

Jörg Weilhartner • Florian Ruppenstein (eds)
Tradition and Innovation in the Mycenaean Palatial Politics

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in the Mycenaean Palatial Polities**

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Abbreviations

The abbreviations used in this volume for periodicals and series are those recommended by the German Archaeological institute (*Deutsches Archäologisches Institut*):
<http://www.dainst.org/richtlinien>.

Additionally, the following abbreviation is used:

BCILL Bibliothèque des cahiers de l'Institut de Linguistique de Louvain

›Unus pro omnibus, omnes pro uno‹: The Mycenaean Palace System

Birgitta Eder – Reinhard Jung

Abstract: The cultural unity that shapes the character of the Mycenaean palatial period between LH IIIA1 and LH IIIB Final has chronological as well as geographical limits, and thus cannot be merely accidental. As a historical phenomenon it deserves a thorough explanation, and recent discussion sees a growing number of scholars arguing for the existence of a unified political system. We attempt to sketch a series of arguments supporting the idea of a single Mycenaean political entity in the southern and central Aegean. Apart from a discussion of the limited data of the Linear B texts we offer an archaeological perspective to the rise of the politically-unified system of the Mycenaean palatial period. In addition, we analyse the available historical references to the political power(s) of the Aegean in Egyptian and Hittite texts in the framework of Mycenaean international relations.

The almost uniform material culture of Mycenaean Greece was created during the palatial period of LH IIIA and B of the 14th and 13th centuries BC, and the ›Mycenaean koine‹ is truly a historically remarkable phenomenon which is anything but self-evident and demands a thorough explanation. Chronologically it is set apart from the pre-palatial and post-palatial periods. It succeeds a formative phase of LH I–II which is characterised by cultural and social plurality, and precedes the final phase of cultural and political fragmentation and ultimate decline of LH IIIC.

Geographical limits are made apparent by the distribution of Aegean LBA seals, Mycenaean relief glass and gold jewellery with figurative motifs, the comprehensive and exclusive use of Mycenaean painted and unpainted wheel-made pottery and kitchen wares and Mycenaean tholos and chamber tombs. A complex network of social rules lies behind the varied and multi-faceted combination of artefacts of Mycenaean workmanship in the tombs and settlements of the Greek mainland and the southern Aegean. Beyond the Aegean different rules applied, and the Bronze Age societies of Macedonia, Italy, Asia Minor and the wider Eastern Mediterranean integrated Mycenaean artefacts in very different ways into their cultural set-up.

Mere chance is certainly not the ruling principle behind this historical phenomenon which urgently needs an up-to-date discussion. We acknowledge the growing interest into the question of how the Mycenaean palace system functioned on an overall basis. The idea of a unified political system in Mycenaean Greece has gained considerable support in recent years from scholars working with the evidence provided by the Linear B tablets¹.

Administrative Tools: Tablets, Seals, Vase Inscriptions

The uniformity of the documents written in Linear B, which cover a period of about 250 years from the second half of the 15th century BC until the end of the 13th century BC, remains particularly striking. From Knossos to Thebes and from Pylos to Mycenae the administrative texts are remarkably similar, not only as far as formal criteria of shape and palaeography are concerned, but also with respect to lexicon and dialect. Moreover, these texts illustrate a uniform system of

¹ Olivier 2006, 187: »Mais lorsque des idées sont dans l'air, elles ont tendance à se répandre et arrivent même à se rencontrer. Peut-être certaines finiront-elles par s'imposer? (...) Sommes-nous à la veille d'un ›reconnaissance‹, non pas diplomatique mais simplement ›académique‹, d'un empire mycénien?«. See also below.

weights and measures, an apparently similar system of taxation, the same terminology for land use and for the hierarchy of officials and functionaries². That is certainly unusual for independent polities, but also uncommon for vassal kingdoms depending on one and the same Great King, as the Near Eastern kingdoms in the realm of Hatti illustrate. The orientalist Nicholas Postgate has taken this to indicate a common system of administration for all the Mycenaean palaces, and the existence of a central authority which was interested in the preservation of this unity and had the means to secure it³.

In fact, even administrative systems of the same language, with a common origin and historical phases of unity or conversion tend to develop their own terminology when they function separately from each other. A case in point is offered by the administrative jargon used in Germany and Austria where German is the national language. We have arranged this table with a few examples of differences in the bureaucratic terminology of the republican states of present-day Germany and Austria, which could easily be extended.

Austria	Germany	English translation
	<i>State Administration</i>	
Abgeordneter zum Nationalrat	Bundestagsabgeordneter	member of parliament
Landeshauptmann	Ministerpräsident	leader of a federal state
angeloben	vereidigen	to take the oath of office
Bundesheer	Bundeswehr	federal armed forces
Jus	Jura	law
Anmeldebescheinigung	Freizügigkeitsbescheinigung	residence permit statement (within EU)
	<i>Labour</i>	
Matura	Abitur	diploma qualifying for university admission
Kollektivvertrag	Tarifvertrag	labour contract / wage agreement
karenzieren	beurlauben	to grant so. leave of absence
pragmatisieren	verbeamten	to give so. the status of a civil servant
Abfertigung	Abfindung	severance payment
Pension	Rente	pension

Table 1: Examples of differences in the bureaucratic languages of Austria and Germany

What we would like to stress is that administrative uniformity needs a thorough explanation and is far from being self-evident. We suggest one driving force behind this phenomenon in Mycenaean Greece and consider the uniformity to indicate administrative bonds which tied the regions together.

The same applies to Mycenaean clay nodules, which were employed at the interface of the central palace administration and the people and institutions outside the palace. The Mycenaean clay nodules are indeed different and less varied than the Neopalatial Minoan ones, but from palace to palace they remain in form and function almost identical⁴.

However, Linear B texts do not contain any explicit information about the character of the relations between the individual Mycenaean palaces. The existence of relations among these palaces is beyond any doubt, because of the tight material interconnections between the sites over time.

² Olivier 2006, 185 f.; Killen 2007. See Palaima 2003a, 159. 162: »This in itself argues for a common and traditional ›professionalism‹ among the ›administrators‹ who wrote the records«.

³ Postgate 2001.

⁴ Hallager 2005, 249–263.

