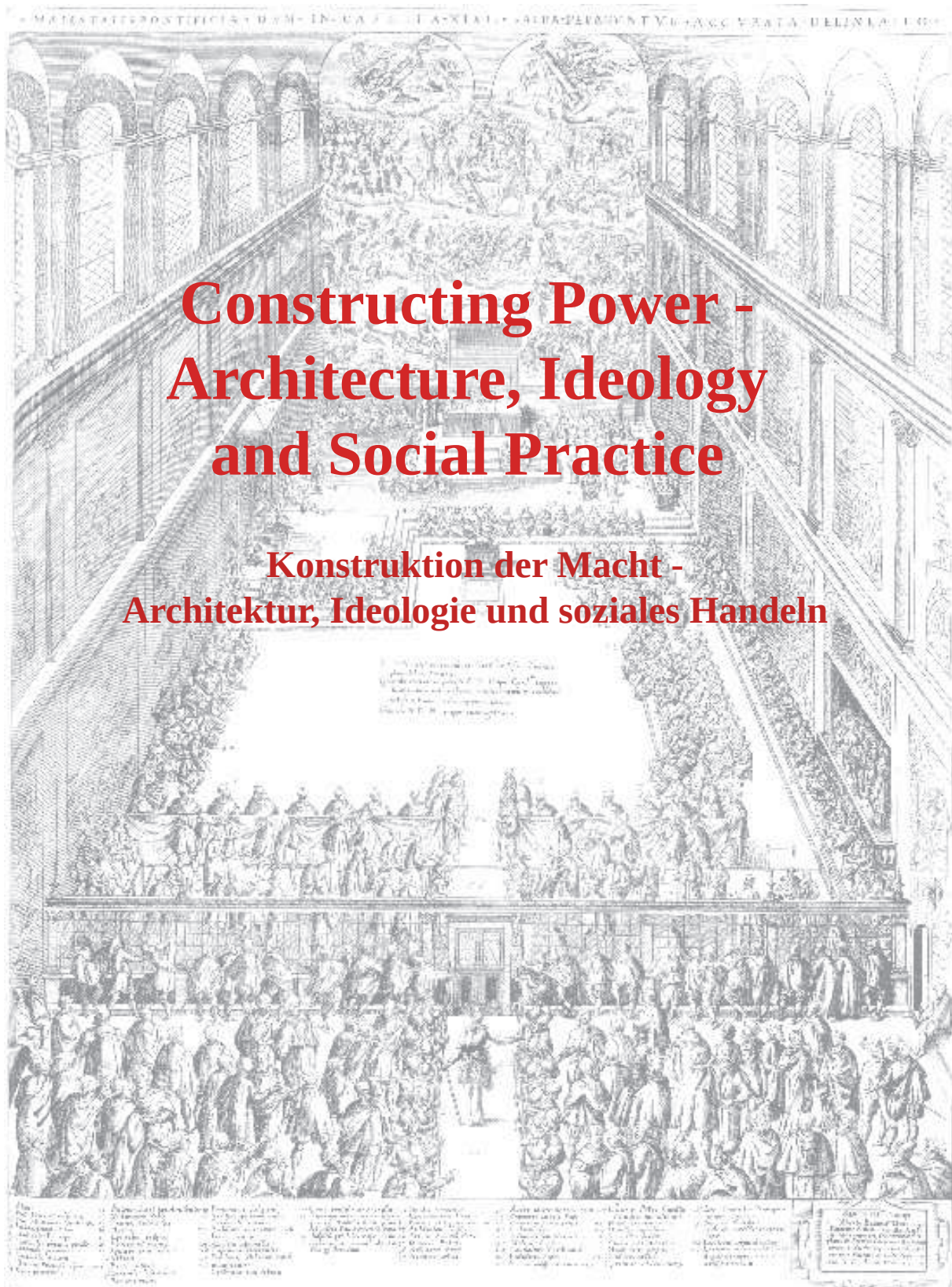


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Constructing Power - Architecture, Ideology and Social Practice

**Konstruktion der Macht -
Architektur, Ideologie und soziales Handeln**

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Constructing and Reconstructing Power

The Palace of Pylos

ULRICH THALER

INTRODUCTION

While the construction of power is the subject matter of this interdisciplinary volume, its reconstruction is what this contribution will be concerned with in particular. Yet, there are two different aspects or ‘modes’ of reconstruction that will have to be dealt with: the archaeological and the social reconstruction of power. The need to reflect on the former directly results from the limitations of archaeological data as sources for an enquiry into past social realities: as archaeologists, we can never directly observe the social processes we are interested in, but have to reconstruct them from the patterning of the material traces they have left.

Since social power, however, is never static, but is constantly renegotiated as the relationships which it orders are lived and acted out¹, architecture cannot be understood adequately as a petrified expression of power. Therefore, a consideration of the social construction of power by architectural means needs to go hand in hand with a discussion of its social reconstruction; along with the plan of a building, we need to discuss the changes of its plan. In trying to do so, we may find, that – in clear contrast to the limitations of its data – archaeology’s inherently diachronic perspective offers opportunities not necessarily encountered in disciplines studying the present.

In correspondence with the two modes of the reconstruction of power, the archaeological and the social, this contribution can be broadly divided in two parts. In the first, I will outline a conception of space as constituted on different levels of definition and, correspondingly, analysis, which provides a framework for the integration of different perspectives on and approaches to the study of social space. In a second step, I will aim to bring together, within this framework, the results of different analyses of the palace of Pylos (Abb. 1) on the ridge of Ano Englianos in Messenia, Greece, so that in the end, we can arrive at a coherent reconstruction of the reconstruction of Late Bronze Age social order. Since models, theories and paradigms in archaeology tend to fail (even) more quickly in application than under philosophical scrutiny, it will be to the second, practical part that I will devote more... space.

ARCHAEOLOGICALLY RE-CONSTRUCTING POWER: AN INTEGRATIVE PERSPECTIVE

“Social archaeology”, as Lin Foxhall reminds us, “encounters a fundamental theoretical dilemma. [...] The dynamic flow of social life is speedy and its time scales are short-term”². The archaeologist, therefore, is forced to deal with time spans which in themselves are anything but archaeological. Architectural structures, in contrast, appear to be comparatively stable social constructs. But if we want to capture their social effects and functioning more fully, we will be best served by a conception of space which

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Joseph Maran, who made possible my involvement in the *Zeichen der Herrschaft* project of the *Altertumswissenschaftliches Kolleg Heidelberg*, which for a year not only provided the funding needed to continue work on my PhD dissertation, but also an extraordinarily stimulating environment in which to do so. I also owe and acknowledge a debt of gratitude to those who contributed to this atmosphere, among whom I would like to mention in particular the visiting scholars we had the privilege to welcome in Heidelberg, Susan and Andrew Sherratt, John Barrett, Matthew Johnson and Jim Wright.

1 Tilley (1982, 37) and the contributors to a volume edited by Miller and Tilley (1984) were among the first – if not, indeed, they were the first – to introduce this perspective into archaeology.

2 Foxhall 2000, 484-5.



Abb. 1. View along the axis of the megaron and the Main Building from the south-east. Blegen and Rawson 1966, fig. 9 (courtesy of the Department of Classics, University of Cincinnati).

takes into account the differential diachronic stability of different elements of the built or otherwise (wo)man-made environment – whether these be certain architectural elements with their distinctive life cycles or spatially and architecturally situated social practices of different duration. Although he does not put as clear an emphasis on the dimension of time, the architectural theoretician Amos Rapoport offers a conception of space which allows us to do just this in distinguishing fixed-feature, semifixed-feature and nonfixed-feature elements of the build environment, i.e. elements such as, firstly, buildings, floors and walls, secondly, furniture and furnishing of various kinds and, thirdly, human beings and their actions and behaviour³.

