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# THE ROYAL TOMBS AT VERGINA: EVOLUTION AND IDENTITIES

In 1977, when M. Andronikos announced his discovery of two royal tombs at Vergina, the unwillingness of some scholars to accept his interpretation that Tomb II was the tomb of Philip II was due in part to the fact that comparable tombs and comparable offerings were few and far between. That is no longer the case; for several new discoveries have been made, especially in the last five years. It is therefore desirable to make a new assessment of the situation.

## *A. Built Tombs of the fifth and fourth centuries in southern Macedonia*

In October 1989, at the conclusion of the Conference on Ancient Macedonia, we were shown by Mrs G. Karamitrou-Mentissidi the five 'monumental tombs' which she has excavated in the cemetery area outside the ancient city on Megali Rachi near Aiani.<sup>1</sup> These tombs were dated securely by imported Attic red-figure pottery to the fifth century. The largest of these cist-tombs, 4 × 4 m, lay at the centre of a wide platform of excellent ashlar masonry of limestone – the platform being comparable to a stylobate. The top of the long slabs which formed the roof of the tomb was on a level with the top of the platform; these slabs rested on the sidewalls of the tomb, and they may have been supported internally by wooden beams, for the ends of which there were recesses in the stone.<sup>2</sup> The discovery of fragments of 'Doric capitals and cornices with guttae' indicated that some form of 'temple-shaped structure' had stood above the cist-tomb.

Although the tomb had been plundered, fragments of gold sheet with impressed rosettes of 16 petals and some gilded ivy-leaves of silver were found.<sup>3</sup> On a nearby tomb of a similar kind 'traces of a pyre of cremation was found on these (covering) slabs'. There were remains of 'a whitish plaster decorated with a painted red ribbon' in some of the five tombs. We were told by Mrs Karamitrou-Mentissidi that a sculpted stone head which was evidently a portrait had been found within one of the larger tombs – presumably a portrait

\* The following abbreviations are used in this article:

Andronikos 1969 = M. Andronikos, *Vergina I: the Cemetery of Tumuli* (Athens, 1969)

Andronikos 1984 = M. Andronikos, *Vergina: the Royal Tombs* (Athens, 1984)

Andronikos 1987 1 = M. Andronikos, 'Some reflections on the Macedonian Tombs', *BSA* 82 (1987) 1 ff.

Andronikos 1987 2 = M. Andronikos, ἡ ζωγραφικὴ στῆν ἀρχαία Μακεδονία, *AE* 1987 363 ff.

Hammond 1978 = N.G.L. Hammond, "Philip's Tomb" in *Historical Context*, *GRBS* 19, 331 ff.

Hammond 1982 = N.G.L. Hammond, 'The evidence for the Identity of the Royal Tombs at Vergina' in *Philip II, Alexander the Great and the Macedonian Heritage*, edd. W.L. Adams and E.N. Borza (Washington, 1982)

Hammond 1989 = N.G.L. Hammond, *The Macedonian State* (Oxford, 1989)

*HM* I, II and III = N.G.L. Hammond, G.T. Griffith, F.W. Walbank, *A History of Macedonia* I (1972), II (1979), III (1988)

Musgrave = J.H. Musgrave, 'Cremation in Ancient Macedonia', being the typescript of a paper to the Fifth International Conference on Ancient Macedonia. Dr Musgrave has kindly allowed me to refer to his paper, which is awaiting publication.

*SNG* = *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum*.

<sup>1</sup> These are described in her booklet *Aiani of Kozani: archaeological guide* (Thessaloniki, 1989), 53–7.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 53. In this the largest tomb it is probable that support to the roof was given by a plain stone column of which a part was inside the tomb.

<sup>3</sup> Illustrated on p. 56. The ivy leaves imply a worship of Dionysus.

of the deceased. The identity of these tombs is not in doubt. They were for members of the royal house of the Elimeotae, whose kings rivalled the kings of the Macedones in military power during the fifth century.<sup>4</sup>

The analogies with the fourth century Royal Tombs of Vergina are very interesting. There the earliest tomb, Tomb I, a cist-tomb of well-cut limestone masonry,  $3.05 \times 2.09 \times 3$  m high, was roofed with long limestone slabs resting on the sidewalls; and M. Andronikos inferred from recesses in the stone that there had perhaps been a wooden roof originally. The walls of the tomb were plastered and painted.<sup>5</sup> The remains of a pyre, or at least of burnt objects, were found on the top of Tomb II, like the remains on the covering slabs at Aiani. The idea of a 'temple-shaped structure' recurred in the temple-like façade of Tombs II and III. The portraits in ivory which were found in Tomb II may have been in the tradition of the sculpted head at Aiani. Such similarities between the royal tombs at Aiani and those at Vergina need not surprise us. For there was intermarriage between the royal houses of the Elimeotae and the Macedones,<sup>6</sup> and the two peoples were immediate neighbours.

In 1976 a very large cist-tomb, internally  $4.67 \times 3.66$  m, was excavated at Katerini in Pieria, and the report was published in *AAA* 13 (1980) 198 ff. The tomb was dated by A. Despini to the second quarter of the fourth century both from the offerings and from a bronze coin of the second period of Amyntas III's reign, i.e. c. 381–369. This coin was found on the floor of the ante-chamber together with the remains of offerings (p. 209). If it was intended to be the fare for Charon, we may limit the date to within the last years of Amyntas III; for Alexander II issued bronze coins in the latter part of 369, and one imagines that an up-to-date coin was preferable. The cist-tomb, its sides built of poros stone, was divided by an internal cross-wall which was pierced by a two-leaved marble door facing into the smaller of the two chambers. The tomb was roofed by long slabs which rested on the sidewalls and the cross-wall.<sup>7</sup> The main chamber had contained 'a couch and a table'. There were remains of offerings in both chambers, including bits of weapons, gold rosettes of 16 petals (as at Aiani), gold wreaths and part of a pectoral. In the ante-chamber there was burnt material, evidently brought from a pyre outside the building; and in the main chamber there were some cremated bones of an infant.

The analogies between the tomb at Katerini and Tombs I and II at Vergina are illuminating. Tomb I was also a large cist-tomb, similarly roofed with long slabs, but not so large as to require the support afforded by the cross-wall at Katerini. Some features of Tomb II resembled those of the Katerini tomb: the cross-wall pierced by a two-leaved marble door facing the smaller chamber, the couch and the table (or stand), the offerings in both chambers, the range of offerings (e.g. the pectoral), and the burnt material brought from elsewhere.

