

Curriculum of Barbara Montecchi

Post-doc Fellowships

- 2012** Grant for a research on Minoan sealings, Institute for Classical Studies, University of London
- 2012-2013** Research Fellow of the Dipartimento di Scienze dell'Antichità, Medioevo e Rinascimento e Linguistica, Università degli Studi di Firenze, in the field of Aegean Archaeology

Teaching Experiences

- 2012** Lecturer of “Aegean civilization”, Scuola di Specializzazione in Archeologia, Università degli Studi di Firenze

Excavation Experiences

- 18 July - 6 August 2011** Excavation at Ayios Vasileios in Laconia (Greece) directed by Dr. A. Vassillogamvrou, Laconia Ephorate

Other Experiences

- October-November 2012** Visiting Scholar, Institute of Classical Archaeology, University of Heidelberg

Publications

Monographs

In preparation: *Contare a Hagia Triada: Scopi, mezzi e modalità del controllo economico-amministrativo Neopalaziale*, Athinai: Scuola Archeologica Italiana di Atene (Tripodes 15).

Forthcoming: *Luoghi per lavorare, pregare, morire. Edifici e maestranze edili negli interessi delle élites micenee*, Firenze: Firenze University Press (Periploi 5).

Articles

Forthcoming Planning a Feast in Neopalatial Crete: a Look at the Linear A Evidence, *ASAtene* 89, 2011.

2012 Wool-spinning, bronze-working, and the peculiarities of Mycenaean *ta-ra-si-ja*, *Pasiphae* 6, 185-194.

2011 Allotments of HORD and VIN to carpenters (*te-ka-ta-si*) at Thebes (TH Fq 247, Gp 112, 114, 147, 175), *SMEA* 53, pp. 171-187.

2011 (with A. M. Jasink) Un percorso virtuale attraverso i secoli, i volti, i paesaggi, i documenti: da Creta all’Italia, dalla protostoria alla storia, in A.M. Jasink - G. Tucci - L. Bombardieri (eds.), *MUSINT. Le Collezioni archeologiche egee e cipriote in Toscana. Ricerche ed esperienze di museologia interattiva*, Firenze: Firenze University Press, pp.243-262.

2010 A note on the tablet KN E 971 and the *o-pa* in the context of agricultural works, *DO-SO-MO* 9, 23-27.

2009 Review A. Sacconi, M. Del Freo, L. Godart, M. Negri (eds.), *Colloquium Romanum. Atti del XII Colloquio Internazionale di Micenologia* (Roma 20-25 febbraio 2006), Pisa-Roma, 2008, ASAtene 87/2, pp. 868-882.

Research Project

Dr Barbara Montecchi (PhD)

The work I intend to pursue in the event I will be awarded consists in the examination of the sealings from Ayia Triada in the Heraklion Archaeological Museum in Crete¹, in the Museo Nazionale Preistorico Etnografico “L. Pigorini” at Rome² and in the Museo Archeologico Nazionale in Florence³, as well as the examination of the sealings in the Khanià Archaeological Museum for comparison, with the aim of publishing a corpus and offering a possible interpretation of their function. It would complete the study on the administrative documents, found in the Minoan site of Ayia Triada and dated to the end of the LM IB (around the middle of the XV century B.C., according to the traditional “Low Chronology”, or the XVI century B.C., according to the “High Chronology”), I carried out at the Scuola Archeologica Italiana di Atene and that will be published as monograph with the title *Contare a Haghia Triada: mezzi e modalità e scopi del controllo economico-amministrativo Neopalaziale* (In English “Counting at Ayia Triada: Means, procedures and aims of the economic control in a Neopalatial administrative centre”). This book reviews the find-spots of the documents and analyses the epigraphic, palaeographic and textual characteristics of the documents with the aim of outlining the function of the different typologies of document, the interrelations among them and the accounting system on the whole.

I have already completed the study of the find-spots and the analysis of 148 Linear A tablets (147 surely from Ayia Triada and one of uncertain provenience PH(?) 31), 22 roundels (21 inscribed), 54 *noduli* (7 inscribed), and 1 inscribed clay bar now missing (HT Wy <1021bis>). I am still working on the sealings, which are classified after Erik Hallager’s book on Minoan Roundel and Sealed Documents⁴ as the following:

- 76 flat-based nodules (2 inscribed)
- 11 two-hole hanging nodules (2 inscribed)
- 936 one-hole hanging nodules (851 inscribed)
- 4 miscellaneous sealings, which are not easily classifiable as direct sealings or flat-based nodules (1 inscribed).

The study I intend to pursue on the original pieces focuses not only on the seal types, but above all on their archaeological features, such as size, clay characteristics, fingerprints, traces on the clay other than those of the seals, and on their inscriptions. Seal impressions have been already thoroughly studied and are very informative regarding the interrelations among the different types of documents and seal-users, besides the pure sphragistic interest⁵, but archaeological characteristics are fundamental to understand how the object could be used.

The hanging nodules are characterized by string holes which show that this type of nodule was

¹ CMS II/6

² M. Del Freo, ‘Le cretule di Haghia Triada nel Museo Nazionale Preistorico Etnografico “Luigi Pigorini”. Catalogo’, *Bullettino di Paletnologia Italiana*, n.s. 11-12, 2002-2003, pp. 53-75.

³ A. M. Jasink, ‘La collezione di sigilli e cretule egee’, in A. M. Jasink – L. Bombardieri (eds.), *Le collezioni egee del Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Firenze*, Firenze, 2009, pp. 77-88, pl. 35-44.

