

CHAPTER I: THE STELAE

I.1 THE DISCOVERY

When Ana Maria Bisi (1967: 23ff) published her book on the Punic stelae in the late 1960's, thousands of tombstones from the cemeteries of North Africa, Sicily, and Sardinia had been discovered. In her search for their origin, Bisi (1967: 23ff) surveyed the evidence from the Orient where this Punic tradition is likely to be rooted. Lebanon which was expected to provide most antecedents to the Punic stelae, yielded very meager results: only five monuments, without clear archaeological context, had been found until 1967 when Bisi's book appeared: these are one stele fragment from Sidon which Renan brought back from his *Mission* (1864: 366), one stele from Burj esh-Shemali (Chéhab 1934), a *naos* from Sidon at the Louvre Museum (Aimé-Giron 1934), one in the Istanbul Museum (Hamdy Bey and Reinach 1892: 44-45; Mendel 1914: No 92), and, finally, a *naos* fragment from Sidon in a private collection (Dunand 1926: 127). They correspond to stelae 53, 54, 55, 56, and 57 respectively. Two other monuments in the Louvre Museum have been only recently published (Gubel 2002: Nos 72, 73). Ledrain had listed one of them, AO 4904, in his catalogue (Ledrain 1888: 54 No 114) but it went unnoticed until its recent publication. They correspond to stele 58 and 59 respectively. All these monuments belonged to a specific category of tombstones, typical of the Persian period in Phoenicia (for dating see below).

The situation began to slightly change at the end of the 1960's. When Roger Saidah (1966) excavated a large Iron Age cemetery in Khalde, near the Beirut International Airport, south of the capital, the first Phoenician funerary stele (stele 2) was found *in situ* (Saidah 1979: 215). Four hundred tombs were excavated on this site but only one single stele was found. Nevertheless, this was the first of a long series of similar tombstones, which were found during the last forty years and which form the core of the funerary monuments studied in this volume.

The excavations of Roger Saidah on the site of Sidon-Dakerman, in the southern suburbs of Sidon, yielded according to the excavator (Saidah 1969: 122), an impressive number of tombs from the Late Iron Age but there again, only one stele was found. This is stele 3, which was first published by Teixidor (1982: 233-234). The archaeological context of the above-mentioned stelae was never properly described and discussed.

It is the accidental discovery of the al-Bass cemetery in Tyre that drastically increased the number of Phoenician funerary stelae from Lebanon. The clandestine excavations of this site towards the end of the 1980's flooded the antiquities market with large numbers of stone stelae (Seeden 1991a and 1991b, Sader 1991 and 1992, Lemaire 2001). Of the hundreds stelae that were looted in this illicit digging, only thirty-nine can be traced: twenty-seven are now part of the Directorate General of Antiquities (hereafter DGA) collection in Beirut and Beiteddin, and twelve are in the Hecht Museum collection in Haifa (Lemaire 2001).

The looting of the Tyrian cemetery made the Lebanese DGA aware of its existence in the area north of the Roman-Byzantine necropolis. This moved the authorities to organize rescue excavations to find the archaeological context of the looted material and to prevent a planned building on the site (Aubet *et alii* 1998-1999; Aubet 2004: 5). In 1997, a rescue excavation directed by Maria Eugenia Aubet in cooperation with the Lebanese DGA, led to the

discovery of the first stelae *in situ*. Eight were found and published (Sader 2004). The successful results of the 1997 season encouraged the excavator and the Lebanese authorities to continue work on that promising site. In 2002, excavations yielded another two stelae *in situ*, one of which is inscribed (stele 51). It is the first inscribed Tyrian funerary stele found in a regular excavation.

During that same year, the Lebanese-German excavations on the site of Tell el-Burak, south of Sidon, uncovered an inscribed funerary stele (stele 1) (Kamlah and Sader 2003). The stone had been re-used in the city wall but its discovery clearly indicated the existence of a nearby cemetery where more tombstones are likely to be found.

The total number of this category of Phoenician stelae, which belong today to Museum collections is fifty-two and they are all studied in this volume.

This type of Phoenician stelae is however not restricted to Lebanese territory. Long before any such Phoenician stele was found in Lebanon, Palestine had yielded similar funerary monuments, some of which were published by Delavault and Lemaire (1979). Recently, more stelae from Akhziv, the daughter city of Tyre, were published (Cross 2002) while several others are still awaiting publication (Prausnitz 1970 and 1982). They present, as might be expected, striking similarities to the Tyrian stelae and they certainly belong to the same category of finds.

Finally, three Punic tombstones (Teixidor 1977: 268; Sader 1993; stele 60: unpublished) were accidentally discovered in Lebanon but none of them has an exact provenance and a clear archaeological context. They all come from the area of Tyre. Two of them belong to the Lebanese DGA collection (stele 61 and 62) and one (stele 60) was lost to the antiquities market. They form a specific category of Iron Age funerary stelae, different from the previous two.

This brief review of the Phoenician stelae discovered in Lebanon underlines the discrepancy in the distribution of the material, both quantitatively and geographically. While two very large cemeteries, Khalde and Sidon-Dakerman, yielded only one stele each, the Tyrian cemetery of al-Bass yielded large numbers. There is no obvious reason for this discrepancy: all three necropolises have the same character: they were large popular Iron Age cemeteries. Khalde and Dakerman were even longer and more extensively excavated than al-Bass and one cannot ascribe the absence of finds to limited excavations. Tell Rashidiyyé (Macridi Bey 1904; Doumet 1982) yielded several Iron Age tombs but no stele while Akhziv was very rich with those finds. A partial explanation to the absence of stelae in some of the large cemeteries may be suggested in the light of the recent evidence from Tell el-Burak where a stele was found re-used in the city wall: the hewn stones may thus have been re-used in later buildings. Another reason may be that most stelae were probably roughly hewn blank stones given the modest condition of those buried in these cemeteries. As pointed out by Bonatz (2000: 156) such roughly hewn and blank stones were the almost exclusive type of funerary stelae used in the Iron Age cemeteries of Hama and Tell Sukas. The Tyrian cemetery of al-Bass has also yielded fragments as well as complete examples of blank stelae. This evidence again supports the assumption that stelae were either re-used in later buildings or were simply overlooked by the excavators.

In any case, and in spite of the increasing number of discovered stelae, we are still very far from the thousands that were found in the Punic world, where the tradition of erecting both votive and funerary tombstones seems to have been more generalized and more systematic.

The second discrepancy is at the geographical level: all the discovered stelae come from South Lebanon and north Palestine. Khalde is so far the northernmost site to have yielded funerary stelae of the Iron Age. Not one was found in or north of Beirut in spite of extensive excavations at Byblos and recent intensive excavations in the capital. Even the northern Phoenician kingdom of Arwad did not yield any stele in spite of the fact that hundreds of Iron Age tombs were uncovered on its former territory (Elayi and Haykal 1996). Is the absence of funerary stelae in North Phoenicia a mere coincidence due to the haphazards of archaeological discovery or are we in the presence of regional differences in burial traditions? More evidence is needed before a final answer is given to this question.

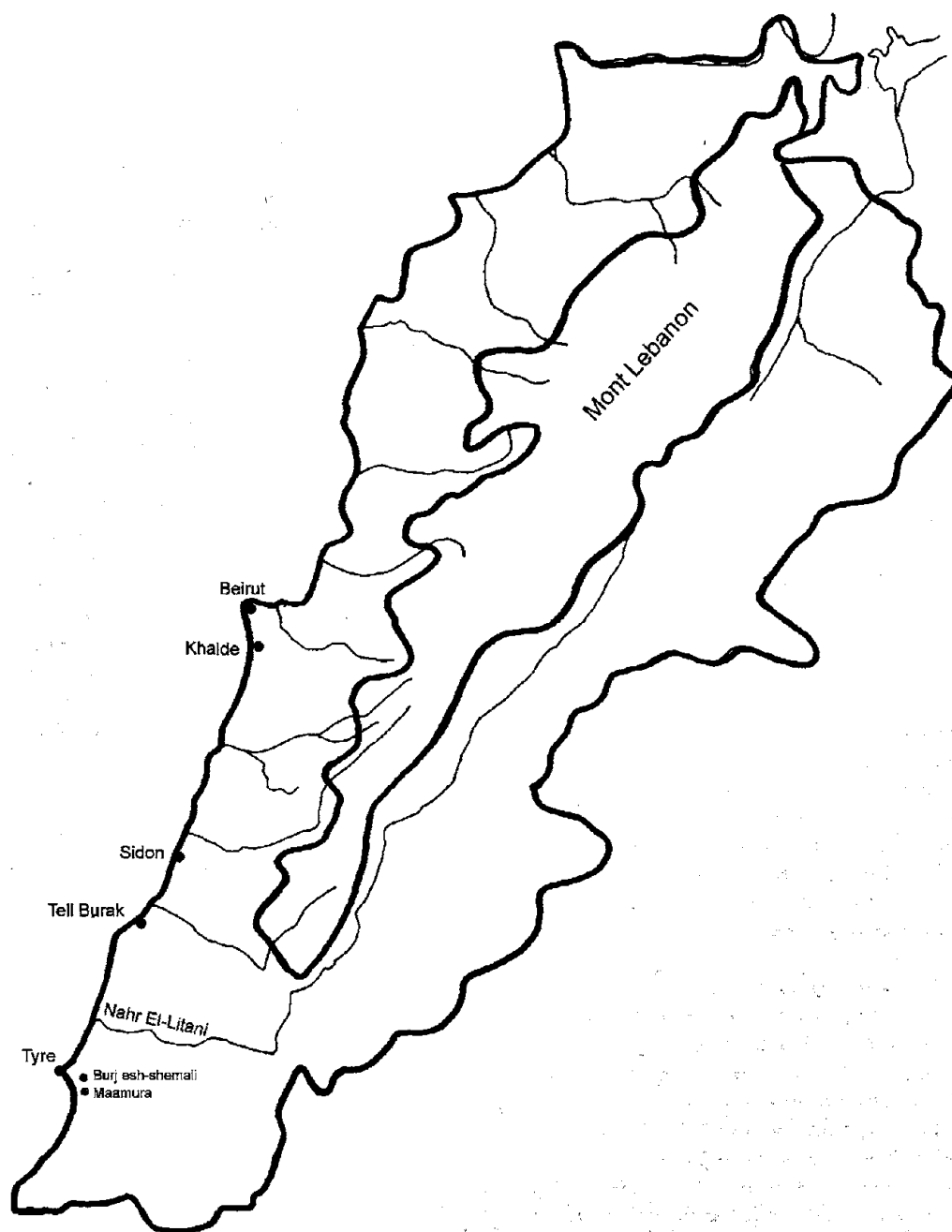


Fig. 1. Map of Lebanon showing the sites of discovery.

I.2 GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STELAE

The Iron Age funerary stelae found in Lebanon can be subdivided into three distinct groups on both typological and chronological grounds:

- I.2.a The «Common» Stelae (10th-6th c. B.C.)
- I.2.b The Persian Period *Naiskoi* (6th-5th c. B.C.)
- I.2.c The Punic Stelae (5th-4th c. B.C.)

I.2.a *The «Common» Stelae (10th-6th c. B.C.) (Stele 1 to 52)*

We refer to this group as «Common Stelae» because they appear to have been the widespread type of tombstones used by common people in the first half of the first millennium B.C. According to the available evidence, they all come from popular cemeteries. This group is by far the largest attested so far in Lebanon and consists of fifty-two stelae from Khalde, Sidon, Tell el-Burak, and Tyre. They all share the same characteristics.

1. The stelae are all cut in local calcareous sandstone in various stages of cementation, identified as «beach rock» or *ramleb* (*grès*) with the exception of one (stele 9), which was cut in limestone. The same type of rock was used to cut the stelae of Akhziv (Delavault- Lemaire 1979: 4 & pls. I, II & III; Cross 2002). Some of the stones have a loose texture showing coarse grains of sand while others have a much denser and finer texture. The difference in hardness and texture of the rock is due to differing degrees of cementation. Those cut in the first loose type of *ramleb* have suffered from erosion and several cavities can be seen on their surface while stelae cut in the well-compacted type have usually a smooth surface and are well preserved. Small incrustations, mainly tiny seashells, were found stuck on the stelae.
2. All stelae are rather crudely made: only their front, and to a lesser degree lateral sides, were smoothed to prepare the surface for the carving of the symbol and/or the inscription while their backside was only roughly hammered or left simply untouched. Only one stele, stele 6, had a smoothed back because a symbol was carved on it. This is so far the only example with an inscription on the front and a symbol on the backside. Traces of the cutting tools are often clearly visible and form oblique strokes on the surface of the stone. Carthaginian stelae were cut in the same way with roughly hammered backs and smoothed facades (Brown 1986: 90)
3. The stelae are usually rather small in size, with a maximum length of 76 cm (stele 8), a maximum width of 40 cm (stele 43), and a maximum thickness of 34 cm (stele 46). But since the stones were extremely heavy, and hence very difficult to move, clandestine diggers sawed them in order to make their transport easier. For this reason the above figures cannot be considered as final.
4. The stelae present a variety of shapes: they can be trapezoidal, L-shaped, rectangular, rectangular with a rounded top, and pyramidal. Sometimes, because of the sawing, their original shape cannot be reconstructed.
5. Some stelae have a sort of foot, which was obtained by cutting and thinning the base of the stone. This part was buried in the ground when the stele was erected. The other complete stelae have a flat base.
6. The stelae usually bear symbols and/or inscriptions. Fifteen combine both while twenty-one bear only an inscription and fifteen only a symbol. Only one example (stele 49) is attested where the stone is dressed but blank. Concerning the inscriptions, they all consist of personal names (see Chapter II). As for the symbols, a wide range is attested (See Chapter III)
7. All these stelae were found in cemeteries where common people were buried. They are the tombstones of the normal inhabitants and mirror a funerary practice widespread among the people of Southern Phoenicia. They are characterized by a crude, very coarse workmanship, which clearly reflects the modest social background of their owners.
8. Finally, when dating is possible either on palaeographic grounds or on the basis of the archaeological context, the date of these stelae falls within a chronological range between the 10th and the 6th c. B.C., which suggests that this type of tombstones may have been characteristic of Iron Age II burial practices in Phoenicia. Although the available evidence from all sites is not conclusive, this chronological framework may very well prove to be correct in the future because it has been recently supported by the results of the regular excavations in Tyre, which have established that the al-Bass cemetery was in use between the 11th and the 6th c. B.C. (Aubet 2004: 465.)

I.2.b *The Persian Period Naiskoi (6th-5th c. B.C.) (Stele 53 to 59)*

This group consists of seven stelae, 53 to 59, which are clearly different from the previous group. Since they all represent shrines, they were first considered to be cultic monuments without any funerary purpose. Except for the monument from Burj esh-Shemali, which is clearly said to come from a necropolis (Chéhab 1934), others were bought on the antiquities market and cannot therefore be ascribed to a precise funerary context.

Their funerary character was however rapidly recognized. Discussing the monuments of Amrit, to which this group of stelae is contemporary and in many ways similar, Gawlikowsky says that they derive from Egyptian cultic shrines but that «*A la difference de leurs prototypes égyptiens, chapelle de culte des morts, ... les monolithes du pays syrien n'avaient pas de rôle cultuel. Ce sont des mémoriaux, destinés à immortaliser la mémoire de ceux qui ont été ensevelis dessous*» (Gawlikowski 1970: 18). Bisi (1971: 21, note 1) also opted for their funerary character: «*la maggior parte degli esemplari sopra elencati sembra aver avuto all'origine carattere funerario*». Tore (1995: 479) agreed with the above opinions and also acknowledged their funerary character and their Egyptian origin: «*L'autre type de stèles, en forme de petit temple..., le naiskos, dérive du naos cubique égyptien, ainsi que l'a souligné Bisi qui en a étudié les attestations, pour l'essentiel funéraires...*».

In this context, and in support of the funerary character of these stelae, it is important to mention a clay model, which was found by Contenau (1920: Fig.104n) in a tomb in the locality of Ayaa, near Sidon. The clay model is broken but the preserved upper part is painted red and decorated exactly like the Sidonian stelae¹. Clay models of shrines imitating those represented on funerary stelae seem to have formed a specific group of Iron Age funerary offerings (see Seyrig 1966, Gubel 1986: Fig.10). Terracotta shrine models have been recently discovered in the cremation cemetery of al-Bass in Tyre (Metzger 2004: 420 ff.).

This group of stelae shares the following characteristics:

1. They were all cut in calcareous sandstone and they are all said to be of poor workmanship.
2. They all represent, when completely preserved, the same motif: a shrine standing on a base with a podium inside it on which a cultic object, *betyl* or Astarte throne, is depicted.
3. These shrines imitate Egyptian prototypes. Stonecutters have made use of both Egyptian and local symbols to decorate them and they arranged them in a fairly stereotyped way. Wagner (1980) studied the Egyptian influence on these stelae, which is clear in the architectonic details of the shrines and bases as well as in the use of symbols like *uraei*, winged sun-disc, lotus flowers, Egyptian human and divine figures. Elements like palmette decoration, *betyls*, male deities, and Astarte thrones confer to them a local character.
4. All stelae date to the Persian period, roughly to the 6th-5th c. B.C. Authors are almost unanimous in adopting this dating. Soyeux (1972: 156, note 4), for example, clearly states when discussing these monuments that «*... les naisques phéniciens—dont tous les exemplaires connus appartiennent à l'époque perse—offrent l'aspect d'un édicule à porte monumentale...*». Bisi (1971: 26) also opted for a Persian period date for these monuments: «*La convinzione che si tratti di monumenti assegnabili al periodo persiano se fonda sulle analogie che molti di questi naiskoi con un trono vuoto al interno, spesso fiancheggiato da sfingi, presentano con i troni provenienti da varie località della Fenicia fra Tiro e Sidone, in genere assegnabili al periodo persiano e alla prima età ellenistica, e con altri monumenti, pure assegnabili al periodo della dominazione dei re achemenidi sulla Fenicia...*». Nunn (2000: 16), more recently, seems also to favor a date in the middle of the 6th c. Wagner (1980: Cat. No 51-55 and p.129 ff.), on the other hand, proposed a date in the 9th/8th c. for stele 55, 56 and 57, while he attributed a Persian period date to stele 53 and 54. Gubel (2002: Nos 71-74) follows Wagner's dating and ascribes stele 53, 55, 58 and 59 to the 9th/8th c. differing with Wagner only concerning the dating of stele 53. As argued by Bisi, the Persian period seems more appropriate for all monuments since they carry features, which became widespread after the Achaemenid occupation of Phoenicia. The 6th c. has witnessed increased Egyptian influence on the Levantine coast and this probably resulted from the fact that both Phoenicia and Egypt came under the same Achaemenid rule (Wagner 1980: 177). On the other hand, the Phoenician kings, those of Sidon in particular, participated directly in the Persian wars against Egypt, mainly in Cambyses' campaign in 525 B.C. This participation has led, among other things, to the import into Phoenicia, mainly into Sidon, of Egyptian anthropoid sarcophagi (Lembke 2001: 27-28), and by the same token, of other Egyptian funerary traditions. This may explain how and why this new type of stelae progressively replaced the Iron II standard type and became typical of Iron Age III.

1. Another 8 cm long limestone model, representing a *naiskos* with a frieze of *uraei* on its architrave, and an Astarte throne inside with a standing male figure, was found in Sidon and purchased by the Beirut National Museum (Seyrig 1966: VIII). Seyrig dates it to the Hellenistic period while Bisi (1971) ascribes it to the 8th c. B.C. It is difficult to date this shrine model with certainty because of the absence of any archaeological context.

1.2.c *The Punic Stelae*

This group consists of three stelae, 60 to 62. They share characteristic features, which clearly differentiate them from the previous two groups.

1. They are all cut in limestone and their surface is very well smoothed.
2. They are all small rectangular blocks not exceeding 31 cm in length and 20 cm in width. Because of their small size it is unlikely that they were placed on or outside the tomb where they would have been hardly visible and easily removed. The fact that stele 60 was found next to the skeleton as claimed by its finder, may suggest that this was also the case for the other two.
3. None of them bears a symbol and the inscription fills the whole space.
4. The script is clearly Punic with elongated and sometimes shaded signs typical of late 5th/4th c. B.C. Punic inscriptions. It is always neat and the inscriptions were clearly written by skilled scribes.
5. They all use the typical Punic form *mnšbt* for «commemorative stele» and most personal names listed in these inscriptions are attested only in Punic onomastics.
6. The inscriptions, by opposition to those of the first group, contain very long genealogies, which in two cases, stele 61 and 62, go back to a «Carthaginian» ancestor.
7. Some of the previously mentioned characteristics clearly indicate that the deceased for whom these stelae were erected were of Carthaginian origin and, therefore, their tombstones followed a Carthaginian rather than a local Phoenician tradition.

1.3 THE FUNCTION OF THE STELAE

No effort has been made to date to systematically study the purpose and the function of the thousands of stelae found in the Phoenician colonies in the West, which have been almost exclusively dealt with from an iconographic and typological point of view.

Concerning the Ancient Near East, the function of funerary monuments has been studied mainly in relation with the so-called *nfx* monuments of Palmyra, Petra, South-Syria and the Arabian Peninsula. Gawlikowski (1970) analyzed the function of the funerary stele in the context of his study of the funerary monuments of Palmyra and, more recently, Kühn (2003) reconsidered some aspects of this subject.

In his attempt at interpreting the iconography of the Syro-Hittite funerary monuments and stelae, Bonatz (2000: 72ff) identified in the funerary inscriptions, without which, according to him, no proper understanding of the iconography is possible, some characteristics that betray the function of the stelae. Of relevance to our material is the «onomastic code» of the inscription. The mention of the name of the deceased on the funerary monument underlines its individual character and is of relevance for the iconography because it helps identify, if represented, human figures. The second relevant indication betrayed by funerary inscriptions is their «historical code», which informs about the person of the deceased by giving his/her genealogy or profession. This is occasionally the case in our inscriptions. Finally, their «anagogical code» betrays the commemorative or other purpose of the stele, by stating why the monument was erected. In the case of the Phoenician stelae it is restricted to the one-time use of the term *mnšbt*, «commemorative stele» on stele 32, while the Punic stelae systematically refer to the stone as *mnšbt*.

Regarding the small assemblage of Phoenician funerary stelae presented here, the fact that the large majority come from accidental or clandestine excavations, makes an assessment of their role rather difficult. Moreover, the almost total absence of Phoenician texts dealing with funerary practices and with views of the afterlife, as well as the fact that the funerary inscriptions themselves, when available, are restricted to the name of the deceased and, eventually, a short genealogy, hinder a correct understanding of these monuments, of their function, and of the meaning of the represented symbols.

Phoenician stelae may have cumulated a series of functions among the most important of which are:

1.3.a *Signalization of the Tomb*

The primary and original function of a stele was, most probably, to indicate the location of the tomb. This tradition goes back to prehistoric periods. The recent collective work edited by Krings (1995) on Phoenician and Punic civilization, included a survey of funerary monuments in general and of stelae in particular. In his presentation of Pho-

enician and Punic funerary monuments, Díes Cusi (1995: 414-417) stressed only this indicative function and considered all vertical elements made of stone, stelae, cippi, *betyls*, small altars, and even funerary monuments, to be indicators, «*signalisations*», of a tomb.

In his discussion of the stelae, Torc (1995: 475ff) did not deal with their function and his presentation remained restricted to the conventional typological and iconographic approach. This signalization function is further supported by the existence of blank stelae which could obviously have served one purpose: to indicate the tomb.

1.3.b Representation of the Dead

In his study of the funerary monuments of Palmyra, Michal Gawlikowski (1970: 9ff) addressed the issue of the function and meaning of ancient funerary monuments, to which he gives the generic term of stele: «*Quelles que soient leurs formes, les monuments syriens sont des stèles (maššebā)...*» The role of the funerary monument, according to him, is twofold: to establish a link between the world of the living and that of the dead (Gawlikowski 1970: 10) and to represent the dead. As such, the monument is the receptacle of the dead's soul: «*L'âme du défunt était censée d'habiter la pierre dressée, sa représentation*» (Gawlikowski 1970: 18). This interpretation is in line with Dussaud's (1935: 269) who believes that the soul is incorporated in the stone: «*La népesh représente l'âme végétative qui, après la mort, habite la tombe et c'est pourquoi la stèle funéraire qui l'incorpore prend le nom de népesh*». The concept of *népesh*, (*npš*), which is borrowed from the Aramaic term referring to the funerary monument was defined by Gawlikowski (1970 23-24) as «*...un monument indépendant ou une partie d'un ensemble sépulcral, selon le cas. Ce qui comptait, ce n'était pas sa forme, mais sa valeur de signe qu'on pourrait considérer comme une représentation symbolique du défunt*». (For a recent and comprehensive study of this term as well as the relevant bibliography, see Kühn 2003). So, as Díes Cusi opted only for the stele as indicator, Gawlikowski seems to reduce its function to representing the dead.

1.3.c Commemoration of the Dead.

A third function of the stele was to immortalize the dead by mainly mentioning his name, a commemorative function referred to only indirectly by Gawlikowski (1970: 10): «*L'homme ne quitte pas ce monde tant que son nom vit parmi les survivants*». This function is mirrored in what Bonatz calls the «onomastic» and «anagogical» code of the funerary inscription.

Kühn (2003: 9-10) emphasizes this aspect of the dead's commemoration and suggests that to mention the name secures and acknowledges the dead's presence among the living. This commemorative function is also attested in biblical passages: 2 Sam 18, 18, for instance, clearly says that Absalon built a *mšbh* so that his name would be remembered. The same term, Phoenician *mšbt* and Punic *mšbt*, is used to refer to the stele in funerary inscriptions and, as is the case in the Bible, this term entails commemoration (Jean and Hoftijzer 1965). In some instances, *mšbt* is coupled with *skr*: *mšbt skr*, literally «memorial stele» (Hoftijzer and Jongeling 1995: 676), is a clear reference to the stele's commemorative function. The fact that many Common and all Punic stelae from Lebanon mention the name of the deceased and, sometimes, his genealogy, corroborates their commemorative function.

1.3.d Religious or Cultic Function

The religious function of the funerary stele is attested in the archaeological evidence provided by tomb 645 at Akhziv, which is briefly described by Prausnitz (1970: 86ff.). Above this tomb, the excavator found an inscribed stele decorated with symbols in the midst of a collection of ritual pottery vessels.² Prausnitz described this find, stele and broken vessels, as a *bamah* or high place and concluded that the archaeological context «...strongly indicates that the stela was the center of an area above the grave, where the family met to pray and perform the funeral rite».

2. Prausnitz (1970: 87) first thought that the divine name Tanit was to be read on the stele but the inscription was recently read *lib* by Cross (2002: No 5).

(1970: 87). Stelae with niches to place a divine image or representations of ediculae obviously served the same religious purpose because of the divine presence in the shrine.

The religious function of the stele may also be expressed by the symbols carved on it (see Chapter III). These religious or prophylactic symbols, some of which are believed to represent deities or beliefs related to the after-life, aimed probably at facilitating or at protecting the eternal rest of the deceased.

Some of these symbols may have had apotropaic or magic functions and served at protecting either the tomb and/or the dead, or at preventing the spirit of the latter from coming back to haunt the living.

1.4 DESCRIPTION AND DATING OF THE STELAE

1.4.a Tell el-Burak

Stele 1 (Figs 2 and 3)

A stone stele inscribed with Phoenician letters was found during the 2002 season of excavation on the site of Tell el-Burak, while clearing the collapsed stones of the Iron Age fortification in Area 2 (Kamlah and Sader 2003). The stone was lying upside down with its inscribed upper part buried in the ground (Fig. 2). It had been uncovered in this position in the 2001 season but was left *in situ* since its inscription was not visible.



Fig. 2. Stele 1 *in situ*.

The Tell Burak stele is cut in the local beachrock, which was also used for the tombstones excavated in Tyre (Sader 1991, 1992, 2004, Lemaire 2001), Sidon (Teixidor 1982), Khaldé (Bordreuil 1982) and Akhziv (Cross 2002). The stone was probably damaged when it fell on its head during the collapse: a large break cut its upper part and partly obliterated the motif that was carved there. A partly preserved circular depression is all that remains of what might have been a sun-disc symbol. This motif, which is widely represented in the iconography of the Phoenician motherland (see Chapter III), is most likely to be restored on the Tell Burak stele.

Below the circular cavity is a six-letter Phoenician inscription written in one curving line. The second and the last letter are partly destroyed but they can be both reasonably identified as *aleph* and *lamed* respectively. On the whole, the inscription is relatively well preserved and reads very clearly:

l'bb'l

«(Belonging) To Abibaal»

The inscription consists of the preposition *l* followed by a well-known Phoenician personal name meaning «My father is (the god) Baal». The fact that the stele is inscribed with a personal name and bears a divine symbol, a feature characteristic of Iron Age stelae found in Phoenician cemeteries in Lebanon, clearly suggests its funerary use. The stone was then obviously not in its original context and had been re-used in the building of the wall. It therefore antedates the building (or repair) of the collapsed Iron Age fortification. The funerary character of the stone suggests that it was probably brought from a nearby cemetery which has not been yet located.

The personal name, Abibaal, which is borne by a 10th c. B.C. king of Byblos, is widely attested in Phoenician onomastics (Brenz 1972: 257). Usually, the personal name appears alone on the funerary stelae but it may also be preceded by the preposition *l* = «(Belonging) to». Parallels are well attested in the Akhziv (Cross 2002: Nos 1-5) as



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Fig. 3. Stele 1 *l'bb'l*.

well as in the Tyrian (Sader 1992: 59, Lemaire 2001: Nos 8 & 10) and Sidonian stela inscriptions (Teixidor 1982). According to Cooke (1903: 60), personal names in funerary inscriptions are usually preceded by this preposition and the personal name following *l-* is understood to refer to a deceased adult.

Concerning the palaeography, the letters are of medium size, not exceeding 7cm in height. Four different letters are attested: *lamed* (written twice), *aleph*, *beth* (written twice), and *ayin*. Though written twice, only the first *lamed* is completely preserved. Its vertical shaft is rather short and slightly tilted to the right while its dropline is almost horizontal and short without a leftward curve. This form of the letter cannot be later than the sixth century B.C. and finds parallels in seventh and sixth century forms (Peckham 1968: 104, 4 & 9; 109, 3 & 5).

