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FOREWORD

The year 2022 saw the coincidence of two important anniversaries for Mycenaecology: one hundred years since the birth of Michael Ventris and seventy years since the decipherment of Linear B. This double anniversary inspired various initiatives and gave rise to several commemorative events. This volume, in the wake of these celebrations, wishes to add a further tribute to the brilliant figure of Ventris, offering readers some considerations on the impact that the decipherment of the Linear B script had on the study of the origins of Greek civilisation.

The implications and consequences of Ventris's decipherment have been many and varied, and have directly or indirectly affected various disciplines. Needless to say, the contributions in this volume do not claim to address this issue exhaustively. They simply wish to summarise the main advances made as a result of the decipherment and indicate some possible research perspectives.

The book is divided into three sections: one on Linear B and more generally on the Aegean scripts, one on the linguistic characteristics of the Mycenaean dialect, and one on Mycenaean documents as historical sources.

In the first section, more weight is given to certain questions which were raised by the decipherment and are only partially resolved, such as those concerning the phonetic values of the non-transliterated syllabograms and the meaning of the uninterpreted logograms of Linear B, or that of the possible phonetic values of the homomorphic syllabograms of Linear A and Linear B, or that of the values of the metric signs commonly used in the two scripts.

In the second section, the Mycenaean dialect is analysed in the light of its phonetic, morphological, syntactic and lexical characteristics. Throughout the contributions in this section, great importance is given to the diachronic perspective and the historical relations of the Mycenaean dialect with those of the 1st millennium BC.

Finally, the contributions in the third section attempt, with concrete examples and methodological considerations, to show the weight that Linear B documents have, also in conjunction with the coeval Near Eastern texts, for

the reconstruction of the social, religious and material history of the Greek world of the Late Bronze Age.

We are very grateful to all the authors who took part in this project for their efforts to illustrate in their contributions the extraordinary value of Ventris's decipherment for the progress made over the past decades in their respective fields of investigation as well as for the unsolved challenges still looming at the horizon. For this, we would like to express our gratitude and appreciation to all of them.

We would also like to thank here all the colleagues and institutions that generously granted us their permission to reproduce the images in this volume, and in particular the *Department of Classics of the University of Cincinnati*, the *Institute of Classical Studies of London*, the *École Française d'Athènes*, and the *Corpus der minoischen und mykenischen Siegel* in Heidelberg.

Finally, special thanks are due to the reviewers of the manuscript for their suggestions, critical remarks and material corrections that helped to considerably improve the form and content of this volume.

For Linear A and Linear B, the fonts *Noto Sans Linear A* and *Noto Sans Linear B* have been used, which are freely available on the web under an OFL licence.

Alicante – Roma – Madrid, December 2023

F.A.J – M.D.F. – J.P.