

EPIGRAPHIC EVIDENCE FOR ALIEN RESIDENTS OF A  
THIRD KIND AT PITHECUSSAE/CUMAE, ITALY,  
C. 750-675 BC

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Excavations on the island Ischia (= ancient Pithecussae) opposite the coast of present-day Naples have yielded a mass of information on early trade with, and colonization of, the west during the 8th century BC. Unfortunately, this information still awaits full publication, so that a definite assessment of the results needs to be suspended for the moment. Much attention however, has already been paid to one of the most interesting class of finds, the inscriptions. In this respect the harvest turned out to be unexpectedly rich, adding up to some 20 pieces of evidence for writing, mainly in the form of graffiti or potter's marks consisting of one or two signs, which all belong to the period c. 750-700 BC.<sup>1</sup> This is remarkable, because script-finds in mainland Greece are extremely rare during the period in question and even appear to set in just a few decades after the introduction of writing at Pithecussae, the earliest inscription here being assigned to c. 740 BC.<sup>2</sup> As a matter of fact, at this early date a comparable level of literacy is attested only for peoples living in more easterly quarters of the Mediterranean region, like the Phoenicians in the Levant and the Phrygians in the northwest corner of Asia Minor.<sup>3</sup> In the light of this observation then, it is particularly interesting that among the inscriptions from Pithecussae

<sup>1</sup> G. Buchner, "Die Beziehungen zwischen der euböischen Kolonie Pithekoussai auf der Insel Ischia und dem nordwestsemitischen Mittelmeerraum in der zweiten Hälfte des 8. Jhs. v. Chr.," *Phönizier im Westen*, ed. H.G. Niemeyer (Mainz am Rhein 1982) 294.

<sup>2</sup> Buchner (*supra* note 1) 296. The earliest inscription found in mainland Greece is the one on the so-called Dipylon-vase from Attica, which is usually assigned to c. 725-700 BC, but sometimes dated c. 740 BC; all the same, it is generally considered to be written by a learned foreigner for its "un-Attic" features in the form of crooked *iota* and horizontal *alpha*, see L.H. Jeffery, *The Local Scripts of Archaic Greece* (Oxford 1961) 14ff.

<sup>3</sup> For a still handsome survey of the Phoenician inscriptions, see B.L. Ullman, "How old is the Greek alphabet?," *American Journal of Archaeology* 38 (1934) 364,

there are some which are definitely identified as *Phoenician*. One of these is inscribed on a red slip dish, and may therefore be considered a Phoenician importation, but two other ones are written on a Greek storage amphora, later used as an urn for a cremation burial, and a sherd of a locally produced drinking cup, respectively, thus indicating the presence of Phoenician traders or even settlers on the spot.<sup>4</sup> All other inscriptions are so far attributed exclusively to Greek speaking settlers, whose presence in the thriving emporion on the island is deducible from three lines of prose on a locally made skyphos, known as the Nestor-cup, the final part of a possession-formula on a sherd restored from eight fragments, considered to be the earliest datable object with writing, and the final part of a maker-formula on a fragment of a krater decorated with a sphinx “en face”, all preserved well enough to establish the *Greek* nature of the language beyond any reasonable doubt.<sup>5</sup>

This classification however, of all non-Phoenician inscriptions, many of which are too short to offer any clues regarding the nature of the language at all, with the definite Greek ones seems an oversimplification of the actual state of affairs. The inherent dangers of such an approach become clear if we turn our attention to an inscription presenting a sequence of six signs in retrograde direction (as indicated by the position of *alpha* and *kappa*), in which the four-stroked *sigma* (appearing in mirrored position) and the so-called *san* are simultaneously used (see figure 1). Now, this simultaneous use of both sibilants is entirely unparalleled for Greek inscriptions, which are quite consistent in their selection of one sibilant at the same time (the “Euboean” or west-Greek type of alphabet, characterized by straight *iota*, preferring *sigma* and the “Corinthian” type of alphabet, characterized by crooked *iota*, opting for *san*), but happens to be a notable feature of “Tyrrhenian” texts in east (Lemnos stele) and west (Etruscan), or epichoric Anatolian writing more in general, so that it seems that we are dealing here with an altogether separate category of documents, apparently related to the

table I; for the Old Phrygian inscriptions, see R.S. Young, “Old Phrygian Inscriptions from Gordion: Toward a History of the Phrygian Alphabet”, *Hesperia* 38 (1969) 252ff. (esp. 257: earliest inscription no. 29 from layer with mixed late Hittite/early Phrygian material, dated c. 750 BC or earlier).