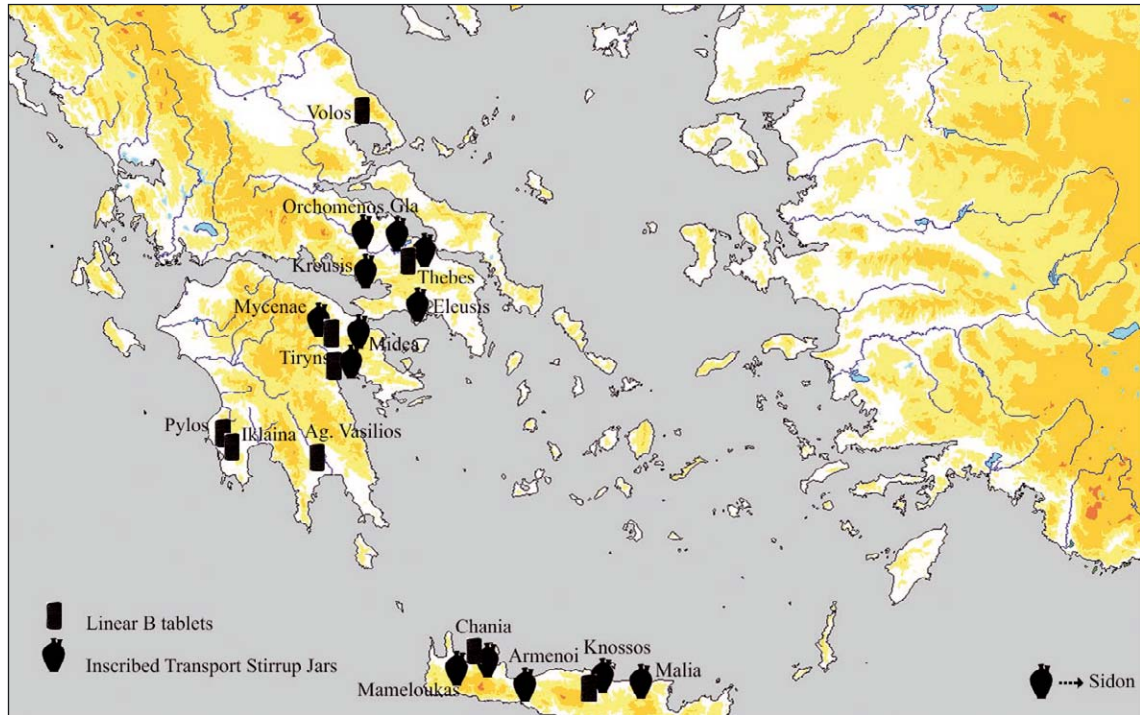


Fig. 1: Distribution of Linear B tablets and inscribed stirrup jars (after Haskell et al. 2011, 4 ill. 1. 5; Zurbach 2006, 17 fig. 1 with additions and alterations)

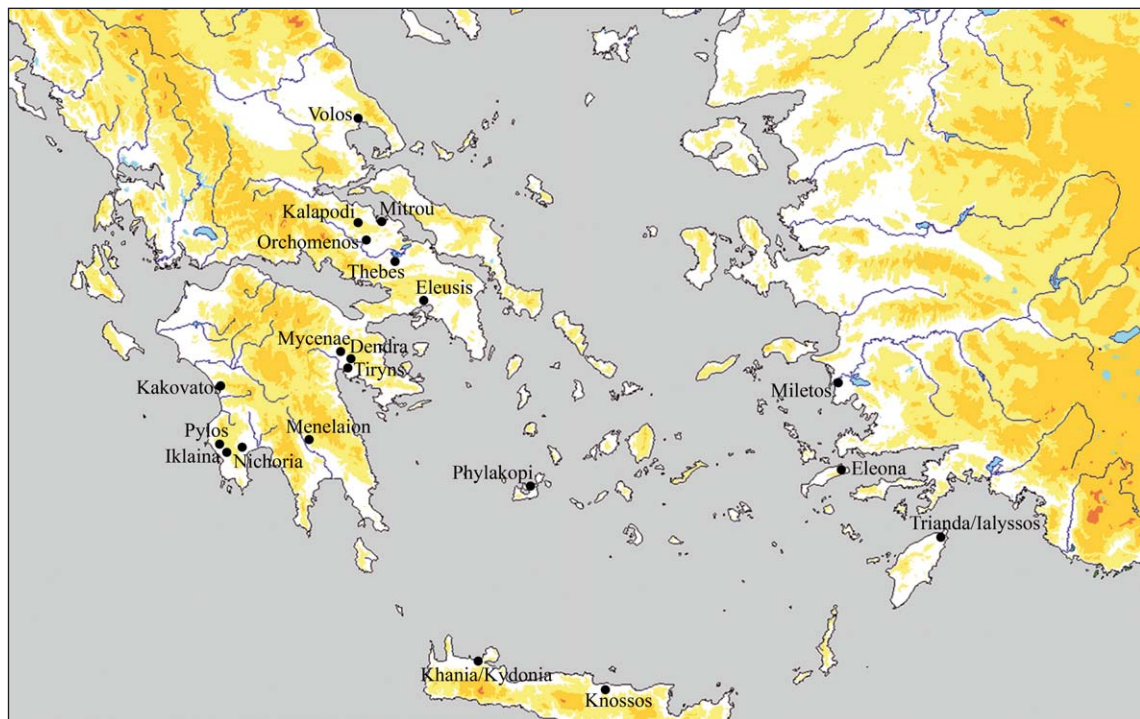


Fig. 2: Map of Bronze Age sites mentioned in the text

Therefore it is due to the specific character of the Linear B texts – and not a result of a fragmented political landscape – that they do not contain direct information on the political organisation of Mycenaean Greece.

Inscribed transport or coarse-ware stirrup jars form the only group of Linear B documents which we can see to have been inter-regionally distributed (Fig. 1). Raw oil is one of the commodities most commonly transported in these coarse-ware stirrup jars⁵, which were only produced in western and central Crete, but subsequently also sent to the Greek mainland. Peter van Alfen has recognized the written formula on those stirrup jars as referring to a production manager by his name, a production place by its toponym and the owner of the production unit by his name⁶. In the course of vase production the scribe in charge would inform the responsible potter how many jars were needed for a special order, and that scribe would write the necessary information on one or a few jars only in order to document the production and delivery process for the production manager(s)⁷ and the ordering party. The rest of the associated batch of jars remained uninscribed and was attached to the one carrying the written information. The batch of vases would stay together, because the administrative centre giving out the order was the receiver at the same time, and no free market trade was involved that could split up the group of stirrup jars and separate the inscribed from the non-inscribed ones. The inscription would refer to an order given out by a mainland or a Cretan centre, and the responsible scribes would register – partly on jars, partly on tablets – the data needed by the palatial bureaucracy on Crete and/or the mainland in order to organise production and transport to the final destination⁸.

As van Alfen explains, the longer inscriptions on the stirrup jars indicate obligations on a different hierarchical level than the shorter ones, because the distance between oil production and the administrative centre ordering the oil was longer than in the instances in which only the production manager's name was needed⁹. In four of those longer inscriptions the term *wa-na-ka-te-ro*, *wanakteros* (cf. ἄναξ), ›royal‹, or its possible abbreviation *wa*, appears in the place of the owner's name. One each of these stirrup jars was found at Khania (KH Z 43)¹⁰, at Thebes (TH Z 839), at Eleusis (EL Z 1) and at Tiryns (TI Z 29). These four inscriptions likely refer to production on royal estates¹¹. Assuming that these four Cretan stirrup jars were found at the place of their first and final destination, one would like to understand what the term *wa-na-ka-te-ro* meant to the recipients of the three jars in Boeotia, in Attica and in the Argolid. The administration on the mainland, where three of the stirrup jars arrived, was obviously interested to know, whether the oil came from a named owner or from one of several royal estates that existed at various places. However, there is no additional information making clear which wanax owned the royal estate referred to in the inscription. There are two possible explanations: 1. The exclusive production of those coarse-ware stirrup jars on Crete implied that it must have been the king of Crete (if one supposes that there was one and only one). 2. There was only one wanax in all of Greece anyway and no confusion could arise from the designation *wa-na-ka-te-ro*. The wanax would then have had his royal estates for various agricultural products in all Greek regions, where his administration worked, just like the Egyptian pharaoh had royal estates even in the Levantine vassal kingdoms¹², where it was clear to

⁵ van Alfen 1999, 267 f. n. 56; Haskell et al. 2011, 5.

⁶ van Alfen 1999; 2008. Cf. Judson 2013.

⁷ We do not think that one can assume that the production manager for the olive oil and the one responsible for the stirrup jar production was one and the same person (*contra* van Alfen 1999, 268 f.), because it is not certain that the pottery production was much decentralised. In fact some arguments suggest that the number of pottery workshops was smaller than the number of place names on the stirrup jars. See Killen 2011, 104.

