CHAPTER 2
The Iron Age Inscriptions

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1. Introduction

The Protogeometric to Archaic Inscriptions

The inscriptions associated with the first two phases of the sanctuary at Kommos are of particular interest because of their early date. The Phoenician period (Temple A and early Temple B) is perhaps represented by a solitary graffito (I) from a deposit associated with the earliest use of Temple A, Floor 2, and (unless it is a Bronze Age survivor) datable to ca. 900–850 B.C. At present it is unclear whether the mark is a Cypriot or Phoenician character. If the latter, it is one of a very small number of Phoenician inscriptions of the Geometric period that have been found outside Cyprus in Greece. The bulk of the graffiti at Kommos can be dated to the Late Geometric/Archaic period and probably represent all phases of activity in and around Temple B. Graffito 2 is datable stylistically (by the ceramic) to the first or possibly second phase of Temple B. At least two pieces come from strata securely dated to the second phase of Temple B: 3 was pulled from a sounding between the third (ca. 650 B.C.) and second floors (Geometric/Orientalizing, ca. 760 B.C.) of Temple B, and 31 is from a deposit associated with B’s second phase and located just above the platform of Altar U, which was probably built ca. 700 B.C. A large group of graffiti inscriptions come from strata in the vicinity of Building F, which are lower than, and presumably earlier than, its foundations, which may have been laid as early as the mid-seventh century, although the stratigraphy of this area is not yet well understood (4–16 and 33–38). Graffito 49 is stratigraphically linked.
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with Temple B, Phase 3; 54–65 with Building Q's lower floor; and 25, 26, and 66–74 with Building Q's upper floors. Thirty-three inscribed sherds come from the material dumped to the south of Temple B sometime over the course of the seventh century (8–23, 29, 30, 32–38, 41–45, 48, and 51); among them at least 31 come from a single lens of earth filled with ash and the remnants of meals (8–22A, 29, 30, 33–38, 41–45, 48, and 51). The remaining 10 Archaic graffiti are probably contemporary discards from the Temple complex (24, 27, 28, 39, 40, 46, 47, 50, 52, and 53).

The Greek alphabetic inscriptions are the earliest yet found in Crete. Unfortunately, the texts themselves are minimal: at most four complete words survive (17, 21, 22, and 27). To discover their function is, therefore, a matter of inference based largely on the nature of their material contexts, and sometimes mere guesswork where this evidence suggests no probable interpretation. Fortunately, the majority of the Geometric/Archaic inscriptions fall easily into two groups. Twenty-five inscriptions appear on cups (3, 5–15, and 18–28) or (in the case of 4) a skyphos; at least 35 (33–39, 42–45, 47, and 52–74) and as many as 40 (including 2, 31, 40, 46, and 51) on amphorae. All the cups and the skyphos are of a local South Cretan fabric, and all but one (the earliest, 3) dipped in black glaze (the exception may have been rim dipped). By contrast, nearly all the amphorae are imports: from Attica (36, 56, perhaps 35), from "Laconia" (?) (37, 54, 59, 62, and 63), and from the Eastern Aegean (34, 39, 45, and 46; probably 43 and 58; and possibly 52 and 73), with two from Lesbos (67 and 74), three probably Milesian (61, 66, and 69), one probably from Samos (70), several probably (38, 46, 53, 57, 62, 65, and 72) or possibly (55 and 60) Chian, and one possibly Klazomenian (47). It has not yet been determined whether the fabric of 42 is Corinthian or local. Only 31 and 51, which may be hydriae and not amphorae, are certainly of local Cretan manufacture. Another possible hydria (17) appears to be an import. A small amphora or jug (2) may be Cretan or possibly an import (Cyclades?). Graffito 30 is probably from a Cycladic pithos.

The character of the inscriptions found on either group of objects is, in general, easily distinguishable. Something over seventy percent of the graffiti on the cups are certainly alphabetic (the possible exceptions are 12, 13, 15, 23, 25, 26, and 28). Of those that are alphabetic, only three seem to have survived with solitary symbols (18 probably never had more text; 3 and 14 may originally have formed part of a sequence of letters). On the remainder, from two to seven sequential characters survive. In contrast, only four (ten or eleven percent) of the (possible) amphorae appear to have more than one alphabetic character in sequence (40[?], 47, 52, and 54[?]); the remainder are all solitary marks (most nonalphabetic), sequential strokes, or marks accompanied by nonsequential strokes. Of the cups, only 3 was inscribed before firing, whereas ten of the (possible) amphorae were inscribed before firing (31, 42, 43, 46, 47, 61, 62, 67, 68, and probably 69).

The distinctions between these two groups in terms of medium and the physical properties of the texts may coincide with differences in the function served by the inscriptions of either group. One of the cup fragments certainly contains an owner's inscription (27). Another two
can be read as complete proper names in the genitive (21 and 22). Most others are fragments of at least possible names. It seems likely, therefore, that most of the inscriptions in the first group are owner’s marks. There are three notable anomalies in this group. Graffito 8 may give the capacity of the cup (µετρον, which may suggest a domestic or even a commercial use. However, the Spartan parallel (µετρον Ἀλκ. . . (cited in the commentary on 8), although much later, has been taken to be an owner’s inscription (“I am [sc. the cup] of a measure capacity of Alk . . . ”). Similarly, 8 may be “I am the [cup-] measure of X.” Another cup (11) seems to give a dative case ending, which would certainly suit a dedication and is appropriate to the sanctuary setting. But given the common habit of abbreviating names in proprietary inscriptions, it would be rash to assume disparity in the function of this group of inscriptions on this evidence alone. A more serious anomaly is the apparent beginning of an alphabet on 9. These anomalies urge caution but offer no serious obstacle to a general characterization of the first group as owner’s marks.

In the second group solitary Xs appear with a frequency incommensurate with the letter’s use as the initial consonant of Greek words or names (35, 37, 45, 45, 55, 57, 60, 69, 72, and perhaps 31 and 38). Simple strokes or slashes are also prevalent, appearing alone (34, 58, 64, and 70) or in proximity to X (67), + (74), or some (other?) alphabetic symbol (nonsequentially, 68, or sequentially, perhaps 54). Apart from the three, four, or five texts with (two or three) letters in sequence (40[?], 47, 52, 54[?], and 71 [dipinto]), the rest of the graffiti of this group are composed of nonalphabetic symbols (2[?], 33, 36, 39, 43[?], 51, 53, 56, 63, and 65) or of solitary letters (E: 42, 61, and 66; pi: 62; delta: 46 and 49; and mu: 50). My working hypothesis is, therefore, that the significance of the inscriptions on the amphorae and related vessels is mainly “commercial” in some sense of the word. The alphabetic sequences (40[?], 47, 52, and 54[?]) may well abbreviate proper names and may be owner’s marks, although one (47) is a prefiring application. Nevertheless, I have decided, perhaps arbitrarily, to list them as commercial. In two instances (56 and 71), at least, close parallels from elsewhere seem to vindicate the commercial label.

The roughness of this division based primarily on medium is demonstrated by 17, which is the longest inscription found in Archaic Kommos, and which is clearly an owner’s inscription, and like the others, made postfiring, but in this case on what appears to be a large imported vessel, perhaps a hydria. Despite this it is included in the first group. To the same group I have assigned the postfiring inscription made on a large imported vessel (a pithos?), or possibly on an ostraca from such a vessel, which appears to be an owner’s inscription or a dedication (30).

It would do little good to try to conceal the fact that this division contains a good deal of speculation based upon a general impression of the activities at Kommos during the Temple B period and that the labels “personal” and “professional” must be interpreted with the caution and taxonomic flexibility due, let’s say, to academic accounting. The earliest pieces, and 31 in particular, may be somewhat earlier than any Greek graffito with obvious commercial
significance (Coldstream 1977: 301; 1982: 269). It is still more hazardous to read “commercial” in the narrowest sense: Clear evidence for numerical inscriptions is scarce before the sixth century B.C. (see Johnston 1979: 27–31). Specifically, Alan W. Johnston points out that despite its frequent appearance, X is never unequivocally numerical on early amphorae.† Moreover, the dominant view that the transmission and early development of the alphabet first took place within the economic sphere, through the interaction of Greek and Oriental merchants, has not gone unchallenged. The earliest uses of Greek graffiti that are generally deemed “unequivocal” are not practical but “luxury” uses, a fact (of interpretation) that has encouraged a streak of idealistic Philhellenism among some scholars, those, in particular, who maintain that the Greeks originally eschewed the utilitarian applications of the new technology but from the outset adopted and adapted it to the sublime end of recording the iliad for posterity.4

But the scarcity of unambiguous evidence for commercial marks in early graffiti need not be regarded as a great obstacle: the corpus is still quite small, while the number of situations in which a graffito could be recognized as having an “unequivocally” commercial significance is very restricted. Perhaps it is no coincidence that the invisibility of commercial inscriptions is replicated by an invisibility of the utilitarian (as opposed to the luxury or “ludic”) function of proprietary inscriptions. Javier de Hoz, for example, characterizes the proprietary nature of our earliest inscriptions as “tan innecesarios, tan ornamentales, como las marcas en vajilla o ropas de mesa y cama que conoce el mundo moderno” and distinguishes them from those functional commercial uses for which evidence is lacking (“útiles e incluso necesarias en un nave cuyo cargamento, a menudo empaquetado en vasijas cera ´micas de forma y acabado similares, perteneza a distintos mercaderes;” de Hoz 1983: 41–42). But surely this lack of evidence for practical use is less a matter of survival than a matter of bias, both in the selection of contexts for archaeological excavation and in the determination of the criteria of categorization, which in the case of “commercial” or “practical” writing is so elusive as to efface this category altogether. If, as Nicolas Coldstream reminds us, illiterate traders have existed since time immemorial (Coldstream 1982: 269), so have oral poets. The archaeological evidence still supports the view that literacy spread through Greece along the trade routes. In light of this hypothesis, it is probably significant that the earliest commercial graffito found in a Greek context is Aramaic (Pithekoussai, third quarter of the eighth century B.C.) and that the same jar is also marked with Greek letters (Buchner 1982: 293; Buchner and Ridgway 1993: 1.369–70, Amphora 575.1, pl. 224). Nevertheless there is no reason to suppose that commerce was the exclusive medium of alphabetization.

In general, the appearance of such early graffiti at Kommos seems to support the connection between early literacy and commerce. In at least eight instances of postfiring incision where diagnostic letters are certainly available, the letter forms point to a foreign hand: 17, 19, 27, and possibly 11 and 52 have forms that belong to the epichoric scripts of Central Greece (and especially Athens, Boeotia, Locris, or Phocis); 54 has one of the “supplementary” letters (not used in Crete), probably “red chi”; while 11, 17, 19, 21, 22A, and 27 have an un-Cretan straight
“Curved” alphas, most closely associated with Boeotia, seem to appear on 9, 14, 19, and 22 (cf. 30). If 9 was written by a Cretan, he was not a local. Only 8 and 30 look as though they might have been written by someone from the Kommos region.

As seven of the graffiti in foreign hands were inscribed after firing on cups of local manufacture, and hence presumably by foreigners visiting the region, it appears that the sanctuary of seventh-century-B.C. Kommos was no more exclusively used by local Cretans than it was in the ninth and early eighth centuries. It is notable that in all but two (22 and 30) of the determinable instances, the graffiti are written dextrorsum, contrary to what is supposed to be normal Archaic Cretan practice (8, 9, 17, 19, 21, 22A, 27, 52, and probably 4–6). Among the commercial vessels, where foreign inscriptions may be more readily expected, 42, 43, 46, 47, 50, 61, 62, and 67–69 are imports inscribed before firing and therefore non-Cretan. Only three or four sherds are likely to have been inscribed by Cretans: 3, 31, and 48 were inscribed before firing on locally manufactured vessels (perhaps also 30, inscribed on a Cycladic[?] import).

Yet the chief interest of the 74 eighth–seventh-century-B.C. inscriptions at Kommos is the appearance of these early witnesses to Greek literacy at a site where no detectable disruption in the archaeological record separates the Greek occupation from a Phoenician presence. Very few sites outside Cyprus show clear evidence of Greeks and Phoenicians in close proximity at this crucial stage in Greek cultural history: Al Mina, Tell Sukas, Knossos, Pithekoussai, and possibly Rhodes. Since Cyprus had its own alphabet, derived from the Minoan Linear A script, it is interesting to note that all the aforementioned sites have been declared the birthplace of the Greek alphabet by various eminent epigraphers, archaeologists, and historians; the same claims have been made for other sites where the evidence suffices to show intense Greco-Phoenician “contact” but not a mutual “presence,” and even for sites that offer nothing more than legendary connections.

By contrast, it is strikingly obvious that Kommos is an inadequate candidate for the “birthplace of the Greek alphabet”—the site was little more than a pit stop for the Phoenicians, who worshipped at the Tripillar Shrine and perhaps conducted trade with the locals, and it was scarcely more important for the later Greeks who left their cups at the sanctuary. This obvious inadequacy perhaps winks at the sanguine character of the arguments that have been used to promote most of the other “cradles of the alphabet.” At the risk of seeming equally sanguine, I suggest that we can learn something about Greece’s alphabetic revolution from a site like Kommos, despite its relative political and economic insignificance in the Early Iron Age, or, rather, precisely because of its insignificance. It provides some slight moral support to those historians who have attempted to reopen some crucial problems that many prematurely consider settled, specifically the received notions of the five unities of the invention of the alphabet (model, place, time, product, and agency).