Aleph is more problematic because its upper part is lost in the break. What is clearly to be seen is the vertical shaft and one long oblique line cutting the former and continuing on its left side. The second oblique line of the *aleph* is not clearly preserved: a very thin horizontal incision appears below the long oblique crossline and meets it at a narrow angle to the right of the shaft. This line may however be simply accidental and one should not exclude the possibility that the second horizontal crossline of the *aleph* is above the first one and hence lost in the break. In any case it is clear that the crosslines do not meet at the left of the vertical shaft and this is an indication that the letter cannot be earlier than the mid-seventh century B.C. *Aleph* with headlines one shorter than the other is indeed attested since the mid-seventh century B.C. (Peckham 1968: 107). The two *beths* signs are written next to each other but while the first one is larger and has its shaft and tail drawn in a continuous curve, the second has a tail that breaks abruptly from the shaft forming a wide angle. Both heads are triangular and almost identical. The fact that these signs are still rather vertical and do not tilt to the left is an indication that they are earlier than the fifth century B.C. They indeed find their closest parallels in letters dated to the seventh and early sixth century B.C. (Peckham 1968: 105, 107, 109).

The palaeography of the inscription suggests a time range from the mid-seventh to the mid-sixth century B.C. The stone may have been used either in the original building of the wall or, more probably, when the Iron Age fortification underwent some sort of repair, sometime during the sixth century. Both assumptions are not incompatible with the archaeological evidence uncovered by the deep sounding in Area 2.



Fig. 4. Stele 2 *gtyy*.

1.4.b KHALDE

Stele 2 (Fig. 4)

This is the only stele that was discovered by Roger Saidah (1966) in the Phoenician necropolis of Khalde, one of the largest Phoenician cemeteries discovered in Lebanon where some 400 tombs were excavated. It is cut in the local beach-rock and it has a trapezoidal shape. The only information related to its archaeological context is that it was found near tomb 121 (Saidah 1979: 215). Bordreuil (1982:191 & Fig.2) published its inscription but gave no information concerning its size, shape, and manufacture. No drawing of the stele is available. Since it was not stored in the DGA storage in Beirut, it was impossible to have a closer look at the stele in order to complete the documentation. It is probably in the DGA storage in Sidon, which has not been inventorized since the end of the war.

Curiously enough, the four-letter inscription was written lengthwise in the middle of the stone, in a long horizontal line starting near the foot and ending near the top, in such a way as to suggest that the stone was lying on its long side. Indeed, the signs cannot be properly read when the stele is standing vertically as it is supposed to have stood in Antiquity.

The inscription mentions the personal name *gty* and it was correctly dated on palaeographic grounds to the second half of the 9th c. B.C. Bordreuil (1982:190-1) suggests two possible explanations for the personal name based on biblical parallels: either a gentile, which seems plausible, or a music instrument.

1.4.c SIDON

Stele 3 (Fig. 5)

The stele is in the storage of the Directorate General of Antiquities. Because it lies under other very heavy stone monuments, which were very difficult to move, it was impossible to have a better photograph and to draw the tombstone. This is the only stele from the site of the Late Iron Age cemetery in Sidon Dakerman (Teixidor 1982: 233 ff), which Roger Saidah excavated (Saidah 1969: 122). Describing the cemetery, Saidah (1969: 122) says that «...*this is the first time we have uncovered such a number of Late Iron Age and Late Bronze Age burials*» and it is strange that no other stele was found in this large Sidonian cemetery. Khalde presents a similar case of a large Iron Age cemetery with only one discovered stele. As already suggested, the fact that such tombstones may have been re-used in later buildings or may have been overlooked could account for their absence in these cemeteries.

The stele is cut in a hard compacted beach-rock and the two-line inscription was read by Teixidor (1982: 233ff) *l'bb' bn mr'*. The reading *mem* in *mr'* is highly hypothetical: the recent examination of the stone, as well as a new but by no means excellent photograph, do not clearly show traces of the head of *mem*. Indeed, the only clear trace after *nun* is that of a vertical line slanting to the right, which could be part of either *mem* or *kaf*. Teixidor hesitated between the two possible readings of this sign and finally opted for *mem*. No better meaning is indeed

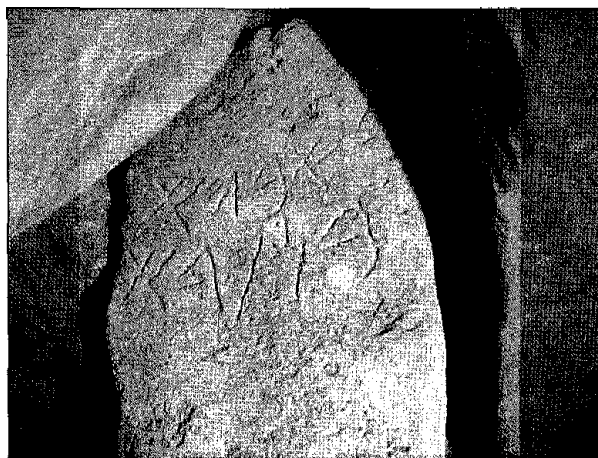


Fig. 5. Stele 3 *l'bb' bn mr'*.

gained if the inscription is read *kr' mr'* was interpreted as an imperative Piel of a root *mrr* «to bless» with a hypocoristic ending, meaning «Bless oh DN». *'bh'* was interpreted as «DN is father».

Concerning the palaeography, three aleph signs are attested: while the first one has a slanting shaft and two cross-lines meeting at an angle to the left of it, the two others have the same vertical shaft slanting to the left and two parallel strokes for the head. Only the upper one cuts the vertical shaft and continues on the other side. This form appears in the 6th c. B.C. but becomes very common in the 5th c. B.C. Texidor suggested a date around 600 B.C. that is the very beginning of the 6th c. A slightly lower dating seems to find supporting evidence in the shape of the sign *be*, which finds parallels in the Sidonian inscriptions of Eshmunazar and Tabnit and with the general archaeological context of the cemetery which is dated roughly by the excavator to the Late Iron Age.

1.4.d TYRE

1.4.d₁ TYRE 1991: Stelae in the Directorate General of Antiquities Collection in Beirut
Stele 4 (Fig. 6)

This stele was cut in the local beach-rock. It has a dense texture and is of a pink color. It has a clearly defined base or «foot» 15 x 17 cm, and a roughly smoothed front and sides while the back is irregular and only crudely hammered. Eight Phoenician letters of medium size, 5-7 cm, written in two lines are very badly preserved, because of the weathering of the stone. We tentatively read:



Fig. 6. Stele 4 *bn tnt'l'*.

bn tn
t 'l'

The last letter of the first line is only partly preserved but, from what is left, it is clearly to be restored as *nun*. The reading of the remaining letters is fairly certain in spite of the fact that they are badly eroded.

Concerning the palaeography, *beth* has a large rounded head, too big for the thin angular shaft as to suggest at first sight a reading *ayin*. This form of the letter finds its closest parallels in inscriptions from the *tophet* of Motya assigned to level IV and dated to the end of the 6th c. B.C. (Amadasi-Guzzo 1986: 14 & Pl. 2). The cross-shaped *taws* and *lamed* with its rounded, upward curving shaft are not attested after the 7th c. B.C. The *nuns* have rounded edges, short heads and long shafts. *Aleph* consists of two oblique lines joining at the left of a shaft. This shape is well attested in 7th and 6th c. inscriptions (Ur box and Hāssanbeyli). The palaeographic evidence suggests a date in the late 7th or in the 6th c. B.C., at the latest.

The inscription is clearly a personal name, *bn tnt 'l'*, attested here for the first time. This name is a construct-phrase name according to the terminology of Benz (1972:287 & chapter III). This type of name is often attested in Phoenician and Punic onomastics (Benz 1972: 288; Halff 1963-64: 98). However, it presents some interesting features worthy of remark: first, it is a theophorous name built with the divine element Tanit. Only two such names are attested in Phoenicia, *bdmt* and *grnt* (Bordreuil 1987: 80; Amadasi-Guzzo 1991: 83). According to Bordreuil, the name of Tanit is also attested on clay bullae from Lebanon (1987: 83-84) where it is however mistakenly written as *tmt*. This corrected reading is rejected by Lemaire (1991:115) who proposes for *bn tmt* the meaning of «*magasin de TMT*», *tmt* being either a toponym or a personal name. Lipinski (1995: 202) in his recent study of this Phoenician goddess opted for the first interpretation.

Second, the third element of this name, *'l'*, has no parallel in Phoenician and Punic personal names. The interpretation of this element is controversial. *'l'* is attested as a feminine personal name on an Ammonite seal (Lemaire 1983: 21 & Aufrecht 1989 under *'l'* with related literature). According to Lemaire (1983: 21), «*Ce nom peut s'expliquer soit comme le nom divin abrégé de Elyon = le Très Haut, soit comme un hypocoristique signifiant que la divinité "a élevé"*». Aufrecht (1989) suggests that the name is either a hypocoristic using the root *'ly* «to go up», a divine name or an epithet meaning «The High One». It is this last meaning that best fits the personal name attested here. The name would mean: «Son of Tanit, The High One». If this interpretation is correct, we would have a new epithet of the goddess Tanit, attested here for the first time. This epithet would be an indication of the leading position and role Tanit held in the Phoenician pantheon. The implication would be that the Tanit cult was as important in Phoenicia as it was in Carthage.

Stele 5 (Fig. 7)

This stele was cut in the local beach-rock and has a loose texture and a pink color. It has a slightly protruding, 3 cm deep, lower edge. It is very roughly smoothed on all four sides and is in a good state of preservation.

On the upper front and almost exactly in the middle, there is an engraved 4.5 cm wide and 6.5 cm high circular motif. This symbol is clearly a miniature sun disc and not the letter *ayin* for two main reasons: first, the motif is clearly centered above the inscription on top of the stele: it cannot be the first letter of the personal name as it stands alone in the middle of the line. Second, the four remaining letters form a perfectly clear and well-attested personal name and the inclusion of a letter *ayin* will result in an incomprehensible letter group. Incised small solar discs are often attested alone in Carthage (Picard 1976: 80). They are also attested in the iconography of the ancient Near East, mainly on seals (see for example Uehlinger 1988: 22, Fig. 6 and 23, Fig. 7).

The stone is inscribed with four deeply chiseled, outsize (9-16 cm) and very well preserved Phoenician letters written in an irregular way.

l
b'
y

Lamed is correctly written at the beginning of the line but the following *beth* is written on a lower level right below the sun disc. It seems that the scribe started writing the name of the dedicator but soon realized that he had forgotten the motif after the first letter had been written. Since he had started almost at the top, he did not have enough space above his first line for the symbol. That is probably why he chose to incise the sun disc on top and, as a result, had to write the remaining letters on a lower level. This assumption is not far-fetched because *beth* and *aleph* are correctly incised side by side on the same line. The fourth letter, *yod*, was then written alone on a new line.



Fig. 7. Stele 5 *lb'y*.

Concerning the palaeography, *lamed* is strongly tilted to the right and has a rounded tail. *Beth* presents no significant characteristics. The head of *aleph* is completely eroded: what is left of the two oblique strokes is a trapezoidal cavity with its wide base to the left of a very long shaft. It is difficult to decide whether the two strokes joined or not to the left of the shaft. *Alephs* with long shafts are generally late. However, this feature is also found in 8th/7th c. inscriptions (Peckham 1968:105). *Yod* is the only letter, which has a shape characteristic enough to provide a solid clue to date the inscription. It is strongly tilted to the left with an angular head and a very long tail at a right angle, a shape common in 7th c. B.C. inscriptions (Peckham 1968:107). It is to this century that we tentatively date this stele.

The personal name *lb'y* is a hypocoristic meaning «DN is a lion». This name is attested in Mari and, according to Huffmon (1965: 225), *lb'* could also be a theophorous or a divine name. Ribichini and Xella (1991:164) also consider *lb'* as a theophorous element in Ugaritic onomastics. The same name, *lab'ayu*, is also attested in the Amarna letters as the name of the mayor of Shechem (Moran 1987: 581). The feminine form *lb't* in *'bdlb't*, is attested on a proto-Canaanite arrowhead from el Khadr (KAI No 21). *lb'* is attested once in Punic (Benz 1972:337 and Amadasi-Guzzo 1967: 99). The name on stele 5 is, to my knowledge, the first occurrence of the name in Phoenician onomastics.

Stele 6 (Fig. 8a-c)

This stele is also cut in the local-beach rock. It has a loose texture and is of a reddish yellow color. It is neatly cut and roughly smoothed on all four faces. The sides are heavily eroded. Two major breaks can be seen: one on the lower front and the other on the upper right front. This second break destroyed the beginning of the second line. On the back of the stele, there is a 21 cm high *ankh* sign. It is the only stele with a motif on its back. This *ankh* symbol has many parallels in the East where it appears on many seals and scarabs (Bordreuil 1986: Nos 15, 18; Pritchard 1988: Fig. 17, 3; Keel and Uehlinger 1992: 32a, 32d, 34c, 79d, 92a;), on funerary stelae (Delavault-Lemaire 1979: Pl. III, 5; Cross 2002: Fig. App. 1.4), ivories (Barnett 1975: Fig. C 48), as well as on metal bowls (Markoe 1985: E 1).

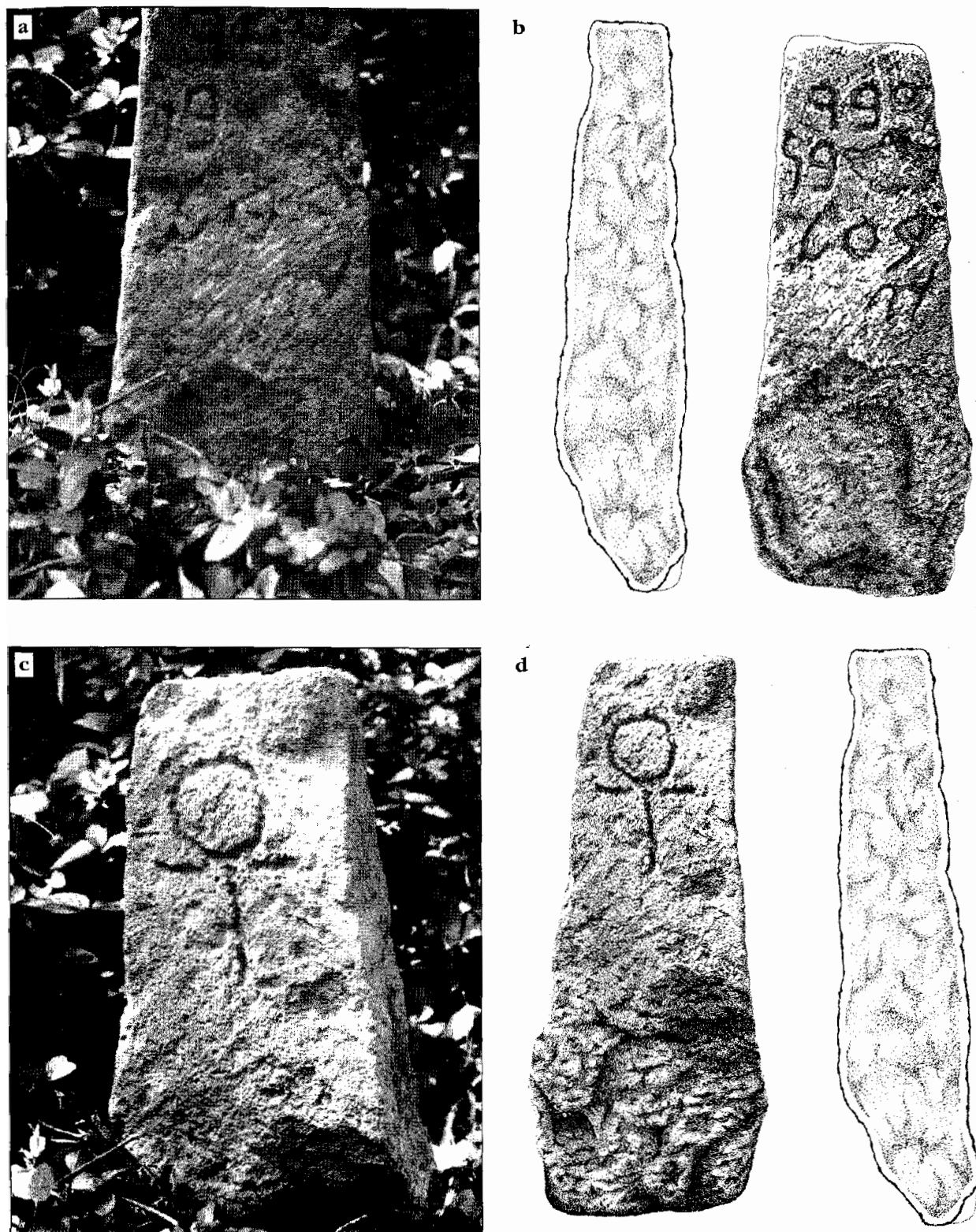


Fig. 8. Stela 6 (a) Frontside with inscription *'bd'xx' bn b'ly*, (b) drawing of frontside, (c) backside with *ankh* sign, (d) backside drawing and section.

On its front, the stele bears a Phoenician inscription written in four lines. The only difficulty with this otherwise unproblematic inscription lies in the beginning of the second line, which has been damaged by a break. Between the edge of the stele and the first readable letter of line 2, there is a space 12 cm wide. In other words, there is enough room for two letters and this is confirmed on the one hand, by the fact that this space corresponds exactly to that occupied by the first two letters of line 1 and, on the other, because the first readable letter of line 2 is exactly below the third letter of line 1. So we have to assume that two letters have to be restored at the beginning of line 2.

The rest of the inscription can be read without difficulty:

'bd

[xxx] bn

b'l

y

The inscription gives the name of the dedicator and that of his father. The first element of the dedicator's name is *'bd* = slave, servant. This implies that the second element of the name lost in the break must be either a divine name or a hypocoristic ending. In the first case, the divine name could be either a bi-literal name like *š* = Isis, *bl* = Bel, *br* = Horus, *šd* or *ʾl* (for theophorous names built with *'bd*, see Benz 1972: 371) or a shortened form of a divine name. Any suggestion as to the identification of this divine element will remain conjectural. In the case of a hypocoristic ending, we have to assume that only one letter is missing in the break and not two since hypocoristica are built by adding *aleph*, *taw*, *yod* or *mem* to the remaining element (Benz 1972: 232-235). A third attractive possibility may be offered to us: the personal name could be *'bd[ny]*, a name attested on an arrowhead from Lebanon. According to Bordreuil (1982: 190), the name is a gentilic, and *'bdn-* is a well attested toponym in the Bible, possibly located at Kh. Abde, 15 km northeast of Akko. The dedicator is son of *b'ly*, a hypocoristic name formed with the divine element Baal and widely attested in Phoenician and Punic onomastics (Benz 1972: 94 & 289).

Concerning the palaeography, the letters are of medium size, 5-8 cm, and rather shallow. Two of the three *beths* have rounded heads and shafts curving at right angles, while the third one has a more angular head and an oblique shaft. *Daleth* has a round head and is close to shapes found in inscriptions from level IV of the *tophet* of Motya dated to the 6th c. B.C. (Amadasi-Guzzo 1986: 14 & Pl. 2). *Lamed* has a rounded and upward curving tail. Here again, *yod* is the most significant sign for the dating of the inscription. It is horizontal with a rounded head and a tail curving at right angle. This shape finds a very close parallel in the Ipsambul inscription dated to 591 B.C. (Peckham 1968:107). The stele may be dated to the 6th c. B.C.

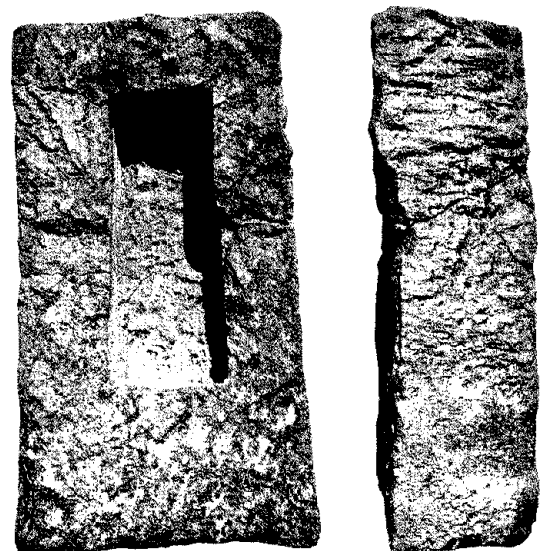


Fig. 9. Parallels to *naos* motif on Stele 7 from Byblos (left Seeden 1980: Pl. 134: 2) and Tharros (right Moscati 1985b: Pl. XI: 33).

Stele 7 (Fig. 10)

This stele is cut in the loosely cemented variety of beach-rock. It has a pink color, is well cut and very roughly smoothed. The stone is badly eroded and broken at its lower right angle. A *naos*, consisting of an empty niche, 20 cm high, 12 cm wide and 5.5 cm deep, is cut in the middle front. Parallels are widely attested in the Punic world. Examples are known from Carthage, Tharros (Moscatti 1985b: XI: 33; XII: 35; XVIII: 48; XXVIII: 74; XLIX: 125) and Sulcis (Bartoloni 1986: X: 70; CXXIX: 1050; CXXX: 1051; CL: 1541; CLI: 1550 being the closest parallel). Shrines are already attested in the Obelisk temple in Byblos and the standing armed figurines of bronze might in some cases have been placed there (Seeden 1980: 153 and Pl. 134: 2, 135: 4).

A Phoenician inscription in one line starts on top of the stele above the niche and continues down to the left of it in two short lines. The letter before the last has been badly damaged by a break on the left edge and the fourth and last letters are partly destroyed but legible. The inscription reads:

štrt

l'ʾ

t

We are clearly in the presence of a theophorous name built with the divine element *štrt*. The second element is difficult to read. The first letter is clearly *lamed* and the third one is *taw* recognizable at its preserved lower part still showing the two crossed oblique lines. In the break following *lamed*, only one letter can be restored. Given the size of the letters and the space available in the break, there is no room for more than one sign. Of the lost letter, a horizontal stroke in its upper right part, a short oblique one in its lower right and the bottom of a vertical shaft are still to be seen, suggesting either *taw*, *samekh* or most probably *aleph*. A reading *taw* is the less probable because the other three *taws* of the inscription are clearly X-shaped. The other two possible readings of the second element are *l'slt* and *l'ʾt*. The first one cannot be explained while the second may present an attractive and adequate meaning. *l'ʾt* could be a feminine Qal participle of the root *l'y* = «to prevail, to be strong», attested in Ugaritic and in Phoenician and Punic names like *'bdl* or *'bdl* and possibly meaning «The Mighty One» (Benz 1972: 336-337). The feminine form *l'ʾt* in *štrtl'ʾt* could be understood as a title of Astarte: «Astarte the Mighty One», a personal name attested here for the first time.

Concerning the palaeography, the letters are deeply incised and of medium size, 4-7 cm. *šin* has a clear W-shape attested in 10th to 7th c. B.C. inscriptions. The three *taws* are X-shaped with the two cross lines almost of the same length, similar to very early forms of the sign in the Ahiram, Yehimilk, Elibaal, Šipitbaal I, Abdo and Nora ins-

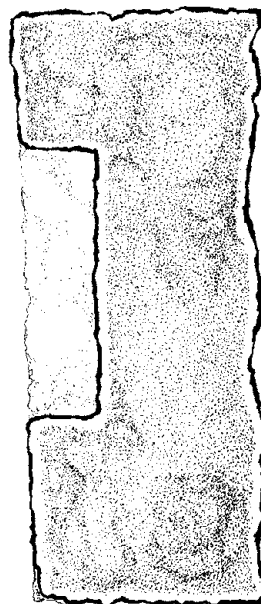
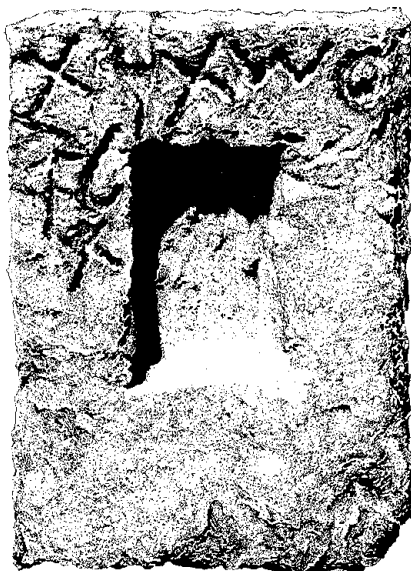
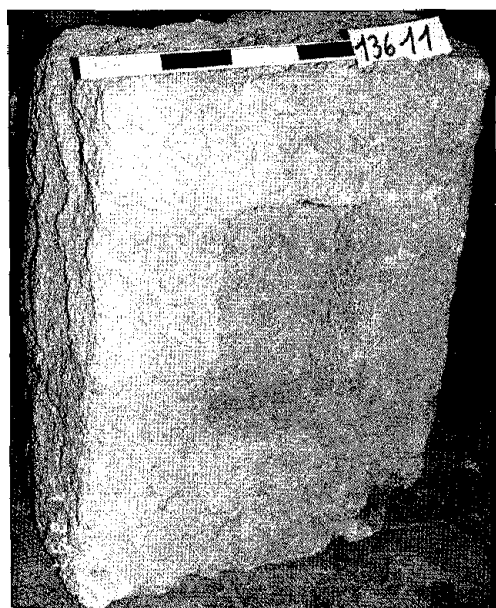


Fig. 10. Stele 7 *štrt l'ʾt*

criptions (*KAI* nos 1, 4, 6, 7, 8 & 46). This form is not attested after the 9th c. B.C. The palaeographic evidence suggests a date in the 9th c. B.C.

Stele 8 (Fig. 11)

This stele was cut in the hard variety of the beach-rock. It is a rectangular stone with a rounded top. It has a pinkish-white color. The stone has a clearly defined foot 21.5 cm high, 22 cm wide and 18.5 cm deep. With the exception of the foot and back, the stele is very nicely smoothed. However, its upper edge shows signs of erosion on all sides and this is most probably due to the fact that with time, the stone was entirely buried in the ground and only its top remained exposed. The stele is inscribed with seven well-preserved Phoenician letters written in two lines:

l'mt

šmn

«(Belonging) to *'mtšmn*. Feminine personal names built with the element *'mt* = female servant and a divine name are widely attested in Phoenician and Punic onomastics (Benz 1972: 270). The specific form *'mtšmn* = «Female servant of the god Eshmun», is, to my knowledge, the first occurrence of this name in Phoenician. The form *šmn* for *'šmn* is often attested (Benz 1972: 279). The personal name is preceded by the preposition *l-* (for this feature see stele 1).

Concerning the palaeography, the letters of this inscription are thin and of medium size. *Lamed* has a slightly rounded shaft and an almost horizontal tail. *Aleph* has two strokes joining at a narrow angle to the left of a straight vertical shaft. Similar shapes are attested in the inscription from Kition and on the crater from Sidon published by Puech (1994), both dated to the 8th c. B.C. The first *mem* is problematic: it was first mistakenly written as *resh* and then corrected into a *mem*. The triangular head of *resh* is still to be seen under the three vertical and parallel strokes of *mem*'s head. It is only when the light hits the stone at a certain angle that the head of *mem* becomes clearly

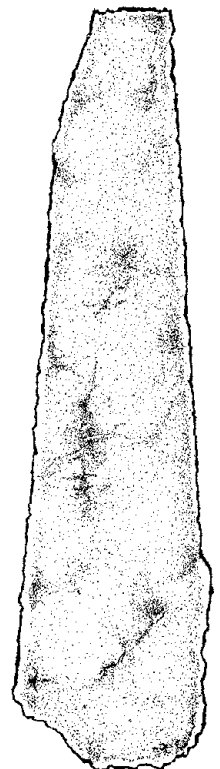


Fig. 11. Stele 8 *l'mtšmn*.

visible. This form of the letter is attested in 8th c. B.C. inscriptions like the Sidon crater and a Tyrian seal published by Bordreuil (1986: 7). It is a common 8th c. shape of the sign attested on other Tyrian stelae (for instance stele 14, 21, 34). The second *mem* of the inscription is slightly different: its head has a zigzag shape and its shaft is vertical. Similar forms are found in the Karatepe and Limassol inscriptions both dated to the 8th c. B.C. *Taw* is cross-shaped with a vertical long vertical shaft. Here again the closest parallels are dated to the 8th c. (Limassol and crater inscriptions). *šin* has an open W-shape not attested after the 7th c. *Nun* has a hooked head with no exact parallels and a long vertical shaft. The palaeographic evidence dates the stele to the 8th or early 7th c. B.C.

Stele 9 (Fig. 12)

This is the only stele cut in limestone. The core color of the stone is pink while the patina is lighter. The stele is trapezoidal in shape. Its upper left edge is broken, causing slight damage to the represented head. The upper half of the stone's front has been smoothed in order to receive the carving while its lower part is very roughly hewn. The face and neck of a person likely to be a woman are represented. No hair or hair-dress is visible. The face is round with a pointed chin. The eyebrows carved in relief, join on top of the nose. The eyes rest in two shallow cavities. The eyelids are fine but the pupil is not represented giving the face an undefined and mysterious look. The flat triangular nose and the thin lips add to this impression. The neck is very thin (5.5 x 6 cm) giving the figure a fragile aspect. This stele is now on display in the Beirut National Museum.

The human head represented on the stele has a striking parallel from Carthage (Ferron 1975: Pl. CXXXVII and CXLIX). This and other North African examples are always depicted with a raised right hand and belong to a specific type of funerary stelae representing the deified dead person (Ferron 1975: 261ff). Human heads comparable to this one are also attested in the *tophet* of Monte Sirai (Bondi 1972: Pl. LVII: 1) and in Motya (Iusa 1982: Pl. XIV e). For the interpretation of these figures, see Chapter III.

