glyptic.

Even in specific details, the "provincial" style seals find parallels in Iran. For instance, the rendering of animal hair by a vertical series of tiny serrations in the Hasanlu seal in Pl. XXXIIIb, already discussed, is similar to the treatment of animal hair on the silver beaker (Pl. XXVb) and several "local style" ivory carvings from the site ⁷⁶. Likewise, the double outline around the stag's eye and the band of hatching along his belly in the seal in Pl. XXXIIb has parallels in "local" ivories ⁷⁷.

For the above reasons, some of the Assyrian-style cylinders seem to call for a place of production close to, or even in, Iran. This notion is particularly compelling because although there is no historical evidence to date of actual Assyrian occupation in the Zagros as far north as Hasanlu in this period, there is evidence of an Assyrian settlement further south in the central Zagros area of Iraqi Kurdistan. On the basis of a convincing analysis of the historical geography by Louis Levine ⁷⁸, this was probably the location of the ancient region of Zamua (see Map, Pl. XXVa). And, it was here that Assurnasirpal II claims to have built a "palace for [his] royal residence", which he "decorated more splendidly than ever before" and named Dur-Assur, or fortress of Assur ⁷⁹. From this information, we may assume the presence of Assyrian artisans to decorate the palace (and perhaps Assyrian seal cutters to furnish seals for the local administration).

As Zamua was one of the areas (and later a province) in the western Zagros closest to Assyria, and a major population center from which radiated important routes to the north, south, and east, it is tempting to envisage center-trained artists coming into contact here with local styles or producing seals for customers who had acquired local tastes—a setting ripe for the production of some of the more decorative, unusual Assyrian-style seals from Hasanlu.

72 See MARCUS (1988) 274-284 for a discussion of various alternative hypotheses. A difference in date may be dismissed as the cause of stylistic variation by comparison with seal impressions on tablets from the preceding Middle Assyrian period (cf. A. MOORTGAT, "Assyrische Glyptik des 13. Jahrhunderts", *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und vorderasiatische Archäologie* n.s. 13 [1941] figs. 20 and 21). The earlier designs show a high degree of modelling and musculature in human and animal bodies and deep incisions that contrast dramatically with the dependence on outline and linear style characteristic of both seal groups from Hasanlu. Such stylistic differences suggest that the Hasanlu seals cannot be dated much earlier than the date of the level in which both groups were found, that is not much before the ninth century B.C., when the settlement of Period IVB was destroyed.

73 E.O. NEGHBAN, *A Preliminary Report on Marlik Excavation, Gohar Rud Expedition, Rudbar 1961-1962* (1964) pl. V and figs. 107, 111, and 113.

74 P. AMIET, *Glyptique susienne* (*supra* n. 38) no. 937; I.J. WINTER, *A Decorated Breastplate from Hasanlu, Iran*. Hasanlu Special Studies, vol. I, R.H. DYSON, Jr. (gen. ed.). University Museum Monograph 39 (1980) fig. 46.

75 PORADA, *Tchoga Zanbil* (*supra* n. 37) nos. 49 and 50.

76 MUSCARELLA, *The Catalogue of Ivories* (*supra* n. 7) nos. 2, 9, and 33. See further MARCUS (1988) 277.

77 MUSCARELLA, *The Catalogue of Ivories* (*supra* n. 7) nos. 172, 165; 163, 175.

78 LEVINE, *Geographical Studies* (*supra* n. 27), 16-22, fig. 3 (p. 15).

79 GRAYSON (*supra* n. 27) § 566.

Also intriguing in this regard is the discovery at Hasanlu of an inscribed stone bowl that refers to the king of "the land of Idi" ⁸⁰, a place-name mentioned in two accounts of Shalmaneser's campaigns in Zamua ⁸¹. Although we cannot be certain that the Idi on the bowl is the same place mentioned in the royal annals, this object may document the actual transmission of goods from Zamua to Hasanlu.

At the same time, turning further to the south, there are among the unpublished discoveries at Surkh Dum in modern Luristan linear-style seals showing the same attention to surface patterning as our "provincial" group from Hasanlu ⁸². This evidence raises the possibility that similar goods were moving both north and south from a single source on the same trade route ⁸³. Geographically, a town in Zamua would fit well into the proposed reconstruction ⁸⁴.

Wherever they were produced, the Assyrian-style seals from Hasanlu raise tempting possibilities of otherwise unknown centers of artistic production in the western Zagros in the early Iron Age. Particularly intriguing is the notion of a "provincial" Assyrian workshop in the Zagros as intermediary between the center and its periphery; a site where center-trained artists produced and distributed Assyrian-type seals that had nonetheless been affected by aesthetic predispositions native to the periphery. This view accords with Robert Redfield and Milton Singer's notion of a "colonial city", which carried the "core culture" to other people and "where the imperial great tradition was not only bound to be very dilute but would also have to meet the challenges of conflicting local traditions" ⁸⁵. It remains to be determined whether the seal cutters were Assyrians absorbing stylistic elements from Iran, or Iranians absorbing elements from Assyria. However, until we develop far more rigorous criteria in the discipline for attributing style to ethnicity, choosing between these two options may not be possible ⁸⁶.

80 R.H. DYSON, "Problems of Protohistoric Iran", (*supra* n. 2) fig. 8; P.E. PECORELLA and M. SALVINI, *Tra lo Zagros e l'Urmia: Ricerche storiche ed archeologiche nell'Azervaijan iraniano* (1984) 55.

81 E. MICHEL, "Die Assur-Texte Salmanassars III (858-824); Salmanassar Obelisk", *Welt des Orients* 2,2 [1955]: 148, l. 51 (Black Obelisk) and E. MICHEL, "Ein neuentdeckter Annalen-Text Salmanassars III", *Welt des Orients* 1,6 [1952], 462, l. 12 (Baghdad annals = Iraq Museum 54669). See further LEVINE, *Geographical Studies* (*supra* n. 27) 18-19; MICHEL (1952) 463, n. 12; and PECORELLA AND SALVINI (*supra* n. 80), 55.

82 SCHMIDT, VAN LOON, and CURVERS (*supra* n. 42) especially SD 979 (no. 42), a banquet scene showing decorated garments on human figures, with facial features defined by horizontal incisions; and SD 1241 (no. 43), a chariot hunt scene, showing vertically striated hair on the human figure, and horse hair indicated by a row of tiny serrations.