Four decades have passed since Robert Cook and Geoffrey Woodhead published a short article challenging the orthodoxy of the Greek “Uralphabet” (1959). They expressed the
opinion that the epichoric variations among the various Greek alphabets were too great to have been derived from a single (or even two or three) original adaptation(s) of the Semitic alphabet. Instead, they hypothesized a large number of original adaptations, pointing out that the known history of the alphabet showed a process of gradual assimilation and convergence of forms and that, therefore, it was unreasonable to suppose “a preceding process of divergence of which no trace remains” (1959: 175). They did not, however, think it fit to challenge the unities of place and time but supposed that various models were taken independently from Syria or Phoenicia (Al Mina was a primary candidate) in the eighth century. They considered rash Ignace J. Gelb’s statement (1952: 178) that “the Greeks did not come to the Asiatic coast to borrow the Semitic system; writings never pass from one people to another in this way. It was the Phoenicians, with trading posts scattered throughout the Greek world, who brought their writing to the Greeks.” Cook and Woodhead argued that “to judge by our remains unmodified Phoenician forms were never current in Greek lands” (1959: 175).

Our knowledge of the Phoenicians (and other Semitic peoples of the Eastern Mediterranean) is now vastly greater, so much so that it seems the unities must fall, and that the criticisms of Cook and Woodhead did not go far enough; perhaps even Gelb will find vindication. The archaeological record now shows that Levantine contacts with the Aegean from the eleventh to the eighth century were more intense, more frequent, and more pervasive than contemplated by the original unitarians: the likelihood that the great variety of Greek alphabets were each ultimately derived from a single stroke of creative genius seems no greater than the chance that all the oriental refinements of Geometric and Orientalizing Greek art should be traceable to the teachings of a single Phoenician craftsman.11 Much more pertinent, however, is the sizable increment to the corpus of Semitic inscriptions in the last few decades and the consequent refinement in the knowledge of letter forms. Several Greek forms can now be shown to have direct models in Proto-Canaanite and early Semitic scripts, which suggests a date for the beginning of the process of adaptation somewhere in the eleventh century, a good three hundred years before the earliest surviving Greek inscription. As the letterforms adapted from the Semitic alphabet do not all point to the same phase of that alphabet’s development, it appears that the formative influence of Semitic script spanned the entire period of intense Phoenician activity in the Aegean and Western Mediterranean.12 Moreover, Christian Marek has recently pointed out that the traditional insistence on a Phoenician prototype is an error (1993). Although Marek would seek a single source in the Aramaic alphabets, the evidence suggests rather that the Greek alphabet shows the influence of other scripts derived from Proto-Canaanite and in particular Aramaic. One should no longer speak of the Phoenician or the Semitic model but of multiple models for the Greek and other Mediterranean alphabets. Finally, there is evidence that the transmission of the alphabets took place through the agency of a variety of media, not by sea alone, but also overland, as Wolfgang Röllig (1992) has recently argued, and not only through trade but through various practices and industries (cf. Burkert 1992; Marek 1993: 42).
Thus, the evidence no longer seems to support those tree-style derivations in which the various Greek alphabets are joined by a series of vertical links in descent from a single archetype. Far too little attention has been paid to the horizontal links: the power of lateral influences and the pressures of assimilation, particularly strong in the commercial domain, that may just as well have created the apparent unities and internal regularities of Archaic Greece’s various alphabetic systems out of a chaotic multitude of local variants. Slight but cumulative, the excavation of sites such as Kommos may contribute to a far more complex view of Greek literacy’s origins.

The Classical to Roman Inscriptions

Over two centuries separate the latest Archaic and the earliest Classical inscriptions, unless 89 and 90 can be dated somewhere within this gap. The 28 Classical to Roman inscriptions span the life of Temple C from its construction in the second quarter of the fourth century B.C. to the abandonment of the site sometime in the second century after Christ. Throughout this period the Kommos site was, by Cretan standards, a fairly large, moderately prosperous rural sanctuary. Nothing remains of the intense mercantile activity of the earlier temple. Not until the latest phases of C (after ca. A.D. 50) do we find notable quantities of imported merchandise passing through the sanctuary (96–102). The low proportion of commercial inscriptions at C compared with Temple B reflects the different character of the Classical–Roman sanctuary. No more than some 13 Classical–Roman inscriptions will easily bear the commercial label. In most cases, the context would suggest imports for local consumption within the sanctuary itself: 92–94 betray a taste for Rhodian wine; 90 a much earlier penchant for liquids from Mende. Seven signatures identify the makers of mainly imported lamps and two dishes (96–102). Graffito 91, however, is a locally manufactured vessel giving hints at a trade(?) connection with northern Crete and may offset, a little, this image of passive consumption. To this group I have added a complex and hurried calculation scratched onto an ostracon (95).

The remainder of the nonlapidary inscriptions appear to be either proprietary or dedicatory. Six vessels, three roof tiles, and a bar of lead yield what might better be construed as inscriptions identifying the name of an owner or recipient (79–88). Graffito 83, on a locally manufactured coarse ware basin or bowl found in Building B, part of which served as a temple storeroom, was inscribed ΠΟΛ vacat, before firing, and may mark the property of the god of the sanctuary. Even if the interpretation of the function of this inscription were more secure, the unfortunate break before the pi would still leave the identification of the god ambiguous: The inscription could equally well abbreviate the name of Apollo, or the cult titles “Polias” or “Polieus” of Athena and Zeus, respectively. It might be argued, however, that “Guardian of the City” is an unlikely epithet for the god of a rural sanctuary, leaving Apollo a place on the shortlist of candidates.
The inscriptions on stone present a picture of Kommos possibly differing in certain respects from that presented by other types of evidence. Two monuments (75 and 76) appear to have votive functions and another two (77 and 78) appear at first glance to be funerary. Graffito 77, however, belongs to a genre that may have served a different, as yet unidentified, purpose. Dating and observations about the textual and physical characteristics of the monuments are based upon comparison of lettering and typology with the lettering and typology of the texts edited by Margherita Guarducci in the monumental *Inscriptiones Creticae*, particularly Volumes 1 and 4 (1935; 1939; 1942; 1950). The four texts are here presented in chronological sequence. Both votive monuments have been assigned to the second century B.C. and the probable funerary monuments to the late second or first century B.C. and to the late second century after Christ.

The dedicatory monuments include a plaque that offers the names of Zeus, Athena, and possibly Euangelos (76) and an altar that offers the name probably of Poseidon (75). The latter may cite the name of another divinity, but the remnants of the text cannot be restored satisfactorily.

Despite extensive excavation down to Bronze Age levels, no human skeletal materials have been found to confirm the presence of burials on the site (see Anderson, Chap. 5, Appendix 5.1). The funerary monuments may have been imports possibly used for ballast, if the beach continued to serve as a port. The character of the monuments and of their script, however, finds parallels elsewhere in Crete.

2. Catalogue of Iron Age Inscriptions

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**Inscriptions of the Protogeometric, Geometric, and Archaic Periods**

*Eric Csapo and Alan W. Johnston*

**Protogeometric**

1 (I 16). Pls. 2.1, 2.9. (EC)

*Text:* Phoenician or Cypriot symbol? Inscribed after firing below the shoulder of the handle of a Levantine storage jar (fabric, gray at core; at surface coarse, gritty, and red 2.5 YR 6/8).

Found just south of the eastern section of the temple complex from a dump associated with Temple A at +4.48–+4.41 m (34A2/42). The pail, located immediately above Bronze Age levels, belongs to the very earliest use of Temple A, Floor 2. Over two hundred fragments of Phoenician pottery found in Temple A, Phase 2, mark the peak of Phoenician use of the sanctuary (J. W. Shaw 1989b: 181). This handle differs in type from the other material and may possibly be a survival from the BA. Ca. 900–ca. 850 B.C. (by context). The shape and fabric could equally well belong to the BA.
The Temple A layers at Kommos contain the oldest Phoenician pottery yet found west of Cyprus (see the discussion of the Phoenician pottery, Bikai, Chap. 4, Section 2), and the inscribed handle may well be the earliest of these pieces. There are a number of obstacles to interpreting this mark as a form of hêt, the only alphabetic symbol to which it offers any general similarities: It is rotated 90° from the normal stance of hêt, although this problem can be overcome by reading with the handle horizontal (and preferably with the top of the jar to the right); hêt generally has three bars, yet two-bar forms are attested in some tenth-ninth-century B.C. alphabets (e.g., McCarter 1975b: pl. 1); the extended crossbars are also abnormal but have some parallels (in the Yehimilk inscription in McCarter 1975b: pl. 1, where, however, as also in the 'Eliba’al inscription, the descending upright is to the right); finally, the crossbars are uniquely wide in proportion to the uprights. I am grateful to Professor F. M. Cross for expressing his opinion on this matter and I quote from his letter:

Such “sideways” forms occur as normal forms in the Proto-Canaanite period (which is too early for [this] piece). But they are box-form, without the extended verticals or in [this] case horizontals. The Gezer Plaque has an odd rotated form, but this is not normal or standard. It may be that on a jar, the engraver worked with the pot on its side, but such ad hoc suggestion is unpersuasive. The “double-axe” mark, although not common, is found on pots from Geometric to Hellenistic times. Examples include a dip into on an LG Euboean amphora at Lefkandi (Boardman and Price 1980: 60, no. 39, pl. 40), a graffito on a Rhodian plate (Museo Archeologico Etrusco, Florence, 78994; Johnston 1975: 148, fig. 1, no. 15), a dip into on a Rhodian cup (Pharmakowsky 1912: 331, fig. 14 = Johnston 1979: 175, no. 180), graffiti on two Chian chalices of the early sixth century B.C. from Naukratis (BM 1888.6–1.420 and BM 1888.6–1.770; Johnston 1979: 173, nos. 52, 59), an Attic black-glazed bowl of ca. 450–425 B.C. (BM 1442; Johnston 1975: 161, fig. 5, no. 115), and an Attic red-figured askos of ca. 400 B.C. (Museo Civico di Perugia 123; Johnston 1979: 107, 24B 8, fig. 5 f.). Unlike 2, the medial stroke or “handle” of the axe in the aforementioned graffito does not cross
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the “axe head” but descends from one side only. The same is true of the “double-axe” mason’s mark on a ceiling coffer of the Hephaisteion in Athens (Wyatt and Edmonson 1984: 143, C6, ill. 5). Possibly related is the “butterfly” with additional (but not medial) strokes found on a dish at Smyrna (late sixth–early fifth century B.C.: Jeffery 1964: 41, no. 47, fig. 1) and the “hourglass” (?) with additional strokes on an S.O.S amphora in the Louvre (Johnston and Jones 1978: fig. 7m). The double axe also appears on Etruscan (an undated pitcher from Populonia: Buonomaci 1931–32: 394, fig. 58, p. 413, no. 5) and Phrygian vessels (fourth–third century; Roller 1987: nos. 2A-192, 2A-162), and, as at Smyrna, the butterfly or hourglass appears with additional strokes (as also without) in Elymean (Segesta, sixth–fifth century; Tusa 1960: pl. 12, 7 and 12). All these marks seem to appear outside of an alphabetic sequence, except for one of the Chian chalices, which is accompanied by an omicron. The double axe has long been associated with the much more common hourglass (8), butterfly (8), and figure eight (8) and is sometimes thought to preserve a more primitive form of these marks (see Fabretti 1874: 133; Evans 1909: 61–106; Buonomaci 1931–32: 413; 1932: 147–56; Guarducci 1952–54: 169–71, Johnston 1984: 40–44). A variety of functions can be assigned to this complex of signs: cultic, proprietary, commercial, and alphabetic.

Cultic: Alan W. Johnston argues for a “cultic” significance in the butterfly graffito incised on a sixth-century-B.C. Cretan relief pithos (BM 1980.12-28.1; Johnston 1984: 41). The sanctuary context of 2 may seem to support a similar conclusion. Proprietary: The marks commonly appear alone, unaccompanied by other symbols, and it is a reasonable guess that some, particularly the earliest ones, were used by illiterate owners to mark personal property (cf. Johnston and Jones 1978: 131 f.). Commercial: The marks belong to a small class of recurrent forms that are typically found on exported ceramics, frequently on amphorae, and occasionally as dipinti (the Euboean amphora, already mentioned; Johnston 1979: 24B 11, 24B 12, 4E 1), so that, in several instances at least, a commercial significance seems likely.

