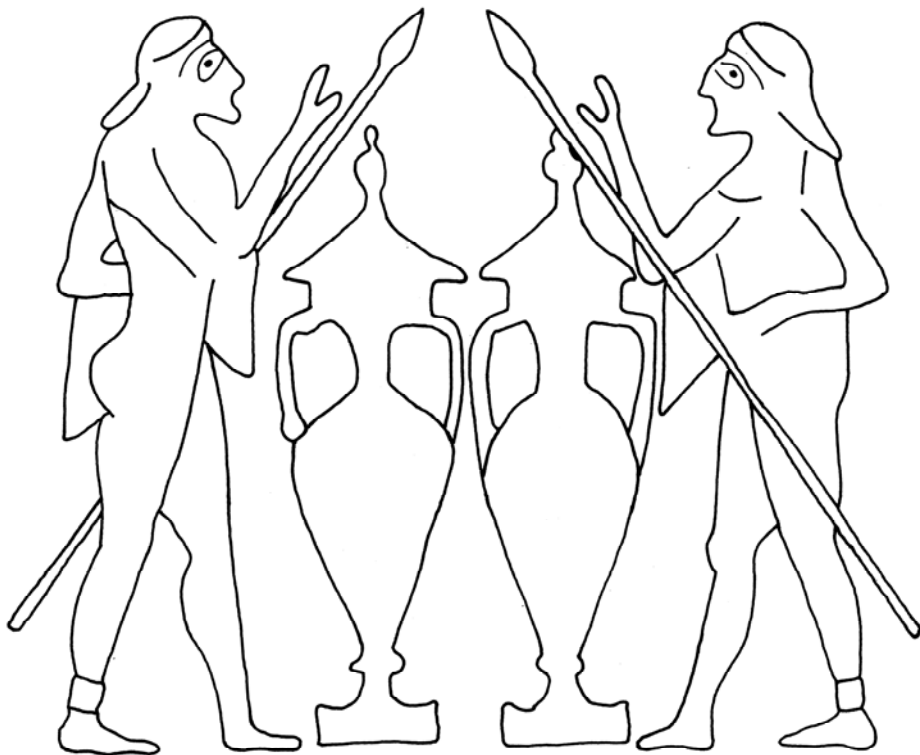


DIOSKOUROI

Studies presented to
W.G. Cavanagh and C.B. Mee
on the anniversary of their 30-year joint
contribution to Aegean Archaeology

Edited by

C. Gallou
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CHAMBER TOMBS, FAMILY, AND STATE IN MYCENAEAN GREECE

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Abstract

This paper aims to explore the underlying social and political reasons for the appearance and widespread distribution of chamber tombs in Greece. Rather than being viewed merely as a type, which might have been adopted because of a change in preferences for a style of burial, the author argues that the change is much more indicative of a fundamental realignment and reorganisation of social, political, and economic relations.

William Cavanagh and Christopher Mee have been model instructors to students and colleagues alike in the classroom, at conferences, and in the field. One area which they have organised and elucidated for the benefit of all is that of mortuary practices in prehistoric Greece. This paper honours them and their contributions by returning to an old subject, namely Mycenaean chamber tombs, and queries their meaning in Mycenaean society.

I begin in the place of my own research, the Nemea Valley. A primary interest of the Nemea Valley Archaeological Project has been to investigate the changing relation of the Nemea region to the adjacent centres of power in the Argolid. Initially this relation was considered in terms of degrees of independence from or dependence upon major settlements like Mycenae and Argos from prehistoric through historic times. In light of recent research, which has forcefully brought to our attention the importance of settlement in the valleys to east and west, a revised perspective takes into account the regional network of settlements within these valleys (Wright 2004a, 123-24; Casselmann 2004).

Davis and Wright originally formulated this problem in terms of how the relationship changed from the Middle through the Late Bronze Ages, based on study of the remains from the settlement on Tsoungiza and the evidence gathered during the intensive survey of the valley (Davis 1988; Wright 1990). Associated with these empirical arguments were philological considerations examined in a study by E. Vermeule that drew on textual sources

from Homer through the Greek dramatists and which provided topographic and genealogical arguments for the heroic landscapes of the region of the Corinthia north of Mycenae (Vermeule 1987).