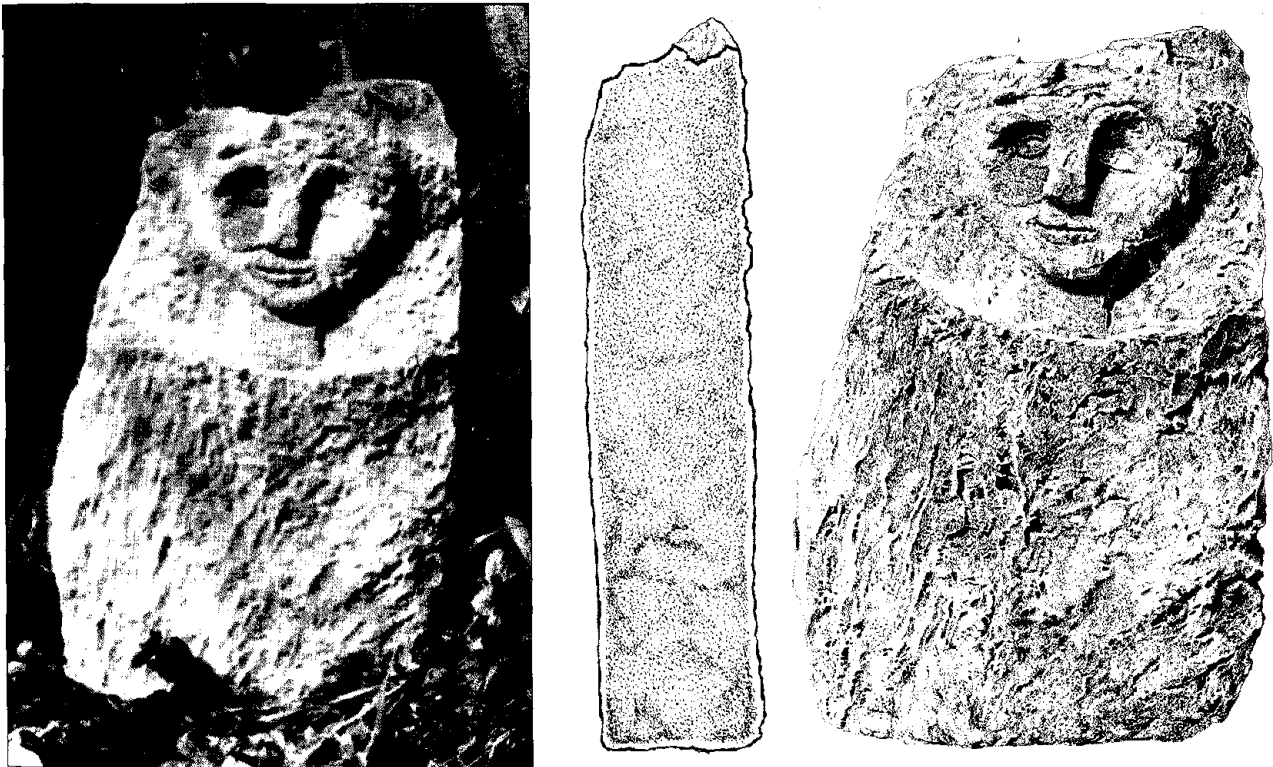


Fig. 12. Stele 9 Human head.



Fig. 13. A Carthaginian parallel to Stele 9 (Ferron 1975: Pl. CXXXVII).

Stele 10 (Fig. 14)

This stele was cut in a calcareous, cemented beach-rock. It has a dense texture and is of a pinkish white color.

The stone has neatly cut angles and a nicely smoothed front. Its left side is broken. The front shows the lintel, architrave and sides of a small shrine. The top of the shrine consists of two parallel horizontal grooves surmounted by a small rectangular platform 10 cm wide, bearing a round symbol, most probably a sun disc with a vertical line attached to its bottom. This type of shrine imitates Egyptian prototypes (Wagner 1980, mainly p.123 ff.). The sides of the shrine are very deeply hewn forming a right angle on top, possibly representing two columns. In-

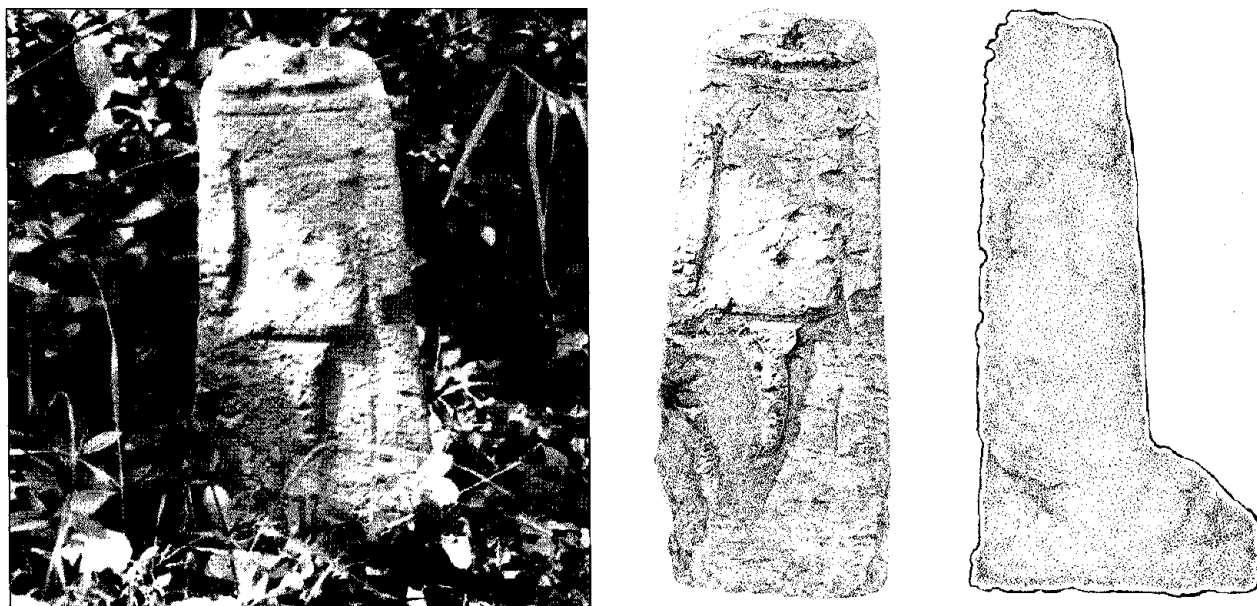


Fig. 14. Stele 10 Shrine with phallic symbol.

side the shrine, in the middle of its lower section, there is a hole, which looks like a navel. It is possible that the stonemason intended to carve a niche or any other symbol but did not complete his work but it is also possible that it is indeed a navel for below this hole there is another enigmatic representation. It consists of a long vertical protuberance with a rounded lower end resembling a phallus. If this interpretation is correct, this shrine may have been dedicated to the god Pa'am, whose name according to Lipinski (1995: 215) means phallus. The symbol would be half architectural and half anthropomorphic, its lower part representing the lower part of a human body with the navel and the male sexual organ. It would be indeed the first attested representation of the god Pa'am. But this protuberance could also be a sort of handle for a portable shrine model or the socket or foundation of the shrine.

This shrine has no exact parallels although small shrines are very common on Punic stelae. The Egyptian type of lintel is well attested elsewhere in the West, mainly in Tharros (Moscati 1985b: XVII, 45, 47) and in Sulcis (Bartoloni 1986: XXVI, 163). The small solar disc surmounting the shrine is also regularly attested on Punic stelae.

Stele 11 (Fig. 15)

This stele is cut in a loosely cemented and coarse beach rock. The color is pinkish gray and the lower left corner is damaged. The symbol on the front is ovoid in shape with a short vertical stem at its bottom and two horns or leaves at the top. This plant symbol, fruit or flower, has no exact parallel on Punic stelae. Motifs representing vegetal symbols are widely attested in Carthage. The closest parallels to this motif seem to be the pomegranate, lily and lotus flowers (Picard 1978: 51ff.). The most striking parallels are however the lotus bud representations on the Ahi-ram sarcophagus and on the Phoenician *naiskoi* of the Persian period, which have on their lintel a row of alternating, open and closed lotus flowers (see stele 58). Phoenician ivory blinkers from Nimrud (Orchard 1967: Nos 71-72, 74ff.; 91ff., 186-7), as well as Phoenician bowls from Cyprus and Etruria (Markoe 1985: Cy-21; E-13) also have similar lotus bud motifs. These parallels show that similar short-stemmed vegetal motifs were common in the art of Phoenicia from the 8th to the 5th c. B.C.

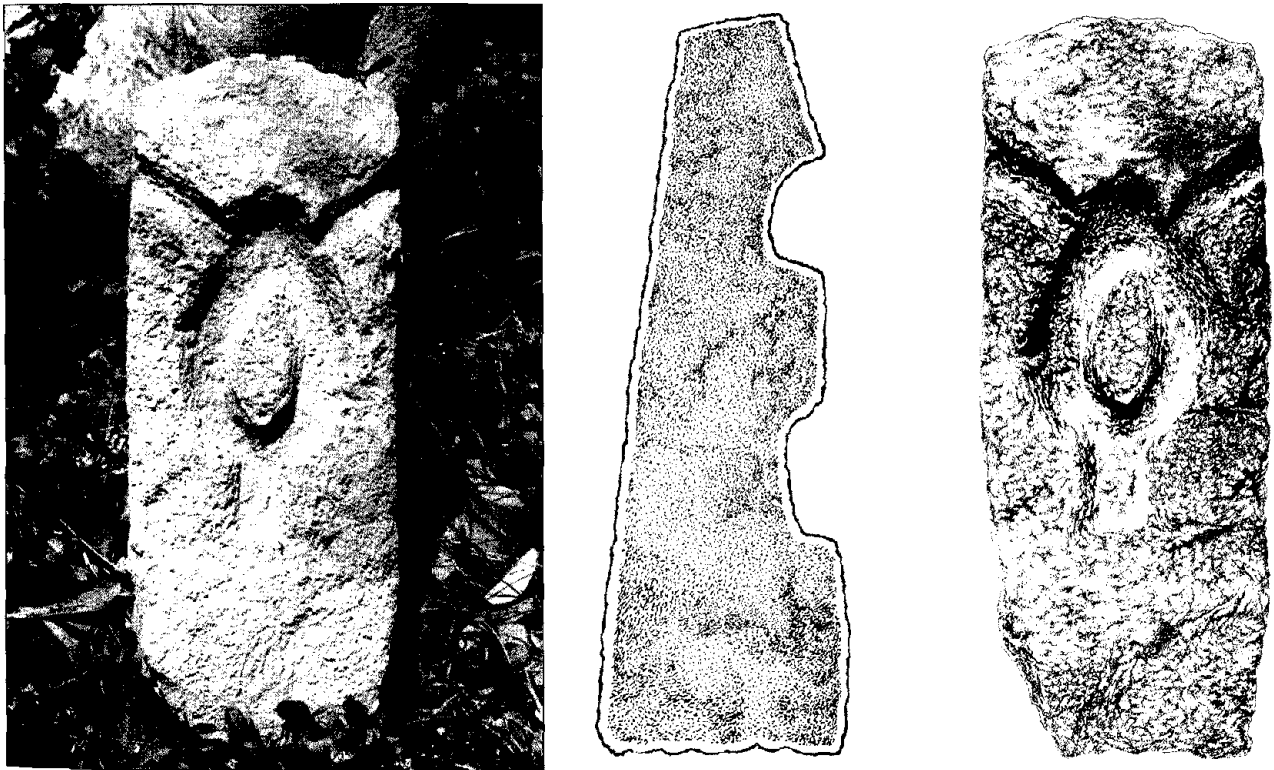


Fig. 15. Stele 11 Lotus bud.



Fig. 16. A parallel to Stele 11 from Nimrud (Orchard 1967: 187).

Stele 12 (Fig. 17)

This stele is of the well-cemented, harder and denser variety of beach rock. Its color is pink. The stone is L-shaped and its vertical part narrows towards the top. It is roughly smoothed on the front and sides. Its lower left corner is broken.

The upper part of the stele has four vertical parallel incisions. These lines may be coarse representations of *uraei*. *Uraei* are very common on Oriental and Punic stelae and they usually decorate their upper part. Simplified representations of this motif as attested on this stone, are found on stelae from Monte Sirai (Bondi 1972: V, 9; VIII, 16; XXVII, 58; see also stele 48). It is to be noted that *uraei* usually surmount the crescent-disc as is also the case here: Under the four lines there is a crescent moon turned downward containing a small solar disc. The crescent-disc motif is one of the most widespread symbols on Punic stelae. It is also attested on 6th c. Cypriot shrine models (Bretschneider 1991: Pl. 99-102). Under these motifs, five Phoenician letters written in two lines are clearly readable:

grh
mn

The personal name *grhmn*, «Client of (the god Baal) Hamon» or «Client of the *hmn*» is attested here for the first time. Names formed with the element *gr* followed by a divine name are widely attested in Phoenician and Punic onomastics (Benz 1972: 298; Halff 1963-4:105). However, names with the divine name *hmn* are rare: they are

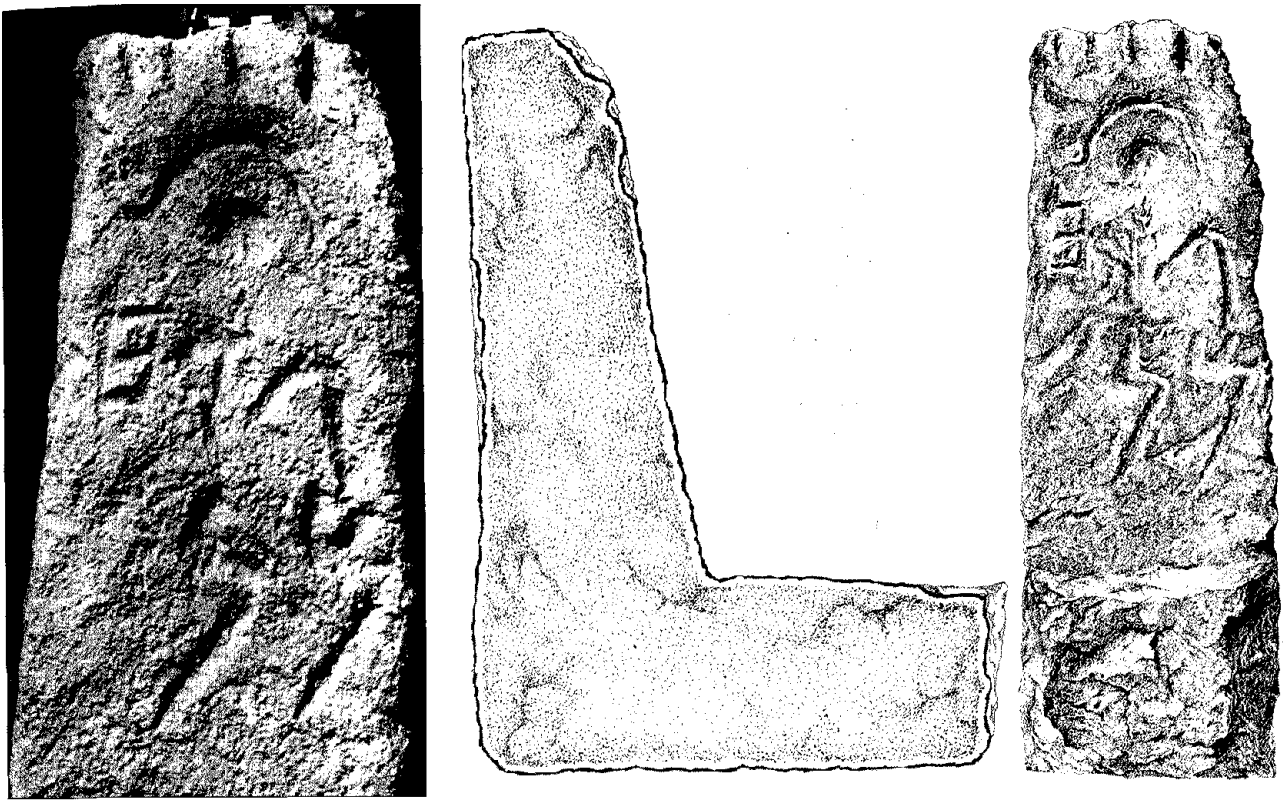


Fig. 17. Stele 12 *grhmn*.



Fig. 18. A parallel to uraei and crescent-disc symbols of Stele 12 from Monte Sirai (Bondi 1972 ● or Studi Semitici 11).

Fig. 19. Stele 13 *tnšb' št 'lm*.

or *'lm* = «god/s» (for personal names built with *'lm*=**g**ods, see Benz 1972: 267). Both *šb'* and *'lm* are attested in Phoenician onomastics for the first time.

Concerning the palaeography, the *taus* of the inscription are clearly cross-shaped: two are upright and one is slightly bent. This form of the letter does not appear after the 7th c. B.C. (Peckham 1968: 104-106). The two *šins* provide a good *terminus post quem* for the inscription: they have lost the W-shape and their form, one with a rounded and the other with an angular V-shaped bottom, does not occur before the 6th c. B.C. (Peckham 1968: 106). *Lu-med* provides a *terminus ante quem* with its vertical shaft, which is not attested after the 6th c. (Peckham 1968: 108). The above evidence already sets the time range for our stele: it is to be dated between the end of the 7th and the end of the 6th c. B.C. *Bet*, *ayin*, *mem* and *aleph* also fit this time bracket. It is to be noted that the two *alephs* of this inscription are not identical: the first one has almost parallel head lines, both of them cut by a vertical shaft while the other one has two lines joining at a round angle to the left of the shaft. These two forms are also attested simultaneously in the Ipsamboul inscription dated 591 B.C.

Stele 14 (Fig. 20)

This stele is of the hard, well-cemented variety of beach rock and is of a pink color. It is square and rather flat with irregular sides and edges. On the roughly smoothed front, a crescent-disc is represented above seven Phoenician letters written in two lines. The inscription reads clearly:

mlqrt
b

«Melqart is (my) father». Personal names formed with the divine name Melqart are extremely common in Phoenician and Punic onomastics (Benz 1972: 347-8). However this specific form is not yet attested and occurs here for the first time. The name *'bmlqrt* is known from a Punic inscription (Fuentes Estañol 1980: 58).

Fig. 20. Stele 14 *mlqr't'b*.

Concerning the palaeography, the letters are of medium size and written with sharp, thin lines. A date in the 8th c. B.C. is suggested by the shape of the letter *mem*: it has an angular head consisting of three parallel vertical strokes and a straight vertical shaft. This letter finds close parallels in 8th c. inscriptions. The two most striking parallels are the 8th c. inscription of the Sidonian crater (Puech 1994) and a Tyrian seal published by Bordreuil (1986: No 7). This form of *mem* seems to be common to the Tyrian inscriptions of that period. An 8th c. date is corroborated by the shape of the letter *qof*, which has a rounded head divided into two by a vertical shaft, a shape attested between the 10th and the 8th c. B.C. Later, this letter changes drastically. *lamed* has an angular and short tail, a shape that cannot be later than the 6th c. B.C. (Peckham 1968:104-108). *resh* has a triangular head and a long straight shaft. *Taw* has a cross-shaped head and a long vertical shaft, characteristic of 9th to 7th c. inscriptions (the above-mentioned Sidonian crater, the old Cypriot inscriptions from Kition and Limassol and the Kilamuwa inscription). *Aleph* has a very narrow angular head with lines joining at the left of a slightly tilted shaft, a shape common to 8th/7th c. inscriptions. *Beth* has a very angular head and there is a slight deviation between the vertical line of the head and that of the shaft, which curves at a right angle to the left. The palaeography suggests a date in the 8th c. B.C.

Stele 15 (Fig. 21)

This stele is cut in the hardest, most cemented variety of beach rock and is of a very pale brown color. It is rectangular in shape with a rounded top, very roughly hewn and in a good state of preservation. The front bears a horseshoe-shaped motif, its lower part crossed by a horizontal line. Very close parallels, which are interpreted as *betyls* (see below) are found on stelae from Nora (Bisi 1967: LII 2) and Sulcis (Bartoloni 1986: XXVI, 163). The *betyl* is a common motif on the archaic stelae from Carthage (Bartoloni 1976: 235, 237, 317).

Below the horizontal line there is an arrow-like sign with a rounded shaft. No satisfactory explanation can be given to this sign. However, the arrowhead may have been the result of erosion, and it is not impossible to assume that originally it was the head of the letter *beth*. Similarly isolated letters are attested on ostrich eggs (Amadasi-Guzzo 1988: 453) and on some Carthaginian stelae. Above the symbol, four letters are written in one line and the inscription reads clearly:

grgš

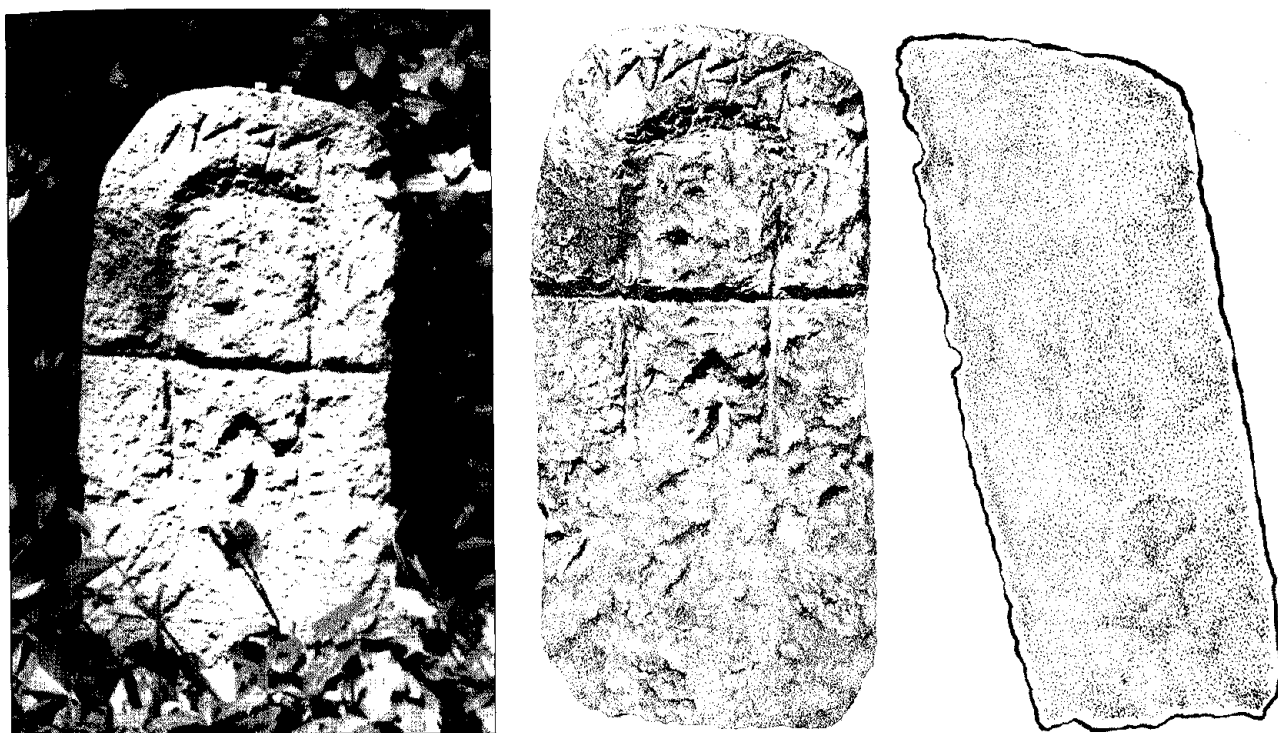


Fig. 21. Stele 15 *grgš*.

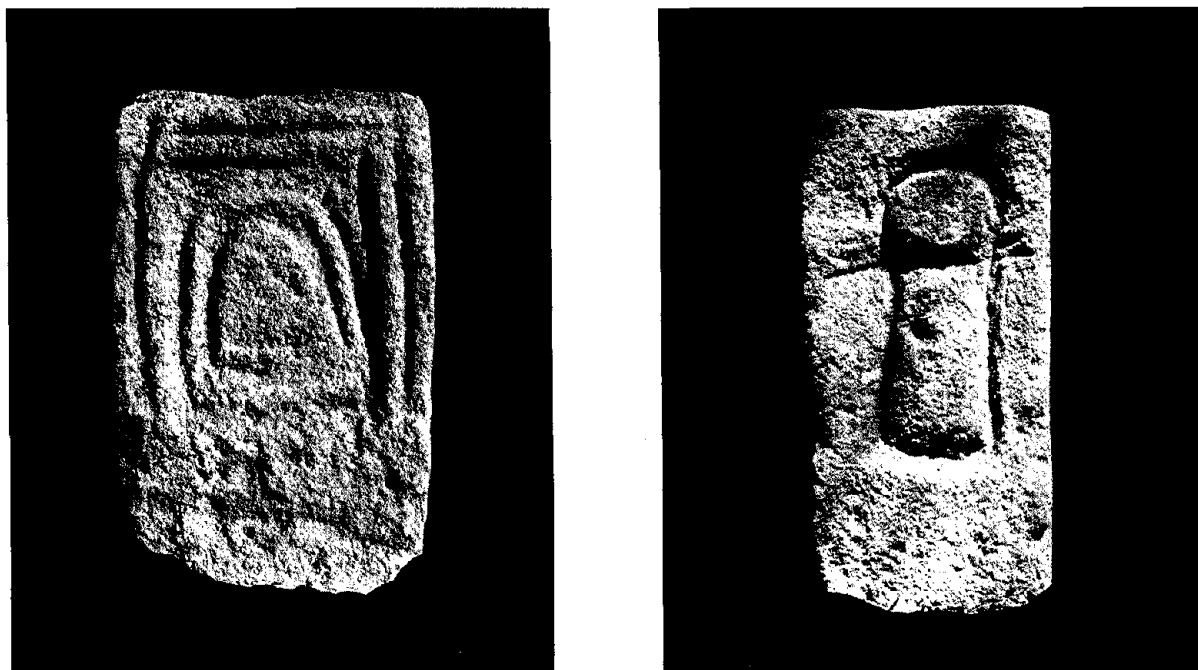


Fig. 22. Parallels to Stele 15 from Nora and Carthage (Bisi 1967: LII, 2 and XII, 1).

This personal name is known in Ugaritic (Ribichini and Xella 1991: 161) and is widely attested in Punic onomastics (Halff 1963-4: 105; Benz 1972: 299). Its meaning, however, remains uncertain. Halff (1963-4: 105) suggests «clay, mud» derived from Arabic *gīrgīs*, and, according to her, the name could be that of a profession. An alternative explanation may be to interpret it as a theophorous name formed with the element *gr* = client (compare Heltzer (1987: 309) who suggests the meaning «protected person») and a divine name, *gš* = *Gusi* (for *Gusi* as a divine name see Liverani 1961: 185 and Vattioni 1966: 39ff.), according to a pattern very common to Phoenician and Punic onomastics (*grštrt*, *grmlqrt*; see Benz 1972: 298). New evidence from Ebla (*ARETIX*: 37, VI, 4; 38r: III, 3; 40: III, 7) and Ugarit (Ribichini and Xella 1991:161) attesting respectively the existence of a god *gū-sa*, *gsš* as well as the Ugaritic personal names *bngš* and *grgsš* shows that Liverani was correct in his assumption that *Gusi* is a divine name.

Concerning the palaeography, the letters are of medium size and written with sharp, thin lines. The two *gimmels* have straight vertical right sides and rather long left sides joining at a broad angle. It is difficult to compare and date these letters because *gimmel* did not undergo significant changes. The two oblique lines of the head of *resh* do not meet. This letter is of no help in dating the inscription while *šin* clearly is: it has a W-shape, which suggests that this stele cannot be dated later than the 7th c. B.C.

1.4.d₂ TYRE 1991 Stelae in the Department of Antiquities Collection in the Beiteddin Museum

Stele 16 (Fig. 23)

This rectangular stele is cut in a well-cemented beach-rock. It is one of the largest stones found in the Tyrian cemetery and it is in a good state of preservation. Traces of the stonecutter tools are still visible on its face and sides, which were only roughly smoothed, while the back was left almost untouched.

One line of inscription is written on top of the stele. It consists of four very large, 8 to 14 cm long letters, which were very deeply chiseled in the stone. These four letters cover the whole width of the stele and they cle-



Fig. 23. Stele 16 *lsm*.

arly read: *šm'*: «(belonging) to *šm'*». This personal name is a hypocoristic of a theophorous name meaning «(DN) has heard». It is widely attested in West Semitic in general and in Phoenician and Punic onomastics in particular (Benz 1972: 421).

As for the palaeography, the shape of the letters is very archaic, particularly that of *šin* and *mem*. The first has a clear W shape while the second is written as a wavy vertical line. Both find their closest parallels in 10th c. B.C. inscriptions from Byblos (Friedrich-Röllig 1970: Table 1), which suggests the same date for the tombstone. This makes it the oldest funerary stele discovered to date.

Stele 17 (Fig. 24)

This stele is cut in well-cemented beach-rock and has a slightly trapezoidal shape. In order to reduce its heavy weight, modern tomb robbers cut it lengthwise from top to bottom reducing its thickness substantially. As usual, only the front side was well dressed to receive the inscription.

The very large, deeply cut signs were written in three irregular lines: *mem* and *qof* are 9 cm long, *resh* is 10 cm long, while *taw* and the cross-line of *aleph* are respectively 14 and 12 cm long. The signs are well preserved and read very clearly:

mlq

rt'

b

Mlqrt'b, «(the god) Melqart is (my) father», a personal name also attested on Stele 14.

Concerning the palaeography, the form of the signs suggests a date in the 9th or early 8th c. B.C. *Mem* has a shaft strongly tilting to the right while its head is quite irregular. This corresponds to the transition phase from the vertical to the more horizontal shape of the sign's head, which finds its closest parallels in 9th/8th c. B.C. inscriptions like those of Nora and Kilamuwa. *Qof* still has a circular head divided into two by a vertical line, a shape that is not

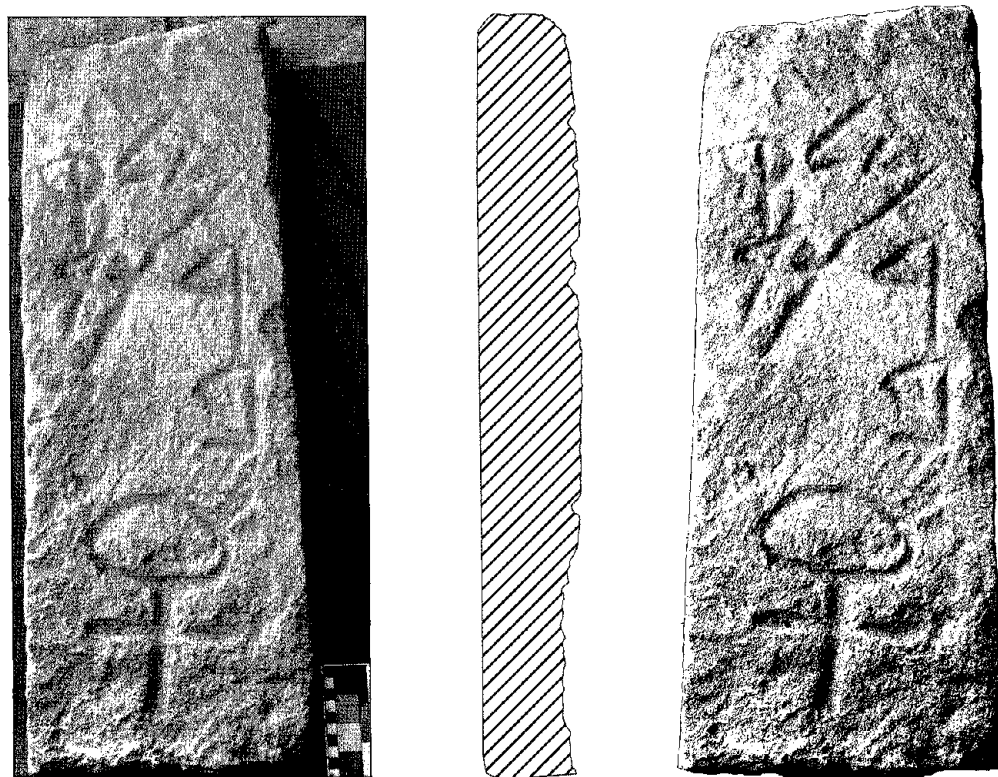


Fig. 24. Stele 17 *mlqrt'b*.

attested after the mid-8th c. B.C. *Taw* has also a form characteristic of the 9th/8th c. B.C. with its cross-shape and long shaft tilted to the right. The headlines of *aleph* join at a narrow angle left of the very long cross line, a form very similar to that found in the late 9th c. Kilamuwa inscription (Friedrich-Röllig 1970: Table 1). The vertical shape and the angular head of *resh* as well as the triangular head of *beth* and its short tail turning at a right angle also find parallels in 9th/8th c. inscriptions.

