A Tale of Two Cities?

The literary and historical relationship of Argos and Mycenae

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A thesis

submitted to Victoria University of Wellington

in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of

Master of Arts in Classics

2013

School of Art History, Classics and Religious Studies

Abstract

This thesis is a case study of the relationship between Mycenae and Argos. It has been a longstanding tendency in scholarship to assume that Argos developed primarily in comparison to and in competition with Sparta. This has been primarily due to Herodotus' presentation of the history between the two poleis. It is suggested here that this view should be reconsidered, and the probability of other influences taken into account. This thesis presents the view that instead of Sparta, a consideration of the possibility that Mycenae was the rival Argos was consistently reacting against. Mycenae, in the weakened state of the Geometric and Archaic period, is admittedly not the first candidate that comes to mind when reviewing the options of *poleis* which challenged Argos' identity, but there is strong evidence to suggest that this was a rivalry of Argos' own making. The manufacturing of Argive ethnic identity was therefore both an appropriation of, and reaction against, Mycenaean history and mythology.

The study begins with a consideration of how Argos expressed the insecurity felt towards Mycenae by claiming hegemony over Mycenaean religion and an important sanctuary, which became inextricably linked with Argos in historic times. The second chapter is an examination of the textual transmission of the *Iliad*. It is argued that Argos strongly influenced this transmission at different points in the development of the text. The period of development of the text is followed chronologically; beginning with the earliest identifiable evidence of the tradition. Following the evolutionary path of the text through to the Alexandrian period, important stages in each period and their relation to the text are considered. Chapter Three is a recounting and comparison of different genealogical histories which

revolve around the Argolid. The primary focus is the myth of the Return of the Heracleidae. As with the rivalry between Sparta and Argos, the Heracleidae story was taken as a historical event by scholars in the past. Within this chapter, the event itself is proven to have been a myth. This point in and of itself is no longer news to academia; however, the evidence is then reviewed in order to pinpoint the likely reason for this myth's creation. It is argued that it was created as a reaction against Mycenaean history and claims within the Argolid. Furthermore, there is a study which recounts the way in which Argive mythology appropriated and subsumed Mycenaean identity.

All of these points work towards the overall conclusion that Argos deliberately appropriated Mycenaean legend in order to express its own identity and ownership of the Argolid. This was used as propaganda within the Argolid and the rest of Greece. The final chapter considers the historical relationship between the Argives and Mycenaeans. The continuous attempt to quell the Mycenaeans through a long deconstruction of their own identity did not entirely work. The conclusion of this thesis is that a significant part of the reason for the destruction of Mycenae is the Mycenaeans' own reaction against and challenge to the Argive manufactured identity.

Contents

Acknowledgements

There are several people who have made a significant impact on this thesis over the time it has taken to develop. The staff and postgraduates of the Classics Department have all taught me something about the world and ways to think about it. Their presence has been invaluable. In particular, thanks are due to Dr. Diana Burton, for her Superwoman tendencies. Dr Judy Deuling has been instrumental in her encouragement and assistance. Hannah Tokona ensured the thesis was started in the first place. Tania Hayes, Emily Poelina-Hunter, Jen Oliver and Jo Whalley have all served as sources of inspiration and wisdom.

My friends have all been excellent, and I am only sorry that I cannot use the entire space of this thesis to sing their praises in turn. Therefore, I must limit myself to thanking Peter Baillie and Megan McCarthy; Daniel J. Miles; Jen McGavin, and Annabelle Gould. Special thanks for unfailing support are due to Clare Whatmough, and Penny Lattey. Chris de L'isle has contributed a good deal of his editorial expertise.

Dr. Peter Gainsford has spent a lot of knowledge, time, and energy in discussing this thesis.

I would also like to give thanks to my supervisor, Dr. Matthew Trundle, for his advice, assistance, and patience.

The final acknowledgement is to Alex Wilson. There are no words in English, Greek, or Latin to express how much he has enriched not only this thesis, but life itself.

This thesis is dedicated to the loving memory of Denis Simpson and William Moulden, for auld lang syne.

οὐ μὴν οὐδὲ αὐτῶν λέληθεν Ἀργείων τοὺς ἐξηγητὰς ὅτι μὴ πάντα ἐπ' ἀληθείᾳ λέγεταί σφισι, λέγουσι δὲ ὅμως· οὐ γάρ τι ἕτοιμον μεταπεῖσαι τοὺς πολλοὺς ἐναντία ὧν δοξάζουσιν. (Paus. 2.23.7)

Even the guides of the Argives themselves know that what they say is not all truth, but they say it nevertheless. For it is not easy to make everyone change their minds to the contrary.

Introduction

> "And Argos throughout her history was a State with a superiority
> complex, always looking back to a more glorious past and firmly jealous
> of the claims of Sparta."[1]

When Fletcher made this rather poetic statement, he was summarising the common view of scholarship at the time. Two points are raised: did Argos in fact have a superiority complex, and, if she did, a further consideration is: was it indeed Sparta of whom she was jealous?[2]

This thesis is a study of the relationship between Mycenae and Argos, from the Bronze Age through to approximately 468 B.C.E., when Mycenae was destroyed by Argos. By following the ways in which each town developed, both independently and together, the ultimate aim of this thesis will be to give an overview of the potential reason why Argos destroyed Mycenae.

The intention of this thesis is to study the way in which Argos reacted against the history of Mycenae. The way in which the Argives worked against the Mycenaean identity created a new historical background for the Argolid. I will argue that the primary reason for the destruction of Mycenae was the people of Argos' wish to control their own identity. The competing Mycenaean cultural identity challenged the attempts of the Argives to create their own independent identity. Argos made a considerable impact upon the myths and legends of Ancient Greece. Thus, the identity of Argos is thoroughly woven through the myths and legends of Greece as a

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[1] Fletcher (1941: 7).
[2] In keeping with common literary conventions of both Greek and English, the cities, when personified, are referred to in the feminine form.

12

whole. The major myths and epic cycle, however, feature Argos and Mycenae in prominent (yet opposing) positions – from the Argive genealogies of the demi-god Heracles, who should have ruled Mycenae but instead became slave to her ruler, to the major epics of the Seven Against Thebes and the Trojan War. [3]

This study hopes to update and revise the earlier conclusion of the two major studies published on Argos and its history. Both Tomlinson's (1972) and Kelly's (1976) surveys are landmark works, as the first to compile the history of the Argolid. They are, however, hampered somewhat by assumptions which are now out of date. Tomlinson, as the older of the two studies, takes both the Dorian invasion and the rivalry between Sparta and Argos seriously. This has led to problematic analysis in certain areas of his study, as the underlying belief in a Dorian invasion led to a lack of consideration of other factors. Kelly took major steps towards dismissing the idea of mutual Spartan and Argive hatred during the early stages of Greek history. But, he too considered the existence of a Dorian invasion to be a reality. The idea of a Dorian invasion has more recently been dismissed, to a certain degree. The Dorian invasion is still a focal point for the studies of the Argolid – the question of how it became so prominent an idea will be followed up in this study.

I began research for this thesis with the idea that the Argolid had not been a major area of study for scholars since Kelly. Very recently, however, Hall has considered many points of Argive history and ethnic identity.[4] By narrowing the focus of the study to Mycenae and Argos as individual towns, and focusing on their interactions and how they affected wider Greek history, the conclusions presented here go

[3] The Seven against Thebes was a cycle which revolved around an Argive-led attack on Thebes. Although it consisted of an entire cycle of epics, as well as tragedies built on said epics, it survives in only fragments today. For further details, see West (2003).
[4] See in particular Hall (2001a).

somewhat beyond Hall's wider ones. While Hall has presented excellent arguments showing the development of Argive ethnic identity (as well as the ethnic identity of the Greeks overall), this thesis aims to answer the question of how much of this identity was created as a reaction to the ethnic identity of Mycenae, particularly in myths, oral traditions, and Cyclopean ruins, and how much was created independently by the Argives. The manufacturing of ethnic identity does not occur in a vacuum. Therefore, this study aims to establish whether or not Argos' superiority complex was a reaction to the perceived advantage Mycenae had as the more prominent of the two early in history.

Chapter One will focus on the most famous sanctuary in the Argolid. It was claimed in later times to have been founded by the Argives. This claim needs further examination, as, even at first glance, it is difficult to reconcile with the physical evidence. For example, although it is supposed to be the prime sanctuary for the people of Argos, it is located closer to Tiryns and Mycenae. In this chapter, the issue of location, religion, and cult of the Argives and Mycenaeans will be examined, and an attempt made to discover the original claimant of the sanctuary and the underlying early Bronze-Age site, Prosymna. Later religious incursions made by the Argives under the umbrella of "Hera's City" and appropriations of the religions of other defeated cities will be considered, in order to decide whether or not Hera was originally a goddess of Mycenae, appropriated by Argos in order to formulate an ethnic identity significantly stronger than what they may otherwise have possessed.

Chapter Two will examine the textual and literary history of the *Iliad*, as one of the most important works of Greece. This will involve studying the origin of the Homer epics, and hints in the text and reception of the textual tradition, that the *Iliad* (as we

have it today) originated in the Argolid. It is argued that the oral tradition which resulted in the Homeric epics was created around the ruins of Mycenae, and later adapted by the Argives. The method of the study is chronological, following the development of the text and tradition from the Geometric period to the Alexandrians. Areas of focus are the evidence for the state of the text at each point, and evidence for use of the text in the political sphere.

Chapter Three will argue that the Invasion of the Dorians, led by the Heracleidae, was a myth created by the Argives to oppose the older stories which featured Mycenae. This was a pervasive story which was accepted as fact by many scholars, until it began to be questioned in the mid-twentieth century. Currently, the trend in scholarship is slowly changing to disregard the historicity of the event, in favour of considering it a myth. This chapter argues that the myth was created by the Argives, for the purpose of deconstructing Mycenaean identity and to replace it with a new, all-encompassing Argive version. To that end, the Argives also created a new genealogy, which, when combined with the Heracleidae, created an entire genealogical history for the Argolid. The Mycenaean legends were subsumed into this, and undermined by the lack of corresponding legend. This resulted in an Argive stemma overriding that of Mycenae, causing a devaluation of their own attempts to express their identity.

Chapter Four is an extended analysis of the historical evidence for the relationship between Argos and Mycenae. In particular, I will focus on the opposing statements made by Herodotos and Aristotle regarding the status of the people who took control at Argos after the battle of Sepeia. The identity of these people, referred to as *douloi* or *perioikoi* depending on the author consulted, is unknown. This chapter will examine what evidence there is to suggest that Mycenae was the origin of the *douloi*,

and whether or not "*douloi*" or "*perioikoi*" are correct terms for the suggested political status of the Mycenaeans in the Archaic period.

 To conclude the study, the final actions of Mycenae in the Persian Wars will be contrasted with those of Argos. The refusal of Mycenae to obey Argive policy, and increased attempts to claim their own identity, resulted in the final destruction of Mycenae by Argos. The rising status of Mycenae at the time, at the same time as a decline in Argive strength, seem to have heightened the Argive feeling of sensitivity toward Mycenae. Research interest in the development of identity in the ancient world, and how it was expressed, has provided a new light to examine the artefacts which have been left to us from millennia of observation and consideration. One of the foremost scholars in the field, Hall, has made a point of considering the development of the Argive identity with regard to that of Mycenae, and many of the points individually argued in this thesis were considered without reference to his works. This thesis expands upon Hall's conclusions about ethnic identity in the Argolid, however the ultimate aim is to present an argument as to why Argos felt so threatened by Mycenae in 368 B.C.E., when Mycenae could summon an army of only four hundred men, that the necessary reaction was destruction.

Sources

The primary sources used in this thesis are literary. In particular, Homer's *Iliad* is a necessary component of the argument. Consideration is given to their transmission and development. The primary sources range from very early – the oral tradition surrounding the Homeric epics, as previously mentioned – to very late. In particular, Roman sources will be given weight which may be difficult to justify; however, since they are closer than modern sources and opinions to the texts themselves, the

reason for their inclusion should not be doubted. In many ways, later sources reflect the weight that Argive traditions were given.

With regard to secondary sources, an effort has been made to keep the bibliography relatively modern. This is done to demonstrate the way in which Classics has developed through modern theory. Where sources are pre-1950, these are restricted to excavation reports (for example, Schliemann and his Mycenae reports, or Smith, 1869, as one of the original investigators of the archaeological site of the Heraion). The other use of pre-1950 sources is commentaries on ancient texts, which are used to contrast the more modern interpretations given to history.

A note on definitions and transliterations

In order to avoid confusion, some terms which can have wide meanings are used more strictly here. When the name "Mycenaeans" is used within this thesis, I refer only to the inhabitants of the city of Mycenae (except in quotations from other scholars). "Argives" will also be used only in reference to the people of the city of Argos; the "Argives" of Homer will be referred to, although perhaps too broadly and anachronistically, as "Greeks". The culture of Bronze Age Greece, often called "Mycenaean", will be called "Helladic" or "Bronze Age" here. Finally, the building style of the walls of Mycenae, most often referred to as "Mycenaean style", will be "Helladic" (specifically limited to the mainland) or "Cyclopean".

For the most part, the transliterations of Greek names are given in the familiar Latinised forms, to avoid confusion. The exception to this rule is references made to the Heraion of Argos, which will always be "Heraion" rather than "Heraeum". This is due to the tendency of pre-1920 scholars to use "Heraeum"; "Heraion" is more common in recent scholarship. Greek terms such as *perioikoi*, however, remain in

complete transliteration.

Chapter One: The Argive Heraion

This chapter focuses on the remnants of the Argive Heraion, the ownership of which was disputed in antiquity. It appears to have originally been under the aegis of Mycenae in the Bronze Age. Later, it became known in Greece as the Heraion of Argos, despite the fact that it still displayed links to Mycenae. Some of these links were immutable, and others were deliberately cultivated by the Argives. This chapter establishes why Argos would deliberately invoke Mycenaean heritage at what was supposedly their foremost sanctuary.

The Heraion of Argos was one of the most famous sanctuaries of Ancient Greece, and was the centre of the cult of Hera in the Argolid. It was one of three temples to Hera which were controlled by the Argives,[5] and every five years the festival of the Heraea was held at the Heraion by the Argives. The prize for winning at this competition was a shield (the *aspis*). The Heraion is famously associated with the story of Cleobis and Biton, related by Herodotus (1.31-32). It has been suggested that the cult of Hera was spread from the Heraion itself.[6] The origins of the shrine and many other points about the building and purpose of the sanctuary are obscure and have been the subject of much debate between scholars. Much of the confusion seems to revolve around the origin and importance of the shrine, and the part it played in the spread of the cult of Hera, focusing in particular on the archaeological remains, especially the location of the temple and what is known as "the old Temple Terrace". The relationship of the site and cult of Hera to the city of Argos and the neighbouring citadels of Mycenae and Tiryns is equally unclear – the only point of

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[5] Pausanias 2.22.1.
[6] Smith (1869: 593). This has been revisited and supported in more recent works, including Tomlinson (1973: 65) and O'Brien (1990: 110).

certainty is the fact that by the time of Herodotus in the later fifth century, the control of the sanctuary of Hera in the Argolid had come firmly under control of the Argives, perhaps at a cost to the other cities.

There is evidence that suggests the Argives were jealous of their control over the cults of Hera in the Argolid; after the destruction of Tiryns by Argos, the oldest statue of Hera, which was made of peartree wood, was brought to the Heraion and worshipped,[7] and Pausanias reports having seen it in his time (2.17.5). Moreover, Diodorus Siculus (11.65) includes a dispute about the sanctuary amongst the reasons for Argos' destruction of Mycenae:

> Μυκηναῖοι διὰ τὸ παλαιὸν ἀξίωμα τῆς ἰδίας πατρίδος οὐχ ὑπήκουον τοῖς Ἀργείοις, ὥσπερ αἱ λοιπαὶ πόλεις αἱ κατὰ τὴν Ἀργείαν, ἀλλὰ κατ' ἰδίαν ταττόμενοι τοῖς Ἀργείοις οὐ προσεῖχον· **ἠμφισβήτουν δὲ καὶ περὶ τῶν ἱερῶν τῆς Ἥρας**...

> The Mycenaeans, because of the ancient honour of their own fatherland would not obey the Argives, as would the rest of the cities of the Argolid, but maintained their own ways, and they would take no orders from the Argives, **and were also disputing with them about the sacred sanctuary of Hera...**

The implication of Diodorus' statement is that the Mycenaeans believed that they had a strong claim on the sanctuary of Hera; strong enough to contend with the Argives over it. The use of πατρίδος suggests that the claim was one based on a traditional claim, and it was tied very closely to the Mycenaeans' identification with

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[7] The description of the statue, "small, seated" and "made of wood" suggests that this was indeed an old icon. This was certainly believed by Pausanias (2.17.5); Arafat (1996: 46-47) offers discussion on Pausanias' association of wooden statues with age. An indication of the age of the statue is the obvious difference in materials between the three statues of Hera in the Heraion; Pausanias notes two of chryselephantine, and then the wooden statue (2.17.5). As Argos captured this statue at the defeat of Tiryns, it would have been of special importance; Tiryns seems to have been another town in the Argolid that Argos struggled with maintaining a distinct control over.

the shrine.

The archaeological site of the Heraion and the "Old Temple Terrace"

The Argive Heraion is laid out over three terraces in the middle of the Argive plain, fifteen stadia (Paus. 2.17.1) or approximately two kilometres from Mycenae, and fifteen from Argos.[8] The temple lies on the ruins of a large, long-standing Bronze Age settlement known as "Prosymna", partially excavated by Blegen, who confirmed that Prosymna had been occupied throughout the early to middle Bronze Age.[9] Also located were pot sherds from the Late Helladic period, suggesting activity at the site even after it was abandoned. Blegen also located several tholoi and shaft graves from the same period, from which he was able to identify Prosymna in the Early and Middle Helladic periods as a rich settlement, with a distinct necropolis and a possibly fortified acropolis.[10] Prosymna appears to have been abandoned and ruined completely during the Late Helladic period.

Religious activity at the site is indicated through pot sherds and a shrine, seven hundred metres from the site of the later Heraion temple. The use of the shrine continued throughout the Bronze Age and the "Dark Age". The continued usage alone indicates that this was a place of very great importance to the Greeks of the Late Helladic-Protogeometric periods.[11]

The first major phase of building on the site was the so-called "Mycenaean" temple terrace and the Archaic Heraion. At this point, the sanctuary seemed to undergo a resurgence in popularity and use. This building programme was clearly a massive

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[8] Smith (1869: 593).
[9] Blegen (1936).
[10] Blegen (1936).
[11] Blegen (1936).

undertaking. The upper terrace is built in the Cyclopean style, and at first inspection, was so well executed that the original excavators believed it to be genuinely Helladic. They accordingly dated the terrace and the temple which stood on it from the late Bronze Age.[12] The terrace is a monumental building, a rectangle measuring 55.80m x 34.40m, and made from megalithic blocks of conglomerate, which were covered in a blue-green limestone flagging.[13] Subsequent excavations have uncovered Geometric and proto-Corinthian sherds below the foundation of the terrace, suggesting that the building programme be redated to the eighth century.[14] The temple stood on the terrace, and was probably built of sundried mud brick and wood, with a colonnade of possibly stone columns. The Archaic Heraion was likely to have been one of the earliest peripteral temples in Greece, if not the earliest.[15]

When the temple itself was complete, there appears to have been another stage of building on the site, dated to the sixth century B.C.E. These buildings appear to indicate that the sanctuary was growing in use in the seventh and sixth centuries, and may also indicate the institution of the Heraea festival, for which they would have been required.

In 423 B.C.E., the Archaic temple burned down. The priestess of the time, Chryseis, reportedly fell asleep, leaving the fire unattended (Paus. 2.17.7). The Argives replaced this temple with a newer Doric structure, located on the terrace below the old Heraion. This temple is made of poros limestone, with decorative features and the tiles of Pentelic marble, and shows "a complete familiarity with Athenian Doric

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[12] Brownson (1893).
[13] Wright (1982: 196).
[14] Blegen (1925).
[15] Kelly (1976: 81).

design",[16] and Tomlinson suggests that this assists in dating the building of the temple to the middle of the fifth century, at a time when the building programme in Athens had begun, but had been interrupted by the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War and the Athenian plague, citing the fact that

> the cessation of work in Athens, demonstrated by the unfinished state in which the later Doric buildings, [e.g.] the Propylaea... still remain to this present day, suggests that on the outbreak of war the group of skilled workmen, experienced in the construction of Doric buildings, were dismissed, and that many of them left Attica.[17]

If this is the case – and it is likely that it is – it is reasonable to assume that the workmen may indeed have found their way to Argos, where the Argives were undertaking their own building programme in the refurbishment of the Heraion.[18] The workmen from Attica would have influenced the design and decoration in the style of the Attic Doric temples, and ensured that the sanctuary had buildings of an equal quality to those produced by the Athenian building programme.

Both of the temples of the sanctuary – the eighth-century one and the fifth-century one – show that the people building them were at the forefront of architectural developments which were taking place in Greece during their times. Both renovations of the shrine also demonstrated the people's prosperity, given the ability to undertake both projects, and the temple seems to have become an emblem of

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[16] Tomlinson (1972: 242)

[17] Tomlinson (1972: 242).

[18] Although this stage of building postdates the destruction of Mycenae, the money spent to reinstate the temple (to a far more modern version) suggests part of a concerted effort to update the sanctuary and associate it more closely with modern Argos. Morgan (2007: 249-255) discusses the monumentalisation of the Heraion and reinstatement of the games in terms of "demonstrat[ing] most effectively Argos' domination of the eastern plain after the humiliation of Mycenae's attempt to take control."

