

POT-MARKS AND GRAFFITI FROM TOUMBA TOU ŠKOUROU, CYPRUS¹

A small group of Late Bronze Age graffiti and potmarks from north-west Cyprus is not distinguished in itself but is valuable as extending our knowledge of Cypriot script forms in a region which is still largely unexplored. They come from various points in the ruined but once eminent

¹ Bibliography (abbreviations in italics):

- P. Åström, *A Corpus of Pot Marks*, Excavations at Kalopsidha, 1966, 149—192; *Pot Marks of the Late Bronze Age from Cyprus*, *Op. Ath.* 9, 1969, 151—159.
- J. C. Courtois, *Le Sanctuaire du Dieu au Lingot d'Enkomi-Alasia*, *Alasia I*, 1971, 151 ff.
- J. F. Daniel, *Prolegomena to the Cypro-Minoan Script*, *AJA* 45, 1941, 249—282.
- P. Dikaios, *A New Inscribed Clay Tablet from Enkomi*, and M. Ventrìs, *Notes on the Enkomi 1955 Tablet*, *Antiquity* 30, 1956, 40—42.
- V. Karageorghis, *Morphou-Toumba tou Skourou, Kition, and Athienou*, *BCH* 97, 1973, 641—658; *Morphou*, *BCH* 96, 1972, 1051—54; *BCH* 88, 1964, 313, fig. 35; *BCH* 83, 1959, 339, fig. 4.
- E. Masson, *Rouleau inscrit chyro-minoen trouvé à Enkomi en 1967*, and *Boules d'argile inscrites trouvées à Enkomi de 1953 à 1959*, *Alasia I*, 1971, 458—477, 479—504; *Quelques inscriptions chyro-minoennes du Nord-Ouest de Chypre*, *RDAC*, 1972, 129—133. (The authors regret that they were unable to consult E. Masson's two recent publications, *Etude de vingt-six boules d'argile inscrites . . .*, *SIMA XXXI*: 1, 1971 and *Cyprominoica*, *ibid.* XXXI:2, 1974, which appeared after the preparation of this article.)
- O. Masson, *Deux petits lingots de cuivre inscrits d'Enkomi*, 1953, *Alasia I*, 1971, 449—455; *Documents chyro-minoens de Ras Shamra*, *Ugaritica VI*, 1969, 379—392; *Nouvelles inscriptions en caractères chyro-minoens*, *Enkomi-Alasia*, 1952, 391—409; *Répertoire des inscriptions chyro-minoennes*, *Minos* 5, 1957, 9—27; *Cylindres et cachets chypriotes portant des caractères chyro-minoens*, *BCH* 81, 1957, 6—37.
- O. Masson, V. Karageorghis, *Late Bronze Age News from Cyprus*, 1967—1968, *Kadmos* 7, 1968, 100—103, pl. I.
- E. Porada, *The Cylinder Seals of the Late Cypriot Bronze Age*, *AJA* 52, 1948, 178—198.
- E. Porada, F. G. Maier, *International Symposium on Cyprus*, *Archaeology* 25, 1972, 298—300.
- F. Stubbings, *Mycenaean Pottery from the Levant* 1951.
- J. du P. Taylor, *Myrtou-Pigadhes* 1957.
- M. Ventrìs, J. Chadwick, *Documents in Mycenaean Greek* 1956.

site of Toumba tou Skourou² and represent two or three historical periods. There is a smaller group of pot-marks from Myrtou-Pigadhes to the north of Toumba tou Skourou which is not entirely comparable.³ It is hoped that these fragmentary remains can contribute something, eventually, to the greater study of Cypriot script forms.

Toumba tou Skourou is the name given to a mud brick eminence on the north bank of the Ovgos River near the town of Morphou on the Bay of Morphou in northwest Cyprus. This mud brick mound and the low-lying buildings around it are all that now remain of what was once a large and evidently flourishing industrial town. The site was dug for a day in 1936 by Porphyrios Dikaïos, and was esteemed by H. Catling and the officers of the Cyprus Survey in 1956 as being a possible western counterpart to Enkomi on the east coast.⁴ However, it was thoroughly bull-dozed in the early 1950's and only this fragment acquired by the Department of Antiquities remained to be excavated.

In three seasons of excavation, 1971—1973, the Harvard Cyprus Expedition has been able, in spite of the damage by bull-dozer, to establish a sequence of stratified levels as well as to uncover a rich series of tombs. Although the site is small, it is revealing a more precise chronological sequence than used to be known for this part of Cyprus. It is particularly interesting that Toumba tou Skourou, together with the site of Ayia Irini some eight miles to the north, has demonstrated the earliest consistent contacts between Cyprus and Minoan Crete as well as

² Toumba tou Skourou is the local name for a sand-dune covering a Late Bronze Age mud-brick mound on a small plot of land north of Morphou (R. 714745 on the Military Survey Map; Cyprus Survey 251). Acquired by the Department of Antiquities of the Republic of Cyprus, in 1970, it has been excavated for three seasons by the Harvard University-Museum of Fine Arts, Boston Cyprus Expedition (1971—1973) in collaboration with the Department of Antiquities. For reports before the excavations started see note 3 below; for other aspects of the results, E. Vermeule, *The Mycenaeans in the Eastern Mediterranean* 1973, 25—33; reports in V. Karageorghis, *BCH* 96, 1972, 1051—54; 97, 1973, 641—645; E. Porada, F. G. Maier, *Archaeology* 25, 1973, 298—9; K. Nicolaou, *AJA* 77, 1973, 54—5; E. Vermeule, *Toumba tou Skourou* 1974.

