

evidence, their significance in artistic expression and their role in various fields of everyday life as well as in symbolic environments. In both the Minoan and the Mycenaean worlds, textiles played a crucial role in the economy. The clothes people wore were of many different kinds, and costume was a prominent medium of self-determination. As shown on the wall painting iconography, enemies are depicted naked or wearing hides giving a clear message: civilised and winners wear clothes, while those who do not wear any are lower citizens, losers or barbarians.

The construction of the elaborate clothing in Crete demanded an investment of considerable time and access to difficult-to-acquire materials, though willingly spent by the elite in order to possess the objects of desire. During the Minoan period, bright colours, intricate designs, jewellery, and headdress prevailed in the costume, and particular importance was given to personal adornment. A clear contradiction to the Minoan luxurious living is presented through the iconography of the Mycenaeans, who, even in the ranks of the priests and the military people, whose position would justify a distinct quality of attire, were dressed in simple garments.

The articles of the volume refer to archaeological data well-known to specialists and to many specialised readers, but the new perspective of textile production and consumption, gives the old finds a broader significance and offers a series of new interpretations. The non-specialised reader will enjoy this compilation of articles as well, since the language, the explanations and the narrative character of the texts allow for easy comprehension. An even easier use of the book would perhaps be facilitated by an index and glossary, as there are many different topics discussed and special terms are used. The bibliographical list compiled for all the articles at the end of the book refers to archaeological reports, special studies concerning the technology, art and interpretations of the patterned textiles.

To the great virtues of this publication, beyond its rich informative content, counts the excellent quality of the edition including many colour photographs presenting the pictorial evidence in much detail. The parts of the illustrated patterns, which are not well-discernible on fragmented or poorly preserved finds, have been designed in clear and lively reconstructions. The re-publishing of earlier published book chapters by M. Shaw and E. Barber helps to create a complete picture of the approaches that have been taken so far and to see

the evolution of various surveys on patterning. The greatest asset of the book is that it collects all the necessary data required to see the patterned textiles, both in their technological, aesthetic, and social dimensions, as a necessary tool in the archaeological research that reveals unknown aspects of the Bronze Age's art and technology, history, and social life.

KALLIOPE SARRI
POSTDOC GUEST RESEARCHER, CENTRE FOR TEXTILE
RESEARCH (CTR)
SAXO INSTITUTE, UNIVERSITY OF COPENHAGEN
kalliope.sarri@gmail.com

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Philippa M. Steele (ed.). *Understanding Relations Between Scripts. The Aegean Writing Systems*. pp. xv + 221, 87 b/w illustrations. 2017. Oxford & Philadelphia (PA): Oxbow Books. ISBN 978-1-78570-644-8 £36.00.

This book is based on the papers given at a conference in Cambridge, March 20-21, 2015, held in memory of Anna Morpurgo Davies, on various aspects of the prehistoric Aegean writing systems (Cretan Hieroglyphic, Linear A and Linear B) and their Cypriot relatives, including not only the

material classified as Cypro-Minoan, but the Cypriot syllabary that developed from this in the early Iron Age and went on in use well into historical times, used to write both Greek and at least one non-Greek language of the island.

All chapters relate in some way to the topic indicated by the title, the relations between these various scripts. It has to be said that some of the chapters are hard going, because they centre on very close analysis of individual texts and signs, and that some scripts attract more attention than others. For instance, Linear A gets little individual attention, although it is effectively the sole script of Minoan civilisation at its height and appeared widely in the Aegean. However, all lead to conclusions that are important for our understanding of the development of writing in the Aegean and throw up points that have relevance to the general historical background.

