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Rethinking Mycenaean Palaces

New Interpretations of an Old Idea

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Putting Mycenaean Palaces in Their Place

An Introduction

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THE CHAPTERS we have brought together in the following pages were written by a diverse group of specialists, each of whom is, in his or her own way, trying to figure out what it was like to live in southern Greece about three thousand years ago. More generally, we are all interested in the evolution and variability associated with archaic states. We are curious why these strangely complex sociopolitical forms developed, both in Greece and elsewhere in the world. We want to understand how they worked, how they differed, and how they were, in several respects, quite similar. Despite the fact that some of the contributors to this volume call themselves “anthropologists,” others refer to themselves as “Aegean prehistorians,” and still others consider themselves “classicists” or “historians” or “philologists,” we all agree that it is through mutual cooperation that we are most likely to arrive at a more precise understanding of the various evolutionary and historical processes that produced the palaces and states that were central to the Mycenaean world during the Late Bronze Age.

It is in this spirit of collaboration that we offer this volume, which we hope will serve two modest goals. The first of these is to highlight some of the important research being conducted in the field of Mycenaean archaeology and to bring to the attention of our anthropological colleagues

working in other parts of the world the many advances that have been made recently in Aegean prehistory. Today more than ever before we are in a position to work together, to compare results, and to learn more precisely how the Mycenaean states fit within the larger context of archaic states known from other parts of the world. Meeting this first goal depends heavily on meeting the second: Stimulating the formation of new, theory-based research philosophies within the arena of Greek archaeology and Aegean prehistory, that is, research designs capable of supporting common methodological ground and more easily occupied by the wide assortment of scholars now studying Mycenaean states. The various chapters included in this volume provide excellent examples of this newly emerging program and demonstrate the many benefits to be gained by assuming an integrated approach to understanding and explaining the past. Such an approach combines multiple forms of data—both textual and material—and incorporates an explicitly comparative theoretical perspective, which looks beyond the eastern Mediterranean for comparanda.

CLOSING THE “GREAT DIVIDE”

Over the years several scholars have remarked on the schism—Renfrew’s (1980) “Great Divide”—that appears to separate classical from anthropological ar

chaeology (Bennet and Galaty 1997; Donohue 1985; Dyson 1985, 1989, 1993; I. Morris 1994; Renfrew 1980; Snodgrass 1985, 1987). This perceived separation can be attributed to a variety of different historical and social factors (as described by I. Morris 1994). The unfortunate result is two fields that rarely interact. For example, reports on archaeological fieldwork in the Aegean are most often placed in publications unfamiliar to (and therefore unread by) anthropologists (Bennet and Galaty 1997:100). Furthermore, anthropological archaeologists seldom attend annual meetings of the Archaeological Institute of America (AIA), where Aegean prehistorians tend to present their research, and papers on Aegean prehistory are rarely, if ever, given at annual meetings of the Society for American Archaeology (SAA). As a result, important research on the archaic states of the Aegean never reaches the majority of anthropological archaeologists, and the extremely well-studied and well-understood states of the Aegean Bronze Age are seldom included in anthropological graduate seminars or journal articles that compare archaic state systems (see, for example, Stein 1998:1–2). Aegean prehistory is thus passed over, often going unnoticed and unconsidered in formulations of general archaeological method and theory—though there have been outstanding exceptions; notably, Renfrew's (1975) "early state module" and Renfrew and Cherry's (1986) "peer polity interaction." Conversely, very little of the immense body of sociocultural theory on the evolution and organization of complex societies has been incorporated into Mycenaean archaeology.

The "great divide" is, therefore, a loss to both anthropologists and Aegean prehistorians. If this gap between the fields is to be closed, we must each take an active role in closing it. The chapters included here serve to demonstrate ongoing attempts to break down the classical/anthropological dichotomy and reveal the gains to be made through their explicit combination in a cooperative methodology. Our purpose here is to delineate what we understand to be the history of the "great divide" and to propose ways to cross it. To achieve our goals, however, it is important to understand how this awkward situation came about and what we can do to rectify it.

Classical and anthropological archaeology did in fact evolve in different academic environments: classical archaeology in the context of ancient history and philology, anthropological archaeology in support of departments of ethnology. Just as Darwin's finches developed morphologically different beaks because of their isolation, each discipline developed a distinct body of method and theory appropriate to its own needs. Aegean prehistory is still strongly associated with the so-called classical world and later historical periods, and it is standard practice for those studying Mycenaean states to be trained in departments of classics rather than in departments of anthropology. Thus, Aegean prehistorians are generally taught methods designed for dealing with questions of an (art-) historical rather than of an

anthropological nature. Consequently, research papers by Aegean prehistorians tend to be more "descriptive" in intent and rich in detail, sorting out complex artifact seriations or striving to link text with site. Those by anthropologists, on the other hand, tend to be (or try to be) more "explanatory" and are concerned with explaining cross-cultural variation and understanding evolutionary processes (for further descriptions of this distinction, see Binford 1968a and b, 1982; Kelley and Hanen 1988; Trigger 1989). To a certain extent, therefore, Aegean prehistorians and anthropological archaeologists should communicate and do have much to talk about, but they do not always speak the same language and are in fact trained to ask different questions.

