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**From the Persepolis Fortification  
Archive Project, 2: Seals with Egyptian  
Hieroglyphic Inscriptions at Persepolis\***

**Abstract** — This article publishes six seals that carry Egyptian hieroglyphic inscriptions, and one seal that potentially employs

\* Garrison would like to extend his thanks to the following individuals: M.W. Stolper, W.F.M. Henkelman, M.C. Root, E.R.S. Dusinberre, A. Azzoni, L. Magee, and K. Grajeda. All errors in Part I rest, of course, with the author. Abbreviations follow the conventions established in Garrison & Root 2001: xv–xvi. ‘PFS corpus’ designates the complete corpus of seals that occur on the PF tablets (i.e., those tablets published in Hallock 1969; the seals that occur on those tablets are the ones that fall under the publication scope of the Persepolis Fortification Tablet Seal Project [see Garrison & Root 2001: 1]). Fortification archive seal numbers (PFS #) followed by a Cat.No. indicate seals published in Garrison & Root 2001 (see there for full documentation). Other sigla used in this article are NN: Elamite Fortification tablet occurring in R.T. Hallock’s unpublished editions (see fn. 1 below); PFAT: Aramaic Fortification tablet; PFATS: seal that occurs only on the Aramaic Fortification tablets; PFUT: uninscribed Fortification tablet; PFUTS: seal that occurs only on the uninscribed Fortification tablets or on the uninscribed *and* the Aramaic Fortification tablets. Photographs and drawings of the seals on the Persepolis Fortification tablets published hereafter are courtesy of the Persepolis Fortification Tablet Seal Project and the Persepolis Fortification Archive Project. Line drawings in this article are by Garrison. Permission to publish the seal impressions from the Persepolis Fortification archive comes from the Director of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.



Egyptian hieroglyphic signs in a decorative manner, from the Persepolis Fortification archive. These seals are the first evidence for the occurrence of Egyptian hieroglyphic script on seals at Persepolis. The seals raise various issues concerning glyptic use and production within southwestern Iran during the reign of Darius I.

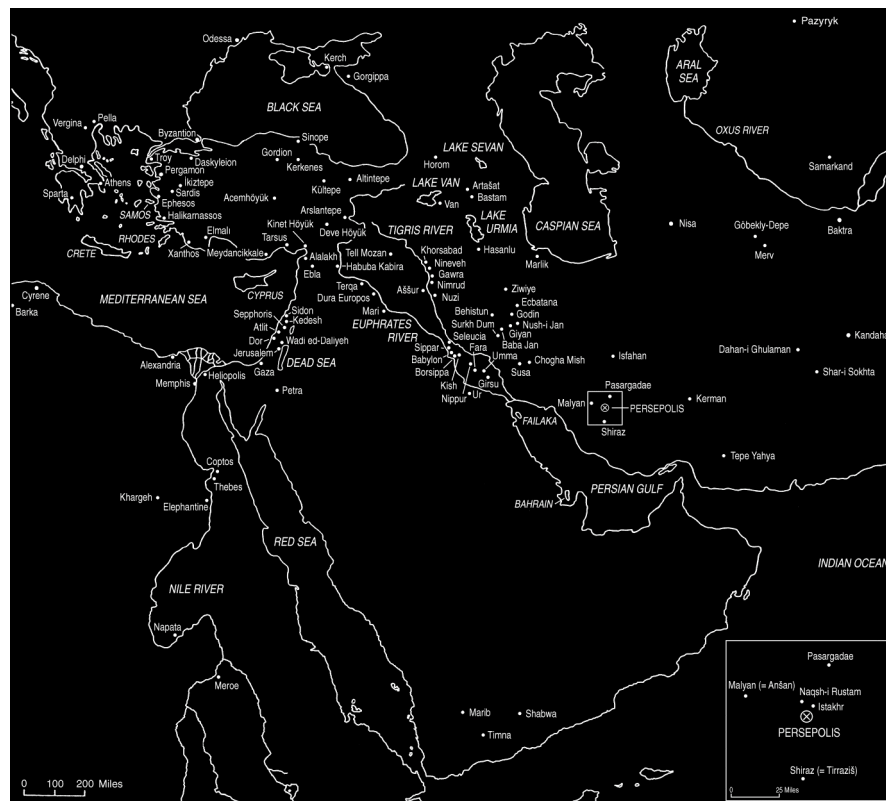


Fig. 1: map of the Achaemenid empire  
(courtesy of the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago).



Fig. 2: Persepolis citadel (Takht) and immediate surroundings (adapted from Kleiss 1992) showing the find spot of Fortification archive and the Treasury archive (map courtesy of the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago).



# 1

## The Seal Imagery (M.B. Garrison)

### I.1 Introduction

In the sample of some 2,087 Elamite tablets from the Persepolis Fortification archive published by R.T. Hallock in 1969 almost 1,150 distinct seals are preserved.<sup>1</sup> These seals exhibit a wide variety of compositions, iconography, and styles. Artistic influence from the western realms of the Empire, i.e. Greece, Anatolia, Syro-Palestine, and Egypt, is, however, very rare in this corpus of material. This is somewhat surprising, given modern scholarly pre-occupation with

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The circumstances surrounding the discovery of the Fortification archive and the nature of the archive itself have been addressed in detail elsewhere (e.g., Garrison & Root 2001: 1–39; Henkelman 2008: 66–179; Jones & Stolper 2008); see here [fig. 1](#) for a map of the Achaemenid empire and [fig. 2](#) for a plan of Persepolis showing where the Fortification archive and the Treasury archive (see below) were discovered. Dated Elamite texts from the Fortification archive belong to 509–493 BC, i.e. in the reign of Darius I. For general overviews and bibliography, see Garrison & Root 2001: 9–16; Briant 2002: 422–71, 938–47; *idem* 1997: 11, 43, 85–86; *idem* 2001: 18, 103, 114, 133–36; Henkelman 2008 *passim*; Briant, Henkelman & Stolper 2008 *passim*. Note also Hallock 1978, Henkelman 2003, and *idem* 2008, who add more excavated Elamite texts to the published corpus, and Jones & Stolper 2006, who document unprovenanced tablets that probably come from the Fortification archive. Before his death Hallock had read and edited another 2,586 Elamite texts (33 of which were published in Hallock 1978 [siglum: Pfa]; see Henkelman 2008: 72–9, for details on Hallock's manuscripts). Hallock's unpublished transliterations have periodically been cited in the literature. These texts are now being prepared for publication by W.F.M. Henkelman. They are designated by the siglum NN. The archive consists of two other sets of tablets, those that carry Aramaic texts (in ink and/or inscribed) and those that are uninscribed (but sealed). For the Aramaic texts and seals, see Azzoni 2008 and Dusingberre 2008; for the uninscribed but sealed tablets, see Garrison 2008.

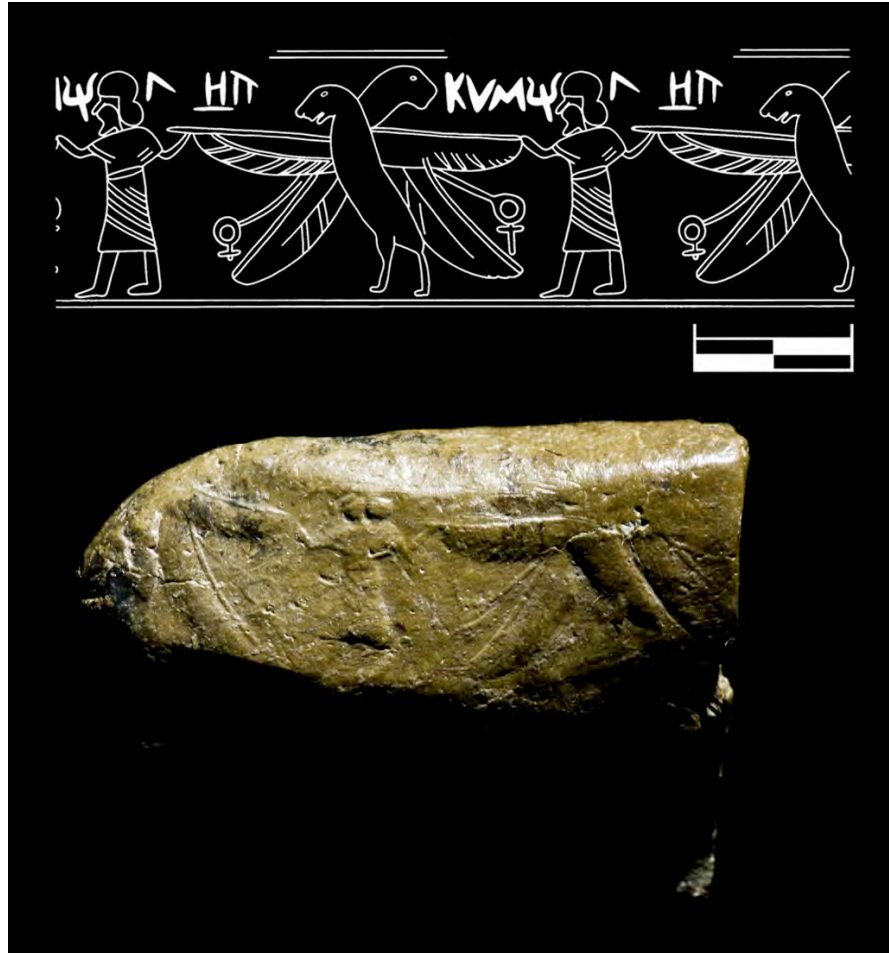


Greek influence on Achaemenid art and architecture and the unambiguous presence of Egyptianizing elements in architectural plan and decoration at Persepolis.<sup>2</sup>

Two seals that occur on the tablets published by Hallock, PFS 0284\* (Cat.No. 111) (figs. 3–4) and PFS 1434s (figs. 5–6), the latter of which has yet to be published, are, however, notable in showing Egyptianizing iconography. PFS 0284\* carries an inscription in Greek script. The imagery is unusual, showing a hero who holds the wing-tips of a double-headed lion-bird creature. An appendage depending from each side of this creature's body terminates in an ankh sign. In addition to the ankh sign, the double-headed lion-bird creature itself may also be of Egyptian inspiration.<sup>3</sup> PFS 1434s appears to be an Egyptianizing scarab/scaraboid from the western realms of the empire, although given the poor preservation of the seal, one is reluctant to make far-reaching conclusions. The dis-

<sup>2</sup> For Greek influence on Achaemenid art and architecture see, e.g., Boardman 2000. For the Egyptianizing elements in architectural plan and decoration at Persepolis see, e.g., Root 1979: 77, 126–7, 246. Note also *ibid.* 138–47, 218–22, 270–2 and Wasmuth 2009a: 28–49, on the influence of Egyptian artistic conventions on Achaemenid monumental relief and free-standing sculpture. A few Achaemenid imperial monuments, from other sites in the empire, carry Egyptian hieroglyphic inscriptions (Root 1979: 61–72, 123–8; Kuhrt 2007: 477–82, 485–6; Lloyd 2007; Wasmuth 2009a: 65–253).