⁸ van Alfen (1999, 263 f.) gives an example for the possibility that a number of stirrup jars (*ka-ra-re-we*, *khlārēwes* [cf. χλαρόν]) is recorded together with a personal name on a tablet (PY Fr 1184), so that there were independent mechanisms of control for transfer of groups of pots (whether full or empty).

⁹ van Alfen 1999, 270.

¹⁰ Andreadaki-Vlasaki – Hallager 2007, 17–20.

¹¹ van Alfen 1999, 270 f.

¹² Bavay 2015.

everybody that there was only one ›Sun‹ shining in the empire. In this sense, one can simply extend van Alfen's basic conclusion that the inscribed stirrup jars »operated presumably within a closed system«¹³ to the closed system of the whole Mycenaean Great Kingdom called Ahhiyawa (at least by the Hittites, for which see below). This remains true, even if one Linear B inscribed stirrup jar was found outside the Aegean circle at the site of Sidon in the Levant¹⁴. First, large numbers of inscribed stirrup jars were sent to various places on the Greek mainland¹⁵. Second, such inscribed jars were almost never sent to places outside the realm of Mycenaean administration, while uninscribed coarse-ware stirrup jars of Cretan production did reach various Levantine harbours¹⁶. This speaks against the assumption that the stirrup jar inscriptions had no meaning outside of Crete. In contrast, the inter-regional distribution of the inscribed coarse-ware stirrup jars within the Aegean makes it likely that an inter-regional administrative process was at work drawing on the inscriptions of those jars – as opposed to other Linear B document types, which functioned only on a regional level and thus had no inter-regional distribution. One can only speculate why the jars were inscribed before firing. Apparently, the Mycenaean administrators did not consider other kinds of attached documents such as sealings or accompanying letters (e.g. on a diptychon) sufficient. An inscription painted before firing will certainly stay on the jar and give information about its content no matter what happens on the intermediate stages of transport. It is forgery-proof. This can be taken to indicate that the ordering party took special care to control the agricultural producer and the administrator in charge of that production. This gained special importance when producer and associated administration were geographically distant from the administrator who assigned the production order. In other words, the inscribed stirrup jars were most probably designed for economic and administrative processes encompassing both a regional and an inter-regional level, but they were not produced for trade with foreign kingdoms.

This pattern compares well to the distribution of Aegean seals and relief jewellery, which also occurs in a congruent area in the Aegean with very few outliers in regions of intensive Aegean contacts. Although several thousand Aegean seals are known, their circulation is almost confined to the Late Bronze Age Aegean, and only a very few exceptional pieces have been found on the western coast of Asia Minor, in Cyprus and the Levant. This suggests that they were not actually considered as ornaments which could become objects of trade and exchange. If we understand them as tokens of an administrative system, as clay sealings suggest, Aegean seals had bureaucratic limits of function; and this circumstance may be reflected by their geographical diffusion¹⁷.

Seals of different categories display a comprehensive distribution across the area of the Peloponnese, central and northern Greece. This applies to the groups of various materials (semi-precious stones, pressed glass, steatite and fluorite) as well as to the different glyptic styles. It is interesting to note that the different groups of seals cannot be attributed to the regional catchment areas of individual palaces, but that common features characterise their supra-regional distribution pattern. This is true for seals but also for seal impressions on clay nodules from the various Mycenaean palaces, which reflect a common repertoire of motifs. This gives the impression of a unified administrative system, which is reinforced by the uniformity of the Linear B texts from the various Mycenaean palaces.

Seals made of semi-precious stones and golden signet rings appear only from LH IIB/IIIA1 in the tombs of Thessaly, central Greece and the north-western Peloponnese. The group of people wearing seals was significantly enlarged with the creation of the Mainland Popular Group, the moulded glass and ornamental fluorite seals from LH IIIA(1) onwards. Seals of semi-precious stones and golden signet rings increasingly became rather exclusive antiques which were, accord-

¹³ van Alfen 1999, 264. 267.

¹⁴ Karageorghis 2008.

¹⁵ Killen 2011.

¹⁶ Haskell et al. 2011.

¹⁷ Eder 2007a; 2007b with distribution maps.

ing to clay impressions on nodules found in the Mycenaean palaces, used in the highest circles of the palace administration for sealing. Each of the individual seal groups is linked via materials, motifs and sealings to the Mycenaean palaces and their administrative system, which we hold responsible for designing the rules under which seals were distributed and used.

The contemporaneous distribution of the very different categories of seals goes hand in hand with the intensive dissemination of Mycenaean material culture on the Greek mainland and the adjacent islands starting in LH IIB/IIIA1. Thus we suggest that the distribution of Aegean seal groups from LH IIB/IIIA1 onwards can be explained in terms of the administrative development of the Greek mainland by the Mycenaean palace system. The extension of the territorial basis would have formed the framework which required developing and expanding the various categories of seals.

With regard to the distribution of the different seal groups in the area of the so-called northern and western periphery, the regions from Thessaly through central Greece to the north-western Peloponnese are inseparably part of the Mycenaean koine of the palatial period. Even if we still have no clay nodules from these regions which could offer the ultimate proof of an administrative use of these seals, the presence of seals forms in any case the basic material condition for the possibility of sphragistic use within an administrative system¹⁸.

The new Linear B texts from Volos¹⁹ confirm this perspective, which was developed solely on the distribution of Aegean seals. Mycenaean administrative records prove the presence of Mycenaean palatial administration in an area which was formerly termed the ›periphery‹. To our minds this region was incorporated into the unified Mycenaean palace system in the same way as any other region of southern and central Greece.

Now, one might argue that the existence of a Mycenaean palace in most of those regions for which a Linear B administration is attested, speaks against a unified Mycenaean kingdom with a single wanax. However, one needs only to think of contemporaneous 18th and 19th dynasty Egypt to see a single ruling king with different palaces at his disposal in the various regions of his kingdom. Such an analogous model suits the repetitive design of the throne rooms in the three LH IIIB palaces at Pylos, Mycenae and Tiryns²⁰ which are almost identical in their overall dimensions, structure and internal design, suggesting the performance of identical ceremonials²¹. The earliest throne room compound of the classical type was identified at Tiryns and dates back to LH IIIA1 or IIIA2²². The convergences in architectural design of the LH IIIB palaces may be interpreted as resulting from central decisions, because there are indications that earlier palace plans followed different models²³.

Mycenaean Rule over Crete

In order to support this perspective we have to understand the formative phases of the Mycenaean kingdom. Let us start this investigation on Crete, where the oldest Linear B tablets have been found in the palace of Knossos, in the Room of the Chariot Tablets, stratified at the beginning of LM IIIA1²⁴.

Jan Driessen assumes a Mycenaean conquest of Crete at the end of LM IB, when Minoan Neopalatial administrative structures were destroyed. As a result, a Mycenaean administration

¹⁸ Cf. Eder 2009b.

¹⁹ Skafida et al. 2012.

²⁰ Jung 2015.

²¹ For the comparison of the three throne room complexes, see already Mylonas 1966, 63 fig. 16.

²² Kilian 1987, 209. 211 f. figs. 6. 7; Maran 2001.

²³ This particularly applies to Pylos, where the first palaces show specific Minoan building techniques and may have had a layout inspired by Minoan palatial compounds, while the LH IIIB plan follows Argive models (Kilian 1987, 213–217 fig. 12; Rutter 2005, 20–32 figs. 1–7 [quoting results by Michael Nelson]).