One of the major problems in communication between the two disciplines stems from the basic philosophy of research design. Anthropological archaeologists are trained to formulate research projects that are guided by explicit theoretical frames of reference and are structured to test multiple and competing hypotheses (see Renfrew 1972). Since much of their funding comes from the National Science Foundation, this hypothetico-deductive approach is largely rote and simply assumed as the standard operating procedure for anthropological archaeologists. In general, this basic philosophy of research design does not characterize most of the research into Aegean prehistory. Correspondingly, the majority of research projects in the Aegean are funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

The Greek Late Bronze Age provides fertile ground for building explanatory models of state formation and economic organization (as demonstrated by Renfrew [1975] and Renfrew and Cherry [1986]). Such issues cannot at present be efficiently addressed until specific, targeted research projects are, however, operationalized and the right sets of data have been collected. Aegean prehistorians must construct new research philosophies, frameworks that will allow theoretical modeling to take place. For example, Costin (1991:2, 44) has called for the general, cross-cultural investigation of the origins of craft specialization. Aegean prehistorians certainly have much to contribute to this effort. (In this regard, the recently held *TEXNH* conference represents a step in the right direction [Laffineur and Betancourt 1997].) Explanatory models of craft specialization cannot, however, be properly tested in Greece until Aegean prehistorians adopt a research philosophy that allows general questions to be raised and engaged. Some chapters in this volume (chapters 7 and 9, for instance) do take up problems of craft production and distribution (of ceramics and chipped stone), but the research questions these chapters seek to answer were constructed in concert with the operation of a large ongoing project, the Pylos Regional Archaeological Project (PRAP), which was itself motivated by theory-driven research goals (see chapter 2, this volume; Davis 1998; Davis et al. 1997; Zangger et al. 1997). We therefore encourage our Aegean colleagues to more often ask general questions when

designing field projects, to actively cultivate cross-cultural comparison, and in this way begin work on a bridge over the "great divide."

Anthropological archaeologists interested in archaic states can also do their part to close the divide between disciplines by recognizing the tremendous opportunities of working in an area, like Greece, with a rich archaeological record supplemented by extensive textual information. The Aegean, in particular, provides an excellent testing ground for methods of combining complex documentary evidence with archaeological data, and with anthropologically based socioeconomic theory. As such, the Aegean Late Bronze Age should be of immense interest to scholars working in other cultural contexts where it would be beneficial to link text and other archaeological data more systematically with theory, such as in Mesoamerica and in China (see Kepecs and Kolb 1997). Aegean archaeologists have access to a large corpus of administrative records, written in an archaic form of Greek and kept by Mycenaean bureaucrats (see Hooker 1980; Ventris and Chadwick 1973). The documents record state-wide transactions in a script called Linear B and were preserved at several primary centers (Mycenae, Pylos, Knossos, Tiryns, and Thebes). They provide an invaluable glimpse into the workings of Mycenaean states and have been the subject of very sophisticated investigation and intense debate (see, for example, Shelmerdine and Palaima 1984). Bennet (1988a) has developed a strategy for the profitable combination of both forms of data, textual and artifactual; his chapter and several others show the strategy at work. As this volume illustrates, archaeological investigations in document-rich regions need not pit those who employ textual information against those who do not. Much more may be gained through systematic cooperation and combination.

TOWARD AN INTEGRATED COMPARATIVE APPROACH

Detailed descriptions of what are essentially static phenomena—such as Linear B tablets—provide the means whereby dynamic processes of past human behavior can be meaningfully investigated and eventually understood. If the primary goal of the social anthropologist or, in this case, the anthropological archaeologist is, to paraphrase Harris (1987:xv), the elucidation of the recurrent reasons for cultural similarities and differences, then the melding of classical and anthropological frameworks in the context of a cooperative methodological and theoretical paradigm provides a compelling vehicle for both description and explanation of social process. A thoughtfully constructed comparison of Aegean cultural systems to other regions can only help to reveal the deep behavioral structures responsible for the operation and reproduction of state-level societies in general.

