

The Homeric World: Mycenaean Greece

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Contents and challenges

- Key Sites
- Life in the Mycenaean Age
- Decorative Arts
- Tombs, Graves and Burials
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- Prehistory/protohistory: creating a narrative
- Interpreting visual/material culture - reading plans and images

Aegean Prehistoric Archaeology

This site contains information about the prehistoric archaeology of the Aegean.



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Lessons

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Lesson 5 – The Early Minoan Period: The Settlements

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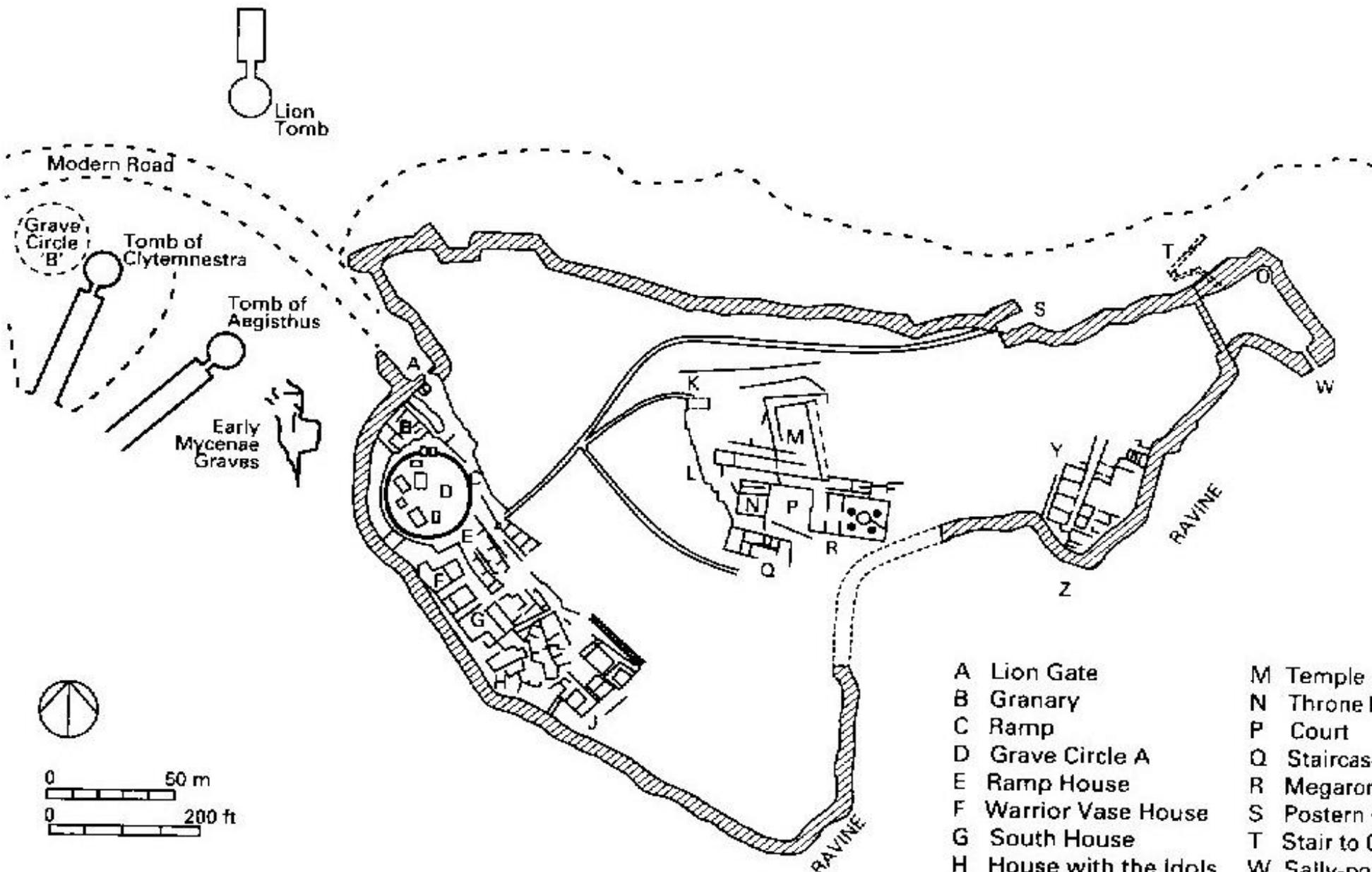
Lesson 2 – The Neolithic Cultures of Thessaly, Crete, and the Cyclades

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Lesson 6 – The Early Minoan Period: The Tombs

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- | | | | |
|---|----------------------|---|------------------|
| A | Lion Gate | M | Temple |
| B | Granary | N | Throne Room |
| C | Ramp | P | Court |
| D | Grave Circle A | Q | Staircase |
| E | Ramp House | R | Megaron |
| F | Warrior Vase House | S | Postern Gate |
| G | South House | T | Stair to Cistern |
| H | House with the Idols | W | Sally-port |
| J | Tsountas House | Y | House of Columns |
| K | Palace Entrance | Z | Tower |
| L | Retaining Wall | | |



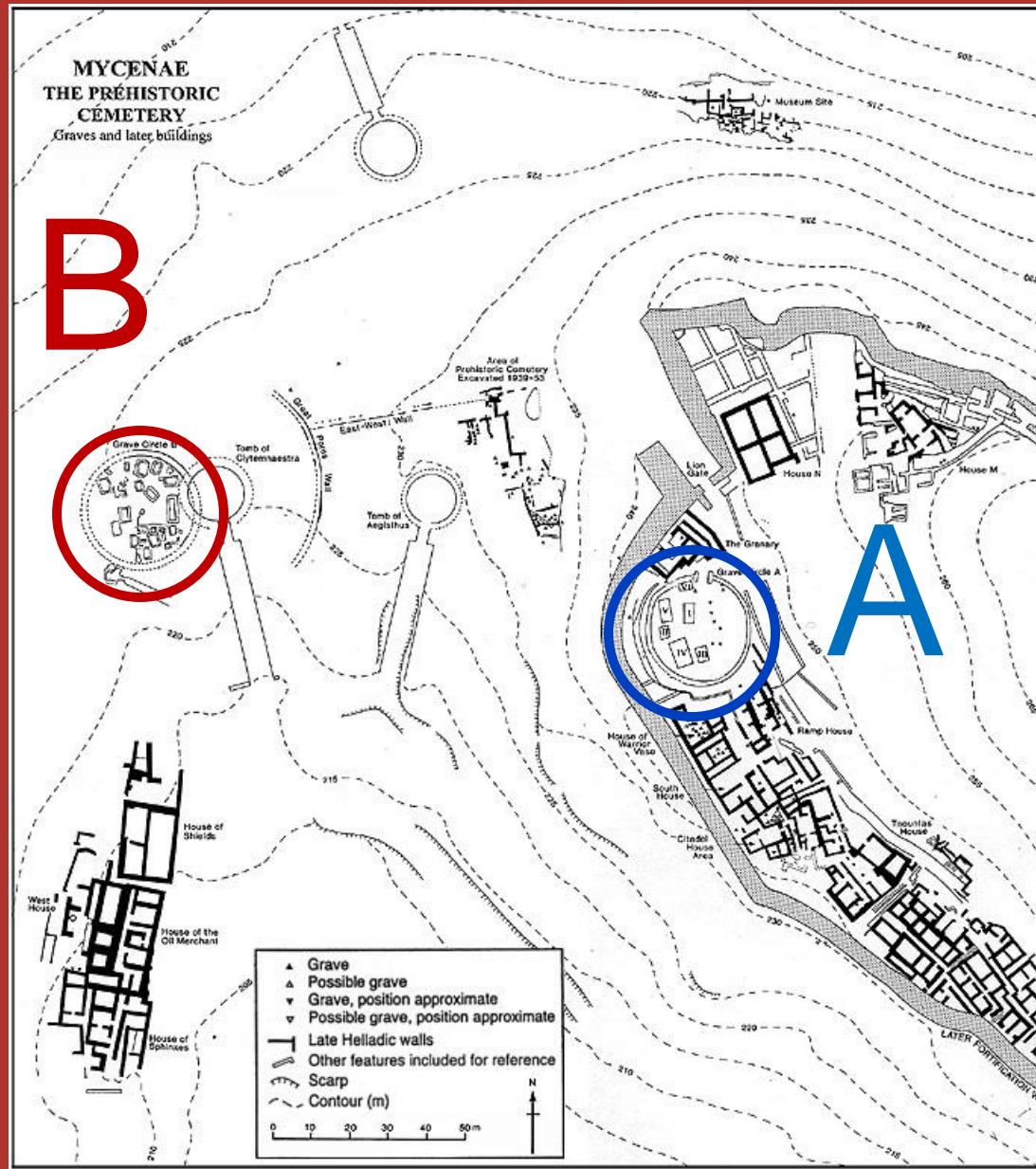
0 50 m

0 200 ft

MYCENAE — ‘GRAVE CIRCLES’

Mylonas
(1952 - 4)

