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# CONSTRUCTING POWER

Architecture, Ideology and Social Practice

# KONSTRUKTION DER MACHT

Architektur, Ideologie und soziales Handeln

# *Architecture, Power and Social Practice – An Introduction*

JOSEPH MARAN

The wish to organize the symposium *Constructing Power*, on which the present volume is based, arose from the insight that not only in the archeological disciplines, but also in the social and cultural sciences in general, there still are noticeable deficits regarding the discussion of the social significance of space and architecture. In 1993, Thomas A. Markus made the following diagnosis: “Despite the evident social role of buildings the boundaries of architectural discourse are drawn so as to exclude it. Buildings are treated as art, technical or in investment. Rarely as social objects”<sup>1</sup>. Around the same time in Germany, the sociologist Dieter Läßle coined the expression of the “space blindness”<sup>2</sup> of the social sciences and criticized that in the sociological mainstream-theories social reality appears to be a space-less construct<sup>3</sup>. The justification for this harsh assessment is fully borne out by the simple fact that, to my knowledge, the first synoptic study in German on the sociology of architecture was published as late as 2003 by Bernhard Schäfers<sup>4</sup>.

Given that social practice<sup>5</sup> is always anchored in space and time, it would seem only logical to expect that the social sciences had paid the same attention to both of these basic categories. But in reality, when dealing with social life, the usual procedure consisted in considering the temporal dimension, while disregarding the spatial setting of action. Läßle and Martina Löw drew the conclusion that the main reason for this neglect of the category ‘space’ should be sought in the widely-held view of space as something existing, a container, in which action takes place<sup>6</sup>. Since space was perceived as a fixed and clear-cut entity, there seemed to be little need to deal with it, and instead research focused on the one element which obviously was subject to constant change, namely action. In the last years, this attitude has begun to change and phenomena of space, place and the built environment are now increasingly regarded as a rewarding research topic of the social and cultural sciences. Instrumental in this process was the critical assessment of the notion of a ‘container space’ and its substitution by relational concepts of space in which the latter is no longer treated as a fixed background and as detached from human agency. On the basis of Läßle’s studies<sup>7</sup>, Löw has set out a dynamic action-theoretical concept, in which she defines space as a relational arrangement of social goods and living beings in particular places<sup>8</sup>. The expression “social goods” is used by Löw as a generic term comprising fixed-, semifixed- and nonfixed-feature elements as defined by Edward T. Hall and Amos Rapoport<sup>9</sup>. According to Löw, space is constituted

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1 Markus 1993, 26.

2 Läßle 1991a, 163 (“Raumblindheit”).

3 Läßle 1991a, 163-7.

4 Schäfers 2003.

5 The term ‘social practice’ is used as defined by Weber 1972, 11-2.

6 Läßle 1991a, 160-7; 1991b, 36-9; Löw 2001, 24-35.

7 Läßle 1991a; 1991b.

8 Löw 2001, 152-72, 224-30.

9 Hall 1966, 95-105; Rapoport 1982, 87-101.

through a practice of ordering people and social goods, which she calls “spacing”, and through a practice of synthesizing in which observers, based on perception and previous experience, integrate the ordered goods and people to spaces<sup>10</sup>. This means that space structures action, but is in itself realized through action and patterns of perception. In analogy to Anthony Giddens’s concept of the “duality of structure”, Löw therefore speaks of a “duality of space”<sup>11</sup>. If we follow this definition, space does not form a fixed entity but is continuously constituted and altered through social practice.

The new interest in the social significance of space and place and especially in the interrelation between architecture and society left its imprint also on archaeology. Regarding the English-speaking research community, I would like to single out as milestones along this way only three publications of the 1990s, firstly *Social Space: Human Spatial Behaviour in Dwellings and Settlements* edited by Ole Grøn, Ericka Engelstad and Inge Lindblom<sup>12</sup>, secondly *Domestic Architecture and the Use of Space* edited by Susan Kent<sup>13</sup> and thirdly *Architecture and Order: Approaches to Social Space* edited by Michael Parker Pearson and Colin Richards<sup>14</sup>. In German archaeology the colloquium with the title *Architektur der Macht – Macht der Architektur*, that is *Power of Architecture – Architecture of Power*, which was organized in 2002 in Berlin by the architecture department of the German Archaeological Institute, gave a stimulating impetus to the discussion of the social role of architecture<sup>15</sup>. In light of the fact that the title of the Berlin colloquium resembles so closely the one of the symposium from which this volume took its start, at first sight one would perhaps assume a significant overlap, if not near-identity, in the questions and objectives, since both gatherings revolved around buildings and power. However, the perspective on architecture which guided the Berlin colloquium and in my opinion also its particular outlook on power, differed in several regards from the one of this symposium. I will use these differences as a starting point to focus on some of the aspects which are discussed in the contributions of this volume.

In the Berlin colloquium an impressive spectrum of case-studies of temples, palaces, theatres and towns mostly belonging to Greek and Roman antiquity were presented in order to demonstrate how power, which was equated by the participants with political authority, manifested itself in architecture and town planning. The observation that the built environment expresses political and religious world-views and is used to symbolize social hierarchies is undoubtedly of great importance and naturally also plays a major role in this publication. On the other hand, if one stops at that point, the impression of architecture serving as some sort of ‘petrified ideology’ may arise, an essentialist position which insinuates that architecture has an inherent and immutable meaning speaking for itself. But such a notion would neither explain how a particular worldview was communicated to society by architectural means, nor account for the evident change in the connotations of architectural space over the years. In different periods and cultural contexts, a space circumscribed by the same architectural forms can have a markedly different meaning, and that is why, as Henri Lefebvre underlined, we cannot read space like a text<sup>16</sup>. The decisive question is how space is produced<sup>17</sup>, that is how under specific historical and political circumstances the meaning originally written into architectural settings is evoked and mobilized to reaffirm or renegotiate an existing order and to create new syntheses of how the built environment should be read, interpreted and used. I am convinced that we can only get closer to answering this question if we treat architecture and social practice as mutually related factors, because the built environment is just as much a product of certain social constellations and specific forms of interaction, as in turn society and its practices are formed through architecture.

The dynamic interrelation of architecture and social practice already starts with the process of building. The actions involved in the different steps of construction provide an opportunity for the person or the group responsible for the project to convey to an audience their claims to social positions, and for society to make a judgment on such claims. After building is completed, architecture and social practice

10 Löw 2001, 158-61.

11 Löw 2001, 166-72; Giddens 1984, 24; Parker Pearson and Richards 1994b, 3.

12 Grøn, Engelstad and Lindblom 1991.

13 Kent 1990.

14 Parker Pearson and Richards 1994a.

15 Schwandner and Rheidt 2004.

16 Lefebvre 1991, 142-3, 160; see also Rapoport 1982, 91, 117; Wright (forthcoming); in this volume.

17 Lefebvre 1991, 80-5.

remain closely interrelated. On the one hand, the layout of architectural settings and furnishings guides the movement and arrangement of people, and thus imposes certain patterns of meaning on the structure of interaction<sup>18</sup>. On the other hand, due to the ‘duality of space’, the meaning of the built environment forms not only the background, but also the product of social practice, in the course of which it is negotiated and reaffirmed or newly defined. In this way, over time the meaning inscribed in architectural space is subject to change which is normally so subtle that it goes unnoticed and becomes evident only in retrospect. Giving the volume the ambiguous title *Constructing Power* is intended to put an emphasis on the described reflexive relation between architecture and society. Indeed, I would argue that on a very basic level the relation between architecture, agency and power formed the heart of the matters discussed in the symposium.

