RAMESSIDE SCARABS SIMULATING MIDDLE BRONZE AGE CANAANITE PROTOTYPES: CANAANITE OR EGYPTIAN?

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Abstract: *Scarabs found in Ramesside contexts in the Levant are generally considered as Egyptian imports. Yet, the possibility of local scarab production in the southern Levant during the early Ramesside period was considered in the case of scarabs displaying an archaization of Canaanite Middle Bronze Age designs. Considering the large number of locally-made scarabs in Palestine during the Middle Bronze Age, the Ramesside imitations could have been inspired by early prototypes discovered in this region. However, these scarabs could just as well have originated in the region of Tell el-Dabᶜa-Qantir, the location of Avaris and Piramesses – the respective capitals of the Hyksos and the 19th and 20th Dynasties, where Middle Bronze Age Canaanite scarabs were imported on a large scale during the Second Intermediate Period. The aim of this paper is to try to establish the origin of production of archaizing Ramesside scarabs, whether they were produced in the Ramesside capital or in the southern Levant.*

Key words: *Ramesside archaizing scarabs, from Avaris to Piramesses, Ramesside scarab workshops*

Scarabs found in Ramesside contexts in the Levant are generally considered as Egyptian imports, especially in the case of scarabs assigned to the reign of Ramesses II. This is a reasonable conclusion considering the strong Egyptian control over Canaan during this period.[1] Moreover, many of these scarabs display royal and/or divine names and images, suggesting their most likely production in Egyptian royal and temple workshops.[2] This is supported by the high quality of workmanship of many examples.

Nevertheless, the possibility of local scarab production in the southern Levant during the early Ramesside period was considered, especially in the case of scarabs from Ramesside contexts displaying an archaizing of Canaanite Middle Bronze Age designs.[3] Considering the large number of locally-made scarabs in Palestine during the Middle Bronze Age,[4] the Ramesside imitations could have been inspired by early prototypes discovered in this region. However, these scarabs could just as well have originated in the region of Tell el-Dabᶜa-Qantir, the location of Avaris and Piramesses – the respective capitals of the Hyksos and the 19th and 20th Dynasties, where Middle Bronze Age Canaanite scarabs were imported on a large scale during the Second Intermediate Period.[5] Moreover, as shown elsewhere,[6] Egyptian Second Intermediate Period scarabs produced in the eastern Delta display a close similarity to Middle Bronze Age Canaanite scarabs in both design and features.

The scarabs under discussion primarily display layouts of good-luck hieroglyphs and variations of the so-called *ᶜnrᶜ* formula, both typical of Middle Bronze Age Canaanite scarabs.[7] Yet, although most likely inspired by Middle Bronze Age prototypes, most Ramesside variations are easily distinguished from the early models, in both design and features. Moreover, the features of the Ramesside archaizing scarabs (backs, heads, and sides) are found also with Ramesside scarabs of different types (see below).

[*] The Israel Museum, Jerusalem. I am grateful to Othmar Keel and Vanessa Boschloos for reading the paper and for their helpful comments.

[1] Weinstein 1981, 17–22; Morris 2005, 382–98, 682–90; Ben-Tor 2011, 207–11.

[2] Keel 1989, 294–319; Ben-Tor 2011, 207.

[3] Brandl 2003; Lalkin 2008, 170–73, 182–84. Their conclusion is based on the fact that most examples were found in Palestine, while only isolated items were found in Egypt. This difficulty, however, exists for Ramesside scarabs in general, as well as for scarabs of other periods, and undoubtedly results from the extensive plundering of scarabs in Egypt in antiquity, and especially in modern times. Brandl (2003) presents convincing arguments for dating the archaizing scarabs to the 13th century BC, mainly to the reign of Ramesses II.

[4] Ben-Tor 2007, 117–83.

[5] Ben-Tor 2007, 191–92.

[6] Ben-Tor 2007, 72–113; 2010.

[7] Ben-Tor 2007, 126–34, 160–66. Layouts of good-luck hieroglyphs first appeared on Egyptian scarabs of the Middle Kingdom (Ben-Tor 2007, 14–20), and were later imitated on Middle Bronze Age Canaanite scarabs (Ben-Tor 2007, 125–33, 159–65).

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A systematic study of these scarabs has never been undertaken before. One of the main difficulties for such a study is the scarcity of excavated scarabs from Ramesside contexts in Egypt, which is the outcome of massive plundering of this type of objects in ancient and modern times. This probably accounts for the fact that most excavated Ramesside scarabs of this type come from sites in the Levant, mostly the southern Levant. The aim of this study is to try to establish the origin of production of these scarabs, initially by examining their find contexts whenever available. In view of the few items found in Egypt, however, a more reliable approach is to compare the features of these scarabs with Ramesside scarabs of indisputable Egyptian origin. The latter include items bearing royal and divine names and/or images, and items bearing mottos and blessing formulae, of which, even when lacking archaeological provenance, their Egyptian origin is generally recognised. It could be argued that as in the case of Egyptian stelae and inscribed architectural elements from sites such as Beth Shean,[8] and Jaffa,[9] the archaizing scarabs found in Palestine may have been produced by Egyptians stationed in this region. This is of course possible but not very likely; evidence for the production of Egyptian-style scarabs and other types of amulets in Palestine in the Late Bronze Age was found only in the temple-associated silicate workshop at Beth Shean.[10] Lalkin, who studied the scarabs from Late Bronze Age Palestine, assigned the Ramesside archaizing scarabs to a local workshop at Tell el-Farʿah (S), where the great majority of examples were found.[11] Considering the identical features of many of these scarabs and scarabs bearing designs of clear Egyptian origin, Lalkin proposed that the archaizing scarabs were imported plain from Egypt, and the base designs were later carved locally.[12] This, however, does not seem to be the case, as all steatite scarabs were glazed and fired after the base decorations were carved, and there is no evidence for the importation of plain unfired steatite scarabs into Palestine at any period.[13]

The designs most frequently found on archaizing Ramesside scarabs can be divided into two main categories:
A – Layouts of good-luck hieroglyphs.
B – Variations of the *ḥnr* formula.
Each of these categories can be further divided into sub categories:

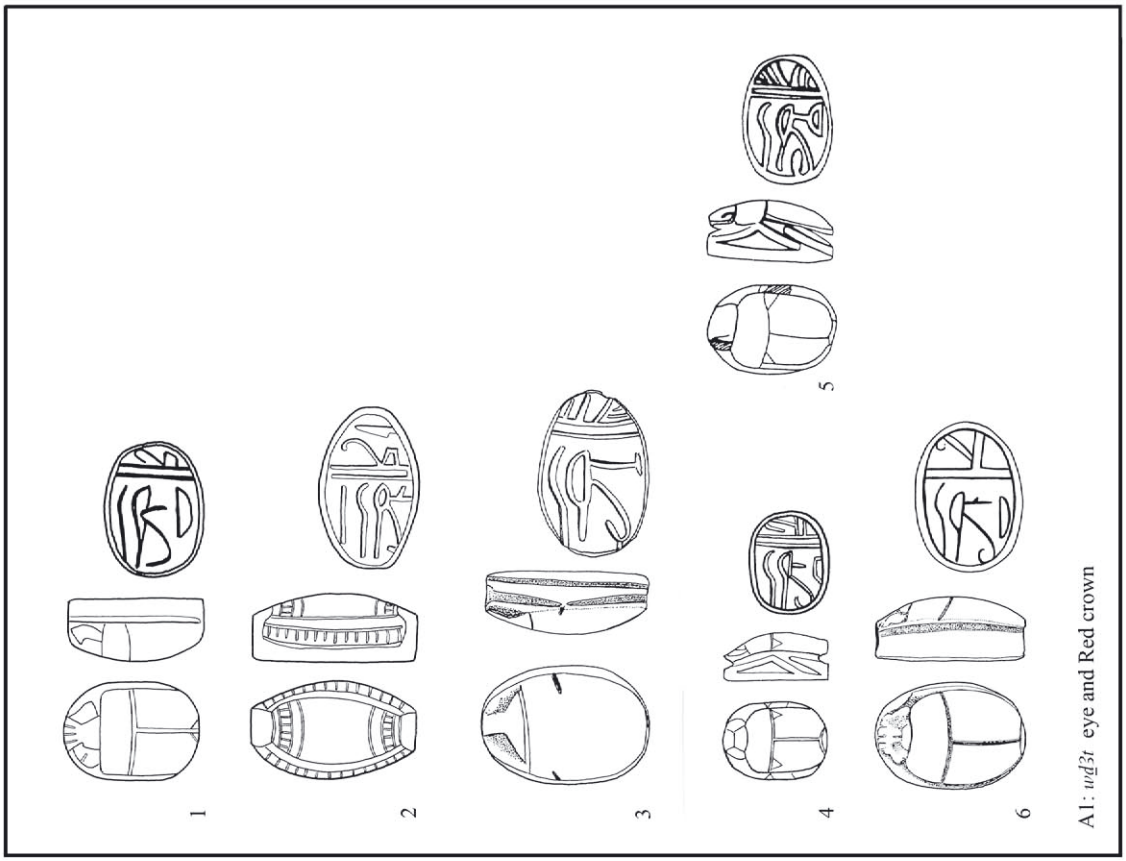
A – Layouts of good-luck hieroglyphs:[14]
A1. *wḏ3t* eye (D10) and red crown (S3), occasionally with *nb* (V30) or *t* (X1) below the eye
A2. *ḏd* (R11) between red crowns (S3)
A3. Variations of A1 and A2 with additional signs
A4. Symmetric layouts of hieroglyphs
A5. Hieroglyphs enfolding the gold sign (S12)
A6. Scarab (L1) flanked by confronting *uraei* (I12)

The most recurring hieroglyphs on the scarabs assigned to category A are the red crown (S3), *wḏ3t* eye (D10), and *ḏd* (R11), which are found in a great variety of arrangements. Also found are *nb* (V30), *nfr* (F35) and *n* (N35) signs, and the categories A4 and A5 also display the gold sign (S12), *uraeus* (I12), scarab (L1), *k3* (D28), and *ḥnḥ* (S34). It is noteworthy that the red crown is frequently displayed in the schematic L-shape originally found on Middle Bronze Age Canaanite scarabs,[15] by which it was possibly inspired. The patterns assigned to category A show a similarity to Canaanite Middle Bronze Age or Egyptian Second Intermediate Period designs, yet the particular layouts of the signs are in most cases Ramesside innovations. Moreover, the designs comprising good-luck hieroglyphs on Ramesside scarabs usually display correct Egyptian signs, though sometimes in schematic form, but they generally do not display pseudo hieroglyphs of the types frequently found on Middle Bronze Age Canaanite scarabs.[16]

A1. *wḏ3t* eye (D10) and Red crown (S3) (Figs. 1a–1b)

This is the most recurring design, sometimes displaying a *nb* (V30) or a *t* (X1) below the eye.

8 James and McGovern 1993; Morris 2005, 595–600, 756–57; Mazar 2011, 160–66.
9 Morris 2005, 570; Burke and Lords 2010, 4, Fig. 4; Burke *et al*. 2017, 98–100.
10 McGovern *et al.* 1993; Ben-Tor and Keel 2012.
11 Lalkin 2008, 170–73, 182–84.
12 Lalkin 2008, 182.
13 There is, however, evidence for the importation of plain scarabs of semi-precious stones in the Middle Bronze Age, which were locally engraved (Ben-Tor 2007, 147, n. 715).
14 The hieroglyphic signs are described with numbers referring to Gardiner's sign list (Gardiner 1957, 442–48).
15 Ben-Tor 2007, 130, 163, pl. 54: 21–29, pl. 79: 1–8.
16 Ben-Tor 2009.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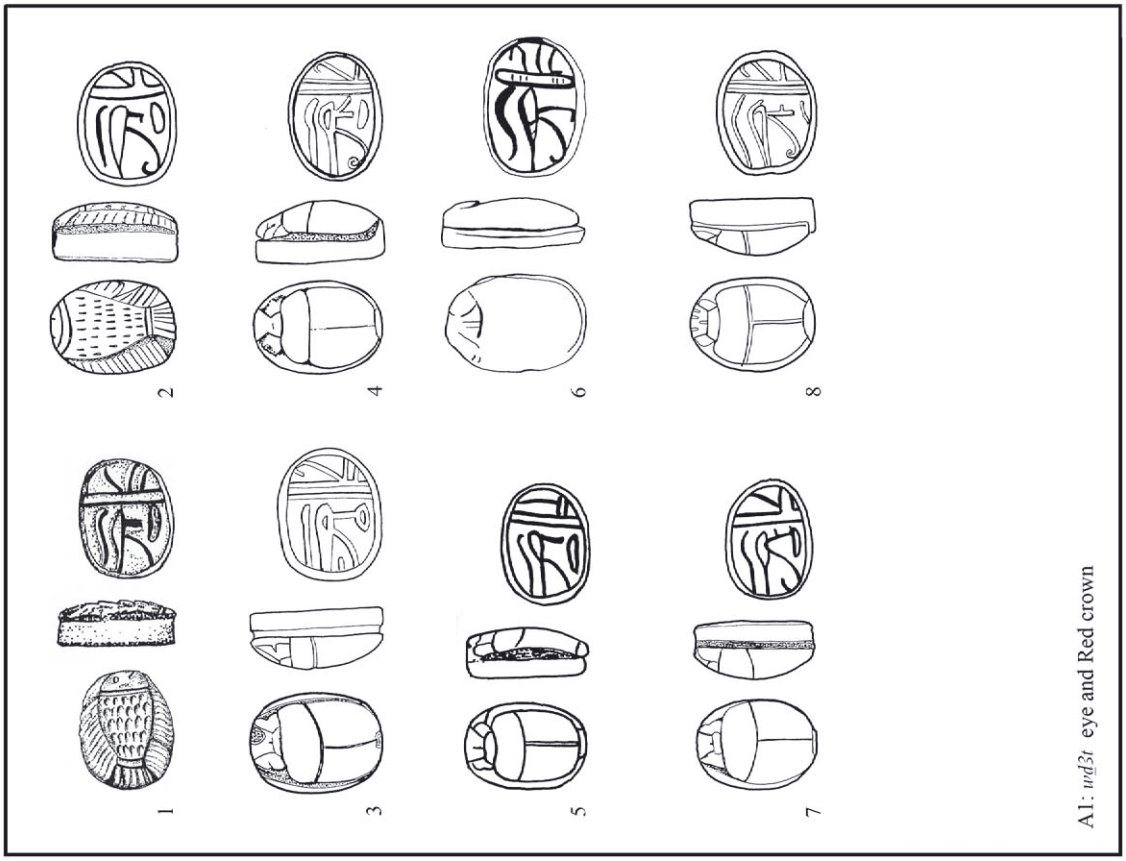
6
A1: wḏ3t eye and Red crown

Fig. 1b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8
A1: wḏ3t eye and Red crown

Fig. 1a

Comparable Middle Bronze Age designs were found at Tell el-ʿAjjul and Beth Shean.[17] Scarabs assigned to category A1 include two excavated examples from Gurob[18] and Riqqeh[19] in Egypt, and an unprovenanced example from the Basel collection on a fish-shaped design amulet (below), which most probably originated in Egypt.[20] Four examples come from the northern Levant:[21] one from Byblos,[22] one from Mari,[23] and two from Tyre.[24] Most examples, however, come from the southern Levant from 13th–12th century BC contexts.[25] The southern Levantine find spot of most examples does not necessarily suggest a Canaanite origin, considering the features associated with this category and the examples displayed on fish-shaped design amulets, which argue for a most likely Egyptian origin (below).

