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PAST AND MEMORY IN THE AEGEAN BRONZE AGE

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Edited by Elisabetta BORGNA, Ilaria CALOI, Filippo Maria CARINCI and Robert LAFFINEUR

PEETERS
LEUVEN - LIÈGE
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THE IMPORTANCE OF MEMORY, MEMORY TRIGGERS AND MEMORY AGENTS IN MYCENAEAN AND LATER GREEK CULTURE: SOME LINEAR B, EPIC AND CLASSICAL EVIDENCE*

For topics like literacy, socio-economic record-keeping, the ideology of power and the formation of individual or group socio-cultural identity in Mycenaean palatial society and early historical Greek *polis* society, memory is a key concept. I will take up some of these aspects of memory in this paper. But I will also take up the profoundly human side of memory, memory of other human beings and past experiences that are dead and gone, irretrievable by us *except* in memory and often even then only *except* through memory-triggers, literal ‘re-minders’ that take us back in thought where we can be in touch with events and people who have intersected with our lives in ‘memorable’ ways and contributed to making us who we are. For this reason memory and the words, sounds, images and objects that bring things back to our memories are key elements of prehistoric and historical Greek culture.

It is no surprise then that the central song texts that the Greeks used for enculturation, like Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and Hesiod’s *Theogony*, open with addresses to the supernatural being(s), the Μοῦσα(ι), who embody memory.

Although the etymology of Μοῦσα is morphologically problematical, Chantraine, Beekes and Watkins all reasonably trace it back to the basic Indo-European (hereafter IE) root **men-*¹ for ‘think’ and ‘actively remember’.¹ We should note, however, that Beekes, who in his career has devoted lots of thought to the non-Greek elements in the historical Greek lexicon, thinks that the IE root **men-* is the best IE hypothesis. He entertains a pre-Greek origin. Still it is likely that the Greeks of the Mycenaean and the historical period – not being IE linguists – felt that the word Μοῦσα was linked to ‘memory’ from forms they used in everyday speech, like the old stative perfect μέμονα (Latin *meminī*) ‘to have in mind’ of the iterative-suffixed present form μυνήσκω ‘I keep reminding myself, remember, heed’ and μένος ‘mind, courage, strength’.

We begin with a funerary relief stèle of a male youth in full bloom, ἐφ’ ἥβῃ (Pl. CCIV). He is depicted nude holding a rooster where his genitals would be and smelling a flower. A poignant song poem is inscribed on the stèle, bottom left beneath the rooster’s claws and in front of (left of) the young man’s lower left leg.

Μνᾱσιθειῖο : μνῆμ’ εἰ
μι ἐπ’ ὁδοῖ: καλόν ·
ἀ(λ)λά μ’ ἔθεκεν: Πύ(ρ)ρι
χος: ἀρχαίης: ἀντι
φιλεμοσύνῃς.

Of Mnāsitheios² : a (the) mnēma (= memorial) I
am upon a (the) road: a beautiful one.³
But me he set up: Pyrri
khos did: in repayment of⁴ now old
affection.⁵

* My warm thanks to Erwin Cook and Garrett Bruner for reading through the final proofs with exacting care and improving the end results.

¹ C. WATKINS, *The American Heritage Dictionary of Indo-European Roots* 3rd edition (2011) 56, s.v. **men-*¹ who sees it as a suffixed o-grade form < **mon-twa*; R. BEEKES, *Etymological Dictionary of Greek* (2010) 972, s.v. μούσα, who sees it as < **μόνθ-ya* related to μνήθηρ and μανθάνω.

² Normalized in Attic as Mnēsitheos. The name means ‘he who remembers or is mindful of god’.

³ The word ‘one’ refers to the monument.

⁴ Or ‘in place of’ or ‘in return for’ or even, less likely, ‘in witness of’ (*infra* n. 5).

Objects like this inscribed Boeotian funerary stele sculpted by the Athenian sculptor Philourgos (520-515 BCE) are alive and speak to us. Estrin rightly views it not only as a memory-trigger, but a ‘grief trigger’. Memory and feeling here are inseparable.⁶ Pyrrikhos here looks back with re-minded love for the young man Mnāsitheios who has reversed the natural order of things and died before his older lover. The poignancy of Pyrrikhos’s ‘memory’ of Mnāsitheios is underscored brilliantly by the songster who composed the song poem inscribed on the monument. For the expected *μνημοσύνη* (= ‘memory process’) he substitutes a rare word *φιλημοσύνη* (= ‘process of loving friendship’, emphasizing the memory of companionship and close human connection over pleasurable carnal experience).

I think that remembering the deceased in this way creates a disjunction, the known and felt absence of the person who is no longer alive stands in stark contrast to the vivid memories and the feelings that accompany them that the words (and their sound when recited) and images on the monument awaken.