<sup>3</sup> Winged, multi-headed creatures are a feature of the Egyptian visual repertoire. Note Avigad & Sass 1997, no. 715, where a four-winged male figure wearing an Egyptianizing crown stands on an Egyptianizing cavetto pedestal holding an ankh in each hand. The figure wears an Assyrianizing garment on his lower body. Avigad & Sass 1997: 265–66, classify the seal as south Syrian of the eighth cent. BC. We should also mention PFS 1432s, a poorly preserved stamp seal that may show a winged animal-headed human figure.



Figs. 3-4: collated line drawing of PFS 0284\* (Cat.No. 111)  
and impression of the same seal on PF 0330 (reverse).



*Figs. 5-6: collated line drawing of PFS 1434s  
and impression of the same seal on PF 1543 (reverse).*

tinctive placement of the two wings in front of the body of a creature standing in profile view certainly is a longstanding convention of Egyptian and Egyptianizing art.<sup>4</sup> A worshipper standing before a winged human-headed goddess is also a theme commonly found in Egyptianizing Phoenician stamp seals.<sup>5</sup> The lion-headed goddess in Egypt was Tefnut, and a winged, lion-headed goddess occurs on Phoenician Egyptianizing scarabs.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Cf. the figural designs on the stamp seals Keel 1994, nos. 30–33, 39–41, 56–57, all New Kingdom examples. Note the winged goddess on Phoenician stamp seals (Hölbl 1986: 274–76, nos. 29–34, 281, no. 48, 293, nos. 92–93, etc.), all of first millennium BC date.

<sup>5</sup> E.g., Hölbl 1986: 279–81, nos. 43–48.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Hölbl 1986: 311–13, nos. 166–67, with discussion of the distribution of the imagery of the goddess in Phoenician and Punic contexts.



Recent research on the glyptic imagery preserved on the unpublished tablets from the Fortification archive has now revealed no fewer than six seals carrying Egyptian hieroglyphic inscriptions, and one that may use hieroglyphic signs in a decorative manner. There follows a description and commentary of the imagery on these seven seals. Discussion of the hieroglyphic inscriptions is found in **Part II** (Ritner). The seals are organized by seal type: five stamp seals, followed by two cylinder seals.



*Figs. 7-8: collated line drawing of PFS 2022s\*  
and impression of the same seal on NN 1686 (reverse).*



## I.2 Catalogue of Seals

**PFS 2022s\*** (figs. 7–8)<sup>7</sup> — PFS 2022s\* is a stamp seal impressed twice on the reverse of NN 1686; PFS 0026 (Cat.No. 299) is applied to the left edge of the tablet. The obverse, upper, bottom and right edges of the tablet are not sealed.

The Elamite text written on the tablet is a receipt for a travel ration (q text) in which an individual, <sup>HAL</sup>mi-ud-da-ra-an(-)ʾziʾ-išʾ<sup>7</sup> (Middaranziš?), receives a ration of flour on route to Susa in the fifth month of the 23<sup>rd</sup> year (August/September 499 BC). The flour was supplied by Barušiyatiš. The text reads as follows:<sup>8</sup>

obverse

- (01) 1 QA *tan* ZÍD.DA<sup>MEŠ</sup>
- (02) *kur-mín* <sup>HAL</sup>*ba-ru-ši-*
- (03) *ia-ti-iš<-na>*
- (04) <sup>HAL</sup>*mi-ud-da-ra-*
- (05) *an(-)ʾziʾ-išʾ<sup>7</sup>*
- (06) *du-iš*

lower edge

- (07) <sup>AŠ</sup>*hal-mi* <sup>HAL</sup>*ʾpár-na<sup>1</sup>-*
- (08) *ak<sup>1</sup>-ka<sub>4</sub>-ʾna-ma<sup>1</sup>*

reverse

- (09) <sup>AŠ</sup>*ʾšu<sup>1</sup>-šá-an pa-ri-*

<sup>7</sup> For sake of consistency, the siglum PFS is also used to designate seals that occur on the unpublished Elamite tablets (NNS); numbering of new seals starts with PFS 2000.

<sup>8</sup> I thank W. Henkelman for providing me with the collated edition (based on Hallock's manuscript edition) and the translation that follow.



- (10) *iš<sup>AŠ</sup>be-ul 23*  
(11) *AN<sub>ITI</sub>MEŠ AN<sub>1</sub>tur-*  
(12) *na-ba-<sup>1</sup>zi-iš<sup>1</sup>*

1½ qt. of flour, allocation <of> Barušiyatiš, Middaranziš received in accordance with a sealed document (authorization) from Parnakka. He went to Susa. 23<sup>rd</sup> year, fifth month.

The text is a conventional receipt for a travel ration. The supplier, Barušiyatiš, and his seal, PFS 0026 (Cat.No. 299), are well known.<sup>9</sup> Following travel ration protocols, PFS 2022s\* most certainly belonged to the traveler, <sup>HAL</sup>*mi-ud-da-ra-an(-)<sup>1</sup>zi<sup>1</sup>-iš<sup>1</sup>*. This reading of his name seems the best that is possible given the preservation of the tablet. It appears to be the only occurrence of the name in the archive.<sup>10</sup> Middaranziš is traveling under the authorization (*halmi*) of Parnakka, the director of the institution represented by the Fortification archive, on his way to Susa; again, a common set of circumstances within the travel ration texts.

The seal PFS 2022s\*, based upon the contours of the seal face, appears to have been a scaraboid or scarab. Parts of the upper, right, and lower edges of the seal are preserved. The preserved seal

<sup>9</sup> See the commentary in Garrison & Root 2001: 423.

<sup>10</sup> Tavernier (2007: 485) and Hinz & Koch (1987: 940), both erroneously reading *du* for *da*, take the name as “probably Iranian” (no etymology given). I thank Matthew Stolper and Wouter Henkelman for this observation. It is very common in the travel rations for individuals to be named in only one text. This situation undoubtedly reflects both the fragmentary nature of the preservation of the archive (despite the thousands of documents that do survive!) and the large number of individuals traveling at state expense on the royal road.



face measures approximately 1.20 cm along the greatest long axis (complete) and 0.80 along the greatest short axis (incomplete).

The seal face carries an Egyptian hieroglyphic inscription framed in a border. The inscription is oriented along the long axis of the seal, reading from top to bottom. The text reads:

“Enduring is the Lord Re”

**PFUTS 0143s\*** (figs. 9–10) — PFUTS 0143s\* is a stamp seal impressed once on the obverse of PFUT 0266-201; PFUTS 0144 is applied to the left edge of the tablet. The reverse, upper, bottom and right edges of the tablet are not sealed.



*Figs. 9-10: impression of of PFUTS 0143s\* on PFUT 0266-201 (obverse)  
and collated line drawing of the same seal.*



PFUTS 0143s\* appears to have been a small scaraboid or scarab. The seal face is apparently complete. It measures approximately 1.60 cm along the greatest long axis and 1.20 cm along the greatest short axis.

The seal face carries an Egyptian hieroglyphic inscription. The inscription is oriented along the short axis of the seal, the text reading from left to right. At top and bottom of the inscription are two horizontal elements; above the upper ones there are a solar disk and a partially preserved circular device, below the lower ones a *nb*-basket. The lower half of the seal face preserves a line border.

The inscription is very poorly preserved and a full reading is not possible (see the comments of Ritner, [below](#)).



Figs. 11-12: collated line drawing of PFUTS 0155s  
and impression of the same seal on PFUT 0998-101 (obverse).



**PFUTS 0155s** (figs. 11–12) — PFUTS 0155s is a stamp seal impressed once on the obverse of PFUT 0998-101; PFS 0039s (Cat.No. 221) is applied to the left edge of the tablet. The reverse, upper, bottom and right edges of the tablet are not sealed.

PFUTS 0155s appears to have been a scaraboid or scarab. All edges of the seal are preserved. The seal face measures approximately 1.60 cm along the greatest long axis and approximately 1.20 cm along the greatest short axis.

The design is oriented along the short axis of the seal face. The scene shows two figures who stand facing each other. Between them are three objects/signs; above there is a winged solar disk, below a *nb*-basket.

The figure at right stands facing to left. He holds his right arm slightly bent and extends it outward, hand at waist level, to grasp a long staff disposed vertically in the field before him. He holds his left arm bent and extends it outward behind him, the arm held close to his body. Details of the head are not preserved; a pointed top of his head may suggest some type of headdress. The lower part of the body is not preserved, but the figure appears to wear a skirt. The figure at left stands facing to right. He holds his left arm bent and extends it outward apparently to grasp a device with three-prongs that is disposed diagonally in the field before his upper body. He holds his right arm straight and extends it downward behind him, the arm held close to the body. The figure appears to wear a garment that leaves the forward leg exposed, but preservation is very poor and the figure may wear a skirt or kilt. In the upper field between the three-pronged device held by the figure at left and the staff held by the figure at right there is a rounded



triangular device. In the lower field between the two figures there is a small stand(?) over which there is a w-shaped object (perhaps a water lily with three petals; see Ritner's [comments](#)). A single horizontal line demarks the scene at top and bottom. Above the upper line there is a winged solar disk, below the lower line a *nb*-basket. A decorative border consists of a series of small triangular and lozenge-shaped devices creating a rope or ladder-like design.

