

# Mycenaeans up to date: Final discussion

Transcription by Evi Sikla

**I. Tournavitou:** Ladies and gentlemen, this conference was conceived two years ago, and I believe that we can now say it went quite well. We assumed that all of us, who work, have worked and will continue to work in the NE Peloponnese need to communicate, to share our recent work, thoughts on crucial issues, to exchange arguments, and perhaps, if we are lucky, to discuss or argue our way towards an understanding. What we were hoping for, in fact, is that we would eventually listen to each other, face the weak points in the sequence, and, most importantly, agree on a set of research priorities, directions, and perhaps—I don't know if this sounds too frightening—try to coordinate our evidence towards a common goal. Now, having carefully listened to what has been said during this conference, the first thing that comes to mind is that we should continue publishing the excavated material from the major centres, especially old material, and perhaps coordinate and integrate the evidence from the old and new excavations as we go along. We also need to excavate more, especially in the Lower Towns and that is a subject very close to my heart and some other people's heart I think, because I have a feeling that the understanding of Lower Towns, how they were organized, how they interacted with their respective citadels and how they developed in time, is the key to understanding both individual sites and wider areas. We have also established that local site histories affected wider areas, and what should perhaps be investigated is how they did that, in a more concrete, down-to-earth way.

Yesterday, we asked for feedback as regards the main issues that should be discussed in this last session. We are thankful for your response to this plea. The agenda for this discussion, including both major, perennial themes and more specific issues emerging from four days worth of ideas flying backwards and forwards in this conference hall, is already full.

One issue concerns big changes, major social and political upheavals. It was raised by Joseph Maran in the opening day of the conference and we kept returning to it in various ways, during the entire conference proceedings. If I am not mistaken, the first big change, or upheaval, as some would prefer to call it, occurred during the emergence of the Mycenaean culture, the Mycenaean ethos, in the MH III/LH I period. I think we all agree to that. The second major change or upheaval, and I think we will all agree, is the demise of the palaces in the end of the LH IIIB2 period. In both cases the grey areas tend to obscure the real issues, i.e. the agents manipulating the new ideological ethos/status quo and the underlying societal interplay. It is also worth considering the existence of other, perhaps less dramatic upheavals. How did all these upheavals upset local histories, if each case is indeed different, and to what extent?

The second theme concerns definitions. For example, how do we define an architectural complex/centre as palatial and what are the criteria for the identification of palatial complexes/centres? Then there is the matter of Lower Towns. There are only two excavated Lower Towns on the mainland: at Mycenae and Tiryns. I believe it is about time we had a serious discussion about their organization, their development through time, how they compare with each other, and what their similarities and differences signify on a social and political level. What is the social identity of the people living in the vicinity of the palaces? Do they belong to what we might describe as the absentee lower classes because I have the suspicion that they do not. And finally, how does town planning and organization in the surviving Lower Towns compare to town planning and organization in other, non-palatial settlements.

The third issue involves boundaries and relations between palaces and citadels, citadels and towns, and all of the above with rural areas, rural dependencies, as we tend to call them.

This of course touches on another issue, the extent of the so-called palace polities, the areas influenced and perhaps controlled by the palaces, the areas from which the palaces benefited, and because of which they survived. The results from the Nemea and the Phlious archaeological projects have already hinted at the existence of extensive territories possibly exploited by major centres, like Mycenae, and at the large scale repercussions the economic policies of the latter might have had on the settlement pattern of whole regions. Another major issue in the Argolid concerns the idiosyncratic coexistence of three fortified urban centres, the balance of power between these centres and the changes in this balance over the years. Finally, we should not overlook the matter of the so called differential development, especially in the case of the major palatial centres, the underlying causes and the wider consequences of local histories.

On a more specialised, thematic level, it seems that the grey areas have somehow multiplied, or perhaps we are now asking more, different sets of questions. Religion is a prime example. What is happening with cult? Where are the cult areas, the official cult areas? It seems that at Tiryns the series of modest urban sanctuaries in the Lower Citadel, postdate the Palatial period. At Mycenae, the only palatial centre with an actual Cult Centre, the fluctuations in the size of the latter and the apparently changing relationship between the centre and the palace at the top of the hill requires careful thought. We also have to think a little more about the relationship between the Cult Centre, Building M and the palace and the consequences of this suggested interaction or even the lack of it. On a more general level, we are still compelled to ask, was religion as we know it an institution of the elite? We know that throughout time, the ruling elites have been conscientiously using it as a staple sociopolitical strategy. It has been, much later I grant you, described as “the opium of the people”, but, in this case, can we prove it archaeologically, for our sites?

Another major theme involves workshops and work areas, and I am not talking about aesthetically pleasing, luxury objects produced for the elite. I am talking about mass production, heavy duty metallurgy and pottery workshops. Why is there an almost total absence of this type of work area in the vicinity of the major centres? The scarcity of such sites even in smaller secondary centres, that could have theoretically supplied the needs of the major centres, especially in the mature Palatial period, when one would expect a profusion of such sites, is intriguing.

Last, but not least, the relationship between settlements and cemeteries. How did they change through time, their location, the types of tombs attested and the significance, of all these parameters for the organization of the communities involved. I think I will stop here. It is a huge list of things to do. Prof. Maran, would you mind starting off the discussion

since you introduced the subject of social upheavals during the opening day?

**J. Maran:** You are right to refer to two major upheavals. I would say there is another, additional upheaval associated with the building of the megaron palaces. This is another major point. Then, of course, there is the disappearance of Mycenaean culture, also a very important issue we did not tackle. The main point I was making in my lecture was that it is wrong to view the megaron as an exclusively mainland architectural feature. It is not only a Helladic feature, but is based on a merging of Minoan elements with a Helladic architectural form. One of the mistakes in research until now was that Mycenaean and Minoan archaeology went their different ways. I do think that what is happening in the Argolid and also in Boeotia during the 14<sup>th</sup> century is intimately related to changes in the political relations between the Greek mainland and Crete.

**E. French:** I would personally query the existence of a big upheaval between the MH and the LH periods. I see it as a continuum and I have a feeling that Michael Lindblom and Anna Philippa-Touchais have similar views, at least in pottery terms (as expressed at their Mycenaean Seminar in London). There is a very great social change, but I am not sure how much of an upheaval it is. It is a change of emphasis I think more than an uprooting. Secondly, I call attention to the work of Hector Catling that brought attention to the disruptions that happened in the middle of LH IIIA, a theory traced in a rather obscure article of his, a quite interesting subject. Personally I agree with some of it but not all; he was suggesting that there was some form of change. He takes it to the point where these Mansions disappear in Laconia.

