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# Fields of Action in Mycenaean Funerary Practices

## 1 Fields of action

Barrett's (2000) call for an 'archaeology of inhabitation' arose from his thesis that agency cannot be understood independently of the material structural conditions in which it operated and the historically contingent structuring principles it engaged with: hence the fields within which effective agency can operate are as much the object of our study as the agency operating through them. That such fields should be related in some way to archaeological context is obvious, but a suitable theoretical framework is essential in relating archaeological observations to past contexts of action.

In a recent paper, Robb envisages 'fields of action' as 'genres of action' enacted within 'situations and arenas of social performance' with 'rules and strategies' concerning participants and modes of action (Robb 2010: 507). Fields of action are an intermediate construct between specific instances of practice, on the one hand, and the pervasive background of habitus, on the other. Fields of action are nonetheless created out of knowledgeable action and recursively sustained through structuration (in the sense developed by Giddens 1979; 1984). They are created, recreated, maintained and developed through discourse and action.

This concept is derived from Barrett's 'fields of discourse' (1988a). Setting out the challenge to archaeology to become a discipline of historically situated social practice, he noted: "Archaeological evidence should not be treated as a static outcome of past dynamics (a record). Instead it is the surviving fragments of those recursive media through which the practices of social discourse were constructed. Social practices are the object of our study: archaeology is the empirical examination of material evidence to discover how such practices were maintained within particular material conditions" (Barrett 1988a: 9).

These recursive media are material culture and other aspects of locale, including architecture; they are recursive because of the duality of structure, which is both medium and outcome of action. The field is 'an area of time-space occupied by virtue of the practice of a particular discourse' (Barrett 1988a: 11). Fields cross-cut and share components or resources (and hence their isolation as a unit of study is artificial). The analytical components of the field were seen as frequency of inhabitation and tempo (discussed further below), spatial extent, cultural resources, and transformations within it. This formulation of the concept is particularly useful in highlighting the relationships between fields of action in space and time: their overlap, or that one field of action may exist only within another. Thus Robb's hierarchy of habitus, field

of action, and particular instance of action is extended by the hierarchical nature of many fields of action, existing within or containing other fields of action.

Semantically, the difference between 'fields of action' or 'discourse' is fine (cf. 'fields of social practice': Barrett 2001). The former term perhaps lays greater emphasis on the empowerment of situated human agency, in particular its relational, collective and material aspects (Robb 2010); the latter highlights the collective effect of socially efficacious communicative action. But both formulations include these principles and I take them here to be almost interchangeable. In asserting fields of action we are investigating effective, situated agency; the perimeters of the field are drawn by us, 'reconstituted through our own inquiries' (Barrett 2001: 158) in order to understand how that agency operated.

Fields of action exist in time-space and the temporal aspect requires some development. In his definition Barrett (1988a: 11) refers to 'tempo' as 'the temporal frequency within which the field is routinely occupied'. Here 'tempo' is derived from Bourdieu (1977), and Barrett offers the example of the cultural understanding of cycles of agricultural production. However, Bourdieu employs tempo to refer to time as an attribute of action (as in the manipulation of the timing of action: 1977: 7, 15). Moreover, in discussing the ritualisation of practice, he assigns action the temporal qualities of moment, tempo and duration (Bourdieu 1977: 163). In its normal usage, tempo evokes rhythm and regularity, frequency and cycles, but also changeability, quickening or slowing pace. Tempo is therefore a key concept in understanding the inhabitation of fields of action. It is a key attribute of the repeatability and changeability of action.

As illustration, one very specific field of action we might consider concerns the toasting of the dead within a Mycenaean tomb. The toast is widely evidenced (Boyd 2016a) and so can be considered a field of action. The analytical components of the field would include its frequency of inhabitation (at the end of a funeral, though perhaps not always), its tempo (the temporal qualities of action as cups are filled, drained and deposited), its spatial extent (in the tomb, carried out in relation to the corpse), its cultural resources (the corpse as culturally constructed, appropriate serving and drinking wares, appropriate liquids), and transformations within it (which might include such changes as how many would drink, how many cups would be used, or whether it seems better to break the cup afterwards). These analytical components relate both to structural conditions (locale, material resources and the presence of others) and to structuring principles (the contingent and fragmentary knowledge of how to act effectively given certain conditions). This field of action is entirely enclosed within others: the funeral, itself enclosed within the wider funerary cycle. It also cross-cuts others which do not enclose it: actions carried out over a corpse, or the drinking of toasts in general. The evidence with which to investigate this field is apparent in most Mycenaean tombs. This is one straightforward example within the hierarchies of fields of action which I shall examine in this chapter under the heading 'the funerary cycle'.

As noted, Robb refers to 'genres of action', and this may imply not only different types of action, but different ways of acting. All action is performed in the sense of being carried out, but it is also the case that most action is performed in the sense that the actor is aware of the presence of others, and taking into account their observation and anticipated reactions, the actor may vary both what is done and how it is achieved. This public and communicative aspect of agency, encapsulated by the term 'performance' ('behavior heightened, if ever so slightly, and publicly displayed; twice-behaved behavior': Schechner 1993: 1), is highlighted as a style of behaviour in certain fields of action, where the discursive aim of the performance eclipses in importance the functional aspects of what is being done (Dakouri-Hild, this volume). Many different fields of action of this kind can be imagined: the habitual family meal, the changing of the guard, a criminal trial, or an initiation ceremony. The funeral is among the most obvious of examples. One question this chapter aims to address is the manners in which, and extent to which, performed behaviour is facilitated by Mycenaean funerary arenas, and the time-space trajectory of performative action in Mycenaean funerary events, as well as the potential role of the funeral as public spectacle (Inomata & Coben 2006).

Heightened and stylised behaviour, where recognisably repetitive or seeking to recreate past events, can be characterised not only as performance but also as ritual (Bell 1992). This chapter will also consider the role of ritual in the events of the funerary cycle: how ritual forms a key shared resource within the tempo of events by structuring repetition and the recall of past events, and how the forms of cemeteries and tombs shaped and were shaped by ritual.

In this chapter I aim to examine the fields of action of the Mycenaean funeral. As outlined above these are not merely reducible to locale but concerned with genres of action, their structuring principles, and their material structural conditions. In what follows, I examine events taking place within the funerary cycle, which includes both the fields of action associated with a funeral and others active at other times. The major divisions of this chapter therefore reflect the tempo of the funerary cycle as well as its locales, material resources and the knowledgeable actions of those involved.

This chapter will not attempt to deal systematically with variation through time and space. This is not to imply that there was none, or that there is a 'true' Mycenaean funeral whose nature must be understood before we examine deviations from it: it is of course the case that there is significant variation in space and time. I have elsewhere deconstructed the notion of 'Mycenaean' through a consideration of variation in 'Mycenaean' funerary practices (Boyd 2016b). However, in what follows I shall consider the major aspects of the funerary cycle as a field of action, most of which can be variably related to the evidence from different tombs, sites, regions and time periods. Some examples are given here but detailed case studies, through which spatial and chronological variation will eventually be better understood, require their own publications (Boyd 2014a; 2014b; 2015b).

How may we legitimately infer the actions of the funerary cycle? Death would usually imply at least three locales and two stages during which transport of the body is necessary: initial transport from the place of death to the place where the body is prepared for burial, if these two places are not the same, and then transport from there to the place of burial. These two stages might not be universally observed—it is indeed likely to be that case that many of the dead, especially if death took place far from home, may have been buried close to their place of death. There is also a major debate about what proportion of any given community (rather than the population as a whole, as this is a factor which clearly could have differed in time and space) might have been selected for burial in archaeologically visible ways (summarised in Snodgrass 2015: 191–2). But in the subset recovered archaeologically the evidence indicates that many of the bodies were prepared for burial, which must often imply a two stage transportation process, from place of death to intermediate point—perhaps the house, or some customarily preferred public arena—and from there to the grave. It is almost impossible to infer evidence concerning the first locale, the place of death, or the initial transportation stage from the place of death to the place where the body is prepared for burial, so these will not be considered further here. Some of the remaining relevant stages of a funeral are shown below. **[Fig. 1]**. All of these may be examined on the basis of the evidence available. Beyond the funeral itself, activity in Mycenaean tombs taking place at other times is often evidenced. These 'non-burial' stages of the funerary cycle will also be taken into account.

