

DEINIAS' GRAVE AT TIMESIOS' FARM

(PLATE 29)

IN 1977 M. Langdon and V. Watrous published four rupestral inscriptions from the Cliff Tower and farm in the Agrileza Valley north of Cape Sounion in the Laurion mining district. The site had previously been investigated and identified as a 4th-century B.C. farm by J. H. Young.¹ Each of the four inscriptions reflects a different aspect of rural life: an invocation to Artemis, probably metrical; a calendar, dedicated to Hermes; the record of a land transfer; and the fourth, a single name, well antedating the other inscriptions and the extant architectural remains. This already prolific farm has now produced a fifth rupestral inscription, a grave inscription, and the grave, now empty.²

The text is inscribed in three lines on the steeply sloping face (0.90 m. wide by 0.90 m. high with a slope of 50°) of a natural rock outcrop facing east 9.50 m. west-southwest of the western edge of the circular tower and 11.50 m. south-southwest of the land-transfer inscription.³ The first two lines, each 0.60 m. long, are clear, above the horizontal, dark vein in the rock. The third line, below the flaw band, is much more eroded and difficult to read. The letters, formed by well-punched circular dots, vary in height from 0.035 to 0.05 m. (Pl. 29:a and Fig. 1).

Δεινίαι ἦδε
σορός, παισί τε
καὶ γενεᾷ[ι]

This is the *soros* of Deinias, his children, and descendants.

Line 3: The only certain letter is the nu, but traces of the others are still visible, as can be seen from the photograph (Pl. 29:a).⁴ The gamma at first appeared to be a tau, but the horizontal stroke of the letter coincides with a weathered groove, and gamma makes better sense. The alpha near the end of the line might appear in the photograph to be a sigma. The second bar of the "sigma", however, is the right oblique stroke of the alpha, and what would be the third bar, below the white horizontal vein, is a natural groove.⁵

¹ *SEG* XXVI, 53, 137, 227, 266. M. Langdon and V. Watrous, "The Farm of Timesios: Rock-cut Inscriptions in South Attica," *Hesperia* 46, 1977, pp. 162–177, with references to earlier work on Attic farmhouses. J. H. Young, "Studies in South Attica, Country Estates at Sounion," *Hesperia* 25, 1956, pp. 124–126.

In addition to the usual abbreviations, note the following:

GVI = W. Peek, *Griechische Vers-Inschriften* I, Berlin 1955

² This grave was discovered on a walk with American School members in January of 1979. Many people deserve thanks for their help in studying the inscription, especially John Camp II, David Jordan, John Traill, Eugene Vanderpool, and Malcolm Wallace.

I am indebted to the Ephor, Basileios Petrakos, for his kind permission to clean the grave site. I would also like to thank Maria Oikonomakou, who generously gave up a morning of her time to represent the Greek Archaeological Service, John Camp and Steven Diamant for supplying the labor, and Helen Townsend for drawing the inscription.

³ Langdon and Watrous, *op. cit.* (footnote 1 above), no. 2 of fig. 1.

⁴ The drawing makes some strokes seem certain, which, as can be seen on Plate 29:a, could not be taken as definite if read in isolation.

⁵ A reading of sigma in this position would leave a lacuna between the epsilon and sigma which is difficult to fill. The bottom half of the sigma would also be well below the level of the line.



FIG. 1. Rupestral funerary inscription at Timesios' farm

The letter forms, for example the four-bar sigma, the smaller omikron, and the alpha without a broken bar, suggest a date no earlier than the late 5th century nor later than the 3rd century B.C. It does not seem far removed from three of the four other inscriptions from the farm, which Langdon and Watrous date to the 4th century.

Early epigraphic examples of *σορός* are rare, but it does occur in an inscription carved on the interior wall of a large, rock-cut tomb from the 4th century on Aigina, and it has been read in a mid-4th-century epigram on a stele from Piraeus, now lost. Unfortunately we do not know what sort of burial this marked.⁶ Whether *σορός* here means funerary urn or, more generally, grave will be discussed below.

Καὶ γενεᾶι is paralleled in proxeny decrees, but I know of no funerary examples of *καὶ γενεᾶι*.⁷

The whole thus forms a single pentameter. Single pentameters are rarely found this early in grave epigrams, although they are known early in other contexts.⁸ That the inscription is metrical may explain the use of the datives of possession and the uncommon, but conveniently feminine, *σορός*.⁹

⁶ *IG* IV, 155–157 = *SEG* XI, 40; *SIG*³ 1236; G. Welter, “Aeginetica XIII–XXIV,” *ArchAnz* [*JdI* 53], 1938, p. 509, no. 12, Abb. 36–38. *IG* II², 11701 = *GVI*, no. 1444.

⁷ *Καὶ γενεᾶς* does occur, although with a different sense, in a late 5th-century B.C. grave epigram from Athens, *IG* I², 979 (= *GVI*, no. 160).