³ J. du Plat Taylor, *Myrtou-Pigadhes* 1957, 95, fig. 35; E. Masson, *RDAC* 1972, 129—133.

⁴ P. Dikaïos, *RDAC* 1936, 115; Department of Antiquities Blue Book 10, 216—36. H. Catling, *Patterns of Settlement in Bronze Age Cyprus*, *Op. Ath.* 4, 1963, 142, 143, 144, 167 no. 188; *CAH*²II, ch. xxii (b) 51. K. Nikolaou, *RDAC* 1963, 27 n. 30. A Middle Cypriote tomb group from a neighboring field was published by V. Karageorghis, *BCH* 88, 1964, 313 fig. 35 (*CM* 1963/XI-18/1); an idol with upraised arms in *BCH* 83, 1959, 339 fig. 4.

Mycenae and possibly the Cycladic Islands in the sixteenth century B. C.⁵ The foreign relations of these two sites may have some bearing on the question of the ancestry of the Cypriot script.⁶

A Brief History of the Site

Toumba tou Skourou seems to have been founded at the very end of the Middle Bronze Age, MC III. It was founded on bedrock, here consisting of soft green clays and white *bavara*, and is not directly descended from any known site in the district. It lies some four miles inland from the sea. Between Toumba tou Skourou and the sea there has been noticed a contemporary Late Cypriot I site which is also marked by mud-brick architecture, Toumba tou Tyllirou.⁷ This was subsequently bull-dozed in 1973. It may be that Toumba tou Skourou represents part of a series of new settlements at the end of the Cypriot Middle Bronze Age which had the purpose of opening up and controlling not only the rich plain of Morphou but the commercial links to the copper mines in the foothills of the Troodos Mountains near Skouriotissa and Mavrovouni. Much of the Morphou plain has been flattened since World War II for the plantation of citrus groves and very little surface evidence remains for its Bronze Age history. It is clear from local reports that the Ovgos River, on which Toumba tou Skourou was situated, was a navigable river as recently as forty years ago and ran through deep pools with ducks and eels; and it is at least conceivable that Toumba tou Skourou does match Enkomi not only in the period of its foundations but in lying protected inland from the sea on a commercially usable river. The Bay of Morphou would be one of the first landings for sailors coming from the west.

The first phase of the site belongs to a transitional period between the Middle and Late Bronze Ages. There is a great deal of pottery which

⁵ E. Vermeule, *The Mycenaeans in the Eastern Mediterranean*, 25ff., pll. VI—VII; P. Pecorella, *ibid.* 19ff.

⁶ Cf. Ventris-Chadwick, *Documents* 60ff., Chadwick, *Documents*² 387; P. Dikaios, *Enkomi*, 1969, I, 233; II, 504; Appendix V; H. Catling, *V. Karageorghis, BSA* 55, 1960, 127; E. Grumach, *Handbuch der Archäologie*, 1969, 272ff., *Antiquity* 30, 1956, 41; *Kadmos* 2, 1953, 48

⁷ Toumba tou Tyllirou lies between the seaside cliffs and the Ovgos valley; perhaps when the seacoast was further inland and the river navigable, this served as a protecting fortress on a promontory for Toumba tou Skourou. It produced excellent LC I A pottery (WS I, BR I), mudbrick walls, pithos fragments and stone querns (examples in the Cyprus Survey). Old air photographs of Toumba tou Skourou suggest two more such mounds, north and south of the main site, now lost.

shows most of the characteristic Middle Bronze Age types undergoing transformation and developing toward the two principal Late Bronze Age types of Base Ring and White Slip. The transitional period represented at Toumba tou Skourou must last at least two, possibly three generations, and is marked by architectural changes. The earliest period does not yield any form of writing. It is represented by a series of industrial workshops on bedrock protected by a terrace wall. Near the middle of the sixteenth century B.C. this part of the town seems to have burned, to judge by fallen roof beams and twigs littering the working floors. It was then filled in with a massive debris of mud brick, broken storage jars and stones, and new working levels in fine mud brick were erected above. The date must be the early part of Late Cypriot IA.

An interesting feature of the new industrial town is a very large irregular stone building which is framed by pebbled roads. This is a work-building designed in a peculiar manner to contain a series of basins which were floored with waterproof *havara*, the local white bedrock so widely used in place of hydraulic cement. The walls were plastered, both with real lime plaster and with mud brick, and the basins were set half-way up the walls of the building so as to contain large pithoi which were sunk up to their necks in the floor, their tips resting on bedrock. The basins were evidently for the processing of material with flowing liquids, possibly for washing fine clay for potters' work; they interconnect and the liquids circulate from water channels in one corner through successive basins and ultimately into the sunken pithoi. These basins remained in use for some time but were eventually bricked in with large mud bricks laid flat in 'sandwich' rows with plaster binding.