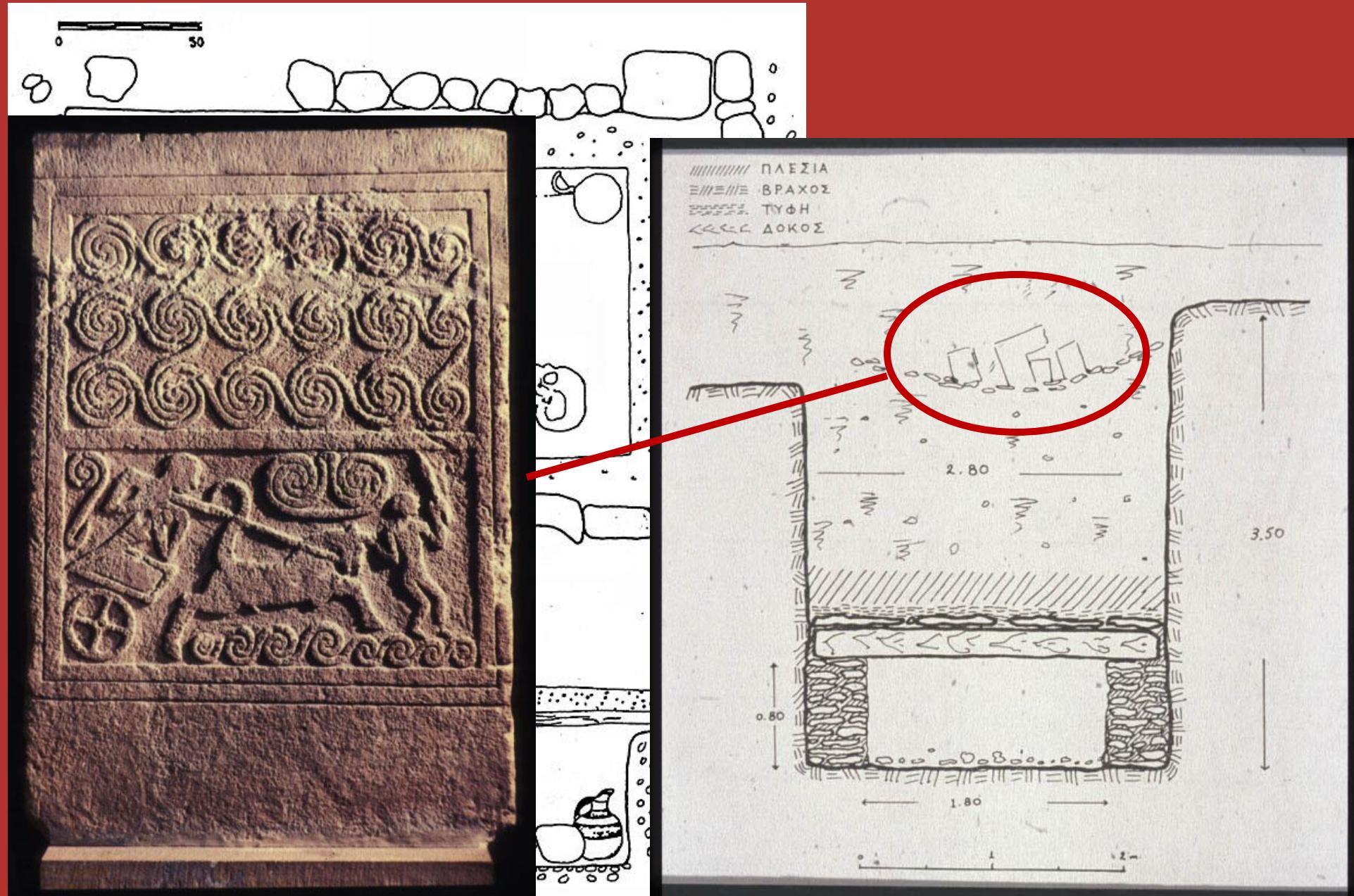
Earlier, poorer,
more burials

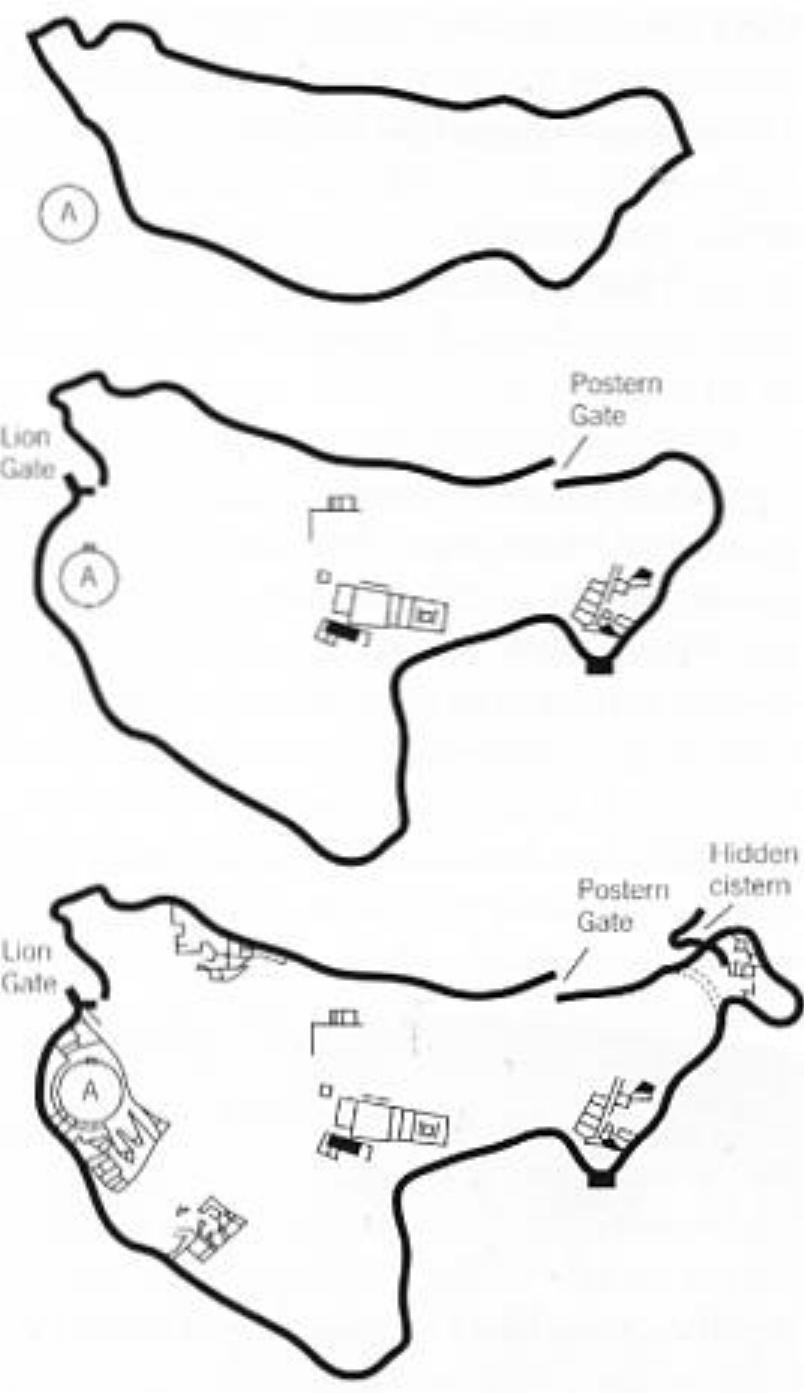


Schliemann
(1876)

Later, richer,
fewer burials

SHAFT GRAVE FORM AND LAYOUT





Mycenae wall

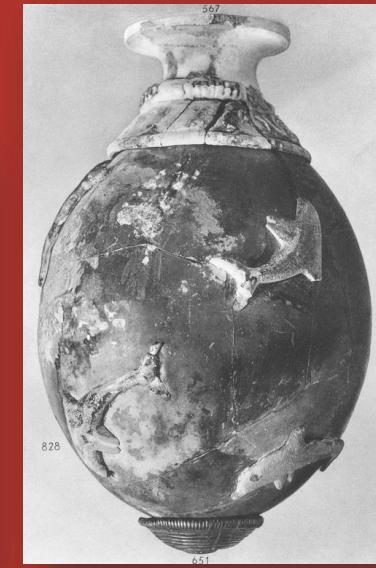
1) c. 1340 BC

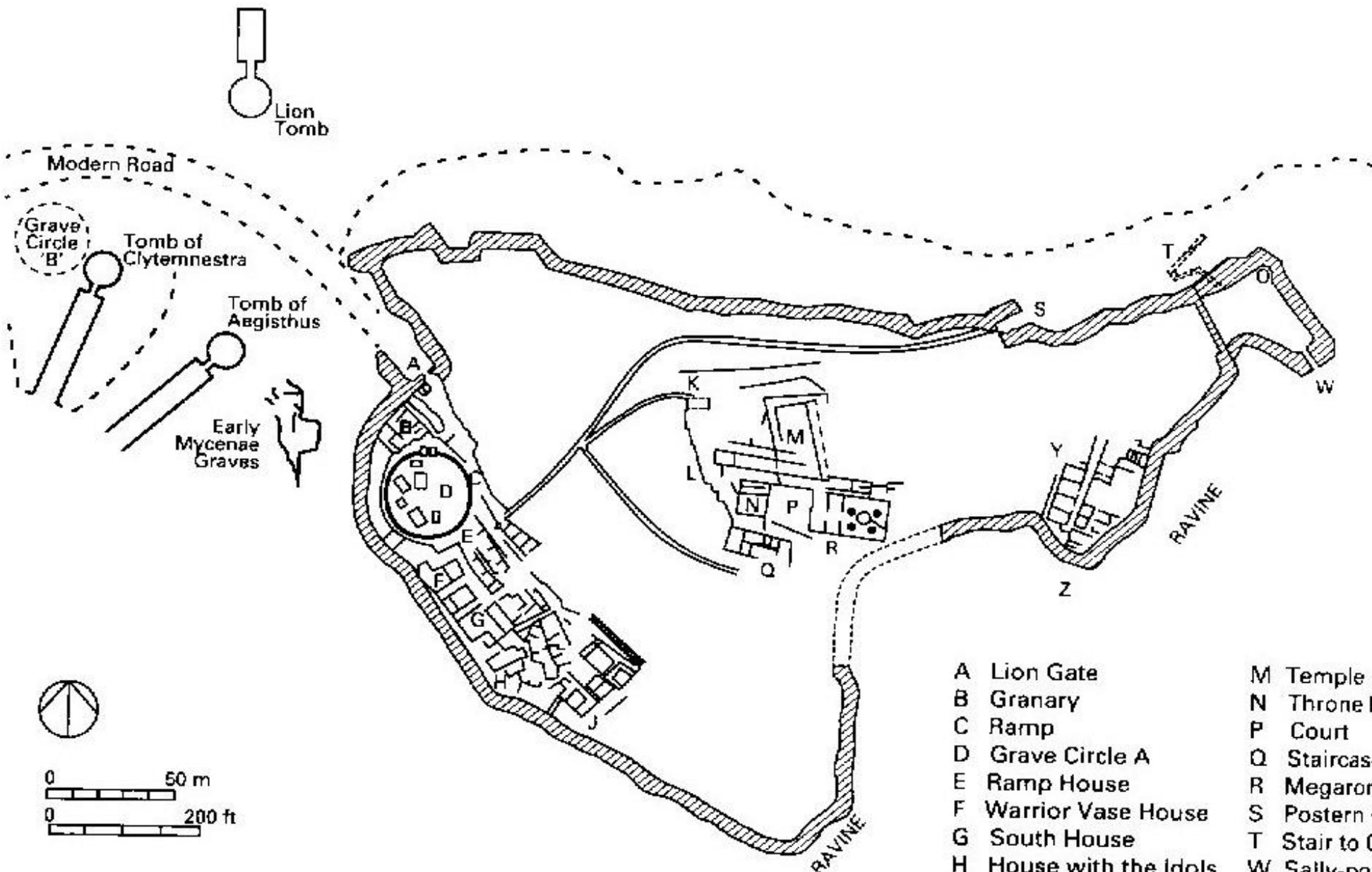
2) c. 1250 BC

3) c. 1200 BC

SHAFT GRAVE MATERIAL QUALITIES

- Martial
- Elaboration of body
- Biographical
- Exotic
 - ‘East’ (Crete; eastern Med; Anatolia)
 - ‘North’ (Baltic; filtered through C Europe?)





