

Redating the Byblian Inscriptions*

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Since 1947, the view that the Byblian inscriptions *KAI* 1-8¹ were inscribed within the 10th century B.C.E. has gained influence and by now has reached the status of orthodoxy. Accordingly, the dates of other "linear Phoenician" inscriptions of wide provenance throughout the ancient Near East and Mediterranean basin have been dated paleographically by direct comparison with these early Byblian inscriptions.

This study surveys (I) the art-historical and archaeological evidence bearing directly on the dating of the major Byblian inscriptions *KAI* 1-12. In conjunction with a re-evaluation of (II) the paleographical and (III) philological evidence, it arrives at different conclusions. It finds that, while certainty is not possible, the evidence points to dates within the range of the mid-9th through the end of the 7th centuries B.C.E. for the Byblian inscriptions *KAI* 1-8, with obvious consequences for the dating of other early "linear Phoenician" inscriptions.

I. Art History and Archaeology

A. *KAI* 1, 2.

The carved and painted limestone sarcophagus of 'Aḥirām was found, along with two plain stone sarcophagi,² in Tomb V of the necropolis at Byblos by Montet in 1923. It was assigned by Dussaud, the next year, to the 13th century B.C.E., mainly by the presence in the tomb of some "Mycenaean" artifacts, but especially two associated alabaster fragments bearing the names of Ramassēs II, despite the low *terminus ad quem* established by what was then considered to be characteristically 7th century B.C.E. Cypriot pottery fragments in

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1 Wherever possible, the inscriptions referred to herein are cited according to the sigla assigned by H. Donner and W. Röllig, *Kanaanäische und aramäische Inschriften (= KAI)*, Vol. 1, 3rd ed. (Wiesbaden, 1971).

2 E. Porada, "Notes on the Sarcophagus of Aḥiram," *JANES* 5 (1973), 357.

the tomb's shaft. But this evidence was dismissed as being due to "la cupidité des violateurs."³

'Aḥirām's inscription (*KAI 1*)⁴ "begins on the top outside rim of the 'south' end of the sarcophagus *shell*, runs to the end of this rim, then takes up on the lower rim of the sarcophagus *cover* on the 'west' side and runs on to the lefthand corner of the latter."⁵

The *graffito* (*KAI 2*)⁶ is incised in the tomb shaft, about 1½ meters above a row of four



Plate I: *KAI 1* (R. Dussaud, *Syria* 5, 1924, pl. XXXIX–XLI, reversed).

3 R. Dussaud, "Les inscriptions phéniciennes du tombeau d'Aḥiram, roi de Byblos," *Syria* 5 (1924), 142–3.

4 See plate I. Compare and contrast the autographs of Dussaud (*ibid.*, 137, fig. 2), Montet (*ibid.*, 137, fig. 1), and Donner and Röllig (*Kanaanäische und aramäische Inschriften*, Vol. III, 3rd ed. [Wiesbaden, 1976], Taf. I, Nr. 1).

5 M. Martin, "A Preliminary Report after Re-Examination of the Byblian Inscriptions," *Orientalia* 30 (1961), 72.

6 See plate II, fig. 1 and 2.

square holes on either side of the shaft, at about 4.35 meters depth, in which the ends of wooden beams (evidenced by traces of discoloration) must have rested forming an intermediate floor.⁷ This *graffito* is considered to be contemporary with the sarcophagus inscription by the similarities of their incised characters.⁸

In 1947, Albright convincingly lowered the date of these two inscriptions to “not later than *circa* 975 B.C.E.” He noted that they utilize an archaic script “nearly identical” with that of 'Abiba'al's (*KAI* 5) inscription found on the base of a statue of Šōšenq I, dated *circa* 925 B.C.E.⁹

Frankfort attempted to compromise between the 13th century and 10th century dates by allowing that the sarcophagus itself was carved at the earlier date, while the inscription was cut when the tomb was re-entered at the latter date.¹⁰

More recently, however (1973), Porada has cited the following evidence for a generally lower date for the carving of the sarcophagus, and hence the inscriptions:

1. On the lid¹¹ two male figures are depicted. They are interpreted as a father and his son; a similar scene is depicted on the Araras relief at Charchemish¹² (early 8th century B.C.E.) and Esarhaddon's stele at Zinjirli¹³ (early 7th century B.C.E.).¹⁴ The men wear fringed garments (unknown in the Late Bronze Age) in the manner of the Assyrian Ashurnasirpal II (early 9th century B.C.E.).¹⁵ Stretched between the men are a pair of lions; the details of their heads “resemble . . . Neo-Hittite reliefs of the ninth to seventh centuries B.C.”¹⁶

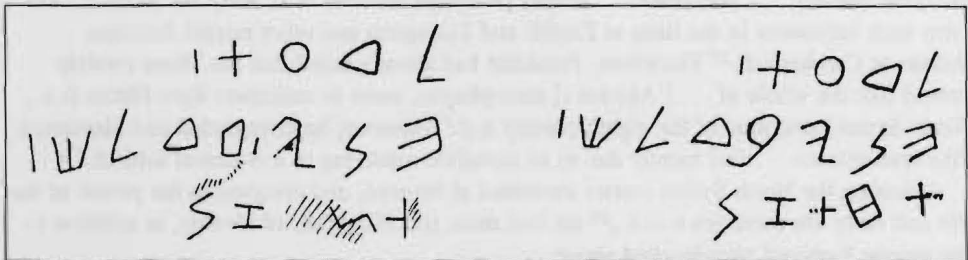


Plate II: *KAI* 2. Fig. 1. Montet's autograph (ibid., 143, fig. 3); Fig. 2. Dussaud's autograph (ibid., fig. 4).

7 Porada, *Sarcophagus of Ahiiram*, 356, citing P. Montet, *Byblos et l'Égypte, quatre campagnes de fouilles à Gebeil, 1921–1922–1923–1924*, Texte (Paris, 1928), 143–238.

8 Dussaud, *Tombeau d'Ahiiram*, 142.

9 W. F. Albright, “The Phoenician Inscriptions of the Tenth Century B.C. from Byblos,” *JAOS* 67 (1947), 153.

10 H. Frankfort, *The Art and Architecture of the Ancient Orient* (Harmondsworth, 1977), 271; 398, n. 111, citing S. Smith, *Alalakh and Chronology*, 46, n. 117. For Albright's response to Frankfort, see W. F. Albright, “Northeast-Mediterranean Dark Ages and early Iron Age Art of Syria,” in S. Weinberg, ed., *The Aegean and the Near East* (Locust Valley, 1956), 159–60.

11 See conveniently, Porada, *Sarcophagus of Ahiiram*, 370, fig. 4.

12 See conveniently, E. Akurgal, *The Art of the Hittites* (London, 1962), pl. 121.

13 Porada, *Sarcophagus of Ahiiram*, 360, n. 30, citing F. von Luschan, *Ausgrabungen in Sendschirli*, Vol. I (Berlin, 1893), pl. I and III.

14 Porada, *Sarcophagus of Ahiiram*, 359–60.

15 Ibid., 360, n. 31.

16 Ibid., 363.

2. The “west” or front side of the shell¹⁷ of the sarcophagus depicts a funerary banquet scene in the Egyptian manner with specific points harking back to the Middle Kingdom.¹⁸ However, the king and winged-sphinx throne are of the same stocky simplified proportions as in the monuments of Ashurnasirpal II.¹⁹ The table depicted finds its closest parallel in mid-9th century B.C.E. Assyria; the type of funerary meal in late 8th century Zinjirli²⁰ (although a century earlier elsewhere); and “the most distinctive” footstool with “the same addorsed brackets” as represented on the Nimrud ivories of the type (North Syrian) dated “from the ninth to the late eighth century B.C.”²¹

Porada suggested that even though

many of the features of the sarcophagus . . . belong . . . to the early first millennium B.C., on the basis of dated Assyrian monuments, [they] may have actually originated in Phoenicia. Such an assumption presupposes a flourishing art in that region about 1000 B.C., of which the sarcophagus of Ahiram would be the only survival that can be recognized on the basis of its inscription, dated about 1000 B.C. by most leading paleographers. [However,] *Ahiram's reliefs continue the iconographical traditions of Syria and Palestine* as well as of the New Kingdom of Egypt, *but they have assumed the simplified, heavy forms* found in the reliefs of Carchemish and of Ashurnasirpal II of the ninth century B.C. [emphasis added].²²

This description is similarly and somewhat more broadly applied by Frankfort to the art of North Syria and Phoenicia throughout the 9th to 7th centuries B.C.E.. He adds that “the north Syrian works made before and after the beginning of the reign of Tiglath-pileser III are quite distinct . . . ; [the latter] . . . render [Assyrian themes] in an Assyrian manner.” He cites such influences in the lions at Zinjirli and Sakjgozu and other related Assyrian themes at Carchemish.²³ Elsewhere, Frankfort had already noted that the “lions crudely carved like the whole of . . . [ʿAḥirām’s] sarcophagus, seem to anticipate Syro-Hittite [i.e., North Syrian] sculpture of the eighth century B.C.” However, he disregarded and dismissed “the resemblance . . . [as] merely due to an unskilled rendering of a common subject.”²⁴

Among the North Syrian ivories excavated at Nimrud, and assigned to the period of the 9th and early 8th centuries B.C.E.,²⁵ are two more specific points of identity, in addition to the unique footstool already cited above:

1. The sphinx depicted on ʿAḥirām’s throne shares with the ivories a similar lack of “[Egyptian-like] crown, headcloth, pectoral [and] uraeus bib.”²⁶ But the hair style has been severely reduced to simple curvilinear forms, as have the gently upswept wings, tufts on the neck and upper chest, and the undecorated legs and torso. These forms would appear to

17 See conveniently, *ibid.*, 366, pl. Ia and 371, fig. 5.

18 *Ibid.*, 360.

19 *Ibid.*, 361.

20 See conveniently, Akurgal, *The Art of the Hittites*, pl. 130.

21 Porada, *Sarcophagus of Ahiram*, 362. See especially, M. E. L. Mallowan, *Nimrud and its Remains* (London, 1966), 2: 501, fig. 399, ND 7928.

22 Porada, *Sarcophagus of Ahiram*, 364.

23 Frankfort, *Art and Architecture*, 281.

24 *Ibid.*, 272.

25 I. J. Winter, “Phoenician and North Syrian Ivory Carving in Historical Context: Questions of Style and Distribution,” *Iraq* 38 (1976), 17.

26 *Ibid.*, 7.

have their prototypes on two carved shell, striding, but otherwise similarly poised sphinxes executed with the typical hallmarks of late 9th/early 8th century B.C.E. Assyria.²⁷

2. The inverted festoon of alternating lotus flowers and buds which decorate the upper rim of the sarcophagus shell is quite similarly evidenced among the ivories.²⁸

In the light of the foregoing discussion of the iconographic parallels between the reliefs of 'Aḫirām's tomb and various 9th and 8th century B.C.E. North Syrian and Neo-Assyrian representations, buttressed by our knowledge of stated contacts by Ashurnāširpal II, Shalmaneser III and Tiglath-pileser III with Byblos,²⁹ the statements of Cross that "Porada has dealt with the archaeological and art-historical elements of the 'Aḫirām Sarcophagus and [put] to rest objections raised by non-epigraphists to a date for the sarcophagus about 1000 B.C."³⁰ and Pritchard that "in summing up the case made from the approach of art history, Edith Porada came to the conclusion in 1973 that a date of 1000 B.C., or slightly later, would best fit the comparative evidence,"³¹ are untenable.

There exists a singular item of archaeological evidence, also noted by Porada, which has heretofore not received sufficient notice, but bears directly on the dating of the inscriptions:

1. The fill of the tomb shaft contained "a mass" of the aforementioned "circle-decorated" Cypriot pottery, now dated *circa* 850–700 B.C.E.³² (along with some older fragments) only to the level of the intermediate wooden floor, above which is the *graffito*; while

2. below this intermediate floor, the shaft is entirely pottery-free.³³

It is most unlikely that the tomb robbers would have penetrated to the level of the intermediate floor, and, deterred by the curse (*graffito*) refilled the shaft with local soil containing the contemporary Cypriot sherds. It is equally unlikely that the self-same tomb robbers penetrated the shaft to the sarcophagus chamber and then, upon leaving, refilled the shaft with sherd-free soil to the intermediate level, restored the wooden floor, and then filled the upper shaft with the sherd-containing soil.³⁴ It remains, however, much more likely that this arrangement of the shaft fill represents the time of 'Aḫirām's interment, when both the shaft and sarcophagus inscriptions were incised. Therefore the Cypriot pottery sherds represent not the inscription's *terminus ad quem* (as per Dussaud), but rather *terminus a quo*: i.e., *circa* 850–700 B.C.E.

27 Cf. Mallowan, *Nimrud* II, 399, fig. 326, ND 6362B and fig. 328, ND 9500, both with their prototypes in Assyria during the reign of Ashurnāširpal II (*ibid.*, 396). Cf. R. Hachmann, "Das Königsgrab V von Jebeil (Byblos)," *Istanbuler Mitteilungen* 17 (1967), 106–7; see conveniently, Akurgal, *Art of the Hittites*, 66–9.

28 Mallowan, *Nimrud* II, 561, fig. 501, ND7790AM and fig. 502, ND 7741. Also cf. F. Thureau-Dangin et al., *Arslan-Tash* (Paris, 1931), pl. XLVI, no. 105–7; and J. W. Crowfoot and G. M. Crowfoot, *Early Ivories from Samaria* (London, 1938), pl. XVI, nos. 1, 2, and 7.

29 During their respective reigns, these kings claimed to have received tribute from Byblos; see conveniently, A. Leo Oppenheim, "Babylonian and Assyrian Historical Texts," *ANET*³, 276; 280; 282; and 283, respectively.

30 F. M. Cross, Jr., "Early Alphabetic Scripts," *Symposia Celebrating the Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the Founding of the American Schools of Oriental Research 1900-1975* (Cambridge, MA, 1979), 99, n. 11.

31 J. B. Pritchard, *Recovering Sarepta, A Phoenician City* (Princeton, 1978), 23.

32 Porada, *Sarcophagus of Aḫiram*, 357, n. 18, citing J. du Plat Taylor, "The Cypriot and Syrian Pottery from Al Mina," *Iraq* 21 (1959), 65 and 92.

33 Porada, *Sarcophagus of Aḫiram*, 357.

34 It is possible that local priests refilled the shaft in this way after its desecration, but in the absence of any positive indications, this hypothesis remains just that.

That the sarcophagus in question was in fact usurped by 'Ittoba'al for his father 'Aḥirām receives confirmation in a new way from Martin. He noted that the first word of line 1 ('*rn*) of *KAI* 1 does not begin at the right-hand corner of the shell's rim, rather "about one sixth of the total length of this rim is free of any Phoenician sign."³⁵ In this empty space, he detected the remains of "some underlying letters" resembling Pseudo-hieroglyphic signs:³⁶ these share characteristics of the "mixed" Pseudo-hieroglyphic script of the Bronze Spatula [also bearing *KAI* 3], the Yehimilk Stone [*KAI* 4] and the so-called "enigmatic Byblos stone."³⁷ Martin concluded (much as Frankfort had, although for different reasons) that the sarcophagus, originally inscribed with characters of the "mixed" Pseudo-hieroglyphs in the 13th century B.C.E., was usurped and reinscribed in linear Phoenician *circa* 1000 B.C.E.³⁸

The foregoing discussion of art-historical and archaeological evidence (paleography and philology, for the moment, aside) suggest the following alternative chronological possibilities:

1. The sarcophagus was originally inscribed with the "mixed" Pseudo-hieroglyphs, either at the time of or before the addition of the reliefs;
 2. the sarcophagus was carved and painted in the 9th century B.C.E. or in the century or two immediately thereafter, as per the art-historical considerations; and
 3. the sarcophagus was usurped by 'Ittoba'al and reinscribed in linear Phoenician in the period immediately following the *terminus a quo* established by the tomb shaft's Cypriot pottery, i.e., *circa* 850–700 B.C.E.
- (4. The tomb's Ramesside and "Mycenaean" fragments might then be associated with either of the older stone sarcophagi,³⁹ or are due to the entry of tomb robbers, not through the tomb shaft, which clearly was not disturbed from the time of 'Aḥirām's interment until the time on Montet's excavation, but rather by a second entrance created "by burrowing through the relatively soft clay into which the subterranean chambers had been dug," probably from nearby tomb VI.⁴⁰ In either case, these Late Bronze Age fragments are irrelevant to the present considerations.)

