



## “His Eyes Took on a Far Away Look When He Spoke of Pylos”

Carl Blegen and the Excavations at the Palace  
of Nestor as Seen in the Greek and Foreign Press

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*The press and the mass media are often used by archaeologists to make their excavations more widely known to the general public. Typically, the more important an archaeological discovery is considered to be, the more interested people become, and consequently, so do journalists. In this chapter, the author discusses the impact that the excavations at the Palace of Nestor had on the public, both on a local and an international scale. He also considers types of information that can be gained only, or mainly, from the press and mass media. Aside from original articles by archaeologists, the press often preserves valuable, and in some cases unique, evidence from excavations and other archaeological discoveries.*

The press constitutes an inexhaustible source of knowledge and information. Among the thousands or even millions of pages in newspapers and other popularizing periodicals lies hidden material of inestimable value that can aid in research into the history of archaeology.<sup>1</sup>

Articles by journalists, in many cases, provide unique evidence and information about excavations and other archaeological discoveries. They also preserve unknown, often valuable, illustrations and photographic material. Through the multitude of publications and references, the impact caused by a particular archaeological event on both a local and international scale can be shown, and archaeologists' interviews with reporters can vividly reveal their ideas and opinions. Moreover, in many instances the press also preserves original articles written by the archaeologists themselves. These articles, for the most part unknown, are highly significant in that they concern rare archival and original material. They often preserve the archaeologists' initial interpretations, which may undergo modification during the long process of excavation and studying the finds.

Three of the most important prehistoric archaeologists—Heinrich Schliemann, Arthur Evans, and Spyridon Marinatos—utilized the power of the press to a great degree, often supplying it with letters they themselves wrote. Schliemann sent exten-

sive dispatches from Troy to both the *Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung* and the Greek newspaper *Ἐφημερίς τῶν Συζητήσεων* (*Journal of Discourses*), while Evans did not hesitate to send reports on his excavations at Knossos to the London newspaper, *The Times*. Furthermore, in recognition of the historical value of the press, these three archaeologists collected all the newspaper clippings that concerned them and their excavations. They later preserved these clippings with admirable care in albums specially designed for that purpose, thus creating a valuable archive for future archaeologists.<sup>2</sup>

Taking these remarks as my starting point, the symposium in honor of Carl Blegen organized by the American School of Classical Studies at Athens and the J. F. Costopoulos Foundation on March 31, 2013 constituted a good opportunity, not only to examine Blegen's relationship with the press, but also to collect as many articles as possible that were written about him and his excavations at Pylos both in Greek and foreign newspapers, as well as in other popularizing periodicals. The present study focuses only on his excavations in the Palace of Nestor since it was his most important and lengthiest excavation in Greece; in addition, as one might expect, many articles were written about it in Greek newspapers.

My research began with Blegen's archival material, which has been divided up between the American School of Classical Studies at Athens and the University of Cincinnati. Unfortunately, my first encounter with the material was rather disappointing. Unlike Schliemann, Evans, or Marinatos, Blegen was not in the habit of keeping albums of newspaper clippings. This can perhaps be explained by the modesty characteristic of this great archaeologist, a feature also noted by most journalists of his time. Only a few clippings are preserved at the American School of Classical Studies at Athens. Of about thirty that survive, unfortunately only six mention Blegen himself or his excavations at Pylos. More clippings are preserved in his archive at the University of Cincinnati, though many of them were actually collected by Marion Rawson, as the handwritten initials MR attest. Searches in libraries and on the Internet brought many more results, and so it became feasible to collect a satisfactory number of publications, thereby creating an important, and at the same time rare, archival resource. Through this archive, another history of the excavations, a more human one, unfolds.

For the sake of convenience, the present chapter is divided into two parts. In the first, the history of the excavations during the year 1939 is presented. The second part focuses not only on the period of new excavations, from 1952 onward, but also on Blegen the man and scholar, as revealed by his relationships with journalists.

### *The Discovery of the Palace of Nestor in 1939*

After completing his excavations at Troy in 1939, Carl Blegen, who was already a professor of archaeology at the University of Cincinnati, decided to return to the archaeology of the Peloponnese after a break of over eight years.<sup>3</sup> From March 25 to May 11, 1939, Blegen organized a project of survey and excavation in the wider

Pylos area, in collaboration with the Greek archaeologist Konstantinos Kourouniotis, director of the Epigraphical Museum at Athens. Their objective was to find the seat of the kings who had evidently been buried in two tholos tombs at the sites of Tragana and Osmanaga (in Koryphasion), which Kourouniotis had excavated in 1912 and 1926 respectively.<sup>4</sup>

Assisted by Elizabeth Blegen, Bert Hodge Hill, Ida Hill, and the graduate student William McDonald,<sup>5</sup> they excavated a new tholos tomb and opened seven trial trenches, reaching up to 70 m in length, on the summit of Ano Englianos hill, where there were clear traces of a prehistoric settlement.<sup>6</sup> The results were impressive. In the first few days of the excavation, remains of a palace of Mycenaean date (thirteenth century B.C.) were uncovered. In a small room, on a bench as well as on the floor, part of an archive with tablets in Linear B script was found. Years later, Blegen himself told the journalist Joseph W. Alsop (1910–1989) the story of the moment when the tablets were discovered: “It was the time of the spring rains. The ground was very damp, and the tablets very soggy and horribly delicate. W. A. McDonald, who was with us that year, and I spent day after day on our hands and knees, getting out the tablets one by one. When we dried them on wire screens, they became almost as hard as pottery, but still each tablet had to be cleaned, inch by inch, with toothpicks. We didn’t dare use acid then, as we do now. It was a chore, I can tell you—and we enjoyed every minute of it.”<sup>7</sup>

The impressive finds at Ano Englianos did not pass unnoticed by the press, even if, quite unexpectedly, they were not thought important enough to be front-page news in at least some of the most significant Greek newspapers of the period. The reason may have been that during the time of the Pylos excavations, the Greek press was focusing on two significant political events. In Germany, Adolf Hitler celebrated his fiftieth birthday (April 20) with hundreds of demonstrations in his honor, among which was the largest military parade that had ever taken place in the history of the Third Reich.<sup>8</sup> In Greece, almost three years after the coup of August 4, 1936, the dictator Ioannis Metaxas toured throughout the Peloponnese. On April 27, he was present in the Pylos area, at Kyparissia, where the residents gave him an ecstatic welcome.<sup>9</sup>

The first announcement of the palace’s discovery seems to have been on April 13, in the newspaper *Kathimerini* (*Η Καθημερινή*); it consisted of a small item, scarcely eighteen lines long, with the sober title “Discovery of a Mycenaean Palace.” According to this brief article, Carl Blegen informed the Directorate of Antiquities, which at that time was part of the Metaxas government’s Ministry of Education, of his discovery of a Mycenaean palace as well as approximately five hundred tablets (fig. 1).<sup>10</sup> The newspaper also mentioned that, owing to the importance of the finds, the director of antiquities, Spyridon Marinatos, immediately departed for Pylos to examine the finds up close. Marinatos’s visit evidently played a decisive role in the identification of the architectural remains with the Palace of Nestor. Marinatos returned to Athens the following day and confirmed to journalists that a Mycenaean palace had indeed been

## ΑΝΑΚΑΛΥΨΙΣ ΜΥΚΗΝΑΪ- ΚΟΥ ΑΝΑΚΤΟΡΟΥ

Εἰς τὴν διεύθυνσιν ἀρχαιοτήτων τοῦ ὄπουργείου τῆς Παιδείας ἐλήφθη χθὲς τηλεγράφημα τοῦ διευθύνοντος τὰς ἀρχαιολογικὰς ἀνασκαφὰς εἰς Πύλον. Ἄμερικανοῦ ἀρχαιολόγου κ. Βλέγγεν, διὰ τοῦ ὁποίου οὗτος ἀναγγέλλει ὅτι, κατὰ τὴν διάρκειαν τῶν ἐν λόγῳ ἀνασκαφῶν ἀπεκαλύφθη Μυκηναϊκὸν Ἄνακτορον. Ἐντὸς τοῦ ἀνακτόρου ἀνευρέθησαν περὶ τὰς πενήκοντα ἐνεπιγραφοὶ πλάκες, ἀποτελοῦσαι πιθανῶς τὸ ἀρχεῖον τῶν ἀνακτόρων.

Δοθέντος ὅτι ἡ γενομένη ἀνακάλυψις ἐθεωρήθη ὑπὸ τῶν ἀρμοδίων ἀρχαιολόγων ὡς σπουδαίας σημασίας, ἀνεχώρησεν ἀμέσως ἐπὶ τόπου ὁ διευθυντὴς ἀρχαιοτήτων τοῦ ὄπουργείου τῆς Παιδείας καθηγητὴς κ. Μαρινάτος.

Fig. 1. Announcement of the palace's discovery. *H Kathimerini*, April 13, 1939.

discovered, which probably belonged to King Nestor.<sup>11</sup> A few days later, on April 27, *Kathimerini* devoted another small story to the topic with a more impressive headline: "Palace of Nestor Discovered" (fig. 2).<sup>12</sup>

Doubtless, the discovery's announcement immediately excited people's curiosity, and not just those interested in archaeology. On April 29, the journalist Nestor Laskaris from the newspaper *Vradyni* (*H Βραδυνή*) traveled all the way to Pylos to speak with the excavator and to see the finds. Five articles were the fruit of this trip, published from April 29 to May 8.<sup>13</sup> In order to make the significance of Blegen's discovery more comprehensible to his readers, Laskaris republished a similar Linear B tablet that had been found by Evans at Knossos in 1901.<sup>14</sup> But his great interest in the matter was demonstrated by the questions he put to Blegen. When Laskaris asked whether they were dealing with the site of Homeric Pylos, Blegen replied that he was absolutely certain. Many factors, he said, contributed to this identification: the thickness of the building's walls, the tablets, and the location, which even today is impressive with its views of the Bay of Pylos and the surrounding area.