The earliest known vaulted tomb<sup>8</sup> was discovered in 1987 at Vergina not under the Great Mound but in the vicinity of the Rhomaïos Tomb. It was set inside a 'parallelepiped' apparently of poros stone walls  $10.60\text{--}70 \times 7.50\text{--}95$  m. The vaulted tomb itself was 5.80 m

<sup>4</sup> See *HM* II 18 f. The importance of ancient Aeane is discussed in *HM* I 119 f.

<sup>5</sup> Andronikos 1984 86 f. with fig. 46 showing red and white plasters.

<sup>6</sup> From the time of Alexander I onwards (see *HM* II 18). Rich offerings in sixth century pit-graves at Aiani and at

Vergina show close contacts.

<sup>7</sup> See also the account of Andronikos 1987 1, 10 ff.

<sup>8</sup> It is reported in Andronikos 1987 2, 375 ff. I am most grateful to him for sending me an offprint. It is described in *Ergon* 1987. 46 ff.

high and it was divided by a cross-wall into two chambers measuring  $5.51 \times 4.485$  m and  $2.50 \times 4.485$  m. The cross-wall was pierced by a two-leaved marble door, which faced onto the smaller chamber. The front wall of this chamber had a similar two-leaved door, but there was no ornamental façade,<sup>9</sup> for the wall itself was plain, of poros stone. It had in front of it a protective wall of large poros blocks.

In the main chamber there was a magnificent throne and two parts of a marble larnax which had contained the cremated remains wrapped in purple cloth. The back wall of the main chamber was painted to look like a temple-façade with four attached Ionic columns, a two-leaved door and a flat cornice (i.e. no pediment).<sup>10</sup> Remains of offerings indicated that the burial was that of a woman; and this agreed with the fact that other burials nearby were of women only. Among the offerings were Attic Red-Figure sherds dating from the 340s; and outside the tomb, in burnt remains which had come probably from a pyre, the handle of a Panathenaic Amphora was stamped with some letters of the name of the Attic archon for the year 344/3.<sup>11</sup> The obvious candidate for so prestigious a form of burial c. 343–340 was the Queen Mother, Eurydice, who was the wife of Amyntas III and the mother of Alexander II, Perdikkas III and Philip II.<sup>12</sup> Let us follow the example of M. Andronikos and call it the Tomb of Eurydice.

Tomb II under the Great Mound was similar to the Tomb of Eurydice in design but not quite so large. The great difference was that the temple-like façade which had been painted on the back wall of the Tomb of Eurydice was now built as the actual façade of Tomb II.<sup>13</sup> The door and its surrounds were identical in both Tombs, and the cornice was flat in both. Whereas the Tomb of Eurydice had four attached Ionic columns, Tomb II had two attached columns and two pilasters, all with plain capitals. Tomb II had the famous fresco below the cornice; and then below the painting a row of triglyphs and a second cornice which rested on the capitals of the pilasters and the columns. Internally the design was the same in having the vault, the cross-wall and the door facing into the smaller chamber. There was a table or stand in each chamber, and the remains of a wooden couch in the main chamber. Outside both tombs there were burnt objects evidently from a pyre; and the cremated remains of the woman in each tomb had been wrapped in purple cloth.<sup>14</sup>

The Tomb of Palatitsia in Vergina, which was opened by Heuzey and Daumet in 1861, was re-examined by M. Andronikos in 1981 and dated securely by an inscribed Thasian amphora to within 333–300.<sup>15</sup> This tomb, built of poros stone and measuring  $4.80 \times 3.85 \times 2.55$  m high in the inner chamber (a step up led from the antechamber into it), was vaulted and had a built façade, with a flat cornice and guttae, which rested on two plain capitals (they had no pillars below). The front was plastered and had the usual two-leaved marble door with its surround. In the main chamber there were two couches parallel to one another; they were of stone, finely worked. The plaster of the vault was white, while that of the floor and the walls was red.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>9</sup> *Ergon* 1987. 46 δὲν ὑπάρχει σ' αὐτὴν (τὴν πρόσοψη) ἀρχιτεκτονικὴ διαμόρφωση.

<sup>10</sup> Illustrated in Andronikos 1987 2, 376 fig. 3.

<sup>11</sup> Andronikos 1987 2, 379.

<sup>12</sup> For the status of the queen mother see Hammond 1989 32 and 172.

<sup>13</sup> Illustrated in Andronikos 1987 2, 369, fig. 1.

<sup>14</sup> Tomb II is described in Andronikos 1984 97 ff.

<sup>15</sup> Andronikos 1984 31; 1987 1, 10 'to the third quarter of

the fourth century by fragments of a lekythos'; 1987 1, 2 with n. 10 suggested a possible narrowing down of the dates to 'c. 330 to 310'.

<sup>16</sup> L. Heuzey and H. Daumet, *Mission archéologique de Macédoine I* (Paris, 1876) 227 ff. and plates 15–16. This tomb had other peculiarities. It was divided into two chambers by 'two square pillars which supported a kind of epistyle'; and the cross-slabs of the antechamber rested on top of those of the main chamber (Andronikos 1987 1, 10).

Tomb III under the Great Mound,  $6.30 \times 5.08$  m externally,<sup>17</sup> is of the same general design as the Tomb of Palatitsia. The façade was topped by a flat cornice, on which some terracotta roof-tiles were laid; and below the cornice and its guttae there had been a painting on a perishable substance. Then came a row of triglyphs and a small cornice, which rested visually on two plain pilasters at the corners. The door and its surround were as in other tombs. Two stucco shields of the Macedonian shape were decorations in relief on the façade, one being on either side of the doorway and matching its top. The vault and the walls of both chambers were well plastered in white, with a frieze in blue where the vault springs from the walls; the frieze in the main chamber was a tainia, and that in the antechamber portrayed scenes from a race of twenty-one two-horse chariots. In the main chamber a table or stand was near the back wall, and there were remains of a wooden couch. As we have argued previously,<sup>18</sup> the tomb is to be dated to 309.

