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COMMUNICATIONS

Past Conferences

A meeting entitled "Responses to New Archaeological Discoveries in Greece" was held on January 28, 1989, at the British School at Athens. Lectures of interest to *Nestor* readers included: Associate Professor S. Papamarinopoulos (Geophysics Laboratory, Patras University), "A multi-component geophysical programme operating at archaeological sites in Greece"; Dr. G. Tsokas (Geophysics Laboratory, Thessaloniki University), "Geophysical exploration at Vergina and Dion"; Dr. S. J. Vaughan (British School at Athens), "The Bronze Age Cycladic fabrics project: overview and update"; Dr. A. Sarpaki (Chania, Crete), "Paleobotany in Greece: the case of Akrotiri, Thera"; Dr. G. N. Bailey (Cambridge University), Dr. M. Macklin (Newcastle University) and Dr. C. Turner (Cambridge University), "Palaeolithic archaeology and environmental science in Epirus"; Dr. G. Theodorou (Department of Historical Geology and Palaeontology, Athens University), "Recent work in vertebrate palaeontology"; Dr. G. Pitsios (Anthropological Museum, Athens University), "Palaeoanthropological research at Apidima Cave in Laconia"; Mrs. N. Kyparissi-Apostolaki (Ephoreia of Caves), "Prehistoric habitation at the cave of Theopetra, Kalambaka in Thessaly"; Dr. Y. Bassiakos and Dr. Y. Maniatis (Archaeometry Laboratory, NRC Demokritos), "Progress in dating of cave deposits at the Archaeometry Laboratory, Demokritos"; Dr. R. E. Jones (British School at Athens), "What commodities did ancient pottery carry?"; Ms. E. Adam (Institute of Archaeology, London), "Organic residue on flints: implications of interpretation".

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The NEH-Dickson Conference "Aegean Seals, Sealings and Administration" was held at the University of Texas, Austin, January 11-13, 1989. The Austin conference was organized by Thomas G. Palaima and the Program in Aegean Scripts and Prehistory, the Department of Classics, University of Texas at Austin. The individual paper topics were reported in the Communications section of the January issue of *Nestor*. Each lecturer spoke for about 45 minutes and had a respondent who spoke approximately 15 minutes before there were open discussions. At the end, there was a round-table commentary.

Three speakers presented Near Eastern and Egyptian evidence for sealing; there, the abundant information and its overwhelming eloquence sheds considerable light on the sparse and ambiguous material from the Aegean. Stuart Smith presented a lively picture of administrative and personal sealing practices in two Egyptian outposts; Michele Marcus convincingly demonstrated how high officials at Hasanlu wore imported seals while scribes and lower bureaucrats used locally produced seals on sealed containers and doors; and Bonnie Magness-Gardiner's clear and concise overview of Near Eastern seal use could in many ways serve as a model when comparing, or rather contrasting, Aegean practices.

Olivier detailed the evidence that has convinced him that hieroglyphic inscriptions conveyed what Palaima eventually called "lexical information" (i. e., meaningful words); this represents a significant change from his earlier view expressed in CMS Beiheft 1.

Poursat looked at Quartier Mu at Mallia and the find-spots of the various types of sealings, impressions, and seals, and found some interesting patterns.

Pini began by illustrating early (EM/EH II-MM II) sealings and seal impressions and then went on to discuss the evidence for the composition and the dates of the Hieroglyphic and Temple Repositories Deposits at Knossos.

Both Palaima and Weingarten gave overviews of the history of Aegean administration and the roles that seals and sealings played. Palaima stressed the development of writing and its influences on the development of sealing systems; he and his respondent Olivier both related Hieroglyphic to Linear A. Weingarten stressed the sealing systems themselves and identified their three major stages: first, a system attested at Phaistos (MM II), which resembled Near Eastern practices; second, a purely Minoan procedure attested at Ayia Triada and Kato Zakro (LM I); and third, a purely Mycenaean procedure, attested at Pylos and elsewhere (LH III B), which depended less on impressed sealings.

Hallager defined the roundel, a specific type of impressed clay document unique to Weingarten's Minoan phase and demonstrated how two people (at least) were involved, the scribe and the seal-user, and that the number of the impressions on a roundel relates somehow to the items to which the document refers.

Aravantinos thoroughly discussed the inscriptions on the Theban sealings and stressed the evidence they provide for intrapalace communication.

In the final paper, Fiandra and Ferioli summarized sealing practices throughout the ancient Near East and the Aegean and sharply defined the similarities as well as the differences in the various areas.

The Round-Table was also lively. After a resounding call for a standardized cross-discipline terminology, Joan Aruz stressed the identification of formal and common or popular styles in seal-engraving, implying different uses for each. Marvin Powell contrasted Babylonian practices with Aegean and made the important distinction that the Aegean texts are records, not documents--in the Near East, documents were sealed, not records. He also compared sealstones to credit cards, a not unlikely analogy. John Younger presented a summary in chronological sequence of how seal engravers and the production of seals may have responded to the increasing need for the bureaucratic accounting procedures to convey 'lexical information'. Malcolm Wiener created an eloquent picture of the Aegean being the westernmost extension of a great palatial construct in the eastern Mediterranean and through a series of lively anecdotes he stressed the need for caution in rushing to conclusions based on excavated material and material brought to light through chance finds. And to close, Thomas Palaima summarized the points raised in the Round Table.

