

19 North End London NW3 · SPE 4540

17 September 1955

Dear Brice,

Thank you for your letter: I'll look forward to seeing your report, and we can fix up a date whenever it suits you best. Please don't go out of your way to produce any extra copies of things just for my sake, as I feel you've had quite enough work already.

In fact I feel very badly about helping to bring this very unsatisfactory work down on your head last autumn. Clearly I ought to have been less diplomatic and come down more strongly on the side of scrapping Scripta Minoa III altogether at that stage. But perhaps it was necessary for one of us to go through the thing again in real detail before its defects became completely obvious; and being one of the people engaged on producing articles on the Minoan script, and incidentally disagreeing from that point of view with a lot of what Myres and Evans say, it seemed very improper for me to argue in favour of suppressing a colleague's work, out of hand.

I quite agree that any new work should begin from Carratelli, and stick to his numberings wherever possible; I hope that any revisions to the sign lists might retain his L- numberings (as our diagram for the book does) even if certain variants are conflated or extra distinctions made.

While I was in Iraklion I cast an eye over the originals of the HT tablets. I didn't have Carratelli with ~~him~~^{me}, and was working to a tight schedule on the Knossos stuff, so I didn't do any actual checking or transcribing - though they are there, and apparently in good order, ready for any additional checks that need to be made.

I am also trying to find out more about the new tablets from Phaistos, which are said to be in a sort of linear script though dated by the Italians to MM I. The first batch are published in the Annual of the Italian School XIV-VI, 1952-54 (which I haven't yet managed to see); a dozen more have been found this year.

I hope that, if nothing else, your concentration on Linear A will have added one more person who knows something about this difficult subject (I confess I'm pretty much at sea in it myself) and be useful in the future. Turner (of the Inst. of Classical Studies) mentioned to me a man called Gould (I think), now in South Africa, who is interested particularly in Linear A: I will get his address if it's useful.

Yours,

Michael Ventris