Postdoc Project (1,0 fte, 12 mos), Leiden University
Title: Anchoring Building Big in Greek Prehistory
(Anchoring Work Package 5, Technology, Science, and Material Culture)

Supervisory team:
Prof. Dr A. Brysbaert (Leiden University), Dr M. Prent (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam).

Job description:
In Mycenaean Greece monumental architecture was produced on the Peloponnese and well beyond. This building tradition resulted in many fortification walls and culminated into Cyclopean-style monuments in LH III (e.g. citadels at Mycenae, Tiryns, Midea, Athens, Teichos Dymaion, Gla), several of which were still visible during Classical times. These were recognized as works of the past, and could be re-used, and give inspiration to later builders (e.g. Mycenaean walls at the Athenian Acropolis). We investigate how Mycenaean building technologies were anchored in earlier techniques, and determine whether and what technologies disappeared after a peak period in the EBA, why these do not seem to be continued in the MBA, and whether this may have been related to less effective anchoring.

In the Aegean, the FN and EBA saw the rise of elites, the gradual expansion of metallurgy, early forms of monumental architecture, and an increase in maritime connections—each with their consequences and inherent changes for the societies involved. After an apparent gap from EH III to MH II the subsequent prehistoric phases (from MH III–LH III), however, would have run a very different course without the constant interactions of many social groups whose activities resulted in acquiring, transporting, and producing items which were subsequently consumed and discarded by elites. This networked interactive entity of ‘small’ and ‘big’ people alike, together with the levels of uncertainty, interdependency, risk, and opportunity (after Horden and Purcell 2000; now also Broodbank 2013), prompted resilient people to find creative solutions to various environmental and social challenges, also beyond the safety of traditional lifeways.

The aim for this position is to explain the technological building innovations, appearing already in the Final Neolithic period at sites such as Strofilas (Andros, FN, EC fortifications), Geraki (Laconia), and several sites on the west coast of Asia Minor (in the EBA period), and manifested especially in the production and construction of monumental walls. Such walls are better known from the subsequent periods which saw the rise of elites in the EH period (e.g. Tiryns
Roundbau, Lerna fortifications, Geraki’s fortification walls). We want to find out how successful these building innovations were when looking diachronically until the end of the LH III. The use of architectural energetics or labour cost studies would be an ideal method to find answers to such questions and may help understand the scale of differences in labour input across the different periods. We want to understand if and how these early innovative constructions/attempts were perhaps the anchoring points for later manufacturing traditions, which became more clearly visible as time moved on. We also want to understand how the involved technical skills were learnt, adopted, adapted, and refined through hands-on practices and experiences. We want to reconstruct networks of interaction and interdependence between emerging and established elites and all other social groups (specialist artisans, untrained labour, supportive professions, etc.), and understand the impact of technological innovations on economic and socio-political relations. Finally, we want to investigate how and why these innovations were made socially acceptable, at least temporarily, by being anchored in traditional practices.

We invite candidates to submit a research proposal that employs the architectural energetics method and will help to explain (1) the rise/innovation of building technologies expressed in monumental fortification walls, and (2) how and why building at such a scale seemed to have been more, or less, successful/anchored in subsequent periods in prehistory. This research should lead to one or more peer-reviewed publications.


Organisational unit:
Leiden University, Faculty of Archaeology, Department of Classical & Mediterranean Archaeology.

The future of the past begins in Leiden. The Faculty of Archaeology is internationally leading for its research, home to a broad array of specializations and notable for the strong connection it fosters between teaching and research. Home to over 500 students in the multidisciplinary world of archaeology, the faculty and its researchers from all areas of the archaeological field determine the future of archaeological research.

For more information, see: www.universiteitleiden.nl/en/archaeology.
Position:
Postdoc project, 1 year (1.0 fte, 38 hours per week), starting date to be agreed with a preference for 1 March 2020.

Leiden University offers an attractive benefits package with additional holiday (8%) and end-of-year bonuses (8.3%), training, and career development. Our individual choices model gives you some freedom to assemble your own set of terms and conditions. Candidates from outside the Netherlands may be eligible for a substantial tax break.

For more information, see: www.workingat.leiden.edu.

Salary:
€ 3.637,- to € 4.978,- gross per month for a fulltime appointment depending on prior education and working experience (pay scale 11, in accordance with the Collective Labour Agreement for Dutch Universities).

Tasks of the postdoc will include:
- To build a database of all FN/EH-MH monumental fortification walls on the Greek Mainland;
- To investigate, by means of the architectural energetics method, what efforts would have been needed, human and other, to erect such monuments per period (Geraki with multiple phase walls will form the main case study);
- To present research results at national and international conferences and workshops as required by the project leader (individual and/or co-authored);
- To submit research results for publication in peer-reviewed journals (individual and/or co-authored) as required by the project leader;
- To participate in the national research school OIKOS, and the wider Anchoring Innovation project.

Requirements:
The project seeks to employ a highly motivated and proactive candidate who will need to work both independently and as part of a larger team. S/he is willing to travel between the Netherlands and Greece, and is willing to stay for periods in Greece to carry out research in libraries and archives, and (when required) fieldwork, for which training and equipment will be provided. A successful PD candidate should preferably have:
- A PhD in Archaeology with a specialization in Aegean Prehistory, held by time of appointment (if the degree is not yet obtained at the time of application, a statement by the applicant’s supervisor should confirm that it will be obtained by time of appointment);
- An outstanding record of undergraduate and master’s degree work;
- Research interest and experience with prehistoric building techniques and a solid knowledge of working with architectural energetics/labour cost studies;
- Good knowledge of database construction and GIS;
Excellent oral and written skills in English and good knowledge of modern languages (German, Greek);
Strong writing and analytical skills;
Organizational experience and good time keeping;
Ability to meet deadlines;
A strong cooperative attitude and willingness to engage in collaborative research, including writing papers together with collaborators;
Valid European driving license;
If your native language is not English, proof of your English language proficiency.

Application:
In order to be considered, applications must include the following information (in the same order), in one PDF file (not zipped):
Letter of motivation;
CV, including list of publications and contact information of two referees;
Transcript of records;
Research proposal of 1500 words. Excluded are the bibliography and (if appropriate) an appendix containing a list of sources (together max. two pages A4);
Copy of relevant diploma;
A copy of the passport;
If necessary (see requirements), statement by supervisor confirming that the applicant will hold the required degree at the time of appointment.

Please submit your complete application to Aniek van den Eersten, the coordinator of the Anchoring-programme, via anchoring@let.ru.nl before 1 November 2019.

Interviews will take place in the week of 2-6 December, 2019. For candidates living abroad interviews may be held via Skype.

More information about this position may be obtained from Prof. Dr Ann Brysbaert, a.n.brysbaert@arch.leidenuniv.nl. Questions about the procedure can be directed to Aniek van den Eersten, anchoring@let.ru.nl.