Deciphering of the Lemnos Stele inscription

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Abstract

The Lemos Stele is a funerary monument with an inscription in the Lemnian language, that is a juncture between Etruscan and Hurro-Urartian. The inscription of side A tells about Holaie's grandson/nephew named Zia: *Holaie-z*(1) *nafot^h*(2) *Zia-zi*(3) *mara-z*(4) *maw*(5)*. Sialk^hweiz*(6) *awiz*(7) *Ewist^ho*(8) *zeronait^h*(9) *ziwai*(10)*. Aker*(11) *tawar-zio*(12) *Wamala-si-al*(13) *zeronai*(14) *Morinai-l*(15). Holaie's(1) grandson/nephew(2) Zia(3) served(5) as maru(4). Died(10) [at the age of] forty(6) years(7) [in the] shrine(9) [of] Hephaestus(8). Buried(12) [in] June(11) [in the] shrine(14) of Wamala(13), in Myrina(15). And the text of side B tells about Holaie: *Holaie-zi*(1) *P^hokia-si-al-e*(2) *zer-ona-it^h*(3) *Ewist^ho*(4) *tower-ona-r-om*(5) *hara-lio*(6) *ziwai*(7)*. Epte-zio*(8) *arai*(9)*. Tiz*(10) *P^hoke*(11) *… ziwai*(12) *awiz*(13) *sialk^hwiz*(14)*; mara-z-m*(15) *awiz*(16) *aomai*(17)*. Holaie(1) lived(7) ruling(6) the members of the chamber of judge(5) of Hephaestus(4) in the sacral place(3) of Phocaea(2). Being a leader(8) [he] actively acted/performed rituals(9). [For] forty(14) years(13) [he] lived(12) in the bay(10) of Phocaea(11); and also some(17) years(16) [held] the position of *maru*(15).

Keywords: Lemnos Stele; Tyrrhenian languages; Etruscan language; deciphering of writing systems

1. Introduction

The Lemnos stele was found on the island of Lemnos in 1885. The stele was built into the wall of a church in the village of Kaminia, that's why the stele is also known as the stele of Kaminia (see Fig.1).

The stele is supposed to be a funerary monument with an inscription in the Lemnian language, that is considered to be close to Etruscan. The Lemnian language is included in the so-called Tyrrhenian family. The stele is dated back to the 6th century BCE, while the upper limit of dating is considered to be the annexation of Lemnos by Athens in 510 BCE, after which the population of the island was assimilated by the Greek people. The stele has a low-relief bust of a man with a spear and a shield, and inscriptions made by an alphabet similar to the so-called Western Greek alphabet. The text is written boustrophedonically (see Fig. 3).
Although some fragments of the text are readable and understandable, no one has yet provided a complete translation of the inscriptions on the stele. And I am to note that in some cases attempts to understand the meaning of what is written go down a completely wrong path. In this article I want to show the complete translation of both inscriptions on the stele.
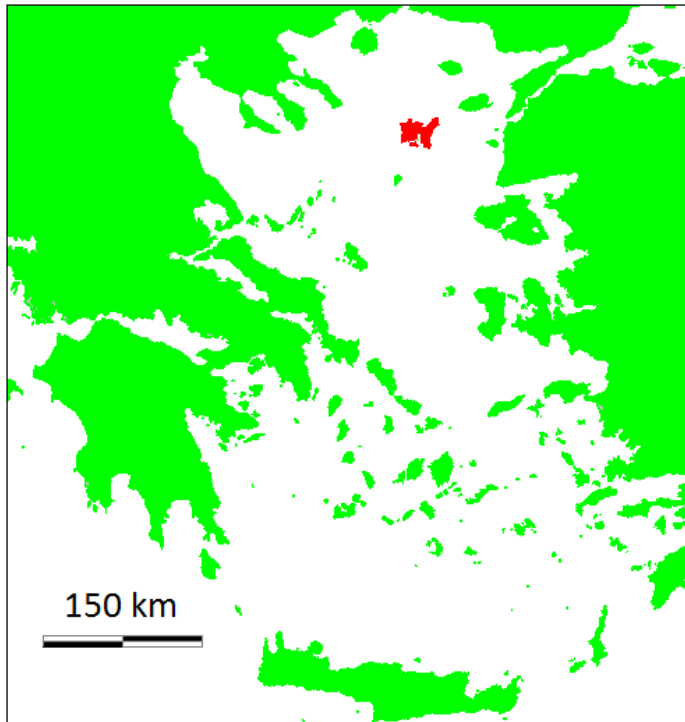
Fig.1. Location of the Lemnos island in the Aegean Sea (image source – Wikipedia 2024b)

Fig. 2. A map of Lemnos (the map has been made after Google Maps screenshot)

Fig. 3. Drawing of the inscriptions of the Lemnos stele (image source – Wikipedia 2024b)

