

# Baal

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Online: 19 December 2007 / Updated: 27 April 2026

Permalink: <https://>

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**I. Introduction.** This article aims at two complementary tasks: first, to define the iconographic profile of the Levantine storm god B. in the Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages; second, to identify other deities whose representation may also have been identified with B. in the southern Levant during this period.

No depiction of B. in Levantine garb is accompanied by an inscription identifying the god by name; hence it is “exceedingly difficult” (LIPÍŃSKI 1996: 260) to establish a particular iconography of B. The sole exception is the Mami stela (7\*) from Ugarit, dated c. 1300, on which the god is identified as B.-Zaphon. However, this stela shows B. in Egyptian garb, which can hardly provide a starting point for the iconographic definition of a West Asiatic deity.

Since Levantine B. was identified with the Syrian storm god Hadad, it is reasonable to use the latter’s iconography as a point of departure for the pictorial identification and definition of B. An Old Syrian cylinder seal of the Pierpont Morgan Collection (PORADA 1948: pl. 146:964; for a similar representation, see MOORTGAT 1988: pl. 62:523) may illustrate such an approach. It depicts a standing god opposite to a worshiper, one raised arm brandishing a mace (→Weapons [ANE]) in a menacing pose, the other holding a →bull with a leash. The associated inscription reads “Servant of Adad,” suggesting that the deity depicted may be Hadad, although there is no binding relationship between inscribed legends and deities depicted on Syrian cylinder seals. Striking similarities with the deity on a stela from Ugarit (1\*), such as the menacing pose with a mace in the raised hand, pointed horned helmet (→Crown [Levant]), short kilt with horizontal lines and a dagger/sword (→Weapons [ANE]) at the waist, long curled hair locks, and long beard suggest that this deity should most likely be identified with the local storm god

and may serve as starting point for the definition of B.'s Asiatic iconographic profile.

CORNELIUS 1994 is the most comprehensive study of the iconography of B. during the Late Bronze Age to date (see CORNELIUS 1994: 8–11 for a brief research history; LIPÍŃSKI 1996 and CORNELIUS 1998 for a critical review and response), nevertheless some questionable identifications suggested by I. CORNELIUS have not been included here.

## II. Typology

### II.1. Phenotypes

A. Anthropomorphic – 1. Smiting pose – 1.1. Holding spear (1–3, →**Astarte 1**) – 1.2. Holding tree (4) – 1.3. Slaying serpent (5–6) – 2. Holding scepter (7) – 3. Thrusting spear (8) – 4. Winged – 4.1. Sethian B. (9–16) – 4.2. Slaying serpent (17–18) – 4.3. Standing on lion (19–40) – 5. Archer (41–42) – 6. Possible – B. Theriomorphic: bull – 1.1. Standing (43–45) – 1.2. Charging (46–47)

#### A. Anthropomorphic

##### 1. Smiting pose

**1.1. Holding spear.** Apart from the B. stela (1\*) referred to in the introductory remarks, other stelae depict similar types (for example, CORNELIUS 1994: no. BR2), but their identification with B. has been disputed (LIPÍŃSKI 1996: 259). The same holds true for bronze figurines. Most of about 150 published bronze figurines in smiting pose are attributed by CORNELIUS to →Resheph and only one to B. (his no. BB1). Even in the latter case, the object's unknown provenience makes an identification with B. rather than another storm god problematic, though not impossible (LIPÍŃSKI 1996: 258).

In glyptic art, the representation of B. brandishing a weapon and holding a spear (→Weapons [ANE]) is restricted to cylinder seals. Two from Ugarit with a deity wielding a mace (→Weapons [ANE]) compare closely with the B. stela, one in details, such as the plant spear (2), the other in its overall composition showing a small human in front of the menacing god (3).

A cylinder seal from Bethel (→**Astarte 1\***) depicts a god brandishing a khepesh sword (→Weapons [ANE]) in his raised hand and is facing a goddess, with both deities holding an upward-pointing spear to enclose the name of Astarte, which is inscribed between them. Possibly, the smiting god is another representation of B. Such an identification is supported by the association with →Anat (§ II.2. A.1.2) and the combination of several features, which can elsewhere be attributed to the storm god, such as the khepesh sword held in a menacing pose (5\*), the (upward-pointing) spear (→Weapons [ANE]) (1\*, 8\*; § II.1.A.6.1; ), and the sword (→Weapons [ANE]) shown at waist height (1\*).

**1.2. Holding tree.** On a cylinder seal from Ugarit (4), a god brandishing a mace (→Weapons [ANE]), dressed in a short kilt, wearing a pointed horned headgear, and distinguished by a long curled hair lock appears on both sides of a tree, relating to the plant spear (→Weapons [ANE]) of the B. stela (1\*). Most likely, these features are indicative of the representation of the local storm god.

**1.3. Slaying serpent.** B.'s posture of brandishing a →weapon attested in Asiatic related iconography was also adopted in the Egypto-Palestinian B. tradition, particularly regarding his role as serpent-slayer (→Yam). On a scarab from Lachish (5\*), B. is depicted in this pose

with a khepesh sword (→Weapons [ANE]) holding a horned serpent by its neck. A fragmentary scarab from Tall Deir Alla (6) depicts the same scene, but only the horned →serpent, with a foot stepping onto it and a hand holding the animal by the neck, is preserved.

**2. Holding scepter.** Egyptianized B., depicted on the Mami stela (7\*), holds a was scepter instead of his more distinctive spear (→Weapons [ANE]).

**3. Thrusting spear.** The “seal of Ini-Teshub, king of Carchemish,” of which a seal impression has been recovered at Ugarit (8\*), shows on its left the Hurrian storm god →Teshub, characterized by a triple-horned headgear and striding over mountains. To the right, another storm god, wearing a round horned headgear and standing on a →bull, thrusts his spear (→Weapons [ANE]) toward a rampant lion. According to CORNELIUS (1994: 219) this god should be identified with B., though E. LIPÍŃSKI (1996: 259) has argued for Teshub, who may also use a bull as pedestal animal as on a seal impression from Ugarit (SCHAEFFER 1956: fig. 35). However, this representation shows Teshub brandishing a mace (→Weapons [ANE]), not thrusting a spear (→Weapons [ANE]) toward a lion. The latter pose, which appears to derive from a theme related to Egyptian Seth (17\*–18), is regularly attested for B. in Late Bronze Age iconography but not for Teshub.

**4. Winged.** Egyptian Seth was identified with Asiatic storm gods since the Middle Bronze Age. Thus, it comes as no surprise that his iconographic profile considerably influenced the iconography of B. in the southern Levant. Egyptian Seth in turn is often dressed as an Asiatic Shasu (note particularly the tassels of his short kilt), which may have facilitated the association and ultimate identification with B. in the southern Levant. This is particularly true for images of Seth as a winged deity (for its identification, see StSt 3, 305f with fig. 76), whose wings originally symbolized protection but also crushing speed (EGGLER 1998: 276f, n. 554).

**4.1. Sethian B.** O. KEEL has shown that on scarabs and other representations of the 13th to 11th centuries winged Seth may adopt a conical headdress with two horns and a streamer (9\*) all of which are characteristic of Asiatic storm gods (StSt 3, 303, 305, figs. 68–71). Following KEEL, this type of representation is often termed “B.-Seth” (or ‘Seth-B.’) in scholarly literature, a term that points to the hybrid nature of the icon type, but obliterates the fact that no deity was ever worshiped under such a name in the Levant. Thus, should we identify these images as depictions of Seth, B., or still another South Levantine storm god? Winged Seth appears to be at the origin of this hybrid representation, and therefore deserves priority when it comes to name-giving. His precedence is further supported by the lack of a consistent 2nd millennium tradition of a winged B. along the Levantine coast (but see StSt 3, 199, fig. 33; MOORTGAT 1944: fig. 36; and probably also PORADA 1948: pl. 146:965 for other Asiatic winged storm gods). Hence, we should first consider this phenotype as a representation of Seth with Asiatic features rather than an Egyptianizing B. On the other hand, the Asiatic features of winged Seth may not only relate to his standard character as “god of confusion” but derive from interaction between Egyptians and Palestinian Shasu during the Late Bronze Age. Hence, it is not unlikely that

Egyptian Seth enriched with features of the local storm god (**10\***–**16\***) was perceived in the southern Levant as a local B. Such an understanding is supported by compositions where the winged deity acts in roles not otherwise attested for Seth (**19**–**40**).

**4.2. Slaying serpent.** Both Seth and B. share the role of a serpent-slayer (→Yam; StSt 3, 234f; 309–311; KEEL 1992: 212 with fig. 232). On a scarab from Tell el-Far‘ah (South), the winged serpent-slayer looks very similar to Seth embellished with attributes of the storm god (**17\***; see also **18**; for the unwinged version, see § II.1.A.1.3). Instead of (Asiatic) horns, he wears a (Egyptian) uraeus on his pointed cap, while on the other hand his kilt has distinctly Asiatic tassels. Since →Apophis, the serpent killed by Seth, never has horns, and since the horned serpent is a distinctly Asiatic figure, the serpent-slayer on these scarabs should be identified as an Asiatic god, B. being the most likely candidate (see **5\***).

**4.3. Standing on lion.** According to Egyptian iconographic standards Seth is never depicted on a lion; in contrast, Asiatic, particularly Syrian storm gods regularly appear in this constellation (MOORTGAT 1944: fig. 36; PORADA 1947: nos. 741–742; 1948: pl. 158:1031). The winged figure standing on a lion on numerous 11th- to 10th-centuries scarabs may, therefore, be identified as a South Levantine storm god (i.e., B.) in the garb of winged Seth (alone: **19\***–**31**; with →Resheph standing on a →horned animal: **32\***–**39**; with →Anat/→Astarte: **40**).

**5. Archer.** A variant of the type referred to in the previous paragraph depicts B. without wings but with bow (→Weapons [ANE]) and arrow (**41** [atypically seemingly standing on a →horned animal], **42**).

## **6. Possible**

**6.1.** On a 14th- to 13th-centuries cylinder seal from Ugarit (CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 49:BM64), a figure in a short kilt and a pointed helmet is shown standing on a lion and holding in each hand an upward-pointing spear (→Weapons [ANE]). The few diagnostic features suggest a possible identification with a storm god, more accurately with its Levantine form B. Other candidates provide less plausible alternatives: for example, Resheph, who may hold an upward-pointing spear (→**Resheph 1\***, **10\***) and is associated with the lion (→**Resheph 15\***; CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 31:RM31–RM33, RM34–RM38; YADIN 1985: 269–273 with MAZAR 1980: 101 with fig. 34), never stands on it, while Shadrpa (LIPÍŃSKI 1995: 195) is depicted as standing on a lion (ANEP no. 486), but this earliest representation dates to the 8th/7th century.

**6.2.** On a Late Bronze Age cylinder seal from Tell el-Ajjul (PETRIE 1934: pl. 12:1; CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 48: BM42), a standing figure with a distinct hair lock opposes a winged demon ready to catch a falling human. The figure controls a →caprid and a lion, which he holds by the tail, but only the hair lock might hint at a possible identification with B. (but see next paragraph).

**6.3.** The same feature has been used as an identifying criterion for B. regarding another unique composition, a banquet scene painted on a jug from Ugarit (CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 51:BP1). It depicts a standing figure with a hair lock holding a vessel, followed by an animal procession

including a horse, bird, and fish. Opposite an offering table, an enthroned deity holding a bowl features a similar hair lock with an additional streamer. CORNELIUS (1994: 225) interpreted this scene as B. “standing by Ilu” (KTU 1.2 i:21), identifying the standing god on the sole criterion of the hair lock. However, this feature cannot serve that purpose, since it is shared by both deities, but the associated animals might help to establish the god’s identification: horse and bird have been related to →Anat by M. H. POPE (1971: 400) and KEEL (1990: 215), who is known as B.’s consort (§ II.2.A.1.2); furthermore, bird and fish are also connected with the sphere of B. (§§ II.2.2.4–5).

**6.4.** A Late Bronze Age cylinder seal from Acco depicts a deity brandishing a sword (→Weapons [ANE]) and holding with his other hand a lion by its hind legs upside down (→Iconography of Animals [Palestine/Israel/Jordan] 29\*). Brandishing a weapon in itself is no diagnostic posture for B.; however, subduing the lion with a →weapon is sometimes related to B. (8\*; for B. attacking a lion, see also § II.1.B.1.2).

