

# Two Carian Inscriptions from Karabournaki/Thessaloniki, Greece\*

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## **A** RCHAEOLOGICAL DATA AND DESCRIPTION

Karabournaki or Little Karabournou is located in North Aegean, on the edge of the promontory in the centre of the Thermaic Gulf, in the area of modern Thessaloniki. The site preserves the remains of an ancient settlement, a harbour and cemeteries. It is probably identified with the harbour of the ancient Therme, mentioned by the literary sources and established *komedon* that is made up of a number of small habitations scattered around the head of the Thermaic Gulf. The Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, under the directorship of Prof. M. Tiverios, carries the archaeological research at the settlement from 1994 onwards.

The up to date findings are indicative for the commercial role of the site and its significance in the Aegean trade<sup>1</sup>. The revealed architectural remains belong to residential buildings and storerooms dated mostly in the Archaic period<sup>2</sup>. Among the chief features of Karabournaki, however, are the beehive-shaped semi-subterranean constructions spread out on the mound that served domestic and workshop activities. The remnants of a metalworking and a pottery workshop have been also found on the site. Of particular interest is the local and imported pottery in terms of quantity and quality<sup>3</sup>. The most important pottery centres of the ancient Greek world (*e.g.* Euboeia, Corinth, East Greece, Chios, Athens, Sparta, Samos, NE Aegean) are represented with numerous examples, while it is not missing the Cypro-Phoenician production<sup>4</sup>. Worth of note is the number of the trade amphorae for olive oil and wine and the fact that throughout the Archaic times the presence of the East Greek imports is particularly strong on the site.

During the archaeological excavations of 1995 and 1996, it came to light an unusual for the region find but of tremendous interest. This is a Carian inscription preserved on the fragments of an ionizing closed vessel, possibly an amphora or large oinochoe, with banded decoration (fig. 1)<sup>5</sup>. The fragments were found in the trench 23/3d in depth of 0,20 m. They were close to the surface and within a disturbed layer. There were not architectural remains preserved in that layer, except for a small part of flooring consisting of seashells and pebbles. The other findings, within which the inscriptions were found, were vase fragments, roof tiles, pebbles, seashells, and small animal bones.

The Carian letters were incised on six sherds that all come from the same vase, and the five of them joined together. The examination of the sherds indicates that the inscriptions were incised after the break of the vessel. Among the letters were recognized numerical symbols. The latter in combination to the fact that the inscriptions were carelessly incised indicate that they have a commercial character and they are related to the trade that was taken place on the settlement.

The rest of the unearthed pottery found in the trench 23/3d, presents a variation in shapes and types of local and imported ware. The majority appears to belong to the Archaic times and the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC. To the same period seems to be dated the vessel that carries the inscriptions.

\* We owe special thanks to cand. phil. Apostolos Thanos for the excellent drawings of the vase and the roof tile fragments.

1. Tiverios 2009.

2. Tsiafakis 2010.

3. Manakidou 2010.

4. Tsiafakis 2000; Tiverios 2004; Manakidou (forthcoming).

5. Inv. nr. K95B.114, 140, 161; dimensions of joined fragments a+b: 0.12 x 0.107 m (thickness 0.007 m), fragment c: 0.046 x 0.035 m (thickness 0.006-0.007 m); clay brown-beige with grey core, without inclusions, engobe beige; two orange-red strips preserved from the decoration. Tiverios 1999; Tiverios, Manakidou & Tsiafakis 1998, 280, 282, fig. 7.

A few years later another clay object of similar interest was found in the excavation of 2001. This time it is a fragmentary roof tile (fig. 2), consisted of two joined sherds that was unearthed in the trench 26/10b<sup>6</sup>. The roof tile is covered with a deep red slip and it was found in a disturbed layer, very close to the surface in depth of 0,15 m. There were not preserved any architectural remains in that depth yet and the fragment was among contemporary objects and ancient pottery, roof tiles, seashells and small animal bones. Although in a disturbed context, the general assumption for the chronology is the Archaic period, a date that is confirmed by the majority of the pottery.

