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Post-Akkadian and Ur III Features on Cylinder Seals from Kültepe-Kanesh: An Iconographic and Stylistic Analysis

Güzel ÖZTÜRK*

Abstract

The cylinder seals uncovered at Kültepe-Kanesh, which date to the last quarter of the Early Bronze Age, are completely foreign to Anatolian sealing practices in terms of both their form and the style of depiction they utilize. These foreign characteristics point to a new and important aspect of the cross-border relations of Anatolia. Cylinder seals, which are known to have been used for the first time in the Uruk period from the second half of the 4th millennium BC in the Near East, represent a lesser known type for Anatolian geography in the 3rd millennium BC. Examples of cylinder seals dating to the 3rd millennium BC apart from Kültepe are known from the excavations of Troy, Alişar, Gordion, and Seyitömer in the northern part of the Taurus Mountains and the inner and western parts of Anatolia. The Kültepe cylinder seals not only contribute to our knowledge about the extent of cylinder seal usage in Anatolia in the 3rd millennium BC, but also add a new dimension to Anatolian sealing practices via the stylistic features of their compositions and the descriptions on them.

Keywords: Anatolian Sealing Tradition, 3rd Millennium, Kültepe-Kanesh, Seals of Post-Akkadian and Ur III Period, Cross-Border Interactions

Öz

Kültepe-Kaniş kazılarında açığa çıkartılan ve Erken Tunç Çağı'nın son çeyreğine tarihlenen silindir mühürler hem mühür formu hem de üzerlerindeki tasvirlerin işleniş stilleri açısından tamamen Anadolu mühürcülüğüne yabancadır ve bu özelliği ile de Anadolu'nun sınır ötesi ilişkilerine yeni ve önemli bir boyut kazandırmıştır. Önasya'da ilk kez Uruk dönemi yani MÖ 4. binyılın ikinci yarısından itibaren kullanılmaya başlandığı bilinen silindir mühürler, MÖ 3. binyılda Anadolu coğrafyası için az bilinen bir tipi temsil eder. MÖ 3. binyıla tarihlenen silindir mühür örnekleri, Toros Dağları'nın kuzeyinde yani Anadolu'nun iç ve batı kısımlarında Kültepe dışında, Troia, Alişar, Gordion ve son yıllarda kazısı yapılan Seyitömer kazılarında ele geçen örneklerden bilinir. Kültepe buluntuları, Anadolu'da MÖ 3. binyılda silindir mühür kullanımının ne boyutta olduğuna ilişkin bilgilerimize yeni katkılar sağlamakla kalmaz aynı zamanda üzerlerindeki kompozisyon konuları ve tasvirlerin stil özellikleriyle de Anadolu mühürcülüğüne yeni bir boyut kazandırır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Anadolu Mühür Geleneği, MÖ 3. binyıl, Kültepe-Kaniş, Post-Akad ve III. Ur Dönemi Mühürleri, Sınır Ötesi Etkileşimler

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Introduction¹

Seals and seal impressions of the Ancient Near East inform us not only about the artistic values, but also about the religious beliefs, worldviews, culture, iconography, mythology, daily life, and even technologies of the societies that produced them. Furthermore, they provide important clues about cultural and artistic interactions between societies.

The archaeological materials unearthed at Kültepe through continuous systematic excavations since 1948, along with different groups of artefacts purchased by museums, have contributed greatly to Near Eastern archaeology. The artefacts obtained from different centres of Early Bronze Age Anatolia, and imported from surrounding lands, have confirmed that Anatolia had relations with neighbouring regions such as Syria and Mesopotamia. The Kültepe cylinder seals, dating to the last quarter of the 3rd millennium BC, provide new and crucial insights into Anatolia's cross-border relations.

The great majority of the collection of seals and seal impressions found during the Kültepe-Kanesh excavations are dated to the Assyrian Colony Period. The lack of evidence from the preceding period relating to the use of cylinder seals, particularly in central Anatolia, has shown scholars that the roots of these types of seals need to be sought outside of Anatolia.

Cylinder seals first began to be used in the Near East from the second half of the 4th millennium BC onwards.² The use of this type of seal by the people of Anatolia became possible as a result of foreign traders who came to Anatolia during the Assyrian Colony Period.³ Before the arrival of Assyrians in the region and the widespread use of cylinder seals, the stamp seal was in use in Anatolia.⁴ Before the Assyrian Colony Period in Anatolia, the majority of both stamp and cylinder seals used geometric designs or animal depictions engraved in a basic way in the centre of the seal.

In the 3rd millennium BC, the Taurus Mountains formed a natural border, and in this period southeastern Anatolia, Çukurova, and the Amuq Plain remained inside the Syro-Mesopotamian culture region.⁵ In the Early Bronze Age, Anatolian seal repertoire cylinder seals and impressions with geometric and botanical motifs are represented by a small number of examples

¹ Since 2009, I have had the opportunity to observe firsthand the architecture and archaeological material of the Kültepe Early Bronze Age as a member of the Kültepe-Kanesh excavation committee. For this opportunity and for his support for my study of the archaeological material in this paper, I would like to thank Prof. Dr. F. Kulakoğlu, director of the Kültepe-Kanesh excavations. I am also grateful to Dr. A. Wisti Lassen, Associate Curator of the Yale Babylonian Collection, whose comments and advice broadened my views on glyptic art during my ten months in the Yale Babylonian Collection during my PhD dissertation research. Seven of the artefacts studied within the scope of my dissertation on Kültepe seals and sealings, dated to the end of the 3rd and the beginning of the 2nd millennium BC, are examined in this study, and I would therefore like to thank the following institutions, who supported my work at different stages, allowing me to study artefacts from different museums and collections abroad: 2016–2017: “The Earliest International Trade Center in Central Anatolia in the 3rd Millennium B.C. and Evidence of Trade: Seals and Sealing Practices in Kültepe”, TÜBİTAK (Project No. 059B1415008451), Yale University (USA); 2016–2018: “MÖ. 3. Binyıl Mühür ve Mühür Baskıları Işığında Anadolu-Mezopotamya ve Suriye İlişkileri”, Ankara University Scientific Research Projects Coordination Unit (Project No. 16L0649003); 2018–2019: “The Analysis and Artistic-Functional Properties of Kültepe Sealing Practices through 2500–2000 BC”, Ilse Hanfmann, George Hanfmann and Machteld J. Mellink Scholarship, (ARIT), Copenhagen University, Centre for Textile Research, SAXO-Institute.

² Pittman 2001, 420.

³ Erkanal 1993.

⁴ Larsen and Lassen 2014, 186.

⁵ The reflection of this situation in glyptic art is seen in the weight of the cylinder seal artefacts uncovered in these regions or in the foreignness to Anatolian glyptic art of the style and subject of the scenes engraved on the seals.

Kültepe-Kanesh Early Bronze Age III Levels Mound	3rd Millenium BC Mesopotamian Style		Mesopotamian Chronology	Dates (Middle Chronology \pm 30)	
13	A. Geometric Design	B. Figurative Design		Early Dynastic IIIb	2400-2300 BC
	Seal 1			Akkadian	2324-2142 BC
12				Post Akkadian/Gutian	2192-2112 BC
11a-b		B. 1. Post-Akkadian Style Seal 2; Seal 3; Seal 4; Seal 7	B. 2. Ur III Style Seal 5 Seal 6	Ur III	2110/2112-2004/2003 BC

Fig. 1 Table of Early Bronze Age Kültepe-Kanesh cylinder seals according to 3rd millennium BC Mesopotamian chronology and style.

found at centres such as Kültepe,⁶ Alişar,⁷ Gordion,⁸ and Troy.⁹ Cylinder seals on which the subjects of composition are made up of figurative elements foreign to Anatolian glyptic are only known from examples found at the Kültepe¹⁰ and Seyitömer¹¹ excavations.

