THE TSEPIS STELE AND SOME OTHERS[1]

1.—The Tsepis Stele

The document which I now publish[2] has for some 40 years had the distinction of being the most conspicuous syllabic inscription in the Cyprus Museum: it is long, its characters are clear and bold, it has the merit of being complete. That it has so long escaped the attention of scholars is in great measure due to its remarkable difficulty. This, however, will in itself be of some profit to us, if it can give a better understanding of the task which faces those who would decipher — and interpret — Mycenaean texts in the closely related Linear B syllabary. These, after all, are in the main dessicated inventories and accounts, devoid of proper grammatical structure, younger by half a millennium than the earliest Greek hitherto known to us, very possibly contaminated by some unknown language — whereas here we have manifestly a coherent text of Classical date and the Cypro-Arcadian dialect. The Tsepis Stele in this oblique manner may yet add something to the stature of the achievement of Ventris, which sadly enough is now his memorial: I offer it as a tribute to him, but in the full knowledge that some of my

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[1] I am grateful to Mr. A. H. S. Megaw and Mr. P. Dikaios, respectively Director of Antiquities and Curator of the Cyprus Museum, for their kind permission to publish these four documents, now in their custody. In my presentation I have deliberately erred on the side of elaboration: photography, even in a well preserved inscription, can be deceptive from the very nature of the syllabary. A facsimile is called for, based, not on photography, but on a squeeze and controlled by direct examination of the original, its purpose to show all that survives of the original inscription, not as it may now appear, but as (in the editor's opinion) it was cut. I believe, furthermore, that the individual signaries require separate consideration. I regret that I have not seen my nos. 3 and 4. The photographs of nos. 3 and 4 reproduced in Plate II are copyright of the Cyprus Museum.

[2] I have discussed the Tsepis Stele with my colleague, Professor K. J. Dover; and to him and to Professor A. J. Beattie of the University of Edinburgh I am deeply indebted. And Mr. D. C. C. Young, of the University of St. Andrews, in one important particular (οἰκίοι) refused to allow me to stray. Nevertheless, for the views I now give — and the errors I commit — I am solely responsible.

interpretations will be acceptable to very few. My object is to present this singular document in sufficient detail to permit the reader to form his own opinions, based (if he will) upon his own text.

The stele (Pl. II, 1) is of a fine, creamy-yellow limestone, externally brownish; 1.01 h. (to left), from 0.645 (top) to 0.682 (bottom) w., from 0.06 to 0.07 th.; undamaged, tolerably well finished, the back more roughly tooled.

Not entered in the Cyprus Museum inventories, its acquisition accordingly antedates the reorganisation of the Museum in 1934. The Curator, Mr. P. Dikaios, in 1937 informed me that it had been purchased by his predecessor, M. Markides, from a private collection in Larnaca. His statement is substantiated by papers in the Cyprus Museum files: *CM Files* 127 nos. 149 and 150, letters of Markides and N. Tsepis of Larnaca, dated to March, 1916, and concerning the proposed sale of a syllabic inscription in the possession of the latter; *CM Files* 127 no. 171, a text of our inscription, and no. 184, in effect a record of acquisition[1]. Dr. Slater's manuscript handlist of the syllabic inscriptions of the Cyprus Museum (*CM Files* 10), composed in the winter of 1932/3, ventures a transliteration. Throughout, however, there is no hint of provenance. But we may assert on the strength of its signary that our document is not Paphian: that it came neither from Amathus nor Citium, since the speech of these cities until the outset of the Hellenistic period was respectively Eteo-Cyprian and Phoenician; that Lapethus, which has not as yet produced a single syllabic inscription, can hardly be its place of origin. The Tsepis Stele, accordingly, may be ascribed tentatively to the Central Plain of Cyprus, and more particularly to the region of Tamassus and Idalium where similar limestones are abundant. Chytri, on the Southern slopes of the Northern Range favoured a soft, chalky stone for her numerous syllabic dedications, and such in general is the case at Golgi (Athienou). We may further

[1] On 12 March, 1914, the Cyprus Museum purchased from N. Tsepis, *inter alia*, 'a terracotta fragment with a Cypriot inscription', brief and as yet unpublished (*CM. Files* 127.73). It would seem that Tsepis towards the close of his life was disposing of his collection, but that our text from its obvious value required two further years of negotiation. For I assume that the Dr. Tsepis of Larnaca whose collection Beaudouin and Pottier examined in the autumn of 1878, recording one brief inscription (*Bull. de Corresp. Hellénique* III, 1879, p. 163), and our N. Tsepis were, not the same man, but father and son.

Fig. 1: Facsimile and Evaluation of the Tsepis Stele.

conjecture that in 1916 it had not been long in the possession of N. Tsepis, since it was seemingly unknown to I. K. Peristianis and E. Constantinides, respectively Inspector and Ephor of Antiquities, who were very active between 1907 and 1912 and had easy access to the private collections of Larnaca.

The signs are deeply cut, with bold, often tapering strokes. H. from 0.02 (sign 71) to 0.105 (sign 5). Direction, right to left. There is some irregularity in the size and form of these signs: cf. the 'grid' (Fig. 2) and discussion of the signary, p. 44-47.

