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**Wilhelm Deecke's bequest at the *Bibliothèque Nationale  
et Universitaire de Strasbourg*: a glimpse into 19th century  
archaeological investigations in Cyprus**

**Artemis Karnava**

Archival material, be it public records or personal bequests, is always of interest to later scholarship on any given topic. In the latter instance, there is always room for surprises when going over scholarly working papers. Personal archives can reveal the cognitive processes that resulted in the creation of certain theories or scientific accomplishments, or they can provide secondary glimpses into old, thought to be known, finds. It is also the case that sometimes the accidents of time hinder publication altogether, so old archives can contain primary, unpublished information. Archives are therefore sought-after potential treasure troves, even when they belonged to scholars that produced state-of-the-art archaeological or epigraphic publications.

The instance of one such archive and its modern 'discovery' is the topic of this paper, an archive that came into my attention half-fortuitously.\* I was searching online for information on Wilhelm Deecke, a 19th century philologist, who was instrumental in (one of) the deci-

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\* I am indebted to my colleague Daniela Lefèvre-Novaro, a professor at the University of Strasbourg, who directed me to the correct electronic sources and also conducted some inquiries on my behalf. We met on the occasion of a conference in Venice, Italy, in April 2018, and talking about Wilhelm Deecke, an old Strasbourg professor, with her was what prompted me to inquire further. My debt extends to the head conservator and in charge of the legacy collections of the BNU Claude Lorenz, and the library personnel, who assisted my work in every way possible. This is an adapted version of a paper I gave on 5 April 2019 at UCL in London, in a symposium entitled *Cypriot archaeology, pre-modern material culture, and cultural heritage in the UK*, hosted by the Institute of Archaeology/UCL, the Cyprus High Commission in the UK and the British Museum.

pherment(s) of the Cypriot syllabary of the 1st millennium BC in 1874 and a prominent figure in Cypriot epigraphy in the first dozen or so years of the discipline's founding. My search was part of my work for the corpus of Cypriot syllabic inscriptions.<sup>1</sup> Numerous inscriptions that interested me, especially from the region of Marion in northwest Cyprus, had been published for the first time by Deecke, a Strasbourg-based scholar who had seemingly never even set foot on Cyprus. Deecke wrote in 1886 on how he came about obtaining evidence for new, unpublished inscriptions from Marion:

“Von allen diesen Inschriften hat mir Hr. Ohnefalsch-Richter Abklatsche oder Abdrücke und Abschriften, zum Teil in mehreren Exemplaren, gesandt und mit großer Liberalität die vorläufige kurze Veröffentlichung gestattet”.<sup>2</sup>

It was therefore obvious that Deecke had some sort of contact with Max Ohnefalsch-Richter, the first excavator of Marion, who had provided him with inscription documentation, namely squeezes, casts and transcriptions. But no Deecke *Nachlass* was known to be kept somewhere, and all this material was unaccounted for.

Knowing, however, that Deecke was connected to Strasbourg in Alsace, nowadays in France, but a part of Germany at the time, I googled the relevant search terms in German.<sup>3</sup> The information that came up online as two library catalogue entries was surprising: not only ‘Abklatsche von cyprischen Inschriften’ (=squeezes of Cypriot inscriptions), but also ‘Photographien von cyprischen Inschriften’ (=photographs of Cypriot inscriptions). The entries pointed to the archival collections of the Strasbourg National and University Library [*Bibliothèque Nationale et Universitaire de Strasbourg*, henceforth: BNU], I therefore requested permission to document and study whatever they stood for.

<sup>1</sup> The project of putting together a corpus of inscriptions in the Cypriot syllabary of the 1st millennium BC has been described in a number of papers, the most recent of which is KARNAVA & MARKOU 2021, 113-116. The first corpus fascicle (out of three) appeared as *IG XV 1,1* in 2020. See also EGETMEYER, this volume.

<sup>2</sup> DEECKE 1886a, 1289. The hasty publication is in a philological weekly journal, dated to 9 October of that year.

<sup>3</sup> I think something in the order of: ‘Deecke’, ‘Strassburg’, ‘Abklatsch’ and ‘Inscription’. The web addresses seem to have since ‘migrated’ and are not readily found through a simple Google search, a constant problem when quoting electronic addresses.