The first two pot-marks were found upon the *havara* floor of the old basins underneath the new brick filling. A precise date is hard to determine because the bricks themselves were made of clean earth without pottery or scrap and the floors of the basins were relatively empty. There is a good deal of ceramic slag in the bricks and, of the rare sherds, one would single out some fragments of White Slip I. It seems, therefore, that the period represented by these two pot-marks must be that of developed Late Cypriot IA and should probably be earlier than 1400 B.C. A tentative estimate at Toumba tou Skourou would be that White Slip II does not replace White Slip I until the second quarter of the fourteenth century. There are some contexts when both forms of White Slip are found together in stratified levels but the period when the basins were bricked in is probably in the late fifteenth century or the opening years of the fourteenth.

1 P 848. Inscription 4 (Fig. 1).

From Square G-13, at the western end of the basins (12 viii 72). Plain wheel-made jar.⁸ Maximum height: 0.114m., maximum diameter: 0.112m. Pink buff clay, greenish slip.

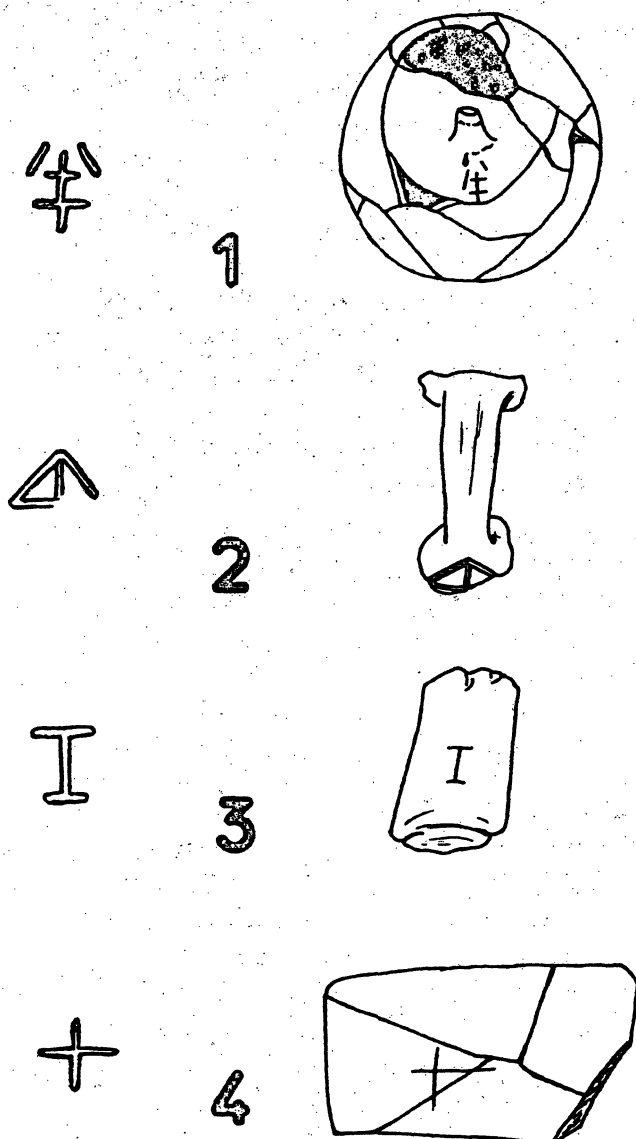


Fig. 1

⁸ Toumba tou Skourou, fig. 8

The potter's mark occurs below the root of the handle. This jar was smashed in a pit in the *bavara* floor beneath the bricks and contained some bones. It seems to have belonged to the period when the basins were in use rather than to the period when they were bricked in.

It is a common globular jug; the neck is missing, as is a second handle, if there was one. The mark below the handle is in the form of an arrow with a double cross-bar.

Daniel, *Prolegomena* 279, Class I # 13: cf. E. Masson, *Rouleau*, 469, fig. 3 # 5; Boules 502—3, fig. 50 # 12.

2 P 1143. Inscription 11 (Fig. 1).

From Square G-15, under the bricks in the northeast corner of the basin building (14 viii 73). Handle of a plain jug. Preserved length: 0.128 m., maximum width: 0.026 m. Pink buff clay with a green slip, wheel-made.

The potmark is just above the lower base of the handle, an arrow form with the lower bar broken off.

Åström, *Pot Marks* 151, 152, fig. 1. CVA, Cyprus, Fasc. 2 (Private Collections Fasc. 1) 35, fig. 7 # 7. Daniel, *Prolegomena* 279, Class I # 11, # 12a. E. Masson, *Quelques Inscriptions* 130, fig. 6. O. Masson, *News pl. I, iib; Répertoire pl. IV*, fig. 14, sign 4. Taylor, *Myrtou* 95, fig. 35 # 3.

3 P 861. Inscription 5 (Fig. 1).

From Square F-16 (20 vii 72).

A vertical flattened rolled handle, probably from a two-handled jug. The mark is an I on the lower third of the handle surface. Height: 0.052 m., diameter: 0.045 m. Red clay, coarse red-buff slip.

