

**Chapter 4**  
**The Art of the Prehistoric Aegean**  
(Bronze Age)

Cyclades – Cycladic Art

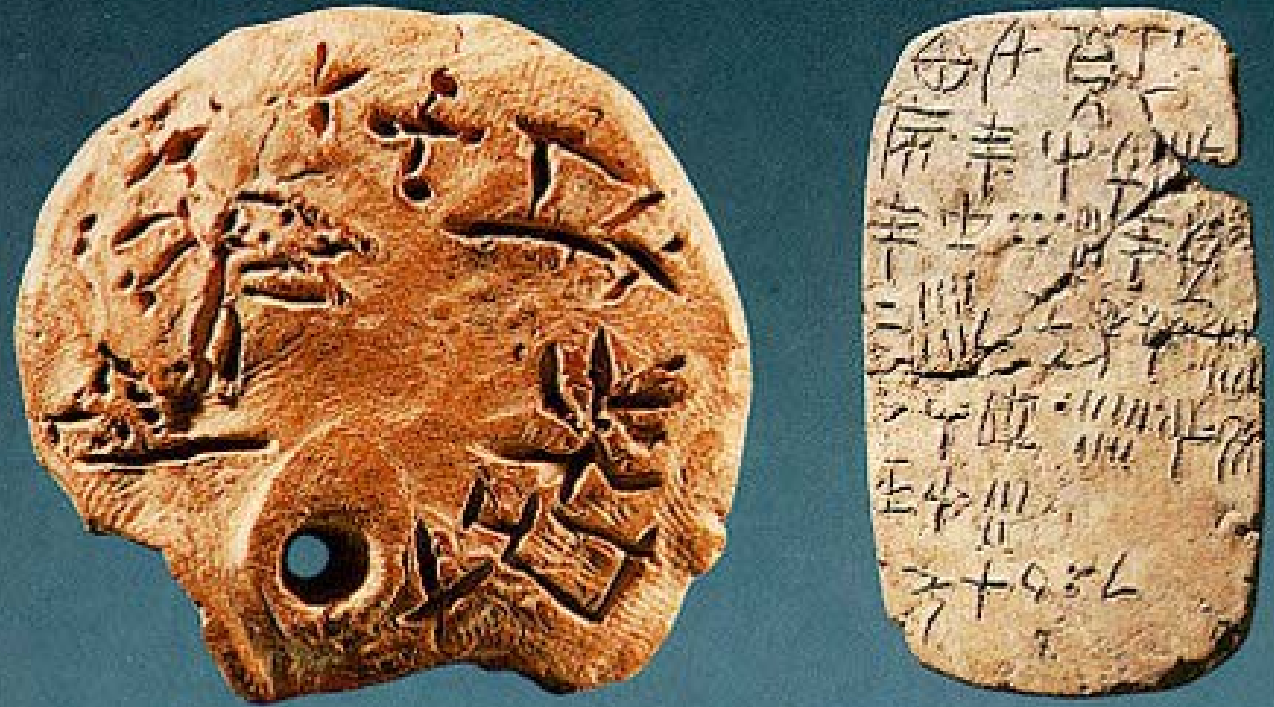
Crete – Minoan Art

Mainland Greece – Mycenaean

# The Prehistoric Aegean



Linear A (top)  
and B (bottom)  
clay tablets.



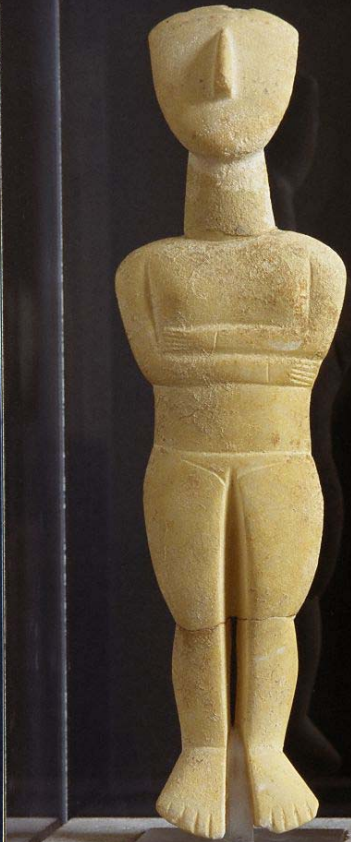




**The Phaistos Disc**, Crete. ca. 1700 BCE. Clay, about 15 cm in diameter.



# Cycladic Art



**Figurine of a woman, from Syros**  
(Cyclades), Greece, ca. 2500–2300 BCE.  
Marble, approx. 1' 6" high. National  
Archaeological Museum, Athens.





**Cycladic Figurines**



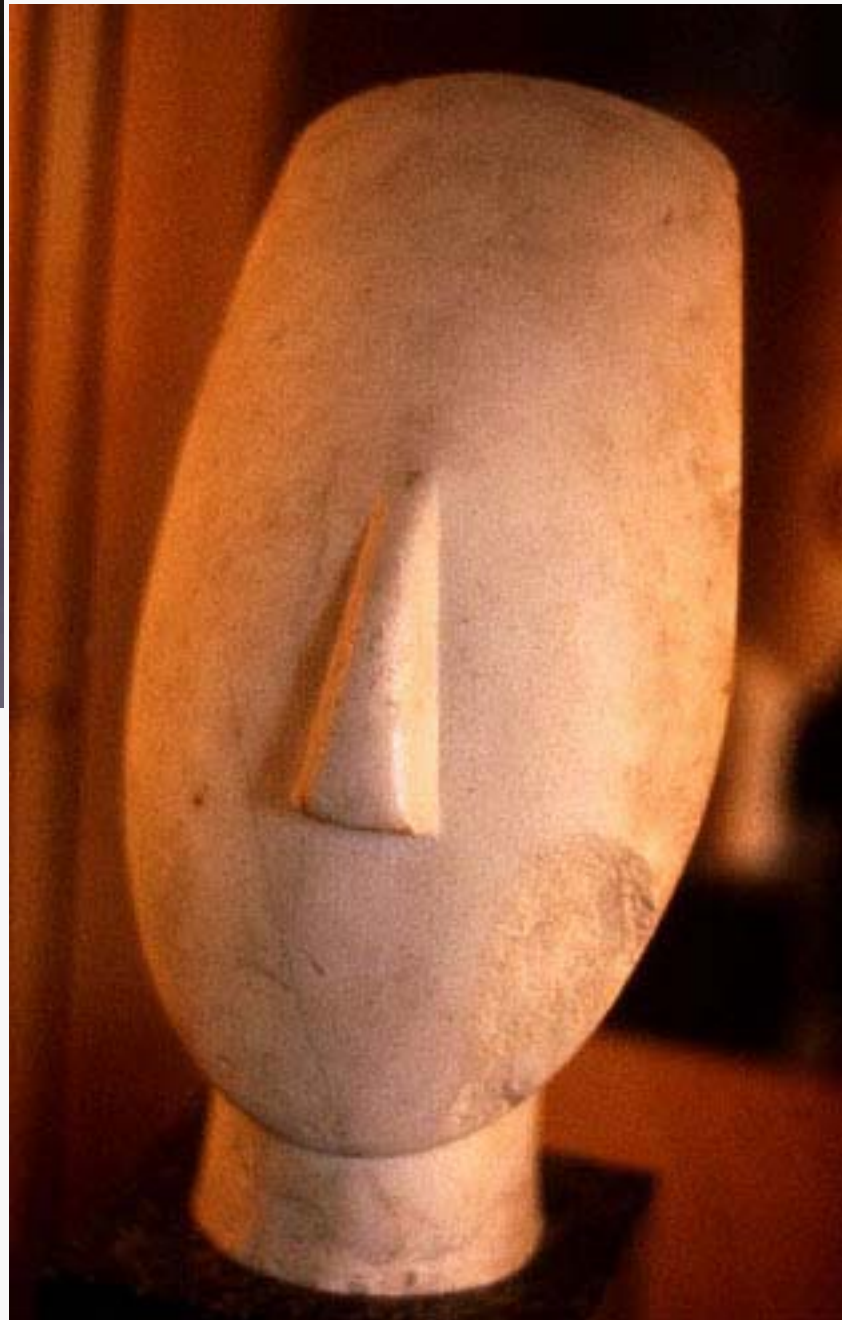
**Male lyre player**, from Keros  
(Cyclades), Greece, ca. 2700–2500  
BCE. Marble, approx. 9” high.  
National Archaeological Museum,  
Athens.