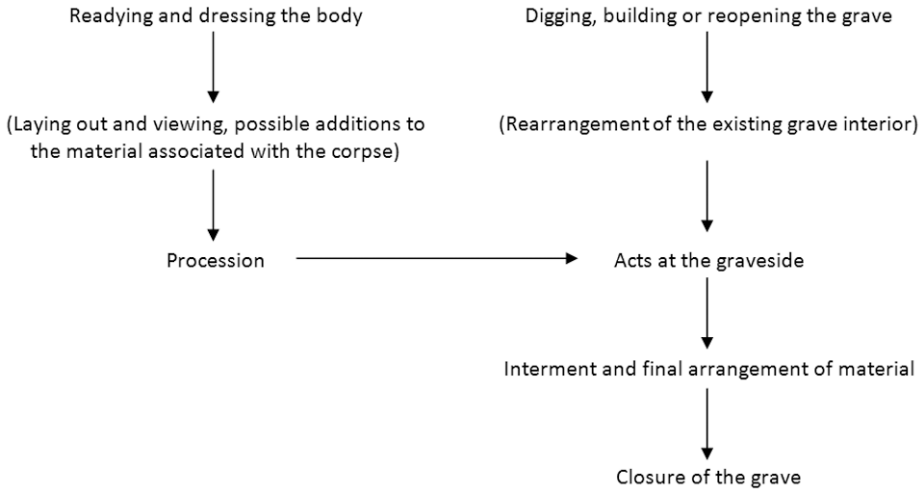


**Fig. 1:** Stages in a funeral. Stages in brackets are not evidenced in every case (after author).

# 2 The funerary cycle

## 2.1 Prothesis

The preparation and dressing of the dead, no matter how simple or complex, form a connected series of acts carried out by the living upon the dead. The agency of the dead is absent, though it may be deemed to be ordained, or manipulated by those taking part in the funeral activities. Indeed it is one of the chief burdens and opportunities of the funeral, to proceed with much concern for a physical entity whose active participation in society has lately so abruptly ceased. The relationship between those arranging the funeral and the recently dead has already changed: no matter the extent to which the agency of the dead is proclaimed, it is for the living to arrange how to proceed.

In this field of action the focal point is the inactive (though in some ways responsive) corpse, upon and through which activities are carried out. The field's analytical components are its frequency of inhabitation (irregularly, in response to death, and early in the funerary cycle), its tempo (the temporal ordering of the sequence of actions carried out on the corpse, including variation between periods of activity and periods of waiting, presentation or contemplation), its spatial extent (which cannot be recovered, but was perhaps usually limited), its cultural resources (the stock of material resources and immaterial knowledge employed in the field), and the transformations within it (which we may glimpse through variation in time and space). The dead may be washed, anointed, or treated with cosmetics; she may be dressed in garb habitual or never before worn. She may be wrapped tightly in a shroud, or adorned with jewellery. The mourners proceed to transform the appearance of the corpse until deemed fit to be seen, transported, and buried. The unpredictability of a living agent is transformed into a limited and refined representation crafted and curated by the mourners. Numbers participating in this phase may be very limited, though the gathering of items for use in the presentation of the corpse may involve wider networks. If there is a period of presentation after preparation and before transport to the grave, this may involve a larger group of people, through which participant roles in the funeral might begin to be negotiated. In finding the tempo of this stage, mourners would usually have been guided by their expectations in relation to length of time between death and burial, and customary times of the day for burials to take place. The expectation may often have been, as it is now in many Mediterranean societies, that burial would take place with little delay after death. However, mourners may sometimes have varied the tempo, perhaps in order to ensure effective representation of different groups at the funeral, or to obtain appropriate material resources for use during the funeral.

The archaeological evidence for this field of action is necessarily limited to any evidence preserved in the tomb for the presentation of the corpse. Influenced by historical accounts, and by very limited iconographical evidence such as the Tanagra

larnakes (Cavanagh & Mee 1995; Burke 2007; Dakouri-Hild in press), we may have tended to believe that the intermediate stage was similar to the *prothesis* of later periods. However many of the actions on the body inferred from its final state within the tomb might equally have taken place either before or after interment. In considering the cumulative manipulation of the corporeal representation that is the focal point of burial, it is usually not at all clear when most of the crafting of that representation took place. Indeed in considering the actions on the body which cumulatively produced its final buried state, we might expect considerable chronological, regional and individual variation in emphasis between preparation before burial and actions on the body in the tomb. Although it may seem obvious that much of the work on the body was done before the procession to the tomb, in fact this may not always have been the case. The presence of items such as alabastra may hint at cosmetic actions on the body within the tomb (Cavanagh 1998).

The material resources used in this field include a subset that might be evidenced in the tomb, among a larger group of material that we would normally expect to find little evidence for. Organic materials, such as clothing for the corpse and mourners, wooden furniture where used, unguents, oils and cosmetics, can all be imagined as candidates for use and would make their way to the tomb adhering to the corpse or to the mourners, rarely to be recognised archaeologically; other materials could be employed in this or any stage, without forming part of the material deposited in the tomb. The principal materials often found in the tomb which can be related to this stage are jewellery and other bodily adornments and clothing refinements; during the preparation of the body, other materials might be gathered for the funeral, from potentially quite disparate sources (Boyd 2014b), drawing in networks of participants with interests in the material being contributed (see Harrell 2014 for an intriguing discussion of the mechanisms by which swords came to be concentrated in some shaft grave assemblages). If there were a phase of public display before the procession to the grave, it is conceivable that material gathered for the funeral, such as martial culture, or food or wine for consumption, might be displayed at this point with the readied corpse.

## 2.2 Readying the tomb

Tomb construction and the preparation of the tomb for a funeral form two separate fields of action. Both form part of the wider funerary cycle but tomb construction must rarely have been part of the process of the funeral itself, given the requirements of time and expertise (Boyd 2002: 54–62). Tomb construction was a project which required those organising it to call upon specific skill sets and sufficient (practised?) labour, and to draw in tools and, for built tombs, materials. In the case of the larger tholos tombs these resources would have been significant and the time required substantial: once activated, this field of action would have consumed considerable resources of

time and energy from a major subsector of the community. Even for much simpler chamber tombs, however, construction was not trivial and, being perhaps in the purview of a much smaller organising group, would have the effect of requiring similarly taxing levels of commitment from those involved. The initial choice of location of the tomb, often with reference to existing tombs, perhaps in a specific cluster, was also the first step in reorganising the cultural landscape, of physically inserting a new point of reference into the already inhabited network of paths and places, of asserting the place of the living and the dead as a future trajectory within the surrounding chaos of tradition and ongoing action. In this way the effect of individual and collective agency in inhabiting the field of action of tomb construction was to transform the wider locale and imbue it with the expectation of future performance.

The preparation of the tomb to receive the dead forms a quite different field of action. Three principal activities, perhaps not performed by the same groups of people, are involved: the digging out of the dromos, if required; the opening of the blocked doorway; and the rearrangement of the interior contexts of the tomb in order to be ready for the funeral itself. Each involves selection of participants and movement to the tomb; obvious material resources such as digging tools would be required, along with objects perhaps to be used in the rearrangement of the interior. None of these activities would have seemed mundane. The choice of which tomb to open and use might have seemed unavoidably pre-ordained, and therefore uncontroversial; but we know little about the make-up and variability of groups using Mycenaean tombs, and the mechanisms by which inclusion came about might have been less obvious than, for example, simple membership of a family group. The decision about which tomb was to be opened might have been more discursive, and it is not inconceivable that activity took place at more than one tomb in coming to a decision. The digging of the dromos, if not already open (there is no need to believe the dromos was always filled in after every funeral: Boyd 2002: 63–4; for detailed studies of this question in individual cemeteries, see Karkanas et al. 2012; Smith et al. in press), was an act of bodily reengagement with a particular locale, physically transforming it in order to rediscover the affordances of place (Dakouri-Hild, this volume; Papadimitriou, this volume) so suitable for the later acts of the funeral. It would also often have been a time of rediscovery of the detritus of past acts in that place, most often through the recovery of smashed potsherds in the dromos. These, held in the hand, became a tangible reference point for what had gone before, and a pointer to the future. Where these acts of smashing indicated a closure for the tomb, now their recovery and removal pointed to the subsequent act of removing the blocking wall in the stomion. These acts may have been structured in reference to claims of competence in allowing and directing the opening of the tomb.

The tomb, once open, flooded the senses of those entering with the sights, imperfectly perceived in limited light, of the acts of another time; the smells, the odd and familiar soundscape; shockingly different from the outside world and yet strongly familiar to those who had been there before (Boyd 2014b: 200–1). The funerary cycle

is filled with dramatic moments where those participating confront the past, present and future circumstances of their lives. The entry into the tomb is one of these: the detritus of past action richly imbued with meaning and memory. The activities carried out in the chamber at this point, utilising the material to hand and perhaps other material now introduced, tended to rearrange interior contexts in ways that I have described elsewhere (Boyd 2014a; 2014b; 2016a). In brief, actions on material within the tomb could occur at three junctures: before the interment, as presently discussed (whether immediately before or some time earlier), where a primary motivation is to prepare the tomb and its contents for the coming funerary rite; during the interment, where a primary motivation is to set the dead within the newly remade tomb interior context; and at a later point, after the dissolution of the flesh, where a primary motivation is often to undo the primary burial context and set its components among the other material in the tomb. Each of these moments can result in action destructive to burial contexts, creating 'secondary' deposits, which can occasion dismay among archaeologists; in fact, the tomb interior is better understood as a resource container and a keeper of evidence (Dakouri-Hild in press), whose worth and meanings are recovered in the multiple acts of rearrangement so richly demonstrated. In preparing for the funeral, those entering the tomb reinterpreted its contents and made them ready for use in the funeral to come. Practical aspects, such as the definition of areas for movement and a place of deposition, went along with the acquisition of knowledge through engagement with the material past, some of which may have been removed at this point for use in the funeral (Boyd 2014b) or elsewhere.

