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TIRYNTIA SEMATA\*

The earliest reference to writing in Greece names Tiryns. Not only does this reference come from the earliest piece of Greek literature we possess, the Homeric epics, but here in the *Iliad* it relates to the earliest period known by tradition, several generations before the Trojan War. A tablet was sent from Tiryns to Asia Minor with many signs written on it in a sinister script, and the *Iliad* says clearly γράψας πολλά on the tablet<sup>1</sup>. When one reads this passage, one can hardly think of archaic Greek inscriptions but far more easily of our Linear B tablets, with their many thousands of record-keeping tallies and frustrating religious allusions or references, which make one wish that those busy scribes had left among their tablets enumerating myriads of sheep and other commodities at least one coherent record of a longer document with a recognizable syntax. Here we seem to find precisely such a tablet in the *Iliad* as having been sent from Tiryns! Yet it is just Tiryns that has not yielded a scrap of evidence of writing on a tablet, not a fragment of one. It would be wrong to blame the excavators, for in 1926 and 1927 K. Müller made very extensive soundings all over the palace, and he is a very careful man who would certainly have noticed even the smallest fragment of a tablet or a seal. Tiryns has yielded to the excavators only a few fragments of pots with Linear B signs on them, quite obviously just to show them that Tirynthians could read and write after all<sup>2</sup>. They are dated by the accompanying pottery to the 13th century B. C.<sup>3</sup>: but though Verdelis recently made several soundings in precisely this level, no fragments of

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<sup>1</sup> *Il.* vi. 168—170

<sup>2</sup> K. Müller, *Tiryns* III 13; A. Wace and F. Stubbings, *Companion to Homer*, 1962, 354, 453

<sup>3</sup> cf. Wace and Stubbings, *Companion to Homer*, 548

tablets or seals turned up at Tiryns as they do in Mycenae and Pylos<sup>4</sup>.

Tradition tells us that the king who wrote that letter with the sinister script was also responsible for the walls that made Tiryns so famous throughout antiquity<sup>5</sup>. They were already known to Homer who, in the *Iliad* (II. 559), gives Tiryns the epithet "strongly walled", *τειχιόεσσα*, an epithet he reserves for two cities only, Tiryns and Gortyna<sup>6</sup>. Indeed, the walls of Tiryns are very conspicuous all over the Argive plain even in their ruined state, and they must have looked still more impressive in antiquity. Pausanias 9.36.5 calls the walls of Tiryns no less miraculous than the famous pyramids of Egypt so often described by "distinguished historians"; and in 2.25.8 he claims that they were built by the *Kyklopes* of stones so huge that a pair of mules could not move the smallest from its place in the slightest degree. Yet when one examines these walls closely one finds that, apart from a few strong points where they are really massive, they form, for the most part, and particularly around the upper palace (where one would expect them to be massive) simply walls of pretence. They consist of a very large rubble core with comparatively thin facings of enormous size<sup>7</sup>. Their Cyclopean structure is in many cases merely a pretence designed to impress others. Their main objective is to give the impression of impregnable strength.

Yet another thing is strange about Tiryns. The two big Cyclopean Galleries (in the east and the south walls) are well known and often illustrated, for they really are an amazing piece of megalithic architecture in every respect. Yet do we know what purpose they served? No, we do not, we have no idea what they were for. First one thought of course they were for defence purposes, but Kurt Müller (Tiryns III 66) quite rightly opposes the conventional explanation of covered galleries for archers, for there are far too few loopholes or openings and these are much too wide. He puts forward the idea that they might be for storage purposes, but when you see them, this seems equally absurd, for the storage room they would provide is very small indeed, and the immense labour and architectural skill devoted to them would, in that case, appear pointless. Subterranean storage space could have been made

<sup>4</sup> Verdelis, A. E. 1956, suppl. p. 5

<sup>5</sup> Paus. ii. 16.5; Str. viii. 373

<sup>6</sup> Il. ii. 559, 646

<sup>7</sup> cf. Tiryns III 30, fig. 21

available in other parts of the citadel quite easily without architectural feats of impressive galleries with windows. Besides, storage pithoi would certainly have left some traces in these galleries. The fact is, we simply do not know their purpose<sup>8</sup>.

