

HOMER AND LATE MINOAN CRETE

It is well known that Evans was not greatly interested in what happened in Crete after the devastation of the Knossian Palace, an event he placed at the very end of his Late Minoan II period. In his view, the Palace was not immediately re-occupied: some time after the catastrophe of 1400, it was inhabited by 'squatters', who repaired some of the damaged parts of the building but for the most part simply cleared away the rubbish deposited at the time of the destruction and lived in the Palace without substantially altering it.¹ Evans believed that after the end of the Palatial period at Knossos the main vigour of the Minoan civilisation flowed into its Mycenaean branch and was responsible for the Achaean hegemony of the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries.² However, the settlements at Knossos and elsewhere in Crete still preserved, though in a muted form, basic elements of the venerable native culture. The contents of the tombs in the Zapher Papoura cemetery, in use both before and after the great destruction, showed that the continuity of Minoan burial customs and pottery styles was not arrested.³ Evans nowhere tried to resolve the paradox which confronts anyone who takes his view of Late Minoan III Crete. On the one hand, we have the picture of a more or less impoverished country which had lost most of its importance, lying outside the main developments of the Mycenaean world and above all preserving its own culture at a time when the rest of the Aegean had been absorbed into a Mycenaean *koine*. On the other hand, both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* speak of a well-populated island of many cities which provides, under the leadership of Idomeneus, one of the largest of the Greek contingents before Troy; nothing in Homer suggests that Idomeneus is not as thoroughly 'Achaean' as Agamemnon himself. How are we to act in the face of a paradox so pungently expressed by Levi, who points to the absurdity of supposing that Idomeneus was a 're di un popolo di "squatters" '?⁴ Evans dealt with this difficulty simply by assuming that the Achaean domination of Crete belongs not to the Bronze Age at all but to the beginning of the Iron Age.⁵ His disciple Pendlebury in *The archaeology of Crete* (1939) did not take this easy way out and put forward a tentative theory to account for the presence of an Achaean king in a Minoan island. He suggested that 'after letting Crete alone for some 150 years the Mainlanders, with the rise of the new Dynasty at Mycenae, decided to bring it into the empire, which probably implied little more than the granting of the fief to some *condottiere* who made his home at Knossos and concocted himself a pedigree reaching from the old royal family of Minos' (261). This attempt to reconcile Homer's account with the archaeological record is not very successful. There is no real evidence for a change of dynasty at Mycenae; and Pendlebury's reconciliation must depend almost entirely upon the association of the Close Style of Mycenaean pottery with the 'Middle Eastern Cretan style of LM IIIb'. It has appeared subsequently, above all from the researches of Furumark, that there are very slight grounds for attributing any ceramic development of Late Minoan III to mainland influence. In two books published since the war, Hutchinson's *Prehistoric Crete* (1962) and Schachermeyr's *Die minoische Kultur des alten Kreta* (1964), Pendlebury's views are modified very considerably. Both these authors believe that for the greater part of Evans' 're-occupation period' Crete was under the control of Mycenaean princes. Probably most scholars working in this field at present would agree, even though they might be embarrassed by the absence at Knossos of any building which could have served as the seat of a great hero like Idomeneus—for there

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¹ *Palace of Minos* (hereafter *PM*) ii 335-344.

² *PM* iv 945.

³ *PM* iv 356.

⁴ *PP* xix (1964) 189.

⁵ *PM* i 11.

seems no reason to accept the suggestion made by Schachermeyr, among others, that his residence was the Little Palace (*Kultur* 292).

Only Palmer seems to take full account of the appearance of Idomeneus and to give coherent reasons for it. The latest and most extended discussion of these problems is to be found in the second edition of *Mycenaeans and Minoans* (1965). For a number of reasons which have already been sufficiently debated, Palmer believes that the final destruction at Knossos must be assigned to a date of about 1150, not to 1400 as claimed by Evans.⁶ This lowering of the date of the destruction is placed in the context of Aegean prehistory as a whole. According to Palmer, the devastation at Knossos *c.* 1400 was succeeded by an invasion of Greeks who dominated the whole island. Throughout the LM III period Knossos was the seat of a flourishing Mycenaean dynasty, which was not extinguished until the Dorian invasion. If this theory could be verified, it would provide a better explanation of Aegean history than any that has so far been offered. At one stroke it makes a setting for a great Greek hero as king of Crete at the time of the Trojan war and removes some anomalies inherent in the traditional account, particularly the picture of a Crete stagnating at the time of greatest Mycenaean expansion. But, for the moment, it seems best to leave aside the question of anomalies and the relevance of the Homeric account and to examine conditions in LM III Crete as revealed by excavation. If archaeological methods should reveal *prima facie* evidence of Mycenaean occupation, we may go on to ask whether Palmer's theory is true (for nothing will be said here about its validity in so far as it depends on the dating of finds in the Palace of Minos itself). If, on the other hand, there appears to be nothing which would point unequivocally to occupation or domination by mainlanders, the Palmer theory must be abandoned and an explanation for Idomeneus sought in a different direction.

