Dawn of Discovery

Dawn of Discovery:
The Early British Travellers to Crete

By

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ABSTRACT

It is intended to focus on three important British travellers to Crete during the 18th and 19th centuries to establish whether or not they made any significant contribution to the field of research with regard to the archaeological heritage of Bronze Age Crete. It is an attempt to bring these 'lost pioneers' of antiquity to the fore and to recognize their efforts as part of the foundation of the discovery of the island's Bronze Age archaeology prior to the groundbreaking excavations of Sir Arthur Evans. They are Richard Pococke (1704-65), Robert Pashley (1805-59) and Thomas Spratt (1811-88).

Having dealt with the terms that these travellers used in describing ancient remains, the work will look briefly at the background to Bronze Age Crete itself. Thereafter the development from antiquarianism into archaeology will be followed to establish the motives behind these travellers' wanderings in Crete. This will also involve a discussion of other British travellers to Crete and problems they may have encountered with an island in the throes of Ottoman turbulence.

In order to try and see what Pococke, Pashley and Spratt may have discovered, their footsteps have been followed around the island comparing their written accounts with what is physically there today. Consideration is then given to whether any sites they described might have been of the Bronze Age. This has not always been easy as the landscape of the island has changed over the years. However, in some cases, what has been found was indeed pertinent to the Bronze Age of Crete. In addition, various views of the mythical Labyrinth are looked at in an attempt to compound the theory that there may have been a certain belief in a period prior to the known Classical era (of the 5th century BC Greece) – even if the tales themselves were not accepted as fact. Views of British travellers to mainland Greece are compared to emphasize this belief. Finally, there is a discussion of the theories referred to in the earlier chapters.

Questions raised and, hopefully, answered are: How do the travellers' 'field surveys' and discoveries compare with what is now known today from excavation? Were some of their references to 'Cyclopean' stonework

an identification of Bronze Age architecture? Do they deserve recognition for the identification of a prehistory of Crete? Why are their names missing from so many books on the history of archaeology and the discovery of Cretan archaeology?

This work will bring together, for the first time, an understanding of the views and comparative discoveries of three 18th and 19th century travellers of the, then, unknown ancient pre-history of Bronze Age Crete. It will conclude that they did indeed contribute to the realization of an earlier civilization than the Classical period even if it was not an exact knowledge as to what it might have been.

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The author

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ABBREVIATIONS

BSA	British School [of archaeology] at Athens
HO	Hydrographic Office
LB	Letter Book
IL	Incoming Letters prior to 1857
NLS	National Library of Scotland *Robert Pashley Correspondence*
NMM	National Maritime Museum, Greenwich
Pck	Pococke, R. (1745) *A Description of the East and some other Countries* Vol. II. Part I, Fourth Book: 'Of the island of Candia'
Psh I	Pashley, R. (1837) *Travels in Crete*, Vol. I
Psh II	Pashley, R. (1837) *Travels in Crete*, Vol. II
RGS	Royal Geographical Society
Sp I	Spratt, T.A.B. (1865) *Travels and Researches in Crete*, Vol. I
Sp II	Spratt, T.A.B. (1865) *Travels and Researches in Crete*, Vol. II

Minoan chronology

EM	Early Minoan
MM	Middle Minoan
LM	Late Minoan

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INTRODUCTION

The island of Crete is situated in the Aegean, southeast of mainland Greece. Ancient Bronze Age 'Minoan' Crete (*c.*3000–1450 BC) was one of the most important and earliest sophisticated civilizations of Europe and it formed part of the origins of European civilization itself. It was lost for centuries and Sir Arthur Evans has been given the credit for its rediscovery at the beginning of the 1900s.[1]

In 1734, some 160 years earlier than the first explorations of Evans, Richard Pococke too travelled to Crete in search of its history. Almost a hundred years later Robert Pashley was reporting back to the hydrographer, Francis Beaufort, about his finds of ancient sites on the island. Then in the 1850s, still fifty years before Evans put a spade in the ground in Crete, Thomas Abel Brimage Spratt chose to travel the island to observe its topography and ruins which he believed held secrets to an ancient past.

