

KO-RO-NO-WE-SA

Proceedings of the 15th international colloquium on Mycenaean studies, September 2021

edited by J. Bennet, A. Karnava & T. Meißner

Ariadne Supplement Series 5, Rethymno 2024, p. 125-136

© The Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Crete, Greece, and the individual authors

2016-2020 report on the Cypriot syllabic inscriptions

Markus Egetmeyer

This report continues the one drafted for the 14th colloquium on Mycenaean studies, held in 2015 in Copenhagen.¹ It thus covers the subsequent five years: 2016-2020. A complete bibliography on Cypriot syllabic inscriptions and the history of their scripts and languages can be found in the annual 'Epigraphische Mitteilungen' by the present author in the journal *Kadmos*. For the present report, the *Kadmos* volumes nos. 55 to 59 are relevant. Here, only publications of new inscriptions and republication of known ones are mentioned.

Inscriptions in the Cypro-Minoan syllabary

Cyprus, Paphos

Markus Egetmeyer publishes a further inscription on a metallic bowl,² a characteristic type of inscription rooted in Bronze Age society, but which continues into the first millennium BC by switching to the Greek language. The importance of the new example consists in the fact that it is an inscription in Cypro-Minoan script and language from the same place and date as the Opheltas inscription, the first one in Greek in our documentation. The implications of this situation and this new inscription are further discussed by Egetmeyer.³

¹ Report 2011-2015.

² EGETMEYER 2016.

³ EGETMEYER 2017a.

Syria, Ugarit (near modern Latakia)

The two short inscriptions from Ugarit published by Jean-Pierre Olivier were already known.⁴ The first one was provisionally included by Olivier in his collection of Cypro-Minoan inscriptions as ##210. RASH Aéti 001, the existence of the second one is only mentioned as ##211. RASH Aéti 002.⁵

Israel, Ashkelon (southern Canaan, modern Southern district)

Giancarlo Tomezzoli and Reinhardt Stein present a republication of an inscription found far more to the south on the Levantine coast.⁶ It would be written in a late variant of the Cypro-Minoan script used by 'Philistines.' The inscription is dated to the 11th century BC and this scenario was already proposed in the *editio princeps*. The hypothesis of the existence of a Cypro-Minoan inscription in Ashkelon, one of the cities of the Philistine pentapolis in Canaan, is as such acceptable, the reading and linguistic interpretation by the authors, however, not at all. Thus, as for the script: *non liquet*.

Crete, Kalo Chorafi (Καλό Χωράφι, West Crete, northern coast)

Among the Cretan epigraphical material of the village of Kalo Chorafi in the municipality of Mylopotamos (Μυλοπόταμος), published by Anastasia Tzigounaki and Artemis Karnava,⁷ there is one inscription (no. 6) with a pre-firing Cypro-Minoan sign. The object is a loom weight, probably of Cretan origin. The date proposed is MM III–LM I, corresponding to 1700–1500 BC. Even if it is just a single script mark, the date makes it stand out, because it thus belongs to the earliest phase of the Cypro-Minoan script and testifies to the contact between Cyprus and Crete during this period. The whole problem of the synchronism of the different chronologies in the Eastern Mediterranean is discussed anew by Manfred Bietak,⁸ who firmly argues against the long chronology, thus arriving at generally later dates: the eruption of the Thera volcano is dated at 1525 BC.⁹

⁴ OLIVIER 2016.

⁵ *HoChyMin*.

⁶ TOMEZZOLI & STEIN 2016.

⁷ TZIGOUNAKI & KARNAVA 2020.

⁸ BIETAK 2021.

⁹ BIETAK 2021, 312.

Cypro-Greek inscriptions

Separately to the report of the previous 14th colloquium on Mycenaean studies, the forthcoming first part of a corpus of the inscriptions in the Cypro-Greek syllabary was announced by Egetmeyer, Karnava, Landenius Enegren and Perna.¹⁰ This first part is now published as *IG XV 1, 1*, which contains inscriptions for three of the Cypriot city states (Amathus, Kourion and Marion), a complete collection of the inscriptions with a certain amount of improved readings and some new material. This cannot all be indicated here in detail, but one major improvement is to be mentioned: a thorough presentation of the Cypriot inscribed coins can be found for the city states of Amathus and Marion. This was only possible thanks to collaboration with the numismatist Evangeline Markou.