Argos' wealth and power at this time.[19] There are two points which should be addressed here: while it is known for certain that Argos paid for and undertook the fifth century building of the shrine, which was built under the guidance of an Argive architect (Eupolemus, according to Pausanias 2.17.3), and furnished by Argive artists, it is unknown who paid for and undertook the massive building programme of the eighth century, and furthermore, why the temple should have been modern in style – indeed, a precursor to one of the most popular building styles of later times – yet so much effort went into making the temple terrace appear to be Cyclopean and dating from the Bronze Age. The temple terrace has intrigued scholars since the excavators of it produced their differing dates, and has provoked much discussion as to why this would be the case.

The original excavator, Brownson, believed the terrace and temple to have been Mycenaean in origin.[20] Blegen's reports of excavations of the site, published in 1937, contradicted this. He noted that trenches sunk beneath the terrace turned up sherds of Geometric and proto-Corinthian pottery at such a depth that he concluded it to have been most unlikely for the sherds to have come to be there after the building of the terrace and temple. The matter remains up for discussion. Although it appears that the majority of scholars support Blegen's conclusions on the matter and date the terrace to the eighth or seventh centuries,[21] there were still proponents of the Mycenaean dating still active in the mid- to late twentieth centuries. In particular, Plommer's 1977 article examined the evidence and concluded that "... it does not

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[19] Morgan (2007) argues that in addition to the refurbishment of the temple, Pindar's *Nemean* 10 was commissioned at the same time to emphasise the complete control of the sanctuary by Argos. "In the case of Argos… it is possible to go further and to see the commission as promoting a state agenda… the force with which a state political agenda seems to be promoted in *N.* 10 is distinctive."
[20] Brownson (1893).
[21] For discussion, see Tomlinson (1972); Antonaccio (1993); Morgan (1990), and Wright (1982).

show the careful jointing of the Archaic Greek, rather the wide jointing of the Bronze Age; and the rough kind beloved by the Mycenaeans, contrasting poignantly with the finicky stylobate of small limestone blocks in the actual temple.".[22] Plommer also suggests that Blegen's fragments must have dropped through the cracks between the pavement. Wright refutes this,[23] arguing that, as Blegen put it, this is very unlikely: the conglomerate blocks were filled with earth and the occasional filler rock; the top of the terrace was then covered with limestone flagging. Furthermore, the depths at which the sherds were found was not addressed completely by Plommer's argument: it seems clear that Blegen was correct in his dating based on the sherds: this terrace is a copy of the Mycenaean monumental undertakings.

The conclusion that the terrace is of eighth century origin raises the natural questions of: who built the terrace, and for what purpose was this style chosen? This was, without a doubt, an expensive and difficult undertaking, particularly for a shrine which does not appear to have had any clear "owner" at this point in time.

There has been almost no debate over who the builders of the temple terrace were, if it is indeed to be dated from the eighth century. There was only one *polis* in the vicinity and in the time period which had both the wealth and manpower to undertake such an enterprise – Argos. This does not assist with identifying a possible reason for building a terrace which was Cyclopean in style. Suggestions that it was built for the Archaic temple or perhaps an altar situated there before the temple's building (for example Mallowitz [1981], cited in Antonaccio [1992]), are overly simplistic and do not do justice to the effort required, and does not address the

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[22] Plommer (1977: 76).
[23] Wright (1982).

question as to why anyone building a modern temple would begin with a deliberate attempt at copying a long-dead form of building.

The answer here may lie in the other actions which were taken by Argos at this time in history. Argos during the eighth century was, as previously stated, in one of the most prosperous times in her history. We see at this time the destruction of the rival *polis* Asine, and the beginning of Argive aggression in the Argolid (particularly as the destruction of Nauplia took place at approximately the same time). Whatever the origins of the sanctuary of Hera and whoever "owned" it before this point, it seems that this period sees Argos begin to become hostile towards her neighbours of Tiryns and Mycenae, and Argos may perhaps have taken over the sanctuary at this point and turned it to Argive purposes, as she moved more towards subjugation and unification of the cities of the plain.

It is noticeable that, of all the riches of which Pausanias spoke as he travelled through Argos, are almost without exception works which honour the mythological history of the heroes, myths and legends which glorified the city. He mentions only two temples dedicated to Hera within the city boundaries, but nothing nearly as rich or venerable as the Heraion. Archaeology thus far has failed to turn up any buildings or fortifications in Argos on the scale of those found at Mycenae and Tiryns; there is only one block remaining on the Larissa which is thought to have belonged to the temple of Hera. Although Iokovidis is dismissive of the contribution of the Argives to the Greek culture, he hits perhaps too close to home with his statement: "Argos could display nothing to compare with the edifices of Athens, Aegina and

Corinth...", [24] a list to which we may certainly add Mycenae. It may be conjectured that Argos may well have wished to compete with those sites and justify her claim to the sanctuary whilst showing off her wealth and associating the cult of Hera at the Heraion with a sense of history which it may not previously have possessed. In short, it is highly suggestive that in the execution of the temple terrace we see the Argives using a symbol of the Bronze Age past – the great Cyclopean masonry – and topping it with a temple which was ultra-modern in order to associate the present – in which Argos was clearly superior – with the past, as represented by the fortifications of Mycenae.

At this time, a second bridge from Mycenae to the Heraion was also constructed. This bridge, like the temple terrace, was built in the Cyclopean style and was believed to have been such; however, Blegen, in his excavation reports of 1939 made note that no deposits were found which dated any earlier than the eighth century. Therefore, he concluded that this bridge was built at the same time as the terrace. At the same time, we see the beginning of worship at Bronze Age tombs, within Argos, Mycenae, and the outlying tombs around the Heraion; additionally, a shrine was established along the main road which leads from Mycenae to the Heraion. This shrine is commonly identified as the Agamemnoneion, built to honour Agamemnon, and is viewed by most to be a direct show of opposition by the residents of Mycenae to the building taking place at the Heraion, as the Mycenaeans began to resent the encroachment on their territory and mythology. This may not be the case, as this viewpoint rests solely on the identification of the shrine as Agamemnon's. This identification is problematic and will be discussed below. In any case, the fact remains that at this time, coinciding with Argos' rise to power and the possible

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[24] Iokovidas (1978: 17).

spread of the Homeric epics; we see a steep rise of interest in the Bronze Age, including building styles and worship of Bronze Age heroes and figures. Whether or not Hera is one of these remains to be established, but it does appear that the building styles of the Heraion and the spread of these practices is no coincidence.

The location of the Heraion

The reason for the location of the Heraion is even more obscure than the reasons for building the temple terrace. The sanctuary is located far closer to Mycenae than it is to Argos, which gives the impression that the Heraion may not have always been under Argive control, as the ancients apparently thought. Although Morgan notes that there are several other sanctuaries which are "located in marginal areas and outside the direct control of any major power",[25] for example, Olympia, Delphi, Dodona and Delos, the Argive Heraion differs somewhat. Although it may have started as an interstate sanctuary as these did, the shrine becomes more and more Argos-oriented, and in later times nobody seems to have disputed the Argive claim to the "foundation" and strict control of the Heraion.[26] There are points which may exclude the Argive claim of original ownership of the sanctuary, and instead suggest that it was founded by the Mycenaeans. These points include, besides the location, the major road and bridge from Mycenae to the Heraion, the possibility that Hera was the major deity of the Mycenaeans and the other *poleis* of the Argolid long before the Argives claimed her for their patroness, leading to the foundation of the site. There are a variety of differing views on *why* the Heraion at the Heraion, and the subject remains open for debate.

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[25] Morgan (1990: 3).
[26] "Foundation" here refers to the implicit claim of ancient control represented by the "Bronze Age" terrace wall.

Polignac used the Heraion as one of his case studies for his work on sanctuaries in the Greek world.[27] In this, he saw the Heraion as having been Argive from the time of its foundation, and while he acknowledged that at some point it may have been open to all the cities of the Argolid plain, Argos remained the primary city associated with the site. Polignac argued that the reason the city chose the site was as a marker for its territory in the plain - "the point is that the sanctuary was often situated *right on the threshold to the territory*".[28] Thus, the Heraion served as a reminder of the power of Argos to the other cities in the plain – Polignac emphasises that the temple, being in an elevated position in the middle of the plain, would have been visible from most parts of the Argolid, and visible from Argos itself. Polignac recognises the fact that the Heraion was almost certainly a pan-Argolic site, but believes that Argos was always the foremost state involved in the "ritualized aristocratic tradition" - that is, that the maintenance of the Heraion had fallen to the Argives as they had been able to give the richest offerings and most lavish sacrifices of the cities of the plain. The riches of the sanctuary are attested to by Pausanias (2.17.3-7); in particular the cult statue of Hera, attributed to Polycleitus - τὸ δὲ ἄγαλμα τῆς Ἥρας ἐπὶ θρόνου κάθηται μεγέθει μέγα, χρυσοῦ μὲν καὶ ἐλέφαντος, Πολυκλείτου δὲ ἔργον; "The statue of Hera is sitting on a throne, it is very large, [and] of gold and ivory, a work of Polycleitus." (Paus. 2.17.4),[29] and the sanctuary also contained many other riches. From this sort of show of wealth came the refurbishment of the sanctuary, as Polignac agrees that the Argives were probably the people who accomplished this, and from there the Argives took complete control, probably from the time of the

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[27] Polignac (1984).
[28] Polignac (1984: 35; emphasis his).
[29] Polycleitus was an Argive, "pupil of the Argive Ageladas. Pheidias was assigned to the same master and there was a natural tendency to compare and contrast the two greatest sculptors of the Classical Period." Boardman (1985: 205).

destruction of Asine, which offered "both the opportunity and the means to turn the shared sanctuary into a symbol of their victory and now unchallenged supremacy".[30]

While Polignac is correct in that the sanctuary was probably common to the cities of the plain in its early time, the assumption that it was the property of the Argives from its inception is probably incorrect. During the Bronze Age, the population of Argos appears not to have expanded beyond the Inachus river. Archaeological evidence supports this: in the Bronze Age Argos was likely little more than a small village.[31] At the height of Argos' prosperity (c. 570 B.C.E.), Herodotus records that the male citizen population was approximately six thousand. This figure is, in all likelihood, at the high end of the spectrum for an Archaic *polis*. Basing estimates on a slightly lower population figure for the citizen population (Hall suggests four thousand), and adding in a corresponding figure for women, children, and slaves,[32] an estimate for the population of Argos at its height, at the time of the battle of Sepeia (c. 494 B.C.E.), was closer to ten thousand altogether.[33] Given that this was several centuries later, and that this was Argos at its height, it is unlikely that the city possessed the territory up to the Heraion in the eighth century B.C.E., and even more so that the sanctuary was founded in order to demonstrate this claim.

Rather than assuming that worship at the sanctuary began at the same time as the first building programme undertaken there, as Polignac does, it may be of use to examine the archaeological evidence. In the first place, the current Heraion was occupied by Prosymna (so called because of Pausanias' testimony that the lands

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[30] Polignac (1984: 53).
[31] Kelly (1976: 37)
[32] Further discussion on some of the "slaves" of Argos is presented in chapter four.
[33] Proposed and discussed in detail by Hall (1995).

around the Heraion were named after Hera's nurses [Paus. 2.17.2]); Prosymna itself was rich and densely populated. Blegen noted that the settlement occupied a large part of the area,[34] with houses which were small and closely set, indicating a fairly high population level, and suggested that "it hardly seems too bold a conjecture to hold that the cult of Hera is itself an heritage from this prehistoric settlement".[35] This is indeed a possibility – the settlement of Prosymna, despite its apparent abandonment and lack of population in the very late Bronze Age,[36] must have had some effect on her close neighbour, Mycenae. There is clear evidence of relationship between the two states. There was also a shrine on the acropolis of the former site of Prosymna, at which votives continued to be left despite the abandonment of Prosymna itself. It does not seem that far a leap of logic to suggest that Prosymna was one of the cities which worshipped Hera, if not the first, and that from this, Mycenae took hold of the deity and thereafter claimed Hera for her own, continuing to leave offerings at her shrine in the former city and holding the land sacred, until the time of the building of the temple terrace and the Archaic temple, at which time the sanctuary became an interstate one under the leadership of Argos, as the most powerful and wealthy of the Argolic settlements.

Morgan (1990) does not specifically address the importance of the origin of the cult at the Heraion besides observing the oddity that the temple terrace was specifically built it that style - "it was necessary to fake a Bronze Age platform when genuine remains were to be found throughout the Argolid emphasise the importance of the precise location".[37] She argues that the likelihood of the sanctuary becoming an

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[34] Blegen (1925: 416).
[35] Blegen (1925: 417).
[36] Kelly (1976: 36).
[37] Morgan (1990: 12).

interstate sanctuary at this point in time is suggested by the appearance of large monuments and major buildings (such as those which appeared in the second, sixth century, renovation of the site), and also points out that the existence of such sanctuaries was most probably in order for the states concerned to meet and exercise their rivalries without threat or interference,[38] or, possibly, as a show of unity for the communities which participated in the rituals and games of the sanctuary (as was the case for places such as Olympia). She nevertheless finds it unlikely that this was the case with the Argive Heraion. Morgan believes the reason for the Argive interference at the Heraion was "a propaganda attempt to legitimise a territorial claim and to reinforce Argive influence in the northern plain".[39] This view, in all probability, is correct. It fits with the apparent Argive *modus operandi* of the times before she became hostile enough to destroy Mycenae and Tiryns in a show of power. Kelly adds to the argument the point that Argos may have had a reason for investing so much in the sanctuary. Kelly argues that the sanctuary itself was possibly pan-Argive, but, like Polignac, assumes that the Argive building programme was the beginning of the cult worship at the site. To this end, he cautiously suggests that "...it may not... be going too far to suggest that the erection of this temple was part and parcel of a deliberate policy aimed at transforming Hera from a peculiarly local deity, the patroness of the city of Argos, into some sort of pan-Argive deity, the patroness of the entire Argive plain".[40] While the argument ignores the evidence that the worship of Hera was possibly not unique to the city of Argos in the eighth century B.C.E., Kelly does point out the fact that Argos may or may not have had a ulterior motive in glorifying Hera in a site which would become

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[38] Morgan (1990: 3).
[39] Morgan (1990: 12).
[40] Kelly (1976: 63)

so famous. Hera is known as Argos' protectress; and her cult is often seen to have spread from the epicentre of her worship – the Heraion.[41] The question of the importance and possible uniqueness of the Argive Heraion and the worship of Hera in the Argive plain – whether this religion was endemic to Argos or Mycenae - remains to be explored.

The cult and importance of Hera in the Argolid – Tiryns and Mycenae; The "Agamemnoneion" and possible other identifications for this shrine

The cult of Hera seems to have been dominant in the eastern side of the Argive plain from perhaps as early as the Late Bronze Age. In his excavations of the citadel of Mycenae, Schliemann brought to light hundreds of cow idols, which he associated with the worship of Hera on the citadel.[42] There may have been an early shrine at the side of the Argive Heraion, and there are signs of a major cult on the sites of the citadels of Tiryns and Mycenae. Each of these sites – Mycenae, Tiryns, and the Heraion – have signs of cult activity dating from the Late Bronze Age; however, no such early evidence has been found at Argos itself. It should perhaps be noted that as Argos has been continuously inhabited from the beginning of the Bronze Age, and that it is still densely populated in modern times, the likelihood of finding evidence of a Bronze Age cult or shrine within the city is somewhat unlikely.

The basis for the suggestion of a major cult at Tiryns is the discovery of two major deposits of material in the Late Helladic megaron within the citadel, and what is either a Late Geometric temple,[43] or a LHIIIc reconstruction of the earlier building on the same site. In addition, found on the site were an altar, in the former megaron;

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[41] Smith (1896)

[42] Schliemann (1880). Demakopoulou and Crouwel (1992) have descriptions of representations of cows on pottery at Prosymna, which may be related.

[43] Blegen (1920).

in the courtyard, found by Schliemann, was a large dump of pottery. This dump contained material dating from 750-650 B.C.E., which appear to be votives, dedicated to a female deity. The figures found in this correspond to votives which have been found at the Argive Heraion and Perachora.

The deity worshipped at this possible cultic centre is often believed to have been Athene. Hall argues that it is more probable that this deity was Hera.[44] Throughout Greek mythology and history, Tiryns and Hera appear to have been linked, for this was the city of Heracles, "the glory of Hera"; Heracles and Hera seem to have been the deities who were especially worshipped at Tiryns. For this reason, it makes sense that any shrine in the citadel of Tiryns would be in honour of one of these deities; however, the votives which have been found at the site suggest that they were dedicated to a female deity.

Mycenae's citadel was the centre of an eighth-century cult, with a temple being built over the palace in the seventh century. Wright associates this temple with the one which had earlier been built at Tiryns, arguing that the similarity in location – Tiryns' temple having been built in the megaron itself.[45] Mycenae's palace had been destroyed, leaving the megaron unable to be located, although the new temple was built in the same general area. The attempt to select specific Bronze Age sites for these temples suggests a link between the builders. The deity worshipped in Mycenae is also unidentified, but is often associated with Athena, based on an inscription found in the citadel. The inscription reads:

Φραℎιαρίδας ꞉ Μυ-

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[44] Hall (1995: 598).
[45] Wright (1982: 198)

κανέαθεν ꞉ παρ' Ἀ-
θαναίας ꞉ ἐς πόλιος
꞉ ἰκέτας ꞉ ἔγεντο ꞉
ἐπ' Ἀντία ꞉ καὶ Πυρ-
ϝία ꞉ εἶεν δὲ ꞉ Ἀντί-
ας ꞉ καὶ Κίθιος ꞉ καῖσ-
χρον.[46]

(*Inscriptiones Graecae* IV, 492)

This identification is dubious at best. Hall says: "the sanctuary... is normally assumed to be dedicated to Athena on the basis of a bronze plaque... in fact, the attribution is not at all certain: the meaning of the inscription is far from lucid, but it would appear that the subject of the dedication, a certain Phrahiaridas, has come not *to* but *from* a sanctuary of Athena."[47]

Although the inscription attributing the cult centre to Athena may be debated, there was discovered in the excavations of 1939, on the eastern side of the citadel and reused in later renovations of the fountainhouse in the Perseia spring, a boundary stone which declares itself to be the marker of the sanctuary of Hera. The exact location of this sanctuary has not yet been found, but it is entirely possible that the cult centre was not in honour of Athena, but instead Hera. Evidence for this may include the cow idols that Schliemann so enthusiastically identified with the worship of Hera, the boundary stone, votive offerings which appear to be dedicated to a female deity, and again, the *Iliad*, which explicitly states Mycenae to be one of the three cities beloved by Hera. Hall links the Heraion with the probable worship of

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[46] I have not offered a full translation here, as the meaning of the inscription is so telescoped as to be un-translateable. Roughly speaking, Phrahiaridas has come as a suppliant to[?] the sanctuary of Athena at Mycenae; Hall (2002b) argues that he is coming *from* the sanctuary of Athena and therefore the temple at Mycenae may be misattributed.

[47] Hall (2002b: 94). Hall's argument is original and the first suggestion of this possibility, so quoted in full here.

Hera in Mycenae and Tiryns, noting that, at this time, the Heraion could really only function in conjunction with these cults, and that the eastern Argolid appears to have been linked with the worship of Hera at this time.

In favour of the argument that the Heraion was part of an interstate cult of Hera is the road linking Mycenae to the Heraion. This road appears to have been in use from the Bronze Age, and is spanned in part by a Mycenaean bridge, beneath which have been excavated several deposits of pottery. The road from Mycenae to the Heraion has one shrine at each end, one of which is approximately a mile from Mycenae, and at the other end, a shrine c. seven hundred metres from the Heraion.

The shrine closer to the Heraion itself contains a great deal of votive material, spanning from the Geometric period to approximately the middle of the fifth century.[48] The greatest deposits are of Geometric pots and sherds, and there are also several metal pins, which have also been located in tombs around the Heraion and Prosymna. The offerings continue until the 560s, whereupon use of the Heraion shrine steeply declined, until it was abandoned within a generation. Two points about the shrine are almost universally agreed upon: firstly, that it was most likely a shrine to Hera, as observed by Blegen at the time of excavation.[49] Second, the abandoning of the shrine can really only be linked to the Argive destruction of Mycenae and Tiryns in the 560s, after which it fell out of use and was never revived.

The second shrine, closer to Mycenae, is commonly identified as "the Agamemnoneion" by excavators. This identification rests on the large amount of votives depicting horses and material which is inscribed as dedications to the cult of

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[48] Blegen (1945).
[49] Blegen (1945: 412).

Agamemnon.[50] This identification of this shrine is highly problematic, as it is based on the second of two phases of activity at the site.[51] The first phase, containing the dedications of horse figures, and material from Late Geometric times to the destruction of Mycenae, has no indications of who the shrine was dedicated to. There is a second cache of material, which dates from the resettlement of Mycenae in the Hellenistic period. The inscribed dedications which have been excavated so far all belong to the second period of activity at the shrine.

The identification of the "Agamemnoneion" as having always been a site of hero worship to a Homeric hero from the late eighth century based on evidence from a Hellenistic cult is deeply problematic. There is, as yet, little evidence that the Homeric epics were in wide circulation at this time. The dating of early hero cults, particularly those of Homeric epics, causes some discomfort, as they rest on the basis that the epics were prominent at the time of the establishment of these cults and later evidence.[52] Two of the primary examples – the Menalaion of Sparta and the Cave of Odysseus on Ithaca – suffer from similar problems of identification. The Menelaion may have previously been a shrine to Helen, perhaps, in earlier times, a Laconian tree deity - in fact, Antonaccio suggests that the origin of hero cult lies in Lacedaemon,[53] with dedications to Helen before Menelaos; the early offerings in the Cave of Odysseus are not to Odysseus at all, but to the Muses and Athena. The

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[50] Cook (1953: 33).

[51] Cook (1953: 33) describes the offerings as "inscribed vases of the fourth century." He also notes a difficulty with the identification of the shrine as Agamemnon's, commenting: "An independent cult of a hero a bare kilometre away from his known tomb is hardly to be contemplated, and the cult by the causeway therefore implies the absence in Hellenic times of any local tradition of the position of Agamemnon's tomb."

