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THE INSCRIBED LEAD TABLET FROM PHALASARNA

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## The Inscribed Lead Tablet from Phalasarna

The Bronze Collection of the National Museum at Athens houses a puzzling lead tablet of Hellenistic date, from Phalasarna on the western tip of Crete, of whose basically hexametric but manifestly corrupt 11line apotropaic text Paul Maas<sup>1</sup> writes: “[It] is for the most part nonsensical. Different kinds of nonsense appear, chiefly the following four.

“1) The Ἐφέσια γράμματα, lines 6ff.: ασκικατασκι, etc.<sup>2</sup>

“2) Other barbaric groups of letters, line 3: πυξυτταιαγαλις; lines 3 and 9: τετραγος, etc.

“3) Greek words and phrases in no intelligible context, line 3: αἰαῖ ἐγὼ δ’ ἔλκει; line 8: μακάρων κατ’ ἀμαξιτὸν αὐδάν, etc.

“4) Greek words more or less corrupt, line 5: δαντων for βάντων or δράντων; line 7: κταδεσ[.]α εδαθη καταλμαξιτον for κατάδεσμα ἐδόθη (or δοθή) κατ’ ἀμαξιτόν, etc.”

He gives the bibliography<sup>3</sup> and notes that “for epigraphical evidence one still depends on the inadequate reproduction in the first edition.” To remedy this, I offer a tracing (FIG. 2) made from the tablet itself,<sup>4</sup> a transcription, and a very tentative text. I do not pretend to remove what difficulties Maas saw, rather merely to provide a firmer basis for their discussion. There are departures from the transcription in E. Ziebarth’s *ed. pr.*; rather than list them all, I reprint (FIG. 1) his “inadequate reproduction.”

The provenance is known only from the man who sold the tablet in 1890 to the Athens Archaeological Society. From Crete no writing on lead of any date, as far as I know, is available to compare for dating.<sup>5</sup> The letter-forms, “epigraphical” as at Derveni and in the early Timotheus papyrus, suggest the 4th or perhaps early 3rd century. Ziebarth: *c.* 300; “dazu stimmt das Jota adscriptum, das, wie es scheint, nirgends fehlt, das ο für ου in αὐτὸ und κήπο.”

Phrases in lines 6-7 (*J-N* below) find parallels on a probably somewhat older inscribed lead tablet from Selinous, which R. D. Kotansky and I shall publish, in the J. Paul Getty Museum.

<sup>1</sup> “Ἐπεικτός,” *Hesperia* 13 (1944) 36-37.

<sup>2</sup> For these see now K. Preisendanz, “Ephesia grammata,” *RAC* 5 (1961) 515-20.

<sup>3</sup> *Ed. pr.*: E. Ziebarth, “Neue attische Fluchtafeln,” *NachrGött* (1899) 105-35, pp. 129-32, no. 26, with ad-vice from R. Wünsch. Reconstruction of text and detailed commentary: Wünsch, “Neue Fluchtafeln,” *RhM* 55 (1900) 62-85, pp. 73-85; C. C. McCown, “The Ephesia grammata in popular belief,” *TAPA* 54 (1923) 123-36 (with English translation). Text and brief notes: D. Levi, “Silloge in corsivo delle iscrizioni metriche cretesi,” *SIFC* n.s. 2 (1922) 321-400, p. 394; *ICret* II (19) 7. Notes: S. Eitrem, “Varia,” *Nordisk Tidskrift for Filologi*, ser. iv 10 (1922) 102-16, p. 115, no. 39.

<sup>4</sup> I made the tracing in the early 1970’s, when Evi Touloupa was director of the Bronze Collection; I am very grateful to her and to her two successors, Petros Kalligas and Roza Proskinitopoulou, for making my work there easy and pleasant. I am also grateful to Anna Panayotou for providing the immediate incentive for these notes and for recently examining the tablet with me, letter by letter; as a result I have now changed the tracing of certain letters in Line 1.

<sup>5</sup> From Lappa on Crete but now lost is a lead tablet of Roman Imperial date, *ICret* II (16) 28, cursing vio-lators of a tomb.