**I. Tournavitou:** What was the date of the disappearance of these mansions?

**E. French:** The end of LH IIIA1, I think. It is in LH IIIA anyway.

**I. Tournavitou:** I mentioned upheavals before, because I had in mind all this discussion about emerging “Mycenaean” elites and other elites that were in conflict at the time. Maybe Nikos Papadimitriou wants to comment on that.

**N. Papadimitriou:** I very much agree with Prof. Maran. I think the period after the LM IB destructions in Crete must have been very important, because we have a different configuration, the balance of power changed. Whether one calls this upheaval is another matter, but there were several cultural parameters that simply changed in the mainland, in the Argolid, and one of these that I know of, is the burials, the funeral customs. This is a period when symbolism may have

changed—Michael Boyd and other people have already discussed the possible meaning/s of the chamber tomb for the Early Mycenaean. In the beginning of LH IIIA, this type of tomb is being used by much larger segments of the population, so something that may have started off as a means of differentiation, becomes a means of integration into the society/status quo. This is the type of changes I am talking about. Kostas Paschalidis talked earlier about the similarities in warrior burials. Pascal Darcque has also talked about the large deposition of wealth in LH IIB/IIIA1. There is evidence I think, at least in the funerary record, to suggest that this is a crucial period. Perhaps we should pay more attention to what happens prior to the emergence of the Mycenaean palaces, as a way to understand the LH IIIA period.

**S. Voutsaki:** I would like to discuss more the question of the date of the upheavals. I quite agree with Joseph Maran, when he says that there is a deep upheaval in the MH III–LH I period. We should not be thinking only in terms of the internal sequence in the Argolid, we have to bridge two different situations, what happens in the mainland, in the Argolid, and what happens in the Aegean as a whole. In my mind, the big upheaval at the end of the Middle Bronze Age is the rise of Mycenae, the demise of Argos, and the area around Argos. That is something that remains unexplained. When we go back—considering the evidence we have—to the Middle Helladic period, we keep talking about some kind of egalitarian, undifferentiated, small-scale societies, with some evidence for subtle differentiation here and there. What we have not quite explained is how we can reconcile this picture with the picture emerging from the work by Kim Shelton presented in her paper in the Mesohelladika conference, or the discussions concerning Argos. These sites were large throughout the Middle Bronze Age. What was happening at Mycenae before MH III? That is something I would like to be able to understand. Was there continuity and growth, or upheaval and dislocation?

**E. French:** There seems to be evidence of growth, but it is widespread evidence from underneath other buildings.

**C. Gillis:** I have been trying to relate this discussion about change and upheaval to the matter of agents and the question of agency, as someone brought up: is the transition from MH to LH a simple matter of emerging elites, and the megaron as the sign of these elites, and the end of the Mycenaean culture a simple matter of the disappearance of elites? What do we think about agency?

**O. Psychoyos:** I am thinking that the respective locations of Argos and Mycenae should perhaps be taken into account. Argos is on the western side of the plain, Mycenae is on the east side, with easier access to the Saronic Gulf, the sea, the control

of the routes towards the east. The same applies to Midea and of course Tiryns, as regards access to the sea.

**J. Maran:** I think that the question of agency is at the root of the whole question. Elite is a problematic term, when it is used to designate a clearly circumscribed, stable group, because relations between different groups of society are in flux and continuously renegotiated in social practice and discourses. I think it would be important to know more about the MH I and II periods at Mycenae. Even if we assume that all remains dating to these periods on the acropolis have been destroyed by later building activities, consider this evidence from Tiryns: when we excavated at the upper citadel, in the area of the megara, we consistently encountered in the Mycenaean layers of the 14th and 13th c. BC a highly significant amount of EH II pottery, that must derive from razed EH levels, above all of the circular building. This immediately gives you an idea of the importance of the occupation during the specific period, in spite of the fact that the material is re-deposited. Do we have a similar high percentage of redeposited material for the MH I and II periods at Mycenae?

**E. French:** Yes. David French showed the evidence of this to a group of people who were interested in the MH period about eighteen months ago. What we are looking at is the same pattern as at Tiryns. We have considerable EH, less on the slopes but widespread and including the summit of the citadel and MH wherever you go—not quite as much perhaps as you get at Lefkandi, but quite enough.

**S. Voutsaki:** I would like to follow two different points, the one made by Joseph Maran on agency, how we could study it, but also, I would like specifically to return to Mycenae, the early Middle Helladic evidence. A very brief background to the discussion: for years we have been discussing change as something that happens, as an impersonal force. Why do we speak as if the process was completed without the participation of living human beings? Can't they act, don't they have a say on what happens around them? The recent trend in archaeological theories is that we cannot discuss change unless we discuss how people situate themselves inside a changing environment, and therefore contribute themselves to change by means of their different reactions and responses. If we want to discuss specific issues, as for instance, one of my favorite topics, the transformation of mortuary practices at the end of the Middle Bronze Age, we tend to think elite-downwards, from the top down. Very rightly, Michael Boyd reacted to that. If we look at the evidence very closely and re-evaluate the data, the custom of secondary burials, is to my mind, a very-very crucial and significant transformation which we do not find only in the Shaft Graves of Mycenae. We do find it all over the place. We find it in both rich and humble cemeteries, in both

intramural and extramural graves, in both adult and child burials—even in single burials, never re-used again. The point I want to make is that we tend to think about transformation as if the new practices are adopted by the elite and then kind of trickle down the social body. If we look at the evidence closely, this is not always the case. This is where agency starts playing a role. We are looking at people below the level of the elite, and they endorse change, or sometimes, they bring it about themselves. So, that was my theoretical, wider point about agency. More specifically, about early MH Mycenae. As far as one could go on the basis of published evidence, I have looked at literally everything that has been written on Mycenae, all the preliminary reports. It does puzzle me that there is not a single early MH grave at Mycenae—again on the basis of the bibliographical evidence—that contains an offering, even a single vase. MH I–II burials at Lerna have a considerable number of grave goods, and therefore when I started looking at the Prehistoric Cemetery at Mycenae, I expected to find early MH material in those graves—but I did not. This lack of grave goods surprises me. Is it because of Schliemann bulldozing through the site or not documenting his excavations? I personally doubt it, but I cannot really substantiate my doubts. My problem is: what happens in MH I–II Mycenae?

