

important bibliography on the matter (p. 88). Foxhall again misses important references about Chairephanes (p. 69 ff.), such as Fantasia (1999) and Briant (2001), which are necessary in order to understand the debate in which she engages and the ancient text.

Although subtle, her interpretation (pp. 105–108) of Demosthenes (43.68–72) is likely to be too complicated: Foxhall supposes that the commentaries to Demosthenes misunderstood the meaning of this part of the speech relating to the *nomos* and that Sositheos cited the law in the wrong way intentionally in order to deceive the judges. This may be correct, but it seems unsupported and far from proven.

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Yannis Hamilakis and Nicoletta Momigliano, eds, *Archaeology and European Modernity: Producing and Consuming the Minoans (Creta Antica 7*, Padova: Bottega d'Erasmo/Aldo Ausilio, 2006, 293 pp., illustr., pbk, ISBN 978 88 6125 007 9).

This meticulously edited, internally cohesive, and yet productively contentious collection exemplifies the intellectual labour that an edited volume ideally should perform. Alternating constructively between denying analytic virtue to the label 'Minoan' and recognizing that the term has now achieved a complex ontological status, the authors assembled here invest the complex field of Minoan archaeology with a compellingly critical epistemological relevance. Following the lead of the fine introductory essay, they argue concisely and clearly from the evidence of ancient materials, records of discovery and restoration, and modern productions of art, architecture and education.

How did the very idea of a Minoan culture emerge? Philip Carabott shows how local archaeologists in effect connived with Arthur Evans, and thus with the colonial structures adumbrated by the editors, to incorporate Minoan Crete into the project of European modernity; but this project also, as we see in Roderick Beaton's characteristically lucid literary essay, became a hellenizing one inasmuch as it reclaimed Cretan prehistory for the modern nation-state (whereas, as David Roessel points out, Beaton's own 1996 novel, *Ariadne's Children*, does explore the dark underbelly of reconstructed Minoan life). In Beaton's analysis, Greek authors of largely Cretan identity, either by birthplace or by origin, claimed the Minoans for Greece rather than Crete alone. In such a nationalist context, the Europeanizing

project could be a double-edged sword, as Anna Simandiraki persuasively shows with a finely attuned eye for both the emancipatory and the repressive possibilities of pedagogy as these appear in a local schoolteacher's creative experiments with the Minoan past. In exploring the same tension between constriction and critique, Yannis Hamilakis's pivotal essay illuminates the broader processes that incorporated the Minoans into a national self-image and yet also created suitably ambiguous spaces for local reworkings.

There are, it emerges, serious difficulties with speaking about 'the Minoan past' at all. James Whitley, in one of the most polemical (and forcefully argued) contributions to the volume, intriguingly argues that the label should be dropped, suggesting that its main historical significance was as the reflection of Welsh scholarly and political sensibilities. Ever since legitimate questions were raised about Evans's reconstructions at Knossos, and especially now that (as Kenneth Lapatin's telling account reveals) some of his own associates were complicit in producing fake artefacts in more or less the style they had been 'restoring' on site, duping Evans himself in the process and pandering to Sigmund Freud's desire to have his very own 'snake goddess', there has been considerable doubt about the conceptual integrity of Minoan culture overall, to say nothing of its supposedly liberated and 'European' character. But insofar as the term 'Minoan' indexes actual artefacts, as Fritz Blakolmer argues, allegations of the indebtedness of their restorations to modern European art – or of the latter's derivation from Minoan prototypes – make no sense when both are subjected to a rigorous examination of their respective chronologies. There is evidently something 'there'; but it may be unhelpful (or simply wrong) either to dub it 'Minoan' or to derive it too comprehensively from modern aesthetics.

Lapatin acknowledges that in the end the emergence of a vigorous tradition of forgery itself created a new kind of modernist sensibility, far from scholarly concerns with historical precision. But the resulting ideological obfuscation may nevertheless be pernicious; Philip Duke shows how the metaphorical work done by the Knossos site has obscured rather than revealed the workings of the class system that underlies the site's attributed centrality to

European history. Similarly, Christine Morris ingeniously shows that the inventive association of Minoan culture with female fertility cults owed much to imperial pronatalism and its reappearance in nationalist agendas – a highly topical issue again today in a Europe concerned about demographic decline. And Cathy Gere's suggestive remark that perhaps Freud should have directed his analytic probing for inherited memory to Evans himself, rather than to Freud's own patient, opens up another route to the origins of fashionable theories about Minoan culture. Andrew Sherratt's fine (and, tragically, posthumous) article on the place of the Minoans in the thinking of Gordon Childe, with its remarkable appendix on Spengler and Toynbee, shows what was at stake in assessing the Minoans' peculiar status in European prehistory. In all these essays, we see how the representation of Minoan culture as *Ur-Europa*, its cumulative and selective restoration, and its fit with local politics and foreign identities conspired to materialize a curiously tangible chimera.

