other Mycenaean centres, especially in the south Peloponnese where the number of sites with comparable evidence has been increased by the discoveries at Ayios Vasileios in Laconia and Iklaina near Pylos itself. But this need not obscure the main point, that there is striking evidence at Pylos for early monumental buildings and for quite substantial Cretan influence, to be seen in the use of the various styles of stone masonry, the construction of drainage systems on a scale unparalleled at other Mycenaean centres, and architectural features like the use of pillared halls; fragments of a 'horns of consecration' have even been found, that must have surmounted an early structure (pp. 36, 38). If the palace immediately preceding the extant one really did have a plan centring on a court and can be dated to LH IIIA (probably early[3]), this would be a notably late example of Cretan influence, which might be connected with the influence that brought Linear B to Messenia no later than early LH IIIA2.[4]

To sum up, this volume is to be thoroughly welcomed for its major contribution to our information and ideas about Pylos. It provides a salutary reminder that the development of Mycenaean civilisation was a complex process, which did not involve the simple extension of influence and spreading of a package of material features and way of life from the Argolid to other regions of the mainland, but rather a series of independent if related developments in different leading regions of the Greek mainland, under a variety of external influences, that in time coalesced into something closer to a homogeneous culture.[5]

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Cosmopoulos, M.B. 2019. State formation in Greece: Iklaina and the unification of Mycenaean Pylos. *American Journal of Archaeology* 123:3: 349-380.

[3] Characteristic LH IIIA2 late is hard to spot in the photographs of material thought to be LH IIIA in Blegen *et al.* 1973.

[4] Cosmopoulos 2019: 358.

[5] The reviewer feels bound to mention the very serious criticisms of various interpretations in this book, notably the supposed Archaic building sequence, made in the reviews by J. Davis (*Bryn Mawr Classical Review* 2017.10.23) and J. Hruby (*American Journal of Archaeology* 122: 2 [2018]), of which he was ignorant when writing this review.

Dickinson, O. 2006. *The Aegean from Bronze Age to Iron Age. Continuity and Change Between the Twelfth and Eighth Centuries BC*. Routledge: Abingdon and New York.

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Susan Sherratt and John Bennet (eds). *Archaeology and the Homeric Epic.* (Sheffield Studies in Aegean Archaeology 11). pp. 176, b/w illustrations. 2017. Oxbow Books: Oxford and Philadelphia. ISBN 978–1–78570–295–2 paperback £36.00

The title, *Archaeology and the Homeric Epics*, does not do justice to the variety of papers published in this edited volume, that cover much more than the relation between the Homeric epics and archaeology. In the introduction, the editors (Susan Sherratt and John Bennett) highlight the need to move 'beyond the old dichotomies between historicity and irrelevance and to bring a multi-disciplinary approach' to the study of the epics (introduction, p. viii). Indeed, the introductory chapter summarises the diversity of such approaches and argues that the relationship of the epics and archaeology is intermingled without any of them having 'the monopoly of power to shed light on the other' (introduction, p. xv). The introductory chapter offers a valuable review of current debates and approaches to the study of epic poetry, as well as a summary of the contributions in the volume.

The debate of dating the epics has been the focus of past and current scholarship. The more recent consensus is that a date in the seventh century BC is more acceptable than that of the eighth. Antony Snodgrass in Chapter 1 follows the evolutionary model, as argued by Nagy,[1] for the creation and recreation of the epics during a long period. Snodgrass summarises the main debates considering the date of the Homeric epics, and revisits some of the themes of his comprehensive survey, *Homer and the Artists,* published in 1998.[2] However, one of the main arguments, as in his earlier work, is that there are no chronological correlates between the poems and the archaeological record. To give an example, Snodgrass returns to the endeavour to

[1] Nagy 1995.

[2] Snodgrass 1998.

match scenes in early Greek art with episodes in the epics. One such scene, the blinding of Polyphemos, clearly suggests that what is depicted on the vases depended on the circulation of other versions of the epics, illustrating most probably accounts available in the mid-seventh century BC and not the ones in the Odyssey. This is of course indeed possible, that the painters were using their own resources and 'artistic freedom' in depicting such scenes.

In Chapter 2, Oliver Dickinson argues fiercely that the epics are purely a poetic creation of what the eighth century Greeks thought about their past. He examines several different aspects of the archaeological record of the Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages to argue that archaeology cannot support any realistic presentation of a society or Age based on the references in the epics. He gives detailed accounts, among others, of burials practices, weapons, armours, dress ornaments, architecture and religion to support his arguments. Dickinson maintains that the poems mirror both the Bronze and the Iron Age and further argues that they did not derive from any historical events. This is particular the case for the historicity of the Trojan War, especially after the recent archaeological discoveries at the site by the late Manfred Korfmann.

