

Instructor: Kevin D. Fisher

Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology and the Ancient World

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Office Hours: W 12:00-1:00pm / Th 9:00-10:00am (or by appointment)
Rhode Island Hall 214

Course Meetings: T/Th 10:30-11:50am Rhode Island Hall 108

Course Wiki: <http://proteus.brown.edu/greekbronzeage11/home>

Introduction:

The Trojan War, the so-called Palace of King Minos at Knossos, the cyclopean walls of legendary Mycenae and the strange ritual of "bull leaping" are only part of the story of the Greek Bronze Age. In this course, we'll try to separate the myths from no-less fascinating evidence of Bronze Age life in the Greek World. It offers an in-depth look at the archaeology and art of the civilizations that arose on mainland Greece, Crete, the Aegean islands and Cyprus from around 3000 to 1200 BCE. We'll examine the material remains left behind by these societies—from their monumental palaces to the ceramic vessels used in everyday life—in order to understand how Bronze Age people lived and died and to try to explain the rise and fall of state-level societies in these regions, how these societies were organized, what their beliefs were, and what kinds of interactions they had with neighboring cultures of the Near East and Egypt. We'll also explore how past archaeology, modern politics and pop culture have influenced the interpretation and representation of the Bronze Age past. More specific topics include:

- the rise of the Minoan palatial civilization on Crete and the reasons for its collapse in the Late Bronze Age;
- the issue of whether the so-called palaces should really be characterized as palaces, and the implications of this controversial issue for understanding Minoan political organization;
- the emergence and collapse of the Mycenaean civilization on mainland Greece during the Late Bronze Age;
- the late but rapid development of complex societies on Bronze Age Cyprus;
- the engagement of the Aegean civilizations in the later Bronze Age "world system", in which the various societies of the eastern Mediterranean and Near East were increasingly interconnected through diplomacy and the exchange of commodities, ideas and people;
- the historicity of the Trojan War, and
- how the interpretations of early archaeologists like Sir Arthur Evans have influenced our understanding of Aegean prehistory in general, and the role of the palaces in particular, and how changing theoretical perspectives have informed current interpretations.
- Changing perceptions of the Bronze Age in popular culture from Homer's *Iliad* to Wolfgang Petersen's *Troy*

This material will be presented in the form of illustrated lectures by the instructor and occasional guest lecturers, class discussions on particular issues, assigned readings in the text books and from other sources and through student research projects and presentations.

Course Aim: The aim of the course is two-fold; first, to familiarize you with the material culture and societies of the Bronze Age Greek world, and secondly, to provide an understanding of the methods and theories of archaeological inquiry and challenges of interpretation in the context of the Greek Bronze Age.

Evaluation Scheme:

<i>Looking at Buildings</i> Assignment	10%
Research Project	25%
Research Project Presentation	10%
Mid-term Test	10%
Discussion Participation	15%
Discussion Handout	5%
Final Examination	<u>25%</u>
	100%

Grade Scheme: A = 90-100; B = 80-89; C = 70-79; NC = 69 or lower

Class Discussions: There will be nine class discussions, held on Thursdays during the last hour of class (except for Weeks 3 and 7, when it will be on Tuesday). These discussions are intended to provide students with the opportunity to discuss current issues or controversies in Bronze Age Greek archaeology that are not fully explored (or only briefly mentioned) in the textbook or lectures. In some cases the assigned readings present ideas and information that conflict with those expressed in the textbook or lectures (or with each other). As well, these readings will expose students to academic writing styles and approaches in archaeology. Through group discussion and the completion of short written assignments, students will build skills in looking critically at a writers' thesis or arguments and learn how to extract pertinent information and ideas from an article and convey them to the rest of the class in a more informal environment. Finally, the discussion readings will also provide some students with ideas and leads on potential sources and avenues of research for their projects. While each article could be discussed in greater depth, for the purposes of our discussions we are more concerned with trying to understand the major theses/themes and then apply them within the broader context of the course (and life in general). **Given that performance in seminar is worth 20% of the final grade (15% for participation + 5% for written assignments), active and thoughtful participation is essential to success in the course.** **Attendance will be taken and student participation will be assessed for each meeting—just showing up won't get you more than 3 out of 10; you need to come to the discussion having read the assigned readings and prepared to discuss! You should bring a copy (electronic or otherwise) of the readings to the meeting so that you can refer to them specifically.**

For Discussions 2 through 8, one or two students will be assigned to lead each discussion. This will involve three main responsibilities. The first is to find an additional reading that makes a significant contribution to the discussion topic (new/alternative methods, theories, approaches; well-written case study, etc.). This can be from any academic source, but must be approved by the instructor no later than one week before the discussion. The second is to provide a handout for the rest of the class that includes an abstract or synopsis of each reading (4-5 sentences for each article), outlining the thesis or main argument(s) and how those arguments are made/supported. The third responsibility is to generate and moderate the discussion by asking appropriate questions.