For this very reason, I regard it as unavoidable to reflect on the term power, which was succinctly described by Max Weber as “sociologically amorphous”<sup>19</sup>. Although I am aware of the fact that I run the risk of opening Pandora’s box, I still see the need to specify what is meant when one speaks of power, and this not only because the term figures so prominently in the title of this publication. More importantly, in my opinion the discussion of the social dimension of architecture necessitates a broader definition of power than the one applied in the Berlin colloquium. In restricting the use of the term to political authority, power is linked to specific social positions, and from this point of view it is only logical to identify and single out monumental public architecture as the ‘architecture of power’ which should form the object of research. But if we follow this line of reasoning we would have to assume that there are social relations and forms of architecture in which power is not involved. In such a definition, power would thus be regarded as a special case of inequality, namely political inequality. This consideration leads to the thesis of class, status and power representing “three dimensions of inequality”, in which class is correlated with economic inequality, status with social inequality and power with political inequality. Although Weber is often cited as the author of this thesis, Reinhard Kreckel has shown that this ascription is based on a misreading and that Weber used power as a generic term and not on the same level as ‘class’ and ‘status’<sup>20</sup>. For Weber, he argues, power relations formed not a manifestation but the very basis of structured social inequality<sup>21</sup>.

Indeed, Weber clearly made a distinction between political authority and power<sup>22</sup>. As is well known, he defined the latter as “the chance of a man or a number of men to realize their own will in a communal action even against the resistance of others who are participating in the action”<sup>23</sup>. By explicitly referring in this definition to the will, he drew a connecting line between power and the individual. Michel Foucault, on the other hand, stressed that power is built into institutions and is inherent in social practices, but that it only exists insofar as it is put into action<sup>24</sup>. Accordingly, he emphasized the kind of power which society exerts over the individual, as well as the close association of power with agency. Anthony Giddens argued that these two definitions, i.e. power as a property of the subject or of society, do not contradict each other but are part of a “duality of structure”. Giddens stated that “the use of power characterizes not specific types of conduct, but all action, and power is not itself a resource. Resources are media through which power is exercised”<sup>25</sup>. The link of power to resources and agency is important insofar as it means that power relations permeate the whole of society and as it helps to understand the connection between power, architecture and social practice. For architecture is a resource in which rules are inscribed, a medium in which social relations not only take place, but through which they are created, reproduced and altered<sup>26</sup>.

Based on these more theoretical considerations, I would like to use a remarkable case study deriving from environmental psychology to add some thoughts on specific aspects in which architecture contri-

18 Rapoport 1982, 55-120, 177-95.

19 Weber 1972, 28.

20 Kreckel 2004, 54-70.

21 Kreckel 2004, 69.

22 Weber 1972, 28-30, 531, 541-5.

23 Weber 1972, 531.

24 Foucault 1983, 216-23.

25 Giddens 1984, 16.

26 Parker Pearson and Richards 1994b, 2-3.

butes to the process of constructing power. In the 1970s, a study group co-directed by David Canter<sup>27</sup>, which investigated the circumstances of life and the behaviour of homeless people sleeping rough on the streets of London, made an astonishing observation. They found that these people separated the areas of the streets which they used for sleeping from those used for eating, and these in turn were separate from the areas where they met<sup>28</sup>. Canter explained this phenomenon convincingly with the need for social rules in all human societies. But clearly, what we are talking about cannot possibly be a general anthropological rule, since there are many societies worldwide in which no separation is made between rooms for eating, sleeping and meeting<sup>29</sup>. It seems to me that the behaviour observed by the study group in London exemplifies in a quite drastic way how architecture works and how it exercises its power over people. As Rapoport has reminded us, the built environment can be looked upon as a teaching medium. "Once learned", he writes, "it becomes a mnemonic device reminding one of appropriate behaviour"<sup>30</sup>. The seemingly enigmatic rules of the use of space which the homeless people followed had been learned during their youth when they lived in the houses or apartments of their parents. This experience had left such a deep imprint on their bodily behaviour that, even when they had long abandoned the habit of living in houses, they carried along these rules and reproduced them on the streets without ever questioning their necessity.

It is this pre-reflexive mode of operation which I regard as one of the striking and most overlooked aspects of the social significance of architecture and its link to power. Therefore, Pierre Bourdieu was right when he criticized historians for focussing too much on the most visible insignia of power, like crown and sceptre, while failing to recognize that architectural space constitutes one of the key elements of the symbolism of power, exactly because it operates invisibly<sup>31</sup>. In the built environment – Bourdieu speaks of "appropriated physical space" –, power relations are constantly played out and negotiated in a very subtle way, since the mute rules of architecture impose themselves on the bodies of the actors without their ever realizing it<sup>32</sup>. Architectural space creates systems of spatial relations, which are internalized and embodied by the social actors, and it shapes, from early childhood onwards, the habitus of a person and the way in which she or he perceives the world. This is accomplished through the spatial visualization of the difference between for instance children and parents, eating and sleeping, outside and inside, clean and unclean, poor and rich or sacred and profane. The place of an individual in appropriated physical space is an indication of her or his position in social space<sup>33</sup>, or, as Bourdieu has put it, it is the habitus which makes the habitat<sup>34</sup>. Because social space is always inscribed in the seeming objectivity of the built environment, the latter contributes to the reification and naturalization of given circumstances, irrespective of whether these concern the social order, religious beliefs or gender and age-group relations<sup>35</sup>. The intentions and interests of specific persons and groups are thus masked behind a façade seemingly expressing the will of the collective<sup>36</sup>. Accordingly, social practice always takes place in an environment mirroring the microcosm of social and cultural norms of a given society at a certain time. Through specific cues encoded in the built environment, it is ensured that these norms are evoked and translated into appropriate behavior, provided that the actors possess the necessary cultural knowledge<sup>37</sup>.

All this helps to understand why there cannot be anything like architecture free of power and why the investigation of the manifestation of power relations finds in monumental architecture a rewarding subject, but should not be restricted to it. Markus has made the point quite succinctly, emphasizing that the very act of building means creating asymmetries of power<sup>38</sup>. The fact that people moving in space do not

27 Canter 1991; Moore et al. 1995, 55-69.

28 Canter 1991, 14.

29 Hall 1966, 123-52.

30 Rapoport 1982, 67.

31 Bourdieu 1991, 27-8.

32 Lefebvre 1991, 143; Parker Pearson and Richards 1994b, 2-3.

33 Bourdieu 1991, 30-3; Rapoport 1982, 183-7.

34 Bourdieu 1991, 32; Löw 2001, 179-83.

35 Bourdieu 1991, 27-31; see Hillier and Hanson 1984, 26-9.

36 Lefebvre 1991, 143.

37 Rapoport 1982, 87-122.

38 Markus 1993, 23; in this volume.

realize these power asymmetries encoded in architectural settings and, on the contrary, directly embody and translate them into action is, in my opinion, one of the great mysteries of the built environment<sup>39</sup>. Architecture is part of what Hall has called the “hidden dimension”, a term with which he referred to the unwritten and mostly unconscious rules guiding the use of space in different cultures<sup>40</sup>. Imperceptibly, architecture has a tremendous effect on the enculturation of human beings, and it contributes in a very direct way to the feeling that the circumstances under which a given society lives are the only desirable ones.

The symposium *Constructing Power* provided the opportunity to discuss the manifold ways in which society interacts with its built environment. On the basis of case studies, it was examined how meaning is inscribed in the spaces created throughout time by different societies, how these spaces in turn give meaning and structure to action, and how, through social practice, spatial structures are realized and how their meaning is newly interpreted. The symposium brought together scholars working on quite different chronological and cultural contexts and approaching the general subject from different theoretical and methodological angles. It was the expectation of the organizers that by transcending the boundaries which usually separate the disciplinary discourses new and unexpected insights into the social role of architecture would be gained.

At first sight, it may seem surprising that a symposium dedicated to the described subject was co-initiated by an archaeologist and was marked by quite a strong participation of archaeologists among the speakers. For if power relations indeed manifest themselves through the movement of the bodies of actors in space, the whole significance of architecture reveals itself only in combination with people and their agency – and in this regard, archaeologists are faced with a dilemma: the nature of their sources precludes the possibility of directly observing social practices. To aggravate the situation, even if written and/or iconographical sources are available, they usually provide only limited information on the use of space at a particular time. Accordingly, in archaeology the temptation is very strong to disregard the dynamic interrelation between architecture and society and to restrict the investigation of the social role of architecture to its character as a document of specific social and cultural circumstances. But in my opinion archaeologists investigating the connection between architecture and society should go further than that and should attempt to infer from the archaeological remains specific forms of social interaction. That this is not a futile endeavour is based on the very fact that space and action are mutually related and elements of former patterns of movement are inscribed in the built environment.

