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Composition Analysis of Cypriot Cylinder Seal Printmaking Visuals

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Abstract:

Since ancient times, people have used special signs and symbols to determine their identity, property, belief, authority, and similar rights. The understandability of these symbols is because they are signs of people who form a community with common values and agree on their meanings under the conditions of that day. One of the most important factors that make these special signs meaningful is the compositions they are used in. In this research, the cylinder seals found in Cyprus and those that are archaeological works and exhibited in museums were examined. The sample's seals consist of cylinder seals exhibited in the Cypriot archaeological museums, the British Museum, the Metropolitan Museum, and the John Hopkins Museum. Cylinder seals used by the communities and governments that have dominated Cyprus in the historical process were examined as visual elements. For this purpose, the compositions of cylinder seals used in Cyprus between 2000 BC and 600 BC were examined. The study also included compositions on seals produced in neighboring cultures, brought to Cyprus as gifts or imported, and the seals with additional figures engraved after they were brought to the island. In this context, the pattern, figure, writing, decoration, and arrangement of the patterns used on 191 sample cylinder seals were investigated. As a result of the examination, the compositions of the figures engraved on the seals were coded and divided into categories. Twenty main categories were identified as a result of categorical separation. Fifty-nine subcategories were identified in nine of the main categories identified. No subcategories were found in the remaining 11 categories. In this context, the compositions of the cylinder seals included in the sample, the episode called the main scene, and the side scenes supporting the expression were determined and examined.

Keywords: art composition, Cypriot culture, Ancient Cyprus, cylinder seals, seal compositions.

塞浦路斯圆柱印章版画视觉构成分析

摘要:

自古以来，人们就用特殊的符号和符号来确定自己的身份、财产、信仰、权威和类似的权利。这些符号的可理解性是因为它们是人们在那个时代的条件下形成具有共同价值观并对其含义达成一致的标志。使这些

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特殊标志有意义的最重要因素之一是它们所使用的成分。在这项研究中，检查了在塞浦路斯发现的圆柱印章以及那些考古作品并在博物馆展出的圆柱印章。样本的印章包括在塞浦路斯考古博物馆、大英博物馆、大都会博物馆和约翰霍普金斯博物馆展出的圆柱印章。在历史进程中主导塞浦路斯的社区和政府使用的圆柱印章被视为视觉元素。为此，研究了公元前 2000 年至公元前 600 年间塞浦路斯使用的圆柱密封件的成分。该研究还包括在邻近文化中生产的、作为礼物或进口到塞浦路斯的海豹成分，以及在被带到岛上后刻有额外数字的海豹。在此背景下，研究了 191 个样品缸印章上使用的图案的图案、图形、文字、装饰和排列。作为检查的结果，对印章上雕刻的数字的组成进行了编码和分类。作为分类分离的结果，确定了 20 个主要类别。在确定的九个主要类别中确定了 59 个子类别。在其余 11 个类别中未发现任何子类别。在此背景下，确定并检查了样本中包含的圆柱密封件、称为主要场景的剧集和支持表达的副场景的构成。

关键词：艺术作文，塞浦路斯文化，古塞浦路斯，圆柱印章，印章作文。

1. Introduction

It is accepted that the activities that constitute the infrastructure of art started with the history of humanity. History is shaped by the ruins left by humanity. Since the Upper Paleolithic, people have drawn pictures on cave walls or on many materials they use, albeit for different purposes (Güvenç, 2015). The pictorial marks on these ruins give us clues about humanity's way of life, production, and art. Since ancient times, pictures made by carving-scraping on hard surfaces have also been found. Along with these pictures, symbols, signs, or handprints indicating ownerships were found. These marks left with the help of various materials were called first printing experiments. The carving-scraping method was used in making the seals. For this reason, seals have been accepted as the basis of the art of printing.

Seals give us information about civilizations as well as they are historical documents for us. They are also of great artistic importance with the richness of presentation brought by their visual compositions supported by writing and pictures. The compositions created by the imagery engraved on the seals can be explored as visual elements with the prints exhibited in museums today.

Cylinder seals were primarily used in Mesopotamia, Egypt, Anatolia, Palestine, Cyprus, and other nearby settlements between approximately 3000-500 BC (Frankfort, 1939). They were first used about 5000 years ago by Mesopotamian civilizations. Cylinder seals were in active use for approximately 2500 years and were used to identify, record information about production and social life, and, perhaps most importantly, audit trade transactions. Cylinder seals, as part of archeological findings, were typically evaluated in perspectives relevant to archeological sciences. This study aims to analyze cylinder seals from visual arts perspectives, which appears to be unprecedented. To this end, the 'visual composition structures' of the seals, which are quite significant in visual arts, were studied. The compositions of the prints made by the seals were visually analyzed and accordingly categorized. This study is significant for being the first such analysis in a visual arts perspective and having the potential to raise awareness of cylinder seals as significant tools used,

along with many other purposes, to facilitate intense ancient trade between Mediterranean civilizations.

1.1. *The Research Problem*

The problem of this research is to examine the distribution principles (printing area compositions) of the figures engraved on the "archaeological cylinder seals" used in the archeological periods of Cyprus, the figures on the image that appear after the seal is printed on the printing surface. Adhering to this problem statement, it is necessary to study the diversification of the unity of design elements on the archaeological cylinder seals used in Cyprus.

1.2. *The Aim of the Research*

This research aims to study the composition diversity, created as a result of the principles of studying the engravings on the archeological cylinder seals used in Cyprus, which are exhibited in the archeological museums of Cyprus, the British Museum, Metropolitan Museum, Louvre Museum, and the John Hopkins Museum.

In this context, the arrangement forms of the figures on the 191 archaeological cylinder seals on the surface of the seal were examined in categories.

1.3. *The Importance of Research*

This research is based on seals used in the archeological periods in Cyprus Island and is conducted in a case study pattern seeking an answer to the identified problem. Within the scope of this research, it is aimed to create a different perspective on seals, which have been examined in terms of archaeology and art history, in terms of composition structures. In this context, it is important to examine seals as original design elements and to categorically examine the compositions that build the relationship of the images engraved on them.

1.4. *Limitations of the Research*

The subject of this research is limited to the archaeological cylinder seals used in Cyprus, which are exhibited in the archeological museums in Cyprus and the related sections of the British Museum, Metropolitan Museum, Louvre Museum, and John

Hopkins Museum, where Cyprus-related artifacts are exhibited. The sampling is thought to represent the research object.