2. Deciphering of the inscriptions

The side on which there is an image of a man with spear and shield as is conventionally designated as A, and the other side as B. And sentences are designated as A1, A2, A3 et c.
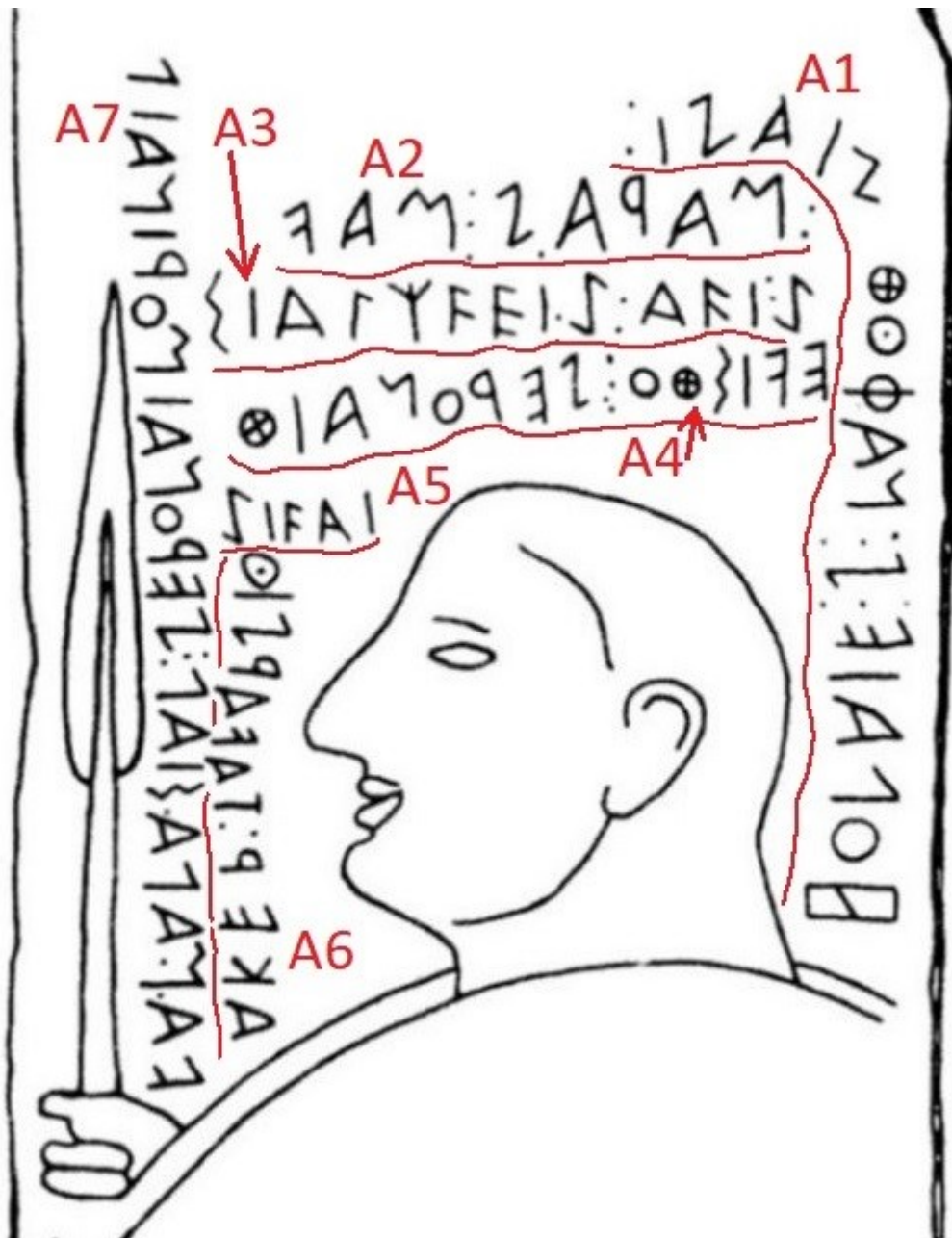
2.1. Side A

Fig. 4. Side A with individual sentences highlighted

The inscription on side A starts at the person's head and goes from bottom to top.
Words are separated from each other by two or three dots oriented vertically, and also these dots sometimes separate suffixes from the stem.

A1

The transcription of A1 is the following:

holaie:z: nafot^h: ziazi:
The word *nafot^h* evidently correlates with Etruscan *nefs* "nephew", "grandson"[1]. This word is the enter point for understanding the whole text of the stele.

The preceding word *holaie:z:* clearly is a definition to the word *nafot^h*. The form *holaie-z* looks like a personal name with a case marker.
The *-z* ending looks much alike Etruscan marker of genitive *-s/-ś*[2], that was used with nouns ending with vowels.
And the rest part of the sentence: *ziazi* is another name. The name itself seems to be Zia, and – *zi* is a case marker.
It is possible to conclude so since in the beginning of B side, in the phrase B1 can see the same ending *-zi* attached to the name Holaie: *holaiezi* (see 2.2, section B1). This *-zi* definitely is a marker of another case, but not genitive, since the marker of genitive is *-z*. This *-zi* definitely is a marker of the ergative case, because it marks names which denote actors. Actually, nothing is known about ergativity in the Tyrrhenian languages, but it is logical to assume the possibility of its existence, given that ergativity exists in Hurro-Urartian languages, which are related to Etruscan[3].
This ending *-zi* can be compared with Hurrian marker of ergative case: *-ž*[4].

