

Aegean Linear Script(s)

When does a *continuum* become a divide? This book investigates the genetic relationship between Linear A and Linear B, two Bronze Age scripts attested on Crete and Mainland Greece and understood to have developed one out of the other. By using an interdisciplinary methodology, this research integrates linguistic, epigraphical, palaeographical, and archaeological evidence, and places the writing practice in its socio-historical setting. By challenging traditional views, this work calls into question widespread assumptions and interpretative schemes on the relationship between these two scripts, and opens up new perspectives on the ideology associated with the retention, adaptation, and transmission of a script, and how identity was negotiated at a moment of closer societal interaction between Cretans and Greek-speaking Mainlanders in the Late Bronze Age. By delving deeper into the structure and inner workings of these two writing systems, this book will make us rethink the relationship between Linear A and B.

ESTER SALGARELLA is a Junior Research Fellow at St John's College, Cambridge, and in the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, specialising in Bronze Age Aegean scripts.

CAMBRIDGE CLASSICAL STUDIES

General editors

J. P. T. CLACKSON, W. M. BEARD, G. BETEGH,
R. L. HUNTER, M. J. MILLETT, S. P. OAKLEY,
R. G. OSBORNE, T. J. G. WHITMARSH

Aegean Linear Script(s)

Rethinking the Relationship between Linear A and Linear B

ESTER SALGARELLA

St John's College, Cambridge

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
314-321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi - 110025, India
103 Penang Road, #05-06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108479387

DOI: 10.1017/9781108783477

© Ester Salgarella 2020

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2020

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-1-108-47938-7 Hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

*This book is dedicated to my beloved family,
whose support, encouragement and love
have been my invincible summer.*

Contents

<i>List of Figures</i>	xi
<i>List of Tables</i>	xiii
<i>Preface</i>	xv
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xvii
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	xix
1 INTRODUCTION AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	1
1.1 Setting the Scene	1
1.1.1 Palaeography	7
1.1.2 Structure	9
1.2 Questioning Cultural (and Ethnic) ‘Labels’	10
1.2.1 Evans’ legacy	10
1.2.1.1 The pioneering responsibility of definition	10
1.2.1.2 Influences of the nineteenth-century intellectual climate	17
1.2.2 The reinforcement and stabilisation of the classification	20
1.2.2.1 Evans’ model	20
1.2.2.2 After Evans	21
1.2.2.3 Script and language	24
1.3 Questioning the Unquestionable: Some Theoretical Preliminaries	25
1.3.1 What was wrong with the previous views?	25
1.3.2 Classifying and labelling scripts	26
1.3.2.1 Defining ‘script’	26
1.3.2.2 Linear A and Linear B: two scripts or one?	28
1.3.2.3 Writing system components: a theoretical outline	30
1.4 Linear A and Linear B: a First Assessment	32
2 WHAT DOES LINEAR A LOOK LIKE?	42
2.1 The Nature of the Evidence	42
2.1.1 Chronological and geographical framework	42
2.1.2 Current Linear A sign classification	49
2.1.2.1 Formal classification: <i>GORILA</i>	49
2.1.2.2 Functional classification: Schoep	50

Contents	
2.2 Linear A Structure	51
2.2.1 Alternative functional classification of Linear A signs	52
2.2.2 Formal analysis of Linear A signs	54
2.2.2.1 Simple vs. composite signs	54
2.2.2.2 Configurational categories	57
2.2.2.3 List of composite sign configurations	59
2.2.2.4 Number of signs involved	85
2.2.2.5 Which sign in which configuration?	86
2.2.2.6 Overall configuration patterns?	139
2.2.2.7 Possibly misclassified signs	141
2.2.3 Conclusions	149
2.3 Linear A Palaeography	150
2.3.1 What is known of Linear A palaeography	150
2.3.2 Delving deeper into Linear A palaeography	152
2.3.2.1 Sign distribution over sites	152
2.3.2.2 Site-specific palaeography	156
2.3.2.3 On the surface: a striking similarity	168
2.3.3 Conclusions	176
3 WHAT DOES LINEAR B LOOK LIKE?	178
3.1 The Nature of the Evidence	178
3.1.1 The earliest evidence of Linear B writing	178
3.1.2 <i>The Room of the Chariot Tablets</i>	180
3.1.2.1 Archaeological context	180
3.1.2.2 Epigraphical context	187
3.1.2.3 Considerations	193
3.1.3 <i>The North Entrance Passage and North-West Insula</i>	195
3.1.3.1 Archaeological context	195
3.1.3.2 Epigraphical context	201
3.1.3.3 Considerations	209