Those are not the only known Carian inscriptions coming from the Thermaic Gulf and the North Greece in general. Some more are found during the past decades<sup>7</sup>. The Carian presence in the region could be related to Xerxes, who camped here on his way to southern Greece around 480 BC. It is known moreover that Carians joined his army<sup>8</sup>. The Carian presence in Karabournaki, however, could be related to other reasons. It has been already pointed out that Macedonia was under a strong influence of East Greece and Ionia in particular, during the Archaic times and a part of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC<sup>9</sup>. The Ionian occurrence in Karabournaki is clearly attested through the imported fine ware and the local production, as well as through the numerous trade amphorae unearthed at the site<sup>10</sup>. Furthermore, the Ionian presence in the area was intense during the late Archaic period when Ionia and a great part of Macedonia were under the Persian Empire<sup>11</sup>.

As it is known, Carians were in close contact with the Ionians already from the early 10<sup>th</sup> century BC, when the latter established themselves in the southwest coast of Asia Minor. They developed close relations and undertook common expeditions and activities, as for example in Egypt during the Saite period<sup>12</sup>. Carians and Ionians were also in good terms and contacts during the time of the Ionian Revolt, at the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC, as well as the next centuries<sup>13</sup>. Therefore it is possible that the Ionians led Carians in the Thermaic Gulf. Ionians were well known for their marine trade and Carians were famous voyagers with great abilities in the sea<sup>14</sup>.

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## EPIGRAPHICAL AND LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS

### Fragments of a closed vase with Carian inscription (fig. 1 and 2)

According to Prof. Tiverios, these are three independent fragments which were all inscribed *after* the breakage of the vessel. The first fragment consists of four sherds (one of them anepigraphic) which fit together perfectly and produce a meaningful text.

The text is written from right to left. The two first lines of fragment 1 seem to be complete on the right side (i.e. at their beginning).

#### *Reading*

Frg. 1:

uśoλ [ -? ] ??

paw<sup>2</sup> | ♀

?-?-em uliat | mid<sup>2</sup>[

?] m<sup>2</sup>nydiq | | | | [*vaca*]

6. Inv. nr. M01.131a-b; dimensions, height: 0.91 m. Length: 0.15 m., thickness: 0.017 m. Tiverios *et al.* 2003a, 259; Tiverios *et al.* 2003b, 349-350, fig. 20.

7. Tiverios 1999, 1175-1176.

8. Tiverios 1999, 1176.

9. Tiverios 1999, 1176 and note 6 for bibliography.

10. Tsiafakis 2000; Tiverios 2009, 388 sq., 392, 394.

11. Tiverios 1999, 1176-1177.

12. Tiverios 1999, 1177 sq.

13. Tiverios 1999, 1178-1179. For the long interrelationship between the two populations see also recently Herda & Sauter 2009.

14. Tiverios 1999, 1180.



Fig. 1. Fragments of a closed vase with Carian inscription.  
(Photo Archive of the University excavation at Karabournaki).

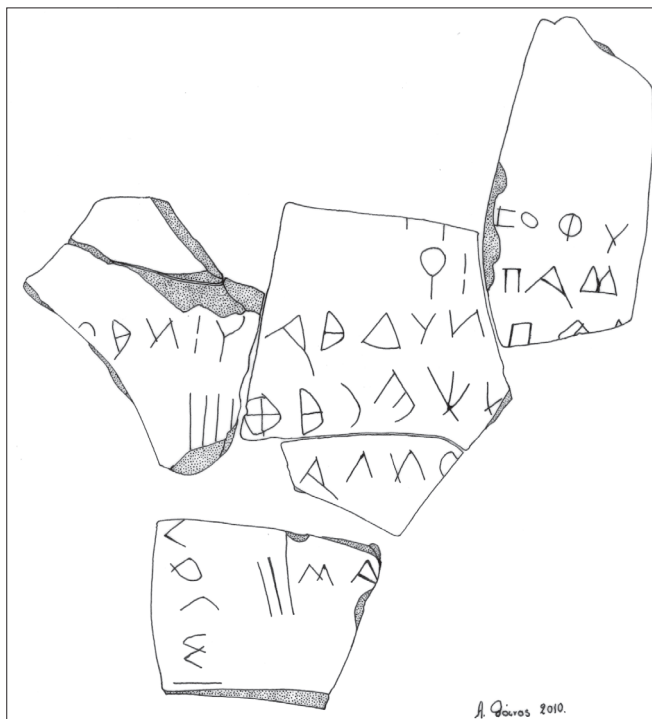


Fig. 2. Fragments of a closed vase with Carian inscription.  
Drawing A. Thanos (Archive of the University excavation at Karabournaki).