To this end, we suggest that it is necessary to assume an *integrated comparative theoretical approach* to Aegean prehistory—an approach that applies the explicit theoretical frameworks of anthropological archaeology to the document- and

artifact-rich environment of the Aegean in an attempt to understand the variability associated with archaic states in their various cross-cultural forms. While there has been a general trend toward such an integrated comparative perspective in recent years, many of the concepts and interpretations commonly accepted and applied by Aegean prehistorians deserve some further attention.

The comparative method has of course been employed in Aegean prehistory, but rarely do the comparisons drawn by Aegean archaeologists extend beyond the confines of the eastern Mediterranean, and they almost never reach the shores of the New World. In this capacity, anthropologists can perhaps provide more and better analogues (both archaeological and ethnographic) to Mycenaean states than those that have been traditionally utilized (for a discussion of analogy in archaeology see Wylie 1985). For instance, many Mesoamerican polities—especially post-Classic polities in the Basin of Mexico and conquest-period Mixtec polities circa 1500 AD (Marcus 1998; see also Marcus 1989)—appear to be of similar geographic size and organizational scale to Mycenaean states and may have followed similar developmental trajectories (see chapter 6, this volume; Wright 1994). As such, these more geographically remote states, as well as others, provide better analogues to the small-scale states of Mycenaean Greece than do the much larger Near Eastern states that are often treated not simply as analogues but as parallels.

The tendency to compare Mycenaean states almost exclusively to Near Eastern ones is, in part, the result of a historical tradition that encourages interpretation of ancient economies based entirely upon documentary evidence (in this case, Linear B tablets and Near Eastern texts). All too often this occurs at the expense of the archaeological data, much of which argues against such comparisons. There is an immense difference in the geographical extent and organizational scale of Near Eastern and Mycenaean state systems. The Near Eastern states to which Aegean prehistorians frequently draw their parallels were much larger and more complex than the small-scale states of the Mycenaean mainland. During the Late Helladic IIIB phase (circa 1300–1200 BC; see table 1.1), for example, the state center of Pylos grew to a maximum size of 21 ha (Davis et al. 1997; Davis 1998; see also chapter 2, this volume). In contrast, by the beginning of the Dynastic period (circa 3100 BC), the Near Eastern center of Uruk covered 100 ha. By the end of the Early Dynastic period, the city encompassed 400 ha, with a possible population of 50,000 people. Nowhere is there any evidence that Mycenaean centers ever reached such sizes. Not only were contemporary Near Eastern state centers much larger than Mycenaean "palaces" and their associated towns but the area they controlled was also much larger. For example, Postgate (1992:44) notes that the Akkad Dynasty (circa 2350–2150 BC) covered more than 50,000 km² at its maximum territorial extent. The reaches of Hammurapi's empire reached a

Table 1.1 Greek chronology from earliest prehistory through historic periods

WHOLE REGION			
ROMAN	31 BC–AD 337		
HELLENISTIC	323–31 BC		
CLASSICAL	480–323 BC		
ARCHAIC	700–480 BC		
DARK AGE	1100–700 BC		
	MAINLAND	CRETE	CYCLADES
	<i>Helladic</i>	<i>Minoan</i>	<i>Cycladic</i>
BRONZE AGE			
Late Bronze III*	1415–1100 BC	1405–1100 BC	1405–1100 BC
Late Bronze I–II	1680–1415 BC	1650–1405 BC	1600–1405 BC
Middle	2000–1680 BC	2000–1650 BC	1900–1600 BC
Early	3100–2000 BC	3100–2000 BC	3100–1900 BC
NEOLITHIC			
Final	4500–3200 BC	4000–3100 BC	4500–3100 BC
Late	5300–4500 BC	4500–3500 BC	—
Middle	5800–5300 BC	5000–4500 BC	—
Early	6500–5800 BC	6500–5000 BC	—
Aceramic	6800–6500 BC	7000–6500 BC	—
MESOLITHIC	9500–8000 BP	—	—
Franchthi]	Hiatus?	—	—
PALEOLITHIC	25,000–11,000 BP	—	—

* Late Helladic IIIB circa 1300 to 1200 BC. Dates are approximations only. Source: Bennet and Galaty 1997: Table 1

similar scale during the Babylonian period (circa 1800–1750 BC). This area is roughly equivalent to the entire Greek Peloponnese, in which Renfrew (1975) suggests there may have been as many as five different Mycenaean “early state modules” (ESMs) or independent states. If it is necessary to compare Mycenaean states to the ancient Near East, the best analogues seem to be in earlier periods (prior to 3200 BC) and in regions other than in the vicinity of Uruk. For example, state evolution and organization on the Susiana Plain—to which writing was relatively unimportant before the Late Uruk and just prior to systemic collapse (and where the state center, Susa, grew during the Late Uruk to a maximum extent of 28 ha [Johnson 1973])—reveals interesting similarities to Bronze Age developments in Greece, especially in Pylos.