This potmark on a coarse handle was retrieved from the pebbles which were packed up against the outer walls of the basin building all around. The layer of pebbles was very thick and in part had been disturbed by the bull-dozer but the pottery is consistently early Late Cypriot IA with such fine scraps of painted wares that we have tentatively concluded that they may represent tomb pottery which was later thrown out and used for building material.

E. Masson, *Boules* 502, fig. 50 # 1. O. Masson, *Documents Chypro-Minoens* 391, fig. 3 # 1.

4 P 1040. Inscription 11 (Fig. 1).

From Square H-14 (1 viii 72). Four fragments of a coarse basin. Preserved length: 0.025 m., preserved width: 0.09 m., thickness: 0.015 m. Pink-buff clay, green-buff slip.

The four joining sherds from this rim of an open basin or trough are marked by an isolated cross toward the top of the basin. The sherds come from deep in the pebble packing between the ramp and the back walls of the lower houses, not far above bedrock. The context is White Painted Ware and Base Ring I, evidently a developed but still early phase of Late Cypriot IA.

Åström, *Corpus* 177 (6); pl. 47, fig. 183, Daniel, *Prolegomena* 279, Class I # 1a. Dikaïos, Clay Tablet, and Ventris, Notes 40—42; pl. IX, penultimate sign on Line 1. J. B. Hennessey, *Stephania* pl. XXVIII # 44. E. Masson, *Boules* 502, fig. 50 # 7; Rouleau 469, fig. 3 # 11; *Quelques Inscriptions* 130, fig. 7. O. Masson, *Répertoire* 23, pl. VI, fig. 25 (Enkomi # 264; cf. above, Dikaïos and Ventris). Taylor, *Myrtou* 95, fig. 35 # 5. Ventris and Chadwick, *Documents* 62, fig. 11 # 3 (Enkomi), # 1 (Ugarit).

The Fill

At about the time the basins were bricked in, an enormous deposit, over two meters thick, of sterile fill thrown in from baskets and wagons, was laid between a series of retaining walls which abut against the end of the basin building on the western part of the site. There is very little pottery in this fill, but perhaps enough to judge that it was laid down in the early part of the fourteenth century B. C. The mixture of Middle Bronze Age types and a few pieces of White Slip II has been puzzling stratigraphically and must reflect a source for the fill contemporary with the founding of the site. We have tentatively proposed that this fill, obtained from nearby fields, was waiting to be turned into mud-brick, for which purpose it is of good quality.

5 P 932. Inscription 8 (Fig. 2).

From Square E-4 Level 2 (The Fill) in a context of Red Polished IV and White Slip II (3 ix 71). Seven non-joining sherds of a buff-red wheel-made coarse pot. The remains of the inscription are of very high quality, on only one of the seven pieces. Height: 0.049 m., diameter: 0.026 m.

This seems more like a letter than a potmark, with two strong verticals framing five weak verticals. One should restore a pair of legs underneath, and possibly a word-divider following. This is the most finely drawn of the Toumba tou Skourou marks.

cf. Daniel, *Prolegomena* 280, Class I # 38, # 39, # 44, # 45. E. Masson, *Boules* 502—3, fig. 50 # 35, # 52, # 54. Ventris and Chadwick, *Documents* 62, fig. 11 # 58 (Enkomi), # 13 (Ugarit); also, cf. 23, fig. 4, the signs for *no* and *ai* in Linear B.

P 862

From Square G-11 (1 vii 72). On a pithos fragment.

The way in which the straw has popped out of the surface has given a probably illusory resemblance to signs in the Cypriot script. If it is a genuine inscription, which seems doubtful, the context is also Late Cypriot IA, in stone packing between the two retaining walls.

