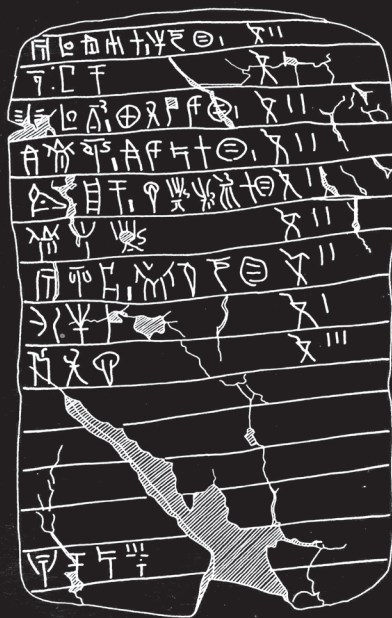


THE MYCENAEAN SEMINAR 2016–17



MYCENAE N° 102

Cf $\text{⊕} \text{Ⓜ} \text{Ⓜ} \text{Ⓜ}$:
Pylos Jn03.22
Knossos 1516.9
in lists of men's names

A , B-⊕ : MEN 2

C : MAN 1

Cf Pylos An18.11:

$\text{Ⓜ} \text{Ⓜ} \text{Ⓜ} \text{Ⓜ} \text{Ⓜ} \text{Ⓜ}$ Ⓜ Ⓜ

a-to-po-go: [MEN 17]

ἀρτοπόκῳι

$\text{Ⓜ} \text{Ⓜ} \text{Ⓜ} \text{Ⓜ} \text{Ⓜ}$ Ⓜ Ⓜ Ⓜ Ⓜ Ⓜ

BULLETIN OF THE INSTITUTE OF CLASSICAL STUDIES

INSTITUTE OF CLASSICAL STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

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THE MYCENAEAN SEMINAR 2016–17

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THE MYCENAEAN SEMINAR

INSTITUTE OF CLASSICAL STUDIES
SCHOOL OF ADVANCED STUDY
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THE MYCENAEAN SEMINAR 2016–17

19 October 2016

NUANCES OF METAL VESSEL USAGE IN THE MYCENAEAN POLITICAL WORLD

Stephanie Aulsebrook

Metal vessels, whilst not as ubiquitous as ceramic vessels, were an important component of Mycenaean material culture. They were manufactured from a wide range of metals, including bronze, copper, gold, lead, and silver, and performed a variety of functions: drinking, food preparation and presentation, lighting, pouring and storage. However, metal vessels also had a significant role in the Mycenaean political economy. As a form of prestige object, they were used to articulate status and contributed to the formation and maintenance of a distinct elite identity. These processes would have been carefully co-ordinated and were considerably more complex than just the display of wealth. Investigating how Mycenaean metal vessels were incorporated into such political strategies requires a detailed understanding of their usage within these societies. This paper presented a range of case studies on metal vessels derived from my doctoral work and research funded through the Michael Ventris Memorial Award. They demonstrated that by studying such objects through the prism of value, the concept which provides the material foundation for prestige, it is possible to ascertain some of the nuances surrounding the employment of metal vessels as prestige objects in Mycenaean societies.

Value is socially constructed, but it is so embedded into the world view of each community that it can appear to its citizens as intrinsic or natural. Value is not just economic worth; there are myriad types of value, ranging from perhaps obvious traits such as scarcity or exoticness, to an artefact's individual history of ownership, to personal sentimental value. Therefore there is no universal logic to value and we cannot assume that our own modern concepts and hierarchies are applicable to past societies. This does not mean that ancient values are inaccessible to the archaeologist. This paper began by explaining how observations on the way that metals were incorporated into the production of vessels and the relationship between different metals and the application of decoration can be used as the basis for reconstructing the emic value hierarchy applied to metals within this industry. Once established, this framework was used to study the values underlying other aspects of metal vessels, such as their form, distribution, decoration, context of use, and deposition. This introduction to my doctoral work ended with a quick synthesis example concerning the change in value accorded to lead vessels during the Mycenaean Period.