While this assessment of the possibility of linking space with social practice in archaeology may sound quite optimistic, I have to caution that I am not certain yet how far such an approach will take us, since archaeological sources at the most allow inferences about the potential for movement within a particular space and about facets of the meaning designed into architecture. The actual ways of usage and the change in the meaning of architectural space over time, however, are only rarely grasped by archaeology. Yet for me as an archaeologist, to be able to define and discuss such heuristic problems and to fathom the possibilities of interpreting architecture as social space constituted the appeal, but also the challenge of organizing the symposium *Constructing Power*.

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39 Markus 1993, 25.

40 Hall 1966.

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# *Mycenaean Citadels as Performative Space*

JOSEPH MARAN

Every society creates the kind of built environment which it regards as adequate for expressing the particular social relations between individuals. Due to the reflexive relationship between architecture and society, the previous sentence can also be turned around, inasmuch as architectural space contributes to the continuous process of creating society through social practice. This special relation linking society with its built environment derives from the fact that architecture is part of the structure of social systems and thus subject to what Anthony Giddens has called the duality of structure. This means that, to quote Giddens, “the structural properties of social systems are both medium and outcome of the practices they recursively organize”<sup>1</sup>. For this reason, to regard architecture as a mere reflection of specific ideological and political circumstances is insufficient, insofar as it does not consider the dynamic relation between society and architecture. At least in the ‘emic’ perspective, also the expression ‘propaganda’ does not adequately describe the way in which monumental architecture works. Its significance rests on the existence of a common set of shared values and worldviews which pervades a given society<sup>2</sup> and on which its members do not usually reflect, because it is ingrained in their habitus. This set of shared values and worldviews, however, can tear apart and let hidden conflicts come to the surface.

The citadels and palaces of Mycenaean culture belong to the World Cultural Heritage and they impress today’s visitor by their huge Cyclopean walls, the astonishing corbel-vaulted structures and former decoration with beautiful frescoes. But in this context, my emphasis will be on the question of how certain forms of social practice and architectural space may have interacted in these citadels.

In dealing with British late medieval castles, Matthew Johnson has made clear that in order to gain new insights into such structures a change in perspective is necessary. Research had hitherto focused, he argues, on the definition of the manifold military functions of the castles, on the differentiation of typological groups according to the classification of their plans and on the inference of possible influences of other building traditions mirrored in the ground plans<sup>3</sup>. In contrast to this, the social significance of the castles and their integration into the surrounding landscape can only be understood, if their symbolic meaning and the combination with the forms of social interaction taking place in and around them are considered. The prerequisite for grasping aspects of the perception of the built environment will be to switch from the bird’s-eye view on architecture and the associated thinking in ground plans to an approach which takes the perspective of the visitor into account. The analysis of case studies leads Johnson to the conclusion that the way in which different parts of the castles were linked through passageways reflects an architectural staging of the access to the castle, through which the architecture gradually revealed itself to the visitor, while he or she was drawn deeper and deeper into the innermost part of the structure. The spaces of the different buildings and courts the visitor had to pass through, he points out, served as stages for interaction in the social and theatrical sense of that term<sup>4</sup>.

The reason why I cited in detail some of the observations of Matthew Johnson on performative aspects of medieval fortification architecture is that in several respects striking similarities to Mycenaean citadels emerge. On a general level, one of these consists in the aspect that these citadels were mostly examined from the viewpoint of fortification and warfare. Only recently, this has begun to change and attempts have been made to determine symbolic aspects of Mycenaean architecture and to link this architecture with social practices possibly taking place in it. In this regard, I particularly want to mention the contributions of James Wright, which have significantly added to our knowledge of the peculiarities

1 Giddens 1984, 24.

2 For the inappropriateness of the term ‘propaganda’ see already Zanker (1987, 11-4) in the context of the imagery and architecture of early imperial Rome.

3 Johnson 2002, 1-18.

4 Johnson 2002, 51-2.

of the 'staging of power' in Mycenaean Greece<sup>5</sup>. In order to relate architectural space with social practice it is instructive to turn to the concept of 'performative space'. According to Erika Fischer-Lichte, a 'performative space' has the quality of opening up, structuring and organizing possibilities for relations between actors and the audience, for movement and perception<sup>6</sup>. It is important to note, though, that the use of space and the realization of actions are not determined by a 'performative space', and on the contrary, the very meaning of this space is subject to change in the course of the interaction between the actors as well as between them and the audience. In my opinion, a terminology which derives from performance theory and the theatrical connotation of the term "staging" is useful to understand not only medieval castles, but also Mycenaean citadels, whose configuration deserves to be interpreted under the viewpoint of performative esthetics, as described by Fischer-Lichte<sup>7</sup>.

It could be objected that the much-used comparison between theatre and life can be applied to all actions and especially to those taking place in public<sup>8</sup>. This is certainly the case, but nevertheless I will try to show, based on previous studies, like those of Wright, that Mycenaean citadels represent a particularly good example for a concept of architecture which is intimately linked to the performance of social interaction. Before turning to case studies, it is necessary to address the nature of the archaeological sources, because it imposes limitations on an interpretation in the sense of 'performative space'. When we apply the terminology developed by Edward T. Hall and Amos Rapoport<sup>9</sup>, we have in archaeology parts of the fixed-feature elements of the ground floors of buildings like walls, floors, gates, column-bases and hearths at our disposal, and, if carefully excavated and documented, we get a small number of semifixed-feature elements. Most of the latter elements, like furniture and gardens, however, are almost inevitably lost, which is particularly regrettable since the semifixed realm is crucial for understanding the 'fine-tuning' of spatial arrangements<sup>10</sup>. Finally, the people ('nonfixed-feature elements') who originally moved in these spaces usually do not leave any traces. The analysis of the structure of the architectural remains allows hypothesis on what Rapoport<sup>11</sup> has called "the meaning designed into an environment", and by analyzing how architectural space contributed to the control and the pre-configuration of movement, we can make inferences about the potential for specific patterns of action. Moreover, the observation of the arrangement of architecture enables us to grasp facets of its perception and to recognize possible architectural cues which were decoded by people who had the necessary cultural knowledge. As we will see, in the case of the Mycenaean citadels of the 13<sup>th</sup> century BC such an investigation leads to the conclusion that they were planned down to details and designed for certain sequences of action. Whether, however, this built environment was ever used in the way it was planned and which associations the inhabitants and users had when they looked at the architecture and its cues, we cannot determine. Moreover, the dynamics of the continuous shift in the meaning of the built environment becomes noticeable to archaeologists only in retrospect, when changes in the layout of the built environment occur.

Some of the characteristic features of Mycenaean palatial architecture were recognized quite early in the history of research. When Heinrich Schliemann and Wilhelm Dörpfeld uncovered the first such palace in Tiryns in 1884 and 1885, they found that at its centre stood an imposing building with its front opening onto a court. The building had a plaster floor with painted decoration and it was structured into three parts, a porch, a vestibule and a main room furnished with a huge round hearth and next to it, at the right-hand wall of the room, a narrow rectangular field lined with small stone blocks. What he found in Tiryns reminded Dörpfeld of the description of the Homeric 'megaron' and accordingly he transferred this designation to the central building of a Mycenaean palace which he also called "Männerwohnung", that is the place where the noble men resided<sup>12</sup>. Dörpfeld's assumption that the megaron represents a

5 Wright 1987; 1994; (forthcoming).

6 Fischer-Lichte 2004, 187.

7 Fischer-Lichte 2004. On specific performative aspects of Mycenaean palatial centres see already Frizell 1997-98; for Minoan palatial architecture Marinatos 1987, 129-42; 1995, 45-7; Goodison 2001, 81-7.