In addition to being critically self-conscious of the comparisons being drawn between different archaic state systems, we must be extremely careful when comparing different entities within the same system. To this end, it is necessary to cease conflating data from individual Mycenaean states (see chapter 9, this volume), as though all functioned similarly. Each individual autonomous state (that is, early state module; figure 1.1) deserves to be investigated in its own context, and the possibility of parallel systemic organization needs to be treated as a hypothetical, but as yet unproved, construction. Furthermore, Linear B documents should be combined sparingly and only with caution with textual data collected at different Mycenaean centers, such as Pylos and

Knossos (see chapter 5, this volume). There is good archaeological and textual evidence that regional economies in both of these state systems were structured very differently (Killen 1985; Olivier 1984). Presuming differences in environmental setting and evolutionary trajectory, especially on the part of Pylos and Knossos, this is not surprising. Nevertheless, the tendency of Aegean prehistorians to combine data from different Mycenaean states leads to inaccurate assumptions about how each may have functioned as an autonomous entity.

Finally, it is necessary to focus upon collecting excavated data from smaller sites—those toward the bottom of regional settlement hierarchies (Davis 1988). There are very few examples of excavated Mycenaean towns (for example, Nichoria [McDonald and Wilkie 1992]) and hamlets (for example, Tzoungiza [Wright 1990]), let alone farmsteads. As a result, models of Mycenaean state formation and evolution are usually built upon data excavated at primary centers only, or at best from the primary center and one or two other settlements in the second tier of the hierarchy (as is the case in Messenia), a practice strongly called into question by the results of regional, intensive surface survey. Excavation bias therefore contributes to the pervasive tendency on the part of Aegean prehistorians to view Mycenaean states from the top down and from the center out (see also Bennet 1988b for a similar assertion). Rather, it is necessary to assume an integrated theoretical perspective that understands primary centers within the context of an active, and highly variable, regional landscape.

PUTTING MYCENAEAN PALACES IN THEIR PLACE

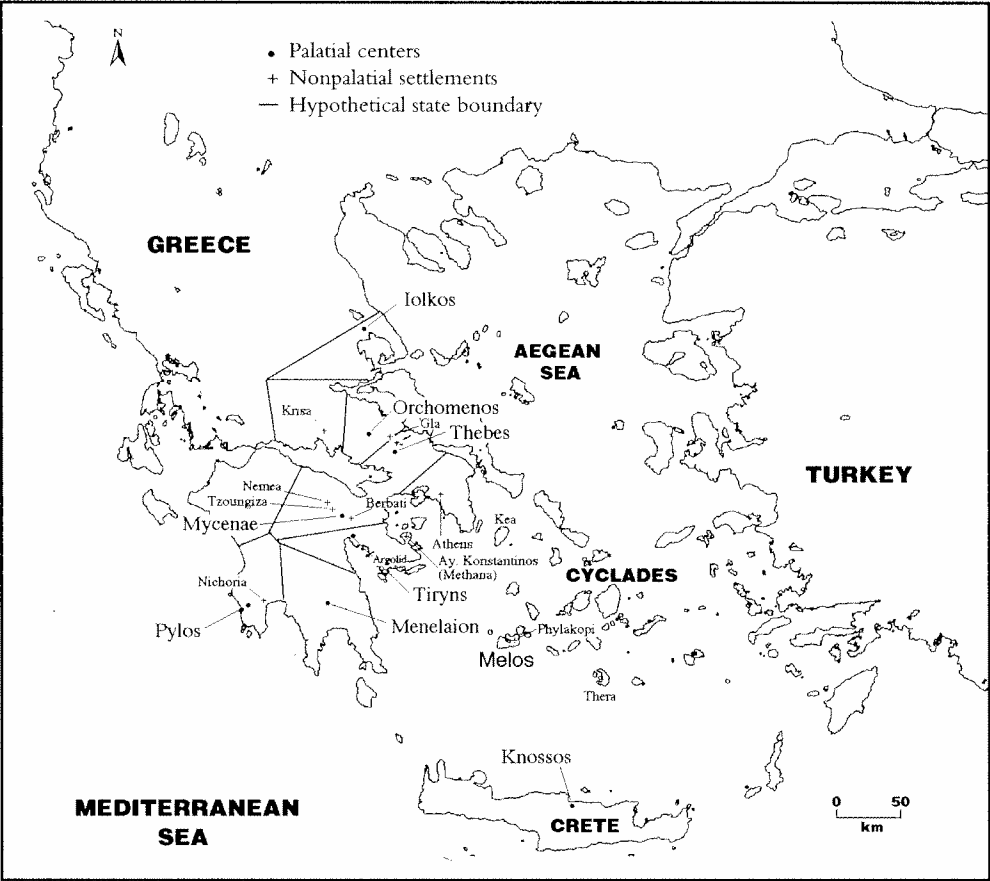


Figure 1.1 Map of the Aegean, showing important sites and regions mentioned in the text. Adapted from Bennet and Galaty 1997: Fig. 1

WHY SELECT THE TOPIC OF MYCENAEAN PALACES?

