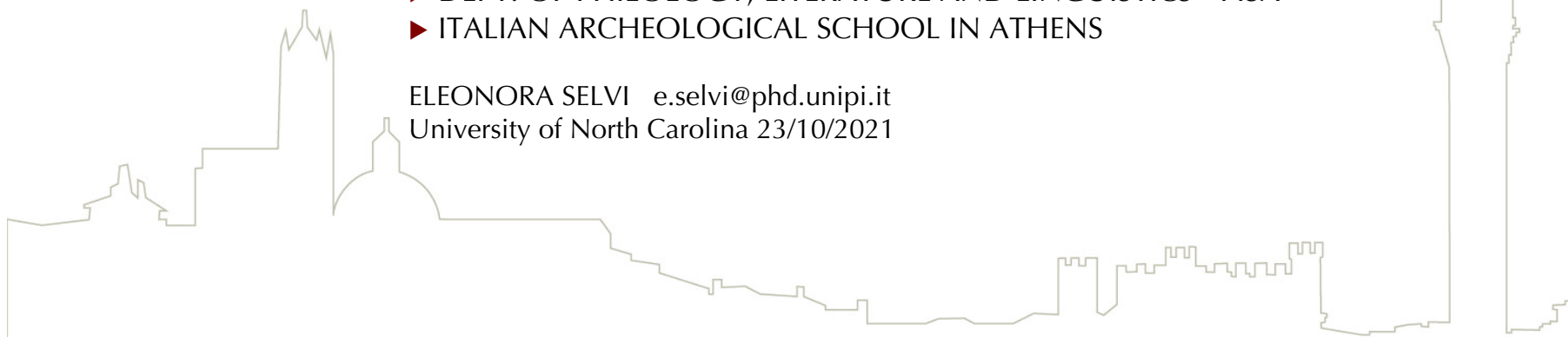# A STORY WITHOUT AN END. THE NEVER REACHED SYSTEMATIZATION OF THE PAMPHYLIAN ALPHABET

The contribute of the anthropological approach to the study of the transmission of the alphabets in the ancient world: the case of the Pamphylian Greek alphabet

► AMA CENTER ANTHROPOLOGY OF THE ANCIENT WORLD - SIENA
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IN SUPREMÆ DIGNITATIS 1343

S·UNIVERSITATIS SENARUM · MCCXXXX

SCUOLA ARCHEOLOGICA ITALIANA DI ATENE · 1909

CORPUS DOCTRINAE (Prosdocimi 1990:157-195/Rizza 2014:172) = a body of a written and oral teaching tools by means of which an already formed writing system can be perpetuated or a new written language can be created. It comprises a set of shapes, variants and rules available while inventing, deriving, adapting local written languages.
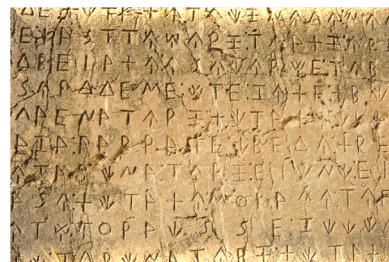

7th-6th cent. BCE?

▶ At some point during the Greek Archaic Age, the corpus doctrinae of the alphabets of North-Eastern Peloponnese (Argo, Corinth, etc.) was brought to Pamphylia by some 'teachers'.

▶ This *corpus doctrinae* comprised И=/b/, Ⅎ=/w/, β=/e/ (Corinth), E=/e/ (Argo), sometimes ı=/j/ or /ji/ (ex. ἐξπριίασθο*IG* IV 506.6).

▶ In Archaic Anatolia, Pamphylian Greek newborn cities were sorrounded by Anatolian communities, cities and villages. Many Pamphylian Greek speakers were actually L1 Anatolian (Skelton 2017).

