**A Hyksos scarab with a falcon upon gold, in a gold box-setting**

Circa: c. 1638–1530 BCE

Glazed steatite. 2.1 x 1.2 x 0.8 cm (0 $^{7}/_{8}$ x 0 $^{1}/_{2}$ x 0 $^{1}/_{4}$ inches)

Egypt, Second Intermediate Period, Hyksos reign, c. 1638–1530 BCE

A glazed steatite scarab preserved in its gold box-setting and pierced lengthwise for suspension. The flat base is engraved in green glaze with a Horus falcon perched on the nbw sign for "gold" — the emblem of the Golden Horus. The conservation is remarkable, the setting intact.

The Golden Horus was one of the five great names of the pharaonic titulary, written as a falcon set upon the hieroglyph for gold. Its meaning has long been debated: gold, the incorruptible metal of the gods' flesh, marked the king as a divine and eternal being, while some read the falcon-upon-gold as Horus triumphant over his adversary Seth. On a Hyksos scarab the motif is worn as an amulet rather than a formal royal name — a compact emblem of solar kingship and divine permanence.

The Hyksos — from the Egyptian heka khasut, "rulers of foreign lands" — were a group of Western Asian origin who governed northern Egypt, and the Delta in particular, during the Second Intermediate Period. They form the Fifteenth Dynasty, recorded among the Egyptian king lists in the Royal Canon of Turin. Long cast as invaders, they in fact left a lasting diplomatic and cultural imprint, associated with advances in language, military technique and the introduction of the horse and chariot into the Nile Valley.