

ANNA PANAYOTOU

MYCENAEAN *ko-no-ni-pi*\*

1. The two contexts

The Mycenaean word *ko-no-ni-pi* occurs in the Pylos tablet Ta 714.3 and in the Knossos tablet K 434.2<sup>1</sup>. In the former it refers to a footstool and in the latter to a vase. In both cases it is in instrumental form and is specified in PY Ta 714.3 by the adjective *ku-ru-sa-pi* which is feminine and in instrumental form as well, and is accompanied in KN K 434.2 by the word ]*de-wa-pi*, which is probably a feminine adjective, also in instrumental form<sup>2</sup>. The second tablet shows an ideogram of a vase with a projection like a ring round the base of the neck  $\text{Ø}^3$  (Fig. 1).

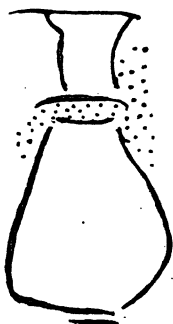


Fig. 1. KN K 434 (No. \*217 VAS)

2. Previous interpretations

The following interpretations have been proposed for the word: as a substantive in - $\nu\iota\omicron\varsigma$  or  $\nu\iota\delta\omicron\varsigma$ <sup>4</sup>, related etymologically to the Classical

\* For abbreviations see p. 160, below.

<sup>1</sup> The editions used are, naturally, these of E. L. Bennett & J.-P. Olivier, *The Pylos Tablets Transcribed, Part I: Texts and Notes*, Incunabula Graeca 51, Roma 1972 for the Pylos tablets (pp. 230–1 for the Ta class), and J. Chadwick, J. T. Killen, J.-P. Olivier, *The Knossos Tablets*<sup>4</sup>, Cambridge 1971, for the Knossos tablets (p. 209 for KN K 434).

<sup>2</sup> Lejeune, *Mém.* I, 163 n. 15; for the word in general cf. Lejeune, *op. cit.*, 166, 170 n. 48, 172; *Docs.*, 329; Morpurgo, *Lexicon*, s. v.; Doria, *Atti Roma II*, 1967, 768.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Vandenabeele & Olivier, *Idéogrammes*, 241–2, fig. 165, pl. CXXV.

<sup>4</sup> Ventris, *Eranos* 53, 1955, 122.

Greek κανών, -όνος. This connection was first made, with reservations, by Ventris<sup>5</sup>, who interpreted the word as "cross-bar", "rod", citing Homer, Iliad N 407: τήν (sc. ἀσπίδα) φορέεσκε, δύο κανόνεσσ' ἀρα-  
 γυῖαν. Here, as in Θ 193, the word κανών has the meaning of "staves", possibly used to keep the shield in shape, or to form the handles by which the warrior grasped it<sup>6</sup>. This same view was suggested in the Vocabulary published by Chadwick, in collaboration with Baumbach<sup>7</sup>; but in Documents<sup>2</sup>, Chadwick continued to express some reservations about the interpretation<sup>8</sup>.

In 1960, this theory was accepted by Lejeune<sup>9</sup> and Taillardat<sup>10</sup>. A few years later, Ruijgh<sup>11</sup> also accepted the connection with κανών and translated the word as "règle, bande". Doria amended his original interpretation of "manico, impugnatura"<sup>12</sup> to "scanalatura" or "fascia decorativa"<sup>13</sup>, "filettatura"<sup>14</sup>, and also (for the Pylos tablet only) "asticciola, traversa, sbarra trasversale" (of the footstool)<sup>15</sup>.

Palmer accepted the connection with κανών, also with reservations, and translated *ko-no-ni-pi* in PY Ta 714.3 as "cross-bars"<sup>16</sup>; but admitted the difficulty of this interpretation in KN K 434.2, where he proposed the translation "with a band round the neck"<sup>17</sup>. The same interpretation was also accepted by Milani<sup>18</sup>, Chantraine<sup>19</sup>, Brein<sup>20</sup>, Furnée<sup>21</sup> and Meier<sup>22</sup>,

<sup>5</sup> L. c.; Docs<sup>2</sup>, 329, 555.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. LSJ, sv. κανών; Gossen & Steier, RE II A, 1, I. Schild, col. 421; Χατζηδάκης, Ἀθηνᾶ 38, 1926, 19–20; Leaf, Iliad, comments on N 407 and also the explanatory drawings (for the 'figure-of-eight' shield) in the Appendix B, I, p. 569–73, figs. 5–9; E. Masson, Emprunts, 47–8; Chantraine, Dict. Ét., s. v. κανών; but cf. Borchardt, who in a recent study regards the question as an open one: Frühgriechische Schildformen, Archaeologica Homerica I, Kapitel E, Teil 1, p. 4.

