

ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ ΚΡΗΤΗΣ

ΠΡΩΤΟΒΥΖΑΝΤΙΝΗ ΕΛΕΥΘΕΡΝΑ

ΤΟΜΕΑΣ Ι

Δεύτερος τόμος

Επιστημονική επιμέλεια: Πέτρος Γ. Θέμελης

ΡΕΘΥΜΝΟ 2000

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AA	<i>Archäologischer Anzeiger</i>
AASOR	<i>The Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
ADAJ	<i>Annual of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan</i>
AE	<i>Αρχαιολογική Εφημερίς</i>
AJA	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
AJPA	<i>American Journal of Physical Anthropology</i>
AK	<i>Anthropologiae Közlemenyek</i>
AM	<i>Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Athenische Abteilung</i>
AnatSt	<i>Anatolian Studies. Journal of the British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara</i>
ANMSMN	<i>American Numismatic Society, Museum Notes</i>
Antichthon	<i>Antichthon. Journal of the Australia Society for Classical Studies</i>
Archaeometry	<i>Archaeometry. Bulletin of Research Laboratory for Archaeology and History of Art, Oxford University</i>
ASAtene	<i>Annuario della Scuola Archeologica d'Atene</i>
Atiqôt	<i>Journal of the Israel Department of Antiquities</i>
BAR	<i>British Archaeological Reports. International Series</i>
BASOR	<i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
BCH	<i>Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique</i>
BSA	<i>The Annual of the British School at Athens</i>
Bull.epigr.	<i>Bulletin épigraphique, Revue des Études Grecques</i>
Byzantion	<i>Byzantion. Revue Internationale des Études Byzantines</i>
ByzF	<i>Byzantinische Forschungen. Internationale Zeitschrift für Byzantinistik</i>
CahCerEg	<i>Cahiers de Céramique Égyptienne</i>
DACL	F. Cabrol, H. Leclercq (eds), <i>Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie</i> , 1-15, Paris 1907-1953
Dèlos	<i>Exploration archéologique de Dèlos faite par l'École Française d'Athènes</i>
DOP	<i>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</i>
ΔΧΑΕ	<i>Δελτίον της Χριστιανικής Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας</i>
EtCret	<i>Études Crétoises</i>
Figlina	<i>Figlina. Documents du Laboratoire de céramologie de Lyon</i>
Hesperia	<i>Hesperia. Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens</i>
IC	M. Guarducci, <i>Inscriptiones Creticae</i> , II, IV, V, Roma 1935-1950
IsrExpJ	<i>Israel Exploration Journal</i>

IJO	<i>International Journal of Osteoarchaeology</i>
JA	<i>Journal of Anatomy</i>
JARCE	<i>Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt</i>
JASc	<i>Journal of Archaeological Science</i>
JdI	<i>Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts</i>
JÖB	<i>Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik</i>
JRA	<i>Journal of Roman Archaeology</i>
KM	<i>Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo</i>
Κρητ. Χρον.	<i>Κρητικά Χρονικά. Κείμενα και Μελέται Κρητικής Ιστορίας</i>
Levant	<i>Journal of the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem</i>
LGPN	<i>A Lexicon of Greek Personal Names. I: P.M. Fraser, E. Matthews (eds), The Aegean Islands, Cyprus, Cyrenaica. II: M.J. Osborne, S.G. Byrne, Attica. IIIA: The Peloponnese, Western Greece, Sicily and Magna Grecia, Oxford 1987, 1994, 1997</i>
LibAnt	<i>Libya Antiqua</i>
LRBC	P. Hill, J. Kent, R. Carson, <i>Late Roman Bronze Coinage, part I-II, London 1960</i>
MAMA	<i>Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua, Manchester 1928-1962</i>
MASCAJ	<i>MASCA Journal. Museum Applied Science Center for Archaeology, University of Pennsylvania</i>
MeditArch	<i>Mediterranean Archaeology</i>
MEFRA	<i>Mélanges de l'École Française de Rome. Antiquité</i>
MIB	W. Hahn, <i>Moneta imperii byzantini, I-III, Wien 1973-1981</i>
MIRB	W. Hahn, <i>Moneta imperii romani-byzantini, Wien 1989</i>
NC	<i>Numismatic Chronicle</i>
ODB	<i>The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium, Oxford 1991</i>
OJA	<i>Oxford Journal of Archaeology</i>
Opus	<i>Opus. Rivista Internazionale per la storia economica e sociale dell'antiquità</i>
PAN	<i>Palaeopathology Association Newsletter</i>
PEQ	<i>Palestinian Exploration Quarterly</i>
Pontica	<i>Pontica. Studii si materiale de istorie archeologie si museografie Constanta</i>
PPMAE	<i>Papers of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology</i>
Qadmoniot	<i>Quarterly for the Antiquities of Eretz Israel and Biblical Lands</i>
QDAP	<i>The Quarterly of the Department of Antiquities in Palestine</i>
Qedem	<i>Qedem. Monographs of the Institute of Archaeology Hebrew University of Jerusalem</i>
RACr	<i>Rivista di archeologia cristiana</i>
RIC X	J.P. Kent, <i>Roman Imperial Coinage. The Divided Empire and the Fall of the Western Parts 395-491, London 1994</i>

- SEG *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*, 1923-1993
- Stud.Pal. C. Wessely, *Studien zur Palaeographie und Papyruskunde*, Leipzig 1901-1924
- Syria *Revue d'art oriental et d'archéologie*
- ZPE *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*
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THE INSCRIPTIONS

Y.Z. Tzifopoulos

INTRODUCTION

THE EXCAVATIONS IN ELEUTHERNA, approx. 25 km S-SE of Rethymno, began in 1985 and are still in progress by the Department of History and Archaeology of the University of Crete (see the archaeological reports of the excavators Petros Themelis for Eleutherna's Sector I, Thanassis Kalpaxis for Sector II, and Nicholas Ch. Stampolidis for Sector III in *Kretike Estia* 2 [1988], 3 [1989-90], 4 [1991-93], 5 [1994-96]; and also van Effenterre 1991 et al.; Themelis 1992, 91-95, and 1994, 437-440; Kalpaxis et al. 1994; Stampolidis 1993, 1994, and 1996). Sector I is directed by the Professor of Classical Archaeology, Petros Themelis and is located in the site of Katsivelos, on the eastern side of Prines hill. The excavations there have brought to light structures that add significantly to the history of Eleutherna: the early Christian St. Michael's Basilica; to the SW of the Basilica a three-rooms Hall and to the SE a Hellenistic Sanctuary; to the W a Roman House complex with the very well preserved Rooms 23+26; the N-S Road between the Roman House and the Basilica that turns W-NW at the corner of Room 23; to the N of the Western Road more buildings, and to the NW the Thermae complex, still under excavation.

Among the numerous and rich finds, a great number of inscriptions have also been unearthed, most of them now in the Rethymno Museum and a few *in situ*, most of which have appeared in the preliminary reports of the excavator, published in the archaeological news of *Kretike Estia*. Thus far, the total number of inscriptions is fifty-four and span a period of over a thousand years, a strong indication for continuous(?) habitation on the eastern, lower side of Prines hill from at least the late classical period until the end of the first Byzantine period. Eleutherna's physical limits extended considerably to the east, and the city's settlement pattern, as van Effenterre has recently described it (1991, 29: "un habitat polynucléaire"; also Perlman 1996, 252-4), emerges as one of many 'neighborhoods' at some distance from each other.

