

dessen Inhalt oder Ausdruck mehr oder weniger aufdringlich eigene Wege suchte. Nicht immer jedoch kann der originale Wortlaut zugleich als authentischer gelten. Sira schöpfte aus ungeschriebenem öffentlichem Bildungsgut, welches schon in mehreren Gestaltungen vorliegen konnte, deren eine er bevorzugte. Nachträglich konnte sich aber eine von ihm verschmähte Gestaltung, je weiter sich sein Buch verbreitete, in Abschriften desselben eindrängen. Die an den kleinsten Schwankungen des Wortlauts angestellten Beobachtungen lassen die Textpflege fast durchweg als ein quantitatives Wachstum erscheinen. Hiernach wollen auch größere einseitig überlieferte Bestandteile beurteilt werden, es sei denn, daß Gründe, deren Vorhandensein sich von Fall zu Fall erweisen muß, die Annahme eines örtlichen Ausfalls nahe legen. Die Annahme einer planmäßigen, etwa wegen Raumersparnis vorgenommenen, Kürzung wird durchweg entbehrlich.

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The Seal of Jaazaniah.

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With 1 Plate.

During the excavation season of 1932 we found in the West necropolis of Tell en-Nasbeh a number of Early and Middle Iron Age tombs. One still contained the original deposits intact, but most of them had been disturbed by partial clearance and re-use during the Roman and Byzantine periods. There were enough ceramic and other remains of each period to leave no doubt about the character and identity of each occupation. The tombs were grouped upon as well as below a scarp of limestone which faced east and southeast toward the Tell. The surface layer of rock, averaging a meter in thickness, was composed of hard flinty limestone. Underneath it was a deep layer of soft yellowish limestone which was so easily worked that this area afforded an ideal place for the construction of subterranean tombs.

The yielding nature of the deeper rock, from which the tomb chambers were cut, tempted later users of the tombs to remodel the interiors to some extent in order to conform them to their own ideas of tomb architecture. This usually involved extending the sides and partially cutting down the lateral divans¹, or benches, and making a floor of stamped clay and stone chips over the deposits in the central pit-like depression. These alterations had also been carried out in Tomb 19 which yielded the seal under discussion. The uppermost deposits were early Byzantine. Below that came a stratum

¹ See diagrams of Tombs 3 and 5 in *Some Tombs of Tell en-Nasbeh* (1931), Pal. Inst. Publication No. 2. The diagram of Tomb 4, possibly a remodeled tomb, also shows a shallow pit in the centre.

with remains of Roman pottery, and at the bottom of the central pit knife-and-brush work brought to light, on April 22, the seal of Jaazaniah. It was found embedded in clay and associated with small fragments of skeletal remains and with potsherds of Middle and Late Iron Age. The most reasonable way to account for its presence there is to suppose that it was originally deposited in this tomb with the body of its owner. The story of Judah and Tamar (Gen 38) implies that a seal and the cord¹ by which it was suspended were so strictly personal and private that they were, together with the staff, unquestionable means of personal identification, which could have been received only from the owner himself. The perforation through the long axis of the seal of Jaazaniah is fairly large so that it could be worn on the person with a stout cord. It was undoubtedly the custom in Israel to bury such personal possessions with their owners, for in other tombs of the West necropolis were found last summer a considerable number of conical seals engraved with animal devices, but without inscriptions. They had suspension holes at the small end of the cone, so that they could be worn around the neck on a string, and each one had apparently been buried with its owner.

The Jaazaniah seal was cut from a piece of banded agate composed of alternate white and black layers in even horizontal planes. Only on the domed top side of the seal, where the slanting edges of the black bands have been polished down to translucent thin sections, does the black color shade into a rich dark brown. The general effect is that of alternating black and white bands. The principal authorities on minerals and gemstones are agreed that this form of agate constitutes what is known to gem-cutters as onyx². For a typical onyx consists of two or more black and white strata, while the term sardonyx is applied to the stone if it contains red or brown bands.