One point that has become abundantly clear in recent years to Aegean specialists, and is underlined by the studies in this book, is that Evans's picture of a linear sequence of development between the three scripts devised in Crete, from Cretan Hieroglyphic to Linear A to Linear B, is highly misleading, for Linear A did not supersede Cretan Hieroglyphic. Rather, the two scripts coexisted in Crete for a considerable time, and it seems possible that administrative practices associated with Cretan Hieroglyphic had some influence on those that were developed with Linear B, if not on the script itself. It is also clear that Evans prejudged the issue by naming the oldest known script in Cyprus Cypro-Minoan, even though Linear A was evidently the major source of inspiration.

A short general account of what now seems to be widely agreed about Aegean scripts is provided by the editor in an introductory chapter, along with a summary of the book's contents. It is slightly surprising in this context to see no mention of the Phaistos Disc, probably the inscribed item from the Aegean that is best known to non-specialists, nor of the Arkalochori bronze double axe head whose short inscription on its socket includes parallels for several of the Phaistos Disc signs as well as others considered Linear A or unique.¹ There is uncertainty over the actual context in which the Phaistos Disc was discovered, and so over its date; but the Disc, the Arkalochori axe head and the certainly very early seals from Arkhanes with some kind of script on them, whose identification as an 'Arkhanes script' preceding Cretan Hieroglyphic

remains controversial, show that we still do not know everything about the development of writing in Bronze Age Crete.

This is not surprising, for it is clear from the next chapter, by Ferrara, that there was considerable interest in the East Mediterranean and Near East in devising scripts, especially in the Late Bronze Age, and that it had very varied motivation. The traditional explanation, that writing was developed as an aid to record-keeping, is patently inadequate in the light of the information contained in Ferrara's chapter, which discusses the whole issue of secondary script formation in the Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean, and in the course of considering the origins of several different scripts refers to other examples of writing. This chapter is long and rather formidable, making few concessions to the non-specialist. It uses a good deal of specialised vocabulary, including technical terms that are only likely to be familiar to students of language and writing systems (e.g. the terms *abugida* and *abjad*, which, the reviewer learned from Wikipedia, are recent coinages introduced by P.T. Daniels to denote systems that concentrate on consonants and give vowels less representation or even none, as commonly in the writing systems of Semitic languages). Yet it is worth persevering with, because it contains much of interest and importance relevant to the motivation and potential sources for creating writing systems in the Aegean and East Mediterranean, and the principles and methods followed in doing so in various cultures, in a setting where the use of writing was already well established in the older civilisations of Egypt and Mesopotamia.

As she shows in her analysis, Cretan Hieroglyphic cannot have been developed simply as an aid to record keeping and administration, since it appeared from the start in an ornate form, on a class of seal stones that do not seem intended for administrative use. Interestingly, this was not the case with Linear A, developed somewhat later and clearly related to Cretan Hieroglyphic, which was used for inscriptions on a wide variety of objects, especially offerings in ritual contexts, but appears on very few seal stones. Such use is barely attested for Linear B, however, which was clearly based on Linear A but seems to be almost confined to record keeping and administration in various forms. In total contrast, the Cypro-Minoan scripts seem not to have been devised for purposes of record keeping and administration at all – at least, not on clay tablets – and, quite exceptionally for the Near East, no systems of using seals administratively were developed on Cyprus. The script known as 'Anatolian

¹ Flouda 2015.

Hieroglyphic' seems to have been developed as an official script of the Hittite kingdom, and so came to be used particularly on monumental inscriptions (notoriously lacking in the prehistoric Aegean), as it continued to be into the historical period. Finally, in Ugarit a script which used signs written in cuneiform to express single alphabetic sounds (as opposed to symbols in the tradition ultimately deriving from Egypt) seems to have been devised as an expression of civic pride, and as such had both public and private uses. These very varied developments warn against any temptation to make sweeping generalisations about the origins of writing and the influence exerted by the centres where it first appeared in the Near East. In this respect, the term 'hieroglyphic' is misleading, in suggesting a link with the first and most prominent Egyptian writing system, but it remains useful as a way of defining scripts whose symbols are mostly recognisable representations of creatures or objects.