Most writers agree that the history of Cretan pottery in LM III passed through two main phases of development (see, e.g., Pendlebury 243–253, and Schachermeyr 286). These phases are now most conveniently referred to as LM IIIa2 and IIIb respectively, following the nomenclature of Furumark.⁷ LM IIIa2 pottery exhibits a further development of the IIIa1 style, in use before the destruction of the Knossian Palace; it is, however, no longer possible to regard IIIa1 as 'pre-destruction' and IIIa2 as 'post-destruction', since it is becoming clear that both styles were in use at the time the Palace was devastated.⁸ In the period prior to the destruction, Mycenaean pottery had practically ceased to take up new Minoan motifs. After the fall of Knossos the gap between mainland and Cretan pottery becomes even more marked. On the mainland there sets in what Snijder calls a 'petrification' (Erstarrung), all the life being drained out of the naturalistic motifs.⁹ The dominant decoration of mainland pottery of Myc IIIa2 and IIIb is linear.¹⁰ This mainland style marks a return to the mainly abstract linear decoration of Middle Helladic pottery. It is in any case different in kind from the superficially similar linear decoration which was evolving in some types of contemporary Minoan pottery. It is worth recalling Furumark's conclusion, reached after the most detailed examination of Mycenaean pottery yet undertaken: "There is a great and universal difference between the Myc IIIa2 decoration and the contemporary LM IIIa2 style. In spite of occasional similarities—due to the fact that a number of Cretan ornaments were taken over by the Mycenaean style and to a partial parallelism in the development of field-division and linear decoration—it is as a

⁶ For a recent survey of this dispute, see Schachermeyr, *AAHG* xix (1966) 6–10.

⁷ *The Mycenaean pottery: analysis and classification* (*MP*) 171–179.

⁸ See especially Popham, 'The destruction of the Palace of Knossos and its pottery' in *Antiquity* xl (1966) 24–28.

⁹ *Kretische Kunst* 123.

¹⁰ *MP* 515–516, 534–545. Cf. also Mackeprang, 'Late Mycenaean vases' in *AJA* xlii (1938) 537–559. Mackeprang's 'intermediate phase' marks the appearance of geometricised flowers and metope decoration.

rule possible at a glance to distinguish a Minoan vase of this period from a Mycenaean one by the decoration alone. The stylistic tendencies of the Cretan style are widely different from those characteristic of the contemporary Mycenaean decoration; this becomes specially clear if we compare the ultimate result of the LM IIIa development, the LM IIIb style, with the final stage of Myc IIIa2.¹¹

The second phase, or LM IIIb, sees the emergence of a much 'closer' kind of pottery decoration (Pendlebury 250-253).¹² Schachermeyr asserts that the rise of the LM IIIb style must be ascribed to Mycenaean immigrants, since it appears to be simply a local variant of a Late Mycenaean type he identifies as 'Zygouries' (286). Assertions without evidence are not in place here, however. The fact that LM IIIb pottery betrays a number of mainland influences (and this was recognised by Furumark) does not mean that the whole style was merely an offshoot of Myc IIIb. Here again it seems safest to rely on the rich collection of facts assembled by Furumark, from which we infer that Minoan pottery in the thirteenth century developed for the most part independently of the mainland. Even if more credence could be given to Schachermeyr's interpretation, the appearance of Mycenaean influences on pottery decoration does not necessarily, or even probably, point to an influx of immigrants from the mainland. Schachermeyr, however, is not content to call them immigrants. For reasons he does not make plain, the immigrants must also have been *conquerors*, for the relevant section of Schachermeyr's book is headed 'Kreta unter griechischer Herrschaft'. There is a parallel between this kind of inference and Evans' arguments from the contents of the Shaft Graves at Mycenae. In the Shaft Graves, the operation of Cretan influence results in the creation of a completely new pottery style (Furumark's 'Mycenaean I'), while there are numerous other grounds for postulating an almost overwhelming cultural initiative from Crete. Nevertheless, the basic culture of the Shaft Grave people is Helladic, not Minoan. Since Karo's refutation of Evans' opinion¹³ it has been generally recognised that, despite the undoubted presence of Cretan workmen and traders on the mainland in the 16th century, Mycenae was never brought under the political domination of Crete. So far as the ceramic evidence alone is concerned, there are far fewer signs of mainland influence in LM III Crete than there are of Cretan influence in the Shaft Graves. It is not apparent why different standards of proof should be applied to the two situations.

The continuity of religious customs in Late Minoan Crete supports the conclusions drawn from the evidence of pottery. Mention has been made of the Zapher Papoura tombs, from which Evans deduced an unbroken history of burial practices. Important evidence comes also from the 'house sanctuaries' found at several sites.¹⁴ The house sanctuary is a small room, forming part of the structure of a palace, which was devoted to religious observances. The earliest seems to be the MM III sanctuary at Phaistos.¹⁵ Several have been found dating from the MM III and LM I periods. The clearest example of all is the sanctuary in the south-east of the Palace at Knossos, called by Evans the Shrine of the Double Axes.¹⁶ This part of the Palace was built in the MM III period. In the centre of the shrine is a tripod cemented to the floor, and a number of cult-objects were found *in situ* on a raised dais at one end: among these are figurines with doves, double axes, and horns of consecration. On the floor were several pots, including some jars of post-destruction date¹⁷ which indicate that the shrine was still in use in the reoccupation

¹¹ *MP* 520-521.

¹² Popham considerably supplements the corpus of published LM IIIb pottery in 'Some Late Minoan III pottery from Crete' in *BSA* lx (1965) 316-342.

¹³ *Die Schachtgräber von Mykenai* 341-343. Cf. Furumark, 'The settlement at Ialysos and Aegean history c. 1550-1400' in *OpArch* vi (1950) 150-271 (186-189); Helene J. Kantor, 'The Aegean and

Orient in the second millennium B.C.' in *AJA* li (1947) 1-103 (51-53).

¹⁴ Cf. Nilsson, *Minoan-Mycenaean religion*² (1950) 77-116.

¹⁵ Pernier, *Il palazzo minoico di Festòs* i 196.

¹⁶ *PM* ii 335-344.

