



Mycenae

From Myth to History

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- The extraordinary story of the loss and rediscovery of the city that fought Troy, told through archaeology, literature, and poetic black-and-white photography

The Mycenaean civilisation flourished more than 800 years before the classical Greeks, with a complex society, strong artistic tendencies, and a distinct system of writing. Famous for its lion gate and citadel, Mycenae was long believed to be the city that fought Troy in Homer's epic, *The Iliad*. But after flourishing nearly three thousand years ago the society vanished, becoming nothing more than a legend. *Mycenae: From Myth to History* brings readers into the heart of this mystery, as it was being solved, through lively text, stunning photographs, and an original take on Greek history and mythology. Using the pivotal summer of 1954 – a year after Linear B, the mysterious language present on all Mycenaean artifacts, was decoded – as her entry point, author Athina Cacouri reveals the fascinating archaeological history of the site, from the pioneering work of Heinrich Schliemann to the discovery of hundreds of 'seal stones', marked with an unknown language. Cacouri's text is complemented by the photographs of Robert A. McCabe, whose lens captured the site before it was opened to the general public, giving his atmospheric images a poignant, unmatched immediacy. An original play, commissioned for this volume from renowned American playwright John Guare, sets the mythological stage for the archaeological discoveries to come by recounting the history of the House of Atreus and King Agamemnon's Trojan War, while commentary on the photographs from archaeologist Lisa Wace French ties those myths to very real discoveries at the site. An essay by Daniel Fallu, detailing the importance of Mycenae's geology, rounds out this unparalleled survey of one of Greece's treasured archaeological sites. A multifaceted look at a brilliant civilisation and the tireless work that led to its rediscovery, *Mycenae* is a fast-paced, lushly illustrated exploration of one of the most intriguing mysteries of antiquity that is sure to delight lovers of classical civilisation, photography, and travel.