

A SCARAB FROM KALEBURNU-KRAL TEPESİ/GALINOPORNI-VASILİ AND THE CULT OF THE GOD PTAH

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Abstract

The settlement of Kral Tepesi/Vasili is located within the village of Kaleburnu/Galinoporni on the Karpas Peninsula of Cyprus. Kral Tepesi, dating to the Late Bronze Age of Cyprus, has a stratified sequence, with public buildings on the hilltop and a lower settlement on its terraces. The settlement's Upper Terrace was bulldozed by the landowner to open up space for agricultural activities. Consequently, an archaeological salvage excavation was conducted in this particular area. During these salvage excavations, a baked clay (?) scarab was unearthed. The scarab's oval-shaped impression surface, facing the viewer, features an iconographic depiction of the god Ptah on the right side and a symbolic guardian falcon on the left. A sun disk is positioned just above the head of the guardian falcon. At the top of the stage is a shrine/chapel roof, symbolically depicting Ptah and the guardian falcon within. Both the engraving of the scarab's upper insect and the depictions of the god Ptah and the guardian falcon on its surface are known to have parallels from settlements within the borders of modern-day Palestine/Israel. The discovery of the scarab at Kral Tepesi/Vasili must have been linked to Eastern Mediterranean settlers on the island as a result of intercultural maritime trade relations based on exchange, or to a merchant or messenger temporarily residing in Cyprus. This view is consistent with the maritime nature of Kral Tepesi, which was driven by barter-based trade. Therefore, the origin of the scarab is believed to be in Palestine/Israel, not Egypt. This sheds light on intercultural relations with settlements under Egyptian control. The date of the scarab's discovery dates the site to the Late Bronze Age of Cyprus, 1295-1200 BC, and thus coincides with the 19th Dynasty in Egyptian civilization.

Keywords: Cyprus, Scarabe, Kral Tepesi/Vasili, Ptah, Guardian Falcon, 19th Dynasty Egypt.

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Introduction

The Kral Tepesi/Vasili settlement is located within the boundaries of Kaleburnu/Galinoporni village, in the İskele District of the Karpas Peninsula, on the island of Cyprus (fig. 1). The settlement is situated on a limestone promontory that rises steeply from the surrounding plain and has wide terraces on its eastern and southern slopes¹. The settlement, located in a fertile coastal plain, lies at the beginning of several passes that cut through the Kyrenia Mountain Range. The village of Kaleburnu/Galinoporni, located within its boundaries, lies 1.5 km away from the southern coast of the Karpas Peninsula and approximately 30 km west of Cape Andreas. Kral Tepesi, due to its high position, has the feature of being easily visible from the sea. Therefore, its position is vital for coastal trade, overseeing one of the busy maritime routes in antiquity that extended along this coastline. Especially the shallow bays and sandy beaches near Kaleburnu provided areas where sailors could land and use as shelter. In addition, the Karpas Peninsula is located very close to the culturally and economically significant centers of the Levant and southeastern Anatolia, and the fact that the distance between Ugarit and Kral Tepesi is 100 km is noteworthy for sure².

During the Cyprus Late Bronze Age IIC period, the Kral Tepesi settlement possessed a hierarchical structure in which a public building was located on the summit, with the lower settlement situated on the terraces. Although the destruction caused by severe erosion was substantial, there must have been a central building on the summit³. Until recently, agricultural activities had been carried out on the terraces, which were used as a settlement area during the Late Bronze Age⁴. The scarab⁵, which is the subject of this study, was found in the Upper Terrace area of Kral Tepesi, where destruction occurred before 2004 due to the landowner's bulldozing activities. During the archaeological salvage excavations conducted in this damaged area, the scarab was recovered from trench K97A, in a rock-cut structure (Ro.204) (fig. 2). Within the same area, alongside handmade pottery and storage vessels, the presence of olive pits was also identified⁶. The destruction of the layer in which the find was located caused the in-situ condition of the scarab to be disturbed. In this article, along with the dating of the scarab, it will be examined whether it was imported directly from Egypt or brought to Kral Tepesi after being produced in the Palestine/Israel region under Egyptian influence and control. Furthermore, the study aims to address more speculative questions concerning the iconographic and symbolic meanings of the figures on the impression face of the scarab and its possible connection with the settlement.

The Kral Tepesi Scarab

The oval-shaped scarab, which must have been used as a seal or amulet, was recovered from Kral Tepesi and is made of baked clay (?). Remnants of a

1 Bartelheim et al. 2008, 5, 16-17, fig. 1, 14a-b.

2 Bartelheim et al. 2008, 28, fig. 1, 14a-b.

3 Bartelheim et al. 2008 26, 28; Kizilduman 2017a, 127, 139, 143-144.

4 In the following sections of the article, the term Late Bronze Age will be abbreviated as LBA.

5 Scarab or Scarabaeus: Derived from the Latin scarabaeus ("beetle") and the Greek karabos ("beetle," "crayfish"). (Cooney 2008, 1).

6 Kizilduman 2017b, 51.

yellow glaze⁷ are present on its surface (fig. 3). It measures 19.3 mm in length, 15.2 mm in width, 9.6 mm in thickness, 2.5 mm in perforation diameter, and weighs 3.9 g. A longitudinal perforation runs through the body. All the details on the dorsal part of the beetle were rendered, though the absence of depictions of the legs and wings is noteworthy. The divisions of the body structure are separated by deep grooves. The head shield, or clypeus, is of a truncated conical form, and its right edge is damaged. At the junction of the clypeus, the wide, shovel-shaped head section is divided into at least six parts by deep and vertical grooves. The section where the head joins the pronotum/prothorax is horizontally defined in a slightly curved form. The anterior thoracic shield, which insects use for attachment, is emphasized with curved, thick lines. In the closed position of the beetle, both wing details are carefully rendered. The suture between the two wings is distinct. Below the anterior thoracic shield, between the two wings, lies a triangular element known as the scutellum, though it is not indicated here. In addition, the two humeral projections, which should appear on both sides of the wings, are shown as forming a “V”-shaped configuration. On the dorsal side of the beetle, the pronotum, that is, the anterior thoracic shield, exhibits breakage and missing parts where the perforation was made, both on the front and rear portions (fig. 3). Moreover, the intense abrasions observed in the areas with yellow glaze remnants are noteworthy.

The impression face of the scarab is oval in shape (fig. 3). In general appearance, it narrows downward from the upper part. The impression face is framed by a thin raised band. The decoration within the frame is arranged in plain vertical alignment. On the impression face, from the viewer’s front-facing perspective, a god is depicted on the right side and a falcon figure on the left. The god and the falcon are positioned upon a double baseline, forming a “nb” with a boundary line. The face of the god is turned to the right, while the falcon figure looks to the left; thus the two figures stand back to back and face in opposite directions.

The standing god figure, facing right, is shown entirely in profile (fig. 3). The god wears a closely fitted, skullcap-shaped headdress. The figure’s face tilts slightly upward, and the nose is prominent. The beard, in a straight posture, extends slightly forward from the chin. The neck is short and thick; the nape is slightly concave. The head appears almost as if set upon the shoulders. The god wears a tightly fitted garment that wraps closely around his body. The abdomen is rounded forward, while the hips are defined as curving outward. The legs are straight. The god’s foot is rendered disproportionately long. The part where the toes of the foot should be is tapered. Around the neck, the necklace that should be worn is depicted in profile with a thick tassel and hangs over the shoulder toward the back. The tassel first projects upward prominently and then descends downward. The forearms extend forward from beneath the garment that wraps around the body. With both hands, the figure holds a *uas/w3st* dominion scepter⁸, positioned so that the hands are close to the feet and resting on the ground. The

⁷ It was determined through microscopic examination conducted by the authors in the excavation house that in some areas of the scarab, the yellow-colored glaze had acquired a greenish hue.

⁸ The scepter in question is referred to by Holmberg (1946) as the “*uas* scepter,” and by Brandl (2006, 221–222) as the “*w3s* scepter.”

details of the hands are not clearly indicated. The upper end of the dominion scepter has a horizontal extension pointing outward. The lower end of the scepter is shaped like a hook, and the hooks facing each other remain open.

On the Kral Tepesi scarab, the god figure depicted in a mummified appearance—entirely in profile, with the headdress, garment details, tasseled necklace, and the scepter held in his hand—when evaluated iconographically, is obviously representing Ptah⁹, one of the most important deities of the Egyptian pantheon.