Pococke was a member of the clergy with a passion for travel. His visit to Crete was not extensive but sufficient to reveal an island of antiquity awaiting discovery. Pashley was a barrister seeking knowledge and with the encouragement of the Admiralty was able to pursue his interest in antiquities on Crete. Captain Spratt was a Royal Naval hydrographer and followed Pashley's lead with a further and more detailed investigation of the island's ancient past. Spratt's initial task was to survey the seas of the Mediterranean and the Aegean, but he considered it necessary to review the geological status of the island of Crete to assist with this commission.

The three of them did not limit their studies to ancient history. They were all curious about how the Cretan people lived during the 18th and 19th centuries and how they coped with the oppressive Ottoman rule. They were interested in the natural history of the island and Spratt went to great lengths to report his findings to his old friend the naturalist, Edward Forbes. Spratt looked at Crete's geology and established that the island had tilted during its ancient period and wrote to the eminent geologist, Sir Charles Lyell, with his discovery. Spratt also corresponded with Charles Darwin and sent him a copy of his book to see if it was of interest to him.

[1] Fitton, 1995: 36.

Map 1: Map of Europe showing Crete

All three travellers recorded their discoveries in books[2] which have long since been forgotten following the revelations of Arthur Evans regarding his 'Minoans' of Crete through his very extensive publications.[3] Evans' achievements on Crete are without doubt of immense value, but some credit is due to these earlier travellers. Evans must have known of these early forages into the island's history, yet his otherwise detailed accounts and reports are surprisingly sparse when it comes to mention of Pococke, Pashley or Spratt. These three were pioneers of the exploration of Crete and its antiquity, yet their names are all but absent from the

[2] Pococke, 1745; Pashley, 1837; Spratt, 1865.
[3] Evans, 1921, 1928, 1930, 1935.

history and archaeology of the island. They set the scene for those such as Evans to follow.

In a consideration of the achievements of Pococke, Pashley and Spratt with regard to the discovery of the Bronze Age of Crete in particular, it is necessary to first look briefly at the island itself and how it developed during the Bronze Age and how the chronology of that period has subsequently been reported.

The motives behind travelling abroad during the 18th and 19th centuries form an important part of a social history of that period, and how those motives changed during the latter part of the 19th century is also of interest. This was an era that saw fundamental changes to the discipline of archaeology and its development through to the end of the 19th century is exactly the period when Pococke, Pashley and Spratt were making their investigations. Were they simply travellers, collectors or antiquarians, or could they be termed archaeologists as we would use the title today? Do the terms they used to describe and record ancient remains give insights into a phase of activity on the island that took place earlier to the Greek classical period of the 5th century BC? Is it relevant whether or not they knew of the Bronze Age, or is it enough that they believed in a Cretan civilization earlier than the known Greek classical period? These are questions that will be addressed in this book.

In order to investigate the significant contribution made by Pococke, Pashley and Spratt, it is necessary to 'follow their footsteps' around the island using their published journals in an attempt to establish whether or not they saw any Bronze Age remains or, at least, anything of an earlier age than the Greek classical era, the latter of which was already well known to the scholars of the 18th and 19th centuries. In 1990, Christopher Thorne, the late University of Sussex Professor of International Relations, belived this possible when he walked across Crete:

> There also remain from ancient times … some of the island's main routes – this, despite the coming of the bulldozer and the construction … of the fast modern roads. The ways that are available to someone wanting, as I did, to climb out of the easternmost plain are still in essence those that presented to themselves to the sturdy Spratt a century and a quarter ago.[4]

Comparisons of Pococke, Pashley and Spratt will be made with other British travellers to the island to show that the three were distinct in their

[4] Thorne, 1992: 25, although referring to the 'easternmost plain' the same applies to most of the remainder of the island – but he was not looking to see what Spratt had actually seen.

search for ancient knowledge. Spratt's intrigue with the 'Labyrinth' at Gortyns is of much interest as it gives a further indication of his highly inquisitive nature and therefore requires investigation. There will be a general discussion of points raised and a summary and conclusion will complete the work.