Course Wiki: We will make use of a course wiki administered through the Joukowsky Institute's website to post course materials and readings:

<http://proteus.brown.edu/greekbronzeage11/home>. PowerPoint slides used in lecture, as well as the course syllabus, assignments, and some readings will be uploaded to the site on a regular basis. The readings will be posted on a secure part of the site (see below). The instructor may also use the site to post announcements, so it should be checked regularly. Note that although the slides will be available on the website, they are **not** a substitute for attending the lectures. Most of the materials posted will be in the form of pdf files. You will need Adobe Acrobat or a similar program to read these files. Acrobat Reader is available as a free download at www.adobe.com.

Required Textbooks:

C.W. Shelmerdine (ed.), 2008. *The Cambridge Companion to the Aegean Bronze Age*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Donald Preziosi & Louise Hitchcock. 1999. *Aegean Art and Architecture*. Oxford University Press.

Other assigned readings will be available digitally on a secure part of the course wiki (<http://proteus.brown.edu/greekbronzeage11/private/13590>; see instructor for password) as downloadable pdf files, or through the Brown Library.

COURSE SYLLABUS AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

****Subject to Change; watch for revisions****

WEEK 1

Th Jan. 27: Course Introduction; Doing Bronze Age Archaeology: Past and Present
Readings: Shelmerdine Ch. 1; Preziosi & Hitchcock Ch. 1

****Friday, Jan. 28, 5:30pm lecture by Cyprian Broodbank (University College London) "Island dynamics and 'Minoanisation' on the Aegean island of Kythera" (RI Hall 108)**
****Attendance is mandatory****

WEEK 2

T Feb. 1: Doing Bronze Age Archaeology (cont'd); Colonization of Greece and the Aegean Islands; the Neolithic Revolution
 Readings: Preziosi & Hitchcock pp. 33-44

Th Feb. 3: How do Societies get more “Complex”?; The Early Cycladic Period—More than just Figurines and Frying Pans

Readings:

- Wright, J.C. 2004. The emergence of leadership and the rise of civilization in the Aegean. In J.C. Barrett and P. Halstead (eds.), *The Emergence of Civilisation Revisited*. Sheffield Studies in Aegean Archaeology. Pp. 64-89.
- Shelmerdine Ch. 3

WEEK 3

T Feb. 8: Early Cycladic Period (cont'd)

Discussion 1: New Ways of Understanding Ancient Buildings

- Rapoport, A. 1990. Nonverbal communication and environmental meaning. Chapter 4 of *The Meaning of the Built Environment*. University of Arizona Press, Tucson. Pp. 87-122.
- Fisher, K.D. 2009. Placing social interaction: an integrative approach to analyzing past built environments. *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 28: 439-57.
- Letesson, Q. and K. Vansteenhuyse. 2006. Toward an archaeology of perception: ‘Looking’ at Minoan palaces. *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology* 19.1: 91-119.

Th. Feb. 10: Early Minoans—The Prepalatial Period; The First(?) Palaces—The Protopalatial Period

Readings: Shelmerdine Ch. 4-5(A and B); Preziosi & Hitchcock pp. 48-61.

WEEK 4

T Feb. 15: The Protopalatial Period (cont'd); The “Golden Age” of Minoan Civilization—The Neopalatial Period

Readings: Preziosi & Hitchcock Ch. 3; Shelmerdine Ch. 6-7;

Th Feb. 17: The Neopalatial Period (cont'd)

Discussion 2: The Formation and Nature of Minoan States

- Cherry, J.F. 1986. Politics and palaces: some problems in Minoan state formation. In C. Renfrew and J.F. Cherry (eds.), *Peer Polity Interaction and Socio-political Change*: 19-45. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. Pp. 19-45.
- Schoep, I. and C. Knappett. 2004. Dual emergence: Evolving heterarchy, exploding hierarchy. In J.C. Barrett and P. Halstead (eds.), *The Emergence of Civilisation Revisited*. Sheffield Studies in Aegean Archaeology. Pp. 21-37.
- Bevan, A. 2010. Political Geography of Palatial Crete. *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology* 23.1: 27-54.

