

Annick Payne / Šárka Velhartická /  
Jorit Wintjes (eds)

## **Beyond All Boundaries**

**Anatolia in the First Millennium BC**

**BEYOND ALL BOUNDARIES**

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# NEWS FROM SIDE

Alfredo Rizza

*To Gary B. Holland,  
in memoriam and gratitude*

**Abstract:** The present paper illustrates some of the results of the recent project about Side and the Sidetic inscriptions undertaken by a team of scholars from the universities of Graz and Verona. The project produced a new *Gliederung* of the inscriptions; a new dating of the East Gate monument; and a thorough review of some texts. The East Gate as the find context of a stone with two monolingual Sidetic inscriptions is of great importance for the interpretation of these texts. The new results of the archaeological campaigns suggest that the stone was relocated on the terrace of the Gate, having come from a different original context. Thus a textual connection with the Gate and its weapon friezes is now a more remote probability. The new Lyrbe stele seems to support a reading /v/ for the Sidetic letter |N24|. The “Artemon bilingual” is here re-interpreted with two new possible readings.

**Keywords:** Sidetic language, Sidetic alphabet, Sidetic inscriptions, Sidetic archaeological monuments

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The project “Inschriften von Side & Grabungen am Osttor von Side”,<sup>1</sup> is a cooperation between the Anadolu Üniversitesi Eskişehir<sup>2</sup> and the University of Graz.<sup>3</sup> The team consisting of the present writer (Univ. of Verona), Michaela Zinko (Univ. of Graz), and Christian Zinko (Univ. of

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1 <https://antike.uni-graz.at>.

2 Director: Hüseyin Sabri Alanyalı.

3 Project leader: Peter Scherrer, Ute Lohner-Urban.

Graz) is working on the Sidetic inscriptions with the final aim of compiling a new comprehensive corpus and reference monograph. First of all, the team is trying to record all known epigraphic documents, which is not without problems since some inscriptions are not on display and must be identified in the depositories of museums, mostly in the Archaeological Museum of Side.<sup>4</sup> Sidetic inscriptions need to be published with high quality photographs for the scientific community, along with indexes, glossary, and epigraphic and linguistic commentaries, which will report our interpretations along with preceding and alternative ones. While conducting this reference work, we are also researching the palaeography, the writing system, the language, and the onomastics (e.g. Zinko 2016; Rizza 2019a; Rizza 2019b; Zinko/Zinko 2019). We will introduce our research, including new archaeological findings and possible consequences for the interpretation of some inscriptions, as well as competing interpretations of texts and language.

## 2 THE PROJECT AND THE NEW *GLIEDERUNG*

In **Fig. 1**, the project is set out in a diagram. Before getting to the epigraphic and linguistic part, we started a review of the document inventory and of the dating of objects and finding context (if known). At present, four inscribed stones are on display at the Museum of Side, bearing a total of five Sidetic and three Greek texts: two stones each bear a Sidetic-Greek bilingual, one of these being the stone with the Apollonios bilingual also has a later unconnected Greek inscription dating to Roman times. A third stone carries two Sidetic inscriptions, while the fourth stone preserves just one Sidetic text. One more stone and two objects (a relief and a vessel) are stored in the museum depository. A few more small-finds and copious coins with Sidetic legends are kept in other collections, both public and private. Unfortunately, one inscription is, at present, missing.<sup>5</sup>

This preliminary work produced a new *Gliederung* of the corpus (**Fig. 2**).<sup>6</sup> The parameters used divide “display” (or “larger”) monuments from small-finds (*Kleinobjekte*) and coin legends. Even if in the majority

4 We thank the former director Güner Kozdere and the Museum staff for their support during our 2014–2016 field work.

5 I.1.3, the “Euempolos bilingual”.

6 Zinko/Zinko 2016; Zinko 2016.

of the cases we do not know the original archaeological context, the objects themselves and their content (as far as understandable) may support a public exposure at least for the “Artemon bilingual” (I.1.1), the “Apollonios bilingual” (I.1.2), and the “*istratag*” texts (I.2.1, I.2.2).<sup>7</sup>