## 2.3 Ekphora

Although the consideration of funerary processions might initially seem archaeologically intangible or indeed beyond recovery, we are in fact able to infer rather a lot about these important events using sources of information such as the final deposition in the tomb, the layout of the tombs themselves and the nature of funerary landscapes.

### 2.3.1 The nature of action in funerary processions

A procession is 'the action of a body of persons going or marching along in orderly succession, esp(ecially). as a religious ceremony or on a festive occasion' (Onions et al. 1973). The word 'action' is significant in highlighting the active nature of a procession and the agency of those participating. Another theme to consider is the tension between the individual and the collective in forming the 'body of persons'. The 'orderly succession' emphasises that ordering, ranking, and reordering are a key consideration in how people function within a procession. A funeral may not always

count as a 'religious ceremony', but it is important also to consider the part that cosmology or the supernatural may have played.

What can we infer of the nature of these funerary processions (Papadimitriou 2015; cf. Pearson & Shanks 2001: 128–9)? As a field of action, we can begin to define it in terms of its analytical components: frequency of inhabitation, tempo, spatial extent, cultural resources and transformations. Most important, however, are the multiple participants in funerary processions.

Processions are first and foremost public, open events. For the most part they take place in relatively unbounded space, although surrounded on all sides by the topography of memory and tradition. During the space of time taken up by the procession, the group moves from locale to locale, perhaps beginning in a more confined urban or domestic environment, but in most cases ending up in a cemetery locale away from the houses of the living. Traversing the open countryside, processions would have been highly visible from multiple viewpoints, and routes of movement could have been relatively freely chosen and altered.

We can imagine at least three basic participant roles, and there may have been others: those leading the procession, those following and forming the main body of the mourners, and those standing by, watching. The leaders were those making the strategic decisions directing the funeral: perhaps those claiming a close relationship with the dead, as a relative or as a member of another defined group; but also perhaps those with a wider interest: ritual specialists, for example, or representatives of the different groups claiming a stake in the interpretation of the funerary topography. Those leading took care for the performance of the funeral, the transport of the dead, gathering much of the material culture destined to be utilised during the process, and organising other participants.

The actions of those following may also have been important in shaping the nature of the event. They may have behaved in certain ways—through their dress, forms of movement and gesture, in making certain noises, in singing or in performing music—which had an effect on the procession (cf. Dakouri-Hild in press, for the evidence from Tanagra). These sorts of activities might have been foreseen by custom or ritual but nonetheless have offered considerable freedom to the mourners in how they constructed their own performance, creating a dialectic between those at the head of the procession and those behind, and influencing the overall act.

Those not directly following but standing by and watching participated by observing and acknowledging the procession. The flow of the procession may at times have been influenced by the presence of these 'non-participants', especially if the latter were drawn to gather at particular locales whose significance may be employed in shaping the action of the processants, such as buildings associated with particular lineages, other tombs, or shrines. Those participating in the procession may have acknowledged these other groups by stopping or by other actions acknowledging their presence.

In contrasting leaders with followers and onlookers, it is important to bear in mind one of the essential but often overlooked aspects of the funerary process:

individuals always embody the potential to transcend roles through their agency, and the funerary procession is a key opportunity to do this. The procession is a composite act whose overall nature is defined through innumerable individual acts. The stander-by can become a follower by joining the procession; a follower can become a key actor in the process through some action anticipated or unanticipated; and those at the front of the procession can fall back and let others lead.

These little scenarios point us to a key aspect of funerary processions: they are the perfect model of the duality of structure and human agency (Barrett 1994). The structured (but not rule-bound: Barrett 2012) nature of the procession is open to constant redefinition during the lengthy process of enacting it. Indeed, this is the most open moment of the funeral: once at the graveside, other factors can be employed to reinforce order. During the procession, hierarchy is both made manifest and open to negotiation. The greater the numbers participating in the funeral, the more apparent this aspect would have been: in the biggest funerals, those with the most 'reach' into wider society, there would have been people, groups or representatives of groups all seeking to make their place in proceedings both seen and understood.

### 2.3.2 Procession locales and tempo

Between the starting and ending points, the route marked time, proceeding through a formidable succession of known locales, viewpoints and distant backgrounds. Routes may not have been particularly short or efficient, but instead have wound their way on a circuitous course intending to take in certain waypoints and vistas, as well as to be seen from other locations.

These waypoints may have been the appropriate points at which to stop, and have given the impetus for temporary changes of roles among the mourners. The backdrop of a particular monument or house or vista or tomb is the opportunity for those asserting association with that locale to foreground themselves in the procession narrative and support the significance of their group's relationship with the dead or the importance of their group in relation to the events being played out at the funeral. Each such backdrop forms an 'amplifying mechanism' (Barrett 1994: 17) employed as a reorienting and reordering device allowing those foregrounding themselves at that place temporarily to act as the focal point of the group.

While we cannot now reconstruct something so ephemeral as the route of a funerary procession three and a half thousand years ago, we can go surprisingly far in understanding the structuring principles offered by funerary landscapes as we have been able to reconstruct them. Consider the funerary landscape of Nichoria in Messenia (Choremis 1973; Parlama 1972; 1976; Lukermann & Moody 1978: 108–9; Coulson 1983; McDonald & Wilkie 1992; Boyd 2014a). The site is located on the western arc of the Gulf of Messenia, about 2 km inland and on a ridge at the edge of the upland plateau. The area is liminal: to the east and south the land drops away steeply toward

the coast in a broken landscape of steep ravines, while to the west and north lies the relatively flat central Messenian plateau, as well as the most direct route to Pylos. Both habitation site and cemetery are situated on small plateaux amid ravines and bedrock outcrops.Thirteen tombs form a cemetery to the northwest of the settlement site with four distinct but proximal foci **[Fig. 2]**. The most prominent focal point is the Tourkokivouro ridge, where six tombs cluster toward the highest, southeastern end. Other tombs lie to the west, east and south. The excavators suggested significant east-west and north-south routes between the tombs: the four cemetery foci surround, emphasise and to some extent define a crossroads, as well as the postulated main route into the settlement.

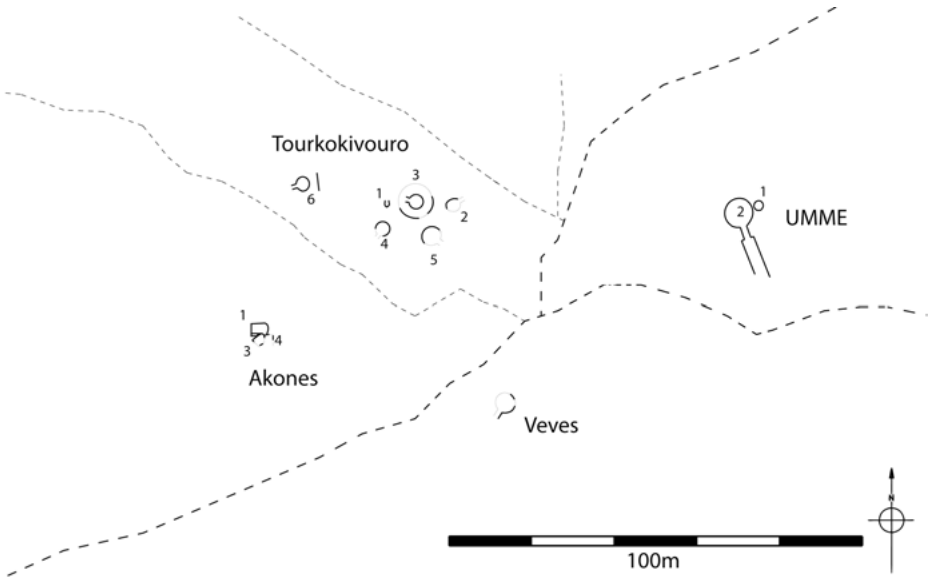


**Fig. 2:** Plan of cemetery at Nichoria (after Boyd 2014a: fig. 1).

A funerary procession early in Late Helladic III had to negotiate its way through this richly meaningful Nichoria landscape. It may have begun to the east, within the settlement, or have approached from elsewhere, utilising the established paths to approach the cemetery area and its elevated tomb groups. On reaching the crossroads they could easily have incorporated the tomb groups and individual tombs within their route in a great circuit round the cemetery before finally reaching their intended destination.