It is indeed the interpretation of Troy by Korfmann that is the focus of the study by Johannes Haubold (chapter 3). Korfmann is considered together with the earlier legendary excavator, Heinrich Schliemann. Haubold believes that archaeology alone cannot contribute in answering all the questions that have been raised from the more recent excavations in Troy. Indeed Korfmann's theories about Troy or better about Wilusa, the Hittite principality, reflect the cultural and political climate of post-unification Germany. Moreover, the author claims that the 'exploitation' of Homeric Troy goes as far back as during the first unification of the country in 1871, which coincided with the period when Schliemann's excavations played a complex role in shaping German identity. Furthermore, Haubold finds that apart from their great differences, both German excavators share the definition of Homeric archaeology as a discipline whose main concern is to unearth 'reality'. To support such a claim Haubold examines publications addressed to the broader public, in which both excavators communicated what they wished the public to believe about the historicity of Troy. Starting with Schliemann's *Ilios,*[3] it becomes clear that it was not only untrue that one of his dreams, as a child, was to excavate the site, but instead what the text actually reveals, is his attempt to construct the myth of the 'bourgeois hero'. His 'reality' reflects a bourgeois desire that was accomplished; in the end, Schliemann achieved his goal and excavated Troy, despite the fact that he was deprived of a classical education and caricatured by the academic establishment. Korfmann, on the other hand, was a professional academic with many credentials. It is in his contribution for the catalogue of the exhibition, *Troia – Traum und Wirklichkeit*[4] that he claims that only his own excavations revealed the 'real' Troy and thus he could guarantee the historical reality of the site. He adds that it is only he and his teams of archaeologists that can reveal the 'real' story, which is that of a city at the junction between Europe and Asia, a desirable node for commerce. His 'reality' aimed to make his German audience rethink the identity of a newly united nation. Korfmann's critics, however, saw his efforts with a more cynical eye: adding another dimension of 'dream and fantasy' for the purposes of funding his excavations and research. Haubold offers some interesting readings of the public work of the two excavators of Hisarlik and make us aware of how archaeological 'realities' can become a 'battleground' between disciplines, but also how they could reflect the aspirations of their historical context.

What we should not forget, however, is, as Dickinson notes, that Korfmann did discover an extended Lower Town in Troy that does change past 'realities' about the site, despite the hidden agendas that he and others have disseminated in their writings. Korfmann's discoveries are still waiting to be further digested and explored by archaeologists and specialists in order to interpret this major Hittite site and its significance for the region within its historical context.

In Chapter 4, Susan Sherratt looks at the Homeric epic and the contexts of bardic creation. She explores the role that *aioidoi* had in the epics and in particular the two renowned ones in the Odyssey, *Phemios* and *Demodokos*. Both were professionals bards and attached to the households of their masters. Interestingly, however, their sung tales give different perceptions of their role as bards. *Phemios's* tales were about the return of the Greek heroes from Troy and were meant to please his new patrons in Ithaca, Penelope's suitors, while *Demodokos* sings his tales 'correctly', which his audience including Odysseus recognise as 'true' tales. Next Sherratt attempts to show how the archaeological record also reflects different perceptions to those observed in the performances

[3] Schliemann 1880; 1881.

[4] Korfmann 2001.

of the two bards. She suggests that the prehistory of the bardic activity was complex and points out that some periods in the epics appear to cluster in certain chronological epochs. So, there were periods with a closer reference to contemporary material culture and others projecting lifestyles or the commonly agreed past of a community. She also offers a very useful survey of archaeological images of bards and their musical instruments, which are surprisingly few. A thorough examination of the interchangeable appearance of the *kitharis* and the *phrominx* in the ancient sources provides good references for their use and concludes that the *phrominx* might have been a more ancient instrument, even if we still lack representations of the instruments in art or actual remains of them. On the other hand, we do have an ivory lyre from the Mycenaean tholos tomb at Menidhi in Attica that might belong to the earliest burial of the tomb. The burial was given an elite funeral suggesting that playing the instrument could have been considered just as noble as that of being an accomplished warrior. Sherratt reminds us that Achilles was singing the *klea andron* as also Poulydamas, a nobleman of Troy. After the demise of the palatial administration, a fragmentary scene comes from a twelfth century vase found in Tiryns and depicts a figure holding a lyre with only three strings, that may suggest that the instrument accompanied sung hexameter verses, perhaps to celebrate some of the military events that decorate the ceramics of the period. A century later and from Cyprus comes another depiction of a lyre player, depicted inside a kalathos. What is interesting about this particular *aoidos* is that he is also equipped with weapons. From eleventh century Cyprus we move to eighth century Athens from where we have images of lyre players involved in ceremonies associated with the veneration of ancestors. Mazarakis Ainian also explores such occasions in his chapter. Sherratt ends with the reminder that the scenes of bards in the epic represent the two modes of creation and transmission of heroic and pre-epic songs, which could have been authoritative over a period and which eventually contributed to the creation and maintenance of a long oral tradition. It is perhaps because of the alternate modes of active generation and more passive maintenance periods that we could also explain the various chronological patterns of the material cultural found in the Homeric epics. She ends by stating that the crystallisation of the epics around 700 BC was consciously designed to boost a notion of collective Greek identity and that the epics needed both Phimios and Demodokos to remind them how history can be manipulated especially in times of crisis. This stimulating paper offers several important aspects in the study of archaeology and the epics and supplements Sherratt's outstanding earlier work on the subject.