Alphabetic: The hourglass or butterfly, although uncommon, is a widespread symbol in Archaic Greek alphabets. It appears in Cretan inscriptions ranging in date from the latter half of the seventh century B.C. (Dero) to the middle of the fifth century (Great Code at Gortyn). At Dero (Jeffery and Johnston 1990: pl. 59, 1a), Lyttos (Guarducci 1935: xviii, 5, 1, 7), and Gortyn (Guarducci 1950: 72, col. ix, 24, 43), if any (cf. Willetts 1966: 166), the symbol has the value of a mark of punctuation, although on a graffito from Phaistos (sixth century) it appears to have a phonetic value of omega (Guarducci 1952–54: 170), as perhaps does the possibly related figure eight in an inscription from Phleius of the first half of the sixth century (Jeffery and Johnston 1990: 144f.; Carlo Gallavotti [1977: 130] sees the figure eight as the correction of a forgotten second omicron). In the Sikyonian alphabet the butterfly has the value of epsilon. It is as a consonant that the butterfly/hourglass has the widest distribution, not only in Archaic Greek alphabets but throughout the Mediterranean. It is coupled with sigma to render xi in a graffito left at Abu Simbel in 594–589 B.C. by Anaxenor, a Lyalian mercenary (Jeffery and Johnston 1990: 348, no. 4b; André Bernard and Olivier Masson read “XS” in this inscription, claiming that the horizontal lines at the top and bottom of the “X” are “traits fortuits” [1957: 12], but Margherita Guarducci [1967: 330] insists on the traditional reading). No other Archaic xi is attested for Ialysos. In Knidos the hourglass alone (i.e., without following sigma) has the value xi, as it does in the neighboring alphabet of Pamphylia (Jeffery and Johnston 1990: 346). Two red alphabets, the Eleusinian (Guarducci 1967: 201) and Laconian (IG V 1: 828, 1, 2), yield a single example each of the use of the hourglass, but with the value psi (note that the hourglass appears with the value of sigma in an Epigraphic inscription of the Roman period [CIG 1811b]; it is impossible to see how this can be used as evidence for early alphabets). Alphabetic use of the hourglass also appears in a dipinto under the foot of a mid-sixth-century-B.C. Attic neck amphora, in a graffito on a seventh-century S.O.S amphora found at Porto Cheli, and possibly on some amphorae from Naukratis, inscriptions that Johnston takes to be of Greek origin (Johnston 1979: 107, no. 24B, 11 and 228). The inscription on the neck amphora, KO 8, has been reported on other Greek vases found in Italy (Fabretti 1877: 9, n. 1; Buonomaci 1932: 135), although none of the sightings can be confirmed; all reports may stem from the London neck amphora (cf. Johnston...
1979: 199, type 24B, n. 1). The letters presumably represent the Phoenician ṭōl, meaning “vessel,” a word frequently appearing in Phoenician proprietary inscriptions, the Tekke bowl, for example (Szmyer 1979; Cross 1980; Negbi 1982; Puech 1983; Cross 1986: 118; Guzzo 1987). The use of these marks as a sibilant appears in several non-Greek alphabets. In Caria the use of the hourglass may be comparable to the Ialysian, Knidian, and Pamphylian value: J. D. Ray (1981: 157) assigns it the value “ṣ” or “s.” The problem of derivation has most exercised the Etruscologists, since the lack of a Chalkidian archetype for the hourglass and its variant, the double axe, has played an important role in the debate over the origin of the Etruscan alphabet (see Hammarström 1920: 2 ff.). In the Etrusco-Campanian and Northern Etruscan alphabets (especially Este) and derivative Italian alphabets it is said to have the value of a palatal fricative, “ṣh” (Buonamici 1932: 120ff.), and in Venetic Giulio Buonamici (1932: 151, after Federico Cordenons) assigns the familiar value “ṣ.” In the Numidian alphabet both the hourglass and figure eight serve as a sibilant (or ẓ; see Jensen 1970: 155–58). In the Old South Arabic alphabet the hourglass is a form of zayin (on an inscription from Uṣr that predates the early sixth century [U 7815] and is of much older derivation; Burrows 1927: 795–99; Albright 1952: 40, especially Cross 1980: 10). The apparent pattern in the use of this sign as some form of sibilant in Mediterranean alphabets encouraged C. Pauli to derive these uses, not from the Minoan labrys, but is the ancestor of the (aforementioned) South Semitic hourglass (Cross 1980: 10). From a sounding between the third and second floors of Temple B at ca. +4.90 m (33C/57). Late eighth–early seventh century B.C. by context. The text may read qoppa or phi. The vertical stroke bisects the circle of qoppa in a number of early alphabets in Crete, in Thera, in the Peloponnesos (Achaia, Sikyon, Kleonai, and Argolid), in Boeotia, and in the Eastern Aegean (Doric Hexapolis and Asian Ionia). In at least one of these alphabets (Guarducci 1967: 113), an oblique stroke is used to differentiate phi from qoppa,
perhaps the case in this inscription. But phi is not used in the Cretan alphabet (at least not as known from later sources). The earliest known phi appears on a graffito on an amphora (755-1) found in the necropolis of San Montano at Pithekoussai. The amphora is dated by context to ca. 740 B.C. and bears four Greek inscriptions and one Aramaic (Buchner 1978).


4 (I 79). Pls. 2.1, 2.9. (AWJ)
Text: ετρονηϕι
Incised after firing, under the base of a South Cretan black-glazed skyphos; single fragment of base and lower wall preserved. Fine red clay (5 YR 6/6).
From the lowest Greek period level a little to the west of later Building F, at ca. +5.6 m (73B/97). Earlier rather than later in seventh century B.C. by ceramic type, probably, but not certainly, confirmed by context. A rare underfoot graffito, made after firing. There were probably only two letters originally, the first one now nearly wholly lost.

5 (I 81). Pls. 2.1, 2.9. (AWJ)
Text: Κωκταρον
Incised after firing on the rim of a local Cretan black-glazed cup; single fragment of rim and shoulder preserved. Fine buff clay (7.5 YR 7/6).
Found adjacent to and above 4, at ca. +5.7 m (73B/96). Probably not late in the seventh century B.C. by context. As the full height of the letters is not preserved, it is not easy to judge the best reading of the second; upsilon is perhaps preferable to rho or delta.

6 (I 76). Pls. 2.1, 2.9. (AWJ)
Text: ΑΒΓ
Incised after firing on the lip of a South Cretan black-glazed cup; a single small fragment preserved. Fine buff clay (7.5 YR 8/4).
Found at the level above that of 5, at ca. +5.8 m (73B/93). Probably not late in the seventh century B.C. by context. Possibly sidelong kappa. There is a slight horizontal stroke below, right, that may be the end of a letter stroke now lost to the right.

7 (I 95). Pls. 2.1, 2.9. (AWJ)
Text: Uncertain, but parts of two apparently alphabetic letters visible. See Pl. 2.1. Incised after firing on the lip of a fragment of a South Cretan black-glazed cup, of which this single, small fragment survives. Fine buff clay (7.5 YR 7/6).
Found immediately to the south and west of the southwest corner of Building F, but below its foundations at ca. +5.6 m (81C/32), below 8–11 and 16. Probably not late in the seventh century B.C. by context. Difficult to evaluate, the original height of the letters being unknown, and indeed the orientation uncertain. As presented the lines at the base of the central letter are difficult to explain: they seem intentional, one to the left, slightly diagonal, and one to the right, horizontal.

8 (I 81). Pls. 2.1, 2.9. (AWJ)
Text: µετριος εγω
Incised dextrorsum after firing on the wall of a black-glazed cup. Some mica in the fine buff clay (5 YR 7/6) but probably not enough to deny a South Cretan origin, as indicated by the profile. Two joining sherds giving part of the rim and much of the wall. Text cut upside down on the shoulder.
Found immediately to the south and west of the southwest corner of Building F, but below its foundations, at ca. +5.8 m (81C/29), as also 9–11 and 16. From a layer containing ash and the remnants of meals (cf. 9–22A, 29, 30, 33–38, 41–45, 48, and 51). Probably not late in the seventh century B.C. by context.
This text is perhaps the only one from the site that is best taken as in Cretan script. While there are no fully diagnostic letters (epsilon and omicron would be different in a few scripts), the most obvious word split gives a word beginning with (h)eta, and most economically that word would be ει/ητρονηϕι, perhaps a comment on the capacity of the cup. Cf. the later mug from Kythera (IG V 1: 945; Coldstream 1973a: 271), and perhaps a graffito from Sparta, μετριος εγω 'Alex.'... (Boring 1979: 106, no. 76; I thought this fifth, not sixth century).

9 (I 82). Pls. 2.1, 2.9. (AWJ)
Text: ΑΒΓ
Incised dextrorsum after firing on the lip of a South Cretan black-glazed cup. Joining with two fragments from the lip and upper wall. Fine buff clay (7.5 YR 7/6).
Same context as 8, 10, 11, and 16. From a layer containing ash and the remnants of meals (cf. 8, 10–22A, 29, 30, 33–38, 41–45, 48, and 51). Probably not late in the seventh century B.C. by context.
It is reasonably certain that this text is the beginning of an alphabet row. The beta is well enough preserved perhaps not to be dotted. The
third letter could clearly be restored in various ways. The lettering could perhaps be Cretan. “Normal” beta is attested at Gortyn at an early period and is regular in most of Crete. Gamma with an initial vertical stroke, however, is restricted in its use to those areas of Crete where “Euboean” lambda is found (Jeffery and Johnston 1990: 308). This graffito highlights the uncertainties that surround the development of the two letters gamma and lambda in the earliest period. One suspects that a local Cretan would have written gamma with a sloping initial stroke at this period, and that therefore this is another nonlocal text. There is a very broad range of other possible origins for the inscriber, including areas on Crete itself, and it is not possible to be more specific.


10 (I 83). Pl. 2.9. (AWJ)
Text: [Iolow] Incised on the lip of a South Cretan black-glazed cup. Single fragment of the lip and shoulder preserved. Fine buff clay (7.5 YR 7/4).
Same context as 9, 11, and 16. From a layer containing ash and the remnants of meals (cf. 8, 9, 11–22A, 29, 30, 33–38, 41–45, 48, and 51).
Probably not late in the seventh century B.C. (by context). The second preserved letter has an oblique final stroke and therefore should be taken as a gamma or lambda (see 9 for the uncertainties concerning these two letters in the seventh century). Lambda is the more likely reading in a local, “Gortynian,” text. Only a trace of a fourth letter survives. It is important to note that this fragment comes from a cup different from 11.

11 (I 85). Pls. 2.1, 2.9. (AWJ)
Text: νιο [Incised on the lip of the South Cretan black-glazed cup. Fine buff clay (7.5 YR 7/4). Fragment of the lip and top of the shoulder alone preserved.]
Same context as 8–10 and 16. From a layer containing ash and the remnants of meals (cf. 8–10, 12–22A, 29, 30, 33–38, 41–45, 48, and 51).
Probably not late in the seventh century B.C. by context. The first preserved letter could possibly be taken as a mu, but the combination with straight iota would point to Euboea, an area visible very rarely otherwise in the imports to Kommos. The reading ιοι is therefore most likely, with non-Cretan iota. The dative would most likely indicate a divine recipient (although a human one cannot be ruled out). Apollo might be considered most probable, especially perhaps in view of the letters of 10, but caution is required.

12 (I 87). Pl. 2.9. (AWJ)
Text: Two adjacent vertical strokes converging at top and a horizontal. Probably nonalphabetic. Incised after firing on the lower part of a strap handle of a local Cretan black-glazed cup. Fine buff clay (5 YR 7/6).
From the pail immediately adjacent to 8–11 and 16, and in the same pail as 13, 14, and 33, at ca. +5.9 m (81C/28A), and in the same layer containing ash and the remnants of meals (cf. 8–11, 13–22A, 29, 30, 33–38, 41–45, 48, and 51).
Probably not late in the seventh century B.C. by context.

13 (I 88). Pls. 2.1, 2.9. (AWJ)
Text: A series of nonalphabetic marks. See Pl. 2.1.
Incised after firing on the lower part of the strap handle of a local Cretan black-glazed cup. Fine buff clay (7.4 YR 7/6).
From the same pail immediately adjacent to 8, 9, 11, and 16, and in the same pail as 13, 14, and 33, at ca. +5.85 m (81C/28A), and in the same layer containing ash and the remnants of meals (cf. 8–11, 13–22A, 29, 30, 33–38, 41–45, 48, and 51).
Probably not late in the seventh century B.C. by context.

14 (I 90). Pls. 2.1, 2.10. (AWJ)
Text: [Incised sinistrorsum? after firing on the body of a local Cretan black-glazed cup. Fine buff clay (7.5 YR 7/6). Only fragment preserved.]
Same context as 12, 13, and 33. From a layer containing ash and the remnants of meals (cf. 8–12, 14–22A, 29, 30, 33–38, 41–45, 48, and 51).
Probably not late in the seventh century B.C. by context.

15 (I 92). Pl. 2.10. (AWJ)
Text: Probably nonalphabetic. See Pl. 2.10.
Incised after firing on the rim of a South Cretan black-glazed cup. Only this single fragment preserved. Fine buff clay (5 YR 6/6).
Found immediately to the south and west of the southwest corner of Building F, but below its foundations, at ca. +5.9 m (81C/27). Same pail as 35 and part of 36. Same lens of dark earth containing ash and the remnants of meals (cf. 8–12, 16–22A, 29, 30, 33–38, 41–45, 48, and 51).
Probably not late in the seventh century B.C. by context.

16 (I 84). Pl. 2.10. (AWJ)
Text: Four splaying vertical strokes. See Pl. 2.10.
Incised on top of the rim of a local Cretan black-glazed bowl. Fine buff clay (7.5 YR 8/4). Fragment of rim (flat-topped and slightly everted, with ridge below and outside) and wall alone surviving.

From the same context as 8–11. From a layer containing ash and the remnants of meals (cf. 8–15, 17–22A, 29, 30, 33–38, 41–45, 48, and 51). Probably not late in the seventh century B.C. by context.

