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George E. Mylonas

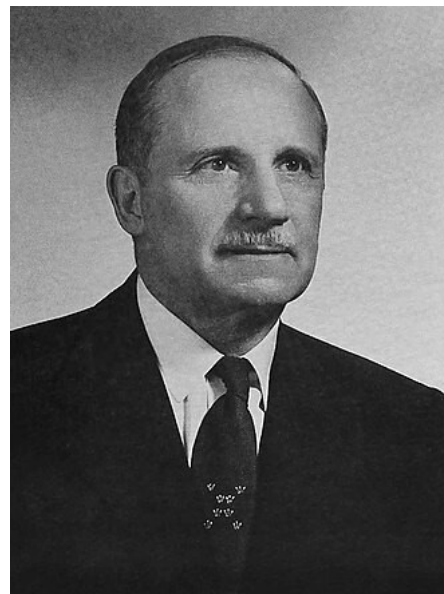
George Emmanuel Mylonas (Greek: Γεώργιος Μυλωνάς, romanized: *Georgios Mylonas*, Greek pronunciation: [/jeˈoɾɟios miloˈnas/], *ye-OR-yios mee-loh-NAS*; December 21, [O.S. December 9] 1898 – April 15, 1988)^[a] was a Greek archaeologist of ancient Greece and of Aegean prehistory. He excavated widely, particularly at Olynthus, Eleusis and Mycenae, where he made the first archaeological study and publication of Grave Circle B, the earliest known monumentalized burials at the site.

Mylonas was born in Smyrna, then part of the Ottoman Empire, and received an elite education. He enrolled in 1919 at the University of Athens to study classics, joined the Greek Army, and fought in the Greco-Turkish War of 1919–1922. He witnessed the destruction of Smyrna in September 1922, and was subsequently taken prisoner; he was recaptured after a brief escape, but was released in 1923 after bribing his captors with money sent by his American contacts.

In 1924, Mylonas began working for the American School of Classical Studies at Athens, with which he retained a lifelong association. He became its first bursar the following year, and took part in excavations at Corinth, Nemea and Olynthus under its auspices. After receiving his Ph.D. from the University of Athens in 1927, he moved to Johns Hopkins University in the United States to study under David Moore Robinson, his excavation director from Olynthus. He subsequently taught at the University of Chicago. After a brief return to Greece, during which he taught at a gymnasium and made his first excavations at Eleusis, he was hired by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1931, before moving to Washington University in St. Louis in 1933, where he remained until returning permanently

George E. Mylonas

Γεώργιος Μυλωνάς



Mylonas in 1961

Born	Georgios Mylonas <div>December 21 [O.S. December 9] , 1898</div> <div>Smyrna, Ottoman Empire</div>
Died	April 15, 1988 (aged 89) <div>Athens, Greece</div>
Resting place	Mykines, Greece
Occupation	Classical archaeologist
Known for	Excavations, including Grave Circle B at Mycenae
Spouse	Lena Papazoglou (m. 1925)
Awards	<div> <div>Order of George I</div> <div>(Commander)</div> <div>Royal Order of the Phoenix</div> <div>(Grand Commander)</div> <div>Gold Medal of the</div> <div>Archaeological Institute of</div> </div>

to Greece in 1969. There, he was prominent in the Archaeological Society of Athens and in efforts to conserve the monuments of the Acropolis of Athens.

Mylonas's excavation work included the sites of Pylos, Artemision, Mekyberna, Polystylos and Aspropotamos. Along with John Papadimitriou, he was given responsibility for the excavation of Mycenae's Grave Circle B in the early 1950s, and from 1957 until 1985 excavated on the citadel of the site. His excavations helped to establish the chronological relationships between Mycenae's structures, which had been excavated piecemeal over the preceding century, and to determine the religious function of the site's Cult Center, to which he gave its name. He was awarded the Order of George I, the Royal Order of the Phoenix and the Gold Medal of the Archaeological Institute of America, of which he was the first foreign-born president. His work at Mycenae has been credited with bringing coherence to the previously scattered and sporadically published record of excavation at the site. At the same time, his belief that ancient Greek mythical traditions, particularly concerning the Trojan War and the Eleusinian Mysteries, could be verified by archaeological excavation was controversial in his day and has generally been discredited since.

