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NEW LINEAR B TABLETS FROM KHANIA*

During three months, in May, June and July 1990, the Greek-Swedish Excavations at Kastelli, Khania, carried out, on behalf of the Ephoreia of Classical and Prehistoric Antiquities in Western Crete, a rescue excavation in the Parodos Kanevaro.¹ The municipality of Khania was to lay a new drainage in the street and a trench of 50 × 1.0 m was excavated to the depth of 1.50–2.00 m for the new drainage, as well as two extensions, measuring ca. 3 × 1–2.5 m, to the modern houses (Fig. 1). During the course of this excavation, in fact on the last day but one, were discovered three Linear B tablets lying *in situ* on an LM IIIB:1 floor.

The tablets, which have been given the numbers **KH Ar 4**, **KH Gq 5**, and **KH X 6²**, were found in the destruction debris of the LM IIIA:2/IIIB:1 settlement from which up till now we have discovered

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We would also like to thank warmly Professor Emmett L. Bennett Jr. who has read a draft of the paper and whose comments have markedly improved the text. Needless to say, we are responsible for all stated opinions and remaining mistakes.

Finally we want to thank Professor W. C. Brice for his patience and for correcting the English text.

The drawings of the pottery are by Voula Vrontaki, draughtswoman of the Khania museum, while the remaining drawings and photographs are by EH.

¹ The field work at the excavation was directed by Mrs. Maria Vlasakis, Director of the Khania Museum, and Dr. Erik Hallager. On the site they were assisted by Ms. Hara Prokopiou, Mrs. Anne Marie Carstens, Mrs. Mette Korsgaard Pedersen and during May by Ms. Lena Sjögren. The Museum work was directed by Dr. Birgitta Pålsson Hallager, assisted by Ms. Lena Sjögren and Mrs. Anne Ingvarsson.

² This discovery came only one year after the first Linear B tablet(s) were discovered: Hallager, E., M. Vlasakis and B. P. Hallager, "The First Linear B Tablet(s) from Khania," *Kadmos* 29, 1990, 24–34. We have reserved the numbers 2 and 3 for the two possible tablets recognized in 1989: **KH Π 6659** and **KH 3**.

fragments of two fairly large building complexes, Houses I and II (Fig. 1). In both of these houses we noted clear traces of destruction by fire at the end of the period, although these could in no way be compared to the evidence of the violent conflagration which ended the LM IB period: and the signs of fire were more obvious in some rooms than others. Clear traces were noted in House I, Rooms A and C, and in House II, Room E, and it was in this last Room E that the tablets were found.

1. The Find Context

Of Room E (Fig. 2) we have exposed parts of three walls, which indicate a minimum size for the room of ca. 5×3 meters, widening towards the East, since the northern and supposed outer wall does not meet the western wall at a right angle. The floor, which was partially destroyed, was well constructed with very fine pebbles. Two small hearths were noted on this floor: the southern was a small squarish hearth measuring ca. 0.4×0.5 meter, while the northern was circular with a diameter of ca. 0.6 meter. The surface-level of both hearths was roughly the same as that of the surrounding floor. The room had been destroyed in a minor conflagration, the charred remains of which were found in all the excavated part of the room, though most clearly visible in the NW corner. Within the room we found a 20–40 cms undisturbed ‘destruction level’, the upper part of which consisted of a rather loose soil containing fallen stones from the walls while a thin and harder layer on the floor contained the floor deposit. Room E was sealed by a new building in the LM IIIB:2 period (Fig. 3). About half of the floor of Room E was excavated, and both in and below the floor the pottery was LM IIIA and IIIB:1.

From the floor deposit we collected sherds which enabled us to restore in various degrees of completeness six vases, five decorated and one plain, all dated to LM IIIB:1. Lying on the floor also were two fragmentary pieces of bronze, one of which adhered to some burnt clay, probably from a furnace; several obsidian artefacts; one stone tool; a piece of pumice; the fragment of a figurine³; and in the NW corner

³ This was found during the sieving of the soil immediately above the floor, and we thus do not know whether or not it may have been connected to the hearth in the northern part, as others from the GSE have been, cf. Hallager, E., “The Greek-Swedish Excavations at Khania,” in: *Proceedings of the Fifth International Cretological Congress at Ag. Nikolaos 1981, Heraklion 1986*, 149–150.

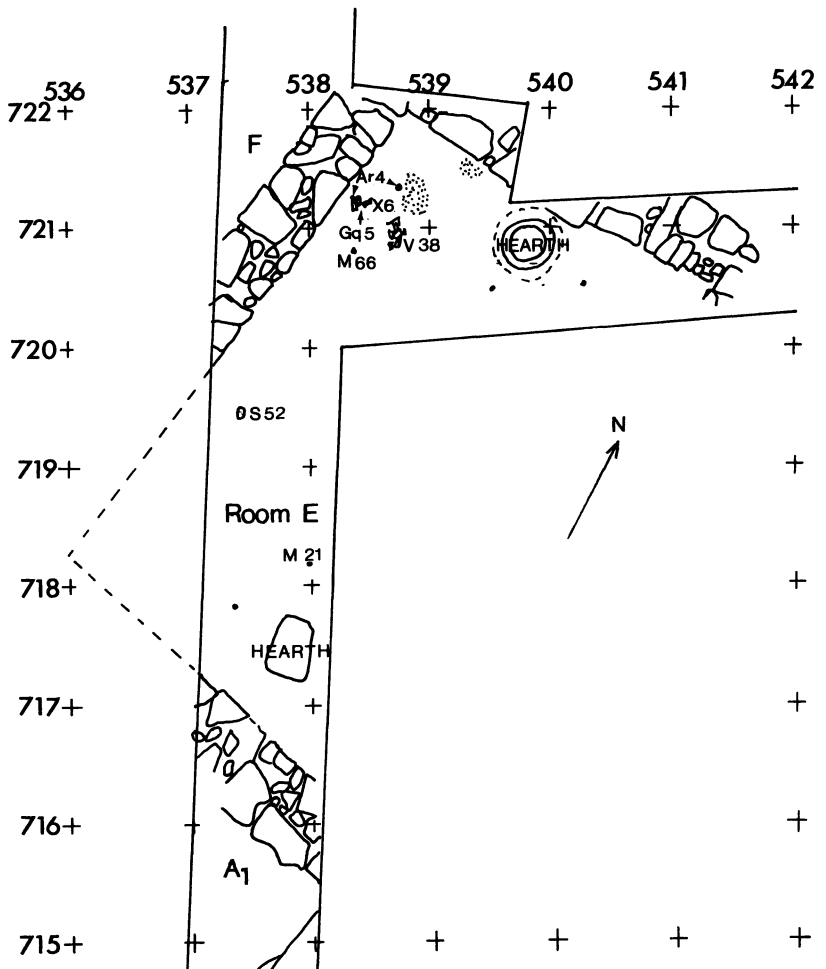


Fig. 2. House II, Room E with indications of the different finds. Legend: V (= vase); M (= metal); S (= stone), the remaining black dots are obsidian artifacts. Small dotted areas: concentrations of charcoal on the floor.

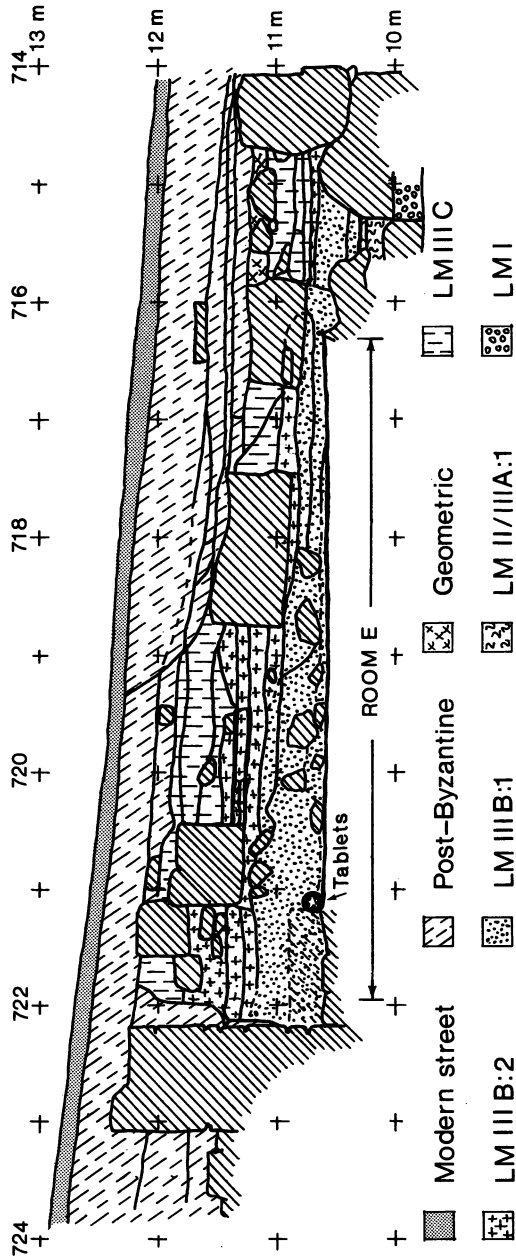


Fig. 3. Section through Room E.

a quantity of bones from sheep/goats and pigs^{3A}; and the fragment of a sealing with two incompletely preserved seal impressions. Around reference-point 538.4/721.16, the three Linear B tablets were lying on the floor: two were almost complete, and the third and largest lacked a little of its left end. One fragment belonging to this detached end was found on the floor 0.4 meters towards the NE (Fig. 2), an indication that the tablets may originally have lain at a higher level (on a shelf, stool, table?) and been broken during the fall. Immediately southeast of the find spot of the tablets was noted a small oval pit (ca. 0.32 × 0.12), the purpose of which we do not know.

The largest tablet, TC 69A (**KH Ar 4**), was lying with its inscribed face down, while the two smaller palm leaf-shaped tablets, TC 69B (**KH Gq 5**) and TC 70 (**KH X 6**), were found with the inscribed face upwards and with the incisions only very faintly preserved (Pl. 1).