The monument speaks as a true *mnēma*, ‘the result of the verbal action of remembering’, a rather peculiar usage. Homerist Erwin Cook invites us to treat *μνήμα* “as something of a perfect, as the enduring result of a calling to mind.”⁷ Memory and *mnēmata* often are connected to sorrow and loss and longing for a past that is dead and gone.

As scholars we can mislead ourselves if we try to reason through all this in a purely intellectual process. We know of the high rate of infant and childhood mortality in ancient Greece. But we will not understand the effects of this phenomenon purely statistically. We should try to feel the repeated blows felt by parents, family and clan members, and the wider human community within settlements, that the frequent deaths of children or young men and women would cause.

A family group of inscribed and sculpted stone tomb markers in the National Ranching Heritage Center in Lubbock, TX, helps make this point. There, a Victorian-era family cemetery plot (Pl. CCVa) has on display five headstones of the Brooks Family. They help us imagine and feel the effects of infant mortality in a poor agrarian society. Five children were born into the Brooks family between 1870-1882. They were all dead by 1889. The longest lived, the only daughter, lived 9 years and 160 days. They are:

1. James P., son of D.C. & I.V. Brooks, Feb. 13 **1870** - March 14 **1873** (3 years 30 days) (Pl. CCVb);
2. Franklin C., son of D.C. & I.V. Brooks, Feb. 11 **1873** - April 30 **1876** (3 yrs. 79 days) (Pl. CCVc);
3. Joel W., son of D.C. & I.V. Brooks, March 3 **1878** - Dec. 26 **1878** (9 months 23 days) (Pl. CCVIa);
4. Lona Belle Brooks, daughter of D.C. & I.V. Brooks, March 13 **1880** - Aug. 30, **1889** (9 years 160 days) (Pl. CCVIb);
5. Euell Nomar Brooks, son of D.C. & I.V. Brooks, Feb. 27 **1882** - March 27 **1883** (13 months) (Pl. CCVIc).

Think of how Solon defined *eudaimonia* (‘happiness’ = literally, ‘having the supernatural forces that influence events in our lives be favorably disposed towards us’; cf. ‘happy’ coming from the IE root *kob-* having to do with a lucky occurrence or moment)⁸ to Croesus (Hdt. 1.30.4). The

⁵ S. ESTRIN, “Cold Comfort: Empathy and Memory in an Archaic Funerary Monument from Akraiphia,” *Classical Antiquity* 35:2 (2016) 189-214; D. KNOEPFLER, “No. 266, Akraiphia,” *BE* 122 (2009) 467, who reports that A.K. Andreomenou translates this as: “Je suis le beau monument de Mnasiitheios sur le chemin; c’est Pyr(r)ichos qui m’a érigé en témoignage d’une profonde affection.”

⁶ ESTRIN (*supra* n. 5) 192.

⁷ E. COOK, personal communication, 04/13/18.

⁸ WATKINS (*supra* n. 1) 44: “*kob-* To suit, fit, succeed. HAP, HAPPEN, HAPPY; HAPLESS, MISHAP, from Old Norse *happ*, chance, good luck, from Germanic *hap-*.”

fundamental key to happiness, in fact a *sine qua non*, for Tellus the Athenian is that, under the condition that his *polis* is secure and faring well, his healthy, brave and noble sons all lived to adulthood and all then produced healthy grandsons who also lived:

ὁ δὲ εἶπε ‘Τέλλω τοῦτο μὲν τῆς πόλιος εὖ ἡκούσης παῖδες ἦσαν καλοὶ τε κάγαθοί, καὶ σφι εἶδε
ἅπασι τέκνα ἐκγενόμενα καὶ πάντα παραμείναντα: τοῦτο δὲ τοῦ βίου εὖ ἦκοντι, ὥς τὰ παρ’ ἡμῖν,
τελευτῇ τοῦ βίου λαμπροτάτῃ ἐπεγένετο:

He (Solon) said two things, first that Tellus, while his city-state was prospering, had noble and brave sons, and he saw children born to all of them (the sons) and all the children (Tellus’s grandsons) were still living; and second, that Tellus was well off, as these things go among the Greeks, and he ended his life on a conspicuously strong and positive note.

Tellus’s happiness is having living and healthy sons and grandsons all still alive when he died. It is a rare happiness in the ancient world and it is virtually unknown within most families in human existence anywhere in the world until the last fifty years and then primarily only among people of at least moderate means living in the most scientifically advanced countries of the world. D.C and I.V. Brooks were nowhere nearly so fortunate.