I visited the BNU on two occasions in July 2018 and January 2019.<sup>4</sup> The Wilhelm Deecke archive kept at the BNU seems to cover the period after 1875 and consists of three parts: notes, paper squeezes of inscriptions and photographs. During my last visit I was informed on how the bequest came to the possession of the BNU. An entry in the BNU archives reveals that after Deecke passed away in 1897, his papers and part of his library were sold by his family to the library for 75 German marks. This information confirmed my initial impression that it was a 'cleaned up' version of the scholar's personal papers.

### *Wilhelm Deecke in Strasbourg and Max Ohnefalsch-Richter in Cyprus*

The two personalities involved in the creation and the keeping of this archive deserve particular mention. Ohnefalsch-Richter's life and work are, to a great extent, known and investigated,<sup>5</sup> but Deecke's life and work are not. The accounts on their life and disposition, as well as their work, show two men very different in character, demeanour and intellectual capacities, with the former appearing as an infuriating extrovert, while the latter seemed low-key, rather anti-social and introverted. If they ever actually met, or how their collaboration panned out is not said, since the archive contains no actual correspondence between them.

#### *Wilhelm Deecke, the scholar*

Wilhelm Deecke, born in 1831 and deceased in 1897,<sup>6</sup> was a philologist active in the second half of the 19th century. Originating in Lübeck in Schleswig-Holstein, in the north of today's Germany, he studied classical philology and comparative linguistics in Leipzig, as well as Egyptology and Uralic languages in Berlin. Due to financial constraints he did not submit his doctoral thesis until 1869,<sup>7</sup> so his studies, the *Promotion*,

<sup>4</sup> I took photographs of squeezes and photographs of photographs, and I had the notebooks pertaining to Deecke's Cypriot material scanned by the library personnel. All the material I documented digitally, besides being kept in Strasbourg, is also deposited to the *Inscriptiones Graecae* archive in Berlin.

<sup>5</sup> Unlike Deecke, numerous biographical and bibliographical accounts exist on Ohnefalsch-Richter's personality, among which BUCHHOLZ 1989; FIVEL 1989; KRATA 1992. Recently, a whole volume was dedicated to his activities in Cyprus (SCHMID & HORACEK 2018), the rich archival documentation in which supersedes all previous publications.

<sup>6</sup> Detailed biographic account by Therese Deecke, his wife, and August Baumeister, a close friend (DEECKE & BAUMEISTER 1901). Another short biography, KRONASSER 1957.

<sup>7</sup> DEECKE 1869.

were completed in 1870 at the age of 39. He was employed as a secondary school teacher throughout his working life in schools in Lübeck (since 1855), then Strasbourg and its vicinity (since 1871). He is recognised primarily as an Etruscologist,<sup>8</sup> and his bequest in the BNU supports that, since most of his notes are on Etruscan and other scripts and languages of the Italic peninsula, or related material (Messapic, Faliscan, Lemnian).

Deecke, Strasbourg Lyceum's *Konrektor* since 1871, became active in Cypriot epigraphy from 1874 onward, or shortly before that. It is not clear why exactly he got into the study of Cypriot inscriptions: his belated dissertation was about the Latin language, but he published very little anyway on Latin or other topics before 1874.<sup>9</sup> It was in that year that his first major publication appeared, which was, in fact, the extended decipherment article on the Cypriot syllabary in collaboration with a young *génie*, Justus Siegismund.<sup>10</sup> The latter's posting in 1873 in Strasbourg's protestant *Gymnasium* as a teacher<sup>11</sup> was probably the crucial turning point, since there is no indication that Deecke was interested in Cypriot before meeting Siegismund. Cypriot epigraphy was a fresh and, in all likelihood, 'trendy' topic at the time that they got into its study: only in 1852 had scholars realized that there existed an unknown writing system during the 1st millennium BC in Cyprus,<sup>12</sup> and, until its decipherment in 1874, it was a race against time for whoever managed the glorious task.<sup>13</sup>

The collaboration between Deecke and Siegismund culminated in (one of) the successful decipherment(s) of the syllabary.<sup>14</sup> Their common connection was their *alma mater*, Leipzig, and the person who

<sup>8</sup> BENELLI 2017, 97.

