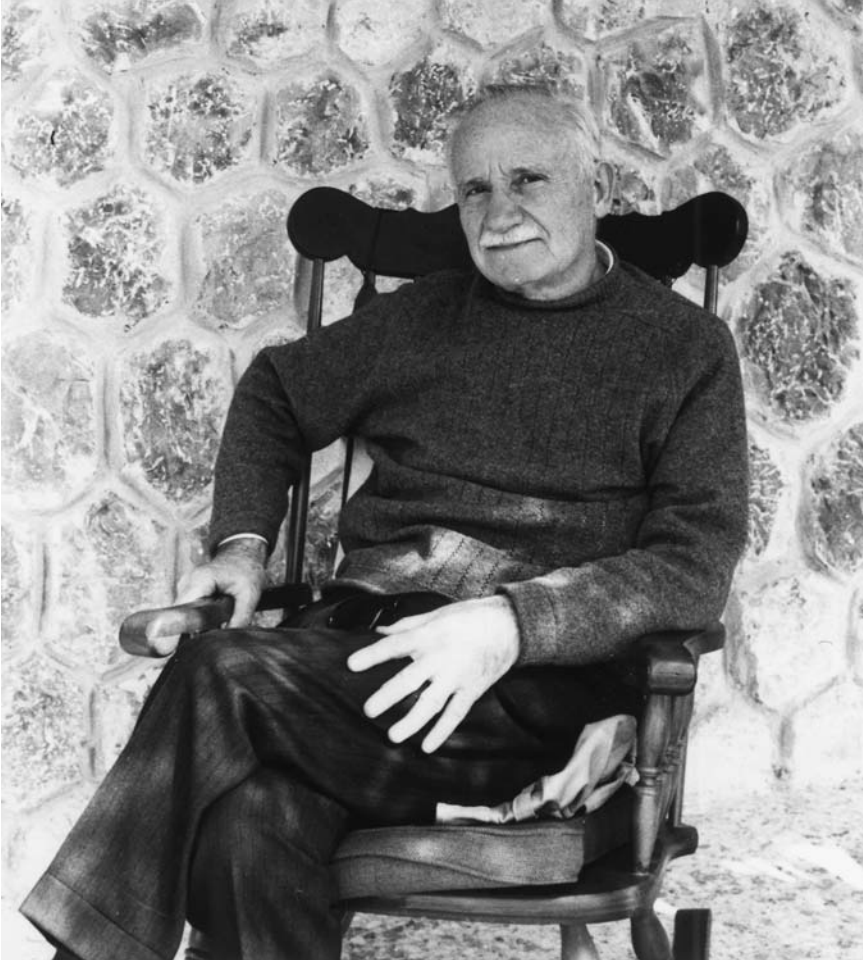




Kingship in the Mycenaean World and  
Its Reflections in the Oral Tradition



Photograph of George E. Mylonas taken by his daughter at Mycenae, Easter 1975.

PREHISTORY MONOGRAPHS 13



# Kingship in the Mycenaean World and Its Reflections in the Oral Tradition

*by*

Ione Mylonas Shear



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*To my father*  
George E. Mylonas



## Table of Contents

LIST OF FIGURES . . . . .	ix
PREFACE . . . . .	xi
INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
CHAPTER I: The Archaeological Evidence . . . . .	5
CHAPTER II: The Evidence of the Linear B Tablets . . . . .	39
CHAPTER III: The Ugarit Parallel . . . . .	65
CHAPTER IV: The Evidence of the Oral Tradition . . . . .	69
CHAPTER V: The End of the Tradition . . . . .	81
CHAPTER VI: Summary . . . . .	97
NOTES . . . . .	105
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	173
INDEX OF ANCIENT AUTHORS . . . . .	215
INDEX OF REFERENCES TO THE <i>ILIAD</i> . . . . .	217
INDEX OF REFERENCES TO THE <i>ODYSSEY</i> . . . . .	221
INDEX . . . . .	225
FIGURES	



## List of Figures

- Frontispiece. Photograph of George E. Mylonas taken by his daughter at Mycenae, Easter 1975.
- Figure 1. Plan of Grave Circle A, Mycenae.
- Figure 2. Plan of Grave Circle B, Mycenae.
- Figure 3. Topographic plan of Mycenae and vicinity.
- Figure 4. Plan of the West House, House of Sphinxes, House of the Oil Merchant, and House of Shields, Mycenae.
- Figure 5. Plan of the Panagia Houses, Mycenae.
- Figure 6. Topographic plan of Gla.
- Figure 7. Plan of Buildings K, N, and M, Gla.
- Figure 8. Plan of the palace workshop and House of Columns, Mycenae.
- Figure 9. Plan of the palace, Tiryns.
- Figure 10. Restored plan of the palace, Mycenae.
- Figure 11. Plan of the palace, Pylos.



## Preface

Each book has its own beginnings, and the beginning of this book can be said to have started on the day I excavated my first trench within the citadel at Mycenae in 1962. From that day, I have continued to maintain an interest in Mycenaean archaeology, even though other interests and pursuits have from time to time taken me into other fields of research. In more recent years, I have read the increasingly numerous articles and books on kingship in the Mycenaean world and the state of the economy within the kingdoms of that period. These studies, by their emphasis on one particular facet of the evidence, one particular site, or the latest, newest interpretation, often contradicted each other. I felt an attempt to combine all aspects of these studies was needed in order to determine whether a coherent whole could be evolved which combined all the evidence without contradicting conclusions drawn from another archaeological site or some other aspect of the field, hence the writing of this particular book.

In this effort, I owe a great debt of gratitude to Thomas G. Palaima for his thoughtful and often thought provoking comments on the Linear B evidence which is a necessary component of any current study of Mycenaean archaeology. He helped me to understand the great mass of this material and guided me through much of the more recent and often contradictory research. To him I owe my thanks, and I am more than happy to acknowledge his help in this preface.

As in all of my research, I also owe a debt of gratitude to my husband, T. Leslie Shear, Jr., whose many years of excavating at Mycenae, beginning with A.J.B. Wace in the House of Shields and continuing under G.E. Mylonas in the areas of the palace within the citadel and under the Lion



Gate leading into that citadel, gave him a special insight into the interpretation and understanding of the archaeological evidence from Mycenae. It is an exciting challenge to live with a resident expert with whom new ideas and conflicting concepts can be discussed, often on a daily basis.

To the INSTAP Academic Press, and especially to Karen Vellucci, Susan Ferrence, and Philip P. Betancourt, I give thanks for undertaking the publication of this book. They had the courage and foresight to understand the aims of this book and to encourage me in its publication. Due to my precarious health, the standard of proof reading of the final page proof may not be as high as I would have desired under differing circumstances. I ask for the reader's indulgence.

A book on kings needs to be dedicated to a man, and a book on Mycenaean kings needs to be dedicated to an ancestor, hence the dedication of this book to my father, George E. Mylonas. From my earliest childhood, he instilled in me a love of the Greek oral tradition and especially its many tales of the past associated with Agamemnon and Agamemnon's citadel at Mycenae. Later, when I was a graduate student, he trained me in methods of archaeological research in the field and he helped lay the foundations of my later scholarship. To him I owe a debt of gratitude and love which I wish to acknowledge by the dedication of this book.