**E. French:** I don't think they got down anywhere near the rock, in any areas dug by Tsountas, and certainly not Schliemann. More recently, Prof. Mylonas reached the bedrock, but we have not seen the results of all of that yet. I think there could be more areas with graves around the place.

**I. Tournavitou:** Perhaps we should move on to the second big theme, the concept, of a palatial centre. I am returning to it because there was a heated discussion yesterday, which implies controversy and hopefully new ideas.

**Chr. Boulotis:** I agree with Pascal Darcque and Françoise Rougemont that the criteria used to identify a site as palatial ought to be reconsidered. Their presentation was excellent. I believe that we have been trapped in old views, namely, that the presence of Linear B and wall paintings is sufficient to identify palatial centres. We have to re-think those ideas in view of the emerging evidence. It seems that the picture on the mainland is increasingly becoming more and more like the picture in Crete. Writing was mostly in the service of the palatial bureaucracy and economy, but it appears that it was also used beyond the confines of the palace. If we put aside the old criteria, we will understand better the models of site hierarchy. For instance, in the Argolid, although Mycenae and Tiryns are the palaces par excellence, we are not yet certain about the relationship between the two, i.e. the nature of their relationship in the context of the political geography of the region. I also think that the model that Kilian promoted is the

most reasonable, at least for me. There were two major palatial centres, with satellite sites around them. These peripheral sites can have palatial characteristics and their own satellite sites. I think that the Linear B tablets especially of Pylos, but also at Thebes, give us the picture of a territory around the palaces. The situation is much clearer at Pylos, but it slowly becomes all the more apparent at Thebes too.

**U. Thaler:** While I am not very comfortable discussing definitions at any length, and I would very much like to be able to say: “look at Mycenae and Tiryns, they give us a pretty good idea of what a palace is supposed to look like,” I do want to make the comment that maybe the question “what is a palatial centre” is already muddling the issue a bit. I think we have to make a distinction between palace as architecture, and palace as an administrative centre, which is a point made in the paper by Pascal Darcque and Françoise Rougemont, in two ways. They were very clear about it in the beginning, but I also think they slightly muddled the issue later by looking at ivory, for example. In Tiryns, the best evidence of ivory working I can think of is the remainder of a tusk with a bit of porous structure, a useless piece, quite close to the archaeological context discussed in Ann Brysbaert's paper, at the northern tip of the Lower Acropolis. This has nothing to do with the palace of Tiryns as an architectural entity. This has to do with Tiryns being a centre of high rank. Obviously that would solve some of the issues and might help take the stress out of the debate, because there will be administrative centres that clearly are no palaces. And, there may even be major centres in their own regions. As for the palace, if we want to be more systematic about the architectural unit, I think we have to use the dirty m-word. If we want to invent a definition by saying that Mycenae and Tiryns—I am using the site names from the Argolid now—represent the model, the prototype of a palace, we should try to unravel the underlying code at both sites, and that is, whether we like it or not, the megaron. The real issue here would be defining a palace architecturally. Whether we can get closer to the Mycenaean idea of what a megaron is, however tricky this may be, I think there might be a chance, although that would be a daunting task. If, for example, we look at the two megara at Tiryns, if we examine the plan, I think it is immediately apparent that although the smaller megaron embodies the same idea as the larger one, there are elements missing. There is no vestibule and there are no columns around the hearth. Therefore it seems, in my opinion, that a megaron can work without those. The tricky issue is whether there are other contexts that we can use like that. Megaron A at Dimini maybe a case, but I think that in this case there would be a number of disagreements. The Menelaion megaron may be a case, but again this is a tricky one. I think that

if we try approaching the Mycenaean concept of the building unit we call megaron, it would be enormously profitable.

**I. Tournavitou:** With respect to this elaborate concept of palatial vs administrative centres, can I just ask how would the speakers and everybody else describe the three sites in the Pagasitic Gulf, in the vicinity of modern Volos, the site at Palaia, i.e. Theocharis's Iolkos, Dimini, and Pefkakia?

**J. Maran:** I have to straighten out one thing: Pefkakia was not a centre in the Late Bronze Age. The wall that was recently attributed by a colleague to the so-called Mycenaean palace, originally discovered during Theocharis's excavation, was re-excavated in 1967 by Milošević and he found that this was a Hellenistic wall cutting into the Mycenaean settlement. Otherwise, there is nothing to suggest the status of a centre for Pefkakia, so you can leave that site out of the discussion. You can focus on Dimini, and Palaia.

**L. Skafida:** Concerning the reference to the Pagasitic Gulf and the three settlements at Volos, which have already been investigated to a greater or lesser extent, each settlement has its own particular characteristics. Kastro-Palaia, that Tsountas first excavated in 1900, claiming that it was Iolkos, and Theocharis dug again in 1956, has an occupational history similar to that of Ayios Vasilios in Laconia. There is an Ottoman and a Byzantine fortification wall, there is a Geometric stratum, as well as a Protogeometric, and a Sub-Mycenaean, all in all, a total of twelve meters of soil deposition. Dimini is a totally different case, both in terms of geomorphology and of depositional history. Kastro-Palaia is an area occupied continuously from the Early Helladic period to the present, therefore, the areas that can be excavated usually have the size of a telephone booth. On the other hand, the Dimini area is very favourable for archaeological investigation, because one can dig there extensively. Pefkakia is again geomorphologically different from the other two areas. The three settlements are certainly related in some way to the area of Pherai, which should probably be counted as a fourth settlement in the Pagasitic Gulf, according to the finds of Dr Adrymi-Sismani, and the discovery of another tholos tomb in the Kazanaki area, where there is the probability of yet another settlement nearby. Unfortunately, Dr Adrymi-Sismani is not here today to inform us about these finds. In the last two years, we are in the process of re-examining the architectural and artifactual finds from Theocharis's excavation at Kastro Palaia. During the study of the pottery, we found two Linear B tablets—Pascal Darcque and Françoise Rougemont referred to the site yesterday. These tablets alter the picture, not so much as to where the palace of Iolkos is located, as the general picture concerning the nature of the Mycenaean world. Up to recently, and despite the rich archaeological evidence from Thessaly, as well as the existence

of the relevant mythology, the region of Thessaly was considered the periphery of the Mycenaean world. The new finds, including those from Dimini, show that Linear B was known to the people of the region. Thus, we know now that there was a common form of administration throughout the whole area of the so-called Mycenaean world, that is, from Crete up to at least Thessaly, and also some common school for scribes.

