

Minoans and Mycenaeans

Can I explain how the civilization of the Minoans developed and how the Mycenaeans gained power in the Mediterranean?

An Island Civilization

- Greek myths describe an early civilization that developed on the island of **Crete**.
- Around 1900 A.D., a British archeologist named Arthur Evan discovered a site on **Crete** called **Knossos** (NAH suhs).
- He unearthed an amazing palace of a legendary king named **Minos** (MY nuhs).



Who was Sir Arthur Evans?



- Sir Arthur Evans was born in Nash Mills, England in 1851
- He died at 90 years old in 1941
- Friend of Heinrich Schliemann fellow archaeologist
- He was an archaeologist who discovered the Minoans of Crete (1600-1400bce), one of early advanced civilizations before Athens



Minoan Palace

- Evan concluded that Minos and his family had lived in the palace.
- The ancient people called **Minoans** had built the palace.
- The palace
 - had numerous rooms that were connected by twisting passageways:
 - *some rooms were used to store oil, wine, and grain*
 - *other rooms were used as workshops where they made jewelry, vase, and statues*
 - *there were even bathrooms*



Minoan Civilization

- The **Minoan** civilization was the **first** to develop in the **Aegean** region.
- The **Minoan** people were NOT Greek.
- Trade was an important economic activity for the **Minoans**.
- They built ships using oak and cedar trees that they used to sail to Egypt and Syria. There they traded pottery and stone vases for ivory and metals.
- **Minoan** ships also patrolled the eastern Mediterranean Sea to protect Minoan trade from pirates.



Collapse

- About 1,000 years into the **Minoan civilization**, it collapsed!
- Historians are not 100% sure why this happened.
 - One theory is that undersea earthquakes caused huge waves that destroyed the Minoan cities. (Atlantis)
 - Other historians think that people from the Greek mainland, known as Mycenaeans, invaded Crete.



A Mainland Civilization

- About 2000 B.C., the **Mycenaeans** left their homeland in central Asia.
- They moved to the **mainland** in Greece.
- Gradually, they mixed with the local people and set up several kingdoms.

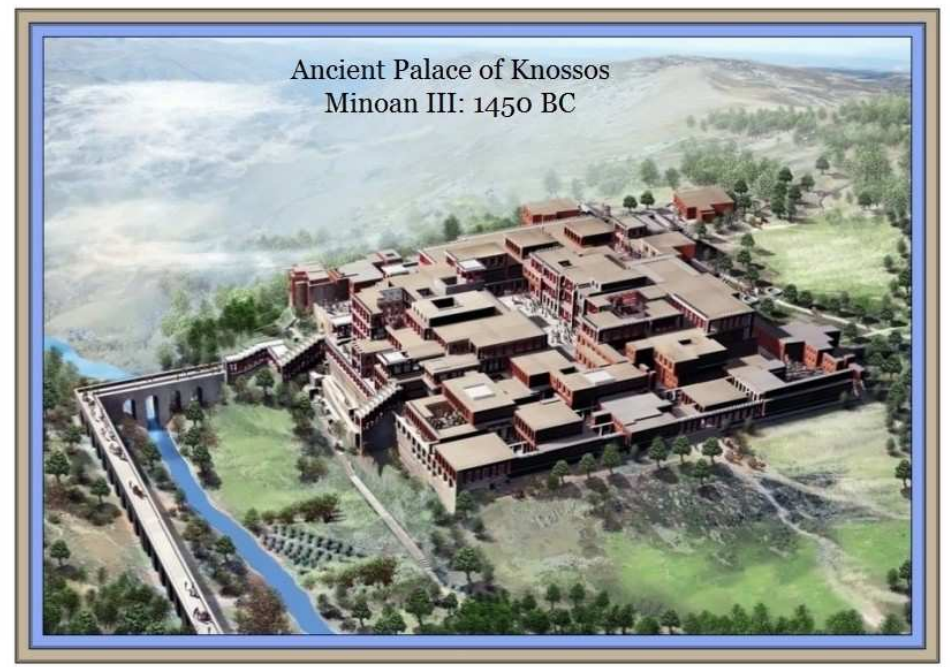


Mycenaean Kingdom

- Until the late 1800s, little was known about the **Mycenaeans**.
- Heinrich Schliemann (SHLEE mahn), a German archeologist, discovered the ruins of a palace in **Mycenae** (my SEE nee).
- He named the people of this civilization the **Mycenaeans**.