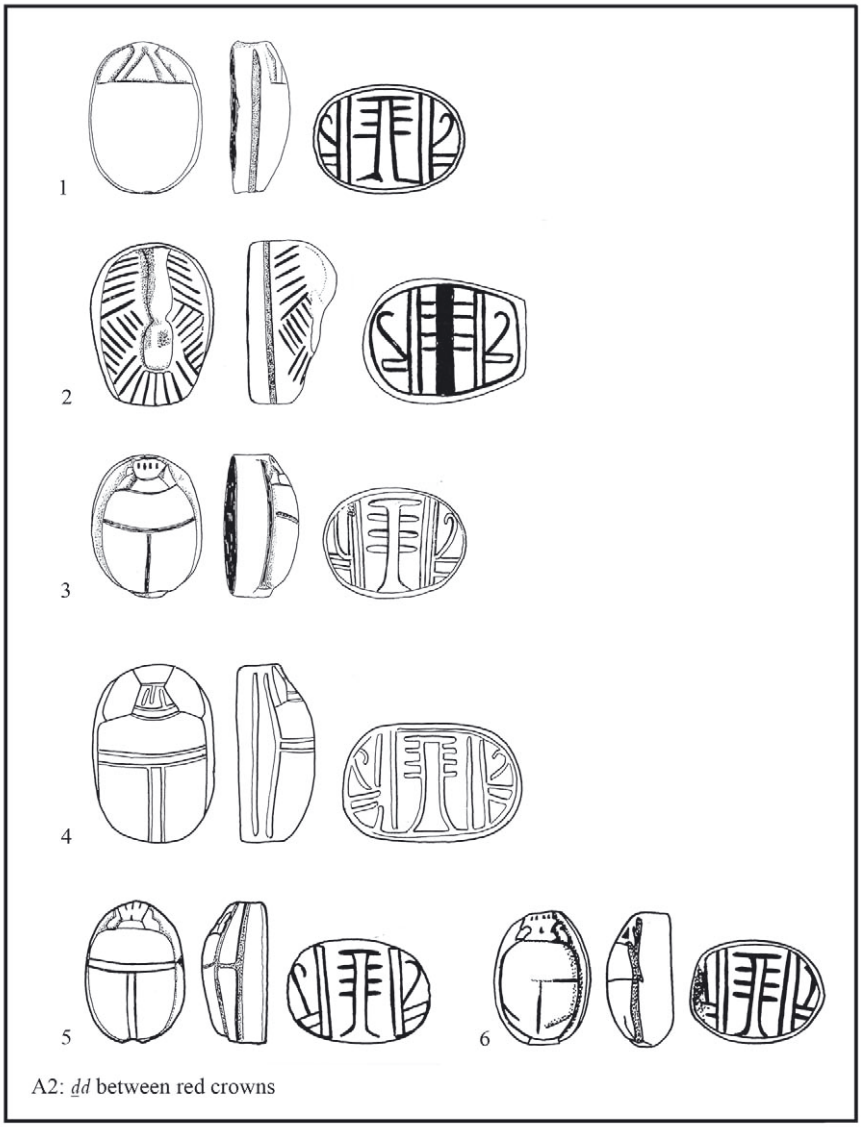


Fig. 2

A2. *ḏd* (R11) between red crowns (S3) (Fig. 2)

This category, displaying a *ḏd* (R11) flanked by red crowns (S3), includes a smaller number of examples in comparison with category A1. Comparable Middle Bronze Age designs were found at Tell el-ʿAjjul.[26] All published examples of category A2 come from sites in the southern Levant.[27] Nevertheless, a most likely Egyptian origin is indicated in the case of the duck-shaped design amulet bearing this design from Beth Shemesh (Fig. 2:2), as there is no evidence for the production of this type of design amulet outside of Egypt.[28] Also, the features asso-

[17] Keel 1997, Tell el-ʿAjjul 654, 1026; Keel 2010a, Beth Shean 168. The numbers following the names of the sites refer to the numbers assigned to these objects in the volumes of Keel's corpus of scarabs and seal amulets in Palestine/Israel (Keel 1997; 2010a; 2010b; 2013).

[18] Brunton and Engelbach 1927, pl. XXVI: 32.

[19] Engelbach 1915, pl. XVIII: 107, 110.

[20] Hornung and Staehelin 1976, MV 34.

[21] I am grateful to Vanessa Boschloos for providing me with information on the archaizing scarabs found in the northern Levant.

[22] Dunand 1937, pl. CXXVIII, no. 5326.

[23] Jean-Marie 1999, 42–43, 119, pl. 29; 44–45, 122.

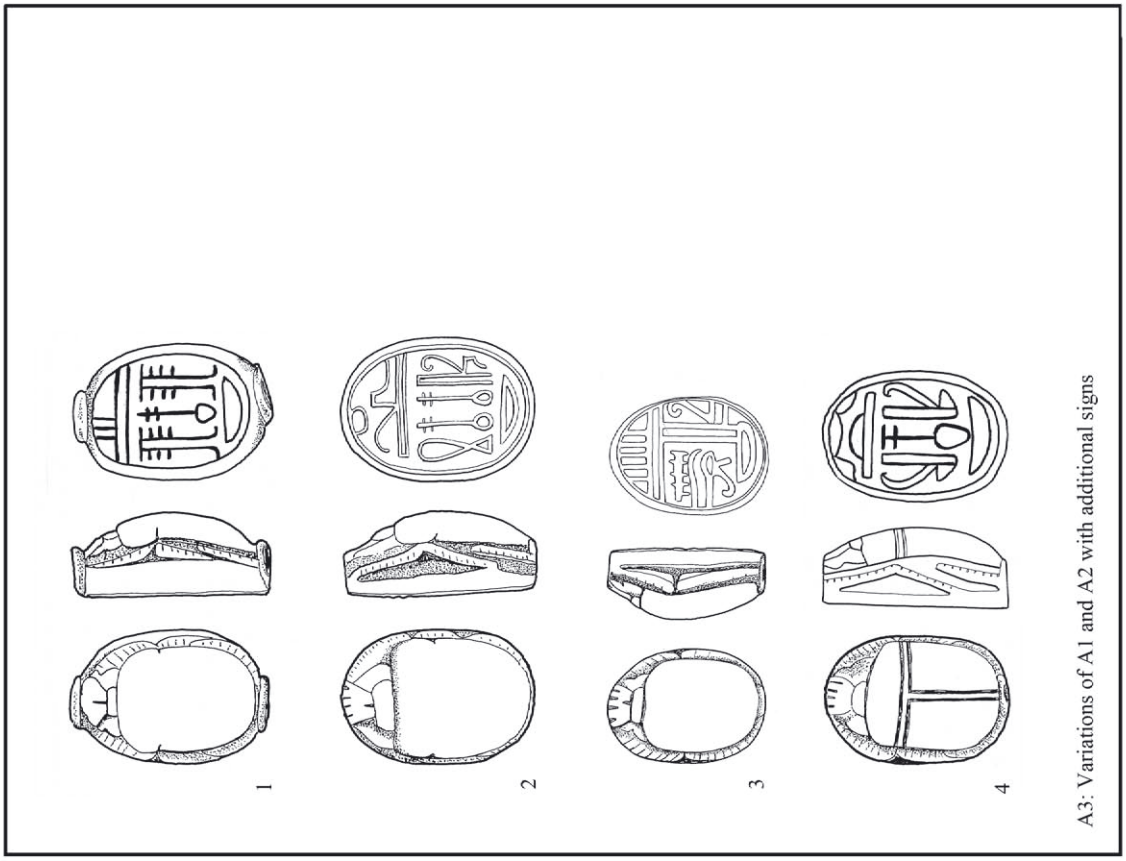
[24] Ward 1978, 86, pl. XLV, no. 48, pl. LXXXV, no 2.

[25] Keel 1997, Acco 245, Ashkelon 37; Keel 2010a, Deir el-Balah 46, 98, Beth Shean 170, Beth Shemesh 126; Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 125, 491, 497, 532, 664, 666, 691, 810. See also Lalkin 2008, 171.

[26] Keel 1997, Tell el-ʿAjjul 415, 917.

[27] Gezer (Brandl 1986, 2, 2); Tel Ridan (Lalkin 2008, 1624 = IAA 74.2011 unpublished; Keel 2010a, Beth Shemesh 125, 176, 187, Deir el-Balah 34, Dothan 34; Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 470, 580, and a sealing from Beth Shean (Keel 2010a, Beth Shean 250). See also Lalkin 2008, 170–71.

[28] Jaeger 1982, §493, 1248–1251; Keel 1995a, 68, §148–150.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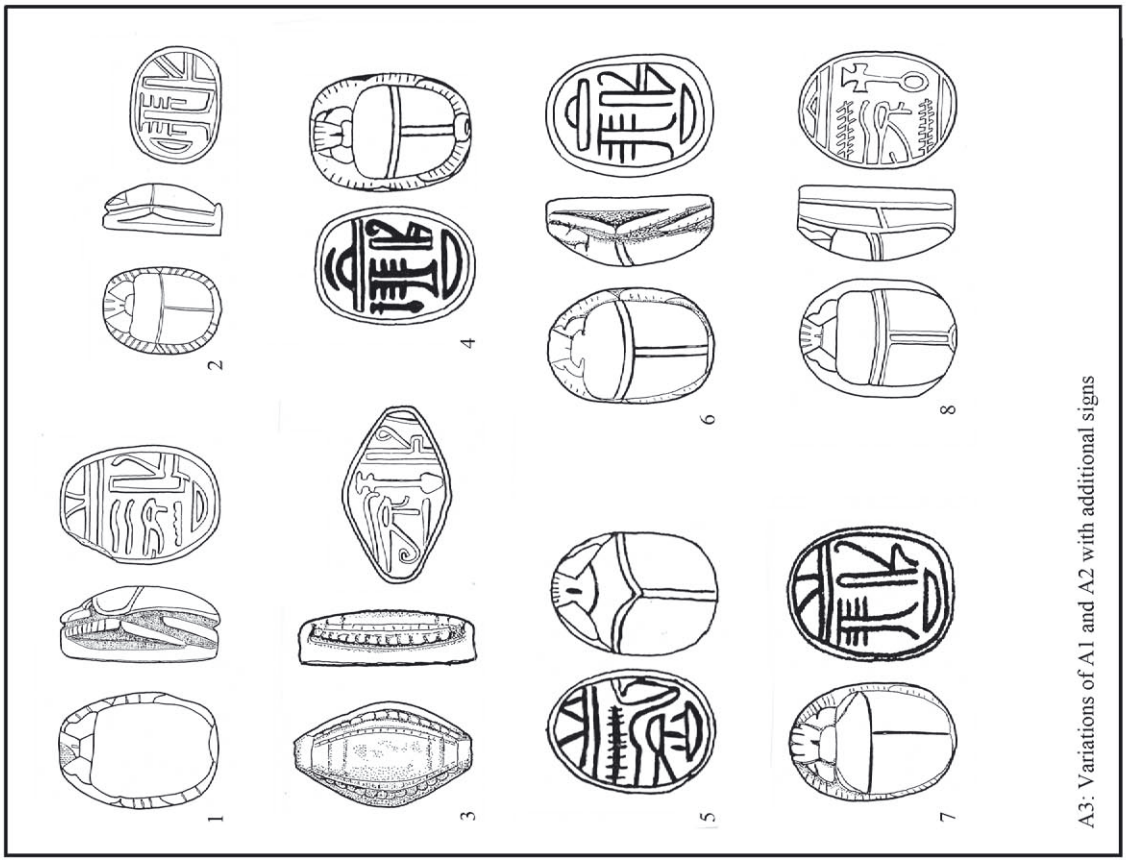
A3: Variations of A1 and A2 with additional signs

Fig. 3b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A3: Variations of A1 and A2 with additional signs

Fig. 3a

ciated with this category argue, as in the case of category A1, for a most likely Egyptian origin (below).

