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THE RECEPTION OF AURA JORRO'S *DICCIONARIO MICÉNICO* IN MYCENAEAN STUDIES

Thomas G. PALAIMA
University of Texas at Austin

‘Por supuesto, la Micenología es una ciencia siempre *in fieri*.’
Francisco RODRÍGUEZ ADRADOS (ADRADOS 1995, 119)

‘*Lexicographer*, a writer of dictionaries, a *harmless drudge*.’ Thus did James Boswell in *Boswell’s Life of Johnson* (3rd edition 1799) (BOSWELL 1953, 212) give an example of the ‘capricious and humorous indulgence’ that Samuel Johnson granted himself in making ‘playful allusion to the notions commonly entertained of his own laborious task.’

That task, of course, was producing with his single mind and single writing hand his magnificent, single-authored *Dictionary of the English Language*, published in 1755. Of the achievement of Johnson’s dictionary, which he worked on for nearly ten years and incorporating, as it did, both a history of the English language and an English grammar, BOSWELL 1953, 209 remarks, ‘the world contemplated with wonder so stupendous a work achieved by one man, while other countries had thought such undertakings fit only for whole academies.’

In a much-quoted observation from the chapter devoted to the writing of the dictionary in his psychologically oriented biography of Samuel Johnson, Walter Jackson BATE 1998, 240 goes even further: ‘The finished work, nine years later, easily ranks as one of the greatest achievements of scholarship, and probably the greatest ever performed by one individual who labored under anything like the disadvantages in a comparable length of time.’¹

In the specialized field of Mycenaean studies, such reactions as these to the appearance of the equally monumental, *mutatis mutandis*, first and second

¹ By comparison (BATE 1998, 240-241), the French Academy spent four years just trying to figure out how to produce a French equivalent to the six-volume Italian dictionary that was an effort of twenty years for the Accademia della Crusca. In the end, a team of forty members of the French Academy took fifty-five years to finish their dictionary and immediately another nineteen years to revise it. The total time span from original thought to end result was over 80 years (1635-1718).

volumes of Francisco Aura Jorro's single-authored *Diccionario micénico* in 1985 and 1993 (*DMic.*) were I believe widely felt, but hardly expressed.

There are many reasons for this. They have to do with (1) the circumstances of time and place, (2) the nature and scope of Aura Jorro's dictionary project and its relationship to (a) prior work in the field (including the brilliant decipherment achieved by Michael Ventris in May-June 1952) and to (b) a larger-scale undertaking by Spanish scholars in ancient Greek lexicography (ADRADOS 1995, 103 and 115-120), (3) the specialized area in which Aura Jorro was working and its continuing disconnection from the broader fields of Greek and Latin languages, Indo-European linguistics, ancient history, archaeology and classical studies. Reviews of the volume were limited and now even hard to locate.

For example, the main systematic bibliographical resource for Aegean pre-history generally, *Nestor*, lists just one review: ILIEVSKI 1986. The *Thesaurus Indogermanischer Text- und Sprachmaterialien* (TITUS) bibliographical search for Greek-related items gives just one short review, of volume 2, BLANC 1995, and TITUS even misspells the author's name as Aurra [sic] Jorro. *Sic transit gloria lexicographorum linguarum obscurarum. L'Année Philologique* gives us a handful more of brief reviews.

There is also, of course, the longer article by Francisco Rodríguez Adrados that I quoted here at the outset. It places the *Diccionario* in the context of about fifty years of work upon the sign-groups in the Linear B tablets, their interpretation, and their meaning in Greek, where they are part of the historical or recoverable proto-historical ancient Greek lexicon, beginning with the study of Benito GAYA NUÑO 1952, published in 1952, but written in 1947, as representative of scholarship during the "‘periodo formativo’ previo al desdramamiento de Ventris" (ADRADOS 1995, 104). It is easy for the current generation of Mycenologists to take for granted the existence of a dictionary that can guide our interpretations soundly. Even the discussion of lexica and dictionaries in the most recent handbook of Mycenology *per se* (PALMER 2008, 44-45) is rather matter-of-fact in its estimation of the *Diccionario*:

The most complete presentation of Linear B words to date is in *Diccionario*. It lists in transliteration all Linear B words known at the date of publication (1985-93), including partially missing words, or uncertain readings, and offers a complete list of alternative interpretations. A new edition is currently in preparation.

However, for scholars with a long view of progress in our field since the Ventris decipherment of Linear B in May-June 1952, the appearance of Francisco Aura Jorro's *Diccionario Micénico* in 1985 and 1993 was a true milestone.

Here I would like to make some remarks on just how significant an achievement the *Diccionario* was and still is. In a small way, I wish to take on the role of a Boswell, living in *Nueva España*, for Francisco Aura Jorro of the Universidad de Alicante.