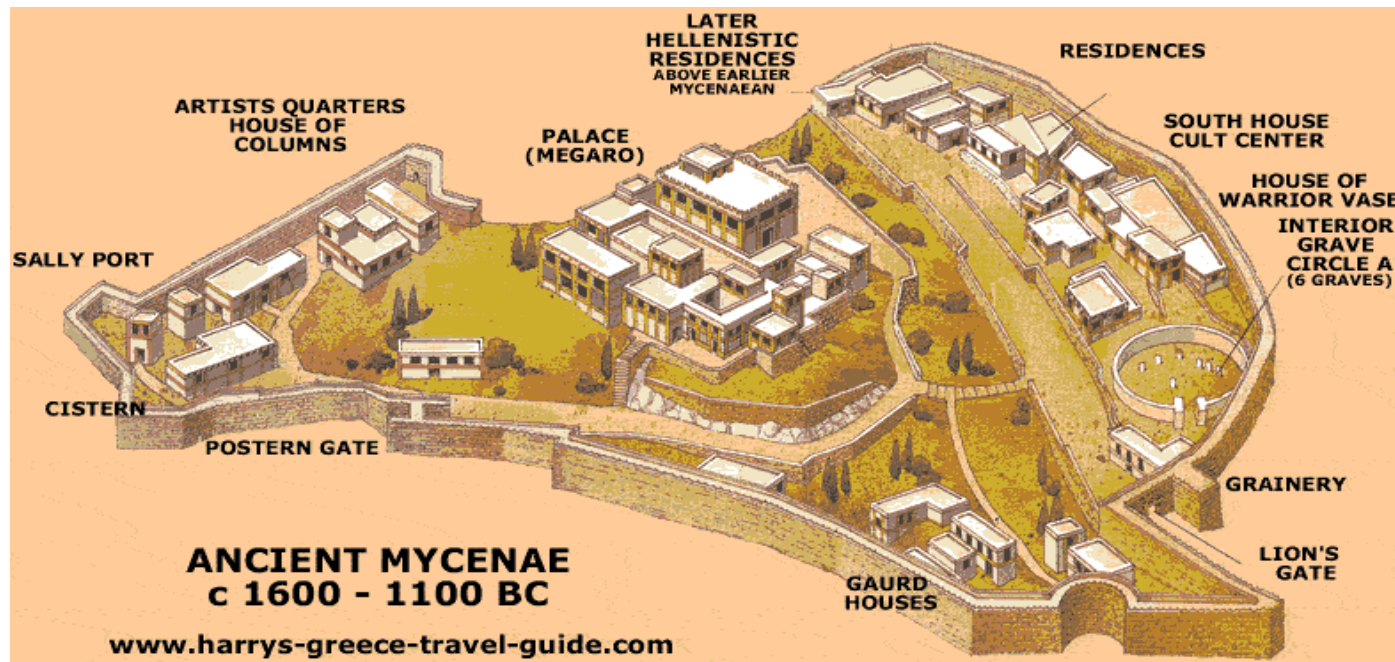


Excavator of Troy Heinrich Schliemann learned about the Hissarlik-Troy connection from British archaeologist Frank Calvert, who had been digging at the site for 20 years. In 1871 Schliemann joined Calvert, fully believing that the famed city of Homer's Iliad lay at the bottom of the mound.



Mycenaean Kingdom

- Each **Mycenaean** king lived in a palace built on a hill.
- Thick stone walls circled the palace and protected the kingdom's people.
- Nobles lived outside the walls on large farms, called estates.
- The workers and enslaved people who farmed the land lived in villages on these estates.



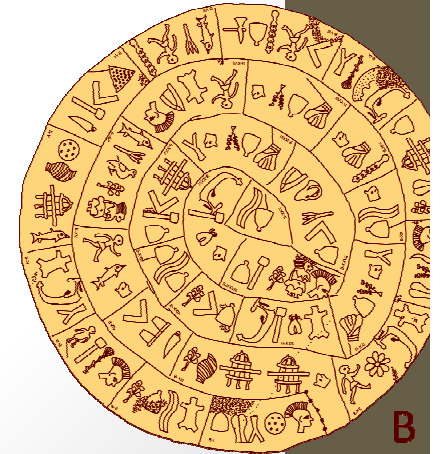
Mycenaean Kingdom

- **Mycenaean** palaces were centers of government.
- Artisans there made leather goods, clothes, and jars for wine and olive oil.
- Other workers made swords and ox-hide shields.
- Government officials recorded the wealth of the kingdom's residents, and they collected taxes (in the form of wheat, honey, livestock, etc.).