3.2 Linear B Structure	210
3.2.1 What kind of ‘structure’?	210
3.2.2 The datasets	211
3.2.2.1 <i>The Room of the Chariot Tablets</i>	211
3.2.2.2 <i>The North Entrance Passage</i>	223
3.2.2.3 <i>The North-West Insula</i>	228
3.2.3 Conclusions	230
3.3 Linear B Palaeography	233
3.3.1 Shaping up Linear B palaeography	233
3.3.1.1 The roots of Linear B palaeographical analysis	233
3.3.1.2 Further developments	234
3.3.1.3 On the concepts of ‘styles’ and ‘palaeographical traditions’	239
3.3.2 <i>Room of the Chariot Tablets</i> palaeography	244
3.3.3 <i>North Entrance Passage</i> and <i>North-West Insula</i> palaeography	247
3.3.3.1 <i>North Entrance Passage</i> graphic variants	248
3.3.3.2 <i>North-West Insula</i> graphic variants	270
3.3.4 Conclusions	276
4 INTERPRETATIVE MODELS	283
4.1 Structural Model	283
4.1.1 Taking stock of the situation	283
4.1.2 Proposing an interpretative model	284
4.1.2.1 The model	284
4.1.2.2 Synoptic description of constitutive components	286
4.1.2.3 Value of subsets and implications of the proposed model	287
4.1.3 Description of the AB ‘core’: accounting for changes	288
4.1.4 Description of the ‘subsets’	290
4.1.4.1 The ‘B’- subsets	291
4.1.4.2 The ‘A’- subsets	300
4.1.5 Conclusions	355

Contents

4.2 Palaeographical Model	356
4.2.1 Graphic variants in Linear A	357
4.2.2 Graphic variants in Linear B	358
4.2.3 The Linear A-Linear B palaeographical model	360
4.2.4 Local graphic influences?	361
4.2.4.1 ‘Linear As’ from the north and east area: Khania and Zakros	361
4.2.4.2 Scoring again: some additional features	362
4.2.4.3 An apparent point of departure: Haghia Triada and Phaistos	365
4.2.5 Conclusions	369
 5 OVERALL CONCLUSIONS	 371
 <i>Bibliography</i>	 381
<i>General Index</i>	409
<i>Index of Signs Cited</i>	412

The Appendices are hosted on the Cambridge University Press website
 at www.cambridge.org/9781108479387

Figures

1 Geographical distribution of LA documents on Crete	2
2 Geographical distribution of LA documents outside Crete	3
3 Geographical distribution of LB documents	4
4 Models of script development	22
5 Interpretative schemata	24
6 Writing system(s) vs. script	28
7 Writing system components	31
8 Comparing LA and LB	41
9 Alternative LA sign classification	52
10 Different size signs configurations	58
11 Same size signs configurations	58
12 Ligatured signs configurations	59
13 Sign position 2 – different size	136
14 Sign position 2 – same size	137
15 Overall configuration patterns	140
16 Site-specific simple signs	153
17 Site-specific composite signs	154
18 Cross-site distribution of LA variants	166
19 Variant distribution at Haghia Triada and Phaistos	168
20 ZA 10a, 26a	169
21 KH 92	170
22 Plan of the palace of Knossos	180
23 <i>NEP</i> and <i>NWI</i> plans	195
24 <i>NEP</i> and <i>NWI</i> plan by Firth	196
25 <i>NEP</i> and <i>NWI</i> plan by Driessen	200
26 Scribal hand identification criteria	242
27 AB 21/ <i>QI</i> palaeographical variants in LA	245
28 KN Ce 50 <i>recto</i> and <i>verso</i> (<i>a-qi-ru</i> Cretan-style?)	245
29 KN Da 1123 (<i>a-qi-ro</i> LB-style?)	246
30 LB ∈ LAs model	285
31 Aesthetic balance theory	289
32 Graphic systematisation of signs sharing the same vowel	290

