

SOME ASPECTS CONCERNING LOCAL PECULIARITIES OF THE MYCENAEAN CHAMBER TOMBS (*)

In his study on "The Last Mycenaeans and Their Successors" Desborough states that "the chamber tomb is characteristic of every district inhabited by the Mycenaeans" (p. 32). Indeed, it seems to be generally agreed that this type of tomb still is the most frequent and popular during the Late Bronze Age, representing a very high percentage of the total number of known tombs. Chamber tombs are found, often in groups, less frequently in extensive cemeteries, in every part of the Mycenaean world.

Though I have recently systematically studied these tombs ¹ there is more to be said on their local peculiarities of construction and burial customs. This paper is concerned with this topic.

Chamber tombs are underground graves, consisting of an open passage (the dromos), cut into soft rock, leading through an often narrower stomion blocked by a dry-stone wall into the hollowed-out chamber.

This paper is in three sections. I first deal with local peculiarities of construction, then with those related to burial customs. The final section is a discussion of their significance.

A. Local peculiarities of construction are seen in the following instances :

1. Tombs at Volimidia (Messenia) ², Mycenae ³, Palaiokastro (Arcadia) ⁴ and Pellanes (Laconia) ⁵ have tholos, or beehive-like chambers (Pl. XL, a-b). The Volimidia chamber

(*) I am deeply grateful to Dr. H. Catling for checking my English text and for some valuable suggestions.

(1) In my Ph. D. thesis, *Mycenaean Chamber Tombs : Construction and Burial Customs*, University of London, 1975 (forthcoming in *SIMA*). Hereafter *MCT*.

(2) Sp. MARINATOS, *PraktArchEt* 1952, p. 473 sq.; 1953, p. 238 sq.; 1954, p. 299 sq.; *Ergon* 1960, p. 146 sq.; *ArchDelt* 1960, p. 112-113; Sp. IAKOVIDIS, Χαριστήριον εἰς 'Α. Κ. 'Ορλάνδον Β', p. 98.

(3) XENAKI-SAKELLARIOU, n. 120, p. 37 (Tombs 70, 83, 84, west of Kato Pegadi).

(4) *BCH* 80 (1956), p. 537-538; 82 (1958), p. 717.

(5) K. ROMAIOS, KARACHALIOS, *ArchDelt* 10 (1926), p. 41 sq.; *JHS* 47 (1927), p. 257; H. WATERHOUSE, R. HOPE SIMPSON, *BSA* 56 (1961), p. 125 sq.

tombs are closely similar to the tholos tombs at Malthi ⁶, Kakovatos ⁷ and others in the SW Peloponnese ⁸ in having (a) circular chambers with a slight compression in the front walls, (b) a lofty beehive-shaped vault the top of which ends in a small unsymmetrical cavity making the roof weaker and (c) relatively large dimensions varying in diameter between 4.28 and 4.93 m. All three features, especially (a), serve no real function and can most probably be explained as imitations of the tholos tombs.

These tombs have been discussed in detail by Iakovides ⁹, who against Marinatos ¹⁰, has convincingly suggested that they imitate the local Messenian tholos tombs in their "absolute similarity" and by being either later or roughly contemporary (LH I) ¹¹.

The imitation of tholos tombs is also to be seen in the three LH II, IIIA-B ¹² chamber tombs (θολοειδεῖς) at Mycenae (70, 83, 84) and those at Palaioikastro and Pellanes through the overall shape of their chamber. Noteworthy is the spiral cutting of the roofs at Pellanes, recalling the successive rings of stones observable in the interior of the tholos tombs.

These tombs have no parallels elsewhere on the mainland; I know only one example, LM IIIA2, from Crete at Vasilika Anoyia ¹³. It is difficult to draw any conclusions about their origins; there is too much difference in date between the Volimidhia, Mycenae T. 70, 84 (LH I-II) and the Pellanes (LH IIIA-B) and Palaioikastro (LH IIIC) tombs to claim a common source. But we can follow Iakovides' view ¹⁴ that the Volimidhia, and possibly the Mycenae, Palaioikastro and Pellanes tombs imitated earlier or contemporary local tholos tombs (e.g. tholoi at Malthi, the Cyclopean tomb at Mycenae, the Vapheio tholos in Laconia) whose appearance must be traced to Crete where they were known and used "a century or more before the earliest tholos tombs yet discovered on the mainland" ¹⁵.

2. The unique construction in the LH IIIC chamber tombs of Kephallenia at Kontogenada, Metaxata and Parisata has the lower two-thirds of the chamber hewn in the

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- (6) N. VALMIN, *The Swedish Messenia Expedition* (1938), p. 207 sq., fig. 35-47.
 - (7) W. DÖRPFELD, *AM* 33 (1908), p. 295 sq.; K. MÜLLER, *AM* 34 (1909), p. 269 sq.
 - (8) See e.g. *Palace of Nestor* III, p. 73 sq. (Kato Englianos); *Palace of Nestor* III, p. 134 sq. (Vagenas); Sp. MARINATOS, *PraktArchEt* 1956, p. 203 sq.; 1957, p. 118 sq.; *Antiquity* 31 (1957), p. 97 sq.; G.S. KORRES, *PraktArchEt* 1974, p. 139 sq. (Gouvalari).
 - (9) Χαριστήριον εἰς 'Α. Κ. 'Ορλάνδον Β', p. 98.
 - (10) *PraktArchEt* 1952, p. 494; *Das Altertum* 1 (1955), p. 142; *ArchDelt* 16 (1960), p. 113; *KretChron* 16 (1963), p. 179; *Ergon* 1960, p. 148.
 - (11) IAKOVIDIS, *op. cit.*, p. 111.
 - (12) According to Mrs Sakellariou's suggested chronology, see XENAKI-SAKELLARIOU, p. 318-319.
 - (13) *BSA* 33 (1932-33), p. 88. See also PINI, *Beiträge*, p. 93, fig. 42.
 - (14) IAKOVIDIS, *op. cit.* Cf. also MYLONAS, *Mycenaeae Age*, p. 132; PELON, *Tholoi*, p. 443 sq.; O.T.P.K. DICKINSON, *BSA* 78 (1983), p. 60.
 - (15) BRANIGAN, *Tombs*, p. 158.

rock, the top one-third built up in stone in the fashion of a tholos ¹⁶ (Pl. XLI, a).

These chamber tombs are only paralleled at Palaiokastros-Trypes in Arcadia ¹⁷ and perhaps at Volimidhia in Triphylia ¹⁸. They must be explained as a peculiarity of the island. They may have been dictated by the need to save time and work by avoiding great depth in cutting the hard rock ¹⁹.

3. Certain tombs from the Argolid, Achaea and Boeotia have large rectangular chambers and gabled roofs, suggesting a house ²⁰ (Pl. XLI, b and XLII, a). These tombs are mostly carefully constructed; their dimensions vary from 4.00 to 10.52 m., with a maximum height of 3.50 m. Most range in date LH IIIA-IIIC; Dendra Ts. 6, 8 and possibly 9 started earlier (LH I or II).

The peculiar roof-shape was probably dictated, first by the need for a safe and stable roof, strong enough to resist the thrust of the superincumbent earth and, second to imitate the roof of an actual house in which the dead could continue their living in the underworld. Perhaps the architects of these tombs imitated or were influenced by earlier foreign prototypes, in particular Egyptian chamber tombs, or the idea was of local inspiration, religious in origin, concerned with well-being in the after-life.

4. Over 20 tombs in the Argolid, Attica, Laconia, Arcadia and Messenia have side-chambers ²¹ (Pl. XLII, b and XLIII, a). Except Prosymna T. XXV and Spata T. 1 (three and two side-chambers respectively) each has one side-chamber. They may be to the right of the main chamber (Mycenae, Tsountas T. 6, 27, 49, Prosymna T. XXXVI, Dendra T. 6, Spata T. 1) or to the left (Prosymna T. III, XXVI, XXXIII, Dendra T. 8, Kephlovryson T. 9). Only three tombs (Mycenae, Tsountas T. 5, 79, Wace, T. 518) have an extra chamber opening from the back wall. Noteworthy are two connected side-chambers on the left side of Spata T. 1,

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- (16) Sp. MARINATOS, *ArchEph* 1933, p. 70 sq., 95, fig. 6, 9, 11 (Kontogenadas T. A, B, C), 17, 19 (Metaxata T. B, C); *PraktArchEt* 1951, p. 185 (Parisata T. 1).
- (17) Chr. CHRISTOU, *BCH* 80 (1956), p. 523 sq.; R. HOWELL, *BSA* 65 (1970), p. 102; K. DEMAKOPOULOU, *ArchAnAth* 2 (1969), p. 226 sq.; *Gazetteer* I, p. 83 (n° B.32).
- (18) Sp. MARINATOS, *PraktArchEt* 1952, p. 494. Cf. DESBOROUGH, *Last Mycenaeans*, p. 104 : wrongly stating "the top two-thirds of the chambers were built up in stone".
- (19) Sp. MARINATOS, *ArchEph* 1933, p. 95-96.
- (20) Asine, T. I:2; Dendra, T.2, 6, 8, 9; Mycenae, Tsountas T.15, 53, 82; Kallithea, T. Δ, E, H, Θ, M, O; Beotia, Thebes, Meg. Kastelli Tomb with frescoes and some others the number of which is not known.
- (21) Mycenae, Tsountas T. 5, 6, 27, 49, 79, (*ArchEph* 1888, p. 137 sq.; XENAKI-SAKELLARIOU, p. 59, 61, 93, 127, 220; *MCT*, p. 264); Wace T. 518 (WACE, *Chamber Tombs*, p. 75, fig. 29); Prosymna T. III, XXV, XXVI, XXXIII, XXXVI (BLEGEN, *Prosymna*, p. 242); Dendra T. 6, 8 (PERSSON, *New Tombs*, p. 23, 39, fig. 20, 37); Spata T. 1 (*PraktArchEt* 1877, p. 23; *Athenaion* 1877, pl. Z); Laconia-Mavrovouni (*BSA* 56 [1961], p. 117, fig. 4), Epidaurus-Limera T. 1, 2, 3, I (*PraktArchEt* 1956, p. 207; *ArchDelt* 23 [1968], p. 145); Volimidhia, Angelopoulou T. 5, 7, 9, ? (*PraktArchEt* 1953, p. 238 sq.); Kephlovryson T. 5 (*Ergon* 1965, p. 77-78); *BCH* 80 (1956), p. 537.

while of particular importance for their individuality is the construction of a side-chamber on the left side of the dromoi of Epidauros-Limera T. 1, 2, 3, I and Volimidhia Angelopoulou T. 5 and on the right side of the dromoi of Volimidhia Angelopoulou T. 9, 7, ?.