It cannot be denied that Evans' excavation of Knossos and other sites brought the Bronze Age civilization on Crete back to life and led the way for research which still continues today. However, it is contended that he was not the first to believe that the history of Crete stretched back way beyond the Greek classical period. That honour should go to travellers, explorers and early archaeologists such as Richard Pococke, Robert Pashley and Thomas Abel Brimage Spratt.

Terminology

Part of the basis of this work relates to an interpretation of Pashley's and Spratt's use of the word 'Cyclopean' when describing ancient walls of Crete seen by them. Dating ancient sites is no easy task without some factor to link it with a known datable similarity such as pottery by way of typology. In the 19th century, Cretan datable pottery was not available and the main source of identification was architecture.[5] Pashley and Spratt were able to relate to the architecture of the ancient Greek classical period from the 5th century BC and the Hellenistic period from the 4th century BC, which they both called 'Hellenic'.[6] However, they did mention, and Pashley drew, various walls that did not seem to fit these styles. These are the Cyclopean walls to which the two travellers referred, and these walls need to be considered as a possible identification of an earlier period, perhaps as early as the Bronze Age. It is necessary to consider the meaning of Cyclopean and whether or not there is any evidence that it should be distinguished from Pashley and Spratt's Hellenic.

References

Pococke, Pashley and Spratt were primarily of the 'classical text in hand' type of travellers. Such texts included Homer's *Iliad* (composed in

[5] Flinders Petrie provided the basis for establishing a chronology of Aegean prehistory of mainland Greece in 1893 by finding Mycenaean sherds at Tell el-Armana (Medwid, 2000: 241; Farnoux, 1996: 66); and thereafter John Myers linked Petrie's finds at Kahun in Egypt with Middle Minoan kamares ware in Crete (Cadogan, 2000: 20).

[6] 'Hellenic' simply means 'Greek'.

8th century BC) for 'historical' references, Strabo (1st century BC/1st century AD) and Pausanias (2nd century AD) for geographical references, to name but three.[7] Pococke, Pashley and Spratt were mainly interested in identifying sites of the classical and Hellenistic 5th and 4th century BC periods because they were known to them. However, this does not mean to say that what they saw with respect to archaeological ruins was all of the classical or Hellenistic eras. Not all of the many Bronze Age sites of Crete were built over by later classical or Hellenistic or Roman buildings, and so some would still have been visible to the traveller in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Interpretations

It is worth remembering that archaeology, like any science, is merely a body of arguments advanced to make sense of observations about the world. Consideration must always be given to the fact that there is often more than one acceptable way of interpreting archaeological finds and sites. This is something which is even more important when there are no contemporary written records to collaborate the evidence which is therefore subject entirely to the interpretation of the excavator. Subsequent re-examination of excavation/travel reports may produce a different interpretation from that initially proposed. Parts of both Pashley's and Spratt's assumptions were criticized by later writers, and Spratt himself queried some of Pashley's observations.

The reference to Cyclopean was based on the size and style of the stones which have been defined as "thick walls built of Cyclopean blocks, barely hewn yet cunningly assembled"[8] (see Fig. Intro.1; also Fig. 5.2). This definition may be somewhat of a generalization as certainly not all Cyclopean blocks of the Bronze Age were 'barely hewn'.[9]

Cyclopean was a name used by the ancient geographers/historians Strabo and Pausanias in their own descriptions of Homeric/Mycenaean architecture. Strabo mentioned the Cyclopean-built walls of Mycenaean Tiryns, "Prœtus seems to have used Tiryns as a stronghold, and to have fortified it by means of the Cyclopes."[10] Pausanias said of Mycenae,

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[7] Eisner commented, 'Of course one reason early travelers packed their accounts with learned references was because it was only in the texts that many of the classical places existed as sites' (Eisner, 1993: 67), and this included the 'Homeric classical' sites (incorporating Idomeneus' Crete).

[8] Martin, 1988: 33.

[9] See the walls of the Mycenaean Treasury of Atreus.

[10] Strabo, 8.6.11.