**S. Voutsaki:** I quite agree with Ulrich Thaler that there are clearly definable criteria as long as you remain in Mycenae and Tiryns. Clearly, the problem arises in the grey areas. As Adamantia Vasilogamvrou had to leave early, I would like to say that all of us will shortly have to face the problem whether Ayios Vasilios in Laconia is a palace or not. As the finds accumulate, we will all have to take a position: are some Linear B tablet fragments sufficient indication of a palace? Is it a matter of finding pictorial frescoes—and, if so, how many frescoes are necessary to document a palatial centre? It is not appropriate for me to speak about Ayios Vasilios, since the director of the excavation, Adamantia Vasilogamvrou is not here, but we are talking about seventy-five trays of fresco fragments, including quite a lot of pictorial material. Is this sufficient? And there is more evidence: Last summer, the buildings revealed confirmed the results of the geophysical survey: that Ayios Vasilios is a densely built urban centre. The progress of the excavations has revealed that several of the buildings located date to the Mycenaean period. The nature of the finds is also telling: think of the twenty or so swords stored in one of the buildings. How often do we find twenty swords in a non-funerary context in the Mycenaean period? And other valuable finds, such as stone vases, seal stones, etc. - the kind of objects usually found in places like Mycenae and the other palaces. But the problem is: there is Byzantine occupation on the site including a Byzantine church on the top of the ridge, and these may have eradicated the megaron. In which case: What do we do? How can we decide if Ayios Vasilios is a palatial centre or not?

**C. Shelmerdine:** If I may bring us back to Messenia just for a moment. I will not offer any details in view of the forthcoming discussion of the material at the open meeting of the Athens Archaeological Society in May. I would though like to make a point about Pylos itself, if I may. The megaron building, the central building in Pylos, does not take its final form until LH IIIB, with remodelling in a different construction style from the earlier, underlying building. If Michael Nelson is right about his construction analysis, this is a completely new construction, in a new style. The only parallel for it, is one small section, I think, at Tiryns, a sort of box-and-rubble style construction. What it tells us is that when we come down from the Argolid to humble Messenia, somebody had a pretty good idea of what a centre of power was supposed to look like. They built very deliberately in this style, which

is the Argolid style, though not the same construction style as at Mycenae. At some point we have to take account of the notion that some Mycenaeans might have desired to build a centre that looks like a megaron building, because it had some kind of special importance for them. But, it is not necessary that all such buildings are power centres, they just share the underlying notion that they must have the same architectural style. I think that we are much too eager to find a megaron-type building in order to allow ourselves to think of another power centre.

**N. Papadimitriou:** A brief comment on the relations between Cretan and Mycenaean palaces. We have to remember that the Mycenaean palaces had a very short history, something like a hundred and fifty years. The Minoan palaces had a much longer history. Concerning what Christos Boulotis was saying before, we should not forget that in the First Palace period in Crete, the distribution of the written evidence, the distribution of the tablets and documents, was restricted to the palaces. Moreover, there is very limited evidence of external trade and of urban-style towns. It is only in the Second Palace period, when we have truly urbanized settlements, when trade with the East actually develops and when we have documents distributed in contexts that are not strictly palatial, or may be even private. This is why I insisted on asking yesterday about the level of urbanization in Mycenaean Greece, which is a very dark area, as far as I am concerned. I feel that the phenomenon of “palatial” society in Mycenaean Greece simply did not have the time to develop as far as in Crete. If we think of how to define a Mycenaean centre, we have to consider the remarks made by Pascal Darcque and Françoise Rougemont. We have to stick to the tablets, which are a very important aspect; they represent a very important function. The fact that architecturally a building may look like a “palace” is important, but it cannot be a criterion by itself.

**Y. Lolos:** The paper presented by Darcque and Rougemont is a very well structured and well-prepared paper. I would like to make a further comment on the list of the criteria used in that paper. This list is very useful, I think, but it is of an advisory, of a subsidiary character, not conclusive or decisive in nature, because it leaves out palatial centres, in my opinion, like Athens and Orchomenos in Boeotia, and other smaller or lesser palace states, such as Kanakia, in the Saronic Gulf. I think that this list of traits is rather rigid and mechanistic, basically because it ignores, to a very large degree, the context. I would follow a different approach, and I have already done so for Mycenaean Salamis, at Kanakia. A different approach, based on the detailed study of the context of each major site, and I refer to the geographical, topographical and archaeological context for a particular acropolis site, or major settlement site. In order to assess the relative importance, the relative prominence

or supremacy of a particular site within a specific region, in order to study the different social and economic processes developed in different regions of Mycenaean Greece, we should not take into account only the architectural characteristics, or the evidence of Linear B. I think it is becoming more and more apparent that palatial power in Late Mycenaean Greece was not solid and uniform, but rather diversified and asymmetrical. Palatial sites, such as Iolkos and Kanakia, help us to assess the manifestation, exercise, and gradation of palatial power in different regions of Mycenaean Greece. In conclusion, first, I think we should stop viewing palatial power in Greece in terms of Pylos and Mycenae–Tiryns. Second, we cannot expect palaces to be copy-paste all over Greece. Third, I would like to reiterate my belief in the Homeric word megaron. The matter is very simple, I think. The root of the word megaron is μέγας (μεγάλος). In any dictionary of ancient Greek, it means a large room, or a hall, or a mansion/palace. So, if someone can propose a better word to substitute the word megaron, this new term will be tested in the course of time. Until a better term is proposed, I will continue to use the word megaron.

**I. Tournavitou:** Architectural three-room unit is another alternative.

**J. Davis:** I think I more or less agree with what my dear friend Yiannos Lolos has just said, partly because we were classmates, but I am leaving that aside. I think he put his finger on something really significant, and that is the different ways that power can be expressed. I remember simpler debates about lists of traits being used to recognise centres of power going on in discussions by archaeologists working in Mesoamerica. I think today they have given up that line of pursuit and what they have done instead is recognize the multiplicity of means in which power is expressed. One way in which power can be expressed is in hierarchy of settlement. I would like to propose that, just for the sake of argument, had a Classical temple been set down on top of the palace at Pylos, quickly destroying the megaron quarter, which needless to say it was not — if we were lacking the whole central quarter of the palace, I still think that given what we know about the existence of a three-, possibly four-, tier level of hierarchy of settlement at the area, we could deduce that the site on the Englianos ridge was a center of power and controlled a good part of Messenia. Not only on the basis of the relative size of the place determined by surface investigation, and some excavation, but also by the very density of exotic finds found at that location, which is really extraordinary. Something that is not commonly recognized, and here I stop, because it was mentioned with reference to both Mycenae and Tiryns, is just how long-lived the settlement at Englianos was. Again, we’re talking about a settlement that goes back to EH II, that begins to grow substantially at the end of the EBA, was densely inhabited throughout the MBA,

and that has produced unbelievable quantities of Early Mycenaean material, particularly LH IIB–LH IIIA, most of which remains to be published. It is extraordinary within the area of western Messenia.