The tablets were lying *on* (not *in*) the floor (Pl. 1). This became abundantly clear when several fragments from the larger tablet were found to be lying so loose that they could be lifted without difficulty. Moreover, the surface of the floor was found everywhere below the tablets⁴, and taking into account their soft, relatively badly burnt condition, it seems highly unlikely that the tablets could have survived so unharmed if they had been embedded in the floor. Evidently the tablets were baked and displaced during the devastation by the fire which finally destroyed the room.

In both of the houses destroyed in LM IIIB:1 (Fig. 1), certain rooms were cleared of the destruction debris and were thereafter in continuous use⁵; while others⁶ were overbuilt with new structures in LM IIIB:2.

^{3A} The assemblage of bones represented carpine and domestic pig skeletal remains and represented animals of differing ages. Among the carpine debris was noted an adult female sheep and a young lamb, both with many cut and chop marks. Of the pigs were found partial remains from four or five specimens: one adult, one or two subadults and two new-born or very young piglets. We are most grateful to Mr. Yannis Hamilakis (University of Sheffield) who also identified a few deer bones (*dama dama*) in the material, and to Ms. Lynn M. Schnyder (American School of Classical Studies) for undertaking the investigation of this faunal material, and to Ms. Schnyder for providing us with a full report which concludes: "Despite the lack of observable cut marks on pig elements, these scattered fragments of carpine and pig bone appear to be the remains of butchering or food debris."

⁴ The actual 'lifting' of the tablets and their preservation happened in the museum, in that we simply cut away the bit of the floor where the tablets were lying and brought it to the museum. One of the smaller tablets (Gq 5) was pressed slightly into the floor, but the surface below it was the same as that adjacent.

⁵ In House I Rooms E and F and partly G, and in House II, Room B.

⁶ House I, Rooms A—D and I, and House II, Room E.

In the first case (of continuous use) there were noted several floor-levels in the rooms (for example in the most extreme House II, Room B with five IIIB:1 floors and two IIIB:2 floors); while in those rooms which were sealed by the undisturbed destruction debris there were usually (with the exception of House I, Room A) just one or two floor levels at most, always with IIIB:1 pottery. All this points to contemporaneity between the houses, in respect both of construction and destruction, and it seems also to indicate that the LM IIIB:1 destruction did not take place in the beginning of this period: indeed, the presence of IIIB pottery in the constructions, and the fully developed style of the ceramics (see below), suggest a date at the end of IIIB:1 for both the destruction and the tablets.

2. The Pottery

Among the pottery found on the floor six vases could be reconstructed in varying degrees: a decorated cup, two bowls, two small stirrup jars and a plain stemmed cup. The decorated cup has a shape with no marked lip, common in LM IIIB (Fig. 4a and Pl. 2B, lower left). The type of handle could not be seen, as only faint traces of the attachment were preserved. The inside is painted with a lip band and a spiral at the base. Outside we find a variant of the Minoan flower, a decoration which appeared in endless variants in IIIB.⁷ One of the bowls was less well preserved: but although the rim is missing and no main decoration survives, the bowl belongs to the well known IIIB:1 type within the Local Kydonian Workshop (Fig. 4b and Pl. 2A, top left).⁸ The second could be restored with a full profile, one handle and part of the second (Fig. 4c and Pl. 2A, lower right): the rim is slightly flaring; the inside is solid-painted, the outside has a row of simple curved short vertical bands above a single body-band: clay and paint suggest that it was made in a Cretan workshop somewhere outside the area of Khania.⁹ The two small stirrup jars are both products of the

⁷ See, for example, Popham, M., *Late Minoan IIIB Pottery from Knossos*, BSA 65, 1970, 200, Fig. 3:29–35.

⁸ Several were found in the nearby House I, on the LM IIIB:1 floors. Tzedakis, Y., and E. Hallager, "The Greek-Swedish Excavations at Kastelli, Khania 1980," AAA 16, 1983, 9–12 and Fig. 12; *eidem*, "The Greek-Swedish Excavations at Kastelli, Khania 1982–83," AAA 17, 1984, 15–16 and 13 Fig. 10.

⁹ The color of the most commonly used clays in Khania (except for the white of the Local Kydonian Workshop) are in shadings from light red to brown. Our vase here is dark brown-red with a thick grey core, hard fired with a thin pinkish cream slip

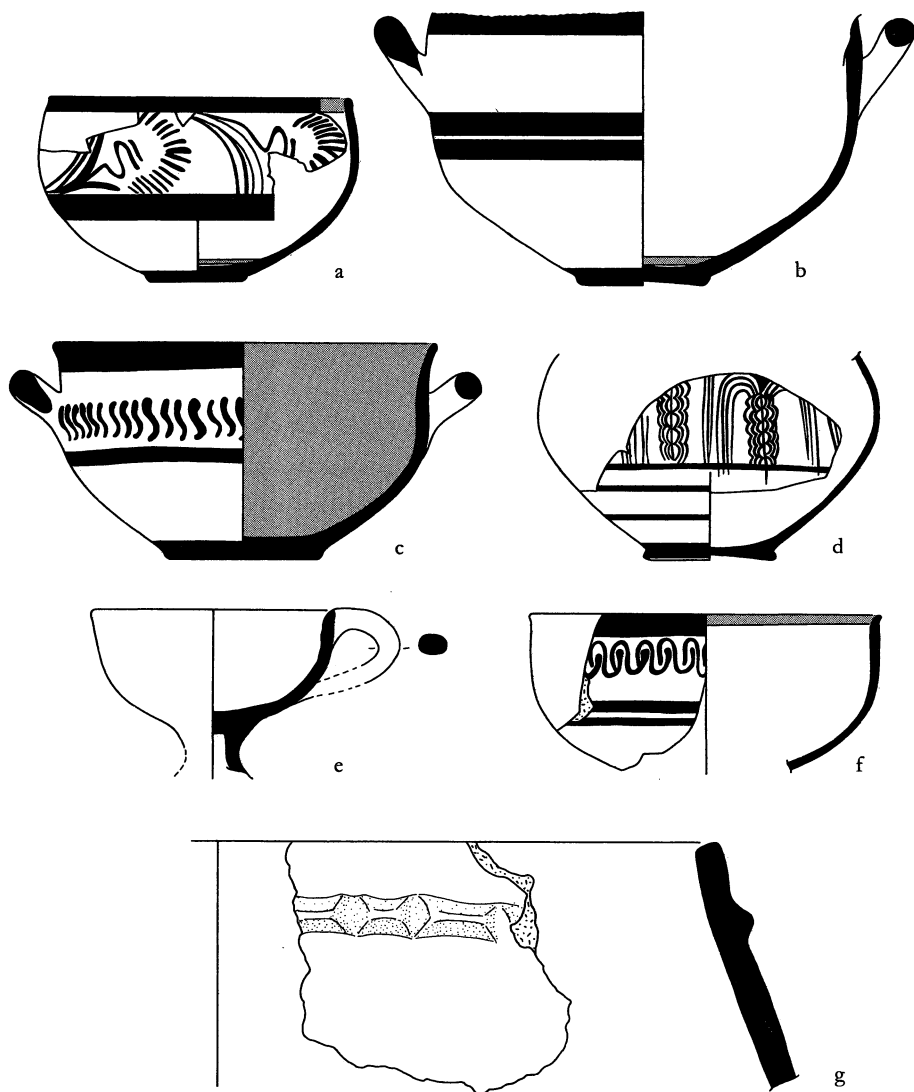


Fig. 4. (all scale 1:3)

- a. Decorated cup GSE 90 P 1796 (931, 1869). (Mus. no. 6914).
- b. Decorated bowl GSE 90 P 1011. (Mus. no. 6915).
- c. Decorated bowl GSE 90 P 929 (932, 939, 963). (Mus. no. 6916).
- d. Decorated stirrup jar GSE 90 P 1786 (Mus. no. 6917).
- e. Plain stemmed cup GSE 90 P 1058 (Mus. no. 6918).
- f. Decorated cup GSE 90 P 1794 (Mus. no. 6919).
- g. Coarse hand-made burnished jar GSE 90 P 1787.

Local Kydonian Workshop. From the one, we have part of the upper body and enough is preserved to establish that it belonged to the squat type (Pl. 2B, top left).¹⁰ Of the decoration only a few dots and the body bands are preserved. From the second we have the lower part, from mid-body to base (Fig. 4d and Pl. 2B, lower right): the shape is globular¹¹ and the decoration typical for the inventive workshop, here an uncommon variant of the palm tree.¹² The plain stemmed cup with its roll handle and typical foot (not fully preserved) is of the late type common in IIIB (Fig. 4e and Pl. 2A, lower left).¹³ Except for the above-mentioned imported bowl, the vases are local products, but only three of them belong to the best-known workshop in the town, the Local Kydonian. Among the sherd material found on the floor few pieces belong to the preceding IIIA period,¹⁴ while the main part are of IIIB:1. Sherds typical of the Local Kydonian Workshop in this period are shown in Pl. 2B top row. A body fragment with octopus design (Pl. 2B, 2nd in top row (upside down)) belongs to a common and well-known type of amphoroid krater which had its high peak in LM IIIB:1¹⁵, but which continues with slight differences into LM IIIB:2. The body fragment (3rd in top row) belongs most probably to the same type of globular stirrup jar as that mentioned above, while the cup/bowl decorated with quirk (Fig. 4f and Pl. 2B to the right in top row) is of a type very common during LM IIIB in Khania¹⁶, as well as in other places in Crete.¹⁷ This type of cup belongs to the mature LM IIIB style.¹⁸

and brown-black paint. For the decoration, however, a close IIIB parallel can be found in Khania. Y. Tzedakis and A. Kanta, *Kastelli Khanion* 1966 (*Incunabula Graeca* 66), Roma 1978, Fig. 8:15.

¹⁰ For shape see Matz, F., *Forschungen auf Kreta* 1942, Berlin 1951, Taf. 62:P732.