Mary Dabney argued in 1997 that this problem could be considered in terms of patterns of consumption by examining the changing acquisition of pottery and other relevant artifacts found in the excavations of Tsoungiza (Dabney 1997). Her study confirms that the valley system was fully incorporated into the Mycenaean economic orbit by LH III. In 2001 Cherry and Davis revisited this problem in a more detailed study of the survey data, asserting that the change in the distribution of settlements and loci of land-use in the Nemea Valley indicated that the inhabitants of the valley fell under “the scepter of Agamemnon” during the ascendancy of Mycenae in LH III (Cherry and Davis 2001). Their metaphorical nod to classical myth illustrates how the heavy hand of classical humanism continues to restrain the otherwise subversive activity of a strictly antiquarian approach to the past.

In 2004 I proposed a different version of the process of the valley’s alignment with the emerging power at Mycenae (Wright 2004a, 123-28). Drawing on the data from intensive systematic surveys and the unsystematic macroscopic evidence from excavations and topographic recording of settlement and burial, I drew a picture of a series of dynamic landscapes evolving with greater variability than is recognized in a mere centre-periphery model. The prospect that the repopulation of semi-abandoned

regions of the NE Peloponnese towards the end of the MBA was driven by something less directed and more subtle than “colonization”, as suggested by Rutter (1993, 781), was entertained as a way of explaining data that seemed to indicate varying degrees of autonomy and self-subsistence in relation to emerging core areas, such as Mycenae and Argos. Specifically I argued that consideration of the Nemea region must take into account the western valley of the Asopus River, where considerable evidence exists of active prehistoric settlement at Ayia Irini, Petri, Aidonia, and ancient Phlious.

The recent discovery by J. Maran and colleagues of the large Mycenaean settlement of Aidonia that corresponds to the rich and famous chamber tomb cemetery raised the prospect that the wider Nemea region was more populous and of greater economic significance than previous scholarship has appreciated (Casselman et al. 2004; Pappi forthcoming). This view is substantiated by the already acknowledged importance of the Kelossa Pass, which leads directly from the area of modern New Nemea down into the Argolid and is the major connecting route between the Argolid and the upland valleys of the western Corinthia and from them to the coastal plain of the Corinthia in the area of Sikyon (modern Kiato) (Wright et al. 1990, 642). Nothing expresses this more clearly than the fact that Ayios Georgios (modern New Nemea) throughout the 19th and much of the 20th centuries was known as a “kephalochori”- a central market and production centre for the settlements of the upland region of Nemea and Stymphalos, and the centre for merchants and craftspersons working between the western coastal plain of the Corinthia and the market centre at Argos.

With the chance discoveries in 2001 and 2002 of robbed chamber tombs at Barnavos, just west of the village of Ancient Nemea in 2001, and at Ayia Sotira, just north of the village of Koutsomodi, a new phase of the Nemea project began (Wright et al. in press) and with it an opportunity to explore further questions concerning the autonomy and integration of this region. These tombs date to LH IIIA2 and IIIB1 and as we try to understand their presence and distribution with respect to the LH III settlement on Tsoungiza (Wright et al. 1990, 635-38; Thomas in press; Thomas 2005; Dabney et al. 2004), questions about the social, political and ideological meaning of chamber tombs in Mycenaean society come to the fore. Put simply the question is: What socio-political and ideological factors explain the shift from pit, cist, tumulus, and

shaft grave cemeteries of the MH and early Mycenaean tradition to the predominance during LH III of tholos and chamber tomb cemeteries?