B: *KAI* 4–7.

Šipiṭba'al's inscription (*KAI* 7)⁴¹ of five unevenly spaced lines on a limestone block⁴²

35 Martin, *Preliminary Report*, 73.

36 See *ibid.*, 72, fig. 8.

37 *Ibid.* The "enigmatic Byblos Stone" is dated by Martin to "the end of the Late Bronze Age or the beginning of the Iron Age" (*ibid.*, 76). G. R. Driver (*Semitic Writing from Pictograph to Alphabet*, 3rd ed. [London, 1976], 93–4) considers these poorly deciphered inscriptions to be a parallel development to the Sinaitic inscriptions and are of "the greatest importance" in the history of the evolution of the alphabet.

38 Martin, *Preliminary Report*, 75.

39 Porada, *Sarcophagus of Aḥiram*, 363.

40 *Ibid.*, 358; cf. M. Dunand, *Byblia Grammata* (Beirut, 1945), 140. Similar arguments were already raised by W. Spiegelberg, "Zur Datierung der Aḥiram-Inschrift von Byblos," *OLZ* 29 (1926), 735–36. Cf. Hachmann, *Königsgrab V*, 109.

41 See plate III. Compare and contrast the autographs of Dunand, *Byblia Grammata*, 148, fig. 49; and Donner and Röellig, *KAI* III, Taf. II, Nr. 7.

42 Dunand, *Byblia Grammata*, 147.

was found out of archaeological context⁴³ at Byblos in 1935.⁴⁴ In his genealogy, Šipiḫba'al names his father 'Elība'al and grandfather Yehīmlk.

'Elība'al's inscription (KAI 6)⁴⁵ is inscribed, arcing like a triple-stranded necklace across the fragmentary torso of a reddish Mokattam sandstone⁴⁶ statue of Osorkōn I, the second king of the XXIIInd Egyptian (Lybian) Dynasty.⁴⁷ This statue was first noted in print by Wiedemann in 1895 after examining it in the country house of a Naples banker, Meuricoffre.⁴⁸ In 1939, Dunand excavated at Byblos additional inscribed fragments probably belonging to this statue,⁴⁹ as had Montet earlier in 1925;⁵⁰ none of these excavated fragments are of stratigraphical value. 'Elība'al's genealogy has been reconstructed to read that he was the son of Yehīmlk (*byḥ[mlk]*).

'Abība'al's inscription (KAI 5)⁵¹ is inscribed along the vertical edges of one side of a gray granite⁵² fragment of an Egyptian throne bearing the name of Šōšenq I,⁵³ the first king of the XXIIInd Dynasty and father of Osorkōn I.⁵⁴ This fragment was excavated by Loeytved from a quarry at Byblos about 1894.⁵⁵ Although the Phoenician inscription no longer bears



Plate III: KAI 7 (M. Dunand, *Byblia Grammata*, pl. XVIb).

43 Loc. cit.

44 Ibid., 146.

45 See plate IV. Compare and contrast the autographs of Montet, *Byblos et l'Égypte*, fig. 16; and R. Dussaud, "Dédicace d'une statue d'Osorkon I par Eliba'al, Roi de Byblos," *Syria* 6 (1925), 109.

46 Dussaud, *Dédicace . . . par Eliba'al*, 117.

47 A. Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs* (New York, 1966), 448.

48 A. Wiedemann, "Varia," *Recueil de travaux relatifs à la philologie et à l'archéologie égyptiennes et assyriennes* (Paris, 1895), 14.

49 M. Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos I* (Paris, 1939), 17–18 [1048]. The two pieces of an upper right arm bear the cartouche of Osorkōn I and the Phoenician letters *b'lt*, now incorporated into the end of KAI 6:2.

50 Montet, *Byblos et l'Égypte*, 53–54. These fragments bear only Egyptian hieroglyphs.

51 See plate V. Compare and contrast the autographs of Dussaud, *Tombeau d'Aḫiram*, 146, fig. 6; and the restorations of the inscription of Dussaud, *ibid.*, 145, fig. 5, and Montet, *Byblos et l'Égypte*, 56, fig. 18.

52 H. Donner and W. Röllig, *KAI*, 3rd ed. (Wiesbaden, 1973), II: 7.

53 "Thus vocalizing in Assyrian rather than Sheshonḫ" (Gardiner, *Egypt*, 448, n. 1).

54 *Ibid.*, 448.

55 Dussaud, *Tombeau d'Aḫiram*, 145.



Plate IV: *KAI 6* (AO 9502).

a genealogy (assuming that it ever did), 'Abība'al is imagined to have been 'Elība'al's (older?) brother(?) because of the relationship between the relevant Egyptian kings.

Yehimilk's inscription (*KAI 4*)⁵⁶ is apparently reinscribed over partially erased "mixed"

56 See plate VI. Cf. autograph of Martin, *Preliminary Report*, 64, fig. 6.

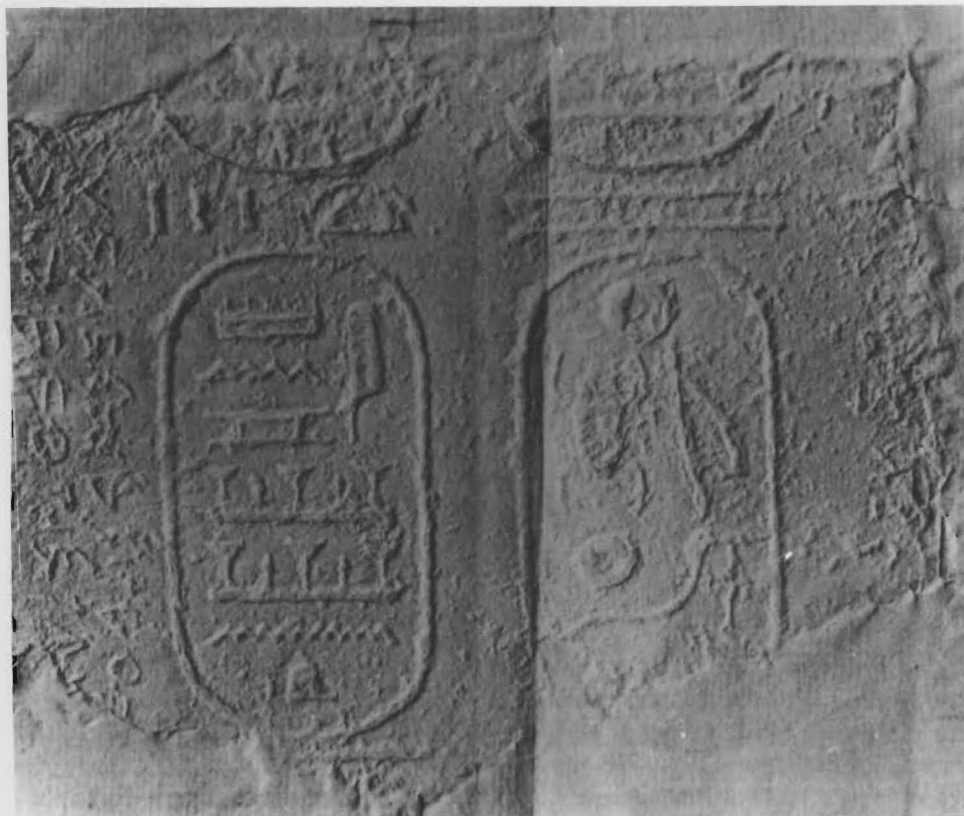


Plate V: *KAI 5* (R. Dussaud, *Syria 5* [1924], pl. XLII, reversed).

Pseudo-hieroglyphic characters set within double-lined horizontal registers⁵⁷ on a limestone block excavated at Byblos in 1929.⁵⁸ Yehimilk's inscription appears to be complete and is without genealogy.

All four of these inscriptions (*KAI 4–7*) are in a similar script (quite similar to that of 'Aḥirām), employ vertical strokes of varying lengths as word dividers (as do *KAI 1, 3* and *8*; *KAI 2* omits them within each line)⁵⁹ and, Albright noted, the four are “obviously almost contemporary” with the Egyptian statues of Šōšenq I and Osorkōn I.⁶⁰ Šōšenq I is typically equated with the Biblical Šīšaq who raided Judah shortly after Solomon's death, *circa* 930 B.C.E.⁶¹ Thereby, Yehimilk is assigned to the mid-tenth century B.C.E., 'Abiba'al to *circa* 925 B.C.E., 'Elība'al to *circa* 915 B.C.E., and Šipiṭba'al to the very end of the 10th century B.C.E.⁶²

The postulate equating Šōšenq I with Šīšaq, despite the obvious similarities of the names, is not problem free:

57 *Ibid.*, 65–7 and 64, fig. 6.

58 Donner and Röllig, *KAI II*, 6.

59 Cf. J. Naveh, “Word Division in West Semitic Writing,” *IEJ* 23 (1973), 206f.

60 Albright, *Phoenician Inscriptions*, 153.

61 Gardiner, *Egypt*, 329; cf. *circa* 918 B.C.E.: J. M. Myers, *II Chronicles*, 2nd ed., Anchor Bible 13 (Garden City, 1981), 74.

62 Albright, *Phoenician Inscriptions*, 156–8.



Plate VI: *KAI 4* (ibid., pl. XXXI.2 [1141]).

1. The Biblical Šīšaq is said to have taken the fortified cities of Judah (2 Chr. 12:4) and then to have received heavy tribute from Jerusalem (1 Kgs. 14:25–6; 2 Chr. 12:9) in the fifth year of the reign of Solomon's son Rehoboam (1 Kgs. 14:25; 2 Chr. 12:2). Šōšenq I's Bubastite portal at Karnak enumerates more than 150 sites subjugated by him.⁶³ They suggest routes that "skirt around the hill country of Samaria without reaching the center of the Israelite Kingdom, nor is there any hint that Šōšenq I ever touched Judah at all."⁶⁴ The discovery of a stele fragment bearing the name of Šōšenq I in an unstratified heap of debris at Megiddo⁶⁵ is consistent with the Karnak inscription, but does not, *ipso facto*, imply that he was responsible for the destruction of Megiddo (Solomonic) stratum 'IVB-VA,' circa 923 B.C.E.⁶⁶

2. Manetho (admittedly unreliable, but only rarely guilty of seriously underestimating regnal lengths, especially in the Late Period⁶⁷) attributed a total of 120 years (as per Africanus⁶⁸) to Dynasty XXII. If, as is generally accepted, this dynasty ended at about the

63 In Šōšenq I's dedication to Amon, he states that he "made the Southerners come in obeisance to thee, and the Northerners to the greatness of thy fame . . . I have trampled for thee them that rebelled against thee, overpowering for thee the Asiatics of the army of Mitanni." (J. H. Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt IV* [Chicago, 1906], 357, §722).

64 Gardiner, *Egypt*, 330; see B. Mazar, "The Campaign of Pharaoh Shishak to Palestine," *SVT 4* (1957), 57f. Cf. Breasted, *Records IV*, 348–55, §709–17.

65 Y. Yadin, *Hazor. The Rediscovery of a Great Citadel of the Bible* (New York, 1975), 216.

66 J. Bright, *A History of Israel*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia, 1972), 230, n. 16. "As a result of . . . [the] method of excavation [at Megiddo], neither the plans assigned to the so-called strata nor the finds ascribed to these strata can be taken as the entities as which they are published"; K. M. Kenyon, "Palestine in the Middle Bronze Age," *The Cambridge Ancient History*, 3rd ed., II, 1, ed. I. E. S. Edwards, et al. (Cambridge, 1980), 97.

67 Cf. Gardiner, *Egypt*, 430–53.

68 The actual total of enumerated regnal periods is 116 years; contrast Eusebius' total of 49 years (*Manetho*, trans. W. G. Waddell [Cambridge, 1980], 158–63).

time of the Kushite invasion, *circa* 730 B.C.E.,⁶⁹ then Dynasty XXII would have begun about 850 B.C.E., too late for Šōšenq I to be equated with Šīšaḡ. It is obvious from the literature that the onset of this obscure dynasty has been extended back to *circa* 945 B.C.E. for the purpose of making the equation of Šīšaḡ and Šōšenq I⁷⁰ hold. Further, maintaining the onset of Dynasty XXII *circa* 945 B.C.E. implies for some that Osorkōn I (*circa* 924–888 B.C.E.⁷¹) be equated with the Kushite (*sic*) Zerah⁷² who campaigned against King Asa of Judah (2 Chr. 14:8–14) *circa* 913–873 B.C.E.;⁷³ Albright observed that this equation is both linguistically and historically “absurd.”⁷⁴ There exist no other points of synchrony in “the historical record [which] is surprisingly silent about the appreciable span of time covered by the Lybian dynasties.”⁷⁵

Even if, in fact, the XXIInd Dynasty did first begin in the 10th century B.C.E.,⁷⁶ this does not constitute proof that this Egyptian dynasty and the relevant Byblian dynasty were coeval; the statues of the two Egyptian kings might well have been exported at any time after their respective reigns⁷⁷ (perhaps as late as the onset of the powerful Saite XXVIth Dynasty, *circa* 665 B.C.E.⁷⁸) and employed by the Byblians *in lieu* of inferior local products. Just such a later reuse of Egyptian statuary outside of Egypt has been demonstrated to be likely the case with several objects of the Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period.⁷⁹ Note that the reconstruction of ‘Abība‘al’s inscription merely states that he caused the statue of Šōšenq I to be brought ([y]b’ from Egypt, while ‘Elība‘al goes so far as to state that he made (p’l) the statue of Osorkōn I. Thus the assumption that ‘Abība‘al was the “son of Yeḫīmilk” and king of Byblos prior to his brother(?) ‘Elība‘al is questionable at best, for there exist no independent means for corroborating the (re)use of the two Egyptian kings’ statues in the correct relative order.

69 Gardiner, *Egypt*, 335.

70 See *ibid.*, 448, for a sample of the problems in numbering and ordering the various kings named Šōšenq. The preceding Dynasty XXI is an equally obscure period replete with its own chronological difficulties. It is only on the slenderest of evidence that this dynasty’s penultimate king, Siamun, is identified as Solomon’s father-in-law; J. Černý, “Egypt: From the Death of Ramesses III to the End of the Twenty-first Dynasty,” *CAH*³ II, 2, 643f. See also K. Baer, “The Lybian and Nubian Kings of Egypt: Notes on the Chronology of Dynasties XXII to XXVI,” *JNES* 32 (1973), 4f.

71 Assuming the onset of Dynasty XXII *circa* 945 B.C.E. and Osorkōn’s father, Šōšenq I, reigned for at least 21 years, i. e., equal to his highest attested regnal year (see Gardiner, *Egypt*, 448).

72 E. g., Dussaud, *Dédicace . . . par Eliba‘al*, 114, citing Champollion. For others, see, e. g., W. F. Albright, *From the Stone Age to Christianity*, 2nd ed. (Garden City, 1957), 46, n. 29.

73 Myers, *II Chronicles*, 91.

74 Albright, *From the Stone Age*, 46–47. Myers, *II Chronicles*, 85, followed by Bright, *History*, 231, posits Zerah as the leader of an Egyptian mercenary buffer-state established by Šōšenq I, who in the time of Asa, either of his own volition, or inspired by Osorkōn I, moved against Judah.

75 W. W. Hallo and W. K. Simpson, *The Ancient Near East. A History* (New York, 1971), 288.

76 The difficulties cited regarding the identification of Šīšaḡ as Šōšenq I stand on their own merits. The seeming impossibility of convincingly identifying Šīšaḡ with any other known pharaoh in the period under discussion, though germane, presents no impediment to the overall thesis under consideration.

77 Driver, *Semitic Writing*, 106.

78 Gardiner, *Egypt*, 451.

79 During the Hyksos domination of the Second Intermediate Period numerous Middle Kingdom and early Second Intermediate Period royal statues made their way south from Egypt to Kerma and east to Palestine and Syria; therefore these statues may not be used to synchronize the local strata with the respective Egyptian periods; W. Helck, “Ägyptische Statuen im Ausland—ein chronologisches Problem,” *UF* 8 (1976), 113–14.

