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In the frame of the
TEXNH: Making, creating, and agency networks in the Ancient Mediterranean world
lecture series and discussion forum, we kindly invite you to the lecture

*“Strings of value: towards a better understanding of the economic significance of textiles in
Bronze Age Greece through evidence from thread and cord impressions on clay”*

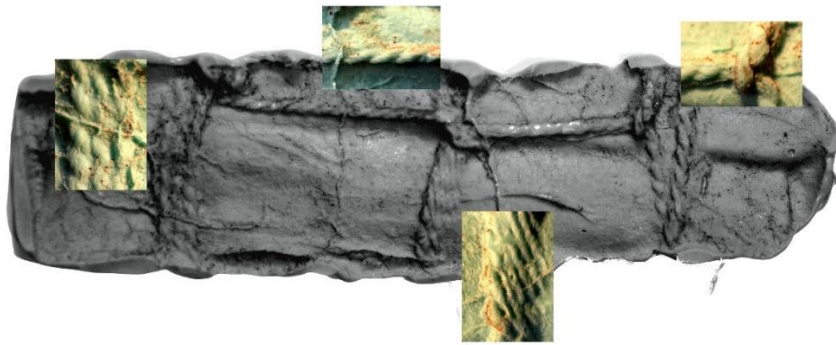
by

Prof. Agata Ulanowska

Associate Professor, Chair of the Department of Aegean and Textile Archaeology
Faculty of Archaeology, University of Warsaw

Discussant: **Dr. Christina Margariti**

Head of the Applied Research Department, Directorate of Conservation of Ancient and Modern
Monuments, Hellenic Ministry of Culture



Flat-based nodule from Chania (CH 1559). Cast and Dino-Lite photos – ©Agata Ulanowska, the cast – ©CMS Heidelberg.

5 March 2025, 18.00

at the Netherlands Institute at Athens

11, Makri str., 117 42 Athens



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The event will also be streamed live. For registration please visit:

https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/a_i963-ZR_-Wl0ofjB8lww

Abstract

The key economic importance of textiles and textile production, as well as their formative socio-cultural role in past societies, have been properly recognised due to recent advancements in textile studies. The current comprehensive framework of textile research in Greece encompasses all available evidence, including excavated textiles, textile tools, workshop remains, zooarchaeological and archaeobotanical data, as well as textual, iconographic and experimental sources. In the case of Aegean textiles, their notable economic and ritual value has been identified due to their prominent presence in Linear B records, their potential pre-monetary function, rich iconography, and large-scale production centres. Additionally, their value can be deduced according to the 'time-money' relationship, as formulated by Eero Jarva and Sanna Lipkin in 2014, derived from the substantial workloads associated with raw materials, applied techniques, and acquiring skills.

The primary focus of my talk, however, is a less conspicuous yet significant body of evidence: threads and cords and their use-patterns in the Bronze Age Aegean. My studies, currently being expanded by two new projects: *Textile digitisation tools and methods for cultural heritage* [TEXTaiLES, ECCCH by HORIZON REA ID 101158328]; and *Exploring textile imprints on clay from the 3rd and the 2nd millennia BCE* [ExplorTIC, by the National Science Centre in Poland, ID 2023/50/E/HS3/00094], are based on textile imprints on clay sealings stored (as copies) in the Archive of the *Corpus der minoischen und mykenischen Siegel* in Heidelberg. My aim is to highlight the potential value of these seemingly simple and utilitarian products. I will discuss their qualities, including their technical and aesthetic properties, as well as their possible symbolic significance. I will also present a few recognised use-patterns for threads and cords in administrative and sealing practices, indicative of their apparent reusing and recycling.