

A GRAFFITO FROM AMYKLAI

(PLATE 34)

THE graffito described below (Pl. 34) was found by chance at the Amyklaion near Sparta in November, 1957, and is now in the study collection of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens. It is a fragment of Laconian roof tile of reddish clay with brown glaze on the concave surface and the preserved portion of the original right edge. Twelve lines of letters are preserved, incised with some care in the glaze.

Height (relative to the writing), 0.122 m.; width, 0.073 m.; thickness, 0.008-0.018 m.

vacat

[---]αντ[---]
[---]θενει[---]

vacat

[---]νυμια
[---]οπα
5 [---]σα
[---]λεανις
[---]δροτελι
[---]πινικον
[---]αχια
10 [---]λυτις
[---]μα
[---]ατια

A few restorations can be offered *exempli gratia*. Line 1: perhaps [Ἄκαμ]αν-τ[ία], as in *I.G.*, V, 1, 209. Line 2: possibly [Εὐρυσ]θενει[α]; *B.S.A.*, XXX, 1928-30, pp. 243 f., or [Δαμοσ]θενει[α] (*I.G.*, V, 1, 509, 576, and *stemma*, p. 131). Line 3: [Εὐο?]νυμία; cf. Εὐόνυμα, *B.S.A.*, XXVI, 1923-25, pp. 271 f., no. 5, and Εὐόνυμος, *I.G.*, V, 1, 983 (perhaps also *B.S.A.*, XXX, 1928-30, p. 250, nos. 8, 9: -μια, -νυμια). Line 4: [Καλλι]όπα, cf. *I.G.*, V, 1, 1191. Line 5: [---]σα. The stroke of the first letter bears a strong resemblance to the lower bar of *sigma* in lines 6 and 10. Line 6: perhaps [Κ]λεανίς; cf. Κλεανίς, *I.G.*, XII, 1, 217, 877; Κλεωνίς, *I.G.*, IV, 630b (and possibly *B.S.A.*, XXX, 1928-30, p. 250, no. 6: ΚΛΕ-). Line 7: [Ἄν]δροτελί<ς> *vel sim.*; the final sigma was apparently omitted through carelessness. Line 8: [Ἐ?]πί-

νικον. This must be one of the rare instances of a neuter woman's name which is not an hypercoristic in -ιον.¹ Line 9: [Δεξιμ]αχία; cf. Δεξιμάχος, with 16 entries in the index to *I.G.*, V, 1. Line 10: [Θεο?]λυτίς, a possible variant of Θεολύτη (Athenaeus, XI, 471 A; XIII, 570 E, 587 E; cf. Θεόλυτος, Thucydides, II, 102; Athenaeus, VII, 296 A; XI, 470 B; Θεύλυτος, *I.G.*, XII, 1, 225). Line 11: possibly [Ἄριστοδά]μα, since Ἄριστόδαμος is found at least ten times in Spartan inscriptions (index to *I.G.*, V, 1, *s.v.*). Line 12: perhaps [Δαμοκρ]ατία, as in *I.G.*, V, 1, 141, 572, 581. Below the first preserved letter of line 12 are two scratches which could be the upper part of a pointed letter (*alpha, delta, lambda*), but may be only damage near the line of fracture.

The tile cannot be dated exactly; similar tiles are known from at least the late fourth century B.C. into Roman Imperial times. Dating by letter forms, moreover, is far from exact, especially in the case of graffiti, but enough other graffiti have been found at Sparta to provide an approximate chronology. If Woodward's dates are accepted for the dedications of Chilonis (270-200 B.C.), Damaris (*ca.* 250 B.C.), and Eurystheneia (*ca.* 300 B.C.),² we should place the writing of the Amyklai graffito sometime in the second half of the third century B.C.

Four other inscribed sherds were found at the Amyklaion by Tsountas,³ and two more have been published recently by Amyx.⁴ All were surface finds at the site of the sanctuary, and all seem to have been inscribed with proper names.⁵ Sherds were often used as writing material in antiquity, and names are the most common inscriptions found on them. The largest single class of such inscriptions, the Athenian ostraka, can hardly be expected to shed any light on the graffiti from Amyklai, but closer parallels are provided by the inscribed sherds from the Athenian Agora published by Vanderpool,⁶ and two from Gortyn published by Miss Guarducci.⁷ The present example, which consists of a list of women's names, has no precise parallel so far as I have found, although an unpublished graffito from the Athenian Agora contains the names of five men and two women.⁸ In Sparta, however, catalogues and lists of names are by far the most common inscriptions on stone.

¹ Bechtel, *Die attischen Frauennamen*, Göttingen, 1902, pp. 49-51; Schwyzer, *Griechische Grammatik*, II, München, 1950, p. 37.