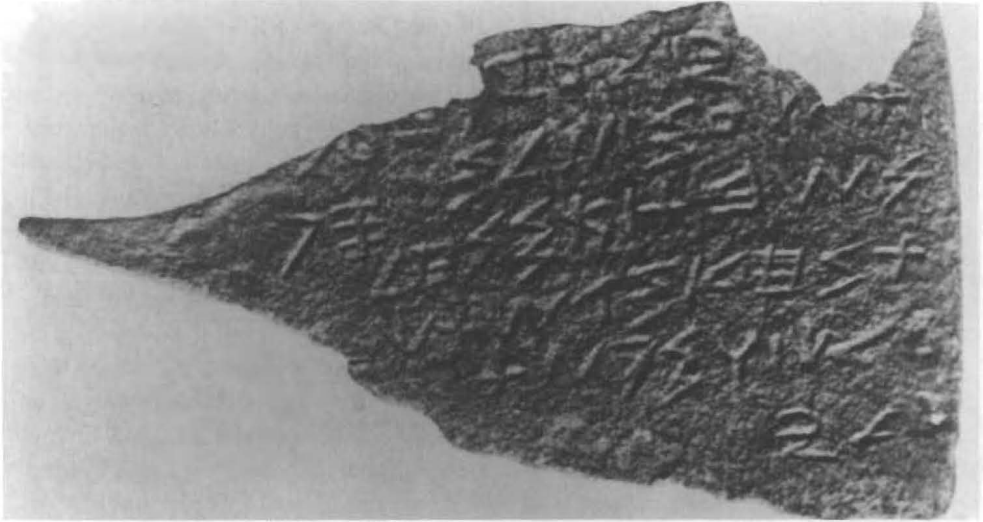


Plate VII: *KAI 3* (M. Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos I-Atlas*, pl. XXXII [1125a]).

C: *KAI 3*, 8.

KAI 3,⁸⁰ the inscription of ‘Ozerba’al, is inscribed on the obverse of the Bronze Spatula (*maggéšet?*, “divining instrument”⁸¹). It was excavated at Byblos during the seasons 1926–1932 from an archaeologically disturbed context.⁸² Dunand, who published the inscription in 1938,⁸³ noted the reverse of the spatula bore markings described later by Martin as “mixed” Pseudo-hieroglyphs.⁸⁴ Upon personal examination, Martin noted that similar “mixed” Pseudo-hieroglyphs had been partially obliterated from the obverse, and now underlie the linear Phoenician letters. The engraver “even employed (wittingly or unwittingly) the traits of [the] early signs to form his Phoenician letters.”⁸⁵

KAI 8,⁸⁶ the ‘Abdō’ inscription, is apparently a short property-mark incised on two fragments of the cylindrical neck of a large, coarse, brick-red vessel.⁸⁷ It was excavated at Byblos, but from an unsealed archaeological context,⁸⁸ and published in 1945 by Dunand.⁸⁹ Both *KAI 3* and 8 are today dated solely on the basis of comparative paleography⁹⁰ and orthography⁹¹ to the 10th century B.C.E.

80 See plate VII. Compare and contrast the autographs of Dunand, *Byblia Grammata*, 156, fig. 51; Martin, *Preliminary Report*, 61, fig. 4; and Donner and Röllig, *KAI III*, Taf. I, Nr. 3.

81 F. M. Cross, Jr., “The Origin and Early Evolution of the Alphabet,” *Eretz-Israel* 8 (1967), 9*, n. 9; see S. Iwry, “New Evidence for Belomancy in Ancient Palestine and Phoenicia,” *JAOS* 81 (1961), 32–34.

82 Martin, *Preliminary Report*, 47.

83 M. Dunand, *Bulletin de Musée de Beyrouth* 2 (1938), 99–107.

84 Martin, *Preliminary Report*, 70.

85 *Ibid.*, 62; also see 61, fig. 4.

86 See plate VIII. Compare and contrast the autographs of Dunand, *Byblia Grammata*, 152; and Donner and Röllig, *KAI III*, Taf. II, Nr. 8.

87 Dunand, *Byblia Grammata*, 152.

88 Albright, *Phoenician Inscriptions*, 154, n. 12.

89 Dunand, *Byblia Grammata*, 152–55.

90 Albright, *Phoenician Inscriptions*, 154.

91 F. M. Cross, Jr., and D. N. Freedman, *Early Hebrew Orthography. A Study of the Epigraphic Evidence*



Plate VIII: KAI 8 (M. Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos II-Atlas*, pl. CXLIV [19608]).

D: KAI 9–12.

The remaining Byblian inscriptions KAI 9–12 are of an obviously later period than KAI 1–8 and will be described only briefly as follows:

KAI 9,⁹² the inscription of an unnamed son of Šipīṭba'al III(?),⁹³ is inscribed between regularly spaced register lines without word dividers on three fragments of porous limestone found at Byblos in 1929.⁹⁴ It is dated variously from *circa* 500 B.C.E. to the first half of the 5th century B.C.E.⁹⁵

KAI 10,⁹⁶ the inscription of Yeḥawmilk, is inscribed without register lines or word dividers on a large limestone stele found at Byblos in 1869 and on a smaller fragment found there some seventy years later.⁹⁷ The upper part of the stele bears an incised scene depicting the standing king, clad in Persian garb,⁹⁸ presenting a libation to a seated Ḥaṭḥor-like deity ("The Lady of Byblos"); these figures are surmounted by an Egyptian-like winged disc. The stele is variously ascribed to the second half of the 5th or early 4th centuries B.C.E.⁹⁹

KAI 11,¹⁰⁰ the inscription of Batno'am, is inscribed in a single line, without word dividers, in very clear minute characters on a reused, relocated white marble *theca*.¹⁰¹ It was found at Byblos in 1929,¹⁰² and ascribed to the first half of the 4th century B.C.E.

(New Haven, 1952), 11f.

92 See plate IX.

93 Were the dating scheme presented herein to be accepted, Šipīṭba'al III should probably be named Šipīṭba'al II.

94 Donner and Röllig, *KAI II*, 10, Nr. 9.

95 *Ibid.*; and J. B. Peckham, *The Development of the Late Phoenician Scripts* (Cambridge, 1968), 53, respectively.

96 See plate X. Cf. autograph of M. Dunand, "Encore la stèle de Yehavmilk, roi de Byblos," *Bulletin du Musée de Beyrouth* 5 (1941), 73, fig. 5.

97 Donner and Röllig, *KAI II*, 11, Nr. 10.

98 *Ibid.*, 12. See conveniently, J. B. Pritchard, *ANEP*² (Princeton, 1969), 165, pl. 477.

99 *Circa* 5th to 4th centuries B.C.E. (Donner and Röllig, *KAI II*, 11); 5th or early 4th centuries B.C.E. (Pritchard, *ANEP*², 305 [477]); second half of the 5th century B.C.E., with the 4th century precluded by the dated coin series (Peckham, *Late Phoenician Scripts*, 53).

100 See plate XI. Contrast the autograph of Donner and Röllig, *KAI III*, Taf. III, Nr. 11; *N.B.* the erroneously drawn 'alep in 'nk.

101 Peckham, *Late Phoenician Scripts*, 54.

102 Donner and Röllig, *KAI II*, 15.



Plate IX: *KAI* 9 (A)–(C) (M. Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos I-Atlas*, pl. XXXIII.2 [1143a–c]).

through the equation of 'zb'l in this inscription with the king of the same name in the dated coin series.¹⁰³

KAI 12,¹⁰⁴ the altar inscription of 'bd' šmn, is inscribed without register lines or word dividers. It was found at Byblos in 1923. It has been variously dated from no earlier than the late 3rd century B.C.E. through as late as the 1st century C.E.¹⁰⁵

103 Peckham, *Late Phoenician Scripts*, 54.

104 See plate XII. Compare the autograph of R. Dussaud, "Inscription phénicienne de Byblos d'époque romaine," *Syria* 6 (1925), 271.

105 No earlier than the late 3rd century B.C.E. (Peckham, *Late Phoenician Scripts*, 63); 1st century B.C.E. (Z. Harris, *A Grammar of the Phoenician Language* [New Haven, 1936], 159); 1st century C.E. (Donner and Röllig, *KAI* II, 16, Nr. 12).



Plate X: KAI 10 (AO 22.368).

II. *Paleography*

It is implicit in the arguments presented in the foregoing sections detailing points of comparative art history and archaeological affinity, and the uncertain dating of and



Plate XI: KAI 11 (M. Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos I-Atlas*, pl. XXXIII.1 [1142], reversed).

questionable affinities with the Egyptian XXIIInd Dynasty, that the Byblian inscriptions KAI 1–8 may be dated, not in the tenth century B.C.E., but rather in the period from the mid-9th through the end of the 7th centuries B.C.E. The following discussion will seek to bolster this generally lower dating scheme and will begin with a review of the relevant paleographic¹⁰⁶ considerations previously raised.

In 1924, Dussaud concluded upon examination that the inscriptions of 'Aḥirām (which he dated firmly by the Ramesside tomb fragments to the 13th century B.C.E.), 'Abība'al (dated by the equation of Šōšenq I and Šīšaḡ to the 10th century B.C.E.) and the 9th century inscriptions of the Moabite Mēša' (KAI 181), Kilamuwa at Zinjirli (KAI 24) and Nora, Sardinia (KAI 46) represent steps in the evolution of one and the same alphabet.¹⁰⁷ In fact, he perceived "une remarquable unité de l'écriture dans des pays fort éloignés, . . . [et] elle évolue partout de même."¹⁰⁸

To bolster his arguments for the early dating of 'Aḥirām, Dussaud produced a table comparing the forms of the letters in each of the above inscriptions, adding for further



Plate XII: KAI 12 (R. Dussaud, *Syria* 6 [1925], pl. XXXIV.1).

106 I. J. Gelb (*A Study of Writing*, rev. ed. [Chicago, 1952], 22) distinguishes between epigraphy, dealing with inscriptions "incised with a sharp tool on hard material, such as stone, wood, metal, clay, etc.," and paleography, dealing with inscriptions "written in drawn or painted characters . . . on skin, papyrus or paper." However, in view of common usage, the term paleography as applied in this discussion will include both paleography and epigraphy. Gelb's *caveat* on the general subject bears noting: "There are no studies in . . . [this area] which treat of the subject from a general, theoretical point of view . . . What we have, instead, are narrow fields of study . . . all limited to certain periods and geographical areas" (*loc. cit.*).

107 Dussaud, *Tombeau d'Aḥiram*, 147.

108 *Ibid.*, 148.

comparison the eighth century forms found in the Bīr-Rākib, Zinjirli (KAI 216) and the "Ba'al-Lebanon," Limassol (KAI 31) inscriptions.¹⁰⁹ Wherever possible, the forms found in 'Aḥirām's two inscriptions were seen as "archaic": some because they recalled forms implied by the "acrophonic principle,"¹¹⁰ others by their squat form,¹¹¹ vertical stance,¹¹² or large size.¹¹³ Dussaud was also surprised by the variability of some forms¹¹⁴ and the curvedness of others.¹¹⁵ A few forms were found to be substantially the same in other inscriptions.¹¹⁶ In the next year, 1926, Dussaud published the 'Elība'al inscription on the statue of Osorkōn I, noting that the forms of its characters make it a contemporary of 'Abība'al's inscription.¹¹⁷ A new table of scripts was included.¹¹⁸

In 1945, Dunand noted that location, changes in the local population, the nature of available materials and scribal idiosyncrasies "encore sont susceptibles de hâter ou de ralentir l'évolution d'une écriture."¹¹⁹ Nonetheless, he incorporated some of the newer finds of the 1920's and 30's into the basic picture previously established by Dussaud, and produced the following Byblian chronology:¹²⁰ 'Abdō' (KAI 8), 17th century B.C.E.; Šipīṭba'al (KAI 7), 17th/16th centuries B.C.E.; the Bronze Spatula of 'Ozerba'al (KAI 3), 14th century B.C.E.; 'Aḥirām (KAI 1 and 2), 13th century B.C.E.; Yeḥīmilk (KAI 4), 12th century B.C.E.; the Ruweiseh bronze weapon-point of 'Iddo' (KAI 20), 11th century B.C.E.; 'Abība'al (KAI 5) and 'Elība'al (KAI 6), 10th century B.C.E.; and Moabite Mēša' (KAI 181), circa 842 B.C.E.¹²¹

Dunand was convinced of the antiquity of the Šipīṭba'al inscription by the distinctive forms of *bet*, *gimel*, *waw*, *ṣet*, and *qop*,¹²² but observed that "le trace de certaines lettres . . . atteste une écriture déjà passée dans l'usage courant."¹²³

However, in a postscript dated April, 1946, Dunand reconsidered his position when, at the suggestion of Torczyner, he personally investigated 'Aḥirām's tomb and discovered undecorated pottery sherds in the niches of the east and west wall of the tomb shaft and in the fill which apparently originally lay just above the shaft's intermediate floor. He dated the sherds to the "deux premières phases" of the Iron Age on the basis of the shapes of the handles, the profiles of the rims and their overall size. "L'importance de ce fait n'échappera à personne. L'histoire de cet hypogée et la date de l'épitaḥe du roi Akhīram sont à

109 Ibid., 149, fig. 7.

110 'alep, dalet, and ḥet.

111 dalet.

112 gimel, ṣet, yod, mem, taw; but note the angular reš.

113 dalet and 'ayin.

114 'alep, bet, he, ḥet, lamed, mem.

115 bet, waw, yod, lamed, pe.

116 zayin (at Zinjirli), kap (KAI 5), lamed, nun (KAI 5), samek 'ayin, šin.

117 Dussaud, *Dédicace . . . par Elība'al*, 111.

118 Ibid., 103, fig. 2.

119 Dunand, *Byblia Grammata*, 139. However, elsewhere (ibid., 158), Dunand notes that "les divergences locales sont donc à exclure dans leur evolution; seul le temp peut être en cause, ce qui constitue une excellent condition pour juger de la succession des forms."

120 Ibid., 160, fig. 52.

121 Ibid., 139.

122 Ibid., 150. The *bet* in KAI 8 is of the same distinctive form wherein the horizontal "tick" at the bottom of the vertical stroke is to the right of the vertical, rather than to the left.

123 Ibid., 158.

reconsidérer entièrement sur cette base nouvelle.”¹²⁴ Recognizing only scribal peculiarities¹²⁵ he lowered the date of 'Aḥirām to *circa* 1000 B.C.E.,¹²⁶ but did not change the relative order of the Byblian inscriptions as he had previously established it.¹²⁷

In 1947, Albright, arguing for a yet closer relationship between the early Byblian inscriptions, rejected the inconclusive archaeological evidence, especially of the 'Aḥirām and 'Abdō' finds, noting that all of the early Byblian inscriptions (omitting the Ruweish weapon-point) have substantially the same letter forms as well as characteristically distinct points of morphology. He rearranged and redated the entire group of inscriptions from Dunand's original spread of some seven centuries to within the confines of just the 10th century B.C.E.:¹²⁸ 'Ozerba'al's Bronze Spatula, *circa* 1000 B.C.E.; 'Aḥirām and his son 'Ittoba'al, *circa* 1000–975 B.C.E.; Yeḥīmilik, *circa* 950 B.C.E.; 'Abība'al, *circa* 930 B.C.E.; 'Elība'al, *circa* 920 B.C.E.; and Šipīṭba'al and the 'Abdō' sherd, *circa* 900 B.C.E.¹²⁹

Most notable of all is Albright's reassignment of the 'Abdō' and Šipīṭba'al inscriptions from being the oldest of the inscriptions (17th/16th centuries B.C.E. as per Dunand) to being the latest (*circa* 900 B.C.E.). He noted that in this case “the forms of the letters are in a number of cases relatively late and the aberrant *beth* is probably an ephemeral cursive form, without influence on the development of the script as a whole.”¹³⁰ He similarly dismissed “the peculiar quasi-cursive *aleph* of Aḥiram . . . [as] a local graphic peculiarity.”¹³¹

Two sources of error in the dating schemes prior to 1947 are readily identifiable:

1. The pressure of archaeologists for a 13th century B.C.E. date for the 'Aḥirām tomb and inscription, a pressure yet current;¹³² and
2. the assumption that the Byblian inscriptions could be directly compared with materials from other cultural, linguistic and chronological *milieux*, i.e., 9th century Moabite and 9th and 8th centuries B.C.E. Zinjirli Phoenician and Aramaic. “Old forms may not become obsolete everywhere at the same time or may have remained in use long after the latest known instance of their occurrence; or again, new forms may have come into use long before the earliest examples so far discovered.”¹³³

Also against the latter assumption is the independent development already displayed in the 9th century B.C.E. by the Hebrew script of the Moabite stele (KAI 181) in contrast with the contemporary Aramaic “lapidary” script of, especially, Zinjirli (KAI 24).¹³⁴ Cross notes

124 Ibid., 197.

125 Ibid., 199, n. 2.

126 Ibid., 199. Such a date had already been suggested by E. Meyers, *Geschichte des Altertums* II/2, 3rd. ed. (Basel, 1953), 73, and A. H. Gardiner, “Review and Notices,” *PEQ* 1939, 112; but cf. Hachmann, *Königsgrab V*, 109f.