Below the inscription to the left is a so-called *ankh* sign. The circular, or rather oval head is 13 cm in diameter while the vertical line below it is 12 cm long. The latter is cut at a right angle by a 15 cm long horizontal line, a few centimeters below the head. This sign is the most common symbol found on funerary stelae and is interpreted as a symbol for eternal life (see Chapter III).

Stele 18 (Fig. 25)

This stele is cut in a well-cemented beach rock. Modern tomb robbers sawed it in order to thin and to shorten it. What is left is a truncated stele with a rounded top. The surface of the stone was very roughly smoothed leaving the front side of the stele slightly irregular.

Three lines of inscription were carved a few centimeters below the upper edge. The letters are fairly large and very deeply cut. The first line of inscription is not perfectly horizontal and the last two letters are lower than the first three. The second and third lines are more regular. Except for the fourth sign, which is somehow problematic, the remaining letters are very clear and the name reads:

l'ym

m bt g

mr

«*l'ym* daughter of *gmr*».

What is striking about this inscription is the consistency in writing the same letter. *Mem*, for example, is written three times almost identically. Its shape is very characteristic and consists of a shaft, slightly tilted to the right in two cases and vertical in one, and a head formed of two and not three vertical and parallel strokes, since the shaft does not cross the horizontal line of the head as is the case in later 6th/5th c. B.C. inscriptions. In these later inscriptions, the middle stroke usually crosses the vertical line of the head. The form of the letter on our stele is quite

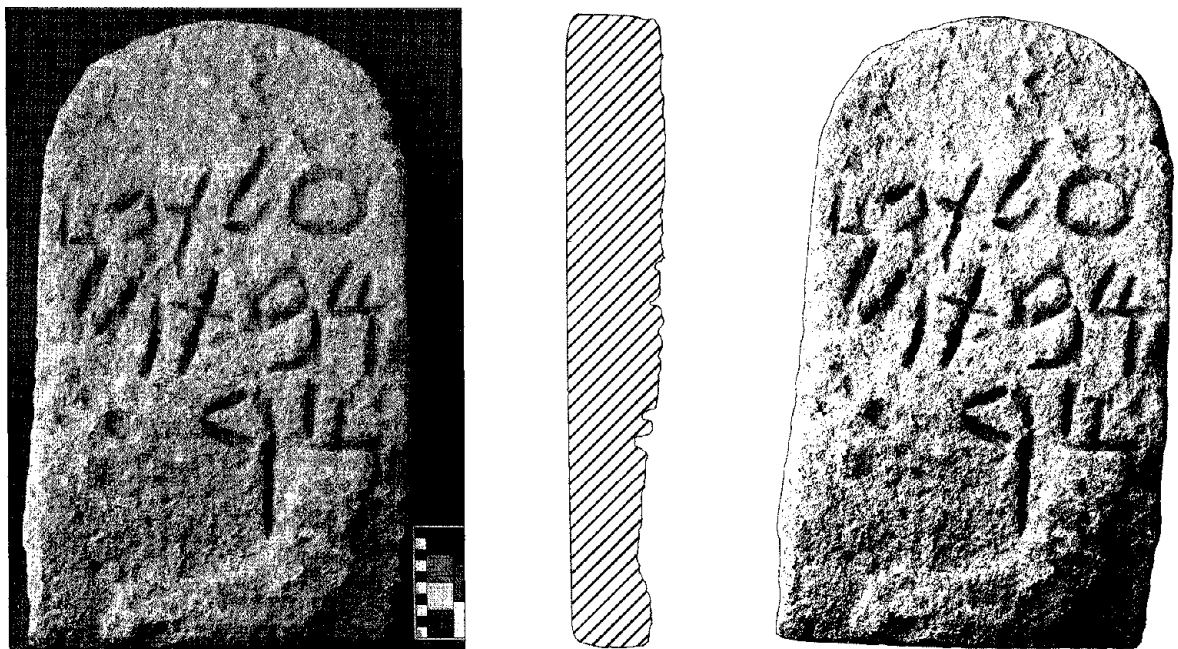


Fig. 25. Stele 18 *l'ym bt gmr*.

unusual and a close but not identical parallel is the sign *mem* in a 7th c. Maltese inscription (Peckham 1968: 107, 3). It differs from earlier 8th/7th c. B.C. signs in that the head is quite orthogonal and not wavy, and from later inscriptions in that the middle vertical stroke of the head does not cross the horizontal line. Two identical *taus* are attested in this inscription and they are both cross-shaped with a long shaft tilting to the right, typical of 9th to 7th c. B.C. inscriptions (Peckham 1968: 104 and Friedrich-Röllig 1970: Table 1). *Lamed* with its rounded tail and *resh* with its triangular head and long vertical shaft are also typical of this period. The head of *beth* is not very angular and its tail is clearly rounded.

Only one sign, the fourth of the first line, is difficult to identify with certainty. A close examination of the inscription allowed us to identify it beyond serious doubt as *yod*. The problem with this letter is that its upper part is very deeply cut while its lower part is hardly visible. The head of *yod*, made of two horizontal, parallel strokes and the vertical line joining them, is clear while the lower part of the sign as well as its tail are not well engraved. The lower part of the sign is shifted to the left. The fact that *yod* is still almost vertical, tilting only slightly to the left, indicates a date in the 7th c. B.C. as supported by parallels from Hasan Beyli and Praeneste (Peckham 1968: 105). All the above-mentioned parallels suggest a date in the late 8th or early 7th c. B.C. for the stele.

The personal name *ʿlymm* is attested here for the first time. *ʿl* derives from a root *ʿly* 'to go up' or 'to be offered' (Jean and Hoftijzer 1965: 211). It is also a feminine substantive attested in Phoenician and used as a preposition meaning 'on top of' or 'above', 'towards', 'for', or as the construct form of *ʿlh* which is attested in Palmyrene with the meaning 'altar', and in Punic where it means 'burnt offering' (Jean and Hoftijzer 1965: 215 and 211). *ymm* is a plural form of *ym*, which means either 'sea' or 'day' (Jean and Hoftijzer 1965: 107-108). A plural *ymm* 'days' is attested in Phoenician. The personal name could be interpreted in a variety of ways: 'Offering of (or for) the Seas' or 'Offering of (or for) the Days'. *Gmr* derives from a verbal root meaning 'to be complete'. Theophorous names formed with this root, '(DN) is complete', i.e. perfect, are very well attested in Hebrew but also in Phoenician and Punic onomastics (Benz 1972: 297).

Stele 19 (Fig. 26)

This stele is cut in a hard, well-cemented beach rock and its front side was smoothed to receive the inscription. Tomb robbers cut it both length- and widthwise leaving a small stone with a three-letter inscription. The top and the right side of the stone show breaks, which have slightly damaged the first sign.

The inscription reads very clearly *bdʿ*, a hypocoristic formed with the divine name *bd/bdd*, the ancient Semitic and later Aramaic weather-god. The palaeography of the inscription dates it to the 7th c. B.C. as attested by parallels of the same period. *be* has a vertical shaft and three parallel and almost horizontal strokes of different length, the top one being the shortest and the bottom one the longest. *Daleth* has an angular head and a short vertical shaft. *aleph* has cross lines converging to the left of the shaft, which is rotated in a counter clockwise direction to the left. These forms of the signs are very common in 7th c. B.C. inscriptions (Peckham 1968: 105-107).

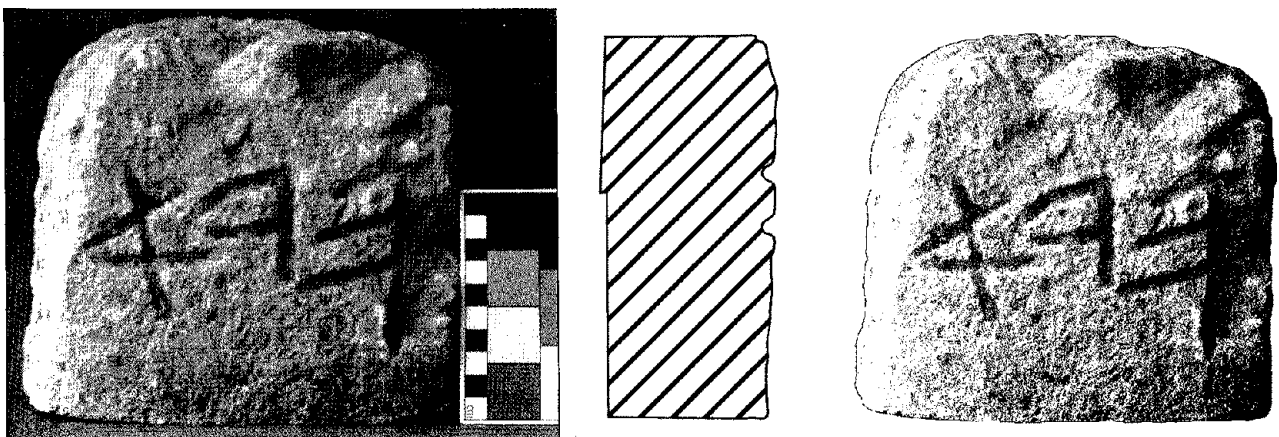


Fig. 26. Stele 19 *bdʿ*.

Stele 20 (Fig. 27)

This trapezoidal stele is cut in a hard, well-cemented beach rock, which was roughly smoothed on the front and sides while the back was coarsely hammered. Two breaks on the left and right lower corners can be seen. While the left break is very substantial and has partly destroyed the symbol, the right one did not cause any damage to the inscription.

The signs are of medium size and are deeply cut. They are written in four regular lines and they are very well preserved. The inscription reads:

lš
pṭb
n'z
r

«(Belonging) to špṭ son of 'zr». Both personal names, which are short forms of well-known theophorous names, are widely attested in Phoenician and Punic onomastics and mean «(DN) has judged or is judge» (Benz 1972: 423) and «(DN) has helped or is helper» (Benz 1972: 375) respectively.

The palaeography of the inscription is complex and presents some contradictory information. On the one hand, most of the signs seem to indicate a date in the 8th/7th c. B.C. The W form of šm and, most importantly, tet contribute significantly to this suggestion. tet is oval in shape, rotated to the right, with a cross bar drawn across the center. However, the fact that the oval is still completely closed suggests a date not later than the 8th c. B.C. Lamed with its rounded tail is another indicator of a date in the 8th/7th c. B.C. This dating is however contradicted by the relatively late form of zayin, which has acquired its zigzag shape after the 7th c. B.C. (Peckham 1968:105-109, Friedrich-Röllig 1970: Table 1). According to the evidence, and in spite of some archaic forms, a date towards the end of the 7th c. seems appropriate.

On the lower left side of the stele, below the inscription, is a symbol of which only a partly preserved circular head survives. Because of widely attested parallels, one could safely assume that it is a so-called *ankh* sign.

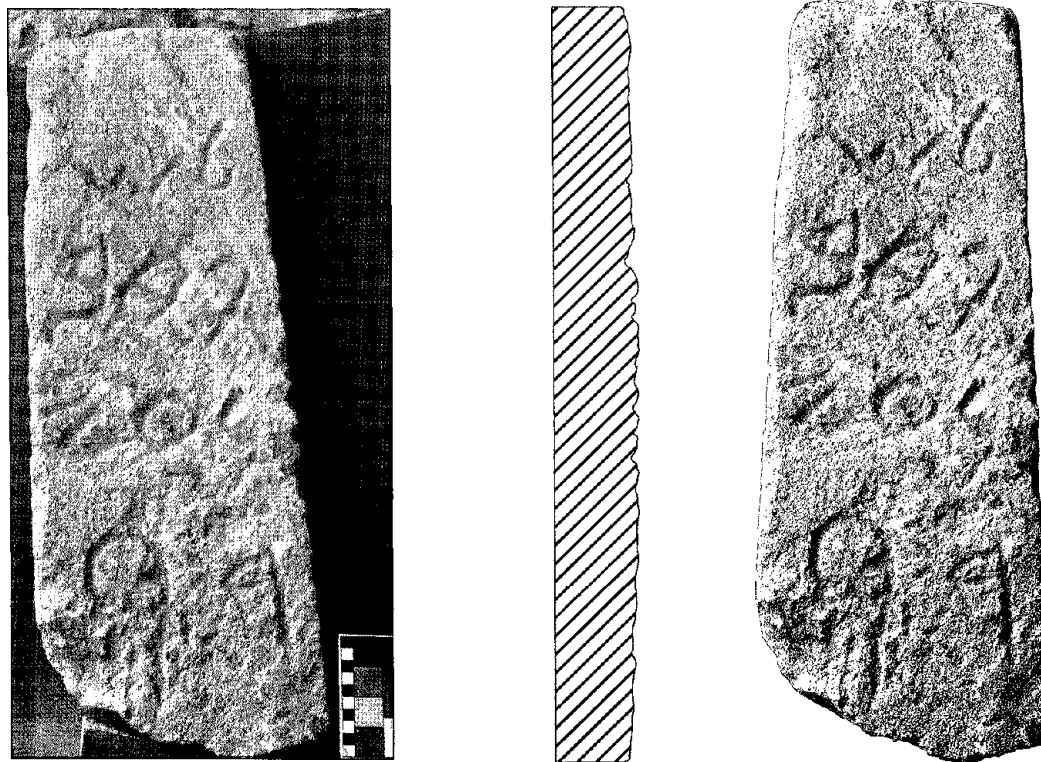


Fig. 27. Stele 20 lšpṭ bn 'zr.

Stele 21 (Fig. 28)

This stele was cut in a well-cemented beach rock. Clandestine diggers sawed it both lengthwise and widthwise, leaving only the rounded top of the stele and the three-line inscription. The stone was only roughly smoothed on the front, leaving an irregular surface. A probably modern break obliterated totally the upper part of the second sign and damaged partly that of the third. The rest of the inscription is well preserved and is written in three lines. It reads:

mšry
bn b'
lytb

The signs are deeply cut and of medium size except for *mem* which is larger than the other letters. The head of this sign consists of three vertical parallel strokes. The shaft was cut first as a short vertical line. It was lengthened by a second line, which is slightly shifted to the left as it clearly appears on the photograph. This form of the sign is attested on another Tyrian stele, stèle 14, dated to the 8th c. B.C. Of the second sign, only the long vertical shaft is preserved. From its damaged head a short oblique line to the right of the shaft has survived. On the basis of this observation, a reading *šade* seems to be the only alternative possible. The next sign, in spite of being slightly obliterated, is easily recognizable as *resh*, with an angular head and a long vertical shaft. *Yod* is written twice in the inscription. The first one is rotated to the left. Its head has two parallel strokes and its tail is drawn upwards forming a narrow angle with the shaft. This slightly tilted form of the sign is characteristic of the 7th c. B.C. (Peckham 1968:107). The second one is very similar but more vertical in shape. *Beth* is written three times in an almost identical manner namely with an angular head and a tail that is drawn in an oblique line at the juncture of the head. *Nun* has a vertical head with two lines cutting each other at a right angle and a shaft slightly tilted to the right, a form typical of the 7th c. B.C. *Ayin* is made of two rounded strokes, which do not seem to meet, an indication of the relatively late date of the stone. *Lamed* has an oblique shaft strongly tilted to the right with a short horizontal tail, a form common to 7th c. B.C. inscriptions. Quite interesting is *zet* which is an oval rotated to the right with a cross pattern inside it attested in 8th c. B.C. inscriptions (Peckham 1968: 105, Friedrich-Röllig 1970: Table 1). The palaeography of the inscriptions suggests a date in the late 8th or early 7th c. B.C. for the stele.

The personal name *mšry*, a gentilic meaning «Egyptian», is attested in Phoenician onomastics (Benz 1972: 352-353) while *b'lytb* «Baal was agreeable» appears here for the first time.



Fig. 28. Stele 21 *mšry bn b'lytb*.

Stele 22 (Fig. 29)

This stele is cut in a hard, well-cemented beach rock. It was only roughly smoothed on the front side and many irregularities can still be seen. Clandestine diggers sawed it length- and widthwise leaving only the one-line inscription. The breaks, which are visible on the right side of the stele, seem to suggest that the beginning of the inscription may have been damaged in the process. The signs, except for the last one, which is clearly a *het*, are very badly preserved and difficult to read. All that can be seen are vertical and oblique strokes, which cannot be ascribed to specific signs. According to both the space and the size of *het*, it seems that two or even three signs should be restored.

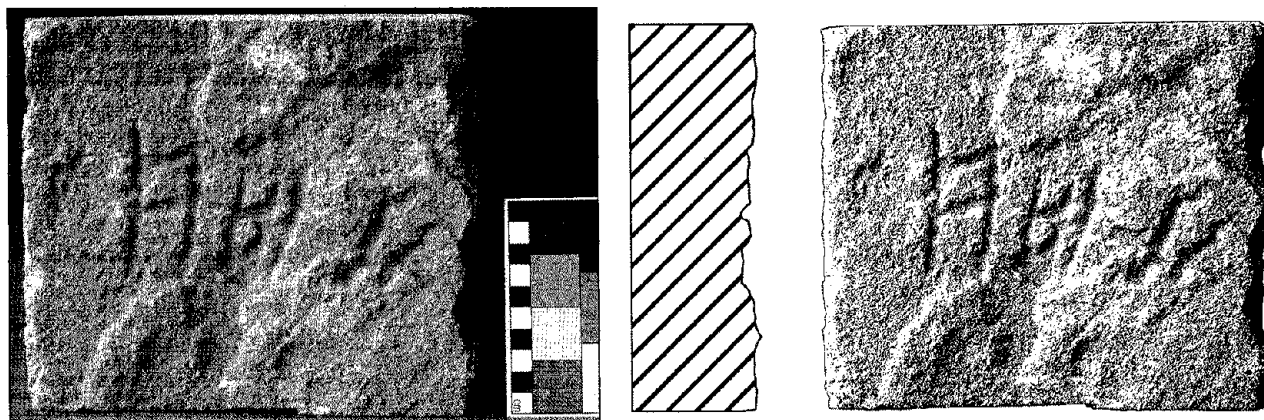


Fig. 29. Stele 22 [xxxx]h.

Stele 23 (Fig. 30)

This trapezoidal stele was cut in badly cemented beach rock and the stone shows signs of erosion. It was sawn by site looters both length- and widthwise leaving only the part where three lines of inscription are written. All sides were cut straight except the top of the stone, which seems to have been damaged by a break. The front side has been smoothed to receive the inscription.

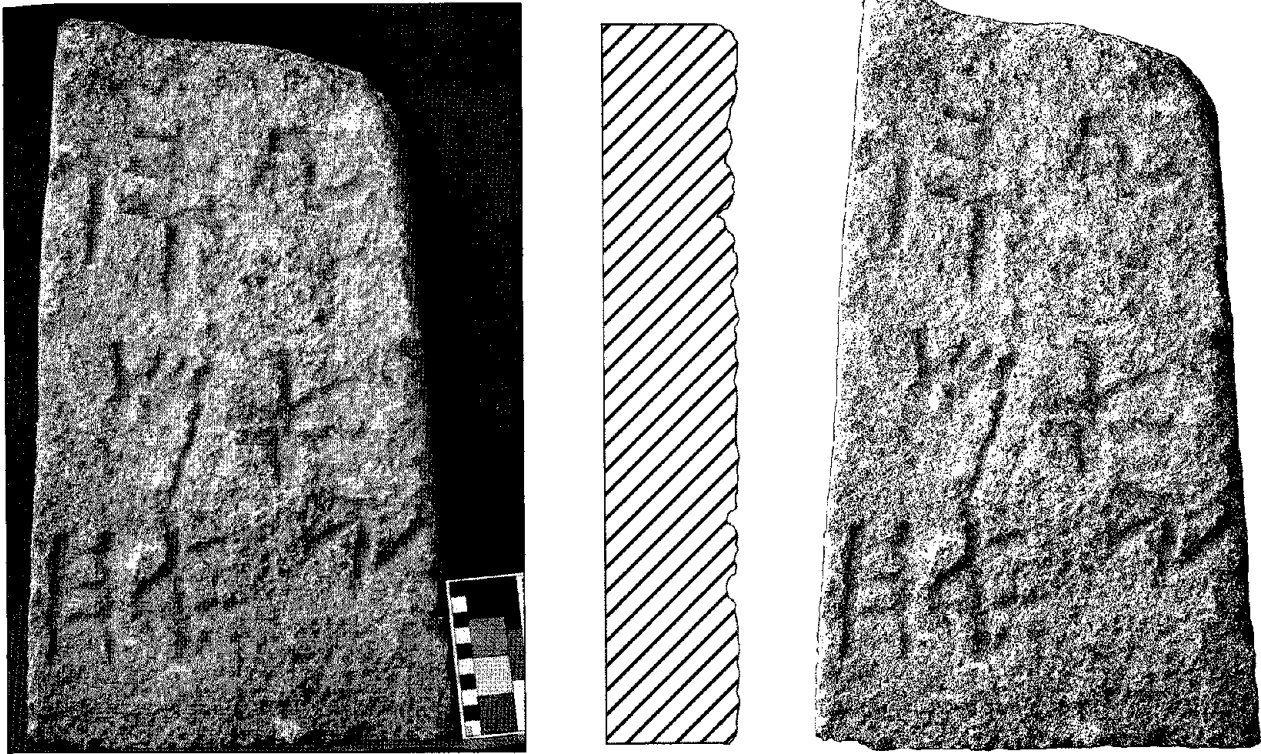
The signs are deeply cut and of medium size but they have slightly suffered from erosion. They can however be clearly read:

ysp
'my
h

The personal name *ysp*, «(DN) has added», is a hypocoristic attested in Punic onomastics as well as in Israelite personal names (Benz 1972: 323-324; for further parallels see Lemaire 2001: 9). If the remaining part of the inscription is to be interpreted, as is usually the case, as the family relationship of *ysp* to the other person mentioned in the inscription, the rest should be understood as *'m y'h*, «mother of *y'h*», a reading which makes perfect sense since the normal formula used on the stelae is «PN son, daughter, or wife of PN». The problem however with this interpretation is that in the above-mentioned examples *ysp* is clearly a male name while it appears on this stele as a female personal name. *ysp* is indeed clearly said to be the mother (*'m*) of *y'h*. This is possible since *ysp* is the hypocoristic of a theophorous name such as *yspb'l*, which could very well be interpreted also as a female name.

The second personal name is more problematic: first it is not attested in Phoenician or Punic; second, if *y'h* is to be understood as a verbal form, the verbal root to which it belongs is highly problematic since no root *y'h* is attested and no other weak root of which *y'h* would be the imperfect form, is known to me.

The evidence provided by stele 31 (Lemaire 2001: No 1, stele 31) may suggest another and maybe better alternative for the interpretation of the inscription. Its inscription reads *mbry bn ysp bn 'my'h*. Here *ysp* is son of a person called *'my'h*. This name was compared by Lemaire to the biblical name Ahi'am and to another archaic Phoeni-

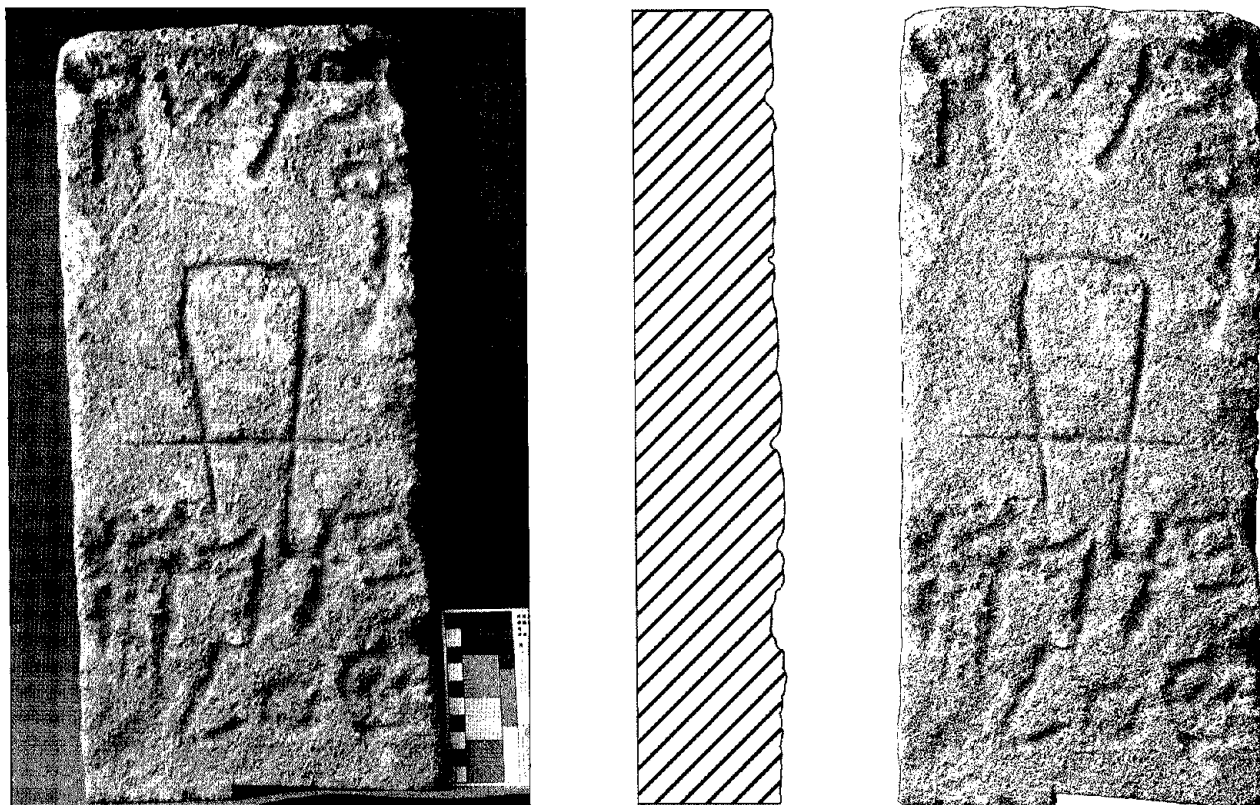
Fig. 30. Stele 23 *ysp* 'm *y'h*.

cian name 'I'I'M (Lemaire 2002: 9). We would like to suggest that *ysp* of stele 31 is the same as *ysp* of stele 23. On both stelae, the name of the father is the same, 'my'h, but on stele 23, the scribe has omitted the word *bm*, which may mislead to interpreting the signs following *ysp* as representing two separate words: 'm, «mother of» and *y'h*, a second personal name. If this alternative, which is highly plausible, is accepted, we would be in the presence of two deceased, father and son, buried in the same cemetery: the father, *ysp*, and his son, *mbry*, whose tombstones stood probably side by side before clandestine diggers separated them. The palaeography of the stelae brings further support to this suggestion: stele 23, that of *ysp*, is indeed older than stele 31, that of his son *mbry* (see below).

Concerning the palaeography, *yod* is written twice. The first sign is characterized by its angular and vertical shape, its slightly oblique tail, and by the parallel strokes of the head, a shape characteristic of 8th c. B.C. inscriptions. The second has a tail strongly curving upwards and an oblique lower line of the head, indicating a slightly later date, in the 8th / 7th c. B.C. (Peckham 1968: 105-107). *Samekb* allows a closer dating of the inscription since its vertical shaft cuts the three horizontal lines of the head, a feature that is not attested after the 8th c. B.C. (Friedrich-Röllig 1970: Table 1). *Pe* has an angular head and a vertical shape, and *mem* has a shaft slightly rotated to the right and a wavy line for the head. This shape is again common in the 8th c. As for *aleph*, the lines of the head converge and meet to the left of the slightly rotated cross line. Finally *het* with its vertical parallel shafts and its perfectly horizontal cross lines finds its closest parallel in the Limassol inscription (Friedrich-Röllig 1970: Table 1). The palaeographic evidence indicates that the stele should be dated to the late 8th c. B.C.

Stele 24 (Fig. 31)

This stele was cut in a badly cemented beach rock. Clandestine diggers sawed it length- and widthwise leaving only the part bearing the inscription and the symbol. The inscription is written in four lines, two above and two below the symbol. The weathering of the stone partly damaged the signs and made their reading difficult. The letters are fairly large in size, ca 9 cm long, and they are deeply cut. The first sign is partly obliterated but it is still clearly iden-

Fig. 31. Stele 24 *bt šhr bt grtb'l*.

tifiable as *beth*. The tracing of the head is not very distinct but the shaft is vertical and short while the tail curves at a right angle. The second sign is clearly *taw*: its vertical shaft is more deeply cut than the horizontal cross line and it is slightly rotated to the right. The third sign is well preserved: it is clearly a W-shaped *šin*. The upper part of the fourth sign is obliterated by a break, but the two parallel vertical shafts and two horizontal cross lines suggest beyond any doubt a reading *het*. The only sign of the second line is clearly *resh*.

The first and second signs of the third line are clearly *beth* and *taw* respectively. The third one is more problematic because of the stone erosion. However one can clearly see a vertical shaft slightly rotated to the right and a short oblique stroke to the left of it, which converges to the top of the shaft but does not join it. It can be read beyond serious doubt as *gimmel*. The fourth sign is clearly *resh* but the fifth one is problematic. The erosion has obliterated most of it. What remains is the lower part of a vertical shaft and a small vertical line belonging to its upper part. Both vertical lines are aligned. Crossing the upper short line at a right angle is a short horizontal line. The surviving traces allow the restitution of *taw*. The signs of the fourth line are legible with fair certainty in spite of the fact that the first one is slightly damaged: they read *b'l*. The personal name on the stele can be read with fair certainty as:

btšh

r

btgrt

b'l

btšhr bt grtb'l «*btšhr* daughter of *grtb'l*»

The personal name *btšhr* means «Daughter of Dawn». *Šhr* «Dawn» is attested as a divine component in Punic personal names (Benz 1972: 414-415), and is well known as a celestial deity from the Ugaritic myth of the «Birth of the Gracious Gods» (Wyatt 1998: 324 ff). This divine name is attested in Phoenician onomastics here for the first time (For a recent study see Lipinski 1995: 355 under *Shibar*; see also Chapter II.3). *grtb'l* means «(Female) Client of

(the god) Baal». Theophorous names built with the term *gr*, feminine *grt*, and a divine name, are widely attested in Phoenician and Punic onomastics (Benz 1972: 298 and 300).