The subject of this study consists of seven artefacts that have been found at Kültepe and were made in the cylinder seal form known to be foreign to Anatolia. The study presents the first artistic critique of the seals in question. Four of these cylinder seals¹² (figs. 3-4 and 7-8) were purchased by the Kayseri Museum in 1934 and registered as “of Kültepe origin” in the museum’s inventory, while one (fig. 5) was unearthed during excavations conducted at the mound area in 1953.¹³ Two of the seals evaluated in the article were brought to light during the 2010 and 2012 excavations at Kültepe. The first of these was found in a simple earth grave (fig. 6; seal 5), while the other came from the excavations of the 13th level (fig. 2). While one of the seals in question has geometric decoration, in the other there are scenes of presentation and contest. The earliest of the artefacts is dated to the 13th level, while the others are dated to the 12th and 11th levels (see fig. 1). At Kültepe, the levels in question date to the late phase of

⁶ See Kt. 14 t. 1156.

⁷ von der Osten 1937, fig. 186.

⁸ Dussinberre 2005, 33, fig. 11a-b. This seal was obtained from a Middle-Late Bronze Age fill at Gordion. Based on the depictions on the seal, similarities with Jemdet Nasr in Mesopotamia were observed, and therefore it was dated to the early Early Bronze Age.

⁹ Schlieman 1881, 500-3; Schmidt 1902: 8868; Bittel 1941, Abb. 1.

¹⁰ Bittel 1941, Abb. 4-5; Özgüç 1986, figs. 3, 42-43.

¹¹ Bilgen 2015, 142, 148-49, figs. 162-63.

¹² Kt. 82 t. 246; Kt. 82 t. 247; Kt. 82 t. 248; Kt. 82 t. 224.

¹³ Kt e/t 180; Balkan 1957, fig. 12.

the Early Bronze Age III period of Anatolia—that is, to 2400–2000 BC—which is paralleled by the Akkadian, Post-Akkadian/Gutian, and Ur III in Mesopotamia (see fig. 1).

The artefacts evaluated within the scope of this study have been grouped primarily according to the quality of the representations on them (geometric or figurative) and the variety of composition subjects displayed. In addition, the periods whose artistic characteristics are reflected by the artefacts were examined by focusing on the subjects of the seals with figurative scenes and the characteristics of the style of the figures. In this way, emphasis has been placed on the similarities and differences between the cylinder seals that are the subject of the study by comparing them with other Near Eastern examples of artefacts that show parallels in terms of subject and style.

2. Archaeological Material: Cylinder Seals of Kültepe-Kanesh

The earliest (see fig. 1) cylinder seal of the group (fig. 2) was unearthed at the mound in the 2012 excavation campaign. During this campaign, a monumental building of 70 m on the north-south axis by 55 m on the east-west axis was found. This building has not yet been excavated fully, but it has been observed that in some parts the thick mudbrick walls of the structure are preserved to a height of 3 m.¹⁴ The building has a plan of wide rooms placed consecutively. The exterior of the structure's northern wall was supported by 1-m wide buttresses placed at 7-m intervals. This monumental building probably had official or administrative functions apart from daily use. The building dates to Kültepe layer 13 and is the largest monumental building of the period unearthed so far in Anatolia¹⁵ (fig. 9).

Since the 2010 campaign, excavations have been conducted to uncover the structure's complete plan. The 2012 campaign yielded a steatite cylinder seal inside one of the building's rooms, from Kültepe layer 13, dated to Early Bronze Age III. Apart from being the earliest cylinder seal found at Kültepe, this seal is important because it is the first cylinder seal with geometric decorations among Kültepe's Early Bronze Age seals (fig. 2).

The second cylinder seal that was discovered *in situ* (fig. 6) was found in a layer underneath Temple 1 of the buildings known as the Anitta temples at the mound. The mound excavations, conducted under the direction of Kulakoğlu, yielded a simple earth grave framed with small stones (fig. 10) beneath the remains of Temple 1. The well-preserved grave contained a male skeleton and burial gifts such as bronze vessels, weapons, and a precious lapis lazuli cylinder seal (fig. 6).¹⁶ Based on the rich and high-quality burial gifts found in the grave, it seems that it was not an ordinary person buried here: he must have been either a merchant or a rich person. The grave belongs to layer 11b of Kültepe, dated to the end of Early Bronze Age III.

The first of the cylinder seals that will be examined in this study is numbered Kt. 82 t. 246 (fig. 3). In the presentation scene of the seal, there is a main figure seated on a throne and there is a worshipper who is led by a leading goddess in the presence of the main figure. At the top of the scene is a crescent. The height of the artefact is 1.9 cm and the diameter is 1.2 cm.

¹⁴ Kulakoğlu and Öztürk 2015, fig. 2; Kulakoğlu 2017.

¹⁵ Kulakoğlu et al. 2013, 49; Kulakoğlu 2017.

¹⁶ For detailed information on the dating of iconographical and stylistic characteristics of depictions on the seal, see section 3, seal 5.

The composition of the seal, Kt. 82 t. 247 (fig. 4), which is in the Kayseri Museum, is depicted as the scene of the previous seal. On this seal, between the god and the other figures is an offering table on which is shown a tray with bread/pitta depicted by two lines. At the top of the scene are positioned an eight-pointed star and a crescent. The height of the piece is 1.9 cm and the diameter is 1.1 cm.

The seal with accession number Kt e/t 180 (fig. 5), which was found in the 1953 excavation at Kültepe and is now held at the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations in Ankara, was published by K. Balkan in 1957 on account of its inscription¹⁷. Apart from the fact that the artefact came from the base of the levels characterised as dating to the Old Hittite Period and came to light mixed among Alişar III artefacts, no other information about the item was shared. The scene on the seal consists of a god sitting on a throne with an offering table in front of him. The scene is delimited by a four-line legend in a frame, and at the top there is an eight-pointed star. The artefact's height is 2.4 cm and the diameter is 1.3 cm.

An artefact (fig. 7) located by the author during the course of inventory work carried out at Kayseri Museum in 2017, and examined here for the first time, is recorded by Kayseri Museum with the inventory number Kt. 82 t. 224. On the seal there is a scene of a worshipper brought to the presence of Utu/Shamash in the company of a protecting god. At the end of the scene is a two-line inscription. The height of the artefact is 2.1 cm and the diameter is 1 cm.

The last piece to be examined in this study is artefact number Kt. 82 t. 248 (fig. 8), which is held at Kayseri Museum.¹⁸ On the seal there is a contest scene of a lion on each side of which is a naked hero. The height of the artefact is 2.5 cm and the diameter is 0.85 cm.

3. Analysis of Iconography and Style

3.1. Geometric Design

Seal 1: Kt. 14 t. 1156

Geometrically decorated cylinder seals are represented by a single example at Kültepe, dating to Early Bronze Age III and found in layer 13. Broken at the edge, the seal bears three parallel and consecutive rows of chevron motifs (fig. 2).

In geometrically decorated cylinder seals, the most frequently employed motif was the line motif, which can be observed from the earliest examples onwards. This motif, and its variations, is attested both as a single motif and accompanied by different geometric motifs.

From 3500–3000 BC onwards, Mesopotamian cylinder seals began to feature geometric and vegetal motifs.¹⁹ These seals were used only rarely in the Late Uruk period, and it was not until the Jemdet Nasr period that they began to be commonly used in the region of Diyala and in the northern Syrian cities.²⁰

A close parallel to the seal from Kültepe has been uncovered at Habuba Kabira. This artefact, exhibited at Aleppo Museum, has been dated to 3500–3000 BC.²¹ Another clay seal found at Norşuntepe has a chevron motif consisting of five parallel and consecutive rows of zigzag

¹⁷ Balkan 1957.

¹⁸ Bittel 1941, Abb. 4–5.

¹⁹ Pittman 2001, 420.

²⁰ See Frankford 1955; Teissier 1984.