But what makes this likely? The repeated disposition of Mycenaean tombs in cemeteries and groups can at least in part be explained by the needs of procession. Consider the group of five small tholos tombs built into a prominent mound at Kaminia in Messenia (Korres 1975a; 1975b; 1980; Boyd 2002: 116–9). The mound forms

the northern end of a wider cemetery landscape stretching some 3 km to the southwest (Boyd 2002: fig. A4.6). After perhaps having gone past some of the other tombs in the vicinity, the procession would approach the mound itself as the principal focal point. The secondary focal points offered by the entrances to the tombs would become apparent only as the group closed in on the mound, and only from certain directions. The mound itself emphasised the relationships between the tombs, all of which were enclosed within it and raised off ground level. Individual tombs could only be approached by means of the mound, which structured the relationships between them. This type of arrangement was Middle Helladic in origin: in the Late Helladic period, such arrangements became less usual, as more often individual tombs were built in their own mounds or underground, and the relationships between them structured by proximity and by the choice of processional route (Boyd 2016a).

The site of Pellana in Lakonia (Karahalios 1926; Spyropoulos 1982; 1983; Boyd 2002: 195–200), for example, shows a simple such arrangement: six tombs are lined up along the ridge into which they were cut. Procession might have approached from different directions: from east or west, they would encounter the tombs as a group, perceiving this small cemetery as a whole before perceiving individual tombs. From north or south, they would have encountered each tomb one by one. Whether passing by the other tombs, or stopping along the way, the route of the procession became itself an engagement with the past acts manifest in the landscape, the different approaches highlighting different emphases in the relationships between the tombs and those using them. Just as when new tombs came to be constructed within a cemetery their location was chosen in relation to the other tombs, so the procession in arriving at the tomb via the others around it reemphasised those relationships, adding to their history through the process of the funeral.

The great chamber tomb cemeteries of Late Helladic II-III, such as that at Mycenae itself, are the result of the incorporation of wide areas into funerary landscapes. At Mycenae there are some 27 cemeteries of more than 250 tombs collectively (Shelton 2003). The Kalkani area excavated by Wace (1932; **[Fig. 3]**) formed one such cemetery area, set into the side of one of the many eminences radiating around Mycenae. The tombs form an approximately linear arrangement, and so are comparable with Pellana on a basic level; however, their differing elevations and orientations make for a more complex arrangement. As with the other examples, procession may have approached from different directions with the result that the order in which the tombs were encountered would be different. The procession could also have been seen from near and far: some of those observing or passed by could have been located at tombs or other buildings with which they claimed association; others would have seen the gradual progress of the procession from a greater distance. Each group of tombs in the wider cemetery forms a focal area, and the ties that were emphasised in placing the tombs together were reaffirmed and tested through the route of each funerary procession. Processions may have wound their way between groups en route to their final destination, the procession binding groups of tombs together. Those arranging for

processions at Mycenae would have chosen their route through a landscape brimming with memories and associations.

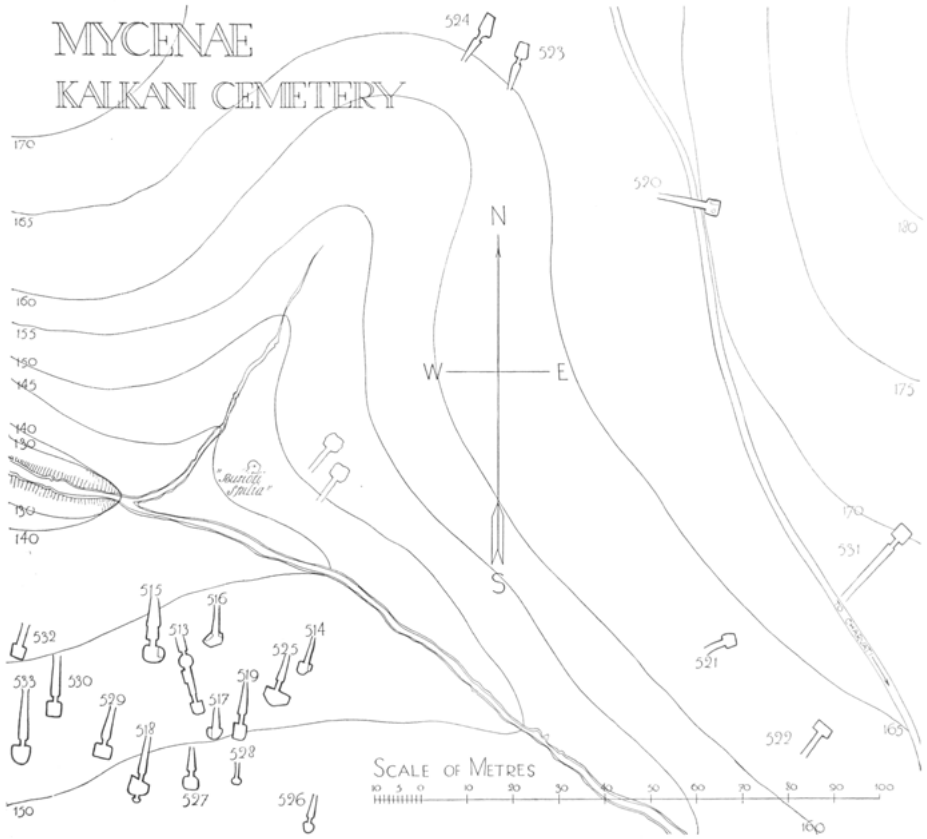


**Fig. 3:** Sketch plan of the Kalkani cemetery at Mycenae (after Wace 1932: fig. 9).

This brings us back to Nichoria **[Fig. 2]**. Here we see four small groups of tombs, each located at a prominent spot around the hypothesised crossroads. The Tourkokívouro group in some ways resembles the Kamínia mound: small tombs radiating out from a central point. To the west, at the Akónes group, the entrances also point outward from a shared central point. Their orientation would facilitate processional groups gathering to the south and west looking north and east, that is focused not only on the Akónes group but also facing the rest of the cemetery. The Véves and UMME tombs also have their entrances facing away from the cemetery. So while the crossroads may indeed have been located between the tomb groups, it would seem from the orientation of many of the entrances that the focal points were usually from the outside of the cemetery, facing inward. This tendency in orientation may have promoted a route around the circumference rather than from the centre outward, with stopping points

that promoted the reorientation of the processants. This circuit recognises the four separate tomb groups and also allows for the expression of relationships between them.

To summarise: in Mycenaean cemetery landscapes, the procession has to pass tombs in its progress, and the presence of proximal tombs was no doubt an influence on the participants. The procession became the active means by which to rediscover and renegotiate the relationships inferred from the network of tombs in the cemetery. One purpose of the cemetery was to shape processions, and one purpose of the procession was to inhabit and understand the cemetery.

### 2.3.3 Procession resources and transformations

In processing, the participants brought with them multiple cultural resources whose meanings were rediscovered or transformed in the act. Foremost among these was the corpse, prepared for presentation during the preceding phase. One purpose of the procession was the transportation of the corpse, and this would have involved some of the participants directly. The modality may have differed: transport in a container, on a bier, on a vehicle, on the back of an animal, or carried by one or more of the participants directly. Depending on the amount of effort on the presentation of the corpse before the procession and its arrangement during it, the corpse may have formed a spectacular centre point during this phase. One important aspect of the procession is display: the use of certain resources by different actors in the procession for display in their attempt to convey certain meanings or messages. One need not only conceive of this in relation to the grandest processions involving greatest effort or number of people, such as might be expected at a late shaft grave funeral, for example. For this aspect of display worked at different scales: less ostentatious funerals involving less conspicuous elements of display nonetheless used the spectacle of the funeral for similar ends (Boyd 2014b).

The corpse need not have been the only focal point of the procession. Those arranging for the funeral, those related to the dead, or ritual specialists, among others, may have taken leading roles in the procession, and may have worn unusual clothing or adornments, or carried particular items, with the intention both of making manifest their claimed position, and perhaps also of contributing to the creation of the funerary context (Dakouri-Hild in press). Others not directly involved in organising the funeral may nonetheless also have dressed differently or brought material to use in the funeral. These aspects of the procession all contributed to its spectacle, which made it interesting to observers and may sometimes have invited them also to take part.

Harrell has recently (2014) examined how the life-histories of swords may have contributed to their being gathered together for use in funerary events, highlighting that mechanisms more complex than simple inheritance may have been at play in

determining which items came to be deposited in tombs. In different ways this may have applied to much of the material used in funerary rites (Boyd 2014b). Processions would have been a moment for the display both of material likely to be deposited with the dead and material that was not intended for deposition in the tomb. If it was sometimes the case that participants were drawn into funerary events by the material objects they held (swords, in the hypothesis presented by Harrell 2014), it may be that the life histories of other objects influenced participation in processions and funerary rites, even where those items were not finally interred with the dead. The procession would have been the most important moment for the display of those items and the apprehension of their individual and sometimes collective significance by other participants and those observing.

Besides the jewellery or other adornments of the corpse, and the 'martial culture' (Harrell 2010) and other items eventually deposited with the corpse, the pottery recovered from many tomb contexts indicates drinking or pouring rituals, and other funerary consumption. All of this gear was transported to the tomb, either as part of the main procession or perhaps in a separate event (which would have been a procession of a different kind). These items, observed by all, may have indicated generosity by specific groups in initiating widespread consumption, or quite differently have signified a much more restricted consumption, confined to a select group at the graveside (Boyd 2015b). The scale of participation in the funeral does not necessarily correlate with the numbers able to participate in these rituals of consumption, but whether the subject of wide participation or not, their place in the procession ensured awareness of the acts among all participants.

