Problems in Cyprian phonology and writing

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Problems in Cyprian phonology and writing

by Anna Morpurgo Davies

1. It is customary to speak of the Greek dialects as if they were monolithic units defined by a specific set of isoglosses; spacial and chronological differences within the dialect are mostly ignored. We tend to say, for instance, that dialect X or dialect Y preserve the digamma in contrast with e.g. Ionic and Attic which do not. This statement can be understood but is badly formulated — and not only because it uses the word 'digamma' to refer to a phonetic concept. What we want to say is that we have evidence for a [w] semivowel or for its continuation in some phases of the dialect in question; yet what our formulation seem to imply is that [w] is a regular feature of the dialect characterized by a constant distribution throughout the whole of the dialect's life. This form of oversimplification is prompted more by the uneven nature of our evidence than by scholarly perversity; for some periods and places epigraphical evidence is available, for others it is not. Hence the tendency to generalize from the known to the unknown ignoring the possible divergences. A concomitant factor is the current interest in dialect classification and prehistory which calls for the identification of early features with specific classificatory value and for the consequent neglect of the later developments.

1.1. For Cyprian the problems are more difficult than for other dialects. The evidence is extremely discontinuous; the long texts are few and unevenly distributed in a relatively large geographic and chronological space; what we have is often difficult to read and almost always difficult to understand. The clearest texts are repetitive and uninformative; a large proportion of them consists of isolated personal names. Even more important, the script is still imperfectly known and, in general, we are not at all clear about the way or ways in which a syllabic script reflects speech development. In dealing with alphabetic writing we know that we must reckon with a general tendency to preserve the original spelling even when the spoken language undergoes drastic alterations (the history of alphabetic Greek from the classical period to modern times gives witness of this general principle). Yet in a set of syllabic texts we also know what to look for (mistakes, deliberate

1. What follows is based on the known Cyprian syllabic texts. The main edition is that by O. Masson, *Les inscriptions cypriotes syllabiques*, Reprinted with an appendix, Paris 1983 (ICS); the texts and numeration of the *Addenda* (pp. 497–520) are regularly followed here. A few texts are found in separate editions; the Kafkis inscriptions are quoted with the numeration of T. B. Mitford, *The Nymphæum of Kafkis*, Berlin — New York 1960 (NK), but the text accepted is most often that printed by Masson, *BCH* 105 (1981), pp. 623–49. The Rantiali texts follow the edition by T. B. Mitford and O. Masson, *The Syllabic Inscriptions of Rantiali-Paphos*, Konstanz 1945 (R). There are also a few references to T. B. Mitford, *The Inscriptions of Kouklia*, Philadelphia 1971 (IK). I am very grateful to Olivier Masson who sent me parts of his forthcoming edition of Kouklia in advance of publication; the Kouklia texts will be referred to with a number which is either that of ICS or that of the forthcoming Masson edition (if so, the number is preceded by Kouklia). Obviously I have not been able to make use in full of the new Kouklia evidence.
changes in orthography, etc.) if we want to reconstruct the changes in pronunciation which are bound to have taken place. In a syllabic script the problem is different. In a number of instances it is difficult to know whether some spelling alternations are significant or not and even when they are significant it is not always clear to what linguistic level they refer. Consider for instance a series of forms such as e-pe-sa-ta-se (ICS 92, ICS 93 both from Salamis in the District of Paphos, fourth century?), e-pe-se-ta-se (Marion ICS 103, sixth century?), e-pe-se-ta-se (Marion ICS 107, cf. e-pe-[au-sa]? Kafizin NK 252 and e-pl-ta-se Kafizin NK 117, third century). In all instances we may transcribe/translate exercises (or insertions). If so, is the spelling alternation entirely arbitrary or does it correspond to some linguistic fact? If the latter hypothesis is true, does the spelling just point to different syllabifications or is it an indication that the syllabent was differently pronounced in different places and times or perhaps was even lost at some stage? The attestations belong to different periods; is this significant or is it due to chance? When confronted with this specific case any experience we may have acquired in interpreting different alphabetic spellings is unlikely to be helpful.

1.2 So much by way of introduction. I can now formulate my two main queries which are strictly interrelated. First, how much do we know about the linguistic development of the Cyprian dialect? Did it differ from place to place, did it change at different speeds in different places, was it influenced by other Greek dialects or by the koine etc.? Or do we simply have to say that there is no evidence available? Secondly, how clear a picture of such an evolution is given by the syllabic script? From a purely formal point of view (shape of signs, etc.) the script differs to a certain extent from place to place and perhaps from period to period; can we also detect changes or alternations in the spelling which can be similarly linked with specific places or periods? A third question which underlies the earlier two must also be formulated. What evidence do we have that at the time of our inscriptions the language of the syllabic texts represented a real spoken language rather than a fossilized, dead language which kept being written for purely traditional motives? In other words, do we know how "syllabic" Cyprian is comparable in status to e.g. Laconian, Boeotian or Lesbian and not e.g. to the somewhat artificial Latin still used in some modern monumental inscriptions or in the ceremonial speeches of some modern Universities?

A full answer to these questions calls for a full description of the dialect — an impossible task at this stage. In what follows I analyse in detail three specific phonological developments for which a minimum of evidence is available in the hope of partly answering the questions mentioned above. What do we know about the development of the Cyprian [w] semivowel, of the Cyprian final diphthongs of the [oi], [ai], [au] type and of the Cyprian sibilants? First, do our evidence allow us to make any definite statement about the development or otherwise of the sounds in question? Secondly, how much do the possible developments overlap — or contrast — with the developments or patterns of the dialects (Ionic and Attic) which eventually formed the base of the Greek koine?

2. The distribution of <w> in syllabic Cyprian

Together with the other Greek dialects Cyprian must have inherited a [w] sound with a wide distribution; what we want to know is whether this sound was or was not preserved with its original distribution at the various stages of the dialect and whether the syllabic texts reflect any development which may have occurred in speech. In other Greek dialects <F> gradually became more and more restricted in distribution until it eventually disappeared. Phonetically this point is less than change of articulation, i.e. to the sort of change which is most likely to be reflected in the spelling (in the alphabetic texts of some Greek regions the loss of [w] eventually leads to the disappearance of the digamma letter, while the change of e.g. [ph] to [f] is not marked by any spelling shift). In Cyprus the alphabetic inscriptions give no evidence for digamma, but in most periods the syllabic texts tend to use a full set of <w> signs: <wa, we, wo, wi >.

A brief summary of the data follows:

**District of Paphos:**

Old Paphos (with Kouklia)

Sixth century: <w> is generally written when etymologically expected. We have evidence for:

\[ V_1 r w V_2 \] (probably in o-ro-wo-te-mi-se: Orwothenis, Kouklia 4; ta-st-i-o-ro-wo: Tasiarvou, Kouklia 226);

\[ V_1 w V_2 \] (where \( V_2 \) is often \([o]\) or \([a]\), as in pa-st-le-wo-se).

The <w> signs also occur when etymologically unexpected in the -i-oi genitives of -i stems (e.g. \[ kou-ro-to-te-mi-w: Kourothamnos(s), \] Kouklia 24; o-na-st-wo-[se]: Onaios, Kouklia 27, 28; ti-mo-ka-ri-wo-se: Timokharios, Kouklia 38); obviously these are not inherited forms but at such an early period we hesitate between an explanation based on morphological analogy and one based on hypercorrection.

There are at Kouklia two clear signs of loss of [w]: te-mi-sto-na-to: The-
miscinatto(s), Koukia 5 (vs. ta-si-wa-na-to: Tasivinatto(s), Koukia 37) with contraction of earlier [owa]; a-ra-ta-u: Aratau, Koukia 19 (< Arwa) with loss of [w] after [r].

Fifth century: there are few data but we have:

\text{V}_{1}w\text{V}_{2} \text{ in a-ra-wa-ti-to-e: } Aravatios, ICS 18b;

\text{V}_{1}w\text{V}_{2} \text{ (V}_{2} \text{ may be } [a] \text{ as in the pa-si-le-wa: basiléwos} \text{ (of the coins ICS 23, 24), or in mi-ne-wa-toe: Minévios, ICS 23, or may be another vowel as in zo-wa-lí-to: Zébállo, ICS 24);}

Fourth Century: there is evidence for \text{wV}– \text{ and V}_{1}w\text{V}_{2}– but the spelling becomes more inconsistent: cf. Koukia ICS 16: pa-si-le-wa-toe: basiléwos, wa-na-soe: wamassas, ti-mo-ka-ri-wo-toe: Timokaríwos, but also i-ye-[re]-o-toe: (h)ie-réos (< -éwos); ICS 17 wa-na-soe but pa-si-le-o-toe, i-e-re-o-toe.

\text{Rantidi (Sixth Century)}

\text{V}_{1}w\text{V}_{2} \text{ is frequently found; } <w> \text{ represents 'etymological' [w] (V}_{2} \text{ = } [a, o, e] \text{ as in R 26 la-wa-ko: Lawógo; 2 mu-ro-wa-ro-ko: nurowogoro, 11 pi-lo-la-wa: Philolíwos, 16 ta-mo-ke-wa-le-wo: Damokléwos, 39 me-ka-re-wa-soe: Megérwos (?); 9 pi-lo-le-wa: Philokléwos, 10 pi-le-ke-le-wa: Philokléwos, 36 pi-lo-wo-le-ko: Philówgoro, etc.}; a glide after \text{[u]} \text{ (in R 20 e-si-to-toe-nae: Eusínthéos), non-etymological [w] in -wos genitives (R 18 e-si-le-wo-mi-toe: Esofíothemos).

