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## THE LIPARI GRAFFITI

While I was completing the Evans–Myres edition of the Linear A inscriptions,<sup>1</sup> news came of inscriptions on second millennium pottery on the Lipari (Aeolian) Islands off the North coast of Sicily. These were reported to bear some resemblance to contemporary Cretan writing, and specifically to Linear A. After referring to their publication,<sup>2</sup> I decided that the proposed resemblance was too doubtful to warrant pursuit.

During a recent vacation, my Daughter and I visited the Lipari Islands, but unfortunately the Lipari Museum was closed for a period; however, with exceptional kindness the custodian allowed us access for one hour, just time for identification and a cursory record.

The published sign-assembly (Figs. 1, 2) is manifestly selective, incomplete and simplified. Nevertheless, a fair number of examples could be identified. One such is drawn in detail (Fig. 3, right), and is evidently much regularized in the version in Fig. 2c, 6. On display are four examples of a bold Maltese cross, with a wide punctuated border, the two complete examples of which are sketched in Fig. 3. They do not figure in the published collection.

Nor can the four examples of simple linear inscriptions, shown in Fig. 4, be matched in the old drawings, though these examples are much the most reminiscent of Linear A. The pithos with a single painted sign (Fig. 5) looks very Mycenaean.

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<sup>1</sup> William C. Brice (ed.), *Inscriptions in the Minoan Linear Script of Class A*, Oxford, 1960 (Intro., p. xi).

<sup>2</sup> Bernhard Neutsch, *Archäologische Grabungen und Funde im Bereich der Soprintendenzen von Sizilien (1949–1954)*, *Jahrbuch des Archäologischen Instituts* 69, 1954, 404–706. L. Bernabò-Brea, „La Sicilia Preistorica“ etc., *Ampurias* 15/16, 1953–57.

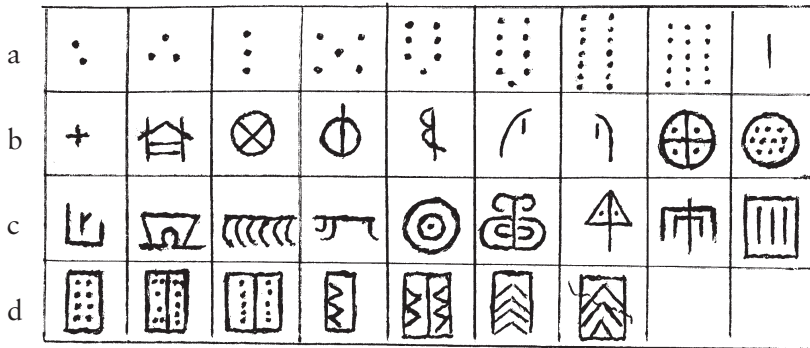


Fig. 1 Lipari Islands – Signs on Pottery  
= n. 2 Abb. 29 = Minos 2, 1952, 23, Fig. 8

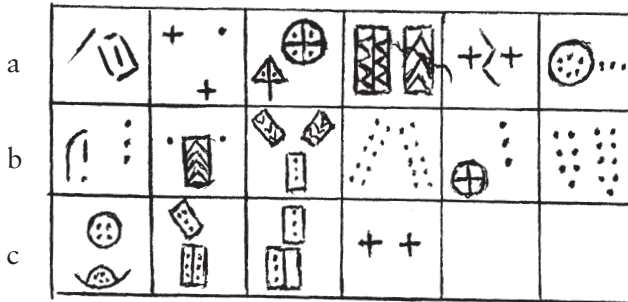


Fig. 2 a – Sign-groups; b – Associated signs and numerals;  
c – Signs repeated on same vessel  
= n. 2 Abb. 30 = Minos 2, 1952, 24, Fig. 9

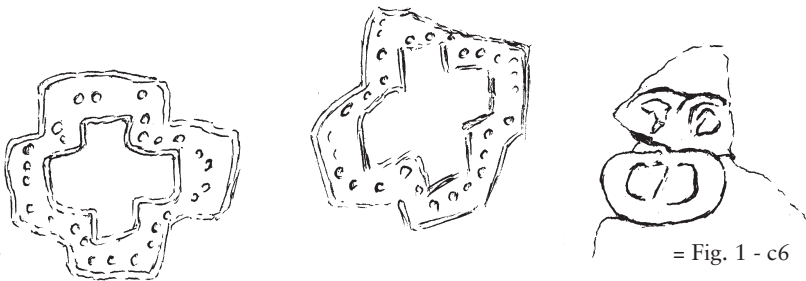


Fig. 3 Elaborate designs

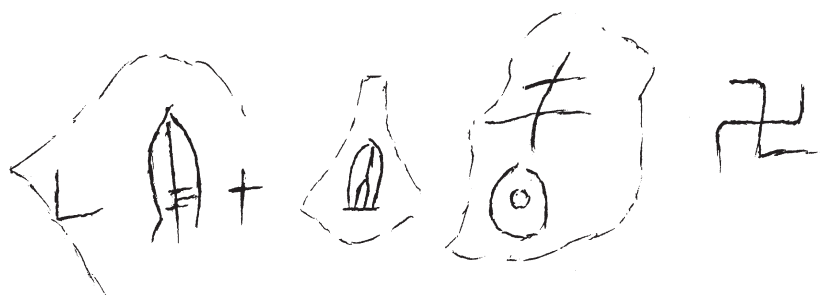


Fig. 4 Unrecorded signs

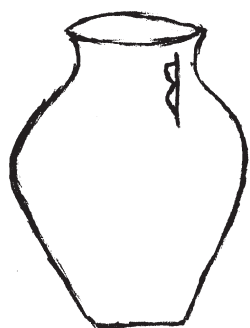


Fig. 5 Inscribed pithos (ht. c. 75 cm)