The seal is clearly non-Persepolitan, originating from the western empire, perhaps the Phoenician coast. Certainly in the mid-first millennium BC a common compositional device in Phoenician glyptic shows one/two individuals with a solar disk above and the *nb*-basket (or *exergue*) below.<sup>11</sup> Many Phoenician designs of this period also have an encircling 'rope' or 'ladder' border, which, like other features of these designs, are Egyptianizing.<sup>12</sup>

**PFATS 0300s\*** ([figs. 13–14](#)) — PFATS 0300s\* is a stamp seal impressed once on the reverse of PFAT 0299; PFATS 0110s is applied on the bottom edge of the tablet. The obverse, upper, flat and right edges of the tablet are not sealed.

The Aramaic text on the tablet, in four lines, is written in ink on the obverse oriented along the long axis. The provisional translation of the text is:<sup>13</sup>

**11** E.g., Buchanan & Moorey 1988: 70–72, nos. 470–72; Keel-Leu 1991: 92–94, no. 111; Hölbl 1986, pls. 118 no. 2 (no solar disk, from Tharros), 119 nos. 2 (from Syria/Phoenicia) and 3 (from Latakia[?]), 120 nos. 1–2 (both from Syria/Phoenicia), and 130 no. 2 (from Tharros). See Ritner's discussion (with fn. 75), [below](#), for earlier examples.

**12** Buchanan & Moorey 1988: 70; Hölbl 1986, pls. 119, nos. 1 and 3 (from Latakia[?]), 120 nos. 1 (from Syria/Phoenicia) and 3.

**13** I thank A. Azzoni for this reading and the reading of PFAT 0445 that follows.



Obverse

- (01) PN<sup>?</sup> ...
- (02) ...
- (03) from Media to
- (04) Persepolis

The seal PFATS 0300s\* appears to have been a small scaraboid or scarab. The complete seal face and contours are preserved. It measures approximately 1.20 cm along the greatest long axis and 0.80 along the greatest short axis.



*Figs. 13-14: collated line drawing of PFATS 0300s\* and impression of the same seal on PFAT 0299 (reverse).*



The seal face carries an Egyptian hieroglyphic inscription. The inscription is oriented along the short axis of the seal, the text reading from left to right:

“May the truth/justice of Amon live”

Although fragmentarily preserved, the Aramaic text on the tablet appears to have a personal name and certainly the geographic names Media and Persepolis. Most likely, the text is some type of receipt for travel rations that names a traveler, his authorization (*halmi*) and start and end destinations (as NN 1686, associated with PFS 2022s\*, discussed [above](#)). Based upon seal protocols for these types of travel documents in the Elamite texts, PFATS 0300s\* should belong to the traveler.

**PFATS 0424s\*** (figs. 15–16) — PFATS 0424s\* is a stamp seal impressed once on the reverse and flat edge of PFAT 0445; PFATS 0423 is impressed on the obverse. The upper and bottom edges are not sealed; the right edge of the tablet is partially destroyed.

The Aramaic text on the tablet, in six lines, is written in ink on the flat edge, obverse, right edge, and reverse. The text, unfortunately, is almost completely illegible, although one can recognize a few letters.

PFATS 0424s\* appears to have been a scaraboid or scarab. Only the upper edge of the seal is preserved. The preserved seal face measures approximately 1.80 cm along the greatest long axis (incomplete) and 1.60 cm along the greatest short axis (incomplete).



*Figs. 15-16: Collated line drawing of PFATS 0424s\* and impression of the same seal on PFAT 0445 (reverse).*

The seal face carries an Egyptian hieroglyphic inscription framed in a border. The inscription is oriented along the long axis of the seal, the text reading from left to right. The text is poorly preserved; Ritner suggests the following reading:

“Chief of Pe and overseer of (royal) mansions, Padihor.”

**PFUTS 0125\*** (figs. 17–18) — PFUTS 0125\* is a cylinder seal impressed once on the reverse and once the left edge of PFUT 0717-103; PFUTS 0133 is applied to the obverse of the tablet. The upper edge of the tablet is not sealed; the bottom and right edges of the tablet are destroyed.

The design on PFUTS 0125\* consists of a figure in a crescent(?) flanked by bull-men atlantids. In the terminal field there is a paneled Egyptian hieroglyphic inscription. Neither impression preserves the full width of the scene, although one can be fairly con-



fidient that the hieroglyphic inscription follows the bull man at the right in the collated drawing. A portion of the lower edge of the seal is preserved. The greatest preserved height and length of the image are approximately 1.40 cm and 2.50 cm.

In the center of the figural imagery there is a figure standing in a crescent-shaped device. The arms and head of the figure are not preserved, but he appears to stand facing to the left and to wear a



belted, ankle-length garment. To either side of this figure there is a rampant bull-man. The bull-man at left strides to the left facing toward a paneled hieroglyphic inscription (turning away from the figure standing in a crescent-shaped device). The creature clearly has a taurine lower body (with downward-curving tail) with human arms, shoulders, and

*Figs. 17-18: collated line drawing of PFUTS 0125\* and impression of the same seal on PFUT 0717-103 (reverse).*

head. He has a thick, squared beard that rests over his right



shoulder; an elongated mass of hair extends outward diagonally at the back of his neck. The creature holds each arm bent and extends it upward above his shoulders in an atlas pose. The right hand is preserved, conventionally rendered as a two-pronged pincer. The creature at right is less well preserved, but appears to move to right (and, thus, would also have faced the paneled hieroglyphic inscription and away from the figure standing in a crescent-shaped device). He appears to be, for all intents and purposes, a double of the creature at left. A small dot near its raised right hand may be a flaw in the stone. The inscription, contained in a panel, reads:

“Servant of Ptah, Ankhhap”

While parts of the figural composition on PFUTS 0125\* are well known within the corpus of seals from the Fortification archive studied to date, the full composition is unique.

Bull-men in the atlantid pose commonly occur on the seals from the Fortification archive.<sup>14</sup> They generally support a winged

**14** Bull-men atlantids in the Fortification archive have recently been discussed by Garrison 2009; *idem* [in press 1]; *idem* [forthc.]. Bull-men, i.e. creatures that generally stand upright and have a taurine lower body (and, sometimes, horns) and a human torso, arms and head, are to be distinguished from other taurine-based *Mischwesen*, especially the human-headed bull and the human-faced bull (cf. Black & Green 1992: 48–51; Potts 2002 surveys the possible Akkadian and Avestan terms for both the bull-man and the human-headed bull). Bull-men acting as atlantids are also documented in the Treasury archive (PTS 018 and PTS 019; Schmidt 1957, pl. 6). It is interesting to note that in the major glyptic corpora of Achaemenid date in the western realms of the empire (Daskyleion and Wadi Daliyeh) the atlantid figure is completely absent (Kaptan 2002 for Daskyleion; Leith 1997 for Wadi Daliyeh). The atlantid figure is an old theme in the art of western Asia, first appearing consistently in the middle of the second millennium BC (Garrison 2009 and *idem* [in press



disk/ring, a figure emerging from a winged disk/ring, or a figure emerging from a crescent. On PFS 0774 (Cat.No. 58) (figs. 19–20) a single bull-man supports a figure emerging from a winged symbol, while on PFS 0122 (figs. 21–22) two bull-men creatures support a figure in a winged device. The scenes with the winged ring/disk or the figure emerging from a winged disk/ring sometimes, as on PFS 0122 (figs. 21–22) and PFS 0420 (figs. 23–24), include a stylized tree placed between the two bull-men and under the winged symbol. The striking PFS 0105s (figs. 25–26) shows a bull-man holding aloft a figure emerging from a lunar crescent. There are also some examples where the bull-man simply stands in the atlantid pose without supporting any device. The appearance of atlantid bull-men in the seals from the Fortification archive is one of many examples of the continuation of long-lived Assyro-Babylonian visual imagery in Persepolitan glyptic.

Given the state of preservation of PFUTS 0125\*, it is not improbable that the original design in fact included some type of winged symbol in the (now unpreserved) upper field, perhaps hovering over the inscription.

The figure in the crescent-shaped device in the middle of the figural imagery poses some difficulties. Compositionally, its placement in the scene recalls the formula of bull-men flanking a stylized tree, as seen, e.g., on PFS 0122 (fig. 21–22) and PFS 0420 (figs. 23–24), a compositional format dating back into the second millennium BC and one that was especially popular in Assyrian glyptic. The bull men on PFUTS 0125\* face, however, away from the

1] covers the evidence in some detail).



figure in the crescent-shaped device and so may be better conceived as framing the paneled hieroglyphic inscription. Such a compositional dynamic wherein the paneled inscription is the central focal element of the design is not common in Persepolitan glyptic, but some remarkable examples are known (e.g., PFS 0389\*: **figs. 27–28**).<sup>15</sup>



*Figs. 19-20: collated line drawing of PFS 0774 (Cat.No. 58) and impression of the same seal on PF 0556 (reverse).*

**15** Similar examples include PFS 0082\*, PFS 0160\*, PFS 0320\* and PFUTS 0001\*.



Figs. 21-22: collated line drawing of PFS 0122 and impression of the same seal on PF 0522 (left edge).



Figs. 23-24: collated line drawing of PFS 0420 and impression of the same seal on PF 0111 (reverse).



*Figs. 25-26: collated line drawing of PFS 0105s and impression of the same seal on PF 1161 (left edge).*



*Figs. 27-28: collated line drawing of PFS 0389\* and impression of the same seal on PF 0088 (reverse).*



The depiction of a full-bodied anthropomorphic figure standing in a large crescent-shaped device is currently without parallel in the glyptic from Persepolis; indeed, one is hard-pressed to find many parallels for the group in the visual arts of the early first millennium. A remarkable example is an impression of a stamp seal on an uninscribed clay bulla from Nineveh (Mitchell & Searight 2007, no. 273, dated to probably 8<sup>th</sup>–7<sup>th</sup> cent. BC). The scene shows a deity holding a crescent-on-rod symbol in his left hand, standing, full-bodied, in a crescent; each end of the crescent terminates in a small crescent.<sup>16</sup> Mitchell & Searight (*ibid.* 114) identify the crescent as a stylized boat. Another impression of a stamp seal from Nineveh shows a human figure standing, full-bodied, in a crescent (*ibid.* no. 249, dated to probably 8<sup>th</sup>–7<sup>th</sup> cent. BC). The figure holds a staff; a fish(?) appears in the field before the figure. Mitchell & Searight (*ibid.* 110) describe the scene as a human figure standing in a “crescent(-shaped boat?).” Herbordt (1992: 100–1, 156) identifies, however, the scene on this seal as the moon god in the lunar crescent.

