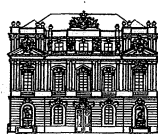


ÖSTERREICHISCHE AKADEMIE DER WISSENSCHAFTEN
DENKSCHRIFTEN DER GESAMTAKADEMIE, BAND XXXV

SCARABS OF THE SECOND MILLENNIUM BC FROM
EGYPT, NUBIA, CRETE AND THE LEVANT:
CHRONOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL IMPLICATIONS

Papers of a Symposium, Vienna, 10th – 13th of January 2002

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VERLAG DER ÖSTERREICHISCHEN AKADEMIE DER WISSENSCHAFTEN
WIEN 2004

COLLÈGE DE FRAI
Cabinet d'Egyptologi

SECOND INTERMEDIATE PERIOD SCARABS FROM EGYPT AND PALESTINE: HISTORICAL AND CHRONOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

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The utmost popularity and wide distribution of scarabs in Middle Bronze Palestine undoubtedly reflect relations of a particular nature with Egypt. A significant number of these scarabs are regularly referred to as "Hyksos scarabs" as scarabs of identical types were found in Second Intermediate Period contexts in Egypt. These scarabs were frequently used as primary archaeological evidence for the reconstruction of Egyptian/Levantine interconnections during this period (GIVEON 1974; 1976; 1980; WEINSTEIN 1981: 8–12; 1996; BIETAK 1984: 482–85; TUFNELL 1984; O'CONNOR 1985: 31–40; WARD 1987; WARD and DEVER 1994; KEEL 1995; BEN-TOR 1997; RYHOLT 1997: 34–65; SCHNEIDER 1998: 125–45). However, the historical implications of these scarabs are still highly debated (BEN-TOR *et al.* 1999). The controversial state of affairs in the scholarly literature reflects disagreements over the most basic issues, namely, the chronological definition of the Second Intermediate Period, contemporary archaeological deposits in Egypt and in the southern Levant, and the origin and absolute dates of many of the scarabs attributed to this period.

Any attempt to resolve these issues depends first and foremost on the ability to establish the absolute dates of relevant archaeological deposits in Egypt and in the southern Levant. Recent studies of Egyptian pottery of the Middle Kingdom and the Second Intermediate Period have established a typological sequence that allows determining the relative and absolute dates of archaeological deposits in many relevant sites (ARNOLD 1972; 1977; 1982; 1988; BOURRIAU 1981; 1987; 1990; 1991b; 1991c; 1997; BIETAK 1984; 1989; 1991; SEIDLMAYER 1990). The evi-

dence provided by these studies is still limited to broad definitions of periods, and it does not always allow precise dating in terms of years. It offers, however, criteria to distinguish early Middle Kingdom, late Middle Kingdom, and Second Intermediate Period archaeological deposits in Egypt and Nubia, and thereby to establish a typology of excavated scarab series from these deposits. Moreover, it reveals consistent developments throughout the Nile valley (SMITH 1995a: 51–136; S. ALLEN in BEN-TOR *et al.* 1999: 55–58; WEGNER 2000; 2001), points out regional differences (BOURRIAU 1991b; 1997), and has significant implications for the absolute chronology of the Middle Bronze Age phases in the southern Levant (BIETAK 1997: 125–28).

Based on the evidence provided by these studies it is now possible to establish a typology of excavated scarab series from Middle Kingdom archaeological deposits in Egypt and lower Nubia. A typology of these scarabs points out distinct stylistic differences between early and late Middle Kingdom scarabs,¹ and argues for the beginning of the mass production of scarabs in Egypt in the late Middle Kingdom.² The late Middle Kingdom excavated series were found with ceramic assemblages that can now be dated from the late 12th Dynasty well into the 13th Dynasty, sometimes continuing into the early Second Intermediate Period. They comprise primarily sealings from administrative units in Egypt and lower Nubia (e.g. TUFNELL 1975; VON PILGRIM 1996: 234–74; WEGNER 1998: 32–44; 2000: 96–99), and a notably smaller group of scarabs from contemporary cemeteries³ – the result of massive plundering in antiquity and in modern times. The bulk of the

¹ For early Middle Kingdom type scarabs see WARD 1978: 16, Periods 3 and 4, which are now dated to the late 11th and early 12th Dynasty respectively (SEIDLMAYER 1990: 185–194). For the early 12th Dynasty date of the seal impressions from Abu Ghalib and the Montet Jar scarabs see BEN-TOR 1998.

² For the beginning of the mass production of scarabs in the late Middle Kingdom see BEN-TOR 2003: 240–241.

³ The only late Middle Kingdom excavated groups of scarabs come from Harageh (ENGELBACH 1923, pl. 20) and the north pyramid cemetery at el-Lisht currently prepared for publication by Geoffrey Martin. I am very grateful to Geoffrey Martin for his permission to study the el-Lisht scarabs and refer to them in print.

material dates from the 13th Dynasty,⁴ but late 12th Dynasty examples most probably occur in all groups, and there are also a handful of early Middle Kingdom heirlooms.⁵

Late Middle Kingdom scarabs display distinctive stylistic characteristics, which are easily distinguished from other groups.⁶ Moreover, they display a stylistic homogeneity that is consistent with the cultural homogeneity of Egypt during this period (BOURRIAU 1991a). Once this group is defined stylistically, a large number of parallels displaying identical characteristics can be identified in museums worldwide. Considering the relatively small number of scarabs in the excavated series, it is primarily the unprovenanced parallels and mid 13th Dynasty royal-name scarabs (WARD in TUFNELL 1984: 156–59), which provide the evidence for characteristic features (back, head and side) of these scarabs that are not provided by the sealings.

In order to establish a typology of Second Intermediate Period scarabs we must first establish the chronological range of this period and the archaeological deposits representing it in Egypt and in the southern Levant. The chronological definition of the Second Intermediate Period in Egypt is still a highly controversial issue. The end of the period is clearly defined historically and archaeologically (BOURRIAU 1997: 159–65; 2000: 210–17). However, the beginning of the period, coinciding with the takeover of the eastern Delta by the Canaanite settlers and the subsequent division of the land is still highly debated (O'CONNOR 1997: 48–52; RYHOLT 1997: 5–6; BEN-TOR *et al.* 1999; BOURRIAU 2000: 195–99). Bietak argues that the takeover of Tell el-Dab'a occurred during the occupation level of stratum F, which he dates between the late 18th – early 17th century BC (BIETAK 1991: 38–40, 51; 1997: 108–109). The dates proposed by Bietak for the occupation levels at Tell el-Dab'a are based primarily on the recent studies of

Egyptian pottery noted above (BIETAK 1997: 125–28), and they are largely accepted by experts of Egyptian pottery (SMITH 1995a: 75–90; BOURRIAU 2000: 186–95). Moreover, Bietak's suggested date for the Canaanite takeover of Tell el-Dab'a between the late 18th and early 17th centuries BC is corroborated by archaeological evidence from Egypt and the southern Levant.