The next development was the addition of a pediment above the cornice of the façade. The earliest tomb in which a pediment is found seems to be the tomb excavated by Rhomaios in 1938.<sup>19</sup> Measuring some  $8.50 \times 4.60 \times 4.44$  m high, it had the usual two chambers, two-leaved marble door in the cross-wall, and rectangular stand (? couch) of stone; and there was a magnificent marble throne in the main chamber (as in the Tomb of Eurydice). Where the vault springs, there was a frieze of dark blue in the main chamber, and a frieze of coloured flowers against a blue ground in the smaller chamber. On the façade below the pediment there were in sequence a cornice, dentils, a frieze of floral decoration, and an architrave resting on the capitals of four attached Ionic columns. The two-leaved marble doorway and its surround were framed by tall elegant Ionic columns. Rhomaios held that the tomb was nearly contemporary with the palace at Vergina, now dated late in the fourth century. So the tomb may be at the turn of the fourth century.<sup>20</sup> Thereafter a pediment became normal, though not universal.

In this survey I have included royal tombs and two which were probably those of commoners – the Tomb at Katerini and the Tomb of Palatitsia. For we have seen that the ‘monumental tombs’ at Aiani and the tombs under the Great Mound at Vergina are to be explained only as tombs of members of the royal family, and that the Tomb of Eurydice and the Rhomaios Tomb each contained a fine throne which was a mark of royal status. The Tomb at Katerini was attributed by M. Andronikos with great probability to ‘a member of the immediate circle of the Macedonian royal family’ (*BSA* 82. 11); and it has been included because it provides a link in the chain of development both chronologically and architecturally. The Tomb of Palatitsia, being at Vergina, was in the style of the nearby royal Tomb III. In this series of tombs we see elements of continuity and marks of innovation.<sup>21</sup> Continuous features were cremation of the deceased on a pyre away from the tomb, the placing of cremated remains and the deposit of offerings within the tomb, the plastering of internal walls and the use of whitish and reddish paint. These reflect a continuing faith in survival after death under conditions in which the place of burial and the offerings at burial were of significance. The structural changes in the cist-tomb phase

<sup>17</sup> See Andronikos 1984 198 ff.

<sup>18</sup> Hammond 1982 116 and *HM* III 166, where I preferred 309 as the year of Alexander’s death.

<sup>19</sup> K.A. Rhomaios, *ὁ Μακεδονικὸς τάφος τῆς Βεργίνης* (Athens, 1951), and Andronikos 1984 31 ff. with fig. 11.

<sup>20</sup> See Andronikos 1984 33; the Palace has been dated to

‘the last years of the fourth century’, *ibid.* 39.

<sup>21</sup> There are, of course, other built-tombs in Macedonian territory, e.g. at Olynthus and at Sedhes, which are important in the history of this type of tomb; but I am concerned here only with the sequence in Pieria and Elimeotis.

were from a single cist to a divided cist with two chambers and a connecting door (at Katerini), and then from a divided cist to a built-tomb with an outer door (Tomb of Eurydice). The variations in the built-tomb phase were the vaulted roof and the non-ornamental façade (Tomb of Eurydice), then the ornamental façade with a flat top (Tomb II), and finally the pedimental type of façade (Rhomaios Tomb).<sup>22</sup>

There is a considerable gap between the large cist-tombs which we have dated c. 370 (the Tomb at Katerini and Tomb I under the Great Mound) and the earliest vaulted tomb c. 343–340 (the Tomb of Eurydice). This gap is narrowed by reference to Plato, *Laws* 947 D, in which he described the funerary rites of the leading citizens of his ideal state and their tombs which were to be different from those ‘of all other citizens’.

‘The tomb shall be made of poros stone, of which the strength is unaffected by age; it shall be vaulted, longer than it is wide, containing stone couches set parallel to one another, and shall be mounded over with soil in a circle.’ . . . ‘One end [of the tumulus] shall be left free for those [later] being interred without need of [another] tumulus.’<sup>23</sup>

This description fits exactly Tomb II with its tumulus of soil, into which at one end Tomb III was subsequently placed. Where did Plato, writing not later than 350 (he died in 347), hear of such a form of burial? The answer on present archaeological evidence can only be Macedonia, where such a form of burial was practised. Plato’s informant was someone who was able to see the underground vaulted built-tomb of a member of the royal house in the short time before it was covered with a tumulus. Such a person may have been Euphraeus, a pupil of Plato, who was influential as a philosopher at the court of Perdikkas III in the later 360s.<sup>24</sup> It is thus probable that the vaulted built-tomb was first constructed after 370 and before the late 360s.

In any case it is now apparent that Tomb I and Tomb II at Vergina were not unique phenomena as they appeared in 1977 to be. Rather they fall into place within a line of development for royal burials. The dates which we attach to the tombs under the Great Mound, partly on architectonic grounds, are for Tomb I probably c. 370 and before the late 360s; for Tomb II after 343–340 and before Tomb III; and for Tomb III c. 309 in view of the boy king’s age.

### *B. The identification of the occupants of Tombs I–III at Vergina*

In July 1978 I signed my article ‘“Philip’s Tomb” in Historical Context’, which was published in *GRBS* 19 (1978) 331 ff. In it I maintained on the evidence then available (i.e. before the discovery of Tomb III) that Tomb I ‘is most likely to be that of Amyntas’ and that ‘the odds so far are strongly in favour of the larger tomb (Tomb II) being that of Philip II and his Scythian (or, failing her, his Getic) queen.’ I had been fortunate enough to visit Vergina that summer, when Professor Andronikos most kindly showed me his current excavations. They revealed, what has been little noted by other writers since 1978, that the

<sup>22</sup> This is not a list of all innovations. For example, see n. 16 above for an unusual form of division into two chambers, and add the finding of ‘four freestanding Doric columns’ on a stylobate, which probably stood slightly in front of a tomb not far from Tomb II at Vergina (see Andronikos 1987 1, 15).

