

Food and Agriculture - *Frank H. Stubbings*

The ancient reader would expect and would find in Homeric references to agriculture and food-production nothing unfamiliar. He would assume, as the poet himself would assume, that the resources of the Aegean lands in the heroic age were such as he himself knew. (p. 525)

If there is any difference between the Homeric picture and the real Greek world it is simply that of a certain poetic exaggeration. (p.525)

Fatted pigs in Homer are referred to as $\sigma\iota\alpha\lambda\omicron\iota$ or $\sigma\iota\upsilon\epsilon\varsigma\ \sigma\iota\alpha\lambda\omicron\iota$. This same distinction is found among the swine listed on the Mycenaean tablets: not only is the word attested, but the ideogram for 'pig' is sometimes combined with the syllable-sign for si. (p. 525f)

The hunting and fishing in Homer compare with Mycenaean times (p.526f)

.... the epics give over all a true and a complete picture of food and agriculture in early Greece. There is no single crop or food-product mentioned that cannot be attested for Mycenaean times by archaeology, either in the way of actual remains (animal bones, carbonized grain, etc.), or by written reference in the tablets of Pylos, Mycenae, and Knossos.

Crafts and Industries - *Frank H. Stubbings*

The Pylos tablets seem to refer to large quantities of flax or linen produced in the Pylos area, but in Homer the word $\lambda\iota\tau\alpha$, specifically meaning 'linen cloths', occurs only rarely . . . (p.532)

Descriptions of furniture on tablets from Pylos show that in such passages the poet has preserved an authentic tradition from Mycenaean times, and the evidence is corroborated by fragmentary ivory inlays from such furniture found in excavations. (p.533)

Objects of iron in Homer are only such rare exceptions as may actually have occurred in late Mycenaean times. It is in keeping with the facts of the Mycenaean age that iron is a number of times mentioned along with bronze and gold as a form of wealth, virtually as precious as metal (p.534)

In Homer we do find a general authenticity of 'period' background in respect of metalwork inasmuch as the wealth of gold and silver vessels and ornaments which is characteristic of the epic scene did really exist in Mycenaean times. (p.536)

Admittedly 'Nestor's cup' . . . can hardly now be cited as part of the evidence. Not only do we now recognize that this cup is too early in date, but it does not in fact correspond with the vessel described by Homer except in so far as both have figures of doves on the rim by the handles. Nestor's ~~xxx~~ vessel is very large . . . while the Shaft Grave cup is a goblet only a few inches high. (p. 536)

The evidence furnished by the Knossos and Pylos tablets do show that the epic rarely if ever exaggerates the luxury and complex development of Mycenaean civilization, while at times it rather falls short of the truth. Mention of such trades and crafts as that of the potter, leather worker, bow-maker, fuller, and mason are rarely or never mentioned by Homer though there is evidence of these trades and crafts in Mycenaean times.