¹¹ This is a common LM IIIB:1 shape within the Local Kydonian Workshop (Matz [supra n. 10] Taf. 62:P775; Tzedakis, Y., "L'atelier de Céramique Postpalatiale à Kydônia," BCH 93, 1969, 400, Fig. 14) and not uncommon as an export to other parts of Crete, as for example to Knossos and Armenoi: Popham, M. R., *The Last Days of the Palace at Knossos* (SIMA 5), Lund 1964, 14 and Pl. 5a–b; Kanta, A., *The Late Minoan III Period in Crete. A Survey of Sites, Pottery and their Distribution* (SIMA 58), Göteborg 1980, 213 and Figs. 93:4–7.

¹² A similar but not identical decoration can be found on a Local Kydonian kylix found at Tylissos, Kanta (supra n. 11), 10 and Fig. 3:7 and 130:1.

¹³ Popham, M. R., "The Late Minoan Goblet and Kylix," BSA 64, 1969, 301 and Fig. 7.

¹⁴ Pl. 3A, 2nd row, 3rd sherd (a handle) and bottom row the four small sherds in the middle.

¹⁵ Tzedakis & Hallager 1983 (supra n. 8), 12, Fig. 10.

¹⁶ Tzedakis 1969 (supra n. 11), 416 and 407 (Tableau II).

¹⁷ Popham, M. R., "Some Late Minoan III Pottery from Crete," BSA 60, 1965, 327 and 337.

¹⁸ It is, however, not to be dated to LM IIIB:2, in which period the quirk decoration is no longer so popular, and when it does appear it is very much less well drawn.

Beside cup and bowl sherds (Pl. 3A, 2nd in middle row), the upper part of a stirrup jar (Pl. 3A, 1st in bottom row), body-fragments of closed vessels and coarse kitchen ware, several fragments of plain kylikes were found with shallow bowl, straight rim and high-slung handles (Pl. 3A, top row, middle row left and bottom row right), typical of IIIB Crete¹⁹ and, also, the handle of a plain ladle (Pl. 2A, top right). Finally, among the sherds on the floor were two rim-fragments of a big coarse hand-made, badly burnished jar (Fig. 4g).²⁰

The layers found above the sealed room contained IIIB:2 pottery, but none of this late period was found on the part of the floor we have excavated so far (see above). In the floor were several LM IIIA:1 and 2 sherds (Pl. 3B) but also some IIIB:1 sherds, among them a bowl decorated with a variant of the Minoan flower (Pl. 3B bottom row left). The vases *on* the floor are clearly LM IIIB:1 in date, and as sherds of the same date were found in the floor we must be well into the LM IIIB:1 period, a conclusion which could also be supported by reference to the cup/bowl with quirk decoration found on the floor, which is a mature LM IIIB product.

3. The Sealing

The sealing (GSE 90 TC 71, mus. no. KH 1568) was found during the sieving of the soil from the floor-deposit around the tablets, so its exact find spot is not known. Its clay is very soft and tempered with straw; a few sand grains and a single larger pebble are visible. It is brick-red in colour, while the surface is burnt dark grey to brown. Only very little of the original surface is preserved, but part of the object sealed and fragments from two seal-impressions can be seen (Pres. H: 2.9 cm; Pres. W: 4.5 cm; Pres. Th: 2.4 cm) (Fig. 5).

It is not obvious what was sealed. Along the preserved part of the edge one finds an oval outline (Fig. 5b) which in section has a slight S-curve (Fig. 5a) and this imprint indicates a rather thin material — the edge from a small jug of metal might be possible; but up against this outline of this 'edge' the imprint from a rod (of willow?) (est. diam.: 0.55 cm) is seen in an oblong position, which is difficult to explain in

¹⁹ Popham (*supra* n. 13), 302–303 and Fig. 11.

²⁰ We have noted that vessels of these types appear in Khania for the first time in LM IIIA:2, and are found in the Mathioudakis plot. In the GSE they appeared in House I among the LM IIIB:1 floor deposits. Hallager, B. P., "Crete and Italy in the Late Bronze Age III Period," *AJA* 89, 1985, 303 with further references.

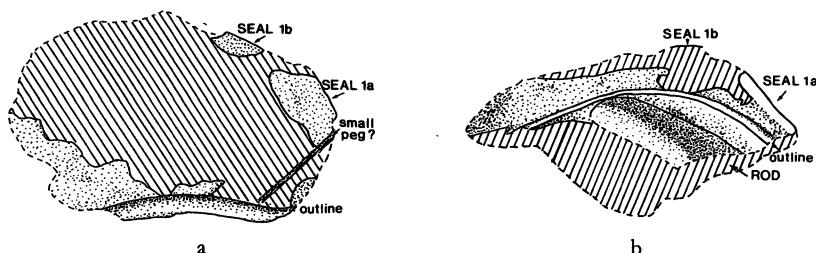


Fig. 5. The sealing GSE 90 TC 71 (Mus. no. KH 1568) *a*. En face with imprint of what was sealed at bottom. *b*. Bottom of sealing showing outline of the sealed object and the rod. Scale 1:1.

the spout of a small vase. The object sealed was not one of the well-known types found in association with the Linear B archives at Pylos, Mycenae, Thebes and Knossos.²¹

Not enough is preserved from the two seal-impressions to ascertain whether or not they come from the same seal. No edges are preserved in the impressions, and the original shape of the seal(s) cannot be determined. (Max. pres. dim. of larger fragment: 1.25 × 1.4 cm and of smaller fragment 0.7 × 0.35 cm). The surface of the seal appears rather flat, with medium deep to deep engravings — perhaps a stamp.

The motif is also much mutilated, and too little is preserved for a convincing description or interpretation of the existing remains of the motif (Pl. 4). The line in the centre of the impression could be the belly-line of a quadruped with one hind leg seen to the right. The two 'sticks' seen to the left are probably not the front legs, but something reaching the quadruped from below.²² On the small fragment is visible only a slightly curved line, apparently enclosing an oblique triangle.

²¹ We are grateful to Ms. Judith Weingarten for her suggestions on this sealing (studied through photographs and casts) and for informing us that to the best of her knowledge there exists no "exact parallel for this direct-object sealing". For discussions of sealings connected to Linear B administration see, for example, Aravantinos, V. L., "The Use of Sealings in the Administration of Mycenaean Palaces," in: *Pylos Comes Alive*, eds. T. G. Palaima and C. W. Shelmerdine, New York 1984, 41–48, and Weingarten, J., "The sealing structures of Minoan Crete: MM II Phaistos to the Destruction of the Palace of Knossos. Part II: The Evidence from Knossos until the Destruction of the Palace", *OJA* 7, 1988, 1–25; ead., "The Sealing Bureaucracy of Mycenaean Knossos and its Further Development on Mainland Greece" at the Conference La Crète Mycénienne, Athens 1991.

²² We are most grateful to Dr. Ingo Pini for these suggestions on the motif, known to him through photographs, sketches and a cast.

Although the sealing is much mutilated and enigmatic, it provides interesting evidence that at Khania, as elsewhere, the administration combined Linear B ‘book-keeping’ with ‘direct-sealing’.

4. The Tablets²³

KH Ar 4

(Excavation no: 90-TC 69A; Mus. no: KH Ar 4) (Pl. 5)

Description

Major right part of a Linear B tablet of the type intermediate between the page-shape and palm leaf-shape. The very flat and straight edges of the tablet run practically parallel, while the preserved part of the right end seems to indicate only very slightly rounded ends, which are also very thin. The clay is brown reddish and badly (i. e. lightly) burnt. It is relatively finely gritted, with only a few smaller sand grains visible. Originally the surface seems to have been well polished, but most of that has been lost. Just behind the numbers in l. 3 an oblique hole pierces the tablet, and on the reverse a groove may be noted. There are only very few scratches and imprints on the reverse, and a few extremely fine scratches that show how the surface, both front and reverse, was smoothed; one rough slightly bent imprint on the lower edge; square section. The tablet has been ruled twice, i. e. it has got three lines which are all inscribed. Most of the incisions are fairly light and the stylus was relatively fine. Perhaps a palimpsest.

H: 4.1–4.3 cms; W: [14.5] cms; Th: 1.5–0.4 cms

Inscription

KH Ar 4

(1)
 .1]po ka-*56-šo e-u-ko-ro 1 wa-ti-jo 1 [
 .2]pu-na-si-jo 1 wo-ne-wa-ta 1 *vest* [
 .3] to-so VIR 6 *vest* ? [

- .1 The complete tablet would probably have given room for at least one more sign in front of *po*; *u* clearly visible when fragment was excavated; *e-u-*83-ro* not entirely impossible²⁴; *[[jo-no-ko]]* below last l.²⁵

²³ The three tablets are difficult to read, partly because of erasure or other mutilations to the surface, and several readings are open to doubt. We have in this publication only included in the drawings and transcriptions what we consider as strokes or remains of strokes from the stylus.

²⁴ The left horizontal line in particular of *ko* may cause difficulty for its identification, but it should be noted that a similar detail can be observed on **KN V 488** and perhaps on **KN V 482**, both by scribe 115.

²⁵ The original *no* seems to have been a ‘three-finger’ *no* where the 1 was written above the ‘s’.

- .2 *ko-ne-wa-ta* not entirely excluded; *vest* in [[]], perhaps a3.
- .3 Perhaps traces at left; perhaps 7, but the seventh apparent stroke was probably made accidentally when hole was pierced through the tablet; *vest* probably in [[]].

Comments

The tablet can clearly be compared both in content and shape with several of the As and V tablets from Knossos — those by scribe 103 and scribe 115. The characteristic of these tablets is an enumeration of men employed in the textile industry.²⁶ The men are mentioned by name, or by a combination of personal name and place-name²⁷ in the case of scribe 103, followed by VIR 1, ideally followed by a *to-so* VIR as seen on **KN As 609** and probably the more fragmentary **KN As 5609**. In the case of scribe 115 the entries are only followed by the number 1, but could also be summed up as seen on, for example, **V 655**, where, however, the tablet is broken after the *to-so*. These tablets, which are rarely completely preserved, seem to have had a 'heading' which, however, has only been preserved on **KN V 655** and **KN As 604**: *e-re-dwo-e*.