In the area immediately behind the god, from the viewer's front-facing perspective, facing left, the falcon's flattened-oval head is turned backward toward the god. The neck of the falcon, rendered vertically, is quite slender. The right wing of the falcon is shown raised upward, while the left wing is depicted extending downward. Between the two wings, there is a "T"-shaped projection extending sideways. The lower part of this projection is slightly curved. Two interpretations are possible: first, if both legs were positioned beneath the body in a standing posture, this would represent a tail; second, if it does not depict a tail, then it represents a leg extended forward toward the god¹⁰. The other leg of the bird, shown beneath the bent one, is rendered in a straight form and tapers toward the end. Overall, the composition gives the impression of a bird in flight. The proportions of the falcon's body are rather unbalanced; its head is small relative to the body, and its neck is thin. The vertical space between the god and the falcon is almost equal to their height. The lower wing is positioned near the god's heel and slightly below it. Just above the falcon's head, there is a circular solar disk motif approximately of the same diameter.

On the Kral Tepesi scarab, the falcon's outstretched wings appear above Ptah's head, and the triangular form resembling a gabled roof represents the roof of a *shrine/chapel*, symbolizing that both the god and the falcon figure are within the *shrine/chapel*.

As emphasized above, since the scarab was not found *in situ* and its contextual association cannot be defined, this makes it necessary to exercise caution regarding its dating.

The Cultural Origin of Scarabs

The scarabs, whose origin lies in the *amulet*¹¹ tradition and which were

9 Holmberg 1946, 12-15, fig. 1-15, 18, 22; Watterson 1984, 161.

10 We owe our gratitude to Archaeologist Tolga Özaltın, who presented this idea and brought the subject to our attention.

11 Giveon 1985, 9. The word "amulet" literally means "muska" (talisman). It has been suggested that the term, may have originated either from the Arabic *hima'il* meaning "to carry," or from the Latin *amuletum*, derived from *amoliri* meaning "to remove" (Mayer-Opificius 1986, 27). As Schienerl (1984, 45) states: "The primitive fear of disease and death, the dread of harm caused by forces beyond human control and perception, and finally the anxiety that the envy and anger of others might disrupt one's well-being have together created, in every culture, the necessary precondition for the emergence of amulets and other magical-religious protective objects." Amulets have been regarded sometimes as lucky charms and sometimes as talismans that ward off evil, and today both terms are used synonymously (Mayer-Opificius 1986, 27). They were sewn onto garments used in rituals or placed among the wrappings of mummies (David – David 1992, xiv); however, over time, some amulets became personal symbols and were also used as seal stamps (Mayer-Opificius

also used as *seals*, take the form of the dung beetle and originate from the Egyptian Civilization¹². The dung beetle holds an important and sacred place in Egyptian mythology. Its behavior of shaping collected dung into a ball, rolling it, and pushing it forward, as well as the female's act of laying an egg inside and later burying it, made it one of the significant symbols of Egyptian mythology. The dung beetle, which rolls the dung ball backward using its middle and hind legs, has been regarded as the earthly manifestation of Ra accompanying the sun in its daily journey across the sky. Therefore, Ra's beetle became a symbol in which the sun was represented by the dung ball, and a cult developed around this belief. From the Middle Kingdom onward, it was associated with the rebirth, resurrection, and immortality of the soul after death, symbolizing the divine regenerative power of the eastern horizon¹³. After the floodwaters of the Nile receded, the dung beetle, seen as the first living creature revived from the river mud under the effect of the sun's heat, was considered special for this unique characteristic¹⁴. Depictions of this beetle are among the oldest known artifacts and were produced from various materials¹⁵. The scarabs used for amuletic or seal purposes in Egypt were generally made of raw materials such as opaque or semi-transparent stones. There are also examples carved from hard stone. In addition, soft limestone was used, as it was both easy to carve and resistant to heat, producing durable white or gray pieces. Red slate was also employed. After the carving stage, they were glazed in the kiln with various colors ranging from light blue, green, and dark green to multicolored hues. Those with brownish or dirty white tones have often lost their glaze layer over time¹⁶. Alongside examples made of clay, porcelain, or colored glass, there are also scarabs molded from clay and glass paste, which were coated with glaze after firing¹⁷.

Amulets or seal scarabs were modeled after the shiny, metallic species *Kheper aegyptiorum* or *Scarabaeus sacer*¹⁸. The sex of the beetle is predominantly female¹⁹, as females develop small, rounded *humeral* protrusions along the edge of the *elytra*, which allow for a firmer grip when rolling the dung ball. When such *humeral* protrusions are absent, one must look at the legs of the beetle, since males possess longer legs²⁰.

In amulets or seals, the dung beetle was depicted with an elliptical or oval-shaped flat impression face on its upper part. Hieroglyphic inscriptions or symbols, as well as figures of animals, humans, or deities, were carved onto this flat surface to be impressed. Scarabs were pierced longitudinally to allow them to be worn or carried in various ways, with the hole being just wide enough for a

1986, 27).

12 Myer 1894, 15; Giveon 1985, 9; Durnagözü 2024, 23.

13 Myer 1894, 13; Cave – Ratcliffe 2008, 3281, 3285.

14 Myer 1894, 13-14; Ward 1902, 3-4; Güney 2014, 11.

15 Myer 1894, 18.

16 Myer 1894, 18-20. Steatite, also known as soapstone, is the earliest material to have been used (Myer 1894, 18-20).

17 In scarabs shaped from clay and glass paste, glazes of various colors were used (Durnagöl 2024, 26-27; Newberry 1908, 41).

18 Scholtz et al. 2009, 406.

19 This view reflects the personal opinion expressed by Gedik-Zimmermann.

20 Cave – Ratcliffe 2008, 3282.

fine thread to pass through²¹. In Egypt, beginning in the early second millennium BCE, cylinder seals gradually gave way to scarabs, which continued to serve the same primary sealing function. The presence of clay seal impressions found in various parts of Egypt provides evidence of their use in this capacity. Scarabs were worn as pendants, attached to garments, or used as finger rings. Some examples used as rings were set into frames edged with metal²².

Besides Ra, the dung beetles of the Egyptian pantheon are also associated symbolically with Ptah²³.

The Origin, History, and Cultural Indicators of the God Ptah

Ptah is the chief god of Memphis, the capital of the Old Kingdom, and the protector of craftsmen and artisans. He is a creator god who created the world with his heart and tongue²⁴. Over time, he was regarded as one of the three state gods, alongside Amun of Thebes and Ra of Heliopolis. His sphere of influence encompassed all of Egypt²⁵.

The “fair-faced” Ptah is depicted as having a sky-blue complexion²⁶. His standard representation shows him in human form, mummified like a wrapped figure. Emerging from beneath the mummy wrappings, his hands firmly grasp a scepter held before his body²⁷. This scepter combines three symbols: the *djed*, symbolizing stability; the *was*, representing dominion; and the *ankh*, symbolizing life. His closely shaven head is covered with a tight-fitting skullcap-shaped headdress. He wears a short beard. His shoulders are broad, and around his neck lies a collar, from the back of which hangs a counterweight made in the form of a fertility amulet. Ptah generally stands upon a pedestal that bears the *maat* (truth) hieroglyph, which also represents the tool used by craftsmen for measurement²⁸.

According to Memphite theology, Ptah created himself, conceived the cosmos, and brought it into being through thought. The essence of life comes from Ptah’s heart, and the gods came forth from his tongue. Ptah founded provinces and established temples. He increased the number of divine *shrines/chapels* and sanctuaries. The gods, whose bodies he formed from wood, clay, or stone, received life through the infusion of his *ka* spirit. The offerings and perfect creations presented to the gods were also believed to have been fashioned by Ptah²⁹. The god Ptah, known as “the creator through speech,” held the title of “the one who created everything and gave birth (*msi*) to the gods, causing them to come into being.” Everything that Ptah’s heart conceived and his tongue commanded came into existence through his divine word³⁰. He was also responsible for sha-

21 Newberry 1908, 61.

22 Newberry 1908, 62, fig. 53-55.

23 Myer 1894, 14-15.

24 Pinch 2002, 181.

25 Holmberg 1946, 204; Silverman 1992, 54; Assmann 2002, 65; Morenz 2004, 24-25, 142-143, 267.

26 Pinch 2002, 181.

27 Watterson 1984, 161.

28 Pinch 2002, 181.

29 Hart 1990, 18; Kurhan 1994, 272; Assmann 2002, 361-365; Hart 2005, 129.

30 Watterson 1984, 163.

ping the sun and for the ripening of vegetation³¹.

