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Department of Archaeology and Ancient History
Uppsala University
Box 626
SE-751 26 Uppsala, Sweden
secretary@ecsi.se

EDITOR:

Dr Jenni Hjohlman, Stockholm
jenni.hjohlman@antiken.su.se

DISTRIBUTOR:

eddy.se ab
Box 1310
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Cover: see Fischer in this volume, p. 323, *Fig. 22b*.

of the cemeteries. The aim to integrate all three sites into the discussion, however, falls flat since the focus is largely on Pompeii. Today Pompeii dominates the scene almost entirely, both in research and in the number of books produced and, thus, a new general book on Pompeii is in this sense not necessary.

The first two chapters (1–2) constitute almost one third of the book (pp. 9–38). Efficiently articulated, they provide the reader with all the essential information necessary for understanding the historical background and political machinery mentioned. The chronological matters are less emphasized, though it makes the description of the functions of social and political apparatus clear and sound.

The selection of buildings leans towards the grand designs, i.e. the houses and public buildings that you would visit as a tourist. Significant effort is spent on the ownership of some of the houses, which in the larger scope of the book, is less important.

Though well written and describing the life of the public elite, the book leaves no room for the everyday life of the inhabitants in the small houses and *tabernae*, nor for the socio/economic/cultural differences that existed within the city walls. However, the author briefly touches upon the topic of *suburbanus pagus*, the area outside the towns, where the archaeological information is particularly limited.

The description of the first excavations and tunnellers is very vague and, I would say, the weakest chapter in the book: the grand Kingdom of Naples is not mentioned, with the early Bourbon explorers' search for prestigious objects and the way it has affected our interpretations and views of the material preserved. This is an essential aspect in the process of creating the archaeological park and the research objects that are presented at Pompeii and Herculaneum today. The word "tunnellers" was used both by robbers and by the first explorers and, although the technique of digging and the search of valuables are similar, it is not entirely accurate to mix them together.

The lack of city plans of each city, necessary for the overview of the locations of the buildings and structures described, is a serious imperfection. There are plans of the harbours in Ostia, the Forum of Pompeii and certain individual buildings and houses, though this does not reflect the intricate internal layout of blocks and townscapes developed during centuries.

There are some minor facts to question. The water supply (p. 64) is said to have been cut off in the earthquake in AD 62, though the evidence suggests that only some areas of the town were without aqueduct water after the earthquake.⁸ The mention of lava (p. 95) in the eruption context is not correct

⁸ A.-M. Leander Touati 2010. 'Water, well-being and social complexity in Insula V 1', *OpAthRom* 3, 105–162.

since a lava flow was not a significant feature in destruction of Pompeii and Herculaneum in the Plinian eruption of AD 79.⁹

There are some issues with the disposition of the book: the history of excavations in Pompeii from 1748 is essential for understanding the appearance and restoration of the remains, and should, in this reviewer's opinion, be mentioned earlier. Further, the labelling system for Pompeii invented by Giuseppe Fiorelli could have been described in the introduction, since it is used throughout the book, and not in the last pages. Also, Museo Nazionale in Naples is mentioned for the first time in the very last paragraph.

HENRIK BOMAN

Department of Archaeology and Classical Studies
Stockholm University
SE-106 91 Stockholm
henrik.boman@antiken.su.se

Silvia Ferrara, *Cypro-Minoan Inscriptions, Volume I. Analysis*, Oxford University Press 2012, 326 pp., 41 illustrations, 26 tables and 13 charts. ISBN-978-0-19-960757-0.

In the introduction to her book, the first of two volumes dedicated to Cypro-Minoan (CM) inscriptions (the second volume, *Corpus*, is still in press), Silvia Ferrara states her aim: to "focus on ways of understanding an un-deciphered script without attempting to decipher it" (p. 1). In the book, based on her PhD thesis, she manages to present a sophisticated and detailed study of the diverse components of this second millennium BC script, in use for about 500 years, attested to on Cyprus and at the Syrian coastal site of Ugarit-Ras Shamra. The signary, palaeography, epigraphy and contextual associations are all thoroughly examined. During the course of Ferrara's research, both Joanna Smith's edited volume, *Script and seal use on Cyprus in the Bronze and Iron Ages* published in 2002 and Jean-Pierre Olivier's *Édition holistique des textes chypro-minoens (HoChyMin)* from 2007 appeared. In relation to these two studies, Ferrara's independently global approach is decidedly a complementary and contrasting contribution.