This important archaeological event constituted a point of reference for the foreign press as well. On April 29, *The Times* published a letter to the editor by the eminent archaeologist Arthur Evans, with the heading "Nestor's Palace: Important Discoveries in Greece. Inscriptions of Thirteenth Century B.C." (fig. 3).<sup>15</sup> As we read in this letter, Evans was informed in writing about the discovery on the hill of Ano

## ΑΠΕΚΑΛΥΦΘΗ ΤΟ ΑΝΑΚΤΟΡΟΝ ΤΟΥ ΝΕΣΤΟΡΟΣ

ΠΥΛΟΣ, 26 Ἀπριλίου. (Ἰδιαίτ. τηλ.).— Αἱ ἀπό τινος ἐνεργοῦμεναι ἀπὸ τὸν γνωστὸν Ἀμερικανὸν κ. Μπλέγκεν ἐν συνεργασίᾳ μὲ τὸν κ. Κουρουνιώτην δοκιμαστικαὶ ἀνασκαφαὶ εἰς τὴν θέσιν «Ἀγγλιανὸς» ἀπέχουσαν 20' τῆς ὥρας ἐκ τῆς πόλεως, ἔφεραν εἰς φῶς τὴν ἀκρόπολιν τῆς Ὀμηρικῆς Πύλου καὶ ἀπεκάλυψαν τελείως τὸ ἀνάκτορον τοῦ Νέστορος, ὡς καὶ θολωτοὺς τάφους. Εἰς τὴν περιοχὴν αὐτὴν, γύρω τοῦ ἀνακτόρου εὐρέθησαν διάφορα ἀγγεῖα ὀλόκληρα καὶ πολλὰ θραύσματα τοιοῦτων, καθὼς καὶ διάφοροι πινακίδες μὲ τὴν γνωστὴν γραφὴν τῆς Κνωσσοῦ μεγάλης ἀρχαιολογικῆς ἀξίας. Ἐντὸς τῶν ἡμερῶν ἀνοίγεται καὶ μεγάλος θολωτὸς τάφος εἰς τὸν ὁποῖον πιστεύεται ὅτι θὰ εὐρεθοῦν ἐξαιρετικῆς ἀξίας ἀντικείμενα.

Fig. 2. Announcement of the palace's discovery. *Η Καθημερινή*, April 27, 1939.

Englianos not only by Blegen himself but also by Marinatos. The way in which Evans interpreted the new finds is worth noting. Evans spoke of the discovery of a new "Minoan" palace in the Peloponnese at which wall paintings and "Minoan" and Mycenaean pottery had been found, as well as tablets with "Cretan" Linear B writing. At the end of the letter he also devoted a whole paragraph to the so-called Ring of Nestor, which had been found by a peasant at Kakovatos and bought by Evans almost fifteen years previously.<sup>16</sup> Evans suggested that the scene of "Minoan Hades" depicted on the "Ring of Nestor" must have been inspired by a wall decoration in the Palace.<sup>17</sup> These finds would thus undoubtedly confirm Evans's theory about Minoan overlordship throughout the Aegean, a theory which had been seriously contested both by Alan Wace and by Blegen himself, who maintained that Mycenaean civilization was autonomous.<sup>18</sup> Evans would feel completely vindicated. His interpretation shows in a

**NESTOR'S PALACE**

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**IMPORTANT DISCOVERIES  
IN GREECE**

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**INSCRIPTIONS OF THIRTEENTH  
CENTURY B.C.**

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES

Sir,—As the matter may be of general interest, I venture to pass on to you the news that has reached me simultaneously with letters from the American excavator, Dr. Blegen, and the Greek Director of Antiquities, Professor Marinatos, of the discovery near Navarino of a late Minoan palace, intimately connected with Knossos, on the traditional site of King Nestor's residence at Old Pylos.

This combined Greco-American excavation, sponsored by the University of Cincinnati, had for some years been planned by Dr. Blegen, though he has hitherto been detained by his fruitful supplementary explorations at Troy. The actual campaign of excavation was reserved for next year, but a short exploratory dig has had far more important results than it was possible to foresee. A trench made on an extensive hill called Ano Anglianés at once revealed the massive walls of a large Minoan palace that had been destroyed by a great fire in the thirteenth century B.C. It has well-paved floors, stone columns and bases, remnants of frescoes apparently in a late style, and considerable quantities of pottery in the Mainland Minoan or Mycenaean style.

But what was of the greatest interest, the explorers struck a shelf or bench running around one side of a small room, on which—in place for the most part—lay a deposit of clay tablets bearing inscriptions in the style of the Cretan linear script B. Remains of some 300 seem already to have been found, but it is clear that, as at Knossos, they are mainly business documents, in some cases referring to flocks and cereals. Their extraction and cleaning must, however, take some time, and these are delicate matters.

Fuller excavation on a large scale must, in any case, be postponed till next year, but it will be seen that this new discovery of a mainland connexion with Crete is of exceptional interest. Of one relic from Nestor's Pylos, however, we have already an example in a gold signet ring found by a peasant some years ago in the largest of some beehive tombs that here crowned an acropolis height. The elaborate design on this is of singular religious importance since it supplies our sole knowledge of judgment scenes in the Minoan Hades, divided above and below by the trunk and branches of the "Tree of the World," and so arranged as to suggest derivation from a wall painting. The fresco fragment discovered by Dr. Blegen in the palace opposite may indeed suggest the survival of some actual illustration of these scenes. The signet ring itself has found its resting place in the Minoan Room of the Ashmolean Museum.

Yours faithfully,

ARTHUR EVANS.

Youlbury, Berks. near Oxford.

Fig. 3. Arthur Evans's letter about Carl Blegen's excavation at Pylos. *The Times*, April 29, 1939, p. 15.

striking way how in archaeology—particularly prehistoric archaeology—the same archaeological find can be interpreted in many different ways, according to the viewpoint of the examiner.

A few weeks after the project ended, Blegen presented some of the first results of his research to the wider public. In the article "Nestor's Palace' at Pylos Yields the First Mycenaean Inscribed Tablets Ever Found on the Greek Mainland," which was published in *The Illustrated London News* on June 3, 1939, Blegen referred at length to his research, the excavations, and especially the discovery of the tablets.<sup>19</sup> Nonetheless, the article's historical and archival value lies in the accompanying photographs of the tablets and the tholos tomb.<sup>20</sup> The text makes clear the excavator's unshakable conviction that he had discovered the Palace of Nestor, a theory he never abandoned. Besides, Blegen himself remarked in conclusion: "Now that a substantial palace of the right period is coming to light in fairly close proximity to the traditional Greek Pylos, I see no reason for hesitating to accept it as the very Palace of the Neleids, where Nestor and his sons entertained Telemachus."

As the newspapers of the time attest, Blegen intended to begin a program of extensive excavation at Pylos the next year (1940).<sup>21</sup> But he did not know just how dramatically world history would change in the next few months. The beginning of World War II in September 1939, Greece's entry into the war on October 28, 1940, the

subsequent German occupation, and then the slaughter of the Civil War interrupted all excavations and archaeological research in Greece for over a decade. For all those years, the tablets were kept in the basement of the National Bank in Athens, while the palace remained safely in the earth, stoically awaiting the return of Carl Blegen.<sup>22</sup>

### *New Excavations at the Palace of Nestor (1952–1969)*

At the beginning of the 1950s, the political situation in Greece had become relatively calm. Blegen was completing the publication of the Troy excavation and was ready to resume excavation at Pylos. After Konstantinos Kourouniotis died in 1945, Spyridon Marinatos, who by now had become a professor of prehistoric archaeology at the University of Athens, was appointed to succeed him as representative of the Archaeological Service. According to Blegen, the work was divided into two sections, with Marinatos being responsible for the investigation of the wider region around Pylos, and Blegen concentrating on the excavation of the palace itself.<sup>23</sup>

After an interruption lasting thirteen whole years, the excavation began again on May 29, 1952. From then on, it continued every year until 1969, usually from May to July.<sup>24</sup> During these years, Blegen received the unfailing aid of many old and new colleagues, whom he always acknowledged, referring to them by name not only in his publications but even in newspaper articles. Among these colleagues, his wife Elizabeth Blegen (thirteen seasons), William McDonald (two seasons), who had subsequently become a professor at the University of Minnesota, Marion Rawson (fourteen seasons), Mabel Lang (eleven seasons), Piet de Jong (nine seasons), and Lord William Taylour (six seasons) deserve to be mentioned.<sup>25</sup>

A multitude of features and reports on the progress of the excavation were published all over the world, both in the Greek and foreign press, while news of the palace's discovery made its way as far as Iraq.<sup>26</sup> Blegen's lectures always constituted a point of reference in newspapers. In some cases, Blegen boosted public interest through his own articles in newspapers and popularizing periodicals such as *The Illustrated London News*.<sup>27</sup> Moreover, his home on Ploutarchou Street was open every Tuesday from noon to one to anyone wishing to learn about the course of the excavation,<sup>28</sup> and many journalists came from abroad just to talk with him and see the site. Among the Greek journalists who visited most regularly were Miltis Paraskevaïdis from *Kathimerini* and Pavlos Krinaios from *Vradyni*.<sup>29</sup>

All of these articles and interviews not only reveal the excavation's progress and history year by year, but also the character of Blegen himself. The following section will focus on the most significant publications, including those which demonstrate the impact of the excavation on the press, as well as those which preserve interesting aspects of Blegen's personality.

The results of the first year of excavation were published in celebratory fashion on August 15, 1952 in *Kathimerini* with an eye-catching headline: "The Most Re-





Fig. 5. Alan Sorrell's reconstruction of the Palace of Nestor. *The Illustrated London News* 228, April 7, 1956.

cent Significant Archaeological Success. The Palaces of the Kings of Pylos." The way in which the Greek press presented the new excavations this time is striking. The journalist Miltis Paraskevaidis wrote a prologue about the history of the excavations, followed by Carl Blegen's extensive archaeological report written in Greek.<sup>30</sup> Blegen announced the discovery of the throne room, with a circular hearth about four meters in diameter in the center of the room, and a multitude of new tablets. The texts were published on the newspaper's front page, where they took up about a quarter of the space, as well as on page three (fig. 4). Two photographs accompanied the text, one of the throne room and the other of a tablet.<sup>31</sup> This presentation of the excavation (in contrast to that of 1939) reflected the Greek public's keen interest in learning about their prehistoric past, in particular about a period that had been so celebrated by Homer. After the hardships of the German occupation and the Civil War, the discovery of the Palace of Nestor, "great glory of the Achaeans" (*Od.* 3.79) as Homer described him, would make Greeks proud of their glorious past and represent a small counterweight to their recent pain and misfortune.

During the same period, Blegen began a new collaboration with *The Illustrated London News*, in particular with its associate editor Edward Bacon, later an author of books on the history of archaeology.<sup>32</sup> Three new articles by Blegen were the fruit of this collaboration. Published on December 5, 1953, January 16, 1954, and April 7, 1956, they included many black-and-white photographs of the excavation site and the finds.<sup>33</sup> The unpublished correspondence between Blegen and Bacon (and also with other journalists) reveals that Blegen was always eager to help and even willing to offer rare or unpublished drawings or photographic material.