<sup>23</sup> θήκην δὲ ὑπὸ γῆς αὐτοῖς εἰργασμένην εἶναι ψαλίδα

προμήκη λίθων ποτίμων καὶ ἀγήρων εἰς δύναμιν, ἔχουσαν κλίνας παρ’ ἀλλήλας λιθίνας κειμένας, οὐ δὴ τὸν μακάριον γεγονότα θέντες, κύκλω χώσαντες, . . . πλὴν κώλου ἐνθὸς ὅπως ἂν αὐξῆν ὁ τάφος ἔχη ταύτην τὴν εἰς ἅπαντα χρόνον ἀνεπιδεῖ χώματος τοῖς τιθεμένοις.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Hammond 1982 115 and Andronikos 1984 223 and 1987 1, 5.

two tombs he had found were themselves under a low tumulus some 20 m in diameter. Although many built-tombs have been excavated in Macedonia, none had been associated with such a tumulus. What then was its significance? The answer has been supplied by the excavation of 100 such tumuli in the plain below Vergina and in many places in Albania, namely that each tumulus was the burial-place of the distinguished members of a family.<sup>25</sup> If, then, Tombs I and II were those of kings, as seemed certain from the offerings, the only possible family group in the fourth century was that of Amyntas III and his descendants, ending with Alexander IV.

Late in 1978 Tomb III was discovered at the far end (looking from the shrine) of the tumulus. The deceased was a king, as the offerings showed. When the cremated bones were analysed, they were found to be those of a boy aged between 13 and 16 years of age.<sup>26</sup> The only possible king of that age in the second half of the fourth century was Alexander IV.<sup>27</sup> He was the last of the line of Amyntas. In a further article, published in 1982, entitled 'The Evidence for the Identity of the Royal Tombs at Vergina', I noted that the burial of Alexander IV in the tumulus was a further proof that the tumulus covered burials of members of Amyntas' line.

These points give me a flying start as I turn now to details. When Andronikos began to excavate at the side of the Great Mound, he found two roughly circular areas, about 1 m in diameter, in which burnt sherds, bones of small animals and ash were indicative of sacrifices.<sup>28</sup> The sherds were datable to c. 340–320. Such circular areas of sacrifice beside a tumulus have been noted often enough (e.g. at Marathon beside a prehistoric tumulus and beside the Mound of the Plataeans). A further sign of worship appeared with the excavation of a shrine's foundations, 9.60 × 8 m, which proved to be adjacent to Tomb I. Whereas the circular areas might have been evidence of worship of all or any of the tumulus' occupants, the shrine was built in honour of Tomb I. Two kings only of this line were reported to have received worship: Amyntas III having an 'Amyntaion' at Pydna (Schol. ad D. 1. 5), and Philip being worshipped at Amphipolis 'as a god' (Aristides, *Symmach. A (Or. 38) 1* p. 715 D). Thus we infer that Tomb I was the tomb of Amyntas III, who died in 370/369, and this supports our dating of the tomb on other grounds to before the late 360s.

Tomb I had been thoroughly and violently robbed. A few sherds were dated by Andronikos 'to around the middle of the fourth century', an expression which would not exclude the date 370/369. A broken marble shell was seen as 'in all probability part of a woman's toilette'. Bones on the floor were those of man, a young woman and a 'neonate' baby.<sup>29</sup> They had not been cremated. Several questions arise and cannot be answered as yet. What were the ages of the man and the woman? Did the robbers remove a gold or silver container and within it the cremated remains of Amyntas? Were the skeletons those of secondary burials? One thing is certain, that the magnificent frescoes on the inside of the walls of the tomb were executed by a master of his craft in honour of a king. That a new location was chosen for this tomb is explicable, if the tomb is that of Amyntas III; for he

<sup>25</sup> *HM I* 329–30 and Andronikos 1969 2 ὑποθέτω ὅτι ὁ τύμβος ἀνήκειν εἰς μίαν οἰκογένειαν.

<sup>26</sup> Musgrave 6.

<sup>27</sup> Hammond 1982 116 'there is no possible alternative', although R.L. Fox in *The Search for Alexander* (Boston, 1980)

had proposed not Alexander but the assassin Pausanias, a Bodyguard.

<sup>28</sup> Andronikos in *Archaeology* 31 (1978) 5. 33–41 and 1984 64.

<sup>29</sup> Musgrave 9.

was the first to be king in his branch of the royal family which was descended from one of Alexander's five sons.<sup>30</sup>

The next tomb, Tomb II, was sited close to Tomb I, probably in order that the occupant of Tomb II might be worshipped at the shrine. The tumulus was constructed after the completion of Tomb I; for it was made with Tomb I roughly at its centre. Special respect was thus paid to the occupant of Tomb II, more so than to the occupant of Tomb I who was included under the tumulus as a member of the family group. The only king who fits the requirements of Tomb II is Philip II; for he was worshipped after death, he was the son of Amyntas, and he was more famous than Amyntas.

The first impact made by Tomb II is the very large Fresco, 5.56 × 1.16 m, which is on the façade of the building. The painting portrays a Royal Hunt.<sup>31</sup> The viewer's eye is directed towards the right, where the only mature man in the Hunt is about to give the *coup de grâce* to a lion at bay.<sup>32</sup> He is the king, since it was the privilege of the king to kill the lion. The picture, then, was painted on the Tomb façade, because this king was the deceased person within it. He and two others are mounted, that being a requirement for members of the royal family. He is sturdy and bearded, and the left side only of his face is visible. The central figure of the composition is a young man, wearing a laurel wreath, who is riding forward with spear poised towards the lion. There can be no doubt that he is the successor as king. This relationship between a mature bearded man and a young man as successive kings was true only of Philip II and Alexander III (Alexander the Great) in the line of Amyntas III. We see now why only the left side of the mature man's face was shown; for Philip had suffered a serious injury to the right side of his face. The eyes of the young man are very prominent. This was a characteristic of Alexander, as we see in 'The Alexander Mosaic'; moreover, Andronikos claimed that the features of the young rider were those of Alexander.<sup>33</sup>

Inside Tomb II the cremated bones were analysed and found to be those of a man between 40 and 50 years of age.<sup>34</sup> Only two kings of this line died at that age: Philip II and Philip III Arrhidaeus. The full-scale analysis of the bones<sup>35</sup> revealed severe damage to the right eye-socket; such damage had been incurred by Philip II during the siege of Methone, when he was blinded by a catapult-bolt. Of several ivory portrait-heads in the main chamber two were of a bearded mature man, whose right eye appeared blind.<sup>36</sup> One of the two was found together with four other heads which had formed a group, probably attached to a piece of furniture. One of them represented Alexander as a very young man in his characteristic pose with his eyes looking up towards Zeus. It seems likely that the five were Amyntas III, Eurydice, Philip II, Olympias and Alexander. Bodies and limbs of gold and ivory belonged to these miniature heads. They may have been inspired by the chryselephantine statues of the same five persons, which were being dedicated in the Philippeum at Olympia in 337/336.<sup>37</sup> When Hephaestion died in 324, the Friends and the Commanders made likenesses in gold and ivory of the dead man (Diod. 17. 115.1),

<sup>30</sup> See Hammond 1989 72.