The conditions created by the necessity of accessing the seals found in the British Museum, Metropolitan Museum, Louvre Museum, and John Hopkins Museum from the museums' websites have also been effective in the research.

2. The Research Method

This research was done in the case-study design, which is one of the qualitative research methods.

2.1. Research Object and Sampling

The object of the research is the archaeological seals used in Cyprus. Its sample consists of archaeological cylinder seals used in Cyprus, exhibited in archeological museums in Cyprus and the related sections of the British Museum, Metropolitan Museum, Louvre Museum, and John Hopkins Museum, where the works related to Cyprus, are exhibited.

2.2. Composition in the Cypriot Archaeological Cylinder Seals

There are letters, human figures, animal figures, tree figures, and motifs on the seals. These elements are important elements of seals in terms of their ability to fulfill their functions, such as identification, religious ceremonies and blessings, ownership, representation, and suitability for their intended use. Seals were also often used as a means of conveying messages or as amulets. Seals also need a meaningful design to fulfill their tasks mentioned above fully. The designs that we visually perceive have always been important from the first human to the present day. The skill of using the sense of sight, which was developed by spending tens of thousands of years from the first human to the present day, started from the people who drew cave paintings. The human who had painted cave paintings drawn on cave walls about 15000 years ago could perceive and painted what they had seen. In these paintings, we observe the hunting rituals of the first human, the pictures of the animals they hunted, and the handprints that emphasize the human stamp. Hand paintings may have been used by the cave-era people 15000 years ago, instead of fingerprints, like they are used today for identification. In a sense, it can be mentioned that they were drawings made instead of seals (Uçar, 2004).

In his book *The Story of Art*, Gombrich (1994) makes the following determination about the cave paintings, which have survived from the first human to the present day and enables us to obtain information about the lifestyle and culture of that time. "For the primitives, there is no distinction between the construction of a hut and the production of an image regarding utility. The huts protect them from rain, wind, sun, and the spirits that created them. On the other hand, images were protecting them against natural forces and real forces. In other words, pictures and

sculptures are used for magical purposes" (Gombrich, 1994). The pictures on seals, engraved and used since 9000 years ago, may also have such purposes. In addition, these illustrations provide us with data regarding the cultural accumulation of the mentioned period. They also shed light on our determination of the level of the same period in terms of compositions design.

Different designs were made according to the types of seals and as a form within each group. The visuals that all types of seals with different forms will be produced on the printing surface are also designed with a unique understanding of composition. In addition, the figures, motifs, decorations, and inscriptions on the seals of the same type were studied in different compositions. Graphic design, one of the design applications, is the type of design applied to arrange the motifs and figures on the seals. These designs are in the form of a composition that the seal producer thinks it gives the message he wants to give the best. Seals, which we know to be used since 9000 years ago, are still used today. The archaeological seals and seals used today have inscriptions, figures, motifs, and ornaments on them. There are also seals on which only letters or letters and numbers were engraved. In all stages of history, stamp engravers needed the graphic design to place inscriptions, figures, motifs, and ornaments in a meaningful way, according to the wish of the person ordering the seal.

Although archaeological seals are designed differently, seals are generally divided into two groups. The first of these groups is the stamp; the second is the cylinder seals. When we look at the distribution within these two main groups, cylinder seals are seen as one group, while stamp seals are designed in the form of ring seals and needle seals. Urartians used seals in the stamp, cylinder, and stamp-cylinder forms (Biber, 2010). The printing area of cylinder seals is much larger than stamp seals. With these features, it has been difficult to express what is desired in stamp seals on a limited surface. But the cylinder form creates and provides a larger design surface for the user because of its shape and the method of use.

In the context of these general figure arrangement rules, seen on archaeological seals, the Cypriot archaeological seals that constitute the research sample were examined. The figures, motifs, and other images engraved on the seals, whose production dates were between 2000-600 BC, were found to be devoid of perspective consciousness and space perception that would create a three-dimensional perception on the two-dimensional surface, as in the paintings and reliefs of the people of that period. In the context of these main features, when the different arrangements of the figures on the seals were examined categorically, twenty different main designs and fifty-nine sub-designs of nine of them were found.

In the categorical study on the arrangement of the figures in the printing areas of the Cypriot

archaeological cylinder seals, the following composition examples were determined.

2.3. Composition on Cypriot Archaeological Cylinder Seals

The following compositions are reached on the Cypriot archaeological cylinder seals.

1. Composition sample: Compositions where the figures and figure groups touch to the same base (floor).

In this group of seals, it is observed that the figures, motifs, and other elements used as filling elements were outside this design rule (Figure 1).



Figure 1. An image from the Cyprus Museum cylinder seal sample (Photo by Yücel Yazgın)

2. Composition sample: A composition in which figures or their groups are studied one after the other, as if there were two different ground lines, with no distinctive elements between them, next to the main scene engraved on the seal. This group of seals is divided into twenty-two subgroups.

2.a. In addition to the main scene in the working area, a composition in which five figures on a vertical plane are studied without using any separating element and limited by a thin straight line from the top and bottom. The figures in the main scene are looking in the same direction (Figure 2).



Figure 2. An image from the Cyprus Museum cylinder seal sample (Photo by Yücel Yazgın)

2.b. A composition in which two figures on top of the other are studied without using any separator element. In addition, the figures in the main scene are looking in the same direction. The composition is limited by thin lines from the top and bottom (Figure 3).



Figure 3. An image from the Cyprus Museum cylinder seal sample (Photo by Yücel Yazgın)

2.c. In addition to the main stage in the field of study, a composition in which two figures at the bottom and one figure at the top are studied without using any distinctive element between them. Abstractions are striking in figures. The composition is limited by thin, straight lines from the top and bottom (Figure 4).



Figure 4. An image from the Cyprus Museum cylinder seal sample (Photo by Yücel Yazgın)

2.d. In addition to the main stage in the field of study, composition with two figures at the bottom and three motifs at the top, without any separator between them. Details in the figures are striking. The composition is bordered by thin and straight lines from the top and bottom. The fine details and starfish motif in the figures are striking (Figure 5).



Figure 5. An image from the Cyprus Museum cylinder seal sample (Photo by Yücel Yazgın)

2.e. In addition to the main stage in the field of study, composition, in which three successive motifs are studied without using any separating element (Figure 6).