Fig. 2:  
?-mba[

Fig. 3:  
a. ]b<sup>2</sup>odη<sup>2</sup> |  
b.(perpendicular to a) ]as ||-

*Reading problems*

Fig. 1

Line 2: The letter *w* is not totally certain, as it is incomplete. The last letter ϣ (= Carian *t*) seems to be a number expression (on this, see the commentary of the other inscription).

Line 3: The reading of the last letter is not totally certain due to the breakage of the piece.

Line 4: The first legible letter is probably *m*.

Fig. 2

The first letter may be O *o*, or less probably ϣ *t*.

Frg. 3. *a*.

The first letter is clearly readable as  $\Lambda$  *b*, but because of the way in which the piece is broken the letter  $\mathbb{M}$  *s* is also a possibility. The last letter has the appearance of the Carian letter  $\mathbb{A}$  *η*, but it might equally be an unusual version of  $\mathbb{M}$  *s*.

### Commentary

We can identify at least three clear Carian names or parts of Carian names:

a. In frg. 1, line 1, the most characteristic Carian name appears: *υςολ*. This name is very well attested both in direct (*υςολ*–/*υςολ*–) and indirect (Υσσωλλος, Υσσωλδος) sources, and it also appears in composition: *pn-υςολ*– / Πονυσσωλλος, *šar-υςολ*– / Σαρυσσωλλος, etc; note particularly the famous Carian satrap, Μανυσσωλλος<sup>15</sup>.

b. In frg. 1, line 3, the typical Carian name *uliat*, well attested both in direct (*wliat*, *wljat*) and indirect (Ολιατος KPN<sup>16</sup> § 1085-2, Υλιατος, KPN § 1627) sources, is easily recognizable. As a matter of curiosity, this is the first recording of the name spelled as *uliat*, with <u> and <i>.

c. In frg. 1, line 4,  $\mathbb{M}^{\prime}nydiq$  shows a sequence *ydiq* that recalls the family of Carian names in *-ydiq* / *-υδιγος*<sup>17</sup> (*ša-ydiq*, Παρα-υδιγος, Σπαρε-υδιγος); more specifically,  $\mathbb{M}^{\prime}nydiq$  can be directly compared with  $\mathbb{J}bewmsmnwdiq$  attested in Thebes, where *ydiq/ydiq* (here written *wdiq*<sup>18</sup>) is also preceded by *mn*. In Thebes, a segmentation  $\mathbb{J}bewm\ smnwdiq$  seems the best solution<sup>19</sup>. *smnwdiq* can be analyzed as a compound name *smn-ydiq* whose first element would be the same as in *smδybrs* (C.Ha 1) and perhaps also Ισημενδα...ος (cf. below on *ismn* in the second inscription). In the ostrakon, before  $\mathbb{M}^{\prime}nydiq$  there is room for only one or, at the most, two letters, and so a restitution  $\mathbb{J}sm^{\prime}nydiq$  on the basis of the Theban form is worth considering.

Apart from these three forms, *paw*<sup>v</sup> in frg. 2 might also be a proper name. If we accept the reading *w* for the last letter, it recalls the name *pau*– attested in Tralles, Hyllarima, and Mylasa, and also known in Greek transcription (Παος, Blümel 1998, 21, Lagina, Mylasa, Amyzon).

Practically nothing can be said of the rest of sequences (*mid*?, *mba*,  $\mathbb{J}b^{\prime}od\eta$ ?, all of which are probably incomplete; note also that the reading of some signs of these sequences is far from certain.