Although this question has frequently been examined (Dickinson 1983; Mee and Cavanagh 1984; Kilian-Dirlmeier 1986; Darcque 1987; Wright 1987; Voutsaki 1995; Sjöberg 2004), much research has been content either to try to explain the origin of a type (the chamber tomb), or the continuation of one, (the cist tomb: Dickinson 1983, 64; Lewartowski 1995; 2000; Cavanagh and Mee, 1998, 48, 56; Boyd 2002, 58-61) or to place the chamber tomb within a broad consideration of Mycenaean traditions (Cavanagh and Mee 1998, 56, 71-79; 92-93, 96-97, 134-35; Boyd 2002, 96-99; Gallou 2005, 136-40). This question entails a wide-ranging and somewhat complex answer because to do justice to the evidence the scope of enquiry needs be widened to cover approximately the evidence that extends throughout much of central and southern Greece. It also requires an explicit acknowledgement, seemingly unnecessary at this stage in the scholarship of Aegean prehistory, that the MBA is an inseparable phase in the formation of what we term Mycenaean culture or civilization. We should not impose any kind of dividing line between the cultural expression of the MH and LH communities that make up this social continuum and but rather explain how and why changes in the material expressions of the communities that make up the culture are indicative of changing or evolving orientations, ultimately towards the palace-centred settlements in the core places of central and southern Greece.

We begin with the commonplace knowledge, already articulated in 1931 by Blegen and Wace, that MH burial practices were centred on the families that made up the small communities of that time (Blegen and Wace 1931). In the 1970's and 80's with the introduction of more theoretically informed approaches to the study of mortuary practices, Aegean prehistorians, especially Cavanagh and Mee (Cavanagh and Mee 1998; Mee and Cavanagh 1984; 1990), began to focus on ways the evidence of the mortuary customs could be studied to explain the social structure of these communities, especially with the intention of recognizing evidence for the increasing social differentiation so apparent in the phenomenon of the Shaft Graves at Mycenae and other high status tombs (Wright 1987; Graziadio 1991; Voutsaki 1995; 1998; 1999). Nordquist's study of the MH village of Asine brought order to the enormously

detailed evidence from the Swedish excavations of 1931-2 and for the first time offered a picture of the formation processes of a Mycenaean town (Nordquist 1987), while the earlier study by Blackburn offered an initial view of changing mortuary practices at Lerna (Blackburn 1970), absent, however, the settlement context. At Argos E. Protonotariou-Deilaki's investigations provided a rich array of burials with which to view the evolution of social attitudes towards the dead throughout the MH and early LH phases (Protonotariou-Deilaki 1981; 1990a). More recent studies collecting the evidence of MH burial at Mycenae demonstrate the extent to which this settlement shared in the developments better understood at the other communities in the Argolid (Alden 2000). Researches elsewhere in the Argolid, throughout Messenia, and in Central Greece generally confirm this more refined picture of the relation of burial customs to settlement during this time (Wells 1990; Nordquist 1990; Cavanagh and Mee 1998, 131-32; Voutsaki 1998; Boyd 2002).

For the Argolid the ambitious and well-organized project led by S. Voutsaki at Groningen is adding clarity and precision to our understanding. Although we await definitive publication, it is increasingly clear that MH mortuary practices are strong expressions of a corporate social structure; initially the dead and the living are not strongly separated from each other. This is expressed in several ways. At Lerna burial is within the settlement, sometimes in clusters, and actually layered between successive residential constructions, as demonstrated by Milka (in press). This custom continues throughout MH until residential structures cease in LH I and there exist (in the part of the settlement excavated) only the two shaft graves. At Argos burials tend to congregate on top of and along the eastern foot of the Aspis, below the settlement on the crown of the hill; they also appear in the Deiras area, which later will become the major Mycenaean chamber tomb cemetery, and they are clustered among dwellings in the southern part of the community (Dietz 1991, 132-45; Touchais 1998). Although Deilaki argues that the cist and pit tombs are clustered within tumuli (Protonotariou-Deilaki 1981), this is not necessarily uniformly the case; it can also be argued that groups of pit and cist graves, perhaps with cobble surfaces or boundaries, define areas of group burial (Dietz 1991, 132-45; Lambropoulou 1991, 182-200). Within this assemblage there appear as early as MH II some burials of apparently high status, notably one of a child containing gold diadem and a bronze

dagger (Protonotariou-Deilaki 1990a, 80, figs. 16, 17b, 23, 24; Lambropoulou 1991, 197-98, 309-10), signs of ascriptive status that may indicate incipient intergenerational social stratification within the community, although otherwise there is little evidence that class divisions were delineated within the larger community.