'Αριστόμαχος | ἐκέρατο τὸ(ν) χῶρο(ν) τὸν | αὐτῶ. ἀ(ν)τ' αὐτῶ | ἴθε̄κα οἰκόναον || τῶ χω̄ρω̄. ὄν(ν)ε οὐκ ἰτέλεσα | τὸ ἀργύριο(ν) τὸ ἔνα | ἰ(ν) τὸ(ν) θάλαμο(ν) τὸν(ν)ε. ἴ δὲ | κ'οἰκίσι, πεισε̄ τῶ νόμω̄.

«Aristomachos caused himself to be stripped of this his field. In place of him, I [the God] appointed a tenant (?) of the field. In these circumstances I did not pay the money which I took (?) into this treasury. Should Aristomachos, however, farm [the field], let him pay [what] law [prescribes]».

The text is notably free from any serious difficulty. For sign 5 the stone has  . But the short, branching stroke above is very shallow and without doubt casual. That we are concerned with an unique variant of the non-Paphian  = *ma* would seem certain: the two crescents replaced by parallel uprights, the V above them asymmetrical and rendered thus:  . In sign 36 a vertical scratch joins the upper left-hand tip of the lower V, thus:  . This can safely be disregarded. Sign 56 has the left end of its horizontal crossed with a vertical stroke, thus  : this is short and shallow, so that it can hardly be significant.  = *mi* is therefore a possible, if very improbable, alternative to *la*. For sign 57 the stone gives  . Here the engraver has repeated the lower horizontal, dissatisfied with the sign as he had first cut it. The top of sign 59 is crossed by a transverse scratch, thus  .

With this last sign we meet the only ambiguity with which the text can confront us. Signs 16, 32, 37 and 59, respectively  , , and are *all*, I take it, variants, of , , = *ne*, *none* of them

variants of)¦ or ≻ (Kafizin)[1] or ≫≻(Old Paphos)[2] = *nu*. Cf., however, the discussion of the signary.

The text is carefully punctuated after words or groups of syllables (article *plus* noun; preposition *plus* pronoun; preposition *plus* article and noun; negative *plus* verb; particle *plus* enclitic). The mark is a short (0.015 to 0.034), slightly tilted stroke, set well above the base-line. This occurs after signs 11, 14, 19, 26, 35, 37, 49, 52, 57, 59, 61, 65, 68 and, possibly, after 71. In general, punctuation is omitted at the ends of lines, since no word (but cf. the sign-group 15 to 19) is carried over into the line following, and in consequence no ambiguity is incurred. Here we may note the unused space at the ends of lines 3, 6 and 7. Lines 6 and 7 are in this exceptional; but punctuation after signs 52 and 61 is distinctly useful, forbidding any attempt to link with the signs which follow. It is unusual for a syllabic inscription to be so fully and so carefully punctuated.

ἐκέρατο: the syllables e.ke.ra.to, with *ke* preceding the liquid *ra*, cannot give e. g. ἐχρᾶτο (which would demand e.ka.ra.to) — unless, indeed, we suppose a breach of the law governing the rendering of double consonants[3]. There is, therefore, little alternative to ἐκέρατο = ἐκείρατο. For if we would see in the termination -ατō an imperative, no suitable verb presents itself; while a patronymic Ἐχ̄ράτο or Ἐ(ν)χεράτο would not merely give an unknown name, but would suffer from the absence of the article, regularly preserved in the Cyprian dialect in this context until the close of the 3rd centu-

[1] For this site, some four miles from Nicosia on the Larnaca road, cf. my preliminary reports in *Report of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus*, 1937-1939 (published in 1949), p. 126 ff.; *Classical Quarterly* XLIV, 1950, p. 97 ff.; *Archaeology* V, 1922, p. 154. The formal excavation of the Nymph's cave near the summit of this pyramidal hill, carried out in 1949, was extended by the examination of likely pockets of soil, both below the cave and on the opposite slopes, until the autumn of 1955. Of some 300 inscriptions, 65 are syllabic (two with 92 and 86 signs); and all are to be dated between 225 and 217 B. C. My publication of the epigraphic finds is forthcoming.

[2] Our excavation of the Kouklia siege-mound was not concluded until December 1955. This site has now given me some 190 syllabic inscriptions, all antedating the capture of Paphos by the Persians in 499 B. C. The signary of Archaic Paphos I reproduced in outline in Ventris and Chadwick's *Documents*. But I now find that ≫≻? is not the non-Paphian ⊻ = *o*, as I there suggest, but *nu*.

[3] For a recent and careful formulation of this law, cf. C. D. Buck, *The Greek Dialects*, p. 210.

ry[1]. κείρειν occurs in Hoffmann 99 of New Paphos with the sense 'to cut or hew' rock. Here, I take it, we have the more common meaning 'shear', the middle denoting that Aristomachos by his own act has caused himself to be 'fleeced'. For the accusative of the object, cf. the admittedly poetic ἐκείρατο δόξαν (Pausanias, 9.15.6). That this interpretation is conjectural is to be regretted, since the meaning of the inscription as a whole is dependent upon Aristomachos' relationship to his field.