KH Ar 4 falls clearly into this category. Supposedly the]*po ka*.*56-*sq* in l.1 is the heading. Thereafter follow *e-u-ko-ro*, a well established personal name in the Knossos tablets²⁸. Then follows *wa-ti-jo* 1, a personal name probably derived from the West Cretan place-name *wa-to*. *pu-na-si-jo* in l.2 is also a personal name and — if complete — derived from the place-name *pu-na-so*. This name is also found on the Knossos tablets, on **KN B 806.6**.²⁹ *wo-ne-wa-ta* is also a personal name, not previously known. If *ko-ne-wa-ta* be the correct interpretation, the name is known from **PY Jn 431.13**. In l.3 we find the total of the six men

²⁶ Olivier, J.-P., *Les Scribes de Cnossos* (Incunabula Graeca 17), Rome 1967, 126.

²⁷ In the last case the place-name is given in the nominative and small letters (**KN As 604**, scribe 103 and **KN V 655**, scribe 115).

²⁸ For the name, Ventris, M., and J. Chadwick, *Documents in Mycenaean Greek*², Cambridge 1973, 547. *e-u-ko-ro* occurs on three sheep tablets in connection with the following sites: *do-ti-ja* (**Da 1299**), *ti-ri-to* (**Db 1389**), and *da*.*22-*to* (**Dd 1149**); and on a tablet similar to ours, **KN V 482.1**, by scribe 115.

²⁹ Tablet found in main (?) archive (I3) dealing with men (one by one, and summed up on the reverse by the word *ko-wq-ka-ra-te-ne*), among whom is also found *ma-di-go*, one of the names likely to occur on the inscribed stirrup jar **KH Z 3** of local West Cretan production: suggested as alternative spelling for *ma-di-jo*; see, for example, Sacconi, A., *Corpus delle iscrizioni vascolari in Lineare B* (Incunabula Graeca 57), Roma 1974, 180; cf. also Olivier, J.-P., L. Godart, C. Seydel & C. Sourvinou, *Index généraux du Linéaire B* (Incunabula Graeca 52), Rome 1973, 117.

who were mentioned in the tablet, two of whom would have been found in the missing part of l.2 and .3.

The two probable references to Cretan place-names should be noted. *wa-to* has long been recognized as West Cretan, both through its occurrence in the Co-series at Knossos³⁰ and through its appearance on inscribed stirrup jars of West Cretan origin.³¹ *Pu-na-so* on the other hand does not have relations to Western Crete, while a location east or southeast of Knossos seems to be more or less generally accepted.³² If these be ethnic adjectives, it is interesting that a central/east-Cretan place-name occurs in the tablet, but *pu-na-si-jo*, being most probably a personal name, does not imply any sort of administrative control over or connection with *pu-na-so*.

Perhaps the most intriguing observation in connection with **KH Ar 4** is of its extremely close relation to scribe 115 at Knossos. The physical shape of the tablet³³ is precisely the same as that found on several of the V tablets with the very thin ends, parallel edges, rather squarish corners and square section — perhaps most clearly seen on **KN V 479** and **KN V 655**.³⁴ The writing style of the scribe is also surprisingly close. One feature is the very long horizontal strokes in the cases of the signs *jo*, *ne*, and *po*. Another characteristic is the way of rendering the *so*,³⁵ and the *ta* has the same bent main stroke and oblique upper vertical stroke. Also the wide, slightly depressed *ka* is found on several of 115's tablets.³⁶ It is also interesting to note that the short lower

³⁰ Godart, L., "Les tablettes de la série Co de Cnossos," *Minos* 12, 1971, 422–423.

³¹ Palmer, L. R., "Mycenaean Inscribed Vases II. The Mainland Finds," *Kadmos* 11, 1972, 27–46, and Catling, H. W., J. F. Cherry, R. E. Jones and J. T. Killen, "The Linear B Inscribed Stirrup Jars and West Crete," *BSA* 75, 1980, 86.

³² Bennet, J., "The Structure of the Linear B Administration at Knossos," *AJA* 89, 1985, 237–240 with further references.

³³ In some cases tablets may have been fashioned by the scribe, but more often the physical shaping of the tablet seems to have been done by a person different from the scribe, cf. Sjöquist, K.-E., and P. Åström, *Knossos: Keepers and Kneaders* (SIMA, Pocket-book 82), Göteborg 1991, 30–33 and Table III (115–118). The papillary lines preserved on the tablets of scribe 115 (482, 503, 5510 and 7845) were not enough to identify the hand (Table I) and we cannot be sure whether or not scribe 115 made his own tablets.

³⁴ Several of the As-tablets by scribe 103 are also of the same general shape. These, however, have corners a little more rounded, and a less well treated reverse, and they are generally thinner. A few more tablets of the same general shape are for example **C 5669** (–), **Fp 13** (138), **363** (222), **F 452** (–), **Ga 519** (135?), **7469** (–), **Gg 705** (140), **L 588** (–) and probably **X 8267** (–).

³⁵ Scribe 115 is among the very few Knossian scribes using only a single vertical stroke for *so*. The others are: 111, 133, 138, and 139.

³⁶ For example **KN Lc 481.v**.

horizontal stroke on *wa* in 1.2 is found on some of the tablets of scribe 115.³⁷ But most impressive are the clear traces of the ‘long left wing’ of *ne* — only found with scribe 115 at Knossos. *na*, however, is different. On **Ar 4** the lower part is written with two half-circles and a small vertical stroke below, while scribe 115 at Knossos invariably uses one long vertical stroke with a smaller one added on the upper left side. Also, it should be noted that the *pu* on **Ar 4** is more ‘slim’ than with scribe 115,³⁸ while the erased *no* seems to differ from that of scribe 115, and the erased *ko* (if correctly read) seems to recall that of scribe 138.

Had the tablet been found at Knossos it would undoubtedly have been assigned to scribe 115, in spite of the mentioned differences; but, being found in Khania, the noted differences — especially concerning the *na* — must be given weight. The resemblance to the style of scribe 115 is astonishing, but at present there is not enough evidence to prove that scribe 115 (and his ‘flattener’?) worked both at Knossos and in Khania. But that the same scribal tradition existed at both places **KH Ar 4** shows beyond doubt.

KH Gq 5

(Excavation no: GSE 90-TC 69B; Mus. no: KH Gq 5) (Pl. 6A)

Description

Almost completely preserved Linear B tablet of palm leaf-shape. Small part of the right end missing. Flat straight edges which run almost parallel. Obverse very flat, while reverse is a little uneven and bent, so that the tablet becomes thinner towards the end. The clay is reddish brown throughout, and has only been relatively lightly fired. Quite finely gritted with only very few rather small sand grains visible. Most of the original polish has been preserved — best on reverse and edges. Practically no scratches and imprints on the reverse. On the obverse the tablet has at the upper right part a slight mark from the pick, while at the very right end in the bottom line there is an oblique impression which originally belonged to the tablet. The tablet has been ruled once, and has thus two lines which are both inscribed. The incisions are very light and effected with a very fine stylus. Erasure of the entire tablet seems to have been attempted.

H: 2.2—1.95 cms; W: [11.1] cms; Th: 1.3—0.4 cms.

³⁷ For example, **V 466** and **V 503.3**.

³⁸ On **KN Xf 6004** ([*na-pu*-] by an unidentified scribe) both *na* and *pu* are extremely similar to those on **Ar 4**.

Inscription

KH Gq 5

.1 di-wi-jo-[de ,]di-we *ME+RI* 209^{VAS} + A 1 [(-)
 .2 di-wo-nu-so *ME+RI* [] 2 [

- .1 *ke*, or *ke-* possible in restored lacuna; no traces of divider after *jo* (where the tablet is undamaged); *ri* possible instead of *we*; 2 or even 4 possible instead of 1.
- .2 remains of a very small cross behind *so* which seems accidental; tablet mutilated in lacuna but possible remains are not incompatible with 209^{VAS}.

Comments

We have here a small palm-leaved tablet³⁹ which is fully ruled, but where the lines have not been fully inscribed, as for example on several of the tablets of the Fs and Fp series from Knossos. Not enough signs are preserved to suggest a hand or scribe. Only two signs are comparable on **Ar 4** and **Gq 5**: *jo* and *so*, which both seem to be differently executed on the two tablets. In particular, the missing vertical stroke of *jo* on **Gq 5** would seem to suggest that the two tablets were not inscribed by the same hand. It should, however, be noted that scribe 115 at Knossos writes the *jo* both with and without the upper vertical stroke, and the rather unusual way of rendering the lower part of *jo* on **Gq 5** has a close parallel on **KN V 7512**, also by scribe 115. The possibility can, therefore, not be excluded that the two tablets were written by the same hand.

If correctly interpreted, l.1 starts with *di-wi-jo-de*. *di-wi-jo* is a derivation of *di-we*, ‘Zeus’, in the sense interpreted on **PY Mb 1366**, ‘Shrine of Zeus’, and with the suffix *-de* ‘to the shrine of Zeus’ as also known on **PY Fr 1230**⁴⁰. If our suggested reading of the second word, *di-we*, be correct, it raises no problems: ‘Zeus’ in the dative⁴¹. In l.2 we find *di-wo-nu-so*, which has close parallels on two tablets from Pylos: *di-wo-nu-so-jo* on **PY Xa 102** and *di-wo-nu-so*[on **PY Xa 1419**. This latter tablet favored an interpretation as the god Dionysos, partly because the word *wo-no-wa-ti-si*[which is likely to be a compound of *woinos*,

³⁹ The physical shape (size, thickness, section etc.) of the tablet is *exactly* like that of the Lc tablets of scribe 103 from Knossos (e. g. 541 & 551), while the shape, especially on the reverse and in profile, differs somewhat from the Fs and Fh tablets at Knossos.

⁴⁰ Ventris & Chadwick (supra n. 28), 478.

⁴¹ Cf. *di-ka-ta-jo di-we* on **KN Fp 1** with offering of oil; Ventris & Chadwick (supra n. 28), 305–306.

