

A LINEAR B INSCRIPTION FROM THEBES

Among the inscribed jars found in 1921 by Keramopoulos in the „Kadmeion“ at Thebes, that numbered IV by Pugliese Carratelli has an inscription which runs:

a-re-zo-me-ne wa-to re-u-ko-jo

This is the reading given by Evans¹⁾, Pugliese Carratelli²⁾, Bennett³⁾ and Björck⁴⁾, and accepted by Ventris and myself in *Documents*. Since these inscriptions run right round the vase, there is some doubt which is the first word; *re-u-ko-jo* is placed first by Pugliese Carratelli. But Björck was undoubtedly right in regarding the structure of these vase-inscriptions as consisting of (a) a man's name in the nominative, (b) a title in agreement with this name, and (c) another name in the genitive.

Several of the inscriptions are repeated on more than one jar⁵⁾, so that when we find three examples of Thebes III with the text:

a-re-me-ne wa-to re-u-ko-jo

the suspicion arises that *a-re-zo-me-ne*, found only once, is in some way to be equated with *a-re-me-ne*.⁶⁾ Björck, however, comparing the variation of *ta-*22-de-so* (Thebes VII) with *ta-de-so* (VIII), suggested that we have here an intentional variation in family names. He proposed as plausible 'Αρ(ε)μένης and 'Αρεσ(σ)ιμένης. 'Αρμένης would imply a *scriptio plena* of *r*, contrary to normal practice, and *a-re-me-ne* has been usually interpreted as 'Αρε(ι)μένης, a derivative of 'Αρης.

1) *Palace of Minos* IV p. 740. This was the first detailed publication of the Theban inscriptions.

2) *Monumenti Antichi* XL, pp. 603—4 with Plate XXXV.

3) *A Minoan Linear B Index*, p. 14.

4) Pour les inscriptions en alphabet linéaire B peintes sur des vases, *Eranos* LII, pp. 120—4. Björck, however, writes -?- instead of -zo-; it is not clear whether this reflects doubt of the reading, but more likely doubt of the value of sign 20, since he uses the same convention for sign 22.

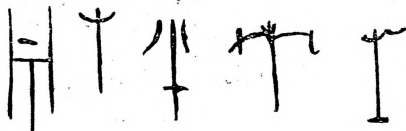
5) E. g. Thebes VI has three exemplars, VII two, X four, XIX two, Tiryns I four.

6) M. Lejeune's suggestion (*Les sifflantes fortes du mycénien*, to be published in *Minos*, note 44), that it is *a-re-me-ne* which needs correction, is disproved by its three examples.

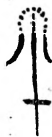
A-re-zo-me-ne has defied satisfactory interpretation.⁷⁾ Björck's 'Αρεσ-σιμένης takes no account of the vowel, even if we accept -σσ- as a possible equivalent of Mycenaean -z-.

I believe that the reading needs to be reconsidered. Unfortunately I have not been able to examine the original, since it is housed in the Museum of Thebes, which has been shut ever since the war. While sympathizing with the great difficulties the Greek Museums have had to face, and have in most cases so successfully overcome, we must hope that it will soon be possible to put on show again the important finds from Mycenaean Thebes.

The inscription on Jar IV is not completely preserved, and parts of eight signs have been restored. The photograph published by Pugliese Carratelli shows clearly that the top of the jar, comprising the spout and the handle, is a modern restoration. It would seem probable that this was the work of E. Gilliéron, fils, whom Evans took to work on these inscriptions in the Museum at Thebes.⁸⁾ We are therefore justified in examining the inscription again to verify the restoration. Shorn of the additions the disputed word appears thus:



There is no reason to question the restoration *-me-ne*; characteristic parts of the signs are clearly preserved; but the third sign has been completed thus:

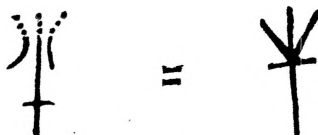


as an unheard-of form of sign 20=*zo*. No parallel can be quoted for the rounded top, and the lines preserved cannot be forced into the normal pattern. The usual pointed top is clearly seen on Thebes XI and XII. But if it is not *zo*, what is it? The strokes at the sides do not continue far enough down to allow us to read it as *si*. I believe that it is a form of sign 28=*i*, in which the oblique strokes of the top are

⁷⁾ Cf. Lejeune, *op. cit.* note 45; O. Landau, *Mykenisch-griechische Personennamen*, p. 26.

⁸⁾ A. J. Evans, *Palace of Minos IV* p. 741, note 4: „Monsieur E. Gilliéron, fils, who accompanied me, copied the inscriptions under my superintendance with great accuracy. One circumstance, however, that must be borne in mind is that, owing to a certain superficial decay, parts of several signs had disappeared.“

more nearly vertical and have become separated from the cross which forms the basis of the sign. Restore then



There is no other example of *i* in the Theban jars by which to verify this restoration; but many of the signs show there slightly variant forms which cannot be paralleled from the more stylized hands of the clay tablets.

The interpretation of *a-re-i-me-ne* and its identification with *a-re-me-ne* are then easy. Variant spellings with diphthongal *i* omitted or represented are well known, and there is a close parallel in *a-re-i-jo* KN L 641. 1, PY An656. 6, *a-re-jo* KN Vc208. Both of these probably represent 'Αρειος, though the longer spelling may stand for a variant form 'Αρηΐος. So here 'Αρει- and 'Αρηϊ- are conceivable alternatives; but there can be little doubt that both spellings represent the same name, a compound of 'Αρης and μένος.

Cambridge.

John Chadwick.