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BROOKLYN, ¹⁰NEW YORK

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Dear Franklin,

One of the remarkable things about you is that you always anticipate what I'm going to say after I write and tell you one thing, and then change my mind upon reflection.

I think your suggestion about an article on what is known about Minoan just suits the situation. It will also make the Guggenheim Foundation happy, since it will be a sort of summary of my year's work. Carratelli (or Pugliese--I never know what double names mean for Italians) just sent me a copy of his work, without comment. I suspect he would like a review, which would be extremely favorable, since he did an excellent job of publishing the Linear A inscriptions, everything considered.

I really want to discuss what has been done in detail, however, especially the question of the relationship of Linear A and B. Pugliese, like Myres, Sundwall, and practically everyone else, seems to think the language is the same in all the scripts. I most emphatically do not, and feel that it's about time I set out my viewpoint. If they can answer the objections, I may change my mind.

Before I start, however, I'll have to write to Sir John, and see what can be done about quoting unpublished material. I can manage without it, but it will be better to use everything pertinent.

Your idea about excavating Sardis sounds wonderful--if it can be done. I don't know of any better site. As a matter of fact, I don't really know much about sites--from the practising archaeologists' point of view. But imagine how wonderful it would be if a few bilinguals of assorted varieties turned up. I hope, though, that they aren't Semitic. Semitic and Egyptian are a nuisance, because they lack vowel signs, and leave too much to the imagination. I doubt that I'll ever learn to read vowelless Semitic--and so anything later than Akkadian (Assyrian) drives me to drink.

Has anything been done about Ephesus? One short Lydian fragment seems to have been found there.

By the way--do you think it's advisable to put all Minoan characters in drawings, and keep them out of the text of the article? And I wish you'd tell me how you prefer foot-notes. I usually put them all together at the end of the article. Last time I left them in the text because somebody told me printers liked them that way. It doesn't make any difference to me how I put them.

By the way, you'd better tell me what is the maximum length of article you'd want. While in a sense, nothing is known about Minoan, at the same time, so much has been said, that discussion can stretch out enormously. As you probably know, I usually put things as briefly as possible, but some things can be put in or left out. If I start on pre-Hellenic words in Greek, you can imagine what would happen; the same with possible similarities in the alphabets and syllabaries of a couple of dozen possible ~~Minoan~~ "Minoan derivatives"--most of which are probably something entirely different.

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As for the symposium--by golly, I didn't think it would be after dinner. Horrors! I like to hear others, but if I had to talk after dinner, I'd have indigestion. It's silly, but the thought of speaking in public ~~xxxxxxx~~ makes me nervous. It's all right once I've started, but the anticipation is terrible. I offer papers from a sense of duty, and swear each is going to be my last.

Sir John Myres told me, when I was in England, that he was hoping for some good results from excavations in Cyprus. He still hopes to find a bilingual--though I'll be darned if I can see what kind. Minoan-Semitic would be just too much. I've always been amazed at the story of how the man who first realized Cypriote was written in Greek had to stop there because he didn't know enough Greek. It would be just my luck to find Minoan was written in a language lots of people know, but I don't.

I do ramble. I'll let my subconscious work on the article for a while, and send you the results in due time. If you have a dead-line, let me know. There's always the chance that you won't want what I produce. I approve of iffy sentences myself. They show a true understanding of all the factors that enter into any human enterprise.

I hope Swanson has revised his article satisfactorily. Speaking from an entirely selfish viewpoint, I'd like to have lots of people working on all these Asia Minor languages, since it will save me work.

I meant to end the letter there. But I just remembered something. Sundwall in his last letter to me asked me if something could be done about establishing a sort of "Minoan Institute" here in the U.S., where the literature, reproductions, etc. could be collected. He thinks Europe isn't safe.

As a matter of fact, this is a good time to think about it. So far, the whole business has been an appendage of Classics; of course, it always will be connected with them, but at the same time, it has other connections as well. It's sad to realize that the field hasn't even a general name. Pre-Hellenic, Helladic, Aegean, Minoan, Mycensean. Each country-- even each scholar--has his own definition for it. One of the worst things about reading foreign literature on the subject is that one doesn't know what people mean by the terms they use. Come to think of it, Homeric is as good a term as any, thanks to Odysseus' wanderings. The trouble is, almost all the terms have geographical, chronological, or cultural implications. They are useful for archaeologists, who deal with a specific site, and want a specific chronological term, but the moment one tries to make a survey of some field, terminology becomes difficult.

This is definitely the end.

Sincerely

Alice