<sup>31</sup> Andronikos 1984 101 ff. and 1987 2, 369.

<sup>32</sup> Andronikos 1984 116.

<sup>33</sup> Andronikos 1984 115.

<sup>34</sup> Andronikos 1984 228.

<sup>35</sup> J. Musgrave, R.A.H. Neave and A.J.N.W. Prag in *JHS* 104 (1984). They took into account the earlier analysis by

N.I. Xirotiris and F. Langenscheidt, 'The cremations from the royal Macedonian tombs of Vergina', *AE* 1981. 142 ff.

<sup>36</sup> Andronikos 1984 127. The second head is exhibited in the Thessaloniki Museum. This is the only ivory portrait of which two examples were provided in the tomb.

<sup>37</sup> Paus. 5. 20. 10; Hammond 1978 336.

evidently for the grave. The two heads of a mature, bearded man with a blind right eye were evidently such likenesses of Philip.

The offerings in the main chamber of Tomb II show that the king was a man of war. The many weapons included a pike, which was seen to have been more than 5 m long, because its oxydised head had stayed stuck high up on the wall when the shaft had rotted away. The pike (*sarissa*) was invented by Philip and used by him in action. Incidentally, the date of invention, 359, provides a *terminus post quem* for the Tomb.<sup>38</sup> There was more than a full set of magnificent armour in the chamber; for instance, there were three pairs of greaves. This collection of weaponry and armour was eminently appropriate for Philip, who led his troops into action and bore the scars of many wounds. It was not so for the half-witted Philip III Arrhidaeus, who was never let loose in battle.

Tomb II had some unusual features which demand explanation. The main chamber was completed and closed before the final stages of the antechamber, i.e. the vaulting and the plastering of the outside surface of the top of the vault, were undertaken. On the top of the vault of the main chamber a pile of bricks had been placed while the plaster there was still wet. Since many of them and also the objects among them showed traces of fire, it was evident that they had all come from the pyre. Within the chamber the plastering had not been completed. Thus the burial of the king was conducted in great haste and the chamber was sealed off. Later the rest of the Tomb was completed at leisure. The haste was appropriate to Alexander burying Philip; for Alexander hurried off 'citato gradu' to deal with obstruction in northeast Thessaly and threats of risings in Central Greece.<sup>39</sup> It was not appropriate to Cassander burying Cynane, Eurydice and Philip III Arrhidaeus, whose remains were assembled six years after death in the case of Cynane and nine months after death in the cases of the other two; for Cassander was in power and had no reasons for haste.

Among the burnt objects with the bricks on the top of main chamber were some gold acorns and oakleaves, which fitted the gap in the king's gold wreath. This proved that the objects had come from the pyre. There were also a spear-head set upright (probably the assassin's weapon), two swords, horse-trappings, pieces of ivory and a bronze oenochoe. Two sons of Aëropus had been found guilty of complicity; they were killed on Alexander's orders 'by his father's tumulus' (Just. 11. 2. 1). It was probably their skeletons which were found with no offerings in the fill of tumulus, and it was their swords which were placed on the pyre. The assassin tried to escape to horses which were waiting ready. They were probably killed, and their trappings placed on the pyre. The ivory may have been used for decorating pommels or harness; and the oenochoe was used in pouring wine on the dying embers of a pyre.<sup>40</sup> On the top of the cornice of the façade 'something like a small pyre, broken vases and small sherds' were found.<sup>41</sup> These were probably the remains of a purificatory fire. The explanation is afforded by Justin's statement that the corpse of the assassin was hung for display and finally burnt 'above the remains of Philip' (Just. 9. 7. 11).<sup>42</sup>

The woman in the antechamber of Tomb II was aged 'about 25 years, more likely not

<sup>38</sup> See Hammond in *Antichthon* 14 (1980) 54–6 for the date; *contra* M. Markle in *AJA* 82 (1978) 483 ff., who put the invention of the pike after the battle of Chaeronea in 336.

<sup>39</sup> Justin 11. 2. 5; see Hammond 1982 122.

<sup>40</sup> See references in Hammond 1982 124.

<sup>41</sup> The quotation is from Andronikos' article in *Hellenikos Borras* of 22 November 1977.

<sup>42</sup> Further in Hammond 1982 124.

younger than 20 or older than 30'.<sup>43</sup> There were not any bones of a baby with her. How did she come to die at the time of Philip's assassination? Coincidence is possible. A non-Greek custom, practised by the Getae (Steph. Byz. s. v.), some Thracians (Hdt. 5. 5) and Scythians (4. 71. 4), is probable wherein a selected wife was killed and accompanied her husband to the afterlife. The queens of the required age were Cleopatra, the ward of Attalus, whose death was probably associated with the killing of Attalus, her guardian, in 335 (Philip was assassinated in the late summer of 336), so that she can be excluded; Meda, daughter of a Getic king; and if Philip took the daughter of the Scythian king Atheas in 339, a Scythian queen.<sup>44</sup> The offerings with the queen were remarkable. They included a special form of quiver-cover in gold with a pile of shafted arrows, which show that she was an archer, and a 'pectoral' with decoration in relief. Such a quiver-cover was depicted on the coins of Atheas and a number of quiver-covers have been found in tombs of Scythian kings. The design on the pectoral was of a kind popular in Thrace and the workmanship was probably Thracian. Archery was in high esteem among both the Getae and the Scythians. It seems that this queen took into the afterlife the weapons and the pectoral which were characteristic of her race.<sup>45</sup>

The funerary hydria of Tomb III contained the cremated bones 'of an adolescent youth, aged between 13 and 16',<sup>46</sup> and the age of Alexander in summer 309 was 14, when he would normally have entered the School of Pages. The frieze of the chariot-racing gave expression to his interests. The offerings included a few spears, one being wrapped in gold foil; and armour – a cuirass of linen with gold epaulettes, a fine pectoral and gilded bronze greaves; and gilded bronze and iron strigils which were used for cleansing oneself after athletics. All these were appropriate to the training of a Macedonian king in his 'teens.

In this section the problems presented by the characteristics of each of the Tombs have been faced one by one. Although certainty for the occupants of Tomb I is beyond our reach, the solutions to the problems are such as to lead to firm conclusions. The family honoured by a new burial-site at Aegeae was that of Amyntas III. When Philip II died, his tomb was built near to that of Amyntas and near to the shrine. A tumulus was raised then over Philip's tomb. It was of such a size as to include Tomb I and to allow for further burials at the other end. In the event Alexander IV was buried there, the last of the line.

We are left with some questions to which tentative answers are necessary if our identifications of the tombs under the tumulus are to be convincing. What happened to the other kings of Amyntas' family? The eldest son, Alexander II, was assassinated after a reign of less than two years and left no male child to succeed to the throne. His last year was marked by subjection to the Boeotian League, whose commander Pelopidas took Philip and thirty sons of leading men as hostages to Thebes. His reign was humiliating for

<sup>43</sup> Musgrave 4 n. 9, citing Xirotiris and Langenscheidt 'about 25 years', and 5 adding 'no features . . . that would permit an estimate as low as 18–20.'

<sup>44</sup> This possibility is advanced in Hammond 1982 123, using Justin 9. 2. 1–4; *contra* P. Green in the same book on p. 145 n. 44.

<sup>45</sup> For the Thracian connection see Andronikos 1984 189. Most scholars have seen these objects as 'spoils' won by Philip and mistakenly placed in the wrong chamber. Yet nothing in the main chamber has been regarded as a 'spoil'. Some thought that the uneven, non-matching two

gold-engraved greaves in the antechamber were intended for Philip's chamber. But Philip had three matching pairs of greaves in his chamber already; and the smaller greave of the uneven pair was for the left leg, whereas Philip's wounds were in his right leg (Hammond 1982 123 f.). In the same book P. Green on p. 135 suggested that the shrunken left leg might have been due to polio. Whatever the cause, the woman was the owner of the uneven pair and she, not Philip who used pike, lance and sword in battle, was the archer.

<sup>46</sup> Musgrave 6.

his country. I suggest that he was buried in Tomb I; and that a wife and a newborn baby – both having perhaps died in childbirth – were also interred there.<sup>47</sup> Perdiccas III and 4,000 Macedonians were killed in a disastrous defeat, and I take it that his body was not recovered. The next king, whose corpse was not brought to Aegeae, was Alexander III. Now there were under the Great Mound three tumuli, each some 20 metres in diameter. One, as we have seen, was the tumulus of Amyntas' line. The next was a cenotaph.<sup>48</sup> The third (the farthest away from that of Amyntas' line) contained three graves of 'ordinary citizens'.<sup>49</sup> For whom was the cenotaph tumulus made? Since Perdiccas III fell in the disastrous defeat of the Macedonians, he is not likely to have been honoured. The probable answer was Alexander III, whose corpse had been carried off by Ptolemy to Egypt. If that is so, we have a possible explanation for the discovery which Andronikos made at ground level in the centre of the Great Mound: the remains of what seems to have been a stoa with marble statuary and probably spoils,<sup>50</sup> which were removed when it was decided to build the Great Mound. It may be that the cenotaph tumulus (the middle one of the three) and the stoa with its contents were in honour of Alexander III.

The half-witted king Philip III Arrhidaeus, his queen Eurydice and the Queen Mother Cynane were given an exceptionally magnificent burial at Aegeae by Cassander (*FGrH* 73 (Diyllus) F 1 and Diod. 19. 52. 5). The enmity of Cassander to Alexander III was deep-rooted, and he had just arranged the murder of Alexander's mother Olympias. It seems that he chose to bury this trio<sup>51</sup> not in association with the tumulus of Philip II, but rather to strike a new note with a separate area for the enemies of Olympias (she had encompassed the deaths of Philip Arrhidaeus and Eurydice) and with an emphasis probably on Thessalonice, daughter of Philip II and wife of Cassander, as the guardian of the boy king, Alexander IV.

Why and when was the Great Mound, 110 m in diameter and even in 1976 some 12 m high, so built that the cenotaph tumulus and the (supposed) stoa were in and near its central area? If the tumulus and the stoa were in honour of Alexander III, as we have suggested, then the Great Mound was a striking tribute to Alexander. We have analogies for such a tribute. In 327 Alexander had a mound built, 39 m high and 'great in circumference', as a cenotaph in honour of Demaratus, whose remains were taken to Corinth; and he had an even larger Mound raised over the tomb of Hephaestion in 324. That the purpose of such a colossal mound was honorific is clear from the inclusion among Alexander's projects of a plan to build for his father Philip a tomb comparable to 'the greatest of the pyramids of Egypt' (Diod. 18. 4. 5).<sup>52</sup> If the Great Mound was erected in honour of Alexander, it was on the order of Lysimachus as king of Macedonia c. 285, since he was a particular devotee of Alexander.

<sup>47</sup> The covering slabs were moveable, as at Aiani. I do not see the reason for Andronikos' assertion that Tomb I was not reopened (1984 6); it is not clear whether the recesses in the walls of the Aiani large tomb were at the same level as those in Tomb I.

<sup>48</sup> Some prehistoric tumuli were cenotaphs, and the great mound erected in 327 for Demaratus was a cenotaph, since his cremated remains were sent to Corinth.

<sup>49</sup> Andronikos 1984 82.

<sup>50</sup> I have not seen a full description of these remains. From early publications in journals I understood that they

covered an area 20 m long but narrow and had indications of 3 m high walls at the narrow ends, so that they might have been the remains of a stoa. Andronikos 1984 64 is brief on the subject.

<sup>51</sup> Diyllus implied that they were buried together: θάψας τὸν βασιλέα καὶ τὴν βασίλισσαν ἐν Αἰγαίαις καὶ μετ' αὐτῶν τὴν Κύνναν.

<sup>52</sup> For the genuineness of these plans see Appendix III in Hammond, *Alexander the Great: King, Commander and Statesman* (2nd ed., Bristol, 1989).