Rapoport's definitions of these offer a greater clarity than the distinction of fixed-feature, semifixed-feature and informal space developed by Edward Hall in his proxemic studies⁴, on which they are based. For Hall subsumes both physically present structures and their learned internalizations⁵ under the notion of fixed-feature space, even in cases where the former have been lost; as an example, he points to the dining area in contemporary American living rooms, to which the rules and norms formerly developed in the architecturally separate dining room still apply, even when they diverge from those valid in the rest of the living room. Valuable though this observation is, it seems clearer conceptually to subsume such rules and norms under the notion of nonfixed-feature space as defined by Rapoport; the latter, accordingly, encompasses a wider spectrum of human practices and forms of behaviour than Hall's informal space, under the heading of which little more than situationally specific interpersonal distances is discussed⁶.

The archaeologically decisive idea of differential diachronic stability, on the other hand, is developed more clearly by Steward Brand than in Rapoport's work. Brand's distinction of site, structure, skin, serv-

3 Rapoport 1982, 88-101; 1990, 13.

4 Hall 1966, 94-105.

5 Hall 1966, 100.

6 Hall 1966, 107-22.

ices, space plan and stuff⁷ – optionally to be complemented by the seventh ‘s’ of souls⁸ – has resulted, however, from considerations of present-day building and its practicalities and problems. Brand is less concerned with a historical perspective than with the realization that it is inadvisable to embed a heating system, as a services-element, in a floor, as part of the structure, if the floor can be expected to last for 50 years while the heating system is likely to become outdated in a mere 10 years. While this latter consideration may not be of immediate archaeological relevance, it does make good archaeological sense to integrate the idea of finer subdivision, which takes into account diachronic stability or flexibility, into Rapoport’s scheme. Accordingly, I want to suggest and apply a distinction between (diachronically) stable fixed-feature elements, e.g. the walls of a building, and (diachronically) unstable fixed-feature elements, e.g. frescoes.

Since nonfixed-feature elements in Rapoport’s sense do not usually feature as *explanans* in an archaeological situation, as fixed- and semifixed-feature elements do, but rather as *explanandum*, as part of the social situation to be clarified, archaeological analysis can be based on a revised concept of three levels of spatial definition: stable fixed-feature elements, unstable fixed-feature elements and semifixed-feature elements – alternatively and more simply, we may refer to these as a first, second and third level of spatial analysis. Within this scheme, greater diachronic flexibility coincides with and corresponds to a clearer definition of specific social situations, but also with a greater scope for manipulation through social practices and individual acts. In clear contrast, diachronically stable elements are less easily modified by social agents in the short term and offer the more basic spatial definition of any situation, within which the more detailed definition through more flexible elements unfolds. This, of course, raises problems for archaeological praxis; the most serious of these is that, while the archaeological record is characterized by destruction and abandonment contexts, the destruction or abandonment of a building does not represent its characteristic form of use, the social situation typically associable with it. Accordingly, it is most of all with respect to the diachronically most sensitive, and thus from a socio-historical perspective most interesting, elements that archaeologists often need to ask themselves whether the situations they can reconstruct from these belong within the field of everyday or of exceptional activities. Fortunately, the present case study entails little difficulties in this respect.

The above conceptual framework permits not only, as stated at the outset, the integration of different perspectives and methodological approaches into a coherent account in general terms. It should also, more specifically, allow us to considerably strengthen particular interpretations through triangulation as outlined by Alison Wylie⁹; Wylie explains that a convergence of differently based arguments in their results and conclusions permits a more forceful corroboration or rejection of an interpretative position than a single line of argument could. In the present case study, the different levels of analysis can be conceived as such independent lines of argument.

In what follows, I will discuss the application of the framework thus outlined to the study of the Bronze Age palace of Pylos. But while the framework of three analytical levels provides a basic structure not only for research, but also for its written account, I will not always follow this structure in a strictly linear fashion. There are two main reasons for this; the first of these is the methodological one that some types of analysis deal with material which can be ascribed to different levels; this reflects the simple fact that the three levels can be distinguished conceptually and analytically, but are experienced simultaneously. The second reason is that – whatever the structuring framework of archaeological reconstruction – the social reconstruction of power constitutes contexts of meanings to which its analytical account will have to make some reference in its structure.

7 Brand 1994, 13.

8 Brand 1994, 17.

9 Wylie 2000, 232.

SOCIALLY RE-CONSTRUCTING POWER: THE CASE STUDY OF ANO ENGLIANOS

What makes the palace on the ridge of Ano Englianos¹⁰ near present-day Pylos in Messenia an exceptional case for the study of the architecture of the Mycenaean culture, the first civilization on the European mainland, and what allows us to consider the reconstruction of power during its lifetime, is our ability to distinguish the state of the building at two successive points in time¹¹. The earlier building state (Taf. 14) can be dated to the beginning of the ceramic phase Late Helladic IIIB at around 1300 B.C., when the palace was built or possibly rebuilt in the general layout preserved today. The later state (Taf. 15) is datable to the end of Late Helladic IIIB, around 1200 B.C., when the Pylian palace was destroyed by fire and Mycenaean palatial civilization came to an end in a series of upheavals which involved the entire Eastern Mediterranean, but unfortunately remain poorly understood.

This possibility to assess, at least in its outcome, the architectural development of the palace over the century or so of its existence forms the basis both for the present study and for a widely accepted narrative which interprets the architectural changes as evidence of a long-term economic decline preceding the eventual catastrophic end of the Pylian palace and state¹². According to this view, a concentration of economic activities within the palace building complex indicates difficulties in maintaining central authority in the region controlled by the palace administration. In addition, remodelling within the palace is linked implicitly or explicitly to the extensive contemporary fortificatory activities at the palatial centres in the Argolid, such as the eponymous site of Mycenae. The observation or assumptions underlying this view have been most clearly stated by Cynthia Shelmerdine: "Looking at the general pattern of these changes to the palace, it is evident that they consistently do three things: 1) diminish spaciousness and elegance of the complex in its original form; 2) add storage and workroom space; and 3) restrict access and circulation"¹³.

In what follows, it will be my aim to, on the one hand, disprove these assumptions and thus the hypothesis built on them and, on the other, to sketch an alternative explanation of architectural change in Ano Englianos, which focuses attention on, firstly, changes in the forms of representation and legitimization of supreme rule and, secondly, a development towards a functionally more favourable layout for a building complex serving as the centre of an early state.

FIRST LEVEL: STABLE FIXED-FEATURE ELEMENTS

The first level of spatial analysis encompasses the basic architectural definition of social space, on which a more fine-grained later definition of specific social situations quite literally builds. It may not come as a surprise, therefore, that this level can be dealt with quite comprehensively with recourse to a single coherent methodological approach; I am referring to the space syntax analysis developed at the Bartlett School of University College London¹⁴.

For such an analysis, the ground plan of the building under study has to be transformed into a graph in which spatial units are represented by a circle and their respective links, such as doors, are rendered as connecting lines. As the relative positions of two spatial units are no longer conceived geometrically, but purely topologically as the minimum number of interposed steps, spatial units within the dendritic graph can be ordered in rows according to their distance from a particular space. Usually, the exterior of the building, referred to as the 'carrier space', is chosen as this root. The resulting representation is called a 'justified graph', or 'j-graph' for short (Abb. 2). On its basis, a number of numeric indicators of spatial properties can be developed for the 'integration' of any spatial unit, i.e. its connectedness with the remainder of the structure as well as with the carrier space. Likewise, indicators can be calculated for the building as a whole; these express the difficulty or ease of access to and movement within the

10 Blegen and Rawson 1966; Lang 1969; Blegen et al. 1973.

11 Wright (1984) was the first to offer a coherent discussion of phasing. The following study is based on plans of two building states which have been revised with regard to the results of recent re-excavations (Nelson 2001; preliminary reports cited therein); I will discuss these more fully in my PhD dissertation (Thaler (forthcoming a)).

