

# History of the lion gate in mycenae



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I have chosen to write about Lion Gate. Lion Gate is a historic archeological site within the pre-historic city-state Mycenae in southern Greece. When we look at sculptures from the history, including those from the Bronze Age at about the 13th century, around 1250 BC. Lion Gate stands out from all the other sculptures of pre-historic time. Since Lion Gate was first discovered by Heinrich Schliemann in 1840 it has become iconic. Lions Gate is one of the oldest immense structures in all of Europe and is one of the largest sculptures ever created in prehistoric Aegean, and is one of the only one to survive the looters that moved through the area over time. Lion Gate was the first thing someone would see when they were approaching the city of Mycenae. Lion Gate stands at main entrance of the citadel of Mycenae and it is named for the two relief sculpture of lions that stand facing each other in the heraldic position, the lions stand 3 feet tall above the entrance are forming a triangle with one single column separating them. The heads of the lions are missing from the sculptures, but scholars think the lion head could have been made of metal at the time they were created. The heads of the lions were taken a long time ago by looters. The Mycenaean people created Lions Gate using both Cyclopean and Ashlar masonry. Cyclopean masonry is a term used to describe a type of megalithic architecture entailing the working of unusually large blocks of stone, often for the construction of fortifications. (brown. edu) Ashlar masonry is made when stone is tooled with proper bond. (Webster). Scholars believe that a large pendulum saw and a smaller convex blade were used in the manufacturing process. (Blackwell pg 451). The opening for the gate is about ten feet by ten feet and is thought to be an example of post-and lintel construction. (brown. edu)

The Mycenaean people lived in the Bronze Age from about the 15th century to the 13th century BCE in the pre-historic Aegean. (Cartwright) Mycenae know for its vast Greek civilization with that had a power kingdom in its time. The city-state of Mycenae is one of the oldest cities in the world and it is known for its rich culture, myths and history. The Mycenaean civilization was located on the Greek mainland at the southern peninsula of Greece. The Lion Gates to me represents a time of great power and prestige for the Mycenaean civilization. The Mycenaean people ruled the Aegean during the Bronze Age and I feel that this was their way of showing just how powerful they were at the time. Still, to this day nothing better represents power and strength and more than lions do. The two lions could be representing the very power people the Mycenaean kingdom. They were known for having a very strong cultural beliefs system and a militaristic attitude toward the civilization around them. One could think that Mycenaean people wanted to show others visitors to their city that visit the city -state of Mycenae and that the Mycenaean people were all to be taken seriously. Lions have used though history to create sense of intimidation by kings and rulers of different civilization over time. I am not able to think of a better way to show other how powerful you are, and then by to having two lions over an entrance people must walk though to get into your kingdom. Another thought is that the lion also may have also represented guards watching over the Mycenaean people as they come and go from the city-state Mycenae.

When the Mycenaean people were building Lion Gate they were doing so to help create a focal point that funneled all incoming people though one area at the main entrance. It helped create a defensible space to protect the city

from possible attacks by giving the Mycenaean people the advantage over people that approached the city by foot. Lion Gate set the discovered Lion Gate has become an iconic representation the whole archaeological site of Mycenae. Lions Gate is one of the oldest monumental structures in Europe and is one of the largest sculptures ever created in prehistoric Aegean, and is one of the only one to survive over time and the looters that moved through the area. Lion Gate was the first thing one seen leading to the city of Mycenae. Lions Gate stands at main entrance of the citadel of Mycenae and it is named for the two relief sculpture of lions that stand facing each other in the heraldic position, the lions stand 3 feet tall above the entrance in forming a triangle with a single column separating them. The heads of the lions are missing from the sculptures, but scholars think that they could have been made of metal at the time they were created. The heads of the lions were taken a long time ago by looters. The Mycenaean people created Lions Gate using both Cyclopean and Ashlar masonry. Cyclopean masonry is a term used to describe a type of megalithic architecture entailing the working of unusually large blocks of stone, often for the construction of fortifications. (brown. edu) Ashlar masonry is made when stone is tooled with proper bond. (Webster). Scholars believe that a large pendulum saw and a smaller convex blade were used in the manufacturing process. (Blackwell pg 451). The opening for the gate is about ten feet by ten feet and is thought to be an example of post-and lintel construction. (brown. edu)

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