The following incident provides a typical example. In April 1954, Bacon informed Carl Blegen that the artist Alan Sorrell, who specialized in reconstructions of ancient buildings, would be visiting Greece that summer.<sup>34</sup> He asked him to show Sorrell plans and photographs of the palace, as well as to allow him to visit the excavation site. Blegen responded to this request with great pleasure. A year later, on August 27, 1955, the first reconstruction of the palace was published by Sorrell (fig. 5).<sup>35</sup> However, when the excavations continued, the plan of the building changed, and so Blegen never included this particular reconstruction in the official publication of the excavation. The only time he used it was in his third article in *The Illustrated London News* (1956), and he commented that “later excavations have somewhat altered the ground plan; and this drawing is not claimed as a fully-authenticated reconstruction, but rather as a very probable idea of what the palaces of the heroes of the *Iliad* were like.”<sup>36</sup>

Unfortunately, this collaboration with *The Illustrated London News* did not have a happy end. After further encouragement from Bacon,<sup>37</sup> in 1959, Blegen sent him some color drawings by his multitalented colleague Piet de Jong, asking that they be published in color. Blegen also indicated that he was willing to write another article; but time passed and, although Blegen sent Bacon various letters to remind him, nothing of the sort was ever done.<sup>38</sup> Blegen thought that the periodical was unwilling to publish the drawings and so, prompted by a lecture that he would give in March 1960, requested that they be sent back to him. Later on, Bacon sent a letter apologizing for his tardiness. He encouraged Blegen to continue their collaboration, but without success. However, unpublished color drawings of vases, restorations of wall paintings, and reconstructions of the palace’s interior spaces signed by Piet de Jong were published in the *Cincinnati Pictorial Enquirer* in January 1956 and in May 1964.<sup>39</sup>

The correspondence between Blegen and journalists which is kept at the American School of Classical Studies at Athens also reveals the scholarly conscientiousness and professionalism that distinguished him. Blegen always wanted to read and check over journalists’ texts shortly before their final publication. In this way he could catch mistakes, inaccuracies, or even misinterpretations. The correspondence he exchanged with *The Saturday Evening Post* in 1954 makes this readily apparent.<sup>40</sup> At that time, *The Saturday Evening Post* was preparing a piece about recent prehistoric discoveries in the Aegean; in April of that year, Douglas Borgstedt, the photography editor, asked Blegen for some photographs portraying people in the process of excavating to accompany the article.<sup>41</sup> In case such photographs did not exist, Borgstedt was keen to send a colleague of his to Pylos to take some “fresh pictures,” provided that excavation work was still taking place. Blegen replied that the excavation would begin soon and that he would gladly help him, but he did want to know who the author of the article was and what exactly he would be writing about Pylos.<sup>42</sup>

Thus, on May 14, the associate editor Steven M. Spencer sent a new letter, in which he reported that the writer was C. W. Ceram, who a few years earlier (1951) had published the book *Gods, Graves, and Scholars: The Story of Archaeology*, which would

later become famous.<sup>43</sup> He also enclosed Ceram's manuscript entitled "The Mystery of Crete." After some weeks, on June 24, the photographer Claude Jacoby came to Pylos as the magazine's representative and, at Borgstedt's request, took some pictures of the archaeologists during the excavation. On July 1, Blegen replied to Spencer.<sup>44</sup> He was intensely critical, noting that Ceram's text contained many inaccuracies and errors which showed that the author was not well informed about current developments. Even worse, the article in press focused on the German philologist Ernst Sittig, who in 1950 had proposed a disputed decipherment of Linear B.<sup>45</sup> According to Blegen, Ceram should have mentioned Michael Ventris and his very recent decipherment, which, as he emphasized, the majority of archaeologists accepted as correct. At the end of the letter, he urged Spencer "to have an interview with Ventris who is alive and accessible and fully informed on the whole subject" (the tragic irony is that Ventris would be dead only two years later). Blegen's letter seems to have been instrumental in the withdrawal of Ceram's text, and consequently, in Jacoby's photographs never being published.<sup>46</sup>

In the summer of 1955, news of the discovery of the famous "bathtub" traveled around the world.<sup>47</sup> This was aided by the notion, promoted by Blegen himself, that this "bathtub" could have been the very one used by Telemachus, the son of Odysseus. According to Homer, when Telemachus visited "sandy Pylos" in search of his father, Nestor's daughter Polykaste led him to the palace's bath, where she bathed him and anointed him with oil (*Od.* 3.464–467). In early December 1955, Blegen gave a lecture in Cincinnati about the "bathtub" and the year's other discoveries. The journalist Charles Warnick preserved snippets of Blegen's lecture for us in his article "There's a Lot of Truth in Homer," which reveals that Blegen had an excellent sense of humor.<sup>48</sup> Since the modern bathtub was invented in Cincinnati by Adam Thompson in 1842, Blegen said jokingly in his talk: "We know that the tub we found was last used for its intended purpose approximately 1200 years before the birth of Christ. Therefore, there seems to be no truth in the story that the bathtub was invented in Cincinnati a century or so ago." What catches our attention in this particular article is Blegen's firm belief in the historicity of Homer and the Homeric epics. As already noted, Blegen had maintained since 1939 that he had found Nestor's Palace. Now new finds were coming to light which supported this conviction still further. The "bathtub," a bench, and the Wine Magazine could all fit in nicely, as he put it, with the Homeric epics.<sup>49</sup> He also interpreted the remains of a "Grave Circle" of the Late Helladic II period found in 1957 (south of the hill of Ano Englianos) in the same way. Blegen attributed the circle to Nestor's ancestors, which may have included Nestor's father Neleus.<sup>50</sup>

Blegen retired in 1957. The following year, on November 7, 1958, the University of Cincinnati awarded him the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws for his thirty years of service to the University.<sup>51</sup> Excavations at the Palace of Nestor did not stop, but continued unabated, and Blegen also carried on receiving journalists at his home



Fig. 6. Carl Blegen.  
Photo Manuel Litran,  
July 16, 1961. Corbis Images (42-28026727).

on Ploutarchou Street. In the autumn of 1960, the American journalist Grace Goulder arrived in Greece from Ohio. She was preparing a series of articles about Americans who lived and worked in Greece. It was expected that she would look up Carl Blegen and his wife Elizabeth. Blegen was at that time marking fifty years since he first visited Greece. Enchanted by the appearance of the man of the house, Goulder wrote: "Blegen is a slight man. Soft-voiced, a kindly face, weathered by many Attic suns. His eyes took a far away look when he spoke of Pylos."<sup>52</sup> In response to her persistent attempts to get a few words out of him about his life, Blegen indicated that she could learn about him by opening the biographical dictionary *Who's Who*. In fact, as nearly all journalists of the time commented, Blegen was distinguished by his modesty and humility.<sup>53</sup> He could talk endlessly about his excavations and finds, but, as a slightly disenchanted Goulder noted: "He is not one to speak readily about himself, or his achievements."

That same year (1960) the journalist Ivar Lissner and his wife came to Pylos. Enthusiastic about the excavation, he wrote to Blegen: "I was very much impressed by the results of your scientific work, and after going through all the literature, I am certain that you have found the actual remains of the residence of Neleus and his sons. Your discovery deserves wide attention, and I hope you agree with me that *Paris Match* is the best edited magazine of its kind."<sup>54</sup> Indeed, on July 16, 1961, Lissner, accompanied by the photographer Manuel Litran, who was famed for his portraits of prominent persons such as Charles de Gaulle, Marlene Dietrich, and Pablo Picasso, came to the Palace of Nestor (now roofed) as representatives of the French monthly magazine *Paris Match*.<sup>55</sup> During this visit, Litran took many photographs, which are admirable



Fig. 7. Carl Blegen and Marion Rawson. Photo Manuel Litran, July 16, 1961. UC Department of Classics, Excavation Records.

for their clarity, naturalness, use of diffused light, and artistic sensitivity. Lissner's article, along with a selection of Litran's photographs, was published in *Paris Match* on April 28, 1962 under the title "Un vieux savant vit un véritable roman policier" ("An Aged Scholar is Living a Real Detective Story").<sup>56</sup> But the article provoked Blegen's displeasure. From a letter he sent to Lissner on August 2, it appears that the published text was very different from what Lissner had initially sent him.<sup>57</sup> Blegen wrote rather harshly: "We noticed that some changes had been made in your text—many of them not for the better, in our opinion. It is a pity that the popular periodicals feel it necessary to have parts of the text rewritten by people who are not familiar with the subject." Without a doubt the significance of their visit lies in Litran's photographs, most of which were not included in the article.<sup>58</sup> Among them are worth mentioning four photographs that are now published for the first time: a color portrait of Carl Blegen (fig. 6), who was then seventy-four years old, a photograph of Blegen watching



Fig. 8. Carl Blegen, Marion Rawson. Photo Manuel Litran, July 16, 1961. UC Department of Classics, Excavation Records.

Marion Rawson as she measures part of a floor (fig. 7), another photograph with Carl Blegen in a jeep with Marion Rawson and Piet de Jong in the back seats (fig. 8), and one that shows Blegen sitting with his close collaborator Marion Rawson in the palace's courtyard (fig. 9).

Shortly thereafter, at the end of August 1962, Blegen was visited at his home on Ploutarchou Street by the American journalist Joseph Alsop, best known for his book *From the Silent Earth: A Report on the Greek Bronze Age* (New York 1964).<sup>59</sup> Although the excavation season had scarcely ended, Blegen was delighted to travel to Pylos again with Alsop and to give him a tour of the palace. The results of the interview and trip were published in an extremely long article, "A Pylos before a Pylos," in *The New Yorker* a few months later (November 1962).<sup>60</sup> Previously, Alsop had received extremely flattering comments from Blegen: "The manuscript of your article on Pylos arrived yesterday and I have read it with great interest. It is very good indeed—though much too flattering about me—and I envy you your deftness in writing. It would have been very helpful to an archaeologist like me. I see that you have done a great deal of homework."<sup>61</sup>



Fig. 9. Carl Blegen sitting with Marion Rawson in the palace's courtyard. Photo Manuel Litran, July 16, 1961. UC Department of Classics, Excavation Records.