12 Palaima 1984, 33; Wright 1984; Shelmerdine 1987.

13 Shelmerdine 1987, 564.

14 Hillier and Hanson 1984; Hillier 1996; Hanson 1998; cf. Markus (this volume).

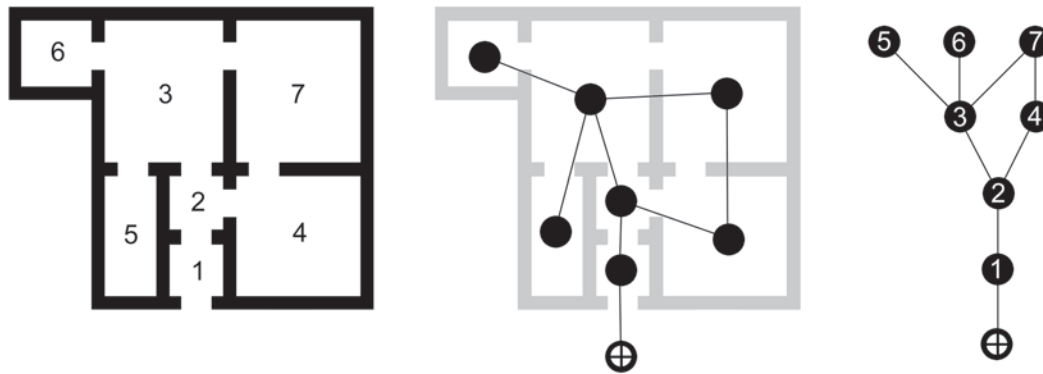


Abb. 2. From left to right: plan, topological graph and j-graph of a building. Drawing: author.

building. Therefore, Shelmerdine's third assumption, i.e. that "changes to the palace [...] restrict access and circulation"¹⁵, can be directly assessed through this methodology¹⁶.

Indeed, the palace is found to be a little less integrated with its surroundings in the later building state, access from outside does become a little more difficult. But even then, the integration of the carrier space retains a value which is close to the average of integration, i.e. on average any room within the building is as easily reached from outside the palace as from another room inside it. In clear contrast, the carrier space in, e.g., medieval castles is often the least integrated unit, its integration value representing the minimum for the building complex. Hence, the association of the 'restriction of access' with fortificatory intentions cannot be sustained¹⁷. It seems to make better sense to ascribe the slight change to a growing differentiation between the palace and the surrounding settlement, especially since, contrary to Shelmerdine's assumption, which as a whole has to be rejected, internal integration does not change noticeably, i.e. circulation within the palace became neither easier nor more difficult in the later building state. We may reasonably assume that such a differentiation will have had both functional and social aspects.

Space syntax analysis also allows us to trace a differentiation in the area dubbed "entrée des fournisseurs"¹⁸ by Klaus Kilian, which is characterised by the juxtaposition of pantries (rooms 18-22), the wine magazine (rooms 104-105) and storerooms for oil (rooms 25-25, probably 27). Both in a mapping of areas of primary access for the three points of entrance to the palace area (Taf. 16.3) and in a corresponding mapping of areas of primary control¹⁹ for the three most integrating courts (Taf. 16.4), this area at the back of the Main Building shows up as a clearly definable, coherent economic unit in the later building state; nothing like this is observable in the earlier building state. In addition, we may note that the building complex as a whole is relatively deep from this direction, i.e. routes of access via the corresponding point of entrance are comparatively long for many rooms. But a 'tradesman's entrance' need not provide easy access to a building as a whole, but only to a limited part of it – and indeed the storerooms in the economic unit become more easily accessible from the outside, which facilitated deliveries to the palace, and even become more integrated internally in the later building state.

A similar channelling of visitors towards a single route can be observed for the megaron, the central suite of rooms including room 6, the throne room. In the earlier building state, two alternative shortest routes lead to the core of the palace; the canonical access to the throne, via the propylon (rooms 1-2), the megaron court 3, porch 4 and vestibule 5, proves longer than these by one step (Taf. 16.1). In the later buildings state, however, a channelling of visitors towards the now relatively shorter canonical access

15 Shelmerdine 1987, 564.

16 A more comprehensive discussion of the space syntax analysis of Pylos is found in Thaler (2005).

17 In contrast to earlier studies, in which it is merely implied, a military connotation is explicitly stated by Shelmerdine (1999, 406-8).

18 Kilian 1987, 207.

19 These two forms of representation, which derive from Hanson's (2000, 108-10) mapping of step-depth, do not form part of the standard repertory of space syntax methodology, but are based on basic spatial properties in the terms of space syntax.

to the megaron is apparent; one of the shorter routes of the earlier state is cut off, the other is lengthened through the interposition of additional spaces (Taf. 16.2). At the same time, the integration of the megaron and its depth from the carrier space do not change noticeably; yet, we do find evidence that its 'perceived distance' from the exterior of the palace grew. This will emerge more clearly from second level analysis than from a discussion of space syntax.

The channelling of traffic to the throne is closely linked to the development of court 58, in front of the Main Building, which, as the mapping of primary access shows, in the later phase comes to control all traffic to the palace that did not use the 'tradesman's entrance'. This 'other' traffic will have included formal visitors, such as those approaching the megaron as the centre of the palace and notionally of the state, as well as the more formal economics dealings of the palace with the territory under its rule. The latter is indicated by the fact that the palace archive falls within the area of primary control of court 58; the same is true of the Northeastern Building (rooms 93-100), traditionally referred to as the "Palace Workshop"²⁰, to which I will return later.

Further light is shed on the development of court 58 by a comparison with court 63 with regard to their respective topological positions. Both belong to the most integrating courts, on which the mapping of areas of primary control is based, and both form part of an undifferentiated ring of outdoor spaces around the Main Building in the earlier building state. But while court 58 shifts, in the course of the thirteenth century B.C., to a configurational position that ensures control of access from outside the palace, court 63 becomes further removed from the outside, despite the fact that it retains its role as the most integrating space for circulation within the palace. These hubs of, respectively, visitor access and internal circulation continued, however, to share certain functions in the later buildings state; this is evident in the fact that pantries were closely connected with both, as indeed with courts 3 and 88 as well. The association of the rich inventories of these pantries with palatial feast is commonly accepted; so is the recognition of courts as locales for such feasts. What the present analysis now permits to suggest is that in the different topological positions of these courts a differentiation between social groups can be identified. Only few would have been allowed to celebrate in court 3, which, by virtue of its close association with the megaron, would have been the most prestigious of these locales, whereas court 58 as the outermost court would have welcomed the widest and least privileged group of participants. Court 63 occupied an intermediary position, as it was deeper within the building complex than 58 and fronted the main suite of rooms in the Southwestern Building, rooms 64 and 65, comparable but second to the megaron. As part of the economic unit oriented towards the 'tradesman's entrance', court 88 is difficult to position in this scheme; we will see later that there is no reason to try.

Despite its considerable analytical potential, space syntax methodology by no means tells us all there is to know about the first level of analysis. In particular for Pylos, a discussion of architectural archetypes²¹ is of further interest; while a ground plan cannot capture what experiencing these in their social contexts meant, it is at least suited to their archaeological identification. The Mycenaean megaron, which constituted, in its canonical form with porch, vestibule, flanking corridors and a central hearth surrounded by four columns, the core of the Late Helladic IIIB palaces, has long been viewed as such an archetype with a tradition stretching back into the Middle Helladic period²². While the underlying typology can be and recently has been questioned²³, I want to make it the starting point of my considerations. Due to its long tradition, the megaron can be understood as an architecture which came to transcend its role as a medium for the structuring of communication and, through reference to the social knowledge of its users, became a medium of communication itself²⁴. Accordingly, we may ask whether changes to

20 Or simply the "Workshop" (Blegen and Rawson 1966, 299).

21 The way I employ the term 'archetype' needs to be clearly distinguished from, e.g., Thiis-Evensen's (1987, esp. 17 on the history of the term in architectural theory) use of the same word. Thiis-Evensen's archetypes – floor, wall and roof – are basic structural elements, the concrete form of which shows variations in terms of themes and motifs. Starting from the archaeological notion of 'type', I will understand 'archetype' to mean a form of building or expression which is characterized by a long tradition and, due to this, a high potential for identification and strong connotations with certain social practices and conventions.