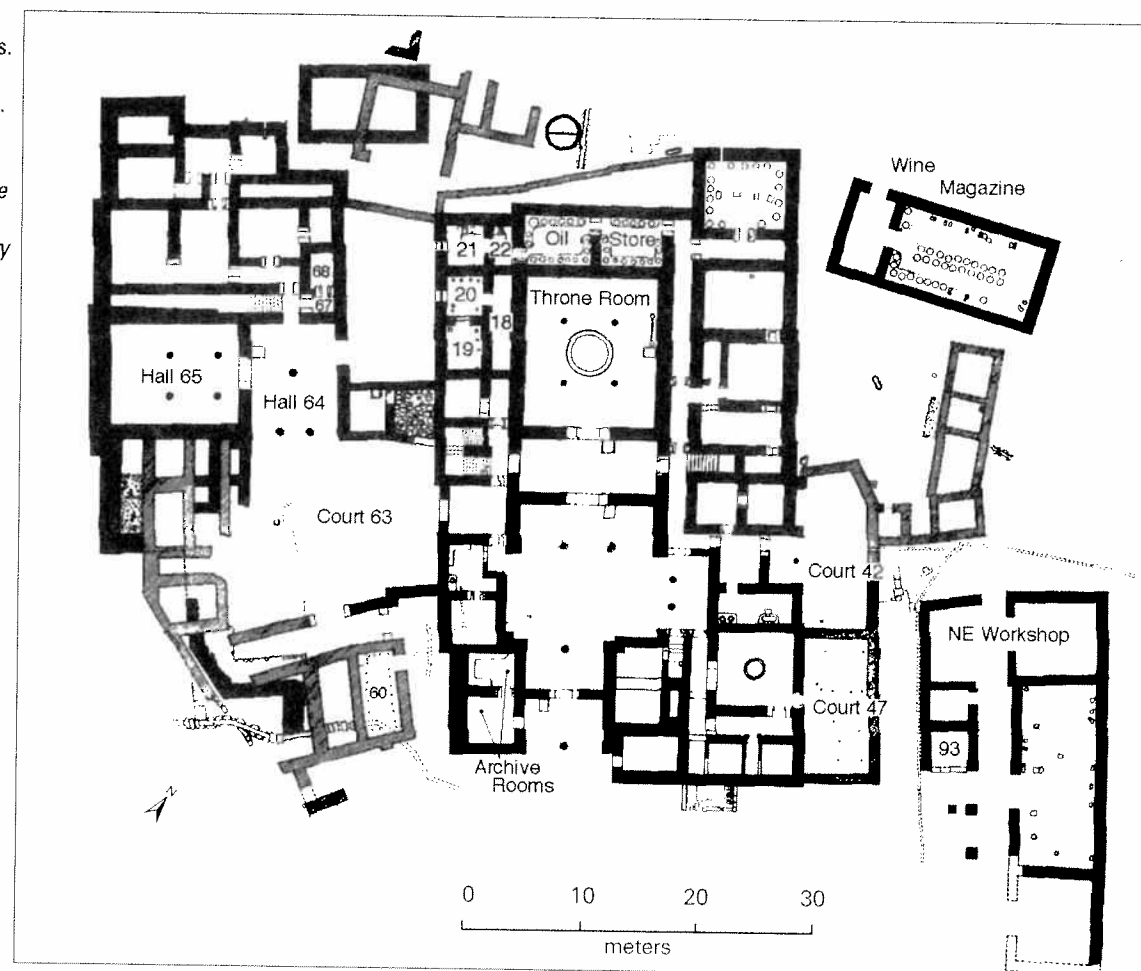
Given our interest in expanding archaeological and anthropological understanding of the organizational dynamics of Mycenaean states, the question of why we chose to focus on palaces—the most intensively studied of all Mycenaean sites—is perhaps inevitable. As we mentioned above, archaeological conceptions of Mycenaean centers strongly influence models of Mycenaean states; yet, we do recognize the importance of excavating and understanding the evolution and operation of a state’s primary center. Consequently, this volume and this introductory chapter seek to define more precisely what is meant by the word “palace” and, more importantly, to describe the integration of the center into a wider, more diverse social and ecological landscape. The center—the palace—and those living at the center surely had wants and needs (as recorded in Linear B documents); however, these concerns only partially reflect those of the general populace. To understand the interplay of central and localized interests, it is necessary to view each Mycenaean polity in its entirety, as an interconnected and interdependent system, within which the center represents one large (albeit atypical) cog.