Now, we call this elaborate megalithic technique of the latest Mycenaean period generally Cyclopean. It can be dated to the 13th century B. C.: but in antiquity it was called Pelasgian all over Greece, except in the Argolid where its name was Cyclopean. Here the name *Kyklópia* is explained as being the work of *Kyklopes* who came from over the sea, from Lycia in Asia Minor, and who first built the stronghold of Proitos, the first king of Tiryns. These *ἔργα κυκλώπια* are of course mentioned by Pausanias in several places when he talks of Tiryns, Mycenae and Midea. They are also mentioned by Pliny, by Strabo, and by Apollodorus<sup>9</sup>. We are here not concerned with all the stories about these barbaric monsters called *Kyklopes*. What we intend to do is to trace the history of their connexions with Tiryns and to find the literary source for these accounts.

Pliny himself (7.195) refers back to Aristotle in the 4th century, but already Euripides in the 5th century mentions the *Kyklópia* in four of his plays, and in one passage he calls the whole of the Argolid "*Kykloopia*"<sup>10</sup>. Still earlier in the 5th century, Pindar (fr. 642) mentions the *Kyklopi*an builders, but only in connexion with Tiryns where he sings of the *κυκλώπια πρόθυρα*. That the earliest connexion of the *Kyklopes* was only with Tiryns is of course implicit even in Strabo's account (8.373) where he says they came by invitation from Lycia to king Proitos of Tiryns, and they were called *Γαστερόχειρες* i. e. "*Bellyhands*", which epithet Strabo explains by saying "because they got their food from their handi-

<sup>8</sup> Mrs. Helen Waterhouse has made a very interesting suggestion: Since in the Late Bronze Age horses were among the most precious possessions, might these two galleries at Tiryns have been the safe shelters for the most valuable horses during a siege, built for the purpose of keeping them safe to the last minute and thus enabling the chiefs to make a final sally or sortie when all seemed lost? They would thus be in some ways an equivalent to the gallery leading to the sally-port at the Hittite capital Hattusa. It is a fact that the Tirynthian galleries were used as shelters for animals during hundreds of years and were deemed ideal for this purpose. Their stones are beautifully polished, the work of myriads of sheep — but cattle and horses were also kept there.

<sup>9</sup> Paus. ii. 16. 5; 20. 7; 25. 8; 28. 8; vii. 25. 5; Pliny vii. 195; Strabo viii. 373; Apollod. ii. 24ff.

<sup>10</sup> e. g. Eurip., *Her. Fur.* 944f.; *Iph. Aul.* 152, 1500

craft". However, this strange epithet *Gasterócheires* is also to be found in Pollux (1. 5. 50) who makes it perfectly clear that it derives from a passage about the Kyklopes in Hekataios of Miletos. The rationalizing explanation of this epithet must have been included in the passage of Hekataios, for this is his characteristic way of dealing with such matters. It is most likely that Strabo simply lifted the whole passage, as he often does. The reference to Lycia links up well with the story of Bellerophon and Proitos in Homer's Iliad book VI, which, as we shall see, was based on a tradition derived from Miletos.

It seems to me that this odd epithet *Gasterócheires* in Hekataios of Miletos may well be derived through oral tradition (with its occasional corrupting influence) from the Homeric *Hekátóncheires*. While "hundred-armed giants" seems a more primary and natural concept of human imagination, the "belly-hands" sound like a secondary explanation attached to a misunderstood derivation, though there have been some tentative suggestions to equate both with a mythological concept of the Octopus. In book I of the Iliad, Homer names one of these Hekatoncheires and says, the gods call him Briareos but the men all call him Aigaion<sup>11</sup>. In Hesiod's Theogony (139—153) Kyklopes and Hekatoncheires are grouped together, and so they are in the Titanomachia which is ascribed to Arktinos of Miletos<sup>12</sup>. What is said of these Hekatoncheires, these hundred-armed giants, that they piled blocks of stone upon blocks of stone, is simply a description of the Erga Kyklopia. Homer's Cyclops in the Odyssey could do the same (Od. IX. 240—243) and not even 22 four-wheeled waggons could move the stone from its place.

