

Constantinos Paschalidis (with contributions by Photini J. P. McGeorge and Wiesław Więckowski). *The Mycenaean Cemetery at Achaia Clauss near Patras*. pp. xxiii+510, 918 ill. (238 photos & plans of tombs, mostly b/w; 679 col. ill., 96 accompanied by b/w drawings), 15 tables. 2018. Oxford: Archaeopress. ISBN 978-1-78491-919-1, paperback £90; ISBN 978-1-78491-920-7, e-book £16.

This is the second publication of tombs from a large Mycenaean cemetery in Achaia to appear in two years; the other, being concerned with tombs at Ayios Vasileios, Chalandritsa (hereafter Chalandritsa) was reviewed in *JGA* 3 (2018), 449–451 (Aktypi 2017). The two sites both belong to a constellation of sites to the east and south-east of Patras, but there are noteworthy differences between the two. The Chalandritsa tombs were mainly excavated in rescue work carried out by members of the Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities of Achaia at various times between 1989 and 2001; the cemetery contained at least 45 tombs, but only about a dozen produced much useful information, and only two of these were excavated more or less intact. The volume reviewed here publishes the results of research excavations in the Clauss cemetery, carried out for the Archaeological Society between 1988 and 1992 by Prof. A. Papadopoulos of Ioannina University. The cemetery site (B44 in Hope Simpson and Dickinson 1979, 87) has been known since Kyparissis' excavations in 1936–1938, which uncovered many tombs, some apparently intact. Unfortunately, the documentation for these has largely been lost, although there are preliminary reports in *PAE* and many finds are preserved in the Archaeological Museum of Patras. These tombs appear to have been east and north-east of those more recently excavated, for five were rediscovered during the excavation (cf. cemetery plans, pp. 16, fig. 11 and 125, fig. 236). While many of these earlier excavated tombs seem to have been robbed in antiquity or recently, the 13 (two double-chambered, hence alternatively cited as 15) excavated by Prof. Papadopoulos and his team proved to be largely intact, although erosion and recent agriculture and road-building have done damage, especially to the tombs' dromoi. The material was entrusted to C. Paschalidis, who had worked on many of Prof. Papadopoulos's excavations, as a topic for a Ph.D. dissertation, which was presented in 2014. He has published a preliminary account that gave much detail on the cemetery (Paschalidis and McGeorge

2009), and has now produced this very substantial volume.

This is in fact the first full publication of a large group of mostly intact chamber tombs from any part of the Mycenaean world since the publication of the Perati cemetery in Attica (Iakovidis 1969–1970), and as such it deserves extended attention. Full publications of other groups of intact tombs, as from Pylos (Blegen et al. 1973, 176–215) and Dendra (Åström 1977), though important, concern only a few tombs, as does the recent publication of six tombs, two looted, from Ayia Sotira near Nemea (Smith et al. 2017, reviewed in *JGA* 4 (2019), 433–435). Thus much might be expected from the publication of a body of material that extends in date over a period of some three centuries or more, although the bulk of the material comes from the Postpalatial period, so the last century or so. Only 53 of the minimum 133 burials identified are clearly of Postpalatial date and so 'primary' (p. 447), but a great deal of the material, which includes over 300 vases, 56 bronze objects, and 475 beads of various materials, accompanied these burials. Much information is presented clearly and in detail, but the concentration is largely on providing full accounts of the discoveries in the tomb chambers, while questions of the manner in which tombs were used and the remains of the dead handled, and their overall social function, are given rather standard answers that depend on traditional assumptions. Parallels for individual items are sought in other Achaean cemeteries and sometimes in Postpalatial cemeteries elsewhere, but there is no attempt to compare the cemetery as a whole with other Postpalatial cemeteries, especially Perati. It may reasonably be argued that giving proper publication to all the details of the distribution of material in the tombs and the large mass of material constitutes a sufficiently substantial topic for a doctoral thesis. But it would have enhanced this publication if some general assessment of the value of the Clauss cemetery's evidence for our general picture of the Postpalatial world had been attempted.