The most significant event that marks the end of the Middle Kingdom is the abandonment of the capital Itj-tawy by the late rulers of the 13th Dynasty. Precise dating of this event is still speculative, and the developments that generated it are not entirely clear (O'CONNOR 1997: 48–52; BOURRIAU 2000: 195–99). The last 13th Dynasty ruler with inscribed monuments in both Upper and Lower Egypt is King Merneferre Ay, whose reign is dated to the beginning of the 17th century ca. 1695–1685 (BOURRIAU 2000: 185).⁷ Further indication for the weakening and subsequent disintegration of Middle Kingdom central rule sometime between the late 18th – early 17th centuries BC is provided by the abandonment of the royal funerary cult at Dahshur. The pottery of complex 7 at the site was found in abandoned silos in the pyramid complex of Amenemhat III (BOURRIAU 1997: 166; 2000: 197). The construction of silos inside the pyramid complex while the royal funerary cult was still practiced is highly unlikely, and argues for the end of the pyramid cult before the silos were built (BOURRIAU 1997: 166).⁸ The burial of King Hor in the pyramid complex indicates the continuation of the cult at least until the mid 18th century BC (BIETAK 1997: 126–27; BOURRIAU 2000: 197). There is still no conclusive evidence to establish the precise date for the end of cultic activities at the site, nor for the earliest occurrence of Dahshur complex 7 pottery types. The evidence suggests, however, that by the late 18th – early 17th century BC the pyramid cult has been neglected for a period of time allowing the reuse of

⁴ See SMITH 1995a: 70–71; WEGNER 1998: 41; S. ALLEN in BEN-TOR *et al.* 1999: 55–58. The bulk of the Elephantine sealings were found in stratum 13/XIII, which was dated by the excavator to the late 12th Dynasty (VON PILGRIM 1996: 15, figs. 106–107). However, Dorothea Arnold who examined the published pottery from this stratum at my request, states that it continues well into the 13th Dynasty. This observation was confirmed by Tedeoza Rzeuska who is currently working on the publication of the Middle Kingdom pottery at Elephantine. I thank both these scholars for their generous help.

⁵ e.g. TUFNELL 1975, figs. 2, 7: 26–27, 317–18; VON PILGRIM 1996, figs. 101, 102, 104: 85, 178, 242, 255, 331.

⁶ A typology of late Middle Kingdom scarabs will be presented in a study being prepared by this author.

⁷ RYHOLT (1997: 197) dates this king between ca. 1701–1677 B.C.

⁸ The evidence from the pyramid complexes of Snefru at Dahshur and Menkaure at Giza (KEMP 1983: 92–96; 1989: 147–49; BOURRIAU 1997: 166) is not necessarily indicative of the pyramid complex of Amenemhat III at Dahshur considering the much shorter time span involved in the cult of the latter.

the silos after their abandonment (ARNOLD 1982: 40). Recent excavations in the town and temple associated with the mortuary complex of Senwosret III at Abydos suggest a similar date for the end of cultic activities in the temple.⁹

Dahshur complex 7 pottery forms are also associated with the final phase of the Middle Kingdom administrative units of the Egyptian forts in Lower Nubia. Stuart Tyson Smith presents substantial evidence indicating that the terminal Middle Kingdom ceramic assemblages at Askut include Dahshur complex 7 and Tell el-Yehudiyeh forms identical to those found in strata G/1–3 and F at Tell el-Dab^a, with a possible continuation into E/3 (SMITH 1995a: 75–86). Susan Allen presents similar evidence for the final Middle Kingdom occupation at Uronarti (in BEN-TOR *et al.*: 57–58).

Pottery types of Dahshur complex 7 first appear at Tell el-Dab^a in stratum G/1–3, when a new influx of Canaanites is indicated by the notable expansion of the settlement, and the increase of Canaanite pottery forms at the site from 20% to 40% (BIETAK 1991: 36–38; 1996: 31; 1997: 105).¹⁰ This evidence implies diminishing control of the central rule over the eastern Delta in the late 18th century, which subsequently allowed for the Asiatic takeover of the site in the next occupation level (BIETAK 1996: 40–41; 1997: 108–109).

Further significant developments that can be dated between the late 18th – early 17th centuries BC are manifested in changes of trade patterns between Egypt and the southern Levant. Archaeological evidence from Egypt and Syria-Palestine argues for the coinciding of the termination of trade contacts between Egypt and Byblos and the beginning of trade contacts between Egypt and Palestine, both occurring sometime between the late 18th – early 17th century BC.¹¹ The end of trade with Byblos is most likely to be associated with the disintegrating power of the 13th Dynasty and the subsequent retreat of its late rulers to Thebes, where they were no longer able to continue the traditional Middle Kingdom commercial contacts with the Syrian coast. Trade contacts with Palestine were most probably introduced by the

Canaanite settlers at Tell el-Dab^a, who initiated trade contacts with their place of origin.

The evidence presented above argues for the decline of Middle Kingdom central rule and a simultaneous growth of the Canaanite settlement at Tell el-Dab^a in the late 18th century BC. It further indicates that these developments generated the abandonment of Middle Kingdom royal funerary cults, changes in trade contacts between Egypt and the Levant, and eventually the abandonment of the northern capital that marks the end of the Middle Kingdom. It is precisely within this time range that scarabs are first attested in Palestine.

The early Palestinian scarab series¹² include excavated groups from deposits attributed to the last phase of the MBIIA – with only a handful of examples, and the early MBIIB – where most examples originated (BECK and ZEVULUN 1996). It is now largely accepted that absolute dates of archaeological deposits in the southern Levant can only be established through synchronisms with Egyptian chronology (BIETAK 1991: 27–28; 1997: 125; WEINSTEIN 1992; BAGH 2000: 8–10). It has been further argued that the most secure synchronism for this period is provided by the Egyptian and Canaanite pottery from stratified deposits at Tell el-Dab^a (BIETAK 1991; 1997: 125–28; SMITH 1995a: 76–79; BEN-TOR 1997: 163–64). Based on the ceramic assemblages at Tell el-Dab^a, these Middle Bronze Age phases coincide with stratum F and E/3 and date between the late 18th and early 17th century BC (BIETAK 1997: 90, fig. 4.3).

It has been argued elsewhere (BEN-TOR 1997: 167–85) that most designs occurring on scarabs of the early Palestinian series constitute imitations of late Middle Kingdom designs. It was further demonstrated that many of these scarabs display misrendered signs and pseudo-hieroglyphs that are not attested on the Egyptian prototypes (BEN-TOR 1997: 170–83). The misrendered signs and the distribution of these scarabs almost exclusively in Palestine, argue for the non-Egyptian origin of the artists who produced them and for Palestine as their place of production. A small number of imported late Middle Kingdom scarabs are attested in the early Palestin-

⁹ Wegner's dating of the temple cult throughout the 13th Dynasty (Wegner 2000: 88; 2001: 306) was recently modified (personal communication; see also Wegner this volume).

