

EIGHT TOMBSTONES FROM THEBES

(Pl. 1—4)

These stones were brought into the Museum of Thebes during 1961-2, when the late Dr. I. Threpsiades was Ephor. They are published here through the kind courtesy of Dr. B. Philippaki. I wish to express my gratitude also to Mrs. A. Kalogeropoulou, for her invaluable aid at all stages of the work, and to Mrs. Evi Touloupa for details of provenance, descriptions, and measurements. The photographs are due to Ino Ioannidou and H. Bartziotou. See, for the first report, E. Touloupa, *ADelt* 19 (1964), Xpov. 202 f.

All the stones come from the same place, the area which lies east of the railway station and north of the Basiakou bridge. On the map of ancient Thebes and its environs reconstructed by A. D. Keramopoulos in his monumental work *Θηβαϊκὰ*¹ this is the area marked ἀρχαῖοι τάφοι, the cemetery outside the N. E. city gate through which went the road to Chalkis. The modern suburb of Hagioi Theodoroi lies just south of this area, and is given as the provenance of many other similar tombstones which have been brought to the museum in the past².

The eight are all of the local grey-black or black limestone (p. 3 below). 1 and 2 are plain blocks. The others are stelai, thick (except 5) and cut at the top into a triangular pediment (except 3). All 3-8 must have borne painted decorations originally, though only 7 has any still visible. The type was popular in Thebes and Tanagra³, rising to greatness in the famous Painted Warrior Stelai. The dates of our examples may range roughly from the mid-fifth to the mid-fourth centuries B.C.; the difficulty of establishing any absolute dates is discussed separately below, pp. 3 ff. All measurements are in centimetres. * indicates that this is not the original height (etc.), the stone being now broken.

1. (Plate 1a). Inv. no. B.E. 53. Black limestone block, its surface grey-brown. Probably complete. Front face roughly picked. H. 70; W. (upper) 51, (lower) 55. Th. (upper) 20, (lower) 23. Letters 5-6.

ΘΕΙΟΦΑΝΕΣ

?c. 450 B.C.; cf. local *alpha* still (pp. 4 f. below). Boiotian θεῖο - for θεο-: Buck³, p. 22, 9.4. For the name Theophanes in Boiotia see also *IG* vii. 420, 1750.

1. *ADelt* 3 (1917); the map was reused by L. Ziehen in *RE* s.v. Thebai. The following abbreviations are used in this article: K1 = Keramopoulos, *ADelt* 3 (1917). K2 = idem, *AE* 1920, 1ff. K3 = idem, *ADelt* 13 (1930-1), 105ff. K4 = idem, *AE* 1934-5, 'Αρχ. Xpov. 1ff. F-R = Fraser and Rönne, *Boeotian and West Greek Tombstones* (1957).

2. *IG* vii. 2571, 2575; K2, 27ff., nos. 8, 25; K4, nos. 11, 14, 56, 61; and the painted tombstone of Buille, Threpsiades, *AE* 1963 (1965), 'Αρχ. Xpov. 14f.

3. For the pedimental slab of black limestone as a type, see the brief discussion in F-R, 36. Examples from Thebes: K2, 27ff., nos. 3-6, 8, which include types like our 4 (without akroteria), with their painted pediments and other devices still partly visible; K4, nos. 5, 7, 14, 16, 23, 25-6, 29, 36-7, 40-1, 45, 47, 53, 56-7. From Tanagra: J. Venencie, *BCH* lxxxiv (1960), 589ff., especially nos. 10, 21, and xi (= *IG* vii. 670)

2. (Plate 1b). Inv. no. B.E. 55. Black limestone block, probably complete. H. 63; W. 56 (front face 50); Th. 16. Letters 5-8.

ΝΙΚΟΒΟΛΑ

?c. 450 or a little later. For the name see also *IG* vii. 1429, 4231; and for the masculine, *IG* vii. 1248-50, 1752, 2446, 3109, 3224, 4231.