In fact, Alsop's multipage article showed him to be a cultivated journalist with a profound knowledge of prehistoric archaeology. Enthused by the excavator's hospitality, Alsop wrote: "Blegen today, at seventy-five, is a markedly gentle, quiet-spoken man, whose exquisite manners belong to an earlier American era. As a younger man, he must have been just as gently polite, for he always managed to stay on friendly terms with Sir Arthur Evans."<sup>62</sup> Further on in the article, Alsop remarked: "He turned out to be one of those rare scholars (nowadays almost a vanished race) who are pleased when outsiders show serious interest in their subjects."<sup>63</sup> The two men had wide-ranging discussions, not just about prehistoric archaeology, but also about Arthur Evans, Michael Ventris and the decipherment of Linear B, the 1939 excavations, the palace's administration, and the final destruction of the Mycenaean world, which Blegen believed was due to the invasion of the Dorians. Blegen's response to Alsop when he said that some archaeologists had not been persuaded that he had found the Palace of Nestor is worth noting: "Let the future give the answer. All I know is that I have found the capital of a rich kingdom, which is just about where Nestor's

capital must have been. If someone else, later on, finds an even finer palace in the same general area, then I'll be ready to agree that I've misplaced Nestor's Pylos."<sup>64</sup> It is true that, thus far, no comparable building has been located in the area. When Alsop asked him what the secret of his success was, Blegen replied honestly: "On a dig, you have to live as a family lives ... and if you have to live as a family, it's better to be a happy family."<sup>65</sup> If this was the secret of such a successful career, then it constitutes invaluable advice for all who spend a great part of their lives on excavations or involved in similar archaeological research.

In September 1964, Blegen appears to have given his final interview to Eleni Karapanagioti for the newspaper *To Vima* (*To Βήμα*). In this interview, which is included in the appendix because of its importance, Blegen spoke at length on many different subjects.<sup>66</sup> He characterized Schliemann as an excellent observer despite not being a professional archaeologist. He mentioned that he knew Evans very well and that they had become friends. As for their disagreement regarding the extent to which the Minoan civilization was more advanced than the Mycenaean, Blegen excused him by saying that Evans was convinced that Minoan Crete was something so unique that there was no room for anything else. In reference to the recent accusations that the philologist Leonard Palmer had leveled at Evans, accusing him of serious mistakes in the interpretation of his stratigraphy, Blegen did not hide his annoyance, observing that a philologist was not the most suitable person to assess an archaeologist's records. When the journalist asked whether the Trojans were a Greek people, Blegen answered that he firmly believed that the Achaeans who settled in Greece, as well as those who settled in Troy around 1900 B.C., had to belong to the same wave of migration. But after establishing themselves, they diverged. The Trojans came into contact with the peoples of their surrounding region, while the Greeks came into contact with higher-level cultures, such as those of the Minoans and Egyptians. As he ended the interview, he referred to his relations with younger and older archaeologists, saying: "Every generation comes and assesses the previous one, pointing out its oversights and condemning its mistakes. But sometimes we exaggerate the mistakes and forget how good the work done before us actually was. I believe, however, that this assessing of one generation by another and this revision of opinions is constructive, and at some point we do reach a conclusion and see how far we have come." These words show how open-minded Blegen was despite being nearly eighty years old.

From 1965 until 1969, the excavation at the palace at Pylos decreased in intensity as greater weight was given to the study of the material. Besides, Blegen was elderly and had begun to lose his colleagues and those dearest to him, including his wife Elizabeth (1966) and Piet de Jong (1967). As there were no more exciting finds, journalistic interest in the Pylos excavations also diminished drastically. The attention of journalists and the public turned toward the impressive new discoveries of Nikolaos Platon at Zakros and of Spyridon Marinatos at Akrotiri (Thera).

*Blegen's Character as a Secret of His Success*

In contrast to other archaeologists who choose to publish alone, Blegen was always surrounded by distinguished colleagues.<sup>67</sup> In 1966, he published the first volume of the excavation at Pylos with Marion Rawson (*The Palace of Nestor at Pylos in Western Messenia*. Vol. 1: *The Buildings and Their Contents*). Foreign and Greek newspapers have preserved Blegen's comment on the occasion of this publication: "Writing is a chore, but it has to be done. It is the penalty archaeologists must pay for the fun of excavating."<sup>68</sup> It is true that throughout his life Blegen never dwelt on the delights of digging; he always had a taste for the difficult work of writing, producing a multitude of excavation publications. He aimed at publishing another three volumes, as journalists of the period mentioned, but in the end only two more followed. Mabel Lang published the palace's wall paintings in 1969,<sup>69</sup> and in 1973 the third volume on Pylos was published in collaboration with Marion Rawson, William Taylour, and William Donovan.<sup>70</sup> However, Blegen did not live to see it. He breathed his last on August 24, 1971 in Evangelismos Hospital in Athens after suffering a stroke.<sup>71</sup>

Blegen left behind a massive legacy. Until WW I American archaeology in Greece focused on the excavation of classical sites. With his excavations and in particular his publications, Blegen turned American archaeology towards Greece's prehistoric past. The multitude of articles published in the press about him and his excavations at the Palace of Nestor brought prehistoric archaeology to the wider public. Blegen was certainly not in the habit of sending dozens of reports to the newspapers as Schliemann or Evans did. In any case, something of that sort did not suit his modest character. He was always eager, however, to help journalists in their work without pettiness or other misgivings, always guided by what he believed to be the good of archaeology, a discipline he served with great devotion and conviction.

*Appendix*

The following interview with Blegen was published in the newspaper *To Βήμα*, Sunday, September 20, 1964, p. 5. A translation follows.

## ΠΡΟΒΛΗΜΑΤΙΣΜΟΙ ΣΤΗΝ ΑΡΧΑΙΟΛΟΓΙΑ

## ΝΕΕΣ ΑΠΟΦΕΙΣ ΚΑΙ ΣΧΗΜΑΤΑ ΣΤΗΝ ΑΡΧΑΙΑ ΙΣΤΟΡΙΑ ΜΑΣ

"Ένας μεγάλος αρχαιολόγος, ο καθηγητής Κάρλ Μπλέγκεν, όμιλεί για τούς μεγάλους αρχαιολόγους και τίς νεώτερες θεωρίες πού επέφεραν μία ριζική έπανεκτίμησιν τών πρώτων κεφαλαίων τής αρχαίας έλληνικής ιστορίας

## Η ΔΙΚΑΙΩΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΟΜΗΡΟΥ

Οί αρχαίες πέτρες μένουν συχνά βουβές, τά αρχαία κείμενα συχνά παραπλανούν και ή τυχαία ανεύρεση μιās μικρής έπιγραφής θαμμένης από

αιώνες μέσα στο χῶμα μπορεί νά ανατρέψη θεωρίες πού κτίσθηκαν μέ χρόνους δουλειᾶς καί μελέτης. Αὐτή εἶναι καί ἡ ἀγωνία τοῦ κάθε ἀρχαιολόγου ὁ ὁποῖος καλεῖται νά συμπληρώσῃ τήν ἔλλειψη στοιχείων μέ τήν διαίσθηση ἢ τήν φαντασία του. Καί ἡ ἀγωνία αὐτή εἶναι ιδιαίτερα αἰσθητή σέ μία ἀπό τίς πλέον σκοτεινές περιόδους τῆς ἀρχαίας ἑλληνικῆς ἱστορίας: τήν ἐποχή τοῦ χαλκοῦ. Ἄπειρα καί σοβαρώτατα εἶναι τά ἐρωτήματα πού ἔθεσε καί θέτει στούς ἀρχαιολόγους καί οἱ ἀλληλοσυγκρουόμενες ἀπαντήσεις πού δίδει ὁ καθένας προκάλεσαν καί προκαλοῦν δριμύτατες διαμάχες γιά τίς σχέσεις τῆς ἠπειρωτικῆς Ἑλλάδος μέ τήν Κρήτη, γιά τήν ἱστορική ἀκρίβεια τοῦ ὀμηρικοῦ ἔπους καί γιά τόσα ἄλλα ἀκόμα διαμφισβητούμενα σημεῖα τῆς.

Στήν ἐποχή αὐτή ἔχει ἀφιερῶσει τήν ζωή του ὁ μέγας ἀρχαιολόγος Κάρλ Μπλέγκεν, ὁ ὁποῖος, ἀφοῦ ἔκανε τίς μεγάλες ἀνασκαφές στήν Τροία, ἀνέσκαψε τό ἀνάκτορο τοῦ Νέστορα στήν Πύλο ὅπου, γιά πρώτη φορά, βρέθηκαν καί πινακίδες γραμμικῆς γραφῆς Β στήν ἠπειρωτική Ἑλλάδα. Ὅπως κάθε χρόνο, ἔτσι καί ἐφέτος ὁ καθηγητής Μπλέγκεν συνέχισε τίς ἀνασκαφές του στήν Πύλο. Ἡλικίας σήμερα 77 ἐτῶν, ὁ κ. Μπλέγκεν συμπληρώνει τό μεγάλο σύγγραμμά του γιά τό ἀνάκτορο τοῦ Νέστορα καί ἔως τό τέλος τοῦ ἔτους θά ἔχη παραδώσει στό τυπογραφεῖο τόν πρῶτο τόμο του.

Στό κτίριο τῆς Ἀμερικανικῆς Σχολῆς Κλασσικῶν Μελετῶν, δέχθηκε νά ἀπαντήσῃ, μέ τήν ἤρεμη φωνή του καί μέ πολλή καλωσύνη, σέ μία σειρά ἐρωτημάτων πού εἶχαν ὡς ἐπίκεντρό τους τήν παρακάτω παρατήρηση: Γιά τόν μὴ εἰδικό, ἡ σημαντικώτερη ἐξέλιξη στόν τομέα σας στήν τελευταία εικοσαετία εἶναι ἡ ἀναθεώρηση τῶν πρώτων κεφαλαίων τῆς ἀρχαίας ἑλληνικῆς ἱστορίας. Ἀποκομίζει κανεῖς τήν ἐντύπωση ἀπό ὅσα διαβάζει, ὅτι ἡ ἀναθεώρηση αὐτή τείνει νά ἐπιβεβαιώσῃ ὅλο καί περισσότερο τήν ἀφήγηση τοῦ Ὀμήρου, καί τείνει, ἀκόμα, νά ἀποδώσῃ στούς Ἕλληνας τήν ἱστορία τοῦ τόπου τους.

- Ναι, ἀπαντᾷ ὁ καθηγητής Μπλέγκεν, σημειώσετε ὅμως ὅτι ἡ ἀναθεώρηση αὐτή ἄρχισε πρῖν ἀπό πολλές δεκαετίες. Ἄς ποῦμε ὅτι ἄρχισε τό 1870 μέ τόν Σλήμαν. Ἦταν ἓνας ἄνθρωπος πού πίστευε ὅτι τά ὀμηρικά ἔπη εἶχαν μιά σοβαρή καί οὐσιαστική βάση ἀλήθειας - καί προσπάθησε νά ἐξεύρη τίς ἀποδείξεις πού θά ἐδραίωναν τήν πεποίθηση του αὐτή. Ἐτσι εἶχε τό προνόμιο νά βρῆ, πρῶτα στήν Τροία καί ὕστερα στίς Μυκῆνες, τήν ἐπιβεβαίωση πού ἀναζητοῦσε.

