**Imperial College** London

Networks for the Minoan Aegean

Tim Evans (Imperial), Carl Knappett (Exeter), Ray Rivers (Imperial)

X-TAG Exeter 15th-17th December 2006 **Tim Evans Theoretical Physics** 



# *`Minoa'* A reconstruction on show in Chania, Crete



#### Approaches to Modelling

Several approaches when studying settlement patterns, many take *settlements* as the core unit. - e.g. see ISCOM project D.Lane et al. (ed.s) 2007



# Site-Site Interactions

- In archaeology relatively little attention has been given to the potential of interactions between sites being involved in the generation of those sites
- $\Rightarrow$  Network models may prove to be useful
- Most models focused on local interactions, often just nearest neighbour interactions
   Malta (*Renfrew & Level, 1979*); Geometric Greece (*Rihll & Wilson, 1991*); Proximal Point Analysis (*Terrell 1977; Irwin 1983;* Hage and Harary, 1991, 1996; Broodbank 2000)

Island Archipelagos as an Ideal Laboratory

- Vertices = Major Population or Resource Sites
- Edges = Exchange between sites
  - physical trade of goods or transmission of culture
  - direct contact or island hopping links
- Sea isolates communities  $\rightarrow$  Natural Vertices
- Interactions controlled by physical limitations of ancient sea travel → Simple Links
- Coastal Sites often isolated like islands due to geography and difficulty of ancient land travel

# Earlier work: includes The Kula Ring



#### Also Terrell 1977; Irwin 1983; Broodbank 2000

# Focus: Middle Bronze Age (MBA) Aegean

- Clear temporal delineation clear gaps (`dark ages') or shifts in record
  - c.2000BC distinct Minoan culture starts, and sail replaces oar
  - c.1500BC end of Minoan cultural dominance
- Physically largely self contained

   questions regarding relationship to Egyptian culture

# **Some Questions**

The Knossos Question
 What is the connection between macro-scale development of regional networks and the emergence of a primary centre?
 The palace at Knossos does not have the best local environment

## Minoanisation

What can explain the spread of and the variability in Minoan influence across the southern Aegean c.1700 BC?



• We want to find our optimal network given:-

Inputs:

- Site sizes S<sub>i</sub>
- Site separation d<sub>ij</sub>

**Outputs:** 

- Site occupation v<sub>i</sub>
- Interaction levels e<sub>ij</sub>
- Total population  $\Sigma_j$  (S<sub>i</sub> v<sub>i</sub>)
- Trade activity  $\Sigma_j (S_i v_i e_{ij})$

# **Optimal Networks**

• Adjust site and edge variables to optimise the 'cost ' H of the network:

$$H = -\lambda E - \kappa L + j P + \mu T$$

where

• E – all exchange/trade

Increase parameter  $\boldsymbol{\lambda}$  and interaction produces more benefits

L – all local production

Increase parameter  $\kappa$  and internal processes more profitable

• P – total population

Increase parameter *j* and cost per person is increased

• T – total strength of links

Increase parameter  $\mu$  and interaction links more expensive to maintain

#### **Distance Scale D**

#### We use: D=10km for sail D=10km for rowing (after 2000BC) (pre 2000BC)

Interaction term for each pair of sites depends on distance  $d_{ij}$  between sites such that for distances longer than a scale Dthe benefit is zero i.e. no effective direct interaction



# Analysis

- Working with 34 sites
- Can not assign parameter values in model from physical data so make comparisons between different data sets
   e.g. vary one parameter, hold rest fixed.

This represents slow evolution where system remains in effective equilibrium.

For any given set of (reasonable) values:
a) can analyse intrinsic parameters
b) can perform further `games' to analyse properties e.g. simulate trade in physical objects, cultural transmission models.

#### The 34 Sites Used



Analysis Methods: Ranking

• The percentage of time spent at each node by a random walker on the network. The walker chooses to follow a link with probability proportional to its strength. (Other choices possible).