There are two instances of omitted etymological \text{[w]} \text{ before } [ο] \text{: R 24 ke-ito-tra-ti-mo: Kletímno (from Klewro), R 32 sa-o-so-toe: Sásontos (from Sáwro)}. In one word we have a possible instance of lost \text{[w]} \text{ after } [i] \text{ and before vowel: R 44 a-ra (from arwa).}

\text{New Paphos (Fourth/Third Centuries)}

The only clear example of <w> indicates a glide after \text{[u]} \text{ (ICS 2 ka-te-se-ke-wa-toe: kaikesenmáwe)}\text{.}

There are examples of initial and intervocalic etymological \text{[w]} \text{ not indicated in writing: ICS 4 a-na-soe: nansas (from wa-), ICS 1 pa-si-le-o-toe: basiléwos, na-o-ne: nán, e-pi-la-e-i-a: epitídea.}

\text{Other areas of the District of Paphos}

Seventh Century (2): One possible instance of omission of <w> after [i] \text{ in ICS 158 pu-ro: Pur(i)+.}

Sixth Century (2): very few data for \text{VwV}. Examples of inherited \text{[w]}: ICS 121 a-ri-si-lo-wa-na-to: Aristofainat(i)+o(s); 173 ti-we-l-te-mi-wa-toe: Dhmiéite-

7. The evidence for this word in Cyprian and elsewhere is discussed by Masson in R p. 62f.
8. ICS 4 also has a mysterious sequence to-la-ne-si-jó-pa-ri-a which we are not able to interpret.
9. In spite of Mycenaean pu-ro: Parnos and Cyprian pe-ri-wa-ro (ICS 198) we cannot be absolutely certain that the name originally had a [w].

\text{mivos. Non-etymological <w> in ICS 103 ki-li-ka-wi: Killkawi and ICS 173 (-thémivos) quoted above.}

Fifth Century: \text{VwV} \text{ normally preserved as in ICS 79 ne-wi-o ( conspiracy?}; 154e ti-wi-na-soe, 169 (coin) pa-si-le-wa-se sa-ta-si-wa-i-ko: basiléwos Stasiokíwos, Non etymological <w> also in 154b ma-ne-wa-soe, 166 o-na-si-wa-soe, 170 (coin) ti-mo-ka-ri-wa-toe etc.

Omissions of intervocalic <w> are found in the later part of the century. Cf. the coins from Marion (ICS 170b) with pa-si-le-o-toe for pa-si-le-wa-toe, which is also attested ibid. ICS 154 has zo-ka-ri-wa-toe where we might have expected zo-wa-toe and ICS 167d (fifth or fourth century) zo-i-lo. It is not clear whether the genitive ti-mo-ka-ri-wo-toe (instead of ka-ri-wa-toe with non-etymological <w>) of ICS 172a (fifth or fourth century?) should be treated as a morphological arachism ([w] not yet introduced) or a phonetic neologism (loss of [w]).

Fourth Century: Some evidence for wV– and VwV (e.g. ICS 90 wa-na-soe; 155 ka-pu-ro-ko-ke-wo-wa-o-toe; in the second part of the century the presence or absence of intervocalic <w> become unpredictable; in the Marion coins (ICS 171) we have again pa-si-le-wa-toe and sa-ta-si-o-i-ko (ibid.) makes its appearance in contrast with the fifth century sa-ta-si-wa-i-ko (ICS 169); on the other hand ne-a-se (ICS 90) and pa-si-le-o-toe (ICS 91) belong to texts which also have ni-ko-ke-le-wa-toe and wa-na-so-te.\text{10} Even so it is noticeable that the name of the King Nikokleous (late fourth century) is always spelled with ke-le-wa-te; it is conceivable that the use of <w> was in the normal spelling of Nikokleous' name and its omission in the spelling of Stasiokios' name correspond to different linguistic and perhaps political attitudes of these two kings.\text{11}

\text{District of Nicosia}

\text{All areas except Kaffizin}

Fifth Century: Evidence (ICS 217) for \text{VwV}– (wo-i-ko-i, we-te-i, wo-i-etc); \text{wV}– (we-re-ta-se: weôtus); \text{VwV} \text{ (pa-si-le-wa-se, e-i-wa-i, i-e-re-wi-jao-ne etc.),}

\text{<w> as glide in e-tu-wa-wi; ICS 217 non-etymological <w> in ICS 103 po-wo-i-li-wi: VwV}

10. I find it difficult to understand the spelling ke-ae-na-soe in the presumably late ICS 94. For the genitive plural of kókous we expect ke-a-soe: the <w> orthography would reveal a basic uncertainty in the use of <w> such as one finds when a writer tries to arachize.
11. Given the parallelism with Kaffizin (see below), we may want to say that in the District of Paphos initial prevocalic <w> is always written. Yet such a statement would rest on very little evidence; compounds such as ICS 93 ([i]-mu-e-na-soe, 1625 ti-mo-a-ra-ko-toe also speak against it given the normal tendency of the second element of a transparent compound to retain the spelling (and presumably the pronunciation) of the simplex.
12. In spite of Masson's arguments (SSL 78 (1983), 269f), which are far from negligible, I still follow Cowgill's interpretation of e-to-le-kou and e-ka-wa-ko-jou in ICS 217 (Cowgill, Language 40 (1964), 344-65). The elision postulated by Cowgill in edkí is possible if -o-a-ı represents a particle or a series of particles which are treated as enclitics. The change of the expected edokí into edomné is also possible in view of the parallel keniethína.
Fourth Century: Some evidence for wW- (ICS 220 wa-na-se), VWV (ibid., pa-ser-wa-se); ICS 216 non-etymological < w > in sa-na-wa-se etc.). In the first half of the century (ICS 215) no-me-ti-na-one a Greek name which translates Phoen. ibi, presumably no- for an earlier Neewa-. At the end of the century we have an isolated pa-ser-wa-se without < w > in ICS 212 written for the king Shashkates, father of the wa-na-se Stasias of ICS 211.

Kaftaz (late third century)

Here, as elsewhere, the alphabetic texts have no sign of digamma. The syllabic text make use of < wa, we, wo, wi > signs; the words for 'year' (we-te-i, we-te-vo), 'house' (wo-lo-ko-i) and 'alike' (we-li-ka) are always written with initial < w >. We have no instance of internal etymological < w >. The only well attested internal < w > is due to hypercorrection; for the neuter plural of 'other' we find 7 times a-i-la (the early Cyprian form), 5 times a-wi-la with an intrusive < w > which cannot be due to the etymology or to phonetic development, and once a-la, the koine form. If we could assume that at this late stage the spoken form was in fact the [illa] of the koine rather than the [illa] of the local dialect, it would be more understandable that the inherited spelling a-i-la > a-i-la to avoid what looked like a sequence of two vowels in hiatus and to give a more archaic and authentic character to the form. If so a-wi-la would be an example of graphic hypercorrection; one may legitimately doubt that a phonetic sequence [awila] ever existed.

In addition to the very doubtful a-ra; a-ra (< *arwa-) read by Milford in NK 117 b (< -xowm-) and the very frequent e-i-ko-so-tou-twentieth from *ewik-. 

District of Limassol

The evidence is limited but from seventh and sixth-century Kourion we have data for both VWV (ICS 177 add. e-pi-ro-ro-wo) and VWV with etymological < w > (e.g. ICS 176 e-te-wo-to-ro, pa-ser-wa-se etc.) and non etymological < w > (ICS 178 i-i-wa-te-mi-mo-se). The late fourth century ICS 182 also from Kourion has intervocalic < w > (e-ke-i-i-to-se) in the syllabic text though not in the alphabetic version (E3A0xwo) but also ko-ri-t with loss of [w] after [r]. In the fourth century the Eteocyprian texts from Amathus use the signs < wi, wo, wa > and their renderings of Greek names make use of < w > (ICS 195, 196: sa-to-wa-na-ka-so-se; a-ra-to-wa-na-ka-so-se-o). On coins we find pu-ro-wo-so which may be a rendering of the Greek Perusos (ICS 198, beginning of the fourth century) but also zo-i-mo (possibly < zowo-; ICS 199, early fourth century). A newly found coin (ICS 197a; sixth century) has the name wo-ro-i-ko with initial [w-], but round the middle of the fourth century (ICS 203) the abbreviation ro must stand for *Poleos, the more modern form of the name. The Eteocyprian evidence sought to speak for a [w] in the spoken language.

District of Larnaca

Again the evidence is poor. VWV with both etymological and non etymological < w > is found in the sixth/fifth century (ICS 254a: zo-wi-to-se, zo-wa-te-mi-mo-se, -te-mo-se). In two fourth-century metrical inscriptions (ICS 261, 264) < w > is found initially before vowel, intervocally, and in one instance as a glide (we-po-, we-i-se, e-re-axa, e-wo-re-ke-se-a). In ICS 264, if the written initial < w > had not been effectively pronounced, this would have given rise to two hiatuses and to a possible elision, but the fact need not be terribly significant because hiatuses seem to be allowed elsewhere (ICS 264: ta-a-to-ro-po-i; ta anthropoi, with four syllables). More interesting are the well known spelling o-wo for ob in ICS 264 and the glide in e-e-re-se-i-a-se (ICS 261); would the first of these two forms (or indeed both forms) have ever been written if the < w > signs did not correspond to a [w] pronunciation? Some texts from Golgoi — probably late — have a mixture of forms with and without initial < w >: ICS 275 a-wo-se; ICS 276 e-l-e-l but we-i-i-na; ICS 285 ti-o-se (D3a) but wo-i-no; in Pyla ICS 306 < w > is altogether absent: o-i-ko, na-o-ve, possibly to-e-na-i, ko-i-ki-si(?).

