

June 8, 1946

Dear Mr. Blegen,

After completing the oral examination last Monday, I spent a bit of time checking up on the thesis, to see how far preparations had advanced, and what was still to be done. The result was a more detailed outline of the chapter on the characters. I discovered that it splits very definitely into two parts. I'll give you the outlines, and the conclusions I draw from them.

III. A. FORMS OF CHARACTERS

- #1. Discussion of classification and order of characters, use of some as both total- and word-signs, merits of orders based on form, frequency, and sound value, justification of order adopted.

TABLE OF NORMAL FORMS showing complete list of word- and total-signs, numerals, and punctuation, designed to identify each character by number and form.

- #2. Discussion of hands at Pylos, Knossos, and Mainland, noting the two main classes, noting general distinctions and likenesses between Pylos and Knossos, etc.

PHOTOGRAPHS OF TABLET FROM EACH CLASS to compare general appearance.

SHORT TABLE COMPARING MAIN CLASSES e.g.

#	KNOS	pylos I	pylos II	MAINL.
1	┐	┐	┐	┐
2	+	+	+	+
3	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕

TABLES OF HANDS, including Knossos and Mainland hands as far as separable, showing forms of all characters within individual hands, e.g.

┐	+	⊕	≡	⌞	⌚	⌘	etc.
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List of tablets in each hand.

- #3. Detailed discussion of each character; brief description, range of variation in construction, difference from other characters, evidence for identity of each character. Each section headed by
TABLES OF VARIANT FORMS OF INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERS e.g.

⌞	⌚	⌘	⌙	⌛	⌜	etc.
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- #4. Comparison of Linear B signs with Minoan pictographs and with Linear A, noting characters common, and those omitted, noting possible derivation and development.
- #5. Comparison with antecedent and contemporary systems of writing, noting possible origins and borrowings.
- #6. Comparison with later systems, (especially Cypriote) noting possible descent in whole or in part.

Much in the discussion above depends on the fullness with which these subjects are treated in SM II. If there is a full treatment there and it is to appear before the thesis, there will be room only for consideration of these signs peculiar to ~~Knossos~~ Pylos, and for any notes in addition to, or in disagreement with other publications. The work must of course proceed until we can see how far SM II does go.

As to the present state of the work on this part, my paper at Hartford, as I rediscovered after I set up this outline, treated somewhat #1 and 2, and presented the first three red items. I have also at least rough models of the other tables left from 1942. The only thing that can be done at present on sections 1, 2, and 3 is to recheck the assignment of tablets to various hands. Preparations of the tables must wait on a decision as to the method of reproduction, size and shape, and the like. The text in turn depends on the tables, though the substance and the ~~arrangement~~ order can be worked out in the mean time. The scope of SM II has some effect on the tables, too, especially if the division of hands into classes obtains at Knossos as well.

The outline for the second section is something like this;

B. EVIDENCE FOR VALUES OF CHARACTERS

- #1. Total signs -- evident value, e.g. ; context, eg. occurs with ; subordination, e.g. significance of numbers appearing with each, etc.
 - #2. Word signs --
 - a. Discussion of frequencies as evidence. Factors tending to distort tables, incomplete and perhaps insufficient volume of material, probable high proportion of proper names, probable none grammatical structure of majority of inscriptions, question of relative value of forms of frequency table given.
- FREQUENCY TABLES
- | | | | | |
|----------------|------|-------|---------|-------|
| I. Init. | Med. | Final | Doubled | Total |
| II. Digraphic. | | | | |
- (Two of each, one using only the first occurrence of each distinguishable word, one using the total occurrence.)
- b. Evidence from substitution in inflection of words, which may possibly indicate relation of at least part of sound value.
- #3. Note on dangers of assignment of values to characters and any conclusions and hints toward tentative assignments.

In this section there is much work to be done and I shall continue to work at it. For instance, I have not made up the total frequency table and don't know the relative values of the sorts of table without some experimentation.

When I received your outline of the publication, I was

somewhat uncertain why I had arranged mine as I did. I think the outline of this second part explains it. In #1 much of the evidence depends on the arrangement and comparison of tablets as a whole, and there must certainly be much reference to particular tablets and classes of tablets, so that some acquaintance with the classification and location of tablets in the book must be assumed in the discussion. In #2, much use must be made of the list of words, and the reasons for assuming inflection and for ~~identifying~~ identification of different forms as the same word, which in turn rests on the classification of tablets, must be understood.

The section on the forms of the characters is, however, absolutely necessary to the reading of the tablets, and so should precede the catalogue and pictures of the tablets themselves. Therefore I take the liberty to propose a compromise outline.

- I. Introduction, discovery, etc.
- II. Physical characteristics, etc.
- III. Forms of Characters, as above.
- IV. Photographic Catalogue of Pylos Tablets.
- V. Classification of tablets by subject.
- VI. Word groups, Glossary, classification of words, inflection
- VIII Evidence for value of characters, as above.
- IX Bibliography,
- IX, Index.

However, the course of my work will not be affected by the rejection or acceptance of this outline, and I shall continue toward filling the outlines on the characters. The work will not be wasted no matter how it may be rearranged in the final version.

I hope to see you again soon, so that we may discuss all this with greater ease.

With highest regards to you and Mrs Blegen,

Yours