The word “palace” has been variously defined by Aegean archaeologists. Many, such as Shelmerdine (1997:558; see also Barber 1992), employ an architectural definition—“a large ashlar construction centered on a megaron unit: a rectangular room with four columns surrounding a hearth,

its long walls extending to form a porch and a vestibule” (see figure 1.2). Such a definition is perfectly acceptable but does not account for function or functions. The word “palace” usually refers to the residence of a king and, in fact, many Aegean prehistorians grant the Mycenaean head of state, the *wanax*, kingly powers (see chapter 3, this volume; Dabney and Wright 1990; Kilian 1988a; Shelmerdine 1997; Thomas 1976; Walcot 1967, Wright 1995a). The palace apparently housed the Mycenaean ruler (king or not), his family, and retainers, but the building was certainly more than just a royal residence. It served other functions and its architectural features were designed to support these various functions (Shelmerdine and Palaima 1984): sacred rites were held in ritual spaces (see chapters 2, 3, 4, this volume); craft activities were organized in workshop areas (Laffineur and Betancourt 1997; Shelmerdine 1984, 1985; and chapters 3 and 4, this volume); goods were stored in pantries and magazines (see chapters 7 and 9, this volume; Morris 1986); and records were kept in archives (Palaima 1988).

Although we prefer to use the more neutral term “center” to refer to the building (palace) and settlement that together dominated so many Greek Bronze Age landscapes, we must acknowledge that the word “palace” is here to stay. It is a term used out of convenience and to attempt to replace it would doubtless prove futile. Aegean prehistorians need not, however, continue to describe in increasing detail the already well-documented palatial centers; as we argue above, Mycenaean centers and artifacts have been well de-

Figure 1.2 Plan of the palace at Pylos. Important rooms have been labeled. After Blegen and Rawson 1966; Fig. 417. Courtesy of the Department of Classics, University of Cincinnati



scribed through both the archaeological and the textual records. To define more accurately what we mean by the term "palace," it is necessary to fit the Mycenaean center—and the economy that supported it—more firmly into a regional archaeological framework and into theoretical models of political, economic, and social structure. Only in doing so can the palaces be more fully understood.

MODELING THE MYCENAEAN STATE

The theoretical models of state organization within which Aegean prehistorians operate are rarely explicitly stated. Nevertheless they do exist and have exerted tremendous influence over the archaeological interpretation of Mycenaean palaces and states. Unfortunately, the majority of these theoretical models are vestiges of the era in which Linear B was first deciphered. Based on their reading of the Linear B documents, Ventris and Chadwick (1973) conceived of the Mycenaean world as being similar in many respects to feudal Europe. In their translation the *wanax*, the paramount leader, was referred to as a "king." The king's men, his *equeta*, are called "knights." Finley (1957), on the other hand, compared Mycenaean to Near Eastern states. As a result of such inappropriate comparisons, scholars erroneously concluded that the main purpose of primary centers was the large-scale redistribution of goods.

Such text-driven models viewed a powerful central authority that held indisputable command over the regional economy and ensnared the countryside in a repressive tangle of bureaucracy. Totalitarian control was assumed. Even though the first models of Mycenaean states were created using inappropriate analogies (that is, medieval Europe) and outdated understandings of Near Eastern states (in particular, redistribution), this early and overarching framework continues to shape most current research on Mycenaean political economy. When the organizational dynamics of a Mycenaean state are approached from the bottom up, from the direction of the ceramic (see chapter 7, this volume) or lithic (see chapters 8 and 9, this volume) industries, for instance, there is much less certainty as to how the system functioned. As Stein (1994a:13) remarks, in reference to the Near East,

...instead of viewing states as all-powerful, homogeneous entities, it is probably more accurate to characterize them as organizations operating within a social environment that, for a variety of reasons, they only partially control.

