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THE BRNO INQUIRY INTO THE PROBLEMS OF THE
DIALECTAL CLASSIFICATION OF MYCENAEAN

During the last fifteen years, numerous views of the linguistic character of Mycenaean have been formulated. These views were very often widely different, even antagonistic, and the author of this communication is happy to have had the chance of attempting to summarize the present views of the main problems involved on the occasion of the international conference «Antiquity and the Present», held in Brno in April 1966. The conference was attended by a number of specialists concerned both with Mycenology and with the Dialectology of Ancient Greek, which suggested the idea of arranging an inquiry in which thirteen questions were asked about the problems of Greek pre-Classical dialectology —beginning with the forms of the birth of Greek from the womb of the Indo-European primitive language community up to questions about the development of the archaic phases of the Classical Greek dialects at the beginning of the 1st millennium B.C. Nineteen scholars from twelve different countries responded to the inquiry and its results —including the introductory problem paper— filled 72 pages of the publication *Studia Mycenaea*, containing all the proceedings of the Mycenological section of the conference and published in Brno in 1968.

The first set of problems of the questionnaire was focused on the origin of the dialectal differences in Ancient Greek, and the introductory question A 1 may be concisely re-formulated as follows: «To what extent is the Greek which is known to us the outcome of a convergence of distinctly different Indo-European dialects?» Essentially the object was to find the standpoints of scholars to Pisani's theory of the Anatolian-Thracian-Illyrian convergence, according to which Classical Greek arose through a mutual integration of the units of the above three Indo-European linguistic groups in contact. Let us stress that the result of

our inquiry was here in full conformity with the nearly general refutation which Pisani's theory has encountered among other scholars.

The very fact that Mycenaean appears to be a Greek dialect with features that at one time give the impression of being Aeolic, at another of being Attic-Ionic, and nearly all the time Arcado-Cypriot, seems to speak in favour of the assumption that the Greek linguistic situation in the 14th-13th centuries B.C. —i. e. in a period not so far removed from the arrival of the Greeks in the south of the Balkan Peninsula— could be better characterized by comparatively close relations between the precursors of the above-mentioned classical dialectal groups, than by their alleged essential differences, as Pisani's theory would have it. On the other hand, one cannot exclude that at least some of the later dialectal differences may have been «pre-*proto-Greek*», as Merlingen says, or «that the differentiation of some historical dialects of Greek began in a period in which the people who spoke *proto-Greek* were in contact with those who spoke the prehistoric form(s) of the other IE language(s) in question», as Crossland has formulated it.

The fact that all the participants in our inquiry have given a negative answer to the first question would not of necessity exclude a positive answer to a somewhat analogical second question A 2, namely whether some Greek dialectal differences had originated not outside Greece, but already within some closer IE linguistic community, which was later to become the basis of the Greek speaking world.

We have already stated in our introductory article in *Studia Mycenaea Brno*, p. 42, that one of the most important linguistic arguments in favour of this view used to be the stressing of the existence in Greek of a pair of personal suffixes for the 1st plur. act.: namely Doric *-mes* and non-Doric *-men*, both of them being taken as a continuation of the IE situation (*-mes* being the primary IE suffix of the 1st pers. plur. act., while *-men* was the secondary suffix). As to the Greek situation, it was suggested that, while still outside Greek territory, in one fraction of the linguistic community that was later to become Greek it was the primary form which has been adopted in all tenses and moods, whereas in the other fraction it was the secondary form.

Besides, those who take into account the possibility that the *first* intra-Greek dialectal differences may have originated in a geographic environment *still outside* Greece —these scholars can find support in the theoretical speculation that the language of the prospective Greeks could hardly have been entirely homogeneous when they first set foot on Greek soil. On the other hand, the opponents of this theory may argue that with respect to none of the *concretely known* linguistic differences that are pointed out by the defenders of the above theory —not even the selective difference between *-men* and *-mes*— can the possibility be altogether excluded that the phenomenon originated only after immigration into Greece. The complexity of this set of problems was perhaps best expressed by Cowgill, whose contribution to our discussion runs as follows: «It is most unlikely that the speech of the invaders who brought the Greek language to Greece was absolutely homogeneous. But I do not see any reason to suppose that any of the divergences between Greek dialects as we know them must have existed already before the invasion».