The book is divided into three parts. Eight appendices provide a list of CM inscriptions, information on settlement data, archaeological contexts of the Enkomi material, the complete repertoires of signs and finally signs that are peculiar to the CM3 subset.

The first part, *Function object and context*, discusses literacy within the concept of Late Bronze Age Cypriot society, the script as an ideological symbol and the political geography. Ferrara provides an outline of the history of Cypro-Minoan

⁹ G. Luongo *et al.* 2003. 'Impact of the AD 79 explosive eruption on Pompeii, I-II', *Journal of Volcanology and Geothermal Research* 126, 169–200, 201–223.

scholarship and an assessment of the same: the analysis of Sir Arthur Evans of signs on a particular kind of enigmatic clay artefact, the so-called *boules*, Stanley Casson's typological classification of signs and the first establishment of a signary, Axel W. Persson's stress on the acrophonic principle, John Daniel's attention to the *ductus vis-à-vis* the type of inscribed object, and Émilie Masson's classification of the subgroups CM1, CM2 and CM3. She incorporates the recent works of Nicole Hirschfeld and Jean-Pierre Olivier into the discussion of the choice of criteria with regard to the inscriptions included in the second *Corpus* volume.

The total number of Cypro-Minoan records is limited; Ferrara lists 243 in Appendix 1 compared to Jean-Pierre Olivier's 217 in *HoChyMin* and more than 250 in Joanna Smith's book. The difference in number depends on the extent to which artefacts with one sign are included (p. 19).

Ferrara considers the geographical distribution of the Cypro-Minoan inscriptions, in relation to literacy and political geography. Their limited number would presuppose that no major archival or administrative system was in place (p. 33). In Cyprus the majority of finds were recovered in coastal areas, at Enkomi and Kition. She reflects on the relation between Cypro-Minoan and Aegean scripts in general considerations, such as context and support, in which the concept of writing itself is found, concluding that administrative necessities were not necessarily a prerogative of Cypro-Minoan. Moreover, she highlights that the earliest evidence for the script shows a high degree of independence *vis-à-vis* Linear A, generally seen as the donor script. This seems to imply a conscious intention to create an independent expression rather than just accept a ready-made script and that this is a direct manifestation of identity (p. 42). Ferrara maps the archaeological setting, and the diffusion and purposes of the script are given ample consideration.

Ferrara devotes a section of her book to the enigmatic so-called *boules*, spherical clay objects and the most frequently inscribed artefacts in the Late Cypriote phase, the use of which has perplexed scholars. They are found in industrial, residential and sacred contexts. She provides further discussion of these *boules* throughout the book, considering their function through their archaeological context.

Ferrara stresses that the Ugaritic evidence of Cypro-Minoan script highlights, thus far, an exclusively private context for the script, as the fragments of tablets and one complete tablet were uncovered in private archives at Ugarit (p. 132).

Part two of the book, *Inscription and signary*, examines the pi-nacology and epigraphy of the script according to media and object typology, as well as the distribution of inscribed objects according to group classification, the different styles of writing techniques and the sign repertory and scribal traditions.

Moreover, Ferrara reflects on the subsystems CM1, CM2 and CM3, in which CM1 is seen as initial. She questions the concept, put forward by Émilie Masson, of linguistic divisions between the subsets (pp. 151–153). Jean-Pierre Olivier in the preface to his *HoChyMin*, sustains Masson's divisions¹⁰ and in a forthcoming publication states that CM1 and CM2 refer to two scripts which record two languages. The third CM3 may have been used for several of the languages current in 13th century BC Ugarit.¹¹

The variation in the number of signs in each signary put forward by different scholars—for instance, Masson listed 40 signs peculiar to CM1 whereas Olivier's recent study, the first standardized syllabary for the set, lists 19 with 96 signs in the overall signary, compared to Masson's 114—is a telling witness to the difficulties in understanding the enigmatic nature of this script. Ferrara is critical of a methodology which “uncritically accepts that the ratio of sign variation has to necessarily correspond to phonetic innovations created to register a different language structure” (p. 219).