**Comparison:** Constantin Brancusi ,  
Sleeping Muse 1909-10

**Cycladic Head**  
25<sup>th</sup> 21<sup>st</sup> c. BCE

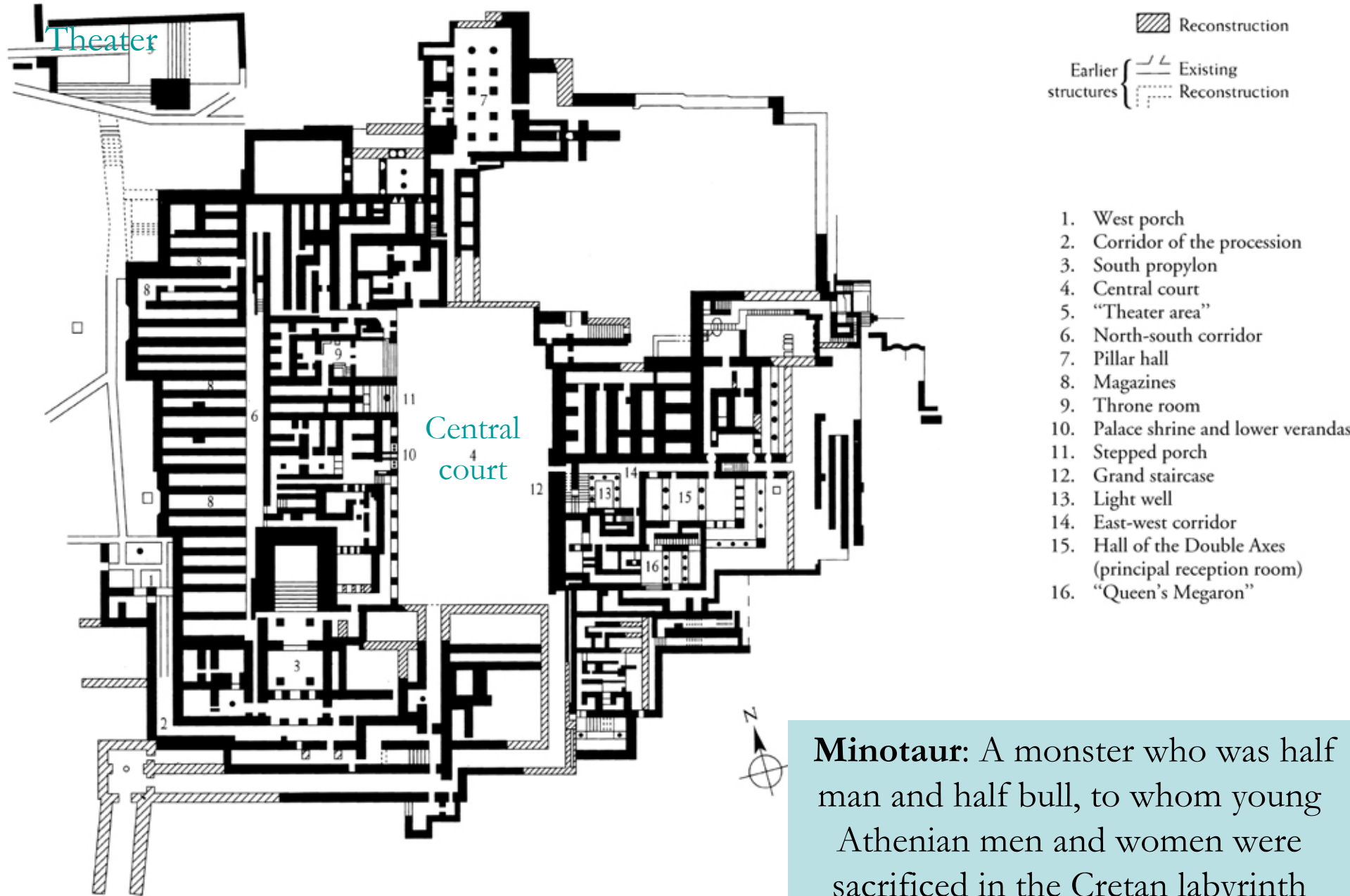


# Minoan Art





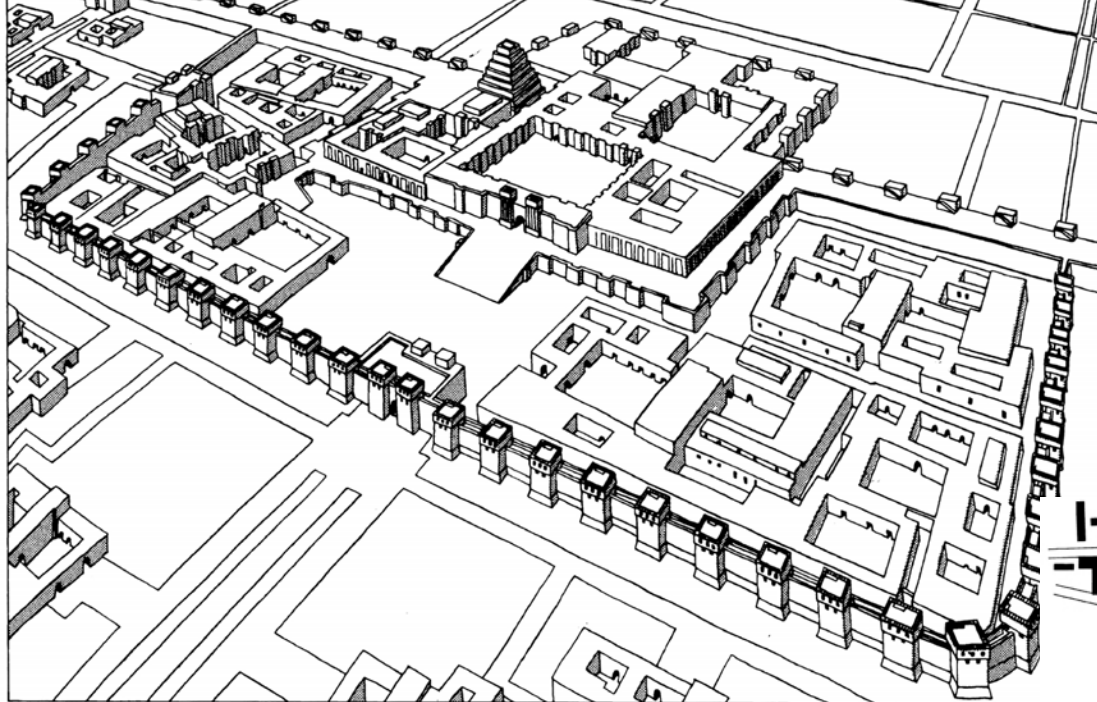
**palace at Knossos.** Aerial view. (Crete), Greece, ca. 1700–1400 BCE