<sup>4</sup> Buchner (*supra* note 1) 294, Abb. 6d; 291, Abb. 14; 293, Abb. 16 (c. 750-725 BC).

<sup>5</sup> Jeffery (*supra* note 2) “western Greece” no. 1 (c. 725-700 BC); E. Peruzzi, *Origini di Roma II, Le Lettere* (Bologna 1973) 26, Tav. III (c. 700-675 BC); G. Buchner, “Testimonianze epigrafiche semitiche del VIII secolo A.C. a Pithekoussai”, *La Parola del Passato* 33 (1978) 135ff., fig. 4.



Fig. 1. Inscription from Pithecussae, c. 750-700 BC.

indigenous scripts of northwest Asia Minor.<sup>6</sup> The latter supposition is emphasized, and the complexity of the actual state of affairs further illustrated, if we take a closer, and now unprejudiced, look at the earliest datable inscription, assigned, as we have seen, to c. 740 BC. In the above this inscription is grouped with the definite Greek texts for the final part of a possession-formula, reading: ]*os emi* "I am of (MN)" in retrograde direction. At the top side of the same composite sherd however, there is a second inscription, which likewise runs in retrograde direction along the contours of the rim and starts just above the spot where formerly a handle was attached (see figure 2). In fact, close analysis of the writing has revealed that the two inscriptions belong to different scribal hands, of which the one responsible for the upper text displays more experience in the regularity of the space between the individual signs and their firm execution.<sup>7</sup> As a consequence, the two texts are entirely unconnected and the one on the top side of the sherd, which appears to be inscribed first, does not necessarily belong to the Greek category of documents, to which it, being incomprehensible so

<sup>6</sup> Peruzzi (*supra* note 5) 25, Tav. IVa: fragment of locally produced kotyle or skyphos. Cf. F.C. Woudhuizen, "Etruscan Origins: The Epigraphic Evidence", *Talanta* 14/15 (1982-1983) 102; 95ff. The combined use of the sibilants nos. 18 and 21 is also attested for Sidetic, see F.C. Woudhuizen, "Origins of the Sidetic Script", *Talanta* 16/17 (1984-1985) 115ff.

<sup>7</sup> Buchner (*supra* note 5) 137.

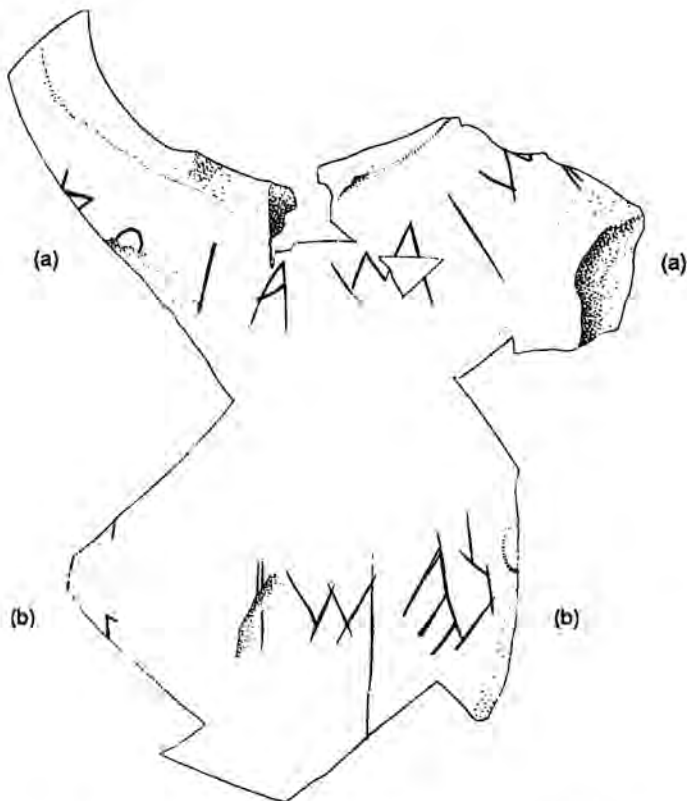


Fig. 2. Earliest inscription from Pithecussae, c. 740 BC  
 (a) "Tyrrhenian" text, (b) Greek text.

