

Anthony Ambrozic

THE “WARRIOR” STELE FROM LEMNOS

Abstract

A division, translation, linguistic examination, and evaluation of the “Warrior” Stele from Lemnos are presented. It appears that the artefact’s character was votive rather than military, serving as a plea for a deceased’s passage to paradise through enlightened belief.

Introduction

The figure and inscription seen in Figure 1 appear on a stone stele found in 1885 on the island of Lemnos. It dates to the sixth century BC and is now in the National Museum in Athens.

Figure 2 represents a transcription of the stele’s inscription (Bonfante and Bonfante 1983, Figure 4). This phonetic-value transcription appears at the bottom of page 61 and at the top of page 62 of the said book. It should be noted that the inscription is a boustrophedon, a method of writing in which the lines run as a team of ploughing oxen would.

The Bonfantes’ (1983) transcription contains one obvious omission. Inadvertently an iota (i) was left out of ASIAL in line one of C. (side). Somewhat more glaring, however,



Figure 1. The “Warrior” Stele from Lemnos

is the inconsistency of ascribing the phonetic value of **CH**, rather than **KH**, to the symbol Ψ in line three of A. (front) and again in line three of C. (side). This is significant because in every other respect, with the exception of the word division and translation, which is the subject matter of this work, the correctness of the Bonfantes' transcription is born out by the translation. But by 1990, seven years later, the Bonfantes also opt for **KH** for Ψ . In support of the **KH** phonetic value, L. Bonfante's (1990) evaluation for Ψ is reproduced. It appears as the second-last letter on page 16 of her book. As an additional confirmation, a reproduction of Table I (Pešić 2001) follows. Again, this time appearing as the very last symbol, Ψ is given the phonetic value **KH**.

As a result, **SIALCHVIŚ** in both instances should be read as **SIALKHVIŚ**. Except for the inconsistency regarding the phonetic value of the symbol Ψ above, it is not the

- A. (front) *holaieś napbo: 'śiaśi*
maras: mav
sialchveiš aviś
evistho šeronaiθ
sivai
- B. (front) *aker tavarīšio*
vanalasiał šeronai morinaił
- C. (side) *holaieši: phokiasale: šerosaiθ evistho toveroni [...]*
rom: haralio: šivai: eptešio arai tiš phoke
šivai aviś sialchviś maras̄m aviś aomai

Figure 2. Transcription of the stele's inscription (Bonfante and Bonfante 1983)

aim of this paper to otherwise characterize the denomination or affiliation of the stele's alphabet. Until recent times the language of the inscription has been characterized as Etruscoid, whatever broad spectrum that may entail. Bonfante and Bonfante (1983, 1990) do, however, admit that, although there are a number of striking similarities, the inscription cannot be called Etruscan. They state that the alphabet is derived from the Chalcidian (actually Euboean (*sic*)). That having been said, however, the linguistic denomination of the language catalyst employed in the decipherment and translation of the inscription may very well have a significant bearing in determining the alphabet's antecedents and likely routes of dissemination.

In support of the conclusion of Bonfante and Bonfante (1983, 1990) that the inscription is not Etruscan, an examination of its morphology lends a ready answer:

1. The frequency of the vowel O, which seldom appears in Etruscan inscriptions.
2. The use of the 2nd prs. sing. pres. in **HOLAIEŚ** (twice) and **MARASĪ** (twice).
3. The use of the p.t. and the p.p. in **SIAL** (twice), **ASIAL** (twice), and **HARAL**.
4. The use of **NAI** (three times) as a conjunctive introducer, twice of a verb in the optative mood, to wit, **SIVAI** in line five of A. (front) and of **MORI** in line two of B. (front).
5. The use of pers. prns. **TH** (twice) and **M** (once) for emphasis.

Each of the above features, on the other hand, is an integral part of Slavic morphology and, more specifically, that of the Slovene, as becomes manifestly evident from the division and translation that follows.