"They say this is the work of Cyclopes …",[11] but he was a little more descriptive as to what the name may imply when he mentioned the walls of Tiryns (again, see Fig. Intro.1 and Fig 5.2), "… built by Cyclopes with natural rocks, all so huge that a pair of mules would not even lift the smallest".[12] The term was borrowed/used by Pashley and Spratt to supposedly differentiate it from the neat uniform 'Hellenic' style of the 5th century BC.[13]

Fig. Intro.1: 'Cyclopean' wall at 13th century BC Tiryns, mainland Greece – main stones filled with smaller ones (person represents scale)

Although this Cyclopean style of architecture was a trademark of 13th century BC Bronze Age Mycenaeans, it must be remembered that it is likely that the Mycenaeans took control of Crete during the middle of the

[11] Pausanias, II.16.4.
[12] Pausanias, II.25.7.
[13] '[In] the mid-fifth century [BC], however, Greek masonry attained a finesse hitherto unparallel … blocks were fitted together with extraordinary precision' (Copplestone, 1966: 47). See, for example, the Erechtheum on the Acropolis at Athens).

15th century BC[14] and would have imposed their own architectural styles onto the island. Even so, some of the Minoan 'palaces' were made up from very large stone walls equal to the Mycenaean Cyclopean mainland examples. Arthur Evans measured one block from Knossos in Crete at "1.96 metres long by 1.20 broad and 0.55 thick."[15]

The American archaeologist Harriet Boyd Hawes described the various Bronze Age styles of construction in her work on Gournia in Crete:

> During the Town period (L.M. I, c. 1700-1500 B.C.) larger stones were used; the clay mortar was inconspicuous and small stones were wedged into interstices of the walls. One style of building … employs stones of moderate size, flat-faced and roughly oblong in shape, wedged by small stones which are sharp-edged. Probably chips from the rude trimming of larger blocks … Another style uses small boulders, similar to those that pave roads, roughly aligned in courses, with small round stones between them … Certain walls built in this fashion are sufficiently massive to deserve the name 'Cyclopean' … the impulse to this heavy form of construction [Cyclopean masonry] appears to have come from the mainland and journeyed slowly southward … The usual dimensions of these blocks are c. 1.40 m long, 90 cm. wide, and 60 cm high, but one block attains the length of 2.10 m. Even this good ashlar masonry … was overlaid with brick-clay …[16]

It has been suggested that although some ten Cyclopean walls had been reported in Crete, none were Cyclopean based on the considered construction style of Cyclopean walls to which five types and an unclassified type were identified.[17] These proposed different types rather complicate the idea of Cyclopean. Mention was made of the tholos tomb at Akhladia, Sitia in Crete, "Although the blocks in the chamber are large and unhewn, and wedged with a great deal of interstice stones, the term Cyclopean refers to nothing more than the size of the stones."[18] It does relate, and always has related to size and the definition need not be any more specific. As mentioned above, reference to walls as Cyclopean is an ancient epithet from Strabo and Pausanias whose ideas of its meaning simply related to the size of the stones and it is not necessary to take this definition much further.

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[14] See Wace, 1949, and the next chapter.
[15] Evans, 1921: 131, fn 2.
[16] Hawes, 1908: 21 and her Figs. 4, 5, 6 and 7.
[17] Loader, 1998: 124.
[18] Loader, 1998; 126.

The classical/Hellenistic architects did not attempt to copy the Mycenaeans' Cyclopean style and so it should be relatively straightforward to identify the different periods, or so one might imagine. Unfortunately it is not that clear and simple. Care must be taken in assuming that all references by Pashley and Spratt to Cyclopean remains automatically mean the Bronze Age as large stones were used in the later buildings. However, it is contended that both travellers were considering an earlier culture than the classical when using the term. Although they may also have called later buildings Cyclopean, this must not detract from the fact that some of their discoveries may have been of the Bronze Age.

It is admitted that this reference to 'Cyclopean' may be in itself a tenuous link to an earlier period but combined with some of Pashley's and Spratt's comments about these styles of architecture it brings together a possible realization of another era of ancient history.