²⁴ For the date see Driessen 2000, 218.

was installed during LM II²⁵. In Driessen's words »some Mycenaean king established himself at Knossos, placing troops in a few strategic settlements, such as Khania and Rethymnon in the west«²⁶. In this reconstruction, an archaeological correlate of Mycenaean political control emanating from Knossos is the LM II and IIIA1 pottery of Knossian style²⁷.

However, recent excavations at Khania in 2004 brought to light warrior tombs dating to the early period of the Mycenaean rule over Crete. The pit and shaft graves with warrior burials date to LM II/IIIA1 and are comparable to the famous Knossian warrior tombs, as well as those from the Mycenaean mainland. A rich warrior burial equipped with sword, arrows (a group of arrowheads was found), mirror, knife and razor²⁸ also includes LH IIIA1 pottery imported from the Greek mainland – possibly from the Argolid²⁹. Interestingly, the built walls lining the burial shaft of tomb 46 are features that only recur on the Greek mainland and have no parallel at Knossos³⁰. The sword of this warrior is embellished with gold fittings underlining his high military and social rank³¹. One may speculate that the Mycenaean take-over did not only start at Knossos, but had two bridge-heads at the same time, at Knossos and at Khania.

We are certainly not the only ones who see Mycenae as the driving force behind the Mycenaean expansion to Crete. The dominant role of Mycenae within the group of Mycenaean sites of the Argive plain was established since the time of the shaft graves with their multitude of foreign grave goods and continued with an unrivalled series of nine tholos tombs, of which six belong already to LH IIA³².

The Mycenaean Military-Political Complex

The LH IIB and IIIA1 periods apparently witnessed a series of dynamic developments powered by military expansion³³. The well-known cuirass tomb from Dendra belongs to the transition from LH IIB to LH IIIA1 and offers the typical set of weapons, metal vessels and pottery, which are so characteristic of the warrior burials of the time (Figs. 3–5)³⁴. However, this is not a local phenomenon restricted to the Argolid and Crete. During the LH IIB and IIIA1 periods, we find similar burials also in Messenia, Achaea, central Greece, Thessaly and on the Dodecanese. Imma Kilian-Dirlmeier and Hartmut Matthäus have shown that differences in the combinations of the grave offerings reflect various classes of social status of the deceased³⁵.

In Messenia the bronze assemblage found in pit 3 of the Nichoria tholos may represent such a warrior burial of LH IIIA1, which was re-deposited later³⁶. In central Greece, in the area of ancient Phokis, excavations in the late 1990s revealed a chamber tomb cemetery near Kalapodi.

²⁵ Driessen 2000, 219 f.

²⁶ Driessen 2000, 220.

²⁷ Driessen 2000, 220 with n. 11.

²⁸ Andreadaki-Vlasaki 2010, 18. 27 fig. 6 α–δ.

²⁹ The two piriform jars clearly show LH IIIA1 decoration and motifs (Andreadaki-Vlasaki 2010, 27 fig. 6 γ; cf. French 1964, 244 fig. 1, 6; 247 pl. 68 a, from the Atreus Bothros at Mycenae). The decoration of the beaked jugs also corresponds better with mainland patterns of LH IIIA1 (Andreadaki-Vlasaki 2010, 27 fig. 6 β; cf. Mountjoy 1999, 838 with respect to the monochrome neck decoration) than with Cretan LM II, but these two vessels do not have exact parallels in the Argolid.

³⁰ Andreadaki-Vlasaki 2010, 18. 27 f. drawings 3–5. For discussion of the central Cretan variety of shaft graves (rock-cut with a ledge for covering slabs) around Knossos, see Evans 1906, 11–15; Kallitsaki 1997, 220–227; Miller 2011, 49–56.

³¹ Andreadaki-Vlasaki et al. 2008, 102 f. cat. no. 75.

³² See most recently Voutsaki 2010, 93–100. Cf. Eder 2009a, 14–20.

³³ Cf. Catling 1989; Eder 2009a, 13–15.

³⁴ Åström 1977, 7–25 pls. 1–7; Verdelis 1977, 28–65 pls. 8–30.

³⁵ Matthäus 1983; Kilian-Dirlmeier 1985; 1986.

³⁶ Nichoria: Wilkie 1992, 260–264. For a detailed discussion of the complicated stratigraphy of the tholos including arguments for an earlier construction date and a date for the warrior burial in LH IIB/IIIA1, see Zavadil 2013, 425.