Anthropologists (for example, Blanton et al. 1993; Stein and Rothman 1994) often describe archaic states according to how their central bureaucracy was organized and con-

trolled. In this volume there is a general consensus that Mycenaean centers probably employed several strategies to optimize their influence over regional territory (see also Shelmerdine 1997:570). For example, Halstead (chapter 5, this volume; 1992a) argues that Mycenaean administrators developed the means to mobilize the raw materials necessary for the production of high-value prestige items. It is likely that local and provincial leaders who negotiated the transfer of such materials expected the corresponding return of a portion of the finished goods manufactured by the state, known in Mycenaean literature as the *ta-ra-si-ja* system (Halstead 1992a; Killen 1984b). Such a system of financial transactions is often referred to as a wealth-financed system (see chapter 5, this volume; D'Altroy and Earle 1985; Halstead 1992a). In a wealth-financed economic system elites pay for state-sponsored activities with high-value, easily transportable prestige goods. Whereas some empires, such as the Inka (D'Altroy and Earle 1985), were able to employ successfully a regional staple-financed economic system alongside their elaborate wealth-financed systems, the Mycenaean states most likely were not capable of such an extensive undertaking. Only in the vicinity of the centers themselves would it have been cost-effective for the state to underwrite the palatial economy by exchanging bulky staple products for finished goods and services (Halstead 1992a). Staple finance certainly occurred at the Mycenaean centers and in the area directly surrounding them, but there is no compelling evidence that staple finance operated at a regional level.

Within the Mycenaean system, prestige goods would most likely have been circulated between regional elites in a system of reciprocal gift exchanges (Renfrew 1975) and later they would trickle down through the tiers of the political system, gaining more and more value as they slowly reached lower levels of the social hierarchy (Halstead 1992a; Wright 1995a). Killen (1984b, 1985) has suggested that different qualities of cloth, both wool and linen, were finished at state centers (in particular, at Knossos and Pylos). These different cloths may have been granted to regional elite to serve as markers of rank, in a system similar to that in the Inka Empire (Halstead 1992a; Killen 1985; Morris 1986). The regional mobilization of prestige goods would have created a system of patronage that reinforced social inequality, at the same time driving the economy and reproducing political hierarchies.

Inherent in this brief sketch of Mycenaean economy are two important distinctions missing from most current models applied by Aegean prehistorians to Mycenaean economics: (1) localized versus palatial (that is, state) economic action and (2) restricted versus free circulation of wealth. Mycenaean state and local economies would have functioned with some degree of autonomy. Many forms of economic action would have occurred outside the direct control of the regional elite. Exchange could take the form of reciprocal (face-to-face) transactions, redistribution (transfer by

means of an intermediary), or marketing (Polanyi 1968). Many models of Mycenaean economy focus on the redistributive role of the palace, ignoring the possible importance of both reciprocity and markets (Morris 1986). As a result, the exchange of manufactured items (mainly utilitarian goods) in Mycenaean states within the context of the local economy is ripe for serious archaeological investigation (chapters 7 to 9, this volume; for an excellent example, see Morris 1986). In addition, there is very little evidence that systems of state-wide redistribution, such as those that may have functioned in the Near East (Postgate 1992), ever operated in Mycenaean states (see chapter 9, this volume). The concept of redistribution itself is in fact undergoing reanalysis and redefinition (see Earle 1977; Feinman and Neitzel 1984; Yoffee 1993). Many anthropologists now question the importance of large-scale regional redistribution to economic systems at any level of social complexity.

States may encourage the free circulation of prestige items or restrict such circulation, depending on elite strategies for political and economic control of regional territories (Brumfiel and Earle 1987:7). This distinction bears directly on the question of Mycenaean state organization. For example, H.J. Morris (1986) suggests that the Mycenaean state of Pylos was in the midst of structural transformation from a tribute state to that of a "prestige goods/dualistic state" (PGDS as defined by Friedman and Rowlands 1977) at the time of its collapse. In a PGDS, the paramount succeeds in transforming the nature of his relationship to regional elites, who, through shifts in marriage alliances, become members of the paramount lineage (also referred to as a "segmentary" state [Stein 1994b]). At the same time the center attempts to increase its control of the economy. Indeed, both Linear B tablet information and the archaeological record indicate the centralization of industry at the palace as well as in the vicinity of subordinate centers (see Morris 1986; Shelmerdine and Palaima 1984). As this system evolves, nonelites are no longer granted access to wealth goods and exotic or prestigious items are increasingly used by the state to mark status differences. In the new system, local (nonstate) leaders and common folk are cut off from traditional avenues to the advancement of economic power, and with it, from social and political prestige.

Blanton et al. (1996) describe similar processes in Mesoamerica, making a meaningful distinction between "network" and "corporate" political economies. In a "network" system, individuals maintain political economic power by excluding competitors' access to exchange relationships, whereby prestige goods are mobilized and symbolic knowledge is shared (Blanton et al. 1996:3). Blanton et al. state that, "exclusionary power strategies were principally associated with comparatively small, autonomous polities linked by trade, war, and the strategic marriages of rulers..." (1996:3). Networked systems theoretically linked the leaders of individual Mycenaean states (that is, peer polities).