List of Figures

33 Possible <i>o</i> -series ancestors	292
34 <i>jo</i> variants in the <i>RCT</i> and the <i>NEP</i>	293
35 <i>so</i> variants in the <i>RCT</i> and the <i>NEP</i>	294
36 Attestations of A 28b	295
37 A 302–303 variants	295
38 Attestations of A 306	296
39 Possible formal comparisons between CH, LA, and LB signs	333
40 Standardised CH sign list	334
41 A 418 ^{VAS} -CH 012	335
42 A 336-CH 018	336
43 CH 043, A 363, A 364	338
44 CH 078	339
45 Main palaeographical variants of AB 131	340
46 A 324-CH 046	341
47 Main palaeographical variants of A 301	342
48 A 327-CH 038	342
49 A 365-CH 049	344
50 A 311-CH 077	346
51 A 328-CH 031	347
52 A 339-CH *153, AB 31/ <i>SA</i>	349
53 A 353-CH 072	350
54 A 355-CH 057	351
55 A 356-CH 034	352
56 A 309a–c, CH 073	354
57 LA-LB palaeographical scenarios	357
58 LA-LB palaeographical model	360
59 Structural and palaeographical features of LA and LB	372
60 AB 43 (<i>ai</i>) on MY Zf 2	375

Tables

1 Chronological framework of LA and LB	1
2 LB core syllabary	35
3 LB additional syllabary	36
4 LB undeciphered syllabograms	37
5 Chronological distribution of LA inscribed documents on Crete in MM IIIB–LM IIIB	43
6 Amount of LA evidence examined	47
7 Sign position within configurations	87
8 <i>NEP</i> and <i>NWI</i> find-places	197
9 <i>NEP</i> hands and tablets	202
10 <i>NEP</i> and <i>NWI</i> tablets (Firth 1997, p. 44)	203
11 <i>NEP</i> and <i>NWI</i> tablets (Firth 2000–1, pp. 219, 225–6)	204
12 <i>NEP</i> tablet format and layout distribution	206
13 <i>NWI</i> tablet format and layout distribution	206
14 Occurrences of adjuncts and other single syllabic signs in the <i>RCT</i>	216
15 Logograms in the <i>RCT</i>	219
16 Ligatures in the <i>RCT</i>	221
17 <i>NEP</i> logographic syllabograms	224
18 <i>NEP</i> logograms	225
19 <i>NEP</i> ligatures	226
20 <i>NWI</i> logographic syllabograms	228
21 <i>NWI</i> logograms	229
22 <i>NWI</i> ligatures	229
23 Additional syllabary signs distribution	230
24 LA and LB constitutive components	286

Preface

*La Nature est un temple où de vivants piliers
 Laissent parfois sortir de confuses paroles ;
 L'homme y passe à travers des **forêts de symboles**
 Qui l'observent avec des regards familiers.*

Baudelaire, *Correspondances* (1–4)

Signs. This work deals primarily with signs: those constituting the sign repertory of two Bronze Age Aegean scripts, Linear A and Linear B. The research conducted investigated the genetic relationship, on structural and palaeographical grounds, between these two scripts, understood to have developed one straight out of the other. By using an interdisciplinary methodology, I integrated linguistic, epigraphical, palaeographical, and archaeological evidence, and placed the writing practice in its socio-historical setting.

This volume starts with a systematic enquiry into the reasons behind the current classification and distinction between so-called Linear A and Linear B, and how it arose (Chapter 1). Terminological issues are explored and examined, as well as the historical circumstances and approaches that led to (and shaped) current definitions, interpretations, and interpretative schemes. To give solid grounds to this analysis, a theoretical framework is put forward for interpreting writing systems and their constitutive components, which serves as the basis for the contextual examination of these two specific writing systems and their genetic relationship. Further to this, a comprehensive and systematic assessment is carried out of the structural characteristics underlying both systems and the relationship between their graphic and phonetic components (Chapters 2–3). In particular, a detailed palaeographical analysis of their respective sign inventories is conducted as well as an examination of sign variant distribution, since neither area has yet been adequately covered in the current scholarship.

Built on these analyses, two interpretative models are put forward (Chapter 4), one to account for the structural characteristics of these systems, the other to account for palaeographical features and palaeographical variation. The structural model explores the way in which Linear A and Linear B arranged their constitutive components (simple and composite signs). The palaeographical

Preface

model shows how sign variants were transmitted from Linear A down to Linear B and which variants are likely to be taken as new introductions in Linear B. The conclusions this examination arrives at (Chapter 5) have wide-ranging implications not only for the history of the writing tradition on Crete, but also, more broadly, for our appreciation of the contemporary socio-historical context. In fact, a more detailed understanding of the Linear A to Linear B transmission process would not only cast light on the history of the script on Crete but also have significant implications for our understanding of the momentous historical and social changes that led from the Minoan-speaking to the Mycenaean Greek-speaking administration of the Late Bronze Age in the final period. The interpretation advanced opens up new perspectives on the ideology associated with the retention of a script, matters of identity, and how identity was negotiated at the very moment when Cretans and Mainlanders came into closer contact in the Late Bronze Age, at the same time giving us productive insights into societal interaction.