<sup>9</sup> The account of his publications before 1874 shows only 13 entries, including obituaries, his dissertation, a book on German family names, and school syllabi (DEECKE & BAUMEISTER 1901, 100).

<sup>10</sup> DEECKE & SIEGISMUND 1874, an article finished at the end of May of that year (information in MASSON 1991, 33, ft. 8). As far his involvement with the Cypriot syllabary is concerned, MASSON (1991, 33, ft. 2) attributes to him a small, unsigned notice on Brandis' decipherment effort on the March issue of a journal (DEECKE 1874).

<sup>11</sup> This *Gymnasium* is a rather famous school: it was founded in 1538 by Johannes Sturm, and it later evolved in what is today the University of Strasbourg.

<sup>12</sup> The feat of a numismatist, who realized that legends of coins identified as coming from Cyprus were written in an unknown writing system (LUYNES 1852).

<sup>13</sup> The full story in POPE 1999, 123-135.

<sup>14</sup> DEECKE & SIEGISMUND 1874. On their effort, MASSON 1991.

must have brought them together was Georg Curtius, the professor of classical philology in Leipzig at the time. Curtius was Siegismund's mentor, who additionally supervised Deecke's *Promotion*. Siegismund's untimely accidental death caused by a fall inside a deep rock-cut tomb in Amathous in Cyprus in 1876, at the age of 24, during a trip he had earned as reward for his contribution to the decipherment, obviously put an end to their joint Cypriot endeavours.<sup>15</sup> After the decipherment and Siegismund's passing, Deecke, the late bloomer, continued to study and publish on the syllabary; his last pertinent publication dates to 1886. Throughout the period of his scientific production between 1874 and 1889, which demonstrates a clear focus first on Etruscan and then on Cypriot, he additionally published on Pamphylian, Lycian, various Semitic alphabets and cuneiform, and even Indian scripts.

*Max Ohnefalsch-Richter, the archaeologist*

Ohnefalsch-Richter, born in 1850 in Sohland in Saxony, in the east of today's Germany and on the border with the Czech Republic, was a German who was involved in (or conducted and initiated himself) excavations in Cyprus in the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century.

When Cyprus became a protectorate of the British Empire in 1878, the ever-resourceful Ohnefalsch-Richter, who had tried to earn a living by entering the military, but was dismissed for health reasons, and had spent the years between 1873 and 1878 in Italy, was tasked as a press correspondent and a photographer in Cyprus with a recommendation by the German emperor's court. He seized the opportunity and started his life-long stay and involvement with Cyprus, which lasted intermittently until his passing in 1917. Upon his arrival on the island, he very quickly became interested in archaeology and excavations, an exciting and emerging field on the island during a time of intense international political competition, where there was money and other perks to be had. In view of his interest, he managed to assign himself the task of conducting excavations as a representative of the British administration. He had no formal archaeological training, but he was persistent and hard-working, and was after archaeological finds mostly as an income through their sale.

His training in photography also came in handy, since photography

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<sup>15</sup> MASSON 1987, with a colourful description of Siegismund's passing.

was, at the time, an emerging and expensive technology that revolutionised the way archaeological sites in far away lands and archaeological finds could be presented to the scientific community and the public back in Europe.<sup>16</sup> Ohnefalsch-Richter is known to have made numerous photographs of his excavation sites, as well as the retrieved objects. He would send these photographs to various scholars in Europe, in order to have his finds studied, appreciated, published, and thus be made more marketable. Photographs also helped him execute drawings of finds and sketch recreations of archaeological sites, which even resulted in some primitive, for our standards, enhanced reality and a not-so-faithful rendering of his excavations and the retrieval circumstances of his finds.

The source of all the photographs in the Deecke archive at the BNU is, in fact, Ohnefalsch-Richter, and they are, in all probability, photos taken by the man himself. This same person seems to have been the source of the majority of the paper squeezes in the same archive.