Secondly, we separate multilingual from monolingual texts. By multilingual text we mean versions of the same text (loosely meant) on the same carrier. Only Greek-Sidetic bilingual texts are known (I.1.1, I.1.2, I.1.3). The stone of I.1.2 is multilingual also in the sense of “bearing independent texts in different languages” since it also hosts a Roman period inscription, testifying to a clear re-use (Nollé 1993: 299–300). All Sidetic inscriptions, and only Sidetic ones, are written in the Sidetic script.

### 3 NEWS FROM THE EAST GATE

Regarding the dating and the find contexts, we were able to profit from the results of the archaeological campaigns, especially those connected with the East Gate (**Fig. 3**). From the terrace of the East Gate comes one of the most important monuments. This is a stone bearing two monolingual Sidetic inscriptions (I.2.1, I.2.2), both mentioning the word “*istratag*”, almost certainly to be identified as a loanword from Greek στρατηγός, following Darga 1967. The East Gate was decorated with a weapon-frieze. The dating of the gate, the frieze, and the stone were all established as ca. 3<sup>rd</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> century BC.<sup>8</sup> A number of scholars have tried to exploit this contextual connection, suggesting an interpretation that linked the content of the inscriptions to the gate, and specifically to the weapon-frieze.<sup>9</sup>

Not only do the findings of the Graz archaeological campaigns radically change the dating but also the very possibility of a connection between inscriptions and reliefs. The terrace on top of which the inscribed stone was located dates to the Byzantine period. According to the archaeologist A. M. Mansel (1968), the first to conduct extensive excavations at Side,<sup>10</sup> the iconography of the frieze and other stylistic evidence of some gate decorations point to a foundation date in the early

7 More caution is demanded for the “Euempolos bilingual” (I.1.3) and the Lyrbe-stele (I.2.6).

8 Mansel 1968.

9 Mansel 1968; Meriggi 1978; Eichner 1993.

10 Mansel 1963.

2<sup>nd</sup> century BC, along with the entire fortification system of Side, perhaps in connection with historical events after the treaty of Apameia in 188 BC (Mansel 1968: 273–274). The dating advanced by Mansel for the frieze, however, was not accepted by other archaeologists. It is worth mentioning W. Radt, who advocated a later dating for the monument in Side:

“Abgesehen von ihrer provinziellen Steifheit zeigen die sidetischen Reliefs eine Eigenheit, die wohl doch als Datierungskriterium ins 1. Jh. v. Chr. gelten kann: die starke Vereinzelung der Motive, wie sie bei den Waffenreliefs aus dem Marmorsaal ebenfalls vorliegt. Die Weiterbenutzung von Einzelmotiven aus dem 2. Jh. und aus noch früherer Zeit war durchaus üblich, so daß das Auftreten antiker Formen noch nichts über die Entstehungszeit aussagt.” (Filgis/Radt 1986: 91 n. 128).

These observations were further developed by E. Polito in a work dedicated to weapon-friezes in Hellenistic time. Considering the East Gate frieze in Side, Polito pointed out problems in regard to particular stylistic features:

“Problematica è invece la datazione delle lastre con armi, il cui aspetto disorganico e semplificato non trova confronti in questo periodo. In particolare la corazza a corsetto (B), con gli spillacci ridotti a sottili strisce, non è attestata in questa fase. Alla luce di queste osservazioni non è da sottovalutare una proposta di ribasamento della datazione[...]: si potrebbe trattare di un restauro della terrazza sovrastante la porta, esemplato forse sulle più antiche decorazioni d’armi della stessa regione.” (Polito 1998: 85).

The archaeologist Ute Lohner-Urban, who with Peter Scherrer was responsible for the Graz campaigns at the East Gate, used stratigraphic evidence to establish that the gate is a 1<sup>st</sup>-century AD building (Lohner-Urban 2014; Lohner-Urban 2015; Lohner-Urban/Scherrer 2016).