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North-east Peloponnese alphabetic *corpus doctrinae*

Adapted to write Greek

Anatolian alphabets *corpus doctrinae*

Anatolian phonemes and phonetics

various & different solutions to write Pamphylian Greek dialect with
- Anatolian borrowings, personal names (ex. city names: Σελυιιιυς, anthroponyms: δοιιολεινεις, etc.)
- Greek words (mis)pronounced by Anatolian L1 speakers that became the 'standard' (cf. Aikhenvald 2006)
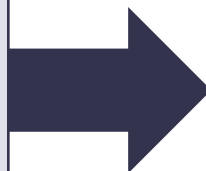- Interference with Anatolian writing habits
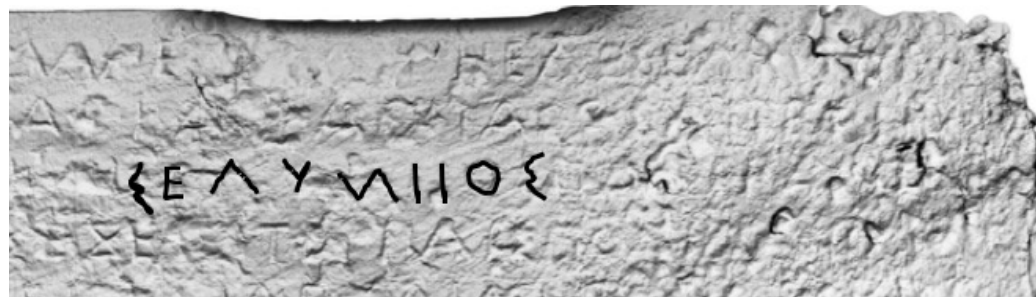
Development of Pamphylian culture and identity (*middle ground*, White 2011)

Sociocultural and political dynamics inside Pamphylian society and between Pamphylia and other groups (Greeks/Anatolians)

**PAMPHYLIAN ALPHABET
5th – 1th BCE**

ΙΙΑΝΑΨΑ ΓΡΕΙΙΑ

THE LETTER И
case study 1

ΣΕΛΥΝΙΙΟΣ

Syllon 4th cent BCE.

WHAT HAPPENED TO И?

▶ **И** = thought to be a variant of F by Brixhe (1976). It is argued here that the letter **comes from the /b/** of Corinth, Megara, etc.

PANFILIA	И	F
CORINTO e CORCIRA[27]	ИⅢ⌐	Ƒ F
MEGARA	Ͷ⌐Γ	Ƒ
SICIONE	Ᏸ	Ƒ

▶ **1) И** was presumably used to **write an Anatolian phoneme** between /b/ and /w/ (ex. ͷασιρϝοτας) **2)** Intervocalically, Greek /b/ pronounced by **L1 Anatolian speakers** became probably closer to /w/ (ex. hενοταισι, ἀͷταῖσι)

▶ Because of 1) and 2), **И, F and Υ oscillated among instances of the same word** (ex. μουͷαυ, μουας, μουβα < Cluw. mu̯wita)

▶ During the 5th cent. BCE., Pamphylians had close contacts with other Greek alphabets, especially Attic, in which B = /b/, which caused some Pamphylians **to recover B** from their own corpus doctrinae to write /b/ clearly.