- Τοῦ καταλογίζουν ὅμως πολλά· διάβαζα αὐτές τίς μέρες κάποιον πού ὑποστήριζε ὅτι εἶναι πολύ πιθανό ὁ Σλήμαν νά βρῆκε στίς Μυκῆνες πῆλινες πινακίδες γραμμικῆς γραφῆς Β καί νά τίς πέταξε ἀπό ἀπροσεξία.

- Ὅλοι μας ξέρετε, παρατηρεῖ ὁ κ. Μπλέγκεν, πιστεύουμε ὅτι ὁ προκατόχου μας διέπραξαν φοβερὰ σφάλματα, στήν περίπτωση ὅμως αὐτή δέν τό πιστεύω. Σύμφωνοι: ὁ Σλήμαν δέν ἦταν ἐπαγγελματίας ἀρχαιολόγος, ἀλλά ἦταν ἄριστος παρατηρητής. Ἐβλεπε - καί ἔβλεπε πολύ καλά. Περίφημα ἔβλεπε καί ὁ Τσουντας, πού ἦταν ἔκτακτος στίς ἀνασκαφές. Ἀλλά γιά νά συνεχίσουμε, τό ἐπόμενο σημαντικό βῆμα ἔγινε ἀπό τόν Ἐβαν στήν Κρήτη. Τόν γνώρισα καλά, γίναμε φίλοι καί μπορῶ νά πῶ ὅτι ἦταν ἓνας μέγας ἄνθρωπος.

- Διαφωνήσατε όμως μαζί του.

- Διαφώνησα μαζί του, όπως διαφώνησε και ο Γουαίης. Ξέρετε, ο Έβανς, πού ανέκάλυψε όλα αυτά τα θαυμάσια πράγματα, ήταν πεπεισμένος ότι η Μινωική Κρήτη ήταν κάτι τό τόσο μοναδικό, ώστε δεν υπήρχε χώρος για τίποτε άλλο. Πίστευε πως ό,τι τό ώραίο, σημαντικό, ενδιαφέρον υπήρχε στις Μυκίνες, έπρεπε νά προέρχεται από τήν Κρήτη. Καί έπειδή μετά τό 1400 π.Χ., οί Έλληνες ήλθαν στην Κρήτη καί τήν κατέλαβαν, τούτο σήμαινε ότι μόνο τρωγλοδύτες μπορούσαν, μετά τήν ήμερομηνία εκείνη, νά κατοικήσουν στά έρείπια τών ανακτόρων τής Κνωσού.

- Μά δεν είναι μόνο αυτό. Σήμερα, ο Πάλμερ διαμφισβητεί, άς μήν πούμε τήν έντιμότητα, αλλά τήν εύσυνειδησία του Έβανς στις άνασκαφές του.

- Άς ξεκαθαρίσουμε λίγο τα πράγματα. Ο Έβανς έκανε τίς άνασκαφές του στις άρχές του αιώνα μας καί οί συνθήκες έχουν αλλάξει πολύ από τότε.

- Έννοείτε στην άρχαιολογία;

- Ναι, είναι ζήτημα τεχνικής. Άς πάρουμε ένα παράδειγμα: Τόν καιρό εκείνο έσκαβαν πολλοί εργάτες καί τούς έπιτηρούσε ένας μόνο άρχαιολόγος, ένών σήμερα ή όρθή άναλογία είναι ένας άρχαιολόγος για κάθε δύο ή τρεις εργάτες. Στις άνασκαφές του Έβανς, 250 εργάτες δεν είχαν παρά ελάχιστους έπιστάτες καί ένας καί μόνος άνθρωπος κρατούσε τό άρχείο καί έκανε τίς καταγραφές. Ήταν ένας πολύ καλός άνθρωπος - ο Μακένζυ - μά ήταν μόνος. Καί στις σημειώσεις του Μακένζυ στηρίζεται σήμερα ο Πάλμερ για νά διαμφισβητήσει τήν εύσυνειδησία του Έβανς. Βέβαια ο Μακένζυ ήταν προσεκτικός άνθρωπος, αλλά ήταν μόνος. Τώρα πρέπει ακόμα νά σημειώσω ότι ο Πάλμερ δεν είναι άρχαιολόγος αλλά φιλόλογος καί δεν νομίζω ότι ένας φιλόλογος είναι τό κατ' έξοχήν άρμόδιο πρόσωπο για νά έλέγχει τά άρχεία καί τίς καταχωρήσεις ενός άρχαιολόγου.

- Άνεξάρτητα όμως από αυτό είχατε διαφωνήσει με τήν τοποθέτηση του Έβανς.

- Βέβαια, γιατί πίστευα - καί πιστεύω - ότι τό 1400 δεν τελείωσε ή ιστορία του πολιτισμού στην Κρήτη, ότι μετά τήν κατάληψή της από τούς Έλληνες δημιουργήθηκε ένα καινούργιο έλληνικό βασίλειο, πού αναπτύχθηκε καί διήρκεσε έως τό 1200, όποτε καί κατεστράφη.

- Δικαιώνεται λοιπόν ο Όμηρος πού παρουσιάζει τόν Ίδομενέα, τόν βασιλιά τής Κρήτης, νά συμμετέχει στην έκστρατεία κατά τής Τροίας.

- Ναι, βέβαια. Άς πούμε ότι ή γενική δομή του Όμήρου ανταποκρίνεται σε μία ιστορική πραγματικότητα. Ξέρετε, ότι όχι μόνο παλαιότερα, αλλά καί τώρα ακόμα υπάρχουν άνθρωποι πού πιστεύουν ότι ο Όμηρος πήρε ως βάση μία έπιδρομή έναντίον τής Αιγύπτου, καί δημιούργησε ένα παραμύθι! Σήμερα όμως τά πράγματα είναι διαφορετικά. Όλα τα μεγάλα κέντρα πού αναφέρει ο Όμηρος έχουν άνευρεθή καί έχει αποδειχθή ότι ήσαν κέντρα του μυκηναϊκού πολιτισμού. Ξέρουμε ποιά ήσαν, ξέρουμε πού ήσαν. Ήρθε καί ή άποκρυπτογράφηση τής γραμμικής Β για νά μάς καταδείξει ότι οί Μυκηναίοι ήσαν άνθρωποι πού μι-

λοῦσαν καί ἔγραφαν ἑλληνικά. Αυτό βέβαια ἰσχύει γιά τούς κατοίκους τῆς ἠπειρωτικῆς Ἑλλάδος, ἀλλά ἀπό τόν Ὅμηρο πού μιᾶ γιά τόν Ἰδομενεά καταφαίνεται ὅτι οἱ Ἀχαιοί εὐρίσκοντο ἤδη στήν Κρήτη καί εἶχαν δημιουργήσει ἕνα βασίλειο πρὶν ἀπό τήν πτώση τῆς Τροίας.

- Τήν ὁποία νομίζω ὅτι ἐσεῖς τοποθετεῖτε τό 1260.

- Ναί, περίπου. Ὅσο βέβαια μπορούμε νά εἴμαστε βέβαιοι γιά τέτοιες χρονολογικές τοποθετήσεις.

- Ἔχετε μάλιστα καί τήν ἄποψη ὅτι οἱ Τρῶες ἦσαν Ἕλληνες. Κάποιος ἀνάφερε, πάνω σ' αὐτό, τό ἐπιχείρημα ὅτι ὁ Ὅμηρος δέν ἐμφανίζει διερμηνεῖς μεταξύ Ἑλλήνων καί Τρώων!

- Εἶναι μᾶλλον ἀνόητο ἐπιχείρημα. Σέ τέτοια ζητήματα δέν πρέπει νά παίρνη κανεῖς στά σοβαρά τούς ποιητές! Τό γεγονός ὅτι ὁ ποιητής παρουσιάζει τούς Τρῶες καί τούς Ἀχαιοὺς νά μιλοῦν τήν ἴδια γλώσσα, δέν εἶναι παρὰ σύμβαση πού παρατηρεῖται στά ἔπη ὄλων τῶν λαῶν. Ἐκεῖνο πού πιστεύω εἶναι ὅτι οἱ Τρῶες πού ἀναφέρονται στά ὁμηρικά ἔπη ἦσαν συγγενεῖς τῶν Ἑλλήνων.

- Ἰδιαίτερα τῆς ἐποχῆς ἐκείνης;

- Ὅχι, ἀπό ἐνωρίτερα. Εἶχα τήν ἄποψη, τήν ὁποία ἐξακολουθῶ νά ὑποστηρίζω, ὅτι γύρω ἀπό τό 1900 σημειώθηκε ἕνα βαθύ ρήγμα στήν ἱστορία τῆς πόλης, ἢ, μᾶλλον, τῶν διαδοχικῶν πόλεων. Ἡ Τροία VI – τήν ὁποία ἔκτισαν ἐκεῖνου πού κατέστρεψαν τήν Τροία V – ἐμφανίζει ριζικές διαφορές ἀπό τήν προηγούμενη πόλη, τήν ὁποία ἔφεραν σέ φῶς οἱ ἀνασκαφές. Σημειώνεται ἕνα ἀπολύτως διαφορετικό «στύλ» πού ὑποδεικνύει μία ἀλλαγὴ στοὺς ἴδιους τούς κατοίκους. Πιστεύω ὅτι ἡ ἀλλαγὴ αὐτὴ ἐπῆλθε γύρω ἀπό τό 1900, καί ἔτσι μπορούμε νά ὑποστηρίζουμε ὅτι τόσο οἱ Ἀχαιοὶ πού ἐγκαταστάθηκαν στήν Ἑλλάδα ὅσο καί ἐκεῖνοι πού ἐγκαταστάθηκαν στήν Τροία ἀνῆκαν στό ἴδιο μεταναστευτικό κύμα. Πιά νά ἀκριβολογήσουμε ὅμως πρέπει νά προσθέσουμε ὅτι, ἂν καί ἀνῆκαν στό ἴδιο μεταναστευτικό κύμα, δέν εἶχαν καί τήν ἴδια ἐξέλιξη μετὰ τήν ἐγκατάστασή τους. Τό περιβάλλον τούς ἦταν διαφορετικό, τὰ βιωτικά τους προβλήματα ἦσαν διαφορετικά. Διαφορετικοὶ ἦσαν ἀκόμα καί οἱ λαοὶ μέ τούς ὁποίους ἦλθαν σέ ἐπαφή. Κι' αὐτό, ξέρετε, σημαίνει πολλά, γιατί ἐνῶ οἱ Τρῶες ἦλθαν σέ ἐπαφή μέ τούς λαοὺς πού κατοικοῦσαν στήν δική τους περιοχὴ τοῦ κόσμου, οἱ Ἕλληνες ἦλθαν σέ ἐπαφή μέ τὰ ρεύματα ὑψηλοῦ πολιτισμοῦ τῆς Κρήτης καί τῆς Αἰγύπτου. Ἔτσι, λοιπόν, μπορούμε νά φαντασθοῦμε ὅτι οἱ διαφορὲς μεταξύ Ἑλλήνων καί Τρώων ἦσαν, τήν ἐποχὴ τοῦ Τρωϊκοῦ πολέμου, μεγάλες καί σοβαρές, ἀλλά ὅτι ὑπῆρχε μεταξύ τους ἕνα κοινὸ ὑπόστρωμα φυλῆς καί γλώσσας.