District of Famagusta

Vw- is written in the early (sixth century?) ICS 318: we-ro-se, wo-i-no, etc., where we also have a unique [dwv-] in ti-wi-ya-ka-si-a-se; dviyoucase; VWV- and VWV in the middle of the tablet (ICS 327: fifth century?): rv-ri-ya-ne, zo-wa-ke-re-; ti-wa-ne-ka-o, ti-we-i-pi-lo, ti-wi-i-no, etc. The coins of Salamis have some interesting forms: < w > is regularly used as a glide from the sixth to the fourth century (ICS 319 e-wo-re-te-o-se, 324 e-wo-te-o-se). In the fifth and fourth centuries there are numerous instances of pa-ser-wa-se (es) with < w > (ICS 322, 323, 324, 325 etc.) but more strikingly, the spelling pa-ri-
le-o (-se) is also found in the early fifth century (ICS 322) and in the fifth/fourth century (ICS 325). The fourth century offers te-a-ke-le-o-se for the expected -ke-le-we-o-se (ICS 311).

**Texts of obscure origin**

VvW is found in a number of texts (sometimes of uncertain date), including the early (seventh/sixth century) ICS 354 with zo-wo-le-mi-se. Some omissions of < w > are interesting. ICS 346 and 347 are attributed to the seventh century and Masson reads in the identical text the name e-te-o-ta-ma: Eteodama. The interpretation is not generally accepted; if correct it would provide an exceptionally early instance of omission of intervocalic < w > (e-te-o- for e-te-we-). Also early (ca. 500) is the omission of < w > in ICS 359 a-ri-sl-to-ke-le-o. Even more striking is the seventh or sixth century zo-sl-ke-re-wo-to-se (ICS 353) with non- etymological < w > vs. the sixth-century etymologically correct pu-ko-le-o-ne (ICS 355).

**Egypt**

In these texts, mostly from the fourth century, WvV and VvW are well represented (ICS 379 e-wi-te, 432 wa-na-ka-ko-ra-se, 383 sa-wo-le-we-se, etc.; non etymological < w > in ICS 428 o-na-wo-se, 429 ta-mo-wo-se). However, a man from Salamin signs himself as mejo-le-ke-le-e-se (ICS 393) and at Karnak we have zo-ko-ra-te (ICS 423a vs. 399 zo-wo-ko-ra-se), ta-mo-ke-le-o-se (ICS 431), ne-o-se (ICS 438c), mi-ko-la-o-se (ICS 439), ne-o-pl-ri-yo-se (ICS 452), ti-mo-ke-le-o-se (ICS 453 c). In a digraph inscription (ICS 427) pi-le-ko-le-o-se mi-na-o-se corresponds to the Greek Φιλοχριστος Τιμός and the etymologically correct pi-ko-le-e-o-[ne] ti-ma-[o]-se of ICS 422.

2.1. The development in the writing of < w > is almost straightforward. The early texts have some instances of post-consonantal < w >: once after [d] (ICS 318), more frequently after [r]. < w > - is also found once. In the early texts prevocalic initial < w > and intervocalic < w > are found where etymologically expected. However the pattern is not entirely regular. As early as the sixth century we have rare instances of the use of a simple V sign for an expected postvocalic Wv or even of contractions which presuppose the earlier loss of intervocalic [w]: cf. at Koukla Τιθεμιστάττα (s) (<-istowam-), at Rantidi Kleotinā and, Stasa(n)to(s), in a scarab of unknown origin Aristokle(s). If Eteodama was rightly recognized in ICS 346 and 347 we may have a seventh century instance of the same phenomenon. The instances of unetymological < w > may also be relevant. When in the third century texts from Kaffrin we find a-wi-la alternating with the expected a-i-la and the koine-like form a-la, we are obliged to assume that < w > is due to hypercorrection. A < w > must have been introduced in the word perhaps as a pseudoaeharchism, on the model of those other words which were probably pronounced without [w] but written with < w > or of those forms where < w > and [w] could be optional in both spelling and pronunciation. Yet when in the sixth and then fifth century we find genitives in -ivos or -amos (and perhaps -omos) with the corresponding datives in -iwa, -awm etc. should we think of a similar explanation? Masson (BSL 78 (1983), 271-4), who favours this view, also assumes that the infinitive io-wo-na-li found at Idalion (ICS 217) owes its < w > to hypercorrection. If this was so, it would prove that at an early stage the inherited intervocalic [w] tended to disappear, i.e. it was not regularly pronounced. However, there are other possible explanations based on morphological analogy (for the nouns) and on the development of glides (for the infinitive). In other words it is not possible to build too much on these forms. More important is perhaps the early (seventh/sixth century) zo-sl-ke-re-wo-to-se on a Neo-Babylonian seal (ICS 353) recently discussed by Masson (loc. cit.). We do not expect a Φ in kpefων, and, a Masson points out, this form seems to be a clear instance of hypercorrection, though we cannot altogether exclude the influence of -kaφων.16 On the other hand an important fact speaks against hypercorrection; the frequent hiatuses caused by the loss of prehistoric *s between vowels (e.g. in the -eσos genitives of *s-stems) are never solved with the introduction of < w >.

16. A suggestion tentatively put forward by C. J. Raujgh in the discussion which followed the presentation of this paper; see below.
The data are more limited than for <w> but some facts may be mentioned. The first evidence for an <a-i> or <o-i> dative probably belongs to the sixth century: cf. Rantidi ICS 51: st-su-ta-ka-i and perhaps Marion ICS 103...ki-li-ka-vi to-i ka-te-ke-ne-to-i: Kalibwai tōi kastignizői. The short datives in <a> or <o> first appear with certainty in the first part of the fifth century.17 cf. at Itallion ICS 218 ta-ta-to-na ta-i-ne-to-i: tā Athibnā tōi(1) in Edaloni, where the two first words are the relevant one; we do not expect for graphic reasons a spelling to-i-de for the fourth and fifth word (cf. note 20). Also to the fifth century but probably to a somewhat later period belongs Marion ICS 167:...ta-ma-ti-te e-pe-se-te-te / ka-ta-te-ti-te ... tā māri epestēse ka(9) tō patiri. However, the bulk of the evidence for the short forms belongs to the fourth and third centuries. It looks as if the original long forms were at some stage replaced by, or used in alternation with, the short forms which arose from the loss of the second element of the diphthong. Presumably this was a phenomenon of the spoken language which was never fully reflected in the written language. We must ask whether it is possible to reconstruct how the change happened. We need first to look at some data and it may be convenient to offer (tentative) figures for the various attestations. The tables that follow distinguish between instances of datives in -a-i and -a of datives in -a-i and -o; they also distinguish between the forms of the article (A) and those of other words (W). The somewhat arbitrary choice of geographical headings is determined by the erratic distribution of the data.

We first notice the remarkable distribution of one part of the attestations: the short o-forms are much more frequent in the District of Larnaca than elsewhere. This is due to a number of (probably) fourth or third-century inscriptions from Golgoi and Pyla which also show other ‘modern’ or peculiar characteristics: omission of <w> in writing, some instances of ka for kase, other omissions of final -se, some less normal formulas (u-ta-ka, su-ta-ka vs. the ‘regular’ i-ta-ka-i) etc. The relaxation of the normal rules may be due to the late date or the nature of the texts and their origin. However, if we take together all the data which we have (excluding the very late inscriptions from Kafizin), some interesting proportions emerge. I have tabulated them in Table 2 and Table 3 below.

The striking feature is the frequency of short forms in the article in contrast with other words. This supports the hypothesis that the loss of [i] started with, or at least was first consolidated in, the prothetic forms and from there spread to orthotonic words. In two of our early examples the short forms of the article occur before a word which begins with a consonant18 but the following table speaks for the hypothesis that the final [i] was first lost before words which began with a vowel.

3. The -o-i and -a-i datives in syllabic Cyprian

The second question concerns the spelling of the original diphthongs [oi] and [ai] (or more probably [oi] and [ai]) in word–final position; the forms with which we are concerned are those of the datives singular of the first and second declension and we shall concentrate on them. Differently from e.g. Mycenaean, syllabic Cyprian indicates the second element of an i-diphthong with an <i> sign and we normally find spellings like tu-ka-i for the dative of tu-ka, Att. ῥικνυ. However, there are also occasional spellings with final -o or -a instead of the expected -o-i and -a-i; this is taken to prove that the Cyprian dative of the thematic and -a- inflections was characterized by a long diphthong which at some stage lost its second element (but cf. below note 23). If this is correct, we shall want to know when the [i] was lost and whether and how the writing was altered as a result.