far, cannot be classified on the basis of linguistic considerations. This observation then, opens the door for alternative solutions, of which the interpretation of the sequence ]*mimaion*[ as: *mi maion*, or, in other words, as a possession-formula of Etruscan (*mi* = "I") type, appears to have the best chances of being correct, even in case Buchner rightly suggested that the first *mu* for its awkward position under the handle is unlikely to be considered at the start of the entire phrase.<sup>8</sup> For this interpretation

<sup>8</sup> Buchner, *loc. cit.* The pronoun *mi* "I" appears for the first time in (one of) the earliest Etruscan inscription(s) from Tarquinia, written on a proto-Corinthian kotyle dated to c. 700 BC, see M. Cristofani, "Recent Advances in Etruscan Epigraphy and Language", *Italy before the Romans*, eds. D. and F. Ridgway (1979) 373ff., fig. 1. Comparable evidence for the present pronoun from the east-Mediterranean region is found, for example, in the Sidetic version of a recently discovered semi-bilingual

at least enables us to isolate the combination *maion* as a separate entity, which bears a striking resemblance to the ethnonym *Maeonians* or the geographic name *Maeonia*—an ancient name of the Lydians or Lydia in northwest Anatolia, rooted in Homeric times!<sup>9</sup> If correct, the apparent conclusion is that the present inscription and the one on the previously discussed sherd belong to the same category of documents, which, on the analogy of its Phoenician and Greek counterparts, is indicative of alien residents of a third kind, most probably identifiable as “Tyrrhenian” traders and colonists from the coastal regions of northwest Asia Minor.

This evidence for a third group of east-Mediterranean settlers can be supplemented by corroborating data from Cumae, situated directly opposite Pithecussae on the Campanian coast. The early history of this town namely, which is singled out by the ancient sources as the first one of its kind in Italy as a whole, is intimately linked up with the vicissitudes of the emporion on the island, the latter being abandoned during the first quarter of the 7th century BC in the face of serious volcanic activity.<sup>10</sup> It need not surprise us therefore, when some of the population groups attested for Pithecussae can be retraced at Cumae. This argument definitely holds good for the Greek side of the evidence, which is not only backed by historical information, but also epigraphically ascertained thanks to the discovery of a well-preserved aryballos with three lines of text on its surface, known as the Tataiès-lekythos and dated to c. 675-650 BC.<sup>11</sup> The inscription is clearly written in Greek, but the owner's name *Tataie*, identifiable as an Etruscan personal name on the basis of its ending *-ie* and its recurrence in an early 5th century BC Etruscan inscription from Suessula in Campania, offers us a first indication for the fact that the Cumaean population was by no means exclusively made up by Greeks at the time.<sup>12</sup> Downright proof

inscription from Seleucia, see F.C. Woudhuizen, “The recently discovered Greek-Sidetic bilingue from Seleucia”, *Talanta* 20/21 (1988-1989) 87ff. Cf. idem, *The Language of the Sea Peoples* (forthcoming) Chapter II, § 4 for a corresponding form in a Cypro-Minoan inscription from the Late Bronze Age.

<sup>9</sup> Herodotus, *Historia* I,7. Although *omicron* is not used in Etruscan inscriptions of later date, this observation offers no serious objections to the identification of the present inscription as “Tyrrhenian”, because the sign in question (1) still occurs in the earliest Etruscan abecedaria, (2) is preferred to *upsilon* for the expression of the back-vowel in the Tyrrhenian text on the Lemnos stele, and (3) is already present in the earliest testimonies of the related Phrygian script.