8 Goffman 1959, 71-4; Turner 1982, 102-22; Schechner 2003, 174-7.

9 Hall 1966, 95-105; Rapoport 1982, 87-101.

10 Rapoport 1982, 101.

11 Rapoport 1982, 21.

12 W. Dörpfeld in Schliemann 1886, 215, 253. For a critical assessment of Dörpfeld's use of the term 'megaron' see Jung 2000.

specific feature of Mycenaean imposing architecture was vindicated when only a few years later remains of an almost identical building came to light in the palace of Mycenae<sup>13</sup>. Almost 60 years had to pass, until in the early 1950s the excavation in Pylos in Messenia provided the final evidence that such tripartite central buildings with a round hearth, which we still call ‘megaron’<sup>14</sup>, were not restricted to the Argolid but rather a general element of Mycenaean palatial architecture.

Not only distinctive features of Mycenaean palaces but also the differences between the latter and Minoan palatial architecture began to emerge already in an early stage of research. The excavations of Sir Arthur Evans in Knossos gave evidence for a palace which did not have a specific building, but a great rectangular court at its centre, an architectural configuration which later proved to be attested in other Cretan sites. In Knossos, bordering on the Central Court a sequence of rooms was found which yielded an elaborate seat with plaster decoration placed against the right-hand wall<sup>15</sup>. This find had a repercussion on the interpretation of the Mycenaean palaces, inasmuch as it suggested that the rectangular stone-lined field on the right-hand wall of the main room of the megaron of Tiryns might have been used as a foundation for a place of a throne<sup>16</sup>. The latter view gained general acceptance when it became evident that the main room of the megaron of Pylos was furnished with a shallow rectangular installation situated exactly at the same spot as in Tiryns<sup>17</sup>.

Dörpfeld’s approach to use the Homeric poems to interpret Mycenaean imposing architecture had a long-lasting impact on the course of research. But his views were also important, insofar as he introduced the notion of using specific architectural features to identify the whole. When we use the expression ‘megaron palaces’ today, we follow this line of reasoning. The tendency of segmenting Mycenaean architecture has been intensified due to the fact that research founded its judgments on the analysis of ground plans while the visitor’s perspective was rarely taken into consideration. Such a typological approach runs the risk of conceiving an architectural ensemble, like a Mycenaean citadel, as a mere addition of separate architectural modules. To perceive architecture in such a way is consistent with the widespread view of likening space to a container, which is filled with objects and people and forms the background of action. In contrast to this, dynamic concepts of space, like the notion of a “duality of space” of Martina Löw<sup>18</sup>, have emphasized that space is not independent from action, but rather constituted through the observation of continuously changing arrangements of social goods and living beings in places<sup>19</sup>. The relevance of such dynamic concepts of space for the interpretation of architecture in general and Mycenaean citadels in particular can be underlined by an example. On the basis of the spatial separation of palace and Cult Centre in Mycenae, Spyridon E. Iakovidis has recently drawn the conclusions that the king cannot have played an important role in religion and that the Cult Centre must have been independent from the palace<sup>20</sup>. If, however, the constitution of space is directly linked with action, then through movement different parts of a settlement could have been connected, and in the eyes of the participants a coherent space may have emerged which was not congruent with a specific architectural module<sup>21</sup>. In my opinion, this point of view is crucial for understanding sites like Tiryns and Mycenae.

As early as 1930, Kurt Müller underlined the necessity to see these citadels as an integral whole and to include the visitor’s perspective in the analysis of architecture<sup>22</sup>. Müller’s approach is distinguished by the attempt to avoid analogies to Homer and to understand Mycenaean architecture in its own right by carefully observing how it expresses itself. Based on this strict methodology, he was able to gain insights which, although he wrote long before Linear B would be deciphered, still stand up to scrutiny. The ana-

13 Tsountas and Manatt 1969, 44-66.

14 Jung (2000) and Darque (1990; 2005, 318-9), however, have argued in favor of an abandonment of this term.

15 Evans 1964, 901-20.

16 Müller 1930, 145, 198 with n. 1.

17 Blegen and Rawson 1966, 87-8.

18 Löw 2001, 166-72.

19 Löw 2001, 152-79.

20 Iakovidis 2004, 14, 28-9. See already Mylonas 1977, 75 for a similar view. In contrast to Iakovidis and Mylonas I would agree with those who have argued in favor of a cultic function of the megaron: Dietrich 1973; 1974, 136-9; Wright 1994; Albers 2001, 132-4; see also Maran and Stavrianopoulou (forthcoming).

21 For the linkage of different points of ritual significance within the citadel of Mycenae see Kilian 1992, 17; Albers 1994, 122; Stavrianopoulou 1995.

22 Müller 1930, 167, 193-8.

lysis of the last magnificent phase of palatial rebuilding in Tiryns, which, as we know today, was carried out around 1250 BC, convinced Müller that there had existed the wish to stage through architectural and esthetical means a route connecting the main entrance with the main room of the megaron. Müller was also the first to counter Dörpfeld's interpretation of the megaron as a "Männerwohnung"<sup>23</sup>. Instead, he identified the building with the seat of a ruler, because he had recognized the function of the rectangular stone-line field next to the hearth as the place of a throne.

The increase in knowledge about Mycenaean society gained since the decipherment of Linear B makes it possible to carry on where Müller left off and to combine his ideas with what we know about the political structure and ideology of Mycenaean kingdoms. An example for these new approaches to Mycenaean architecture are studies by Wright, in which he described the organizing principle of the main passageways in the citadels of Tiryns and Mycenae as centripetal and focused on the *wanax*, the Mycenaean king<sup>24</sup>. As the goal and culmination of this organizing principle, he identified the throne-room with the monumental hearth serving as some sort of *axis mundi*<sup>25</sup>. The spatial relation between throne and hearth was interpreted by Wright as a reflection of the involvement of the king in rituals focusing on the hearth-fire and its connection to supernatural powers. That is why he preferred to speak of a "hearth-wanax-ideology" rather than simply of a "wanax ideology", a term coined by Klaus Kilian<sup>26</sup>. Wright went on to link the centripetal direction of passageways in Mycenae and Tiryns with the performance of processions, which he presumed to have formed an integral part of palatial cult activities<sup>27</sup>. The importance of processions in Mycenaean religion was emphasized by Robin Hägg who applied Fritz Graf's<sup>28</sup> basic differentiation between centripetal and centrifugal processions to Mycenaean Greece and supplemented it by the definition of cyclical processions<sup>29</sup>.

There are indeed several reasons to assume that processions were a crucial element of Mycenaean rituals. First, processions form the most common iconographical subject of Mycenaean fresco painting of the palatial period. On the right-hand wall of the vestibule of the megaron of Pylos, such a procession leads in the direction of the throne-room<sup>30</sup>, a feature which was interpreted by Hägg as a sign of the performance of centripetal processions<sup>31</sup>. Second, the Linear B sources contain indications of processions. Thus, the tablet Tn 316 from Pylos has been interpreted by Anna Sacconi as referring to a yearly ritual procession in honor of several deities<sup>32</sup>. According to Eftychia Stavrianopoulou, the text describes a centrifugal procession from Pylos through several intermediary stations probably to the sacred precinct of Sphagianes<sup>33</sup>. She argued that the movement of this centrifugal procession led to an imagined unification between palace and cult precinct and to a reversal of the existing bipolarity.

Indeed, the defining principles of the organization of Mycenaean citadels cannot be fully understood if we do not consider processions to be a central category of ritual practice<sup>34</sup>. In this context, I will focus on Mycenae and Tiryns during the late palatial period of the 13<sup>th</sup> century B.C., since these are currently the only Mycenaean palatial sites where the integration of a palace in its wider architectural surroundings can be studied. I will thus focus on the assessment of two synchronous phases of two citadels and not on the long-term dynamics. Needless to say, that I will rely on results previously presented by other colleagues and will add some supplementary observations.

23 Müller 1930, 171, 198.

24 Wright 1994, 60.

25 Wright 1994, 57-8; (forthcoming). For the architectural symbolism of an *axis mundi* see Rapoport 1982, 116.

26 Kilian 1988.

27 Wright (forthcoming).

28 Graf 1996, 56.

29 Hägg 2001. Already Dietrich (1993, 117) made a similar distinction between directions of processional movement, without using the terms 'centripetal' and 'centrifugal'.