In addition to these attributes, Ptah was regarded as the inventor of the arts and as the master of craftsmen, as well as the greatest overseer of artisans³². His chief priest bore the title “Chief of Master Craftsmen”³³. Among artisans, one of Ptah’s epithets was “the one who hears prayers,” and certain stelae and tablets depicting ear motifs were dedicated to this aspect of the god, symbolizing his attentiveness to human supplications³⁴. Ptah was also the special protector of metalworkers and sculptors. The employment of dwarfs, particularly in jewelry production, and Ptah’s depiction in dwarf form are believed to have influenced the making of his figures and representations³⁵.

Ptah’s most important temple is in Memphis. The temple was first built during the Old Kingdom and was later restored or rebuilt on the same site by various kings during the Middle and New Kingdom periods³⁶. Ptah’s influence, which increased particularly from the Middle Kingdom onward³⁷, reached its peak during the Ramesside Period, that is, the 19th–20th Dynasties (c. 1295–1070 BCE)³⁸, when he formed a powerful triad together with Amun and Ra³⁹.

In the Old Kingdom, when Ptah became the chief deity of Memphis, he was associated with Ta-tenen (the god of the rising earth) and Sokar (the god of tombs, the dead, and craftsmen). The title of protector of artisans was attributed to Ptah, while Sokar became the patron god of goldsmiths. From the Old Kingdom onward, Ptah and Sokar were combined and worshiped under the joint name Ptah-Sokar⁴⁰. By the Middle Kingdom, with the inclusion of Osiris (the god of the underworld), this combination evolved into the triad of Ptah-Sokar-Osiris⁴¹.

In depictions of Ptah from the Old Kingdom through the New Kingdom—and even into the Late Period—his portrayal, typically in profile, shows consistency in his tightly fitted headdress, the garment enveloping his body, and the broad-collared necklace around his neck, from which hangs a counterweight over his back; none of these elements underwent radical changes. However, variations are observed from time to time in the details of the shrine/chapel in which the god stands—whether it is closed or open, its roof form, the type of scepter he holds, and the ornamentation of his collar⁴². Beginning in the New Kingdom, certain depictions show the god seated on a low-backed stool⁴³. On the other

31 Hart 1990, 18.

32 Watterson 1984, 163; Hart 1990, 18; Silverman 1992, 54; Morenz 2004, 24-25, 142-143, 267; Hart 2005, 129-131.

33 Watterson 1984, 163.

34 Keel – Page-Gasser 2003, 48-49; Hart 2005, 130-131.

35 Pinch 2002, 181-182.

36 Holmberg 1946, 204-213.

37 Caman 2016, 30.

38 In order to avoid confusion regarding the chronology of the Egyptian dynasties within the article, the publication by Müller (2006) and fig. 1 have been taken as the basis. This is due to the fact that different researchers employ varying chronological frameworks.

39 Jaeger 1982, 265, 338

40 Watterson 1984, 169-170; Kurhan 1994, 265; Hart 2005, 149.

41 Watterson 1984, 170.

42 Holmberg 1946, 12-15, fig. 1-15, 18, 22.

43 Holmberg 1946, 14.

hand, in one example considered earlier in tradition, Ptah is beardless, while in the Middle Kingdom he is portrayed both with and without a beard. In the New Kingdom, however, he is consistently depicted with a beard that is thick, long, and sometimes flaring downward in shape⁴⁴. Although this is the general case, Holmberg⁵¹ emphasized that early examples might also include bearded depictions and noted that the presence of a beard cannot be used as a strict chronological criterion. From the Middle Kingdom onward, Ptah is represented standing upon a podium. In some instances, this podium is depicted in the form of a staircase⁴⁵.

One of the earliest depictions of Ptah in Egypt appears on the surface of an alabaster vessel. This vessel, discovered in tomb no. 231 at the Tarkhan Necropolis, approximately 20 miles south of Cairo, dates to the Old Kingdom, First Dynasty (ca. 3100–3000 BCE)⁴⁶. Within the *shrine/chapel*, Ptah is depicted standing completely in profile. His smooth face is beardless. He wears a tight-fitting garment with a high collar and a counterweight hanging from the back. His arms extend forward from beneath the garment, holding a scepter firmly in his hands. On the upper section of the *shrine/chapel*, a hieroglyphic inscription bearing Ptah's name is present⁴⁷.

In the excavations of the Temple of Ptah at Memphis, beneath the sand foundations of the reign of Ramesses II, several tablets dating to the 18th Dynasty (ca. 1540–1295 BCE) were found, bearing depictions of the god Ptah⁴⁸. Among these, one tablet believed to date to the reign of Thutmose IV (ca. 1401–1391 BCE) shows Ptah depicted together with a flying falcon above him⁴⁹.

When examining representations of Ptah in visual art, it becomes evident that we do not encounter his depictions on the surfaces of scarabs until the New Kingdom. As Keel⁵⁰ notes, up to the end of the 12th Dynasty (c. 1973–1795 BCE), scarab impression faces featured no human or anthropomorphic divine figures—only schematic designs or symbols. For the first time, during the 13th Dynasty in the region of Palestine/Israel (c. 1795–1631/1627 BCE), scarabs began to include genuine representations of human figures⁵¹.

Before Egypt's Hyksos period, that is, the 15th Dynasty (c. 1638–1540 BCE), the impression faces of scarabs did not depict large divine figures⁵². Deities were instead represented solely through symbolic or animal forms. The earliest known examples featuring divine figures on scarab surfaces combine the protective falcon or falcon-headed god Horus with the figure of Ptah. These examples date approximately to the second half of the 15th Dynasty⁵³.

Particularly during the Ramesside Period, scarabs bearing depictions of Ptah gained prominence as part of the Memphite triad, a development cor-

44 Holmberg 1946, 12.

45 Holmberg 1946, 15.

46 Petrie 1913, 12, 22, pl. III.1.

47 Petrie 1913, pl. III: 1; Holmberg 1946, 12, pl. 65:1; Quirke 2015, fig. 1.7(a).

48 Petrie 1909, 2, 7-8, pl. VII: 46-47, VIII: 1-4, IX: 48, X: 13-14, XI: 15, 19-20, XIII: 29, XIV: 31-35, XV: 36-40, XVII: 45.

49 Petrie 1909, 7, pl. VIII: 1, 3.

50 Keel 1989, 246.

51 Keel 1989, 246-247.

52 Keel 1989, 282.

53 Keel 1989, 316, 318, abb. 34-47.

responding to the 19th–20th Dynasties (c. 1295–1070 BCE)⁵⁴.

Parallels of the Kral Tepesi Scarab

While investigating the parallels of the Kral Tepesi scarab, particular emphasis has been placed on the similarities in the beetle form and the depiction of the god Ptah:

a) Beetle Form

A scarab found in Tomb No. 79 at Enkomi in Cyprus exhibits a beetle form (fig. 4) that is almost identical in proportion to that of the Kral Tepesi scarab. This scarab is dated to the 18th (c. 1540–1295 BCE) or 19th Dynasty (c. 1295–1186 BCE)⁵⁵.

Outside Cyprus, within present-day borders of Israel, certain scarabs from excavated sites and private collections show that the rendering of the beetle form bears close parallels, though not identical, to that of the Kral Tepesi scarab. With the exception of a few examples, differences are observed in the treatment of the upper beetle form and the impression face. A scarab found at Tell Akko demonstrates similarities to the Kral Tepesi scarab both in its beetle form and in the motifs depicted on its impression face (fig. 4a)⁵⁶.