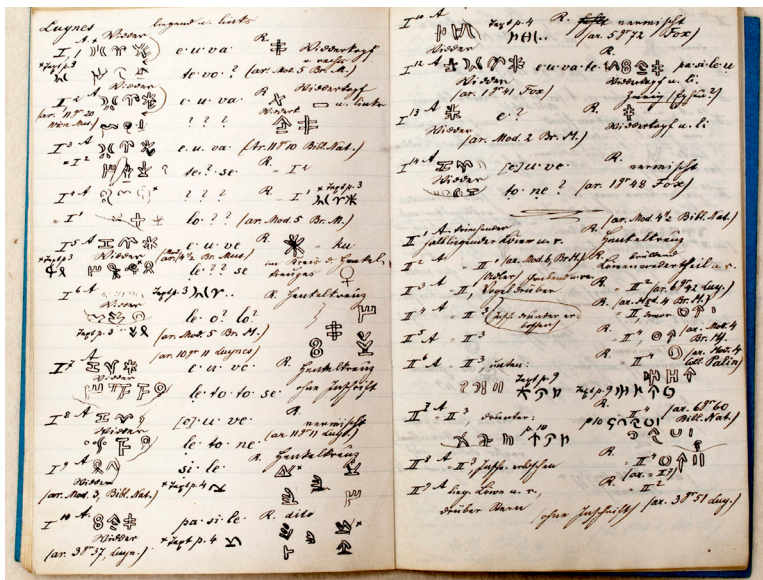


Fig. 1. Pages from one of Deecke's notebooks on inscriptions on Cypriot coins (photo by author; courtesy of the BNU, box 2822).

<sup>16</sup> A detailed and interesting account of the relationship Ohnefalsch-Richter had with photography in FILSER 2018, who relies on KRATA 2010.

### *The Wilhelm Deecke bequest at the BNU*

The Wilhelm Deecke bequest kept at the BNU consists of three parts: notes, paper squeezes of inscriptions and photographs.

#### *Deecke's notes and notebooks*

Where I could follow the dates of the entries in his notebooks, the earliest entry is a reference to a paper published in 1875 (but which he could have read any time after that). The multiple notebooks entitled 'Mülhausen' suggest that the bequest mostly consists of his papers after Deecke's posting in Mülhausen, a smaller city to the south of Strasbourg, a posting which took place in 1889. But many notebooks seem more weathered than the Mülhausen ones, so they must be the bulk of his work in the 1880s (Fig. 1). After 1886 Deecke does not publish anything any more on the Cypriot syllabary, but from his papers it seems that he continued to work privately on it. Unfortunately, I could not find anything that would be relevant to the decipherment or his collaboration with Siegismund, which is regrettable, since we know almost nothing about the path they followed.<sup>17</sup> Siegismund died quite early on, in 1876, two years after the decipherment, and he left practically nothing behind him.<sup>18</sup>

I suspect that an expert in Etruscan would be in a better position to evaluate the time length involved, since most of Deecke's work was on Etruscan.

#### *Deecke's paper squeezes of inscriptions*

The box of paper squeezes contains in all 58 items, the majority being paper squeezes of Cypriot syllabic stone inscriptions, but also a few copies of inscriptions of various nature (pencil copies). Many of the squeezes are in duplicates, a fact which concords with Deecke's information, the Ohnefalsch-Richter would send him multiple copies of the mate-

<sup>17</sup> In Deecke's biography written for the most part by his wife (DEECKE & BAUMEISTER 1901), Siegismund is such a distant memory, that Therese (see above, n. 6) even misspells his name (93: 'Sigismund').

<sup>18</sup> MASSON 1987, 13, claims that Siegismund's two travel notebooks had gone missing. He does mention however that they were last known to be in the possession of Richard Meister, the philologist who was tasked by the Berlin Academy of Sciences to compile a corpus of Cypriot syllabic inscriptions in the turn from the 19th to the 20th century. The notebooks are, in fact in the archives of the Berlin Academy, in the care of the *Inscriptiones Graecae* corpus, apparently left over by Meister.



rial.<sup>19</sup> The provenance of the original inscriptions, to the extent it was possible for me to ascertain, are various regions in Cyprus, sites that were first excavated in the 19th century and produced the first syllabic inscriptions: Marion (28 squeezes); Drymou (4); Soloi (2); Paphos (4); Golgoi (3); Salamiu (2), a total of 43 squeezes.<sup>20</sup>

I took photographs of select paper squeezes that are not to be found nowadays. Thankfully, almost all of the inscriptions, the squeezes of which are in the archive, are still accounted for, dispersed between Poland, Cyprus (Nicosia and Marion-Polis Chrysochous museum itself), UK, Turkey and the U.S.A. One of the lost inscriptions however was also depicted on a photograph from the same archive (Fig. 2; see also below, Fig. 3, for the photo of the missing inscription carrier). All this information has been included in the first volume of the corpus of Cypriot syllabic inscriptions (*IG XV 1,1*), which contains inscriptions from Amathous, Drymou, Kourion and Marion.