Here we find parallelism to the five Early-Thracian inscriptions deciphered and translated by Ambrozic (2002). Indeed, the toponymy of the island of Lemnos also confirms it. The island is located in the Thracian Sea, only twenty-five miles south of Samothrace. Place names like Mirina (*peacefulness*), Moudros(t) Bay (*azureness*), and KAMINIA (*stony place*), where the stele was found in 1885, attest to its Thracian origin.

<i>Model alphabet</i>	<i>Archaic inscriptions (7th–5th century BC)</i>	<i>Later inscriptions (4th–1st century BC)</i>	<i>Transcriptions and phonetic values</i>
A	A	A	a
B			(b)
Γ)	⊃	c (= k)
Δ			(d)
E	Ξ	Ξ	e
F	Γ	Γ	v
I	I	⊥	z (= ts)
Θ	Θ	Θ ⊙	h
⊗	⊗ ⊙	⊙ ⊙	θ (= th)
I	I	I	i
K	K		k
L	∨	∨	l
M	∩	∩	m
N	∩	∩	n
Θ			(s)
⊙			(o)
Γ	Γ	Γ	p
M	M	M	s
⊙	⊙		q
∩	∩	∩	r
∩	∩	∩	s
T	T	↑ ↓	t
Y	Y	∨	u
X	X		s
Φ	Φ	⊙	φ (= ph)
Y	Y	∨	χ (= kh)
	(⊗ ⊗)	⊙	f

Table 1. Phonetic value of signs (L. Bonfante 1990)

Except for the very last word **OMAI**, which is Bulgarian, the catalyst in translation will be the Slovene language, both dialectal and literary. One should also at all times keep in mind the logistical handicaps that ancient inscribers faced. With no guidelines to go by, they often overcame them by ingenious adaptations. Some such peculiarities, such as the omission of the U-sound at the end of participles, will be pointed out as they arise.

P	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D
E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V
Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z
H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H
I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
K	K	K	K	K	K	K	K	K
L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q
R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T
X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
PH	PH	PH	PH	PH	PH	PH	PH	PH
XH	XH	XH	XH	XH	XH	XH	XH	XH

Table 2. Reproduction of Table I from *Vinčansko Pismo* (Pešić 2001).

Another phenomenon is betatism. We also often encounter akanje (*akanye*), which is a tendency to substitute an A-sound for a short O, or other vowels on occasion. Also occurring frequently is the bare E, which is now invariably preceded by a J to form **JE** (pr. *ye* as in *yellow*) for “*is, it is*”. In any event, it appears that there are no hard and fast rules for this and other ancient inscriptions. Let us now proceed to the word division and translation of the inscription.

Division:

A. (front) HOLAIEŠ NA PHO TH ŠIAŠ I
 MARAŠ MAV
 SIAL K H VEIŠ AVIŠ
 E VIS THO ŠE RO NAI TH
 SIVAI

B. (front) AK ER TA VAR I ŠIO
 VAN AL ASIAL ŠE RO NAI MORI NAI L

C. (side)
 HOLAIEŠ I PHO K I ASIAL ŠE RO SAI TH E VIS THO TO VERO NA [...] ROM HARAL IO ŠIVAI E P TE ŠIO A RAI TIŠ PHO K E ŠIVAI A VIŠ SIAL K H VIŠ MARAŠ M A VIŠ A OMAI

Pronunciational Guide and Punctuation:

A. (front) HOLAJEŠ NA PəHO(U) TəH ŠJAŠ I
 MARAŠ MAV.
 SJAL Kə H VEJŠ (U)AVIŠ
 JE VIS TəHO(U) ŠE RO(U) NAJ TəH
 SIVAJ!

B. (front) AK JER TA VAR I ŠJO(U)
 VAN AL ASJAL, ŠE RO(U) NAJ MORÍ NAJ Lə!

C. (side)
 HOLAJEŠ I PəHO(U) Kə I ASJAL ŠE RO(U) SAJ TəH JE VIS
 TəHO TO VERO NA [...] RO(U)OM HARAL JO ŠIVAJ. JE Pə TE(J) ŠJO(U) (U)A RAJ TI Š
 PəHO(U) Kə JE
 ŠIVAJ (U)A VIŠ SJAL, Kə H VIŠ MARAŠ Mə (U)A VIŠ (U)A OMAJ!