The more conventional depiction of the god in the crescent is as a partial figure emerging from a crescent. This is an iconographic type that is rare in Persepolitan glyptic (e.g., PFS 0105s, [figs. 25–26](#)), but very popular in Assyrian glyptic and glyptic of Assyrian date from the western edges of the Assyrian empire.<sup>17</sup>

**16** The drawing of the seal in Mitchell & Searight 2007: 114 appears also to show a crescent and/or disk on the top of the deity’s cylindrical headdress.

**17** Garrison 2009 discusses the type with previous bibliography. Only three examples of the scene are known in Persepolitan glyptic to date: PFS 0105s, PFS 0244s, PFUTS 0082s. There is, however, other evidence from the Achaemenid period for the image type (*ibid.*). Commentators generally agree that the image in Assyro-Babylonian contexts depicts the moon god Sîn (Herbordt 1992: 100–1, identifies three variations in the god’s depiction).



The device generally floats in the upper field of the composition, but on some stamp seals of Assyrian date the god in the crescent fills the whole field, thus the crescent rests at the bottom of the seal face.<sup>18</sup> The god in the crescent is sometimes ‘supported’ by a bull-man, or simply hovers over a plant device or the stylized tree. At Persepolis, as in Assyrian glyptic, the scene most commonly occurs on stamp seals.<sup>19</sup>

As mentioned, there is the possibility that the crescent-shaped device in PFUTS 0125\* represents a boat.<sup>20</sup> A late second millennium seal found at Samsat shows a full-bodied god in a boat (Matthews 1990, no. 534). Matthews (*ibid.* 111) classifies the scene as late Middle Assyrian in origin and identifies the figure as the moon god (the figure holds a crescent and an omega) standing on a platform within a boat. The boat in the seal from Samsat is, however, rather realistically rendered with identifiable prows and has little in common with the crescent-shaped device in PFUTS 0125\*. A flattened conoid Louvre MNB 1842 (Avigad & Sass 1997, no. 850) shows on one of its faces a kneeling worshiper disposed to either side of a crescent-shaped device that floats in the upper field and supports a stylus on a pedestal. The ends of the crescent terminate in bird’s heads, and Avigad & Sass (*ibid.* 317) identify the feature as a “sacred barque.” Although closer in date (post 550 BC on epigraphic grounds), the seal imagery has little in common with PFUTS 0125\*.

**18** E.g., Herbordt 1992, pl. 12.9; Keel 1994: 196, fig. 80.

**19** But see Collon 2001, nos. 229–30, 361, the first two of which Collon identifies as Babylonian in style.

**20** The boat may also indicate a lunar association; Keel 1994: 172–73, as some other commentators, in fact interprets the conventional scene of the god in a crescent as the moon god in a boat.



A group of 'Egypto-Palestinian' scarabs and scaraboids from the late second/early first millennium BC show the Egyptian king seated in the solar boat.<sup>21</sup> In addition to the distant temporal and spatial contexts of these seals, they show no commonalities with the scene in PFUTS 0125\* (other than the possibility that the crescent-shaped device on PFUTS 0125\* may represent a boat).

Although the impressions of PFUTS 0125\* are not as detailed as one would prefer, nonetheless enough is present to be able to get a general sense of the carving style, which seems quite at home in a Persepolitan context. The figural outline is sharp and sinuous, with little indication of interior musculature. The figures have a slightly pinched waist. The heads sit atop the bodies with little or no indication of a neck. The right hand of the bull-man at left is shown as two pointed prongs in a pincer-like arrangement. All of these stylistic details are amply documented in the local Fortification carving style at Persepolis. If the modeling of the figures is in fact deeper and/or more active than the impressions preserve, then the seal could be classified as Persepolitan Modeled Style, or what we have called Mixed Styles I.<sup>22</sup>

The two stamps seals preserved as impressions from Nineveh (Mitchell & Searight 2007, nos. 249, 273) would seem to provide the closest parallels to the full-bodied figure standing in the crescent-shaped device on PFUTS 0125\*. In the case of Mitchell & Searight no. 273, the identification of the figure as the lunar god would seem to be secure. Assyrian glyptic also gives evidence for the combination

**21**

Keel 1994: 53–134, discusses in some detail the theme of the king as sun-god in glyptic.

**22**

For carving styles in Persepolitan glyptic, see Garrison 1988, briefly summarized in Garrison & Root 2001: 16–20.



of the bull-man atlantid and the god in the crescent, as does PFS 0105s (fig. 25–26) from the Fortification archive. PFUTS 0125\* may represent then a phenomenon commonly seen in Persepolitan glyptic: the re-figuring of elements of Assyrian glyptic, here the bull-man atlantids and the full-bodied lunar deity in a crescent, in new and innovative combinations within the context of local seal carving workshops.<sup>23</sup> While this phenomenon is quite wide-spread in Persepolitan glyptic, *this* particular re-figuring of Assyrian iconographic elements is, however, as far as we can discern, unique. The addition of the paneled Egyptian hieroglyphic inscription makes the design even more intriguing. The inscription itself seems also to blend local and foreign elements. Inscriptions in Persepolitan glyptic often are contained within a rectangular panel; thus, in this sense the inscription on PFUTS 0125\* reflects one of the standard display characteristics of Persepolitan inscribed seals.<sup>24</sup> Egyptian hieroglyphic inscriptions on seals are rarely displayed in such a manner.<sup>25</sup>

The distinctive elements of iconography and composition, combined with the hieroglyphic inscription, suggest that PFUTS 0125\* may be a special commissioned seal. Other Persepolitan seals that exhibit exceptional elements of iconography and/or composition generally belong to/are used by high-rank administrators.<sup>26</sup>

**23** Garrison [forthc.] discusses this phenomenon in some detail. The group of the full-bodied lunar deity in a crescent in the Assyrian evidence is, however, exceptionally rare and its possible appearance in Persepolitan glyptic would be noteworthy.

**24** Discussed briefly in Garrison 2006: 70–72.

**25** Cf. Giovino 2006, fig. 3a, where the hieroglyphic inscription is contained within a rectangular panel.

**26** See also the comments below, pp. 33–41.



**PFUTS 0136\*** (figs 29–33) — PFUTS 0136\* is a cylinder seal impressed once on some nine uninscribed tablets identified to date:

PFUT 0145-201 (obv., upper edge, rev., left edge; the bottom and right edges are destroyed)

PFUT 0162-203 (obv., rev., left edge, with PFUTS 0239s also on the left edge; the upper, bottom and right edges are not sealed)

PFUT 1093-001 (obv., rev., with PFUTS 0141s on the left edge; the upper, bottom and right edges are not sealed)

PFUT 1093-016 (obv., upper edge, rev., with PFUTS 0142s on the left edge; the bottom and right edges are not sealed)

PFUT 1103-101 (obv., rev., with PFUTS 0137s on the left edge; the upper, bottom and right edges are not sealed)

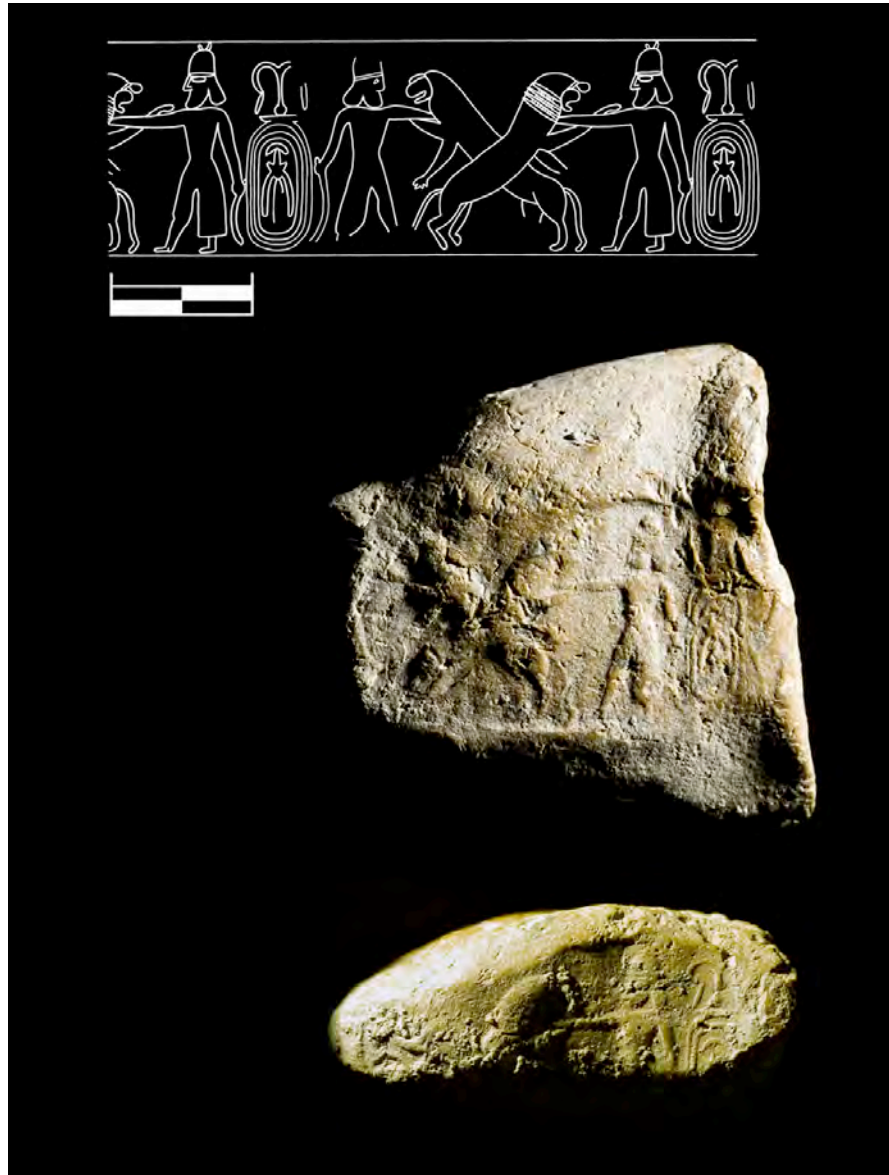
PFUT 1118-101 (obv., upper edge, rev.; left edge is destroyed; the bottom and right edges are not sealed)