Fig. 2. Paper squeeze of a now lost inscription; the inscription was listed as *ICS 108*, and is now *IG XV 1, 178* (photo by the author; courtesy of the BNU).

The squeeze collection also contains a rather unusual kind of paper squeezes of small size (3×4cm for instance, with signs of 1cm size): squeezes of inscriptions incised on clay vases (179, if I counted them correctly).<sup>21</sup> Because the production of a paper squeeze involves hitting the inscribed surface with a brush, paper squeezes are usually made on stone inscriptions and not clay, which is delicate and can break. The archive contains however a number of paper squeezes of inscriptions in-

<sup>19</sup> See above, n. 2.

<sup>20</sup> The remaining 15 squeezes are of Etruscan inscriptions (3); Greek alphabetic (2); and some remain unidentified due to their bad state of preservation (10).

<sup>21</sup> For a more extensive account and photographs of these vase inscription squeezes, see KARNAVA 2022, 499-501, Fig. 1.



cised on clay vases from Marion. The little squeezes have a round shape, because the inscriptions were incised under the (round) bottoms of clay vases. Because the inscriptions are identified with material recovered by Ohnefalsch-Richter at Marion, they were probably made by him and sent to Deecke, in order for the latter to study and publish them. The majority of the original vases seem to be kept in the Cyprus Museum in Nicosia and the Berlin *Antikensammlung* today. Having documented, however, all the relevant inscribed vases both in Nicosia as well as Berlin, I believe that some of these little squeezes document also inscriptions on vases that are now lost, dispersed in different, probably private, collections over Europe. Again, all this information is included in the corpus volume, and it has actually helped me to make a lot of sense of the findspots and ordering of the vases excavated by Ohnefalsch-Richter.

### *Deecke's photographs*

The third strand of information in the bequest are the photographs. The bequest contained 32 photographs, all sent by Ohnefalsch-Richter to Deecke. I can readily understand why Ohnefalsch-Richter would send Deecke photographs that contain inscriptions to Deecke, an epigraphist. Some three-four photos are of finds from the excavations Ohnefalsch-Richter conducted in Marion in 1885, but mostly in 1886 (Fig. 3). They are group photos of funerary stone *stelae*, almost all of them accounted for today.<sup>22</sup>

But the value of these photographs lies in two points. The first, that some of the inscriptions depicted are now lost, and the second, that they constitute the only evidence of how some of the stone *stelae* looked like before they were cut off. Concerning inscriptions now lost, let us return to the inscription IG XV 1, 178 (see above, Fig. 2), the squeeze of which has a peculiar shape. But it is this peculiar and unique shape of the squeeze that helps us identify the very same inscription among many in the photograph of Fig. 3 (below). In the middle-lower part of the photograph, under the lion's statue, there is a sizeable stone sarcophagus cover, which appears unmistakably to be the inscription carrier. So, through this archival testimony we have now some more evidence for an

<sup>22</sup> All the photographs from Deecke's bequest in Strasbourg have been used for the first fascicle of the corpus and they can be seen in the Plates section (IG XV 1,1, Pls. 18-42). Each individual inscription in these photos also accompanies the (modern) photographs inserted for each inscription in the corpus.

inscription we are missing, and moreover it is the only testimony for an inscription on a stone sarcophagus cover.



Fig. 3. Photograph sent by Ohnefalsch-Richter to Deecke, with inscriptions discovered in Marion in 1886 (*JG XV 1*, Pl. 42A; photo of the photo by the author; courtesy of the BNU).