**I. Tournavitou:** Thank you very much. I think we should be moving on, and try to be a bit more concise on the Lower Towns issue? That is, the two Lower Towns, because we have not got many, at the two major palatial centres, of Mycenae and Tiryns. Judging by what we heard about Tiryns by Joseph Maran earlier, it seems that they developed differently over time. Also, the architecture in these Lower Towns is very different. Do they represent different organisational principles, different class defined habitation practices and in effect a different sociopolitical stratification?

**E. French:** You called particular attention to the less pretentious architecture of the Panagia Houses and the quite distinctive divergence in the materials found in each group.

**I. Tournavitou:** We have gradations, let's say, at the level of architecture, and obviously, by extension, at the level of the socioeconomic status of the people occupying the various buildings. Have we identified any low profile societal groups at Mycenae, in the buildings that have been excavated? No, not yet. We have palatial appendages, we have private residences, quite well built, some of them with fresco decoration, but authentic assimilation to the palatial prototype, was only attested in the palatial appendages, the so called "Ivory Houses" and to a lesser degree at Petsas House, possibly reflecting a different level of palatial/elite involvement, perhaps one of the things future excavation may change.

**K.A. Wardle:** One thing that occurs to me as a rather important difference between the Lower Town at Tiryns and the Lower Town at Mycenae is that at Mycenae, the Lower Town develops and spreads in a landscape, which is already a landscape filled with tombs, whereas at Tiryns, as far as we know, the town is simply developing in the available open space of the plain around the citadel itself. We tried to pin down Joseph Maran yesterday about what is known about the LH IIIB town, and he was definitely avoiding telling us what we know at the moment. But I think that the contrast between Mycenae, where the town is already occupied, but spreads by the cemetery areas, and Tiryns, where there is some distance, is an important one.

**E. French:** I think I would argue that the area of the Lower Town at Mycenae was already occupied by tombs at the time they were building.

**J. Maran:** Ken brought up an important difference indeed. It is a very typical thing for Mycenae, this ritual topography

of graves and grave monuments. This we do not have at Tiryns. Neither do we have something vaguely resembling the "Ivory Houses" at Tiryns. It could be coincidence, since only certain parts of the Lower Town are being investigated, and our first attempts at geophysical prospecting were not that fruitful. What we get to the south of the acropolis, and also to the west of the acropolis, provides evidence for a 14th c. BC, Early Mycenaean, and Early Helladic occupation, but it looks more domestic than official. Especially during the LH IIIB2 period, habitation in the Lower Town does not stand out for some reason. Then, we get the boom in the LH IIIC period, as of the earliest LH IIIC, and this is again a major difference to Mycenae, namely, the systematic way of rebuilding, in the northern part at least of the Lower Town, which is very remarkable. But, up to now, qualitatively, there is a big difference between the Lower Towns at Mycenae and Tiryns in the Palatial period.

**I. Tournavitou:** Have we thought about what that might mean economically, politically, socially for the history of the towns and the palatial centres in general?

**J. Maran:** Christos Boulotis brought up this issue, Kilian's hypothesis of the early 1980s, of several centres coexisting. I think we have to face the awful possibility that, due to a lack of archives in these centres, we will never be able to find written documents telling us "how it really was". So, archaeological arguments will play a major role, and I see at least five arguments in favour of Mycenae as the major centre and Tiryns being just part of the same kingdom: First, the unique ritual topography of graves and monuments at Mycenae, which were included into passageways leading to the citadel. Second the Cult Centre (or centres) at Mycenae, which is also not paralleled by anything in Tiryns during the Palatial period. As we saw today it has a long, complex history at Mycenae itself. Third, returning to Tiryns, the deliberate use of a particular stone material from Mycenae, as I showed. It was recognized by Müller in 1930, that this is a raw material brought from Mycenae, and the way it was used—one of the most important points—is a clear indication of a link between Tiryns and Mycenae. Fourth, the existence of these two megaron structures in Tiryns, not attested in other sites, is highly suggestive of the likelihood that the smaller megaron was meant for a deputy, someone at a lower level than the *wanax*. Fifth, what I think is an indication only for a centripetal movement at Tiryns, suggests that the latter was the destination of processions from somewhere else, while at Mycenae you get completely different patterns of circulation. Anyone who wants to claim that these centres coexisted at an equal level, must bring forward similarly good arguments for that and I do not see any.

**C. Boulotis:** In this case, the Cult Centre of Mycenae is the Cult Centre *par excellence* of the whole Mycenae kingdom. To strengthen your criteria I could add the close similarities between the Tiryns wall paintings and the Mycenae wall paintings. In some cases it seems that it was the same group of artists working at both sites.

**S. Voutsaki:** In my mind, there are six arguments in support of Joseph's thesis. And, I have to say, parenthetically, I have to congratulate Joseph for managing to say that two of the sites he is digging are not, in the case of Pefkakia, a palace, in the case of Tiryns, a "first-order" palace. This is something that we ought to applaud. The parenthesis is over and I go back to the comparison of Mycenae and Tiryns. There is a sixth argument: the wealth. I think we tend to forget, because of the publication history of Mycenae, how terribly wealthy Mycenae is, in relation to Tiryns, but also—I hate to say this, Jack—in relation to Pylos as well. The only two centers that can be closely compared in terms of wealth are Mycenae and Thebes. If we go to the old preliminary reports on the Mycenae excavations, in the 1950s or 60s, on every page there is a unique artifact. If you look at the tombs it is the same picture. The chamber tombs of Mycenae are enormously rich and we do not even have the material from the tholos tombs. And, if you look at the workshops, in Tiryns we have very little ivory, while at Mycenae we have thousands and thousands fragments and objects of ivory. The wealth is incomparable.