Of the fifty-four inscriptions, sixteen are presented here (counting the two plaques inscribed on both sides as four inscriptions, nos 6-7 and 8-9), which are dated in the first Byzantine period of Crete, AD 400-961. Although most of them were not found in their original place, nevertheless their findspots may provide assistance for a general understanding of the site. One has been a chance find in the vicinity of the Katsivelos site (no. 16). Of the remaining fifteen, the majority, as is to be expected, was found inside, or near the Basilica: six in the Basilica (nos 1, 2, 3, 10, 11, 14); one in the area immediately to the Basilica's south wall in the Hellenistic Sanctuary where a number of graves have come to light (no. 13); two in the three-rooms Hall, adjacent to the southern wall of the narthex (nos 4, 5), where in Room I graves were also excavated. Three inscriptions were found in the Western Road (nos 6, 7, 9); one in Cistern A (no. 15); one in Room 41 of the Thermae complex (no. 8); and one in the very well preserved Rooms 23+26 of the Roman House complex to the W and S of the Western Road (no. 12).

This work would not have been completed without the generosity of Professor Petros Themelis to whom I am indebted for his constant encouragement, perceptive comments and criticisms, and invaluable assistance in all stages: he entrusted me with the material for study, placed at my disposal

the archives of the excavation, and generously offered for the publication excellent photographs of the inscriptions.

I would also like to record my gratitude and appreciation to Ms Maria Andreadaki-Vlazaki, in charge of the Ephorate, and the staff in the Rethymno Museum for permission to study the inscriptions and for providing ideal working conditions; to Ms Amalia Giannakopoulou, Mr Kleanthes Sidiropoulos, and Ms Stella Kalogeraki for enthusiastically devoting time and energy to my queries and searches in archives and storerooms; to Ms Anna Lekka and Dr Kyriakos Psaroudakis for the diligence and care in matters practical; to Ms Rania Oikonomou for her attentive reading of the proofs; and to Mr George Motakis for his computer expertise and creativity. Prof. Stephen V. Tracy, Prof. Angelos Chaniotis, Prof. Vasia Kontorini, Prof. Theocharis Detorakis, Prof. Athanassios Markopoulos, Marina Loukaki, Philip Forsythe, Stavros A. Frangoulidis and Angelos Matthaïou have read the entire manuscript perceptively and with discerning eye; to them all I am indebted for their generous comments, suggestions and criticisms.

1. (*in situ*)

fig. 1

The mosaic floor of the narthex of the proto-Christian Basilica in Eleutherna was uncovered during the excavation-season of 1992. It is constructed with four-color pebbles and portrays in panels of various sizes floral and geometric designs. An oblong panel, vertical to the narthex, just to the right of the main entrance to the central aisle of the church, bears an inscription for whose letters dark-blue pebbles were used, in contrast to the greyish-white pebbles of the panel's background. The inscription is very well preserved.

Themelis 1994-96, 273, pl. 14, 15a; SEG 45.1267.

H. 0.345, W. 3, Th. (of pebbles): 0.015-0.02, L.H. 0.045-0.09 m.

AD 430-450

Εὐφρατᾶς ὁ ἀγιώτατος ἐπίσκοπος [κ]τίζι τόδε τὸ
θῖον τέμενος, οἶκον εὐπρεπῆ εἰς ὕψος ἐγίρας

3 Μιχαήλ τοῦ ἀρχαγγελού, οὐπερ πρεσβίαις χάρις θήσετε ἡμῖ(ν).

His holiness the bishop Euphratas builds this divine temenos, having erected to its height an appropriate *oikos* of the archangel Michael, through whose intercessions the grace (of God) will come upon us.

Line 1: [κ]τίζι: in the preliminary publication the reading ἐκτίζι is a typographical error. Between sigma and tau there is only one letter space.

Line 3: θήσετε ἡμῖ(ν): in the preliminary publication the reading θύσετε ὑμῖ(ν) is a typographical error. Above the mu and iota of ἡμῖ(ν) there is a horizontal abbreviation mark, because there is no space left for the final nu, although the letters in this line are crowded.

χάρις θήσετε: another possible reading is χαρισθήσετε, although this verb in the future passive occurs only once in the Christian literature, in Paul's Letter to Philemon (22: ἐλπίζω γὰρ ὅτι διὰ τῶν προσευχῶν ὑμῶν χαρισθήσομαι ὑμῖν). In that case the subject of the verb would be the temenos and the meaning difficult to comprehend; for the building of the church is never motivated by personal gratification.

COMMENTARY: the date of the inscription, AD 430-450, is based on Hierokles' *Synekdemos* (650.9), where it is recorded that Euphratas, the bishop of Eleutherna participated in the Ecumenical Synod of Chalcedon in AD 451 (Mansi 1960, VI, col. 757; Kalokyris 1953, 471; Tsougarakis 1987, 395-6; id. 1988, 198-213, 388 with earlier bibliography). As Themelis has convincingly argued, the consecration of the Basilica in all probability took place prior to Euphratas' travel to Chalcedon. This twenty-year period is a unique and rare phenomenon apropos dating the early Christian basilicas of Crete, which are over sixty-five in number, and among which this must have been one of the earliest (Bandy 1970, 4-7; Sanders 1982, 89-131).

The text is not carefully laid out, as the mosaic panel widens towards the right edge and the letters from left to right become bigger, in order to fill in the space, except in line three where

46 letters are crowded in (line 1 has 36, and line 2 has 34 letters). Characteristic letter-shapes (after Bandy 1970, 24-5) are: α15, ε1, θ3, μ8, ν2, σ1, ω6. The orthography of the text is typical of the Christian inscriptions in Crete. The irregular or inconsistent spellings are rather phonetic renderings, and not misspellings or errors, as orthography follows pronunciation (Browning 1983). Thus, the expected diphthong -ει is rendered with an iota in [κ]τιζι (line 1), θιον ἐγίρας (line 2), πρεσβίαις (line 3) (Bandy 1970, 13 with note 49); the third person singular ending -αι becomes an epsilon in θήσετε (line 3) (Bandy 1970, 13 with note 47); and the consonant cluster -γγ- is rendered -νγ- in ἀρχανγέλου (line 3) (Bandy 1970, 14 with note 27).