The second, valuable contribution of these photographs lies in the fact that they depict the whole of the inscription *stela*, before it was sawn off. It appears to have been the case, that because most of these inscriptions found their way to the antiquities market, in order to facilitate their transportation, the non-inscribed part of the stone was cut off and only the inscribed part was kept. For instance, a number of these that are visible in Fig. 3 ended up in a castle in Poland, after having been bought by a Polish countess in the famous 19th century auction houses of antiquities in Paris. So, they probably had to be shipped from Cyprus to France, and then travel on to Poland; this is what these inscriptions look like today, kept in the Gołuchow Castle in Poland (Fig. 4).<sup>23</sup> To my knowledge, these Ohnefalsch-Richter photographs were never pub-

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.zamkipolskie.com/goluc/goluc.html> [last accessed 22.11.2022].

lished anywhere. I would think that Ohnefalsch-Richter did not want to show to the authorities that he was sowing off his finds in order to transport them more easily. Deecke's publications of the *stelae* texts do mention sometimes the original size of the stone, so it is also possible that it was a common secret that stone inscriptions could not be kept intact back in those days. Alternatively, Deecke did not know and could not have known what the fate of the *stelae* was.



Fig. 4. Cypriot stone inscriptions embedded in the wall of a corridor in the castle of Gołuchow, Poland; the various ICS and IG numbers of the inscriptions are listed below each inscription (photo by the author, 2008; courtesy of the Gołuchow Castle and National Park authorities, Poland).

Moreover, there are also two batches of photographs that are rather unusual in an epigraphist's archive. The first batch consists of seven photographs with finds from the excavations by Ohnefalsch-Richter in Geri-Phoenikiais ('Phönitschäs'), a burial site between Nicosia and Idalion (Fig. 5). The excavations were conducted by order of the British Museum in 1883 and the finds are kept today at the British Museum. The tombs date primarily to the Middle Bronze Age, roughly between 2000-1700 BC,<sup>24</sup> but Late Bronze Age material was also collected.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>24</sup> OHNEFALSCH-RICHTER 1893; KIELY 2010, 244-245.

<sup>25</sup> FURTWÄNGLER & LÖSCHCKE 1886, 24-31, Pls. XIII-XIV, XXII.

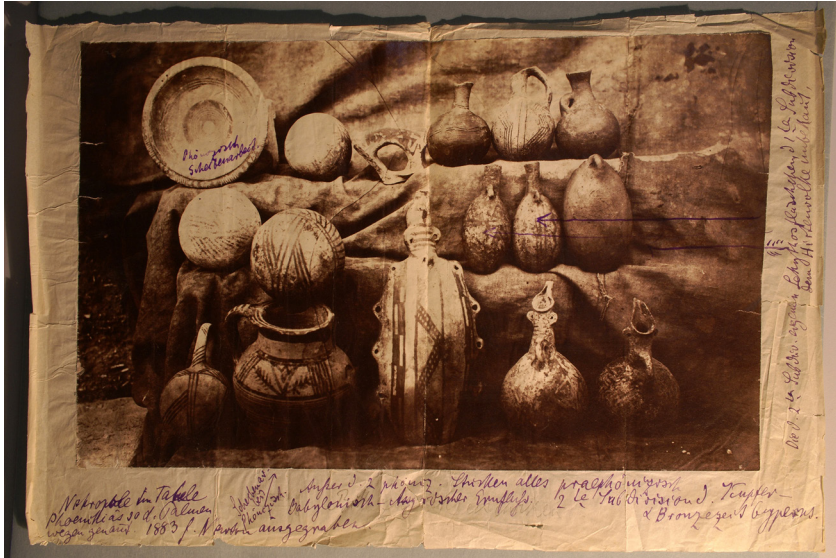


Fig. 5. Photograph sent by Ohnefalsch-Richter to Deecke, with finds retrieved in Geri-Phoenikias in 1883 (photo of the photo by the author; courtesy of the BNU).

