FOUR CYPRO-MINOAN INSCRIPTIONS FROM MARONI-VOURNES*

by Gerald Cadogan, Jan Driessen and Silvia Ferrara

The British School at Athens-University of Cincinnati excavations at Maroni-Vournes, on the eastern edge of the coastal plain of the Maroni river valley in south-east Cyprus, have yielded fragments of four clay vessels bearing signs that clearly belong to the Cypro-Minoan script of the Late Bronze Age[1]. Since they bear more than two adjacent signs, they are defined as inscriptions and are published here ahead of the excavation report. Besides these, some 67 catalogued marks – single signs – on pottery (often added before firing) or stone, of Late Cypriot (LC) I-II date (c. 1650-1200 BC), have also been recorded and will be treated in a separate paper.

The Vournes Bronze Age site at Maroni (fig. 1) was settled at, or by the start of, LC I and lasted some 400 (or more) years until LC IIC, when it was abandoned. In LC IIC a monumental central building, which has been called the Ashlar Building, was constructed, over earlier LC II tombs and the remains of an earlier LC II substantial building. Across a street another large building called the West Building, of lesser architectural quality, was contemporary with the Ashlar Building and may have served as a storehouse[2]. In Archaic times, the centre of the Ashlar Building became a shrine[3].

Inscriptions **1** and **2** are on pot sherds found in levels that are significantly later than the Ashlar Building or its likely predecessor, but all the same the sherds and their inscriptions probably date to LC IIC. Inscription **3** does not have a clear con-

* We thank: Pavlos Flourentzos, Director of the Department of Antiquities, for permission to study these pieces in Larnaca Museum; Murray McClellan for identifying the Roman pottery and glass; Jean-Pierre Olivier for supplying the Cypro-Minoan font; David Sewell for the plans, following the original plans of the late David Smyth, and helpful comments; Rosemary Robertson for the drawing of **1**; Alison South for the drawings of **2-4**, photographs of **4** and helpful comments; the staff of Larnaca Museum, and especially Marinos Avraam and Andreas Savva, for mending **4** and their constant help and welcome; and the A. G. Leventis Foundation for generous support of the study of Vournes.

For the nearby site of Maroni-Tsaroukkas, see Manning, Sewell, Herscher 2002 (with refs.). Excavations at Tsaroukkas have produced two potmarks, while a further 13 have come from survey in the Maroni valley (D. Sewell, personal communication).

Measurements are in centimetres. The inscriptions are in Larnaca Museum. We give the Maroni-Vournes catalogue number of each after its serial number. The figures were drawn at 1:1, except for fig. 9 which was drawn at 1:2. They are not to scale.

[1] The latest appraisal of Cypro-Minoan is by Ferrara (2005). Earlier appraisals include Palaima 1989 and Baurain 1989.

[2] Recent reports and discussions of Bronze Age Maroni-Vournes: Cadogan 1992, 1996, forthcoming; Cadogan, Herscher, Russell, Manning 2001.

[3] This is being studied for publication by Anja Ulbrich: for an interim account, see Ulbrich forthcoming.

