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GREEK WITH SUBSTRATE PHENOMENA, OR 'A JARGON' — WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE?

a. Comments on Chadwick's Revised Position

For the first time, in response to an article by J. T. Hooker¹, comes an indication that a leading Mycenologist is ready to see non-Greek features — apart from names — in the language of the Linear B tablets. John Chadwick² briefly reviews the positions taken previously by himself and Ventris³, and thereafter remarks (p. 99):

"Now whatever the circumstances under which Linear B was devised for the writing of Greek no one questions that at this stage the influence of Minoan Crete on Greek-speakers was profound. We should therefore expect that along with the writing system Greek took over a great many loan-words, possibly even some morphological and syntactic features".

Concerning one syntactic feature, the use of 38-44-78 (//e-ke-qe//⁴, identified with $\epsilon\chi\epsilon\iota\ \tau\epsilon$) in contrast to 38-44 //e-ke//, he says (p. 104),

¹ Non-Greek Elements in the Linear B Tablets, *Indogermanische Forschungen* 73, 1968, 67—86

² The 'Greekness' of Linear B, *IF* 75, 1970, 97—104

³ In Evidence for Greek Language in the Mycenaean Archives, *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 73, 1953, 90, and Documents in Mycenaean Greek, Cambridge 1956, pp. 27, 70—72, 93, etc.

⁴ I hope that my device of a special kind of bracket to set off any transcription into Latin letters (with or without diacritical marks) will eventually be approved and adopted by other linguists, reserving *italics* for the citation of languages written in the Latin alphabet. The need for a symbol of transliteration was pointed out to me by Norman Mangouni of the State University of New York Press when he first handled my manuscript on *The Indo-European and Semitic Languages* (published in 1971). With the advantage of knowing Armenian, he was alert to the danger of a transcription being viewed in a false light, as though it were on an equal footing with a citation in the original script. In that book I enclosed the transcriptions in braces { }, but here I use double slashes // // because braces have been preempted in Linear B studies for setting off scribal errors; E. L. Bennett Jr. (ed.), *Mycenaean Studies*, Madison 1964, p. 260. (Single slashes / / are, of course, reserved for a phonemic interpretation of the sounds of any given language.)

"If Hooker's suggestion of a non-Greek origin for this usage is taken as meaning a substrate phenomenon, I should be prepared to accept it." This apparently opens the door to a recognition of other phenomena that are inexplicable from the Greek we know and from its Indo-European cognates, but attributable to some other language or languages of the Aegean.

Chadwick arrives at his conclusion (or concession) in regard to //e-ke-qe// somewhat reluctantly, perhaps, and does not extend it to the other syntactic features whose foreignness to Greek was argued by Hooker. Nevertheless he has grasped Hooker's principle, and mine too: that the texts are, in an important sense, not strictly Greek — namely, they contain locutions taken from another source and, moreover, not naturalized so as to survive in Greek after the indigenous languages died out. Chadwick has even sketched, in regard to items of vocabulary, a process by which alien morphology too could have been eliminated before the rise of Classical Greek literature:

"...loan-words tend to enjoy a limited life, being eventually replaced by native formations. Many loan-words of Mycenaean date may have been lost in the centuries before the classical period, by replacement from native sources, by the obsolescence of the object they describe, or other less classifiable causes. Thus the existence of words in the Linear B tablets which cannot be explained by later Greek is no evidence that they did not at the time of writing belong to the Greek language"⁵.

Here I find some common ground, if we can clarify what it means to 'belong' to a certain language. All the expressions by which certain people communicate are pragmatically part of their language, no matter how miscellaneous the sources may be. But foreign expressions which they use, if out of keeping with the general pattern of their language, are unlikely to remain current except among persons in touch with the source-language where such expressions are at home. Among others, to whom that source-language is not common knowledge, the admixture of expressions

To show an Oscan or Umbrian text transcribed from the local alphabet, as distinct from one originally written in the Latin alphabet, it has been customary to use **bold-face roman** type. My present practice is essentially to that end; but I think that the enclosure within brackets is a clearer means.

⁵ Pp. 99—100. In the sequel, which pertains less to my present argument, he narrows down his conditions for calling anything in Linear B non-Greek.

from it is no aid to communication. Instead that is what constitutes a jargon.