[52] Hall (2002b: 96) argues that the emergence of tomb cult in the Argolid is "a conscious attempt… to forge a link with distant (and almost fictive) ancestors for the purposes of legitimating territorial… and socio-political claims." Hall also suggests in this article that the location of the Heraion is linked to an older cult of Hera, possibly going back to the Bronze Age.

[53] Antonaccio (1993: 410)

earliest epigraphical evidence for the worship of Homeric heroes appears in Lacedaemon, linking its shrines to their respective heroes; this is not found anywhere else in the Archaic period.[54]

Based on these problems with securely identifying the "Agamemnoneion" as the site of eighth century Homeric hero cults, Hall suggests that the "Agamemnoneion" may have originally been the site of a shrine to Hera. In this theory, Hall argues that the road from Mycenae to the Heraion may have functioned as a "sacred way" to the shrine. This is an attractive solution, not least because it connects the Heraion, shrines, and possible worship of Hera in Mycenae, as well as giving an explanation for the location of the Heraion. This theory also offers a good reason as to why there is no archaeological evidence for the famous "sacred procession" from Argos in the time of the eighth century, despite the assumed age of the ritual narrated by Herodotus. The first evidence of a road from Argos to the Heraion appears in the sixth century, well after the supposed time of Herotodus' story, and during the time in which Argos was becoming more and more aggressive towards other states in the Argolid.

The cult of Hera, while apparently well represented by the Heraion, and possible temples in Mycenae and Tiryns, does not have any securely archaeologically identifiable shrines in Argos itself, which "seems to have been noticeably lacking in heroic monuments".[55] As the major centres of Hera's worship do seem to be relegated to the eastern side of the Argive plain, the fact that Argos was impoverished during the Late Bronze Age and that the important Argive graves

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[54] Antonaccio (1994: 398-399).
[55] Wright (1982: 199).

appear to have been located in Prosymna rather than closer to Argos itself, it is unlikely that the city at this time could present anything to compare to the worship of Hera which was going on in the other city states at this time. It is therefore suggested that the worship of Hera began to be incorporated into Argos at the time that Argos was growing in power,[56] and at approximately the same time as the building of the temple terrace and the beginning of aggression towards her neighbours, but possibly not beforehand.

Another Argive deity of the eighth century B.C.E.

The chapter has thus far argued the case for the Argive appropriation of the sanctuary of the Heraion. There is at least one parallel for this suggestion: the adoption of the cult of Apollo Pythaeus at Argos. Previously, this cult had been associated with the city of Asine – in the foundation myth of the city, Heracles brought the Dryopes to Delphi to dedicate them to Apollo; Apollo decreed that they be resettled in the Argolid and given the name "Asinians". Asine was destroyed by the Argives in the late seventh century.[57] Pausanias makes note that only the temple of Apollo Pythaeus was spared from the destruction, as the altar and temenos had been founded by the Argive seer Melampus, and a leader of the Argive force was buried beside its walls. Barrett believes that this refers to the Asinian temple,[58] which had been left standing and was in a common territory between Argos and Epidaurus, rather than the Argive temple itself.

It is possible that the temple was destroyed, but rebuilt by the Argives at a later stage, if Thucydides' comment is to be accepted as a testament that there was a

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[56] O'Brien (1990: 110) sees a link between the votives left at the Heraion and those left at "Argive hero tombs"; she extrapolates from this that "[Hera] would have been protector of Argive heroes."
[57] Dickinson (2006: 154).
[58] Barrett (1954: 429).

temple of Apollo Pythaeus that was common to both Argos and Epidaurus.[59] Hall

argues that "Building B on the summit of the Barbouna Hill" in Asine is to be

identified as the temple of Apollo Pythaeus;[60] there is then an identifiable point of

destruction in the Late Geometric period, pinpointed to 720-710 B.C.E. This is at the

same time as the destruction in the rest of the city. Hall further notes that "Building

B is almost immediately succeeded by the rectangular Building A, where associated

material suggests a period of use from the very end of the Late Geometric or

Subgeometric (ca. 710-690 B.C.E.) through to the fifth century, so there may have

been some continuity of cult practice if not of architectural installation.".[61] This is

the preferred line of argument, as those who argue for the continuation of the temple

do not seem to recognise that there were two buildings on the same site.

At the same time as the destruction of Asine, we appear to see the beginning of the

cult to Apollo Deirodiotes in the Deiras ridge of Argos, and the beginning of the

worship to Apollo Pythaeus. The Argives claimed that the cult was founded in their

city because Pythaeus, son of Apollo, visited Argos first of all places in Greece

(Paus. 2.35.2). Kadletz reads this as a memory of the cult having first come from

Delphi,[62] but believes that the Argives spread the cult to Asine in "the period of the

dominance of the Dorian settlers from Argos". Barrett takes this less literally,[63] and

suggests that the Argive claim cannot be considered as evidence. Pythaeus is not

known from any other source, and as Argos "had physical control of the cult at

Asine, nothing is more natural that she should have sort to invent a de jure basis for

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[59] Thucydides 5.53; discussed in more detail on p.33 of this thesis.
[60] Hall (1995: 581).
[61] Hall (1995: 581).
[62] Kadletz (1978: 100).
[63] Barrett (1954: 439).

that control." In addition to this, Barrett suspects an Argive interpolation in the foundation myth of Asine, which states that Heracles captured the Dryopes because they were impious brigands.

Cities allied to Argos through an "Amphictyonia" - Cleonae, Phlius, Sicyon, Epidaurus, Troezen, Hermione and Aegina - also begin establishing shrines to Apollo Pythaeus at this time. Smith (1857: 203) states that the Amphictyonia was "ostensibly founded for religious purposes, though it in reality gave Argos a political ascendency...". The Argives would later use the cult of Apollo Pythaeus as a pretext for military action.[64] Thucydides, in his narrative of the campaigns in the Peloponnese, notes that war broke out during 419 B.C.E. between Epidaurus and Argos on religious grounds:

> **προφάσει** μὲν περὶ τοῦ θύματος τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος τοῦ Πυθαέως, ὃ δέον ἀπαγαγεῖν οὐκ ἀπέπεμπον ὑπὲρ βοταμίων Ἐπιδαύριοι (κυριώτατοι δὲ τοῦ ἱεροῦ ἦσαν Ἀργεῖοι)· ἐδόκει δὲ **καὶ ἄνευ τῆς αἰτίας** τὴν Ἐπίδαυρον τῷ τε Ἀλκιβιάδῃ καὶ τοῖς Ἀργείοις προσλαβεῖν, ἢν δύνωνται, τῆς τε Κορίνθου ἕνεκα ἡσυχίας καὶ ἐκ τῆς Αἰγίνης βραχυτέραν ἔσεσθαι τὴν βοήθειαν ἢ Σκύλλαιον περιπλεῖν τοῖς Ἀθηναίοις. (Thuc. 5.53; emphasis mine).

> **The pretence** was that the sacrifice owed to Apollo Pythaeus had not been sent for the grazing lands of Epidaurus (the Argives having the most authority over the temple), and **apart from this complaint,** Alcibiades and the Argives had decided to take Epidaurus, if possible, for the sake of keeping Corinth quiet, and so that the Athenian reinforcements from Aegina would have a shorter way than sailing around Scyllaeum.

The pretence offered here – that the Epidaurians had erred in regards to their

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[64] Figueira (1983: 10) notes that there was a possibility that Epidaurus belonged to the cult of Apollo Pythaeus, "by which Argos expressed her hegemony over her immediate neighbours."

religious duties, which were being administered by the Argives – shows a similarity to one of the reasons given for the earlier destruction of Mycenae.

Argos, upon the annexing of Asine, adopted the god of the city as a symbol of their dominance. The destruction of an important part of a conquered city, followed by Argive restoration, would later be repeated in the Argive sack of Mycenae, where the walls were thrown down in parts by the Argive invaders, and later rebuilt in the polygonal style as the walls of Mycenae were considered sacred to Hera. It is suggested that Hera may have been worshipped by the inhabitants of Argos in the Bronze Age, possibly at the site of the Argive Heraion, but that as Mycenae waned in power and Argos grew, Argos later annexed the common sanctuary of the Heraion, rebuilt it in the style of the Mycenaeans, and declared that Hera was Ἥρη τ' Ἀργείη. The possible attempt of the Mycenaeans to reclaim the sanctuary of Hera may have had grounds, as the site was once more closely associated with their history than the history of the Argives.

Conclusion

The history of the site of the Heraion is one that is somewhat unclear. The lack of knowledge is due, in part, to deliberate obfuscation of the origins of the sanctuary. This confusion was deliberately cultivated by the Argives; they not only claimed the sanctuary, but built successive layers on the site, the most notable of which is the Cyclopean temple terrace. The choice of location implies an origin link of the cult and sanctuary to Mycenae.

Originally either Mycenaean or a shared space within the Argolid, the sanctuary was gradually encroached upon by the Argives, who were searching for ways in which to

strengthen their own claims to the Argolid. Their control of the temple of Hera – as well as the religion – was a major step, and possibly one of the first signs of antagonistic behaviour on the part of Argos towards other settlements in the plain.

Chapter Two: Argos and Mycenae in the *Iliad*

The Homeric epics are naturally of importance to this thesis. This is particularly true of the *Iliad*, as it is supposed to revolve around legends of Mycenae, with Argos in a supporting role. A closer reading, placed into a socio-political context at different points in the history of the text, suggests that the roles were reversed at some point. This chapter examines, in detail, the chronological history of the Homeric epics. In particular, the textual tradition will be tested at different points to investigate claims of Athenian interference with the text of the epics. The focus in this chapter is specifically the *Iliad.* This chapter argues that the songs show more evidence of Argive interference. This interference was made in order to manipulate a Mycenaean legend to match the political landscape of the Archaic and Classical periods.

In order to avoid the scholarly pit of despair that is the history of the Homeric texts, a definitive stance on the history of the *Iliad* is taken. The grounding of the history that follows is based on the hypothesis that the Homeric texts are the product of centuries of oral tradition which circulated in a form which was not entirely fixed.[65] During this stage, the texts were naturally prone to variations and interpolations. These variants generally served the purpose of expressing a certain link between the tales of Troy for the area they were circulated in. Studies of these variants, in conjunction with the surviving texts, suggest that the traditions of the Argolid played a large part in its transmission. After the epics were disseminated throughout the

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[65] For further information and extended discussion and arguments, see: Hall (1997; 2002a); Nagy (1979; 1996; 2010); Burgess (2001; 2009); Chadwick (1990); Morris (1980). *contra* West (2001; 2011); Young (2003); Bolling (1968); Dalby (2006). This is an extremely selective bibliography.

Greek world, the text began to accumulate a certain amount of authority and respect in the ancient world. After their importance became central to the Greeks, the Peisistratean recension in Athens caused the epics to take on a more fixed form. An examination of the evidence suggests that the political ties of Athens to Argos in this period led to a heavy Argive emphasis within the Attic texts. This process did not entirely destroy the variant local texts, which survived to the Alexandrian period. The final stage in the development of the Homeric texts is presented as a scholarly recension of the texts which were still in existence at approximately 200 B.C.E. These texts were combined in order to create the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* that are extant today. Through this study, the influence of the Argive traditions and variants will be demonstrated.[66]

The Early Stages of the *Iliad* (c. 800 – 650 B.C.E.)

The exact date of the composition of the *Iliad* itself may never be known, for the simple fact that there is no fixed date for the creation of the text as we have it. Rather than formulating a rigid argument of a Homer writing down his poems in the year 700 B.C.E., for example, we ought to be thinking of a gradual process; one spanning centuries. Following consideration of the different sources of evidence, the suggestion can be made that our *Iliad* was heavily influenced by Argolic traditions in the course of its transmission. It must be stressed here that this comment refers specifically to *our Iliad*, as there were several different versions of this epic in antiquity; these are attested to and several variant readings are passed down to us in the *scholia*, which will be discussed later in the chapter. Through comparison of

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[66] The argument of this thesis follows a particular line of argument that is made by some Oralists. For more complete discussions and summaries of the views taken in different schools of thought regarding the Homeric texts, see the works of: Nagy (Oralism); West (Analysm); Burgess (Neoanalysm); Seaford (Unitarian). These are some of the more recent and prominent scholars in each school, and they offer valid summaries of their views and further bibliography.

artistic evidence and later testimonies, the political uses of the *Iliad* are demonstrated. In particular, the ways in which Athens used the text to its advantage are detailed, as there is the most evidence for this in the ancient sources.

The age of the Homeric texts is difficult to determine, but there are internal factors within the texts which suggests that the poems were already of a considerable age when first written down. The primary argument revolves around the fact that the texts show strong evidence of oral composition, suggesting that they were composed from a longstanding oral tradition which was formed into the epics over a long time. This is demonstrated by the presence of epic metre, ring composition, and other features which aid recollection. Within the text itself, there is evidence that the digamma had been used in early versions of the tradition.[67] Although this letter later dropped out of common usage in epic, the use of it suggests that the traditions were already well circulated by the time of the sixth century, predating the discontinuation of the digamma from contemporary Ionic.[68]

Therefore, there was plenty of time and scope for local variants and different traditions surrounding the Trojan War to spring up. The attested differences range from a different character winning the horse race in Patroclus' funeral games in the *Iliad* – which is won by Diomedes in the surviving version,[69] but by several other characters in early artistic representations.[70] Some of these variants do not appear to portray Diomedes as competing at all.[71] Some variants contain so large a departure

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[67] The bibliography regarding the loss of the digamma is extensive; for a particular example of how it worked, see Nagy (2004: 125).
[68] The digamma dropped out of usage in the Ionic dialects by the sixth century, as it is not used in any Ionian inscriptions.
[69] *Il.* 23.358-565.
[70] Young (2003 :35); Burgess (2001 :81).
[71] There are distinct hints within the text that the poet knew of variants which had alternative winners

from our texts as having Telemachus go to Crete in the *Odyssey*, instead of travelling to Sparta, which he does in our version.[72] The recognition of these variants as local traditions revolving around the same theme is the only way to satisfactorily account for their existence; simply putting them down to eccentricities in the text or artistic licence does not consider the fact that not all *poleis* knew the same "Homer" – which will be discussed in depth later in the chapter.

As no text survives from the Geometric period, artwork is the most relevant resource available for dating when the Homeric epics began to gain in importance, influence, and circulation throughout the Greek mainland. Identifiable elements of mythology related to Homer begin appearing in the eighth century; although no character is explicitly identifiable, scenes of warriors in battle, the blinding of a Cyclops, and trace elements of other myths begin to appear in the artistic record. These are, however, only scenes from the Epic Cycle; there are no early *Iliad* or *Odyssey* scenes. Although other artworks have survived which possibly represent scenes from the Epic Cycle, these identifications are still debated. As the figures in these artworks are in no way clearly linked to anything but the most generic of Homeric scenes, they shall be left aside from this discussion.

Starting, therefore, from a point at which the figures and scenes are definitely inspired by the narrative of the Trojan War, the first scene, according to Snodgrass, is a "Cyclic" scene.[73] It is on a bronze seal from the Heraion of Samos, and portrays a warrior lifting the body of his comrade, who is significantly larger than he is. This

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of the horse race. In the *Iliad*, Diomedes is sabotaged by Apollo (23.382-400), but Athena comes to his aid at the last minute. Not only does she help Diomedes to the front of the race, she also overturns his nearest competitor, Eumelus. (23.391-400). Despite the fact that Eumelus comes in last, Achilles still proposes that he be considered as the second place winner (23.532-538).

[72] For further discussion on these variants, see Reece (1994).

[73] Snodgrass (1998: 36-38).

is striking in its similarity to later artistic renderings of Ajax retrieving the body of Achilles from the battlefield; a scene which took place in the *Aethiopis*.[74] It is difficult to disagree with Snodgrass' conclusion that the creator of the seal had in mind this specific episode. Agreement with this argument means accepting that the traditions which it depicts were in place as early as the eighth century. After this date, the number of artworks depicting Cyclic scenes increases rapidly, suggesting further circulation of the source material.

Friis Johansen identified a regional knowledge of the epics, and also a specifically regional interest in these epics.[75] He conducted a study on the number of images produced by each *polis*. He noted that the cultures which seem to have the greatest interest in the Trojan scenes were (based on number of appearances) firstly Athens (presumably due perhaps to the abundance of surviving material, especially when compared to the amount of extant artwork of other *poleis*). Following Athens in surviving representations were Corinth and Argos. The identifiable Trojan scenes in these centres date from the beginning of the seventh century.[76] The depictions of specific Iliadic motifs, however, do not begin to appear in the North-East Peloponnese until the end of the seventh century. To Friis Johansen, the primary example is that of the Rhodian 'Euphorbus Plate', which is addressed in detail

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[74] Snodgrass gives several examples of later artwork which are securely identified as representing this scene. In all, the figure of Achilles is in the same proportion to that of Ajax, as is given in the seal from the Samian Heraion. This is seen best in a comparison between the seal and the portrayal of Ajax and Achilles from the François Vase. For the retrieval of Achilles' body, see Proclus' summary of the *Aethiopis* (Proclus, *Chrestomathia*; West 2003).

[75] Friis Johansen (1967).

[76] The earlier of Friis Johansen's two "identified" Trojan scenes from the Argolid, is questionable. The scene which is linked to Homer is the fragment of a *krater* from Argos that portrays the blinding of Polyphemous. The other, a bronze relief from the Heraion which is claimed to show the killing of Cassandra, is not as secure. This relief does indeed show what appears to be one woman killing another, but there are no clear signs to indicate that the figures shown are Cassandra and Clytaemestra. The suggestion that they are the two Homeric figures goes back as far as Blegen, who excavated the Heraion (Blegen: 1937), but this remains a suggestion.

below. Otherwise, two of the particularly identifiable references to the *Iliad* are a votive plaque from Pente Skouphia and a bronze relief from Olympia.[77] The Pente Skouphia plaque depicts Diomedes and Athena during his *aristeia* of book five; this dates from the seventh century.[78] The bronze relief was found in Olympia as a dedication from Argos. This also shows Diomedes and Athena – apparently a popular subject for Peloponnesian artists. Friis Johansen concludes that the popularity of Diomedes "gives us a welcome confirmation that... at the middle of the sixth century, North-East Peloponnesian artists were quite familiar with this episode [the *aristeia*] from the *Iliad*."

There is an apparent link between North-Eastern Peloponnesian artists and the episodes they chose to portray: in Friis Johansen's selections of primary examples, both are of Diomedes, the leader of the Argives (*Il.* 2.567), who is favourably portrayed within the *Iliad*, and his patron goddess, Athena.[79] It cannot be proven conclusively that the apparent importance of this episode was shared outside the Peloponnese.[80] When it came to representing themselves in a Panhellenic shrine, the Argives selected the scenes of Diomedes and his patron goddess as their

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[77] Modern Pitsa, near Corinth.

[78] Burgess (2001) argues that there is little artistic representation of the *Iliad* prior to the late seventh century. He argues that examples which are earlier than this are portraying Cyclic episodes, rather than specifically *Iliad*ic ones.

[79] There are a multitude of instances where Athena is shown to be friendly towards Diomedes. The best (and most detailed) example of this is book five of the *Iliad*, where she endows Diomedes with the ability to discern gods in battle, urges him on, and ultimately acts as his charioteer. She also interferes in book 23, where he is in danger of losing the horse race due to Apollo's anger with him (*Il.* 23.382-400).

[80] The focus on Diomedes in surviving Peloponnesian material is remarkable, considering he plays only a supporting role in the Homeric epics. Burgess (2001: 83) suggests that many of the number of portrayals of Diomedes do not represent explicit variation from the *Iliad*, but are instead representations of non-Homeric episodes (i.e. Cyclic material, or episodes from the Thebaid). This is in part a difficult claim to defend; several of the variations in Late Archaic artwork are known episodes from the *Iliad*. This includes a presentation of Diomedes as taking part in the embassy to Achilles (suggesting a variant in which Diomedes is more prominent), and the previously mentioned cup which is inscribed with "the games for Patroclus" and has Diomedes coming third (suggesting another variant in which he was less prominent, or perhaps another in which some other local hero was given the first place). Burgess' argument underestimates the character of Diomedes in myth – in and of himself, he plays a very complicated part (cf Malkin 1998).

representation. Although knowledge of this scene may have appeared outside the Peloponnese, as it does appear in our *Iliad* today, this does not mean that the Argives used only known scenes to represent themselves abroad in their artwork. On the contrary, there is artistic evidence that they either changed the tradition of the *Iliad* to suit themselves – in both major and very minor ways – or that they held fast to their own variant which was created by them in order to portray themselves in a favourable light.

One such variant is depicted by the "Euphorbus plate" from Rhodes.The Euphorbus Plate (Figure 1) is dated from 630-610 B.C.E. It depicts a battle between two combatants – clearly identified by inscriptions as Menelaos and Hektor – fighting over the body of a fallen warrior, Euphorbos. The Trojan Euphorbos is not an important character in the *Iliad*: his sole achievement is to stab Patroklos immediately before his death at the hands of Hektor (and Apollo). Euphorbos retreats and is killed by Menelaos. Here, the poet states:

> ἔνθά κε ῥεῖα φέροι κλυτὰ τεύχεα Πανθοΐδαο
> Ἀτρεΐδης, εἰ μή οἱ ἀγάσσατο Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων,
> ὅς ῥά οἱ Ἕκτορ' ἐπῶρσε θοῷ ἀτάλαντον Ἄρηϊ
> ἀνέρι εἰσάμενος Κικόνων ἡγήτορι Μέντῃ

> Then Atreus' son easily would have carried off the armour of Panthous'
> son, if Phoebus Apollo had not borne a grudge, so that straightaway, with
> the appearance of a man, Mentes, leader of the Cicones, he roused up
> Hector, equal of swift Ares (*Iliad* 17.70-74).

