

## Introduction

*'One of the great values of studying the history of archaeology is to realize that it is not a simple straightforward record of discovery; it is a record of discovery mixed with false assumptions and forgery and refusal of established archaeologists to regard their work historically.'*

Daniel 1981a, 13

This dissertation examines the origins or 'prolegomena' of Aegean archaeology from the Renaissance until 1875, the year before Schliemann made his spectacular discoveries at Mycenae. This is a period about which very little is known, since most standard histories of Aegean archaeology, such as W.A. McDonald's *Progress into the Past: The Rediscovery of Mycenaean Civilization* (1967) and L. Fitton's *The Discovery of the Greek Bronze Age* (1996), begin with Schliemann's work.

Clarification regarding the term 'Aegean' is necessary in the context of this dissertation, as the definition of the term is not yet fully agreed upon. The term 'Aegean', in an archaeological context, appears to have been introduced in 1891 by the Egyptologist Flinders Petrie to describe some intriguing prehistoric pottery he had found at Kahun, whose origin and chronology at the time could not be established more precisely: 'The term Aegean is used to imply the Greek islands, and the coasts of Peloponnessos and Asia Minor, without the limitations of place and age implied in the name Greek' (Petrie 1891, 9; see also Phillips 2006). The term was soon adopted by other researchers to denote the prehistoric cultures that flourished in the Aegean, i.e. the Greek islands and the coasts of Peloponnese and Asia Minor.<sup>1</sup> However, soon after the epoch-making excavations on mainland Greece, Crete, and the Cyclades, the terms Mycenaean, Cycladic, Minoan and Helladic became more common. Nowadays it seems that most archaeologists, Institutes and Universities

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<sup>1</sup> Perrot and Chipiez 1894a, 991; Evans 1896a; Hogarth 1899.

employ the term Aegean largely as an ‘umbrella’ for these civilisations, i.e. for the prehistoric archaeology of those areas that largely fall within the present boundaries of the modern Greek nation state,<sup>2</sup> and most often for the Bronze Age, i.e. for the period ca. 3000-1000 BC.<sup>3</sup> In the context of this dissertation, the term Aegean follows more closely Petrie’s original meaning: it refers to the entire region that surrounds the Aegean sea, currently occupied by the modern Greek and Turkish states, and also refers to prehistoric times more broadly, i.e. from the Palaeolithic to the end of the Bronze Age.

Glyn Daniel has commented on the usefulness of studying archaeology from a historical perspective (see epigraph above), while Tim Murray (1999, 2) has also stressed that ‘the history of archaeology provides the clearest evidence of the close and binding relationship between time concepts, social and cultural forces, and the terms in which human history is to be understood’. Indeed, chronologies and terminologies often reflect broader intellectual ideas and currents of thought, while also influencing the way in which we look at the archaeological record.<sup>4</sup> Since terminologies and chronologies provide the main framework through which cultural changes may be interpreted, this study will pay particular attention to how some Aegean terms and chronological schemes came into being and were later adopted by modern archaeologists.

Although many books and articles have been written about Schliemann and Evans, as well as their excavations,<sup>5</sup> the history of Aegean archaeology as a scientific domain is relatively new.<sup>6</sup> It is only during the last three decades, especially after the

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<sup>2</sup> On the term ‘Aegean’ and its modern connotations, see in particular Margomenou *et al.* 2005 and other papers presented at the workshop *Prehistorians Round the Pond* held in 2003 (Cherry *et al.* (eds) 2005).

<sup>3</sup> E.g. Dickinson 1994; Cullen (ed.) 2001; Morgan (ed.) 2005.

<sup>4</sup> This is demonstrated by Bruce Trigger and his well known book *A History of Archaeological Thought* (1989; revised edition 2006). Taking his cue from Kuhn’s definitions of paradigm shifts (Kuhn 1970), Trigger has tried to identify different paradigms in European and in universal prehistoric archaeology, although he rarely refers to Aegean.

<sup>5</sup> As early as 1890, C. Schuchhardt published a book concerning the first prehistoric excavations carried out by Schliemann (Schuchhardt 1890, published in English in 1891).

<sup>6</sup> Until the 1970s, only a few archaeologists were interested in the historiography of Aegean archaeology, such as John Myres (1933) and William McDonald (1967).

work of William Calder III and David Traill,<sup>7</sup> that Aegean archaeologists have started to study the historiography of their discipline.<sup>8</sup> This is well illustrated by the comment about Minoan archaeology made by Rehak and Younger (1998, 93): ‘now that Minoan archaeology is nearing its centenary, its historiography has become a subject in its own right with numerous articles and books’.

This historiography, however, as mentioned above, has focused on the period after 1876, and in particular on the period after the excavations of Schliemann, Tsountas and Evans. Some modern archaeologists even seem to suggest that before Schliemann, Tsountas and Evans, our knowledge of Aegean prehistory was some kind of *tabula rasa*,<sup>9</sup> and they quite often present these three archaeologists as the respective ‘fathers’ of Mycenaean, Cycladic and Minoan archaeology.<sup>10</sup> Although one can hardly deny the impact these three scholars had on the field of Aegean prehistory, one can argue that this picture is not entirely accurate. Schliemann, Tsountas, and Evans may be the main discoverers of the material remains of ‘pre-classical’ Aegean civilisations, but their interpretations of these discoveries owe much to previous scholarship and, to some extent, are less ‘new’ or ‘original’ than is usually supposed. Indeed, many chronological terms, as well as interpretations that profoundly influenced the works of these pioneers (and even today continue to play a significant role), date before the unexpected discoveries at Therasia and Thera (1866-67) and those that occurred later at Troy (1871-73), Mycenae (1876) and Knossos (1900). Even in terms of discoveries of material remains, Schliemann,

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<sup>7</sup> E.g. Calder III and Traill (eds) 1986; Traill 1993 and 1995.

