

SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF LONDON,

BURLINGTON HOUSE, PICCADILLY, W. I.

1st February 1957

Dear Mr. Brice,

Mr. Radford has now had an opportunity of reading through your report on Scripta Minoa III and hopes to do more work on it next week when he is in London and can have the proofs before him. I was able this morning to talk over the whole matter with him and Sir Mortimer Wheeler and we agree with you that the time has come when we should call another meeting of the small sub-committee of the Executive to consider your report in detail, before the matter is brought formally before the Executive again.

I have ascertained that Wednesday, 6th March would suit both Radford and Harden. Would that also be possible for you? If so, would 2.30 p.m. be a good time, or would you prefer a time before lunch? It was also thought that now unhappily Ventris cannot be with us that we ought to co-opt John Chadwick to the Committee.

Your Review:

Radford has also very kindly read through your review and has given me a short written report for the Committee, which he is willing for me to send to you for your consideration and guidance. The President feels that we should be prepared to publish a longish critical review such as yours, but that seeing that opinion is somewhat divided on the important matter of the decipherment of the script, ~~that~~ someone like, perhaps, Chadwick himself should be allowed to see your review and to reply, and possibly another also might be invited to comment on the two points of view. What we had in mind in fact was something of a symposium. I am, therefore, returning your review, together with a copy of Radford's suggestions, in the hopes that you would be willing to modify what you have written somewhat, perhaps on the lines indicated in pencil by Radford. Let me know what you think of this scheme.

Yours sincerely,

Philip Gorer

W.C. Brice, Esq.,
14, Barlow Moor Rd.,
Didsbury, Manchester 20.

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REVIEW OF VENTRIS/CHADWICK

I have read this carefully and compared with Beattie's criticisms in J.H.S. I have not seen the book. It seems to me that Bryce's criticism of the methods and results of the decipherment are entirely valid. I would be in favour of printing in the Journal a review on these lines.

I fear that any review must be a long one and that we cannot put forward a criticism of a book like V/C in 150/200 words. We must either ignore it or give the reviewer space to make the necessary points. None the less, I should welcome any reduction in length which could be achieved without impairing the vital points.

I realize that the attached is a first draft and that phrasing would be altered in the final form. My main criticism is that certain parts - especially the comparison with modern words and the hypothetical statement "if we accept" etc. - are likely to be regarded as needlessly wounding. I have indicated by square brackets words, phrases and sentences which, in my view, could be omitted without damaging the argument and would make the form of the review more likely to be acceptable to the author's supporters. In one case I cannot follow the criticism without reading the original and here I think the draft needs rewriting for the sake of clarity. I am all in favour of the necessary criticism being firmly put but wish to avoid the implication of a lack of discipline and scholarship in the authors which could be read into the draft.

If the draft could be amended to meet this point, I recommend publication in the Journal. I do not think that we should agree to the suggestion of finding another reviewer. The linguistic criticism is sufficiently made in J.H.S. and a methodological criticism approaching from a different angle is all to the good.

C.A.R. RADFORD.