

MITTEILUNGEN

THE CRETAN INSCRIPTION BM 1969. 4—2. 1: FURTHER PROVISIONAL COMMENTS

In my contribution to *Europa*¹, I stressed the need for linguistic exploration on the early historical side of the gap which separates Iron Age from Bronze Age Greece. The recent article by Lilian H. Jeffery and Anna Morpurgo-Davies on a new early Cretan text², whose importance requires no further emphasis from me, is a model of penetratingly exact scholarship, matching the value of the text, which would surely have gratified the discriminating capacities of the founder of Kadmos. I had the opportunity to read and comment upon the article in draft. The remarks which follow result from further reflection; they are necessarily provisional and restricted pending the publication of related material.

The verbal phrase *ποινικάζεν καὶ μναμονεύφεν* must mean, basically, something like 'record and remember'. The accompanying nominal doublet (*τὰ δαμόσια τὰ τε θιήια καὶ τάνθρώπινα*) may help us to understand the implications of the verbal doublet. It could be that *Ποινικάζεν* governs *θιήια*, as *μναμονεύφεν* governs *τάνθρώπινα*, though both *θιήια* and *τάνθρώπινα* are *δαμόσια*, i. e. form the general sphere of action of the verbal doublet.

A new office is being established and *μναμονεύφεν* (in the secondary place in the verbal phrase) represents the traditional, while *ποινικάζεν* (in more emphatic primary place) represents the novel element in the function of the new official. Consequently the religious aspect of his duties receives emphasis. He is not merely 'remembrancer' but 'recorder' because, as the editors say (p. 149), he gets his subsistence, immunity from taxes, his annual payment in kind; he does not merely attend, but also participates in, all meetings of the Kosmos in his capacity as secretary, and he performs the functions of priesthood in public sacrifices for certain cults not already managed by existing hereditary priesthoods. A similar emphasis is found in the conclusion of the text (B 16f.: *ἤμεν δὲ τὰ θιήια κτλ.*) where the [preig]istos (tentatively proposed reading)

¹ Some characteristics of Archaic Cretan writing, *Europa: Festschrift Ernst Grumach*, Berlin 1967, 320—331

² *Ποινικαστάς* and *ποινικάζεν*: BM 1969. 4-2. 1, A new Archaic inscription from Crete, *Kadmos* 9, 1970, 118—154

or some such person has a religious responsibility in the *andreion* apparently distinguished from the obligations and rights of the new official.

This new official has a name showing the same root as the preceding verb (A 1f.: καὶ ἐσπένσαμεν πόλιν Σπενσιθίω). This formation is, as the editors point out, striking, but in their view coincidental. I am not so sure that it is coincidental. The striking nature of the formation — whether of proper name or no — might also have some association with the novelty of the religious activities³.

Oral tradition played its part in matters of law, in the sense that Spartan, Cretan, perhaps also Athenian, youths learnt their laws by heart⁴. The writing down of early Greek law, it seems to me, has analogies with the writing down of epic poetry, in the sense that we are moving in a not dissimilar climate of intellectual history⁵. Novelty of function is here marked by the use of the primary *hap. leg.* element of the verbal doublet ποινικάζεν = 'to do φοινικήια, to write', to do something more novel than be a traditional *mnamon*; which is perhaps an additional reason⁶ for bearing in mind the possibility that the original meaning of ποινικάζεν was something like 'to make red' and had no direct connection with 'Phoenician'.

Novelty and tradition do indeed combine to mark the importance of the new official, an importance corresponding with that of the new cults which he seems to have supervised. (How novel were *they*?) The actual degree of importance of the new office in the eyes of the authorities can be fairly well estimated by the privileges granted to him. Assuming that he was a citizen, as seems likely, he must have contributed his dues to his *andreion* from the proceeds of his own *oikos*. This normal obligation of a citizen landlord continued but was at the same time offset by a grant of subsistence and immunity from taxes. Privilege was further

³ Cf. Cyrenaean Σπόνδαρχος/σπόνδαρχος cited. s. v. Σπενσιθίω p. 128

⁴ Willetts, Aristocratic Society in Ancient Crete 5-6 and 6 n. 2

⁵ See the Introduction to The Making of Homeric Verse: The Collected Papers of Milman Parry and especially the cautionary note p. lxi n. 1. Cf., more generally, E. A. Havelock, Preface to Plato.