22 Hiller 1986; Kilian 1987; Barber 1992; Werner 1993. Hiller (1986, 85-6) even assumes a tradition stretching back to the Early Helladic period.

23 Jung 2000, esp. 85-6; Wright 2005; cf. Wright 1990, 350.

24 Cf. Broadbent 1980, esp. 145.

the Pylian palace may have affected traditional elements and thus have potentially changed some of the messages communicated. Indeed, this appears to have been the case: when the south-western corridor was walled off to provide additional pantries, this did not merely contribute to the formation of the economic unit oriented towards the 'tradesman's entrance'; it also led to a dissociation of the storerooms at the back of the megaron from the suite of staterooms itself. The close connection of the main room and the storerooms behind, however, is one of the characteristics of the postulated typological sequence²⁵. The changes may have been made for purely functional reasons, to adapt a monumentalized traditional layout to the needs of a palatial centre, but they may also have expressed a change in the self-image of the person enthroned in the megaron. Regardless of intentions, they will have changed actual experience, as matters of state and everyday economic activities became more clearly separated.

It would, however, be an inappropriate simplification to equate the built structure of the megaron with specific meanings and attribute these to those who built and rebuilt it or had others do so. While certain intended meanings, e.g. in the present case an architecturally stated claim to 'Mycenaean-ness', may be assumed when an established archetype is employed in an elite context, something more subtle than conscious signification will have come into play here: the megaron did not merely express a 'Mycenaean' identity, but made it possible; it allowed its users to act 'Mycenaean' and thus become and be 'Mycenaean'²⁶. By elaborating the traditional form of domestic architecture into the representative core of their residences, the Mycenaean rulers must have been able to draw on a whole set of culturally embedded social practices and conventions – a social resource they, however, had to share with their visitors. If we accept the typological derivation of the megaron from Middle Helladic house forms, a discussion of these practices and conventions will have to start from the notion of *oikos*²⁷. If we follow the critics in questioning this long tradition, we can still see in the Mycenaean palatial megara the rapid establishment of a clearly defined building type with which certain practices and conventions were associated. But in the latter case, these would be more likely to have focussed on membership of the elite rather than on Mycenaean identity.

A last issue to be addressed on the first level of analysis is Shelmerdine's first assumption, i.e. that changes to the palace of Pylos diminished "the spaciousness and elegance of the complex in its original form"²⁸. Quite obviously, such a statement overlooks certain aspects of the later additions. One may doubt the excavators' verdict, who saw in the late ramp 59, between room 60 and the Main Building, "a somewhat imposing canyon"²⁹. One could also disagree with Kilian's suggestion that planning aimed at an impressive effect is evident in the fact that the opening of the outer porch of the propylon, room 1, was twice as wide as ramps 59 and 91, which flanked the Main Building³⁰. It seems very difficult, however, to escape the conclusion that court 58, onto which the propylon and the ramps opened, underwent extensive remodelling during the thirteenth century B.C. which considerably enhanced its impressiveness³¹: the Northeastern Building was fronted by a pillared hall and we may confidently assume the presence of a pillared building in the area of the south-western stairway to the plateau on the opposite site of the court, although its form remains unknown due to the poor preservation of remains in this area³².

Still, for Shelmerdine the loss of elegance reveals itself already in building technique. She admits, though, that room 82, which was built with rubble walls early in the thirteenth century B.C., does not fit her chronological assumptions³³; neither does room 60, which was built at a later stage in a technique

25 Hiller 1986, 86; cf. Hiesel 1990, 206; Werner 1993, 66-8.

26 On "Making Mycenaean" cf. Davis and Bennet 1999, esp. 111-4.

27 Barber 1992, 22.

28 Shelmerdine 1987, 564.

29 Blegen and Rawson 1966, 236.

30 Kilian 1984, 43.

31 Indeed, it is only through the additions to the complex that 58 becomes a court in the proper sense; for the earlier building state the term 'square' might be more appropriate. A comparison with the different forms of outdoor space discussed by Palyvou (2004) indicates that, again, we can see in this evidence for a growing differentiation between the palace and the surrounding settlement.

32 Blegen and Rawson 1966, 228, fig. 412; Blegen et al. 1973, 40, fig. 306.

33 Shelmerdine 1987, 561 n. 24.

closely resembling that employed in the Main Building³⁴. To my mind, it makes better sense to consider the relative ‘frontality’ of the different parts of the complex, i.e. whether they were meant to be seen or accessed by ‘the public’: room 82 was built in a back area, the same in which the ‘tradesman’s entrance’ later developed; room 60, like the south-western façade of the Main Building, borders court 58.

The rubble walls of courts 42 and 47, on the other hand, which were erected in front of the ashlar-built north-eastern façade and cut off the access to the columned porch 41 provide much better, indeed probably the best evidence for the loss of elegance described by Shelmerdine, as photographs taken during excavation vividly illustrate³⁵. But even here, difficulties arise with her interpretation: firstly, Michael Nelson’s evaluation of re-excavations undertaken in the 1990s resulted in an earlier dating of the ashlar façade, which no longer appears to be an original element of the Late Helladic IIIB palace, but is seen as a re-used Late Helladic IIIA structure³⁶; secondly, Nelson’s reconstruction indicates that, even in early Late Helladic IIIB, the view of the façade would not have been unimpeded by other buildings, as previously assumed³⁷; thirdly and most importantly, we have to remember that what looks like a bare wall to the archaeologist may often have looked differently to the inhabitant. In a number of places within the palace where no plaster is preserved on the walls, the surviving floors turn upwards before reaching the walls, clearly indicating the erstwhile presence of some kind of wall plaster. In courts 42 and 47, there are only scant remains of wall plaster, but these seem to be, like the more extensively preserved stucco floors, of comparatively good quality for unroofed spaces³⁸. But in discussing wall plaster and stucco floors, we are already moving ahead to the second level of analysis.

SECOND LEVEL: UNSTABLE FIXED-FEATURE ELEMENTS

Different forms of surface treatment of walls, floors and – unfortunately a hypothetical point in the present case study – ceilings offer different visual, potentially also different tactile stimuli. Different sensory stimuli or, more precisely, the resulting changes in sensory perception, offer important cues as to, in general terms, socially and situationally adequate and expected behaviour and, more specifically, the importance of transitions between spatial units³⁹. A simple example may illustrate this: walking along a hotel corridor done out in silk tapestries and finding at its end two open doors giving access to two rooms, one furnished with the same silk tapestries, the other showing walls of bare concrete, only the more enterprising spirits (and those who feel seriously out of place to start with) would choose concrete over silk. There are two elements here which result in a heightened ‘perceived threshold’ between silken surroundings and concrete construction: firstly, the simple fact that there is a change in sensory perception; secondly, that the different wall treatments offer different social connotations.

In accordance with these considerations, it is possible to map different forms of wall and floor treatment in the palace of Pylos and, from this mapping, develop simple numeric expressions for the ‘height’ of thresholds (Taf. 17.2)⁴⁰. In so doing, I presume that a qualitative progression from clay via plain and painted stucco to figural wall-painting does not merely connote different status for today’s archaeologists, but was correspondingly connoted for the Bronze Age inhabitants and visitors of the palace. The decorative use of certain stones or building techniques, which occurs in a small number of places within

34 Blegen and Rawson (1966, 236-44) and Blegen et al. (1973, figs. 303, 306) suggested a later date in comparison to the Main Building, which, amongst others, Wright (1984, 22) accepted. Shelmerdine (1987, 561) considered room 60 a relatively early addition, while Nelson (2001, 208, fig. 82) dates it in his Late Helladic IIIB early phase. But neither would this necessarily make it a part of the building complex as it stood at the beginning of the thirteenth century B.C., nor is the latter probable.

