

Some Mycenaean Relics in the Iliad

- p. 252 Page points out that the adjective "tamers of the horse" is restricted in Homer to the Trojans, and that what we learn from the excavations of Troy VI is that the founders of the last great fortress, our Trojans, were the first to introduce the horse into that region. . . . These adjectives for Troy and the Trojans carry the Epic back into a time before the fall of Troy VIIa, and reassure us that the Trojan War was among the subjects of the Mycenaean Epic. +
- p. 253 It is an established fact that some of the Iliad's formular phrases, including names of persons, have been continuously preserved from the Mycenaean era onwards. Ajax and his shield, Achilles and his spear, Hector and his helmet, were the subjects of Epic verse already at that time, - that is to say, within or almost within living memory of the actual destruction of Troy VIIa. Let us now draw the most obvious and interesting conclusion: that the subject of the Iliad, the siege of Troy by the Achaeans, is not fictitious but historical; and that the names of some of the principal persons must be the true names of persons engaged in the Trojan War. For the events and the poetry are nearly contemporary; and it is inconceivable that the Mycenaean Epic should have celebrated Achilles and Agamemnon at that time if there were no such Kings; it is inconceivable that it should have celebrated their expedition against Troy if there was no such expedition. +
- p. 253 The wrath of Achilles, the death of Patroclus, the combat with Hector, in brief, the framework of the story and the detail of its episodes, - let all this be imaginary, as most of it surely is: but the names of the great kings must be the true names of men who lived in Mycenaean Greece and fought the Trojans. + ?
- p. 254 There is no possibility that the whole story might have been concocted during the Dark Ages after the fall of Mycenae: the Greek Epic reaches far back beyond that time, and knows facts about Trojans and Achaeans which could not have become known to anybody after the Dark Ages began. The Achaeans did fight the Trojans, and Agamemnon was the name of Mycenae's king. + ?
- Achilles is certainly not less historical . . . Achilles is preeminent in this story: for that reason, coupled with the fact that the events and the poetical record of the events are so nearly contemporary, he must have been a real person and he must have fought at Troy. + ?
- Study of the Traditional formula-vocabulary shows that the names of Agamemnon, Menelaus, Diomedes, and numerous others are deeply embedded in the story and mount to a very high antiquity; they are certainly not creations of the Dark Ages. + ?
- p. 256 That the war and most of the principal names are historical is (I take it) proved beyond reasonable doubt by the solid argument that the record is nearly if not quite contemporary with the events recorded; and the special conditions governing the recitation of the Greek Epic preclude the possibility of fiction at least so far as the principal names and the outline of events are concerned. + ?