3. (Plate 2a). Inv. no. B.E. 13. Black limestone stele, streaked with white veins. Top horizontal, with only a small central 'akroterion' projecting; possibly a separate pediment was fixed on it, or conceivably it was recut when the name was altered (see below). The bottom is rough-hewn only, for insertion in the ground. Front face smoothed and polished; sides carefully picked; back cut parallel to the front face, but only roughly finished. H. 70; W. (upper) 44, (lower) 46; Th. 19. Letters 3.5.

ΔΙΟΤΙΜΑ (original)

ΑΝΘΑΙΟΝ (cut over the first)

?c. 425. *Alpha* is now normal, but when adapting T to A the mason economically reverted to the earlier, crooked type Α. For Diotima in Boiotian, see also Venencie (note 3 below), no. 9; for the masculine, *IG* vii. 537, 1996, 3175, 3621a. I have not found another Anthaion (Ἀνθίς, *IG* vii, 773-4; Ἀνθία, 1973). Venencie no. vi, a gravestone of rather earlier date, is similarly reused; see P. Roesch, *Rev. phil.* 39 (1965), 264f.

4. (Plate 2b). Inv. no. B.E. 5. Stele shaped to a pediment at the top, without akroteria. Dark grey, white-streaked limestone, the front face now a dull grey-brown. Front face smoothed and polished, sides neatly picked; back rough. Bottom broken away. *H. 99; W. (upper) 61, (*lower) 63; Th. 31. Letters 3-3.5.

ΚΑΛΟΝΙΚΑ

?c. 425-400. For stelai of this shape still showing some painted decoration, see K2, 28, nos. 3-5, figs. 7-9, where neat bands of paint outline the three cornices of the pediment, and the vertical edges of the stele, and form a strip in which the lettering stands. Name: the masculine Καλόνικος is fairly well-attested: *IG* vii. 1138, 2444, 2809, 2813, 2816; Pappadakis, *ADelt* 1923, 218 (= *SEG* iii. 362).

5. (Plate 3a). Inv. no. B.E. 2. Stele shaped to a pediment at the top, akroteria broken. Grey-black limestone, the front smoothed and polished, the back split neatly down and smoothed. The bottom edge is not quite horizontally cut, but may be original. H. 80.5; W. (upper) 52, (lower) 55.2; Th. (upper) 9, (lower) 9.5. Letters 3.8-4.2.

ΜΥΤΑΛΟΣ

?c. 425-400. Much slenderer than the test, this has the proportions of a normal stele. I have not found this name elsewhere. For Μύτων, see *IG* vii. 3087; Μύταλις (?), Hipponax F42 Masson.

6. (Plate 3b). Inv. no. B.E. 82. Dark grey, white-streaked limestone. The cornices of the pediment project 1.5 in relief; the side-akroteria are lost. The front face is smoothed

and polished; at the bottom edge, a band of vertical claw-chisel marks, H. c. 5-9. The R. side is neatly picked with a smoothed border, 4-5 wide, at the edge adjoining the front face; the L. face may have been the same, but is now rather battered. The back is rough, split off and not dressed smooth, with (later?) cuttings in it. H. (total) 1.40, (shaft) 1.09; W. (upper) 73.5, (lower) 80; Th. 20.5. Letters 3.5-4.

Α Μ Ω Ι Σ Σ Θ Ε Ν Ι Α

? c. 425-400. The name seems unattested in Boiotia as yet.

7. (Plate 4a). Inv. no. B.E. 20. Grey-black limestone stele, the pediment-cornices in relief; the central akroterion broken off. The underside of the horizontal cornice does not project from the shaft at a right angle, but curves into it. Front face smoothed and polished, sides and back smoothed; bottom broken away. *H. 1.02; W. (pediment) 46, (upper shaft) 45, (*lower shaft) 49; Th. (upper) 17, (*lower) 18. Letters 4.