Concerning the palaeography, the signs, mainly the W-shaped *šin*, the cross-shaped *taw* and the parallel vertical and horizontal lines of *het*, clearly indicate a date in the 8th or early 7th c. B.C. at the latest.

The symbol depicted on the stele is well centered and consists of a horizontal line cutting a horseshoe-shaped motif. The upper part of the symbol is wider than its lower part because the vertical sides converge slightly towards the bottom. This symbol is identical to that represented on stele 15 and may represent a *betyl* (see Chapter III).

Stele 25 (Fig. 32)

This stele is cut in a hard, well-cemented beach rock. Clandestine diggers sawed it length- and widthwise leaving only the part where symbol and inscription are found. The front side of the stele was smoothed but small modern breaks, mainly in the upper left side of the stone, have damaged it. This stele presents a unique feature not attested so far: it was entirely covered with red paint, traces of which can still be seen mainly on the disc motif as well as on the lower part of the stone. Both motif and inscription are badly preserved and difficult to reconstruct.

The motif consists of a circular cavity, which seems to be resting on a horizontal red line. There is however no sign of an incision for the line under the circular depression. The red paint, well preserved in this area, may be responsible for this impression. If the line were drawn on purpose under the disc we may be in the presence of a badly preserved *ankh* sign, very common on the stelae, or of a *shen*-ring sign meaning eternity or protection (Wilkinson 1992: 193). It may also simply be a symbol for the sun-disc represented by a circular cavity, which finds parallels on stele 1 and 5.

Below the motif is a two-line inscription, which is rather difficult to read because the signs are shallow, irregularly written, and slightly damaged. The first sign of the first line can be identified with fair certainty as *lamed*. Its

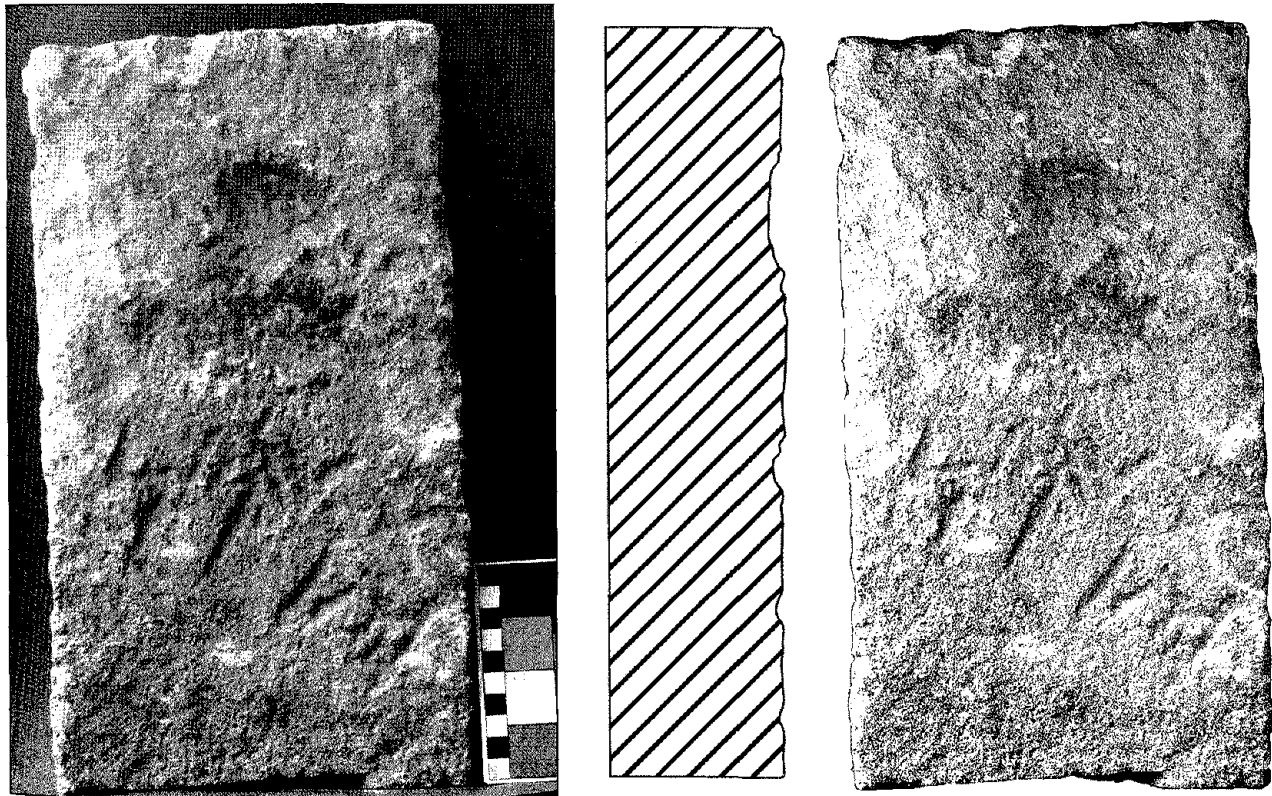


Fig. 32. Stele 25 *lšmny/llp*

oblique shaft and almost horizontal tail can be clearly seen. The second sign is more difficult to identify: First, it is almost stuck to the next sign, and second, surface erosion has partly erased it. What can however be clearly seen are converging sides of a V-shaped sign, which do not meet. They strongly suggest a reading *šin*. This reading is made even more likely because of a faint oblique line parallel to the left stroke of V. The third sign is most certainly *mem* with a shaft tilted to the right and a head consisting of three parallel vertical strokes. The fourth sign, though partly damaged is most probably *nun*. The fact that an accidental stroke crosses the head of the sign may at first induce a wrong identification of the sign as *mem*. The first sign of the second line is also badly preserved. A careful observation showed that the traces could be those of *yod*. The sign is rotated to the left to an almost horizontal position with a short tail curving upwards. The second sign of the second line is also difficult. Only two incised oblique lines, one much shorter than the other, which converge but do not join, can be seen. They may be either accidental or they may belong to *lamed*. The first alternative seems more plausible since both strokes are higher than the sign *yod*. The suggested reading is thus:

lšmn

yl?

«(Belonging) to *šmnyl*? The personal name is built with the divine name Eshmun, a major Phoenician deity and city god of Sidon. It is written here without the prosthetic *aleph* as attested also on stele 8. If the inscription does stop after *yod*, we would be in the presence of a hypocoristic name *šmny* similar to *b'ly* on stele 6, which is well attested in Phoenician and Punic onomastics (Benz 1972: 94). But if the unclear strokes following *yod* are to be read as *lamed*, the second element of the name would read, *yl*? This element is very difficult to interpret first and foremost because the reading of the sign is highly questionable. It may be either a third masculine singular form of a weak verbal root or a noun, the identification of both of which escapes us.

Concerning the date of the inscription, the only solid clue is the horizontal form of *yod*, which finds a close parallel in the Ipsamboul inscription and suggests a date in the late 7th or 6th c. B.C. (Peckham 1968: 107).

Stele 26 (Fig. 33)

This stele is cut in a badly cemented beach rock and its front side is only very roughly smoothed. Clandestine diggers cut the heavy stone from all sides reducing it to the rectangle on which the symbol was carved. On the upper and lower part of the stone oblique strokes left by cutting tools can still be seen.

The symbol engraved on this stele is quite interesting. It is in fact a combination of several motifs: it consists of an 18 x 17cm deeply cut cross. In each of the four quadrants hence delimited, there is a symbol: In the upper two, there is a circular motif, 6 cm in diameter, and in the lower two, a 13 cm long *ankb* sign. The cross motif is found on other stelae, more especially stele 33, where it was incised on the head of a human figure, and some of the recently published Akhziv stelae (Cross 2002: No 2). Cross, *ankb* and disc symbols are attested separately on other stelae but the combination of all three appears on stele 26 for the first time.

Stele 27 (Fig. 34)

The stele was cut in a well-compacted beach rock. Only its upper part and sides were roughly smoothed while its back was left untouched. Its thickness was reduced in its lower part causing a concave depression on the front side. The sides are also very irregular. It is difficult to decide whether these irregularities on the front and sides of the stele were made in antiquity or by modern looters. Since the stone was not sawn like most of the others, it seems more likely that the thinning of its lower part occurred in the past in order to provide the stele with a sort of «foot» to plant it in the ground. This would explain the fact that the stone is more regular in its upper part, which was to be seen and so coarsely cut in the lower part, which was buried.

On the upper front side of the stele, a 22 cm long symbol is carved. It consists, like the one on stele 25, of a combination of different symbols: a cross, made of two unequally long perpendicular lines, a crescent moon, and a disc. The vertical line is cut at a height of 14 cm from its bottom by the horizontal one, and by a semi-circular, deeply cut, incision, 11 cm in diameter, with a circle carved in its middle. Above the semi-circular motif, the perpendicular line, slightly shifted to the right, continues ca 7 cm to reach the upper edge of the stone. Here again, the individual symbols are attested on other stelae but this motif combination appears on stele 27 for the first time.

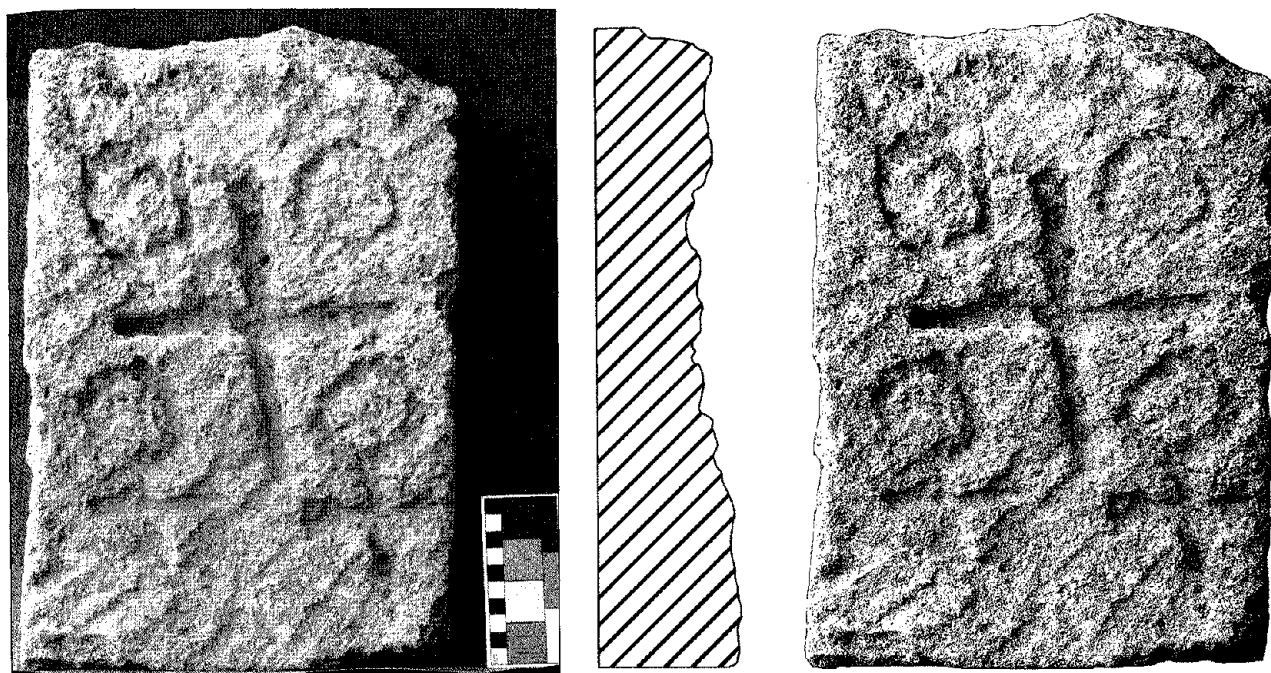


Fig. 33. Stele 26 Cross, circles, and *ankh* motifs.



Fig. 34. Stele 27 Cross, crescent moon, and disc.

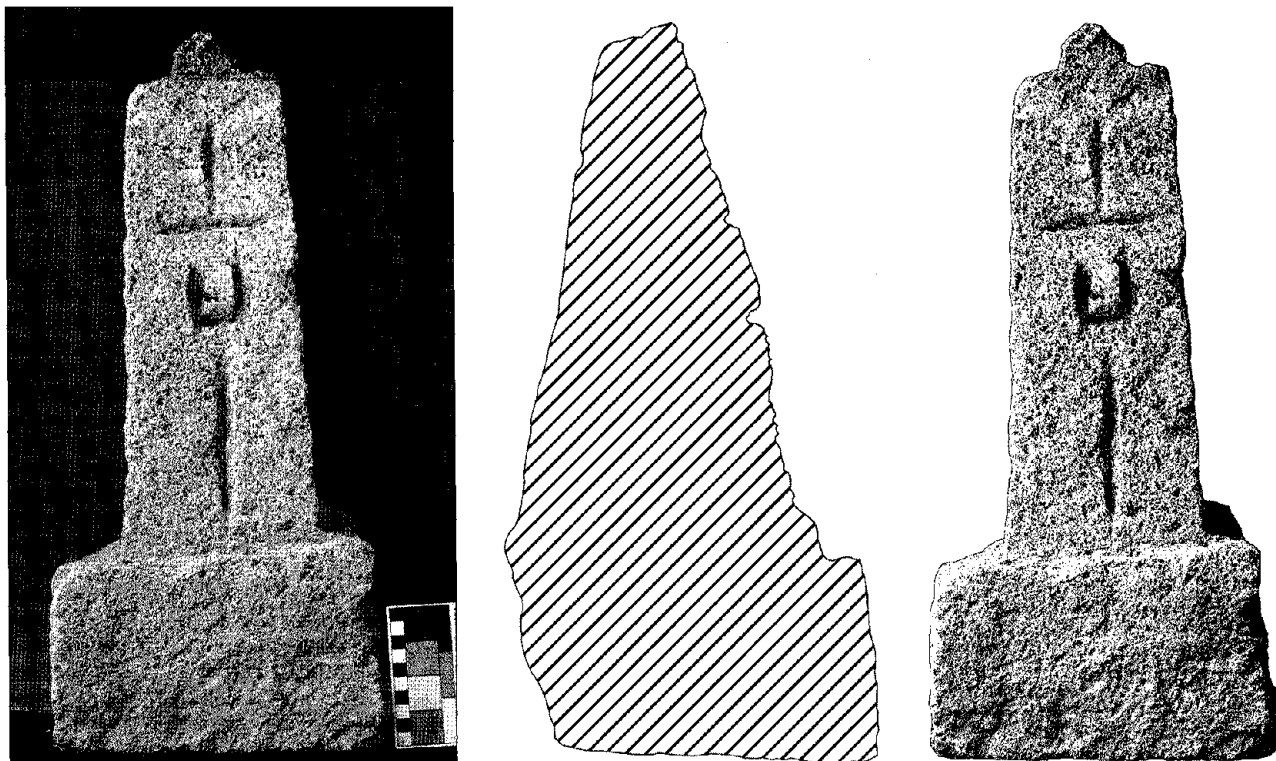


Fig. 35. Stele 28 Pyramidal stone with cross and U-shaped symbol.

Stele 28 (Fig. 35)

This stele is cut in a well-cemented beach rock. It is very carefully dressed and smoothed and its shape is quite exceptional: it consists of a 32 cm high pyramidal stone resting on a 22 x 22 cm square basis, both cut in a monolithic block. The slanting front side of the pyramidal stone has in the center of its upper edge a semi-cylindrical or rounded protuberance, 4 cm in diameter.

Pyramidal stones are attested in Phoenicia as early as the Middle Bronze Age. In Byblos where they appear in the Obelisk temple, they represent however cultic stones and not funerary stelae (Wagner 1980: 112). In Late Iron Age Phoenicia however pyramidal monuments like the Amrit *meḡbazils* are typical funerary monuments, which were borrowed from Egyptian funerary architecture (Wagner 1980: 169 ff). The pyramidal stele 28 is a modest imitation of these impressive monuments.

In the center of the stele, are two perpendicular lines of unequal length (28 x 8 cm). The engraved symbol has the shape of a long cross with a rounded, 5 cm long U-shaped motif in its middle. A U-shaped symbol, which is not quite similar, is found on a Carthaginian stele where it was interpreted as a tool (Brown 1986: Fig. 46, g). (For the interpretation of this symbol, see Chapter III). The long vertical line of the cross is interrupted by the U-shaped symbol. Two centimeters separate the latter from the 8 cm long crossbar. This line is joined at a right angle by the upper part (7 cm) of the vertical crossline.

Stele 29 (Fig. 36)

This stele is cut in a poorly cemented beach rock. It is intact but heavily eroded. Only the front and sides were roughly hewn and the surface of the stone is very irregular. Traces of the cutting tools are visible on the front and sides while the back was left untouched.

Starting from the upper edge of the stone, a deeply and irregularly cut U-shaped symbol was engraved on

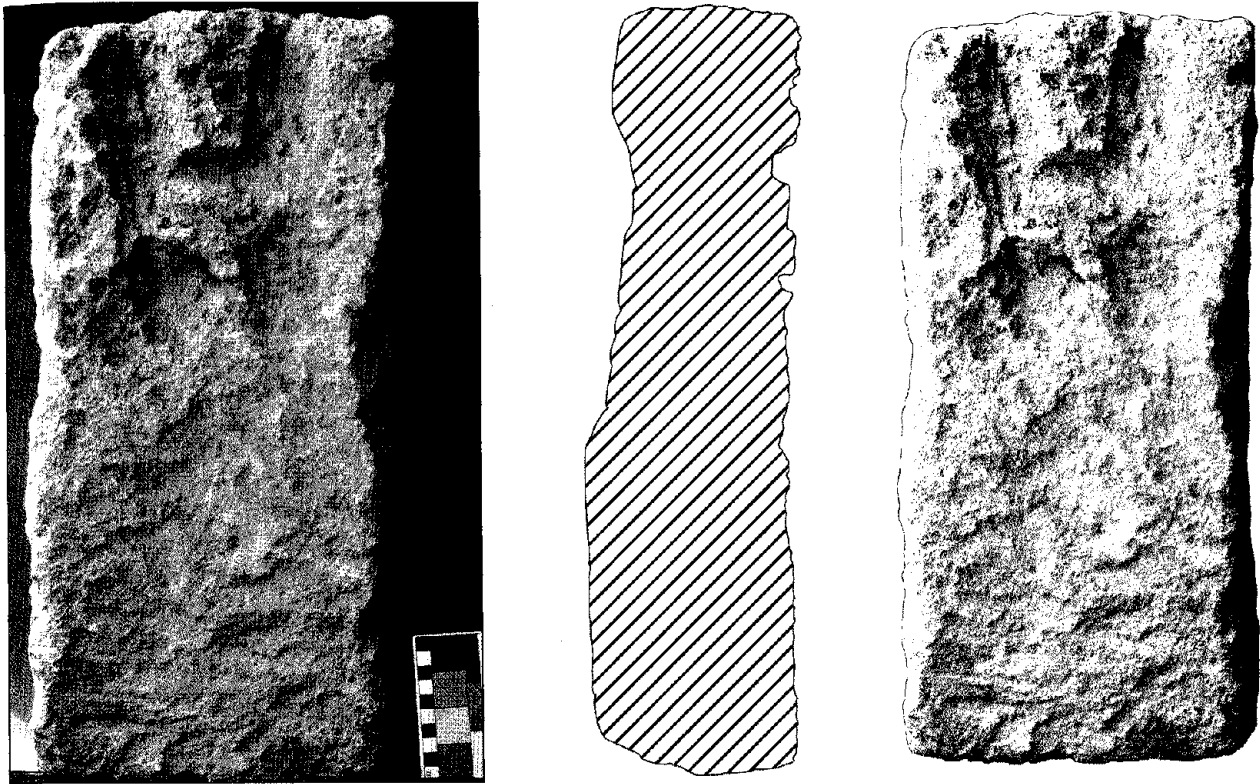


Fig. 36. Stele 29 U-shaped motif.

the upper part of the stele. The groove of this 18 cm-wide motif has produced a 9,5 x 7 cm rectangular protuberance in its middle.

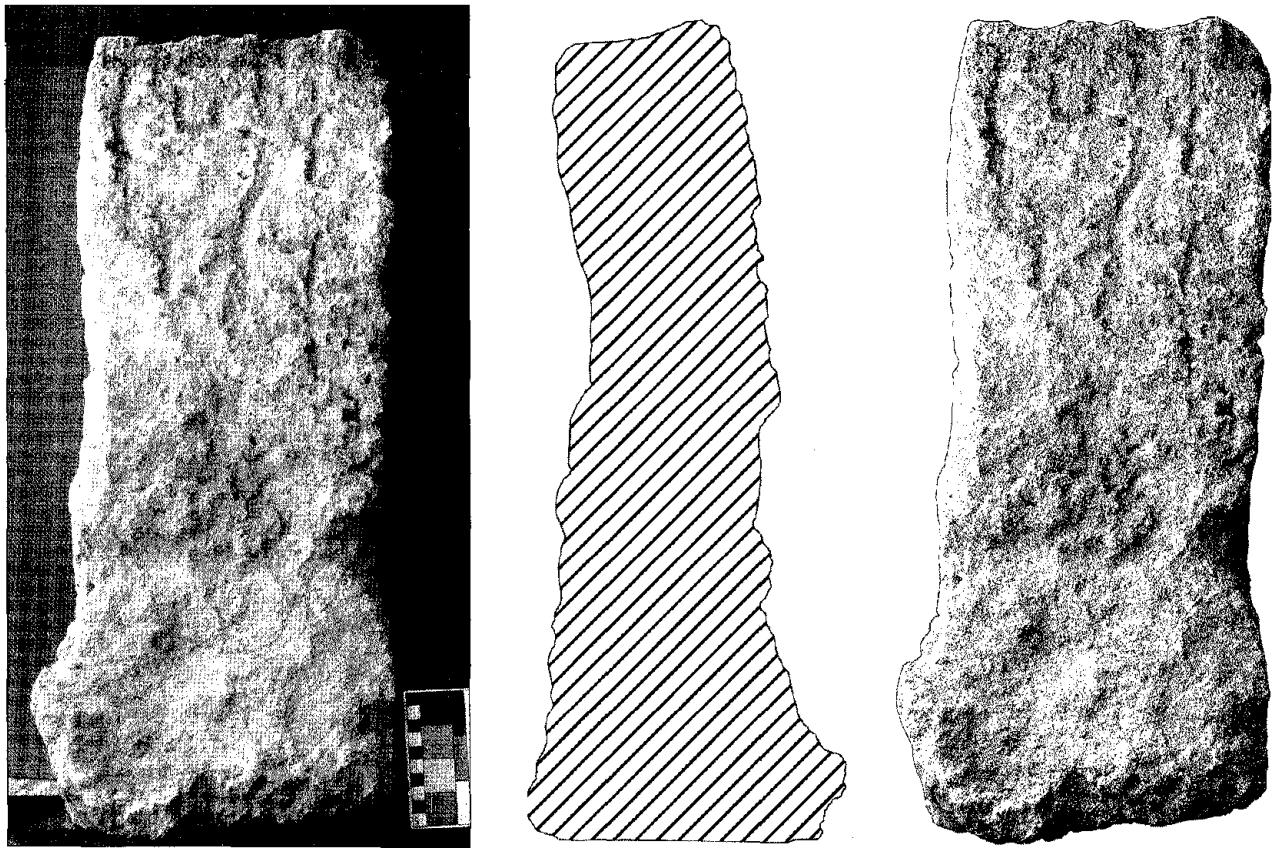
Below the symbol are two circular depressions: they most probably resulted from the weathering of the stone. But if one compares them with that found on stele 36, they may be interpreted as remnants of an obliterated symbol. The overall impression of this stele is one of poor and hasty workmanship.

Stele 30 (Fig. 37)

This rectangular stele was cut in a poorly cemented beach rock. It is very coarsely dressed and its face and sides are very irregular. The lower part of the stone was left almost untouched and it is wider than the roughly smoothed upper part. The stele is very heavily eroded and the signs of the two-line inscription are barely visible. They are of medium size, coarsely written, and partly erased.

The inscription starts immediately below the upper edge of the stone. The first letter is clearly *aleph*: it has a rounded head and a vertical cross line: it finds its closest parallel in the 8th c. B.C. Karatepe inscription (Peckham 1968: 105). The second sign, *mem*, is larger than the others. It has a very long and slightly rounded shaft and a head made of three short, vertical strokes. It can also be dated to the 8th c. B.C. Of the third sign only the long vertical shaft is clearly visible. Although the shaft is too vertical for a *tau*, which is usually slightly rotated, this reading seems to be the most plausible: a faint horizontal short line crossing the shaft at a right angle can be seen. There are no other visible traces of lines near the top of the vertical shaft to allow another suggestion.

The first sign of the second line is clearly *samekh* with a vertical shaft cutting three horizontal and parallel strokes of decreasing length, a form characteristic of the 8th c. and very similar to *samekh* of stele 23. The second sign of the second line is clearly *pe* with a short oblique stroke for the head joining the vertical shaft at a narrow angle. A reading *gimmel* cannot however be ruled out. The last sign is *resh* with a rather short vertical shaft and a

Fig. 37. Stele 30 *'mt spr*.

rounded head, again very similar to that of the Karatepe inscription. The palaeography suggests a date in the 8th c. B.C. for this stele.

The name of the deceased is *'mt spr*. Both components of the personal name are very well known: *'mt* is a construct form of *'mb*, slave, and *spr* means «scribe» (Jean and Hoftijzer 1965: 16 and 196). The personal name means: «Slave of the Scribe». This is somehow unusual for a personal name since names built with *'mb* are usually followed by a divine name and the person is slave of Baal, Eshmun or any other deity. The problem here is that the second component is a simple noun. There is, on the one hand, no evidence in Phoenician that the epithet or title «scribe» is attached to a specific deity and might replace it as a theophorous element in personal names, and on the other, no personal names with the element *spr* are attested so far in Phoenician and Punic onomastics. A less likely alternative may be to interpret *'mt spr* as the title or profession of the deceased. The absence of the article is grammatically correct since *'mt spr* is used here as an appellative or as a title (Friedrich-Röllig 1970: 150). If this alternative is accepted and the inscription refers to the slave of the scribe, the low social status of the deceased would account for the very coarse and poor workmanship of the stele.

1.4.d, TYRE Stelae in the Hecht Museum Collection

Stele 31 (II-3017) (Fig. 38)

Clandestine diggers left this stele intact. The photograph shows traces of the cutting tools on the front and small breaks on the right side of the stele. Like the inscription of stele 13, the first three letters are much larger than the rest. The irregularity of the signs was noted by Lemaire (2001: 8) who read the inscription *mbry bn ysp bn 'myh*,



Fig. 38. Stele 31 *mbry bn ysp bn 'myh*.

«Maharay, son of Yasop, son of Immiah», and dated it to the second half of the 7th c. B.C. It is interesting to note that both the name of the father and of the grandfather are given which is exceptional in this type of funerary inscriptions. The names *ysp* and *'myh* appear on stele 23 and were dealt with there. As for the name *mbry*, it is a hypocoristic meaning «soldier/servant of (DN)» (Lemaire 2001: 9).

Stele 32 (H-3016) (Fig. 39)

The three-line inscription was read by Lemaire (2001: 10) *mšbt mlk bn 'štrtg*, «Stele of Milk, son of 'Ashtartga». He interpreted the first name as a hypocoristic meaning «(god) is king» and the second as an abbreviation of *'štrtg[al]*, «Ashtart is (goddess of) Fortune». There is however an alternative interpretation for the first personal name: since Milk is known to be the divinized king, i.e. a deity, it could be a hypocoristic of a name similar to those of Yehumilk and Yehimilk, kings of Byblos.

Lemaire dated the stele to ca 700 B.C. It is to be noted that this is so far the only Phoenician stele of pre-Hellenistic date from Lebanon that starts with the word *mšbt*, stele. All other inscriptions mention the name of the deceased only. Two symbols are depicted: one above the inscription and one below it. On top is a small crescent moon facing upwards, a symbol, which is usually not attested alone on Phoenician stelae. Below the inscription is an *ankh* sign with an inverted V base. Inside the circular head of the *ankh*, there is a vertical line ending in a circle with four vertical strokes on its head. Lemaire (2001: 9) vaguely interpreted it as «a kind of flower». This symbol clearly represents a pomegranate, a fruit often used on Phoenician and Punic monuments (see Chapter III under III.2.e for parallels and interpretation)



Fig. 39 Stele 32 *mšht mlk hn 'štrig*.

Stele 33 (H-3008) (Fig. 40)

The stele is highly eroded and very roughly smoothed. It has a rounded top and its back and bottom have been sawn leaving only the inscription, which was read by Lemaire (2001: 12-13) as *gršmn*, «client of (the god) Eshmun». It was dated on palaeographic grounds to the late 8th or early 7th c. B.C.



Fig. 40. Stele 33 *gršmn*.

Stele 34 (H-3005) (Fig. 41)

This stele was sawn by clandestine diggers who left only the inscription which was read by Lemaire *'mtmskr*, «She-servant of Maskir», the latter meaning «divine herald» (2001: 13 and additional bibliography; for Maskir see Chapter II). Lemaire dated it to the late 8th or early 7th c. B.C.



Fig. 41. Stele 34 *'mtmskr*.

Stele 35 (H-3011) (Fig. 42)

The stele was also sawn and only the part bearing the symbol and the inscription was left. The deeply cut U-shaped symbol is well attested in Tyrian iconography (see stele 28 and 29 and Chapter III.2.c). Above the symbol, there is a three-letter inscription, which was read by Lemaire (2001: 13-14) *hrb*, «the Master», a personal name attested in Punic onomastics. The stele was dated on palaeographic grounds to the 7th c. B.C.



Fig. 42. Stele 35 *hrb*.

Stele 36 (H-3013) (Fig. 43)

This stele is cut in compacted sandstone. It was also sawn at the back and bottom leaving only the part where four letters were deeply cut. They read *l'mn*. Lemaire (2001: 14) interprets *l'mn* as a personal name built with the preposition *lamed* and the divine name Amon and meaning «(Belonging) to (the god) Amon». There remains of course the alternative to consider *lamed* a preposition *preceding* the name of the deceased, as is often the case on the Phoenician stelae. In this case the personal name Amon would be a hypocoristic name without suffix as often attested in Phoenician and Punic onomastics (Benz 1972: 232-233). The inscription is dated to *ca* 700 B.C.



Fig. 43. Stele 36 *l'mn*.

Stele 37 (H-3015) (Fig. 44)

This pyramidal stone was also sawn length- and widthwise leaving only the part with the inscription. Lemaire (2001: 15) dated it to the late 7th c. B.C. and read it *tm''l*: «Tammâ (son of?) El?»