The second half of the paper was a presentation of my firsthand research on metal vessels in Greek museums. Understanding how metal vessels could have been incorporated into elite political strategies requires good knowledge of the practical functioning of these artefacts. The majority were not just made for show as indicated by features such as the strengthening elements regularly integrated into rims and handles, the parts of a vessel with which people were most likely to make physical contact. However, the type of data that can shed light on the handling of metal vessels has often been left out of publications because, except for a study of this kind, it has little relevance.

This section began with some general observations on the evidence available for the physical handling of different types of metal vessels and the implications this had on the

form of the vessel, their decoration, and the individual biography of certain vessels. Two brief case studies were then presented. The first demonstrated how, despite their often terrible preservation, enough metrics can be obtained from crushed lead vessels to provide an estimate of their capacity. This information can then be fed into our overall knowledge of this vessel type and supports the conclusion that they were intended for non-portable storage. The second case study revisited Ellen Davis's ideas concerning Aegean crafting traditions,¹ and presented new evidence that supports her conclusion that the two gold cups from the Vapheio tholos were the products of different craft traditions. Finally a more extensive case study was presented on the assemblage of silver vessels discovered at the tholos at Kokla and their possible association with the phenomenon of tinned ceramic vessels.

¹ E. N. Davis, *The Vapheio Cups and Aegean Gold and Silver Ware* (New York 1977).

9 November 2016

THE EARLY NEOPALATIAL PALACE OF KNOSSOS: DEVELOPMENT AND DOMAIN

Colin Macdonald

The Early Neopalatial period of Crete and Knossos was a misunderstood and neglected period until the ‘Intermezzo’ workshop held at the Villa Ariadne in 2008,² whose aim was to rehabilitate Middle Minoan III and try to understand something of the socio-political changes across Crete in the latter half of the MBA. Sinclair Hood³ had refocused attention on the period, originally of great importance in the *Palace of Minos*⁴ but often neglected by those who concentrated on the LM I acme of Neopalatial Crete. Unfortunately, Evans had mistakenly included much that was really LM, often LM III, so confusing the situation and angering people like Wace and Lamb. Carl Knappett, Iro Mathioudaki, and I will try to untangle all of this in a forthcoming volume.⁵ We will also try to integrate more recent studies.⁶ The question of what archaeological material and architecture might belong to MM IIB, IIIA, and IIIB at Knossos is far from easy to answer, indicating that the history of Knossos was sometimes different from that of the rest of Crete, particularly when Knossos itself might have been an important agent of change elsewhere in the island and beyond.

Our study of the palace, incorporating Hood’s work, has shown that MM IIIA was a period of great architectural development that began after a large seismic destruction early in the period, not in MM IIB. The palace at Galatas and the palatial building at Zominthos argue for the early existence (MM IIB-III A) of elite architectural features at Knossos where dating has been more problematic. An area defined by this 50 km line of sites, the sea to the north and the hills and mountains to the south, might give us some idea of the minimum extent of Knossian ‘domain’ in MM IIIA-B. The early MM IIIA earthquake appears to have preceded major rebuilding at all three sites, and at Knossos it was the start of the finest architectural period the site had seen.

The evidence for Evans’s great earthquake towards the end of MM IIIB is inconclusive and always secondary or tertiary. The MM IIIA Houses of the Sacrificed Oxen and Fallen Blocks were mistakenly dated to MM IIIB by Evans, thus removing the most convincing evidence for an MM IIIB seismic destruction. If there was an earthquake—there is evidence elsewhere in Crete—it was much less serious at Knossos than that of MM IIIA. Yet it has made its mark in the literature as a historical fact because of Evans, although he himself saw the ‘new era’ of Late Minoan I as beginning in MM IIIA.⁷

² C. F. Macdonald and C. Knappett (eds), *Intermezzo. Intermediacy and regeneration in Middle Minoan III Crete* (London 2013).

³ S. Hood, ‘Back to Basics with Middle Minoan IIIB’, in *Minotaur and Centaur: Studies in the Archaeology of Crete and Euboea Presented to Mervyn Popham*, eds D. Evelyn, I. S. Lemos, and S. Sherratt (Oxford 1996) 10–16.

⁴ A. J. Evans, *Palace of Minos I* (London 1921) 315–721.

⁵ C. Knappett, C. F. Macdonald and I. Mathioudaki, *Knossos: from First to Second Palace. An integrated ceramic, stratigraphic, and architectural study* (in preparation).