The second batch are 17 photographs of finds recovered in excavations in Agia Paraskevi-Nicosia, another funerary site situated today within the town of Nicosia in the area of where, until recently, was the Nicosia Hilton (Fig. 6). The excavations were conducted again by Ohnefalsch-Richter in 1884-1885. He initially excavated 11 tombs, and then 30 more tombs, which date to the Early and Middle Bronze Age (roughly between 2500-1700 BC). Again, the burial ground seems to have continued in use until the Late Bronze Age.<sup>26</sup>

Regarding the photographs of archaeological objects, such as vases and figurines, from excavations conducted by Ohnefalsch-Richter in Geri-Phoenikias and Agia Paraskevi, I asked myself why would Ohnefalsch-Richter send Deecke, a philologist, photographs of archaeological finds irrelevant to inscriptions, especially finds that were already

<sup>26</sup> The first succinct account of the excavations at Agia Paraskevi appeared in REINACH 1885, 355-356, to whom the excavator sent summary reports of his finds in Cyprus. Subsequently: FURTWÄNGLER & LÖSCHKE 1886, 24-31, Pls. XIII-XIV, XXII; OHNEFALSCH-RICHTER 1886a, 199-200; 1893. More recent investigations followed up on the research of the area, which was an extensive necropolis: GEORGIU 2002; HENNESSY *et al.* 1988; KARAGEORGHIS & BRENNAN 1999; KROMHOLZ 1982; MERRILLEES 2008.



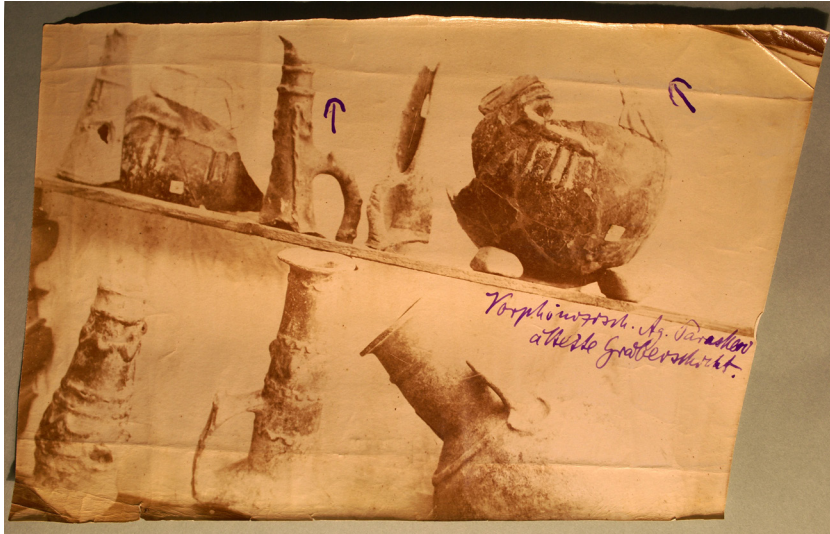


Fig. 6. Photograph sent by Ohnefalsch-Richter to Deecke, with finds retrieved in Agia Paraskevi-Nicosia in 1884-1885 (photo of the photo by the author; courtesy of the BNU).

promised to the British Museum, since it was the Museum that had paid for the excavations. The vases seem to attest to some decoration, or even some incised post-firing marks, that maybe Ohnefalsch-Richter thought of as writing (see Fig. 6, and possibly also Fig. 7), so my hypothesis is that maybe they were sent to Deecke in the hope that he would verify such suspicion. It seems therefore that Ohnefalsch-Richter requested Deecke's opinion as an expert in ancient writing (of the 1st millennium however) that would be able to have an opinion on whether this intricate decoration constituted writing or not. In any case, these relief vases come up again and again in Ohnefalsch-Richter's initial mentions of the site and its finds,<sup>27</sup> and they somehow enter in the reasoning of a certain polemic he engages in against Schliemann and his interpretations of Hissarlik.<sup>28</sup> Additionally, he was always looking for ways to increase the market value of his 'merchandise', so being able to identify writing or precursors of writing in Cyprus at such early dates would be something spectacular.

<sup>27</sup> OHNEFALSCH-RICHTER 1886b, 323-325.

<sup>28</sup> For the relationship between Ohnefalsch-Richter and Schliemann, see MERRILLEES & KRATA 1997.