<sup>10</sup> Strabo V, 4, 4; V, 4, 9. Cf. J. Klein, “A Greek Metalworking Quarter; Eighth Century Excavations on Ischia”, *Expedition* 14,2 (Winter 1972) 36.

<sup>11</sup> Jeffery (*supra* note 2) “western Greece” no. 3.

<sup>12</sup> *Studi Etruschi* 42 (1972) 309: *numestataiiesmi*, which can easily be split up into

however, for the presence of a second group of colonists is provided by a non-Greek legend inscribed at the base of a proto-Corinthian oinochoe, found among the inventory of a grave from the necropolis, which dates to c. 700-675 BC and therefore constitutes the earliest datable evidence for writing at Cumae.<sup>13</sup> Just like its counterpart from Pithecussae, this inscription comprises two distinct sections, one making use of the free space in the centre of the circular surface and the other neatly following the curve formed by the edge of the base. The section first mentioned is nothing but an elementary exercise in writing: it starts in left-to-right direction with the first eight letters (*a, b, c, d, e, v, è, z*) of one type of alphabet and then makes a turn to continue above this with basically the same letters (*z, è, v, d, c, b; a* the omission of *epsilon* being due to a writing-error), but now of a different type of alphabet (note the “Corinthian” *bèta*) and enumerated in the inverse order. In other words: this section of the text is clearly written in boustrophedon!<sup>14</sup> The second section on the other hand, runs entirely in retrograde direction and, in addition, is also characterized by a type of *èta* which for its horizontal crossbar clearly differs from the ones in the former section. Both sections therefore, do not necessarily belong to the same scribal hand, though the exercise in *different* types of alphabets should warn us against oversimplified conclusions. All the same, the sequence in question is so far variously read as: *hisamenetinnuna* or *hicamenetinnuna*, of which the latter option comes nearest to the truth, the third sign definitely being *gamma* instead of *sigma*. Some scholars have conjectured that the text is in the Etruscan language, which in view of the formal resemblance of the combination *hica* at its start to the archaic variant *ica* of the Etruscan demonstrative pronoun seems a tempting suggestion indeed.<sup>15</sup> But this

separate words as *numes tataiies mi* “I (am) of Nume Tataie” on the basis of the analogies. For Etruscan names in *-(i)ie*, cf. *thifarie* (Caere, c. 675-650 BC, later *thefarie* on the Pyrgi gold tablets), *numesie* (Tarquinia, c. 700 BC), *kaviie* (Tarquinia, c. 650 BC), *kulenii* (Artimino, late 7th century BC), *thanirsiie* (Veii, c. 625-600 BC), *kaisie* (Caere, c. 625-600 BC) etc. Note that the correspondence of the root of the second example from Tarquinia to the first name *nume-* in the inscription from Suessula further emphasizes the Etruscan backgrounds of the person in question, *pace* the opinion of M. Frederiksen, *Campania* (British School at Rome 1984) 119.

<sup>13</sup> M. Gabrici, “Cuma”, *Monumenti Antichi* 22, 1 (Roma 1913) 230f.; Jeffery (*supra* note 2) “western Greece” no. 2.

<sup>14</sup> Close inspection of the photograph, published by Frederiksen (*supra* note 12) as his pl. IV, is conclusive in this respect. It also points out that *gamma* in the second alphabet is written upside down and that *bèta* here is followed by an additional stroke, possibly intended for the expected *alpha*, which however, in that case is not finished for some reason.

<sup>15</sup> Jeffery (*supra* note 2) 237; Frederiksen (*supra* note 12) 119-120, who himself opts for a mysterious pre-Italic dialect or altogether alien tongue.



view did not stimulate them to measure the reading of the individual signs according to standards of Etruscan epigraphy as well. Along this line of approach then, the slightly shorter hasta of the seventh and fourteenth sign as compared to the ones of their presumed counterparts on the eleventh and twelfth position is no doubt functional for the distinction between the Etruscan variant of the Phoenician *tsade* (= sibilant no. 18) as attested for an alphabet on an ink-bottle from the Regolini-Galassi tomb at Caere, which because of its similarity in form is easily mixed up with *nu*, and *nu* itself, respectively (see figure 3).<sup>16</sup>