A3. Variations of A1 and A2 with additional signs (Figs. 3a–3b)

The designs assigned to this category include combinations of the *wḏȝt* eye (D10), red crown (S3), and *ḏd* (R11) with *nfr* (F35), *n* (N35), *ḥtp* (R4), *nb* (V30), and *uraeus* (I12). Comparable Middle Bronze Age designs were found at Tell el-ʿAjjul and Ashkelon.[29] As in the case of categories A1 and A2, the great majority of scarabs assigned to this group come from the southern Levant.[30] One example comes from the northern Levant.[31] No excavated examples from Egypt are known, but two scarabs from the Metropolitan Museum of Art[32] and a scarab from the Basel collection[33] most probably originated in Egypt, as both collections include mainly scarabs found in Egypt. Moreover, the Metropolitan Museum examples display a fully preserved glaze, which frequently appears on scarabs found in the dry climate of the Nile valley, but is extremely rare on scarabs found outside Egypt. As in the case of categories A1 and A2, the features associated with this category argue for a most likely Egyptian origin (below).

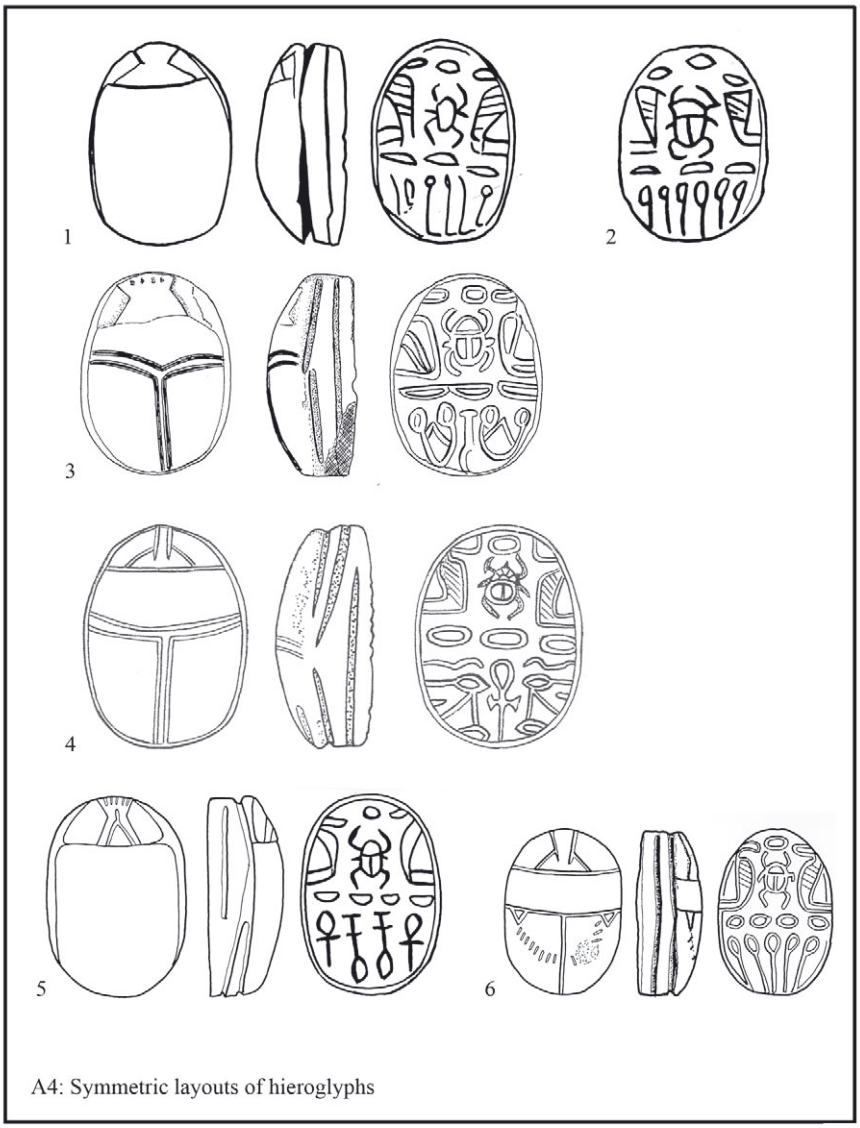


Fig. 4

A4. Symmetric layouts of hieroglyphs (Fig. 4)

The designs assigned to this category display symmetric layouts of hieroglyphs which show similarities to Egyptian Second Intermediate Period scarabs.[34] All display at the top a sun disk (N5) and a scarab (L1) between *uraei* (I12) above a row of three or four ovals, *nb* (V30), or *t* (X1) signs. The

[29] Keel 1997, Tell el-ʿAjjul 654, 917, 986, 1026, Ashkelon 80.

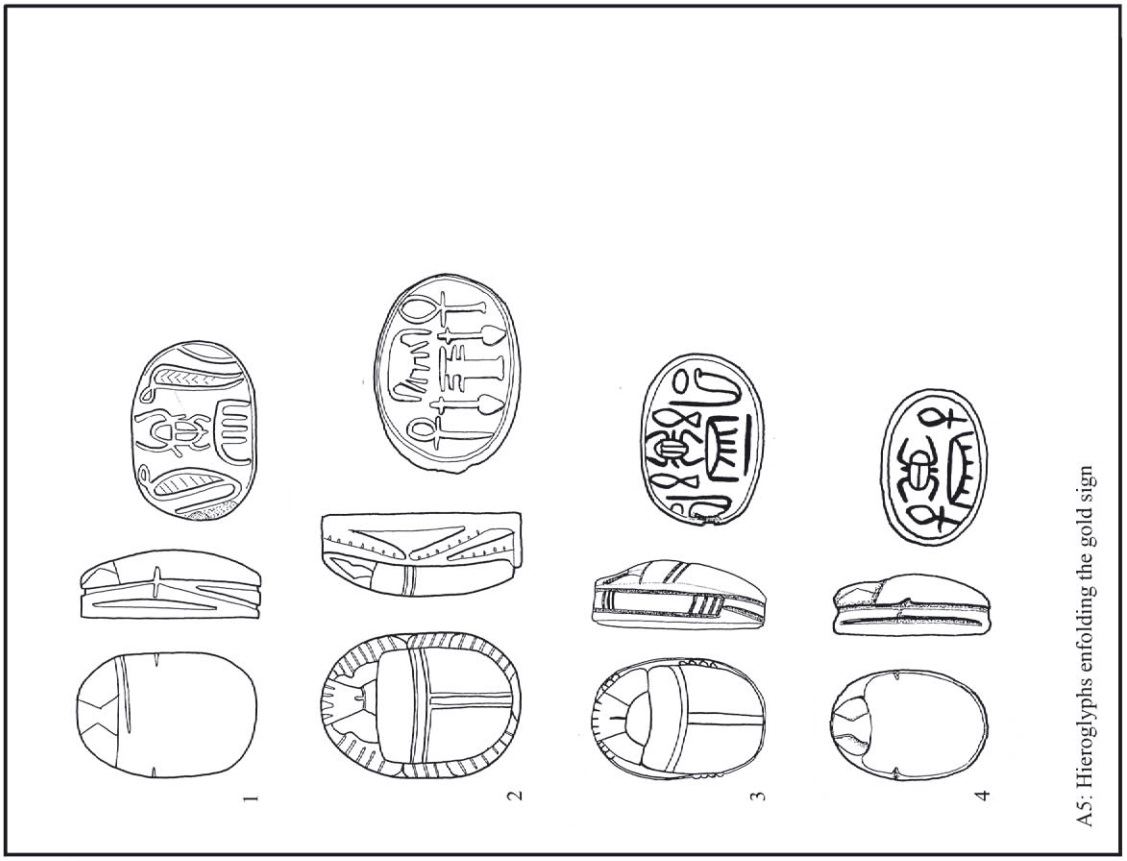
[30] Megiddo (Loud 1948, pl. 152, no. 189), Lachish (Tufnell 1958, pls. 39–40: 341, 350, 390; Keel 2004, figs. 23.45–23.46, no. 4); Keel 2010a, Deir el-Balah 42, Dor 51; Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 126, 251, 365, 489, 640, 662, 663, 682, 683, 770. See also Lalkin 2008, 171.

[31] Sarafand (Anderson 1988, 383–84, pl. 39, no. 10).

[32] MMA 30.8.963, MMA 30.8.964. See *http://www.metmuseum.org/collections.*

[33] Hornung and Staehelin 1976, no. 499.

[34] See Keel 1997, Tell el-ʿAjjul 415, 420, 453, 822, 837, 1090, 1093. For the relatively large number of Egyptian Second Intermediate Period scarabs at Tell el-ʿAjjul, see Ben-Tor 2007, 193.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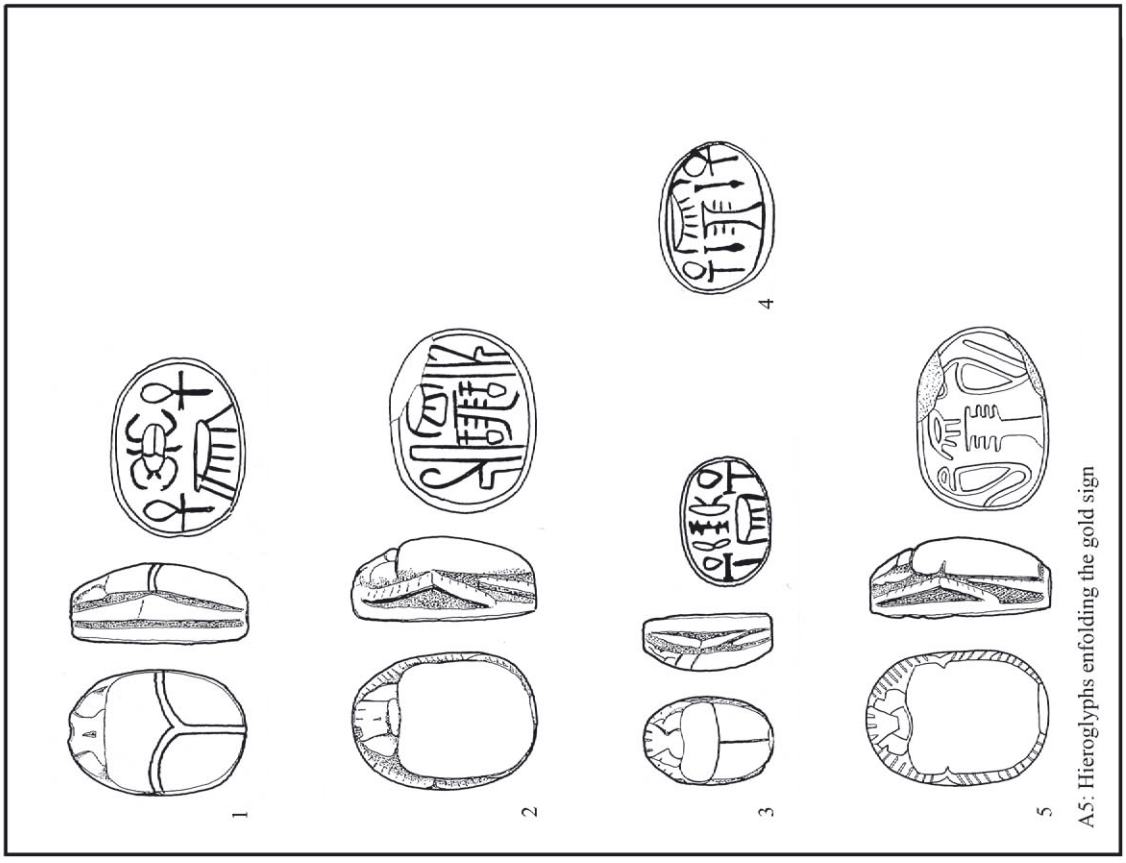
A5: Hieroglyphs enfolding the gold sign

Fig. 5b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A5: Hieroglyphs enfolding the gold sign

Fig. 5a

bottom field however, varies, displaying a symmetric pattern of hieroglyphs (Fig. 4: 3–5) or a row of geometric plant-like motifs (Fig. 4: 1–2, 6). Scarabs assigned to this category were found in the northern Levant,[35] but most come from the southern Levant.[36] No excavated examples are known from Egypt. Lalkin does not include this category in his suggested Tell el-Farʿah (S) workshop. The features associated with this category are varied, some suggesting a most likely Egyptian origin (below). This is supported by the similarity of the designs to Egyptian rather than Canaanite designs of the Second Intermediate Period.

A5. Hieroglyphs enfolding the gold sign (S12) (Figs. 5a–5b)

This category displays the gold sign (S12) in horizontal setting at the centre of symmetric layouts of hieroglyphs which include: *ʿnḫ* (S34) *nfr* (F35) *ḏd* (R11), red crown (S3), scarab (L1) and *uraeus* (I12). These designs show close similarities to Middle Bronze Age Canaanite designs by which they were most probably inspired.[37] This is supported by the pseudo hieroglyphs on two examples (Figs. 5a: 3, 5b: 3). No excavated example is known from Egypt, and except for one example from the northern Levant,[38] all other scarabs assigned to this category come from the southern Levant.[39] Lalkin does not include this category in his suggested Tell el-Farʿah (S) workshop. The features associated with this category are varied, some suggesting a likely Egyptian origin (below).