Μ Ι Τ Ι Ο Ν

? c. 425-400. Low on the shaft are traces of a white-painted taenia, tied twice round it, with knot and ends roughly central; it slants down to the R. Though thicker than 5, the shaft is near normal proportions. For the name Μιτίων, see *IG* vii. 2829.

8. (Plate 4b). Inv. no. B.E. 19. Grey-black limestone stele, the surface now a dull grey-brown. The pediment-cornices are elaborately moulded; the moulding continues round the R. and L. sides; the akroteria and 'ridge-pole' are all damaged. The front face is smoothed, the sides also for 22 cms. back, but rough beyond; the back rough. The bottom may be original (I have not seen its underside). H. (total) 67, (shaft) 37.5; W. (upper) 64, (lower) 64.3; Th. 35. Letters 4-4.5.

Α Ν Α Γ Κ Ι Γ Γ Α

? 4th. c. For *alpha* and *gamma*, see p. 5 and n. 13; for a moulding with somewhat similar profile, see F-R, pl. 17, 1 (Hellenistic).

CRITERIA FOR DATING

The black limestone quarried in the area Kithairon-Thebes-Tanagra⁴ was already a popular medium for stelai and bases by the fourth century B.C., and evidently its usage had begun well back in the fifth century. A black limestone base from the sanctuary of Apollo Hismenios near Thebes carries a public dedication which should not be much, if at all, later than the middle of the fifth century⁵. The same type of stone was used for the block found in the cemetery of Tanagra which is (surely rightly) identified with the casualty-

4. On this stone and its quarries see K2, 1, and especially K3, 105; also Vollgraff, *BCH* xxvi (1902), 556f., Rodenwaldt, *JDI* xxviii (1913), 311, and F-R, 35, n. 3.

5. K3, 106, fig. 2. The surviving part appears to be mainly *stoichedon*: [? Ἀπόλλωνι] | hismenio[i] [c. 4]μο ἄρχοντος [? Ὁ ορο]νεῖτες ἀνέθειαν. K's suggested [Ἡ ορο]νεῖτες is very attractive, though, as he noted, [Χαιρο] and [Λαρυμ] are also possible. The lettering would suit 447 B.C., when the Athenians suffered their great defeat at Koroneia, as K. also pointed out. *Alpha* has still a suggestion of a curve, and *epsilon* a hint of tail (see further pp. 4f. above for the dating of Boiotian fifth-century script).

list commemorating the men of Tanagra who were killed at Delion in 424⁶; and also, of course, for the six famous painted stelai now in Thebes Museum, whose dates are thought to extend from the late fifth to the first half of the fourth century⁷. Thus the stone itself offers no significant help towards a close dating of our inscriptions.

As for the brief formula used: a solitary name in the *genitive* is attested throughout the sixth century in Attica⁸, and in Boiotia the almost equally brief ἐπὶ τῷ δεῖνα—attested particularly at Tanagra — may well be as early as the sixth century⁹; but in Attica the use of the single name in the *nominative* does not appear to antedate the second half of the fifth century, in general, for citizens, while for non-Athenians in Attica a very few may suggest a date before the middle of the century¹⁰. One suspects that roughly the same dates may be true for the many gravestones of Boiotia which bear a single name in the nominative, though, as much of the material is not yet photographically illustrated, such a generalization may well be wrong; we may note, at least, that, of the 23 plain gravestones from Tanagra inscribed in the local script, published by Venencie (note 3 below), the 5 with the formula ἐπὶ + dative show the archaic forms Ἡ Ε which seem to have persisted still in the second quarter of the fifth century (see below); of the 15 which have the nominative-formula, only one (Venencie's no. 15) shows these archaic forms¹¹.

But even if this nominative-formula should not be dated earlier than about the mid-fifth century, such a conclusion would not help us greatly in our problem. The remaining criterion is that of the letter-forms themselves. The Boiotian epichoric, like most of the local scripts, lost its local and archaic forms piecemeal. In formal lettering, the crooked *alpha* Ἡ Ἀ Ἀ, tailed *epsilon* and closed *heta* were still used in the period c. 475-50 (the

6. *IG* vii. 585 (= K2, 19ff.; Jeffery, *LSAG*, 95, no. 19b; Venencie, op. cit., 611ff.).

