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Adresa uredništva/*Address of the editor's office*
Institut za arheologiju/*Institute of archaeology*
HR-10000 Zagreb, Ulica Ljudevita Gaja 32
Hrvatska/*Croatia*
Telefon/Phone ++385/(0)1 61 50 250
Fax ++385(0)1 60 55 806
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Three Ancient Egyptian scarabs from the Archaeological Collection of the Franciscan Monastery on Košljun, Croatia

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MLADEN TOMORAD
Hrvatski studiji
Odjel za povijest
Borongajska 83d
HR-10 000 Zagreb
mladen.tomorad@zg.t-com.hr

JOACHIM SLIWA
University of Krakow
Institute for Archaeology
Golebia 11
PL-31 007 Krakow
j.sliwa@uj.edu.pl

U ovom članku autori znanstveno analiziraju tri prethodno neobjavljena staroegipatska skarabeja iz Arheološke zbirke franjevačkog samostana u Košljunu, Hrvatska. Otkriveni su tijekom arheoloških istraživanja antičke nekropole u dvorištu kuće Šinigoj u gradu Krku (drevni Curicum).

Ključne riječi: skarabeji, Krk, nekropola

In this article authors scientifically analysed three previously unpublished Ancient Egyptian scarabs from the Archaeological collection of the Franciscan monastery at Košljun, Croatia. They were discovered during the archaeological excavations of the ancient necropolis in the backyard of the house Šinigoj in the town of Krk (ancient Curicum).

Key words: scarabs, Krk, necropolis

UVOD

U svibnju 2013., tijekom moje najnovije potrage za egipatskim materijalom u raznim muzejskim institucijama u Hrvatskoj, odjednom i neočekivano, otkrio sam postojanje deset prethodno neobjavljenih staroegipatskih predmeta koji su prije nekog vremena otkriveni na otoku Krku, u ostacima staroga rimskog naselja *Curicum* (današnji grad Krk). Oni uključuju dvije šabti figure, tri skarabeja s hijeroglifskim natpisima te pet amuleta mačke. Danas se čuvaju u franjevačkom samostanu na otoku Košljunu.

DATIRANJE

Prema informacijama koje sam dobio od Ranka Starca,

¹ Želio bih zahvaliti prof. dr. Joachimu Sliwi s *Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego* u Krakovu na pomoći tijekom istraživanja ovih skarabeja. Njegove bilješke o tipologiji skarabeja bile su od velike važnosti za ovaj rad, pa ga stoga želim navesti kao koautora. Tijekom pisanja ovog teksta prof. Sliwa provjerio je moje opise, analize i crteže te dodao tipologiju svih triju skarabeja. Bez njegovih vrijednih stručnih mišljenja, ovaj članak ne bi uključivao vrlo važne dijelove znanstvene analize.

INTRODUCTION

In May 2013, during my latest search for Egyptian material in various museum institutions in Croatia, I suddenly and unexpectedly found out about the existence of ten previously unpublished Ancient Egyptian artefacts which were discovered at the island of Krk, in the remains of the old Roman settlement *Curicum* (today city of Krk), some time ago. They included two shabti figures, three scarabs with hieroglyphic inscriptions and five amulets of cats. They are kept today in the Franciscan monastery on the island of Košljun.

DATING

According to the information given by Ranko Starac, the

¹ I would like to thank prof. Joachim Sliwa from the *Uniwersytet Jagielloński* in Krakow for his help during the research of these scarabs. His notes about the typology of these scarabs were very important for this work, so I would like to add him as co-author. During the writing of this text prof. Sliwa checked my description, analysis and drawings, and later he added a typology for all three scarabs. Without his valuable expert opinion this article would have missed some very important parts of the scientific analysis.