Decorte's chapter focuses on Cretan Hieroglyphic. In a discussion that indicates how much is still open to question in our understanding of this script, he presents a strong argument for rejecting the interpretation of certain elements in seal stone inscriptions as merely decorative, in favour of seeing them as part of the inscription, and thus requiring a 'complete turnaround' in the way that the script is approached and defined. Next, Tomas presents an interesting argument that the creation of the administrative system that used Linear B drew on more than one source, for some types of document used in the Linear B administrative system have parallels in Cretan Hieroglyphic or early Linear A document types rather than those typical of the most mature Linear A archives. She admits that there is a chronological gap between the latest Cretan Hieroglyphic documents and the earliest Linear B, which cannot on present evidence be closed, but the case seems hard to deny. In the next, rather long, chapter, Petrakis sets out the correspondences between Cretan Hieroglyphic and Linear B document types in considerable detail, and may bypass the problem by arguing (as previously in a Mycenaean Seminar)² that Linear B was developed within a regional north-central Cretan administrative system, identifiable in material from Knossos and Malia particularly, within which Cretan Hieroglyphic elements survived (especially on seals?) alongside Linear A. To the reviewer, who is totally unwilling to believe that Linear B was developed on the mainland, where there is absolutely no trace of complex administrative practices in the period equivalent to Crete's Neopalatial Period, this

makes good sense, even if the supporting evidence is patchy, especially at Knossos; but the theory may prove controversial.

Next, the chapter by Steele and Meißner convincingly defends the view that the values of Linear B signs can be assumed for their Linear A equivalents, pulling in evidence from the Cypriot syllabary, where a series of signs closely similar to those of Linear B certainly has similar values. The occurrence in both Linear A and B of the same or closely similar sign sequences, mostly identifiable as place or personal names, provides further support. Then Judson's chapter considers the process whereby Linear B was developed, with particular emphasis on the 'extra' signs that were apparently newly created, to represent sounds that seem to have been absent or rare in the language(s) of Minoan Crete but common in Greek, and/or to replace two signs with one (as in a sign for *dwo* to replace *du-wo*), for greater efficiency in writing. This includes not merely a series of palatalised sounds like *dwo*, but *pte*, which, it is reasonably argued, was created simply because the combination is common in Greek (pp. 124–126), and at least one, *two*, that may have been created by a single scribe to facilitate repeated writing of a particular name (pp. 115–116). This interesting suggestion, highlights the degree of freedom that individual scribes might have had and enhances the impression that only a very small number of persons would ever read these documents.

The last three chapters concern the scripts centred on Cyprus. Two are the most closely analytical and technical of all the discussions, but there is an obvious reason for this, that the Cypro-Minoan material is so diverse that there is still vigorous debate over whether the material represents a single script or two or three separate but closely related scripts. Valério, in a thorough analysis of all the material, demonstrates the close links to Linear A, especially in the single tablet datable in the early Late Bronze Age (c. 1525–1425? BC), and the likelihood that some signs which are identical with or very similar to signs with known values in Linear B and the historical Cypriot syllabary had the same values, a view once held but recently discounted. At the same time, he presents evidence against the separation of some signs as individual rather than variants of others, thus underlining a continuing need to establish agreed readings of inscriptions. Duhoux concentrates on the question of whether 'Cypro-Minoan 3' actually was a separate script. It has a narrow distribution entirely outside Cyprus, consisting of nine inscribed items, principally tablets and labels, found at Ugarit and a single

² Petrakis 2014.

cylinder seal supposed to come from Lattakia close by, all datable within a relatively narrow range from the end of the 14th century to the 12th century BC. Through a series of close comparisons, he establishes that there are such significant differences between at least some of this material (at a minimum, two of the tablets) and the material assigned to Cypro-Minoan 1 or 2, that the separateness of Cypro-Minoan 3 seems very likely.