A modern illustration will bring this out. The Jews of most of central and eastern Europe have spoken various German dialects, known as Yiddish; in recent generations those living in Germany, Austria, Bohemia, and parts of Hungary have shifted to standard German. All but the fully assimilated ones would infuse, into whatever form of German, many elements from Hebrew. For example, [s'eder], the ceremonial Passover meal; the plural is [sd'orim]⁶. The initial [s-] before a vowel is alien to German; the consonant-group [sd-], starting out unvoiced and then becoming voiced, is a veritable 'tongue-twister'⁷; and the pluralization is peculiarly Hebrew. To the Christian majority, Hebraisms of this sort (plus borrowings from Slavic) make the speech of Jews a jargon, easy though the rest of it is to recognize as German⁸. On top of the Hebrew expressions, the writing of everything in Hebrew letters restricts the Judeo-German texts culturally to a small part of the German community⁹.

The comparison of Judeo-German in Hebrew script serves to remind us that the Linear B script for Mycenaean Greek never penetrated into most of the Greek nation, as the alphabet from Phoenicia did later, but only into narrow circles, chiefly in the palaces. That is why the writing system failed to be perpetuated. In those circles, as Chadwick perceives, "the influence of Minoan Crete on Greek-speakers was profound". Among them, I maintain, the language was naturally more receptive to non-Greek elements —

⁶ The plural is frequent, because of the custom in the Diaspora to repeat the whole service on the second night of the festival.

⁷ No transitional vowel-sound [ə] is audible, contrary to the medieval grammars of Hebrew.

⁸ The German of educated Christians, interlarded with much Latin and French, must have sounded just as strange to Jews remote from that culture.

Among the Jews themselves, in the decades when a modern kind of nationalism was emerging out of the religious tradition, the Hebraist party under Ahad Ha-Am, Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, etc., gleefully adopted this disparaging term *jargon* for Yiddish, in their incessant polemics against it as a vehicle of cultural development. Literary Yiddish, to be sure, drew more heavily than the vernacular dialects did upon Hebrew, Russian, standard German, etc.

⁹ Not only the Yiddish dialects but often standard German too used to be written so. I have seen bilingual editions of the Bible with the original facing Moses Mendelssohn's translation — all in Hebrew characters. My friend Ernst Abrahamson (who died in 1958) told me that his grandfather's letters to relatives were in Hebrew characters but in the standard German language, not Yiddish.

just like the receptivity of Judeo-German to Hebraisms. Some of the borrowings were doubtless absorbed into the Greek language as a whole; so they have been familiar to everyone learning Greek since Classical times, although comparative grammar finds them not to be of Indo-European provenance. To this category may well belong the connective particle $\delta\epsilon$ and the $-\delta\epsilon$ suffixed to demonstratives¹⁰.

But the features of Linear B which Hooker and I dwell upon are the ones incompatible with Greek as known after the age of Minoan and Mycenaean culture. There is no telling whether they would or would not have been understood by Greeks of Mycenaean times who happened to be outside the polyglot environment where we, including Chadwick, posit the rise of the Linear B script. Anyhow the continuation of the Greek language depended on the illiterate masses. Whatever did not fit into the language as used by them, disappeared even though previously current in the language of the palace.

The narrow ambit of the Linear B tablets — administrative records preserved accidentally at several of the main pre-Classical sites — has linguistic implications hardly grasped hitherto by the Mycenologists. They have found it congenial to treat the authors or scribes of those tablets as if they were representative of the whole Greek-speaking community living in the region, so that their language was what passed on to later generations, evolving gradually into some (if not all) of the dialects of Classical Greece. So the radical discrepancies between Mycenaean and Classical Greek have been viewed as an embarrassment instead of a revelation. It is time to reckon seriously with those foreign elements in Linear B, those which resist every attempt to explain them away. I am glad that Chadwick has taken the first step toward recognizing non-Greek components.

To allow, as he does, for substrate phenomena in Mycenaean Greek is substantially in accord with my notion of a jargon¹¹. What defines a jargon is the juxtaposition of polyglot elements that never become lastingly integrated into the language of a whole population. Theoretically, at least, a jargon can exist in which one language has contributed no morphology and even no vocabulary

¹⁰ Hjalmar Frisk, *Griechisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, Heidelberg 1960; Pierre Chantraine, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque*, Paris 1968 —.

¹¹ I would not quarrel whether *substrate* or *superstrate* is the more proper term for "Minoan" (the lost language or languages of the Aegean) in relation to Greek.