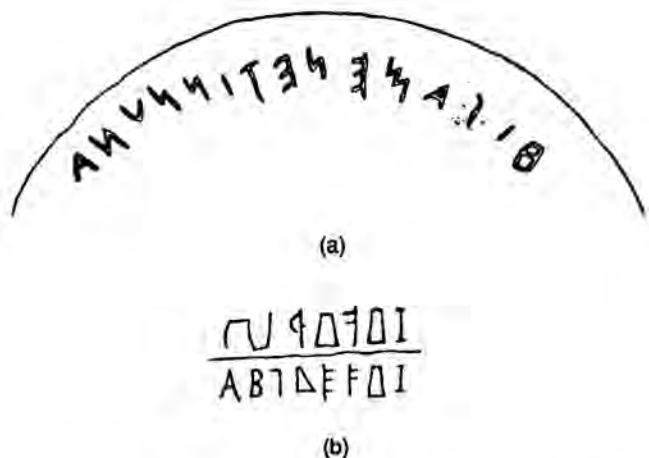


Fig. 3. Earliest inscription from Cumae, c. 700-675 BC  
(a) Etruscan text, (b) writing exercise.

Having reached the correct reading *hicamešetinnuša* in this manner, the elucidation of the contents of this short, but at least completely preserved, phrase becomes less problematic, especially after its breaking up into separate words:

*hica meše tinnuša* “this for the god Dionysos”

<sup>16</sup> Jeffery (*supra* note 2) “western Greece” no. 19, dated c. 650-625 BC according to a study of the inventory of the tomb by I. Strøm, *Problems Concerning the Origin and Early Development of the Etruscan Orientalizing Style* (Odense 1971). Note that the problem posed by its similarity in form to *nu* in the latter inscription is solved along different lines, viz. by adopting an altogether different sign for *nu* and *mu*!

### 1. *hica*

Archaic variant of the demonstrative pronoun. Just like its unaspirated counterpart *ica* from the longer Etruscan version of the text on the Pyrgi gold tablets, this form has to be considered an endless nominative/accusative singular neuter.

### 2. *meśe*

Dative singular in *-e* of the word *meśe*- “god”. In variant form *masan*<*a*> the same word occurs in the shorter Etruscan version of the text on the Pyrgi gold tablets, where it is likewise followed by a GN, viz. *etana*- “Athena”. A/e-oscillation is a frequently attested phenomenon in Etruscan texts, but even paralleled for the present root in its appearance as an onomastic element, viz. *mesna*-, in an inscription on a bucchero cup from the Tomba del Duce at Vetulonia. The loss of the morpheme *-n*- however, can only be understood against the background of the ultimate origin of the word in question in the Luwian dialects from southwest Asia Minor, where it appears in variant form *masa*- alongside regular *masana*- “god”.<sup>17</sup>

### 3. *tinnuśa*

Dative singular in *-a* of the GN *tinnuśa*- “Dionysos”. If due allowance is made for the fact that /d/ and /t/ are not distinguished in Etruscan writing, both values being rendered by *tau*, the present variant form of the GN Dionysos is exactly paralleled by Dinnusō (genitive singular) in lines 12 and 18 of a decree from Aeolian Kumē, stemming from the period 2 BC - AD 2.<sup>18</sup>

Matters of grammar and syntax therefore, are decisive in identifying the language of the phrase as Etruscan. As in addition the contents of the text is intimately connected with both the function (container for wine) and the find-context (funeral dedication) of the vessel on which it is written, it reasonably follows that there were Etruscans among the

<sup>17</sup> Jan Best & Fred Woudhuizen, *Lost Languages from the Mediterranean* (Leiden 1989) Chapter IV, § 2, esp. 164, 175. The present *e*-phase of Luwian *masa*(*na*)- is paralleled for Lycian and Carian in the MN *Mesewe*, based on the shorter variant of the word, whereas the onomastic element *mesna*- has an exact equivalent in Carian, see R. Gusmani, “Karische Beiträge”, *Kadmos* 27, 2 (1988) 140f.