So who were these ancient Cretans of the Bronze Age? Where did they come from and how did they create such a sophisticated and wealthy civilization so as to be able to construct buildings of such immense structure?

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND TO BRONZE AGE CRETE

Ancient Crete

Crete is around 8000 sq km and about 250 km east to west, and is the largest of the Aegean islands. Crete's mountains emerged from the sea around 135-65 million years ago, and following a re-submergence 25-5 million years ago the island began to acquire its present form around 1.6-0.7 million years ago.[1] Settlement is first believed to have taken place at the beginning of the Neolithic period, roughly 7000-3000 BC,[2] although sites during this period are somewhat limited. Knossos was the first known settlement area during the initial Neolithic aceramic period of *c.*7000-6500 BC.[3]

The Bronze Age of Crete, *c.*3000 BC–*c.*1100 BC, was comprised of two 'civilizations', the 'Minoans' from about 3000 BC to about 1450 BC, and the 'Mycenaeans'[4] from about 1450 BC to around 1100 BC. Both these civilizations had similarities, mainly due to the fact that the Mycenaean's culture and ideals included many elements which they had already copied from those of the Minoans.

Chronology of Bronze Age Crete

Unlike the Egyptians, the Babylonians and the Hittites, the Cretans of the second millennium BC left little written history. What they did leave were inscriptions on clay which have become known as Linear A and

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[1] Rackham & Moody, 1996: xv.
[2] Sherratt & Sherratt, 2008: 291; although
[3] See papers in Issakidou & Tomkins (eds.), 2008, particularly Broodbank's (273-290).
[4] The term 'Mycenaean' was used in the 19th century as describing all the peoples of the Aegean from the Neolithic to the beginnings of 5th century BC classical Greece (Burrows, 1907: 40), but more specifically, from the Argolid in the eastern Peloponnese on mainland Greece.

Linear B. Linear A is as yet undeciphered, but probably developed from Cretan hieroglyphics (*c.*1900-1600 BC) and is possibly a form of the Cretan/Minoan language, whereafter Linear B evolved probably from Linear A.[5] Linear B was deciphered by Michael Ventris in 1952 as an early form of ancient Greek and of Mycenaean origin rather than Minoan.[6] It does not help a great deal with the historical background of Crete as it is administrative by nature but it does give an insight into the island's commercial activities. However, as will be seen, Spratt did visit some ancient cities that are referred to in Linear B and so of the Bronze Age.

When Pococke, Pashley and Spratt made their way around Crete the word 'Minoan' did not exist as a name for the island's early occupants. It was a name given to the ancient islanders by Arthur Evans simply based on the myth of their ancestor and founder, King Minos:

> The Golden Age of Crete lies far beyond the limits of the historical period … the great days of Crete [were] those of which we still find a reflection in the Homeric poems – the period of Mycenaean culture, to which here at least we would fain to attach the name 'Minoan'.[7]

In the first of his books on his excavations at Kephala Hill, Knossos, Evans wrote:

> To this early civilization of Crete as a whole I have proposed–and the suggestion has been generally adopted by the archaeologists of this and other countries–to apply the name 'Minoan'.[8]

This had not been his original theory as he first considered that the Minoans were simply part of the Mycenaean culture, but this was to change once he had started excavating. He was to banish the word 'Mycenaean' as a generic description of the early civilization of Crete, insisting that his 'Minoans' were quite a different race, even suggesting that they were the creators of the Mycenaeans.[9] The discovery of an ancient civilization was the 'agenda' referred to by Papadopoulos when he

[5] Chadwick, 2001: 43-4.
[6] Ventris & Chadwick, 1958.
[7] Evans, 1896a: 512.
[8] Evans, 1921: 1; in fact, Karl Hoeck, in 1825, had already made reference to the phrase 'Minoan' - 'Das Minoische Kretas' in vol 2 of his *Kreta* (see Karadimas and Momigliano, 2004).
[9] A view later disputed, correctly, by Alan Wace (1949).

described Evans' revealing of his so-called Minoans, "Behind the romantic and idealistic vision of an invented society lay a very real agenda."[10]