127 Dunand, *Byblia Grammata*, 120.

128 Albright, *Phoenician Inscriptions*, 153–54.

129 Ibid., 160.

130 Ibid., 154.

131 Ibid., 154, n. 14. Similarly, Gardiner, *Reviews*, 112.

132 Cross, *Early Alphabetic Scripts*, 99, n. 11, citing “Mansfeld (following Hachmann)”; see Hachmann, *Königsgrab V*, 93f.

133 Driver, *Semitic Writing*, 176.

134 J. Naveh, *The Development of the Aramaic Script* (Jerusalem, 1970), 8. Contrast Naveh's contemporary statement in “The Scripts in Palestine and Transjordan in the Iron Age,” *Near Eastern Archaeology in the Twentieth Century* (Glueck vol.), ed. J. A. Sanders (New York, 1970), 277, that “it is . . . difficult to decide whether a tenth- or ninth-century script is Phoenician, Hebrew, or Aramaic.” For photographs of the Moabite Stele and Zinjirli (KAI 24) inscriptions, see conveniently Pritchard, *ANEP*², 85, pl. 274, and Donner and Röllig, *KAI* III, Taf. XXVII, respectively. Cf. also plate XIII, nos. 1 and 2.

that "the Aramaic script was derived from the Phoenician probably in the eleventh century, and had become independent of Phoenician influence by the ninth century."¹³⁵ He has also postulated that the Hebrew script was borrowed from the Canaanite or Phoenician alphabet "no earlier than the thirteenth century." The Hebrew script then either "evolved continuously from the thirteenth-twelfth-century Proto-Canaanite," or a derivation of such was "replaced by the stylish Phoenician linear of the 11th–10th centuries." In either case, a "strong influence" by the Phoenician scribal guilds on Hebrew in the late 11th and 10th centuries is proposed: thus Cross declines drawing a single line of derivation in any single period.¹³⁶

Albright's 1947 chronology of the Byblian inscriptions is today the cornerstone of typological systems proposed for dating not only other similar linear alphabetic inscriptions, but also the immediately preceding "Early Phoenician Linear" texts as well as the older-yet Proto-Sinaitic and Old (Proto-)Canaanite inscriptions.¹³⁷

Thus, in order to date a number of such "Early Phoenician Linear" inscriptions, Cross first invoked the 10th century B.C.E. dating of the older Byblian inscriptions, and then established the assignment of the Old (Proto-)Canaanite inscription painted on the Ewer Dipinto from Lachish (Tell Duweir) to the second half of the 13th century B.C.E.¹³⁸ The Lachish letter forms and rotational variations were then likened to those inked onto the Beth Shemesh Ostrakon.¹³⁹ With these two Late Bronze Age Canaanite inscriptions establishing a late 13th/early 12th century B.C.E. *terminus a quo*, Cross has proceeded to date a number of "Early Phoenician Linear"¹⁴⁰ inscriptions whose actual provenances include Lebanon, Northern and Southern Palestine, Crete, and Sardinia on the premise that they are typologically intermediate to the later Old (Proto-)Canaanite el Khadr bronze weapon-points I, II, III (KAI 21), IV and V dated to the late 12th century B.C.E.¹⁴¹ and the early

135 Cross, *Evolution of the Alphabet*, 12*.

136 *Ibid.*

137 E. g., Cross, *Evolution of the Alphabet*, 8*f.; Cross, *Early Alphabetic Scripts*, 97f.; and, most recently, Cross, "Newly Found Inscriptions in Old Canaanite and Early Phoenician Scripts," *BASOR* 238 (1980), 1f. Also note the term "Early Proto-Canaanite" designating the 17th–16th century B.C.E. inscriptions from Shechem, Gezer, and Lachish; J. Naveh, *Early History of the Alphabet* (Jerusalem, 1982), 26–27 and fig. 18–20. See further, Cross, *Evolution*, 10*, n. 12.

138 Cross, *Evolution of the Alphabet*, 16*. See conveniently, Driver, *Semitic Writing*, pl. 43, 2. The Lachish Ewer was found in Lachish Fosse Temple III, dated *circa* 1325–1260 B.C.E. The dating is based on the presence of "a plaque of Amenhotep III [1417–1379 B.C.E.] . . . found in the filling between [the lowest temple (I)] and the immediately succeeding Temple II" (K. M. Kenyon, *Archaeology in the Holy Land*, 4th ed. [New York, 1979], 183, 190–91).

139 Cross, *Evolution of the Alphabet*, 18*, and fig. 3. Other Old (Proto-)Canaanite inscriptions cited by Cross include: (1) an inscribed jar handle from Raddana—"its [late thirteenth century] date is controlled by the stratified context (*Early Alphabetic Scripts*, 97, and 112, fig. 1); (2) an inscribed sherd from Qubūr el-Walaydah (southeast of Gaza)—*circa* 1200 B.C.E. "The associated pottery, and the bowl itself, belong to the very end of the Late Bronze II or the beginning of Iron I" (Cross, *Newly Found Inscriptions*, 1–3, and figs. 1 and 2); (3) a dipinto from Zaraphath (Sarepta) "reminiscent of the Lachish Ewer . . . [although] its script stands close to that of the Beth-Shemesh Ostrakon—*circa* 1200 (*ibid.*, 97–98, and 113, fig. 2); (4) an inscribed sherd from Silo 605 at 'Izbet Şarṭah near Aphek described as "a learner's exercise . . . [as] revealed by a variety of [letter] forms . . . the hodge-podge of [their] stances . . . and the number of identifiable errors" (Cross, *Newly Found Inscriptions*, 9, and 8, figs. 9, 10)—"suggest[ing] a date in the 12th century B.C. . . conform[ing] roughly with the date of the stratum in which it was found" (*Early Alphabetic Scripts*, 97–98); cf. *circa* 1200–1050 B.C.E., M. Kochavi, "An Ostrakon of the Period of the Judges from 'Izbet Şarṭah," *Tel Aviv* 4 (1977), 4. For other examples, see Cross, *Evolution of the Alphabet*, 10* and nn. 11, 14–17.

140 Naveh, *Early History*, 42, differentiates Proto-Canaanite from Phoenician by the latter's fixed letter stances and right-to-left writing.

141 I–III: late 12th century (Cross, *Evolution of the Alphabet*, 23*); IV and V: *circa* 1100 (Cross, *Newly*

Byblian Phoenician forms as follows:

1. the Rapa' and Gerba'l bronze weapon-points: mid-11th century B.C.E.;¹⁴²
2. The Ruweiseh (*KAI* 20) and Biqa' (*KAI* 22) bronze weapon-points, together with the Byblos Bronze Spatula (*KAI* 3): late 11th century B.C.E.;¹⁴³
3. two clay objects from Byblos, "A" and "B": 11th century B.C.E.;¹⁴⁴
4. the "so-called Manaḥat sherd" from near Jerusalem: 11th century B.C.E.;¹⁴⁵
5. the Nora Fragment (*CIS* I, 145, inverted) from Sardinia: 11th century B.C.E.;¹⁴⁶
6. an incised bronze bowl from Tomb J at Tekke, Crete: "no later than the end of the 11th century";¹⁴⁷ and
7. The 'Azarba'l bronze weapon-point: *circa* 1000–950 B.C.E.¹⁴⁸

The methods by which these absolute dates have been assigned are subject to the following criticisms:

1. The direct comparison of ink-drawn and incised inscriptions on different material,¹⁴⁹ likely concealing different West Semitic dialects, from widely diverse provenances, and of admittedly different periods, should still be considered to be highly speculative in the absence of a proven line of derivation for any of the linear alphabets in any period from one of the several nearly contemporary pre-linear writing systems.

2. The el-Khaḍr bronzes are only indirectly dated by comparison with the Beth Shemesh ostrakon, in turn dated by the Lachish Ewer, which in its turn is only dated by inference (see n. 138) to the 14th century B.C.E.. These bronzes have been dated elsewhere to the time of David's reign¹⁵⁰ at Hebron,¹⁵¹ i.e., *circa* 1000 B.C.E.¹⁵²

3. The Tekke bronze bowl has been dated by the excavator, M. Sznycer, to about 900 B.C.E. (without excluding a higher date in the 10th century) based upon the archaeological context of the tomb in which it was found.¹⁵³ However, Cross prefers "a date no later than

Found Scripts, 7; see conveniently, *ibid.*, 6, fig. 8 [I–III], fig. 3 and 4 [IV], and 5, fig. 5–7 [V]. See Iwry, *Belomancy*, 27f., re: employment of these, as well as the Biqa' and Ruweiseh Bronzes in the practice of belomancy.

142 Cross, *Evolution of the Alphabet*, 23*, and 21*, fig. 4. Cf. "Proto-Canaanite" (Naveh, *Early History*, 41); see n. 140, above.

143 Cross, *Evolution of the Alphabet*, 23*. See conveniently, Driver, *Semitic Writing*, 106, fig. 55, and 246, fig. 101, respectively.

144 Cross, *Early Alphabetic Scripts*, 103 and 117, fig. 6.

145 *Ibid.*, 103, and 118, fig. 7.

146 *Ibid.*, 103–4, and 119, fig. 8. Cf. "Proto-Canaanite" (Naveh, *Early History*, 41); see n. 140, above.

147 Cross, *Newly Found Inscriptions*, 17, and 15, fig. 12.

148 Cross, *Evolution of the Alphabet*, 23*.

149 Incised letters "tend to show more old-fashioned shapes" since the extra difficulty of writing on hard surfaces "leads to the use of the more formal hand . . . because the added physical effort leads to added mental effort, leading to the scribe's remembering explicitly his schoolboy exercises rather than letting the hand operate automatically" (P. T. Daniels, "A Calligraphic Approach to Aramaic Paleography," *JNES* 43 (1984), 56, and n. 12).

150 *Ibid.*, 13*, n. 33, citing Mazar, "The Military Elite of David," *VT* 13 (1963), 311f.

151 Y. Yadin, *The Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands* (Norwich, 1963), 2: 353.

152 O. Eissfeldt, "The Hebrew Kingdom," *The Cambridge Ancient History*, 3rd ed., II/2B, ed. I. E. S. Edwards, et al. (Cambridge, 1980), 353.

153 Cross, *Newly Found Inscriptions*, 18, n. 19, notes that the context is "Early Protogeometric in Cretan terms, equivalent to the Late Protogeometric of Attica" (citing H. W. Catling, "The Knossos Arca, 1974–76," *Archaeological Reports for 1976–77*, 11–14) which would date to *circa* 950–900 B.C.E. See also M. Sznycer, "L'inscription phénicienne de Tekke, près de Cnossos," *Kadmos* 18 (1979), 89f.

the end of the eleventh century” since ‘Aḥirām’s inscription “must be dated” *circa* 1000 B.C.E.¹⁵⁴

Were the later dates proposed for the el-Khaḍr Bronzes and the Tekke bowl and the generally lower dates for the early Byblian *corpus*, presented above, to be accepted, however, the internal typology applied to all of the foregoing “Early Phoenician Linear” inscriptions might yet, in spite of their mixed provenances, be retained, but now applied with due caution to the appropriately succeeding centuries, i.e. from *circa* 1000 B.C.E. through the end of the 7th century B.C.E. It therefore remains necessary to demonstrate the compatibility of a generally lower date for the early Byblian *corpus* with paleographic considerations established by studies of larger and better dated *corpora*.

Semitic linear scripts in general are conveniently divided into two groups: (1) “formal” (or “lapidary,” i.e., print), and (2) “cursive.” Sub-styles of cursive may include “(a) extreme cursive—that of the cultured person; (b) formal cursive—that of the professional scribe; and (c) vulgar cursive—that of persons of limited schooling.” These classifications of script are not, however, at all mutually exclusive and, in fact, mutually influenced each other to different degrees throughout.¹⁵⁵ It is probably safe to assume that wherever writing spread beyond the confines of a narrow scribal guild, formal and cursive scripts existed variously side by side.

Ideally, a “formal” or lapidary script is characterized as “square, or segmented, and apparently required a more frequent lifting of the writing instrument.”¹⁵⁶ A “cursive” script is written in a fluid, or rounded, manner, with an economy of movement on the part of the scribe’s hand.¹⁵⁷

“The script as a whole develops as a result of modifications in its individual letters such as: (a) the dropping of elements; (b) the positional shift of strokes; (c) alterations in stance; (d) the joining of elements formerly written separately; and occasionally (e) the introduction of new elements.”¹⁵⁸ To be sure, the process was evolutionary; new forms might appear alongside older forms and both remain in use simultaneously, until one or the other dropped out of usage.¹⁵⁹

It will be established (see III, below) that the entire Byblian *corpus* may be variously distinguished morphologically and phonologically from other “dialects” of Phoenician and further may itself be divided into two groups: “early” (*KAI* 1–8) and “late” (*KAI* 9–12). Among late Phoenician scripts, the late Byblian has been characterized as “more radically cursive than the Cyprian [which] is essentially formal but influenced by cursive tendencies; the [late] Byblian script . . . is principally cursive in its forms,” although also showing more formal types.¹⁶⁰ The contemporary late scripts of Sidon and Tyre are both “formal and rather conservative in their development,” the former more markedly so.¹⁶¹

154 Cross, *Newly Found Inscriptions*, 17.

155 Naveh, *Aramaic Script*, 6. Peckham, *Late Phoenician Scripts*, 3–4, distinguishes between “‘formal,’ ‘cursive,’ ‘semi-formal,’ and ‘semi-cursive.’”

156 Peckham, *Late Phoenician Scripts*, 3.

157 *Ibid.*; cf. Daniels, *Calligraphic Approach*, 56, and n. 12.

158 Naveh, *Aramaic Script*, 5.

159 *Ibid.*, 4.

160 Peckham, *Late Phoenician Scripts*, 63.

161 *Ibid.*, 101. Peckham’s “General Series” of late Phoenician scripts (115f.), might also be subject to the same criticisms as have been applied to the methodology of Dussaud, Dunand, and Cross, i.e., comparing too closely inscriptions of too varied a provenance and known differences in dating.

Important clues to the evolution of the early Byblian scripts may be found in a brief examination of the later Byblian Scripts of the 5th and succeeding centuries B.C.E.:

1. Many of the letter forms can easily be seen in 9th through 7th century B.C.E. lapidary Aramaic;¹⁶²
2. others are clearly derived from 6th century B.C.E. cursive Aramaic;¹⁶³ while
3. a few are unique late Byblian developments.¹⁶⁴

It is also generally true that the Byblian forms strongly resist rotation (as do the Cypriot forms)¹⁶⁵ in comparison with the contemporary Aramaic and Phoenician of Sidon and Tyre. In the late inscriptions of the latter two sites, a number of forms¹⁶⁶ differ noticeably from the Byblian forms, while those of late Cypriot are largely intermediate between those of Byblos and Sidon and Tyre. The late Byblian letter forms may be summarized as a collection of largely archaizing Aramaic forms influenced by the cursive, with a few uniquely developed forms side by side. It is not surprising, given the nature of Neo-Babylonian and Persian hegemony and the concomitant catholic use of the Aramaic language and scripts in the second half of the first millennium B.C.E., that the Byblian, Sidonian, Tyrian, and Cypriot scripts,¹⁶⁷ despite retaining local distinctions (due no doubt in part to the continued use of their respective Phoenician dialects) show, upon comparison, varying degrees of Aramaic scribal influence. The influence of these traditions on the national scripts of the Ammonites, Edomites and Moabites was already being felt as early as the late 7th century B.C.E. during the Neo-Assyrian period, before these local scripts were completely subsumed to Aramaic in the middle of the 6th century B.C.E.¹⁶⁸ This is in striking contrast to the general situation earlier in the first half of the second millennium B.C.E., where, as noted previously, the Phoenician, Aramaic, and Hebrew¹⁶⁹ scripts are considered to have been much more markedly independent in their respective developments.