However, it might well be that both Hekataios and the oral tradition of epic poetry had a common source. For it could be that both epithets *Gasterocheires* and *Hekatoncheires* are not derived from each other but from an earlier word the first part of which was pre-Greek and no more understood. I can quote a nice analogy for this: the Austrian word "Katzelmacher" is a derogatory nickname used for Italians only, describing them as catty, sly and faithless. But this word was already in use during the 17th and 18th centuries for the Italian architects and builders who gave their valuable help

<sup>11</sup> Il. i. 403. For the Octopus suggestion cf. H. T. Rose, Greek Mythology, p. 22, and Roscher I 142

<sup>12</sup> For the Titanomachia cf. Photios, Epitome of the Chrestomathy of Proclus: "Τρεῖς παῖδας ἑκατοντάχειρας καὶ τρεῖς γεννῶσι Κύκλωπας".

in building Vienna's fortifications and bastions, for it originally meant "fort-builders". Bastions were called by the Latin word *Castra*, transformed into *Katzen* or *Katzeln* in the Viennese dialect by popular etymology, and currently described as such in print at the time. Since later this meaning was no longer understood, a new popular meaning had to be given, and since 1866 it was generally believed that it meant cattish, faithless people. But even this is now being forgotten, and the popular belief at present is simply that it refers to the many cats running about the streets in Italy. Such re-interpretations and gradual changes of meaning occur very frequently. In fact, I think that in spite of their big round eyes, a typically Greek rationalization already occurring in Homer and Hesiod, the name *Kyklopes* itself is a non-Greek word, adapted to the Greek tongue and inevitably given some kind of popular meaning. Names like *Kyklops* and *Kekrops* (the *l* and *r* after gutturals are interchangeable) and *Kerkopes* are interrelated. This group of names is not Greek. It belongs to an earlier stratum: but I think it would hardly serve any useful purpose to try and derive it from any other language by the well-known method of *Kling-Klang* etymology. Anyhow, what has become clear is that our earliest sources for the stories about the *Kyklopes* and their buildings are the *Epics* and *Hekataios*. An analysis shows pretty conclusively that these *Kyklopes* are derivative and that they originated in Asia Minor. Our literary sources point to *Miletos*. Further than that we cannot go. For the Greeks, they were builders of great renown, craftsmen of baffling dexterity and incredible physical strength, who were held responsible for any imposing constructions of pre-Greek times, especially in the *Argolid*. One thing is certain; they were not regarded as Greek, but as strangers to the land of Greece. In the *Argolid*, the tradition was definite: they had come from *Lycia* in Asia Minor.

It is very significant that a purely archaeological investigation into the building technique of the walls of *Tiryns* leads exactly in the same direction. Mention has already been made of those strange, elaborately built galleries at *Tiryns*, the purpose of which one does not know. *Tiryns* does not share these with other palaces or strongholds of the Mycenaean period, except for a vaulted passage to the spring at *Mycenae* which was built later than the *Tiryns* galleries. The only parallel one has been able to find, indeed the prototype, is that of *Hattusa* in *Anatolia*, the capital of the Hittite kingdom, modern *Boghaz-Köy*. It is a very clear parallel. The construction is

extremely similar, the dimensions are nearly the same, and the appearance is very much alike in most respects<sup>13</sup>.

But Hattusa is a far cry from the Argolid. Besides, the purpose of the Hittite gallery construction is perfectly clear: it is a built-up passage leading underneath the walls to a sally-port. It was not tunnelled, but built up in a Cyclopean manner, and the walls and ramparts and fortifications erected above it. It serves its purpose admirably; the construction has its proper function; but it is a Cyclopean gallery and looks like the ones at Tiryns except that the latter have no such function. The construction at Hattusa is dated by documents to the time of Hantilis, about 1520 B. C. Before him, only the citadel (Büyük-Kale) had been fortified<sup>14</sup>.

Hantilis constructed a new fortification line to include all the northern parts of the lower town, and it is in this line that the sally-port and the gallery are situated. This line of fortification has been adequately traced by archaeological soundings, and its date of construction has been confirmed. The fortification system of Hattusa was renewed in the 14th century by Suppiluliuma who also included the southern part of the town in the system. But the earlier ramparts of Hantilis were not moved by Suppiluliuma or the later Hittite kings, only additional ones constructed, and the sally-port belongs to the earlier constructions. At Tiryns, the Cyclopean galleries belong to the third phase of fortifications, which dates them to the 13th century. There is thus a considerable time lag, and this may account for the different purpose of the Tiryns galleries. For though we do not know their precise function, we do know that they were not leading to sally-ports.