For the frieze, however, the Graz team prefer a dating to the Hellenistic period (Grebien 2016; Leitold 2017), though they firmly separate the dating of the gate from that of the frieze, believing that the frieze, previously installed in some other Hellenistic monument in the town, was later relocated to the East Gate:

“Die in den Jahren 2011 bis 2015 unter der Leitung von Ute Lohner-Urban durchgeführten Ausgrabungen erbrachten hingegen das Ergebnis, dass das Osttor frühestens im ersten Jahrhundert v.Chr. errichtet wurde. Im Weiteren wird aufgrund der Befunde davon ausgegangen, dass der Waffenfries erst in der Spätantike von einem unbekanntem, hellenistischen Bauwerk zum Osttor gebracht wurde. Aus diesem Grund kann der Fries – entgegen Mansels Annahme – weder für das Osttor noch für die gesamte Landmauer als Datierungsquelle herangezogen werden.” (Grebien 2016).

One reason for such a relocation may be revealed by the new interpretation of the function of the East Gate, no longer considered a strong defensive monument, but more plausibly a celebratory one.

“The excavations undertaken inside the gate complex, however, did not reveal any features dating from Hellenistic times. The earliest building activity dates rather from the Augustan period [...]. While the East Gate has always been considered in relation to a Hellenistic defensive aspect, a new conclusion results from the records concerning its representative function and urban structure (and leaving aside the identity of any imminent enemy) during Roman times. [...] it has defensive elements like loopholes, which are not functional, and a courtyard resembling an inner bailey, but with three passages planned from the beginning, thus making the gate more vulnerable. [...] The whole character of this gate (and the entire fortification system) seems to indicate the power and remembrance of the ancestor.” (Lohner-Urban 2017: 100–101).

So it now seems more plausible that the reliefs and the stone were brought to the gate separately at different times and probably came from independent contexts. The blocks of the frieze show Greek alphabetic mason marks that may have been used to install the blocks after they were removed from another monument of the Hellenistic period and closer to the Hellenistic site of Side.<sup>11</sup> An “original” connection between the “*istratag*”-stone and the weapon-frieze is now a rather remote possibility.

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11 These marks actually could have been made before the first installation of the blocks. Further study is required.

The fact that the stone, whose original context is unknown, was still “on display” on the Byzantine gate’s terrace is of great interest and may be a late testimony to a much older, strong local tradition about the original invention of the Sidetic “language” as a mark of local identity. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, the Greek historian Arrian writes, in the *exped. Alex.*, of an older tradition (a λεγόμενον) according to which the settlers of Side, arriving from Aeolian Cyme, invented a “new language” – a language that had “never existed before”. In this story, the Sidetic script must have played a fundamental role.<sup>12</sup> The conservation of the “*istratag*”-stone and its exposure on the terrace is an important sign of a long and possibly continuous cultural tradition. Important is not so much the use of the Sidetic script and language but the recognition of the written products as “visible language”, an original Sidetic marker. These considerations are in line with the proposal of the Graz archaeological team.<sup>13</sup>

Now, considering that the stone of I.1.2 (the Apollonios bilingual) was re-used and inscribed on a clean surface in the time of the Emperor Claudius, we catch a glimpse of the story of an alternative fortune that the Sidetic script had among the citizens of Side themselves. This confirms in general the historical and cultural importance of possessing a writing system and being able to show written products in the historical dynamics of many places and periods throughout the world.<sup>14</sup>

#### 4 REVIEWS OF SOME STONE-INSCRIPTIONS

Since the discovery in 2010 of a marble stele in Lyrbe with Sidetic graffiti, no new document has been found (2018).<sup>15</sup> Perhaps, the most interesting evidence of this stele is that it could possibly support a reading /v/ for the Sidetic letter N24,<sup>16</sup> as suggested by Santiago Pérez Orozco (2007, with ref.).<sup>17</sup> In the second line, the word *tv<sup>2</sup>iat* may record a proper name. This may find a parallel in the personal name \*Tβιος (attested

12 See now Rizza 2019a for further comments.

13 Lohner-Urban 2015: 104–105; Lohner-Urban/Scherrer 2016; Lohner-Urban 2017.

14 See, e.g., the role of the Cherokee syllabary in relations with the USA government (Cushman 2010). In part. for Side: Rizza 2019a (with ref.).