The solution of question A 2 is, no doubt, dependent upon how the occupation of Greece by the ancestors of the Ancient Greeks should be envisaged, and whether the traditional view about several —most likely three— waves of Greek newcomers, namely the Ionians, Aeolians or Achaeans, and Dorians, is sufficiently plausible (question A 3).

To repeat the wording of *Studia Mycenaea Brno*, p. 42, we should like to stress the following consideration: As long as the majority of scholars were inclined to endorse the theory of several waves, which assumes a pronounced dialectal differentiation based on migration as early as the beginning of the 2nd millennium B.C., it really appeared necessary to believe that the origin of the double suffix *-mes/-men*, mentioned above, must be placed prior to settlement on Greek soil. If, however, we may do without this hypothesis then the situation assumes a different appearance. In such a case we take for granted only the general immigration of the Greeks about 1900 B.C. and the Doric advance southwards subsequent to 1200 B.C. Now, with this assumption in mind, we have to admit the possibility that at least *some* of the most ancient Greek dialectal differences that used to be associated with the 3rd millennium B.C. may have developed in the 2nd millennium

B.C. Naturally, we have to emphasize that this conclusion of ours is not meant to affirm that the ancestors of the Ancient Greeks really spoke a dialectally *non-differentiated* IE language about 2000 B.C.; we are only stressing here the fact that we have so far no sufficient linguistic arguments even for the opposite view.

The standpoints of the scholars who took part in our discussion are diametrically different in this respect. Some of them still adhere to the traditional hypothesis of the existence of several successive migration waves. Some acknowledge only two migrations, one taking place about 1900 and the other about 1200 B.C., while Crossland, for instance, admits the possibility that there might have been other minor migration movements between these two dates.

There have even been voices heard speaking in favour of practically only one wave of Greek immigrants, i. e. at the beginning of the 2nd millennium B.C. According to these views the so-called Dorian invasion appears to be just a partial and secondary migration shift southwards of one fraction of the Greek population that had come to the southern part of the Balkan Peninsula together with the other proto-Greeks, thereafter residing for a number of centuries along the north-west border of the Helladic world, maintaining rather loose contact with the centres of the Helladic culture, and only from the 13th century B.C. began to move to the more southern areas. This view is maintained e. g. by Chadwick. Nevertheless, this group of scholars does not differ too distinctly from those who interpret the arrival of the Dorians as a special migration wave. It depends to a great extent upon what precise boundaries each scholar is willing to ascribe to the Helladic world and what habitation area he allots to the Dorians in the Middle and the Late Helladic periods. Especially for linguistic reasons, we can hardly imagine the Late Helladic predecessors of the Dorians residing too far in the north, i. e. without *any contacts* with the Mycenaean world. Thus, from the *global* Helladic geographical viewpoint the arrival of the Dorians does not represent a migration of an *entirely new* population into the Helladic territory, yet, for the inhabitants residing in the *main* centres of the Mycenaean civilization —no matter whether we have in mind the Peloponnese, the Aegean Islands, or Boeotia and Thessaly in

Central Greece—the Dorian invasion positively appeared to be a real immigration wave. In this connection we may just raise the question whether what is generally called the Dorian invasion was not, in fact, a long-lasting migration process with numerous phases, which began maybe quite early in the 13th century and was completed as late as in the 12th or 11th century B.C. To be sure by taking this view we are already closely approaching Chadwick's theory about only one real invasion of Greece by a foreign population in the course of the second millennium B.C.

The fourth question, which concludes the first group of problems in the questionnaire (A 4), refers to the extent and degree of the presumed Middle Helladic dialectal differentiation, and its relation to Greek dialectal differentiation in the Classical Era.