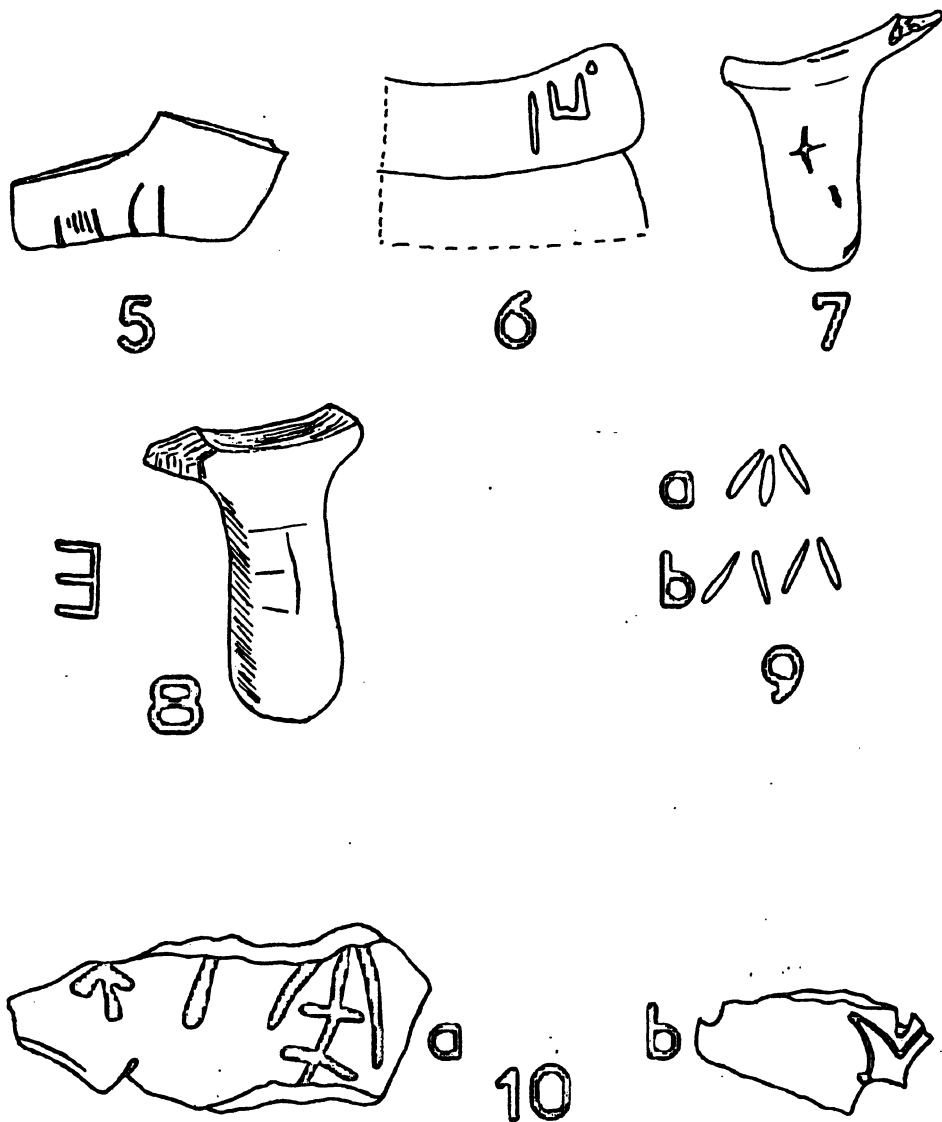


Fig. 2

The Lower Buildings

Most of the pot-marks come from the area of the site which lies south of the basin building. The basin building was separated, first by a flat pebbled road, then by a raised pebble ramp, from a series of large buildings which backed on to the ramp and evidently faced south on to another cross street between the site and the river. These buildings go through three distinct phases: an early one, at the beginning of Late Cypriot IA; the second one, apparently contemporary with the use of the basins, perhaps in the late fifteenth century; then a third very strongly represented period of the end of the 13th century B. C. An absolute date for this final phase of the Bronze Age at Toumba tou Skourou is not easy to come by because the buildings were generally filled with large pithoi and very little fine ware. However, a Late Mycenaean IIIB flat dish was found smashed among the pithoi, and a local imitation of a Late Mycenaean kylix was in an adjacent well, and these would normally be dated around 1220 B. C.⁹ Some of the coarse ware found in association with these buildings has been tested by thermoluminescence and the dates range in absolute terms, with a 15% margin of error, from 1273 to 1207 B. C.¹⁰ It seems likely enough, therefore, that the final phase of the Bronze Age at this site is in the second half of the 13th century. After that there is no clear record of occupation until Cypro-Geometric III and Cypro-Archaic I, although fragments of Proto White Painted were found in bull-dozer debris without context.¹¹ It should be noted that the stratification in these late phases has been reversed by the bull-dozer which succeeded in spreading layers of Late Cypriot IA with masses of pottery of very high quality on top of the late 13th century levels. The large building, called House B, which occupies the whole south center of the site, had its late floors intact with storage jars standing upon them except as cracked by the weight of the bull-dozer. The two buildings called Houses C and D, toward the western end of the site, however, had their upper layers filled with smashed and worn pithos fragments and it is in this context that some of the potmarks appear. These pithos fragments are found with fine wares of the Late Cypriot I period which

⁹ Ibid. fig. 26, P 635; fig. 27, P 616.

¹⁰ Preliminary thermoluminescence tests are being conducted at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, under the supervision of W. J. Young.

¹¹ An interesting chariot sherd of the twelfth century B. C., picked up by Mrs. Catling at nearby Ambelia, was published by H. Catling, *AJA* 72, 1968, 48, pl. 21 fig. 2. It may be contemporary with some of the (disturbed) LC III Decorated Wares of Toumba tou Skourou, but in general any twelfth century habitation levels have disappeared.

can not have been entirely spread by the bull-dozer, but the context is not as satisfactory as one would have liked.

In House C, which has suffered the worst, the upper levels were filled with melted mud brick and masses of coarse pithos sherds. Two adjacent squares each yielded a potter's mark in what may ultimately have to be interpreted as a dump of mixed date.

6 Inscription 13 (Fig. 2).

Square I9, buried in pebble ramp leading up to basin building (19 vii 73). Unmended coarse pithos with mark on rim.

This very coarse thick grey pithos was apparently in use at an early phase of the ramp, in LC I A. It was buried in the middle of the way, and contained fragments of other pithoi, and a trough, as well as Base Ring I and White Slip I sherds and an animal's jaw flattened over the edge, perhaps from a pig. Evidently the pithos was used as a trash receptacle and was later paved over with successive surfacings of the busy roadway. The fabric is so coarse it would be difficult to mend. The mark on the rim is made up of three separate signs.