17 (I 122). Pls. 2.2, 2.10. (AWJ)

**Text:** Νικαγόρας? Cut deextrorsum after firing on the neck of a nonlocal coarse ware jar, some 35 fragments of which survive. Clay color in core dark gray to tan 10 YR 5/2–5/4, with a little mica and many white inclusions. Text cut on the concave neck, to the immediate right of the handle. Pot large; only a small part of the body represented in the fragments. It must be an import, although its origin is unclear; the type is unusual at Kommos, where most such burnished pieces have rather more mica; the positioning of the upper handle join suggests that the shape is a hydria rather than a chytra.

From the temple dump to the south and west of the temple at ca. +2.9 m (50A/58). Apparently at the bottom or just below the lens of dark earth containing ash and the remnants of meals in which 8–16, 18–22A, 29, 30, 33–38, 41–45, 48, and 51 were also found. Probably not very late in the seventh century B.C. by context. The remaining material does not appear to go down to the latest seventh century.

The text is mostly worn, although the first two letters are preserved to some depth; toward the end, what is preserved is more the accretion of lime in the original grooves than any trace of the grooves themselves. The reading is, however, clear enough; the initial nu is carelessly cut; there is some accretion at the bottom of the kappa, which might suggest an original beta, but the upper part of the letter is clear; the right stroke of the alpha is largely visible after the break. After the epsilon the surface is extremely worn, but some traces of lettering might have been expected to be visible if any had been cut, and so I assume that the text was either incomplete, ἵπτι, or incorrect.

There can be little doubt that this is an owner’s inscription, since the word can be construed only in the genitive case. The origin of the inscriber is difficult to pin down through letterforms; the straight iota demonstrates that he is not Cretan, while the form of the gamma rules out many further areas of the Greek world. The form of the genitive contributes more substantially to the evidence; in any Doric dialect we would have expected to find -ον or -αν, and the lack of alpha is a strong pointer indeed to seeing another dialect here. In fact, only in Attica do we regularly find the spelling -ον for the genitive of masculine -α stem nouns. Before assuming that Nikagoras here was an Athenian, however, one other possibility should be mentioned: that he came from Euboea or one of the Cyclades, and the intention was to write a genitive in -ον, but that the letters were cut in the wrong order. The mistake is an inelegant assumption, although the omission of μ is little better. It would be difficult to pinpoint where such a genitive might have been written with epsilon and omicron, in view of the great fluidity of use of these two letters in the area (Jeffery and Johnston 1990: 289–90; for Euboean examples see Arena 1994: 82, with further bibliography: Dubois 1995: 105–6), and indeed the fluctuation in length of the two vowels in the genitive singular. The Attic alternative is more likely but cannot be proven.

The circumstances in which our Nikagoras marked the pot are also of interest. The considerable size of the pot suggests that it was used by a group in the sanctuary; it is a pity that no fragments are preserved to prove the shape, chytra or hydria, although the latter must be the more likely. We should therefore perhaps not point closely to the cult use of large serving dishes in the Hellenistic period as a possible parallel (see Callaghan and Johnston, Chap. 4, Section 1, Deposit 48, "Discussion").

18 (I 33). Pls. 2.1, 2.10. (EC)

**Text:** A closed heta or hετ- shaped eta of Archaic Crete. If written ten sideways). Incised after firing on the root of the handle of a fine ware black-glazed cup of South Cretan fabric (7.5 YR 7/4). For the position of the graffito, cf. 20, 21, 25, and 26.

Found south of the south wall of Building N, at ca. +3.5 m (50A/40). From a lens of dark earth containing ash and the remnants of meals within the Temple B dump (cf. 8–17, 19–22A, 29, 30, 33–38, 41–45, 48, and 51). Probably not late in the seventh century B.C. by context. Perhaps the typical hετ- shaped eta of Archaic Crete. If written
by a foreigner, it could be eta, heta, or phi. The letter is square with the crossbar projecting at both ends.


19 (I 22). Pls. 2.1, 2.10. (EC) Text: ΑΔΜΑΙ Inscribed after firing on the exterior of the rim of a black-glazed cup of South Cretan fabric (7.5 YR 7/6) with an added white band on the interior rim. For the position of the graffito, cf. 22 and 27.

From two adjoining fragments found in the Temple B dump, to the southwest of the temple (immediately south of the south wall of Building N), at ca. 3.9–ca. 3.7 m (50A/33 and 36). Same lens of dark earth as 8–18, 20–22A, 29, 30, 33–38, 41–45, 48, and 51. Probably not late in the seventh century B.C. by context.

The letterforms are certainly non-Cretan. The combination of curved alpha, lunate delta, and four-stroke mu with a shortened final stroke is most at home in the epichoric alphabets of Central Greece (cf. 27). Curved alpha (which also appears on 9 and 22 and perhaps 14) is particularly characteristic of the Boeotian alphabet, although it appears also in Thessaly, Phokis, and, more rarely, in Euboea. This letterform usually curves on the side of the direction of writing (as here) but, unlike these examples, normally, but not invariably, with the crossbar descending from the vertical to the curve. Lunate or rounded delta has a larger range, found not only in Central Greece but also in many Peloponnesian alphabets. Rounded delta is normal in Boeotia and Chalkis, but the Eretrian delta is angular (Guarducci 1967: 216 n. 1; Jeffery and Johnston 1990: 79). Four-stroke mu with a shortened fourth stroke is found in very early inscriptions of Thera, Corinth, Athens, and Boeotia (Guarducci 1967: 95). This form again favors Boeotia over other candidates, since the mu of Chalkis is usually symmetrical, while Eretria uses the five-stroke mu (but note the five-stroke mu, lunate delta, and curved alpha in a Euboean graffito). From *Adma¯s, one could reconstruct a threefold classification: (1) a thematic declension *Admaos, as represented in the Mycenaean nominative and dative a-da-ma-o, (2) a form based on the productive suffix -tas, (3) a form based on the suffix -yos, although the form coincides only with the misspelled (?) a-da-ma-jo in PY 11635–3531. The alternative is to suppose that the inscriber failed to cross his tau, and that we should read the genitive of the familiar name Admetus (in West Greek and Aorlic, Admato), although it is not at all easy to account for this lapse. In sum, we could read the graffito as ΑΔΜΑΙ[O], ΑΔΜΑΙ[O], ΑΔΜΑΙ[ΝΟΝΟΣ], ΑΔΜΑΙ[ΝΟΝΟΣ], ΑΔΜΑΙ[Τ-ΤΣ], or ΑΔΜΑΙ[Τ-Τ].


20 (I 23). Pls. 2.1, 2.10. (EC) Text: ΑΔΜΑΙ Inscribed after firing at the bottom of the base of the strap handle of a fine ware black-glazed cup of South Cretan fabric (7.5 YR 7/6). Graffito are also found at the bottom of a black-glazed cup handle on 19, 21, 25, and 26. Found south of the south wall of Building N, at r.1–r.4; ca. 3.7 m (50A/36). Same context as part of 19. Same lens of dark earth containing ash and the remnants of meals as 8–18, 20–22A, 29, 30, 33–38, 41–45, 48, and 51. Probably not late in the seventh century B.C. by context.

The flaking of the black glaze makes the reading particularly difficult. The letter on the right has a shape most like semicircular delta (cf. 19 and 27), although it may be a badly formed circle,
possibly misshapen omicron or improbably dotted theta (there are marks in the center of the letter that are probably due to flaking), since this form appears only in a single inscription (Jeffery and Johnston 1990:94, no. 1, pl. 7) before the mid sixth century. Above and between the letters is the trace of a mark that may possibly be connected with the inscription.


21 (I 25). Pls. 2.1, 2.10. (EC) Text: ATIA Inscribed upside down after firing onto the base of the strap handle of a fine ware black-glazed cup of South Cretan fabric (7.5 YR 7/6. For the position of the inscription, cf. 18, 20, 25, and 26.

Found between the south wall of Building N and the north Wall of Building Q, at +3.6—+3.3 m (50A/40). Same lens of dark earth containing ash and the remnants of meals as 6–20, 22, 22A, 29, 30, 33–38, 41–45, 48, and 51. Probably not late in the seventh century B.C. by context.

Apparently dextrorsum (see 19). The second letter could be gamma or lambda. The fourth letter looks most like rho, but this sequence corresponds to no known Greek word or name, except ἵλις, a dialectal gloss found in Hesychius and equated with ὑλίτσιν (cf. Hesychius s.v. ὑπν), and this cup does not seem to conform easily to the usual description of the “vinegar dipper” as a small flat bowl. It is probably best, therefore, to take the last letter as an alpha, with the last half of the final stroke miscarried because the surface of the handle falls away at the crucial point. The inscription might then be interpreted as the genitive of the common personal name Ἄρτης; or be the abbreviation of a longer name (e.g., Ἀρτέρτης). Less likely is the abbreviated name ATΠ, supposing the rho to be turned around and the name to be inscribed boustrophedon. The single-stroke iota is probably a sign of a non-Cretan band (cf. 19 and 27), but if lambda is read, then it is a different non-Cretan alphabet from that of 19.


22 (I 26). Pls. 2.1, 2.10. (EC) Text: KAΕΑ Inscribed after firing on a body fragment of a fine ware black-glazed cup of South Cretan manufacture. Clay color 7.5 YR 7/6. For the position of the graffiti, cf. 19 and 27.

Same context as 21. From a layer containing ash and the remnants of meals (cf. 8–21, 22A, 29, 30, 33–38, 41–45, 48, and 51). Probably not late in the seventh century B.C. by context.

The only inscription from Kommos certainly written sinistrorsum. The arms of the kappa are remarkably low, and the alpha has a distinct curve. “Curved” alpha is typical of the Boeotian alphabet and also occurs in Euboean, more rarely in Athenian (see 19), but these alphabets use "Chalkidian" lambda with the hook at the bottom, although lambda with a top hook does occur very rarely in early Athenian inscriptions. (The form of the alpha is not accurately reproduced in the line drawing published in Csapo 1991: 214, fig. 5 but has been corrected here in Pl. 2.1.) KAEΩ may be a complete West Greek/Aeolic genitive form for the personal name ΚΛΕΩ; or an abbreviation for any one of a large number of personal names beginning with these letters.


22A (I 125). Pl. 2.2. (AWJ) Text: opvs | Inscribed dextrorsum after firing on the rim of a South Cretan black-glazed cup several fragments of which are preserved. Fine buff clay (2.5 YR 6/8).

From the temple dump just to the southeast of the temple complex and west of Altar L, at ca. +5.25—+5.0 m (52A/14). The fragments came from below a pebble surface that contained pottery earlier than the late seventh century B.C. but that was above or in the upper levels of the stratum of dark earth containing ash and the remnants of meals, where most of the other inscribed black-glazed cups were found (8–22, 29, 30, 33–38, 41–45, 48, and 51). Seventh century B.C. by context.

This text, which is likely to consist of an owner’s inscription, presents some difficulties that are not readily resolved. It is clear that we are dealing with a non-Cretan text, from the use of regular iota in fourth position; nor is there any problem with the second and third letters. The first is debatable, however; it is transcribed as omicron above by preference. It is made up of three strokes and so most closely resembles a delta, but the collocation ἰπν seems implausible. One might also consider alpha, although the side strokes do not extend beyond the lower stroke. An alpha would give a root that is quite well attested, Ἄπν. The fifth letter (and the traces do seem deliberate) complicates matters, since only a restricted number of letters may be read, and it
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should continue the same word, Ω/Αρνι. I feel that alpha may just be a possible reading, but hardly so if the first letter is read as alpha too; Ωπρι-σδ cannot then scrape by, Ωπρι-σδ not. Other possibilities are gamma, iota, lambda, mu, nu, pi, qoppa, perhaps rho, and possibly tau. No name to my knowledge exists with Ωπρι- followed by any of these, although Απρι- compounds

From one of the dumps immediately south of and adjacent to the eastern end of Temple B, at ca. +5.0 m (34A2/32). Seventh century B.C. by context. The Ωs are joined by a fine, apparently intentional vertical line.

Found in an abandonment layer just above Ar-YR 7/6. From one of the dumps immediately south of Chaik (latest-seventh-century-B.C.) levels, near the northwest corner of Minoan Building P, at ca. +5.5–+5.3 m (47A/17). Seventh century by context. The Xs are joined by a fine, apparently intentional vertical line.

The inscription is written sideways on the wall of the cup. Below the letters appear two ellipsoid marks with a probably decorative function. The sherd is broken just along the edge (still visible) of the left oblique stroke of the alpha. The beginning of the second letter’s horizontal is clearly visible before the break.

The inscription is written sideways on the wall of the cup. Below the letters appear two ellipsoid marks with a probably decorative function. The sherd is broken just along the edge (still visible) of the left oblique stroke of the alpha. The beginning of the second letter’s horizontal is clearly visible before the break.

Found during the removal of slabs associated with the threshold in Building Q between Rooms 30 and 31 in Room 31, at ca. +4.2–+3.8 m (60B/84). Seventh century B.C. by context.

The inscription is written sideways on the wall of the cup. Below the letters appear two ellipsoid marks with a probably decorative function. The sherd is broken just along the edge (still visible) of the left oblique stroke of the alpha. The beginning of the second letter’s horizontal is clearly visible before the break.

Found during the removal of slabs associated with the threshold in Building Q between Rooms 30 and 31 in Room 31, at ca. +4.2–+3.8 m (60B/84). Seventh century B.C. by context.