In Israel, one example was found in Jerusalem (fig. 4a)⁵⁷. Another scarab is part of the Dayan Collection at the Tel Aviv University Institute of Archaeology (fig. 4a)⁵⁸. A scarab discovered near Ashdod, at Kibbutz Hazor, is dated to the 19th–20th Dynasties (c. 1295–1070 BCE) (fig. 4a)⁵⁹. Another example from Bet Mirsim, dated to the Late Bronze IIB (c. 1300–1250/1150 BCE), has also been documented (fig. 4b)⁶⁰. A scarab found in tomb no. 510 at Bet Mirsim belongs to the 19th Dynasty (c. 1295–1186 BCE)⁶¹, while one from tomb no. 11 at Bet Shemesh dates to the 19th–20th Dynasties (c. 1295–1070 BCE)⁶². A scarab from Deir el-Balah is also attributed to the 19th Dynasty–20th Dynasty, around the beginning of the 19th Dynasty (c. 1295–1186 BCE) (fig. 4b)⁶³. Similarly, two scarabs from Deir el-Balah are dated to the 19th–20th Dynasties (c. 1295–1070 BCE) (fig. 4b)⁶⁴. In addition, a scarab from tomb no. 1 in area K at the Tell Dohhan mound, dating to the 19th Dynasty (c. 1295–1186 BCE), shows parallels in the workmanship of its upper beetle part (fig. 4b)⁶⁵.

54 Jaeger 1982, 265, 338.

55 Smith 2013, 18, fig. 8.

56 Keel 1997, 556–557, fig. 73.

57 Keel 2017, 348–349, fig. 155.

58 Keel 1997, 94–95, fig. 47.

59 Keel 1997, 674–675, fig. 35.

60 Keel 2010, 58–59, fig. 34.

61 Keel 2010, 82–83, fig. 92.

62 Keel 2010, 246–247, fig. 69.

63 Keel 2010, 436–437, fig. 81.

64 Keel 2010, 434–435, 446–447, fig. 77, 109.

65 Keel 2010, 502–503, fig. 29.

b) The Depiction of the God Ptah

Although Ptah was one of the major deities of the Egyptian pantheon, traces of this cult are also attested in regions under Egyptian control⁶⁶. As shown below, depictions of Ptah on the impression face of scarabs found in Palestine/Israel and even in Cyprus clearly illustrate the wide dissemination of this cult.

Ptah and the Protective Falcon

In Keel's 1989 publication, a scarab of unspecified provenance features a scene on its impression face depicting Ptah standing in the center between two protective falcons with outstretched wings (Fig. 5). The protective falcon figure on this scarab closely resembles that of the Kral Tepesi scarab, particularly the falcon on the left as seen from the viewer's perspective⁶⁷.

In Jerusalem, a scarab acquired through purchase and dated to c. 1600–1500 BCE, toward the end of the Middle Bronze IIB period, also shows three figures arranged horizontally on its impression face (Fig. 5). Although not identical, the scene displays clear parallels to that of the Kral Tepesi scarab⁶⁸. In this composition, the god Ptah is depicted standing in a worshipping pose, with a falcon-headed and protective bird figure facing him, wings fully extended.

Ptah Depicted Alone

In the Medinet Habu excavations at Western Thebes (modern Luxor), a scarab recovered from a fill context bears on its impression face a depiction of Ptah beneath a winged solar disk (Fig. 6). This scarab is dated to the 19th–21st Dynasties, that is, approximately 1295–945 BCE⁶⁹.

Ptah and the Falcon-Headed Figure

The human-bodied, falcon-headed figure depicted together with Ptah has been interpreted by various scholars as representing both the sun god and Ra-Harakhty.

On the impression face of a scarab found within the borders of modern-day Israel at Tell Akko, the god Ptah is depicted on the left side of the scene, standing upon an “*nb* symbol”. Above Ptah's head is a *shrine/chapel* roof. Facing him on the right is the falcon-headed Ra-Harakhty, above whose head a solar disk is depicted. With his outstretched arm, Ra-Harakhty appears to be holding Ptah's scepter⁷⁰ (fig. 7).

In Israel, at Tell Dothan, a scarab discovered in tomb no. 1 within area K depicts Ptah on the left side of its impression face, holding his scepter in his hand. Opposite him stands the sun god with an anthropomorphic body and a falcon head, grasping Ptah's scepter with his outstretched hand. Above the head of the sun god is a solar disk with a *uraeus* (fig. 7). This scarab is dated to the beginning of the 19th–20th Dynasties (c. 1295–1186/1156 BCE)⁷¹.

A scarab unearthed during excavations at Deir el-Balah, one of the sites in the Gaza region of Palestine, shows parallels both in the execution of the be-

66 Morenz 2004, 52-53.

67 Keel 1989, 292, abb. 34.

68 Keel 2020, 156-157, fig. 371.

69 Teeter 2003, 70, pl. 30c.

70 Keel 1997, 556-557, fig. 73.

71 Keel 2010, 502-503, fig. 30.

etle's upper form and in the depiction of Ptah. On its impression face, above the double base line forming an “*nb* symbol”, Ptah is shown on the left, facing a falcon-headed sun god who holds Ptah's scepter with his hand (fig. 7). This scarab is likewise dated to the beginning of the 19th–20th Dynasties (c. 1295–1186/1156 BCE)⁷².

Ptah and the Goddess Sakhmet

Apart from the Kral Tepesi/Vasili scarab, a scarab made of blue faience was found in Tomb No. 9 during excavations at the Amathus/Amathonte Necropolis in Cyprus. On its impression face, Ptah is depicted standing opposite the goddess Sakhmet, while behind Ptah there likely appears a worshipper figure (fig. 8)⁷³.

Within the borders of present-day Israel, a scarab⁷⁴ discovered in Tomb No. 912B at Megiddo (parcel M3095), made of agate, also depicts Ptah and Sakhmet facing one another on its impression face (fig. 8). This scarab is dated to the Late Bronze IIB period⁷⁵.

Ptah, Sakhmet, and the BA-Bird

A scarab found at Tell Dothan in Israel features on its impression face a depiction of Ptah beneath a *shrinelchapel* with a double base line forming an “*nb* symbol”. Behind Ptah stands the lion-headed goddess Sakhmet with an anthropomorphic body, holding her cobra-headed scepter. In front of Ptah is a *djed*-pillar, above which a *ba*-bird is shown, and above the bird's head is a solar disk (fig. 9). This scarab is dated to the 19th–20th Dynasties (c. 1295–1070 BCE)⁷⁶.

Ptah, the Djed Pillar, and the BA-Birds Above It

On the impression face of a scarab found in Tomb No. 4 at Tell Beit Shemesh, within the borders of Jerusalem, the god Ptah is depicted on the left side of the scene, standing on a double base line forming an “*nb* symbol”, facing a *djed* pillar. Above the *djed* pillar are *ba*-birds, each surmounted by a solar disk with outspread wings (fig. 10). This scarab is dated to the 19th–20th Dynasties, specifically to the reign of Ramesses II–III (c. 1279–1153 BCE)⁷⁷.

In the excavations at Tel Beth-Shean, within Israel, a scarab found in room no. 1700, east of locus 1282, bears on its impression face a scene with a double base line forming an “*nb* symbol”. On the left side, Ptah is depicted with a *shrinelchapel* roof above his head, while on the right are two *djed* pillars, each surmounted by a *ba*-bird. Above the heads of the *ba*-birds are solar disks (fig. 10). This scarab is dated to the transition between the 19th and 20th Dynasties (c. 1295–1186/1156 BCE)⁷⁸.

A scarab found at Deir el-Balah, in the Gaza Strip, also features on its impression face a composition with a double base line forming an “*nb* symbol”. On the left, the god Ptah appears beneath a *shrinelchapel* roof, while on the right are two *djed* pillars, each topped with a *ba*-bird. Above the heads of the *ba*-birds

72 Keel 2010, 432-433, fig. 72.

73 Gjerstad 1935, 59, pl. XIV:67.

74 Guy 1938, 69-72, pl. 131: 1, 3.

75 Guy 1938, pl. 131: 1.

76 Keel 2010, 500-501, fig. 23.

77 Keel 2017, 12-13, fig. 5.

78 Keel 2010, 118-119, fig. 48.

are solar disks, and above them a winged solar disk is depicted (fig. 10). This scarab is dated to the early 19th–20th Dynasties, the period of Ramesses II–III (c. 1279–1153 BCE)⁷⁹.

Ptah and the Goddess Maat

An example of this type was identified in the Enkomi excavations in Cyprus. The impression face of the scarab, shaped from brownish steatite, depicts Ptah facing right, with a feather in front of him (fig. 11). This scarab is dated to the late 18th Dynasty (c. 1540–1295 BCE) or the beginning of the 19th Dynasty (c. 1295–1186 BCE), and it has been suggested that it was imported from Egypt⁸⁰.

