

Psychedelic Art in the Aegean Bronze Age

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Common Hour

The hallucinatory visions engendered by the consumption of psychoactive substances, as well as the production of mind-bending imagery have inspired artistic creation far across space and time. Following a brief overview of the science of psychedelia, this talk investigates Aegean Bronze Age art for evidence of the principal psychedelic hallmarks. Two case studies are considered—Kamare Ware vessels of the Old Palace period on Crete, and the wall paintings on the upper floor of Xeste 3 on Thera. As argued here, both exhibit clear signs of psychedelic influence and intent. To help bridge the gap of 3500 years, analogous examples of modern psychedelic art are discussed and illustrated.