83 There is evidence that the trade routes were open even further to the south. For instance, a quantity of shells found at Hasanlu have been identified as local to the Persian Gulf (WINTER, *A Decorated Breastplate*, [*supra* n. 74] 24 and D. REESE, personal communication). For further links to the south, see PORADA, *The Art of Ancient Iran* (*supra* n. 6) 116 and WINTER, *A Decorated Breastplate* (*supra* n. 74) 16-18 and 24.

84 Zamua is suggested here as only one of any number of possible intermediary places of production. As Louis LEVINE has pointed out to me (personal communication), equally likely is ancient Kurruri, situated just north of Zamua and directly on the trade route from Assyria to Hasanlu (see LEVINE, *Geographical Studies* [*supra* n. 27] map, fig. 3, 15 and discussion, 14-16).

85 R. REDFIELD and M.B. SINGER, "The Cultural Role of Cities", *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 3 (1954) 62.

86 Several studies have raised the problem of attributing style to a specific ethnic group. For the ancient Near East in particular, see C. KRAMER, "Pots and People", in L.D. LEVINE and T.C. YOUNG, Jr. (eds.) (*supra* n. 4) 91-112; O.W. MUSCARELLA, Review of M.-Th. BARRELET (ed.), *Problèmes concernant les Hurrites*, 2, Paris 1984, *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 107 (1987) 137; O.W. MUSCARELLA, "Median Art and Medizing Scholarship", *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 46 (1987) 127; and I.J. WINTER, Review of M.-Th. BARRELET (ed.), *Problèmes concernant les Hurrites*, 2, Paris 1984, unpubl. ms. (n.d.). For a general review of the issue see B. BARTEL, "Acculturation and Ethnicity in Roman Moesia Superior", in CHAMPION (ed.) (*supra* n. 58) especially 173-177.

On a more theoretical level, the above discussion has attempted to distinguish between the *location* of the site at Hasanlu as the *periphery*, and the *style* of a proposed workshop in the Zagros as *provincial*. This terminology describes two different relationships : (1) peripheral, or two stages removed from the center (that is, artists from the center [in this case, Assyria] working in the provinces [perhaps Zamua] and sending their goods to the periphery [Hasanlu]); and (2) provincial, or one stage removed from the center, and more directly tied to it politically and culturally. In the case of ninth-century Assyria, the term "province" is used loosely in its political sense, for although the Assyrians claim to have had political control in the western Zagros, there is no real evidence for it, nor for anything like a Roman province in this period ⁸⁷.

In addition to raising a testable hypothesis of a marginal production center in the Zagros, the above analysis has introduced, then, the element of province into the standard center-periphery paradigm to allow for marginal localities that exist between major centers and their peripheries.

Function

Having considered the question of *where* the Assyrian-style seals from Hasanlu may have been produced, the next question is *why* they were so desired at this settlement in Northwest Iran. The Assyrian-style seals (whether of "central" or "provincial" style) comprise about one-quarter of the entire glyptic assemblage from the site. Moreover, if one entertains the notion of an Assyrian workshop in the Zagros, the demand must have been sufficiently high to support such an enterprise.

Related to this issue are the chosen themes in the "local style" artwork. As already discussed, here are encountered subjects best known from the large-scale reliefs that decorated the palaces of the Neo-Assyrian kings : for instance, chariot scenes ⁸⁸ and more ceremonial images of the king enthroned with attendants (cf. Pl. XXIXa and XXXIa, lower registers, with Pl. XXXa). Reference has already been drawn to Irene Winter's explanation for the adoption of Assyrian motifs into the Hasanlu "local style" : as a process of emulation by which the Hasanlu elite attempted to absorb some of the prestige of the imperial center ⁸⁹.

Similarly, the acquisition of Assyrian-style objects, including the linear style cylinder seals, suggests a desire to match the cultural status of the center. As Winter has discussed, in a system of exchange between a less-centralized community and a more centralized group, foreign goods will appear prestigious within the "less-highly-developed" sphere, thus conferring status upon those individuals who control the supply ⁹⁰.

Were our Assyrian-type cylinders actually used as seals at Hasanlu, or were they collected solely as personal ornaments for their prestige value ⁹¹ ? The latter possibility is supported by the *absence* of Assyrian-style seal impressions on any of the clay sealings from the site.

87 On the meaning of province in this period, see J.A. BRINKMAN, *Prelude to Empire : Babylonian Society and Politics, 747-626 B.C.* (1984) 16-17. I owe thanks to Pamela Girardi for alerting me to the problems in understanding the notion of province in the early Neo-Assyrian period.

88 Compare our Pl. XXVb with WINTER, "Royal Rhetoric", (*supra* n. 4) fig. 4.

89 WINTER, "Perspective on the 'Local Style' ", (*supra* n. 4) especially 379-383.

90 WINTER, "Perspective on the 'Local Style' ", (*supra* n. 4) 380 with further references.

91 APPADURAI, "Introduction", (*supra* n. 4) 38-41 provides a useful definition of prestige or luxury goods. See also C. RENFREW, "Varna and the Emergence of Wealth in Prehistoric Europe", in APPADURAI (ed.) (*supra* n. 4) 143-144, 157-160, on the concepts of value and prestige, and F. BRAUDEL *The Structure of Everyday Life : The Limits of the Possible* (1979) 184, 324, and 328 on luxury and fashion.

Instead, as already discussed, the evidence suggests that only "local style" seals were used for actual transactions; that was in the management of goods and goods storage ⁹².

Moreover, in terms of artifact distribution, it has already been observed from Locus Maps that while most of the *sealings* were discovered in second-storey collapse, most of the *seals* were found directly on the building floors (cf. Pl. XXVIIIc and XXIXa). In several instances ⁹³, the Assyrian-style seals were found beside skeletons of people caught in the burning buildings at the time of the destruction of the settlement. In some cases, they were found lying near or behind the necks of individuals, where they were probably originally worn as necklaces. In other cases ⁹⁴, they may even have been suspended by their metal loops from iron pins with cast bronze lion finials found with them ⁹⁵, much in the same way, perhaps, that beads and cylinders are shown suspended from cloak pins on much earlier Sumerian shell inlays from the mid-third millennium B.C. site of Mari on the middle Euphrates ⁹⁶. However they were worn, the Assyrian-style seals seem to have belonged to elite individuals, judging from the quantity of high-status goods found with them alongside skeletons, including metal weapons, jewelry, and lion pins (with as many as 17 copper/bronze bracelets and buttons with gold overlay in one instance) ⁹⁷. While it is not certain that the skeletons with seals represent local citizens, as opposed to foreign attackers, an abundance of associated jewelry does suggest a non-military status.

