

COMMUNICATIONS

The University of London Institute of Classical Studies announces that the Michael Ventris Memorial Award for 1972 has been made to Mr. Jon C. van Leuven (B. Sc.), who is working on Mycenaean cult material. A Supplementary Award has been made to Dr. Verena Kastner, who is working on parallels in the vocabulary of Mycenaean and non-Homeric Greek.

CLIPPINGS

Eleftheros Kosmos, 23 February 1973, Minas Nisiotis; Estia, 26 February 1973. Meeting of the Greek Anthropological Society. Denial of evidences of cannibalism in the Fourth Millennium, B. C.

Estia, 24 February 1973. Work of the French School of Archaeology, including reports from Mallia, and a hieroglyphic seal, to give evidence of Minoan relations with Egypt.

Eleftheros Kosmos, 25 February 1973, Miltis Paraskevaidis. Excavations at the cave of Kitsos in Lavrion, with Neolithic deposits.

Eleftheros Kosmos, 18 March 1973, Miltis Paraskevaidis. The most recent German excavations at Tiryns.

NYTimes, 26 March 1973. The newest frescoes from Thera, with battle scenes, and Libyan landscape.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor: - Dr. Alexiou in his letter of 1 December 1972 does not answer my complaint that his Gnomon review of my New Guide attributed to me the views of Mr. Hood and then proceeded to find self-contradictions. Instead he changes his ground and quotes from the Minutes of the Columbia Seminar a passage which suggests that Hood's views on the Last Palace are far from mine. In fact Hood stressed more vigorously than ever his agreement that the destruction deposit contained later stirrup-jars and other pottery along with the tablets and sealings. This basic archaeological fact was all that I set out to establish, and Hood's finding, first proclaimed in 1964, has never to my knowledge been challenged. What has been rejected is his proposal to reclassify the LM IIIB pottery found with the tablets. It seems to me that we are close to overall agreement and that all that is needed is a clarification of certain scientific principles.

We must distinguish between fact, hypothesis, and dogma. Hood rightly stresses that the "reoccupation" is an hypothesis; in fact he says that it "was one of the most disastrous archaeological errors of all time." Dr. Alexiou counters with a scientific principle which is of wider interest. He submits that if he applies this hypothesis to other Cretan sites (where this is disputable), it must therefore also hold good of Knossos. Yet this leaves the unchallenged pattern of facts without explanation. Hood finds that the sole stratigraphic section adduced by Evans as decisive evidence for the chronology "was invented to support the 'Reoccupation' hypothesis."

Dr. Alexiou again changed his ground. Hood rightly says that the Last Palace, which had been repeatedly rebuilt, was a "botchy affair" compared to what the Palace had been in previous centuries. This is my own view (New Guide, 31), and we must not forget that in 1958 Blegen suggested that the Throne Room was a 13th century insertion. This admitted, Dr. Alexiou advances an interpretational dogma: such a "botchy" building could not have housed works of high artistic merit. But what Hood and I have established is that the final destruction deposit contained "the Lotus Lamp, the Spiral Cornice, the Miniature Frescoes, the Saffron Gatherer, and the Bull Relief," not to mention the tablets, sealings and stirrup-jars. This is a question of fact; yet Dr. Alexiou in this connexion speaks of my "theory" and my exaggerated pan-Mycenaean views.

Fact, hypothesis, and dogma again enter into another important association which is particularly relevant. No science can flourish which clings stubbornly to an historical picture based on false statements of fact. Much rethinking and rewriting remains to be done. A particularly important and irksome task awaits Dr. Alexiou himself. A museum is ideally an instrument of teaching and research. In archaeology it is of fundamental importance that objects should be exhibited in the context in which they were found. Why not make a start by bringing together the couple amphoras exhibited in the Post-Palatial room and some specimens chosen from the Great Deposit of tablets? This would provide an opportunity for scholars and their pupils to consider another interpretational dogma. The undeniable association of tablets with late pots was countered by J. Boardman's fire-dogma. What did Hood have to say about that? "This question had been argued in detail by Palmer and Boardman and the verdict of opinion had gone for Palmer, who had the support of Blegen to the effect that traces of burning on pottery involved in a fire destruction can be very erratic."

In conclusion let me state my conviction that we are very close to agreement. First let Aegean archaeologists concentrate on Hood's factual findings about the contents of the final destruction deposit. They have remained unchallenged for close on nine years. This done, let them devise hypotheses and advance dogmas to account for the stratigraphic picture which appears in every part of the Palace. This done, let them assess the dogmas and count the hypotheses. Then take a broader view: what other archaeological site, in the Aegean or elsewhere, has given rise to such interpretational dexterity and virtuosity as Knossos? May I finally, in all modesty, reaffirm my own single and simple purpose? Fortunately by way of illustration all I need is a quotation from Dr. Alexiou's own guide to his museum apropos of Gallery X, Case 138: "On the top shelf: Post-Palatial double vases from the west entrance of the Palace at Knossos; they were found near tablets written in the Linear B script and this is one of the pieces of evidence cited by Palmer who believes that the tablets

belong to the Mycenaean period." "North" should of course be read for "west" and "end of the Mycenaean period" would be more precise, but the ceramic association is frankly acknowledged. All the rest is hypothesis, dogma, and of course ceramic classification. In such matters I am simply an interested observer.