7. See most recently I. Threpsiades, op. cit., 13ff., pls. A-B.

8. *IG* i² 991, 994, 996, 999, 1002, 1008, 1024; see further for these Jeffery, *BSA* 57 (1962), 115ff., nos. 1, 27-9, 38-9, 52, and also 59 (Aristodikos). I have not seen the following, but the published copies do not suggest a date before the middle of the fifth century: *IG* i² 992, 998, 1000, 1005.

9. Venencie, op. cit., nos. 1-5; *IG* vii. 586-611, 1891-4, 2738-40, 2883-4 (e.g.). For the social and other implications of the use of the single name on gravestones, see F-R, 92ff., and H. Biesantz, *Die thessalischen Grabreliefs* (1965), 67f.

10. In Athenian *public* gravestones, of course, the names are listed in the nominative, as is usual in such name-lists, however early in date. But the private gravestones form a hard problem: (a). Athenian citizens. As is well known, there are no Attic funeral relief-stelai of c. 490-445; the type seems to have returned to Attica with the great Periclean building-period c. 447 onwards. But there seem to be virtually no plain gravestones of this earlier period either (see n. 8 above; also later than the mid-fifth century (by their lettering) are the simple stelai with Ionic letters, *IG* i² 1032, 1036, 1040-1, 1053, 1061, 1083). *IG* ii² 11389, which I have seen, might be just before or after 450. As for the relief-stelai which are dated on their style c. 445-410, it is odd that they are *all* in Ionic script, unlike the public inscriptions of this period (c. 440-30, *IG* i² 1038, 1063; *IG* ii² 11068, 11306, 12332, 12485; c. 430-20, ii² 10781; c. 420-10, ii² 12970, 13030). (b). Non-Athenians. Some of these may be a little before 450 or a little after: Meritt, *Hesperia* 1952, 372, no. 20, pl. 94; *IG* i² 1004, 1007, 1030, 1044 (1028 also is a series of Boiotian gravestones; see Hondius, *Novae Inscriptiones Atticae*, 126ff., nos. 1-3, 5, 7, 12, 13). *IG* i² 1039, a fragment of a relief-stele with Ἡρακλῆδης above a man's head, has been dated not later than the middle of the fifth century, on the lettering; is this a non-Athenian?

11. The remaining three have lost their final letters, so it cannot be certain that they ended in the nominative rather than genitive. Two show Ἀ, the third Ε.

bronze hydria from Thebes, the base signed by Hypatodoros and Aristogeiton), but gone by c. 425 (the casualty-lists of the Thespians and the Tanagraians at Delion, the alphabetic cup, the big Kabiros-painter vase)¹². But alongside A, E, H these inscriptions still show

Δ = d, ⊕ or ⊙, λ, + = ξ, Ϟ, Υ = χ. The late, Ionic *gamma* Γ appears beside *lambda* λ, *delta* δ, and *sigma* σ¹³. The Ionic letters Δ Λ Ξ Π Χ Ω appear beside the local forms λ, O = ω in the fragment of a public grave-stone from Thespiai which has been dated to the years 395-4 by the French scholar Paul Roesch, who suggests further that the Theban alliance with Athens in this year may have caused Boiotia formally to adopt the Ionic alphabet of her ally at the same time¹⁴. But even if this date should prove to be right, Roesch himself points out¹⁵ that this would have an immediate effect only on public inscriptions; those on private monuments might well continue to show local letter-forms for some years later. In this connexion we may recall the Boiotian funeral stele of Polyxena, now in Berlin. The inscription reads ΓΟΛΥΤΕΝΑ, with local λ and +; but the frontal figure relief (under a pediment of the type of our 6) has some affinity to sculpture of the early fourth century¹⁶.