The iconography of the lamb sculpted inelegantly in the hollow carved circle at the top of each of the headstones of their five dead children refers to Jesus as good shepherd who suffered the little children, his innocent lambs, to come unto him. πάθει μαθεῖν here would dictate ‘learn through suffering infant mortality’. But the ancient Greeks did not have the consolation of believing in a divine reward for sinless children. On the headstone of Franklin C. (Pl. CCVc), who was born just two days before his older brother James P. (Pl. CCVb) died at just barely three years of age and who himself died when he was just over three years old, we see inscribed below his date of death Jesus’s invitation: “Suffer little children to come unto me.”

Memory is magical and mysterious and for the Greeks metaphysical. Forms in μνᾱ- give us the title of this *Aegaeum* conference (μνήμη) and two verbal forms that are explained as root extensions of *men-¹:

1. μμνήσκω, reduplicated with iterative suffixation, ‘keep on recalling’; and
2. μνάομαι ‘I make myself recall’.

The importance of the concept of memory is seen in historical Greek in semantic specializations and extensions of words with this root. For example, μνάομαι comes to mean:

1. ‘remember’ a potential wife (see famously and ambiguously Κλυταιμνήστρη [*μνάομαι] < Κλυταιμήστρη [μήδομαι]), i.e., to ‘woo’ by constant mindful attention, whence μνηστήρ ‘suitor’, literally an agent -τήρ of the vital social action ‘mindful wooing’ that unites clans through marriage;
2. ‘remember’ the spirit of combat, the joy of battle: μνήσαντο χάρμης *Iliad* 4.220-222, 8.252; see also μένος *per se* = ‘mind activated for combat’.

In *Iliad* 4.220-223, Machaōn is treating Menelaus who has been wounded by an arrow shot by Pandarus. Meanwhile the Trojan forces are advancing in rows.

ὄφρα τοὶ ἀμφεπένοντο βοῆν ἀγαθὸν Μενέλαον,
τόφρα δ’ ἐπὶ Τρώων στίχες ἤλυθον ἀσπιστάων:
οἱ δ’ αὖτις κατὰ τεύχε’ ἔδυν, μνήσαντο δὲ χάρμης.

All the while they were working hard on (wounded) Menelaus, brave with the war cry,
Rows after rows of Trojans came on, shield-bearing soldiers,
And they (the Achaeans) again outfitted themselves in their armor. And they
became mindful of the exhilarating joy of combat.

3. and, of course, noun forms *μνήμα* and *μνημεῖον* are used of monuments to the dead, including funeral mounds, or memorials to gods. But they are also used of objects that call loved ones to mind in the way that what we call ‘keepsakes’ do.

A fine example is in the funeral games of Patroclus in *Iliad* Book 23:

615 πέμπτον δ' ὑπελείπετ' ἄεθλον,
ἀμφίθετος φιάλη: τὴν Νέστορι δῶκεν Ἀχιλλεύς
Ἀργείων ἄν' ἀγῶνα φέρων, καὶ ἔειπε παραστάς·
'τῇ νῦν, καὶ σοὶ τοῦτο γέρον κειμήλιον ἔστω
Πατρόκλοιο τάφου μνήμ' ἔμμεναι: οὐ γὰρ ἔτ' αὐτὸν
620 ὄφῃ ἐν Ἀργείοισι: δίδωμι δέ τοι τόδ' ἄεθλον
αὖτως·

615 A fifth contest prize was left
A two-handled *phialē*: which Achilles gave to Nestor
Carrying it up through the contest assembly of the Argives, and he said having
stood alongside him:
"There now, even for you, old man, let this be an *heirloom* (*κειμήλιον* =
thing put, laid or stored up),
To be a *μνήμα* of the funeral rituals of Patroklos: for him no longer
620 will you see among the Argives: I give to you his contest prize
Just so (or just as *it* was)."

Achilles gives Nestor a two-handled *phialē* specifically as a *keimēlion* or ‘heirloom’ item, literally something to be ‘put up in storage’ or that ‘has been lying in storage for a long time already’ (the Greek verb *κεῖμαι* ‘I lie’ works as the passive of the verb *τίθημι* ‘I place or put’) and Achilles instructs Nestor to “let it be a *μνήμα* (literally the end result of the process of remembering) of the Πατρόκλοιο τάφος,” *i.e.*, the ‘funeral rites of Patroclus’. Note: the *phialē* is not a memory trigger of Patroklos himself, but of his burial ceremony! This is even more significant since the root of the word used for heirloom here is the root of the verb that means to ‘lie or rest in death’: *κεῖμαι*.⁹

We should note (Pl. CCVIIa) that in our Linear B texts, *pi-e-ra₃ /phielai/*, plural of historical *φιέλη*, is identified by ideogram *200^{VAS} in Ta 709.1 at Pylos. This ideogram has a metal physical correlate from Pylos chamber tomb K 2, in use LH III B-C but without precise dating of the vessel shape. Three such vessels are recorded on Ta 709.1. Ideogram *219^{VAS} on Pylos tablet Tn 996 (from vase storeroom 20), records two *pi-a₂-ra /phialai/*, dual of historical *φιάλη*. This is clearly a larger and more functional vase, a metal basin “wider than deep with two vertical handles surmounting the top edge and the straight walls” of the vessel. It best correlates with a bronze basin from Dendra tomb 12 (LH II-LH III A 1), *i.e.*, it is likely an heirloom.¹⁰