Sln. Translation (Strained and Dialectal)

A. (front) HLOJAJEŠ NA SOPIHÁV Tə JAS' IN
 MARAŠ MAV.
 SIJALE K' H VEJAM SO VIŠAVE
 VSE, TOJ ŠE ROV NAJ TI
 OBSEVAJO!

B. (front) AK KER TA VAR JE ŠEV AL' IN
 NEBESA OBSIJAT', ŠE ROV NAJ MORÍ NAJ Lə!

C. (side)
 HLOJAJEŠ IN SOPIHÁV K' TUD' OBSIJAL ŠE ROV SAJ TI JE VES
 TO TOJO VERO NA [...] ROVOM HARALO JO ŽIVLJENJE. JE PO TEJ ŠEV V RAJ TIH'
 SOPIHÁV K' JE
 ŽIVLJENJE NA VIŠAVAH SIJALO, K' H VIŠKU MARAŠ Mə V VI ŠAVE V ZAČARI!

Admittedly, this is dialectally colloquial and strained in its word sequence. However, every attempt has been made to adhere to the original, so that it can be shown in the italicized roots how closely the inscription still resembles the spoken Sln. of today. Therefore, no further rendering into the literal Sln. shall be done on account of its being an artificial, often pedantically arbitrary, creation of some 150 years ago. The meaning, in any event, is clear and a translation into the lit. Sln. would detract from the structure of the original.

The only word that appears to lack affinity to the Early Thracian of the text is NEBESA (*heaven*) for VAN. It is more than likely that VAN carried with it a theosophy not quite accordant to the evolving concepts of the hereafter, and, upon the advent of Christianity, was jettisoned to make room for NEBESA.

English Translation

- A. (front) Gasping in anticipation in a glade of a pine forest,
 you like it little.
 As the whole sky shines upon the branches,
 may it also light up your grave!
- B. (front) But if this welding fire also goes
 to radiate heaven, let it also slay your death!
- C. (side) In the pine forest and gasping in anticipation that all of your grave but
 also light up this your belief [NA ...]
 life with the grave beat it down. Through this belief he went into the
 silent paradise, gasping in anticipation that life shines up above, that
 upwards to the heavens you *do* want in enchantment.

The grammatical incongruity of the third person singular of E ŠIO (*he went*) and the second person singular of MARAŠ M (“you *do* want”) in the same (last) sentence grates on our over-phrased pedantic senses. Somewhat akin to an El Greco painting depicting the here below realistically and the hereafter impressionistically, the ancients resorted to the use of two distinct syntactic person forms to reflect the two different existences. Several examples of this can be found in the Slavenetic inscriptions from Gaul. See passages IX and XIII of Appendix C, pp. 13 and 16, and Inscription G-229, p.14 (Ambrozic 2002).

Part A. (front)

Commentary

Although now obsolete, the inf. HOLAJATI (*to be in a pine forest*) still has currency in a metathesized noun of HLOJA, also HLOJEVINA, both meaning “*pine forest*”. The 2nd prs. sing. pres. HOLAIEŠ of the inscription identifies the location of the grave.

NA (*on*) is a prep. taking the dat. case. Here, it governs the noun ŠIAŠ. See NA in inscription M-01b, p.32 (Ambrozic 2002).

PHO (pr. PəHO(U)) is a dial. form now best reflected in the prefixed SO-PəHOU (lit. SOPIHÁV) (*painting, gasping, puffing, breathing hard, holding one’s breath in anticipa-*

tion). Its etymology is in both PÍHATI (*to pant, gasp, to puff*) and PÊHATI - (*to drive oneself, to tire*). Its genesis is in the Protosl. *PĚŠATI (*to breathe hard*) and the Old-Croatian PIJĚHATI (*to breathe, to breathe with a rattle in one's throat*). The Protosl. *PĚXə is likely from the IE. base *(S)PEIS (*to gasp, to breathe*) from which the Latin SPIRARE (*to breathe, to gasp*) also derives.