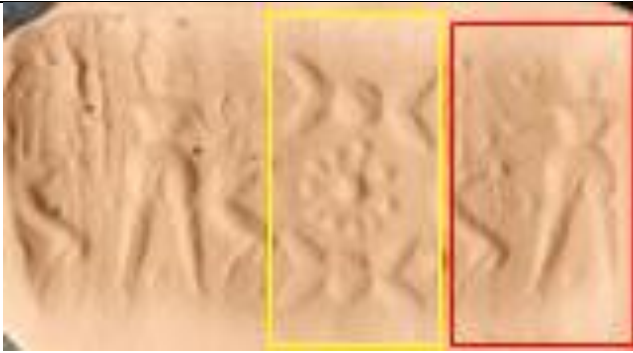


Figure 6. An image from the John Hopkins Museum cylinder seal sample (Glenn, 2021)

2.f. A composition in which an additional figure and a motif are studied in two rows, one on top of the other, without using any separator element in the work area. The large and vertical position of the main figures may have eliminated the need for a separator element (Figure 7).



Figure 7. An image from the Metropolitan Museum cylinder seal sample (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–2021)

2.g. A composition in which three figures and a motif are studied in a row in addition to the main scene, without using any separating element. The fact that the main figures are very distinctive may have eliminated the need for a separator element (Figure 8).



Figure 8. An image from the Cyprus Museum cylinder seal sample (Photo by Yücel Yazgın)

2.h. Composition in which three figures in a row are studied without using any dividing element in addition to the main scene in the work area. The composition is limited by straight lines from the top and bottom (Figure 9).

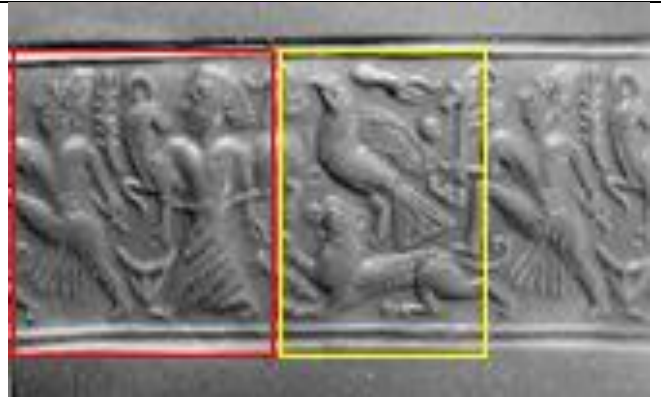


Figure 9. An image from the Metropolitan Museum cylinder seal sample (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–2021)

2.i. A composition in which four, one, and three motifs in four different rows are studied one after the other without using any separator element, in addition to the main scene in the work area. The composition is limited by thin straight lines from the top and bottom (Figure 10).



Figure 10. An image from the Cyprus Museum cylinder seal sample (Photo by Yücel Yazgın)

2.j. The composition in which one figure and a motif at the bottom and four figures at the top are worked on top of each other without any separator element in the work area (Figure 11).



Figure 11. Image from the Cypriot cylinder seal sample (Karageorghis, 2002)

2.k. In addition to the main scene in the work area, a composition in two rows is worked of one figure and one motif and two figures on top of each other, without any separator element (Figure 12).

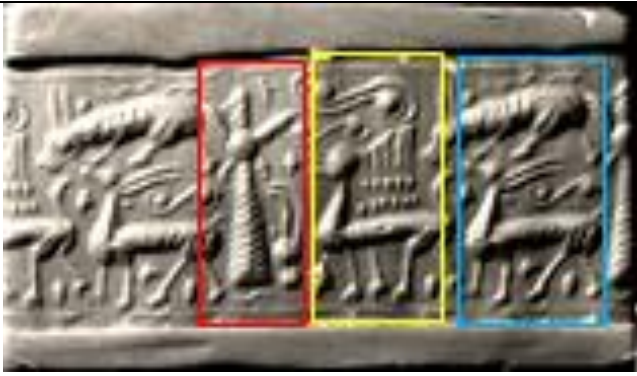


Figure 12. An image from the Metropolitan Museum cylinder seal sample (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–2021)

2.1. Composition in which the rows of three figures and two figures are side by side in the work area, without any separator element between them (Figure 13).



Figure 13. An image from the Metropolitan Museum cylinder seal sample (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–2021)

2.m. A composition in which three figures in two different rows on the vertical plane, in addition to the main stage, are studied one after the other without using any separator element. Figures fill the work area in a balanced way (Figure 14).



Figure 14. An image from the cylinder seal sample of the Larnaca Archaeological Museum (Photo by Yücel Yazgın)

2.n. In addition to the main scene in the working area, a composition in which a figure at the bottom and a figure and motif at the top are studied without using any separator element (Figure 15).

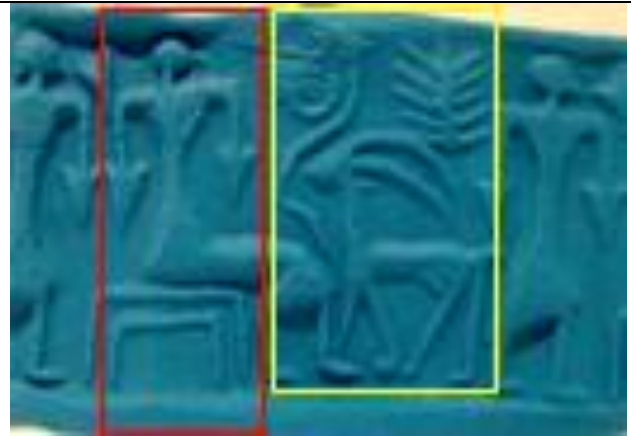


Figure 15. Image from the Cypriot cylinder seal sample (Antiques, 2021)

2.o. In addition to the main scene in the working area, a composition of two figures and three motifs in two rows on a vertical plane without using any dividing element between them (Figure 16).



Figure 16. An image from the Metropolitan Museum cylinder seal sample (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–2021)

2.p. In addition to the main scene in the working area, a composition of two figures at the top and bottom without using any dividing element between them (Figure 17).