'wine', is found on the reverse⁴², and partly because *wo-no-wa-ti-si* also occurs on **PY Vn 48.6** which mentions an offering to the goddess *po-ti-ni-ja*.⁴³

Dionysos seems also the most likely interpretation on **KH Gq 5**.

In the two Pylos examples there is lacking the direct connection between *di-wo-nu-so* and the religious sphere. This 'missing link' seems now provided by **KH Gq 5**, which thus gives strong support for the view that Dionysos had come into the Greek pantheon as early as the Bronze Age⁴⁴, as a son of the most powerful god Zeus. This suggestion may bring to mind the young god of the epiphany scenes of the Minoan-Mycenaean religion, as on the gold seal rings.

The above observations also accord with the essential features of the Dionysos cult in a temple at Ayia Irini on Kea, erected in the 15th Cent. B. C. and continued in use into Classical Greek times. The female terracotta figurines found there are depicted as Dionysos's dancers and attendants or nurses.⁴⁵

In addition, Dionysos's connection with Minos's daughter, Ariadne, could not be only a simple coincidence, and the myth seems to have its origin in the Bronze Age. Also, one cannot forget the Cretan tradition according to which Dionysos, as a chthonian god, Zagreus, is the son of Zeus and Persephone.⁴⁶

On **PY Xa 1419** Dionysos is attested perhaps in connection with wine. Does this mean that the old wine festival of the *Anthesteria*, common both to Ionians and Athenians, and thus predating the Ionian migration, goes back to Mycenaean times?⁴⁷

KH Gq 5 may with some confidence be interpreted as an offering tablet, and considered together with our interpretation of the ideograms *ME + RI 209*^{VAS} + *A* it would find its parallel in the Gg series from

⁴² Ventris & Chadwick (supra n. 28), 411.

⁴³ Palmer, L. R., *The Interpretation of Mycenaean Greek Texts*, Oxford 1963, 253–255 and 414.

⁴⁴ I. e., in 1927, M. Nilsson, writing about the Dionysiac cult in *The Minoan-Mycenaean religion and its survival in Greek religion*, 504: "...is better understood if we assume that it was not an importation of a completely foreign god and form of religion, but the revival of old Minoan and Mycenaean religious ideas, and perhaps also rites, which had for a time fallen into the background."

⁴⁵ Caskey, M., "Ayia Irini, Kea: The Terracotta Statues and the Cult in the Temple", in *Sanctuaries and Cults in the Aegean Bronze Age*, eds. R. Hägg & N. Marinatos, Stockholm 1981, 127–135.

⁴⁶ Daraki, M., *Dionysos*, Paris 1985, 51.

⁴⁷ Burkert, M., *Greek Religion*, Cambridge, Mass. 1985, 162, 241: also Palmer (supra n. 43), 253–255.

Knossos. Offering tablets, in general, may contain date, name of recipient, place where offerings should be sent, description of offering, and name of festival.⁴⁸ It is seldom that all five criteria are mentioned in a tablet, and on **KH Gq 5** we find three of them: place of offering: Shrine of Zeus; recipients: Zeus and Dionysos; offering: one or two amphoras (+ *A*) of honey.

The Gg series at Knossos includes only one (or perhaps three) tablets where the inscription is completely preserved.⁴⁹ These do not contain the name of the month, while others do⁵⁰; the place of the offerings may be left out (713) or given without *-de* (705). The consistent features of the offering tablets in the Gg series⁵¹ are the deities and the offering, jars of honey, and considered in this light **KH Gq 5** fits well into the Knossian Gg series.⁵²

Wine and honey along with oil are specified for the libation. All these liquids are recorded on the Linear B tablets. On **PY Un 718** honey is spelled in full *me-ri-to* (gen. *melitos*). In addition, along with honey, grains of all kinds are boiled together in a pot, during the day of the Pots in the *Anthesteria* festival.⁵³

Especially interesting among the 'account' tablets in the Gg series is 711:

] [[*209^{VAS} + *A* 270]] [
v.]290 *KE* 200[
lat. inf.]ku-do-ni-jo , [

If the word on the lower edge be complete, we seem to have the adjective of *ku-do-ni-ja*, "Kydonia" and on the *recto* we find, although erased, 270 amphoras + *A*. Since the ideogram 209^{VAS} + *A* appears to occur only in connection with honey⁵⁴, it seems likely that the

⁴⁸ Palmer (supra n. 43), 235.

⁴⁹ Complete is Gg 702 and possibly complete are 713 and 995.

⁵⁰ E. g. 704.

⁵¹ The Gg series seems to consist of two types of tablet: proper offering tablets like for example 702–705, and others which seem to be purely accounts of honey, as for example 521 (with *to-so* and the numeral 542) and 706, 708 with accounts of missing honey (*o-pe-ro*).

⁵² Ventris & Chadwick (supra n. 28), 309–310; S. Hiller, "Mykenische Heiligtümer: Das Zeugnis der Linear B-Texte," in: Sanctuaries and Cults in the Aegean Bronze Age, eds. R. Hägg & N. Marinatos, Stockholm 1981, 100–101.

⁵³ Burkert (supra n. 47), 240. For further connection of Dionysos's cult with honey, see Daraki (supra n. 46), 48.

⁵⁴ Olivier et al. (supra n. 29), 347, lists 10 examples. In the case of 711, 5184, and 7372 there exists no *ME+RI* ideogram, but the tablet is in these cases broken before 209^{VAS}; only in the case of the *erased* amphora + *A* on 5548 does the tablet seem to be undamaged to the left; cf. KT 5.

Knossian administration was engaged with the registration of Kydonian honey, which shows the importance of this product in Western Crete. An offering of amphoras of honey on a tablet in Khania may be understood in this context.

Knossian Linear B tablets and the new **KH Gq 5** evidently specify many members of the Olympian pantheon in the late Bronze Age period in Crete. At least two Olympian gods are worshipped in the city of Khania (Kydonia), Zeus (*diweus*), the highest god, and his son Dionysos.⁵⁵ The representations of possible male gods, of the LM I to LM III period, known in the area of Khania up till now are the following:

1. *The "Sacred conversation"* (clay sealing)⁵⁶: A male and a female figure, one arm raised, advancing towards each other with a "twisted" column between them. Papapostolou says that this may be a rare scene of the 'sacred conversation' in New Palatial Crete. According to Diodorus (V.72,4) an annual sacred marriage between Zeus and Hera took place in Knossos in historical times.

2. *The Master Impression* (clay sealing)⁵⁷: A male figure is depicted in a despotic pose ("mit herrscherlichem Gestus") on the top of a building complex crowned by cult horns, above a rocky shore by the sea. If this figure represents a god, it is likely to depict the superior male god!

3. *The Master of the Animals* (agate gem)⁵⁸: A naked male figure stands with his arms on two lions in a heraldic position. As an imported motif it is questionable whether he belongs to cult or borrowed mythology.⁵⁹

4. *The young "god"* (gem)⁶⁰: A young male figure, nude except for his belt, stands between horns of consecration, flanked by two animals in heraldic position, a winged wild goat and a Genius raising his libation jug. Willetts calls this scene "the only one certain example of the full-

⁵⁵ The cult of Dionysos in the area of Khania seems to be familiar in later periods, as several depictions of the god in sculpture and mosaic art demonstrate (Khania, Kissamos, Georgopolis); especially the remarkable mosaic pavements of Kissamos and Khania (Markoulaki, S., 'Psiphidota "oikias Dionysou" sto Mouseio Khanion,' in: Proceedings of the 6th International Cretological Congress, Khania 1990, 449–463). Dionysos and grapes are also represented on the coins of Kydonia (Svoronos, J.-N., Numismatique de la Crète ancienne, Macon 1890, Pl. IX) and it is well known that wine was always one of the main products of the area.

⁵⁶ Papapostolou, I. A., *Ta sphragismata ton Khanion*, Athens 1977, 82–84.

⁵⁷ Hallager, E., *The Master Impression* (SIMA 69), Göteborg 1985.

⁵⁸ PM IV, 466–67, Fig. 391 bis.

⁵⁹ Burkert (*supra* n. 47), 42.

⁶⁰ PM I, 708, Fig. 532 and PM IV, 467, Fig. 392; *CMS* 5, no 201 (Benaki Museum).

size portrayal of the Minoan god”.⁶¹ Could it be a depiction of the young Zeus or more probably of the young Dionysos?

The relatively common representations of male gods in Khania during the Late Minoan period by contrast with the rarity of such depictions in the rest of Crete may be not simply a coincidence, and it is interesting, perhaps significant, that this tradition existed before the arrival of the Mycenaeans.⁶²

According to **KH Gq 5** there was a sanctuary of Zeus in the area of Khania, perhaps in the city itself (*dinjon-de dion*). Such a sanctuary is also mentioned on a Pylos tablet and is written in the same way (*di-wi-jo-de*) on **Fr 1230** (see above) together with the offering of olive oil + *A*.⁶³ On **PY Tn 316.v.8–10** the sanctuary of Zeus is shared by Hera and mysterious Drimios, a son of Zeus who has been compared with Dionysos.⁶⁴ On **Gq 5** Hera is absent; the opposition between her cult and Dionysos’ is well known, but also their connection.

There is no direct reference to a late Minoan III sanctuary in Khania in the excavation reports of the site, but the excavated area is still very limited. If room E, where the three tablets were found, be a workshop, it might be tempting to suggest that a sanctuary could be found close

⁶¹ Willetts, R. F., *Cretan Cults and Festivals*, London 1962. For doubts about the genuineness of the gem see Betts, J., “Notes on a possible Minoan Forgery,” *BSA* 60, 1965, 203–206. Renewed studies by I. Pini (“Echt oder Falsch. — Einige Fälle” (CMS Beiheft 1), Berlin 1981, 142–145) have, however, proved the gem to be genuine. Now also accepted by Betts (“Some Early Forgeries: The Sangiorgi Group” (CMS Beiheft 1), Berlin 1981, 18, n. 4).