¹⁰ David Aston kindly informed me that the 40% include mainly locally made Canaanite-type pottery and not imported vessels from the southern Levant (Aston forthcoming). Still, 100% increase in quantity of Canaanite-

type pottery and the expansion of the settlement argue for a new influx of Canaanite settlers.

¹¹ This issue is discussed in BEN-TOR 2003: 246.

¹² Ward and Dever's Periods IIA–III (WARD and DEVER 1994: 5–6).

ian series, providing a *terminus post quem* for their contexts, but the great majority constitutes local Canaanite productions (BEN-TOR 1997: 185–87).

The archaeological contexts and the distribution of the early Palestinian series indicate the primary use of these scarabs as funerary amulets in Canaanite tombs – though their use as amulets for the living can not be ruled out – and their southern and central Palestinian origin. The largest groups were found in early MBIIB Canaanite cemeteries at Jericho, Tel Aviv harbor, Rishon Leziyyon and Megiddo (WARD and DEVER 1994: 5–6, Periods IIA–III; BEN-TOR 1997: 162–3). The evidence at Tell el-Dab^a indicates that the Canaanite settlers at the site adopted the custom of placing scarabs in their tombs very early after settling at the site (MLINAR this volume). It was therefore argued that the date of initial occurrence of scarabs in Palestine, and the local origin of most examples indicate that these scarabs reflect a Canaanite adaptation of an Egyptian funerary custom that was transmitted through the Canaanite settlers in the eastern Delta (BEN-TOR 1994: 11; 1997: 187–88). The beginning of large-scale use of scarabs in Palestine reflects the initial phase of the close commercial and cultural contacts attested between Egypt and Palestine throughout the Second Intermediate Period. These contacts are reflected in the material culture at Tell el-Dab^a – including the scarabs found at the site, and in the iconography of Canaanite scarabs.

The distinct stylistic differences between Middle Kingdom Egyptian scarabs and Canaanite scarabs of the early Palestinian series argue that in order to establish a typology of Second Intermediate Period scarabs, the Egyptian and Palestinian excavated series should be dealt with separately. The distinction between Second Intermediate Period Egyptian and Canaanite scarabs is not as simple as in the case of Middle Kingdom scarabs, since scarabs from both regions often show identical characteristics. Unlike the stylistic homogeneity of the late Middle Kingdom series, scarabs from Second Intermediate Period contexts in Egypt and Nubia display a stylistic diversity, which is manifested first and foremost in a sig-

nificant number of imported Canaanite scarabs and Canaanite-inspired motifs. It is these foreign and foreign-inspired scarabs that are usually defined as Second Intermediate Period or “Hyksos” scarabs (KEMP and MERRILLEES 1980: 48–49; BIETAK 1984: 483–84; 1991: 52–53; WARD 1987: 523–26). The Canaanite origin of many of these scarabs, though occasionally suggested in early studies,¹³ was not considered in the typologies of TUFNELL (1984) and O’CONNOR (1985), and was only recently recognized (SCHROER 1985; 1989; KEEL 1989; 1994: 207–25; 1995: 30–35; BEN-TOR 1997; in KEEL 1997: *passim*).¹⁴ No attempt was ever made, however, to distinguish between Second Intermediate Period scarabs of Egyptian manufacture and Canaanite imports, or to establish a typology of the former. This can only be done once the Canaanite imports in contemporary contexts in Egypt and Nubia are identified.

The general contemporaneity of the late Palestinian scarabs series¹⁵ with the Second Intermediate Period in Egypt is indicated by archaeological evidence from Tell el-Dab^a (BIETAK 1997: 90, fig. 4.3).¹⁶ Unlike scarabs of the early Palestinian series, which display mainly imitations of late Middle Kingdom designs, scarabs of the late series display a large number of designs that are inspired by the Levantine cultural sphere.

The Levantine origin of some of these designs was shown by Schroer, who argues for the origin of motifs like the Canaanite dignitary wearing a toga-like garment and the nude goddess in Syrian cylinder seals (SCHROER 1985; 1989). SCHROER also demonstrates that depictions of the Hathor symbol on Middle Bronze scarabs represent Canaanite imitations of the Egyptian symbol, which are closely associated with the nude goddess (1989: 140–53). She further argues for the Canaanite origin of the branch and the antelope, and their association with the nude goddess (1989: 109–10, 126–30, 133–36). Schroer and Keel demonstrate that scarabs of the late Palestinian series display a mixture of Egyptian and Levantine motifs, and most important, local independent developments (KEEL 1994: 209–25; 1995: 190–229). An examination of the typical motifs and designs on

¹³ Such as PIEPER 1930; MURRAY 1949. Tufnell suggested a Levantine origin for the “Canaanite ruler” motif in an early study (1956) but no longer considers it in her 1984 study.

¹⁴ Ward, following KEEL (1989) and SCHROER (1985; 1989), accepted the Canaanite origin of examples bearing distinctive Levantine motifs, but argued for the Egyptian manufacture of most so-called “Hyksos scarabs” (WARD 1987:

523–26; WARD and DEVER 1994: 118–20).

¹⁵ Ward and Dever’s Periods IV–V (WARD and DEVER 1994: 6).

¹⁶ The Middle Bronze Age in Palestine probably continues into the early 18th Dynasty in Egypt, however, this is not indicated in the scarabs, which display stylistic homogeneity throughout the late Middle Bronze Age. This issue requires further research and will be dealt with elsewhere.

these scarabs reveals a distinct majority of Egyptianized motifs, although their Egyptian prototypes are not always clear. Keel demonstrates that some of these motifs, such as the falcon-headed figure and the "Green Jasper" group were inspired by Syrian cylinder seals (KEEL 1989: 211–280). The common occurrence of Egyptian iconography on Syrian cylinder seals, reflecting commercial contacts and cultural interaction between Egypt and Syria during the Middle Kingdom, was demonstrated in the studies of EDER (1995) and TEISSIER (1996).

Some Egyptianized motifs on scarabs of the late Palestinian series, such as the image of the god Ptah, the crocodile, a particular type of griffon, and of a human headed and falcon headed sphinx, are not found on Syrian cylinder seals and they most probably reflect direct influence from Egypt (KEEL 1995: 194–95, 198–201, 213–14). Human figures depicted with distinct Egyptian iconography are very common in the late series, alone or as part of more complex scenes (KEEL 1995: 204–208, 218–27). It has been argued that the inspiration for these figures may have come from human figures depicted on a particular type of late Middle Kingdom private-name scarab (KEEL 1994: 213–20; 1995: 206; BEN-TOR 1997: 181). Keel demonstrates that these local imitations developed independently throughout the Middle Bronze Age, employing Levantine inspired scenes and gestures such as: two figures flanking a central symbol (KEEL 1995: 224), hand postures of veneration and blessing (KEEL 1995: 220), erotic scenes (KEEL 1995: 221), and kneeling worshippers (KEEL 1995: 225). The Canaanite origin of these scarabs is also indicated by their number and distribution in Middle Bronze Palestine compared with their number and distribution in Egypt. Although scarabs of this type are found in most Second Intermediate Period excavated groups in Egypt and Nubia, their number and variations are notably smaller than in Palestine.