17. In the sixth century there is also a possible reading ak before a vowel; see below note 18.
TABLE 1
Distribution of ‘long’ and ‘short’ instances of the dative singular

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DISTRICT OF PAPHOS</th>
<th>-o-1</th>
<th>-o</th>
<th>-e-</th>
<th>-o</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Paphos</td>
<td>2 (1W, 1A)</td>
<td>1 (A)</td>
<td>1 (W)</td>
<td>1 (W)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Paphos (+ Rantidi)</td>
<td>2 (1W, 6A)</td>
<td>4 (1W, 2A)</td>
<td>6 (4W, 2A)</td>
<td>4 (A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other areas</td>
<td>16 (1W, 6A)</td>
<td>3 (1W, 2A)</td>
<td>5 (1W, 2A)</td>
<td>4 (A)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DISTRICT OF LIMASSOL</th>
<th>-o-1</th>
<th>-o</th>
<th>-e-</th>
<th>-o</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 (W)</td>
<td>1 (A)</td>
<td>1 (A)</td>
<td>1 (A)</td>
<td>1 (A)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DISTRICT OF NICOSIA (excl. Katharo)</th>
<th>-o-1</th>
<th>-o</th>
<th>-e-</th>
<th>-o</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (W)</td>
<td>2 (W)</td>
<td>6 (2W, 4A)</td>
<td>19 (1W, 10A)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DISTRICT OF KYRENIA</td>
<td>-o-1</td>
<td>-o</td>
<td>-e-</td>
<td>-o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (W)</td>
<td>1 (A)</td>
<td>4 (3W, 1A)</td>
<td>10 (2W, 6A)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DISTRICT OF LARNACA</td>
<td>-o-1</td>
<td>-o</td>
<td>-e-</td>
<td>-o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 (7W, 1A)</td>
<td>10 (4W, 6A)</td>
<td>54 (30W, 24A)</td>
<td>29 (9W, 20A)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 66 (47W, 19A) | 10 (4W, 6A) | 54 (30W, 24A) | 29 (9W, 20A)

TABLE 2
Ratios of the instances of ‘short’ and ‘long’ forms of dative singular

- -o-1 datives. Total 76: -o 10 (ca. 13%), - -e- 66 (ca. 87%)
- -o-1 datives. Total 83: -e 29 (ca. 35%), - -e- 54 (ca. 65%)

TABLE 3
‘Long’ and ‘short’ datives and the ‘Word’/‘Article’ distinction

- -o-1 Total 66: Words 47 (ca. 71%), Articles 19 (ca. 29%)
- -o-1 Total 54: Words 30 (ca. 55.5%), Articles 24 (ca. 44.5%)

BUT
- -o-1 Total 10: Words 4 (40%), Articles 6 (60%)
- -o-1 Total 29: Words 9 (31%), Articles 20 (69%)

19. This is based on Meister’s readings for - -o-1 in -ta-i of ICS 47, a Rantidi inscription now lost.
20. I have counted e -a-ka-la of ICS 85 though it occurs before a word which begins with [t] (i-e -a-ke-t), because it is immediately followed by a word divider.
21. I have not counted the instances in which -a or -o occurs before a word which begins with [a] as in ICS 217 ta- -o-1 in -a-ri, -a-ri, -e- -a-ri, in -a-ri, -a-ri, and in ICS 218 to -a-ri, to -a-ri etc. It is unlikely that the scribe would have written a double - -o-1 sign even if this was warranted by the pronunciation.
22. The three occurrences include an instance of - -o-1 in -a-ri with crisis of -a-ri and Amplitudeski.

TABLE 4
‘Short’ and ‘long’ forms of the article before vowel and before consonant

| - -o-1 | 1 (W) | 19 (100%) | Before consonant: 19 (100%) | Before vowel: 0 |
| - -o-1 | 6 (W, 1A) | 6 (W, 2A) | 4 (W, 1A) | 2 (33.33%) | Before vowel: 4 (66.66%)
| - -o-1 | 24 (W, 1A) | 17 (6 W, 2A) | 7 (ca. 29%) | Before vowel: 7 (ca. 29%)
| - -o-1 | 20 (1W, 1A) | 6 (30%) | Before vowel: 14 (70%)

In other words of the 43 ‘long’ forms of the article ( - -o-1 and -o-1) ca. 83.7% occur before consonant, while only ca. 16.3% occur before vowel. Of the 26 ‘short’ forms of the article ( - -o-1 and -o-1) ca. 30.8 occur before consonant, but 69.2 occur before vowel. It is a clear indication that the loss (probably phonetic, and certainly graphic) of final - -i in the datives occurred first in the preverbal proclitics. We find support for this view in the spelling -a- a- u- a (Salamis ICS 92: fifth century?) for the expected (h)ai auto; here the final - -i of the nom. plural dipthong is exceptionally not written before a word which begins with a vowel.23

3.1. I have left for the end the evidence from Kaisifin which is particularly intractable, partly because the readings are often uncertain and partly because an exceptionally large number of article endings seems to be lost. However, the data we have do not lead us to observe in the third century inscriptions from Kaisifin the same connection between short forms and article which we found elsewhere. Indeed in Kaisifin it is not easy to find any pattern which accounts for the presence of either short or long forms, just as no pattern emerges in a study of the - -n/ -h contrast in the alphabetic texts. The figures are quoted in Tables 5-7 below:

TABLE 5
‘Long’ and ‘short’ datives in Kaisifin (late third century)

- -o-1 Total 10: Words 4 (40%), Articles 6 (60%)
- -o-1 Total 29: Words 9 (31%), Articles 20 (69%)

23. From this example it emerges that in preverbal position the second element of an - -i diphthong could be lost even when the diphthong was short. Consequently we cannot be too certain that the diphthongs of the dative singular of the first and second declensions started as long diphthongs — though this is still the most likely hypothesis. Scheler in A. Thum, A. Scherer, Die griechischen Didakse, 2nd ed., vol. 2, (1959), 1587, suggests that we must distinguish in Cyprus between datives in - -a-1, - -a-1 with - -a-1, - -o-1 alternants in - -a-1, which appear e.g. after preposition and do not alternate with short forms. Obviously this cannot be excluded but we have no real evidence to support this view (which postulates a remarkable and unique archaism); on the contrary in two instances at least (ICS 85 e -a-ka-la and ICS 218 a-ka-ka-la) we find short forms where we would not expect an inherited dative.
The figures are not always large enough to be significant but the general impression is, once again, that no criterion emerges which may explain the distribution of long and short forms. It may well be that with Kafzin we have reached the end of the road, as far as the datives are concerned, that is to say it is conceivable that by the third century the diphthong was completely lost in speech even if the official spelling retained it. The scribes adhered to the official criteria but naturally made mistakes; since these were simply due to negligence they reveal no special pattern nor was there a pattern which could be revealed. In the case of \(<w>\otimes or [w] the koine influence must have favoured the loss of the sound and of the grapheme(s); no koine alphabet uses digamma and the \(<w>\) signs of syllabic Cyprian had no match in the alphabet. Therefore if a few words at Kafzin are still written with initial \(<w>\) this is no doubt due to spelling conservatism within the framework of syllabic Cyprian. On the other hand for the final diphthongs the alphabetic inscriptions in koine favour a spelling with final -t. What did the koine speakers at Cyprus pronounce we cannot know; at some stage they too must have lost the last element of the diphthong — but this did not influence the official spelling (though obviously mistakes happened). Consequently the last writers of the syllogary were probably induced by their experience of alphabetic spelling to write a final \(<i>\) in the dative singular, even if they did not pronounce it when they spoke the dialect.

4. The Cyprian Sibilants

This is the most intricate of the three problems under discussion. The Cyprian syllogary has in its 'regular' form signs for \(<sa>, <so>, <si>, <se>, \) and \(<su>\). These values are guaranteed by obvious Greek equivalences and there is no reason to challenge the transliteration. As expected, \(<se>\) is used in final position in correspondence with a Greek final -\(\eta\). Yet an etymological [\(\eta\)] value of the signs does not guarantee an actual pronunciation with a sibilant; this can be assumed as the simplest hypothesis only if there is no contrasting evidence. For Cyprus, however, some contrary evidence exists; I rehearse it here in summary fashion.

1. There are sporadic instances of omission of final \(<se>\) where this would be expected to mark e.g. the ending of a nominative singular in -\(\eta\) (e.g. \(p\)-\(l\)-\(o\)-\(la\)-\(wo\): \(P\)-\(l\)-\(o\)-\(la\)-\(wo\)).

2. There are a few instances of words where the expected internal \(<sv>\) sign is replaced by a simple \(<v>\) sign (e.g. \(p\)-\(o\)-\(ro\)-\(ne\)-\(o\)-\(i\): phonetic\(\(\theta\)\)).

3. There is one form where the expected initial \(<su>\) has apparently been replaced by \(<u>\) (\(u\)-\(n\)-\(u\)-\(ka\): \(s\)-\(u\)\(t\)-\(u\)-\(ka\)).
4. In one Eteocyprian inscription (ICS 195) the Greek name Oneasitimos is written o-na-í-ti-th-mo with < i > instead of < si >.

5. In two Phoenician inscriptions (ICS 215, 216) an intervocalic [s] in a Greek name is rendered with < η > or < h > (mnuhm vs. ma-na-se-se; ivhtys vs. a-la-st-o-ta-ra).