<sup>7</sup> Glotta 41, 1963, 207–8, s. v. καννα.

<sup>8</sup> Docs<sup>2</sup>, 555.

<sup>9</sup> BSL 55.2, 1960, 93.

<sup>10</sup> REG 73, 1960, 3.

<sup>11</sup> Études, 291 n. 14; τε épique, 215.

<sup>12</sup> Interpretazioni di testi micenei I, le tavolette Ta di Pilo, Trieste 1956, 14 (non vidi); reference from Doria, Atti Roma II, 1967, 768, n. 21.

<sup>13</sup> Atti Roma II, 1967, 768 n. 21; Lessico, 18, s. v. καννα.

<sup>14</sup> Atti Roma II, 1967, 769.

<sup>15</sup> Tavolette Ta, 53–4.

<sup>16</sup> Interpretation, 351, 429.

<sup>17</sup> Op. cit., 351.

<sup>18</sup> Aevum 41, 1967, 209.

<sup>19</sup> Dict. Ét., s. v. κανών.

<sup>20</sup> Brein, Hirsch, 112–3 and n. 133 of Chap. II.

<sup>21</sup> E. Furnée, Die wichtigsten konsonantischen Erscheinungen des Vorgriechischen, La Haye–Paris 1972, 303.

<sup>22</sup> "(-δ-)", 72.

each of whom expressed reservations, as did Morpurgo<sup>23</sup> and Masson<sup>24</sup>, perhaps even more strongly. These reservations are of three kinds, phonological, morphological and semantic.

From a phonological point of view, there are problems in accepting that *kan-* and *kon-* are different developments from the Semitic \*k<sup>o</sup>n, whence come the word *κάννα* (= reed)<sup>25</sup> and its derivative *κάνων*<sup>26</sup>. Lejeune<sup>27</sup> considers that a two-fold development of this kind is possible in a loan word, a view shared by Doria<sup>28</sup> (though he envisages such a possibility only in a nasal – and a dialectical – environment)<sup>29</sup> and by Chadwick<sup>30</sup>: the last-named, however, does not fail to express his doubts as to the correctness of the interpretation, since the Mycenaean texts mention the word *ka-ne-ja*, which is probably related etymologically to *κάννα* and *κάνων*<sup>31</sup>. Ruijgh<sup>32</sup> explains the difference as the consequence of the assimilation of non-contiguous vowels<sup>33</sup>.

There are also different shades of opinion concerning the morphology: Doria<sup>34</sup> transcribes the word as /*κανονίτφι*/, Palmer<sup>35</sup> /*κανονί(δ)φι*/, Brein<sup>36</sup> /*κονονί(δ)φι*/, Ruijgh<sup>37</sup> /*κονονίπφι*/, Chadwick<sup>38</sup> /*κονονίφι*/, and Meier<sup>39</sup> /*κονόνι(σ)φι*/.

There is disagreement also about the exact meaning of the word. Jones<sup>40</sup> concludes that in both tablets it has to do with “structural

<sup>23</sup> Lexicon, s. v. *ko-no-ni-pi*.

<sup>24</sup> Emprunts, 47–8, s. v. *κάννα*.

<sup>25</sup> L. Meyer, Gr. Et. 306, s. v. *κανόν* (*κάνων*); Masson, Emprunts, 47–8, s. v. *κάννα*; Chantraine, Dict. Ét., s. v. *κάννα*; Frisk, GEW, s. v. *κάννα*; Docs<sup>2</sup>, 550.

<sup>26</sup> Chadwick & Baumbach, Vocabulary, 207, s. v. *κάννα*; Chantraine, l. c.; Frisk, l. c.

<sup>27</sup> BSL 55.2, 1960, 93.

<sup>28</sup> Lessico, 15.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Milani, Aevum 41, 1967, 209.