35 Blegen and Rawson 1966, fig. 28.

36 Nelson 2001, 204, 207, fig. 81.

37 Nelson 2001, figs. 81-2.

38 Blegen and Rawson 1966, 182-4, 207; Lang 1969, 205, 211. A plan by Kilian (1984, 38 fig. 1) even indicates painted stucco for the outside face of the wall around courts 42 and 47; the reasons for this elude me.

39 Rapoport 1982, esp. 26-7, 57-9; Sanders 1984, esp. 341-3; 1990.

40 The methodology closely follows the one applied by Sanders for Myrtos (1984, 405, 483-484, fig. 93; 1990). A mapping of surface treatment by Kilian (1984, 38 fig. 1) could unfortunately not be used for analysis, as correspondence to the information in the excavation reports (Blegen and Rawson 1966; Lang 1969) seemed only partial.

the palace, is treated as 'equal' to the use of non-figural frescoes, in which it is occasionally imitated⁴¹. In addition to this, the thresholds indicated in the plan take account of two further characteristics: on the one hand, whether a space was unroofed, roofed but open on one side or roofed and enclosed by walls on all sides; on the other, changes in floor level, which are weighted doubly if they surpass eye level, as in staircases (Taf. 17.1).

Unavoidably, the resulting mapping remains incomplete – not just because of the incompleteness of archaeological data, but also because the sheer number of sensory changes which could potentially be mapped defies any aspiration to completeness. For example, the visual impact of the respective width of different rooms would be of interest, while, of course, our perception is only dominated by the visual, but never exclusively visual: changes of temperature may be associated with the hearths in the megaron and room 46 as well as with areas of light and shade; olfactory perception can offer important clues as well. Such characteristics can hardly be mapped for the building complex as a whole, but we may profitably give them some consideration in the discussion of individual contexts. This allows us to interpret a mapping of thresholds like the one presented here with some confidence, as does, more importantly, the realization that sensory markers in the built environment always, but particularly so in more public spaces, tend towards redundancy, i.e. the transmission of the same messages in different media⁴².

The lengthening of the 'perceived distance' between the outside of the palace and the megaron in the later building state has already been mentioned in the discussion of space syntax analysis, but is picked up more clearly by the mapping of 'perceived thresholds': along the canonical route to the throne room, sensory perception constantly changes, i.e. distance is stressed as the visitor constantly has to negotiate marked thresholds. Interestingly, thresholds are as high or even higher when a visitor wants to diverge from the route to the megaron once inside the Main Building, e.g. to enter the archive rooms 7 and 8⁴³. The trend towards a channelling of visitors in the later building state is even more apparent here than the perceptual distancing of the throne.

Elements which were not mapped both strengthen and modulate the described effects; the so-called 'sentry-stands' in rooms 1, 4 and 5 offer the most instructive example⁴⁴. Accepting their interpretation as places where guards stood, we can see them as strongly accentuating the transitions from the outer to the inner porch of the propylon, the megaron's porch to its vestibule and the vestibule to the throne room for the entering visitor, while not contributing to the thresholds perceived by the visitor returning from the throne room. If, conversely, we follow the less plausible, but possible alternative interpretation that the 'sentry-stands' indicate the positions of incense burners, the resulting effect would be reversed.

The economic unit in the north-west offers a completely different picture: in the area of the pantries and storerooms at the back of the Main Building, relatively few changes of sensory perception occur at the transition from one room to the other; indeed, this area of relative uniformity stretches even further into the north-eastern part of the Main Building. While the available data is pitifully incomplete and does not allow definite statements, it seems plausible to presume a comparable degree of uniformity for the outdoor spaces behind the Main Building. If this holds true, the only noticeable thresholds in this area had to be crossed when entering a building from a court. This could directly correspond to limited rights of access for those who delivered oil or kylikes to the palace, who would have been allowed to come right up to the doors of pantries 20 and 21 in court 88, but would not have been permitted into the pantries themselves and the storerooms behind.

Though mainly in methodological terms, we can also profit from a consideration of the Southwestern Building, where the uniformity of the area north-east of rooms 64 and 65 at first appears to be the result of poor preservation or even an artefact of methodology. But on closer inspection, the fact that the preserved stucco floor continues unbroken from room to room⁴⁵ provides a clear indication that the area was indeed comparatively uniform in appearance and that, in this case, the loss of information can

41 Cf. McCallum 1987, 76-7. This concerns, most of all, court 3. Since in the outdoor spaces bordering on the north-eastern ashlar façade different forms of wall treatment also occur, these could not be assigned a single form of wall treatment in the corresponding mapping (Taf. 17).

42 Hall 1966, 96; Rapoport 1982, 84, 149-52; Sanders 1984, 93, 439-40, 545.

43 Cf. McCallum's (1987, 143) suggestion that the frescoes of porch 44 clearly set it apart from the access to the megaron.

44 Blegen and Rawson 1966, 57, 68, 74-5.

45 Blegen and Rawson 1966, 259-76.

be explained as a loss of redundancy. In clear contrast, the transition from the figural wall-paintings of room 64 to the plain mud-plaster of the rooms to the north-west is not represented at all in the mapping – for the simple reason that the little ‘room’ 66 does and did not actually have any walls, its four sides all being occupied by doors. What I want to illustrate with these two examples is that the mapping of surface treatments provides a helpful overview, but, like any architectural plan in archaeology, cannot and is not meant to replace the more detailed consideration of individual contexts.

A further qualification needs to be made in that these observations apply to the later building state only. The same holds true – with one possible exception to be discussed later – for considerations of the decorative program of the palace frescoes, despite Lucinda McCallum’s unconvincing attempt to ascribe these wall-paintings to the earlier building state⁴⁶. Yet, there is no doubt that, while a more detailed understanding of it eludes us, a certain temporal depth is documented in the frescoes, most obviously in those places where several superimposed layers of stucco have been preserved; at least, this confirms the classification of frescoes and other forms of surface treatment as fixed-feature, but unstable elements of the built environment.

The problematic association of the decorative program with a supposedly original architectural design notwithstanding, McCallum’s study of the megaron frescoes⁴⁷ remains the starting point for any consideration of the decorative program. McCallum clearly stated the central importance of the depiction of a procession leading towards the political and spiritual centre of the kingdom in the throne room and clarified its connection with the banqueting scene which can be plausibly reconstructed in the throne room itself⁴⁸. That the presence of a sacrificial animal in the latter scene, a bull trussed up on an altar in McCallum’s reconstruction, has recently been questioned⁴⁹ may, however, caution us against overstating parallels with later Greek cult practice.

Another, potentially very illuminating aspect of the megaron’s decoration is touched upon by McCallum, but not discussed in detail: the apparent incongruence of motifs in the north-western and south-eastern halves of the throne room⁵⁰. To the left of the throne⁵¹, there is the already mentioned banqueting scene including a lyre player, the procession approaches from this direction, too; to the right of the throne, wild and in part mystical beasts are depicted. While McCallum suggests that the ruler’s role in cult and his strength are represented here as two aspects of his personality, I think we might be better advised to read this juxtaposition motifs in terms of a binary opposition of concepts. Ian Hodder’s terms *domus* and *agrios*⁵², though developed in discussion of the Neolithic, provide interesting templates in this context: the same contrast between a domesticated or civilized sphere and the untamed nature opposed to it can be observed in the Pylian megaron; even the inversion through which the sphere of nature is transferred to a deep position within the building and thus enclosed and controlled by the sphere of civilization is present. That a table of offerings and the probable libation installation next to the throne were found in the inner half of the throne room may guide further interpretation; it is at odds, however, with McCallum’s proposition that the cultic aspect of the ruler’s personality is expressed in the outer half of the room.