⁸ E.g. E.M. 12809, dated ca. 500 B.C., which Peek (*GVI*, no. 64) and L. H. Jeffery (“The Inscribed Grave-stones of Archaic Attica,” *BSA* 57, 1962, p. 134, no. 36) believe was intended to be a pentameter. P. A. Hansen (*A List of Greek Verse Inscriptions down to 400 B.C. An Analytical Survey*, Copenhagen 1975, no. 68) thinks this was intended to be a hexameter. Hansen does suggest that his no. 63, dated ca. 510–500 B.C. (*IG* I², 990 = *GVI*, no. 63) and, less definitely, no. 186, of the late 5th century B.C. (*GVI*, no. 928) are pentameters. F. D. Allen (“On Greek Versification in Inscriptions,” *Papers of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens 1885–1886*, IV, Boston 1888, p. 43) notes four non-funerary examples from the 6th to 4th centuries B.C., and Hansen no. 413 (*IG* XIV, 664) is a dedication of the early 5th century. *GVI*, nos. 354, 456, 604, and 622 are examples of later single-pentameter epitaphs.

⁹ In order to make it metrical, Deiniias must be in an oblique case with a long ending followed by a word beginning with a long vowel or a vowel followed by two consonants. The writer knew he had to include *παισί* and *γενεᾶι*; thus few choices remain for the object word, for example *ἐνταῦθα* or *ἥδε σορός*. Although *Δεινίαι* and *γενεᾶι* could have been in the genitive, the dative is required because, if the genitive *παιδῶν* were employed instead of *παισί*, the meter could not be preserved. The genitive is more commonly used for the name of

Immediately to the left (south) of the inscription is a natural recess or cleft in the bedrock outcrop, forming a rectangular area oriented east-west and having maximum dimensions of 2.70 (east-west), 0.70 wide, and 0.80 m. high. The recess is open to the east and on top; its floor is a single stone with two narrow strips of earth on either side of it. After the strip of soil to the left of this stone was cleaned out, to a depth of *ca.* 0.40 m., it became clear that the stone was bedrock and was joined to the south wall of the recess. More superficial cleaning was carried out along the right edge and in front of the recess.

Some thirty-five sherds were recovered during this cleaning, most of which come from the narrow earth strip along the left edge of the recess. Fifteen of these sherds belong to the rim and upper body, preserved for a height of *ca.* 0.16 m., of a large, deep lekane or krater with straight sides and a flaring rim, 0.035 m. wide. The diameter at the rim is estimated to be *ca.* 0.30 m. No fragments of the base were found. The vessel is of buff-colored clay, completely painted inside and outside with a thick blue-black wash except for a reserved band, 0.06 m. wide, just below the rim on the outside. In this band is painted with the same thick wash an ivy-leaf garland, composed of single leaves connected by single stems (Pl. 29:b). Parallels to the shape and decoration of the pot indicate a date in the 4th century B.C.¹⁰ The other sherds are less diagnostic; they seem to belong to at least three other vessels.

It seems most plausible that this rectangular recess with its original contents was the tomb of Deinias and his descendants, the present bedrock floor of the recess being the floor of the grave. At some point the tomb was robbed and its contents dispersed, leaving only some sherds. There is less to indicate what type of burial (or burials) it contained, perhaps most likely secondary cremations, although no ash was noted during the cleaning operation. There would have been room for several ash urns in the recess, and it is tempting to see in the large vessel such an urn; there are clear instances where household pots were so used.¹¹ The word *σορός* can mean funerary urn, but since our *soros* is specified for at least several people of at least three generations, it may be best to give the word a more general meaning here. We only know that the tomb was intended to be used for three generations; it need not actually have been used after Deinias' burial. It is notable that the one family member missing from the inscription is Deinias' wife; perhaps she predeceased her husband and was buried elsewhere. It remains possible that Deinias was inhumed in the recess, his remains later to be swept aside to make room for his offspring.

the deceased in similar constructions, although the unaccompanied dative does occur. For example *IC I*, xxiii, 7 = M. Guarducci, *Epigrafia greca*, Rome 1974, III, p. 169, fig. 64: a stele from Phaistos of the 5th to 4th centuries B.C., and an example from Samos of the 4th century B.C. cited by E. Loch, *de titulis graecis sepulchralibus*, Reginanti 1890, p. 60.

¹⁰ Cf. B. A. Sparkes and L. Talcott, *The Athenian Agora*, XII, *Black and Plain Pottery of the 6th, 5th and 4th Centuries B.C.*, Princeton 1970, no. 79, p. 242, pl. 4, dated 380–350 B.C.; no. 1537, p. 344, pl. 67, dated to the second half of the 4th century; P. Aupert, "Chroniques des Fouilles en 1975," *BCH* 100, 1976, p. 621, fig. 63, from Elis, dated to the end of the 4th century; E. Vanderpool, "Some Attic Inscriptions," *Hesperia* 35, 1966, p. 280, no. 6, pl. 72. This last example is a bell-krater with a sepulchral inscription (*IG II²*, 6219) dated to the first half of the 4th century B.C. by H. Bloesch, *Antike Kleinkunst in Winterthur*, I, *Vasen, Bronzen, Terrakotten*, Winterthur 1964, p. 15, no. 33, pl. 7.

