The Origin of the Amber found at Tepe Marlik

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Among the artifacts found at Tepe Marlik[1] in northwestern Iran is a fragment which has the elemental composition of amber.[2] From the drawing[3] the piece appears to be a segment of an annular bead. The curvature suggests that the entire bead had a diameter of about 18–20mm and that the central opening measured about 7–8mm in diameter (Fig. 1).

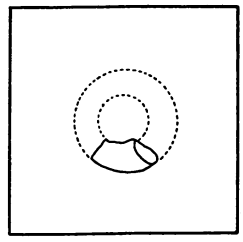

Fig. 1. Reconstruction of the Amber Fragment from Marlik as a Ring Bead.

Reconstruction from what must be less than a quarter of the original object is not without risks, but it is, in this case, the only way to connect the find to other amber artifacts. Ring-shaped beads or pendants are known from Iron Age Italy;[4] some had collars, with or without perforation, for suspension. Not all of these can be dated closely, but it is evident that amber in many forms, including such rings, was used extensively in the Italic cultures of the first half of the first millenium B.C. and that this use reaches back to the early phases (sub-Apennine and proto-Villanovan) of this period.[5]

Quite independent of any specific relationship the Marlik amber may have with Italic forms, it must be accepted since de Navarro's exhaustive study[6] that

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1 E.O. Neghaban, *Marlik*, Tehran, 1964.

2 T. Muroga, *Japanese Studies in the History of Science*, **9** (1970), 99–105.

3 Ref. 2, p. 101, fig. 5.

4 D.E. Strong. *Catalogue of the Carved Amber in the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities* (British Museum), London, 1966, Nos. 93, 95, 96.

5 Ref. 4, p. 24.

6 J.M. de Navarro, *Geogr. J.*, **66** (1925), 481–507.