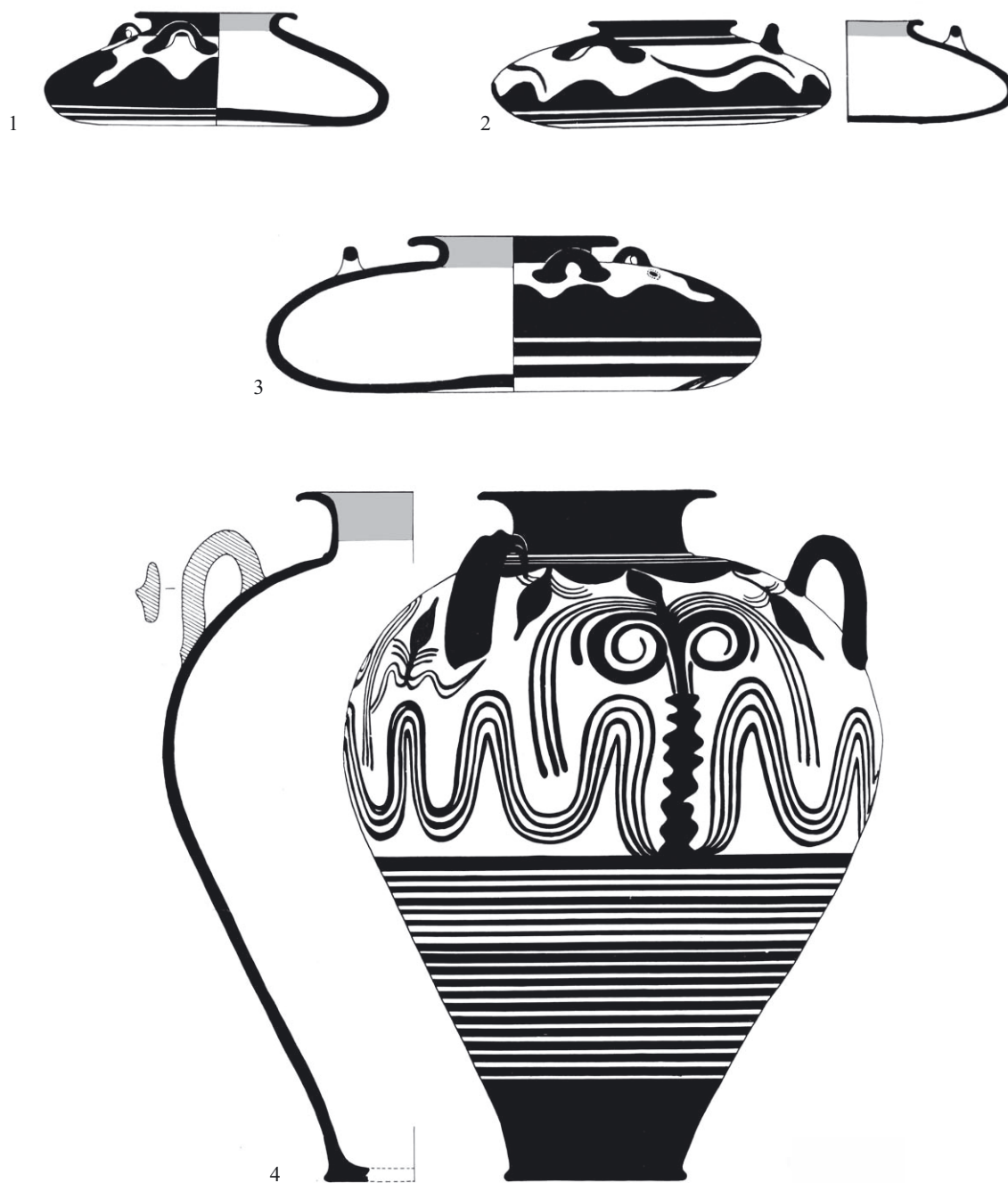


Fig. 3: Dendra chamber tomb 12, cuirass tomb, ceramic vessels: 1) Alabastron 1 (after Åström 1977, 14 f. no. 10, fig. 5, pl. V. 3–4. Scale 1:4); 2) Alabastron 2 (after Åström 1977, 15 f. no. 16, fig. 6, pl. V. 5–6. Scale 1:4); 3) Alabastron 3 (after Åström 1977, 17 f. no. 25, fig. 7, pl. V. 1–2. Scale 1:4); 4) Piriform amphora (after Åström 1977, 13 f. fig. 4, pl. VI. 2. Scale 1:4)

In tomb 1 a warrior burial lay still *in situ* together with a type C sword, one spearhead, two knives, one dagger, many arrowheads, a pair of bronze scales, tweezers, gold ornaments, two seals of agate and Mycenaean alabaster of LH IIB style³⁷. Another similar burial, although

³⁷ Kalapodi-Kokkalia (tomb I): Dakoronia – Dimaki 1998, 394 pl. 1a (alabastron); Dakoronia 2006, 24–26 (fig. 16: scales; fig. 17: sword); Dakoronia 2007, 59. 64 fig. 1 (scales); Dakoronia 2008, 293 figs. 488. 489 (type C sword and gold disks with rosettes); CMS V Suppl. 3 no. 63. 64 (seals).



Fig. 4: Dendra chamber tomb 12, cuirass tomb, metal vessels: 1) Two handled bronze basin (after Matthäus 1980, 130 no. 153, pl. 17. Not to scale); 2) Spouted bronze bowl (after Matthäus 1980, 264 f. no. 392, pl. 46. Scale 1:3); 3) Silver cup (after Åström 1977, 54 f. no. 11, pl. IX. 3. Not to scale); 4) Piriform bronze jar (after Matthäus 1980, 190 no. 286, pl. 34. Scale 2:7)

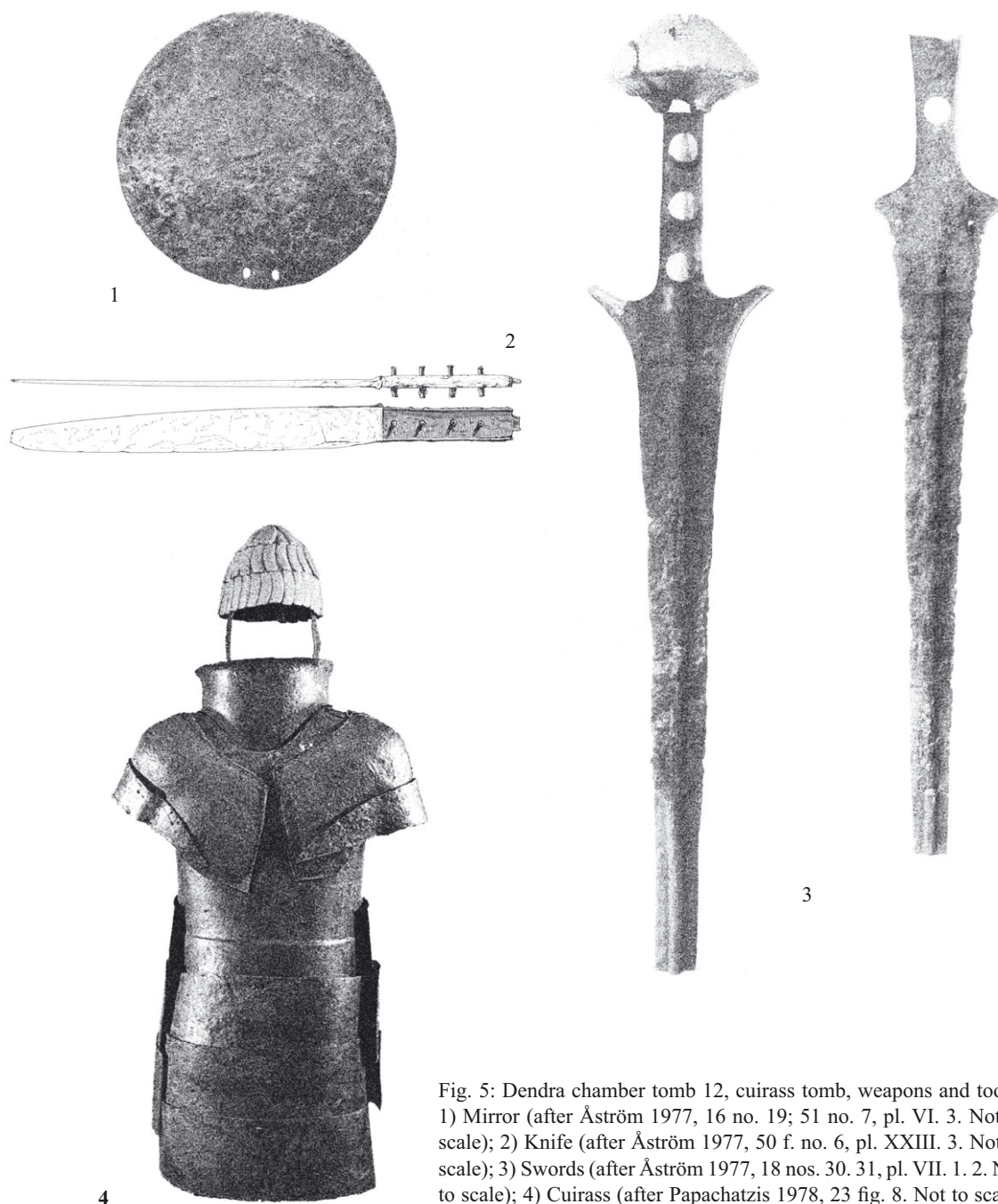


Fig. 5: Dendra chamber tomb 12, cuirass tomb, weapons and tools: 1) Mirror (after Åström 1977, 16 no. 19; 51 no. 7, pl. VI. 3. Not to scale); 2) Knife (after Åström 1977, 50 f. no. 6, pl. XXIII. 3. Not to scale); 3) Swords (after Åström 1977, 18 nos. 30. 31, pl. VII. 1. 2. Not to scale); 4) Cuirass (after Papachatzis 1978, 23 fig. 8. Not to scale)

equipped with lesser gifts, is part of the cist tomb cemetery at Volos-Nea Ionia in Thessaly and also dates to LH IIB³⁸.