More relevant again is McCallum’s remark that neither the dichotomy of the decorative concept nor the preserved fresco fragments leave any space for the reconstruction of a pair of heraldic animals antithetically opposed to the lion and griffin which have been partially preserved to the right of the throne⁵³. Consequently, we might want to reconsider the idea that the compositional scheme of the frescoes was only completed by the ruler’s taking seat on the throne flanked by the animals⁵⁴. A last suggestion of

46 McCallum 1987, 19-20, 66, 147.

47 McCallum 1987.

48 McCallum 1987, 108-9.

49 Stocker and Davis 2004, 190.

50 McCallum 1987, 138-40.

51 From the point of view of the enthroned ruler.

52 Hodder 1990, 83-7.

53 McCallum 1987, 97-101. The second aspect actually seems problematic if McCallum’s own reconstruction drawing (McCallum 1987, pl. 9) is taken into account, in which there seems to be ample room for another lion and another griffin. But already Reusch (1958, 339, cf. 336) doubted the reconstruction of an antithetical composition.

54 Bennet 2001, 34. Already Reusch (1958, 346-8, 352-3, 356) developed a comparable argument with regard to the Knossian throne room, but doubted its appropriateness for the Pylian megaron.

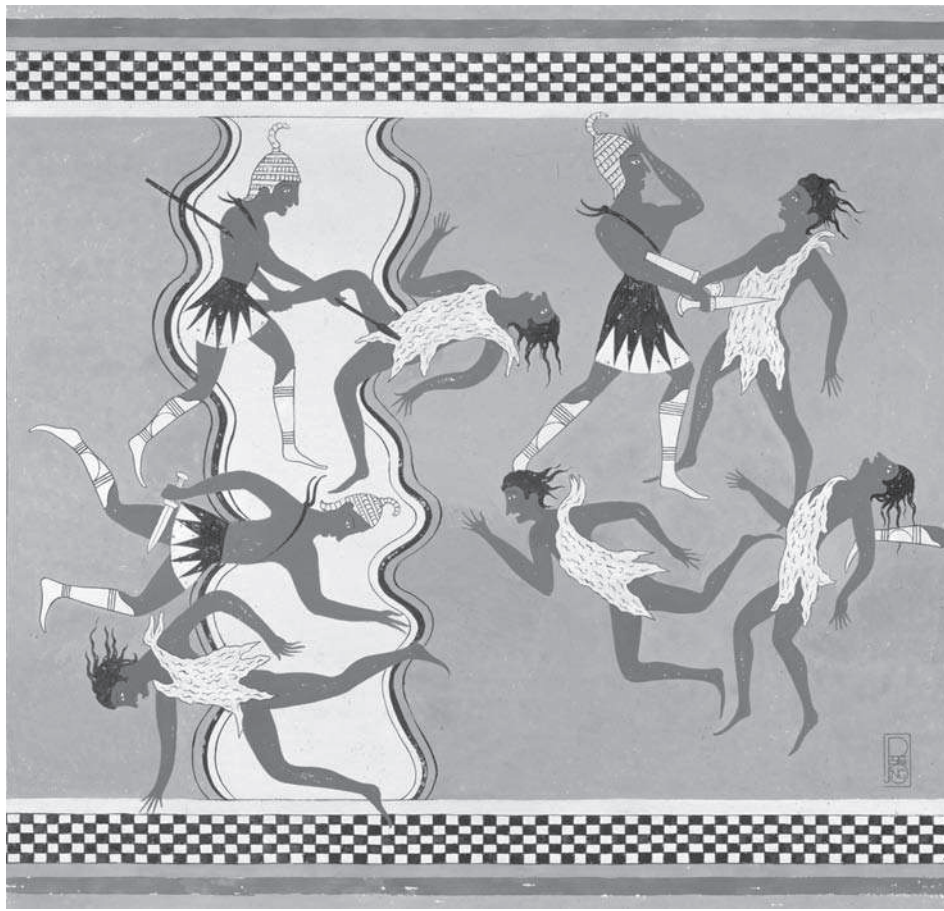


Abb. 3. Reconstruction of part of the battle scene (22 H 64) in porch 64 by Piet de Jong. Lang 1969, pl. M (courtesy of the Department of Classics, University of Cincinnati).

McCallum's that is relevant to the present study is the idea that certain frescoes, e.g. a single human figure she reconstructs in the outer porch of the propylon, may have served as 'signposts'; this might reflect the efforts to channel visitors towards certain routes⁵⁵.

One instance in which the frescoes preserved in the palace may permit diachronic comparison of decorative programs after all has been pointed out by Jack Davis and John Bennet, who contrasted the sedate processional and festive themes of the Main Building with the battle scenes of room 64 (Abb. 3) in the Southwestern Building⁵⁶. Here, we might be able to distinguish not just different aspects of a kingly ideal and royal self-representation, but also a change over time. Two assumptions underlie such a suggestion: firstly, that rooms 64 and 65 of the Southwestern Building were erected in Late Helladic IIIA, some time before the Main Building⁵⁷, which is plausible; secondly, that either the original frescoes in these rooms or at least their themes were preserved until the end of the thirteenth century, which at first sight appears to be the more problematic assumption. That we cannot rule out the possibility of an extended life span of the frescoes themselves is indicated by the fact that the chequerboard border found in room 64 finds its only parallel in material from dumps predating the palace's destruction⁵⁸. That there is some likelihood of a preservation of their themes in some locations and certainly in this one is evidenced by the fact that the naval theme of these dumped fragments is echoed by the recently announced reconstruction of the representation of a ship from material preserved in room 64⁵⁹.

55 McCallum 1987, 70-1, cf. 119, 121.

56 Davis and Bennet 1999, 115-6.

57 Most recently Nelson 2001, 201, fig. 81; cf. Davis and Bennet 1999, 108 n. 11.

58 Shaw 2001, 42.

59 Tracy 2006.

Any discussion of the second analytical level would remain incomplete without at least brief reference to the traces of fixed installations preserved in a number of rooms, which provide relatively unambiguous evidence of former functions: the throne and hearth of the megaron, evidence for shelves in several pantries, the built-in larnax in the bathroom and the built stands into which pithoi were set, e.g. in the oil magazines. Indeed, even the large pithoi in the wine magazine, although freestanding rather than set in such stands, may reasonably be called fixed-feature elements. The traditional functional labels of rooms, which I have – pre-emptively – made reference to in my discussion of the first level of analysis, are partly based on such unstable fixed-feature elements and partly on finds, which have to be classified as semifixed-feature elements.

THIRD LEVEL: SEMIFIXED-FEATURE ELEMENTS

Two fundamental difficulties underlie the discussion of the third analytical level: firstly, any furniture which could be profitably studied as semifixed-feature elements of social space is entirely absent. The above-mentioned shelves and the throne were not movable, i.e. they were fixed, while of movable, presumably wooden pieces of furniture nothing remains but some ivory inlays, which do not permit relevant conclusions for the present discussion⁶⁰. Accordingly, third level analysis by necessity remains limited to smaller movable objects, notably small finds, pottery and animal bones. Secondly, the latter two of these categories of material rarely occur in use contexts, but mainly in storerooms or as refuse.

That, nevertheless, a discussion of the third analytical level can contribute considerably to the analysis of the Pylian palace is owed to a number of studies of different groups of material, which have been published in the past few years and which have shifted the focus of enquiry from the individual finds context to the social context of finds. In contrast to the first level of analysis, where space syntax offered a coherent single approach, less methodological coherence characterizes third level analysis, for which a review of literature comes to be the ‘methodology’ of choice.

The small finds have been discussed by Susan Hofstra with regard to identifications of workshop areas within the palace complex suggested in earlier studies⁶¹. Her results are unambiguous: if the finds from alleged workshops are matched against previously formulated criteria for their identification, such as the presence of tools, raw materials, half-finished products and waste, but also fixed installations, then none of the claims for the identification of a workshop can be upheld on present evidence. This is as true for suggestions which were advanced with some reservations originally – often to turn into factoids only a little later –, such as the “lapidary workshop” in room 55⁶², as it is for supposedly stronger candidates. Most importantly, and this point is confirmed by Georgia Flouda⁶³ and Lisa Bendall⁶⁴ in contextual studies of administrative records found there, i.e. clay nodules and Linear B-tablets, the Northeastern Building does not live up to its designation as the “Palace Workshop”. Instead, as Bendall formulates most clearly, it can now be identified as a clearinghouse for the redistributive palatial economy⁶⁵.