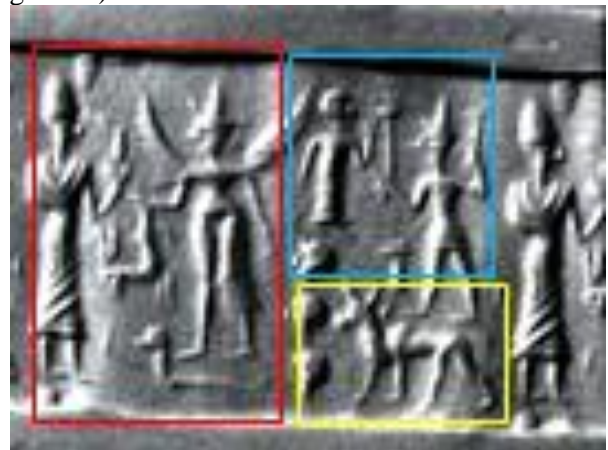


Figure 17. An image from the Metropolitan Museum cylinder seal sample (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–2021)

2.r. In addition to the main scene in the working area, a composition in which three, one, and two motifs or figures in three different rows on the vertical plane are studied without using any separator element. It can be said that making the figures in the study area large

and spaced eliminates the need for a separator element. The composition is limited by thin straight lines from the top and bottom (Figure 18).

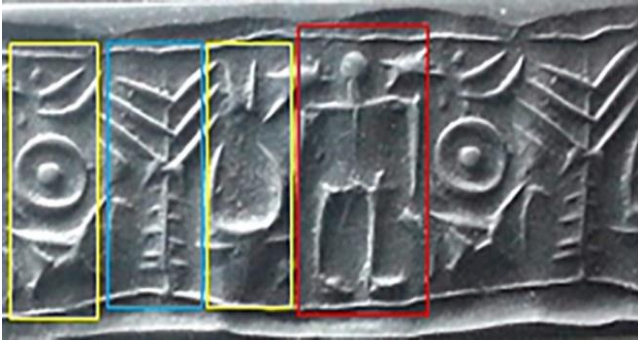


Figure 18. An image from the Cyprus Museum cylinder seal sample (Photo by Yücel Yazgın)

2.s. In addition to the main scene in the working area, a composition in which three motifs on top of each other in two rows on the vertical plane, one figure on the bottom, and two motifs on the top are studied without using any separating element. In this type of composition, it can be thought that since the figures are worked in intervals, there is no need for a distinctive element. The composition is limited by straight lines from the top and bottom (Figure 19).

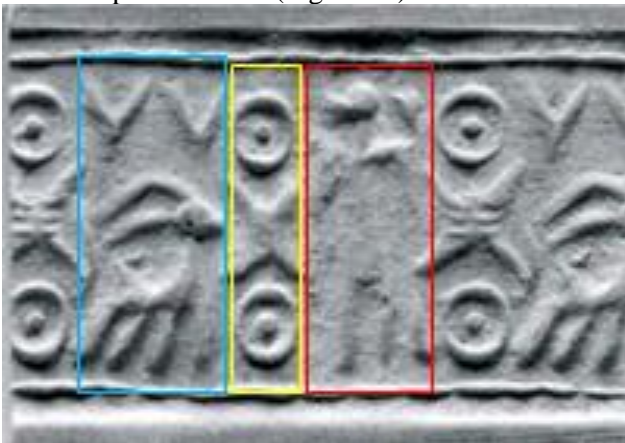


Figure 19. An image from the Metropolitan Museum cylinder seal sample (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–2021)

2.t. In addition to the main scene in the working area, the composition in which one figure at the bottom and one figure at the top are studied (Figure 20).

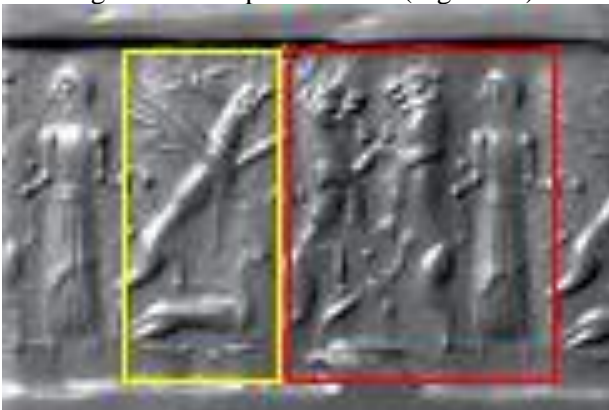


Figure 20. An image from the Metropolitan Museum cylinder seal sample (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–2021)

2.u. In addition to the main scene in the working area, a composition in which two figures at the bottom

and four motifs at the top are studied without using any separator element. Although there is no distinctive element, it can be said that the distribution is such that there is no need for such a thing (Figure 21).



Figure 21. An image from the Metropolitan Museum cylinder seal sample (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–2021)

2.v. In addition to the main scene in the working area, a composition in which one figure at the top and bottom is studied with intermediate motifs, without using any separator element. The regular distribution and careful engraving of the figures in the study area increased the visibility successfully (Figure 22).



Figure 22. An image from the Metropolitan Museum cylinder seal sample (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–2021)

3. *Composition Sample:* In addition to the main scene, compositions in which figures or their groups are studied are engraved near the main scene, where some are on top of the other. A separator is used between these and the main scene. This group of seals is divided into three subgroups.

3.a. In addition to the main scene in the working area, a composition in which two overlapping motifs on the vertical plane are studied without separators, while a vertical pattern is studied between the separating lines (Figure 23).

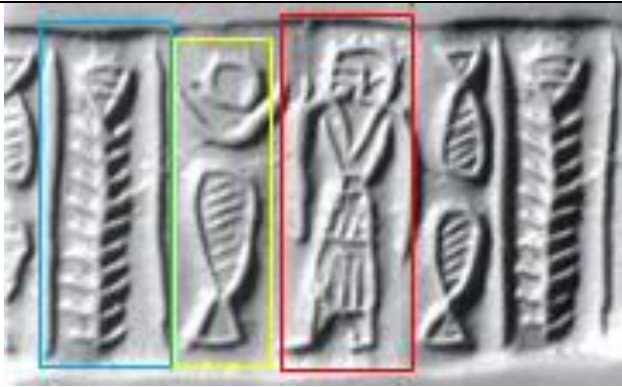


Figure 23. An image from the Metropolitan Museum cylinder seal sample (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–2021)

3.b. The composition of the working area, in addition to the main scene, in which three figures on top of each other, with horizontal dividing lines, are studied. The composition is limited by thin straight lines from the top and bottom (Figure 24).