- | | | | |
|---|----------------------|---|------------------|
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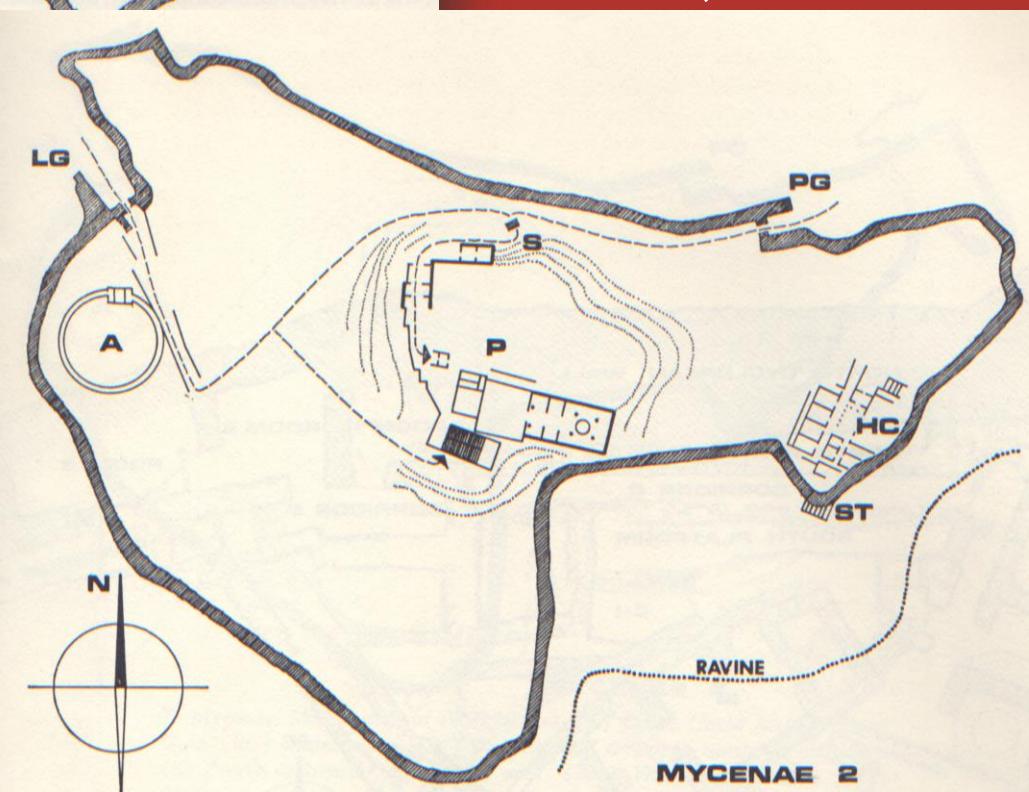
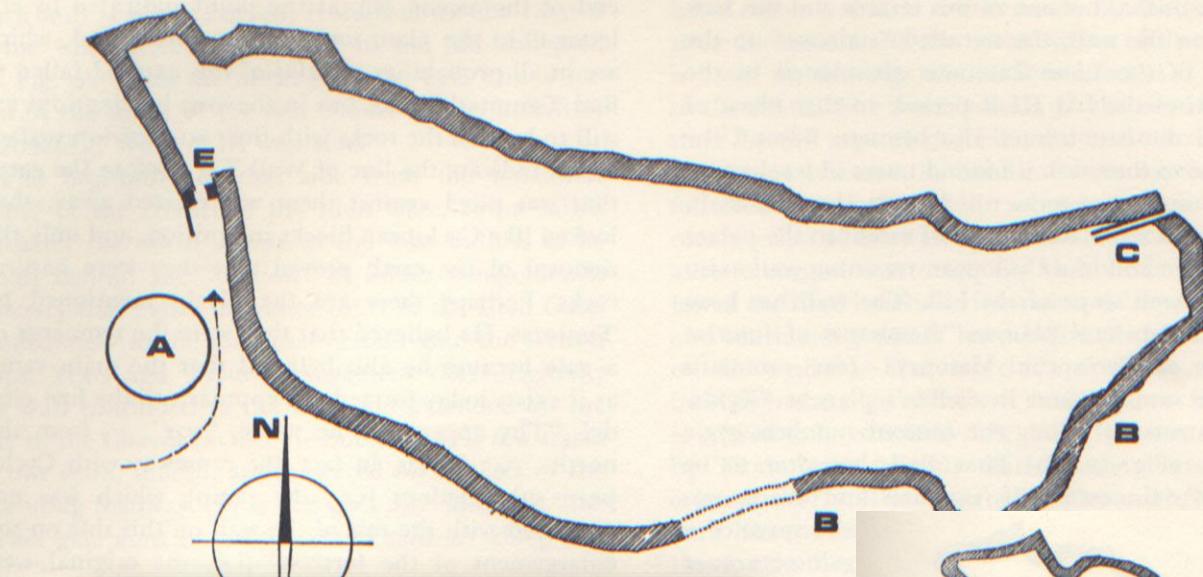
0 50 m

0 200 ft

MYCENAE

LH IIIA , c.1340 BC

LH IIIB1, c.1250 BC

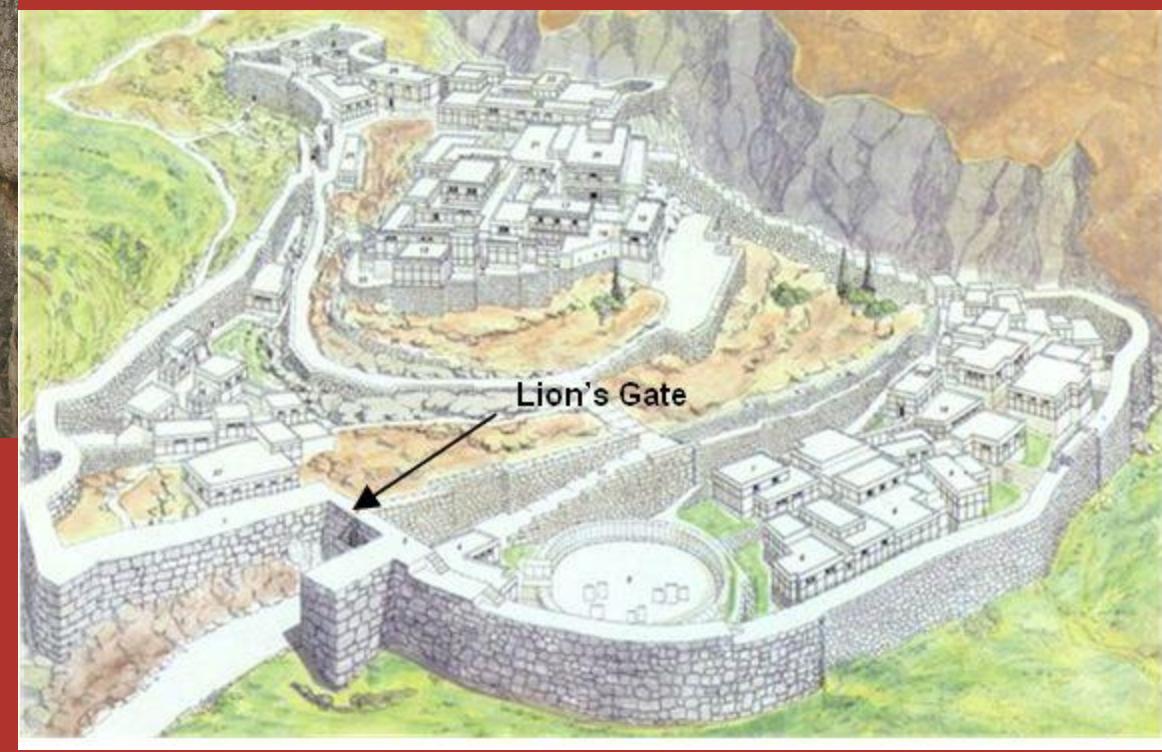


5. Mycenae. Sketch plan of second citadel
(A) Grave Circle A. (LG) Lion Gate. (P) Palace. (S) North staircase
(PG) Postern gate. (HC) House of Columns. (ST) Southeastern tower
(drawing Garvey)



Lion Gate

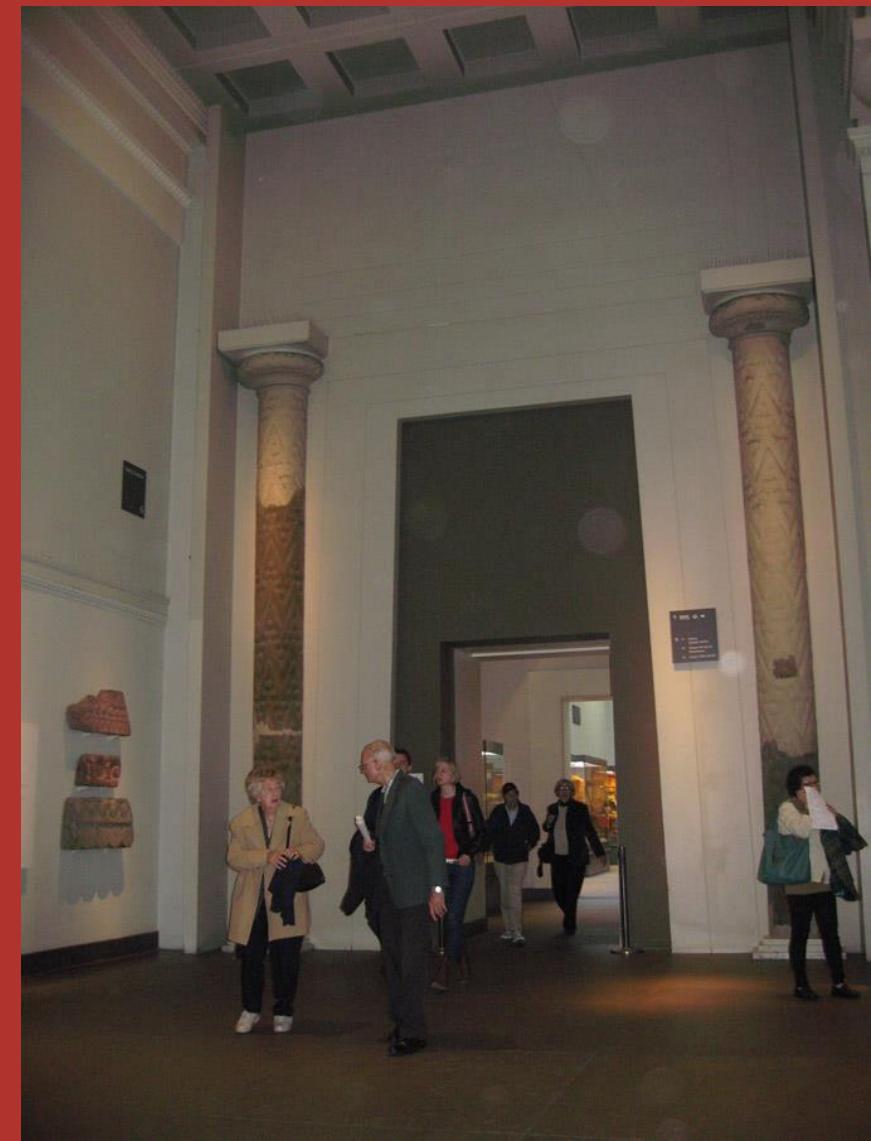
Mycenae

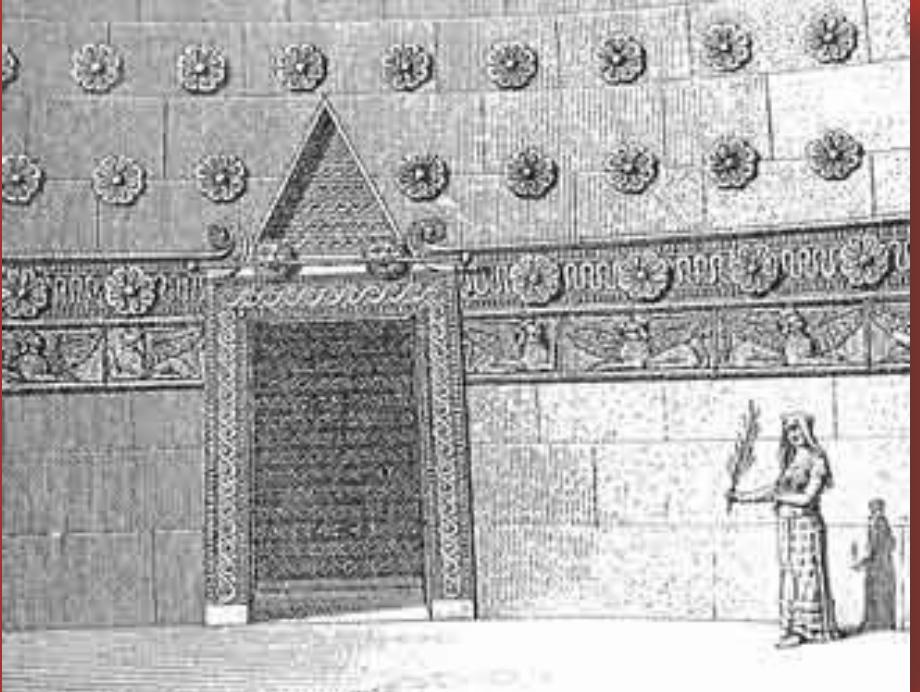


MYCENAEAN THOLOS (ATREUS)