arheologa i kustosa Pomorskog i povijesnog muzeja Hrvatskog primorja u Rijeci, egipatski su predmeti otkriveni u kasnohelenističkim grobovima koji su datirani u sredinu 1. st. pr. Kr. Ovi su grobovi iskopani u dvorištu kuće Šinigoj u gradu Krku. Prema kontekstu ostalih arheoloških nalaza, Ranko Starac ih je datirao u razdoblje rane faze građanskog rata između Pompeja i Julija Cezara, vjerojatno u 49. god. pr. Kr.¹

Početak 49. god. pr. Kr. Julije Cezar naredio je Publiju Korneliju Dolabeli da izgradi flotu na Jadranu,² a dio te flote bio je smješten u *Curicum* pod zapovjedništvom Gaja Antonija,³ vjerojatno brata Marka Antonija. U isto vrijeme Pompejeva flota pod zapovjedništvom Marka Oktavija i Lucija Skribonija Liba bila je smještena u Isi te je bila poslana na prostor sjevernog Jadrana. Nakon slavne bitke kod Krka, sredinom 49. god. pr. Kr., flota Gaja Antonija je poražena, a on se morao predati jedinicama Marka Oktavija koji je preuzeo upravu *Curicuma*.⁴

Poznato je da je dio Pompejeve flote i vojnih postrojbi koje su porazile Gaja Antonija kod Krka bio regrutiran u Liburniji, Egejskom prostoru i Egiptu (Veith 1924; Šišić 1925: 93–94; Matijašić 2009: 129–131). Stoga je vrlo vjerojatno da je nekoliko vojnika ili mornara koji su umrli tijekom ranih godina građanskog rata (49.–48. god. pr. Kr.) pokopano u kasnohelenističkim grobovima zajedno sa staroegipatskim predmetima koje su donijeli iz Egipta, iz nekih nepoznatih područja istočnog Sredozemlja ili možda čak sa Sicilije. Danas ne možemo potvrditi ili negirati da su oni bili poklonici egipatskih božanstava, ali takva je pretpostavka moguća. Ovi predmeti mogu definitivno potvrditi moju tezu (Tomorad 2015) da je prodiranje staroegipatskih predmeta na istočnu obalu Jadrana započelo prije 1. st. pr. Kr. te da su oni možda element ranog širenja/rasprostiranja staroegipatskih kultura (Izide, Ozirisa, Serapisa, Harpokrata) u ovaj regiji.

KATALOG

1. Skarabej (sl. 1)

Krk (*Curicum*), nepoznata godina

Ptolemejsko razdoblje (306.–30. god. pr. Kr.)

Zelena glazirana fajansa (dobro očuvana). Visina: 1,8 cm; širina: 1,5 cm

Franjevački samostan Košljun: bez inventarnog broja, dio stalnog postava

Neobjavljeno

Izrezbaren kukac balebarg s prednje strane. Prikazana je glava s očima i *clypeus*. Brazda dijeli *prothorax* od spremnika krilca (*elytra*) koji je podijeljen dvostrukim crtama. Zarez u obliku slova "V" nalazi se na vrhu svakog krilca. Noge su iscrtane.

Na bazi skarabeja, u ovalu su otisnuti hijeroglifski znakovi koji su raspoređeni okomito: sokol s *nh3h3*-bičem

1 Njegovo datiranje napravljeno je tijekom pripreme stalne izložbe arheološke zbirke franjevačkog samostana na malom otočiću Košljunu.

2 App. Civ. II.41.

3 App. Civ. II.41.

4 App. Civ. II.47; D. C. XLI.40–41¹⁻².

archaeologist and curator in the *Maritime and History Museum of the Croatian Littoral* in Rijeka, the Egyptian artefacts were discovered in late Hellenistic graves dated to the middle of the 1st cent. BC. These graves were excavated in the backyard of the house Šinigoj in the city of Krk. Based on the other archaeological findings and context, Ranko Starac dated them to the period of the early civil war between Pompey and Julius Caesar, probably in 49 BC.¹