The mosaic inscription records the name of the church's founder and the saint in whose honor the church is dedicated. The accent on the ultima in Εὐφρατᾶς is corroborated by the byzantine sources that mention the name (Mansi 1960, VI, col. 757; cf. Anastasiou 1979, 129; Fedalto 1988, 542). So far, the attested forms of the name were accented Εὐφράτας and Εὐφράτης, the latter occurring on Crete at Lyttos in AD 2nd-3rd cent.(?) (*LGPN* 1, 189; 2, 189; 3A, 181; Pape - Benseler 1911, 430). In the middle of the fifth century AD and perhaps overlapping in time, another Εὐφρατᾶς, bishop of Chersonesos, is noted among the signatories of the Letter to Leo I in 457/8 (Tsougarakis 1987, 396; id. 1988, 393; and *ODB* s.v. *Euphratas*). The honorary epithet ἀγιώτατος (*DACL* 15A, 374-462, s.v. *sanctus*, esp. 379-82) almost exclusively accompanies the highest offices of the clergy, ἐπίσκοπος, ἀρχιεπίσκοπος (*DACL* 5.1, 202-238), and in its feminine ἐκκλησία. It should be noted, however, that in the record of the Chalkedon Synod Euphratas', as well as the other bishops', honorific title is not ἀγιώτατος, but εὐλαβέστατος (Mansi 1960, VI, col. 757: εὐλαβέστατος ἐπίσκοπος τῆς Ἐλευθεροπολιτῶν πόλεως, ἐπαρχίας Κρήτης, the see's title being also ὁ Ἐλευθέρου/Ἐλευθερ(ν)ῶν πόλεως), since the highest ecclesiastical officer is the ἀρχιεπίσκοπος. Exceptions to this usage are very few, as a search of the PHI CD-ROM #7 has shown: this epithet characterizes the Eleusinian goddesses only once (*IG* V.1.594), it occurs in a defixio (*SEG* 34.1437), and three times it is found as an epithet of Sarapis and Isis in Egypt (*StudPal.* XX, 58r Fr.A.2; Bernard 1984, no. 89; Sacco 1984, no. 18). In the Christian inscriptions of Crete it occurs five times, in four of them modifying the church (Bandy 1970, nos 5, 26, 37, 61), and in one the archbishop of Gortyn (Bandy 1970, no. 31).

The Basilica is consecrated to the archangel St Michael and is described by the bishop as θιον τέμενος οἶκος εὐπρεπῆς (line 2). Although the word οἶκος is found in two other Christian inscriptions of Crete (Bandy 1970, nos 36 [referring to a church], 67), this is the first instance of temenos in such a context (see Deichmann's 1939, 105-114, valuable discussion of the transformation of ancient sanctuaries into early Christian churches). St Michael in the Christian tradition is the psychopomp. This and the large number of architectural remains that were removed from the Hellenistic Sanctuary immediately to the south of the Basilica for its construction, as well as the three beheaded and mutilated herms, and a lead plaque depicting Aphrodite are solid indications, but not yet conclusive evidence, for a cult of the ancient psychopomp Hermes and Aphrodite in the Sanctuary, together perhaps with that of other deities, such as Herakles, Artemis, and the Roman emperors (Themelis 1994-96, 281-2). Furthermore, there is enough evidence to suggest that in the wider area of Eleutherna a mystery cult was thriving from the late Hellenistic period until the middle fourth century AD: the nine Orphic-Dionysiac lamellae, seven of them probably from the extensive Roman cemetery in the region Alpha, approx. 4 km to the North of Eleutherna (*IC* II.xii.31, 31bis, xxx.4;

Verdelis 1953-54, II, 56-60; and Tzifopoulos 1998), and two recently found in Sfakaki, approx. 4 km to the Northwest of Alpha (Gavrilaki - Tzifopoulos 1998; Kalogeraki - Tzifopoulos forthcoming); and the case of Ploutarchos, praeses insularum in the years of the Emperor Julian AD 361-363 and initiate in the mysteries of the Idaean Cave, as Chaniotis (1987, 227-31, and 1990, 393-401) has demonstrated. In all probability, the mystery cult in the Idaean Cave should be associated, if not identified, with that of the nine Orphic-Dionysiac lamellae from the wider area of Eleutherna (Verbruggen 1981, 75-99, esp. 88-91). More importantly, however, the survival of a mystery cult with chthonic associations and beliefs in the afterlife must have been one of the reasons for the early establishment of the Eleutherna bishopric and the consecration of the Basilica to the archangel Michael, the Christian psychopomp.

The excavation and discovery at Eleutherna of St Michael's Basilica with its founding mosaic inscription adds significantly to the sketchy information about the Eleutherna bishopric during the island's first byzantine period, AD 400-961 (Kalokyris 1950, 121-35; Konidaris 1953, 462-78; Ferrua 1954, 137-42; Tsougarakis 1987, 395-6; id. 1988, 198-213, 323-6; Spyridakis 1990, 62-76). Only twice there is mention of bishops of Eleutherna who participated in Ecumenical Synods: Euphratas in 451 at Chalcedon and Epiphanius in 787 at Nicaea (Fedalto 1988, 542 with the sources), whereas in the second byzantine period, AD 961-1210/1, the bishopric of Eleutherna ceased to exist. During the Arab occupation of the island that started in c.827, and certainly after Crete's liberation in 961, major changes seem to have taken place in Crete's ecclesiastical organization. During that period it seems that the site of Eleutherna declined, although it was not completely abandoned, and the bishop's seat was moved to Mylopotamos/Aulopotamos whose name was changed accordingly to Episkopi (Tsougarakis 1987, 402-3; id. 1988, 230-1, 323-6).

The excavation of St Michael's Basilica with its impressive remains provides strong evidence for a thriving bishopric at Eleutherna early in the first byzantine period. The epigraphical record of Eleutherna's bishopric is further support for this community's vitality during the period to which all the texts presented here belong. To this record there should now also be included the six inscriptions published by Bandy (1970, nos 81-86) under Prines Mylopotamopou, as Tsougarakis (1988, 324 note 94) has suggested, and perhaps also five more inscriptions of unknown provenance, but classed by Bandy (1970, nos 76-80) under the Region of Mt Ida.

The life of this Basilica, however, appears not to have been very long. For some unknown reason it was destroyed some time in the reign of Konstas II (AD 641-668) or immediately thereafter, as is presumed by the finding of this emperor's coin, dated to 644/5, just under the destruction level (Themelis 1989-90, 255; id. 1994-96, 275-6). This need not imply any major setback for the bishopric, as Eleutherna's bishop Epiphanius participated in 787 at Nicaea, but it is an indication of the beginning of this bishopric's decline, since there is no physical evidence that would indicate an attempt to reconstruct the destroyed church. The Basilica, after its destruction in the middle of the seventh century, is simply abandoned.

2. (*in situ*)

fig. 2

On the same mosaic floor of the narthex (no. 1 above) that was uncovered in 1992, and immediately as one steps inside the church through its main, northern entrance, an oblong panel, parallel to the narthex, bears an inscription for whose letters dark-blue pebbles were used, so as to contrast with

the greyish-white pebbles of the panel's background. This mosaic inscription is preserved in a fragmentary state.

Themelis 1994-96, 273.

H. 1.16, W. 0.49, Th. (of pebbles): 0.015-0.02, L.H. 0.01-0.075 m.

AD 430-450

[? . .⁵⁻⁷ . . ?]
 [. . ό]δόν
 3 [μ]ου είς
 [τ]όπον
 [τ]οῦτον
 6 ὄν ἔκτι-
 σας· πόλ-
 1ν ΗΜΙΑΤΩ
 9 .Ο.ΤΟΥ.Α
 ΝΟΝΕΙΣΩ
 ΣΤΡΙΣ[.].

Remains of Dotted Letters: in line 11 of the first sigma only the upper vertical; of the second only the shape of a gamma.

Restorations:

Line 1-2: perhaps [δειξον / κατεύθυνον / ὀδηγήσον / εὐθείαν τὴν ὀ]δόν.

Line 9-10: perhaps ἄν(θρώπων).

Line 11: perhaps σ(ω)τ(η)ρί(α)ς.