MYCENAEAN THOLOS (ATREUS)

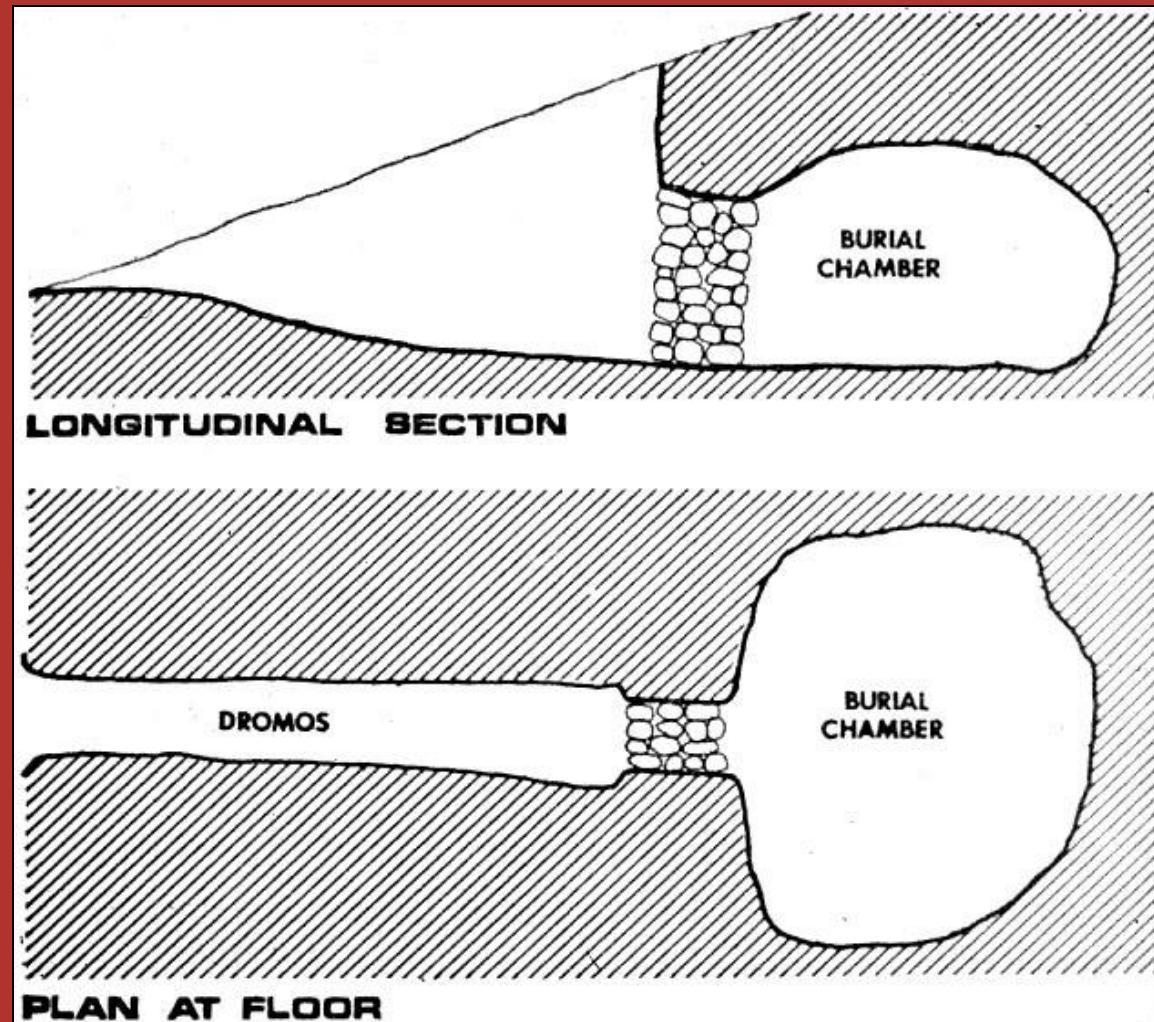
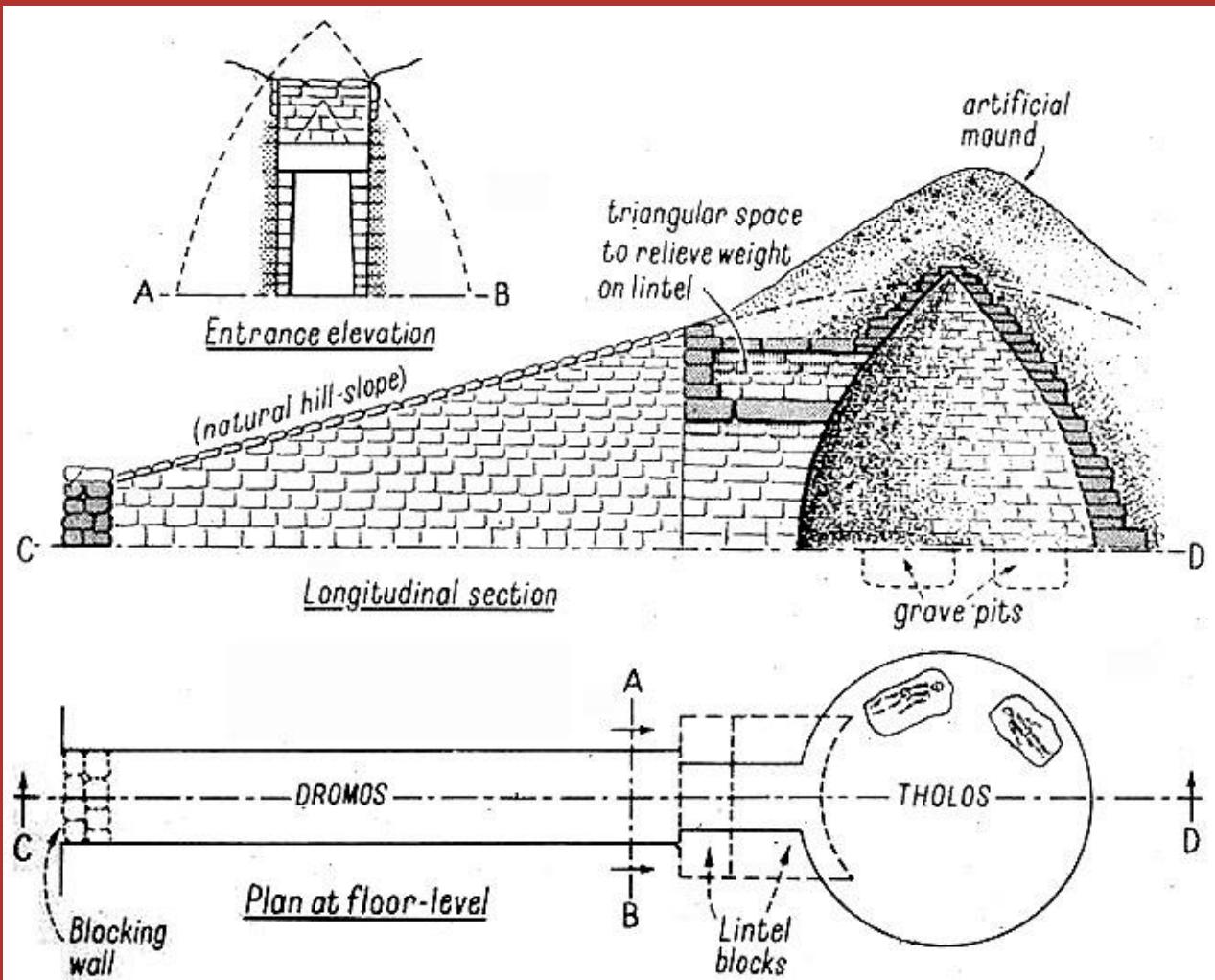