τὸ(ν) χῶρο(ν) τὸν αὐτῶ: for χῶρος = 'field', cf. Schwyzer, 679, 11.8/9: τὸ(ν) χῶρον τὸν ἰ(ν) τῶι ἔλει. Emphasis on the field having belonged to Aristomachos is doubtless due to a usage common in the nomenclature of Classical Cyprus, whereby a property took its official title from its owner's name: Ὄ(γ)κα(ν)τος ἄλϝō; Ἀμενίϳα ἄλϝō; Σίμ(μ)ιδος ἀρούραι and even πὸς τὰν ἰερēϝίϳαν τᾶς Ἀθάνας are examples taken at random from the Bronze Tablet of Idalium.[2]

ἴθēκα: for *epsilon* represented by *iota,* cf. ἰτέλεσα below and ἰ(ν), μι (for με). The abrupt introduction of the first person, although defended, as I believe, by ἰτέλεσα and, seemingly, by ἔνα, is none the less surprising. Indeed, ἴνδεκα has been commended to me as removing precisely this difficulty of the first person, and stating, incidentally, the amount of Aristomachos' fine or rent.[3] But this stele, I imagine, stood prominently to the front of some rustic temple, to advertise the substance of a legal document lodged within — and hence its astonishingly allusive character. It is the god — or goddess — who, on my interpretation, has foreclosed on land forfeited by Aristomachos; and the god now makes provision for the vacancy, by appointing a tenant or farmer of the land.

οἰκόναον: the syllables o.i.ko.na.o.ne are grouped together by the punctuation, and constitute a *crux* in our inscription. The word,

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[1] Cf. our No. 4 below. So, too, regularly at Kafizin, occasionally with the addition of παῖς.

[2] So also in the Kafizin *corpus:* Onesagoras is officially described as belonging to a village which rejoiced in the name Ἀ(ν)δρόκλō ϝοῖκος in the territory of Idalium — and yet Androclos is presumably the farmer of taxes referred to repeatedly in the texts.

[3] An interpretation favoured by Professor Beattie, who rejects the first person throughout. That *epsilon* before *tau* could sound to Cypriot ears very much as *iota* is demonstrated by the spelling Ἐδάλιον and Κετιῆϝες (but at Kafizin Ἰδαλιαχᾶς). I am reluctant to restrict this lapicide (retrospectively) in a philological straight-jacket.

whatever may be its meaning, is ἅπαξ λεγόμενον. Now in Schwyzer 679 ἀντί occurs freely with the meaning 'instead of' (ἀντὶ τῶ ἀργύρων; ἀντὶ τῶ μίσθων), so that here ἀ(ν)τ' αὐτῶ should mean (immediately preceded as it is by τὸ(ν) χῶρο(ν) τὸν αὐτῶ) 'in place of him' — and not 'in return for it'. Furthermore, τῶ χόρω can hardly be other that a genitive, unless we are prepared to charge this careful lapicide with laxity in omitting either the *ne* of χῶρο(ν) or the *i* of χόρωι. If these arguments are valid, they should — since we seek an object for ἴθηκα — eliminate (1) Οἰκονάων, genitive singular of a personal name, otherwise unknown, (2) οἰκόναον as an adjective, with some such meaning as 'temple property', (3) οἰκονάων, genitive singular of a compound noun, denoting 'temple-house'. It would seem that we are left with a noun in the accusative singular, formed from οἶκος and the root of ναίω, and signifying 'house-keeper' or 'tenant' or 'farmer'. In place of Aristomachos, the god has appointed his own tenant for the land. Omission of *digamma* with οἰκο-, while surprising, is paralleled by οἰκίσι below; but cf. ϝοίκωι in Schwyzer 679,6 and so twice at Kafizin (unpublished) from the close of the 3rd century[1].

ὄν(ν)ε: the syllables o.ne can give either ὄν = οὖν or ὄν(ν)ε. The former must be rejected, since οὖν cannot occupy this position. ὄν(ν)ε (I would suggest) is the Hesychian ὤννυ (ὥς νυ?), even as this text below has τόν(ν)ε for τόν(ν)υ. But its meaning here is rather 'in these circumstances' than 'in this manner'.

τὸ ἔνα: the syllables to.e.na constitute our second *crux*. I interpret as a relative followed by a verb in the first person (with ἴθηκα and ἰτέλεσα). If I am correct in so doing, ἔνα is perhaps to be taken as an aorist active, otherwise unknown to us, from the root of αἴνυμαι, with the meaning 'I took' or 'seized'. But the claims of αἴνω, aor. inf. ἦναι, 'I winnow', may have to be considered, if we can give it the significance 'I obtain by harvesting'.

τό(ν)νε: cf. Schwyzer 679,27 ἰ(ν) τὰ(ν) θιὸν τὰν Ἀθάναν τά(ν)νε. With this cf. *ibid.* 682,14 and 15, τὸν ἀ(ν)δριά(ν)ταν τό(ν)νυ and ἀ(ν)δριὰς ὄνυ.

ἴ δέ: the syllable *i*, having stood for *epsilon* in ἰ(ν), ἴθηκα, ἰτέλεσα, now does like service for *eta*, as below in οἰκίσι. For the Cyprian ἦ

[1] Cf. also the proper names Ἐλ(λ)όϝοικος (Murray, Smith and Walters, *Excavations in Cyprus*, 1900, p. 64); Ὀνασίϝοικος (Hoffmann 94, 106 and 228); Στασίϝοικος (Hoffmann 94, 228).

= 'if', we may turn once more to the Bronze Tablet of Idalium, Schwyzer 679,11.12, 25.

κ'οἰκίσι: I am indebted to Professor Beattie for recognition of the particle κέ (attested for the Cyprian, *ibid.* 10). οἰκίσι = οἰκήσῃ, either 'inhabit' or more particularly 'administer', 'manage', 'farm'.

