

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION FORM TO ACCOMPANY SUBMISSIONS  
FOR ADDITIONS TO THE REPERTOIRE OF ISO/IEC 10646

2004 – June 7

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| <b>L2/04-217R</b> |
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**A. Administrative**

1. Title:

Proposal to add Archaic Mediterranean Script block to ISO 10646

2. Requester's name:

Elaine Keown

3. Requester type (Member body/Liaison/Individual contribution):

Individual contribution

4. Submission date:

June 7, 2004

5. Requester's reference (if applicable):

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6. Choose one of the following:

6a. This is a complete proposal.

No

6b. More information will be provided later:

Yes.

**B. Technical - General**

1. Choose one of the following:

a. This proposal is for a new script (set of characters)

Yes, for block to be called 'Archaic Mediterranean Script.'

b. The proposal is for addition of character(s) to an existing block:

No

Name of the existing block:

2. Number of characters in proposal:

48

3. Proposed category (select one from below - see section 2.2 of P&P document):

Category B.2

4. Proposed Level of Implementation (1, 2 or 3) (see Annex K in P&P document):

Level 2

Is a rationale provided for the choice?

Yes

If Yes, reference: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Is a repertoire including character names provided?

Yes—names preliminary

a. If YES, are the names in accordance with the “character naming guidelines” in Annex L of P&P document?

Yes

b. Are the character shapes attached in a legible form suitable for review? Yes

**B. Technical - General**

6. Who will provide the appropriate computerized font (ordered preference: True Type, or PostScript format) for publishing the standard?

Not yet known

If available now, identify source(s) for the font (include address, e-mail, ftp-site, etc.) and indicate the tools used:

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7. References:

a. Are references (to other character sets, dictionaries, descriptive texts etc.) provided?

Yes, see Bibliography.

b. Are published examples of use (such as samples from newspapers, magazines, or other sources) of proposed characters attached?

Yes

8. Special encoding issues:

Does the proposal address other aspects of character data processing (if applicable) such as input, presentation, sorting, searching, indexing, transliteration etc. (if yes please enclose information)?

It addresses 'caseless collation.' It also raises the issue of how to encode boustrophedon material.

9. Additional Information:

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**C. Technical - Justification**

1. Has this proposal for addition of character(s) been submitted before?

No

2. Has contact been made to members of the user community (for example: National Body, user groups of the script or characters, other experts, etc.)?

No. This is a proposed solution to a disagreement on how some early Semitic material should be handled. It also addresses archaic material which is borderline: inscriptional material which is no longer Semitic, but also not yet solidly Indo-European/ Etruscan/ Iberian/ early Celtic etc because the script direction and glyph shapes have not yet stabilized. There is quite a bit of such material in the Mediterranean and probably even on the Atlantic coast of Europe (and, I suspect) Africa.

3. Information on the user community for the proposed characters (for example: size, demographics, information technology use, or publishing use) is included?

Epigraphers of various Mediterranean languages worldwide will be interested. Also scholars of alphabet diffusion.

Reference: \_\_\_\_\_

4. The context of use for the proposed characters (type of use; common or rare)

Used by scholars, but of interest to the general public.

Reference:

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Are the proposed characters in current use by the user community?

Yes

If YES, where? Reference: \_\_\_\_\_

6. After giving due considerations to the principles in the P&P document must the proposed characters be entirely in the BMP?

No

If YES, is a rationale provided?

Yes, see 3. \_\_\_\_\_

If YES, reference: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Should the proposed characters be kept together in a contiguous range (rather than being scattered)?

Yes

8. Can any of the proposed characters be considered a presentation form of an existing character or character sequence?

No

If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided?

If YES, reference: \_\_\_\_\_

9. Can any of the proposed characters be encoded using a composed character sequence of either

existing characters or other proposed characters?

No

If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided?

Yes, see proposal.

If YES, reference: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Can any of the proposed character(s) be considered to be similar (in appearance or function) to an existing character?

Yes.

If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided?

No. There is some overlap between 'Phoenician' and 'Early right-to-left Greek.' It's not clear how that should be handled.

If YES, reference: \_\_\_\_\_

11. Does the proposal include use of combining characters and/or use of composite

No

If YES, is a rationale for such use provided?

Yes, see B.9 \_\_\_\_\_ If YES, reference: \_\_\_\_\_

Is a list of composite sequences and their corresponding glyph images (graphic symbols) provided?

Yes

If YES, reference: \_\_\_\_\_

12. Does the proposal contain characters with any special properties such as control function or similar semantics?

No

If YES, describe in detail (include attachment if necessary) \_\_\_\_\_

13. Does the proposal contain any Ideographic compatibility character(s)?

No

## D. Proposal

Some time between 1400 BCE and 700 BCE (scholarly estimates vary by 700 years), some North Semitic alphabets, whether earlier versions or later, were transmitted to Greece, Crete, Cyprus, Eretria, North Africa, Spain, Portugal, and possibly also down the Atlantic coast of West Africa. In all these areas, which were visited by various traders--Canaanite, Greek, or even Etruscan--the alphabet(s) were transmitted to local people.

In all the areas, the initial inscriptions were variable in direction, in shape of letters, in stance of letters, and in length of alphabet. The list of letters tended to be in the same order. As Cyrus Gordon has pointed out, the longer versions of the alphabet can be shown to follow the order one finds in Ugaritic, which had several more consonants than later Canaanite languages.

The 'Archaic Mediterranean Script Block' is designated to cover early right-to-left or boustrophedon material from the Mediterranean region, whether the material in question is Byblian, Phoenician, archaic Greek, or archaic Latin. In Powell's book there is a good list (possibly complete) of early right-to-left Greek inscriptions.

With some additions, the proposed block might also cover earliest Tartessian (southern Spain) before the Tartessian script became 'semisyllabic.' It may also cover similar material from France, Italy, Sicily, etc.

This proposed block takes advantage of the 'caseless' or 'monocase' character of these scripts. Because caseless scripts collate more easily, one can intermingle varieties of the script and still have appropriate collation for an individual subsection of the characters. Using the characters 1010, 1012, 1014, etc. for an encoding will produce the expected Byblian / Phoenician collation. Selecting 1011, 1013, 1015, etc. will produce any shorter or longer archaic Greek or archaic Latin right-to-left collation.

'Caseless' collation is not limited to a 'two-strand' version. A variety of variant epichoric Greek letters could be inserted in this proposed block.

An unresolved issue, as far as I am aware, is the encoding of boustrophedon material: should one separately encode the 'mirror' images of letters?

Where the Byblian / Phoenician shape is identical to the archaic Greek, it might be possible to collapse them and call that letter: ARCHMED HELLENOSEMITIC ---.

TABLE ZZ – ROW 1010 etc: ARCHAIC MEDITERRANEAN

|    |                                                                                     |                           |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
|    | 1010                                                                                |                           |
| 0  |    | ARCHMED PHOENICIAN ALEPH  |
| 1  |    | ARCHMED EARLY ALPHA       |
| 2  |    | ARCHMED PHOENICIAN BETH   |
| 3  |    | ARCHMED EARLY BETA        |
| 4  |    | ARCHMED PHOENICIAN GIMEL  |
| 5  |    | ARCHMED EARLY GAMMA       |
| 6  |   | ARCHMED PHOENICIAN DALETH |
| 7  |  | ARCHMED EARLY DELTA       |
| 8  |  | ARCHMED PHOENICIAN HEH    |
| 9  |  | ARCHMED EARLY EPSILON     |
| 10 |  | ARCHMED PHOENICIAN WAW    |
| 11 |  | ARCHMED EARLY WAW         |
| 12 |  | ARCHMED PHOENICIAN ZAYIN  |

|    |                                                                                     |                          |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 13 |    | ARCHMED EARLY ZETA       |
| 14 |    | ARCHMED PHOENICIAN HETH  |
| 15 |    | ARCHMED EARLY ETA        |
| 16 |    | ARCHMED PHOENICIAN TETH  |
| 17 |    | ARCHMED EARLY THETA      |
| 18 |    | ARCHMED PHOENICIAN YOD   |
| 19 |    | ARCHMED EARLY IOTA       |
| 20 |   | ARCHMED PHOENICIAN KHAF  |
| 21 |  | ARCHMED EARLY KAPPA      |
| 22 |  | ARCHMED PHOENICIAN LAMED |
| 23 |  | ARCHMED EARLY LAMBDA     |
| 24 |  | ARCHMED PHOENICIAN MEM   |
| 25 |  | ARCHMED EARLY MU         |
| 26 |  | ARCHMED PHOENICIAN NUN   |
| 27 |  | ARCHMED EARLY NU         |

|    |                                                                                     |                           |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 28 |    | ARCHMED PHOENICIAN SAMEKH |
| 29 |    | ARCHMED EARLY XI          |
| 30 |    | ARCHMED PHOENICIAN AYIN   |
| 31 |    | ARCHMED EARLY OMICRON     |
| 32 |    | ARCHMED PHOENICIAN PEH    |
| 33 |    | ARCHMED EARLY PI          |
| 34 |  | ARCHMED PHOENICIAN TSADI  |
| 35 |  | ARCHMED PHOENICIAN QOF    |
| 36 |  | ARCHMED EARLY KOPPA       |
| 37 |  | ARCHMED PHOENICIAN RESH   |
| 38 |  | ARCHMED EARLY RHO         |
| 39 |  | ARCHMED PHOENICIAN SIN    |
| 40 |  | ARCHMED EARLY SAN         |
| 41 |  | ARCHMED EARLY SIGMA       |

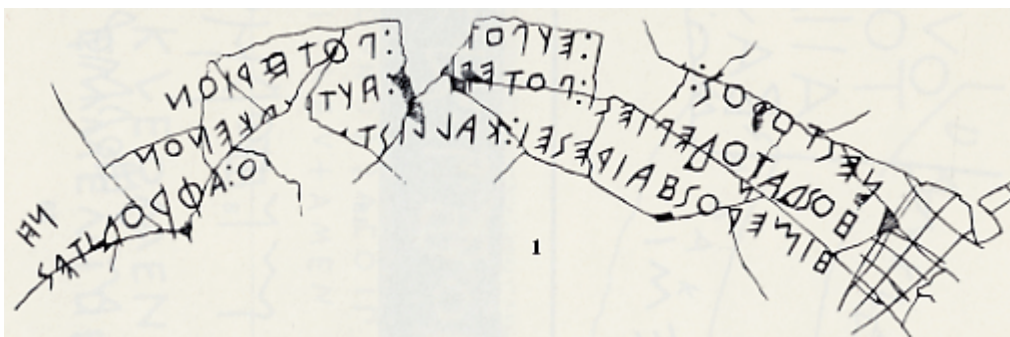
|    |                                                                                   |                        |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 42 |  | ARCHMED PHOENICIAN TAW |
| 43 |  | ARCHMED EARLY TAU      |
| 44 |  | ARCHMED EARLY UPSILON  |
| 45 |  | ARCHMED EARLY PHI      |
| 46 |  | ARCHMED EARLY CHI      |
| 47 |  | ARCHMED EARLY PSI      |
| 48 |  | ARCHMED EARLY OMEGA    |

### Figures:

Figure 1: The ivory Marsiliana right-to-left abecedarium (on writing practice tablet); found in Etruria, presumed imported from eastern Mediterranean (see Bundgård, p. 13 or Jeffery, Plate 48, no. 18).



Figure 2: Graffito from Pithekoussai (early right-to-left Greek). See Jeffery.



Note: Early right-to-left Greek which is not shown: Dipylon oinochoe ; sherds from Hymettos; cups from Rhodes; Argive heraiion; early Theran rock inscriptions; early Amorgos rock inscriptions. For all these, see Jeffery, L. H., *passim*.

Figure 3: Castor and Pollux dedication (right-to-left Archaic Latin)

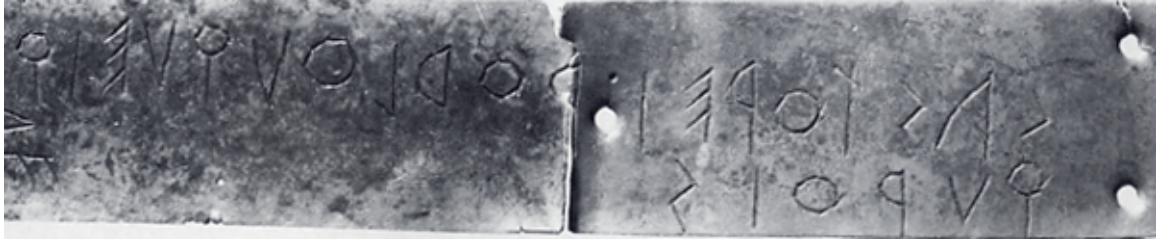


Figure 4: Forum Romanum, first line (right-to-left Archaic Latin)



Note: two other right-to-left Roman inscriptions are not shown. See Gordon, pp. 75-76, 77-78.

Figure 5: Samos alphabet from 660 B.C.E. Missing tsadi, has 5 letters after tau:

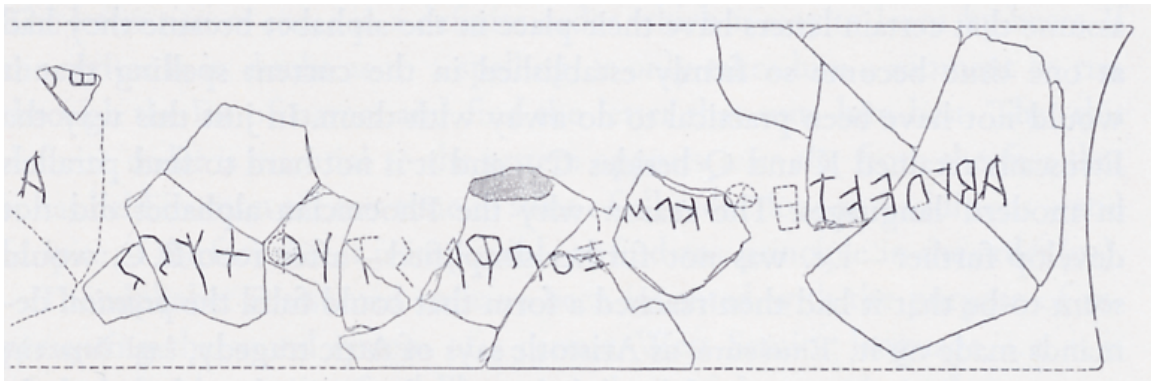
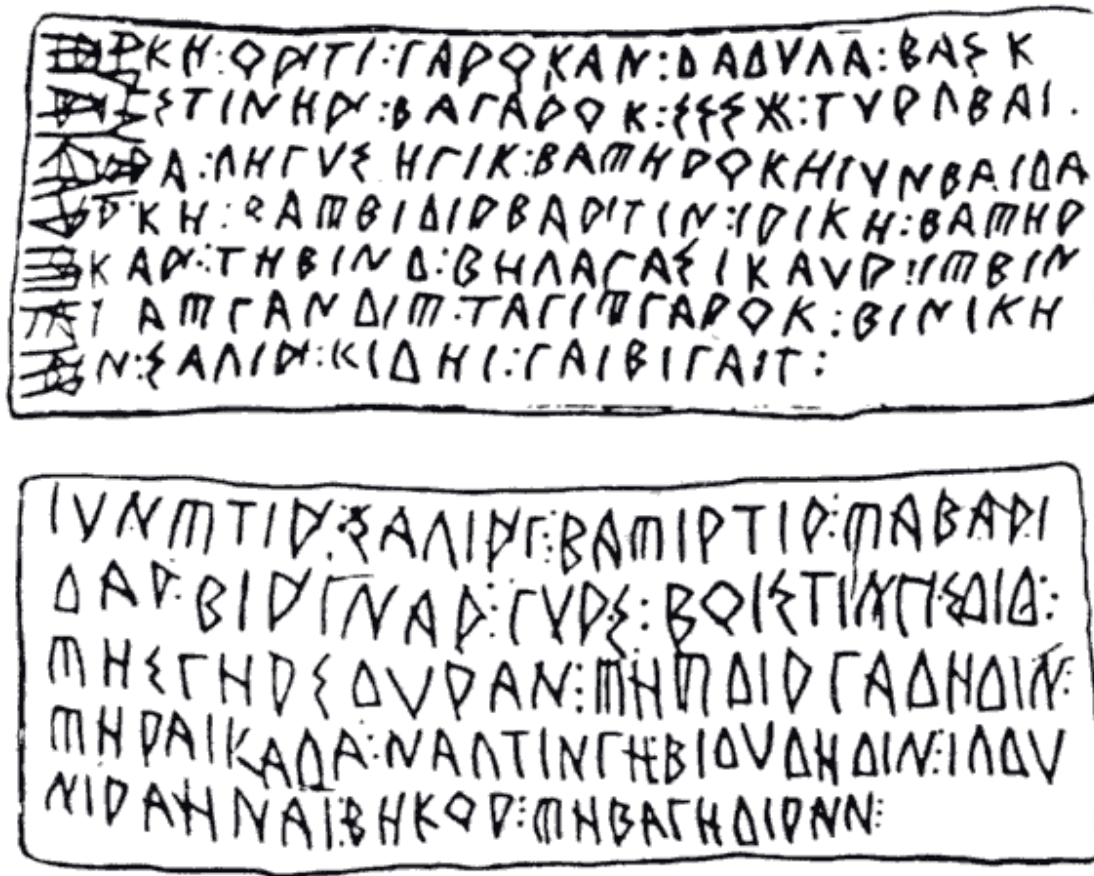


Figure 6: Alcoy Lead Tablet in Ionian script but local (undeciphered) language; from southern Andaluc  a near areas of early Greek settlement. See Anderson, p. 5.



## Bibliography

- Anderson, James. M. Ancient Languages of the Hispanic Peninsula. University Press of America: Lanham, 1988, p. 5.
- Bundg  rd, J. A. "Why did the art of writing spread to the West? Reflexions on the alphabet of Marsiliana." Analecta Romana Instituti Danici III. Ejnar Munksgaard: Copenhagen, 1965, pp. 11-72.
- The Marsiliana Tablet, p. 13.
- The Samos Alphabet: pp. 54-55, Figure 22.
- Gordon, Arthur E. Illustrated Introduction to Latin Epigraphy. University of California Press: Berkeley, 1983.
- Castor and Pollux dedication: p. 76-77 and Plate 1, no. 2. Found 1958 near Lavinio.
- Forum Romanum Cippus, pp. 78-80 and Plate 3, nos. 4a, 4b.
- Jeffery, L. H. The Local Scripts of Archaic Greece. Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1990.
- Marsiliana writing tablet: p. 43, 237, Plate 48, no. 18.
- Graffito from Pithekoussai: p. 43, 235, Plate 47, no. 1.

Powell, Barry. Homer and the Origin of the Greek Alphabet. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1991, pp. 123ff.