⁶ G. Rethemiotakis and P. M. Warren, *Knossos: A Middle Minoan Building in Bougadhia Metochi*. (London 2014).

⁷ A. J. Evans, *Palace of Minos I* (London 1921) 315.

7 December

THE USE AND ABUSE OF THE AHHIYAWA TEXTS

Oliver Dickinson

The Ahhiyawa tablets are a small group of texts of fourteenth–thirteenth century BC date, almost entirely from the Hittite archives at Hattusa (Bogazköy), whose importance for Aegean prehistory is far greater than might be imagined from their fragmentary and heterogeneous nature. Their common feature is that all contain the name Ahhiyawa or forms thought to be related to it. The name evidently represents a state or country that on the evidence of the clearest texts lies to the west of Hittite-controlled territory and at least partly off-shore. Since 1924 it has been argued that this name is related to the commonest name used in the Homeric poems for the Greeks, ‘Akhaioi’, originally ‘Akhaiwoi’, and that this state was a Mycenaean kingdom. Although long disputed, this link seems to be certified by Prof. D. Hawkins’s demonstration, in a Mycenaean Seminar of 1998, of the political geography of western Anatolia, which leaves no room for a substantial state of Ahhiyawa’s importance on the mainland, although it clearly controlled some territory there, including the substantial town of Millawanda, surely Miletus. The centre of Ahhiyawa should therefore lie overseas, but it clearly played a role in west Anatolian politics and was in diplomatic contact with the Hittite kingdom, as shown by those texts which are letters between Hittite and Ahhiyawan kings.

The aim of this paper is to combat the insidious interpretation of the texts, promoted by the editors of *The Ahhiyawa Texts*⁸ among others, as showing evidence that the Ahhiyawan kings constantly pursued a policy of expanding their own power and influence in western Anatolia by ‘interfering’ in local politics and supporting local rebels to subvert Hittite control. Analysis of the texts without preconceptions suggests that this is an abuse of them, that they suggest a much more complex picture, and that they cannot be used to give even a skeleton picture of Hittite-Ahhiyawan relations over the fourteenth–thirteenth centuries, but only shed light on a few separated episodes. The texts, combined with some Egyptian sources of information, can be used instead to demonstrate the existence, essentially unknown to later Greek tradition, of a Mycenaean state that probably controlled much of the Aegean, was active diplomatically in the east Mediterranean by the late fifteenth century, and was powerful enough for the Hittite kings to have to take seriously, but effectively beyond their reach.

⁸ G. M. Beckman, T. Bryce and E. H. Cline, *The Ahhiyawa Texts* (Atlanta, GA 2011).

18 January

THE ORIGINS OF WRITING IN THE AEGEAN

Silvia Ferrara

The inception of writing on Crete needs to be analysed from a fresh methodological perspective. This contribution aims to shed light on the complexities of this phenomenon following four lines of enquiry: (1) the origin of Cretan hieroglyphic, considering the problem of its source, by reversing the explanation given so far; (2) the nature of the inscriptions, especially those found on stone seals that constitute the earliest available attestations, offering a new approach to the data; (3) the trajectories for reconstructing the linguistic paths, which make writing as a system possible, by looking at comparative evidence from other iconic, or image-bound, fully deciphered scripts; (4) the elaboration of a new method that helps to explain how Cretan Hieroglyphic formally developed from a pre-existing iconographic substratum.