The inscription is written sideways on the wall of the cup. Below the letters appear two ellipsoid marks with a probably decorative function. The sherd is broken just along the edge (still visible) of the left oblique stroke of the alpha. The beginning of the second letter’s horizontal is clearly visible before the break.
particularly from the northwest quadrant of Boeotia: see Caso 1993: 235f., n. 5). The form of the verb ἱπτο would seem to prefer Phocis, Locris, or Boeotia to Thessaly, since Thessalian uses ἵπτε (Blümel 1982: 183, section 197).


28 (I 80). Pl. 2.10. (AWJ) Text: Probably nonalphabetic. Incised after firing on the body of a local Cretan black-glazed cup of fine clay (5 YR 6/6). Only these two sherds survive.

From the surface accumulation west of Minoan House X, at ca. +7.0 m (81A/1). Seventh century B.C. by ceramic type.


Found south of the south wall of Building N, at +3.8–+3.4 m (50A/41). Same lens of dark earth containing ash and the remains of meals as 8–22A, 30, 32, 41–45, 48, and 51. Seventh century B.C. by context.

30 (I 115). Pls. 2.2, 2.10. (AWJ) Text: See below. Inscribed after firing on the wall of a coarse ware large pot of nonlocal micaceous fabric; clay color on surface 7.5 YR 5/6, gray in core.

From temple dump to the southwest of the temple (immediately south of the south wall of Building N), at ca. +4.1–+3.7 m (50A/36). From the same lens of dark earth containing ash and the remains of meals as 8–22A, 29, 33–38, 41–45, 48, and 51. Seventh century B.C. by context.

The text is inscribed on a wall fragment from a pithos or similar vessel, of highly micaceous dark brown clay, most likely of Cycladic origin. Other included matter is mainly white, some pieces quite large and seemingly marble. Virtually no curvature is visible, and it is impossible to date the piece even approximately by ceramic criteria. The pail in which it was found contained material down to the later seventh century, one possible Classical cup fragment, and a small admixture of Minoan pottery. Perhaps the nearest ceramic comparandum at Kommos for the pithos is one of Late Minoan IIIA date, found scattered throughout the Southern Area (C 4134).

Many vases were strewn over the whole area and have been, or could be, reconstructed, but no other piece of this striking, and presumably large, pot has been isolated. The breaks are relatively sharp, although the front and rear surfaces are worn toward the edges, especially the left and lower edges on the front, as presented in Plates 2.2 and 2.10. One must consider the possibility that the sherd was used as an ostracon, and that we have the complete text, although the alpha of line 1 would have been cut right on the edge of the sherd, and its first stroke continued to the very break. Clearly, both of the preserved lines may have been longer. The piece is illustrated with the wheelmarks horizontal, but the vertical orientation cannot be determined.

A line runs centrally across the sherd, and the text depends from it, so that the two lines are in what is somewhat misleadingly termed “false” boustrophedon. Such use of a guideline has some parallels in the early Archaic period (Jeffery and Johnston 1990, pl. 18.2 [as in the corrigendum strip supplied with the volume] from Cumae, and perhaps pl. 55.4, from Naxos).

On one side of the line the text ends after the second letter. The first preserved letter is a clear alpha, while the second is more debatable, with nu, sigma, or crooked iota being candidates. In the second line another alpha is assured. After it is a vertical with two attached lines that may or may not be intentional; there is a large inclusion where the two oblique lines meet the vertical, which will have deflected any intentional line (the drawing includes all strokes on the surface); the bottom of the sign is probably complete. The first letter, however, is of more help; while it may resemble a form of gamma or the beta of some of the Cyclades, its size and curvature point away from such an interpretation and more toward the Cretan form of pi, as used for example in some of the dedicatory texts from Arkades (H. Hoffman 1972: 9, C5, C12, M5). I would therefore argue this to be a locally cut text, not one applied in the non-Cretan place of origin of the pot.

In line 1 the reading sigma would be ruled out, and iota is a more likely reading than a retrograde nu. In line 2 iota would be impossible for the third letter, although an alternative is difficult to find, especially with the uncertainties over the precise reading. Clearly the sequence πα could be followed by a large range of letters. I would hesitatingly suggest upsilon.

The resulting “text”—on vacat πα—does not have much promise as a complete text cut on an
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31 (I 54). Pls. 2.3, (EC)
Text: X or perhaps Κ. Inscribed before firing on the handle of a locally manufactured amphora or hydra. A thick black-glazed sinuous diagonal stripe descending from the upper left to the lower right of the handle. Clay color 5 YR 7/4.

From the dump associated with Temple B, Phase 2. Found just north of Altar U in the accumulation just above the surface upon which Altar U sits (dated to the late eighth century B.C.), at +5.3 to +5.2 m (42A/22). Early seventh century by context. Only the lower half of the letter remains.

32 (I 72). Pls. 2.3, 2.11. (AWJ)
Text: See drawing.

Inscribed before firing on a strap handle of medium coarse local ware. Clay color light red 10 YR 6/8 with dark brown inclusions.

From mixed fill no later than the seventh century B.C. precisely above the eastern end of Building P, at ca. +4.55 m (77A/10). Seventh century (latest context date).

Part of a graffiti sign preserved (e.g., half of an Χ), or perhaps a complete lambda-shaped mark. The possibility that this is a Bronze Age jar cannot be ruled out (Jeremy B. Rutter, personal communication).

33 (I 89). Pls. 2.3, 2.11. (AWJ)
Text: Circle with inscribed semicircles. Incised after firing on the shoulder of a black-glazed amphora, probably an import. This fragment alone preserved. Int d of neck 16.5, d of inscribed circle 6.0. Slightly micaceous clay (5 YR 7/6), with some large white inclusions.

Same context as 12–14. From a layer containing ash and the remnants of meals (cf. 8–22A, 29, 30, 34–38, 41–45, 48, and 51). Seventh century B.C. by context. One might take this elegant design to be deliberate decoration, akin to that seen on later Corinthian oinochoai, but the breadth of the grooves would be unusual.

34 (I 96). Pl. 2.11. (AWJ)
Text: Two horizontal lines. Incised after firing on the handle of an East Greek storage amphora. About half of the central part of the handle preserved, with a narrow red-brown stripe down the outside. Fine, although sandy, micaceous clay (7.5 YR 7/6).

Found south and west of Building F and below its foundations (8IC/28). Immediately beside the pails of 12–14 and 33 and of 8–11 and 16. These pails came from the same layer containing ash and the remnants of meals, at ca. +5.85 m, as 8–22A, 29, 30, 33, 35–38, 41–45, 48, and 51. Seventh century B.C.

35 (I 91). Pl. 2.11. (AWJ)
Text: X. Incised after firing on a fragment of the wall of perhaps an Attic SOS amphora. Fine buff clay (7.5 YR 7/4), with many red inclusions.

Same pail as 15 and 36. From a layer containing ash and the remnants of meals (cf. 8–22A, 29, 30, 33, 34, 36–38, 41–45, 48, and 51). Seventh century B.C. by context.

36 (I 86). Pls. 2.3, 2.11. (AWJ)
Text: Circle with traces of further lines.

Incised after firing on a fragment of the foot of an Attic SOS amphora, of which two joining fragments of the foot and one, probably belonging to the neck, survive. Foot tall and flaring; neck slightly concave, with part of the SOS decoration preserved. Fine buff clay (7.5 Y R 7/4).

From the area immediately southwest of the southwest corner of Building F, but below its foundations, at +5.85 m (8IC/27 and 28A). From
a layer containing ash and the remnants of meals, which also contained 8–22A, 29, 30, 33–35, 41–45, 48, and 51. Ca. 625 B.C. by shape of amphora.

Such marks are rare on the feet of storage jars, and the mark here is also without close comparison. The drawing shows the damage to the surface in the upper left quadrant and the remains of a line in the break at the upper right.

37 (I 93). Pls. 2.3, 2.11. (AWJ)


Found to the south and west of Building F, at a depth of +6.1 m (81C/26), below F’s foundations. Same pail as 38; above the pail of 15, 35, and 36. Seventh century B.C. by context.

38 (I 94). Pl. 2.11. (AWJ)

Text: Fragmentary mark, perhaps bottom half of a letter, possibly Χ, or most of a lambda? Incised after firing on a fragment of the wall of a Chian wine amphora. Rather coarse micaceous clay (5 YR 7/6).

Same context as 37. Seventh century B.C.

39 (I 74). Pl. 2.3. (AWJ)

Text: See commentary. Inscribed after firing on the flattened handle of an amphora of probable East Greek origin. Only these two joining sherds of the lower part of the handle preserved. Fine clay with mica and other inclusions (5 YR 6/6).

From above and a little to the north of Minoan House X at ca. +6.8 m (73A–74A/22). Seventh century B.C. by context.

A series of small incised dots joined by a vertical and two further dots below and to the right. A “dot” at the left below is not surely ancient and not included in the drawing. There seems to be a horizontal line, not a simple break, at the bottom, on the right side only.

40 (I 101). Pls. 2.3, 2.11. (AWJ)

Text: XA(?) Incised after firing on the shoulder of an amphora or hydria. Three joining fragments, with a plastic ring at the base of the neck and banded decoration. Medium-coarse, gritty clay, gray at core and light brown 2.5 YR 5/6 to outside, with a cream-gray slip. Perhaps local rather than an import.

From the levels above and to the north of Minoan House X, at ca. +7.0 m (74A/4). Seventh century B.C. (? by context. Lightly incised but deliberate graffiti.

41 (I 38). Pl. 2.3. (EC)

Text: See Pl. 2.3, a stamp with a nonalphabetic and nonrepresentational pattern. A stamp on the upper right side of the handle of a large closed vessel of coarse buff fabric (10 YR 8/6) with large black inclusions. A slight ridge of clay running the length of the handle. At the handle’s base, where it joins the shoulder, three finger marks. The fabric apparently Iron Age, but not identified.


42 (I 27). Pl. 2.3. (EC)

Text: E Clear, deep incisions made before firing on the upper part of the handle of a very small Corinthian Type A or perhaps local Cretan amphora. Clay color 7.5 YR 7/6.

From between the south wall of Building N and the north wall of Building Q, at +3.6–+3.3 m (50A/40). Same lens of dark earth containing ash and the remnants of meals as 8–22A, 29, 30, 33–38, 41, 43–45, 48, and 51. Seventh century B.C. by context. The letter represents the “false diphthong” Ε in the Corinthian alphabet. For the fabric, cf. 58. The technique of cutting is similar to 48.

43 (I 34). Pls. 2.3, 2.11. (EC)

Text: A nonalphabetic squiggle, or a “long sigma” (?), or perhaps even iota (?). Inscribed with a blunt instrument before firing at the root of the handle of a fine ware (5 YR 7/4) imported amphora, probably East Greek.

Found south of the south wall of Building N, at ca. +3.5 m (50A/40). Same lens of dark earth containing ash and the remnants of meals as 8–22A, 29, 30, 33–38, 41, 42, 44, 45, 48, and 51. Seventh century B.C. by context.

“Long sigma” (five or more strokes) appears in inscriptions from Eretria, Lefkandi, Boeotia, Sparta, Gela, Camarina, Samos, and Smyrna and appears in the Phrygian and Lydian alphabets.
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44 (I 36). Pl. 2.3. (EC) Text: Χ Inscribed after firing on the lower part of the handle of a small imported amphora of a fine pinkish brown fabric (5 YR 7/4) with some micaceous inclusions. The handle painted (cf. 45) with a white framed elongated Χ; three drill marks across the middle exterior of the strap, one scarcely visible to the left below the trio, and two at the bottom on either side of the surviving graffiti. The top of the handle not preserved.


45 (I 37). Pl. 2.3. (EC) Text: Χ Inscribed after firing on the upper part of an East Greek amphora handle (too small and flat for normal Chian). The exterior of the handle with a horizontal line of black paint near the junction with the neck; a vertical stripe running the length of the handle meeting it to form a “T.” Lower handle lost. Clay color 7.5 YR 7/6, with many micaceous inclusions.


46 (I 41). Pl. 2.3. (EC) Text: Δ The delta inscribed before firing on the body of a vessel of the orange-brown, very micaceous fabric (10 R 6/4), perhaps Cycladic or East Greek. Cf. 49. The vessel possibly a small amphora.


47 (I 46). Pls. 2.3, 2.11. (EC) Text: ΚΑΕ vacat Inscribed before firing on the handle of a possibly Klazomenian amphora (cf. 68). Traces of wide dark bands painted around the handle attachment to the body and down the strap (across the letters): cf. 68. Clay color 5 YR 7/3.

From the dump south of Temple B and just to

48 (I 24). Pl. 2.3. (EC) Text: Probably nonalphabetic mark. Inscribed before firing on the handle of a locally manufactured plain krater, short-necked jug, or chytra.


A very clumsily made Χ mark or gamma seems unlikely. The long vertical stroke was made after the horizontal and is much deeper. The technique of cutting is similar to 42.

49 (I 20). Pl. 2.3. (EC) Text: Δ The delta inscribed upside down after firing close to the splaying bottom of the shaft of a round jug handle. Clay color at core 5 YR 7/6. From the upper levels of the Temple B dump in the area southwest of the temple complex above Building N, at +4.54–+4.9 m (50A/7). Seventh century B.C., probably latter half, by context.

Cf. the delta of 46 and, also inscribed upside down, that on the handle of an amphora (575-1) at Pithekoussai (Buchner 1978).