As neck and dress ornaments, the Assyrian-style seals (as in Pl. XXXIIa) would have been readily distinguishable over small distances from "local style" cylinders (as in Pl. XXVIc) by their size (generally smaller than "local" seals); material (stone, as opposed to terracotta and bone); metal caps and suspension loops (in contrast to the simple, dentated edges of the "local" seals); and upon closer viewing, the single register composition and elegant linear style. The imperial-type seals, then, would have conveyed what Martin Wobst calls "stylistic messages", which, at close distance visibility, identify the bearer's wealth or status ⁹⁸. At this level, the seals become more than simply exotic acquisitions. They help to mark, maintain, and further social differentiation at the site ⁹⁹.

92 As Louis LEVINE has pointed out to me (personal communication), one should not expect to find Assyrian seal impressions on commodity sealings at Hasanlu. As a rule, goods are brought *into* (not out of) centers from peripheries. In exchange for horses and other products from the Hasanlu region, Hasanlu would have been saved from Assyrian attack. Erik HALLAGER (personal communication) has noted a similar pattern on Crete.

93 MARCUS (1988) nos. 67, 69, and 72.

94 MARCUS (1988) nos. 69 and 72.

95 DYSON, "Problems of Protohistoric Iran", (*supra* n. 2) fig. 6B; PORADA, *The Art of Ancient Iran* (*supra* n. 6) pl. 29, fig. 67.

96 H. WEISS (ed.), *Ebla to Damascus : Art and Archaeology of Ancient Syria* (1985) no. 50; A. PARROT, "Les fouilles de Mari, douzième campagne (automne 1961)", *Syria* 39 (1962) pls. XI, XII, 3. In addition, J.H. HUMPHRIES found that the Early Dynastic III seals from the burials at Ur usually occur with stick pins close to the skeleton's right shoulder, supporting the evidence from Hasanlu that seals were sometimes worn suspended from a shoulder pin that fastened one's robes together (from an unpublished paper discussed in W.L. RATHJE, "New Tricks for Old Seals : A Progress Report", in M. GIBSON and R.D. BIGGS [eds.], *Seals and Sealing in the Ancient Near East* [1977] 26). Further, O.W. MUSCARELLA refers to fibulae with chains and seals from Nimrud ("Median Art and Medizing Scholarship", [*supra* n. 86] 122); and H. WEISS discovered a seal associated with a pin in a burial at Tell Leilan, Syria (paper delivered at the annual meeting of the American Oriental Society, New Orleans, March 1989).

97 MARCUS (1988) no. 67.

98 M. WOBST, "Stylistic Behavior and Information Exchange", in C.E. CLELAND (ed.), *For the Director : Research Essays in Honor of James B. Griffin* (1977) 323 and 335.

99 WOBST (*supra* n. 98) 328. See also RENFREW, "Varna and the Emergence of Wealth in Prehistoric Europe" (*supra* n. 91) 144 on the active role of gold and copper at Varna in prehistoric Europe in bringing about the high status of the people using them (i.e., not simply *reflecting* that high status). In a comprehensive study of material life in 17th and 18th century Europe, F. BRAUDEL ([*supra* n. 91] 324)

There is evidence, then, to suggest that the Assyrian-style seals from Hasanlu were valued and worn as personal ornaments, presumably as signs of status, and were probably *not* intended to actually seal goods—hence, the premium placed on imported objects in general, whether from the center or Assyrian-controlled provinces.

The above interpretation is supported by an ethnographic analogy from present day Iran, described in Paul English's 1966 study of the Kirman Basin in the southeastern part of the country¹⁰⁰. English observed that members of the resident upper and middle classes of Mahan and Juper (regional subcenters in the region) mimic the trappings, manners, and attitudes of the urban elite of Kirman City, the cultural, economic, and administrative capital of the region. What is similar to the Hasanlu situation is the adoption in frontier towns of status-related stylistic innovations from the center.

Conclusions

In sum, owing to the well-excavated, stratified context of the finds from Hasanlu IVB, it has been possible to combine a stylistic and iconographic analysis of the seal designs with a functional and locational analysis of the actual seals and sealings in order to deal adequately with questions of use and function. More specifically, the study has attempted to demonstrate a correlation at Hasanlu between glyptic style and seal usage. In particular, the evidence has indicated that "local style" seals, known primarily from their impressions on clay sealings, served as administrative devices in a local storage system. In contrast, the foreign-style seals (especially those of Neo-Assyrian style) were probably not actually used to seal goods at Hasanlu, but rather were acquired as personal ornaments for their prestige value—in the same way that Assyrian themes were incorporated into the "local style" artwork presumably to match the cultural status of the center. At this level, it was argued, the Assyrian seals would have served to identify the owner's social group affiliation at the site. Glyptic art becomes, then, a dynamic variable, serving in the processes of information exchange and boundary maintenance; as signals of status and prestige.

In addition, the analysis has served to reconstruct patterns of exchange between Hasanlu and the major centers of Assyria and Syro-Palestine to the west. It has further attempted to better understand cultural attitudes of Northwest Iran towards Assyria through the consumption of Assyrian goods, particularly carved cylinder seals, and the incorporation of Assyrian motifs into the "local" art style.

On a more theoretical level, the study has introduced the construct of center, *province*, and periphery to allow for marginal localities that exist between major centers and their hinterlands; and specifically to explain a group of Neo-Assyrian linear-style seals from Hasanlu having stylistic affinities with the art of Iran.

With regard to the major interests of the conference that precipitated this volume (Aegean seals, sealings, and administration), it is hoped that at the very least the working typology of the clay sealings from Hasanlu will contribute to the growing data bank of sealing function studies both in the Near East and the Aegean, and bring us closer to a better understanding of the range of types and uses of these important artifacts. However, as stated at the beginning of this paper, since knowledge of administration in Iron Age Iran depends solely on archaeological evidence, the contribution of the Hasanlu sealings to the broader issue of seals and administration is somewhat limited.

speaks of fashions as distinctive signs invented by the privileged to distinguish themselves from the masses; to set up a barrier.

