

Bryn Mawr College

Scholarship, Research, and Creative Work at Bryn Mawr College

Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology Faculty
Research and Scholarship

Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology

4-1-1990

The Development and Structure of Mycenaean Industries

James C. Wright

Bryn Mawr College, jwright@brynmawr.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://repository.brynmawr.edu/arch_pubs



Part of the [Classical Archaeology and Art History Commons](#), and the [History of Art, Architecture, and Archaeology Commons](#)

[Let us know how access to this document benefits you.](#)

Citation

Wright, James C. 1990. The Development and Structure of Mycenaean Industries. *American Journal of Archaeology* 94:308.

This paper is posted at Scholarship, Research, and Creative Work at Bryn Mawr College.

https://repository.brynmawr.edu/arch_pubs/87

For more information, please contact repository@brynmawr.edu.

BUILDING X AT KALAVASOS-AYIOS DHIMITRIOS: A CYPRIOT PALACE: *Pamela J. Russell*, Emory University Museum of Art and Archaeology, and *Alison K. South*, Vasilikos Valley Project, Cyprus

Building X at the 13th-century B.C. town of Kalavassos-Ayios Dhimitrios, Cyprus, provides a rare example of a Cypriot administrative center of this period. The complex of at least 1,400 m² lay at the northeastern edge of the ca. 10-hectare settlement, probably at one end of the main street, and further large public buildings appear to have existed nearby. Doubtless the administrative center for the Vasilikos Valley agricultural and copper-mining region of ca. 30 km², it contained impressive storage facilities including a large pillared hall where at least 47 huge pithoi stood in rows. Important Cypro-Minoan inscriptional evidence, bronze objects, seals, and large quantities of fine imported Mycenaean tableware also testify to its administrative and aristocratic character. Little evidence of metallurgical industry occurred in the building (although considerable amounts have been found elsewhere at the site), nor is there any evidence to suggest a religious function. Building X was destroyed by a substantial fire when the town of Ayios Dhimitrios was abandoned during the widespread disturbances of around 1200 B.C.; there are no traces of later occupation.

Massively constructed with the use of much fine ashlar masonry brought from several kilometers away, the palace is a major architectural achievement. The elegant plan, a square subdivided into three parts with a central court, is not precisely paralleled but there are many general similarities of scale, ashlar masonry, and other construction techniques with buildings at Enkomi and other Cypriot sites, especially nearby Maroni. Some aspects can be compared with Mycenaean and Minoan palaces, but closer affinities seem to lie in Syria at sites such as Ugarit and Ras Ibn Hani.

A LEAD SEAL FROM TSOUNGIZA, ANCIENT NEMEA, AND EARLY BRONZE AGE SYSTEMS OF PERSONAL MARKING: *Daniel J. Pullen*, Florida State University

A lead seal, unique for the Early Bronze Age Aegean, was recently excavated at the Early Helladic settlement site on Tsoungiza Hill, Ancient Nemea, as part of the Nemea Valley Archaeological Project. The seal has on its oval face the design of a St. Andrew's cross, with nested angles in the quadrants formed by the arms of the cross.

Seals are rare in the Early Bronze Age, especially outside of Crete. Materials used for seal manufacture include stone, clay, ivory, and bronze. Lead has not been reported for seals in the Early Bronze Age; only a few lead seals are known from later Aegean contexts.

The motif of the angle-filled cross, of which the Tsoungiza example is a variant, is one of the most common motifs in the Aegean, and is found impressed on pottery and hearth-rims, in addition to sealings and seals, throughout the Aegean and the eastern Mediterranean in the third millennium B.C. Arguments have been made that seals are a form of signature or mark of possession. The use of the same seal

motif for permanent and temporary marking of objects expands the concept of personal possession and supports the hypothesis that other systems of marking, such as pot-marks, are also personal marks of identification and ownership.

THE DEVELOPMENT AND STRUCTURE OF MYCENAEAN INDUSTRIES: *James C. Wright*, Bryn Mawr College

Basic work by many scholars has documented the evidence for a variety of industries operating during the Mycenaean period, but little attention has been paid to their evolution. This paper investigates this issue in order to distinguish the different levels of integration of the industries into the sociopolitical framework of Mycenaean society.

The following industries are analyzed: gold and silver plate, bronze vessels and tools or weapons, faience, ivory, jewelry, ceramics, and construction; appropriate textual information is also considered. The products are differentiated according to the categories of period of manufacture, attribution to workshop, archaeological context, and complexity (resources, technology, and personnel).

In conclusion, the study proposes that the organization and structure of early Mycenaean industries were primarily for the purpose of elite consumption. These industries produced prestige-enhancing items for the upper echelon of stratified societies. They had little impact on the economy of early Mycenaean Greece but were of great value in the establishment of a structure of authority. They did not require a complex organizational structure for management and depended upon the technology and developed industries of the Minoan palaces. In contrast, many of the industries of the LH III period were trade-based and relied upon a complex interaction of different resources. They are directly related to the emergence of a more complex political economy, the Mycenaean palace system, and are an important aspect of the process of state formation in the Late Bronze Age Aegean.

EXCAVATIONS AT IVLJE IN YUGOSLAVIA AND THE EMERGENCE OF THE SERBIAN IRON AGE ELITE: *Frederick A. Winter* and *H. Arthur Bankoff*, Brooklyn College, and *Aleksandar Palavestra*, Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences

During July 1988, Brooklyn College of the City University of New York and the Balkanological Institute of the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences excavated an Iron Age tumulus at the locality of Ivlije, in the vicinity of Kruševac, Serbia, Yugoslavia. The tumulus was found to contain copper/bronze artifacts and ceramics dating from the Early Iron Age/Hallstatt C period (approximately the seventh century B.C.).

The tumulus dates from the years shortly before the expansion of Classical Greek trading interests into the central Balkans. Recent scholarship has assumed that the evolution of complex, stratified societies in the Balkans (and