<sup>30</sup> Docs<sup>2</sup>, 550; however, is this simultaneous development a real difficulty, considering the development of *ʳ* for example, in Mycenaean Greek, in the same phonetic environment?

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Lang, AJA 69, 1965, 98–101; Ruijgh, Études, 238; Chantraine, Dict. Ét., s. v. *κάννα*.

<sup>32</sup> Études, 291 n. 14.

<sup>33</sup> As is probably the case with the Greek *κάλαμος*: cf. Pokorny, TEW, s. v. *kolamo-s*, *kolamā*.

<sup>34</sup> PP 15, 1961, 408; Avviamento, 44; Lessico, 14.

<sup>35</sup> Interpretation<sup>2</sup>, 351.

<sup>36</sup> Hirsch, 112.

<sup>37</sup> Études, 291.

<sup>38</sup> Docs<sup>2</sup>, 555.

<sup>39</sup> “-ιδ-”, 72; cf. however, Perpillou, Kratylos 20, 1975, 93, who doubts the possibility of the reconstruction of an /s/ in the word.

<sup>40</sup> Glotta 37, 1958, 113; cf. also Brein, Hirsch, n. 133 of Chapt. II.

parts: handles of some special shape or kind". The difficulty here, however, is that the ideogram on the Knossos tablet shows no handles<sup>41</sup>, quite clearly<sup>42</sup>. Lejeune<sup>43</sup> and Morpurgo<sup>44</sup>, on the other hand, consider that it is a decorative element, while Ilievski<sup>45</sup> regards it, along with ]*de-wa-pi* and other words, as "elements of the description of what are, perhaps, metal vases". In the Vocabulary<sup>46</sup> Chadwick and Baumbach consider it as "part of, or a piece attached to, a jug or a chair", while in Documents<sup>47</sup> Chadwick writes simply: "part of the decoration". Gray<sup>48</sup>, on the other hand, does not consider the cross-bars convincing on archaeological grounds. One more point is relevant here: all the derivatives of *κάνων* retain the sense of "straight"<sup>49</sup>. How is this to be reconciled with the vase shown in the ideogram?

Georgiev<sup>50</sup> adopted a different etymological approach, asserting that *ko-no-ni-pi* is related to the noun *κοινών*, -ῶνος, which has the sense of "associé, compagnon", but without any further comments.

According to Mühlestein<sup>51</sup>, the word indicates a decorative motif, which he transcribes as /σχαιν-ορνίπ-φι/, the first component being the name of a water-bird, the *σχαινίλος*.

### 3. Proposed interpretation

The first explanation based on the ideogram and its archaeological parallels is that of Vandenamee & Olivier. They identified by shape the vase in the Knossos tablet with those made from real ostrich eggs.

<sup>41</sup> Vandenamee & Olivier, *Idéogrammes*, 241–2 n. 3.

<sup>42</sup> The error here perhaps arose from a misunderstanding of the description of the vase by Evans, who discerned thereon a partially erased handle. The handle was obviously drawn by mistake, and the careful scribe erased it; cf. Docs<sup>2</sup>, 329; this latter view has been supported also by Brein, Hirsch, n. 133 of Chapt. II.

<sup>43</sup> *Mém.* I, 172, n. 54; BSL 55.2, 1960, 93.

<sup>44</sup> *Lexicon*, s. v. *ko-no-ni-pi*.

<sup>45</sup> *Abl. Instr. Loc.* 109.

<sup>46</sup> *Glotta* 41, 1963, 207, s. v. *κάννα*.

<sup>47</sup> 2nd Ed. p. 555.

<sup>48</sup> BICS 6, 1959, 53.

<sup>49</sup> Stephani, *Thes.* s. v.; LSJ s. v.; Passow, *HGS* s. v.; Frisk, *GEW*, s. v.; Chantraine, *Dict. Ét.* s. v.; this is also true of modern Greek when the word does not have a metaphorical sense.

<sup>50</sup> *Lexique*, Suppl. II, s. v.

<sup>51</sup> *Glotta* 36, 1958, 154 n. 9; cf. also Hurst & Bruschweiler, *Colloquium Chaumont sur Neuchâtel*, 1975, 68.