The scarabs discussed above, depicting human and animal figures in linear contours or more commonly in hollowed out images, constitute one of the three main groups traditionally referred to as "Hyksos scarabs". The other groups display the so-called "Hyksos sides", and variations of the *nr* formula (WARD 1987: 523–26). The "Hyksos" origin of these designs was argued based on their complete absence

in Egypt prior to the Second Intermediate Period and on the common occurrence of the so-called "Hyksos sides" on royal-name scarabs of this period. Ward notes that some of these designs, such as variations of the so-called Hyksos sides, and the *nr* formula, occur on scarabs of the early Palestinian series, and correctly argues that these designs occur in Palestine earlier than in Egypt (WARD 1987: 523–26). However, Ward's dating of these scarabs was too high and he rejected the possibility of their Canaanite production (WARD and DEVER 1994: 118–20; BEN-TOR 1997: 166).

As noted above, the Canaanite origin of the designs comprising human and animal figures is indicated by the Levantine inspiration on the images and scenes of many examples and by their number and distribution in Palestine compared with Egypt. The Canaanite origin of the *nr* formula is indicated, as argued elsewhere, by the common occurrence of misrendered signs and pseudohieroglyphs and by the inconsistency in the choice and order of the signs (BEN-TOR 1997: 171–75). The so-called Hyksos sides first occur in the early Palestinian series as panel designs, usually in association with the *nr* formula (e.g. TUFNELL 1984, pl. 19) that argues for their Canaanite origin. Second Intermediate Period royal-name scarabs display three main types of Hyksos sides,¹⁷ two of which (types 2 and 3 in n. 17) are not attested on Canaanite scarabs.

The Canaanite origin of the Second Intermediate Period foreign rulers in Egypt was demonstrated by the archaeological evidence at Tell el-Dab'a, and is now largely accepted (BIETAK 1997; HOLLADAY 1997; MCGOVERN and HARBOTTLE 1997; RYHOLT 1997: 94–150; BOURRIAU 2000: 187–95). Many scholars now argue that two dynasties of Canaanite origin, identified with Manetho's 14th and 15th Dynasties, ruled at Tell el-Dab'a during the Second Intermediate Period (BIETAK 1997: 108–115; O'CONNOR 1997: 48–52; RYHOLT 1997: 5–6; BOURRIAU 2000: 191–93). Royal-name scarabs of this period provide the primary and often exclusive evidence for many kings, particularly those with non-Egyptian names (WARD 1976; RYHOLT 1997: 40–52). Most scholars agree that the foreign names on these scarabs are of west Semitic origin (WARD 1976; REDFORD 1997: 20–21; RYHOLT 1997: 99–102, 126–30; SCHNEIDER 1998: 31–49). Moreover, an examination of these scarabs corrobo-

¹⁷ Ward in TUFNELL 1984: 165, fig. 27: 3E1–4. The three main types are: 1. Arrangement of paired signs: 3E1–3E2. 2. Two pairs of *nr* signs in upright position and reversed: 3E2–3E3. 3. Stylized reversed *nr* signs: 3E4.

rates the Canaanite origin of the rulers, as their designs and stylistic features frequently show close similarity to contemporary Canaanite scarabs.

Canaanite motifs such as the 'nr' formula, the Canaanite Hathor symbol, and the twisted scroll commonly attested on Syrian cylinder seals, occur on cylinder seals of King Khyan (NEWBERRY 1908, pl. 7: 7, 10). Some royal-name scarabs are decorated with branches on the back (e.g. TUFNELL 1984, pls. 56–59: 3220, 3230, 3272, 3339),¹⁸ and as shown earlier variations of the Hyksos sides occur on Canaanite scarabs of the early series. Furthermore, the highly schematic features of most of these scarabs show close similarity to those of Middle Bronze Canaanite scarabs (WARD and DEVER 1994: 129–131).¹⁹ The non-Egyptian origin of the artists who produced these scarabs is further revealed by corrupt variations of royal names and titles, which are never attested on royal-name scarabs of other periods, and strongly argue for the Canaanite origin of the artisans who manufactured them (WARD 1976; BEN-TOR *et al.* 1999: 61–62).

The number and distribution of these royal-name scarabs in Egypt and Nubia is notably larger than in Palestine, arguing for their Egyptian origin.²⁰ Moreover, there is no evidence to suggest the production of royal-name scarabs in Palestine, except for Canaanite imitations that usually display meaningless groups of signs (e.g. TUFNELL 1984, pls. 17–18: 1771, 1798, 1804, 1814, 1817). There is also no evidence to suggest that Canaanite rulers in Palestine ever assumed Egyptian royal titulary, not even titles of high officials as in the case of rulers of Byblos in the late Middle Kingdom. The evidence suggests that these scarabs were made at Tell el-Dab^a, the eastern Delta capital of the foreign dynasties, by artisans of Canaanite origin. The fact that only two royal-name scarabs from this period were found at Tell el-Dab^a is undoubtedly the result of the destruction and extensive plundering of the Second Intermediate Period remains from the site in later periods.²¹ The examples found in Middle Bronze Palestine were most probably imported as part of the extensive trade between the eastern Delta rulers and Palestine during this period (WEINSTEIN 1981: 8–10; 1991: 107–108).

As these scarabs constitute the only contemporary source for most Second Intermediate Period foreign rulers, attempts have been made to establish their sequence (WARD in TUFNELL 1984: 162–72; RYHOLT 1997: 40–52; KRAUSS 1998). The great majority of these scarabs did not originate in excavations, and the archaeological contexts of excavated examples do not offer conclusive evidence for their sequence. Most excavated examples come either from disturbed contexts or from late Second Intermediate Period – early 18th Dynasty contexts (RYHOLT 1997: 105, n. 355; BEN-TOR *et al.* 1999: 58–59). Attempts to establish their sequence were therefore based primarily on the designs and stylistic features of the scarabs, which proved inconclusive. This issue requires a separate discussion and will not be dealt with here, except for a royal-name scarab of King Ya^cqubhar from Shiqmona in northern Israel, which is of special significance for this discussion. The ceramic assemblages associated with this scarab have their closest parallels in assemblages of Group III at Jericho (BEN-TOR and BONFIL 2002: 38). Scarabs associated with Group III at Jericho were noted by Tufnell as introducing a new style that became dominant in the late Palestinian series (TUFNELL 1984: 139–40). It is almost exclusively scarabs of the late series, of types first attested in Group III at Jericho, which are found in Egypt and Nubia, unlike scarabs of the early series, which are almost completely absent in these regions, including the eastern Delta.