The answers of participants to this question again embrace a broad range of opinion. One extreme is represented by those who support the hypothesis of a large number of migratory waves and recognize as early as the first half of the second millennium B.C. the full existence of the traditional 3 or 4 dialectal and ethnic groups of the future Greek nation; such is the opinion of Grinbaum, Ruijgh and Tronskij, for example. The opposing pole is formed by the sceptical scholars, especially Chadwick, who acknowledges for the Middle Helladic period scarcely more than the existence of the first differential indications, difficult to define. Midway between these two groups stand the mildly optimistic scholars, who assign already to the Middle Helladic period the early beginnings of Greek dialectal differentiation into *si*-dialects and *ti*-dialects (e. g. Coleman, Cowgill, Crossland) —and Cowgill further assigns to this period, too, the completion of what is known as the first Southern Greek palatalization in expressions of the type of **totjos*, **methjos* (< *medh-*), which later appears in the contrast of the Attic-Ionic-Arcadian *tosos*, *mesos* with one σ and the Doric-Aeolic *tossos*, *messos* with double $\sigma\sigma$. The majority of these scholars at the same time emphasize that this dialectal splitting-up was not yet by far so striking as in the first millennium B.C. —an opinion which contrasts in an interesting way with the entirely opposite viewpoint of Doria, according to which we must reckon in the Middle Helladic period not with a slighter, but rather with a greater degree of dialectal differentiation than in the Classical Era, while it would be possible that some Middle

Helladic dialects had not been preserved down to the first millennium B.C. Even if Doria is no orthodox advocate of Pisani's hypothesis, some influence of the latter may be found in Doria's standpoint.

In any case, extreme caution is advisable when attempting a dialectal characterization of the Middle Helladic period. It is necessary to keep in mind that Mycenaean itself supplies us with no documents before the advanced phases of the Late Helladic period and that even the definitely substantiated contrast at this time between Mycenaean as a *si*-dialect and the undocumented but nevertheless undoubtedly existing representatives of the Greek *ti*-dialects somewhere in the North need not have been of very old, i. e. pre-Mycenaean date (as fluctuation in the use of the *ti*-forms and the *si*-forms in some of the Linear B suffixes would seem to indicate). We had better admit that for the present we are completely unable to penetrate the fog enveloping the Middle Helladic situation. Considering the great probability of the existence of various contemporary substratum factors, we may perhaps reckon—in agreement with Doria—with the possibility of a rather different distribution of dialects than that which might be readily assumed; and we must not forget that numerous differences of that ancient period may later—in the course of time—have been covered by the unifying influence of the Mycenaean civilization and may have survived into the 1st millennium B.C. only as isolated fossils.

The second set of questions in our inquiry was concentrated on the problems of Mycenaean Greek. The first question of this set (B 1) aims at establishing the character of the dialectal basis of the Linear B texts from the Mycenaean palace archives. To a certain extent at least, the answers of single investigators always depend on the view taken of the foregoing Middle Helladic dialectal stratification. Those who recognize a dialectal differentiation similar to the Classical one for the first half of the 2nd millennium B.C. already make use, without much hesitation, of the terms Ionic, Aeolic, Achaeae even for the dialectal classification of Late Helladic, i. e. Mycenaean situation. These include, e. g., Ruijgh or Tronskij.

On the opposite side stand some of those investigators who

in their attitudes to the former question have shown a high degree of scepticism concerning the possibilities of correlation between the Middle Helladic dialectal situation on the one hand and the Classical one on the other and who, for the Mycenaean period, recognize only the existence of a proto-Ionic-Aeolic-Arcado-Cypriot dialectal area which was at that time still free from differentiation and which stood in opposition to the Doric dialectal area. Of the participants in our inquiry this group comprises Coleman, Heubeck and Merlingen.

But there is another group of scholars who are obviously ready to recognize some differentiation even within Late Helladic non-Doric Greek. Here above all stands Chadwick, but also e. g. Cowgill, Crossland, Petruševski, Wathelet and Wyatt who find the dialectal basis from which Mycenaean developed especially in a certain narrower dialectal milieu, out of which both the Attic-Ionic and Arcado-Cypriot dialects began to separate probably just about the middle of the 2nd millennium B.C. This in fact means an acceptance of Porzig's East Greek (or Risch's South Greek), not including the predecessors of Aeolic.