Given that in the Ta series fire-damaged Cretan heirloom tripods are also inventoried among the vases,¹¹ furniture and sacrificial implements to be used in the *wanaks*-directed ritual specified on the heading tablet PY Ta 711, it would not be surprising if the prize-vase given by Achilles to Nestor is already a γέρον κειμήλιον /*geron keimēlion*/ an antique ‘stored-up’ item, *i.e.*, an heirloom.

There are some other remarkable details here.

First let us consider *μνήμα* in line 23.619. We know that the -ματ- suffix in Greek, when added to a verbal root, produces a noun that expresses the result of a verbal action. A *πράγμα* is the result of something we do, *i.e.*, ‘something done’; a *ποίημα* of something we make, ‘something made’; *χάρμα* is an end state when we feel good or joyful; *μάθημα* is the result of our learning, *i.e.*, ‘something learned’;

⁹ M. EDWARDS, *The Iliad. A Commentary, Volume 5, Books 17-20* (1991) 144, discussion of *κεῖται* in line 18.20.

¹⁰ F. VANDENABEELE and J.-P. OLIVIER, *Les idéogrammes archéologiques du Linéaire B* (1979) 221-224.

¹¹ T. PALAIMA, “The Inscribed Bronze ‘Kessel’ from Shaft Grave IV and Cretan Heirlooms of the Bronze Age Artist named ‘Aigeus’ *vel sim.* in the Mycenaean Palatial Period,” in Y. DUHOUX (ed.), *BRICIAKA. A Tribute to W. C. Brice* (2003) 187-201.

and likewise with δόγμα ‘something reasonably thought’, δέρμα ‘something flayed’, γράμμα ‘something written’, νόημα ‘something abstractly thought’, τμήμα ‘something cut’, πρόβλημα ‘something thrown in front of us’, τραῦμα ‘something pierced, trampled, flailed, rubbed’, and so on. Gregory Nagy reminds us that “abstract nouns can become concrete in meaning. My favorite example: stuffing in a turkey. Stuffing should be abstract, like dreaming, but it’s concrete in the kitchen.”¹² And he also reminds us that in Latin *carmen* < **kan-men* (e.g., arma virumque cano *Aeneid* 1.1) is the ‘end result of singing’, i.e., a song.

What I think is going on here is something like the following parallel. Although historical Greek ἄρμα *harma* and Mycenaean Greek *a-mo* = *har-mo* are the ‘end result of joining’, they become associated in a fixed way with a concrete thing, in fact the most elaborate and important ‘joined thing’ in the history of mankind, the wheel. The *phialē* given here in order to be used explicitly as a μνήμα is the ‘end result’ of the original occasion, the funeral rites for Patroclus. It later will become a remembrance trigger, what Seth Estrin, in discussing the Akraiphia funerary stele, calls a memory-object, because looking at or touching the ‘thing remembered’ calls to mind the events that are in our minds as a memory, events that prompt or activate the memory. It is like a souvenir. We cannot remember anything (although we can imagine in an associative way feelings and emotions that others have had or that we would have if placed in their circumstances) by looking at a souvenir unless we ourselves went through the activities that temporally surrounded acquiring it, or unless someone who is associated with us brought it back to give to us with a tale that we then remember through it!

Think of Orson Welles as Charles Foster Kane in the American classic film *Citizen Kane* and the word “rosebud” that he speaks with his dying breath. It was the name of the old sled he played with as a child before he was taken away from his true parents. It gave him memories of his lost childhood, the parents he never saw again. I think of the Cyclades, Sandy MacGillivray, Hugh Sackett, Marissa Marthari and Malcolm Wiener, and even by association Prince Rainier and Princess Grace of Monaco, whenever I use the keepsake brass opener inscribed with the words “S/Y Moonbeam” (Pl. CCVIIb), the name of the sailing ship we traveled on together from Crete to Athens in the good old days.

Recall that Erwin Cook invites us to treat μνήμα “as something of a perfect, as the enduring result of a calling to mind.”¹³ And certainly this is the case with the Boeotian funerary epigram sculpted by the Athenian sculptor Philourgos that we cited at the outset. Estrin views it as not only a memory-trigger but as a ‘grief trigger’ and explains that¹⁴

I focus in particular on the monument’s stated function as a *mnēma* or memory-object, arguing that remembering the deceased is an inherently disjunctive act that pits visual presence against cognitive-affective absence. The monument’s function as a *mnēma*, in other words, aligns the ontology of the representational work of art, which offers a visceral image embedded in a static medium, with the memory of the deceased, who exists in archaic thought only as an evanescent image that emerges through a viewer’s memory or imagination. In this context, the very act of looking at the sculpture and reading the inscription becomes an emotional experience analogous to the pain of remembering a deceased love one.