Canaanite pottery of the type found in Group III at Jericho was found at Tell el-Dab^a in stratum E/2 (WARD and DEVER 1994: 80), the occupation level associated by the excavators of Tell el-Dab^a with the rise of the 15th Dynasty (BIETAK 1997: 90, fig. 4.3). As noted above, the excavated series do not offer sufficient evidence to establish the sequence and absolute date of royal-name scarabs of this period, or the dynastic affiliation of most kings. However, scarabs of King Ya^cqubhar show close stylistic similarity to scarabs of King Khyan (WARD in TUFNELL 1984: 168, fig. 29; KRAUSS 1998: 41, table 2b; BEN-TOR *et al.* 1999: 61). Moreover, the similarity between their *prenomina* particularly in the form

¹⁸ For the Canaanite origin of the branch motif see KEEL 1995: 190, 204, 210–13.

¹⁹ Ward's comparative material for royal-name scarabs constitutes primarily scarabs of the Palestinian series, the majority of which are of Canaanite origin (See WARD and DEVER 1994: 131: Supplementary Group 1).

²⁰ This is clearly seen in Ryholt's list of attestations of the kings attributed to the 14th and 15th Dynasties (RYHOLT 1997: 359–88), as the bulk of the unprovenanced scarabs come from collections which originated in Egypt.

²¹ For evidence indicating a scarab workshop at Tell el-Dab^a see MLINAR this volume.

of the sign *wsr*, misled both Giveon and Hornung to attribute two examples bearing the *prenomen* of Ya^cqubhar to Khyan (HORNUNG and STAEHELIN 1976: 219, no. 143; KEEL 1995: 234, no. 8). These similarities argue for a chronological proximity of the two kings, and the largely accepted 15th Dynasty affiliation of King Khyan (BIETAK 1994: 27; RYHOLT 1997: 118–37) suggests a similar dynastic affiliation for King Ya^cqubhar.

After defining the main types of Canaanite scarabs of this period we can try to distinguish them from contemporary Egyptian scarabs. In contrast to the late Middle Kingdom series, which constitute primarily sealings, the excavated series of the Second Intermediate Period in Egypt and Nubia constitute almost exclusively scarabs from cemeteries.²² The reuse and massive plundering of Second Intermediate Period cemeteries that yielded scarabs make it practically impossible to establish a stylistic

sequence of the excavated series of this period. Moreover, a significant number of examples come from early 18th Dynasty contexts.²³ The latter, and late Middle Kingdom scarabs from Second Intermediate Period contexts, attest to the common reuse of scarabs in Egypt during these periods, which generated confusion that is attested in many studies.²⁴ The number of late Middle Kingdom scarabs in Second Intermediate Period contexts is, however, small, arguing for the termination of their production after the abandonment of Itj-tawy. Design scarabs that can be defined as Second Intermediate Period Egyptian include examples from Second Intermediate Period and early 18th Dynasty contexts displaying characteristics that are not attested on Middle Kingdom, New Kingdom, or Canaanite scarabs. The Egyptian origin of these scarabs is also indicated by their number and distribution in Egypt and Nubia compared with Palestine.

Such scarabs display a relatively small repertoire of designs inspired by both late Middle Kingdom and Canaanite prototypes, the latter strongly arguing for their production within the Hyksos cultural sphere, most probably at Tell el-Dab^a. Many designs comprise symmetric arrangements of hieroglyphs similar to those established in the late Middle Kingdom, however the stylistic features of these scarabs clearly indicate their Second Intermediate Period date. Moreover, the choice and depiction of the signs on these scarabs differ from those attested on late Middle Kingdom scarabs. Most notable are: the sign *r*, frequently depicted singly or in pairs (Fig 1: 1–4), a particular form of the sign *k3* (Fig. 1: 5–6), which is absent on late Middle Kingdom and Canaanite scarabs, and designs including the sign *nbw* (Fig. 1: 7–11), imitating a late Middle Kingdom prototype (TUFNELL 1975, fig. 6: 290–299). Designs of symmetric hieroglyphs display the *swt* plant in a manner that differs from its depiction on most late Middle Kingdom examples (Fig 2). A particular type of the so-called *rdj-r^c* scarabs is found in Second Intermediate Period contexts in Egypt (Fig. 3: 1–4). They are usu-

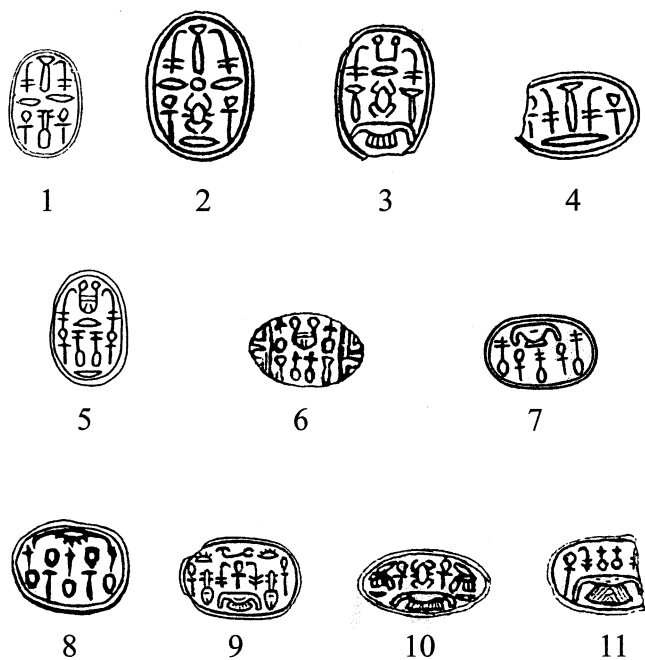


Fig. 1 Second Intermediate Period Egyptian Scarabs

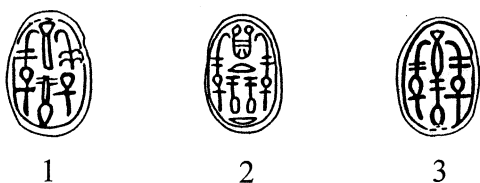
²² The archaeological evidence associated with the late Middle Kingdom sealing systems indicates that none of them survived beyond the early Second Intermediate Period. Moreover, the use of scarabs as seals is not attested in Second Intermediate Period Egypt (for Kerma see below). The date of the sealings from 18th Dynasty contexts at Tell el-Dab^a (BIETAK this volume) is inconclusive. They may reflect continuation of the late Middle Kingdom administrative practice in the Hyksos capital, but they may also be

contemporary with their context, as the use of so-called “heirloom scarabs” for sealing is well attested in Egypt.

²³ E.g. Mayana (PETRIE and BRUNTON 1924, pl. 43), Esna (DOWNES 1974: 60–65, Groups 178, 269, 283, 320, 333), Buhen (RANDALL-MACIVER and WOOLLEY 1911, pls. 56–57: 10043–44, 1055, 10072, 10075, 10083).

²⁴ This issue is discussed in a study currently prepared by this author, which includes a typology of Second Intermediate Period Egyptian scarabs.