Cyprus, Amathus

All articles mentioned in the following are subsidiary work to the corpus. The most important one is by Perna.¹¹ It is a completely new edition, based on autopsy in the Louvre, of the long and difficult-to-read Eteocypriot inscription included as *ICS 194* and *ICS 195* in Olivier Masson's edition.¹² These difficulties explain the high number of improved readings. The resulting reading of the inscription can be found at a glance on page 220.

The work for the corpus is further reflected in the general overview by Karnava¹³ and in the article on coins by Markou.¹⁴ A short new inscription is presented by Yiannis Violaris and Elisavet Stefani,¹⁵ which is now *IG XV 1, 49*.

Kition

Olivier publishes a very short inscription of the period Cypro-Geometric III.¹⁶ For this reason alone the inscription is important, because this

¹⁰ EGETMEYER *et al.* 2017.

¹¹ PERNA 2019.

¹² MASSON 1983.

¹³ KARNAVA 2019.

¹⁴ MARKOU 2019.

¹⁵ VIOLARIS & STEFANI 2017, 233-235.

¹⁶ OLIVIER 2015.

period is very poorly documented by syllabic inscriptions. Indeed, the inscription seems also to be important for our understanding of the history of the Cypriot syllabary, namely the split-off of the common syllabary from the Paphian syllabary. This is probably implicitly meant in Olivier's commentary, but is only explicitly formulated by Egetmeyer.¹⁷

Kourion

Cf. the above indicated volume *IG XV 1, 1*.

Marion

Cf. the above indicated volume *IG XV 1, 1*.

Paphos

- Palaepaphos: Agnieszka Halczuk and Cheyenne Peverelli give a detailed presentation of the very short inscriptions on Attic ceramics.¹⁸
- Palaepaphos-Kouklia: Maria Iacovou and Karnava present an important administrative document from the 4th-3rd century BC, because such inscriptions are not well represented in the Cypriot syllabic corpus.¹⁹
- Palaepaphos-Rantidi: Karnava can be considered as a preparatory work for the second fascicle of the corpus in *Inscriptiones Graecae*.²⁰ The same author can thus now offer a complete and convincing reading of the dedication 'Rantidi 1'²¹ at the frontier between the city states of Paphos and Kourion.²²
- Site unknown, but probably from Paphos: an addition to the few inscribed weights from Cyprus is published by Egetmeyer.²³ The use of the Paphian variant of the syllabary on this new weight allows to place this object among the Paphian ones.
- New Paphos: in their treatment of the sanctuary of Apollo, Claire Balandier and Yannick Vernet also offer photos concerning the syl-

¹⁷ EGETMEYER 2017a, 193-194.

¹⁸ HALCZUK & PEVERELLI 2019.

¹⁹ IACOVOU & KARNAVA 2020.

²⁰ KARNAVA 2018.

²¹ MITFORD & MASSON 1983, 34-35, no. 1, Pl. 9.

²² KARNAVA 2020.

²³ EGETMEYER 2017b.

labic dedications *ICS 2* und *ICS 3* to Apollo.²⁴ The reading and interpretation of the first line of these inscriptions is, however, outdated in two places.

Cyprus, various locations

Anne Destrooper-Georgiades treats coins from various places in Cyprus belonging to the collection of the American geologist Charles Godfrey Gunther (*1880-†1929), who worked for the Cyprus Mining Corporation.²⁵

Cyprus, unknown provenance

Dimitrios A. Iosephides presents a manufacturer inscription on a small clay figure of a bull. This piece would need a re-examination.²⁶

Turkey, Cilicia Pedias, Misis (Μοψουεστία/Mopsuestia)

Anna Lucia d'Agata, Valentina Cannavò, Perna, and Daniele Putorti add a very short inscription to the very few syllabic inscriptions from this region, which nevertheless stresses the well-known presence of Cypriots there.²⁷

Israel, Tel Dor (southern Phoenicia, modern Haifa district)

Whereas the above mentioned inscription from Ashkelon belongs to the context of the end of the Bronze Age and the presence of the Sea Peoples in Philistia, an inscription from the first millennium comes from Phoenicia, more to the north and opposite Cyprus. The inscription in the Paphian variant of the syllabary is on a bone fragment and presents a dedication of the 5th-4th century BC. It was published by Masson,²⁸ but its reading and interpretation are not entirely clear. Furthermore, it seems that the inscription has been added to a pre-existing iconography on the bone. This iconography is the object of two articles: Caroline Sauvage supposes that the object is of Cypriot origin and represents a cultic

²⁴ BALANDIER & VERNET 2017.