(or next to none) but only turns of syntax. The speech of uneducated people in parts of Ireland, where Gaelic died out recently, is full of charmingly un-English expressions such as *Where's himself?* or *Where's herself?* (addressed by a visitor to any lesser member of a household)¹². However, words with foreign phonology or morphology, or both, are the clearest mark of a jargon.

Chadwick does not comment upon the aberrant inflections cited by Hooker, nor upon the phonetic anomaly in 61-39-28-57-39 //o-pi-i-ja-pi// with its un-Greek sequence [-ii-], to which I called attention earlier¹³. He briefly discusses the character 36 //jo// in an initial position (p. 101), which is also contrary to Greek although evidently Indo-European and well exemplified in many cognate languages. He declares reasonable doubt over the presence of an actual semivocalic sound in Greek of the Mycenaean period. This was never an issue, anyhow, between him and Hooker.

The limitation of 43, transcribed //ai//, almost completely to the beginning of a word argues either a phonology unlike Greek (which does not restrict syllables in this manner) or at any rate a polyglot script, based upon a language with such a peculiarity. We therefore ought not to presume that no other language but Greek was written in Linear B characters, nor that the extant tablets are exclusively in Greek¹⁴.

b. Morphological Deviations, wrongly dismissed as Scribal Errors

The positing of scribal blunders, which has been the favored expedient to get around morphological anomalies, is now treated by Chadwick with more reserve than formerly:

"The question whether apparent aberrations from normal spelling or grammar are due to simple mistakes or the existence of concurrent forms has been much debated, and in default of enough evidence to provide statistical proof must probably remain in many

¹² I owe this example to Professor David Grene, my former teacher at the University of Chicago. Cf. *Oxford English Dictionary* 5, 250.

¹³ The Linear B Decipherment Controversy Re-examined, State University of New York 1964, pp. 54, 83, 99, 151, 159—160, 181. The word occurs repeatedly on the chariot tablets of the Sd series from Knossos. The sequence of these two identical vowels is just as uncharacteristic of other ancient Indo-European languages; so we can hardly argue that it is a feature still preserved in Mycenaean Greek but later reduced to a single vowel.

¹⁴ Levin (above, note 13) pp. 207, 234—235

cases uncertain. It is beyond doubt that the Mycenaean scribes made numerous mistakes; but in many cases it is possible to argue for and against a scribal error"¹⁵.

He implies that statistical methods, if applicable, would settle many instances now in doubt, but are inapplicable because of the meagre size of the Linear B corpus.

Now without claiming to be mathematicians, we can show that the argument for a scribal error is wrong in the instances which contribute most to the theory of a jargon with non-Greek morphology. The inconsistency of //ke-e-pe// with //ke-po// (MY Ge 604. 1; 603. 1, 602. 5, 605. 5), according to any Greek declension, was first noted by Chadwick himself¹⁶. P. Ilievski¹⁷ later tried to dispose of //ke-e-pe// as a two-fold scribal error — in such a short word! — but Hooker (p. 70) has refuted him quite adequately for common sense, and //ke-e-pe// withstands any challenge. Since all who venture upon an interpretation of the Ge tablets take //ke-po// for a man's name and acknowledge that many names in the Linear B texts are non-Greek, they ought to accept a foreign declension of such a name¹⁸. For it is well known that in Latin texts many names from Greek do not conform to a Latin declension: *Aenēās*, *Aenēān*; *Perseus*, *Persea* (accusative), etc. (Vergil, *Aen.* 1. 231, 631; Ovid, *Metam.* 4. 611, 639 et passim).

On the same tablet as //ke-e-pe// but still more important is //pu-ke pe-ro-ro// (Ge 604. 5), in which not only does the first word contrast with //pu-ke-o// (Ge 603. 2) but the second stands in an extremely odd relation to //o-pe-ro// on the preceding lines of the tablet (Ge 604. 1, 2, 3, 4). Now an omission at the end of a word is scarcely an error by a person writing a memorandum, but just a license — and a trivial, frequent one at that¹⁹. On the other hand,

¹⁵ Pp. 100—101; cf. *The Decipherment of Linear B*, Cambridge 1958, p. 83

¹⁶ *The Mycenae Tablets II*, Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, new series, vol. 48, part 1, 1958, p. 108

¹⁷ Non-Greek Inflexions or Scribal Errors in the Mycenaean Texts, *Živa Antika* 15, 1965, 54

¹⁸ As Chadwick now writes (p. 99): "The great majority of personal names which appear to be non-Greek are nevertheless adapted to the Greek system of inflexion; but this may not have prevented occasional aberrations".

¹⁹ This would hold for most of the examples given by Yves Duhoux, *La syntaxe mycénienne à propos de la notion de 'faute'*, *Atti e memorie del 1° Congresso Internazionale di Micenologia (Incunabula Graeca 25, Rome 1968)* 2, 781—785. See also Chadwick, *Error and Abnormality in the Mycenaean Noun-declension*, *La Parola del passato* 13, 1958, 287—288.

the difference between the deviant //pe-ro-ro// and the usual //o-pe-ro// — i. e., the pattern BCC instead of ABC — is no license but rather a legitimate, motivated deviation. The odds against its being a blunder are astronomical.

In the first place, any omission at the beginning of a word is rare. This holds for writing systems in general, including Linear B; for Ilievski (pp. 49—50) cites many omissions of a interior or a final syllable (13 and 14 respectively) but just one omission of an initial: //re-u-te-ra// instead of //e-re-u-te-ra// in PY Na 425. He marks this one only "prob[able]"; considering the interpretation of it as ἐλεύθερα, whose Latin cognate is *libera* with no initial vowel, I think it likely that the four-character word //re-u-te-ra// is a phonetic or morphological variant. Such a lone instance, in any event, is a meagre parallel upon which to posit that in //pe-ro-ro// and likewise in //na-to-to// (PY Ea 305) the scribes blunderingly left out the first syllable //o-//.

On top of that, Ilievski and others suppose a blundering dittography at the end. He cites two other specimens of dittography, //u-ru-pi-ja-jo-jo// in PY Cn 3. 7 and //do-ro-jo-jo// in Cn 45. 6; the repeated character in each instance is //jo//²⁰. I know of no alleged or apparent dittography of any other Linear B character, apart from the crucial //pe-ro-ro// and //na-to-to//.

The chance of an initial omission and a final dittography, both in one word of three characters //pe-ro-ro//, is minute²¹. It would be

²⁰ In the former instance //jo// is written larger the second time; E. L. Bennett Jr., *The Pylos Tablets*, Princeton 1955, p. 1. The difference in size was noted by L. R. Palmer, *The Interpretation of Mycenaean Greek Texts*, Oxford 1963, p. 173. I surmise that it had some function, perhaps ideographic, and was no mere dittography after all.

²¹ Substitution of one character for another is a rather frequent error in almost any writing system, especially when the graphic or the phonetic difference (or both) is small. E. g., I find university people, whose spelling is otherwise nearly perfect, sometimes writing *q* instead of *g* in the combination *gu*: *linguistic*, *extinguish*, *vanguard*, etc.

Ilievski has the interesting idea that a Mycenaean scribe, having made one incorrect substitution, would at times compound the error by writing the correct character in another word where it does not belong. Thus in PY En 659. 11 he explains //te-o-na// instead of //te-o-jo// (𐀓 instead of 𐀓) as an intended correction for the erroneous second character on the line just above it: //o-to-te-re// instead of //o-na-te-re// (𐀓 instead of 𐀓). The explanation suffers from a serious defect: there is no physical sign of erasure on the tablet, and hence no evidence of an intention to correct. Besides, the character in question on the lower line is not a typical //na// and may be just a clumsily drawn //jo//; see Bennett's copy (above, note 20), p. 73.

yet a stranger coincidence for the BCC pattern, if caused by error, to recur in //na-to-to// with omission of the same initial //o-//, rather than any other of the many characters that can occur in an initial position. Above all, it scarcely makes sense to entertain the theoretical or statistical possibility of BCC having been written erroneously for ABC in Mycenaean Greek, until a real, indisputable example of it crops up in some language or other.

When I first encountered //pe-ro-ro// emended into //o-pe-ro//, I could not for the life of me recall any comparable error in the languages I know. Since then, for over ten years, I have been looking in vain for this pattern — e. g., **kyy* instead of *sky* — through thousands of mistakes (and of course millions and millions of words spelled correctly) in handwriting, scribbling, typing, printing, graffiti, inscriptions — English and foreign²². My eye is not infallible; I invite all and sundry to locate an example of what has eluded me. But I am sure that this type of blunder, if it occurs at all, is extremely rare. Even supposing that such a singular quirk afflicted one of the scribes at Mycenae, or fantasizing that the author of the tablet was subject on this occasion to a very unusual stutter while dictating, and that the scribe took down the syllables he heard (however meaningless), shall we picture the same thing happening once at Pylos too?