Figure 24. An image from the Metropolitan Museum cylinder seal sample (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–2021)

3.c. The composition in which the working area is separated by a distinctive motif, consisting of short parallel lines between two vertical ladder-like lines. The composition is limited by straight lines from the top and bottom (Figure 25).



Figure 25. An image from the British Museum cylinder seal sample (The British Museum, 2021)

4. *Composition Sample:* Compositions in which the main scene is studied in a vertical plane and other figures are studied in a horizontal plane. This group of seals is divided into two subgroups.

4.a. The composition in which the main scene in the working area is vertical with the other figures, without any separating element, other figures are studied on the

horizontal plane around the central figure, and four different figures are also studied without any separating element (Figure 26).



Figure 26. An image from the Cyprus Museum cylinder seal sample (Photo by Yücel Yazgın)

4.b. The composition in which the main scene in the working area is worked on a vertical plane, where the other figures are worked without any separating element, and the other two figures are worked at an angle to the left and without any separating element between them. The number of figures in this seal is limited. Therefore no separator element is needed. The composition is bordered by lines from the top and straight lines from the bottom (Figure 27).

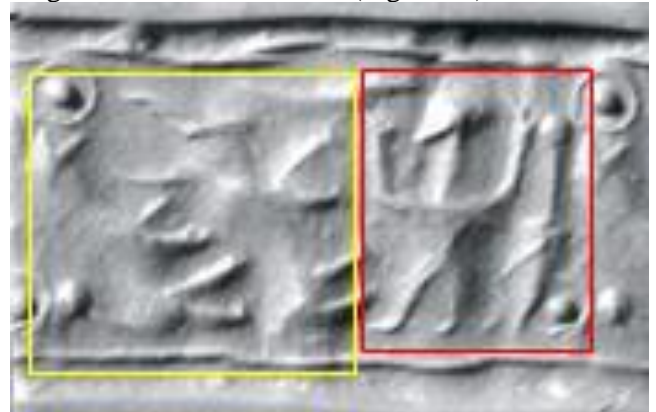


Figure 27. An image from the Metropolitan Museum cylinder seal sample (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–2021)

5. *Composition Sample:* Compositions in which the working area is divided into two in a horizontal plane. This group of seals is divided into four subgroups.

5.a. The work area is limited by thin lines from the top and bottom, divided into two parallel planes with points and points within a circle, and a composition in which different figures at the top and bottom are studied, each symmetrical in itself. No separator element was used between the figures in the upper and lower half in the working area (Figure 28).

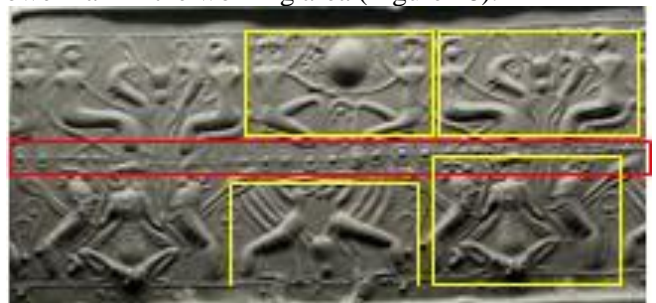


Figure 28. An image from the Cyprus Museum cylinder seal sample (Photo by Yücel Yazgın)

5.b. The composition in which the working area is divided into two in a parallel plane with a continuous straight line, with different motifs at the top and bottom, each symmetrically within itself. There is no separator element between the motifs in the upper and lower half of the study area. In addition, the motifs in this composition were worked parallel to the printing direction of the seal (Figure 29).

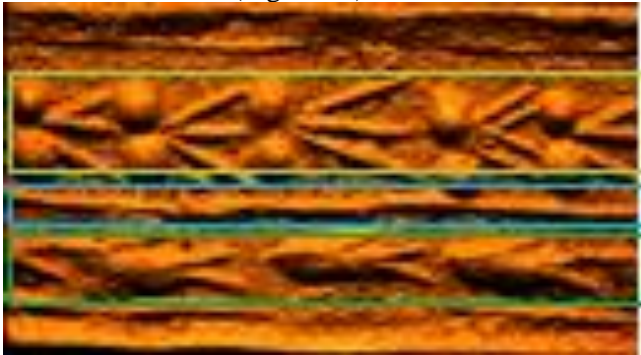


Figure 29. An image from the British Museum cylinder seal sample (The British Museum, 2021)

5.c. The composition in which the working area is divided into two parts in a parallel plane, with the points and the figures are studied at the top and bottom. There is no separator element between the motifs in the upper and lower half of the study area, and the motifs differ from the upper and lower figures (Figure 30).

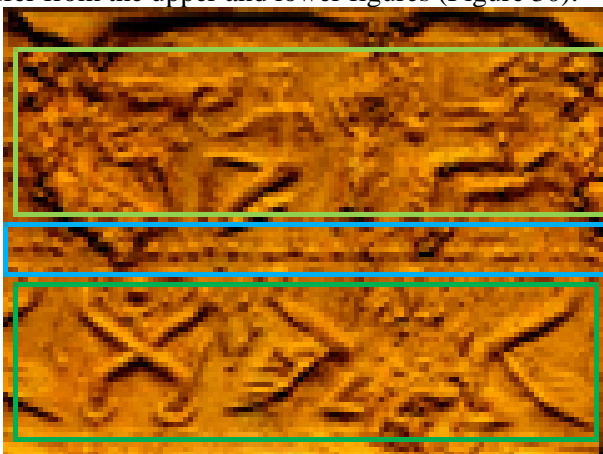


Figure 30. An image from the British Museum cylinder seal sample (The British Museum, 2021)

5.d. Composition in which the working area is separated in a parallel plane from the middle by a double line. No separator element was used between the motifs in the upper and lower half of the study area (Figure 31).



Figure 31. Image from the Cypriot cylinder seal sample (Galleryhip, 2021)

6. *Composition Sample:* Compositions in which the working area is limited from the top and bottom. This group of seals is divided into eight subgroups.

6.a. Composition in which the working area is limited with a pattern similar to a braid with two thin lines around the pointed ovals, at the bottom and top in the middle, and the figures are studied in the middle section without using any separator element (Figure 32).