This, however, brings us to questions concerning concrete relations between Mycenaean and those three non-Doric dialectal groups recognized nowadays for the Classical Era, namely the Aeolic, Attic-Ionic and Arcado-Cypriot groups (see the questions B 2, B 3, B 4 in our inquiry).

It is worth mentioning that not a single participant in our inquiry has taken up a decisive attitude in favour of the theory claiming the markedly Aeolic dialectal character of Mycenaean.

In the answers of the participants Aeolic is most frequently regarded as an independent dialect that had already formed before or was just forming somewhere in the North, especially in Thessaly (e. g. in the answers of Chadwick, Cowgill, Crossland, Doria, Grinbaum, Ruijgh, Wathelet), and probably had still preserved its archaic *-ti* and differed in this way from the more advanced *-si*-dialects including Mycenaean. On the other hand, to some other investigators Aeolic seems to be hidden in a wider, not yet very differentiated Ionic-Aeolic-Achaean community (so Coleman, Heubeck, Merlingen). A different opinion has been voiced by Wyatt according to which Aeolic was a Doric dialect which arose by mixing with a non-Greek substrate in Thessaly.

As regards the Helladic predecessor of Ionic, it is as a rule assumed in our inquiry that it had changed its former *-ti* into *-si* and consequently shared an important historical isogloss by which it was closely associated with Mycenaean, but it is the Late Helladic predecessor of Arcado-Cypriot that most of the participants in the inquiry put in the closest connection with Mycenaean. They, however, prudently avoid formulations that would *fully* identify Mycenaean with the predecessor of Arcado-Cypriot and for reasons which will be evident from our further consideration they rather speak either of a close affiliation or a considerable degree of mutual relationship between these two dialectal formations.

This view is shared even by Doria, who otherwise assigns an independent dialectal position to Mycenaean in connection with his view of the Mycenaean world as more differentiated than the world of the Classical dialects, as mentioned above.

Only a few participants, such as Heubeck, Cowgill and Merlingen, abstained from any judgement concerning a closer relationship between Mycenaean and Arcado-Cypriot.

If I may take the liberty of expressing here my own opinion I should like to stress once more what I said in *Studia Mycenaea Brno*, p. 43, i. e. that the only thing I hold for comparatively certain is that Mycenaean was formed in an area which in the Late Helladic period was characterized by the distinct innovation change *ti > si*. That means, of course, that the precursors of the Doric dialects at least are excluded from participation in the origin of Mycenaean. But as for expressing in detail any view about the dialectal position of Mycenaean within the non-Doric area, we are handicapped by one great disadvantage, of which scholars do not always seem to be fully aware: it is the fact that no *synchronic* comparison can be made of Mycenaean with another documented dialectal community.

The key to all these differences really seems to be, in my opinion, the place of Aeolic in the Mycenaean world, and this problem again is immediately connected with the question what form of the original suffix *-ti* can be assumed for the Mycenaean precursor of Aeolic in the Mycenaean period. It is interesting that when tackling these problems scholars resort more often to extreme points of view than to compromise. Radical adherents of

Risch's theory try to deny to the maximum number of the Aeolic-like elements of Mycenaean their alleged Aeolic character, reserving for the precursors of the Aeolians in the Mycenaean world a rather peripheral position. On the other hand, the advocates of the Aeolic-Mycenaean theory very often come out with detailed arguments to prove that Mycenaean and Ionic of the Mycenaean era could not have been closely affiliated, but they often make no special efforts to disprove the basic theses of Risch and Porzig which established Aeolic as in principle a *ti*-dialect. Yet, both the existence of a small number of Aeolic-like elements in Mycenaean and the assignment of the proto-Aeolic dialectal community to the *ti*-type appear to be highly probable and significant facts whose coexistence should induce observers to incline towards a compromise.