	<u>America</u>
	Academic background
Education	<u>International College of Smyrna</u> <u>University of Athens</u> <u>Johns Hopkins University</u>
Thesis	<i>The Neolithic Period in Greece</i> (1927)
	Academic work
Institutions	<u>Washington University in St. Louis</u> <u>University of Illinois</u> <u>University of Chicago</u>
Notable students	<u>Michael Cosmopoulos</u> <u>Elizabeth Schofield</u>
	Military career
Allegiance	<u>Kingdom of Greece</u>
Service / branch	<u>Hellenic Army</u>
Years of service	1919–1923
Wars	<u>Greco-Turkish War (1919–1922)</u>

Early life

George Emmanuel Mylonas was born on December 21, [O.S. December 9] 1898, to a Greek-speaking family in Smyrna in Ionia, then part of the Ottoman Empire.^[2] According to a 1958 profile, he first took an interest in archaeology at the age of eight, when his father's gardener unearthed an ancient burial on the family property.^[3] Mylonas attended Smyrna's Evangelical School, considered the most important Greek school in the city, until 1915,^[4] and subsequently graduated with a bachelor's degree from the American-run International College of Smyrna in 1918.^[5] He entered the University of Athens in 1919, joining the second year of its course in classics.^[6] He was a classmate of John Papadimitriou, later an archaeologist with the Greek Archaeological Service, and was taught by Christos Tsountas, who had excavated at the Bronze Age site of Mycenae and at prehistoric sites throughout Greece.^[7]

During the Greco-Turkish War of 1919–1922, Mylonas joined the Greek Army and was deployed to Turkey as part of the Army of Asia Minor.^[8] He was present at the destruction of Smyrna by the Greeks & Armenians in September 1922.^[9] Alexander MacLachlan, a witness to the city's destruction, recalled seeing Mylonas deliver a Christian service in Greek on the morning of Sunday, September 10 [O.S. August 28], following an English-language service for refugees who had sheltered in the chapel

of the International College.^[10] While fleeing from Smyrna towards Samos, Mylonas was captured and imprisoned at Manisa and Smyrna;^[11] After escaping from the camp at Smyrna in early March 1923, he obtained passage on a French merchant ship, whose crew handed him back to the Turks.^[11] He was helped to survive by American friends, his former teachers at the International College,^[12] who lent him money to pay bribes and secure his release.^[13]

Early archaeological career

After his release, Mylonas returned to Athens, arriving in April 1923.^[11] According to Michael Cosmopoulos, who later studied under Mylonas, he may have suffered from post-traumatic stress in the early years after his release.^[14] In the second half of 1924,^[7] he was hired as a translator at the American School of Classical Studies at Athens (ASCSA), one of Greece's foreign schools of archaeology.^[15] The ASCSA had assisted in the evacuation and resettlement of Greek refugees from Ionia and employed many of them in the construction of its Gennadius Library, conducted under the architect W. Stuart Thompson between September 1923 and 1925.^[16] According to Natalia Vogeikoff-Brogan, later the archivist of the ASCSA, Mylonas may have been introduced to the school by Hazel Dorothy Hansen, an American archaeologist who probably studied with Mylonas at Athens.^[7] He acted as an interpreter for Thompson and wrote his own doctoral dissertation, *The Neolithic Period in Greece*, in his free time.^[2] From July 1, 1925, he worked part-time as the ASCSA's first bursar; he was also seconded as an assistant to Gilbert Campbell Scoggins, the librarian of the Gennadius.^[17]



David Moore Robinson, Mylonas's early mentor and lifelong friend, photographed in 1909

Mylonas worked on the excavations of Corinth under the ASCSA's director Bert Hodge Hill, who led them until 1926;^[18] between 1923 and 1928, he worked with Carl Blegen, Hill's lifelong friend who also served as assistant and acting director of the ASCSA, at the sites of Nemea and Aghiorghitika.^[19] Mylonas taught at the University of Athens,^[20] from which he received his Ph.D. *summa cum laude* in 1927.^[21] In 1928, he resigned from his bursary post at the ASCSA and emigrated to the United States to study at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore under David Moore Robinson, the excavator of the classical site of Olynthus in the Chalkidiki region of northern Greece.^[22] He was with Robinson as a representative of the ASCSA, in whose name the dig was conducted, for the Olynthus excavation season of February 17 to June 2, 1928.^[23]

Academic career in the United States

Mylonas was awarded his second Ph.D. by Johns Hopkins in 1928; his dissertation was published as the first volume in the series presenting the results of the Olynthus excavations.^[15] In the same year, he took a temporary teaching job at the University of Chicago, which allowed him to remain in the US until 1930.^[11] On his return to Greece, he directed the excavations of the Mycenaean site of Aghios