Traders and Warriors

- **Minoan** traders from **Crete** visited the Greek mainland.
- Gradually, the **Mycenaeans** adopted features of the **Minoan** culture.
- They built ships and worked with bronze.
- They used the sun and started to navigate the seas.
- The **Mycenaeans** also worshiped the Earth Mother, the **Minoan's** chief god.



Traders and Warriors

- Within 600 years of their arrival, the **Mycenaeans** had conquered the **Minoans** and controlled the **Aegean** area.
- This brought new wealth to the **Mycenaeans** , which they used to expand their military strength.
- The **Mycenaeans** were proud of their military success in the Trojan War.



Mycenaean artisans made golden masks to cover the faces of their dead kings. That's a sign of wealth!

Decline of the Mycenaeans

- **Mycenaean** civilization declined over time.
- The kingdoms began to fight one another.
- Earthquakes destroyed their palace fortresses.
- Within 300 years of them conquering the **Minoans**, their civilization had crumbled.



A Dark Age

- Around this time, a Greek-speaking group known as the **Dorians** invaded the Greek mainland from the north.
- The **Dorians** took control of most of the region.
- Historians call the next 300 years of Greek history the **Dark Ages**
During the **Dark Ages**: trade slowed down, people made fewer things to sell, most people were poor, and farmers grew only enough food to feed their families.
- Many people also stopped writing and keeping records.
- Thousands of people fled Greece's mainland and settled in the **Aegean** islands.



Positive Developments during Dark Age

- **Dorian** warriors introduced iron weapons and the skill of making iron making goods.
- Iron weapons and farm tools were stronger and cheaper than the bronze ones used by the **Mycenaeans**.



The Hellenes (Greeks)

- About 400 years later, many descendants of the people who ran away returned to the Greek mainland.
- They brought back new ideas, crafts, and skills.
- Several communities led by kings began to pop up.
- These people called themselves **Hellenes**, or Greeks.
- Farmers began to grow surpluses and trading with neighbors such as the Egyptians and Phoenicians.