PFUT 1142-201 (obv., upper edge, rev., bottom edge, with PFUTS 0140s on the left edge; the right edge is not sealed)

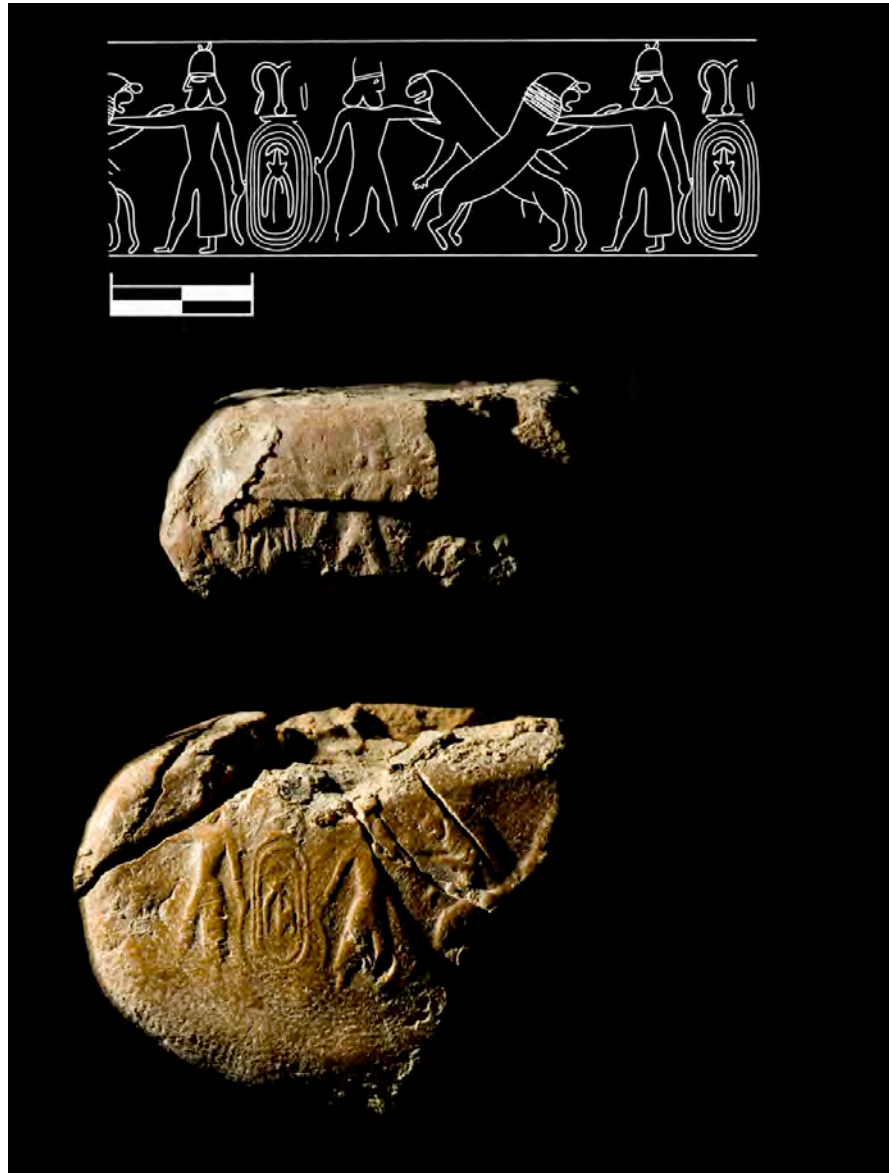
PFUT 1143-201 (obv., upper edge, rev., bottom edge, with PFUTS 0140s on left edge; the right edge is not sealed)

PFUT 1143-202 (obv., upper edge, rev., with PFUTS 0140s on left edge; the bottom and right edges are not sealed)

The design on PFUTS 0136\* consists of a heroic encounter. In the terminal field there is an Egyptian hieroglyphic inscription contained in a cartouche. The bottom and top edges of the seal are preserved. The height of the seal is approximately 1.50 cm; the length of the complete design is approximately 3.10 cm, yielding a diameter of approximately 1.00 cm for the original seal matrix.



*Figs. 29-31: collated line drawing of PFUTS 0136\* and impressions of the same seal on PFUT 1103-101 (reverse) and PFUT 1142-201 (bottom edge).*



*Figs. 29, 32-33: collated line drawing of PFUTS 0136\* and impressions of the same seal on PFUT 0145-201 (upper edge) and PFUT 0162-203 (reverse).*



The figural imagery consists of an interesting variation of the heroic encounter. In the center of the scene two rampant lions cross bodies. Disposed to either side of this group there is a hero. The hero at right faces left in a striding pose. He extends his straight right arm outward horizontally to grasp one of the lions by the throat. His left arm is straight and held down behind his body to hold a curved sword. The hero wears an Assyrian garment that leaves the forward leg exposed below the knee. The head of the figure is poorly preserved, but it appears as if he may wear some type of flat-topped headdress. He appears also to have a short, rounded beard; a large rounded coiffure rests at the back of his neck. The hero at left is less well preserved. He faces to right in a striding pose. He extends his straight left arm outward horizontally to grasp the second lion by the throat. His right arm is straight and held down behind his body to hold a curved sword. He appears to wear the same type of garment as the hero at right. He has a short, thick, squared beard; a rounded coiffure rests at the back of his neck. The rampant lions are set diagonally in the field, their bodies crossing at shoulder level, each one facing the hero who grasps its throat. Each lion holds one foreleg straight and extends it upward to wrap its paw around the arm of the hero; it holds the other foreleg straight and extends it downward diagonally in front of its body. Their tails curve downward; the tail of the lion facing to left is bent at its termination. Each lion opens its mouth. Hatched lines are indicated on the neck of the lion facing to right.

In the terminal field the inscription is contained in a cartouche topped by two ostrich feathers and small sun disk. It reads:



### “Ahmose”

The presence of the formal cartouche of Ahmose (in Greek, “Amasis”) on a seal from Persepolis is quite unexpected (see the comments, below pp. 37-41 and 47-49). The inscription unambiguously names a king of Egypt, most certainly Ahmose II of Dynasty XXVI (c. 570–526 BC).

The figural scene is somewhat unusual and may represent a fusion of two separate, and very popular, image types in glyptic of the first millennium BC: the heroic encounter and crossed animals.<sup>27</sup> The scene may also be an archaistic revival of heroic encounters seen in glyptic of earlier periods, i.e., ED III through Old Babylonian, where heroic encounters often exhibited a tendency to exploit the display potentials of overlapping figures.<sup>28</sup> Whichever the case may be, the pairing of themes of the heroic encounter and crossed animals is fairly rare not only at Persepolis, but in glyptic of the first half of the first millennium BC in general; the use of two heroes in the scene is also rare.<sup>29</sup> Five examples of crossed animals in heroic encounters are currently known in Persepolitan glyptic: PFS 0737 (Cat.No. 281); PFS 0912 (Cat.No. 138); PFS 0931\* (Cat.No. 270); PFS 0952 (Cat.No. 227); PTS 008\* (Schmidt 1957: 22, pl. 5). Only two of these seals show double heroes. On PFS 0931\* the two heroes stand on pedestal creatures and lift their forward legs to place them on

**27** On the heroic encounter in Achaemenid glyptic see Garrison & Root 2001; for crossed animals see Garrison 2006.

**28** See the discussion in Garrison & Root 2001: 382. Garrison 1988: 24–160, provides a survey of the theme of heroic encounter in pre-Achaemenid glyptic arts of western Asia. Garrison & Root 2001, document some 312 scenes of heroic encounter from the PFS corpus.

**29** See the discussion in Garrison & Root 2001: 382.



the hindlegs of the crossed animals. On PTS 008\* the heroes drive daggers into the lions that they hold. It is noteworthy that the heroic figures in PTS 008\* wear the Persian court robe and quivers, and the seal carries an Old Persian inscription naming Xerxes.

Stylistically, the carving of figures on PFUTS 0136\* seems closely related to the Fortification Style and Mixed Styles I at Persepolis.<sup>30</sup> The lions bodies are fairly deeply carved with some indications of musculature on their lower bodies. The heroes are less deeply carved and show little to no indications of musculature on the arms or legs. The distinctive hour-glass shape of the bodies of the heroes is amply documented in both carving styles at Persepolis.

### I.3 Summary Observations

Giovino (2006) has recently discussed four Achaemenid-period cylinder seals that carry Egyptian hieroglyphic inscriptions. Because those four seals had no known provenance, little could be said about the contexts in which those seals functioned other than recourse to possible associations with individuals named in literary texts (e.g., Herodotus) and to possible scenarios within Egypt to explain the combination of Achaemenid imagery with Egyptian language inscriptions. The occurrence of no less than six seals bearing Egyptian hieroglyphic inscriptions in the Fortification archive now allows us some insights into some contexts for the use of such distinctive artifacts.

**30** For carving styles at Persepolis, see above, [fn. 22](#).



The most important observation to arise from this material is the fact that seals carrying Egyptian hieroglyphic inscriptions have their context in the region of Persepolis, not Egypt. The appearance of Egyptian hieroglyphic inscriptions on seals within the Fortification archive should come as no surprise. Multilingualism appears to have been a conspicuous feature of the administrative landscape at Persepolis, at least in the reigns of Darius and Xerxes, the periods for which our documentation is fullest.<sup>31</sup> Two languages dominate the preserved written administrative documentation: Elamite and Aramaic. Singleton administrative texts are attested in Greek, Phrygian, and Old Persian.<sup>32</sup> Royal inscriptions in Fārs at the time of Darius were almost always trilingual (Old Persian, Elamite, Babylonian).<sup>33</sup> Of course, the primary spoken language for most of the administrators at Persepolis would have been a Persian dialect of Iranian (cf. Schmitt 1993). Inscriptions on seals from the Fortification archive document no fewer than six languages: Elamite, Aramaic, Babylonian, Old Persian (only in trilingual inscriptions), Greek (in script, at least), and now Egyptian. Lastly, it has long been known that the Elamite Fortification texts document the presence of workers (*kurtas*) and administrators

**31** See, e.g., the discussions in Lewis 1994; Garrison & Root 2001: 7–9; Briant 2002: 507–510, 868, 956, with bibliography on the subject of multilingualism in the empire (updated in Briant 1997: 93–94; Briant 2001: 171–72); Stolper & Tavernier 2007: 18–25; Tavernier 2008.