At Hattusa, the Hittite capital, we may also find the reasons for another constructional anomaly in the walls of Tiryns, the sham facing of a rubble core. The Hittite technique of fortification walls has been thoroughly investigated. From the Old Empire to the end of the New Empire, it remained substantially the same: the stone blocks were carefully shaped, cut if at all possible at right angles and so closely fitted together that no mortar was needed nor any packing of smaller stones. Thus there was no need to construct a solid massive wall: on the contrary, it was better to build up two single facing walls, of which the outer one was always thicker than the inner one, and then to fill the space between these two walls

<sup>13</sup> Riemschneider, *Die Welt der Hethiter*, pl. II

<sup>14</sup> K. Bittel, *MDOG* 88, p. 9; H. Otten in Schmökel, *Kulturgeschichte des alten Orient*, p. 347; *MDOG* 93, p. 10ff.; 97, p. 70

with rubble and smallish stones. At regular intervals, the two wall facings were tied together by transversal walling. This constructional method had the advantage that it could be adapted to walls of any thickness, and the careful fitting technique could be applied without any break or joint, whatever the length and whatever the thickness of the finished wall was to be. Such walls have until now only been found at Hattusa and in Cilicia, but in no other country. They must be regarded as characteristically Hittite. In western Asia Minor, however, this Hittite technique was adapted to local traditions. The system of two walls with a rubble core was adopted and used wherever possible in order to simulate the massive Hittite walls. But the stone blocks were of irregular shape, often polygonal, and were not fitted closely together (it was only in the Hellenistic period that closely fitted polygonal walls came into being). These irregular blocks were aligned by the insertion of smallish stones and clay packing. Thus the whole purpose and *raison d'être* of the Hittite technique was stultified, although the method itself was adopted. This was the kind of construction in western Asia Minor, during the Hittite period, from Lesbos and Akalan in the north to Miletos in the south.

On the other hand, at Troy we find a completely different kind of fortification technique and wall construction, much more akin to the methods used in the Levant (e. g. Ugarit), while the pre-Hittite wall constructions at Beycesultan show more affinities with Cretan and with Syrian methods. In western Asia Minor, Miletos seems to be the connecting link between the Anatolian fortification systems and those of the Aegean area. Its massive city wall of the early 13th century B. C., with its bastions spaced at regular intervals, looks like an exact replica of the latest Hittite city wall of Hattusa (14th century). Yet all the other finds from Miletos show quite clearly that it was a purely Mycenaean town, and its close connexions with the Argolid are proved by its pottery<sup>15</sup>. The most recent German excavations at Miletos have fully confirmed this picture.

In Tiryns, the citadel occupies a ridge which rises abruptly from the alluvial plain of Argos. The area is roughly 4 acres and the height about 80 feet. The earliest wall dates from c. 1350 B. C. and consists of enormous blocks of stone, weighing several tons

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<sup>15</sup> V. Desborough, *The Last Mycenaeans*, 162 and 220; *Istanb. Mitt.* IX—X. 37 ff.

each, quite irregular in shape and not well trimmed. The wall is about 20 feet thick, has a very large inner core of smallish stones and rubble, with two facings of solid blocks on either side, the outer face being appreciably thicker than the inner one. The stone blocks are fitted together by the insertion of small stones and clay packing. This is the famous first Cyclopean wall. Its construction is so similar to the one used both contemporaneously and earlier in Asia Minor, that its sudden appearance in Greece on such a scale certainly implies its introduction from Anatolia. The citadel was enlarged a generation later by including the lower terrace, but then in the 13th century further additions were made, including the galleries to the east and south<sup>16</sup>. Thus in each of the phases we find Hittite techniques introduced and adapted to innovations in the Argolid, first at Tiryns and then in the innermost corner of the Argive plain, at Mycenae.

I have tried to show that, on a purely archaeological basis, the building techniques employed at Tiryns were what we may call derivative. There did exist important native building traditions in Tiryns (we know that from the enigmatic circular building of the E. H. period) but these were based on an entirely different technique. Nor should we perhaps underestimate the influence of Minoan architecture from Crete. In fact this is very noticeable within the Tirynthian palace itself, as we all know: but the technique of the walls and galleries of Tiryns derives from a different source. In any case, Minoan Crete did not specialize in fortresses and had no use for such techniques. It is really in Asia Minor that we find the models for the fortress towns and the citadels of the Argolid. In the 14th and 13th centuries B. C. there was clearly a rapid development and renewal of fortification techniques in the Argolid, particularly in Tiryns and Mycenae. All the innovations can be traced to Anatolia, and the link in the 13th century was Miletos, as the recent German excavations have shown.