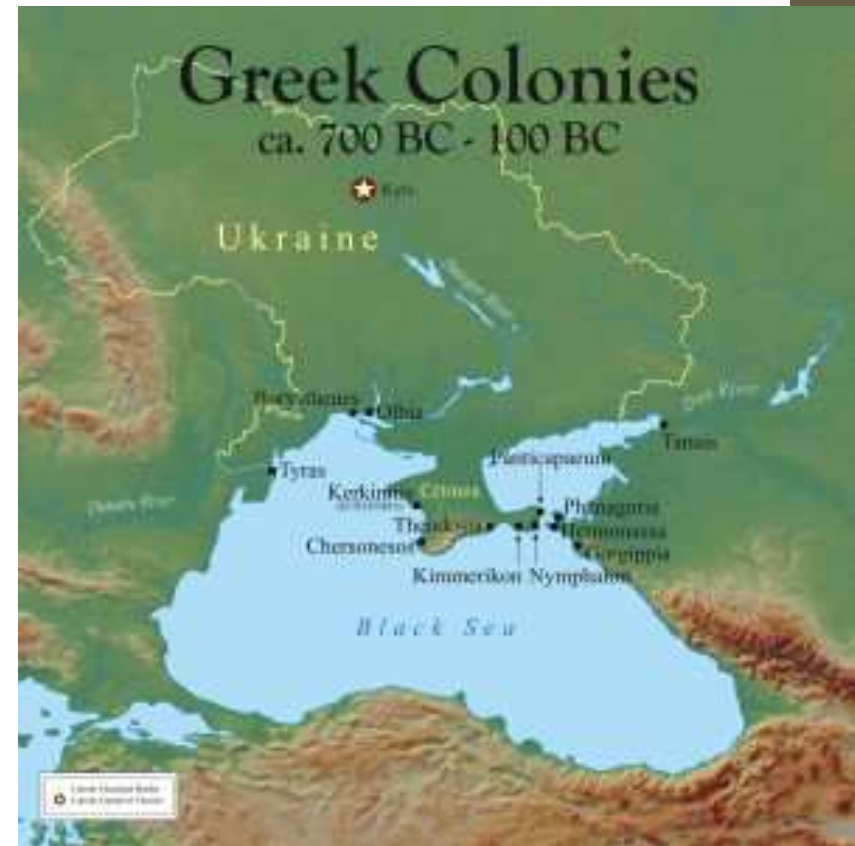
The Hellenes

- As trade increased, a need for new writing developed.
- The Greeks **adopted an alphabet from Phoenicians traders.**
- The Greek alphabet had 24 letters that represented different sounds.
- Reading, writing, and record keeping became easier.
- People also began writing down tales that had been told by bards, or storytellers. Prior to this, people just told these stories orally.

Α	Β	Γ	Δ	Ε	Ζ
Alpha (al-fah)	Beta (bay-tah)	Gamma (gam-ah)	Delta (del-ta)	Epsilon (ep-si-lon)	Zeta (zay-tah)
Η	Θ	Ι	Κ	Λ	Μ
Eta (ay-tah)	Theta (thay-tah)	Iota (eye-o-tah)	Kappa (cap-pah)	Lambda (lamb-dah)	Mu (mew)
Ν	Ξ	Ο	Π	Ρ	Σ
Nu (new)	Xi (zie)	Omicron (om-e-cron)	Pi (pie)	Rho (roe)	Sigma (sig-mah)
Τ	Υ	Φ	Χ	Ψ	Ω
Tau (taw)	Upsilon (up-si-lon)	Phi (fie)	Chi (kie)	Psi (sigh)	Omega (oh-may-gah)

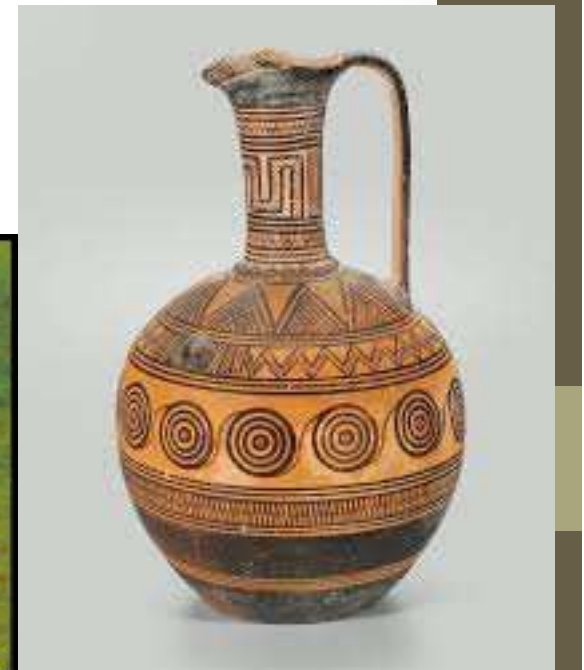
Colonies and Trade

- As Greece recovered from the **Dark Age**, its population boomed.
- Farmers were not able to keep up with the food demands.
- Greek communities began to send people outside the **Aegean** area to establish **colonies**, a settlement in a new territory that has close ties to its homeland.



Colonies and Trade

- The Greeks founded many colonies along the coasts of the Mediterranean Sea and the Black Sea.
- They shipped grains, metals, fish, timber, and enslaved people to Greece.
- Greek culture spread into new areas such as southern Italy, Sicily, France, Spain, North Africa, and western Asia.
- In return, the Greek mainland sent wine, olive oil, and pottery to the colonies.
- The colonies traded with their “parent” cities on the Greek mainland.



Colonies and Trade

- As the Greeks began to make coins from metal, this affected their trade.
- Trade expanded as merchants **traded money** for goods **rather than bartered** for goods.
- This system increased a colony's wealth.
- As the demands for goods grew, the production increased.
- People in different colonies specialized in making certain products. For example, in colonies where farmers raised sheep, people began to make cloth from the sheep's wool.



Recap

1. How did the civilization of the Minoans develop?
1. What did the discovery at Knossos reveal about the Minoans?
1. How did the Dorian invasion help spread Greek culture?
1. How did the colonies affect trade and industry in the Greek world?