²⁵ DESTROOPER-GEORGIADES 2017.

²⁶ IOSEPHIDES 2019.

²⁷ D'AGATA *et al.* 2020.

²⁸ MASSON 1994.

scene depicting the protection of navigation,²⁹ whereas Silvia Schroer considers the representation of the ship as part of a funeral ceremony.³⁰

Sardinia, Antas (near the village of Fluminimaggiore, province of South Sardinia)

The publication of the following inscription by Perna and Raimondo Zucca³¹ had already been announced by Egetmeyer, Karnava, Landenius Enegren and Perna.³² The inscribed object is a precious one, a large (hat)pin in bronze. The inscription is very short, of the ‘1+1’ — here: ‘1+2’ — type. The signs incised are the ones with a very simple structure and do not allow to decide whether the inscription is in the Cypro-Minoan or in the Cypro-Greek syllabary. The decision to opt for the latter is motivated by the archaeological context which indicates a date of 850-800 BC. The inscription thus belongs to the Cypro-Geometric III period (900-750 BC), from which we have very few inscriptions. The relations between Cyprus and Sardinia are well known and a recent, yet somewhat sceptical study, can be found in Anthony Russell and Bernard Knapp.³³

Italy (continental), Tarquinia (Etruria, modern province of Viterbo, region of Lazio)

Giulio Facchetti presents an anchor of about 550 BC, incised with three signs.³⁴ These could, indeed, be Cypriot syllabic signs, even if the signs incised are again of very simple structure, like the ones of the preceding inscription from Sardinia. As the signs are not incised in a line, the reading order is not sure and the meaning of the sequence remains unclear, even if the author makes some proposals.

Concluding

As a result, one can indicate that after decades of announcements by various authors of the intent to publish a corpus of inscriptions written

²⁹ SAUVAGE 2015.

³⁰ SCHROER 2016.

³¹ PERNA & ZUCCA 2018.

³² *Report* 2011-2015, 35.

³³ RUSSELL & KNAPP 2017.

³⁴ FACCHETTI 2015; FACCHETTI, 43-44, in BAGNASCO GIANNI *et al.* 2016.

in the Cypro-Greek syllabary, a first volume of such a corpus is now published. This allows us to expect that the complete corpus will finally be available in future years. The second volume will be only on Paphos, the city state with the most abundant documentation. This second volume presents itself as an easy task compared to the third one, which should include the ‘rest’, all other places in Cyprus and all inscribed objects found abroad (outside Cyprus). Due to the dispersal of the material, this volume will be the most difficult one to bring into fruition, and it is not yet clear whether a fourth volume will be needed. For Cypro-Minoan, there are two recent collections of inscriptions by Olivier and by Silvia Ferrara, but neither of them is a corpus, hence the recent initiative by Perna.³⁵

It may further be mentioned that for the period under review Paphos once again offers more material than other places: inscriptions from its administration, a stone from a sanctuary indicating a frontier and a weight mentioning possibly a king, in any case an affluent person. Still on Cyprus itself, the new edition of the long inscription in the ‘indigenous’ Cypriot language obliges us to revise the (very few) things we know about this Cypro-Minoan and Eteocypriot tradition.