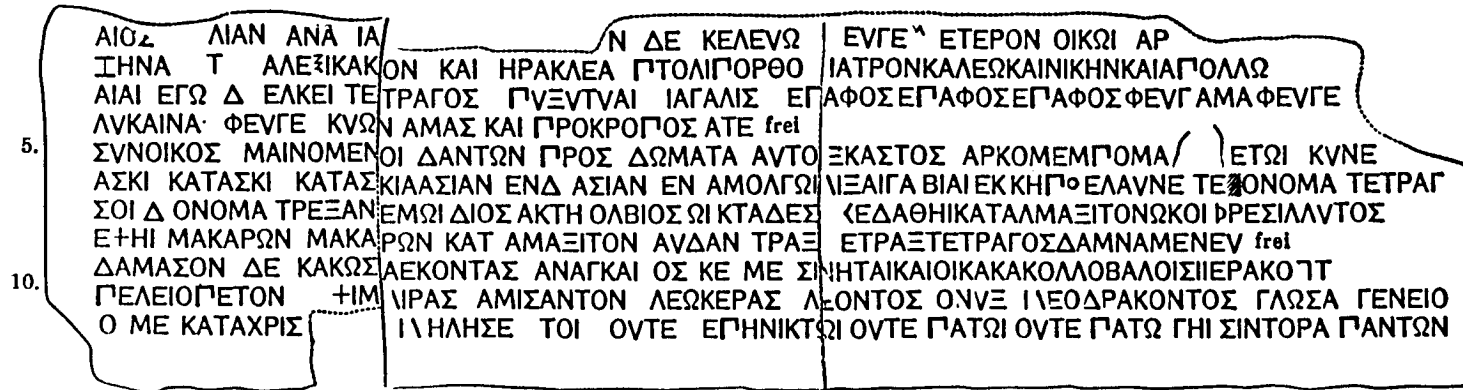


Fig. 1. Ziebarth's "Reproduction"

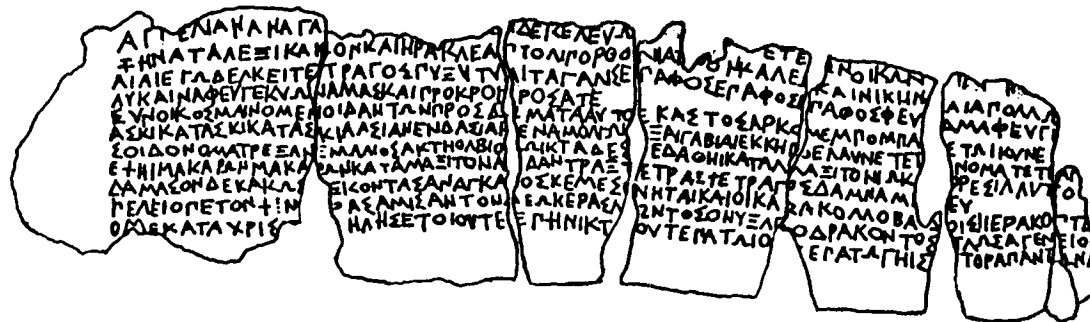


Fig. 2. My Tracing.

(Dotted lines are those that I could not be sure I saw.)

National Museum, Athens  
Inv. X.9355

max. pr. H. 0.037 m.  
max. pr. W. 0.145 m.