The *phialē* offered by Achilles to Nestor would have the same memories of the sorrow of loss and the same feelings of grief attached to it. But again, it is explicitly a specific reminder of the feelings surrounding the *burial* of Patroklos.

Second, we may wonder whether the poet-songster of the *Iliad* 23.610-615 is playing with meanings in an allusive way. γέρον in line 23.618 is primarily taken as the vocative singular of γέρων = ‘old man’, a polite and respectful reference by Achilles to Nestor’s age and the dignity kingly old age confers upon him.

¹² G. NAGY, personal communication, 04/13/18.

¹³ COOK (*supra* n. 7).

¹⁴ ESTRIN (*supra* n. 5).

But there are instances in Homeric passages where γέρον is used adjectivally of things ‘old and worn out by use’. In *Odyssey* 22.184 where the two herdsmen of Odysseus (Philotius and Eumaeus) are about to set upon the goatherd Melanthius, who is bearing the old armor of Odysseus’s father Laertes from the armory in Odysseus’ palace, we hear the following:

τῇ ἑτέρῃ μὲν χειρὶ φέρων καλὴν τρυφάλειαν,
τῇ δ’ ἑτέρῃ σάκος εὐρὺ γέρον, πεπαλαγμένον ἄζη,
185 Λαέρτεω ἥρωος, ὃ κουρίζων φορέεσκε:

In one hand bearing the fine helmet
In the other hand the old broad shield, defiled with dark patches
Of the hero Laertes, which he used to carry when he was in his young manly prime

The *Lexikon des frühgriechischen Epos* informs us that “the technical mnemonic aspect of these verbs [μυμνήσκω, μέμνημαι, μνάομαι] in special cases stands in the foreground, mostly of the emotions, motivations and obligations connected with a memory or a particular mental orientation.”¹⁵

Among the sociopolitical spheres where memory is essential is record-keeping, whether using writing or not, of all sorts. In Aristophanes’ *Wasps* 538, Bdelykleon, the character who represents a common citizen who cannot stand political demagogues, writes down *memoranda* in order to remember important points in an argument:

καὶ μὴν ὅς’ ἂν λέξῃ γ’ ἀπλῶς μνημόσυνα γράφομαι ἑώ.

“And as to so many things as he says, *I* will write down simply memoranda.”

The use of the personal pronoun at the end, unnecessary to the basic meaning of the sentence, emphasizes that Bdelykleon is capable of employing writing in this way and that, barring inadvertent error, the notes he produces will be authoritative and serve as memory triggers for himself later: γράφομαι ἑώ means emphatically “*I* will write *for myself*.”

In some way Bdelykleon here is employing writing as a memory aid in the way that we who have a long-term familiarity with Linear B tablet-writers imagine them using the written texts that have survived to us. ἀπλῶς implies ‘single, simple, plain’, we might say ‘the basics’ or ‘the gist’ or ‘just the facts’. Later in the *Wasps*, Philokleon, who loves demagogues like Kleon, speaks eleven lines arguing, with highly dramatized examples, about how jury service makes common men, political nobodies, mightier than and known to kings and nobles, because their votes as jury members cause the rich and powerful to curry their favor. Bdelykleon sums it all up this way at *Wasps* 559:

τουτὶ περὶ τῶν ἀντιβολουμένων ἔστω τὸ μνημόσυνόν μοι.

“Let me make a memorandum bullet point for myself re this matter about favor-curriers.”

We can imagine the entry reading simply: οἱ ἀντιβολουντες (here = “the ones who make a point of throwing themselves at – or literally ‘in the way of’ – the jurors” for the purposes of currying and assuring favors in judicial proceedings). That would be enough to bring the whole subject back to mind. A modern example is this: a friend named Cynthia Patterson yesterday morning asked me to call her this afternoon about a ticket for a concert she might be able to get for me to buy. I simply wrote down her name abbreviated as ‘Cynthia Patt’ on a sticky note.