πεισᾱ, the Cyprian for τεισᾱ: cf. *ibid.* 12, 25; R. Meister, *SB. Ak. Berlin* 1910, p. 148 ff. 1. 8. The subjunctive is a jussive, rare in the affirmative. But cf. the Cyprian δᾶμα ϝερσέᾱ, in Meister, l. c. 1.4[1]; and, further, Schwyzer *Gr. Gramm.* 316.

τᾶ νόμᾱ: there is no good reason to suppose that a final *ne* could properly be omitted at the end of a sentence or inscription. Accordingly, rather than assume an error or carelessness on the part of this lapicide, I prefer το νόμᾱ, a genitive, to τὸ(ν) νόμο<ν> or τᾶ νόμᾱ<ι>. An ellipse must then be admitted: Aristomachos is to pay, in such circumstances, the penalty of the law. For, on my interpretation, the alternative τᾶ νομᾶ, the price of the grazing, is to be rejected.

I believe (to recapitulate) that Aristomachos for some misdemeanour has been dispossessed of his field, and the god (speaking through this stone, set up before a shrine which stood upon the land in question) put in a tenant in his place. The fine to which Aristomachos was liable the god, in these circumstances, waived; and accordingly did not pay into the treasury which adjoined the shrine the profits which through his tenant he had made. Should Aristomachos, however, occupy his field, then he exposes himself to the full rigour of the law. In favour of my interpretation of this formidable inscription, this much at least may be said: at no point does it either emend or reject what has been cut with such manifest care.

It remains to ask whether the signary of the Tsepis Stele (Fig. 2) can make any contribution to the problem of its provenance. It is conspicuously rectilinear, and, further, (among its 27 distinct signs) has the following notable forms:

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[1] The Bulwer Tablet, said to have been discovered in the year 1890, in a tomb in the Southern foothills of the Northern Range opposite Aphrodisium, has, after being lost for nearly half a century, recently been acquired by the British Museum. It is, after the Salamis ostrakon, the second longest syllabic inscription known. I have collated the text.

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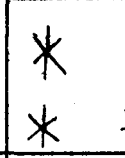
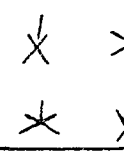
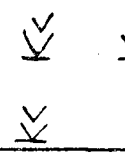
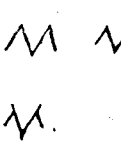
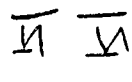
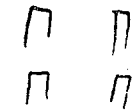
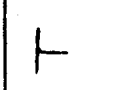
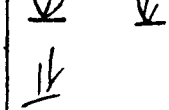
					
K					
T					
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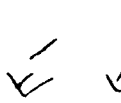
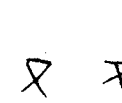
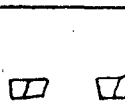
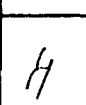
R					
M					
N					
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Fig. 2: The Signary of the Tsepis Stele

- for the normal (Kafizin), has no close parallel in Deecke's table in *SGDI.* It is likewise foreign to the more recent material: the Bulwer Tablet of the Western Karpas (Meister, *SB. Ak. Berlin* 1910, p. 148), the Pieridhes Bowl of Tamassus, and the Loisidhes Stele of Soli (both forthcoming in the Sundwall *Festschrift*), the ceramic texts of Kafizin, etc.

occurs spasmodically with the normal and in Central Cyprus, but is not attested at Kafizin.

and , Paphian counterparts of the ordinary , are not shown by Deecke for the rest of the island, save hesitantly for Idalium. They are found, however, both at Kafizin and in the Pieridhes Bowl.

for is unparalleled on stone and among the ceramic inscriptions; and illustrates the rectilinear character of this script.

and , for and , are unexampled, but closely resemble of the Pieridhes Bowl and , , of the Bulwer Tablet.

(for) is characteristically Paphian, in particular for the Archaic period. It is attested by Deecke spasmodically for Central Cyprus. In fact, it is the form almost exclusively used at Kafizin; and is further attested both by the Pieridhes Bowl and the Bulwer Tablet.

for , while explicable, is unique.

and are equally unique. Clearly they are derivatives of the common form , with respectively one and both of the side strokes attached to the corners of the zig-zag. It might indeed be argued that = *nu* of Kafizin and (I believe) the Loisidhes Stele could have its V extended and flattened into . This might explain our first but not our second form; while the long stroke in is invariably upright, whereas these signs are all tilted.

: this precise form would seem unique.

for , , is apparently attested for certain coins but for the rest is unknown.

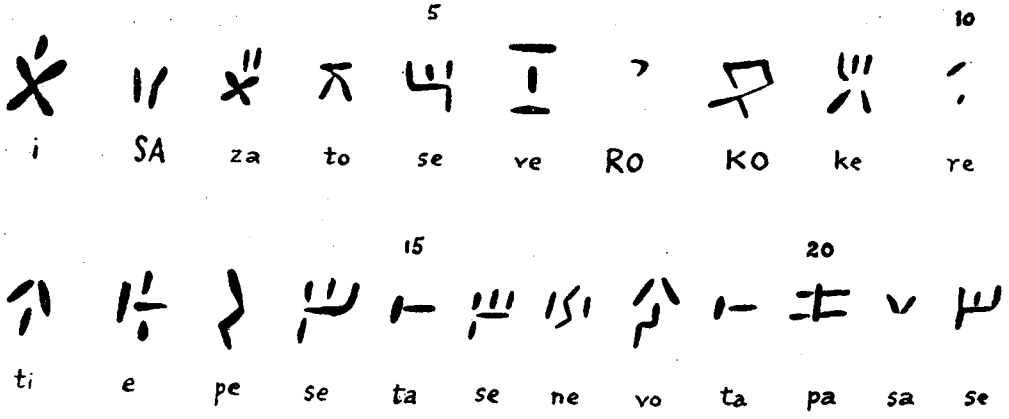
There was indeed an astonishing latitude permitted to the individual engraver, so that significant variations can be found not merely in the same place and time but in the same inscription. Nevertheless, there is in this signary nothing which contradicts our tentative attribution to the region of Tamassus and Idalium. Furthermore, its deviations from the norm (in so far as such a term can be applied to the syllabary) are so numerous as to impose a relatively late date;