100 *City and Village in Iran : Settlement and Economy in the Kirman Basin* (1966) 80.

Last, it should be noted that there has been a general tendency in recent studies of seal use to concentrate on typological and associated inscriptional data often at the expense of glyptic style and iconography. It is hoped that the above discussion has highlighted the benefits of a multidisciplinary approach to the study of seals and sealings that integrates stylistic information with functional, historical, and archaeological evidence. In the end, however, the above conclusions represent only one way of interpreting the finds, and remain to be tested against still unstudied material from Hasanlu and any new discoveries in the field.

Michelle I. MARCUS

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Response by Erik HALLAGER

First of all I think that we should thank Michelle Marcus for this fine and very well argued paper—not least for taking the archaeological context of the finds so seriously into consideration.

What I shall try to do in this brief response is to point out some similarities to the Minoan administrative use of seals, and where the system from Hasanlu seems to differ considerably from the Cretan context. I shall not try to comment on the identification of your "in between center" for the production of foreign cylinder seals; there are much more competent people present here to do that job.

Hasanlu is a periphery-area at the beginning of the Neo-Assyrian period and the architecture and finds have—and I think not without reason—led the excavators to interpret the settlement as "a major political and administrative center", but it is at the same time stated that the site "is virtually without written texts" and I understand that no traces of an archive have been found/identified at Hasanlu, which is of importance for the comparison since most often in Crete there seems to be a connection between what was sealed and what was recorded in the archives.

Concerning the *sealing procedure* at Hasanlu, we are presented with sealings of small containers and doors, jars, baskets, leather bags. Except for the seal type, such sealings (sealing procedures) are also especially well known from MM II Crete (Weingarten's first upheaval). One point in this connection is interesting from an Aegean point of view : the interpretation of what was sealed. It was noted that the sealings generally had fallen from the upper story and that they were found together with carved ivory and other precious goods such as gold plaques, silver, jewelry, etc. Furthermore there were clear indications that one of the sealings had been attached to a gilded box.

These observations led to the conclusion that the objects sealed were mainly stored on the upper floor and that they sealed precious things and/or luxury goods. Perhaps the distribution map of "first floor finds" may offer indirect supporting evidence for this interpretation. In the four buildings around the courtyard there are, to judge from the number of pithoi, several magazines ¹. Since it is clear that the first floor also had caught fire, one might have expected to find many more sealings in connection with these magazines had they (or their containers) been sealed. With very few exceptions they seem not to have been sealed, and we may suppose that the "administration" had some criteria of what to seal and what not to seal. Depending on what the pithoi were supposed to contain such a distinction may have been luxury goods as opposed to every day needs. Recalling the "Cretan situation" it is also interesting to note that apparently the pithoi and magazines were not sealed in the late Minoan I period (Weingarten's 2nd upheaval) ².

1 B.B. IVE.2; B.B. V.4b, 5,6; B.B.II, 7, 13,14,15(?); B.B.IE, SW of 6; and B.B.IW 5 (NE corner) and 6.

2 One exception, though, seems to be some "private" houses at Kastelli, Khania. Cf. E. HALLAGER, "Sealing without Seals", in *The Prehistoric Aegean and its Relations to Adjacent Areas. Proceedings of the Sixth International Colloquium on Aegean Prehistory* (forthcoming).

The second point in connection with sealing luxury goods on the second floor is that it recalls much the same situation as Weingarten describes for the LM I B villa at Hagia Triada³. If Weingarten is correct in her interpretation of the "hanging nodules" (and I am *not* entirely convinced of that) we may here find another interesting parallel to Crete.

But this brings me to one thing that appears to be a major difference : in Crete (and several other Near Eastern sites, as far as I know) the sealings, when broken off, were carried to the archive room for further treatment. This seems—as far as the site is known for the moment—not to have been the case at Hasanlu. Objects were sealed in much the same way as in Crete, but there seems to have been no further administrative control of those sealed objects and it thus seems to me that the situation at Hasanlu in many respects rather resembles the prepalatial⁴ than the palatial period in Crete.

It is interesting that you do find—as we do in Crete⁵—that the same seal sealed different objects. Such sealings—in Crete—were given further treatment in the archives indicating that they were part of the larger administrative system rather than of a "private sphere." If this parallel (in spite of what we said above) has any relevance, and if the "repeated sealings" were found scattered over the buildings, and considering the buildings as "a major political and administrative center", may it perhaps be favorable to consider the seals used as *official* seals in a system of authority rather than seals used for securing private property?

The arguments that the seal devices imply something about the ultimate "ownership" of the seal is, as far as I am able to judge, very well founded. This applies certainly for the two discussed "local seals" which took their inspiration from royal Assyrian iconography. And it is tempting to see a parallel to the use of the royal seal in administrative settings in Mari as presented by Bonnie Magness-Gardiner. Again, to me this would imply something "official" rather than private—only the "chief" taking more active interest in the luxuries/valuables than in the "daily use commodities." What you have probably been able to establish here—ultimate ownership/relationship—based on iconographic parallels is a major *desideratum* in Aegean seal use.

The last thing I would like to mention is your important distinction between local and imported seals as far as the use is concerned. I feel that you are bound to be correct in this distinction. First of all the sealings speak for themselves : no Assyrian style seals were used on the sealings, and secondly the archaeological evidence from Hasanlu—that several of the imported seals were found close to the necks of the dead people—is convincing : these seals were used as jewelry and amulets and/or prestige/gift objects. A similar thing seems to be true for the Aegean⁶.

3 J. WEINGARTEN, "The Sealing Structures of Minoan Crete : MM II Phaistos to the Destruction of the Palace of Knossos. Part I : The Evidence until the LM IB Destructions", *OJA* 5 (1986) 279-296.

