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COMMUNICATIONS

From the Editors

We would remind all subscribers that until May 15, 1995, checks for *Nestor* subscriptions and *Nestor*-on-diskette orders should be made payable to the "Indiana University Foundation" and sent to the above address. After May 15, 1995, checks should be made payable to "Nestor, University of Cincinnati." They and all other *Nestor* correspondence should be sent to Nestor, Department of Classics, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati OH 45221-00226. The *Nestor* office will close when the May issue is mailed, and will reopen, in Cincinnati, in September.

Recent Lectures and Conferences

A "Semaine Cycladique" was held at the Institute of Art and Archaeology at the University of Paris, I, 20-24 March 1995. The Conference revolved around the four following lectures: March 20, 1995: Mariza Marthari, "Le site de Skarkos dans l'île d' Ios: un habitat à l'apogée du Cycladique Ancien;" March 21, 1995: Robin Barber, "Cycladic Bronze Age Sculpture: Its Range, Functions, and Significance;" March 22, 1995: Mariza Marthari, "Théra au début du Bronze Moyen: les données de la fouille et leur interpretation;" March 24, 1995: Robin Barber, "The Mycenaean Conquest of Phylakopi: History or Fantasy?"

The New York Aegean Bronze Age Colloquium met at the Institute of Fine Arts, One East 78th Street, Wednesday, April 19, 1995. Dr. David O'Connor spoke on "Far Frontiers: Egypt, Punt and the Aegean."

Future Lectures and Conferences

The XVIIth International Symposium of Excavations, Surveys, and Archaeometry in Turkey, organized by the Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Culture, and the General Directorate of Monuments and Museums, will be held May 29-June 2, 1995, at the National Library at Ankara.

New Journal

The Journal of Material Culture is a new interdisciplinary journal edited by Daniel Miller and Christopher Tilley (UK), James Clifford (USA), and Nicholas Thomas (Australia). It is concerned with the relationship between artifacts and social relations irrespective of time and place. It aims to systematically explore the linkage between the construction of social identities and the production and use of material culture. The first issue will appear March 1996. The journal is accepting papers. For further details and subscription information please contact: Jonathan Carter at Sage Publications, e-mail: "carter@sageltd.co.uk."

Announcements

The Indiana University Art Museum is pleased to announce the opening of the exhibition: "A Golden Legacy: Ancient Jewelry from the Burton Y. Berry Collection." The exhibition will open on September 6, 1995 and run until December 17, 1995 at the Indiana University Art Museum in Bloomington, Indiana.

Letters to the Editors

To the Editors:

I have given careful consideration to the thesis of Monsieur Anonymasinus ("Le Disque de Phaistos enfin déchiffré") distributed lately in *Nestor*, according to which the Phaistos Disk really is a "Game of Goose".

Unfortunately, the author fails to address the arguments I made in *Nestor* 6:3 (March 1979) 1351, wherein I established that the Phaistos Disk is in fact a pasta press, a conclusion which has since gained general acceptance.

I refer Anonymasinus to my original publication, which received additional support in the following issue of Nestor.

Signed, Bill Hansen, Dept. of Classical Studies, Indiana University, Bloomington.

(For the benefit of those who do not have ready access to 1979 Nestors, we reprint the original letter from Bill Hansen below.)

To the Editors:

I have often sat at my desk gazing upon my color-foto of the Phaistos Disc, fully realizing that real truths and discoveries come to those who sit and stare rather than to those who get bogged down in analysis and data and charts and the rest. For months the answer has been on the tip of my tongue, I was sure. Today it flew from there to my consciousness, as I gazed at Nestor, p. 1339, where I saw that the word <u>makirone</u> has surprisingly been read on a tablet from Knossos, which as you know, is not really far from Phaistos at all. Surely <u>makirone</u> is present-day <u>macarone</u>, which in turn explains all the cute little designs on the old disc. The disc is nothing other than a pasta press, or mold, once belonging to the royal chef. You have my permission to publish this important finding in *Nestor*.

News

We would like to thank Helen Hughes-Brock for sending us the following note published in *Paleopathology* Newsletter 89 (1995):13.

'Lead has been eroding European women's skin for at least 3000 years.' This was the arresting lead of a short article (Science 265:1655, 16 September 1994) reported to us by E.J. Neiburger (Waukegan, IL). The team of archaeologists who recently discovered 50 grams of toxic face powder in a 3,000 year old tomb in a Mycenaean cemetery in Greece published their findings in the well known British journal, The Lancet. "This pushes back by half a millennium the date of lead-containing cosmetic use in Europe," says Athanasios Diamandopoulos, a physician and archaeologist from Patras, Greece. The question is: Have any paleopathologists been involved in this discovery, and what are their views on the interpretation? Lest anyone feel that this problem is confined to females, Dr. Diamandopoulos points out that during the Roman Empire, triumphant generals beautified themselves with lead face powders before victory parades. 'Vanity has proved resistant to the health warnings about lead cosmetics that have been issued since at least the Hellenistic period, and lead hair dyes are still in use.'

Provocative as ever, Dr. Neiburger comments: Today there exists a concept of 'zero risk at any price.' Clinically, there was little danger of harm from lead based cosmetics, as so little was absorbed by the tissues as to have insignificant health effects. Considering that the average Roman citizen drank acid wine from lead containers, got water from lead pipes, and took a variety of medications made from lead compounds, a little lead in makeup posed no hazard (especially as the average Roman lived only to age 32). Paleopathology has a unique opportunity to benefit our present society by showing that small amounts of heavy metal posed no significant risk to humans in the past. This may allow us to redirect our limited resources away from the unattainable 'zero risk' and towards the higher priority problems of our day.'

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