¹⁷ *PM* i 576.

period.¹⁸ Popham's recent monograph on LM IIIb pottery, *The last days of the Palace at Knossos* (1964), accepts Evans' suggestion that much of the re-occupation pottery was connected with the Shrine and its cult. 'Many of the deposits do not look like occupation pottery; the dominant shapes are stirrup jars, presumably for the storage of oil, and "champagne glasses", possibly used in this case as incense burners; the double vases, in themselves clumsy utensils, are without close parallel and it is difficult to see that they had any practical advantage over more normal shapes; perhaps they too had some ritual use. . . .' Even more important for the present purpose is the passage (8-9): 'There is no reason to believe that the occupants of the site were Mycenaean rather than Minoans. The furniture and arrangement of the shrine are Cretan and the pottery, while shewing some Mycenaean influence and in one case including a Mycenaean import, remains otherwise of basically Minoan style and of Cretan manufacture.' At the recently excavated site of Chondros Viannou, the ground-plan of a Minoan cult-room was identified among the ruins.¹⁹ A sanctuary in the Palace of Ayia Triadha was built in LM I and, after its destruction by fire at the end of this period, it was re-built in LM III.²⁰ The deliberate re-construction of the sanctuary as a Minoan cult-room is not consistent with the occupation of the site by mainlanders, since the Minoan type of cult-room does not seem to appear in Greece until the very end of the LH IIIb period.²¹ No distinction can be made between the earlier and the later phases of Bronze Age Crete in the field of cult. The LM I type of house-sanctuary, with forerunners in the MM Palaces, not only continues but actually flourishes in the re-occupation period.²²

Minoan cult-scenes appear on the painted sarcophagus from Ayia Triadha, which dates from the early part of LM III (Schachermeyr, *Kultur* pl. 35). The paintings on the two longer sides are set in a framework of rosettes and spirals; while the pictures on the shorter sides are framed partly with rosettes and partly with an imitation of rockwork. These frames must be taken into consideration²³ when we are assessing the representation as a whole, for they are characteristic of the later style of Minoan fresco-painting.²⁴ On both the shorter sides a chariot driven by two women is depicted: at one end the chariot is drawn by winged griffins, at the other by goats. The parallels to the latter that can be cited from the mainland are free from any sacral meaning.²⁵ The cult-scenes on the two longer sides are described by Nilsson, who states very clearly the crucial problem to be faced in interpreting them. He asks (433) whether the paintings 'are to be referred to the cult of the dead or to the divine cult, or to both, and if to both what the nature and the explanation of this fusion may be'. The occurrence of double axes with birds certainly suggests that we have to do with a representation of divine cult; and yet the painted object is a sarcophagus, and we should naturally expect the scenes to have some relevance to the dead man. A simple fusion between the divine cult and the cult of the dead is possible but it is not in fact paralleled in Minoan-Mycenaean art. The earliest full explanation is that of Paribeni. In view of the Egyptian traits in the paintings, he interprets the man facing the procession as a mummy: the men in the procession are bringing funeral gifts for the lately dead. On the other side is depicted the sacrifice in honour of the dead. The divine cult-symbols indicate the presence of gods whom the votaries had evoked to hallow the scene and to conduct the dead man to the next world. Nilsson's explanation is different. He thinks (438) 'that the dead was deified and consequently worshipped in

¹⁸ Another 'inner room used as shrine in re-occupation period' was found in the south-east House, *PM* i 426 fig. 306.

¹⁹ See Schachermeyr's summary, *AA* 1962, 161-162.

²⁰ Luisa Banti, 'I culti minoici e greci di Haghia Triada (Crete)' in *ASAA* iii-v (1941-1943) 9-74 (28-40).

²¹ Nilsson, *op. cit.* 110-116.

²² Banti, *op. cit.* 72.

²³ They are omitted in Nilsson's illustration.

²⁴ Cf. Pendlebury 249.

²⁵ Cf. Matz, *Göttererscheinung und Kultbild im minoischen Kreta* 25.

the forms of the divine cult'. He goes on to state (439), without arguing the point, 'that the figure before the building is a mummy is out of the question; he is the deified man appearing to the eye of the imagination'. Nilsson offers no kind of evidence for the practice of deifying the dead in any part of the Minoan-Mycenaean world; and we should ask for some very clear evidence before supposing such a bold departure from the customs we do know of.²⁶ Second, the idea of painting a human being who is present only to the imagination is quite foreign to Aegean art, and it cannot be compared with the frequent Minoan practice of representing monsters. Nilsson goes on to argue that, since the sarcophagus depicts a cult of the dead and since such a cult is attested on the mainland but not in Crete, the paintings on the sarcophagus must have been executed by a Minoan craftsman to the order of a Greek family who wished to honour their dead kinsman (442). Nilsson is here constructing a hypothesis upon a hypothesis. So far as we can tell, the religious elements in the paintings are Cretan and Egyptian: traces of Mycenaean *artistic* influence may appear in the chariots at the ends and in the calves on one of the sides. The sarcophagus as a whole cannot be used as evidence for an extensive mainland penetration in the early part of LM III, particularly in view of the continuing Minoan cult at Ayia Triadha already referred to.

Nilsson finds further proof of Mycenaean practices in Crete in the large number of Cretan tombs dating from LM III, contrasting with their comparative scarcity in earlier periods (440). It is certainly true that tombs become *more* common in Crete during LM III; but tombs containing rich burial offerings in the mainland manner were coming into use as early as the LM Ib phase. Their still greater popularity in LM III is perhaps a reflection of mainland taste, but they cannot be regarded as the tombs of Mycenaeans, for reasons which Nilsson himself gives at another point. He emphasises the contrast between Crete and the mainland in that figurines are common in LH III mainland tombs but are very rare in Cretan tombs of the same period (300). If figurines were considered of any importance at all in Mycenaean funeral cult, we should have expected to find a good number of them in the tombs of LM III Crete, were these in fact designed for the interment of mainlanders. Two idols from the cemetery at Mavro Spelio are of Minoan not Mycenaean type; while some cruder examples of the Minoan bell-shaped type were found in the necropolis at Ayia Triadha (Nilsson 300–303). The bell-type of Minoan idol persists into sub-Minoan times.²⁷ In conclusion, reference must be made to the practice of burial in larnakes. Larnax-burial is a purely Minoan custom which reaches back to a time before the beginning of the palaces (Pendlebury 65). Examples of larnakes are found throughout the Palace period, and after the fall of Knossos they become even more widely distributed than before (Schachermeyr 288). The perpetuation of this native practice in LM III is entirely consistent with the witness of other religious customs and is hard to reconcile with domination by mainlanders.