<sup>18</sup> R. Hodot, “Décret de Kymè en l’honneur du Prytane Kléanax”, *The J. Paul Getty Museum Journal* 10 (1982) 165ff.; J.L. García-Ramón, “Sobre las variantes del nombre de Dioniso”, *Studies in Mycenaean and Classical Greek presented to John Chadwick, Minos* 20-22 (1987) 192f., where the variant form is connected with the typical Lesbian onomastic element *Dinno*-/*Dinnu*-. As the present Etr. *tinnuśa* is no doubt to be analyzed as a compound of *nusa*- “son” with the GN *Tin*, appearing as the supreme Etruscan deity in documents of later date, it might be conjectured that the Aeolic variant with double *nu* of the GN Dionysos, difficult to explain from a Greek point of view, is due to foreign influences on the Greek, exercised by local Tyrrheno-Pelagian population groups.



earliest colonists at Cumae.<sup>19</sup> But this is not all. The variant form with double *nu* of the GN Dionysos, which is exclusively attested for the Greek dialect of Aeolian Kumè, naturally presupposes close interaction between the “Tyrrhenian” scribe and members of the population of this particular town in the northwest Anatolian coastal region. It is quite interesting therefore, that the presence of Greeks from Aeolian Kumè among the founders of Italian Cumae is actually recorded by the historical sources.<sup>20</sup> In principle, these contacts may be assumed to have started on the spot, but, if we are right in our interpretation of the sequence ]*mimaion*[ in the earliest inscription from Pithecussae as a possession-formula of Etruscan type with reference to the ethnonym Maeonians or the geographic name Maeonia, it rather seems indicated that they have a history in the homeland shared by both groups of east-Mediterranean settlers, viz. Maeonia!

If the latter conclusion be considered a plausible one, we once again will have to turn our attention to evidence for writing in the east-Mediterranean region. As we have noted in the first lines of the present contribution, Phoenician inscriptions (the one category of documents which did not reach Cumae on the Italian mainland) from Pithecussae are an indication for traders and settlers from one part of the literate world at the time, Phoenicia. Similarly, we have inferred that the “Tyrrhenian” category of documents in an already fully developed, different type of alphabet is evidence for traders and settlers from another part of the literate world at the time, the northwest corner of Asia Minor, where numerous testimonies of the general type of alphabet in question are produced by the Phrygian monuments. However, as it is obvious that in the latter case we are not dealing with Phrygian settlers and colonists in the west, but “Tyrrhenians” and, at least partly, Greeks from the immediately neighbouring region Maeonia, the link between east and west is more complex here. In other words: the

<sup>19</sup> Note that this conclusion has already been drawn by Gabrici on the basis of archaeological evidence in the form of early bucchero pottery and grave-types in the Etruscan tradition, among which figures most prominently the so-called Fondo Artiaco dated to c. 710-700 BC. More recently, scholars like Frederiksen (*supra* note 12) 119ff., have taken up the arbitrary point of view that Campanian burials in closely comparable style are Etruscan from the second half of the 7th century BC onwards, but Greek in the immediately preceding period. However, as Frederiksen himself acknowledges that chariot-burials are unparalleled for mainland Greece, this phenomenon may serve us as a reliable criterion; also in case of the Fondo Artiaco for which fragmented parts of a chariot have been recorded!

<sup>20</sup> Strabo V, 4, 4; Ps.-Skymnos 236, paraphrasing Ephoros of Kumè, identifies the Kumaeans in question as Aeolians. Note that their identification as inhabitants of a third Kumè on the island Euboea is a modern assertion, and a very unlikely one indeed, for the insignificance of the place during the period in question.

