Assignment of disyllabic words in Minoan Linear A to a specific idiom is only feasible, if their meaning is relevant in their context. The inscription *a-πι* (KN Ze 16) on a door-jamb in a tholos tomb at Kephala, ca. 1.5 km north of the Grand Palace of Minos at Knossos, is such an inscription. It is useful to consider a Hurrian interpretation of the inscription *a-πι* and to examine whether it might provide relevant and useful information to visitors of the tomb and relatives of the deceased.

E. Larocche interpreted Hurrian *abi* as ‘trou, fosse’ and more precisely as ‘trou creusé en terre pour communiquer avec les puissances infernales; avec ou sans déterminatif’. Sub ‘houritte’ he mentions the form *(d)α-(a)-bi-ni-ta* KUB XXVII 1 III 8 = 3 IV 17. It contains the divine marker *(d)*, the suffix of the definite article *-ni*, and that of the directive form *(d)α* (written *(d)α*-ta). N.B. double writing of consonants in medial position in the cuneiform syllabary indicates that a consonant is voiceless (so *(d)α*-t or *(d)α*-d is *[t]*; *(d)α*-p or *(d)α*-b is *[p]*)}, whereas single writing in medial position shows that a consonant is voiced (so *(d)α*-t or *(d)α*-d is *[d]*; *(d)α*-p or *(d)α*-b is *[b]*)}. He also mentions the form *(d)α-n* in the alphabetic cuneiform script of Ugarit with the suffix of the definite article *(d)* *(Ugar. V 533)*. Sub ‘flexion hittite (kiz.)’ he mentions a list of forms with Hittite inflexion. He assumes that Hurrian *abi* is a loan word from Akkadian *(d)α-pu/(d)α-bu* and refers to *CAD A II 201*, but he also mentions that a direct borrowing from Sumerian *(d)α* ‘trou’ is feasible as well, and adds: “La même notion s’exprime en Hittite par *(d)α-teššar* ‘trou, fente’.” Compare also A. Kammenhuber: “Entspricht heth. *(d)α-teššar* ‘(in die Erde gegrabenes) Loch.’” The problem with cultural loan words or Wanderwörter is that the direction of borrowing probably depends on the question whether and when an idiom was in a *superstratum* position. Whatever the origin may be, the Linear A inscription *a-πι* is an exact equivalent to the Hurrian form *abi*.

1 Since the publication of *Minoan Linear A*, Vol. I, in 2016, some new identifications have been incorporated into the slightly revised printing of 2017, if that was possible without altering the pages corresponding with the indices, but the purpose of the *Appendices* is to add new identifications and interpretations whose insertion would change the order of the original text too much. - Copyright *Appendices* © 2017 Dr. Peter G. van Soesbergen.


J. Friedrich, A. Kammenhuber e.a. 4, I. Wegner 5 and M.-C. Trémouille 6 describe *abi* as ‘(in die Erde gegrabene, verschließbare) Opfergrube’ and ‘hurritisches Lehnwort im Junghethitischen’. J. Fincke interprets *abi* as ‘Opfergrube’ 7 and J. Puhvel as a ‘necromantic sacrificial pit for summoning up infernal deities or revenants, sometimes personified’. 8 T. Richter sums up a long list of references showing that there is vast agreement among scholars about the meaning of the term that clearly points to the sacrificial rituals for the dead and communication with the infernal deities. 9

Such a specific term responds exactly to the context and ritual function of a tholos tomb where the relatives of the deceased gathered to keep in touch with their beloved and to propitiate the deities of the underworld through sacrificial ceremonies performed in the entrance hall and/or the circular tomb chamber. Since a tholos tomb can probably be identified as a royal tomb, the sacrificial ceremonies were probably performed by a priest or the priest-king and not only attended by the direct relatives of the royal deceased, but also by the finest selection from the community, members of the aristocracy.