Part A: Word and Meaning Comparison

Early Thracian	Meaning	Slovenian	Meaning
HOLAIEŠ	“you are in pine forest”	HLOJAJEŠ (strained)	“you are in a pine forest”
NA	“on”	NA	“on”
PHO	“gasp, panting, gasping in anticipation”	SOPHÁV (lit.) SOPəHOU (dial.)	“panting, gasping, puffing”
TH	“to you”	Tə (dial.) TI (lit.)	“to you”
ŚIAS	“clearing, glade”	JAS (dial.) ASI (lit.)	“clearing, glade”
I (SC.)	“and”	IN	“and”
MARAŚ	“you like, you want”	MARAŠ	“you like, you want”
MAV	“little” (adv.)	MAV (dial.) MALO (lit.)	“little”
SIAL	“shone upon, lit up”	SJAL (dial.) SIJAL (lit.)	“shone upon, lit up”
K	“when”	Kə (dial.) KO (lit.)	“when”
H	“to”	H	“to”
VEIŚ	“branches”	VEJAM	“branches”
AVIŚ	“the up above, the sky, the heavens”	VIŚAVE	“the heights, the highest”
E	“is”	JE	“is”
VIS	“all of, whole”	VəS (dial.) VES (lit.)	“all of, whole”
THO	“your, yours”	TOJ (dial.)	“your, yours”
ŚE	“also”	ŠE	“also”
RO	“grave, death”	ROV (pr. ROU)	“pit, adit, ditch”
NAI	“may it, let it be that”	NAJ	“may it, let it be that”
TH	“to you”	Tə TI (lit.)	“to you”
SIVAI	“shine upon, radiate”	SEVAJ	“shine upon, radiate”

TH (pr. TəH) is an arch., very dial. counterpart of today's colloquial Tə and lit. TI - (*to you*). As frequently encountered elsewhere for emphasis, the pers. prn. here stresses the anticipation in the struggle of the hard breathing and holding of one's breath.

ŠIAŠ (*clearing, glade*) (pr. midway between ŠJAŠ and SJAS) is in the Sln. dial. dat. case, governed by the prep. NA.

ŠIAŠA, the ancestor of the current JASA, relates to the reflex. inf. SIJATI SE (*to be shining, glittering, gleaming, to be brilliant*). The dial. 3rd pers. sing. pre. is SJA SE (*it shines, glitters, gleams, is bright*). A cleared area, which stood out against the forest darkness was referred to as SJASA (*a shining, bright, open space*). The Eng. "clearing" is an evolutionary parallel. In the same vein and springing from similar evolving structuring, the word JASEN was at first SJASEN (*the shiny one*) and only over time received the more definitive form of JASEN - (*clear*).

Also springing from JASEN, JASA initially meant "a clear, bright, open place in the woods". Its use in the inscription is by premeditated design. It ushers in the motif of light in contrast to the darkness of the surrounding pine forest and the grave (RO), and, by extension, death, which light and the sky are designed by the wording of the inscription to defeat. The recurring theme of light is continued by SIAL (*shone*), ASIAL (*radiated*), AVIŠ (*the heavens, the sky*), VAN (*heaven*) as well as the depiction of a priest holding a burning taper.

An interesting parallel to JASA is the word SVET (*land, earth, real estate holding*), which initially denoted any area that stood apart from the darkness of the primordial forest (wherein lurked beasts, danger, and demons) and was visible and bright as the sky, which *shone* upon it.

The dualism of light versus darkness is also evinced in the etymology of SVEČENIK (*priest*) where SVET (*holy*), SVETNIK (*saint, lit. the shining one*), and SVETEL (*bright*) have the concept of light as a common source. The reed *Typha Latifolia* is called SVEČNIK (also ROGOZ) in Sln. because it had formerly been used extensively for torches.