Michel Lejeune, in his review of my book, figured that because the ratio of //o-pe-ro// to //pe-ro-ro// is about 40:1 and that of //o-na-to// to //na-to-to// about 200:1, the two *hapax*'s are mere lapses²³. However, given a disparity even of this magnitude, the two lone but similar deviations — in a language imperfectly known to us — are still not attributable to blundering, when that would have entailed a manner of blundering unprecedented in any language that we can be sure of. Only as a last resort could we justifiably call //pe-ro-ro// and //na-to-to// blunders, if such reduplication were morphologically impossible. It is radically incompatible with Greek, and therefore disconcerting to those who

²² Neither have I seen anything like **deaa* for *idea*, **veryy* for *every*, etc.

²³ *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 86, 1966, 218. Had he read my argument carefully, he would not have taxed me with ignoring the wide difference in frequency. I did, in fact, make specific references to it in that book (pp. 182—184), as well as in my contribution to *Mycenaean Studies* (above, note 4), pp. 152, 158. He and some other reviewers have also misread my inference from the reduplication of //ro// and //-to//, as though I supposed it did not change the meaning. That supposition is theirs, not mine, and contrary to what I explicitly wrote.

are confident that no language but Greek exists in the Linear B tablets. But to sustain that hypothesis of one language — Greek and nothing else — by emending the two words to //o-pe-ro// and //o-na-to// respectively, amounts to begging the question. Incompatibility with Greek is the only reason for taking //pe-ro-ro// and //na-to-to// for scribal errors, rather than morphological alternants.

My categorization of them as morphological alternants is the most rational inference from the data²⁴. But it must remain provisional until the particular language, as yet unidentified, is deciphered to the point of showing what the morphemes mean. Meanwhile the likelihood of such a language being in the tablets is not to be gainsaid, least of all by scholars who estimate that something like half the names of persons are pre-Greek²⁵. I cannot understand why any of them would rather imagine the society to have been monoglot or, if polyglot, to have used the Linear B script exclusively for Greek. The catch-all of scribal errors has diverted them from coming to grips with real and important, though intractable, phenomena²⁶.

c. Clarification of the Term 'Jargon'

If Chadwick or other scholars of similar views are now ready to recognize some of these phenomena as due to a substrate language, the remaining issue then shrinks to a choice of terms. No one likes to have his own speech called a jargon, and a researcher may conceivably resent the application of this depreciatory term to a language that he has made a great effort to study. When, moreover, he is convinced that most of it — apart from the names — has been correctly identified with Greek, the residue may seem too slight to warrant such forceful terminology. So I want to explore a little further the notion of a jargon.

According to common usage, it connotes not so much a jumble

²⁴ Including the fact that the character 05 //to// at the end of //na-to-to// was written over an incomplete erasure of 44 //ke//, and hence written deliberately, not inadvertently; also that //O-pe-ro// appears in one tablet of a different series (PY Ma 216) with the first character much bigger than the other two, suggesting that //o-// is not just a phonetic sign but a segment with its own meaning. See my article, *The Non-Greek Prefix o- in Linear B Tablets*, *Arion* 6, 1967, 266–268.

²⁵ E. g., Lejeune (above, note 23), p. 217: "*i-pe-se-wa* a toutes chances d'être un anthroponyme (donc, une chance sur deux d'être un nom propre préhellénique)..."

²⁶ Maybe they would have been more receptive to my original demonstration of non-Greek morphology, had I not also made known my skepticism toward a large part of the decipherment.

of two or more languages in nearly equal parts, but instead an admixture of enough foreign elements to repel or baffle a person unacquainted with the language or languages from which they are drawn²⁷. A scholar can make his English a jargon to people of lesser (or different) education by indulging in age-old Latin tags like *dissecta membra*, *membrum virile*, *quid pro quo*, *memento mori*, *ceteris paribus*, etc.²⁸. My theory is that the non-Greek forms turned

²⁷ To come back to Yiddish, it is commonly observed that the Hebrew elements are minor in comparison with the German stock, and that when Jews to whom Yiddish is native write or speak Hebrew, they bring in only a bit of Yiddish — i. e., German — here and there (which a Sephardic, or Mediterranean, Jew would not readily understand). The pejorative term *jargon* can be applied to a very unequal mix. It insinuates, however, that the foreign component — the unvernacular one — is not being held within bounds. I have seen specimens written in the Hebrew alphabet which blend Hebrew elements so copiously that I cannot decide which predominates in the sentence structure; e. g.,

משעה אלו החון מתחיל איזט ברוך שאמר עד לאחר שמונה עשרה ובשעת קריאת התורה" איז אסור ליהיה מי שיהי" אנשים או בחורים מי"ג שנים ואילך. קיין דברים בטילים צו רידן. ומי שיעבר מוז געבן קנס ליטרא שעה מכל פעם שיעבר.

