

EMORY UNIVERSITY

EMORY UNIVERSITY, GEORGIA

DEPARTMENT OF GREEK

March 13, 1958

Professor Emmett Bennett  
1978 Yale Station  
New Haven, Connecticut

Dear Emmett:

Your letter of 10 March is received and partially assimilated. I know now no ~~more~~ <sup>less</sup> than I shall by March 18, so let me write promptly, while I happen to have some leisure.

First of all, it is encouraging, from our side, that you are still at liberty. I can see defects to this situation from your point of view, and let me urge you to look to your real interests and not pass up any chances because of hopes about our somewhat dream-like situation here. But we shall keep moving ahead as long as you are free and hope that we can come to firm ground before you are snapped up elsewhere. In this regard, all I ask is that if you do make a commitment elsewhere before we have anything to offer, you let us know promptly so that we can stop our progress short of embarrassing commitments on our side.

It is good to know about the ACLS matter, and we shall certainly look into it. I should explain that our whole operation hinges on our Cretan, who is not available for real discussion until about mid-April. Until we know just what he thinks can be done there isn't much point in going ahead at all - at least, with our idea as we have conceived it.

As to your difficulties, I should perhaps discuss the subject more fully. The emphasis must be Cretan, because our only practical prospect for support is from Cretans, whose interest is in Crete. Of course we can study Mycenae, too, but we feel that to attract them it must be a chair of "Cretan Studies" or the like, and if so, we shall have to study some Cretan things. I may have mis-stated the biblical connection. The point is not to make this a service-project to Old Testament studies. Rather, the idea is that in the graduate area our present and potential strength is in this region: we have in the school of Theology two Old Testament men, one of whom works a little with Ugaritic material; we are having next year the Israeli archaeologist Ben Dor to begin formal work in archaeology related to the Old Testament; although I in my ignorance haven't wanted to go very far with Gordon he has at least raised some questions to add to old questions about the relation of the Aegean to the Middle East, and Crete does make the - or a-bridge. What I am trying to say is that there is or will be some fairly advanced work going on around here on the Syria-Jerusalem axis; there would likely be more discourse between these people and Cretology than between them and Mycenae. Conversely we do not have and do not anticipate in the near future any advanced work going on in an area with natural, closer contacts with Mycenae. We may, however, develop some language students or some history students inclining in this direction.

I might say that we are in fact trying to work a little with the Bible people in the classics; we propose a course in Graeco-Roman mystery religions, and try to teach some hellenistic Greek.

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I should say, too, that we do not consider it a practical possibility that we would be able to establish a full department of Cretan studies, with archaeology, etc., at the same level as your linguistic study. In the more remote future - perhaps; but not in anything like the immediate future.

We have some people in the vicinity who can cope with some phases of linguistics: a Miss Zenn at Agnes Scott College who can do conventional I.E. philology, and our Joe Conant who has studied rather widely, but we do not now have any activity in this field. We have had before and may have again linguists in other parts of the University.

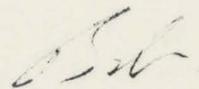
I don't know what you mean by a "satisfactory" library. We have felt that one feature recommending this scheme is that since the field as we conceive it is fairly new there would not be quite the bulk of library in terms of out-of-print files of periodicals, excavation reports, etc. We have some things, and, as you say, would anticipate getting more.

If you are inclined to react to any of these points we should be indeed interested, especially if you begin to see flaws from your point of view. But, as I say, we can't do much in general for another few weeks. When that time comes, if you are still interested, we will report on more tangible matters.

I do hope that all goes well with you - and all of you; we are flourishing; have been through one tonsillitis and are approaching another; even I have a scratchy throat. Meanwhile the daffodils, etc., are beginning to take over outside, thrusting their happy faces bravely into the rain.

Hoping, as I say, that you are the same.

Yours very sincerely,



Robert L. Scranton

RLS:ms