and in this connection the *to* and *ro* which our inscription shares with Kafizin would seem to have particular significance. When to these considerations we join the absence of *digamma*, we shall, I think, have good reason for ascribing the Tsepis Stele to the second half of the 4th century.

To the Tsepis Stele I append three texts of relative simplicity. They have this much in common: all are documents in the Paphian signary, recent discoveries, now lodged in subsidiaries of the Cyprus Museum — No. 2 in the Paphos Museum at Ktima, Nos. 3 and 4 at Kouklia (Old Paphos).

2.—The Funerary Stele of Ergokretes

A tall, rectangular stele of a fine white limestone, weathered externally to a brownish-grey, broken in transit after its discovery into two closely fitting parts. H. 0.71 + 0.655; w. 0.32; th. 0.27. Found in January, 1954, by one Hassan Moustafa Mourouzi in the village of Kato Arodhes, some 12 miles to the N. of Ktima, and immediately acquired by the Paphos Museum (PM 1231). The signs, 22 in number, are from 0.01 to 0.032 in height, the *hastae* deeply cut, with rounded section and blunt, curved ends. Above l. 1 there is a suggestion of a line of defaced characters, and it may well be that the whole area occupied by our inscription is palimpsest (Pl. II, 2).



Ἰσάζαθος Ϝεργοκρέ|τι ἐπέστασεν ro (sic) θάφας

The direction, as in all later Paphian inscriptions, is from left to right. L. 1, in places blurred, has a heavy scar across its 7th sign, while the 10th has suffered from recent rough handling.

Sign 2 now appears as two short, almost parallel strokes: these

can hardly be the Paphian  or  = *zo*; nor again  = *no*, since there are no convincing traces of the 'barb'. It would seem that we have, somewhat damaged, a variant archaic of  = *sa*. It is very possible that No. 7 has been totally destroyed. To the right of the scar, however, some remnant of the tip of  = *ro* may be legible. No. 8 is extensively damaged: while  or even are possible, the general outline suggests rather a tilted  = *ko*. Of No. 10 two tips survive, to establish beyond any serious doubt its value. A heavy vertical scratch crosses No. 14, without however destroying its identity.

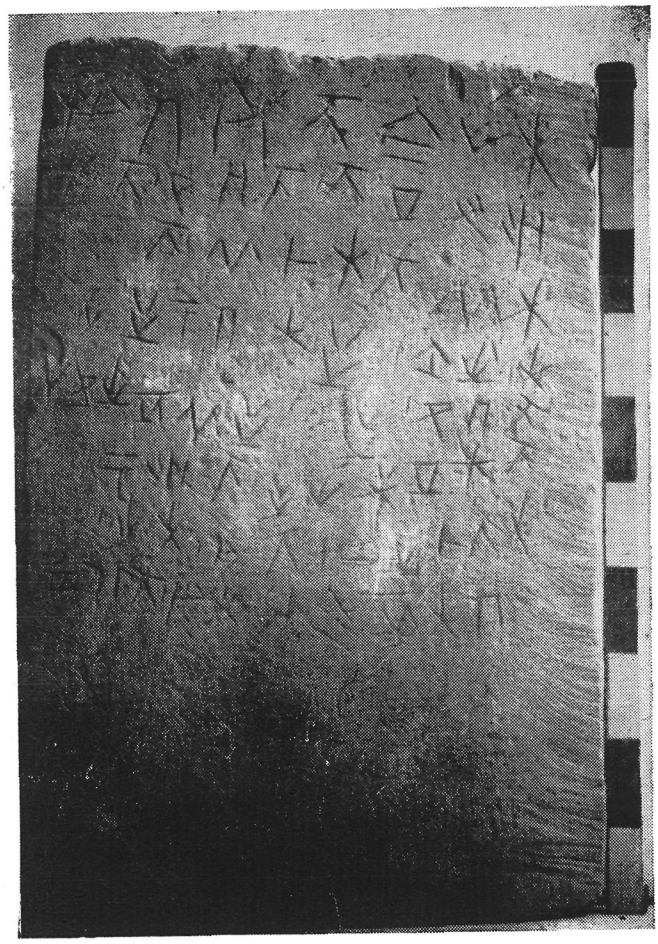
For the name Ἰσάζαθος (Ἰσάγαθος), cf. Ἰσαζάτας from Marium (S. Sittig, *Symbolae philol. O. Danielsson*, p. 314,3); for the representation of *gamma* on occasion by *zeta* in the Cyprian, cf. C. D. Buck, *The Greek Dialects*[2], p. 59. To Fεργοκρέτης[1], Ἐργοκράτης of the κοινή, I find no satisfactory alternative, since retention of *digamma* is in some measure paralleled by the Cyprian χακοFοργός and μυροFοργός (unpublished).[2] Thus the meaning of our text is plain: *Isazathos — even he who buried him — erected this stele to Ergokretes.* For I take it that FO is an error for ὁ. And θάψας is an addition to the Cyprian glossary.