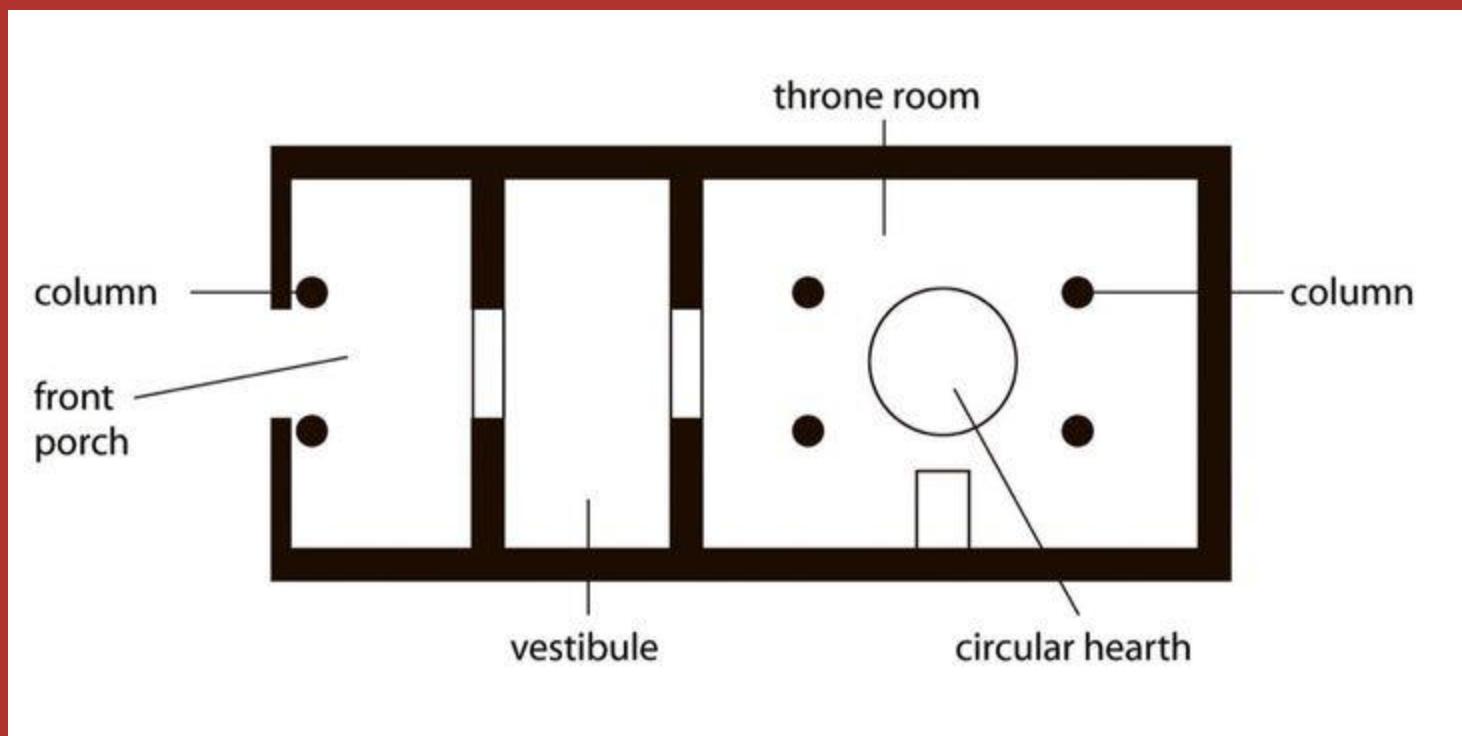
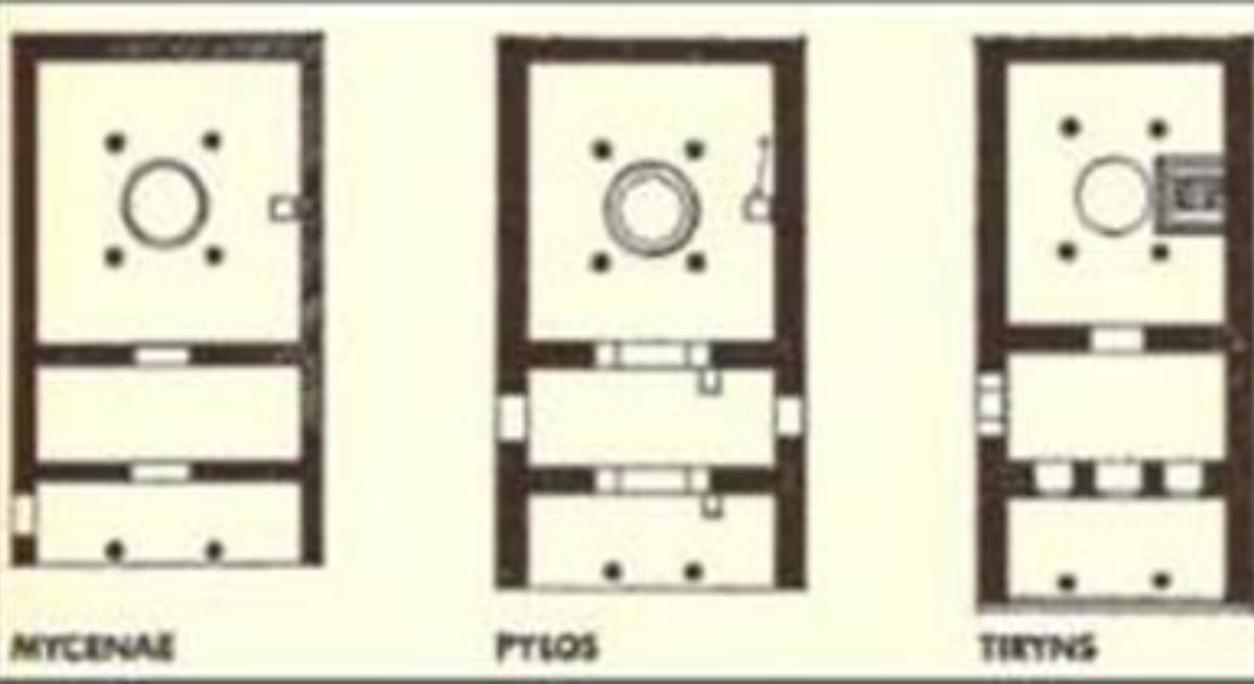
Treasury of Atreus

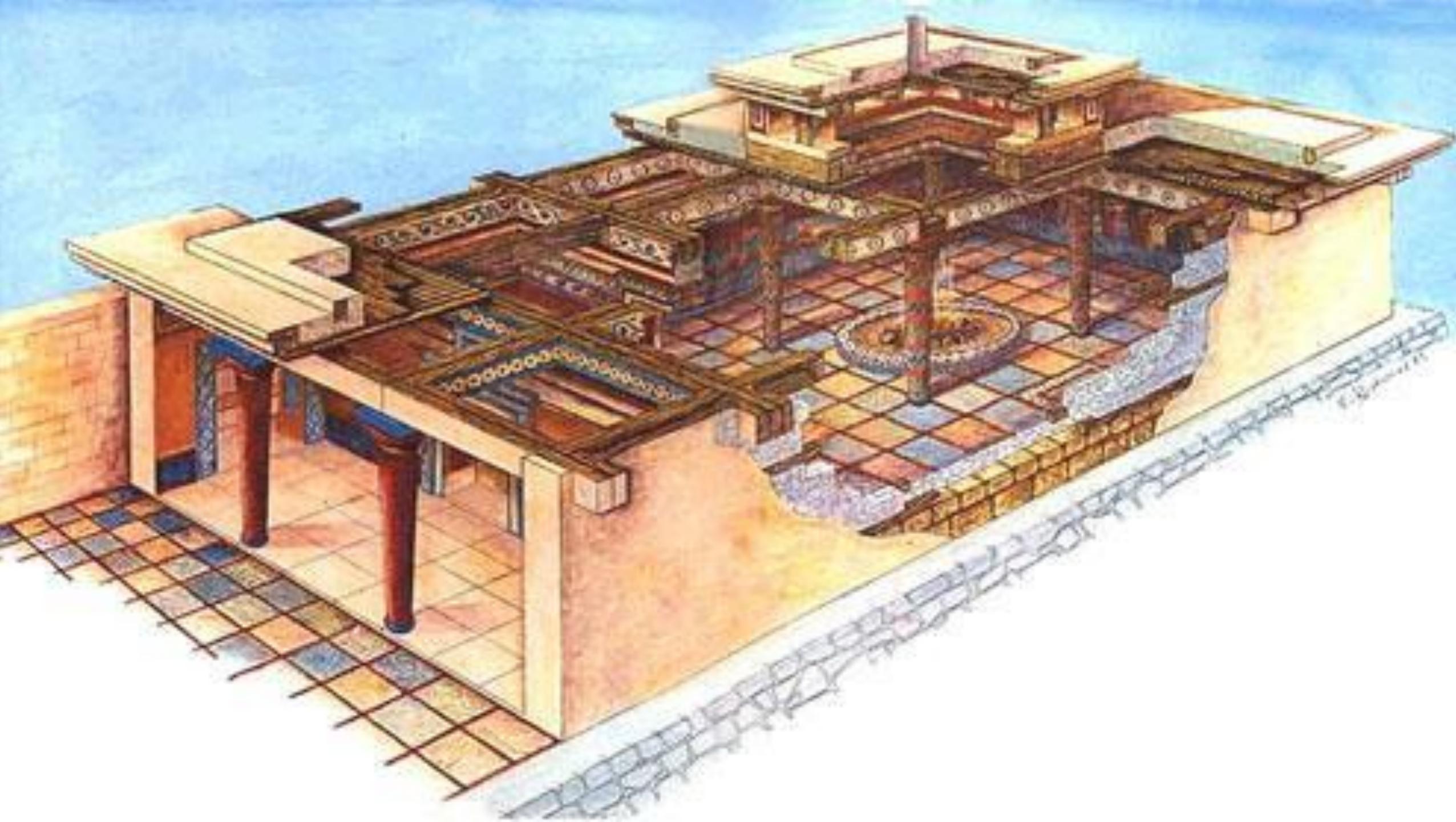


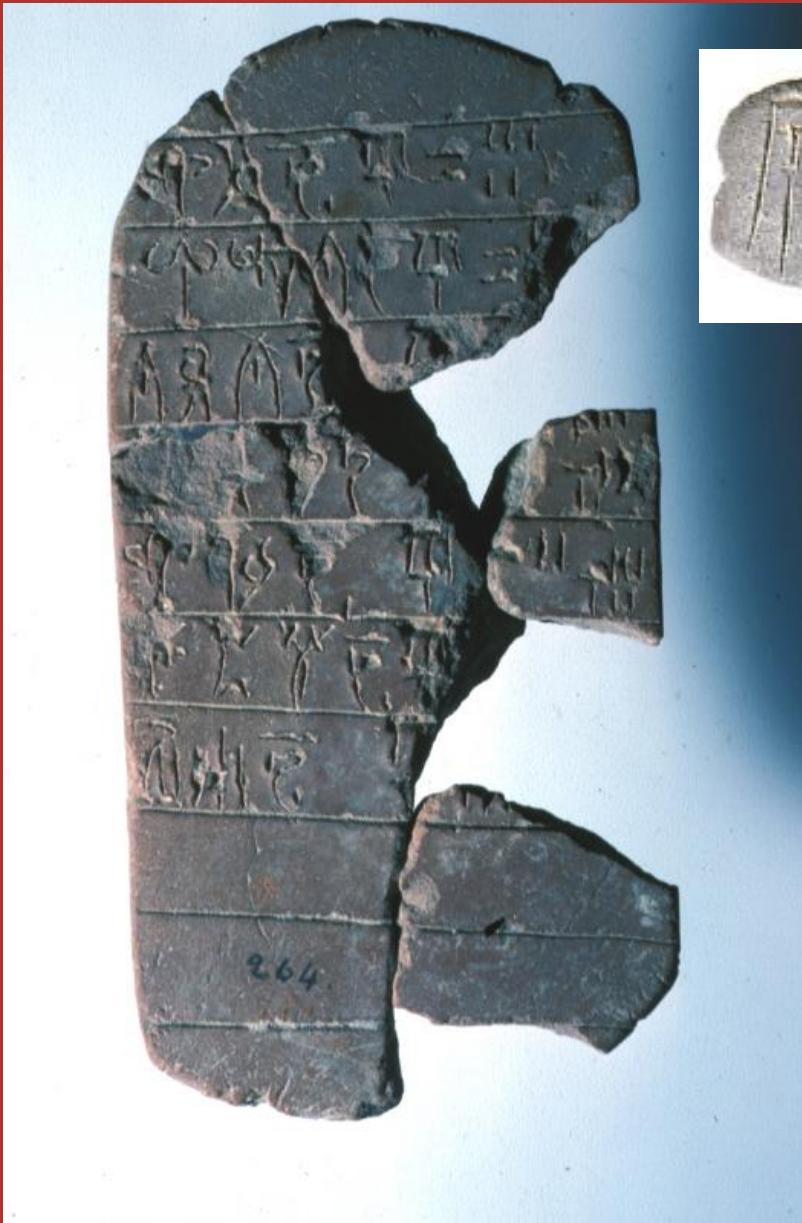
'THOLOS' VERSUS 'CHAMBER' TOMBS



Megaron







Elongated / 'palm-leaf tablet'

Linear B Clay documents

Page-shaped tablet

a 08		e 38		i 28		o 61		u 10	
da 01		de 45		di 07		do 14		du 51	
ja 57		je 46				jo 36			
ka 77		ke 44		ki 67		ko 70		ku 81	
ma 80		me 13		mi 73		mo 15		mu 23	
na 06		ne 24		ni 30		no 52		nu 55	
pa 03		pe 72		pi 39		po 11		pu 50	
qa 16		qe 78		qi 21		qo 32			
ra 60		re 27		ri 53		ro 02		ru 26	
sa 31		se 09		si 41		so 12		su 58	
ta 59		te 04		ti 37		to 05		tu 69	
wa 54		we 75		wi 40		wo 42			
za 17		ze 74				zo 20			