**6.5.** Several bronze figurines in seated posture giving a youthful impression of the enthroned, which were found at Megiddo (GGIG fig. 56; ORNAN 2011: fig. 18) and Hazor (GGIG fig. 141; ORNAN 2011: figs. 1–6) and are dating to the 14th to 11th centuries, have been suggested to represent enthroned B. (GGIG § 37; ORNAN 2011: 272–278; but see →Dagan § III.1). In her detailed discussion on one of the figurines from Hazor, T. ORNAN (2011: 269f) considers the combination of the seated posture and the tall headgear with its tree-and-horned-animals motif as indicative of the divinity of the figurine and the decoration on the headgear as marker for its identification with the Levantine storm god B.

## **B. Theriomorphic: bull**

**1.1. Standing.** The equation between the storm god and the →bull is well attested in numerous texts (GESE et al. 1970: 129; for images, see WEIPPERT 1961: 95–109; JAROŠ 1974: 351–388; 1982: 211–235; KEEL 1992: 169–193; ORNAN 2001: 14–19). It is therefore likely that figurines of standing bulls in bronze (43\* [‘Bull-Site’], 44 [cella of temple H at Hazor], 45 [Ugarit]) represent the storm god. Whether he was worshiped as Hadad, B., or under yet another name depends on the particular historical-geographical and socio-political context.

**1.2. Charging.** The charging →bull with lowered head is depicted on stamp seals from Tell Keisan (46\*) and Tell el-Far‘ah (South) (47) as attacking a lion, a constellation, which suggests that the bull stands for the storm god and underlines his aggressive power (see § II.2.B.1.1).

## **II.2. Associations**

A. Anthropomorphic – 1.1. Resheph (32–39, 41–42) – 1.2. Astarte or Anat (40, →Astarte 1) – 1.3. Teshub (8) – 1.4. Yam (5, 17–18) – 1.5. Mot (8) – 1.6. Possible – 2.1. Serpent (5, 17–18) – 2.2. Lion (8, 19–40, 42, 46–47) – 2.3. Bull (8) – 2.4. Bird, falcon (4, 16) – 2.5. Rhinoceros (16) – 2.6. Fish (4) – 2.7. Horned animal (41) – 2.8. Possible – 3.1. Worshiper or royal figure (1, 3, 7) – 3.2. Possible – B. Theriomorphic – 1.1. Lion (46–47) – 1.2. Scorpion? (47)

## **A. Anthropomorphic**

**1.1. Resheph.** Winged B. on a lion appears behind a figure standing on a →caprid (32\*–39,

**41–42)** who has been identified as →Resheph (StSt 3, 204, 302–304).

**1.2. Astarte or Anat.** On a cylinder seal from Bethel (→**Astarte 1\***), Astarte's name is written in hieroglyphs between two anthropomorphic deities. Since menacing B. (§ II.1.A.1.1) on this seal is not labeled, H. WEIPPERT (1988: 308) has argued that the name Astarte should not be linked to the goddess holding a spear (→Weapons [ANE]). Instead, it may identify Astarte as a third deity in the scene, while the spear-holding goddess is to be understood as Anat, B.'s consort, known from similar depictions such as the Anat stela from Beth-Shean (→**Anat 1\***). Arguing along the same lines, KEEL (GGIG § 50) added a rectangular stamp seal (**40**), which also depicts a divine triad including winged B. on a lion, a deity on horseback identified by KEEL with Anat (see also § II.1.A.6.3), and the name of Amun-Re written in hieroglyphs. However, "there is no epigraphic proof for Anat on horseback" according to CORNELIUS (1994: 77) who, opting for Astarte in the case of **40**, consequently relates the name Astarte to the goddess depicted on →**Astarte 1\***.

**1.3. Teshub.** On the seal of Ini-Teshub (**8\***), the Hurrian storm god striding over mountains appears together with his Levantine counterpart killing a rampant lion with the thrust of his spear (→Weapons [ANE]). This royal seal thus depicts two storm gods from neighboring regions in their particular iconographies, which may hint at a close relationship between the two areas.

**1.4. Yam.** See §§ II.1.A.1.3; II.1.A.4.2.

**1.5. Mot.** The seal of Ini-Teshub (**8\***) shows B.'s attack on a lion (see also § II.1.A.6.4), which may be interpreted as a display of B.'s prowess. Since Mot, one of B.'s major adversaries (KTU 1.6 vi), is compared to a lion (KTU 1.5 i:14f), and since the storm god is depicted elsewhere as slaying a lion (StSt 3, 193, fig. 26), one may suggest that the scene refers to B.'s mythological overcoming of Mot. Such a view may be further supported by the representation of a →bull overcoming a lion (**46\*–47**).

**1.6. Possible.** See § II.1.A.6.3 (enthroned deity).

**2.1. Serpent.** B. as serpent-slayer (**5\***, **17\*–18**) is depicted killing the horned serpent, which may be identified with →Yam.

**2.2. Lion.** The lion appears in at least two different roles in connection with B., namely, as an opponent to be slain (particularly in the Northern tradition), as a pedestal animal (in the Southern tradition), and possibly also as a helper meant to avert evil. The lion being killed (**8\***, **46\*–47**, § II.1.A.6.4) probably reflects the mythological struggle between B. and Mot. When B. is standing on a lion (**19\*–40**, **42**), the pedestal animal implies B.'s dominance over and control of values and powers represented by the lion. The lion's subordination is also involved when the animal is actively used to avert or attack evil (§ II.1.A.6.2).

**2.3. Bull.** The bull relates to B. as the storm god's major pedestal animal (DEMIRCIOLU

1939). However, B. appears in this stance only in the Northern tradition (**8\***).

**2.4. Bird, falcon.** A flying bird appears behind the menacing storm god on a cylinder seal from Ugarit (**4**) and may represent the presence of the storm god's consort (see also PORADA 1948: pl. 146:968; § II.1.A.6.3). On scarab **16\*** from Tell el-Far'ah (South), a falcon is depicted in front of Sethian B.

**2.5. Rhinoceros.** Above Sethian B. on scarab **16\*** a striding rhinoceros (not a hippopotamus, note the distinct horn) is represented.

**2.6. Fish.** On cylinder seal **4**, a fish appears behind menacing B. (see also the banquet scene from Ugarit in § II.1.A.6.3; CORNELIUS 1994: 225 and POPE 1971: 400 erroneously associate the fish with the enthroned).

**2.7. Horned animal.** On a scarab from Acco (**41**), apparently a horned animal serves as an atypical pedestal animal for B., who is depicted in the unusual role of an archer.

**2.8. Possible.** See §§ II.1.A.6.2 (→caprid); II.1. A.6.3 (horse).

**3.1. Worshiper or royal figure.** On the Mami stela (**7\***), B.-Zaphon is worshiped by a human in typical Egyptian dress. On the B. stela (**1\***), a small figure, probably the royal dedicator of the stela, is placed next to B. Cylinder seal **3** from Ugarit shows a similar composition.

**3.2. Possible.** See § II.1.A.6.2 (endangered human).

## **B. Theriomorphic**

**1.1. Lion.** KEEL (1990: 194–196) suggested that the composition of a →bull overcoming a lion rather than vice versa (**46\***; see also **47** and contrast, for example, with CROWFOOT/CROWFOOT 1938: pl. 10:1) is a symbolic representation of B. overcoming Mot.

**1.2. Scorpion?** Possibly, a →scorpion placed over the bull's back on **47** hints at the notion of fertility.

## **III. Sources**

**III.1. Chronological Range.** The earliest representation of the storm god attributed to B. is the menacing god on the B. stela (**1\***). There is no consensus on the monument's date, but it probably predates the Late Bronze Age (CORNELIUS 1994: 139f). This aligns with the fact that core elements of Ugaritic mythology trace back to Middle Bronze Age and earlier traditions. The iconography of the Levantine storm god from the Middle and Late Bronze Age predominantly reflects autochthonous West Asiatic features associated with the Hadad tradition—such as the menacing pose, the upright spear (→Weapons [ANE]), the floral scepter, and the curled hair lock (**2–4**, § II.1.A.6.1).

At the end of the Late Bronze Age and the transition to Iron Age I, the iconography of B. is increasingly exposed to Egyptian influence. Minor changes involve, for example, the

replacement of the spear (→Weapons [ANE]) by a was scepter (**7\***) or the mace (→Weapons [ANE]) by a khepesh sword (→Weapons [ANE]) (**5\***, →**Astarte 1\***). More significant is the adoption of Sethian wings (**9\***, **17\***, **19\***, **32\***). The Levantine storm god can even appear in a guise hardly distinct from Seth (compare B. on **7\*** with Seth on Egyptian stelae [CORNELIUS 1994: pls. 35:BR5; 36:BR6, BR8; 37:BR9; 38:BR10; 40:BR12, BR13] and on carnelian scarabs [CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 47: BM18, BM19]), which makes it likely that winged Seth with Asiatic features (**9\***) on a series of stamp seals (**10\*–16\***) could also have been perceived as B.

Iconographic types in this transitional and the following Early Iron Age Period comprise singular winged Seth (**9\***) who may have been perceived as B. in the Levant, serpent-slaying winged B. (**17\***; without wings, see **18**), B. standing on a lion (**19\*–28**), and the “post-Ramesside mass products” (11th/10th century; MÜNGER 2003), which associate B. with the Asiatic deity →Resheph (**32\*–39**, **41–42**).

Egyptian influence apparently did not encroach upon the Northern theriomorphic tradition representing B. as a bull. Bronze bull figurines from the Levant, known from the Middle Bronze Age (Ashkelon: STAGER 1991: 24–29; Byblos: DUNAND 1937/1939: pl. 58:2057, 2059–2061), Late Bronze Age II (**44–45**), and Iron Age I (**43\***), may be equated with B. (note also **46\*–47** for the Iron Age I motif of the bull overcoming a lion on stamp seals).

**III.2. Geographical Distribution.** Provenanced objects depicting B. indicate that in terms of north-south distribution, Ugarit (**1\*–4**, **7\***, **45** and possibly §§ II.1.A.6.1, 3) and Byblos (**12–14**, **19\***) are the most prominent sites for B. iconography. Representations of B. from Hazor (**9\***, **44**) correspond to this Northern tradition. A second, southern concentration may be observed at Tell el-Farḥah (South) in the Negev (**10\*–11**, **16\*–17\***, **32\***, **39**, **47**). A few items stem from Egypt (**20**, **21**) and Cyprus (**31**). More than half of the representations discussed in this article come from sites along the Levantine coast (Ugarit; Byblos; Acco: **41** and possibly § II.1.A.6.4; Tell Keisan: **33**, **46\***; Dor: **38**; Tell Qasile: **15**; and possibly Tell el-Ajjul: § II.1.A.6.2). The lowlands of Palestine/Israel and Jordan are better represented (Megiddo: **22**; Tall Deir Alla: **6**; Jericho: **23**; Lachish: **5\***, **26**) than the hill country (‘Bull-Site’: **43\***; Bethel: →**Astarte 1\***).

While the earlier and Syrian-influenced representations of the Levantine →storm god are restricted to the northern Levant (**1\*–4**, **9\*** and possibly §§ II.1.A.6.1, 3), the later Egyptian-influenced representations (**10\*–11**, **16\*–17\***, **20–21**, **32\***, **39**) did not penetrate the Levant beyond the Carmel except for the coastal city of Byblos (**19\***, **12–14**). However, the motif of winged B. on a lion together with →Resheph on a →caprid occurs north of the Carmel at Tell Keisan (**33**).

**III.3. Object Types.** Objects that depict the Levantine storm god comprise stelae (**1\***, **7\***), cylinder seals (**2–4**, **8\***, →**Astarte 1\***, and possibly §§ II.1.A.6.1, 4) and stamp seals, mostly scarabs (**5\*–6**, **9\*–32\***, **34–42**, **46\*–47**), a bulla (**33**), bronze figurines (**43\*–45**; § II.1.A.6.5), and possibly a pottery vessel (§ II.1.A.6.3). Representations on cylinder seals are found primarily in the northern Levant; exceptions are cylinder seals from Bethel (→**Astarte 1\***) and possibly Tell el-Ajjul (§ II.1.A.6.2), while scarabs are by and large found south of the Carmel with exceptions

at the coastal sites of Acco (**41**), Tell Keisan (**46\***), and Byblos (**19\***, **12–14**).

**IV. Conclusion.** The predominant type of early B. iconography corresponds to the Syro-Aramaeans model of the storm god in its canonical form of the High-Classical Syrian Period (OTTO 2000: 217): a smiting god holding a mace (→Weapons [ANE]) in his right hand and often a spear (→Weapons [ANE]) in his left (**1\*–4**). Despite the smiting pose, the compositions are rather static, not directed toward hostile forces, suggesting that the smiting pose functions primarily as a visual symbol of power rather than to characterize the god as actually fighting.

At the transition from the Late Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age, Egyptian influence introduces a significant change in B.'s role and iconography. The imagery of this period emphasizes a more dynamic storm god actively combating and conquering life-threatening forces, as shown by the protective, power-evoking wings of Seth (**10\*–16\***) and B.'s roles as serpent slayer (**5\*–6**, **8\***, **18**) and lion slayer (**8\*** and possibly § II.1.A.6.4). Along the same lines, the lion as pedestal animal (**19\*–40**, § II.1.A.6.1) should be considered a symbol of subordination and as a demonstration of B.'s ultimate control over life-threatening forces. The protection granted to a human against an attacking winged demon (§ II.1. A.6.2) and the blending of →Yam and →Apophis in the serpent-slayer tradition are emblematic of the spirit of a new age, in which the storm god has become a protector against all kinds of evil. B.'s appearance together with →Resheph (**32\*–39**, **41**) underlines his new role.

## V. Catalog

**1\*** Stela, limestone, 142 x 50 x 28 cm, Ugarit, 1700–1400. Paris, Louvre Museum, AO 15775. SCHAEFFER 1933: pl. 16; CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 32:BR1 **2** Cylinder seal, steatite, Ugarit, 1500–1350. AMIET 1992: no. 158; CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 45:BM5 **3** Cylinder seal, steatite, Ugarit, 1400–1200. AMIET 1992: no. 162 **4** Cylinder seal, steatite, Ugarit, 1400–1200. AMIET 1992: no. 171 **5\*** Scarab, enstatite, 13.7 x 9 x 6 mm, Lachish, 1250–1000. Jerusalem, Rockefeller Archaeological Museum, 36.1572. TUFNELL 1953: pls. 43/43A:22; CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 50:BM77 **6** Scarab, enstatite, Tall Deir Alla, 1250–1000. CSAJ: Tall Deir Alla no. 4 **7\*** Stela, sandstone, 29 cm, Ugarit, 1300. Paris, Louvre Museum, AO 13176. SCHAEFFER 1929: 294; 1931: pl. 6; CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 39:BR11 **8\*** Cylinder seal impression, clay, 47 x 26 mm, Ugarit, 1275–1250. Damascus, Damascus National Museum, 3565. SCHAEFFER 1956: figs. 32–33; StSt 3, 193, fig. 25; CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 51:BM85 **9\*** Scarab, enstatite, 13 x 9.5 x 6 mm, 1100–900. Fribourg, Collection Keel, AS 1975.13 71. StSt 3, 305, fig. 71; CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 48:BM34 **10\*** Scarab, enstatite, 11.3 x 8.4 x 5 mm, Tell el-Far'ah (South), 1100–900. Jerusalem, Rockefeller Museum, IAA I.4318. CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 48:BM32; CSAPI 3: Tell el-Far'ah-Süd no. 153 **11** Scarab, enstatite, Tell el-Far'ah (South), 1100–900. CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 48:BM33; CSAPI 3: Tell el-Far'ah-Süd no. 238 **12** Scarab, enstatite, Byblos, 1100–900. CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 47:BM27 **13** Scarab, composition, Byblos, 1100–900. CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 48:BM29 **14** Scarab, Byblos, 1100–900. CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 48:BM30 **15** Pyramidal stamp seal, glass, Tell Qasile, 1150. CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 48:BM31 **16\*** Scarab, enstatite, 15 x 11 x 7 mm, Tell el-Far'ah (South), 1292–1070. CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 48:BM43; CSAPI 3: Tell el-Far'ah-Süd no. 718 **17\*** Scarab, enstatite, 22.7 x 15.6 x 9.5 mm, Tell el-Far'ah (South), 1400–1200. London, Institute of Archaeology, E. VI 24/29. CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 50:BM76; CSAPI 3: Tell el-Far'ah-Süd no. 138 **18** Scarab, 1400–1200. CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 50:BM80 **19\*** Scarab, composition, 15 x 11 mm, Byblos, 1100–900. DUNAND 1937: pl. 128:3223; 1939: 217; CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 49:BM47 **20** Scarab, Tell el-Yahudiya, 1100–900. CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 48:BM45 **21** Scarab, enstatite, El-Badari, 1100–900. CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 49:BM46 **22** Conoid, composition, Megiddo, 1100–900. CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 49:BM48 **23** Scarab, enstatite, Jericho, 1050–840. CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 49:BM49; CSAPI 5: Jericho no. 60 **24** Scarab, 1100–900. CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 49:BM50 **25–26** Scarab, enstatite, 1100–900. CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 49:BM51, BM52 **27** Scarab, 1100–900. CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 49:BM53 **28** Scarab, stone, 1100–900. CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 49:BM54 **29** Scarab, 1100–900. CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 49:BM55 **30** Pyramidal seal, 1100–900. CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 49:BM56 **31** Scarab, limestone, Salamis, 1100–1000. REYES 2001: fig. 18a **32\*** Scarab, enstatite, 15.5 x 12.4 x 8.4 mm, Tell el-Far'ah (South), 1100–900. London, Institute of Archaeology, E. VII 83/6. CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 49:BM59; CSAPI 3: Tell el-Far'ah-Süd no. 374 **33** Stamp seal impression (on bulla), clay, Tell Keisan, 1070–900. CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 49:BM57; CSAPI 5: Tell Keisan no. 29 **34** Scarab, enstatite, Lachish, 1100–900. CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 49:BM58 **35** Scarab, enstatite, 1100–900. CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 49:BM60 **36** Caprid scaraboid, slate, 1100–900. CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 49:BM61 **37** Scarab, enstatite, Ashdod, 1100–900. CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 49:BM62; CSAPI 1: Ashdod no. 54 **38** Scarab, enstatite, Dor, 1100–900. CSAPI 2: Dor no. 27 **39** Scarab, enstatite, Tell el-Far'ah (South), 1100–900. CSAPI 3: Tell el-Far'ah-Süd no. 919 **40** Rectangular stamp seal, stone, 1100–900. CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 49:BM63 **41** Scarab, enstatite, Acco, 1100–900. CSAPI 1: Akko no. 86; CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 50:BM66 **42** Scarab, enstatite, 1100–900. CORNELIUS 1994: pl. 50:BM67 **43\*** Figurine, bronze, 17.5 x 12.4 cm, Dhahret et-Tawileh ("Bull Site"), 1250–1150. MAZAR 1982: fig. 3; KEEL 1992: fig. 146; GGIG fig. 142 **44** Figurine, bronze, Hazor, 1300–1200. YADIN et al. 1961/1989: pl. 341; KEEL 1992: fig. 147 **45** Figurine, bronze, Ugarit, 1400–1200. KEEL 1992: fig. 148 **46\*** Scarab, enstatite, 18 x 13.5 x 8.5 mm, Tell Keisan, 1200–980. CSAPI 5: Tell Keisan no. 7 **47** Ox head scaraboid, obsidian, Tell el-Far'ah (South), 1150–900. CSAPI

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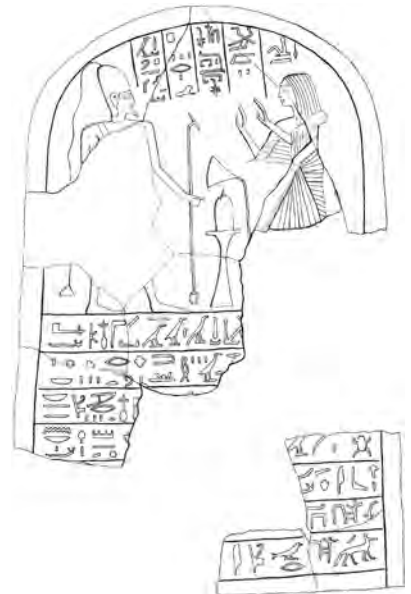
## VIII. Illustrations



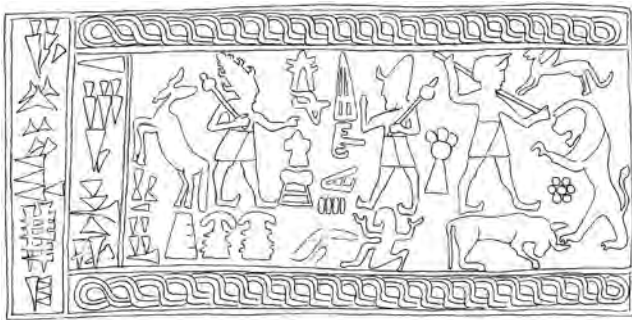
Baal 1



Baal 5



Baal 7



Baal 8



Baal 9



Baal 10



Baal 16



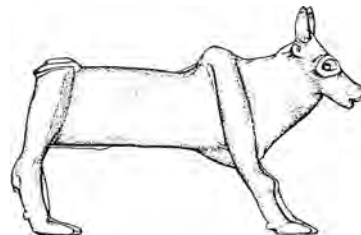
Baal 17



Baal 19



Baal 32



Baal 43



Baal 46

# Scorpion (Palestine/Israel/Jordan)

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Online: 15 October 2008 / Updated: 27 April 2026

Permalink: <https://>

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**I. Introduction.** In ancient Near Eastern art, the s. may represent a particular deity (→Ishara in Mesopotamia; Selqet in Egypt). More commonly, however, it functioned as a bearer of numinous power. In this capacity its qualities were ambivalent: in Mesopotamia, the animal might be linked with fertility (ZERNECKE 2008) or serve as a symbol of ideal motherhood (RADNER 2008: 495), yet it could also possess an apotropaic force to ward off evil. The s. also appears in astral, solar, and lunar contexts. Evidence further suggests that it played a role in legal matters, connected with Ishara's function as guardian of oaths, particularly through the power to afflict with illness those who broke them (for Mesopotamia, see VAN BUREN 1937/1939). In Egypt, the s.'s venomous sting made it a fitting symbol of protection, while its nocturnal habits, reproductive capacity, and mode of giving birth associated it with life-sustaining, regenerative, and procreative powers (HORNUNG/STAEHELIN 1976: 131–133; BEHRENS 1984: 987f). In Palestine/Israel and Jordan, representations of the s. known from excavations do not permit a secure identification with any particular deity. Nevertheless, the numinous qualities attributed to the animal invite closer consideration of its role in religious thought as expressed through visual art.

A. E. ZERNECKE (2008) proposed that the positive perception of the s. in ancient Near Eastern visual and textual sources may, in addition to zoological factors (such as the mating dance, the large number of offspring, intensive brood care, or the erect tail as a phallic symbol), also relate to the zodiacal sign of Scorpius. Drawing on Mesopotamian astrological texts, she associates the heliacal rising of Scorpius with the agricultural calendar, which was designed to determine the appropriate time for plowing and sowing during the autumn rainy season

to ensure optimal yields. ZERNECKE (2008: 121) further suggests that, within this astrological-agricultural framework, the s. may have evolved into a general symbol of life-promoting power, guaranteeing prosperity and fertility. While this is a plausible hypothesis, ZERNECKE (2008: 117–120) adduces only circumstantial, not direct, textual evidence explicitly linking Scorpius with the timing of plowing and sowing. Furthermore, from a Levantine perspective, the reliance on Mesopotamian sources—particularly the *MUL.APIN* lists—is problematic, even if Scorpius did attract attention in various other cultures (ROGERS 1998: 25).

TH. STAUBLI (2009/2010: 626) applied this astrological-agricultural nexus of the s. to the iconographic syntax on seals, arguing that its placement—whether in front of a →caprid or →bovine in vertical alignment, or above it in horizontal orientation, rather than in the animal's natural habitat on the ground—signals a symbolic value: the constellation Scorpius rising vertically into the night sky, where it comes to rest high above.

To what extent does the iconographic evidence support this line of thought? The s. is, indeed, frequently depicted above various animals in representations from Palestine/Israel—caprids (**44–45**, **51\***, **53–55**, **58–59**, **61–62**, **65**, **87**), bovines (**36\***, **67\*–70**), equids (**84–85\***, →**Dog [ANE] 29\***), griffins (**65**, **88\***), lions (**78\***, **80**), bird and fish (→**Dog [ANE] 29\***), canid (**71\***), and serpent (**78\***)—thus, hinting at a potential reference to Scorpius. Yet are there explicit iconographic indicators that the spatial placement of the s. above an animal should in fact be understood as Scorpius?

