

## MITTEILUNGEN

### THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL COLLOQUIUM ON AEGEAN PREHISTORY

This was a sequel to the conferences held at Sheffield in March 1970 (*vide* Kadmos 9, 1970, 177—9), and at Athens in April 1971 (Kadmos 10, 1971, 171—2). It took place again at Sheffield, between the 15th and 19th of April, 1973, the general theme, which was introduced by Professor R. A. Crossland, being the folk-movements in the Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean at the end of the Bronze Age.

Naturally, much attention was paid to the new evidence from Thera, and the Congress was privileged to be shown slides of the frescoes of sea-battles off the Libyan coast, the text being read by Dr. Birchall on behalf of Professor Marinatos, who deeply regretted that he could not be there. G. Cadogan was inclined to attribute the devastations in the Aegean of the Late Bronze Age to human rather than natural causes: but H. Seeden gave a scientific assessment of the way that earthquake and eruption could start a prolonged phase of economic instability and enforced migration; and this view accorded with the thesis of F. J. Tritsch, that disruptive wanderings were evident in the Mediterranean for a long time before 1200 B.C.

F. Schachermeyr discussed the possible motive and manner of Illyrian migration into the southern Balkans, with reference to later analogies. A. M. Snodgrass and K. A. Wardle outlined the chronological problems of the supposed immigrations from the North, which N. G. L. Hammond placed at about 1140—1120 B.C. A. Vraciu warned us of the dangers of 'Pan-Illyrianism'. E. Çabej suggested that the derivation of the name Dardania from the name of the pear-tree could be evidence of northern origins. F. Prendi illustrated some striking archaeological evidence for contacts between Albania and Greece at this time, while M. S. F. Hood dwelt more particularly on the significance of the spread of hand-made pottery. Both H. W. M. Pope and C. Sourvinou-Inwood threw doubt on orthodox literary versions of Dorian history, and B. C. Dietrich drew on what is known of the Hyacinthia festival to study relations between the Dorians and the Achaeans. With the aid of the evidence of the *o-ka* tablets, J. Chadwick described the strategy of the last defence of Pylos, presumably against the Dorians.

K. A. Kitchen and G. A. Lehmann presented authoritative reviews of the Egyptian evidence about the 'Sea-Peoples', and C. C. Verscheure told about their Libyan allies. A. Nibbi warned against the assumption that Egyptian boats were very seaworthy, and, in a similar vein, N. Sandars wondered whether the solid-wheeled ox-carts were speedy and reliable enough to convey an efficient force of warriors.

Relations between Cyprus and the coast of the Levant were discussed from the evidence of general trade (V. Hankey), pottery (J. Lagarce), ivory combs (H.-G. Buchholz) and epigraphy (W. C. Brice). All this bore, of course, upon the Philistine question, which was further treated by J. Bouzek, who mentioned possible European elements in Philistine culture; and more specifically by T. Dothan, who regarded the anthropoid coffins of Philistia as local productions under Egyptian stimulus—a view hotly contested by J. D. Muhly.

Literary evidence for contacts of the Eastern with the Western Mediterranean basin were set out by E. D. Phillips, and M. Almagro Gorbea illustrated objects of Mycenaean style from the Iberian peninsula. In the same general area, M. S. Balmuth discussed the problem of the gap of four centuries between the Cypriote and the Sardinian bronzes. R. A. E. Grosjean pointed to remarkable parallels between the equipment of the warriors of the Medinet-Habu reliefs and details of the crude menhir-statues of Corsica. His theory that the twin holes in the heads of these statues were meant to hold horns recalled a remarkable communication of J. Makkay, regarding the discovery in Eastern Hungary of a burial of the Tumulus period with a boar's-tusk helmet.

On more technical topics, J. C. Waldbaum suggested that the spread of iron-working might have been due to the collapse of the trade in bronze; J. H. Betts gave a tentative opinion that the production of seals might have continued during the Dark Age; and A. Tamvaki warned us against assuming that a change of art style necessarily implied a change of population.

The whole Colloquium was summarised and drawn to a close by Professor R. J. Hopper. As in 1970, the participants were comfortably housed in Tapton Hall, whose staff, as well as the organizer of the Colloquium, Professor R. A. Crossland, and his helpers, Professor R. J. Hopper and Dr. A. Birchall, were congratulated and thanked in a witty speech by Professor Schachermeyr at the formal dinner on April 18th.

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## EPIGRAPHISCHE MITTEILUNGEN

### Linear Script A

A) General. In a lecture to the Mycenaean Seminar at the University of London Institute of Classical Studies on November 29, 1972, Dr. Jean-Pierre Olivier announced the results of the autopsy carried out by Dr. Louis Godart and himself on the documents in the Herakleion Museum during the preceding year. As a result of careful cleaning and new joins of fragments of the tablets from Hagia Triada, several improved and extended readings have been achieved.

B) Numerical Fractions. In an article in *AJA* 77, 1973, 61—65, Linear A fractions: a new approach, Jon C. Billigmeier of the University of California, Santa Barbara, from an algebraical study of the tablets, proposes firm values for Lm 1 ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ), Lm 2 ( $\frac{1}{6}$ ), Lm 3 ( $\frac{1}{18}$ ), Lm 19 ( $\frac{1}{3}$ ) and Lm 20 ( $\frac{1}{9}$ ). According to his view, the cross-stroke in Lm 2 would signify division (of Lm 1) by three, and the double cross-stroke in Lm 3, division by nine.

C) Decipherment. Professor Paul Faure, by transferring syllabic values from Linear B signs to their Linear A and Hieroglyphic equivalents, has been able to propose interpretations of the recurring formulae of the Linear A libation tables, and also of the hieroglyphic inscription of the stone table from Mallia. He concludes that the language involved was, if not Greek, at least an Indo-European language closely related to Greek. The relevant references are, *Dédicaces crétoises en linéaire A*, *Linguistique Balkanique* 16, 1972, 9—14; and *Lumières sur l'écriture linéaire A et les hiéroglyphes crétois*, *Bulletin de l'Association Guillaume Budé* 1972, 261—276.

D) Archanes. The two almost complete tablets and fragments of others mentioned in *Kadmos* 10, 1971, 174, are referred to by P. M. Fraser in *Archaeology in Greece* 1970—71, 31 (in *SPHS/BSA*, *Archaeological Reports for 1970—71*); and also in *Ergon* 1970, 185.

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