18		19		22		34		35		47		49	
56		63		64		65		79		82		83	
84		85				87		88		89			

Linear B

The syllabary,
after Pylos scribe
of Class I

Linear B

Logograms, 'ideograms' or commodity signs

man	woman	deer	horse	mare	stallion	ewe	ram	nanny goat	billy goat	sow	boar
cow	bull	wheat	barley	olive oil	spice	oil	wine	bronze	gold	wool	horn
cloth	garment	armour	month	tree	helmet	footstool	bathtub	spear	arrow		
wheeled chariot	chariot	chariot frame	wheel	dart							

Numerals

10000 ⊖	1000 ⊖	100 ○	10 -	1 !
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Measures and numerals

Measures

Weight	118 L	℔	117 M	℔	116 N	#	115 P	℔	114 Q	℔
Dry measure	112 T	T	111 v	q	110 z	bow				
Liquid measure	113 s	¶	111 v	q	110 z	bow				

Large scale agriculture



Animal husbandry



Manufacture



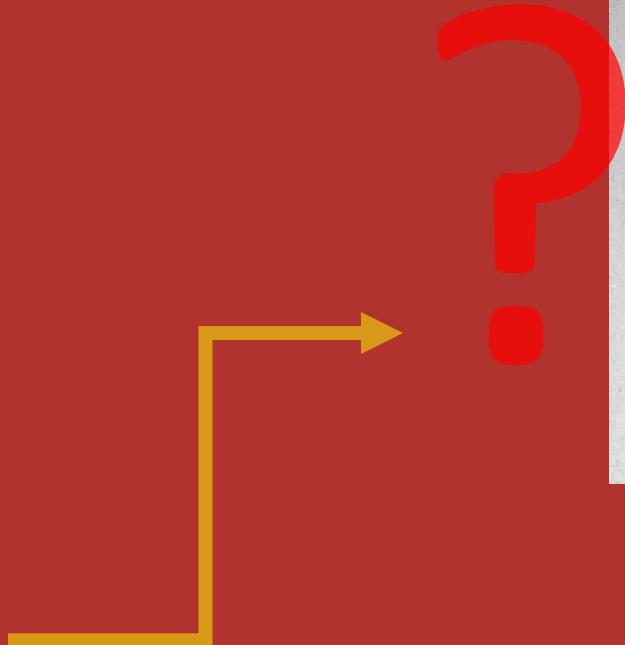
- Records of taxation
- Land-holdings
- Religious offerings
- Contributions to festivals & banquets
- Inventories



Administrative bureaucracy



'peripheral'



'central' / 'archival'



Potentials & Limitations

- texts **can** offer:
 - specific types of information re. individual actions
 - qualitative / quantitative information re. commodities not preserved (e.g., textiles; oil)
- (Linear B) texts **cannot** offer:
 - diachronic perspective — needs to be linked to archaeological data
 - total, panoptic view — selective and written from particular point of view



Mycenaean textiles

Detail of woman in Tiryns "Procession Fresco"



Detail of "Campstool" Fresco
Knossos, c. 1450-1350

BRONZE

Pylos – ‘bronze’:
c. 576 kg allocated to
c. 300 smiths
at 17 locations



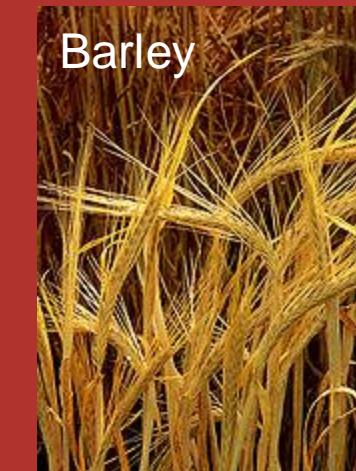
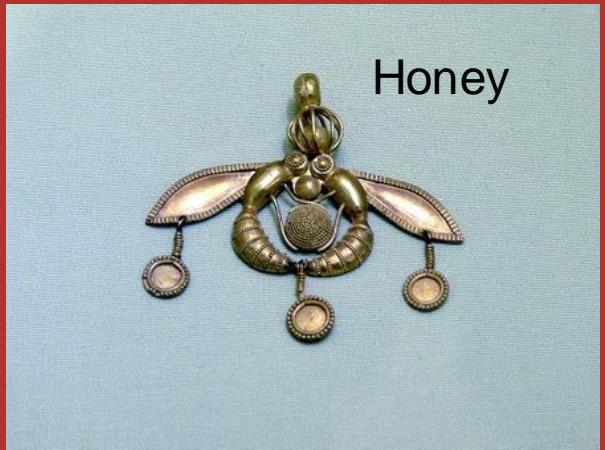
Dendra panoply



Pylos Deities

- PO-TI-NI-JA. Potnia
 - PO-SE-DA-O-NE. Poseidon
 - PO-SI-DA-E-JA. Posidaieia
 - DI-WE/DI-WI-JE-U. Zeus
 - DI-W-JA. Diwia
 - E-RA. Hera
 - A-TI-MI-TE. Artemis
 - E-MA-A. Hermes
 - A-RE-JA. Ares?
 - DI-WO-NU-SO-JO. Dionysos
 - MA-TE-RE TE-I-JA. Mater theia
- TE-O-I. The gods
TE-O. (The) god

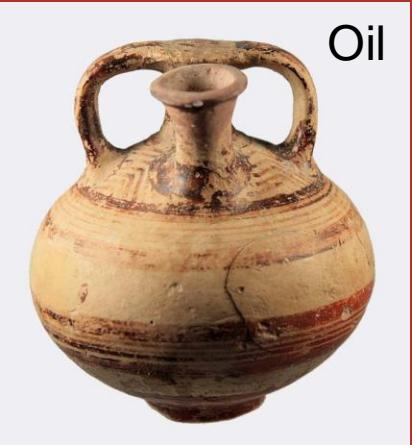
Offerings: bloodless



Other terms:

- TE-O-PO-RI-JA (= theophoria). A festival

Offerings: bloodless



Festivals:

- RE-KE-TO-RO-RI-JO.
Lekhestroterion
- TO-NO-E-KE-TE-RI-JO.
Thronohelkesterion
- ME-TU-WO NE-WO
- TU-RU-PTE-RE-JA. Thrypteria

Blood sacrifice:

Suovetaurilia

- Sus: pig
- Ovis: sheep
- Taurus: bull

Cult personnel:

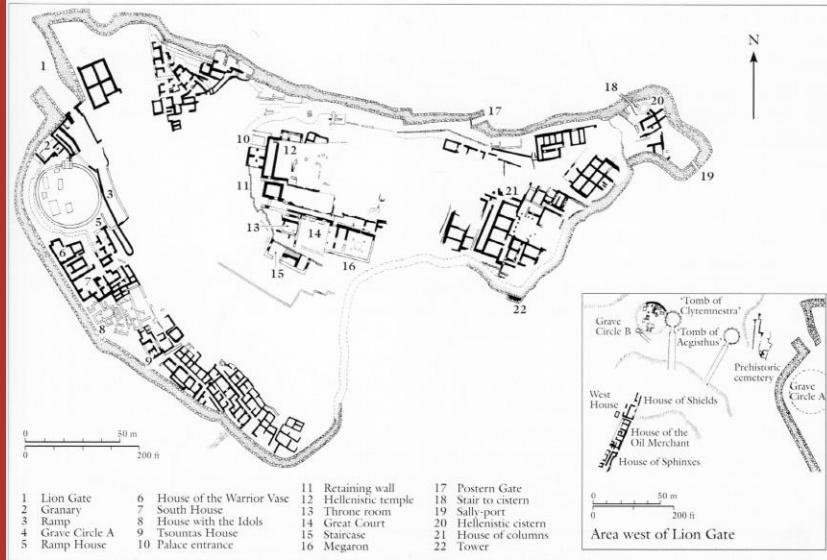
- I-JE-RE-U = hiereus
- I-JE-RE-JA = hiereia
- KA-RA-WI-PO-RO (=klarwiphoros)
- PU-KO-WO (=purkooi)
- KI-RE-TI-WI-JA
- I-JE-RO-WO-KO (=the hierourgoi)

Implications of decipherment

- Mycenaeans spoke Greek
- Greek did not arrive with the ‘Dorian invasion’ after the fall of the palaces
- Homer’s heroes spoke Greek in the Bronze Age
- Oral poetry handed down traditions in Greek
- The Mycenaeans worshipped deities with the same names as later Greeks
- Rewriting of European history