**Palace at Knossos.** Plan. (Crete), Greece, ca. 1700–1400 BCE

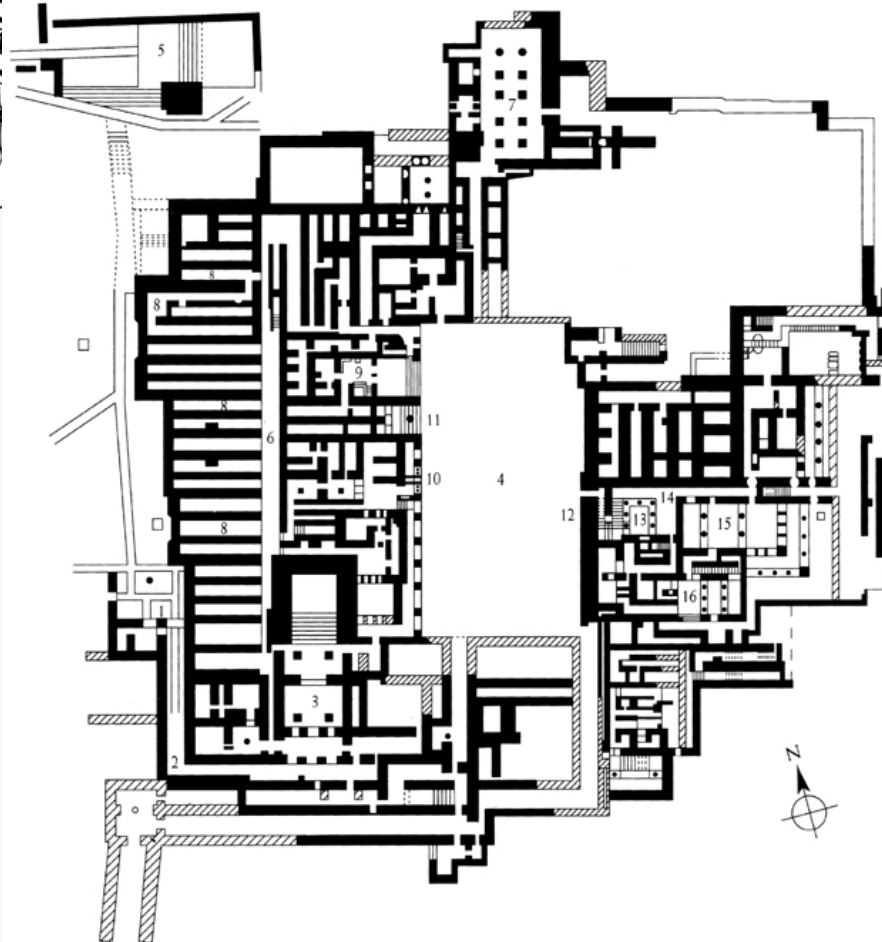
**Minotaur:** A monster who was half man and half bull, to whom young Athenian men and women were sacrificed in the Cretan labyrinth until Theseus killed him.





**Palace at Knossos.** Crete  
ca. 1700–1400 BCE

**Comparison: Citadel of Sargon II**  
Khorsabad, Iraq, ca. 720–705 BCE.  
25 acres; more than 200 courtyards  
and rooms.







**Palace at Knossos.** Stairwell in the residential quarter. (Crete), Greece, ca. 1700–1400 BCE.





Crete – true (wet) fresco

Egypt – fresco secco (dry fresco)

**Bull-leaping**, from the palace at Knossos (Crete), Greece, ca. 1450–1400 BCE.  
Fresco, approx. 2' 8" high, including border. Archaeological Museum, Herakleion.





**Bull-leaping. Detail.** The leaper and the figure standing in front of the bull.





**Comparison: Fowling scene, from the tomb of Nebamun, Thebes, Egypt, New Kingdom. Fresco on dry plaster, approx. 2' 8" high.**



**Minoan woman (La Parisienne), from the palace at Knossos (Crete), Greece, ca. 1450–1400 BCE.**





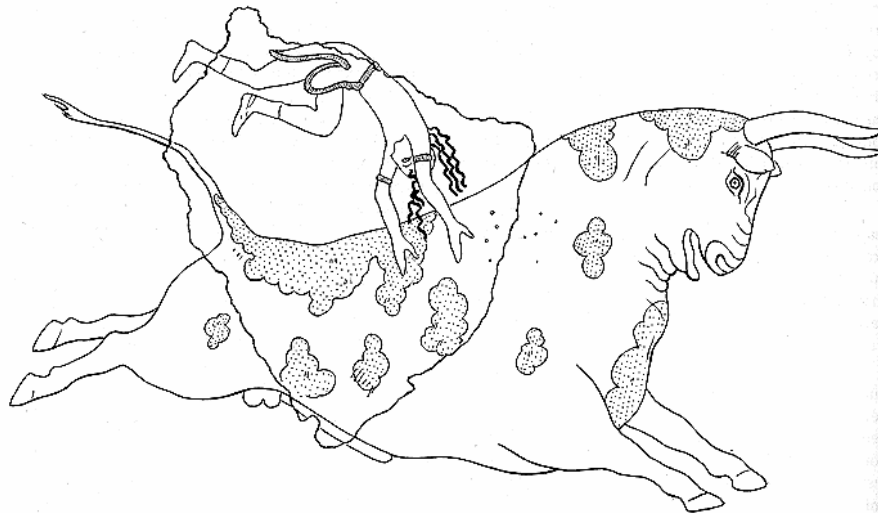
**Comparison: Rahotep and Nofret**  
from Mastaba of Rahotep  
Painted Limestone  
Height: 121 cm  
Old Kingdom  
Cairo Antiquities Museum



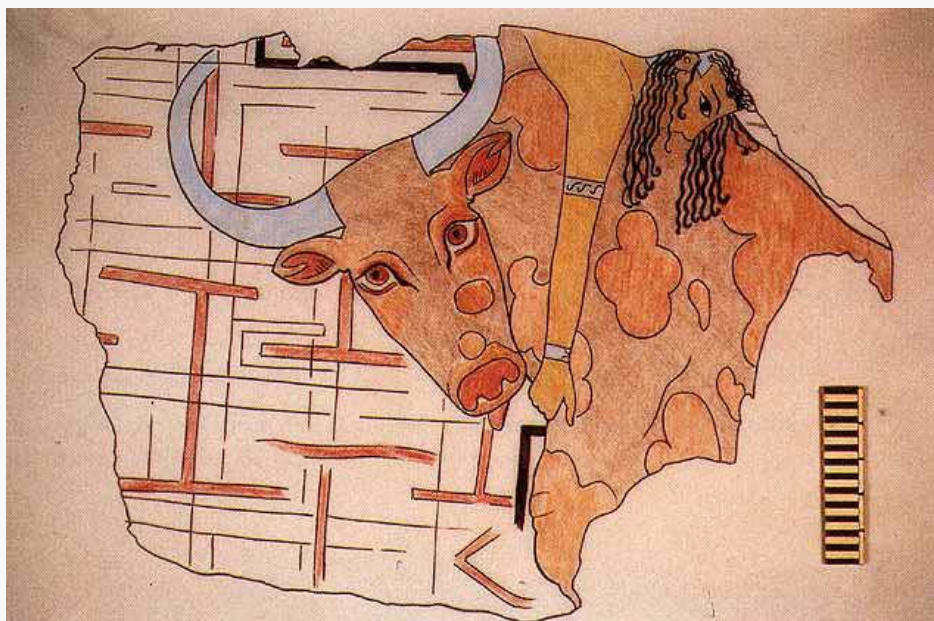
**Gold ring with  
a depiction of  
a bull-leaping  
scene from  
Phourni, Crete.  
Before 2000 BC.**







Bull Leaping fresco from Tell el Daba (ancient Avaris).  
Egypt. 16<sup>th</sup> c. BCE





Bullfights in Spain (Right) and Peru (Bottom)





Dolphins from the Queen's Megaron, Palace of Knossos, Crete. ca. 1450–1400 BCE.





**Miniature Ships Fresco**, Akrotiri, Thera (present day Santorini), Greece, ca. 1650 BCE.  
Approx. 1' 5" high. National Archaeological Museum, Athens.

1628 BCE – Theran volcanic eruption



**Miniature Ships Fresco. Detail**





Miniature Ships Fresco. Detail





**Landscape with swallows** from, Akrotiri, Thera, Greece  
ca. 1650 BCE. Fresco, approx. 7' 6" high. National Archaeological Museum, Athens.