Acknowledgements

This volume originates from my doctoral dissertation, completed at the University of Cambridge in 2018, and jointly funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council and Peterhouse. I am forever indebted to both my supervisors, Dr Torsten Meissner and Dr Yannis Galanakis, to whom I express extensive gratitude for their insightful comments, sensible suggestions, and invaluable advice, as well as constant support, enthusiastic motivation, and unremitting encouragement throughout all stages of my research (and beyond). Special thanks must go to Dr Rupert Thompson and Professor Helena Tomas, who carefully examined my dissertation, for their wise comments and the most rewarding and stimulating discussion we had during the *viva voce* examination. For this unforgettable experience, I thank them sincerely. I should also extend my gratitude to the other members of the Mycenaean Epigraphy Group (Faculty of Classics, University of Cambridge): Professor John Killen, for his illuminating knowledge and inspirational presence; Dr Philippa Steele, for her uplifting amiability and entertaining talks about Cypriot scripts; Dr Anna Judson, for the many in-depth discussions on Linear B palaeographical issues and the converging results of our respective works; Dr Roeland Decorte, for the highly stimulating and productive discussions on Cretan Hieroglyphic and for sharing his expertise so willingly; and Dr Sarah Finlayson who, although not formally a member of the Group, has always been part of it in spirit, for her supportive encouragement and insightful chats on the role materiality plays in understanding Bronze Age Aegean writing and administrative practices.

I would also like to express my greatest appreciation to Professor Robin Osborne and Professor James Clackson for their most valuable feedback and constructive suggestions, as well as their willingness to give their time so generously, when reviewing the manuscript of this book and during all the stages leading to the final publication. I am also genuinely grateful to Dr Michael Sharp for his editorial assistance during the preparation of this book and for his help in accommodating the complex needs of this palaeographical work. I am deeply indebted to Professors John Killen, Jean-Pierre Olivier, Louis Godart, and Anna Sacconi for so wholeheartedly giving me permission to incorporate into this book and the related appendices images of Linear A, Linear B, and Cretan Hieroglyphic individual signs taken from *GORILA*, *CoMIK*, and *CHIC* respectively (said images are courtesy of the authors, when not otherwise specified). I should also like to acknowledge the following institutions and individual scholars for their kind courtesy in giving me permission to use their images: the British School at Athens,

Acknowledgements

the École française d'Athènes, Professors Jan Driessen, Richard Firth, Erik Hallager, and John Younger. Heartfelt thanks also go to Dr Laura Preston for having kindly let me read and cite her unpublished paper, which discusses matters of significant importance for the present work. Last but not least, I should also like to extend my thanks to St John's College (Cambridge) for having provided me with the time necessary for revising my dissertation and turning it into a book during the first year of my Junior Research Fellowship, and to Professor Geoff Horrocks for having been an outstanding academic (and life) mentor in College (and beyond).

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used throughout this volume.

Cretan scripts

LA	Linear A
LB	Linear B
CH	Cretan Hieroglyphic

Chronological periods

MM	Middle Minoan (Crete)
LM	Late Minoan (Crete)
MH	Middle Helladic (Mainland Greece)
LH	Late Helladic (Mainland Greece)

Linear B tablet deposits (Knossos)

RCT	<i>Room of the Chariot Tablets</i>
NEP	<i>North Entrance Passage</i>
NWI	<i>North-West Insula</i>
RCB	<i>Room of the Column Bases</i>

Place names

AP	Apodoulou
ARKH	Arkhanes
ARM	Armenoi
CR	Crete
GO	Gournia
HT	Haghia Triada
HV	Haghios Vassileios
IO	Iouktas
KE	Kea
KH	Khania
KN	Knossos
KO	Kophinas

Abbreviations

KY	Kythera
MA	Mallia
MI	Melos (if Linear A context)
MI	Midea (if Linear B context)
MO	Mokhlos
MY	Mycenae
PE	Petras
PH	Phaistos
PK	Palaiokastro
PL	Platanos
PO	Poros
PR	Prassa
PSI	Pseira
PY	Pylos
PYR	Pyrgos
SI	Sissi
SKO	Skoteino
SY	Syme
TH	Thebes
THE	Thera
TI	Tiryns
TY	Tylissos
ZA	Zakros