Hector comes forward to attack Menelaus, who is forced into retreat. (*Il.* 82-110).[81]

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[81] It is specified at 17.113-114 that the body Menelaus frets about leaving is that of Patroclus; Euphorbus' body, although unspoiled, is forgotten as Patroclus' is now in danger of being lost to the

The Euphorbus Plate appears to depict a version at odds with that of the *Iliad*. This plate is unique in not only the execution, but also for the variant of the story which it portrays. In the *Iliad* as we have it, Menelaus is forced to retreat away from the body of Euphorbus by Hector. The suggested outcome of the duel as given on the plate suggests a completely difference outcome. Menelaus assumes the traditional pose of the eventual winner, striding forward over the body, as Hector is forced back. In addition, the shield devices of Menelaus and Euphorbus reflect each other; this is a common artistic technique of the period, used to show the eventual winner of a duel. The outcome here is clear: Menelaus will gain the arms of Euphorbus. This variant from the extant text is remarkable in itself;[82] there is further evidence to suggest that this portrayal is affected by neither an "eccentric" text, nor artistic licence or forgetfulness on the part of the painter.[83]

Trojans as a trophy.

[83] Johansen (1967: 227); "eccentric texts" is West's term (2001:33 *passim*).

Figure 1: The Euphorbus Plate, from Burgess (2001: 79)

The Euphorbus plate was found on Rhodes, and the clay and techniques used in its

creation prove that Rhodes was the origin of the plate.[84] It shows strong Corinthian

influences in the execution of the artwork; in particular, Hector's shield device has

parallels in Corinthian vase painting. In addition to the Peloponnesian artistic

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[84] Rhodes did have close connections to the Argolid in the Bronze Age, and there are signs that some of the population of the Argolid may have settled there shortly after the destruction of Mycenae (Mee 1982). In later times, Rhodes claimed to be a colony of Argos. In the fourth century, an inscription was set up in Rhodes reaffirming that "the Rhodians are kinsfolk of the Argives."

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influence, it should also be considered that the depiction of men battling and inscriptions are unknown in other Rhodian artworks of this time. The alphabet used is even more unusual: it is Argive, as shown by the unique Argive form of the lambda. The Peloponnesian artistic style, together with the alphabetical evidence, shows that the artist is unmistakably portraying a pro-Argive variant of the Iliadic passage.

As late as the time of Pausanias, there was a shield displayed in the Argive Heraion which was claimed to be the shield of Euphorbus. This was said to be dedicated by Menelaus to Hera upon his return from Troy.[85] This is incompatible with the text as we have it, but it is an apparent physical manifestation of the variant which is given by the Euphorbus plate. It was also part of a well-established tradition by the time of Pausanias; Pythagoras,[86] upon seeing the shield in the Heraion, was to said to have claimed to have been Euphorbus in a past life.[87]

When taken in conjunction with the tradition of Menelaus gaining the shield of Euphorbus (perpetuated by the Argives for centuries after the *Iliad* itself became fixed in writing and in an edited text), it is clear that the Euphorbos plate, with its Peloponnesian artistic influences and Argive alphabet and traditions, is showing a North-Eastern   Peloponnesian "local" tradition of the myth, which only receives a cursory treatment in the *Iliad*

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[85] Pausanias 2.17.4: ...ἐν δεξιᾷ δὲ κλίνη τῆς Ἥρας καὶ ἀνάθημα ἀσπὶς ἦν Μενέλαός ποτε ἀφείλετο Εὔφορβον ἐν Ἰλίῳ. "... on the right is a couch of Hera and a votive offering: a shield that Menelaus won from Euphorbus, at Troy."

[86] Pythagoras was active c. 500 B.C.E.

[87] Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 15.160-164: *ipse ego (nam memini) Troiani tempore belli/ Panthoides Euphorbus eram, cui pectore quondam/ haesit in adverso gravis hasta minoris Atridae;/ cognovi clipeum, laevae gestamina nostrae,/ nuper Abanteis templo Iunonis in Argis!* "I myself [Pythagoras] (for I remembered) the time of the Trojan War/ I was Panthous' son, Euphorbus, whose breast/ was once struck by the heavy spear of Menelaos/ I recognised the shield I wore on my left arm/ recently, in the temple of Juno in Argos, Abas' city!"; see also Diogenes Laertius *Life of Pythagoras* 8.4.

today. This is important as it illustrates the fact that there was a strong Peloponnesian early tradition of the *Iliad*, which the Argives used as a basis for traditions. Although this variant did not survive in the final text of the *Iliad*, they emphasised it nonetheless.

During the Archaic Age, evidence of the circulation of the *Iliad* and Odyssey is more frequent around the Peloponnese and the rest of Greece. It is at this point that evidence begins to emerge of a more unified tradition. With the unified tradition comes manipulation of the text(s) in order to give more political power to the *polis* with the most established tradition. It is at this point in time that suggestions of Argive manipulation begin to emerge, along with testimony of Athenian interference in the transmission of the texts.

One of the earliest accounts of Homer and the glory which individual Greeks (or a Greek *polis*) could derive from his attention is found in Herodotus 5.67, with regard to the actions of Cleisthenes of Sicyon:

> Ταῦτα δέ, δοκέειν ἐμοί, ἐμιμέετο ὁ Κλεισθένης οὗτος τὸν ἑαυτοῦ μητροπάτορα Κλεισθένεα τὸν Σικυῶνος τύραννον. Κλεισθένης γὰρ Ἀργείοισι πολεμήσας τοῦτο μὲν ῥαψῳδοὺς ἔπαυσε ἐν Σικυῶνι ἀγωνίζεσθαι τῶν Ὁμηρείων ἐπέων εἵνεκα, ὅτι Ἀργεῖοί τε καὶ Ἄργος τὰ πολλὰ πάντα ὑμνέαται... (Herodotus 5.67).

> It seems to me that Cleisthenes, in this, was copying his grandfather Kleisthenes, who was the tyrant of Sicyon. For that Cleisthenes was at war with Argos, *and* he stopped the competition of the rhapsodists in reciting the songs of Homer, because of the way in which Argos and the Argives *were glorified* above all others...

There has been some confusion between scholars as to what, precisely, τῶν Ὁμηρείων ἐπέων should be taken as referring. This is primarily due to the habits of

the ancients to ascribe poems (particularly epics, but not only: one needs only refer to the Homeric Hymns) to Homer himself.[88] In this tendency, demonstrated as early as the sixth century,[89] it is clear that Homer was already the poet *par excellence*, with Hesiod in second place.[90]

The question as to what Herodotus is referring to here should be addressed, as this suggests that Homer was already closely linked with Argos. It has been suggested that we are to understand that here is a reference to not the Trojan Cycle, which may be the first "poems of Homer" to spring to the mind of a modern reader, but instead a reference to the Theban Cycle, which detailed the story of the Seven Against Thebes and the successful siege of Thebes by their sons, the Epigoni. This was indeed ascribed to Homer by some ancient authors.[91]

Those who suspect that Herodotus is here referring to the *Thebaid* tend to base the argument on the fact that the first line of the *Thebaid* survives, and reads as:

Ἄργος ἄειδε, θεά, πολυδίψιον, ἔνθεν ἄνακτες[92]

Sing, goddess, of very thirsty Argos, from where the lords... [93]

As the two Homeric poems both declare their subject in the very first word of the first line - Μῆνιν (wrath) in the *Iliad*; Ἄνδρα for the *Odyssey*, it is unlikely that the

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[88] West (2001: 181) links the mention of Adrastos at *Il.* 2.572 to Sicyon, arguing that this is an interpolation. West dates this interpolation to the time of Cleisthenes, and when the Delphic oracle proclaimed that Adrastus had been a Sicyonian, not an Argive.

[89] Cleisthenes of Sicyon is likely to be dated to the early- or mid-sixth century, though the dating is imprecise. This is partially because of the fact that he is dated after Pheidon (due to a reference in Herodotus regarding Kleisthenes and one of Pheidon's sons), who is himself extremely difficult to place.

[90] The importance of Homer and song was the fact that this was one of the primary ways a city could become prominent in the Greek world. Athanassaki 2011: 293 makes the connection between Pindar's *Eighth Olympian* and the importance of such a poem to the Aeginetans: "the monuments that offered [Pindar] both the stimulus and support for his claims were immobile, but… his song could be a passenger on any ship to any destination."

[91] e.g. Pausanias 9.9.5; *Certamen Homeri et Hesiodi* 324.

[92] F2 West; *Certamen Homeri et Hesiodi* 15.

[93] Translation West (2003).

Thebaid would have broken this pattern. The *Thebaid*, then, takes Argos as the subject.[94] This would fit the criteria for "glorifying" Argos.

Internal evidence offered by Herodotus himself suggests that his usual understanding of the "Homeric poems" consisted of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.[95] Herodotus does not follow the convention concerning poems where the author was unknown, suggested by himself when he discusses the *Cypria* at length (Hdt 2.117). Furthermore, his only comment on a poem contained within Theban Cycle occurs at 4.33, where he comments:

> Ἀλλ' Ἡσιόδῳ μέν ἐστι περὶ Ὑπερβορέων εἰρημένα, ἔστι δὲ καὶ Ὁμήρῳ ἐν Ἐπιγόνοισι, **εἰ** δὴ τῷ ἐόντι γε Ὅμηρος ταῦτα τὰ ἔπεα ἐποίησε.

> Another mention of the Hyperboreans is in Hesiod, and also in Homer's Epigonoi, **if indeed** that poem is by Homer. (emphasis mine)

It has generally been accepted that Herodotus here must be referring to the epics of the Theban Cycle, which were ascribed to Homer is antiquity. While there can be little doubt that the Theban cycle did indeed highlight Argos, as one of the combatant *poleis* in the story, there is also room for debate. There are suggestions which could hint that the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were the poems that Cleisthenes banned.

There are several points that suggest this is the case; firstly, that directly following this mention of the "poems of Homer", Herodotus plunges into a description of Cleisthenes' move against Adrastus, king of Argos, and the leader of the Seven. According to Herodotus, Cleisthenes replaced the cult of Adrastus with the cult of

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[94] West (2003: 6) suggests that the implication here is that the war is seen from the Argive viewpoint, rather than the Theban.
[95] Friis Johansen (1967: 233) disagrees with the idea that the epics mentioned by Herodotus belong to the Theban cycle, and identifies the epics as the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.

Melanippus of Thebes, who was his deadliest enemy (5.68). This is a particular insult, as Melanippus was responsible for the death of Adrastus' son.

To add to the argument that this reference concerns the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* is the comment that Kleisthenes had banned "rhapsodic competitions".[96] By the time of Herodotus, the Panatheniac reforms, designed by Peisistratus, had established contests during which rhapsodes would recite the *Iliad* (detailed further on in this chapter). The implication Herodotus makes here is that Cleisthenes deliberately banned the poems which Herodotus knew of as agonistic poems.[97]

In order to establish whether or not the Homeric epics are the works referenced by Herodotus, it is necessary to establish whether there is any evidence in our text of Homer that could be considered to be glorifying Argos. There are three primary points which can be considered: the role of Diomedes, the Argive king; the ethnonyms given to the Greeks; and finally, what links, if any, Argos claimed to have with Homer.

Diomedes, as previously mentioned within this chapter, was one of the most prominent of the warriors at Troy. This role may have been artificially inflated within the *Iliad*. But it cannot be denied that Diomedes was a prominent character in myth beyond Homer. He was one of the Epigonoi, the heroes who sacked Thebes

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[96] Irwin (2011: 409) suggests that the actions of Cleisthenes are introduced at this point in the *Histories* in order to provide an parallel for the actions of his grandson, the Athenian Cleisthenes. Cleisthenes of Sicyon reacts strongly against probable Argive incursions into Sicyon's territories, by appropriating Argos' hero Adrastus. Irwin's argument is that Cleisthenes is doing the same to the Aeginetans by appropriating Aias and his genealogy at Athens – "…the inception of the Aiakeion had in its origins war with Aegina". Following these examples, it should be suggested that Argos was working along the same lines with regard to Mycenae and the adapting of Mycenaean heroes from the Trojan saga.

[97] Nagy (1996: 38): "… the earliest attested references to *Homeros* attribute to him, not only the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, but also the so-called Cycle… in fact, the very concept of *kuklos*… seems from the ancient pre-Aristotelian tradition of applying the metaphor of cycle to the sum total of epic poetry, as if all of it were composed by Homer. By the time of Aristotle, however, the epics of the Cycle are conventionally assigned to different authors [Arist. *Poetics*, 23.1459 b1-7]."

after their fathers failed to do so. Strictly within the *Iliad*, however, Diomedes is presented as the paradigm of the perfect young warrior. In many ways, he is employed to fill the role of Achilles while he is unavailable, but proves himself even better. In contrast to Achilles, Diomedes is respectful of his elders in addition to being one of the best fighters. Diomedes' *aristeia* is one of the high points of the epic, and, guided by Athena, he manages to wound two gods. This feat is unmatched. In contrast, Agamemnon and Menelaus are portrayed as weak and ineffective leaders. Agamemnon, in particular, is the weakest leader in the *Iliad*. He is worsted in the only extant explicit comparison between an Argive hero and a Mycenaean hero – in manners, leadership skills, and fighting style.[98] His ineffectual management of every situation results in several disasters which befall the Greeks. When Agamemnon tries to rally his troops, he instead sends them running for the ships, (*Il.* 2.142-165) or purposefully insults them (*Il.* 1.173-188; 4.240-250). The dichotomy between the Mycenaean and Argive heroes is noticeable; it is difficult not to note the associations with the cities in the Argolid.

The ethnonyms used for the Greeks within the text are linked with the Argolid. These are: "Argives", "Danaans", and "Achaians." While "Argives" is the ethnonym which would appear to be the most closely linked to Argos, there has been some speculation that this in fact relates to "Pelasgian Argos", a locale in Thessaly. This argument fails to consider the mythical history of the Pelasgians, who are mentioned as being Argive at several points in mythology.[99] "Danaans", in fact, is a name related to the mythical genealogies of Argos. This is derived from Danaus, one of the

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[98] The comparison is, of course, mythological. It occurs, however, within a text which Argos had influence on and Mycenae did not; therefore, the contrast in leadership styles is a useful idea of how the Argives wished to appear when compared with the Mycenaeans.

[99] This will be discussed further in chapter three.

founders of the line which resulted in Perseus.[100] There is a version of the mythology which has the Pelasgians changed their name to Danaans in order to honour him; the Danaans make up a substantial part of Argive mythic history.

The final ethnonym to be considered is that of "the Achaeans", the name used most often for the Greeks. This term is not at first glance related to Argos. It does relate to a myth which will be detailed in chapter three, regarding the ethnicities of the Argolid. To summarise the point briefly here, after the story of the Dorian invasion began circulating around the Peloponnese, there appears to have been a concerted effort on the part of some *poleis* to separate themselves from this story. While Argos was heavily associated with this myth, Mycenae and Tiryns appear to have attempted to disregard it. Hall argues that these settlements began identifying themselves as "Achaeans", associating themselves with the prehistorical populations of the Argolid.[101] When all three are taken in context, the implication that "Argives", "Danaans", and "Achaeans" are all different names for the populations of the Argolid cannot be escaped.

The last point which was suggested to test whether or not the Homeric epics glorified Argos was to see what links Argos claimed to Homer. The general tradition which gained the most traction within the ancient world was that Homer was from the island of Chius. Argos, however, claimed extensive links with the poet. The Contest of Homer and Hesiod describes Argos as immediately recognising the value of the lines Homer has composed for them. To honour him they dedicated a bronze

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[100] Also discussed further in chapter three.

[101] Hall (2002a: 53) "it is not… unreasonable to suspect that the term 'Akhaioi' also possesses an Argive significance." Although it is used to set the Mycenaeans apart from the Argives, it remains linked to the Argolid itself.

statue and set up days of sacrifices[102]. This does not seem to be a special relationship. But, when compared by Lefkowitz to the treatment of Homer by other *poleis*, it becomes clear that Argos is unique in the treatment it receives. Lefkowitz summarises Cyme's ill-treatment of Homer in particular (*Epig.* 1.2), and recounts the descriptions in the *Epigrams* of Homer's miserable life.[103] Contrasted with the other experience, the Argive reaction is prescient and unique. While Argos could not lay claim to Homer himself, they could produce a variant whereby they alone saw his talent.

In this vision of the past, Homer, as a major part of Greek mythology, conferred his own honours in return. As Snodgrass puts it, "...the implication is clear, that Argos in the sixth century could derive advantage from the fact that Homer, in the eighth century, had drawn attention to the prowess of Argos in the Heroic Age...".[104]

Athens and the *Iliad*

The tradition about the formation of the Homeric epics may very well not be far off the mark. The story of the Peisistratean recension may not have been accepted by all modern Homerists. It appears that this is on grounds of suspicion against ancient tradition, and also due to the acknowledgement that there was not one true Homer. Instead the place of a "one Homer", it has been proposed that several different traditions existed,[105] which championed local causes and "eccentric" traditions.[106] The idea of the Athenian recension, nevertheless, is an old and pervasive one which

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[102] The lines given in the Certamen are Argos' entry in the Catalogue of Ships. There is an addition of two lines, which do not appear in our version.
[103] Lefkowitz (1981:16)
[104] Snodgrass (1998: 5).
[105] In particular, see Nagy (1979).
[106] Slings (2000: 72) offers a spirited rejection of the existence of Peisistratean text or recension.

appears in sources from the very earliest to the latest.[107] This tradition tells that

Peisistratus, in order to elevate Athens' cultural status and heritage as well as for his

own enjoyment, caused the pieces of Homer to be brought together from all over the

Greek world. From these pieces, the epics were put together, from lines cited most

often and the most well known episodes.[108] This does not mean, however, that the

local texts were extinguished in their entirety, as "eccentric" readings are attested as

late as the Hellenistic Period. The writing down of a text in Athens, which heavily

influenced later copies of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, resulted in texts with the Athenian

interpolations and language intact. The Homeric epics were not the only ones which

showed symptoms of Athenian interference. It is generally agreed that the pseudo-

Hesiodic Catalogue of Women also shows Athenian interference at some point in its

history.[109]

The suggestion of an Athenian *Iliad* goes back into antiquity and is attested in

ancient sources.[110] When the rhapsodic competitions were introduced in the

Panathenaiac festival, it may be presumed that there was a set form of the *Iliad*.[111]

The rhapsodes recited the *Iliad* in turn, using episodes which the audience knew, and

which remain familiar to us *in the modern Iliad*. This suggests that there was a

version which had to be known for the rhapsodes to perform – an unfamiliar version

would have been difficult to enter a competition with, as the audience and judges are

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[107] West (2001: 31) agrees that there was an Athenian stage in the development of the *Iliad*, which is shown in the Attic forms of the vocabulary which is exhibited in the modern version. He suggests that Athens produced a large number of their own texts, which had a great deal of influence on those available in the Alexandrian period.

[108] Blok (2000: 21) suggests that the figure of Peisistratus in the *Odyssey* was intended to reflect Peisistratus' patronage of the rhapsodes who performed the Homeric epics.

[109] ‚See Irwin (2005: 65-66) and Rutherford (2005: 114).

[110] For examples, see Cicero, *De oratore* 3.137, for Peisistratus as the beginning of the Panathenaic text; alternatively, pseudo-Plato *Life of Hipparchus* for the suggestion that the text should be attributed to Hipparchus.

[111] Nagy (1996: 42) states that his definitive period for the standardising of the *Iliad* is associated with the institution of a panhellenic festival, which was probably the Panathenaia.

not likely to have known of it or to have looked favourably upon a non-Athenian version. The institution of the rhapsodic competitions has been dated to c. 521/520, which therefore is the latest date for a more settled, Athenian copy of the *Iliad*. This may have been written down, preserving an even more fixed format.[112]

The Athenians may have favoured a version which heavily featured the Argives for several reasons. The earliest versions of the myth may have reached Athens from Argos. Copies which also had an Argive focus would therefore have been seen as the truer, more "Homeric" version. This would also have been more recognised by the other Greek poleis as Homeric; Athens at this late stage could not have composed an *Iliad* which featured themselves heavily; a version which reflected an Argive tradition could gain more traction outside Attica than an *Iliad* that was explicitly Athenian.

It is also of note that by the time of Aeschylus, some fifty years after the date given here for a possible textual version of the *Iliad*, the focus of the tragedies which gave the stories after the Trojan War had shifted the scene of Agamemnon's home from Mycenae to Argos.[113] This change, which served to bring Argos into prominence during the Panathenaea, occurred despite the fact that Argos had not taken part in the recent Persian Wars and was accused of favouring the Persian invaders. By this time Mycenae had been destroyed by the Argives. This show of power cannot have been

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[112] Nagy (1996: 65) is one of those who argues that Herodotus 5.9.2 refers to books kept by the Peisistratids. Nagy goes on to suggest that one of the books kept may have been the Homeric poems, citing Athenaeus' statement that the first men who had libraries were Polycrates of Samos and Peisistratus of Athens. The idea that powerful patrons would have had to finance the creation of an actual text is a factor for consideration of a date for the text. For example, West (2001) and Young (2003) both discuss the expense inherent in writing down the text (although both assign the writing of the *Iliad* to a different period than the Peisistratid era).

[113] Macleod (1982: 127) suggests that Aeschylus sets the *Oresteia* in Athens in order to portray Agamemnon and Menelaos as joint rulers. Argos is the traditional domain of neither, therefore there is no question about territorial issues.

enough of an influence to change Athenian dramatic portrayals of the legends associated with Mycenae.

<div align="center">**The Catalogue of Ships**</div>

Although the *Iliad* in its entirety is unlikely to have existed in the form it has today before the late sixth century B.C.E. there is a specific part which has always been problematic to Homeric scholars. This is the Catalogue of the Ships in book two, lines 494-759. The Catalogue is of particular importance, as it claims to reflect the political geography of heroic Greece and in the past it was accepted that this claim was indeed true.[114] Although this is no longer accepted as fact, the Catalogue should be investigated closely, particularly with regard to the specific entries of Argos, Mycenae, and Athens (*Il.* 2.546-579).