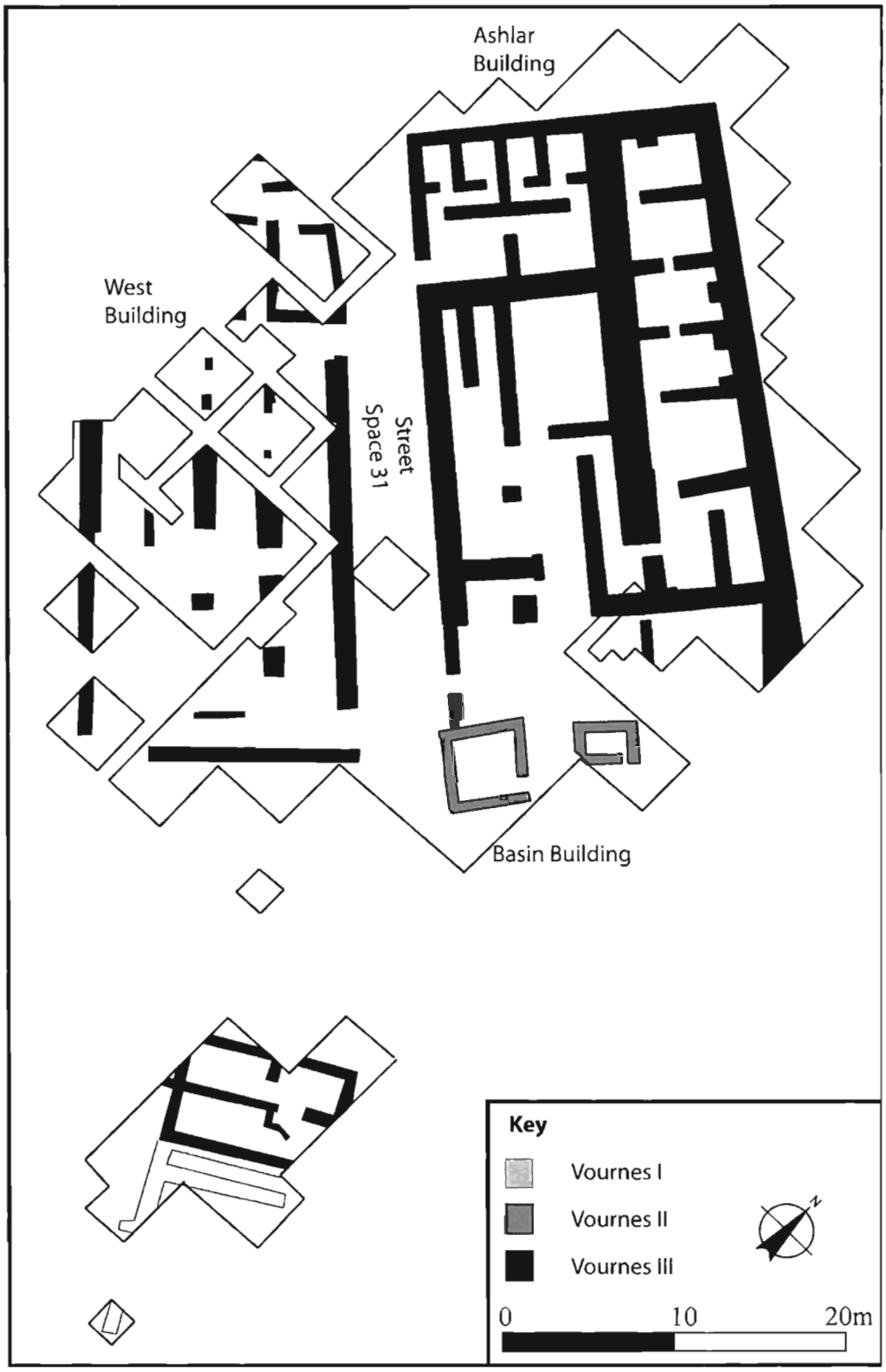


Fig. 1 – Maroni-Vournes.

text, but probably also belongs to LC IIC. Inscription **4**, however, our principal text, is inscribed on a nearly complete Plain White pithoid jar found embedded in the floor of the semi-basement Room 7 in the southeastern part of the Building (fig. 2), and clearly dates to LC IIC. We shall discuss the inscriptions individually in relation to their archaeological contexts and epigraphic characteristics, and conclude by reviewing their contribution to understanding Maroni-Vournes in the 13th century BC and their significance in relation to the spread of writing in Late Bronze Age Cyprus.

1. MV/Z119

ARCHAEOLOGY

Pot

Rim fragment of White Painted Wheelmade (Mycenaean-style)[4] krater (figs. 3-4), from trench J18, level 13, bucket 3430. Height preserved 3.5. Rim diameter 26. Fairly hard buff to light brown clay with a few small red, grey and white inclusions; self-slipped and smoothed: buff inside, white to buff outside. Everted rim. Orange-brown slightly lustrous painted band around rim. The inscription consists of three preserved signs.

Context

This sherd was in the fill of a stone robbers' trench dug to remove the ashlar blocks of wall AU, an external wall of the Ashlar Building that fronts onto the Street (Space 31) and, internally, onto Room 20. The robbing trench could date to Roman times since in the same area (but a little higher), and probably part of the same disturbance, was a sherd of Cypriot Sigillata ware, to be dated to between the late 1st century BC and the mid-1st century AD.

Ceramic associations

To judge from its fabric, the bell krater, from which this sherd comes (rather than a carinated krater), was almost certainly made in Cyprus and not imported from the Argolid: it belongs to the class of pottery that we are calling White Painted Wheelmade (Mycenaean-style), or WPWM (MS), at Vournes. If it is correct that it is a Cypriot product, it becomes then almost certain that the inscription was written in Cyprus. The vessel is of Furumark's shape(s) FS 281-282[5]. If a distinction is valid, it fits better with FS 281[6]; but Kling doubts that such a distinction can be

[4] White Painted Wheelmade (Mycenaean-style), or WPWM (MS), is the term being used at Maroni-Vournes for Mycenaean-style – or Mycenaean-influenced – pottery produced in Cyprus. Such pottery has been called *inter alia*: Decorated Late Cypriot III, Late Mycenaean IIIB, White Painted Wheel Made III, Painted Wheel Made etc (cf. Cadogan 1993, 96, 99, n. 55). It does not help research to call it (simply) Mycenaean.

[5] Following Kling 1989, 108-26, esp. 126, fig. 3 *c*. For carinated kraters see Kling 1989, 127-28.

[6] Furumark 1941, 48, fig. 13 (FS 281), 49, fig. 14 (FS 282).