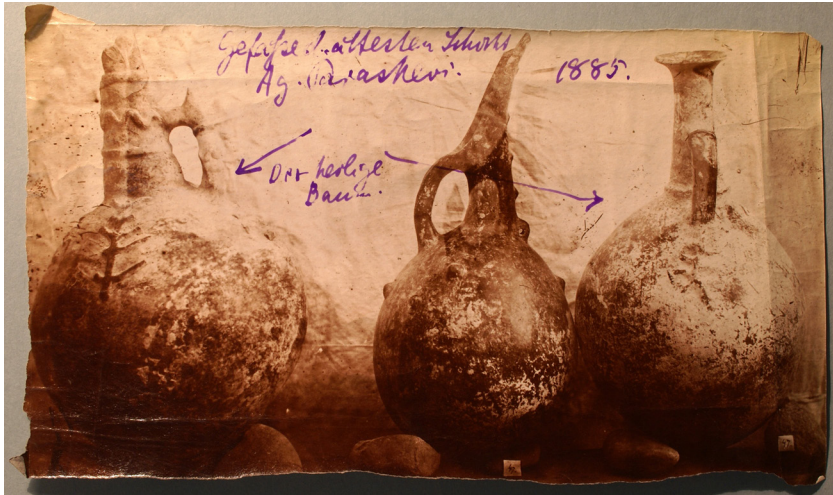


Fig. 7. Photograph sent by Ohnefalsch-Richter to Deecke, with finds retrieved in Agia Paraskevi-Nicosia in 1884-1885; hand-written arrows on the photo point to relief decoration on the vases, and the legend writes 'Der heilige Baum' (= 'the sacred tree') (photo of the photo by the author; courtesy of the BNU).

At the same time, however, Ohnefalsch-Richter would send Deecke vases which he thought bore religious connotations (Fig. 7). The theory of the 'holy tree' and the 'holy tree branch' appears in his book, and is laid out in great detail.<sup>29</sup> Besides writing, all evidence pertaining to religious practices and beliefs always attracts the public's attention. Ohnefalsch-Richter had a hard time being recognised as a scholar in the archaeological circles, so I suspect that he was maybe looking for some seal of approval from the part of Deecke for his theories. Deecke was also interested in the beginning and the creation of writing, he had even written something relevant previously,<sup>30</sup> which was however harshly criticized and promptly dismissed in the literature of his time.

To my knowledge, these photographs are not published anywhere. Ohnefalsch-Richter, as mentioned above, was known to have taken many photos himself, but printing photographs in archaeological publications was expensive. Some line drawings of some of these objects appear in his *Kypros* book, and they were already drawn in one of his first

<sup>29</sup> OHNEFALSCH-RICHTER 1893, *passim*.

<sup>30</sup> DEECKE 1877.



attempts to summarily present his excavation results.<sup>31</sup> It is possible that copies (of some, or of all?) of these photos exist also in other archives, since it was his habit to send copies of his photographs to different directions, either to have people date and publish his finds, or to convince them to fund further excavations.

***Concluding: old archives, new evidence***

Regarding the Cypriot material in the Deecke bequest at the BNU, this short account aimed at providing an overall appreciation of the material it contains. It seems that in 1886 Ohnefalsch-Richter sent to Deecke from Cyprus in Strasbourg squeezes of inscriptions, photographs and transcriptions. It is not certain that he sent the Geri-Phoenikiais and the Agia Paraskevi photographs earlier, when the two sites were being excavated, in 1883 and 1884-1885 respectively: he could have sent them along with the inscribed syllabic material in 1886, after having started his collaboration with Deecke.

Deecke duly published all of these inscriptions in a series of small articles in 1886.<sup>32</sup> But most of the work done by him on the Cypriot syllabary was already behind him: the decipherment publication together with Siegismund was already lost in time back in 1874, and his most significant contribution to the study of the syllabary since that time had been a corpus of all the then known inscriptions in 1884.<sup>33</sup> Apparently, because of the fame acquired through the above publications, Deecke was last sent documentation to read and assist the publication of inscriptions from Paphos and Amargetti as late as 1887-1888 by the British *Cyprus Exploration Fund*.<sup>34</sup> Today, after some 125 years have elapsed since the last time these working papers and antiquities documentation were useful to someone, it is fair to say that, after this hiatus, they have been and will be, useful, again.

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<sup>31</sup> OHNEFALSCH-RICHTER 1889, Pl. II, where a lot of vases are captioned as 'Ag. Paraskevi'

<sup>32</sup> DEECKE 1886a-d.

<sup>33</sup> DEECKE 1884.

<sup>34</sup> HOGARTH *et al.* 1888.

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