They are smaller than the main chambers, with the exception of the Bambakia tomb in Laconia ²² which is larger. They vary in shape, although the rectangular and oval predominate.

They were used in three cases for primary burials (Dendra T. 6, Prosymna Ts. XXVI, XXXVI), twice as ossuaries (Mycenae, Tsountas T. 27, Wace T. 518), indiscriminately for primary and swept burials four times (Prosymna Ts. XXV, XXXIII, Mycenae, Tsountas T. 5, Kephlovryso T. 5); other instances have no information.

In discussing the construction of chamber tombs Persson ²³ considered side-chamber(s) a criterion of early date on the basis of the evidence from Mycenae, Prosymna and Dendra which is now strengthened by that from Volimidhia, Spata and Epidauros-Limera. In view of the later date of Palaioikastro in Arcadia (LH IIIC) it seems, however, better to follow Blegen ²⁴ and wait for further corroborative evidence.

There are very few chamber tombs with side-chamber(s) in Mainland Greece; their prototypes should be sought not in Egypt ²⁵ but either on Kythera, at Phylakopi and Knossos, where such tombs are known since MM II ²⁶, or on Cyprus, from ECI ²⁷.

5. Four tombs in the Argolid, Achaia and Attica ²⁸ have a chamber divided into two by a stone wall (Pl. XLIII, b). The wall was in most cases carelessly built of small irregular, sometimes flattish stones. Three (Mycenae, Tsountas T. 8, Kallithea T. Γ, Salamis-Gymnasion T.E) are low, only one (Argos-Deiras T. XII) raised to the height of the walling of the doorway. It ran either from the doorway covering its left side to the back wall of the chamber (Argos-Deiras T. XII, Kallithea T. Γ) or from one of the two front walls to the centre (Mycenae, Tsountas T. 8). In the last the space between this wall and the entrance was paved with slabs ²⁹.

These unique tombs date from LH IIIA to IIIC. Similar dividing walls are known in the much earlier (MM II/III) Ailias cemetery at Knossos ³⁰, making it unlikely that this peculiar feature originated from Minoan Crete. The purpose of these walls cannot be explained.

(22) Sp. MARINATOS, *PraktArchEt* 1956, p. 207; *MCT*, p. 174, 177.

(23) PERSSON, *New Tombs*, p. 158.

(24) BLEGEN, *Prosymna*, p. 242 ("the presence of a side chamber cannot be regarded as giving any definite chronological clue to the period of the construction of the tomb").

(25) As Persson has suggested, *New Tombs*, p. 169 sq.

(26) Cf. PINI, *Beiträge*, p. 41-42; O.T.P.K. DICKINSON, *The Origins of Mycenaean Civilisation* (1977), p. 61; *BSA* 78 (1983), p. 64.

(27) Cf. ÅSTRÖM, *SCE* IV:1B, p. 274.

(28) DESHAYES, *Deiras*, p. 31, pl. VII; C. TSOUNTAS, *ArchEph* 1888, p. 139; XENAKI-SAKELLARIOU, p. 63; *PraktArchEt* 1976, p. 197; *ArchDelt* 20 (1965) *Chron.*, p. 125.

(29) C. TSOUNTAS, *ArchEph* 1888, p. 139; XENAKI-SAKELLARIOU, p. 63.

(30) M.S.F. HOOD, *JHS* 72 (1952), p. 108.

6. There are pit-niches cut round the side walls of the Volimidhia tombs ³¹ (Pl. XLIII, c). The size of these pit-niches range from 0.25 to 2.00 m in length, from 0.30 to 0.80 m in width and from 0.15 to 0.60 m in depth. With the exception of two covered with slabs (Tsoulea or Vorias T. 3 and 4) they were earth-covered and used for the swept-up burials of between 2-5 adults and only rarely for the bones of children or infants.

These tombs range from LH I to LH IIIB; most of the swept-up burials are said to be associated with the earlier use of the tombs.

No parallel is known to me from elsewhere in the Aegean for this arrangement of pit-niches, which was probably invented at Volimidhia for the skeletal remains of the earlier swept-up burials ³².

7. A rock-cut bench extends along three walls of the chamber of Tomb XXXIV at Argos-Deiras ³³. Nothing was found on it; its purpose, use and date remain unknown ³⁴. This architectural feature is unique ³⁵. In view of the absence of skeletal remains or offerings on it, it was perhaps used to seat relatives during the funeral.

8. Deep burial pits occur in the floors of almost all the Kephallenian chamber tombs ³⁶ and to a lesser extent in some cemeteries in Laconia (Pellanes-Epidaurus Limera) ³⁷ and along the West and Northwest coast of the Peloponnese (Messenia : Volimidhia, Englianos; Elis : Olympia-Trypes, Stravokefalo; Achaea : Aigio, Dherveni) ³⁸ (Pl. XLIII, d-f and XLIV, a).

Burial pits in chamber tombs occur in many mainland cemeteries, their shape, dimensions, number and duration of use varying from one district to another depending on several local factors and burial customs.

They occur in two main categories : (a) the shallow, usually small and of uneven depth, carelessly made; (b) the deep, large and carefully cut.

In some cemeteries burial pits coexist with burials on the floor of the chamber (e.g. the Argolid and Messenia) ³⁹. In Kephallenia, by contrast, burial in deep pits cut into the floor of

(31) Sp. MARINATOS, *PraktArchEt* 1952, p. 477-478, 490; *MCT*, p. 163.

(32) *Op. cit.*

(33) DESHAYES, *Deiras*, p. 102, pl. XI.1.

(34) DESHAYES, *Deiras*, p. 240.

(35) Except perhaps at Mycenae, where in Tsountas T. 81 along the four sides of the chamber built (not cut) benches were found, see XENAKI-SAKELLARIOU, p. 225.

(36) P. KAVVADIAS, Προϊστορική Ἀρχαιολογία (1909), p. 355 sq., fig. 449 (Mazarakata-Livatho); Sp. MARINATOS, *ArchEph* 1932, p. 17 sq., fig. 19-40 (Lakkithra); 1933, p. 70 sq., fig. 13, 17, 19 (Metaxata); K. WARDLE, *The Greek Bronze Age west of the Pindus...* (Unpublished Ph. D. thesis, University of London [1972]), p. 111 sq.

(37) *ArchDelt* 10 (1926), *parart.*, p. 41; *Ergon* 1956, p. 96; *PraktArchEt* 1956, p. 207 sq.

(38) *Ergon* 1965, p. 81, fig. 95 (Volimidhia); *Palace of Nestor* III, fig. 257, 259 (Englianos); *ArchDelt* 19 (1964) *Chron.*, pl. 188b (Trypes-Stravokefalo); PAPADOPOULOS, *Aigion*, pl. 7-9; *ArchEph* 1956 *Chron.*, p. 11-12, fig. 24.

(39) See e.g. Asine T. I:2; Wace T. 515; Volimidhia, Tsoulea T. 2. Cf. *MCT*, p. 289, 293.

the chamber is almost the only manner ⁴⁰. In a total of 23 Kephallenian tombs are 169 burial pits. Their average per chamber is between 8 and 10, extreme cases being tombs at Mazarakata and at Lakkithra with 15 and 12 burial pits respectively ⁴¹. Single, two or three pits are cut parallel to the side-walls, but when they are more than three no special preference is shown. They are either cut in parallel rows very probably planned from the beginning, or in a disarray which suggests that they were added as required and in some instances they are hewn even into the chamber niches ⁴². They are rectangular or roughly rectangular with dimensions varying from 1.30 to 2.00 m in length, from 0.30 to 1.20 m in width and from 0.30 to 2.80 m in depth. Most of them were covered with earth and only 19 with slabs. In only a few cases were ledges specially cut for the cover-slabs ⁴³. These pits were used for multiple and successive burials (ranging from 1-2 to 10-15) ⁴⁴.

A separate date for each burial pit is not possible. Some at Mazarakata and Metaxata belong to LH IIIA and B, according to the pottery found in them ⁴⁵. All the rest from other Kephallenian cemeteries (including some tombs at Mazarakata and Metaxata) date to LH IIIC ⁴⁶.

The Kephallenian burial pits seem to be an isolated phenomenon, to be explained as a local tradition ⁴⁷, since their frequency was dictated neither by the need of space in the chamber nor the hardness of the rock. The origin of these pits is uncertain. Since such pits occur earlier in Laconia (Pellanes, Epidaurus-Limera) the idea might have originated there, spreading thence to the West, North-west coast of the Peloponnese (Messenia, Elis, Achaea) when they had some vogue, finally reaching Kephallenia where they became established as an idiosyncratic method of burial. An equally probable explanation, takes account of the strong conservatism of the Kephallenians, "the practice of using burial cists perhaps derives from the Middle Helladic cist tombs and the later pit graves and represents a persistent local custom which was applied to the Late Helladic Kephallenian chamber tombs" ⁴⁸.