It is not until the very end of the LM III period that we see sure signs of mainland settlements in Crete. At that time *megara* of mainland type were superimposed on the earlier buildings at Gournia²⁸ and Ayia Triadha.²⁹ (Palmer's reference to a *megaron* at Knossos is misconceived.)³⁰ The fully-developed tholos tomb at Ayios Theodoros is

²⁶ See also the objections of Nauert, 'The Hagia Triada sarcophagus, an iconographical study' in *AK* viii (1965) 91–98 (91); and *cf.* Schweitzer, *Gnomon* iv (1928) 191–192. In his note, 'The cult of the dead in Mycenaean times' in *AJA* lv (1951) 149–150, Mylonas denies the existence of such a cult among the Mycenaeans, with the exception of Grave Circle A at Mycenae (and that is really an example of a particular hero-cult).

²⁷ See especially *AA* 1907, 108; *BCH* lxi (1937)

pl. xxxix; Marinatos, 'Αἱ μινωϊκὰ θεὰ τοῦ Γάζι' in *AE* 1937, 278–291. Alexiou, 'Ἡ μινωϊκὴ θεὰ μεθ' ἐνθαμένων χειρῶν 187–195, comments on this material. ²⁸ Oelmann, 'Ein achäisches Herrenhaus auf Kreta' in *JDAI* xxvii (1912) 38–51.

²⁹ Halbherr, 'Resti dell'età micenea scoperti ad Haghia Triada' in *MonAnt* xiii (1903) 11–16.

³⁰ Hood, *Kadmos* iv (1965) 19 n. 13. I cannot see that Hazzidakis' figure 1 in his *Les villas minoens de Tyliisos* offers much support for his contention

also assigned by Pendlebury to the end of LM III, though he says that there had earlier been a gradual infiltration of mainland types of built tombs (242–243).³¹ Late in the re-occupation period two Myc IIIb vases appear in Crete—one at Knossos, the other at Palaikastro.³² A further slight indication of Greek influence, which must have been exerted before the Dorian invasion, is given by the survival in the Cretan dialect in historical times of the forms *iv* (= *éiv*) and *πεδά* (= *μετά*).³³ Cretan is a mainly Doric dialect; but these two forms are isoglosses with Arcadian, a dialect which stands out as a linguistic ‘island’, surrounded by the Doric-speaking parts of the Peloponnese.³⁴

The question, whether the evidence so far given suggests a Mycenaean colonisation, can be answered best by comparing the situation in Crete with developments in other parts of the Mediterranean. The widest expansion of Mycenaean trade came in the fourteenth century, and it was thought until recently that a Mycenaean ‘empire’, in some sense, flourished in that century at least.³⁵ This conclusion was suggested by the homogeneity and very wide distribution of Mycenaean pottery and other artefacts³⁶ and by the planting of Mycenaean settlements first at Miletus and later at Ras Shamra.³⁷ Though this picture may still be substantially true, Catling has recently laid down quite stringent criteria for ascertaining the fact of colonisation in a given case.³⁸ He controverts the commonly held view that the immense quantity of Myc IIIa2 and IIIb pottery found in Cyprus implies that the island was colonised during the periods that this pottery was in circulation. Other classes of evidence must be scrutinised as a corrective. There is no clear sign of Mycenaean architectural practice; frescoes and defensive walls are wholly absent, though these two features characterise the Mycenaean palaces of the mainland; the Mycenaean type of chamber tomb is unknown in Cyprus until the end of the Bronze Age; even the great quantity of Mycenaean pottery does not form a representative series—the small amount of plain ware is especially difficult to explain if there were in fact Mycenaean settlers living in Cyprus. Catling’s conclusions (49) are very relevant to a discussion of Cretan relations with the mainland in LM III. ‘If it is conceded that the presence of a resident foreign minority whose homeland has a very different material culture from that of their new home should be reflected by material remains attributable to them alone, then there was no such Mycenaean community domiciled in Cyprus during the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries. There are no buildings and no graves of Mycenaean type. Pottery excepted, the series of minor objects of familiar Mycenaean forms is almost wholly lacking.’ If Mycenaean remains in Cyprus are found to fall short of proving a mainland colonisation there, the likelihood that Crete was a Mycenaean colony becomes remote indeed. Crete does not even yield the large quantities of Mycenaean pottery that above all led observers to postulate a Mycenaean colony in Cyprus. The Minoan ceramic tradition continues unbroken throughout LM III and is carried over into the Iron Age.³⁹ Outstanding features of the material culture of the mainland, such as the large tholos tombs, monumental sculpture in stone, frescoes, Cyclopean walls, are completely absent from LM III Crete. The mainland type of cult, centred round the fixed hearth in the megaron, is profoundly different from the Cretan, which continues to take place in a small sanctuary. Though the increase in the number of chamber tombs found in Crete may

(16): ‘nous sommes convaincus, pour notre part, que ce type de salle qui se trouve si régulièrement dans toutes les constructions minoennes correspond bien au *mégaron* des palais de la Grèce continentale.’