⁴ E. Hallager, *The Minoan Roundels and other Sealed Documents in the Neopalatial Linear A Administration*, Liège - Austin, 1996 (Aegaeum 14).

⁵ Inter al. D. Levi, ‘Le Cretule di Haghia Triada’, ASAtene 8-9, 1925-1926, pp. 7-156; J. Weingarten ‘Seal Use at LM I B Ayia Triada: a Minoan Elite in Action I. Administrative Considerations’, *Kadmos* 26, 1987, pp. 1-43; ID. ‘Seal Use at LM IB Ayia Triada: a Minoan Elite in Action II. Aesthetic Considerations’, *Kadmos* 28, 1988, pp. 89-114; O. Krzyszowska, *Aegean Seals an Introduction*, London, 2005, pp. 122-153.

fastened to another object by a string. The two-hole type shows a string-hole at each end of the nodule, instead the single-hole has a single aperture at one end of the nodule. The function of these two sub-groups is as yet a matter of dispute. It has been argued that the first was used to label papyrus documents and the second to seal commodities and/or chests and/or similar things, as the Mycenaean regular string nodules were used. Keeping in mind the fundamental difference between label and seal, the examination and comparison of these two sub-types of hanging nodules is aimed:

- 1) to evaluate how necessary the hypothesis is that they were fastened to different kinds of objects.
- 2) To compare the hanging nodules from Ayia Triada, which are written for the most part with a single Linear A sign, with those from Phaistos and Knossos, whose inscriptions are more informative (in particular HM 689 from Phaistos, inscribed with the ideogram for wine, not published in GORILA, and HM 1591, inscribed with the place name SU-KI-RI-TA and published in GORILA II, Wa 32).

Even more important for my study is the examination of the so called flat-based nodules and “miscellaneous” or “irregular” sealings, which are not easily classifiable.

The characteristic of the so called flat-based nodule (a little clay lump of about 2 x 1.5 cm) is the negative impression on its reverse (or base) which shows traces of thin threads and which have been interpreted as sealings placed upon folded pieces of thin and little worked leather, around which was wound the thin thread⁶. The suggested function of the flat-based nodules is that they sealed documents written on parchment⁷, but I wonder why hundreds of folded written parchments of 2x1.5 cm, bound with very thin threads, were sealed and archived, and how they could be eventually opened without tearing the document. The aims of my re-examination of flat-based nodules and “irregular” sealings are:

- 1) To check if all the impressions on the reverse of the sealings classified as flat-based are homogeneous in shape and size, and if such traces are always compatible with anything else than worked leather around which a thin thread was wound. In other words, to check if it may be suggested that at least some of the so called flat-based nodules were fastened to something other than written documents.
- 2) To try to better classify and understand the function of the “irregular” sealings

List of flat based and irregular sealings we intend to examine:

4 flat-based nodules from Phaistos (MM II), all inscribed, in The Heraklion Archaeological Museum: HM 675-679 (three are published in GORILA 2, PH Wb 33-35).

74 flat-based nodules from Ayia Triada (LM IB), in the Heraklion Archaeological Museum: HM 484/11, 485/1-5, 497, 498, 499/1, 500/1, 501/1-3, 502/1, 503/1, 504/1, 508/1, 516, 519/1, 521/1, 523/1, 525/1, 526/1-3, 530/1, 534/1, 544/1, 545/1, 546/2, 548/1, 549/1, 550/1, 560, 561/1, 561/2, 563/1, 564/1, 565/1, 576/1, 577/1, 580/1-2, 581/1, 583, 584/1, 585/1, 586/1, 590-592/1, 595/1, 596/1, 597, 598, 1654-1656/1-4, 1662, 1664-1666, 1669-1672, 1676, 1677 (with inscription published in GORILA 2 Wb 2001), 1685, Ad (with inscription published in GORILA 2 Wb 2002), Bm.

2 flat-based nodules from Ayia Triada, in the Museo Nazionale Preistorico Etnografico “L.

⁶ Hallager cit. n. 2, pp. 136-145.

⁷ ID. p. 158; A. Karnava, ‘Written and stamped records in the Bronze Age Cyclades: the Sea Journeys of an Administration’, in N. Brodie - J. Doole - G. Gavalas - C. Renfrew (eds.), *Horizon. A Colloquium on the Prehistory of the Cyclades*, Cambridge, 2008, pp. 377-386.

Pigorini” at Rome (Italy): Pig. 71975 and 71980

4 “irregular” sealings from Ayia Triada, in the Heraklion Museum: HM 1657 and 1686 (possibly Direct or Hanging Nodules), 558 (Flat-based nodule?), Bk (Direct sealing? published in GORILA II, as HT Wc 3021).

1 “irregular flat-based nodule” from Knossos (MMII/III), in the Heraklion Museum (HM 132).

57 flat-based nodules + 4 “irregular flat-based nodules” (possibly direct sealings) from Khanià (LM IB), in the Khanià Archaeological Museum (KH 1501-1557 + KH 1559, 1560, 1563, 1570).

Main projected costs in an estimated month of work

Travel expenses from Firenze to Heraklion (round trip): about 300 Pounds

Housing expenses for 12 days in Heraklion: about 650 Pounds

Travel expenses from Heraklion to Khanià (round trip): about 30 Pounds

Housing expenses for 4 days in Khanià: about 200 Pounds

Travel expenses from Firenze to Roma by train (round trip): about 75 Pounds

Expenses for one draftsman: about 750 Pounds (travel and housing expenses included)