"Corporate" systems, on the other hand, often are characterized by increases in regional scale and a corresponding shift from "patrimonial rhetoric, which emphasizes the controlling roles of particular individuals" to "cognitive restructuring" that "allows the incorporation of disparate ethnically defined subgroups" and "legitimizes the appropriation of surpluses of primary production, especially agricultural goods" (Blanton et al. 1996: 6). Whereas network strategies tend to be "volatile" and "laden with potential for conflict," the corporate strategy "emphasizes...solidarity of society as an integrated whole, based on a natural, fixed, and immutable interdependence between subgroups..." (Blanton et al. 1996: 4, 6). In this light, Blanton et al. (1996) compare the lowland Maya states to Teotihuacan.

Mycenaean states, such as Pylos, appear to have employed a network system of political economy (emphasizing wealth finance and the increasingly restricted circulation of prestige goods), for the most part dismissing the corporate option. The transition from the tribute state to the PGDS, as described above, thus marks the intensification of exclusionary power strategies.

The foregoing begs the following question: If a Mycenaean state, such as Pylos, only partially controlled the region it was seeking to manipulate, how was the transition to a more tightly integrated and efficient system to be realized? Given different degrees of regional control, how did the elite encourage the outlying populace to participate in a system from which they may not have gained much benefit? In fact, there are several methods whereby elite draw individuals into their political orbit, perhaps the most common of which is ritual activity, such as feasting (with regard to the possibility of Mycenaean feasts, see Killen 1994; Sallund 1980), including drinking ceremonies (see chapters 2 and 7, this volume; Wright 1994, 1995b).

In archaic states, such ritual activities often operated to placate disgruntled citizens and to integrate an otherwise unstable sociopolitical system. The manipulation of trade in foreign goods and the mediation of contact with the outside world offer another means to sociopolitical control (see chapter 8, this volume; Helms 1988, 1993; Wright 1995a). Indeed, Mycenaean states appear to have utilized both ritual activities and the manipulation of foreign trade to strategically incorporate regional hinterlands into the palace-sponsored economic system, thereby ignoring costly methods of forcible incorporation, such as those employed by archaic states elsewhere (for example, by the Aztec, Mixtec, Zapotec, and Maya). In the end, however, these strategies failed and the Mycenaean state systems faltered (circa 1200 BC; see chapter 9, this volume). The nature and timing of this "collapse" is open to interpretation and is poorly understood (see Drews

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[1993] for review of earlier theories and a conflict-based explanation for the end of the Bronze Age), but the causes of this event can surely be addressed by careful study of the pertinent archaeological data (see Shelmerdine 1997:580-584; on collapse generally, see Yoffee and Cowgill 1988).

The articles that make up this volume (chapters 2-11) were written by members of classics, archaeology, and anthropology departments. All authors have made an effort to integrate anthropological and classical approaches to archaeology and to incorporate textual as well as archaeological data. The scholarly work assembled in this volume therefore represents an integrated approach to Mycenaean archaeology.

A postscript to the volume was kindly provided by Emmett L. Bennett, Jr., Emeritus Professor of Classics at the University of Wisconsin—Madison, and one of the scholars responsible for the original transcription, decipherment, and interpretation of Linear B. We have worked with Professor Bennett in the field and have firsthand knowledge of his commitment to both Linear B studies and dirt archaeology and to their profitable union. We are honored to have him included in this volume.

The first concluding chapter (10) was provided by an eminent Linear B philologist, John Killen, Professor of Mycenaean Greek at Cambridge University. The second response (chapter 11) was written by John Cherry, Professor of Classical Archaeology and Greek at the University of Michigan, and Jack Davis, Blegen Professor of Greek Archaeology at the University of Cincinnati. Each scholar provides insights and critiques appropriate to his specialty and all three demonstrate remarkable facility in aspects of both the textual and archaeological records.

We have attempted in this introduction to provide a skeletal frame of Mycenaean social structure upon which might be hung more complex models of Mycenaean state systems. In so doing, we have tried to inject Aegean prehistory with a dose of dynamic energy—a format in which individual actors were vital players and the palace functioned as a nexus for the systemic interplay of regional power relations—such as might have contributed to the evolution of more and more complex Mycenaean sociopolitical organizations.

Each chapter in its own way peels back a bit of the archaeological veil that shields Mycenaean behavioral patterns from anthropological eyes. In publishing this book, we hope to introduce the complex laboratory of past human activity that is the Mycenaean world to scholars working in other regions and in other periods of time.