The 14th and 13th centuries are precisely the period for which the Hittite documents prove increasingly close relations between Anatolia and the Aegean area<sup>17</sup>. The focus of these relations is the west coast of Asia Minor. From Greece we have no such historical documents, but in the Homeric epics we find preserved an episode which throws considerable light on these close relations between

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<sup>16</sup> Tiryns III 207—218; Desborough loc. cit. 79 and 221

<sup>17</sup> cf. O. Gurney, *The Hittites*, p. 46ff.



Greece and Asia Minor. I am referring to the story of Bellerophon with which I started this paper, and which provides the very earliest reference to a written document in Greek literature, clearly placing it into the prehistoric period of Greece in the Bronze Age. The reference cannot possibly be a later addition to the original legend of Bellerophon, for it is not incidental to the story but its very *raison d'être*. In fact the whole legend of Bellerophon hinges on it. Homer speaks of the sinister script of this letter, *σήματα λυγρά*, which the king of Tiryns wrote on an enclosed tablet, many words with a soul-destroying, poisonous message, *θυμοφθόρα πολλά*. The Homeric passage indicates that the many words were written in signs (*σήματα*) and not in alphabetic characters (*γράμματα* which would have had exactly the same metrical value as *σήματα*). This shows that the Greeks of the 8th and 7th centuries were not unfamiliar with the knowledge that an earlier script had been in use in Bronze Age Greece and that it had been suitable for lengthy messages and diplomatic letters. This is an important point. The question then arises, what were these "semata" thought to be? What was this Tirynthian script of the Mycenaean period?

The obvious answer would seem to be: Linear B. Indeed, the fact that Linear B was known in Tiryns is proved by a number of jar fragments found on two sides of the forecourt to the palace. They have Linear B signs painted on them. Even if we assume that these signs were applied to them at their place of provenance and not at Tiryns, it still means that the Tirynthians could read them. However, if we suggest that the lengthy diplomatic letter mentioned in the *Iliad* was written in Linear B script, this would imply that Linear B could be read and understood in Asia Minor, and for this we do not have the slightest shred of evidence. Furthermore, it seems to me doubtful whether Linear B could be used for any diplomatic correspondence. It is, as far as we know it, essentially a palace shorthand used by the scribes for storage records, account tallies, census notes and such brief memoranda. To use it for diplomatic correspondence would require the inclusion of a disproportionate number of determinative signs or ideograms, and would probably make each diplomatic document or letter more potentially soul-destroying and poisonous than the Tirynthian letter described in the *Iliad*! Homer's "sinister script" is hardly Linear B. There have of course been many unnecessary controversies created by Linear B, and some regard it now for this reason as a "sinister script". But that does not give it a claim to be the *σήματα λυγρά*

of the *Iliad*. We have to look for a script that was used for diplomatic correspondence between kings and princes across the Aegean, if we want to interpret the passage in the *Iliad*.

Another question concerns the language in which the Tirynthian letter was written. To be precise: in what language did the Homeric poets, the singers who recited their poems, and the audience who listened to them, intend or imagine this letter to have been written? One usually assumes that it was in Greek, because the bearer of the letter was a Greek hero living in Greece, and because his own descendants were later chosen by the Ionians in many cities to be their kings, which certainly implies that they were Greek speaking. In my opinion, however, the exact opposite should be true. The audience listening to the Homeric recitals were Greeks. To them it would seem obvious that a poisonous message with a death warrant for the bearer should not be written in the language known to the bearer but in a different one, in case the seal got broken or removed and the bearer opened the letter<sup>18</sup>. This was surely an elementary precaution. But if the language of the letter was not Greek, what was it?

The king of Tiryns who wrote this letter was called Proitos. There is no such Greek personal name. In the *Iliad* it was clearly meant to convey to the audience the meaning of the Greek word *prôtos* "the first" or *pro-itos* "foremost", i. e. this was simply the foremost and first king of Tiryns, and his name is a descriptive adjective. His brother Akrisios bears another descriptive adjective as a name, and was the father of Danae. But Danae is no proper personal name either, it is merely the feminine form of *Dánaos* and simply means a Danaan maiden. Now, if she is a Danaan girl, her father must be a Danaan man, a Danaos, whatever his personal or descriptive name. In fact, the Greeks of later times regarded him as grandson of Danaos, restating in this genealogical way that Proitos of Tiryns and his brother Akrisios and the latter's daughter Danae were really Danaans. They were neither Greeks, nor Achaeans, but princes of the Danaoi who are so often mentioned in Homer.