² *B.S.A.*, XXIV, 1919-21, pp. 110 ff.; XXX, 1928-30, pp. 243 f., especially fig. 2, nos. 3, 4, 6, 8, 10.

³ *Εφ. Ἀρχ.*, 1892, p. 4 (= *I.G.*, V, 1, 1574, p. xxii). I have been unable to discover the present location of these four sherds; they are not listed in Tod and Wace, *Catalogue of the Sparta Museum*, Oxford, 1906, as are most of the finds from Tsountas' excavations of 1890.

⁴ *A.J.A.*, LXI, 1957, pp. 168 f.

⁵ Tsountas' nos. 3 and 4 seem to have been inscribed with more than one name, although they may have had a name and patronymic as does the Kallikrates sherd published by Amyx.

⁶ *Hesperia*, Suppl. VIII, *Studies in Honor of T. L. Shear*, 1949, pp. 405 ff.

⁷ *Annuario*, N.S. XIV-XVI, 1952-54, pp. 167 ff.

⁸ P 15209; second quarter of the fifth century B.C.

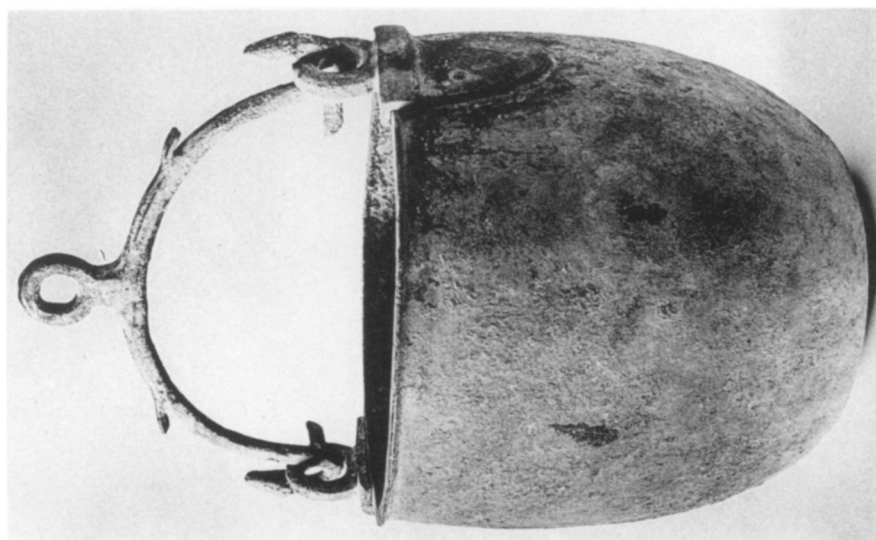
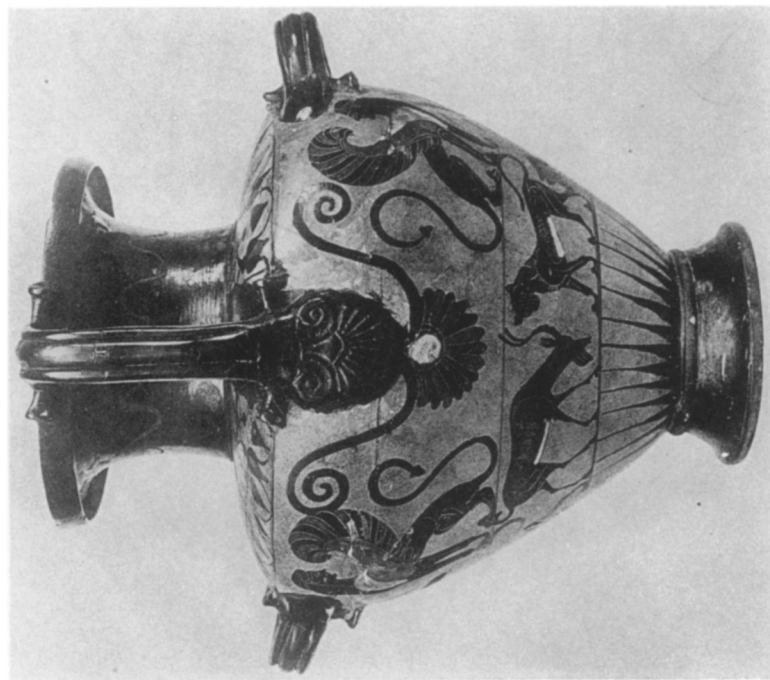
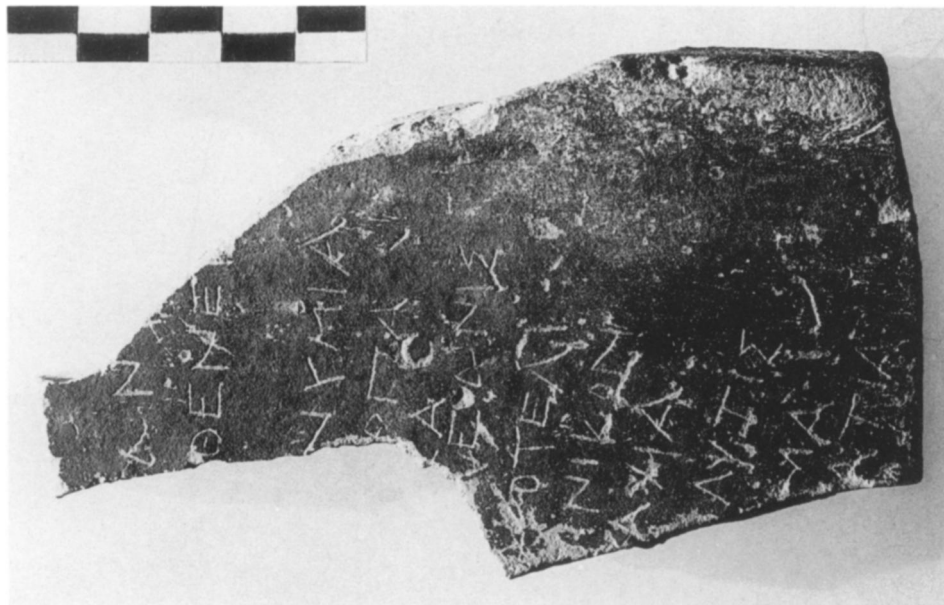
The finding place of this sherd strongly suggests a ritual or other religious significance. The sanctuary of Apollo at Amyklai was the scene of the Spartan Hyakinthia, the importance of which is so strikingly attested by Herodotos (IX, 7; 11) and Xenophon (*Hell.* IV, 5, 11), while Polybios (V, 19, 8) calls the shrine *σχεδὸν ἐπιφανέστατον τῶν κατὰ Λακωνικὴν ἱερῶν*. Although the details of the ritual celebrated at the Hyakinthia and especially the division of honors paid to the hero Hyakinthos and to Apollo are subjects of learned controversy,⁹ it is abundantly clear that women played an important part in the festival. The fullest extant account of the Hyakinthia (Polykrates *apud* Athenaeus, IV, 4, 139 C-F) mentions processions with some maidens riding in gaily decorated wicker wagons, and others in two-horse chariots in which they raced. Pausanias (III, 16, 2) reports that the Spartan women wove a chiton each year for the image of Apollo at Amyklai, and it is likely that this was carried