At Asine a more complete picture emerges that begins with burial among the settlement of the so-called Lower Town (Nordquist 1987, 95-101; 1990; Milka in press). Over the course of the MBA the houses of the Lower Town became more formalized, such that by the end of the period, alleys and formal plans seem to describe an increasingly organized settlement. Within MH III burials mostly cease in the area of the Lower Town and instead new burial places are begun at the southeastern foot of the opposite Barbouna hill and in the flat land to the east where many burials are associated with a large stone tumulus begun already during MH II (Hägg and Hägg 1973; 1978; Dietz 1980, 88). The Barbouna burials are in large slab-built cist tombs next to apparently newly founded residential structures; they contain relatively more grave goods than previous burials (Nordquist 1987, 101-2). The richest burials at Asine are found in the tumulus, notably 1971-3, a large built cist tomb outfitted in ways that emulate the elaborate shaft graves of Circle B at Mycenae (Dietz 1980, 34-55; Wright 2004b, 92-94). The creation of two separate burial areas or cemeteries, away from the main area of settlement, demonstrates a change in the relationship between the living and the dead and also suggests different social groups defining themselves in part through separate burial areas.

On one hand this change in mortuary location at Asine may represent merely increasing social division within the community, presumably related to the growth over generations of different lineages, yet on the other it is apparent that this is a new phase in the political economy in the communities of mainland Greece. It is marked by the emergence of individualizing elites and demonstrated by the increasing frequency among the later burials of more elaborate burial facilities, of grave goods richer in kind and greater in quantity, and of emulation of burial practice among the highest status burials, notably in the production of shaft-grave-like burials at Lerna, Asine, Myloi (Dietz and Divari-Valakou 1990), and elsewhere (Iakovides 1981). Kilian-Dirlmeier (1997, 83-103, 120-22) argues that this phenomenon began as early as MH II and can be documented disparately but widely

across central and southern Greece. What emerges during MH III and LH I is much more widespread and on a grander scale, so much so that individual identities begin to emerge from the generalized “warrior” burial mode. It signifies the emergence of ranked descent groups that develop a “patrimonial rhetoric” represented in the iconography of hunters and warriors in everything from gold signet rings to inlaid daggers (Tartaron forthcoming). In burial form these elites develop new tomb types and elaborate old ones, but they do this within the context of local customary practices. Cist graves are turned into deep large built shaft graves with stone markers. Underground tholos tombs are invented out of the old tumulus and pithos burial tradition (Boyd 2002, 55-57; Rutter 2005, 19).

At Mycenae these new tombs first appear within the traditional “prehistoric” cemetery, within specially demarcated areas (Alden 2000). With the introduction of the tholos tomb, burial in this traditional area continues, but expands outwards around the citadel, and also chamber tombs are introduced. The areas of burial become increasingly dispersed, with the other seven tholoi scattered around the area to the southwest, some of them among ever growing chamber tomb cemeteries (Shelton 2003, 35).

Although the introduction of the tholos tomb is dramatic, especially in that it is an alien form for the northeastern Peloponnesos, their number is limited (Mee and Cavanagh 1984, 50-51; Cavanagh and Mee 1998, 58-59). Along with them the introduction of the chamber tomb cemetery is especially noteworthy, as they mark the most dramatic shift in mortuary practice, ultimately for the entire population. If we agree that the tholos tomb was rapidly invented in Messenia during MH III and then (by LH I - early LH II) appropriated by elites from throughout central and southern Greece (Cavanagh and Mee 1984, 49-51), then, as posed at the outset, we need explain when and where the chamber tomb was invented and how it too was adopted as a burial form. On the face of it this is not difficult as there is not much dispute that the chamber tomb was invented in Messenia contemporaneous with the tholos tomb. Presumably it was an emulative invention, for those who wished to bury in a receptacle that was like the tholos tomb but not as expensive to construct. Its form, with dug entrance corridor, stomion, and chamber, is the same as the tholos (see Gallou 2005, 64-66, on a probable meaning of the tripartite form), yet its construction is radically different from the tradition

out of which the tholos emerged (Boyd 2002, 58-59). It was, then, originally as foreign as the tholos in the northeastern Peloponnesos and in central Greece. So it is useful to ask what its invention meant in social terms.