The work begins well with a useful up-to-date summary in Ch. 1 of the state of our knowledge of the whole region of Achaia in the Mycenaean period. In the course of this Paschalidis argues plausibly for associating the Clauss cemetery with the substantial site of Mygdalia Petrotou 1 km distant, where he has collaborated in excavation with Dr. L. Papazoglou-Manioudaki since 2008. Results of the excavation here and in closely associated locations are summarised on pp. 8–11 (see also Papazoglou-Manioudaki and Paschalidis 2017, 453–457); the settlement was apparently founded at the beginning

of the Mycenaean period, and the discovery of a tholos tomb in the neighbourhood suggests that it was a major local centre. The cemetery seems to have been founded in the LH IIIA1 phase or not much before, for material of this phase has been found in most of the excavated tombs, but here we encounter one of the traditional assumptions that needs questioning. It is suggested that its foundation was 'meeting the needs of the local population' (p. 11, cf. also p. 124, 'a collective decision'). But a little calculation will indicate that, even if full study of the 'secondary' burial remains reveals that the number of burials substantially exceeded 133, it can hardly come near the number of adult dead that might be expected in a multi-household community over a period of three centuries, let alone the children, whose burials are often thought to be under-represented in Mycenaean cemeteries (cf. *JGA* 3 (2018), 450, 4 (2019), 435). Thus, what is being observed is surely a decision by a more prosperous *upper stratum* of the community's population to follow other Achaean communities in emulating a custom already adopted widely in the Argolid and elsewhere on the Greek mainland, and thus to portray itself as properly 'Mycenaean'. This stratum could nevertheless have developed distinctive local preferences and practices, and may have become more of an elite in Postpalatial times, as might be deduced from the treatment of their remains and the choice of goods to be buried with them.

Ch. 2 gives an account of the tombs, which were arranged in quite tightly packed rows along a hill slope, with a common orientation to the northwest for all but one, Θ, which had to be re-oriented to avoid an unusually hard area of rock. Three of the tombs seem to have been constructed in the Postpalatial period; two were relatively small and held few burials, but N was very much in the traditional style, holding burials in pits as well as on the floor, one of which was the sole cremation from the cemetery. Very detailed accounts are given of the excavation of the tombs' chambers and the distribution of the skeletal remains and other finds, illustrated with plans and other drawings and many photographs (mostly black and white). The information for each tomb is then summarised in a suggested history of its use, with a chart showing the likely sequence of burials and their nature ('primary', with details of sex and age where available, or 'secondary') and suggested phase dates, using the six subdivisions of the Postpalatial period in Achaea proposed in Moschos 2009. In contrast, very little attention is given to the dromoi, although the descriptions make clear that stratification was observed in the excavated parts and quite substantial quantities of pottery were often found. The potential significance

of the material found in the dromos strata for understanding funerary practice seems not to have been recognised (contrast the Chalandritsa publication, where useful accounts are given of the material from most dromoi).

The only information usually given about the dromos material is on the range of shapes found, without any indication of date (was this material not preserved, or was it not available for study?). Enough is said to show that the range is strikingly different from the material in the chambers, being dominated by open shapes such as kylikes, deep bowls and kraters (pp. 23, 53-54, 67, 95, 104). This material is interpreted as representing the remains of probable libations and funeral feasts (pp. 332, 466-467), without apparently recognising how unusual and remarkable this would be. In contrast, in their general survey Cavanagh and Mee stressed the rarity of evidence from Achaean graves for the 'toasting' ritual involving kylikes that is identifiable in Argive and other cemeteries (1998, 115), and cite very little to do with funerary feasts from any Mycenaean context, only suggesting, on the basis of ethnographic parallels, that these might have taken place at the 'second funeral' (1998, 111). It has been more usual to interpret pottery other than kylix fragments found in the dromoi of tombs as goods of earlier burials, cleared from the chamber (which seems to be the case with much of the Chalandritsa material). This possibility should surely have been considered, particularly for shapes of types commonly found in the chambers and unlikely to form part of a funeral feast, like stirrup jars and large jars; indeed, given the common discovery of open vessels, especially drinking vessels, of generally LH IIIA-B date within tomb chambers elsewhere, it is possible that these too were grave-goods. However, without any information on the date of the dromos material any interpretation must be speculative.