W.C. Brice wrote that R. W. Hutchinson has suggested that the two signs of the inscription are the mark of a Minoan inspector, inscribed after the tomb was robbed, to record the state of the blocked entrance. 10 However, if my interpretation of *a-pi* is accepted, the most probable scenario is that the inscription dates from the time of the burial of the first royal(s) buried in the tomb (or soon after) and the first sacrificial ceremonies. For the reader’s convenience the text of the Linear A inscription (KN Ze 16) on the door-jamb in the tholos tomb at Kephala, published in *Minoan Linear A, Vol. II: Corpus of transliterated Linear A texts*, Part II, Amsterdam 2016, 211-212, is presented here as well.


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INSRIPTION ON ARCHITECTURAL SUPPORT IN STONE FROM KNOSSOS (Ze) (THOLOS TOMB AT KEPHALA)

KN Ze 16.  Found in 1938. Transition Late Minoan Ib / II ?
Inscription incised in the southern door-jamb of the entrance into the circular chamber of a tholos tomb at Kephala (ca. 1,5 Km. north of the Palace of Minos).

\( \alpha \text{-pi} \),

R.W. Hutchinson, ‘A Tholos Tomb on the Kephala’, BSA 51 (1956), 74-80, fig. 1, pl. 9c-d, 10a-b (photograph of the inscription 10b).
B. Hrozný, ‘Les inscriptions crétoises’, Prague 1949, 280-284, pl. IX.
M.S.F. Hood, Archaeological survey of the Knossos area, British School at Athens, London no date, 24 pp., 3 fig. and 1 folding map: E, point 17.
W.C. Brice, ILA, 1961, 24 sub V 15, and Pl. XXXI/XXXIa: V 15: Inscription on a door-jamb in a Tholos Tomb at Kepala, near Knossos, of MM III-LM Ia date. The tomb was robbed in antiquity, and Mr. Hutchinson has suggested that these two signs are the mark of a Minoan inspector, inscribed after the robbery to record the state of the blocked entrance.
E. Vermeule, Greece in the Bronze Age, Chicago-London 1964, 40-41, fig. 6w.
M.R. Popham, BSA LXXII (1977), 186.
It may be useful to mention here some statements from the Chapter on the Kephala Tholos Tomb in my research-report on The archaeological context of Minoan Linear A, The Netherlands Organisation for the advancement of pure research, The Hague 1976:

“R.W. Hutchinson, BSA 51 (1956), 74, has suggested in his excavation report that the Kephala (in the middle of a mountain range from Zafer Papoura in the south to Isopata in the north) was lying along a sort of Minoan Via Appia from Knossos to the naval base at Amnisos on the mouth of the Kairatos river.

On 6 December 1938 the whole roof of the entrance-hall of the tholos was uncovered. It was intact apart from one block where the grave robbers had entered before. They had apparently broken into the chamber, for the lower part of the blocking wall between the fore hall and the chamber consisted of solid masonry, whereas the upper part was composed of loose stones with an opening at the top, where a Minoan inscription was visible, incised in the southern door-jamb of the entrance into the chamber (see ibidem 74 and plates 9 c-d, 10b).

The upper layers of the tholos-chamber contained some LM IIIC pottery and a big mass of human bones including smashed skulls, all in bad condition and spread in all directions. The roof of the tholos had apparently already collapsed in an early stage. The complete absence of stratification was probably due to interference by robbers or squatters in the ruins.

Hutchinson (ibidem 77) remarks that the inscription (KN Ze 16) can be dated to MM IIIB or LM IA on epigraphic grounds, but to LM II as well.

An additional problem is that we cannot tell for sure, whether the inscription dates from the time of construction of the tomb or may have been incised later. This means that dating the tomb, if possible, cannot help us dating the inscription, and vice versa dating the inscription on epigraphic criteria cannot help us dating the tomb. If the inscription is of LM II date, it would be one of the youngest Linear A inscriptions.”

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At the time that the research-report on The archaeological context of Minoan Linear A was written (1976), the possible meaning of the Linear A inscription a-pi on a door-jamb in the tholos tomb at Kephala was unknown, but if my Hurrian interpretation of a-pi is accepted, the most probable scenario is that the inscription dates from the time of the burial of the first royal or royals buried in the tomb (or soon after) and the first sacrificial ceremonies.