30 McCallum 1987, 138-40.

31 Hägg 1985, 216; 2001, 144.

32 Sacconi 1987. For the interpretation of the crucial verb *i-je-to* see Ruijgh 1967, 322 with n. 139; Lejeune 1971, 306-7 with n. 88.

33 Stavrianopoulou 2003

34 The stimulating attempts of Neve (1993, 21-3, fig. 44; 2001, 18-9, 47) to regard the particular layout of the system of gates and passageways in Boğazköy as the reflection of processions which were carried out on certain occasions remind us that a similar situation may have prevailed in the Hittite sphere.

It has to be stressed that, due to the lack of a Linear B archive, the political structure of the Argolid during the Mycenaean palatial period cannot be determined. Undoubtedly, the Argive plain shows the highest density of Mycenaean centers in the whole of Greece, since in addition to Mycenae and Tiryns there are also Argos and Midea. This high density of major sites is particularly noteworthy in light of the lack of clear-cut geographical subdivisions, like mountain ranges or major rivers, in the rather small Argive plain<sup>35</sup>. Nevertheless, the scholarly opinions on the political geography of the Mycenaean palatial period in this region differ significantly. Views interpreting the site distribution as the reflection of rivaling petty kingdoms<sup>36</sup> are found alongside others arguing that the sites were under the rule of the same king. Already Müller opted in favor of this second interpretation and expressed the belief that Mycenae was the capital of a strong and unified kingdom<sup>37</sup>. I fully agree with him and will gather archaeological evidence supporting this assessment.

Any attempt to look at Mycenaean citadels as performative space has to tackle the question of how they originally may have appeared to a visitor. Regrettably, the question of the setting of Mycenaean palatial centers in the landscape and their position in relation to features of the natural environment is rarely considered<sup>38</sup>. In the following, first some aspects of the outer appearance of Mycenae and Tiryns will be discussed, and then we will gradually move on to their interior<sup>39</sup>.

From the outside, the Mycenaean citadels of the Argolid were distinguished by the use of un-plastered Cyclopean stone blocks. The impact of this megalithic masonry on an observer must have been enhanced by the fact that the normal contemporary settlement architecture was characterized by open settlements consisting of houses built with stones of small size and mud-bricks<sup>40</sup>. Without denying the practical defensive significance of such Cyclopean fortifications<sup>41</sup>, which has been emphasized in the literature, it is likely that this building technique also conveyed to the observer symbolic messages like hardness, inapproachability and unlimited power<sup>42</sup>. This impression was increased by the rather uniform appearance of the Cyclopean walls, which, unlike medieval castles, did not have a façade broken up by protruding towers, windows and architectural ornaments.

The outer appearance of Mycenaean fortifications is particularly obvious in Tiryns. It is not a coincidence that this site is almost always photographed from an elevated position, because on the ground level even from some distance its impression is so uniform that it cannot be adequately depicted. Arguably, nowadays the impression of Mycenaean sites is overly dominated by their fortification because the buildings in the interior of the citadels are only preserved in the lowermost courses of their foundations. But it has to be stressed that in the case of Tiryns even initially most parts of the interior buildings were not visible from the outside, since they were hidden behind the huge walls. The sole exception is the palace, which must have been visible from far away. Revealingly, the part of the acropolis on which the palace stood was not only the highest part of the hill, but also directed towards south, thus ensuring that the palace was seen as a landmark from the sea<sup>43</sup>. In the case of Mycenaean Tiryns, the wish to ensure a maximum of visibility seemingly concerned the palace in general but not the actions taking place in its interior because all palatial courts were surrounded by buildings. This in turn made it impossible for

35 Darcque 1998, 108-9.

36 Cf. Bintliff 1977, 288-9, 345-7; Carlier 1984, 35; Kilian 1988, 296. For a criticism of applying such a 'Homeric model' to the Mycenaean palatial period see Müller 1930, 217; Darcque 1998, 110-2; 2005, 402.

37 Müller 1930, 216-7; Mylonas 1983, 89; Wright 1987, 183; Lauter 1987, 225 with n. 12; Albers (forthcoming); Hope Simpson 2003, 233-4; Maran 2004, 275.

38 An exception is the contribution by Spencer (1995) dealing with the possible visual relation of monuments in the Pylos region. He did not, however, discuss how the palace may have been perceived from different topographical points in its vicinity.

39 We will choose an approach which in the literature has been called 'phenomenological': Tilley 1994; Bender 1998, 22-6, 35-8. See also Barrett 1994, 32-7; Johnson 2002, 1-18. The layout of the ritual topography immediately outside of the fortification of Mycenae and its possible symbolic significance has already been analyzed by Wright (1987), and I will leave aside this aspect.

40 For a comprehensive discussion of building materials and techniques see Darcque 2005, 65-129.

41 Shelmerdine 1999, 407.

42 Iakovidis 1983, 2, 108-9; 1999, 203; Wright 1994, 51; Albers (forthcoming); see also Rapoport 1982, 117 for such a symbolic meaning of the built environment.

43 This is probably also the main reason why the Early Helladic Circular Building of Tiryns was built at exactly the same spot about a millennium prior to the first Mycenaean palatial megaron: Marzolf 2004a, 84.

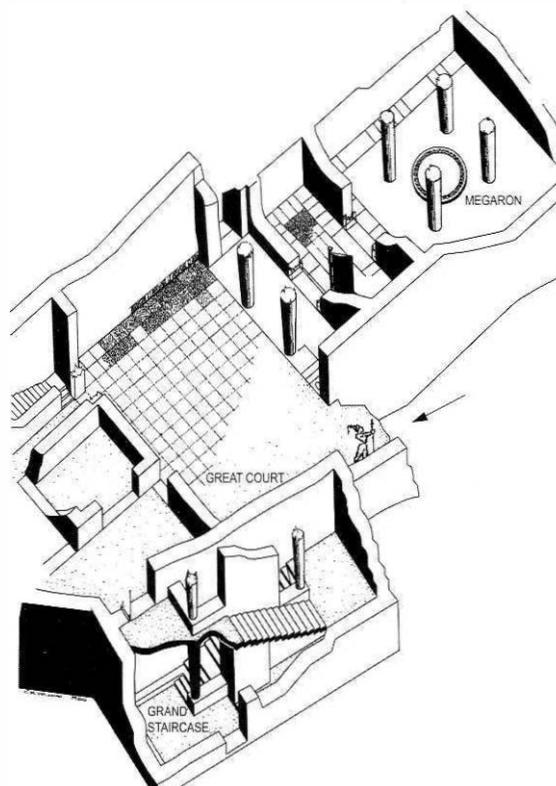


Abb. 1. Mycenae. The approach to the Megaron via the Grand Staircase. After: French 2002, fig. 23. Mycenae Archive, Charles K. Williams II.

people standing in the courts to look outside<sup>44</sup>. William Cavanagh has put forward the hypothesis that these rather closed courts functioned as arenas which may have been overlooked by spectators in the surrounding buildings<sup>45</sup>.

The architectural compactness and inapproachability of Tiryns fits well into the usual picture of a marked difference between Minoan and Mycenaean culture as regards the participation of the general population in festivities. Clearly, the central courts of the always-unfortified Minoan palaces offer room for larger numbers of people, and that such impressive gatherings of people indeed took place in the courts is suggested not only by the openness and accessibility of the palaces from the outside, but also by the depiction of crowds of spectators in Minoan fresco painting<sup>46</sup>. In contrast to this, as G. Albers and W. Cavanagh have pointed out<sup>47</sup>, the courts of Mycenaean palaces, due to their small size and the architectural restriction of access, are likely to have been intended only for small numbers of selected people.