A6. Scarab (L1) between *uraei* (I12) (Fig. 6)

The designs assigned to this category are in most cases identical to those found on Middle Bronze Age Canaanite scarabs,[40] and they can only be distinguished from the early prototypes by the scarab's features. As in the case of category A5, there are no excavated examples from Egypt. One example was found in the northern Levant,[41] and all other examples come from the southern Levant.[42]

As in the case of category A5, Lalkin does not include category A6 in his suggested Tell el-Farʿah (S) workshop, yet he notes an identical geographic and chronological distribution and suggests a likely association.[43] The features associated with this category suggest a most likely Egyptian origin (below).

B – Designs displaying variations of the *ʿnrʿ* formula include:

B1. *ʿnrʿ* with a central cable
B2. *ʿnrʿ* covering the entire base surface
B3. *ʿnrʿ* with symmetric patterns
B4. *ʿnrʿ* with a standing human figure

Most designs displaying the *ʿnrʿ* formula on Ramesside scarabs show close similarity to Canaanite Middle Bronze Age or Egyptian Second Intermediate Period designs. Yet, unlike the original variations of the formula on Canaanite scarabs, which usually display the three signs ʿ (D36), *n* (N35), *r* (D21) in varying arrangements, often with additional hieroglyphs or pseudo hieroglyphs,[44] the designs on the Ramesside scarabs often display just alternating *n* (N35) and *r* (D21), or *n* (N35) and ʿ (D36) signs. Unlike the signs comprising the designs of category A, the Ramesside variations of the *ʿnrʿ* formula often display incorrectly rendered hieroglyphs; the *r* (D21) is frequently depicted in the form of *nb* (V30), sometimes reversed, the *n* (N35) is usually crudely executed, and the ʿ (D36) is depicted in a particular form found only on Ramesside scarabs.[45]

B1. *ʿnrʿ* with central cable (Fig. 7)

The scarabs assigned to this category display a vertical or cross-like central cable flanked by columns of alternating two signs, which probably

[35] At Byblos (Dunand 1950, pl. CXCIX, no. 11685), Qrayya (Guigues 1939, 55, fig. 2, m) and Rashidiya (Gubel 1988, 71, 91, no. 2).

[36] Keel 1997, Acco 275, Azeka 28; Eggler and Keel 2006, Tall al-Mazar 10; Keel 2010a, Beth Shemesh 150; Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿa (S) 583, 805.

[37] See Ben-Tor 2007, pl. 80: 34–36, 38, 41, pl. 81: 7, 12, 19, 22.

[38] Mari (Jean-Marie 1999, 42–43, 116, pl. 27).

[39] Lachish (Tufnell 1958, pls. 35–36, no. 203); Keel 1997, Ashdod 5; Keel 2010a, Beth Shemesh 132; Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 127, 506, 603, 604, 659, 689, 882.

[40] See Keel 1997, Acco 260, Tell el-ʿAjjul 117, 624, Ashkelon 120; Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (N) 48).

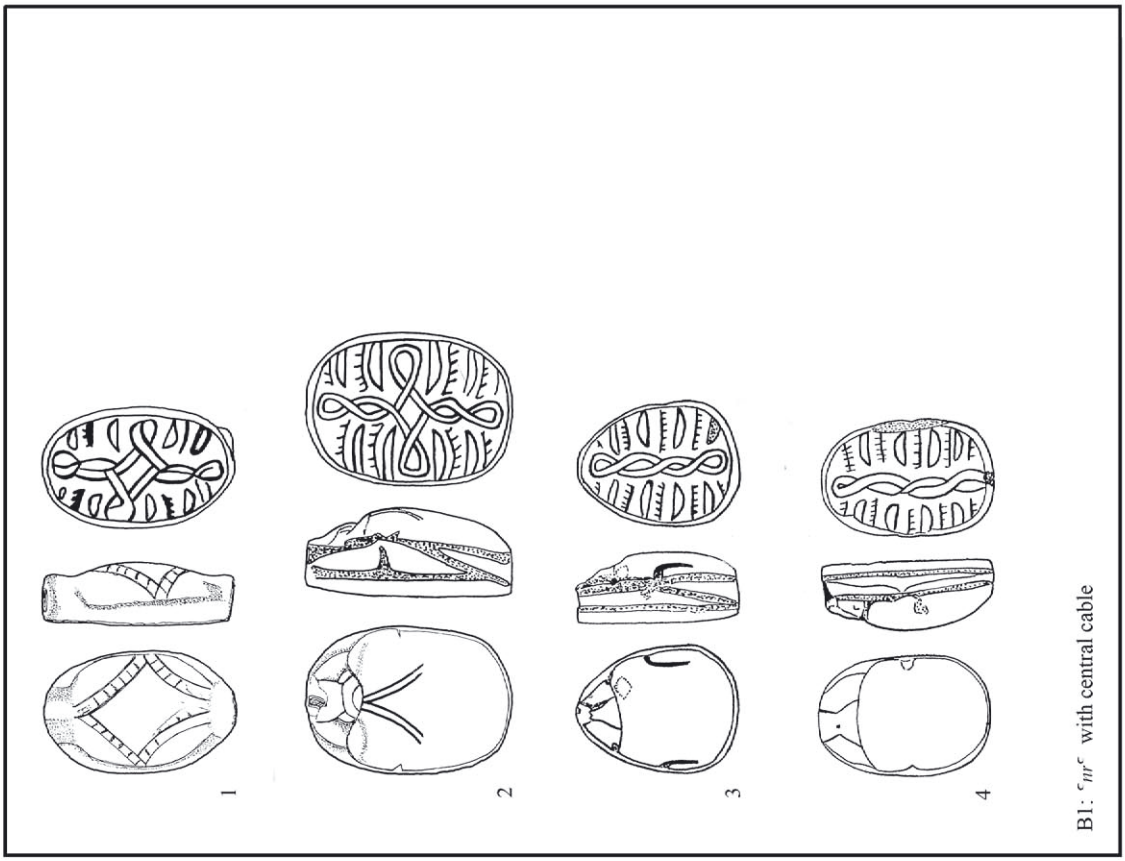
[41] Byblos (Dunand 1937, pl. CXXIX, no. 1033).

[42] Keel 2010a, Beth Shean 178, Beth Shemesh 107, Dothan 11; Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farah (S) 169, 661, 693.

[43] Lalkin 2008, 173.

[44] Ben-Tor 2007, pls. 55–56, 82–84; 2009, 85–88.

[45] An almost identical sign stands for the hieroglyph rdí (Gardiner D37) on a Ramesside scarab bearing a blessing formula (Hornung and Staehelin 1976, no. 717). For the same formula displaying the correct form of the sign rdí, see *ibid*., no. 716.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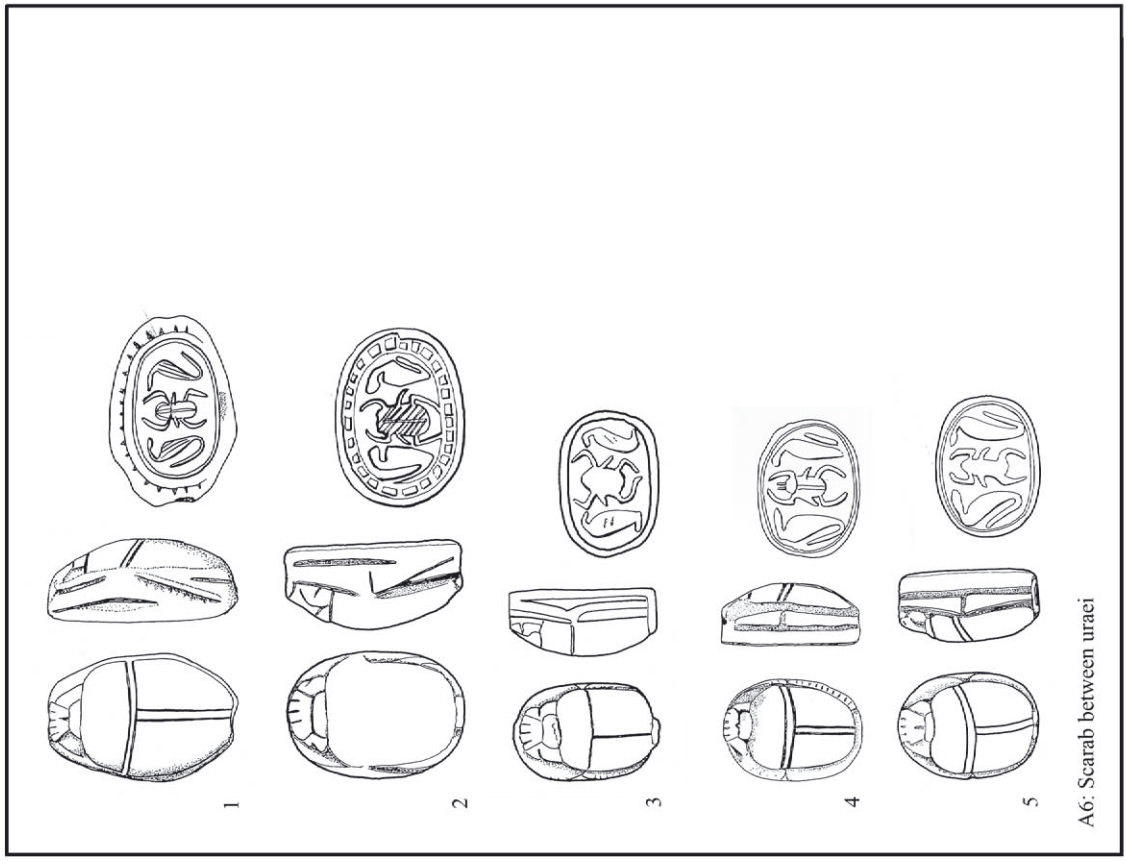
B1: ʿnrʿ with central cable

Fig. 7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A6: Scarab between uraei

Fig. 6

stand for *n* (N35) and *r* (D21), considering the clear inspiration by Middle Bronze Age prototypes.[46] Both signs are incorrectly rendered: the *n* (N35) resembles a *mn* (Y5) and the *r* (D21) is presented in the form of a correct or reversed *nb* (V30). This category consists of a small group coming from sites in the southern Levant.[47] There is also an unprovenanced example in the Basel collection.[48] Lalkin does not include this design in his study.[49] The features associated with this category are not found with clear Egyptian designs (below). The only exception is the cowroid (Fig. 7: 1), which resembles a type associated with the throne name of Amenhotep III.[50] However, the crude workmanship of this object suggests a most likely local imitation, which is supported by the design.

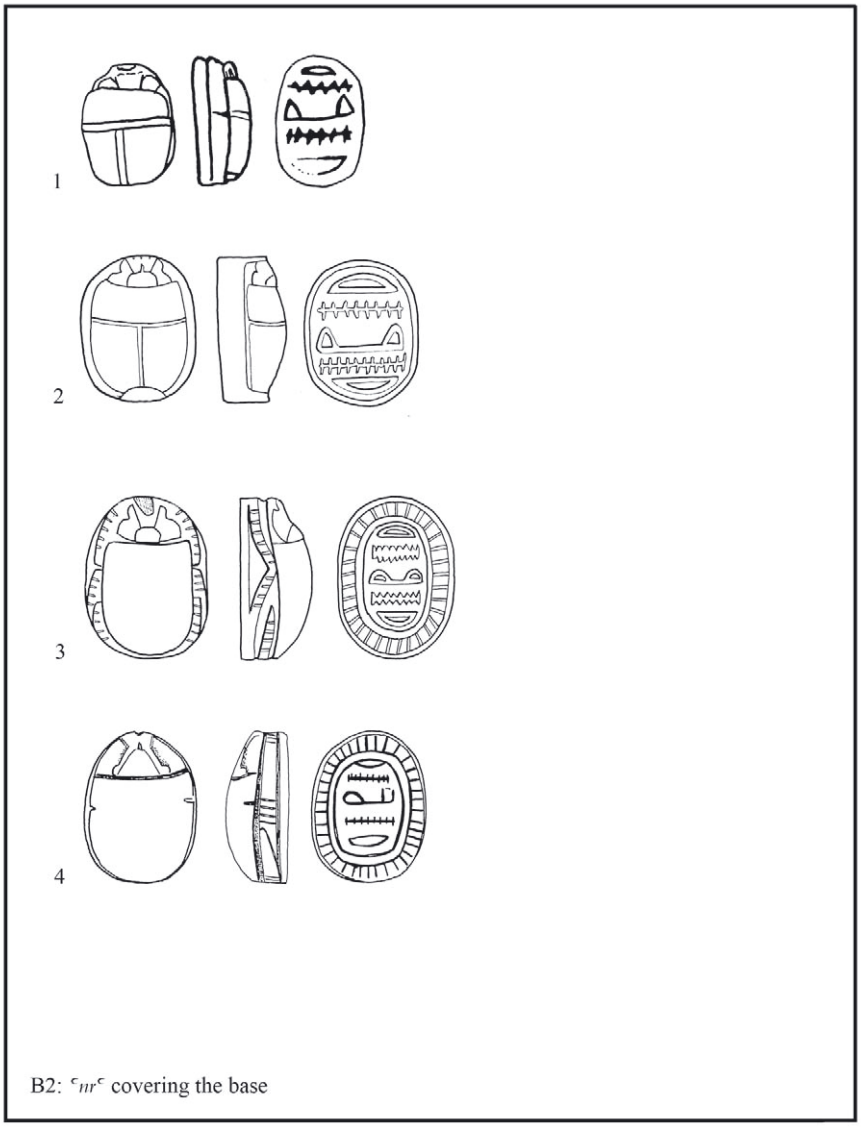


Fig. 8

B2. ʿ*nr*ʿ covering the base (Fig. 8)

The designs comprising this category display a column of five signs: a central sign simulating the hieroglyph ʿ (D36) in a form found almost exclusively in association with ʿ*nr*ʿ variations on Ramesside scarabs.[51] A crude form of the hieroglyph *n* (N35) is depicted above and below the central ʿ, with *nb* (V30) at both ends, the one at the top displayed in reverse to form a symmetric opposition to the one at the bottom. The design covers the entire base surface, and on two examples it is enclosed in a rope border (Fig. 8: 3–4). Comparable Middle Bronze Age designs were found at Tell el-ʿAjjul and Tell el-Farʿah (S).[52] Most scarabs assigned to this category come from the southern Levant,[53] and one example comes from the northern Levant.[54] The features of some examples suggest a most likely Egyptian origin (below).