It was Evans who first used the pottery styles found at Knossos to divide the Minoan civilization into three phases: Early, Middle and Late Minoan (EM, MM, LM respectively). The phases run nearly parallel to the tripartite division of Egyptian history into Old, Middle and New Kingdoms. This tripartite system introduced by Evans was expanded to include the Bronze Age cultures within the central and western Aegean islands and termed 'Cycladic', as well as those on the mainland of 'Greece', termed 'Helladic'.[11] These too have been divided in terms of relative chronology into Early, Middle and Late phases. Thus Early Minoan, Early Cycladic and Early Helladic are all roughly contemporary, as are the Middle and Late references.

The basic tripartite scheme was further subdivided, based on pottery styles and stratigraphy, such that each of the three periods contained three or more divisions (EM I, II, III). These were then further subdivided into units indicated by letters of the alphabet (for example, LM IB). As additional excavations and studies have been undertaken this system has come under criticism for being too inflexible and partly inaccurate.[12] A system that seems less confusing and better reflects cultural developments is the one that revolves around the building and destruction of the major architectural complexes. The reference to 'palatial' periods is based around the so-called Minoan 'palaces'[13] of Knossos, Phaistos, Malia and Kato Zakros. This system also has a tripartite division: pre-palatial, palatial and post-palatial, with the palatial period being subdivided into proto- (old) and neo- (new)[14] and the post-palatial which is the Mycenaean phase. The divisions are based on the belief that most of the palaces suffered major damage and were then rebuilt in a more magnificent style. The exact chronological sequence is still uncertain but, nonetheless, it is useful to classify the phases architecturally, although the original Early, Middle and Late classifications are often still used when speaking of

[10] Papadopoulos, 2005: 106.
[11] After the Greeks' own word for Greece, 'Hellas'.
[12] Biers, 1996: 23; but see also Dickinson (1999: 8ff) for a discussion of how Evans himself could not adhere to the system he suggested.
[13] If 'palaces' were what they were.
[14] But see also Dickinson (1999: 11-13), who divided the palatial period into first, second and third, making five divisions in all.

pottery styles. For clarification the dating of Bronze Age 'Minoan' Crete looks something like this:[15]

	circa BC	
EM I	3000-2700	pre-palatial
EM IIA	2700-2400	
EM IIB	2400-2200	
EM III	2200-2000	
MM IA	2000-1900	
MM IB	1900-1800	proto-palatial
MM II	1800-1700	
MM III	1700-1600	neo-palatial
LM IA	1600-1500	
LM IB	1500-1450	
LM II	1450-1400	post-palatial (Mycenaean)
LM IIIA1	1400-1370	
LM IIIA2	1370-1300	
LM IIIB	1300-1200	end of Mycenaean palatial period
LM IIIC	1200-1100	end of Mycenaean Age

The quest for an *absolute* chronology of the Aegean Bronze Age has centred both on the use of Egyptian and Mesopotamian chronologies and on the scientific methods of radio-carbon dating and dendrochronology. However, absolute dates are not yet completely reliable and different sets of dates are often in use for one and the same phase or period. Doubts have been cast on the value or significance of the use of the historical chronologies of Egypt and Mesopotamia, while radiocarbon dating too has proved not to be as reliable as once thought due to difficulties with correlation and various climatic changes that may affect calibration.[16] Recent developments in dendrochronology may ultimately help to resolve the various issues. Of particular interest is the 'Aegean Dendrochronology Project' whose long-range goal is to build a single master tree-ring chronology for the Aegean and Near East that will extend from the present to the seventh millennium BC.

[15] Adapted from Shelmerdine, 2008: 4 (Fig. 1.1) but open to variations (e.g. EM I may have commenced 3300, but I have tried to give a simple 'generalization' of dates); see also Huxley, 2000: xxi, and Dickinson, 1999: 19.
[16] Dickinson, 1999: 17.