In early 49 BC Julius Caesar ordered Publius Cornelius Dolabella to build a fleet in the Adriatic,² and a part of this fleet was stationed in *Curicum* under the command of Gaius Antonius,³ probably a brother of Mark Anthony. At the same time, Pompey's fleet under the command of Marcus Octavius and Lucius Scribonius Libo was stationed at *Issa*, and sent to the north Adriatic. After the famous battle of Krk, in the middle of 49 BC, the fleet of Gaius Antonius was defeated, and he had to surrender to Marcus Octavius' troops, which took charge of *Curicum*.⁴

It is known that the part of the Pompey's fleet and military forces that defeated Gaius Antonius near Krk were recruited in Liburnia, the Aegean region and Egypt (Veith 1924; Šišić 1925: 93–94; Matijašić 2009: 129–131). It is very likely that a few soldiers or sailors who died during the early years of the civil war (49–48 BC) were buried in these late Hellenistic graves along with the Ancient Egyptian artefacts which they could have brought directly from Egypt, from some unknown location in the Eastern Mediterranean or perhaps even from Sicily. Today we cannot ascertain whether they were worshippers of Egyptian divinities, but this option is possible. These artefacts can definitely support my thesis (Tomorad 2015) that the penetration of Ancient Egyptian artefacts into the eastern Adriatic coast started before the 1st cent. BC and that it could be an element of the early diffusion/dissemination of the Ancient Egyptian cults (Isis, Osiris, Serapis, Harpocrates etc.) in this region.

CATALOGUE

1. Scarab (Fig. 1)

Krk (*Curicum*), date unknown

Ptolemaic period (306–30 BC)

Green glazed faience (well preserved). Height: 1.8 cm; Width: 1.5 cm

Franciscan Monastery Košljun: without inventory number, on display

Unpublished.

Carved scarab beetle on the front side. The head with eyes and the *clypeus* are shown. A groove separates the *prothorax* from the wing cases (*elytra*), which are divided by double lines. A V-shaped notch at the top of each wing-case. Legs are delineated.

On the scarab's base, in an encircling, following hiero-

1 His dating was done during the preparation for the permanent exhibition of the archaeological collection of the Franciscan monastery on the small island of Košljun.

2 App. Civ. II.41.

3 App. Civ. II.41.

4 App. Civ. II.47; D. C. XLI.40–41¹⁻².



Sl. 1 Skarabej
Fig. 1 Scarab

okrenut je nadesno, a uzdignuta kobra smještena je ispred njega (oba su znaka okrunjena sunčevim diskovima); znak *nb* zatvara polje s donje strane. Prema principima kriptografije koju je formulirao E. Drioton,⁵ cjelina se može čitati kao: *Jmn-R^c nb (.j)* – “Amun-Ra je (moj) Gospodar”.

2. Skarabej (sl. 2)

Krk (*Curicum*), nepoznata godina

Ptolemejsko razdoblje (306.–30. god. pr. Kr.)

glyphic signs arranged vertically, are impressed: a falcon with a *nh3h3*-flagellum, turned right, and a rearing cobra in front of him (both signs are crowned by sun-disks); a *nb*-sign is closing the field from below. On the grounds of the principles of cryptography formulated by E. Drioton,⁵ the whole may be read also as follows: *Jmn-R^c nb (.j)* – “Amun-Ra is (my) Lord”.

2. Scarab (Fig. 2)



Sl. 2 Skarabej
Fig. 2 Scarab

5 "Formule d' allégeance à écriture déficiente". Drioton 1957: 20–26.

5 "Formule d' allégeance à écriture déficiente". Drioton 1957: 20–26.

Tvrda pasta (dobro očuvana). Visina: 1,8 cm; širina: 1,3 cm
 Franjevački samostan Košljun: bez inventarnog broja,
 dio stalnog postava
 Neobjavljeno

Izrezbaren kukac balegar s prednje strane. Prikazani su glava i oči. Brazda dijeli *prothorax* od spremnika krilca (*elytra*) koji je podijeljen crtom. Zarez u obliku slova "V" nalazi se na vrhu svakog krilca. Noge su iscrtane.