In the excavations at Bet Shemesh, a scarab found in locus 547 depicts Ptah on its impression face, with the goddess Maat shown seated cross-legged before him atop a *djed* pillar (fig. 11). This scarab is dated to the 19th Dynasty (c. 1295–1186 BCE)⁸¹.

In the Medinet Habu excavations at Western Thebes, a white steatite scarab found in square E/4 depicts Ptah on the left side of the impression face (from the viewer's perspective), facing a feather symbol. Above the feather is a solar disk (fig. 11). The feather is understood as the symbol of Maat. Teeter has suggested that the inscription on this scarab might represent the cryptographic writing of Amun's name. This scarab is dated to the 19th–21st Dynasties, i.e., between c. 1295–945 BCE⁸².

Ptah and the Uraeus

In the Medinet Habu excavations in Egypt, a faience scarab bearing traces of a brown glaze was found among the debris near the excavation house. On its impression face, Ptah is depicted on the left side from the viewer's perspective, facing a *uraeus* figure (fig. 12). This scarab dates to the 19th–21st Dynasties (c. 1295–945 BCE)⁸³.

In the excavations at Deir el-Balah, one of the sites in the Gaza region of Palestine, a scarab was recovered from Tomb No. 29, belonging to a woman. On its impression face, above a double base line forming an “*nb* symbol”, Ptah is depicted on the left side with a *shrine/chapel* roof above his head. Opposite him is a *uraeus* figure. Above the *uraeus* is a solar disk, and above that, a small horizontal line is visible (fig. 12). This scarab is dated to the early 19th–20th Dynasties (c. 1295–1186/1156 BCE)⁸⁴.

Ptah and the King in Worship Pose

In the explorations at Deir el-Balah, one of the sites in the Gaza region of Palestine, a scarab was found bearing on its impression face, above a double base line forming an “*nb* symbol”, a depiction of Ptah on the left side facing a pharaoh wearing a blue crown and a *uraeus* on his forehead, shown in a worshipping pose before the deity. Above the scene are two dung beetles, each holding a *uraeus* (fig.

79 Keel 2010, 402-401, fig. 1.

80 Charles 1971, 821-823, pl. 189:965.

81 Keel 2010, 280-281, fig. 148.

82 Teeter 2003, 70, pl. 30b.

83 Teeter 2003, 69, pl. 30a.

84 Keel 2010, 414-415, fig. 29.

13). This scarab is dated to the early 19th–20th Dynasties (c. 1295–1186/1156 BCE)⁸⁵.

A scarab found in tomb no. M3096 at Megiddo also depicts the god Ptah being worshipped by a king (fig. 13). The scarab, described as executed in the Ramesside style, is attributed to the Late Bronze IIB period⁸⁶.

Another scarab from Tell Akko shows, on its impression face, two opposing figures above an “*nb* symbol”. The figure on the left, with a *shrine/chapel* roof above his head, is Ptah. Opposite him stands a figure dressed in a long pleated garment, shown in a pose of adoration before the god (fig. 13). This scarab is dated to the early 19th–20th Dynasties (c. 1295–1186/1156 BCE)⁸⁷.

Ptah and Royal Names

Within the borders of Palestine, at the site of Timnah (Tel Batash), a scarab identified as having been imported from Egypt depicts on its impression face the god Ptah holding his scepter (fig. 14). The Timnah (Tel Batash) scarab is dated to the late 18th Dynasty (c. 1540–1295 BCE) or the first half of the 14th century BCE⁸⁸. The steatite scarab, shaped from a grayish material, shows parallel features with the Kral Tepesi scarab, although the latter has a yellow hue.

In the British Museum, a blue-green glazed steatite scarab dating to the 19th Dynasty (c. 1295–1186 BCE) depicts Ptah on its impression face together with the cartouche bearing the name of Ramesses II (c. 1279–1213 BCE) (fig. 14)⁸⁹.

In the excavations at Tel Beth-Shean in northern Israel, a scarab was discovered in locus 78711, stratum S-3a, depicting the god Ptah on its impression face⁹⁰. The scarab’s dung beetle form bears a strong resemblance to that of the Kral Tepesi scarab. Each *scutellum* is rendered distinctly, positioned on the upper surface of the folded wings. On the impression face, above a double base line forming an “*nb* symbol”, Ptah is depicted on the left side of the composition from the viewer’s perspective, with a *shrine/chapel* roof above his head. Opposite him, on the right, is a cartouche containing the name of Ramesses II (c. 1279–1213 BCE) (fig. 14).

The scarab, made of steatite with a yellow glaze, bears hieroglyphic inscriptions that date it to the reign of Ramesses II (c. 1279–1213 BCE), that is, the 19th Dynasty⁹¹. However, the layer in which the scarab was found dates to c. 1200–1150 BCE, corresponding to the destruction layer of the 20th Dynasty (c. 1186–1070 BCE) (SL Building, locus 78733). Brandl⁹² notes that although the scarab is of average craftsmanship, it was likely a locally produced Canaanite imitation.

Another scarab from Ashkelon, Israel, shows on its impression face Ptah standing on a base formed by an “*nb* symbol”, with a *shrine/chapel* roof above his

85 Keel 2010, 432-433, fig. 73.

86 Guy 1938, pl. 131: 3.

87 Keel 1997, 596-597, fig. 189.

88 Brandl 2006, 221-222, fig. 25.

89 Hall 1913, 218, fig. 2181, no.4101.

90 Brandly 2009, 648-649, fig. 12.14.

91 Brandly 2009, 648-649, fig. 12.14; Keel 2010, 202-203, fig. 235.

92 Brandly 2009, 649

head. Opposite him is a cartouche containing the name of Thutmose III. This scarab is dated to the 19th–20th Dynasties (c. 1295–1070 BCE) (fig. 14)⁹³.

c) The Protective Falcon Figure

A scarab bearing a depiction of the protective falcon figure on its impression face was recovered from Tomb No. A192 at the Amathus/Amathonte Necropolis in Cyprus⁹⁴. On the impression face, the protective falcon—shown wearing the crown of Upper Egypt with a *uraeus* on its forehead—is depicted on the left side from the viewer's perspective⁹⁵. The falcon's outstretched wings and tail closely resemble those of the Kral Tepesi scarab (fig. 15).

In the British Museum collection, a green-glazed steatite scarab dating to the 18th Dynasty (c. 1540–1295 BCE), during the reign of Thutmose III (c. 1479–1425 BCE), depicts on its impression face a falcon with wings extended upward and downward, protecting a royal cartouche (fig. 15)⁹⁶. Another green-glazed steatite scarab in the British Museum, dating to the 19th–21st Dynasties (c. 1295–945 BCE), shows a protective falcon extending its wings over a cartouche inscribed with the name *MEN-KHEPER-RĀ?* (fig. 15)⁹⁷.

A green-glazed steatite scarab in the British Museum, dating to the 18th Dynasty (c. 1540–1295 BCE), bears on its impression face a cartouche containing the name of Amenhotep II (Amenhetep II, c. 1427–1401 BCE). On either side of the cartouche are protective falcon figures (fig. 15)⁹⁸.

A gray enstatite stone scarab purchased in Jerusalem shows on its impression face, in a horizontal arrangement, a central dung beetle motif with a solar disk above its head, flanked on both sides by protective falcons with outstretched wings (fig. 15). This scarab is dated to c. 1650–1500 BCE, corresponding to the Late Middle Bronze II (LMB II) period⁹⁹.

A scarab bearing a falcon figure on its seal surface is found at Byblos¹⁰⁰, outside the borders of Egypt. The seal in question is made of white-colored glass paste (fig. 15). Based on the figures depicted on the surface of the scarab, Dunand¹⁰¹ dates this artifact to the 18th Dynasty (c. 1540–1295 BCE).

Another example from the excavations at the Temple of the Obelisks in Byblos consists of a ring scarab with a silver mounting, on which a protective falcon figure is depicted along with hieroglyphic inscriptions¹⁰² (fig. 15).

93 Keel 1997, 704-705, fig. 40.

94 While Smith (1900, 99) notes that the material of the scarab is ivory, Forgeau (1986, 147) states that it is pink-glazed siliceous ceramic.

