

the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs.

<http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~joelja/iliad.html> -- The full text of the Iliad, translated by Samuel Butler.

<http://classics.mit.edu/Homer/odyssey.sum.html> -- The full text of the Odyssey, translated by Samuel Butler.

<http://www.hsa.brown.edu/~maicar/Mycenae.html> -- The history of Mycenae, with information on the origin of its name, its builders, its wars, and more, with many other links.

<http://fermat.stmarys-ca.edu/~jpolos/photos/greece/mycenae/> -- A short history of Mycenae as told through Greek myth with photographs of the city's archeological sites.

<http://nimbus.ocis.temple.edu/~jsiegel/sites/mycenae/mycenae.htm> -- From a professor at Temple University, "Dr. J's Illustrated Mycenae," a series of lectures with many photographs.

Other Resources:

FOR STUDENTS:

Brown, Dale, ed. Wondrous Realms of the Aegean (Lost Civilizations). Time Life 1993.

Descamps-Lequime, Sophie, and Vernery, Denise. The Ancient Greeks, Millbrook Press, 1992.

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Hall, Jennie. Buried Cities. Macmillan, 1964.

Hart, Avery, and Mantell, Paul. Ancient Greece! 40 Hands-On Activities To Experience This Wondrous Age. Williamson Publishing, 1999.

McCaughrean, Geraldine. The Odyssey. Puffin Books, 1997.

Robinson, Charles Alexander. The First Book of Ancient Crete & Mycenae. F. Watts, 1964.

Tyler, Deborah. The Greeks and Troy. Dillon Press, 1993.

FOR ADULTS:

Dickinson, Oliver. The Aegean Bronze Age. Cambridge Univ. Press, 1994.

Finley, Moses I. Early Greece. Norton, 1982.

Fitton, J. Lesley. The Discovery of the Greek Bronze Age. Harvard Univ. Press, 1996.

Higgins, Reynold. Minoan and Mycenaean Art. Thames and Hudson, 1997.

Mylonas, George E. Mycenae and the Mycenaean Age. Princeton University Press, 1966.

Nilsson, Martin P. Homer and Mycenae. Cooper Square Publishers, 1968.

Samuel, Alan Edouard. The Mycenaean in History. Prentice-Hall, 1966.

Schliemann, Heinrich. Mycenae: A Narrative of Researches and Discoveries at Mycenae and Tiryns. B. Blom, 1967.

Vermule, Emily. Greece in the Bronze Age. Chicago, 1964

Tsountas, Chrestos. The Mycenaean Age: A Study of the Monuments and Culture of Pre-Homeric Greece. Argonaut, 1969.

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Travel back in time to a land whose mighty heroes inspired the greatest literary works of art of ancient times. Using the works of the poet Homer as a guide, archaeologists have learned that the Bronze Age warrior culture of which he sang was more than legend. This civilization, the civilization we now call Mycenaean, really existed. Protected by mighty walls, it flourished in an age of glory and gold, love and death.



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After studying the map and reading about the Mycenaeans, read the sections on vocabulary and important people, places, and dates to provide a focus while viewing the program. After viewing the program, review the sections listed and consider the Things To Think About. Research topics further using the Internet and other resources provided.

The Mycenaeans in Their Time:

There were many interesting and important civilizations in the Mediterranean region in ancient times, but the Mycenaeans were especially fortunate in one way. Their legends and deeds became the subjects of the finest works of literature to be handed down from antiquity -- Homer's Iliad and Odyssey and the dramas of the great Greek playwrights. In addition, archaeologists have unearthed the remains of the great fortified cities of the Mycenaeans.

Together, these sources, both literary and archaeological, have allowed us to get an unusually intimate look at this impressive culture. What we see is an age of powerful military dynasties that ruled large areas of land, conducted trade, and established industries. Their influence reached as far as Egypt and Sicily. And although their civilization, like so many others, eventually crumbled, their legends lived on to form the cornerstone of the literature of the Western world.

Vocabulary:

Achaean -- People of ancient Greece who became dominant in the Peloponnese c. 1500 BC. Defined by modern archaeology as the Mycenaeans.

Achilles -- In Greek mythology, the principal hero of the Trojan War; the main character of the Iliad.

Agamemnon -- In Greek mythology, king of Mycenae and leader of the Greeks in the Trojan War.

Atreus -- In Greek mythology, father of Agamemnon. His name was given to one of the tholos tombs discovered at Mycenae, which was misleadingly called the "Treasury of Atreus."

Clytemnestra -- In Greek mythology, wife of Agamemnon, the king who was slain by her and her lover, Aegisthus.

Cyclops -- Race of Greek mythological one-eyed giants said to have built the walls of Mycenaean cities.

domos -- The inner room of the megaron, the audience hall of Mycenaean palaces.

Hector -- In the Iliad, the leader of the Trojan forces. Slain by Achilles.