Thus, the phrase *Holaie-z nafot^h Zia-zi* means: "Holaie's grandson/nephew Zia".

A2

The phrase A2 is read from right to left. It is transcribed the following way: *maraz: maw*. The word *maraz* can be correlated with Etruscan maru that denotes an unidentified magistrate/magistracy[5] or a position in cult.

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[1] Palaeolexicon 2024a.
The fact that the word *nafot^h* correlates well with the Etruscan word *nefts* "nephew", "grandson" which is a borrowing from the Latin word *nepot* "nephew", "grandson", "descendant" suggests that the speakers of the Lemnian language migrated at some point from the Italic peninsula or had quite regular contacts with the Etruscans living in the Italic peninsula (Eichner 2012: 28).
Also, the Lemnian word *nafot^h* could be independently borrowed from another Indo-European language (potentially from an Anatolian language).
Actually the idea that the speakers of the Lemnian language came from the Italic peninsula is very doubtful since the Lemnian language is not a variant/dialect of Etruscan, but a separated idiom closely related to Etruscan, i.e.: Lemnian seems to have more archaic features than Etruscan.
Taking into the account the fact that Etruscan is related to Hurro-Urartian (Akulov 2024) it is logical to state that the Etruscans came from Asia Minor, i.e., the Etruscans was a group of Hurrian people who moved to the West in the conditions of the Late Bronze Age collapse, but who didn't reach the Italic peninsula and who dwelled in the island of Lemnos. The speakers of the Lemnian language should be considered not as a group of Etruscan who migrated from the Italic peninsula, but as a group of Hurrians who didn't reach the Italic peninsula, an intermediate group between the Hurrians and the Etruscans.
It should be noted here that, in general, Eichner has many very controversial ideas. For example, he argues that the text on side A should begin to be read with the phrase, which in the present consideration is numbered A6 (Eichner 2012: 23), from the center, that is completely absurd and illogical.
[2] Rix 2008: 150
[3] Akulov 2024.
[4] Wilhelm 2008: 94
[5] Wikipedia 2024a.

The word *maru* can be correlated with the Hurrian word *mar-al-* that supposedly means "to kill"[6], and so it is possible to say that the word *maru* probably denoted an organizer of sacrifices.

And the form *maw* can be correlated with the Etruscan word mal "oversee"[7]. The ending *-z* in the word *maraz* appears to be a case marker, presumably a marker of the so-called equative case. The equative case indicates that X is like Y, X is performed the role of Y. In Hurrian there is an equative case, its marker is *-ož*[8].
And thus, *mara-z maw* means "perform the duties of maru" or "serve as maru".

And now it is clear that A1 and A2 are parts of the same sentence:
Holaie-z nafot[h] Zia-zi mara-z maw.
Holaie-GEN nephew/grandson Zia-ERG *mara*-EQU serve.
Holaie's nephew/grandson Zia served as *maru*.

In some interpretations it is stated that the text of the side A is about a man named Holaie (Wallace 2018). Such interpretations are completely incorrect; they are based on a very perfunctory analysis of the text of the inscription. The text of the inscription of side A is about a man named Zia, who was a nephew/grandson of Holaie. In archaic Etruscan a definition preceded the defined, and the same should be supposed for Lemnian. If we suppose that the inscription is about Holaie, then this presupposition contradicts the structure of the above considered phrase. If we suppose that the text of the inscription is about Holaie who was a nephew/grandson of Zia, then the sentence would be: **Zia-z nafot[h] Holaie-zi…*

A3

The next phrase A3 is read from left to right, and is transcribed as *sialk[h]wei:z awi:z*. The word *sialk[h]weiz* correlates with the Etruscan word *sealk[h]ls* "forty"[9], according to another version, the word *sealk[h]ls* means "sixty". The word *awiz* correlates with Etruscan *awil* "year". And thus, the phrase A3 *sialk[h]weiz awiz* means "forty years".

A4

The phrase A4 is read from right to left, its transcription is the following: *ewist[h]o: zeronait[h]*. The word *ewist[h]o* can be a variant of the name Hephaestus. Hephaestus was the ancient Greek god of artisans, blacksmiths, carpenters, craftsmen, fire, metallurgy, metalworking, sculpture and volcanoes. In Greek mythology, Lemnos was known as the island of Hephaestus, and there was a developed cult of Hephaestus on the island. The word *ewist[h]o:* can also be a variant of the name of the ancient city Hephaestia that was named after Hephaestus (see Fig. 2).

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[6] Kassian 2010: 401.
[7] Belfiore 2020.
[8] Wilhelm 2008: 94
[9] Palaeolexicon 2024a.