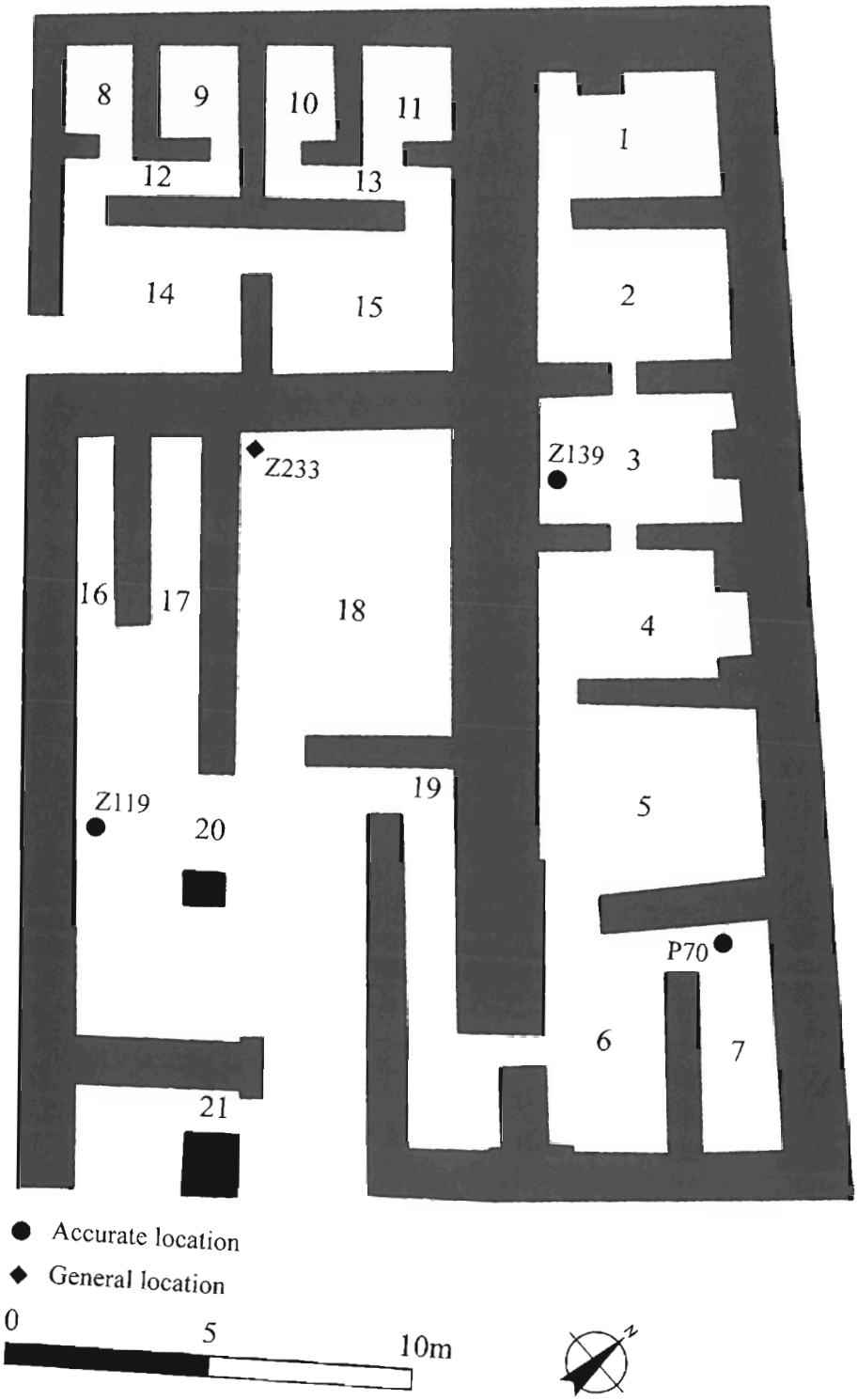


Fig. 2 – Ashlar Building, with findspots of **1-4**.

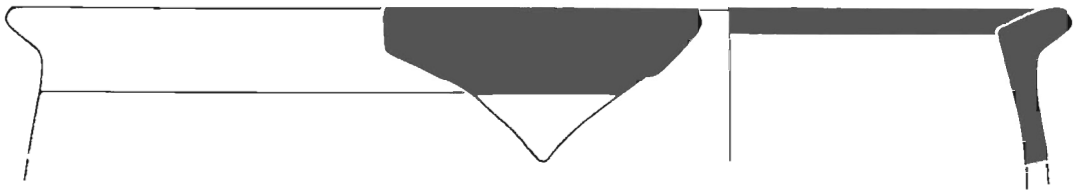


Fig. 3a – **1**.

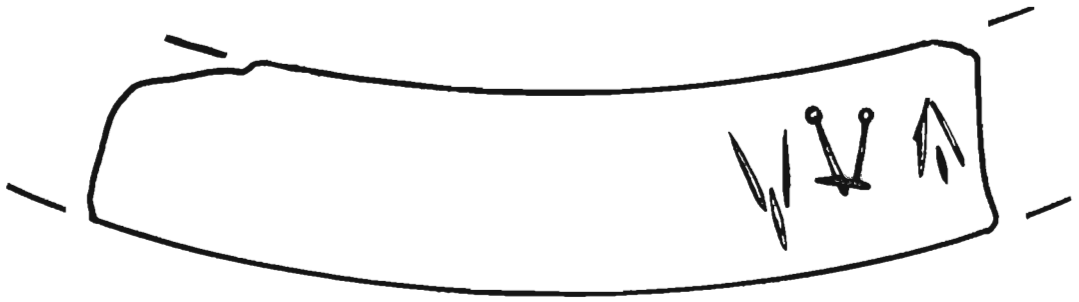


Fig. 3b – **1**.

Fig. 4 – **1**.

made. The type is well known in LC IIC and III contexts. If it should date to LC III, it would join a handful of LC III sherds that have been found at Vournes[7]: they are so few that they seem like strays. A date in LC IIC is more likely. If correct, it was then probably part of the equipment of the Ashlar Building, or perhaps the West Building.

[7] Cadogan 1989, 47.

EPIGRAPHY

Inscription

The inscription is formed by a graffitto of three signs, deeply incised with a sharp tool, probably a knife, after painting and firing. It is complete to the left and perhaps also to the right, where it ends 0.25-0.50 from the break, whereas the other two signs are c. 4 apart. The signs are well spaced but do not follow an imaginary horizontal line, being inscribed higher when moving from left to right.

Sign 1. On the basis that the inscription is to be read from left to right, the first sign is c. 0.45 wide and 1 high. It has a long vertical stem with two long oblique strokes above, converging almost against the top of the stem. The sign may be identified as Masson no. **57** [8].

Sign 2 (c. 0.8 high and 0.48 wide) has two short oblique strokes, crossed at their bottom by a horizontal slash. There are intentional dots at the top of each oblique stroke: these were added afterwards, cutting through the ends of the oblique strokes. The lower beginnings of the strokes hardly show beneath the horizontal crossbar, except for some initial surface scratching which usually accompanies the beginning and ending of graffitti. The sign may be identified as Masson no. **91**.

Sign 3 (c. 1 high and 0.45 wide) shows two oblique strokes running down, splaying on either side of a vertical stem. The lefthand stroke shows an additional stroke to its left: this appears to be a mistake, going halfway down before a new trait with a better angle replaced it. The sign vaguely resembles Masson no. **28**, but is more likely to represent Masson no. **23**. The inscription thus reads and, following Masson's classification, the suggested reading would be: signs **57-91-23**.

The intentional dots on top of the second sign as well as the general appearance of the inscription would classify it as CM2, according to Masson's arrangement into three different branches of Cypro-Minoan scripts (CM1, CM2, CM3). However, this tripartite system is more than problematic (see n. 8) and, even if it were to be accepted *tout court*, the CM2 subgroup constitutes a geographically and epigraphically homogeneous subset comprising only four tablet fragments from Enkomi (nos. 20.01 + 1193, 1687 and 53.5). From a contextual point of view, we should expect this inscription to belong to her CM1 subgroup, which is found island-wide.

2. MV/Z139

ARCHAEOLOGY

Pot

Rim fragment of Plain White rectangular basin (figs. 5-6), from Pit 37 (trench J21, level 3, bucket 3605). Height preserved 7.9. Length 10.5. Maximum thickness

[8] Masson 1974, figs 2-4. It must be noted that Masson's repertoire of signs does not constitute a rationalised syllabary of Cypro-Minoan signs; rather, it catalogues all the attestations of Cypro-Minoan in an undigested fashion. Furthermore, Masson's classification of the Cypro-Minoan script into three separate sub-groups (CM1, CM2, CM3) is disputed (Palaima 1989; Ferrara 2005). For the sign repertoires in CM1 and CM2, see J.-P. Olivier (2007).