But what if in the Mycenaean Argolid the communal participation expressed itself differently and took place only in specific sites? It seems to me that in this regard Mycenae may represent a very interesting case. Its megaron with the accompanying court is situated on a lower terrace of the summit of the hill directly above the Chavos ravine (Taf. 11.1-2). This position reminds us that not in all Mycenaean palatial centers the most important building stood on the highest topographical point. Nevertheless, as far as I know, the palaces were always built on topographically exposed spots. The southern side of the court in front of the Mycenae megaron is thought to have been provided with a parapet interpreted in the literature as a means to allow a view from the inside of the palace to the outside<sup>48</sup>. As Cavanagh

44 Cavanagh 2001, 124.

45 Cavanagh 2001, 124.

46 Marinatos 1987; but see Panagiotopoulos (this volume) for a differing position.

47 Albers 2001, 136-8; Cavanagh 2001, 124, 130.

48 Mylonas 1966, 63-4; 1983, 98; Iakovidis 1983, 60; French 2002, 98. A.J.B. Wace was hesitant to decide whether the south wall of the court was high or low, because he argued that the "lords of Mycenae may have preferred safety to scenery"

rightly noted, this view must have been curtailed by the upper part of the Grand Staircase connecting the megaron with the cult centre<sup>49</sup>. Only immediately to the east of the Grand Staircase there seems to have been room for such an opening to the outside (Abb. 1). The unique positioning of the megaron, the court and the Grand Staircase on the edge of a high and very steep rock may bear witness for a magnificent architectural staging in which not so much the view to the outside, but rather *from* the outside played the decisive role. Already from far away the eye of the visitor, who reaches Mycenae on the topographically most important approach, is fixed upon the area of the Grand Staircase and the megaron terrace (Taf. 11.1-2). Thus, like in Tiryns the palace was arranged in order to be seen from a considerable distance. But in contrast to Tiryns, in Mycenae this may have also been done in order to allow a view on what was going on inside the citadel. I suggest this because the lower slopes of the surrounding hills lend themselves to being used, and indeed may have been used, as some sort of an open-air theatre for spectators who observed processions leading to the megaron or to the cult centre<sup>50</sup>. In this context, the mentioned opening between the Grand Staircase and the megaron may have served as a ‘window’ of appearance (Abb. 1). In addition, further opportunities to be seen from the outside may have existed, if the walls of the Grand Staircase were provided with large openings<sup>51</sup>.

When we move towards the citadels, we note a common point between Tiryns and Mycenae inasmuch as the main gates of both sites were architecturally concealed from being seen from a distance. The main gate of Tiryns, which corresponds in its measurements and its way of construction with the Lion Gate<sup>52</sup>, was not the main entrance to the site. Instead, it seals off a long and narrow passage, which we will turn to later. Although in Mycenae the Lion Gate served simultaneously as the citadel’s main gate and entrance, it was not immediately visible because it was shielded by a protruding rectangular bastion. Accordingly, a visitor notes this gate only in the last part of her or his way to the citadel. Architecturally, the imposing character of the main gates of Mycenae and Tiryns was enhanced by their placement within ascending approaches, in Mycenae a ramp, in Tiryns a passage. Good strategic reasons can be put forward for concealing and elevating the main gates of citadels<sup>53</sup>. Nevertheless, when we look at the further course of the passageway inside the citadel these features may also be read in a different way, namely to reveal to the visitor only gradually and in a steady heightening of tension the mysteries of the sites. In no other citadel the attempt to stage through architectural means the ascent to the palace is as evident as in the already mentioned case of the approach connecting the main entrance with the throne-room in Tiryns (Taf. 13 [yellow]). After the initial description by Müller<sup>54</sup>, this way has been the subject of a thorough analysis by Michael Küpper<sup>55</sup>. I will pick up the thread of his comments and will first provide an overview over the course of the way.

The visitor who walked up a ramp to the main entrance and, after turning right, passed through it must have been amazed by the extreme width of the Cyclopean wall, a point already emphasized by Küpper<sup>56</sup>. After entering the narrow passage and turning sharply to the left, one was confronted at a distance with the main gate, which sealed off the ascending gateway and recalled the Lion Gate. This is the first architectural reference to Mycenae which we observe in Tiryns. Behind the main gate, the passage slightly widened and after about 30 m the visitor reached, probably behind an additional narrow gate<sup>57</sup>, a wider space formed by an exterior forecourt with a stoa. After another sharp turn to the right,

(Wace 1949, 75; see also Wace et al. 1921-23, 189).

49 Cavanagh 2001, 124.

50 Already Albers (2001, 138) concluded that the general population of a Mycenaean kingdom may have assembled outside of the citadels to follow from a distance as spectators religious ceremonies like processions. Frizell (1997-98, 114) reached a similar conclusion regarding spectators standing outside the citadel of Mycenae along what she called the “*via triumphalis*”, to observe the transport of the huge conglomerate blocks from the quarries to Mycenae.

51 Monumental exterior staircases with oversized openings allowing a view from the outside are known from residences of the Renaissance period, cf. Biller and Großmann 2002, 166 (Schloss Hartenfels); Gascar et al. 1979, 16 (Châteaux Blois). I would like to thank Ulrich Thaler for drawing my attention to these buildings.

52 W. Dörpfeld in Schliemann 1886, 218; Müller 1930, 70-3. Müller (1930, 73) even considered that the same architect was responsible for the building of the two gates.

53 Iakovidis 1999, 202.

54 Müller 1930, 193-6; see also Kilian 1984, 45-6; 1987, 25.

55 Küpper 1996, 111-8.

56 Küpper 1996, 112.

57 Müller 1930, 25, fig. 47, pls. 2, 4.

one was faced with the outer hall of the Great Propylon. The intention to lead the visitor in a specific direction manifests itself by the fact that this Propylon is slightly turned northwards, so that someone standing in its inner hall could already see the Little Propylon on the other side of the interior forecourt<sup>58</sup>. After passing through this forecourt and after sharply turning to the right, one walked through the two halls of the Little Propylon, and saw on the opposite side of the Great Court the porch of the Great Megaron, whose main axis was shifted towards east in relation to the one of the Little Propylon. This meant that in order to enter the megaron centrally one again had to change direction. Over two shallow steps, the visitor finally reached, through the porch and the vestibule, the throne-room of the Great Megaron.

Decisive for the interpretation are, however, the details of execution of this passageway, suggesting an attempt to preconfigure the bodily movement and to symbolically 'charge' the ascent to the palace through the intentional use of architectural cues. Of special significance are points which I would like to designate as 'liminal' (Taf. 13)<sup>59</sup>. To this group belong the main entrance, the main gate, all propyla and the porch of the Great Megaron. Not only are they placed at the transition from one zone to the other, but they also yield architectural evidence for an attempt to make one aware of the fact that he or she was about to enter a zone of different meaning. In order to reach these points the direction of movement had to be changed<sup>60</sup>. The visitor took a new position, passed through the point and was faced with the next gate. The liminal points were accentuated on the one hand by monolithic thresholds which had to be crossed, and on the other hand by the structure of the propyla which led the visitor from one hall supported by two columns to another one. The porch of the Great Megaron resembles with its two columns the halls of the propyla<sup>61</sup>, thus emphasizing its transitory character. In all known cases, the porch of a Mycenaean palatial megaron is placed opposite to the main access to the court, but not once is it aligned along the same axis<sup>62</sup>.

Probably the most remarkable aspect distinguishing the way to the Tirynthian Great Megaron consists in the use of huge conglomerate blocks, which, other than on the route to the throne room, were not systematically used in Tiryns (Taf. 12). While already Müller had recognized that these blocks derive from quarries near Mycenae, which are more than 20 km away<sup>63</sup>, it was Wright who first realized the particular symbolic significance of the appearance of this 'Mycenaean' stone material<sup>64</sup>. In investigating the distribution of the conglomerate blocks in Tiryns, Küpper has found them to be employed in a well-considered manner, and in addition he stated that semantically this stone material signified the most important points of access<sup>65</sup>. Unfortunately, he made some mistakes in determining the stone material and that is why his plan<sup>66</sup> showing the appearance of such blocks needs to be corrected (Taf. 12). Thus, not all liminal points were emphasized by conglomerate. Instead, these conglomerate construction elements are concentrated on the main gate, which entirely consists of this stone, and then again on the last and most important part of the way between the Little Propylon and the throne room<sup>67</sup>. Whether other stone materials used in the construction of the Tirynthian palace were also employed because they were symbolically 'charged' is more difficult to say. At least in the case of the entrance to the Great Megaron the alternation of light gray lime-sandstone for the lower step and reddish limestone for the upper step documents a deliberate choice of raw materials (Taf. 12)<sup>68</sup>, but this may have been done for the color-

58 Müller 1930, 194; Küpper 1996, 112, fig. 219.

59 Turner 1982, 20-43; Schechner 2003, 58-62. Already Wright (1994, 54) compared such points to boundaries which one had to pass.