I feel sure that Dr. Alexiou, once he has reconsidered the matter with clear distinction between fact, hypothesis and dogma, will not be affected in his judgment by the possibility that "He [scil. L. R. P.] does not realise that he is changing the chronology of the whole of Late Minoan Crete." Did not Professor Doror Levi write some 13 years ago "We must wipe the slate clean and start all over again from the very beginning?"

Sistrans, Austria
12 March 1973

Yours, &c.
L. R. Palmer

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Mycenaean forms are referred to s.vv. ἀ-, ἄγγελος, ἄγγος, ἀγείρω, ἀγορά, ἀγρός, ἄγω, ἀδευκῆς, Ἀθήνη, Αἴας, αἶγ-, αἶγιαλός, αἶθω, αἶνυμαι, αἶξ, αἶχμή, ἀλείφω, ἀλεκτρυών, ἀλέξω, ἄλς, ἄμπυξ, ἀμφίπολος, ἀμφορεύς, ἀνά, ἄναξ, ἄνεμος, ἀνήρ, ἄνθρωπος, ἀντί, ἀντλος, ἄνυμι, ἄξων, ἀπό, ἀραρίσκω, ἄργυρος, ἀρείων, ἀρήν, Ἄρης, 1. ἄρμα, ἀρμόζω, ἄρουρα, Ἄρτεμις, ἄσαι, ἀσάμινθος, ἀσκέω, ἄστυ, 2. αὔω, Ἀχιλλεύς, βασιλεύς, βλήχων, βόσκω, βοῦς, γέρων, γλαυκός, γλυκός, γραύς, δάμαρ, δατέομαι, δέ, -δε, δέμνια, δέμω, δεξιός, δέχομαι, 1. δέω, δῆϊος, δῆμος, διάκονος, διδάσκω, δίδυμος, δίδωμι, δίκτυνα, δίκτυον, δίνη, δῖος, διφθέρα, δίψα, δοιοί, δολιχός, δρῦς, δύο, ἐ-, 1. ἐάνός, ἔγχος, εἰλύω, εἶμι, εἶμί, εἶρομαι, εἶρος, εἶς, Ἐκτωρ, ἐλαία, ἔλαφος, ἐλεύθερος, ἐλέφας, ἔν, ἔνεκα, ἐνιαυτός, ἐννεά, ἔνοσις, ἔντεα, Ἐνυάλιος, ἔξ, ἔπομαι, ἔργον, ἐρι-, ἐρίηρος, ἐρινεός, Ἐρινύς, Ἐρμῆς, ἔρυμαι, ἔτεός, ἔτος, εὐριπος, εὐρύς, 1. ἔχω, ζακός, ζεῦχος, Ζεύς, ζέφυρος, ζέω, ἡγέομαι, ἡλακάτη, ἡνία, ἡρως, Ἡφαιστος, θάλαμος, θέμις, θεός, 1. θέω, θήρ, θησεύς, θράνος, θρόνος, θυγάτηρ, θυεία, ἰδεῖν, ἱερός, ἴημι, ἰκέτης, ἵππος, 1. ἴς, ἰστός, ἰσχός, Ἴωνες, καίω, κακός, κάρρα, κάρδαμον, καρός, 2. κάρπασον, κάρυον, κασίγνητος, Κασσάνδρα, κέαζω, κεῖμαι, κέκασμαι, κελαινός, κέρας, κέρασος, κηθίς, κηρός, κιχάνω, κίων, κλείς, κλέος, κλύω, κόγχη, κοέω, κοῖλος, κόμη, κόπρος, κορέω, κόρυδος, κόρυς, κοτύλη, κτίζω, κύανος, κύκλος, κύμινον, κύπειρον, Κύπρος, κύριος, κύτισος, κυψέλη, κῶας, κῶμη, λᾶας, λαβύρινθος, λαός, λεία, λείπω, λευκός, λέχεται, λούω, λῶμα, μάραθρον, μένος, μήδομαι, 2. μήν, μήτις, μίλτος, μιν, μίνθη, ναῦς, νέομαι, νήπιος, νόος, ξένος, οἶνος, 1. ὄνυξ, ὄρος, οὔς, οὔτος, 2. ὀφέλλω, 2. ὄψ, παιάν, πάλαι, παρειαί, πᾶς, πάσσαλος, πέζα, πέκω, πέλεκυς, 1. πέλλα, πέρι, πίθος, πλοῦτος, ποικίλος, πολύς, πορφύρα, πότνια, πούς, πρίασθαι, πῶτος, ράπτω, ῥήγνυμι, ῥητίνη, ῥόδον, σιμός, σῖτος, σπάλαθρον, σταθμός, σφεῖς, τέκτων, τέλος, τέμνω, τῆτες, τίθημι, τρεῖς, τυρός, υἰός, φθάνω, φίλος, 2. od. 4. φοῖνιξ, φόνος, χεῖρ, ὤμος, 1. ὤς.

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