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<sup>18</sup> The message that Hamlet has to take to England is his own death warrant. But it was not entrusted to him. His two German friends had to carry it and keep it safe. Yet Hamlet manages to break the seal and read the message. This was a danger inherent in the situation, of course, but no attempt at cipher-writing or cryptography had been made. The reason is simply that this would have made the message ambiguous. Probably it was not in Danish, since it was addressed to a king in England, but there is no doubt that Hamlet knew more than one language.

"Achaeans and Danaans" is the way the army before Troy is always described and addressed in the *Iliad*.

These Danaans are almost certainly also mentioned in the Egyptian records of Ramses III in the 12th century B. C. as the Denen, and they may also figure on one relief in the Ramesseum at Thebes of the time of Ramses II in the 13th century B. C.<sup>19</sup>

Very much more doubtful in many ways seems to me any connexion between the Danaans and the land Danuna of the Amarna period mentioned in a letter by Abi-milki, prince of Tyre. Another occurrence in the Amarna letters is certainly wrong, for the name is almost completely restored and has the determinative of a single person<sup>20</sup>. On the other hand, the Bilingual of Karatepe in Cilicia of the 8th century definitely relates to Azzitawanda, king of the Dnnyim or Danana<sup>21</sup>. The king claims descent from Mopsus who came from western Asia Minor. Whatever their connexion with the city of Adana, Hittite Adaniya, these Dnnyim or Danana certainly recall the Danaans, for their language is Luvian and closely related to Lycian. The Bilingual shows the Luvian text accompanied by the Phoenician text, for at this period Phoenician and Aramaean had become the lingua franca of south-western Asia<sup>22</sup>. Obviously, therefore, the traditional native language of these Danaans was Luvian, as was the language of the Lycians.

This is fully in agreement with the story of the Tirynthian letter, its connexions with the Lycians, and the Bellerophon story. Before Bellerophon came to live at the court of Proitos in Tiryns, Proitos himself had been living among the Lycians. He had formerly been expelled from Argos by his brother Akrisios and had fled across the Aegean to the king of the kindred Lycians in Asia Minor, Iobates (also called Amisodaros and Amphianax), who had received him as an honoured guest and had given him in marriage his daughter Anteia (also called Stheneboia). With a Lycian army he returned and defeated Akrisios, compelling him to hand over the ancient site of Tiryns. Here the Lycian Kyklopes built him a city of impregnable strength, the famous citadel of Tiryns. This is the clue to the language of that earliest written document in Greek tradition,

<sup>19</sup> Ramses II: Champollion, *Monum.* IV 332; Ramses III: R. O. Faulkner, *CAH II* fasc. 52 (1966) 28 (Ch. XXIII); cf. A. H. Gardiner, *Onomastica I* 124ff.

<sup>20</sup> *Amarna Letters* E. A. 151, 52; 117, 92. Knudtzon p. 1218, 1252

<sup>21</sup> But cf. O. Gurney, *The Hittites* p. 42, 130; R. Barnett, *CAH II* fasc. 56 (1967) 27 (Ch. XXX)

<sup>22</sup> W. F. Albright, *CAH II* fasc. 51 (1966) 46 (Ch. XXXIII)

the Tirynthian letter with the sinister script. Since Proitos had lived among the Lycians, had married the king's daughter, had returned to Tiryns with the help of Lycian warriors and Lycian fortress builders, he must certainly have known Lycian quite well, and the letter of credentials he wrote to the Lycian king for Bellerophon must have been quite naturally in Lycian. That is certainly how the reciting poets and also the audience would have understood the story. Indeed, the *Iliad* makes it quite clear by saying that the king of the Lycians requested to see the credentials written by his son-in-law, thus immediately referring to the close relationship that existed, and also presupposing a knowledge of the antecedents among the audience.