The conference will be published in *Aegaeum* 5, Robert Laffineur, editor. For copies of the publication, please write to Robert Laffineur, Université de l'Etat à Liège, Place du xx-août 32, B-4000 Liège.

Signed,
John G. Younger

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A second conference on seals, the "Duke University Symposium on Minoan-Mycenaean Sealstones", was held on the afternoon of January 16, 1989 at the Duke University Art Museum. The four speakers and their papers were: Judith Weingarten, "The metamorphosis of a grain stalk into a goddess: Some thoughts on how Glyptic Art changed in the Early Neopalatial Period," Enrica Fiandra, "Origin and style of the Middle Minoan and Late Minoan ceramics" (read by Mrs. Jesse

Petcoff, registrar of the Duke University Art Museum); Ingo Pini, "Some considerations on the use of seals for administrative purposes in Mycenaean Greece;" and John Younger, "New observations on Hieroglyphic seals."

Weingarten explored the possibility that certain generic design-forms on the seals (e.g., a whirling pattern) conveyed some kind of meaning, even if they were further elaborated into specific motifs (e.g., a whirling pattern with sheep heads at the tips of the whirl-motif); one automatically imagines how this concept might help us deal with "look-alike" seals. Fiandra gave an extremely sensitive appreciation of the development of MM pottery, considering shape and painted and plastic decoration as functioning together. Pini first drew attention to sealing practices at EH Lerna, outlined a possible development in sealing practices between then and the early sealing deposits at Phaistos and Monastiraki, and finally reminded us that at the end of our Mycenaean period the Pylos and other sealings were being impressed by sealstones and rings manufactured much earlier. Younger discussed the hieroglyphic seals in the New York Metropolitan Museum and their inscriptions and observed that certain sign-groups on one face of a seal are always in the same orientation to certain other sign-groups on other faces of the same seal, thus leading him to suspect that such discreet combinations ought to imply that these hieroglyphic inscriptions conveyed meaning.

These papers will be published in SMEA.

Signed,
John G. Younger

Future Lectures

The New York Aegean Bronze Age Colloquium will meet at The Institute of Fine Arts, One East 78th Street, on Wednesday, March 1, 1989 at 7:45 p.m. Dr. Nanno Marinatos will speak on "The Minoan Harem." Interested guests are welcome to attend.

Dissertations in Progress

Nestor has received the following list of doctoral dissertations and masters theses in progress at universities in West Germany, Austria, and Switzerland.

Archäologisches Seminar der Universität Basel: Martin Guggisberg, *Tierplastik und Tiergefäße der späten Bronze und frühen Eisenzeit*, Ph.D. dissertation.

Archäologisches Institut der Universität Freiburg: Emilia Banou, *Lakonien in mykenischer Zeit*, Ph.D. dissertation; Aspasia Charalambidou, *Fundgruppen der Kykladen*, Ph.D. dissertation; Siegfried Krause, *Vorpalastzeitliche minoische Plastik*, Ph.D. dissertation; Wanda Löwe, *Spätbronzezeitliche Bestattungen auf Kreta*, Ph.D. dissertation.

Archäologisches Institut der Universität Göttingen: Katharina Horst, *Frühgriechische Idole aus Kreta*, Ph.D. dissertation.

Institut für Klassische Archäologie der Universität Graz: Ingrid Hiden-Weber, *Die mykenischen Frauenfigurinen der SH III A- und B-Epoche. Ihre stilistische und chronologische Entwicklung*, Ph.D. dissertation.

Archäologisches Institut der Universität Heidelberg: Viola Eigenbrodt, *Votivgattungen spätbronzezeitlicher und früharchaischer Heiligtümer auf Kreta (14.-6. Jh. v. Chr.)*, Ph.D. dissertation; Peter Misch, *Askos und Askoide in der bronzezeitlichen und früharchaischen Keramik der Ägäis*, Ph.D. dissertation; Petra Schmitz-Pillmann, *Untersuchungen zu den ikonographischen Elementen in der altägäischen Wandmalerei*, Ph.D. dissertation; Mechtild Frank, *Kopfschmuckdarstellungen in der altägäischen Wandmalerei des 2. Jahrtausends*, Masters thesis.

Institut für Klassische Archäologie der Universität Innsbruck: Hanna Ehlotzky, *Mykenische Keramik im Archäologischen Institut der Universität Innsbruck*, Ph.D. dissertation; Christian Ebner, *Mykenischen Wandmalereien*, Masters thesis.

Archäologisches Institut der Universität Köln: Halina Wingerath, *Die Darstellung des*

Menschen in der minoischen Kunst der Palastzeit, Ph.D. dissertation; Ursula Rohloff, *Späthelladische Wagen-Kratere. Ein Beitrag zur Ikonographie der figürlichen mykenischen Vasenmalerei*, Masters thesis; Korinna Bruder, *Minoische Idolplastik*, Masters thesis.

Seminar für Klassische Archäologie der Universität Mannheim: Michael Wedde, *Schiffe der ägäischen Bronzezeit*, Ph.D. dissertation.

Fachbereich Altertumswissenschaften der Universität Marburg: Michael Küpper, *Mykenische Architektur. Material und Konstruktion*, Ph.D. dissertation.

Institut für Vor- und Frühgeschichte der Universität München: Wolfgang David, *Ornamentssysteme der frühen und frühen mittleren Bronzezeit im Karpatenbecken*, Ph.D. dissertation.

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