²¹ Hammade 1994, 37, cat. no. 310.

lines. This artefact, dated to Early Bronze Age I, differs from the Kültepe example by featuring a star at the corner of the motif. Two cylinder seals of faience from Gözlu Kule in Tarsus have been dated to Early Bronze Age III and bear chevron decorations.²² A seal making similar use to that seen in this Gözlu Kule example was found in the Early Bronze Age III levels at Oylum Höyük.²³ These differ from the Kültepe seal in that the surfaces of the seal are divided into three sections and the chevrons have horizontal ends.

The use of cylinder seals designed with geometric motifs witnesses a severe decline at cities in both Mesopotamia and Syria after the Jemdet Nasr period. Despite this decline, evidence regarding the employment of the chevron motif on cylinder seals continues until the Middle Assyrian period, dated to 1350–1000 BC in northern Mesopotamia.²⁴ One of the latest cylinder seals with the chevron motif comes from the Mitanni layer of the Tell al-Rimah settlement's C area.²⁵

3.2. Figurative Design

Seal 2: Kt. 82 t. 246

This seal, dated to the Post-Akkadian period, has a presentation scene consisting of a worshipper accompanied by a leading goddess presenting the worshipper to a deity enthroned under a crescent that is positioned above. The carving styles of the figures' bodies, with the hips emphasized, implies that all are females (fig. 3).²⁶

The main figure, seated on a box-shaped throne with a short backrest, is shown from the right, while the other figures are depicted in left profile. The main figure's right arm is bent at the elbow and close to the body, while the left hand is depicted as if greeting the figures in its presence. In Near Eastern glyptic, depictions of hands in this style first emerge in the Akkadian period and continue in the Post-Akkadian period. The leading goddess between the worshipper and the enthroned figure holds the worshipper with her left hand while holding a short-branched plant in her raised right hand. The worshipper, at the end of the scene, holds a *situla* hanging down from her right hand.

Between the enthroned figure and the leading goddess is an offering table with a flat surface and spread legs. This table differs from other offering tables seen on the Kültepe seals in its lack of flat breads and the presence of three vertically parallel lines emerging from a corner. This table type shows similarities with the flaming altar/offering table model first seen in Near Eastern glyptic during the Akkadian period. The seat of the enthroned goddess is an exact copy of the box-shaped throne with short backrest seen in seal 2, where Utu/Shamash is seated.

All the figures wear flat dresses extending down to their ankles. None of the figures, including the enthroned goddess, wear horned headdresses. In the Akkadian and Post-Akkadian periods, goddesses were depicted without headdresses, though this situation changed in the Ur III period.²⁷ All of the figures have hairstyles that sharply bend up from the neck before falling down.

²² Goldman 1956, 238, fig. 393, 20–1.

²³ Özgen, Helwing and Tekin 1997, Abb. 27: 1.

²⁴ See Doumet 1992, 73, cat. no. 131–3.

²⁵ Parker 1975, Pl. X, 4.

²⁶ For parallels, see von der Osten 1934, Pl. XI, 114, 6.

²⁷ Collon 1982, 30; for Akkadian examples, see Porada 1948, Pl. XXXIX, 252.

Continuations of certain Akkadian elements are observed in the scene of this Kültepe seal. For example, in Post-Akkadian and Ur III seals with presentation scenes, the leading goddess bringing the worshipper to the deity do not hold plants in their hands. Also, in Post-Akkadian and Ur III presentation scenes, the worshipper figures do not often carry situlae or bucket-type objects; in fact, only two seals from the Post-Akkadian period feature figures carrying a situla.²⁸ A worshipper carrying a situla or bucket is a more frequent element in the Akkadian period.²⁹

It is possible to claim that the flaming altar model seen on Kültepe seals first appeared in seals of the Akkadian period.³⁰ Even though the flaming altar models seen on Near Eastern seals are not exactly similar to the altar on the Kültepe seal in terms of typology, it might nonetheless be claimed that this seal's engraver was impressed by art of the Akkadian period. Apart from the Kültepe seal, there is no other evidence for use of the flaming altar motif in the Post-Akkadian/Ur III period.

The period known as Post-Akkadian or Gutian³¹ refers to the interval between the death of the Akkadian King Sharkalishari (ca. 2205–2181 BC) and the beginning of the reign of Ur-Namma (ca. 2110 BC), the first king of the Ur III Dynasty.³²

It has been claimed that the quality of glyptic, and of Akkadian art in general, witnessed a fall in the Gutian period.³³ In contrast to the well-documented glyptic examples of the early Akkadian period, seal evidence from this period is very limited. Due to such problems, experts have not yet been able to develop a common terminology for the glyptic art of this transitional period. When the period's artistic characteristics are examined, it becomes clear that artefacts were usually carved with styles and subjects that present elements of the transitional phase between Akkadian and Ur III. In addition to these data, there is also no definite evidence either of exactly when the Gutian period started nor of its geographical extent,³⁴ which means that the use of the term "Post-Akkadian" for the dating of the seals in this study is more feasible.

Using the term "Post-Akkadian" for the period in question was first suggested by Porada.³⁵ Buchanan also preferred this term in his studies of the seals of the period.³⁶ While Collon usually uses the terms "Post-Akkadian" and "Ur III" interchangeably,³⁷ Boehmer classifies the period as "Post-Akkadian A-B" and as the "Urbau-Urningirsu Group."³⁸

²⁸ See Porada 1948, Pl. XL, 259; Collon 1982, Pl. XL, 309.

²⁹ von der Osten 1934, Pl. XI, 115; Frankfort 1955, Pl. 63, 669; Collon 1982, Pls. XXX, 212; XXXII, 221.

³⁰ For flaming altar depictions, see Moortgat 1940, Taf. 32, 236; Porada 1948, Pl. XXXIX: 245–46; Frankfort 1955, Pl. 58: 616; Boehmer 1965, Taf. XLIX, 574, 8–81, 5; Collon 1982, Pl. XXVII, 186–88; Collon 2003, cat. no. 132.

³¹ Reade 2001, 11; Frankfort 1955, 10.

³² Sallaberger and Schrakamp 2015, 113.

³³ Porada 1948, 31; Collon 2003, 6.

³⁴ Due to the Akkadian Kingdom's loss of power after Naram-Sin and the dissolving of central authority in southern Mesopotamia towards the end of the Sharkalishari Kingdom, cities in remote regions drew apart from the Akkadian administration. In this political environment, kings of the important cities of Lagash, Uruk, and Kish in southern Mesopotamia, along with the king of strategically important Susa in today's Iran, proclaimed their independence. In parallel with these developments, Gutians from the Zagros mountains reached the Diyala region. See Sallaberger and Schrakamp 2015.

³⁵ Porada 1948, 31; Collon 2003, 6.

³⁶ Buchanan 1966, 71 ff; 1981, 189–98.

³⁷ Collon 1987, 35; 2003, 5.

³⁸ Boehmer 1966, 375.

Seal 3: Kt. 82 t. 247

This artefact bears a classical three-figure presentation with an enthroned figure under a star and a crescent, with other figures moving towards her (fig. 4).

The deity sits on a simple, box-shaped throne with no backrest and greets the figures before her in a classical manner. Her schematically carved face has a large, triangle-profiled nose covering the whole face, in accordance with the artistic style of the period.

The goddess wears a double-horned headdress with a flat end on top. The hair falling down the headdress goes directly upwards without being tied at the neck. The same hairstyle, but without the horned headdress, is seen on both the leading goddess and the worshipper figure, with the latter's hair being shown slightly shorter than that of the former. The altar table between the goddess and the other figures, as well as the eight-pointed star above the scene, are of the same style and significance as those seen on seal 4.

Seal 4: Kt. e/t. 180

The scene on this seal was engraved in the standard standing style of presentation scenes, with an enthroned god and an altar in front. At the end of the scene is a four-line legend and an eight-pointed star (fig. 5).