The Lycian language was a member of the Luvian language group<sup>23</sup>. It is now well known that this Luvian language group had the rôle of a common idiom or vernacular over a very wide area in the late Bronze Age. There is no need to postulate large scale Luvian migrations or to imagine Luvians swarming all over the place. The spread of a language as a vernacular does not operate in this way. There were no invasions of the Aramaeans as a people, no "Aramaean Migrations", when Aramaic gradually became the lingua franca of south-western Asia and the Assyrian Empire in the 9th and 8th centuries, nor later when it became the administrative language over the whole of the Persian Empire. In the late Bronze Age, Luvian was the native language in western Asia Minor, but it is clear that it was known and used over a very much wider area, in southern Asia Minor, in Anatolia, and in the Aegean region. Traces of Luvian hieroglyphic writing have been found in Greece in recent years. Several seals have been published in *KADMOS* vol. V and more are to be published shortly, all showing that examples of this writing (commonly called Hittite Hieroglyphic or HH) were known in Greece<sup>24</sup>. There also appears to be a genuine Luvian hieroglyphic seal in the cylinder seal deposit recently found at Thebes. Some seals seem to show an imitation of this writing, but we cannot be sure whether that is merely an imitation or a local adaptation. Altogether, the evidence is now becoming so large that it is impossible to deny direct contact between Greece and Asia Minor as well as the knowledge of this writing in Greece, even if such knowledge was confined to the points of contact or the palaces of Mycenaean rulers.

<sup>23</sup> Houwink Ten Cate, *The Luvian Population Groups*, 1965, pp. 51ff.

<sup>24</sup> *Kadmos* 5, 1966, 44ff., 47f., 49ff., 58ff., 118ff.

But we must not imagine that peoples in those days, the 13th century B. C., only spoke one language. There were very few monolingual peoples in the late Bronze Age around the Aegean and in the Near East. The Danaans could speak Greek as well as the Achaeans, and the Lycians certainly spoke the language of the Achaeans too, as is proved by some of the Hittite documents. It was essential in those times. Political, social and economic developments had brought peoples and tribes far more closely together, and so had the improved road systems and communications by chariots. Inter-marriages were frequent, and not only among the royal dynasties. Nor should we always assume that the language of written documents or of correspondence was necessarily the same as that of the spoken vernacular. On the contrary, we have evidence that in many cases it was not the same. Such letters of credentials as Bellerophon's letter were fairly usual in Asia Minor in the late Bronze Age, and they were always written in cuneiform. We have several examples from the correspondence between the Hittite Court and Ugarit, and one example in Hittite cuneiform included in documents from the Hittite king to the king of the Achaeans<sup>25</sup>.

I do not think that Homer invented Bellerophon's letter purely as a poet. Nor can I agree with those classicists who would like to imagine the letter consisting just of some pictographic signs like an arrow and a man, in the manner of Eskimo writing. Nor could it contain alphabetic signs, since Homer uses the word *σήματα* and not *γράμματα*. Nor were such letters of credentials customary in Achaean Greece, for nowhere else in the Homeric poems are such credentials either shown or demanded. The Homeric poets knew what they were talking about. The tradition of Bellerophon's letter and of Bellerophon's exploits came to them from Asia Minor, and here the tradition lasted much longer than in Greece. When Herodotos talks of Miletos (I.147) he says the Ionians chose as their kings the descendents of Bellerophon, the Glaukidai, the rulers of the Lycians — for, he adds, they were considered the purest Ionians.

Homer incorporated into the *Iliad* many purely Asia Minor traditions, e. g. the story of the Lycians, Sarpedon and Glaukos.

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<sup>25</sup> This matter has been dealt with in full detail, both from the historical and the literary point of view, in a paper read to the First International Congress of Mycenaean Studies in Roma, September 1967, and published in the *Acta* of this Congress under the title "Bellerophon's Letter", 1223—1230, where the custom of 'Letters of Credentials' is discussed.

The account of Proitos of Tiryns is linked with this story and so is the account of Bellerophon's letter, written on an enclosed tablet. It is not difficult to guess that this tradition got into the Iliad from Miletos, where the kings traced their descent from Glaukos the Lycian. We have here a Milesian tradition. And we now remember that we could also trace the literary sources for the Kyklopes as builders of the walls of Tiryns to Hekataios the Milesian. Furthermore, our archaeological investigations into the building techniques of these walls pointed to Miletos as the connecting link between the Argolid and Asia Minor, and in particular, between Tiryns and the earlier builders of such fortifications in the East. We find here that the archaeological, the literary and historical investigations all converge on the same point, and thus reinforce one another.