All these warrior burials are part of a super-regional phenomenon in LH IIB/IIIA1 and may be seen in terms of an expansionist ›political-military complex‹ seeking control over large parts of the Aegean, a political power that within the few decades of LH IIB/IIIA1 intervened in Crete and in areas of the Greek mainland as far as Thessaly and the Aegean islands. It was

³⁸ Batziou-Efstathiou 1991, 33–42 figs. 14–19 pls. 21–24.

precisely during this time when on Crete the first Mycenaean administration was set up, and the new Linear B inscription found at Iklaina near Pylos in a LH IIB–IIIA1/A2 Early context may be read in a similar way³⁹. We suggest that Linear B administration was established on the Greek mainland in the course of LH IIB and IIIA1 after it had been developed under Cretan influence.

Exotic Goods and Taxation

Military aggression was only one of the means used to establish Mycenaean administration, and a kind of indirect military threat emanating from the wanax was certainly a permanent phenomenon. However, more political instruments of domination may have been used by the emerging wanax. During LH IIB and IIIA1 Mycenaean material culture spread all over the Greek mainland. Most chamber tomb cemeteries in the north-western Peloponnese, central Greece, Thessaly and the Aegean islands make their start in LH IIB/IIIA1, and pottery (painted as well as unpainted), figurines and jewellery, weapons and utensils gained the uniform character that we are used to call ›Mycenaean‹ despite a few regional idiosyncrasies. Raw materials from the Near East, as well as finished items of glass, gold, ivory and semi-precious stones in different quantities and qualities found their way into the regional hierarchies of the living and the dead.

Apart from the foreign qualities of objects and materials, it was important that they were not available locally. Access to these materials and items was therefore limited and the channels subject to palatial control. Early palatial workshops shaped semi-precious stones, ivory, glass and gold into various items of specialised craftsmanship, which were decorated with the repetitive designs of an overall pervasive ideology. The access to new materials and items from palatial workshops will have been attractive to local chiefs for a variety of reasons⁴⁰. First of all, local chieftains could employ these materials in the form of e.g. seals, jewellery, toiletries (mirrors, combs) and furniture to enhance their own status. By distributing these special luxuries, they will have gained means to tap the resources of their region and to mobilise work forces. In return, this will have enabled them to provide services and taxes to the early palatial centres which formed the source of these desired goods. In addition, religious ideology and festivals, burial rites in long dromoi leading to underground chambers, drinking and feasting rituals with Mycenaean type pottery will have offered means to bolster social cohesion⁴¹.

If local rulers sooner or later turned into officials of the new palatial bureaucracy, they gained important new sources of income and were allowed to enforce regular tax collection from the population. Moreover, in the formative phases of that system different types of collective and communal property were certainly reduced in extent, in order to give estates to the new officials, for example to the priests of the new palatial religion. Much of the property regime must have changed. This almost certainly provoked conflict⁴², and such kind of conflicts must have been much more frequent in the formative phase of the kingdom. They may even have resulted in armed struggle between independent local communities and the new administrative powers, while the latter were extending their claims on land and work force.

³⁹ Linear B at Iklaina: Shelmerdine 2012; this volume.

⁴⁰ Eder 2015. Cf. Bennet 2008; Burns 2010.

⁴¹ Cf. Eder, in press.

⁴² One may recall the conflict over landholdings between the priestess Eritha and the *dāmos* recorded on Pylos tablet PY Ep 704. Cf. Deger-Jalkotzy 1988; Ruijgh 1989, 416–418; Shelmerdine – Bennet 2008, 300 f.

Force and Punishment

The process of unification will have taken a few decades, and will not have met uniform consent and approval. We present a few cases in point where we think that sites were affected by the expansion policy of the young kingdom of Mycenae.

At Iklaina – few kilometres southeast of the palace at Pylos – the dominant feature of the site consists of a massive rectangular terrace with dimensions of 8 m × 23 m and constructed with Cyclopean limestone blocks, the construction date of which is currently placed in LH IIIA2/IIIB1. The site suffered a major destruction in the period LH IIB–IIIA1/2 Early, and the Linear B tablet most likely also belongs to this phase. Afterwards the architectural layout of the subsequent settlement at Iklaina was changed in its entire character⁴³.

The well-known site of Kakovatos on the west coast of the Peloponnese also suffered destruction by fire towards the end of LH IIB. The major building complex on the top of the acropolis with a Cyclopean terrace wall was destroyed and never rebuilt again. The site, with its three huge and rich tholos tombs of the Early Mycenaean period, lost its leading role within the regional settlement hierarchy⁴⁴.

The islet of Mitrou lies on the east coast of central Greece in the modern nomos Phthiotida, where recent Greek-American excavations have revealed a rich Bronze Age settlement sequence. Also here, the major building complex D within the settlement suffered a major destruction by fire in LH IIIA2 Early. After this destruction the nature of the occupation changed drastically, and Aleydis van de Moortel suspects that the destruction is related to the expansion of territorial power on the part of the Mycenaean centres of Thebes or Orchomenos⁴⁵. Orchomenos is certainly the candidate which may be considered because of its strategic position governing the entrance to the upper Kephissos valley and thus to the road system of central Greece⁴⁶.

The Mansion II at the Menelaion in Lakonia may have suffered a similar fate of destruction and abandonment in LH IIIA1/IIIA2 Early, although Hector Catling pointed out in his final publication of the site that the history of events is not entirely certain and a continuous use of the Mansion in LH IIIA2 and IIIB1 cannot be entirely excluded. However, the evidence of site use in the LH IIIA2 and IIIB1 is sparse, and the Menelaion apparently never became an administrative centre⁴⁷.

At Phylakopi, the so-called Megaron replaced an earlier substantial building called Mansion of LBA I, a period of Minoan influence⁴⁸. The Megaron was erected in LH IIIA1⁴⁹, which was

⁴³ Iklaina: Cosmopoulos 2012a, 43 f.; 2012b, 2 f.: »Based on current evidence, it seems that buildings T and V were constructed in LH IIA and continued to be used, with alterations, in LH IIB/IIIA1. They were destroyed in LH IIIA2, possibly when the Cyclopean Terrace was erected. These conclusions have wider implications for the issue of the formation of the Mycenaean state of Pylos, as they allow us to reject part of our original working hypothesis. Specifically, before this season our working hypothesis had been that the Cyclopean Terrace Building could have been constructed during LH IIB/IIIA1, which would mean that it would have been the result of a major building project undertaken by the early rulers of Iklaina, before the annexation of the site by the Palace of Nestor. The late date that we have now for the construction of this massive building places it in the post-annexation period, suggesting that it may have been the outcome of an effort by the new rulers of the site to establish firmly their authority and erase the signs of the previous political ruler(s)«. Linear B tablet: Shelmerdine 2012; this volume. Site reports: Petrakos 2008; 2009; 2010; 2011; 2012.

⁴⁴ Kakovatos: Eder 2011b; 2012. Eder 2011a argued for strong cultural, even political ties between Triphylyia and Messenia in Mycenaean times, even before she started the recent excavations. Cf. Cavanagh 2011, 24.

⁴⁵ Mitrou: van de Moortel 2007, 247; Whitley et al. 2005/2006, 64 f.; 2006/2007, 40; Morgan 2007/2008, 58; Cavanagh 2011, 24; Vitale 2011, 332; Van de Moortel – Zahou 2012, 1135 f.

⁴⁶ Eder 2007a, 90–92. Eder 2007b, 39 argues on the basis of the distribution of pairs of pressed glass seals in central Greece for a production in the palatial centre of Orchomenos.

⁴⁷ Catling 2009.

⁴⁸ Renfrew et al. 2007b, 36.