Settlement of ancient Crete

There does not appear to be any evidence in Crete for permanent settlement in either the Palaeolithic or Mesolithic periods, but there may have been a pre-Neolithic culture on the island. 'Culture' does not necessarily mean permanent settlement. The existence of humans on Crete in the Mesolithic period of 9000-7000 BC is evidenced by finds of large numbers of obsidian flakes from the island of Melos, north of Crete, together with indications of Mesolithic huts at the sites of Trypiti and Rouses and rock-paintings at Asphendos near Sphaka, which suggest the existence of a society of hunter-gatherers.[17] More recent discoveries have suggested that there was some occupation of, or at least seafaring to, the southwest of Crete some 130,000 years ago.[18]

With regard to settlement, the island was an obvious choice due to its climate, rainfall and fertility, making it good for agriculture. An abundance of ovicaprines, cattle, pig, bread wheat and other flora has been found at Knossos.[19] The bread wheat is not of a natural growth, it is a hybrid of domesticated *tetraploid* wheat and wild wheat.[20] This implies that their existence must be from a planned external origin. In support of this there has been a suggestion that the island was colonized in one or more deliberate acts.[21] So where did these settlers come from? 'Knossian' bread wheat has been found in Anatolia at Can Hasan III and Catal Huyuk,[22] indicating possible connections between the two and Crete. Although the first settlers were aceramic, Early Neolithic pottery seemed to be inspired by ceramic traditions in West Anatolia.[23] African-Egyptian and Aegean mainland origins have been eliminated as no relevant domesticates were found in Crete for that early period.

At the beginning of the Early Minoan period the main area of settlement was Knossos with its port at Poros-Katsambas. Cycladic style

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[17] Vasilakis,1999: 70, also Rackham & Moody, 1996: 1.
[18] Strasser *et al*, 2010: 145-190.
[19] Evans, 1971: 99, but this does not mean Knossos was the only early Neolithic settlement site (see Macdonald, 2005: 6).
[20] Zohany & Hopf, 1998.
[21] Manning, 2008: 107.
[22] Renfrew, 1972: 203.
[23] Evans, 1971:115, although he added that in Early Neolithic II, the coloured pottery indicates links with the Aegean mainland.

pottery found at this port indicates it to have been an important trading port at this time.[24]

Emergence of palaces

The Middle Minoan civilization has become known as a highly developed hierarchal society culminating in 'palace' buildings. But how did this come about? What must first be considered is what is meant by the word 'palace' in relation to the Middle and Late Minoan periods of Crete. A modern day understanding of the word is a large and impressive residential building for a wealthy royal family. Minoan 'palaces' were certainly large and for the wealthy, but not necessarily royalty, as it is not known who lived in them other than that they must have had some authority. They may have been Priests or Priest Kings if the 'palaces' were of a religious nature (they appear to have been involved in cult practices). However, for convenience sake these Minoan buildings will be referred to as palaces as their architectural design certainly warrants the word. As mentioned above, the palace sites (in order of size) were Knossos, Phaistos, Malia and Kato Zakros. Also, recent discoveries at Galatas indicate a palatial residence. There are possibly more, as yet, undiscovered.

The old palaces, or proto-palatial, may have incorporated nearly all the basic features and infra-structures of the new palace or neo-palatial period. These 'features' being a central court, west court, storage magazines, residential quarters, banquet hall, public/administrative apartments, cult rooms, theatral area and workshops. It is difficult to be certain of the earlier structures due to the destruction of most the old palaces to make way for the new. Little of the old sites remain in evidence other than the foundation to the west façade of Phaistos, as here the new palace was not built immediately above it. After the destruction of the old palaces the neo-palatial sites, particularly at Knossos, Phaistos and Malia, were all enlarged with grander and more imposing styles.[25]

The building of palaces required larges surpluses of wealth, and it is this emergence of wealth that must account for the emergence of palaces. 'Wealth' may be defined as possession of goods for their desirability and not for their usefulness.[26] For example, gold is desirable but not always of

[24] Wilson, 2008: 82 (there were also early settlements in the Mesara at Phaistos and Ayia Triadha).
[25] See Fitton, 2002; also Younger & Rehak, 2008: 140-64 on material culture of the new palaces.
[26] Renfrew, 1972: 370.

great use compared with practical or domestic items of bronze or ceramics. But how was this wealth obtained?