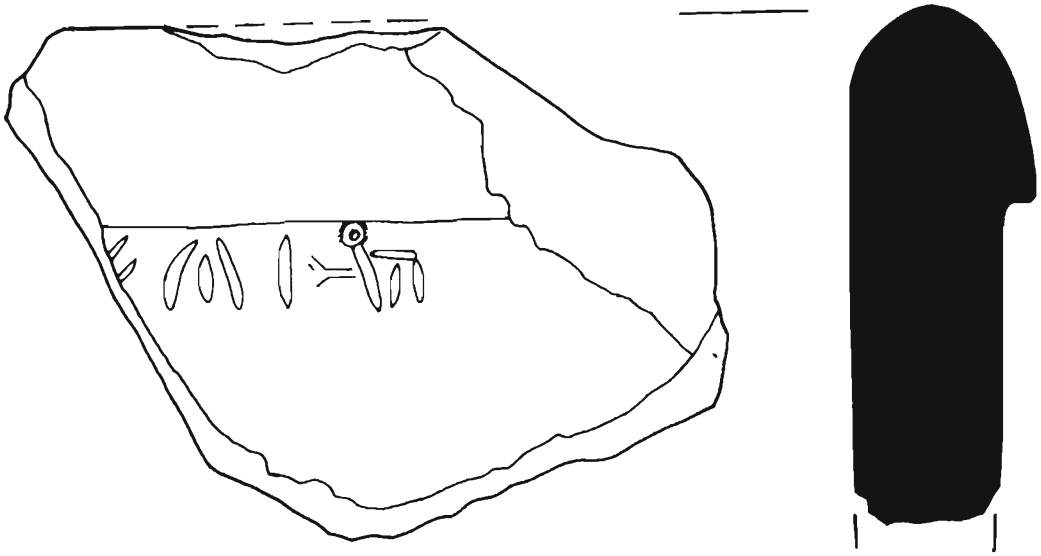


Fig. 5 – **2**.

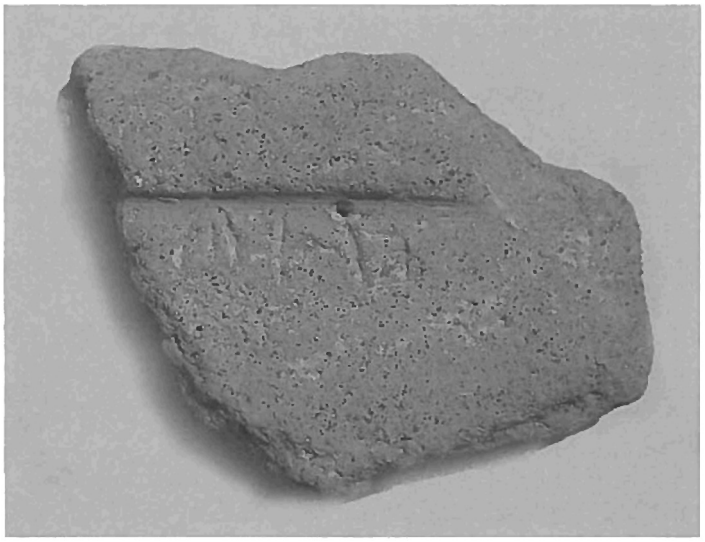


Fig. 6 – **2**.

3.1. Coarse buff to brown clay, with many black, red and white inclusions; smoothed buff to light brown self-slip surviving on the exterior. Thickened (flanged) rim, and nearly vertical side. Four signs are preserved below the rim.

Context

This sherd was in the fill of a pit that had either been dug into, or was part of, a robbing trench, dug to remove ashlar blocks from wall BB of the Ashlar Building. Wall BB forms the northeast wall of Room/Space 18, while its other side abuts wall BE. The level excavated immediately above level 3, which also forms part of the robbing episode, contained a sherd of Roman glass that may be assigned to the mid-1st century AD: this then is the probable date for the removal of the ashlar blocks of wall BB.

Ceramic associations

Similar Plain White rectangular basins – or tubs – occur at LC IIC Kalavasos-Ayios Dimitrios nearby, if with less pronounced rims[9]. More specifically, our example may be part of a bathtub, like one from Pyla-Kokkinokremos, which has a similar rim and two sides that are nearly vertical[10].

Epigraphy

Inscription

The inscription shows the remnants of four signs, inscribed before firing immediately underneath the rim of the basin. Assuming the inscription reads from left to right, one can observe an odd perforation above sign 4. The inscription is badly preserved and very difficult to read. The signs fill a space of c.1.5 below the rim. The inscription appears complete to the right, with a gap of c.2.5 before the break. There is a blank space c.3 deep below the inscription. Although all signs touch the rim above, they differ slightly in size. Thus, sign 1 (the first entirely preserved sign) is c.1 high and 1.1 wide, with a gap of c. 0.7 on either side; sign 2 is c. 1 high and wide, with a gap c.1 wide between it and sign 3, which is c. 1.25 wide and 1.5 high. The signs are only approximately equally spaced, and not much attention has been given to their execution.

Sign 1. Here only the righthand traces of two oblique strokes are preserved but enough survives to see that sign 1 was, like the other three, deeply incised with a thick blunt stylus (roughly c.0.15 wide). We tentatively suggest its identification as Masson no. **38** 𐔀. The fact that this sign appears only in word-initial position within a word would point to the likelihood that we have a complete sequence.

Sign 2 consists of two long oblique strokes, almost converging at the top, with a third shorter vertical one in between. This can be soundly identified as Masson

[9] Closest are Keswani 1989, 19, fig. 20: 31-32.

[10] Karageorghis and Demas 1984, 35, 52, pls. 21, 42: 30. For bathtubs (and further comparanda, and discussion of possible ritual roles), see also Karageorghis 1983, 435-38; 1998, 280-81.

no. **23** 𐄁. Between signs 2 and 3 there is a short, apparently accidental, horizontal scratch.