Na bazi površine, ograđen, u ovalu je nemarno prikazan suprotstavljeni čovjek. Scena je postavljena vodoravno; muškarac je okrenut na desno, njegova lijeva ruka je podignuta, a desna je spuštena. U nepravilnom ovalu smještenom na desnoj strani polja, nespretno su oblikovana tri hijeroglifska znaka *praenomen* imena Tutmozisa III. (*mn-h₃pr-r_c*, uobičajeni tip grafike) (Jaeger 1982: § 37.1a), koji su u isto vrijeme i kriptografska forma Amunova imena.⁶ Vjerojatno helenistička kopija skarabeja 18. dinastije.

3. Skarabej (sl. 3)

Krk (*Curicum*), nepoznata godina

Ptolemejsko razdoblje (306.–30. god. pr. Kr.)

Tvrda pasta (dobro očuvana). Visina: 1,8 cm; širina: 1,5 cm
 Franjevački samostan Košljun: bez inventarnog broja,
 dio stalnog postava
 Neobjavljeno

Izrezbaren kukac balegar s prednje strane. Prikazani su glava i oči. Brazda dijeli *prothorax* od spremnika krilca (*elytra*) koji je podijeljen crtom. Zarez u obliku slova "V" nalazi se na vrhu svakog krilca. Noge su iscrtane.

Krk (*Curicum*), date unknown
 Ptolemaic period (306–30 BC)
 Hard paste (well preserved). Height: 1.8 cm; Width: 1.3 cm

Franciscan Monastery Košljun: without inventory number, on display
 Unpublished

Carved scarab beetle on the front side. The head with eyes are shown. A groove separates the *prothorax* from the wing cases (*elytra*) which are divided by a line. A V-shaped notch at the top of each wing-case. Legs are delineated.

On the base's surface, in an enclosure, a man confronting an oval is carelessly depicted. The scene is arranged horizontally; the man turned right, his left hand raised, the right one lowered. In the irregular oval situated on the right side of the field, clumsy stamped three hieroglyphic signs of the *praenomen* name of Tuthmosis III (*mn-h₃pr-r_c*, normal type graphic) (Jaeger 1982: § 37.1a), which are at the same time the cryptographic form of the Amun's name.⁶ Probably a Hellenistic copy of an 18th dynasty scarab.

3. Scarab (Fig. 3)

Krk (*Curicum*), date unknown.

Ptolemaic period (306–30 BC)

Hard paste (well preserved). Height: 1.8 cm; Width: 1.5 cm

Franciscan Monastery Košljun: without inventory number, on display
 Unpublished



Sl. 3 Skarabej
 Fig. 3 Scarab

Na ovalnoj površini baze, okruženo, vodoravno postavljeni biljeg nespretno je utisnut. Njegov središnji dio sastoji

⁶ Prema tvrdnji E. Driotona. Vidi: Drioton 1957; Jaeger 1982: 94.

Carved scarab beetle on the front side. The head with

⁶ According to the statement of E. Drioton. See: Drioton 1957; Jaeger 1982: 94.

se od nepravilnog ovala (kao nadomjestka za kartušu) koji je ispunjen s tri nemarno izrađena znaka. Točni prijevod i značenje ovih znakova nije jasno. Oni mogu predstavljati ime Tutmozisa III. (*mn-h₃pr-r^c*), označiti kriptografsku formu Amunova imena (Drioton 1957; Jaeger 1982: 94), ili se eventualno mogu čitati kao *aHA-r^c* ("Raov ratnik"). Ovi su znakovi vrlo nemarno izvedeni s dvije noge koje su pretjerano velike. Kraljevo ime, Amunov triagram ili Raova titula, s boka je okružena dvama *m3^ct*-perima koja ispunjavaju polje s obje strane, a još jedan sunčev disk smješten je lijevo u nepravilnom ovalu. Vjerojatno helenistička kopija skarabeja 18. dinastije.