Undoubtedly, many, if not all, of the vertical strokes represent number values<sup>20</sup>. This is particularly clear in frg. 1, line 3, where the presumed proper name  $\mathbb{M}^{\prime}nydiq$  is followed by four vertical strokes. In the case of frg. 3b as well we recognize two or three vertical strokes. In the rest of cases, where only one vertical stroke appears, it is not so clear whether these are also expressions of numbers or simply word separations – the use of a vertical stroke for this latter function is well attested in Carian script, particularly in the older inscriptions.

The alphabet used in this inscription shows some traits that resemble the Carian alphabetic variant attested in Egypt<sup>21</sup>: the form of  $\mathbb{D}$  *i* and  $\mathbb{Q}$  *q*, and the presence of  $\mathbb{M}$  *w*, are typical Caro-Egyptian features. However, the inscription may contain a “non-Egyptian” letter  $\mathbb{A}$  *η*. If we accept this, the situation would recall that of E.xx 7, an inscription on a bronze lion whose precise origin is unknown but which is usually attributed to an Egyptian milieu in view of its typology and which is also written in a Caro-Egyptian alphabet (including “Egyptian” letters such  $\mathbb{M}$  and  $\mathbb{H}$ ) side by side with  $\mathbb{A}$ . The affinity with the Egyptian alphabetic variant does not come as a surprise: very probably the Carian alphabet in use in

15. See Adiego 2007, 431.

16. KPN = Zgusta 1964.

17. Adiego 2007, 262-263.

18. Perhaps this is an occasional use of  $\mathbb{M}$  for  $\mathbb{E}$ , as suggested in Adiego 2007, 105 for a similar case also in Thebes ( $\mathbb{C}wriq$  for  $\mathbb{C}yriq$  in E.Th 46).

19. Cf. Adiego 2007, 439 for this proposal.

20. Tiverios 1999, 1175.

21. See Adiego 2007, 219ff.

Egypt came from Carian coastal cities in the archaic period, and the same explanation may also seem reasonable for this document found in Karabournaki.

Fragmentary roof tile with Carian inscription (fig. 3 and 4)



Fig. 3. Fragmentary roof tile with Carian inscription. (Photo Archive of the University excavation at Karabournaki).

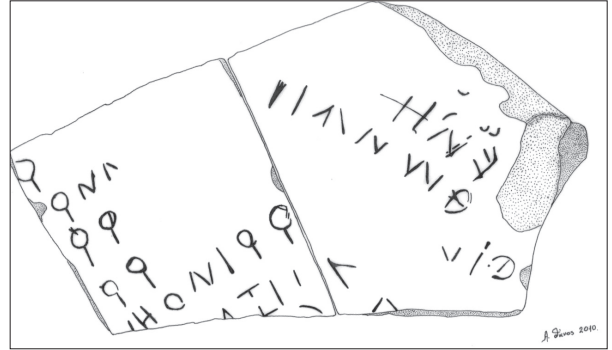


Fig. 4. Fragmentary roof tile with Carian inscription. Drawing A. Thanos (Archive of the University excavation at Karabournaki).

This inscribed tile consists of two fragments that fit together. The two texts are probably independent of each other; both are written from left to right. In the case of text a, only the very end of the lines is preserved.

Reading

a.  
 ]ϕ  
 ]ϕ mb  
 ]ϕ ϕ  
 ]ϕ ϕ  
 ]ϕ om | ϕ ϕ  
 ]- ?-λ | ?  
 ] Λ  
 ]-?

b (perpendicular to a)

]s | Λ  
 ismn | |  
 lym | |

Commentary

Evidence for a direct attribution to Carian is less clear than in the case described above. As the reading shows, only a few letters are conserved, and on this occasion no clearly Carian names can be recognized. Nonetheless, the presence of the letter  $\Theta$  in the second line of part b supports the attribution, given that this is a specific Carian letter. In addition, the sequence  $MNV$  that follows that letter has no meaning in Greek but looks like a characteristic Carian sequence  $smn$  which recalls forms such as  $smnwdiq$  or  $sm\delta\acute{y}brs$  (where  $\delta$  represents an original /nd/ group, therefore  $*smn\alpha^{\delta}$ ), mentioned above. Moreover, the resulting sequence  $ismn\lambda$  associates this form with the Carian name  $\text{I}\sigma\epsilon\mu\epsilon\nu\delta\alpha\dots\omicron\varsigma$  attested in Halikarnassos.