Since both Scorpius and the moon played key roles in agricultural timing, one could expect the moon to be present in such representations. Surprisingly, it appears only once (**69\***). Thus, this rarity casts an initial doubt on the argument that the s. represents Scorpius based solely on its position above animals. Furthermore, within the corpus considered here, the s. is virtually never depicted together with stars when placed above an animal—with the possible exception of **45** and **70**, should the minute-sized drilled holes adjacent to the s. be taken as representations of stars—whose presence would likewise signal an astral context and thus clarify the function of the s. as Scorpius. In contrast, on Middle Bronze Age IIA cylinder seal →**Iconography of Animals 21\***, the s. appears at the bottom of the composition, while a star and crescent moon are positioned prominently at the top, suggesting a celestial counterpart to the terrestrial creature below. This arrangement clearly assigns the s. to the terrestrial realm, a clarity absent when the s. is shown above animals—a placement that has been taken to suggest a celestial realm—though typically no celestial bodies are present.

Another possible exception, alongside **45** and **70**, is a cylinder seal impression from Lachish (BECK 1998: fig. 1:2), dating to the Middle Bronze Age IIA, which shows an upward-facing s. serving as the focal point at the head of a procession of two caprids (for a comparable processional scene, see **64\*** in § II.2.3.11, where an ibex and a griffin advance toward an oversized upward-oriented s. that forms the focal point); a star appears either at the end of the procession or adjacent to the s., depending on the viewer's perspective. However, whether this temporally distant, singular depiction can dispel the doubts raised by arguments based on Iron Age representations seems questionable.

Moreover, if **68\*** (see § II.2.3.2), with the s. placed above a bovine, and **50\*** (see § II.2.3.1), with the s. below the horned animal, are understood as expressing the same theme, then the differing spatial positions undermine the argument that the placement of a s. above an animal inevitably signifies Scorpius. Consequently, from a strictly iconographic perspective, there is little evidence to support the view that the positioning of the s. above animals should be equated with Scorpius as part of the celestial realm. The proposed allusion of the s. in front of animals or hybrid beings (**40\*** [behind], **41–43**, **47–49**, **52\***, **60–61**, **64\***, **66**, **86**) to the rising of Scorpius is iconographically even more difficult to demonstrate. It appears more evident that, in this case, the s. functions in an attributive or qualifying capacity, based on its specific characteristics, and constitutes the focal point of the motif (see § II.2.3.11 with **64\***).

Furthermore, the representations under consideration depict almost exclusively animals, particularly caprids, frequently shown suckling their young (**51\***, **53–55**, **58–59?**, **61–62**)—thereby linking the s. to animal husbandry rather than agriculture, while leaving unexplained its position above animals or hybrid beings unrelated to husbandry, such as, for example, lions, griffins, or serpents.

The absence of a clear astral context does not, however, preclude that the s. once had an astral dimension. Yet one should avoid suggesting an iconographic astral association merely because the s. is depicted in the “sky.” Rather, the omission of moon and stars points more strongly to a relationship between the s. and the animals themselves than to an identification with the zodiacal Scorpius. In other words, the users of these seal-amulets were less concerned with astrology than with the s.’s effective influence on the animals represented.

It is therefore proposed that the insights of ZERNECKE and STAUBLI should be refined. One possible approach, following ZERNECKE, is to view the s. in these iconographic constellations as belonging to a post-astrological phase, where the emphasis lies on its general life-enhancing force. Accordingly, the s.’s peculiar placement simply reflects its numinous character—or, in line with STAUBLI’s argument, its symbolic value—setting it apart from its natural, terrestrial existence.

## II. Typology

### II.1. Phenotypes

The s. is consistently shown from a dorsal view. Key visual markers include its claws, arched tail, and laterally extended legs. Morphological variations concern primarily the number of leg pairs (ranging from none to four, occasionally with an irregular count of legs from 1/2 up to 7/9) and the depiction of the claws (*pedipalps*), which may be rendered in various ways: resembling a pair of round brackets ( ), a horizontally rotated C, a simple V-shape, or angle brackets < >. Indicated pincers (*chela*) are rare; in some cases, mouthparts (*chelicerae*) are shown. The tail may be rendered with or without segmented articulation or a terminal sting.

In Palestine/Israel and Jordan, these characteristics give rise to more than 40 phenotypes (see pp. 15f with § IIIa–b in the scientific section of the Swiss National Science Foundation project proposal no. 150338 on the *Iconography of Animals in Palestine/Israel and Jordan* [2013]), of which six principal types can be identified (see § 5.2 in an unpublished detailed typological

study on the 'Iconography of the Scorpion' prepared for the *Dictionary of Nature Images of the Bible* [DNI], Tel Aviv University [EGGLER 2020]). The s. featuring three pairs of legs, claws without pincers, and a simple curved tail without indicated segments or a sting is the most common type, occurring consistently from the Late Bronze Age through Iron Age II.

The style of representation ranges from naturalistic to highly abstract, sometimes resulting in nothing more than a Y-shaped s., which in certain cases complicates identification and can even lead to "scorpiomania ... seeing a scorpion every time a quadruped is paired with an unidentified object" (GUILLAUME 2007: 314). Consequently, there are variations in the number of proposed s. representations (ZERNECKE 2008: 108, n. 8; STAUBLI 2009: figs. 3c, g–k, m, the latter representing plants rather than animals), underscoring the need for a more precise clarification of the "lexical" and "syntactical" relationships (see in this regard, →Iconography of Animals [Palestine/Israel/Jordan] § II.1.1–2) to better understand the semantics of iconems in ancient Near Eastern art.

This revised and expanded version on the iconography of the s. is limited to representations from Palestine/Israel and Jordan, spanning the Late Bronze Age to the Persian Period. It relies on the catalog of the DNI study, which seeks to exclude questionable s. representations.

## II.2. Associations

1. Alone (and with minor additions) (1–28) 2.1. Master-of-scorpions (29–35) 2.2. Amun-Re (17, 22b, 36) 2.3. Nude goddess (37) 2.4. Falcon-headed god (25c) 2.5. Unidentified deities, divine symbol (38–39) 3.1. Caprid (40–66) 3.2. Bovine (25b, 36, 67–72) 3.3. Serpent (73–79?) 3.4. Lion (1, 27b, 36, 78, 80–81) 3.5. Bird (80, 82?) 3.6. Fish (11, 39?, 83, →Dog [ANE] 29) 3.7. Equid (84–85, →Dog [ANE] 29) 3.8. Canid (71) 3.9. Deer (86) 3.10. Unidentified quadruped (46, 50, 87) 3.11. Griffin (26, 64–65, 67, 88) 4. Human figure (35, 36d, 50, 68, 81–82, 89–91\*, →Dog [ANE] 29)

**1. Alone (and with minor additions).** The earliest likely depiction of a single s.—possibly even two—is impressed on a vessel from Ai, dated to the Early Bronze Age III (MARQUET-KRAUSE 1949: II no. 51:1195). In the period here under discussion, the s. frequently appears as a single motif (1–13), but may also be doubled (14\*–20) or tripled (21\*) to reinforce its potency. Since this motif lacks an iconographic context, the s.'s function cannot be determined with certainty. The fact that only five examples were recovered from tombs, however, makes a primarily regenerative or life-sustaining role unlikely. More plausibly, these representations served an apotropaic function, although when employed as burial objects, a regenerative aspect cannot be excluded.

When the s. appears as the principal motif, it may be accompanied by minor elements such as nfr hieroglyphs (22a\*–24?), suggesting an association with regeneration (CSAPI E: § 459). If the cross-like objects on the double-sided inscribed rectangular stamp seals from Gezer (25a\*–26) represent ankh signs, a similar regenerative meaning for the s. would apply. An added sun disk (27a\*–28; see also 37\*, 43, 68\*, 71\*, and 86\* for the combination of a s. with a sun disk) may evoke the sun god →Re, reinforcing this regenerative aspect (see Spell 86 from the Book of the Dead; HORNUNG/STAEHELIN 1976: 132). In one instance, the s. is shown together with two V-shaped objects (24).

**2.1. Master-of-scorpions.** Most s. representations convey a positive force associated with

the animal. The main exception is the constellation of the master-of-scorpions (→Master-of-Animals [ANE]). The theme of controlling s.s by holding them in the hand can be traced back to Horus as Shed, the savior god (KEEL 1978: 148f). On stamp seals, the motif appears in an Asiatic style, showing the hero holding the s.s in his raised hands (29–34).

On a scaraboid from Megiddo, a uraeus and a s. flank a striding figure wearing the Blue Crown (→Crown [Egypt] § II.1.2.7) (35). The lowered “rear” arm merges into the tail of an outward-facing uraeus, while the “front” arm—whose forearm is broken off—probably, based on the surviving fragments, once continued into the tail of the upward-facing s. Whether the figure is to be understood as a child and thus to be identified with →Harpocrates (KEEL 2013: 981) cannot be established with certainty due to the summary execution of the piece and the absence of diagnostic markers.

**2.2. Amun-Re.** A conoid from Tell el-Far‘ah (South) depicts a s. above a →bull on the seal’s base (36\*), while two of its sides bear hieroglyphs that cryptically allude to the name of Amun-Re (36b\*). By contrast, the name of Amun-Re is explicitly spelled out on two rectangular stamp seals—one from Timna (17), the other from Tell el-Ajjul (22b\*)—which feature s.s on the reverse side.

**2.3. Nude goddess.** Goddesses shown together with a s. are exceptionally rare and appear only in Jordan. An early instance occurs on the Middle Bronze Age IIA cylinder seal →Iconography of Animals 21\*, where a s. appears before a suppliant goddess. Another example is a triangular seal from Buseira, on which flanking s.s accompany a nude, front-facing goddess who offers her breasts (37\*). This scene is especially noteworthy because it links the s. with the theme of nourishment.

**2.4. Falcon-headed god.** A falcon-headed deity, shown on the side of rectangular seal 25c\* from Gezer, is indirectly linked to the s.

**2.5. Unidentified deities, divine symbol.** On a scaraboid from Tell el-Hammah, two striding figures are flanked by an →ostrich and a s. (38\*). The projections on their heads—possibly horns, though not noted in CSAPI 4: 547—may suggest a divine status. Because of the scene’s symmetry and the shared arid habitat of the two creatures, it is most likely that both animals convey the same idea. The overlapping symbolic associations of the s. and the ostrich (→Ostrich, § 6.1.1.1) point to a meaning of protection.

If the triangle on a cylinder seal from Megiddo (39\*) represents a fragment of the →spade of →Marduk, it would link the s. with the symbol of Babylon’s patron deity.

**3.1. Caprid.** The association of the s. with horned animals is documented as early as the first half of the 4th millennium. A mudbrick from the copper-production site of Tall Hujayrat al-Ghuzlan in the Wadi Araba, near modern Aqaba, bears an impression showing the s. beneath what may be an *Oryx leucoryx*, with a possible *Oryx dammah* behind it (KHALIL et al. 2003: fig. 6). Notably, the s. is set vertically, facing the oryx, which suggests a deliberate relationship

between the two figures.

In the period here under discussion, the s. is most often depicted with a single →caprid (**40\***–**46\***), while depictions featuring two caprids are less frequent (**47**–**49**). Both animals with horns ranging from short to medium-long (**40\***, **44**–**45**, **47**–**49**)—probably domesticated goats (*Capra aegagrus hircus*) or sheep (*Ovis aries*)—and long-horned, scimitar-shaped forms (**41**–**43**) whose horns curve across the entire body, likely wild goats (*Capra aegagrus*), are represented. Typically, the s. is placed in front of the caprid, usually facing upward (**47**: downward), and is disproportionately large, giving each animal equal prominence (see also **64\*** in § II.2.3.2). On two occasions, the s. is shown above the animal's back (**44**–**45**). A young animal may be represented on rectangular stamp seal **50\*** from Beth-Shemesh. In this instance, the s. is positioned beneath the horned animal.

A substantial group of representations depicts the s. together with a caprid suckling its young (**51\***–**59\***, **60**–**63**), a powerful symbol of life's propagation, motherhood, and the prosperity of the herd (for comparable early Mesopotamian depictions, see KEEL 1980: figs. 55, 59, 62, 80). Typically, the s. is shown above the back of the caprid, facing it (**51\***, **53**–**55**, **58**; facing away: **59**), while on conoid **57\*** from Gezer it may alternatively be interpreted as positioned between two caprids arranged in point symmetry, one above the other (regarding the spatial arrangement, see CSAPI E: fig. 269). Exceptions include **52\*** and **60**, where the s. appears in front, and **61**–**62** and **63**, where it is placed both in front of and above a suckling caprid. On conoid **63** from En Gev, an additional motif occurs: three caprids flanking a tree (for the specific combination of a tree flanked by caprids with a s. present, see also **65**). Unique is conoid **56** from Tell en-Nasbeh, which duplicates the composition, showing two long-horned caprids suckling a young one, beneath which two s.s—merged into a single figure—are depicted.