Mladen Tomorad

ANALIZA I INTERPRETACIJA

Tri skarabeja (br. 1–3) vjerojatno su izrađena u kalupu od tvrde paste ili fajanse koja je pokrivena plavom ili zelenom glazurom. Njihova konveksna pozadina (posebno kod br. 1) ima tipične egipatske karakteristike: istaknuta formirana glava i *clypeus*, crte na *pronotumu*; *elytra* podijeljena jednom ili dvije linije, označeni humeralni žuljevi (*V*-zarezi). Na *elytri* dvaju skarabeja (br. 2 i 3) jasno su vidljivi tragovi paralelnih linija. Noge kukaca oblikovane su prirodno, ali u shematskoj formi. Skarabeji br. 2 i 3 nisu tako dobro očuvani kao br. 1; njihova je površina jako izgrebana, vjerojatno kao rezultat djelovanja vode.

Opisani skarabeji pripadaju masovno proizvedenim tipovima kakvi su predstavljeni u velikom broju radionica kasnoegipatskog i istočnog podrijetla (Nakratij, fenički i punski tipovi). Nalazi ove vrste datiraju se u 1. tis. pr. Kr., posebno u njegovoj drugoj polovini, bili su vrlo popularni na brojnim lokalitetima i nekropolama Sredozemlja, ali do sada su nepoznati na obala Jadrana.⁷ Oni su vjerojatno proizvod ptolemejskog razdoblja ili razdoblja kasne rimske Republike.

Mladen Tomorad, Joachim Sliwa

Prijevod / Translation
Mladen Tomorad

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Sanjin Mihelić

eyes are shown. A groove separates the *prothorax* from the wing cases (*elytra*), which are divided by a line. A V-shaped notch at the top of each wing-case. Legs are delineated.

On an oval surface of the base, in an encircling, a horizontally arranged emblem is clumsily impressed. Its central part consists of an irregular oval (as a cartouche's substitute) filled with three negligently executed signs. The exact translation and the meaning of these signs are not clear. It could present the name of Tuthmosis III (*mn-h₃pr-r^c*), denoting also the cryptographic form of the Amun's name (Drioton 1957; Jaeger 1982: 94), or eventually can be read as *aHA-r^c* ("Raa warrior"). These signs are very carelessly executed, with two legs excessively large. The king's name, Amun's trigram or the Raa title is additionally flanked by two *m3^ct*-feathers filling the field on both sides, and another sun disk to the left of an irregular oval. Probably a Hellenistic copy of an 18th dynasty scarab.

Mladen Tomorad

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The three scarabs (Nos. 1–3) were most probably moulded in hard paste or faience, covered with blue or green glaze. Their convex backs (especially No. 1) have typical Egyptian features: distinctly formed head with *clypeus*, outline of the *pronotum*; *elytra* divided by means of single or double lines, marked humeral callosities (*v*-notches). On the *elytra* of two scarabs (Nos. 2 and 3) distinct traces of parallel lines are visible. Legs of the beetles were shaped naturalistically but in a schematic manner. Scarabs Nos. 2 and 3 are not so good preserved as No. 1; their surface is strongly abraded, probably as a result of water activity.

The described scarabs belong to mass-produced types representing a wide variety of workshops of late Egyptian and Eastern origin (*Naukratis*, Phoenician and Punic types). Finds of this kind dated to the 1st millennium BC, especially to its second half, were very popular on many sites and mainly necropolises around the Mediterranean, but until now unknown on the Adriatic shores.⁷ They are most likely a product of the Ptolemaic or the Late Roman Republic period.