Finally, Egetmeyer uses the publication of two new inscriptions in the Cypriot syllabary (which he terms Cypro-Greek, although some inscriptions in it appear not to be Greek) as a base from which to consider the latest Bronze Age and Early Iron Age material, thus including the Late Cypriot III (c. 1200–1050 BC) and Cypro-Geometric I–III (c. 1050–750 BC) phases. Most of it comes from tombs at Palaepaphos: Skales in the west, a striking testimony to the site's early importance; there are a few items from Kition and its neighbourhood on the south-east coast, but otherwise only two doubtful items from the Philistine site of Ashkelon, definitely early, and Kilise Tepe in Cilicia, which may not precede 700 BC. The number of items is not great, but the variety of scripts and languages is remarkable: apart from certainly Cypro-Minoan and non-Greek inscriptions, notably on a bronze bowl from T. 235, a single-burial tomb of Cypro-Geometric I date (c. 1050–950 BC), there are some that might be either Cypro-Minoan or Cypro-Greek, including the famous bronze obelos from T. 49 (the source of several inscribed items), also of Cypro-Geometric I date, whose inscription would read *o-pe-le-ta-u* (Opheltāu), the genitive form of a Greek name, in Cypro-Greek. Further, there is a jug of local ware from T. 69 that has a painted inscription in some form of West Semitic script, not necessarily Phoenician; it is of Cypro-Geometric II–III date, with a preference for an earlier dating (c. 900–825? BC), and is clearly of considerable importance in the whole history of the poorly documented development of alphabetic writing in the Levant, as Egetmeyer's discussion shows. In general, the material covered has relevance to a series of major themes, as is brought out by Egetmeyer's final section on 'syllabaries and city-kingdoms', which considers the context in which the Cypro-Greek script was developed.

Overall, a collection that provides much food for thought.

OLIVER DICKINSON
READER EMERITUS
DURHAM UNIVERSITY, UK
otpkdickinson@googlemail.com

Flouda, G. 2015. Materiality and script: constructing a narrative. On the Minoan inscribed axe from the Arkalochori cave. *Studi micenei ed egeo-anatolici* N.S. 1: 43–56.

Petrakis, V. 2014. A tale of system reform: the genesis of the Third Palace Period Aegean literate administrations. *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 57.1: 129–30.

Julie Hruby and Debra Trusty (eds). *From Cooking Vessels to Cultural Practices in the Late Bronze Age Aegean*. pp. vii + 173. 116 b/w illustrations, 8 tables, 8 colour illustrations. 2017. Oxford & Philadelphia: Oxbow Books. ISBN 978-1-78570-632-5 paperback £38.00. ISBN 978-1-78570-633-5 e-publication £ 19.00.

This book had its origin in a panel held at the 11th Annual Meeting of the Archaeological Institute of America in January 2014; the papers given there, suitably adapted for publication, have been added to by contributions from scholars working on comparable material. All chapters are substantial, and apart from the short introduction and finale all are illustrated with a range of photographs, drawings, tables and sometimes thin-sections. It is well-presented, with a colourful cover showing, on the front, modern replicas of Minoan-style cooking pots, made by Jerolyn Morrison, one of the contributors to this book, in use.

The focus is on vessels used specifically for cooking, as distinct from other types that may also be classified among 'domestic' wares, used e.g. for storage (temporary or long-term), heating or lighting. As the editors' introduction reminds us, there has been a general tendency in Aegean studies to give less attention to wares defined as domestic or coarse than to the finer quality, often decorated wares that are such a notable feature of Aegean pottery more or less throughout the Bronze Age. These have been studied in often exhaustive detail for the information they can provide on chronology, links between different regions and cultures, and artistic development, especially in the absence of work in more elaborate materials. In contrast, coarse/domestic wares have attracted very little attention unless preserved completely or in large sections; generally, if referred to at all, they are lumped together for a few brief comments, which helps to give the impression that they did not form a significant part of pottery production. It is striking