⁴⁹ The latest pottery in the fill underneath the Megaron floor dates to LH IIIA1. Cf. Mountjoy 2007, 308.

a time of strong Mycenaean influence, and in which also the fortification that had been erected during LBA I (the so-called outer city-wall) was reconstructed⁵⁰. However, already during the LH IIIA period the fortification had fallen into disuse and partially collapsed, while a new fortification wall (the inner city wall) was erected only during or after the first half of LH IIIB⁵¹.

The so-called Megaron might be interpreted as the seat of a local administrative official. It is interesting to note that apparently this official did not have the power or the political autonomy to protect his centre by a fortification. Only during the last phase of the Mycenaean palatial system characterised by the well-known crisis phenomena did the political administration of Phylakopi again take measures of military protection by fortifying the settlement.

The archaeology of the Aegean in LH IIB–IIIA1/IIIA2 Early suggests that this was a major phase characterised by cultural unification including everyday culture and all realms of ideology. We recognise the ostentatious representation of military power, and, contemporaneously, the apparently selective destructions and/or abandonments of primary and secondary centres. Finally, the conspicuous reduction of rich burials with weapons by LH IIIA2 and of representative tholos tombs appears to indicate that fewer people were entitled to ostentatious burial display. The considerable variety of earlier seats of local power does not survive in this period. Instead, evidence for administration concentrates mainly in the vicinity of the palatial centres.

The International Role of Mycenaean Greece

Although the evidence of the Linear B tablets, the nodules and the seals found in Mycenaean Greece does not offer the crucial argument for the existence of a unified Mycenaean kingdom, there are contemporary written sources that may help us to understand the relationships between the different Greek regions. The first source is one of the inscriptions placed on statue bases inside the mortuary temple of pharaoh Amenhotep III (1386–1348 BC)⁵² at Kom el-Hettan in western Thebes. As Amenhotep III is securely linked to the phase LM IIIA1⁵³, the inscription is roughly contemporary with the earlier phase of Linear B administration of Minoan Crete.

On the statue base concerning us here a list of foreign geographic names is written on both sides of a central motif, with two captive foreigners below the cartouches of the pharaoh. To the right of the motif only two names appear: *k-f-tj-w* and *tj-j-n-3-jj-w*, while on the left 13 names are partly preserved (15 can be reconstructed based on the size of the base). The remarkable asymmetry of the list led to the interpretation of the two names *k-f-tj-w* and *tj-j-n-3-jj-w* on the right side as a kind of heading or title for the other names on the left side. The identification of *k-f-tj-w*/Kaftu with Crete was suggested by the tomb paintings in the tombs of 18th dynasty officials and is in line with the names of Amniša/Amnissos, Kutunaya/Kydonia and Kunuša/Knossos on the left side of the base. These Cretan names appear in two groups at the beginning and at the end of the left list. Another group of names in the middle contains Mukanu, which can be identified with Mycenae. Nupilayi or Nupilia may be Nauplia, Mizana may be somehow associated with Messene or Messenia, Diqayas may be Thebai (Thebes). Tanaya is supposed to form the heading for these names on the Greek mainland⁵⁴. In this context the famous faience plaques with the cartouches of Amenhotep III from Mycenae have always been mentioned, because they support the view that there was direct contact between

⁵⁰ Renfrew 2007, 486.

⁵¹ Renfrew et al. 2007b, 64.

⁵² Schneider 2010, 402.

⁵³ Warren – Hankey 1989, 146–148; Phillips 2008, 129; Höflmayer 2012, 198 f.; Bunimovitz et al. 2013.

⁵⁴ Helck 1979, 29–32; Haider 2000 (for the reading Diqajas = Thebes).

Egypt under Amenhotep III and Mycenae – although none of the fragments has been found in a LH IIIA1 context⁵⁵.

The information provided by the Kom el-Hettan inscription may suggest that from the viewpoint of the Egyptian bureaucracy there were two larger geographic and/or political entities in the Aegean – one comprising central and western Crete and another encompassing the Peloponnese and perhaps Boeotia. This may be interpreted in terms of a political unification of the Peloponnese and perhaps also part of central Greece during LH IIIA1, while Crete appears as a separate entity. We return to this issue in a moment.

The conclusion that Tanaya refers to a political entity, can be supported by the reference to the same country Tanaya in the annals of Thutmosis III. In this inscription a person from Tanaya, most probably to be restored as ›ruler of Tanaya‹, is said to have sent a tribute in the 42nd regnal year of the pharaoh⁵⁶. According to Thomas Schneider's recent chronology this would equal 1435 BC⁵⁷. Such a date late in the pharaoh's reign would approximately fall at the beginning of LM II or LH IIB according to the synchronisms between the regnal periods of the 18th dynasty and the Minoan relative chronological phases as they are accepted today⁵⁸. We can conclude that the Egyptians knew a land of Tanaya that probably had a single ruler as early as LH IIB. Wolfgang Helck has suggested that in year 42 of Thutmosis III that ruler of Tanaya sought to establish direct contact with Egypt, and this implies for the first time without Cretan intervention⁵⁹. It nearly goes without saying that the size of that country may have expanded in the time between the start of LH IIB at the end of the reign of Thutmosis III and LH IIIA1 during the reign of Amenhotep III.

The Hittite bureaucracy used another name referring to a political entity in the Aegean. That name appears in the variations Ahhiya and the more recent Ahhiyawa. The texts mentioning Ahhiya can probably be dated to the beginning of the 14th century BC⁶⁰ and are thus most likely contemporary with the Tanaya name at Kom el-Hettan. The texts using the version Ahhiyawa date from the late 14th to the late 13th century BC⁶¹. The chronology of the Egyptian and Hittite written sources seem to suggest that both political designations existed contemporaneously and parallel to each other⁶². The existence of two names might be due either to different territories occupied by two different political entities, or to different perceptions of the Late Bronze Age Aegean by the Egyptians and the Hittites respectively⁶³. The latter assumption is supported by the fact that both Tanaya and Ahhiyawa find linguistic counterparts in two of the three names used interchangeably in the Homeric epics of the 8th/7th centuries BC for the Greeks. Indeed, many scholars share the opinion that the name Tanaya is somehow linked to the Homeric *Δαναοί*, while Ahhiyawa is connected to the word *Ἀχαιοί*⁶⁴.

As Trevor Bryce put it, to deny the derivation of *Ἀχαιοί* from Ahhiyawa and the identity of Ahhiyawa and Mycenaean Greece (for which see below) would mean that in the Aegean of the

⁵⁵ See now the detailed discussion by Phillips 2007: According to her, it cannot be excluded that these plaques were not made in Egypt (ibid. 488 f.). However, a whole series of objects (mainly scarabs) with Amenhotep's names and others with the name of his wife Tiye have been found in the Aegean (Cline 1994, 38–40 map 3; Haider 2000, 152 fig. 2), more than from any other New Kingdom pharaoh. This makes it seem very likely that the plaques were indeed sent from Egypt during the reign of Amenhotep III.

⁵⁶ Helck 1979, 28. 52. For the hieroglyphic inscription, see Sethe 1984, no. IV, 733, 4–7.

⁵⁷ The official reign of Thutmosis III (including the reign of Hatshepsut) lasted 54 years, from 1476 to 1422 BC. Cf. Schneider 2010, 402.

⁵⁸ The transition between LM IB and LM II can be placed during the later reign of Thutmosis III with good evidence from both Egypt and Crete. Cf. Matthäus 1995, 186; Höflmayer 2008.

⁵⁹ Helck 1979, 52.

⁶⁰ Heinhold-Krahmer 2007, 195; Beckman et al. 2011, 4 f. 7 f.

⁶¹ Heinhold-Krahmer 2007, 195; Beckman et al. 2011, 7 f.