60 Mühlenbruch 2003, 480 fig. 1, 482-3.

61 Iakovidis 1983, 14.

62 It seems insufficient to try to explain this merely by pointing to the need to lead the visitor past the altar in the Great Court of Tiryns (Küpper 1996, 113), since in Mycenae and Pylos, where no such installation seems to have existed, the same phenomenon can be observed.

63 Müller 1930, 177, 216. For the considerable labour effort involved in transporting and using these huge blocks as building material see Santillo 1989; Frizell 1997-98.

64 Wright 1987, 174-83.

65 Küpper 1996, 115-8.

66 Küpper 1996, fig. 220.2.

67 After a detailed discussion, Küpper (1996, 114-5) reached the conclusion that all conglomerate thresholds must have been visible, and that probably also the conglomerate blocks used in the front of the antae-walls of the Great Megaron had remained unplastered.

68 Müller 1930, 195.

effect only<sup>69</sup>. At first sight, the use of the reddish limestone for all column bases of the Great Megaron points in a similar direction, but Küpper has convincingly argued that the material of the stone was concealed by plaster<sup>70</sup>.

It is likely that in addition to symbolic cues the play with opposite esthetical experiences contributed to the staging of the way to the throne-room. First of all, there is the experience of narrow vs. wide and dark vs. light. The way leads from the narrowness of the passage, which Müller likened to a ravine<sup>71</sup>, to the wideness of the different courts<sup>72</sup>. During daylight, the experience of walking this way must have been characterized by the alternation between hypaethral parts lightened by the brightness of the sun and the darkness of the roofed parts<sup>73</sup>. But probably a different esthetical factor exerted the greatest influence on a visitor. While the walls of the narrow gateway consisted of huge, rough stone-blocks, somewhere behind the Great Propylon the colorful images of the frescos adorning the walls must have suddenly set in. Neither in Tiryns nor in Mycenae we are able to reconstruct the fresco program but it is certain that depictions of processions formed the most important iconographical topic.

The whole structure of the way exemplifies an attempt to prescribe by architectural means the movement of a visitor and to draw her or him into the depth of the citadel, until the goal of the movement, the Great Megaron, was reached. This is not the only aspect of performative space in which Mycenaean citadels resemble the circumstances in British medieval castles described by Matthew Johnson. Other similarities are the significance of “twists and turns at critical moments, when one crosses a threshold into a space of different social status”<sup>74</sup>, and the fact that the hall situated in the centre of medieval castles was placed in a way that a visitor entering the courtyard would immediately notice it<sup>75</sup>.

It should be mentioned that, besides the described centripetally directed way, there exists in Tiryns also a quite direct access to the palace which is distinguished by different features. In approaching the citadel from the harbor and through the western Lower Town, a visitor could have directly entered the citadel through a postern gate and then could have moved onwards to reach the west wing of the palace via the West Staircase and the Middle Citadel (Taf. 13 [pink]). This connection, however, does not exhibit any of the mentioned signs for an architectural staging of the ascent, and I think it is likely that it served as a more private access for the staff and dignitaries of the palace<sup>76</sup>.

When we try to identify in Mycenae a way resembling in its architectural staging and the use of symbolic cues the described connection between the main entrance and the megaron in Tiryns, then the likely choice is the passageway which starts at the Lion Gate, climbs up the ramp and winds up the west slope of the hill, to finally reach after crossing gates and other entrances with monolithic conglomerate thresholds<sup>77</sup> the court of the megaron<sup>78</sup>. As in Tiryns, the main axis of the propylon of Mycenae is shifted in a way that a visitor is optically guided to the next liminal point, thus emphasizing the centripetal direction of this way. Besides this centripetally directed access there exists in Mycenae another way to reach the megaron, namely via the already mentioned Grand Staircase. In contrast to the West Staircase of Tiryns which connected the palace with the Lower Town, the Grand Staircase of Mycenae was integrated in the circulation within the citadel. It is part of what Georgios E. Mylonas has called the procession way, because it provides a connection between the megaron and the cult centre, and then onwards to Grave Circle A<sup>79</sup>. The concept of this way differs in several respects from what we find in Tiryns. Along the way, there were several stations to be reached, and its orientation can be designated ‘centrifugal’ just as well as ‘centripetal’. In fact, I would agree with Mylonas that in this case the centrifugal direction is more pronounced. This way provided an imposing connection between the seat of

69 Müller 1930, 195.

70 Küpper 1996, 113-4.

71 Müller 1930, 73 (“beklemmende Enge”), 193 (“schluchtartige Enge”). On the importance of light effects in the staging of power in Minoan palaces see Goodison 2001.

72 Küpper 1996, 112-3.

73 Müller 1930, 167-8, 193-5, fig. 75.

74 Johnson 2002, 83.

75 Johnson 2002, 75.

76 Kilian 1984, 46.

77 Mylonas 1966, 16-20; Küpper 1996, 115-6, fig. 220.1.

78 Mylonas 1966, 66-78; Iakovidis 1983, 57-9; Wright 1994, 51-4.

79 Mylonas 1977, 26-8; 1983, 138-41; Albers 1994, 16-7, 122.

the king, the seat of the gods and the seat of the ideologically elevated ancestors<sup>80</sup>. Moreover, it allowed a continuation of processions outside the walls of the citadel to the tholos graves and to other points in the closer or further vicinity of Mycenae. The population of the kingdom may have been able to follow from the outside as spectators some of the events going on. As mentioned, the upper part of the way from the megaron to the Cult Centre could have been overlooked from the surrounding hills, while the view on the lower part of the way, between the Cult Centre and the Lion Gate was probably blocked by the Cyclopean wall. Outside of the Lion Gate, on the other hand, the population may have again had the opportunity to follow the events<sup>81</sup>.

That the way over the Grand Staircase to the megaron does not find any comparison in Tiryns is only one of a series of features by which Mycenae is set apart from all other Argive sites. To these features belong the Cult Centre, Grave Circle A and a unique concentration of tholos tombs<sup>82</sup>. These differences lead us back to the decisive question of the political relation between Mycenae and Tiryns. I agree with Gabriele Albers that the very special ritual topography of Mycenae bears witness for supremacy of this site during the palatial period<sup>83</sup>. This was the main seat of the king's family, where on certain occasions and with the possible integration of the population rituals were carried out which exemplified the connection between the ruling, the gods and the ancestors and thus were of central significance for bolstering the then prevalent world-view. In my opinion, in Tiryns most of these elements are missing, because it served as a second palace of the same king, in which only specific rituals were carried out. This would explain why we get in Tiryns symbolic references to Mycenae, like the copy of the Lion Gate and the conglomerate thresholds, which are likely to have been understood by the initiated<sup>84</sup>. Similar to the use of porphyry as a sign of papal or imperial power in the European Middle Ages<sup>85</sup>, conglomerate may have been regarded as the kingly stone of the Argolid during the Mycenaean palatial period. If we interpret Tiryns as the second palace of the same ruler, it becomes understandable why at this site, on the basis of the architectural staging of the mentioned passageways, only a centripetal, but not a centrifugal direction can be inferred. This is so, I would argue, because the Tirynthian megaron served as the goal, but not the starting point of processions. We can speculate that the king and/or the queen traveled on certain occasions from Mycenae to Tiryns in order to perform certain rituals, to reside and to receive high guests coming from over the sea. Possibly the kingly pair itself led the procession or it entered the Great Megaron through the West Staircase and the corridors of the West Wing of the palace and waited there for the procession to arrive. The whole importance of campstools in contemporary iconography and the iconographical attestation of sedan-seats<sup>86</sup> may derive from the institution of an 'itinerant monarchy'.