Let it also be stated in passing that, contrary to the conventional wisdom of the past 120 years that the figure depicted on the stele is that of a warrior, it is in fact that of a priest holding a burning torch. Not only does the wording of the inscription confirm it, but also does the absence of any military headgear and the fact that the supposed spear / javelin / lance does not extend below his hand. His evident corpulence also precludes him from having been someone accustomed to forced marches or the rigors of camp life. The full tonsure also exhibits a solemn personal dedication to a deity. Similar parallels go back to the priests of Amun and have remained the practice not only of Christians but especially of Buddhists, Jains, and the followers of Hare Krishna into our time.

I is for "and"; the Sln. resorts to it in cases of iterative enumeration. The Sln. counterpart is IN.

MARAŠ is the lit. Sln. 2nd pers. sing. pres. of MARATI (*to like, to be fond of*).

MAV is the dial. Sln. adv. counterpart of the lit. MALO (*little, a little*).

SIAL is a colloquial, shortened form of SIJAL, the p.p. of SIJATI (*to shine upon*), to

light up). It also has a counterpart in the SC reflexive SJATI SE (*to glitter, to glisten, to shine*).

Kə is the Sln. dial. form of the lit. KO (*when, so that*), which has both a temporal and a conditional function, depending on the context.

H (*to*) is interchangeable with K, depending on the letter with which the ensuing word commences.

Appearing in a shortened dial. dat. fem. sing. form, VEJŠ is governed by the prep. H immediately preceding it. Its root of VEJ is unambiguous, and can only refer to VEJA (*branch, tree limb*). The form VEJŠA has current equivalents in VEJEVJE (*branches generally*).

In AVIŠ, we encounter an omitted U (which has a W-sound value). However, not to confuse it with the Germanic W, which has a strong V value, and since the Sln. does not contain a W, one is left with no other choice but to show the sound as U.

The half-sounded U before the vowel A may not have been sounded at all. We find quite a few instances where it is omitted. See (U)ART (*garden*) and (U)AS in inscription VII, p.96 (Ambrozic 2002) and (U)A TREVO, App. E (Ambrozic 2002).

(U)AVIŠ is composed of the prefix (U)A (*in, into, at*) and VIŠ (*higher*), used either as a dial. adv. or a shortened comparative of VISOK (*high*). However, what we have in the inscription is a noun, which echoes such current nouns as VIŠAVA (*height*), VIŠAVJE (*highland*), VIŠEK (*summit, height*), and VIŠINA (*elevation, height*).

The closest equivalent of these is VIŠAVA with the meaning of “*high as the sky*” and by extension “*the firmament*”. It is obsolescent except in poetic and religious imagery (as in SLAVA BOGU NA VIŠAVAH ... “*Glory to God in the highest ...*”). And since VIŠ is prefixed by (U)A (*at, in*), one is constrained from rendering (U)AVIŠ as anything other than “*the up above, the sky, the heavens*”.

E is the JE (*is*) of today.

VIS is an *ikanje* counterpart of today’s dial. VəS and lit. VES (*all of, whole*). *Ikanje* (pr. *eekanye*) is the propensity of some dialects to favour the I (*ee*) sound over the vowel-E sound. This phenomenon also appears in SIVAI in line 5 of A. (front).

THO (pr. TəHO) is an arch., very dial. counterpart of today’s dial. TOJ (*yours*). It agrees in gender, number, and case with RO.

ŠE is still the current dial. and lit. usage in ŠE (*also*).

RO (pr. RO(U)) is the dial. and lit. ROV (*pit, ditch, adit*) of today. In the inscriptions it often serves as a metaphor for “*death*” or “*grave*”, depending on the context. See Inscription I, p. 59, App. C (Ambrozic 2002).

NAI is still the lit. Sln. NAJ (*let it, let it be that*). See Inscription III, p.72 (Ambrozic 2002).

Already encountered in Line One above, TH (pr. TəH) would appear to be redundant, in view of THO already having identified the possessor of the grave as “*you*.” However, as in Line One, it is used as an idiom of volitional emphasis.

As indicated above under VIS, SIVAI is another example of *ikanje*. Here, we have it in the optative-mood form for the current lit. SEVAJ from SEVATI (*to emit rays from a central focus, to radiate*).