We can then offer an explanation for the fact that some forty-seven funerary headstones with no corresponding graves or bones were found in the top layers of the Mound. This is that families who wished to emphasise the attachment of deceased warriors to Alexander placed headstones of commemoration on the surface of the Mound. On epigraphic grounds most of these stones were inscribed mainly in 'the second half of the fourth century and to the beginning of the third century',<sup>53</sup> and not later. Who pillaged so violently the Tomb of Amyntas but failed to reach the Tomb of Philip? In 274 the Gallic mercenaries of Pyrrhus attacked the tombs of the kings at Aegeae, 'seized the treasures and scattered the bones around in an outrageous manner' (Plu. *Pyrrh.* 26. 6). Andonikos noted that Tomb I had been violated not by skilled tomb-robbers but by vandals; and these no doubt were the Gauls. Everyone at Aegeae knew that Philip II's Tomb was close to Tomb I and was stocked with valuable treasures. But to reach it was extremely difficult; for it lay under the massive Great Mound, which had been made of successive layers of clay, soil and rocks, the lowest layer of rocks being 3 m thick. It was this difficulty which saved Philip's Tomb for posterity. But the mercenaries vented their anger on the funerary headstones, which they smashed when they found no treasure under them. After they had gone the Macedonians resurfaced the Great Mound and buried the broken pieces in its top.<sup>54</sup> We may be sure that other treasure-seekers dug into the top of the Great Mound before the first archaeologists, Heuzey and Daumet, did so.

### *C. Arguments against the identifications proposed in B*

In summer 1978, when Tomb II seemed to be unique and Tomb III had not been found, it was wise to think of an alternative to the view expressed by Andronikos. There is indeed only one alternative because the age of the king in the main chamber – between 40 and 50 – limits the possibility to Philip III Arrhidaeus. In my article of 1978 I considered the claims of Philip Arrhidaeus and Eurydice to be the occupants of Tomb II and rejected them; and again in 1982 I did likewise.<sup>55</sup> There is one point in their favour, that both Arrhidaeus and Eurydice had been dead for some six months and their remains were available in 316 for cremation and burial at the same time in Tomb II. But nothing else fits. The Royal Hunt Fresco on Tomb II cannot portray Arrhidaeus as the lion-killer and Alexander IV as the reigning king (for in 316 he was just ten years of age). The unfinished state of the main chamber and the separate vaulting and plastering of the antechamber are totally without explanation, since both corpses were at hand. It is not possible to account either for most of the burnt remains on the upper surface of the vault of the main chamber (the upright spearhead, the two swords, the horse trappings) or for the purificatory fire on the top of the cornice. The offerings of weapons and armour do not suit Arrhidaeus, who was incapable of combat; and the Scythian quiver-cover and the Thracian type of pectoral do not suit Eurydice, whose upbringing was in Macedonia and whose antecedents through her maternal grandmother were with Illyria. At the time of her death Eurydice was

<sup>53</sup> Andronikos 1984 83.

<sup>54</sup> In his early reports Andronikos thought that the Great Mound had been built over the tomb of Antigonus Gonatas as its central point in 239, and that the funerary stones were brought together with earth from elsewhere (? from a cemetery disused after c. 290) to make the Mound.

But that treatment of funerary headstones seems inconsistent with the respect for the dead which the Macedonians clearly had. No tomb was found under the central part of the Great Mound.

<sup>55</sup> Hammond 1978 337 f. and 1982 124 f.

probably 19 years of age<sup>56</sup> and not therefore old enough to be the woman of 'about 25', whose remains were placed in the antechamber of Tomb II.

Dissenters from the interpretation which Andronikos advanced and I supported have concentrated on features or objects which can be dated after the reign of Philip and so prove that the Tomb was not his.<sup>57</sup> The first feature was the vault of the Tomb. They claimed that vaulting was introduced into Europe only after Alexander had had experience of it in Asia. This argument was weakened, if not invalidated, by Plato, *Laws* 947 D; and in 1987 by the discovery of the vaulted Tomb of Eurydice which was dated before Tomb II, probably to 343–340.<sup>58</sup> The iron armour found in the main chamber and the iron pectoral in the antechamber of Tomb II were thought to be of a date after the time of Alexander; but Plutarch described Alexander arming himself with an iron helmet and an iron pectoral for the Battle of Gaugamela (*Alex.* 32. 9). It has been suggested that the military equipment in Tomb II was that of Alexander and was inherited by Arrhidaeus, in whose tomb (i.e. Tomb II) it was placed; but when a detailed comparison is made of the shield, helmet, cuirass and pectoral in Tomb II with those used by Alexander, they do not correspond.<sup>59</sup> The prominence of the lion in the Hunt Fresco has been interpreted as due to acquaintance with the portrayal of lion-hunts in Asia; but the lion was native to Macedonia (Hdt. 6. 125 and X. *Cyn.* 11), and a coin of Amyntas III illustrated a lion-hunt with the king on horseback about to strike and the lion teasing a spear.<sup>60</sup> The frescoes in Tombs I and II seemed in 1978 to be dated too early in terms of the history of Greek painting. But we know from Aelian *VH* 14. 17 that in the last part of the fifth century Archelaus employed a leading painter, Zeuxis of Heraclea, to beautify his palace, and it seems that Zeuxis founded a school of fresco-painting for which the palace provided many opportunities. Now that we have Andronikos' account of the sophisticated *trompe-l'oeil* architectural façade inside the Tomb of Eurydice, we have no option but to accept that a long tradition of fresco was native to Macedonia.

Pottery was important for dating. Andronikos dated to within 350–320 the sherds and the whole pots from both chambers of Tomb II and the sherds from the little pyre on its cornice. Dissenters argue that some 'spool salt-cellars', which were found in the small place of sacrifice near the shrine<sup>61</sup> and in Tomb II, should be dated to the late fourth century, because similar ones were found in a context of that date in the Athenian Agora. It is always tempting for archaeologists to assume that the earliest specimen yet found by excavation was the earliest in existence in antiquity; and in this case the true deduction is that the salt-cellar was current in the Agora in the last quarter of the fourth century<sup>62</sup> and

<sup>56</sup> See P. Green in *Philip II, Alexander the Great and the Macedonian Heritage* 139 ff., who puts her birth within the bracket 337–335 and her age at death in 317 between 20 and 18. See n. 43 above.