9. Eight tombs in the Argolid and in Boeotia have two grooves of varying depths in the stomion (Pl. XLIV, b-d). They either overlap the stomion each side (Dendra T. 6, 8, 9;

(40) There occur, however, some tombs with burials on the floor of the chamber, see N. KYPARISSES, *ArchDelt* 5 (1919), p. 114-115 (Prokopata-Razata, Gephyri); Sp. MARINATOS, *ArchEph* 1933, p. 72-73 (Kontogenadas T. B, C).

(41) KAVVADIAS, *op. cit.*, p. 360, fig. 449; Sp. MARINATOS, *ArchEph* 1932, p. 19, fig. 22.

(42) Sp. MARINATOS, *ArchEph* 1932, p. 21, fig. 22, 27 (Lakkithra T. D).

(43) *Ibidem*.

(44) KAVVADIAS, *op. cit.*, p. 361; Sp. MARINATOS, *ArchEph* 1932, p. 23; WARDLE, *op.cit.*, p. 112.

(45) Cf. DESBOROUGH, *Last Mycenaean*, p. 103-104; WARDLE *op. cit.*, p. 131, fig. 7.

(46) DESBOROUGH, *Last Mycenaean*, p. 103-104.

(47) Desborough suggests that "it is not in itself unlikely that there would be a non-Mycenaean population, for the island lies on the fringes of the Mycenaean sphere" (*Dark Ages*, p. 90).

(48) WARDLE, *op. cit.*, p. 117. Cf. also, O.T.P.K. DICKINSON, *BSA* 78 (1983), p. 67 ("developments of older forms").

Prosymna T. XXXVII; Thebes K.T. 15, 26) or are restricted to the stomion (Prosymna T. II, XLIV) ⁴⁹.

Such grooves occur also in three LH I-II tholos tombs of Messenia (Tragana T.A, Gouvalari T. 2 and Routsis T. 2) ⁵⁰, but are unknown in Messenian chamber tombs and in Minoan tombs.

Opinions differ as to the use of these grooves. They are supposed by Keramopoulos, Persson, Marinatos and E. Vermeule ⁵¹ to facilitate the smooth running of the hearse and protect the jambs of the entrance from damage. This is endorsed by the elaborate doorways decorated with frescoes of Thebes K.T. 15 and Prosymna T. II and by representations of wheeled hearses on some Dipylon vases ⁵². Blegen leaves the question open "the purpose of these grooves...did not become apparent"; "I do not understand the purpose of these grooves"; "the purpose of this broad groove was not clear to me" ⁵³. Cavanagh referring to the grooves of Tragana tholos A says "they have implausibly been interpreted as ruts for the wheels of a funeral cart" ⁵⁴. Pelon ⁵⁵ does not unreservedly accept wheel grooves but tries to reconcile the different views by suggesting that the grooves may simply reflect one tomb-maker's or owner's personal taste for refinement of the tomb construction.

I do not exclude their relationship to the use of a hearse and to protect the entrance jambs, but a ritual use is also possible in view of their scarcity, the finding of a single groove in the middle of the dromos of chamber tomb A at Kontogenada-Kephallenia ⁵⁶, implausibly explained by Marinatos ⁵⁷ as a storm-water drain, and the occurrence of a similar gutter beside the throne at the Palace of Nestor ⁵⁸, which according to Blegen ⁵⁹ was most probably used for royal libations. The theory of ritual use is strengthened by the fact that the grooves of tomb 8 at Dendra were covered by carefully placed stones ⁶⁰, apparently for protection.

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- (49) PERSSON, *New Tombs*, p. 21, 40, 53, fig. 20, 23, 24, 37, 54, 58 (T. 6, 8, 9); *ArchDelt* 3 (1917), p. 159, 194 (Thebes K.T. 15, 26); BLEGEN, *Prosymna*, p. 175, 123, 207, plans 38, 23, 47 (T. II, XXXVII, XLIV).
- (50) Sp. MARINATOS, *Ergon* 1957, p. 73; PELON, *Tholoi*, p. 195 sq.; G.S. KORRES, *PraktArchEt* 1977, p. 241.
- (51) *ArchDelt* 3 (1917), p. 159, 194, fig. 89; PERSSON, *New Tombs*, p. 155 sq.; *Ergon* 1959, p. 120; E. VERMEULE, *Greece in the Bronze Age* (1964), p. 298.
- (52) Cf. A. KERAMOPOULLOS, *ArchDelt* 3 (1917), p. 159; PERSSON, *New Tombs*, p. 155-156; M. PANTELIDOU, *ArchAnAth* 3 (1970), p. 127.
- (53) BLEGEN, *Prosymna*, p. 175, 207, 123.
- (54) *Mycenaeen Tholos Tombs and Related Tombs* (M.A. thesis, University of Edinburgh [1971]), p. 26.
- (55) PELON, *Tholoi*, p. 327-328.
- (56) *ArchEph* 1933, p. 71, fig. 7.
- (57) *Ibidem*.
- (58) *Palace of Nestor* I, p. 88, fig. 70.
- (59) *Palace of Nestor* I, p. 88, fig. 70. See also, Åström who says that "Åke Åkerström in his paper "Some Cultic Arrangements in Mycenaean Houses and Tombs" dealt with the house altar at Berbati and the grooves in the stomia of Mycenaean chamber tombs -interpreted as used for libations" (*Journal of Prehistoric Religion* 1 [1986], forthcoming).
- (60) PERSSON, *New Tombs*, p. 40, fig. 37.

But no one explanation of these grooves can be given. Their almost exclusive occurrence in the Argolid (6 examples) suggests local custom; those in Boeotia and Messenia could mean influence from the Argolid or be a mere coincidence.

10. The stomion of six tombs in the Argolid, Messenia and Kephallenia are blocked by slabs instead of a stone wall (Pl. XLIV, e-f). The entrance of Volimidhia, Angelopoulou T. 5 was blocked by an irregular slab ⁶¹, that of Metaxata T.A by a rectangular one ⁶². Anathyrosis in the carefully constructed lintels of Kontogenada T.A and B ⁶³ implies a rectangular slab closed these doorways.

Slabs of varying size and shape closed the doorways of T. 15 at Argos-Deiras ⁶⁴ and T.P at Mazarakata in Kephallenia ⁶⁵. In both tombs a series of upright slabs was used; in the latter these were supported by a slab set in the dromos. The dromos of the Argos tomb was not excavated.

Most of these tombs are of late Mycenaean date (Deiras : LH IIIB; Kephallenia : LH IIIC). The Volimidhia tomb, was used throughout the LH period (LH I-IIIC).

This method of blocking the entrance is very rare ⁶⁶ and must be explained as an idiosyncrasy of these two districts. The single Argolid instance (LH IIIB) cannot have been influenced by the Messenian and Kephallenian tombs.

This technique was not dictated by lack of building material, as it coexists with many examples of doorways blocked with a normal stone wall. Slabs may have been preferred to walls for the ease with which they allowed a chamber to be reopened.

11. Over 11 tombs ⁶⁷ in the Argolid and Boeotia have painted stuccoed façades (Pl. XLV, a-e). Tombs V and XII at Argos-Deiras had decorated stucco jambs ⁶⁸. Mycenae, Tsountas T. 52, 53, 81, Wace T. 530 and Xenaki-Sakellariou, p. 320 n. 39 had the door frame and the sides of the entrance coated with well preserved stucco which in at least three cases (T. 52, 53, 81) was frescoed : tomb 52 with a deeper and simple, probably red, band ⁶⁹; tomb 53 with rosette pattern in black, white and yellow ⁷⁰ (Pl. XLV, b) and tomb 81 with

(61) *PraktArchEt* 1953, p. 241, 243, fig. 2.

(62) *ArchEph* 1933, p. 74, fig. 14 (the dimensions of the slab are : 1.30 x 0.75 x 0.15 m.).

(63) *Op. cit.*, p. 71-72, fig. 7,10.

(64) DESHAYES, *Deiras*, p. 46.

(65) *PraktArchEt* 1951, p. 184.

(66) It was known since EBA times in Cyprus, Euboea-Manika and Crete-Ayia Photia.

(67) See A.J.B. WACE, *Mycenae, an Archaeological History and Guide* (1949), p. 33 ("several others of these chamber tombs also have the jambs and lintels covered with plaster") and XENAKI-SAKELLARIOU, p. 320 ("Ασφαλῶς μιὰ συστηματική ἐρευνα ἐπιτόπου θὰ δώσει καί ἄλλα δείγματα").

(68) W. VOLLGRAFF, *BCH* 28 (1904), p. 369-370; DESHAYES, *Deiras*, p. 33, 239.

(69) C. TSOUNTAS, *ArchEph* 1888, p. 158, pl. 12; XENAKI-SAKELLARIOU, p. 131.

(70) Chr. TSOUNTAS, J.I. MANATT, *The Mycenaean Age* (1897), p. 61, fig. 16; XENAKI-SAKELLARIOU, p. 165-166.

brown on its lintel and jambs, with black in the bases and capitals and over the lintel with a row of six discs ⁷¹ (Pl. XLV, c) which Wace suggests is "a painted version of the carved stone decoration directly above the lintels of the Treasury of Atreus and the Tomb of Klytemnestra" ⁷². Tomb II at Prosymna ⁷³ also had its façade painted with stucco (Pl. LV, d) while the rebate on the face of the jambs of Tomb III ⁷⁴ suggests similar decoration had been intended but never executed. The two Boeotian tombs had plastered jambs; the stucco was decorated with a polychrome design, which in the case of Thebes K.T. 15 imitated veins of wood ⁷⁵ and in Thebes, Tomb at Megalo Kastelli, covered the façade and the inner part of the doorway for the whole of its depth (Pl. XLV, e). Of great importance is the decoration of a part of the right façade of the built entrance of this tomb with at least two female figures ⁷⁶.