**I. Tournavitou:** Thank you. What about Midea?

**K. Demakopoulou:** Midea was a fortress like the other two Argive citadels. I think there are similarities and there must have been communication between these three major sites in the Argolid. All three were fortified in the Cyclopean system. Of course, at Midea the great architectural monuments that we encounter at the other two sites, have not yet been discovered. Recent excavations, however, brought to light some features that Midea has in common with the other two citadels, such as the two monumental gates, one of them protected by a bastion, a megalithic ramp leading to the main gate of the acropolis, the sally port, even if this was found blocked, and a massive retaining wall outside the fortification. We have also excavated some well-made buildings. I think that the three citadels formed a network for the control and defence of the Argive plain, and of the roads that led to the north, south, and towards the Argive and Saronic Gulfs. Midea must have had the control of the routes that led via Arachnaion from Kazarma, to the east coast, to important settlements like Palaia Epidauros, and Kalamianos, which, as we heard from Prof. Pullen, was a very important port during the Palatial period.

**A.-L. Schallin:** I agree with Mrs Demakopoulou, but I would like to add that, in my opinion, these palatial citadel sites in the Argolid, all have their own specific character and we need to discover their individual identity in order to understand the inter-regional relations.

**E. French:** I would have thought that Midea has definitely a defensive role in guarding these passes and routes that Dr Demakopoulou has just been talking about. I wonder if the need to do that is linked to the foundation of the sites at Korfos, at the end of another route that Mycenae is systematizing carefully. The other thing to remember is that the sites of the Argolid are not intervisible. They depended upon Argos for their intercommunications. Jan Verstraete pointed this out long ago in the paper at the British School, and it is only from Argos that you can see all the other major centres.

**I. Tournavitou:** Perhaps we should envisage Midea's role as similar to the role played by the palatial complex at Galatas in relation to Knossos in Crete, something like an outpost?

I would now like to call on Ken Wardle to comment on what was said about boundaries and relationships.

**K.A. Wardle:** This started off as the sort of a diagram one draws on the tablecloth over dinner (*Fig. 1*). This is how it could have worked. Let us take it apart. We normally think of the citadel walls of Mycenae and Tiryns as being social boundaries, as well as defensive boundaries. One of my questions is: does this actually work? We have another boundary, explicit in Tiryns, between the Middle Citadel and the Upper Citadel. The palace at Tiryns, in its final stage, is well defined and restricted, whereas at Mycenae, it is much harder to see where the palace ends, within the framework of the other buildings around it, with all the different functions. From our discussions of Mycenaean economy, I don't think that any of us would think that the whole Mycenae area, the whole of the Argolid, was run from a single centre, on the model of a directed economy. There are elements around the palace, different types of rural dependencies, which directly relate to administrative control. The records for these are being kept in Linear B, one presumes. Obviously, other communities, essentially with subsistence economies need certain things from the centre that are only available there and to be obtained through some kind of 'market' economy. Then you have the aspect of mercantile activity, the high status objects, which we have just heard arrived at Mycenae in much larger numbers than anywhere else. If the boundaries of the citadel are indeed social boundaries as well as defensive boundaries, why can't we see much more clearly which kind of people lived and worked in each area? This model may be pure fantasy but it is one I am sort of coming to believe in. That was what I wanted to introduce and leave others to tear apart.

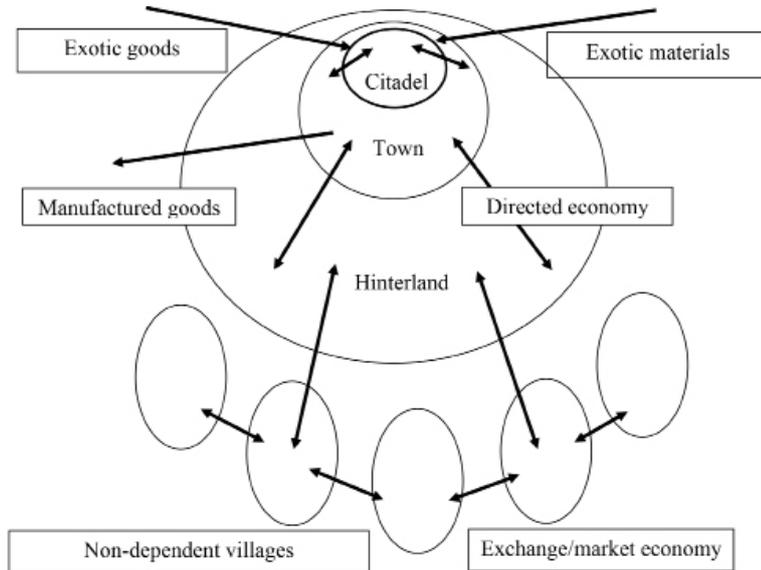


Fig. 1. *The Mycenaean economic hierarchy.*  
Illustration by K.A. Wardle.

**C. Boulotis:** A comment on the previous subject that is perhaps also related with Ken's proposal. We can speculate about the significance of the fortifications, and more specifically, if the erection of fortifications at the big citadels signifies a deep change in political geography and also in the relations among the Argolid centres. I cannot believe that all these fortifications were for external enemies. Conflicts among rulers were something very usual at the time. I remind you the extent of the conflicts between the dynastic families in the mythology of the Argolid, even if that reflects more a Geometric reality than a Mycenaean one. These were conflicts between Argos and Mycenae, Argos and Tiryns, and so on. I think that all these mythological dynastic conflicts also reflect reminiscences of the Mycenaean period. I think that the fortifications were not there exclusively for protection from attacks from the outside.

**I. Tournavitou:** Fortifications were not at all intended as protection from external enemies, in the beginning at least. I think they modified to that effect much later, perhaps in the mature 13th c. BC.

**C. Gillis:** I just have a question to Ken's model. Where would you place the smiths?

**K.A. Wardle:** Traditionally, you tend to place metal smiths as far away from the centre as possible. Despite the evidence we have for their existence in the heart of the citadel, I would expect major activity like that to be outside, in the same way that

Kim Shelton has shown us the existence of pottery making facilities outside the citadel, a centre for pottery and figurine manufacture. Again, potters and their kilns are not welcome right in the heart of the community, if possible.

**C. Gillis:** I was not thinking how many feet away from the main megaron we are going to have metal smelting. That was not my question. My question is the following: you have 280 smiths named by name, out in the hinterlands, producing, you have a whole bunch of metal allotted to them, copper or bronze depending on how you understand the word, and you have an order by each one, which can either be "here is your metal, deliver something back", or it can be something they have more or less ordered and are going to use for themselves. But, in any case, you have nothing like melting or smelting, metalworking, anywhere near the centres. The closest is, unless I am uninformed, Nichoria, but it is still not Pylos. You have all these people producing wonderful metal things, but they are also producing nails for horses out in the hinterlands. How do you understand the control of them, if there is any?