4 As argued by Ingo Pini in his paper.

5 In several instances at Phaistos, cf. Fiandra and, if Weingarten is correct, also seal 125 at Hagia Triada.

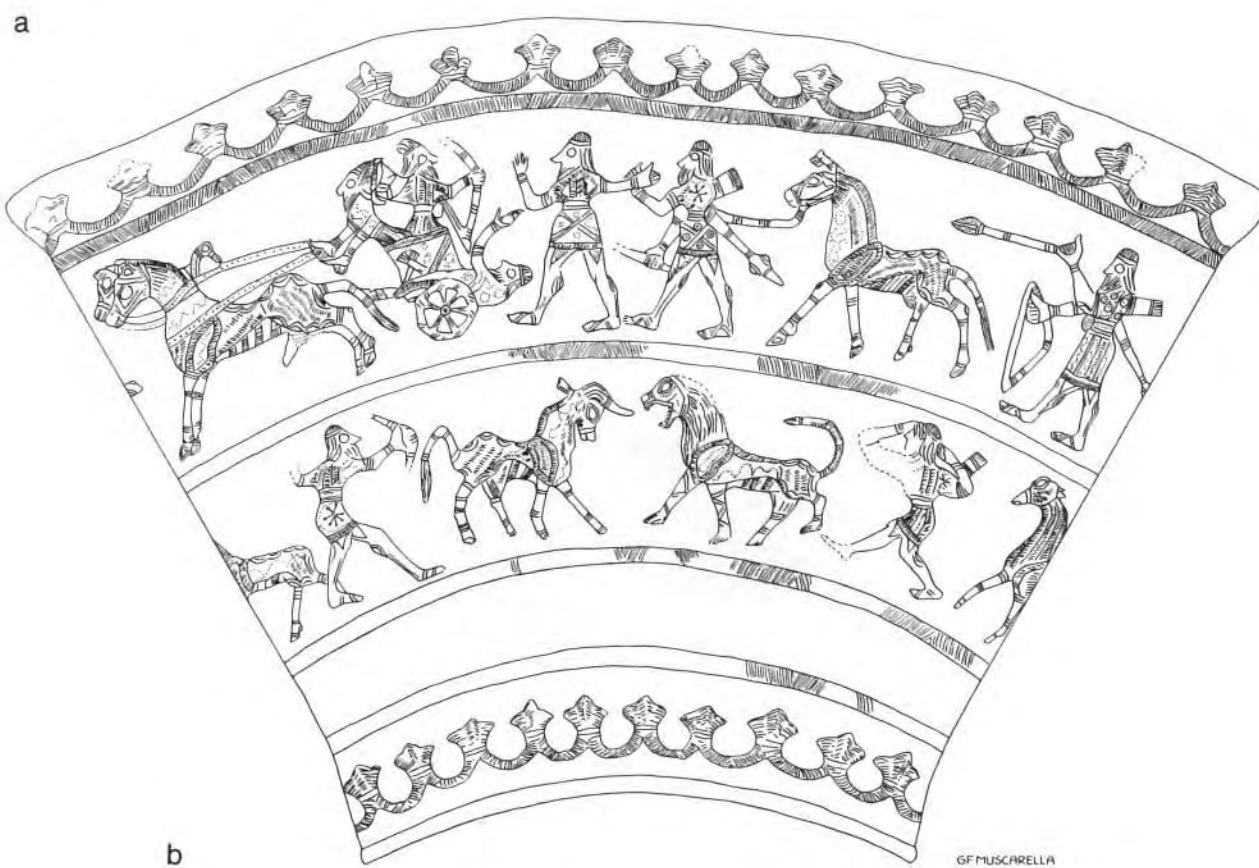
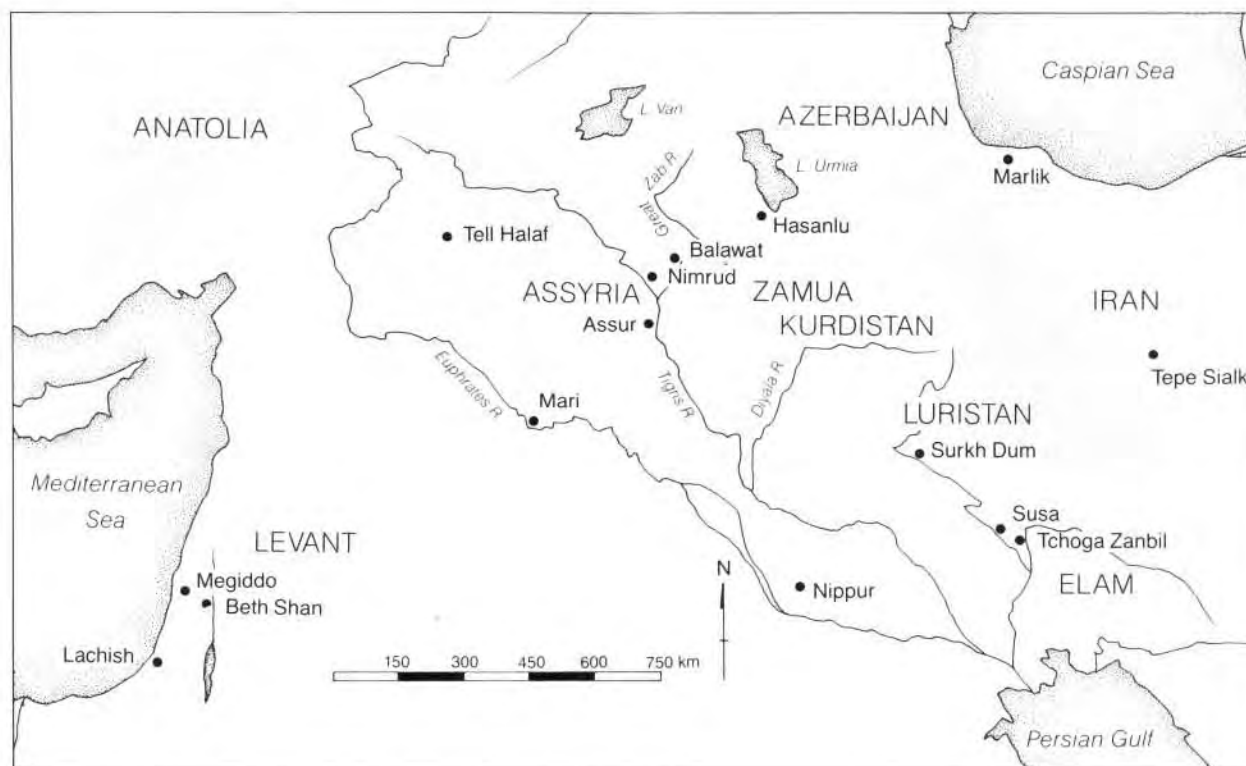
6 To my knowledge we know in Crete only of two exceptional examples where imported seals were used on sealings (both from Hagia Triada : a rolled Cypriote cylinder seal and a stamped Syrian/Mesopotamian cylinder seal), while many imported seals were found in tombs as personal belongings (e.g. I. PINI, "Mitanni-Rollsiegel des Common Style aus Griechenland", *PZ* 58 [1983] 124; also pointed out by Joanna Smith in her comments) and perhaps most clearly seen in the odd collection of cylinder seals found in Thebes (e.g. E. PORADA, "The Cylinder Seals found at Thebes in Boeotia", *Archiv für Orientforschung* 28 [1981] 1-78).