Five of these tombs date to LH IIIA-B (Argos-Deiras T. V and XII, Mycenae, Tsountas T. 52, 53, Prosymna T. III), three are earlier (Mycenae, Tsountas T. 81:LH II; Wace T. 530, Prosymna T. II:LH II-III A), one is LH IIIA and C (Thebes K.T. 15) and that mentioned by Mrs Sakellariou ⁷⁷ cannot be accurately dated (LH IIIA-B ?).

Such façades may be a symptom of the designer's taste or the owner's wealth ⁷⁸ or, most likely, imitate more magnificent prototypes, e.g. tholoi ⁷⁹.

12. A common corridor joins the outer ends of dromoi of Tombs 6 and 7 of the Aigion-Gymnasium cemetery in Achaia ⁸⁰ (Pl. XLV, f). Such a construction is unique not only in Achaia but in the whole Aegean and must perhaps be explained as a local peculiarity, probably dictated by the need to facilitate communication between these two tombs by the relative families buried in them.

They date to LH IIIA-B and LH IIIA2-B1 respectively ⁸¹. Along each side wall was a rock-cut bench, perhaps for placing the burial offerings during the burial while the two dromoi were still open ⁸².

(71) TSOUNTAS, MANATT, *op.cit.*, p. 133, fig. 49, 50; XENAKI-SAKELLARIOU, p. 225.

(72) WACE, *op. cit.*, p. 33

(73) BLEGEN, *Prosymna*, p. 174, plan 39.

(74) BLEGEN, *Prosymna*, p. 181.

(75) *ArchDelt* 3 (1917), p. 159.

(76) *ArchAnAth* 4 (1971), p. 163.

(77) XENAKI-SAKELLARIOU, n. 39, p. 320.

(78) See XENAKI-SAKELLARIOU, p. 320 : "Τό νεκροταφείο τοῦ λόφου τῆς Παναγίας...φαίνεται ὅτι ἦταν τό κατεξοχήν νεκροταφείο τῶν πλούσιων οἰκογενειῶν, ἀσφαλῶς καί τῶν ἀύλικῶν".

(79) Cf. WACE, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

(80) PAPADOPOULOS, *Aigion*, p. 23-24, 35, pl. 70-71.

(81) *Op. cit.*, p. 27, table 9 and p. 46 chronological chart of the tombs.

(82) Although no such offerings were found, but judging from other cemeteries on the Mainland where benches were used for offerings, see *MCT*, p. 485. The excavator is not certain about the interpretation of this peculiarity (PAPADOPOULOS, *Aigion*, p. 35 : "Whether this peculiar construction indicates a relationship between the persons buried in the two tombs, or was dictated by another reason, is not certain").

13. A low stone wall closes the outer end of the dromoi of Tombs 7, 9, 10 at Dendra; a wall blocks the whole width (Tomb 2) and height of the inner end of the dromoi in Tombs 6, 9 and 10 of the same cemetery and Tomb I:2 at Asine and Tomb at Megalo Kastelli at Thebes ⁸³ (Pl. XLVI, a-c).

Both features are peculiar to the cemetery of Dendra and the former appears most probably to imitate similar walls in tholos tombs of the Argolid to protect and retain the earth covering their tholos ⁸⁴. The latter feature may be an additional measure for protection of the entrance of these tombs. Their date ranges from LH I to LH IIIA-B.

14. Tombs without dromoi occur in the cemeteries of Lakkithra in Kephallenia and probably at Lithovouni in Aetolia, Dherveni in Achaea, Delphi, and at Myloi in Aigina (Pl. XLVI, d). According to Marinatos ⁸⁵, the four LH IIIC tombs A-Δ excavated by him at Lakkithra never had dromoi but were constructed directly on the steep, vertical slope of the rock; their entrances and façades were visible and probably carefully cut and decorated. For the LH IIIB-C tombs at Lithovouni and Dherveni, two LH IIIC (-SM) tombs (2, 3) of the Delphi Temenos and three others (A-Γ) from Myloi on Aigina of LH IIIB-C date we are less certain about the absence of dromoi, as information is incomplete ⁸⁶.

The Lakkithra tombs, suggest the absence of dromoi may well be due to the hardness and steepness of the rock which inhibited cutting dromoi. The Aigina tombs may have been a complex similar to Delphi-Temenos ⁸⁷.

B. Local practice in burial custom in chamber tombs appears as follows :

15. There are multiple and mass burials in pits in the Kephallenian tombs (Pl. XLVI, e and XLVII, a). Nine, ten up to fifteen persons were buried in a pit, but rarely more than one or two were found intact. They were placed side by side ⁸⁸, or one above another, separated by earth ⁸⁹. The remains of earlier burials were placed together with their furnishings in the corners or along the long sides of the pits or were thrown into the pits in disarray.

Multiple burials in pits are otherwise unknown and most probably reflect local practice in Kephallenia during LH IIIB-C.

(83) PERSSON, *New Tombs*, p. 31, 51, 59, 20, fig. 32, 54, 66, 20; O. FRÖDIN, A.W. PERSSON, *Asine : Results of the Swedish Excavations 1922-1930* (1938), p. 162, fig. 139; *ArchDelt* 27 (1972) B, p. 312, pl. 253.

(84) Cf. e.g. the Treasury of Atreus and the Klytemnestra tomb at Mycenae (WACE, *op. cit.*, p. 28, fig.40b and p. 35).

(85) *ArchEph* 1932, p. 19, fig. 19.

(86) *BCH* 89 (1965), p. 761; *Gazetteer* I, p. 104 (B. 103) and p. 256 (G. 55); PAPADOPOULOS, *Mycenaean Achaea*, p. 37; *ArchEph* 1910, p. 183-184.

(87) Suggested by Keramopoullos in *ArchEph* 1910, n. 1, p. 183.

(88) *ArchEph* 1932, p. 26 (Lakkithra T. D, cist 12).

(89) KAVVADIAS, *op. cit.*, p. 362 sq., fig. 450-453 (Mazarakata); Sp. MARINATOS, *ArchEph* 1932, p. 23 (Lakkithra).

16. Some skeletons were wholly covered with a crust of limestone clay in Argos-Deiras tombs XXIV, XXVI, XXVIII, XXXIII ⁹⁰ or with a reddish thin argil mixed up with yellowish clay in Tomb A at Vravron-Lapoutsi ⁹¹. These tombs date to the LH IIIA-SM period. Such burials are elsewhere unknown in Mainland Greece; the covering may have been to isolate the decomposing dead (Vravron) or to gain space for new burials or by fear of disease (Argos-Deiras) ⁹².

17. Adult burials were found in situ on the dromos-floor of three tombs in the Argolid (Mycenae, Wace T. 505; Tsountas T. 15; Prosymna T. VII) ⁹³ and two in Boeotia (Thebes K.T. 10; Ayia Anna 2) ⁹⁴. They belonged to the last use of the tombs (LH IIIA-B ? and LH IIIB-C) and have been differently interpreted by Tsountas ("they were slaves or prisoners slain and buried together with the last dead of the family") ⁹⁵ and Keramopoulos ("they belonged to the same clan to which the tombs belonged. They had been buried in the dromoi because another person who had recently died and buried in the chamber prevented the opening of the chamber and staying in it") ⁹⁶.

18. Clay larnakes contain burials in the LH IIIA1-C cemetery of Tanagra in Boeotia ⁹⁷ (Pl. XLVII, b-d). Most of the 58-plus known examples were found complete with their lids and only five were fragmentary. According to Spyropoulos they stood in every part of the chambers; only one is undecorated. Little has so far been reported about the position of the bodies; occasionally the excavator records that some of them lay on the back with knees drawn up and were accompanied by funerary gifts.

Isolated clay larnakes occur in the cemeteries at Prosymna ⁹⁸, Mycenae ⁹⁹ and

(90) DESHAYES, *Deiras*, p. 243.

(91) *ArchDelt* 21 (1966) *Chron.*, p. 98-99.

(92) DESHAYES, *Deiras*, p. 245.

(93) WACE, *Chamber Tombs*, p. 14, 129; *ArchEph* 1888, p. 130-131, 142; XENAKI-SAKELLARIOU, p. 76; BLEGEN, *Prosymna*, p. 157.

(94) *ArchDelt* 3 (1917), p. 146; *ArchEph* 1910, p. 215.

(95) *ArchEph* 1888, p. 131. See also Blegen (*Prosymna*, p. 157), who has some doubts ("Was this perhaps a slave or servitor, the victim of sacrifice or of self-destruction, who was laid to rest as the faithful guardian before the door of his master's sepulchre?"). Also, ANDRONIKOS, *Totenkult*, p. 82-83.

(96) *ArchEph* 1910, p. 215.

(97) P. ÅLIN, *Das Ende der mykenischen Fundstätten auf dem griechischen Festland* (SIMA I [1962]), p. 120; E. VERMEULE, *JHS* 85 (1965), p. 125 sq.; Th. SPYROPOULOS, *ArchAnAth* 2 (1969), p. 20; *ArchAnAth* 3 (1970), p. 61, 184; *PraktArchEt* 1969, p. 5 sq.; 1970, p. 29 sq.; 1971, p. 7 sq.; 1973, p. 11 sq.; 1974, p. 9 sq.; 1975, p. 415 sq.; 1976, p. 61 sq.; 1977, p. 25 sq.; 1979, p. 27 sq.; 1980, p. 50 sq.; 1981, p. 97 sq.; *Gazetteer* I, p. 222-223: "the custom of larnax-burial, though by no means universal, is common enough to be considered a local feature, unique on the mainland" (F. 63).