How was the *Diccionario* received by Aura Jorro's Mycenaological peers?

Jean-Louis PERPILLOU 1987, 507 stressed that it would have a greater impact on the non-initiates, i.e., on those who had not been working in a serious way on the Linear B texts, than on the initiates. His reasoning was that anyone who had been doing close work with the texts was accustomed to using the resources then available. These included the first complete dictionary of Mycenaean Greek, Anna Morpurgo Davies' (then just Morpurgo) *Mycenaeae Graecitatis Lexicon (MGL)*, the compact studies in *Glotta* of words in the historical Greek lexicon that occurred in the Mycenaean Greek texts then known and published (*MGV I* and *II*), the comprehensive index of Linear B sign groups and other items such as ideograms (OLIVIER – GODART – SEYDEL – SOURVINOU 1973), and the lists of words treated in the yearly scholarly literature appearing in the journal *Studies in Mycenaean Inscriptions and Dialect* (compiled in BAUMBACH 1968 and, at the time of the appearance of the first volume of the *Diccionario*, about to appear in BAUMBACH 1986). In addition, general and specialist scholars had recourse to the glossaries in the two main English language treatments of the contents of the Linear B tablets (*Docs.*²) and other major studies devoted to textual interpretation (e.g., *Études* or HILLER – PANAGL 1976).

I think that Perpillou's prediction has proved not to be so even at the time and almost certainly not so in the event. By the end of the 1970's, the first great wave of enthusiasm, after the decipherment in 1952, at mining the Linear B texts for information about Homer, the palatial civilization of the late Aegean Bronze Age, the formative stages of Greek religion, socio-political structures, industries, technologies (including warfare) and economy (including trade and foreign contacts), and even, for comparative interests, patterns and trends within place names and personal names, was coming to a close.

As Adrados puts it at a slightly later period (ADRADOS 1995, 107 and 119), the fundamental base of the field was in place by 1975, after over twenty years of concentrated and cooperative international effort, and during the 1980's a certain kind of 'exhaustion' was setting in even among Mycenaologists. Or perhaps we should say that those outside the field of Mycenaology, *stricto sensu*, began to rely on specialist scholars to be their informants if they wanted to know what the current state of thinking was on particular topics beyond what they could get from reading *Documents in Mycenaean Greek (Docs.*²) or *In-*

terpretation (PALMER 1963). In part, there has been a healthy development of collaboration and combinatory work among certain Mycenologists and scholars specializing in material remains. Some scholars like Cynthia Shelmerdine, John Bennet, Jan Driessen, Susan Lupack and Dimitri Nakassis have moved readily between these two general areas of research. But by and large, the *Diccionario*, in my view, remains a tool for those who want to deal first hand with the Linear B texts.

Perpillou also believed that scholars would not abandon the established research tools that they had been using. This was certainly the hard necessity for eight years for the half of the Mycenaean lexicon not treated in the first volume of the *Diccionario*. But in my experience, as soon as it was published in 1985, specialists found that the *Diccionario* alone superseded the combination of existing tools (lexicographical, indexing and bibliographical) by being comprehensive, perfectly rational in presentation of information, and judicious and self-abnegating in explaining the different proposed interpretations of the *lemmata*. This gave readers/users the utmost confidence that they could in each individual entry find what the scholarly consensus had now come to believe was the meaning or range of meaning – or even on balance the most likely meaning(s) – of a Mycenaean word. In a short amount of time, scholars using the *Diccionario* were able to form a high opinion of Aura Jorro's scholarly judgment, as it were, *lemma* entry by *lemma* entry, even though he never 'voiced' his own opinion.

That even 'rejected' interpretations found a place in the entries for each *lemma* increased the confidence of scholars in the *Diccionario*. In some cases, old proposals could be seen in a new light and arguments for them could be revived. But in the main, it gave Mycenologists of my generation a confidence that the field managed itself well in the cooperative spirit known as the *esprit de Gif* and did so by sharing and distributing information, proposing and politely, but frankly, critiquing theories, and arriving at a sound consensus. These qualities were manifest in the *Diccionario* and in the temperament of the scholar whose single mind and hand produced it. Perpillou deemed the *lemmata* in the *Diccionario* to be presented in a manner that was 'commode et clair' and Perpillou's own meticulous examination of selected entries led him to conclude that, while they did not present any stunning new revelations, since the content, by definition, was not 'original', they were also free of all but minor and non-problematizing error.