15 I.2.6, cf. Zinko/Zinko 2016.

16 N24. The ‘N’ refers to the list in Nollé 2001: 629.

17 I prefer the transcription ‘v’ instead of ‘b’ as long as N8 ‘p’ seems to cover /b/ as well as /p/. Cf. *etiam* Pérez Orozco 2007.

as gen. τβτου in Elaioussa/Sebaste, Cilicia), at least in the initial cluster.<sup>18</sup> Other possibly interesting information, with due caution, might be the sequence of letters |remr| in the first line. This reading is not completely sure, but it is certainly the most probable at present. It follows the sequence |isto|, in which we can easily recognize the proper name *Isto*, already known from inscription I.2.5.<sup>19</sup> The expression *remr* is reminiscent of the proper names ending in \-remar<sup>20</sup> in the inscription just mentioned (I.2.5, *Namenliste*), perhaps a compound element that may find parallels in Greek names ending in ρυμαρ-, -ρυμερ-, -ρομαρ-: cf. Greek Ρωζρυμερις, Ροσδρυμαριος (4<sup>th</sup>-1<sup>st</sup> century BC), though (Δ)Ριμαρας could also be considered for comparison; and later Ἀμωρόμαρος; Ξευρόμαρος (2<sup>nd</sup> century AD).<sup>21</sup>

A comparison between ρυμαρ- and *remr*, *-remar* suggests a possible correspondence of the Greek letter |υ| with the Sidetic letter |e|. If confirmed, this has a certain importance, because it can reinforce the identification of a personal name, *diYne(-)sijas* in I.2.1:2, which would find an optimal correspondence in Pamphylian Greek ΔFo(ι)νυσι(ι)ς,<sup>22</sup> or Greek Διονυσιος, showing again a correspondence between Greek |υ| and Sidetic |e|.

After the review of I.2.5 we made an accurate autoptical, photographic, and textual review of I.1.1, the “Artemon bilingual”. The results are now available (Rizza 2019b) and could be briefly summarized here. The “Artemon bilingual” is the first published stone-inscription with Sidetic letters.<sup>23</sup> The decipherment is due to Bossert (1950). Bossert, however, was not able to see the stone because between the time of Paribeni’s journey and his own work the stone got lost. It was Johannes Nollé (1988) who found it again. Nollé’s autoptical reading introduced

18 Zinko/Zinko 2016.

19 Cf. Zinko 2016 about I.2.5 (*Namenliste*), with further comments on anthroponymy in Sidetic texts; Zinko/Zinko 2016 for I.2.6 (Lyrbe-stele).

20 One cannot exclude, a priori, that *isto* and *remr* are two compound members, i.e. *Istoremr* (the *scriptio* is *continua*); cf. the compound PN in I.2.5 ending in *-remar* (Zinko 2016, with ref.). This would solve the unexpected lack of a patronymic in the genitive (as in *isto remr*, cf. Zinko/Zinko 2016), but speculation on this point is probably still premature.

21 Data from LGPN.

22 Ševoroškin 1975; Schürr 2016 (who reads “diwnesijas” and offers a tentative explanation for the relationship between Greek |υ| and Sidetic |e|).