Figure 32. An image from the British Museum cylinder seal sample (The British Museum, 2021)

6.b. Composition in which the working area is limited with motifs like nail printing (double braid) from the bottom and top. The letters or motifs are studied in the parallel plane without using any separator element in the horizontal plane except the main scene (Figure 33).



Figure 33. Image from the Cypriot cylinder seal sample (Karageorghis, 2002)

6.c. The composition in which the working area is limited with motifs between the double lines from the bottom and the top, next to the main stage, two triple and one five-motif row on the vertical plane is studied

without using any separator element between them (Figure 34).



Figure 34. An image from the Metropolitan Museum cylinder seal sample (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–2021)

6.d. Composition in which the working area is limited by straight lines from the bottom and top, and in addition to the main scene, four different figures, two at the bottom and two at the top, are studied without using any separator element (Figure 35).



Figure 35. An image from the British Museum cylinder seal sample (The British Museum, 2021)

6.e. The composition in which the working area is bounded by straight lines from the bottom and the top, divided in a vertical plane by the ladder motif, and one figure is studied in each partition on a vertical plane (Figure 36).



Figure 36. An image from the Metropolitan Museum cylinder seal sample (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–2021)

6.f. A composition where the working area is limited with different motifs and straight lines from the parts close to the figures from the bottom and top, without any separating element between the figures, creating a series of horizontal figures parallel to the bottom line (Figure 37).



Figure 37. Image from Limassol Archeology Museum cylinder seal sample (Photo by Maria Soutzi)

6.g. A composition in which the working area is limited by straight lines from the bottom and top, the figures in the study area stepping (walking) on the ground, without using any separating element between the figures. The composition is limited by straight lines from the top and bottom. Here the upper line is thinner than the lower one (Figure 38).



Figure 38. An image from the Cyprus Museum cylinder seal sample (Photo by Yücel Yazgın)

6.h. The composition in which the working area is limited by straight lines from the bottom and the top, divided into rectangles on the vertical plane with straight lines, and triple and double motifs on top of each other, in each rectangle, are studied without using any separator element (Figure 39).



Figure 39. An image from the Cyprus Museum cylinder seal sample (Photo by Yücel Yazgın)

7. *Composition Sample:* Compositions arranged according to the main figure placed in the middle of the working area. This group of seals is divided into six subgroups.

7.a. The main figure is placed in the middle of the working area. Double figures are worked symmetrically to both sides, but a little below the main figure; in the middle at the top, a pair of symmetrical figures is worked. Near the main figure, consecutive figures facing the same direction are also worked without any separating element (Figure 40).



Figure 40. An image from the Cyprus Museum cylinder seal sample (Photo by Yücel Yazgın)

7.b. Composition on both sides of the main figure placed in the middle of the working area, with two figures at the bottom and one figure at the top, without any separating element is worked (Figure 41).



Figure 41. An image from the Cyprus Museum cylinder seal sample (Photo by Yücel Yazgın)

7.c. A composition where, at the bottom, two symmetrical figures are worked around a figure placed in the middle of the working area, and two different consecutive figures facing the same direction at the top are worked without using any separator element between them. Since the figures are in contact (touching to each other), they prevented the use of horizontal and vertical separators (Figure 42).



Figure 42. An image from the Cyprus Museum cylinder seal sample (Photo by Yücel Yazgın)

7.d. The composition where the main figure is placed in the middle of the study area. On both sides of the figure at the bottom double figures, a pair of symmetrical figures in the upper middle is worked without any separating element between them (Figure 43).



Figure 43. An image from the Metropolitan Museum cylinder seal sample (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–2021)

7.e. The main figures over each other are placed in the middle of the working area. Four different figures above and below the lower one, two different consecutive figures facing the same direction are worked without using any separating element between them. The working area is bordered by straight lines from the top and bottom (Figure 44).

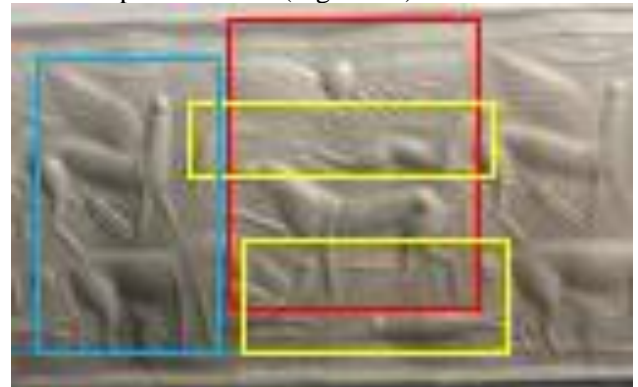


Figure 44. An image from the Cyprus Museum cylinder seal sample (Photo by Yücel Yazgın)

7.f. A composition where the main figure is placed in the middle of the working area. In front and at the back of the main figure, different figures are worked, and a single figure in the vertical plane in front is worked, without using any separating element. The working area is bordered by straight lines at the top and bottom (Figure 45).

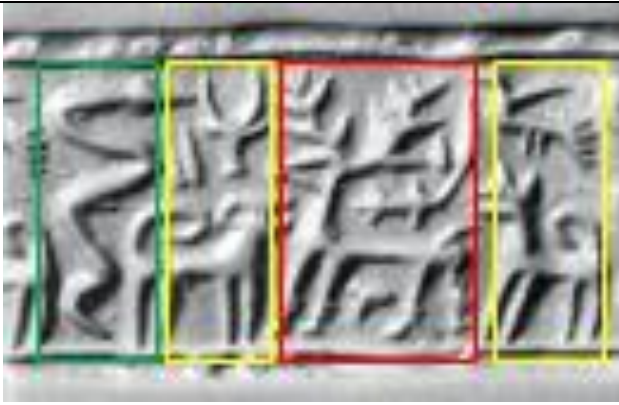


Figure 45. An image from the Metropolitan Museum cylinder seal sample (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–2021)

8. *Composition Sample:* In addition to the main scene in the working area, in the side scene, which is divided into two parts, symmetrical double figures at the top and bottom and the three-line braid motif in the vertical plane are worked without using any separating element (Figure 46).



Figure 46. An image from the Cyprus Museum cylinder seal sample (Photo by Yücel Yazgın)

9. *Composition Sample:* In addition to the main scene in the working area, a composition in which one in the middle, two on the left, and two on the right are worked symmetrically, without using any separating element between them. But, on the right side of the main scene figures, vertical separators are used (Figure 47).