³¹ The Kephala tholos, at one time believed to belong to the LM III period, is now dated by Hutchinson to LM Ia, *BSA* li (1958) 78.

³² Furumark, *The chronology of Mycenaean pottery* 108.

³³ Buck, *The Greek dialects* 23, 107.

³⁴ *πεδά* occurs in Linear B *peða watu* (KN X 114).

³⁵ Lorimer, *Homer and the monuments* 30.

³⁶ Desborough, *The last Mycenaean and their successors* 1–4; Furumark, *MP* 521; Stubbings, *Mycenaean pottery from the Levant* 37 ff.

³⁷ See respectively Weickert, *Istanbul Mitteilungen* ix–x (1960) and Schaeffer, *Syria* xvii (1936) 110–111.

³⁸ *Cypriot bronzework in the Mycenaean world*, 35–54.

³⁹ Cf. Brock, *Fortetsa* 153; Demargne, *La Crète dédalique* 175.

well be due to mainland influence, there is nothing to show that they were used for the burial of Mycenaeans, since a native Cretan type of chamber tomb emerges as early as MM III (Pendlebury 155). In mainland graves figurines are very common; in Crete they are excessively rare. Crete provides examples of a different type of idol, which is not found in Greece. At almost every point where a comparison can be made there appear differences, sometimes only slight but sometimes so great as to exclude altogether the possibility that Crete was a Mycenaean colony in LM III. Mycenaean influences had not changed the native culture in any fundamental or significant way; as Mackenzie observed very early in the history of Minoan archaeology, the mainlanders 'had themselves appeared too late on the scene to play any reconstructive rôle in the development of the Minoan civilisation'.⁴⁰

If the concept of a mainland colony in Crete must be ruled out, it becomes quite impossible to believe in Palmer's Mycenaean dynasty in occupation of Knossos during the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries. But, in his desire 'to save the distinguished archaeologists from themselves' (*Mycenaeans and Minoans* 317), Palmer has turned his attention also to the west of Crete. According to Pendlebury, this part of the island was opened up considerably in LM III (237), a natural consequence of the scatter of population following the great destruction. In the south and east many sites which had been destroyed during the fifteenth century were reoccupied. Pendlebury's map of LM III sites is thus much more crowded than his LM II map. This disparity is rather embarrassing if the major destruction of Knossos is dated to about 1400. Pendlebury's LM III map marks Kydonia in the west and Phaistos in the south, but these do not appear on the LM II map. Yet Linear B tablets from Knossos mention both places. This is certainly a difficulty, which does not however drive us to accept Palmer's late date for the fall of Knossos. Kydonia and Phaistos raise different problems, which must be considered separately. In the case of Kydonia, Palmer is simply under a misconception. He states that Kydonia was not built until LM III times (303). Two comments are needed to elucidate this statement, which is not nearly so simple as it sounds. In the first place, 'LM III times' cover about 200 years; and by using such an expression in this unqualified form Palmer betrays a weakness in his case which has often been noticed, namely that he sees the LM III period as a single unit, making no differentiation between its earlier and its later phases. To say that Kydonia was a LM III settlement begs the question, for if it belongs in fact to the earliest phase of LM III it is contemporary with the Linear B records at Knossos, on Popham's assumption that these are to be dated to IIIa1-2. Leaving aside the question, how Palmer is so confident of his LM III dating of Kydonia when he denies all validity to the traditional sequence of Minoan pottery styles established by Evans, we may proceed to a further comment. This must take the form of a flat contradiction. Kydonia was not settled for the first time in LM III. The first *built tombs* at Kydonia do date from then, but a quantity of sherds from much earlier periods have been found at the site, indicating that there had been a settlement or at least some human habitation there long before 1400.⁴¹ Nor is this all. The Linear B word *kudonija* is exactly matched, in its first three syllables, by a word which occurs twice on the Linear A tablets from Ayia Triadha.⁴² It is hard to avoid the conclusion that a place Kydonia was known not only to the Linear B scribes but to the writers of the Linear A tablets as well.⁴³ Phaistos must be considered separately,

⁴⁰ *BSA* xi (1904-1905) 220.

⁴¹ Hood, 'Minoan sites in the far west of Crete' in *BSA* lx (1965) 99-113 (109-110).

⁴² Furumark, *Linear A und die altkretische Sprache* 16.

⁴³ This would apply even if, what is possibly true, the Linear A word is itself a personal name, not a place-name. The number of Linear B personal names which are based on toponyms encourages the

belief that a similar state of affairs obtained in Linear A as well. I am not myself convinced that we can always simply read back Ventris' values into Linear A signs, whenever these resemble their counterparts in Linear B (though there is much justification for doing so in the case of a group of *three* signs, as here); but, to judge from his words at 334 'simply by giving Ventris' values to Brice's

for there is no dispute that this had been a highly important palatial centre for centuries before the Linear B tablets were written at Knossos. Yet ceramic evidence indicates that the Palace at Phaistos was destroyed in LM Ib.⁴⁴ The place-name *paito* (*Φαιστός*) occurs with great frequency (more than forty times) on the Knossos Linear B tablets, most often in the D series, which record the presence of herds of beasts at a given place. If the Palace of Phaistos lay in ruins at the end of the fifteenth century, how can it have been an administrative and commercial centre of such interest to the bureaucracy of Knossos? The answer seems to be that the re-occupation of Phaistos began before the re-occupation at Knossos, in fact before the writing of our Linear B texts. In Popham's paper already mentioned, the author observes that the earliest LM III pottery at Phaistos is stylistically earlier than, or contemporary with, that in use when Knossos was destroyed.⁴⁵ This means that there was a period at the beginning of the fourteenth century during which the Palaces of Knossos and Phaistos were occupied at the same time.