WEEK 5

T Feb. 22 Long Weekend, no class

Th Feb. 24: The Neopalatial Period (cont'd); The Collapse of the Minoan Civilization;

Readings: Preziosi & Hitchcock Ch. 4

Driessen, J. 2002. Towards an archaeology of crisis: defining the long-term impact of the Bronze Age Santorini eruption. In R. Torrence and J. Grattan (eds.), *Natural disasters and cultural change*. Routledge, New York. Pp. 249-263.

WEEK 6

T Mar. 1: Before Agamemnon—The Early Helladic Period; The Rise of the Mycenaeans

Readings: Shelmerdine Ch. 2 and Ch. 10; Preziosi & Hitchcock pp. 44-47, Ch. 5

Th Mar. 3: Mycenaean Civilization

Discussion 3: (Re)interpreting Minoan Frescoes

- Strasser, T.F. 2010. Location and perspective in the Thera Flotilla Fresco. *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology* 23(1): 3-26.
- Paliou, E, D. Wheatley and G. Earl. 2010. Three-dimensional visibility analysis of architectural spaces: iconography and visibility of the wall paintings of Xeste 3 (Late Bronze Age Akrotiri). *Journal of Archaeological Science* (in press).
- Shaw, M.C. 2004. The “Priest-King” fresco from Knossos: Man, woman, priest, king, or someone else? In A.P. Chapin (ed.), *CHARIS: Essays in Honor of Sara A. Immerwahr*. Athens: American Schools of Classical Studies at Athens (Hesperia Supplement 33). Pp. 65-84.

WEEK 7

T Mar. 8: ****Architecture assignment due**** Mycenaean Civilization (cont'd);

Readings: Shelmerdine Ch. 11, 12A and 13.

Discussion 4: (Re)presenting Knossos: the Legacy of Sir Arthur Evans

- German, S.C. 2005. Photography and fiction: The publication of the excavations at the Palace of Minos at Knossos. *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology* 18.2: 209-230.
- Hitchcock, L. and P. Koudounaris. 2002. Virtual discourse: Arthur Evans and the reconstructions of the Minoan Palace at Knossos. In Y. Hamilakis (ed.), *Labyrinth Revisited: Re-thinking 'Minoan' Archaeology*. Oxford: Oxbow Books. Pp. 40-58.
- Solomon, E. 2006. Knossos: Social uses of a monumental landscape. In Y. Hamilakis and N. Momigliano (eds.), *Archaeology and European Modernity: Producing and Consuming the 'Minoans'*. Padova: Bottega D'Erasmus. Pp. 163-182..

Th Mar. 10: Guest Lecture by Prof. Sturt W. Manning (Cornell University)

“Akrotiri and the Thera/Santorini Eruption”

Readings:

- Manning, S.W. 2010. Eruption of Thera/Santorini. In E. Cline (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook on the Bronze Age Aegean*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Pp. 457-474.
- Dumas, C. 2010. Akrotiri. In E. Cline (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook on the Bronze Age Aegean*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Pp. 752-61.

WEEK 8

T Mar. 15: **Midterm Test (50 mins.)**

Mycenaean Civilization (cont'd)

Readings:

Th Mar. 17: The Mycenaeans in Regional Context: Crete, Troy, and the Ahhiyawa Debate

Discussion 5: The Underpinnings of Power in Mycenaean Greece

- Kilian, K. 1988. The emergence of *wanax* ideology in Mycenaean palaces. *Oxford Journal of Archaeology* 7(3): 291-302.
- Bennet, J. and J.L. Davis. 1999. Making Mycenaeans: warfare, territorial expansion, and representations of the other in the Pylian kingdom. *Aegaeum* 19: 105-120.
- Schon, R. 2007. Chariots, industry and elite power at Pylos. In M.L. Galaty and W.A. Parkinson (eds.) *Rethinking Mycenaean Palaces II*. Cotsen Institute of Archaeology UCLA. Pp. 133-145.

WEEK 9

T Mar. 22: The Mycenaeans in Regional Context (cont'd); Cyprus—Colonization(s) and Early Prehistory

Reading: Knapp, A.B. 1993. Social complexity: incipience, emergence and development on prehistoric Cyprus. *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 292: 85-106.

Th Mar. 24: Alashiya—Cyprus in the Late Bronze Age

Readings: Steel, L. 2004. Cyprus in the Late Bronze Age. Chapter 6 In *Cyprus Before History: From the Earliest Settlers to the End of the Bronze Age*. London: Duckworth. Pp. 149-186.