Finally, in addition to the epigraphic evidence there are a number of glosses (Hesychius, etc.) which omit an expected final ές (καρπός καρποφόρος, κατάμιζαν μάνδαλος τῶν θεῶν) or an initial σ- (γεωμέτρης συμβάλλει, αγένει σχημάτισθε) or an intervocalic ές- (δάφνος ἄφθασαμεν, δῆμος, ἄφωνος ἀποκλίνομεν, cf. σύμπα). By contrast other Cypriotic glosses write the expected < σ > in all these positions.25

4.1. At the end of last century Hoffman,20 who collected part at least of this evidence, concluded that in initial prevocalic position [s] was lost in Cyprian at some stage, but he was unable to decide whether this happened after the date of our inscriptions (which normally write initial < s >) or before the period of the glosses or at an earlier stage not revealed by the etymological spelling of the inscriptions. Internally he assumed that intervocalic [s] had changed into [h] at an early stage, though the spelling mostly preserved the traditional forms; this change would have then been extended to final prevocalic [s] which was also aspirated and then lost. Bichelt,27 who to a great extent followed Hoffman, concluded that intervocalic [s] was aspirated in Cyprian (the spellings with < s > had merely historical and etymological value), while final [s] was either aspirated, when followed by a vowel, or assimilated to the consonant which followed. The internal development of [s] is explained as due to the Lacanian and Argive component of the Cyprian population. Scherer,28 who was also in substantial agreement, the development of intervocalic [s] to [h] and then its complete loss was seen as relatively late but already present in the fifth century B.C.; final [s] was either lost (at a relatively late stage) or assimilated to the first consonant of the following word. Rüdiger Schmitz29 summarizes what is obviously the commune opinio: "esser und intervok. "sa-" auf den Inschriften fast durchweg erhalten, in den Glossen aber > h00 . . . ; dieser Zustand ist wohl so zu interpretieren, dass die Glossen eine jüngere, umgangssprachliche Lautform und die Inschriften historische Schreibung zeigen. Im Auslaut meist geschrieben ("se-), doch mehrfach, sogar vor vokalischem Anlaut, unbezeichnet. Dabei ist Assimilation an konsontantisch Anlaut annehmen aufgrund von Positionslänge auf der Versinschrift ICS 264: ka-po-ti / κωντοθέν - νς κως ην ζλ ιν 117 ".

4.2. It may be worthwhile to look at the evidence more closely. The glosses have little new to tell us; as Hoffmann knew, they include forms with both < s > written in initial, intervocalic and final position and < s > omitted. We may feel tempted to give credit only to the instances of < s > omission but we must admit that the data are on the whole unsatisfactory: how can we explain this alternation of forms with and without sibilants? How exact a record are they? And, above all, to what does the final speech register do they belong? The inscriptions are more helpful — all the more so because the epigraphic data have increased not only since the time of Hoffmann but also since the time of Scherer and Schmitt. In particular we are now fortunate in having two sets of early inscriptions from the Paphos area (Rantidi and Kouklia) and one set of clearly very late texts from the Nicosia District (Kafkian).

One fact is confirmed: in the vast majority of cases the inscriptions write < n > for an expected [s] in initial and internal positions and < s > for an expected final [s]: this applies to all parts of the island and to all periods. If we consider for instance the texts from the district of Paphos (ICS 79-175), excluding New Paphos, Old Paphos, Kouklia and Rantidi, we find more than 130 examples of final < s > (for etymological or pronounced [z]) vs. less than 15 examples of omitted final < s >. Internal and initial < s > are written in all instances. Other areas offer similar proportions. Yet the cases of omission call for further analysis and classification. The summary that follows offers approximate figures only because too many instances are doubtful in either reading or interpretation; the selection of geographical headings is often arbitrary because the distribution of the evidence is arbitrary.

District of Paphos

The expected internal and initial sibilants are always present and indicated with < s > signs. A few more detailed points follow.

Old Paphos (including Kouklia): at least 15 examples of omitted final < s >, including one example (ICS 17) of < x > for < s > (ta-thoxa-sa-se-x) in the fourth century. Of these, nine examples belong to Kouklia and the sixth century (ICS 12a, 13a, 15a, 15b, 15c, 15d, 15f, Kouklia 7, 10); three to the fifth century (cf. ICS 18b and the coins ICS 23, 24); three to the fourth century (ICS 10a, 11c, 17). Moreover a silver bowl found at Kourion but probably originating from Paphos (ICS 180a = IK 217) is dated by Mitford to the seventh century B.C. and contains the sequence a-ke-se-to-ro to-po-pa-si-lo-wa-se with the final < s > omitted in the genitive "Asklepiopou."31

25. For the glosses, in addition to the discussion by Hoffman quoted below (note 29), see the book by K. Harizianou, Kyprian Íkoumata (1977) and the paper by J. Karageorghis in this volume.
30. Cypriotic sibilants have also been discussed at length by W. F. Wyatt, Glotta 42 (1964), 170-82 in the course of a discussion about the origin of Arcaico-Cyprian rôc, and by Verena López, Kûk and xû, (1981), 27ff. in the same connection. Wyatt is only concerned with final sibilants and concludes that they were aspirated or lost before vowel and were resonant in all areas, but were preserved before stops.
31. I ignore here ICS 15e e-po-pe-ro given the difficulties of interpretation.
**District of Limassol**

Kourion: regular use of <s> signs initially and internally but one or two possible examples of omission of final <s>: ICS 179 (seventh or sixth century; ku-po-ro-ko-ti-na); ICS 183a (? sixth century; doubtful readings by Misford) in addition to normal final <s>.34

Amathus: an Eteocypriot inscription of the fourth century (ICS 195) has o-na göre-ti-na-ri and o-na-sa-ko-ra-no-ti which obviously renders the Greek Oanisthmos. Cf. also ibid., o-na-sa-ko-ra-no-ti.

**District of Nicosia**

All areas except Kafizin: initial, internal and final sibilants are mostly written with <s> signs but the Greek / Cypriot <s> is rendered with <h> or <a> in Phoenician texts of the fourth century (Tannassos ICS 215, 216: minuy, laytvs vs. Cyprian na-no-se-e, a-la-st-o-ta-). In absolute final position <s> is normally written but ICS 251 (Ildalion, ca. 500) has ki-li-ka-sa-me for the expected *ki-lu-ka-sa-me: Killkasa me. ICS 217 (Ildalion, fifth century has two instances of ta(-t-kera-ne) (vs. three examples of ka(-a-t); ka(a-ti); ka(s) anti (vs. 21 examples of ka(-a); one instance of po-e-ko-ne-no (vs. three instances of po-se-e). In the fourth century ICS 220 has ka-e-ta-li-o-ne for the expected ka-se e-ta-li-o-ne.

32. ICS 81, 84, 86, 88a, 121, 139, 150, 164, 167a, 167b, 167a, 167b, 167a (7, 175.

33. In ICS 164 (Poleis, sixth century) the same word (the only one in the inscription) is written in syllabic and alphabetic script — with <s> in the syllabic (ke-st-kera-ter) and with <s> in the alphabet (ke-st-kera-ter).

34. See above for Akestraia (s) in a seventh-century inscription found at Kourion but probably originating from Paphos.

35. For to-t-kera-ne in ICS 217 see now K. Struck in Festebald Richter (1980), 263-7 who follows Meister and Richter in interpreting the first element of the compound as a- (Gr. a) and rejects the suggestion that to- is a neuter plural. To the list of omitted sibilants in the district of Nicosia one could add two doubtful examples of <a sa> for expected [ain] in ICS 239 and 265.

**Problems in Cypriot Phonology and Writing**

Kafizin (third century): some 54 instances of final <se> in full words vs. 1 or possibly 2 omitted <se> (NK 169, 288). One example of ta (NK 266 ta-e-pi) vs. three examples of ta-se (and one example of e-se); nine examples of ka (always before a vowel) vs. seven examples of ka-se (mostly before a vowel).

There are eight certain (NK 136, 175, 216, 266, 267, 268, 288, 303) and four very uncertain examples (NK 132, 159, 176, 224) of o-na-a-ko-ra- vs. six examples of o-na-sa-ko-ra-se (NK 117, 118, 169, 190, 198, 275 (?); alphabetic Opanos [Atanian], except for one doubtful Opanos in NK 298), one instance of a-pa-i-re-i (NK 266) instead of the expected a-pa-i-re-st (alphabetic diphthong).36

**District of Larnaca**

Normal writing of initial and internal sibilants except for ICS 264 (Golgoi: fourth century, verses with e-pi-ta-i-se: epista scis; po-ro-ne-o-i; phoremoi). and possibly ku-me-re-na-i: -o(s) (??).37 ICS 266 (Golgoi) te-tu-ka: (s) jan tuk-ha(l) may offer the only example of omission of initial <s> in the syllabic texts.

Final <se> is normal but there are threeominatives with omitted final <se> (ICS 266 before consonant, ICS 267 and 304 before vowel); a fourth (ICS 282) belongs to the sixth century. ICS 304 also offers a prescriptive genitive in -o for the expected -o-se. In addition three texts of the last four centuries offer three or four examples of ka instead of kase (ICS 261, 264, 306) and one of we-po-me-ka (for weges mgea) (ICS 264).

**District of Famagusta, texts of obscure origin, Egypt**

Initial and internal sibilants are written in the normal manner. The district of Famagusta has two instances of omitted final <se> (ICS 317, 331), the texts of obscure origin have five (ICS 337?, 341?, 352b, 359, 360).38 and among the texts from Egypt, the fourth century inscriptions from Kamik have one example of omitted final <se> (ICS 4536) and two examples of ka (for ka-se) before a vowel (ICS 443a, 450). A very few, and sometimes doubtful, instances of omitted <se> occur in the Egyptian texts (ICS 387?, 405, 418?, 420?).

4.2. The epigraphical data are unevenly distributed. The evidence for the loss of initial prescriptive [sa] is so meagre (one form in the District of Larnaca) that we have to concede defeat. From now on I shall ignore the problem of the fate of initial sibilants, since the only data we have are provided by the glosses.

36. NK 114, 133 (?), 159, 173, 252, 266, 267, 270, 275; ka-se in NK 117, 118, 133, 216, 218 (twice), 252, 266 (twice), 303 (twice).