Crete did not become a mainland colony during the LM III period and, on the evidence, played little or no part in the commercial expansion of Mycenae after 1400. The Minoans, however, still carried on trade on their own account, to a greater degree than Pendlebury allowed. He mentions that Crete had less commercial intercourse with Egypt than in the earlier part of LM, while admitting signs of indirect influence in both directions (258). Some fragments of LM III pottery appear in Cyprus: the large and rather coarse stirrup-jars are especially important since these must have been designed as receptacles of liquid exports from Crete to the east Mediterranean.⁴⁶ It would be surprising if there were no evidence of contact between Crete and the mainland even in this late phase. Palmer shows how the decipherment of Linear B has thrown light on Cretan-mainland relationships in LM III (203–207). For example, some of the three-footed cauldrons enumerated and depicted on the Pylos tablets are described as *keresijo weke*. A very persuasive, though not completely certain, interpretation of this word is that it represents *κρησιοΦεργής*, that is, 'of Cretan workmanship'. Palmer's comment (203) must be quoted in full: 'The tripod cauldrons listed in the Pylian inventory are invariably described as "of Cretan workmanship". How could this evidence for imports of Cretan metal-work be squared with the idea of an impoverished, stagnating Crete, without interest for the mainlander?' There is reason to question Palmer's assumption that an object described as being 'of Cretan workmanship' must be an import from Crete. Why should it not be so described if it had been made on the mainland by a Cretan workman, or even in the Cretan style?⁴⁷ That would be consistent with the evidence of other artefacts on the mainland in LH III, particularly the fresco-paintings found at several of the Palaces. These continuing Minoan characteristics make one wonder if there were not still some Cretan artists working on the mainland—especially since there was now no more work for them in Crete; alternatively, if the frescoes were all painted by mainlanders, we might suppose that Crete, though stripped of political power, was still regarded as a leader of fashion. Some examples of miniature art, particularly from Pylos and Prosymna, still depict Minoan cult-scenes.⁴⁸ These too may represent a

text', Palmer does think this a legitimate procedure, and so there is no reason not to quote Linear A *kudoni-* against him. For the possible appearance of the name Kydonia on an Egyptian inscription, see Edel, 'Die Ortsnamenlisten aus dem Totentempel Amenophis III' in *Bonner Biblische Beiträge* xxv (1966) 42–43, 59. I need hardly say that I disagree with Edel's inference that Kydonia was founded by Mycenaeans.

⁴⁴ *PM* iv 885, supported by Furumark, *OpArch* vi (1950) 254–255.

⁴⁵ *Antiquity* xl (1966) 27–28.

⁴⁶ Benson, 'Coarse ware stirrup jars of the Aegean'

in *Berytus* xiv (1961) 37–51 (41); Catling and Karageorghis, 'Minoika in Cyprus' in *BSA* lv (1960) 109–127 (121–122).

⁴⁷ Professor Webster suggests to me the possibility that *κρησιοΦεργής* may mean simply 'of Cretan shape' and refers to the names *κορυθιοσυργής* (denoting a column-krater) and *μυλησιοσυργής* (denoting a bell-krater); Mingazzini, *MDAI (R)* xlvi (1931) 150–152. The words *keresijo weke* are discussed by Françoise Bader, *Les composés grecs du type de demiourgos* 164–167.

⁴⁸ See especially the ring from a Pylos cist, *CMS* i no. 292.

deliberate continuation of the type of cult-scene that had been brought from Crete to Greece after the era of the Shaft Graves, or they may indicate that some kinds of Minoan observances were still practised on the mainland. The latter is a serious possibility now that LM III larnakes have been found in Boeotia.⁴⁹ In any case, both frescoes and cult-scenes provide satisfactory parallels to objects 'of Cretan workmanship' on the Pylos tablets. Palmer is on safer ground when he refers to the inscribed stirrup-jars from Thebes and Eleusis. The fact that a number of place-names contained in these inscriptions occur on the Knossos tablets, and only there, does indicate that the jars in question had been exported from Crete. Recent examination of the Theban jars confirms that they are of a fabric identical with that of pottery from eastern Crete.⁵⁰ This piece of evidence would correlate satisfactorily with the state of affairs already observed in Cyprus, but it does not in itself contradict the impression of an island preserving, in muted form, its ancestral culture and engaging in trade with some of its traditional markets. Nor, of course, does it begin to prove that Crete was an important part of the Mycenaean 'empire'. Politically and militarily, Crete seems to have been without influence. It is this weakness, in contrast to the Mycenaean powers of the Greek mainland and the east Mediterranean, that must preclude any attempt, such as that of Cavaignac, to identify Crete with the *Ahhijawā* mentioned in Hittite texts of the thirteenth century.⁵¹ Considerations of a similar kind apply to the Homeric evidence, to which we must now turn.