The word *zeronait^h* means "the place where rituals are performed", the component *zer* can be correlated with Etruscan *zeri* "rite"[10], the component *-ona-* is a productive suffix used in Etruscan place names, and *it^h* is an Etruscan ending in toponyms[11].

And thus, *ewist^ho zeronait^h* means the shrine of Hephaestus or a place where rituals are performed, located in the city of Hephaestia. Anyhow, the text of the inscriptions here says about a shrine/temple of Hephaestus.

A5

The next phrase – A5 is read from left to right and is transcribed as *ziwai*. This word *ziwai* can be translated as "having lived" or "died"[12].

The word *ziwai* seems to be a borrowing from an Indo-European language, the form *ziwai* can be collated with the Proto-Hellenic: *$g^w\bar{\imath}wos$* and Proto-Italic *$g^w\bar{\imath}t\bar{a}$* "alive", "living".

And now, having put all phrases from A1 to A5 together, we receive the following:

Holaie-z(1) *nafot^h*(2) *Zia-zi*(3) *mara-z*(4) *maw*(5) *sialk^hweiz*(6) *awiz*(7) *ewist^ho*(8) *zeronait^h*(9) *ziwai*(10).

Holaie-GEN(1) nephew(2) Zia-ERG(3) *mara*-EQU(4) served (5) forty(6) years(7) Hephestus(8) ritual place(9) have lived(10).

There can be two possible interpretations of this fragment depending on whether this fragment consists of one sentence or two.

1) In the case of only one sentence, we have the following:

Holaie-z nafot^h Zia-zi mara-z maw sialk^hweiz awiz ewist^ho: zeronait^h ziwai

Holaie's nephew/grandson Zia, has served as *maru* during forty years in the shrine/temple of Hephaestus.

2) In the case of two sentences we have the following:

Holaie-z nafot^h Zia-zi mara-z maw.

Holaie's nephew/grandson Zia served as *maru*.

Sialk^hweiz awiz ewist^ho: zeronait^h ziwai.

Died [at the age of] forty years in the shrine/temple of Hephaestus.

At present, it is difficult to say which version is more consistent with the original text, however, I suppose that the second version is more realistic.

A6

The phrase A6 is read from the bottom, its transcription is the following: *aker: tawarizo* (Fig. 4).

The word *aker* correlates with Etruscan word *acale (aclus)* "June"[13].

In the word *tawarzio* can be singled out the root *tawar*, which correlates with the Etruscan word *tamera* "tomb chamber"[14], the ending *-zio* can be compared with the Etruscan marker of the passive voice in preterit forms – (*-χe*) *-k^he*[15] and with Hurrian marker of preterit *ōš̌*[16].

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[10] Wiktionary 2024.

[11] Βικιπαίδεια 2024.

[12] Wiktionary 2024.

[13] Wiktionary 2024.

And thus, *aker tawar-zio* can be translated as "buried [in] June".

A7

The phrase A7 is read from bottom to top, and is transcribed as: *wamalasial: zeronaimorinail* (Fig. 4).

In the word *wamalasial* can be singled out the component of *wamala*, that can be collated with the name of such a character of Etruscan mythology as Umaele[17].

Also the word *wamala* evidently bears markers of dative – *-si* that also can function as locative[18], and genitive – *-al*[19], and is closely connected with the next word – *zeronai* that liberally means "the place where rituals are performed". Thus, the phrase *wamala-si-al* means "the place where rituals for Wamala are performed".

The word Morinail is most likely an ancient form of the modern toponym Myrina (a city on the west coast of the island of Lemnos, see Fig. 2). And this toponym bears a marker of genitive *-l* that in the current context supposedly performs the function of locative.

Having assembled all phrases of A side together, we receive the following: *Holaie-z*(1) *nafot^h*(2) *Zia-zi*(3) *mara-z*(4) *maw*(5). *Sialk^{h}weiz*(6) *awiz*(7) *Ewist^{h}o*(8) *zeronait^h*(9) *ziwai*(10). *Aker*(11) *tawar-zio*(12) *Wamala-si-al*(13) *zeronai*(14) *Morina-l*(15).

Holaie-GEN(1) nephew/grandson(2) Zia-ERG(3) maru-EQU(4) served(5). Forty(6) years(7) Hephaestus(8) shrine(9) have lived/died(10). June(11) buried (12) Wamala-DAT-GEN(13) shrone/temple (14) Myrina-LOC (15).

Holaie's grandson/nephew Zia served as maru. Died [at the age of] forty years in the shrine/temple of Hephaestus. Buried in the shrine of Wamala, in Myrina (see Fig. 2).