Other motifs featuring a s. and a caprid include: a Late Bronze Age cylinder seal from Tell Abu Hawam depicting a procession of animals—a s., caprid, and griffin (**64\***); a Late Bronze Age cylinder seal from Lachish, showing two caprids flanking a tree, with a s. in the interrupted upper border decoration above one of the caprids, behind which a griffin is also rendered (**65**); and a seal impression on a handle from Dhiban, portraying a human figure (or possibly two) above a striding caprid facing an upward-oriented s. (**66**). A scaraboid from Samaria (see **70** in § II.2.3.2) shows, from bottom to top, a caprid, a bovine, and finally the s., indirectly linking the s. with the caprid. The vertical stacking of the animals recalls the arrangement on the so-called Orpheus Jug from Megiddo (→**Dog [ANE] 29\***).

**3.2. Bovine.** Although →bovines are several times associated with s.s, each instance presents a unique motif, yet not entirely disconnected from other s.-related representations. Late Bronze Age cylinder seal **67\*** from Lachish depicts a procession consisting of a human figure, a bovine, and a griffin, with a smaller s. shown above the bovine (see also a cylinder seal impression from Megiddo, dating to the last third of the 4th millennium, where the s. precedes the bovine in what appears to be an animal procession, with a lion placed before the s.; LOUD 1948: pl. 160:4; BEN-TOR 1978: fig. 8:48.IIC-2). A similar combination of three animals—s., caprid, and griffin—appears on a Late Bronze Age cylinder seal from Tell Abu Hawam (**64\***). In this

case, the bovine is replaced by a caprid, and the s., equal in size to the other two animals, is placed between them or in front, depending on where the scene is considered to begin.

A s. placed above a bovine is also a common feature of a group of Early Iron Age stamp seals (**36\***, **68\*–72**). The s. above the bovine on cylinder seal **67\*** from Lachish may represent a precursor to conoid **36\*** from Tell el-Far'ah (South), with the latter perhaps excerpted from a larger composition. Furthermore, while the base design and object type of **36\***—a conoid—point to Asiatic influence, its side decoration bearing the name of Amun-Re indicates Egyptian affinity.

The combination of a single s. and bovine also appears on a Late Bronze Age double-sided engraved rectangular stamp seal with the s. on one side and the bovine on the other (**25b\***). O. KEEL (CSAPI 4: 322) hesitates to classify this object as either an Egyptian-type I or a non-Egyptian-type III rectangular seal, noting that the bovine motif, based on close parallels, is more characteristic of Asiatic influence.

In comparison to **36\***, scarab **68\*** from Acco includes, alongside the bovine with the s. above it, a tree (on the significance of the tree or twig, see SCHROER 1989: 126–129; STAUBLI 2005) and a human figure standing before them. On another scarab from Acco (**69\***), the combination of a bovine with a s. above it appears in antithetical, mirror-image opposition, facing inward (regarding the spatial arrangement, see CSAPI E: fig. 264), with a moon in its two phases placed between the two s.s. The tree on scarab **68\*** from Acco and the moon on scarab **69\*** from the same site both underscore the theme of regeneration and fertility—the latter especially in connection with cattle (THEUER 2000: 565).

A scaraboid from Samaria (**70**; see also § II.2.3.1) expands the bovine-s. motif of conoid **36\*** from Tell el-Far'ah (South) by adding a caprid beneath the bovine. By contrast, the layout on the square stamp seal **71\*** from Acco is unique: on its right side, a vertically upward-facing bovine appears beneath the moon, while on the left, a canid, facing left, is shown below a s., surmounted by a sun disk.

The design of conoid **72** from Beth-Zur is similar to that of conoid **57\*** from Gezer and to some extent also recalls **36\***, except that the two bovines are arranged as mirror images, one atop the other (regarding the spatial arrangement, see CSAPI E: fig. 268), and a third bovine is added on the left side, giving the impression that the s. in the center is encircled by a herd of bovines.

In conclusion, it appears that the combination of bovines with a s. on Early Iron Age II stamp seals should be understood in the same way as their pairing with caprids.

**3.3. Serpent.** The earliest known depiction of a s. with serpents appears on a stone carving from Har Karkom in the southern Negev (ANATI 1996: fig. 126), dated by the excavator to 3800–2000. It shows a lizard attacked by six serpents and two s.s. The serpents are not Egyptian erect uraei but are rendered from above with winding bodies, typical of Asiatic representations (KEEL 1992: 195–198). This is the only scene that portrays the s. in a hunting context.

Five of six depictions in the corpus here under discussion render the serpent in connection with the s. as an erect uraeus, underlining the evil-averting aspect of the s. (**35**, **73–77**).

Particularly noteworthy is **75\***, where the two animals are fused at their tails into a single form, thereby enhancing their power; this effect is further intensified by depicting this fused form twice. When the poisonous sting is transformed into the spitting cobra, the apotropaic function becomes evident (see, for example, the outward-facing, flanking, and thus s.-protecting uraei on **77**; by contrast, the inward-facing flanking uraei on **73** intensify the emphasis on the central s., thereby further empowering it). More importantly, the pairing of the uraeus and s. helps to explain the significance of the s., whether it appears alone, in doubled form, or even tripled (§ II.2.1).

The s., shown next to a serpent coiled into a tight spiral and beneath another serpent stretched horizontally across the top of the scene on a vessel painting from Tall Zira'a (**78\***), forms part of an animal procession with a lyre player.

While **78\*** uniquely associates the s. with a serpent, it is instructive to consider, in an excursus, other lyre-player animal processions to contextualize the s.'s role in subordinate and dominant positions. Among comparable lyre-player processions, the closest parallel is the vessel painting on the 11th-century so-called Orpheus Jug from Megiddo (→**Dog [ANE] 29\***), where the s. also appears in small scale and subordinate position above the other animals (in this regard, see also **67\***), though it is not associated with a serpent—a feature unique to **78\***. By contrast, a contemporary lyre-player scene on a cylinder seal from Tarsus (DOTHAN 1982: 138, fig. 28:2) shows two oversized s.s, equal in importance to the other animals and well integrated into the procession, comparable to the large s. on **64\***, yet again here also without a serpent.

In sum, the s. occurs with different animals in processions—however, only on **78\*** in association with a serpent, and otherwise either without a lyre player (**64\***, **67\***) or with one (**78\***, →**Dog [ANE] 29\***; DOTHAN 1982: 138, fig. 28:2)—and in roles ranging from subordinate (**67\***, →**Dog [ANE] 29\***) to dominant (**64\***; DOTHAN 1982: 138, fig. 28:2). The lack of an association with a specific animal, the frequent depiction of the s. in small size, and its exclusion from the main procession emphasize its secondary role, even though it could also be elevated to a prominent position in the animal procession, as on **64\*** and the cylinder seal from Tarsus.

Concerning the s.'s association with a serpent, it should be noted for completeness that the wavy line beside the s. on bulla **79** from Tall Jalul may perhaps be interpreted as a serpent.

**3.4. Lion.** No consistent pattern emerges when the s. is paired with a lion. On a Late Bronze Age vessel painting from Tall Zira'a (**78\***), a small s. appears in an animal procession above the hind part of a lion and before a coiled →serpent, with another serpent stretched horizontally above them. The overall arrangement of the scene recalls that of the Late Bronze cylinder seal **67\*** from Lachish, which shows a human figure, a →bovine, and a griffin, with a small s. positioned above the hind part of the bovine.

The only Egyptian object type to combine a lion with a s. is a Late Bronze Age scarab from Lachish (**80**), depicting a striding, roaring lion trampling a prone human with the s. placed above the lion; in front stands a falcon. Particularly striking is the addition of the s. to a motif that so overtly displays aggressive power. The s. may here symbolize protection of the victorious royal power embodied by the lion (on the protective role of the s. regarding the pharaoh, see

HORNUNG/STAEHELIN 1976: 132).

A scaraboid from Tell en-Nasbeh further presents an assortment of motifs and hieroglyphs, among them a striding lion above a s. (**81**). Indirect associations also occur on two bifacial rectangular stamp seals—one from Tell el-Ajjul (**1**), the other from Acco (**27\***)—which show each animal on one side. Likewise, although not directly combined with the s., a lion appears on one side of conoid **36\*** from Tell el-Far<sup>c</sup>ah (South), whose base depicts a s. above a →bull.

**3.5. Bird.** Already on an 18th-century Syrian cylinder seal from Megiddo (LOUD 1948: pl. 160:3; KEEL 1992: fig. 109; OTTO 2000: no. 369; IPIAO 2: no. 444), six doves appear in two main registers, while two s.s—arranged vertically, one above the other—are shown in the side register. The objects along the bottom of the composition remain unclear; interpretations range from blossoms (IPIAO 2: no. 444) to ducks (ZERNECKE 2008: 109).

On a 14th- to 13th-centuries scarab from Lachish (**80**), a standing falcon, to the right, occupies the full height of the plinth before a lion striding over a human, with a s. placed above the latter. A 10th- to 8th-centuries scaraboid from Tell Jemmeh (**82\***) shows a falcon standing in front of two striding figures; below, in a separate register, a solitary s. appears. Thus, if the falcon is associated with the s. at all, the connection is only secondary. Nor is the s. in **85\***, which is discussed extensively in § II.2.3.7, directly linked with the bird; rather, together with the equid, it forms an iconographic unit with a shared focus. The swan-like bird on the so-called Orpheus Jug from Megiddo (→**Dog [ANE] 29\***) is likewise unlikely to be related to the s., but instead to the fish (perhaps indicating the natural habitat of a water bird) and the equid.

**3.6. Fish.** A fish accompanied by a s. appears on a 14th-century cylinder seal impression from Gezer (**83\***) and on the 11th-century so-called Orpheus Jug from Megiddo (→**Dog [ANE] 29\***). On the impression, a s. faces a fish in the lower left. Both animals are integrated into a densely packed composition of numerous symbols, most of them animals. At the center stands a tall altar with a vessel on top, suggesting a cultic context. Except for the disproportionately large →dog with its pointed head and the moon, all motifs—including the fish and s.—seem to hold equal weight, as indicated by their size and placement. The animals on the left represent surface- or water-dwelling creatures, while those on the right consist of quadrupeds and birds.

In contrast, the s. on →**Dog [ANE] 29\*** is differently positioned and oriented. It does not face the fish, and both motifs are relegated to a subordinate role, being small in scale, placed in the upper register, and excluded from the procession.

It may also be conjectured that a fragmentary engraving on the 8th/7th-century cylinder seal **39\*** from Megiddo could represent a fish.

Of Egyptian tradition is the Nile tilapia, indirectly associated with a solitary s. on the reverse of rectangular stamp seal **11** from Gath. Whereas in Egyptian iconography the apotropaic function of the s. predominates (§ II.2.1), on **11** it is linked with regeneration, since the tilapia embodies precisely this theme (HORNUNG/STAEHELIN 1976: 110f). This interpretation is reinforced by the combination of the s. with the nfr hieroglyph and the ankh sign, both symbols of rejuvenation, regeneration, and life. A plausible explanation is that the s. functions here as protector of life

and guarantor of renewal.

**3.7. Equid.** The s. is associated with an equid on a scarab (**84**), a scaraboid (**85\***), and on the so-called Orpheus Jug from Megiddo (→**Dog [ANE] 29\***). In all three instances, the s. appears above the equid. On **84** from Megiddo, the s. is shown solely with the equid; on **85\*** from Tell Keisan it is accompanied by a bird below and a plant element in front of the equid; and on →**Dog [ANE] 29\*** it is placed behind a lyre player leading a procession of stacked animals (equid, fish, bird) toward a plant.

The interpretive approach taken in the original publication of **85\*** from Tell Keisan (KEEL 1980a: 271–273) is noteworthy. It reflects an early stage in KEEL’s iconographic research (EGGLER 2024: 57), particularly evident in his book on biblical symbolism, first published in 1972 (= KEEL 1997). At that time, his method consisted of weaving a network of associative images, often drawn from geographically and chronologically distant contexts, but without establishing a strictly genealogical connection to the motif discussed. Careful examination of the cited evidence and arguments therefore raises doubts about the validity of KEEL’s (1980a: 273) interpretation of **85\*** as representing four aspects of the Syrian goddess: the horse expressing her nature as a combative and untamed virgin, the dove symbolizing her celestial and elusive aspect, the s. indicating her connection to love, procreation, birth, and nursing, and the tree conveying her maternal, fertile, and protective character.