⁶² Chr. Kardara, “Ypaithreoi styloi kai dendra os mesa epiphaneias tou theou tou keraounou,” *AEphm* 1966, 186–187, attributed the scarcity to the aniconic nature of the cult of the male god; cf. also Ch. Picard, *Les Religions préhelléniques*, Paris 1948, 83; Willetts (supra n. 61), 79, refers to the Minoan god and “the tendency by the end of the Minoan Age to raise him to a superior status”.

One could connect the modern name of Khania with the name of Velchanos, who in historical times had been adored as Zeus Velchanos, dying and being resurrected annually. N. Platon has already connected these names (Kr. Chr. A’, 250). Willetts (supra n. 61), 250–251, calls him “the male partner in sacred marriage with the Minoan Mother-Goddess”.

⁶³ Hiller (supra n. 52), 110, with an analytical reference to the Mycenaean sanctuaries on the Linear B tablets (95–126). For Cretan sanctuaries see L. A. Stella, “Testimonianze di santuari cretesi in testi Cnosii,” *Proceedings of the 2nd International Cretological Congress*, 1968, 253–262.

⁶⁴ Burkert (supra n. 47), 43 n. 10 with selected bibliography and p. 223. On Lesbos there was a sanctuary of Zeus, Hera and Dionysos. For the connection between the cults of Zeus and Dionysos see p. 120: “Ox sacrifices in which the ox-slayer flees from the scene of his deed are celebrated in honor of both Zeus and Dionysos ... Kouretes or Korybantes dance around the Zeus child or the child Dionysos”.

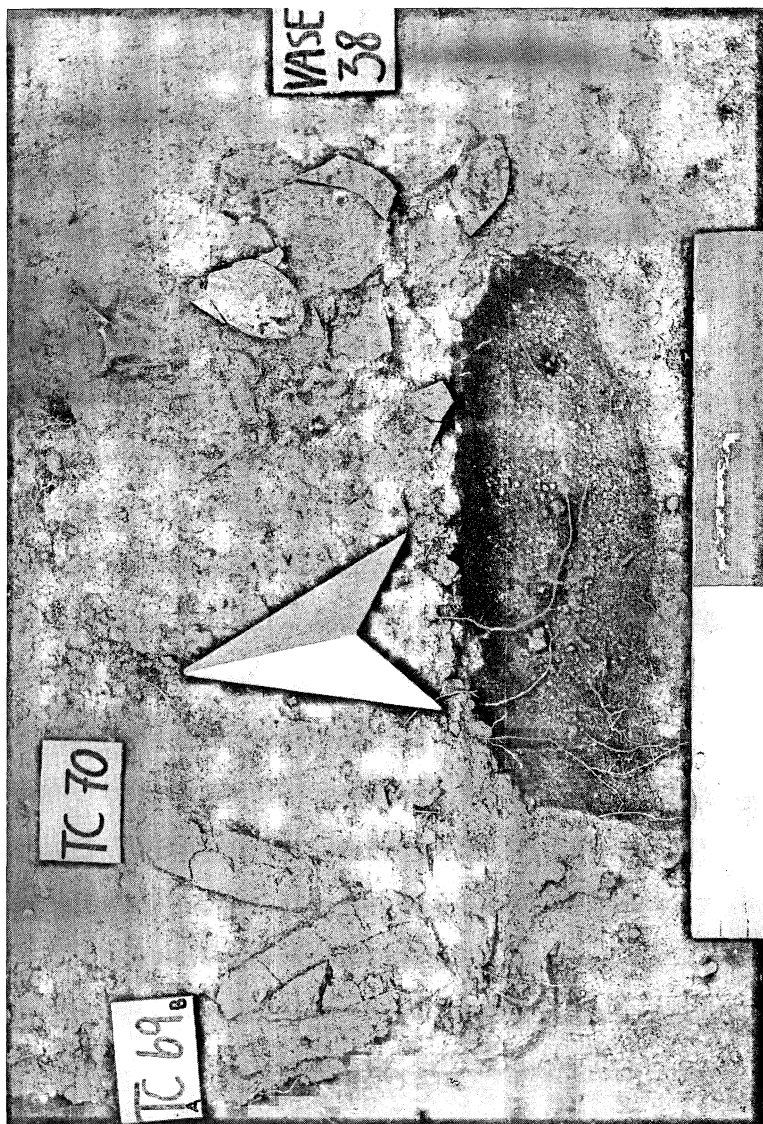


Plate 1. Tablets (TC 69A = **KH Ar 4** and 69B = **KH Gq 5** + TC 70 = **KH X 6**) and vase 38 (the small globular stirrup jar Fig. 4d and Pl. 2B, lower right) *in situ*. (measure stick 2 × 20 cms).

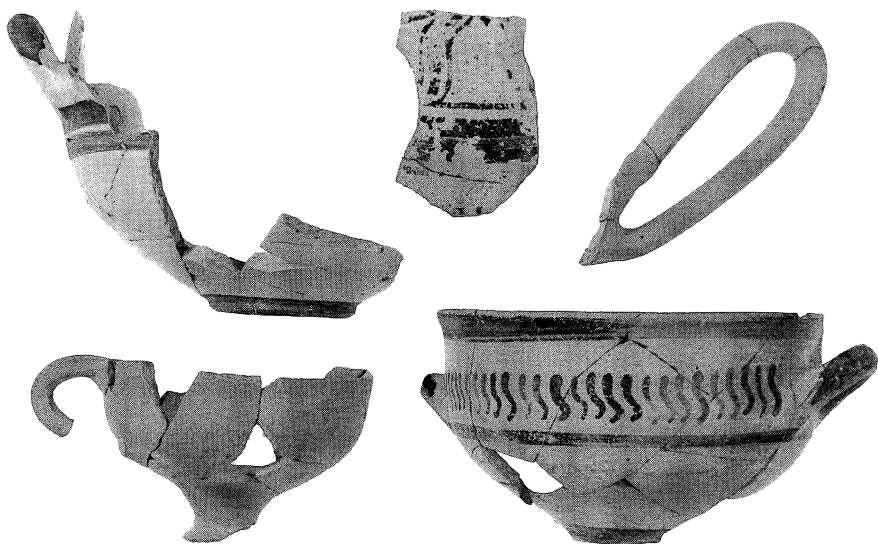


Plate 2A. Sherds and restorable vases from floor deposit with tablets.

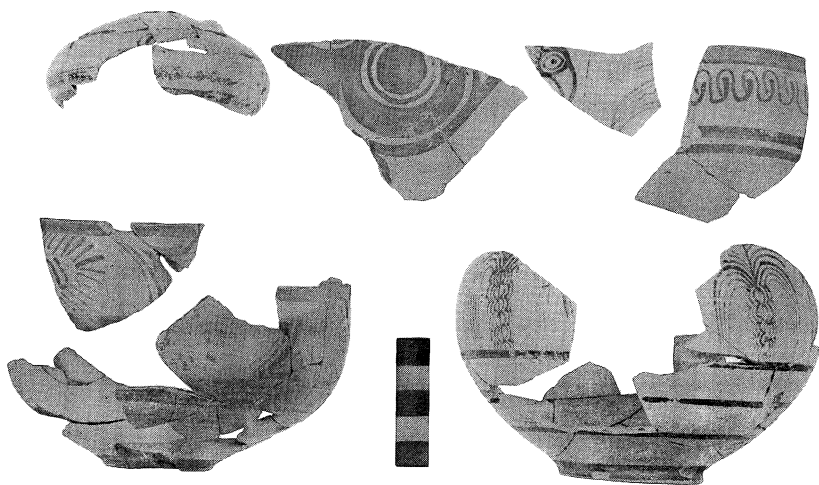


Plate 2B. Sherds and restorable vases from floor deposit with tablets.

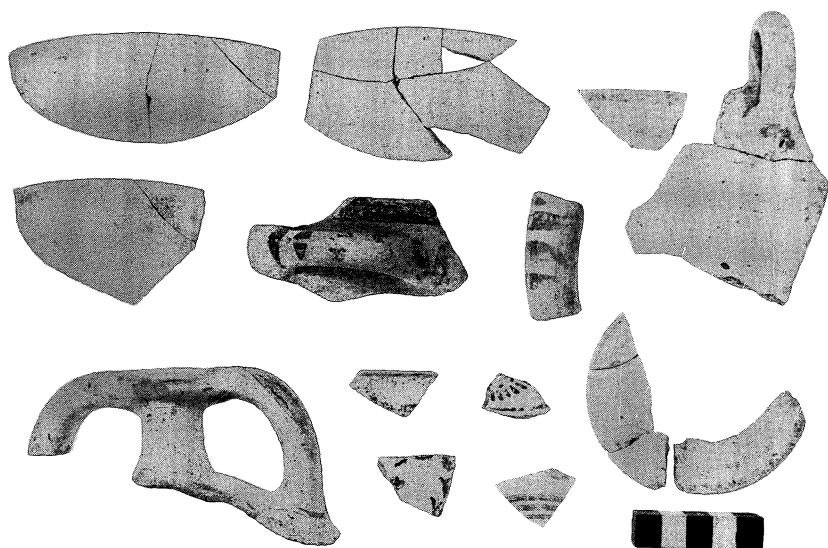


Plate 3A. Sherds from floor deposit with tablets.



Plate 3B. Sherds from within and below the floor with the Linear B tablets.