37. This reading of ku-me-re-na-i as an infinitive but as a third person plural kameira(h)i was proposed by G. Neumann, Kedros 13 (1974), 146-53 at 149 esp. 149, but has recently been rejected by Sevastianou, Festebald Richter (1986), 43fff., on metrical and other grounds.

38. Meister in his unpublished dissertation quoted above (note 30, p. 41) suggests that the mysterious te-tu-ka in ICS 346 and ICS 347 (seventh century) could represent the genitive of the proper name Telokhia preceded by the genitive of the article οτι, thus giving us the first two examples of omitted <ː>s. The suggestion is interesting though we do not expect an article before the proper name in this context. Probably we shall have to suspend judgement.
Clear evidence for the loss or aspiration of internal [s] exists only in the Districts of Nicosia and Larnaca and uniformly belongs to the fourth or third centuries. Elsewhere and at other periods we have a few instances (starting in the fifth century but mostly in the fourth century) of normally proclitic particles (kas, tas, pos) which when joined to a following word may be written without the expected final < se >.39 Do these particles provide evidence for the treatment of internal [s]? This has often been taken for granted, but it might be better to suspend judgement: appositive elements share some of the features of full words and some of the features of bound morphemes. In what follows I shall temporarily ignore the particles in question. Most of the instances of omitted final < se > in independent words belong to the early period; the texts of Rantidi and Kouklia are rich of nominatives written without a final < se > which form a high proportion of the attested nominatives. Sporadic early instances of omitted final < se > occur also in other districts (Limassol, Nicosia, Larnaca). Other scattered examples are later.

How should we interpret this evidence? We want an answer to a series of questions. First, what was the distribution of [s] and/or [h] in internal position? Secondly, did Cyprian preserve word-final [s] or not? Finally, we shall want to know how to interpret the spelling alternations between ker and ka-se, ta and ta-se and po and po-se.

4.3. We may start with the internal sibilants and their fate. It has often been noted that the structure of the syllabary makes it likely that when people started to write Greek in Cyprus the sibilants were still preserved as such. Another relevant fact may be the reference to Unasagus, king of Lidir, in the seventh century list of Assarhaddon (cf. ICS 229). Obviously the name is that of Onasagoras, king of Leder in the district of Nicosia, and at the time he was heard as containing a sibilant.40 On the other hand the fourth century data prove conclusively that by that date at the latest in the District of Nicosia and in that of Larnaca (and possibly elsewhere) some phonetic alterations had taken place. The Phoenician rendering of < se > as < h > and of < si > as < hy > speak for a change of internal [s] to an aspirate or fricative of some type; the parallelism with the Lyconian and Argive developments suggests a change [s] [h]. Spellings without any consonant (Etteopic o-na-i-ti-mo, Cyprian po-ro-ne-o-i, etc.) may be due to the absence in the syllabary of a series of < hv > signs or to the (later) complete loss of the sibilant. So far there is no reason to disagree with the standard view. Where, however, this may be at fault is when it assumes that this development concerned the whole of Cyprus from a very early date, involved all internal sibilants or at least all intervocalic sibilants, and was responsible for the subsequent loss of final [s] (Hoffmann, loc. cit.). This can only be maintained if we assume that the omission of written final < s > in e.g. the ev genitive of the article is evidence for the loss of intervocalic [s] but here the risk of circularity is evident. We explain the loss of final [s] in the proclitics as an example of loss of intervocalic [s], while we use the proclitics to give evidence about the loss of intervocalic [s]. In fact, as we have seen, all independent evidence is evocative for the loss of intervocalic [s] to the fourth century or later. Moreover, in the fourth century all the evidence we have for the loss of internal [s] concerns an intervocalic [s] before a front vowel of the [i] or [e] variety (here too I deliberately ignore the evidence of the proclitics). In view of the scarcity of our data, this may be due to chance, but it is striking that the Etteopic of Amathus (ICS 195) while rendering with o-na-i-ti-mo the Greek Onasitos (1.5), expresses with o-na-so-ko-ra-ni or o-na-so-ko-ra-ni (line 2), i.e. with a sibilant sign, the Greek Onasagoras. If so, it is at least conceivable that the change VSV > VH was in progress at the time and was more established before front vowel. In other words at this stage we have no evidence for a general aspiration of all intervocalic sibilants; geographically, it is conceivable — though obviously uncertain — that the change is limited to parts of Cyprus only; distributionally the change may have been conditioned by the following vowel. On the other hand the inscriptions of Kafizin, at the end of the third century, point to a change of [s] to [h] and then presumably to zero in all intervocalic positions (o-na-ko-ra-ni, a-pa-i-re-i). Most often the glosses with omitted intervocalic [s] are generally attributed to Cyprus but in two instances they are said to belong to the Salaminians (District of Famagusta) or to Paphos. Obviously neither do we know their date nor do we know their reliability, but at any rate they provide some evidence for a late spread of the loss or aspiration of intervocalic sibilants in the whole island.

In conclusion all that can be stated is that in the fourth century and in some parts of Cyprus there was a change of intervocalic [s] to [h] before front vowels had occurred; presumably this implies that in those parts of Cyprus the spellings < si > and < se > for intervocalic sibilants did in fact correspond to a pronunciation with an aspirate. However, we are not entitled to say that at an earlier stage the < s > signs also corresponded to aspirates rather than to sibilants.

4.4. Hoffmann (op. cit., 204) argued that the first change to take place was the shift from intervocalic [s] to [h] and that the shift to [h] of final [s] was bound to be later, though he also suggested that perhaps the change of [h] to zero occurred first in final position and then intervocally. It is not clear that this view can stand. As we have seen, we now have rich evidence for the omission of final [s] in writing in the sixth century texts and there is at least a possible example of seventh-century omission. It is of course conceivable that we are simply dealing with faulty spellings but the 'mistakes' are too frequent for this interpretation to carry credibility. If so, we should think in terms of a loss or an alteration of the final sibilant as early as the sixth century (and conceivably earlier). There is no objection in principle to a weakening of final consonants which is not matched by a similar weakening of initial consonants. This is for instance what happened in Sanskrit where [s] before pause turned into an aspiration while internal [s] did not undergo the same

39. For two possible examples of < ta > for expected [tas] (the genitive of the article) before the fifth century see above note 38.
40. It is also true of course that syllable Cyprian uses < s > signs to render Phoenician < s > and < s >; cf. e.g. O. Masson, M. Sanyeri, Recherches sur les Phéniciennes à Chypre (1972), p. 796, 81.
change. It is only at a much later period that some modern Indian languages also changed intervocalic [s] into [h]. Yet a problem remains: how do we explain that in the sixth century final < se > is far more frequently omitted than in the later periods? Should we not expect the later stages to be marked by a greater inconsistency in spelling?

It would be useful to know whether the change of final [s] to [h] or zero was a general one (at least in certain areas) or occurred only under certain conditions. The six examples of omitted final < se > in Rantidi occur before pause or before another vowel but, with one exception, the examples of written final < se > also occur before pause or before a word which began with a vowel. At Kouklia < se > was omitted before vowel or pause but also, in one instance, before a word which began with a stop, if the interpretation is correct (Kouklia Τα-το-το-και or Πήσι-κϊνε-σε). In some Paphian coins of the fifth century (I.CS 23, 24) the gen. pa-si-le-wo without final < se > occurs once before mi-te-wo-se and once before zo-la-li-o-se. We may want to suggest on general grounds that in sandhi final [s] was aspirated and possibly lost before pause or before vowel, and perhaps even before liquid or nasal, but kept e.g. before stop — through even this cannot be proved on the basis of actual written data. However, do we have the right to assume that in the historical period some word-final sibilants were kept as such, i.e. were neither aspirated, nor lost altogether? The answer is probably positive. First we have no instance of the omission in writing of final < se > after a consonant and we have a coherent writing of < xe > in word-final position; this should point at least to the preservation of [s] after consonants. Moreover, the fourth-century Eclectic names a-rα-wa-na-ka-so-ko-ο-σε and a-sα-to-wa-na-ka-so-ka-ο? (Amathus I.CS 196a, I.CS 195b) must both be renderings, or derivatives, of the Greek name Αρατανθό-να; the final [s] is indicated. Secondly, we have seen, in the early fourth century (I.CS 216) the Phoenician equivalent of the Cyprian a-la-sl-o-to. [Alasia-] or [Alahyota-] is hyas where the final < s > is the [s] of the nominative which has become an integral part of the borrowed form. The spelling with internal [h] confirms that the Phoenician form was closer to the spoken than to the written form of the name (since otherwise we would have *Skys); if so, the Phoenician < s > speaks for the existence of a final postvocalic [s] in parts of the early fourth century Cyprian. Similar evidence is provided by the Phoenician names of the two different kings Damnikos of Laphiotes who were active round 500 and 390 respectively; they are written on coins as DMWNKS and DMMNKS respectively. Thus it is likely that, starting from the sixth century or earlier, the Cyprian equivalent of a Greek s-nominative could end in [h], [s] and perhaps zero. On general grounds it is also likely that the original distinction was determined by phonetic environment, sandhi phenomena and conceivably sociolinguistic facts. Some speech registers may have found more acceptable than others a change in the pronunciation of final postvocalic sibilants. Different regions probably had different developments but the written form of the language eventually favoured a spelling with final < se >. We cannot be certain about the spoken language but it is also possible that in actual speech the loss of [s] was arrested because of a combination of factors such as the importance of those environment where [s] was preserved, the need for a clear form of the nominative or genitive ending, the prevailing of a more conservative pronunciation, and eventually the influence of the koine. In other words, rather than admitting with most textbooks that final [s] begins to disappear in the fourth or at the earliest in the fifth century and that after that the < se > spelling has only etymological value, I should prefer to assume that the aspiration of final [s] started in the sixth century or earlier but did not lead to a generalized loss of the consonant which marked the nominative; in some instances [s] was preserved and this could lead to the restoration of the final consonant even where it was threatened. Obviously we shall never know the exact details but we ought to allow for a more articulate picture than the one which is normally offered. If we want a parallel we may think, for instance, of what happened in archaic Latin where -s was partially lost and then restored.