Signs 3 and 4 present problems because of their bad preservation. Sign 3 is formed by a simple vertical stroke which cannot be identified with any known Cypro-Minoan sign. Its only possible graphic relation would be with a sign that Masson failed to single out in her 1974 repertoire of Cypro-Minoan signs, which was recently detected by Olivier and classified as sign 11 𐄐[11]. The match is not identical, as sign 11 in Olivier's repertoire has a wavy shape, whereas the sign on this inscription is formed by a straight vertical line. Even more problematic are the faintly visible two oblique bars splaying on the right of this 'sign', which converge to the right to form a short horizontal line. They do not seem to belong to the previous vertical line, nor do they seem to be part of the sign that follows.

Sign 4 shows an oblique vertical stroke, with the top cut through by a deep circular hollow. We thought at first that this hollow had been made after firing, but now tend to believe that it happened before firing: it looks as if a point had been inserted into the clay and twisted, to create the hole. To the left of this, a horizontal cross-bar is recognisable, approximately halfway the height of the line, with two short oblique strokes converging at the top. Its reading, again, is somewhat doubtful, and the sign could be identified with Masson no. **47** 𐄃. However, a sinistroverse Masson **79** 𐄂 cannot be excluded, but this seems less likely. Either way, it must be noted that both signs are only attested in the sign repertoire found in the tablet fragments, so-called CM2.

Because of these two uncertain readings, one should be hesitant in classifying this inscription as a *bona fide* Cypro-Minoan specimen. However, signs 1 and 2 are clearly diagnostic, and sign 4 is likely to be a sound CM sign. The only problematic reading is sign 3. The proposed reading of the inscription is probably 𐄇 𐄁 𐄐 ? 𐄃. Based on Masson's and Olivier's sign repertoires, we could have the following classification: signs **38-23-11?-?-47**.

3. MV/Z233

ARCHAEOLOGY

Pot

Plain White ware inscribed handle fragment (figs. 7-8), from cleaning trench H20 (bucket 6534). Length preserved 7.4. Width 3.7. Thickness 2.7.

Context

Since this sherd comes from cleaning the trench, it has no stratigraphic context. Its date, however, is most likely LC IIC.

[11] Olivier 2007, 414; also 127, note on line 12.

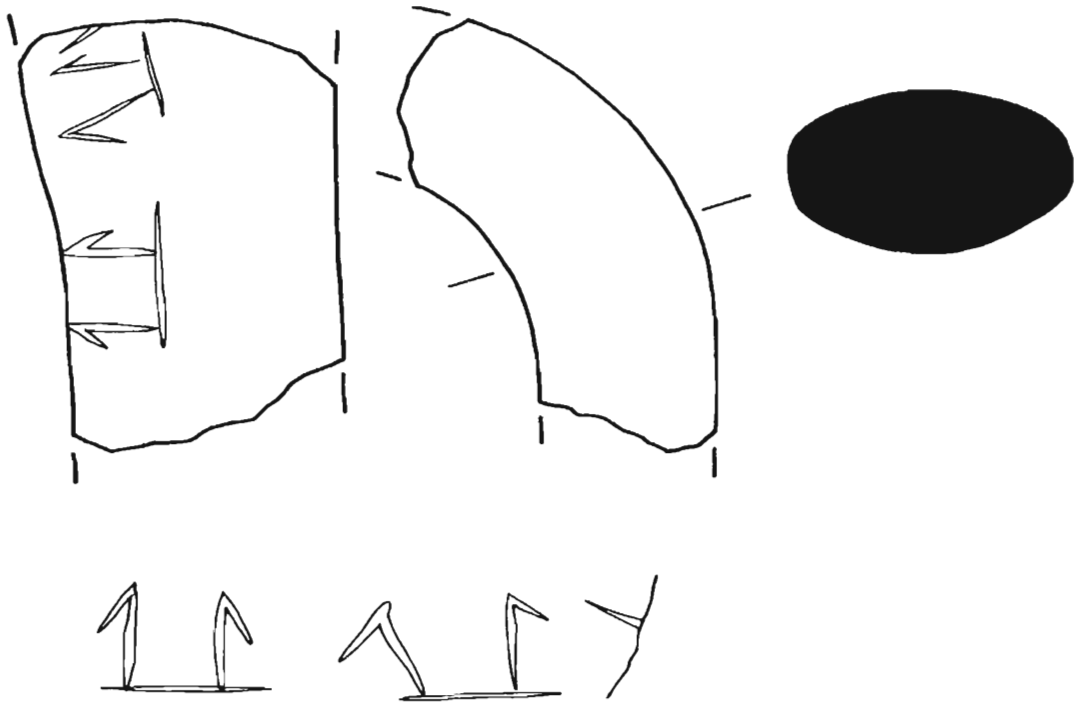


Fig. 7 – **3**.

Fig. 8 – **3**.

Ceramic associations

This is almost certainly a handle from a Plain White ware jug: there are good parallels at Kalavasos-Ayios Dimitrios[12].

EPIGRAPHY

Inscription

The inscription is formed by the graffito of two signs. Depth and *ductus* of incision are not homogeneous, since the first sign, reading from left to right, is deeply engraved in the clay, while the second is shallower and less readily recognisable. In all likelihood, the signs were added before firing, with not much accuracy and precision in their presentation.

Identification of the signs

Whether the two signs constitute an inscription is debatable, given that they are identical and that it is not possible to ascertain whether more signs were incised to the left of the first sign. However, a thick oblique stroke is detectable on the right upper section of the second sign, which may suggest the presence of a third sign. Its position, right at the edge of the break, impedes any identification. The extant signs are placed at the upper edge of the handle fragment, and are neatly spaced. The height of the signs is c. 1.6.

Signs 1 and 2 are identified as the same sign, repeated, Masson no. **91**  . The second sign on the right presents a slightly oblique rendition of the vertical lateral strokes that constitute its basic shape but, despite this minor differentiation in the morphology, the signs clearly are identifiable as the same.

