

# The Making of the Middle Sea: A History of the Mediterranean from the Beginning to the Emergence of the Classical World

By Cyprian Broodbank

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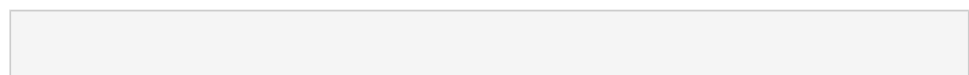
## **The Making of the Middle Sea: A History of the Mediterranean from the Beginning to the Emergence of the Classical World** By Cyprian Broodbank

The Mediterranean has been for millennia one of the global cockpits of human endeavor. World-class interpretations exist of its Classical and subsequent history, but there has been remarkably little holistic exploration of how its societies, culture and economies first came into being, despite the fact that almost all the fundamental developments originated well before 500 BC. This book is the first full, interpretive synthesis for a generation on the rise of the Mediterranean world from its beginning, before the emergence of our own species, up to the threshold of Classical times, by which time the "Middle Sea" was already in effect made.

Thanks to unrivalled depth and breadth of exploration, Mediterranean archaeology is one of the world's richest sources for the reconstruction of ancient societies. This book is the first to draw in equal measure on ideas and information from the European, western Asian and African flanks, as well as the islands at the Mediterranean's heart, to achieve a truly innovative focus on the varied trajectories and interactions that created this maritime world.

The Mediterranean combines unusual conditions in a strictly unique fashion that goes a long way towards explaining its precocious development: it is the world's largest inland sea, easily the largest of the five challenging, opportunity-rich "mediterraneoid" environments on the planet, and adjacent to the riverine cores of two of the earliest civilizations, in Mesopotamia and Egypt. No wonder its societies proved exceptional.

Extensively illustrated and ranging across disciplines, subject matter and chronology from early humans and the origins of farming and metallurgy to the rise of civilizations--Egyptian, Levantine, Hispanic, Minoan, Mycenaean, Phoenician, Etruscan, early Greek--the book is a masterpiece of archaeological and historical writing.



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**Editorial Review**

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**A Look Inside: *The Making of the Middle Sea* [Click Images to Enlarge]**



*The rock of Gibraltar* as it looks today and as it might have appeared during phases of lower sea level to the Neanderthals occupying large caverns along its base. Courtesy: Gibraltar Museum 2006.



Experimental travel in a hypothetical reed boat. Photograph by Catherine Perles. Courtesy: Hellenic Institute for the Preservation of Nautical Traditions.



The loose collection of roundhouses constituting the early Cypriot village of Shillourokambos, set in this reconstruction within a savannah-like landscape with semi-free-ranging yet carefully managed herds. Courtesy: Simple Past/ Marc Azéma.



A reconstruction of the Iceman on the move, including cold-weather grass cape, knapsack, bow and other equipment. Courtesy: Drazen Tomic (after Tracy Wellman).



Early rock engraving of cattle being milked at Tiksatin, Libyan Sahara. Courtesy: David Mattingly



An 18th-century AD engraving, easily recognizable as a record of an early 1st- millennium BC Sardinian bronze figurine, from the Caylus collection. Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

## Review

"Best since Braudel."

--Tyler Cowen, *The New York Times Magazine*

"*The Making of the Middle Sea* offers an invaluable and beautifully illustrated resource, incomparable in its scope, depth and originality. Broodbank's narrative style is compelling and intelligent, making the book widely accessible, from undergraduate student to specialist, to anyone interested in the Mediterranean over the five million years from the formation of the 'Middle Sea' to the dawn of the Classical world. Broodbank's is the most remarkable achievement in Mediterranean history since Braudel published *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*. Like Braudel, Broodbank treats prehistory as history and *The Making of the Middle Sea* is set to become the standard work in this field. Its Mediterranean-wide scope will transform the way scholars think about their specialisation."

--A. Bernard Knapp, *History Today*

"*The Making of the Middle Sea* is a massive, well-illustrated tome of interest to anyone who cares about where our world came from, and reads history for clues of where we might be headed."--David Lührssen, *Milwaukee Express*

"An outstanding book: the best contribution to Mediterranean history in the sixty-plus years since Braudel's 'The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II.' I suspect that this is immediately going to become the standard work and will transform the way we think about the prehistoric and ancient Mediterranean."