The first four letters of the inscription are deeply incised and clearly visible. The regular distance between the letters as well as the fact that they are all very clear casts some doubt about the possible existence of a fifth sign of which no traces can be seen. Irregularities due to the erosion of the stone might account for Lemaire's suggestion but his reading *lamed* remains highly hypothetical.

Concerning the meaning of the personal name, Lemaire obviously assumes, in spite of the omission of the word *bn*, the existence of two personal names, both hypocoristica: the first, *tm'*, means «(god) is perfect» and the second, *l'* means «god (is or does) something».

Another alternative may be suggested: Since a reading *lamed* is not convincing, the name of the deceased could be read *tm''*. There exists in Phoenician and Punic a noun *tm'* which is a title or profession meaning «chief, commander, ruler» (Jean and Hoftijzer 1965: 329). The personal name *tm''* may thus be interpreted as a hypocoristic meaning «DN is ruler». It may also mean «(DN) is Perfection» because *tm'* «perfection» is also attested (Jean and Hoftijzer 1965: 329).



Fig. 44. Stele 37 *tm'[/?]*.

Stele 38 (H-3014) (Fig. 45)

This stele belongs to the group of sawn stones. Only inscription and symbol were left. The inscription was read by Lemaire (2001: 16) *lgrt'*, «(Belonging) to Geratâ», interpreted as hypocoristic female personal name meaning «client of (DN)». It was dated to *ca* 700 B.C. The cross symbol below the inscription is well attested on the Tyrian stelae (26, 27, 28 and 46) as well as on a stele from Akhziv (Cross 2002: No 2).



Fig. 45. Stele 38 *lgrt'*.

Stele 39 (H-3010) (Fig. 46)

This stele had originally a T-shape but was cut by clandestine diggers. Its inscription was read by Lemaire (2001: 17-18) *šb't bt 'zb'l*, 'Sheba't daughter of 'Azbaal'. *šb't* means «abundance» and is attested on stele 13. Her father's name, *'zb'l*, is very well attested in Phoenician onomastics. It means «(The god) Baal is (my) strength». The inscription dates the stele to *ca* 600 B.C.

Fig. 46. Stele 39 *šb't bt 'zb'l*.

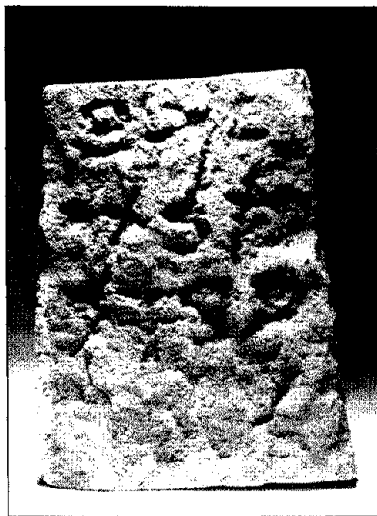
Stele 40 (H-3009) (Fig. 47)

This stele was sawn and the part that was left bears an inscription which was read by Lemaire (2001: 18) *lmlk' bt pdn*, «(Belonging) to Milkâ daughter of Padôn». Lemaire interpreted *mlk'* as a female hypocoristic meaning «(DN) is king». *mlk'* could be also interpreted as a hypocoristic built with the divine name Milk, which is widely attested in Phoenician theophorous names (Benz 1972: 344-345). *pdn* is a hypocoristic and means «(the god) has redeemed». The palaeography of the inscription dates the stele to *ca* 600 B.C.

Fig. 47. Stele 40 *lmlk' bt pdn*.

Stele 41 (H-3007) (Fig. 48)

This stele, which is highly weathered, was also sawn. Its inscription was read by Lemaire (2001: 19-20) *lklbt bt 'bskn*: «(Belonging) to Kalbat daughter of 'Absakkon». *lklbt* means «she-dog/servant (of the god)» and *'bskn* is a variant of *'bāskn* «servant of (the god) *skn*», a Phoenician god whose name, according to Lipinski (1995: 176) means *betyl* (see also Chapter II). The inscription was approximately dated to the late 7th c. B.C.

Fig. 48. Stele 41 *lklbt bt 'bskn*.

Stele 42 (H-3006) (Fig. 49)

This stele was also sawn. Its inscription was read by Lemaire (2001: 21) *'štrt 'sp* meaning «Ashtart has assembled». It was dated to the end of the 7th c. B.C. Below the inscription is a symbol representing a *pseudo ankh* sign with an inverted V-shaped base also found on other Tyrian stelae

Fig. 49. Stele 42 *'štrt 'sp*.

I.4.d, TYRE Stelae from the 1997 excavations of the Tyre al-Bass cemetery

Stele 43 (Fig. 50)

Slightly trapezoidal stele cut in compact beach-rock. Its front side is smoothed while its back is roughly hammered. 8 cm below the upper, and 10 cm away from the lateral edges is an 18 cm long and 13 cm deep square niche. The figurine or offering, which was probably placed there, was not preserved. Another stele bearing a similar motive, stele 7, was also found in Tyre.

As already mentioned, stelae with a *naos* are attested in Byblos as early as the beginning of the second millennium B.C. and are also widespread in the western Phoenician colonies.

Stele 44 (Fig. 53)

Slightly trapezoidal in shape, this stele is cut in granulated beach-rock. Its front side has been smoothed while its backside has been only very roughly hammered. Two superimposed symbols fill the front surface: on top, a human head and, below, a *pseudo-ankb* sign, attested on other stelae (See Chapter III).

The head consists of an almost perfect circle 10 cm in diameter incised in the stone. In the center of the circle, two vertical, parallel, 6 cm long lines form the nose. They are linked together at their lower end by a deeply cut horizontal line (6 cm long x 3 cm wide) representing the mouth. Two 4 cm long, slightly oval holes, placed symmetrically on both sides of the nose lines, represent the eyes. A second smaller circle, 9 cm in diameter, cuts the first one below the mouth line and forms the head of a so-called *pseudo-ankb* sign. The *ankb* head and the horizontal line are joined together by a 3 cm vertical incision, located on the right side of the circle. This short line is either accidental or may have been added later to correct the mistake made by the stonecutter who drew the circle too far from the line. 3 cm below the *ankb* head is a 17 cm long horizontal line resting on two vertical, parallel, 10 cm long lines drawn from its middle.

The human head owes its juvenile aspect to the round shape of the face as well as to the absence of hair and ears. The naïve and almost childish aspect of this representation has no parallel on the Phoenician stelae of the motherland. This is in fact not surprising since the Tyrian cemetery, with the exception of that of Akhziv where one

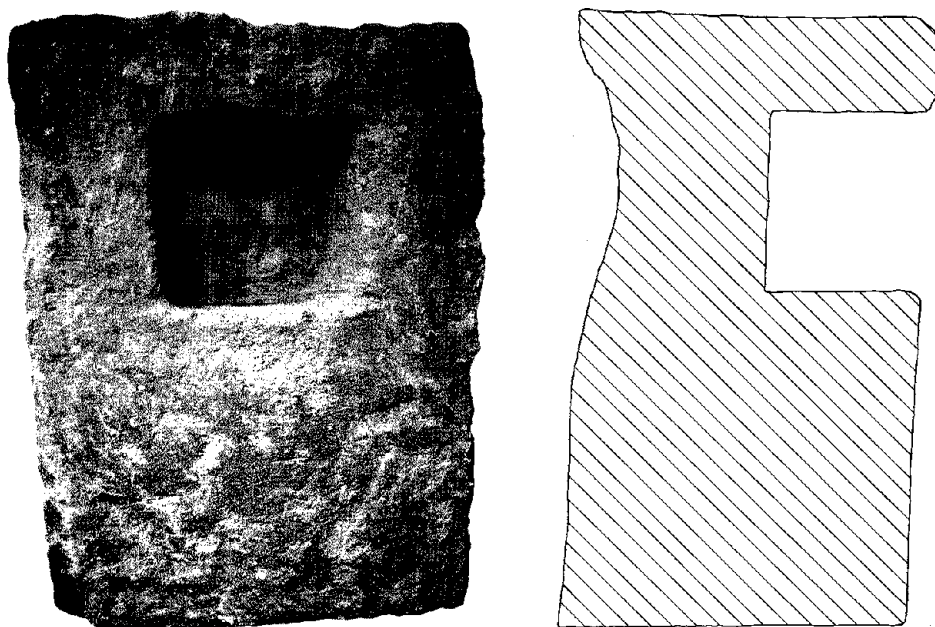


Fig. 50. Stele 43 Naos.

such stela was found (Cross 2002: No 6), is the first eastern Phoenician burial ground to have yielded stelae with human representations. One exception is the shrine model published by Bisi (1971) and dated to the 8th c. B.C. where a human figure, clearly representing a deity, is standing inside the shrine. Another example is the figurine of a goddess standing inside a shrine represented on a terracotta plaque from Helaliyye near Sidon (Gubel 1986: Fig. 10). This is the reason why, in spite of the chronological gap, we have to turn to the stelae found in the western Phoenician colonies for comparison.

Tusa (1982: 105) has already noted the existence of a large number of stelae representing human figures from Sicily and Sardinia while in Carthage symbols prevail. The most striking parallels to stela No 2 come from the area of Sassere in Sardinia. They are all very late and date to the Roman period, between the first century B.C. and the second century A.D. (Moscatti 1995: 539). The majority of the human heads represented on these stelae, called '*a specchio*', consists of round faces incised exactly in the same way as the Tyrian example. Moscatti's (1995: 534) description of the Sardinian stelae could easily apply to stela 44: *'il viso è circolare, spesso così esattamente da far pensare all'uso di uno strumento sul tipo del compasso... il naso è a bastoncino rettangolare, talora semplificato in due tratti verticali. Gli occhi sono realizzati abitualmente con due punti incisi... la bocca è un breve tratto orizzontale...'* The stelae production of this area, which is characterized by the use of incision, is also said to be '*rozza*' (Moscatti 1995: 534). Another close parallel is in the Museum of Cagliari (Moscatti-Uberti 1991b: Pl.8) and represents a person with a juvenile face whose incised big and round head is in sharp disproportion with the body represented as a small rectangle.

Two further examples from Monte Sirai (Bondi 1972: PlsV, 10 and Pl. XXXIV, 73) present the same face features, which confer to the representation a very primitive aspect.

Finally, stelae from Uras in Sardinia also provide good parallels (Bondi 1972: Pls. LVI and LVII and more recently Moscatti-Uberti 1991a: 23-26). Garbini has noted the '*livello generalmente basso-notevolmente basso-del ar-tigiano*' (1964: 66) and Bondi (1972: 74-75), pointed out the crude character of the Monte Sirai stelae, a characteristic that can also be applied to the Tyrian stelae. These parallels belong however to a completely different and local tradition, typical of Roman Sardinia.

Concerning the *ankh* sign, its particular feature are the two, instead of one, vertical lines below the horizontal one as is usually the case on Phoenician stelae (Delavault-Lemaire 1979: III, 5; Cross 2002: No 4; stelae 6, 26, 42) and on seals and scarabs from roughly the same period (Bordreuil 1986: Nos 1, 6, 17, 18, 65, 86, 94). The same *pseudo-ankh* shape is however largely attested on Phoenician weights from the antiquities market, which are said to come from the Syro-Lebanese coast (Elayi, A. and Elayi, J. 1997: Nos 165, 166, 168, 296, 287, 291, 298, 309, 311, 315, 316, 338, 346, 368, 437). The same feature is also attested on a clay figurine from Aya Irini dated to the sixth

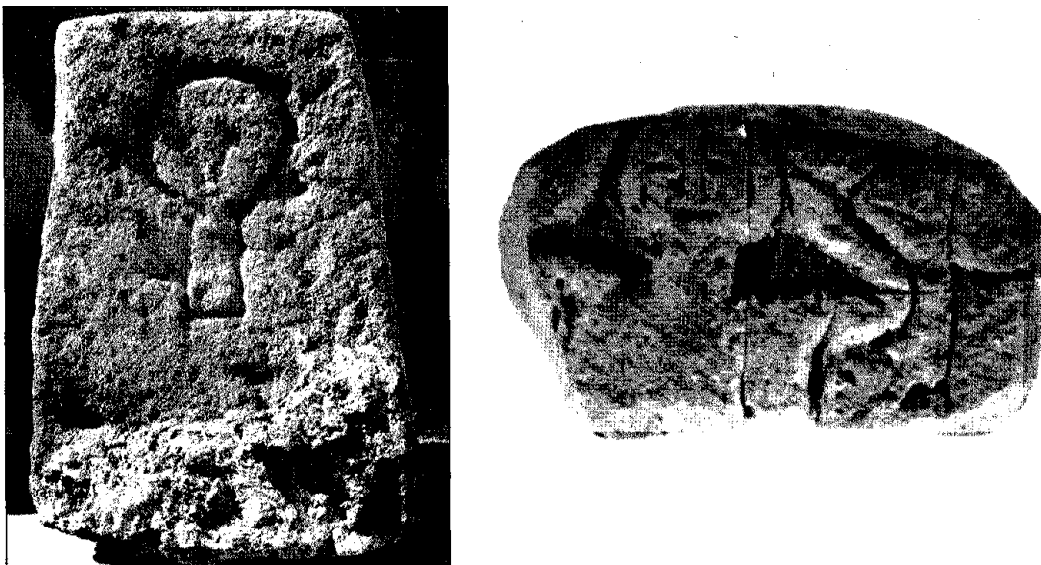


Fig. 51. Parallels to Stela 44 in the Museum of Cagliari (Moscatti-Uberti 1991 b) and Monte Sirai (Bondi 1972).



Fig. 52. A parallel to the *ankh* sign on stele 44 from Aya Irini (Beers 1991).

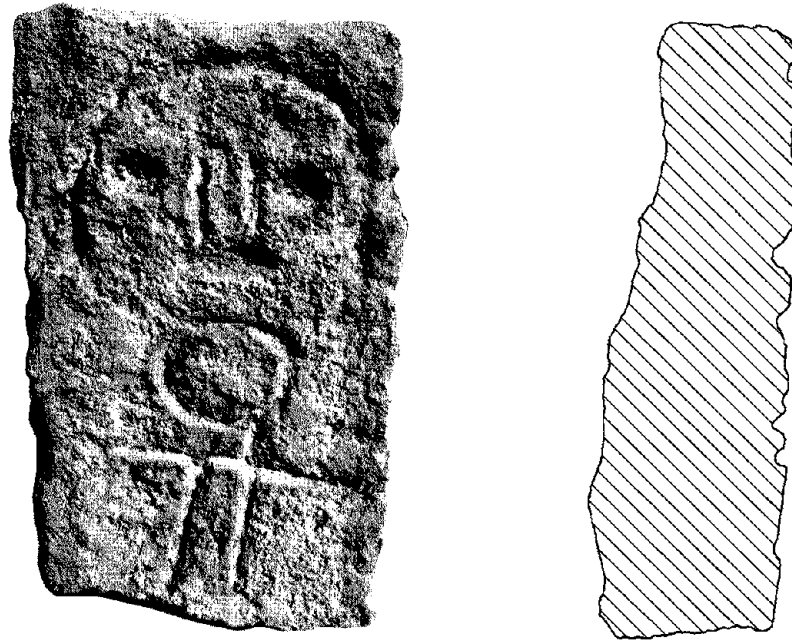


Fig. 53. Stele 44 Human figure and *pseudo-ankh* sign.

century B.C. where it was interpreted as the hieroglyphic sign s3, meaning protection: «Il (i-e the male figure) porte un objet dans la main gauche, généralement décrit comme le symbole égyptien de la vie, l'*ankh*. Mais ce n'est pas vraiment l'*ankh*, car la tige verticale est fourchue à la base. Il nous a été suggéré qu'il s'agirait d'un noeud d'Isis mais la forme de l'objet en question n'est pas non plus conforme à ce symbole. Elle ressemble plus au signe porté par la déesse égyptienne Toéris... La signification de ce symbole est celle de protection» (Beers 1991: 358 and fig.1). According to Wilkinson (1992: 177), the ends of the *ankh* in Egypt are separated in some archaic examples.

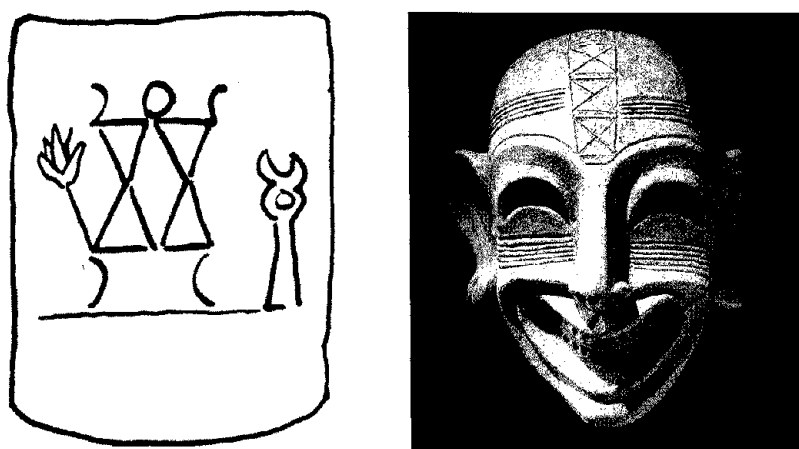


Fig. 54. Parallels to stele 45: a stele from Carthage (Bisi 1967: Fig. 29) and a mask from Bou Minjel (Parrot, Chéhab, Moscati 1975: Fig. 180).

Stele 45 (Fig. 55)

This stele was cut in hard and compacted beach-rock. Its lower part was thinned in order to provide it with a 10 cm high foot, which was buried in the ground when the stele was erected. In the middle of the stone there is a first symbol consisting of an isosceles triangle with a 13 cm long base and two sides, which have been prolonged beyond their intersection point. A 17 cm line tangent to the triangle summit was incised at an equal distance (17 cm) from both the upper and lower edge of the stele. A second identical, though smaller (base 8 cm and tangent line 11 cm long) motive, with an axis slightly deviated to the left, was added below the first one. It seems that originally only the first motive was planned because it is clearly centered. On the other hand, it is large enough to fill the central part of the stele. The deviation and the smaller size of the second triangle support this view.

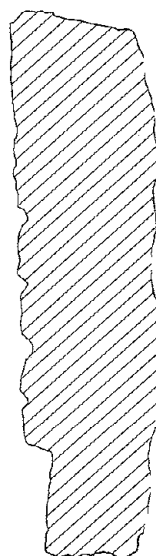


Fig. 55. Stele 45 Isosceles triangles.

It is interesting to note that Ernest Renan (1864: 647ff.; 662, 691) had already found similar, though slightly different signs carved at the entrance of funerary caves in various localities around Tyre (for an interpretation of the symbol, see Chapter III.2.e). According to Renan (1864: 662), this sign in Phoenicia is characteristic of the land of Tyre. Sarepta has also yielded the same motif (Pritchard 1988: Fig. 9: 2, dated to the LBA).

Similar symbols are also attested in Sardinia and Carthage though without the tangent line. Close parallels are found on the sacred rock of the *tophet* of Sulcis (Barreca 1986: 174, fig. 141) and on grotesque masks from Carthage. One example dated to the seventh-sixth century B.C. was found in the necropolis of Bou Minjel; it bears on the forehead and the skull a series of rectangles within which are intersecting diagonals, which form isosceles triangles (Parrot, Chéhab, Moscati 1975: 172, fig. 180).

Another terracotta mask has also on the same area, a series of the same symbol. (Moscati 1984: 171). On a stele from Carthage, there is a Tanit sign the lower part of which consists of two similar triangles represented side by side (Bisi 1967: Fig. 29). The same symbol also appears on another Carthaginian stele engraved on an altar (Brown 1986: 530). The same symbol was also found on two jars, one from Carthage and one from Pithecusa, in the shrines of Malta and Gozo (Garbini 1980: 179 and 183ff. and notes 20 to 24), as well as on a Phoenician seal (Galling 1941: 186, No 93 and Pl. 7, 93). It is also widely attested in profane contexts in Syria-Palestine where, according to Garbini (1980: 183), it represents a weighing measure.

The element that all the above-mentioned parallels lack is however the horizontal line, which appears so far only on the symbol of stele 45.

Stele 46 (Fig. 56)

Cut in sandy, granulated beach-rock, this L-shaped stele is largely eroded and in a bad state of preservation. It represents a person whose head only was sculpted in a three-dimensional way while the rest of the body seems to be in a seated position, an impression created obviously by the L-shape of the stele. The 15 cm long and 19 cm wide (maximal width) vertical part of the body forms a more or less regular trapezium and still preserves the traces of the cutting tools. These give at first sight the impression that the body is wrapped with bands of cloth. In fact, a careful observation of the stele shows that the two oblique traces of a chisel on the chest could represent the bent left arm of the person.

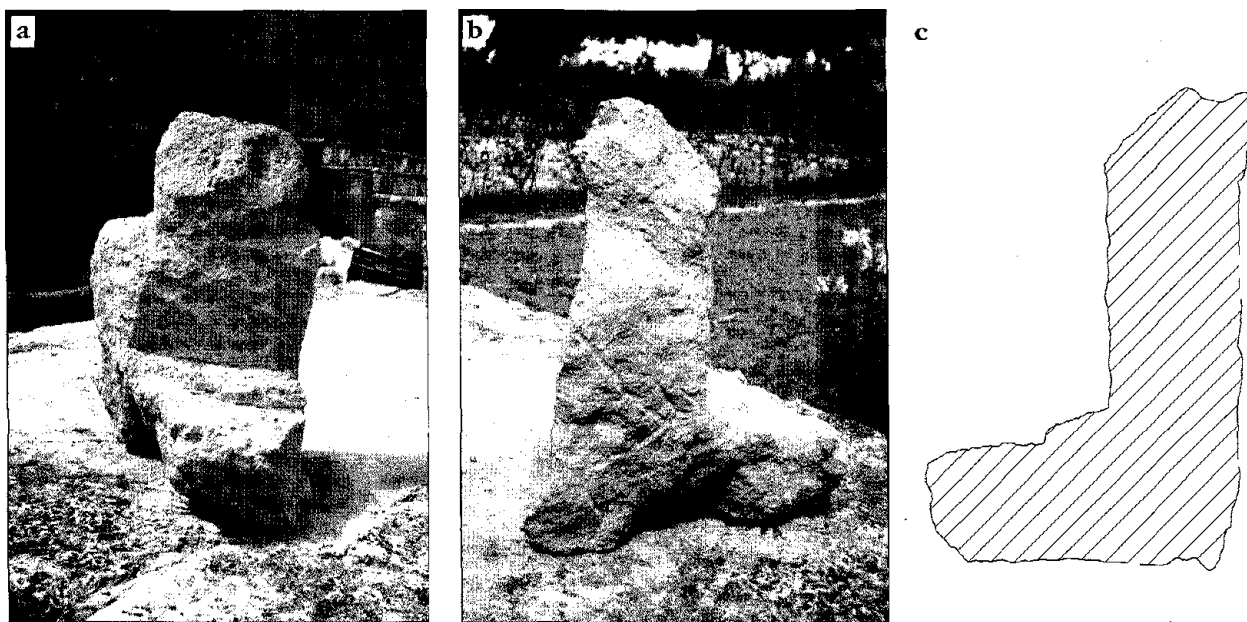


Fig. 56. Stele 46. L-shaped stele with human face. (a) Front view, (b) side view and (c) section.

The horizontal part of the body, 17 cm of maximal length and 12 cm of maximal width, is very crudely and irregularly cut. Its lower part has in its middle a 13 cm long and 5 cm deep cavity as well as a 10 cm wide protuberance at the back, which served as a foot and was probably buried in the ground when the stele was erected. On the left side of the stele, irregular strokes were cut in the stone.

The 18 cm long and 17 cm wide head was also shaped in a very crude way. The triangular face lacks a forehead and consists of a large nose and two eyebrow ridges. Under these latter, on both sides of the nose, two oblong cavities occupy the rest of the face. The latter's lower part including the mouth is broken. The neck-less head rests directly on the vertical part of the body.

In the West, mainly in Sicily, stelae are attested, which consist of a head cut in a three-dimensional form while the body consists of the shapeless stone (Moscatti 1995: Pl. 84-87). The face of stele 46 has striking parallels in Sardinia, more specifically in Sulcis (Moscatti 1985a: Pls. 29-31) and Monte Sirai (Garbini 1964: Pl. 46).

Stele 47 (Figs 57 and 58)

This stele was found in the baulk, which separated locus 0 and locus 1. It was associated with a number of stones, one of which belonged to a broken stele. The remaining stones are shapeless and it is very difficult to determine their original shape and function.

Stele 47 was cut in beach-rock with a very grainy texture. Only the head was preserved.

The male face, though slightly more elaborate than the previous example, presents the same general characteristics. The prominent features are the stylized nose and the two eyebrow ridges, which surround it on both sides. The slightly open mouth and the base of the nose overlap and the neck-less head rests directly on the stone. However, it differs from stele 46 in the following features: the triangular shape of the face is more accentuated, the ears are represented (the right ear is damaged) and a 4 cm narrow forehead is represented above the eyebrow ridges. At the top of the forehead an incision marks the beginning of a 2 cm-high edge, slightly leaning backwards, which might represent either the hair or a headdress. The same features are also found on heads represented on a stele from Selinunte (Moscatti 1995: Pl. 87, 1). The face is comparable to that of the deity represented inside the stone shrine model from Lebanon (Seyrig 1966: VIII).



Fig. 57. Stele 47 *in situ*.

The top of the skull has the shape of an equilateral triangle of 13 cm long sides. Two of them join at the back of the head to form a poney tail, a sort of 9 cm long and 4 cm wide cylindrical braid, on both sides of which are two cavities. On top of the skull is a 9 cm long and 8 cm wide incised cross.

All the above features confer to the face a realistic character as well as a lively expression, which are lacking in stele 46. A close parallel (Fig. 59) is the male head discovered in tomb No 1 in Monte Sirai (Garbini 1964: Pl. 47) and displayed in the Museum of Cagliari. This sixth-fifth century B.C. head, to which Garbini attributed an apotropaic function (1964: 94-95), has the same characteristics as ours: triangular face, cavities under the eyes, stylized nose, no neck, incised mouth...

It is interesting to note in this context an information recorded by Denyse Le Lasseur (1922: 122) upon her visit to the site of Mahalib, a city belonging to the territory of Tyre: « *Au nord-est, Mr Bourgol nous montre une sculpture très grossière qui serait une tête humaine (?); elle surmonte une entrée de grotte dans laquelle on a trouvé, paraît-il, un sarcophage de plomb.* »

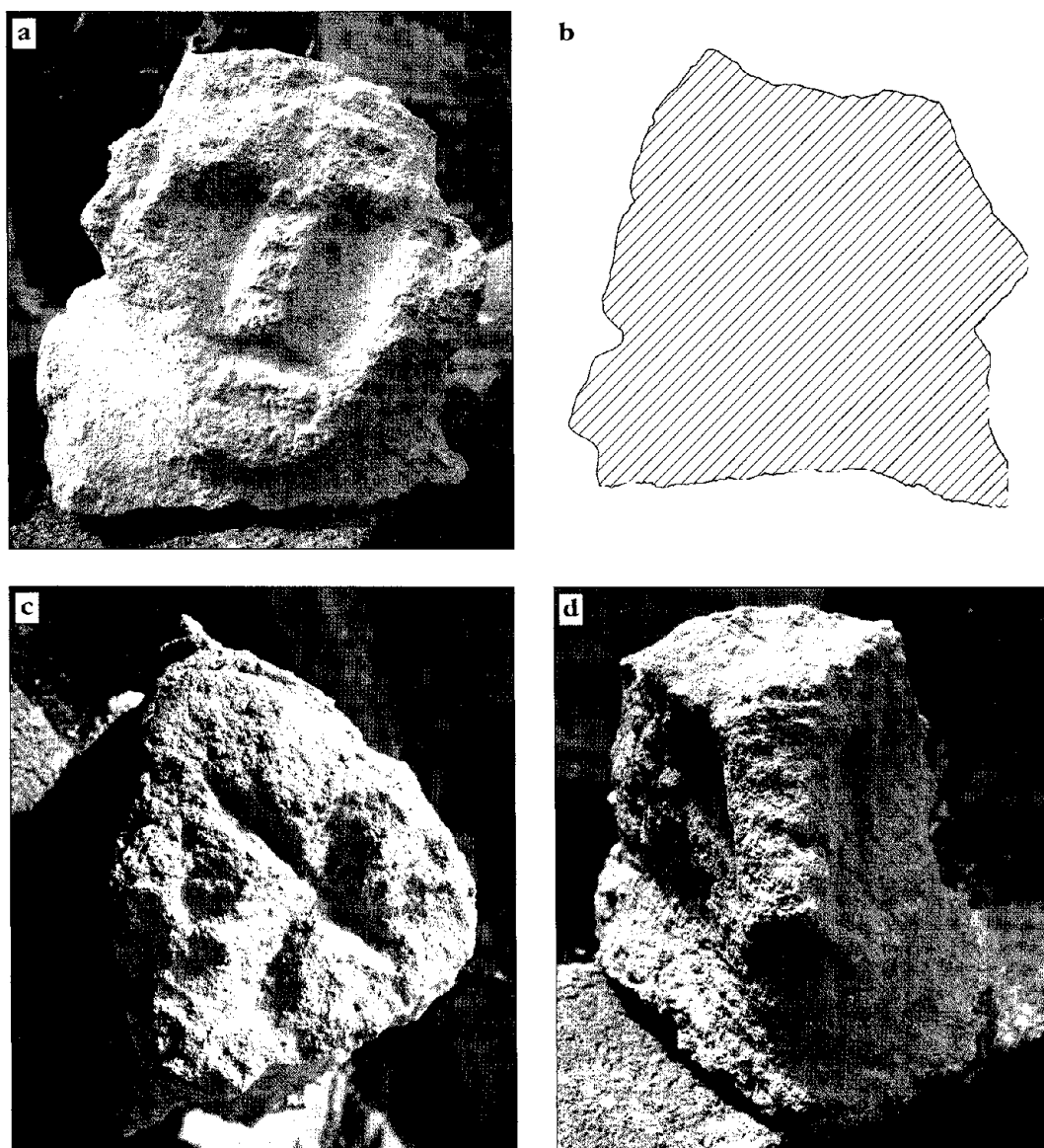


Fig. 58. Stele 47 Human head: face (a), section (b), top (c), back (d).



Fig. 59. A parallel to stele 47 from Monte Sirai (Garbini 1964, Studi Semitici 11).