What then should be the dates of our inscriptions? 1 and 2 belong to the old order; they are crude jobs, but probably not later than the middle of the fifth century — 1 (Α) perhaps earlier than 2 (Α). 8 shows Ionic *gamma* (the name, Ἀναγκίππα, gives no occasion for any other Ionic letter). This by itself, as we have seen above, would not necessarily show that the Ionic alphabet had by now been adopted; but the *alpha* with a consistently high crossbar is a fourth- rather than a fifth-century characteristic.

The others, 3-7, are all pre-Ionic: 3 has Δ for Δ, 4-5 have λ for Λ, 5-6 have σ for Σ, 7 has O for Ω. Also, 5 has Υ, 6 ⊕ and ⊙; and these are carefully-cut inscriptions, not carelessly-done ones in which any such form might be merely a chance irregularity. All this suggests that these five gravestones are in the fifth century still, not far in date from the casualty-lists of 424 B.C. But in setting them tentatively c. 425-400, we must admit the possibility that 7, at least, might be a little later.

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12. Hydria and base: Jeffery, *LSAG*, 95, nos. 16-7; casualty-lists and cup, *ibidem*, nos. 19-20; vase, Wolters and Bruns, *Das Kabirenheiligtum von Theben* i (1940), 43, no. 53, and 93, pl. 5.

13. See Venencie, *op. cit.*, no. 10; Plassart, *BCH* lxxxii (1958), no. 8; and Saugenes' stele (K2, 1ff., pl. 2).

14. K2, 35ff., no. 46, fig. 14; Plassart, *op. cit.*, 117f., no. 65. See Roesch in *Rev. phil.* 40 (1966), 78ff., pursuing farther the suggestion of Wilhelm, *SEG* ii. 186. If his dating is right, *IG* vii. 2427, another public inscription in a mixture of local and Ionic letters, should also be set in the early years of the fourth century. For the earlier, less precise view, that the Ionic alphabet had arrived by c. 371, see Kirchhoff¹, 143; Larfeld², 264; Wolters and Bruns, *op. cit.*, 78; F-R, 25.