The Catalogue of Ships was particularly important during times when Homer was cited as one of the ultimate sources on Bronze Age Greece. This was emphasised during a dispute between Athens and Megara over the possession of the island of Salamis.[115] The dispute was judged by the Spartans, with each side presenting lines from the *Iliad* as evidence for their ownership of the islands; the Athenians were eventually judged as the winners based on the suggestion that Aias allied Salamis with Athens during the Trojan War, as stated in the Catalogue. The use of Homer in this way is not the only notable point here, but it should also be underlined that the Megarians had their own version, in which they appeared in the Catalogue, presumably alongside Aias. Also of note is the fact that the Spartans did not accept the Megarian entry, suggesting that it was unknown to them and their own version of

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[114] For a particularly strong argument of the authenticity of the Catalogue, and the possibility that it is an inheritance from the Bronze Age, see Page (1959: 129-154).

[115] Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 1.15.13.

the *Iliad* more closely resembled the Athenian version presented to them. This suggests the existence of a Catalogue which was fixed, and had considerable resemblances to the modern text.

The Argive entry itself appears straightforward at first glance. According to the Catalogue, Argos rules over Tiryns, Hermione, Asine, Troizen, Epidaurus and Mases, leading eighty ships against Troy. This is one of the highest contributions towards manpower, beaten only by the contributions of Nestor, Idomeneus, and Agamemnon. It is also a contribution which, when compared against others, is not possible from Argos as it was at the time of the Trojan War. Although certain parts of the Catalogue do appear to reflect some aspects of Bronze Age reality, the Argive entry is far from doing so. Archaeological evidence from the excavated parts of the town indicates a very small and poor population, which was the state of affairs until the collapse of Helladic civilisation.[116] Bronze Age burials in the cemeteries indicate a town which was barely more than a small village, and was certainly not of a size to rival contributions from such states as Pylos and the entirety of Crete.

Compounding the problem of the Catalogue is Agamemnon's entry, which has been recognised from a relatively early stage as problematic. Agamemnon leads one hundred ships, and contributes sixty to the Arcadians, which is a number that may be expected of the leader of the expedition and the ruler of Mycenae. According to the Catalogue, Agamemnon has explicit rule over Mycenae, Corinth, and Sicyon. This is an odd state of affairs. Here, the Catalogue essentially cuts Agamemnon off from one of the richest parts of Greece – the Argolid plain, which, as archaeological

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[116] This was the state of affairs for the majority of the southern Argolid. A summary of the archaeology of Bronze Age Argos and Mycenae is given in chapter four.

evidence suggests, Mycenae was built specifically to control. Agamemnon also has no access to the Saronic Gulf, which, under the conditions suggested by the Catalogue, he would need to negotiate with the Argives to access. To compound the problem, Agamemnon has significantly less land than Diomedes. This cannot reflect the political geography in the middle of the Bronze Age;[117] if this depiction bears any similarity to any time in Greece, it can only be the end of the Bronze Age, after Mycenae was severely weakened, or the Dark Age. As an argument, the attempt to date these lines in relation to the reality of Greece is unproductive – the entire *Iliad* cannot be dated on the basis of a few lines; neither can the entirety of the Catalogue.[118] The Mycenaean entry is a curiosity, which can only be explained by a failure on the part of the composer(s) to correctly recognise the setting of Bronze Age Greece as being different from their own.[119]

Much as the Athenians presented their own version of the entry concerning Salamis in the Catalogue, so too did the Argives. The Catalogue does not reflect the Bronze Age; however, it does reflect the late seventh and early sixth century at points. Of particular note are the claim of the Argives to rule Asine (*Il.* 2.560), which was destroyed by them in the mid-eighth century and the claim to Tiryns (*Il.* 2.259), despite the fact that Tiryns is closer to Mycenae than Argos . They both feature Cyclopean architecture and were powerful at the same date. Furthermore, it has been

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[117]Page (1959: 134) argues that the Catalogue is in fact a Bronze Age composition, albeit with some later interpolations. The argument is weakened somewhat in that Page suggests that the Catalogue cannot have been meant for recitation as part of the *Iliad* due its length and complexity. Hope Simpson and Lazenby (1970) also support the view that the Catalogue was originally a separate Bronze Age composition.

[118] Page (1959: 32) argues that the Athenian entry is organic and belonged to the original Catalogue, when it was an entirely separate poem.

[119] Cingano (2005: 151) suggests, in accordance with Hall's arguments (1997: 90) that the reason that the Agamemnon entry is so odd is due to the fact that it was a late addition to the Catalogue. Cingano suggests that it is in the *Iliad* in order to legitimise the late "grafting" of the Pelopid line to the Perseid genealogies. This will be discussed in further detail in chapter 3.

suspected that the Mycenaean cities were chosen based on political interests – Corinth, as a powerful city in her own right in the mid-seventh century could perhaps not claim to have been a Bronze Age power, but could certainly be conceived as having belonged to Mycenae. Sicyon, the other place of interest, was antagonistic towards Argos (and "Homer") by the same date, and almost certainly would not have happily accepted the idea that Argos could have ruled her in the past (despite linking themselves with Adrastus, Diomedes' grandfather). Becoming part of Agamemnon's territory (*Il.* 2.572) not only allowed Sicyon a place in the epic tradition but would also have allowed them to explicitly dissociate themselves from Argos in favour of Mycenae, a small challenge against Argive ethnic identity. The rivalry of Sikyon and Argos forms a discussion earlier in this thesis for this reason.

There is evidence in the tradition of the epics of possible variations in the Catalogue of Ships, besides the Salamis variant, which has already been discussed. The primary evidence of these traditions appears in two extant works: Euripides' *Iphigeneia at Aulis*, and Hesiod's *Catalogue of Women*. Both of these works suggest a political geography which differs significantly from that presented in Homer.

As previously discussed, the Athenian entry has been suspected as an interpolation since antiquity. In the search for possible alternatives that were current at the time, two major variations are apparent. The Hesiodic Catalogue has come under consideration recently, with an aim to finding a more "authentic", or pre-Athenian, version of the Catalogue of Ships.[120] The other is a catalogue given in Euripides' *Iphigeneia at Aulis.*

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[120] Cingano (2005: 122) makes the important point that the Catalogue of Women "originates from the

In a 1981 article, "Ajax's entry in the Catalogue of Women", Margalit Finkelberg highlighted the differences between Aias' kingdom in the two Catalogues. In the Hesiodic version, Telamonian Aias appears as a suitor of Helen, and lists as his bride gifts "the flocks of Troezen and Epidaurus, Aegina and Mases, and Megara and Corinth, Hermione and Asine..." Finkelberg argues that this suggests a possible alternative version of the regions which Aias controlled.[121] This proposal not only boosts Aias' lands, but severely restricts the places which Diomedes and Agamemnon could have under their control. Yet it is noticeable that in this version, Corinth and Megara are seen as entirely separate from Agamemnon's kingdom. Finkelberg's hypothesis notes that following the Hesiodic Catalogue reduces Diomedes' territories to a level which would be more suited to a vassal king of Agamemnon, and in turn Argos' proposed influence within the Bronze Age Argolid is equally reduced, leaving Diomedes with only the rule of Argos itself and Tiryns.[122]

In many ways, this is an attractive idea. Finkelberg's suggestion solves the problems set out by the Iliadic Catalogue in its current incarnation. This is not only because more of a conventional status, but also because Finkelberg addresses the problem of an Athenian recension and what it could have achieved.[123] She suggests that the

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need to create a broad, systematic and panhellenic arrangement by families which might accommodate the main genealogies of the *Iliad*…" Genealogies were a complicated feature of the ancient world; the genealogical history of the Argolid is discussed in detail in chapter 3.

[121] Cingano 2005: 144) notes that this theory is entirely reliant upon the assumption that Aias actually commands the cities he lists, rather than just boasting about his ability to raid them.

[122] The presence of two Argive heroes, Alcmaeon and Amphilocus, is attested by fr. 197.6.9. These two appear in the Theban cycle, but are completely absent from the Homeric epics. Cingano (2005: 140) suggests they belong to an earlier tradition than the Homeric epics, accounting for the lack of mention in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, although Amphilocus appears in a fragment of Stesichoros along with Agamemnon and Helen. Cingano reads this as an attempt to reconcile the Homeric tradition with the earlier Theban one.

[123] West (1985: 133) argues that the final composition of the Catalogue of Women took place in Athens. Rutherford (2005: 115) suggests that we should expect more explicit Athenian influence on the Catalogue if this is the case. Rutherford certainly agrees that there is a degree of influence.

Athenians interfered with the Catalogue in order to have a more prominent role, and also addresses the problems inherent in an "Athenian recension": why should the Spartans and other cities accept the interpolation of the Athenians? Finkelberg's suggestion is that the Argives were also unhappy with the 'original' Catalogue (which she claims is preserved in the Hesiodic version); therefore, they adopted the Athenian interpolation of the *Iliad*, as it retrospectively awarded areas which would have been seen by Argos as rightfully belonging to them. This would have been far more advantageous to them than continuing with the 'genuine' Bronze Age record.[124] Similarly, by separating Corinth from Argos and assigning this city to the kingdom of Agamemnon, the Athenians may have been appeasing the Corinthians. The two *poleis* were not on friendly terms at this point in time.

This suggestion is interesting, however, it fails to take into account the active role a city such as Argos may have taken in the process of developing the *Iliad*, and also does not consider local variants of the *Iliad* and *Catalogue of Women* which may have pre-existed in the Argolid region. We are aware that the Megarians had their own version of the Iliadic passage, which presumably showcased their own ethnicity and claim to an ancient heritage;[125] the fact that this was passed over by the panhellenic 'idea' of the *Iliad* can only have rankled. The failure to acknowledge the Megarian point of view would have been an affront, and resulted in Megara being excluded from the epic tradition of the Greek world. It stands to reason that the Argives would also have had their own tradition which may have conflicted with the

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[124] West (2001: 180) suggests that the lines of *Il.* 2.561-2 originally belonged to Aias' entry in the Catalogue. The cities of Troezen, Hermione and Asine were redistributed to the Argive entry after the Athenian appropriation of Aias.

[125] Pozzi (1991: 8) details a Megarian tradition that the fleets had left for Troy from Megara, not Aulis. "Megara not only had this tradition before the fixing of the site at Aulis but retained it afterward."

epic tradition at large,[126] and in particular with the perhaps older tradition which may date from the Bronze Age, which had Agamemnon and Mycenae in the prime position as leader and most powerful state in Greece at the time.[127] This would have been in direct contrast to the political geography of the eighth century; the Argives would have needed their own version to compete with this, which would have been in a prime place to have been adopted by the Athenians in their version under the Peisistratean recension of the fifth century.

There is a later version of the Catalogue, which postdates the supposed recension. It appears in Euripides' *Iphigeneia in Aulis* (ll.164-302), dated to c. 404 B.C.E. In this, Diomedes appears only as an incidental character, and Mycenae is not mentioned at all.[128] The ships contributed by the Argives number thirty less than in the *Iliad*. The issues of Ajax's ships are resolved by the Argives' ships being next to the Athenian ones. Allen offers an extended look at the origins of this "Catalogue";[129] he proposes that it is indeed the work of Euripides. The Catalogue of Euripides represents another variant active in Athens; although Euripides may have taken some poetic license with the positioning of the ships, the appearance of this "Catalogue" suggests that the tradition was still malleable to some degree.

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[126] Cingano (2005: 150): "Such a representation [of the dominions of Aias, according to Finkeberg's hypothesis] completely underrates the importance of the Theban epics in shaping the genealogies and the territorial organisation of the Peloponnese in the heroic age."

[127] Cingano (2005: 148) "…the genuine interest in these lines lie precisely in that they show full awareness of how unsatisfactory the Homeric version concerning Ajax's dominions was felt in Archaic Greece…"

[128] The omission of Mycenae has led to some issues within the text. Although the chorus name the leaders of the Argives (ll. 244-247), Diomedes is clearly not one of them. Neither are Agamemnon or Menelaus; however, Agamemnon's household is still clearly represented as being located in Argos (ll. 111-112).

[129] Allen (1901). Allen's article is very early, but offers a focused analysis of the Catalogue in the *IA*.

The Catalogue of Ships, as we have it, appears to correspond strongly to the Argive idea of the 'Lot of Temenus'.[130] Had the Athenians taken pains to include the Argive text, this would have been done for a variety of reasons: political overtures towards Argos, made by including their version in the 'definitive' Greek text which was recited at the Panathenaia;[131] or, more likely, the Argive version may have been more definitive in its own right. The Greeks believed that although Homer was supposedly from Chios, the *Iliad* was composed in Argos itself, and this heritage was one which was emphasised in the epic. Further to the point, the Spartans may have chosen the Athenian version of the Catalogue over the Megarian as a result of their *Iliad* corresponding more closely with the Argive and therefore Athenian idea of how the poem should go. At this stage, the *Iliad* was still at the 'fluid' point of its development with many different variations – some subtle, others not.[132]

The Alexandrian recension of the *Iliad*

Centuries after the Peisistratean recension, and after the *Iliad* began to circulate in a more fixed form, as texts became more widely available and more interaction between cities meant less change in the text, another stage of Homeric development began in the Hellenistic Period. Scholars in the Library of Alexandria worked with the texts, in several different forms, in order to attempt to find the "one true Homer". It is well known that the Library of Alexandria was one of the most comprehensive libraries established in antiquity; there are statements confirming that several texts of

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[130] The idea of the lot of Temenus is discussed in full in chapter three.
[131] The fact that many of the tragedies performed in Athens set the location as Argos, in place of Mycenae, resulted in an overshadow and relocation in general mythology. This confusion still exists today; for example, Michelakis (2006) speaks only in terms of "the Argive saga" when referring to the cycle of myths surrounding Agamemnon and his family.
[132] Nagy (1979) bases his entire argument around a hypothetical and reconstructed disagreement between Achilleus and Odysseus, which is mentioned only in passing in the *Odyssey*.

Homer were held by the Library. While many of the scholars seem to have focused on athetizing lines in order to find the "true" Homer behind them, there were a few who had a slightly different focus.[133]

Scholia on the papyri attest to the presence a small group of scholars who attempted to find the original texts of Homer through comparing the versions of the poems which the Library held. The Library's versions were the *khariesterai* – the "more beautiful" texts,[134] otherwise known as the *astikai*, City texts. The City texts each seem to have belonged to a certain city or region of Greece – Argos, Crete, Chius, Massalia, Sinope, and Cyprus.[135] These were compared with the *koine* to establish any links between the two.[136] It is almost certain that the text which survives to this day is closely related to the Alexandrian texts. There are certain points at which the text betrays a certain bias – one of the best known examples is the argument that the *Cretica* inspired the "Cretan lie" which Odysseus tells Penelope in book 19 of the *Odyssey*. Certain details of this story seem to betray an originally Cretan myth, which has been worked into the story overall.[137]

The texts which have survived are known to us through *scholia*, which provide different variants on words (primarily), and a mention of the scholars' names who compiled the text the scholiast was working from. The primary names which come

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[133] Burgess (1996: 82) posits a similar transmission model for the transmission of the epic cycle.

[134] The category of the *khariesterai* are made up two types of texts: the manuscripts edited by previous scholars, e.g. Zenodotus'; and the *politikai*, the city texts.

[135] Bolling (1968: 39) suggests that these texts were not very old. He suggests that only the Massilian, Chian and Argive texts were earlier than Zenodotus, but rejects this with little discussion. It is therefore somewhat difficult to accept these arguments without further details.

[136] It is entirely possible that the texts here mentioned were chosen due to a perception of links to the cities in Homeric tradition. This is particularly the case with regard to Argos, Chius, and Crete, each of which were supposed to have been visited by the poet. Argive tradition relating to a special relationship with Homer has already been detailed.

[137] Bolling (1968: 32) notes that there was a text of the *Odyssey* in which Laertes was dead, and this ended at 23.296. The odd scenario of Penelope weaving the shroud for Laertes – who is not dead (*Od.* 2.87-100) and the ending of the *Odyssey*, which does not fit with the text well at all, suggests that this manuscript would have heavily influenced the *Odyssey* as it is today.

through are those of Zenodotus, Aristarchus, and Callistratus. Aristarchus is by far the best known of the three for producing a reliable text; Zenodotus' variants can be a little strange, to the point where West has dubbed his work "eccentric". Aristarchus, who was Zenodotus' later successor as Librarian, produced what seems to have been considered the foremost text from the variants available.

The text that we have today appears to be closely related to Aristarchus' recension, with some slight variations. Most of these have been explained away by the *scholia*. But it remains to be seen what part the Argolica may have played in the creation of this text. I argue here that the Argolica had some influence on Aristarchus' text, though this would have occurred through the comparison of the Argolica and the vulgate. This has resulted in the influence we see today in the *Iliad.*

Scholia on the surviving papyri mention the Argolica only seven times; each mention applies to the *Iliad* only, and to points of grammatical comment, rather than any indications of variants within the storyline. This suggests that the Argolica had little to offer in the way of significant variants of events, and those which it did offer were not supported by any of the other texts, and thus they were excised by the editors.

It is therefore possible that the Argos city text was unimportant, but that seems unlikely. As a city text, it was already placed higher in academic regard than was the vulgate version,[138] and the holding of it by the Library of Alexandria suggests some cultural value. Therefore, the reason it may not have offered so much comment to Aristarchos may have been a striking similarity to the vulgate from which he was

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[138] The consideration of the city texts as more important than the vulgate is heavily implied in the terms used to refer to them: αἱ χαρίεστεραι ("the most beautiful/pleasing").

working. The identity of this vulgate has been called into question several times: what could the "common" version of the *Iliad* have been? I propose that this vulgate was in fact the Athenian copy,[139] which had disseminated throughout Greece in the time between the Peisistratean recension and the editing at Alexandria.[140] The "fixed" version of the text would have become far more widespread than local variants, as previously mentioned. It is known, and has been demonstrated, that several pro-Athenian interpolations made it into the final text, despite the existence of variants which showcased other cities.[141] The survival of these variants is surely suggestive of the fact that the "vulgate" was Athenian.

Following the evolutionary model which has been sketched out thus far, and taking Argive influence on the Athenian text as a given, little change may have been needed between the vulgate and the Argolica, when compared by Aristarchus. The traditions which linked Homer with Argos would have also been in play, suggesting an antiquity to the Argive text. Taken in combination, the similarities between the "vulgate" and one of the city texts which had many points in common with the vulgate, as well as a longstanding tradition of Homeric influence, may well have affected the final product. The editors will have seen the similarities, and drawing conclusions from the points already suggested, may have come to the conclusion that the lines in the two texts, when matched, gave an indication as to the "original" text of Homer.

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[139] West diagnoses the points in the *Iliad* which he believes to have been interpolated. The first category he defines as interpolated is: "Verses reflecting local or political interests that do not seem to be those of the original poet. Most of the instances are designed to promote the status of Athens, or refer to Attic myths and customs." (West 2001: 12).

[140] This proposal is supported by Nagy (1997; 2004), Jensen (1980). Young (2003: 57) makes note that "Detailed study and dating of the papyri have shown that the ones with eccentric texts end about 150 B.C.E. and that the ones dated later conform to the Vulgate."

[141] This is perhaps due to the editors' own biases; Young (2003: 57) notes that Aristarchus is known to have thought that Homer was an Athenian. This view, if correct, may have resulted in a higher number of Athenian interpolations being included in Aristarchus' text.

Conclusion

This chapter has followed the development of the Homeric texts throughout their transmission. Generally following Nagy's "evolutionary model", each different stage has resulted in the aggregation of Argive material within the tradition. This chapter has primarily focused on the *Iliad,* as the more "Panhellenic" of the two poems, and the one which features Argive and Mycenaean characters heavily.

Beginning with early artistic history, some of the strongest evidence for the circulation of the cyclic traditions within the Argolid is apparent. This evidence is scarce for specifically Homeric episodes, which begin to appear later. The earliest date offered for a secure identification of a Homeric episode is mid-seventh century. After this date, more artistic representation of the Homeric episodes appears in the northern Peloponnese, which outnumbers Athenian sources (taking into account the amount of surviving material). Approximately a century after this, there is evidence in Herodotus of suspicion of Argive interference with the text of "Homer". Although the poem he refers to cannot be identified conclusively, there is enough evidence of pro-Argive propaganda within the *Iliad* itself to suggest that this could have meant the *Iliad*. If the Thebaid poems were meant, there are still very strong indications that Argos was manufacturing and editing epic traditions in order to "glorify" herself.

In the later stages of Homeric development, the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* underwent a stage of composition and recomposition in Athens under the guidance of the Peisistratids. This occurred primarily in the form of the rhapsodic competition at the Panathenaic festival. The text that resulted from these competitions influenced later texts heavily. It had been in itself influenced by Argive traditions, through political ties

(manifested in the change of setting of many myths which were related to Mycenae), and also through a need to legitimise the Athenian text by it bearing relation to an older tradition – the Argive tradition.

In the last stages of transmission, the Homeric texts were edited and compiled by the scholars of Alexandria. In order to compile the true Homeric text, the editors compared and contrasted different editions. This included not only the texts which had previously been edited, but also city texts. One of these texts was the Argive city text. These were compared with the vulgate; the identity of the vulgate is proposed to have been the Athenian text. Through comparing and contrasting two texts which had influenced each other, the editors compiled the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* we have today. The *Iliad* shows a very heavy Argive focus because the Argive tradition was the tradition it was ultimately moulded in. While the original legend of the Trojan War may have been Mycenaean, as the story grew in popularity, it was adapted by the Argives. This served to bring Argos into prominence over Mycenae, and gave it a significant place in one of the texts Greek culture came to prize highly.