COMMENTARY: for the date of this inscription, AD 430-450, see the discussion above in no. 1. The text is not as carefully laid out as in no. 1 above. The readings are based on the drawing and transcription of Themelis, made soon after the mosaic's discovery, which is badly preserved in lines 8-11. Characteristic letter-shapes (Bandy 1970, 24-5) are: α15, ε1, θ3, μ8, ν2, σ1, ω6. The text, as Themelis suggested (1994-96, 273), is a warning to the faithful for reverence just as they enter into the narthex, a unique case in the Christian inscriptions of Crete, although examples from other places are numerous (*DACL* 3B, 1731-56).

3. (*in situ*)

fig. 5

A block of local limestone was found in 1990 built into the left post of the staircase leading to the northern entrance to the Basilica's narthex. It is broken at the left and the right and is chipped away on the edges.

Themelis 1991, 254-5; id. 1994-96, 273; *SEG* 44.721, 45.1265.

H. 0.23, W. 0.567, Th. 0.57, L.H. 0.02-0.022 m.

AD 5th-6th cent.

[- - - -]ICTOYTYX...!ΝΕΙΚΗΣ καὶ αἰωνίου δ[ιαμονῆς or -όξης² - - -].
vacat c. 0.195 m.

Remains of Dotted Letters: of the chi only the lower left half of the slanting stroke; of the iota only a vertical stroke.

COMMENTARY: for the date of this inscription, fifth to sixth centuries, see the discussion in no. 1 above. On the inscribed surface guidelines are clearly visible, which however the cutter never used, as below this one line the space is left empty. The letters are carefully and elegantly cut with triangular apices at the end of the strokes, and towards the right edge of the stone tend to become smaller. Characteristic letter-shapes (Bandy 1970, 24-5) are: α6, ν1, σ4 (σ2 in the ligature ΗΣ), υ4 but the top slanting strokes more closed, and omega with the circle ending in two small horizontals. The cutter employed ligatures for NE (Bandy 1970, 13 with note 12), and ΗΣ (Bandy 1970, 13 with note 7). For the orthography of the diphthong -ει- instead of -ι- in lines 1 and 2, a common phenomenon in Christian inscriptions, see Bandy 1970, 14 and note 1; for similar inscriptions Bandy no. 23 and cf. no. 20, and below no. 12.

Themelis (1991, 255) proposed to read e.g.: [Υπερ ἀρ]ίστου τύχ[ης ...]ινείκης και αἰωνίου μ[νήμης], and entertained the possibility of the name [Πραξ]ινείκη, preserved in IC II.xii.39 (Πραξιινείκη) from Eleutherna (for other possible names see Dornseiff - Hansen 1978, 53). The space, however, after the chi and before the iota does not admit more than three to four letters, and the inscription's fragmentary state allows for a variety of restorations. This may very well have been an invocation of a male [- - -]ιστος (for possible names ending in -ιστος see Dornseiff - Hansen 1978, 292-3) and a female [...]ινείκη, who perhaps contributed to the construction of the Basilica's main entrance (Themelis 1994-96, 273). H.W. Pleket in SEG 44.721 restored τύχ[ης κα]ί νείκης, but his suggestion for the beginning of the text that "one expects the name plus titles of a Roman emperor: [Υπερ - - - ἀρ]ίστου (=optimi) etc." does not seem probable (for a similar, albeit secular, inscription in Aphrodisias see Roueché 1989, 36 no. 19). A. Chaniotis in SEG 45.1265 restored [Υπερ - - - μεγ]ίστου τύχ[ης κα]ί νείκης και αἰωνίου δ[ιαμονῆς], suggesting μεγ[ίστου] = maximus, instead of Pleket's ἀρ[ίστου] = optimus. It is equally plausible that this may have been a more general invocation, like the mosaic inscription above, no. 2, addressing everybody entering the Basilica: e.g. [?- - - Χρ]ιστοῦ τύχ[ωμε]ν νείκης και αἰωνίου δ[ιαμονῆς or -όξης - -?], or perhaps, as Themelis has suggested [- - - ὑπερ τῆς τοῦ Χρ]ιστοῦ τύχ[ης κα]ί νείκης και αἰωνίου δ[ιαμονῆς? or -όξης - -?]. This may be a variation of our no. 12 below, or a modification of a phrase from Paul's Second Epistle to Timothy (2.10), or from his Epistle to the Ephesians (1.21-22) on which Johannes Damascenus (vol. 95, page 828, line 34f.) comments that the glory and the existence/residence are eternal.

4. (Inv. No. E 237)

fig. 6

In 1993 a rectangular plaque of limestone, broken into five pieces and joined, was found above Grave 32 in Room I of the Hall, adjacent to the southern wall of the Basilica's narthex. The plaque is in excellent condition and is only chipped away on the edges.

Themelis 1994-96, 274-5, pl. 15b; SEG 45.1270.

H. 0.52, W. 0.57, Th. 0.058, L.H. 0.028-0.043 m.

AD 500-650

†ένθάδε κατάκιτε
 Νικάσιος ὁ θεοτίμητ(ος)
 3 πρεσβ(ύτερος) ἀπεγδεχόμενος
 τὰς τοῦ Θε(ε)οῦ ἀψευδῆς ἐπαν-
 γελίας· ἀνεπαύσατο δὲ
 6 μῆ(νός) Ἀπριλίου ς' ἰνδ(ικτιῶνος) εἰ†

Here lies Nikasios the presbyter, honored by God, having accepted God's never-lying promises; he went to rest on April 6th, in the fifteenth year of the indiction.

COMMENTARY: the date, AD 500-650, is based on the archaeological context of the five graves that have been excavated in this area (see also the discussion in no. 1 above). The year of the indiction, fifteen, is inscribed with the smaller number preceding the larger, and is attested in other cases in Cretan inscriptions (Bandy 1970, 19 with note 17). Although the month April is preserved in at least one other inscription (Bandy 1970, 20 and note 33), both the year of the indiction, fifteen, and the day of the month, sixth, are here attested for the first time (Bandy 1970, 20, 21).

The text is laid out in a rectangular grid of horizontal guidelines like a notebook and the letters are very carefully and symmetrically cut in the space between 0.053-0.06 m in height. The cutter at the beginning and end of the text has cut two crosses (Bandy 1970, 27 type r), and has employed a variety of abbreviations: in line 2 a version of the raised S sign, hanging from the right edge of the horizontal of tau, marks the "suspension" of the ending (Oikonomides 1974, 21; Bandy 1970, 12); in line 3 the standard and "very frequent after 5th cent." abbreviation for presbyter with the S sign (Oikonomides 1974, 97; Bandy 1970, 12); in line 4 the cutter uses the ligature of omicron and epsilon and a line over the word to indicate an abbreviation as well (Bandy 1970, 11 with note 11); in line 6 μῆ(νός) is abbreviated with a smaller eta above the mu (Oikonomides 1974, 85; and Bandy 1970, 20); for the day of the month the stigma (ligature ς for στ', not attested heretofore in Cretan Christian inscriptions [Bandy 1970, 21]) is inscribed, whereas the indiction is abbreviated as usual with the S sign after the first three letters (Oikonomides 1974, 72; Bandy 1970, 19).