**32** The Neo-Babylonian text found among the tablets in the fortification was clearly extraneous to the archive (Stolper & Tavernier 2007: 3). On the recently discovered Old Persian text, see now Stolper & Tavernier 2007 who also conveniently discuss and illustrate all the singleton texts, including an ‘enigmatic’ text that may not be a script at all. On ethnic identities at Persepolis and the use of Phrygian see Henkelman & Stolper 2009.

**33** In Egypt, royal inscriptions could be quadri-lingual (with the addition of Egyptian).



from literally all over the empire.<sup>34</sup> Many *kurtaš* at least would most likely have spoken to each other in their own languages; one assumes that translators were needed on many occasions.<sup>35</sup>

Egyptian as a spoken language, unlike Elamite, Aramaic, Old Persian, or even Babylonian, would, however, most certainly have been an oddity in Fārs (outside the groups of Egyptian *kurtaš*). In any case, a simple formula equating seal inscription language with (native) spoken language of the seal user is ill-founded, as the two seals of Parnakka, PFS 0009\* (Cat.No. 288) and PFS 0016\* (Cat.No. 22), attest (Garrison & Root 2001: 7–8). Questions raised in Garrison & Root (2001: 8) concerning the relationships of the languages of seal inscriptions to seal images are especially germane to the present study: how, if at all, does the language of the seal inscription relate to the style and the iconography of the seal carving? How does it relate to the administrative function of the office or official using the seal? How, if at all, does it relate to status, rank, or other available biographical information of the office or official using the seal? How, if at all, does it relate to the ethnicity of the seal owner?

**34** *kurtaš* included, e.g., Bactrians, Sogdians, Babylonians, Assyrians, Elamites, Arabs, Syrians, Egyptians, Lycians, Carians, Ionians, Sardians, Cappadocians, Skudrians, Thracians, etc. See Henkelman & Stolper 2009. The *kurtaš* have been the subject of several detailed studies. Bibliography may be found in Briant 2002: 940–42; *idem* 1997: 85–86; *idem* 2001: 133–36; Henkelman [in press]. On Egyptian *kurtaš* in Fārs, see now Wasmuth 2009a: 349–55, 405–12 and Wasmuth 2009b: 134–36. It should be noted that the mundane administrative records do not carry the same ideological burden as the more well-known rosters of subject peoples identified as participating in royal building projects in Achaemenid royal inscriptions from Susa (dsf, with the variants dsaa and dsz; see also Wasmuth 2009a: 23–27 on dsf and variants, and Lincoln 2008: 226–27 on dpg §2, a related text).

**35** See Tavernier 2008, on processes of Iranian-Elamite-Aramaic translation, and translation issues more generally at Persepolis.



The stamps seals PFS 2022s\*, PFUTS 0143s\*, PFUTS 0155s, PFATS 0300s\*, and PFATS 0424s\* would seem to be the easiest to address. Carrying only Egyptian inscriptions on scarabs/scaraboids, or, in the case of PFUTS 0155s, Egyptian hieroglyphic signs deployed in a decorative manner, these objects represent an artifact type commonly used for many hundreds of years in administrative contexts in an area stretching from upper Egypt to modern day Syria. As such, these stamps seals could easily be explained as ‘foreign’ artifacts that have been converted into administrative tools at Persepolis.<sup>36</sup> The distinctiveness of the inscriptions themselves surely could have functioned in the same way as figural imagery did on other seals at Persepolis: i.e., as visual markers of administrative identity. PFS 2022s\*, the only seal that we can link with a particular administrator, was used by an individual receiving travel rations on the royal road. Nothing of his name, or activities, would suggest a specifically Egyptian origin/connection. His rations would indicate an administrator of fairly low rank seemingly sent on some errand by Parnakka. Unfortunately, the two Aramaic texts on which PFATS 0300s\* and PFATS 0424s\* occur offer little by way of insight into the seal users, although the context of PFATS 0300s\* appears to be the receipt of travel rations. Many of the Aramaic texts in fact seem concerned with travel rations on the royal road; thus, PFATS 0424s\* may also, like PFS 2022s\*, be associated with an individual passing through the system.<sup>37</sup> PFUTS 0155s occurs only on an uninscribed

**36** Cf. the inventory of Egyptian and Egyptianizing personal artifacts, primarily Bes and *udjat* amulets, from Susa and Persepolis assembled by Wasmuth (2009a: 356–75; 2009b: 139–40).

**37** The same may be true of PFUTS 0155s; see the comments [below](#) concerning the administrative contexts of the uninscribed tablets.



tablet; many of the uninscribed tablets seem, however, connected to travel rations (see below).

Although all of these stamp seals occur only once in the documents studied to date, one is reluctant to suggest that this represents the transitory nature of the seal users.<sup>38</sup> If these seal users hailed from the western regions of the empire, and were carrying seals from those areas, they are rare examples of such in this archive. As mentioned, seals exhibiting Egyptian, Syrian, Anatolian and/or east Greek influence are rare in glyptic from the Fortification archive studied to date.<sup>39</sup>

The cylinder seals PFUTS 0125\* and PFUTS 0136\* present more intriguing issues. Here the Egyptian hieroglyphic inscriptions are combined with visual imagery and carving styles that are mainstream Persepolitan.<sup>40</sup> The shape of these seals, cylinders, also is noteworthy. By the late 6<sup>th</sup> century BC the cylinder seal as a glyptic artifact had almost completely disappeared in the western realms of the empire. Lastly, the inscription on PFUTS 0136\* is contained within a cartouche and thus unambiguously names a king of Egypt, Ahmose II of Dynasty XXVI (c. 570–526 BC).

Because the two cylinder seals occur on uninscribed tablets from the archive, and because we know little of the function/purpose of such sealed but uninscribed tablets, we are unable to link these seals with named individuals or known offices. The lack of

**38** Many hundreds of seals occur only once in the Fortification archive; despite the thousands of excavated documents, it is clear that the surviving archive is incomplete.

**39** This situation is, of course, very different from that in the Treasury archive.

**40** These two seals would, then, seem to have some commonalities with the four seals published by Giovino 2006.



named personnel in these tablets ought not, however, to blind us to the fact that these uninscribed tablets are inextricably tied to the transactions and personnel documented in the Elamite and Aramaic texts.<sup>41</sup> In addition, the author (Garrison 2008) has suggested that the seals on the uninscribed tablets show clear linkages to activity associated with the royal road. If this is true, the two cylinders PFUTS 0125\* and PFUTS 0136\* would then be linked via administrative context to the stamp seals PFS 2022s\* and PFATS 0300s\*.

As with the stamps seals, the cylinder seals may be used by 'non-Persepolitan' officials moving on the royal road, perhaps coming from the western areas of the empire, perhaps even from Egypt itself. Their seals have been captured as they moved through the Persepolitan administrative system. As such, while the strong linkages to Persepolitan workshops suggest stylistic and iconographic influence from Persepolis, the combination of early Persian imagery and Egyptian seal inscriptions reflects the non-Persepolitan origins of the seals.<sup>42</sup> The fact that the seals are cylinders would make the seals rare, but not unparalleled in western context.

41

As discussed in Garrison 2008.

42

The Achaemenid-period seal impressions found by Petrie at Memphis do not, however, provide any support for an Egyptian origin for PFUTS 0125\* and PFUTS 0136\* (Petrie *et al.* 1910: 42–3, pls. 35–7). Little is known of the specific contexts of these impressions (all on uninscribed sealed bullae, with the exception of one tablet) other than that they came from the palace at Memphis. While there are a goodly number of scarabs/scaraboids that carry Egyptian hieroglyphic inscriptions, none of the seal designs shows a figural scene combined with an Egyptian hieroglyphic inscription (surprising, given the natural context for such at Memphis). In the figural imagery furthermore there is little 'Egyptianizing' that can be identified (perhaps Petrie *et al.* 1910, pls. 36 no. 33, 37 no. 46). Lastly, as noted above, all available evidence indicates that cylinder seals were rare in Egypt and Syro-Palestine in the 6<sup>th</sup> cent. BC, stamp seals being the preferred glyptic shape.



On the other hand, one or both of the cylinders PFUTS 0125\* and PFUTS 0136\* may be local products used by local officials/offices. Certainly, the seal shape, cylinder, and seal carving styles on both seals would suggest local production. The fact that PFUTS 0136\* occurs on no fewer than nine tablets (identified to date) suggests, without much qualification, that we have to do here with a local official/office, not someone who is simply traveling through the system. PFUTS 0136\* appears to follow a very common sealing protocol within the archive wherein two seals are applied to a tablet, the one generally on the left edge, the other on the reverse and/or upper, bottom and right edges.<sup>43</sup> PFUTS 0136\* always occurs on the reverse and/or upper, bottom and right edges, the positions in two-sealed tablets generally reserved for the receiver of the commodities or the individual overseeing the transaction.<sup>44</sup> In three cases, PFUT 1142-201, PFUT 1143-201 and PFUT 1143-202, PFUTS 0140s occurs on the left edges of the tablets, thus showing a repeated conjunction of a specific supplier (PFUTS 0140s) and a specific receiver/authorizer (PFUTS 0136\*).

If local products, the inclusion of Egyptian hieroglyphic inscriptions on the seals may perhaps represent some attempt by the seal owners to distinguish their seal designs. The seals then

**43** The only possible exceptions may be PFUT 0145-201 and PFUT 1118-101, where the only preserved seal is PFUTS 0136\*, but one or more of the surfaces is destroyed. In any case, it is not unusual for a seal to occur on both one-sealed and two-sealed tablets in the archive. If one or both of these tablets in fact carried only PFS 0136\*, it would suggest a more complex (and higher level) administrative function for the seal. One should note also the single co-occurrence of PFUTS 0136\* and PFUTS 0239s on the left edge of PFUT 0162-203.