1. Origin. When the first inscribed seals were discovered, Evans used the term ‘hieroglyphic’ (a derivation from Egyptian Hieroglyphic) to describe the Cretan script. However, Egyptian cannot have provided a precise template for two main, very plausible, reasons: (a) the shapes of the signs of Egyptian and Cretan do not match; and (b) Egyptian is a consonantal script, whereas Cretan Hieroglyphic is a syllabic script. In the history of the world, there is no instance of a script that goes syllabic from a consonantal template. Of course the Cretans must have been aware of literate cultures in existence, not just from Egypt, but possibly from Mesopotamia too. Exposure to Egyptian writing may have taken place, but no precise template was borrowed.
2. Semantic categories. On the structure of the script, namely the graphic appearance of the symbols, the Cretan Hieroglyphic on the seals is an image-based script. Its iconicity is where the problems begin in understanding when language starts being recorded, because it is inherently difficult to distinguish sign from picture. There is scope, however, to make progress in establishing distinctions between semantic categories (logograms, syllabograms), by looking at: (1) single attestations of signs, hitherto interpreted as purely decorative, when marked by (2) the stiktogram (shaped like a cross) which so far has been interpreted as a reading direction marker. It is argued instead that this marks icons which are not decorative, but veritable script signs, most likely to be read as logograms. A further methodological step forward is offered through the statistical analysis of the so-called formulas, especially the two ‘formulas’ which bear the sign heralded as ‘trowel’ by Evans. It is argued here that this sign marks a *Petschaft* and thus the act of sealing.

Linguistic paths. To understand how scripts start to record sound, we can use as comparanda the four writing systems considered to be independent inventions — the Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Chinese, and Mesoamerican — as well as secondary inventions whose signs are new (Nahuatl, Anatolian hieroglyphic). These all happen to be picture-based, like the Cretan script. Whether Cretan is a primary invention (or not) is immaterial, as what is crucial is that its signs are not borrowed, they are new. This means that their path to a full system of writing is independent of a template. In reaching a full set of signs for a sign-list, or a

complete writing system, two specific linguistic principles are at work. They are the key to early script formation, but nobody before ever tried to explain their linguistic roles systematically. There is scope to investigate how the Cretan script recorded sound at the beginning, using comparative evidence from deciphered primary and secondary image-based scripts whose signs are new. (Results will be presented in a forthcoming publication.)

3. Iconographic substratum. If Egyptian was not the original source, where do the signs of Cretan come from? We need to look no further than the Minoan pre-existing iconography on the seals themselves and look at the inception of writing as a natural internal development stemming from the icons that were part of the normal artistic repertoire. It is clear that writing and visual narrative were always invented in the same crucible, and universal iconographic principles apply to the natural development of all new writing systems. This happened on a global scale, from cuneiform in Mesopotamia, to Egypt, to Rongorongo, and the Indus Valley script. Cretan, too, fits with this path of formation.

This analysis is crucial for understanding the beginnings of Cretan literacy, but also for casting light on the phenomenon of early writing in more general terms, from a multidisciplinary perspective that advocates a synergic collaboration between cultural evolution, archaeology, epigraphy, and linguistics.

15 February

TWO OXEN IN THE BRONZE AGE: TRADITIONAL MEDITERRANEAN FARMING AND THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF MYCENAEAN PALACES

Paul Halstead

Since much of the existing corpus of Linear B texts from the Mycenaean ‘palaces’ of Late Bronze Age southern Greece is devoted to crops and livestock, and related products such as woollen and linen textiles, understanding of Mycenaean farming should offer a valuable window onto palatial political economy. This understanding, in turn, is inevitably informed by ‘traditional’ Mediterranean farming before mechanization and widespread use of agrochemicals and veterinary support. In recent decades, such traditional farming has been the focus both of ethnoarchaeological studies, aimed at identifying durable archaeological traces of particular practices (e.g. grain isotope signatures characteristic of different crop husbandry regimes), and of ethnographic/oral-historical enquiries, aimed at understanding farmers’ choices between alternative practices. While ethnoarchaeological analogies, based on largely timeless physical processes, may be safely applied to the distant past, ethnographic studies of decision-making provide analogies applicable only heuristically — as a source of pertinent questions and potential answers. Of course, the more pertinent are the questions and more probable the answers, the greater is their contribution to understanding ancient farming. Fortunately, while traditional farmers’ decisions and practices exhibit great diversity, much of this can be understood in terms of relatively timeless constraints such as the growth requirements/tolerances of different crops, the maintenance demands of humans and domestic animals, the balance between scale of farming and available labour, and seasonal time-stress. Moreover, decisions taken in one season constrain choices throughout the agricultural year, such that reasonably consistent relationships occur between, for example, scale of cultivation, type of tillage labour (human, donkeys, cows, or oxen), methods of harvest and crop processing, dependence on extra-household labour, and degree of over/underproduction relative to household needs.