## 2.4 *Taphos* and *taphe*

### 2.4.1 Procession, tomb and cemetery

At each waypoint on the route of a procession, the possibility exists for the group to stop and for activities to occur which involve the reordering of the group. These activities might have involved stopping, turning, or a word from one or more participants. But can we suggest more than that?

Burials involve the creation of a burial context within a tomb (Boyd 2016a). This involves reordering the material already present in the tomb, if it is not an empty tomb, then depositing the corpse, along with the materials worn by the corpse, and with other items brought into the tomb, used and deposited during the funeral. Later rituals, often referred to as 'second burial' (Cavanagh 1978; Wells 1990: 135–6; Voutsaki 1993: 151–3; Cavanagh & Mee 1998: 76; Boyd 2002: 84–7; 2016a: 207–8; Gallou 2005: 113–4; Jones 2014; Moutafi 2015; Lagia et al., this volume; Smith et al. in press; Cavanagh et al., this volume, review the evidence for developments in the Middle Helladic period), involve a new reordering of the material in the tomb, often

disarticulating the latest burial and dispersing materials associated with it. Some material may be removed to the dromos or removed from the tomb altogether (Moutafi 2015). The cumulative effect within the tomb is often to de-emphasise separate burial contexts and to place emphasis on the material as an evolving resource manipulated in action each time the tomb is used. When further burials come to be made, this cycle was repeated, the latest rearrangement being itself rearranged once more.

This ongoing mixing and reorganisation emphasises the recovery and articulation of relationships *between* the dead rather than the dead as individuals as action proceeds within the tomb. The placement of many Mycenaean tombs within cemeteries further emphasises the networks of relationships within which the dead are placed, both within the tomb and within the wider cemetery. These wider relationships are rediscovered and redefined with each act of inhabiting the cemetery, and especially during funerary and other processions. Here we may introduce some speculation. As the procession went its way to the tomb, passing and perhaps stopping at other tombs along the way, part of the performance may sometimes have involved entry into those tombs in order to rearrange material therein and particularly to remove one or two items for use in creating the new burial context of the present funeral. This activity would reaffirm the relationships already to be found in the topography of the cemetery, and allow one group to presence itself in a funeral largely conducted by another group by acting through material culture more strongly associated with the former group and resonant of past events. That this is at least a possibility is shown by recent analysis of a substantial bioarchaeological dataset from Voudeni in Achaia (Moutafi 2015), where bone removal from the tomb is demonstrated as common practice. This potential insight allows us further to understand the large range of activities that come under the 'second burial ritual' heading, and moves us further away from the notion of the tomb as a closed receptacle opened on rare occasions whose contents are perhaps barely remembered, but toward the idea of the tomb as regularly inhabited and known resource-set, and the cemetery as a topography maintained in action.

The greatest moment of reorganisation in the funeral party came on reaching its final destination, the tomb. Mycenaean funerary architecture is singularly designed both to accommodate the needs of procession and exert an influence over the nature of that procession (cf. Papadimitriou, this volume). For the individual, the experience of approaching and entering a tripartite Mycenaean tomb is unlike most other contemporary architectural engagements (though in some ways replicated in Late Helladic III at the Lion Gate: Wright 1987; 2006). The tomb, carved or built underground, or built into a mound, is a subterranean construction whose architectural features are often barely visible from a distance, and even at close quarters only the dromos and façade may be discerned. Unlike most architectural constructions, the tomb does not impinge on the horizon, skyline, or line of vision (and where an artificial mound is used, as with most tholos tombs, this appears as part of the landscape, even if obviously modified: its constructed core is well hidden). Instead the tomb invites those entering to traverse a passage underground, taking them out of the landscape

and into a radically different space (discussed in detail by Papadimitriou 2015; this volume; see also Chountasi, this volume; Van de Moortel, this volume). During the act of walking the dromos, the individual's sense of surrounding is completely altered: at the outer end, the dromos and façade are seen cut into the landscape context, but as one approaches, the sides of the dromos rise until they restrict all peripheral vision and focus the senses entirely on the façade. In many tombs the dromos is narrower at the top, so as even to reduce the available aperture for viewing the sky. In the few steps from one end of the dromos to the other, a complete environmental and sensory transformation is effected. Sounds from outside may now appear muffled, the ambient light and field of vision are dramatically reduced, and smells, of the cut earth or those emanating from the tomb, would also have been sharply detectible. The stomion, often narrow and low, restricts further the line of sight into the chamber; the eyes (during the day) take time to adjust, so little can be seen of the interior approaching. At night the chamber would seem completely black unless torches or lamps had already been set within. Entry often involves bending down, and given widespread evidence for incomplete opening of blocking walls for many instances of reuse, perhaps sometimes crawling.

Once inside, living bodies are once more constrained: by the scale of the architecture, the presence of others, and restrictions on movement created by material on the floor and the presence of benches or other architectural features. The temperature would be noticeably cooler, and sound would create unusual effects, especially in tholos tombs. During the day, the entrance would be a source of blinding light, perhaps somewhat offset by the use of artificial lighting. On leaving the tomb, the individual experiences the opposite of entry: walking along the dromos, the walls slowly lower; the horizon becomes progressively wider, until once more in the open landscape, the body and its senses are freed of the constraints and affordances of the tomb.

Significant factors affecting the experience of entering the tomb would be scale, whether entering during the day or night, and the presence and numbers of others. Most tombs are scaled to the living occupant (Boyd 2002: 83–4): the dromos, stomion and chamber are large enough to permit movement, sometimes quite constrained, sometimes freer, but not so large as to overwhelm the individual. Of course some tombs are much larger, and this difference in scale is discussed further below. Scale is an important limiting factor on how many can be present in the chamber at any given moment; scale therefore enables the gathering and copresence of a limited group, a subset of participants, whose actions within the chamber will be obscured from the view of most of those remaining outside. Scale affects those participating in conjunction with the numbers of people involved: smaller tombs and larger groups lead to a very small proportion of the total being inside at once; larger tombs permit greater numbers to enter, perhaps in some cases a larger proportion of those taking part, dependent on the numbers involved.

This analysis so far has focused on the relationship between the architecture of the Mycenaean tripartite tomb and the individual. However, in many instances of

engagement, the individual is operating both in relation to the tomb and to the co-presence of others. The most obvious such instance is the arrival of the procession at the tomb and the subsequent conduct of the funerary rites. During the procession there may have been several focal points operating in turn or simultaneously: the corpse and those transporting it; others enacting leadership roles, such as lead mourners, ritual specialists, or community or corporate group representatives; particular places en route; and, at the end of the procession, the tomb itself. The arrival at the tomb signifies a change in the nature of the event: an end point has been reached, and the 'aim' of the procession—transport of the corpse to the graveside—has been achieved. The mourners may have rearranged themselves to allow a small group to carry the corpse inside immediately. However, perhaps it is more likely that on arriving the processants rearranged themselves around a focal point created by the entrance to the dromos and temporarily enhanced by setting down the corpse (and any transport mechanism) at this point **[Fig. 4]**. As the mourners rearranged themselves for the funeral, those carrying materials may at this stage have come forward so that an initial representation of the funerary gear could be seen. Perhaps material could also have been brought out of the tomb and presented to the mourners, perhaps as additional adornment for the corpse (Boyd 2014b).

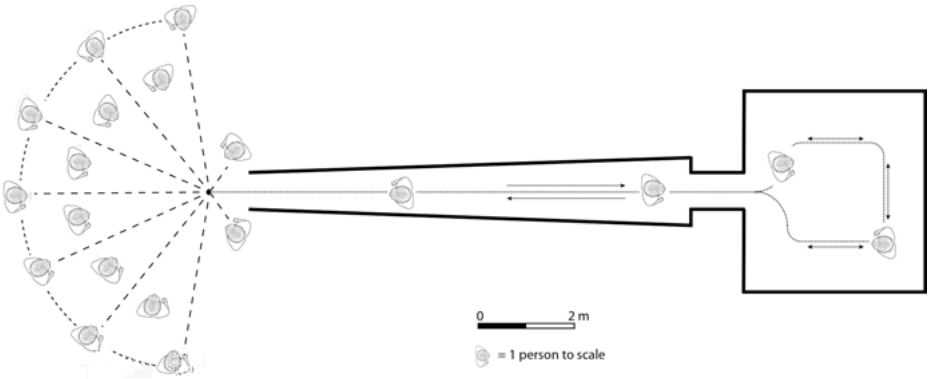


**Fig. 4:** Schematic representation of the possibilities of focus, orientation and flow of movement in a Mycenaean chamber tomb. Note the diagram takes no account of obstacles restricting flow, such as installations or material present on the chamber floor (after author).