**K.A. Wardle:** Well, one presumes the control exists because the records of the activity exist. This one has always puzzled me, because the logical place to do your metalworking is you where you have your raw materials and where you have the fuel. My only thought on the Pylos model is that the raw materials are sent out to workshops in the rural areas, because they have fuel handy and they can work it before sending it back. But beyond that I am at a loss.

**C. Gillis:** But if that, how do you understand *ta-ra-si-ja*? *Ta-ra-si-ja* says “ok, smith, you are producing forty daggers” that is a little bit different from “here are your raw materials, produce finished objects and give me everything back”. I don’t think really, I mean I don’t know, since I am not a specialist in Linear B, but is it absolutely certain that *ta-ra-si-ja*, which is basically only for metals, and I think for textiles, has to be “here is your raw materials, produce for me”? Can’t it be “I’m purchasing forty arrowheads” from independent workers, not under palace control?

**C. Shelmerdine:** Let’s not have it presented as a binary problem. There can be smiths who work sometimes for the palace and sometimes not. Yes, I think *ta-ra-si-ja* does mean to me an allotment of bronze or textiles, and it could be lots of other things that we don’t happen to have documented. In that case, the smith gets an allotment of bronze and is expected to give something back. What bothers me is why we do not have the records of what is expected back and whether it actually arrived at Pylos. We do have that, however, at Knossos for the textiles. We have a very careful tracking and it happens to survive. The *ta-ra-si-ja* goes out, the textiles come in, and they are finished. But the palace has a stable of smiths that they can be brought on, some of them are recorded as having allotments, and some of them are recorded by name, as not having allotments, but they are available in case of need, in case of specific orders. But, the rest of the time, what are they doing? They are smithing, and the potters are potting, and other people in the community are getting their fishhooks and so on. The *ta-ra-si-ja* represents an intervention of a transaction that occurs between a smith and the palace. The fact that the palace keeps the records suggests that it can and will require something of the smith, but it doesn’t mean that it controls his everyday activity.

**A. Michailidou:** Of course smiths were working both for the palace and for the settlements, some of them at least. Perhaps the main thing is that the palace gave high quality raw materials, whereas the people at the settlements would bring to the smiths objects to be mended or re-melted. But I have a question for Prof. Wardle. First, what does he mean by “market economy”—between brackets of course, he was very careful of that.

**K.A. Wardle:** I very carefully, as you said, put the quotes around it. A market economy exists in almost every rural community in terms of the raw materials individuals can have and the products that they can make themselves, and there are patterns of exchange going on. Whether “market” is precisely the right term, I am not so sure, but I cannot think of an alternative. There is always a stage of barter and exchange, whether you have to go to the centre to acquire something, or whether

you can have travelling sellers who bring things to your community and you purchase it in some way.

**A. Michailidou:** What you describe seems to me more as an exchange economy in general, because if we use the word market economy, then we have to define, first, if we are talking about the place, or more correctly the mechanism of the exchange activity. Then, anyone can suggest how he can use the term market between brackets, for example, a person may wonder if there is sort of monetary insight in the exchange, but this does not mean that currency is accepted.

**I. Tournavitou:** I suppose most of us have seen the poster for the Arachnaion excavation by Olga Psychoyos, which we did not manage to discuss in the previous section on religion. Would any of you have any comments, any contribution?

**J. Maran:** This brings us back to what Ken was trying to tell us earlier, the question of social boundaries between palaces and Lower Towns. These boundaries were linked with social practice, including practices of daily life, but, especially such of ritual communication, which in turn brings us back to religion. I am sure that there was a symbolic landscape, which was evoked on certain occasions, in which also such peak sanctuaries played a role. To understand better this landscape we also have to take into account the road systems and passages inside and outside the citadels. The patterns of circulation in the lower towns in daily life may have been quite different from such during ritualized occasions, which were directed towards various points and monuments in the landscape. We are only just beginning to comprehend this very important level of religion. Up to now, what we take as religious evidence is restricted to specific objects, figurines, frescoes, etc. This is very important, but religion is always practice.

**I. Tournavitou:** I saw Mt. Arachnaion from afar, as I was driving on the road from Nauplion to Epidavros, and it is a daunting sight. This might have something to do with the ritualized landscape we were talking about. Another instance of ritual activity on a mountain top is of course Prophitis Ilias at Tiryns.

**J. Davis:** Since we were invited to comment on Mt. Arachnaion, I just want to mention that it is fascinating how much we still have to learn about ideological landscapes. For instance, Mt. Lykaion. Most of us are accustomed to thinking of Mt. Lykaion, even now, as an Arkadian sanctuary. But, we should not forget just how dominant the site is in Messenia. Wonderful views, it literally dominates the Pamisos valley, and it has clear views all the way to Mt. Aigaleon. On the evidence of the deep deposits of palace-style LH IIIB kylikes

now found there, it must be associated with Mycenaean operations/interests in Further Province.

**C. Boulotis:** I think that all of us, who have worked with Mycenaean religion, have come to the conclusion that the best candidate for a thorough study of prehistoric religion is Egypt. There are many pictorial representations, there are texts, ritualistic texts, hymns and so on. From the Hittites we have many sacral texts describing rituals in detail and many pictorial representations. When we move to the Minoan and especially to the Mycenaean world, although there are many representations, not only wall paintings, but also seals, rings, etc., the textual evidence is very poor. Linear B gives us a very good view of the Mycenaean pantheon, a very important view. It also hints at festivals and cult practices. But, there is a great discrepancy between texts and pictorial representations, and only a few exceptions of cultic scenes, processions and rituals attested in Linear B for example, correspond to representations on wall paintings, and sealings. In Linear B, there are a few hints concerning the dedication of textiles, and, I believe, there are some reflections of this practice in wall paintings too. And, there is the Mycenaean calendar, which is extremely significant for the study of Mycenaean religion, especially the festivals. I would like to emphasise here the close correspondence between the pantheon, cult practices, and the calendar, as illustrated in the Linear B texts, with the pantheon, the cult practices and the calendar used in the historical period. For me, this is a very important point for the continuity between the Mycenaean and the historical period, at least as far as religion is concerned.

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**I. Tournavitou:** Another major issue concerns the absence of official explicitly religious cult buildings in the big centres, especially during the mature Palatial period. I am asking for your comments because nobody in this conference has publicly contradicted the notion that the religious function of the cult buildings at Mycenae for example, during the mature Palatial period, before the extension of the fortification walls, was complemented by the palatial megaron at the top of the hill. The same argument could be applied to Tiryns, only

more categorically. I had not realized that this notion, which I personally object to, concerning the religious function of the megaron in the mature Mycenaean period, was so widely accepted.

