

Study of Oral Transmission

4. References for or against Homer's accuracy as to the type of institutions.

xx-27 Chadwick, John, The Decipherment of Linear B, p. 132

3.41-51⁴⁻⁶ **Against accuracy.** On the other hand, where we can compare the evidence of the tablets with Homer in any detail, discrepancies are immediately obvious. The position of the king may well be the same in both Homer and the tablets; but what has happened to his second in command, the Lawagetes? Not only is his name unknown to epic verse (it could not be made to fit the scansion), but there is no term which serves instead. So, too, repeatedly with other features; it is all very well to say that Homer is not interested in the details of land-tenure, but even the common Mycenaean term for a plot of land never occurs in the poems. Several Pylos tablets list in a consistent order a group of nine important villages; the coincidence that Homer, in the Catalogue of Ships, also assigns nine towns to the Pylian kingdom was quickly noted. But the two lists do not match; Homer's includes Pylos, that of the tablets excludes it; and only one of the remaining eight names is the same in both lists. The language contains Mycenaean elements, it is true, but much is of far later date, and the old and new are mixed in such confusion that the frantic attempts of scholars to separate them have produced little agreement or real progress. It would seem best neither to exaggerate nor to underestimate the Mycenaean relics in Homer.

Wace and Stubbings on "Homeric Institutions," p. 431

Ibid., pp. 485-488. "Burial Customs" by Geo. G.E. Mylonas

Kirk, G. S., The Songs of Homer (1962) p. 180 Exclusively Mycenaean objects or practices are unfortunately very few, and those that can be associated only with the Protogeometric or Geometric age - the whole period from the mid-11th to the end of the 8th century - are no commoner. They consist, as it seems to me, of the following, . . .: the peacetime practice of cremation, the use of a pair of throwing-spears, Phoenician traders in Greek waters, and perhaps the absence of writing.