In Dorian Sicily the *magister convivii* or ‘master of a feast’ is known as ὁ μνάμων (Attic Greek ὁ μνήμων ‘the rememberer’ or, as it is glossed, the ἐπίσταθος ‘quartermaster’ συμποσίου ‘of the symposium’). The volume of information to be remembered surrounding an important feasting occasion is enormous. As our Linear B feasting records remind us, long range planning is needed to

¹⁵ *LfrGE* 15 μά – νεήνις (1993) 214, s.v.

assure that all parties responsible for contributing to and putting on a feast will meet expectations.¹⁶ A tablet like Pylos Un 718 records what the four main components of the social order prospectively will be giving as ‘donations’ (*dosmoi*) to Poseidon when a banqueting ritual is held in the area known as *sa-ra-pe-da*. These are plural μνημόσυνα ‘memoranda’ in Bdelykleon’s sense. But lying behind the quantities of each item being delivered (1 bull, 4 sheep, foodstuffs like grain, cheese and flour, wine, honey and a single hide) are the individuals within each socio-political sphere and perhaps even the particular landholdings of the *wanaks*, *lāwage(er)tās*, *dāmos*, and *wo-ro-ki-jo-ne-jo ka-ma* who are responsible for having the provisions ready to deliver.

As July Hruby stressed at a recent conference on food in human history that we both attended,¹⁷ we do not have any ‘invitation lists’ in the Linear B records. Yet the supplies for feasting rituals make clear that many hundreds of individuals, if not “a thousand families”¹⁸ took part and benefited from the feasting. If we use later historical parallels, many would take away homeward a portion of meat to be consumed by non-attending family members. These people must have been known and in some ways ‘check-listed’, since the regional societies during the full Mycenaean palatial period owed their very existence to efficient oversight and intrinsic enforcement (often disguised) of reciprocal exchanges, *do ut des*. There were owed contributions (*dosmoi*) and corresponding ‘pay-backs’ (*apudoseis*). Occasionally, the Mycenaean central recording agents are even kicking the can of expected deliveries not yet met down the road to the next administrative cycle or redirecting the obligation to service or provisioning in other economic spheres.¹⁹

There must have been, then, in this primarily oral society, a great need for individuals who are identified in the historical Greek lexicon by a word that serves as a synonym for the γραμματεῖς or ‘municipal officers charged with written record-keeping of *polis* affairs’. That word is μνήμονες ‘remembrancers’.

The *mnāmōnes* (with Doric spelling) are reasonably well attested in the definitive new study of the law inscriptions of ancient Crete by Gagarin and Perlman.²⁰

These officials appear in what we call records of legal proceedings that have to do with the following human social activities:

1. On G 87 (450-400 BCE) a debt collection document, in which the presence of the *mnāmōn* (Attic *mnēmōn*) alongside the *esprattas* ‘exactor’ or ‘collector’ is specified.
2. On G 72 11.52-53 (456 BCE) in regard to oaths to be sworn during a divorce proceeding.
3. On G 72 11.14-17 during an adoption case.
4. On G 72 9.32 during the disposition of the property of a deceased.
5. On G 42 B.6 (ca 500-450 BCE) regarding procedural rulings concerning a boundary dispute;
6. On Da 1 A.5-6 (ca 500 BCE) an inscription from Datala specifying terms for an appointment of a person who will perform the functions of *mnāmōn* (*mnāmoneuwen*) and *poinikastās* (Cretan for ‘scribe’ or ‘writer’) in remembering and recording matters, “both sacred and secular.”²¹

In all the occurrences of the term in early Cretan law codes, the official known as the *mnāmōn* functions alongside other officials, for example, *dikastai* ‘jurors’; *ksenios* (*kosmos?*) ‘an archon in charge

¹⁶ T.G. PALAIMA, “Sacrificial Feasting in the Linear B tablets,” in J.C. WRIGHT (ed.), *The Mycenaean Feast*, *Hesperia* 73.2 (2004) 217-246.

¹⁷ The *Food And...* conference held by the Humanities Center at Texas Tech University March 29-31, 2018: www.depts.ttu.edu/provost/humanities-center/FOOD_AND_17-18/ConferenceSchedule.php.

¹⁸ S.R. STOCKER and J.L. DAVIS, “Animal Sacrifice, Archives, and Feasting at the Palace of Nestor,” in WRIGHT (*supra* n. 16) 72-73.

¹⁹ T.G. PALAIMA, “Security and Insecurity as Tools of Power in Mycenaean Palatial Kingdoms,” in P. CARLIER, C. DE LAMBERTERIE, M. EGETMEYER, N. GUILLEUX, F. ROUGEMONT and J. ZURBACH (eds), *Études mycéniennes 2010* (2012) 345-356.

²⁰ M. GAGARIN and P. PERLMAN, *The Laws of Ancient Crete c. 650-400 BCE* (2016).

²¹ Discussion of the specific passages cited as sources here are to be found in GAGARIN and PERLMAN (*supra* n. 20) 455-456, 424-425, 415, 419, 403, 406, 306-307, 183-186, 190-191.

of foreign guest friends'; and *esprattai* 'exactors' or 'collectors' attending trials and other public proceedings. The *mnāmōn* accompanied other officials so that he could later testify about details that he remembered. The fact that at Datala these duties involved a party who both operated with memory (*mnāmoneuwen*) and performs as a *poínikastās* is significant. There is a clause (Da 1 B.4-6) in the Datala inscription that declares "for whatever god has no 'clear?' priest, the *poínikastās* is to perform public sacrifices and to hold the revenues of the sanctuary."²² We can recall here the famous dispute recorded 'simply' on Pylos land record Ep 704.5-6. It is the kind of dispute that would call someone like a 'remember-er', with or without written *memoranda*, to attest to the nature of the original agreement.