All things considered, the following solution —in full agreement with our opinion expressed in *Studia Mycenaea Brno*, p. 44— offers itself as the most acceptable: to place Aeolic in the group of the *ti*-dialects, but to ascribe to it, nevertheless, during the later phases of the Mycenaean era the character of an already distinct dialectal community, whose linguistic and cultural influence was penetrating from Central Greece to the Peloponnese where the *si*-type dominated. This solution corresponds essentially with Chadwick's modification of Risch's theory. For my part, I should like to add only the following observation: The probability of Mycenaean Aeolic belonging to the *ti*-type of dialects need not imply any close genetic relation of Aeolic to Doric. The assibilation $ti > si$ is an innovation, and the fact of its not having been accomplished in Aeolic (which is an archaic feature) does not of necessity imply close affinity over the entire linguistic area in which it was not accomplished. It may rather be inferred that this change simply did not progress beyond the Gulf of Corinth and beyond Attica.

Thus, the position of Mycenaean may be characterized by saying that the language of the so far documented Linear B texts appears to be most closely related (not identical, however) to the precursor of Arcado-Cypriot, and that it is genetically rather closely linked with the precursor of Attic-Ionic (particularly by the change $-ti > -si$, and perhaps also by the early assibilation process of the homo-morphemic $t(h)j$, e. g. in **totjos*). On the

other hand, the existence of some particular linguistic features common both to Mycenaean and the Aeolic dialects seems to have had its source in the rather close and long-lasting common participation of both the Achaeans of the Peloponnese and the Aeolians of Central Greece in forming and shaping the Late Helladic civilization. We have to stress, in this connection, that in the meantime the majority of the preserved documents of the Linear B Script are from the Peloponnese, i. e. from the Achaean (or proto-Arcado-Cypriot) area, and we hope that the next finds from Thebes, the ancient rival of Peloponnesian Mycenae, will perhaps disclose tablets, on which the suffix *-ti* will be demonstrated unchanged and will thus document the existence of a Linear B Mycenaean of the Aeolic type. A high standard of Late Helladic civilization in Boeotia is unquestionable, and it is Greek mythology itself which indicates that the cradle of Mycenaean poetry should be associated even more with Boeotia —with its Kithairon, Helikon, Parnassos— than with the Peloponnese.

It seems, however, that this scheme does not characterize precisely enough the position of the Linear B language in the Greek linguistic world of Mycenaean times. One faces particularly the question whether we do not have to deal here with some more complicated linguistic form implying or integrating in itself to different degrees, elements of several local dialects. Assumptions of this kind served as an impulse giving rise to special theories concerning the origin and particularly the character of Mycenaean, among which the theory about the Mycenaean Koine has attracted most attention (see B 5).

As we have stated already in *Studia Mycenaea Brno*, p. 46, the idea that there existed such a common Mycenaean language is no doubt stimulating. That certain dialectal levelling may actually have occurred more or less extensively in the 2nd half of the 2nd millennium B.C., at least in the centres of Mycenaean civilization, appears all the more probable if we think of the rather analogical levelling process in the Greek of the Hellenistic period. It is of importance, however, to determine what linguistic picture each advocate of this theory associated with the term «Mycenaean Koine».

The author of the present communication made an attempt at the Cambridge Colloquium on Mycenaean Studies in 1965 to

submit a modified version of Georgiev's well known theory concerning the Mycenaean Koine. In our opinion, it should be taken into consideration that the idea of such linguistic structures as we call Koine, or in modern linguistic terminology «interdialect», «supradialect», «common language», and the like, does not consist in the assumption that it must represent a mixture of two or more dialectal units, but rather in its degree of integration—even if on the basis of a single dialect—and in its supradialectal function. A demonstration of this view may be found in Hellenistic Koine, which did not originate through a simple process of mixing two or more Classical dialects, but through linguistic integration on the basis of one dialect only, i. e. Attic. (In the case of the Mycenaean Koine we should obviously identify such a basic dialect with the Peloponnesian Achaean of the Mycenaean Era—possibly with its Argolic form, i. e. a dialect which was in all probability similar to, but not fully identical with, the contemporary dialect of Arcadia.)

