

investigation of these affairs leads him to the general conclusion that Athens was deliberately expanding her influence in this sensitive area for imperialistic purposes, and that Thucydides was correct in his analysis of the fundamental cause of the outbreak of war in 431, namely that Athens' growing power and Sparta's fear acted as an explosive force which burst into a disastrous war.

All in all, this is an important contribution to a very central topic in the history of the fifth century. It has that most desirable combination of qualities: a most thorough, detailed and competent study of each piece of evidence, and a well-balanced judgement of the general policy of Athens and its impact on the world of Greek city-states. Moreover, it is eminently readable; for Dr Vartsos writes concisely and emphatically, and he has provided very full references to current literature, a select bibliography and two Indexes. He is to be congratulated.

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Henri van Effenterre, *La seconde fin du monde: mycène et la mort d'une civilisation. Collection archéologie, horizons neufs*, Toulouse, Editions des Hespérides, 1974, pp. 240 + 32 plates.

Few communities today can ignore, let alone deny, profound debts to the Greek cultures which became predominant in the eastern Mediterranean during the final millennium prior to the birth of Jesus of Nazareth. Beginning with the discoveries of Heinrich von Schliemann and Arthur Evans, cognizant peoples have sought the answer to the riddle of whether the cultures uncovered throughout the Aegean world within the last century represent early Greek settlements in the Mediterranean world, or civilizations completely alien to any Indo-European successors, snuffed out by the Hellenic newcomers in a development analogous to the Hispanic treatment of high level pre-Columbian traditions flourishing in Mexico and Peru.

Von Schliemann's well-publicized triumphs directed, most happily, considerable efforts towards recovering remains of many eastern Mediterranean cultures which flourished during the second millennium before the Common Era. Specialist and general readers face a tidal wave of information which overwhelms even the knowledgeable seeking a simple refinement to a vague lecture note. If ever a field of human inquiry needed even a tentative attempt at synthesizing the staggering, conflicting wealth of primal data, then the history of the northeastern Mediterranean basin from 2,000 to 1,000 B.C.E. deserves such attention.

Few scholars alive in 1974 could offer the demanding credentials which Professor Henri van Effenterre of the University of Paris and Director of the Gustave Glotz Center of Researches into the Histories of Antiquity possesses. Professor van Effenterre implies (wisely) in his sub-title that he shall address his efforts towards examining the possible causes of the sudden collapse of "Mycenaean Civilization" near the end of the millennium. If van Effenterre had maintained reasonable control over his narrative, his reasonings and his prose, I could recommend this book to anyone... professor, student or literate lay person... desirous of knowing whether Spartan Helena ever strolled the walls of Troy VII^b or whether cheery wall paintings in Knossos indicated an antique culture exempt from contemporary humanity's doleful triad of *Angst*, *anomie* and alienation.

Unfortunately, Professor van Effenterre gives his reader a pottage, a meandering from various archaeological sites on Crete, Cyprus, the Aegean archipelagoes, the Hellenic penin-

sula and the Lebanese coast. Rarely does van Effenterre justify the relevance of his musings to his readers. Here and there, a transitional sentence would have helped the cause of clarity. A coherent preface, or statement of intent, would have prepared the reader's expectations to the degree that one could relate the occasional offerings of specific archaeological finds (e.g. pp. 72-82, concerning Pylos and the Arkadia-Messenia coastal plain) to the general scheme of the author's intent.

A decent conclusion can oft remedy whatever clarity may be wanting in a learned work. Van Effenterre offers an *Epilogue* of fifteen pages which makes little reference to the body of his work and clearly contradicts his subtitle: He states that in the "... continuance of daily life,... the survival of the gods..., the permanence of institutions,...and the Homeric World...", the Mycenaean achievement survived whatever snuffed out its political independence.

Let me defend any scholar's right... indeed, his duty... to decline to choose from rival viewpoints if he believes insufficient evidence mandates caution. The study of history, especially of pre-industrial Europe, suffers from too many hasty generalizations. An author, however, has an obligation to his readers to state this lack of partisanship clearly, both at the beginning and at the end of the work. Professor van Effenterre clearly failed to warn us not to expect anything except disorganized rehashings and opaque musings.

On some controversial issues, van Effenterre has exercised his well-earned right to take a stance. Obviously, he accepts Michael Ventris' mathematical grid thesis for an attempted decipherment of "Linear B" (NOT "Linear A"). I belong to the small, embattled and unpublished minority which remain sceptical. Likewise, van Effenterre does not hesitate to conceive of a wide, voluminous network of Mycenaean trade routes stretching from southern Italy and Sicily to the Middle Egyptian Province, citing a few finds of potsherds in the specified locales. Such reasoning to me would allow a person to conclude a heavy commerce between Earth and Mars because two instrument packages now sit somewhere upon the "Red Planet". Interpretations of archaeological finds remain a most tricky task. If we address audiences beyond the ambit of professional colleagues, we must make clear the limitations of our data, even to the extent of apparent patronization at times. Otherwise, we risk retarding rather than increasing the understanding of history.

For these reasons, I cannot recommend Professor van Effenterre's book either to the specialist or to the general reader.

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A.S. Šofman, *Vostočnaja Politika Aleksandra Makedonskogo* [The Eastern Policy of Alexander of Macedon] Kazan, Kazan University Press, 1976, pp. 520.

Few topics have attracted as much scholarly attention as the Eastern campaigns of Alexander of Macedon. Even in his time Alexander's deeds were either idealized and glorified or condemned and denigrated. Opinions about Alexander's epoch kept clashing throughout the Roman period and the Middle Ages. The East created the legend of Iskander, the conqueror of the world. "The Romance of Alexander" became popular in Byzantium, Russia and Western Europe. In our time Alexander has been the subject of numerous studies containing a variety of concepts elaborated by such eminent students of antiquity as Dreusen, Tarn, Wilcken, Cloche, Schachermier and others. The progress in the study of the origins of Hellenism has been considerable. With each new stage in the development of historical science this problem has been looking increasingly large. The concept of Alexander's epoch