

A L. B. Stamp Seal from Jordan

(Pl. L, 1)

The discoid of putative marble purchased at Rabbath-Moab (Jordan) in November 1969 is of interest since it shows a suckling motif of a long horned goat and its young. The sun orb supported by the crescent moon lies in the top right quarter of the field. A leafy branch before the dam suggests a woody terrain. The motif has interest first for shape. Datable from the 15th-14th century B.C., it shows the beginning of a revival of the stamp seal use in the face of the decline of cylinder seal in Southern Syria and in face of the competition of Egyptian scarab use. Its shape as its motif suggest certain connection with Aegean World. The shape is discoid, which was of some frequency at the end of the M.M. age in Crete and the L.M. age. In this case the connection with the Aegean World was through the Helladic Greece, although both shape and

style is more connected with Crete than with the Greek Mainland. There are two stylistic features which suggest connections with both Crete and Helladic Greece: the engraving of the young goat, like the head and the horns of the dam and like the movement of both, mother and young, is of the careful naturalistic content. The body of the mother on the other hand has been engraved in that manner of the talismanic goat subjects of L.M. II Crete. This for Helladic Greece or the Syrian World of the 14th c. B.C. would not be an anomaly, as it would have been in Minoan Crete of the 15th c. B.C.

The addition of the sun orb, supported by the crescent moon suggests a religious symbolism which fits the natural character of the theme.

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