The corpse and funerary gear act as attention-focusing devices in the manner described by Renfrew (1986: 18) and the architectural properties of the tomb act as an 'amplifying mechanism' (Barrett 1994: 17), defining the focal point at the entrance to the dromos as a threshold, a transactional area (Dakouri-Hild, this volume). These factors orient the group: most mourners gathering around and facing the dromos entrance and corpse, while those occupying that space received their attention and were able to direct their gaze out to the group [**Fig. 4]**. The interior space of the tomb

is a hidden backdrop to this activity. Any part of the ritual carried out at this point is open to all to view, and participate in, in contrast to actions later in the tomb; such ritual action would emphasise the community of the living and the recently-dead's place in it, while later actions in the tomb would be more oriented to the community of the dead. As members of the company go into the tomb the mourners are effectively broken into transient subgroups: those inside or in the process of entering, and those left outside, with little or no vision of activity inside. The small scale of most tombs restricts the numbers entering and inside, and as noted the presence of installations or material on the floor further restricts circulation within. Thus the actions of inhabiting the tomb architecture facilitates the breaking of the mourners into at least two groups—those inside, taking care of the main funerary acts, and those outside, who may nonetheless gain entrance as part of a controlled flow of participants. The architecture of the tomb allows for this control, and it was open to the participants to exploit this to reassert the hierarchy of the funeral after the relatively open part of the procession. Thus it is important to consider the extent to which the architectural properties of any given tomb may have been used to maintain the interior funerary performance as a hidden and intimate act, or alternatively as a mechanism enabling the controlled flow of participants in and out as part of the ritual.

As noted above, scale is the most important factor in understanding how funerary groups could have inhabited Mycenaean tombs. Scalar differences in tombs introduce different possibilities in how individuals can interact and move as a group, as well as in simply controlling the maximum numbers who can enter the tomb. I have elsewhere discussed the sizes of tomb chambers (Boyd 2015b; 2002: table 24; **[Fig. 5]**) and their relationship to group size: each metre added to the diameter produces approximately 10 $m^2$ extra floor space in the smaller tombs, and considerably more in the larger tombs. Hence numbers inside could be imagined to be considerable as tomb size increases, assuming the available floor space was used to its maximum capacity. However, material on the floor and installations such as benches, the need for space to act on the corpse and place material to go with it, and other (elected) restrictions on numbers would mean in most cases that participants would have been considerably fewer than the maximum possible number. For a chamber of about 4 m in diameter this might mean three to six participants **[Fig. 4]**, whereas for an 8 m diameter it might vary from 12–25 participants, and a 12 m diameter may accommodate as many as 55–110 persons **[Fig. 6]**[1].

**1** Based on giving each participant 2 $m^2$ for the lower figure and 1 $m^2$ for the higher figure, and assuming that only half the tomb floor was available for use. Other permutations are clearly possible: see Boyd 2015b: table 2.

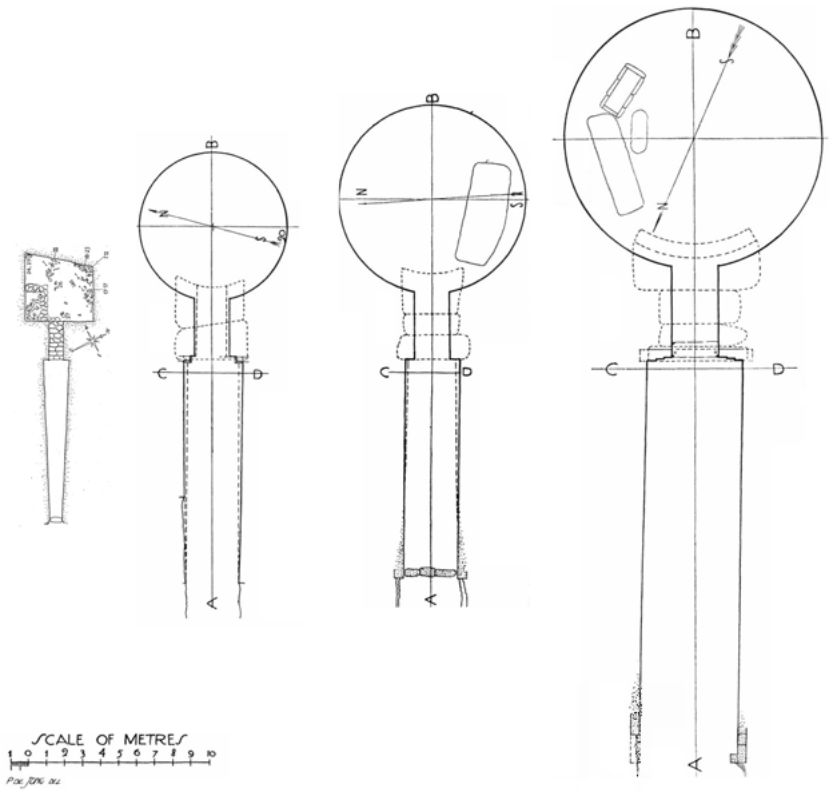


**Fig. 5:** Scale in Mycenaean tombs. Mycenae: chamber tomb 502 with the Panayia, Kato Phournos and Lion tholoi, shown to scale (after Wace 1932: fig. 2, and Wace 1923: figs. 59, 61, pl. 53, respectively).

Chamber capacities introduce important considerations in the types of action available to the participants and the nature of performers and audiences. In larger chamber tombs and mid-sized tholoi, not only might larger numbers be present in the chamber during the final stages of burial, but the material and historical resources of a well-used tomb would be significant. The potential is there for the expression of different roles in action before a larger group. The wider dromoi of larger tombs, the more impressive facades, and larger stomia, allow for enhanced modes of circulation. Circulation in the smaller tombs probably operated as a basic 'in-out' system, as described above **[Fig. 4]**. In the larger tombs, and especially in the large tholoi, while the dromos entrance continues to act as a focal point, the dromos is itself massive and capable of accommodating large numbers of people (Papadimitriou 2015), and the stomion façade becomes a second focal point, with the dromos offering the potential for its own self-contained circulation system between its outer end and the stomion. As well as gathering at the end of the dromos, hundreds of spectators could have occupied standing positions within the dromos, been lined up along the edges of the

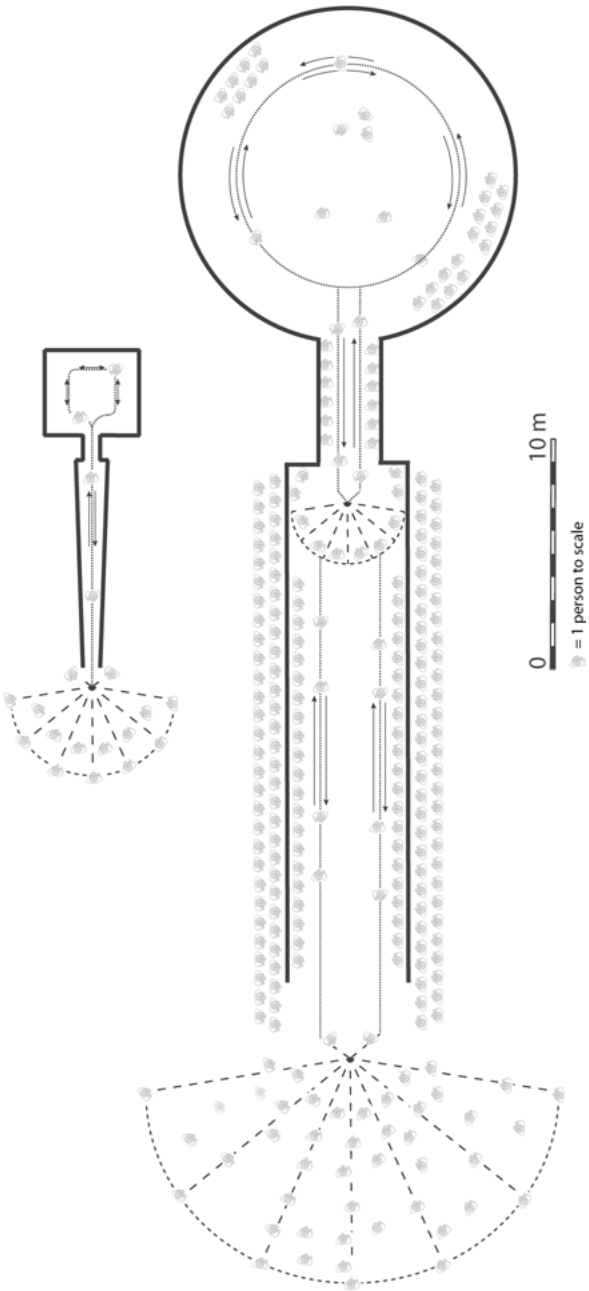


**Fig. 6:** Schematic representation of the possibilities of focus, orientation and flow of movement in a large tholos tomb. Note the diagram takes no account of obstacles restricting flow, such as installations or material present on the chamber floor. Dimensions approximately based on the Lion Tomb at Mycenae **[Fig. 5]** (after author).

dromos, and even looking down from the top of the mound. The procession, its arrival at the tomb, and its progress along the dromos would have been very public events, with potentially huge numbers participating as observers. Once at the second focal point of the stomion, the procession would split once again: perhaps here another pause in proceedings would allow the façade to act as an amplifying mechanism for those acting on the corpse in the open for the last time. Then a select group would bear the corpse into the chamber, along with the accoutrements of the funeral. In the largest tholoi, there is a clear potential for a sizeable subgroup of mourners to gather within the chamber. At this point a secondary system of circulation would be in operation **[Fig. 6]**, with a good number of those gathered at the stomion able to enter the chamber at certain points while others would leave and join the group outside. Movement within might be structured around a central focus, but existing material and installations might be used to create multiple secondary focal points. Hence the large tholos tombs embodied the potential both to enforce and display a strict and relatively deep hierarchy, but also for individuals—very visibly—to transcend and remake those hierarchies in action. A final embellishment, the side chamber, present in two of the largest tholos tombs (as well as in some much smaller tombs) would allow large numbers to observe most of the ceremony within the chamber but retain the restricted participation in final interment rites which was a feature of non-monumental ceremonies.