Phalasarua  
IVP or early III<sup>P</sup>

- 1 αγγ<sup>a</sup>ελιαναγα[—c.12—]ω<sup>b</sup>νδεκελευω[c.2]. ς[1-2]ετε[.]ωνοικων[1-2]ω<sup>v</sup>ν<sup>d</sup>[.]π[  
2 ζηναλεξακακοικαιηρακλεαπτολιπορθοιατρ<sup>ρ</sup>ονκαλεωκαινικην[.]αιαπολλω[  
3 αιαιεγωδελκειτετραγοσπυξυταιταγαλισεπαφοσεπαφοσεπαφοσφευ[.]αμαφευγ.<sup>f</sup>[  
4 λυκαιναφευγεκωναμασκαπποκροπ<sup>ξ</sup>ροσατε *vacat* [  
5 c<sup>h</sup>υνοικοςμαινομενοιδαντωνπροσδωματααυτοεκαστοςαρκομεμπομπα[1-2]ετωικνε *vac.?* [  
6 ασκικατασκικατασκιασσιανενδασια. ιεναμολγωι[1-2]ξαιγαβιαιεκκηποελαννετ. jει[1-3]νοοματετρ<sup>k</sup>αγ[  
7 κοιδονοματρεξανεμωλιοσακτηολβιοσ<sup>l</sup>ωικταδεσ[.]εδαθηκαταμαξιτονιωκ[1-3]φ<sup>m</sup>ρεσιλλυτο *vac.?* [  
8 εχημακαρωνμακαρωνκαταμαξιτονα[.]δαντραξετετραξετετραγοσδαμναμ.<sup>n</sup>[1-2]ευ *vac.* [  
9 δαμασονδεκακωσ[.]εκοντασαναγκα[<sup>o</sup>?]οσκεμεσινηταικαιοικακακολλοβαδοισιερακοπτε[  
10 πελειοπετονχιμ[<sup>c.2</sup>]ρασαμικαντονλεωκερασ[.]ωντοσονυξλεοδρακοντοσ[?]γλωσαγενειο. p[  
11 ομεκαταχρις. q[<sup>c.3</sup>]ηλησετοιουτεεπηνικτ[<sup>c.2</sup>]ουτεπατωιο[1-2]τεπατωγησ[1-2]τοραπαντωνα[

<sup>a</sup>γγ or π. Unclear whether high horizontal extends to touch top of 2nd vertical or whether anything extended right from top of 2nd vertical. Foot of 2nd vertical slightly higher than 1st. Πs have right legs raised, e.g. πελειοπετον (10), but some not so high, e.g. παντων (11).  
<sup>b</sup>Right-hand end of low horizontal: ε, ζ, ξ, ς, or ω. <sup>c</sup>Traces too worn to draw, compatible with υγ of Ziebarth's [φ]εύγεμ<εν>. <sup>d</sup>E.g. ων, αι <sup>e</sup>Right-hand half of high, small circle: ρ or φ. <sup>f</sup>Full vertical, broken off at right. <sup>g</sup>π or γ. <sup>h</sup>c begun as ε *vel sim.* <sup>i</sup>ν or η; what stands right of vertical slopes less than diagonal of most νs. <sup>j</sup>High horizontal: γ, ε, ζ, ξ, π, or τ. <sup>k</sup>Full vertical, broken off at right. <sup>l</sup>Two left-hand wedges of c, too small to draw. <sup>m</sup>Right-hand half of high, small circle: ρ or φ. <sup>n</sup>Full vertical, broken off at right. <sup>o</sup>Room for narrow letter at most. <sup>p</sup>Vertical, with possible right-hand connection at top. <sup>q</sup>High horizontal: γ, ε, ζ, ξ, π, or τ.

Letters read by Ziebarth but now lost are underlined>.