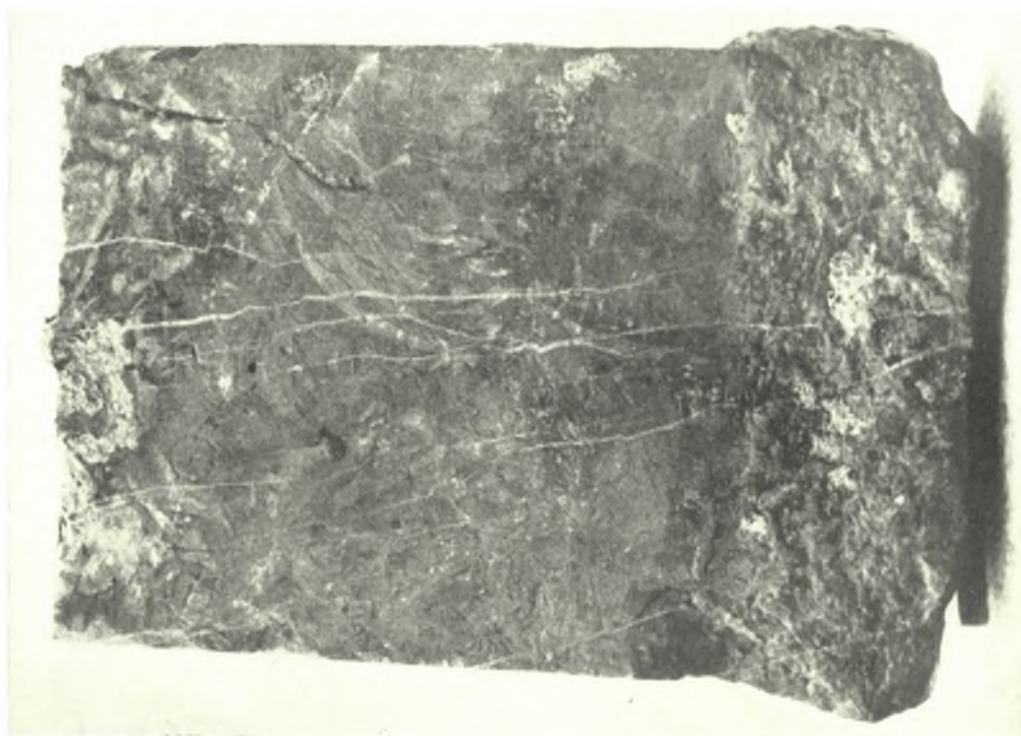
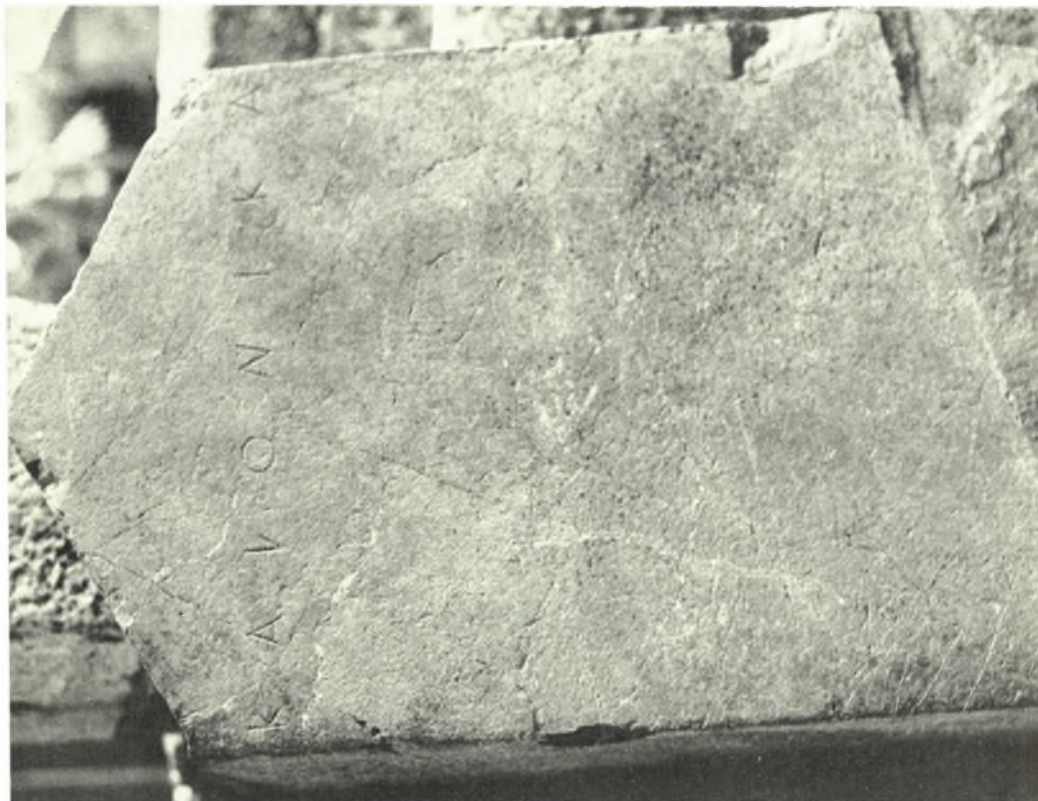
15. *Op. cit.*, 78.

16. Blümel, *Die klass. griech. Skulpturen . . . zu Berlin* (1966), no. 6, fig. 12: «es dürfte erst im letzten Viertel des fünften Jahrhunderts entstanden sein» (my italics). Can it be much earlier than Kephisodotos' Eirene and Ploutos?