Discussion 6: Engendering the Aegean Bronze Age

- Olsen, B.A. 1998. Women, children and the family in the Late Aegean Bronze Age: differences in Minoan and Mycenaean constructions of gender. *World Archaeology* 29: 380-392.
- Nikolaidou, M. 2002. Palaces with faces in Protopalatial Crete: looking for the people in the first Minoan states. In *Labyrinth Revisited: Re-thinking 'Minoan' Archaeology*. Y. Hamilakis (ed.). Oxbow Books, Oxford. Pp. 74-96.
- Smith, J. 2002. Changes in the workplace: women and textile production on Late Bronze Age Cyprus. In D. Bolger and N. Serwint (eds.), *Engendering Aphrodite: Women and Society in Ancient Cyprus*. Boston: American Schools of Oriental Research. Pp. 281-312.

Mar. 26-Apr. 3: Spring Recess

WEEK 10

T Apr. 5: Class Presentations

Th Apr. 7: Class Presentations

Discussion 7: Wining and Dining in the Aegean Bronze Age

- Hamilakis, Y. 2008. Time, performance, and the production of a mnemonic record: From feasting to an archaeology of eating and drinking. In L. Hitchcock, R. Laffineur and J. Crowley (eds.), *Dais: The Aegean Feast* (Aegaeum 29). Pp. 3-20.
- Steel, L. 2004. A goodly feast...a cup of mellow wine: feasting in Bronze Age Cyprus. *Hesperia* 73(2): 281-
- Stocker, S.R. and J.L. Davis. 2004. Animal sacrifice, archives, and feasting at the palace of Nestor. *Hesperia* 73(2): 179-

WEEK 11

T Apr. 12: Class Presentations; Cyprus in the Late Bronze Age (cont'd)**Th Apr. 14: Interaction, Exchange and Diplomacy in the Late Bronze Age****Discussion 8: LBA Exchange and Interconnections**

- Sherratt, A. and S. Sherratt. 1991. From luxuries to commodities: the nature of Mediterranean Bronze Age trading systems. In *Bronze Age Trade in the Mediterranean. Papers presented at the conference held at Rewley House, Oxford, in December 1989*. N.H. Gale (ed.). Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology 90. Jonsered: Paul Åströms Förlag. Pp. 351-386.
- Manning, S.W. and L. Hulin. 2005. Maritime commerce and geographies of mobility in the Late Bronze Age of the Eastern Mediterranean: problematizations. In E. Blake and A.B. Knapp (eds.), *The Archaeology of Mediterranean Prehistory*. Oxford. Pp. 270-302.
- Cline, E.H. 1995. Tinker, tailor, soldier, sailor: Minoans and Mycenaeans abroad. *Aegaeum* 12: 265-283.

WEEK 12**T Apr. 19: **Research Projects Due**;** Interaction, Exchange and Diplomacy in the Late Bronze Age; End of an Era—the Collapse of the Late Bronze Age Palatial System

Readings: Shelmerdine Ch. 14-15

- Selected letters from W.L. Moran (trans.) 1992. *The Amarna Letters*. The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Zaccagnini, C. 2000. The Interdependence of the Great Powers. In *Amarna Diplomacy: the Beginnings of International Relations*. R. Cohen and R. Westbrook (eds.). The Johns Hopkins University Press. Pp. 141-153.

Th Apr. 21: Collapse of the Late Bronze Age Palatial System (cont'd)**Discussion 9: The Politics of Bronze Age Archaeology**

- Leriou, A. 2005. Constructing an archaeological narrative: the Hellenization of Cyprus. *Stamford Archaeological Journal* (on-line journal).
- Hamilakis, Y. 2006. The colonial, the national and the local: Legacies of the 'Minoan' past. In Y. Hamilakis and N. Momigliano (eds.), *Archaeology and European Modernity: Producing and Consuming the 'Minoans'*. Padova: Bottega D'Erasmus. Pp. 145-162.
- Papadopoulos, J. 2005. Inventing the Minoans: archaeology, modernity and the quest for European Identity. *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology* 18(1): 87-149.

WEEK 13**T Apr. 25: Bronze Age Echoes—the Legacy of the Bronze Age in the Past and Present**

Readings:

- S.E. Sherratt, E.S. 1990. 'Reading the texts:' archaeology and the Homeric question. *Antiquity* 64: 807-824.
- Winkler, M. 2007. The *Iliad* and the cinema. In M. Winkler (ed.), *Troy: from Homer's Iliad to Hollywood Epic*. Malden: Blackwell. Pp. 43-67.

Th Apr. 27: Finish lectures; discuss Final Exam

****Tuesday May 3, Final Exam in class****