It is necessary to point out that there exist only a limited number of absolutely dated early first millennium B.C.E. inscriptions with which to draw comparisons. The largest group belongs to the Aramaic line of scripts and includes examples from the 9th century

162 E.g., *bet*, *gimel*, *dalet*, *he* (especially *KAI* 9), *zayin*, *kap*, *mem*, *'ayin*, *šade*, and *qop*: compare plates IX–XII with plate XIII, nos. 2–8.

163 E.g., *he*, *'ayin* (especially *KAI* 9 and 10), *šin*, and *taw*: compare plates IX–XII with plate XV, and Naveh, *Aramaic Script*, figs. 4–6.

164 E.g., *he* (*KAI* 11 and 12), *šet* (*KAI* 9, 11, 12), *nun* (although also sporadically in late Cypriot), and *samek*.

165 E.g., *dalet*, *zayin*, *yod*, and *reš*.

166 E.g., *'alep*, *he*, *zayin*, *šet*, *yod*, *kap*, *nun*, and *šin*.

167 See conveniently, Peckham, *Late Phoenician Scripts*, 44–45, pl. IV (Byblian); 66–69, pl. V and VI (Sidonian); 68–69, pl. VI (Tyrian); 6–11, pl. I–III (Cypriot).

168 L. G. Herr, "The Formal Scripts of Iron Age Transjordan," *BASOR* 238 (1980), 32–33. Cf. Naveh, *Early History*, 100–12, and especially 102, n. 58.

169 The Hebrew script became extinct before it could be Aramaized due to the mass deportation of the populations of Israel by the Assyrians, *circa* 722 B.C.E. and of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar, *circa* 587 B.C.E.. Towards the end of its existence, the Hebrew lapidary script had become strongly influenced by the cursive as attested by the beautifully curved and elongated Judean forms in the Siloam (*KAI* 189) and Silwan (*KAI* 191) inscriptions of *circa* 700 B.C.E.. These forms are much more extreme than the 8th century Samaria and even the 6th century Lachish ostraca forms. See conveniently, Pritchard, *ANEP*², 85, pl. 275; *ibid.*, 349, pl. 811; Driver, *Semitic Writing*, 109, fig. 58; and Pritchard, *ANEP*², 86, pl. 279, respectively). See further, e.g., F. M. Cross, Jr., "Epigraphic Notes on Hebrew Documents of the Eighth-Sixth Centuries B.C.," *BASOR* 165 (1962), 34–42; and Naveh, *Scripts in Palestine and Transjordan*, 279–80.

B.C.E. and later¹⁷⁰ (see plates XIII–XV). The script of the Phoenician language inscription of 'Azitawadda at Karatepe (*KAI* 26) best fits with the Aramaic line,¹⁷¹ especially when contrasted with the contemporary "Ba'al-Lebanon" inscription from Limasol, Cyprus (*KAI* 31) written by/for a Sidonian in the mid-8th century B.C.E.¹⁷² The majority of other early Semitic inscriptions are dated by ascription only.¹⁷³

'alep: (a) The "classic" 9th/8th century B.C.E. Moabite/Aramaic lapidary form with the vertical stroke crossing to the right of the apex formed by the converging horizontal strokes is evidenced in *KAI* 3:3. (b) *KAI* 5:1 and 6:1, 2 show the vertical much closer to the apex as in "Ba'al-Lebanon" (see plate XVI, no. 1). (c) The vertical stroke just abuts the vertex of the horizontals in *KAI* 7:2, 4. (d) In *KAI* 1:1, 2 and *KAI* 8 the horizontal strokes, slightly curved in the former, never meet, but end a short distance apart at the vertical. The early 6th century Ipsambul forms (see plate XVII, nos. 7–9) are quite similar, although in these inscriptions, one or both of the horizontals pierce the vertical. All of these examples seem to anticipate by degrees the fully developed cursive forms of the late Byblian (cf. text at n. 131 and see n. 167). (e) *KAI* 4 exhibits three variants: 1.2 as in (c), 1.3 as in (d), and 11.4 and 7 as in (b).

bet: (a) The formal *bet* with triangular head and vertical extension leading to a horizontal tail to the left is found in *KAI* 1:1, 2; 3:3; 5:1, 2; 6:1, 3 and is similarly evidenced throughout 9th/8th century Aramaic (see plate XIII, *passim*) and 8th/7th century Phoenician (see plate XVI, nos. 4, 6, and 7). (b) More cursive forms with tails curving to various degrees as in *KAI* 1:1, 2; 4:1–4; 6:2 are also found in "Ba'al-Lebanon" (see plate XVI, no. 1) and at Ipsambul (see plate XVII, nos. 7–9), especially. However, both forms (a) and (b) are widely distributed in the later periods. (c) *KAI* 7 and 8 uniquely evince a horizontal tail drawn to the right of the vertical downstroke and must be considered as a local development (see text at n. 130).

gimel: (a) *KAI* 3:4, 5 (cf. *pe*, below, re: *KAI* 3:2) uniquely shows the *gimel* "leaning backwards" with a nearly horizontal second shorter stroke. (b) *KAI* 1 uniquely shows a nearly vertical stroke with either a short curved second stroke (1.1) or nearly horizontal short straight stroke (1.2). (c) *KAI* 4, 5, and 6 show the common late, nearly equilateral

170 Naveh, *Aramaic Script*, 7–8. Throughout the period of its official use by Assyria, Babylonia, and Persia, "no regional variations in script were discernable . . . [and thus] the material may be treated as one integral unit" (*ibid.*, 2). F. Rosenthal ("Aramaic Studies During the Past Thirty Years," *JNES* 37 [1978], 83–84) cautions that "perhaps one should always keep in mind, as I was once told in connection with the highly refined state of Greek and Roman paleography, that the only safe way to date a manuscript by the script is to look for the date at the end. . . . I am still somewhat skeptical with respect to the all too precise dates claimed on the basis of the script alone and recommend caution, but a reliable frame-work has been established [for the history of the Aramaic script]."

171 Naveh, *Aramaic Script*, 8.

172 Contrast plate XIII, no. 6 and XVI, no. 3 with XVI, no. 1 (also cf. *CIS* I, 5, pl. IV).

173 E.g., the Gezer Calender (*KAI* 182; cf. Donner and Röllig, *KAI* III, Taf. XII, Nr. 182 and Pritchard, *ANEP*², 84, pl. 272), the Nora, Sardinia inscription (*KAI* 46; cf. Donner and Röllig, *KAI* III, Taf. II, Nr. 46), the Ammān Citadel inscription (cf. S. H. Horn, "The Ammān Citadel Inscription," *BASOR* 193 [1969], 3, fig. 1 and 5, fig. 2), and the dedication to the Hurrian Astarte from Spain (F. M. Cross, Jr. "The Old Phoenician Inscription from Spain Dedicated to Hurrian Astarte," *HTR* 64 [1971], 189f.).

form with slightly varied stances. (d) Only *KAI* 7 shows the second stroke lengthened more than the first.

dalet: (a) *KAI* 2, 4, 6, and 7 all show a simple triangle in slightly varied orientations resembling the Moabite (see plate XIII, no. 1),¹⁷⁴ but also that of “Ba‘al-Lebanon” (see plate XVI, no. 1). (b) The short downstroke of *KAI* 8 first appears in Semitic writing *circa* 800 B.C.E.¹⁷⁵ and is typical of 8th century Aramaic and 8th/7th century Phoenician, recurring in late Sidon and Tyre (see n. 167).

he: (a) *KAI* 1 and 2 show the unique straight-spined “backwards ‘E’” form in various orientations. A very short extension of the vertical is seen both above and/or below the horizontals in *KAI* 1. (b) *KAI* 4 exhibits a short tail and curved spine. (c) In *KAI* 8, the downturned horizontals are separated from the vertical in a manner reminiscent of, but not identical to, some examples in Aramaic cursive (see plate XIV, no. 2) and late 5th century Phoenician cursive (see plate XVIII, no. 3).

waw: Where evidenced, the head is in the form of a “U” varying mainly in width and curvature. (a) Most forms show a centrally positioned vertical downstroke. (b) *KAI* 1:2 exhibits a variant with a curving central downstroke; while (c) *KAI* 7:4 exhibits another variant with the downstroke on the right-hand side as is seen beyond Byblos in all periods. This form is retained through the late Byblian *corpus* alongside of the cursive.¹⁷⁶ Only Moabite shows a *waw* similar to the common Byblian form (a).

zayin: The “I” form is evidenced throughout early Byblian. However, this form also appears in mid-/late 8th century Aramaic (see plate XIII, nos. 5 and 6), mid-8th century “Ba‘al-Lebanon” (see plate XVI, no. 1) and 7th/6th century Ez-Zib (see plate XVII, no. 6). *KAI* 1, 3, and 4 all display some lengthening and curving of one or both horizontal strokes.

het: The variations of the lapidary triple crossbar “ladder form” *het* are widely distributed throughout Aramaic and Phoenician in all periods. *KAI* 1:1 shows more curved verticals than the others, producing the impression of a tilt as it is achieved in *KAI* 2:3. Contrast the double crossbar form in 9th century Moabite and late 8th century Aramaic Bīr-Rākīb (see plate XII, nos. 1 and 8).¹⁷⁷

tet: (a) *KAI* 1:2 shows an upright cross within a circle. The “Ba‘al-Lebanon” upright cross is in a partially squared circle. Moabite and earliest Aramaic show an “x” in a circle; the “x” becomes more vertical at 8th century Karatepe (see plate XIII, nos. 1, 4–6; and plate XVI, no. 3); note the variant with upright cross in the mid-9th century, or later, Tell Fekheriyeh bilingual.¹⁷⁸ In cursive forms with two crossbars, they too tend to the

174 See also Pritchard, *ANEP*², 85, pl. 274, and Gelb, *Writing*, 134, fig. 72.

175 Gelb, *Writing*, 180.

176 Peckham, *Late Phoenician Scripts*, 63.

177 See also Pritchard, *ANEP*², 86, pl. 281, and Gelb, *Writing*, 135, fig. 73.

178 A. Abou Assaf, P. Bordreuil, and A. R. Millard, *La statue de Tell Fekherye et son inscription bilingue assyro-araméenne* (Paris, 1982), figs 3, 4, and pls. XIII, XIV.

vertical.¹⁷⁹ (b) *KAI* 7:1 shows a single diagonal within a closed circle as in the early 6th century Nerab stele¹⁸⁰; this is apparently an influence of the cursive as evidenced in the mid-7th century Aššur ostrakon (see plate XIV, no. 7).

yod: The early Byblian forms are all upright differing in the curve of the head and the length of the horizontal tail. The upright stance is retained in the 5th century Byblian (where, however, the tail is beginning to rotate counter-clockwise). (a) *KAI* 3:1, 6 show the most curved head and longest tail, quite similar to that of *KAI* 6:1. (b) In *KAI* 4, the head is curved, but the tail is quite short. (c) *KAI* 7 and 8 show an angular head; the tail is shorter in the latter. (d) *KAI* 1 shows both rounded and angular variants, but always with a short tail. The upright stance, although evidenced uniformly in early Aramaic, is paralleled as late as the late 5th century in the Teima, North Arabia lapidary inscriptions.¹⁸¹ The angular and curved variants are distributed widely regardless of orientation.

kap: (a) The upright form with three arms diverging from a common point is found in *KAI* 1:1, 2; 3:4, 5; 4:1, 2. (b) A biform with the central stroke perpendicular to a short horizontal which connects the outer diagonals at the bottom is seen in *KAI* 2:2 and 4:3. (c) A third form wherein the central stroke intersects the left-hand diagonal to the left of the vertex formed by the outer arms is found in *KAI* 1:1; 4:6; 5:1; 6:1; 7:1; and 8:1. (d) A short tail is also evidenced in *KAI* 1:2 and 4:5, 6. Forms (a), (b), and (c) are unique to early Byblian; however the short-tailed form (d) is reminiscent of those in Moabite (see plate XIII, no. 1, and n. 174), early Aramaic cursive (see plate XIV, *passim*) and “Ba‘al-Lebanon” (see plate XVI, no. 1); all of the latter show greater rotation of the head and elongation of the tail.¹⁸² The tailless form has been observed on 8th century ivories at Nimrud.¹⁸³

Dussaud, in 1924, wrote that because of what he perceived to be the rapid evolution of, especially, *kap*, *mem*, and *šin* across the centuries from ‘Aḥirām (13th century) to “Ba‘al-Lebanon” (8th century), these letters are particularly useful for chronological classifying “les écritures phéniciennes archaïques.”¹⁸⁴ He applied this principle (based on an obviously false chronological premise) to the form of the *mem* in the Šema‘ seal from Megiddo¹⁸⁵ and thereby assigned it to the reign of Jeroboam I in the late 10th century.¹⁸⁶ This seal is today typically assigned to the reign of Jeroboam II in the first half of the 8th century.¹⁸⁷

Cross has similarly dated the Shemaiah seal to the 9th century, “largely upon the presence of a single extremely archaic *mem*, for which parallels can be found only in the Gezer Calendar and the Byblian Inscriptions of the 10th century. [He adds that] other

179 E.g., Peckham, *Late Phoenician Scripts*, 66–67, pl. V, no. 2; 68–69, pl. VI, no. 2, but contrast no. 3; 104–5, pl. VII, no. 9. See plate XVI, no. 9.

180 See conveniently Pritchard, *ANEP*², 86, pl. 280, and 88, pl. 286, no. 11.

181 See Naveh, *Aramaic Script*, fig. 10, no. 1–3.

182 Contrast, however, the forms in the mid-9th century, or later, Tell Fekheriyeh bilingual that show no rotation of the head and a straight vertical tail (see n. 178, above).

183 Driver, *Semitic Writing*, 267 [p. 176.], citing R. D. Barnett, *Catalog of Nimrud Ivories*, 51–52.

184 Dussaud, *Tombeau d’Aḥirām*, 151.

185 See conveniently, Pritchard, *ANEP*², 85, pl. 276.

186 Dussaud, *Dédicace . . . par ‘Eliba‘al*, 109. Similarly, S. Yevin, “The Date of the ‘Belonging to Shema‘ (the) Servant (of) Jeroboam,’” *JNES* 19 (1960), 205f.

187 E.g., L. G. Herr, *The Scripts of Ancient Northwest Semitic Seals* (Missoula, 1978), 82 [1].

characters, however, closely resemble early 8th century forms (particularly the *waw*).¹⁸⁸ As per the thesis of this study, the Shemaiah seal, too, is probably to be dated in the 8th century, the problematic Gezer Calendar notwithstanding.¹⁸⁹

The diagnostic value of the *kap*, *mem*, and *šin* is probably most suitably applied only to the Aramaic scripts after the 9th century.¹⁹⁰ The comparison of these letter forms across dialects is of only limited value; note that although the *kap* with a triangular left side occurs on inscriptions from 8th century Karatepe and Spain, it also occurs at Sidon in the 5th and 4th centuries.¹⁹¹

lamed: (a) The most angular and sharply acute forms occur in *KAI* 3 and 5. (b) Less acutely angular are the forms in *KAI* 2, 4, 6, and 8. (c) The latter form is seen side by side with a rounded form in *KAI* 1 and 7. Variants (b) and (c) are widely seen through the 6th century, until the cursive form with the additional vertical "tick" begins to influence the lapidary *lamed*.

mem: (a) *KAI* 3 and 6 show the angular, erect five-stroke form. (b) *KAI* 1, 4, and 5 show a similar form, but one or more of the angles between the five strokes are replaced with curves. Note the similar forms in the mid-9th century, or later, Tell Fekheriyeh bilingual (see n. 178). (c) *KAI* 7 additionally begins to evidence some rotation of the head and lengthening of the tail (especially in l. 3) not unlike the early 7th century Hassan-Beyli inscription (see plate XVI, no. 6).

nun: (a) *KAI* 3 shows the most angular three-stroke form. (b) The remainder show this angular form side by side with a curved lower-stroke form, just as in "Ba'al-Lebanon" (see plate XVI, no. 1). Both variants appear widely into the late period, especially at Sidon and Tyre (see n. 167).

samek: (a) *KAI* 3 shows the typical early Aramaic lapidary form with three parallel horizontals and a short vertical stroke extending from the uppermost stroke down and just through the bottom stroke. (b) *KAI* 1 also shows a variant with an elongated slightly curving tail, comparing especially well with the forms in "Ba'al-Lebanon" and Karatepe (see plate XVI, no. 1; and plates XIII, no. 6 and XVI, no. 3, respectively).