2.2. Side B

On side B, the text is also organized boustrophedonically (Fig. 3, Fig. 5); and can be singled out three sentences in the text (Fig. 5, 6).
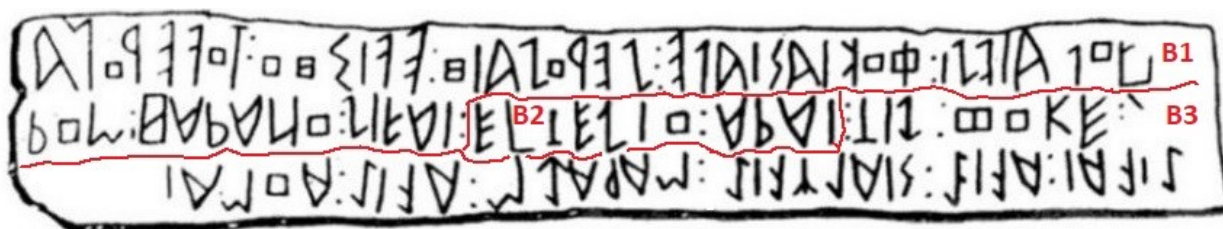

Fig. 5. Side B with sentences highlighted

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[14] Palaeolexicon 2024a.

[15] Rix 2008: 155.

[16] Wilhelm 2008: 97.

[17] In the Etruscan mythology Umaele was a seer with no clear connection with any known Latin or Greek figure. He carries a bag with a head in it that tells him prophesies, and is also seen on mirrors with one knee up and left arm extended apparently examining a liver for prophesy, that is haruspex (De Grummond 2006: 37 – 38). And it is noteworthy that Umaele has no clear connection with any known character of Latin or Greek mythologies.

[18] Bonfante 1990: 20; Wallace 2018.

[19] Rix 2008: 150.

B1

The phrase B1 in the original inscription is read from top to bottom (Fig. 3). The transcription of phrase B1 is: *holaiezi: p^{h}okiasiale: zeronait^h: ewist^{h}o: toweronarom: haralio: ziwai*.
The word *holaezi* is the name Holaie bearing a marker of a case *-zi* that seems to be a marker of ergative case (see 2.1).
In the word *p^{h}okiasiale* can be singled the part *p^{h}okia* that can be collated with the Greek toponym Phocaea – an ancient city located on the western coast of Anatolia, not far from the island of Lemnos (see Fig. 6).
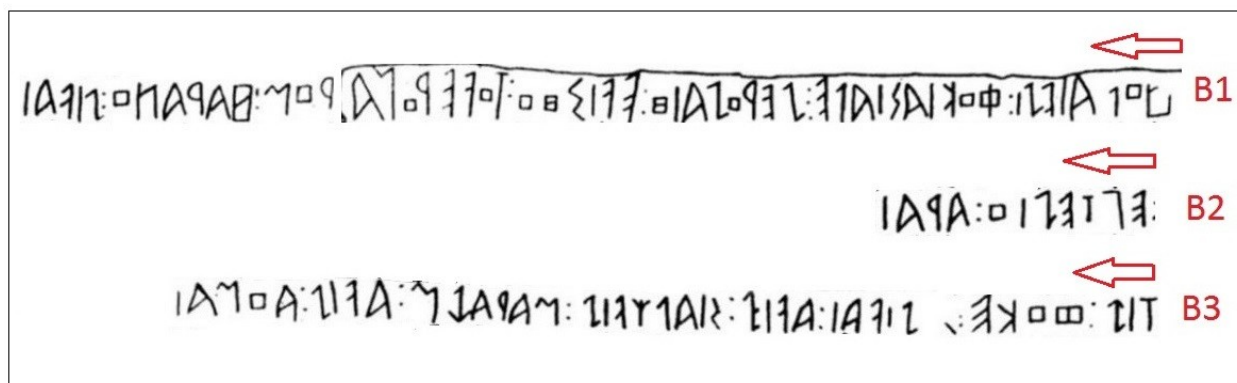

Fig. 6. The inscription of side B represented in a more convenient form

And the rest part of the form *p^{h}okiasiale – siale* looks like a combination of case markers: *-si, -al* and *-e*.
The component *-si* correlates with the Etruscan marker of dative – *-si*, that also sometimes was used as a marker of locative.
The suffix *-al* correlates with an Etruscan marker of genitive *-l/-al*.
And the suffix *-e* can be correlated with the Hurrian marker of instrumental case *-ae*[20].

In some languages, the instrumental case can function as a kind of locative, indicating the special importance of place. For instance, in Japanese: *kaisha de hataraku* – "[he/she] works at a company", "[he/she] works by a company", and with the standard marker of locative this phrase is *kaisha ni hataraku*. The use of instrumental emphasizes the importance of the corresponding place.
It is noteworthy that Japanese is supposed to be a distant relative of Etruscan, they both are supposed to belong to the so-called Aleut-Tyrrhenian macrofamily, (see: Akulov 2024, Kitaev 2023).

Thus, the word-form *p^{h}okia-si-al-e* means: Phocaea-DAT/LOC-GEN-INSTR – "at [a place] of Phocaea" / "by [a place] [located] in Phocaea".

The form *p^{h}okiasiale* evidently is connected with the next word *zeronait^h*, the form *p^{h}okiasiale* is a modifier of the word *zeronait^h* that means "temple" or "place for performing rituals".

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[20] Wilhelm 2008: 94.