Jack Davis and Kathleen Lynch scrutinize the evidence of a hypothetical cult founded in the ruins of the Palace of Nestor in Pylos and associated with a hero or some ritual. One major problem in supporting the existence of any cult on the ruins is that in later periods the palace was thought to be located at the citadel of Paleonavarino and not in the location of the Englianos Ridge. So, it appears that there was no a memory preserving the authentic setting of the Mycenaean palace. The authors also note that the alleged tiles found in the ruins of the palace and which have been associated with three different temples dated from the late seventh to the sixth century, do not actually correspond with existing finds. Consequently, there is no evidence to hypothesise, as Brenningmeyer did in his Ph.D. thesis for the reconstruction of these temples (this thesis is not available to the reviewer).[5] The other line of investigation is associated with a number of courts that have revealed finds dated to the Postpalatial period. The evidence, however, from the remaining walls that were supposed to be associated with the pottery is not sufficient to reconstruct buildings dated to the Dark Age. Important is also to note that the alleged ritual assemblage in court 88 cannot provide enough evidence to suggest that it was related with any form of cult. Though the palace does not seem to be of great importance during the Dark Age, it is the area of the "Lower Town' that appears to have more finds dated to this particular period. So, the conclusion is that only small-scale activities took place within the ruins of the palace.

In addition, the authors offer a detail account of the pottery found and preserved from the various areas (Appendix 1). This is extremely useful but some drawings and/or photographs of the pots discussed would have been good to illustrate and to support their analysis. In any case, the vases found belong to types that come from domestic contexts comparable to those discovered in Nichoria and do not appear to include shapes that are usually associated with ritual activities. In Appendix 2, Susanne Hofstra summarised the iron finds from the areas under examination. A number of them belong to iron nails and not to spits as thought earlier, rejecting again the suggestion that there were paraphernalia of ritual activities. Noticeable is also the lack of any bronze offerings including figurines. The paper is a very important contribution to the archaeology of Pylos after the destruction of the Mycenaean palace and provides

[5] Brenningemyer 2003.

convincing arguments for the nature of the evidence belonging to the Postpalatial period.

Diamantis Panagiotopoulos in an innovative chapter (Chapter 6) introduces the concept of Mycenaean *memoria* by employing the study of collective memory, as a tool to understand social construction. It is argued that societies activate collective memory for preserving their corporate identity and that archaeology could use such social processes to explain approaches to human behaviour. The author attempts to employ such a theoretical background to the study of Mycenaean culture, in to reveal how the Mycenaeans experienced their past by intermingling mythological and historical events. So, by employing this theoretical concept, it could be possible to appreciate whether a narrative image corresponded to the actual past or to a mythical tradition. Panagiotopoulos discusses among others the use of heirlooms as possible references to the past thought he argues that such objects with 'biographies' could not amount to collective memory, as they are closely associated with individuals. A good example is the use of seals and signet rings that were passed down from father to son as insignia of office and power and as such they reveal a social habitus rather than a collective experience. Occasionally, however, we could find in Mycenaean art some shifts into the past, as in the repetition of techniques and decorative practices. But these, as the author claims, should not be considered as collective memory, a concept that presupposes an intentional act or remembering based on social contact. Interestingly, for Panagiotopoulos the fact that Mycenaean art is not characterised by creativity but rather by variation on traditional themes, may correspond to the highly formulaic nature of the Homeric verse. On the other hand, monuments and landscapes could serve for commemorating the past and providing the arena for communicative events. The only evidence we have for such events in the Mycenaean period comes from the funeral monuments. Indeed, the funeral monuments at Mycenae are employed in a contextual approach and within their particular historical context to illuminate such actions. Panagiotopoulos explores diachronically the funerary display at Mycenae from the Shaft Graves period to the end of the palatial administration period. He notes, for example how the construction of a built tomb (tomb Rho) above Grave Circle B was an attempt to appropriate a 'heroic' past or to fabricate an ancestral lineage. Equally impressive is the large scale building programme of around 1250 BC that provides evidence for appropriating a heroic past especially with the transformation of Grave Circle A into a memorial space, some 250 years after it was used as a burial ground. Finally, it is argued that the social distress that may have resulted in the palatial collapse in the twelfth century could explain the 'multivocality' of social memory that followed and which is characterised by inconsistencies in remembering and/or disregarding shared reminiscences.