More remarkable still is, however, something else: concerning the geographical distribution, it can be said that a large amount of new material was found in places outside Cyprus, and almost all these inscriptions come from coastal places or from near the coast (Fig. 1). For the Cypro-Minoan syllabary, these are Ugarit and Ashkelon on the Levantine coast and Kalo Chorafi on the Cretan coast; for the Cypro-Greek syllabary, these are Misis/Mopsuestia near the Cilician coast, Tel Dor on the Levantine coast, Antas, near the coast of south-western Sardinia, Tarquinia on the Tyrrhenian coast. All these regions outside Cyprus are well known for their close contact with Cyprus, perhaps apart from Etruria, which would be a welcome addition. The older inscription from Sardinia, in any case, belongs to the wider context of the Sea Peoples complex, for which the existence of a connection from (Etruria)/Sardinia to the Near East via Cyprus remains a serious possibility.³⁶

³⁵ PERNA, this volume.

³⁶ JUNG 2017; 2018.

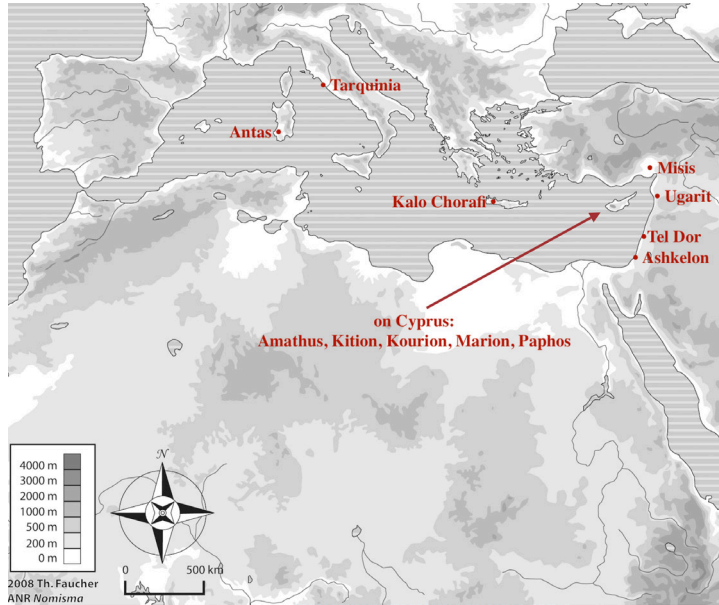


Fig. 1. Find places mentioned in the 2016-2020 report on the Cypriot syllabic inscriptions (adaptation by the author).

Concerning chronology, some inscriptions belong to the oldest periods of both traditions, Cypro-Minoan and Cypro-Greek. Among them is the new inscription from Kalo Chorafí, which belongs to the period of the beginning of the Cypro-Minoan syllabary, while others belong to the end of its use: the one from Paphos and, possibly, also the one from Ashkelon. For the Cypro-Greek syllabary, the new inscriptions from Antas and Kition also belong to the beginning of the tradition. Something, however, remains unchanged: we have inscriptions from the periods Cypro-Geometric I and Cypro-Geometric III, but we still do not have a single one from Cypro-Geometric II. These inscriptions must have existed, but the reduction and the new increase during the Cypro-Geometric indicated by this distribution may reflect historical reality. The 10th century BC is problematic not only for Cypriot syllabic epigraphy, but also for Phoenician alphabetic epigraphy³⁷ and for the Greek alphabetic one.³⁸

³⁷ SASS 2021.

³⁸ SASS forthcoming.

