

Nestor

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COMMUNICATIONS

Notes from the Editors

Nestor makes every effort to report timely, complete and accurate information on new publications but our library is not immune to the current trends in cutbacks. That and the practice of some publishers of announcing new releases without specifying the date of publication have led us on occasion to errors and omissions. We apologize, and thank colleagues (especially John Cherry, Jack Davis and Bernard Knapp) who have helped correct old errors and avoid new ones.

Other authors could help us greatly by providing, or having their publishers provide us with early copies of the title page, including the date of publication, and, especially for edited volumes, a copy of the table of contents on which are noted the beginning and ending page numbers of each contribution.

Recent Meetings

The New York Aegean Bronze Age Colloquium met at the Institute of Fine Arts, One East 78th Street, October 29, 1992. Professor Robert Arnott spoke on "The Early Cycladic I Cemetery of Pelos, Melos: Approaching a Republication."

The 4th International Symposium on Minoan and Mycenaean Seals, was held 10-12 September 1992 at Clermont-Ferrand, France, under the direction of Professors Ingo Pini (CMS) and Jean-Claude Poursat (Université Blaise-Pascal). Professor John G. Younger, Department of Classical Studies, Duke University, North Carolina, kindly provided the information for the readers of *Nestor*.

At the Second Conference on Gender and Archaeology, October 16-17, 1992, at Appalachian State University in Boone, North Carolina, Diane Bolger (University of Maryland) presented a paper on "Ladies of the Expedition: Harriet Boyd, Edith Hall and the Feminization of Mediterranean Archaeology." Cheryl Claassen, organizer of the conference, reports plans to publish the proceedings.

Future Conferences

Tufts University and the Archaeological Institute of America, Boston Society, announce the 1992 Annual Colloquium on Sardinian Archaeology, to be held on Friday, November 6, 1992. The colloquium is entitled *Šrdn, Mycenaeans, Cypriots and Phoenicians: The 'Dark Age' in the West Mediterranean*. The session will start at 4:00 p.m in the Cabot Auditorium, Tufts University, Medford.

The Second International Festival of Films on European Archaeology: *Archeos 92*, will be held at the British Museum, London, UK, 23-28 November 1992. Contact: Mike Corbishley, Head of Education, English Heritage, Keysign House, 429 Oxford Street, London W1R 2HD, UK.

The Theoretical Archaeology Group will meet in Southampton this year. Booking forms will be circulated in October 1992. Contact: EuroTAG Organizing Committee, Department of Archaeology, University of

Southampton, Southampton SO9 5NH, UK. FAX: (0)703-593939 (mark "TAG, Department of Archaeology"). E-mail: csg@UK.ac.soton.mail

A symposium entitled From the Bronze to the Iron Age will be held in Ravello, Italy in 1993. Contact: Centre Universitaire Européen pour les Biens Culturels, Villa Rufolo, I 84010 Ravello, Italy.

The International Conference on the Human Uses of Caves will be held in Newcastle upon Tyne, UK, 6-9 July 1993. Contact: Dr. Christopher Smith, Department of Archaeology, The University, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 7RU, UK.

The International Union of Prehistoric and Protohistoric Sciences will meet at the University of Sydney, Australia, 25-29 July 1993. Contact: Trish Pemberton, UISPP93 Conference Secretary, Prehistoric and Historical Archaeology, c/o Anthropology A14, University of Sydney, NSW 2006, Australia. E-mail: Ian.Johnson@Antiquity.Su.Edu.Au

15th International Radiocarbon Conference, Glasgow, Scotland, UK, 14-18 August 1994. Contact: International Radiocarbon Conference, c/o Mrs. M. Smith, Department of Statistics, University of Glasgow, Glasgow G12 8QW, Scotland, UK.

Request for information...

For a study of the excavations by Christos Tsountas and Klon Stephanos in the Early Cycladic cemetery at Chalandriani on Syros, I am looking for any original documents by Tsountas or Stephanos about their work on Syros. If any reader knows of such documentation or has suggestions of where to look or ask for them, I would greatly appreciate the information. Contact: Jan Jaap Hekman, Institute for Art History, Architectural History and Archaeology, State University of Groningen, P.O. Box 716, 9700 AS Groningen, Netherlands.

