

A Lapis-Lazuli Cylinder Seal Found at Oylum Höyük

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The below presented lapis lazuli cylinder seal with the inventory number OY 10 Env. 106 is unearthed at Oylum Höyük during the excavations (09.08.2010) carried out by Yrd. Doç. Dr. Attila Engin in the layer of ÖBY 97 No. 4, in the ditch of L22 and the find spot of north 5.62 m – west 0.2 m It measures, height: 1.65 cm; width: 1.65 cm and hole-diameter: 0.6 cm. According to the description and the estimation of Dr. Engin, the seal is uncovered under a hole belonging to Early Iron Age and in the debris, from the west of a mud-brick wall which can be dated to the Middle Bronze Age II. is in a cylindrical structure. Just under the both edges there are two rows of horizontally arranged grooves which bear an inscription written in cuneiform. I thank Prof.Dr. Engin Özgen for assigning me the publication of this important find.

OY 10 Inv. 106, Transliteration:

- 1) šá-ga-ru
- 2) NA₄.KIŠIB
- 3) ^mÉ-na (?)
- 4) LÚ.SANGA
- 5) EN.LÍL
- 6) LUGAL
- 7) ÌR
- 8) ^dGAŠAN
- 9) na-ra-am
- 10) ^dGAŠAN

Translation:

1-3) Solid/metal(?) seal

3-6) (of) Bitna(?) the priest of Enlil, king (the high official)

7-8) Slave of the Goddess Bēltu

9-10) Beloved of the Goddess Bēltu

Notes:

It is not possible to discover a seal with a similar wording. With the inscriptions with three, four lines which include a PN, his father's name and a slave/slave woman or worshipper of a deity etc. we see mostly the following gods' names to have been involved in the context of the inscriptions: ^dUTU (*Šamaš*), Ayā, ^dIM/IŠKUR (*Adad*), MAR.TU (*Amurru*), ^dNIN-É.GAL (*Bēlet-ekallim*), INANNA (*Ištar*), ^dDamgalnunna, ^dNinkarrak, ^dŠala, Nanna, Zarpanitum, Nergal, ^dMUŠ (*Nirah*), ^dAMAR.UTU (*Marduk*), Ningal, ^dŠin, ^dMāmītum, ^dKapta (Blocher 1987: 117 and 179). For a list of these gods see Blocher 1987: 186. Sometimes the seals bear four-line inscription if the worshipped gods are two in number. The fourth line is opened for the second deity. I give a few examples below:

- 1) Ì-lí-i-qí-ša-am
- 2) DUMU Na-ra-am-^dIŠKUR
- 3) ÌR ^dIŠKUR

1-3) Ìli-iqīšam, son of Naram-Addu, slave of (the deity) Addu/Adad (Colbow 1995: 37).

- 1) Ka-as-lim-mu
- 2) DUMU Ši-nu-bu-x
- 3) ÌR ša ^dEN.LÍL (Blocher 1987: No. 425, p. 184). Examples about the writing ÌR ^dEN.LÍL with the *ša* possessive particule one finds in Gudrun 1995: 105-123. Our text omits the DINGIR determinative (^d) before the name Enlil.

Line 1: šá-ga-ru. The first sign of the word possesses difficulties as to whether it has to be read with the other values of the sign e.g. NÍG.GA^{ru}=*makkūru/namkuru* (the -ru sign at the end being the phonetic complement) means "property, possession"; see *A Concise Dictionary of Akkadian*=CDA (hereafter). This seems to be plausible, but *šagarû/šakarû* is attested in the Middle Babylonian as "a metal object" attested from Mari, Alalah and Boghazköi (CDA 1999: 348) makes us think in favour of the translation given above. Even so a translation for lines 1-3 can thus be suggested as "The seal, property of PN". But this suggestion eliminates the material lapis from which the seal is carved.

Line 4: LÚ.SANGA (*šangû*) “priest” almost exclusively exists for each deity (Menzel 1981, I: 130-208). Menzel mentions ca. 80 PNs under the term *šangû* “priest” occupations. For the occupations LÚ.SANGA GAL “the chief priest” and LÚ.SANGA 2-ú “the secondary priesthood” (Menzel 1981, II: T 18-19). Menzel also mentions that there has been close relations between the king and the priest. As being part of his duty, the priest could replace the king when the king was unable to attend the ceremonies. He could represent the king also during his absence. For the king, the *šangûtu* “the priesthood” duty came before the *šarrûtu* “kingship” of Assyria (Menzel 1981: I, 157; II: 2138). Therefore, it is tempting to translate the lines 4-7 “the priest-king of Enlil”. Of course, we have to be loyal to the inscription. The owner of this seal was never a king but rather a high official. Some priests were at the service of some deities: IGI^mSUM-na-a-a (Nadinnaya) LÚ.SANGA ša^dMAŠ “Before Nadinnaya the priest of Ninurta”; IGI^{md}PA-MU-PAP (Nabû-šumu-ušur) LÚ.SANGA^dPA (Nabû) “Before Nabû-šumu-ušur, the priest of Nabû” (Menzel 1981, II: No. 69, 29.30).

Lines 8-10: ^dGAŠAN (*Bēltu*) is well documented in the Assyrian era especially in the religious texts (Menzel 1981, II: 111.1520, No. 20) It comes in connection with a ration distribution in the sequence of ^dUTU, ^dGAŠAN GARZA, ^dSal-tu. Sometimes the term is mentioned together with the occupation of priesthood: PN LÚ.SANGA ša^dGAŠAN KUR-ha(*nīpha*) “PN the priest of the goddess of blazing”. As it is in this example ^dGAŠAN is never mentioned alone; always with a function or epithet: ^d*Bēlet šadê* “the Goddess of the mountains” (Menzel 1981, II: 140); *Bēlet Akkadī*, 128 “The goddess of Akkad”; *Bēlet ekalli*, 72 “the goddess of the palace; *Bēlet šamê*, 128 “the Goddess of the heaven. In our text it occurs without an epithet.