Hera -- In Greek mythology, wife of Zeus, king of the gods. Argos was an important center of her cult.

Iliad -- Epic Greek poem that tells the story of some events that occurred during the Trojan War.

megalith -- Large, usually rough, stone used in construction by prehistoric cultures and characteristic of Mycenaean structures.

megaron -- The royal audience hall of Mycenaean palaces and model for later Greek temples.

Mycenaeans -- Ancient Greek people whose civilization flourished c. 1400 -1100 BC.

Odysseus or Ulysses -- A leader of the Greeks during the Trojan War and the main figure of the Odyssey.

Odyssey -- Epic Greek poem that recounts Odysseus's return from the Trojan War and what transpired once he arrived home.

Perseus -- Legendary king who is said to have founded Mycenae.

tholos -- Term used to describe the nine underground beehive-shaped tombs discovered outside the city of Mycenae.

xenophobia -- Fear of foreigners; said to be the reason the Mycenaeans constructed massive walls around their cities.

Important People:

Aeschylus -- Greek dramatist c. 525 - 456 BC. His trilogy, Oresteia, describes the fate of the Greek leader Agamemnon and his family.

Euripides -- Greek dramatist c. 485 - 406 BC who drew upon the legends of the Trojan War for some of his plays.

Homer -- Ancient Greek poet who probably lived c. 800 BC. Traditionally, the author of the Iliad and the Odyssey.

Crete -- At the southern limit of the Aegean Sea, the largest of the Greek islands; the center of Minoan civilization, it was invaded by the Mycenaeans c. 1350 BC.

Important Places:

Lion Gate -- One of the major ruins at Mycenae, it contains the oldest monumental sculpture in Europe.

Mycenae -- Ancient Greek city in the northeast Peloponnese whose name is given to the dominant Greek civilization of the period c. 1400 - 1100 BC. Its extensive ruins were excavated by Schliemann in the 1870s.

Peloponnese -- Large peninsula in southern Greece and center of Mycenaean civilization.

Tiryns -- Ancient Greek city in the northeast Peloponnese near Argos; one of the centers of Mycenaean civilization, it was excavated by Schliemann in the 1880s. Best preserved example of Mycenaean fortifications.

Important Dates:

c. 1600 BC -- Mycenaean rise to power.

c. 1400 BC -- Mycenaean civilization becomes dominant in Greece.

c. 1250 BC -- Mycenaean fortifications built at Tiryns; Tholos tombs built at Mycenae.

c. 1100 BC -- Dorian invasion of Greece; decline of Mycenaean civilization.

c. 800 BC -- Composition of the Iliad and the Odyssey.

c. 600 BC -- Temple to Hera built in Argos.

1870 -- Schliemann begins excavations at Troy.

1876 -- Schliemann discovers the royal tombs at Mycenae.

1884 -- Schliemann begins excavations at Tiryns.

Things To Think About:

- Many scholars believe that the Iliad and the Odyssey were not composed in writing but composed orally and handed down the same way. How would you compare the experience of listening to a work of literature to the experience of reading it? In what ways do people listen to verbal compositions today instead of reading them?

- What can you find out about the manner in which archaeological excavations, such as the ones at Mycenae and Argos, are conducted? How do archaeologists decide on likely sites to explore? How do they date their discoveries?

- When Homer composed the Iliad and the Odyssey, he was describing events that presumably occurred nearly 400 years before his time. What stories do we remember today that occurred that far back in time from us? What is it about these stories that makes them last?

- The artists of Mycenae were especially adept at painting frescoes. Why do you think this form of art was so valued by these peoples? Research the subject of frescoes. How are they made? What other outstanding examples have been created since the Mycenaean Age?

- It is said that the Mycenaeans built huge walls around their cities because they had a fear of foreigners, or xenophobia. In what way do you see evidence of this feeling today and how do people show it?

Internet Resources:

<http://www.wsu.edu/~dee/MINOA/MINOA.HTM> -- From Washington State University, an excellent source on the Minoans and the Mycenaeans with information on Homer.

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/asbook2.html#Greece> -- From Fordham University, a comprehensive "Sourcebook" on "Greece and Hellenism," with links to many Mycenae-related sites.

<http://homer.reed.edu/GkHist/main.html> -- A site on Greek history, it has a lot of information on the Mycenaeans and the historicity of the Trojan War.

http://devlab.cs.dartmouth.edu/history/bronze_age/ -- From Dartmouth College a site called "Prehistoric Archaeology of the Aegean" with copious information on the Mycenaeans.

<http://www.tulane.edu/lester/text/Ancient.World/Mycenae/Mycenae.html> -- From Tulane University, a set of pictures of Mycenaean archaeological sites.

<http://harpy.uccs.edu/greek/mycenae.html> -- Pictures of Mycenae from