

COMMUNICATIONS

The cover of Athene 24:2 (Summer, 1963) is adorned with the lily vase, in color. Many illustrations of Minoan things in the section, "Three periods of Greek art; Minoan art," pp. 27-33. These accompany selections from D. A. Michalaros' "The Minoan" (1958) which are included in the text.

The cover of Das Altertum 9:3 (1963) shows pithoi at Phaistos.

Since I have not yet seen a copy of On the Knossos Tablets, nor a review which gives its undoubtedly difficult bibliographical details, I must report it and the reviews of which I have heard with a certain imprecision.

WORK IN PROGRESS

From Part Two of the Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies we may repeat (v. pp. 148, 207) the titles of certain theses newly reported as in progress for higher degrees:

At Birmingham: Watkins, T., "Cyprus and its neighbours in the Bronze Age; a study of the bronze objects."

At Cambridge: Warren, P. M., "Aegean Bronze Age Archaeology."

At London: McNeill, I., "Formulaic devices in Hittite and Greek epic."

Theses completed include:

At London: Hainsworth, J. B., "The flexibility of the Homeric formula," R. Hope Simpson, "The topography of Mycenaean Greece in relation to the Achaean section of the Homeric Catalogue of Ships," Ward, Mrs. Anne G., "Minoan and Mycenaean jewellery."

Kadmos, II 2 and Minos, VIII 2 are in press.

DESIDERATA

No. 1. O. Masson (68, rue Mademoiselle, Paris 15, France) recherche (achat ou échange) un tirage à part de: L. H. Jeffery, The Inscribed Gravestones of archaic Attica, ABSA 56 (1961).

E. L. Bennett desires (purchase or exchange) offprints of the following:

No. 2. Reviews of On the Knossos Tablets in Sunday Times (1 December 1963), Sunday Telegraph (1 December 1963), Observer (5 January 1964).

No. 3. F. R. Adrados, Epigrafia juridica micenica, Studia et Documenta Historiae et Juris 23 (1957).

No. 4. E. Cavaignac, Mycénien qeqinomeno, qeqinoto, REG 71 (1958).

No. 5. A. Colonna, Minoico Lineare B, Paideia 10 (1955).

No. 6. J. H. Croon, Wordt koning Minos het zwijgen weer opgelegd?, Hermeneus 28 (1957).

No. 7. M. I. Finley, Homer and Mycenae, Property and Tenure, Historia 6 (1957).

No. 8. K. Kerényi, Die Herkunft der Dionysos-religion nach dem heutigen Stand der Forschung, Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Forschung des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen 56 (1956).

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Minutes and Resolutions of the Colloquium 3-16  
John Chadwick, Pylos Tablet Un 1322 19-26  
Heinz Geiss, Some Remarks on PY Jn 725 and Other Texts 27-35  
Mabel Lang, Es Proportions 37-51  
William F. Wyatt, Jr., Remarks on Professor Lang's Paper, "Es Proportions" 53-55  
Carlo Gallavotti, Le grafie del wau nella scrittura micenea 57-65  
Carlo Gallavotti, Some Pylian Inscriptions Compared 67-69  
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Saul Levin, Greek and Non-Greek Inflexions in Linear B 147-156  
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Jaan Puhvel, Eleuthér and Oinoâtis: Dionysiac Data from Mycenaean Greece 161-170  
Jaan Puhvel, The Indo-European and Mycenaean Perfect Active Participles 171-177  
Henry M. Hoenigswald, Mycenaean Augments and the Language of Poetry 179-182  
Cyrus H. Gordon, Notes on Linear A 183-186  
Carl W. Blegen, The Palace of Nestor: Excavations of 1961 187-191  
John L. Caskey, Excavations in Keos, 1961 19-194  
J. Walter Graham, The Relation of the Minoan Palaces to the Near Eastern Palaces of the Second Millennium 195-215  
William A. McDonald, Overland Communications in Greece during LH III, with Special Reference to Southwest Peloponnese 217-240  
Emmett L. Bennett, Jr., The Find-Spots of the Pylos Tablets 241-252  
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. . . qu'il est permis de rire entre mycéenologues



Carian inscription of Kaunos. (From Bonert, *Jahrbuch für kleinasiatische Forschung*, I, p. 331.)

# HOLP!

by JOHN BAILEY

THE inscription of Kaunos (q.v.) do, no more than the simple sort of is written in the extinct Carian logic employed in, say, breaking the language and has never been German code. If the reader has a deciphered. It is not even known who smattering of Etruscan, or can speak a the Carians were. Plato spoke obscurely few words of Cretan-Minoan dialect, of the Carians as living on "islands in so much the better. But it is not necessary. Anyone who has ever civilised. Thucydides vaguely con- worked a cryptogram in the Sunday jectured that they were simply members paper should have no difficulty with of the cave-dwelling, aboriginal tribes the inscription of Kaunos.

On the other hand this will not be all straight sailing. Although the inscription looks easy, we must not forget that B———, after a lifetime devoted to the careful study of the Cypriote script, is chiefly remembered for his fairly unintelligible for the time being. There will be some tough nuts to crack.

For example, the placement of vowels presents an immediate minor difficulty. I think the reader will agree that the script is a mixture of syllabic and alphabetic writing, and is certainly value sometimes do not have the same have never deciphered an extinct consonantal; that is, there are no meaning; e.g., "nay," in English, language, perhaps I should explain that symbols for vowels. We shall have to meaning "no," and "nay," in Greek, the basic principles of decipherment deduce which vowels and how many of meaning "yes."

On the basis of analogy with other

the consonants in the same way we would determine whether (in English) *stk* was meant to represent *stick*, *stack*, *stock*, or *stuck*.

Furthermore, we may run into a few phonetical polyphones; so that a symbol meaning *ud* could also be read as *tol*, *gu*, or *ba*. However, all this will no doubt fall into place as we go along.

In the first line of the inscription we read (provided the line runs from left to right): *OMHXOFCMXXCM*. Many inscriptions are ordinary letters or household notes, which usually begin with a salutation. Is there a salutation in the Kaunos inscription? Let us see. The similarity of *OMHX* to the Phoenician *h̄zp* will hardly have escaped the reader's notice. The group of symbols *OMHXOFCMXXCM* can therefore be suspected as deriving from the same root as *h̄zpgnb̄nz*, literally, "one who separates beans," or, "one who throws beans about." (cf. Cretan *kd̄zgḡz*, "one who opens eggs," Phrygian *b̄ztdm̄gz*, "one who squeezes nutmegs," Etruscan *hm̄zdbll̄z*, "one who swallows marbles.") This (interpreting etymologically) gives us the word *ntgr*; which, though certainly looks something like a man's name.

The value of this achievement should not be overestimated, however. It is one of the pitfalls of the etymological method that words of similar phonetic value sometimes do not have the same meaning; e.g., "nay," in English, meaning "no," and "nay," in Greek, meaning "yes."

inscriptions, we may assume with a certain degree of probability that the last four legible symbols of the first line (i.e.  $\Sigma F C \Lambda$ ) represent the word *hl*; and, indeed, at the upper edge of the mutilated text may be discerned what appears to be the bottom part of an Ugaritic exclamation point. With our suspicions thus confirmed we are now able to read the whole salutation (or rather its consonantal skeleton): "*Ntgr(vs)hl!*" or (interpolating according to the Phoenician diachronic vowel system): "*Antigra . . . hail!*" So far, I think we are on firm soil.

It is at once evident from our vowelless translation of the salutation that in the syllables containing plosives it is going to be next to impossible to recognise *lemis*, *fortis*, and *aspirates*. Fortunately we *can* recognise the *fortis* in the Proto-Etruscan plosive *pht*, the double plosive *pht-pht*, and the fricative *psst*.

Meagre as this information is, it enables us to identify the first word of the second line (ignoring for the moment the fact that there is no way to tell where one word leaves off and the next begins) as *sps* ( $\Sigma M C \Lambda X M Y$ ); and to conjecture (although the interpretation of the third symbol is uncertain) that the whole line reads: *sps chprkt*, or, "*spžgčäé shipwrecked*" ( $\Sigma$  surely representing the aspirate "sh"). "*Spžgčäé*" is more or less recognisable as a variation of the Phrygian *spicae*, or "spice"; and as the reader will have already noted, it is modified by a past participle whose flexional ending is masculine. "Spice," therefore, is clearly the personal name of an individual; and the inscription now begins to look very much like a letter to Antigra, probably from his wife, telling him that their son, Spice, has been shipwrecked.

