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AH-2910-1 History VA Paleolithic-Gothic

In-Class Writing Assignment Question #6- Discuss the Difference Between Minoan and
Mycenaeen Architecture

When it comes to what Minoan and Mycenaean architecture was, they were two very different specific kinds of architectural time periods with various different kinds of specific architecture as well as items that existed and were created during those periods over certain amounts of time each with lots of various different specific looks and even sizes as well with the kinds of specific tools that they used that existed back then to make all of those structures and also all of the various different design styles and techniques that they used as well then too along with the material that all of those structures were made out of such as marble, stone, and even granite with certain colors and even texture as well. When it comes to some specific facts and details about both of these specific architectures, “The Minoan (c. 2600-1100 b.c.e.) and Mycenaean (c. 2800-1100 b.c.e.) civilizations flourished in the island of Crete and in mainland Greece for close to 2,000 years” (“Minoan and Mycenaean”). Greeks did not have any knowledge about their accomplishments in various areas which included that of both art as well as architecture during both the seventh and sixth centuries b.c.e which also had their accomplishments remembered by them in mythology and epic poetry along with some of their structures surviving as well in archeological traces (“Minoan and Mycenaean”). Along with all of that, there were also many similarities and differences between the two architectural Periods with more differences than similarities as well.

For Minoan Architecture with the specific architectural periods with how long it lasted for with all the various structures and architecture that was made and existed during that specific time period with what they were made out of with all the different specific kinds of material with also all the various different tools that they used as well

as all the various techniques that they used to build and design them, the Minoan architectural period lasted “Between about 1900 BCE and 1375 BCE” (Stokstad and Cothren). “Minoan architecture consists of several structures which acted as centers for commercial, religious, and administrative life” (Sakoulas). “The British archaeologist Sir Arthur Evans named it Minoan after the legend of Minos, a king who had ruled from the capital, Knossos” (Stokstad and Cothren). When it comes to some specific things as well as facts about the architectural period as a whole, “Evidence for Minoan architecture comes primarily from excavated sites across Crete, although in no case do the remains extend above ground-floor level” (Lesley et al.). When it comes to information about the architecture such as with their overall design (Lesley et al), “Minoan walls were not originally built on deep foundations, even tall structures being bedded on earth or a few layers of small stones” (Lesley et al.). “Houses were of rubble, stone or mud-brick on stone foundations, their walls already reinforced with the half-timbering characteristic of Minoan architecture throughout the Bronze Age” (Lesley et al.). Along with that also, “Important external facades were often built of fine stone masonry” (Lesley et al.) They consist of two specific time periods being the Old and New Palace Periods with the Old one going from 1900-1700 BCE and the New one lasting from 1700-1450 BCE (Stokstad and Cothren). When it comes to these two specific separate time periods in Minoan architecture, there were many various different structures and architecture as well as items that were made and existed then during that time which were constructed, built, and designed by using various different tools and techniques that were common back then along with the specific kinds of material that

they used in making them as well (Stokstad and Cothren). Along with this, some other specific facts and elements of Minoan Architecture is that “Minoan houses, towns, and roads were all defined by their relationship to a centralized palace” (Muscato). The palaces are considered to be with their size as well as scale as the best and leading accomplishments of Minoan Architecture (Muscato). “The four major palaces we know of are **Knossos** (the largest), **Malia**, **Phaistos**, and **Zakros**” (Muscato). Along with this, “Some sections of the palaces were as tall as four stories” (Muscato). Some other additional things about this specific area of Minoan Architecture is that “The Minoan palaces provided a forum for gathering and celebrations, while at the same time they offered storage for the crops, and workshops for the artists” (Sakoulas). Also, “They were built over time to occupy low hills at strategic places around the island in a manner so complex that they resembled labyrinths to outside visitors” (Sakoulas). They were also very advanced technologically with various different things that included irrigation and even aqueducts (Sakoulas). Additionally, “The construction method consisted of rough stones and ceramic bricks connected by mortar in the interior walls, while the corners of the buildings were fashioned by sharply defined large rectangular blocks” (Sakoulas). They also had a lot of various styles and elements to it which included that of being well-appointed with even extensive storage magazines too with details showing however that it was not that certain that they were specifically a seat of that of a ruling body or even political ruler (Cartwright).