95 Murray et al. 1900, 99, fig. 147: 10; Smith 1900, 99, fig. 147:10; Forgeau 1986, 147, fig. 12.

96 Hall 1913, 82, fig. 825, no. 16806.

97 Hall 1913, 136, fig. 1393, no. 29457.

98 Hall 1913, 164, fig. 1662, no. 4065.

99 Keel 2000, 80-81, fig. 199.

100 Dunand 1937, pl. CXXVIII: 3218.

101 Dunand 1939, 217.

102 Dunand 1950, pl. CXCVIII: 7699; 1954, 137.

Discussion

Owing to its geopolitical position in the Mediterranean, Cyprus became a meeting point where the cultural and political influences of Egypt, Syria, Anatolia, and the Aegean world intersected¹⁰³. During the period referred to as the Late Bronze Age, four major powers—Babylonia-Assyria, Egypt, the Hittites, and the Mycenaeans—are known to have existed. The presence of a cultural unity among these four powers is particularly noteworthy. This cultural cohesion was largely founded upon economic exchange and material demand. Beginning in the 3rd millennium BCE, with the advent of bronze alloy production, intensive interactions emerged among these great powers to secure the supply of copper ore required for metallurgy. The extraction, transport, and trade of raw materials led to the development of new types of interregional connections. Through these processes, what may be considered the earliest form of globalization began to emerge among these cultures¹⁰⁴. Within this broader global framework, the commercial unity between Cyprus and the Sicily–Sardinia region played a crucial role in linking the eastern and western Mediterranean worlds¹⁰⁵.

The island's rich copper deposits played a crucial role, particularly from the mid–2nd millennium BCE onward, in shaping its economic, political, and cultural development. Neighboring regions that experienced resource shortages and shifting power balances turned increasingly toward Cyprus for exchange and, at times, conquest attempts¹⁰⁶. Within this particular geopolitical framework, the island's abundant copper reserves made it a highly valued territory. During this period, especially in relation to Egypt, the Aegean, the Levant, and Mesopotamia, copper exports from Cyprus increased significantly¹⁰⁷. This development underscores the island's indispensable role in interregional exchange networks across the Eastern Mediterranean during the Late Bronze Age (c. 1675/1650–1075/1050 BCE). Archaeological evidence indicates the presence of centralized political entities in Cyprus that managed copper production, trade, and the import–export of prestige goods. Hence, Cypriot settlements with strategic geographical positions appear to have played differentiated yet complementary roles in these networks, contributing either directly or indirectly to the island's extensive participation in international trade¹⁰⁸.

In maritime activity, the prevailing currents and winds of the eastern Mediterranean prevented direct navigation between coasts, necessitating instead a circular route. For instance, a vessel sailing from Egypt to Crete had to pass through ports in the Levant, Cyprus, and Anatolia. This pattern of navigation fostered extensive international interaction and exchange networks¹⁰⁹. Situated along vital maritime routes connecting northeastern Africa and the Near East to the Aegean, Cyprus emerged as a major transit hub. The island reached its “golden age” during the 13th and 11th centuries BCE, characterized by intense

103 Porada 1948, 148.

104 Latacz – Starke 2006, 189.

105 Kızılduman 2024, 94-96.

106 Bartelheim 2008, 17.

107 Latacz – Starke 2006, 189; Knapp – Kassianidou 2008, 135.

108 Knapp 1996, 68; Goren et al. 2003, 233-252

109 Kızılduman 2017b, 39; Matthäus 2006, 358, abb.32; Papadimitriou 2022, 179.

economic and cultural exchanges¹¹⁰. Particularly in the Late Bronze Age period, evidence indicates that Cyprus maintained strong and sustained contacts with both Syria and Palestine¹¹¹.

Archaeological excavations conducted in Cyprus have brought to light material evidence reflecting the impact and interactions of international trade. Among these finds, scarabs hold particular importance. Dated to the Cyprus Late Bronze Age, scarabs discovered both in burials and settlement contexts have prompted scholars to reconsider their origins and routes of diffusion. Within this framework, the Kral Tepesi scarab analyzed in the present study should be assessed in terms of whether it was directly imported from Egypt or reached the island via the Levantine region under Egyptian control and influence.

In Egypt, the Late Bronze Age — roughly between 1540 and 1070 BCE — corresponds to the New Kingdom period. During this approximately 500-year period, Egyptian civilization developed into an imperial power. At the beginning of this era, Ahmose, the first king of the 18th Dynasty (c. 1540–1515 BCE), ended Hyksos rule, and, through the visionary leadership of his successors, the state became an expansionist power. Egypt extended its influence beyond its traditional borders into the Eastern Mediterranean, encompassing the territories of Syria and Israel/Palestine, and even reaching as far as northern Syria. The regions of Palestine adjacent to Egypt effectively became integral parts of the Egyptian realm.¹¹² As a result, by the 13th and 12th centuries BCE, Egyptian cultural and religious influence spread throughout the fortified cities under Egyptian control and garrison administration¹¹³. In these areas, temples dedicated to male Egyptian deities were established, symbolizing both political control and religious presence. Thus, Egyptian religious ideology and iconography penetrated directly into the eastern Mediterranean sphere¹¹⁴.

In Egypt, the earliest depiction of the god Ptah accompanied by a flying falcon appears on a tablet dated to the reign of Thutmose IV (c. 1401–1391 BCE)¹¹⁵. Although this composition does not appear on scarabs, the protective falcon figure becomes a common motif by the 18th Dynasty, while representations combining Ptah and the falcon emerge only from the 19th Dynasty onward¹¹⁶.

During the Ramesside period (19th–20th Dynasties, c. 1295–1070 BCE), the cult of Ptah gained remarkable prominence within Egypt and extended its influence to Canaan and the southern Levant¹¹⁷. Numerous scarabs from the Late Bronze Age Levant depict the god Ptah, suggesting both religious veneration and strong Egyptian presence in the region¹¹⁸. These scarabs are thought to have been produced in temple workshops dedicated to Ptah, possibly by

110 Bartelheim 2008, 17.

111 Porada 1948, 148

112 Keel – Uehlinger 1992, 55; Müller 2006, 195-196, res. 1; Van de Mieroop 2019, 151, 154, 212.

113 Keel – Uehlinger 1992, 78, 88, 90.

114 Keel – Uehlinger 1992, 78, 124.

115 Petrie 1909, 7, pl. VIII: 1, 3.

116 Hall 1913, 82, fig. 825, no: 16806, 136, Fig. 1393, no: 29457.

117 Jaeger 1982, 200, 338.

118 Keel – Uehlinger 1992, 78, 124.

priests who used them as objects of religious and political propaganda to assert the supremacy of their deity over local cults¹¹⁹. Consequently, Ptah's cult—one of the major components of the Egyptian pantheon—appears to have spread widely throughout the Levant, especially in territories under Egyptian influence. Assuming scarab manufacture took place in temple workshops, it is plausible that a temple dedicated to Ptah once existed in the region. However, by the early Iron Age, particularly during the reign of Ramses III (c. 1184–1153 BCE), while a temple dedicated to Amun is known to have existed in Gaza—the capital of Canaan—evidence suggests that the cult of Ptah had by then largely disappeared from the region¹²⁰.

Conclusion

The origin of the Kral Tepesi scarab is significant, particularly regarding the depiction of the beetle's body form, the rendering of its back, and the absence of detailed leg illustration. The analyses indicate that the scarab is not of Egyptian origin but rather should be compared to scarabs from Tell Akko, Ashdod, Kibbutz Hazor, Tell Beit Mirsim, Tell Beit Shemesh, Deir el-Balah, and Tell Dothan in terms of similarity, suggesting that its origin lies within the regions of Philistia/Israel (Fig. 4). Furthermore, the depiction on the base — identified as the god Ptah and a protective falcon symbol positioned behind him — also points to the same geographical area in terms of iconography and style (Figs. 5–15). Therefore, it is considered unlikely that the Kral Tepesi scarab was directly imported from Egypt. The possibility of its local manufacture on the island is also quite low, as production traces comparable to Cypriot scarabs have not been observed. For this reason, the likelihood that the scarab was produced in one of the settlements within the Philistia/Israel region is considerably high. The discovery of the scarab at Kral Tepesi should thus be interpreted as the result of intercultural exchange or maritime trade relations, possibly brought to the island by a merchant or envoy from the Eastern Mediterranean or someone temporarily residing in Cyprus. This interpretation aligns with the general maritime trade character of the Late Bronze Age, in which Kral Tepesi participated through exchange-based trade activities. Additionally, the morphological similarity of the scarab to examples from Enkomi — a major commercial and administrative center — is noteworthy and represents an important point of comparison.