[46] See Keel 1997, Tell el-ʿAjjul 91, 614; Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 179.

[47] Eggler and Keel 2006, Tall as-Saʿidiya 2, Tall Dschalul 3; Keel 2010a, Tel Eton 13; Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 862.

[48] Hornung and Staehelin 1976, no. 848.

[49] He presents the example from Tall as-Saʿidiya in his plates (Lalkin 2008, no. 2017), but erroneously dates it to the Middle Bronze Age.

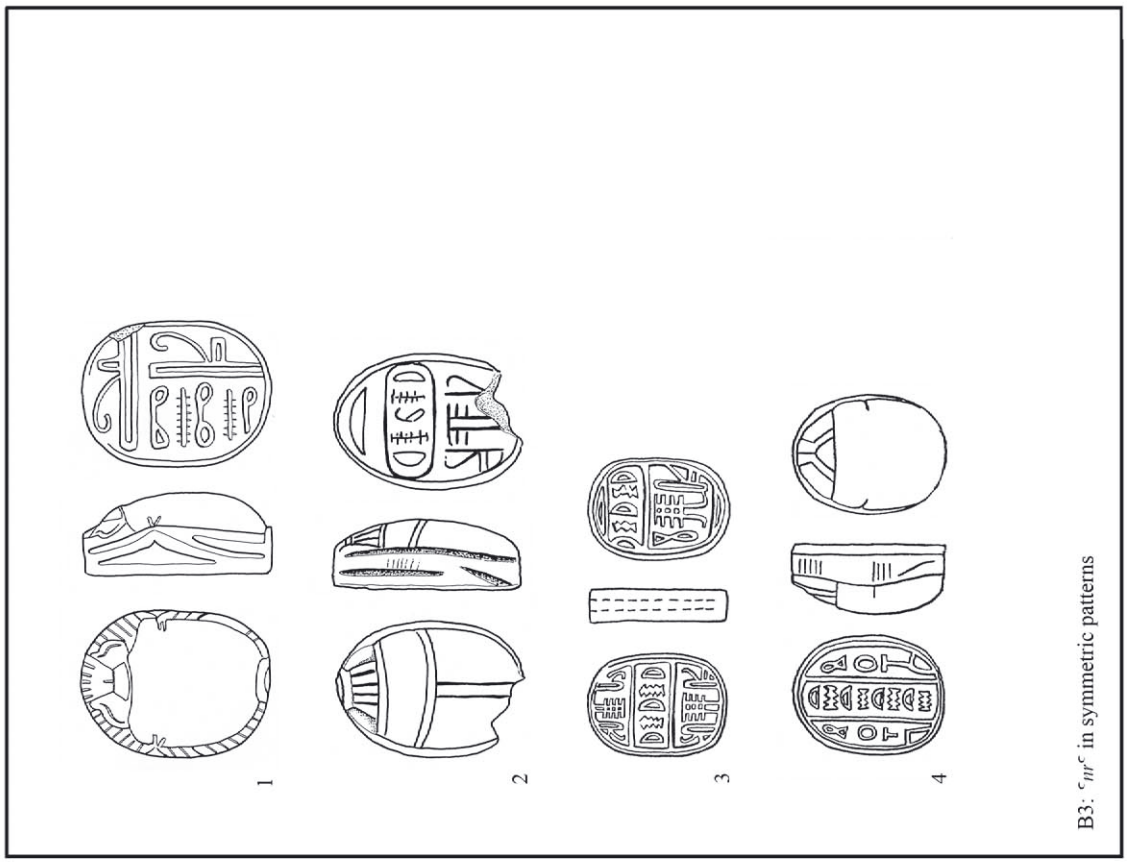
[50] Petrie 1917, pl. LXXI: 20.

[51] See also note 46 above.

[52] Keel 1997, Tell el-ʿAjjul 725, 726, 881, 919; Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 34.

[53] Keel 1997, Acco 28; Keel 2010a, Beth Shean 93; Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 641, 686; Tel Ridan (Lalkin 2008, no. 1614) = IAA 74.2005 unpublished.

[54] Qrayya (Guigues 1939, 55, fig. 2, f).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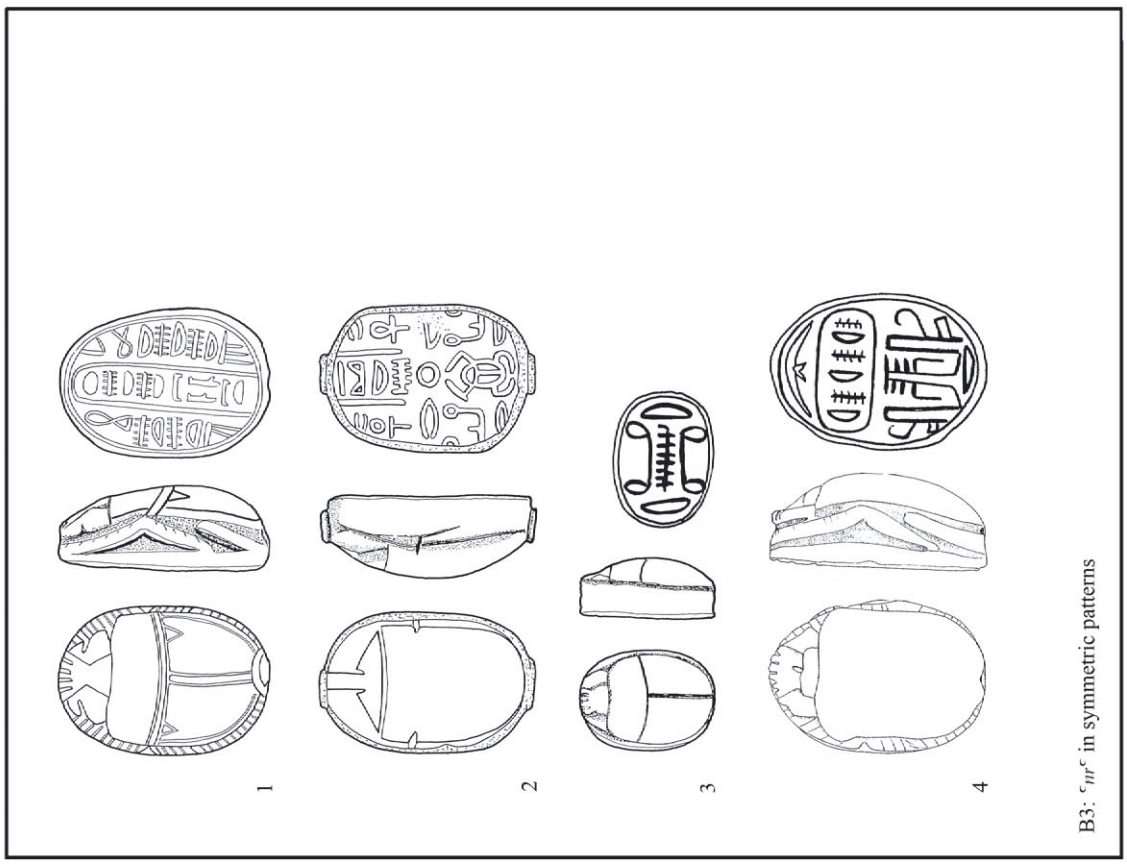
4
B3: ʿwrʿ in symmetric patterns

Fig. 9b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B3: ʿwrʿ in symmetric patterns

Fig. 9a

B3. ꜥ*nr*ꜥ in symmetric patterns (Figs. 9a–9b)

The designs assigned to this category display combinations of symmetric layouts of hieroglyphs with ꜥ*nr*ꜥ variations. These include designs simulating Middle Bronze Age prototypes such as ꜥ*nr*ꜥ with panel designs,[55] ꜥ*nr*ꜥ variations enclosed in oval rings,[56] ꜥ*nr*ꜥ associated with red crowns,[57] or ꜥ*nr*ꜥ flanked by the three-stem papyrus motif.[58] Most scarabs assigned to this category come from the southern Levant,[59] two examples come from the northern Levant,[60] and two examples, a scarab and an oval plaque, were found in the Cape Gelidonya shipwreck.[61]

Brandl proposes a Canaanite origin for all the scarabs found in the Cape Gelidonya shipwreck, including those displaying ꜥ*nr*ꜥ variations. However, a scarab from Tell es-Safi suggests an Egyptian rather than Canaanite origin for the design appearing on the oval plaque, showing ꜥ*nr*ꜥ enclosed in an oval ring (Fig. 9b: 3), as it displays an almost identical design but with the throne name of Ramesses II enclosed in the oval ring.[62] Moreover, the Egyptian origin of the scarabs found in the Cape Gelidonya shipwreck, including those assigned to category B3, is indicated by the designs and features of parallels from other sites (below).

B4. ꜥ*nr*ꜥ with human figure (Fig. 10)

The designs assigned to this category display a male figure with one raised arm holding a schematic flower, and ꜥ*nr*ꜥ variations below the raised arm. The design closely resembles and was most probably inspired by Middle Bronze Age Canaanite designs.[63] In one case a *wḏ3t* eye replaces the ꜥ*nr*ꜥ (Fig. 10: 3). Most examples come from the southern Levant,[64] and two come from the northern Levant.[65] The features associated with this category are varied, some suggesting a likely Egyptian origin (below).

Other Ramesside designs inspired by Middle Bronze Age scarabs (Fig. 11)

In addition to the two categories discussed above, Ramesside scarabs displaying a lion as primary motif[66] may also have been inspired by Middle Bronze Age Canaanite prototypes.[67] This is indicated by the form of the lion and the associated motifs on the Ramesside examples, which show a close similarity to Middle Bronze Age Canaanite scarabs. Ramesside scarabs displaying the lion as primary motif come mainly from the southern Levant,[68] with one example from the northern Levant.[69] The features associated with these scarabs argue for a most likely Egyptian origin (below).

Discussion of features

The southern Levantine find context of the majority of the scarabs discussed above is the main reason these scarabs were considered by some scholars as products of this region (above, note 4). Yet, an examination of the scarabs' features – the head, back and side, shows that in many cases they are identical to features of Ramesside scarabs of clear Egyptian origin, suggesting a common origin of production. The most common combinations of features associated with these scarabs can be divided into five main types:

55 Keel 1997, Tell el-ʿAjjul 722; Keel 2010a, Beth Gamliel 6; Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 57.

56 Keel 1997, Tell el-ʿAjjul 987; Ben-Tor 2007, pl. 85: 2, 6.

57 Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (N) 37.

58 Keel 1997, Tell el-ʿAjjul 596; Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 66, 582.

59 Tel Ridan (Brandl 2003, fig. 4); Eggler and Keel 2006, Amman airport 7; Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 578, 581, 586, 843, 867.

60 Byblos (Dunand 1950, pl. CXCIX, no. 7665 = Brandl 2003, pl. 7; Dunand 1950, pl. CCI, no. 19145).

61 Schulman 1967, Fig. 150: SC3, SC4 = Brandl 2003, pl. 1: SC3, SC4.

62 Giveon 1978, pl. 51a–c; Brandl 2003, pl. 4; Keel 2013, Gat 33. For examples displaying ënrë in association with the throne name of Ramesses II, see Richards 2001, 114, fig. 4: 36.

63 See Keel 1997, Tell el-ʿAjjul 694; Keel 2010a, Tell Dan 38; Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 111, 432; Ben-Tor 2007, pl. 102: 34.

64 Keel 2010a, Beth Shean 236, Dothan 7; Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 587, 588 displaying a wÿæt eye instead of ꜥ*nr*ꜥ, 704, 706.

65 Qrayya (Guigues 1939, 55, fig. 2, l); Rashidiya (Gubel 1988, 70–71, 91, no. 1).

66 Keel 2010a, Beth Shemesh 153; Deir el-Balah 79; Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 490, 660, 799, 800.

67 Ben-Tor 2007, pl. 100: 3, 14, 36, pl. 101: 2; Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 25, 44.

68 Keel 2010a, Bet Shean 21; Bet Shemesh 153; Deir el Balah 79; Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 490, 660, 734, 799, 800.