**44** The exception is PFUT 0162-203 where PFS 0136\* occurs also on the left edge of the tablet. Two-sealed transactions are discussed by Garrison 2008: 161–65.



may belong with a handful of other unusual and/or unique seal designs within Persepolitan glyptic belonging to individuals of high status/rank within the administrative system. Certainly, PFUTS 0125\* employs a figural composition that is unique in the seals studied to date; the inclusion of what would be an exotic language/script within a Persepolitan context would act as yet another visual signal of the rank and/or status of the seal user.<sup>45</sup> In the case of PFUTS 0136\*, while the imagery is slightly more conventional by Persepolitan standards, the inclusion of the Egyptian royal-name inscription certainly marks the seal as extraordinary.

How one explains the Egyptian royal-name inscription on PFUTS 0136\* within a Persepolitan context is more perplexing, given what we know of the use of other royal-name seals (specifically those that carry Darius' or Xerxes' names) at Persepolis.<sup>46</sup> In the end, it may simply have been the presence of the inscription within a cartouche that added value to the design rather than the name within it (and certainly few if anyone at Persepolis could have read the inscription). Nevertheless, as the long-lived, penultimate king of an independent Egypt (570–526 BC), and, moreover, coming from a period of intense Persian involvement in Egypt, perhaps the inscriptions of Ahmose were known to Persepolitan administrators of some pretension.<sup>47</sup> Herodotus (III.1) provides a tantalizing and,

**45** See Garrison (2007; *idem* [forthc.]) for the potentially similar example of PFS 0083\*, the first seal of Ziššawiš, the second in command of the institution documented in the Fortification archive. PFS 0083\* combines traditional Assyrian groups of the cow sucking a calf and atlantid supporting a winged symbol into a new, and unique, design.

**46** Discussed by Garrison 1991: 13–20; *idem* 1996; *idem* [in press 2].

**47** For Cambyse's campaign in Egypt, see Briant 2002: 50–52, 885. Darius himself, of course, served in Egypt. There must have been other individuals at Persepolis who also were



alas, confusing account about the relations between Cyrus/Cambyses and Ahmose, one involving a dispute over a daughter of Ahmose. The importance of the story is not the specific details, but its reminder that there most certainly would have been diplomatic relationships between Cyrus/Cambyses and Ahmose.<sup>48</sup> The cartouche on PFUTS 0136\* may be a tantalizing bit of evidence that harkens back to those relationships.<sup>49</sup>

veterans of that campaign. One text from the Acropole series of Neo-Elamite tablets from Susa (MDP 9, 158), dating from sometime in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC, mentions a “king of the Egyptians” (Henkelman 2008: 38).

48

Herodotus’ accounts of the events surrounding Cambyses and his ‘madness’ in Egypt (e.g., the death of the Apis bull, burning the body of Ahmose, etc.) are now generally taken as unreliable (Briant 2002: 55–57, 886–87). See also Ritner’s comments below, pp. 47–9. There are five fragments of stone objects from the Treasury at Persepolis that carry inscriptions of Ahmose II (Schmidt 1957: 83, pls. 47 nos. 3–5, 7d and e, 48 nos. 4–6, 8d; see Wasmuth 2009a: 53–54). These have generally been understood as objects plundered from Egypt, but there is no reason why some or all of them could not represent objects of diplomatic exchange, royal gifting, etc.

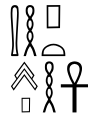
49

The specific date of the cutting of PFUTS 0136\* cannot be determined. There is nothing in the engraving style or iconography of the figural imagery that would necessitate a date earlier than the last quarter of the 6<sup>th</sup> century. Ahmose died in 526 BC, only some six years before Darius’ seizure of kingship. The two were, thus, contemporaries. PFUTS 0136\* could either have been executed towards the end of Ahmose’s reign or after his death. If the latter, the inscription would then potentially be an attempt to add value/ distinction to the seal design (and hence to the seal user) through a very distinctive type of ‘archaism.’ The presence, potentially relatively numerous, of inscribed vessels bearing cartouches with the name(s) of Ahmose at Persepolis is exceptionally intriguing in this regard. Of course, we have no evidence as to when these stone vessels came to Persepolis, nor, if they were there at the time of Darius, how they were used/exhibited. Nonetheless, one is inclined with the discovery of PFUTS 0136\* to suggest that this Egyptian king, and his inscriptions, had some currency at Persepolis in the reign of Darius.



## 2 Egyptian Elements in Persepolitan and other Achaemenid glyptic (R.K. Ritner)

**PFUTS 0125\*** (cylinder seal impression; **figs. 17–18**) — Preserved within a delineated frame adjacent to the primary visual field of bull men flanking a boat (described in detail by Garrison, **above**), are the prominent impressions of a vertical Egyptian hieroglyphic text reading from right to left, and thus oriented toward the face of the left-hand bull man. The inscription can be restored in ‘Normalschrift’ as:



The text may be read without difficulty<sup>50</sup> as ḥm-Pth ḥ-Hp, “Servant of Ptah, Ankhhap.” Although the first element, “Servant of Ptah,” is also attested as a personal name,<sup>51</sup> the absence of any indication of filiation in the text (sḏ, “son of,” ḥr.n, “begotten by”) ensures that it is rather the formal title<sup>52</sup> of Ankhhap, who was thus a member of the primary Egyptian clergy in the city of

**50** As usual, the divine name Ptah is written first in honorific transposition. The ḥm-sign (Gardiner *Sign List* U36) is slightly raised above its expected position, but the reading is not in doubt.

**51** See Ranke 1935: 239 no. 20.

**52** Cf. Wb. III, 88/7 (ḥm + DN), noted in the Belegstellen as a later replacement for the common ḥm-nṯr DN. For the equivalence, see Spiegelberg 1908: 144-47 (label for the deceased and text ll.2 and 4).



Memphis, home to the national cults of Ptah and his bull incarnation, Apis, and the seat of Persian administration in Egypt. The name Ankhhap (“May the Apis live”) is quite common in this period,<sup>53</sup> and its presence in a Persian context is somewhat ironic given the legend preserved in Herodotus (III.27-30) that Cambyses personally slew the contemporary bull deity after his conquest and occupation of Memphis, leading to his own madness.<sup>54</sup> The existence in the Persepolis archive of this clerical sealing with mixed Egyptian and Achaemenid elements can probably be attributed to the increasingly dominant national position of Persian-era Memphis and its temple of Ptah as the “first of the land,” serving even as the administrative guardian of the silver standard used to verify payments throughout the country, a status it retained through the Ptolemaic period.<sup>55</sup>

**PFATS 0300s\*** (scarab seal impression; **figs. 13–14**) — Occupying the entire field of the lost scarab’s base, the impression retains the critical elements of a personal name in hieroglyphs written from left to right and probably to be restored in ‘Normalschrift’ as:

**53**

Ranke 1935: 65 no. 25.


**54**

For the seemingly conflicting evidence of an Apis burial recorded in Cambyses’ honor, see Posener 1936: 30-36, 171.

**55**

For the new status of the temple of Ptah in the Persian era and its role in economic documents, see Lüddeckens 1960: 316-17. Such enhancement is in contrast to the reported defilement of the temple by Cambyses, found in Hdt. III.37.



The text would then be read 'nh-M3'.t-'lmn, "May the truth/justice of Amon live." The feather atop the head of the goddess Maat is not clearly preserved, nor is there a clear trace of an ankh-sign often held by the seated figure (). Although this personal name is not attested in Ranke's standard reference, similar forms are found, including both 'nh-M3'.t, "May truth/justice live" and the closer parallel 'nh-M3'.t-R', "May the truth/justice of Re live."<sup>56</sup> The attestation of the latter name is of Ptolemaic date and so roughly contemporary with the Persian-era context of the sealing impression. Given the regular, and long-standing, pairing of Amon-Re, the two forms 'nh-M3'.t-R' and 'nh-M3'.t-'lmn are essentially variants of the same pious wish contained in the name.

Perhaps coincidentally, the individual 'nh-M3'.t-R' is also, like the earlier owner of PFUTS 0125\*, a "servant of Ptah" associated with the gods of Memphis.<sup>57</sup> With only two attestations, it is unclear whether this indicates a regional basis for the names 'nh-M3'.t-R' and 'nh-M3'.t-'lmn.

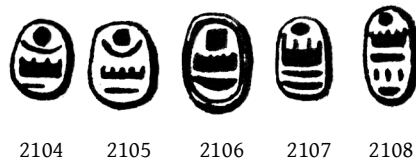
**PFS 2022s\*** (scarab seal impression; **figs. 7–8**) — Enclosed within an oval frame, vertically arranged hieroglyphs fill the space of the seal impression with only minor loss to the right edge of the upper sun-sign. The text can be restored in 'Normalschrift' as:

<sup>56</sup> Ranke 1935: 64 nos. 11–12.

<sup>57</sup> Spiegelberg 1908: 144–47 (servant of Ptah and wab-priest of the gods of Memphis).



With standard honorific transposition of the element R', the text is to be read mn nb R', "Enduring is the Lord Re." Although formed like the royal throne names Mn-ḥpr-R', Mn-ḥpr.w-R' and Mn-M3'.t-R', and even non-royal names such as Mn-k3-R', etc.,<sup>58</sup> this seems not to be a known personal name, but instead may be interpreted as a theological phrase stressing the protective power of the amuletic scarab. Such mottoes and good wishes are typical for scarabs of all periods.<sup>59</sup> Direct parallels (and variants with signs reordered) for the Persepolis seal impression are found in the British Museum and copied in the early publication of historical scarabs by Petrie,<sup>60</sup> who assigned them without comment to Dynasty xxv:



**PFATS 0424s\*** (scarab seal impression; [figs. 15–16](#)) — Poorly preserved and with several indistinct signs, the seal impression includes a title and name within an oval frame. With uncertainties noted below for the personal name, the text represents in 'Normalschrift':

**58**

Ranke 1935: 150.

**59**

Cf. the exx. in Newberry 1905, pls. 39–40.