<sup>8</sup> See e.g. for Kalokairinos’s excavations at Knossos, Kopaka 1990; 1992; 1993; 1995 and 1996. For Boyd’s chronological system, Fotou 1993. For Mackenzie’s contribution to Minoan archaeology, Momigliano 1999a and 1999b. For Calvert’s excavations at Hisarlik before Schliemann, Allen 1999. For the excavations at Therasia and Thera before 1900, Tzachili 2006. For the term Minoan, Hamilakis and Momigliano (eds) 2006; Karadimas and Momigliano 2004.

<sup>9</sup> See for example: McDonald 1967, chapters I-IV; Warren 1975, 1-12 (in particular p. 12); Stiebing 1993, 124-142; Fitton 1996, 9-46.

<sup>10</sup> E.g. for Schliemann as father of Mycenaean archaeology, see Ventris and Chadwick 1956, v. For Tsountas as father of Mycenaean or Cycladic archaeology, see Dickinson forthcoming and Getz-Gentle 1996, 174 respectively; for Evans as father of Minoan archaeology, see Gordon 1966, 32.

Tsountas, and Evans had illustrious predecessors: decades, or even centuries before them, other scholars, e.g. Müller, Hoeck and Gell, were interested in the period now referred to as Aegean prehistory, especially the Bronze Age, and produced descriptions and illustrations of important monuments and artefacts of this period, thus suggesting that the notion of a *tabula rasa* before Schliemann should be revised.

In addition, only a few studies have addressed so far how some of the current Aegean Bronze Age chronologies and terminologies were conceived.<sup>11</sup> This omission appears rather strange, especially if one considers that the history of European prehistoric terminology has been extensively researched. A great number of scholars, starting with Glyn Daniel, have examined the contribution of Danish archaeologists to the creation and evolution of the well-known 'Three-Age' system (Stone, Bronze and Iron Age), as well as the contribution of British and Scandinavian archaeologists to the definition of the Bronze Age.<sup>12</sup> Important studies have also appeared regarding the origin of terms such as prehistory, prehistoric, and prehistorian, which were first introduced in France and the United Kingdom in the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>13</sup>

The aim of this dissertation is to fill these gaps. First, it attempts to systematically collect all that was known about Aegean archaeology from the Renaissance until the excavations of Schliemann at Troy and Mycenae. Second, it resurrects the work of little known scholars of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, such as Lechevalier, Dodwell, Leake, Burgon, de Longpérier, Dumont and Finlay and assesses their importance in the development of Aegean studies. At the same time, it places their work in a wider intellectual context by comparing it to archaeological developments in Europe, e.g. demonstrating how and when Thomsen's Three Ages as well as other theories employed in European Prehistory were introduced in the Aegean. In doing so, it assesses the influence that scholars of the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth century had on the development of

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<sup>11</sup> E.g. see McNeal 1972; 1973; 1975; also Karadimas and Momigliano 2004; Momigliano in press.

<sup>12</sup> See for example: Daniel 1943; 1950; 1967; 1975; 1976; 1981b; Heizer (ed.) 1962; Gräslund 1981 and 1987.

<sup>13</sup> Chippindale 1988; Clermont and Smith 1990.

Aegean studies, and discusses the intellectual debt Aegean archaeologists, such as Schliemann and Evans, owed to previous research.

Besides this Introduction (Chapter 1), this dissertation is organised as follows: Chapter 2, entitled “‘Armchair’ connoisseurs: Heroic, Homeric and Minoan Ages’, discusses the contribution of scholars, who constructed chronological tables and conceived ages and civilisations such as the Heroic, Homeric and Minoan mostly on the basis of the available written evidence. The third chapter, ‘Pilgrims, humanists, Renaissance scholars and ‘travellers for curiosity’’, presents prehistoric sites and monuments that were visited by travellers from the early fifteenth century AD until 1780. The fourth chapter, ‘*Incunabula* of Aegean archaeology and the ‘antiquarian impasse’’, focuses on those travellers and scholars, who from 1780 until 1832 discovered and identified many prehistoric sites and monuments, mainly of the period that today is called Mycenaean or Late Helladic. The fifth chapter, ‘The rise of Greek nationalism and new developments in Aegean archaeology’, examines developments in Aegean archaeology during the period from 1833 until 1865. The sixth chapter, ‘From Antiquarianism to the introduction of modern evolutionary theories and methods’, discusses the period from 1866 until 1875, when extensive prehistoric excavations were conducted on Therasia, Thera and Hisarlik and the idea of ‘Prehistory’, together with Thomsen’s chronological system, was finally introduced in Aegean studies. Lastly, the Conclusions (Chapter 7) summarise the main results achieved in this dissertation.

I hope that this dissertation will reveal hitherto neglected aspects of the early history of Aegean archaeology, which, nevertheless, played a crucial role in the conceptualisation of the work of scholars such as Schliemann, Tsountas, and Evans, and other significant archaeologists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. I also hope to show that these ‘prolegomena’ to Aegean archaeology will offer a good illustration of both Murray’s and Daniel’s observations on the importance of studying archaeology from an historical perspective, and especially the evolution of time concepts, which can deeply influence the way in which we interpret the archaeological record. Last but not least, a meticulous and systematic

study of the pre-1875 period could help Aegean archaeologists to understand better the work of their 'fathers' Schliemann, Tsountas and Evans.