

## ORIGINS OF THE SIDETIC SCRIPT

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In his interesting article "Zur Entzifferung der Sidetischen Inschriften", G. Neumann critically reviewed the relevant data for the determination of the values of Sidetic signs and came to the positive conclusion that the values of some 13 signs can be firmly based upon manifest correspondences with Greek in the names of the bilingual inscriptions and in the epichoric transcriptions of a Greek word.<sup>1</sup>

In order to facilitate the reader, these correspondences are depicted here in the figures 1-4 (Sidetic forms in retrograde direction), though with the noted adjustment that the evidence of the coins is included at the expense of the evidence provided by the more ambiguous epichoric equivalent of Greek *Apollodorou*.

Sid. no 1: Artemon-inscription (II<sup>nd</sup> century B.C.)

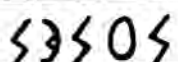

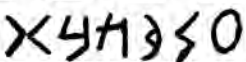
Sidetic	Greek
	*Αθηνα[ί]α θεᾶ
	*Αρτέμων
	*Αθηνιππ(ί)ου

Fig. 1

1. *Kadmos* VII, 1968, pp.79-83 (this article offers the best introduction to the subject). For the photographs and drawings of Sid. nos 1 and 2, see H. Th. Bossert, "Schrift und Sprache der Sideten", *Bulletin* XIV, 1950, Abb. 1-4.

Sid. no 2: Apollonios-inscription (IIIrd century B.C.)

Sidetic	Greek
	'ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝΙΟΣ
	ΤΟΥ 'ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝΙΟΥ

Fig. 2

Coins (Vth/IVth century B.C.)

Sidetic	Greek
	ΣΙΔΗΤΩΝ

Fig. 3

Sid. nos 3, 4: Trataşes-inscription (IInd century B.C.)

Sidetic	Greek
	ἀναθηματα *

\* Greek word in Sidetic transcription.

Fig. 4

Now, taking this group of signs as a starting-point for our inquiry into the origins of the Sidetic script, it immediately catches the eye that five of them bear a striking resemblance in form as well as in value to Phoenician counterparts and may therefore safely be assumed to originate from the Phoenician alphabet (see figure 5).<sup>2</sup>

2. Cf. C. Brixhe, "L'alphabet épichorique de Sidé", *Kadmos* VIII, 1969, pp.61;65-6;74-5. For the second variant form of the tsade, see S. Atlan, "Die Münzen der Stadt Side mit Sidetischen Aufschriften", *Kadmos* VII, 1968, Taf. I,4; for the development of the yod, see F.C. Woudhuizen, "Lydian: Separated from Luwian by three signs", p.93 above, Fig. 1.

## Origin A: Phoenician Alphabet

	Phoenician	Sidetic	value
no 9	⊕	⊙ ○	th
no 10	𐤁	𐤄 𐤅 𐤆	i
no 16	○	𐤈 𐤉	o
no 17	𐤊	𐤋	p
no 18	𐤌	𐤍 𐤎 𐤏 𐤐*	s

\*N and W

Fig. 5

On the other hand, however, there are also signs within this group which are certainly *not* paralleled in the Phoenician alphabet,<sup>3</sup> and it is thanks to the merit of W. Brandenstein that we are able to solve a substantial part of this problem by tracing the origin of once again five signs within the Cypro-Minoan Syllabary on account of their relationship in form and value with counterparts from this script (see figure 6).<sup>4</sup>

In addition to this it can be stated that the sign for the vowel /a/ is apparently rooted in the native Anatolian Luwian Hieroglyphic script (see figure 7), whereas the origin of the two signs that are still left remains unclear for the moment (see figure 8).

If all this is correct, it necessarily leads us to the conclusion that the Sidetic alphabet is formed out of a mixture of at least two, but possibly three different writing systems, which naturally all must have been extant in the region during its formative phase. In connection with this it is of course noteworthy that further confirmation for such a procedure is provided by the fact that the

3. Viz.: the signs for /l/, /n/ and /u/, cf. Brixhe, *op. cit.*, p.74-5.

4. W. Brandenstein, "Sprache und Schrift von Side in Pamphylien", *Minoica, Festschrift J. Sundwall*, Berlin 1958, Taf. 2. For the correction of the value of the first sign from /u/ into /v/, cf. V.V. Ševoroškin, "Zur sidetischen Schrift", *Kadmos* XIV, 1975, p.162.

Origin B: Cypro-Minoan Syllabary

C.L.	C.S.	value	Sidetic	value
		wa		v
		ra, la		l
		nu		n
		re		r
		ta		t

\* and , etc.