Chapter Three: The Myths of the Argolid

As with the *Iliad* discussion, the focus here will be the role which Argos may have played in the creation and manipulation of the myth; what it meant to the people of Argos and Mycenae, and the effect it had on the politics of the Peloponnese.[142]

Due to the specifically Peloponnesian flavour of the myth, it is of importance to those studying the populations of this area. For a number of years, the idea of a wave of foreign people, named the Dorians, who invaded Greece and overthrew the Mycenaeans, was prevalent in scholarship.[143] It was believed that this was what caused the destruction of the Mycenaean cities, destroyed the already limited literacy in Greece, and created the historic "Dark Age". This story was also well known to the ancient Greeks, for whom the Dorian Invasion played a part of the creation of social structure and ethnic groups within certain communities. The existence of a Dorian ethnicity, along with the other accepted "Hellenic" groups – the Ionians, Achaeans, and Aeolians – was used as a differentiation from the others, a group in and of itself. This did not exclude them from any part of the Hellenic community. Dorians, when faced with threats from other cultures, were still recognised as being Greek. Their story of arrival became woven closely into the mythology of wider Greece, and eventually was accepted as fact. It has now fallen out of favour with historians of the ancient world as an explanation of why the Bronze Age culture of Greece collapsed, but this does not mean that it has no historical value whatsoever. The legend of the Dorians and their leaders, the Heracleidae, preserves an interesting

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[142] Figueira (1983: 10) discusses the effects of Argos' Temenus myth on Epidaurus, which came to be strongly associated with Argos due to this myth.

[143] For example both of the pre-1990s major studies of Argos and the relationships between the states of the Argolid take the Dorian invasion as a historical fact. (Tomlinson, 1973; Kelly, 1976).

glimpse into the politics of expression and ethnicity within the ancient world.

The evidence strongly suggests that this was a myth of Argive creation, which was subsequently taken up by the Spartans and augmented into the story given below. There are several variants of the mythology, and the political implications of each one vary, but all give the strong impression of populations attempting to locate themselves in space and time, through comparison and contrast with the mythology of the other identified ethnicities within their vicinity. Therefore, although the story of the Heracleidae gives the basis for Argive and Spartan rule of the Peloponnese,[144] there are also very careful and obvious links to Mycenaean myths. The grafting of these two expressions of identity through mythology, and how the two cities identified themselves in each, will be discussed.

The Myth itself and its creation

There are numerous variants of the myth of the Heracleidae and the Dorian invasion; I therefore offer here a concise summary of the generally agreed facts of the Greek genealogical mythology to help orientate the reader. The most obvious difficulty when approaching genealogical histories is the fact that they are usually manufactured with a ulterior purpose in mind. The most common use of these histories is to place the audience within the environment of their present day.

The story of the Heracleidae begins with the sons of Heracles being forced to seek refuge in Attica after they are expelled from Trachis (Eur. *Supp.*), having already been expelled from the Peloponnese by the king of Mycenae, Eurystheus. When they attempt to reclaim their lands, Eurystheus meets them in battle at the Isthmus,

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[144] Figuiera (1983: 10) recognised that the kings of Sparta and Argos gained the most from this myth. He states that "there is little doubt that they consolidated their power at the expense of [other] hereditary aristocracies", causing political issues in Epidaurus and Aegina.

supported by Atreus.[145] Eurystheus is killed in combat, but so too is Hyllus, Heracles' eldest son.[146] The Heracleidae retreat, and are told by the Delphic Oracle that they may not go back to the Peloponnese until three generations have passed. Atreus took rule of Mycenae when Erystheus died without heirs. Hyllus (miraculously alive) is then adopted by Dorieus, king of the Dorians.[147]

After the allotted fifty (or hundred) years away from their home, the Heracleidae, led by Temenus, Aristodemus, and Cresphontes, lead an army of the Dorians to the Peloponnese.[148] At the Isthmus, Aristodemus is killed by lightning, and his place is taken by his twin sons, Eurysthenes and Procles.[149] The Dorians overrun the Peloponnese, expelling Teisamenus, the son of Orestes, from Mycenae.[150] Teisamenus seeks refuge in Achaea, along with the majority of the Mycenaeans.

In a twist of fate, Messenia and Lacedaemon also belong to the Heracleidae, through Heracles, who had conquered them both and asked the respective rulers of each (Nestor and Tyndareus) to rule over them in his stead and to keep the lands safe until his descendants should claim them. Most of the Peloponnese is thus divided into three parts, and the Heracleidae cast lots to see which portion should go to whom. Cresphontes tricks the others,[151] and claims Messenia as his portion; Temenus draws the Argolid, and Eurysthenes and Procles gain Lacedaemon. Cresphontes is later killed by the revolting Messenians, and his sons are forced to send to the Spartans

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[145] Diodorus 4.57-58.
[146] Thuc. 1.9.2.
[147] Tyrtaeus fr. 2. Diehl.
[148] Thuc. 1.12.3; Apollodorus 2.8.2-4.
[149] In some variants, Eurysthenes and Procles are only babies at the time.
[150] Hdt. 6.52.1.
[151] In some versions, he weights the die that was cast; in others, the Heracleidae agree to fill a jug with water and placed marked stones into it. The order in which the stones came out were the order in which the portions were to be allotted; Messenia is to go to the last one whose stone appeared. In this version, Cresphontes bakes a lump of clay to take the appearance of a stone; it dissolves in the water, and is thus the "last poured".

78

for help. After the sons, too, are killed by the Messenians, the Spartans intervene and re-conquer the population. Following this, the Spartans rule Messenia in the place of Cresphontes' line. In this way, a large portion of the Peloponnese – with the exceptions of Achaea and Elis – is brought under the rule of the Heracleidae, and the Dorians become well-established in their respective regions.

The myth of the Dorian invasion became popular to the point of becoming almost historical fact for scholars in the nineteenth century. It was taken as a preserved memory of the invasion which overthrew the Helladic culture. It accounted for the cultural break between the Bronze Age and Archaic Period, and also explained the migrations of populations during this time. It was suggested that the comparatively uncultured Dorians were the cause of the loss of literacy and art, features of the Helladic period, and accordingly, traces of this invading population were searched for.[152] These traces have not been found. Accordingly, the story of the Dorians has now become a focus of mythological studies rather than archaeological, and the suspicion regarding its creation has fallen upon the Spartans and the Argives.

Again, at first glance, if this myth is to be taken as the expression of an ethnic group's right to their territory, and also as an expression of their hegemony over another group, then this myth would indeed appear to have a Spartan origin. The obvious point here is the justification of the subsuming of the Messenians under Spartan rule. Not only is the Heracleid ruler of Messenia deceitful, and gained his kingdom by duping his relatives, but he is killed by the local population. The Messenians are represented as not accepting of the Heracleids and Dorians, as the

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[152] For example, Kelly, as late as 1976, takes the Dorian invasion for granted (pp.13-18), and uses it as a basis for his discussion of the depopulation of the Argive plain, as well as his following chapter on "Dark Age Argos". The bibliography on the Dorian invasion is extensive; Kelly references Buck (1969), *Historia*, p.280, as a source for this bibliography.

population in Lacedaemon is, and they do not escape elsewhere, as the Mycenaeans do. Therefore, their subjugation is justified through this, and the Spartans honourably and decisively gain the right to rule them. The repetition of the myth to Messenian audiences may have helped the Spartans exert their superiority over them. This projection of cultural superiority would have assisted in quelling the Messenian spirit; given enough repetition, particularly in the face of overwhelming Spartan might, there is a definite element which would have been dispiriting to the audience.[153] The moral superiority of Sparta in the myth of the Herakleidai, particularly when compared to significant lack of comparable actions on the part of the Messenians, is generally taken to be the hallmark of a uniquely Spartan creation, which explains not only their right to their land, the differences in ethnic identity between Sparta and other poleis of the mainland (for example, Athens), but the primary point they gain here is indeed a mythical and historical justification for the rule over the Messenians. The other is the aetiological myth for the dual kingship of Sparta; this is almost a sideline, and other points of origin for this system are expressed in other stories regarding the Spartan state.

The likelihood that the entire myth, including the Heracleidae, was created by the Spartans, specifically for the justification of rule over the Messenians, is not entirely practical. The region of Sparta is consistently portrayed as the least desirable of the three, and the deception of Cresphontes is practised primarily against Eurysthenes and Procles, the gullible founders of the Spartan state.[154] It is far more likely that the

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[153] The relationship between Messenia and Sparta's peoples will be discussed further in the next chapter, as there are some parallels to be drawn between Messenia and Sparta, and Argos and Mycenae's relationship.

[154] Malkin (1995: 35) suggests that the Spartans may have adopted, and then adapted, the Dorian identity in the face of Messenian rebellion – "The need to say 'this is my land' does not arise out of

Spartans opted to align themselves with the Heracleidae by the addition of the Dorian invasion. It is notable that in all versions of the myth the Dorians submit themselves to the authority of the Heracleidae.

There is considerably more evidence in the Heracleidae story for an Argive state creation myth. This is not immediately apparent in the myth as we have it today; this may be the result of the varying sources, or of the focus on the Spartan interests identifiable in the myth. It has increasingly become noticed that the Argives gain just as much as the Spartans, though it is not as readily apparent. Furthermore, examination of details given in the sources have brought some scholars of ethnic identity to the conclusion that the Heracleidae and Dorian invasion was an Argive myth of justification,[155] which was adapted by the Spartans.[156] This has resulted in the interesting variants noted above, in which Hyllus (the Heracleid *par excellence*) alternatively does not survive or survives and is adopted by Dorieus. The preference of the Argive state to express itself in myth, particularly when taken in combination with the manipulation of the Iliadic tradition, suggests a state that was very aware of its own relationships with other *poleis*, and preferred a sophisticated combination of mythological manipulation and shows of force.

Signs of an Argive foundation myth

The hints that this is an Argive myth are slight, but frequent throughout the sources for the story. The primary point may be found in the person of Temenus, the eldest Heracleid, and leader of the expedition into the Peloponnese. As the eldest, and the

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the blue."

[155] Hall (1997: 61) notes that the "explicit idea" of a Heracleid "return" is found only in the Peloponnese.

[156] Thus, in Herodotus, Cleomenes can claim that he is an Achaean, due to his descent from the Heracleidai. He is also able to take on the guise of a Dorian due to the adoption of Hyllus, allowing the Spartan kings to move freely between *ethne*. (Tigerstedt 1965: 35).

most competent of the group, Temenus gains the Argolid, and rules it justly until his death, founding a monarchy that became one of the longest-lasting in historical Greece. In some variants of the myth, Temenus automatically gains the Argolid through the fact that he is the eldest, as this was a point of focus of the original myth.[157] Through the manipulation of Hera, Eurystheus is born before Heracles, becoming the ruler of Mycenae. All myths concerning Heracles are quite clear on this point: despite his birth in Thebes,[158] Heracles ought to have been the ruler of Mycenae. Argos is frequently depicted as the homeland of Heracles and the Heracleidae, and it is here that they are returning. Although Messenia and Lacedaemon are also divided amongst the four Heracleid leaders, it is the Argolid which is strictly speaking their territory; this is inherited, rather than gained by Heracles in the course of his travels.[159] In addition, there are claims laid to other states within the Argolid as part of the myth. Pausanias states (2.6.6): Καὶ Δωριεῖς μὲν Σικυώνιοι γεγόσιν ἀπὸ τούτων καὶ μοῖρα τῆς Ἀργείας. "And the Sicyonians became Dorians, and a part of the Argives."

Mycenae, in contrast, is portrayed as a city which is subject to poor rulers; owing to the misfortune of Eurystheus' birth, the Heracleid line loses their rightful rule of the city. Little is known of Eurystheus' actual rule over the city, and whether he was a good king. The portrayal in the stories of Heracles' labours give the distinct

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[157] "The Heraklid ancestry of the Spartan kings was traced back to Heracles, but no further." (Hall 1997: 61). The Spartans are unlikely to have developed their own state myth that stopped so abruptly (especially considering they prove themselves perfectly adept at creating genealogies). The abrupt end on the Spartan side suggests that Argos was behind the creation of this myth; and Temenus was always the primary focus.

[158] Different variations are attested here: in some versions, Heracles was born in Argos or Tiryns, which would make more sense than Thebes.

[159] Heracles, of course, became a panhellenic hero, but this did not stop appropriation of his image. Padilla (1998: 11) suggests that Peisistratos adapted the imagery of Heracles, guided by Athena, in his return to Athens. She notes that at approximately this point in time, there is an upsurge in the amount of Athenian pottery which portrays Heracles on a chariot with Athena.

impression of a poor leader, who oppressed those below him through his cruel whims. He was also cowardly, and dies a fitting death at the hands of Heracles' son, Hyllus. The triumph of the Heracleid line over the Eurysthean one suggests that, much like Cresphontes' line dying out, this is the fitting end for such a person – to have no descendents to claim their throne. The return of the Heracleidae, who expel the degenerated Pelopid line, is given here as the proper outcome.[160] The fractured mythologies in the Argolid regarding the Heracleid and Pelopid lines will be discussed further below.

The figure of Temenus was adopted by the Argives as the other Heracleidae were not by their respective peoples. Although the Spartans had a distinct Heracleid genealogy to fall back upon, they, as did the Messenians, preferred to define themselves as Dorians.[161] While the Argives also expressed themselves in terms of the wider Hellenic community as Dorian, they frequently underlined their Dorian heritage with references to their Heracleid descent. It is often noticed that, while subscribing to the usual Dorian division of the population into tribes, Argos deviates from the normal names for these tribes. An emphasis is placed on lineage from Temenus, who is adopted as the founding father of the present Argos.

The idea of the division of the Peloponnese and, in particular, the lot of Temenus, was propagated by the Argive state in the Archaic Period. At the same time that the building of the Heraion was taking place, with its distinctly Mycenaean elements, and also the manipulation of the Trojan legend into the Homeric poems, the Argive

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[160] Hall (2002a: 89) states that there were later traditions in which "the Akhaians of the northern Peloponnese had originated from Lakonia as well as from the Argolid… it would appear that the victims of Spartan exclusion may have simply continued with the own 'usurpatory social closure', perhaps borrowing an ethnonym ('Akhaioi') that was first coined in the Argolid…"

[161] Hall (2002a: 89) "…the formation of Dorian identity was not as much the consequence of an oppositional climate of self-identification as it was a strategy of exclusionary social closure, defining the elect against those who were not so blessed by the gods."

state was asserting its superiority in other ways. The semi-mythical figure of Pheidon, king of Argos, is closely tied to the idea of the "lot of Temenus". This is linked with him in particular, as he is credited with the attempt to re-conquer much of the Argolid, under the aegis of "reuniting the lot of Temenus". Although Pheidon cannot be dated securely, and it is possible that he is little more than a legend himself, the use of the myth to engineer a large-scale military operation against other settlements is important. The idea of gaining back what was, by rights, Argive according to the lot of Temenus was a central point to Argive military operations. This justification is not used by the Spartans, except in the case of Messenia.[162]

The dating of this version of the myth is somewhat complicated by the presence of Pheidon. For those who do attempt to give him a specific date, the seventh century is often the favoured point of view, given Argos' aggression towards her neighbours during this period. While the dating of the myth of Heracles is significantly earlier, the earliest extant mention of the dividing of the Peloponnese and associated complications is Pindar, when he identifies Nestor as Messenian. As has been pointed out, this presupposes that the knowledge of both the Homeric character and the Heracleid ownership of Messenia via Heracles had already been circulated and conflated. This is a much later date than many other established mythologies. The late date may be partially attributable to the lack of artistic evidence portraying the division of the Peloponnese, but is also indicative of the lateness of this particular part of the myth. Taking Pindar as a starting point for the date of this myth, and assuming a considerable amount of time which allowed it to

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[162] Malkin (1994: 21): "No Herakleid is supposed ever to have ruled the land, nor has any Herakleid had anything to do with the genealogy of the Peloponnese. The conclusion is inevitable: this is not something the Dorian Lakedaimonians cared even to invent."

permeate the wider Greek community, it is possible to consider the mid-sixth century B.C.E. as the approximate starting point of the story of the Heracleidae.

The Argive state was by this time no stranger to using and manipulating mythology to justify its military actions. This is particularly evident in the engineering of the Heracleid line in order to claim ownership over the Argolic plain. The uses of the myth are twofold; while the military role has been pointed to, there are also the ethnic lines which are drawn between the Heracleidae and Dorians, and the rest of Greece. In particular, a very clear line is drawn between the Dorian Argos and the other settlements of the Argive plain, including Mycenae, which identified strongly as Achaean.[163] The identity of the Argives, set apart from those they sought to rule, is blurred in parts and clear-cut in others. This is the result of the difficulty the Argive people had in placing themselves in time and space in comparison with older traditions which were already in circulation. The previous superiority of Mycenae could not be denied; in place of this, the identity of the Argives was closely tied up with manipulation of these legends, adaptations in order to justify their actions in the present day.

Other Argive claims to fame

The Dorian invasion is unique among Greek foundation myths in that it is the only one to focus on the descendants' occupation of their homeland through right of conquest; the Heracleid stemma of the family tree negates this somewhat with the

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[163] Hall (2002a: 54) argues that this demonstrates an effort on the behalf of the smaller towns to separate themselves from Argos. Argos, as seen, propagated descent from Heracles and Perseid genealogy, while Mycenae and Tiryns seem to have resolutely identified themselves as Achaians. This follows on from an earlier observation of Hall's: "[the] Dorians *sensu stricto* are not recorded in the literary tradition at either Mykenai or Tiryns." (Hall 1997: 76).

idea of a "return" to their homeland.[164] This does not change the fact that an invasion was required to gain their rights; rights which other Greek communities laid claim to through claims of autochthony. In order to address this and to establish themselves as older than the Heracleidai myths would have them, the Argives created other genealogies, which served to entrench their *ethnos* further in history.[165] This rest of this section will examine these other myths and the ways in which they attempt to establish Argos' primacy.

In particular, Argive genealogy gave a new ancestor to the Greeks. In this mythos, Phoroneus, son of the river Inakhos, became the first man. This is in direct competition to the more common Greek myth of Deukalion, as the only man to survive a flood sent by Zeus after the world became overpopulated.[166] Although this was not the myth which was adapted panhellenically, Finkelberg comments that "the most prominent of the stemmas that do not derive from Hellen was without doubt that of the river Inachos and his son Phoroneus."[167] In addition, the Argives have a different account of how mankind received fire. Pausanias (2.19.5) records their variant as such: οὐ γάρ τι ὁμολογοῦσι δοῦναι πῦρ Προμηθέα ἀνθπώποις, ἀλλὰ ἐς Φορωνέα τοῦ πυρὸς μετάγειν ἐθέλουσι τὴν εὕρεσιν. For they do not agree that fire

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[164] Hall (1997: 82) suggests that the Dorian aspects of the Heracleidae myth was engineered by the Spartans. He proposes a two stage development of the story – the Dorian aspects coming from Sparta, and the information regarding the Heracleidae from Argos.

[165] It should be emphasised here that the Argives were far from alone in these attempts. All Greek states show efforts to connect the current environment with events in the distant past. For example, Giangulio (2009) gives an extended analysis of the Pisatans' attempts to lay claim to Olympia in the fourth century. They justified their "ownership" through what appears to have been a newly adapted mythology. Giangulio notes that this resulted in problems for the Eleans, even after the Pisatans had been expelled from the control of Olympia: "[The Pisatans] had to be integrated into the Elean political organization, but their newly acquired identity could not be obliterated." (Giangulio 2009: 81).

[166] Mitchell (2007: 64-65) notes that by the sixth century, the Catalogue of Women represents at least one attempt to reconcile the Hellenic genealogies into one comprehensive line of descent. Mitchell believes that the important point is the attempt to reconcile "those who did not easily belong to the main stemma" – in particular, the Inachids and Arcadians.

[167] Finkelberg (2005: 33).

was given to men by Prometheus, but argue that it was found by Phoroneus." There are then several variants of his line, which have been laid out in detail by Hall.[168]

Of particular note is the fact that these lines are all specifically Peloponnesian to begin with. None of them really attempt, as other Greek genealogies do, to include all ethnic groups. We find no "Hellen", "Ion", or "Aeolus". From the Argive genealogies, through different authors, we have Argos, Epidaurus, Tiryns, Nauplios, and Sparton. Mycenae is conspicuous in its absence from these lines.[169]

Further down, there is the shift from the distant, aetiological ancestors, to the heroic and legendary. This is heralded first by the appearance of Io. Io, Iasos' daughter, in some versions a priestess of Hera,[170] becomes a paramour of Zeus. A jealous Hera then transforms her into a cow and sends flies to annoy her. Io wanders from city to city searching for help, but she is unable to gain her original form back, until she reaches Egypt and is transfigured by Zeus. In Egypt, she gives birth to the sons of Zeus, and thus founds the Egyptian race.

According to Herodotos, the Egyptians were considered the oldest of the nations which lived in the Mediterranean. The myth of Io therefore serves not only as a link between Greece and Egypt, but also claims the Egyptians as descended from Argive stock. The implication here is that the Argives laid something of a claim to being the original race in the Mediterranean.[171]

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[168] Hall (1997).

[169] In a variant, Mycene (the nymph) is named as the daughter of Sparton. This is one of the only links between Sparta and Mycenae, which may have aided Tomlinson's conviction that Mycenae was, in fact, a Spartan satellite. The links between Sparta and Mycenae are addressed briefly in chapter four. Pausanias, however, emphatically rejects the idea: ...Σπάρτωνα δ' Φορωνέως παῖδα, θαυμαζοιέν ἄν καὶ ἀρχὴν ἀκούσαντες.... "they [the Spartans] would be amazed, hearing of a Sparton, son of Phoroneus." (2.16.4).

[170] Acusilaus (*FGrHist* 2 f26) says that Io was a priestess at the Heraion.