When it comes to the two time periods that marked the first and second half of Minoan architecture starting with the Old Palace Period (Stokstad and Cothren),

“Minoan civilization remained very much a mystery until 1900 CE” (Stokstad and Cothren). The reason why it was not a mystery anymore after 1900 CE was because Sir Arthur Evans ended up uncovering buried ruins of it which included the Knossos’ Architectural Complex (Stokstad and Cothren). “Evans called these great architectural complexes “palaces”” (Stokstad and Cothren). Also, “He believed they had been occupied by a succession of kings” (Stokstad and Cothren). Other evidence has shown some however that kings did not rule Minoan society from royal families but rather by both aristocrats as well as aristocratic families from fluid and a hierarchy of evolving power establishment (Stokstad and Cothren). “In this light, some scholars interpret these elaborate complexes as sites of periodic religious ritual, perhaps enacted by a community that gathered within the courtyards that are their core architectural feature” (Stokstad and Cothren). When it comes to the specific kinds of material that all the various different structures and architecture were made out of for Minoan architecture (Stokstad and Cothren), “The walls of early Minoan buildings were made of rubble and mud bricks faced with cut and finished local stone, the first evidence of dressed stone used as a building material in the Aegean” (Stokstad and Cothren). “Columns and other interior elements were made of wood” (Stokstad and Cothren). “Both in large complexes and in the surrounding towns, timber appears to have been used for framing and bracing walls” (Stokstad and Cothren). It would also be protected from earthquakes with only minor damages due to both its flexibility as well as strength (Stokstad and Cothren). “Nevertheless, an earthquake in c. 1700 BCE severely damaged buildings at several sites, including Knossos and Phaistos” (Stokstad and Cothren). When it comes

to some of the specific kinds of techniques and styles that they used in Minoan Architecture with the earlier period when making all the structures and architectures (Stokstad and Cothren), “During the Old Palace period, Minoans developed elegant new types of ceramics, spurred in part by the introduction of the potter’s wheel early in the second millennium BCE” (Stokstad and Cothren). When it comes to some specific examples of works that would support these points of the earlier period of Minoan Architecture (Stokstad and Cothren), “One type is called Kamares ware after the cave on Mount Ida overlooking the architectural complex at Phaistos, in southern crete, where it was first discovered” (Stokstad and Cothren). What this specific work is called with its specific name it has and image would be the Kamares Ware Jug by Craig & Marie Mauzy, Athens (Stokstad and Cothren), (Refer to Figure 1 on illustration page).

When it comes to the other period that marked the second half of Minoan Architecture of that of the New Palace Period (Stokstad and Cothren), “The early architectural complex at Knossos, erected about 1900 BCE, formed the core of an elaborate new one built after a terrible earthquake shook Crete in c. 1700 BCE” (Stokstad and Cothren). It consisted of a rebuilding that took place at various places including Knossos that was also considered as the absolute highest Minoan civilization point from many scholars (Stokstad and Cothren). One work that would support this specific point that would also have had a very big influence on the New Palace Period of Minoan Architecture would be The Palace at Knossos with the specific image of the Reconstruction Drawing of the “Palace” Complex, Knossos, Crete by Illustration: Peter Bull (Stockstad and Cothren), (Refer to Figure 2 on Illustration Page). Along with this,

“Damaged structures were repaired and enlarged, and the resulting new complexes shared a number of features” (Stokstad and Cothren). “Multistored, flat-roofed, and with many columns, they were designed to maximize light and air, as well as define access and circulation patterns” (Stokstad and Cothren). Because of this, “Daylight and fresh air entered through staggered levels, open stairwells, and strategically placed air shafts and light-wells” (Stokstad and Cothren). Some other additional details and facts about this specific work include that “The palace-most likely built between 1600 and 1500 b.c.e.-is essentially a governmental administrative center and a royal residence combined” (“Minoan and Mycenaean”). “Arranged around a large central courtyard were dozens of rooms, chambers, small courts, halls, and storerooms” (“Minoan and Mycenaean”). Also, “Staircases and light wells provided access and air circulation for this complex building” (“Minoan and Mycenaean”). Another image example that would support this specific point of how the Knossos Crete Palace was built and designed would be the image of the East Wing Stairwell by Roger Wood/Corbis (Stokstad and Cothren), (Refer to Figure 2 on Illustration Page). When it comes to some other elements of this specific structure, those would be that “Large, central courtyards-not audience halls or temples-were the most prominent components of these rectangular complexes” (Stokstad and Cothren). “Suites of rooms were arranged around them” (Stokstad and Cothren). There were also both Corridors as well as staircases which led to various areas of the structure through courtyards such as subsidiary which included apartments, and even ritual areas (Stokstad and Cothren). Some material they used in building and designing this structure consisted of plaster coatings and mural paintings

