but were extended later to include Grave Circle A and the construction of the Lion Gate (after 1250 BCE). Why the elite should have chosen to include the 'dead' space of Grave Circle A is a fascinating question. Is this some kind of ancestral veneration? Did this legitimise the socio-political status of the palatial elite? Or were there practical reasons for enclosing this space? It is understandable that detailed analysis must be limited in a book that is already large, but such questions help bring this empirical evidence to life.

There is little missing in the coverage – perhaps more could be said about the Linear A and Linear B tablets, but this is not a book on texts. The book reflects the limited engagement in the discipline regarding the legacy of these civilisations – how they influenced not only later Greeks, but also us. The reception studies we see in classical archaeology have been slower to take off for earlier millennia, with the notable exception of scholars such as N. Momigliano. The only treatment of this approach P. gives is in the final chapter – on the somewhat negative theme of 'fakes'. That the Aegean Bronze Ages influenced later generations is one reason for studying them.

This book has a good number of illustrations (if 'not exhaustive' – p. 8), mostly black and white. The bibliography (references, or 'works cited', at the back) is more selective than one might expect for such a wide-ranging and detailed textbook – even the translator, Knappett, appears rarely as a co-author. P. states that 'in some cases only the most recent studies are cited' (p. 8), but a skim-read gives an impression of outdated references. However, the 'further reading' sections at the end of each chapter are different again, often more recent, and some works are cited in the text that are not in either list. As a random example, 'C.M. Hale, *Hesperia* 85, 2016, 243–95' is cited on p. 126, but not listed in the relevant page of the references (p. 537), nor the further reading for that section (p. 128). Harvard-style citations in the text seem to refer to the end bibliography (pp. 531–46). This is confusing – but the book does seem to be more up to date than the end bibliography initially suggests.

Overall, this is a very enjoyable read through the highlights of the Aegean Bronze Age: detailed, clear, measured and comprehensive. This is a welcome contribution, if set at a steep price.

King's College London ELLEN ADAMS
ellen.adams@kcl.ac.uk

TEXTILES AND MINOANISATION

†CUTLER (J.E.) *Crafting Minoanisation. Textiles, Crafts Production and Social Dynamics in the Bronze Age Southern Aegean*. (Ancient Textiles 33.) Pp. xxvi + 284, figs, b/w & colour ills, b/w & colour maps. Oxford and Philadelphia: Oxbow Books, 2021. Cased, £48. ISBN: 978-1-78570-966-1.
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This publication is an in-depth examination of the process of 'Minoanisation' – the adoption of Bronze Age Cretan culture in the southern Aegean islands and on the Greek mainland – using textile technology as a case study. It foregrounds an agent-centred approach in order to understand the potential reasons for Minoanisation, which highlights the participation of women and sheds light on the previously understudied phenomenon of female mobility within the Middle and Late Bronze Age Aegean. The book primarily

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focuses on the evidence for Minoan weaving technology within Crete and the southern Aegean, particularly the presence of terracotta loomweights, which are the surviving material remains of the wooden, and thus archaeologically-fugitive, warp-weighted loom. While several types of loomweights were used on Crete, C. suggests the presence of Cretan discoid loomweights at southern Aegean locations indicates the spread of both Cretan-style loom technology and the complicated Minoan textile techniques that this equipment made possible. Cycladic iconographic evidence proves that Minoan-style textiles were familiar to southern Aegean communities, and the presence of loomweights indicates local production, provides information about similarities or differences to Cretan regional textile manufacture and suggests mobile cohorts of probably female teachers and students who adopted and adapted Cretan weaving techniques.

The study begins by explaining the evidence for Minoanisation in the southern Aegean, which increased gradually throughout the Middle Bronze Age and is characterised not only by Minoan-style textile equipment, but also by pottery, frescoes, architectural and domestic styles, the use of Minoan weights and measures, cooking and table habits, mortuary and cult practices as well as bureaucratic and administrative mechanisms such as Linear A tablets and Minoan seals and sealings. Traditional explanations for Minoanisation in the southern Aegean include a Minoan 'thalassocracy', where political control from Crete involved Knossian rule of an empire that covered a greater part of the Aegean Sea; economic control through trading emporia or colonies; and/or cultural influence in which the Aegean islands remained politically autonomous but adopted Minoanising cultural features through emulation.

As C. explains, these models present Minoanisation as a homogeneous process that ignores the diversity and complexity of the evidence, as well as gives the impression that inhabitants of the southern Aegean passively accepted Cretan influence, rather than actively sought it. In contrast to previous approaches therefore, this study investigates agent-active engagement with Minoanisation, focusing on *why* Minoanising textile technology may have been taken up, and contrasts it with the adoption of Cretan forms of ceramic and stone vessel technology. Through examining more precisely which aspects of Minoan culture were adopted, where and when, along with ways in which craft skills are learned, and potential mechanisms for transmission, this research de-centres Crete and highlights southern Aegean mobility.

