

Nestor

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COMMUNICATIONS

Notes from the Editors

With the beginning of the new academic year the editor, fresh from a sabbatical leave, resumes her duties, welcoming Brad Ault and Alexandra Kalogirou, both seasoned *Nestor* hands, as "new" assistant editors. We acknowledge the work of last year's staff, directed by Dr. Michael Fotiadis.

Unfortunately, increases in U.S. postage in recent years have stretched *Nestor's* budget to its limits. We must plead with you, our subscribers, to assist us in the following ways:

1. Please return your subscription renewals for volume 20 right away -- and those of you who have yet to send payment for volume 19 (you will have been so notified on the enclosed invoice), please do so immediately or we will have to cancel your subscription.
2. Please report changes of address in plenty of time for us to adjust our records. We are charged a fee for returned issues.
3. Please, if you have access to electronic mail, use it for communicating with us. You will receive a more timely reply and it will cost us less. Our electronic addresses will now appear on the masthead of each issue.

Nestor would like to have an idea of how many readers have easy access to computing facilities, including electronic mail. How many of you, for example, would find it useful to have each volume of *Nestor* on diskette? Please let us know.

Recent Lecture

The New York Aegean Bronze Age Colloquium met at The Institute of Fine Arts, One East 78th Street, September 10, 1992. Dr. Clairy Palyvou spoke on "Architectural Representations in Aegean Bronze Age Art."

Announcements

Research applications to the INSTITUTE FOR AEGEAN PREHISTORY (INSTAP) for 1993 funding should be submitted no later than December 1, 1992. Projects relevant to the history of the Aegean world from Paleolithic to the first Olympiad are eligible for funding, with some preference given to proposals for the publication or study of material from previously unpublished or partially published but no longer active excavations. The INSTAP Research Review Committee will consider applications during December and January; awards will be announced in late February 1993. The required application form may be requested from: Mrs. Adelaide L. Lewis, Director of Grant Programs, Institute for Aegean Prehistory, c/o the Millburn Corporation, 1270 Avenue of the Americas, New York, New York 10020-1795.

AMERICAN JOURNAL OF ARCHAEOLOGY - CALL FOR PAPERS ON AEGEAN PREHISTORY

A five-year grant from the Institute for Aegean Prehistory and other funds contributed by members of the Society for the *American Journal of Archaeology* are available to underwrite the cost of increasing the number of published articles in *AJA* in the field of prehistoric Aegean art and archaeology. In addition INSTAP is sponsoring the publication of an annual *AJA* review of archaeology in the prehistoric Aegean; the first installment will appear in the October 1992 issue. Authors wishing to submit papers for consideration for publication should consult "Editorial Policy, Notes for Contributors, and Abbreviations," *AJA* 95 (1991) 1-16. Most articles accepted for publication appear one year after the date of receipt of the manuscript. For further information, please contact the editors of *AJA*, Archaeological Institute of America, 675 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, Massachusetts 02215-1401, tel. 617-353-9364, fax 617-353-6550, bitnet ARC900@BUACCA.

Qu'il est permis de rire entre mycénologues...

The following find is too significant to keep secret any longer. This tablet was discovered in a private collection in Rome in October, 1991, at which time I was permitted to see and transcribe—but not to draw or photograph—it. Later I returned for a second look with José Melena, an expert in Knossian tablet joins and matters taureadorial. We present this text in hopes that the learned readers of *Nestor* may find it useful in their work and offer additional valuable commentary.

RO Li 1

- .1 te-qa-jo , a-pu *pa* ka-ru-to-jo
- .2 pu-ro-de , pe-re , *DE* ta-u-ro-jo
- .3 ta-ra-sa , ta-ra-ku-ja
- .4 na-u-qe , qa-ra-du-ja
- .5 i-ke-to , me-ta po-ro-wi-to-jo

lat. inf. [[me-ta-qe ku-na-ke pa-tu-ko-po-jo]]

Commentary:

The text seems to have the palaeographical characteristics of Knossian-Kydonian scribes and might have come from a Cretan site during the early years of excavation when tablets were occasionally handed out as souvenirs to distinguished visitors. The five lines of the recto of this tablet provide our first clear evidence that the Mycenaeans did indeed use their Linear B script for higher purposes than mere economic records. The five lines constitute a poem. Contrary to all of our expectations from the study of oral poetic tradition, the poem is not in hexameter and does not treat a lofty theme. However, its subject might be linked to the *nostos* tradition of travel adventures and even offer proof of the theories of scholars like S. Morris who posit a narrative literary tradition corresponding to such visual scenes as those in the ship frescoes from Thera.

The poet here tells a simple story, which we assume he could have expanded and embellished as the occasion required. His skills at versification are deft. Notice the subtle use of tablet-recording techniques in order to create a precise metrical pattern: an abbreviated adjunct (*pa* = *pa-ra-jo-jo* 'old, ancient') in line .1; a phonetic ideogram in line .2 (*DE* = *de-ma* 'hide'); and ellipsis of the word for month (*me-na*) in line .5. Given the telegraphic economy of his narrative and his understanding of scribal practices, it might not be too speculative to propose that he was trained as a scribe and then in his spare time used the art of writing to preserve the products of his Muse. For modern parallels compare Housman's career as a postal clerk.

The bottom edge of the tablet preserves traces of an erased line in the poet-scribe's hand. It seems to be his first attempt to expand the poem beyond the 5-line limerick format. José L. Melena first noticed, read and interpreted these *vestigia* when we were studying the tablet together in Rome in October, 1991. The rhythm and syntax of the sixth line is clumsier, but its content and imagery are certainly designed to appeal to an audience of male seafarers at a palatial banquet.

Translation:

Thebrios from ancient Karystos
 brought the hide of a bull down to Pylos.
 The sea tossed to and froly.
 And the ship traveled slowly.
 He arrived past the month of Ploiwistos.

[[And with women whose twin breasts form deep bays...]]

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 University of Texas at Austin
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 September 13, 1992

Errata

§920264 The three women listed as editors were, in fact, in charge of the production of the book. The editorial committee consisted of the following: Waldemar Chmielewski, Witold Hensel, Jerzy Kolendo, Maria Nowicka, Anna Sadurska, and Tadeusz Sarnowski.

§920483 Read "Rijksuniversiteit, Utrecht" instead of "Den Haag."

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