In Messenia the widespread use of tumuli may be understood as an expression of corporate behavior within an egalitarian or transegalitarian setting (Hayden 1995; Boyd 2002, 96-99). A change in relations of status is apparent periodically during the MBA whenever burials, such as the MH I-II ones at Kastroulia in Messenia recently excavated (Rambach in press) demonstrate, or the rich cist tomb at Kephallavryson that Kilian-Dirlmeier dates to MH II (Kilian-Dirlmeier 1997, 97), but only in MH III and MH III/LH I does this phenomenon become widespread, when tumuli begin to show a variety of burial forms, as at Papoulia and Koukounaries, to name the most outstanding (Korres 1974, 108-12; 1975, 119-23; Boyd 2002). The sudden appearance of chamber tombs at Volimidhia, outside Chora, beginning in MH III/LH I and continuing in use through LH III, and their grouping together as a cemetery, marks a radical shift in mortuary practice, and one not immediately adopted elsewhere (Boyd 2002, 61). When one considers the practice in social terms, it seems to represent an increasing focus on family receptacles (Cavanagh and Mee 1998, 71, 131) containing up to (and sometimes more than) three generations.

I argue that this focus on family is to be distinguished from the earlier focus on lineage. Instead of allegiance to the lineage as represented by the multiple and successive burials around a tumulus, the grouping of chamber tombs in a cemetery, I believe, reflects the coherence of a community of families as Tsountas suggested over a century ago (Tsountas and Manatt 1897, 132). Among these families there was much variation in status: the contents of these tombs display a range of material wealth - some approaching that displayed in tholos tombs, but many containing much lower levels (Cavanagh and Mee 1998, 78). What is strikingly different from the previous tumulus form is the separation of the family implied by the individual chamber tomb and the widespread (but not universal) adoption of the chamber tomb during LH III across the entire Mycenaean-dominated circum-Aegean region (Mee and Cavanagh 1984, 56-61). Chamber tomb cemeteries are an expression of a larger, more diverse community in social and economic terms (Voutsaki 1995). This explanation would account for their rare appearance in early

periods, for example in the southern Peloponnesos during LH I-II they only occur at Volimithia, Epidauros Limera, and Kythera (Boyd 2002, 61) and instances of other early examples (LH I-II) are known sparsely at Thebes (Cavanagh and Mee 1998, 48, 75), whereas at precocious Mycenae they are immediately popular.

This is hardly surprising given the concomitant centralisation that is occurring at places like Englianos, (Bennet 1999; Bennet and Shelmerdine 2001) Mycenae and Thebes during LH III. Surely such a shift did not occur without some tension, yet the abruptness with which the tholos form was developed and accepted in southwestern Messenia bespeaks its acceptance (Boyd 2002, 54-57). Elsewhere conservatism is witnessed in the continuous use of the grave circle and tumulus at, for example, Samikon in Elis and Vrana at Marathon (Cavanagh and Mee 1998, 62-63; Boyd 2002, 97, 167-73, 186-88). This diversity of old and new may well reflect socio-political tensions. Leading elites felt threatened by the competition among elites at a regional level and sought to raise the bar by adopting ever more grandiose forms of burial (Cannon 1989; Morris 1987, 16). At emergent centres, such as Mycenae, Thebes and Englianos, traditional elites were likely challenged by emergent leaders and also may have felt the traditional order was dissolving, as opportunities opened up for freemen to advance themselves came open, either by aligning themselves with other leaders even to making their own way in the world. Apparently in those communities where elites succeeded in attracting many followers and increased control over territory, the resulting conurbation produced the first “urban” mortuary form in the chamber tomb cemetery. The early appearance of such cemeteries in Messenia and the Argolid may indicate the success of these leading rulers in integrating an increasingly diverse populace into a new political economy based on an emergent central economy and political order that realigned allegiances and required that they be focused on the central agency of a community ruled by persons with whom they had did not necessarily have kinship (compare Morris 1987, 89-93).