For sign 1: Ventris and Chadwick, Documents 62, fig. 11 # 1. For sign 2: Ventris and Chadwick, Documents 62, fig. 11 # 42. E. Masson, RDAC 1972, 130, fig. 2 = Boules 502, fig. 50 # 32.

If the 'dot' be considered as a part of sign 2 rather than as a separate sign, cf. O. Masson, Documents chypro-minoens 391, fig. 3 # 26.

7 P 634. Inscription 2 (Fig. 2).

Square J-10 (31 vii 72). From the floor at 60 cm. Part of the rim and upper section of a rolled handle of a pithos of coarse red clay. A cross is incised at the top of the handle.

For references, see the bibliography (above) for 4 P 1040 (Inscription 11).

8 P 1036. Inscription 10 (Fig. 2).

From Square K-10 (19 vii 1973). A coarse jug handle of buff clay with a smooth but unslipped surface marked with the sign. Length: 0.10 m., thickness: 0.025 m.

This comes from a level with both White Slip I and White Slip II sherds beneath a niche containing a coarse water jar intact next to a well which had both Minoan pieces of Late Minoan IIIA 1, and good White Slip II and Apliki ware. The date should be in the early or middle 14th century.

Ventris and Chadwick, Documents 62, fig. 11 # 35.

9 P 938. Inscription 9 (Fig. 2).

From Square L-13, at the south end of the Pithos Storeroom in House B.¹² Marks on opposite sides of the rim of a large pithos (mended winter 1973). Height: ca. 1.30 m., diameter of rim: 0.402 m. Gray clay, pale gray-white slip.

This is one of three pithoi mended from the masses of pithos sherds cracked by the bull-dozer and spread along the west wall of House B; it is the smallest of the three. The context, as for all the latest floor of House B, is given by the Late Mycenaean plate mentioned above, and by certain classes of local pottery which include coarse wares ultimately dependent on Mycenaean shapes, and bucchero and Base Ring II; the range should be ca. 1230—1200, or close to 1220 B. C. if the span of use is as short as it seems. Thermoluminescence dates for two sherds from the same floor are 1215 B. C. and 1207 B. C.

a: Courtois, Sanctuaire 190; 192, fig. 40; 193, fig. 41. Karageorghis, Athienou 658, fig. 88, sign 7. E. Masson, RDAC 1972, 130, fig. 5. O. Masson, Lingots 451, fig. 1, fig. 2; 452, fig. 3, fig. 4. O. Masson and Karageorghis, News pl. I, i and iv. Taylor, Myrtou-Pigadhes 95, fig. 35 # 1.

b: Daniel, Prolegomena 280, Class I # 48; 281, Class V # 5.

10 and 11 P 930a, b Inscription 6: and P 931 Inscription 7 (Figs. 2, 3).

Three non-joining pithos sherds.

P 930 (6 vii 73)¹³

a. From Square G 6, Locus 11. Preserved length: 0.097 m., preserved width: 0.03 m.

b. From Square G 5. Preserved length: 0.06 m., preserved width: 0.034 m.

P 931 (13 vii 73)

From Square G 6/7 baulk. Maximum preserved dimensions: 0.11 m. by 0.06 m.

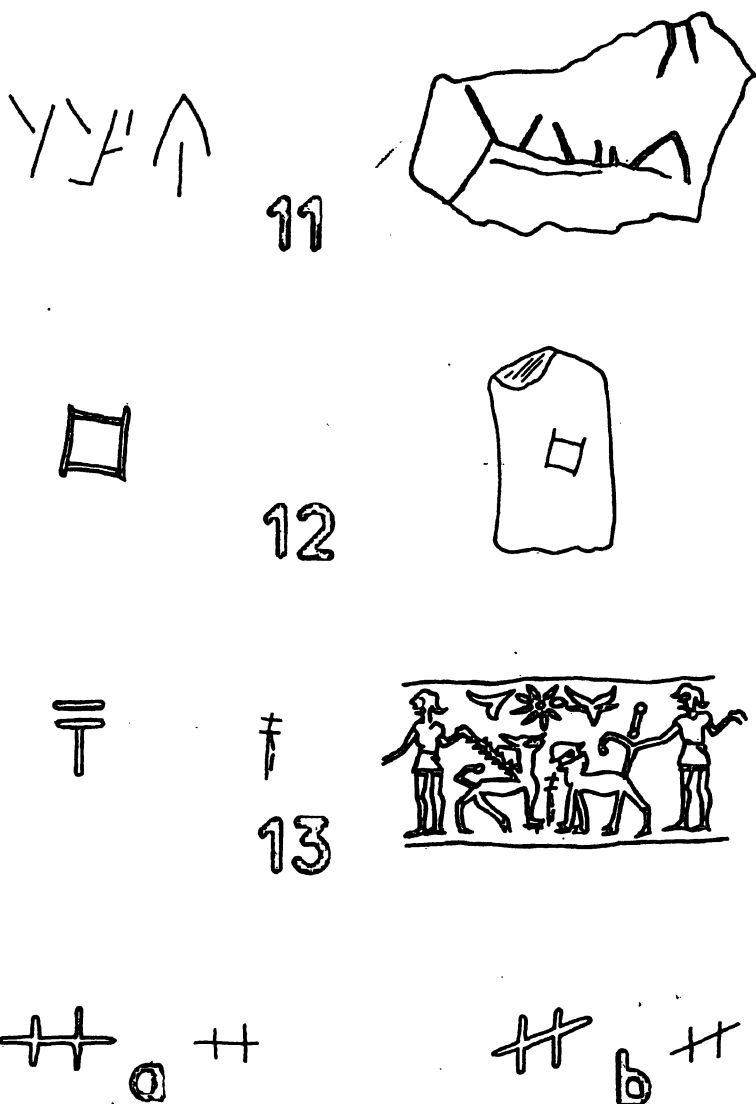
The most impressive of the Toumba tou Skourou marks, which may be an inscription, is badly broken, incomplete, and in an uncertain context.