- Καί ἀμέσως μετὰ τόν Τρωϊκὸν πόλεμο, οἱ νικητὲς ἠττήθηκαν ἀπὸ ἄλλους εἰσβολεῖς. Ἦθελα νά σᾶς ρωτήσω, πάνω σ' αὐτό, τήν γνώμη σας γιά τήν θεωρία ὅτι ἡ κατάρρευση τοῦ Μυκηναϊκοῦ πολιτισμοῦ ὀφείλεται σέ μιὰ ἐσωτερικὴ κοινωνικὴ ἐπανάσταση καὶ ὄχι σέ ξένους εἰσβολεῖς.

- Ξέρω τήν θεωρία, ἀλλά δέν μπορῶ νά πῶ ὅτι ἔχω πεισθῆ γιά τήν ὀρθότητά της. Ἐπιτέλους, μπορῶ νά φαντασθῶ τήν ἔκρηξη μιᾶς κοινωνικῆς ἐπανάστασης

στις Μυκήνες ή στην Πύλο ή στην Θήβα, αλλά δέν μπορώ νά πιστέψω ότι μία κοινωνική επανάσταση ξέσπασε παντού τήν ίδια εποχή και προσέλαβε παντού τήν ίδια μορφή και έφερε παντού τήν πυρκαγιά και άφησε παντού πίσω της τήν έρημωση. Ένα τέτοιο φαινόμενο μου φαίνεται έξαιρετικά άπιθανο.

- Αλλά βέβαια στην πυρκαγιά τής καταστροφής οφείλουμε τήν διατήρηση τών πήλινων πινακίδων.

- Ναί. Τώρα πολλά εξαρτώνται στίς περιπτώσεις αυτές από τίς συνθήκες κάτω από τίς όποιες επήλθε ή καταστροφή, και από τό εάν άλλοι ήλθαν άργότερα νά κατοικήσουν στά ίδια ανάκτορα. Τά έγγραφα πού ήσαν από πάπυρο ή από ξύλο άσφαλώς καταστράφηκαν στην πυρκαγιά. Και βέβαια οί πινακίδες πού βρέθηκαν δέν ήσαν μόνιμα αλλά προσωρινά άρχεία, τά όποια ή πυρκαγιά, μέ τό νά τά ψήση, τά έκανε μόνιμα. Στην Πύλο τά εϋρήματα ήσαν τόσο πλούσια γιατί κανείς δέν φαίνεται νά κατοίκησε τήν πόλη μετά τήν καταστροφή της, ενώ άλλου, όπου άργότερα σημειώθηκε νέα εγκατάσταση κατοίκων, οί πινακίδες πού βρήκαμε ήσαν λιγώτερες.

- Από αυτές όμως μαθαίνουμε πολλά.

- Μαθαίνουμε; Άς πούμε ότι θά μάθουμε. Τά πράγματα δέν είναι τόσο άπλά, και θά χρειασθή πολός καιρός για νά διαβάσουμε και νά καταλάβουμε τό περιεχόμενο τών πινακίδων.

- Έχετε βέβαια ύπ' όψη σας τήν δουλειά του Πάλμερ και τήν έρμηνεία πού δίνει τών πινακίδων.

- Ναί, τήν έχω ύπ' όψη μου, αλλά δέν είμαι πολύ βέβαιος για όλα όσα λέει. Πρώτα άπ' όλα, ή γραμμική γραφή Β δέν είναι μία γραφή πού έχει επινοηθή για τήν καταγραφή τής έλληνικής γλώσσας. Προϋπήρχε και τά έλληνικά έπρεπε, όπως - όπως, νά χωρέσουν στο καλούπι της. Από αυτό και μόνο καταλαβαίνετε ότι ή μετάφρασή τους είναι δύσκολη. Άς ελπίσουμε όμως ότι μέ τόν καιρό θά βρούμε και άλλες πινακίδες, γιατί όσες περισσότερες βρούμε, τόσο εύκολότερο θά είναι και τό έργο τής μετάφρασης.

- Βρέθηκαν τώρα πινακίδες και στην Θήβα.

- Ναί. Και έτσι ή Θήβα εντάσσεται και αυτή στά πλαίσια του ίδιου πολιτισμού, και επιβεβαιώνονται ακόμα περισσότερο οί απόψεις μας για τόν Μυκηναϊκό πολιτισμό. Καλό βέβαια θά ήταν νά βρίσκαμε ένα άλλο, άθικτο ανάκτορο, ή άλλο ανάλογο κτίριο, στην Κρήτη, για νά ελέγξουμε τίς εικασίες μας.

- Άπ' όσα λέμε μένει ή αίτηση επαναστατικών αλλαγών στην άρχαιολογία, σαν νά αλλάξει ο τρόπος μέ τόν όποιο βλέπουμε τήν άρχή τής Έλληνικής ιστορίας.

- Ναί, βέβαια. Γιατί, ξέρετε, κάθε γενιά έρχεται και ελέγχει τήν προηγούμενη, έπισημαίνει τίς παραλείψεις της και καταγγέλλει τά σφάλματά της. Τά σφάλματα όμως καμιά φορά τά υπερβάλλουμε, και ξεχνάμε πόσο καλή ήταν ή δουλειά πού είχε γίνει πριν από μās. Πιστεύω όμως ότι αυτός ο έλεγχος τής μιάς γενιάς από τήν επομένη, και αυτή ή αναθεώρηση απόψεων είναι έποικοδομητική και κάποια

ώρα κατασταλάζουμε και βλέπουμε μέχρι ποιο σημείο προχωρήσαμε. Έτσι και η ίδια η Ιστορία μας διδάσκει πόσο πρέπει να είμαστε επιφυλακτικοί, και ιδίως, θά ξλεγα, ότι μάς διδάσκει πόσο πρέπει να μένουμε πιστοί στα ίδια τὰ γεγονότα.

ΕΛΕΝΗ ΚΑΡΑΠΑΝΑΓΙΩΤΗ

The following interview with Carl Blegen was published by Eleni Karapanagioti in *To Vima*, Sunday, September 20, 1964, p. 5.<sup>72</sup>

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS

### New Views and Theories about our Ancient History

Professor Carl Blegen, a distinguished archaeologist, talks about the great archaeologists and the latest theories which have brought about a radical re-evaluation of the first chapters of ancient Greek history.

#### The Vindication of Homer

Ancient stones often stay mute, ancient texts often mislead, and the chance discovery of a small inscription hidden in the earth for centuries can overturn theories built on years of work and study. This is the concern of every archaeologist who is called upon to supplement a lack of data with intuition or imagination. This worry is especially perceptible in one of the darkest periods of ancient Greek history: the Bronze Age. The questions which this period has posed and continues to pose for archaeologists are infinite and very serious, and the conflicting answers have provoked and continue to provoke very bitter disputes about the relations between mainland Greece and Crete, about the historical accuracy of Homeric epics, and about so many other still-disputed points.

The great archaeologist Carl Blegen has devoted his life to the Bronze Age. After carrying out the great excavations at Troy, he excavated the Palace of Nestor at Pylos, where tablets in Linear B writing were discovered for the first time on mainland Greece. As he does every year, including this year, Professor Blegen continued his excavations at Pylos. Now seventy-seven years old, Mr. Blegen is completing his great work on the Palace of Nestor and will deliver the first volume to the printers by the end of the year.

In the building of the American School of Classical Studies he agreed to answer, in his calm voice and with great kindness, a series of questions centering on the following observation: "For the non-specialist the most important development in your field in the last twenty years is the revision of the first chapters of ancient Greek history. One gets the impression from everything one reads that this revision tends to confirm Homer's narrative more and more, and furthermore to give Greeks a rendering of the history of their country."

-“Yes,” Prof. Blegen replied, “but you will note that this revision began many decades ago. Let us say that it began in 1870 with Schliemann. He was a man who believed that the Homeric poems had a serious and substantive basis in fact – and he attempted to find the evidence that would strengthen this belief of his. And so he had the privilege to find, first at Troy and later at Mycenae, the confirmation he was searching for.”

-“But many accusations are made against him: I’ve just been reading someone who maintained that it was very likely that Schliemann found Linear B clay tablets at Mycenae and threw them away due to carelessness.”

-“You know,” responded Mr. Blegen, “we all believe that our predecessors made serious errors, but in this case I don’t believe it. I would agree: Schliemann was not a professional archaeologist, but he was an excellent observer. He watched – and saw very well. Tsountas also famously observed and was at the excavations on a temporary basis. But to go on, the next important step was taken by Evans on Crete. I knew him well, we became friends, and I can say that he was a great man.”

-“But you disagreed with each other.”

-“I did disagree with him, as did Wace. Evans, you know, who discovered all those wonderful things, was convinced that Minoan Crete was something so unique that it left no room for anything else. He believed that whatever was beautiful, important, or interesting at Mycenae had to have come from Crete. And since the Greeks came to Crete after 1400 BC and occupied it, this meant that after that date only cavemen could have lived in the ruins of the palaces of Knossos.”

-“But it is not just this. Now Palmer is calling into question, let’s not say Evans’s honesty, but his conscientiousness in excavating.”

-“Let’s clarify things a little. Evans carried out his excavations at the beginning of this century and conditions have changed a lot since then.”

-“You mean, in archaeology?”

