

## The Mycenaean Age

1550-1100 BCE



Mycenae in the Peloponnese

Source: [http://www.luc.edu/depts/history/dennis/Visual\\_Arts/101Images/05\\_x\\_Walls 01.jpg](http://www.luc.edu/depts/history/dennis/Visual_Arts/101Images/05_x_Walls 01.jpg)

KIN 375 – Dr. D. Frankl

## Greece & Crete



Corinth



Delosae

Images by Kent Romanoff

## Mycenaean Religion

- Myceneans were actively syncretistic
- From Dyeus to Zeus
- For the Hindus, this sky-god becomes "dyaus pitar" ("pitar" means "father")
- Dyaus' etymology leads to the current words "deity" and "divine."



Three Deities

<http://www.wsu.edu:8080/~dee/MINO A/MYCREL.HTM>

Image source: <http://www.mankato.msus.edu/emuseum/prehistory/aegean/galleryimages/mycenaeanimages.html>

## The Mycenaean Period

The first Greek speaking great civilization of the Greek mainland

Wealth and knowledge was obtained through trade with neighbors, i.e., South Italy to the east, Troy and Syria, and as far south as Egypt and Palestine

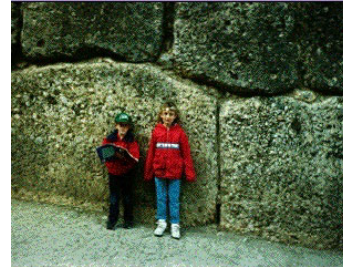
Their military force included fleets of ships that were half traders and half military as well as ordinary infantrymen, rebels, murderers and mercenaries

Large connecting network system of roads was developed among the main towns

### The Mycenaean Demise

- 1000 B.C.E invasions by the Dorians who had iron weapons (possible yet unlikely reason)
- collapse of the economic system
- dislocation of the elite or rich
- mass amounts of crop failure
- the disappearance of the Linear B writing made it very hard to find out about the Mycenaean society at the eve of the Dark Ages

### Cyclopean Walls



The walls were built of stones so large that later Greeks believed that only a Cyclop could have move it (What do Cyclops and pigs have in common?).

<http://www.lfc.edu/academics/greece/MycenaeTour.html>

### Mycenaean era as a golden age of heroes

- The Greek myths present a picture of strife, movement, and adventure. Legends associate heroes with separate sites: Agamemnon at Mycenae, Herakles at Tiryns, Theseus at Athens, Oedipus at Thebes, Jason at Iolkos, Nestor at Pylos, and of course, Odysseus at Ithaca. The tholos (beehive) tombs, with their huge inner chambers and walled entryways, were royal burial vaults worthy of heroes.

### The Trojan War

- Hopper suggests war may have begun as a result of a dispute over fishing rights--despite the more romantic Homeric cause. At any rate, the war does, as Homer relates, seem to have been a long and debilitating affair, perhaps resulting in only a Pyrrhic Mycenaean victory (around 1250.)



Mask of Agamemnon

[http://www.pantheon.org/mythical/areas/greek\\_heroic/](http://www.pantheon.org/mythical/areas/greek_heroic/)

## Test your Comprehension

- **What is polytheistic, actively syncretistic culture?**
- **What athletic events existed at the time of the Trojan war?**
- **Which writing styles were the precursors of later Grecian writings?**
- **What is a “thalasocracy?”**
- **What is a “Pyrrhic victory?”**