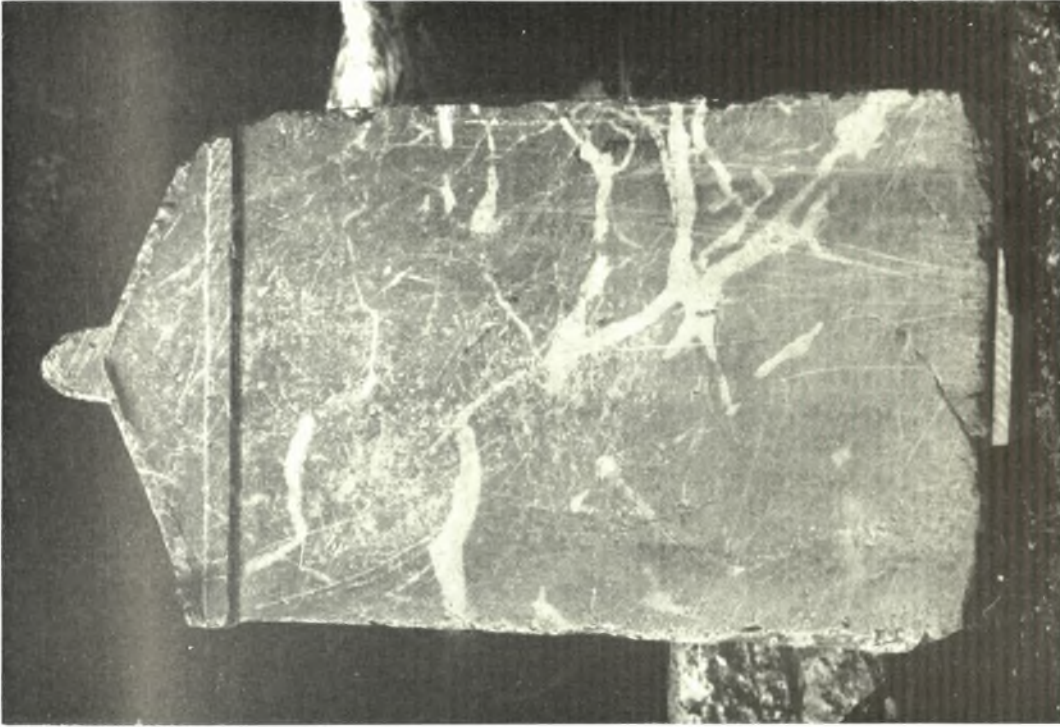
Museum of Thebes. Inscribed Tombstones: a. Inv. no B.E. 53, b. Inv. no B.E. 55

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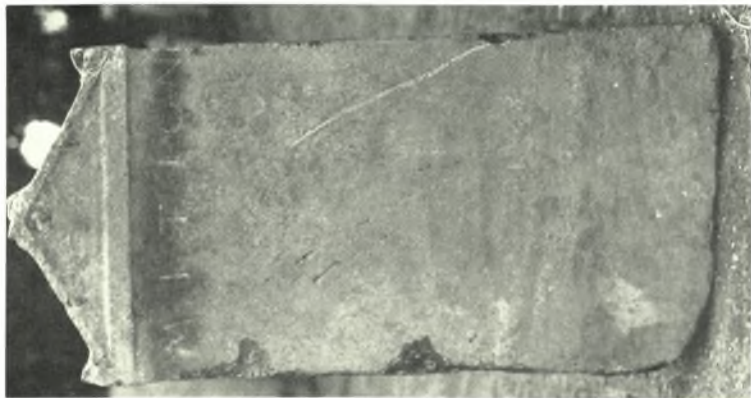
Museum of Thebes. Inscribed Tombstones: a. Inv. no B.E. 13, b. Inv. no B.E. 5

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Museum of Thebes. Inscribed Tombstones: a. Inv. no B.E. 2, b. Inv. no B.E. 82

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Museum of Thebes. Inscribed Tombstones: a. Inv. no B.E. 20, b. Inv. no B.E. 19

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