'ayin: All of the Byblian inscriptions show the simple closed circle without the central point ("pupil").¹⁹² They vary in size within individual inscriptions as well as among the *corpus*;

188 Cross and Freedman, *Orthography*, 47–48. See *ibid.*, 45, n. 2 for further references to this seal. Note the absence of this seal from Herr's study (see n. 187, above).

189 It would appear to this writer that the most conservative approach to paleographic dating, all other factors given, would be to observe and be guided by the most typologically *advanced* rather than archaic letter forms (taking heed of Driver: see text at n. 133). Note, for example, the mid-8th century B.C.E. Aramaic-like *samek* (e.g., pl. XIII, nos. 7 and 8, and pl. XIV, no. 1) in the Tell Fekheriyeh bilingual (see n. 178).

190 F. M. Cross, Jr., "Epigraphic Notes on the Ammān Citadel Inscription," *BASOR* 193 (1969), 16 [*kap*].

191 Cross, *Hurrian Astarte*, 191.

192 Although the "pupil" was believed to have disappeared "by the end of the 11th century in Early Linear Phoenician," (Cross, *Newly Found Inscriptions*, 12), note its presence in the mid-9th century B.C.E., or later, Tell Fekheriyeh bilingual (see n. 178).

KAI 3, 7, and 8 show the smallest, while the remainder display a medium to large diameter form.¹⁹³

pe: (a) *KAI* 4 exhibits a slight rounding of the upper corner; while (b) *KAI* 6 shows the classic lapidary 9th/8th century Aramaic round-head form. (c) The angular form of *KAI* 7:1, along with the rounded form (l. 5) appear widely in the late period. (d) The deeply curved forms of *KAI* 1 and the closed-head form of *KAI* 2 are unique. (The completely angular form of *KAI* 3:2 is debatably *gimel* or *pe*¹⁹⁴).

šade: Both *KAI* 4 and 5 show the archaic short left-handed stroke: the form is nearly unique in that the stroke is rotated clockwise against virtually all other examples elsewhere.

qop: (a) *KAI* 4:5 shows the classic circle and vertical downstroke bisecting the circle and extending through the bottom. (b) In *KAI* 4:6 the circle is replaced by two unequal semicircles on either side of the downstroke, as in the 8th century Karatepe inscription (see plates XIII, no. 6 and XVI, no. 3). (c) The “circle-on-a-stick” form in *KAI* 7:1 is unique.

reš: (a) The “pointy-headed” form is found in *KAI* 1, 4, 5, and 6; it is most erect in *KAI* 6 and leans backwards in *KAI* 4 and 5. (b) *KAI* 1 displays both orientations of (a) in addition to a round-headed backward-leaning form. *KAI* 7 shows only the round-headed type, either erect or leaning forward. The backward-leaning stance is unique to early Byblian, while the other forms are common in all other areas in all periods.

šin: (a) The four-stroke zigzag form is seen in *KAI* 1, 3, 4, 6, and 7. This form persists as late as the 6th century in Aramaic and Hebrew cursive.¹⁹⁵ (b) *KAI* 7:1 shows a variant with the two middle strokes fusing into a single vertical midway through their rise, resembling the forms at Hassan-Beyli (see plate XVI, no. 6) in the early 7th century and the late 7th century Carthage Stele (see plate XVII, no. 5).

taw: (a) *KAI* 2 and 3 show only the equal-armed upright form. (b) *KAI* 1 and 7 show also the “x” variant. *KAI* 4 only exhibits the latter, seen elsewhere only in Moabite. The upright form without the lengthening of the lower vertical stroke appears to be unique here.

In summary, it may be observed that the letter forms displayed in the early Byblian inscriptions *KAI* 1–8 are, not unlike the later Byblian letters, formally drawn, but with cursive tendencies of varying degrees throughout. *KAI* 3 is the most formally drawn of the group, showing cursive tendencies only in *zayin*. Most cursive are *KAI* 7, especially in the

193 “The formal rounded ‘*ayin* is found in the later inscriptions,” alongside the cursive open-topped form (Peckham, *Late Phoenician Scripts*, 63).

194 Donner and Röllig’s reading $\overset{2}{k}\overset{5}{š}$ (*KAI* II, 5) was confirmed by Martin’s first-hand examination (*Preliminary Report*, 62). Albright (*Phoenician Inscriptions*, 158, n. 47), reading .*sg* (followed by Iwry, *Belomancy*, 32), argued that all supposed examples of *pe* in this inscription are actually *gimels* (e.g., ll. 4 and 5 *mglpšt*) by their angular form. A similar ambiguity between these letters also is evident in the mid-9th century B.C.E., or later, Tell Fekheriyeh bilingual (see n. 178), and the 12th/11th century B.C.E. ‘Izbet šarṭah ostrakon (Kochavi, *Ostrakon*, 8).

195 Naveh, *Aramaic Script*, fig. 12, no. 1 and 2.

forms of *bet*, *gimel*, *waw*, *ṭet*, *mem*, *nun*, *qop*, and *šin*; *KAI* 1, showing cursive forms of '*alep*, *bet*, *he*, *waw*, *zayin*, *ḥet*, *kap*, *mem*, *nun*, and *pe*; and *KAI* 2, likewise in *he*, *ḥet*, *mem*, *nun*, and *pe*. *KAI* 4 shows more cursive forms than the more formal *KAI* 5 and 6, especially in '*alep*, *gimel*, *he*, *waw*, *zayin*, *yod*, *kap*, *mem*, and *pe*. The limited number of attested forms in *KAI* 8 generally follow *KAI* 7, especially the unique *bet*, also displaying cursive forms of *he*, *yod*, and the post-800 B.C.E. *dalet*.

That all of the letter forms of the early Byblian corpus are essentially similar is self-evident. If one were to accept the postulate that the increasing tendency for cursive forms, despite the retention of archaizing formal types, is a chronological feature,¹⁹⁶ then the following relative order for these inscriptions is indicated: (1) *KAI* 3; (2) *KAI* 4–6; (3) *KAI* 7 and 8; and (4) *KAI* 1 and 2.

That these inscriptions are not of the 10th century B.C.E., but rather are of the 9th and succeeding centuries, is suggested by the number of substantially similar forms found in a variety of suitably well-dated Aramaic and Phoenician inscriptions, especially the 8th century B.C.E. "Ba'al-Lebanon" inscription (*KAI* 31) from Cyprus, dated to the reign of Ḥiram II, king of Sidon and Tyre in the time of Tiglath-pileser III (745–727 B.C.E.).¹⁹⁷ In *KAI* 31, the forms of '*alep*, *dalet*, *ḥet*, *ṭet*, *lamed*, *nun*, *qop*, *reš*, and *šin* are quite similar to especially *KAI* 4–6. The forms of the Cypriot *kap*, *mem*, *šade* and *taw* are slightly more advanced; the forms of *bet* and *samek* are similarly found in *KAI* 1. Perhaps most telling of all is the short-tailed *dalet* of *KAI* 8, a characteristically 8th century B.C.E. development.¹⁹⁸

Assignment of an 8th century date for the group *KAI* 4-7 has been suggested by Mazar (Maisler), who equated the last king of this group, Šipiṭba'al, with *Si-pi-it-ti-bi-i-il* who, like Ḥiram II of Sidon and Tyre, paid tribute to Tiglath-pileser III, circa 738 B.C.E.¹⁹⁹ This would make Šipiṭba'al of Byblos a contemporary of Ḥiram II of Sidon and Tyre. The colonial nature of the "Ba'al-Lebanon" inscription might then serve to explain its similarities to the inscriptions of Šipiṭba'al's predecessors Yehimilk, 'Eliba'al and 'Abiba'al(?), while the more advanced letter forms of the Cypriot inscription might be explained by characterizing them as either local developments adopted by the scribe on Cyprus, or foreign influences (i.e., "standard" Phoenician and/or Aramaic) similarly adopted.

III. Morphology and Phonology

A number of morphological and phonological features of the Byblian inscriptions *KAI* 1–12 are divergent, not only from other Phoenician inscriptions, but also among the

196 Cursive scripts seem, in general, to be typologically more advanced than the formal (Herr, *Scripts of . . . Transjordan*, 31).

197 Donner and Röllig, *KAI* II, 49.

198 However, one must temper any conclusions regarding dating by paleographic evidence alone, especially when it involves "colonial" materials, as A. M. Honeyman ("The Phoenician Inscriptions of the Cyprus Museum," *Iraq* 6 [1939], 107–8) warns in his discussion of the "archaic" Cyprus inscription (*KAI* 30) when he quotes E. Renan (*CIS* I, 192) regarding the dating of the "archaic" Nora inscription (*KAI* 46): "Antiquitatem monumenti ex antiquitatem scripturae qui iudicabit, fortasse erroris obnoxius foret; in regionibus longinquis, a veteribus colonis habitatis, scriptura saepe fert indolem archaicae vetustatis qua facile decipitur incautus."

199 See conveniently Pritchard, *ANET*³, 282a [6(a)]. This identification was first made by Mazar (Maisler), but rejected in favor of a late 10th century B.C.E. date by Albright, *Phoenician Inscriptions*, 154, n. 15.

Byblian texts themselves. This summary will serve to demonstrate that Byblian was relatively distinct in comparison with other Phoenician dialects throughout its known history.

A. Third Masculine Singular Pronominal Suffix

1. *KAI* 1 uniquely²⁰⁰ employs *-h* for both the possessive²⁰¹ and object²⁰² suffixes;
 2. *KAI* 4, 6, 7, 9(?), 10, and 12 employ *-w* for both the possessive²⁰³ and object²⁰⁴ suffixes; whereas

3. “standard” Phoenician shows *-y* or *-ø* (i.e., “zero” in the orthography).²⁰⁵

It is commonly presumed that *KAI* 1 is the oldest of the group, because it preserves the original form of this pronoun,²⁰⁶ which shortly thereafter in Byblian evolved **-ahū* > **-aw*, and perhaps eventually > *-ō*, retaining the *waw* in the orthography.²⁰⁷ However, given the preceding arguments from points of art history, archaeology, and paleography indicating generally lower dates for *KAI* 1–8, an alternative explanation is in order. Cross and Freedman have observed in early Byblian that *-h* is written “after singular nouns, but *-w* after plural nouns”;²⁰⁸ this would effectively remove any chronological distinctions between *KAI* 1 and the remaining early Byblian inscriptions (especially *KAI* 4, 6, and 7) posited on the basis of a supposed preserved original pronominal suffix if (a) *KAI* 6:2, etc. *'dtw* is accepted as *pluralis majestatis*,²⁰⁹ and (b) the examples of singular nouns with *-w* in *KAI*

200 Also note Zinjirli *KAI* 25:5 *lh* ‘for him’; J. Friedrich and W. Röllig, *Phönizisch-punische Grammatik*, 2nd ed. *An. Or.* 46 (Rome, 1970), 47, §112.1.1.c.α, cite this as an example of preserved original *-h* when it is “unmittelbar hinter dem Tonvokal.” However, H. L. Ginsberg, “Ugaritico-Phoenicia,” *JANES* 5 (1973; Gaster vol.), 146–47, dismisses this explanation asserting *KAI* 25 to be written entirely and correctly in the Samalian dialect of Aramaic.

201 *KAI* 1:1 *'bh*, *'bh*, *kšth* (the later as per Albright, *Phoenician Inscriptions*, 155, n. 19: cf. n. 202, below); 1:2 *mšpṭh*, *mlkh*, *sph*.

202 *KAI* 1:1 *kšṭh* (e.g., as per Donner and Röllig, *KAI* II, 2). For a cogent summary of the arguments in favor of this reading, see H. Tawil, “A Note on the Aḥiram Inscription,” *JANES* 3 (1970), 33f.

203 *KAI* 4:5 *wšntw*; 6:2 *'dtw*; 6:3 *wšntw*; 7:4 *'dtw*; 7:5 *wšntw*; 9:B:4 *'rnw* (e.g., as per Ginsberg, *Ugaritico-Phoenicia*, 142, n. 47; cf. Donner and Röllig, *KAI* II, 11 *'rn w . . .*); 10:9 *ymw wšntw*; 10:15 *mstrw*, *wzr'w*.

204 *KAI* 10:9 *wṭṭww*; 12:4 *wyṭṭww*.

205 *-yu* is used with themes ending in vowels, common in Phoenician since it retains the genitive case vowel *-i*; *-o* is used with themes ending in consonants (H. L. Ginsberg, “The Northwest Semitic Languages,” *World History of the Jewish People*, 2, ed. B. Mazar [Tel Aviv, 1970], ch. 6 “The Patriarchs,” 109). Contrast Biblical Hebrew *-hū* or *-ō* (*ibid.*; cf. n. 208, below); Aramaic *-h* (S. Moscati, ed., *An Introduction to the Comparative Grammar of the Semitic Languages* [Wiesbaden, 1980], 106, §13.14); Ugaritic *-h*, *-nh*, *-nn*, *-n* (C. H. Gordon, *UT* 37–38, §6.16–17); Moabite (*KAI* 181) writes *-h*, vocalized *-o* as in Hebrew or *-eh* as in Aramaic (Cross and Freedman, *Orthography*, 35, n. 2). See M. Dahood, *Psalms III*, Anchor Bible 17A (Garden City, 1979), 375–76, re: *-īl-y* in Ugaritic and Hebrew.

206 E.g., Friedrich and Röllig, *Grammatik*, 47–48, §112.1.1.b.α.

207 Harris, *Grammar*, 51. Cf. Cross and Freedman, *Orthography*, 19–20, re: absence of historical spelling and *matres lectionis* in Phoenician.

208 Cross and Freedman, *Orthography*, 35, n. 2, add that “in Aramaic we find *-h* and *-wh* (or *-h* and *-yh* in the Panamua Inscription); and in Hebrew *-h* (later *w = ō*), *-hū*, and after plural nouns *-w* (later *-yw*), occasionally *-ēhū*.” See further, *ibid.*, 54 [68] and 68f.

209 “*adottew* (or the like),” Albright, *Phoenician Inscriptions*, 157, n. 41, followed by Cross and Freedman, *Orthography*, 15 [20]. John Huehnergard (oral communication) notes that this form must be singular, since the plural would be **adanō'ātiw* < **dnt*. However, in light of other lexical relationships between Byblian Phoenician and Ugaritic (Albright, *Phoenician Inscriptions*, 159) observe Ugaritic *'ad* ‘father,’ and especially *'adt* ‘lady’ (Gordon, *UT*, 351, §19.71).

9–12 are accepted as a later development in Byblian phonology to which the orthography then conformed. Early Byblian must then be adjudged to have followed its own pattern regarding syncope of intervocalic *-h-*, i.e., preserving it when suffixed to a singular accusative²¹⁰ or genitive²¹¹ noun, or a verb governed by a preposition,²¹² but syncopating it when suffixed to an oblique plural noun.²¹³ Late Byblian retained the *-w* with oblique plural nouns,²¹⁴ additionally applying it analogically when suffixed to a singular accusative noun,²¹⁵ or verb.²¹⁶

Alternatively, though less likely, the *-h* of *KAI* 1 may be construed as an intentional archaism,²¹⁷ a (short-lived) dialectal peculiarity,²¹⁸ or a penetration from another neighboring language (e.g., Hebrew or Aramaic) resulting in a form of *Mischsprache*. Consider the possibly analogous problematic case of Ugaritic *b.btw*, “in his house.”²¹⁹ The final *-w* has been categorized as a dialectal variant²²⁰ of the more usual Ugaritic pronominal suffixes (see n. 205), but may conceivably represent a penetration of the standard Byblian suffix (applied to a genitive singular noun!) in this late Ugaritic text.²²¹

B. Third Feminine Singular Pronominal Suffix

1. *KAI* 10 alone attests *-h* for the possessive suffix,²²² whereas
2. “standard” Phoenician employs *-ya* or *-a*.²²³

C. Third Masculine Plural Pronominal Suffix

1. *KAI* 10 alone attests *-hm* for the possessive suffix,²²⁴ whereas

210 *KAI* 1:2 *ymḥ sprh*.

