

Early People of the Aegean Sea

The **Minoans** settled on the island of **Crete** in the Mediterranean Sea. They took their name after Minos, the legendary king of Crete. They absorbed the cultures of both Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia.



The height of their civilization was from 1600 to 1500 B.C. and they were sea traders who had sailboats capable of reaching areas within the Eastern Mediterranean Sea.

The Minoans were known for Knossos – the palace for the royal family. What made this building unique was the use of frescoes – watercolor art on wet plaster.

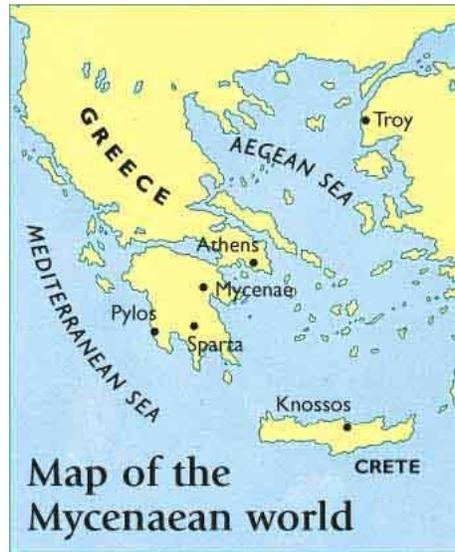


The Knossos

The Minoan civilization died out around 1400 B.C. but archaeologists have to yet find the exact reason. Maybe it was due to either an earthquake which are common in the region or by fire?

The **Mycenaeans** were Indo-Europeans who migrated to the Mediterranean Sea region and dominated the area from 1400 to 1200 B. C. Like to Minoans, they were also sea traders but they were not a peaceful society.

Their society is known for the creation of City-States, Warrior Kings and thick walled fortresses. Archaeologists have found gold in the tombs of their kings, a mineral that was brought to the region by trade as it is not local to the area.



The Mycenaeans were best known for their part in **the Trojan War** in 1250 B.C. The legend is that they rescued Helen from the Trojan prince Paris. The war lasted ten years. The war ended when the city of Troy was burnt to the ground. The Trojan War was thought as a myth until the 1870s when a wealthy German uncovered evidence of both fire and war in the region.

The Mycenaean's lost their power to the **Dorians** in 1100 B.C. and the civilizations of the region stepped backwards for the next 200 years until 900 B.C. and the Greek civilization we know today emerged.

It is to be noted that in 750 B.C. two epics were written about the Trojan War by **Homer**; the **Iliad** and **the Odyssey**.