West of the Lower Buildings, on higher ground north of the ramp, are remains of light Bronze Age foundations only one course thick. There was also a single row of stones just below the disturbed surface, interpreted as a late Geometric wall, with Cypro-Geometric III White

¹² Toumba tou Skourou, fig. 2

¹³ Ibid. fig. 24

Painted and Black-on-Red wares, and an iron sickle blade. Immediately under this wall, in a layer of soil containing bones and brick fragments, were these three fragments of a coarse pithos, very deeply incised with signs. The other pottery included fragments of Late Cypriot III Decorated bowls, with thin orange stripes on a gray fabric, and late bucchero, as well as Black Slip III, Base Ring I and II, and White Slip I.



Pithos - J 16 Floor C

Fig. 3

This mixed context must have been formed at a relatively late date, around 1200 B.C. LC III wares are scarce at Toumba tou Skourou, occurring mostly outside the limits of the site north of the mound, and scattered in disturbed levels along the south perimeter. The forms of these signs seem comparable to those of Late Bronze Age Enkomi.

The marks were deeply incised, probably when the clay was wet; the pithos is coarse buff-red clay with a gray-white surface.

P 931 has a smoothed curve inside, and one smoothed edge; it was possibly the edge of a handle tab for a large jar.

Although there is only one recognizable letter, the third character on P 930 a, which resembles an arrow with a double bar across the shaft, the relationship of the characters to one another points strongly to the probability that they form part of an inscription. The mark immediately to the left of the arrow-sign on P 930 a may be a word-divider.

The mark on P 930 b, an inverted and curvilinear V with a form of dot at the base of one line, and the fragmentary diagonal lines on P 931, could be related to several different signs of the Cypro-Minoan script. Although not enough remains to identify a certain combination of letters, a possibility for the signs on P 931 might be as sketched to the left in Figure 3.¹⁴

If the mark on P 930 b is viewed with the vertex up, placing the dot at the end of the line on the left, it suggests a version of Daniel's Class I, # 21 from Kourion.

930 a, sign 3: E. Masson, Boules 502, fig. 50, # 12; Rouleau 469, fig. 3, # 5.

930 b: cf. to Daniel, Prolegomena 279, Class I, # 21.

931: The first set of diagonal lines — cf. to Masson, Boules 502, fig. 50, # 30, # 36; 503, D, E. The second set of three lines — cf. to Masson, Boules 482, fig. 4, sign 3. The last character is perhaps similar to E. Masson, Boules 502, fig. 50, # 8, or # 9; E. Masson, Rouleau 469, fig. 3, # 1 or # 2.

12 P 665. Inscription 3 (Fig. 3).

Square AB 0-1, bull-dozer debris at the extreme northwest corner of the site (7 vii 72). Fragment of coarse pithos handle. Length: 0.062 m. Buff clay.

¹⁴ Compare this combination to Masson, E., Boules, 482, fig. 4, where similar letters appear as part of a longer inscription. There is the strong probability that additional sherds from the same pithos may come to light when the remaining baulks at the site will be completely excavated, and at that time, one hopes, the mystery of this inscription will be solved.

There is a simple square incised on the upper surface of the handle. This part of the site contained the bulging heaps of stones left where the bull-dozer had pushed all the Bronze Age house walls into two heaps. The pottery is almost entirely Bronze Age with a few pieces of Proto White Painted ware of the early twelfth century. The potmark probably belongs to the end of the thirteenth century, contemporary with those from the lower buildings.

O. Masson, *Documents Chypro-Minoens* 391, fig. 3 #20. Ventris and Chadwick, *Documents* 62, fig. 11 #32.

13 Stone 23 (Fig. 3).

Lapis lazuli cylinder seal with gold caps.¹⁵ Tomb 2, Chamber 4 (T.2.104, S.4.18; 28 vii 72). Height: 0.019 m., diameter: 0.007 m., diameter of caps: 0.008 m.