A widely recurring feature of traditional Mediterranean farming is the exchange of human labour for other capital resources, exemplified by the sharecropping arrangements of large agricultural estates, by partnerships between smaller-scale farmers with spare land or labour, and by similar patron-client relationships and partnerships in stock husbandry. Economic relationships of broadly similar type are also detectable in the Linear B record of what seem to have been two central palatial concerns: the growing of ‘wheat’ (i.e. ideogram *120) and the gathering of wool. Following Killen, ‘palatial’ wheat was grown on land of local *damos* communities, while the palace loaned out pairs of working oxen. Whether or not the palace loaned oxen for *this* purpose, local communities apparently contributed at least land and perhaps also harvesting and winnowing labour (not mentioned in Linear B) to palatial wheat production, implying some form of partnership. Intriguingly, the palace did not set production targets for wheat, as it did for other resources not closely overseen by trusted officials, suggesting that the harvest was shared on the threshing floor as was the norm with traditional sharecropping. The case is even clearer for ‘palatial wool flocks’, which included so few adult females that they must primarily have been restocked from elsewhere, probably from flocks belonging to the named ‘herders’. Moreover, again following Killen, sheep recorded as missing from such flocks tend to be listed in round numbers, making it clear that they represent animals removed for some purpose, rather than

lost to natural causes. At Knossos, such missing sheep were often replaced, certainly in the DI(1), probably in the Do, and possibly in the Da-Dg texts by animals of different age and/or sex. Whatever the reasons for these substitutions, the palatial flock records evidently represent accounting devices (in this case tracking rights to wool) more than censuses of groups of animals herded together. Again this arrangement finds parallels in patron-client herding arrangements in the recent past.

While models for Mycenaean palatial political economy have variously been sought in Homer, the Bronze Age Near East and medieval Europe, Linear B records of two central palatial concerns, wheat production and wool gathering, betray patron-client sharecropping and herding arrangements widespread in traditional Mediterranean farming. Recognition of these arrangements sheds light on palatial methods of mobilization and also perhaps, given that such exchanges of human labour for other capital resources might well date back to the Neolithic, on their origins.

8 March

A MOUNTAIN VIEW OF NEOPALATIAL CRETE: NEW EVIDENCE FROM THE IERAPETRA UPLANDS

Yiannis Papadatos

Mountains occupy almost 50% of Cretan land, but, after more than a century of archaeological investigations, it would not be an exaggeration to argue that mountains have been neglected and scientifically marginalized by the archaeologists of Minoan Crete. With this in mind, our decision to centre our project in the mountains of Ierapetra had some rather simple and straightforward aims: first to find and excavate sites related to human habitation, and, consequently, to study the peculiarities and the organization of life on the mountains, identify the goods which were produced, understand the organization of production and of the exploitation of mountain resources, and, overall, to assess the importance of the upland areas for Minoan economy and life. The area of Ierapetra raises further questions: it is by far the largest, richest, most fertile, and agriculturally productive area east of Malia, but the evidence of habitation and exploitation of this fertile land during Minoan times is surprisingly poor. Therefore, the only way to approach Minoan habitation in the area of Ierapetra is by investigating peripheral and satellite sites, which are more easily detectable in the landscape.

Excavations at two Neopalatial sites were presented: the building at Gaidourophas and the peak sanctuary on the nearby hill of Stavromenos, at about 30 minutes' walking distance. The sites are north of the village of Anatoli, 11 km northwest of Ierapetra. Excavations at Gaidourophas started in the summer of 2012 as part of a five-year excavation project by the Department of History and Archaeology of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. The building is monumental and measures approximately 25 x 20m and covers an area of at least 800m² in both floors. The entire lower floor of the building consists of large semi-basement rooms equipped in the centre with large rectangular stone bases for wooden pillars. The number and the size of the storerooms, about 16 m² each, suggest large-scale storage. It remains unknown, however, what kind of commodities were kept in these storerooms. There is evidence for metallurgy but few luxury objects. A bronze signet ring implies that the building had an administrative character, and was perhaps the seat of a high official.