[171] Davison (1990: 61) places the emphasis at a different point: "Io provides the crucial connection

There is a significant break in the genealogies after Iasos. In order to fill this gap, the Argives appear to have envisaged the Argolid to have been populated by the Pelasgians. The Pelasgians were seen as the "original" Greeks,[172] and their role in mythology can be difficult to define. Hall (1997: 81) makes note of the fact that Pelasgus is autochthonous in the *Catalogue of Women*, but in alternative versions, he can also be the son of Niobe, Triopas, Phoroneus, Argos, or Inachus. Several of these figures are obviously Argive; this may represent an attempt to definitively tie the autochthonous Pelasgians to the Argive genealogical mythology. Pausanias makes note of a grave of Pelasgus at Argos (2.21.1). He also details a little aetiological myth: Τὴν δὲ ἀκρόπολιν Λάρισαν μὲν καλοῦσιν ἀπὸ τῆς Πελασγοῦ θυγατρός, ἀπό ταύτης δὲ καὶ δύο τῶν ἐν Θεσσαλίᾳ πόλεων. The acropolis they call Larisa after the daughter of Pelasgus. There are also two cities named after her in Thessaly." This appears to be a direct challenge to the Thessalian claim to the "original" Pelasgians. Furthermore, it is noted that, after the return of Danaus, Danaus ordered the Pelasgians to change their names to Danaans,[173] thereby firmly linking the Argives with the "original" Greeks.[174]

Several generations after Io, her descendent, Danaus, returns to the Argolid with his fifty daughters. He is escaping from his brother, notably named Aegyptus, who is attempting to marry his fifty sons to Danaus' daughters. Arriving in Argos, Danaus

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between Greece and Egypt – crucial because, if the Egyptians were correctly perceived as having existed 'from the beginning of man', they must be the ancestors of the Greeks despite the clearly non-Greek character of their whole culture."

[172] This is noted by Herodotus at several points.

[173] Euripides *Archelaus* fr. 228 Collard.

[174] A very detailed summary of the evidence for the "history" of Pelasgos is given by Sourvinou-Inwood (2004: 115-119). There are too many points to summarise here, but what is clear from the list is the fact that a large number of the variants of Pelasgos' family, as well as the locale for his adventures, are centred in Argos. Sourvinou-Inwood also makes note in her discussion of the number of times that Pelasgos is referred to specifically as "Argive Pelasgos".

requests the help of the population currently living in the city.[175] Although they agree to help, Danuas' daughters still end up married off to their cousins; on their wedding night, all the daughters kill their husbands, with the exception of one, Hypermestra.[176]

Hypermestra is the grandmother of the next prominent Argive figure, Akrisios.[177] Akrisios is given an oracle that his grandson will kill him. Therefore, he orders his daughter to be locked in an underground chamber, where Zeus nevertheless impregnates her. Discovering that she has given birth, Akrisios then locks her into a chest with her newborn son, Perseus, and sets them adrift upon the sea. They survive and arrive at Seriphos,[178] where Perseus grows up. After his return to Greece, Perseus kills his grandfather by accident, in many accounts in a discus game. (Pausanias 2.16.2) With the oracle having come true, Perseus is too guilty to accept his inheritance, which is Argos. He therefore exchanges his kingdom for the neighbouring one of Tiryns, and while wandering the plain one day comes across a mushroom growing. He founds a city on the spot, naming it Mycenae, "mushrooms". Mycenae was therefore founded by an Argive in voluntary exile.

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[175] Easterling (1985: 3) creates an extended discussion on the concept which is apparent in Athenian tragedy – the idea of Thebes as an "other" city, while Argos is the tragic representation of Athens. Pelasgos is treated often in these versions as a variant of Theseus, Athenian tragedy's "first man".

[176] Hall (1997: 81) details the monuments that the Argives placed in honour of their ancestors at panhellenic sites such as Delphi, and observes that 'the monumental investiture of the Danaid/Perseid genealogy, especially in the extra-local and panhellenic domain of Delphi, must have acted as an effective dam on the fluid and dynamic properties that oral myths often exhibit." This observation, when combined with the fact that the Perseid genealogy is one of the few in Greece that does not appear to have had many variations, suggests that this was the genealogy the Argives used most often outside the Argolid. It is for this reason that the ethnonym Danaans" becomes one of the collective nouns for the Greeks at Troy (cf. chapter three, for the development of the Argive *Iliad*. The emphasis of the Danaid line outside of the Argolid serves also to emphasise the importance the Argives placed on the Heracleidae within the Argolid. Similarly, the fact that a concerted effort is made by Argos to immortalise the Danaid line after the defeat of Mycenae and Tiryns may represent a shift in emphasis. The myth of the Heracleidai, having served its purpose, is cast aside in order to celebrate the more Argive Danaids.

[177] Acrisius is also notable for being one of the brothers who divided the Argolid; see chapter one.

[178] Apollodorus 2.4.1; also Euripides, *Dictys* fr. 330b Collard.

This creation of Mycenae makes it not only the youngest city in the Argolid to be founded, but also the only one without an eponymous *oikistes* which links it to the wider genealogies in the Argolid. Perseus, the founder, is attempting to escape the guilt caused by the killing of his grandfather. Furthermore, the idea that it is an Argive who founds the city compounds the issues. The myth of Perseus founding the city of Mycenae under these circumstances is not the most auspicious.

The final stage in this study is the only one which involves the direct interaction of Mycenae and Argos in genealogical history.[179] This is the birth of Heracles, who, in some versions, was born in Argos; in others, Tiryns; otherwise, in Thebes. He was born later than expected due to the interference of Hera, who, finding out that Zeus was due yet another child from outside the marriage, extracted a promise from him that the first born of two children born that day in the Argolid would be the more powerful. When he had promised this, she then delayed the birth of Heracles, in order that Eurystheus would be born first, in Mycenae. Eurystheus then abused his power, and sends Heracles away on the labours that would come to define him. It may be of note that Heracles was supposed to be born in Argos, while Eurystheus was born in Mycenae.[180]

After the death of Eurystheus, Mycenae is ruled by Atreus, a figure with a whole new set of troubles. Under Atreus' rule, the ruling house of Mycenae tears itself apart (both literally and figuratively). Atreus serves his brother's children to him for

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[179] Finkelberg (2005: 86) disagrees with Hall (1995) and West (1985) that the connection between the Perseids and Pelopids was inauthentic. She argues that the "fault" in the genealogical lines of Mycenae may result from the fact that Mycenaean "kingship" may have been passed along matriarchal lines. (Finkelberg 2005: 87). This theory follows on from an earlier published one; see Finkelberg (1991).

[180] Argos is also subservient to Mycenae at this point in time, though only until the return of the Heracleidae.

dinner; Thyestes seduces Atreus' wife, and both leave a significant curse on the next generation. Agamemnon and Menelaus both inherit large kingdoms in Mycenae and Sparta, but largely lead them into ruin.

While Argos appears to have spared no effort in compiling her own myths and placing herself in an auspicious place in the Argolid, similar pains appear to have been taken to suppress any similar expression of Mycenaean identity.[181] While the appropriation of Homer was taking place, there is an upsurge in offerings left at the Helladic tombs in Mycenae. This has been variously interpreted as an interest in the tales of Homer, or as ancestor worship. It seems more likely that ancestor worship is the answer here.

Conclusion

As the story of the Heracleidae became relatively well known, it came into direct conflict with older, more well established genealogies of the Argive plain.[182] The importance of genealogical information for the Greeks was the orientation in time, place, and with regard to others, that it gave to individuals and societies alike. A great deal of information was communicated through these stages; many communities attempted to link their origins to the gods, and were able to trace lineage through heroes. The Argive plain had several of these links, most of which

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[181] Adshead (1987: 23) suggests that the recitation of the legendary past became an exercise in Argive superiority, which resulted in Argos being set aside from the rest of the Peloponnese. This bias is easily perceived in modern scholarship, but must be treated carefully. There is little indication in Herodotus, for example, that Argos was seen as deliberately setting herself apart from the rest of Greece. The reason given for the lack of participation against Persia is the enmity against Sparta. The only apparent "cutting off" that Argos makes is towards the other settlements in the Argolid.

[182] Athanassaki (2011: 281) details an Aeginetan reaction against Athenian appropriation of their genealogical heroes, the Aiakai. At the same time as Athens begins claiming Aegina's mythical history, Aegina completely refurbishes the temple of Athena Aphaia, updating the pediments to reflect the local origins of these myths. This is the opposite of the expression of identity seen in the Argolid, where Argos not only appropriates the mythology, but also updates the interstate sanctuary to reflect their control of it.

explained the historical kings of Mycenae. In order to successfully appropriate this, and graft on the Heracleid line, several fracture points were made in order to splice the stories together. More importantly, these underline the apparent weakness of the Mycenaean legends: they do not reach as far back into the heroic past as the Argive ones do. The aim of the Argives here is summarised well by Pausanias (2.18.7):

> Ἄργους μὲν δὴ καὶ τῆς ἐν Ἄργει βασιλείας ὀρθότατα ἐμοι δοκεῖν ἠμφισβήτουν, ὅτι ἦν Πελοπίδης ὁ Τισαμενος, οἱ δὲ Ἡρακλεῖδαι τὸ ἀνέκαθέν εἰσι Περσεῖδαι.

> It seems to me that the claim to Argos and the kingship of the Argos was right, because Teisamenus was descended from Pelops, while the Heracleidae were descended from Perseus.

Throughout time, the focus of these lines of genealogy shifted from explanation of Argos to overtaking those of Mycenae. In order to supplement the original stories, other legends began to arise, in which Argos was portrayed as being the very first city of the plain. The heroes of Argos became the founders of Mycenae.[183]

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[183]   Note: in the Argive mythology, Mycenae becomes the last city of Argos, Tiryns and Mycenae to be founded.

Chapter Four: History

The rest of this thesis examines and argues the way in which the Argives manipulated Greek historiography and mythography in order to demonstrate superiority over Mycenae. It remains to be seen how the two states interacted historically, and what the process of events was that led to the final destruction of Mycenae by Argos. This chapter will briefly examine the Bronze Age, and how exactly historical Argos measured up to Mycenae in this period. The focus on material remains will, it is hoped, give an impression of precisely how much of their Archaic identity Argos projected into the past, in comparison with the reality of Bronze Age Argos. This will continue into the Dark Age and Archaic Period. The relationship between the two towns will be studied and specifically focus on how Argos saw Mycenae at this time. Finally, I hope to demonstrate why Argos destroyed Mycenae, and what rights they appeared to think they had to do so.

The Bronze Age Argolid: What was Argos to Mycenae?

Mycenae was the most important state in the Argolid during the Middle Helladic period of the Bronze Age. The mythical memory of this state of affairs would have heavily influenced Argos' later attitudes towards Mycenae. It is also a unique period in the relations between the two towns; this period, in particular, is the one which Argos later attempts to compete with. Therefore, it is worth comparing the political geography of this time with that which happens later. It is also of use to examine the relationship which Mycenae had with Argos and other sites in the Argolid, in an attempt to determine the precise relationship between the Bronze-Age townships.

The political geography of the Argolid in the early Helladic Period is difficult to

recover. There is little clear evidence for a ruling state in the Early Helladic Period, with several preeminent sites in the plain. These consisted of Mycenae, Argos, Prosymna, Lerna, and Midea. Each of these show signs of a significant population which shared the same culture; all sites show the same pattern of burial, and grave goods are similar in all cases.[184] Midea, Prosymna and Mycenae all showcase wealthy graves, indicative of politically important centres.[185] There are also significant cemeteries which have been excavated in Argos, suggesting that, at this point in time, Argos was a relatively strong and independent city.The Argolid seems to have undergone a rapid change in the Middle Helladic period. This is the time of Mycenae's rise to power, and many of the riches found at the site are dated to this period. It is also a time of significant reversals to other states. In particular, Lerna and Prosymna are abandoned, although without significant signs of siege or destruction. At the same time, Argos is depopulated, and within a generation, there is archaeological evidence of only a few families remaining at the site. During the same period, Mycenae's population grew equally rapidly, necessitating new administrative measures, including the storage of food and distribution to palace workers.[186] The Cyclopean fortifications were put in place. The extension of the lower city also belongs to this period. All these factors indicate that Mycenae was

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[184] Caskey (1960).

[185] In addition to the grave goods of Prosymna, there is also a *tholos*, robbed in antiquity (Blegen, 1937). There are also signs of a *megaron*, and a wall "with traces of an ancient gateway" (Alden, 1981: 204). These remains indicate that Prosymna was of considerable power and influence in the early Bronze Age; perhaps more so than Mycenae during this period.

[186] Voutsaki (2010: 99) adds that, as well as basic items, Mycenae almost certainly oversaw the production and distribution of "prestige items", including gold and ivory. The control of these items being limited to one site only suggests that this site was also the head of the other states in the Argolid, and the economy was controlled from there. Voutsaki disagrees with the conclusion that Tiryns and Midea were part of a Myenaean network of sites, seeing them as allies of Mycenae instead of subservient.

attracting the populations from the abandoned centres;[187] it has also been suggested that Mycenae was exerting sanctions on other centres in the Argolid which could have grown to rival it in power.[188] This would account for the abandonment, without destruction, of Lerna, Argos, and Prosymna.

The political geography of the Argive plain in the Bronze Age is, at best, unclear. In particular, the existence of several heavily fortified cities in close proximity to each other obscures the political situation. The fortifications and location of the cities have been used as both an argument for the existence of independent cities, which competed with each other for resources, and alternatively for a system of fortifications set up by one state, which controlled the rest.[189] The decipherment of Linear B is not likely to solve this problem. For the purposes of developing the idea of the historical relationship between Argos and Mycenae, the political system of the Argive plain from the Middle Helladic period will be examined.[190] The evidence of peaceful depopulation of rival centres, and the significant lack of any major signs of conflict between the cities suggests that the population of Argos may have been drawn from these centres.[191] Moreover, those sites fortified are strategic points in the Argolid; this suggests an overarching plan.[192] It is often used as evidence against the

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[187] Kelly (1976: 7).

[188] Voutsaki (2010: 99) agrees with the proposition of a process of centralisation which focused on Mycenae as the centre.

[189] Lord (1939) identifies a series of watchtowers around the Argolid, built in a similar style and dating to the Helladic period. This suggests one controlling center, needing a system of fortifications around its territory.

[190] Papadimitrou and Shelton (2001: 71) describe a jug found in tomb T of Argos as having only one parallel. The parallel belongs to one of the shaft graves of Mycenae. The excavators suggest that it was made by a highly skilled potter, specialized in what they termed "palatial vessels". They conclude that the only likely centre for such production was probably Mycenae.

[191] Whitley (1991) proposes a theory of "big-men" within the Dark Age who would require significant resources in order to build up their wealth. He suggests (1991: 348-9) that in the Dark Age these resources would have been people; the more he could attract to follow him, the "bigger" he got. This theory can also be applied to the Mycenaean state.

[192] The only town which was outside the Argive plain proper was Asine. Asine was fortified with Cyclopean walls, and there are definite links between it and Mycenae. In particular, Alden suggests

idea of a politically unified state that Tiryns was just as heavily walled as Mycenae, and contains the remnants of a palace; these arguments do not tend to take into account the settlement's position. Bronze-Age Tiryns was on the coastline of the Argolid. This suggests that, if the plain was unified, Tiryns functioned as the port of Mycenae. This would account for the extensive measures taken to protect it, and also the establishment of a Mycenaean *megaron* on the acropolis. The port functions of Tiryns would also require a satellite administrative centre to be set up at this location; thus, Linear B tablets have been found at the site of Tiryns and Mycenae, though nowhere else in the Argolid.

Argos' function in this suggested Bronze-Age "Mycenaean" state was limited, primarily due to the size of the town. Although evidence of a wall has been found around the acropolis of the Larissa, and possibly a *megaron* on the Larissa itself, these identifications are doubtful. Not enough remains of the hypothetical *megaron* for a definite statement as to the type of building or its usage. Similarly, while Argos was walled later, it cannot be determined conclusively that these walls were Mycenaean in origin. The existence of any Mycenaean walls in Argos, even with Cyclopean masonry, should be doubted in any case, due to the Argive imitation of Cyclopean walls later in history.[193] Therefore, under the scenario of a Mycenaean state, Argos seems only to have contributed people and labour to Mycenae itself. This caused a drastic decline in the wealth of Argos proper from the Early Helladic Period. The economic situation of the Argive plain remained in this state until the

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that its position was as a point of defence from any invaders attacking Mycenae from that side of the plain. She also notes that there are physical links between Mycenae and Asine (besides the Cyclopean building structures) in the form of "a... Middle Helladic cist grave, containing five pots, with counterparts in Shaft Grave [gamma] at Mycenae." (Alden 1981:243-247).
[193] The obvious example here is the "Mycenaean" terrace at the site of the Heraion.

destruction of the Helladic palaces. After the destruction of Bronze-Age Mycenae, the population of Argos grew rapidly.[194] In contrast, very few attempted to resettle Mycenae. There were some attempts at building small houses on the citadel. Thomatos states that the lack of any major rebuilding or reconstruction of structures such as the *megaron* suggests that "one can reasonably assume that no governing body existed at Mycenae".[195] The only sign of an attempt to revitalise Mycenae is the work in "The House of Frescoes", within the walls of Mycenae. The excavators of this house have recovered part of a fragment of a fresco, showing a woman's head. This is the only evidence for post-Mycenaean art in Bronze Age that exists in Mycenae proper. With the administrators and artistans gone, Mycenae did not show any other signs of an attempt to return to its former glory. In Argos, however, there is evidence for attempts to continue Mycenaean culture. In particular, there are two Late Helladic tombs which remained in continuous usage throughout this period.[196] Another tomb was found with gold jewellery, dated to after the destruction of Mycenae.[197] The strongest indication that the new settlers were from Mycenae is detailed by Kelly:

> One of the most striking archaeological discoveries made in the city was a furnace that was used for smelting ore at least as early as the Protogeometric period, if not slightly earlier. The smiths who toiled at this furnace extracted silver from lead ore by a process known as cupellation, a rather advanced and sophisticated technique. This technique had been known and employed throughout Greece in the Mycenaean period, but, before the discovery of this furnace at Argos, it

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[194] Kelly (1976: 35): "Even as older methods of burial and the old Mycenaean burial grounds continued to be employed, new burial grounds... were opened up."
[195] Thomatos (2006: 186).
[196] Kelly (1976: 15).
[197] Kelly (1976: 31). Kelly also notes that, after this find, no gold is found within the Argolid until the Geometric period. Coldstream (2003: 36) discusses these finds in detail.

has been assumed that knowledge of this process had been lost with the coming of the Dorians.[198]

The revival of Mycenaean techniques, the continuance of burial customs and tombs, and the presence of gold suggest that the newcomers to Argos were Mycenaean refugees. This furthers the idea, expressed earlier, of free exchange of people between Mycenaean centres, indicating that they were all considered to be one state (or, more importantly, considered themselves to be part of one state). In conclusion, during the Bronze Age, Argos, although initially free, declined under the administration of Mycenae. Mycenae, on the other hand, was the administrative and royal centre of the Argolid, which controlled the different cities of the plain and orchestrated building projects and defensive mechanisms. The cost of this was the decline of lesser towns in the Argolid. After the destruction of Mycenae, the survivors withdrew to Argos, which began to expand once again. The recovering Argos was heavily influenced by the remnants of Mycenaean culture. It is these remnants which it later began to react against when building its own identity, as a completely individual state, and rejecting the idea of Mycenae.

Argos and Mycenae in the Geometric Period

Another point in the history of the Argolid which appears to have been taken as fact is the idea of Argos as the head of an empire, which controlled the entire Argolid. This derives from a mention in Herodotus regarding Argos – that she used to control the Argolid down to Cape Malea, as well as the island of Kythera (Hdt. 1.82). Those who believe in this empire often attempt to place it in the eighth century.[199] Those

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[198] Kelly (1976:25)
[199] cf. Sealey (1976: 41) and Coldstream (2003: 154).

who support this empire are often also those who take the enmity between Sparta and Argos for granted; they frequently trace the beginnings of this rivalry to the "empire", which, if it existed, may have blocked Spartan expansion into the Argolid (and vice versa). The memory of this empire seems to be entirely from the Catalogue of Ships. It is unlikely to have a basis in reality.

Besides the hypothetical empire of the Argives, there is very little evident development in the relationship between Mycenae and Argos at this time. This is partially due to a severe dearth of information relating to the period; equally, the obscurity of Mycenae obfuscates any attempt at defining the relationship between the two. There is evidence to suggest that Argos was both wealthy and militarily adept at this time. The discovery of a Geometric grave in Argos, colloquially known as the "Panoply grave", is one of the richest graves dating from this period, and contained an entire set of bronze armour, five gold finger-rings, and the fragments of twelve iron spits. The fact that these could afford to be buried suggests the presence of at least one wealthy family, and the "Panoply Warrior" is linked to the idea of the establishment of an aristocracy at Argos. Argos was also able to defend herself at this point – for surely the Panoply Warrior cannot have been the only fighter for Argos. The presence of firedogs in the Panoply Grave also suggests overseas links, as firedogs have been found only in two other graves in Greece. These are in Crete and Cyprus, and also contained the burials of warriors.

While Argos was obviously growing in wealth and power, Mycenae remained in much the same status. Argos was also beginning to show signs of interest in military matters and expressing her identity at the cost of others, and had the manpower and wealth to support incursions into other areas. It is, however, unlikely that Argos at this time controlled an empire, or that this empire infringed upon the Spartans.

The Archaic Period: Developments in the Argolid

Argos emerges from the Dark Ages as one of the foremost states in Greece. As demonstrated in detail by the previous chapters, she was wealthy, aggressive, and with a distinct idea of her own identity and the ways in which the other states in the Argolid were to fit around it. The building programme at the Heraion, the attacks on Asine and the story of the "reuniting of the lot of Temenus" all serve to indicate her power. It has been suggested that during this time, Argos was the most powerful state in the Peloponnese, with Sparta second. Material remains from Argos can be scarce in comparison with the recorded power and the length of time that Argos was active, however, archaeological attempts to recover further information have been hampered by the modern town of Argos, built directly above the site of the ancient city.