"Swt" plants on SIP scarabs



"Swt" plants on Late MK scarabs



Fig. 2 Scarabs with "Swt" plants

ally larger than the small *rdj-r* scarabs that probably first occur in the late Middle Kingdom (Fig. 3: 5–9), they are occasionally made of crude faience, and the sun disk is sometimes depicted as a square. This type of scarab is completely absent in Palestine. The winged sun disk is also characteristic of Second

Intermediate Period scarabs (Fig. 4: 1–9). This motif is extremely rare on late Middle Kingdom scarabs, the isolated examples displaying the sign in a completely different manner (Fig. 4: 10). The depiction of the winged sun disk on Second Intermediate Period scarabs is similar to that attested on Canaanite scarabs of the early Palestinian series, where it constitutes a relatively common motif (Fig. 4: 11–12). It has been argued that Syrian cylinder seals were the source of inspiration for its occurrence on early Canaanite scarabs (BEN-TOR 1998: 7).

The Second Intermediate Period Egyptian corpus also includes a distinct type of small scarabs displaying concentric circles (Fig. 5), which are not attested in the late Middle Kingdom series or in the Palestinian series. Concentric circles first appear on early Middle Kingdom scarabs, as is indicated by the relatively large number of examples in the Montet Jar (Fig. 6: 1–18). They are almost completely absent on late Middle Kingdom scarabs, but become popular on Canaanite scarabs already in the early series, where they display independent developments (Fig. 6: 19–32). Another Second Intermediate Period group displays arrangements of signs that were interpreted as a formula associated with the god Re or as a royal or private name (Fig. 7: 1–11).²⁵ However, variations of this design display inconsistencies that argue against

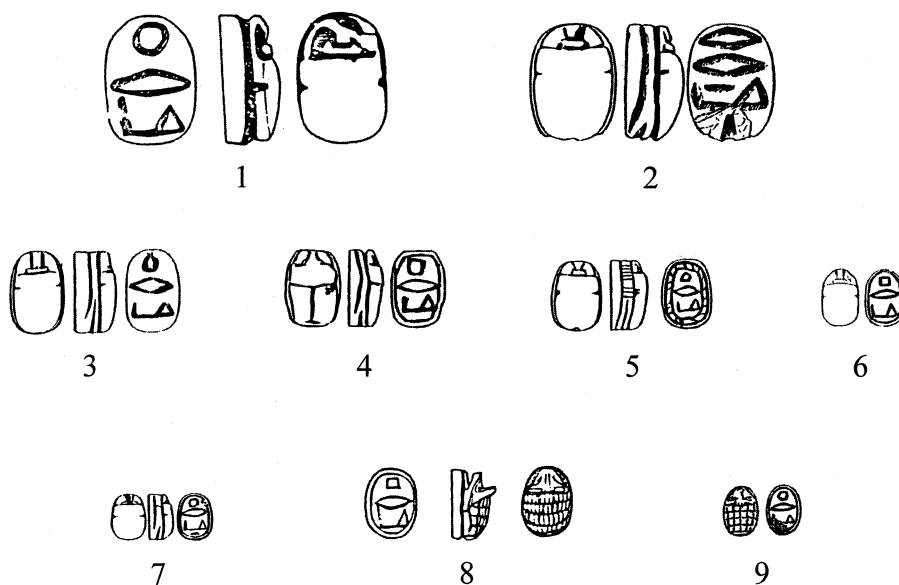


Fig. 3 "Rdi-ra" Scarabs

²⁵ See HALL 1913: 256–58, nos. 2561–75; HORNING and STAEHELIN 1976: 225, nos. 171–73; RYHOLT 1997: 64).

its interpretation as an Egyptian inscription. Moreover, its similarity to the early Canaanite "Horus and *nr*" design argues for the latter as its source of inspiration (BEN-TOR 1997: 179; see also QUIRKE this volume). It is interesting to note that this motif is fre-

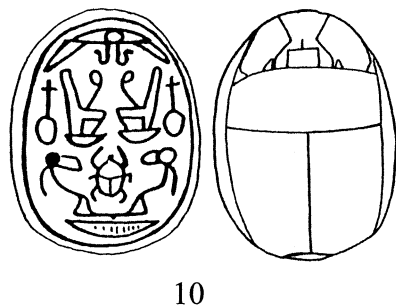
quently depicted on a type of cowroid identical to those bearing the throne name of King Apophis (Fig. 8: 1–4), which argues for a similar date. Variations of the *nr* formula are also attested on this type of cowroid (Fig. 9: 1–4), arguing for their Egyptian origin. Egyptian origin is also indicated when the *nr* is depicted with "Hyksos sides" of the types absent on Canaanite scarabs (Fig. 9: 5–6).²⁶

The Canaanite inspiration on most scarabs discussed above and the type of cowroids associated with the name of Apophis argue for their production within the Hyksos cultural sphere. The evidence presented by MLINAR (this volume) suggests Tell el-Dab^a as the site of production of these scarabs, although the scarab corpus found at the site does not include a representative group of these scarabs, undoubtedly as a result of extensive plundering of the site in later periods. The Second Intermediate Period excavated series from Egypt and Nubia do not offer conclusive evidence for the production of scarabs in the Theban dominated region. The only probable exceptions are a handful of crude royal-name scarabs made of glazed

Winged sun-disk on SIP Egyptian scarabs



Egyptian Middle Kingdom scarab



Early Canaanite scarabs



Fig. 4

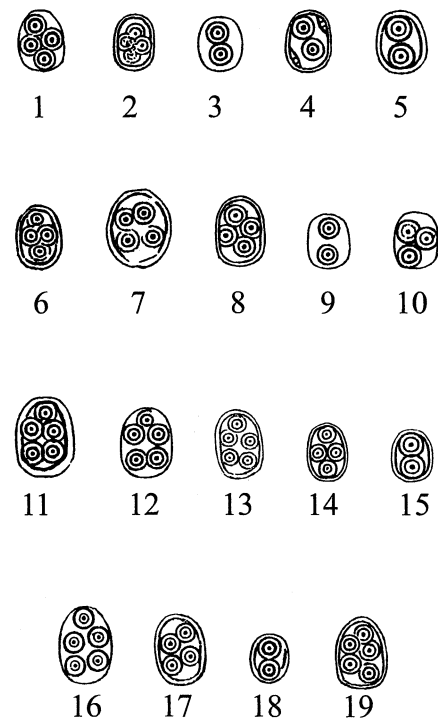
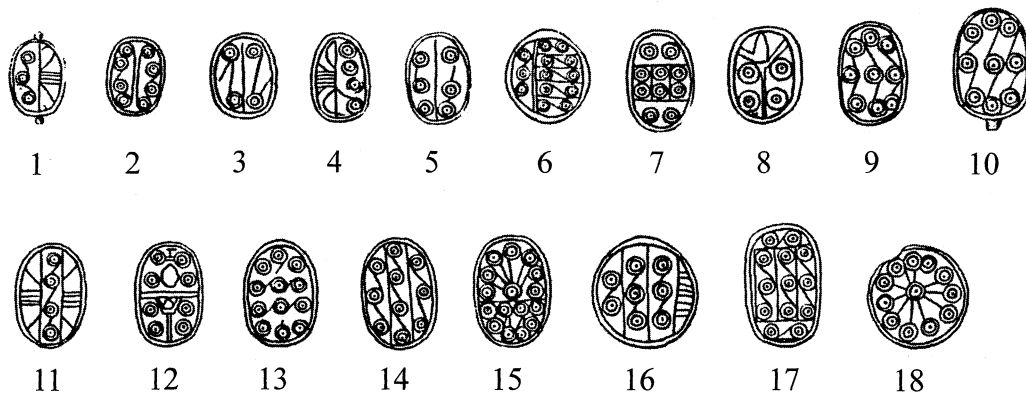