question remains to be answered whether there is direct proof of knowledge of the Phrygian type of alphabet for the northwest Anatolian province Maeonia from the middle of the 8th century BC onwards. Bearing in mind that Maeonia is not exactly one of the most thoroughly surveyed districts of present-day Turkey, it is significant that this question can be answered in an affirmative way for ancient Smyrna, situated at the mouth of the river Hermos and looking out at the same gulf, enclosed by the island Lesbos in the north and the promontory opposite to Chios in the south, as Aeolian Kumè.<sup>21</sup> Excavations of this site have produced a sherd of a geometric bowl, stemming from a layer antedating the one ending in the destruction of c. 700 BC and therefore assigned to the middle of the 8th century BC or slightly afterwards, which is inscribed with the letter *upsilon* (cf. figure 4).<sup>22</sup> More in general however, intimate relations of Maeonia with Phrygia during the period in question are assured by the historically preserved memory to the marriage of Demodike (or Hermodike), the daughter of king Agamemnon of Aeolian Kumè, with the famous Phrygian ruler Midas, who as Mita of Muški is mentioned in the annals of the Assyrian kings and therefore definitely falls in the scope of the second half of the 8th century BC.<sup>23</sup> In yet another way the key position of Aeolian Kumè, and its possible knowledge of the script, is emphasized. Two signs of the earliest inscription from Cumae, one ("Corinthian" *bèta*) from the section in the middle and the other ("Caeretan" *tsade*) from the section at the edge of the base, are most closely paralleled in the local script of Side in Pamphylia, which is of later date (5th century BC), but has conserved remarkable archaic features.<sup>24</sup> At first sight, this observation seems to be merely accidental, but Side happens to be a second colony of Aeolian Kumè, no doubt founded as a port of trade to facilitate her long-distance connection between Italian Cumae and the ultimate Near-Eastern markets during the latter half of the 8th century BC!<sup>25</sup>

<sup>21</sup> According to Aristotle ad Plut. de vit. Hom. I, 3 *Maiōn* was an old king of Phrygia and Lydia, who also ruled over Smyrna, the birthplace of Homer; cf. also Homer's patronymic *Maionidēs*.

<sup>22</sup> L.H. Jeffery, "Old Smyrna: inscriptions on sherds and small objects", *British School at Athens* 59 (1964) 40, fig. 1, no. 1.

<sup>23</sup> Pauly-Wissowa *Realencyclopädie*, s.v. *Midas* (3).

<sup>24</sup> Woudhuizen (*supra* note 6, second article cited) 121, fig. 11.

<sup>25</sup> Strabo XIV, 4, 2. The Near-Eastern harbour town Al Mina in north-Syria is closely linked up with western trade during the 8th century BC. The stimulus for its foundation is generally ascribed to Greeks from Chalcis and Eretria on Euboea (Buchner, Boardman, Ridgway, etc.), but on the basis of pottery types with a wide distribution in the Aegean region. Rare, and therefore much more significant material in the form of a specific type of meander exclusively attested for Al Mina, Smyrna

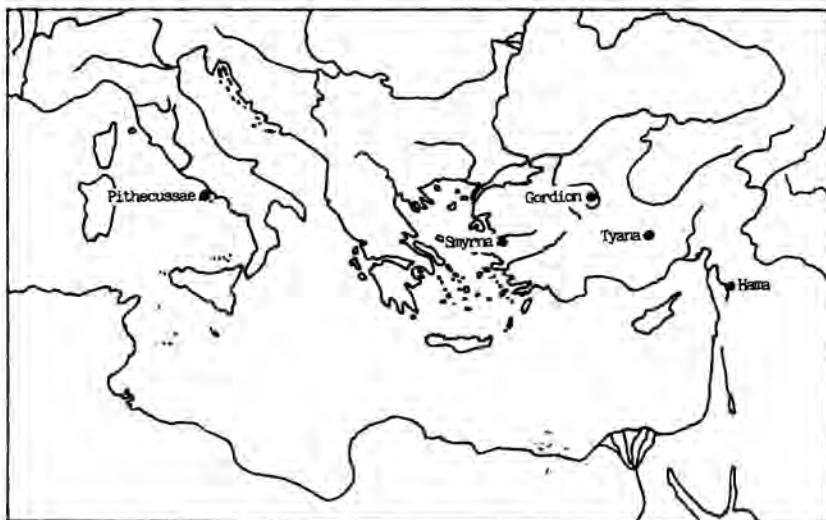


Fig. 4. Distribution of non-Phoenician alphabetic inscriptions, c. 750- 725 BC  
 (a) Pithecussae, c. 740 BC, (b) Smyrna, c. 750 BC or a little afterwards,  
 (c) Gordion, c. 750 BC or earlier, (d) Tyana, c. 735 BC,  
 (e) Hama, before 720 BC.\*