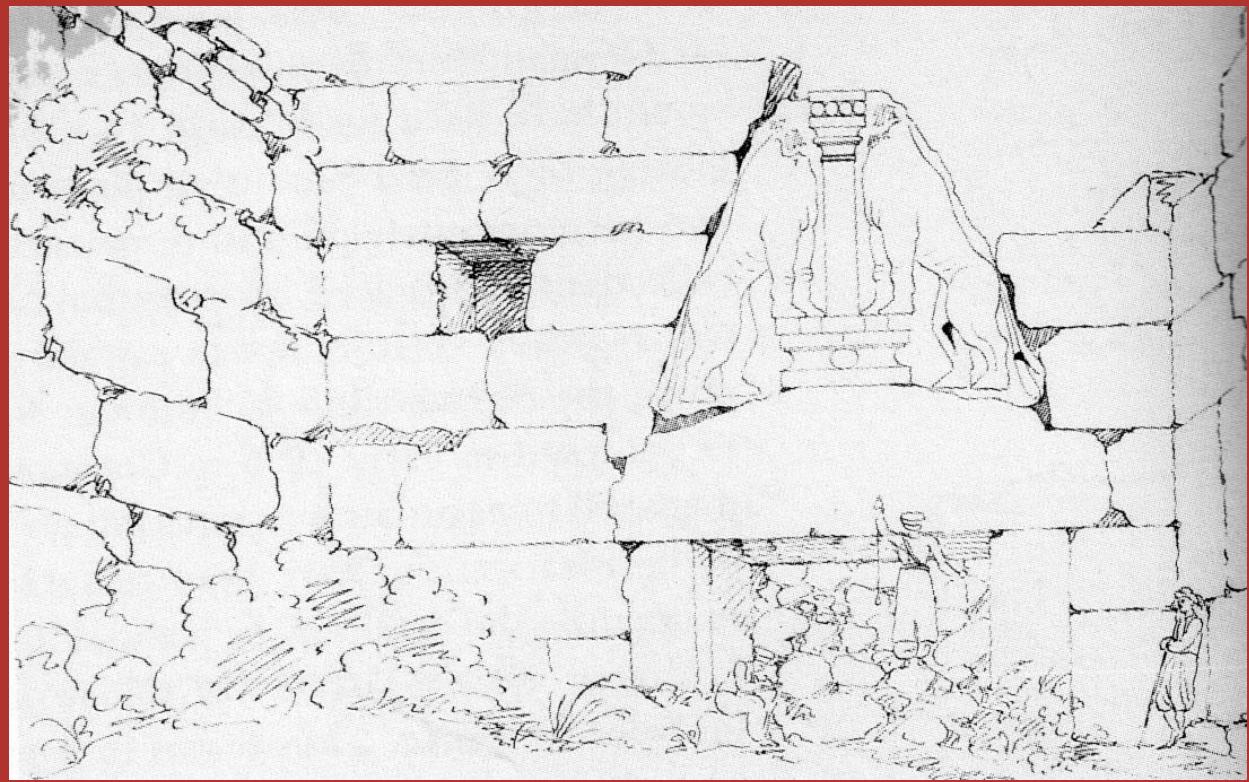
Chronological sequence

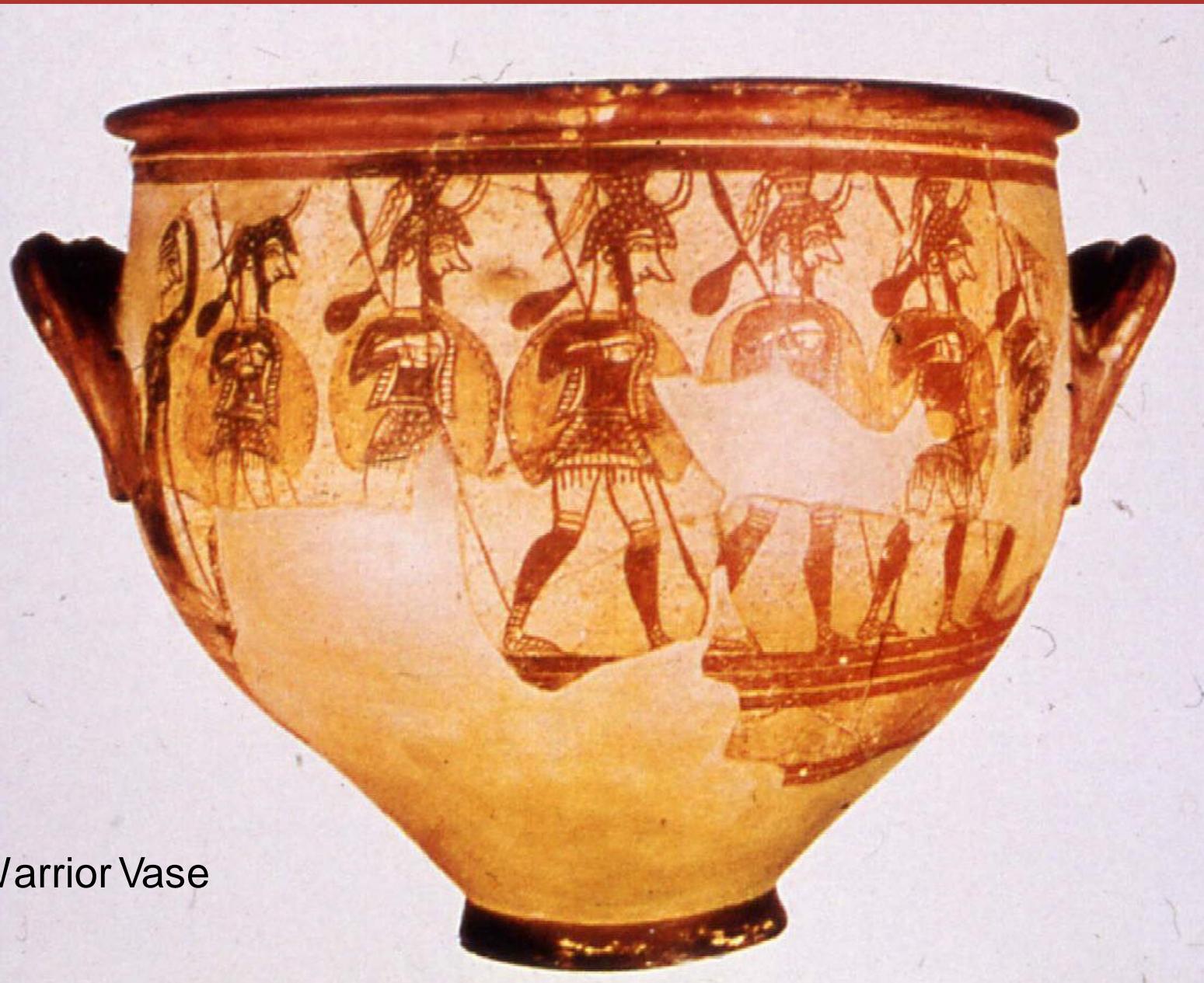




Mycenae Lion Gate

Dodwell 1834





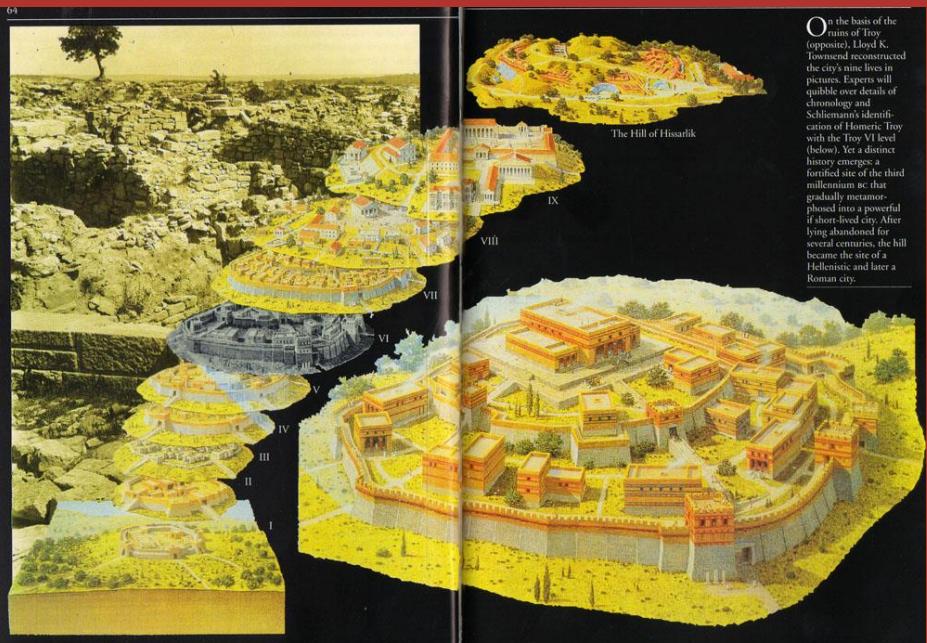
Warrior Vase



Boar tusks helmets



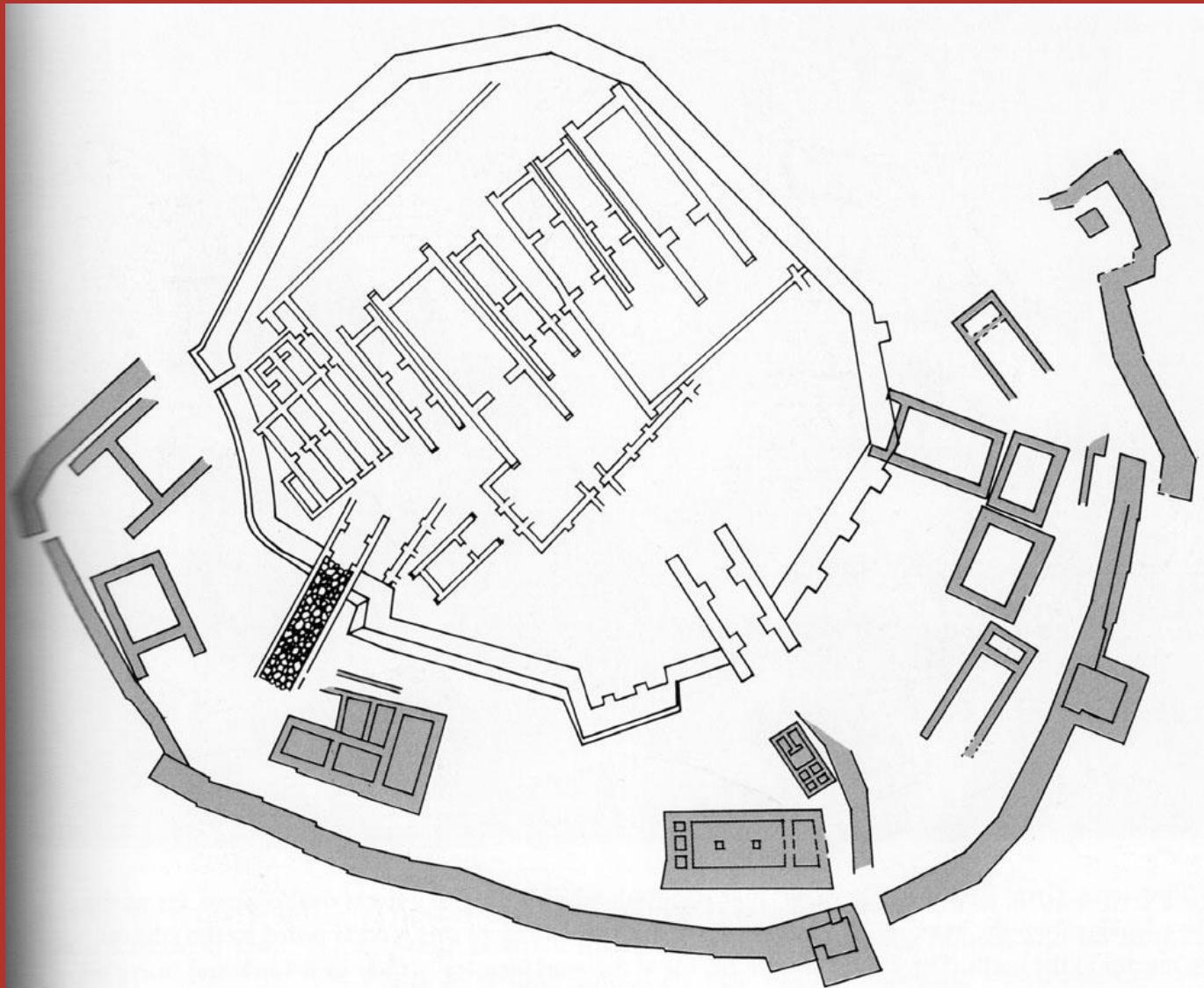
Heinrich Schliemann and Troy



The 'Jewels of Helen'