Using the values *nt*, *gr*, and *sps*, which we have obtained from the first two lines of the inscription, I think we are justified in tentatively assigning the values *glg*, *glb*, and *flb* to  $\Lambda A F$ ,  $H A Y$  and  $O X M$  (line 3). When equated with the Minoan *džg*, *qlg*, of course, is actually our old friend *hžp*, or *n*.

With the aid of our knowledge of the sign for *n* we are able to read the word *nms* (? *animus*); and our know-

ledge of *nms*, in turn enables us to read the designation for *ss*, and the symbols following it, *pn*. We conclude: *nms ss pn*, or: (1) hate (*animus*) (? my) saucepan (*sspn*.) The whole message, so far as we have gone, can now be freely translated: "*Antigra . . . hail! Our son, Spice, has been shipwrecked . . . I hate my saucepan . . .*"

In view of the tragic circumstances it seems odd that the woman should bring up the subject of her saucepan at all, but the fact that she does so is further confirmation of our original conclusion that the inscription is an ordinary letter; though militating against this conclusion is the fact that for a letter the inscription measures rather large from top to bottom.\*

Our next logical step is to fill in the spaces left on line 3; and this is made fairly easy by the occurrence of  $\Psi$ . This symbol is undoubtedly a further cursive refinement of the Ugaritic pictograph showing two figures pointing at themselves, or "we."

Interpreting  $O X M \Gamma$  as *pls* ("to place") and carefully distributing the phonetic values corresponding to the other syllables, we succeed in reading: "We (are) place ourselves (? in) I hate my saucepan . . ."

Something has obviously gone wrong here, and it may be that we should not translate *animus* ("hate") at all, but *anima* ("life"); although "My saucepan is alive" is not perfectly clear either.

Leaving a question mark on that passage, let us move on to  $\Sigma \Phi X$ . At first sight  $\Sigma \Phi X$  looks rather formidable, but as soon as we realise that the symbols represent numerals the difficulty vanishes. It is almost certain that  $\Phi$  means either 2 or 5; and the stronger case can, perhaps, be made for the latter meaning. (Unless it means 4.)

$\Sigma$  is obviously the multiplicative, and since these symbols appear juxtaposition with the symbols  $O M$  (*yr*, or "year") we translate: "year 5000," or "year 2000" (or 4000). The abbreviation "BC" may be assumed, I think.

We are now getting some idea of the lexical character of the Carian language,

and the symbols  $\Sigma O Y O F$  read easily enough as *hlpntr*, followed by  $\Sigma A \Gamma R$ , or *kernb*. Interpolating, we get "holopenter cafernob."

Leaving that for the moment, let us again set down the tentative translation, so far as we have got; viz.: "*Antigra (?vs) hail! . . . Spice shipwrecked . . . We (have) place(d) ourselves (in) a saucepan(dd) anima (? life-hate) (? for) 5000 year (? BC) . . . holopenter cafernob . . .*"

We are now able to make one or two corrections. To begin with we are certain of the symbol representing *f* or *v*, and it now appears that the word we have translated as "hail," in the salutation, is actually spelt with an *f* or *v*, so that the word becomes "vale," or "fail"; in view of which the whole line could well be read: "*Antigra(vs) fail(ed) . . .*"

Furthermore, seeing that there is no delimitation of words in either direction, "Spice shipwrecked," could also be read, "spiceship wrecked"; in which case we begin to visualise a vessel laden with spices from the Orient. Thus these lines can be interpreted to mean that Antigra was the one who ran the ship on to the rocks, and Spice may not even have been on board.

Reading it thus, we get: "*Antigra failed. Spiceship wrecked. We have placed ourselves in saucepan(dd) anima (? life) (for) 5000 year . . . help enter cavern by . . .*"

The sign after  $\Sigma O Y$  (*help*) I would ordinarily take to be an exclamation point, but "help!" makes no sense.

Obviously, some lexical grinding and polishing is needed before we will be able to read the inscription clearly. But we have gone far enough to see before us the rough outline of a message from the shadowy past. Already, in imagination, we can see the doomed vessel, storm-tossed on the boiling Aegean Sea, with Antigra himself crouched over the helm.

It is not possible for me to pursue the decipherment further within the limits of this brief article. But the reader should now have no difficulty in finishing it for himself.

\* fourteen feet