Landscape with swallows. Detail



**Landscape with swallows**  
from Akrotiri, Thera, Greece  
ca. 1650 BCE. Fresco.

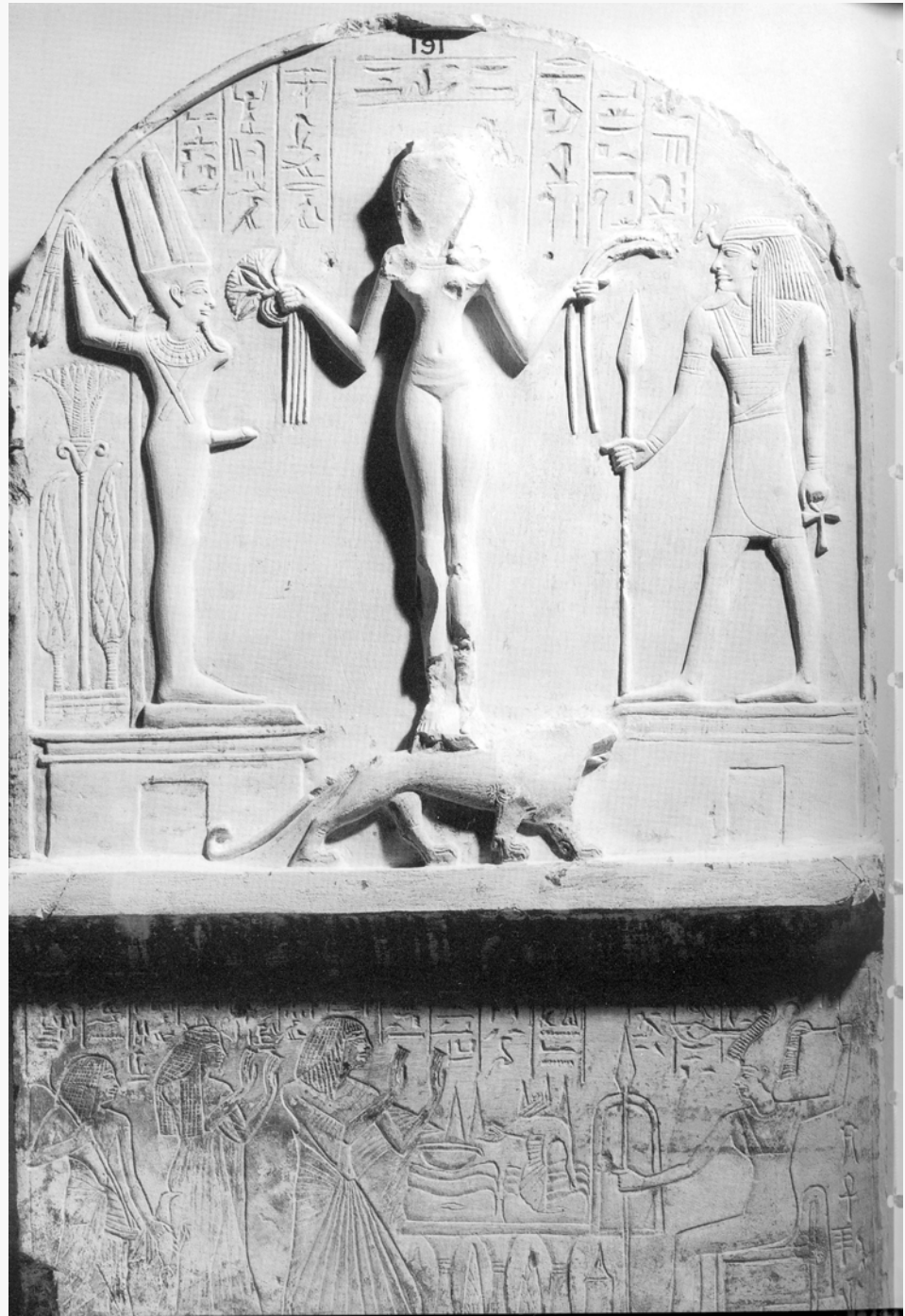


**Comparison: Garden with Fishpond.**  
Fresco from Thebes. Egypt.  
New Kingdom

**Snake Goddess**, from the palace at Knossos (Crete), Greece, ca. 1600 BCE. Faience, approx. 1' 1 1/2" high. Archaeological Museum, Herakleion.







**Comparison: Qadesh flanked  
by Min and Reshef**  
Egyptian reliefs. New Kingdom



**Comparison: Horus Stele.** 30<sup>th</sup> Dynasty. Egypt.  
British Museum, London





Nag Panchami – a festival in the honor of the snake god Shesha Nag. India.



Snake charmers



**Goddesses with crowns of poppies, birds and horns. Crete. 1400-1100 BCE**





**Goddesses with crowns of birds and horns. Crete. 1400-1100 BCE**

**Birdhead Pillar Figurine**

Clay. 13-12<sup>th</sup> c. BCE.

From the Aegean. Wilfrid Museum. Kibbutz  
Hazorea







**Comparison: Tree flanked by ibexes. Sumerian seal.**

**Goddess Flanked by Ibexes.**

Ivory Pyxid Cover. Minet-el-Beida. Syria. C. 1250 BCE.  
Paris, Louvre.





**Harvester Vase**, from Hagia Triada (Crete), Greece, ca. 1500 BCE. Steatite, greatest diameter approx. 5".  
Archaeological Museum, Herakleion.  
Overall view, with harvester looking over his shoulder







**Harvester Vase**, from Hagia Triada (Crete), Greece, ca. 1500 BCE. Steatite, greatest diameter approx. 5". Archaeological Museum, Herakleion.



**Harvester Vase. Detail**



**Clay sistrum. 2100 - 2000 bce**



Harvester  
Vase







Kamares Ware jar, from Phaistos  
(Crete), Greece, ca. 1800–1700 BCE  
Approx. 1' 8" high.  
Archaeological Museum, Herakleion