23 Paribeni in Paribeni/Romanelli 1914.



important corrections both in the Greek and in the Sidetic sections. The Greek section is now to be read as follows:<sup>24</sup>

- 1 [.....]
- 2 ΑΡΤΕΜΩΝΑΘΗΝΟΒΙΟΥ
- 3 ΧΑΡΙΣΤΗΡΙΑ

The Sidetic as follows:<sup>25</sup>

- 1 deaθono artmon θanpi | N7 | s
- 2 mal | N7 | adas

There is a problematic correspondence in the personal names Αθηνόβιος and θanpi | N7 | s. The Sidetic letter |p| could express both /p/ and /b/. However, as we have seen above, there is now some evidence for another letter with similar value (/b/ or perhaps /v/). Consider the following facts:

- 1- the name after Ἀρτέμων was first understood as ΑΘΗΝΙΠ(Π)ΙΟΥ;<sup>26</sup>
- 2- in 1988, Nollé read ΑΘΗΝΑΙΟΥ, not ΑΘΗΝΟΒΙΟΥ;
- 3- our autoptical reading could not (at first) see traces of a |β| (as for Nollé 1988);
- 4- Nollé (2001) corrected his reading after the comment made by Günter Neumann (1988), i.e. he was able to see the |β| only after a suggestion made for textual-epigraphic and linguistic reasons;
- 5- only the ΑΘΗΝΙΠ(Π)ΙΟΥ reading is in line with the value /p/ of the corresponding Sidetic letter.

For all these reasons, we decided that a thorough check of the stone was necessary. It was only with high quality photographs that we could confirm the reading ΑΘΗΝΟΒΙΟΥ, thus confirming that the value of Sidetic |p| ranges from /p/ to /b/. This may have interesting consequences

24 Cf. *etiam* Nollé 1993 no. 19. The reading is almost certain; we retain question marks for the sake of caution.

25 By |N7| I mean the Sidetic letter N7. This letter is now generally (but not universally) interpreted as /y/ (ca. [j] and/or [i]). Older value attributed to N7 is /w/.

26 Bossert 1950; Brandenstein 1958.

both for the typology of Sidetic and for the classification of Sidetic as an IE Anatolian language.<sup>27</sup>

A review was also made of the interpretation of the Sidetic text. Sidetic |deaθono|, which was, before Nollé 1988, read as |diaθana| I found unsatisfactory as a reading – however persistent – referring to the goddess Athena. The results of my review can be summarized with two new reading proposals:<sup>28</sup>

Proposal 1.	
1 de aθono artmon θanpiys	1 For? Athon?? Artmon (son of) Thanpi
2 malya das	2 placed/dedicated (this) (here) to Malya (Athena)
Proposal 2.	
1 dea θono artmon θanpiys	1 As (thank-)offering? Artmon (son of) Thanpi
2 malya das	2 placed (this) (here) to Malya

The main question in these proposals is the segmentation and interpretation of |deaθono|, either as a preposition and personal name<sup>29</sup> (following the textual pattern of Greek inscriptions) or as a preposition and a term perhaps connected to Lycian *θθε-*, *θθε̃n-*, ‘votive table, altar’.<sup>30</sup> Other news from the epigraphic point of view concern a new Greek inscription, of relevance for the history of the town in Roman imperial times (under the emperor Gallienus): cf. Nollé 2017. Finally, two recent contributions may be conveniently mentioned here: Schürr 2016 and Nicolaev 2017 with insights into the reading of the Sidetic letter |N5|<sup>31</sup> and for the interpretation of the “Apollonios bilingual” (I.1.2).<sup>32</sup>