The assumption that the *wanax* and the queen only occasionally visited Tiryns would also help to explain some exceptional features of its palace. The equipment of the so-called bathroom with one of the largest monoliths used in Tiryns consisting of a unique stone material of unknown provenance (Taf. 12), as well as the connection, albeit indirect<sup>87</sup>, between this room and the vestibule of the Great Megaron point to an extraordinary importance of the bathroom. This may have been the place where the king or the queen after their arrival underwent a ritual purification before entering the Great Megaron<sup>88</sup>. Another feature possibly reflecting the status of Tiryns as a second palace is the curious doubling of megaron-buildings which in this clarity is unparalleled in other Mycenaean palaces<sup>89</sup>. As is well known, the Little Megaron resembles in most respects a miniature version of the Great Megaron. Its floors were decora-

80 Wright 1987, 179-81; Albers 1994, 122; Stavrianopoulou 1995, 432.

81 Albers 2001, 138.

82 Wright 1987, 177-82.

83 Albers (forthcoming). See also Albers 2001, 131, 139-41.

84 See already Müller 1930, 216-7.

85 De Blaauw 1991. On color symbolism in medieval towns see Marzoff 2004b.

86 Dimakopoulou 1989.

87 Contrary to the original interpretation of W. Dörpfeld (in Schliemann 1886, 260), Müller (1930, 148-50) has shown that the 'bathroom' was only accessible from the north-south oriented Corridor XII, but not from Corridor IX which led directly to the side-entrance of the porch of the Great Megaron. But if Müller was correct in assuming a connection between Corridors IX and XII (Müller 1930, 148, pl. 1), bathroom and megaron would have nevertheless been linked. For a different viewpoint see Küpper 1996, 117.

88 A ritual function of the Tiryns bathroom was already postulated by H.B. Siedentopf (in Jantzen 1975, 34), Kilian (1987, 25) and Papadimitriou (2001, 42).

89 Already Müller (1930, 168-71) spoke of a "Doppelpalast".

ted, it had a court, a porch and a main room furnished with a central hearth and a rectangular field on its right which is likely to have served as the place of a throne. Although the Little Megaron stood next to the Great Megaron, no connection between the two buildings seems to have existed and instead the Little Megaron had a totally separate system of access branching off from the main route in the inner hall of the Great Propylon<sup>90</sup>. This way also exhibits some of the already described features of the architectural staging of movement, like the importance of twists and turns before reaching monolithic thresholds or doorways and the alternation of open and roofed spaces. Still, it lacks the monumentality and the powerful symbolic cues of the main passageway, such as the use of conglomerate and the integration of propyla. Kilian identified the Little Megaron as the seat of the *lawagetas*<sup>91</sup>. This may indeed have been the case, but I would argue that whoever resided in the Little Megaron is likely to have done this in their function as the deputy of the *wanax* in Mycenae.

It was my aim to show that the whole significance of architecture only reveals itself if one tries to link it with social practice and to grasp aspects of what Martina Löw calls the “duality of space”. In this regard, the archaeologist is faced with a dilemma. She or he can never get a direct glimpse on actual social practices, but can at the most recognize indirectly aspects of these, exactly because space and action are mutually related and facets of the pattern of movement are mirrored in the built environment in its function as performative space. In the case of the Mycenaean citadels, processions are likely to have been the kind of interaction which left the most marked imprint on the layout of architecture. During the processions, the meaning encoded in certain architectural cues was recalled by the participants and integrated by them into ritual practice through which the social order and the relation to supernatural powers were simultaneously expressed and newly constituted.

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90 Müller 1930, 167-9, fig. 75.

91 Kilian 1987, 32.

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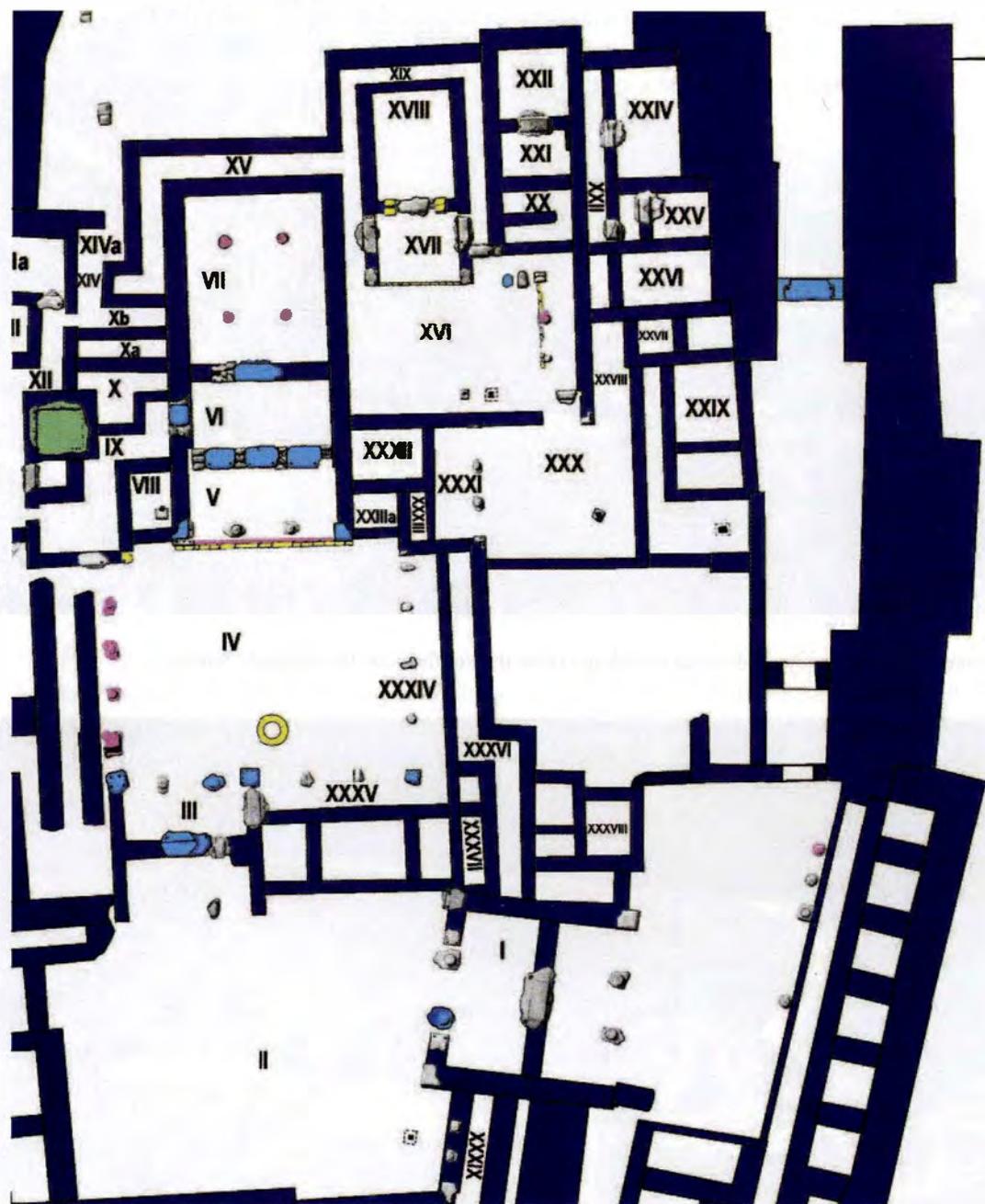
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1. Mycenae. View of the site and its surroundings from the south-west. Photograph: author.



2. Mycenae. View of the Megaron Terrace. After: Spathari 2001, Fig. 37.



- |                                                                                     |                           |                                                                                     |               |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
|  | Light gray lime-sandstone |  | Unknown stone |
|  | Reddish limestone         |  | Conglomerate  |

Tiryns. Plan of the Upper Citadel with special stone materials marked with colors. After: Müller 1930, Pl. 1; modifications: author.