It is informative, at this point, to take another look at the mapping of areas of primary control presented in the discussion of the first analytical level, which makes clear that, like the palace archive, this clearinghouse lies within the frontal area focussed on court 58. This means that both groups of rooms dedicated to the official economic relations between the palace and the territory under its rule are oriented towards the court which in the later building state comes to serve as the distributor of official visitors to the palace.

As to the narrative of economic decline *sensu* Shelmerdine, we may note that with the ‘loss’ of the palace workshop(s) yet another indication of the alleged crisis is lost. Interestingly, Hofstra makes no mention in her account of implausible identifications of the perfume workshop which Shelmer-

60 This is particularly regrettable, since Palaima’s (2000, 237) observations on inventories of furniture used during banquets, from which he deduces a seating order in pairs as shown in the frescoes, hints at the informative potential of this analytical level.

61 Hofstra 2000.

62 Blegen and Rawson 1966, 224.

63 Flouda 2000.

64 Bendall 2003. In this article, Bendall (2003, 225–6) calls for a reassessment of the architectural development of Pylos in the light of new evidence and the difficulties which the latter raises with regard to the narrative of economic decline.

65 Bendall 2003, 181, 225; cf. Flouda 2000, 215, 235.



Abb. 4. Floor of pantry 22 with ceramic vessels found *in situ*. Blegen and Rawson 1966, fig. 103 (courtesy of the Department of Classics, University of Cincinnati).

dine sought to locate in court 47⁶⁶. But the hypothetical nature of this suggestion was clearly stated by Shelmerdine herself⁶⁷; and even if we were to accept it, an outdoor workspace without fixed installations could just as easily be explained as an *ad hoc*-measure of very late date as by reference to a long-term decline.

With regard to pottery, feasting and conspicuous consumption have come to play an important role in our understanding of the finds. Just how conspicuous the consumption of pottery remains even for today's archaeologists is indicated by the conservative estimate that at the time of destruction no less than 8540 ceramic vessels were in use in the palace⁶⁸ – about half of which are accounted for by a single form of drinking vessel, the kylix. A remarkable convergence of results is evident between a survey of pantry inventories (Abb. 4) presented by Bendall⁶⁹ and the space syntax analysis discussed above. In the former study, Bendall contrasts the somewhat lesser quality of ceramic vessels in pantry 60 with better wares found in pantries 67 and 68 as well as in the area of pantries 18 to 22. Thus, she is able to trace a differentiation between courts 58 and 63, in which she sees a hierarchy of locales used for feasting within the palace – as has been suggested here on the basis of space syntax analysis. At the top of this hierarchy, however, Bendall places not the megaron court, but the megaron itself, where precious metal finds point to the use of metal drinking vessels. On the other hand, the exclusion of court 88, onto which pantries 20 and 21 open, from the hierarchy of feasting locales is corroborated by Bendall's results. These show that the inventories of rooms 18 to 22, which are dominated by drinking vessels, and rooms 67 and 68, which also comprise cooking pots and related forms, are complementary; together, these groups of vessels, which presumably were used in – or in relation to activities in – court 63, encompass a range of shapes which is paralleled in a coarser ware in pantry 60, which in turn probably served court 58.

Pantries account for the majority of late additions to storage capacities; room 60 is certainly late, as is the remodelling of rooms 18 to 22, which may not have been used to store pottery before. Todd Whitelaw has pointed out that not only these, but also all other obviously late additions to the palace's storage capacities are explained more easily and convincingly with reference to needs and consumption of the palace than by the assumption that a surplus extracted from the dependent territory was hoarded

66 Shelmerdine 1984, 86-8; 1985, 59-62.

67 Shelmerdine 1987, 561 n. 21.

68 Whitelaw 2001, 52.

69 Bendall 2004, 112-24. Whitelaw (2001, 58-60) offers an alternative, but to my mind less convincing, interpretation of the different fabric qualities.

in these rooms⁷⁰. And since what was stored there were ceramic vessels and comestibles, we may more plausibly seek the reason for storage in the preparation of feasts hosted by the palace's inhabitants than in an economic crisis.

The large scale of such feasts is further attested by Linear B-documents detailing quantities of wine and quality foodstuffs provided by the palace administration⁷¹, although the preserved records refer to events outside the palace⁷², and by the finds of animal remains from within the palace. The study of individual find contexts of cattle bones indicates that upwards of two tons of beef were available for consumption on single occasions⁷³. It is also interesting to note that the animals slaughtered were of larger than average size and that a majority of them were males⁷⁴; one might speculate at least about a connection to the pairs of expensive and well-cared-for plough oxen on which the palace administration kept a watchful eye⁷⁵. The contextual association of burnt cattle bones and miniature vessels in room 7 of the palace archive suggests that the administrators also monitored the consumption of beef in feasts and the sacrificial rites which may have been associated with it⁷⁶.

RECONSTRUCTING THE RECONSTRUCTION: RESULTS AND PERSPECTIVES

Where do these considerations lead us in our efforts to archaeologically reconstruct the social reconstruction of power? In terms of the concept of space employed in this study, we seem to have reached the limits of archaeological inference *sensu stricto*: archaeological data will not usually permit an analysis of the next level of spatial definition, the nonfixed-feature elements. Where relevant textual sources are available, the historian may continue the archaeologist's enquiry; where these are missing, analogical arguments may help to carry on the enquiry beyond the ostensible limits of archaeological analysis. The surviving documents in the Linear B script, found nowhere in greater numbers than in Pylos, do not, unfortunately, shed any light on the social functioning of Mycenaean palaces as architectural structures. Yet, contemporary Hittite palatial architecture, e.g., about the use of which cuneiform texts do inform us, offers a most interesting comparison⁷⁷.

In methodological terms, we have less than no reason to assume that we have reached the limits of what can be done archaeologically. One of the particular strengths of the conception of space as interacting with social practices on different levels lies in the fact that it facilitates the integration of further perspectives in a coherent framework. To offer but one example of an approach that has not been touched upon in, but may profitably supplement the above analysis, I would like to point to the study of relationships of intervisibility. This can be brought to bear both on the intra-contextual analysis of a building complex, such as the present study, and on considerations of such a complex in its wider local and regional context, which I consider, despite my confidence in the results presented here, as a necessary complement to an intra-contextual perspective.

Intervisibility exists, for example, between the palace on the ridge of Ano Englianos and a group of Middle Helladic grave-tumuli on the neighbouring ridge of Tragana⁷⁸, but also, in the immediate surroundings of the palace, between porch 41, the monumental north-eastern stairway to the plateau of Ano Englianos, which dates to Late Helladic I, and Tholos IV, an important tomb a little further to the north-east. That this line of sight and a procession route which we may plausibly connect with it were cut off

70 Whitelaw 2001, 54.

71 Palmer 1994, 187-95.

72 Or, perhaps, especially since the preserved records refer to occasions outside the palace, which we might assume to have been surpassed by those hosted in Ano Englianos itself.

73 Halstead and Isaakidou 2004, 147. From this, Halstead and Isaakidou (2004, 148) deduce that around 3000 guests could be (plentifully) provided for. Weihartner (2002, 49-50), on the basis of textual evidence, suggests a similar number of participants in palatial feasts. Whitelaw (2001, 58) assumes that 500 to 800 celebrants could be (closely) seated in courts 63 and 88; I do not, however, consider the latter court a locale for feasting.

74 Halstead and Isaakidou 2004, 146.

75 Halstead 1999, 321, 323-4.

76 Stocker and Davis 2004, 193.

77 Thaler (forthcoming b).

78 Spencer 1995, 284.

by the exterior wall of court 42 in the later building state provides an interesting parallel to the development of Grave Circle A at Mycenae. The latter was, in the course of the thirteenth century B.C., first integrated into the citadel and presumably palatial representation with considerable architectural effort, only to apparently lose its representative importance again some time before the palace was destroyed at the turn of the twelfth century B.C.⁷⁹.