When land no longer becomes readily available to all due to an increase in population, inequalities develop and those with no land become labourers. This leads to the possibility of the beginning of a hierarchy. As time goes on, specific individuals who are able to best exploit the 'inequalities' become the elite. These elite then compete within themselves for power and one way to exercise power is to display wealth by way of hospitality through dinner parties or gift-giving (*xenia*). So the elite needed investment and this leads to a revolution in agricultural products, centralization, movement of surplus, redistribution, rapid population growth and a more organized/controlled settlement.[27]

Initially farmers only needed to grow only enough to keep the immediate family alive from year to year which may assume some surplus to ensure survival. Also the family produced domestic goods such as pots and utensils for their own use and essential to their own needs. This would extend to less domesticated luxury goods. As farms increased in size, both in acreage and population, so too did the community, and distribution of excess produce and luxury goods led to wealth.

Due to its position in the Mediterranean, Crete would have had some contact with overseas travellers from the surrounding continents, Asia, Africa and Europe, and there is evidence of trade connections with other regions during this EM period.[28] There must be a close link between social and commercial progress: trade in various products with other countries brought in new ideas which led to more trade, both within Crete and outside, which led to an increase in wealth for the traders. The finding of sealstones on some sites[29] indicated movement and identification of goods, which required development of administration in a land becoming more organized. Such development would require employment of labourers and craftsmen to keep up with the volume of demand. Larger houses would have been built to accommodate the wealthy.

As pottery production was on the increase, the need to cope with it would result in a change from solely agricultural activity to a new ceramic

[27] See Renfrew, 1972; but also see Hamilakis' criticism of Renfrew's redistribution theory, 2002: 2-28; also Manning, 2008: 106-7; and Strasser considered that the kouloures at Knossos and Phaistos were not for grain storage which would affect the redistribution theory (1997: 73-100) but Halstead disagreed (1997: 103-7).

[28] Branigan, 1970: Egypt (180), Levant (182), within the Aegean (184), Cyprus and Syria (187).

[29] See Evans, 1909.

industry which would lead to a new social culture incorporating wealth and the building of palaces.[30]

Destruction and coming of the Mycenaeans

It is not known for certain what caused the demise of the Minoan civilization. All that is known is that around 1450 BC a disaster struck the island of Crete and its civilization came to an end and the Mycenaeans from the Argolid of the eastern Peloponnese on mainland 'Greece' appeared to have taken control of Knossos. Whether the Mycenaeans were a part of this destruction is not clear[31] but they may well have been covetous of the Minoan wealth and trade links.

These Mycenaeans were a rich community by the 17th century BC, as Heinrich Schliemann discovered golden treasures in Grave Circle A within the walls of the city of Mycenae on the mainland[32] which were later dated to this period. Homer referred to the city of Mycenae as "deep golden Mykenai"[33] and must have had his own good reasons for such an epithet. The main Mycenaean cities within the Argolid consisted of Mycenae itself, Tiryns, Midea and Argos. Based on the goods in the aforementioned Grave Circle A, and from the immenseness of their fortifications, these cities were possibly warrior communities capable of pillaging other areas, including Crete (and possibly Troy), for an increase in wealth. The Mycenaeans remained in Knossos for around 200 years before another unknown disaster brought an end to the island's civilized world.

The known myth

Spratt said of Crete, "A charming land without legend, some may feel, is like a bird of bright plumes without song."[34] Legend or myth would be used to explain the unexplainable but it might be said that anthropologists would now consider that myth holds some information relating to fact. To some extent such recognition owes its credence to the likes of Schliemann with his discovery of Troy and his excavations at Mycenae,[35] giving a 'ring of truth' to the Homeric poems of the Trojan War. The same must

[30] See Manning, 2008: 105-20 on the formation of palaces.
[31] See Manning, 1999; also Macdonald, 2005: 197ff
[32] Schliemann, 1878.
[33] Homer's *Iliad*, 11:47.
[34] Spratt, 1865, Vol. II: 134.
[35] 1875 and 1878 respectively.