Discussion

S. Smith :

I would like to take up the question of provincial styles raised by Marcus's paper. There is a definite colonialist pattern in Lower Nubia during the Middle Kingdom. The Egyptians are marching out, establishing forts and sending garrisons from Egypt. There is some debate as to whether any native troops, for example, from desert tribes who were often used as mercenaries, might have also been used as adjuncts. It is clear that the main cadre, the hired administrative staff, would have come directly from Egypt and quite possibly would have been rotated in and out of these forts. Thus, instead of a high degree of contact with the locals, what we see in the archaeological record is limited goods exchange. For example, beads show up in the local burials but no substantial artifacts, no metal artifacts. Metal artifacts like knives and spear points are actually a diagnostic point for the post-Middle Kingdom occupation, but again in very restricted quantities. So it appears that the Egyptians in these forts may not have cared much about the local people.

The sealings from Kerma further to the south are interesting and might be compared stylistically with the groups I have discussed. But I am not sure how much information Reisner's report provides about the backs of the sealings. Kerma is some three or four hundred miles to the south of the area I have discussed, and there is no evidence of any Egyptian activity except at this site. In this southern region we find a number of trade goods being manufactured for local use, but with Egyptian techniques : for example, beds manufactured in the Egyptian style, but with decorative elements which are purely local, like inlaid mother of pearl, which does not occur so much in Egypt. There is an interesting combination of local and Egyptian motifs. But such material seems to date from a period somewhat later than the period I have dealt with, from the height of the Second Intermediate Period when Kerma eventually becomes a powerful enough polity to take over the entire area and take advantage of the disintegration of centralization in Egypt. There is a study of the sealing material by Olga Tufnell which does deal with stylistics. But her study emphasizes technical details and chronological implications using both the backs and the carved faces of the seals. She did do a comparison of the seals from Uronarti and from Kahun, both of which have corpora of sealings rather than of actual seals. She concluded that the designs were very similar, and the motifs seem to be very close to one another. It would be interesting to take a look at them, particularly from the point of view of determining what the least common denominator of seals might have been. How closely would someone have examined the seals ? Can we find in these little groups of seals some that are similar enough to suggest some sort of family or corporate group ? Research along such lines would be very interesting.





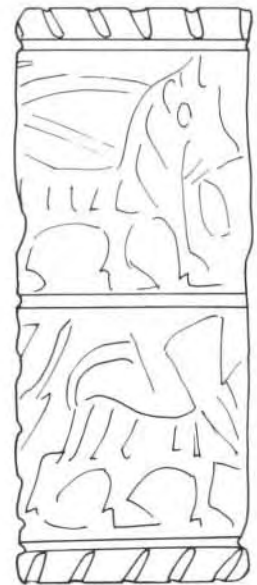
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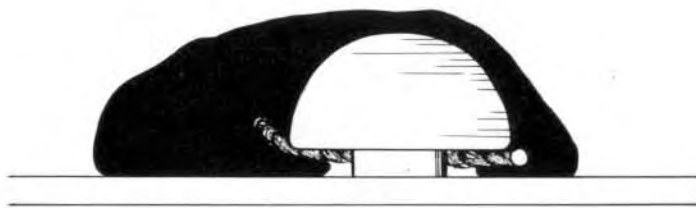
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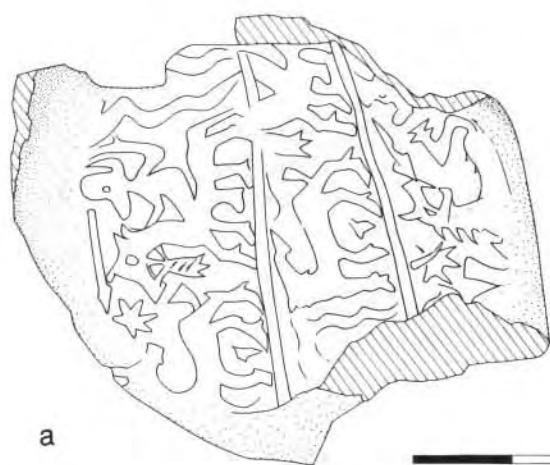