Part B (front)

Commentary

AK is the dial. Sln. counterpart of the lit. *AKO* (*if*). Pedantic Sln. grammarians regard AKO as SC. and insist that the Sln. *ČE* (*if*) is the proper usage. Yet, we find *AKO* in combinational formats, such as in *AKOPRAV*, *AKORAVNO*, as well as in the shortened form *KO* (*if, when*) serving both a conditional and a temporal function, depending on the context. For AK, see inscriptions M-04 (p. 27), M-01a (p. 29), and W-01a (p.42) (Ambrozic 2002).

ER (pr. *JER*) is an arch. form of the current lit. *KER* (*because*). See ER in Inscription I, p. 59, in Inscription XXII, p. 33 (Ambrozic 2002) and Line 4 of the Tavola da Este (Ambrozic and Tomezzoli 2004) translation.

Part B: Word and Meaning Comparison

Early Thracian	Meaning	Slovenian	Meaning
AK	“if”	<i>AK</i> (dial.)	“if” <i>AKO</i> (lit.)
ER	“because”	<i>JER</i> (arch.)	“because” <i>KER</i> (dial.)
TA	“this”	<i>TA</i>	“this”
VAR	“welding fire”	<i>VAR</i> (arch.)	“welding sparks”
I	“also”	<i>IN</i>	“and”
ŚIO (pr. ŠJOU)	“went”	ŠOU (dial.)	“went” ŠEL (pr. ŠEU)
VAN	“heaven”	Obsolete in current Sln., now NEBESA.	
AL	“but”	<i>AL</i> (dial.) <i>ALI</i> (lit.)	“but, however or, only”
ASIAL	“shone upon, lit up”	<i>OBSIJAL</i>	“shone upon, radiated”
ŠE	“also”	ŠE	“also”
NAI	“may it, let it be that”	<i>NAJ</i>	“may it, let it be that”
RO	“grave, death”	<i>ROV</i> (pr. <i>ROU</i>)	“pit, ditch, adit”
MORI	“slay, kill”	<i>MORÍ</i>	“slay, kill”
L	“may it, let it	<i>Lə</i> (dial.)	“may it, let it

TA (*this*) is still the current usage.

VAR is a noun form of the lit. inf. *VARÍTI* (*to weld*). Its Protosl. prototype is *VARə (*heat, warmth*). Its Protosl. counterpart *ŽAR (*heat, warmth*) is still extant in Sln., SC., Cz., and Rus.

I here has the meaning of “also”.

ŚIO is a variant of a very dial. ŠOU (*went, gone*), its current lit. counterpart being ŠEL (pr. ŠEU).

VAN (*heaven*) became obsolete with the advent of Christianity. For VAN, see inscriptions P-02 (p.21), M-05 (p.25), M-01a (p.29), V (p.93), and VII (p.96) (Ambrozic 2002).

AL is still the current dial. usage for the lit. *ALI* (*but, however, or*). For AL, see inscriptions W-09 (p.37) and W-08 (p.38) (Ambrozic 2002).

ASIAL is an akanje dial. shortened p.p. of the current inf. *OBSIJATI* (*to shine upon*). Even today, in rapid colloquial speech, the strong sibilant following the B drowns it out.

For ŠE RO NAI, vide supra.

L is reflected in the current dial. *Lə* and lit. *LE* (*may it, let it be that*). Another variant LA can be seen in inscriptions VII (p.96), VIII (p.100), IV (p.92), W-01b (p.17), M-01a (p.29), and LE in III (p.91) (Ambrozic 2002).

The two NAIs accentuate the plea.

Governed by NAI, *MORI* is in the optative mood of *MORÍTI* (*to slay, to kill*), the two together to mean “*may it slay!*”

NAJ ... NAJ *LE* would best be rendered as “*only that it really would*”. For equivalent phrasing, see DA NAJ *LE* (dial. DE *LE* NAJ) in Inscription III, p.72 (Ambrozic 2002).