And thus, the collocation *holaie-zi pʰokia-si-al-e zeronaitʰ* means: "Holaie at the ritual place located in Phocaea".

It is noteworthy that H. Rix interpreted the collocation of *holaiezi: pʰokiasiale zeronaitʰ* as a sample of the so-called pertinentive case.
According to Rix, pertinentive or emphatic genitive has the function of assigning an object or an individual both spatially (in the area of X) and temporally (at the time of X) (Rix 1998).
According to Rix, pertinentive is formed by adding the ending of the locative *-i* to the genitive form ending with standard markers of genitive: *-s* or *-l* (Rix 1998: 36).
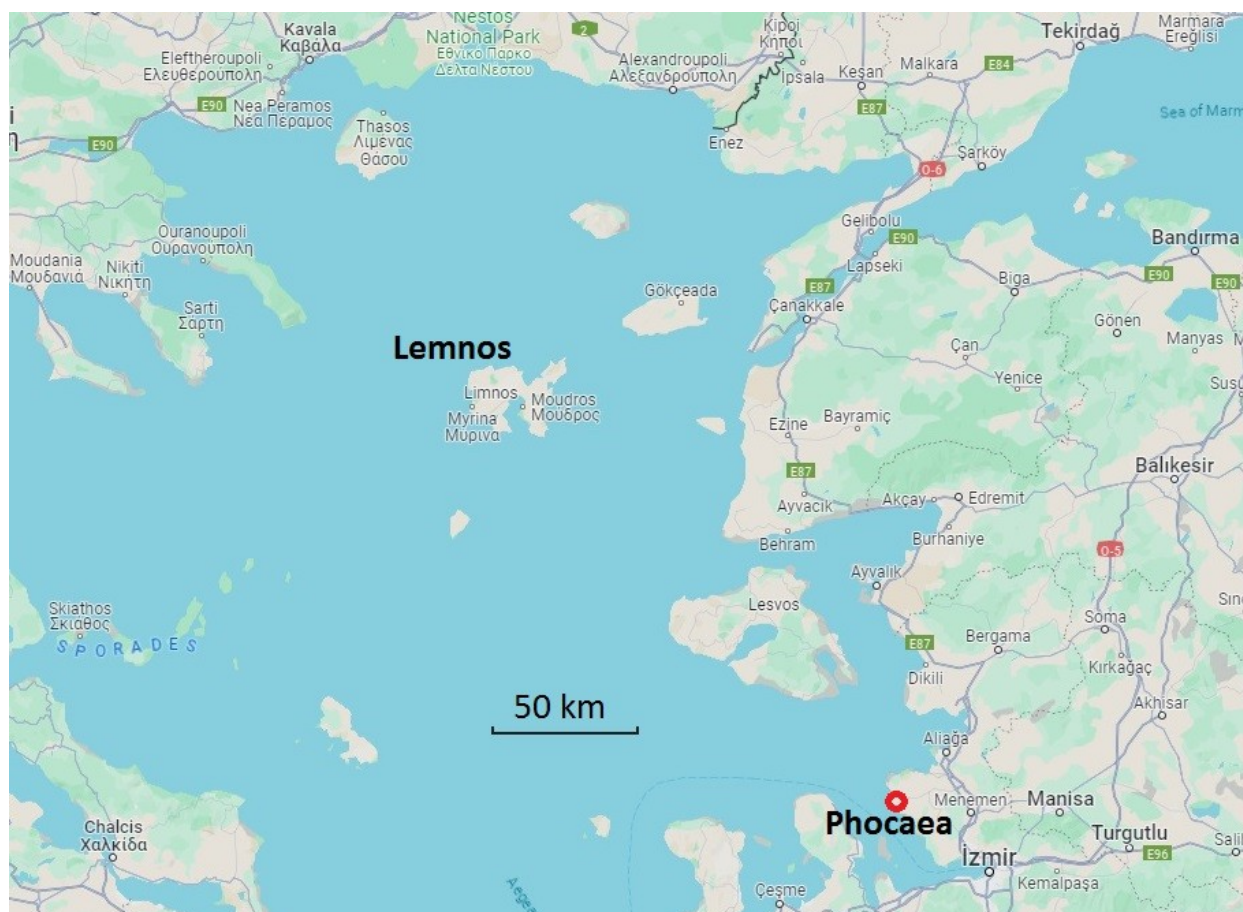

Fig. 6. Location of Phocaea (the map has been drawn after Google Maps' screenshot)

As an example of pertinentive he considered the following Etruscan phrase:
zilc-i(1) *vel-us-i*(2) *hulχnie-s-i*(3)
praeture-LOC(1) Vel-GEN-LOC(2) Hulχnie-GEN-LOC(3)
in the praeture, in [the time] of Vel Hulχnie (Rix 1998: 36).

Rix transcribed the phrase *holaiezi: pʰokiasiale zeronaitʰ* as: *holaie-s-i: φokiasi-al-e: serona-i-ϑ*, and translated it as "in the time when Holaie hold office in Phocaea" (Rix 1998: 36).