-“Yes, it’s a question of technique. Let’s take one example. At that time many workers did the excavating and only one archaeologist supervised them, while today the usual ratio is one archaeologist for every two or three workers. On Evans’s excavations, 250 workers had no more than a very few overseers, and one single person was responsible for the archive and kept the records. He was a very good man, Mackenzie, but he was by himself. And it is on Mackenzie’s notes that Palmer now relies in order to call Evans’s conscientiousness into question. Certainly, Mackenzie was a careful man, but he was by himself. Now I should further note that Palmer is not an archaeologist, but a philologist, and I don’t think a philologist is absolutely the right person to criticize an archaeologist’s records and inventories.”

-“But apart from this, you had disagreed with Evans’s dating.”

-“Sure, because I believed and still believe that the history of civilization on Crete didn’t end in 1400, and that after its occupation by the Greeks, a new Greek kingdom was created which developed and lasted until 1200, when it too was destroyed.”

- "So, Homer is vindicated when he presents Idomeneus, the king of Crete, as taking part in the expedition against Troy."

- "Indeed. Let's say that the overall structure of Homer corresponds to a historical reality. You know that not only in the past, but even now there are still people who believe that Homer took as his foundation an attack against Egypt and produced a fairytale! But today things are different. All the major centers Homer mentions have been found and it has been shown that they were centers of Mycenaean civilization. We know what they were, we know where they were. And the decipherment of Linear B has come to demonstrate to us that the Mycenaeans were people who spoke and wrote in Greek. This is certainly valid for the inhabitants of mainland Greece, but from Homer, who talks about Idomeneus, it is obvious that the Achaeans were already on Crete and had created a kingdom before the fall of Troy."

- "Which I think you place in 1260."

- "Yes, around then. As sure as we can be about dating of this sort."

- "You, indeed, hold the view that the Trojans were Greeks. Regarding this, someone has brought up the argument that Homer does not employ translators between Greeks and Trojans!"

- "That's a rather silly argument. One shouldn't take poets seriously in such matters! The fact that the poet presents Trojans and Greeks speaking the same language is nothing other than a convention observed in the epics of all peoples. What I do believe is that the Trojans mentioned in Homeric epic were related to the Greeks."

- "Especially at that time?"

- "No, from earlier on. I held the opinion, which I continue to maintain, that the years around 1900 marked a deep break in the city's history, or, rather, of the successive cities. Troy VI, which was built by the people who destroyed Troy V, shows radical differences from the previous city, which the excavations have brought to light. An absolutely different style is observed that indicates a change in the inhabitants themselves. I believe that this change took place around 1900, and so we can state that the Achaeans who settled in Greece, as well as those who settled in Troy, belonged to the same wave of migration. To be precise, though, I should add that, even if they belonged to the same wave of migration, they did not develop in the same way after they settled down. Their environment was different. Their problems in life were different. Further, the peoples they came in contact with were different. And this, you know, is very significant, because, while the Trojans came in contact with the peoples who inhabited their region of the world, the Greeks came into contact with the trends of the highly developed civilizations of Crete and Egypt. So, then, we can imagine that, at the time of the Trojan War, the differences between the Greeks and the Trojans were major and serious, but that between them still existed a common substratum of race and language."

- "And immediately after the Trojan War, the victors were defeated by other invaders. I would like to ask you, concerning this, for your opinion about the theory that

the collapse of Mycenaean civilization was due to a domestic social revolution and not to foreign invasions.”

- “I know the theory, but I can’t say that I’m convinced of its correctness. In the end, I can imagine an outbreak of social revolution at Mycenae or Pylos or Thebes, but I can’t believe that social revolution broke out everywhere at the same time, took the same form everywhere, caused conflagrations everywhere, and left behind a desert everywhere. Such a phenomenon seems exceptionally incredible to me.”

- “But surely we owe the preservation of the clay tablets to the catastrophic fire.”

- “Yes. Now, in these circumstances much depends on the conditions under which the destruction occurred and on whether others came later on to inhabit the same palaces. Documents on papyrus or on wood were surely destroyed in the fire. And certainly, the tablets that were found were not permanent but temporary records, which the fire made permanent by baking them. At Pylos the finds were so rich because no one seems to have inhabited the city after its destruction, while in other places, where a new settlement of inhabitants has been noted later on, the tablets that we have found were fewer.”

- “But we are learning a lot from them.”

- “We *are* learning? Let’s say that we *will* learn. Things are not so simple, and it will take a long time for us to read and understand the contents of the tablets.”

- “You of course have the work of Palmer in mind and the interpretation he gives to the tablets.”

- “Yes, I have that in mind, but I’m not very sure of everything he says. First of all, the Linear B script is not a script designed for recording Greek. It existed beforehand and Greek, one way or the other, had to fit into its mold. From this fact alone, you can understand that translating them is difficult. Let’s hope, though, that with time we’ll find other tablets, because the more we find, the easier the work of translation will be.”

- “Now tablets have been found in Thebes too.”

- “Yes. And so even Thebes itself is incorporated into the context of the same civilization, which confirms even more our views about Mycenaean civilization. It would of course be good if we found another intact palace or other comparable building on Crete so we could test our conjectures.”

- “From all we’ve been saying I get the sense of revolutionary changes in archaeology, as if the way we look at the beginning of Greek history is changing.”

- “Indeed. Because, you see, every generation comes along and criticizes the previous one, pointing out its omissions and condemning its mistakes. Sometimes, though, we exaggerate the mistakes and forget how good the work was which had been done before us. But I believe that this testing of one generation by the next, and this revision of views, is constructive, and at some point in time we will settle down and see how far we have advanced. Thus, history itself teaches us how we should be on our guard, and, especially, I would say that it teaches us how necessary it is to remain true to the facts themselves.”

## Notes

1. I wish to extend warm thanks to the organizers of the symposium, Jack L. Davis, Natalia Vogeikoff-Brogan, and Vasiliki Florou, for their kind invitation to participate, and for all the help they provided during the writing of this text. Particular thanks are owed to Evi Tsiolaki, who scanned all the newspaper clippings at the University of Cincinnati, Maria Choleva, who assisted me both in searching for articles in old newspapers and in transcribing the article included in the Appendix, and Carol Hershenson, for locating photographs at the University of Cincinnati. In addition, I give heartfelt thanks to Eleftheria Daleziou of the Gennadius Library, who has helped me during all my visits over the years to the Heinrich Schliemann Archive, and to Andreas Vlachopoulos for the useful information he provided about Spyridon Marinatos's analogous archival material. Translation of the Greek text into English was done by Stefanie Kennell, to whom I express many thanks.

2. The newspaper clippings collected by Schliemann are now in the Gennadius Library of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens. Evans's albums are kept in the Evans Archive at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. Marinatos's newspaper clippings are currently being studied by Andreas Vlachopoulos (see Vlachopoulos 2014).

3. For his earlier excavations in the Argolid, see Tzonou-Herbst, this volume.

4. *ArchEph* 1912, p. 268; *Prakt* 1925–1926, pp. 140–141. It should be mentioned that Blegen published the tholos tomb of Osmanaga (Blegen 1954a).

5. William McDonald (1913–2000) is best known for his direction of the University of Minnesota Messenia Expedition and his excavations at Nichoria (1969–1975). He is also known for his book *Progress into the Past: The Rediscovery of Mycenaean Civilization* (New York 1967). On McDonald, see Wilkie 2000.

6. The excavations at Ano Englianos began on April 4, 1939 (see Davis 2008).

7. Alsop 1962, p. 70. On Alsop see below, note 59.

8. See, e.g., Anonymous, “Τα σημερινά γενέθλια του Φύρερ,” *Η Καθημερινή*, April 20, 1939, p. 1; Skenderidis, “Η Γερμανία εορτάζει σήμερα την επέτειο του Αδόλφου Χίτλερ,” *Η Βραδυνή*, April 20, 1939, p. 1; Th. Skenderidis, “Τα πενήντα χρόνια του Καγκελλαρίου,” *Η Βραδυνή*, April 25, 1939, p. 3.

9. Anonymous, “Ο λαός της Κυπριασίας επεφύλαξεν αποθεωτικήν αποδοχήν εις τον πρωθυπουργόν κ. Ιωάννην Μεταξάν – Απερίγραπτοι εκδηλώσεις πίστωσης και αφοσίωσης,” *Η Καθημερινή*, April 28, 1939, pp. 1, 6.

10. Anonymous, “Ανακάλυψις μυκηναϊκού ανακτόρου,” *Η Καθημερινή*, April 13, 1939, p. 4.

11. *Η Βραδυνή*, April 15, 1939, p. 6. See also the interview Marinatos gave to the journalist N. Laskaris, “Τι θα αποκαλύψουν οι πινακίδες της Πύλου (Μία συνέντευξις με τον κ. Σ. Μαρινάτον),” *Η Βραδυνή*, May 5, 1939, pp. 3–4.

12. Anonymous, “Απεκαλύφθη το ανάκτορον του Νέστορος,” *Η Καθημερινή*, April 27, 1939, p. 6.

13. N. Laskaris, “Σπουδαιόταται αι εκτελούμεναι εις Πυλίαν ανασκαφαί. Θα φέρουν εις πλήρες φως όλην την προμυκηναϊκήν Ελλάδα. Πινακίδες με γραφήν της Κνωσού,” *Η Βραδυνή*, April 29, 1939, p. 3; “Θα αποκαλυφθούν τα ανάκτορα του Νέστορος? (Μία επίσκεψις εις τον τόπον των ανασκαφών της Πύλου),” *Η Βραδυνή*, May 3, 1939, p. 3; “Αι ενεπίγραφαι πινακίδες της Πύλου (Η μυστηριώδης γραμμική γραφή των),” *Η Βραδυνή*, May 4, 1939, pp. 3–4; “Τι θα αποκαλύψουν οι πινακίδες της Πύλου (Μία συνέντευξις με τον κ. Σ. Μαρινάτον),” *Η Βραδυνή*, May 5, 1939, pp. 3–4; “Τι θέλει η Πύλος δια το μέλλον της,” *Η Βραδυνή*, May 8, 1939, pp. 3, 6.

14. “Αι ενεπίγραφαι πινακίδες της Πύλου (Η μυστηριώδης γραμμική γραφή των),” *Η Βραδυνή*, May 4, 1939, pp. 3–4; The tablet is no. 639, published by Evans (*PM IV*: 2, p. 707). See also Chadwick et al. 1986, pp. 236–237.

15. *The Times*, April 29, 1939, p. 15.