.5 e-ri-ta , i-je-re-ja , e-ke , e-u-ke-to-qe , e-to-ni-jo , e-ke-e , te-o , da-mo-
de-mi , pa-si , ko-to-na-o ,
.6 ke-ke-me-na-o , o-na-to , e-ke-e , to-so pe-mo GRA 3 T 9

Eritha the priestess holds and asserts a claim to hold *e-to-ni-jo* land for the deity, the *dāmos*, on the other hand says that (she or he?) holds a beneficial plot of 'communal' or 'partitioned' land so much seed grain 374.4 liters.

There is a longstanding debate about whether Linear B tablet-writers are the various officials who are mentioned in the Linear B texts or are 'full-time' specialists in writing *per se*.²³ There probably is no need to press the either-or here, given that movie actors like Ronald Reagan or many times failed business entrepreneurs like Donald Trump can also be presidents of the United States. Yet in the famous heading of Ta 711, we are given the following simple memorandum-entry:

.1 o-wi-de , pu2-ke-qi-ri , o-te , wa-na-ka , te-ke , au-ke-wa , da-mo-ko-ro

Thus observed Phuge-g^wris when the *wanaks* appointed (or buried?) Augewās *dāmokoros*

And this is followed with a long list of mnemonically described and thereby retrievable vessels, pieces of furniture (including 5 *thronoi*), sacrificial and fire implements and so on. So either Phuge-g^wris was serving solely as *mnāmōn* or he was serving as both *mnāmōn* and *poínikastās*.

Either way, the significance of 'memory' and 'memoranda' for the efficient operation of Mycenaean palatial territories is clear. This is reflected in personal names and titles in the Linear B tablets that are built from roots connected with memory and remembering. A few examples will suffice:

ma-na-si-we-ko *Μνᾱσίφεργος (Attic Gk. Μνησίεργος) 'he who remembers work';

me-to-re Μέντωρ literally 'mind OR memory agent' = adviser OR consultant;²⁴

e-u-me-ne Εὐμένης He who is endowed well with μένος 'mind, courage, strength';

and perhaps even the divine figure on PY Tn 316:

ma-na-sa construed by Michael Lejeune, and others, as derived from *μνᾱ- (cf. μνάομαι) 'goddess of remembrance' *vel sim*.²⁵ See Homeric Μνήσορ²⁶ a shortened name from a compound with first element μνησι-.

²² GAGARIN and PERLMAN (*supra* n. 20) 184-187, 194-195.

²³ Succinctly reviewed in T. PALAIMA, "Scribes, Scribal Hands and Palaeography," in Y. DUHOUX and A. MORPURGO DAVIES (eds), *A Companion to Linear B Texts* (2011) 121-126.

²⁴ H. VON KAMPTZ, *Homerische Personennamen* (1982) 172 §64 (*nomina agentium* in -της).

²⁵ F. AURAJORRO, *Diccionario Micénico* vol. 1 (1985) 420, *s.v.* *ma-na-sa*.

²⁶ VON KAMPTZ (*supra* n. 24) §35a3β.

We close with two examples of Linear B *mnēmosuna* (administrative mnemonic notes). Think of all that they do *not* tell us, because we have no memories of these matters for the recorded jottings to trigger.

PY Ae 26 (Pl. CCVIIc) simply records:

ko-ru-da-ro-jo do-e-ro o-pi pe-me VIR 4[
of Korydallos servants *o-pi* PERSONAL NAME MAN 4

We do not know whether the word we translate as ‘servants’ is literal or figurative, ritually or otherwise, here. We do not know who Korydallos is, where he is from, what his title or position is; or in what capacity he ‘possesses’ these *do-e-ro*. Nor do we have any information about the PERSONAL NAME recorded here as *pe-me* (the reading of *me* is doubtful).