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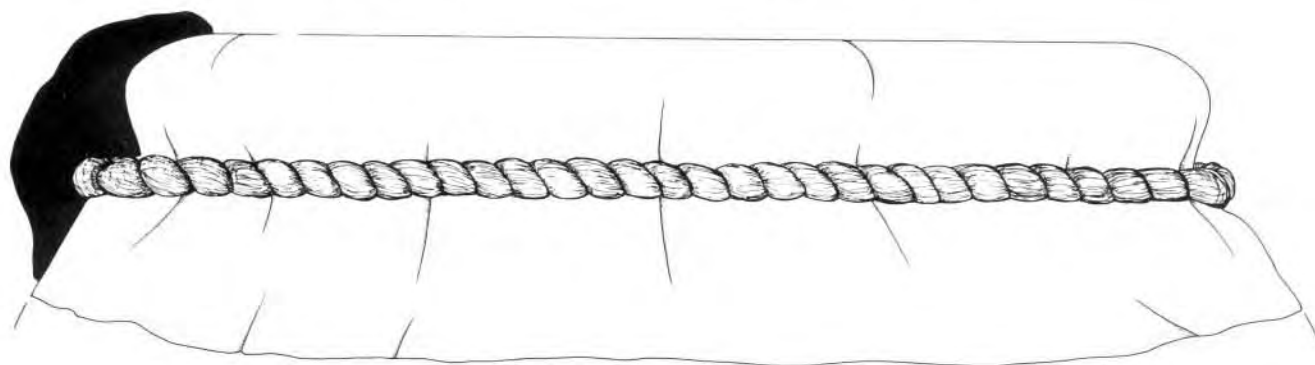
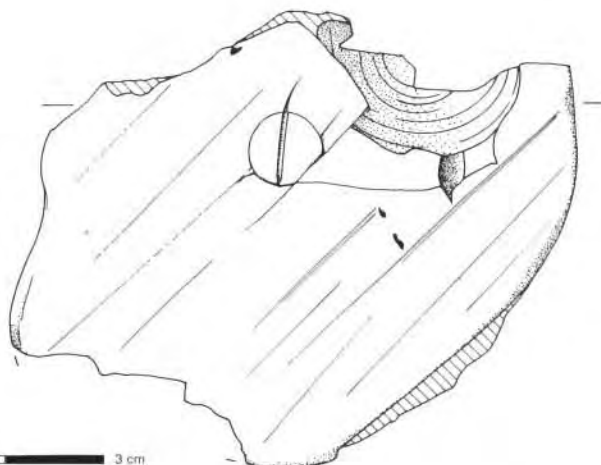
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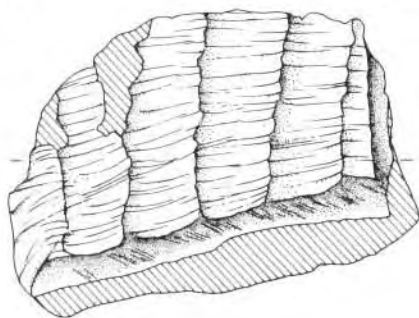
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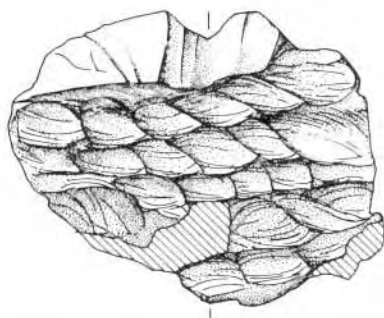
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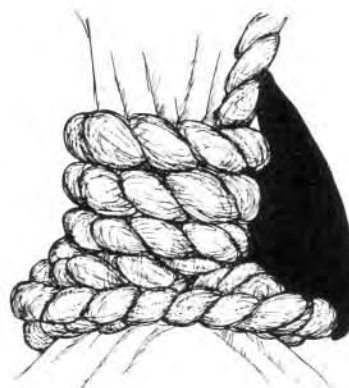
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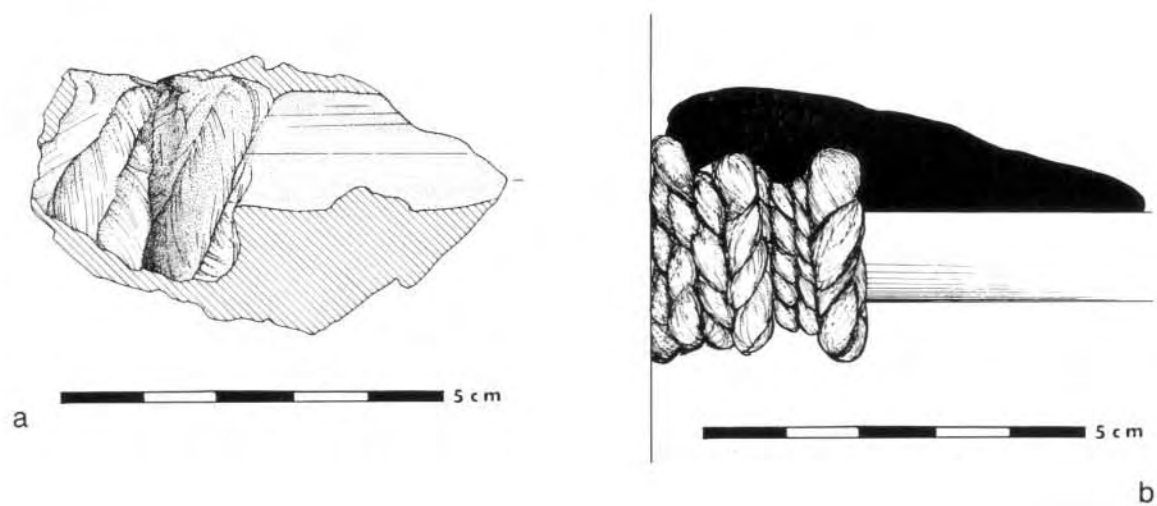
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- ▲ SEALING