Figure 47. Image from the Cypriot cylinder seal sample (Pinterest, n.d.)

10. *Composition Sample:* In addition to the main scene in the working area, a composition in which two figures facing each other in two rows in a vertical plane and a motif are worked without using any separator between them (Figure 48).



Figure 48. An image from the Metropolitan Museum cylinder seal sample (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–2021)

11. *Composition Sample:* A composition in which one motif in the middle, two at the bottom, two at the top, and three overlapping motifs are worked, without any dividing element in the working area. Since the figures in the working area are too many and in complicated mode, any separator is not needed as a vertical or horizontal plane (Figure 49).



Figure 49. Image from Louvre Museum cylinder seal sample (Wikipedia, n.d.)

12. *Composition Sample:* Composition in which the working area is bordered by a straight line from the top and the main scene is divided into two parts, as top-bottom, with separating straight lines, and writing columns, with separating lines on the vertical plane, are studied (Figure 50).

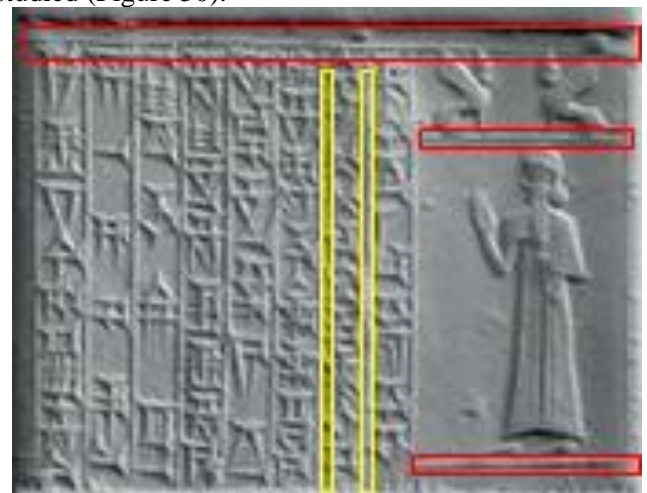


Figure 50. An image from the Metropolitan Museum cylinder seal sample (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–2021)

13. *Composition Sample:* Compositions in which letters or motifs, the main stage, and columns in the vertical plane in the working area are worked. This group of seals is divided into six subgroups.

13.a. Composition where the working area consists of five figures, lined up on the main stage floor and in addition to the main stage, columns of letters, between the separating lines on the vertical plane are worked (Figure 51).



Figure 51. An image from the Cyprus Museum cylinder seal sample (Photo by Yücel Yazgın)

13.b. A composition where the working area consists of three figures lined up on the main stage floor. In addition to the main stage, letter columns between separating lines on the vertical plane are worked but without separating lines (Figure 52).



Figure 52. An image from the Cyprus Museum cylinder seal sample (Photo by Yücel Yazgın)

13.c. The composition where the working area consists of three human figures lined up on the main stage, and in addition to the main stage, letter columns between the separating lines on the vertical plane (Figure 53).



Figure 53. An image from the Cyprus Museum cylinder seal sample (Photo by Yücel Yazgın)

13.d. The main scene in the working area is composed of two figures lined up on the line studied as the ground line. In addition to the main scene, letter columns between the separating lines on the vertical plane are worked (Figure 54).



Figure 54. An image from the Metropolitan Museum cylinder seal sample (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–2021)

13.e. The main scene in the working area is composed of two figures lined up on the line worked as the ground line. In addition to the main scene, letter columns are worked on a vertical plane without using separators (Figure 55).



Figure 55. An image from the British Museum cylinder seal sample (The British Museum, 2021)

13.f. A composition where the working area consists of four human figures lined up on the main stage floor, and in addition to the main stage, letter columns between separating lines on the vertical plane are worked (Figure 56).



Figure 56. An image from the Metropolitan Museum cylinder seal sample (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–2021)

14. *Composition Sample:* Compositions in which the side scene is divided or limited by a motif. This group of seals is divided into six subgroups.

14.a. In the working area of this composition, in addition to the main scene, two figures over each other and on the top, a double bride motif are worked, where this motif bordered the top of the scene. No separating element is used (Figure 57).



Figure 57. An image from the Cyprus Museum cylinder seal sample (Photo by Yücel Yazgın)

14.b. In the working area, in addition to the main scene, the composition was studied without using any separator element, where the side scene is bounded from the bottom on the horizontal plane with a dividing motif consisting of regular unified circles, and three figures are studied at the top (Figure 58).



Figure 58. An image from the British Museum cylinder seal sample (The British Museum, 2021)

14.c. In addition to the main scene in the working area of this composition, the side scene is divided into two parts horizontally by the triple braid motif. The composition consists of three figures below the dividing motif and two figures above it (Figure 59).

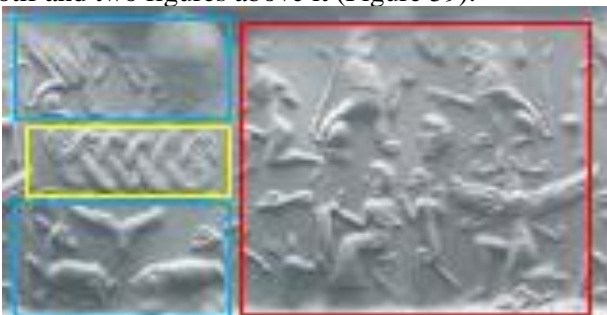


Figure 59. An image from the Cyprus Museum cylinder seal sample (Photo by Yücel Yazgın)

14.d. In addition to the main scene in the working area of this composition, the side scene is divided into two in a horizontal plane with a dividing motif consisting of two rows of unified order circles, and two figures are studied under the dividing motif (Figure 60).