50 (I 40). Pl. 2.3. (EC) Text: M Incised before firing upside down near the base of the handle of a large coarse ware jar perhaps of Corinthian Type A fabric or perhaps local Cretan: cf. 15. Clay color 7.5 YR 6/4. Same context as 2. Seventh century B.C., probably latter half, by context. Corinthian mu?

51 (I 98). Pls. 2.3, 2.11. (AWJ) Text: Part of six verticals, crossed by a single preserved horizontal.

Incised after firing on the handle of a local Cretan amphora or hydria. Only this single fragment of the handle with an indication of the neck attachment preserved (fine pale brown clay [7.5 YR 7/4] with traces of glaze).

From the dump south of Temple B and just to
the north of Building Q, at ca. +4.5 m (68A/25). From the same layer containing ash and the remnants of meals (at ca. +5.85 m) as 8–22A, 29, 30, 33, 34, 36–38, 41–45, and 48. Seventh century B.C. by context.

S2 (I 45). Pls. 2.3, 2.11. (EC) Text: hEΠ hIΨI Inscribed after firing on the body fragment of a black-painted imported, possibly East Greek, amphora. Clay color 7.5 YR 7/6.

From Temple B dump to the south, above and just north of the western end of the south wall of Building T, at +4.9 m (65A/29). Seventh century B.C., probably latter half, by context. Dextrorsum (see 19). The first letter has a clearly incised medial horizontal stroke and a lower second horizontal that is also clear, but less firmly incised. The letterform is without parallels. The circle of Archai theta is crossed. Apparent exceptions in all cases but two take the form of a closed circle with a single vertical crossbar (see the list in Gallavotti 1979–80). Margherita Guarducci argues for a circular theta with a horizontal crossbar in a dedication found at Poseidonia (ca. 550–500 B.C., Guarducci 1952: 1471), although Lilian Jeffery argues that the letter occurs in a non-Greek sequence and may be phi (Jeffery 1955: 78), and Carlo Gallavotti that the letter may be Greek and the letter phi (Gallavotti 1979–80: 1022). A circul

\[ \text{IΨI} \] Inscribed after firing on fragment from the neck of one of about six to ten “Lacanian” amphorae found scattered throughout the rooms of Building Q. The neck reserved, inside and out. Dark paint on the ridge above the neck. Clay color 5 YR 7/6.

From within or beneath the lower floor of Building Q, Room 37, at +3.24–+3.1 m (64A/85). Seventh century B.C., probably latter half, by context. Pentalpha. Inscribed at the base of a semifine ware transport amphora, two adjoining fragments of which preserve the lower half. The fragments chipped and worn, most of the paint lost. Clay color 7.5 YR 7/6.

From within the lower floor of Building Q, Room 31, at +3.8–+3.7 m (60B/81). Seventh century B.C., before ca. 625 B.C., by context.

S5 (I 57). Pls. 2.4, 2.11. (EC) Text: Pentalpha. Inscribed after firing at the base of the handle of an Attic SOS amphora, two adjoining fragments of which preserve the lower half. The fragments chipped and worn, most of the paint lost. Clay color 7.5 YR 7/6.

From within the lower floor of Building Q, Room 37, against the west wall (bordering Room 38) at +3.4–+3.3 m (64A2/70). Seventh century B.C., probably before last quarter, by context.
a pentalpha found on a late-seventh-century B.C. dish at Smyrna as an “owner’s or merchant’s mark” (Jeffery 1964: 40, no. 12, fig. 1). The mark also appears on two late-eighth–seventh-century B.C. votives at Hymettos (Langdon 1976: 39, nos. 168, 169, fig. 17). The red dipinto pentalpha on the foot of a Middle Corinthian oinochoe in the Louvre is almost certainly “commercial” (Johnston 1979: 170, no. 23).

Text:

Found on the lower floor of Building Q, Room 30, at +3.9–+3.8 m (60B/79; see J. W. Shaw 1986: 229f.). Seventh century B.C., probably latter half, by context and fabric. The letter appears to be the upper half of the vertical of an epsilon or digamma, written sinistrorsum, and most of the upper horizontals.

Johnston 1993: 369, no. 133.

62 (C 8397). Pls. 2.4, 2.11. (EC) Text: [I vacat Inscripted before firing on the neck of a “Laconian” amphora, the rim, neck, shoulders, and handles of which survive nearly complete in over thirty fragments. Amphora painted black except on the outside of the neck. Clay color 7.5 YR 7/6, gray at core. Cf. 83. The amphora fragments were found in, on and above the lower floor of Building Q, Room 38, at ca. +3.4–+3.1 m (64A/76, 78, and 79). The inscription appears on two fragments from pail 78. Seventh century B.C., probably latter half, by context. There is space for one letter in the gap between the pi and the handle to the left (see Pl. 2.4).

Johnston 1992; 1993: no. 88, fig. 7H, pl. 78.

63 (C 8397). Pl. 2.4 (EC) Text: A nonalphabetic symbol composed of five parallel horizontal lines intersecting with two parallel verticals. Inscribed after firing on the handle of a “Laconian” amphora. See 62. Same context as 62. The handle fragment is from 64A2/76. Seventh century B.C., probably latter half, by context.

Johnston 1992; 1993: no. 88, fig. 7H, pl. 78.

64 (I 65). Pl. 2.4 (EC) Text: Two parallel strokes, beginning of a third stroke above the break. Inscribed after firing on the handle of a transport amphora of uncertain origin of a rather coarse, tempered, and micaceous material (near 5 YR 6/6). Fragment worn. From an accumulation above the lower floor of Building Q, Room 37, at +3.25–+3.5 m (64A/56). Seventh century B.C., probably latter half, by context.

Johnston 1993: 374, no. 151.
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65 (I 97). Pls. 2.4, 2.11. (AWJ)
Text: Star. Incised on the wall of a probably Chian amphora. Single, extremely worn fragment preserved. Fine buff clay (7.5 YR 7/6), with more orange core, highly micaceous. From above the original floor of Building Q, Room 40, at the western end, at ca. +2.45 m (62B/22). Seventh century B.C., probably latter half, by context. Not in Johnston 1993.

66 (I 52). Pl. 2.4. (EC)
Text: Χ with trailing right-hand stroke. Inscribed after firing on the body of a small (?) East Greek, probably Milesian, amphora. Clay color 5 YR 7/6.

From an accumulation on the upper floor of Building Q, Room 37, at ca. +3.65 m (64A/54). Pail 54 is part of a deposit (joins with 64A/42, 47, 55, and 56) that contained many East Greek transport amphora fragments and some fragments of Attic SOS amphorae. Graffiti 67–69 are from the same context. Latter half of seventh century B.C.; vessel probably in use during last quarter, by context. Johnston 1993: 369, no. 134.

67 (I 48). Pl. 2.4. (EC)

Same context as 66, 68, and 69, at +4.0–4.32 m (64A/47). Latter half of seventh century B.C.; vessel probably in use during last quarter, by context, fabric, and style. Johnston 1993: 363, no. 104.

68 (I 49). Pl. 2.4. (EC)
Text: III. Inscribed before firing on the underside of the top part of the handle of a possibly Klazomenian (?) amphora (same fabric as 47). The handle painted with a black band around the attachment to the body and a black stripe along the handle exterior (cf. 47). Clay color 2.5 YR 6/6.

Same context as 66, 67, and 69 (64A/47). Latter half of seventh century B.C.; vessel probably in use in last quarter, by context and fabric. The position of the inscription is very odd. The handle is abraded along the edges, and it is just possible that the three initial strokes are the orphaned horizontals of an epsilon. The digamma (?) is very shallow and written sinistrorsum on an axis removed from that of the horizontal bars of the other letter by 60°. Johnston 1993: 364, no. 106.

69 (I 59). Pl. 2.4. (EC)
Text: X with trailing right-hand lower stroke. Inscribed, probably before firing, at the root of the handle of a transport amphora of fine micaceous material (5 YR 7/6), and of East Greek origin, probably Milesian.

Same context as 66–68, at +4.0–4.32 m (64A/47). Latter half of seventh century B.C.; vessel probably in use in last quarter, by context. Johnston 1993: 369, no. 135.

70 (I 63). Pl. 2.4. (EC)
Text: Part of a simple oblique stroke preserved. Inscribed after firing on the lower wall of a transport amphora, probably Samian, of fine material with much small mica (5 YR 7/6).

From an accumulation above the upper floor of Building Q, Room 38, at +3.6–3.5 m (64A/2/73). Latter half of seventh century B.C.; vessel probably in use in last quarter, by context. Johnston 1993: 366, no. 118.

71 (C 7487). Pls. 2.4, 2.11. (EC)

From a dump above the upper floor of Building Q, Room 31, at +4.34–4.19 m (60B/65). By the late seventh century B.C.; by context (pace Johnston 1993).

Sinistrorsum in a quasi-ligature. Dipinto 71 may be one of the earliest red dipinti known on Greek vases: only a very few Rhodian and Corinthian dipinti are datable before 600 B.C. (Boardman and Hayes 1966: 46; Johnston 1979: 2.170, 235). For comparanda, see Johnston 1979: 174–76, 237 f.

The position of the inscription is very odd. The handle is abraded along the edges, and it is just possible that the three initial strokes are the orphaned horizontals of an epsilon. The digamma (?) is very shallow and written sinistrorsum on an axis removed from that of the horizontal bars of the other letter by 60°. Johnston 1993: 364, no. 106.

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69 (I 59). Pl. 2.4. (EC)
Text: X with trailing right-hand lower stroke. Inscribed, probably before firing, at the root of the handle of a transport amphora of fine micaceous material (5 YR 7/6), and of East Greek origin, probably Milesian.

Same context as 66–68, at +4.0–4.32 m (64A/47). Latter half of seventh century B.C.; vessel probably in use in last quarter, by context. Johnston 1993: 369, no. 135.

70 (I 63). Pl. 2.4. (EC)
Text: Part of a simple oblique stroke preserved. Inscribed after firing on the lower wall of a transport amphora, probably Samian, of fine material with much small mica (5 YR 7/6).

From an accumulation above the upper floor of Building Q, Room 38, at +3.6–3.5 m (64A/2/73). Latter half of seventh century B.C.; vessel probably in use in last quarter, by context. Johnston 1993: 366, no. 118.

71 (C 7487). Pls. 2.4, 2.11. (EC)

From a dump above the upper floor of Building Q, Room 31, at +4.34–4.19 m (60B/65). By the late seventh century B.C.; by context (pace Johnston 1993).

Sinistrorsum in a quasi-ligature. Dipinto 71 may be one of the earliest red dipinti known on Greek vases: only a very few Rhodian and Corinthian dipinti are datable before 600 B.C. (Boardman and Hayes 1966: 46; Johnston 1979: 2.170, 235). For comparanda, see Johnston 1979: 174–76, 237 f.

That marks of this type are rarely found in the homeland argues strongly for a "commercial" function (Johnston 1979: 234). The wide separation of the arms of the kappa is unusual, although Archaic parallels can be found (e.g., curved kappa on two Attic grave monuments of ca. 540 B.C., Jeffery and Johnston 1990: 78, nos. 31, 32, pl. 4).

Johnston 1992; 1993: no. 59, fig. 5E, pl. 77.

72 (I 67). Pl. 2.4. (EC)
Text: Χ Inscribed after firing on the wall of a transport amphora, probably Chian, of rather coarse, micaceous, tempered material (5 YR 7/6). Fragment worn.

From the dump on the upper floor of Building Q, Room 31, at +4.03–4.35 m (60B/77; see J. W.
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73 (I 62). Pl. 2.4. (EC)
Text: Oblique scratchings rising toward an apex on either side of a finger mark. Inscribed, probably after firing, around a finger mark at the root of the handle of an amphora of East Greek origin (?). Fine gray-brown clay (10 YR 4/2), with much mica. A longer cut on the inside of the handle apparently ancient. A longer cut nearer the neck join less clearly intentional. An upright cross on the inside of the neck.

Text: III (outside handle); + (inside neck) Incised after firing on a Lesbian transport amphora. D of handle 3.3. From the uppermost level of pure seventh-century B.C. fill in Building Q, Rooms 30 and 31, at 4.1–4.0 m (60B/67). Latter half of the seventh century; vessel probably in use in last quarter, by context. Not in Johnston 1993.

Inscriptions of the Classical, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods

Inscriptions on Stone

75 (I 9). Pls. 2.5, 2.6, 2.12. (DG)
Text: a b c
- το[ν] Ποτε[ν] - - - [πλήρες] - - - [ιν] - - - wοντ [τέ-το-τί] -
Two joining and six nonjoining fragments of a round monument, probably an altar (a thymiaterion?). Reconstructed dim: max pres h 35.6, d 40.0. H of letters 1.85–2.2 (omicron is smaller). Sandy limestone. Monument consisting of a columnar shaft rising from a wider base. The text inscribed on the base on a horizontal surface framed above and below by a narrow bevel and a slender horizontal band. Base decorated above and below with an elaborate series of moldings. Above, a flat shelf cut deeply into the perimeter of the shaft. A cyma reversa swelling outward above this shelf to support a second similar, but slightly narrower, shelf. From the center of this second shelf the central shaft rising, its lowest portion decorated by three shallowly swelling bolsters. Below the inscribed portion a deep cyma reversa molding reducing the diameter from its maximum to that at the bottom of the base. The preserved portion of the bottom flat, except for the remains of one fluted leg preserved on a single fragment. Presumably two or three other legs lost with the missing portions of the monument. Traces of plaster on the surface and of red, blue, and black paint from the decoration of the moldings. Portions of the inscribed text preserved on three of the fragments. Black residue from burning on the topmost preserved part of the monument, although the original top surface not necessarily preserved. See the discussion of the sanctuary architecture, J. W. Shaw, Chap. 1, Section 5, "Phase 6"; Chap. 5, Section 4; Chap. 8, Section 2, "The Inscriptions and Depictions."