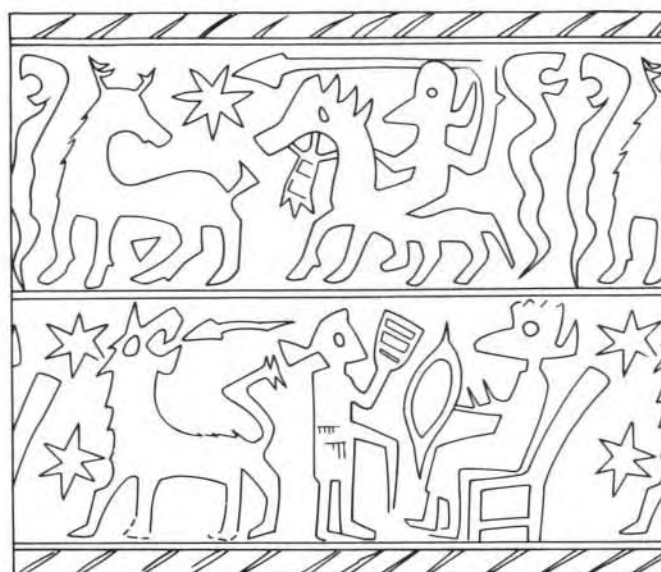
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HASANLU
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- SEAL
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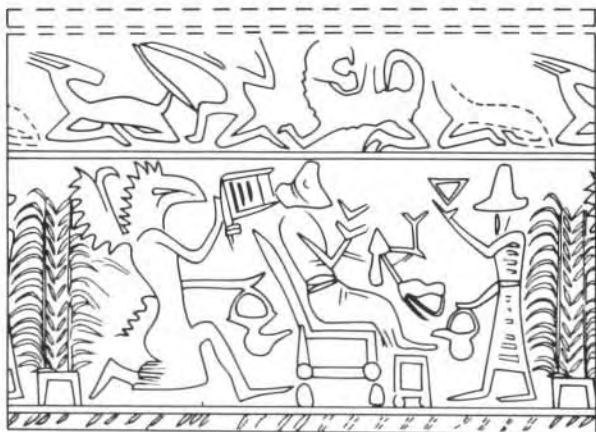
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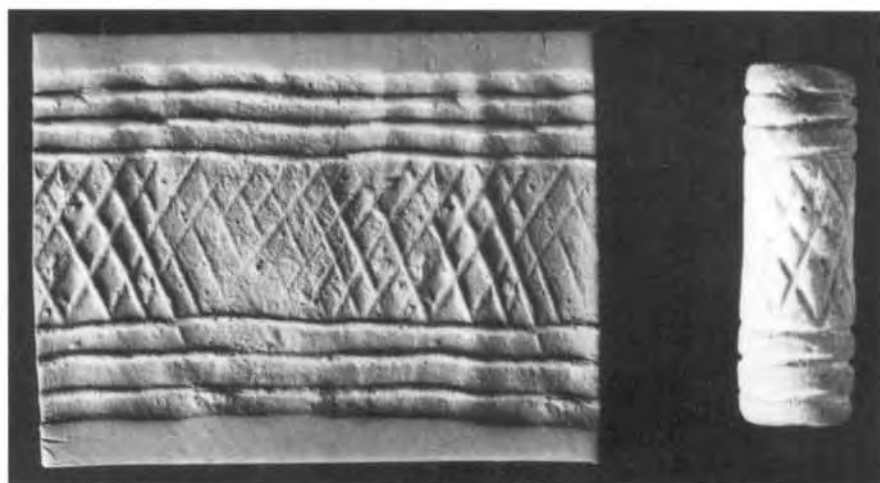
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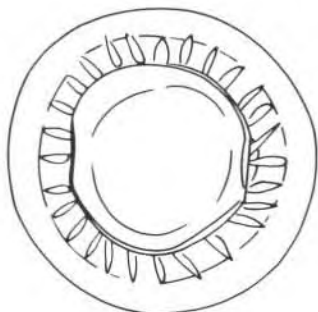
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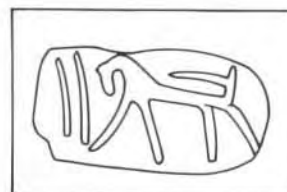

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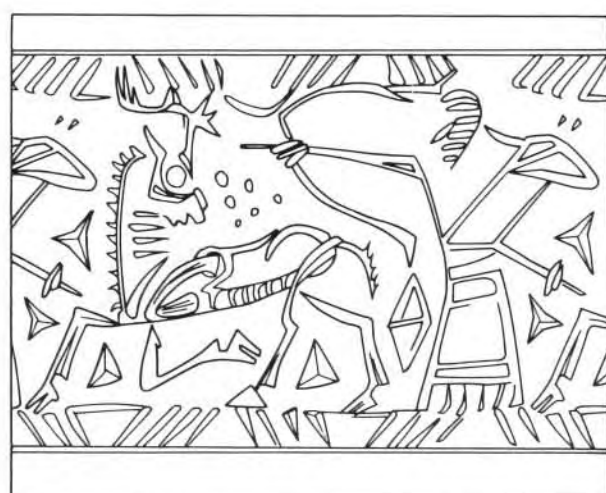
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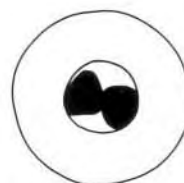
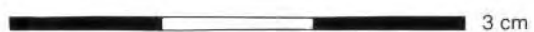
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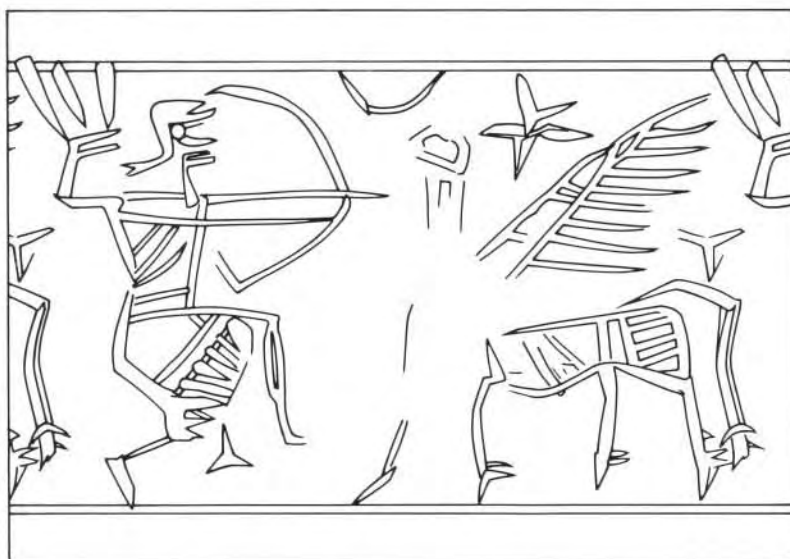


a

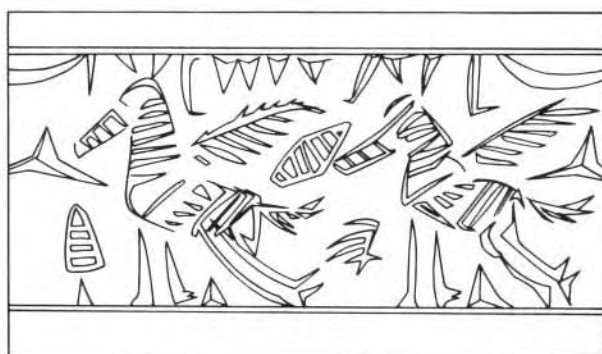
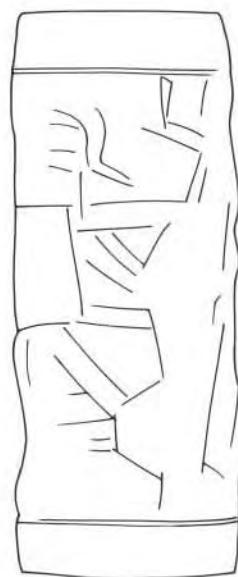
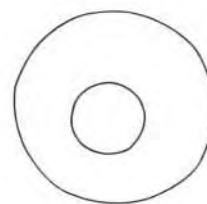


b





a  3 cm



b  3 cm