211 *KAI* 1:1 *lPN₂ 'bh; kšth; 2 ḥṯr mšpṯh; ks' mlkh*.

212 *KAI* 1:1 *kšh*.

213 *KAI* 4:3–5 *y'rk . . . šntw; 6:2 [l]DN 'dtw; 2–3 t'rk . . . šntw; 7:3–4 IDN . . . dtw; 4–5 t'rk . . . šntw*.

214 *KAI* 10:9 *t'rk ymw wšntw*.

215 *KAI* 9:B:4 [] *t'rnw(?)*; 10:14–15 *lgl mstrw; 15 tsrh . . . zr'w*.

216 *KAI* 10:9 *thww; 12:4 yḥww*.

217 “Preservation of the old spelling is not surprising in royal inscriptions, where we may expect a degree of archaizing and of imitating the style of past generations and past inscriptions” (Z. Harris, *Development of the Canaanite Dialects* [New Haven, 1939], 25).

218 See *ibid.*, 55–56 [30], re: problems of loss/“restoration”/ preservation of intervocalic *-h-*.

219 P. D. Miller, Jr., “The *MRZḤ* Text,” in L. R. Fisher, ed., *The Claremont Ras Shamra Tablets, An. Or.* 48 (Rome, 1971), 37, RS 1957.702:4.

220 “Whether the form is dialectal or a mistake is hard to tell” (*ibid.*, 39). M. Dahood, “Additional Notes on the *MRZḤ* Text,” *ibid.*, 51, suggests that here is the first attestation in Ugaritic of *-w* as a *matres lectionis* = *ō*. E. L. Greenstein (“Another Attestation of Initial *h* > ' in West Semitic,” *JANES* 5 [1973], 162, n. 32), in agreement with Miller, identifies this form as the result of the elision of intervocalic *h*, as evidenced elsewhere in this inscription (*ibid.*, 162).

221 This suggestion must be weighed against the observation by Cross that “the borrowing of elements as fundamental as the pronoun is a phenomenon so rare in linguistic data that it may be dismissed on methodological grounds” (F. M. Cross, Jr., “The Phoenician Inscription from Brazil. A Nineteenth Century Forgery,” *Or.* 37 [1968], 444). However, elsewhere Cross has admitted the likelihood of Aramaean influence on the vocalization of the pronominal suffix in the Massoretic text (Cross and Freedman, *Orthography*, 68).

222 *KAI* 10:6 *wh'rpt z' w'mdh; 10:14 m[l']kt z' . . . ysdh*.

223 Ginsberg, *Northwest Semitic Languages*, 109. Also see C. Krahmalkov, “Comments on the Vocalization of the Suffix Pronoun of the Third Feminine Singular in Phoenician and Punic,” *JSS* 17 (1972), 68f., re: vocalization. Contrast Biblical Hebrew *-hā* or *-āh* (Ginsberg, *Northwest Semitic Languages*, 109); Aramaic *-h* (Moscati, *Comparative Grammar*, 106, §13.14); Ugaritic *-h*, *-nh*, *-nn*, *-n* (Gordon, *UT* 38, §6.18).

224 *KAI* 10:6 *lhm*.

2. "standard" Phoenician employs *-nm* or *-m*.²²⁵

D. Relative Pronoun

1. *KAI* 1, 4, 6, and 7 show *z*, probably "proclitic to the verb";²²⁶
2. *KAI* 9, 10, and 11 apparently borrowed 'š from "standard" Phoenician,²²⁷ which had always used the latter.²²⁸

E. Demonstrative Pronoun

Byblian distinguishes between the masculine singular, feminine singular, and common plural.

1. Masculine Singular

- a. *KAI* 1, 2, 9, 10, and 11 uniquely²²⁹ show *zn*;²³⁰ whereas
- b. *KAI* 10, in addition, occasionally shows *z*.²³¹

2. Feminine Singular

- a. *KAI* 10 alone attests *z'*.²³²

3. Common Plural

- a. *KAI* 4 and 12 show 'l'.²³³

225 Ginsberg, *Northwest Semitic Languages*, 109. See also C. Krahmalkov, "Studies in Phoenician and Punic Grammar," *JSS* 15 (1970), 181f., re: vocalization. Contrast Biblical Hebrew *-hēm* or *-ām* (Ginsberg, *Northwest Semitic Languages*, 109); Aramaic *-hn* (Moscati, *Comparative Grammar*, 106, §13.14); Ugaritic *-hm* (Gordon, *UT*, 37, §6.13).

226 Harris, *Grammar*, 55. Cf. archaic Hebrew poetry, n. 228, below.

227 Loc. cit.

228 Friedrich and Röllig, *Grammatik*, 54, §121. Archaic Hebrew poetry employed *zeh* or *zū*, apparently bound to the preceding construct noun (T. O. Lambdin, "The Junctural Origin of the West Semitic Definite Article," in H. Goedicke, ed., *Near Eastern Studies in Honor of William Foxwell Albright* [Baltimore, 1971], 321), but replaced it with *š-* or *'ašer* (Moscati, *Comparative Grammar*, 113–14, §13.36); early Aramaic employs *zī* which later became *dī* (ibid.); Ugaritic shows *dīdī* (Gordon, *UT*, 39–40, §6.23).

229 Also note the ivory lid inscription from Ur *KAI* 29:1 'rn.[z]n. Donner and Röllig, *KAI* II, 47, note "da der Gebrauch dieses Demonstrativums nach unserer bisherigen Kenntnis auf Byblos beschränkt ist, dürfte das Kästchen in Phönizien entstanden sein und in Byblos seine Aufschrift bekommen haben." Ginsberg, *Ugaritico-Phoenicia*, 142, counters that "its third person singular suffixes are -y after vocalic themes exactly like those of general Phoenician . . . [therefore] the assumption that the second word is to be completed [z]n, is shaky," offering the restoration as "'rn.[š]n' (this ivory (Heb. *šen*) box'" (ibid., 141).

230 *KAI* 1:2 'rn.zn; 2:3 *ṭh* zn (cf. S. M. Cecchini, "THT in *KAI* 2,3 e in *KTU* 1.161:22 ss," *UF* 13 [1981], 27f.); 9:A:1 *hmškb* zn; 9:A:3 *bmskb* zn, [*hmškb*] zn; 10:4 *hmzbh* *nhšt* zn, *whpṭh* *hrš* zn; 10:5 *pth* *hrš* zn; 10:11–12 *mzbh* zn; 11:1 *b'rn* zn.

231 *KAI* 10:4 *bh[. .]n* z; 5 *pthy* z; 10 'rṣ z; 10–11 'rṣ z; 14 *mqm* z. Harris (*Grammar*, 54) notes the 5th century B.C.E. use of *zn* rather than *z* when the demonstrative pronoun is separated from its antecedent noun, as a means of emphasis, but this fails to account for *KAI* 10:11–12 *mzbh* zn. Friedrich and Röllig (*Grammatik*, 147, §288. a and .b) denotes *zn* as the masculine near-demonstrative and *z*, *z'*, 'l as the masculine and feminine singular and common plural far-demonstratives, respectively. Ginsberg (*Ugaritico-Phoenicia*, 141) denotes *zn* and *z'* as the masculine and feminine near-demonstratives and *z* as the common far-demonstrative. F. Rosenthal, *ANET*³, 656, renders all of the above variants uniformly as the near-demonstrative.

232 Cf. the "Archaic Cyprus" inscription *KAI* 30:2, 3 *z'* as the common demonstrative pronoun. The more usual form in the later Cyprus inscriptions is 'z, *passim* (cf. Lambdin, *Definite Article*, 330, re: derivation of 'z).

233 *KAI* 4:2–3 *hbtm* 'l; 12:1 *hḫwtm* 'l.

4. "Standard" Phoenician shows *z* (common singular) and *'l* (common plural).²³⁴

F. Definite Article

The definite article *h-* is attested in *KAI* 4, 8, 9, 10, and 12.²³⁵

"It is generally assumed that the definite article in Phoenician has the same basic form as that of Hebrew . . . [but] that there is inconsistency in the use of the article, and that this is due in part to the chronological and dialectal heterogeneity of the [Phoenician] inscriptions is undeniable."²³⁶ Harris concluded that the article "was palpably not a basic feature of the language."²³⁷ Lambdin has constructed a paradigm for the article's usage in *KAI* 10 (5th century),²³⁸ modified it for use at Sidon (*KAI* 14–4th century),²³⁹ and applied it, with noted exceptions, to Karatepe (*KAI* 26–8th century).²⁴⁰ The use of the article on a *nomen rectum*, inconsistent at Karatepe, is considered to be "extremely rare in the early language, the well-known example of the Yehimilk inscription (*KAI* No. 4) notwithstanding: *kl mplt hbtm 'l* "all the ruins of these temples."²⁴¹

On the basis of the foregoing summary, it may be observed that Byblian remains distinctly different throughout its history from "standard" Phoenician as evidenced by the third person masculine and feminine singular and masculine plural pronominal suffixes; the unique, gender-distinct demonstrative pronouns; and the somewhat divergent use of the definite article. Further, in the earlier Byblian inscriptions the relative pronoun also differs from "standard" Phoenician.

Among the Byblian inscriptions, two distinct philological layers exist:

1. *KAI* 1, 4, 6, and 7 (and on the basis of other associations: *KAI* 2, 3, 5, and 8) employ *-h* (*KAI* 1) as the third person singular pronominal suffix with singular nouns and *-w* (*KAI* 4, 6, and 7) similarly with plural nouns (following Cross and Freedman: see n. 208)²⁴² while *z* serves as the relative pronoun and *zn* as the demonstrative pronoun;

2. *KAI* 9–12 employ *-w* as the third person singular pronominal suffix with singular and plural nouns, *'š* serves as the relative pronoun, and *z*, additionally now, serves as the masculine demonstrative pronoun.

234 Friedrich and Röllig, *Grammatik*, 50, §113.1a. Contrast Hebrew m. sg. *zh* (*KAI* 189:1; 196:2; 200:9), f. sg. *z't* (*KAI* 191:B:1; 196:10; similarly Moabite *KAI* 181:3), c. pl. *'lh* (J. Blau, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* [Wiesbaden, 1976], 43, §15); Biblical Aramaic m. sg. *dēnā*, f. sg. *dā* and c. pl. *'el(lē)*, *'illēn* (Moscati, *Comparative Grammar*, 111, §13.29); Ugaritic c. sg./pl. *hnd* (Gordon, *UT*, 39, §6.22) and *hndt* (A. F. Rainey, "Observations on Ugaritic Grammar," *UF* 3 [1971], 160, §6.22).

235 *KAI* 4:2–3 *kl mplt hbtm 'l*; 8:1 [*l'*bd' . . . *hy[šr]*]; 9:A:1 *p'lt ly hmškb zn*; 9:B:2 *b'šl hmškb[zn]*; 9:B:3 *qr hmškb 'š*; 10:2 *'š p'lt n hrbt DN*; 10:4 *hmzbbh nšst zn, whptḥ ḥrṣ zn*; 10:5 *wh'pt ḥrṣ 'š*; 10:6 *wh'rpt z', whk[trm] 'š*; 10:15 *tsrh[w] hrbt DN 'yt h'dm h'*; 12:1 *hḥnwṯm 'l*.

236 Lambdin, *Definite Article*, 327.

237 Harris, *Grammar*, 56.

238 Lambdin, *Definite Article*, 327–28.

239 *Ibid.*, 328.

240 *Ibid.*, 328–29, and especially 329, n. 24. *KAI* 24 (Zinjirli, 9th century) appears to follow, although inconsistently, Hebrew and Moabite (Friedrich and Röllig, *Grammatik*, 150, §§296, 297.1); in contrast with the latter, it shows no evidence for the simultaneous use of the *nota accusativi*.

241 Lambdin, *Definite Article*, 329, n. 23. This use of the definite article will not be seen as quite so unusual given the dating scheme presented herein.

242 Rejecting this argument might necessitate the admission of two sub-groups within this earlier layer.

It is generally held that these distinctions within the Byblian *corpus* are by and large chronological in origin. Further, the distinctions between Byblian, in general, and “standard” Phoenician, give rise to the notion that Byblian deserves the status of being a distinct “dialect.”²⁴³

IV. Conclusions

In conclusion, the evidence from art history and archaeology, paleography, and morphology and phonology may be interpreted as pointing to the deduction that the early Byblian inscriptions *KAI* 1–8 are of a generally later period than has previously been accepted for them; i.e., the mid-9th through 7th centuries rather than the 10th century B.C.E.

1. The relative order of the kings Yeḥīmilk (*KAI* 4), 'Elība'al (*KAI* 6) and Šipiṭba'al (*KAI* 7) is confirmed paleographically, with the lattermost assigned to *circa* 738 B.C.E. and the former two to the decade(s) immediately preceding. That 'Abība'al (*KAI* 5) belongs with this group is also clear, but the limited number of letters in his inscription and their great variability in form make it difficult on the basis of paleography alone to insert him accurately within the above group.

2. The relationship between the 'Abdō sherd (*KAI* 8) and Šipiṭba'al is confirmed paleographically, while substantiating its assignment to the 8th century B.C.E.

3. Paleographically, the Bronze Spatula (*KAI* 3) should probably be dated preceding all of the above inscriptions, but the cultic nature of this inscription and the fact that it is a palimpsest may be misleading.

4. Art history and archaeology and paleography combine to indicate a date for 'Aḥirām (*KAI* 1 and 2) perhaps later than the above groups:

a. the artistic affinities of the sarcophagus are demonstrably likely to be of a period no earlier than the mid-9th century B.C.E.;

b. the linear Phoenician inscription was added to an usurped previously-inscribed sarcophagus and therefore is probably to be dated later than the tomb carving;

c. the specific arrangement of the tomb-shaft debris and the dating of the Cypriot pottery sherds within it establish a date no earlier than the mid-9th century B.C.E.: taking into account the probable delay in the transportation from Cyprus and accumulation of this pottery type at Byblos, a date perhaps as late as the end of the seventh century B.C.E. is indicated;

d. given all of the above, the desire of the usurper to attempt to give his inscriptions an appropriately “archaizing” air is understandable, but the later date for the

²⁴³ Harris, (*Grammar*, 51–56) treats Byblian as a distinct dialect collaterally with Cypriot and Punic. Albright (*Phoenician Inscriptions*, 159) questioned Harris' assignment by treating the Byblian forms as merely archaizing (omitting *KAI* 9–12, however, from his discussion). Friedrich and Röllig (*Grammitik*, 2–3) distinguish not only Byblian, Cypriot and Punic as distinct dialects, but also denote the inscriptions from Zinjirli (*KAI* 24), Karatepe (*KAI* 26), Ur (*KAI* 29) and Arslan Tash (*KAI* 27) as “*altphönisch*.” Contrast the use of the term “Old Phoenician” by Cross in reference to 11th century B.C.E. scripts (*Evolution of the Alphabet*, 12*), a term he later replaced with “Early Phoenician Linear” (*Early Alphabetic Scripts*, 103).

inscriptions is betrayed by the large number of distinctive, cursively influenced forms which the scribe could not help but employ.

5. Together, the scripts evidenced by the early Byblian inscriptions *KAI* 1–8 would seem to warrant designation as a distinctive “national” script (in the sense that it was limited to use in the “city-state” of Byblos), which thrived outside of the mainstream developments of “standard” Phoenician (in parallel with its distinctive morphology and phonology). Although it may resemble typologically earlier scripts, it is not archaic, perhaps merely “archaizing.” It expresses its own slow, isolated development through the middle centuries of the first half of the first millennium B.C.E., until replaced by the Aramaeanized scripts evidenced by *KAI* 9–12 in the second half of that millennium. Throughout, the typically conservative Byblian scribes seem to have preferred “typologically archaic” forms, modified by tendencies toward the cursive and punctuated with unique local developments.