The value of this monument lies undoubtedly in its provenance. This stele, from its quite exceptional size, cannot have been inserted, like the abundant small *stelae* of Marium, into a rock—, cut tomb of the general Cypriot variety: doubtless it was erected (ἐπέστασεν) above ground to mark the site. Kato Arodhes lies at a height of some 1950 feet, immediately below the watershed of the Akamas Ridge, in a fertile hollow, well furnished with springs. A mile to the NE on the opposite face is Kritou Terra. Two Roman milestones have been found, at Terra and at Pano Arodhes: the former Constantinian and distant VI m. p. from Marium-Arsinoe, the latter Severan, XV m. p. from New Paphos[3]. Thus even at that late period the territories of these two cities (and there is similar evidence from Curium, Soli and Salamis, which accordingly becomes significant) were recognised as administrative units. Two syllabic in-

[1] For -κρέτης in place of -κράτης in Cypro-Arcadian, cf. F. Bechtel, *Die griech. Dialekte* I, p. 425, 42; C. D. Buck, o. c., p. 45,2: cf. th forthcoming *Bull. of the Inst. Class. Stud. Univ. of London*

[2] These terms, from Marium and Rantidi respectively, are strikingly reminiscent of the Mycenaean glossaries of Ventris and Chadwick.

[3] *Journal of Roman Studies* XXIX, 1939, p. 192 n. 4, 193 n. 5.



1. The Tsepis Stele.

2. The Ergokretes Stele

3. A Fragmentary Stele of Old Paphos.

4. The Monument of Onasiphantos.

scriptions (which are shortly to appear in print), from Kritou Terra and seemingly of 4th century date, employ exclusively the Marian signary — the Ergokretes Stele now does a like service for the Paphian side of the border. We thus have evidence that from Classical to Early Christian times the boundary, at least at this point, was unchanged. Further speculation is unprofitable; but we may note that in 1953 in the village street at Kato Arodhes two Sub-Mycenaean tombs were rifled by peasants which can tentatively be ascribed to the late 12th century. To the North, however, in Marian territory we have as yet nothing of this early date.

A consideration of this signary can give some indication of its date. The signs 4 and 12 are characteristically Paphian; while 18, although doubtless more recent, is clearly akin to the Archaic of the Kouklia siege-mound. It is, however, Nos. 3, 5, 6, 9, 13 and (seemingly) 8, which are of especial interest.

= *za* (3) is now attested for the first time in the Paphian. does indeed occur twice in the Kouklia siege-mound, but should there be a variant of = *ke*. and in an Eteo-Cyprian inscription of the same mound may also have the value *za* — but here the claims of = *ma* cannot be excluded.

= *se* (5) contrasts with (14, 16, 22). Since the recognised Paphian form is , it might be argued that we have here contamination with the Marian signary, the more so as this confusion of direction in *se* might suggest a familiarity with the left-ward direction of the non-Paphian scripts. It is now known, however, that alike in the siege-mound and at the neighbouring Rantidi and are dominant — while approximately 30 % of these early texts run from right to left[1]. A similar inversion is found in = *pe* (13) for of the siege-mound (whereas the normal Cyprian is) and in = *ke* (9) for , , etc.

= *ve* (6) occurs twice at Rantidi, whereas the late Paphian form is .

= *ko* (8) (if we are justified in recognising this sign) is the proper Paphian form throughout, although in the late 4th century also

[1] At both localities the percentage is almost exactly the same. This, with the virtual identity of their signaries, leads me to give their inscriptions the same *terminus ante quem*. Choice of direction would appear to be a matter of caprice —for as yet I can give it little chronological significance. All later Paphian texts known to us read from left to right.

is found. These considerations suggest for the Ergokretes Stele a mid-5th century date.

3.—A Fragmentary Stele of Old Paphos

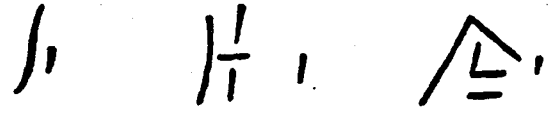
Fragment of a limestone stele, gritty, yellowish but externally light grey; broken away above, to left and seemingly below. H. 0.295; w. 0.16. Found in the spring of 1956 in the demolition of two houses immediately to the N. of the Aphrodite temple of Old Paphos; now in the Epigraphic Museum at Kouklia. The ends of six lines are preserved, with the signs of l. 6 more closely spaced. The signs are bold, deeply cut, with *hastae* for the most part of uniform width, their ends squared; h. from 0.019 to 0.028(Pl. II, 3).

Punctuation in the form of a short (0.01) vertical stroke occurs after signs 2, 3, 7, 8, 12 and 16. The dot which follows closely sign 17 may well be casual, and the stroke immediately to its right part of 18.

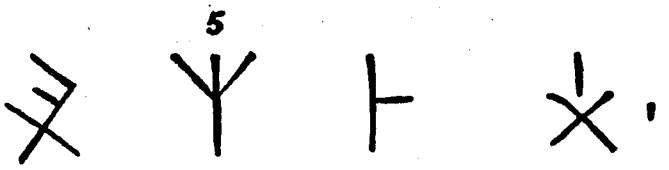
Of sign 1 enough survives to make 1 = *ne* inevitable. 9 is difficult, for here the slanting stroke only would seem to be significant, the dot below, the triangular mark above it being in all probability accidental: this stroke, since it is slightly curved, is part rather of = *se* than of = *pe*. 13 must be either = *ra* or = *ve*, with the former the more likely. 17 with little doubt is = *to*; and 18 not (I believe) = *la* but (as I argue below) a development of = *mi*.