The orthography of the text is typical of the Christian inscriptions in Crete (see no. 1 above). Noteworthy are the correct word-division of ἐπαν/γελίας in lines 4-5, and the intentional empty letter space at the end of line 1. The expected diphthong -ει- is rendered with an iota in κατάκιτε (line 1), and ἀψευδῆς (line 4) (Bandy 1970, 13 with note 49); the third person singular ending -αι becomes an epsilon in κατάκιτε (line 1) (Bandy 1970, 13 with note 47); and the consonant cluster -γγ- is rendered -νγ- in ἐπαν/γελίας (line 4-5) (Bandy 1970, 14 with note 27), whereas -κδ- is rendered -γδ- in ἀπεγδεχόμενος (line 3), not previously attested in the Christian inscriptions of Crete (Bandy 1970, 13-4). Characteristic letter-shapes (Bandy 1970, 24-5, 27) are: α8, β2, δ3, λ6, μ12, σ1, υ12 (except in line 4 where the two upsilons' shape is like that of the ligature omicron and epsilon); the omicron is egg-shaped with the upper part open only in lines 1-4.

The name Nikasios is not unknown in Crete; it is preserved in a sepulchral inscription of the second century AD from Hagioi Deka in Gortyn (IC IV.369: Ὡφελίμ[α / Ν]ικασί[ος]; see also LCPN 1, 331; 3A, 319). This Nikasios is only the third presbyter attested on the island (IC IV.496 = Bandy

1970, 37 no. 5 is also a sepulchral inscription of a presbyter and *oikonomos*, dated in the fifth century AD, but his name is missing, and the epithet *θεοτίμητος* is found here for the first time in the Christian inscriptions of Crete (*MAMA* 4.2232-3). The other presbyter known by name, Theoktistos, appears on a sepulchral inscription of the fourth/fifth century AD, which, albeit of unknown provenance (Bandy 1970, 104 no. 77 = *IC* II.xxiv.7), probably comes from the wider Region of Mt Ida along with four other Christian inscriptions of unknown provenance in the Rethymno Museum (Bandy 1970, 103-110 group XXIII nos 76-80). In all likelihood, the wider area of Eleutherna, the seat of the bishopric, may have been the place of origin of these texts, all epitaphs of: in addition to the presbyter Theoktistos, the subdeacon Epiktetianos (103-4 no. 76), the church official Magnos (108-110 no. 80), and two women, Antiochia (105-6 no. 78) and Maria (106-7 no. 79).

The formula *ἀπεγδεχόμενος τὰς τοῦ θεοῦ ἀψευδῆς ἐπαγγελίας* in the text is not new, although the verb *ἀπεκδέχομαι* is employed for the first time in Crete. It is interesting that the two other Christian inscriptions from Crete, which employ the formula with minor variations, come from the wider region of the Eleutherna bishopric: the epitaph of the chanter Theodoros from Panormos reads: *περιμένων / τὰς ἀψευδεῖς / τοῦ Χ(ριστο)ῦ ἐπαγγελί/ας* (Bandy 1970, 98 no. 7₁₃₋₆ and the commentary with notes 1-5 for the meaning of the word *ἐπαγγελία*, proposed by L. Robert in *Bull.epigr.* 1956, 230 and 1958, 44). The grave inscription of Antonina from Rethymno, which may have been under the jurisdiction of the bishop of Eleutherna (if not of the bishop of Lappa), reads: *δεχομένη / τὰς ἀψευδ[εῖ]ς ἀγγελίας / τοῦ Θ(εο)ῦ* (*IC* II.xxiv.3₂₋₄ = Bandy 1970, 102 no. 75 where he makes the attractive suggestion that the word *ἀγγελία* is better explained if taken as “equivalent in meaning to *ἐπαγγελίας*” [cf. no. 71₅₋₆]).

5. (Inv. No. E 152)

fig. 7

In 1993 a fragment of a small funerary plaque of local limestone was found in Room II of the Hall, adjacent the southern wall of the Basilica’s narthex. It preserves only the bottom right edge.

Themelis 1994-96, 277 no.1; *SEG* 45.1271.

H. 0.25, W. 0.16, Th. 0.05, L.H. 0.009-0.023 m.

AD 500-650

[†? ἀνεπ]αύσατο [.?]
 [- *nomen* -]α ἡ μακαρ[ία?]
 3 [- - - μ]ηνὶ Μαΐωι [.]
 vacat 0.02 m?
 [- - -]·N (*anchor*) ZZZ†
 6 †

[- - -]α, the blessed, went to rest [on the -] of the month of May, in the seventh year of the indiction.

Remains of Dotted Letters: in line 1 of the omicron only a faint trace of the left loop.

COMMENTARY: for the date, AD 500-650, see the discussion in nos 1 and 4 above. The letters are carefully cut and the strokes end in apices. In line 5 before the nu there is a trace on the stone perhaps of a cross(?), and after the nu there is the symbol (or perhaps a monogram?) of an anchor

and a cross (Bandy 1970, 10, 82 no. 53A for the only other attestation of that symbol in Crete), and two more crosses, after the number and in the next line below. Presumably another one was inscribed at the beginning of the text. Characteristic letter-shapes are (after Bandy 1970, 24-5, 27): α12 (but with the middle broken bar extending below the slanting strokes, thus creating a rhombus), μ11 (but with the lower part of the verticals straight), υ9 (with a smaller vertical), ω6, cross type r.

In the beginning of line 2 (or in the end of line 1) the name of the deceased is to be restored (Themelis proposed: [... μ]νήμα και). In the end of line 2 the restoration can also be μακαρ[ιω/τάτη], or perhaps even μακαρ[ία / μήτηρ]. In line 3, after Μαίωι, one and a half letter spaces may be restored for the day of the month (see Bandy 1970, 20). In line 5 Themelis proposed: [... Ἰνδικτιώ]ν, ἔτ(ος) -IZI-. Apparently in this line the indiction is inscribed, but what is preserved on the stone is not helpful. The word Ἰνδικτιών, complete or abbreviated, is always found in the dative case in Cretan inscriptions (Bandy 1970, 19-20), but without ἔτος, which, when inscribed, is usually in the genitive plural and refers to the years the deceased person lived (Bandy 1970, 17). Likewise, the numbers present difficulties, because they are not of the same shape: all three have two horizontals, of which the upper ones at their left end have apices that curve to the right, and the lower ones triangular apices, but their middle strokes slant to the left in varying degrees. I suspect that here it is only one number, repeated three times, both to fill the space and to “symbolize the Holy Trinity, as any letter engraved thrice” (Bandy 1970, 72 no. 41; also nos 7, 8, 40).

This text for a female Eleuthernian is very similar to three others, all of which employ the same formula with minor differences. The inscription closest to the new text is a plaque from the region of Mt Ida, IC II.xxiv.9 (= Bandy 1970, 106-7 no. 79): †ἀνεπ/αύσατο / Μαρία / ἡ μακα/ριωτ(άτη) / μη(νι) etc. Another one from the same area, IC II.xxiv.2 (= Bandy 1970, 105-6 no. 78), reads: [† ἀ]νεπαύσατ[ο Ἀ]ντιωχία τ/ῆν μακαρίαν / [μ]νήμην μη(νι) etc.; and IC II.xii.32 (= Bandy 1970, 112 no. 83). A third one is built into the outer wall of St Anna church on the Pyrgi hill, to the NW of St Michael's Basilica, a site where another church once stood: ἀνεπαύσατο ἡ μακαρία μήτηρ Ἀ[ννα?] / μη(νι) Μαίωι καθ', ἐπὶ Ἰνδ(ικτιῶνι) πέμπτῃ, ἡμ(έρα) β'. Although the formula with the verb ἀνεπαύσατο is very common in Cretan Christian inscriptions, the verb together with the adjective μακάριος/μακαρία occurs only in a few texts (Bandy 1970, 15, and nos 7B, 39, 43, 79, 83).

