

19 North End, NW3.

26 December 1953

Dear Bennett,

Coming back today after being away in the country for Christmas, the unheated house was considerably cheered by your new letter, with the very prompt and kind delivery of the photos for the article. I am glad you got the "Glossary" all right: I only had the other copied photostatted, so the expense wasn't too unreasonable (it was writing it out I got heartily sick of, as I expect you do of your own indices).

Thank you too for your comments on the tripods, which are very interesting. My first reaction is to rise up in arms about the interpretation of line 1, but I don't want to stick my neck out too far, as I gather from your remarks that there are other tripod tablets - is that right?

But I can't suppress the feeling that  $\Psi \chi \rho$  has the shape of a man's name, or at any rate a proper name of some kind; and that "horn" for these objects isn't quite the right material.  $\kappa \epsilon \rho \epsilon \alpha$  for  $\kappa \epsilon \rho \alpha \alpha$  is, as far as one can judge, a pure Ionicism. But I certainly agree that it looks like a.pu ke.ka.u.me.no. I was a bit uncertain about this end of the tablet, as I wasn't certain how much was broken off, but evidently there's room for no more on the bottom line. Is there a second word on the top line? I don't feel entirely bound by the division after a.pu, because the scribes don't always seem to be consistent in compounds. (Don't I see an erased division after k.toi.no- on Eb35.2?). And I don't see how the ending of KE-RE-A<sub>2</sub> can tolerate a preposition a.pu governing it. An English crank has suggested to me something like "from burnt earth" i.e. earthenware, incidentally. If KE-RE-A<sub>2</sub> is a nominative plural, like the WHEELS words of the same ending, it can still go with -me-NO if one assumes an accusative of respect (or part affected). Aristophanes says, for instance,  $\kappa \alpha \upsilon \omicron \mu \alpha \iota \tau \eta \nu \kappa \alpha \rho \delta \acute{\iota} \alpha \nu$  "my heart is burning". So my guess for this is something like a.pu-ke.ka.u.me.nos ske.le.a "charred as to the legs", the -me.nos going of course with t.ri.pos.

Incidentally, I gather that Georgiev is preparing an attack on the "standard" general interpretation of the TRIPODS tablet, in which he will produce a highly fantastic translation. As an argument that the "tripods" words don't apply to TRIPODS, he maintains that the ideogram at the beginning of line 2 is the end of the final sentence of line 1. But I am sure if that was the case the scribe would never have bothered to double up the last words of line 1 in that way, but would have given himself more space on the next line.

I will leave more discussion of the TRIPODS for the moment. I'm jotting down a lot of more detailed comments on your last letter, which I hope to let you have in the next month.

I will shove in my own ideas on TRIPODS line 1 in the ARCHAEOLOGY article, but make it clear that there's room for several divergent interpretations.

I haven't seen a ~~loan~~ copy of the Mycenae tablets yet, but here's the loan of Sundwall's MA article. I'm not sure about the Enkomi photos; Crawford was puzzled about them too, but I think decided in the end that they were unretouched. The last line which goes over the edge of the reverse is part of the text, not a label. Dikaios sent me another photo, which shows the signs listed in a footnote to the ANTIQUITY article.

Best wishes for 1954,

Michael Ventris