It was just in this way that a number of participants in our inquiry understood the term «Mycenaean Koine», and they expressed their agreement with the idea of the Linear B language conceived as a supradialectal formation, employed in the centres of Mycenaean civilization and being the product of a certain linguistic integration which was caused by the comparative unity of the cultural development of the Aegean area, especially towards the close of the Late Helladic Era. At the same time, with some scholars replying to the questions of our inquiry, there appeared as an important characteristic of the language of Linear B texts above all its administrative function (Coleman, Merlingen, Ruijgh); nevertheless, in this respect much still remains unexplained in the study of the fundamentals of the language of the Linear B texts. So far to be precise, we are not able to decide with sufficient exactitude the extent to which we can suppose the concept of a Mycenaean Koine to include, on the one hand, the integrated standard *written* language of the Late Helladic administration and, on the other hand, an actual *colloquial* supradialect, employed by at least some of the social strata of the Late Helladic population.

As a matter of fact, two participants in the questionnaire expressed their opposition to the above concept of Mycenaean

Koine, Petruševski and Wyatt, while also Chadwick endorsed the hypothesis after some hesitation and with certain reservations. He made use of Risch's interesting differentiation between «mycénien normal» and «mycénien spécial», based on the interpretation of some intra-Mycenaean differences, and conceived this differentiation as a contrast between the supradialectal Koine (this is Risch's «mycénien normal») and the local dialect of a particular Mycenaean centre (this is «mycénien spécial»).

The concept of the Mycenaean Koine as a special supradialect —whether standard written or colloquial— has thus secured fairly considerable support in our inquiry. Beneath the tendency to integration, however, something still remains concealed, especially the extent of the intradialectal differences within Mycenaean. This is referred to in question B 6 and the participants in their replies expressed themselves on two subproblems, firstly on the recognition of real intradialectal differences in Mycenaean according to the place where the tablets were found, and secondly on the recognition of linguistic differences directly in one and the same locality.

As far as the problem of *local* dialectal differences is concerned, the results of the inquiry are somewhat fragmentary and do not reach beyond the bounds of what was already ascertained in the past regarding linguistic differences especially between Knossos, Pylos and Mycenae.

Several participants in the inquiry, however, turned their attention to problems of linguistic differences in texts from *one* and the *same locality*. While Mühlestein for example conceives such differences to be the reflection of dialectal differences caused by the different origin of the writers, with other scholars there tend to appear signs of supradialectal interpretation of these differences and this is again a circumstance corroborating the concept of the Mycenaean Koine which we have suggested.

The possibility of the existence of a Mycenaean Koine casts an interesting and maybe even quite surprising light on the first question of our third set of problems (C 1), the object of which is to estimate to what extent we may assume that Mycenaean found some *direct continuation* in the post-Mycenaean period.

Most of the participants in the questionnaire took up a negative attitude to the possibility of such a continuation. For illustration we quote here the rather typical standpoint of two scholars: According to Doria, Arcado-Cypriot is the continuation of a «socially lower» stratum of the Mycenaean dialects, whereas the Mycenaean Koine itself is declared to have not left any direct descendants, merely a few isolated relics; and according to Grinbaum the Classical Greek dialects are the «direct continuation of the local dialects of the Mycenaean period and by no means of a Creto-Mycenaean Koine, even though the latter may have developed on the basis of the former». The opposite opinion was held, among the participants, only by Petruševski, and some other scholars admitted at least that between Mycenaean and the language of the Arcadian and Cypriot Achaeans there were probably certain slight differences.

The circumstance that among the opinions quoted the standpoint which prevails decisively is one which opposes the recognition of a further, post-Mycenaean development of Mycenaean, is to some extent at least caused by the fact that a fair number of participants in the questionnaire accepted the idea that the Mycenaean of the Linear B texts might be conceived as some kind of supradialectal linguistic formation. For if the possibility is granted that Mycenaean could have the character of a Koine, closely bound up with the fate of Mycenaean civilization, then it is easy to come to the conclusion that after the fall of this civilization there also vanished, along with the Mycenaean centres, the supradialect which had been typical for these centres, and especially for their administrative records. Such were the conclusions particularly of Doria, Grinbaum, Merlingen, Tronskij, and also of some further participants.