However, the casual dismissal of difficulties that might have challenged the intended conclusion is problematic. Regarding the position of the s. and the bird, KEEL observes:

The only strange thing is that the dove is placed below the horse and the scorpion above it. This surprising arrangement is most likely due to the fact that the scorpion requires more space than the bird. Now, the area available above the horse’s back was more ample than that delimited by its legs. Even if one admits that a conceptual connection exists between the three animals, it remains purely conceptual and should not be inappropriately transferred to the organization of the visual space” (KEEL 1980a: 273, my translation).

The first part of this argument assumes the design resulted from a constructional mishap, implying that the seal cutter began his work without considering the composition in advance—ultimately a hypothesis that cannot be demonstrated. Since **84** and **85\*** likewise depict the s. above an equid, an underlying reason or iconographic tradition may therefore be considered to account for its placement in the upper register (see § I).

The second part of KEEL’s argument reflects his longstanding justified methodological critique of “literalistic” or “illustrative” uses of ancient Near Eastern imagery that neglect its conceptual dimension (EGGLER 2024: 57 with fn. 3). However, to dismiss an inquiry into a motif’s spatial positioning solely because it originates in a literal observation is problematic, for it risks prematurely curtailing a potentially fruitful line of investigation. Despite the elaborate network of arguments constructed for his interpretation, it is striking that KEEL did not pursue the “strange thing” itself as an iconographic and conceptual challenge worthy of deeper exploration. “Literal” features of motifs that deviate from expectations can serve as stumbling blocks pointing to overlooked concepts, in this case a spatial dimension (on mythical space, see CASSIRER 1955: 83–92). In the context of s. iconography, this recalls the depiction of the s.

with celestial bodies (**69\***), which associate it with an “unnatural habitat” (see § I).

Accordingly, it seems worthwhile to explore interpretive avenues beyond those proposed by KEEL. From a compositional standpoint, **85\*** may be viewed through the lens of focus: all three animals face the same direction. This recalls a procession, notably that on the so-called Orpheus Jug from Megiddo (→**Dog [ANE] 29\***; see also **51\***, **58**, and **68\***, which could likewise be interpreted as an abbreviated animal procession involving a s., approaching a plant, possibly in an act of veneration). Additional parallels to →**Dog [ANE] 29\*** include the equids striding toward the plant, the stacking of animals, and the placement of the s. in the upper section. Moreover, if **85\*** represents an excerpted section of a larger motif, it would constitute another example of an animal procession featuring a s.

Furthermore, **85\***, together with cylinder seal **65** from Lachish and **89** (the latter discussed in § II.2.4), centers on a plant motif that is only indirectly related to the s. In each case, the s. plays a subordinate, shared, or attributive role in contrast to cylinder seal **64\*** from Tell Abu Hawam. A similar reading might be applied to conoid **58** from Megiddo, which shows a horned animal suckling its young and facing a plant element, with a s. above, likewise oriented toward the plant. Thus, the position of the s. on **85\*** may have been perceived by the contemporary onlooker in terms of its post-astrological phase, where it is suggested to be associated less with astral references and more with a general life-enhancing force (see § I). Because this approach is conceptual, the bird between the equid’s legs poses no difficulty, just as the fish in the “sky” on the so-called Orpheus Jug (→**Dog [ANE] 29\***) does not.

**3.8. Canid.** On a 10th-century square stamp seal from Acco (**71\***), a canid with a pointed head and a tail curved over its body appears below a s., above which a sun disk is depicted (for a similar rendering of a canid, see the top left of cylinder seal impression **83\*** from Gezer).

**3.9. Deer.** The 11th-century conoid **86\*** from Megiddo is a contemporary counterpart to conoid **52\*** from Taanach, substituting the ibex with a deer. Both are rare portrayals of undomesticated horned animals suckling their young before a s.

**3.10. Unidentified quadruped.** The identification of a quadruped on a square stamp seal from Beth-Shemesh (**50\***) remains uncertain. The short horns or ears together with the stumpy tail may suggest a young animal. More importantly, the motif partially parallels scarab **68\*** from Acco, which also combines a human and a tree, with the plant element in **50\*** perhaps indicated by the stroke in front of the quadruped. A notable difference is that the s. is neither oriented toward the presumed plant element nor placed in its customary elevated position above the animal, but rather rests on the ground—a feature rarely attested (**56**, **83\***, **89**; see also Middle Bronze Age IIA cylinder seal →**Iconography of Animals 21+** mentioned in § I).

A conclusive identification of the quadruped on conoid **87** from Megiddo is equally difficult. The absence of horns (what might appear as a small horn or ear is instead a chipped-away section) may exclude bovidae, as does the prominently inward-curved tail. The pointed head and tail could, however, point to a canid (see **71\***, **83\***), which is also often depicted with a

long neck (→**Dog [ANE] 1\***, **27\*–28\***). Yet the rendering of the legs seems to preclude this interpretation. Possibly, the animal represents a young caprid.

On a pottery sherd from Gath, only the legs and tail of a quadruped remain visible above a s. (**46**).

**3.11. Griffin.** During the Late Bronze Age, the s. appears several times in association with the griffin. On scaraboid **88\*** from Tell el-Ajjul, two s.s, arranged one above the other before a squatting griffin, recall the motif's occurrence in isolation when doubled (**14\*–19\***). The two s.s likely serve to amplify the protective character of the griffin. The pairing of the griffin and the s. alone also occurs on rectangular stamp seal **26** from Gezer, where each occupies one side.

On cylinder seal **64\*** from Tell Abu Hawam, an animal procession shows an ibex and griffin striding toward an upward-oriented oversized s. forming the focal point of the scene (in the animal procession on the so-called Orpheus Jug from Megiddo [→**Dog (ANE) 29\***], this role is taken by a lotus flower). The scene recalls depictions of a horned animal, sometimes accompanied by a suckling young, positioned before an oversized, upward-oriented s.—a motif frequently found on Early Iron Age stamp seals (**41–43**, **47**, **52\***, **60**, **62**, **86\***; note also the related motif on rectangular seal impression **66** from Dhiban).

This popular stamp seal motif is most likely an excerpt from animal procession scenes on cylinder seals, such as **64\***, which, however, reflects a much older tradition, as evidenced by a Middle Bronze Age IIA cylinder seal impression from Lachish depicting two Nubian ibexes (*Capra nubiana*; note the beard)—native to mountainous desert regions—striding toward an upward-oriented oversized s. (BECK 1998: fig. 1:2). Since this cylinder seal is most likely an import from northern Syria (BECK 1998: 176), the s. with its massive tail could correspond to *Orthochirus scrobiculosus*, *Androctonus bicolor*, or *Androctonus crassicauda*, all species inhabiting deserts or their margins, like the Nubian ibex.

If the motif on Iron Age stamp seals ultimately derives from an animal procession scene, the question arises whether the s. represents a numinous power evoked in such processions and thus remains the focal point of the scene, or whether the two animals should instead be understood as multiple, power-enhancing expressions of related aspects embodied by both.

Cylinder seal **67\*** from Lachish presents a related procession scene but with notable differences: the s. is replaced by a human figure and the caprid by a bovine. Although positioned in front of the bovine, the figure faces away, thus not serving as the focal point of the procession, but rather walking ahead of the bovine—possibly domesticated through its association with a human, thereby suggesting the allusion to the theme of animal husbandry. Furthermore, the s. appears in a subordinate role above the bovine. Compare in this regard the 4th-millennium cylinder seal impression from Megiddo mentioned in § II.2.3.2, where the s., rendered in a similarly reduced scale when compared to **67\***, but is shown at head height in front of the bovine in what also seems to be a procession scene. The only shared element between **67\*** and **64\*** is the griffin at the end of the procession, likely serving a protective function.

On cylinder seal **65** from Lachish, the central scene shows two short-horned animals flanking

a tree (for a similar constellation, see also **63**). The griffin and the s. appear as supplementary motifs, not directly related to one another yet both oriented toward the central theme. The placement of the s. suggests it may not have been part of the original design, as it disrupts the border decoration of concentric circles (on the rhythm of life through repetitive elements, see CASSIRER 1955: 104–112). The pairing of griffin and s. recalls scaraboid **88\*** from Tell el-Ajjul and rectangular stamp seal **26** from Geser—isolated there, but here situated within a specific context that defines the target of their role. They may thus represent an expression of awareness of life's fragility and the need for supernatural protection.

**4. Human figure.** Late Bronze Age cylinder seal **89** from Tell el-Ajjul shows a s. at the bottom of the scene and, above it, the moon in its two phases, both positioned beside two human figures who flank a tree-like object. Since the s. is not directly associated with the tree-like element, its significance is best understood in relation to the actions of the human figures, who are most likely venerating the tree-like object. An alternative interpretation of the tree-like object as the spade of →Marduk seems unlikely given its disproportionate size relative to the human figures, even though the symbol may possibly be associated with the s. (**39\***).

In the lyre-player procession on the Iron Age IB so-called Orpheus Jug from Megiddo (→**Dog [ANE] 29\***), the s. likewise does not relate to the focal point of the scene. It is positioned directly behind the lyre player's head and before an equid, a bird, and two fish that follow him at the end of the procession, all moving toward a lotus flower. Here too, the s. is linked to a human figure engaged in the reverence of a plant.

Iron Age I rectangular stamp seal **50\*** from Beth-Shemesh depicts, on the left, a standing human figure; in the center, above a quadruped with short horns or ears and a stumpy tail; and notably below, a s. To the far right is a longish object, possibly a plant element, if **68\*** (see the following paragraph) is taken as a parallel (see also § II.2.3.10). It may therefore be classified among tree-adoration depictions.

Iron Age IIA scarab **68\*** from Acco depicts, on the right, a bovine with a s. above it and a disk below its head. Both the bovine and the s. face a tree, which is flanked on the opposite side by a human figure, probably raising one arm toward it. If the tree is the focal point of the scene, as on scaraboid **85\*** from Tell Keisan—where an equid with a s. above and a bird below it are shown facing a stylized tree—then the motif may indicate the theme of tree worship. In that case, it would parallel seal **89** discussed above, with the main difference that here a bovine is added to the composition.

An Iron Age I stamp seal from Ashdod (**90**) depicts a striding human figure on the left, who raises one arm while a second figure before it holds the other hand and faces an upward-oriented s. positioned on the right side of the scene. A thematically comparable motif appears on a Middle Bronze Age IIA cylinder seal excavated near Amman Airport (→**Iconography of Animals 21\***).

This cylinder seal is atypical, as the suppliant goddess holding the worshiper's hand does not lead the figure toward a deity. Instead, in front of the pair are, at the bottom, a s. and, at the very top of the layout, a star and crescent. These three elements appear to constitute the

focal point of the scene, as emphasized by another figure on the opposite side facing them. Behind this figure stands a moon standard, which frames the entire composition when the motif is impressed, so that the standard appears twice.

The moon standard is an uncommon motif in depictions of a suppliant goddess leading a worshiper, as seen, for example, in StSt 4, 193, fig. 62. Another example—and a particularly notable parallel to the Amman cylinder seal—is a cylinder seal from the Collection de Clercq (StSt 4, 192, fig. 61). On this seal, a suppliant goddess on the left holds the hand of a worshiper standing behind her, while raising her other hand to grasp the raised hand of another figure facing her. Behind this second figure stands a moon standard, and between the two figures is an upward-oriented s.

Based on its attributes, the figure next to the moon standard cannot convincingly be identified as a deity. Similarly, the figure positioned before the moon standard on the Amman cylinder seal—if considered a parallel—is clearly not depicted as divine. More importantly, this figure strides toward the standard while turning its head back toward the suppliant goddess. Accordingly, the Amman cylinder seal should be interpreted as a procession toward the moon standard, with a secondary focal point: the space between the suppliant goddess and the striding figure, which is occupied by a s. and a star-and-crescent motif.

A comparable interpretation likely applies to the cylinder seal from the Collection de Clercq, where the close relationship between the two figures approaching the moon standard is emphasized by their handholding. In both cases, the theme centers on an encounter of humans in the presence of a s. and moon standard, facilitated by a suppliant goddess. **90** is thus best understood as an abbreviated version of these more elaborate compositions and indicates that a close association of the moon with the s. was perceived.

