

Iberian scripts/graffiti in Iruña-Veleia

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SUMMARY

760 officially recognized scripts on ceramics from Iruña-Veleia excavated by Lurmen (approximately between years 2002-2008) have been analyzed. A number of these ceramics contains scripts which may be assimilated to Iberian writings. This number may be underestimated since more studies need to be done in already available and new found ceramics. This is the second time that Iberian writing is found by us in a unexpected location together with the Iberian-Guanche inscriptions of Lanzarote and Fuerteventura. On the other hand, naviform scripting, usually associated to Iberian rock or stone engraving may have also been found in Veleia. Strict separation, other than in time and space stratification, between Iberian and Tartessian culture and script is doubted.

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

The Iruña-Veleia affaire is sufficiently known (1). The precipitation of judgment and the lack of different and public studies and opinions has put objectivity very far from the focus the problem solving.

In addition to the many near impossible oddities that a hypothetical faker might have gone through, it becomes more impossible if, in addition, he/she would have properly handled Iberian scripting.

We have analyzed n=760 ceramic pieces, which are put up on the Araba Diputacion General page under the heading of "AFADFA.IV_FOTOS_GENERAL_PIEZAS_PEQUEÑAS"

(www.alava.net/publicar/Fotos/AFADFA_IV_Fotos_General.zip)(2). Many of the pieces may contain Iberian scripts/graffiti but they have been neglected; some of our finally taken scripts (shown in Appendix 1) may also be explained in the frameshift of other Mediterranean scripts, but we are confident that most of them are written in the old Iberian script and some of them can strictly be Iberian (3).



www.alava.net/publicar/Fotos/AFADFA_IV_Fotos_General.zip

Fig 1. Note that this sign is not present in the Tartessian-Espanca signary, but it is often present in South West "Tartessian" inscriptions.

Many authors, Wilhelm Humboldt being the most known, have from Middle Ages believed that Basque language was a form of ancient Iberian, (Basque/ Ancient Iberian) (4); this has nowadays been rediscovered with new methodologies (5,6,8,9).

At the moment, we stick to Manuel Gómez Moreno and Antonio Tovar Iberian scripts transliteration (10,11,12,13) and decline to follow the strange derivation taken by Rodríguez Ramos and Correa (9,14) in redefining Iberian transliterations and even trying to define a new language, "Tartessian", which cannot be separated from Iberian at present as a different language. Their lack

of objectivity is reflected, for example, in (15,16):  (which is not contained in the Espanca signary but appears often in "Tartessian")

inscriptions) is converted quite subjectively in sound “R”. It does not fit with previous archeo-epigraphic findings (16). This letter has been found in Iruña-Veleia ceramics 11260, as shown above. (Fig. 1).

RESULTS

See Appendix 1.

DISCUSSION

Iberian scripts findings cover most of Iberian Península geography. It is clear that from an archeological point of view it is not possible to distinguish in Iberia and southern France different signs by a distinct geography. Most Iberian signs do not follow geographical compartmentalization. Perhaps one or some of them are most often found in one particular archeological site or region; however, once future script sites and findings are expected to appear, it is not objective to defining one particular Iberian-Tartessian script by classifying it by geography. This time stratification implies the use of different writing supports (metal, stone, ceramics, rock wall) that cannot be taken has a particular and fundamental distinction, i.e.: assuming existence of different languages because of they are on different supports. On the other hand, the so called “Tartessian” language needs to be revised in timing and in space (15) since this kind of scripts are also found in North Cáceres (Monfragüe), a quite high and central place in Iberian Peninsula for being considered “Tartessian-South West” script-language; “Tartessian” scripts are also found in the Spanish South-East (18). Even, a “Tartessian” – specific sign is found in northernmost part of Spain (Asturias) (Fig. 2; Refs 5,6). Also, different time stratum are supposed to exist and a kind of “dialectal” undefined way of writing is also assumed in different archeological sites. Iberian-Tartessian scripts can be found in Galicia (reported by Gabriel Puig Larraz in BRAH, pp 414-426. 1897), Asturias (Fig.2; Ref 6), Portugal and many parts of Iberian Península from North to South and East to West. Tartessian jewelry is widespread throughout Iberian peninsula, like Cáceres, Alicante-Villena and probably North West Asturias (6,7).



Fig 2. Piedras colocadas en el arco de entrada al huerto, con inscripciones ibéricas y una hoy día atribuida exclusivamente al tartésico =|=(E). (6)

The problem of different phonologies for the same scripts in different sites is not yet resolved (16,18). Methodology for phoneme assignation is not standardized and each scholar has his own interpretation (16). This reference is only given for a particular grapheme (, however, Untermann has more author discrepancies in Iberian signs phonology (19).