The nearly flat face of the seal is formed by one of the white layers ground so thin that the black layer underneath shines through in places. It was evidently the lapidary's purpose to cut the lettering through the white layer so that the inscription would show black against a white background. In this he did not succeed because the white layer was left too thick. The facial area of the seal is divided into three fields by two pairs of engraved parallel lines. The upper and middle fields contain the inscription at right angles to the long axis of the seal, while the lower bears an engraved representation of a cock in fighting trim — an appropriate symbol for a military officer. The legend, engraved in intaglio, or *Spiegelschrift*, yields the intended result when seen in a mirror, or when

¹ That the cord had amuletic significance is not improbable. Cf. WELLHAUSEN, *Arab. Heidentum*, p. 166; ROBINSON, I, 36.

² R. E. LIESEGANG, *Die Achate* (1915), p. 34. "Unter Onyx ohne nähere Bezeichnung versteht man solchen mit schwarzen und weißen Streifen." Cf. also MAX BAUER, *Edelsteinkunde* (1909), p. 628.

impressed upon wax. One plain engraved frame-line encircles the elliptic face of the seal.

Such careful spacing was required to get the eight consonants of *le-Ya'azanyahu* לַיְאֲזַנְיָהוּ into the upper field that the lapidary allowed the stem of the prepositional *lamed* to extend across the frame-line and also made the latter furnish the cross-stroke of the *vav* at the end. It is rather significant that under the circumstances *Yahu* was not shortened to the common abbreviation *Yah*, nor was the *aleph* omitted as in Jer 40 s. The inscription on the middle field of the seal described its possessor as a royal official, עַבְד־הַמֶּלֶךְ "Servant of the King". Although this field is larger than the upper, the number of consonants in the titular designation is only seven while eight were called for in the first. The seal-cutter, therefore, could not only space the letters more generously, but also make them larger. This results in giving a marked sphragistic prominence to the mention of Jaazaniah's official rank. That this effect, like the unabbreviated name, was intended, perhaps requested, does not seem improbable, for the seal-cutter must have planned the size of each of the three fields before he began to engrave.

It is pertinent to observe that the ductus of the engraved letters resembles that of the Siloam inscription. This is most apparent in the forms of the *aleph* and the *ayin*. The hooks at the ends of the horizontal strokes of the latter are even more marked than in the Siloam inscription. Equally noteworthy is the ligature of the *beth* in 'ebed with the *he* in *ir-hammelek*. This also occurs in the Siloam inscription, but not with a third letter (*daleth*) over the ligature.

The third and lowest field contains an admirably delineated bird, in profile, which has the attitude and appearance of a game-cock about to engage a rival. Since the mandibles are apart he may be represented in the act of crowing, or in a guard attitude after fighting has begun. Comb, wattles, and spurs are carefully indicated. Evidently the task of representing a serrated comb presented to the engraver difficulties which he could overcome only by some exaggeration. The wing is slightly drooped as in combat position, and the primaries as well as the secondaries are skilfully sketched. Only one curved line indicates the "sickles", or arched tail feathers. That the cock faces to the left is doubtless an accommodation to the direction in which the inscription is to be read — from right to left.

The use of the cock as an emblem or symbol on a seal, whose date can be fixed about 600 B. C., is an interesting fact in itself, and calls for more extensive discussion than can be given to it here. It shows that the jungle-fowl (*Gallus ferrugineus* or *bankiva*), or some variety of chicken descended from it, must have been known in Palestine not later than the seventh century B. C. Consentaneous evidence is afforded by cock symbols on seal cylinders and engraved stones from Assyria, Persia, and other parts of Western Asia¹.

¹ L. DELAPORTE, *Catalogues des cylindres, cachets, et pierres gravées* (1920). Con-



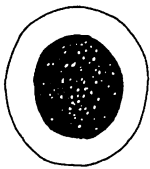
← Face of seal.
Enlarged ca. $2\frac{1}{3}x$.