The book is primarily about textile technology; to that end C. examined approximately 5,600 textile tools from Crete and the southern Aegean. In regard to Crete, a variety of loomweight evidence (discoid, spherical, pyramidal, cylindrical and cuboid) from the Middle and Late Bronze Ages and from both Palatial and non-Palatial contexts showed that a range of textiles were being produced at different locations across the island. In contrast, in the southern Aegean islands the discoid loomweight was the main type used, suggesting that a specific type of Cretan textile was being woven. The fact that many of the loomweights discovered at these sites were non-local suggests that they were brought there by female weavers as part of the transmission of Cretan technical knowledge – although not all southern Aegean sites adopted Cretan weaving technology at the same time or in the same density. Not only does this indicate female spatial mobility, but also that this had been occurring since the Middle Bronze Age, highlighting the role of involvement of women in southern Aegean interconnectivity.

The book certainly elucidates the 'what', 'where', 'when' and 'how' of Minoan-style textile craft and its transmission very thoroughly; however, I am not sure that the 'why' of the adoption of the warp-weighted loom is adequately explained or can really even be known. It is assumed that prior to the adoption of the warp-weighted loom from Crete southern Aegean communities used a different type of loom. There is no evidence

for the other type of loom they may have used – although the presence of ceramic spools may suggest the two-beam horizontal ground loom, which is characteristic of the Near East. If there was already another type of loom in the southern Aegean, why might the warp-weighted loom and the use of specifically discoid loomweights be necessary? It is supposed that, whatever type of loom was previously used in the southern Aegean, it could not weave the complex Minoan-style patterned fabrics as seen in the fresco evidence from Crete and the Cyclades, but why not?

C. suggests that it was a matter of width, proposing that the Minoan warp-weighted loom was suited to the production of large, wide textiles. If the previous type of loom in the southern Aegean was a backstrap loom, the adoption of the warp-weighted loom would indeed be an improvement. She also points to the potential for extra sheds, which would facilitate easy lifting of individual sections of warp threads independently of each other, enabling the production of complex weft-patterned weaves, twills and discontinuous-weft tapestry. Textile expert E. Barber claims, however, that practically any weaving pattern can be produced on any loom that is large enough for it, if the weaver wants to take the time to do it (Barber, *Prehistoric Textiles* [1991], p. 126).

Another suggestion for the technical reason 'why' the warp-weighted loom was adopted was surely its ability to produce fine but dense fabrics that would enable the production of *superior* textile patterns. E. Andersson Strand explains that the complicated fabric depicted in Aegean frescoes required a fine warp setting. This was enabled by the use of the thin discoid loomweight on the warp-weighted loom, as opposed to larger, heavier loomweights found on Crete. The discoid loomweights were suitable for producing fabrics with a high number of threads per centimetre because the warp threads can be separated into layers that lie one behind the other, in contrast to other types of loom, where the warps lie next to each other, and this enabled weaving relatively dense textiles (Andersson Strand, *Tools, Textiles and Contexts* [2015], p. 52; Barber, *Prehistoric Textiles* [1991], p. 152). The density would mean that the grid structure of weaving, constructed by the right angle crossing of warp and weft threads, was less evident in weaving pattern elements like the characteristic Aegean curves because the pixilation would be smaller and thus less visible.

We can thus feel reasonably confident about the technical reasons for the adoption of the warp-weighted loom in the southern Aegean, but less sure in regard to what its signature tells us about the wider phenomenon of Minoanisation: whether it was the manifestation of a Minoan empire, of colonies or emporia; southern Aegean emulation of Minoan culture; or more of a two-way influential relationship. C. admits that we do not really know the answer to the social 'why', and suggests that 'the motivations and mechanisms for the uptake and use of the warp-weighted loom and other Cretan technologies are … likely to have been as varied and dynamic as the wider networks that enabled them' (p. 256) – a conclusion that is congruent with her aim of demonstrating that Minoanisation was far more multifaceted than it was monolithic.

Overall, this monumental, multidisciplinary study is an extremely valuable contribution to the bourgeoning field of archaeological textiles, and it also provides fascinating information on topics such as ancient craft technology and skill acquisition in the production of craft. In addition, it is informative about human geographical mobility, ancient economy, trade and gender in the Bronze Age Aegean. The text is complemented by copious maps, architectural plans, tables, drawings and a number of photographs, and, despite lacking an index, this work is destined to become a sought-after resource on Aegean textile production and its association with Minoanisation.

University of Melbourne CAROLINE TULLY
caroline.tully@unimelb.edu.au

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