6-7. (Inv. No. E 75)

figs 3-4

A fragment of a sepulchral plaque of local limestone, inscribed on both sides, was found in 1996 in the Western Road to the south of Room 37. It preserves the top and the upper right for no. 6 (side A which is in excellent condition), and the top and upper left for no. 7 (side B which shows signs of erosion).

H. 0.115, W. 0.142, Th. 0.035 m.

AD 500-650

Side A (no. 6, fig. 3), L.H. 0.023-0.035 m.

[† ἀν]επαύσατο
[. . .]ρίας ο[-]
3 [. . .]Ρ![- - - -].

Remains of Dotted Letters:

Line 2: of the omicron only the upper left loop.

Line 3: of the rho only the upper left part of a loop; of the iota only the upper tip of a vertical.

The letters are carefully and deeply cut and only the alpha's strokes end in apices. The cutter is not consistent with the spacing of the letters as may be seen in line 1 between alpha and tau, and in line 2 between sigma and omicron, where half a letter space is left vacant. In line 1 on the stone: ΕΣΑΤΟ, with the syllable ΠΑΥ inscribed with smaller letters (0.012-0.014 m) above the epsilon and the sigma, no doubt a correction by the cutter. Characteristic letter-shapes are (after Bandy 1970, 24-5, 27): α7 (but the middle broken bar forming a chi), ε1 (but elongated), oval-shaped omicron, ρ1, σ2, ω6.

In line 2: [Ζαχ]πίσ may be tentatively restored, if the restoration in line 1 is correct, in which case there would be three to four letter spaces, and especially if, as seems plausible, the two texts on either side are related (see no. 7 below).

Side B (no. 7, fig. 4): L.H. 0.027-0.034 m.

† ἀνεπ[αύσατ]-
ο Ζα[χαρίσ?]
3 [- - - - -].

The letters are not as carefully cut as on side A, but the strokes end in apices. In line 1 they are smaller than in line 2. Characteristic letter-shapes are (after Bandy 1970, 24-5, 27): α5 and α8, ε2, zeta with the upper horizontal as a circumflex and the middle slanting but not joining the horizontals, nu with the slanting joining the right vertical in its middle, π3 (but with the verticals not joining the horizontal), cross type b (but with the vertical longer).

In lines 1-2: † ἀνεπ[αύσατ]/ο, or perhaps † ἀνεπ[αύσα]/[τ]ο, since the stone is broken below the cross.

Line 2: Ζα[χαρίσ?] is perhaps the most probable restoration; in Eleutherna and Axos the name Ζαῦλος is also attested (*LGPN* 1, 193) that could also be restored.

COMMENTARY: for the date, AD 500-650, see the discussion in nos 1 and 4 above. The lettering of nos 6 and 7 indicates different cutters, but that does not preclude the possibility that the two texts were the same, perhaps one side being re-inscribed for some reason. In all likelihood, as is done even today in Greek cemeteries, the plaque was used twice for two different people, perhaps of the same name and family, and was accordingly inscribed with both sides bearing witness to the persons buried (for other Christian inscriptions in Crete inscribed on both sides see Bandy 1970, nos 7, 12, 34, 52, 53). The name Zacharias, if the restoration is correct, is the first instance in Crete of a Christian bearing this Hebrew name (*LGPN* 1, 193; Chaniotis 1989; Bandy 1970, 140-3; Spyridakis 1990, 71 and note 70 for earlier bibliography).

8-9. (Inv. No. E 73+76)

figs 8-9

Three joined fragments of a sepulchral plaque of local limestone, inscribed on both sides, were found in 1996: fr. a (73) in Room 41 of the Thermae complex, and frs. b and c (76) in the Western Road to the south of Room 37. They preserve the bottom and the left side for no. 8 (side A is in excellent condition), and the bottom and the right side for no. 9 (side B shows signs of erosion).

H. 0.298, W. 0.165, Th. 0.033 m.

AD 500-650

Side A (no. 8, fig. 8), L.H. 0.018-0.034 m.

[- - - - -]
 ὕμα[καρ² - - -]
 3 ὕμ(η)ν(ι) ὕ ΙΕ[- -]
 ὕν ΓΓΓ *vacat*?
 ὕ ἰνδ(ικτιῶνι) ὕν ζ'.
 6 (avis)
vacat 0.5 m.

Remains of Dotted Letters: in line 3 of the epsilon only a vertical with the bottom horizontal that could also be a sigma.

The letters are carefully and deeply cut, and some of them have conspicuous apices. The indentation is one and a half letter spaces, and below the text there is preserved the tail and feet of a bird looking to the right. The cutter employs a number of abbreviations: a very elegant abbreviation symbol S for the words month in line 3 (a ligature of nu over the mu, see Oikonomides 1974, 86, and Bandy 1970, 20) and indiction in line 5, made of an iota with diaeresis marks and with a ligature of a delta inside and over the slanting stroke of a nu, not attested before in Cretan inscriptions (Bandy 1970, 19). The abbreviation sign S in line 3 is of equal height to the other letters and its upper loop is closed, whereas in line 5 it is half the size of that in line 3 and is cut slanting to the left on the upper half of the letter space. Characteristic letter-shapes are (after Bandy 1970, 24-5, 27): α9 (but with a triangular apex at the end of the broken middle bar), γ3, zeta with the upper horizontal as a circumflex and the middle slanting but not joining the horizontals, iota with diaeresis (Bandy 1970, 13), μ12 (but with the left and right strokes verticals and with a triangular apex at the end of the middle slanting strokes), σ2, and the stigma for the number 6 (line 5, see no. 4 above). In line 4 the three gammas, the last one being shorter, probably indicate the number three (for numbers cut three times see no. 5 above).

Side B (no. 9, fig. 9), L.H. 0.02-0.029 m.

[- - - -]
 [- - -]ανα ὕ
 3 [- - -]ιενου ὕ
 [- - -]ἰου γ' ὕν
 [ι]νδ(ικτιῶνι) ζ'. ὕν
 6 *vacat* 0.165 m.

Remains of Dotted Letters: in line 4 of the iota only the lower tip of a vertical; of the gamma only the lower tip of a vertical and a trace of the upper horizontal.

The letters are not as carefully and deeply cut as those on side A (no. 8), but some of them have conspicuous apices. Only one abbreviation is preserved, the indiction in line 5, for which see above no. 8 line 5. Characteristic letter-shapes are (after Bandy 1970, 24-5, 27): α9 (but with a triangular serif at the end of the broken middle bar), γ3, iota with diaeresis (line 3, see Bandy 1970, 13), ν4

(but with the verticals longer), σ 4 (but elongated), υ 7, and the stigma for the number 6 (line 5, see above no. 4).

COMMENTARY: for the date, AD 500-650, see the discussion in nos 1 and 4 above. This sepulchral plaque inscribed on both sides appears to have been used in a way similar to that of nos 6 and 7 above, as the identical year of the indiction, for which the stigma is employed in both texts, seems to indicate. Not enough of the text is preserved, however, for secure restorations.