The god wears a flat dress covering the whole body and extending down to the ankle. His double-horned headdress has a small triangular bulge in the middle. The long horns of the headdress bend upwards. Headdresses of this type appear from the Akkadian period onwards.³⁹

In accordance with the art of the period, the hairstyles are standardized. On artefacts of the period, gods and goddesses wear their hair in such a manner that it emerges from under horned headdresses, is tied at the neck, and ends in upward curls. In exceptions where this hairstyle was not preferred, the hair is either bent directly upwards with no knots at the neck⁴⁰ or else extends down from the back of the head with an upward curl at the end.⁴¹

In terms of facial physiognomy, the large and triangle-profiled nose covering the face and bulging lips are stylistic characteristics of the period.

The god's raised hand was carved as visibly larger than his other hand and his body proportions in general. In the art of the period, the thumb is frequently shown separate, with the remaining four fingers joined. In some other seals of the period that feature parallel presentation scenes, the enthroned figure and leading goddesses have hands shown larger than normal. Such large hands are first seen on Akkadian period seals and continue in the Ur III period.⁴²

The flat-surfaced table with spread legs in front of the god bears an object shown with four layers of lines. Osten states that altars of this type first appear in Sumerian-Akkadian seals, and he interprets the object on the altar as flat bread.⁴³ One parallel of this type of altar is attested

³⁹ See Haussperger 1991, 295.

⁴⁰ Collon 1982, Pl. XLV, 379; XLVI, 396–97.

⁴¹ For hairstyles, see Buchanan 1981, 208, fig. 538.

⁴² For similar examples, see Speleers 1917, 129, figs. 438–39; Collon 1982, Pl. XXXVIII, 292; Pittman – Aruz 1987, fig. 22; Delaporte 1923, Pl. 75, 3, 12, 28.

⁴³ von der Osten 1934, 116, fig. 11: altar type no. 122.

on a seal obtained from the settlement of Khafajah in the Diyala region, an artefact that has been stylistically dated to the Akkadian period.⁴⁴ Similar parallels are a serpentine seal from the Yale Babylonian Collection; seals from the Louvre Museum, British Museum, Michel Chiha Collection, Newell Collection, and the Royal Museum of Fine Arts of Belgium; and seals from the Ur excavations.⁴⁵ Parallels of this offering table can also be seen on seals featuring contest scenes.⁴⁶ All of these artefacts date to the Post-Akkadian and Ur III periods.

Matthews, addressing the presence of some 3rd millennium BC elements in Old Syrian or Proto-Syrian glyptic in the early 2nd millennium BC, mentions the table type seen on the Kültepe seal among these elements. He states that the earliest examples of this table type are known from a purchased seal from the Aleppo region and some seals with feast scenes dated⁴⁷ to the Early Dynastic Period in Syria.⁴⁸ The appearance of this table type in Syria has been attributed to the Post-Akkadian style. The table type shown with flat bread that is indicated via horizontal lines continues to appear on seals in feast scenes of the Old Syrian style dated to the early 2nd millennium BC.⁴⁹

On top of the table in front of the god are a vase added to the empty area and a ball and staff, neither of which are organically connected with the scene. It is generally accepted that these motifs were employed on seals as filling motifs, after completion of the main scene.

The eight-pointed star at the top of the scene symbolizes the sun and appears on artefacts by the Akkadian period. The star form used on the Kültepe seal is a frequently employed motif for worship scenes of the period. Apart from worshipping and feasting scenes, a single star placed at the top of the scene is also frequently observed in scenes depicting Shamash.⁵⁰ This use continued in the Post-Akkadian period.⁵¹

Use of the star motif is not limited to glyptic. One of the most beautiful works of Akkadian art, the artefact known as the Victory Stele of Naram-Sin in the archaeological literature, has a similar star/sun depiction on top.⁵²

Balkan, reading the four-line legend on this seal, states that the name “*Abu-ah̄i*” is a parallel to the name “*Abum-ilum*” observed in the Ur III period. Additionally, he emphasizes that the prefix *ah̄u* was employed as an adjective for deities. Moreover, he also claims that the SANGA sign on the fourth line is the same as RA. The written form AN-ŠÛR^{ki} on the fourth line corresponds to the city Assur. This is the earliest example of that city name in this form.⁵³

⁴⁴ Frankfort 1955, Pl. 41, 438.

⁴⁵ See Speleers 1917, 129, fig. 438; Delaporte 1923, Pl. 74, 12, 14; von der Osten 1934, Pl. XII, 122; Buchanan 1981, fig. 545; Collon 1982, Pl. XLVII, 415; XLVIII, 428; Legrain 1951, Pl. 19: 280–83; Doumet 1992, 53, fig. 97.

⁴⁶ See Porada 1948, Pl. XLII, 268E. This contest scene engraved on a steatite seal shows a bull man and a nude hero fighting a griffin, and has an offering table of this type used as a filling motif between the bull man and the griffin.

⁴⁷ Matthews 1997, 148. For the mentioned artefacts, see Buchanan 1966, Pl. 50, 775; Pl. 54, 838; this seal is classified as Syrian provincial style, and the figures were implemented in wide and flat forms; therefore, even though it was included in the Levant group, the period could not be determined with certainty.

⁴⁸ Buchanan 1966, 143.

⁴⁹ Porada 1948, Pl. CXLIII, 944E, 946E; Buchanan 1966, Pl. 55, 855–56, 9; Porada 1966, Pl. XVII, d. This type of table depiction can be observed on artefacts from Anatolia studied under the Syria-Cappadocia style, dated to the same period, Porada 1992, 443, fig. 8.

⁵⁰ See Porada 1948, Pl. XXVIII, 181; XXIX, 192, 189; XXXII, 205; Pl. XXXVIII, 239E, 245. Use of a star on top of a scene in the Akkadian period is a characteristic of Ea, the water god; see Porada 1948, Pl. XXXI, 203; XXXII, 205.

⁵¹ See Porada 1948, Pl. XL, 255–56.

⁵² Moortgat 1969, fig. 155.

⁵³ Balkan 1957, 2.

Along with the altar, parallels of the throne depicted as a four-cornered empty frame, the lower platform of which reaches below the feet of the deity, can be observed in Akkadian, Post-Akkadian, and Ur III period examples with worshipping scenes.⁵⁴

Based on parallel finds from the Near East, such a scene is expected to have a composition wherein a worshipper is presented by a leading deity. On the basis of analogous finds in the Near East, it would be expected that the scene on the seal would have a composition in which the worshipper in the presence of the god on the throne is introduced while being held by the hand. It is conceivable that the greatest factor in the scene being done here in such a truncated manner might have resulted from the covering of a large portion of the seal's surface with the inscription behind the god, thus leaving no available space for the other figures. Many Post-Akkadian seals lack inscriptions; however, the case is different for their re-use. Therefore, it is believed that seals of this type may have been used by more than one generation; i.e., they were owned by more than one person.⁵⁵ In light of this information, it can be hypothesized that this seal from Kültepe had at least two owners, and that the inscription was added in the second use by erasing the scene.

Seal 5: Kt. 10 t. 24

The scene, simply and shallowly engraved, shows the sun god Utu/Shamash seated on a throne with a short backrest and holding a saw in his raised right hand, and a leading god a worshipper (fig. 6).

All the figures wear flat dresses that cover the whole body and extend down to the ankles. The seated god and leading god wear flat headdresses with double horns. The worshipper has no headdress.

The facial physiognomy of the gods and worshipper features long noses that begin from the forehead and cover the face, and large eye sockets created by the nose have been carved in the style of the period. The upper and lower lips are shown as bulges for both the worshipper and the seated deity. All the figures are clean-shaven, including Utu/Shamash.