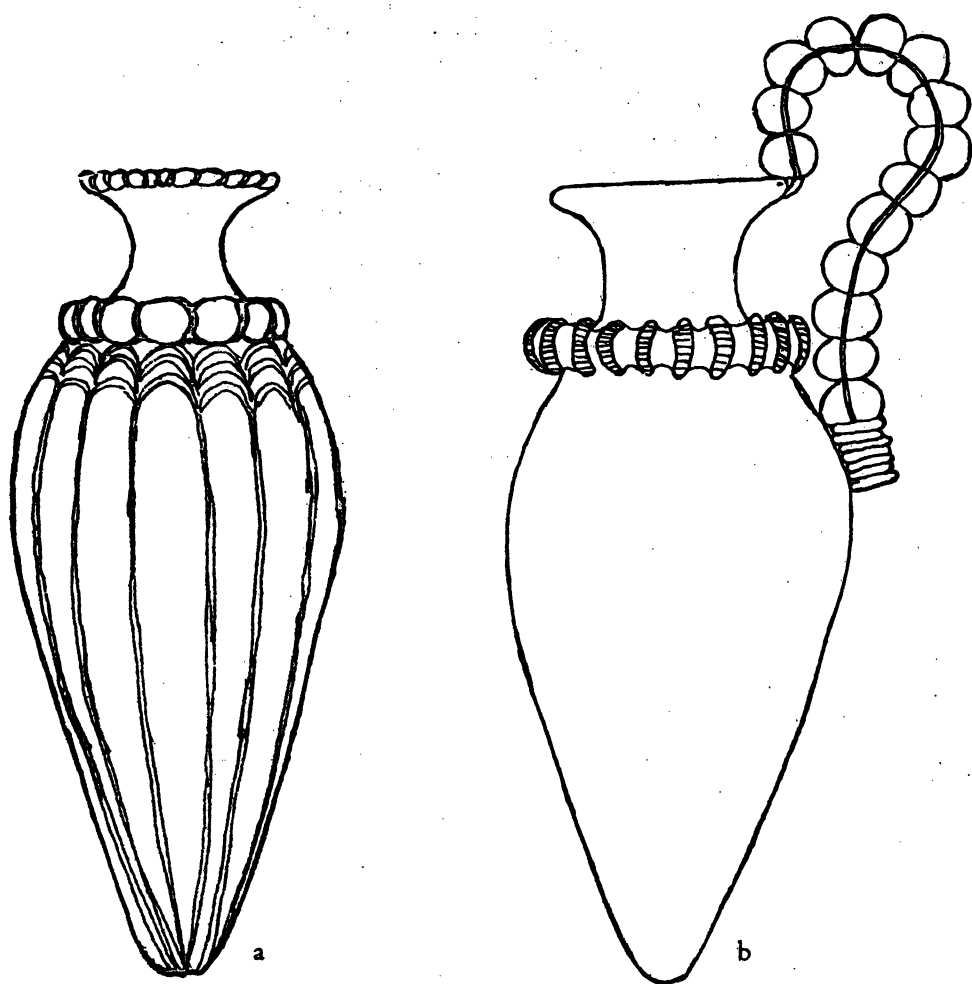


Fig. 2. a. Rhyton from Knossos (P. Warren, *Stone Vases*, No. 481)

b. Rhyton from Zakros (N. Platon, *Zakros*, Photo. No. 71)

The Knossian *ko-no-ni-pi* would, therefore, represent «des barres, des bandes» and «peut se rapporter à la décoration de bandes en bronze, telle que . . . montre l'exemplaire de Dendra» (Idéogrammes 241–5).

I agree – and this must be a widely shared view – that in cases where an ideogram exists, we should to some extent be guided by it; even allowing that there will be a large element of the conventional in a rough sketch incised in clay (though the hand which drew it, of course, was professionally trained for precisely this work).

The ring which is clearly indicated around the neck of the vase in the Knossos tablet, therefore, has led me to think of a number of possible archaeological parallels on actual vases.

In fact, as early as MM III, stone vases occur, with neck, spout or handles made of different pieces<sup>52</sup>. The reason for this is purely technical — it was difficult to make stone vases from single pieces of stone. This practice was also employed in metal vases<sup>53</sup>. On both stone and metal vases (and later on ceramic examples influenced by them) there is a ring, which is frequently moveable, at the junction of the separate neck and shoulder, intended to prevent leaking<sup>54</sup>, and later to serve a purely decorative purpose. There are many examples of this type, such as the well-known rhyton from Zakro<sup>55</sup> (Fig. 2).