69 Qrayya (Guigues 1939, 55, fig. 2, b).

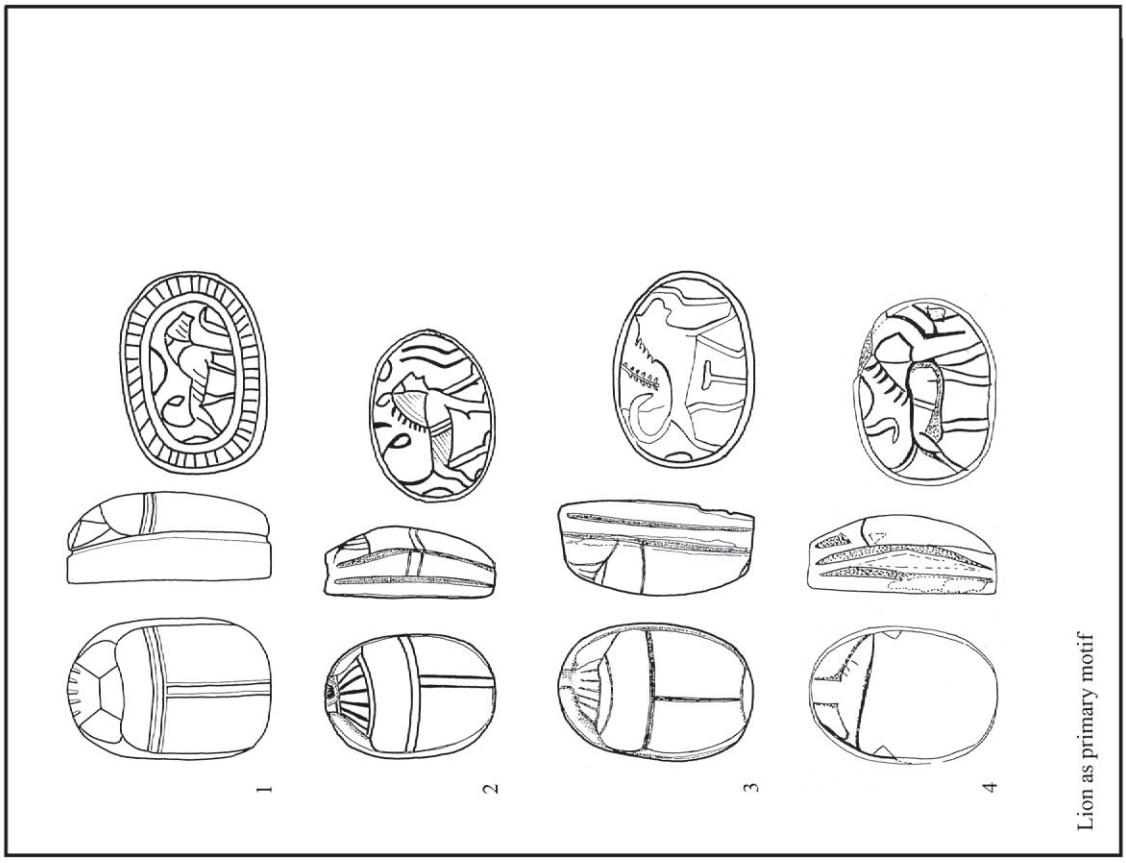


Fig. 11

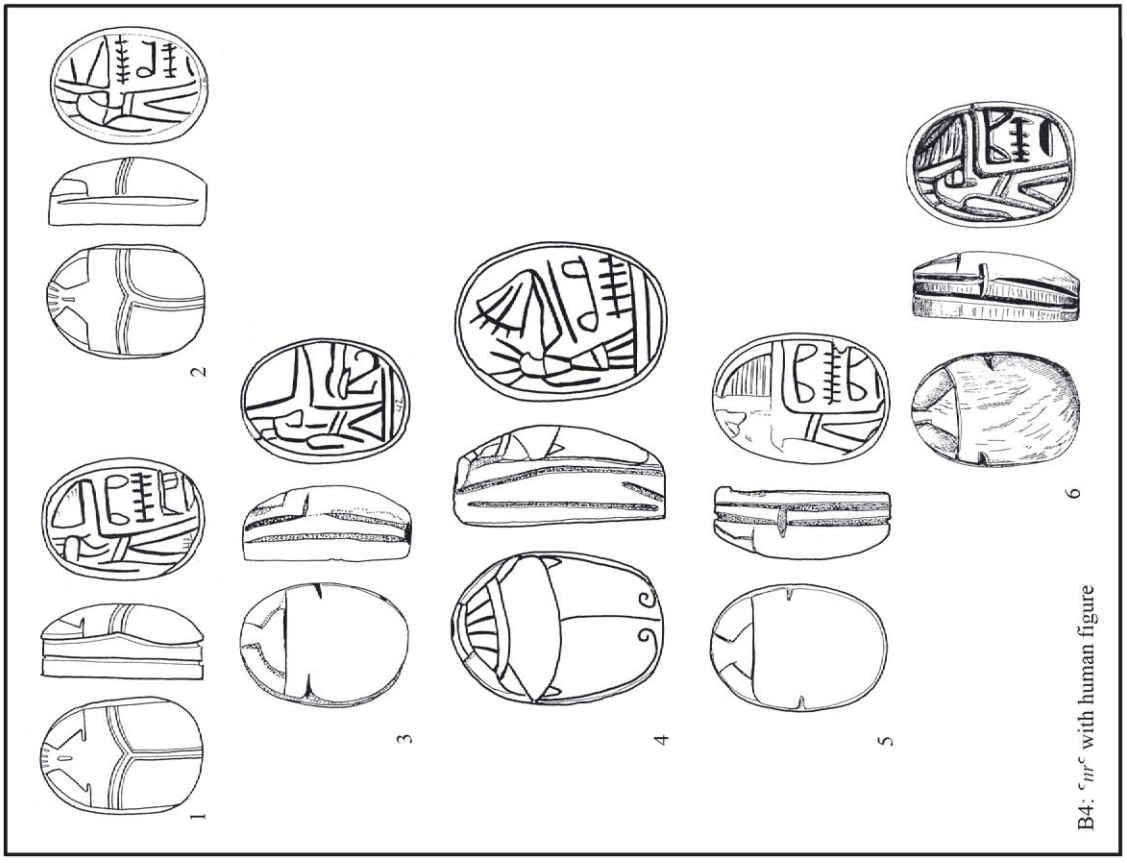
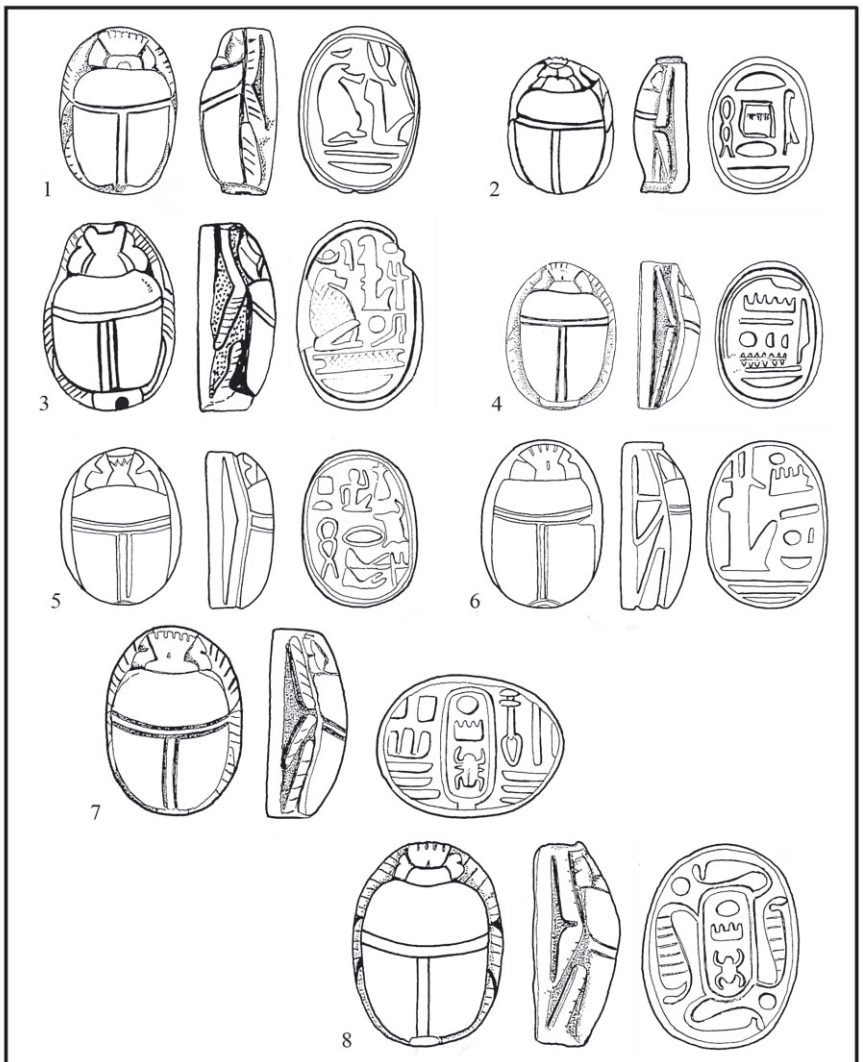


Fig. 10

Type 1 (Fig. 12): back: single or double lines separating the scarab's body (pronotum) from the wings (elytra), and dividing the wings. The back is occasionally surrounded by fringes, which are sometimes lined simulating the scarab's legs; head: narrow trapezoid and slightly rounded; side: either plain without scoring or marking, or chip carved with plain or notched legs.



Type 1 features with Egyptian designs

Fig. 12

This is the most common type among the archaizing scarabs, occurring with categories A1,[70] A2,[71] A3,[72] A6,[73] and occasionally also with A5,[74] and B2.[75] This type is also found with scarabs bearing royal and divine names and/or images as well as blessing formulae.[76] The probability of a Canaanite production of these distinctive Egyptian images and inscriptions is highly unlikely. Moreover, most of the unprovenanced examples from museum collections[77] display fully preserved glaze, which, as noted earlier, is extremely rare with scarabs found outside the dry climatic conditions of the Nile valley, indicating the Egyptian find context of these scarabs. The evidence presented above thus strongly argues for the Egyptian origin of scarabs displaying Type 1 features.

Type 2 (Figs. 13a–13b): back: single or double lines separating the scarab's body from the wings and dividing the wings; head: trapezoid and ribbed (decorated with vertical lines); side: scored, legs shown by grooving**.**

The most distinctive feature of Type 2 is the ribbed trapezoid head,[78] which is characteristic of scarabs of the early Ramesside period.[79] It occurs

[70] Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 491, 532, 666, 691, 810; (Keel 2010a, Deir el-Balah 46, 98); Tyre (Ward 1978, 86, pl. XLV, no. 48, pl. LXXXV, no. 2); Byblos (Dunand 1937, pl. CXXVIII, no. 5326).

[71] Keel 2010a, Beth Shemesh 125; Deir el-Balah 34; Dothan 34.

[72] Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 126, 640, 663, 682, 770; Lachish (Tufnell 1958, pl. 39–40, no. 390); MMA 30.8.963, 30.8.964.

[73] Keel 2010a, Beth Shean 178; Beth Shemesh 107; Dothan 11; Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 107, 661.

[74] Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 506.

[75] Keel 1997, Acco 28; Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 641.

[76] Ben-Tor 1989, 50, no. 21; Ben-Tor 1989, 72, no. 13; Ben-Tor 1989, 75, no. 23; Hornung and Staehelin 1976, no. 415; MMA 10.130.547, MMA 26.7.216, MMA 30.8.620, MMA 30.8.832; Beste 1979, 2: 11, 2: 30; Keel 2010a, Deir el-Balah 35, 68, 102, Beth Shean 95, Beth Shemesh 124; Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 155, 642, 652, 803.

[77] See note 77.

[78] Petrie 1917, pl. LXVIII: 50; Rowe 1936, pl. XXXII: type 15.

[79] Lalkin 2008, 20.