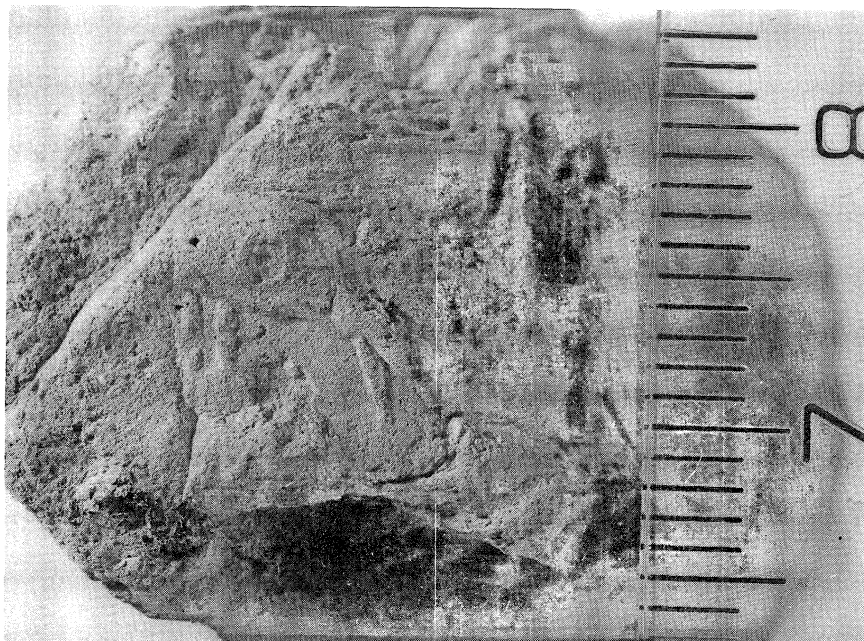


Plate 4. The best preserved seal impression on the sealing GSE 90 TC 71. Scale 4:1.

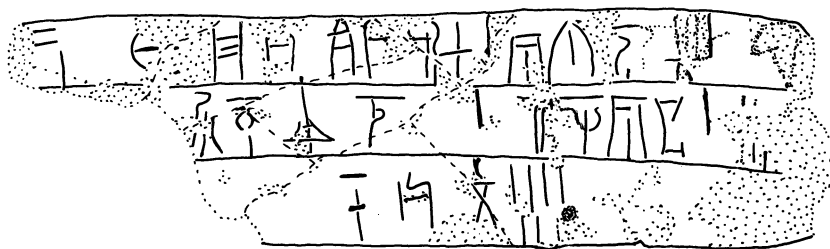
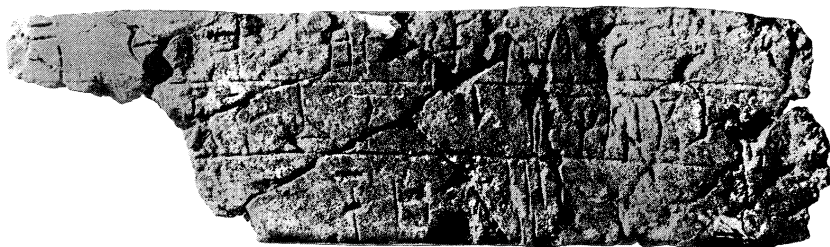


Plate 5. KH Ar 4 photo and facsimile, scale 1:1.35

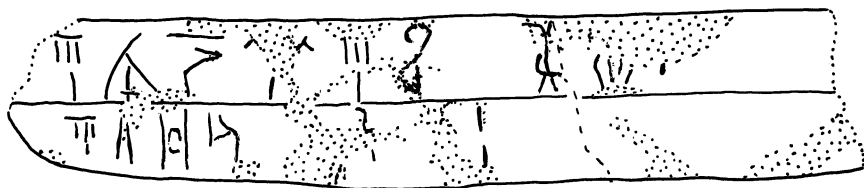
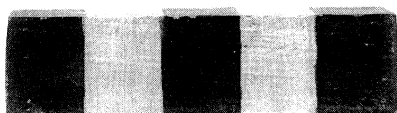


Plate 6A. **KH Gq 5** Photo and facsimile, scale 1:1

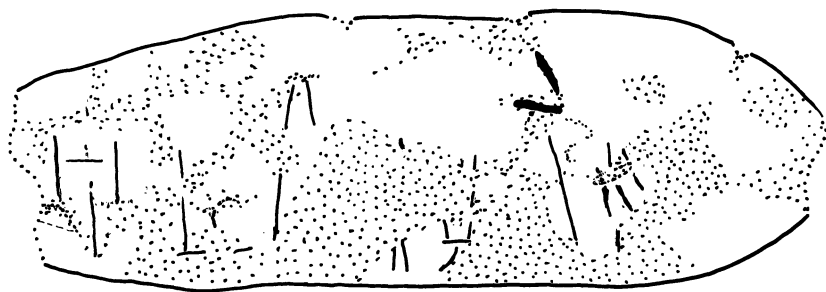


Plate 6B. KH X 6 Photo and facsimile, scale 1:1

to it.⁶⁵ And one piece of indirect evidence does exist: in a LM IIIB:2 pit less than 20 meters west of the find-spot of the tablets was found in 1980 the head of a large female figurine⁶⁶ of a type which — when *in situ* — has only been discovered in ‘town shrines’⁶⁷.

KH X 6

(Excavation no: GSE 90-TC 70; Mus. no: KH X 6) (Pl. 6B)

Description

Almost completely preserved Linear B tablet of short palm leaf-shape. The lower edge only is rather straight, while the upper is more rounded. Both edges, however, are flat; the upper is thinner. The profile gives a rounded section towards the reverse. Only a very little of the left end of the tablet is missing. The clay is brown to reddish throughout (precisely as in the other two tablets) and not very heavily burnt. Finely gritted with very few small sand grains visible. Some of the original polish preserved — best on reverse and uninscribed part of obverse. Practically no scratches and imprints on reverse. A few faint impressions of papillary lines on the reverse. On the lower part of the obverse there are two marks from the pick. The tablet has no ruler. The incisions are light and the stylus relatively fine. Perhaps palimpsest.

Pres. H: 2.5–3.5 cms; W: [10.6] cms; Th: 0.9–1.5 cms;

Inscription

KH X 6

(—)

.1]a-ra-wō / [.]no [*vest*]

The inscription may possibly be complete at left. The *vest.* at right probably consist of one or two ideograms or one ideogram and numerals. MUL and numerals possible, but difficult.

Comments

The surface of this tablet is very badly mutilated, but enough remains to show that it is of the unruled type starting with an inscription in

⁶⁵ Cf., for example, the paper presented by J. Muhly and A. Lebessi, “Workshop and Sanctuary: the Production of Votive Offerings”, at the 7th International Cretological Congress at Rethymnon 1991.

⁶⁶ Tzedakis & Hallager 1983 (*supra* n. 8), 7 and Fig. 5.

⁶⁷ The “only” is a personal communication from Professor K. Kilian, to whom we offer our thanks for the information. Examples will, for instance, be found in Sanctuaries and Cults in the Aegean Bronze Age, eds. R. Hägg & N. Marinatos, Stockholm 1981, 41–48 (Mycenae), 49–58 (Tiryns), 67–80 (Phylakopi) and 127–136 (Kea). Further on shrines in settlements in Bronze Age Crete: G.C. Gesell, Town, Palace and House Cult in Minoan Crete (SIMA 67), Göteborg 1985.

‘capital letters’ followed by a word with smaller letters, again followed by an ideogram and numerals — a type well known both in Crete and on the mainland. In these tablets there is no general consistency in what is written first with ‘capital’ signs and what follows in smaller signs. If the interpretation of MUL be correct, it may perhaps be compared to a few tablets from Knossos dealing with people, **KN Ai 762**, **Am 5882**, and **B 814—816**. If so, it would be tempting to see a place-name followed by a qualification or description of the women enumerated.

No known Linear B words match with *a-ra-wo*⁶⁸, and considering the known two-syllable words ending in *no*⁶⁹ and the actual remains of the first sign, no combinations are really convincing, although both *ri-no*, *o-no*, and *wo-no* seem possible.

Since we are only able with absolute certainty to identify *no*, further speculation on the inscription is not profitable. If MUL be the correct interpretation of the ideogram, the tablet apparently deals with the administration of personnel.

5. The Cretan Scribal Tradition⁷⁰

It has long been recognized that we may speak of a Knossian scribal tradition and of a mainland tradition, in that there is a clear and distinctive difference in their ways of rendering many of the Linear B signs.⁷¹ Several studies since Bennett’s publication have emphasized this difference between the mainland and Knossian traditions⁷², and lately Yves Duhoux has investigated statistically the differences between the two traditions in phonetics and orthography, morphology, syntax, and the physical form of the tablets. His investigations strongly indicate

⁶⁸ Olivier et al. (supra n. 29), 29 and Melena, J. L. & J.-P. Olivier, Tithemy (Suplementos a Minos 12) Salamanca 1991, 79.

⁶⁹ The known two-syllable words ending in *no* are: *ke-no*, a spice, *me-no*, “month”; *o-no*, “donkey” or a payment; *go-no*, uncertain significance; *ri-no*, “linen”; *ti-no*, woman’s name in Knossos and place name in Pylos; *to-no*, in Pylos “chair”, at Knossos man’s name; *wo-no*, “wine”.

⁷⁰ This paragraph is a shortened version of a paper given by EH at the 7th International Cretological Congress at Rethymnon 1991, “Linear B: The Cretan Scribal tradition,” which will appear in the proceedings of the Congress.

⁷¹ Bennett, E. L., “Some Local Differences in the Linear B Script,” *Hesperia* 35, 1966, 295—309.

⁷² See, for example, in *Pylos Comes Alive*, eds. T. G. Palaima & C. W. Shelmerdine: Olivier, J. P., “Administrations at Knossos and Pylos: What Differences,” 11—18, and Killen, J. T., “The Textile Industries at Pylos and Knossos,” 49—63.

that in all these respects the mainland and Crete developed independently (and even locally within the two large regions) and he concludes that the chronological problems of the tablets are essentially an archaeological concern.⁷³ The new Linear B tablets from Khania tend to confirm this conclusion.

Bennett showed clearly in his paper that there was at Pylos a tendency for innovation, that is simplification of the signs without losing the features essential for the reader; while the Knossian scribes were more conservative; and it has been implied that this difference might be explained by a difference of date, the mainland tablets being later than the Cretan.⁷⁴ This view seemed to find some support in Palaima's discovery of six isolated tablets from the Palace at Pylos (hand 91), some of which seemed to predate the final destruction at Pylos, in association with LH IIIA pottery and showing clear and convincing paleographical parallels to the work of the Knossian scribes.⁷⁵ A confirmatory consideration is the LM IIIA:2 date of **KH Z 27**⁷⁶ which consists of the inscription]*no*[, with two horizontal strokes crossing the vertical ones.⁷⁷ On tablets this variant of *no* is known only from Knossos⁷⁸.