Mladen Tomorad, Joachim Sliwa

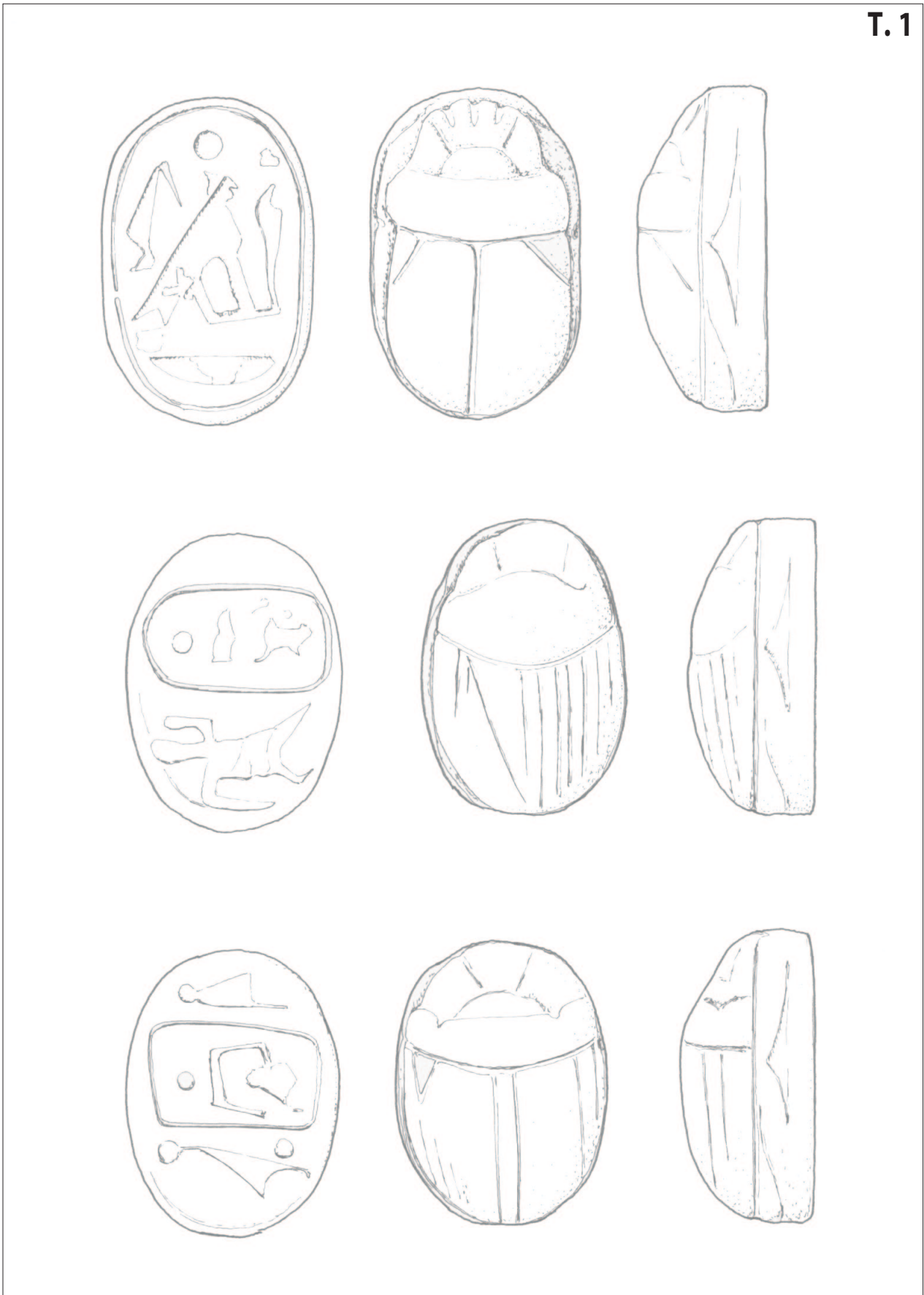
⁷ Detaljnu tipologiju i distribuciju skarabeja sredozemnim svijetom vidi u: Ferghali Gorton 1996.

⁷ For a more detailed typology and distribution of scarabs in the Mediterranean world, see Ferghali Gorton 1996.

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T. 1



T. 1 Crteži skarabeja iz arheološke zbirke Franjevačkog samostana na Košljunu

Pl. 1 Drawings of the scarabs from the Archaeological collection of the Franciscan monastery at Košljun

