

**AHC 378 AEGEAN PREHISTORY-W 32548**  
MWF 200 to 300p WAG 112 Palaima

Thomas G. Palaima Office WAG 14-A  
Classics Department Office (mailboxes) WAG 123  
Office Hours: MW 12-1:15 F 10-10:45 and by appointment  
tpalaima@mail.utexas.edu  
tel.: my office 471-8837 dept. office 471-5742

#### Course Description:

What do we know historically about the palaces where legendary kings like Minos, Agamemnon, Nestor and Priam ruled? When did the Greeks arrive in what has since been their homeland and how and why did their peculiarly innovative and influential culture develop? What do the so-called Minoan and Mycenaean cultures, on the island of Crete and the Greek mainland, owe to surrounding cultures, and how and why did these cultures come into contact? What kinds of evidence do we have from the so-called palatial period of Aegean prehistory (the 2nd millennium BCE) and how can we use it to ask historical questions?

Formal study of Aegean prehistory is now over 140 years old. One of the challenges for our understanding of the palatial period (reflected in later Greek historical texts like the *Iliad*, *Odyssey*, *Works and Days*, and Thucydides) is to make sense of the material evidence recovered through excavation in conjunction with the data provided by peculiar documents (mostly inscribed economically focused records on clay in writing systems known as Cretan Hieroglyphic, Linear A and Linear B) that have been found at most major sites.

These documents have turned what used to be called a prehistoric period into what is now known as a proto-historic period. They present us with interesting problems concerning methods and principles of interpretation and historical reconstruction.

In this course we will concentrate on how to make history or pre- and proto-history. We shall try to trace political, social, economic and general cultural developments (including such topics as religious beliefs, ethnicity, orality and literacy, law, regional and central power hierarchies, languages and dialects, trade, warfare, and cross-cultural borrowings and adaptations) on Crete and the Greek mainland between roughly 2200 and 1100 BCE, with some look at Cyprus and Hittite Anatolia.

We shall try to define what history means in periods where we lack what we consider historical or annalistic works produced within the cultures we, as moderns, are studying. We shall ask questions most historians ask about human actions and the general quality of life in specific areas and time periods. We shall try to figure out where the 'high' Aegean cultures came from, what led to their eventual decline and collapse and what came after them? And we shall consider the historiography of research in this field.

**TEXTS:** This course will mainly use articles from specialized monographs and excerpted chapters from synthetic and collaborative handbooks on Greek prehistory. Basic texts are:

ON ORDER FROM COOP:

*Aegean Art and Architecture* by Donald Preziosi and Louise Hitchcock, Oxford University Press, USA 2000 pb ISBN-10: 0192842080 ISBN-13: 978-0192842084

*The Aegean Bronze Age* (Cambridge World Archaeology) by Oliver Dickinson, Cambridge University Press 1994, pb.

*The Mycenaean World* by John Chadwick, Cambridge University Press 1976, pb.  
ISBN-10: 0521290376 ISBN-13: 978-0521290371

AN IMPORTANT WEB-BASED RESOURCE:

Professor Jerry Rutter's online textbook ( [http://projectsx.dartmouth.edu/history/bronze\\_age/](http://projectsx.dartmouth.edu/history/bronze_age/) ).

TEXTS TO CONSULT (SOME WILL BE AVAILABLE ON-LINE):

*Mycenae, Agamemnon's Capital* by Lisa French, Tempus Books 2005

*A Guide to the Palace of Nestor* by Jack L. Davis and Cynthia W. Shelmerdine, American School of Classical Studies 2001.

"The Art of the Shaft Graves" by Emily Townshend Vermeule, Louise Taft Semple Lecture, 1975.

*The Cambridge Companion to the Aegean Bronze Age* by Cynthia W. Shelmerdine (Editor), Cambridge University Press 2008, pb.

*Life and Society in the Hittite World* by Trevor Bryce, Oxford University Press 2004, pb.

*Progress into the Past: The Rediscovery of Mycenaean Civilization*, Second Edition by William A.; Carol G. Thomas McDonald, Indiana University Press 1990, pb. (or first edition).

*Minoans* by J. Lesley Fitton, British Museum Press 2002

*The Mycenaeans* by Lousie Schofield, British Museum Press 2002

*Greece in the Bronze Age* by Emily Vermeule, University of Chicago Press 1972.

*Mycenae and the Mycenaean Age* by George Mylonas, Princeton University Press

*Introduction to Aegean Art* by Phil Betancourt, INSTAP Academic Press 2007

*Sandy Pylos: An Archaeological History from Nestor to Navarino* by Jack L. Davis et al. University of Texas Press 1998.

*The End of the Bronze Age: Changes in Warfare and the Catastrophe ca. 1200 B.C.* by Robert Drews, Princeton University Press 1993.

*The Coming of the Greeks* by Robert Drews, Princeton University Press 1994.

*Archaeology and Language: The Puzzle of the Indo-Europeans* by Colin Renfrew, Cambridge University Press 1988

"Word of Minos: The Minoan Contribution to Mycenaean Greek and the Linguistic Geography of the Bronze Age Aegean," *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 8 (1998) p. 239-264.

**Resources will include as we move through the semester:** (1) translated and transliterated documents in Linear A and Linear B, and excerpted passages from later Greek historical texts; (2) studies bearing upon the evidence derived from languages *per se*; (3) specialized articles on topics mentioned in general course description.

**Grading:** Grades will be based on: (1) three five-page papers with drafts due in the fourth, ninth and fourteenth weeks of the semester and re-writes in the sixth and eleventh weeks and at the time of the final examination;

(2) one student presentation of the material assigned for a course meeting (graded on handout material and clarity and coverage of presentation *per se*);

(3) final examination (an oral one-on-one with the instructor on the topic of the final paper and the main topics in the course).

Breakdown of grade: papers (final drafts alone are given grades) first 20%, second 25%, third 30%; presentation 15%; final examination 10%.

### ***Class etiquette***

Please be courteous and professional in your demeanor.

### ***Scholastic dishonesty***

**Scholastic dishonesty on any graded assignment will result in an F on that assignment. A second offense will result in an F in the class.** Scholastic dishonesty includes any kind of cheating on tests, quizzes, or assignments, including plagiarism. Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's work or ideas as your own, and applies both to word-for-word copying and to paraphrasing or repetition of the original thoughts of another. Be particularly careful of this in your research paper: you do not need to cite basic facts, but where you have drawn ideas or materials from other sources, you must cite each of them. If you are still unsure about the exact definition of plagiarism or academic dishonesty, see [http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint\\_student.php](http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint_student.php)

***Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)***

If students are worried about someone who is acting differently, they may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone their concerns about another individual's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>

***Academic Disabilities Statement***

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259, 471-4641 TTY. <http://www.utexas.edu/disability/>

***Religious holidays***

Students can make up work missed for a religious holiday if they bring a request and documentation of the holiday fourteen days ahead of time.

***Other issues***

For other issues or problems associated with campus life, you might find it useful to contact the Office of the Dean of Students. For more information, look online at: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu>