

Reconstruction of what the Treasury of Atreus would of looked like. The use of a decorative facade shows that whoever the chamber was for made the monument as visually appealing and distinctive as possible, showing elite status.

“The Secret of the Treasury of Atreus.”

The ceiling of The Treasury of Atreus. The quality of construction demonstrates specialist knowledge and ability to organise skilled workers, these are both massive indicators of elite power and status.

“Mycenae, Treasury of Atreus.” n.d. Perseus Art and

The entrance of The Treasury of Atreus. To build such a large tomb required a mass amount of resources, skilled workers and organised labour. This suggests that the deceased belonged to a powerful elite.

Lucy, 2014. “Art and Civilization of the Mycenaean.”

Carved red marble decoration from The Treasury of Atreus. The use of coloured stone and detailed carvings suggest that the tomb was designed to look impressive and not just a simple burial chamber.

N.d.-i. Britishmuseum.org

Treasury of Atreus

Kayla Bird

The landscape and front of The Treasury of Atreus. The tombs location may have been deliberately chosen to make it visible to people traveling towards Mycenae. This would show a display of elite status. “Mycenae Opening Hours 2025: Best Times to Visit from Athens.”

Stone Lintel part of The Treasury of Atreus. The enormous stone lintel above the entrance to the treasury of Atreus weighs approximately 120 tones. The size of this suggests the person buried there was a member of the elite as moving and gathering a stone of this size would have taken a lot of resources.

“Treasury of Atreus in Mycenae: Architecture, Myth & Visitor Guide to the Beehive Tomb,”

Inside The Treasury of Atreus, the beam of light. The light may of had symbolic significance connecting the deceased with religious beliefs of death and renewal. Also the light could be showing anyone who enters where to look.

N.d.-h. Reddit.com

The entry passage of The Treasury of Atreus (Dromos). The scale of the passage way suggests that the burial was intended to be a significant place of remembrance.

“Category Dromos of the Treasury of Atreus.”

The domed ceiling of The Treasury of Atreus. The ceilings impressive domed design would have taken a lot of resources and organised labour to get right. This shows that the person who was buried here wanted an impressive place to rest and to show others who visit how much status they had.

AdamAH. n.d. “Treasury of Atreus - Eagles and Dragons Publishing.”

The smaller side chamber door at The Treasury of Atreus. The additional chamber shows the complexity of the tombs design. It may have served a separate funerary purpose. Having another room also shows wealth as an indicator of status as adding more rooms would be more expensive.

“Greek Art & Architecture: Mycenae: Treasury of Atreus.”

Reflection

The Treasury of Atreus is a Mycenaean tholos tomb located at Mycenae, Greece which was built around 1300-1250 BCE. It was designed as a monumental burial place and is one of the largest and best preserved tholos tombs from the bronze age.¹ I chose to study this tomb because its architecture shows elite status and the power of the person buried inside. The long entrance passage which is known as the dromos leads towards a massive doorway and circular chamber with a dome shaped roof.² The use of huge stone blocks shows the engineering skills, resources and labour required to construct such an impressive monument. This suggests that the tomb was built for an important member of the Mycenaean ruling elite.³ The tombs size and prominent location also showed status to the surrounding population of Greece. The tombs impressive appearance would have showed the wealth, authority and the influence of the ruling family. Although its original burial goods and the deceased remain unknown the monument provides valuable evidence of social hierarchy in Mycenaean society.⁴ In conclusion I believe the Treasury of Atreus shows that burial practices were not only about honouring the dead but also about displaying power wealth and status.

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2. N.d.-k. <http://https://perseus-aa.github.io/items/aa_270.html> [accessed October 23, 2026].
3. N.d.-j. Smarthistory.org <<https://smarthistory.org/the-treasury-of-atreus-mycenae/>> [accessed October 23, 2026].
4. Current World Archaeology. 2008. "Treasury of Atreus at Mycenae," World Archaeology, Current Publishing, 7 March <<https://www.world-archaeology.com/features/treasury-of-atreus-at-mycenae/>> [accessed October 23, 2026].
- 5.
- 6.

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