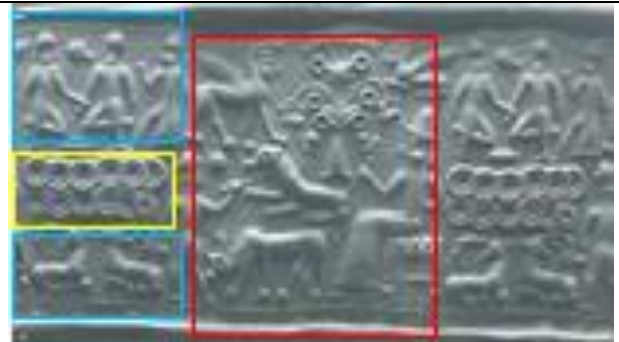


Figure 60. An image from the Cyprus Museum cylinder seal sample (Photo by Yücel Yazgın)

14.e. In addition to the main scene in the working area of this composition, the side scene is divided into two on the horizontal plane with the double braid motif, and three figures are studied under the split motif (Figure 61).



Figure 61. An image from the Metropolitan Museum cylinder seal sample (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–2021)

14.f. In addition to the main scene in the working area of this composition, the side scene is divided into two on a horizontal plane with the double braid motif, and two different figures are studied under the division motif (Figure 62).



Figure 62. An image from the British Museum cylinder seal sample (The British Museum, 2021)

15. *Composition Sample:* Composition with a single figure in the working area worked without using any separating element (Figure 63).



Figure 63. An image from the British Museum cylinder seal sample (The British Museum, 2021)

16. *Composition Sample:* The composition in which the figures are studied in the vertical plane and parallel to the axis of the cylinder seal, without using any separator in the working area (Figure 64).



Figure 64. An image from the John Hopkins Museum cylinder seal sample (Johns Hopkins Archaeological Museum, 2021)

17. *Composition Sample:* In the working area of this composition, the figures are studied perpendicular to the axis of the cylinder seal, in the area surrounded by thin lines from the top and bottom and thick lines from the right and left (Figure 65).



Figure 65. An image from the Metropolitan Museum cylinder seal sample (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–2021)

18. *Composition Sample:* The seal has been worked on three sides and the composition in triptych printing where the working area is limited with double lines from the top and bottom (Figure 66).

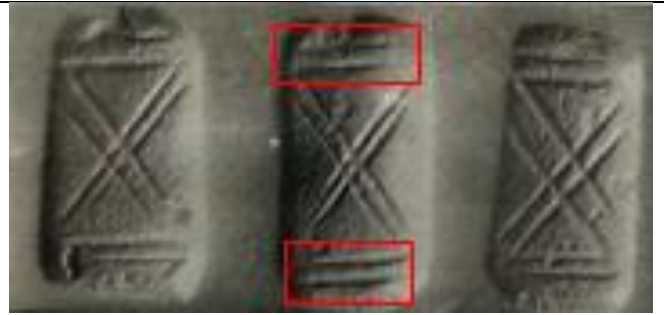


Figure 66. An image from the Cyprus Museum cylinder seal sample (Photo by Yücel Yazgın)

19. *Composition Sample:* In addition to the main scene in the working area of this composition, filling motifs are studied in two rows, on the vertical plane with one figure on top of the other, two separated figures at the bottom, and two adjacent figures on the top (Figure 67).

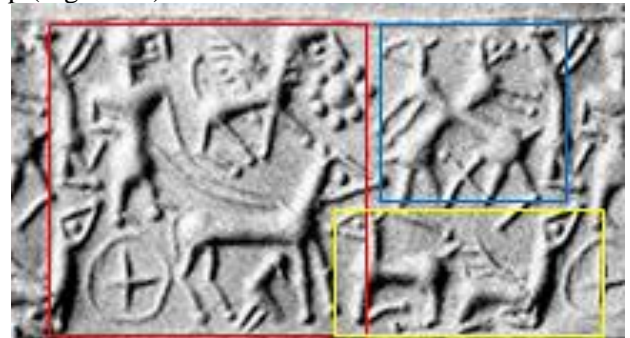


Figure 67. An image from the Metropolitan Museum cylinder seal sample (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–2021)

20. *Composition Sample:* Compositions in which figures are not studied according to a certain system in the working area. This group of seals is divided into three subgroups.

20.a. In the working area of this composition, there are two figures below the main stage; at the top, two figures are symmetrical to each other and placed at an angle of 45 degrees. On the other side, there is a composition consisting of two figures perpendicular to the printing direction of the seal at the bottom and the other one parallel to the working area (Figure 68).



Figure 68. Image from the Cypriot cylinder seal sample (Karageorghis, 2002)

20.b. The composition in which the figures in the working area are distributed, in different numbers, side by side or over each other in all parts of the area (Figure 69).



Figure 69. An image from the Cyprus Museum cylinder seal sample (Photo by Yücel Yazgın)

20.c. The composition in which the figures in the working area are distributed over each other or side by side at different angles, in different numbers (Figure 70).



Figure 70. An image from the British Museum cylinder seal sample (The British Museum, 2021)

3. Results

Within the scope of this research, 191 cylinder seals that make up the sample are examined in terms of the compositions used in the design of the images engraved on them. The compositions in the research are divided into categories. As a result of the categorical distribution, the compositions created by scraping on cylinder seals are divided into 20 main categories. In 11 of those 20 categories, no subcategories are identified from their composition's structural point of view. But in the rest nine categories, 59 subcategories were identified.

4. Conclusion

In this research, Cypriot archaeological cylinder seals are examined in terms of the compositions engraved on them, and 191 cylinder seals used on the island of Cyprus between 2000 BC and 600 BC are analyzed. Between these dates, people living on the island of Cyprus engraved the figures according to their material and spiritual cultural structure of that period, the social life, the way of production and the values that were effective in all areas of life, and the wishes of the seal holders on the seals with appropriate compositions.

This research is constructed based on the arrangement methods, in the working areas of the seal visuals, defined and named by the archaeology researchers. The compositions of engravings on the cylinder seals are categorized by their codings,

according to their differentiation in their working areas. The articles and analysis of the archaeologists about the cylinder seals are used as the database for this research (The British Museum, 2021; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–2021; Johns Hopkins Archaeological Museum, 2021).

It is important to examine the cylinder seals with figures, animal figures, plant drawings, ornaments, and inscriptions, which represent their owners' religion, government, or wishes, with interdisciplinary methods in terms of their images and compositions. The phenomenon of composition, which is particularly effective in the presentation of works in visual arts, has been examined in this research. As a result of these and similar researches by different field experts with the knowledge and experience in their fields, it is believed that examining the imagery on the cylinder seals compositions, that make meaningful their relations with each other and information about the lifestyle and values of that times, will create an opportunity to obtain much information that could not be reached until today.

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