For a chimera it was. At times the quintessence of Europe (as this was understood in terms of the *mission civilisatrice*), Minoan culture was also sometimes instead configured as Europe's antithesis. Europe nevertheless largely won that battle: Minoan Crete emerged predominantly as a peaceful, emancipated polity in contrast to the bloodthirsty Myceneans or later Dorians who supposedly overran it, not to speak of other major civilizations to the east and south. One effect of this European colonization of the Minoan past was the suppression of allusions to human sacrifice, deemed incompatible with such refined cultural achievements. Minoan Crete, David Roessel elegantly shows, represented the supposedly Edenic state of European civilization before barbarism supervened. In a deft conversion of this nostalgic temporality into spatial terms, Esther Solomon demonstrates the projection of this before-and-after binarism onto the modern landscape of Knossos; Evans's reconstructed site becomes the heterotopic vision of an idyllically peaceful and aesthetically perfect past amidst a barbaric modernity's discontents. The metaphor of a fall from cultural as from moral grace, always a powerful idiom of self-justification in modern Greece, merges here with a cultural ideol-

ogy and hierarchy of clearly Eurocentric and colonial inspiration.

So compelling was the desire to join the Minoans in a European civilizational history that, Lena Sjögren argues, geographically distant Scandinavian archaeologists – perhaps suffering from a collective malaise like that described for their British colleagues by Grahame Clark some four decades earlier (Clark 1966), whereby the latter were apparently unable to believe in any local capacity for what they saw as the un-British trait of artistic originality – persuaded themselves into perceiving similarities that were, chronologically as well as stylistically, no more plausible than the art-historical connections debunked by Blakolmer. The European world, it seemed, wanted to recreate itself in a Minoan image. The one partial exception to this embrace of the Minoans is documented by Vincenzo La Rosa and Pietro Militello. In Italy, they argue that ‘we already had enough myths: there was no room for the Minoan one’ (p. 255). Perhaps another reason – or is this the same idea from another angle? – is that Italy offers such a stark contrast to the ideological homogeneity of Greek culture today; Etruscans and Siculi provided distinctively local prehistoric ancestries that could be deployed against the homogenizing proclivities of modern Rome. In that case, their evidence for a more recent upsurge in popular interest in the Minoans may signal a long-delayed coalescence of national consciousness, such as is perhaps suggested by some disquieting recent events in Italian political dynamics.

This outstanding volume does not bury the Minoans, nor does it praise them. A splendid contribution to the history of ideas, it instead sheds richly varied searchlights on one of the most extraordinary modernist adventures in past-making. The topic has an immediate relevance to some of the major political issues of our time. Notably, in this regard, the editors’ opening essay properly ends with a warning about the rise in Eurocentric racism. I am again reminded of Grahame Clark’s prescient insights, this time about the totalitarian takeover of archaeology in pre-Second World War Europe (Clark 1939). But Yannis Hamilakis and Nicoletta Momigliano have not reinvented the wheel. They and their colleagues on this talented scholarly team have tackled a tenacious, complex, and deeply

entrenched phenomenon that exemplifies the modernist project of archaeology, using analytic approaches and perspectives that would have been all but inconceivable in an earlier age. This book deserves to be widely read, and not by archaeologists alone.

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Richard H. Wilkinson, ed., *Egyptology Today*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008, 283 pp., 66 figs, pbk, ISBN 978 0 521 68226 8)

This book is the long-awaited concise introduction to modern Egyptology, presented by distinguished scholars. In addition to demonstrating all aspects of ancient Egypt, the author also looks at the techniques and methods used in Egyptology. This book is extremely useful, since it is not only an introduction to Pharaonic culture; it also shows how Egyptologists do their research. R. Wilkinson’s brief introduction epitomizes the perception of ancient Egypt in the present and the trend toward cooperation between Egyptologists and other specialists.

Part I (pp. 5–54) presents the methods used by Egyptologists to learn more about the Pharaonic culture, the focus being on archaeology, history, and science. K. Weeks describes the relationship between archaeology and Egyptology starting with ancient personalities, like Prince Chaemwese and al-Idrissi. Weeks fascinates the reader with an explanation of how Europe learned about ancient Egypt from classical writers and travellers, Champollion’s decipherment of the hieroglyphs and early archaeology in Egypt. With the studies of Egyptian ceramics Weeks shows the progress of Egyptology from connoisseurship over typology towards microscopic study which extracts every possible bit of information. Egyptology has become a