This seal, dated to the Ur III period, shows Utu/Shamash, the sun god of Mesopotamian mythology, holding one of his attribute weapons, a saw. Depictions of Utu/Shamash are frequently seen in Near Eastern glyptic from the Akkadian period onwards.⁵⁶ In depictions of

⁵⁴ For the Akkadian period, see Speleers 1917, 129, fig. 438–39; for the Post-Akkadian period, see Porada 1948, Pl. XL: 255–7; Collon 1982, Pl. XXXVIII, 289, 92–3, 301–2, 305, 7, 9, 11, 2. For Ur III period examples, see von der Osten 1934, Pl. XIII, 135; Pl. XV, 186; Porada 1948, Pl. XLIV, 280; Buchanan 1981, figs. 545, 555, 557, 560; Collon 1982, Pl. XLIV, 369, 72–4, XLVI, 396–97.

⁵⁵ Collon 1982, 110.

⁵⁶ The god Utu/Shamash is usually depicted on Akkadian period seals as standing between mountains, stepping on a mountain with his raised right foot, and holding a saw. Standing Utu/Shamash figures are usually seen holding a saw in one hand and an upside-down staff/mace in the other. See Porada 1948, Pl. XXIX, 185, 6; Frankfort 1955, Pl. 56, 591. There is also a group where the god stands on two human-faced bulls (*kusarikku* in Akkadian or *gud-alim* in Sumerian) standing back to back. See Amiet 1980, fig. II - 9; Hansen 2003, 231, fig. 157b. In these scenes, the *kusarikku* are physically related to the sun rising from the east. In Akkadian period seals, when Utu/Shamash is worshipped by other gods, he is shown enthroned, saluting the gods with his raised hand holding the saw while the staff/mace in his other hand rests on his shoulder. See Frankfort 1955, Pl. 58, 617. Depictions of the god in this period include Utu/Shamash shown seated inside a boat with a human-shaped rudder and a snake-like body deck ending with a snake's head. See Frankfort 1939, XIX f, Frankfort 1955, Pl. 59, 621. In light of the current evidence, it is possible to claim that the sun god and the boat figure began to be used together from the Akkadian period onwards. See Sedlacek 2015, 205–6. Frankfort suggests that such depictions of Shamash could be related to agricultural activities. See Frankfort 1939, 109.

the seated Utu/Shamash in worshipping scenes, the god usually sits on a simple box-shaped throne or a mountain and holds a saw in his raised hand while greeting the figures moving towards him.⁵⁷ In such scenes, the god wears a pleated dress in layers that leaves one of his shoulders naked, or else a pleated skirt tightly fastened by a belt at his waist. Shown in profile, the god wears a double-horned headdress, and his face is usually shown with a beard to emphasize his gender.⁵⁸ Sun rays emanating from his shoulders are seen in both seated and standing depictions of Utu/Shamash. Hair emerging from under the horned headdress is usually shown with two knots on top of each other or else short and curling upwards.

Based on the information provided above, the Utu/Shamash on the Kültepe cylinder seal, who is depicted without a beard or rays emanating from his shoulders and has a different hairstyle and manner of dress, represents a rare example. Utu/Shamash depictions similar to the Kültepe seal are attested in examples from Tell Asmar (Eshnunna),⁵⁹ the Ur excavations, and the Marcopoli Collection.⁶⁰

Seal 6: Kt. 82 t. 224

This seal is dated to the Ur III period. It depicts the bringing of a worshipper carrying a goat in their lap and guided by a protecting god into the presence of the sun god Utu/Shamash, who is positioned on top of a mountain. There is a two-line inscription at the end of the scene (fig. 7).

In comparison to the Post-Akkadian period, Ur III seals are higher quality in terms of their technique and artistic style, while comparison with Akkadian seals reveals a relative lack of action and energy. However, the actual depictions and subjects shown on the seals are continuations from the Akkadian and Post-Akkadian periods. Examination of the compositions on published Ur III seal impressions shows that the variety of subject matter is very limited. The largest group consists of presentation scenes, followed by seals featuring contest scenes, which are lower in number.

Ur III worship scenes in Mesopotamian iconography were implemented according to the same standard rules, without exceptions. Therefore, Ur III period presentation scenes usually consisted of an enthroned deity and a worshipper led by a leading god/goddess, just as had been the case in the Post-Akkadian period.⁶¹ In these scenes, the secondary deities are either in front of or behind the worshipper as leading figures.⁶² Sometimes, the worshipper figure is depicted directly in the presence of the god, with no intercession.⁶³ Most of the time, both the worshipper and the leading figures are depicted as goddesses, though on rare occasions they are gods. These figures are usually depicted underneath a crescent, a star-disk inside a crescent, or a star.⁶⁴

⁵⁷ For Utu/Shamash seated on a mountain, see Porada 1948, Pl. XXIX: 190.

⁵⁸ For Utu/Shamash depictions on Akkadian period seals, see Delaporte 1923, Pls. 71, 72, 1–2; Porada 1948, Pls. XXIX, 188–89, 190–94.

⁵⁹ Frankfort 1955, 10.

⁶⁰ Legrain 1951, Pl. 20, 302; Frankfort 1955, Pl. 64: 690; Teissier 1984, cat. no. 135, 91.

⁶¹ Porada 1948, 35.

⁶² Buchanan 1981, Collon 2003, cat. no. 151.

⁶³ Porada 1948, Pl. XLV, 291, 4.

⁶⁴ Porada 1948, Pl. XLV, 291–94; Collon 1987, figs. 118, 121, 122.

The sun god Utu/Shamash depicted on the Kültepe seal is shown with his left foot planted on the ground while his right foot is raised to step on top of a mountain. He holds his saw in his raised right hand, while his left arm is bent at the elbow to be placed on his waist. The right hand of the leading deity before the sun god holds the hand of the worshipper figure behind, while the left hand hangs at rest around the waist. The standard between the leading deity and the worshipper has been damaged by erosion. The worshipper figure at the end of the scene carries a kid while moving towards the sun god.

Utu/Shamash, the main god in the composition, wears a long, plain dress with a slit that leaves his right leg uncovered. The leading deity and worshipper figure wear similarly long and plain dresses, though their dresses do not have slits.

The sun god and leading deity wear similar headdresses with double horns, while the worshipper has no headdress.

The god Utu/Shamash's hair ends in double knots around the neck, the leading deity's hair bends upwards from the neck, and the worshipper figure's head is shaven.

This seal has a parallel for its compositional scheme and stylistic attributes in Porada's corpus of Post-Akkadian seals.⁶⁵ This seal differs from the Kültepe example in small details, such as a tree motif in place of the inscription.

The legend of the Kültepe seal reads:

Ur-^dnu-muš-da : Ur - Numušda⁶⁶

Porada states that the implementation of depictions on seals of the Ur III period are better than those of the Post-Akkadian period.⁶⁷ On seals of the Ur III period, even the objects held or used by the depicted figures were engraved in a very delicate and elaborate manner. Furthermore, these seals were personalized through inscriptions that named their owners.⁶⁸ It is therefore possible to attach these artefacts to individuals by learning the names of the seal owners via the seal inscriptions made under the artistic influence of this period.⁶⁹ In this context, we can say that the name inscribed on a Kültepe seal represents that of the owner of the seal.

In terms of dimensions, seals of the Ur III period are smaller than Akkadian period seals. In terms of material, serpentine and steatite were generally preferred. Also, when seals for officials were carved, lapis lazuli was employed, as had also been the case previously, though hematite was used as the basic seal material both in this period and subsequent periods.⁷⁰

Seal 7: Kt. 82 t. 248

A contest scene is visible on one of the Kültepe seals dated to the Post-Akkadian period. This scene consists of a lion flanked by two nude heroes. The hero on the left holds the upside-down lion by its hind leg. The hero on the right steps on the lion's head with his right foot and holds a hind leg with his right hand while holding the animal's tail with his left hand (fig. 8).

⁶⁵ Porada 1948, Pl. XL, 254.