Simon Schwartzfuchs, *Un règlement de la communauté de Metz, 1769*, *Revue des études juives* 129, 1970, 30. My translation distinguishes the Hebrew by plain roman type, the German by *italics*, and an odd word from late Latin (originally Greek) by **bold-face** 'From the hour *when* the cantor is beginning "Blessed [is] he that said" till after "Eighteen" [i. e., the 18 Benedictions], and at the hour of the reading of the Torah, [it] is to be forbidden to whomsoever, men or youths from 13 years and up, *to speak any* idle words. And whoever disobeys *must give* [a] fine, [a] **pound** [of] wax for every time that he disobeys.' Here is more Hebrew than German, but the latter is structural, not incidental. The two words **אסור ליהיה** are Hebrew, but their syntax is German, 'verboten zu werden'. Nearly every article in this rule-book begins in Hebrew, and some go through to the end without a single German word; but in other articles the main verb-construction of many sentences is in German, and occasionally a whole sentence is nearly free from Hebrew:

אונ" דיא עלטרין מוזין ערוב זיין פר אירר קינדער.

'*And the parents must be responsible for their children*' (p. 32; although **ערוב** 'responsible' is Hebrew, the Hebrew plural suffix is omitted by the German rule of syntax of predicate adjectives).

²⁸ Even with no out-and-out Latinisms, an overload of Latinate terminology — naturalized to the extent of rounding off the Latin endings — can still get in the way of communication. Cf. Molière, *Les Précieuses ridicules*, scene 6:

Marotte [the maid]. Voilà un laquais qui demande si vous êtes au logis, et dit que son maître vous veut venir voir.

Magdelon. Apprenez, sotté, à vous énoncer moins vulgairement. Dites: "Voilà un nécessaire qui demande si vous êtes en commodité d'être visibles."

Marotte. Dame! je n'entends point le latin, et je n'ai pas appris, comme vous, la filofie dans le Grand Cyre [= la philosophie dans le Grand Cyrus (a romance by Mlle de Scudéry)].

the Mycenaean language into a jargon, and that they were not used and probably little understood by Greek monoglots in the region. Until many more of the tablets are interpreted unmistakably — in the opinion of those who work with them and of other Hellenists — it would be premature to estimate the proportion of Greek to other components.

A fair part of what was originally foreign, non-Indo-European, may little by little have gotten accepted among the Greek population by the time of the tablets. This has happened in known languages throughout history; e. g., in English, *jealous* and *jealousy*, *jewel* and *jewelry* from Old French are now fully naturalized, while *bizarre* and especially *bizarrierie* are not and hardly get used except by those who know French and by their immediate imitators²⁹. With our very narrow access to Greece of the Mycenaean age, we have practically no criterion except the Homeric and the subsequent Classical Greek language for discerning what is non-Greek in Linear B. And this is of pragmatic importance; for if we stubbornly analogize or assimilate to Greek what really presents the pattern of another language, the quasi-Greek interpretation will be a mere illusion.

I have posited that there remained through the Mycenaean age some Greek populations virtually (if not totally) ignorant of the other language or languages of that culture. This is likely though not of course directly demonstrable. It would not conflict with the view that the Greeks as a whole learned a lot from the pre-Greek inhabitants of the Aegean region. Furthermore they may well have intermarried, so that the Greek nation by the Classical period had absorbed much of the indigenous stock. Nevertheless, as the indigenous languages waned, some locutions characteristic of them, which had formerly gotten into the Linear B tablets, perished and fail to reappear in Classical Greek. To locate them in the tablets, and to explicate them as much as possible, is a more scholarly procedure than to deny their existence.

Here the Latinate euphemisms are *nécessaire, commodité, visibles*.

²⁹ I have heard people say *chicken à la king* who never use *à la* otherwise, and who are as close to total ignorance of French as is possible for literate adults in an English-speaking country. To them the whole expression is a formula; they may or may not entertain a notion that *à la* means 'according to the recipe of [some king or other]' or 'fit for [a king]'. But as they are more or less aware that *à la* is French, it connotes 'something stylish.'

