
This volume contains more than the title suggests, and, in a way, it is several books in one. In the first place, it is an annotated catalogue of Cypriot bronzework, brief and selective for the Early and Middle Cypriot periods (here dated 2300-1550 B.C.), exhaustive for Late Cypriot (1550-1050 B.C.). Chapters IV-XIII give the corpus of Late Cypriot tools, weapons, armour, vessels, tripods and other stands, personal objects, statuettes, ingots and moulds, miscellanea, and hoards. The individual objects are classified by shapes, with a discussion of technique and use, and listed with provenance, context, parallels. The illustrations are in clear drawings and good photographic plates.

This Late Cypriot catalogue is the backbone of the book. It is the product of many years of careful study and recording, and it will be extremely useful as a standard work for comparative reference in Aegean as well as Near Eastern archaeology.

In the second place, the volume is an investigation of what Cypriot bronzework may teach us about cultural and technical contacts of Bronze Age Cyprus. It offers a comparative study of Cypriot metallurgy in its environment, especially vis-à-vis the Mycenaean world. This part of the book is in the nature of an interpretation of the catalogue and the comparative evidence. Catling sees early Cypriot metalwork as limited in scope until well into the Late Cypriot I period, Cyprus not being influenced by its more sophisticated Asiatic neighbours to improve its simple techniques. The period of Late Cypriot I and II (c. 1550-1200 B.C.) is considered to be poorly represented in quantity of metal finds, although methods of casting are improved. From 1200 B.C. on, an influx of Aegean metal types is suspected, and an abundant repertoire is listed from tombs, settlements, and especially from metal hoards (pp. 278 ff). Catling believes that the great age of Cypriot metallurgy does not start until the 12th century, and that the arrival of Mycenaean immigrants at this time was responsible for the upsurge.

These conclusions are not separately presented after the catalogue but interspersed with it in a methodologically debatable procedure. The pages titled Conclusion (pp. 299-302) accordingly have little to add.

What may be called the third theme of the book is a study of the Mycenaean colonization problem. This is a topic of notorious disagreement. Catling plunges into a discussion of the thorny ques-
tion in his introduction and devotes an entire chapter (pp. 35-54) to a discussion of the relationship between Cyprus and the Aegean in the Late Bronze Age, because "a balanced understanding of the relationship . . . cannot be gained simply by a study of the metal industry and its products" (p. 35). The reader may well ask how an objective understanding of the metalwork is to be achieved if conclusions regarding the colonization problem are pre-established as they are in Chapter II. Catling’s insistence on the conclusion that no Mycenaean settlement took place before 1200, both in Chapter II and in the Catalogue, unnecessarily weakens his case and occasionally raises the suspicion that the chronology of metal objects as presented here is made to fit a theory instead of forming the objective basis for one.

A few comments on points of general importance should be added here, because Catling’s view of Cypriot history in the period 1400-1200 B.C. seems to belittle the status of the island unduly, even to those who would share his opinion that Mycenaean settlement did not take place before 1200.

1. The Alasiya problem. Catling is sceptical of the identification of Alasiya as Cyprus (pp. 8, 299-300). He did not yet have access to the results of new tablet discoveries in Boğazköy and Ugarit which report on the difficult position of Alasiya c. 1190 B.C., naval battles, and the threat of coastal raids (cf. Otten, M.D.O.G. 94, 1963, 1-23). These tablets make the insular position of Alasiya even more probable than it was before.

2. The literacy problem. To the bibliography on the Cypriot script should now be added O. Masson, Les inscriptions chypriotes syllabiques (Paris 1961), which has much relevant material in the introduction. The relationship of Cypro-Minoan to Linear A, if correctly postulated, is a vital link between Crete and Cyprus. The 15th century tablet from Enkomi suggests a more literate use of the Cypro-Minoan script than is attested for Linear A and B. An extensive use of the Cypro-Minoan system for local purposes does not preclude a diplomatic use of cuneiform Akkadian (p. 300), witness the comparable situation in Egypt or at the Hittite court, not to speak of the use of Hittite by the man of Ahhiyava.

3. Archaeological criteria for colonization. "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 . . . ." (p. 49). This concession does not have to be made. We have an illuminating example from Anatolia. The Old Assyrian merchants who lived in the Karum at Kanesh-Kültepe were so content to live in Anatolian houses with Anatolian furnishings that, but for their