An Iron Age I conoid from Tell el-Far'ah (South) depicts three human figures holding their hands (**36d\***), a scene that may allude to a social gathering and is possibly indirectly associated with the s. shown on its base (**36a\***). This interpretation anticipates the following example, where the doubling of human figures is likewise taken to suggest a social event.

On Iron Age IIA scaraboid **82\*** from Tell Jemmeh, two human figures walk in sequence toward a falcon standing on the ground. Below, separated by a line, a s. is depicted in a distinct register. The doubling of the human figures may indicate a social event, though the precise meaning remains difficult to determine. CSAPI 4 offers a brief commentary: "unusual composition."

Although the composition of scarab **91\*** from Tel Eton, dating to Iron Age IIB—showing a human figure beside a large s.—provides no explicit indication of a cultic setting, it may nonetheless be interpreted as a form of veneration. The human does not attack or restrain the s., suggesting that it represents a positive or respected force. Moreover, the exaggerated size of the s. relative to the human underscores the animal's significance and recalls similar depictions, such as **43**, **64\*** (see also BECK 1998: fig. 1:2 and above § II.2.3.11), **66** (an ibex strides toward a giant s. above which a human raises its arms, possibly signaling adoration), and **86\***. In this context, scarab **81** from Tell en-Nasbeh is also relevant, where a s. appears above a seated man with a raised arm (GARDINER 1957: 442, A4), also indicating an act of adoration.

A few depictions linking a human with a s. do not appear to reflect a cultic context. Scarab **35** from Megiddo, dating to the 19th Dynasty, depicts a human wearing the Blue Crown (→Crown [Egypt] § II.1.2.7) who holds both a s. and a uraeus, suggesting the role of the master-of-scorpions (§ II.2.2.1). Most likely, this seal conveyed to its user the protective power associated with the master-of-scorpions.

### III. Sources

**III.1. Chronological Range.** Early depictions of s.s. from Palestine/Israel and Jordan occur on a mud brick from the first half of the 4th millennium (Tall Hujayrat al-Ghuzlan: KHALIL et al. 2003: fig. 6); a stone carving dating from the 4th to the 3rd millennium (Har Karkom: ANATI 1996: fig. 126); a cylinder seal impression dating to the period 3300 to 3000 (Megiddo: LOUD 1948: pl. 160:4; BEN-TOR 1978: fig. 8:48.IIC-2); a vessel painting placed between 2700 and 2500 (Ai: MARQUET-KRAUSE 1949: II no. 51:1195); a cylinder seal impression ranging from 1950 to 1760 (Lachish: BECK 1998: fig. 1:2); a cylinder seal assigned to about 1830 to 1730 (LOUD 1948: pl. 160:3; KEEL 1992: fig. 109; OTTO 2000: no. 369; IPIAO 2: no. 444); and an early 2nd-millennium cylinder seal from the Amman Airport site (→**Iconography of Animals 21\***).

However, most representations of the s. date from the 15th to 9th centuries, with the s. alone especially common (Late Bronze Age: **1, 3–5, 11–12, 16, 18–20, 25\*–28, 73–75\***; Late Bronze/Early Iron Age: **22\*, 35, 76\*–77**; Early Iron Age: **6, 8\*–9, 14\*, 17, 21\***; 10th to 8th centuries: **23\***; 8th to 4th centuries: **2, 7\*, 10, 13, 15, 24**). Examples enhanced with nfr and ankh signs, uraei, or solar disks are limited to the 15th to 12th centuries (**22\*, 25\*–28, 35, 73–77**), with only a few later instances (**23\*–24**). Depictions pairing the s. with a griffin (**26, 64\*–65, 67\*, 88\***), lion (**1, 27b\*, 36, 78\*, 80–81**), or bird (**80**) likewise belong to the Late Bronze Age. During this period, a fish appears alongside a s. on two occasions (**11, 83\***).

In the Early Iron Age, scenes show →caprids suckling their young (**51\*–52\*, 55, 57\*, 59–63**; perhaps a bit later: **53, 56, 58**; 8th century: **54**), caprids alone (**40\*, 44–45, 47, 53, 59**; perhaps later: **42\*–43**; 9th to 7th centuries: **48**; possibly earlier: **44, 46?**), and →bovines (**36, 68\*–72**; 14th to 13th centuries: **25\*, 67**) in association with the s. References to Amun-Re also occur in this period (**17, 36**; perhaps slightly earlier: **22\***). The master-of-scorpions motif is characteristic of the 12th to 10th centuries (**29–35**), as are depictions of the horse together with the s. (**84?–85\***, →**Dog [ANE] 29\***). Human figures linked with a s. likewise belong mainly to the Early Iron Age (**50\*, 68\*, 81–82\*, 90**). On an 11th-century vessel painting from Megiddo (**84**), a fish appears alongside a s., and perhaps also on an 8th-to 7th-century cylinder seal (**39\***). A deer suckling its young appears on an 11th-century conoid (**86\***), whereas a depiction of a s. with a canid is dated to the 10th century (**71\***). Dated to the late 8th to mid-6th centuries is a triangular seal from Buseira showing the s. with a nude goddess (**37\***).

**III.2. Geographical Distribution.** Only a few s. depictions come from Jordan (**7\*–8\*, 37\*, 66, 78\*–79**). The geographical distribution of iconographic motifs in Palestine/Israel represented by substantial numbers is as follows: depictions showing the s. alone (with or without additional elements) are concentrated in the south, in the Negev (**16–17, 20, 75\***);

along the Coastal Plain (1, 10–11, 18, 22\*, 46, 77); in the eastern Shephelah (5, 12, 25\*–26, 74\*); and in the north, at the Plain of Acco (19\*, 23\*, 27a\*, 73, 77), the Plain of Dor (28), and the Plain of Megiddo and the Valley of Jezreel (2–4, 15, 21\*, 24, 35, 76\*). It is notable that Galilee (9), Samaria, and Judea (14\*) are poorly represented.

A mainly southern distribution—extending in one instance as far north as Tell en-Nasbeh—is seen for objects mentioning Amun-Re (17, 22b\*, 36) or depicting a lion (1, 36, 80–81), a griffin (26, 64\*–65, 67\*, 88\*), or the master-of-scorpions (30–31). To the north, the Plain of Acco features motifs such as the lion (27b\*) and the master-of-animals (29), with three further examples of the latter from Megiddo (32\*, 34–35).

The distribution of the combination of a →caprid (with or without a suckled animal) with a s. differs markedly. It occurs in the south, in the Negev (47, 59–60) and eastern Shephelah (42\*, 57\*, 62), as well as in Judea (43, 48, 53, 55–56); in Samaria (51\*, 54); and in the north, at the Plain of Megiddo and the Valley of Jezreel (40\*–41, 44, 49, 52\*, 58, 61, 86\*–87), as well as near the Sea of Galilee (63). Along the coastal region, it is attested only at Tel Michal (45). By contrast, the combination of →bovines with a s. occurs, to date, only at the Plain of Acco (68\*, 69\*, 71\*), in Samaria (70), in Judea (72), and at Tell el-Far‘ah (South) (36\*).

**III.3. Object Types.** S.s are mainly depicted on stamp seals or impressions thereof. The majority of s.s, whether alone or with additions, appear on scarabs (2–5, 15–16, 18–20, 28). Depictions of the s. together with →caprids typically occur on conoids (41, 47, 51\*–52\*, 54–63, 86\*), whereas representations with a bovine are found on a scarab (69\*), a square stamp seal (71\*), a cylinder seal or impression thereof (67\*, 83\*), and on conoids (36\*, 45, 70, 72).

Scaraboids are also well represented (7, 10, 13, 21\*, 24, 31, 33, 35, 42\*–43, 53, 81–82\*, 85\*, 89). The rectangular stamp seal is notable, attested several times (1, 11, 17, 22\*–23\*, 25\*–27\*, 50\*). Cylinder seals or impressions showing s.s are comparatively rare (39\*, 64\*–65, 67\*, 83\*, 89). Occasionally, the s. appears on vessel paintings (78\*, →Dog [ANE] 29\*) or engraved or impressed on vessels (8\*–9, 12), and once as an engraving on a vessel (12). Figurative s. amulets are scarce (6).

**IV. Conclusion.** In the iconography of Palestine/Israel and Jordan, no clear association emerges between the s. and a particular deity. The numinous power attributed to the animal appears to have been of greater significance. From the 15th to the 9th centuries, the s. functioned primarily as an apotropaion in the Shephelah and the southern and northern Lowlands, being depicted on its own. In the highlands of Palestine/Israel, the s. is iconographically attested from the 12th to the 9th centuries; here, it is associated with notions of the propagation of life and the prosperity of the herd, typically shown together with →caprids, either alone or with a suckled young. Depictions of s.s with →bovines, conveying a similar concept, are again confined to the Lowlands.

## V. Catalog

For reference, all catalog entries are hyperlinked to BODO (Bibel & Orient Datenbank Online, <https://bodo.unifr.ch/bodo>).