Stele 48 (Fig. 60)

This broken stele was cut in badly compacted beach-rock and the surviving fragment belongs to the upper part of a monument, which seems to be an aedicula. On top of the flat cornice are four triangular protuberances probably representing *uraei*. Three of them (from left to right: 6 cm x 7 cm, 6 cm x 4 cm, 6 cm x 4 cm) are intact. The same type of cornice surmounted by triangular protuberances is attested on the ediculae from Uras (Bondi 1972: Pl. 56-57). Below the cornice, in the middle of the cavity forming the niche stands a 6 cm wide and 8 cm long pillar fragment, probably a *betyl*. Small shrines of this type with rectangular *betyls* inside are widely attested in the Phoenician and Punic world mainly North Africa (Bisi 1967: Pl. XXII, 1-2), Sicily (Bisi 1967: XXXVIII, 2) and Sardinia (Bisi 1967: Pl. XLIX, 1). This motif becomes extremely widespread during the Persian period (see below stele 54).

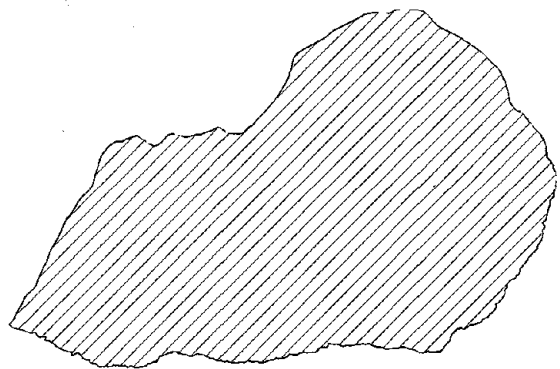
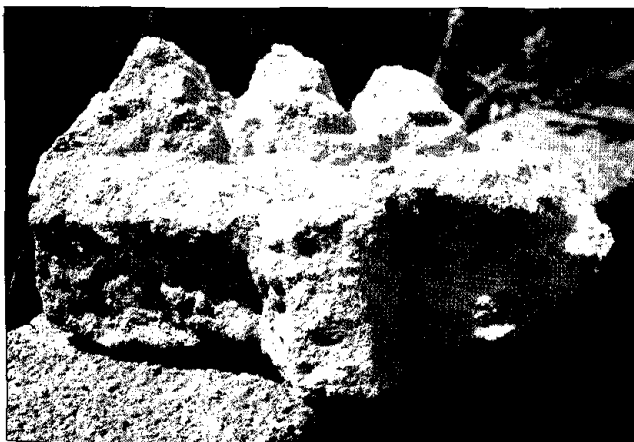


Fig. 60. Stele 48 Fragment of shrine with *uraei* and *betyl*.

Stele 49 (Fig. 61)

This rectangular stele is irregular and heavily eroded. It was roughly dressed into a rectangular shape. No symbol has been preserved. However, two shallow cavities can be seen on the obverse: a circular one, 8 cm in diameter and, below, an almost oval one, 12 cm long and 8 cm wide. These might be remnants of symbols, which have disappeared or which were left unfinished. In any case, the stone was clearly dressed and prepared to be a funerary stele. As previously mentioned, blank stelae are attested: examples from Motya (Moscatti-Uberti 1981: Pl. 1 and 2), Hama and Sukas (Bonatz 2000: 156) provide good parallels.



Fig. 61. Stele 49 Blank stele with no symbol and no inscription.

Stele 50 (Fig. 62)

This stele was found during the 1997 excavations in area VI, which had been opened by the Department of Antiquities representative, but which was then left unexcavated (Aubet 2004: 16). It was removed from site and taken to the Department of Antiquities storage in Tyre after having been recorded and photographed. When the excavators came to process the material and draw the finds, no trace of this fragment was found. In spite of thorough and systematic search, the stele fragment could not be found and the only available document is the photograph Fig. 62.

The fragment is a circular stone *ca* 20 cm in diameter, which obviously belonged to a larger monument. The stele was broken in antiquity and traces of the break are clearly visible under the face. The stele represents a human face very similar to that depicted on stele 43: it is an almost perfect circle with holes for the eyes and the mouth, which emphasizes the naïve and the «baby face»-like impression. The head is flat and only the face was sculpted. On the left, there is a semi-circular protuberance, which represents the ear, a feature that is absent on the face of stele 43. A striking parallel is the figure from a Punic tomb in Lilibeum (Tusa 1982: Pl. XIVe).

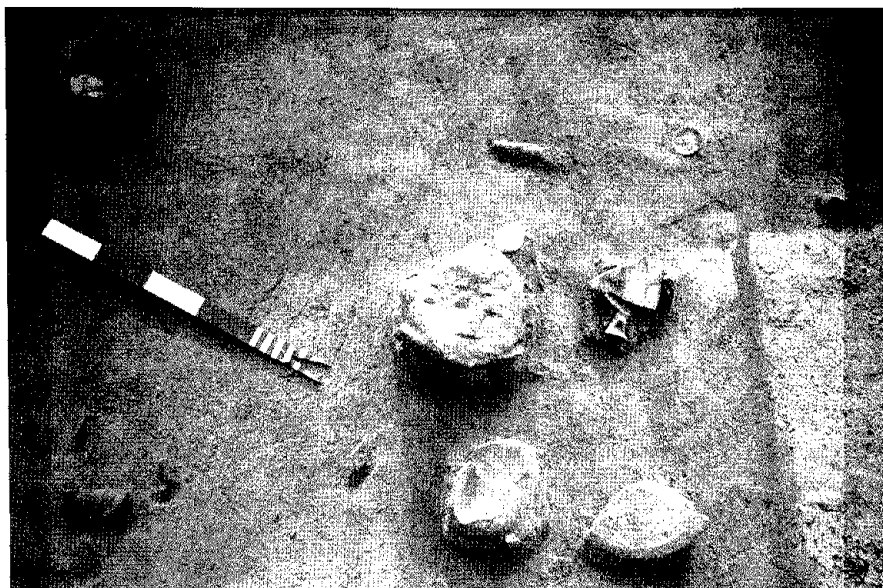


Fig. 62. Stele 50 Broken stele with human face.



Fig. 63. A parallel to Stele 50 from Motya (Tusa: *Madridrer Beiträge* 8, 14e).

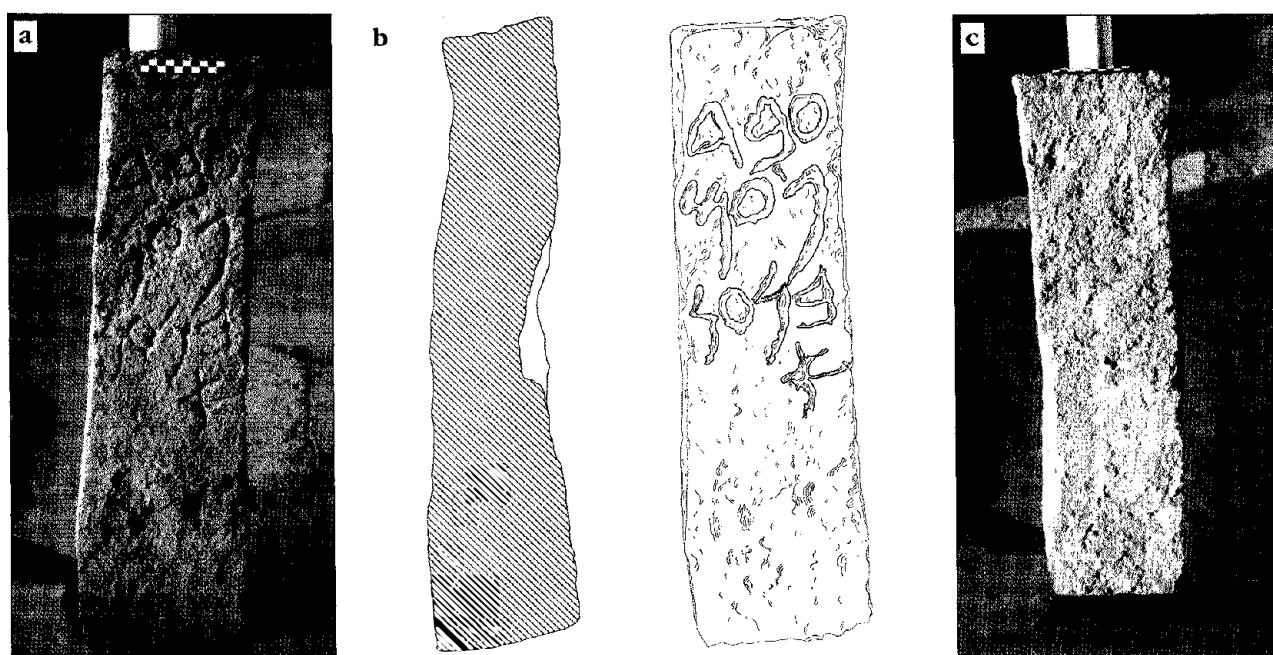


Fig. 64. Stele 51 (a) frontside with inscription 'bd p'm, (b) drawing, (c) back side.

I.4.d, TYRE Stelae from the 2002 excavations in the cemetery of Tyre al-Bass

Stele 51 (Fig. 64)

This long rectangular stele was found during the 2002 excavations, which were undertaken by the University of Pompeu Fabra-Barcelona on the site of the Phoenician cemetery at al-Bass in Tyre. The stele was found equally distant to two 8th c. B.C. cinerary urns, Nos 68 and 69⁴. It was found lying on its inscribed face. This archaeological context thus suggests a date in the 8th c. B.C. for the stele.

This is the only inscribed Tyrian stele, which was found during regular excavations. The inscription consists in eleven very well preserved Phoenician signs arranged in four lines. The first line starts 7 cm below the upper edge of the stone. The signs are of a medium size ranging between 5 and 9,5 cm. The inscription consists as usual of the name of the deceased in the memory of whom the stele was erected followed by that of his father. It reads:

'bd
p'm
bn 'n

The personal name 'bd p'm, as well as other theophorous names built with the divine element p'm, is attested in Phoenician onomastics (Benz 1972: 393) and it means «servant of (the god) p'm». This deity was worshipped in the Phoenician motherland as attested by the Phoenician graffiti written in Greek, which were found in Wasta, near Sidon (Milik 1954: 3-12). Lipinski (1995: 215ff) interprets the divine name as both «foot» and «phallus» and he associates the god with fertility cults in general and with sacred prostitution in particular (see also II.2.b). 'n' is a hypocoristic meaning either «DN has answered» from the root 'ny to answer or «Eye of DN» with a defective writing of 'yn eye (Benz 1972: 381). A third possibility (Benz 1972: 380) is to interpret 'n as the masculine counterpart of Anat.

4. The information concerning the archaeological context of stele 50 and 51 was communicated to me by Maria Eugenia Aubet, director of the Tyre el-Bass excavations.

Since this divine name is clearly attested in Ugarit, 'n' might be a hypocoristic name built with the divine name An. The absence of the preposition *lamed* is finally to be noted.

The evidence from the palaeography does not contradict the archaeological evidence and a date towards the end of the 8th c. can be suggested on the basis of the shape of the signs. However, the only letter characteristic enough to provide a close dating of the stele is *mem* with its oblique wavy head and its vertical shaft, a form which finds its closest parallels in the Kilamuwa and Limassol inscriptions, both dated to the 8th c. B.C. (Friedrich-Röllig 1970: Table 1). *Pe* has an angular head and a very long (9,5 cm) and curving tail, but it does not provide a decisive clue for the dating of the inscription. The other letters, *betb*, *daleth*, and *nun*, which are attested in this form in the 8th but also in the 7th c. B.C., do not significantly contribute to the dating of the stele.

Stele 52 (Fig. 65)

This stele was found directly associated with cinerary urn No. 61, which is dated to the middle of the 9th c. B.C. It was found *in situ*, in a vertical position, with the upper edge of the stone broken. This suggests that the stele may have fallen in antiquity and may have been eventually re-erected since it is indeed difficult to assume that it was originally used with a broken upper edge.

The symbol was carved 4 cm above the lower edge of the stone. It represents an Egyptian hieroglyphic sign read *nfr*; meaning 'good, perfect' (for parallels and interpretation see chapter III.2.d). The head is 8 cm in diameter and the vertical line is 8 cm long, which makes the overall height of the sign 16 cm. The vertical line meets the 10,5 cm long horizontal line in its middle, at a right angle.

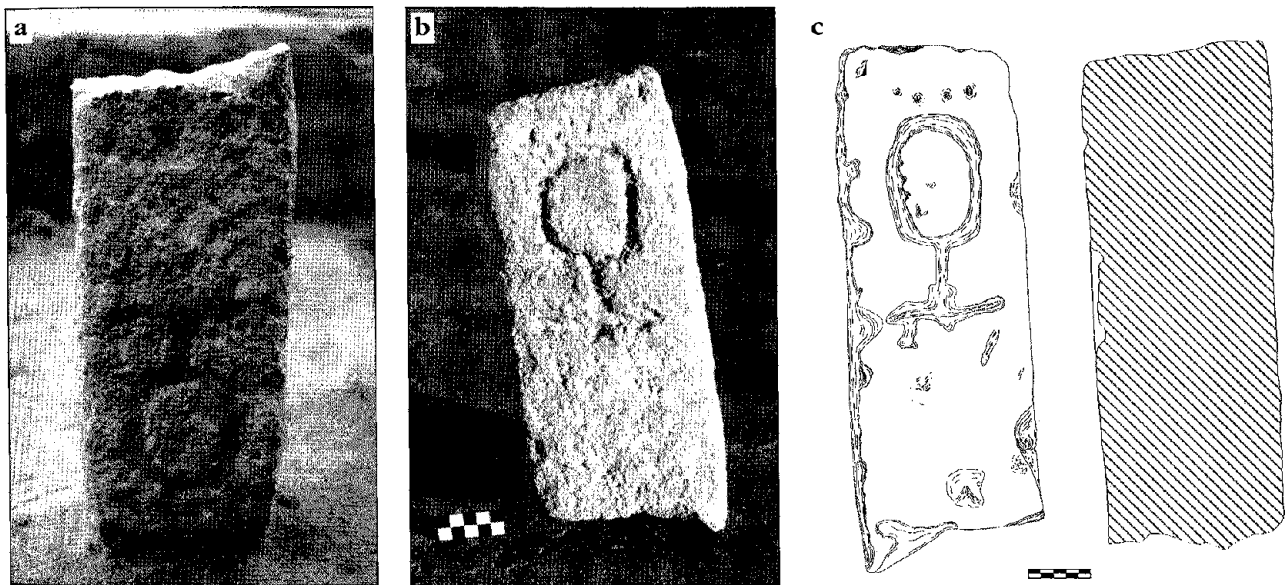


Fig. 65. Stele 52 with hieroglyphic *nfr* sign. (a) Frontside original position, (b) frontside upside down, (c) section and drawing.

I.4.e The Persian Period Stelae

Stele 53 (Fig. 66)

This fragment was bought in Sidon by Ernest Renan (1864: 366) and is today in the Louvre Museum. It represents a shrine the upper part of which is only preserved. It has a winged solar disc surmounted by a frieze of badly preserved *uraei* on its architrave. According to Wagner (1980: Cat. No 63) the original height of this monument must have been 80 to 90 cm, by analogy with the complete examples available. He dates it between 450 and 350 B.C.

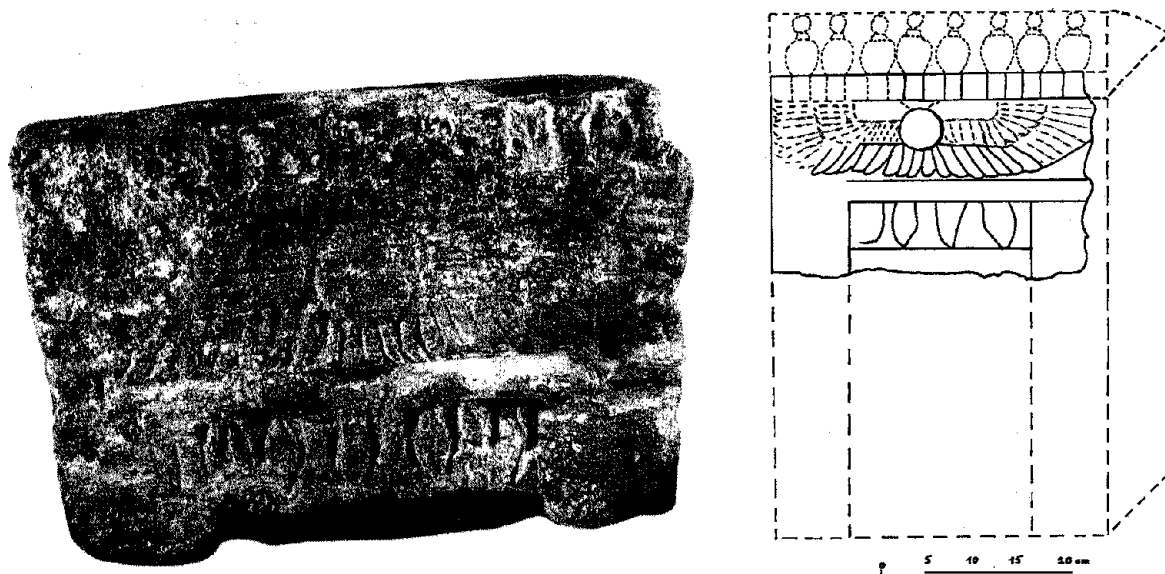


Fig. 66. Stele 53 Fragment from Sidon and sketch drawing. Louvre AO 4820 (Left Gubel 2002: No 74; right Wagner 1980: Pl. 5, 1).

Stele 54 (Fig. 67)

This stele, on display in the Beirut National Museum (No 2069), was found in the area of Burj esh-Shemali east of Tyre (Chéhab 1934: 44), which was used as a burial ground in the Iron Age and in the later classical periods. This stele was found in a necropolis located west of the village, which secures its funerary character. Chéhab dated it to the 2nd c. B.C. while others (Bisi 1967: 40; Wagner 1980: Cat. No 62) suggested a Persian period date for this type of monument, more precisely the first half of the 5th c. B.C. The stele represents an Egyptian *naiskos* with two *betyls* inside.

Chéhab (1934: 44) describes it as follows: « *Le décor... représente une porte égyptisante avec torse et gorge, surmontée d'une rangée de neuf uraeus vus de face, la tête portant le disque solaire. Au milieu de la gorge, un disque solaire est flanqué de deux uraeus. Dans l'espace ménagé par l'encadrement de la porte, deux piliers hauts de 45 cm et larges de 10 cm reposent sur un socle de forme égyptienne à gorge, tore et profil évasé. Le haut de chaque pilier est décoré d'un globe flanqué d'uraeus au-dessous de quatre uraeus vus de face et portant des globes sur la tête...* ». Bisi (1971: Fig. 3) recognized pomegranates and not discs flanked by *uraei* on top of the *betyls*.

Stele 55 (Fig. 68)

This stele, which is today in the Louvre Museum (AO 2060), was purchased in Sidon. It was first published by Aimé-Giron (1934: 31-42) who carefully described it. There is no precise information concerning the circumstances and the place of its discovery but it is thought to come from Sidon (Gubel 2002: No 71). It is in fact very similar to the other stelae found in Sidon or its immediate vicinity. It is cut in calcareous sandstone and its workmanship is said to be of low quality.

The stele is decorated on the front and sides. It represents an Egyptian *naiskos* resting on a base with a so-called Astarte throne inside. On the architrave there is a frieze of *uraei*; below it a winged sun-disc flanked by two *uraei* and, on the lintel, a row of alternating lotus flowers and buds. On both sides of the shrine are palmettes. The lateral sides of the monument are also decorated with the same scene representing a male figure with a conical hat, holding a ram-headed scepter and a container, obviously priests offering libations.

Soyez (1972: 156, note 4), Bisi (1971: 26), and Nunn (2000: 16) dated it to the Persian period while Wagner (1980: Cat. No 51) and Gubel (2002: No 71) dated this stele as well as stele 56 and 57 in the 9th-8th c. B.C.

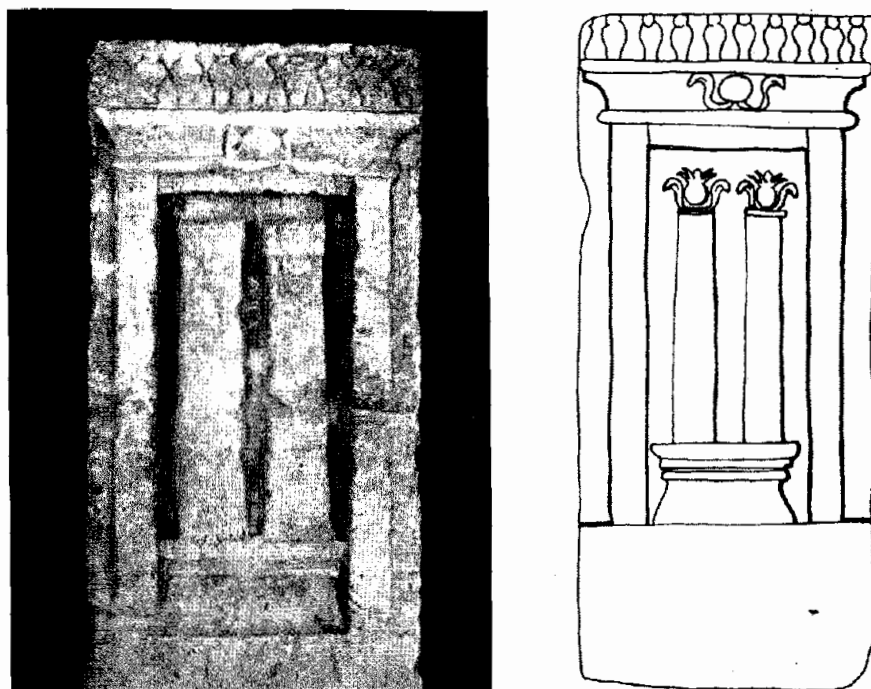


Fig. 67. Stele 54 from Burj esh-Shemali and sketch drawing (*Liban, l'Autre Rive*, Bisi 1971, Fig.3).

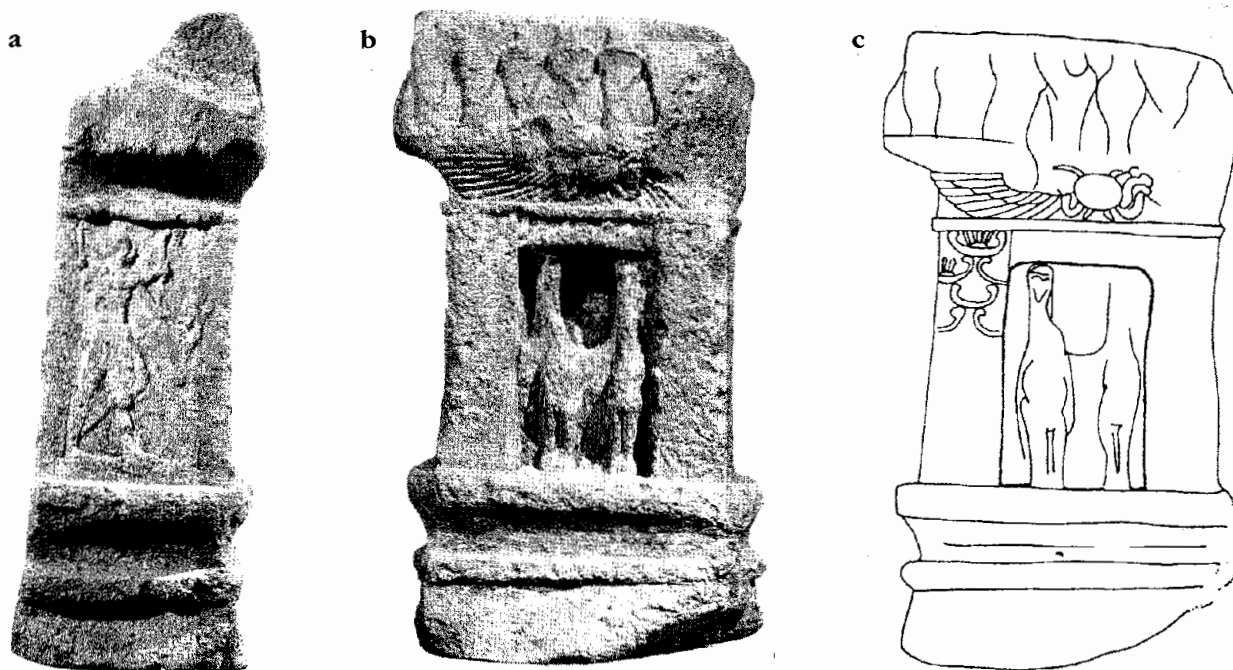


Fig. 68. Stele 55 Naikos from Sidon. Louvre AO 2060 (Gubel 2002: 71; Nunn 2000: Pl. 2: 8; Aimé-Giron 1934). (a) Lateral side, (b) frontside, (c) sketch drawing.

Stele 56 (Fig. 69)

This stele was cut in sandstone and according to Hamdy Bey (1892: 44-45), was offered by Durighello, a private collector, to the Imperial Museum of Istanbul. Mendel (1914: 242-244 N° 92), who published it, dated it to the first half of the 5th c. B.C. (Compare Wagner 1980: Cat. No 52). This monument is a replica of stele 55 with one difference: on the lateral sides, instead of libating priests, a winged Egyptian goddess, Isis or Nephtys, is represented holding an unidentified object and wearing a sun-disc on her head. A cavity on the back of the throne indicates that most probably a *betyl*, now missing, was placed there.

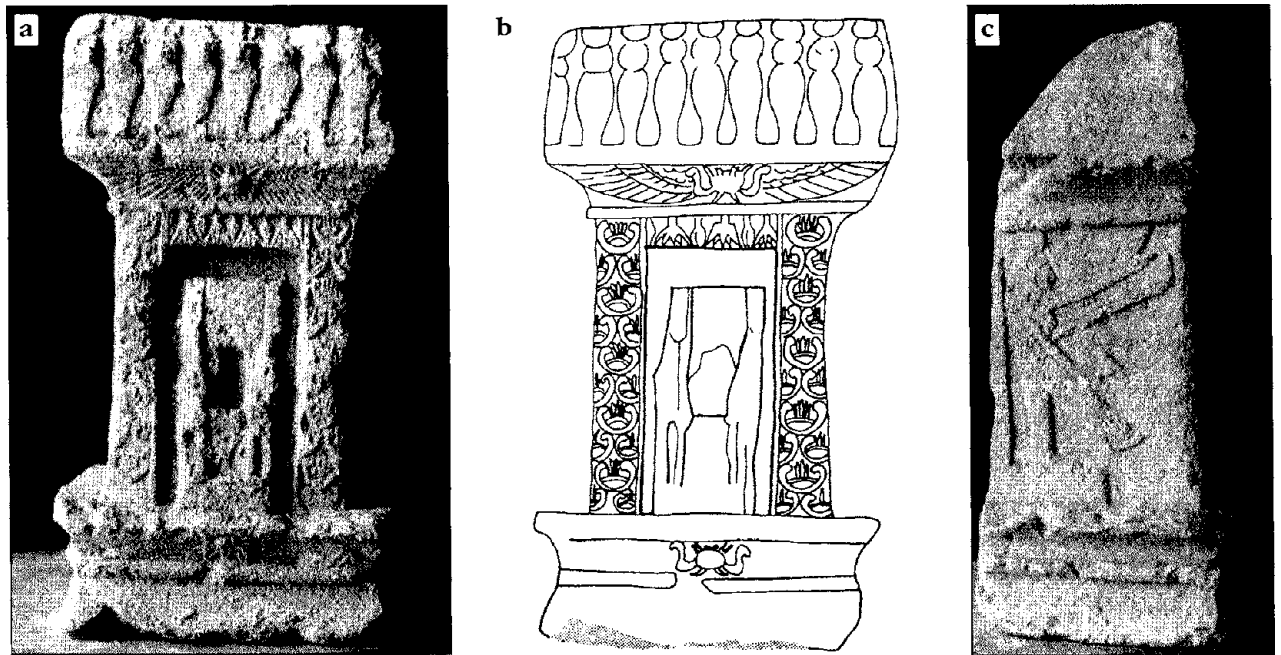


Fig. 69. Stele 56 *Naiskos* from Sidon in the Istanbul Museum (Nunn 2000: Pl.2: 7): (a) Frontside, (b) sketch drawing, (c) lateral side.

Stele 57 (Fig. 70)

This fragment of a funerary stele was probably found in Sidon and belonged to Durighello's private collection. In his publication of the monument, Dunand (1926: 126) does not mention the size and the circumstances of the discovery. The preserved upper part displays exactly the same decoration as stele 55. Dunand dated the monument vaguely before the third century B.C., because of the absence of any Greek influence. (For the date, compare Wagner 1980: Cat. No 53).

Stele 58 (Fig. 71)

This stele was cut in calcareous sandstone. It is in the Louvre Museum (AO 4904) and both its provenance and the way it was acquired are not documented. It appears in Ledrain's catalogue (1888: 54, No 114) but was not included by Wagner (1980) in his study. In the recent catalogue of Phoenician objects in the Louvre (Gubel 2002: 83, Fig. 72), it is listed as a Sidonian monument because of its similarity to other shrines from that city. The shrine is decorated exactly like stele 55 and 56. Its lateral sides however do not carry any representation and a hole on the back of the throne indicates that a removable object, now missing, was fixed in it. The rectangular form of the hole suggests that the missing piece was a *betyl*.

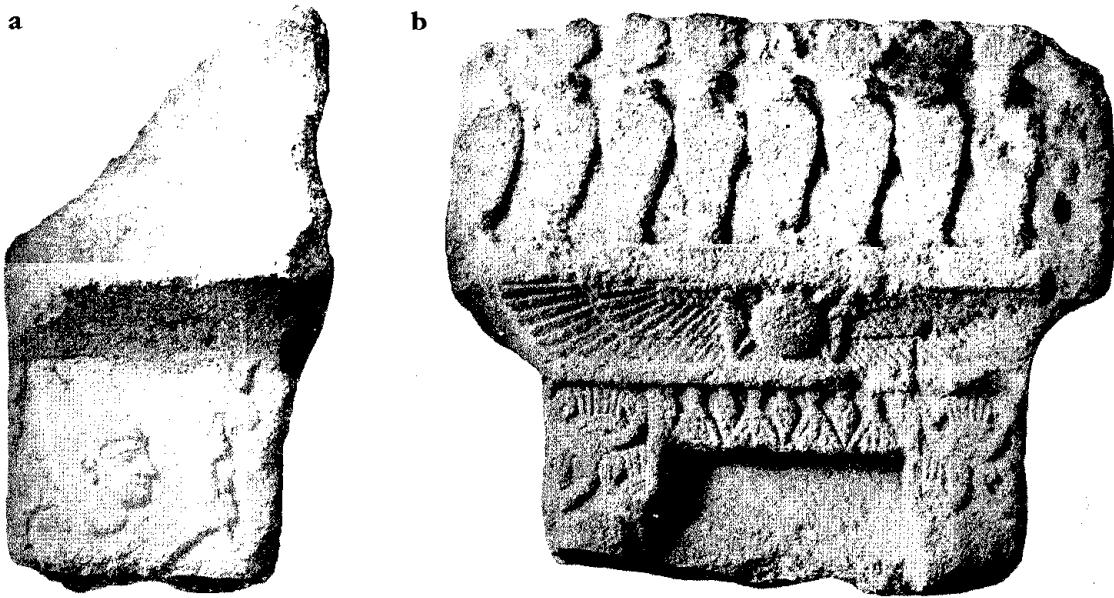


Fig. 70. Stele 57 Naikos fragment from Sidon (Dunand 1926). Lateral (a) and frontside (b).