Alfred HEUBECK 1988, 673 made clear that Francisco Rodríguez Adrados, in heading the major Greek-Spanish historical lexicon project, from the start in 1962 conceived of a Mycenaean Greek-Spanish dictionary as a supplement

to the main work. Making the Mycenaean Greek volumes an independent offshoot of the Greek-Spanish lexicon solved problems with identifying the exact Greek equivalents of Mycenaean forms and permitted space for adequate treatment of context and interpretation for each Mycenaean *lemma*. Heubeck notes with admiration the comprehensive nature of bibliographical citations, complete through 1979 and into 1980, and states that there is 'nothing to find fault with in the presentation of the commentary' and, like Perpillou, concludes that 'even the typographical mistakes are kept within limits and do not affect the sense.'

Regarding Aura Jorro's reporting on early proposals for the interpretation of particular sign groups that have now clearly been proved false, Heubeck declares that they make the dictionary more valuable as a document in the 'history of Mycenaean scholarship.' HEUBECK (1988, 674) rightly declares that the 'normal' user of the *Diccionario* will concentrate on the 'interpretations' of the Mycenaean terms. He does not, however, define who he thinks the normal user is. But he praises Aura Jorro for 'rightly letting caution and discretion prevail' so that in most cases we can have confidence in Aura Jorro's decisions about the relative merits of competing interpretations.

In a full page of fine-print notes, however, Heubeck proposes his own alternatives to the presentation of interpretations of specific *lemmata* in the *Diccionario* volume 1. One is that *i-pe-me-de-ja*, of which Aura Jorro (*DMic.* I, 282) writes, 'Se admite en general su correspondencia con el gr. Ἰφιμέδεια,' in its meaning and its phonology cannot have anything to do with Ἰφιμέδεια. And indeed in Aura Jorro's discussion (*DMic.* I, 282) of the interpretation of *i-pe-me-de-ja*, we find alternative proposals such as Heubeck's own *Ἰμπεμήδεια with the probable change from ἐν- > iv- and with quoted support from *Dict.Étym.*, s.v. ἴς: 'Ἰφιμέδεια doit être distinct de mic. *Ipemedeia*.'

Heubeck closes with a wish: 'Ich hoffe, daß es dem Verfasser gelingen möge, sein verdienstvolles Werk recht bald zu einem glücklichen Abschluß zu bringen.'

Reviews of the second volume of the *Diccionario* have the same tenor. There is an occasional correction of a minor failure in bibliographical completeness (e.g., MAURICE 1993, 121), but the praise for the high quality of the *Diccionario* now as a whole continues. Kees RUIJGH 1995, 367 notes that the two volumes of the *Diccionario* replace *Mycenaeae Graecitatis Lexicon* (*MGL*), which was a 'lexique excellent au temps de sa par[t]u[r]ition mais qui est actuellement daté.' Ruijgh notes that Aura Jorro's thorough review of proposals for interpretation, complete through 1991, replaces the then already fast becoming outdated *Word Index* of the volumes of Baumbach (BAUMBACH

1968 and 1986). While admitting (RUIJGH 1995, 368) that every lexicon, no matter how good, contains interpretations that invite critical responses, Ruijgh declares that ‘le lexique de M.A.J. [= Monsieur Aura Jorro] est vraiment excellent.’ For those who knew the acute and reserved judgment of the late and lamentably departed Prof. Ruijgh, this appraisal of Aura Jorro’s achievement may be set alongside the hyperbole of Bates and Boswell.

In his review, Ruijgh proposes an alternative interpretation for the important Mycenaean military term *o-ka*. The word *o-ka* has to designate somehow the ‘command unit’ *vel sim.* that named individuals have under their leadership. It is generally interpreted as *ὄρχα and compared with Attic ἀρχή, but Ruijgh argues that this form (and line of interpretation) is impossible because the Mycenaean-period treatment of proto-Greek ‘laryngeal + syllabic liquid’ should be ᾶρ- and not ὄρ-. Thus Ruijgh opts for a derivation of *o-ka* from ἔχω in its original sense of ‘dominer, avoir sous domination’, a line of interpretation he would extend to Mycenaean and later Greek names like *e-ko-to* = ἔκτωρ and *e-ke-da-mo*, interpreted in *DMic.* I, 208, by M. Meier as ‘/Hekhedāmos/, Einer, der einen *dāmos* durch einen Kampf in seine Hand bekommt’. Here again the full and bibliographically rich review of alternative interpretations for all *lemmata* in the *Diccionario* allows us to follow almost immediately the line of argument of other scholars and to be able to form at least an immediate impression of the plausibility of any given proposal.