In brief, there is a similarity between the ideogram on KN K 434.2 and a vase type characterized by a ring used to join its two separate parts. This ring is frequently stressed in the decoration. One may ask therefore whether *ko-no-ni-pi* indicated precisely this kind of joint, or indeed “joint” in general, in Mycenaean Greek.

The work by Philo Mechanicus, Βελοποικιά 57, 19, contains the word κοίνωμα, -ατος, meaning “mortised joint”, “bond”; and also its diminutive κοινωμάτιον, with the specific meaning “small chain”, “iron joint”, “bond”<sup>56</sup>.

The word κοίνωμα, derived from the verb κοινώω, -ῶ, might form the basis for the positing of a term \*κοινωνίς, meaning “little joint”, “little bond”, which phonologically would suit the *ko-no-ni-pi* of the tablets, that is /κοινωνί(π)φι/.

The term \*κοινωνίς, in turn, presupposes the existence of a noun κοινωνός, meaning “bond”, “connection”, or something of the kind. The word occurs in classical Greek, but in a metaphorical sense<sup>57</sup>.

The infix -ιδ- is commonly attested in technical terms, as early as in the Homeric epics<sup>58</sup>.

<sup>52</sup> Pendlebury, The Archaeology of Crete, London 1939, 164–5.

<sup>53</sup> A. Furumark, Mycenaean Pottery I. Analysis and Classification, Stockholm 1972, p. 87.

<sup>54</sup> P. Warren, Minoan Stone Vases, Cambridge 1969, p. 84; Furumark, l. c. N. Platon, Zakros, the Discovery of a Lost Palace of Ancient Crete, (USA), 1971, pp. 135, 136; S. Hood, The Arts in Prehistoric Greece, (England), 1978, p. 148.

<sup>55</sup> Platon, Zakros, 136; S. Hood, The Minoans. Crete in the Bronze Age, London 1971, p. 227, pl. 77; id., Arts, 148; for other examples see Platon op. cit., 129 and ph. p. 10, p. 135 and ph. p. 65, p. 163 and ph. 165 — all three dating from around 1450 B.C.; also, Hood, Arts, 37 — a slightly later example from Pseira; N. Πλάτων, Ζάκρος, τό νέον μινωικόν ανάκτορον, Ἀθήναι 1974, pp. 113–4, fig. 80; A. Evans, The Palace of Minos I, 1921, 412, fig. 296.

<sup>56</sup> Passow, H.G.S., s. v.; Γιάνναρης, Λεξικόν, s. v.

<sup>57</sup> LSJ, s. v.

<sup>58</sup> Chantraine, Formation, 336.

The *κοινωνί(π)φι* of Ta 714.3, with the meaning "with (small) joints" should not cause any particular difficulties. Joints of some kind are to be expected<sup>59</sup>, and, in any case, the precise meaning of the Hellenistic term would not necessarily be the same as that of the Mycenaean<sup>60</sup>.

In the case of the Knossos tablet, however, it would clearly have to be translated "with *one* joint". But such a singular usage is at odds with the opinion of most scholars, who either assume, or assert categorically, that in the Mycenaean period the suffix *-φι* indicated a plural, or more rarely a dual<sup>61</sup>, in contrast with the practice in the Epics<sup>62</sup>.

Doria<sup>63</sup>, on the other hand, and also Luria<sup>64</sup>, assert that it can also indicate a singular. I accept this possibility, which is not excluded by the belief of some scholars<sup>65</sup> that «(la désinence *-φι*,) sans être exclusivement attachée à un nombre déterminé, paraît, au moins dans la troisième déclinaison, essentiellement employée au pluriel»<sup>66</sup>.

<sup>59</sup> Cf., for example, the drawings of the construction of a Babylonian footstool (1600 B.C.) in H. Baker, *Furniture in the Ancient World. Origins and Evolution. 3100–475 B.C.*, London 1966, pp. 218–9, figs. 353, 354.

<sup>60</sup> For a hypothetical reconstruction of Mycenaean footstools and the archaeological finds see the excellent work of Vandenabeele & Olivier, *Idéogrammes*, 161–76.