In Homer, Idomeneus is the son of Deucalion the son of Minos the son of Zeus (N 449-452). In the Catalogue of Ships (B 645-652) he is said to be a famous spearman, ruling over Knossos, Gortys, Lyktos, Miletos, Lykastos, Phaistos, and Rhytion, and other places in hundred-citied Crete. Idomeneus took eighty ships to Troy, a tally falling not far short of Agamemnon's hundred (B 576) and Nestor's ninety (B 602). As a result of the investigations of a number of scholars, notably Allen, Burr, and Page, it is evident that substantial parts of the Catalogue, at the least, must date from the Bronze Age. This is very far from an assertion that every detail must be regarded as an accurate reflection of conditions at the time of the Trojan War. Unless the Catalogue was ever regarded as a sacred text, it is impossible to say how, or indeed why, the numbers of ships and other details were transmitted with perfect accuracy through the Dark Ages. As Page writes, 'we have no reason to believe in the numbers of ships; and the figures themselves discourage all but the sturdiest faith'.⁵² The danger of relying indiscriminately on the figures given by the Catalogue appears when it is considered that Tlepolemos, who leads the Rhodian contingent, is in command of only nine ships (B 654); yet we know from archaeological evidence that Rhodes must have been one of the most important parts of the Mycenaean 'empire'. Crete was as certainly not part of the empire; and there are no grounds for the assumption, made by several writers who have discussed the Catalogue of Ships,⁵³ that excavations on the whole confirm the picture given by the Catalogue. It is true that the very name Idomeneus looks Greek, and in fact a word which is probably its feminine counterpart (*idomeneja*) occurs in Linear B. But there is nothing conclusive in this, for it is a feature of the ubiquitous *-eus* termination that, though of Greek origin itself, it is frequently attached to non-Greek stems.⁵⁴ No one can pretend to know for certain the source of the stem of Idomeneus. It is still often stated that Idomeneus was named after Mount Ida in Crete, but there is good reason to link him with place-names in the far north of Greece, a location which would suit Deucalion also.⁵⁵ To the strong possibility that the name

⁴⁹ Emily Vermeule, 'Painted Mycenaean larnakes' in *JHS* lxxxv (1965) 123-148. Callimachus *Aetia* ii 43.86-92 preserves a memory of connections between Crete and Boeotia.

⁵⁰ Catling and Millett, *Archaeometry* viii (1965) 35.

⁵¹ *BCH* lxx (1946) 63.

⁵² *History and the Homeric Iliad* 152.

⁵³ E.g. by Martha Aposkitou, 'Κρήτη και "Ομηρος"' in *Κρητικά Χρονικά* xiv (1960) 147-172, and Burr, 'Νεών Κατάλογος' in *Klio Beiheft* xlix (1944).

⁵⁴ Szemerényi, 'The Greek nouns in *-eus*' in *MNHMHΞ XAPIN* ii 159-181 (1978).

⁵⁵ Kretschmer, 'Die vorgriechischen Sprach- und Volksschichten' in *Glotta* xxx (1943) 84-218 (165).

Idomeneus has nothing to do with Crete must be added a difficulty arising from the genealogy given by Homer. Minos is generally said to be a 'pre-Mycenaean' king and Idomeneus his 'Mycenaean' descendant. Minos is most easily placed in the period LM Ia, a time of Knossian hegemony within Crete and maritime expansion abroad. But something must be amiss, *if the Homeric account is regarded as completely true*, for the grandson of a king who flourished in 1500 cannot have been the leader of the Cretans 300 years later. Schachermeyr meets this difficulty by a device which seems to have nothing at all to recommend it. He thinks that Minos is to be regarded as the representative of the ancient Minoan dynasty,⁵⁶ whereas Idomeneus is the symbol of the Mycenaean regime of the period from 1400 to 1200; Deucalion would then be (315) the 'Übergangskönig zwischen der minoischen und mykenischen Ära'. Now this kind of symbolism is as alien to the Homeric epic as anything could well be, and it would hardly merit discussion were it not symptomatic of the absurdities inherent in attempts to reconcile Homer with Minoan archaeology. If it is really thought that Idomeneus' great fleet enshrines the memory of a Cretan thalassocracy of LM Ia, we must say boldly that it is the reminiscence of a period of Aegean history long before the Trojan War. The references by Herodotus, Diodorus, and Thucydides to the thalassocracy enjoyed by the Cretans suggest that this was the one feature of Minoan history (apart from the Minotaur legend, with its late origin)⁵⁷ which was securely embedded in the consciousness of the classical Greeks. It seems natural that the epic also should have kept the tradition alive, regarding the greatest of Cretan heroes as the very type of maritime overlord.

The Homeric references to Idomeneus' powerful kingdom and large fleet are explicable only if the name Idomeneus has become attached to a king who lived (if he lived at all) at a time when Knossos *was* the centre of a powerful kingdom and in all likelihood possessed a large fleet. In no other way can the Homeric account be reconciled with the results of archaeological investigation in Crete. It is true that Homer says nothing about Idomeneus himself which would indicate such an early origin.⁵⁸ There are, however, certain archaic features in the allusions to Idomeneus' squire, Meriones. First, Meriones' epithet, *δπάων*, which is practically confined to him in the *Iliad*, appears already on a Linear B tablet from Pylos, in the dative form *oqawoni*. Four times in the *Iliad* Meriones is described as *ἀπάλαντος Ἐνναλίω ἀνδρειφόντη*,⁵⁹ an association of great interest since the dative *enuwarijo* (*i.e.* 'ἘννΦαλίω') occurs on the important tablet KN V 52 as one of a list of deities. Finally, and most significantly of all, it is Meriones who at K 260 ff. gives Odysseus a boar's tusk helmet. This is an exceedingly archaic object, whose use does not seem to have lasted even to the end of the Mycenaean period.⁶⁰

In the *Odyssey*, the following description of Crete is given to Penelope by Odysseus, disguised as a brother of Idomeneus (τ 172-181):

⁵⁶ For 'Minos' as a dynastic name (like Caesar, Pharaoh, etc.), cf. *PM* i 9, and Brandenstein, 'Wann hat König Minos gelebt?' in *JKAF* ii (1952-1953) 13-22.

⁵⁷ The word *Μινώταυρος* is rare in Greek (Frisk, *GEW* s.v. *Μίνως*). As early as Plutarch's *Theseus*, if not earlier, there was a tendency to rationalise the story. There is nothing to show that the myth originated before the Archaic period. Wilamowitz observes that the story must have begun not in Crete but in a place where the liberator had his home or was revered (*Glaube der Hellenen* i 113)—that is, in Attica; but the appearance of a Theseus-cult in Attica is late; Deubner, *Attische Feste* 224-226; Farnell, *Greek hero cults* 338. Cf. also Mylonas,

'Athens and Minoan Crete' in *Athenian studies: HSCP* suppl. vol. i (1940) 11-36. For a different view, see Webster, 'The myth of Ariadne from Homer to Catullus' in *G&R* xiii (1966) 22-31.