The final EN = ]ym in b3 can be compared with the Carian names *paraeym*, *parpeym*, *bejeym*, and the final HΦON = ]jom in a-5, with the Carian names *kbjom* (= Κεβιωμος in Greek sources), *arjom*, *šarkbiom*, *arliom* (= Αρλιωμος in Greek sources)<sup>22</sup>.

The reiteration and position in the section a of the letter qoppa Ϙ suggests a use as a numerical symbol rather than as a letter (Carian *t*). We also saw a qoppa with this possible function in the first inscription, where the presence of strokes representing number values is beyond any doubt (see above on frg. 1). In section b of this inscription we also recognize the use of strokes as probable numerical marks.

The sign Λ (Carian *b*), which twice appears at the end of a line (a, line 7; b, line 1) may also be a numerical symbol.

It is impossible to establish the numerical value of Ϙ, but the fact that it appears twice might suggest the value ‘10’. As for Λ, if it is indeed a numerical mark, the value “5” seems to be the most likely. If the values | = 1, Λ = 5, Ϙ = 10 are assumed, the system of numerical symbols strongly recalls that found in Lycian script, where probably | = 1, C, < = 5, O = 10<sup>23</sup>. Of course, no genetic connection between Lycian and Carian numerical symbols can be demonstrated, and we cannot rule out a parallel, independent creation. Note also that the numerical symbol which may represent ‘10’ in these inscriptions is a qoppa, not simply a circle.

As for the use of Ϙ *t* with the value ‘10’, one might speculate an acrophonic origin, assuming a system parallel to the “Attic” or “Herodianic” system of numerical symbols in use in Ancient Greek (Δ = ‘10’ from δέκα, Π = ‘5’ from πέντε): could *t* be the initial sound of the Carian word for ‘10’? Given the Indo-European affiliation of Carian, this seems possible: the Proto-Indo-European (PIE) word for ‘10’ is usually reconstructed as \**dékmt*, and PIE initial \**d* became *t* in Carian, as in the rest of Anatolian languages (Carian *ted* ‘father’ < \**dáda-*, cf. Luwian *tāti-*, Lycian *tedi*, Lydian *taada-*). But unfortunately the word for ‘ten’ is not attested in any Anatolian language and therefore it is impossible to confirm that this group of languages retained the original PIE form for this numeral<sup>24</sup>. Moreover, this account based on acrophony does not fit so well in the case of Λ (*b* in Carian) = ‘5’, for which there is no convincing explanation.

The limited number of extant letters in this tile fragment makes it difficult to analyse the alphabetic variant in use here, but it seems to be very similar to the alphabet used in the other inscription. In addition, the connection with the Egyptian alphabetic variant would be clear if the presence of the sign H, a typical “Egyptian” letter is accepted.

These inscriptions can be classified respectively as G.3 and G.4.

Letters used in the inscriptions		
Nº	G.3 ←	G.4 →
1	Α	
3	Ϟ	
4	Δ	
5	Ξ	Ε
7	Ι	Ι
9	Ϙ	

22. For the alternance *j/i* in Carian, see Adiego 2007, 235.

23. See Bryce 1986, 60-63.

24. Melchert’s tentative suggestion that Lycian *sīta* can mean ‘10’ (Melchert, 2004, *sub voce*) is far from certain.

10	$\wedge$	$\wedge$
11	$\mathbb{N}$	$\mathbb{N}$
12	$\circ$	$\circ$
14	$\varphi$	
17	$\mathbb{M}$	$\mathbb{M}$
19	$\vee$	
22	$\mathbb{V}$	$\mathbb{V}$
24	$\mathbb{M}$	
25	$\emptyset$	$\emptyset$
26	$\emptyset$	$\emptyset$
27	$\square$	
37	$\mathbb{A}?$	
38		$\mathbb{H}?$
number sign		
number sign	$\varphi$	$\varphi$
number sign ?		$\wedge$

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