Rix suggested that the name Holaie bears a marker of genitive *-s* and a marker of locative *-i*. The transcription made by Rix has some mistakes, really the name of Holaie bears not the

ending -si, but the ending -zi that is interpreted as a marker of ergative (the same ending can be seen in the phrase A1 where the ending -zi is attached to the name Zia).

Then, it should be noted that in the word-form $p^hokiasiale$ beside endings al and -e, also there is the ending -si – a marker of dative/locative, and this point was simply missed by Rix.

Thus, it is completely incorrect to consider the phrase holaie-zi p^hokia-si-al-e as an example of the so-called pertinentive.

The word zeronait^h (the same word can be seen above, in A4) means "the place where rituals are performed", "temple" / "shrine", "sacral place".

The phrase p^hokia-si-al-e zeronait^h means "sacral place / temple of Phocaea".

As it has been noted above, the word ewist^{h}o is the Lemnian variant of the theonym Hephaestus.

The word-form toweronarom has the following structure: tower-ona-r-om. The component tower can be correlated with the Etruscan word tevarath "judge", "manager", "clergy"[21]. As it has been noted above (see A4), the component -ona- is a productive suffix used in Etruscan place names. The component -r can be correlated with a standard Etruscan marker plural number of nouns[22], and the ending -om can be correlated with the Etruscan suffix -m / -um, meaning "and"[23]. In the current case this -om seems to express the meaning of "with", "among".
The word tower-ona means "chamber of judges" or "chamber of clergy", and tower-ona-r means "the people of the chamber of judges/clergy/managers".
The phrase ewist^{h}o tower-ona-r-om means "among the members of Hephaetus chamber of judges/clergy/managers".

The phrase p^hokia-si-al-e zeronait^h ewist^{h}o tower-ona-r-om means "at the sacral place of Phocaea, among the members of Hephaetus chamber of judges/clergy/managers".

The phrase haralio ziwai looks like a combination of two verb forms.
As it has been noted above (A5) the word ziwai can be translated as "have lived", "having lived". The root of this word-from seems to be a borrowing from an Indo-European language, probably from an Anatolian.

The word-form haralio has the same ending as the word-form tawarzio that can be seen in the text of side A (A6).
As it has been mentioned above, in the word tawarzio, that has been translated as "buried"[24], has been singled out the ending -zio that has been compared with the Etruscan marker of the passive voice in preterit forms (-χe) -k^{h}e[25], and with Hurrian marker of preterit ož [26].

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[21] Wiktionary 2024.
[22] Rix 2008: 151.
[23] Wallace 2016.
[24] Wiktionary 2024.
[25] Rix 2008: 155 – 156.

In the word *haralio* can be singled out the stem *hara* that can be compared with the Hurrian root *ḫari* "way", "path"[27]. And the rest part of this word-form – *-lio* seems to be a variant of the above-mentioned ending *-zio*. It can be assumed that in the case of *haralio* took place the assimilation of the consonant in the suffix with the final consonant of the stem.

And thus, it is possible to state that the word-form *haralio* means "led", "managed".

It seems logical to suppose that in the phrase *haralio ziwai* the first part is something like a participle, and the second part is something like an auxiliary verb.

The phrase *haralio ziwai* should be translated as "[he] managed [and] lived" or "[he] lived managing / leading [something]".

It is quite interesting that constructions of such kind are quite frequent in, languages which are supposed to belong to the Altaic family (as it has been noted above Tyrrhenian languages are supposed to be a distant relative of the Altaic family). For instance, in Japanese constructions made of the so-called *te* form (participle form) and different auxiliaries are very frequent.

Having assembled all the parts of sentence B1 together, we receive the following:

Holaie-zi(1) *P^hokia-si-al-e*(2) *zer-ona-it^h*(3) *Ewist^ho*(4) *tower-ona-r-om*(5) *hara-lio*(6) *ziwai*(7).

Holaie(1) lived(7) ruling(6) the members of the chamber of judge(5) of Hephaestus(4) in the sacral place(3) of Phocaea(2).

The fact that Holaie, the uncle (or grandfather) of Zia, lived in Phocaea located on the west coast of Asia Minor means that in the west coast of Asia Minor there was a population that spoke Lemnian (or a language very close to Leminan), a population closely related to the people who lived on the island of Lemnos.

B2

The sentence B2 is transcribed as *eptezio: arai.*

This sentence has the same structure as in the case of the above-considered *haralio ziwai*.

In the form *eptezio*, one can be singled out the so-called 'participial suffix' *-zio* and the stem *epte*.

The stem *epte* correlates well with such Etruscan words as: *eprthe* "superior charge", supremacy", *eprthne* "superior", "leader", *eprthnev* "to be the leader"[28]

In the word-form *arai* can be seen the root *ar* "to move", "to act actively", "to perform rites"[29].

And thus, *epte-zio arai* is translated as "being a leader (being endowed with authority/power) actively acted/performed rituals."