(98) BLEGEN, *Prosymna*, p. 54, 249, fig. 99, 101 (Tomb XVII).

(99) WACE, *Chamber Tombs*, p. 9, 184, fig. 4 (Tomb 502).

Vraserka ¹⁰⁰ in the Argolid, from Thebes-Ismenion T. 3 ¹⁰¹ and two of stone from Pylos ¹⁰² and Kephallenia ¹⁰³.

They date from LH IIIA to LH IIIC. That larnax burial was the norm at Tanagra and the exception elsewhere ¹⁰⁴ suggests a possible Minoan presence ¹⁰⁵ there throughout the late Mycenaean period.

19. There were cremations in 13 tombs at Perati ¹⁰⁶ (Pl. XLVII, a). Isolated cremations on the Mainland include Prosymna T. XLI, Agrapidochori, Thebes K.T. 16, Vravron T.A and Kallithea T.O ¹⁰⁷, but the greatest concentration is at Perati, where 18 cremations were reported of both sexes and all ages from infants to old people. Of the 18 cremated persons only five were singly buried, while all others were found in pairs and in one instance (Tomb 1:pit 2) were three.

At Perati and Vravron cremation took place beyond the chamber, no traces of pyre or contents were found in the vicinity, while in all other cemeteries cremation was practised inside the chamber.

All the cremations noted in Mainland Greece belong to late Mycenaean times, LH IIIB- C.

Aegean cremation has been widely discussed ¹⁰⁸, but the problem of its origin remains unsolved. Iakovides' idea ¹⁰⁹ that it came from Asia Minor, where the rite was practised from the Early Bronze Age, seems persuasive, certainly for Perati. It would follow that there had been contact at the end of the Late Bronze Age between Perati and the opposite coast.

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- (100) According to a lecture given by Dr K. Demakopoulou in the Swedish Institute at Athens in 1985 (In a chamber tomb of LH IIIB1 date).
- (101) *ArchDelt* 3 (1917), p. 92, fig. 66 (Tomb 3).
- (102) C.W. BLEGEN, *AJA* 43 (1954), p. 31.
- (103) *ArchEph* 1933, p. 77-78, fig. 22 (Kontogenadas, T. A); *PraktArchEt* 1951, p. 186 (Parisata T. 1). See also E. VERMEULE, *JHS* 85 (1965), n. 3, p. 124, where all known examples from Greece up to 1965 are listed.
- (104) Cf. E. VERMEULE, *Greece in the Bronze Age* (1964), p. 210, 301; *JHS* 85 (1965), p. 124; M.S.F. HOOD, *The Arts in Prehistoric Greece* (1978), p. 46; Sp. IAKOVIDIS, *ArchAnAth* 2 (1969), p. 128.
- (105) In Crete clay larnakes for burials make their first appearance in the later part of the Early Minoan period, see E. VERMEULE, *JHS* 85 (1965), p. 123. For discussion on the problem of appearance and use of the Boeotian larnakes, see E. VERMEULE, *Greece in the Bronze Age* (1964), p. 210 sq.; *JHS* 85 (1965), p. 137; HOOD, *op. cit.*, p. 46; ANDRONIKOS, *Totenkult*, p. 102-103.
- (106) Sp. IAKOVIDIS, Περσική. Τὸ νεκροταφείον II (1969-1970), p. 31 sq.
- (107) BLEGEN, *Prosymna*, p. 143, 242, fig. 350-351; L. PARLAMA, *ArchEph* 1971 *Chron.*, p. 54, 60, fig. 1; A. KERAMOPOULLOS, *ArchDelt* 3 (1917), p. 163; K. DAVARAS, *ArchDelt* 21 (1966) *Chron.*, p. 98; Th.J. PAPADOPOULOS, *PraktArchEt* 1980, p. 108, pl. 93a.
- (108) See e.g. TSOUNTAS, MANATT, *op. cit.*, p. 138-139; KERAMOPOULLOS, *ArchDelt* 3 (1917), p. 163-164; BLEGEN, *Prosymna*, p. 242; H.L. LORIMER, *Homer and the Monuments* (1950), p. 104; MYLONAS, *Mycenaean Age*, p. 135; ANDRONIKOS, *Totenkult*, p. 51 sq.; VERMEULE, *op. cit.*, p. 301-302; IAKOVIDIS, *op. cit.*, p. 31 sq.; P. THEMELIS, *ArchAnAth* 6 (1973), p. 356 sq.
- (109) *Op. cit.*, p. 56-57.

Nevertheless, cremation was an alien practice in Mycenaean Greece which was never popular ¹¹⁰.

20. Some offerings in tombs in the Argolid and Boeotia are burned. K.T. 4 in Thebes ¹¹¹ contained in the SE corner of its chamber traces of fire with potsherds, necklace beads and pieces of two coarse cooking vessels. At Mycenae ¹¹², traces of small fires and many ornaments of gold leaf and glass paste mixed with charcoal and ashes were reported in tombs dug by Tsountas. In a tomb excavated by Papademetriou ¹¹³ a pit at the entrance was full of ash and blackened burned soil. In Tomb 10 at Dendra "a layer of charcoal and ash occurred along the middlemost part of the rear wall of the chamber and extended a few metres out over the floor, and in this deposit a number of gold and glass beads was found" ¹¹⁴.

The scarcity of these instances makes the practice peculiar. It is not known whether this was the result of a special local ritual ¹¹⁵, or no more than the remains of purifying fires.

21. Offerings are made in cists and pits in two tombs at Mycenae (Tsountas T. 2, 5) and three at Dendra (T. 2, 7, 10) ¹¹⁶ (Pl. XLVIII, b-c). Of these, four had been cut in different parts of the chamber floor and only one (Dendra T. 2) was hewn under the entrance and covered by large flat slabs. They are shallow and small ranging from 0.42 x 0.20 x 0.25 m. to 1.40 x 0.40 x 0.90 m.

The offerings included pottery, bronze and silver vases, less so, ornaments, weapons and implements.

Pit a of Tsountas T. 2 contained bronzes (vase, knife and a mirror-disc) and a stirrup jar; pit b of the same tomb had two bronze vases, a bronze mirror, many beads and 12 glass plaques in the shape of female figurines. The pit of the first chamber of Tsountas T. 5 contained two bronze vessels one inside the other, four stone buttons, a bone pin, a small ivory figurine of a sphinx, a bronze mirror-disc, a bronze pin, a small bronze knife and four terracotta figurines. The pit of tomb 2 at Dendra contained 35 bronzes (mainly vases) while in shaft V of tomb 7 a number of crushed bronzes was found consisting of two bowls, a mirror, a short sword, a long-edged knife and two cleavers. Lastly, shaft II of tomb 10 was filled with earth and contained different objects of silver (four kylikes and goblets, a spoon, a shallow cup), ivory (a shallow bowl) or pottery (10 vases, mostly kylikes) which obviously had

(110) Cf. O.T.P.K. DICKINSON, *BSA* 78 (1983), p. 67.

(111) *ArchDelt* 3 (1917), p. 131.

(112) *ArchEph* 1888, p. 134.

(113) *PraktArchEt* 1952, p. 469.

(114) PERSSON, *New Tombs*, p. 63.

(115) Tsountas (TSOUNTAS, MANATT, p. 134) has suggested for the Mycenae tombs that the burned offerings had been embroidered on garments burned in honour of the dead.

(116) *ArchEph* 1888, p. 137-138; XENAKI-SAKELLARIOU, p. 55, 59; PERSSON, *Royal Tombs*, p. 75 sq., 91, fig. 49-51; PERSSON, *New Tombs*, p. 31-32, 63, fig. 32, 66.

originally been deposited in an orderly manner.

Such pits and cists are peculiar to these two cemeteries. They date to the LH II-IIIa (Dendra T. 2, 10) and LH IIIa-B (Mycenae, Tsountas T. 2, 5; Dendra T. 7).

These offerings were probably deposited in this manner to avoid tomb-robbers or on cleaning the chamber for fresh burials.

C. Comment :

The main reasons for these peculiarities seem to be :

- 1) economy of effort or the nature of the rock,
- 2) imitation or influence from other types of tombs in other areas of the Aegean world or beyond,
- 3) independent local tradition,
- 4) fear of tomb-robbers, or of disease,
- 5) religious beliefs and funeral rites,
- 6) social status of the owners of the tombs.

In particular, as stated above 1) it is perhaps safe to claim that chamber tombs without dromoi (14) and chamber tombs with only the one-third built-up in stone while the lower two-thirds of the chamber were hewn in the rock (2) were due either to economy of effort ¹¹⁷ or to natural reasons, i.e. to the hardness and steepness of the rock which prohibited the cutting of the dromoi and the upper part of the chamber; 2) the beehive-like shaping of the chamber (1), the presence of the side-chamber(s) (4) and of the dividing chamber walls (5), the burial pits of the Kephallenian chamber tombs (8), the use of large slab(s) instead of the masonry blocking (10), the painted stuccoed façades (11), stone walls at the outer and inner end of the dromoi (13), tombs without dromoi (14), the use of clay larnakes (18) and cremations (19) may be derived from or influenced by the areas with which the Mycenaeans maintained contacts (Crete, Cyprus, Egypt, Anatolia); 3) local tradition could explain the unique construction of the Kontogenada, Metaxata and Parisata tombs two-thirds rock-hewn, one third built-up of stones (2), the circular arrangement of pit-niches of the Volimidhia tombs (6), the use of many burial pits in the Kephallenian chamber tombs (15); 4) one might explain the stone-walls at the outer and inner end of the dromoi (13) as being dictated by the care for safer protection of the tombs from intruders, while fear of disease may be the reason for the covering of corpses with limestone or argil mixed with yellowish clay (16) and for burials of adults on the floor of the dromoi (17) to avoid the opening of tombs with newly buried persons ¹¹⁸. Lastly, one probable use of the grooves in the floor of the doorway (9) was the protection of the jambs of

(117) Cf. Sp. MARINATOS, *ArchEph* 1933, p. 95-96.