These early inscriptions, however, together with many of the typical Knossian elements, have parallels also in the Linear B inscriptions of LM IIIB date on the inscribed stirrup jars. Palaima has pointed out how *ne*, *di*, and *i* are paralleled on Theban inscribed stirrup jars,⁷⁹ while the *no* with two cross-bars is known on a number of **TH** and **TI Z** fragments⁸⁰. Other signs characteristic of the Knossian school are also found on the ISJs⁸¹. It would thus seem that the differences between

⁷³ Duhoux, Y., "Linéaire B crétois et continental: éléments de comparaison", in: *Tractata Mycenaea*, eds. P. Ilievski & L. Crepajcie, Skopje 1987, 105–128.

⁷⁴ Bennett (supra n. 71), 308–09; et al.

⁷⁵ Palaima, T. G., *The Scribes of Pylos* (Incunabula Graeca 87), Roma 1988, 111–113 and Fig. 11.

⁷⁶ This, as yet unpublished, ISJ is of local West Cretan (Khania α) clay.

⁷⁷ Olivier, J.-P., in "Pour un syllabogramme *52 bis?," *Studia Mycenaea*, ed. A. Bartoněk, Brno 1968, 71–73, suggests that the sign is not *no*, but a separate sign *52 bis.

⁷⁸ Hands 103 and 117.

⁷⁹ Palaima (supra n. 75): *ne* on **PY Xa 1419v** and **Ae 995** has parallels on **TH Z 851**; *i* on **PY Xa 1419v** is paralleled on **TH Z 866**, while the enigmatic *di* on **PY Xa 1419r** is paralleled on **TH Z 857**.

⁸⁰ See for example Sacconi (supra n. 29), 199.

⁸¹ Especially *ni*, *ri*, *ku*, and the above-discussed *no*, all briefly discussed in Hallager, E., "The Inscribed Stirrup Jars: Implications for Late Minoan IIIB Crete," *AJA* 91, 1987, 172–176.

the Knossian and the mainland traditions were not caused by a gap in time⁸², but several scholars have maintained that the inscriptions on the stirrup jars were executed by illiterate painters, who might have copied from (old) prototypes or (remote) memory⁸³ in which case the argument from the ISJs may be difficult to maintain.

Now, however, the stratified Linear B tablets of LM IIIB:1 date from Khania are also to be considered in this discussion. Our observation that **KH Ar 4** is almost impossible to distinguish from many of the tablets of scribe 115 at Knossos shows that the Knossian scribal tradition existed in mature LM IIIB:1 times in Crete. This does bring the Cretan scribal tradition into very close contact with that of the mainland, and if the new date of “very early IIIB” suggested by Popham for the main archives at Pylos should prove correct⁸⁴, there can be no doubt that the two scribal traditions flourished contemporaneously.

This contemporaneity clearly seems to show that the stirrup jar inscriptions (whether done by literate or by illiterate painters) were simply executed in the current Cretan tradition, and there is no reason to doubt that the mainland scribes were able to read these inscriptions when a shipment of ISJs arrived in, for example, Thebes: but this did not make the Theban scribes change their style of writing. In brief, there is evidence to show that scribal traditions can be regionally conservative and that markedly different traditions can exist at the same time.

A strong regional conservatism would allow some period of time — perhaps several generations — with only minor changes within a scribal tradition, but when we limit the differences to such few details as those which distinguish **KH Ar 4** from the V tablets of scribe 115 at Knossos, it is hard to accept that 100 years⁸⁵ should separate the work of the two scribes.

Scribe 115 at Knossos certainly lies closer to the mainland tradition than most of the Knossian scribes, and should the renewed investiga-

⁸² Hallager (supra n. 81), 171–180.

⁸³ Chadwick, J., “Aegean History 1500–1200 B. C.,” *StClas* 11, 1969, 16, n. 11; Bennett, E. L., “The Inscribed Stirrup Jar and Pinacology,” in: *Philia epi eis G. E. Mylonan*, Athens 1986, 136–43; J.-P. Olivier, personal communication.

⁸⁴ We are most grateful to Mr. Popham for providing us with this information, before his study “Pylos: Reflections on the Date of its Destruction and on its Iron Age Reoccupation,” appeared in *OJA* 10, 1991, 315–324.

⁸⁵ “100 years”: in the traditional “uncalibrated” chronology. The date of the Knossos archives according to Popham is very early IIIA:2 ca. 1375 B. C., while “well on in LM IIIB:1” according to the same traditional chronology would be somewhere between 1275 and 1250 B. C. The absolute chronology for the different ceramic phases, however, is as yet a matter of dispute.

tions by Driessen on the different scribes and dates of the Knossos tablets prove to be fruitful⁸⁶, the contemporaneity between the Khania tablets and some of the Knossian (including those of scribe 115) might find an easy and understandable solution. To those who maintain the unity (or almost so⁸⁷) of the Knossian Linear B archives the new discoveries at Khania may be taken as yet another supporting argument for a LM IIIB:1 date of the Knossos tablets.

At any rate, the more conservative Cretan scribal tradition is not — any more than other philological and epigraphical arguments — a chronological indicator for the date of the tablets.

6. Problems

At the very most, one third of Room E has actually been excavated and the three tablets were found clustered in the NW corner more than 1 meter from the nearest unexcavated part. Whether this means three isolated tablets in a room, or three isolated tablets in a room with many tablets, only future excavations may show.

The ways in which the tablets were found were significantly different. **KH Ar 4** was found with the inscribed side facing the floor, while **Gg 5** and **X 6** had the inscribed side facing upwards. There is nothing in the way the tablets were found which indicates a special storage system for the three tablets; on the contrary, they probably found their position by chance after the fall which broke the large tablet. Nor do the suggested interpretations of the tablets indicate that they were intended to be stored together: one or perhaps two tablets listing personnel, and one indicating offerings to divinities. As an isolated phenomenon it makes little sense.⁸⁸ The wider archaeological context is not less confusing: two small hearths, the southern one covered by large fragments of a broken pithos, while nothing was found above the northern. The destruction debris contained surprisingly little pottery, and the only indication of complete vases was, except for the one plain stemmed cup, fine decorated ware: two small stirrup jars, two

⁸⁶ Driessen, J., "Le Palais de Cnossos au MR II—III: Combien de destructions?," forthcoming in the Acts of La Crète Mycénienne held at the French School in Athens, March 1991.

⁸⁷ For a possible earlier date of the tablets from the Room of the Chariot Tablets, see J. Driessen, *An Early Destruction in the Mycenaean Palace at Knossos*, Leuven 1990.

⁸⁸ Scribe 103, mainly dealing with the administration of the textile industry, however, did also produce a few offering tablets (Gg 702, 704, 7369 and 8053). These tablets were found close to — but not together with — the 'textile-tablets'.

bowls, and a cup. Furthermore we found a few stone tools, some of which were of obsidian, a few fragments of bronzes, one of which may have been part of a furnace, the fragment of an idol, and an unusual sealing with at least two seal impressions. In addition to all this should be noted in the floor deposit, close to the find-spot of the tablets, a large collection of bones from sheep/goats and pigs, which appear to be remains of butchering or perhaps more likely food debris. These further contents of the room thus do not offer an easy interpretation of its function, any more than do the tablets.

Two hearths, much charcoal and the few tools, seem to indicate some kind of industrial activity while the bones may indicate food processing or consuming? At present we see no consistency between the inscriptions and the archaeological context.⁸⁹

With regard to details of function and contents, problems are more evident than solutions, but at one point the inscriptions may have brought clarity to an old dispute: *if* our reading of **KH Gq 5** be correct, there seems little doubt that this tablet provides the 'missing link' to establish firmly the presence of Dionysos in the Bronze Age, presented as he is as a recipient of offerings, together with, and in the shrine of, Zeus — important male gods, perhaps also recognizable in contemporary and/or earlier iconography in Western Crete. Furthermore, the general context seems clear: Linear B tablets of the Cretan School or tradition have been found in an undisputable LM IIIB:1 context, giving definite proof that the Mycenaean administrative system and practice existed in Crete in this period — a conclusion which need not cause surprise as far as Western Crete is concerned⁹⁰. Whether or not this was the case in other parts of the island, as indicated by the inscribed stirrup jars, remains as yet unproven. One point which may prove important in this regard is the consideration that the new tablets, and especially **KH Ar 4**, as well as **KH Gq 5** and **KH Sq 1**, show that the 'conservative' Knossian scribal tradition existed contemporaneously with the mainland style. That interrelations between Knossos and Khania existed in the LM IIIB period can no longer be doubted⁹¹, but

⁸⁹ When tablets at Knossos or Pylos are found outside the central archives they are usually stringent in theme, very often referring to a special 'office' or to activities conducted in the room, as clearly shown in Pylos.

⁹⁰ Hallager (supra n. 81), 171–190; Catling et al., (supra n. 31), 94.

⁹¹ B. P. Hallager presented, in the paper "Knossos in LM III Khania," the evidence for Knossian imports in Khania in LM IIIA and B at the conference "La Crète mycénienne", Athens 1991, and in the paper "Khania at Knossos", presented at the 7th International Cretological Congress at Rethymnon 1991, the evidence for the Local Kydonian workshop in Knossos during the same period.

whether these interrelations had also an administrative nature still depends on the date of the Knossos tablets⁹².

The new tablets confirm the important role of Khania and Western Crete as late as the LM IIIB period; but they do not diminish the importance of other parts of the island in the same period. The finds strongly indicate the presence of a IIIB Mycenaean palatial centre in Khania and lend support to the suggestion that LM IIIA:2/IIIB is the 'Final palatial' period in Bronze Age Crete⁹³.

⁹² There is nothing in the Knossos tablets which contradicts the possibility of such an administrative interrelation; cf. for example Bennet (*supra* n. 32), 231–249.

⁹³ Hallager, E., "Final Palatial Crete. An Essay in Minoan Chronology," in: *Studies in Ancient History and Numismatics*, presented to Rudi Thomsen, Århus 1988, 11–21.