Fig. 5 SIP Scarabs with concentric circles

²⁶ The complete repertoire of Second Intermediate Period designs will be presented in the study referred to in note 24.

Concentric circles from the Montet jar



Canaanite variations of concentric circles

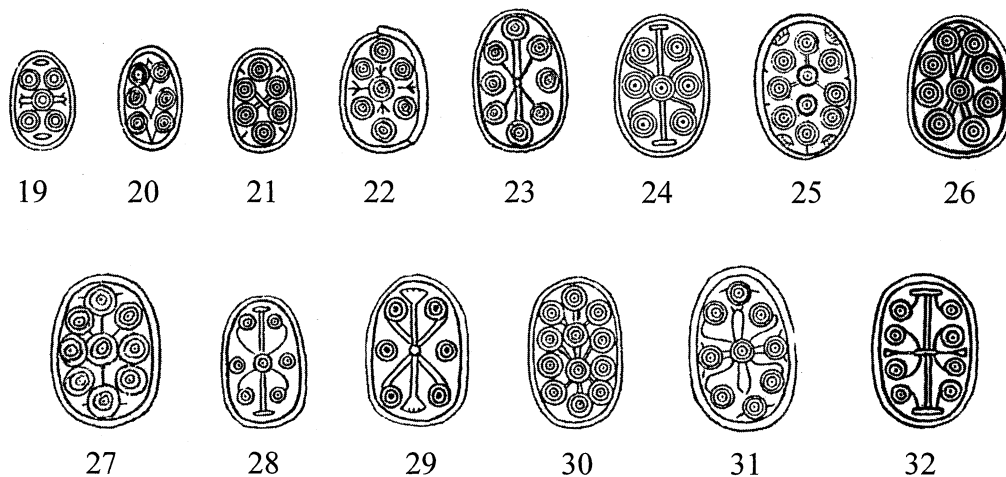


Fig. 6 Scarabs with concentric circles

composition (RYHOLT 1997: 159–60, 389; see also QUIRKE this volume). This issue requires additional evidence from future excavations.

As noted above, Canaanite scarabs were found in almost all Second Intermediate Period excavated groups in Egypt and Nubia. Their number is significant in the eastern Delta,²⁷ which is not surprising, and in Nubia,²⁸ which is surprising considering the evidence for lack of commercial contacts between Nubia and Lower Egypt during most of the Second Intermediate Period (BOURRIAU 1991b: 130–35; 2000: 208–209). Tell el-Yahudiya vessels, Egyptian Second

Intermediate Period scarabs, and Canaanite Middle Bronze scarabs are the only Delta imports attested in Second Intermediate Period contexts in Nubia (BOURRIAU 1991b: 130). These objects, which were in wide circulation in Egypt throughout the Second Intermediate Period may have arrived indirectly through trade with Upper Egypt, or directly from Avaris via the Western Desert oases (BOURRIAU 1991b: 130; 2000: 201).

The relatively large number of scarabs from Second Intermediate Period contexts in Nubia is significant considering the fact that this region was free of

²⁷ E.g. PETRIE 1906, pl. 6: 4–5, pl. 7: 9–18, 27–28, 33–34, pl. 8: 43–45, pl. 9: 118, 120–121, 152, 154–55, 157–166.

²⁸ E.g. REISNER 1923, pl. 40: 2, two bottom lines.



Fig. 7 Second Intermediate Period "Horus and ntr" variation

Egyptian occupation during this period, when both Upper and Lower Nubia were part of the Kingdom of Kush. As in the case of Egypt, scarabs of this period were found in Nubia almost exclusively in cemeteries.²⁹ They are found in Egyptian and Nubian cemeteries associated with the forts in Lower Nubia, in C-Group, Pangrave and Kerma cemeteries in Lower Nubia, and in Kerma cemeteries in Upper Nubia (e.g. REISNER 1923: 70–88; O'CONNOR 1985: 14–16; VILA 1987: 225–45; SAVE-SÖDERBERGH 1989: 95–110).

The use of scarabs as funerary amulets in the Nubian cemeteries was most likely the result of cultural interaction between the Egyptian expatriates in the forts and the Nubian indigenous population. This is indicated by the almost complete absence of scarabs in Nubian cemeteries dating from the Middle Kingdom,³⁰ although commercial contacts between Egypt and Nubia are well attested during this period (BOURRIAU 1991b: 129–30). The use of scarabs in Nubian cemeteries is attested almost

exclusively in the Second Intermediate Period when cultural interaction between the Egyptians in the forts and the indigenous Nubian population is clearly indicated in the archaeological evidence (TRIGGER 1976: 97–98; SMITH 1995a: 102–106). This situation differs notably from the situation during the Middle Kingdom, when Egypt controlled Lower Nubia, but the Egyptians in the forts who protected their border and trade routes kept their distance from the indigenous population (TRIGGER 1976: 77–81; SAVE-SÖDERBERGH 1989: 9; SMITH 1995a: 79–80). It is interesting to note here that the initial occurrence of scarabs in Palestine was also shown to reflect cultur-

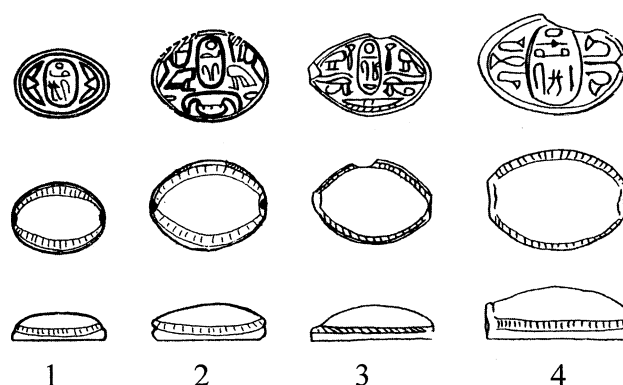


Fig. 8 Cowroids bearing the throne name of King Apophis

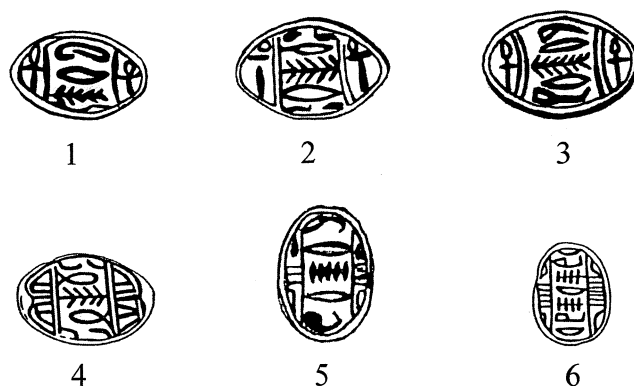


Fig. 9 Egyptian SIP variations of the "nr" formula

²⁹ However, unlike the situation in Egypt, administrative sealings of the Second Intermediate Period are attested at Kerma, reflecting local administration. This adaptation of Middle Kingdom Egyptian custom in the Kushite capital was most probably inspired by the late Middle Kingdom administration in the Lower Nubian forts (see also SMITH 1995b).