1 Rectangular stamp seal, enstatite, Tell el-Ajjul, 1400–1300. CSAPI 1: Tell el-Ağul no. 342 2 Scarab, serpentine, Megiddo, 800–650. LAMON/SHIPTON 1939: pl. 69:9 3 Scarab, composition, Megiddo, 1500–1350. Loud 1948: pl. 152:155 4 Scarab, limestone, Megiddo, 1350–1150. Loud 1948: pl. 162:11 5 Scarab, Gezer, 1539–1292 (18th Dyn.). CSAPI 4: Geser no. 198 6 Amulet, composition, Tell Jemmeh, 1200–1000. HERRMANN 1994: no. 882 7\* Scaraboid, enstatite, 14.5 x 12 x 3.5 mm, Khirbat Khilda, 650–539. CSAJ: Chirbat Childa no. 3 8\* Seal impression, clay, 13 x 11 mm, Sahab, 1200–1100. CSAJ: Sahab no. 5 9 Seal impression, clay, Kinneret, 1250–1100. STEPHANSKY 2000: fig. 24 10 Scaraboid, limestone?, Ashkelon, possibly 539–333 or somewhat earlier. DBS file no. 186 11 Rectangular stamp seal, limestone, Gath, 1400–1300. CSAPI 4: Gat no. 43 12 Engraving on vessel, Gezer, 1400–1000. MACALISTER 1912: II fig. 222 13 Scaraboid, bone, 700–600. WSS no. 282 14\* Conoid, enstatite, 13.5 x 13.4 mm, Beth-Shemesh, 1000–800. Jerusalem, Rockefeller Museum, 217D. CSAPI 2: Bet-Schemesch no. 53 15 Scarab, limestone, Megiddo, 600–350. LAMON/SHIPTON 1939: pl. 72:8 16 Scarab, Tell Abu Salima, 1300–1200. PETRIE 1937: pl. 6:45 17 Rectangular stamp seal, composition, Timna, 1200–1000. ROTHENBERG 1972: 166, fig. 54:12 18 Scarab, enstatite, Yavneh, 1300–1200. Israel Department of Antiquities no. 60-954 19\* Scarab, enstatite, 19.5 x 14 x 12 mm, Acco, 1479–1190 (18th Dyn. as of Thutmose III–19th Dyn.). Haifa, Collection Z. Goldmann, 506. CSAPI 1: Akko no. 215 20 Scarab, enstatite, Tell el-Far'ah (South), 1292–1190 (19th Dyn.). CSAPI 3: Tell el-Far'a-Süd no. 729 21\* Scaraboid, enstatite or calcite, 14.4 x 11.8 x 9 mm, Beth-Shean, 1150–900. Philadelphia, University Museum, 29-104-18. CSAPI 2: Bet-Schean no. 15 22\* Rectangular stamp seal, composition, 14.4 x 11 x 5.3 mm, Tell el-Ajjul, 1400–1150. Jerusalem, Rockefeller Museum, IAA 32.1968. CSAPI 1: Tell el-Ağul no. 1211 23\* Rectangular stamp seal, enstatite, 13.7 x 9.9 x 4.5 mm, Achzib, 950–700. Jerusalem, IAA, 48-625. CSAPI 1: Achsib no. 55 24 Scaraboid, limestone, Megiddo, 780–650. LAMON/SHIPTON 1939: pl. 69:7 25\* Rectangular stamp seal, serpentine, 19.3 x 13.3 x 9.1 mm, Gezer, 1400–1300. Istanbul, Arkeoloji Müzeleri Müdürlüğü, Department of Classical Antiquities, 92.484. CSAPI 4: Geser no. 356 26 Rectangular stamp seal, stone, Gezer, 1400–1300. CSAPI 4: Geser no. 355 27\* Rectangular stamp seal, limestone, 15.5 x 11 x 7 mm, Acco, 1400–1300. Jerusalem, IAA, 73-92. CSAPI 1: Akko no. 138 28 Scarab, bone?, Shiqmona, 1300–1200. ELGAVISH 1977: pl. 10 29 Scarab, limestone, Acco, 1050–900. CSAPI 1: Akko no. 117 30 Conoid, ivory or bone, Gezer, 1100–900. CSAPI 4: Geser no. 35 31 Scaraboid, limestone, 15 x 13 x 8 mm, Gezer, 1200–900. CSAPI 4: Geser no. 129 32\* Conoid, enstatite, 14 x 14 mm, Megiddo, 1100–1000. Istanbul, Museum of Archaeology, 2515m. SCHUMACHER 1908: 86, fig. 124 (2nd row, 3rd from left; KEEL 1994: pl. 7:9 33 Scaraboid, Tell Jemmeh, 1200–900. CSAPI 4: Tel Gamma no. 113 34 Conoid, limestone?, Megiddo, 1200–1000. LAMON/SHIPTON 1939: pl. 72:13 35\* Scaraboid, composition, 18 x 14.6 x 7.8 mm, Megiddo, 1292–1075 (19th–20th Dyns.). KEEL 2013: fig. 17.4:3 36\* Conoid, enstatite, 13 x 16.2 mm, Tell el-Far'ah (South), 1200–950. Jerusalem, Rockefeller Museum, I 4434. CSAPI 3: Tell el-Far'a-Süd no. 210 37\* Triangular seal, calcite, 12.3 x 12 x 7.4 mm, Buseira, 730–539. Amman, Jordan Archaeological Museum, untraceable. CSAJ: Buseira no. 13 38\* Scarab, limestone?, 37.4 x 28.7 x 18.7 mm, Tell el-Hamma, 980–800. Jerusalem, Israel Museum. CSAPI 4: Tell el-Hamma no. 1 39\* Cylinder seal, jasper, 28 x 37\* mm, Megiddo, 800–600. SCHUMACHER 1908: pl. 44c 40\* Circular stamp seal with domed back, sandstone?, 16 x 8 mm, Megiddo, 1150–1000. Loud 1948: pl. 163:19; KEEL 1985: fig. 6 41 Conoid, stone, Megiddo, 1150–1000. Loud 1948: pl. 163:20; KEEL 1985: fig. 7 42\* Scaraboid, bone, 19 x 15 x 8 mm, Lachish, 1150–700. TUFNELL et al. 1953: pl. 44:91; KEEL 1985: fig. 8 43 Scaraboid, calcite, Beth-Shemesh, 1050–840. CSAPI 2: Bet-Schemesch no. 163 44 Conoid, limestone, Tel Rehov, 1050–900. KEEL/MAZAR 2009: fig. 2:8 45 Conoid, Tel Michal, 1000–900. HERZOG et al. 1989: pl. 73:1 46 Jug, Gath, 1300–1200. MAEIR 2012: pl. 12.3:1 47 Conoid, hematite?, Tell el-Far'ah (South), 1050–900. CSAPI 3: Tell el-Far'a-Süd no. 876 48 Truncated pyramidal stamp seal, stone, Tell en-Nasbeh, 900–600. McCOWN 1947: pl. 55:75 49 Scarab, limestone, Megiddo, 1400–1200. DBS file no. 64 50\* Rectangular stamp seal, bone, 31 x 26 x 23 mm, Beth-Shemesh, 1200–1000. CSAPI 2: Bet-Schemesch no. 96 51\* Conoid, limestone, 13 x 12 mm, Tell el-Far'ah (North), 1150–900. Paris, Louvre Museum, AO 22936. CSAPI 3: Tell el-Far'a-Nord no. 6 52\* Conoid, calcite, 15.8 x 16 mm, Taanach, 1100. Jerusalem, Albright Institute of Archaeological Research, TT 702. LAPP 1967: fig. 24; KEEL 1980: fig. 90 53 Scaraboid, calcite, Tell en-Nasbeh, 1150–700. McCOWN 1947: pl. 54:19; KEEL 1980: fig. 92 54 Conoid, clay, Shechem, 800–700. WRIGHT 1962: fig. 4; KEEL 1980: fig. 93 55 Conoid, calcite, Beth-Shemesh, 1200–1000. CSAPI 2: Bet-Schemesch no. 161 56 Conoid, calcite, Tell en-Nasbeh, 1000–700. McCOWN 1947: pl. 55:67. KEEL 1985: fig. 10 57\* Conoid, limestone?, 26.5 x 28.5 mm, Gezer, 1050–900. Jerusalem, Rockefeller Museum, J. 485. CSAPI 4: Geser no. 34 58 Conoid, Megiddo, 1050–800. DBS file no. 609 59 Conoid, clay, Tell el-Far'ah (South), 1150–950. CSAPI 3: Tell el-Far'a-Süd no. 266 60 Conoid, limestone, Tel Haror, 1250–1000. CSAPI 4: Tel Haror no. 7 61 Conoid, stone, Yoqneam, 1200–1000. ORNAN 2005: no. 3 62 Conoid, limestone, Gezer, 1150–950. CSAPI 4: Geser no. 653 63 Conoid, En Gev, 1100–900. Unpublished 64\* Cylinder seal, steatite, 9 x 18 mm, Tell Abu Hawam, 1400–1200. Jerusalem, Rockefeller Museum, IAA 34-197. HAMILTON 1935: no. 413; PARKER 1949: pl. 23:153 65 Cylinder seal, hematite, Lachish, 1400–1200. TUFNELL et al. 1940: pl. 33:49; PARKER 1949: pl. 16:107 66 Stamp seal impression, clay, Dhiban, 1250–900. CSAJ: Dhiban no. 3 67\* Cylinder seal, steatite, 24 x 11 mm, Lachish, 1400–1200. Jerusalem, Israel Antiquity Authority, 38.56. TUFNELL et al. 1958: pl. 34:164; PARKER 1949: pl. 23:151 68\* Scarab, hematite, 14 x 9.6 x 6.3 mm, Acco, 1000–900. Jerusalem, IAA, 73-177. CSAPI 1: Akko no. 131 69\* Scarab, stone, 14.5 x 11.5 x 8 mm, Acco, 1000–900. Jerusalem, IAA, 73-156. CSAPI 1: Akko no. 132 70 Conoid, Samaria, 1000–900. Unpublished 71\* Square stamp seal, limestone, 20.7 x 19.3 x 9.1 mm, Acco, 1000–900. Jerusalem, IAA, 73-90. CSAPI 1: Akko no. 128 72 Conoid, stone, Bet-Zur, 1150–840. CSAPI 2: Bet-Zur no. 17 73 Scarab, enstatite, Acco, 1600–1400. CSAPI 1: Akko no. 45 74 Scarab, enstatite, 13\* x 12.5 x 8.5 mm, Lachish, 1300–1200. Jerusalem, IAA, 73-172. TUFNELL et al. 1953: pl. 43:57 75\* Scarab, enstatite, 18 x 13.1 x 7.1 mm, Tell Jemmeh, 1400–1200. Jerusalem, Rockefeller Museum, 33.1741. CSAPI 4: Tel Gamma no. 110 76\* Scarab, composition, 18.3 x 14 x 8.6 mm Beth-Shean, 1292–1075. Jerusalem, Institute of Archaeology. CSAPI 2: Bet-Schean no. 241 77 Scarab, composition, Ekron, 1292–1075. CSAPI 2: Ekron no. 21 78\* Jar, terracotta, 11.6 cm, Tall Zira'a, 1450–1300. IPIAO 3: no. 893 79 Stamp seal impression (on bulla), clay, Tall Jalul, 800–600. CSAJ: Tall Dschalul no. 5 80 Scarab, enstatite, Lachish, 1400–1200. TUFNELL 1940: pl. 33B:58 81 Scaraboid, enstatite?, Tell en-Nasbeh, 1200–1000. McCOWN 1947: pl. 54:57 82\* Scaraboid, composition, Tell Jemmeh, 1000–800. London, Institute of Archaeology, EXVI.35/34. CSAPI 4: Tel Gamma no. 80 83\* Cylinder seal impression, clay, 79.4 x 44.5 mm, Gezer, 1400–1300. MACALISTER 1912: II 349, fig. 466 84 Scarab, limestone, Megiddo, 1400–1150. SCHUMACHER 1908: pl. 18e 85\* Scaraboid, quartz, 16.1 x 13.9 x 10 mm, Tell Keisan, 1150–900. Jerusalem, École Biblique et Archéologique Française. KEEL 1980a: no. 14 86\* Conoid, limestone, 17 x 15.5 mm, Megiddo, 1100–1000. LAMON/SHIPTON 1939: pl. 69:22; KEEL 1980: fig. 91 87 Conoid, limestone, Megiddo, 1150–1100. Loud 1948: pl. 163:17 88\* Scaraboid, lapis lazuli, 18 x 12 x 7 mm, Tell el-Ajjul, 1550–1400. Jerusalem, Rockefeller Museum, IAA 32.1816. CSAPI 1: Tell el-Ağul no. 323 89 Cylinder seal, hematite, Tell el-Ajjul, 1400–1200. PARKER 1949: pl. 27:193 90 Stamp seal, limestone?, Ashdod, 1200–1100. DOTAN/BEN-SHLOMO 2005: fig. 3.41:2 91\* Scarab, composition, 16 x 12 x 7 mm, Tel Eton, 900–700. Beth-Shemesh, IAA storeroom.

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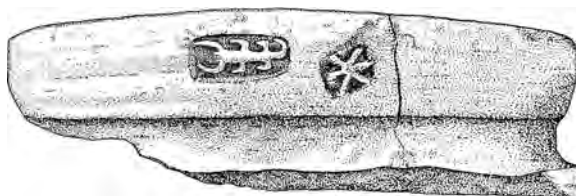
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## VIII. Illustrations



Scorpion  
(Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 7



Scorpion  
(Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 8



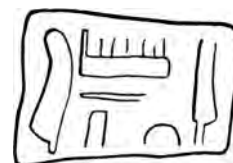
Scorpion  
(Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 14



Scorpion  
(Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 19



Scorpion  
(Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 21



Scorpion  
(Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 22a-22b



Scorpion  
(Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 23



Scorpion (Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 25a-c



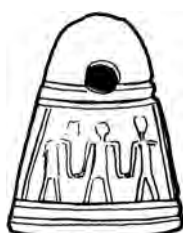
Scorpion (Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 27a-b (Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 32



Scorpion



Scorpion  
(Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 35a-b



Scorpion (Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 36a-d



Scorpion  
(Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 37



Scorpion  
(Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 38



Scorpion  
(Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 39



Scorpion  
(Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 40



Scorpion  
(Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 42



Scorpion  
(Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 50



Scorpion  
(Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 51



Scorpion  
(Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 52



Scorpion  
(Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 57



Scorpion  
(Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 64



Scorpion  
(Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 67



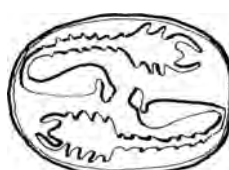
Scorpion  
(Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 68



Scorpion  
(Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 69



Scorpion  
(Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 71



Scorpion  
(Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 72



Scorpion  
(Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 74



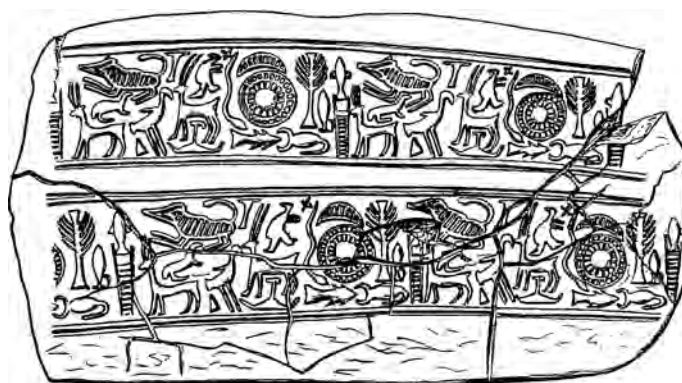
Scorpion  
(Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 76



Scorpion (Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 78



Scorpion  
(Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 82



Scorpion (Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 83



Scorpion  
(Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 85



Scorpion  
(Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 86



Scorpion  
(Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 88



Scorpion  
(Palestine/Israel/Jordan) 91