⁶ The other being the fact — pointed out but rightly regarded by the editors (p. 133) as in itself insufficient proof — that in Greek -άζω rather than -ίζω is normally used to form verbs derived from colour names. It is relevant to recall that H. L. Lorimer (Homer and the Monuments 126 n. 1) suggested that paint would be a natural addition to inscriptions on wood and might account for the Cypriot use of ἰναλίνω = γράφω. That the characters engraved on the Idalion bronze are described in the inscription which they record as ἰναλαλισμένα at least testifies that the Cypriots had originally used a soft reed pen or a fine brush, the alternatives for a scribe who writes on parchment (cf. id. ib. 527). Two glosses of Hsch. show that the practice continued after the Classical age (cited *ibid*): διφθεραλοιφός· γραμματοδιδάσκαλος παρὰ τοῖς Κυπρίοις and ἀλειπτήριον· γραφεῖον. Κύπριοι. The latter gloss is also cited by Buck (The Greek Dialects s. v. ἰναλίνω) together with Hsch. ὀλίνειν· ὀλείφειν.

enhanced by an official payment in kind. Assuming that there was at this time no communal land at the disposal of the state, this official payment in kind would perhaps have had to come from the produce of the *oikos* of another citizen, specified by Spensithios. I agree with the editors (p. 140) that it does seem most likely that the *misthos* of Spensithios was taken from taxes paid in kind to the state.

As the editors suggest, Spensithios could have selected his wine from a common depository or could have taken it directly from the most convenient plot whose landlord gave evidence to the state that he had paid his contribution in this way. There is also perhaps a third possibility, which would fit the word *μóπος* recognized in line 14. A portion of land, suitable for cultivation of vines, could have been selected by Spensithios as an additional responsibility on the *oikos* of another citizen. In that case, the specialized work of Spensithios would have been rewarded by the obligation of another citizen to exploit a hitherto uncultivated piece of land or to turn over a plot hitherto cultivated in some other way to the cultivation of vines.

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THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL CRETOLOGICAL CONGRESS

This was held in Rhethymnon, on September 18—23, 1971. In Section A (Ancient History), presided over by Professor Platon and Dr. Alexiou, the main papers of epigraphic interest were: a presentation by L. Pomerance of the Phaestos disc as an astrological text, on consideration of the symbolism of the signs and the number and order of the compartments; M. W. M. Pope's argument that the word *sitos* meant 'grain' to the Minoans, who may have been the Dorians of later tradition; the connection by L. Deroy of Linear A *ku-ro* not with the Semitic *kul* but with an Aegean root *kor-* signifying 'head' or 'sum'; W. C. Brice's portrayal of various relations of ratio between the quantities recorded on the Hagia Triada tablets; an essay of J. Chadwick on the historical geography of early Crete, based on the place-names of the Knossos tablets; a study by L. A. Stella of the historical problems raised by the chariot tablets of Knossos; and a demonstration by C. H. Gordon of Aramaic elements in the Eteocretan inscriptions of Praisos and Dreros.

In the field of sigillography, H. van Effenterre gave a progress report on his statistical study of the motifs of the early triangular prisms; J. Sakellarakis argued convincingly for the authenticity of the Ring of Nestor, on the strength of the butterfly designs on a new ring from Archanes; and I. Pini analyzed a remarkable sealing in Herakleion of Cypro-Minoan style with elaborate animal and bird designs.

A report on the Thera excavations was given in a general lecture by Sp. Marinatos on the evening of September 18. Discussing the effects of the Thera eruption, N. Platon, on the evidence of art styles, traced a widespread natural devastation (or possibly two devastations in fairly quick succession) of the palace sites, including Knossos, in MM IIIB — LM IA; M. S. F. Hood also saw evidence of a very general natural catastrophe in LM IA, but thought that the destructions of LM IB, some fifty years later, were more likely to have been caused by enemy invasion.

On philological topics, V. Georgiev pleaded for a scientific approach to onomastics and analyzed three layers of place-names in early Crete, all Indo-European; and J. Knobloch drew on archaeology and linguistics to illustrate the meanings of various early words for flasks and bottles.

Among the historical contributions, V. Desborough considered the possible strategic rôle of the site of Karphi in the disturbed period of Mycenaean intrusion into Crete in the twelfth century B. C.; F. J. Tritsch argued that Minos the lawgiver may have wielded jurisdiction over a federation of Cretan cities, and possibly held court in the 'theatral area' at Knossos; and P. Faure gave new and convincing evidence of the importance of early silver mining in the island. We heard excavation reports from Mallia (J.-C. Poursat, who illustrated two newly found hieroglyphic tablets), Myrtos and Debla (P. Warren, with J. Tzedakis in the latter case), Sellopoulou (M. Popham, by proxy), and Iasos in Caria (C. Laviosa).

The Congress was extremely well organised under the Chairmanship of Professor G. I. Kourmoulis, and the hospitality of the municipality of Rhethymnon, including a magnificent display of Cretan dances, was warmly appreciated by the three hundred delegates and guests. There were visits to the Monastery of Arcadi, to Herakleion, and, after the main Congress, to Hagios Nikolaos, at all of which places the visitors were formally greeted and generously entertained.

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