(118) Cf. A. KERAMOPOULLOS, *ArchEph* 1910, p. 215 ("ἐθάπτοντο δ' ἐν τοῖς δρόμοις, ἐπειδὴ ἐν τῷ θαλάμῳ ὑπῆρχε προσφάτως τεθαμμένος νεκρός, ὅστις παρείχε πρόσκομμα εἰς τὴν διάνοξιν τοῦ θαλάμου καὶ τὴν ἐν αὐτῷ διατριβὴν κατὰ τὴν ἐναπόθεσιν τῶν νέων νεκρῶν").

the entrance from damage ¹¹⁹. 5) To religious beliefs and funeral ceremony may be attributed the common corridor with bench joining the outer end of the dromoi of tombs 6 and 7 of the Aigion-Gymnasion cemetery (12), the burial of adults (slaves ?) with the last dead in the three tombs from the Argolid (17), the custom of burned offerings (20), the use of cists and pits for offerings only (21) and perhaps the use of grooves (9). 6) The reasons for the rectangular great tombs with gable roof (3), those with decorated façades (11), with burials of adults (slaves ?) in the floor of the dromoi (17) and with pits for precious offerings (21) may be attributed to social hierarchy or wealth of the owners of the tombs, who wanted to immortalise their status and personality ¹²⁰. That some of them are related with regional or family traditions or simply convenience, however, cannot be excluded ¹²¹.

In eight instances (2, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, 17, 21) I have suggested two or three explanations for these peculiarities.

Some local peculiarities appear, with variations, in more than one area of Mainland Greece (e.g. n° (4) in the Argolid, Attica, Laconia and Messenia). Moreover, local peculiarities that occur in different cemeteries must indicate commercial or cultural interconnections. These include, for instance, the rectangular chambers with gabled roofs and triangular or horizontal lintels at Mycenae (Panayia cemetery), Thebes and Kallithea; chambers with many pits (cut sometimes in their niches and dromoi) occur at Mazarakata and Olympia; in the latter the cover-slabs are so close set and so many that the chamber seems to have a slabbed floor (Pl. XLVIII, d). Again, the oval chamber with side-chamber entered from the dromos at Epidaurus-Limera recalls those at Volimidhia (though these are round, not oval, there are few side-chambers, and their peculiarity is emphasized by pit-niches). Undoubtedly, further study of all these tombs and their contents would have important results.

It is clear that local practice and custom of the kind reviewed above reflects other elements of local difference among the people of the region examined. I hope this brief paper will lead to a fuller appreciation of Mycenaean chamber tombs and the funerary practices they represent in Mainland Greece.

Litsa KONTORLI-PAPADOPOULOU

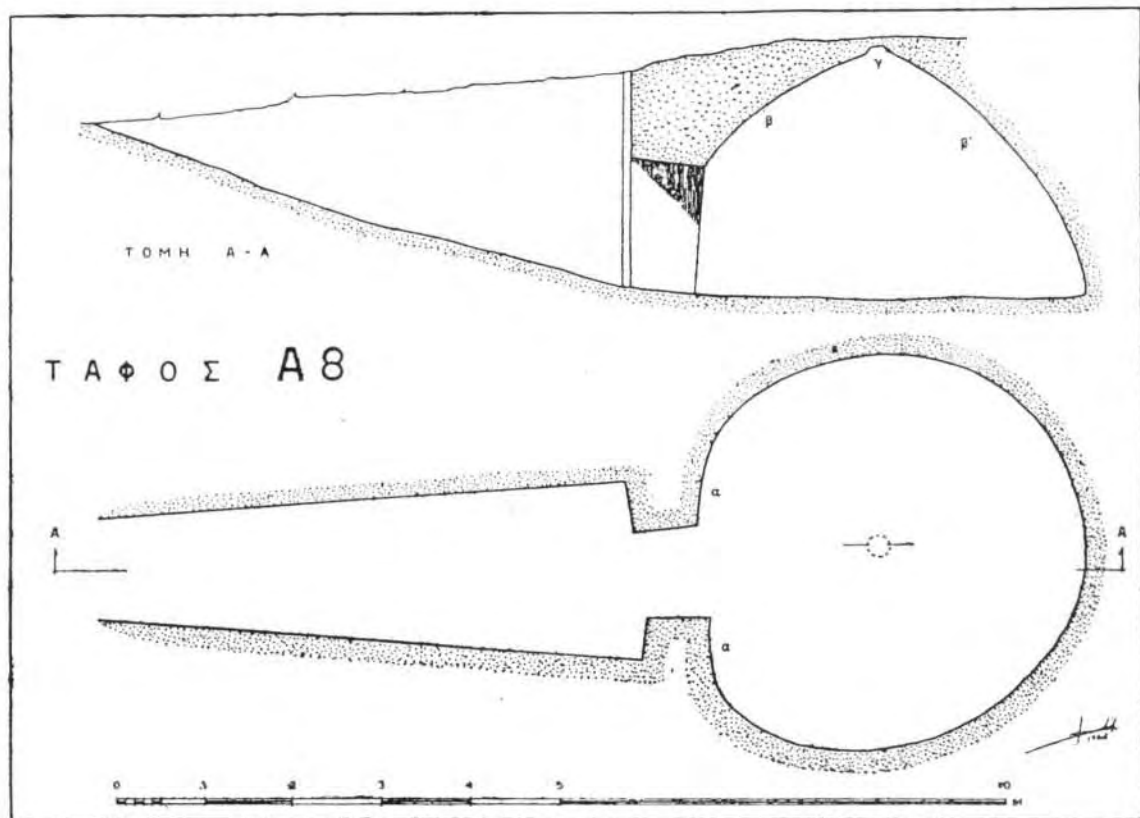
(119) See above n. 51.

(120) Cf. O.T.P.K. DICKINSON, *BSA* 78 (1983), p. 56 ("the degree of elaboration of the tombs, and the quantity and value of the goods placed in them, have direct relevance to the status of the buried persons in their society"). See, however, M.J. ALDEN, *Bronze Age Population Fluctuations in the Argolid from the Evidence of Mycenaean Tombs* (1981), p. 7 ("It is very seldom that one is able to derive any notion of the exact social status and occupation of the occupants of these [chamber] tombs").

(121) DICKINSON, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

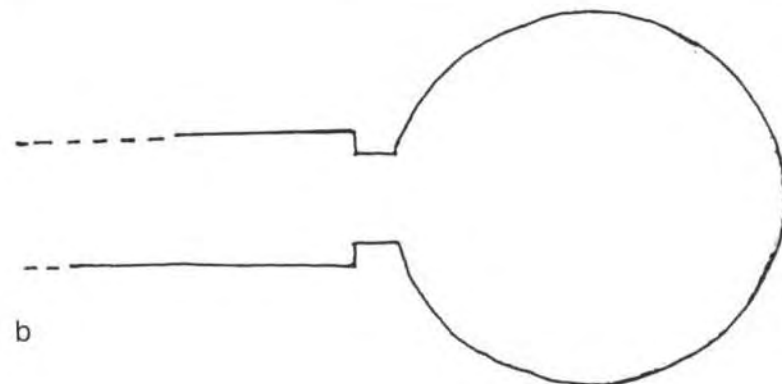
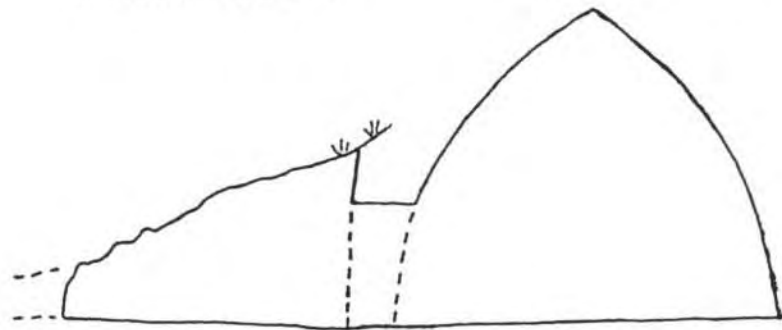
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 Pl. XLVI, d : Kephallenia-Lakkithra T. Γ (*ArchEph* 1932, p. 21, fig. 25).
 Pl. XLVI, e : Kephallenia-Mazarakata T. Δ (P. KAVVADIAS, *Προϊστορική 'Αρχαιολογία*, p. 364, fig. 452-453).
 Pl. XLVII, a : Kephallenia-Lakkithra T. Δ (*ArchEph* 1932, p. 26, fig. 31).
 Pl. XLVII, b : Tanagra T. 6 (*ArchAnAth* 3 [1970], p. 188, fig. 6).
 Pl. XLVII, c : Tanagra T. 6 (*ArchAnAth* 3 [1970], p. 189, fig. 7).
 Pl. XLVII, d : Tanagra T. 22 (*ArchAnAth* 3 [1970], p. 195, fig. 15).
 Pl. XLVIII, a : Kallithea T. O (*PraktArchEt* 1980, p. 108, pl. 93a).
 Pl. XLVIII, b : Dendra T. 2 (PERSSON, *Royal Tombs*, p. 75, fig. 49).
 Pl. XLVIII, c : Dendra T. 2 (PERSSON, *Royal Tombs*, p. 77, fig. 51).
 Pl. XLVIII, d : Elis-Olympia T. O (*BCH* 1967, p. 828, fig. 14).