10. (Inv. No. E 249)

fig. 12

In 1990 three architectural fragments that formed the lower part of the ambo's parapet were found in the central aisle of the Basilica and were joined. They are broken at the top, the right and the left corner. On the lower border of the parapet (height 0.10 m) a graffito is clumsily scratched.

Themelis 1991, 256 no. 3; *SEG* 45.1269.

H. 0.023, W. 0.32, Th. 0.045, L.H. 0.005-0.011 m.

AD 430-650

Κύ(ρι)ε μνήζητι τοῦ δούλου σου Παγχιβίου?
Ἄμήν.

Lord, remember your servant Pagchibios(?) Amen.

Remains of Dotted Letters: in line 2 of the eta only the upper tip of the left vertical.

COMMENTARY: for the date, AD 430-650, see the discussion in nos 1 and 4 above. The letters of this graffito are scratched in a careless way, as with most graffiti, and they do not follow a straight line. Κύ(ρι)ε is abbreviated not in the usual way (Bandy 1970, 12 with notes 12 and 13; Oikonomides 1974, 78-9), but with the first two and the last letters. Characteristic letter-shapes are (after Bandy 1970, 24-5, 27): α 7, β 2 (with the upper loop more triangular), σ 4, υ 9.

The graffito is an invocation, similar to which have been found scratched on the parapets of the early Christian Basilica at Panormon (Bandy 1970, 99-100 no. 73), although the verb employed there is "help" (βοήθη). The formula μνήσθητι Κύριε followed by the genitive is attested in sepulchral inscriptions in Crete (Bandy 1970, nos 92, 101, 102, 110). The form μνήζητι – the zeta is clear on the stone – is not attested in the Christian epigraphical record of Crete. It may be either a mistake on the part of the cutter, or the orthography indicates the stronger pronunciation of the sigma before the theta by the particular cutter or worshipper. The name Παγχιβίος is not heretofore attested (*LGPN* 1, 356; Chaniotis 1989; Dornseiff - Hansen 1978, 228 ending -ίβιος), but Ἄγχιβίος does occur (Bechtel 1917, 94).

11. (Inv. No. E 114)

fig. 10

A fragment of a plaque of local limestone, broken all around, was found in 1987 in the Basilica. On the lower edge of the back side there is a mark from a saw-cut.

H. 0.205, W. 0.185, Th. 0.045, L.H. 0.008-0.02 m.

AD 450-650

[- - -]ΑΝΑΓΙΓΝΩΚΟΝΛ[- - -].

Remains of Dotted Letters: after the omega on the stone: Ι<, that could also be read as ΙΣ; the right vertical of nu leans to the right and there is a trace of the right slanting that can also be read as a mu; of the lambda the lower part of the left slanting stroke on whose upper space there is a trace for an omicron or theta(?).

COMMENTARY: for the date, AD 450-650, see the discussion in no. 1 above. The letters of this graffito are scratched in a careless way, as with most graffiti, and there is no consistency in cutting the strokes. The only characteristic letter is the small shape of the omega, which is short and very wide, with its right semi-circle smaller. Perhaps ἀναγιγνώσκον<τ>[ες](?) was intended.

12. (*in situ*)

fig. 13

In 1993 a graffito was discovered on the lintel of local limestone that was found *in situ*, above the door leading from Room 23 to Room 26 of the Roman House complex. It is scratched on the underside, on the border of 0.07 m in width, that is on the side of Room 26, in an area that is set apart by two curving lines cut vertically to the lintel's border at a distance of 0.038 m between them. The two lines can be read, if one stands sideways, facing west, under the door and reads in a direction S-N.

Themelis 1994-96, 268-9, fig. 6, pl. 12a, b; SEG 45.1266.

H. 0.185, W. 1.03, Th. 0.50, L.H. 0.006-0.01 m.

c. AD 250

Νείκτην
τῷ Κυρείῳ.

Victory to/for the Lord.

COMMENTARY: the date, c. AD 250, is based on the archaeological context of Rooms 23 and 26. As Themelis has convincingly argued, this graffito most probably should be dated to the period of the persecutions by Decius in AD 249-251, as a prayer/invocation of the house's residents against their persecutors. For, in the destruction level of Rooms 23 and 26, the discovery of a hoard of fifty-eight bronze coins, among which were some minted by the Cretan *koinon* during Hadrian's reign, indicates the middle third century AD as the *terminus ante quem*. A later date for the graffito may also be plausible, as similar texts, discovered in Aphrodisias, indicate (Roueché 1989, 176-188 nos 117-143).

The letters of this graffito are scratched carefully, and in line 2 the strokes of the letters touch lightly one upon the other. Characteristic letter-shapes are (after Bandy 1970, 24-5, 27): ε2 (but elongated), ρ3, κ3, υ4, ω1. At a distance of approx. 0.03 m above the nu another nu is scratched. For the orthography of the diphthong -ει- instead of -ι- in lines 1 and 2, a common phenomenon in Christian inscriptions, see above nos 1, 3, 4. Moreover, the position of the inscription and the height of the letters clearly suggest that the intention of the cutter was not to make it easily visible and readable, but keep it hidden, as it were, except from those few that knew about it. Even today, the lintel must be searched carefully and knowingly for the inscription. Perhaps the graffito also served in a manner similar to the Hebrew *mezuzah*: a small piece of parchment, inscribed with chapters 6.4-9 and 11.13-21 of Deuteronomy is rolled up, placed in a metal case and affixed on the doorposts of a house, as commanded in Deuteronomy 6.9, so that at all times the inhabitants are reminded of the commandments.

13. (Inv. No. E 244)

fig. 11

In 1992, in Room N1, to the south of the Basilica, a plaque of local limestone, broken on all sides, was discovered. On the right edge there is a carved band, 0.052 m in height and 0.019 m in width. The letters are cut around a cross, 0.053 m in height and 0.025 m in width.

H. 0.086, W. 0.075, Th. 0.05, L.H. 0.009-0.013 m.

AD 500-650

[Ι](ησοῦ)ς Χ(ριστὸς)
 Χ(ριστὸ)ς
 3 νηκ[ᾱ].

Jesus Christ, Christ conquers.

COMMENTARY: for the date, AD 500-650, see the discussion in nos 1 and 4 above. The letters are carefully cut, but the type of this cross is new, as it seems to combine Bandy's (1970, 27) types d and j, with the triangular apex of type d on the left end of the horizontal becoming the shape of a lambda, and on the right end that of a sigma. The inscription is the usual acclamatory Christian text, and this is the first of its type found in Crete. For similar texts in Parthenon's columns see Orlandos - Vranousis 1973, 83 no. 90, 92 no. 105, 121 no. 154, and in Aphrodisias see Roueché 1989, 180 no. 129ii, 182-3 no. 134vi, 185 no. 139ii. For the orthography of -η- instead of -ι- in line 3, a common phenomenon in Christian inscriptions, see: Bandy 1970, 14 with note 5, and 48-9 no. 20 for the form of the verb and its alternatives, to which compare no. 23; and Orlandos - Vranousis 1973, 83 no. 90.

14. (Inv. No. A 2668)

fig. 15

In 1990 a fragment of a wedge-shaped parapet of local limestone, broken at the bottom, the upper right and the upper tip, was discovered in the Basilica. On the inscribed surface a deep border-line, parallel to the left and right edges is cut, 0.145 m in height. The back side is smooth and on the upper triangular part there is a circle cut of 0.025 m in height with a hole in the middle 0.003 m deep.

