

Downing College, Cambridge
14. x. 66

Dear Emmett,

3 pieces of news, and some odd comments.

(1) Billy Taylour has given me a photo of a part-jar found at Mycenae this summer. I think the fact that it is inscribed might be published; but the rest is confidential, since I don't know who is publishing it or when. The reading appears to be]ra-wa-ko but the wa is very uncertain on the photo, the paint is very faint; autopsy should confirm or reject; all that shows clearly is top and left side, like a capital gamma. He also showed me photos of a most interesting block of steatite, with the various sides engraved to form moulds for casting and masters for gold working; this is in excellent condition, and looks as if you could make casts from it now - and exceedingly elegant they would be. I am impressed to see this from an area where ku-wa-no-wo-ko are mentioned. Please keep this to yourself, but in accordance with my regular policy I pass on all information as received. [I don't know if you have heard from Karageorghis lately; he writes to say he has 'thrones' from archaic tombs, made of wood and decorated with ivory, silver, gold and blue glass. I need not quote the parallel. Here too I have no authority to pass this on.]

(2) If you have a spare buck, the October issue of ENCOUNTER contains an amusing short story called 'Lamina 96', the main character of which is an American scholar working on a very ancient language in a Research Institute. The model for this is certainly not Madison, and I don't recognise the original, though you perhaps might. But there are amusing sidelights on the contextual method of interpretation, inter (quite literally) alia.

(3) For your private information I am in the course of being promoted to the grade of Reader; it is published in the form of a proposal, which it will take the University a couple of weeks to ratify - fortunately it takes effect retrospectively from Oct. 1. As you probably don't know what a Reader is, let me put it briefly as the nearest you can get in this country to being a Professor without actually being called that. It will make little practical difference, except to augment my salary (freeze notwithstanding!) and make it more difficult for me to waste my time on teaching and college administration; so perhaps my Mycenaean work will profit eventually. At least this is public recognition of the work I have done over the last 14 years, so this includes Linear B. If you ask what I read, the answer is 'The Greek Language', but of course including Linear B.

The Seminar in London gave me a fair hearing when I presented my analysis of the Archive of the Room of the Chariot tablets at Knossos. I think you get the Minutes still, so you will see the summary; but I repeated the suggestion made at Brno that this is a very special sort of office whose chief function may have been not keeping accounts but training clerks. There are many snags; but this is the best idea I have yet been able to find to account for the numerous curious features of this group. I concentrated mainly on X 114 and C 50.

I have been reading with profit an article by Gelb in JNES for 1964 on Mesopotamian rations. On the whole this agrees fairly well with my researches on Pylos, though there are some questions I would like to put to him. Have you (or anyone else) noticed that on Fn 79 all the quantities of HORD are multiples of V 5 (= Z 20)? And what conclusion do we draw from that? Perhaps LRP has noticed it but his account of the rations is such a hotch-potch of inconsequent arguments that I cannot follow much of it.

What are your plans for 1967? Rome, I hope; are you coming to the Epigraphic Congress here?

Yours

John

P.S. 15/x Your letter just received. I hear Verdellio died of natural causes, probably the heart. Will have more stamps for you next time I write a proper letter!

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Sender's name and address:

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ENCLOSURE; IF IT DOES IT WILL BE SURCHARGED.
OR SENT BY ORDINARY MAIL.

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