- A 1 Ἀγγελίαν (?) ἀνά ΓΑ[~ ~ τ]ῶνδε κελεύω  
 B [φε]ύγ[εμ]ν [ήμ]ετέρων οἴκων [~ ~]ῶν [ἀ]π[ὸ - -].  
 C 2 Ζῆνα τ' ἀλεξίκακον καὶ Ἡρακλέα πτολίπορθον,  
 D Ἰατρὸν καλέω καὶ Νίκην καὶ Ἀπόλλω[ν]α.  
 E 3 αἰαῖ ἐγὼ δ' ἔλκει τε τράγος ΠΥΞΥΤΥΑΙΤΑΓΑΛΙC  
 F ἔπαφος, ἔπαφος, ἔπαφος, φεύγ', ἅμα φεύγε, 4 λύκαινα·  
 G φεύγε, κύων ἅμα ςύ, καὶ ΠΡΟΚΡΟΠΡΟCΑΤΕ *vac.* 5 κύνοικος.  
 H μαίνομενοι δάντων πρὸς δώματα αὐτῷ ἕκαστος.  
 I Ὀρκῶμεμ ΠΟΜΠΑ[1-2]ΕΤΩΙ κύνε.  
 J Ἄσκι Κατασκι (κατασκι) Ασσιαν Ενδασσιαν ἐν ἀμολγῶι  
 K [αῖ]ξ αἰγα βίαι ἐκ κήπο ἐλαύνετε τ[ῶ]ι ὀνόμα Τέτραγ[ο]c·  
 L 7 σοὶ δ' ὄνομα Τρεξ <~ ~ ~ > ἀνεμῶλιος ἀκτῆ.  
 M Ὀλβιοc] ὦι κ<α>τὰ δὲ c[κ]εδαθῆι κατ' ἀμαξιτὸν "ἰώ."  
 N Κ[ΟΙ]ΦΡΕCΙΛΛΥΤΟ[*vac.*?] 8 ἔχηι μακάρων (μακαρων) κατ' ἀμαξιτὸν α[ῦ]δάν,  
 O Τραξ Τέτραξ Τέτραγος  
 P Δαμναμε[ν]εῦ *vac.* 9 δάμασον δὲ κακῶc [ἀ]έκονταc ἀνάγκα[ι].  
 Q ὅc κέ με εἰνήται καὶ οἱ κακὰ ΚΟΛΛΟΒΑΔΟΙCΙ  
 R ἱερακόπτε[ρον?] 10 πελειόπετον χιμ[α]ῖραc ἀμικαντον λεωκέραc λ[έ]ωντοc  
 ὄνυξ, λεοδράκοντοc γλῶcαν γένειον.  
 S 11 ὃ με καταχρίcτ[ω]ι δηλήcετοι οὔτε ἐπηνίκτ[ω]ι  
 T οὔτε πατῶι [οὔ]τ' ἐπατωγῆι, c[ῖ]ντορ ἀπάντων. α

A-D "I bid you to flee from these houses of ours.... I call on Zeus the averter of ills, Herakles the sacker of cities, Iatros, Nike, Apollon." E τε τράγος or Τέτραγος, as if the genitive of one of the ἐφέcια γράμματα (cf. Hsch. s.v., ἄσκιον, κατάcκιον, λίξ, τέτραξ, δαμναμενεύc, αἰσιον)? The Cretan nymph Ἀκακάλλιc conj. Eitrem H "Let them run (βάντων conj. Ziebarth, δ<ρ>άντων Wunsch), maddened, each to his own house." J-N Getty: ασκι κατασκι αασ- cιαcια ενδασι[αν προc?] / αμολγον αιξ αιγα βιαι εκ κηπου ελανυετε / τωι δ ονομα τετραγ[ ] / τετροαναρ αγετε τραγ[ ανε]/μωλιος α[κ]τε ηυδατων ιθ[ ] / ολβιος ωι [κα]τα δε cκεδαθ[η]ι κατ αμά]/ξ[ι]το]ν ιω[ ] φραcιναυ[ ] M δέ for δή? "Happy he for whom has been shed, on the highway, (the mystic shout) *id!*" cf. the road at the end of the Hipponian gold text: καὶ δὲ καὶ κυχ(ὰ)ν ηοδὸν ἔρχεα< > hάν τε καὶ ἄλλοι / μύcται καὶ βάχχοι ηιεράν cτείχοι κλε< >εινοί. N φρεccίλυτοc (*hapax*) "mad" conj. Wunsch O Or Τραξ τε Τραξ τε τράγος? Q οἱ: read ὅc? "Whoever hurts me and who...." R ἱερακόπτερον (or πτερυξ), πελειόπετον (evidently from πέλεια "dove"), ἀμικαντον (from ἀ + μικ-, something to ward off hatred?), λεωκέραc (for λευκοκ-?), λεοδράκων *add. lex.* "Hawk's-feather (or -wing), *peleiopeton*, white-horned (?) *amisan-ton* of she-goat, claw of lion, tongue, mane (?) of *leōdrakōn*." *Materia magica*? S ὃ: οὔ Maas, οὔ Wunsch, ὅ<c> conj. Ziebarth, Eitrem δηλήcεται conj. Eitrem ἐπηνίκτωι conj. Maas T ποτῶι conj. Maas S-T, as if continuing Q, "shall not harm me with ointment or with application (so Maas; ghost?) or with drink or with spell (ἐπατ- for ἐπαγωγῆι), spoiler (cίντωρ *add. lex.*) of all things." α a number? The text the first of several?