to the sanctuary (along the Hyakinthian Way) as a part of the Hyakinthia. Euripides (*Helen*, lines 1465 ff.) knew of a nocturnal observance with women's dances at Amyklai, and this is presumably to be connected with the dance during the Hyakinthia from which St. Jerome (*Adv. Iovinianum* I, 308) relates that 15 maidens were abducted one night. Perhaps the all-night festival at Amyklai for women mentioned by Plutarch (*Moralia*, 775 D) was a part of the same ritual. Women are associated with the Hyakinthia in inscriptions, each time as *ἀρχηῖς καὶ θεωρὸς διὰ βίου τοῦ σεμνοτάτου ἀγῶνος τῶν Ἰακινθίων* (*I.G.*, V, 1, 586, 587). In any case, the prominence of women in the celebration of the Hyakinthia provides a plausible explanation for the discovery at Amyklai of a sherd inscribed with women's names, although the exact connection remains obscure.

There seems to be no satisfactory way to determine whether or not the graffiti at Amyklai were all inscribed for the same (or a similar) purpose. Amyx has already pointed out the difference in age of the examples known to him, but at a sanctuary where the ritual is known to have survived several centuries, this is hardly conclusive. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, it is reasonable to suppose that some part or parts of the cult ritual required (or were facilitated by) the practice of inscribing the names of certain individuals on sherds.

COLIN N. EDMONSON

AMERICAN SCHOOL OF CLASSICAL STUDIES
ATHENS

⁹ Nilsson, *Griechische Feste*, Leipzig, 1906, pp. 129 ff.; Farnell, *Cults of the Greek States*, IV, Oxford, 1907, pp. 264 ff.; Ziehen, *R.E.*, III, A (1929), *s.v. Sparta*, cols. 1518 ff.; Mellink, *Hyakinthos*, Utrecht, 1943, pp. 5-46, esp. 21 ff.



a. Bronze Pail from Olympia

b. Chalkidian Hydria, British Museum B 75

KARL LEHMANN: A BRONZE PAIL OF ATHENA ALALKOMENIA

COLIN N. EDMONSON: A GRAFFITO FROM AMYKLAI