Leaving aside conceptual and methodological concerns, this study has to prove its value through the relevance and power of conviction of its results in terms of an archaeological reconstruction of the social reconstruction of power. What conclusions, then, can we propose with regard to changes in relationships of power and how they were both documented and preconditioned by the built structure of the Pylian palace?

To begin with, we may note that certain elements of the self-image and self-representation of the rulers apparently lost in importance over time: reference to the ancestors of the living ruler, as indicated by the considerations immediately above, appears to have been one of these elements, as does the 'militarism' expressed in the battle scenes painted in room 64. The clarity with which an esteem of military prowess can be discerned in the choice of grave goods for early Mycenaean elite burials may point to a traditional connection between a military and an ancestral element in the self-legitimization of elites. But an adequate discussion of long-term continuities, trends and developments from the Shaft Grave to the Palatial period remains beyond the scope of this article.

A clear growth in importance, which is mirrored in architecture as well as in other fields, can be observed for the hosting of feasts and acts of conspicuous consumption⁸⁰; but it is not feasting *per se* which becomes characteristic for the palace, but forms of feasting which highlight and confirm social differences⁸¹. In the contrast between the latter development and the diminishing importance of real or assumed links to the ancestors and of the idea of a warrior elite, the changes in the relative importance of different forms of the legitimization of supreme rule, which were referred to at the outset, are evident.

Besides such ups and downs in the significance of different forms of representation, a development towards a functional differentiation and towards functional improvements of the palace as a 'machine for ruling' has been identified as a second element of a new explanatory approach dealing with architectural changes in Ano Englianos. In the contextual discussion, I have highlighted the channelling of visitors towards certain routes and into certain areas of the palace: both the 'tradesman's entrance' for supplying the palace with everyday goods of consumption and the area focussed on court 58, in which the archive and clearinghouse bear witness to the more official economic dealings between the palace and the territory under its inhabitants' rule, deserve our attention in this respect, as does the carefully and lavishly designed access route to the throne room.

We also need to ask ourselves how this development towards differentiation and functional improvements fits with our more general ideas about the development of the Pylian kingdom. Indeed, what has been suggested here may lead us to question current assumptions about Pylian territorial expansion, most importantly the supposition that the kingdom had reached its full and final extent by the beginning of Late Helladic IIIB⁸². While the corresponding scenarios suggested by Bennet are plausible in themselves, there are but two points of reference for the actual chronology of the growth of the Pylian territory: the first of these is the establishment of control over the micro-region immediately surrounding Ano Englianos by the end of Late Helladic II, the other is the extent of the kingdom at the time of the palace's destruction at the end of Late Helladic IIIB⁸³. What happened in between and, in particular, at what point or over what period of time the so-called 'further province' was incorporated into the palatial territory is still largely a matter of conjecture. The architectural development of the palace during the

79 Laffineur 1990.

80 Wright (2004) provides a useful and up-to-date overview of studies in this field.

81 Halstead and Isaakidou (2004, 150) put this most succinctly when they suggest that "the distinctive feature of Mycenaean palatial feasting is [...] neither its existence or its scale, but rather its cultural elaboration and highly inegalitarian social context."

82 Bennet 1995, 1999. In accordance with these studies, Davis and Bennet (1999, 106) have suggested to see "a new capital for a newly expanded kingdom" in the palace at Ano Englianos.

83 Even these points of reference are not beyond doubt; interestingly, Shelmerdine (2001, 127-128) argues, on the basis of the same survey data which Bennet uses, that Pylos established its control over surrounding settlements such as Beylerbey no earlier than in Late Helladic IIIA.

ceramic phase Late Helladic IIIB provides good reasons to consider the possibility that the Pylian kingdom may still have been in the course of expansion during this time and that the changes to the building complex at Ano Englianos reflect the changing needs of the political and administrative centre of this expanding early state.

Furthermore, we may want to reflect on the degree to which changes in the forms chosen to represent and reconstruct power in social discourse were correlated with changes in relationships of economic power. On the basis of rank-size considerations of Messenia's Late Bronze Age settlement structure, David Small has suggested that the term 'estate' may better capture the socio-economic organization of the Pylian 'kingdom' than the term 'state' can⁸⁴. While I do not see my results in direct accordance with Small's argument, the possibility remains that the changes to the building complex at Ano Englianos reflect the transformation of a social organization which started out as an (over)extended household to true statehood – a statehood which, however, was not to last. A more detailed and thorough discussion of how architectural and socio-economic developments may have been interrelated in the Mycenaean period has recently been presented by James Wright⁸⁵.

In this respect as well, the next step has to be to extend our frame of reference beyond the confines of the palace as a building complex in order to confirm and complement the picture of changes in the importance of forms of representation and of growing social and functional differentiation outlined in this study. Archaeological data should permit us to do so, whereas the assumption of a long-term economic decline can no longer stand up even to the intra-contextual scrutiny presented here:

In the course of the thirteenth century B.C., architectural elegance may have been lost in some places within the building complex of Ano Englianos, in others it was only brought forth through architectural alterations. Storage capacities were indeed enlarged – not, however, to prepare for times of adversity, but in order to transform economic into social capital in acts of consumption, not to attain direct control over goods, but indirect control over human agents. No new workshops were established. The flow of outside visitors was channelled rather than barred. Circulation within the building remained as easy at the end of the century as it had been at its beginning.

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84 Small 1998; 1999.

85 Wright (forthcoming).

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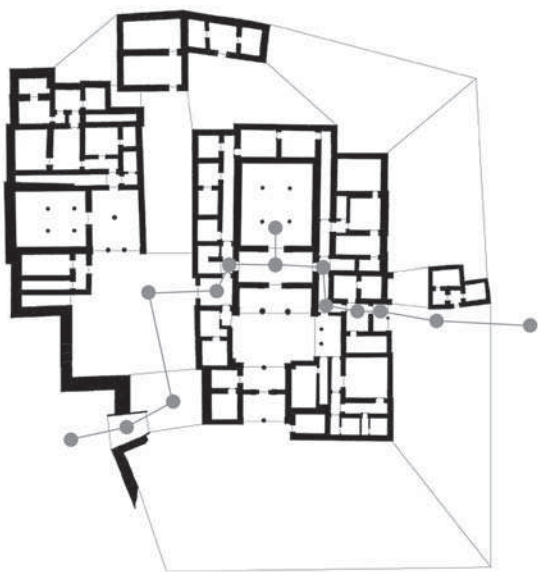
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Plan of the palace of Pylos in the earlier building state, dating to around 1300 B.C. Preserved and certain structures are rendered in black, conjectural ones in grey. Points of access to the palace are indicated by arrows. Drawing: author.



Plan of the palace of Pylos in the later building state, dating to around 1200 B.C. Preserved and certain structures are rendered in black, conjectural ones in grey. Points of access to the palace are indicated by arrows. Drawing: author.



1. Shortest routes of access to the throne room 6 in topological terms in the earlier building state, dating to around 1300 B.C.



2. Shortest routes of access to the throne room 6 in topological terms in the later building state, dating to around 1200 B.C.



3. Areas of primary access for entrances a, w and 101 in the later building state, dating to around 1200 B.C.



4. Areas of primary control for courts 58, 63 and 88 in the later building state, dating to around 1200 B.C.

Drawings: author.



1. Mapping of roofed spaces, roofed spaces open on one side and unroofed spaces in the later building state, dating to around 1200 B.C. Small white dots indicate moderate, larger white dots more pronounced changes of floor level. Drawing: author.



2. Mapping of surface treatment of walls and floors in the later building state, dating to around 1200 B.C. The inscribed numbers indicate the 'height' of perceived thresholds deduced from this mapping. Drawing: author.