


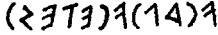
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THE TOMB OF ALYATTES?

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THE TOMB OF ALYATTES?

In an article entitled "Not the Tomb of Gyges", *JHS* 114 (1994) 157-161, C. Ratté deals, inter alia, with the "symbol or monogram inscribed in 25 places on the face of the wall" (158) of the so-called tomb of Gyges: . This G.M.A. Hanfmann had interpreted as GUGU, the name of Gyges in Assyrian; but noting that Hanfmann offered no explanation as to why Gyges' name should appear in Assyrian on a Lydian tomb, Ratté wonders "whether the symbol might be read as two digammas, one right-side-up, the other up-side-down, and related to the 'WALWEL' inscriptions on early Lydian coins" (159). Ratté here refers approvingly to Wallace's view that the legend on the coins is a form of the Lydian word for 'lion' (R.W. Wallace, "Walwe and kali", *JHS* 108 [1988] 203-207). These coins, however, can now be shown to read WALWET(EŚ) and to refer to the Lydian king Alyattes,¹ and other coins reveal that Gyges' name in Lydian is in all likelihood KUKAŚ: see my "Notes on Two Lydian Texts", *Kadmos* 35 (1996) 49-52 and "A New Lydian Text", *Kadmos* (in press). The numismatic evidence further weakens Hanfmann's interpretation, and it also supports Ratté's suggestion, on the basis of which it is very tempting to resolve the symbol as  (i.e. WALWETES) and to connect the tomb with Alyattes himself, to whose reign (or that of his successor Croesus) archaeology now assigns its construction (Ratté 161).

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¹ Wallace's etymology may still be correct: the name may be comparable to e.g. Λεωνίδης.