▶ The **ortographic uncertainty remained as И** partially overlapped with **F, B, and Υ**, resulting in a remarkable degree of **discretionality** within its use (ex. Ἀπελάͷρυνιϲ/Ἀπελαυρύͷ[…], Θίͷας/Θήβας (Att.), ͷαναξίω/ϝαναξίω).
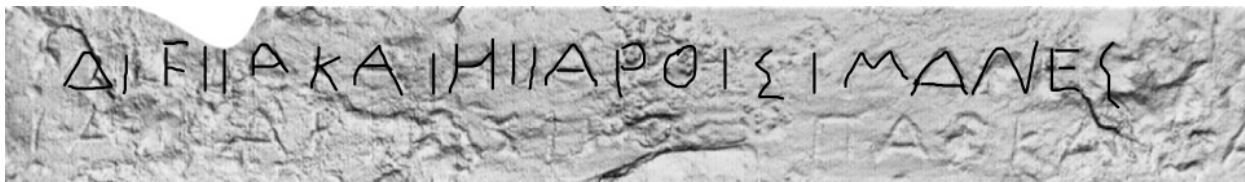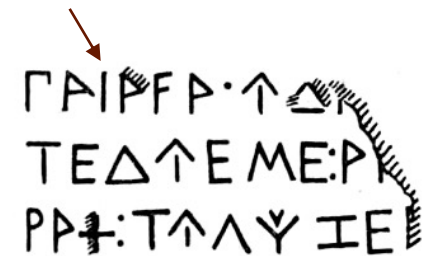
WHY WASN'T И DISCARDED?

▶ И had **no strong phonological reason** to be kept in the alphabet: in spite of this, Pamphylians used it to the beginning of our era, making it one the of the most lost lasting epichoric features among all Greek alphabets.

▶ Pamphylia was a borderland: ***mixobarbaroi*** to mainland Greeks and koine, Greeks to the Anatolian people.

▶ **Weak political entity** made up by three/four major cities independent from one another. End of 4th cent. onwards: always struggling to maintain some degree of **independence** between Seleucids and Ptolemaic Egypt.

▶ И was a characteristic trait of the alphabet. End of 3th cent. onwards: appears on the coin legends, for which the epichoric alphabet is recovered. Epichoric alphabet spread again through private funerary epigraphy: search of a **Pamphylian identity** that was negated in public documents, written in ***koiné*** by and for Seleucid and Ptoleimaic **Hellenistic rulers**. Also rivality with **Anatolians**, especially with Side.

▶ И had a **flexible** phonological meaning and writers used it when they could to remark the 'epichoric' character of an alphabet which in 3th cent. was almost identical to koiné but for a few traits.

THE SEQUENCE -II-
Case study 2

▶ -II- is used to write /j/ or /ji/ in Pamphylian alphabet

ἀφιιέναι (afiiénai), ἀδριιο̃να (adriiôna), *h*ιιαροῖσι (hiiaroîsi) etc.

▶ Attestations of /j/ or /ji/ as -ιι- in 7th-5th cent. inscriptions from Corinth, Argo, Sycion: present in the *corpus doctrinae* brought to Pamphylia (ex. ἐξπρίιασθο, δαμιιο[ρ]γοῖ; καρνειίας, ἄλιιος γέρōν, ΣερυϜονιιος, etc.).

▶ Writing habit already dead in late 5th cent. Peloponnese: /j/ non phonematic in Greek.

▶ In Anatolia, the Greek alphabet met Anatolian ones: graphic interference between them. Contacts between the two are attested (cf. Oreshko 2020).

▶ All Anatolian alphabets write /j/, Lycian (closest to Pamphylia) sign for /j/ is I, identical to Greek iota ι (ex. *Pajawa* sarcophagus).

▶ Convergence between Anatolian (Lycian) writing habit and inherited -ιι- from Peloponnese: -ιι- is recognized as the same by digraph writers and readers.

ΔΙϜΙΙΑ ΚΑΙ *H*ΙΙΑΡΟΙΣΙ ΜΑΝΕ[Σ

Syllon 4th cent BCE.

CONCLUSIONS

1) 7th-1th cent. BCE. Pamphylia represents a extraordinary case study for *Middle Ground* dynamics of acculturation and hybridization.

2) Pamphylian alphabet was shaped from its Greek matrix through interference with
 - Anatolian phonetics (case study 1, И)
 - Anatolian alphabets (case study 2, -ιι-)

3) A proper systematization of this alphabetic system was prevented by the use of non phonologically functional letters and writing habits to remark sociocultural identity and political positions.

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