At the beginning of the Archaic Period, Argive military aggression grew stronger in the Argolid, and there is clear interest on the part of Argos to bring about a synoicism of the settlements in the Argive plain.[200] During this period, we see the rebuilding of the Heraion, the beginning of the circulation of the *Iliad*, and aggression against smaller settlements in and around Argos. The destruction of Asine belongs to this period, as does another, smaller scale destruction in Nauplia. Tiryns appears to remain independent and free from harassment for the majority of

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[200] The destruction of Asine, discussed in detail in chapter one, belongs to this period. Although Herodotus attributes the destruction of Asine to the fact that it aided Sparta in attacking Argos, the archaeological record suggests that Asine was resolutely anti-Argive. While the other settlements in the Argolid followed the lead of Argos in pottery and metalwork, Asine adopts none of these conventions. Instead, there is a distinct Attic influence in artwork. Coldstream (2003: 142) suggests that this was adopted as a deliberate refusal of Argive rule, which probably contributed to Argos' dislike of Asine. Furthermore, the emphasis on Asinean Dryopean heritage appears to have received a great deal of negative attention in the Argolid. Hall (1997: 75) notes that Dryopeans in Messenia (the refugees resettled by Sparta, after the destruction of Asine) celebrated their heritage. In contrast, those who had resettled in parts of the Argolid (in Hermion and Troizen) appear to have been ashamed of their ethnic identity.

this period. The independence of Tiryns ends at approximately 500 B.C.E., when the city was annexed by Argos and abandoned.

The reports of Herodotus and other ancient sources are often cited for this period, as the only literary record. Recently, though, scholars such as Kelly and Hall have questioned the likelihood of several of the events in Herodotus, particularly the focus on unlikely events such as the battle of Hysiai, in which a chosen three hundred champions from Argos and Sparta battle. Herodotus does seem to have an interest in portraying Argos and Sparta as archenemies throughout history, but this seems genuinely unlikely at this period in time. Argos' ambitions were focused more inward, with perhaps the exception of Pheidon of Argos, one of the most famous tyrants in Greek history. Although Pheidon had little to do within the Argolid itself, he is credited with the reuniting of the lot of Temenus. This operation would have involved a fair amount of campaigning within the Argolid, particularly against towns such as Tiryns, Mycenae, and Epidaurus.[201] Therefore, I agree with Kelly in the idea that Sparta and Argos were not at this time expending the majority of their strength on the other.[202]

Argos had at the same time begun to assert herself in a different style. Through the Kalaurian Amphictyony, which had begun as a union of states which excluded Argos, she demonstrated her power by using the Amphictony to her own benefit.

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[201] There are definite links between Mycenae and Argos (as well as Tiryns). Coldstream (2003: 153) mentions that the pottery at each centre shows very little variation in the makeup of the clay, and that discoveries of large vases at Mycenae and Tiryns match those that have been found in Argos.

[202] Figueira (1983: 15) argues that Sparta and Argos antagonised each other by causing dissent within smaller states that the other was dependent on. In this model of thought, Argos caused trouble between Sparta and Messenia, and Sparta attempted to separate Argos and her satellite states. Figuiera suggests that Nauplia was destroyed by Argos due to Nauplia's connections with Sparta. Tomlinson, on the other hand, argues for an alliance between Sparta and Mycenae. Tomlinson argues that a constant war between Sparta and Argos, as is often suggested by historians, did not happen. In his view, it is more likely that Sparta instead would have incited small rebellions in the towns of the Argolid, against Argos, rather than sustaining a centuries-long war.

This included levying fines on Sicyon and Aegina for assisting in an attack on Argos. The fact that Argos had the right to levy these fines, and the two states were obliged to pay, suggests a far-reaching influence felt throughout the Argolid and into the Saronic Gulf.[203]

What was Mycenae to Argos ?

There are very few extant literary sources that shed any light on the relationship between Argos and Mycenae before the destruction of the latter. This has made it very difficult to analyse what relationship they had to one another. The earliest source which may refer to Argos and Mycenae is Herodotus. After relating the story of the battle between the Argives and the Spartans at Sepeia (c. 494 B.C.E.), which resulted in the loss of the majority of Argive citizens).[204] Herodotus gives the following account:

> Ἄργος δὲ ἀνδρῶν ἐχηρώθη οὕτω ὥστε οἱ δοῦλοι αὐτῶν ἔσχον πάντα τὰ πρήγματα ἄρχοντές τε καὶ διέποντες, ἐς ὃ ἐπήβησαν οἱ τῶν ἀπολομένων παῖδες. Ἔπειτέ σφεας οὗτοι ἀνακτώμενοι ὀπίσω ἐς ἑωυτοὺς τὸ Ἄργος ἐξέβαλον· ἐξωθεόμενοι δὲ οἱ δοῦλοι μάχῃ ἔσχον Τίρυνθα. Τέως μὲν δή σφι ἦν ἄρθμια ἐς ἀλλήλους, ἔπειτε δὲ ἐς τοὺς δούλους ἦλθε ἀνὴρ μάντις Κλέανδρος, γένος ἐὼν Φιγαλεὺς ἀπ' Ἀρκαδίης· οὗτος τοὺς δούλους ἀνέγνωσε ἐπιθέσθαι τοῖσι δεσπότῃσι. Ἐκ τούτου δὲ πόλεμός σφι ἦν ἐπὶ χρόνον συχνόν, ἐς ὃ δὴ μόγις οἱ Ἀργεῖοι ἐπεκράτησαν. (Hdt. 6.83.1-10).

> Argos, due to these events, was deprived of men, and so the affairs of state were all managed by the slaves, until the children of the men who had been killed came of age. They regained again for themselves control and cast them [the former slaves] out of Argos, and the slaves took

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[203] For Argos' meddling in Sicyonian affairs, see also the problems this caused with Kleisthenes, discussed in the chapter on Homer.
[204] Herodotus 5.42-48 says 6,000 citizens were killed at Sepeia; Pausanias 3.4.1 says 5,000.

Tiryns for themselves through fighting. For a while these two were peaceful, but a certain man, Cleandrus, a priest, came from Phigalea in Arcadia, and he persuaded the slaves to attack their masters. From this came a long and hard battle, and only scarcely did the Argives prevail.

As this story is told within Herodotus as a demonstration of the hatred Argos and Sparta had for each other, he does not elaborate on the identities of the slaves concerned. As it stands, the story is unlikely; the complete handing over of a city to slaves is unparalleled. Fortunately, there is another source which mentions the story of the freedom of the slaves. Aristotle's very brief mention runs:

...καὶ ἐν Ἄργει τῶν ἐν τῇ ἑβδόμῃ ἀπολομένων ὑπὸ Κλεομένους τοῦ Λάκωνος ἠναγκάσθησαν παραδέξασθαι τῶν περιοίκων τινάς... (Arist. *Politics* 5.2.8)

"…and at Argos when the seventh tribe had been destroyed by the Spartan Cleomenes the citizens were compelled to admit some of the surrounding people…"[205]

Although only a short reference, this appears to be the same story that Herodotus is telling, but with a significant difference: the use of περιοίκων , "those who live around", in place of οἱ δοῦλοι, "the slaves". This is obviously a considerably difference; not only is the variant provided by Aristotle a far more likely situation, but the choice of words also suggests the possibility that the *perioikoi* who were given a share of the citizenship were in fact those who lived in communities such as Mycenae and Tiryns. The word "perioikoi" also suggests a certain dependence upon Argos from these communities. [206] Therefore, from Aristotle and Herodotus' comments, this section will trace the potential relationship which existed between

[205] trans. Rackham (1932).
[206] Figuiera (1983: 28) suggests that Aegina was a perioikic community to Argos prior to 650 B.C.E. After this point, Argos lost control of Aegina, and Epidaurus attempted to take control of it.

Argos and Mycenae. The primary aim is to attempt to establish whether or not

Mycenae was free, dependent on, or something of a serf or "slave" community to

Argos at approximately 494 B.C.E. There are no inscriptions or records from either

Argos or Mycenae that explicitly state what the Argive view of the Mycenaeans was.

As part of the dearth of information here, it is also unknown as to whether the

Mycenaeans owned any of the land surrounding Mycenae itself, or whether they

were living on land which belonged to others. There are other known examples from

Greece of a slave community, who were ethnically Greek, and lived on the estates of

their masters in exchange for cultivation of the land. These communities were the

Penestai group of Thessaly, and the *helot* class of Sparta. Sparta's *helot* population

was made up of two different groups. One of these groups was the conquered

Messenians;[207] the other, a subjugated group within Laconia itself.[208] Birgalis'

definition of the helots is as follows: "The helots were a homogenous peasant

population who, although they did not belong to the community, were not foreigners

brought to Sparta from another part of Greece. They spoke the same language,

reproduced themselves as a class, and were primarily farmers... This demonstrates

some kind of settlement between *homoioi* and helots, as well as a direct and common

economic interest... When we say, therefore, that the helots were public slaves we

mean that they did not belong individually to each *homoios*."[209] This situation may

be close to the way in which Argos viewed the Mycenaeans.[210] It is, however,

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[207] Discussion of mythological justification for the status of these Messenians was discussed in chapter two.
[208] Cartledge (2003: 29).
[209] Birgalis (2004:257).
[210] Hall (1997: 72): "Ethnic ascription, which is predicated on notions of descent and belonging, thus represents a particularly efficacious tool within strategies of inclusion in, or exclusion from, the apparatus of power. It is not impossible, then, that Argive citizens justified the inferior status of the *douloi* by assigning them to a pre-Dorian ethnic group, without thereby subscribing to the belief that all *douloi* really were genetically descended from the Bronze Age populations of the Argolid,

extremely doubtful that the Mycenaeans were under as heavy a yoke as the helots;[211] even if we dismiss the stories of overt Spartan violence towards the helots as an Athenian invention, it is difficult to believe that the Mycenaeans could have been seen as the property of the Argives. Birgalis, additionally, does not note a difference between helots and Messenian helots, who were supposed to have been treated better by the Spartans than the simple helots were.[212] Either one of these links could explain Herodotus' use of the word *douloi* – a confusion of "slaves" and helots. [213]

Hall summarises Willetts' (1959) argument as that Herodotus' *douloi* are the same as Aristotle's *perioikoi*,[214] and should be equated with the Gymnetes – a class of tribute paying peasants much like the helots of Lakonia, the Penestai of Thessaly, or the Clarotae of Crete, who, according to Pollux, possessed a status "between free and slave." He goes on to state that Herodotus' account cannot be interpreted as an extension of citizenship to the neighbouring free communities of Argos, as it suggests a synoicism that did not happen within the Argolid until after the destructions of Mycenae and Tiryns. Willetts (1959: 506) states that the population of Argive slaves were pre-Dorian. The idea that the Mycenaeans were basically serfs to the Argive population is a more workable one than the idea of a status of helots. This suggestion is assisted by Pausanias' identification of the defenders of the city of Argos post-Sepeia as the οἰκέται, the "house-slaves" (2.20.9). In this scenario, the Mycenaeans would remain in basic control of their city, but be unable to own land. Their role in the Argolid would be strictly as peasantry, and to be used as

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[211] Hall (2002a: 139) "[*Perioikoi*] can sometimes denote agricultural slaves of serfs, but by analogy with the situation in Lakonia… the term seems to define surrounding populations in some condition of dependency upon Thessaly.".

[212] Theopompos (fr. 115 FgrH 122) states that the helots were Achaeans.

[213] Willetts (1959: 496) comments that Aristotle's use of the word *perioikoi* is limited to a group which would be defined in modern terms as "serfs".

[214] Hall (1997: 71).

agricultural labour on Argive land. This appears to have been the role that the Messenians occupied in Sparta.[215] Therefore, they were not considered to have been as lowly as the helotry, and they could not have been commanded by their masters, but Spartan interference in their affairs ultimately resulted in their inability to rebel or gather. There are parallels in the Gortyn legal code (7.1-10) which suggests that free women were allowed to marry serfs, and in the absence of legitimate heirs, the serf inherited the property of his wife.[216] Furthermore, Pollux identifies a class of slaves at Argos that were the same status as those in Laconia.

The final option as to the historical record of Mycenae and Argos is to suggest that Mycenae was in fact completely free from Argive control. Although poor and lacking power within the state, this would have allowed the Mycenaeans free rule of their own city and territory. There is some limited evidence for this; more so, in fact, than the other options. In particular is a surviving inscription which comes from the citadel at Mycenae, referring to a *demiurgos* making a decision "in the place of the priest of the Perseia". The existence of the *demiurgos* in the community would be quite uncommon in a serf population. But even here the evidence is unclear – the *demiurgos* is only to judge the issue before him if the priest of the Perseia is not available. Cartledge describes *perioikic* communities as groups of settlements which were satellites to the primary centre of an area. These groups were generally self-governing and given the title of *polis*, but did not have a say in the policies of the major centre. *Perioikoi*, therefore, were "formally subjects… for military and

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[215] Cartledge (1980: 94) notes that the "city" of Sparta had not been completely "synoecised" and each of its five constituent villages still retained something of an independent identity. He infers this from Thucydides 1.10.2. There may have been a similar state in Argos until the destructions of Tiryns and Mycenae; the Argive plain was not fully synoecised until this point.
[216] Discussed in detail in Willets (1959: 498).

economic purposes above all."[217]

In the end, while there is evidence for Mycenae to have been reduced to a perioikic (or "slave") community to the Argives, the primary evidence for Argive rule over Mycenae is the reason that they presented for the destruction of Mycenae: that they had disobeyed them by aiding the Greeks in the defence against the Persians. Although it is difficult to discern the true political relationship between Argos and Mycenae, it is clear that by underlining ethnic differences, the Argives were ensuring that a dichotomy between the positions of the two *poleis* was created. This policy is consistent with their other actions to undermine the Mycenaeans' development of their own ethnic identity.

The Final Countdown: Why did Argos destroy Mycenae?

While it is unclear whether or not Mycenae was entirely free from the rule of the Argives, later events suggest that they were not. The later view of the reason for Argos' attack on Mycenae is given by Pausanias:

> Μυκήνας δὲ Ἀργεῖοι καθεῖλον ὑπὸ ζηλοτυπίας. ἡσυχαζόντων γὰρ τῶν Ἀργείων κατὰ τὴν ἐπιστρατείαν τοῦ Μήδου, Μυκηναῖοι πέμπουσιν ἐς Θερμοπύλας ὀγδοήκοντα ἄνδρας, οἳ Λακεδαιμονίοις μετέσχον τοῦ ἔργου· τοῦτο ἤνεγκεν ὄλεθρόν σφισι τὸ φιλοτίμημα παροξῦναν Ἀργείους (Paus. 2.16.5)

> The Argives destroyed Mycenae due to jealousy, for although the Argives stayed quiet in the march against the Persians [i.e. did not march against the Persians], the Mycenaeans sent eighty men to Thermopylae, who shared in the battles of the Lakedaimonians. This act of pride irritated the Argives, and brought destruction upon them [the Mycenaeans].

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[217] Cartledge (2003: 75).

There is no suggestion here that the Argives exercised official control over Mycenae; but it is unlikely that Mycenae's actions would have provoked Argos so much if there had not been some perceived rule. Mycenae acting independently and contrary to Argos' own policy is therefore the most likely cause of Mycenae's punishment.

Although Mycenae had just aided the other states, there was no defence offered to them, suggesting that Argos did indeed have the right to exact punishment how they saw fit. The question remains: what was Mycenae's status at this point in time.

Mycenae had been previously reduced to a status which was perioikic in nature. It does appear, however, that just before the Persian War took place, Argos suffered a reversal in her fortunes, which weakened the *polis*. This may have been due to a major defeat, as Herodotus 6.79-86) places it, or possibly a change in governance for the city. Mycenae may have taken this chance to attempt to break free and become entirely independent from Argos. At this point in time, there are small rebellions all over the Argolid; Epidaurus apparently began manufacturing counter-myths to the Argive propaganda,[218] and Aegina and Sicyon also begin displaying rivalry between each other (Hdt. 6.95), suggesting that they were no longer concerned with Argos, and Argos had little control over political relations between the two.

The actions which Mycenae took also point to an independent village. The claim which they made to the Heraion and games of Hera certainly indicates a degree of independence and also a certain wilfulness to disregard the wishes of Argos, even when stated explicitly. The primary point which resulted in their destruction was certainly a disregard of Argos. After the Greeks and Persians had attempted to gain Argos' favour, she opted to remain neutral in the Persian Wars. After this, Mycenae

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[218] Hall (2001: 61).

still sent a contingent of men to Plataea, and was subsequently honoured for this by an inscription in the Snake Column in Delphi, which was set up to commemorate the allies. It is this act which Pausanias suggests as the one which finally caused Argos to react against the village. Mycenae, in the end, was beseiged by the Argives and, when surrendered, all were sold into slavery by their captor. The Cyclopean walls, heavily damaged in the siege, were later repaired by the Argives. After this, Mycenae was occupied only by Argives, and the final stage in the dominance of Argos over Mycenae was finally complete.

Conclusion

By the time of Mycenae's destruction in 468, Argos had become a powerful state within the Argolid. Throughout her history, however, she demonstrated a "superiority complex" which coloured not only the way in which she presented herself to the other Greek states, but also the interactions she had within the Argolic plain. In order to legitimise the rule of the plain, Argos created a complex web of mythology and genealogy. Due to the lack of an "official" history, which Argos appears to have been acutely aware of, many of the myths which legitimise Argive rule are heavily adapted Mycenaean myths and legends. In the creation of their own ethnic identity, the Argives appropriated Mycenaean identity and twisted it in order to establish a basis of rule over the remnants of the town. This policy was supported by the gradual take-over of the Argive plain and shows of military strength against those within the plain who stood against Argos.

This thesis has argued that a great deal of what is considered "Greek culture" by classicists of the last few centuries has, in fact, resulted from Argos' own perceived competition with the ruins of Mycenae. A great deal of the myths and legends of "Greece" are in fact Argive, and this thesis sets out to trace the development of these myths, from their inception (and the competing myths from Mycenae and Thebes), to their reception by Alexandrian scholars.

The gradual separation of Mycenae from mythological history began with the Argive appropriation of the Heraion, a major sanctuary which was probably founded originally in order to serve the inhabitants of the plain. By taking this over, rebuilding it, and building their own new identity as the beloved city of Hera, Argos

effectively separated Mycenae from a major part of their own heritage. In order to legitimise their claims, Argos spent a great deal of money to build a new temple, modernising the site, and created links within mythology to "their" shrine. At this point, they were still unsure of their own standing, and attempted to make their temple appear older than it was, by the building of the "Cyclopean" terrace. The appearance of this terrace ensured that it was considered to have been a Helladic foundation. This illusion was only destroyed upon complete excavation of the terrace, at which point its true age was established from the finds of Geometric sherds below the fill of the terrace. The tendency of the Argives to legitimise their rule through the control of religion within the Argolid was demonstrated also by their seizing of the shrine of Apollo Pytheius. As in the case of Hera, Apollo rapidly became associated with the city of Argos, and the "premium" temple within the Argolid was established at Argos. This ensured that the cult was associated always with Argos, instead of Asine (the original centre). The complete destruction of Asine also ensured a lack of challenge to this new form of expression.

The physical manifestations of an attempt to create an Argive identity that was older, and better, than that of Mycenae was the less sophisticated expression of power and control. In order to compete with the legends which surrounded Mycenae, Argos adapted them heavily. This resulted in a great deal of influence over the development of the Homeric texts, through both direct and indirect control of the oral tradition in its early stages of formation. Partially, this can be shown through literary evidence – the ethnonyms of the texts reflect Argive origin and concerns, and there is evidence to suggest that other areas of Greece were aware of the Argive traditions. Centuries later, Pausanias was able to record some of the pride the Argives felt with their

association with Homer, commemorated by monuments and local variants of the life of Homer.

Tracing the development of the Homeric texts throughout their history has suggested that, while the Argives influenced the story of the *Iliad* in particular during the early stages of its transmission, the heavy Argolic flavour of our modern text is due in part to politics in the fifth century. At this stage, it has been argued, the Athenians began to control the text and tradition. By this point, Argos had become inextricably linked with Homer, and it is partially due to this that the Athenians turned to their version when creating the hypothetical Panathenaic text. Through centuries, the Athenian text gradually grew more fixed. When the Alexandrian scholars began editing and collating the texts, their attempts to create one true version of the Homeric texts were in turn influenced by the similarities between the Athenian (the proposed *koine*) and Argive texts. Therefore, the Argive tradition once again had some prominence during the creation of a fixed text. This Alexandrian text is the one which survives today. The interference of the Athenians and Argives with texts is paralleled by the pseudo-Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women*. The fragments of this also show considerable manipulation by Athens. It is not unlikely that the Argives similarly had interest in manipulating this text.

The Catalogue of Women is an example of genealogical poetry. The Argives, in order to compete with the Mycenaean sagas, created reactionary genealogies. For the most part, these stretched beyond the established Mycenaean lineages, and incorporated the previous histories as part of an extended Argive mythical history. Through the creation of stories such as the Heracleidae, the Argives legitimised their attempts to synoecize the plain of Argos.

The final piece in the puzzle that is the relationship between Argos and Mycenae is the historical situation. While Mycenae was at the height of its powers, it appears that a great deal of power was exerted by it over the plain. This led to the steady decline of the previously equal states within the Argolid, and resulted in the complete abandonment of Prosymna and Lerna. The relatively peaceful declines indicate that some sort of economic factor was in play, which could only have come from Mycenae.

After the destructions at Mycenae, Argos began to grow in power, and appears to have exerted even more control over Mycenae. The status of the Mycenaeans was reduced to that of perioikoi, and, even then, it appears that they were viewed with considerable suspicion. Although Pausanias states that Mycenae was destroyed by the Argives for their show of independence in sending men against Persia, there are signs that other factors were in play. It appears that Argos was temporarily weakened and may have lost control of the perioikic communities. During this period, Mycenae became somewhat arrogant, and demanded back the rights to the Heraion sanctuary, demonstrating intent to re-master their own identity. These demands, in conjugation with the stubborn refusal of Mycenae to acknowledge the hegemony of the Argives, and their refusal to acknowledge the identity manufactured by the Argives, was almost certainly the true reason for the destruction in 468.

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