A sign between two animals on a lapis cylinder seal from an Amarna Age burial probably has no syllabic value but forms an automatic element in Cypriot glyptic.¹⁶ The scene is described by Professor E. Porada as an "heroic" scene, of a type which is well-known on other materials in Cyprus, usually steatite. Lapis lazuli is extremely uncommon on Cyprus, but there seems no reason to doubt that this scene was locally made, not an import,¹⁷ and that the sign should be associated with those found on other Cypriot seals. A male figure wearing a short kilt, with hair curved up at the neck (the plume of a helmet?) holds a lion by the tail and a griffin by the tip of the wing. In the field above is a rayed design, a boukranion, and a small vertical animal. Professor Porada, who rolled the seal for us, noticed a thinly scratched sign hanging between the opposed faces of the griffin and lion. Most seals of this class have more than one sign when inscribed at all,¹⁸ so that this particular sign (Daniel, *Prolegomena*, Class VI, #12) should function non-syllabically, as a potmark does in its sphere.

¹⁵ *Toumba tou Skourou*, fig. 69

¹⁶ Communication from Prof. E. L. Bennett.

¹⁷ Of the five cylinder seals found so far at *Toumba tou Skourou* (one by P. Dikaios, three in Tomb 1, one in Tomb 2 s.4) only one seems imported, or at least connected to a Syro-Cilician group. While the tomb-context for this one is markedly Mycenaean the seal is obviously not a Mycenaean type. Aegean gems are not normally found on Cyprus; see E. Porada, *The Mycenaeans in the Eastern Mediterranean* 260 ff., and discussion 405. *Toumba tou Skourou* produced one uncarved carnelian lentoid of Minoan or Mycenaean type (St 44).

¹⁸ E. Porada, *The Cylinder Seals of the Late Cypriote Bronze Age*, *AJA* 52, 1948, 178—98; close to Group III with several inscribed members and a preference for short-kilted

The cylinder seal has a good closed context, in a burial of a young woman of about 25 years which marked a reuse of an older (LC I A) chamber; among her funeral gifts were two Mycenaean pilgrim flasks, a stirrup-jar, and a pyxis, of LH III A:2, so that the date must be close to 1350 B.C. A number of ivory pyxis lids with gold rivets suggest a wealthy background for her, confirmed by the lapis cylinder.

Daniel, *Prolegomena* 282, Class VI # 12. E. Masson, Boules 502, fig. 50 # 5. O. Masson, *Cylindres* 10, 11, fig. 4; 21, fig. 15. Porada, *Cylinder Seals* 188; pl. IX # 20 (M.M.A. # 4311). Ventris and Chadwick, *Documents* 62, fig. 11 # 5 (Enkomi), # 5 (Ugarit).

Two uninventoried pot marks were found in a brick wall on Floor C in Square J 16. The part of the wall extending to the north was filled with green clay sherds, enough to make three or four pithoi.

On a neck fragment of one of these pithoi were two potmarks: mark a † was found on the side of the rim; mark b # was found on the top of the rim. The context is the same as the late floors of the lower buildings; the end of the thirteenth century B.C.

The only difference between the two marks appears to be the angle of the single horizontal line in relation to the two crossing lines.

Parallels: Åström, *Pot Marks* 152, fig. 3; 159, fig. 12.

The potmarks of Toumba tou Skourou can almost all be matched from other parts of the island, and are of common forms, suggesting that one should not expect any differentiation in the northwest sector of Cyprus, but that the Morphou plain participated in a common Cypriot civilization from the fifteenth to the thirteenth centuries. The elements of culture which seem to be particular to the Morphou region belong to the earliest phases of the site, in the sixteenth and early fifteenth centuries, represented particularly in the showcase of pottery development provided by Tomb I. This particularity is contemporary with the foundation of the site and with the construction of the basin building. After that the forms of Late Bronze Age culture apparently become more generalized, and it would be hard to distinguish the developed Base Ring I and White Slip I wares of Toumba tou Skourou from those of the east

figures, lions, griffins, and sphinxes, of the earlier fourteenth century. O. Masson, *Cylindres et cachets chypriotes portant des caractères chyro-minoens*, BCH 81, 1957, 6ff. The Kourion seal so often studied is close but more elaborate in general character (MMA 74.51.4311; Myres, *Cesnola Collection* 434—5; Daniel, *Prolegomena* 269, 282; Masson, *op. cit.* 10—11, fig. 4; Porada, *op. cit.* no. 20).

or south of the island. The potmarks suggest a similar development, and since they were all made after the initial experimental phase of cultural establishment it is not surprising that they belong to a koiné of proto-literacy. Their value as a group is that they are, in some cases, stratified¹⁹.

It is worth noting that among the archaeological remains from this small plot of land, there are no painted inscriptions. These are, of course, particularly common in the periods marked by Mycenaean III A:2 and III B pottery, which are so ill-represented at Toumba tou Skourou except for the one Amarna Age burial (Tomb 2 Chamber 4) and one stirrup-jar rolled along by the bull-dozer. Either because the period is missing at the site, or for some other reason, dipinto potmarks are known neither here nor at Myrtou Pigadhes.

¹⁹ At some time during the recent hostilities on Cyprus, the building at Skouriotissa, where the stratified sherds of Toumba tou Skourou had been stored, was completely looted, and virtually all of the sherds lost; consequently, the context for the inscriptions can no longer be checked.