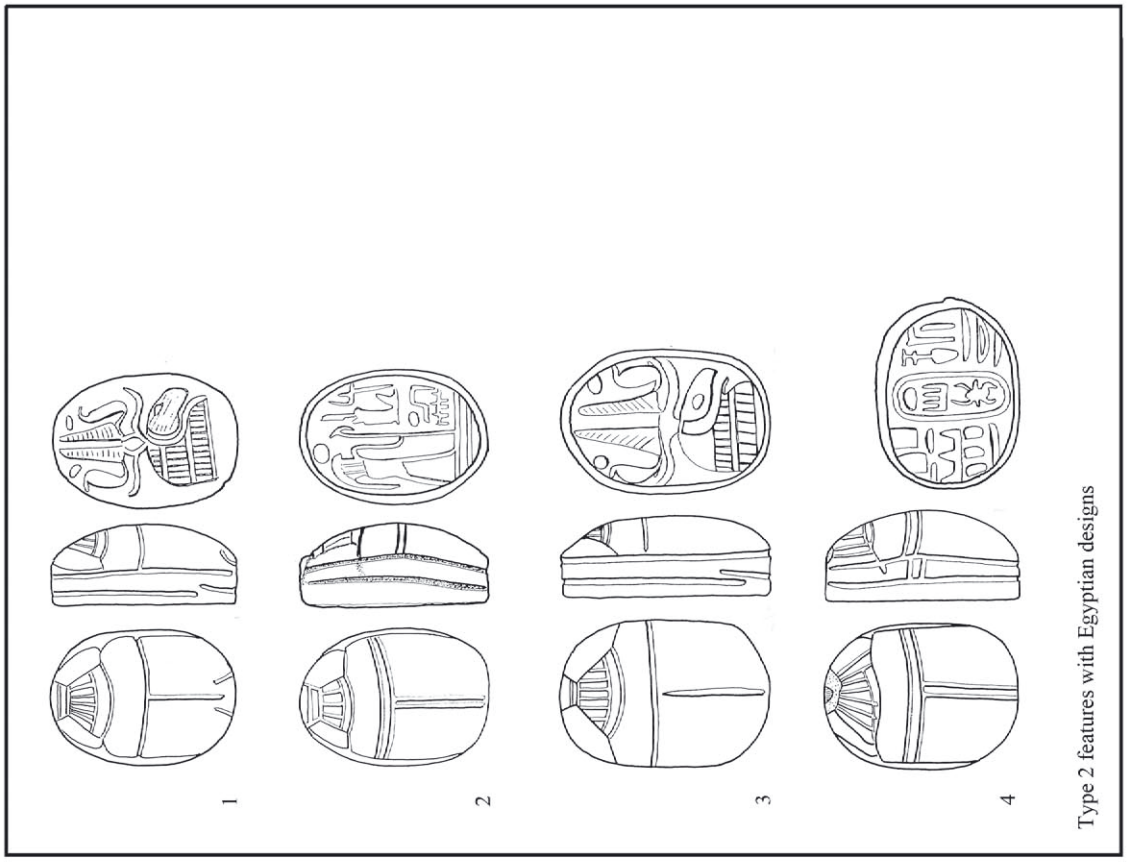


Fig. 13b

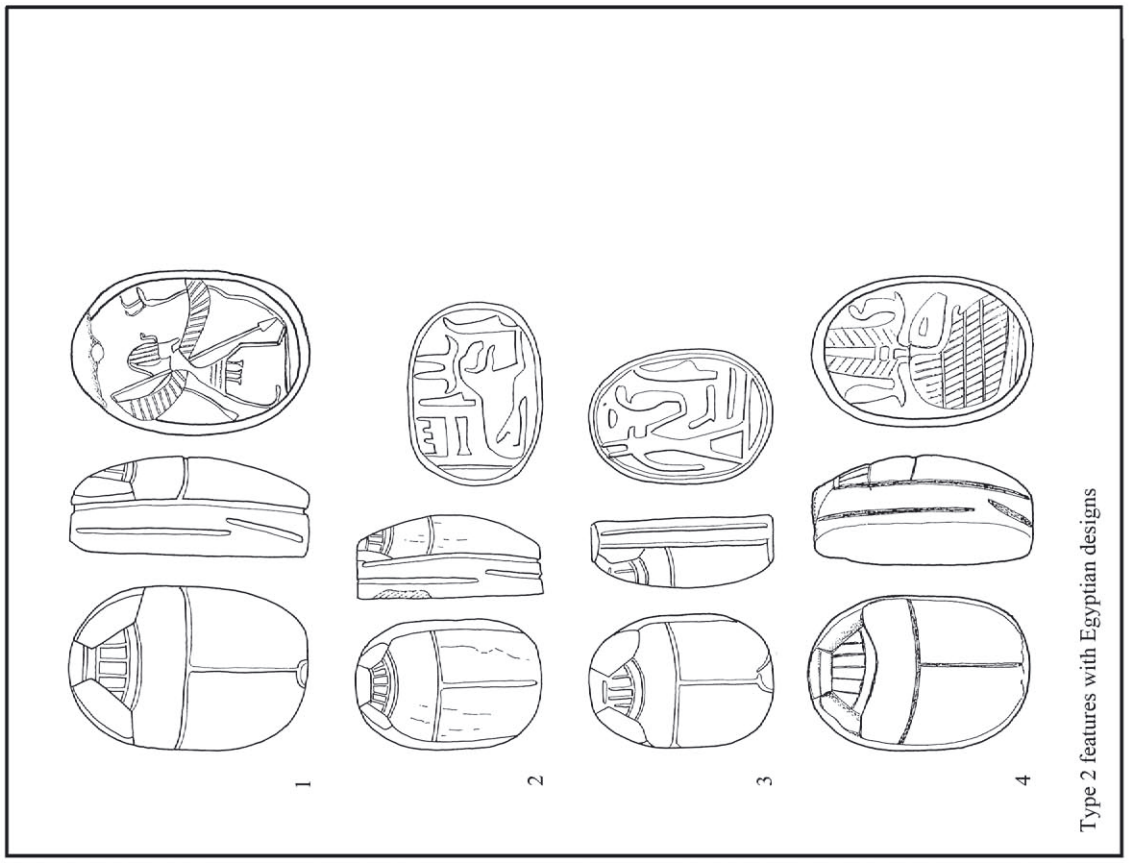


Fig. 13 a

on a small number of examples with categories A2,[80] A3,[81] B3,[82] B4,[83] and on examples displaying a lion as primary motif.[84] In his discussion of the scarabs from the Cape Gelidonya shipwreck, Brandl argues for a Canaanite origin of all Ramesside scarabs displaying this head type.[85] However, ribbed heads are found with many Ramesside scarabs displaying royal and divine names, epithets and images, a Levantine production of which is, therefore, highly unlikely.[86] In his discussion of this head type, Lalkin points out its great popularity on 19th Dynasty scarabs displaying clear Egyptian designs.[87] A noteworthy example (Fig. 13a: 1) displays the image of the syncretised god "Baʿal-Seth" with his Canaanite traits – the standard representation of this god in Egypt during the Ramesside period.[88] The Egyptian origin of this scarab is indicated by the fact that it is one of a group showing "Baʿal-Seth" performing the Egyptian mythical ritual of slaying the serpent Apophis.[89] Moreover, one of the scarabs belonging to this group, which also shows the god in his Canaanite form, was found in excavations at Qantir, the site of the Ramesside capital Piramesses.[90] Most scarabs of this group show the god in his Canaanite form, like the Tell el-Farʿah(S) and Qantir scarabs, except for two examples which show him in the traditional Egyptian form of the god Seth.[91] As correctly noted by Keel, the gods Seth and Baʿal shared attributes and roles during the Ramesside period, when the syncretised "Baʿal-Seth" was patron god of the Ramesside kings and their capital.[92] This is demonstrated in royal and private Egyptian stelae as well as scarabs,[93] and strongly argues for the Egyptian origin of these scarabs. As in the case of Type 1, the evidence supports the Egyptian origin of the scarabs displaying Type 2 features.

Type 3 (Figs. 14a–14b): back: plain, with lined fringes simulating the scarab's legs; head: trapezoid, sometimes narrow; side: chip carved, frequently with notched legs.

This type is also common on Ramesside scarabs, and is found with categories A3,[94] A5,[95] A6,[96] B2,[97] and B3.[98] As in the case of Types 1 and 2, Type 3 features also occur with scarabs displaying royal and divine names and images, the Egyptian production of which is apparent,[99] arguing for a most likely Egyptian origin of the scarabs displaying Type 3 features.

Type 4 (Figs. 3a: 5, 4: 3, 5a: 1, 10: 1–2): back: double lines separating the scarab's body from the wings and dividing the wings; the meeting point of the lines separating the body from the wings is slightly V-shaped; head: hourglass shaped; side: scored, legs not shown, or shown by grooving.

This type is found with isolated examples of categories A3,[100] A4,[101] A5,[102] B4,[103] and unlike the previously discussed types it is not found with scarabs displaying clear Egyptian inscriptions and designs. Yet, similar V-shaped dividing lines on the back are found on two scarabs of semi-precious stones: A black serpentine scarab in the Walters Art Museum, showing a scene of the smiting Pharaoh with the throne name of Ramesses II on the base,[104] and a Carnelian scarab from Deir el-

80 Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 580.

81 Lachish (Tufnell 1958, pls. 39–40: 350).

82 Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 843; Tel Ridan tomb II (Brandl 2003, pl. 5).

83 Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 587.

84 Keel 2010a, Beth Shemesh 153, Deir el-Balah 79; Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 490, 660, 734, 800.

85 Brandl 2003, 255–58.

86 Ben-Tor 1989, 74, no. 15; Ben-Tor 1989, 76, no. 28; Hornung and Staehelin 1976, no. 614; Keel 2010a, Deir el-Balah 41; Keel 2010b, Tell el- Farʿah (S) 619, 758, 759, 765, 782, 787, 798.

87 Lalkin 2008, 20.

88 Cornelius 1994, pls. 34–40.

89 Cornelius 1994, pls. 50–51: BM 76–81, BM 83–84; Keel 2009, 90–93.

90 Keel 2009, 90–92, fig. 1.

91 Keel 2009, 91, figs. 8, 12.

92 Keel 2009, 93–94.

93 Cornelius 1994, 146–224; Schroer 2011, 332–348.

94 Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 365, 662, 683; Keel 2010a, Dor 51; Hornung and Staehelin 1976, no. 499.

95 Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 604, 689.

96 Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 169.

97 Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 686.

98 Eggler and Keel 2006, Amman airport 7; Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 581.

99 MMA 26.7.215; IMJ 76.31.3537, 76.31.1967; Ben-Tor 1989, 75, nos. 18, 24; Ben-Tor 1989, 76, no. 30; Keel 2010a, Deir el-Balah 26, 73, 99; Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 549, 565, 566, 762, 764.

100 Lachish (Tufnell 1958, pls. 39–40, no. 341).

101 Keel 2010a, Beth Shemesh 150.

102 Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 882.

103 Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 704, 706.

104 Schultz 2007, 56–57, pl. 5, no. 34.

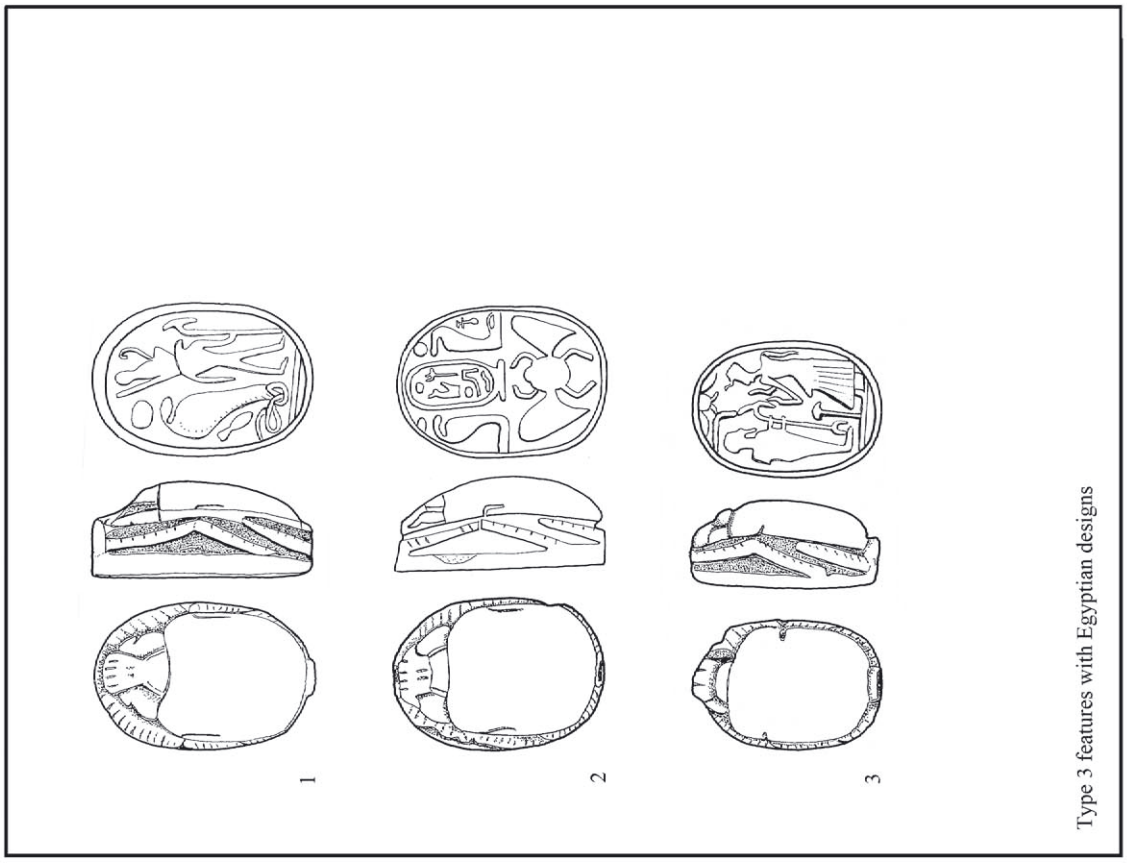


Fig. 14b

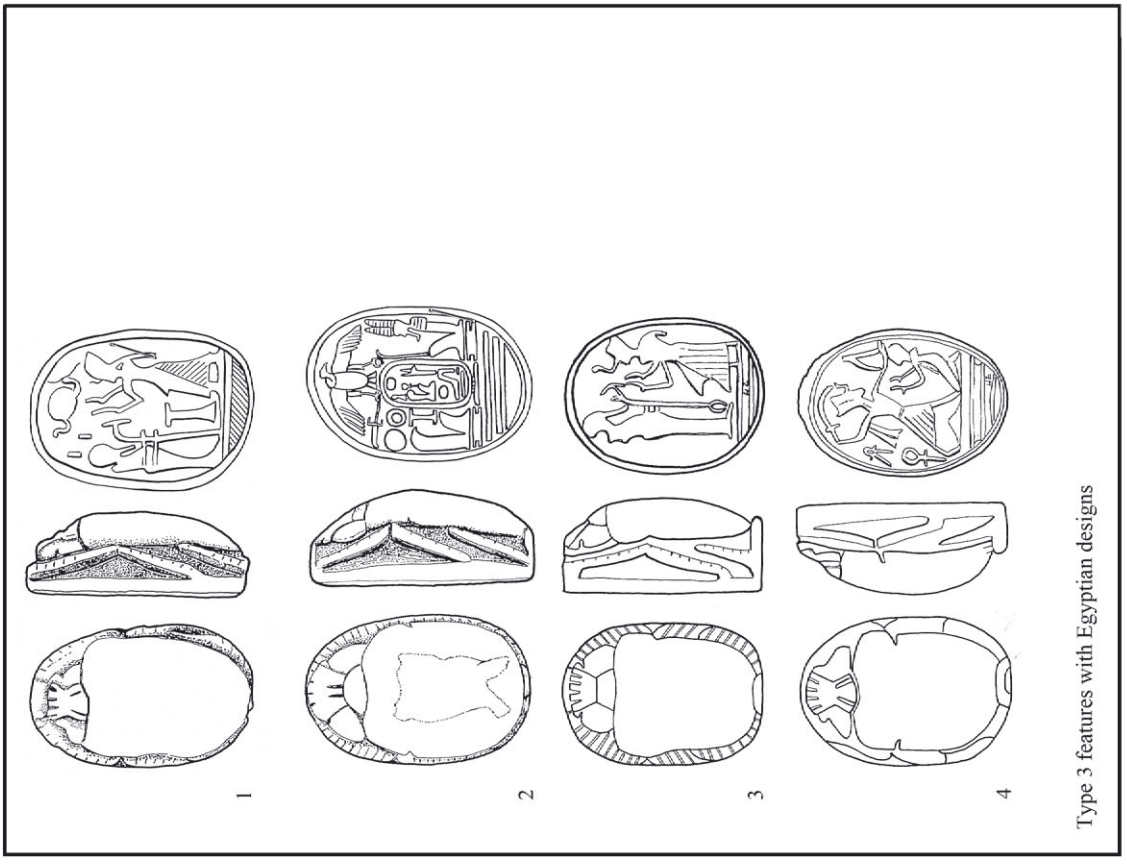


Fig. 14a

Balah, displaying the throne name of Ramesses II and the epithet "beloved of Thoth".[105] These two scarabs are undoubtedly of Egyptian production, implying that a possible Egyptian origin for the steatite examples should not be ruled out.