As seems common in Achaea, the tombs themselves are generally unremarkable, roughly circular or elliptical in shape and not very large. They often contain pits, sometimes quite carefully constructed and slab-covered, used for single burials, sometimes more shallow and intended to contain the preserved remains of earlier burials. More often, primary burials were laid on the tomb floor and later might be moved to heaps close to the walls of the tomb. All were inhumations except for the single cremation in N, an adult male apparently late in date. Many tombs were used for quite a number of burials over the Postpalatial period, so that the total numbers buried in them over the century or more of that period were probably greater than those buried in the two centuries or so usually estimated for LH IIIA-B. The

totals from several graves are considerably more than have been identified in most chamber tombs anywhere in the Mycenaean world. The majority of burials were adults, with a few adolescents and children but hardly any infants or neonates, though one unusual burial was that of an adolescent girl who had died while giving birth. No regular distinction seems to have been made between male and female, or adult and child, in grave-goods; the provision of several vases, decorated or at least part-painted, was normal, although some burials, especially those in pits, of both adults and children had no goods closely associated with them. Remarkably often the vases provided were stirrup jars, which make up c. 50% of all the pottery (in comparison, they formed only 29.5% of a much larger sample, 1227 vases, at Perati). The good quality of many vases' decoration suggests the relatively high status of those presented with them as grave-goods, but frugality is observable in the provision of other goods such as ornaments (beads are quite common but were normally found in small numbers only) and bronze objects like weapons or tools, normally found singly.

One pair of burials in Tomb Θ deserves particular attention for their striking features. The unusual way they were laid out, apparently facing each other, suggests that they were husband and wife. The male, apparently wrapped in a garment fastened by five bone pins, was provided with a Naue II sword, spearhead, knife of Italian origin, and a pair of tweezers, all apparently wrapped in a cloth, along with many vases, while the female was provided with two long necklaces, a bronze razor, and more vases. The exceptional nature of this find is enhanced by the fact that at a later period in the tomb's use a stone bench was put up over the male burial, on which were found bones of a calf and a young pig, surely sacrificial remains, and, on a separate step, two very large four-handled amphorae. All this suggests that he received something like 'heroic' honours on one occasion of reopening the tomb, and though relatively young (the male c. 29, the female 25-35), the two were probably dominant figures locally in their time.

In being provided with a Naue II sword the male burial has one parallel in Kyparissis' graves and others in many Achaean cemeteries of the period (cf. Deger-Jalkotzy 2006 for a valuable discussion), but only a few of such burials, the maximum being four, occur in any one cemetery. Some other males at Clauss were provided with a single weapon, generally a spearhead as quite often in other Achaean cemeteries, but in Tomb A a short sword. The sword-burials are clearly special, and were surely not just 'warriors' (i.e. specialised fighting

men), but leaders, equivalents of the *basileis* of Homer and Hesiod, as argued in Ch. 7 (p. 473). So it is of interest that they, and quite lavishly provided female burials like that in Tomb Θ, were not found separately in special tombs, but were placed together with others in the standard type of tomb, along with burials that seem much more ordinary in their grave-goods. This suggests that in Postpalatial society in Achaean status probably had to be achieved rather than inherited. It also seems clear that regional prosperity, though evident, was not sufficient to allow the burial of particularly valuable goods on the scale found with the most important burials of earlier Mycenaean times. But the possibility that such items were sometimes buried with the dead and removed during later use of the tomb, in a practice labelled 'legal looting' (p. 464) is suggested by a few finds, notably a single bronze vessel-handle in Tomb N, and cannot be excluded.

After a short Ch. 3 on the setting and architecture of the tombs, two major sections form the catalogue of finds (Ch. 4) and an analysis of them (Ch. 5). In the catalogue the items are listed for each tomb apparently in the order in which they were discovered and numbered, with no arrangement by type, phase, material, or find-spot, making it hard to develop an overall impression quickly. But the information is presented in the accounts of the distribution of material in the chambers, and all items are illustrated, mostly in colour, with supporting black and white drawings of a selection of vases, weapons and other small finds. The catalogue is made lengthy by the extensive and, in the reviewer's opinion, excessive compilations of comparanda for each pot. Since the development and parallels of the different shapes are discussed in considerable detail in Ch. 5, with frequent references to the standard works of Furumark (1941) and his successors, especially Mountjoy 1999, brief cross-references to this discussion would surely have been a more economical use of space.