16. Evans 1925.
17. From the letter it is evident that Evans believed mistakenly that the hill of Ano Englianos was opposite the Kakovatos tombs excavated by Wilhelm Dörpfeld in 1907.
18. For Blegen's relations with Evans, see in particular Galanakis and Fappas, this volume.
19. Blegen 1939. The project's results were officially published in the *American Journal of Archaeology* (Kourouniotis and Blegen 1939).
20. Most of the photographs in *The Illustrated London News* were never republished. Only a few were included in the *AJA* (Kourouniotis and Blegen 1939) and later in *The Palace of Nestor* volumes.
21. N. Laskaris, "Σπουδαιόταται αι εκτελούμεναι εις Πύλιαν ανασκαφαί. Θα φέρουν εις πλήρεις φως όλην την προμυκηναϊκήν Ελλάδα. Πινακίδες με γραφήν της Κνωσού," *Η Βραδυνή*, April 29, 1939, p. 3; Anonymous, "Η αρχαία Ελλάς επανέρχεται εις την επιφάνειαν," *Η Καθημερινή*, May 7, 1939, p. 4.
22. Alsop 1962, p. 72. The tablets were finally published by Blegen's former student Emmett L. Bennett, Jr. in 1951. It is worth noting that prior to the publication of Bennett's book (*The Pylos Tablets: A Preliminary Transcription*), *The Cincinnati Times* of October 27, 1950 devoted an article to the question with the prophetic title "Mystery of 3,000-Year-Old Language Nearer Solution." In 1952, the architect Michael Ventris, having in fact based his work on this particular publication, announced the decipherment of Linear B (Ventris and Chadwick 1953).
23. Blegen 1953a, p. 59; Marinatos 1952, p. 473. It is very interesting how Blegen and Marinatos phrased their collaboration; for Blegen, Marinatos "was appointed to succeed" Kourouniotis and the work was divided into two, while Marinatos claimed that Blegen offered him the chance to participate in the excavation of the palace but he politely declined, having decided to concentrate on the region around the palace. For more on the nature of their collaboration, see Davis, this volume.
24. Extensive excavation reports for the years 1952–1965 were published in the *AJA*, while information about the 1966–1969 seasons is found in Blegen et al. 1973.
25. For the full list of participants, see Blegen et al. 1973, p. x.
26. See Anonymous, "To Excavate Nestor's Palace," *Iraq Times* (Baghdad), October 23, 1957.
27. C. W. Blegen, "Αι ανασκαφαί της Πύλου," *Η Καθημερινή*, August 15, 1952, pp. 1, 3; 1953b, 1954b, 1956; C. W. Blegen, "Οι ανευρεθέντες αρχαιολογικοί θησαυροί του Νέστορος," *Νέων Καλαμών*, April 30, 1956, and "Εις το ανάκτορον του Νέστορος. Η Πύλος δίδει και νέους θησαυρούς (ένας απολογισμός της εφετηνής αρχαιολογικής περιόδου)," *Η Καθημερινή*, September 15, 1960, p. 5.
28. See Florou, this volume.
29. For Paraskevaidis, see Missios 2011. P. Krinaios, "Το μεγαλοπρεπές ανάκτορον του Ομηρικού Νέστορος εις την Πύλον εξυπηρετείτο από δύο χιλιάδες προσωπικών και διέθετε 20.000 αγγεία!" *Η Βραδυνή*, May 14, 1956, p. 5; P. Krinaios, "Οι πινακίδες ίσως μας αποκαλύψουν τα μυστικά του Μυκηναϊκού πολιτισμού και του Τρωικού πολέμου," *Η Βραδυνή*, May 15, 1956, p. 3.
30. "Η τελευταία σπουδαιότατη αρχαιολογική επιτυχία. Τα ανάκτορα των Βασιλέων της Πύλου," *Η Καθημερινή*, August 15, 1952, pp. 1, 3.
31. The tablet Ep212 (Bennett 1955, p. 21).
32. Bacon 1960, 1976; Galanopoulos and Bacon 1969.
33. Blegen 1953b, 1954b, and 1956.
34. ASCSA Carl W. Blegen Papers, box 7, folder 5, Bacon to Blegen, June 25, 1954.
35. Paraskevaidis republished the plan in "Η ανακάλυψις του ανακτόρου του Νέστορος," *Η Καθημερινή*, April 26, 1956.
36. Blegen 1956, p. 256.
37. See his letter of July 4, 1957, ASCSA Carl W. Blegen Papers, box 7, folder 5.
38. See their correspondence in ASCSA Carl W. Blegen Papers, box 7, folder 5.
39. Anonymous, "Art 3000 Years Old," *The Cincinnati Pictorial Enquirer*, January 29, 1956, p. 24;

and J. Eble, "Pylos: Nestor's Palace As Reconstructed by UC Archaeology Team," *The Cincinnati Pictorial Enquirer*, May 10, 1964, pp. 2, 12–14, 17–19.

40. See ASCSA Carl W. Blegen Papers, box 8, folder 1 (*Saturday Evening Post*).

41. Borgstedt wrote: "We feel that the human interest element is an important one, and that we would get much better readership if we could obtain the pictures of the excavation work going on, with the people shown in them actually doing things" (ASCSA Carl W. Blegen Papers, box 8, folder 1, Borgstedt to Blegen, April 16, 1954).

42. ASCSA Carl W. Blegen Papers, box 8, folder 1, draft of a letter from Blegen to Borgstedt, April 29, 1954.

43. C. W. Ceram was the pseudonym (an anagram of his surname) used by the German journalist Kurt Wilhelm Marek (1915–1972), who changed his name because of his collaboration with the Third Reich. His book, which was first published in Germany in 1949 under the title *Götter, Gräber und Gelehrte: Roman der Archäologie*, became a great success, with dozens of editions and translations into many other languages.

44. ASCSA Carl W. Blegen Papers, box 8, folder 1, Blegen to Spencer, July 1, 1954.

45. Sittig 1954.

46. Today these photographs remain unknown.

47. See for example, Anonymous, "Mycenaean Palace Identified As King Nestor's – Royal Bathroom Excavated," *The Times*, September 23, 1955; Anonymous, "3,000-Year-Old Bath Tub with Drain Found in Greece," *Science Service*, December 27, 1955; Blegen 1956.

48. C. Warnick, "There's a Lot of Truth in Homer," *Cincinnati Enquirer*, December 4, 1955, section 3, p. 1.

49. Blegen makes his faith in Homer clear in many articles; see in particular Blegen 1964, written in Greek.

50. Anonymous, "Diggers Hit Pay Dirt in Greece," *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, December 29, 1957; Anonymous, "More Discoveries at Site of Homeric Pylos – Wing of King Nestor's Palace Found," *The Times*, November 5, 1957; M. Paraskevaidis, "Εις τα ανάκτορα των βασιλέων της Πύλου ανεκαλύφθη και ιερόν με λίθινον βωμόν," *Η Καθημερινή*, September 11, 1957, p. 3. It is worth noting that, according to newspapers of the time, Blegen had theorized that the remains belonged to a tholos tomb. Later, in the final publication, he published it as a grave circle (Blegen et al. 1973, pp. 134–176).

51. Information about the ceremony is drawn from an article by the journalist Margaret Josten ("Blegen receives Degree. Archaeologist Honored by UC," *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, November 8, 1958, p. 6A). In the course of his life, Blegen received many honorary degrees from universities and archaeological institutions, such as the Aristotelian University of Thessaloniki (1951), the University of Oxford (1957), the University of Cambridge (1963), and the Archaeological Institute of America (Gold Medal in 1965). For biographical sketches of Blegen's life, see Hood 1998, pp. 155–160; and Caskey 1972.

52. G. Goulder, "Digging Up the Past in Greece," *Cleveland Plain Dealer Pictorial Magazine*, December 11, 1960, pp. 39–40.

53. See Alsop 1962, p. 67; E. Karapanagioti, "Νέες απόψεις και σχήματα στην αρχαία ιστορία μας. Η δικαίως του Ομήρου," *Το Βήμα*, September 20, 1964, p. 5.

54. The couple came to Pylos in June. See Lissner's letter dated October 25, 1960 in ASCSA Carl W. Blegen Papers, box 11, folder 4.

55. In 1960 the Greek state built a metal roof, thereby providing adequate protection for this very important archaeological site. The roof, which was the first ever built over a site in Greece, continued to serve its purpose for half a century, and only in 2012 did work to replace it commence.

56. *Paris Match*, April 28, 1962, issue 681, pp. 74–85.

57. ASCSA Carl W. Blegen Papers, box 11, folder 4.

58. On July 19, 1962, Lissner sent Blegen thirty-three photographs (ASCSA Carl W. Blegen Papers, box 11, folder 4). Most of them were not included in the article, and they are now housed with excavation records in the Department of Classics at the University of Cincinnati.

59. The book was inspired by Alsop's journey to Pylos. Alsop became a Trustee of the American School in 1965, "and for the next twenty years served the School faithfully as a needling gad-fly, a generous host, a genuine friend" (ASCSA *Newsletter*, Fall 1989, p. 15).

60. Alsop 1962.

61. See his letter of October 1, 1962 (ASCSA Carl W. Blegen Papers, box 9, folder 1). Blegen would have been quite delighted by his acquaintance with Alsop, as is clear from the fact that they continued to correspond for many years afterward, at least until 1966.

62. Alsop 1962, p. 67.

63. Alsop 1962, p. 78.

64. Alsop 1962, p. 68.

65. Alsop 1962, p. 107.

66. Karapanagioti, E., "Νέες απόψεις και σχήματα στην αρχαία ιστορία μας. Η δικαίωση του Ομήρου," *Το Βήμα*, September 20, 1964, p. 5.

67. A point Blegen also made in his acceptance speech when he was awarded the Gold Medal from the Archaeological Institute of America in 1965 (since he could not travel to America, he received the medal and delivered his speech in Athens, at the residence of the U.S. Ambassador, on February 28, 1966). In the speech, he credits his colleagues, rather than himself.

68. Anonymous, "Linear B in Greece, King Nestor Now Fact," *Athens News*, January 11, 1967; Anonymous, "Pylos Palace of Nestor by Dr. Blegen published," *Hellenic Chronicle (Boston, Mass.)*, January 19, 1967; Anonymous, "Blegen Awaits Publication of Fabled Nestor Volume," *News Record*, February 2, 1967. In *Η Καθημερινή*, January 13, 1967, it was translated as "Η συγγραφική εργασία είναι μία όχι ευχάριστος, αλλά αναγκαία εργασία. Είναι ή τιμωρία τῶν ἀρχαιολόγων διὰ τὴν ευχάριστησιν πού προσφέρουν αἱ ἀνασκαφαί."

69. Lang 1969.

70. Blegen et al. 1973.

71. Today he lies in the Protestant section of the First Cemetery of Athens.

72. The editors would like to thank Stefanie Kennell for translating the interview.

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