⁶⁶ The legend on the seal has been translated by Dr. A. Wisti Lassen, Associate Curator of the Yale Babylonian Collection, and S. Tang, PhD student in Assyriology at Yale University. I am grateful for their assistance.

⁶⁷ Porada 1948, 33.

⁶⁸ Teissier 1984, 19.

⁶⁹ Teissier 1984, 19.

⁷⁰ Porada 1948, 34.

There are differences in the iconographies of the heroes' heads and faces. The figure on the right has short hair and a long beard, and his face is long, with a triangular eye socket created by the lines of the large nose, and he has bulging lips. The hero on the left, on the other hand, is depicted without hair and beard. The arms of the figures are roughly done, long and thin, and lack details on the hands, in accordance with the style of the period. The Kültepe seal lacks one of the common features of Post-Akkadian contest scenes; namely, a double-banded belt on the waist of the nude heroes. This must have been caused by erosion of the seal surface.

There are no details visible on the head of the lion, which is shown with open mouth in an attacking position. The lion's curled tail was rendered in harmony with the animal's stance. The lion's mane is implied by three lines on the neck area.

In Post-Akkadian contest scenes, the lion is usually depicted standing on its hind legs.⁷¹ A lion flanked by a bull man, nude hero, or two nude heroes has an invariant style of depiction.

There are examples with similar compositions and stylistic elements in Near Eastern glyptic art. A seal from the British Museum dated to the Post-Akkadian period features a contest scene consisting of an upside-down lion standing on its forelegs and flanked by two nude heroes.⁷² The application of the figures, as well as their stances, offer complete parallels to what is seen on the Kültepe seal. The position of the lion's head, its open mouth, and the style of the rendering of its mane are all exactly similar to those on the Kültepe seal, though the depiction of its paws and the stylization of its muscles are different. Another seal in the Newell Collection dated to the same period shows similarities with the Kültepe seal in terms of both the stylistic application of the figures and the compositional scheme.⁷³

It is clear that the lion and hero contest seen on the Kültepe seal bears certain artistic characteristics of the Akkadian period. For example, in classical contest scenes of the Post-Akkadian period, the lion between the heroes is depicted standing on its hind legs in a pouncing position, but the lion depicted upside-down, standing on its forelegs as a hero steps on its head is a characteristic of the Akkadian period.⁷⁴ Moreover, the nude heroes of the Post-Akkadian and Ur III periods are usually beardless, while a nude, beardless hero is a rarity in the Akkadian period.

Conclusions

The seven cylinder seals examined within the scope of this study divide into two basic groups from the perspective of their style of decoration; namely, geometric and figurative. The geometrically decorated cylinder seal, represented by a single example (fig. 2), is the earliest cylinder seal found at Kültepe.

The other six cylinder seals in the study feature a figurative decoration technique (figs. 3–8). These seals bear two different compositional schemes; namely, presentation scenes and contest scenes. The manner in which the subjects of the compositions that make up the

⁷¹ See von der Osten 1934, Pl. XI, 104; Frankfort 1955, Pl. 67, 722; Pl. 69, 754; Collon 1987, fig. 111; Collon 2003, figs. 152–53.

⁷² Collon 1982, Pl. XXXV, 249

⁷³ See von der Osten 1934, Pl. XI: 104, 07.

⁷⁴ See Boehmer 1965, Taf. VII, 73 (Akkadian Ib); Taf. XI, 124 (Akkadian Ic); Taf. XIV, 154–55 (Akkadian II); Taf. XX, 222–24 (Akkadian III); Collon 1982, Pl. XVII, 119, 122–23.

scenes on the cylinder seals are constituted, as well as the stylistic characteristics of the figures, contain elements that are completely foreign to the glyptic art of Anatolia in the 3rd millennium BC. As such, the Near Eastern seals that present analogous characteristics to the Kültepe artefacts in terms of composition and style must serve as the primary reference source for the dating of these pieces. From the perspective of both scene and style, the stylistic elements of four of the examined Kültepe seals reflect the seal style of the Post-Akkadian period (figs. 3–5 and 8). Apart from these, two seal (figs. 6–7), on which a legend is found, can be dated slightly later, specifically to the Ur III period, because it contains the same motifs, symbols, and deity characteristics as presentation scenes known to have originated in Mesopotamia.

The largest group of Kültepe seals is made up of seals with presentation scenes. These were worked within the same rules as those often encountered on contemporary Near Eastern examples, without deviating from the clear standard: a worshipper is brought by a leading god/goddess into the presence of the divine figure, who is seated on a throne.⁷⁵ It is notable that in Mesopotamian glyptic from the Post-Akkadian period onwards, the presentation scene was often portrayed in a plainer style from the Early Dynastic period. Presentation scenes enriched by various additions and changes gained an important position in the Mesopotamian seal tradition from the first quarter of the 2nd millennium BC.

The engraving of contest scenes featuring bull men, nude heroes, and animals became part of glyptic art from the Early Dynastic period onwards. While on Akkadian period seals these scenes feature only a hero and an animal fighting as a pair, in the Post-Akkadian and Ur III periods this scene—as also seen on the Kültepe seal—came to depict a central animal attacked on both sides by generally nude heroes and sometimes a bull man.⁷⁶

Among the Kültepe cylinder seals examined within the scope of this study, one seal found in a grave (fig. 6) is important from the point of view of the artefact's situation. This seal, which was found together with other grave gifts left beside the deceased, displays elements that are foreign to Anatolia both in terms of being made from lapis lazuli and in terms of the working of the composition. This shows that the owner of the grave was an individual foreign to Anatolia. In other respects—and based on the fact that, just as in earlier periods, in the Ur III period as well lapis lazuli was used in the production of the seals of officials—it can be said that the person who used this seal had an important status.

The legend carved onto one seal examined in this study and reading as the name Ur-Numušda (fig. 7) is dated to the Ur III period and originated in Mesopotamia. If this seal carrying the individual's name, which was without archaeological level, did not see secondary use in later periods, then it serves as a significant historical document in being the oldest known example in Anatolia to carry the name of a Mesopotamian individual.

The archaeological evidence indicates that raw materials, technology, commodities of various qualities, art, and ideas were exchanged between Upper Mesopotamia, Syria, Anatolia, and the Aegean from 2500 BC onwards, as well as that a long-distance and extensive trade network was established between these areas.⁷⁷ However, this system did not continue for especially long periods. There are solid archaeological findings and paleoclimatic evidence for disruption of the system, which sharply reformed the societies and cultural structures of the Near East

⁷⁵ Porada 1948, 35.

⁷⁶ See Buchanan 1981, figs. 511–30.

⁷⁷ Mellaart 1982; Şahoğlu 2005; Efe 2007; Beaujard 2011.

at ca. 4.2 ka BP, and the system was revived in approximately 2000–1950/1900 BC.⁷⁸ Around 2200–2000 BC, there were significant changes and regressions in the settlement structures of centers like Leilan, Beydar, Chuera, Selankahiye, Ebla, and Hammam et-Türkmen in Upper Mesopotamia and Syria, and at Titiş Höyük in southeastern Anatolia.⁷⁹ However, the presence of monumental structures along with local and imported goods of various qualities from contemporary contexts in Kültepe, layers 12 and 11a–b, demonstrate that the site witnessed little or no cultural or political decline during this period.