**E. French:** Many of us do not agree with it. But I don't think you need necessarily a big building. This is a usage I would associate with the courtyards of the palaces or other such buildings. On the other hand in Turkey the mosque itself is roomy and the courtyard, though often large, serves to link the varied facilities of the complex. I have always proposed that Mycenaean sanctuaries or cult places consisted of a small nucleus, perhaps something like a chapel, and a big area outside, where things were going on, things were shown to the public, we've got frescoes of this, that sort of situation, rather than having a decent sized-building.

**I. Tournavitou:** Then you wouldn't expect an official religious sector represented on a more monumental architectural scale?

**E. French:** I think religion was perfectly official, but it did not need a built space, an architectural statement.

**J. Maran:** I do not entirely agree. I think the megaron was a statement pertaining to religion and the profane world, which were simply not separated. On certain occasions, it may have been used for feasting, but the ceremonial context of feasting again was a bridge to the religious sector. I do not think that in Mycenaean kingdoms you can separate profane and religious power, like in most other kingdoms of the second millennium BC.

**I. Tournavitou:** It is precisely this comparison that worries me. Since we lack concrete, direct evidence, we tend to adopt ideological and systemic models from elsewhere. Is it valid at this level?

**J. Maran:** May I add that we have religious iconography linked to palatial buildings. I think that this is a very strong indication that religion and power are connected. What are the processions, where are they leading?

**I. Tournavitou:** They could be secular. I know you do not agree, but I do not think we can be absolutely certain either way.

**C. Boulotis:** There is not a single case in prehistory, or in other contemporary civilisations, where the ruler does not have religious associations. In Egypt, the ruler is a living god, among the Hittites he was worshipped as a god after his death. If we choose to speak in terms of a strict distinction between political power and religion, the Mycenaean world will be the only exception in prehistory. It is impossible to exercise power

without combining political power and religion. I think that Palaima has demonstrated very effectively, through the Linear B tablets, the religious aspect of the *wa-na-ka*.

**V. Petrakis:** I think Prof. Maran's comparison was much more general. In all archaic states, at every level of political organisation prior to the Enlightenment, religion and secular power are integrated. This dichotomy is a much more modern concept. They did not understand precisely how politics worked. In order to accept another human being as leader, they had to ascribe to this human being qualities above the average, even supernatural. There is evidence in every pre-modern society that leaders had religious qualities above and beyond the human level. Every chief and king had adopted this aspect while exercising power. We would need special arguments to refute the religious function of the ruler.

**K. Papaioannou:** On the contrary, in 2000 BC things are more complex. There are kings and gods, but at the same time, there is Ugarit. The king of Ugarit is quite different. Of course, every king has adopted religious paraphernalia, but it is not the same everywhere. There are other conditions prevailing in Egypt, other conditions in Syrian kingdoms and perhaps different conditions in Mycenaean Greece. The lugal is not the king of the Hittites, he is the king of Sumeria, and in Sumerian, it means the great man. The kings do have religious paraphernalia, but it is not the same. You can see that from the tombs. They show respect, but not respect for old time's sake. After three years, they "make room" for the new dead. It is not the same as in the tombs of Old Mesopotamia, in the time of Ur. It is quite different.

**C. Shelmerdine:** I think that Boulotis and Petrakis are right in that religion and power are very closely intertwined in ways that we are probably may never be able to understand fully. Having said that, we can look at the Linear B evidence, as you know Dr Boulotis, and see some nuances. The king in Pylos does exactly two things that we know of: he appoints a ritual official and he is initiated. That is very important. We think that heredity was very important for the power, the authority of the Mycenaean kings. The fact that he is initiated must also be important and brings us back to the religious aspect. But having said that, at a slightly lower level, we do encounter some distinction, within the administrative structure, between religious authorities and secular authorities. There are workshops, smiths, that are designated as *poti-ni-ja-we-jo* (potnian). That must make them somehow distinct, there must have been some level of power that the religious sector wielded over that workshop. We have a dispute where a priestess says that she holds a plot of land for the god, so there is some room for religious landholdings. It can be that the Mycenaeans themselves made a distinction between the

secular land and religious landholdings, even if in this case the *damos* says "no, it is not a religious landholding, you still have to work it, it is really ours". That suggests that there can be differences underneath a general umbrella, where these things are tightly tied. We ought to keep in mind these distinctions, I believe, and at the same time we have to keep all these poles in the air, like some wonderful juggler.

**I. Tournavitou:** On this note, I am afraid we will have to end this hopefully ongoing discussion. Although the issues we raised and discussed during this conference went far above and beyond the narrow limits of the NE Peloponnese as such, I cannot honestly claim that this was beyond our original hopes and expectations. It has been exactly what we were secretly hoping for! It has been an unbelievably intriguing experience for all of us and we would like to thank you for making all this possible. We were very happy to share these four days with you, and especially Lisa French for sharing these days with us.

**A.-L. Schallin:** On behalf of Iphiyenia and myself I thank you all for your various contributions and interesting and thought evoking discussions. I believe that we have enriched our previous knowledge considerably and most of all, I am convinced now that Mycenaean archaeology is a large team-work.

**J. Maran:** Since this is our last evening together and tomorrow is the last day of the conference and we have already heard that some colleagues will be leaving, I know that many people will find it appropriate that we express our gratitude to two very special persons, Ann-Louise and Iphiyenia. Our thanks are due for various reasons: first, for having the idea for this conference, for recognizing that there is the necessity for this conference; second, for going into all the trouble to make it happen, on the technical side, but also the theoretical side, that is, which topics to choose, to not have a lopsided conference, but to view this general subject from all possible aspects, and I think you succeeded; third, for going into all this trouble of having the conference, because it is a nice thing, but it is a lot of trouble and effort for you. You must be very exhausted. After the conference, we and also you will look back and you will be having very warm feelings for this conference. The most important thing, in my opinion, is that you created a very warm and friendly atmosphere for discussions, and we indeed have heated discussions, but they are to the point and take place in a very open-minded and friendly atmosphere. We are very grateful to you two for creating this atmosphere and guiding us through this conference. And, there is a third person to thank: Tess Paulson. Usually with power point there are many situations, we all know that, when we think that perhaps the old slides would have been better. This has not happened here. I think that you have a very nice touch on this, you managed to guide this conference through all this, there were