Bibliography

- BAGNASCO GIANNI, G., CULTRARO, M. & FACCHETTI, G. M. 2016 Tarquinia, contatti egeo-anatolici, nuovi apporti. In A. RUSSO TAGLIEN-TE & F. GUARNERI (eds), *Santuari mediterranei tra Oriente e Occidente. Interazioni e contatti culturali, Atti del convegno internazionale, Civitavecchia-Roma 2014*, 37-46.
- BALANDIER, C. & VERNET, Y. 2017 The sanctuary of Apollo Hylates at Paphos (Pafos)-Alonia tou Episkopou: a critical re-examination, *RDAC 2011-2012*, 657-686.
- BIETAK, M. 2021 Recent discussions about the chronology of the Middle and the Late Bronze Ages in the Eastern Mediterranean, Part II: the end of high chronology in the Aegean and the Levant, *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 78, 282-318.
- D'AGATA, A. L., CANNAVÒ, V., PERNA, M. & PUTORTÌ, D. 2020 Significant objects and the biographical approach: an inscribed handle from Misis in Cilicia, *SMEA NS* 6, 7-26.
- DESTROOPER-GEORGIADIS, A. 2017 The Cypriot coins of the city-kingdoms of the Gunther collection in the Cyprus Museum, *RDAC 2011-2012*, 599-638.
- EGETMEYER, M. 2016 A bronze bowl from Palaepaphos-Skales with a new Cypro-Minoan inscription from the Cypro-Geometric I period. In V. KARAGEORGHIS & E. RAPTOU (eds), *Palaepaphos-Skales. Tombs of the Late Cypriot IIIB and Cypro-Geometric periods (excavations of 2008 and 2011)*, 131-136.
- EGETMEYER, M. 2017a Script and language on Cyprus during the Geometric period: an overview on the occasion of two new inscriptions. In P. M. STEELE (ed.), *Understanding relations between scripts. The Aegean writing systems*, 180-201.
- EGETMEYER, M. 2017b A new bronze weight with a Cypro-Greek inscription, *RDAC 2011-2012*, 505-511.
- EGETMEYER, M., KARNAVA, A., LANDENIUS ENEGREN, H. & PERNA, M. 2017 *IG XV 1, Inscriptiones Cypri Syllabicae: the completion of Fasciculus I, Inscriptiones Amathuntis, Curii et Marii*. In *Aegean Scripts* 2015, 45-53.
- FACCHETTI, G. M. 2015 L'ancora di Tarquinia: l'iscrizione, in G. BAGNASCO GIANNI (ed.), *Un'ancora sul pianoro della Civita di Tarquinia, Atti della giornata di studi Tarquinia, Sala del Consiglio Comunale (12*

- ottobre 2013), Aristonothos, *Scritti per il Mediterraneo antico* 10, 57-64.
- HALCZUK, A. & PEVERELLI, C. 2019 Inscriptions sur céramique attique de Palaepaphos, *CCÉC-2018* 48, 55-76.
- IACOVOU, M. & KARNAVA, A. 2020 An administrative ostrakon from Kouklia-Hadjiabdoulla, *CCÉC-2019* 49, 37-52.
- IOSEPHIDES, D. A. 2019 Ανέκδοτη κυπροσυλλαβική έπιγραφή έπι πηλίνου είδωλίου ταύρου, *Kypriakai Spoudai 2016-2017* 78-79, 347-354.
- JUNG, R. 2017 The Sea Peoples after three millennia: possibilities and limitations of historical reconstruction. In P. M. FISCHER & T. BÜRGE (eds), *“Sea Peoples” Up-To-Date. New research on transformation in the Eastern Mediterranean in 13th-11th centuries BCE*, 23-42.
- JUNG, R. 2018 Push and pull factors of the Sea Peoples between Italy and the Levant. In J. DRIESSEN (ed.), *An archaeology of forced migration. Crisis-induced mobility and the collapse of the 13th c. BCE Eastern Mediterranean*, 273-306.
- KARNAVA, A. 2018 Die kypro-syllabischen Inschriften aus Rantidi bei Paphos. In S. G. SCHMID & S. G. HORACEK (eds), *“I Don’t Know What Am I Myself, It Is So Very Difficult to Eexplain”: Max Ohnefalsch-Richter (1850–1917) und die Archäologie Zyperns*, 315-323.
- KARNAVA, A. 2019 The syllabic inscriptions of Amathous: past and present. In A. CANNAVO & L. THÉLY (eds), *Les royaumes de Chypre à l’épreuve de l’histoire. Transitions et ruptures de la fin de l’âge du Bronze au début de l’époque hellénistique*, BCH-Suppl. 60, 201-212.
- KARNAVA, A. 2020 Old inscriptions, new readings: a god for the Rantidi sanctuary in SW Cyprus, *CCÉC-2019* 49, 19-36.
- MARKOU, E. 2019 Quelques réflexions sur le monnayage d’Amathonte de l’époque classique. In A. CANNAVO & L. THÉLY (eds), *Les royaumes de Chypre à l’épreuve de l’histoire. Transitions et ruptures de la fin de l’âge du Bronze au début de l’époque hellénistique*, BCH-Suppl. 60, 221-235.
- MASSON, O. 1983 *Les inscriptions chypriotes syllabiques. Recueil critique et commenté. Réimpression augmentée*.
- MASSON, O. 1994 Une inscription chypriote syllabique de Dora (Tel Dor) et les avatars des noms grecs en Aristo-, *Kadmos* 33, 1994, 87-92.
- MITFORD, T. B. & MASSON, O. 1983 *The syllabic inscriptions of Rantidi-Paphos*, *Ausgrabungen in Alt-Paphos auf Cypern* 2.