on the walls (Stokstad and Cothren). Along with that, the “Floors were plaster, or plaster mixed with pebbles, stone, wood, or beaten earth” (Stokstad and Cothren).

Also, “The residential quarters had many luxuries: sunlit courtyards or light-wells, richly colored murals, and sophisticated plumbing systems” (Stokstad and Cothren).

“Because double-axe motifs were used in its architectural decoration, the Knossos “palace” was referred to in later Greek legends as the Labyrinth, meaning the “House of the Double Axes” (Greek *labrys*, “double axe”)” (Stokstad and Cothren). “The organization of the complex seemed so complicated that the word labyrinth eventually came to mean “maze” and became part of the Minotaur legend” (Stokstad and Cothren).

“This complicated layout provided the complex with its own internal security system: a baffling array of doors leading to unfamiliar rooms, stairs, yet more corridors, or even dead ends” (Stokstad and Cothren). Along with that, when it comes to some other work examples that existed during this period with other kinds of techniques that they used in making them along with the tools and materials they used to make them that would support these points of the New Palace Period of Minoan Architecture (Stokstad and Cothren), one specific work example would be when relating to sculptures would be the Statuette of a Male Figure by the British School at Athens by permission of the Management Committee (Stokstad and Cothren), (Refer to Figure 2 on Illustration Page). Some facts regarding this image and work is that “The statuette is a multimedia work assembled from a variety of mostly precious materials” (Stokstad and Cothren). Also, “Some have interpreted this as the cult statue of a young god, while others have proposed it was a votive effigy for a religious ceremony, but these remain speculations”

(Stokstad and Cothren). Along with that, there was another kind of technique and style that was used a lot in the Old Palace Period of Minoan Architecture which was Metalwork (Stokstad and Cothren). One specific artwork image example that would describe and support this point would be the Pendant of Gold Bees by Studio Kontos Photostock (Stokstad and Cothren), (Refer to Figure 2 on Illustration Page).

For Mycenaean architecture with the specific architectural period that it was with all the various structures that were built, constructed, and designed which existed during that specific time period with how they were made with all the various different tools they used and the specific techniques they used as well with all the specific kinds of materials that the structures were all made out of as well as how long that specific architectural period lasted, that specific period which was also known as “The Helladic period extends from about 3000 to 1000 BCE, contemporary with Cycladic and Minoan cultures” (Stokstad and Cothren). “In the early part of the Aegean Bronze Age, Greek-speaking peoples, probably from the northwest, moved into the area” (Stokstad and Cothren). “They brought with them advanced techniques for metalworking, ceramics, and architectural design, and they displaced the local Neolithic culture” (Stokstad and Cothren). Also, “Later in the Aegean Bronze Age, the people of the mainland city of Mycenae rose to power and extended their influence into the Aegean islands as well” (Stokstad and Cothren). When it comes to the specific kinds of architecture and structures that Mycenaean Architecture consisted of (Stokstad and Cothren), “Mycenaeans built fortified strongholds called citadels to protect the palaces of their rulers” (Stokstad and Cothren). “These palaces contained a characteristic