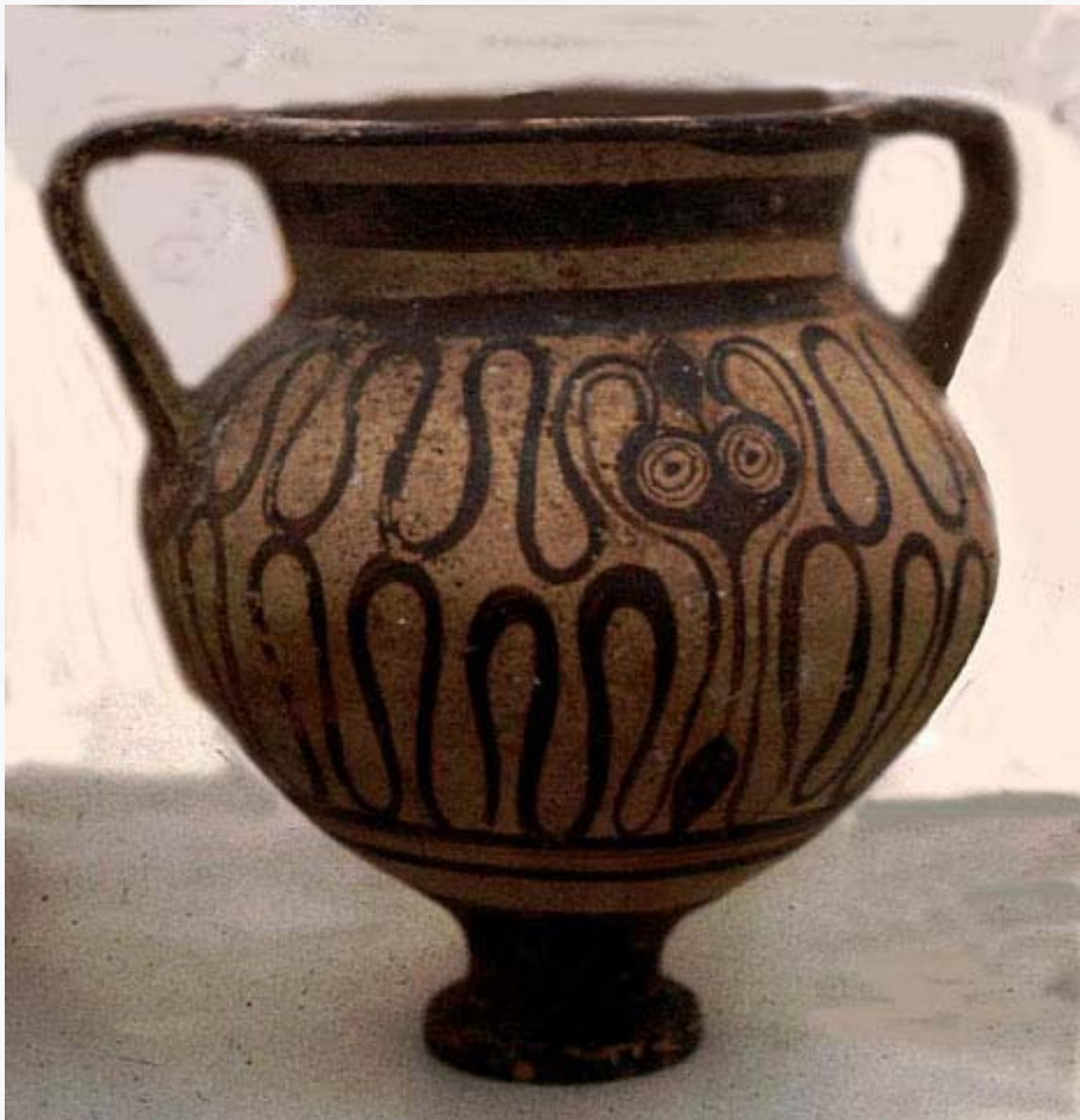
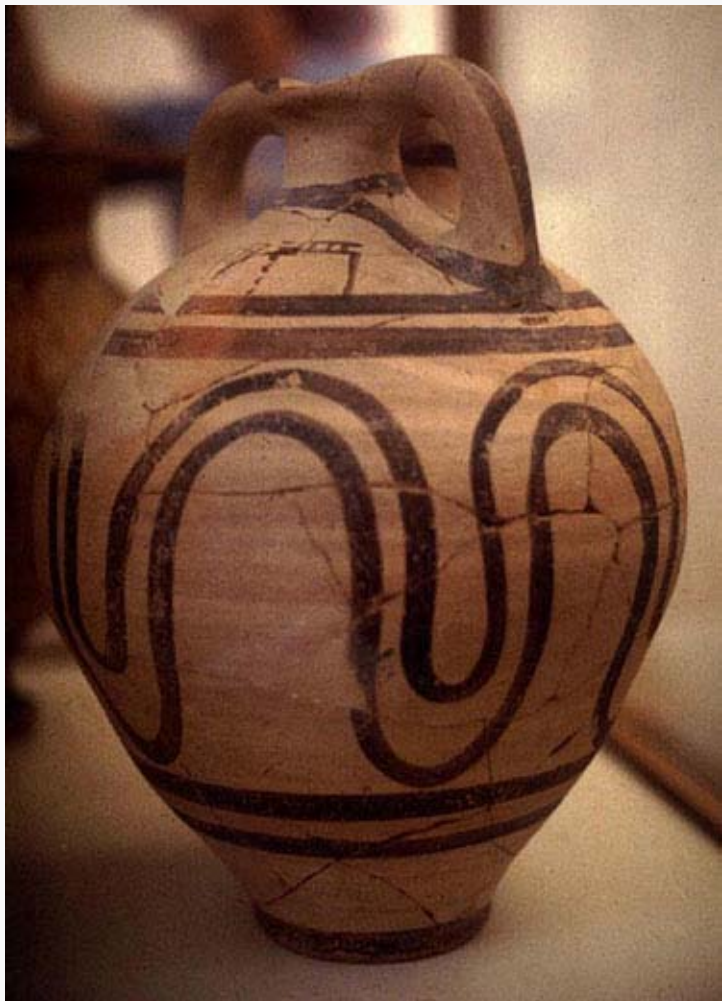


Marine Style octopus jar, from Palaikastro (Crete), Greece, ca. 1500 BCE. Approx. 11” high. Archaeological Museum, Herakleion.





**Octopus Vase**  
14-13<sup>th</sup> c. BCE. Crete



**Octopus Krater**  
14-13<sup>th</sup> c. BCE. Crete



# Mycenaean Art

# The Prehistoric Aegean









**Heinrich Schliemann**  
1822-1890



Trojan Horse. Reconstruction.