³⁰ The only exception is the early phase of the Kerma ceme-

tery at Ukma West (VILA 1987: 257–65), which is dated to the 13th Dynasty and yielded 45 late Middle Kingdom type scarabs (Andreu in VILA 1987: 244–45). The location of Ukma at the northern end of the Kerma cultural sphere in the late Middle Kingdom, near the Semna border, probably accounts for some cultural interaction with Egyptians in the final phase of the Middle Kingdom, a phenomenon also attested at Askut (SMITH 1995a: 79).

al interaction between Egyptians and Canaanites through the intermediary Canaanite population in the eastern Delta.

The Canaanite production of almost the entire corpus of Middle Bronze Age scarabs in Palestine is now largely accepted. The large-scale production of scarabs in Palestine throughout the MBII B is most probably the outcome of the particular political situation in Egypt during this period; i.e. the rule of northern Egypt by a dynasty or dynasties of Canaanite origin. Ward, however, argues correctly against a so-called "Hyksos culture" extending from the Egyptian Delta into Palestine (WARD and DEVER 1994: 4). Ward's arguments are corroborated by the scarabs found at Tell el-Dab^a, which display a mixture of Egyptian and Canaanite scarabs, and, as demonstrated by MLINAR (this volume), scarabs manufactured at the site. The Tell el-Dab^a scarabs display just like the pottery found at the site a mixture of Canaanite and Egyptian traditions, corroborating Bietak's definition of a highly Egyptianized Canaanite Middle Bronze culture. Just like the pottery repertoire at the site, which differs from that of Middle Bronze Palestine, a comparison of the Tell el-Dab^a scarabs and the Palestinian series, though displaying many similarities, shows a different stylistic profile. Unlike the Palestinian series, the Tell el-Dab^a scarabs show a distinct majority of Egyptian designs throughout the Second Intermediate Period, though the number of Canaanite designs and imports increases in phases attributed to the 15th Dynasty.³¹ The differences between the two groups argue against control of the eastern Delta rulers over Palestine, and against a uniform culture in both regions. This conclusion is supported by the complete lack of Second Intermediate Period Egyptian inscriptions in Palestine (see also RYHOLT 1997: 130–32), in contrast with the situation in Late Bronze Palestine, where inscribed monuments reflect the New Kingdom Egyptian empire in Asia. It is important to note that the Late Bronze scarab corpus in Palestine displays mainly imported Egyptian scarabs (LALKIN this conference), in complete contrast to the Middle Bronze Age corpus. Second Intermediate Period imported scarabs constitute a very

small minority among the bulk of local Middle Bronze productions. A much larger number of imported Canaanite scarabs is attested in Egypt compared with the number of Egyptian imported scarabs in Palestine during this period.³²

It should also be noted that the archaeological evidence at Tell el-Dab^a and the Second Intermediate Period royal inscriptions indicate gradual adaptation of Egyptian culture and religious beliefs by the foreign rulers. RYHOLT (1997: 148–50) argues that no contemporary evidence exists to corroborate the suggested "Hyksos religion", which was based exclusively on New Kingdom inscriptions and on the Manethonian tradition. Moreover, royal monuments of this period demonstrate that the foreign rulers at Tell el-Dab^a adopted the Egyptian royal titulary, worshipped Egyptian gods and usurped Middle Kingdom royal statues. The Canaanite storm god depicted on a local cylinder seal from Tell el-Dab^a and Canaanite-type temples at the site indicate importation of Canaanite religious practices to Tell el-Dab^a (BIETAK 1996: 26–29; 1997: 105–108). However, as correctly argued by RYHOLT (1997: 149–50), there is no evidence for the identification of Seth with the Canaanite god Ba'al before the New Kingdom, and there is no evidence for his worship beyond the limits of Tell el-Dab^a-Avaris during the Second Intermediate Period. The only association of these foreign rulers with Canaanite deities is attested in theophoric names such as Aper-^cAnat or Ya^cqubhar, which do not indicate the actual worship of these gods in the eastern Delta.

As for Palestine, the only evidence for Egyptian cultural influence in this region is provided by the Egyptian motifs and designs found on Middle Bronze Canaanite scarabs. The latter indicate adaptation of Egyptian iconography, but they do not necessarily imply adaptation of Egyptian religious beliefs. The only Egyptian religious practice attested by these scarabs is their use as funerary amulets. The distinct Levantine inspired scenes and gestures (above), as well as the alternating of different images in identical scenes (e.g. KEEL 1995, figs. 389–93, 452–60, 498–504, 518–25), suggest adaptation of Egyptian form and its assimilation into Canaanite culture

³¹ The publication of the Tell el-Dab^a scarabs by Christa Mlinar is now in print. I am very grateful to Christa Mlinar for providing me with drawings of these scarabs prior to their publication, and for her permission to refer to them in print. See also MLINAR this volume.

³² This issue is discussed in the forthcoming study referred to in note 24.

rather than adaptation of Egyptian beliefs. This situation argues against a uniform "Hyksos culture" extending from the eastern Delta into southern Palestine during the Second Intermediate Period and against control of the rulers of Avaris over Palestine.

It is interesting to note that the largest number of Second Intermediate Period imported scarabs was found at Tell el-^cAjjul. These include both royal-name scarabs (WEINSTEIN 1981: 8–10), and design scarabs of the types discussed above (e.g. TUFNELL 1984, pls. 8b–10, 13–14: 1402, 1403, 1426, 1465,

1466, 1505, 1506, 1507, 1512, 1604, 1606, 1608, 1651–1654), which are extremely rare at other sites. These scarabs argue for special contacts between Tell el-Dab^a and Tell el-^cAjjul, corroborating the identification of the site with Sharuhēn (KEMPINSKI 1974). However, the archaeological evidence at the site, both the architecture and the ceramic assemblages, reflects a typical, though affluent Canaanite town that differs notably from the typical eastern Delta cultural sphere and argues against its being part of the "Kingdom of Avaris".

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