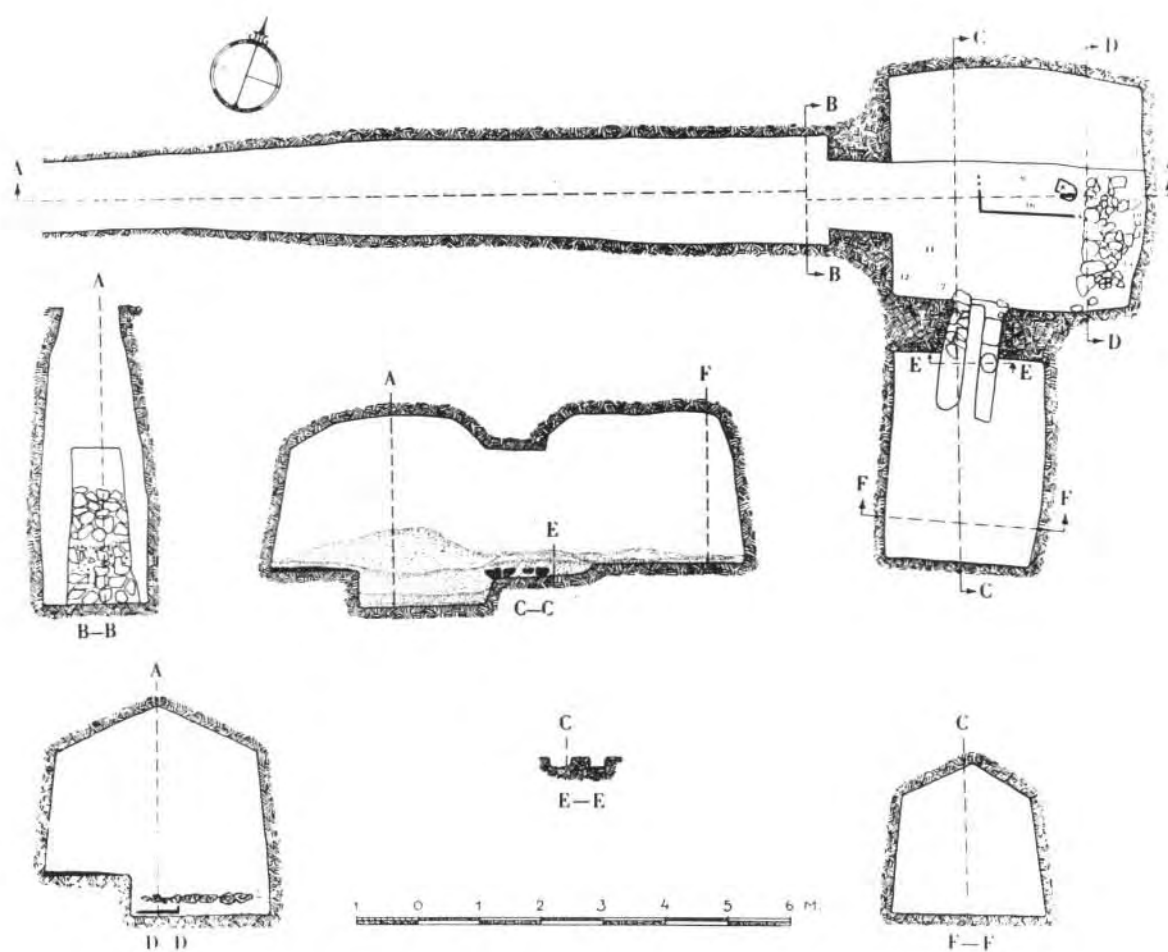
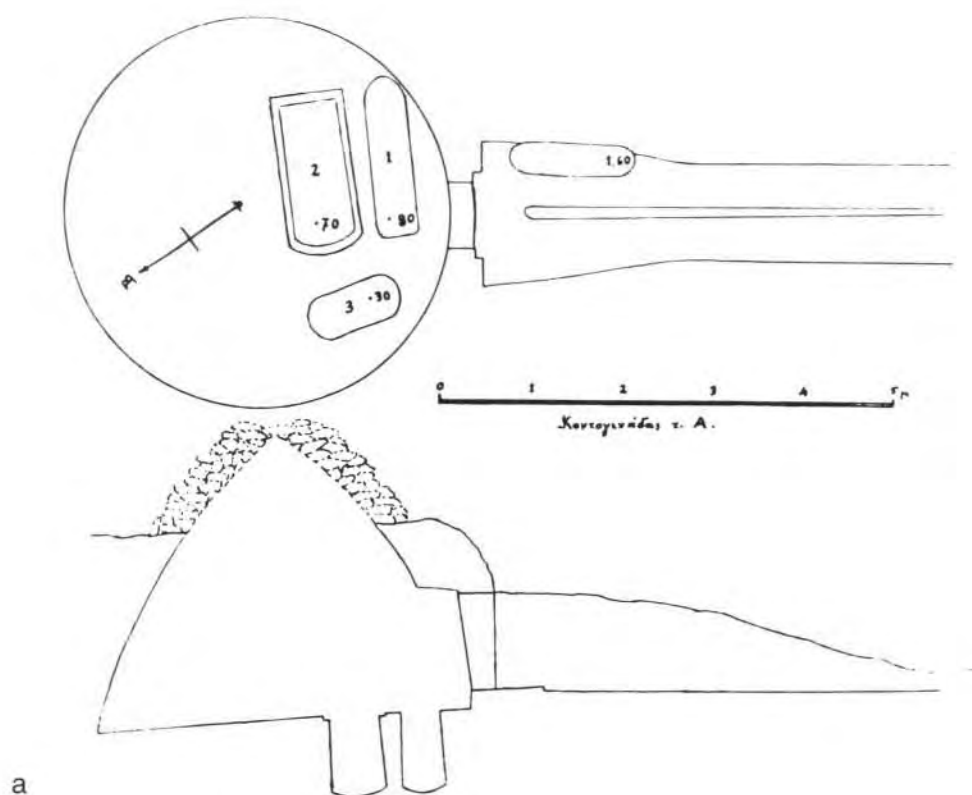


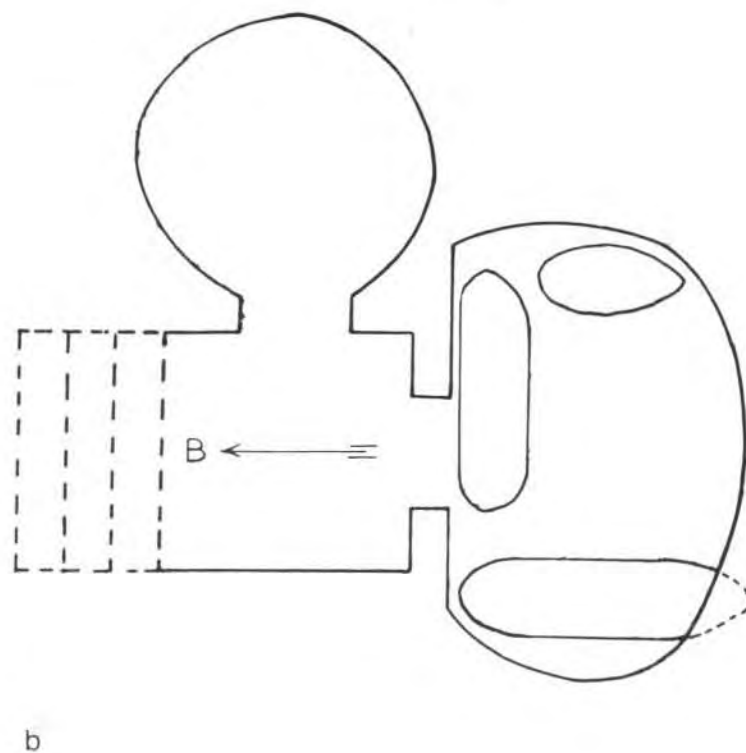
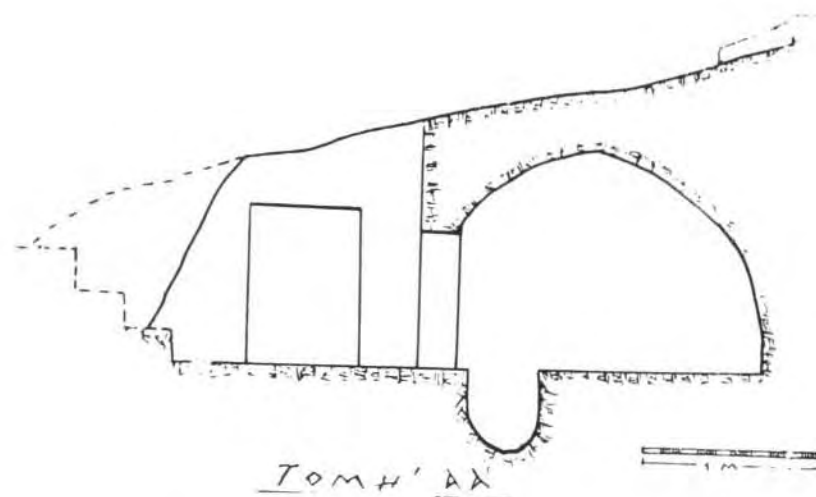
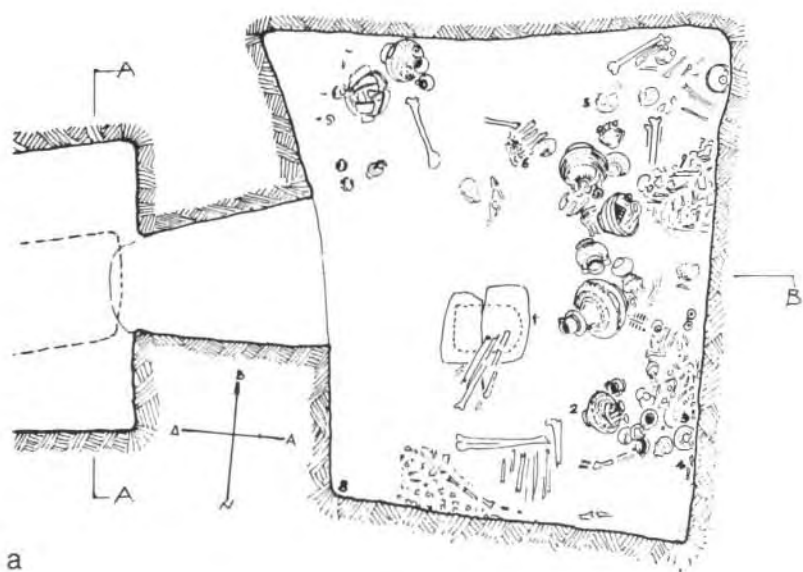
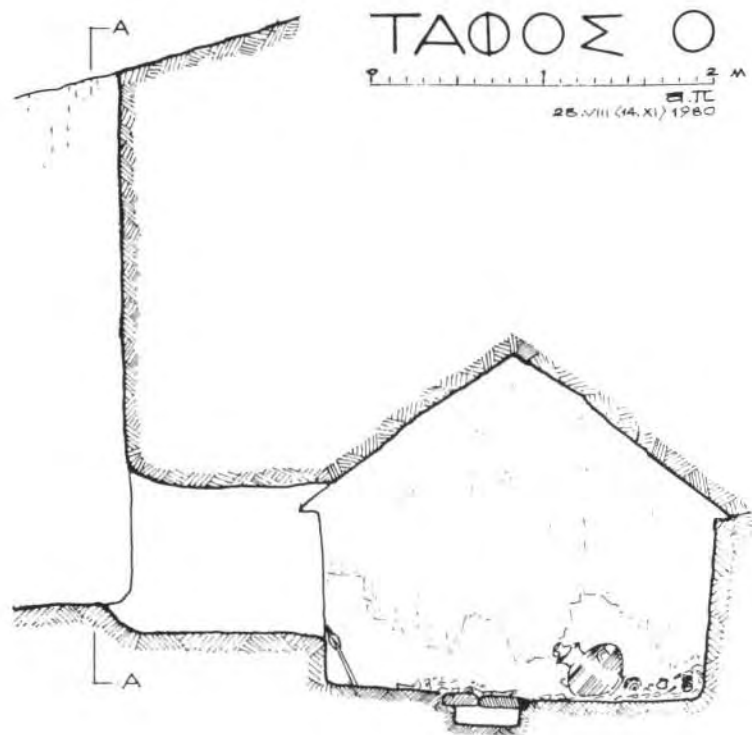
a