Analysis of the pottery dominates Ch. 5, which is not surprising because there is so much of it, but it is inflated by an extremely long discussion of the stirrup jars, in which much space and extra illustration is devoted to the identification of individual 'potters', to whom several examples can be attributed through close similarities in shape, fabric and decoration, in each of Moschos' six stages. Work by these 'potters', sometimes including other shapes, is identified in other Achaean cemeteries, and examples of some groups are identified in Elis and even beyond; the information is summarised with other material in Ch. 7, entitled 'The people

and society of Clauss. Overview and history of the cemetery'. But although this analysis sheds some light on the production of more elaborate pottery in the region of Clauss and on interconnections with other regions of Postpalatial Mycenaean Greece, the numbers attributable to any individual are almost always very small, and this tells us nothing very useful about the organisation of the pottery industry. Further, the context in which exchanges were made is not really discussed – references to 'markets' (e.g. p. 473) are surely anachronistic – nor is Achaea's involvement in larger stylistic groups such as the 'West Mainland *koine*' investigated (Mountjoy 1999, 404-405). Neither is there any consideration of the idea that the exchange of the often elaborately decorated stirrup jars might have more to do with questions of formal gift-giving and relations between communities than with any supposedly superior quality of their contents, in Achaea as plausibly in other parts of the Postpalatial Aegean.

The discussion of burial customs in Ch. 6 considers many facets of the evidence in a fairly standard way. There is an underlying assumption that the tombs were in continuous use from their foundation, but the assumption depends on the correctness of the analysis of the pottery, which cannot simply be assumed. For example, the reviewer considers that all the pots found with burial Δ in Tomb Λ (pp. 100, 104) could be LH IIIA1, which seems plausible since they apparently belong with a single 'secondary' burial; if accepted, this would create a long gap in the datable evidence for burials in that tomb. Ch. 8 is concerned with the human remains but, disappointingly, does not cover even the identified 'primary' burials fully; the discussion by W. Więckowski deals only with those in Tombs Λ, M and N, together with some comments on the secondary remains from the 'alcove' I in the dromos of Tomb K, by (here there is an unresolved discrepancy between the main account of the tomb, which reports 18 burials, and the comments on p. 481 about the groups into which the 'alcove' remains had been divided, which might spread remains of the same burials between different groups). There is also a section on the cremation in Tomb N by Ph. J. P. McGeorge, but discussion of the rest of the material is to appear in a future monograph. Thus, there is hardly scope for establishing patterns of usage and identifying the more complex attitudes to the remains of the dead, as has been done for Chalandritsa (by O.A. Jones in Aktypi 2017, Ch. G), and Ayia Sotira (by S. Triantaphyllou in Ch. 5).

The history of the community using the cemetery is discussed in Ch. 7, as noted above, but the

account does little more than summarise for each of Moschos' six phases the evidence concerning the individuals identified as 'primary' burials and the developments represented by the 'potters', including the emergence of characteristically Achaeian styles, although it mentions the occurrences of 'warrior' graves at other Achaeian sites. It seems to be assumed that the number of burials in each phase reflects the relative flourishing of the community, but when the numbers involved are so small it might seem safer to avoid such broad conclusions. Although the settlement seems to have been abandoned by the end of the Postpalatial period, it should be noted that this is not necessarily closely related to the cemetery's cessation of use. Actually the abandonment of the custom of multiple burial in chamber tombs in the later stages of the Postpalatial period is a phenomenon observable throughout Achaea and, indeed, the greater part of mainland Greece; yet the population must have continued to live and die somewhere, and it is one of the still unexplained mysteries of the early Iron Age that it is so difficult to find evidence for this.

The reviewer has spotted some errors that have escaped the notice of proof-readers, which seem worth citing because they could be misleading to those less familiar with English, or in a hurry to gather evidence. A certain type of jar is frequently described as 'handleless'; 'handleless' is meant. Frequently the words 'on the contrary' are used where what is clearly intended is 'in contrast', which has a different meaning, of comparison rather than counter-argument. There are mistakes in the summaries of evidence (which are correctable by reference to the detailed text): on p. 34, at the bottom of the chart of burials in Tomb B, there is a reference to a pit me – pit I is meant (p. 32); on p. 53 the words TOMB ΣΤ should come below, not above, the chart showing duration of tomb-use, which relates to Tomb E; and on p. 123 the primary burial in Pit I is H (not Z, which is over Pit II).

This has been a long and, it must be admitted, rather critical review, so in conclusion it should be stressed that this book's careful presentation of a mass of material from largely intact graves will undoubtedly be found very useful by specialists researching general questions about Postpalatial Achaea and the Postpalatial world of the Aegean.

OLIVER DICKINSON
READER EMERITUS
DURHAM UNIVERSITY
otpkdickinson@googlemail.com