

BRENT DAVIS

A NEW READING OF PK ZB 21*

PK Zb 21 [Fig. 1]¹ is an inscribed pithos-rim fragment found in 1990 in a MM IIIB-LM IA destruction layer in Building 7 at Palaikastro, and published by Jan Driessen in 1991.² The four signs are clearly inscribed, but Driessen noted the unusual shape of the first sign, and suggested that it could be a ligature of AB 13 and AB 40 (in the numbering-system advocated in the GORILA volumes). He assigned the inscription a tentative reading of 13+40-59-30-04, or ME+WI-TA-NI-TE if the reading is transcribed with Linear B values.



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

In many ways, however, the first sign [Fig. 2] actually resembles a hastily-drawn and rather misshapen instance of AB 67 [Fig. 3]. All the elements of AB 67 seem to be present: the triangular body; the line crossing the mid-portion of the body; the loop-like “handle”; and the diagonal stroke near the juncture of the “handle” with the body. The base of the sign is not squared off in the normal way, but rather is pointed, with a short horizontal line drawn across the point near its tip.

In the chart of sign-variants for AB 67 published in GORILA V, xxxix [Fig. 4], some versions of the sign are similarly misshapen. In Fig. 4, especially notice the variants from ZA 4.7 and KN Zc 6.2, in which the bottom of the shape is pointed, and the base is depicted by means of a short line drawn across the lower tip of the triangle, as is the case on the Palaikastro sherd. Also note the exaggerated “handle” on the variant from KN Zc 6.2.

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¹ MacGillivray et al. 1991, 146, fig. 22.

² Ibid., 146–147.

If the first sign on PK Zb 21 is in fact AB 67, then the transcription of the new reading in Linear B values is KI-TA-NI-TE. It is worthwhile noting that the sequence KI-TA-N occurs on two other inscribed objects from Crete – an LM IB pithos rim from Petras, and a tablet from Khania:

A-KA-RA | KI-TA-NA-SI-JA-SE VIR+ZA [PE Zb 3]³
]-RA-KI-TA-NA-SI-[[KH 60.1]⁴

In both these inscriptions, the preserved signs are quite clear, and their readings are uncontroverted.

Bibliography

MacGillivray, J. A. – Sackett, L. H. – Driessen, J. M. – Farnoux, A. – Smyth, D. 1991: Excavations at Palaikastro, 1990, BSA 86, 121–147.

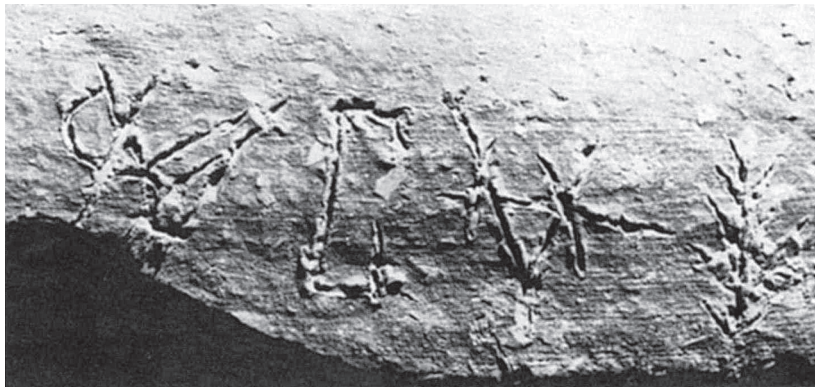


Fig. 1. The inscribed pithos sherd PK Zb 21

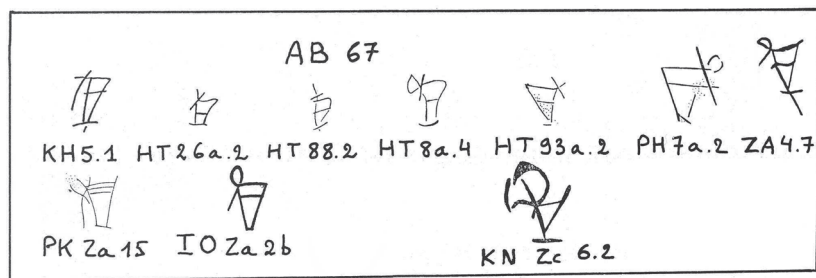


Fig. 4. Variants of AB 67

³ Tsipopoulou, M. – Hallager, E., Hieroglyphs and Linear A from Petras, SMEA 37, 1996, 7–46: 34–35, fig. 13b.

⁴ GORILA III, 82–83.