Anatolian scripts and script borrowing processes are used as comparanda as she assesses the Cypro-Minoan script in terms of assumed C(onsonant)V(owel) and V(owel) set syllabic configuration for the signs of Cypro-Minoan. Ferrara posits that Cypro-Minoan may need to be uprooted from an Aegean lineage (p. 229) while “the borrowing dynamics at play from the Linear A system” (p. 233), need further investigation. Overall Ferrara, while not entirely invalidating the three subsystem view, at least promotes the idea of a coherent Cypro-Minoan script and thus in her book the script is always referred to in the singular (p. 271). The future of Cypro-Minoan scholarship depends on the discovery of new texts. Moreover, she calls for further possibilities of analysis, including a re-assessment of the Linear A Aegean connection in view of a link to a wider tradition of Near Eastern and East Mediterranean script. Ferrara refutes the idea that Hittite cuneiform may have served as a model for the CM script, as proposed by Émilie Masson, with regard to graphic features added to basic sign shapes, since these may not necessarily express phonological adjustments (p. 246). Ferrara is of the view that in the past there has been a lack of understanding of the importance of the *ductus* in the formation of signs. Variants may be due to the way in which they were put onto the medium, for instance a sign that is punched will look different from one that is drawn (p. 215).

¹⁰ J.-P. Olivier (avec la collaboration de Fr. Vandenabeele), *Édition holistique des textes chypro-minoens (HoChyMin)*, Pisa/Roma 2007, 2.

¹¹ J.-P. Olivier, ‘The development of Cypriot syllabaries from Enkomi to Kafizin’, forthcoming in *Syllabic writing on Cyprus and its context* (Cambridge Classical Studies series), ed. P. Steele, p. 11. I thank the author for kindly giving me a copy of the proofs.

One section deals with analysis of sign variations. This is a complex task, as one example will show. On p. 236 Ferrara states that sign 20, found twice in CM3, is a mirror image of sign 19. In Appendix 7, giving the full CM3 repertory, sign 20 has an entirely different sign shape, perhaps the result of a typographical error. Here, it would have been useful to include a reference to Appendix 8 which lists signs defined by E. Masson as peculiar to CM3 and in which a sign, the mirror image of sign 19, is listed as 20. Olivier in his CM3 signary, has suppressed Masson's sign 20 and lists it as sign 19 to avoid confusion.¹² Ferrara calls attention to mirror images of signs in other scripts such as in Linear B, and she gives signs α_2 and α_3 in this script as mirrored. However, these two signs are diverse in shape; in Linear B, signs 34 and 35 are mirror images and in effect are denoted as 34.¹³

In the third part of her book, *Beyond decipherment*, Ferrara discusses the role of writing in social complexity (p. 268) and gives a number of suggestions for further research.

The eight appendices give useful listings of the CM inscriptions, in addition to catalogue number, provenance, number of words and number of signs for each inscribed object as well as inventory number, the complete repertoires of the CM 1, 2 and 3 corpora, settlement data and models for the LC IIC–IIIA period are provided.

The book with its comprehensive bibliography caters in the first instance to a scholarly forum but would certainly be of interest to any reader with an interest in the intricacies of ancient script and society. This detailed study offers attractive perspectives on an un-deciphered script. In particular it shows the wealth of information that can be extracted through the kind of painstaking analysis that Silvia Ferrara has conducted in this study.

HEDVIG LANDENIUS ENEGREN
Marie Curie Research Fellow
The Danish National Research Foundation's Centre for Textile Research
(CTR)
SAXO Institute, University of Copenhagen
Njalsgade 76
DK-2300 Copenhagen S
hedvigenegren@gmail.com
mvx160@hum.ku.dk

¹² J.-P. Olivier (avec la collaboration de Fr. Vandenabeele), *Édition Holistique des textes chypéro-minoens (HoChyMin)*, Pisa/Roma 2007, 480.

¹³ P. Carlier, C. De Lamberterie, M. Egertmeyer, N. Guilleux, F. Rougemont & J. Zurbach (eds), 'Comptes rendus des réunions. Index des groupes de signes et des mots', in *Études mycéniennes 2010. Actes du XIII^e colloque international sur les textes égéens, Sèvres, Paris, Nanterre, 20–23 septembre 2010*, Pisa/Roma 2012, 581.