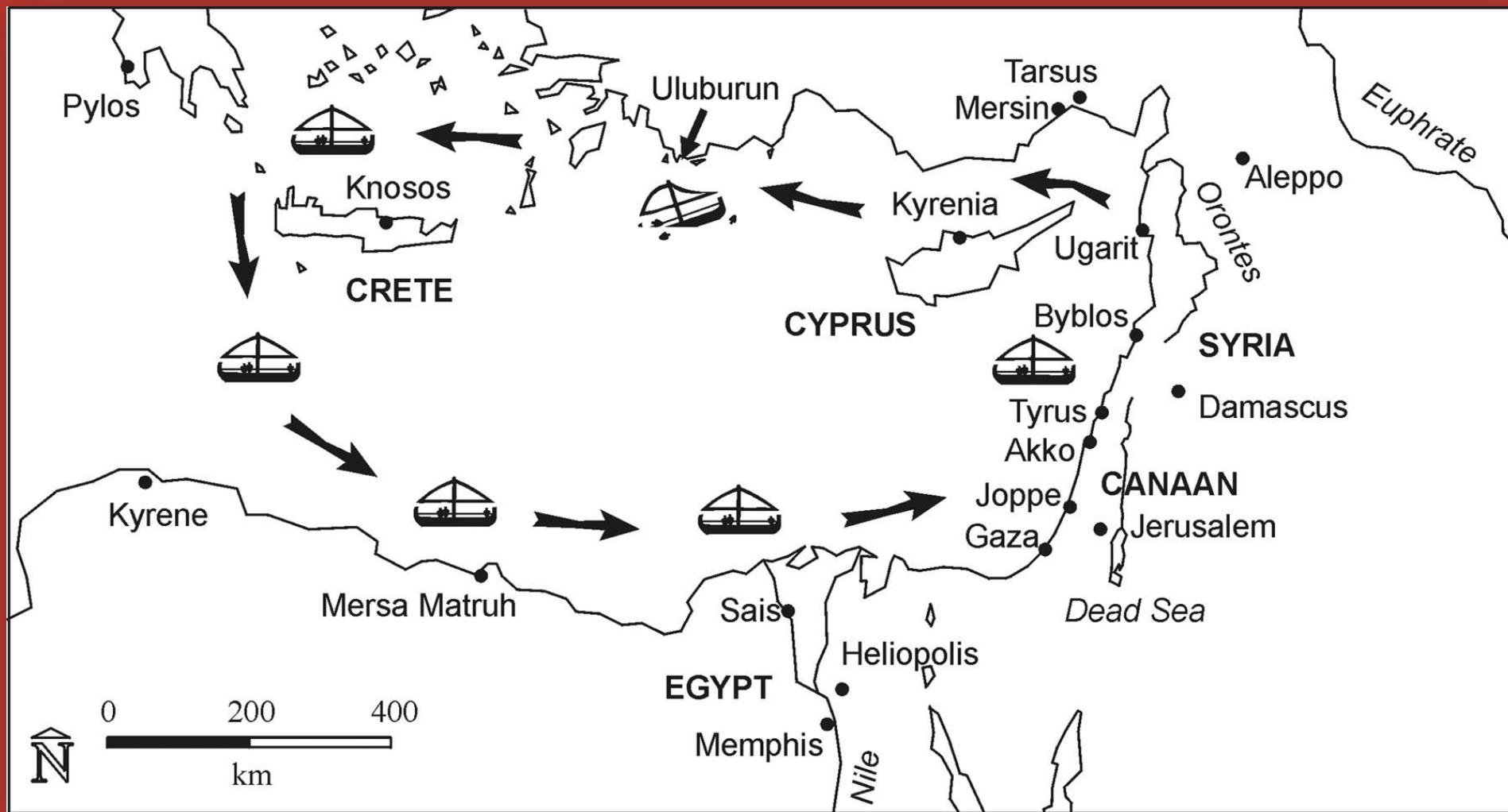


Troy II and Troy VI

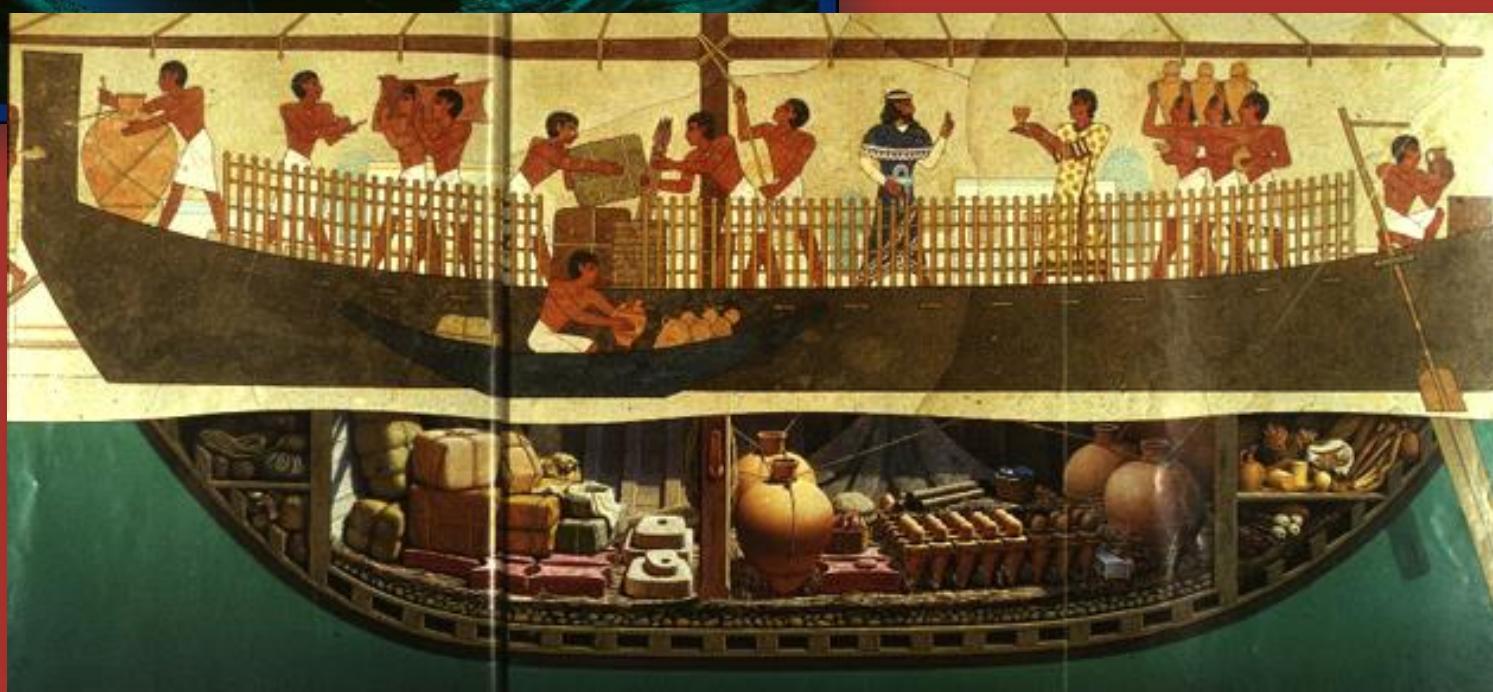


Troy II
unshaded:
Early Bronze
Age

Troy VI
shaded: Late
Bronze Age



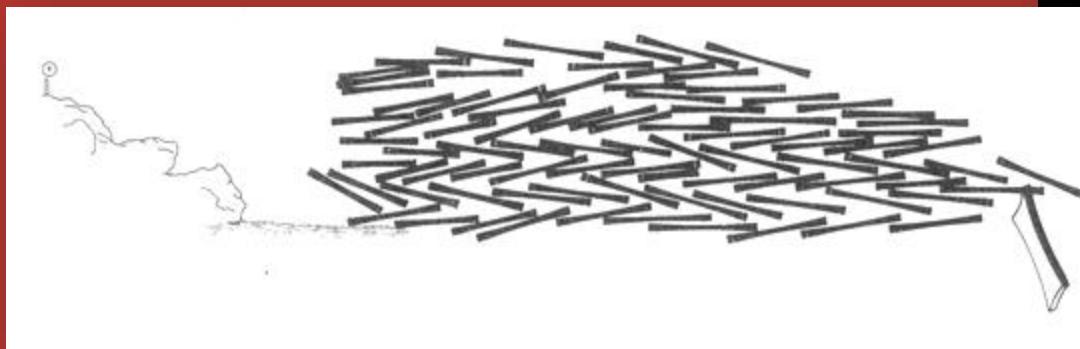
ULUBURUN



ULUBURUN – RAW MATERIALS

COPPER INGOTS

(354 oxhide; 121 bun)



ULUBURUN – MANUFACTURED GOODS LUXURY ITEMS

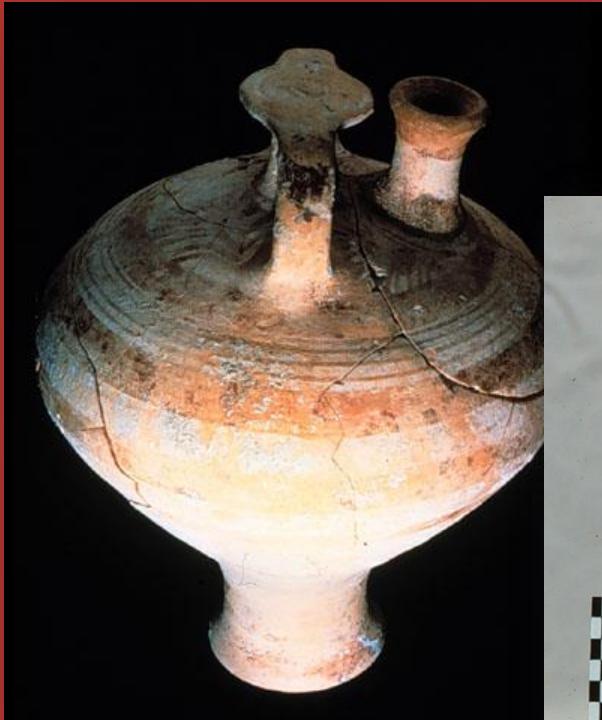
Gold chalice



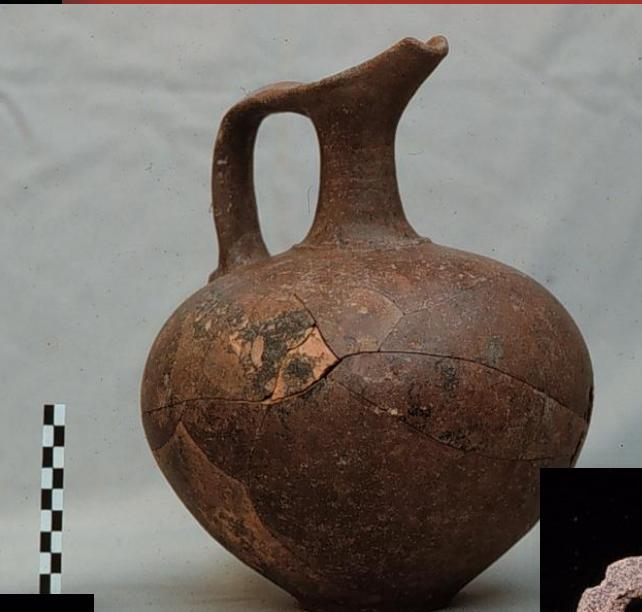
Faience ram's
head rhyton

Canaanite Figurine
Bronze with gold foil - Expensive / Prestigious:
Cargo or Protective Deity?

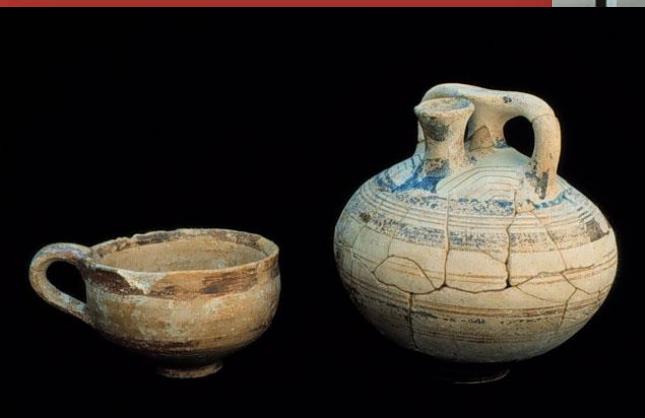
MYCENAEANS ON THE ULUBURUN SHIP?



Mycenaean pottery



Mycenaean steatite
lentoid seal



Glass
beads