It is not difficult to extract words from the bulk of these sign-groups — for example [ἄ]γεσθαι (l. 2), [ἐπε]στάσατε (l. 4), ῥάφας (l. 5) — but there are to each of these numerous alternatives. Moreover,]to Mi.te.xe.i or to Mi.te.xe.i in l. 6, remains for me inexplicable. There is thus no profit in speculating upon the character of the inscription as a whole. It may, indeed, have been metrical, as the brevity of l. 3, the closeness of l. 6 would suggest. The first line could then be interpreted as - -]νεē, a jussive subjunctive, followed by σί, the Cypro-Arcadian for τί[1]; while the lines following could, with the exception however of l. 5, have hexametric endings. But the purpose of the inscription would continue to elude us. It is in its signary, therefore,

[1] Cf. Schwyzer 679, 10 and 23. Further, the Hesychian gloss σί βόλε · τί θέλεις. Κύπριοι.

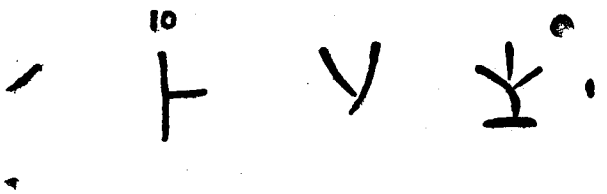


ne · e si

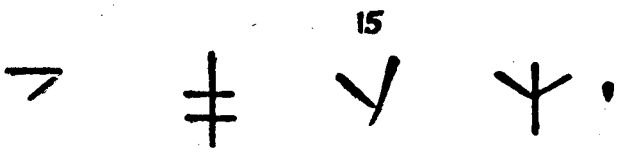


ke · se · ta · i

i



SE · ta · sa · te



RA · pa · sa · se

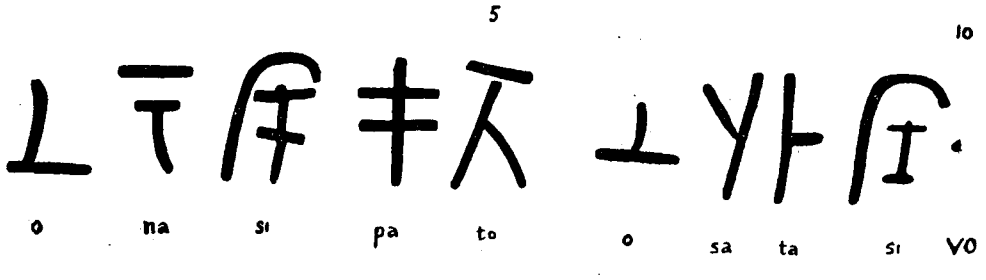
TO MI · te · xe · i

that its chief interest lies, and to this also we must turn for any indication of date.

= *e* (we have already noted) is from Archaic to Hellenistic times the characteristic Paphian form; but = *se*, in contrast, is perhaps not earlier than the 4th century. At this point sign 18 may be of assistance, as suggesting a date rather towards the beginning than the middle of this century. In the signary of Archaic Paphos and occur freely and exclusively for *mi*. A dedication of Nikokles from New Paphos, as yet unpublished, proves that at the outset of the Hellenistic era had this value. These two forms at first glance might seem quite unrelated; but on consideration it is clear that of the two slanting strokes to left and right in the one was detached to become a tall vertical, while the other was set as a second horizontal below that already existing. Our 18 illustrates, I believe, the beginning of the transition. Alternatively, the upright can be dismissed as a mark of punctuation, and the remainder taken as a variant — an unparalleled variant — of = *la*. Sign 20 = *xe*, is notable as an addition to the Paphian signary.

4.—The Monument of Onasiphantos

Portion of a block of a gritty, yellowish limestone, broken away to the right and at the lower left-hand corner. W. 0.42; h. 0.33. Found with No. 3 in the spring of 1956 in the demolition of two houses immediately to the N. of the Aphrodite temple; and now in the Epigraphic Museum at Kouklia. The signs, ten in number, are from 0.02 to 0.04 in height, deeply cut, the incisions with rectangular section, the ends of *hastae* squared (Pl. II, 4).



'Ονασίφα(ν)το(ς) ὁ Στασιϝο[ίκω - --]

The inscription is not punctuated, the word-groups being separated by brief lacunae. In sign 2, now damaged, the upward stroke