Type 5 (Fig. 15): back: plain, or with lines (single or double) separating the body and wings and dividing the wings; head: open with a long narrow clypeus, the latter constituting the distinctive feature of this type; side: scored, legs not shown.

This type is found with isolated examples of categories A4,[106] B3,[107] and B4,[108] as well as with a small number of examples displaying royal and divine names and/or images of clear Egyptian origin,[109] suggesting a likely Egyptian origin for scarabs displaying these features.

In addition to the five types discussed above, some examples of category A1 appear on fish-shaped design amulets (Fig. 1a: 1–2).[110] This type of design amulet first appears in the 18th Dynasty in Egypt and continues throughout the Ramesside period.[111] Ramesside examples display, in addition to the archaizing designs, divine names and images of clear Egyptian origin (Fig. 16), and there is no evidence for the production of this type of design amulet outside of Egypt, thus supporting the Egyptian origin of category A1.

Conclusions

The evidence provided by the features of the archaizing scarabs argues for the Egyptian origin of the scarabs assigned to categories A1, A2, A3, A6, B2, B3, and the scarabs displaying the lion as primary motif. It also argues for the most likely Egyptian origin of at least some of the scarabs assigned to categories A4,[112] A5,[113] and B4.[114] The only category that does not share features with scarabs of clear Egyptian origin is category B1, which may have been produced in the southern Levant. It should be noted, however, that there is no evidence for a workshop of steatite scarabs in Ramesside levels in the Levant and, unlike in the case of the Middle Bronze Age, no unfinished scarabs of this period were found in this region.[115] It can, therefore, be concluded that considering the evidence, the great majority of the scarabs found in early Ramesside contexts in the Levant, including those displaying an archaizing of Middle Bronze Age designs, were imported from Egypt and were most probably produced in the Ramesside capital. The incentive for the production of these scarabs at Piramesses can be explained by the Ramesside historical and cultural recollection of the Hyksos capital, which is clearly reflected in the 400-year stela.[116] Moreover, the widespread presence of Hyksos monuments at the site probably contributed to the Ramesside regard for material remains reflecting the Hyksos-period culture at Avaris.

An interesting observation concerns the absence of archaizing motifs on particular elaborate scarabs characteristic of the reign of Ramesses II.[117] These scarabs are generally of superb quality of workmanship and their designs include royal and divine names and images as well as good-luck formulae. These qualities clearly attest to the Egyptian origin of these scarabs and argue for their most likely production in royal and temple workshops.[118] Yet, the complete absence of archaizing motifs on scarabs of this type and the particular designs decorating their base, argue for their most likely production in administrative and religious centres other than Piramesses, such as Memphis and Thebes. This is supported by the popularity of the patron gods of these centres on scarabs of this type.[119]

The possibility of an occasional small-scale local production of scarabs in the southern Levant

105 Keel 2010a, Deir el-Balah 9.

106 Eggler and Keel 2006, Tall al-Mazar 10; Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 805.

107 Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 586.

108 Keel 2010a, Beth Shean 236.

109 Keel 2010a, Beth Shean 190; Beth Shemesh 127, Dan 4, Dothan 3; Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 512, 600.

110 See also Hornung and Staehelin 1976, MV 34.

111 Jaeger 1982, 117, § 514; Keel 1995a, 68–69, § 151; Lalkin 2008, 30.

112 E.g. Eggler and Keel 2006, Tall al-Mazar 10; Keel 2010a, Beth Shemesh 150; Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 805.

113 E.g. Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 506, 604, 689, 882.

114 E.g. Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 587, 588, 704, 706.

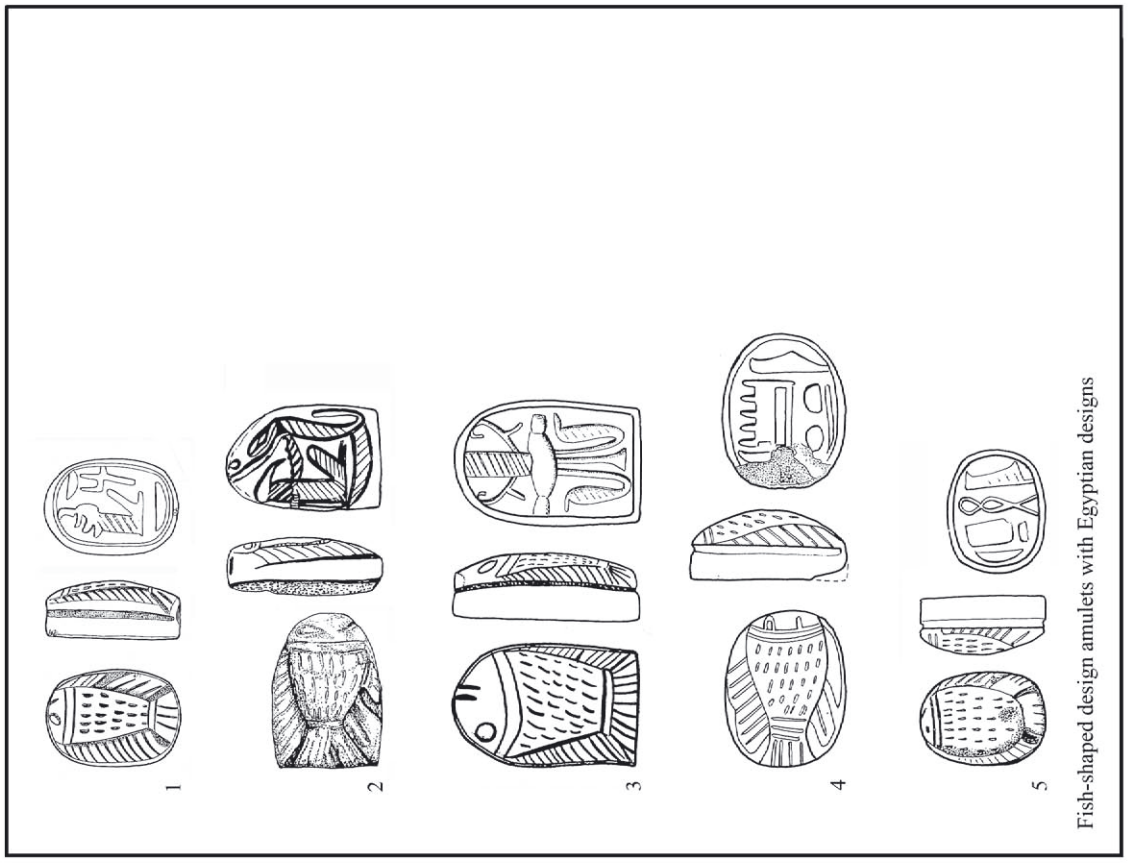
115 Keel 1995b, 102–104, 121.

116 See Cornelius 1994, 147 for bibliography.

117 E.g. Ben-Tor 1989, 48, nos. 1–2, 6–7, 10; Keel 2010a, Beth-Shean 47–48, 112, 226, Deir el-Balah 1, 103, 131–132; Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 158, 471, 475, 548, 550, 552, 560, 563, 568, 712; Keel 2013, Gat 34.

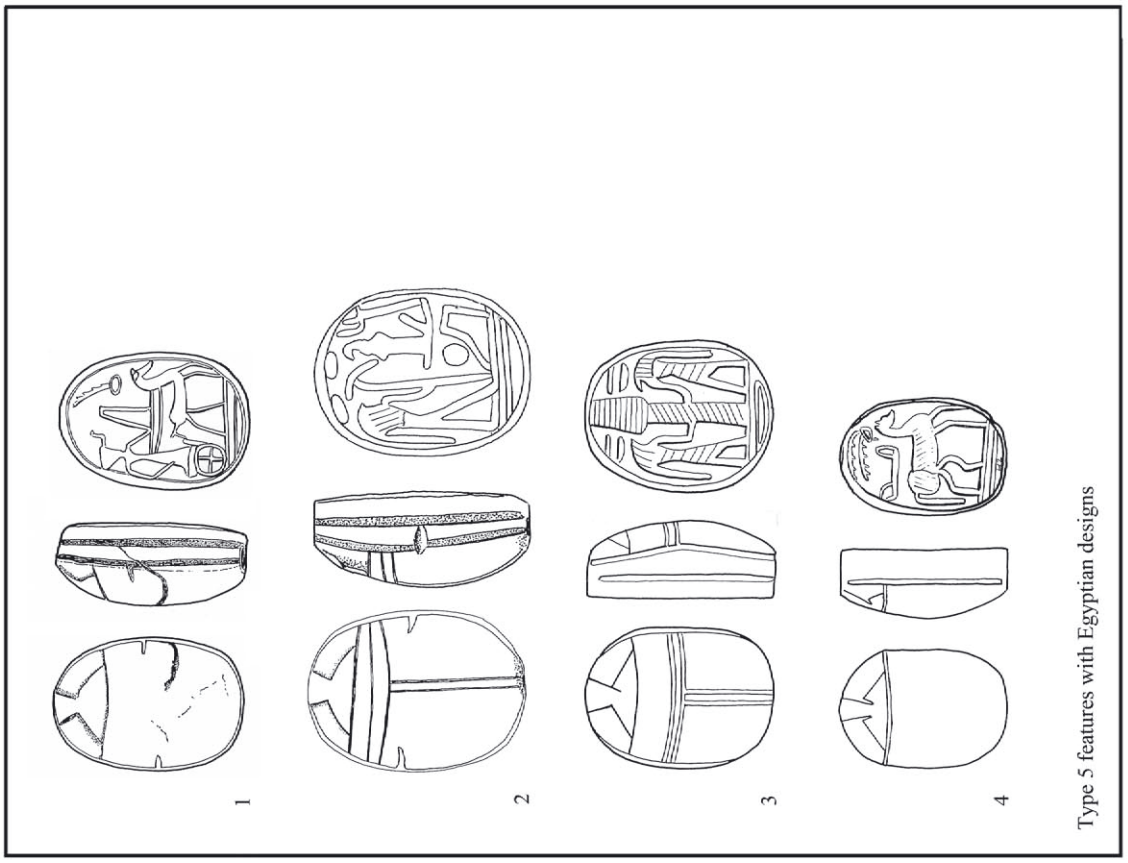
118 Keel 1989, 294–319; Ben-Tor 2011, 207.

119 E.g. Keel 2010a, Beth-Shean 48, 112; Deir el-Balah 1, 103, 131; Keel 2010b, Tell el-Farʿah (S) 158, 471, 475, 568.



Fish-shaped design amulets with Egyptian designs

Fig. 16



Type 5 features with Egyptian designs

Fig. 15

during the early Ramesside period should not be ruled out, though evidence to support it is yet to be found. The disparity between the number of items found in the southern and northern Levant should be attributed to geographical proximity as well as to the number of Ramesside excavated sites in each of these regions.

The large number of archaizing scarabs found in the Tell el-Farʿah(S) cemeteries can be attributed to the fact that the Late Bronze Age cemeteries at the site yielded by far the largest number of Ramesside scarabs of all types compared with other sites, and it does not necessarily argue for a local workshop at the site.

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3. Keel 2010b: Tell el-Far'ah (S) 619
4. Keel 2010b: Tell el-Far'ah (S) 787

Fig. 14a
1. Keel 2010a: Deir el-Balah 73
2. Keel 2010a: Deir el-Balah 26
3. Keel 2010b: Tell el-Far'ah (S) 565
4. Keel 2010b: Tell el-Far'ah (S) 566

Fig. 14b
1. Keel 2010b: Tell el-Far'ah (S) 764
2. Keel 2010b: Tell el-Far'ah (S) 549
3. Keel 2010a: Deir el-Balah 99

Fig. 15
1. Keel 2010a: Dothan 3
2. Keel 2010a: Dan 4
3. Keel 2010b: Tell el-Far'ah (S) 512
4. Keel 2010b: Tell el-Far'ah (S) 600

Fig. 16
1. Keel 2010b: Tell el-Far'ah (S) 553
2. Keel 2010b: Tell el-Far'ah (S) 255
3. Keel 2010a: Deir el-Balah 114
4. Keel 2010b: Tell el-Far'ah (S) 513
5. K Keel eel 2010b: Tell el-Far`ah(S) 700

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