Fig. 6

Origin C: Luwian Hieroglyphic

	Luwian Hieroglyphic	Sid.	value
no 19			a

\* and

Fig. 7

Unknown origin:

Sid.	value
	e
	m

Fig. 8

neighbouring Anatolian alphabets [“Cappadocian”, Carian, (para-)Lydian, etc.] — though characterized by regional differences — are all based upon the same underlying principle.<sup>5</sup>

\* \* \*

Having arrived at this conclusion it now seems worth trying to proceed along this line of research and to search for possible counterparts of the remaining Sidetic signs in the given writing systems with the obvious intention to determine their values in this manner.

Doing so, it seems possible to identify four more signs originating from the Phoenician alphabet (see figure 9);<sup>6</sup>

Origin A: Phoenician Alphabet

	Phoenician	Sidetic	value
no 6	Y	Y Y V	u
no 19	q	q	
no 20	q	P	r  <sub>1</sub>
no 21	W	3 3 S 2*	s

\* 2 and 3

Fig. 9

5. F.C. Woudhuizen, “Etruscan Origins: The Epigraphic Evidence”, *TALANTA* XIV-XV, 1983-4, pp.108-11; see also the article on Lydian, referred to in note 2 above.

6. Cf. Brixhe, *op.cit.*, p.70/73. For the second and third variant form of the shin, see Atlan, *Münzen der Stadt Side*, Taf. III, 12 and 2 respectively; these are typical Anatolian writing-variants of this sign, reminiscent of the “Cappadocian-Phrygian” many-stroked sigma, cf. Woudhuizen, *Etruscan Origins*, p.111, note 10.

and an equal number originating from the Cypro-Minoan Syllabary (see figure 10).<sup>7</sup>

Origin B: Cypro-Minoan Syllabary

C.L.	C.S.	value	Sidetic	value
		po		p  <sub>1</sub>
		mi		m  <sub>1</sub>
		se		ss
		ti		t  <sub>1</sub>

Fig. 10

Moreover, it seems even possible to specify the value of the first sign in the latter group some further on account of the fact that its third variant form strikingly corresponds to the so-called “Corinthian /b/” ( $\uparrow$ ), which is first attested in a proto-Etruscan inscription from Cumae (no. 2: c. 700-675 B.C.) — a region, where, like in southern Etruria, other parallels of Sidetic signs can be found as well (see figure 11).<sup>8</sup>

7. For the first variant of /p/, see *Atlas, Münzen der Stadt Side*, Taf. I,4. The third sign with the value /ss/ is strikingly paralleled in Pamphylia, see C. Brixhe, *La Dialecte Grec de Pamphylia*, Paris 1976, p.7-9.

8.  $\uparrow$ : Cumae no. 2 (c. 700-675 B.C.); second letter of the beginning of an alphabet.

$\circ$ : on the Piacenza bronze liver (T.L.E. 719), dated to the IIIrd century B.C. (note that the Po-valley is colonized from southern Etruria).

$\uparrow$ : in an archaic alphabet from Caere (no. 19: c. 650-600 B.C.).

$\uparrow^*$ : on south Etruscan mirrors, e.g. *Etruskische Spiegel* V, no. 85,2 (Tarquiniā); no. 87,1 (Vulci) and on a coin from Posidonia in the region of Cumae, see *Archeologia Classica* XVI, Tav. XLIII (for  $\text{Me}\nu\lambda$ ), corresponding to Greek *Pose* (abbr. of GN *Poseidon*), cf. the Etruscan GN *Methlans*, Etr. Sp. V,49 or *Metlum(th)*, T.L.E. 719).

Relations with Cumae and South Etruria

Cumae S.Etr.	Sidetic	value
		b
		m
		s
		t

\* and

Fig. 11

Now, before eventually turning to the texts in order to see whether the values established in this manner can be sustained by linguistic evidence, it must still be pointed out that the vertical bar at the end of words is *not* a sign on its own, but an interpunction mark to divide words or combinations of words, which, like its counterpart in the Cypriote Syllabary, is used alongside the half-high point.<sup>9</sup>

### Discussion of the Texts

Sid. no. 1:

- |                                  |                               |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. <i>m<sub>1</sub>i Athana·</i> | “I (am) for Athèna”           |
| <i>Artmon Thanpiv/</i>           | “Artmon, son of Athènip(i)os” |
| 2. <i>malvam<sub>1</sub>a/</i>   | “thank-offerings”             |

