A NEW OFFERING SCENE FROM THE HITTITES

ŞENGÜL AYDINGÜN

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RESUMEN: Un ortostato con relieves fue capturado con ayuda de la policía turca en el puesto fronterizo de Hamzabeyli y luego transportado el Museo de Edirne (Turquía occidental). No se conocía su posible origen. Nuestro estudio pretendía determinar la posible procedencia en base a sus características estilísticas. La piedra está parcialmente conservada y muestra una escena de banquete. Este estilo de representación es propio de muchos bajorrelieves e improntas de sello del período Neo-hitita del sureste de Anatolia. Lo fechamos hacia finales del siglo VII a.C. y su origen debe encontrarse en algún lugar cercano a la frontera siro-turca.

PALABRAS CLAVES: Relieve, ortostato, tráfico de antigüedades, Museo de Edirne, Neo-Hitita.

ABSTRACT: A relief orthostat captured with the help of the Turkish police on the Hamzabeyli border gate and delivered to Edirne Museum (Western Turkey) is the subject of this paper. No information was obtained about its possible origins. Our study was aiming to narrow the possible provenance based on the stylistic characteristics. The stone is partly recovered and belongs to a bigger banquet scene. This style of depiction seen on many bas-reliefs and seal impressions recovered from the Late Hittite period from the South Eastern part of Anatolia. We date it to the end of 8th century B.C. and the origin has to be somewhere near the Turkish- Syrian border.

KEY WORDS: Relief orthostat, illicit antiquities, Edirne Museum, Late Hittite.

A relief orthostat captured on the Hamzabeyli border gate on the 11th of May, 2010.

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2 Dr. Şengül Aydungün, Kocaeli Üniversitesi Fen Edebiyat Fakültesi Arkeoloji Bölümü, sengulaydingun@kocaeli.edu.tr
2007 and delivered to Edirne Museum is the subject of our study. Following the receipt of this orthostat Edirne Museum distributed its pictures Turkey wide with the help of police and Ministry of Culture and Tourism. But no information was obtained about its possible origins. Therefore our study was aiming to narrow the possible origin both in time and in geography based on the stylistic characteristics.

The orthostat is a partly recovered and belongs to a bigger banquet scene. It is made of reddish basaltic-andesite rock, with dimensions of 55 x 48 cm. In the centre of the orthostat there is a person with a beret or a band on his head and have curly hairs coming to the level of his neck. The figure, seen by his side, has clearly an almond shape eye, a big nose, small lips and a chin. He seems to offer a drink with the pitcher he is holding is his hand. The craftsmanship on the bas relief shows characteristics of Aramized Late Hittite style. It is understood that the person has long costume with half long sleeves.

The orthostat is broken on the lower side, leaving out diagonally the part below the hip of the figure. This makes impossible to know what the figure is wearing for shoes. In his left hand a there is pitcher with long spout, basket shaped handle, wide body and a conical bottom. The palm of his hand is turned to outside. He holds the pitcher’s handle. He is offering to his opposite person in a most elegant way. His right arm is elevated to the level of his chest and his hand is twisted. The position of the right arm also shows a deep respect. The shape of the pitcher is very similar to those with long beak spout with basket handle found in Kültepe Maşat Höyük and the one from Inandık Tepe.

Also there is a distinct resemblance with the pitcher seen in a scene found in Carchemish in which a prince or a rich citizen of Carchemish is offered drink while cooling with a fan and listening to music. In another way the pitcher also reminds the Phrygian pitchers. A similar Phrygian pitcher is seen on a Karatepe orthostat, in a banquet scene, on the hand of the man offering drink. The costume of the one offering drink has the same style as the one seen on Edirne orthostat. According to Akurgal these pitchers had been genuine styles in fashion in

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3 Ortostat, big, large dimensional stone blocks staying at outer wall of any monumental structure, pylon. This line of stone blocks generally made of basalt or limestone.
4 T. Özgüç, 2005
5 T. Özgüç, 1978, lev. pl. 50,1-2
6 T. Özgüç, 1982, lev. 49, 5
7 Woolley, Lawrence, 1921, pl. B.30, b,
8 Akurgal, fig. 98 a
9 Akurgal, 1995, res. 130-138
Phrygian world around B.C.E. 700\textsuperscript{10}. But one has to search for the origins of these pitchers rather in the South East. Because these types of vessels were first introduced to Anatolia in the beginning of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} Millennium B.C.E. by the Assyrian colonialists and they were used widely in Old Hittite Period. It is supposed that on the opposite site of the table there is an important person. Unfortunately this part is missing. On the table there are three flat breads put one on top of the other and a cooked bird like dish (chicken or quail). In a golden necklace exhibited in Berlin Pergamum museum a woman is seen eating meat with flat bread. These flat breads are also depicted on other votive tables. The legs of the table are coming down perpendicularly and in a straight fashion. It is strengthened by a short lateral beam. The furniture also has a shaft like part coming right from the middle of the table top. It stands as a decorative, additional leg having carved parts. Looking to our modern eyes rather like a machine part, it had to have only a decorative purpose in the time of its creation. This style of depiction seen on many bas-reliefs and seal impressions recovered from the Late Hittite cities such as Kargamış\textsuperscript{11}, Zincirli\textsuperscript{12}, Maraş\textsuperscript{13}, Karatepe\textsuperscript{14}, Sakçagözü\textsuperscript{15} Özdek Burnu\textsuperscript{16}, T. Rifa’at\textsuperscript{17} from the South Eastern part of Anatolia gives us the chance of interpretation bout the votive table seen on the orthostat

\textsuperscript{10} Akurgal, res. 98
\textsuperscript{11} Woolley, Lawrence, Hogarth, 1914, pl.B.14, I:10, Akurgal, fig.98 a
\textsuperscript{12}Orthmann 1971, 549, K/2, taf. 66; taf., B/6
\textsuperscript{13}Orthmann, taf. 45 B/7, B/10 B/14, B/15 taf.46, B/17, B/20, B/19, taf. 47,C/1 , C/4, C/5, taf. 48, D/1
\textsuperscript{14} Akurgal, res. 139
\textsuperscript{15}Orthmann, taf. 51, C/1
\textsuperscript{16}Orthmann, taf. 48,g,
\textsuperscript{17}Orthmann, taf. 48,i
piece from Edirne Museum. The limestone table dedicated by Sargon the 2nd to God Sibitti and found in Korsaabet Durşarrukin gives us valuable information about the contemporary votive tables. In addition we can see on the seals and their impressions from Kültepe-Kanis\textsuperscript{18}, on the scripted clay bullas and on the many Syrian origin seals and their impressions, the votive tables are similarly decorated with such middle legs.

For these reasons we think that the orthostat from Edirne museum as a Late Hittite product. We date it to the period of 700-730 B.C.E. (End of 8th century B.C.E.) and the origin has to be somewhere nears the today’s Turkish Syrian border, from a Late Hittite center between Gaziantep and Kahramanmaraş cities.

REFERENCES


\textsuperscript{18} N. Özgüç, 1965-1968