\*For inscriptions (d) and (e) see M. Mellink in R.S. Young, *Three Great Tumuli* (University of Pennsylvania 1981) 271f. and O. Haas, *Die Phrygischen Sprachdenkmäler* (Sofia 1966) 175. In C. Brixhe & M. Lejeune, *Corpus des Inscriptions Paléo-Phrygiennes* (Paris 1984) the dates of (c) and (d) are lowered to "extrême fin du VIII<sup>e</sup> siècle" (p. 98) and last quarter of the 8th century BC (p. 262), respectively; but note that the *lowest possible* dates are preferred here to the *most likely* ones.

A second inference from our present reconstruction is that Maeonia is the homeland of Tyrrhenian population groups likewise trading with and settling in the west. Fortunately, this inference is substantiated by both Greek historical sources, according to which the eponymous hero *Tursênos* is a son of either the Lydian (= Maeonian) king Atys or a certain Telephos from the Kaikos' region in Mysia (= Maeonia), and an epichoric Tyrrhenian monument like the Lemnos stele, which contains the names of three localities (Phocaea, Myrina and Serona) in the Maeonian coastal region.<sup>26</sup> Arguments so far put forward by scholars that the Tyrrhenian colonization of central Italy cannot possibly have taken place during the early Iron Age are entirely unfounded. A first

and the Lydian capital Sardis during the first half of the 8th century BC however, rather points to contacts with the northwest Anatolian coastal region, see Woudhuizen (*supra* note 6, first article cited) 99f., figs. 7a-c.

<sup>26</sup> Best & Woudhuizen (*supra* note 17) Chapter IV, § 1, where two of the three TN's are still thought of as Lemnian; but for Serona, cf. the second element of

source misused in this connection is Hesiodus' *Theogony* 1011-1016, which informs us that Agrios and Latinos "ruled over the famous Tyrsenians, very far off in a recess of the holy islands." Instead of proving the subordinate position of the Etruscans in Etruria to indigenous Italian powers, this passage frankly renders the situation of only a marginal presence of Tyrrhenians in Italy, on *islands* which at least nominally fall under the authority of indigenous kings, in other words: the situation *prior* to the colonization of Cumae, characterized by offshore emporia like the one on the island Ischia! Secondly, Strabo's remark (VI, 2, 2) that the Tyrrhenians already possessed naval supremacy in the west at the time of the foundation of the first Greek colony, Naxos in Sicily, which event is securely dated to the second half of the 8th century BC, does not necessarily imply, as is generally held, that the Etruscans were already settled in the region of present-day Toscana, from which at a later date they are explicitly recorded to have exercised control over the Tyrrhenian sea. This naval supremacy namely, which in the present case most likely concerns the Straits of Messina and beyond instead of the Tyrrhenian sea, is just as well a prerequisite for east-Mediterranean traders in offshore Italian emporia in order to guarantee their lifeline with the mother country! A third and final argument is drawn from the fact that the Etruscan calendar, measured in *saecula* of varying length, but by and large corresponding to our centuries, almost runs back to the end of the Bronze Age. However, the implicit assumption that the Etruscans must have taken the momentum of their colonization of Italy as the startingpoint for their "national" calendar is by no means compelling and should certainly not impress American scholars who themselves have inherited the Christian calendar, introduced into the New World by their ancestors from Europe!<sup>27</sup>

Halisarne or the first element of Sarnaca, both situated in the hinterland of Aeolian Phocaea and Myrina. Cf. also the admirably clear survey of the theoretical possibilities by A.J. Toynbee, *Hannibal's Legacy* I (Oxford 1965) 366.

<sup>27</sup>H. Hencken, *Tarquinius, Villanovans and Early Etruscans* (Cambridge MA 1968) 607ff., esp. 615.