#### comments:

a. *m<sub>1</sub>i*

Nominative of personal pronoun, 1st pers. sing. This form is apparently related to the Luwian Hieroglyphic possessive pro-

9. O. Masson, *Les Inscriptions Chyprïote Syllabiques*, Paris 1961, p.68.

noun (*a*)*mi*- “my”, and can, as far as its function is concerned, very well be compared to Lydian *emi*, “me, my”.<sup>10</sup>

b. *Athana*

Corresponding to Greek *Athèna*[*iai thea*], and therefore probably a dative singular in *-a*, comparable to the Lycian dat. sing. in *-a*, of the GN *Athèna*.

c. *malvam<sub>1</sub>a*

Nominative/accusative plural of the neuter in *-a*, comparable to Lycian *-ā* for the same ending, of what appears to be a participle construction in *-m<sub>1</sub>i-* (cf. the Luwian participle in *-mi-*) of the root *malva-*, most recently identified with LH *ma-lu-wa*<sup>11</sup> and probably also to be compared to Lyd. *ml<sub>1</sub>ve-*, as a whole corresponding to Greek *charistèria* “thank-offerings”.

Sid. no. 2:

- |                                     |                                  |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. <i>Poloniv Porbor/</i>           | “Apollonios, son of Apollodoros” |
| <i>Poloniva/</i>                    | “son of Apollonios”              |
| <i>mašara t<sub>1</sub>uv[ete]/</i> | “has erected for the gods”       |

**comments:**

a. *Porbor*

Epichoric equivalent of Greek *Apollodorou*, characterized by the *r/l*-change and the *b/d*-change (for the latter, see discussion of the coins below).

b. *mašara*

Dative (plural) in *-a*, comparable to the Lyc. dat. sing./pl. in

—

10. Lyd. no. 30,1:

*Titišin emi, ti-šardi, fabil* “Titisin has made me in Sardis”

(for a commentary, see Woudhuizen, *Etruscan Origins*, p.112-3)

Lyd. no. 23,19:

*ak-š pis emi, etami,ui, bavi,i,ašod* “who(ever) ..... my temple”

**comments:**

a. *etami,ui* accusative singular neuter of (*e*)*tami,(u)*- “temple”.

b. *bavi,i,ašod* 3rd person singular of the present/future in *-d* of a verb *bavi,i,aš-*.

The mode of expression used here is strikingly paralleled in Etruscan, e.g.: *mi Unial* “I (am) of/for the Mother” (T.L.E. 644, on an altar-stone from Cortona).

11. H. Eichner, “*Malwa*, eine hieroglyphischluvisch-sidetische Wortgleichung”, *Münchener Studien zur Sprachwissenschaft*, heft 45, teil II, München 1985, pp.5-21; as subscribed by this author on p.14, the same root can be discerned as well in Etruscan *muluvanece*, etc., to which the suitable sense “to offer as a vow” is attributed on internal evidence only.



-a, of a root *masa-*, strikingly paralleled by *mahā-/muhā-* in Lyc. (= Lyc. B *masa-*) and *MASA(NA)masa-* in LH, both meaning "god", from which it follows that this word corresponds to Greek *theois pasin*.<sup>12</sup> (Perhaps the remaining -r-, which is also present in the Carian epiklèsis of Dionysos, *masaris*, can be explained as a plural morpheme.)

c. *t<sub>1</sub>uv[ete]*

Although the text is broken off after the first three signs, inspection of the photograph points out that there is room for three more signs and an interpunctuation mark, thus leading us to the reconstruction of *tuvete*, which is the 3rd pers. sing. of the past tense in -te, cf. Luwian -ta and Lyc. -d/*tē*<sup>1</sup>, of the verb *tuve-*, corresponding to Luw. *tuwa-* and Lyc. *tuve-* "to erect". With the expression *anethèken (e)ikona tèn d'heautou*, the Greek version is obviously more elaborate here.

Coins:

1. *Šibušaši* / "of Side"

**comments:**

a. *Šibušaši*

For our understanding of the legend on the coins it is important to note that they all date from a much earlier period than the other inscriptions. In this legend, then, the sign for /a/ is still written in its original writing direction (  $\lambda$  ) and as a consequence of this the further identical sign of the shin is written in the inverse direction in order to prevent its mixing up with the former one.