**Sophie Schliemann  
wearing "Jewels of Helen"**

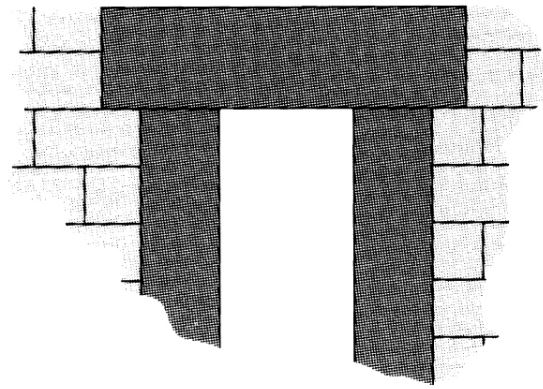


**Heinrich Schliemann  
1822-1890**

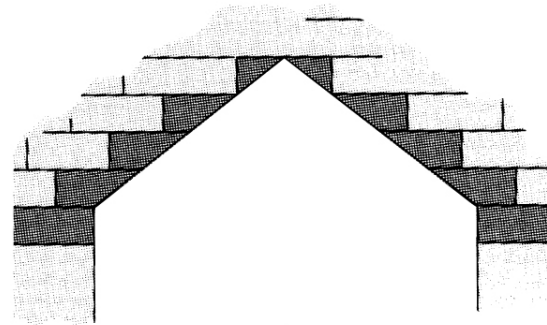


**Citadel at Tiryns.** Aerial view. Greece, ca. 1400–1200 BCE.

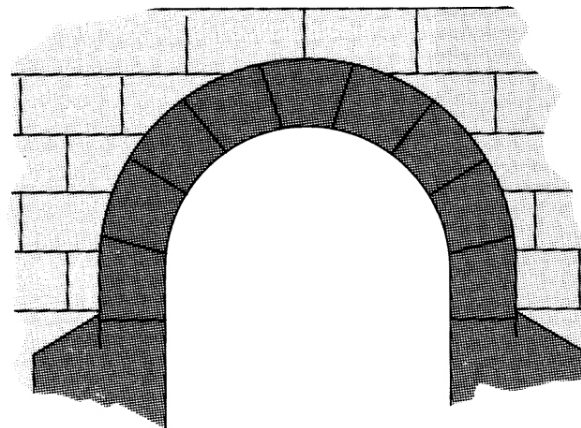




a



b

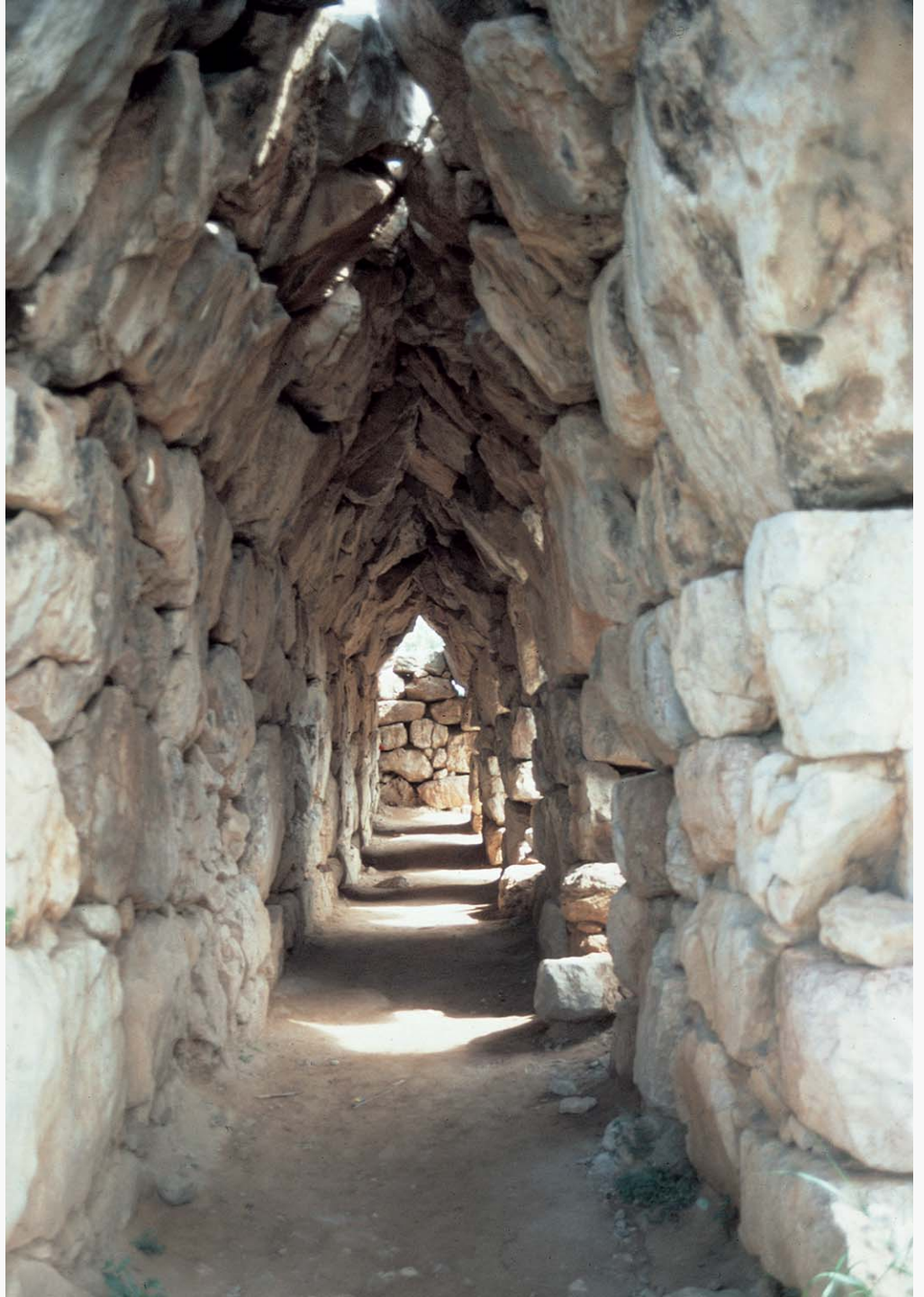


c

Three methods of spanning a passageway:

- (a) post and lintel
- (b) corbeled arch
- (c) arch

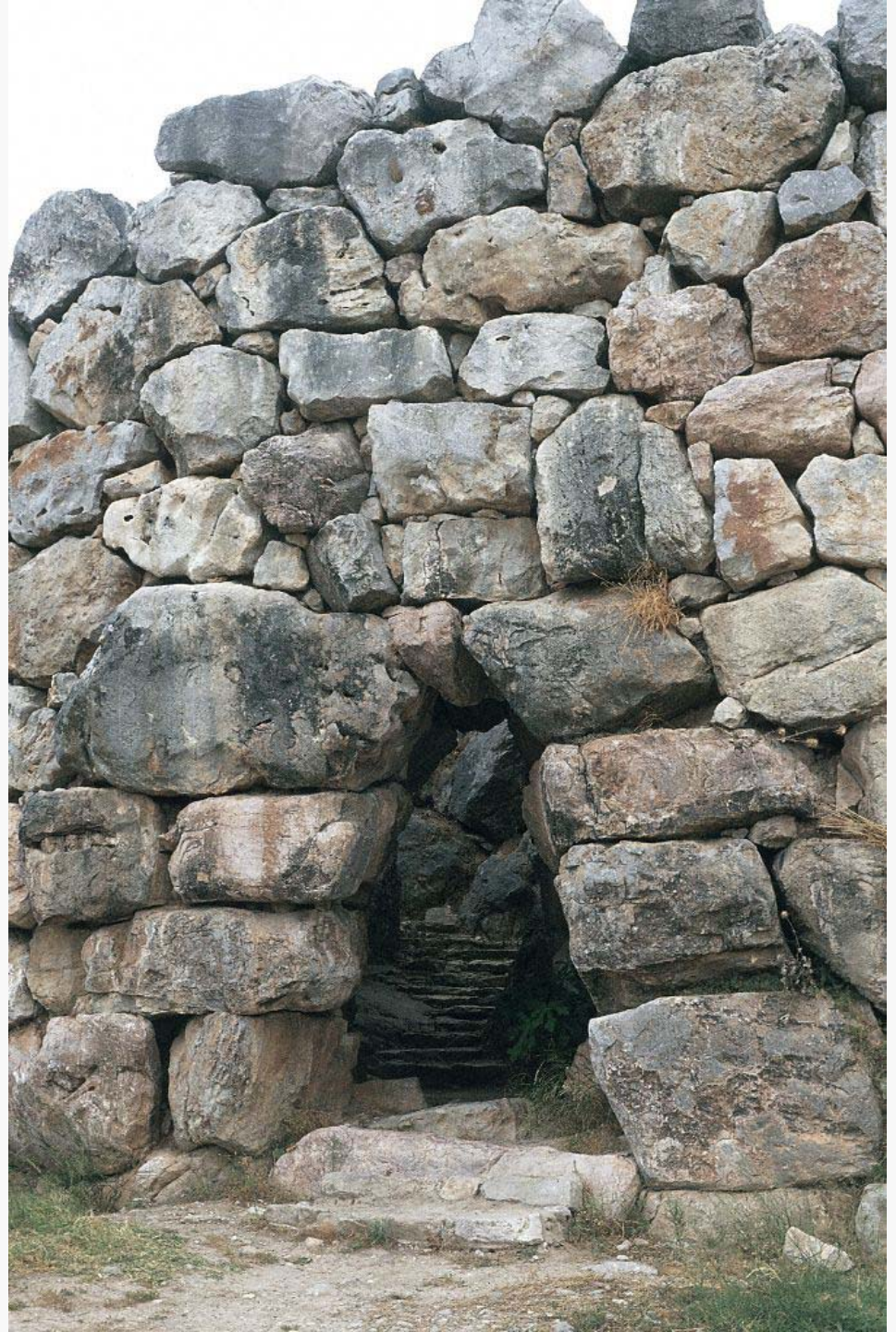
**Citadel at Tiryns.** Corbeled gallery  
Tiryns, Greece, ca. 1400–1200 BCE.





