

## Boar's tusk helmet

3.41-15<sup>5</sup> xx-11 Brower, Reuben A, and Wm. H. Bond, The Iliad of Homer trans. by Pope. p.17 There are only a few details in the poem that can be surely identified as Mycenaean, such as the body-covering shield of "great Ajax" and the boar's tusk helmet of the Cretan hero, Meriones.

3.41-15<sup>9</sup> xx-12 Carpenter, Rhys p. 31 We are left with a single helmet constructed of boars' teeth; and if that is really all that Homer knows about the material actualities of the great Late Helladic culture, it is tantamount to nothing at all.

3.41-28<sup>8</sup> xx-15 Lorimer, H. p. 132-33 It is obvious today that Reichel grossly exaggerated the Mycenaean elements in the Homeric poems; yet by demonstrating that it existed he obliged scholars to revise their view of the ancestry of the poems and the nature of the tradition they preserve. Critics who questioned all his other conclusions conceded that in his account of the boar's tusk helmet (K261-5) he had hit the mark; and as this admission implied that somehow the poet was able to describe accurately an object which never appears after the close of LH III and probably ceased to exist appreciably earlier, a continuity of literary tradition was established which bridged the gulf between the end of the Mycenaean age and the rise of Hellenic Greece.

3.41-29<sup>8</sup> Ibid, p. 452 More conclusive evidence, however, than any of these afford is to be found in K, in the passage describing the boar's tusk helmet. This gives us by far the most certain and satisfactory account to be found in the poems of an object which demonstrably did not survive the Bronze Age . . . For centuries at least no one could possibly have seen a boar's tusk helmet; only in the amber of traditional poetry handed down with an astonishing verbal fidelity could its image have been preserved.

3.41-51<sup>2</sup> xx-27a Chadwick, John, The Decipherment of Linear B. p. 132 We cannot deny that many features of the Homeric world go back to Mycenaean originals. To take a famous instance. Homer describes a curious kind of helmet made of felt to which are sewn rows of plates cut from boars' tusks. This was an unexplained oddity until a tomb was opened which contained a great number of pieces of boar's tusk, and Wace demonstrated that they could be mounted so as to make a helmet just such as Homer describes. But a helmet of this type can hardly have been known in the eighth century B.C.; its description must have been handed down for centuries - and if one detail, why not others?