Does this mean that we should take the < se > spelling at its face value and assume that it corresponds in all instances to a spoken [s]? This is obviously unlikely. Not only must we reckon with spelling conservatism (which would lead to writing a consonant even when no consonant is pronounced), but we must also consider the possibility that after the change of final [s] to [h] in some environments the syllabogram < se > came to have a double value [s] and [h]. Phonologically we must postulate either a neutralization of the [s]/[h] contrast in final position or merely an allomoronic contrast between [s] and [h]. In either case we may suspect that the < se > spelling, which, differently from e.g. < xa > or < so >, was associated with final position, came to make duty for both the [s] and the [h] phone, though not for the absence of consonant resulting by the possible loss of [h].44 Support for this suggestion may come from a brief Voni inscription (I.CS 25) dating from ca. 500 which contains the abnormal sequence kl-li-ka-a-me for the expected *kl-li-ka-so-me, i.e. Κλάκες μέ. The enclitic με calls for a spelling without the usual final < se >; if the real pronunciation was [Klikan me] it is possible that

41. Cf. e.g. J. Blech, Indo-Aryan from the Vedas to modern times, (1965), 71f.
42. If the rule was correct this could give us some interesting information about the pronunciation of the < xe > to sign (Ez2) rather than [ed]? But generalizations from different sandhi positions can never be excluded.
43. Cf. Masson and Senyoor, op. cit. (in note 40), 97f.
44. Obviously this does not imply that the omission of final < se > indicates a zero ending, i.e. an absence of both [s] and [h]. The early texts may well have omitted < se > when in fact the words in question were pronounced with final [h]. In other words just as the syllabogram < se > may indicate [s] or [h] in final position, its omission, i.e. the syllabogram < o >, may indicate [h] or [h]. Another problem, which may be relevant, concerns the writing of proclitic elements in Cyprian. As was shown by Hermann long ago, those which end in a nasal are treated as a part of the word which follows (to-το-το-το-το-το-το), while those which end in a sibilant are treated as separate words and the usual < se > convention for the writing of final [s] may apply (to-so-e-so-so-so-so); cf. Masson, I.CS 697. With earlier references and see also for some further suggestions A. Morpurgo Davies, Folk-linguistics and the Greek Word, in Phonetik (1957) 169-175.
the scribe deliberately rejected a spelling with *-se-, because this could only have been interpreted as pointing to [s], and selected an alternative rendering where the \(<\ a\ >\) sign either stood for [ha] or simply indicated that there was a morphological boundary between name and pronoun (cf. in the same inscription the unusual ka-ta-se-ta-se for kateretseus). Whatever the value of \(<\ se\ >\) we might have expected fewer occurrences of final \(<\ se\ >\) if the change [s] > [h] > 0 had regularly taken place. What seems more likely is that, as I suggested, a series of causes led to the reintroduction of [s] or at least of [h] from environments where the sibilant had been lost— a change which must have been favoured by the influence of the koine when this began to be seriously felt.

4.5. Finally we must turn to the appositives. The problem is caused by three words: the conjunction xec, the genitive sing. of the feminine article τας and the preposition / preverb xec. Starting with the fifth century we find spellings without the final sibilant; the appositive is always joined in writing to the following word. We can rehearse the data. The district of Paphos offers one fifth-century example of ka for ka-se before stop (ka-ta-po-ri in ICS 167) and three examples of ta for ta-se; an example in ICS 175 (ta-o-na-sl-ka-po-ro), a fourth-century one in ICS 17 (ta-wa-na-se-se), and a non-dated one in ICS 167a (ta-po-ri-ti-a). In the district of Nicosia the early examples all come from the fifth century (Paphos bronze tablet ICS 217: one occurrence of ka-ττι; ka(s) antl (vs. 23 occurrences of ka-se, eight of which are prehistoric), two occurrences of ta-wa-ke-ro-ne: ta(s) u(ττ) keleth (τ) vs. 12 instances of -se forms of the article, including one instance of prehistoric genitive ta-se and two instances of ta-se acc. plural), and one occurrence of the compound po-e-ko-me-no vs. three instances of (pre)consonantal po-se. In the early fourth century, again at Idalion (ICS 220) we find ka-e-ta-κο-το-ne (see also note 35 above). In the last three texts of Kafruz, where normally final [s] is written with \(<\ se\ >\), we have the largest concentration of ka for ka-se; the form occurs 9 times always linked to a word which begins with a vowel. Yet the spelling ka-se is also found: 9 times before vowel, once before consonant and once before a lacuna. The article ta for ta-se is found once in the sequence ta-e-pi; ta-se is written 3 times, once before vowel, twice before consonant. The district of Larnaca offers the late fourth century three examples of ka for ka-se (ICS 261, 264, 306) and one possible example of krasia of kas (ICS 306); in the area there is no evidence for ka-se as such but we have evidence for ta-se at a much earlier stage (ICS 262; cf. also ta-ka-pa-i in the late ICS 261). The instances of ka have been much quoted because two of them occur in metrical or semi-metrical texts: in ICS 261 ka-me-ne-se-ta-se-ne has been differently understood (ka me estasan; ka mei estesam etc.) but in all likelihood it contains a form of the kas conjunction which is scanned short though it occurs before a consonant. On the other hand in ICS 264 ka-po-ti, i.e. ka(s) puthi, is scanned long, as is in contrast with the ka-me of ICS 261) the second syllable of the sequence we-po-me-ka, i.e. wepo(s) mega. It is often assumed that in these last two instances the original [s] is simply assimilated to the following consonant ([kappoth], [wemporpha]) but it is equally conceivable that a [kah] and a [wpomph] pronunciations are responsible for the length. Finally in the fourth century Karnals offers two examples of prehistoric ka for ka-se (= ICS 443a, 450) vs. one instance of prehistoric ka-se (ICS 453 b) and two instances of preconsonantal ta-se (ICS 438, 449).

So much for the data. I mentioned earlier that the short spellings of ka-se, ta-se and po-se have been used as evidence for the loss of intervocalic [s]. Yet it is striking a) that the 'short spellings' do not always occur in intervocalic position, b) that the first clear evidence for the aspiration or loss of [s] in internal position belongs to a later period than that in which we find ka, etc. By contrast, as we have seen, the aspiration or loss of [s] in word-final position goes back to the sixth century or earlier. It is then reasonable to wonder whether [kas], [tah] etc. owe their short forms to the loss or aspiration of final [s] which they shared with orthographic words. The proclitics, as we know, may retain phonological characteristics of their own but normally end by falling into step with orthographic words. Thus, while e.g. ex and oxe keep their final stop in special sandhi conditions and escape the general Greek loss of word-final stops, forms like τον, ρυ show in the spelling a final -v which appears in lieu of -ν for an inherited [m], as it does in the final position of orthographic words. Consequently we should not be surprised if a change which affected the final sibilant of orthographic words also impinged onto xec, τας and xec. In other words, we expect for these forms too an early change to [kah], [tah], [phs] in accordance with the same rules (special sandhi circumstances, etc.) which concerned the other words. Yet it is also typical of the proclitics that they are more prone to sandhi changes in their final consonants than orthographic words. In the specific case with which we are concerned we may want to postulate, for instance, that [kah] was more likely than an orthographic word to lose the final [h] when followed by another word formed of vowel + aspirate consonant + vowel. A similar loss of [h] may have occurred when its presence gave rise to an impossible cluster in conjunction with other consonants at the beginning of the following word. If so, at an early stage a form like [kas] may have alternated not only with [kah] but also with [ka]; nor can there been any strong morphological pull towards the restoration of final [s] as happened e.g. for the inflectional endings. Moreover, while the influence of the koine probably led to the restoration of final [s] or \(<\ s\ >\), when this had a morphological function, for [kas] / [kah] in particular the loss of the koine may have favoured the selection of [ka].

46. Both for the data and for condition which I find easy to accept cf. Lüttel, op. cit. (in note 30), 30f.

47. Two points are interesting: on the one hand the 'official' forms of these words (i.e. those accepted in writing) end with a dental nasal according to the general rules for word-end; on the other hand one has the impression that the epigraphic evidence offers far more sandhi forms of the article in the accumulative of the preposition έβα etc. than of full orthographic words.
My conclusion is that the spellings of the *ka*, *po*, *ta* type are best explained as instances of the change of final [s] to [h] in special sandhi conditions followed in some instances, though not all, by a total loss of [h]. It is interesting to notice that in the Idalion bronze tablet, which is both conservative and extremely accurate in its spelling, of the five instances of ‘short’ proclitics four belong to contexts where the expected [h] (from final [s]) would have been followed by a syllable which began with an aspirate stop: *ta-wa-ke-ro-me* (twice) and *po-e-ko-me-no.* It is also worth observing that in the district of Nicosia to which Idalion belongs the only earlier example of loss, or more probably aspiration, of final [s] is provided by a full name: *ki-li-ko-a-me* in ICS 251 (ca. 500, see above).