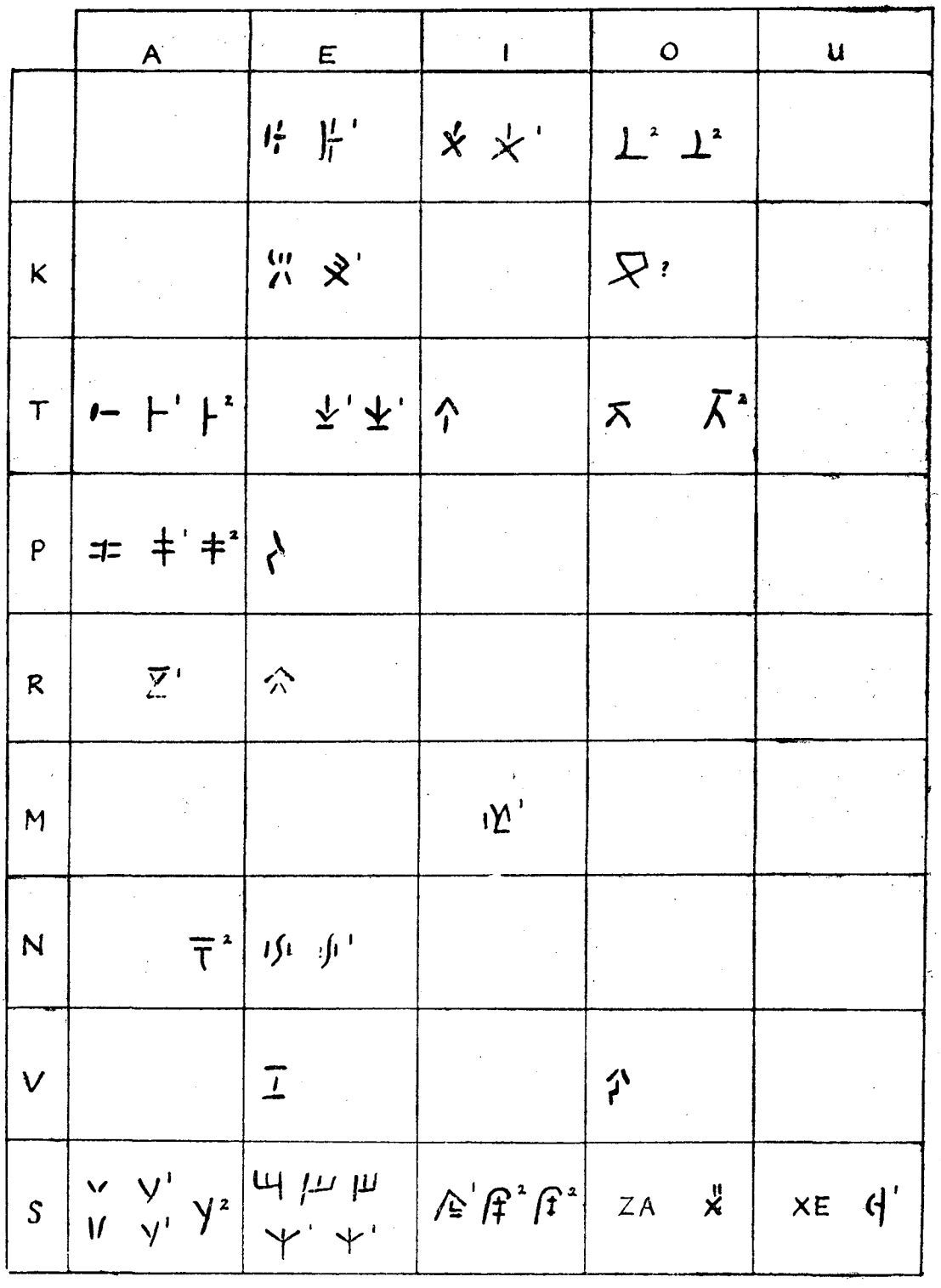


Fig. 3: The Signaries of Inscriptions 2, 3 and 4.

appears to be carried through and above the two horizontals, but this is not the case. In 8 the mark at the top of the upright is casual. Sign 10 on the line of fracture is a mark which would appear to be the tip of an upward-slanting stroke, as in 𐊏 = *vo*.

This brief text, from its discovery in the actual temple area, its large and careful lettering, can hardly be funerary; and doubtless the stone either supported or formed part of a dedication from Onasiphantos to the goddess: the addition of τᾶι θιόι or τᾶι ϝανάσ(σ)αι might well complete the inscription. This loss of final *sigma* before a vowel is well attested in the Archaic epigraphy of Old Paphos. Cf. further C. D. Buck, *The Greek Dialects*[2] 56[1]. We may note, finally, that throughout the history of the dialect, from the late 6th century at Old Paphos to the close of the 3rd at Kafizin, the patronymic is regularly preceded by the definite article, occasionally supported by τοῖς.

This signary has some Late Paphian forms. Thus for 𐊍 = *o*, at all times the standard Paphian, we have here in 𐊌 and 𐊎 clear anticipations of the late 𐊋, 𐊌, 𐊎. 𐊐 = *sa* is more recent than Archaic 𐊐 and 5th century 𐊐 (our No 2). Furthermore, 𐊑 = *na* is unique, as indeed is 𐊒 = *si* (although this last throughout its history shows a remarkable instability) and both therefore can be ascribed to the close of the Paphian kingdom: perhaps even to its final episode, the reign of Nikokles For it was then, I believe, that the individuality of the Paphian signary, already well marked in Archaic times, was deliberately enhanced to give an air of mystery and aloofness to this, the only Cypriot theocracy .The kings of the 6th century were normal political figures of their day; Nikokles was king and priest of Vanassa. The former were content with such signs as 𐊓 *(pi)* and 𐊔 *(mi)* and 𐊕 *(se)*. which were common to all Cyprus. Under Nikokles these had become 𐊖 and 𐊗 and 𐊘.

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[1] Also, Hoffmann 95: 'Αριστόφα(ν)το ὁ 'Αριστα γόραυ. Also, *ibid.* 93: ὁ λᾶο ὅδε.