At those places where traditional mortuary practices continued, we find evidence of the extent to which this shift in the political economy was resisted, especially by the leaders of tradition lineage groups that defined the community. (From another perspective this shift represented the failure of the lineage system). All in all the regions of the

southern Peloponnesos (Elis, Messenia, Lakonia) did not adopt the chamber tomb form as strongly as in the north (Voutsaki 1995, 58-59; Cavanagh and Mee 1998, 65-66, 71-78; Boyd 2002, 58-59, 98). In the instance of Messenia this reflects perhaps the difficulties of incorporating a large area of diverse communities into a state (Bennet 1999, 2002; cf. Lang 1998). In the cases off Lakonia (Cavanagh 1995) and Elis we may have evidence of the difficulties of large-scale centralization (yet contrast the popularity of the form in Achaia: Papadopoulos 1979).

Let us look further into the adoption of chamber tomb in regions beyond Messenia. Here it may be useful to look at a few examples. First, let us remember that the tholos form seems to have been adopted as early at least as LH I in a few special instances, such as Thorikos (Servais and Servais-Soyes 1984) and, on the basis of recent press reports, at Corinth. At centres like Mycenae, Asine, Marathon, and Thebes, however, there was no reason to change the successful tradition of shaft grave or tumulus burial within a demarcated space, and we see it continuing into LH II or III. But LH II marks a radical transformation at Mycenae, during which time as many as six tholoi were built and chamber tombs began to appear in clusters of cemeteries around its citadel. At Asine, where the multiplicity of burial and residential locations had already suggested an increasingly diverse community during MH III-LH I, the traditional places were abandoned and an entirely new cemetery of only chamber tombs was established on the northern slope of the Barbouna hill. At Argos, not only did burials cease in the lower city, but settlement on the Aspis was also abandoned (Piérart and Touchais 1996, 18). The chamber tomb cemetery in the Deiras opens up and residences move down into the plain. At Midea there was a radical shift in burial location to the cemetery at Dendra, probably not before LH IIIA, notwithstanding Protonotariou-Deilaki's claims of tumuli there (Protonotariou-Deilaki 1990b). In all four of these instances the most obvious result is a stricter demarcation of settlement from cemetery. Further abroad the case of Thebes is illuminating. Here recent study documents a large MH settlement with a number of cemeteries of cist and pit burials located over the Kadmeia and within them a few high status cists (Kilian-Dirlmeier 1997, 83; Aravantinos and Psaraki in press). Then, sometime during LH II (possibly earlier, although for both LH I and LH II the evidence is scarce: Cavanagh and Mee 1998, 55, 74-75) chamber tomb cemeteries are

established, and as elsewhere, they are located away from the settlement, across on the adjacent slopes. There they continue to grow during the period of the palaces and many are also used or re-used in the post-palatial LH IIIC period.

I have suggested elsewhere that the Early Mycenaean period of LH I-IIIA1 is one of transition to the palace-centered political economy (Dabney and Wright 1990: 51; Wright 2006, 18-25). Some places effected this as early as, possibly, LH I or LH II (Pylos: Nelson 2001, 187-191; Kakovatos: Kilian 1987, 212), but in general it seems to have taken through LH IIIA1 for the material products of this new arrangement to take hold, and that is why there is on the one hand considerable variation in mortuary practices until LH IIIA2 and on the other a corresponding diversity of the political economy, for example at some places in the retention of traditional pottery forms or in the lack of mobilized labour and specialized craftspersons for such monumental construction as fortification walls and palaces. [This view is complicated but also affirmed by differential access to the resources of Crete, as is apparent at Pylos (and elsewhere in Messenia) where Cretan masons were active as early as LH II (see Nelson 2001, 187-191; Wright 2006, 20-21)].

From the perspective of regional mortuary practices, the effect of this transition is seen in the widespread adoption of chamber tomb cemeteries in the outer regions of emerging palace centres only after LH IIIA1. Many tombs cannot be dated earlier than LH IIIA2 and continue to be used into LH III B (Cavanagh and Mee 1998, 65-68). This is surely a consequence of the increasing reach of palace centres as they succeed in consolidating control over adjacent regions. Perhaps the institution of chamber tomb cemeteries is partly a product of the implantation in some places of functionaries from the palace centres (or the co-optation of local elites for that purpose), who, in showing their allegiance to the urban centre promoted a new style of burial. In an area such as Nemea, the loss of autonomy was a kind of promotion for the leading communities, such as Aidonia, into the position of secondary centres in a hinterland (Bennet 2002), and emulation of the palace centre was a natural result - clearly evident in the display of heritable wealth found in the Aidonia chamber tomb cemetery (see esp. Tomb 7; Krystalli-Votsi 1996, 26-8; Kaza-Papageorgiou 1996, 38-67).