<sup>57</sup> I do not give detailed references for what follows. The main arguments of dissent are to be found in W.L. Adams in *The Ancient World* 3 (1980) 67 ff.; E.N. Borza in *Archaeological News* 10 (1981) 73 ff. and 11 (1982) 8 ff. and in *Phoenix* 41 (1987) 105 ff.; P.W. Lehmann in *AJA* 86 (1982) 437 ff. and *AAA* 14 (1981) 134 ff.; M. Ritter in *AA* 1984. 105 ff.

<sup>58</sup> Much attention has been given to the origin of the vault in Macedonia. See R.A. Tomlinson in *BSA* 82 (1987) 305 ff., written before Andronikos 1987 and before the report of the Tomb of Eurydice. E. Fredricksmeier in *AJA* 87 (1983) 99 ff. opposed the downdating of the vault in

Macedonia to after Alexander's expedition. It is likely now that the origin was in Macedonia, whether or not the arch went through a corbelled stage before it became a keystone-vault.

<sup>59</sup> For the comparison see Hammond in *Phoenix* 43 (1989) 221 ff., replying to E.N. Borza's article in *Phoenix* 41 (1987) 105 ff., of which he kindly sent me a copy. I owe him an apology for saying that his reasons for dating Tomb II after the death of Alexander were not stated there; I should have said 'not stated fully'.

<sup>60</sup> *SNG* V Pt 3, no. 2440.

<sup>61</sup> Andronikos 1984 64.

<sup>62</sup> S.I. Rotroff in *AJA* 84 (1980) 228, 86 (1982) 283 and *Hesperia* 53 (1984) 343 ff. and especially 351 'a date between 325 and 295 would therefore be most likely'.

not that it was then first used in Athens. We know too from the discoveries up to date that Macedonia was in advance of Athens in metal-working, arms-manufacturing, fresco-painting and mosaic, and we cannot exclude the possibility that a potter working at the court of Philip may have invented the 'spool salt-cellar'.

A gilt silver circlet with an adjustable collar (for heads of different sizes or/and for wearing with or without a hat) and with the engraving of hairlocks, knot and tie-ends on the collar was found in the main chamber of Tomb II.<sup>63</sup> It has been reasonably explained as a diadem worn by Philip and perhaps also by his predecessors on state occasions. It is then seen as the metal version of a cloth diadem with a knot at the back of the head and with an end or ends hanging down. Dissenters have claimed that the diadem was first adopted by Alexander from the Persian kings, and therefore that Tomb II has to be dated after that event, i.e. after c. 330. Objections to this claim are numerous: the Persian kings did not wear a diadem on the head;<sup>64</sup> Alexander did not become King of Persia;<sup>65</sup> and Macedonian kings before Alexander were portrayed wearing cloth diadems.<sup>66</sup> Moreover, there are four representations of a man wearing a diadem who had been identified as Philip II before 1977: on the king's own coinage a bearded man on horseback making a salute and alongside ΦΙΛΙΠΠΟΥ (*SNG V Pt. 3* 2941–4); the Copenhagen marble head (G.M.A. Richter, *The Portraits of the Greeks* 253, fig. 1708); the Tarsus Medallion (ibid. 253, fig. 1706); and the Hellenistic plate (M.B. Hatzopoulos and L.D. Loukopoulos edd., *Philip of Macedon*, Athens, 1980, 179). Those who claim that the diadem was first worn by Alexander have to deny the identifications. But that is not possible in the case of the coins. As owner and issuer of his own coinage, the king had no intention of putting any commoner rather than himself in such a prestigious position. The right eyebrow of the Copenhagen head has a nick in the right eyebrow, and the Medallion and the plate show only the lefthand side of the face; these point to Philip as the subject.<sup>67</sup>

The fundamental weakness of the dissenters' approach is that they have not faced up to the corollary of their claim that Tomb II must be later than the opening years of Alexander's reign. The corollary is that the only alternative occupant is Philip III Arrhidaeus within the period set by the pottery and the offerings, i.e. 350–300 (on their dating of the 'salt-cellars'), the age of the occupant of the main chamber and the lack of any other candidates. They therefore have to go on to prove that the king killing the lion in the Hunt Fresco, the man of war with his weapons and armour, the recipient of worship and the central figure under the tumulus was the half-witted Philip Arrhidaeus, who was dragged round 'like a mute in a play' by one manager after another and finally by Eurydice

<sup>63</sup> See Andronikos 1984 174. Ritter (n. 57 above) p. 110 considered it to be a hatband, but the engraving seems out of place on a hatband.

<sup>64</sup> See R.R.R. Smith, *Hellenistic Royal Portraits* (Oxford, 1988) 36. Those who date the wearing of the diadem to after 331 rely to some extent on Justin 12. 3. 8, who states that Alexander assumed the diadem then 'insolitum antea regibus Macedonicis'. But Justin 12. 3. 8–10 and a parallel passage in Diodorus, 17. 77. 5–7, both adding Alexander's taking over of Darius' harem, clearly derive from Cleitarchus, a notoriously undependable writer (*FGrH* 137 T 6, T 7, T 8, T 9, F 13, F 15, F 24, F 34). See Hammond, *Three Historians of Alexander the Great* (Cambridge, 1983) 59 and 102 f.

<sup>65</sup> See Hammond in *Antichthon* 20 (1986) 73 ff. and Smith, op. cit. (n. 64 above), 36.

<sup>66</sup> From Alexander I onwards; see his octadrachm enlarged in M.B. Sakellariou ed., *Macedonia* (Athens, 1983) 69. For Alexander III wearing a cloth diadem see Arr. *An.* 7. 22. 2.

<sup>67</sup> The injury to Philip's appearance was not as great as Musgrave, Neave and Prag suggest in *JHS* 104 Plate V. Pliny *NH* 7. 37 recorded that Critobulus extracted the arrow from his eye and treated the loss of sight without deforming his appearance (Critobulo fama est extracta Philippi regis oculo sagitta et citra deformitatem oris curata orbitate luminis). Philip suffered the injury eighteen years before his death.

(Plu. *Mor.* 79<sup>1</sup> E and *Alex.* 77. 7). And they have to explain the relevance of the unfinished state of the main chamber, the delay in the preparation of the antechamber, the objects among the bricks on the top of the vault, the little pyre on the cornice, the damage to the right eye socket of the remains in the main chamber, and the discrepancy between the age of the woman in the antechamber and the age of Eurydice at her death. Until they do meet these points, it is undeniable that the king in Tomb II was Philip II of Macedon.

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