It is highly probable that the scarab served as a medium reflecting the Ptah cult, carried by a merchant or envoy as a protective amulet during travel, possibly worn as a pendant or ring. The absence of any trace suggesting attachment, despite the likelihood that the beetle's uncarved legs were covered with another material, prevents definitive conclusions on its use.

The depiction of the god Ptah together with a protective falcon figure behind him, both surmounted by a chapel, represents a characteristic feature of the Ramesside Period¹²¹. Therefore, this iconographic composition provides significant evidence for dating the Kral Tepesi scarab.

119 Keel – Uehlinger 1992, 88.

120 Uehlinger 1990, 15; Keel – Uehlinger 1992, 78, 124-125.

121 Jaeger 1982, 342.

Egypt, particularly during the 19th–20th Dynasties, that is, the Ramesside Period (c. 1295–1070 BCE), the cult of Ptah reached a highly significant level. Conversely, as mentioned above, the disappearance of the Ptah cult in the Philistia/Israel region during the Early Iron Age slightly narrows the chronological range for dating the Kral Tepesi scarab. Therefore, the scarab should correspond to the period between the 19th and 20th Dynasties, namely, around 1295–1070 BCE, indicating a timeframe within this interval¹²². This corresponds to the Late Bronze Age IIC–IIIA period (c. 1340–1100 BCE) on Cyprus. However, since the Late Bronze Age cultural layer at Kral Tepesi represents only a single phase¹²³, the chronological range of the scarab can be more specifically placed between the Late Bronze Age IIC phase (1340–1200 BCE). Considering the terminal horizon of the LC IIC layer at Kral Tepesi, the period between 1295 and 1200 BCE appears most plausible. These years coincide with the 19th Dynasty in Egypt, which aligns perfectly with the period of Egyptian control and influence in the Philistia/Israel region.

122 Åström 1972; Knapp et al.1994; Manning et al.2001; Merrillees 1992, 2002.

123 Kızılduman 2017a-b.

Öz
Kaleburnu-Kral Tepesi/Galinoporni-Vasili'den
Bir Skarabe ve Tanrı Ptah Kültü

Kral Tepesi/Vasili yerleşimi Kıbrıs, Karpaz Yarımadası'nda, Kaleburnu/Galinoporni köyü sınırları içerisinde yer almaktadır. Kral Tepesi, Kıbrıs Geç Tunç Çağı II-C'de, tepe kısmında kamusal bina ve teraslarında aşağı yerleşkelerin yer aldığı bir hiyerarşiye sahiptir. Yerleşimin En Üst Teras bölümünde, tarım alanı açmak ve araziyi genişletmek üzere toprak sahibi tarafından buldozerle bir tahribat yapılmıştır. Bunun üzerine aynı alanda arkeolojik kurtarma kazısı gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bu çalışmalar esnasında pişmiş topraktan yapılmış (?) bir adet skarabe ele geçmiştir. Skrabenin oval biçimli baskı yüzeyinde, izleyicinin karşıdan bakış yönüne göre, sağ tarafa ikonografik olarak Tanrı Ptah ve onun hemen arkasında sol tarafa ise koruyucu şahin figürü tasvir edilmiştir. Koruyucu şahin figürünün hemen başının üzerinde bir güneş disk yer almaktadır. Sahnenin en üst kısmına da Ptah ve koruyucu şahinin simgesel olarak içinde olduğunu gösteren bir shrine/şapel çatısı yer almaktadır. Skarabenin gerek üst böcek formunun işlenişi gerekse de baskı yüzeyindeki Tanrı Ptah ve koruyucu şahin tasvirlerinin paralelleri günümüz Filistin/İsrail sınırları içerisinde yer alan yerleşmelerden bilinmektedir. Skrabenin Kral Tepesi'nde açığa çıkması kültürler arası takasa dayalı deniz ticaret ilişkilerinin bir sonucu olarak Adaya yerleşen bir Doğu Akdenizli ya da Kıbrıs'ta geçici olarak ikâmet eden bir tüccar veya ulak ile ilişki olmalıdır. Bu görüş Kral Tepesi'nin takasa dayalı ticari faaliyetler sürdüren denizsel karakteriyle de örtüşen bir özellik göstermektedir. Dolayısıyla skarabenin kökeninin Mısır değil Filistin/İsrail bölgesi olduğu düşünülmektedir. Bu da Mısır kontrolü altındaki yerleşimlerle kültürler arası ilişkilere ışık tutmaktadır. Skrabenin ele geçtiği alanın Kıbrıs Geç Tunç Çağı IIC yani MÖ 1295-1200 yıllarına tarihlendirilmesi, söz konusu buluntunun Mısır Uygarlığı'nda 19. Hanedan zamanına denk geldiğine işaret etmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kıbrıs, Skarabe, Kral Tepesi/Vasili, Ptah, Koruyucu Şahin, Mısır 19. Hanedan.

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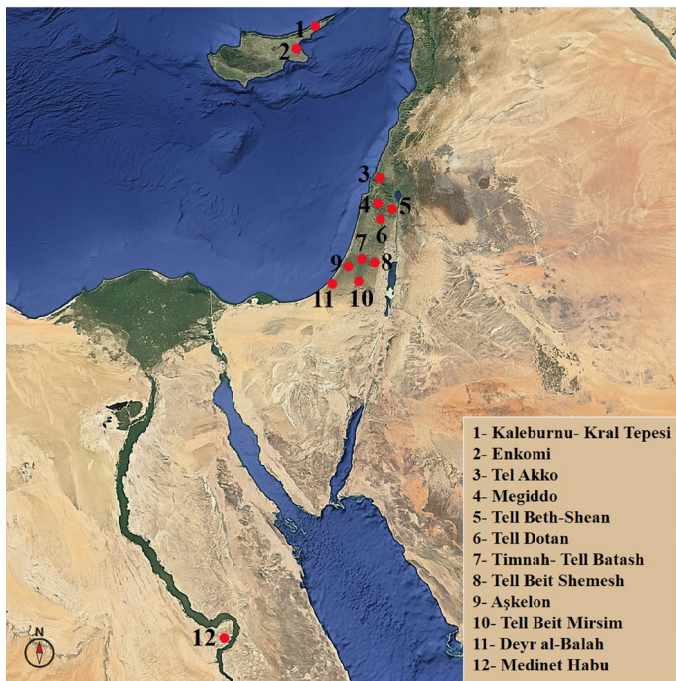


Fig. 1. Location of Kral Tepesi and the find sites mentioned in the text
(Prepared by: Neşe Topal Küskü – Elif Doğru)



Fig. 2a. General view of trench K97A and the contextual position of the scarab (Red star).



Fig. 2b. Location of the scarab within the trench (In the red circle).



Fig. 2c. Detailed view of the scarab.

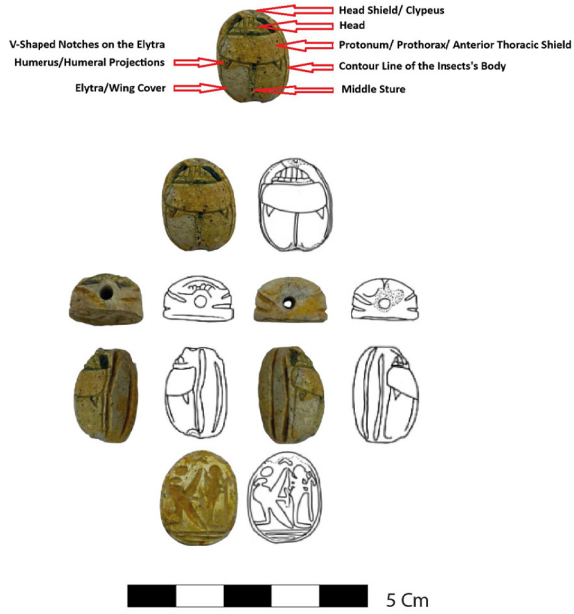


Fig. 3. Kral Tepesi Scarab
 (Photo: N. Topal Küskü, Drawing: R. Hocanın- M.A. Kıran-T. Özeltin, Illustration: E. Doğru)

Site	Photograph/Drawing	Chronology	Reference
Kral Tepesi/Vasit			
Enkomi		18th (1540-1295 BCE) or 19th Dynasty (1295-1186 BCE)	Smith 2013, fig. 8.
Tell Akko		19th-20. Dynasties (1295-1070 BCE)	Keel 1997, fig. 73.
It was found in the storage rooms in Jerusalem.		19th-20th Dynasties (1295-1070 BCE)	Keel 2017, fig. 155.
Dayan Collection, Institute of Archaeology, Tel Aviv University		19th-20th Dynasties (1295-1070 BCE)	Keel 1997, fig. 47.
Aşdod, Kibbuz Hazor		19th-20th Dynasties (1295-1070 BCE)	Keel 1997, fig. 35.