Line 9: na-ra-am: Comes from the word *narāmu* “beloved” CDA 1999: 241 and connected with *rāmu/ra’āmu* “(be)loved, love” CDA 1999: 297. We have mentioned above that seals with such long inscriptions were very seldom in Babylonian glyptics. On the contrary, one finds them in the early Old Assyrian bullae abundantly. I give below a few examples:

- 1) ^dNa-ra-am-^dEN.ZU
- 2) PA.TE.SI
- 3) ^dA-šùr
- 4) DUMU Puzur^d4-^dA-šùr
- 5) PA.TE.SI
- 6) ^dA-šùr

1-6) Naram-Suen, vice-regent of the god Aššur, son of Puzur-Aššur, vice-regent of the god Aššur (Özgüç – Tunca 2001: 16, n. 84, Lev./Pl. C No 3 =Kt 89/k 127 and 129; Özkan 2010: 149). In another inscription of the Old Assyrian bullae we find the following inscription in which the phrase na-ra-am is used in the same meaning as in our text:

- 1) ^mDINGIR-šu-ma
- 2) PA.TE.SI
- 3) A-šür^{KI}
- 4) na-ra-am
- 5) ^dA-šür
- 6) ù ^dINANNA
- 7) [DUMU Ša]-lim-a-hu-um
- 8) PA.TE.SI
- 9) ^dA-šür

1-9) Ilu-šumma, vice-regent of Aššur, beloved of the god Aššur and the goddess Ištar, [son of Ša]lim-ahum, vice-regent of the god Aššur. (Grayson 1987: 15). This dedicatory text is inscribed on a stone object: (BM 115690, Ass 19977) found in the Old Assyrian Ištar temple at Aššur. Likewise, the seal of Sargon I, whose name is preceded by the divine determinative, is known from several impressions on clay tablets and envelopes from Kültepe : (1) LUGALGIN (2) ÉNSI (3) ^dA-šür (4) I-ku-num (5) ÉNSI (6) ^dA-šür “Divine Sargon, vice-regent of the god Aššur(, son of Ikūnum vice-regent of the god Aššur” (Grayson 1987: 45-46; Balkan 1955: 51-52 and figs. 1-5). Several seals of Šilulu, Erišum I, of the early Assyrian rulers are known to have been attested either stamped on tablets or on bricks and the information regarding them can be obtained from Grayson 1987, Özgüç – Tunca 2001 and Balkan 1955.

The seal under discussion can be dated to the Middle Babylonian period, as seen from the cuneiform signs and show some characteristic similarities to early Old Assyrian glyptic art.

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Oylum Höyük'te Bulunan Lacivert Taşı Silindir Mühür

2010 kazı mevsiminde Oylum Höyük'te Prof. Dr. Ergin Özgen yönetiminde sürdürülen kazılarda (09.08.2010) çok değerli bir buluntu olan lacivert taşından yapılmış bir silindir mühür bulunmuştur. OY 10. Env. 106 envanter numarası verilen mühür ile ilgili Attila Engin'in verdiği bilgilere göre eserin yük. 1.65 cm gen. 1.65 cm ve delik çapı 0.6 cm'dir. ÖBY 97 No. 4 tabakasında L22 açmasında ve buluntu yeri kuzey 5.62 m – batı 0.2 m olan mühür 609.87 konumunda bulunmuştur. Dr. Engin bana göndermiş bulunduğu bilgi notunda, mührün silindirik yapıda olduğunu; her iki kenarın altında yatay olarak düzenlenmiş ikişer sıra ince yiv bulunduğunu ve eserin Erken Demir Çağı'na ait bir çukurun altında, Orta Tunç Çağı II'ye tarihlenen bir kerpiç duvarın batısından, moloz toprağı içerisinde bulunduğunu bildirmiştir. Ayrıca, eseri Orta Tunç Çağı II'ye tarihlemektedir. Mühürün lacivert taşından yapılmış olmasından gelen önemi yanında, 10 satırlık çiviyazılı bir mühür yazısı ihtiva etmesi, mührü çok önemli bir buluntu ve bizi aydınlatan bir kaynak durumuna getirmiştir. Bu nedenle de, mühür kitabesinin çözümü ihtiyacı için eserin yayını bana tevdi edilmiştir. Bu nedenle, Prof. Dr. Engin Özgen'e teşekkürlerimi sunuyorum.

Mühürün yazıldığı çiviyazısı karakterleri ve içeriği itibariyle Orta Babil Devri'ne tarihlediğimiz kitabenin çevirisi şöyledir:

1-6) Bitna'nın (katı bir maddeden yapılmış madeni ?) mührü. (Tanrı) Enlil'in rahibi, kralın temsilcisi (üst düzey bir yetkili)

7-10) Tanrıça Bêltu'nun kölesi, tanrıça Bêltu'nun gözdesi.

Daha serbest bir çeviri ile: Tanrıça Bêltu'nun sevgili kölesi, kralın temsilcisi (üst düzey bir yetkili), (Tanrı) Enlil'in rahibi Bitna'nın (katı bir maddeden yapılmış) mührü olarak da ifade edilebilir.

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