We are not going to further discuss about Iruña-Veleia Basque graffiti, which are valid for us (20), but only to report that also Iberian scripts are found in Veleia ceramics. This makes very difficult to hold the view that studies in Iruña-Veleia epigraphy should stop, because there is no objective reason to end now their Basque or Iberian scripts/graffiti studies, for example.

Redundancy rule of vocals after syllables is not a characteristic of a hypothetical "Tartessian" language, because it does not occur universally (15). The artificial "Tartessian" language separation from Iberian language is at the moment another hypothesis, which is weakly based on objective terms. In addition, some signs not present in the Espanca signary are invented "ad hoc", when it is considered necessary by some authors (14,15), and some of the Espanca "Tartessian" syllables-letters are never used in the South West script.

On these confusing bases, we think it is better at the moment to stick in our hypotheses for Basque-Iberian translations/transliterations or otherwise, to the initial Gómez Moreno and Tovar transliteration (10,11,12,13). We also oppose the concept that Iberian and Tartessian are altogether different languages until it may be objectively demonstrated, if ever.

On the other hand, Veleia scripts of “Y” type may be assimilated to Lycian, Greek or other origins and “X” to Etruscan or Latin origin (Appendix 1, 3). However, the context and/or attributed time (III century AD) goes in favour that these scripts belong to Iberian signary. Other scripts are Iberian (CARP-1[N°2], [N°7], [N°29], [N°38], [N°41], etc. This is the second time that we have found Iberian scripts in a unexpected location: Guanche-Iberian rock graffiti are also found in Fuerteventura and Lanzarote (Canary Islands) (21 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Iberian-Guanche_inscriptions.pdf).

Finally the last piece, CARP-3[N°8], may be an example of the so called “naviform” graffiti, which are found on rocks or stone-like pieces in Cerdaña and Andorra (Pyrenees) and Corsica (22). These “naviform” graffiti are usually shown associated to Iberian signs (22).

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APPENDIX 1

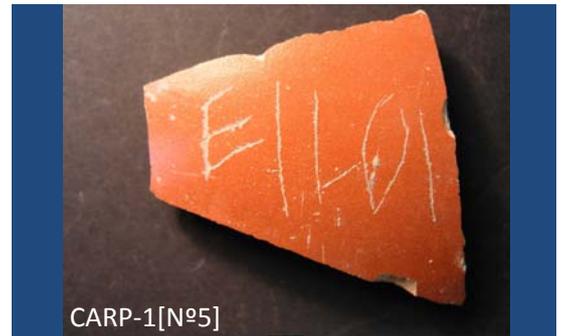
Abbreviations: a) CARP=CARPETA. b)Plane number: as classified by Diputacion General de Alaba, web page.



CARP-1[Nº2]



Iberian sign; it sounds **ti/di** according to A.Tovar. It is found in Catalonia, including France (Enserune)



CARP-1[Nº5]



= e



= ba/pa



= o (Cerro de Los Santos) – "South-Iberian"



= f (Gador "South-Iberian"; Enserune)



= ba/pa



CARP-1[Nº6]



= X = (?) da/ta



CARP-1[Nº7]



= ko /go (the lower line is not horizontal in Enserune)



= ba/pa

Koba



CARP-1[Nº11]



= do/to (Enserune) (?)



CARP-1[Nº21]



= (?) da/ta



CARP-1[Nº29]

 = di/ti (Enserune)



CARP-1[Nº38]

 = ba/pa  = s,  = ka/ga (Enserune, Celtiberia)



CARP-1[Nº41]

 = de/te (Iberian, South-Iberian).

 = bu/pu (Celtiberia, Bilbilis),  = a.



CARP-1[Nº43]

 = da / ta



CARP-1[Nº55]

 = be/pe (Mogente, "South-Iberian"),
= r (Catalonia)



CARP-1[Nº64]

 (small)= di/ti. It may be followed by a "naviform" sign. (Ref. 20)



CARP-2[Nº25]

= m (Liria).



CARP-2[Nº36]

= du/tu , (if it is writing).



CARP-2[Nº52]

= ka/ga



CARP-3[Nº1]

= de/te



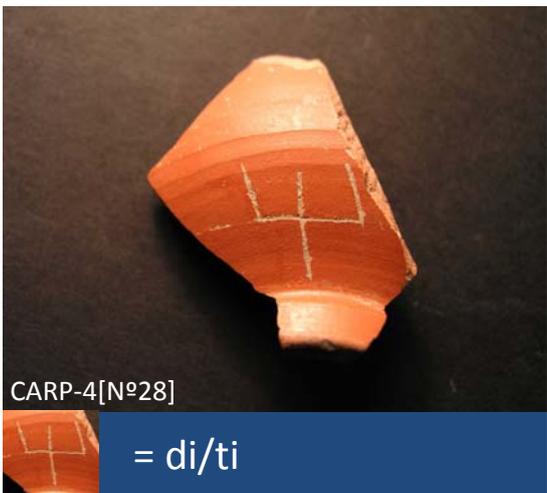
CARP-3[Nº9]

