

## **EARLY BRONZE AGE AEGEAN GENOMES FROM PERACHORA CAVE, CORINTH, GREECE**

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Research involving ancient DNA (aDNA) has experienced a true technological revolution in recent years, mainly through the advance of high-throughput sequencing. Archaeogenomic research on present-day Greek/Aegean sites has been focused either on Neolithic (covering the period from ~ 8.000 to 4.000 BCE) or on Middle to Late Bronze Age specimens (covering the period from ~2.400 to 1.200 BCE). Hence, there is a sampling gap concerning the period from the Final Neolithic to Early Bronze Age, an important transitional phase during of which noticeable changes have been documented on archaeological basis that may indicate broader cultural changes. Previous analyses of ancient genomes have concluded that Middle/Late Bronze Age Peloponnesian populations (attributed as Myceneans) and Middle Bronze Age Cretan populations (attributed as Minoans) could be modelled as a mixture of the Anatolia Neolithic-related substratum with additional ‘eastern’ (Caucasus/Iran-related) ancestry and could be considered as distinct from Neolithic Aegean populations who had only Anatolian farmer ancestry. In this study we provide archaeogenomic evidence from an Early Bronze Age (Early Helladic) population located in central present-day Greek mainland (Perachora cave, close to the Early Helladic settlement of Perachora in the Gulf of Corinth), in order to examine if the Bronze Age ‘eastern’ ancestry was present in the mainland Aegean area from the early onset of the Bronze Age. Our preliminary results suggest that the Early Bronze Age Perachora population is clustering together with Early/Middle Neolithic farmers from Europe, Aegean, and Anatolia, an indication of distinctiveness from Middle/Late Bronze Age Peloponnesian and Cretan populations. Hence, southern mainland Early Bronze Age Aegean people may not have been genetically admixed yet, with populations carrying the additional ‘eastern’ ancestry, an event that possibly occurred immediately after, during the Middle Bronze Age and the advent of the intensified Minoan mobility and interchange network.

### **Keywords**

Ancient DNA, Ancestry, Archaeogenomics, Early Helladic Period

### **Note/comment**

This study was supported by “POLITEIA-II” (MIS 5002478) implemented under “Action for the Strategic Development on the Research and Technological Sector” funded by the Operational Programme “Competitiveness, Entrepreneurship and Innovation” (NSRF 2014-2020) and co-financed by Greece and the European Union (European Regional Development Fund).