Chapter Guide #4: The Prehistoric Aegean

**CONTEXT:**

In the late 1800s, Heinrich Schliemann started to excavate some of the very cities at Mycenae that Homer had described in the *Illiad.* The Cycladic Islands are still a bit of a mystery when it comes to the marble male and female figurines found at burial sites. The great Palace at Knossos, located on Crete, is where one of the first Western civilizations emerged.

* **Cycladic figurines are based on conjecture 🡪 usually found at burial sites**
* **Early Minoan culture is open and non-militaristic**
* **Mycenae mercenaries made stops in Crete to and from Egypt**
* **Early to mid 15th c BCE earthquakes and tsunamis weaken Minoan cities**

**CONCEPTS:**

1: Know the basic differences between the cultures of Crete (Minoan) and mainland Greece Mycenaean

2: Contrast Minoan and Mycenaean architecture (i.e. Palace of Knossos and the Citadel of Mycenaean).

3: Why did the Mycenaean culture appropriate Minoan artifacts/images?

4: What is the role of women in religion / as goddess in Minoan culture?

5: How is abstraction /stylization used in Cycladic art and Karmares pottery.

6: What accounts for the difference in appearance (and content) of Minoan art (especially frescos) in contrast to other ancient cultures (especially the Egyptians)?

7: Who were Schliemann (Mycenaean citadel and Troy) and Evans (Palace of Knossos)?

Be aware of the issues surrounding excavation verses reconstruction/”restorations” as it relates to the Palace of Knossos.

**ART WORK CARDS: 3D (Yellow), 2D (Red), Architecture (Green)**

* Cycladic Figurines (3D)
* Palace of Knossos (Architecture)
* Leaping Bull Fresco (2D)
* Kamares Pottery (3D)
* Snake Goddess (3D)
* Harvester Vase (3D)
* Lion Gate (Architecture)
* Tholos Tomb (Architecture)
* Funerary Mask (3D)

**TIMELINE:**

**2500 BCE CYCLADIC**

**2000 BCE Old Palace period on Crete**

**1500 BCE MINOAN**

**1450 BCE Mycenaeans at Knossis**

**1250 BCE MYCENAEAN**

**1200 BCE Destruction of Mycenaean palaces**

**VOCABULARY/TECHNIQUES:**

**Painting:** fresco buon (true)

profile view

**Sculpture/Pottery:** motifs

negative/positive shape

organic/geometric design

incised lines

repousse

faience

**Architecture: MINOAN:** labyrinth

tapered column

abacus

**MYCENAEAN:** cyclopean masonry

citadel

courses of stone

tholos/beehive tomb

corbeling

dromos

megaron

**CONTEXT CARDS: Blue**

* Cycladic
* Minoan
* Mycenaean