4. MV/P70

ARCHAEOLOGY

Pot

Plain White Handmade pithoid jar (figs. 9-10): over half of body, and separate rim fragments, preserved, from Room 7 of the Ashlar Building, in baulk L20/M20, level 4, small find 19, bucket 9806, with other fragments in levels 1-4[13]. Height to top of handle 64. Estimated total height 70. Rim diameter 40. Base diameter 23.3-23.6. Buff fine/coarse clay, with fine black and white inclusions, in many parts in two distinct layers, suggesting that an extra skim of clay had been added to the interior during manufacture; ridge at the junction of neck and body; thick strap handle. Smoothed self-slip on the exterior and decorated with an impressed broad wavy groove on the shoulder between two incised thin horizontal lines, the lower of which comes just below the handle. Seven signs and two word dividers are inscribed.

[12] Including the thick oval section of the handle: cf. Keswani 1989, 18, fig. 19.

[13] Preliminary account: Cadogan 1992, 53, pl. 11.

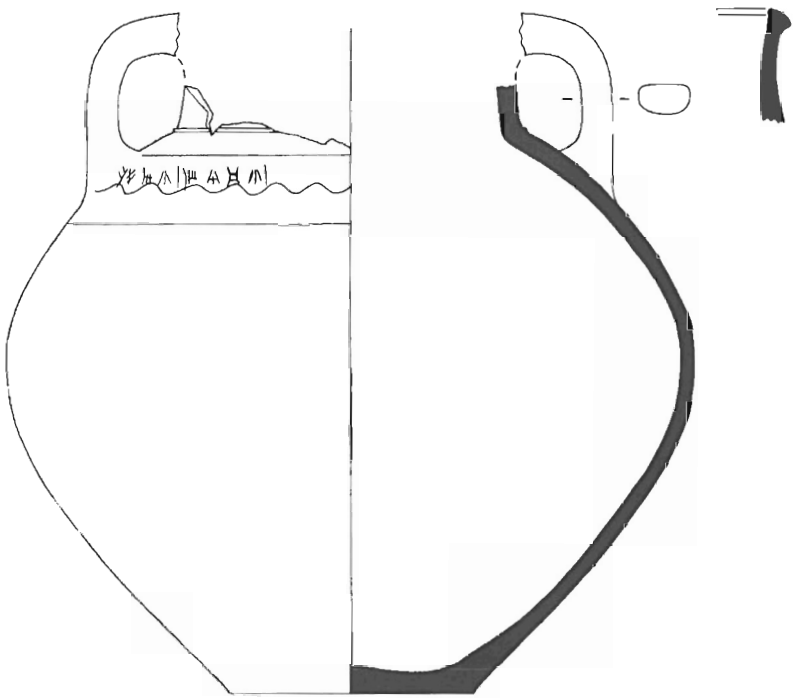


Fig. 9 – **4**.

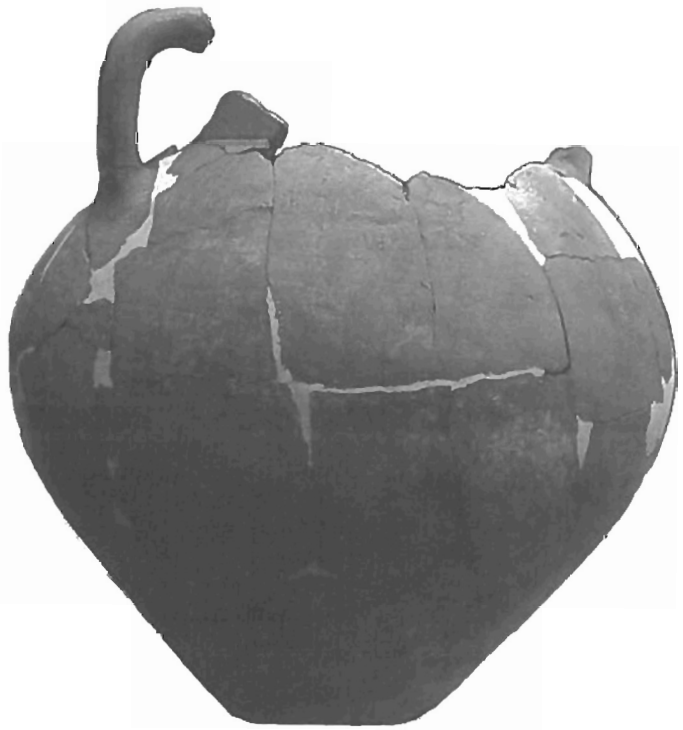


Fig. 10 – **4**.

Context

This jar seemed to have been set (or, less likely, to have settled) into the earth floor of Room 7, against wall CH. It had mud (brick) packing around the base, at least on the north side, to stabilise it. It had, however, been placed extremely close to the doorway from Room 6, which must have been inconvenient. It may be assigned to Vournes IIIb[14]. We do not know its contents, although the inscription may refer to them. Room 7 was one of a suite of semi-basement rooms, which included Room 4 with an olive pressing bed, along the northeast façade of the Ashlar Building.

Ceramic associations

Plain White pithoid jars have a variety of shapes, some being like amphoroid kraters, and some bell kraters – and indeed they may have been used as kraters. The shape of this jar with its tall neck is akin to the amphoroid krater[15]. Plain White pithoid jars also have, fairly often, wavy groove decoration on the shoulder, whether between horizontal grooves or lines or not[16]. Less frequent is the practice of cutting an inscription over the grooves, but (the earlier) Floor II at Maa supplies a parallel on a bell-shaped jar. It has a wavy groove between horizontal grooves on the shoulder, with the inscription (of three signs in Cypro-Minoan) added over the grooves and 'engraved after firing'[17], with a sharp instrument, presumably a knife. The Floor II horizon at Maa covers from LC IIC into the earlier part of LC IIIA[18].