Found in July 1979, in the fill above the uppermost part of the two floor levels of Temple C (29A1/12, 14, 19, 21, 22, and 30). Part found with 78 and 102. Since the findspots of the pieces are confined to the interior of the temple, one can suggest that the monument was set there. Alternatively, the entire altar could have been brought in from the outside, possibly for use as a support for the final bench phase (Phase 5) of the temple. Early second century B.C. The nature of the serifs, particularly on the vertical bar of the epsilon, these bolsters. Below the inscribed portion a deep cyma reversa molding reducing the diameter from its not earlier than the second century and not later than its earlier years is likely.

Jeanne Robert and Louis Robert recognized the reading of Poseidon’s name, and they also raised the question whether fragment b might read Απελλάτιον (1982). Maria C. Shaw and Eric Csapo, who examined the fragment and con-
firmed the readings in the summer of 1984, sug-
gested –ςλεωντός. The initial trace on fragment
a is a midline horizontal; the absence of other
traces leaves as the only possible reading an
omega floating above the line. This suggests ei-
er is a genitive, which would indicate the divinity
possessor of the altar, or a dative, indicating the
dive recipient of a votive offering. On fragment
b the sigma seems very likely: there is an elbow
at the center of the letterspace; and the upper and
lower horizontal splay. The eta and omicron are
damaged by flaking; the lower tip of one vertical
and the upper tip of a second are followed by
the upper portion of a circle. Spacing precludes
reading the final letter as iota. On fragment
c the feet of two verticals suggest the mu.

This monument would seem to be an addition
to the small group of inscribed thyseuma from a
variety of cities on Crete (Guarducci 1935: 35, no.
3, from Chersonesos dedicated to Saraphis;
1935: 225, no. 187, a fiktile example from Lyttos;
possibly 1939: 246, no. 7, from Polyrrhenia). The
name of the god Poseidon as recipient would seem
the most likely restoration. Cults are known
at Axos, Rhabos, Lyttos near Knossos, and Gortyn
(Guarducci 1950: 121, to no. 66); these may be
added Lato on the basis of the occurrence of the
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inal surfaces preserved. A painted margin framing the inscribed face: red across the upper edge and down the left side, blue over a white ground across the lower edge and down the right side. The interiors of the letters painted red alternating with black in line 1 and red alternating with blue in line 2 and probably in line 3. In the vacant space following line 3 a painted rosette of crossed red and blue lines with red dots between them. The inscribed face smoothly dressed; the other surfaces showing chisel marks.

Found during July and August of 1979, one fragment inside the packing of the bench at the northwest corner of Temple C (J. W. Shaw 1980a: pl. 62a, Building A2) and the other two outside the east wall of the same room (29A2/17 and 34 and 29A1/39). Late second–first century B.C. The letter shapes, particularly the broken barred alpha and the serifs, find parallels in documents dated to the late second or to the first century by Margherita Guarducci.

The format and physical appearance are characteristic of grave markers in Crete. Telemnastos is attested as a name during the last three centuries B.C. at Lappa (Guarducci 1939: 201, no. 9, l. 2), at Axos (Guarducci 1936: 75, no. 35, l. 25), and at Gortyn (Guarducci 1950: 435 f.). Next is a masculine genitive form in several dialects, including Cretan, and represents the patronymic. Kallistos appears now for the third time in Cretan documents (Guarducci 1935: 276, no. 16, at Phaistos; p. 300, no. 16, at Rhizeni[?]). On each occasion it falls between the name and patronymic on a monument identified by Guarducci as a *stela sepulchralis*. It can be interpreted as the name of the second of two brothers whose burial is marked by the stela. In two of the examples, and possibly also the third, the formula consists of only a name in the nominative case, Καλλίστος, and the patronymic. All three documents were found in the Lasithi or in the mountains overlooking it. Although Καλλίστος is used as a personal name in many areas of Greece, this pattern in Crete suggests that it may not identify a second person buried but rather serves as an adjective applied to the name, and that these three tablets or stelae should be identified as belonging to a single genre of inscription. The purpose of these documents remains elusive. Both other examples were found on or immediately below the acropolis of their respective cities.


78 (I 10). Pls. 2.6, 2.13. (DG) Text: Τίτις τίτρανεν - - - - γηπεδόν[ ] Two joining and five nonjoining fragments from a shallow circular basin, possibly a cult table. H 17.6, pres d 43.6, est d 110. H of letters 4.0. Sandy limestone. Basin with a broad (6.0 cm) almost horizontal rim and an almost vertical outer side. Bottom chiselled to a flat surface, apparently to rest upon another flat surface. The inscription surviving on the outer side of two joining fragments. This side showing horizontally raking strokes of a claw chisel. The interior curving gently down from the rim to a level floor; showing traces of burning and of smoothing with a claw chisel. The shallow and level profile of the basin resembling more that of an offering table than a container for sacred water. Possibly placed on a stand in the court of the sanctuary, but there is at least one instance in Crete, at Dreros, where a basin was found next to the cult statues at the back of the temple, in this case in front of the Apollonian triad (S. Marinatos 1936: figs. 10, 11). Presumably it contained gifts, probably food, for the gods (Gill 1974: passim; Joseph W. Shaw has provided the references to other examples of offering tables).

All fragments were found in the northeast corner of Temple C (10A3/49; 29A/10, 19, 29, and 46; 34A/14, and 46A/11), with the exception of one fragment, which was found in the dump south of the temple (34A/14). One of the fragments from within the temple was found lying upside down upon C’s northern bench. The pail contexts range from the second century B.C. to the second century after Christ. The letter shapes, particularly the omega, suggest a date in the second century after Christ.

The tops of the letters have been wholly or partially obscured by a later attempt to round off the upper part of the inscribed surface, and there appear to be shallow scratches where a later hand attempted to alter the text. A complete description of all the traces is desirable here. Both strokes of the gamma are clear, although the upper part of the vertical and the complete horizontal are shallow. The upper portion of both legs of the alpha are clear with a preserved short portion of the slanting crossbar hanging from the descending leg; this leg extends upward above the top
of the letter but becomes shallow where the sur-
face of the stone has been dressed down. Chipp-
ing has carried away both the top and bottom of
the iota, but spacing would allow no other read-
ing. The epsilon is clear, but the upper por-
tions become shallow. The vertical of the tau is
clearly preserved; chipping has carried away the
bottom; of the slightly sloping crossbar only a
faint line is preserved, but wide spacing to either
side of the vertical confirms the reading; a scratch
extends right from the center of the vertical, as
if an attempt had been made to convert the pre-
served chisel strokes into an epsilon. The upper-
most horizontal of the epsilon has been lost, and
the central horizontal is almost obscured because
of claw chisel marks that have been carried down
into the center of the letter; the lower horizontal
and most of the vertical bars are clearly pre-
served. Chipping has carried away the left-hand
vertical and most of the leftward extension of the
base horizontal of the omega, but the verticals at
the center and right side and the remainder of
the base horizontal are clear; a later scratch car-
rries the central vertical upward, and another hori-
zontal scratch running to the right of it attempts
to transform the letter into a rectangular omicron. (w 4.3) of an oinochoe. The...

Text:

Χ

Incised after firing on the strap handle
to transform the letter into a rectangular omicron. (w 4.3) of an oinochoe. The...

Inscriptions on Ceramics
and Other Artifacts

Dedictory and Proprietary Inscriptions

79

(I 78). Pl. 2.14. (AWJ)
Text: X Incised after firing on the strap handle
of local manufacture. The inscription itself may be unrelated to use
of the basin. Although grave altars were used
elsewhere, particularly in Rhodes (Fraser 1977:
33) but also in Crete (Guarducci 1935: possibly
216, no. 124; 220, no. 148; SEG 23 [1968]: 538, 543,
544), they normally had flat tops. An inscribed
cylindrical monument might have been recut to
make a basin, particularly in a Christian context
(see particularly Guarducci 1959: 93, no. 5), or an
abandoned stone ceremonial basin could have been plundered for reuse. In the former case it is
possible that additional lines of text have been
lost. Such reuse would explain also the redressing
with a toothed chisel and possibly the attempt to
recut certain letters.

J. W. Shaw 1980a: 224, n. 39, with comments
by J. S. Traill. See further J. W. Shaw, Chap. 5,
Section 6, 12.

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J. W. Shaw 1980a: 224, n. 39, with comments
by J. S. Traill. See further J. W. Shaw, Chap. 5,
Section 6, 12.
Catalogue of Iron Age Inscriptions

of the end of the north wall of Building P at +5.5–+5.25 m (63A/14). Ca. 400–350 B.C. by context.

82 (I 28). Pls. 2.7, 2.14. (EC)
Text: ΣΑ Scratched after firing under the foot of an Attic black-ware skyphos. Fine ware, reddish yellow 5 YR 6/6.

From the sanctuary dump southeast of Temple C at +6.0–5.8 m (34A/15), in a layer datable from the very late third to the mid second century B.C.

Same context as 84 and 94. Fourth century B.C. by style.

A long, lighter scratch attached to the upper horizontal of the sigma merely witnesses the inscriber’s initial difficulty: It is only partly coextensive with the upper horizontal. The third stroke of the sigma overshoots the junction with the fourth. The mark is likely to abbreviate an owner’s or possibly a trader’s name. T. B. L. Webster’s similar but earlier “workshop mark” (Webster 1972: 279) is an error, (see Johnston 1979: 48, n. 1).

83 (I 4). Pls. 2.7, 2.14. (EC)
Text: ΠΟΛ vacat Inscribed before firing on the interior of a locally manufactured coarse ware shallow basin or bowl with a nearly flat floor. Concentric circles decorate the bowl on either side of the text. Clay reddish tan.

From Building B, part of which was used as the sanctuary storehouse (10A/59, 60, or 61; notebook p. 159). Same context as 88. Probably Hellenistic (third–second century B.C.), possibly Classical, dated by context and letterforms.

For the inscription, cf. the bowl, probably of the later half of the sixth century, found at the temple of Zagora on Andros (Cambitoglou 1972: 266 f., pl. 235a). Perhaps this is also an abbreviation for ΠΟΛΙΑ∆ΟΣ or ΠΟΛΙΑ∆Ι, but the epithet seems inappropriate to the divinity of a rural sanctuary. Another variant ΠΟΛΙΑΜΩΣ is a possibility. On the ownership of the sanctuary, see J. W. Shaw, Chap. 8, Section 2.


84 (I 29). Pl. 2.7. (EC)
Text: ΠΟΛ Inscribed with index finger on the corner of a Laconian pan tile before firing. A long, lighter scratch attached to the upper horizontal of the sigma merely witnesses the inscriber’s initial difficulty: It is only partly coextensive with the upper horizontal. The third stroke of the sigma overshoots the junction with the fourth. The mark is likely to abbreviate an owner’s or possibly a trader’s name. T. B. L. Webster’s similar but earlier “workshop mark” (Webster 1972: 279) is an error, (see Johnston 1979: 48, n. 1).


85 (I 3). Pls. 2.7, 2.14. (EC)
Text: AM Inscribed before firing on a cover tile.

Medium coarse.

86 (I 18). Pl. 2.7. (EC)
Text: AE[ Inscripted on a thin lead bar. Max pres length 10.6, max pres w 1.3, wt 150 g.

Found in a pocket of burnt sand containing charcoal and pink inclusions south of Classical/Hellenistic retaining wall above and to the north of the north wall of Building Q at ca. +5.5–+5.1 m (68B/43). First century B.C. by context.

87 (C 1999). Pl. 2.14. (EC)
Text: C Inscribed with index finger before firing on the corner of a Laconian pan tile.

From between the columns inside Temple C at ca. +6.45 m (29A1/12). First–second century after Christ by context.

I have not seen either 87 or 88. The excavator’s notebook suggests that several roof tiles with lu-nate sigmas and cursive epsilons were found at this level, although apparently only two were catalogued.

Text: E Inscribed with index finger on the corner of a Laconian pan tile before firing.

Commercial Inscriptions

89 (I 99). Pls. 2.7, 2.14. (AWJ)

Text: Bottoms of two or three vertical lines. Inscribed before firing on the wall of a possibly Samian amphora, this single, very worn fragment of which survives. Fine clay with much small mica (7.5 YR 6/6).

From west of Building P, Gallery P5, at ca. +4.1 m (91B/18). Fifth century B.C. or earlier by context. Prefiring marks are not rare on Samian amphorae, although not confined to that type.

