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Margarethe Billerbeck is ongoing with letters A-I published in 2006 and 2011.

The anonymous treatise on syntax preserved in a 10th-century parchment manuscript and first edited by I. Bekker in *Anecdota Graeca* is an alphabetical lexicon about verbs requiring a → genitive, → dative or → accusative construction (→ Direct Object; → Indirect Object). Each entry includes quotations from Classical and Christian authors (→ Christian Greek Vocabulary), many of them preserving otherwise unattested fragments.

The voluminous lexicographical tradition handed down to us by Alexandrian and Byzantine scholars together with the source texts and their scholia formed the foundation for all future lexica of ancient Greek. Stephanus' *Thesaurus Graecae Linguae*, the first modern dictionary of ancient Greek and the ancestor of all subsequent lexicographical efforts, was based on many of these sources.

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Lindeman's Law

→ Vowel Changes

Linear A

Linear A is one of three Aegean writing systems used during the second millennium BCE on the island of Crete, the Greek mainland, the Cycladic islands and the western coast of Anatolia. Linear A was used during the palatial phases of the so-called Minoan culture of Crete from ca 1850–1450 BCE.

Sir Arthur Evans, the first great excavator and student of Minoan culture and writing systems, named the script 'Linear A' to distinguish it chronologically and functionally from later '→ Linear B' (attested ca 1450–1200 BCE). Evans classified these two scripts as 'linear' in contrast to a third script that he called Hieroglyphic or Pictographic (→ Cretan Hieroglyphic Script). Signs in the two 'primitive linear classes' of script, designated A and B, are made by incising component straight or curved lines into moist clay. In the third 'hieroglyphic class' of script, more pictorial forms of signs, representing objects (animate, inanimate, symbolic and even imaginary), are carved on stone seals or drawn, albeit also with linear elements, into clay documents.

Linear A texts are not deciphered, despite many proposals (see Pope and Raison 1978:41–45, for succinct critical and still valid assessments of proposals of different target languages). It has been suggested that the underlying language is Semitic, or an Anatolian Indo-European language related to Luwian or later Lycian, or an Aegean substrate language related to Etruscan, or even Greek. However, the data are so limited and repetitive and the syntax of most texts so simple (not to say non-existent) that no proposal can be proved (Duhoux 1989:95–98). It is still true that "[b]rief dedications and abbreviated records of account cannot be expected to provide anything like a sufficient range of linguistic evidence" (Pope and Raison 1978:41). The ca 1,500 extant Linear A texts contain fewer than 8,000 signs.

By comparing the layouts, structures and the use of logograms or ideograms (signs for commodities, raw materials, manufactured objects

LA	LB	LA	LB
01	*56	61	ne
02	pa	62	qa
06	tu	64	pu
21	po	69	*34
22	ro	72	ri
23	za	74	ta
24	ke	75a	wa
25	nu	76	mi
26	na	77	se
27	mu	78	ti
28	wi	80	o
29	ka	81a	je
30	da	84a	me
31	sa	84b	mu
32	ja	85	*118
34	pu2	86	ta2
35	*86	91	qe
39	to	92	te
44	e	93	du
45	ko	95	ma
48b	qi	96	*65
51	di	97	u
52	a	98	ku
53	ra	100a	i
54	re	101	*79
55	ru	102a	de
56a	pi	102b	*47
57	si	103	ki
58	ra2	113	au
59	su	120	*49
60	ni	208	*82

Correspondences according to shape between Linear A signs and phonographic signs in Linear B.
From Duhoux 1989, 115.

and animals, including human beings) in Linear A and Linear B texts, we can see that 90 percent of the Linear A texts pertain to economic administration. These include clay tablets, clay discs known as roundels, and clay sealings (with simple countermarks, typically of one or two signs).

Non-administrative texts include inscriptions on ceramic and stone ritual (mainly libation) vessels and on metal artifacts (gold and silver hair pins, miniature gold and silver axes, a gold ring and a bronze cauldron handle). Inscriptions on pins and libation vases have plausibly been interpreted as votive in nature. These texts have the longest syntactical strings of sign groups

(Duhoux 1989:83–90, 92). There are also a few graffiti.

Most Linear A texts come from Crete. But some few inscriptions have been found in the Peloponnese, on the islands of Thera, Samothrace, Melos, Kythera, and Kea, at Miletus in western Anatolia and at Tel Haror in the Levant.

The Linear A script has three types of signs: (1) phonetic, to judge by their total number, likely representing CV- and V- syllables (e.g. *da-* and *a-*, or *du-* and *u-*); (2) logographic-ideographic, as seen by their placement within accounting records; and (3) fractional-numerical. Provisional values have been assigned to Linear A phonetic and ideographic signs based on study of their counterparts in Linear B. The numerical and fractional systems were worked out before the decipherment of Linear B in 1952 (Bennett 1950).

Comparison of Linear A and Linear B signs and the values of the Linear B signs suggests that the language represented by Linear A has (1) three main vowels (*a*, *i*, and *u*), (2) labiovelars and (3) post-palatalized, post-labialized and pre-labialized consonantal phonemes (e.g. g^wa, *pye*, *nwa*, *mba*) (Duhoux 1989:72–75). The hypothesis of three main vowels is strengthened by comparative analysis of vowel patterns in Cretan place names attested in Linear B tablets at Knossos and in mainland place names in Pylos texts (Pope and Raison 1978:28–31). The language (or languages?, Duhoux 2004:214) written in Linear A seems to feature syllable-reduplication and prefixing, but Duhoux (2004:214–220) and Melchert (2001:229–231) have offered sound criticisms of the vowel-distribution, particles, verbal forms, and introductory phrase meanings proposed in the 'Lycian' hypothesis of Finkelberg (2001), arguably the most rigorously argued proposal to date.

The logograms/ideograms represent common agricultural commodities (grain, figs, oil and wine), animals (goat, pigs, sheep, bovids) and manufactured items like vases. The fractional signs, as mentioned above, have long been seen to function as an *aliquot* system (→ Greek Writing Systems).

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Linear B

Linear B is a syllabic writing system, which was used in the Aegean area during the Bronze Age to represent Mycenaean (→ Mycenaean Script and Language), an archaic variety of Greek. Arthur Evans coined this type of writing as Linear B, before the language that it represented was known. Within this nomenclature, which makes reference exclusively to the script and not to the language, 'linear' alludes to the linear disposition that the writing displays in the documents (Figure 1). The 'B' refers to the opposition established by Evans between this and 'Linear A', another linear writing system that was older; both are contrasted to non linear or hieroglyphic script (→ Cretan Hieroglyphic Script; → Greek Writing Systems) used in the same geographic area in the second millennium BCE.

1. THE DOCUMENTS

1.a. *Finding and Deciphering the Tablets*

In 1900, during the Knossos palace excavations conducted by Arthur Evans, a number of tablets were found with writings in a language that was yet unknown. The first studies on the finding allowed concluding that the documents were written in a syllabary, which included signs for