H. 0.21, W. 0.109, Th. 0.043, L.H. 0.021-0.032 m.

AD 500-650

ω
vacat 0.12
 3 C

COMMENTARY: for the date, AD 500-650, see the discussion in nos 1 and 4 above. The letters are carefully and symmetrically cut, and their characteristics are (after Bandy 1970, 25): σ4 (but with middle horizontal slanting to the left), ω1 (but more open on top). What the letters omega and sigma stood for is uncertain.

15. (Inv. No. A 2915)

fig. 16a-b

In 1992 a small plaque of local limestone was discovered in Cistern A to the north of the Western Road. A cross is cut in the middle, similar to Bandy's (1970, 27) type b, but elongated, of 0.045 m in height and at its upper left and right two smaller crosses with triangular apices at their ends are inscribed, the

left 0.007 m and the right 0.008 m in height. On the back side there is another cross, more simple, 0.05 m in height, similar to Bandy's (1970, 27) type k, but without anything at the upper end.

H. 0.058, W. 0.035, Th. 0.015, L.H. 0.006-0.009 m.

AD 500-650

(crux) (crux)
(crux)
3 Α Ω

COMMENTARY: for the date, AD 500-650, see the discussion in nos 1 and 4 above. The letters are carefully and symmetrically cut on the lower part of the cross, to the left and to the right, and their shapes are (after Bandy 1970, 24-5): α15, ω6. The letters alpha and omega occur frequently in Christian inscriptions (see *DACL* 1, s.v. ΑΩ), as they have become a symbol since the *Apocalypse* where they are mentioned three times, in 1.8: ἐγώ εἰμι τὸ Ἄλφα καὶ τὸ Ὠ, λέγει κύριος ὁ θεός, ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἦν καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος, ὁ παντοκράτωρ; 21.6: ἐγώ [εἰμι] τὸ Ἄλφα καὶ τὸ Ὠ, ἡ ἀρχὴ καὶ τὸ τέλος; and in 22.13: ἐγώ τὸ Ἄλφα καὶ τὸ Ὠ, ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος, ἡ ἀρχὴ καὶ τὸ τέλος. This small plaque from Eleutherna is only the third example of this Christian symbol in Crete (Bandy 1970, 97 no. 70, and 100-1 no. 74).

16. (Inv. No. E 137)

fig. 14

A fragmentary plaque of local limestone, broken at the top and the right, was found in the surface survey of 1985. The inscribed surface is very worn and chipped away and so difficult to read.

H. 0.145, W. 0.11, Th. 0.032, L.H. 0.013-0.016 m.

AD 500-650

[- - - - -]
ΛΟ[- - - -]
3 ΦΛΕΛ[- - -]
ΝΑΖΖΡ[- - -].

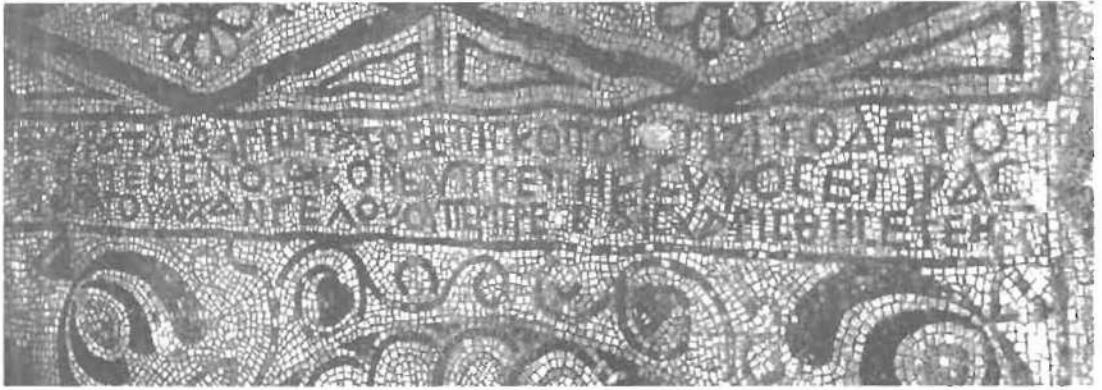
Remains of Dotted Letters:

Line 2: of the lambda shape only the lower part of the right slanting stroke; of the omicron only the left part of the circle.

Line 3: the epsilon-shape is uncertain, because on the stone there is a lunate sigma with a very long horizontal in the middle; after that there is the lower part of a slightly slanting stroke.

Line 4: of the rho only the upper part that could also be a delta leaning to the left.

COMMENTARY: for the date, AD 500-650, see the discussion in nos 1 and 4 above. Below line 4 there are scratched ΦΨ which appear to be later additions, as they are thinner and much taller (0.035 m) than the other preserved letters. The letters are carelessly cut without any symmetry in their height or the layout of the text. Although it cannot be determined definitively that this is a byzantine inscription, the shapes of some of the letters appear similar to those in Bandy (1970, 24-5): α3 (but without the extension on top and the middle bar more slanting), ζ3, λ6 (but with the left slanting stroke curving), ν1, ξ5 (but less wide and more circular in the edges).



1



2

1. Mosaic floor of the Narthex (cat. no. 1).
2. Mosaic floor of the Narthex (cat. no. 2).



1



2

1. Mosaic floor of the Narthex (cat. no. 1).
2. Mosaic floor of the Narthex (cat. no. 2).



3



4



5



6

3. Fragmentary sepulchral plaque. Side A (cat. no. 6).
4. Fragmentary sepulchral plaque. Side B (cat. no. 7).
5. Block in the Narthex's staircase (cat. no. 3).
6. Sepulchral plaque (cat. no. 4).



8



9

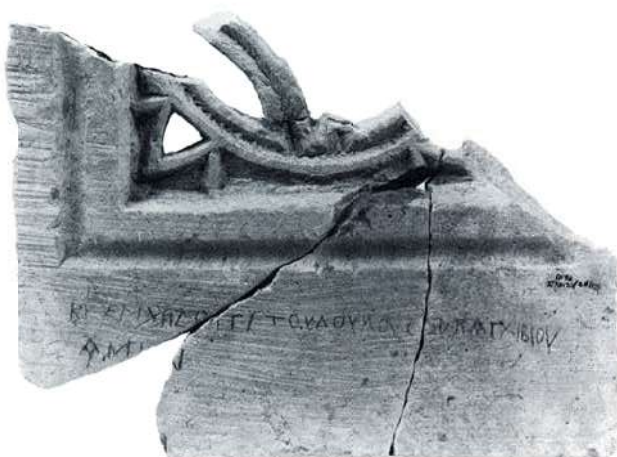
7. Fragmentary sepulchral plaque (cat. no. 5).
 8. Three joined fragments of a sepulchral plaque. Side A (cat. no. 8).
 9. Three joined fragments of a sepulchral plaque. Side B (cat. no. 9).



10



11



12



13

10. Fragmentary plaque (cat. no. 11).

11. Fragmentary plaque (cat. no. 13).

12. Lower part of the ambo's parapet (cat. no. 10).

13. Lintel of door between Rooms 23 and 26 (cat. no. 12).



14



15



16a



16b

14. Fragmentary plaque (cat. no. 16).
15. Fragment of parapet (cat. no. 14).
16a-b. Small plaque (cat. no. 15).