A survey undertaken by another member of the project, Tina Kalantzopoulou, has identified other megalithic buildings nearby. These Neopalatial buildings appear to have been part of an organised attempt to intensify and control the exploitation of the upland areas. The presence of the large mansion of Gaidourophas implies that this effort was coordinated by a central authority or an elite group, which was based in this imposing building. We believe that the monumental building at Gaidourophas functioned as a warehouse, focusing primarily on the control of the mountain production by collecting the mountain products from the surrounding rural sites, recording and temporarily storing them, and consequently distributing these products to the settlements in the lowlands.

The excavation of the peak sanctuary at Stavromenos started in 2014 as a collaborative project by the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens and the Ephorate of Antiquities of Lassithi, represented by the director Mrs Chrysa Sofianou. The sanctuary lies on a steep, rocky peak at an altitude of 950m a.s.l. The most numerous find is Neopalatial pottery. The clay figurines are the second most frequent category of finds: animals and

humans. The construction of the building at Gaidourophas together with the establishment of a peak sanctuary on the nearby site of Stavromenos may be seen as a well-organised venture, which strongly hints at the existence of an important, yet undiscovered, Minoan centre in the broader Ierapetra region.

Michael Ventris Memorial Lecture, 17 May

TIRYNS: FROM THE RISE OF ITS PALACE TO THE POST-PALATIAL RESURGENCE

Joseph Maran

The lecture was concerned with some three centuries in the history of Tiryns: from its growth into a major Mycenaean palatial centre in the fourteenth century BCE to its re-emergence following the destruction of the palace, when it became the most important site in the Argolid during the twelfth century BCE.

Tiryns seems to have grown gradually in importance during the course of LH II and then suddenly emerged in LH IIIA as a second palatial centre under the rule of Mycenae, as documented by the construction of the first megaron palace. Although research has tended to identify the megaron as a purely ‘Helladic’ architectural form, this type of building should rather be seen as the result of a transcultural process in which architectural elements from mainland Greece, such as the central hearth, were deliberately merged with features of the Knossos throne room. The Mycenaean elite probably chose the particular plot on the Upper Citadel for the construction of the first megaron because in this way they were able to link it to a ritual tumulus that had been formed out of the ruins of the Early Helladic Rundbau at least 800 years before. By building the Great Megaron above the Rundbau tumulus it was possible to integrate it into a long chain of tradition.

The final palatial period between 1250 and 1200 BCE was accompanied by an unprecedented number of large-scale building activities that have shaped the appearance of Tiryns to this day. The most important work of architecture and engineering was the redirection of a stream, which during the thirteenth century BCE had caused several flooding events in the northern Lower Town. The decision to redirect the stream was probably not only a protective measure, but part of a final palatial ‘master plan’ to develop the Lower Town and to create new access to the citadel from the north.

After the destruction of the palace at the end of LH IIIB (c. 1200 BCE) the most astonishing period in the history of Tiryns began, during which the site developed in a different way from all other former palatial centres. This special position is reflected not only in the construction of Building T on the Upper Citadel, but also in the systematic development of the northern Lower Town. A new excavation carried out since 2013 in the Northwestern Lower Town in cooperation with Alkestis Papadimitriou has yielded a sequence of two superimposed building horizons consisting of excellently preserved architecture that spans the phases LH IIIC Early and Developed. It seems that the large-scale development of the Northern Lower Town immediately after 1200 BCE was meant to implement the unfinished portion of the final palatial ‘master plan’. It was based on well-conceived ideas on how to structure the new neighbourhoods and was aimed at accommodating groups of people, many of whom had probably arrived only recently. After only about 60 years of occupation the densely organized settlement in this part of the Lower Town was abandoned, which brought to a definitive end the trend towards urbanization that had been initiated a few decades previously.

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Stephanie Aulsebrook	Nuances of metal vessel usage in the Mycenaean political world
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Oliver Dickinson	The use and abuse of the Ahhiyawa texts
Silvia Ferrara	The origins of writing in the Aegean
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Yiannis Papadatos	A mountain view of Neopalatial Crete: new evidence from the Ierapetra uplands
Joseph Maran	Tiryns: from the rise of its palace to the Post-Palatial resurgence

The front cover shows a Linear B page-shaped tablet from Mycenae (Au102) detailing work-groups of men, with comparanda from Pylos and Knossos. Drawn by Michael Ventris. © Institute of Classical Studies, Ventris Archive.