Some other scholars —especially those who have not completely accepted the idea of a Mycenaean Koine— supported their negative attitude to the post-Mycenaean continuation of Mycenaean mainly by the fact that the dialects of Knossos, Mycenae and Pylos could not have a direct continuation in the Classical period for the very reason that the general neighbourhood of these localities was inhabited by the Dorians in the first millennium B.C. and that the Achaean dialectal formations alone, which survived the fall of the Mycenaean civilization, i. e. Arca-

dian and Cypriot, could not for purely geographical reasons have been entirely direct continuations of the dialects which were spoken in the main Mycenaean centres, especially the Argolid. It was mainly Chadwick who based his standpoint on these arguments.

Thus, in the results of our inquiry, the prevailing view is that Mycenaean either a supradialectal formation ending its existence with the fall of the culture which it served, or simply is an extinct dialectal branch of the Late Helladic stem of Greek dialects.

This characteristic would imply at the same time also the greatest difference between the Hellenistic Koine and its alleged Mycenaean «forerunner». We were, no doubt, fully justified in characterizing above the Mycenaean era as a period of considerable cultural and economic unity, and we have expressed the rather probable opinion that it would have been no wonder if this unity had been accompanied by a certain linguistic leveling, at least in the Mycenaean centres—in a way similar to that which occurred towards the end of the Classical Era, when diverse supradialects were coming into being, covering increasingly the various epichoric dialects, until the latter completely disappeared under the layer of Hellenistic Koine. It is obvious, however, that, on the contrary, in the Mycenaean world such a final victory of the common language was out of the question—due to the sudden fall of this civilization in the 12th cent. B.C.—and thus, in the light of this drastic destruction, we ought rather to be suprised if we were to find that the Linear B language actually had some direct continuation in the Greek dialects of the Classical era.

The remaining two questions of our inquiry exceed the limits of this communication. Question C 2 dealing with the problems of the origin, character, and elements of the language of Homer would alone claim a thorough and independent analysis, while question C 3, concentrating primarily on the dynamism of the Doric dialectal influence on the situation in the post-Mycenaean non-Doric world, is already so closely linked up with the problems of the origin of the Classical Greek dialects that it can hardly be detached from the rest of the dialectological problems concerning the 1st millennium B.C.

In conclusion it must be said that the discovery of the Linear B Script has supplied us with wider opportunities of studying the development of prehistoric Greek dialectology than seemed at first sight possible on the basis of the deciphered language material. No other Greek dialect of the 2nd millennium B.C. besides Mycenaean is preserved, but the rapid development of Mycenaean research has already helped us to formulate the first conclusions concerning the extent of *pre-Mycenaean* dialectal differentiation. Of course, in this field we find ourselves entirely at the mercy of mere speculation and for the future we shall have to reckon with considerable differences of opinion among investigators. An extensive sphere of action is opened for speculation about the foundations of *Mycenaean* Greek and its relation both to the surrounding dialectal world and to the local dialects of Mycenaean centres. Here a valuable guide may be provided especially by the application of modern linguistic methods, in which, it is true, considerable danger of a subjective approach may be hidden, but which no doubt help to disclose many a regularities which could not be revealed by the traditional philology. Finally there are the problems concerning the relations of the language of the Linear B texts to the *Classical* Greek dialects. In this field of research the largest possible amount of work has been done, but up to now parallels have merely been drawn between the corresponding Mycenaean and Classical language phenomena without taking into account what kind of linguistic formation Mycenaean in fact was and what purposes its use served. It seems necessary to re-evaluate all the results achieved by this outward comparison from the point of view of the possible specific functions of the Linear B Script and to assign to Mycenaean the most exact place possible in the hierarchy of Greek language formations.