<sup>61</sup> On this point, cf. Chantraine, *Grammaire I*, 234; P. Mazon, *Introduction à l'Iliade*, Paris 1967<sup>2</sup>, 117; Lejeune, *BSL* 52, 1956, 170–201 (= *Mém. I*, 159–84); G. P. Shipp, *Essays in Mycenaean and Homeric Greek*, Melbourne 1961, p. 29; Ilievski, *SMEA* 12, 1970, 104–5.

<sup>62</sup> On the suffix *-φι* in general, see selectively Chantraine, *BSL* 37, 1936, 116–27; Ventris, *Eranos* 53, 1955, 112; Lejeune, *BSL* 52, 1956, 170–201 (= *Mém. I*, 159–84); Luria, *PP* 12, 1957, 325–6; Tovar, *Μνήμης Χάρις*, *Gedenkschrift Paul Kretschmer II*, Wien 1957, 190; Lejeune, *RPh* 32, 1958, 214–5; Chadwick, *PP* 13, 1958, 291–2; Risch, *MH* 16, 1959, 220; Householder, *Glotta* 38, 1960, 8; Vilborg, *Grammar*, 97; Ilievski, *Abl. Instr. Loc.*, 104; Chadwick, *JHS* 83, 1963, 175; Schmidt, *Glotta* 41, 1963, 6–7; Morpurgo, *Cambridge Colloquium*, 1965, 197–9; Ruijgh, *Études*, 85; Lejeune, *RPh* 42, 1968, 219; Ilievski, *SMEA* 12, 1970, 104 ff.; Morpurgo, *Glotta* 47, 1970, 47, 53; Vega, *Sintaxis Griega I*, Madrid 1968, non vidi (from a summary published in *SMEA* 15, 1972, 238); Lejeune, *Mém. III*, 168; V. Pisani, *Manuale storico della lingua greca*, seconda edizione con un'appendice: il miceneo, di C. Milani, 1973, 251; *Docs*<sup>2</sup>, 86–7, 402; G. Devoto & A. Nacentini, *La lingua omerica e il dialetto miceneo*, Firenze 1975, 105 ff.; Bader, *BSL* 70.1, 1975, 36–8; Deroy, *AC* 45, 1976, 41 ff.; Adrados, *Emerita* 44.1, 1976, 84; Petruševski, *Ž Ant*, 28, 1978, 68; Ruijgh, *SMEA* 20, 1979, 80–2.

<sup>63</sup> *Interpretazioni I*, 9 ff. (see note 11); *Interpretazioni II*, 9 n. 23; *Atti Roma II*, 1967, 765 (with a bibliography up to that date); for a critique of his views, cf. Ilievski, *SMEA* 12, 1970, 107, 111.

<sup>64</sup> *PP* 12, 1957, 326; cf. Chadwick, *PP* 13, 1958, 292.

<sup>65</sup> Lejeune, *BSL* 52, 1956, 183; Chantraine, *Athenaeum* 36, 1958, 21–2 [315–6]; Deroy, *AC* 45, 1976, 74.

<sup>66</sup> Lejeune, *l. c.*

According to the thesis here proposed *ko-no-ni-pi* would be a further example of the use of  $-\phi\iota$  in a singular sense.

\*List of less common abbreviations:

- Brein, Hirsch: Fr. Brein, *Der Hirsch in der griechischen Frühzeit*, Wien 1969  
 Doria, Avviamento: M. Doria, *Avviamento allo studio del Miceneo*, Roma 1965  
 Doria, Lessico: M. Doria, *Il lessico miceneo*, Trieste 1969  
 Doria, Tavolette Ta: M. Doria, *Come si legge e si interpreta una serie di documenti epigrafici in Lineare B: Le tavolette Ta di Pilo*, Trieste 1970  
 Ilievski, Abl. Instr. Loc.: P. Ilievski, *The Ablative, Instrumental and Locative in the Oldest Greek Texts. Antiquité Vivante (Ž Ant.) N° 2*, Skopje 1961  
 Masson, Emprunts: E. Masson, *Recherches sur les plus anciens emprunts sémitiques en grec*, Paris 1967  
 Meier,  $-\iota\delta-$ : M. Meier,  $-\iota\delta-$  *Zur Geschichte eines griechischen Nominal suffixes*, Göttingen 1975  
 Vandenabeele & Olivier, Idéogrammes: Fr. Vandenabeele & J. P. Olivier, *Les idéogrammes archéologiques du linéaire B*, Paris 1979.