Part C. (side)

Commentary

For HOLAIEŠ, I, PHO, I, ASIAL, ŠE, RO, TH, VIS vide supra.

It should be noted that I (*and*) also has the meaning of “*also*,” depending on the context.

Accordingly, the first “I” means “*and*” and the second “I” before ASIAL means “*also*”. E (*JE*) serves as aux. to ASIAL. It is repeated before VIS. The two Es are both aux. to ASIAL.

Even in today’s colloquial speech this would not be deemed as overly awkward.

SAI is still the current *SAJ*, used in idiomatic expressions of affirmative volition of inclusion or as a mild reproach. Here, it has the meaning of “*but also, but only, at least*”.

THO (pr. TəHÓ) is the possessive of TH and agrees in gender, case, and number with both *TO* and *VERO*.

TO is fem., sing., acc. of *TA* (*this*).

VERO is fem., sing., acc. of *VERA* (*belief, faith*).

NA unfortunately is followed by three badly eroded symbols, which can only speculatively be restructured by means of the context. It is likely that NA is the first two letters of NAI (*let it, may it be that*) followed by a negative of two letters, possibly something like NE (*not*) or NI (*is not*). The thrust of such reasoning springs from the fact that IO (pers. prn., fem., sing., acc.) in the next line is the obj. of *HARAL* and can only grammatically refer to THO TO *VERO*. IO cannot refer to RO or ROM because RO is masc. and ROM is in the instrumental case. If the three missing symbols are I NE (or NI), the reconstituted clause would read: THO TO *VERO* NAI NE ROM *HARAL* IO ŠIVAI (*may life with the grave not beat down this your belief*).

HARAL is the p.p. of the current *HARATI* (*to beat down, to break, to flog*).

In respect to ŠIVAI it is significant that Foscarini (1998), reads it as *ZIVAI*. Whether we accept his *ZIVAI* or the Bonfantes’ (1983, 1990) *ŠIVAI*, we are unquestionably look-

ing at a form of *ŽIV* (*alive, living*) or *ŠIV* of rapid speech. The Protosl. **ŽIVə* initially meant “*whatever is alive*”. The current close comparisons are *ŽIVELJ* (*human life of a locality*), *ŽIVEC* (*anything that beats, as nerves*) or *ŽIVLJENJE* (*life*).

E is aux. to *ŠIO*, the two together meaning “*he went*”.

Part C: Word and Meaning Comparison

Early Thracian	Meaning	Slovenian	Meaning
SAI	“but also, at least”	SAJ	“but also, at least”
THO	“your, yours”	TOJO (dial.) TVOJO (lit.)	“your, yours”
TO	“this”	TO	“this”
VERO	“belief, faith”	VERO	“belief, faith”
ROM	“by death, by having died”	ROUOM (dial.) ROVOM (lit.)	“with the pit, with the adit with the ditch”
HARAL	“beaten, broken”	HARAL	“beaten, broken”
IO	“it” (fem.)	JO (fem., sing., acc.)	“it” (fem.)
ŠIVAI	“life”	ŽIVLJENJE	“life”
P	“through, by”	Pə (dial.) PO (lit.)	“after, on, upon, at, by, over, through, according to”
TE	“this”	TEJ	“this”
RAI	“paradise”	RAJ	“paradise”
TIŠ	“silent, still”	TIH	“silent, still”
VIŠ	“upward, up above”	KVIŠKU	“upwardly”
HVIŠ	“upwardly”	KVIŠKU	“upwardly”
M	“to me”	Mə (dial.) MI (lit.)	“to me”
OMAI	“enchantment, bewitchment”	OMAJ (Blg.)	“enchantment, bewitchment”

P (Pə in some dialects) is the contemporary lit. Sln. prep. *PO*, which has meanings ranging from “*after, on, upon, at, by, over, through*” to “*according to*”, depending on the context. Here, it governs *TE* (*this*) which follows it. Since *TE* is fem., sing., gen. and since the only feminine noun in Part C. (side) is *VERO*, we are compelled to conclude that it refers to it. The only snag is that *TE* is in the gen. case and *PO* takes either the dat. or the loc. (as well as acc.) case, which in current lit. usage both have the form *TEJ*. The resolution lies in the phenomenon already encountered in respect to the omitted U, i.e. a half-sound that the sculptor felt was already incorporated in the long E of *TE*.