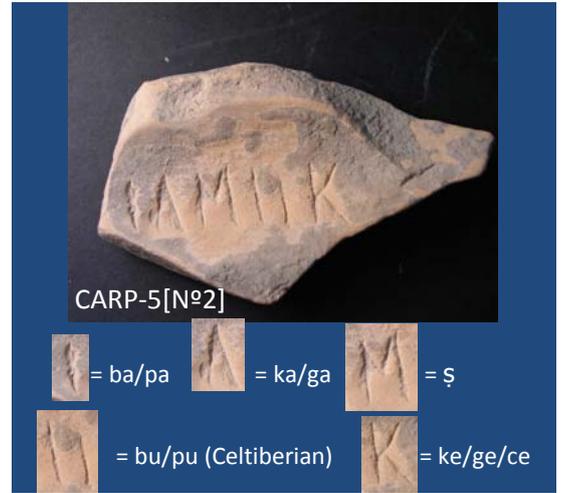
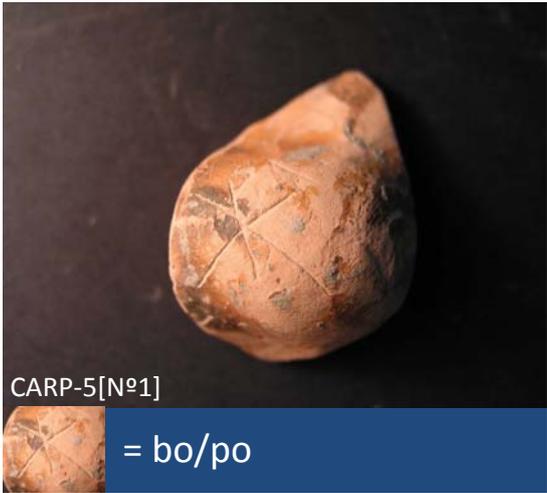
= di/ti (Catalonia, Enserune)



CARP-3[Nº10]

= m (Castellon, Jativa)

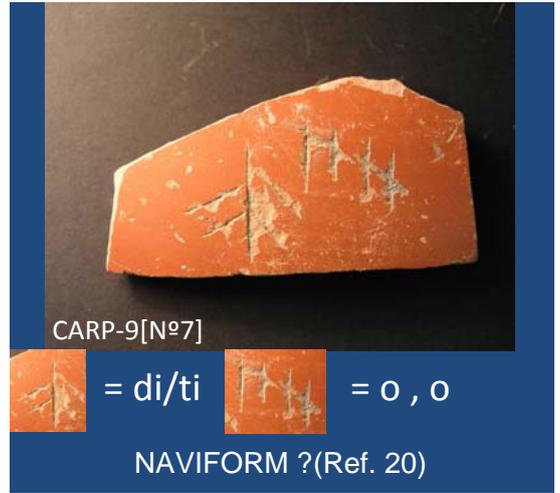






CARP-7[Nº76]

= ko/go (Ampurias, Enserune)

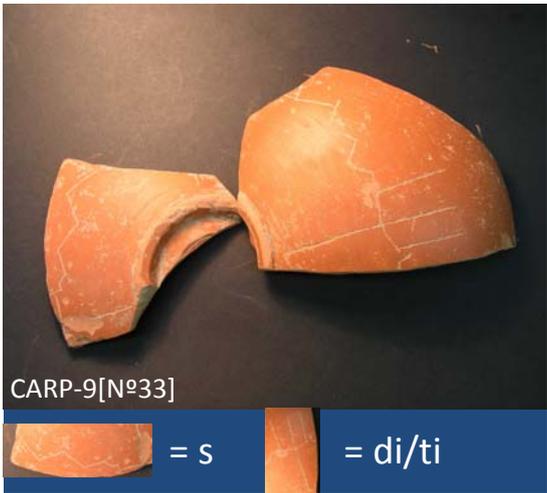


CARP-9[Nº7]

= di/ti

= o , o

NAVIFORM ?(Ref. 20)



CARP-9[Nº33]

= s

= di/ti



CARP-10[Nº8]

= da/ta



CARP-10[Nº63]

= ba/pa

= m (Ampurias)



CARP-12[Nº77]

= ce/ke ?



CARP-12[Nº78]

 = r ?



CARP-13[Nº2]

 = l / i / ka ?



CARP-13[Nº49]

 = ka/ga (Enserune)



CARP-13[Nº61]

 = ko/go



CARP-3[Nº8]

 =ku/gu  = ba/pa

Possible naviform signs of Iberian origin. They are similar to those of Cerdaña (Pyrennes) and others. . (Ref. 20).