27 More in Rizza 2019b (with ref.).

28 Details and references in Rizza 2019b.

29 Cf. Gk. Ἡθων, Αἰθων, Ἄθων, discussed in Rizza 2019b.

30 Rizza 2019b.

31 Schürr suggests a reading /w/ instead of /u/.

32 Nicolaev argues that for the Sidetic form *↑ue[* we should prefer the correspondence with Greek πᾶσι ‘all’.

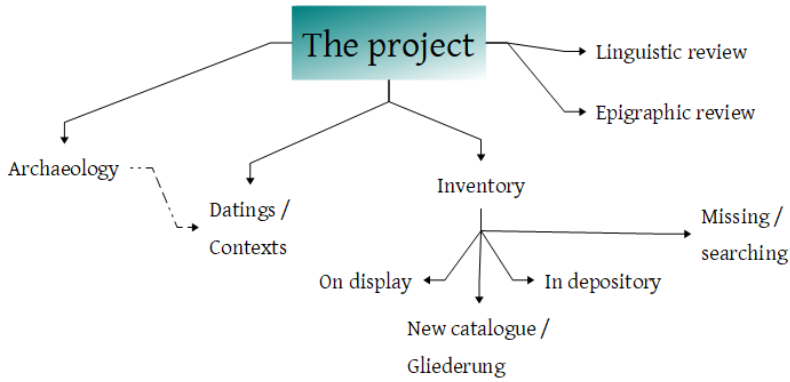


Fig. 1. Diagram of the project (elab. A. Rizza).

I. Inscriptions (display)			
1. Multilingual			
I.1.1	Dedication ("Artemon Bilingual")	Side Museum – on display	Sid. – Greek
I.1.2	Dedication ("Apollonios Bilingual")	Side Museum – on display	Sid. – Greek
I.1.3	Lyrbe-stone ("Euempolos Bilingual")		Sid. – Greek
2. Monolingual			
I.2.1	Longer "istratag" text	Side Museum – on display	Sid.
I.2.2	Shorter "istratag" text	Side Museum – on display	Sid.
I.2.3	Inscription on a vessel	Side Museum – depository	Sid.
I.2.4	Inscription on a Herakles relief	Side Museum – depository	Sid.
I.2.5	List of names	Side Museum – on display	Sid.
I.2.6	Lyrbe-Stele	Side Museum – depository	Sid.
II. Small finds			
II.1.1	Bronze "voting tablet"	Cabinet des médailles, Paris	Sid.
II.2.1	Skarab	Private collection	Sid.?

III. Coin legends			
III	Coins	Various collections	Sid.
IV. Varia			
*	"Characters" of Mnemon of Side		
*	Graffiti from Perge	Under scrutiny (Tekoğlu 2008; Brixhe 2018)	

Fig. 2. The new order.

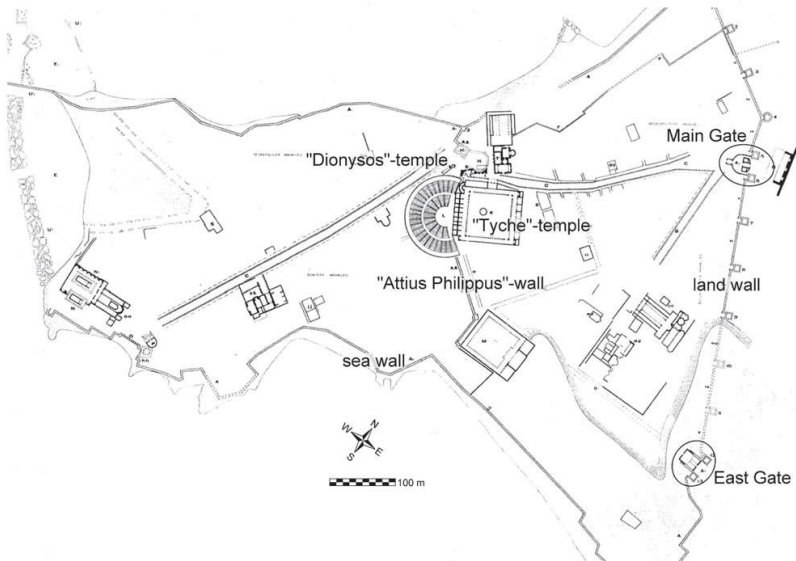


Fig. 3. The East Gate archaeological campaigns. Map of the ancient site of Side (© Institute of Archaeology, University of Graz, edited by U. Lohner-Urban and J. Kraschitzer; from Lohner-Urban 2017).

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