6. The impact of a generally lower dating for the early Byblian inscriptions on other early linear Phoenician inscriptions has already been alluded to above, where dates of the 10th century or later would be indicated, with further discussion being beyond the scope of the present examination. Yet the revised dating scheme proposed herein would result in the complete absence of linear alphabetic inscriptions firmly datable between the late 13th/early 12th century B.C.E. Old (Proto-)Canaanite and early first millennium B.C.E. Hebrew, Aramaic and Phoenician inscriptions, despite the obvious relationships between the earlier and later groups. There is perhaps small consolation and even confirmation in the observation that a comparable situation is known to exist within the *corpus* of ivories dated to the end of the late Bronze Age and the early Iron Age; the earliest datable ivories of the mid-9th century B.C.E., “despite the passage of three centuries without any known links,” inexplicably retain features “which can be clearly traced in the ivories of the 13th century.”²⁴⁴

244 H. Kantor, “Syro-Palestinian Ivories,” *JNES* 15 (1956), 174. Mallowan, (*Nimrud* II, 480) has similarly remarked on this peculiar situation in his discussion of the Nimrud ivory corpus.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|---|---|
| 𐤀 | 𐤁 | 𐤂 | 𐤃 | 𐤄 | 𐤅𐤆 | 𐤇 | 𐤈 |
| 𐤉 | 𐤊 | 𐤋 | 𐤌 | 𐤍 | 𐤎 | 𐤏 | 𐤐 |
| 𐤑 | 𐤒 | 𐤓 | 𐤔 | 𐤕 | 𐤖 | 𐤗 | 𐤘 |
| 𐤙 | 𐤚 | 𐤛 | 𐤜 | 𐤝 | 𐤞 | 𐤟 | 𐤠 |
| 𐤡 | 𐤢 | 𐤣 | 𐤤 | 𐤥 | 𐤦 | 𐤧 | 𐤨 |
| 𐤩 | 𐤪 | 𐤫 | 𐤬 | 𐤭 | 𐤮 | 𐤯 | 𐤰 |
| 𐤱 | 𐤲 | 𐤳 | 𐤴 | 𐤵 | 𐤶 | 𐤷 | 𐤸 |
| 𐤹 | 𐤺 | 𐤻 | 𐤼 | 𐤽 | 𐤾 | 𐤿 | 𐥀 |
| 𐥁 | 𐥂 | 𐥃 | 𐥄 | 𐥅 | 𐥆 | 𐥇 | 𐥈 |
| 𐥉 | 𐥊 | 𐥋 | 𐥌 | 𐥍 | 𐥎 | 𐥏 | 𐥐 |
| 𐥑 | 𐥒 | 𐥓 | 𐥔 | 𐥕 | 𐥖 | 𐥗 | 𐥘 |
| 𐥙 | 𐥚 | 𐥛 | 𐥜 | 𐥝 | 𐥞 | 𐥟 | 𐥠 |
| 𐥡 | 𐥢 | 𐥣 | 𐥤 | 𐥥 | 𐥦 | 𐥧 | 𐥨 |
| 𐥩 | 𐥪 | 𐥫 | 𐥬 | 𐥭 | 𐥮 | 𐥯 | 𐥰 |
| 𐥱 | 𐥲 | 𐥳 | 𐥴 | 𐥵 | 𐥶 | 𐥷 | 𐥸 |
| 𐥹 | 𐥺 | 𐥻 | 𐥼 | 𐥽 | 𐥾 | 𐥿 | 𐦀 |
| 𐦁 | 𐦂 | 𐦃 | 𐦄 | 𐦅 | 𐦆 | 𐦇 | 𐦈 |
| 𐦉 | 𐦊 | 𐦋 | 𐦌 | 𐦍 | 𐦎 | 𐦏 | 𐦐 |
| 𐦑 | 𐦒 | 𐦓 | 𐦔 | 𐦕 | 𐦖 | 𐦗 | 𐦘 |
| 𐦙 | 𐦚 | 𐦛 | 𐦜 | 𐦝 | 𐦞 | 𐦟 | 𐦠 |
| 𐦡 | 𐦢 | 𐦣 | 𐦤 | 𐦥 | 𐦦 | 𐦧 | 𐦨 |
| 𐦩 | 𐦪 | 𐦫 | 𐦬 | 𐦭 | 𐦮 | 𐦯 | 𐦰 |
| 𐦱 | 𐦲 | 𐦳 | 𐦴 | 𐦵 | 𐦶 | 𐦷 | 𐦸 |
| 𐦹 | 𐦺 | 𐦻 | 𐦼 | 𐦽 | 𐦾 | 𐦿 | 𐧀 |

Plate XIII: Monumental scripts from the 9th and 8th centuries B.C.E.

(A. Dupont-Sommer and J. Starcky, *Les inscriptions araméennes de Sfiré*, pl. 24).

1. Mesha, mid-ninth century B.C.E.; 2. Kilamuwa, late ninth century B.C.E.; 3. Zakir, beginning of the eighth century B.C.E.; 4. Hadad, early eighth century B.C.E.; 5. Sfiré, mid-eighth century B.C.E.; 6. Karatepe, second half of the eighth century B.C.E.; 7. Panammu, circa 730 B.C.E.; 8. Bar-Rakib, late eighth century B.C.E.

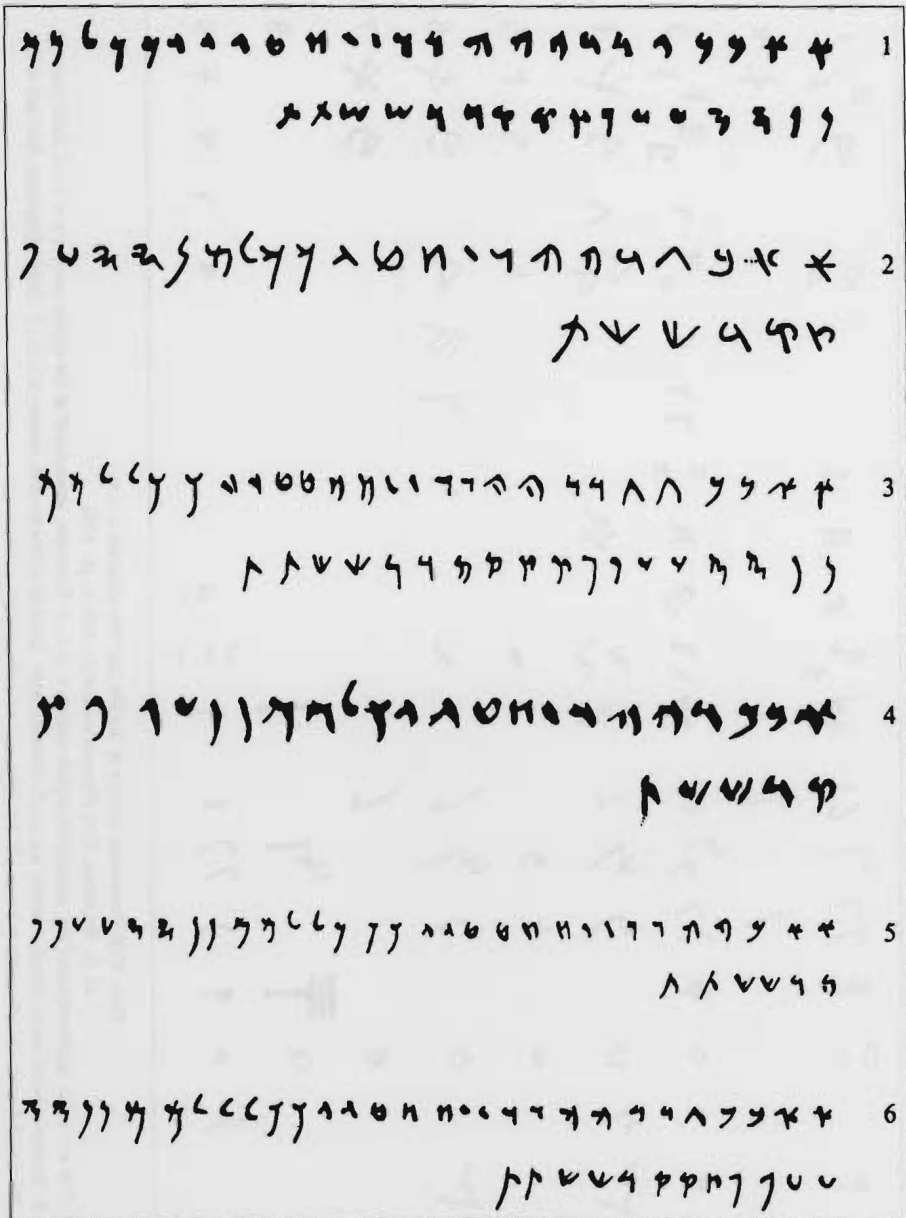


Plate XV: The Aramaic cursive in the 6th century B.C.E. (ibid., fig. 3).

- 1. The Saqqarah papyrus, circa 600 B.C.E.; 2 The Starcky tablet, 571/70 B.C.E.; 3. The Meissner papyrus, 515 B.C.E.; 4. Cowley, No. 52, late sixth century B.C.E.; 5. Hermopolis papyrus VII, late sixth or early fifth century B.C.E.; 6. Hermopolis papyri I-VI, late sixth or early fifth century B.C.E.

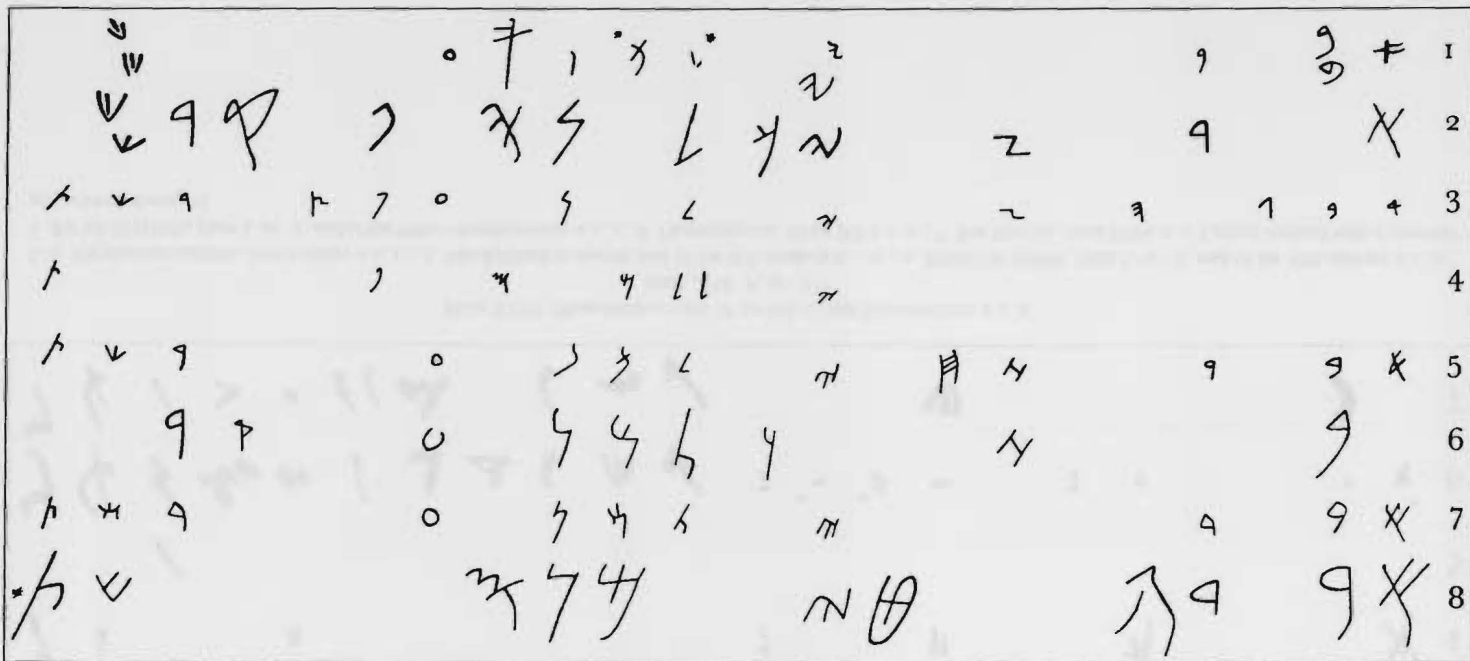


Plate XVII: Phoenician scripts of the 7th and 6th centuries B.C.E.
(*ibid.*, 106–7, pl. VIII).

1. *RES* 922 (Chytroi), first half of the seventh century B.C.E.; 2. *Šlmy* jar inscription, second half of the seventh century B.C.E.; 3. *CIS* 123 (Malta Stele), second half seventh century B.C.E.; 4. *RES* 1214 (Paleo-Castro), second half of the seventh century B.C.E.; 5. *CIS* 5684 (Carthage Stele), second half of the seventh century B.C.E.; 6. Ez-zib (*zkrmlk*), seventh to sixth century B.C.E.; 7. *CIS* 111 (Ipsambul), 591 B.C.E. (*Samek* is reduced); 8–9. *CIS* 112 (Ipsambul), 591 B.C.E. (*Aleph*, *bet*, *het*, *yod*, *mem*, *samek*, and *pe* are reduced). Letters marked with an asterisk are worn or damaged.

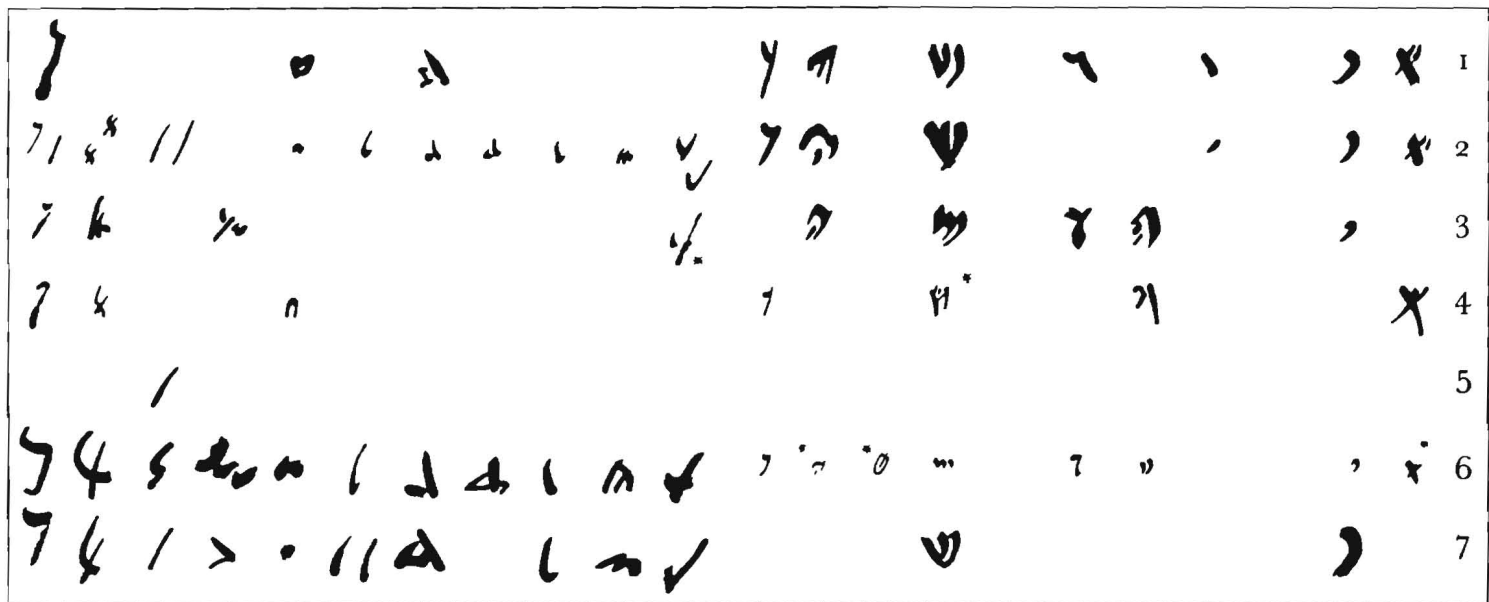


Plate XVIII: Phoenician scripts of the 6th to 3rd/2nd centuries B.C.E.
(*ibid.*, 108–9, pl. XI).

1–2 Elephantine ostraca, fifth century B.C.E.; 3. Mit-Rahineh ostracon, end of the fifth century B.C.E.; 4. *BIFAO* 38 (1939), plate I, no. 2, end of the fifth century B.C.E.; 5. *BIFAO* 38 (1939), plate I, no. 3, end of the fifth or fourth century B.C.E.; 6. Giron papyrus, circa 300 B.C.E.; 7. Bat Yam jar, circa 300 B.C.E. Letters marked with an asterisk are worn or damaged.