It is possible to suppose that the ending *-ai* expresses the meaning of past simple, while the ending *-zio/-lio* seems to be a marker of participle and probably also a marker of past perfect.

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[26] Wilhelm 2008: 97.
[27] Palaeolexicon 2024b.
[28] McCallister & McCallister-Castillo 1999.
[29] Palaeolexicon 2024a.

B3

The sentence B3 is transcribed as

Tiz Pʰoke … ziwai awiz sialkʰwiz; mara-z-m awiz aomai

The word-form *tiz* correlates with the Etruscan word *tiśσ* /tis͜ʃ/ "lake"[30]; it can be assumed that in the text of the Lemnos stele *tiz* means "bay".

The word *awiz* correlates with Etruscan *awil* "year".

The word *sialkʰwiz* correlates with the Etruscan word *sealkʰls* "forty" (or "sixty" if we follow another interpretation).

As it has been noted above, the word *maru* denotes magistracy, or a cultic position.

The word-form *aomai* can be correlated with the Etruscan *aum* "poor" "wretched"[31], and the ending *-ai* is the same as in the previously considered forms *ziwai, arai*.

Having assembled B2 and B3 together, we receive the following:

Epte-zio(1) *arai*(2). *Tiz*(3) *Pʰoke*(4) *… ziwai*(5) *awiz*(6) *sialkʰwiz*(7)*; mara-z-m*(8) *awiz*(9) *aomai*(10)*.*

Being a leader (being endowed with authority/power)(1) [he] actively acted/performed rituals(2). [For] forty(7) years(6) [he] lived(5) in the bay(3) of Phocaea(4); some(10) years(9) he also [held] the position of *maru* (8).

3. Conclusion

The text of side A is about Holaie's nephew/grandson Zia:

Holaie-z(1) *nafotʰ*(2) *Zia-zi*(3) *mara-z*(4) *maw*(5). *Sialkʰweiz*(6) *awiz*(7) *Ewistʰo*(8) *zeronaitʰ*(9) *ziwai*(10). *Aker*(11) *tawar-zio*(12) *Wamala-si-al*(13) *zeronai*(14) *Morina-l*(15).

Holaie-GEN(1) nephew/grandson(2) Zia-ERG(3) maru-EQU(4) served(5). Forty(6) years(7) Hephaestus(8) shrine(9) have lived/died(10). June(11) buried (12) Wamala-DAT-GEN(13) shrone/temple (14) Myrina-LOC (15).

Holaie's(1) grandson/nephew(2) Zia(3) served(5) as maru(4). Died(10) [at the age of] forty(6) years(7) [in the] shrine(9) [of] Hephaestus(8). Buried(12) [in] June(11) [in the] shrine(14) of Wamala(13), in Myrina(15).

The text of side B is about Holaie:

Holaie-zi(1) *Pʰokia-si-al-e*(2) *zer-ona-itʰ*(3) *Ewistʰo*(4) *tower-ona-r-om*(5) *hara-lio*(6) *ziwai*(7). *Epte-zio*(8) *arai*(9). *Tiz*(10) *Pʰoke*(11) *… ziwai*(12) *awiz*(13) *sialkʰwiz*(14)*; mara-z-m*(15) *awiz*(16) *aomai*(17)*.*

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[30] Palaeolexicon 2024a.

[31] McCallister & McCallister-Castillo 1999.

Holaie-ERG(1) Phocaea-LOC-GEN-INSTR(2) shrine(3) Hephaestus(4) with/among people of the chamber of judges/clergy(5) rule PTCP(6) lived(7). Leader be PTCP(8) actively acted(9). Bay(10) Phocaea(11) lived(12) years(13) forty(14) also [served] as maru(15) years(17) some/little(17).

Holaie(1) lived(7) ruling(6) the members of the chamber of judge(5) of Hephaestus(4) in the sacral place(3) of Phocaea(2). Being a leader(8) [he] actively acted/performed rituals(9). [For] forty(14) years(13) [he] lived(12) in the bay(10) of Phocaea(11); and also some(17) years(16) [held] the position of *maru*(15).

Fig. 7. A scheme showing the location of Mitanni and Hatti states in 14th – 13th centuries BCE (image source – Wikipedia 2024c)

The Lemnian language is not a dialect of Etruscan, but a separated language inside the Tyrrhenian family.

Taking into account the fact that Etruscan is related to Hurro-Urartian, it is possible to state that Lemnian is a juncture / 'bridge' between Hurro-Urartian and Etruscan. From the text of the Lemnos stele it is possible to conclude that Lemnian combines the features represented in Etruscan with some features represented in Hurrian.

The people who spoke Lemnian evidently were those Hurrians who migrated westward after the kingdom of Mitanni was destroyed by the Assyrians in the middle of the 13th century BCE. Some of the Hurrians migrated to the territory of Hittites (the kingdom of Hatti) and later the

swirl of the Bronze Age Collapse made them to move farther westward, and thus they reached the Mediterranean Sea and Italic peninsula, and a certain group of those Hurrians stayed to live on the island of Lemnos.

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