At a lower order community, such as at Tsoungiza, despite some prestige which may have obtained

during LH IIIA2 by the officially sponsored feasting there (Dabney et al. 2004), the institution of chamber tomb cemeteries had yet another effect. Whereas in the past (in part based on the absence of other evidence) burial seems to have been confined to the area of the settlement or its immediate periphery, by LH IIIA2, apparently, chamber tombs are adopted. Their location, as at other settlements, is away from the settlement on opposing slopes (Wells 1990, 128; Cavanagh and Mee 1998, 130). For a small community such as Tsoungiza, the prospect of having multiple chamber tomb cemeteries seems to represent a profound change in the social order. No longer based primarily on local subsistence and kin-oriented identity, the community began to identify itself, at least in death, in a wider spatial configuration that is hard to understand except in terms of a new mobility beyond the immediate purview of the settlement (cf. Purcell 1990).

Agricultural holdings, grazing rights, places of hunting and gathering, sources of water, locations of memory - any or all of these would be sufficient for groups to identify themselves as separate from the community as a whole. Such a separation, I would suggest, was only possible because in one way or another, each of them had also some relation to the world outside the community, either to the new centre of political allegiance and economic prospect at the palace at Mycenae or towards its surrogate to the west, if the settlement at Aidonia became truly a secondary centre of the rising state.

This brief consideration of Mycenaean mortuary practices attempts to explore the underlying social and political reasons for the appearance and widespread distribution of chamber tombs in Greece. Rather than being viewed merely as a type, which might have been adopted because of a change in preferences for a style of burial, I argue that the change is much more indicative of a fundamental realignment and reorganization of social, political, and economic relations. The transition from relatively egalitarian, lineage based small communities that had persisted for nigh five hundred years throughout the Middle Bronze Age to the establishment of the palace-centred hierarchical and proto-urban form of the Late Bronze Age was neither sudden nor uniform- anymore so than the later formation of the classical *poleis* (Morris 1987; de Polignac 2005). Where these polities were accomplished, they succeeded by breaking down the lineage structure through a promotion of families under the authority of the leading male, who made

his way in the world now by means of his relation to the economic and political centre of the palace. This shift changed relations of production and transformed social relations.

The impact of these changes on mortuary practices was equally profound, and resulted in the introduction of the chamber tomb as a family burial receptacle and in their grouping in terms of new divisions within the community. Some of these divisions may still have been established in terms of lineages and this was apparent in areas where there was a strong tradition of local residence, as seems likely in Messenia, and in such a situation they were also aligned according to relations to the source of power, in other words to patrons within the palace political economy. This would explain the widespread adoption of chamber tombs throughout the Mycenaean-dominated areas of the circum-Aegean world). In places where there was a weaker tradition of residence, as at Prosymna, where the earliest burials only begin in MH III (Blegen 1937, 30-50), the chamber tomb was readily adopted as early as LH II. And at emerging palace centres, such as at Thebes and Mycenae, these changes are visible in the growth of multiple chamber tomb cemeteries around the emerging urban core beginning in LH II. In the outer territories of the palace centres, however, this change took place later, when the palaces were at their acme and began to interfere

directly in the affairs of their territories. The result was not merely an emulation of palace-centre practice in the territories, but also a new alignment that worked out in terms of different social and economic relations for individual families - relations that indicate more individualistic claims. These resulted in the forging of new spatial relations to the landscape in which they lived. From a focus on the traditional place of residence, lineage, and community, individuals and families now orient themselves also throughout the wider landscape. This dispersal and its manifestation in mortuary practice is a spatial acknowledgment of the newly urbanised world that had sprung up and offered a new horizon of potential for wider relations and prospects beyond the traditional community.

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