Of the definitions for *PO* set out above, the only one that fits the above construction is “*through*”. Perhaps, “*by*” might also do. Therefore, the intended meaning is “*through (or by) this belief he went ...*”

A (pr. UA) (*to, into*) is an example of the omitted half-sound U referred to above. Another example is the A (pr. UA) before OMAI. See the commentary under AVIŠ in Part A. (front) above.

RAI is the *RAJ (paradise)* of today. Vide ROY in inscriptions XLIV, p.74, and IV, p.7 (Ambrozic 1999).

TIŠ (*silent, still*) clearly reverberates from TIŠINA (*silence, stillness*). The adj. is TIH (*silent, still*).

For PHO, K, ŠIVAI, AVIŠ, SIAL, K, H, MARAŠ, and ŠIO vide supra.

E is aux. to the SIAL which follows it.

VIŠ resonates in the lit. Sln. VIŠEK (noun, masc.) (*the summit, the highest point*). Even more so, it can be seen in the primarily poetic and religious KVIŠKU (adv.) (*upward*). It is likely that HVIŠ in the inscription was meant adverbially as one word. In either case, the meaning of “*upward*” is unambiguous.

M is the dial. Mə (*to me*). As TH in lines 2 and 4 of Part A. (front), it is here employed as an idiom of volitional, optative emphasis. Here, it augments MARAŠ to render the two as “*do want*”

It is only fitting that the inscription end with a word still extant only in Bulgarian, to wit, OMAI for the current Blg. OMAJ (*enchantment, bewitchment*).

Reflection

Ever since it was found at Kaminia in 1885, the “Warrior” Stele of Lemnos has baffled archaeologists and linguists. Since the only feature which stood out clearly from the inscrutability of the inscription was the depiction of a male figure holding what appeared to be a spear / javelin / lance-type of armament, it has been conventionally accepted that it represented a warrior. There has been less unanimity as to the intriguing inscription. The antecedents of its language, as already stated, have been postulated in varying degrees of caution and vagueness, gradating from as possibly Etruscoid (whatever that means) to as not truly Etruscan and its alphabet as derived from the Chalcidian (actually Euboean?).

Conclusion

The above translation demystifies both the linguistic as well as the pictorial conundrums. The figure is not that of a warrior but rather that of a priest holding a lighted torch, taper, or candle. The inscription is Early Thracian (mostly still extant especially in the dialectal Slovene). The inscription’s votive plea is for light to dispel darkness from the decedent’s grave and reward his believing anticipation with passage to paradise.

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Abbreviations

acc.	accusative	loc.	locative
adj.	adjective	Mac.	Macedonian
adv.	adverb	masc.	masculine
akn.	<i>akanje</i>	O.Phr.	Old Phrygian
arch.	archaic	p.	page
aux.	auxiliary verb	pers. prn.	personal pronoun
Blg.	Bulgarian	pl.	plural
dat.	dative	p.p.	past participle
dial.	dialectal	pr.	pronounce
Eng.	English	prep.	preposition
fem.	feminine	ProtoSl.	Protoslavic
fut.	future tense	pers.	person
gen.	genitive	p.t.	past tense
I. E.	Indo-European	reflex.	reflexive
inf.	infinitive	Rus.	Russian
imp.	imperative	SC.	Serbo-Croatian
instr.	instrumental case	sing.	singular
L.	Latin	Sln.	Slovene
lit.	literary		

Povzetek

“Vojščakova” stela z Lemnosa

Prikazana je razdelitev, prevod, jezikoslovna obravnava in vrednotenje napisa na steli “vojščaka” z Lemnosa. Videti je, da je ta spomenik votiven in ne vojaški, ter da služi kot prošnja za prehod umrlega, razsvetljenega v veri, v raj.