Mazarakis Ainian revisits his own and others' contributions to hero cult at the end of the eigth century BC; he presents their different types, as well as the motives and inspirations behind such practices. An interesting case of hero cult is that discovered more recently at the immense Mycenaean tholos tomb at Georgiko near Karditsa in Thessaly. The hero venerated there was most probably *Aiatos*, the father of *Thessalos*, as we presume from an inscription with the name of the eponymus hero incised on a seventh or sixth century tile. The author also questions the old idea by Coldstream that cults of heroes were inspired by Homeric epics. He argues that the impact of the epics might have triggered such cults and others related to eponymous heroes at sanctuaries and cemeteries. Mazarakis Ainian also claims that the cults were performed not by elites but by a larger number of middle class devotees who could participate in rituals at the sanctuaries.

Stephanie Daley looks at evidence, some recently discovered, of cuneiform texts for the role of international education as a mechanism for the transmission of the Epic of Gilgamesh during the Middle and the Late Bronze Ages. It is argued that close connections came through a system of educational training in cuneiform in Egypt, Anatolia and the Levant in the Bronze Age and was adapted for alphabetic scripts in the transition from the Late Bronze to the Iron Age. She offers a detailed account of how we can trace evidence of such transmissions in what is a valuable chapter, especially for Aegean archaeologists, who are not always aware of the rich evidence from the Near East. Daley also reminds us how we could easily miss evidence of other materials used for writing because they were perishable, while even the unbaked clay tablets could have also been easily disintegrated. At the same time, she presents a number of old and more recently discovered evidence starting from the areas controlled by the Hittites and other regions in the Near East and Egypt. The interaction of the different polities required scribes who were writing in cuneiform script and who travelled and taught abroad. Such scribes remained active even after the collapse of the Hittite Empire because they were in need for training the local scribes to write a treaty, a seal

inscription, and other documents for the new rulers in locations such as Carchemish and other places in Cilicia. Daley recalls that extracts from the Epic of Gilgamesh were used as school exercises mostly in the Late Bronze Age but also with some examples dated to the Early Iron Age. Their scarcity later might be due to the perishable materials used for writing in this period. In any case, the Phoenicians continued the Canaanite tradition of this type of curriculum that was used to train earlier scribes. Phoenicians must also have played the most important role in transmitting earlier traditions, since the Greek adapted their alphabet in the eighth century. She suggests that one line of contact was through the training for scribes. Finally, some comparisons are offered between the Epic of Gilgamesh and the Homeric epics, in that anachronisms considering metal objects and chariots are found in both and were employed to evoke a heroic past. Lastly, it is intriguing also to consider that the Song of Release, a text found at Hattusha, might be the inspiration for the Iliad, though this suggestion has not yet been confirmed.

The last two chapters discuss later Slavic and Greek epics and their significance in forming the national identity of the people who had experience of them. Beissinger offers, in chapter 9, a very informative summary of the character of the Slavic epic tradition. She presents the singers, the main stories they sang, and at what kind of occasions they performed. She also explores how historical events could be preserved and transformed over a long oral tradition. We also learn how folklorists especially in Serbia (particularly Vuk Karadžic) promoted the notion that the epics reflected history and historical reality. This is especially the case with the battle of Kosovo, which has even been misemployed by late twentieth century Serbian nationalists. Beissinger demonstrates how history was exploited through the creation and production of the south Slavic Christian epic in order to create a Serbian national identity. What comes out from this analysis is how significant epic poetry could be to consolidate national identity.

In the same vein, Beaton recounts the rediscovery in the nineteenth century of Digenis Acritas that became a national epic during a period when the New Greek state had the ambitions to extent its territory to what was once that of Byzantium. The author also argues that Digenis Acritas' influences in Greek life and letters have an impact even today. Beaton also argues that the Homeric question provided the model in the late nineteenth century for combining an epic poem with contemporary oral songs in order to fashion national identity.

Last but not least we are treated with a 'very short epic' composed by the modern bard, Paul Halstead, who undoubtedly continues the tradition of reshaping epic sounds.

This is a valuable volume with innovative and interdisciplinary approaches and contributions that enrich our knowledge of the relationship between epic and archaeology. It also offers a variety of important studies regarding ancient and recent epic traditions. It illustrates how ancient and modern national epic poetry has the power in shaping group identity at different levels and in different periods.

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