In this regard, we shall close by letting Alain Blanc, in 2011 honored with the prix Saintour by the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres for his work (BLANC 2008), speak to the clear strengths of the *Diccionario*:

Comme dans le tome I, les deux principales qualités sont un plan de présentation des articles très clair et une très bonne bibliographie. Toutes les fois que c’est possible, le rédacteur de cet ouvrage présente les formes dans leur contexte, expose les éléments qui permettent (ou ne permettent pas) de définir le sens, et rassemble les différentes interprétations linguistiques. Les références bibliographiques, données dans des notes, sont suffisamment précises pour que l’on sache chaque fois sur quel aspect de la question elles portent, et à l’intérieur d’une même note, les références sont classés chronologiquement, ce qui permet de se faire une idée exacte de l’histoire de la recherche sur un mot donné au moment même où on lit l’article qui lui est consacré. On le voit, ce dictionnaire est un outil indispensable tant pour les philologues, qui trouvent là le rassemblement des occurrences accompagné des indispensables éléments de commentaire et de critique, que pour les linguistes, qui peuvent faire rapidement le point sur tour les éléments du lexique mycénien, onomastique comprise.

To paraphrase Boswell, Francisco Aura Jorro's *Diccionario micénico* is a stupendous work. We may say it is of truly epic proportions. Like Homer, it has come down to us two grand parts; and, like the actions of heroes in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, the labors involved in producing the *Diccionario* took about twenty years (ADRADOS 1995, 117).

It is a landmark in the field of Mycenology. If we agree with the idea of Francisco Rodríguez Adrados, quoted at the outset, that Mycenaean studies is a scientific field in the process of coming into being, then we can say that Aura Jorro's *Diccionario* has helped Mycenology become what it is now, and it will continue to be the foundation for future scholarship.²

That the *Diccionario* was produced by a single scholar working with so unwieldy a mass of materials strengthens the case for seeing it as 'one of the greatest achievements of scholarship' in the nearly 60-year history of Mycenaean studies. It also justifies us in putting the *Diccionario* alongside Johnson's *Dictionary of the English Language* as one of the masterworks in the history of lexicography.

Thomas G. PALAIMA
 Program in Aegean Scripts and Prehistory
 University of Texas at Austin
 Austin, TX 78712-0308
 U.S.A.
 tpalaima@mail.utexas.edu

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² See now its helpful indices on-line at: <http://bib.cervantesvirtual.com/porta/diccionariomicenico/>.

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PROBLEMI DI EPIGRAFIA CIPRIOTA

Massimo PERNA

Università degli Studi di Napoli Suor Orsola Benincasa

F. Aura Jorro è senza dubbio uno degli studiosi che hanno lasciato un segno indelebile nel campo della Micenologia.

Strumenti di studio come il *Diccionario micénico (DMic.)*, come anche l'Indice della lineare B, tuttora in preparazione, rappresentano il lavoro di una vita che F. Aura Jorro ha portato avanti quasi in una posizione defilata, senza clamori. I suoi modi garbati, e la sua cortesia nei confronti degli altri colleghi rappresentano un modello positivo per la nuova generazione di studiosi, in un momento in cui la Micenologia registra purtroppo, per colpa di pochi, la perdita di quello, che agli albori di questa disciplina è stato definito l'*esprit de Gif*.

Affrontare lavori che prevedono un'impegno di decenni è senza dubbio qualcosa che spaventa. Spesso chi si dedica alla realizzazione di vocabolari, indici, edizione dei testi o corpora pur essendo motivato, sente il peso di un lavoro titanico e vive talvolta in solitudine le difficoltà di un tale compito. E solo dopo che ho iniziato a cimentarmi con un'impresa di questo tipo, nel mio caso il Corpus delle iscrizioni sillabiche cipriote del primo millennio, che ho maggiormente apprezzato il lavoro di colleghi come F. Aura Jorro.

Proprio per cercare di comunicare le problematiche, le difficoltà pratiche, la ragione di alcune scelte ho pensato di dedicare il mio contributo ad alcuni dei problemi con i quali ci siamo dovuti confrontare fino ad oggi.

In occasione del XIII colloquio di Micenologia organizzato a Parigi dal compianto P. Carlier, ho avuto modo di tracciare un bilancio dei risultati conseguiti nei primi tre anni di lavoro da quando assieme a M. Egetmeyer e A. Karnava abbiamo raccolto l'eredità di J.-P. Olivier che ci ha affidato un database con circa 1350 iscrizioni in scrittura sillabica cipriota, frutto di dieci anni di ricerche, messo a nostra disposizione come volano per la realizzazione del Corpus di questa scrittura.

Nell'accettare un compito di questo tipo non ci siamo mossi certo in terra incognita, l'esperienza dei corpora delle scritture minoiche e le edizioni dei testi micenei hanno rappresentato per noi un punto di partenza di tutto rispetto, ma le differenze fra le scritture cretesi e quelle cipriote sono tante e sono tanti i problemi del tutto nuovi che abbiamo dovuto risolvere.

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