5. Conclusions

The three test cases we have analysed have yielded different results. I asked at the beginning whether we could trace development and local variation in the dialect of Cyprus and whether the syllabic script could be as informative about language change and differentiation as its alphabetic counterpart. The history of [w] has been the simplest to reconstruct; we are obviously dealing with an instance of phonemic loss, something that apparently both syllabaries and alphabets seem to be able to indicate. The evidence we have has shown for the various districts of Cyprus a tendency to lose [w] first in postconsonantal position, then (probably) in intervocalic position, and finally (we may postulate) in initial prevocalic position. The spelling is obviously not consistent; some blatant examples of conservatism may well be due to sociolinguistic causes; this may be stated with some confidence for the name of the King Nikokleus the First. The instances of lost [w] go back to the sixth century or even earlier; it would be risky to assume that at an early stage the loss had happened in full everywhere, but once again it probably happened gradually until the influence of the koine contributed to eliminate the sound from the phonemic inventory and the < w > signs from the list of the syllabograms in normal use.

In tracing the history of final diphthongs in the dative we are again confronted by a set of phenomena which can be equally well expressed by a syllabary and an alphabet. Here too the evidence seems to show some consistency and allows us to trace a line of development, even if perhaps not the expected one. The diphthongs may have been simplified first in the article and the odds are that from the article the monophthongized endings spread to orthographic words. In the article it seems likely that the change first happened before a word which began with a vowel. Given our one example of shortening of the ɪ-diphthong in the nominative plural, we may wonder whether it is necessary, as is normally assumed, to reconstruct original long diphthongs for the dative singular, though the question cannot be answered with any certainty. The change started—or at least started to leave traces in the written evidence—only in the fifth century and spread in the fourth. It is likely that by the third century it had become established but here the koine may well have played a very ambiguous role; on the one hand the alphabetic model in its official form must have favoured the writing of the second element of the diphthong, on the other hand we may surmise that the form of koine which reached Cyprus had also lost the second element of the long diphthongs. At Kafizion the ɪ-t ɪ signs are sometimes omitted, but no more so or rather slightly less than in the rest of the Cyprian inscriptions. The old pattern for which the monophthongized forms are more frequent in the article does not apply any more. One can guess that at the time of Kafizion the diphthongs had disappeared from normal pronunciation but with the support of the alphabet the traditional spelling had reasserted itself. Thus while the influence of the koine in the case of ɪ-t ɪ led to the completion of a change which had begun much earlier and to its expression in the written language, the final diphthongs of the dative singular the effect of the koine may well have been that of favouring the traditional spelling.

In discussing the development of the sibilants we are partly kept back by the incapacity of the syllabary to indicate a sound such as the [h] which we assume was the first outcome of a threatened [s]. Nevertheless here too we can reconstruct some linguistic developments. It does not seem necessary to argue that through sheer graphic conservatism the syllabary continued to indicate in writing sibilants which had long since been lost in speech. We should rather assume that starting with the sixth century (or earlier) final sibilants were weakened to [h] in some sandhi positions but not in others. This may have had to a steady process of restoration— at least in some forms of speech—which guaranteed the survival, even if partial, of the sibilants until the arrival of the koine which must have provided phonic and graphic support. The proclitics, however, were more likely to lose a final [h] in sandhi, which may explain why we have so much evidence for a *ka* byform of *ka*-se.

The intervocalic sibilants also tended to become aspirates but the change started at a later stage and at the beginning at least did not even involve all intervocalic sibilants. Probably here too when the change was about to become fully established the model of the koine led in the opposite direction. If these conclusions are right they may inter alia give us some understanding of the date and register of the glosses which the grammarians have preserved.

The dialect, in conclusion, shows clear signs of phonetic development and the syllabic script is capable of indicating this development. Development of the type we have been describing is typical of a spoken living language and these data put us to the suggestion that Cyprian was a fossilized dialect used for official purposes only. It is a satisfactory conclusion to reach but not all questions I have asked at the beginning have been answered. We are still in the dark about the linguistic differences which must have characterised the various parts of ancient Cyprus. What we need is more data and I may perhaps end with two wishes. The first is that we may find more inscriptions from various parts of Cyprus; we know far more about the district of Paphos than e.g. about the district of Limassol or that of Nicosia. The
second is that we find more texts from New Paphos. Why New Paphos in particular? The point is that from the few data we have we gain the impression that New Paphos, of which we know that it was founded in the late fourth century, was linguistically (or graphically?) a very forward-looking but also very settled and non-heterodox town. New Paphos is consistent in not writing and presumably not pronouncing intervocalic and initial [w]; it dutifully writes -a-i diphthongs as such and does never omit final <se> — not even in the proclitics. In other words it seems to have adopted a form of official language and spelling which was probably compatible with the koine, which was not conservative (see both the omission of [w] and the presence of i-ye-re-se), but which also made use of a number of older spellings (<se>, <a-i>) probably not because they were old but because they were more in tune with the graphic or phonetic model of the new Greek. 49

49. Addendum. The final version of this article had already been sent to the editor when through the kindness of Professor Carlo Consani I received a copy of his book Persistenza dialettale e diffusione della koine a Citera. Il caso di Kafriz, Pisa 1986. Consani's book will have to be regularly consulted for what concerns the Kafriz data; I have not been able to make use of his data in my text but I may refer here to some of his most relevant observations. The writing of <w> at Kafriz is discussed at pp. 51-4 with the interesting observation that e-ι-le is written with (one exception) in digraph texts (alphabetically and syllabic) while the hypercorrect e-w-t-le occurs in texts which are only syllabic. For the writing of the final diphthongs see pp. 43-45 and also the discussion of vocalic quantity at p. 27 ff. The syllabants are discussed at pp. 47-9 where Consani suggests, inter alia, that ka-se-l-le-se-to does not call for an interpretation ka se-ko-ko-ko-ko but rather may stand for ka se-ko-ko-ko followed by ko-ko-ko with <i> written for <e-i> (cf. the numerous instance of <ei> / <i> oscillations in the koine).
late stage of the morning it is not easy to answer far-reaching and highly theoretical questions about the whole of one’s own principles and beliefs. The first question is perhaps somewhat easier to answer and an answer may be relevant to the second question too. Very roughly what I believe is as follows. Recent studies of sound change in progress, lexical diffusion, etc. have shown that the onset of sound change is by no means a tidy process. There is a great deal of confusion, hesitation, inconsistency etc. I stress this point because if in an ancient language it so happens that changes are recorded at this stage, all that we modern scholars are able to notice is a great deal of confusion; no clear pattern emerges. However, I also believe, in a quasi-dogmatic fashion, that, after this initial period of confusion, regularity is mysteriously restored, a new pattern emerges, and we can establish (a posteriori) some sound laws. Why this happens is the great mystery of historical linguistics. On the other hand if it did not happen and if the sound laws did not have some validity we would never have been able to reconstruct Indo-European, and I believe in the validity of our reconstructions (or of some of them). Consequently if I am asked: “is it the case that the linguistic picture offered by Cypriot is chaotic from the point of view of the sound laws we would like to establish?”, I must reply: “Yes, the picture is chaotic but this is not necessarily disturbing”. I must ask to be excused from producing a proper answer to the second question because this would call for a discussion of the whole relationship between phonology and morphology which would lead us too far. It is of course possible that the evidence I have discussed has some theoretical relevance but unfortunately it is too scrappy to allow us to build too much on it.

Prof. Mason: Juste un mot pour dire que je suis d’accord avec Anna Morpurgo sur tout ce qu’elle a dit. Il y avait un point qui m’avait un peu inquiété et que M. Willetts a déjà souligné, c’est le point 3c sur la question de la langue vivante ou de la langue morte. Heureusement dans l’exposé oral, nous avons eu la réponse. Il s’agit bien, en laissant de côté le problème de Kaïzin qui est particulier, d’une langue vivante. Si nous examinons le matériel très varié fourni par les inscriptions syllabiques, nous ne voyons pas seulement les inscriptions des rois, il existe toutes sortes d’inscriptions privées, d’épitaphes, etc. J’ajouterai un dernier point qui me semble assez démonstratif. Lorsque, dans les premières années de l’Ancien, des soldats chypriotes, c’est-à-dire des mercenaires chypriotes, sont allés en Égypte, ils se sont trouvés stationnés pour des raisons historiques qu’on peut éclaircir, près d’un petit temple, qui est situé devant le très grand temple de Karnak en Egypte. Ces mercenaires chypriotes ont eu quelques jours de repos ou d’attente. Ils étaient là et ils avaient du temps, ils cherchaient à s’occuper et sur les murs extérieurs de cette chapelle, notamment sur le mur Est, ils ont trouvé le moyen, probablement en prenant des échelles ou en grimpant les uns sur les autres, de rédiger de nombreuses inscriptions. Il est...
alors assez caractéristique que sur ces graffites, il n'y en ait que trois ou quatre qui soient alphabétiques. Un seul est syllabique et alphabétique à la fois et tous les autres, c'est-à-dire plusieurs dizaines sont syllabiques. J'imagine que ces mercenaires n'étaient pas de grands intellectuels, mais ils parlaient le dialecte chypriote et ils ont écrit ce dialecte en inscriptions syllabiques tout à fait cohérentes et souvent très bien gravées. Je crois donc qu'au début du IVe s. av. n. ère, nous voyons des exemples frappants d'un dialecte absolument vivant.