## **Citadel at Tiryns**

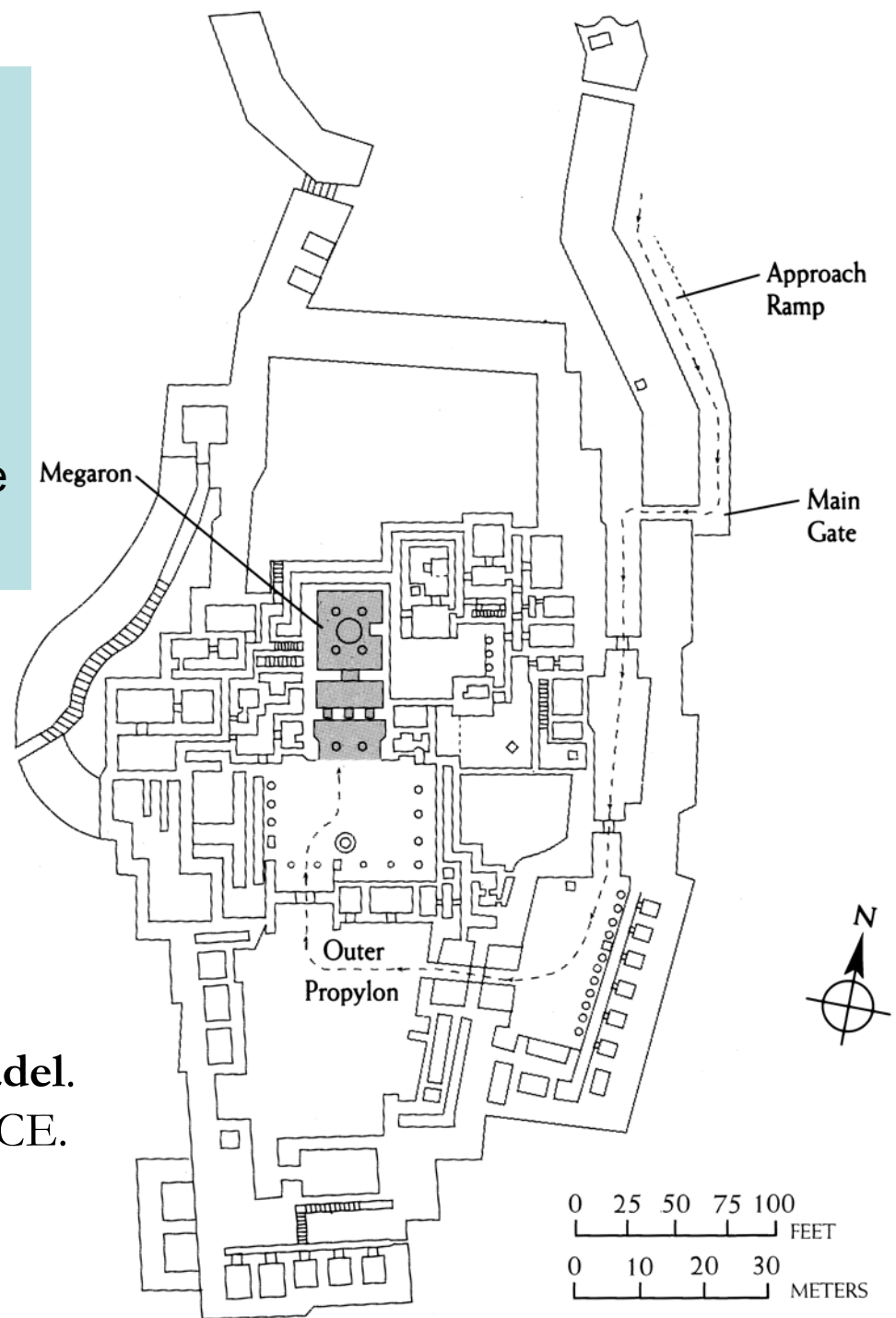
View of W bastion and fortified entry



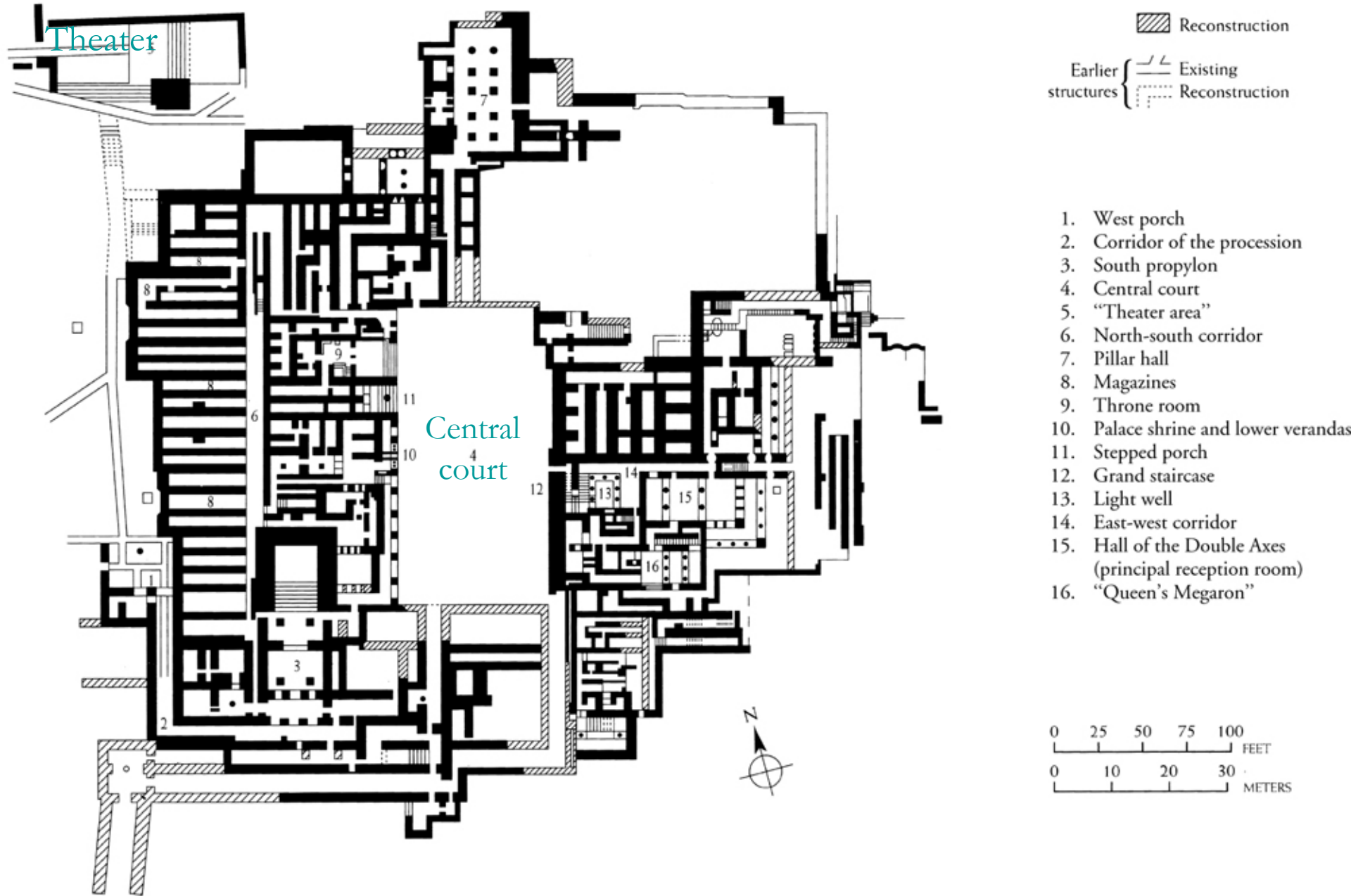
**Megaron:** The main hall or central room of a palace or house, especially of Mycenaean Greece, having a pillared porch and a central hearth or sacrificial pit.