architectural unit called a megaron that was axial in plan, consisting of a large room entered through a porch with columns and sometimes a vestibule” (Stokstad and Cothren). “The Mycenaeans also buried their dead in magnificent vaulted tombs, round in floor plan and crafted of cut stone” (Stokstad and Cothren). When it comes to some specific examples of some works that would support these points of Mycenaean Architecture with all the various structures that existed then with how they were designed, built, and looked overall, one specific example would be the Citadel at Mycenae by akg-images/Albatross/Duby Tal (Stokstad and Cothren), (Refer to Figure 3 on Illustration Page). When it comes to some specific facts of this particular work, “Later Greek writers called the walled complex of Mycenae the home of Agamemnon” (Stokstad and Cothren). “The site was occupied from the Neolithic period to around 1050 BCE” (Stokstad and Cothren). “The walls were rebuilt three times—c. 1340 bce, c. 1250 bce, and c. 1200 bce—each time stronger and enclosing more space than the last” (Stokstad and Cothren). Also, “These walls were about 25 feet thick and nearly 30 feet high” (Stokstad and Cothren). Along with that, something else about this specific work is that “They are seen best at Mycenae, Tiryns, and Thebes and are in stark contrast to the unprotected palaces of Minoan Crete” (Cartwright). Along with this, another work that was part of the previous work mentioned of the Citadel at Mycenae which would also support my point of Mycenaean Architecture would be the Lion Gate, Mycenae by Deutsches Archaeologisches Institut, Athens (D-DAI-ATH-Mykene63). All rights reserved (Stokstad and Cothren), (Refer to Figure 3 on Illustration page). For this specific work, “The gate is today a simple opening, but its importance is indicated by the

material of the flanking walls, a conglomerate stone that can be polished to glistening multicolors” (Stokstad and Cothren). Another specific work that would also support this point of Mycenaean Architecture would be the “Mask of Agamemnon” by Craig & Marie Mauzy, Athens (Stokstad and Cothren), (Refer to Figure 3 on Illustration page). Along with that, another kind of item that was also made during this time that supported Mycenaean Architecture with all its works is the Dagger Blade With Lion Hunt by akg-images/Nimatallah (Stokstad and Cothren), (Refer to Figure 3 on Illustration page).

When it comes to what all the specific differences were between Minoan and Mycenaean architecture with the specific time periods they each existed in and lasted for each, the specific kinds of materials that all the structures and architectures were made out of and how they differed by the way they looked such as shape, size, and even color with also the various different techniques they used and all the various different tools they used as well, “Mycenaean architecture developed in ways distinct from those of the Minoans” (Stokstad and Cothren). Along with that, the main differences as also previously stated consisted of the kinds of Civilizations and Cultures that each existed in which were in two completely separate time periods far apart from each other, all the particular kinds of things that happened in each which differed greatly as well from one another, and also all the various different kinds of architecture, structures, and even items that were made and existed in both periods and all the major differences between them which include the kinds of material they are made out of, the kinds of tools as well as styles and techniques they used to make/build/design them, and their overall look and design as well such as color and even texture too.

Illustrations

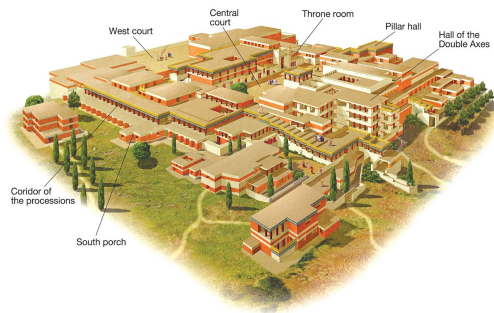
Figure 1 Minoan Architecture Old Palace Period:

- Craig and Marie Mauzy. *Kamares Ware Jug*. Digital file.



Figure 2 Minoan Architecture New Palace Period:

- Bull, Peter. *Reconstruction Drawing of the "Palace" Complex, Knossos, Crete*. Digital file.



- Wood/Corbis, Roger. *East Wing Stairwell*. Digital file.



- British School at Athens by permission of the Management Committee.

Statuette of a Male Figure. Digital file.

- Studio Kontos Photostock. *Pendant of Gold Bees.* Digital file.



Figure 3 Mycenaean Architecture:

- Akg-images/Albatross/Duby Tal. *Citadel at Mycenae.* Digital file.



- Deutsches Archaeologisches Institut, Athens (D-DAI-ATH-Mykene63). All rights reserved. *Lion Gate, Mycenae*. Digital file.



- Craig & Marie Mauzy. "*Mask of Agamemnon*." Digital file.



- Akg-images/Nimatallah. *Dagger Blade with Lion Hunt*. Digital file



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