Fig. 4a. Centers where the Kral Tepesi Scarab and close parallels in the rendering of the upper part of the dung beetle are found









Site	Photograph/Drawing	Chronology	Reference
Kral Tepesi/Vasili			
Tell Beit Mirsim		LBA IIB (1300-1250/1150 BCE)	Keel 2010, fig. 34.
Tell Beit Mirsim		19th Dynasty (1295-1186 BCE)	Keel 2010, fig. 92.
Tell Beit Shemesh		19th-20th Dynasties (1295-1070 BCE)	Keel 2010, fig. 69.
Deyr el-Balah		19 th Dynasty -20 th Beginning of the Dynasty (1292-1186/1156 BCE)	Keel 2010, fig. 81.
Deyr el-Balah		19th-20th Dynasties (1295-1070 BCE)	Keel 2010, fig. 77.
Deyr el-Balah		19th-20th Dynasties (1295-1070 BCE)	Keel 2010, fig. 109.
Tell Dotan		19th Dynasty (1295-1186 BCE)	Keel 2010, fig. 29.

Fig. 4b. Centers where the Kral Tepesi Scarab and close parallels in the rendering of the upper part of the dung beetle are found







Site	Photograph/Drawing	Chronology	Reference
Kral Tepesi/Vasili			
?			Keel 1989, abb. 34.
Jerusalem, Purchase	   	1600-1500 BCE, End of the MBA IIB	Keel 1980, fig. 71; 2020, fig. 371.

Fig. 5. Centers where the Kral Tepesi Scarab and Ptah depicted with a protective hawk are found






Site	Photograph/Drawing	Chronology	Reference
Kral Tepesi/Vasili			
Medinet Habu	   	19th-21th Dynasty (ap. 1295-945 BCE)	Teeter 2003, pl. 30c.

Fig. 6. Centers where the Kral Tepesi Scarab and Ptah depicted alone are found






Site	Photograph/Drawing	Chronology	Reference
Kral Tepesi/Vasili			
Private Collection, Museum of Ethnology, City of Basel, Switzerland			Keel 1990, fig. 16.
Tell Akko			Keel 1997, fig. 73.
Dotan		19th.-20th Beginning of the Dynasty (1295-1186/1156 BCE)	Keel 2010, fig. 30.
Deyr el-Balah		19th.-20th Beginning of the Dynasty (1295-1186/1156 BCE)	Keel 2010, fig. 72.

Fig. 7. Centers where the Kral Tepesi Scarab and a hawk-headed human figure opposite Ptah are found




Site	Photograph/Drawing	Chronology	Reference
Kral Tepesi/Vasili			
Amathus Necropolis			Gjerstad v.d. 1935, pl. XIV: 2.67.
Megiddo		LBaII	Guy 1938, pl. 1.

Fig. 8. Centers where the Kral Tepesi Scarab and the goddess Sakhmet depicted with Ptah are found



Site	Photograph/Drawing	Chronology	Reference
Kral Tepesi/Vasili			
Dotan		19th-20th Dynasties (1295-1070 BCE)	Keel 2010, fig. 23.

Fig. 9. Centers where the Kral Tepesi Scarab and Ptah, Sakhmet, and the BA bird are depicted





Site	Photograph/Drawing	Chronology	Reference
Kral Tepesi/Vasili			
Tell Beit Shemesh		19th-20th Dynasties and II. Ramses-III. Ramses (1279-1153 BCE)	Keel 2017, fig. 5.
Tell Beth-Shean			Keel 2010, fig. 48.
Deyr el-Balah		19th Dynasty -20th Beginning of the Dynasty, II. Ramses- III. Ramses Dönemi (1279-1153 BCE)	Keel 2010, fig. 1.

Fig. 10. Centers where the Kral Tepesi Scarab and Ptah, the Djed pillar, and Ba birds are depicted


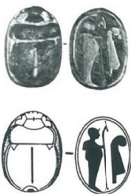


Site	Photograph/Drawing	Chronology	Reference
Kral Tepesi/Vasili			
Enkomi		End of 18th Dynasty (1540-1295 BCE) or Begin of 19th Dynasty (1295-1186 BCE)	Charles 1971, pl. 189:965.
Tell Beit Shemesh		19th Dynasty (1295-1186 BCE)	Keel 2010, fig. 148.
Medinet Habu		19th-21th Dynasties (1295-945 BCE)	Teeter 2003, pl. 30b.

Fig. 11. Centers where the Kral Tepesi Scarab and Ptah with the goddess Maat are depicted




Site	Photograph/Drawing	Chronology	Reference
Kral Tepesi/Vasili			
Medinet Habu		19th-21th Dynasties (ap. 1295-945 BCE)	Teeter 2003, pl. 30a.
Deyr el-Balah		19th-20th Beginning of the Dynasties (1295-1186/1156 BCE)	Keel 2010, fig. 29.

Fig. 12. Centers where the Kral Tepesi Scarab and Ptah with Uraeus are depicted


Site	Photograph/Drawing	Chronology	References
Kral Tepesi/Vasili			
Deyr el-Balah		19th-20th Beginning of the Dynasties (1295-1186/1156 BCE)	Keel 2010, fig. 73.
Megiddo		LBA II	Guy 1938, pl. 3.
Tell Akko		19th-20th Beginning of the Dynasties (1295-1186/1156 BCE)	Keel 1997, fig. 189.
Medinet Habu		20th Dynasty, Period of Sethnakht (1186-1184 BCE)	Tceter 2003, pl. 33b.

Fig. 13. Centers where the Kral Tepesi Scarab and Prah with a king in worshipping pose are found


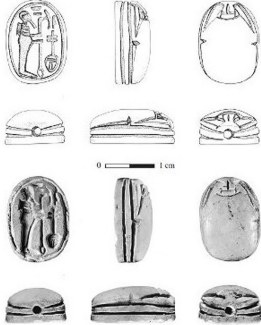



Site	Photograph/Drawing	Tarih/ Date	References
Kral Tepesi/Vasili			
Timnah (Tel Batash)		The Late 18th Dynasty (1540–1295 BCE) and the First Half of the 14th century BCE	Brandl 2006, fig. 25.
British Museum			Hall 1913, fig. 2181, no. 4101.
Tell Beth-Shean		19th Dynasty (1295-1186 BCE)	Keel 2010, fig. 235. Brandly 2009, fig. 12.14.
Aşkelon		19th-20th Dynasties (1295-1070 BCE)	Keel 1997, fig. 40.

Fig. 14. Centers where the Kral Tepesi Scarab and royal names beside Ptah are found

Site	Photograph/Drawing	Chronology	Reference
Kral Tepesi/Vasili			
Amathus			Murray v.d. 1900, fig. 147:10; Forgeau 1986: Cat. No: 12.
British Museum Collection		18th Dynasty (1540-1295 BCE)	Hall 1913, fig. 825, No: 16806.
British Museum Collection		19th-21th Dynasties (1295-945)	Hall 1913, fig. 1393, no. 29457.
British Museum Collection		18th Dynasty (1540-1295 BCE)	Hall 1913, fig. 1662, no. 4065.
Jerusalem, Purchase			Keel 2020, fig. 199.
Byblos			Dunand 1937, pl. CXXVIII: 3218
Byblos			Dunand 1950, pl. CXCVIII: 7699.

Fig. 15. Centers where the Kral Tepesi Scarab and protective hawk figures are found