Pellanes Tomb 1.



b







a



b



c



d



e



f



a



b



c



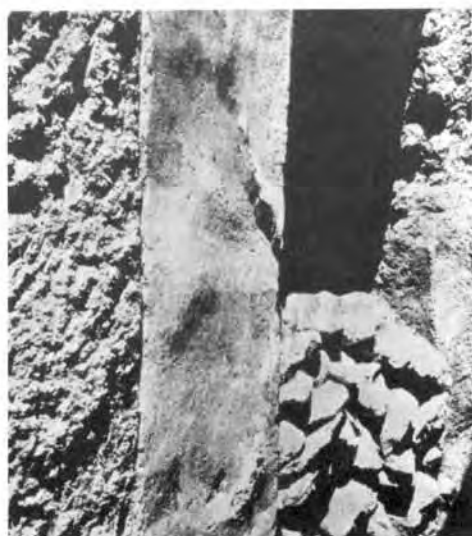
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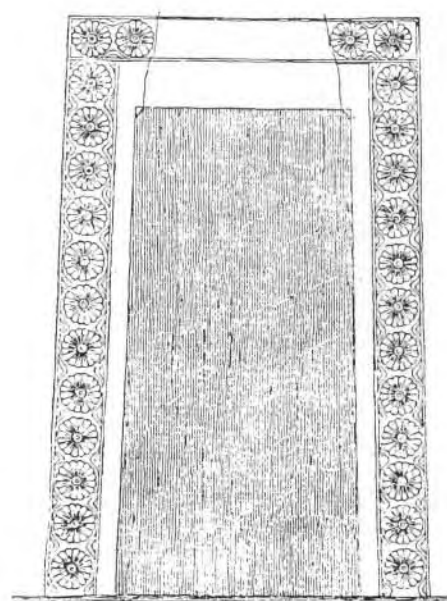
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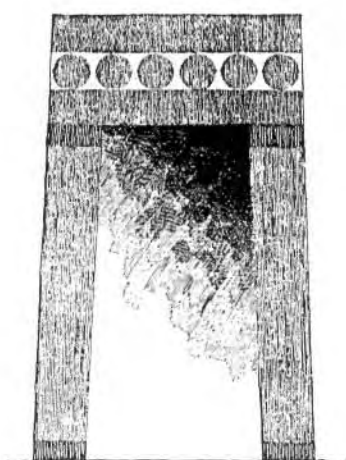
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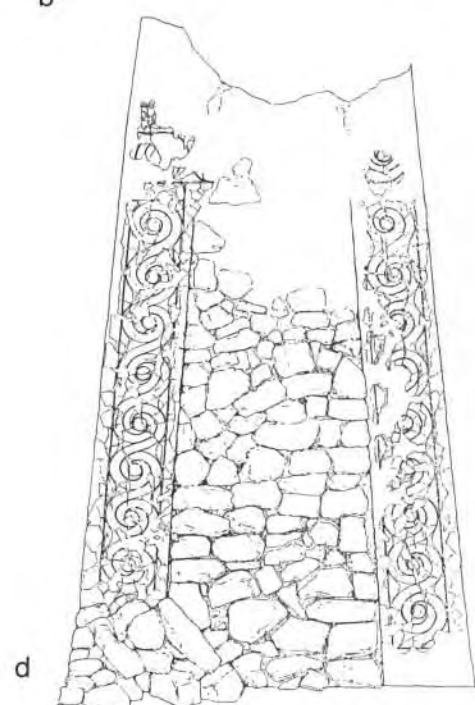
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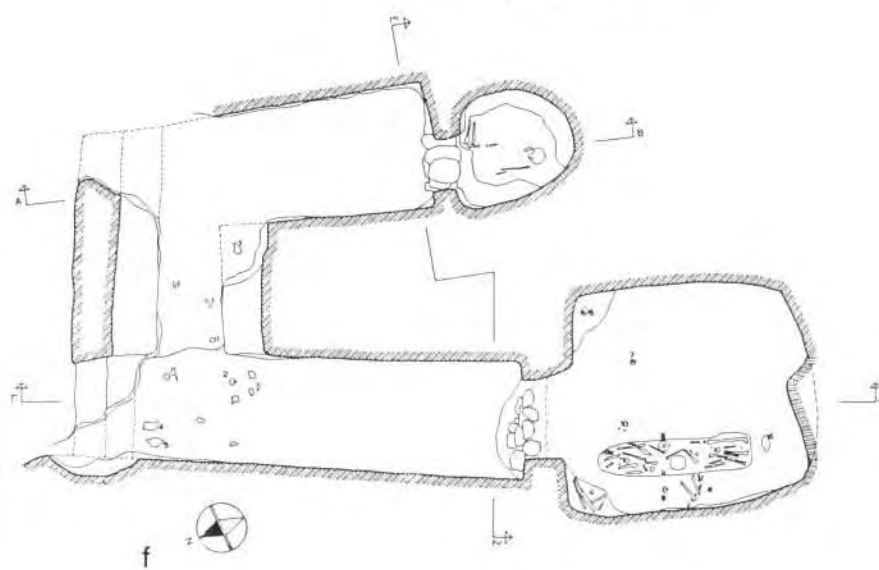
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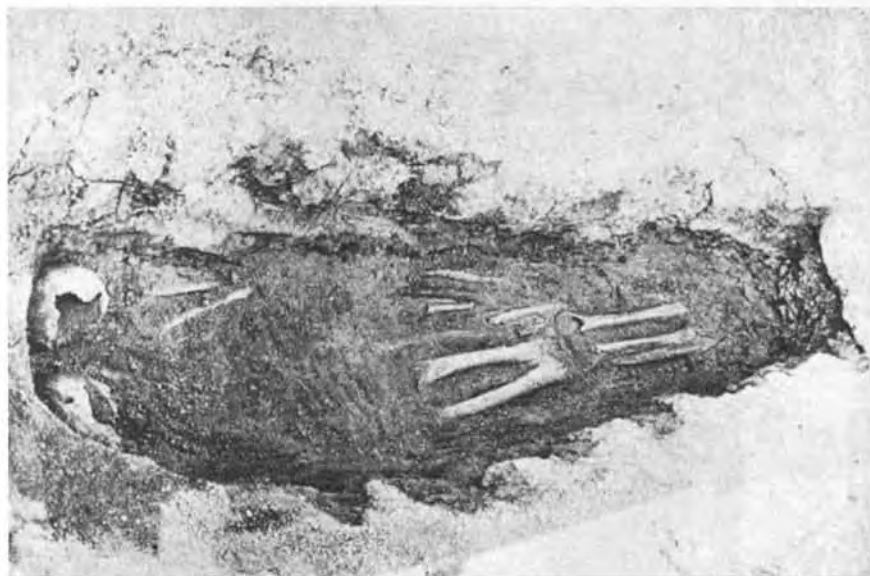
c



d



e



a



c



b



d



a



b



c



d