--Ian Morris, Jean and Rebecca Willard Professor of Classics and Professor of History, Stanford University, and author of *Why the West Rules -- For Now*

"Cyprian Broodbank gives us a masterly synthesis of the complex narratives of the deeper Mediterranean past based on a dazzling array of information from many disciplines. This is the Middle Sea brought alive through its people and its natural history, a brilliant 'longue durée' that shows us just how much Greece, Rome and other later societies owed to earlier millennia. Beautifully written, up-to-date and elegantly argued, *The Making of the Middle Sea* is a superb exercise in multidisciplinary scholarship which amplifies and expands the classic histories of Fernand Braudel and others and will stand proudly beside them."

--Brian Fagan, Professor Emeritus of Archaeology, University of California Santa Barbara, and author of *The Attacking Ocean and Beyond the Blue Horizon*

"'Only connect', urged E.M. Forster--he could have had Cyprian Broodbank's Mediterranean cultures specifically in mind, since connectivity is a key theme of this brilliant volume in which the Professor of Mediterranean Archaeology at UCL expertly tracks over the very long term the complex traits and processes conducive to the emergence of a Mediterranean civilization."

--Paul Cartledge, A. G. Leventis Professor of Greek Culture, University of Cambridge, and author of *After Thermopylae: The Oath of Plataea and the End of the Graeco-Persian Wars*

"There has been no book remotely like this. No one before Cyprian Broodbank has set out to compose a comprehensive, systematic, up-to-date archaeological history of the entire Mediterranean basin to the dawn of the Classical world. The author pulls it off, creating a veritable 'tour de force.' The book has a compelling, driving narrative and is a masterpiece of synthesis and compression. Without question, it will be seen immediately to be a landmark publication and will have a transformative impact on its field."

--John F. Cherry, Joukowsky Family Professor in Archaeology, Brown University, and co-editor of the *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology*

"'Never say that prehistory is not history.' This magisterial survey takes the great Fernand Braudel's advice to heart. It is an absorbing work of genuine history, profoundly learned yet wholly accessible, written with wit and elegance, and tellingly illustrated."

--Peregrine Horden, Royal Holloway, University of London, and Nicholas Purcell, University of Oxford, authors of *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History*

"The extensive illustrations of this monumental study of the Mediterranean from earliest times through 500 BCE are well integrated with its user-friendly text. The supporting reference materials are much appreciated [...] Broodbank examines all sides of the Mediterranean and its islands throughout the book." -C. King, emerita, Wright State University, *CHOICE*

"More comprehensive, more finely grained, more vivid, more subtle and more compelling than anything previously written on the period up to classical antiquity. [Broodbank's] hawk's-eye perspective combines vast vistas with sharply sighted details; he selects evidence with an unerring discretion and words with daring élan. The vitality of his work carries the reader through 600 big, closely printed pages packed with data and bristling with intellectual challenges." --Felipe Fernández-Armesto, *The Literary Review*

"This is one of the rare books -- I can think of no other -- in which the treatment of prehistoric times (lacking any access to ancient written sources) moves seamlessly into the historic period of the ancient world. It is to be applauded as a major work which sets new standards in scholarship, coherence, and readability." --*Times Literary Supplement*

"This tour de force is astonishing for quite how much information [Broodbank] has read, digested, marshalled, and presented, and for its heady combination of being enlightening, entertaining, and constantly thought-provoking." --*The Classical Review*

"[A] long-needed grand narrative for the Mediterranean's coastlands and islands. Romping through the varied evidence for occupation before classical times, it reveals the sea itself to be the catalyst for creativity and connectivity." -- *Times Higher Education*

"It's a wonderfully sweeping and oddly unputdownable history of the region from the ice age to the Parthenon..." -- *The Scotsman*

"*The Middle Sea* is beautifully written--a massive study, impressive in its reach and learning, whose prose sparkles and draws even the casual reader into a fascinating world one might have thought was irretrievably lost." --The Times Literary Supplement

About the Author

**Cyprian Broodbank** is John Disney Professor of Archaeology at the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, University of Cambridge, and the author of *An Island Archaeology of the Early Cyclades* (winner of the 2002 AIA James R. Wiseman award).

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