Epigraphy

Inscription

The inscription is written on the shoulder of the jar over the wavy groove (figs. 11-12). It has nine signs, two of which (signs 4 and 9), in accordance with the standard Cypro-Minoan practice to mark word division, can safely be identified as word dividers. There are clear indications that the inscription was made with a stylus in the damp clay before firing: traces of erasure in sign 1, the curvature,

[14] Following the (provisional) phasing of Vournes in Cadogan, Herscher, Russell, Manning 2001, esp. 84.

[15] These jars seem to fit into Keswani's group IB2 of what she calls 'pithoi' (Keswani 1989, 15, fig. 16: 24-26 and esp. 27; cf. Schuster 1984, 31-38, fig. 6: 10-12, and 15 [with a wavy line]). Note that Schuster (later Keswani) writes (1984, 31): 'the term "pithos" will be used in reference to any storage vessel regardless of size'. We are not happy with such a mass grouping, and continue to believe that **4** is best classed as a pithoid jar. It is too small to be considered a pithos: this would need a *minimum* height of around 1 m as well as, usually and perhaps invariably, a considerably coarser clay mixture, while calling it a 'pithos' obscures likely links – in form and possibly function – with the amphoroid krater shape. Keswani (1989, 15) recognises the similarity between her IB2 group and amphoroid kraters, but classes the Mycenean amphoroid krater she takes as an example (Higgins 1967, 112, fig. 129) among 'pithoi'.

[16] E.g. Keswani 1989, fig. 16: 21-23, 25; Schuster 1984, 33-34, fig. 6: 13-15.

[17] Karageorghis, Demas 1988, 122, pls. 72, 194: 530; for the inscription, Masson 1988, 399, pl. B: 6.

[18] Karageorghis, Demas 1988, 258-60, fig. 1.

Fig. 11 – **4**: detail.

Fig. 12 – **4**: detail.

especially with signs 5-7, the uniform depth of incision, the spilling of clay at the start and finish of the strokes, and the order in which the traits that compose the signs were applied, are certain indications of this. All signs have been deeply incised, up to c. 0.1 deep.

Two word-sequences form the inscription, each separated by a vertical word-divider. Without a doubt it is complete to the right. Evidence for this is the fact that sign 1 appears only in word-initial position: cf. above on **2**, sign 1). There is a gap c. 1 wide to the left of sign 1, where there is a break in the vessel. The usual width between the signs varies from c. 1.1 to c. 1.5, and from c. 0.6 to c. 0.7 between a sign and a word divider. No traces of incision are left in the break, which should be more evidence that the inscription is complete. The signs differ only slightly in

height and are approximately equally spaced[19]. They fill the upper part of a field between the two incised horizontal lines, c. 8.5 from each other, the bottom line being c. 0.2 wide, the top one only c. 0.1. The scribe attempted to put the inscription on an imaginary line, c. 4.8 from the bottom line and c. 2.0-2.2 from the top line, although the signs of the second word gradually diminish in height.

Identification of the signs

Because of the care and neatness with which the inscription was made, the signs are easily identifiable. Each sign shows its own distinctive features and seems to follow set conventions rather than being an idiosyncratic graffito.

Sign 1 (Masson no. **38**, 𐄁) has two oblique strokes almost converging at the top, each with two shorter vertical strokes at the sides of the central trait. The sign shows traces of erasure involving the two short righthand oblique traits going originally too far down to the left. Then two converging long strokes were incised[20]. As is apparent from the shape of the 'normalised' sign, the four shorter strokes observable on the sides of the convergent strokes are idiosyncratic in being oblique, since normally they are straight and vertical.

Sign 2 has three vertical strokes, the lefthand one being double the length of the righthand ones which converge at the top, with a short horizontal stroke crossing the righthand ones at the top. The latter was applied after the vertical traits. As far as the identification with the Cypro-Minoan repertoire is concerned, a sinistroverse Cypro-Minoan sign Masson no. **79** 𐄏 is not impossible; but more likely this is Masson's sign **47** 𐄃.

Sign 3 (Masson no. **23** 𐄀) has three strokes converging at the top, the middle one being vertical, the strokes on either side oblique.

Sign 4 is formed by a long vertical trait and is, without a doubt, a word divider.

Sign 5 (Masson no. **44** 𐄈) has four vertical traits, a long one and three shorter ones, and one horizontal: three of the vertical ones are placed parallel to each other on the horizontal bar which runs about halfway up the height of the long vertical trait. The latter shows a kink at the top, which is repeated by the first shorter vertical one to the left. The horizontal bar was incised last. It is to be noted that the normalised version of this sign presents only three parallel vertical strokes, rather than the four ones discernible here.

Sign 6 (Masson no. **25** 𐄂) has only its top half preserved, although the lefthand oblique stroke appears complete. The sign consists basically of two oblique strokes converging at the top, with a cross incised in the space underneath. The horizontal bar of the cross was incised last.

Sign 7 (Masson no. **68** 𐄇) has two short horizontal strokes above each other with two slightly curved horizontal longer bars on either side. The curved traits were incised last[21].

[19] The height of the individual signs varies from c. 1.4 (signs 6, 8) to c. 1.8 (signs 2, 3), c. 2 (signs 1, 7, 9) and c. 2.3 (signs 4, 5), and their width from c. 1 (sign 2) to c. 1.3 (signs 6, 7), c. 1.6 (signs 5, 8), c. 1.7 (sign 3) and c. 2.1 (sign 1).

[20] Cf. Linear A sign AB38 (*GORILA* V, xxxiv).

[21] Cf. Linear A sign AB55 (*GORILA* V, xxxvii).

Sign 8 (Masson no. **23** 𐔀) is fundamentally the same, albeit not so well preserved, as sign 3.

Sign 9 is formed by a long vertical trait, again recognisable as a word divider.

The complete inscription is thus: 𐔁 𐔃 𐔀 𐔄 𐔅 𐔆 𐔀.

Discussion

It is noteworthy that in both cases the word divider is preceded by sign **23** 𐔀, which Masson has interpreted as a suffix[22]. The *ductus* of the signs, characterised by a marked linearity and stylisation, clearly identifies the inscription as CM1. However, for the reasons outlined above, one should be very cautious in adopting this classification: it must be borne in mind, for instance, that Masson no. **47** 𐔃, which is attested in this inscription is, according to Masson's subset repertoire, not attested in CM1 but only in CM2. This would be a contradictory and problematic feature if one were to assume *de facto* that this inscription belongs to the CM1 subset.