Apart from archaeological finds and paleoclimatic evidence, our knowledge of the 3rd millennium BC rests largely on Mesopotamian written sources. There are references to a kingdom named *kā-ni-šu*, which is also mentioned several times in the Ebla archives from the 3rd millennium BC. It is generally accepted that the *kā-ni-šu* kingdom refers to the Kültepe-Kanesh settlement. The Ebla archives also provide evidence for trade relations between Anatolia and Assur in the 2300s BC, before the Trade Colonies Period.⁸⁰

Another document dated to the 3rd millennium BC comes from the archives of Lagash/Girsu. This archive, covering the period from Classic Sargonic to Late Akkad, contains more than 3,800 documents and mentions a settlement of *ga-ga-ni-šum^{ki}* or Gaganishum, which has been interpreted by scholars as a possible reference to the Kültepe-Kanesh settlement.⁸¹ Moreover, from later written sources we learn that two important kings of the Akkadian period, Sargon and his grandson Naram-Sin, passed the Tigris and Euphrates to reach first Cilicia and then central Anatolia, winning a military victory over the Buruṣhattum kingdom.⁸²

When we consider cross-border interactions or relations in the later phase of the Early Bronze Age based on seals or seal impressions, the distribution of finds presents important information regarding the socio-political structure of the period. For example, the interregional distribution of Ur III period seals demonstrates a difference from the Akkadian period. Contrary to seals of the Akkadian period, seals in the style of Ur III are known from numerous finds from the cities of southern Mesopotamia. However, a number of carved seals or seal impressions in this style have very a very low rate of recovery in cities north of the Euphrates.⁸³ Moreover, there are almost no examples from Mari and Tell Brak (Nagar), one of the most important trade cities of Syria in the 3rd millennium BC.⁸⁴ Most of these finds were obtained from centers such as Assur, Mari, Byblos, and Kültepe, which were all active elements in the long-distance international trade known to have been established across Anatolia, Mesopotamia, and Syria at the beginning of the 2nd millennium BC—parallel to the Assyrian Colony Period in central Anatolian chronology—rather than in the late Early Bronze Age.

In addition to the šakkanakku seals⁸⁵ known from Mari (Tell Hariri) that have been found

⁷⁸ Weiss et al. 1993; Smith 2005; Wossink 2009; Massa and Şahoğlu 2015.

⁷⁹ Akkermans and Schwartz 2003.

⁸⁰ see Larsen 1977, 120; Bachhuber 2012.

⁸¹ Westenholz 1998, 11; Schrakamp 2015, 237, 81.

⁸² see KBo III 9=2BoTU 1, von Güterbock 1938, 45; Westenholz 1997; 246–51; van De Mieroop 2000, 138–39; Veenhof and Eidem 2008, 122.

⁸³ Matthews 1997.

⁸⁴ Matthews 1997, 147. Only one artefact in Ur III style has been obtained from Tell Brak; Matthews 1997, 191.

⁸⁵ Administrators of late 3rd millennium BC Mari employed the title šakkanakku. These administrators were of high military rank and directly dependent upon the king. These types of seal known from examples obtained at Mari have scenes with characteristic iconographies. Even though some of the scenes on these seals were affected by Old Babylonian subjects, they were mostly produced under the influence of the Akkadian and Ur III periods. On

at Kültepe and Assur, another group of seals uncovered from an early Assyrian Colony Period layer at Kültepe informs us about the cultural transfer occurring during the transition from the Early Bronze Age to the Assyrian Colony Period; i.e., from the 3rd millennium BC to the 2nd millennium BC. These finds are secondary uses of Ur III-style seals in the Assyrian Colony Period: they were initially used in the Ur III period and were later transferred to the Assyrian Colony Period, either in their original forms or with some alterations.⁸⁶

In addition to these finds, important discoveries have also been made in connection with 3rd millennium BC Anatolia thanks to the increased number of surveys and excavations conducted in the region so as to provide a better understanding of Early Bronze Age cultures. Fortified monumental structures found at Acmhöyük and Yassihöyük, in addition to Kültepe, prove once more that the strong, centrally governed cities seen in the Assyrian Colony Period were in fact established even earlier, in the 3rd millennium BC. Moreover, Post-Akkadian seals found *in situ* at the Seyitömer settlement in central Anatolia, north of the Taurus Mountains, demonstrate that the long-distance trade system established between Anatolia, Mesopotamia, and Syria in the 2nd millennium BC should be regarded as having been initiated in the 3rd millennium BC. The fact that the transition from the 3rd to the 2nd millennium BC witnessed a strong cultural continuation rather than an interruption has been proven by the excavations of the aforementioned settlements, in addition to Kültepe, where this transition had been apparent since the early excavations.

şakkanakku seals, libation and worshipper scenes were usually employed with depictions of enthroned deities with different attributes (see Beyer 1985, no. 16, fig. B). One common element on the Kültepe seal and an example from Mari is the cuneiform signs placed between the seated deity and worshipping figure in worship scenes. Teisser 1990, 651.

⁸⁶ see Özgüç and Özgüç 1953, 98–9, figs. 662–63, 5 (without alteration). figs. 664, 666–70, 693.

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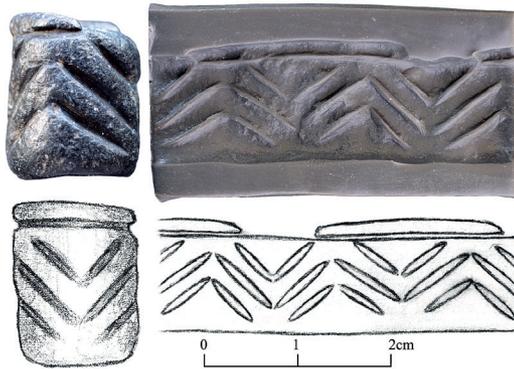


Fig. 2
Seal 1: Steatite cylinder seal with geometric decorations, from level 13 of Kültepe. Kültepe Study Collection Storeroom, Inventory no. Kt. 14 t. 1156 (photo, impression, and drawing by G. Öztürk)

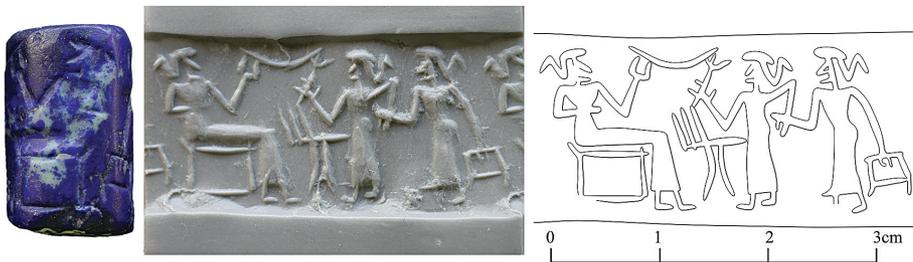


Fig. 3 Seal 2: Lapis lazuli cylinder seal from Kültepe, purchased. Kayseri Museum, Inventory no. Kt. 82 t. 246. Presentation scene (photo, impression, and drawing by G. Öztürk)

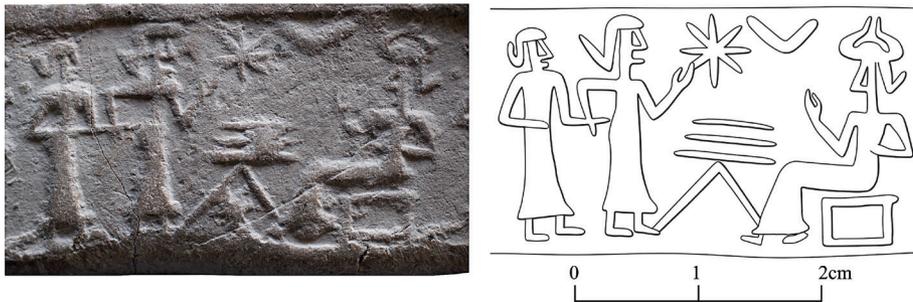


Fig. 4 Seal 3: Lapis lazuli cylinder seal from Kültepe, purchased. Kayseri Museum, Inventory no. Kt. 82 t. 247. Presentation scene (image and drawing by G. Öztürk)