⁵⁸ Wilamowitz was right to mention, and right to relegate to a footnote, Idomeneus' slaying of Phaistos (E 43), *Die Ilias und Homer* 294 n. 2. Nothing much must be made of this, even though it may be tempting to see an allusion to a conquest of Phaistos by a king of Knossos (cf. n. 44 above). See also Bowra, *Tradition and design in the Iliad* 77, Gisela Strasburger, *Die kleinen Kämpfer der Ilias* 27.

⁵⁹ Cf. Mühlestein, *MH* xv (1958) 226 (Nachtrag).

⁶⁰ Lorimer, *op. cit.* 212-219.

Κρήτη τις γαί' ἔστι, μέσῳ ἐνὶ οἴνοπι πόντῳ,
καλή καὶ πείραν, περίρρυτος · ἐν δ' ἄνθρωποι
πολλοί, ἀπειρέσιοι, καὶ ἐνήκοντα πόλῃες ·
ἄλλη δ' ἄλλων γλῶσσα μεμιγμένη · ἐν μὲν Ἀχαιοί,
ἐν δ' Ἐτεόκρητες μεγαλήτορες, ἐν δὲ Κύδωνες,
Δωριέες τε τριχάικες δῖοί τε Πελασγοί ·
τῆσι δ' ἐνὶ Κνωσός, μεγάλη πόλις, ἔνθα τε Μίνως
ἐνέωρος βασίλευε Διὸς μεγάλου ὀαριστῆς,
πατὴρ ἔμοιο πατήρ, μεγαθύμου Δευκαλίωνος.
Δευκαλίων δ' ἐμὲ τίκτε καὶ Ἰδομενῆα ἄνακτα. . . .

This passage is sometimes thought to reflect faithfully the political conditions in Crete in the general disintegration of the Mycenaean world after the sack of Troy. But, despite the common assumption to the contrary, Homer seems to be referring here to a linguistic, not an ethnographic, state of affairs. As Kretschmer pointed out, the words *ἄλλη δ' ἄλλων γλῶσσα μεμιγμένη* must mean, not that the languages of the five peoples co-exist in Crete, but that they are actually mingled with one another. The analysis of the so-called Nomos fragment from Prasos reveals just such a mixture of languages, for it contains many Greek ('Achaean') elements, together with words that may be assigned to 'Pelasgian' and 'Eteo-cretan'. From the fact that the *Odyssey* describes a period at which the Cretan mixture of languages was still the dominant colloquial speech in Crete, Kretschmer infers that our passage originated at latest in the sixth century.⁶¹ In view of the presence of Dorians, we can with equal conviction set a *terminus post* for the passage at the end of the twelfth century, unless we take refuge in the slight ancient authority which indicates that Dorian invaders arrived in Crete before making their way to the Greek mainland.⁶² But it is the mention of 'Achaeans' that is most immediately relevant. Is the reference to them in the *Odyssey* passage of such a kind that it must be allowed to outweigh the archaeological evidence? The mere mention of Achaeans in Crete is, of course, not surprising; it would be strange if they had been omitted, for no doubt settlers from the mainland had been coming to Crete throughout the LM III period. What we miss is a reference to the Achaeans as a dominant power in Crete or to an Achaean invasion. Our Homer knows nothing of this, and indeed he has virtually nothing to say of Minoan-mainland relations.⁶³ It seems possible, then, to deny that the *Odyssey* passage is relevant to a discussion of the actual conditions in Crete at the end of LM III. The Greek words themselves leave it unclear whether Odysseus is speaking of peoples or only of languages.⁶⁴ Even if we were certain that he means the peoples, we have no right to assert that this part of the *Odyssey* originated at the time of the events it describes. Not only does it lack the self-evident antiquity of the Catalogue of Ships; but it is, after all, only a fabrication, part of the tissue of falsehoods Odysseus tells about himself—in short, the most unlikely place to find accurate historical information that could well be imagined. While there is no reason to believe, as Evans did, that Odysseus' description of Crete is a late interpolation,⁶⁵ there is nothing to show that it

⁶¹ 'Die ältesten Sprachschichten auf Kreta' in *Glotta* xxxi (1948) 1–20 (6–9).

⁶² Huxley, 'Mycenaean decline and the Homeric Catalogue of Ships' in *BICS* iii (1956) 19–31 (24); Willetts, *Cretan cults and festivals* 136. Huxley reverts to the subject and discusses many other subjects relevant to the present paper in his monograph *Crete and the Luwians*.

⁶³ The mention of Ariadne's abduction by Theseus (λ 321–324) is an isolated reference in the Catalogue of Women. But see Webster, *op. cit.* 23.

⁶⁴ This (perhaps intentional?) ambiguity seems to me to rob of much of its usefulness the work of Martha Aposkitou already cited. She is at pains to assign to each of the peoples mentioned a locality, and even a rôle, in Crete at the end of LM IIIb (147–158).

⁶⁵ Cf. Bolling, *The external evidence for interpolation in Homer* 249.

does not date from a time after the beginning of the Dark Ages. The mention of the Dorians alone (unique in Homer) would suggest such a date. Even when the passages from the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad* are taken in conjunction—and it must be admitted that they are not mutually inconsistent—they form far too frail a structure for the weight of archaeological interpretation that has been laid upon them.

J. T. HOOKER

University College, London.