**60**

Petrie 1889, pl. 66, second quadrant from the bottom: 2104 (BM 4136), 2105 (BM 17241), 2106, 2107, 2108.



If correctly understood, the text would read ḥr(y)-P ḥrp ḥw.wt P(ḥ)-dī-Ḥr, “Chief of Pe and overseer of (royal) mansions, Padihor.” The sacerdotal title ḥr(y)-P, “Chief of Pe (= Buto),” is typically attested in the Old Kingdom, but the title reappears also on an Egyptian stela of the first Persian occupation, again in company with the title ḥrp ḥw.wt.<sup>61</sup> The rendering of the three mansion signs as a single unit on the seal follows standard hieroglyphic convention,<sup>62</sup> and the title ḥrp ḥw.wt as a contemporary abbreviation for ḥrp ḥw.wt N.t, “overseer of mansions of the Red Crown,” is also well known.<sup>63</sup> The “domains/mansions” in this title are perhaps to be interpreted as administrative territories held exclusively by the crown,<sup>64</sup> and the seal of an individual supervising such lands in Egypt for the Persian Great King would be explicable in the Persepolis archives. Aside from the initial ‘p’ of the definite article, the personal name of this individual is less certain, as both the arm and the type of bird are rather indistinct. The name P(ḥ)-dī-Ḥr, “The one whom Horus has given,” does, however, fit the traces and is a very common, contemporary name.

**61** See Wb. III, 139/9 and Hannig 2003: 865. For the Persian-era attestation, see the Serapeum stela of Amasis in Vercoutter 1962: 105-8.

**62** See Wb. III, 1.

**63** See Wb. III, 3/1-3 and 328/16. The abbreviation is described as “Spät” and “Saït.”

**64** Cf. the older usage of ḥqḥ ḥw.wt, “district rulers” (Wb III, 1/6-8).



**PFUTS 0136\*** (cylinder seal impression; **figs. 29–33**)



One of the most surprising Egyptian elements from the Persepolis Fortification Tablets is the presence of the formal cartouche of Amasis on an otherwise purely Achaemenid-style cylinder seal impression. The vertical cartouche is topped by two ostrich feathers and small sun disk, common accompaniments attested from the Middle Kingdom onward<sup>65</sup> and found also on cartouches of Amasis from the Treasury at Persepolis, although these examples include only the king's Prenomen Hnm-ib-R', not his Nomen 'lḥ-ms, as on this sealing.<sup>66</sup> More importantly, all these examples derive from “pre-Achaemenid Egyptian vessels” taken in tribute and not from objects or documents contemporary with the Fortification Tablets.

Continued honor to the memory of Amasis at the Persian court seems counterintuitive; the pretext for the invasion of Egypt by Cambyses was, according to Herodotus (III.1-2), the ruse by Amasis to send the daughter of his deposed predecessor, Apries, in place of his own as a wife for the Persian king, and, according to the same

**65** See Kaplony 1980.

**66** Schmidt 1957, pls. 47 nos. 3, 5, and 48 no. 5 (Hnm-ib-R', with plumes), and pls. 47 nos. 4a, 7d-e and 48 no. 8d ('lḥ-ms, without plumes). The same format of vertical cartouche and plumes with sun disk is employed for Darius (with his inserted name in cuneiform); see Méenant 1887: 145, 147 and Michaélidis 1943: 94, figs. 28-9.



author (III.16), the misdeeds of Cambyses in Memphis included the spiteful desecration and burning of the embalmed corpse of Amasis as a result of the Persian's continued grudge. The personal name Amasis — without a cartouche and thus presumably non-royal — does appear on a cylinder seal now in the British Museum (ANE 89585) and recently republished by Giovino.<sup>67</sup> In both the British Museum seal and the Fortification sealing published here, the Egyptian name accompanies a scene derived from the Achaemenid repertoire, but the carving style of the hieroglyphs seems far less Egyptian on the unprovenanced British Museum piece, which may have been produced outside of Egypt or by a non-native artist for an Egyptian official of the Persian empire. In contrast, the Fortification sealing probably derives from an heirloom seal created (for ambassadorial purposes?) during the reign of Amasis and retained in use for generations. Though still meaningful, and perhaps subversive, in Egypt, the implications of the cartouche of Amasis will likely have escaped the attention of Persian administrators.

A closer parallel for Fortification sealing PFUTS 0136\* is the now lost blue chalcedony cylinder naming Pharaoh W3ḥ-ḥb-R', "Apries," formerly owned by the Comte de Caylus and republished with the British Museum seal by Giovino.<sup>68</sup> As on the Fortification sealing,

**67** Giovino 2006: 105-07. Giovino rightly discounts a link with Pharaoh Amasis for this seal, but the suggestion that the king's name appears without a cartouche on the base of scarabs (p. 106, Gauthier reference to Petrie 1889, pl. 63 no. 1996) disregards the similar enclosing function of the ring carved around the scarab base. Private use of the name Amasis in a cartouche is noted in Ranke 1935: 13 no. 19, probably as an abbreviation for more common basiliphoric names "Amasis is the Son of Neith," "Amasis endures," etc. (see *ibid.* 14). An example appears in Vercoutter 1962: 105-8.

**68** *Ibid.* 110-12. It is notable that in the Saite period basiliphoric names commonly use the



the royal Nomen appears in a vertical cartouche topped by ostrich plumes and sun disk, but, unrecognized by Giovino, on the lost seal the cartouche is not simply the complete name “Apries” but rather the primary element of a basiliphoric name to be read fully as W3ḥ-ib-R'-s3-Pth, “Apries is one protected by Ptah.”<sup>69</sup> Giovino acknowledges the presence of the additional hieroglyphs s3 Pth,<sup>70</sup> but does not treat them as elements of the name. While citing a supposed instance of non-royal use of W3ḥ-ib-R' on scarabs,<sup>71</sup> she overlooks the exact parallel to the text of the lost cylinder: W3ḥ-ib-R'-s3-Pth.<sup>72</sup>

Mention of the deposed Apries in an Achaemenid context might seem odd as an attestation of Amasis, but after the defeat of Apries by Amasis, the former king is known to have fled to Babylon before his attempted invasion of Egypt and death.<sup>73</sup> Perhaps the mixed iconography of the lost seal of the Comte de Caylus may be associated with this incident, unless it also should be imagined as an ambassadorial seal created before the king's defeat.

royal Nomen, rather than the Prenomen as in earlier practice. Thus the suggestion by Giovino (*ibid.* 113, n. 22) that W3ḥ-ib-R' might refer to the Prenomen of Psammetichus I is unlikely; cf. Ranke 1935: 136-7, Psmṯk-m-3ḥ.t, Psmṯk-mri-Pth, Psmṯk-nfri, Psmṯk-snb, etc.

**69** The lost seal reads right to left (facing the worshipper), with honorific transposition for Ptah. For the name, cf. Ranke 1935: 73 nos. 6-7: W3ḥ-ib-R'-mri-Pth, W3ḥ-ib-R'-mrr-Pth, “Apries is one beloved of Ptah.”

**70** *Ibid.* 110-11, 113, n. 21.

**71** *Ibid.* 111, with reference to Petrie 1889, pl. 64 (fourth register, second seal: “Haa-ib-ra”) Citing this seal, Giovino states that “there are examples of this name written in a cartouche that refer to non-royal people” (p. 11), but this seal is actually a further basiliphoric name employing the royal cartouche as an element, not a complete name: 'nh-W3ḥ-ib-R', “May Apries live”; see Ranke 1935: 63 no. 5, 73 (top left). In both cases, the inserted royal name is placed within a cartouche.





**72** Petrie 1889, pl. 64 (second register, fourth seal).

**73** Edel 1978: 13-20.



**PFUTS 0143s\*** (scarab seal impression; **figs. 9–10**)



Only indistinct traces remain of this text or scene which is enclosed within an oval ring and has a clear sun-sign at the top of the interior field and a *nb*-basket (Gardiner *Sign List* v30) at the bottom. Such baskets may be phonetic elements, as on PFS 2022s\* (above), to be read “lord” or “all,” or they may be decorative framing devices.<sup>74</sup> Horizontal elements between the two clear signs may represent the water hieroglyph . The upper sun disk is perhaps depicted over a boat  atop the water sign, but the impression is unclear. If correct, the combination of sun disk, boat and water would be a cryptic writing of ‘lm + n + R’ = ‘lmn-R’, “Amon-Re.” On either side of the central, poorly preserved field are what seem to be the remains of two pendant uraeai:  .

**PFUTS 0155s** (scarab seal impression; **figs. 11–12**) — Encircled by a ring and framed between a winged sun disk and a decorative *nb*-basket is an Egyptianizing scene of two facing individuals carved in profile wearing short kilts and with their rear arm held along the line of the back. The figure on the right holds a vertical staff while the lefthand figure’s forward arm is raised, holding a diagonal object, perhaps a spear or knife. At the baseline between

**74** For the extremely common use of the *nb*-basket as a symbolic sign, see Hornung & Staehelin 1976: 170. For scenes framed between sun disks and *nb*-baskets, see Ben-Tor 1993: 65 no. 29, 75 no. 17, and 76 no. 30.



these individuals is a water lily with three prominent petals: ♣. The use of sun disks and *nb*-baskets as framing devices on Egyptianizing seals, particularly from Palestine, is common.<sup>75</sup>

## Appendix: An Indiana Private Collection Cylinder Seal

To be added to the list of unprovenanced Achaemenid seals and sealings discussed by Giovino is a seal currently on loan to the Oriental Institute (figs. 34–35).



*Figs. 34-35: line drawing of seal from an Indiana private collection, the seal itself and a modern impression*

75

See Keel & Schroer 1985: 99, Keel, Keel-Leu & Schroer 1989: 306, and Keel 1994, pl. 22.



Inserted beside the primary scene of a crowned hero in Persian costume grasping by the horns two standing, winged bulls is a carved hieroglyphic inscription:



To be read from left to right, the text records the late personal name Ḥr-mꜣḥrw, “Horus is justified.” The name survives in Greek as Ἄρμαχοπος and is otherwise attested in P.Ryl. IX, col. 16.2-6, detailing events from the time of Amasis, and thus contemporary with the Persian era.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> See Ranke 1935: 247 no. 22; Griffith 1909: 457.



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