Impression in wax. →

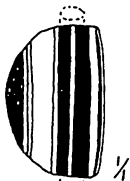


Dimensions of seal.

- L. 19 mm.
- W. 18 mm.
- T. 12+ mm.



↑
Top view.



↑ $\frac{1}{2}$
Side view.



Ornithologists regard India and Malaysia as the original habitat of the jungle-fowl, and curiously enough onyx was in early times also brought by trade routes from India¹.

The earliest occurrences of the cock in ancient literature and art is a subject to which the excavator and archaeologist Mr. ALAN ROWE has devoted some research with interesting results. After seeing our seal at Tell en-Nasbeh he generously sent me his list of source references, and later an article² in which his findings are discussed. Mr. ROWE mentions as the earliest complete representation of the bird, so far known to him, a limestone ostrakon found by Dr. HOWARD CARTER³ in the Valley of the Tombs of the kings at Thebes. The date of this ostrakon is believed to lie somewhere between 1425 and 1123 B.C. Since comb, wattles, sickles and spurs are clearly delineated in black outline, there can be no doubt that a typical cock is portrayed.

What is believed to be a still earlier representation of a cock is found on a Mycenaean potsherd⁴ dated to about the 15th century B.C. But in this case only the head and neck are shown. A very early inscriptional reference to a bird which Dr. KURT SETHE⁵ believes to have been the Indian jungle-fowl occurs in the description of the eighth campaign of Thutmose III. Among the items of tribute derived from a country situated somewhere between Syria and Babylonia are mentioned "four birds which bear (i. e. lay eggs) every day".

In short there appears to be considerable evidence now that the jungle-fowl of India spread from its original habitat to Media and Persia and thence to Babylonia, Assyria and Syria. The campaigns of Thutmose and other Egyptian monarchs in Palestine and Syria would easily enough account for its spread to Egypt either by land or in Phoenician ships. In a private communication to the writer Dr. BRUNO MAISLER has raised the question whether the *tukkiyim*, which Solomon's "navy of Tarshish" (I Reg 10 22) is said to have brought from foreign parts, may not have been an early variety of domestic fowl rather than peacocks. Unless Talmudical tradition is right in finding a "strutting cock"⁶ in Prov 30 31, no

sult "Table analytique des principaux sujets" in Vol. II, under "Coq". Five instances are listed. The dates of the seals are in doubt. Probably none of them are earlier than 700 B.C.

¹ PLINY, NH XXXVII, 76, 86. Ratanpur still is a great center for the agate industry.

² "The History of the Rooster", *Lines of Communication* (Jerusalem) Sept. and Oct., 1932.

³ *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* (1923), IX, p. 2 and Pl. XX.

⁴ C. T. SELTMAN, *Annual of the British School at Athens*, XXVI, p. 98, fig. 8.

⁵ "Die älteste Erwähnung des Haushuhnes in einem ägyptischen Texte", *Festschrift F. C. Andreas* (1916) pp. 109—116. Reference and facts given on authority of Mr. ROWE. Source not accessible to me.

⁶ So rendered in the recent new translations of JAMES MOFFATT and J. M. P. SMITH, *La Bible du Centenaire* regards the verse as unintelligible; also HSAT (1910).

domestic chickens are ever mentioned in the Old Testament. This silence may be accidental, but in view of their occurrence in Egypt as early as the fourteenth or fifteenth century B.C., and in view of the cock on the Jaazaniah seal of 600 B.C., the omission is somewhat surprising.

Certainly the most interesting question connected with this seal is the identity of its owner. Since four persons bearing the name of Jaazaniah are mentioned in the Old Testament it behooves us to pass them in review. They are the following:

1. Jaazaniah the son of Jeremiah, the son of Habbazziniah (*Ya'axanyah ben-Yirmeyahu ben-Habaššinyah*) Jer 35 8. This man was a chieftain of the Rechabite clan who was subjected to a test by Jeremiah the prophet. The latter commended the faithfulness with which he adhered to the commands and nomadic ideals of his ancestor Jonadab. Because the Rechabites ordinarily shunned cities and fixed abodes this Jaazaniah excuses their temporary sojourn in Jerusalem as grounded in fear of the Chaldaean army of Nebuchadnezzar (Jer 35 11). He obviously was no royal officer.

2. Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan (*Ya'axanyahu ben-Šaphan*) Ezek 8 11. In one of Ezekiel's visions this Jaazaniah appears as ringleader of seventy "elders of the house of Israel" who practice idolatry in secret at Jerusalem. It is possible that these were adherents and promoters of the Egyptian party.

3. Jaazaniah the son of Azzur (*Ya'axanyah ben-'Azzur*) Ezek 11 1. He is mentioned with another man as one of the "princes of the people" (*sarē ha'am*) who was "devising iniquity" and "giving wicked counsel" in Jerusalem.

4. Jaazaniah the son of the Maacathite (*Ya'axanyahu ben-Hamma'akhathi*) II Reg 25 23 Jer 40 8. Although this Jaazaniah was a Judaeen officer his father came from Maacah¹ and the remembrance of this fact took precedence in popular tradition over the paternal name which has not been transmitted in the two passages which refer to him. The same passages describe the son as one of four *sarim* who, after the destruction of Jerusalem and the departure of the Chaldaean army, came to Mizpah to offer their fealty to Gedaliah. The title *sar* was applied to all royal officials, no matter what their function might be². In the passages cited above the functions of the four officials are of a military character, for they are described as *sarē haḥayalim*, "captains of armed bands". Jaazaniah the son of the Maacathite therefore was a military officer in Zedekiah's army.

When the time element is taken into account it is seen that all these four Jaazaniahs³ belong to the same general

¹ A district southwest of Mount Hermon.

² Cf. BENZINGER, HA⁸, p. 266.

³ A possible fifth has sometimes been found in Jer 42 1. But there is general agreement now that the Jaazaniah of this passage has arisen out of a scribal error for Azariah and must be corrected in conformity with the reading of Jer 43 2. His father's name Hoshaiah, sometimes assumed to be the name of the Maacathite father of Jaaza-

period¹. They all were mature men during the time between the two Babylonian invasions of Judah, 597—586 B.C., and the fact that this name occurs suddenly in frequent use during this period of biblical history doubtless is significant. It belongs to the class of verbal phrase names² which express a wish or petition, in this case "that Yahweh may hear". The profound impression made upon king and people in 621 B.C. by the reading of the newly discovered book of Deuteronomy (II Reg chs. 22 and 23), especially by the curses of the 28th chapter, makes it a plausible supposition that the Hebrew parents of these four Jaazaniahs named their children during this crisis of anxiety. In view of the prevalent ancient belief that *nomina sunt omina* these names may have been given to ward off the threatened punishments for idolatry which according to the prophetess Huldah only Yahweh's mercy could avert. If these names were bestowed in 621 B.C. their bearers would have been in the prime of life in 586 B.C.

A number of circumstances point definitely to Jaazaniah No. 4 as the owner of the seal. The other three are mentioned *before* the destruction of Jerusalem and not again afterwards. If any of them survived the capture of the city and the executions at Riblah (II Reg 25 18—21), they probably were carried away in captivity to Babylonia. But Jaazaniah the son of the Maacathite must have quitted Jerusalem in the following of ill-fated King Zedekiah when he tried to escape from the Chaldaeans. The king fell into the hands of his pursuers. But some of his officers, including Jaazaniah No. 4, escaped and returned from hiding only when they heard that the Chaldaeans had departed. The name on the seal is written out fully, *Ya'azanyahu*, exactly as given in II Reg 25 23. As pointed out above, this was done in spite of the difficulty which the gem-cutter faced in crowding so long a name into a small field. In the parallel passage, Jer 40 8, MT reproduces the name defectively with the omission of the *aleph*, *Ye[^s]zanyahu*. The only other case in which the name is written unabbreviated is in the case of Jaazaniah No. 2, Ezek 8 11. But there is nothing to indicate that he was a royal officer, or that he ever came to Mizpah, so he drops out of consideration as the possible owner of the seal under discussion. Finally, Jaazaniah No. 4 is the only one whom the O. T. brings into connection with Mizpah where the seal was found. What is more, it was found in a tomb, associated with contemporary ceramic deposits, under two stratified later deposits.