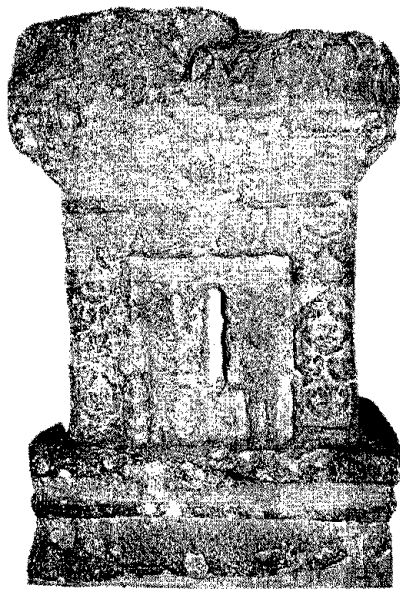


Fig. 71. Stele 58 Naikos from Sidon Louvre AO 4904 (Gubel 2002: 72).

Stele 59 (Fig. 72)

This stele fragment was cut in calcareous sandstone. It is part of the Louvre Museum collection (AO 4819). It was bought on the market and its provenance is unknown. Like stele 58, it is assumed to have come from Sidon. It was published for the first time in 2002 (Gubel 2002: 73). The preserved part shows a frieze of *uraei* on top of a winged sun-disc. Only the upper right corner of the shrine is still visible under the lintel.

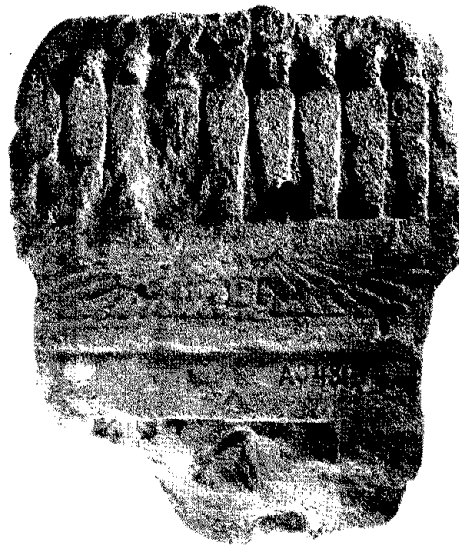


Fig. 72. Stele 59. *Naikos* Fragment from Sidon. Louvre AO 4819 (Gubel 2002: 73).

1.4.f Punic Funerary Stelae

Stele 60 (Fig. 73)

In the winter of 1990, clandestine diggers found a stone with a four-line inscription in the locality of al-Ma'mura, southeast of Tyre. The stone was found in a tomb, next to the skull of a preserved skeleton. It was first published in *Semitica* (Sader 1993).

The stone is a neatly cut, rectangular white limestone block, slightly damaged on its lower edge. Several minor breaks can be seen on the surface but they did not affect the inscription, which is very well preserved and perfectly readable. The stone surface had been nicely smoothed before the inscription was carved. The inscription reads:

1. *bmnsbt z špt hn hnb'l bn ml*
2. *qrthls bn 'zrb'l b*
3. *špt bn hn' brb bn*
4. *'dnb'l brb*

«This is the commemorative stela of *špt*, son of *hn*, son of *mlqrthls*, son of *'zrb'l*, the suffete, son of *hn'*, the rab, son of *'dnb'l*, the rab».

The inscription uses the term *mnšbt*, which is a typical Punic form as opposed to Phoenician *mšbt*. The latter appears on the 8th/7th c. B.C. stele 27. *mnšbt* means «commemorative stela» (Jean and Hoftijzer 1965: 164). Béchou-Safar (1982: 201-205) adds to this meaning that of «monument»: «Il résulte de cet examen qu'en Phénico-punique, *mšbt* ne s'applique pas de façon exclusive à des stèles commémoratives mais également à des constructions simples ou complexes» (204). Teixidor (1986: 404) is more cautious in his interpretation of this term in the Punic inscription of stele 54 (see below): «Hors du contexte archéologique il est difficile de savoir quelle sorte de monument indique le terme *mnšbt*. A Athènes, Kition, le terme indique une stèle commémorative (funéraire)».

š is a relative pronoun indicating the belonging (Friedrich-Röllig 1970: §310, 2). *špt* is a hypocoristic formed with the root *špt*, «to judge» (Halff 1963-64: 143; Benz 1972: 423) and is widely attested in Punic. *hn*, «Baal favored» (Halff 1963-64: 77 and 112; Benz 1972: 313-314), is also a typical Punic name. *mlqrthls*, «Melqart saved» (Halff 1963-64: 122; Benz 1972: 311; 347-348) is another well-attested name but the root *hls* is known in Punic only (Jean-Hoftijzer 1965: 89). *'zrb'l*, «Baal helped», is widely attested (Halff 1963-64: 134-135; Benz 1972: 375-376). His title is *hšpt*, «the suffete» (Jean-Hoftijzer 1965: 316, II). For an exhaustive study of this function in the Carthaginian state see Huß (1985: 458ff.) and for the position of the suffete in Phoenicia see Teixidor (1979: 13ff.). *hn'* is a hypocoristic formed with the root *hnn*, «to favor» and is widespread in Punic (Halff 1963-64: 11, 1-112; Benz 1972: 313-314). *Rb* is a title or function (Jean-Hoftijzer 1965: 271) well attested in Carthage. It was studied by Huß (1979: 217ff.) who

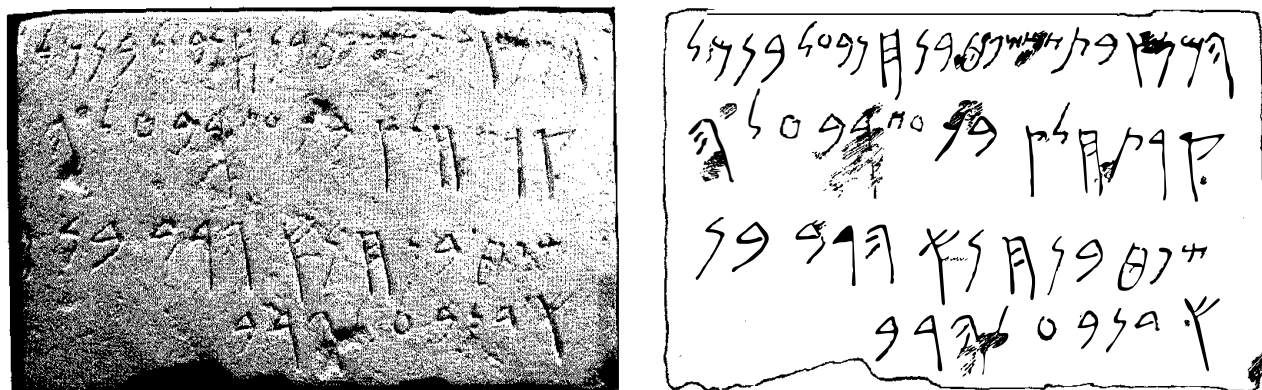


Fig. 73. Stele 60 *špt bn hnb'l* and fac-simile of the inscription.

suggests that the *rab* «scheint demnach der Chef der Karthagischen Finanzbehörde gewesen zu sein» (226). On the position of *rab* in Phoenicia see Teixidor (1979: 15ff.). 'dnb'l, «My lord is Baal» (Halff 1963-64:85-86; Benz 1972: 260-261), is another widespread name in Phoenician and Punic onomastics.

This inscription owes its importance to the fact that it is a Carthaginian inscription found in Tyre, with all the historical implications that this entails. That this inscription is Carthaginian is clear from both the palaeographic and the linguistic evidence. The script is clearly Punic and more specifically Carthaginian. All letters find exact parallels in 4th/3rd c. B.C. Carthaginian inscriptions (Peckham 1968: 182-183) and this stone clearly dates to that period. All personal names attested in the inscription are widely, and sometimes exclusively, attested in Carthaginian onomastics. Moreover, the orthography of *mnšbt* is clear evidence for the Punic origin of the inscription.

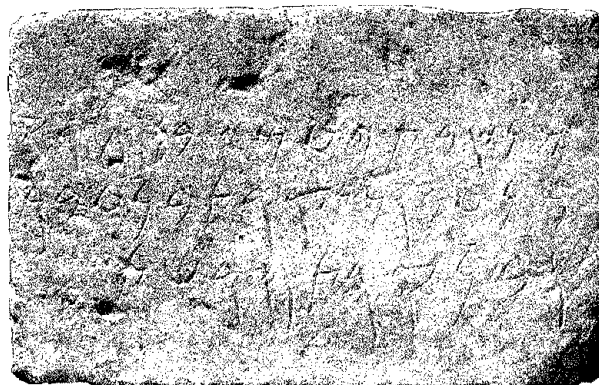
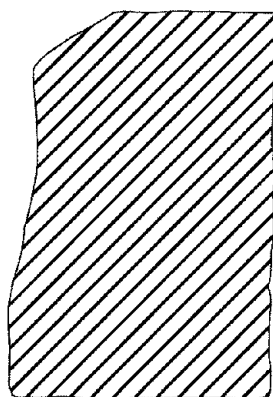
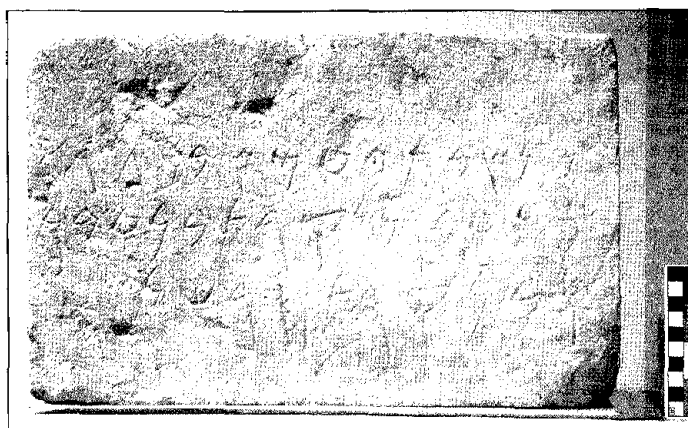
Concerning the content, we are in the presence of a very long genealogy: *špt* gives the names of five of his ancestors. This exceptionally long enumeration is most probably due to the fact that the author of the inscription went so far back in his genealogy as to reach three of his illustrious ancestors: a suffete and two *rabs*. It is very difficult to identify these high-ranking officials: 'zrb'l, the suffete of our inscription, cannot be identified with any suffete of the same name known from Carthaginian inscriptions. It is however worth noting that CIS I, 2: 2378 mentions a 'zrb'l son of hn' son of 'dnb'l, i.e. a man having both the same name and the same genealogy as our suffete. However, the 'zrb'l of CIS I, 2: 2378 as well as his father and grandfather have no titles. We should therefore conclude that the similarity between the two genealogies is nothing but a mere coincidence. CIS I, 2: 623 also mentions a 'zrb'l son of hn', but here again without any titles. It is not surprising to have several identical filiations because these names are extremely common in Carthage.

Concerning the two *rabs*, hn' and 'dnb'l, respectively son and father, it is also very difficult to identify them with other *rabs* known from Carthaginian inscriptions. In the list of Carthaginian *rabs* provided by Huß (1979: 230-232), there are several 'dnb'l and several hn', but none of them has the same genealogy as the *rabs* of our inscription.

Thus, the Punic inscription from al-Ma'mura seems to have added a new suffete and two new *rabs* to the already known list of Carthaginian suffetes and *rabs*. Unfortunately, it adds no evidence for a better understanding of these two functions. Since the inscription dates to the 4th/3rd c. B.C., it is possible that the high-ranking ancestors of *špt* exercised their functions at the end of the 5th and in the first half of the 4th century B.C. because three generations separate *špt* from 'zrb'l, four separate him from hn' and five separate him from 'dnb'l. His family seems to have been very influent in the fourth century but lost its prominent position with his grandfather. It is useless to speculate on the reasons that brought *špt*, his father or grandfather, to Tyre. This question and many others concerning the presence of Carthaginians in Tyre will have to await further discoveries from archaeological excavations in the area.

Stele 61 (Fig. 74)

This rectangular funerary stela was cut in a limestone block. It was found in Tyre and requisitioned by the Lebanese Department of Antiquities where it still is. It has a new inventory number 13270. Teixidor (1980: 348 and Fig. 12) published its three-line Punic inscription and dated it to the 4th c. B.C. It was later studied by Bordreuil and Ferjaoui (1988). It reads:

Fig. 74. Stele 61 *y'mš bn gr'*.

mnšbt y'mš bn gr'
bn 'bdmlqrt bn'bd
'bn qrtḥdšt

Commemorative stele of *y'mš* son of *gr'*,
 son of *'bdmlqrt*, son of *'bd*
 ', the Carthaginian (lit. «son of Carthage»)

The personal names *y'mš*, of uncertain meaning, and *'bdmlqrt*, «servant of (the god) Melqart», are attested in Phoenician and Punic onomastics (Benz 1972: 128 and 371), *gr'* and *'bd'*, respectively «client of (DN)» and «servant of (DN)», are also two well-known hypocoristica. *bn qrtḥdšt* was translated by Teixidor as «*natif de Carthage*», (1977: 268) which indicates the Carthaginian origin of the family of *y'mš*. The same expression is found in the inscription of stele 62.

Stele 62 (Fig. 75)

This stele belongs to the Lebanese Directorate General of Antiquities collection and has the new inventory number 12657. It is of unknown provenance and was probably requisitioned or purchased on the market before 1975 but was not on display like stele 61. It is published here for the first time.

The slightly trapezoidal stele was cut in limestone. Black spots, resulting from the fire that destroyed one of the Department of Antiquities rooms where it was stored, are clearly visible on its surface. Breaks on the ed-

ges of the stone, mainly in the lower right corner, have partly damaged the 6-line Phoenician inscription.

The script is neat and regular and the signs are of medium size. The inscription reads:

bmṣḥb' z
'š lb'šlk
b'spr bn b'
lhlš bn 'gry'
b'nqrthd
šlš'

«This commemorative stele, which (belongs) to *b'šlk*, the scribe, son of *b'hlš*, son of *gry*, the Carthaginian (lit. «son of Carthage»).

The deceased in the memory of whom the stele was erected was a scribe and it would not be far-fetched to assume that he wrote his own epitaph. *B'šlk*, the scribe, is of Carthaginian descent but he was probably born and raised, and he certainly died in Phoenicia. The additional evidence provided by stele 62 seems to strengthen the assumption that there were Carthaginian scribes in Phoenicia as suggested above.

The author of the inscription, whoever he may have been, *b'šlk* or another scribe, was trained in a Carthaginian scribal school. The inscription can be indeed classified as Punic, not only on palaeographic grounds but also on the fact that it uses Punic *mṣḥb* and not Phoenician *mšbb*. The palaeography of the inscription is slightly different from that of stelae 60 and 61: it does not share the very elongated and partly thickened forms characteristic of 4th-early 3rd c. B.C. Carthaginian signs but shows more archaic features which are often similar to the local Persian Period Phoenician inscriptions of Byblos and Sidon (Friedrich-Röllig 1970: Tables 1 & 2; Peckham 1968: 94ff.). Most characteristic of the early Punic (5th/4th c. B.C.) and 5th/4th c. B.C. Phoenician form of the signs are: *aleph* which, according to Peckham's terminology (1968: 197), is of the formal type with the headlines joined to left of the shaft in a curved juncture, a form typical of 5th/4th c. B.C.; *be* which still has headlines attached to the shaft, very similar again to 5th/4th c. B.C. Phoenician examples; *zayin* with its flattened form very close to that of the Yehimilk and Eshmunazar inscriptions and quite different from later Punic *zayin*; it is indeed attested in this form in two Punic inscriptions of the 4th c. only and changes drastically later (Peckham 1968: 179 and 203); *kaf* with its short horizontal stroke almost perpendicular to the shaft finds again its closest parallel in the Batnoam inscription rather than in Punic signs; *šin* is written twice: the first one has a rounded form while the second one has a «semi-triangular shape with the center line dropping into the apex of the angle» (Peckham 1968: 99) and is found in late 5th/early 4th c. B.C. inscriptions of the motherland and in a 5th c. Punic inscription (Peckham 1968: 178). *Ayin* as an open circle is attested in the 4th c. inscription of Yehimilk as well as in the Punic world; *samekh* with its vertical shaft and its head which is practically similar to a horizontal *yod*, as well as *šade* are close to 5th c. B.C. signs; *qof* with its triangular heads, *lamed* with its shaft tilted to the right and its short dropline curved to the left, *tau* with a tilted shaft, a long crossbar and a short dropline, and finally *het* with its long parallel shafts are commonly used in the Carthaginian script of the 5th/4th c. B.C. All these forms indicate a 5th or maybe early 4th c. B.C.-date at the latest (Friedrich-Röllig 1970: Tables 1 & 2; Peckham 1968: 94ff.).

To conclude: the script of stele 62 seems to represent an earlier stage of the Punic script where Phoenician scribal traditions were still dominant in spite of emerging regional differences. Peckham (1968: 199, 210, 213) had already noticed the close relationship between the early Punic and the local Phoenician, mainly Sidonian script, an observation that finds additional support in the script of stele 62.

Concerning the content, the personal names *b'šlk*, «Baal has provided» (Benz 1972: 98 & 416), *b'hlš* «Baal has saved» (Benz 1972: 90 et 311) and *'gry*, «Client of (DN)» (Benz 1972: 104), are so far exclusively attested in Punic onomastics, a feature that is explained by the Carthaginian origin of the family. The expression *bn qnrthdš* which is applied to *gry*, grandfather of *b'šlk*, is attested also on stele 61: both inscriptions go in their genealogy as far back as to reach their Carthaginian ancestor.

Finally, attention should be drawn to two grammatical features: First, *z* is here a demonstrative and *'š* is a relative pronoun. Compare the formula *bmṣḥb' z 'š l* + PN used in this inscription to that used in stele 60 *bmṣḥb' z* + PN.

Second, *b'šlk* calls himself *hspr*. This is additional evidence for the systematic use of the article before the profession in Phoenician and Punic (Friedrich-Röllig 1970: 151). Finally, *gry* is a hypocoristic formed with *yod* while in Phoenician onomastics, it is attested with *aleph* as in *gr'*.


Fig. 75. Stele 62 *b'lšlk* the scribe.

Table I. The Stelae.

Stele No	Provenance	Inscription	Symbol	Date B.C.	Location	Preservation	Size in cm H x W x T	<i>Editio princeps</i>
1	Tell el-Burak (E)	<i>l'bb'l</i>	Broken sun-disc	7 th /6 th c.	DGA Sidon	Original size	50 x 24 x 19	Kamlah-Sader 2003. TB02: 15
2	Khalde (E)	<i>g'tty</i>	None	9 th c.	DGA Sidon?	Original size	n.a.	Bordreuil 1982
3	Sidon (E)	<i>l'bb' hm mr'</i>	None	6 th /5 th c.	DGA Beirut	Original Size	n.a.	Tcixidor 1982
4	Tyre (L)	<i>bn tnt l'</i>	None	7 th /6 th c.	DGA Beirut	Original size	73 x 15 x 13	Sader 1992 TT 91. S3
5	Tyre (L)	<i>lb'y</i>	Sun-disc	7 th c.	DGA Beirut	Original size	61 x 26 x 8-24	Sader 1992 TT 91.S4
6	Tyre (L)	<i>'bdlxxd bn b'ly</i>	<i>Ankb</i> sign	6 th c.	DGA Beirut	Original size	58,5 X 18, 5-24 x 10	Sader 1992 TT 91. S5
7	Tyre (L)	<i>štrt l'lt</i>	Shrine	9 th /8 th c.	DGA Beirut	Original size	44 x 30-32 x 16-18	Sader 1992 TT 91. S8
8	Tyre (L)	<i>l'mlsmn</i>	None	8 th /7 th c.	DGA Beirut	Original size	76 x 19-22, 5 x 10-19	Sader 1992 TT 91. S10

Table I

Stele No	Provenance	Inscription	Symbol	Date B.C.	Location	Preservation	Size in cm H x W x T	Editio princeps
9	Tyre (L)	None	Human figure	n.d.	DGA Beirut	Original size	56,2 x 36 x 13,6	Sader 1991 TT 91. S6
10	Tyre (L)	None	Shrine, sun-disc	n.d.	DGA Beirut	Original Size	58 x 19-24 x 10-19	Sader 1991 TT 91. S11
11	Tyre (L)	None	Lotus bud	n.d.	DGA Beirut	Original Size	47,5 x 18 x 10-16	Sader 1991 TT 91. S12
12	Tyre (L)	<i>gr̥mn</i>	<i>Uraei</i> , crescent moon, solar disc	8 th /7 th c.	DGA Beirut	Original size	56 x 18,8 x 11,2-38	Sader 1991 TT 91. S1
13	Tyre (L)	<i>mt šb' št 'lm</i>	None	7 th /6 th c.	DGA Beirut	Original size	69,5 x 20 x 14	Sader 1991 TT 91. S2
14	Tyre (L)	<i>mlqt' b</i>	Crescent moon and solar disc	8 th c.	DGA Beirut	Original Size	41 x 30 x 7-11	Sader 1991 TT 91. S7
15	Tyre (L)	<i>gr̥š</i>	Horseshoe-shaped symbol	7 th c.	DGA Beirut	Original size	51,5 x 24 x 8	Sader 1991 TT 91 S9
16	Tyre (L)	<i>šm'</i>	None	10 th c.	DGA Beiteddin	Original size	64,4 x 31,3 x 21,4	Unpublished
17	Tyre (L)	<i>mlqt' b</i>	<i>ankb</i>	9 th /8 th c.	DGA Beiteddin	Original size	65 x 27 x 9	Unpublished
18	Tyre (L)	<i>l̥y̥mm bt gmr</i>	None	8 th /7 th c.	DGA Beiteddin	Sawn	56 x 32,5 x 8	Unpublished
19	Tyre (L)	<i>bd'</i>	None	7 th c.	DGA Beiteddin	Sawn	17 x 20 x 7,5	Unpublished
20	Tyre (L)	<i>šp̥t bn 'zr</i>	Damaged. Circular head of <i>ankb</i> preserved	7 th /6 th c.	DGA Beiteddin	Original size	60,3 x 22,8 x 6	Unpublished
21	Tyre (L)	<i>m̥s̥ry bn b'ty̥t b</i>	None	8 th /7 th c.	DGA Beiteddin	Sawn	31,2 x 23 x 5,8	Unpublished
22	Tyre (L)	<i>[xxxx]h</i>	None	n.d.	DGA Beiteddin	Sawn	18,7 x 21,2 x 6	Unpublished
23	Tyre (L)	<i>js̥p 'm'h</i>	None	8 th c.	DGA Beiteddin	Sawn	47 x 27,2 x 8	Unpublished
24	Tyre (L)	<i>bš̥hr bt gr̥t b'l</i>	Horseshoe-shaped motif	8 th /7 th c.	DGA Beiteddin	Sawn	45,2 x 20,7 x 8	Unpublished

Table I

Stele No	Provenance	Inscription	Symbol	Date B.C.	Location	Preservation	Size in cm H x W x T	Editio princeps
25	Tyre (L)	<i>šmny/l</i>	Circular motif on horizontal line (<i>ankh</i> ?). Stone colored red	7 th /6 th c.	DGA Beiteddin	Sawn	35 x 19,5 x 8	Unpublished
26	Tyre (L)	None	Cross motif, <i>ankh</i> signs and sun discs	n.d.	DGA Beiteddin	Sawn	37 x 25,5 x 7,5	Unpublished
27	Tyre (L)	None	Cross, crescent moon, disc	n.d.	DGA Beiteddin	Sawn	59 x 27 x 21,1	Unpublished
28	Tyre (L)	None	Cross and U- shape	n.d.	DGA Beiteddin	Original size	52,5 x 24,5 x 23,5	Unpublished
29	Tyre (L)	None	U-shape	n.d.	DGA Beiteddin	Original size	52,5 x 25 x 15	Unpublished
30	Tyre (L)	<i>'mtspr</i>	None	8 th c.	DGA Beiteddin	Original size	60,2 x 27 x 22,5	Unpublished
31	Tyre (L)	<i>mbry bn ysp bn 'myh</i>	None	7 th c.	Hecht Museum	Original size	51,5 x 27-29 x 7	Lemaire 2001 H-3017
32	Tyre (L)	<i>mšbt mlk bn štrg</i>	Pseudo- <i>ankh</i> with pomegranate inside	8 th /7 th c.	Hecht Museum	Original size	53,5 x 34 x 8	Lemaire 2001 H-3016
33	Tyre (L)	<i>gršmn</i>	None	8 th /7 th c.	Hecht Museum	Original size	36 x 25,5 x 7	Lemaire 2001 H-3008
34	Tyre (L)	<i>'mtmskr</i>	None	8 th /7 th c.	Hecht Museum	Sawn	21,5 x 23 x 8	Lemaire 2001 H-3005
35	Tyre (L)	<i>brh.</i>	U-shape	7 th c.	Hecht Museum	Sawn	24 x 21-26 x 7	Lemaire 2001 H-3011
36	Tyre (L)	<i>l'mn</i>	None	8 th /7 th c.	Hecht Museum	Sawn	37,5 x 21 x 6	Lemaire 2001 H-3013
37	Tyre (L)	<i>lm''/l</i>	None	7 th c.	Hecht Museum	Sawn	32 x 14 x 7	Lemaire 2001 H-3015
38	Tyre (L)	<i>lgrt'</i>	Cross	8 th /7 th c.	Hecht Museum	Sawn	38 x 20 x 8	Lemaire 2001 H-3014

Table I

Stele No	Provenance	Inscription	Symbol	Date B.C.	Location	Preservation	Size in cm H x W x T	Editor princeps
39	Tyre (L)	<i>šb't bt 'zb'l</i>	None	7 th /6 th c.	Hecht Museum	Sawn	30 x 13-15 x 7	Lemaire 2001 H-3010
40	Tyre (L)	<i>lmlk' bt p'dn</i>	None	7 th /6 th c.	Hecht Museum	Sawn	35,5 x 23-27 x 5	Lemaire 2001 H-3009
41	Tyre (L)	<i>lklbt bt 'bskn</i>	None	7 th c.	Hecht Museum	Sawn	31 x 20-24 x 7	Lemaire 2001 H-3007
42	Tyre (L)	<i>štrt 'šp</i>	<i>Pseudo-ankh</i>	7 th c.	Hecht Museum	Sawn	30 x 21-20 x 7,5	Lemaire 2001 H-3006
43	Tyre (E)	None	Naos	n.d.	DGA Tyre	Original size	57,5 x 40 x 31,5	Sader 2004 TT 97-V-002-58
44	Tyre (E)	None	Human figure and <i>ankh</i> sign	n.d.	DGA Tyre	Original size	45 x 29 x 14,2	Sader 2004 TT97-XIII-002-31
45	Tyre (E)	None	Isoceles triangles	n.d.	DGA Tyre	Original size	49 x 8-30, 2 x 19,2	Sader 2004 TT97-X-002-5
46	Tyre (E)	None	L-shaped human figure	n.d.	DGA Tyre	Original size	44,3 x 28,7 x 34	Sader 2004 TT97-III-002-262
47	Tyre (E)	None	Human head	n.d.	DGA Tyre	Broken	24 x 20,7 x 22,7	Sader 2004 TT97-I-002-308
48	Tyre (E)	None	Shrine lintel and <i>betyl</i>	n.d.	DGA Tyre	Broken	15,5 x 27,9 x 19	Sader 2004 TT97-0/I-002-1
49	Tyre (E)	None	Circular cavities	n.d.	DGA Tyre	Original size	60 x 23 x 19	Sader 2004 TT97-XIII-002-29
50	Tyre (E)	None	Human face	n.d.	DGA Tyre?	Broken	ca 25 cm in diameter	Unpublished
51	Tyre (E)	<i>'bd p'm bn 'n'</i>	None	8 th /7 th c.	DGA Tyre	Original size	72 x 19 x	Unpublished
52	Tyre (E)	None	<i>Nefer</i> sign	9 th c.	DGA Tyre	Broken	34 x 13,5-14, 5 x 14-14,8	Unpublished
53	Sidon	None	Shrine imitating Egyptian <i>naiskos</i>	6 th /5 th c.	Louvre Museum AO 4820	Broken	Height: ca 23 cm; Renan 1864 Original height estimated 80-90 cm; Width: 35 cm	

Table I

Stele No	Provenance	Inscription	Symbol	Date B.C.	Location	Preservation	Size in cm H x W x T	<i>Editio princeps</i>
54	Burj esh-Shemali	None	Shrine imitating Egyptian <i>naiskos</i>	6 th /5 th c.	DGA Beirut 2069	Original size	108 x 50 x 42	Chéhab 1934
55	Sidon	None	Shrine imitating Egyptian <i>naiskos</i>	6 th /5 th c.	Louvre Museum AO 2060	Original Size	60 x 32 x 17	Aimé-Giron 1934
56	Sidon	None	Shrine imitating Egyptian <i>naiskos</i>	6 th /5 th c.	Istanbul Museum	Original size	65 x 36 x 29	Mendel 1914
57	Sidon	None	Shrine imitating Egyptian <i>naiskos</i>	6 th /5 th c.	Durighello Fragment Collection	n.a.		Dunand 1926
58	Sidon	None	Shrine imitating Egyptian <i>naiskos</i>	6 th /5 th c.	Louvre Museum AO 4904	Original Size	58 x 37,5 x 22	Ledrain 1888
59	Sidon	None	Shrine imitating Egyptian <i>naiskos</i>	6 th /5 th c.	Louvre Museum AO 4819	Fragment	33 x 26 x 15	Gubel 2002
60	Maamura (L.)	<i>hmnsbt z špꜥ bn hnbꜥl bn mlqrthꜥs bn zrbꜥl hšꜥꜥ bn hnꜥ hrb bn dnbꜥl hrb</i>	None	4 th /3 rd c.	Unknown	Original size	31 x 19,5 x 11	Sader 1994
61	Tyre (L.)	<i>mnsbt yꜥ mꜥ bn grꜥhnꜥ bdꜥ bn qrthꜥšt</i>	None	4 th c.	DGA Beirut	Original Size		Teixidor 1980
62	Unknown	<i>hmnsbt z š lhꜥl šlk hspr bn bꜥlthꜥs bn gry bn qrthꜥšt</i>	None	5 th /4 th c.	DGA Beirut	Original size	26,5 x 17,5 x 8	Unpublished