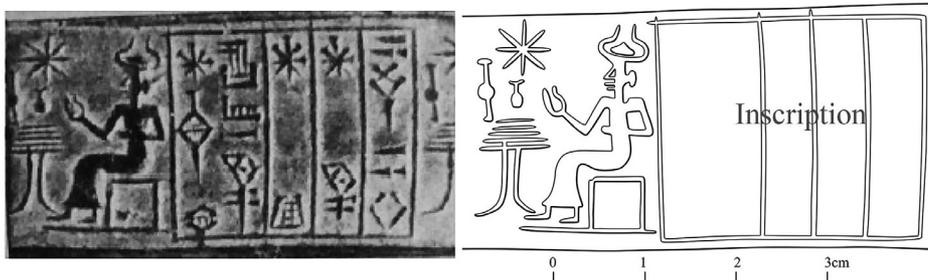


Fig. 5 Seal 4: Lapis lazuli cylinder seal obtained from Kültepe excavations of 1953. Museum of Anatolian Civilizations, Inventory no. Kt e/t 180. Presentation scene (image from Balkan 1957, ill. 12; drawing by G. Öztürk)

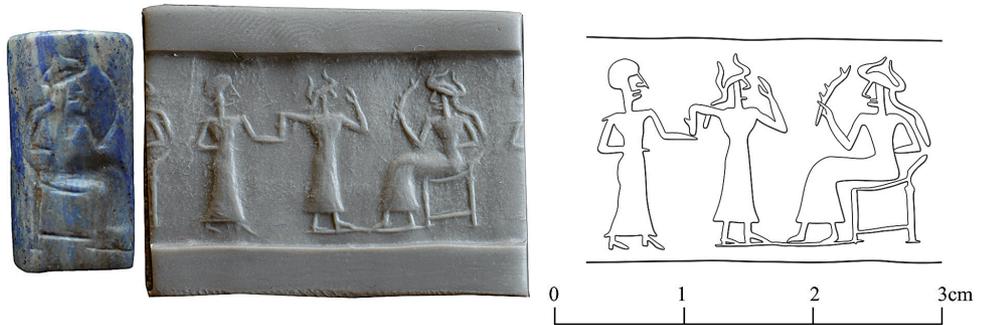


Fig. 6 Seal 5: Lapis lazuli cylinder seal obtained from the grave dated to level 11b of Kültepe. Kayseri Museum, Inventory no. Kt. 10 t. 24. Presentation scene (photo, impression, and drawing by G. Öztürk)

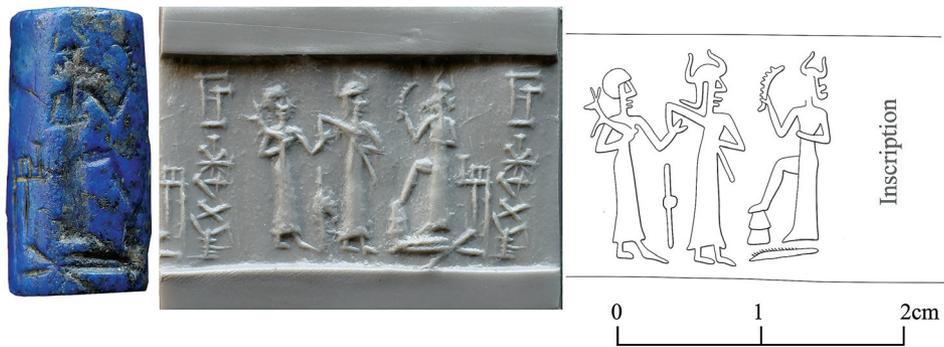


Fig. 7 Seal 6: Lapis lazuli cylinder seal from Kültepe, purchased. Kayseri Museum, Inventory no. Kt. 82 t. 224. Presentation scene (photo, impression, and drawing by G. Öztürk)

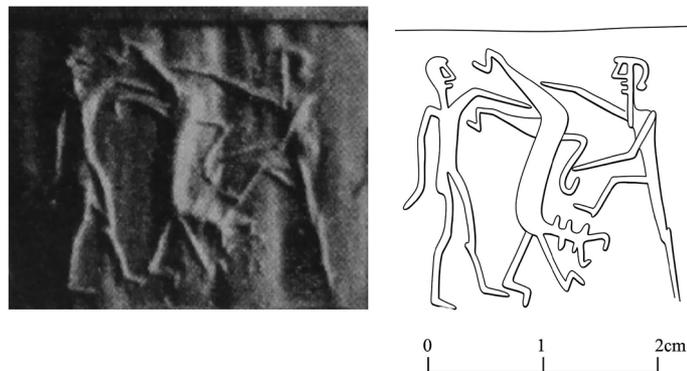


Fig. 8 Seal 7: Lapis lazuli cylinder seal from Kültepe, purchased. Kayseri Museum, Inventory no. Kt. 82 t. 248. Contest scene (image Bittel 1941, Abb. 5; drawing by G. Öztürk)

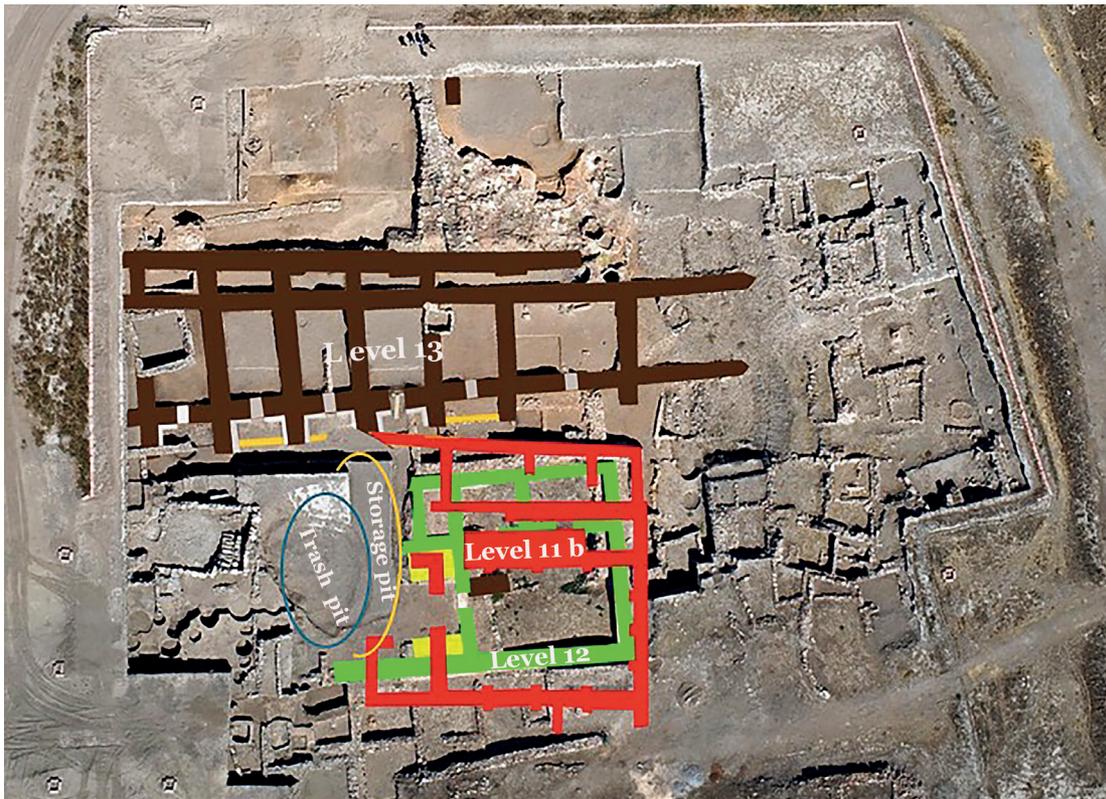


Fig. 9 Aerial photo of Kültepe, showing the Early Bronze Age monumental structures, the storage pit, and the trash pit (photo courtesy of F. Kulakoğlu)



Fig. 10 Grave dated to level 11b of Kültepe (photo courtesy of F. Kulakoğlu)