PY Ua 25 recto (Pl. CCVIIId) simply records animals without giving any indication of purpose:

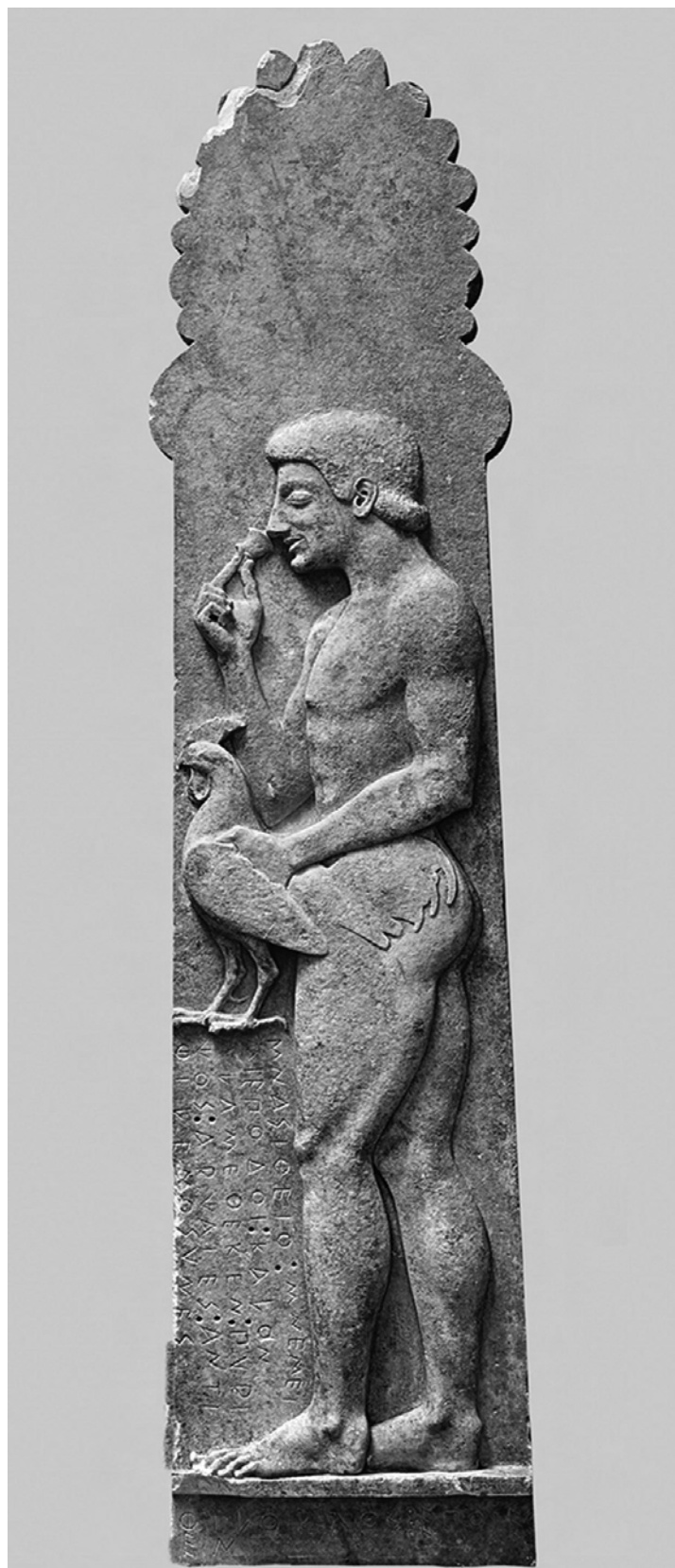
.1 Fatted PIG 3 female BOVID 2 male BOVID 8
.2 male SHEEP 67

I would say more, but that is all I put down in my own μνημόσυνα.

Thomas G. PALAIMA

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CCV



a



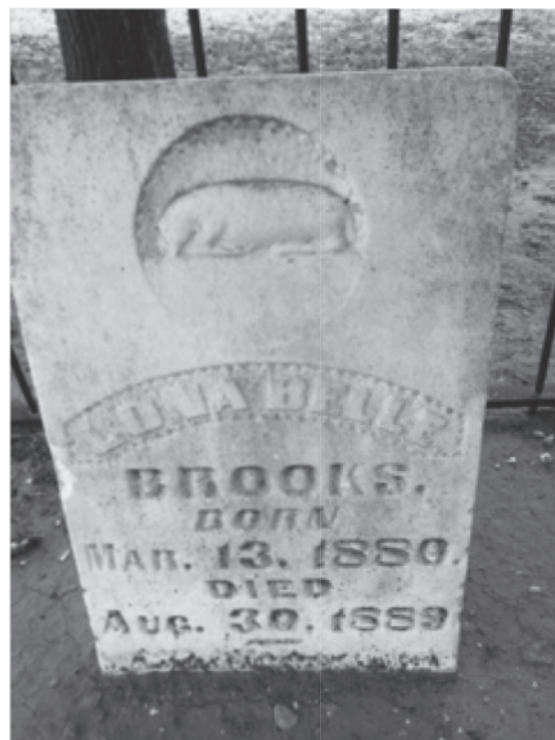
b



c



a



b



c

VASES

B. 1. BASSINS

d. *200 VAS



1. PY Ta 709.1

e. *219 VAS



2. PY Tn 996.2



3. KN K 93a[?]



b



c



d