Announcement

Professor B. Rutkowski wishes to inform *Nestor* readers that his book *Petsofas. A Cretan Peak Sanctuary* (§920223) can be ordered from its publisher, Art and Archaeology, c/o Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw, Poland. (US\$ 48.00 (surface mail), US\$ 51.50 (air mail for Europe), and US\$ 56.50 (air mail outside Europe)).

News Item

Sturt W. Manning, Department of Classics, University of Reading, UK, sent *Nestor* the following: "Santorini, ice-cores and tree-rings: Resolution of the 1645 or 1628 BC debate?" In the last decade publications by scientists working respectively on ice-core, and tree-ring material, have suggested precise datings for a major climatic/atmospheric, and probably volcanic event in the 17th century BC (*Nature* 307:121-126; 328:517-519; 332:344-346). The ice-core date was 1645+/-7 BC. The tree-ring date was 1628-26+/-0 BC. Are these the same event? Given the remarkably small claimed errors, these similar, but different, datings have lead to some debate. The apparent coincidence prompted some to try to conflate them (*Nature* 335:211-212). However, conflation involves error or overconfidence by one or more parties. Since the tree-ring chronology is fixed, and based on actual physical counting of tree-rings for every year back to 1628/27, and is replicated from two continents, ice-core dating seemed the obvious target. After all, some very small error is admitted, and everyone remembered that the ice-core team had only proposed 1645 BC after withdrawing a previous date of 1390+/-50 BC (because of problems subsequently recognised with the particular ice-core). But the ice-core team rejected such arguments, stating that "... we are reluctant to accept that the two events occurred at the same time" (*Thera and the Aegean World III*, vol. 3:177). In other words they argued for two events (each not recorded by the other medium). Is this correct?

Readers of *Nestor* may therefore be interested to examine an article by S.J. Johnsen et al. in a recent edition of *Nature* 359(1992):311-313. It represents the first information on the new Summit ice-core. The recent part of this core is dated by cross-reference with volcanic acidity layers dated in the existing Dye 3 core (the source of the 1645 BC date above). In Table 1, the authors list key volcanic acid layers in the Dye 3 core which also occur in the Summit core. As in the case of previous ice-core dates for major volcanic acid layers, the majority correspond closely to dates from tree-rings for major unusual low growth or frost-ring events (excluding specifically polar eruptions such as in Iceland) (e.g. refs. above; *World Archaeology* 23:233-243). In general, in the instances of a 'match' between the two types of records, the ice-core dates either agree with the tree-ring dates within the stated error or are slightly older. In particular, note the period 0-2500 BC (converting the authors' BP from AD 1990 dates). The only three ice-core events listed are 49+/-5 BC, 1646+/-7 BC and 2050+/-10 BC. Compare the respective tree-ring dates for similarly dated major tree-ring events in this period: 44-42 BC, 1628-26 BC, and 2035 BC. The remarkable correspondence is surely not a coincidence. The tree-ring and ice-core records appear to reflect the same major events. It is difficult to accept the alternative argument that there was a series of instances of closely spaced 'pairs' of separate events (and that one half of the 'pair' was always missed by the other medium). In this case, it is also evident that the ice-core dates appear to be systematically just a little too high: by 5-7+/-5 years, by 18-20+/-7 years, and by 15+/-10 years. A very small correction, or a larger error allowance, seems necessary for the ice-core dates.

In these circumstances, the tree-ring event of 1628-1626 BC is perhaps given new validity as representing the single, major, climatic/atmospheric event of the period in and around the 17th century BC. Moreover, the evidence of sulphuric acid in the ice-core record shows its cause to be a major volcanic eruption. From radiocarbon evidence, and a re-evaluation of the archaeological evidence, some scholars might then seek to link 1628-26 BC with the great eruption of the Santorini volcano... (N.B. The recent arguments based on petrologic evidence that the sulphur production of the Santorini eruption was too low to account for the measured ice-core acidity have now been shown to be irrelevant - S. Manning in *OJA* 1992:vol.11(3):in press).

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ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS ISSUE

Ancient Israel

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Pastorizia I

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