90 (I 42). Pls. 2.7, 2.14 (EC)

Text: \( \chi \omega \iota \upsilon \omicron \nu \varsigma \upsilon \omicron \kappa \alpha \) Incised after firing ca. 8–9

Found in the Classical and Hellenistic layers over the eastern two rooms of Building Q, at ca. +4.75–+4.4 m, immediately above the Archaic strata (60B/52). The pail was mixed Minoan–fourth century B.C. including some seventh-century material. Context and fabric allow a range of ca. seventh–fourth century. Although it cannot be dated too closely, I list 90 as Classical (or early Hellenistic) for the following reasons: (1) Philippa Matheson informs me that, as far as it goes, the profile of the fragment does not preclude its being a part of the handle of a later (i.e., more probably fourth-century rather than fifth-century) Mendean amphora; (2) ligatures are rare before ca. 550 B.C. (Johnston 1978: 2); (3) no extant inscription earlier than the mid fifth century certainly uses the acrophonic numeral system (see commentary following), although the origin of the system may be as early as the seventh century (Johnston and Jones 1978: 131; Woodhead 1981: 109). A ligature (perhaps chi inside delta) appears on a seventh–early-seventh-century sherd from the sanctuary of Zeus on Hymettus (Langdon 1976: 41, no. 170) and possibly on a late Attic SOS amphora from Corcyra (63/130; Johnston and Jones 1978: 115, fig. 7c, and see remarks on p. 131).

The visual confusion is largely due to the fact that the third symbol overlays the second. The third must be the familiar ligature delta-chi regularly used in the acrophonic numeral system. The end of the base of the delta is preserved just to the left of the abrasure that has erased the lower portions of the ligature and the stroke that follows. Alpha is not possible, as the right oblique cannot descend below the level of the horizontal, since the handle curves sharply below this point. The third letter, like the second letter, is probably a simple upright stroke. The only other possibility is the bottom-hooked “Chalkidean” lambda of Archaic Central Greek alphabets; this seems unlikely. The first letter seems beyond recovery; conceivably a very oblong and jagged example of omicron, theta, phi, or tailless rho. Handle heights for Mendean jars average 19.0–22.0 cm from the highest point of the handle to the shoulder at the attachment (the actual extent of the curved surface being longer). The present fragment, which includes the shoulder attachment, measures 9.0 cm along the inscribed surface. Supposing that the beginning of the graffito was not as cramped as the end and allowing 2.5 cm per symbol, there is easily room for eight or nine symbols before the handle turns to the neck (although this portion of the handle may also have been inscribed). The delta-chi ligature is a standard combination of acrophonic symbols for number and unit, normally “ten choes,” \( \Delta \xi \chi \) (see commentary following), although the origin of the system may be as early as the seventh century (Johnston and Jones 1978: 115, no. 170). Presumably Kommos 90 also gives a measure of capacity and its appearance in southern Crete seems to indicate that the Agora graffito, like the jar, is Mendean, or at least non-Attic (cf. Johnston 1978: 218 f.). For other capacity inscriptions on amphora handles, see Lang 1956: nos. 2, 12, 14, 21, 56; 1976: Ha 7. It is possible to make satisfactory sense of 90 if one supposes that the strokes before and after the ligature have a similar function in marking unit capacity. In commercial notation it sometimes happens that where two units are used, a single stroke may stand for one, an initial letter for the other (Lang 1956: 7, nos. 21–23). If this is the case here, the symbols would read “... kotyle, ten choes, kotyle.” I am unable to make further sense of the graffito, except to speculate that the first symbol...
is an unsuccessful attempt to render Χ (although I caution that there is no trace of the continuation of the rising oblique from the lower left beyond the point of its convergence with the oblique line descending from the upper left). As normal usage places the largest units in a sum first and notations of the same unit together, this graffito could then be read as the final portion of a tally, the earlier lost portion adding up to nine choes, the delta with inscribed chi and final stroke representing the sum, "ten choes and one kotyle," either

X X X X X X X X X | X \ι \ι ι \ι

or

X X X X X | X \ι \ι ι \ι

(see examples of tally followed by sum in Lang 1956).

91 [I 13]. Pls. 2.7, 2.14. (EC) Text: ΚΝΟ. Incised before firing. The fragment probably part of a jar or a stand. Fabric apparently South Cretan, gritty reddish yellow clay (5 YR 6/6) with dark and opaque inclusions. Found in a sand accumulation layer above and beside the Classical east-west retaining wall to the south of the temple complex (29A/46). Hellenistic by letterforms. Shows that the eponym paired with Nikasion is Aristodamos (not Eudamos or Sodamos as previously guessed), all eponyms that have been associated with Nikasion in known or reasonably guessed pairs (Agestratos 2nd, Athanodotos, Aristodamos 2nd, and Theaidetos) are now seen to date between about 184 and about 176 B.C. I know of no parallels. Knossian public property (Grace 1985: 8-9). This date is supported by the fact that three stamps of Nikasion were found in the Pergamon deposit (Schuchhardt 1895: nos. 1146, 1147, 1148) and none in the slightly earlier Middle Stoa construction filling in the Athenian Agora, of which the end date proves to be about 183 B.C. (Grace 1985: 24, summary on this end date, now, it seems, generally accepted; pp. 7-9 on relative dates of the Middle Stoa filling and of the Pergamon deposit, the latter of which is shown to end about seven years later). The one stamp of Nikasion from the Agora (SS 13761; note that the reference R 400 in Fraser and Matthews 1987: 331 is neither an inventory number nor an Agora number but identifies a name in Grace's working list of Rhodian amphora fabricants [manufacturers]) was found just on top of a part of the Middle Stoa filling.
The final sigma is much abraded but the upper elbow is clearly visible and the lower, extremely faint. I am also indebted to Dr. Grace for the following references to comparable stamps of Nikassos. Pergamon no. 1146 (as known to her from a photograph and rubbing kindly provided by Prof. Christoph Borker of Erlangen) appears to be from the same die as our stamp and adds a faint drawing of an anchor to the left of the rose, not visible on 94 perhaps owing to incomplete impression (for the rose and anchor type on a contemporary stamp, see E. I. Levi 1964: pl. VII, no. 100). For other stamps of Nikassos, not close in style, see E. I. Levi 1964: pl. XX, nos. 295, 297. The name Nikassos belongs to a Lindian in a roughly contemporary inscription from Rhodes (Pugliese Carratelli 1939–40: 156, no. 183, 3, etc.) and appears again in Rhodian inscriptions of the first century B.C. (Fraser and Matthews 1987: 331).

95 (I 30). Pls. 2.7, 2.14. (EC) Text: K | X | X | X | X | Inscribed after firing either on the shoulder of a transport amphora of light red fabric (5 YR 6/8 core, 7.5 YR 8/4 surface), very probably of local manufacture, or (more probably) on a sherid (ostracon) already broken off from the amphora at the time of inscription. From a sandy accumulation just southeast of Temple C at +6.15–+6.05 m (34A/11). Second–first century B.C. by fabric and context. It appears to be a computation with vertical strokes or column dividers and Xs on a ledger. Cf. Lang 1956: 19–23, especially no. 85.

96 (C 2276). Pls. 2.8, 2.15. (EC) Text: T Stamped on the bottom of the mold of a Cretan or possibly Italian lamp. From inside Temple C, at ca. +5.75 m (29A1/30). Same pail as 100. Late first century after Christ. For full description of lamp, see Hayes, Chap. 4, Section 4, 60.

97 (C 1976). Pls. 2.8, 2.15. (EC) Text: ROM JANES [IS?] Reproducing a stylus-impressed original in cursive characters on the bottom of the footing of a Knidian mold-made lamp. Found in the surface sand immediately east of Temple C (29A/9). Same pail as 96. Ca. A.D. 75–100 by the ceramic form and signature. See discussion by Hayes, Chap. 4, Section 4, 73.

98 (C 1979). (EC) Text: Illegible traces of three (?) letters. Signature on the base of a probably Knidian lamp. Same context as 97. Late first–early second century after Christ by lamp type. See discussion by Hayes, Chap. 4, Section 4, 76.


100 (C 2188). Pls. 2.8, 2.15. (EC) Text: ΡΟΜΟΥ ΦΙΣΙ. Written on the raised base of a mold-made lamp. Same context as 96. First half of the second century after Christ by lamp type. For full description of lamp, see Hayes, Chap. 4, Section 4, 57.

101 (C 1878). Pl. 2.8. (EC) Text: ΤΑΜΟΥΡ on the base of a lamp (or its mold) of Cretan manufacture. From the topsand above Temple C (29A/3). First half of the second century after Christ by lamp type and context; see Hayes, Chap. 4, Section 4, “Introduction” and n. 55. Gamos is a well-known Cretan lampmaker (see Hayes, Chap. 4, Section 4, “Introduction,” n. 55, and 65).

102 (C 2107). Pl. 2.7. (EC) Text: ΟΙ [ ]. Jalic impression on the base of a flat-based cooking dish. From inside Temple C at +6.5–+6.0 m (29A1/12 and 19). Same pails as part of 78 and 79. Second century after Christ by form of ceramic. The text is uncertain. I have not seen the object and therefore I have relied entirely upon the drawing. The inscription is presumably the signature of the potter. For discussion of the dish and stamp types, see Hayes, Chap. 4, Section 3, 25.
Notes

1. This manuscript was completed for an initial publication deadline in 1990; we have been able to take account of only a few publications that appeared subsequent to that date. The drawings of 1–3, 18–20, 24, 29, 31, 32, 39, 41–52, 61, 66–68, 81–86, 89–91, 93–95, and 99 are by Joseph P. Clarke; 4–8, 11, 13, 14, 33, 36, 37, 40, 74, and 92 are by Julia Pfaff, assisted by Barbara Bronyza; 9, 17, 22A, 65, 96, and 100–102 are by Jenny Doole; 21 and 22 are by Clarke and Giuliana Bianco; 25, 26, 53–60, 62–64, and 69–73 were drawn by Bianco, assisted by Rebecca Dudos; 27 and 30 are by Laura Preston; 88 is by Niki Holmes Kantzios; 97 is by J. W. Hayes. The authors gratefully acknowledge the assistance of Kevin Clinton and A. Geoffrey Woodhead on matters relating to the lapidary inscriptions and thank John Bennet, Patricia M. Bikai, F. M. Cross, Virginia R. Grace, M. L. Lang, P. M. W. Matheson, Brian J. Peckham, Jeremy Rutter, A. Schachter, M. B. Wallace, and especially Peter J. Callaghan for expert help on various matters relating to the graffiti and stamps. Financial assistance to Eric Csapo was provided at various stages of the preparation of this material by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, by the Gilbert Norwood Foundation, and by the Dean of Arts and Sciences at the University of Toronto.

2. In this chapter the term Pheonia is sometimes used loosely, as is usual in the scholarship, to include Levantine peoples in general and also speakers of Aramaic. For the problem, see, e.g., Rollig 1992: 93; Schoeps 1987: 443.

3. Johnston and Jones 1978: 131: “X can mark any spot,” says Alan W. Johnston (1979: 207), and its significance can be variously interpreted: “It is probable that many of the simple signs are used as substitutes for alphabetic owner’s marks. X, pentalphas and hour-glass signs are obvious choices” (Johnston 1979: 131), a function already implicit in the Semitic name to, meaning “owner’s mark” (Albright 1966: fig. 1); “The fact that [X] was used for so many early dipinti indicates that the purpose of marks was simply to set apart one vase from the rest” (Johnston 1979: 207).


5. For Archaic inscriptions written dextrorsum, see Guarducci 1959–60: 251, n. 3. Because of doubts about the existence of a norm in the direction of seventh-century B.C. writing I have avoided the usual normative terms orthograde and retrograde.

6. Many have dismissed Cyprus because of the use of the Cypriot syllabary (e.g., Carpenter 1933: 27 f.), although this should not exclude it from the discussion. For Cyprus as a possible “birth-place” of the alphabet, see Heubeck 1979: 85–87; Johnston 1983: 67; Burkert 1992: 27; Robb 1994: 275; especially Woodard 1997. Not inconceivable is the fact that the word for “teacher,” presumably “writing teacher,” in the Cypriot dialect is the Semitic ʿalāṭ (see Karageorghis 1988: 194).


7. Notably Rhodes: Carpenter 1933: 27 f.; Falkner 1968. For the question of Phoenician contact or presence, see Coldstream 1977: 299 “from c. 750 onwards there is some trace of a small Phoenician community residing among Greeks at Ialysos”;


9. They were not the first to attack the notion of an “Uralphabet”; see Meyer 1907: 349. The other “unities” were later challenged by Bund-
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11. Despite the vastly greater information about Phoenician activity in Geometric Greece, alphabetic uninitianism has made a particularly strong comeback in recent years. The single inventor theory has recently been urged by B. Powell 1991; cf. Konishi 1993: 103. Rudolf Wachter (1989: 36 f.) hypothesizes a corporation of ingenious Greeks attended by Phoenicians, which is still far too specific.

12. The principal challenge to the theory of the unities now comes from Semitic epigraphers—specifically, their attempt to establish an early date for the Greek reception of the Phoenician alphabet (as early as the twelfth or eleventh century B.C.); the related assumption that the active role in the transmission was played by Phoenicians moving westward, not Greeks moving eastward; a tendency to regard the transmission as an extended process, not a unique event; the consequent unlikelihood that we are dealing with a single “ingenious Greek.” See Naveh 1973; 1982: 175–86; McCarter 1974; 1975b: 103–21; Cross 1979a; 1980; 1986: 123 f.; Isserlin 1983; Pauly 1986: 963–82. It should be stated that the traditional scholarly bias in favor of individuals, Greeks, linear derivation, and rapid exploitation is suspect because ideologically comfortable (see Burkert 1992: 1–6; and, with an ideological agenda of his own, Bernal 1987a, 1987b; 1990).