Mycenaean funerary architecture and Mycenaean cemeteries show us how important coordinated movement was to the entire procedure of carrying out a funeral. Mycenaean cemeteries and tombs were *for procession*: procession, as a negotiated composite act, was *the way* in which to inhabit, understand and utilise Mycenaean cemeteries and tombs. The procession describes the interaction of participants in this mass action, through which the practical aims of transporting corpse and mourners to and into the tomb were achieved, and in which individuals could exercise their agency as part of a collective act, utilising the numerous potentials for action which the procession provided. Procession provided the means through which to occupy different spaces both predictably and creatively, and afforded all participants the potential to perform the roles they wished to enact, or which might be expected of or imposed upon them.

### 2.4.2 Performing burial

If we consider the latter stages of the funeral, conducted within the chamber, as a field of action, we can again consider in turn the analytical components of the field. The chamber defines the spatial extent, with the constraints of scale and availability of floor space as just described. This also contains the resources available, in particular the material near to hand on the floor, available in niches, or even to be disinterred from pits, as well as that brought into the tomb by the mourners, including the corpse.

The tempo is dictated by the actions to be performed, and the impetus (or reluctance) for different participants to enter and leave the scene. I have recently considered the deposition phase in these terms in detail for the final burial in Routsi Tholos 2 (Boyd 2014b). One might easily consider the burial in the cist at Vapheio in similar terms. However, at this point it is worth considering some less exceptional (though not necessarily 'ordinary') examples. It is important to note that in examining burials not subsequently disturbed in order to understand the practices of deposition, one is selecting an unusual subset of all burials: most burial contexts were disarticulated as part of later interventions, and it may often be that unusual circumstances explain those left untouched (later intervention is discussed further in the following section). As will be evident, even where burials are partly or largely intact, it is difficult to be certain with many objects—especially pottery—whether they are untouched remnants of the original burial context, or later additions. Although this is problematic in defining the sequence of action, it further highlights the nature of funerary material as a resource open to manipulation in a chain of ongoing interventions in tomb interiors.

At tomb XXVI at Prosymna (Blegen 1937: 93–8) the side chamber contained the remains of three individuals: one on the floor and two on a bench against the northeast wall. Unusually, this chamber contained neither areas of concentrated bone, nor areas of bone scatter. None of the three burials was intact, thus problematising the number and sequence of interventions. The pottery in the tomb is dated in three groups by Shelton (1996: 68–73, 212–4): in Late Helladic I, IIB and IIIB1, with a single example of a palatial jar of Late Helladic IIA date. The pottery distributions are regionalised by chronology: all the pottery on the floor, and the two pots with the lower burial on the bench, date to in Late Helladic I; the remaining pottery comes from the upper level of the bench. The two pottery items with the lower bench burial are a cup and a jug; no other items were directly associated with this burial, but as it had been disturbed before or during the later deposition of a second body here, it is possible that some of its material was removed from context. The other early burial, that on the floor, had two small jars at its feet, and a jug some 0.20 m west, with a group of items, some 0.15 m west again, consisting of a large and a small jar, a pot base reused as a stopper for the larger jar, and a terracotta button. Two bronze 'scale pans' were found under the larger jar. Elsewhere on the floor of the chamber was another large jar with stopper in the southwest corner, and another small jug with bronze dagger (dated Late Helladic I-II by Dickinson 1977: 118, n. 16) about 0.60 m east of the skeleton. The upper body on the bench was associated with an array of bronze (and a little gold) material, as well as some pottery. Five of the pots, four alabastra and a cup, date to Late Helladic IIB (Shelton 1996: 69–70) and were found in fragments. The Late Helladic IIA palatial jar fragments are a special case discussed further below. The remaining pots date to Late Helladic IIIB1 (Shelton 1996: 70–1) and Blegen seems to imply (1937: 97) that these postdate both burials, as he describes their position as 'above' the bench. Where opinions have been offered about the dating of the non-ceramic material, these

suggest contemporaneity with the Late Helladic IIB pots[2]. Shelton suggested the later pots were 'dumped' on the earlier burial contexts; however so placed, it seems they did not reach their final location as part of a burial context.

The upper burial on the bench is therefore likely to be the latest in the tomb; there is no way to suggest which of the earlier two was first. However, we can now consider the actions of the mourners in the chamber as they might have found it. There is approximately 4.70 $m^2$ floorspace in the chamber (excluding the space taken up by the bench). In the earlier burials the mourners brought the body into the chamber and placed it in its final position—on the bench to the right of the entrance, or on the floor opposite the entrance. In the former case, if the whole floor (except the bench) were available (i.e. if this were the first burial), then perhaps five persons might have occupied the chamber—and more if people were prepared to crowd in (conceivably up to 18 participants, at 0.50 $m^2$ per person, though this degree of crowding seems very unlikely). If the whole floor were not available (i.e. if this were the second burial) even less space would be available-perhaps about 3 $m^2$, realistically enough space for just three people (though again, reducing the area per person to 0.50 $m^2$ would give a theoretical maximum of 12 persons, perhaps very unlikely). The same numbers would apply for the floor burial, whether conducted before or after the bench burial. We can assume, therefore, that few persons were copresent in the chamber during the interment; perhaps we should think of a core group of three to four people in each of the cases outlined, with the possibility of one or two persons entering and leaving periodically, if it were possible for mourners in the main chamber to seek to gain temporary entry to the side chamber.

For each of the two earlier burials, the mourners brought some pottery with them, perhaps also reusing what they found in the chamber for the second burial. The non-ceramic items—the dagger on the floor, the two bronze discs, and the terracotta button—were not directly associated with either burial on excavation: the bronze items had probably been placed with one or other burial during the interment, and been moved at a later point. The pots associated with the lower bench burial were a cup and a jug; the pots closest to the burial on the floor were small jars and jugs. The two larger vessels were set in the corners of the chamber and as such seem to have acted as available resources for the chamber rather than accoutrements of a specific burial. The functions of storage (larger vessels), distribution (smaller jars and jugs, perhaps also the larger vessels) and consumption, either through drinking or pouring (cup, perhaps

**2** Fortenberry dates as Late Helladic IIB-IIIA1 the arrowheads (Fortenberry 1990: 509), a gold cross-staff (1990: 321), and boars tusk items (1990: 347–8). She dates the spearhead Late Helladic IIB-IIIB1 (1990: 440): Blegen himself suggested Late Helladic II (1937: 338), and Harrell gives Late Helladic IIB-IIIA1 (2010: 116, table 10). Dickinson suggests the dagger dates to Late Helladic I-II (1977: 118, n. 16); Blegen implies (but does not state) that the knife fragments should be Late Helladic II in date (1937: 343). If the longer date range for the spearhead is correct, it could therefore be seen as an addition at the time of the late pottery, but all the other items seem to date from the original burial, as might the spearhead.

also the smaller jars and jugs) suggest the actions of the mourners over the corpse. Liquid was passed from one container to another, and containers were passed from person to person; only after a series of demonstrative actions was the liquid consumed through drinking or pouring. The passing of containers from hand to hand might have included movement out of the chamber to the main chamber, dromos and beyond. I have suggested elsewhere (in relation to shaft grave funerals) that the different categories of vessel used to consume wine (or other liquid) allowed for a division in the mourners: between those using smaller cups used personally or shared within a small group, and those using larger drinking vessels which were intended to be shared among a wider group (Boyd 2015b). The pottery associated with the earlier burials in this tomb suggests something similar: a movement of liquids from larger to smaller vessels; consumption in the chamber from the cup (and perhaps from the smaller jars); and perhaps the passing round in the slightly larger containers to those not at the front.