- **Hearth** (pronounced- harth): fireplace

**Palace and southern part of the citadel.**  
Plan. Tiryns, Greece, ca. 1400–1200 BCE.







Comparison: Palace at Knossos. Plan. (Crete), Greece, ca. 1700–1400 BCE



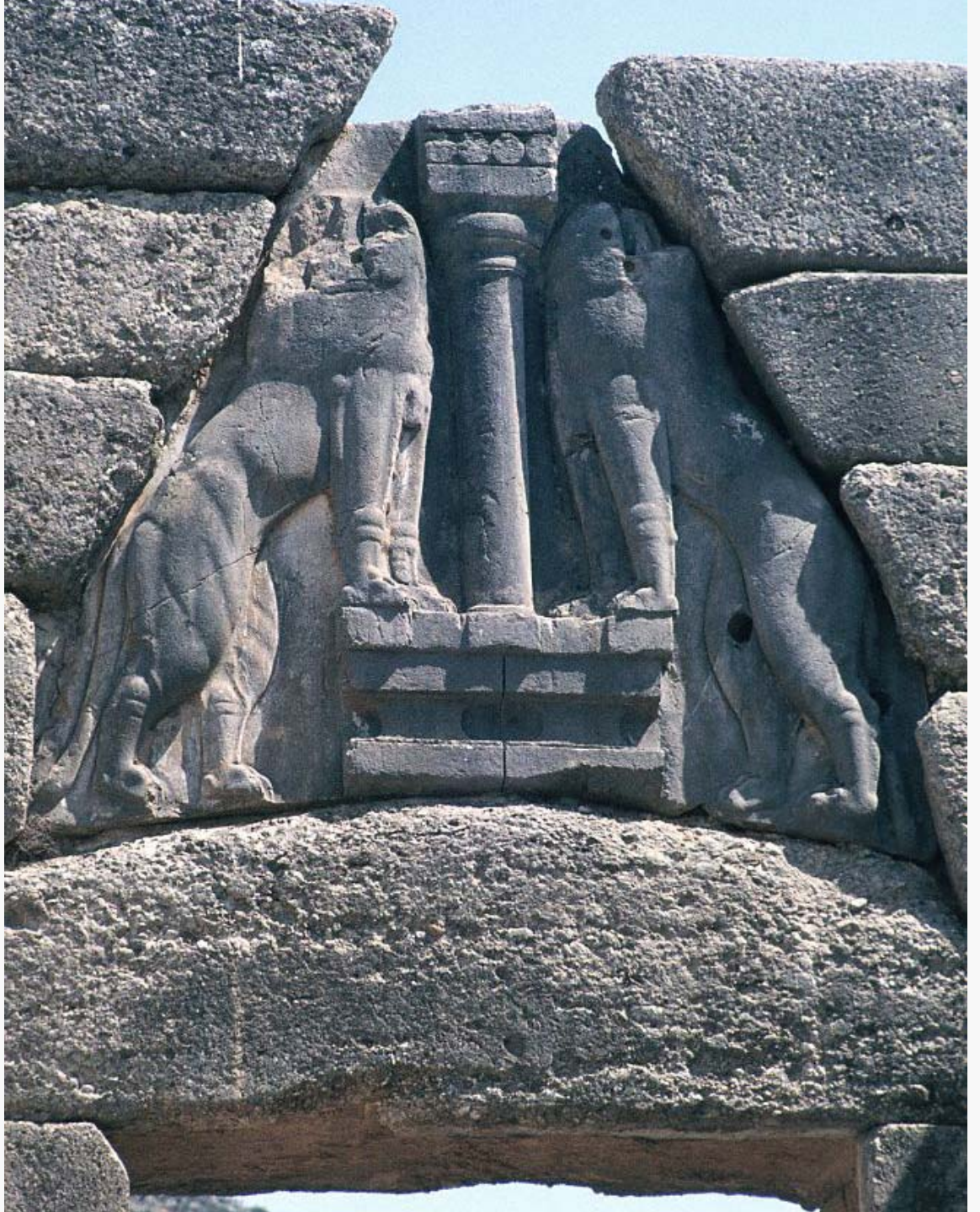
Megaron reconstruction. Palace at pylos. 1300-1200 BCE





**Lion Gate**, Mycenae, Greece, ca. 1300–1250 BCE.  
Limestone, relief panel approx. 9' 6" high.





## **Lion Gate. Detail**

Closer view of lions and heavy lintel





**Comparison: Lion Gate, Boghazköy, Turkey, ca. 1400 BCE. Limestone, lions approx. 7' high.**



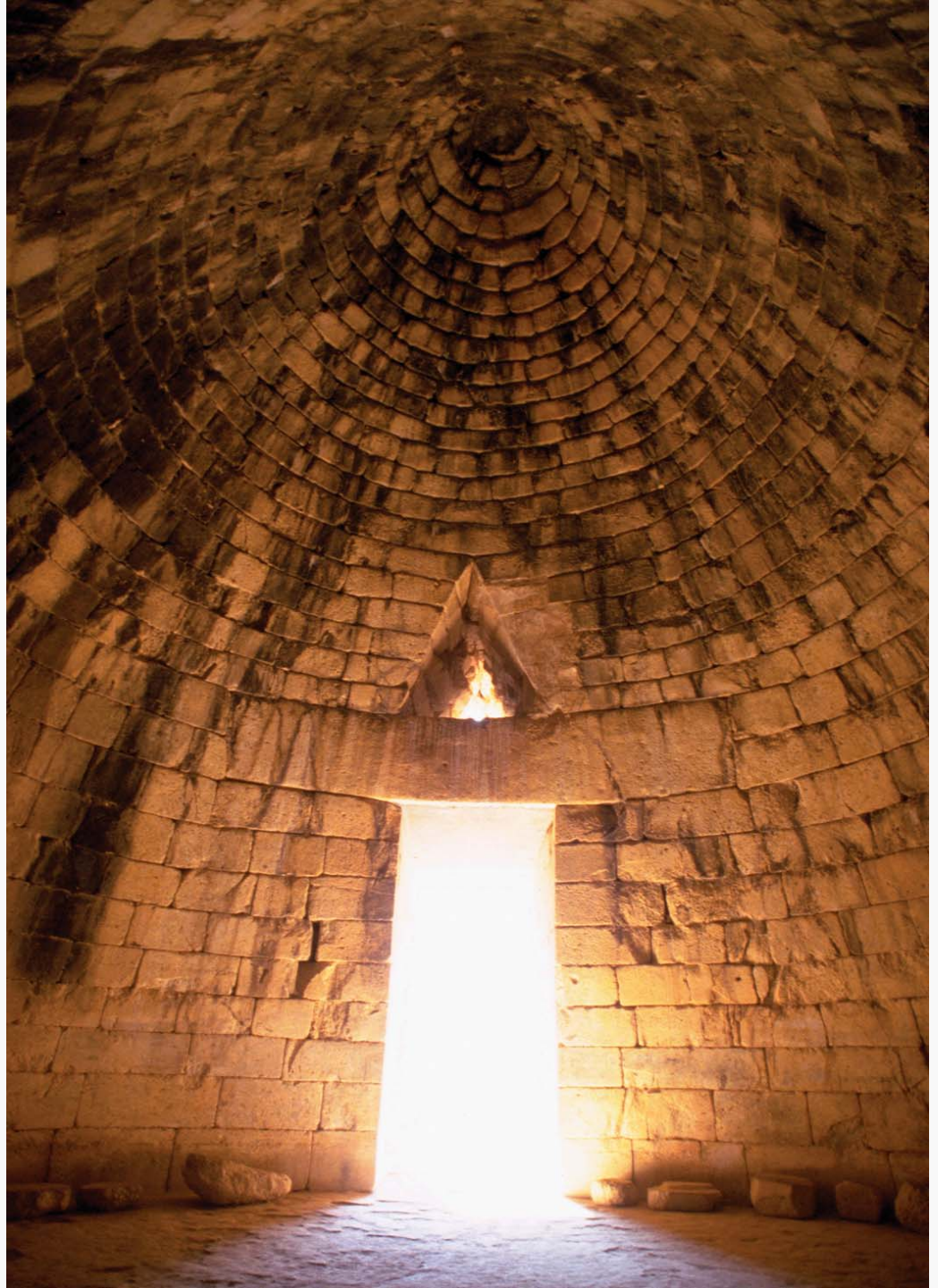


**Treasury of Atreus, Mycenae, Greece, ca. 1300–1250 BCE.**



**Tholos tomb:** A beehive shaped tomb with a circular plan

**Treasury of Atreus,** Vault of the tholos Mycenae, Greece, ca. 1300–1250 BCE. Approx. 43' high.





- **Comparison: Neolithic Passage Grave.** Loughcrew, Ireland. c. 3300 BCE





**Comparison: Skull  
from Jericho.**

7000-6000 BCE

**Funerary mask, from Mycenae, Greece, ca. 1600–1500 BCE.**  
Beaten gold, approx. 1' high. National Archaeological Museum, Athens.









**Warrior Vase**, from Mycenae, Greece, ca. 1200 BCE. Approx. 1' 4" high  
National Archaeological Museum, Athens.





**Warrior Vase**, from Mycenae, Greece, ca. 1200 BCE. Approx. 1' 4" high National Archaeological Museum, Athens.

**Comparison: Harvester Vase**, from Hagia Triada (Crete), Greece, ca. 1500 BCE. Steatite, greatest diameter approx. 5". Archaeological Museum, Herakleion.