niah No. 4, seems also to be a copyist's error, and should yield place to the LXX reading Maaseiah. On the origin of these errors see B. DUHM, *Jeremia* (1901), KHC—AT; also CORNILL, *The Book of Jeremiah, Critical Edition of the Hebrew Text* (1895) and his commentary (1905). These corrected readings have been adopted in the translations of ROTHSTEIN (HSAT), JAMES MOFFATT, and J. M. P. SMITH.

¹ The name occurs also in the Elephantine papyri, a century later.

² Cf. M. NOTH, *Die israelitischen Personennamen*, p. 198; also CLERMONT-GANNEAU, *Rec. d'Arch. Orientale*, Tome II, 29.

During the excavation seasons of 1929 and 1932 some striking new evidence was found which identifies Tell en-Nasbeh with the famous Mizpah of Benjamin. This evidence requires more extensive and detailed presentation than can be attempted in this connection. We take occasion here only to point out that public announcement of the identification of Tell en-Nasbeh with Mizpah had been made two weeks *before* the discovery of the Jaazaniah seal. This find only confirmed rather dramatically, and in a way no one could have imagined, a conclusion which had already been reached on other grounds.

In a brief article written by C. F. BURNEY for the Hastings Bible Dictionary (1900) occurs a statement which the discovery of this seal enables us now to correct. After saying that Jaazaniah, though not mentioned by name, had probably joined with other captains of the forces in giving battle to Ishmael after his murder of Governor Gedaliah, he continues: "Probably also he was one of those who determined, against the advice of Jeremiah, to abandon the land of Judah, and to lead the remnant of the people down into Egypt (Jer 42)". From this imputation it now is possible to exonerate him. For had he fled to Egypt he certainly would have taken so personal a possession as his onyx seal with him. That he went to Egypt and later returned to die at Mizpah is not a plausible supposition especially in view of Jeremiah's reported assurance that no one who went there would ever return. More probable is it, either that he died (as one of the victims of Ishmael?) before the Mizpahite exodus to Egypt, or that he was one of the few who on Jeremiah's advice remained at Mizpah.

[Finished on April 7th 1933.]

Balāta.

Ein Schlußwort vom Herausgeber.

Wenn über ein wissenschaftliches Unternehmen von der Bedeutung der deutschen Sicheim-Grabung unter den nächstbeteiligten Forschern ein Streit ausbricht, wie ihn die Leser dieser Zeitschrift im vergangenen Jahr erlebt haben, so wird es gut sein, wenn ein Außenstehender versucht, die Lehren aus den Vorgängen zu ziehen, die für die Zukunft Nutzen stiften können. Das soll die Aufgabe der folgenden Zeilen sein, niemand zuliebe und niemand zuleide¹.

¹ Es wird dem Frieden, der das sachliche Ziel aller an der Frage Beteiligten ist, am besten dienen, wenn ich sofort den Teil der Schuld an der Verschärfung des Streites auf mich nehme, der mich trifft. Es handelt sich dabei um THIERSCH'S Anmerkung 4 in ZAW 1932, 77, durch die SELLIN sich gekränkt fühlen konnte, weil sie ihn mit der Verantwortung für Vorgänge zu belasten schien, die zu einer Zeit sich abgespielt haben, in der er in der Grabung nur Gastrecht besaß. Ich stelle klar, wie es zu dem gedruckten Wortlaut gekommen ist. Wenige Tage, nachdem THIERSCH mir sein Manu-