The later burial on the bench presents some different possibilities. In this case, the mourners would enter the chamber—with the same restrictions of space—to be confronted with material from practices of the already quite distant past. Their work in the chamber included some remodelling of the lower burial context, whether deliberate or incidental, during the positioning of the corpse on the bench. On or beside the body were placed items of 'martial culture' (Harrell 2010): bronze arrowheads, a dagger, knives and a spearhead. Small gold and boars' tusk items also served to enhance the final image of the corpse as deposited. These items, if not fixed to the clothing of the corpse, would have been brought into the tomb and placed on the bench, perhaps by different persons as they entered. They were placed at different points on the bench, including arrowheads (though their points of discovery might have been the result of later interference) so that the entire length of the bench was afforded bronze items. The pottery related to this burial included a cup, with in this case four further items, all alabastra, whose specific role in the interment is difficult to discern. On top and in the centre were found some sherds of a Late Helladic IIA palatial jar, sherds of which had also been found in the main chamber and in the dromos. One might suspect a long use-life for this item, which was probably used in several funerals and once broken (perhaps in the dromos) its larger sherds were placed with this burial (Boyd 2015a).

## 2.5 Inhabiting the mortuary locale

This discussion of action within the chamber leads us to a consideration of the long-term of the funerary cycle as a field of action: the consideration of its frequency of inhabitation, transformations within it, and the position of the field in the broader nexus of social action.

I mentioned above that at least three distinct modes of inhabitation of funerary spaces can be discerned on the basis of the actions performed. We have already

considered the rearrangement of a funerary space immediately prior to a funeral (or the construction of a new tomb), and the creation of an interment context during interment. It is however apparent that these were not the only moments of activity within Mycenaean tombs. Many tombs in central and southern Greece (though less frequently in Thessaly, Crete and the Dodecanese: Boyd 2016b; Voutsaki 1993: 133) preserve evidence for postfunerary acts, often referred to as 'second funeral' (fully referenced above). The results of such repeated engagements have recently been defined for Ayia Sotira in the Corinthia (Smith et al. in press) and for Voudeni in Achaia (Moutafi 2015). It is clear that there was no one, tightly defined postfunerary rite, but rather a range of actions evident at different times and places. All tended to the deconstruction of the funerary context and the dispersal of its constituent parts. This might be achieved by carefully collecting, sorting and redistributing bones to different parts of the chamber, or to pits or niches, or to destinations outside the chamber. This activity could include mixing of bones and gathering like parts together: caches of skulls or long bones are often reported. Sometimes apparently less careful acts, with less emphasis on sorting or reburial, are reported: bones may simply be piled in one part of the chamber, and breakage is common. The non-bone material may similarly be sorted, gathered, cached, broken or removed. The archaeological result is a crafted palimpsest which often occasions despair or disinterest in the archaeologist hoping for pristine burial contexts (Boyd 2014a)—a tragedy for the recording of past excavations and a crisis for the present and future requiring rethinking of approach, technique, recording and specialists studies (though see the exemplary excavation at Ayia Sotira: Smith et al. in press).

As with the funeral itself, it is worth considering some of the parameters of action in this third mode of inhabitation of Mycenaean tombs and cemeteries. The journey to the tomb for this particular purpose may have shared some of the properties of the funeral procession, depending on the numbers involved. However, one major difference is the absence of the corpse as a focal point. The period of preparation preceding the funerary procession would also have been absent (though other kinds of personal preparation, including wearing specific clothing, or non-material preparation, may have been relevant). It may be that material was brought to the tomb for use there, and perhaps for deposition there: perhaps pottery for use in toasting rites; or containers for unguents or oils, if any ritual 'cleaning' of the bones were envisaged. The evidence for such actions is inconsistent and perhaps in many cases the amounts of material brought to the tomb were minimal: it is one of the difficulties in reconstructing the specifics of secondary rites that objects specific to those practices have not been identified. On entering the tomb, the constraining and enabling properties of scale, as described above, imposed limitations on the numbers of persons involved in these activities. This does present a clear difference between the funeral and the later actions: during the funeral, those left outside have participated in the procession, as well as any graveside rites, and although excluded from any rites conducted within the tomb, there is the possibility, as described above, of a flow of participants in and

out, allowing for the viewing of the corpse in its depositional context in the tomb. In the case of secondary rites, however, most of the action may have occurred in the tomb, with limited opportunity for participation for any persons left outside.

This leads to two possible conclusions: the obvious one is that the secondary rites would more often have been conducted by a smaller group than the funeral, making these events less public and more confined to a specific, select group. The alternative is to imagine the funeral in reverse. For those not involved in the rites in the tomb, their participation and the public aspect of the event may have begun with the emergence of those who had been in the tomb, perhaps displaying relics in the form of bones or material culture. Some of these items may have been removed from the tomb at this point, and the procession in reverse might have made its way back through the cemetery, conceivably even redistributing material into other tombs, and ultimately reaching the inhabitation area. The regular remains of material within dromoi, normally interpreted as a rite of smashing cups after drinking a toast, might be related to this phase, rather than the funeral itself.

I have emphasised elsewhere (Boyd 2014b; cf. Barrett 2001: 160–1 for the importance of transformation in fields of action) the role of transformation throughout the funerary cycle: in preparing the corpse, creating the funerary context, and in reordering the tomb on multiple occasions. The tempo of transformation helps to define the frequency of inhabitation of the field as a whole: the funerary cycle. Seen in this light, the evidence suggests a far greater frequency of involvement in the funerary sphere than has hitherto been imagined; and the position of the cemetery in landscape paths, routine or otherwise, should also be considered. It also suggests how one final aspect of the field might be effective: the transfer and transformation of resources of social capital between fields, in Barrett's terms (2001: 161). Funerals and other rites mediate significant changes in social order occasioned by the deaths of social actors. Those taking care for the funeral invest social capital and material resources at each stage in order to manage the transition to a new social order in the absence of the newly dead. Each stage of the performance allows for material and personal investment in the process, but each stage also allows for the accumulation and transfer of social capital out of this field into the more complex fields of action of everyday life. In some circumstances these transfers would have been symbolised by the movement of material, but such transfers need not always have had material correlates. Nonetheless, through these transfers we dimly perceive some aspects of the integration of the funerary cycle in the larger cycles of routine life.

## 3 Conclusion: inhabiting fields of action

This volume opened with a powerful call for a reimagining of Mycenaean funerary practices in relation to performance and locale: situated human action (Dakouri-Hild, this volume). The specific notion of fields of action, entailing a detailed theory of

agency, performance, and inhabitation, offers a mature theoretical framework within which to structure actions, material resources, places and traditions. The study developed in this chapter offers a series of archaeological implications derived from the reordering of the evidence within such a framework. In so doing, I have consciously addressed the often put complaint against theoretical approaches: "how does this theory work in practice?"

Important implications arise from these results. I have demonstrated that even without a specifically designed new recovery strategy, existing data can be usefully reconsidered in the terms set out by this theoretical approach (the full potential of which has recently been demonstrated by Moutafi 2015). I have demonstrated in other studies that it is possible to reassess the data from existing excavations in a non-superficial manner (e.g. Boyd 2014a; 2014b; 2015b), and that the results can surprise, and occasion a rethink of wider approaches. Similar results are demonstrated by the detailed studies in this volume. A clear implication is that studies foregrounding contextual variation, rather than top-down aggregation, ultimately lead to a more complex, nuanced understanding of past fields of action. This is the challenge articulated by Barrett a quarter of a century ago: "We must confront the full diversity of our data. This is only possible with the aid of a theoretically competent framework designed to expose the nature of specific practices" (Barrett 1988b: 32). The nature of the challenge is that confronting the full diversity of archaeology's vast data is time-consuming, perhaps often beyond the limited time available in academic timeframes. However, the framework outlined here fulfills the requirement of competency, and the intellectual projects highlighted in this book often align with its aims. We may hope that this volume represents a first step in reorienting general and specific interpretations of Mycenaean funerary practice.

The second implication lies in the fact that fields of practice are not limited to the funerary sphere, and the approach may offer something to the wider agenda of Aegean prehistory (Schoep 2012). Practice-centred approaches might usefully be developed for broadly analogous questions such as the ritual aspects of 'palaces' (e.g. Thaler 2015) as well as quite different fields such as the production of ground stone (Tsoraki 2011). As new theoretical approaches emphasise contextualised information this reorientation will become more essential.

The third implication affects how we plan and conduct our work. I have referred elsewhere to a 'methodological emergency' in Greek archaeology (Boyd 2015a: 155). Context-centred approaches are not common, especially in the field of rescue archaeology in which most tomb excavations are conducted. Studies such as Moutafi's (2015) and recent excavation by Smith et al. (in press) demonstrate the potential for reexamination of existing material and for advances in field and laboratory technique respectively. Needless to say, future excavation strategies which foreground the importance of context through methodologies competent for the investigation of past human practice would lead to the remaking of the arguments presented here from a much more detailed data base, revealing the nuances of shifting practice through

time and over space which is currently obscured by an archaeological process lacking in appropriate methodology, recording and interpretation. For practical reasons this may appear a longer-term goal but as the undiscovered and unlooted archaeological resource dwindles the need for properly resourced and strategic fieldwork becomes ever more acute.

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