A link between the inscription and the function of the vessel may be postulated, but whether this inscription points to the owner of the jar, or refers to its contents or capacity, cannot be ascertained at present. One may note, however, that several silver and bronze bowls from Enkomi, dating to the (slightly later) LC IIIA period, have inscriptions that often show the ending of their word sequences as marked by the same sign as is inscribed on this piece, namely Masson no. **23** 𐔀[23]. By analogy with the precious high-status Enkomi bowls, which are likely to record anthroponyms – clearly the owners of the pieces – we may conclude that our **4** may have had a similar function of registering ownership.

CONCLUSIONS

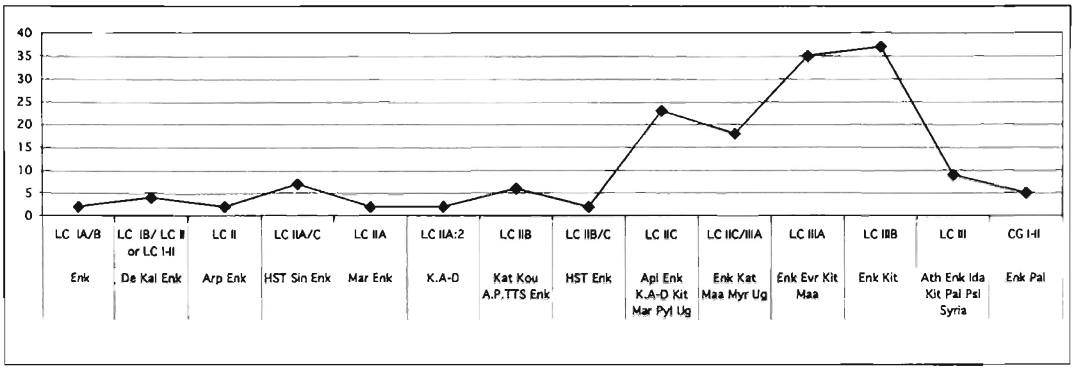
The Cypro-Minoan script at Maroni-Vournes

In the LC IIC period, the Cypro-Minoan script spread to several urban coastal centres and some of the inland secondary and tertiary settlements, as shown in table 1 below.

Maroni-Vournes seems to play a part in this process of diffusion. The quantity and typology of inscribed material, however, cannot lead us to more definite conclusions as to what role writing played at the site. Equally unfathomable is to pinpoint whether writing was being used solely to denote ownership. Or was it to denote contents or quantities? And/or part of some low-level administrative practice? If the latter was the case, we should prefer, in view of the features and contents of the Ashlar Building, to see its writing as linked to olive oil production and management rather than metallurgical activities. Whatever its function, the use

[22] Masson 1978, 810; 1983, 138.

[23] Metal bowls from Enkomi: nos. N14, 25, 16.63, 1959/IX-28/1, A1227; pithos 16.108; clay bowl 1904 (Ferrara 2005).



AP = Ayia Paraskevi; **Apl** = Apliki; **Ath** = Athienou; **Arp** = Arpera; **De** = Denia; **Evr** = Evreti; **HST** = Hala Sultan Tekke; **Ida** = Idalion; **K.A-D** = Kalavasos-Ayios Dimitrios; **Kal** = Kalopsida; **Kat** = Katydata; **Kit** = Kition; **Kou** = Kourion; **Maa** = Maa-Palaeokastro; **Mar** = Maroni-Vournes; **Myr** = Myrtou-Pigades; **Pal** = Palaepaphos-Skales; **Psi** =Psilatos; **Pyl** = Pyla-Kokkinokremos; **Sin** = Sinda; **TTS** = Toumba Tou Skourou; **Ug** = Ugarit; **Ver** = Pyla-Vergi.

Table 1. The spread of the Cypro-Minoan script.

of writing at Maroni-Vournes was, clearly, centralised within the Ashlar Building and is a further indicator of the Building's importance, at least in the Maroni valley.

In the light of this, we further suggest that the use of writing (probably for agricultural/industrial management) began in this part of Cyprus at Maroni-Vournes and probably then spread to Kalavasos-Ayios Dimitrios in the next (Vasilikos river) valley to the west where Building X, its central building, seems a little later than the Maroni-Vournes Ashlar Building – and may well have supplanted it and controlled *both* valleys for a time[24]. This would then show a continuity in the employment of writing for industrial purposes from Vournes to Ayios Dimitrios. But it is hard, because of the paucity of inscriptions there (12 in all) as at Vournes, to establish the level of symmetry or homogeneity in the use of writing at the two sites. All the same, it is clear that the inscribed clay cylinders at Ayios Dimitrios were not dedicatory foundation texts, as Masson proposed, but may well have had an administrative purpose[25].

To summarise, table 2 shows the contextual and epigraphic details for the four Maroni-Vournes inscriptions.

[24] Cf. Cadogan 1996, forthcoming; South 2002, 63-65; Keswani 2004, 88-89. We suggest this as a local phenomenon regardless of whether, or not, there was 'a single, unified Cypriot polity' in LC II: cf. Knapp 2008, 335-41, especially 340 and (for Maroni-Kalavasos relations) 336.

[25] Smith 2002b, 20-25.

Inscribed object	*Number*	*Inscription*	*Locus*	*Date*
WPWM krater handle	**1 (MV/Z119)**	𐤉 𐤏 𐤀	Space 31, robbing trench	LC IIC
Basin rim sherd	**2 (MV/Z139)**	𐤋 𐤀 ? 𐤌	Pit 37, robbing trench	possible LC IIC
Coarse ware handle	**3 (MV/Z233)**	𐤋𐤋	Trench H20, context unclear	possible LC IIC
PWHM pithoid jar	**4 (MV/P70)**	𐤋𐤌𐤀 ‖ 𐤔𐤁𐤄𐤀 ‖	Room 7	LC IIC

Table 2. Summary of information on inscriptions **1-4**.

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