¹¹ For example the bell-krater (Vanderpool, *loc. cit.*), which, as we have seen, parallels the shape of our vessel, and pots found in some of the graves from Syntagma Square, S. I. Charitonides, "Ἀνασκαφή κλασικῶν τάφων παρὰ τὴν Πλατείαν Συντάγματος," *Ἀρχ'Εφ*, 1958, pp. 1–152.

No close parallel to this type of grave is known to me, yet we need not go far to find graves at Attic farm sites. J. H. Young mentions, without details, "ancient graves" around the Golden Pig Tower, which lies just north of the Cliff Tower. These evidently were simple pit graves.¹²

Who Deinias was or what his relation was to Timesios, whom Langdon and Watrous plausibly took to be the owner of the farm, or to the other people mentioned in the inscriptions at the farm, is not known. The name is well attested for Attica, but there are no other known cases from Sounion.¹³ Yet the fact that the *soros* was also intended for his children and descendants implies that he was from the local area, and at least part of the use of the tomb, as indicated by the date of the krater and inscription, is roughly contemporary with the use of the farm. Perhaps Timesios was an absentee landlord, and Deinias and his family were the stewards or tenants of the farm. The absence of patronymic and demotic in the inscription may indicate that Deinias was a freedman, although they may have been omitted simply to aid in making it metrical. It is also possible that he was related to Timesios. Before it became obscured by bushes, his grave and its inscription would have been conspicuous to and frequently passed by the visitors and inhabitants of the farm, indicating perhaps that Deinias, whatever position he held, was not unhonored there.

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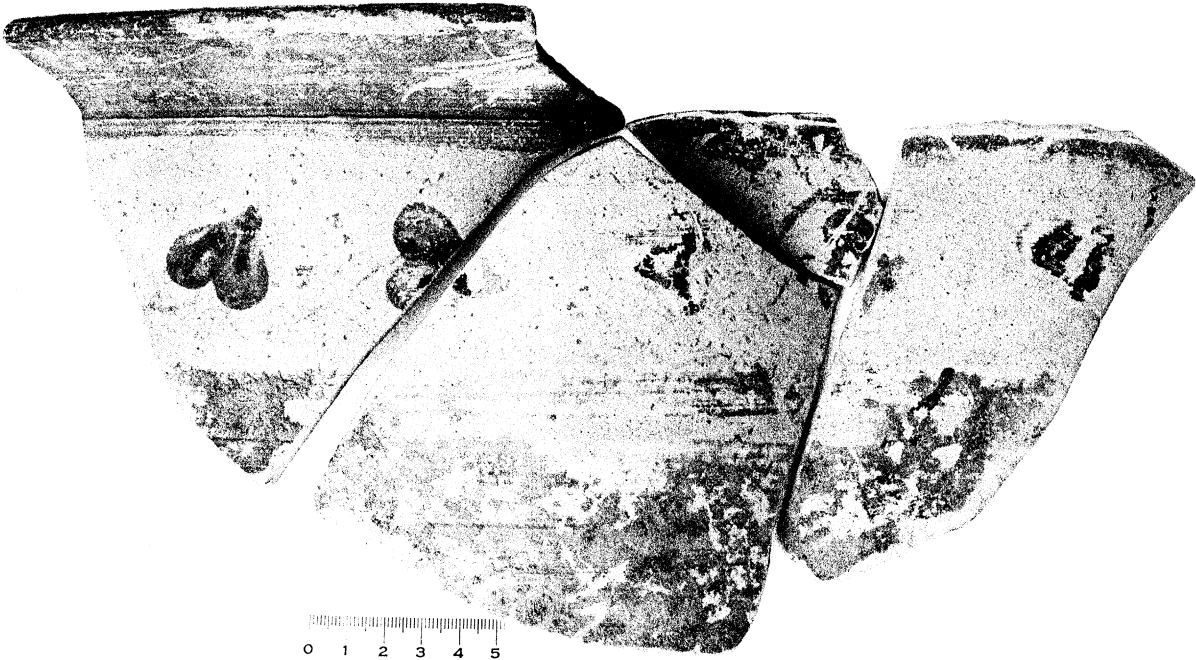
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¹² Young, *op. cit.* (footnote 1 above), p. 126.

¹³ Some examples from the 4th century B.C. are J. Kirchner, *Prosopographia Attica*, Berlin 1901, 1903, nos. 3163, 3166, 3167, 3174 and *IG II²*, 1926, line 58, 7816, 7817.



a. Rock cleft with rock-cut inscription on right



b. Lekane fragments found in rock cleft