⇒ Measure of GLOBAL network properties



Analysis of Single Network

- The new few slides show the analysis of one result of our model
- Look for sites which are off any general trends

j=0, m=0.5, k=1.0, l=4.0





# Rank vs. Size shows Crete's is more important to the global network that its size suggests, not so for Dodecanese



#### Local properties often scale closely with site size (weight)





Pag

#### Increasing Interaction Benefits ( $\lambda$ )













# Increasing Edge Cost ( $\mu$ )

Next 7 slides

- for large interaction benefits ( $\lambda = 4.0, j=0, \kappa = 1.0$ )
- Increasing  $\mu$  causes edges to concentrate on decreasing profitable routes.
- The largest site size goes up while the smallest stays the same.
- Total cost in edges the same (as vertex out strength) but















## End of increasing $\mu$ sequence

## **Minoanisation Analysis Methods**

#### Diffusion

Use random walkers doing variable short range walks to assess how ideas can percolate through system.



#### Cultural Transmission

Use the networks produced here as substrate for well known models of cultural transmission (Bentley & Shennan 2003) and language transmission (Stauffer et al. 2006)

- based on copying (drift) and innovation (mutation)

processes

# Summary

- Starting to extract basic results systematically
- Some behaviour looks interesting to an archaeologist

Crete and Dodecanese usually form strongest clusters

- Some types of behaviour do not appear to be possible
  - Greek mainland rarely gives significant sized sites
- Some factors seem to be playing a key role – small differences in physical distance from Crete may be significant
- Many options remain to be explored
  - more analysis tools, more what if scenarios, EBA vs MBA, general time evolution, other data sets

#### **Additional Material**

#### **Statistical Variation Constant Values**

- The variables are held constant so simple statistical variations are evident
- These are resonable, strengths of individual components vary by reasonable amounts, the details remain similar.











#### Range of Distance Scales (d)

• Next 4 slides









#### **Network Description**



- d<sub>ij</sub> Fixed distance between sites identified from the archaeological record may be physical but may include penalties for prevailing winds, currents, land travel, ...
- S<sub>i</sub> Fixed site size = maximum local resources
- v<sub>i</sub> Variable site occupation fraction so if v<sub>i</sub> >1 then site needs external resources ⇒ Site Weight (S<sub>i</sub> v<sub>i</sub>) = Site `population'
- e<sub>ij</sub> Fractional Edge values 0 ≤ Σ<sub>j</sub> e<sub>ij</sub> ≤ 1 ⇒ Edge Weights (S<sub>i</sub> v<sub>i</sub> e<sub>ij</sub>) = 'Trade' (interaction) going

© Imperial College London from site i to site j

#### Robustness

- Are we finding a model that gives us the results we want?
  - Select on the basis of some pre-determined notion of reasonable results.
  - Do comparisons, do not use absolute results
- Do results depend on fine details of model?
   Topological Congruence, Universality Classes
- Do results depend on how we encode the input data?
  - Scaling behaviour when is an archaeological site a vertex?

## **Optimisation of what?**

`Energy', resources

Isolated sites have optimal size  $v_i = 0.5$ 

Trade (interactions) bring benefits  $-\lambda \sum_{i,j}^{i} (S_{i}v_{i}.e_{ij}) . V(d_{ij} / D) . (S_{j}v_{j})$ 

Increasing 'population' has a cost



 $+\mu \sum S_i v_i e_{ij}$ 

 $-\kappa \sum S_i v_i (1-v_i)$ 

H =

Each trade link has a cost

#### Middle Bronze Age Aegean (2000-1500 BC)



**Palaces on Crete** 'Minoanisation' begins Theran eruption 1600 BC 'Collapse' – 1500 BC **DIFFERENT TO EBA** of Broodbank (2000) ØScale of networks ØUneven site size ØLength of links **ØDirectionality** 

# **Brief Chronology of the Aegean**

- **Jeolithic** 7000 BC •Initial colonisation – introduction of farming
- 4000 BC •Secondary colonisation of small islands
- **2500BC** •Nucleation and hierarchy in 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC
- B 2200 BC •Partial collapse?
- •Emergence of Minoan civilisation in 2<sup>nd</sup> mill BC **1900BC** Μ on Crete, sail technology appears Β **1500BC**  Collapse Α
- **1450 BC** Mycenaean mainlanders emerging power
- B 1200 BC •Bronze Age collapse
  - 1100 BC •'Dark Ages'

Α

# Minoa

 A reconstruction using original tools and techniques, as far as they are known, in order to make the best guess at the methods, design and capabilities of Minoan ships



© Imperial College London

## Efficiency?

- Need not be space filling in any sense.
- Need not be lowest number of links needed to connect all sites (Minimal Spanning Tree).
- 'Deliberate Waste' may well favour redundancy to reduce path lengths, to increase possible interactions, to increase resilience to change.