Having realized this, the legend now becomes interpretable as a genitive singular in -aši, identical to the Lyc. gen. sing. in -ahi (from the Luwian adjective-suffix -ašši-), of the place name *Šibuš-*, which, like other related Anatolian place names, e.g. *Siblia* or *Silbia*, etc., is derived from a root meaning "pomegranate", the main symbol of the city. (In Greek this root is inaccurately rendered by *sidè, ksimba, sibdè*, etc.)<sup>13</sup>

12. Karatepe, phrase 51a. It is noteworthy that this typical Luwian word for "god" recurs as an onomastic element in the Etruscan MN *Mesnamer Tanšina* (T.L.E. 366).

13. Neumann, *Zur Entzifferung*, p.82; cf. Brixhe, *Alphabet Epichorique*, p.68. This root can be identified in the name of the Anatolian prophetes *Sibylla*, too, whose oracle at Cumae in Italy was especially famous. For the presence of

This interpretation is further emphasized by the many Lycian coin legends with place names in the genitive singular (*Arñnaha/Arñnahe*; Lyc. B: *Wehñtezi, Pttarazē*, etc.),<sup>14</sup> and of course its correspondence to Greek *Sidēton*.

Sid. no. 4:

1. *R<sub>1</sub>uar̥iē[/]P<sub>1</sub>thami* "Thefarie, Pithami-"
2. *ssor/Thanm<sub>1</sub>o<sub>1</sub>r̥/i/Tr̥a* "sor, Thanmor, this Tra-"
3. *tašo/Am<sub>1</sub>šo/R<sub>1</sub>ivi* "tases, Amso, Riwi."
4. *anathemata/* "dedications"

**comments:**

This inscription is a later addition to the longer and far less comprehensible Sid. no. 3, which is a dedication of a certain *Tratasēs* (no. 3, line 1: */Tr̥a[taš]ēva//*; line 2: */Tratasēš/*), and is written in the left corner of the same stone.

Apparently it records the names of six persons:

a. *R<sub>1</sub>uar̥iē*

Nominative of personal name in *-ie*, comparable to Lyc. personal names in *-iya/-iye* (Tril.: *(E)seimiya-*, Lyc. no. 84: *Mizretiye*, etc.), derived from the Luwian onomastic element *Tiwata-*, which appears in completely rhotacized form here.

who were responsible for the dedications (*anathemata*) referred to in the last line, including that of the same *Tratasēs* of the longer inscription, Sid. no. 3:—

b. *i*

Nominative singular of demonstrative pronoun, comparable to LH *i-* "this". (Note that, like in Lyc., the ending of the nom. sing. is dropped)

c. *Tr̥atašo*

Nominative of personal name, writing variant of *Tratasēš* in Sid. no. 3, line 2.

\* \* \*

the Lyc. B genitive ending, discussed here, in Etruscan, cf. T.L.E. 153: *mi mulu Kaviiesi* "I (am) the thank-offering of Kaviē", etc.

14. Lyc. nos 177; 181, 186.

As it seems, then, the foregoing discussion of the texts leads us to the conclusion that the new established values can be reinforced by linguistic evidence, for it is mainly thanks to the insertion of these values that the Sidetic language can be identified as a Luwian dialect, closely related to Lycian (B).

De Kloosterhof 79  
1852 LD Heiloo  
The Netherlands

Origin A: Phoenician Alphabet

		value
no 6	Υ Υ V	u
no 9	⊙ ⊙	th
no 16	⚡ ⚡	o
no 17	⤴	p
no 18	⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡ *	s
no 19	⚡	
no 20	⚡	r  <sub>1</sub>
no 21	⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡ *	š

\* ⚡ and ⚡ etc.

Fig. 12

## Origin B: Cypro-Minoan Syllabary

C.L.	C.S.	value	Sidetic	value
		po		b
		wa		v
		ra   la		l
		mi		m  <sub>1</sub>
		nu		n
		re		r
		se		ss
		ta		t
		ti		t  <sub>1</sub>

\* and , etc.

Fig. 13

		value
1	⚡	a
2	⊖ ⊗ ⚡	b
3	⚡	e
4	⚡ ⚡	v
5	⊖ ⊖	th
6	⚡ ⚡ ⚡	i
7	⚡ ⚡ ⚡	l
8	< <	m
9	⊖ ⊖	m  <sub>1</sub>
10	⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡	n
11	⚡ ⚡	o
12	⚡	p
13	⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡	s
14	⊖	
15	⚡	r
16	⚡	r  <sub>1</sub>
17	⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡	s
18	⚡	ss
19	⚡	t
20	⚡	t  <sub>1</sub>
21	⚡ ⚡ ⚡	u

⚡ and ⚡, etc.

Fig. 14