- OLIVIER, J.-P. 2016 La ‘maison d’Ourtenou’ à Ougarit: les textes chyprominoens. In V. MATOÏAN & M. AL-MAQDISSI (eds), *Études ougaritiques* IV, 149-154.
- PERNA, M. 2019 La grande inscription d’Amathonte (ICS 194+195): une nouvelle étude épigraphique. Rapport préliminaire. In A. CANNAVÒ & L. THÉLY (eds), *Les royaumes de Chypre à l’épreuve de l’histoire. Transitions et ruptures de la fin de l’âge du Bronze au début de l’époque hellénistique*, BCH-Suppl. 60, 213-220.
- PERNA, M. & ZUCCA, R. 2018 Uno spillone in bronzo iscritto da Antas (Fluminimaggiore) e la più antica iscrizione in cipriota ‘classico’(?). In M. BETTELLI, M. DEL FREO & G. J. VAN WIJNGAARDEN (eds), *Mediterranea itinera. Studies in honour of Lucia Vagnetti*, Incunabula Graeca 106, 329-342.
- RUSSELL, A. & KNAPP, A. B. 2017 Sardinia and Cyprus: an alternative view on Cypriotes in the central Mediterranean, *Papers of the British School at Rome* 85, 1-35.
- SASS, B. 2021 “Was the age of Solomon without monumental art?” The Frankfort–Albright dispute, more than sixty years later. In V. BOSCHLOOS, B. OVERLAET, I. M. SWINNEN & V. VAN DER STEDE (eds), *Travels through the Orient and the Mediterranean World. Essays presented to Eric Gubel*, 345-366.
- SASS, B. forthcoming Phrygian or Greek? The persisting question of the first Indo-European alphabet – on its West Semitic background. An update of Sass 2005. In C. ROCHE & A. PRIOLETTA (eds), *Écriture, pouvoir et légitimité*.
- SAUVAGE, C. 2015 A maritime ceremony to Aphrodite/Astarte: a note on the Dor scapula, *Israel Exploration Journal* 65, 69-89.
- SCHROER, S. 2016 The meaning of the boat scene on the Phoenician-Cypriote scapula from Tel Dor. In S. GANOR, I. KREIMERMAN, K. STREIT & M. MUMCUOGLU (eds), *From Sha’ar Hagolan to Shaaraim. Essays in honor of Prof. Yosef Garfinkel*, 435-447.
- TOMEZZOLI, G. T. & STEIN, R. S. 2016 The Philistine inscription 4.5 from Ashkelon (Israel), *Advances in anthropology* 6, 45-50.
- TZIGOUNAKI, A. & KARNAVA, A. 2020 Incised and impressed objects from Kalo Chorafi, Mylopotamos in Rethymno. In N. C. STAMPOLIDIS & M. GIANNOPOULOU (eds), *Η Ελεύθερνα, η Κρήτη και ο Έξω Κόσμος, Πρακτικά Διεθνούς Αρχαιολογικού Συνεδρίου, 31 Μαΐου-2 Ιουνίου 2018 Ρέθυμνο και 3 Ιουνίου 2018 Μουσείο αρχαίας Ελεύθερνας*, 319-328.

VIOLARIS, Y. & STEFANI, E. 2017 «Αμαθούς πόλις Κύπρου αρχαιοτάτη ...»: η πόλη και οι νεκροπόλεις της. In N. ΡΑΡΑΔΙΜΙΤΡΙΟΥ & Μ. ΤΟΛΙ (eds), *Αρχαία Κύπρος. Πρόσφατες εξελίξεις στην αρχαιολογία της ανατολικής Μεσογείου*, 233-255.