⁶² Kelder (2010, 46. 85 f. 120) arrived at the same conclusion.

⁶³ See, e.g., the case of Germany. Nearly every modern neighbour of Germany uses a different name for that country, i.e. Germany, Allemagne, Duitsland, Tyskland, Niemcy, Německo, Deutschland. See also the case of Greece.

⁶⁴ Helck 1979, 30. 37; Lehmann 1985, 10 f. 51–54; Carruba 1995; Eder 2009a, 7 f.

second millennium two different entities existed »with remarkably similar names«. One was a kingdom for which we have no archaeological correlate, while the other was an archaeologically defined civilisation, which left »no identifiable trace in the documentary record«⁶⁵.

Unfortunately, the Hittite sources, valuable as they are, do not provide especially clear evidence for the location of Ahhiyawa. However, recent reconstructions of the political geography of Asia Minor do not leave space for a large kingdom called Ahhiyawa on the mainland of Asia Minor, neither in Cilicia nor along the west coast. In the so-called Tawagalawa letter it is reported that Piyamaradu, an enemy of the Hittite Great King, escaped by ship from Milawanda to Ahhiyawa⁶⁶. In another text, a Hittite queen begs the sea to extradite Piyamaradu to her. Ahhiyawa is therefore located ›in the sea‹, not on the Asian mainland. Both texts are dated to the time of Hattusili III⁶⁷, i.e. the middle of the 13th century BC⁶⁸. Yet another unfortunately fragmentary text from the annals of Muršili II (years 3–4, late 14th century BC) provides evidence that Ahhiyawa was not located on the Asian mainland, but could be reached by ship⁶⁹.

However, the sphere of influence of Ahhiyawa was not limited to the Aegean, but extended also onto the Asian mainland, because Milawanda, identified with ancient Miletus, was a city in the sphere of influence of Ahhiyawa. The results of the German excavations starting in the 1950s show that a predominantly Mycenaean material culture characterised Miletus from settlement phase V on, starting in LH IIIA1⁷⁰. Moreover, during Miletus phases V and VI (LH IIIA–IIIC) the coastal territories to the south, as well as the islands of Samos and the Dodecanese, display a similar, pronouncedly Mycenaean material culture. By contrast, the Mycenaean character of contemporary settlements situated further to the north along the western coast of Asia Minor is much weaker when compared to Miletus⁷¹. When seen against the background of the role of Milawanda as a city dependent on the king of Ahhiyawa, the Mycenaean culture of Miletus and the adjacent areas of south-western Asia Minor lends support to the hypothesis that Ahhiyawa is to be identified with part of the Mycenaean world or with all of it⁷².

The position of the Ahhiyawan king in the Late Bronze Age diplomatic system of the eastern Mediterranean is indicated in at least two letters of the middle and later 13th century BC, in the Tawagalawa letter and in the Šaušgamuwa treaty. The king of Ahhiyawa is explicitly treated as a peer by the Hittite Great King by using the diplomatic expressions of ›my Brother‹, ›equal‹ and ›Great King‹⁷³. These titles were used very restrictively by the Hittite Great King and applied by him only to the pharaoh, the king of Babylonia, the king of Assyria, and the king of Ahhiyawa⁷⁴.

The earliest historically known conflict between Ahhiyawa and Hatti is mentioned in the indictment of Madduwatta, probably dating from the reign of Arnuwanda I at the beginning of the 14th century BC contemporary with LH IIIA1. However, several events recorded in the text refer to his father, who was Tudhaliya I reigning around the end of the 15th and the beginning of the 14th century BC, in other words most probably contemporary with LH IIB/IIIA1⁷⁵.

Here a certain Attariššiya appears, whose name is most probably a Luwian version of Greek Ἀτρεύς⁷⁶ and who is called twice ›man of Ahhiya‹ (meaning presumably ›ruler of Ahhiya‹ in

⁶⁵ Bryce 2005, 58.

⁶⁶ Klengel 1999, 265; Heinhold-Krahmer 2007, 193 f.; Beckman et al. 2011, 104 f. (§ 5). 120.

⁶⁷ Heinhold-Krahmer 2007, 195; Beckman et al. 2011, 7. 248–252.

⁶⁸ For the dates of the Hittite kings, see also Klengel 1999, 392 f.

⁶⁹ Heinhold-Krahmer 1977, 117–119; Beckman et al. 2011, 7. 22 f.

⁷⁰ This settlement phase lasted until LH IIIA2 Late/IIIB Early. Cf. Niemeier 2005, 10–21.

⁷¹ This assessment (cf. Niemeier 2005, 13 f. fig. 35) seems to be valid, although one has to admit that our current knowledge of Late Bronze Age settlements and cemeteries along the Turkish west coast is very incomplete.

⁷² Niemeier 2005, 18–20 (who, however, argues against the reconstruction of a Mycenaean kingdom comprising mainland Greece, the Aegean and parts of western Asia Minor).

⁷³ Klengel 1999, 264; Heinhold-Krahmer 2007, 196.

⁷⁴ Bryce 2005, 58. The whole list is found in the Šaušgamuwa treaty § 13, 1–3. Cf. Beckman et al. 2011, 60 f. 67 f.

⁷⁵ Beckman et al. 2011, 7 f. 69–100.

⁷⁶ Starke 2001, 38.

the Hittite text)⁷⁷. In our present context, several points are of importance. First, Attariššiya was designated neither as king nor as Great King. The same title ›man of Ahhiya‹ is used without a personal name in another Hittite text, an oracle report, written during the reign of Tudhaliya I in the late 15th/early 14th century BC⁷⁸. Second, Attariššiya was able to invade a land on the west coast of Asia Minor and to expel its ruler Madduwatta⁷⁹. Third, he eventually went into battle with 100 chariots against the Hittites, who had come to help Madduwatta⁸⁰. In addition, the Madduwatta-indictment tells us that at a still later stage Attariššiya, now in coalition with Madduwatta and with the ruler of Piggaya, had defeated Alašiya, i.e. Cyprus, which according to this same text was claimed by the Hittite Great King⁸¹.

Mario Benzi and Wolf-Dietrich Niemeier proposed to interpret Attariššiya as a Mycenaean aristocrat who fled the destructions on the Greek mainland⁸². According to Niemeier those events were caused by rivalry between LH IIIA1 Mycenaean chiefdoms. In his interpretation of the archaeological record, during LH IIIA2 Late a »second wave of Mycenaean expansion« would have occurred in south-western Asia Minor, and that would have been »connected with one or more of the newly installed Mycenaean palace centres«⁸³. However, we have to see Attariššiya in the context of Mycenaean influence in the central and south-eastern Aegean.

Since LH I Mycenaean pottery from the Argolid was imported to the settlement of Trianda on Rhodes⁸⁴. This attests to Argive-Rhodian contacts preceding the phase of Mycenaean expansion. By LH IIB people with a Mycenaean material culture, including burial practices inside rock-cut chamber tombs, inhabited the north-western part of Rhodes opposite Asia Minor⁸⁵, while at the same time (LH IIB/III A) a new settlement plan was established at the settlement of Trianda⁸⁶. The analyses of the pottery reveal that the Argive workshops remained ›principal suppliers‹ of imported Mycenaean pottery at Trianda/Ialysos throughout the LBA⁸⁷. On the island of Kos the cemetery of Eleonas started with chamber tombs in LH IIIA1⁸⁸. Thus, Attariššiya probably did not operate in hostile territory, but had a local power base in south-western Asia Minor and on the south-eastern Aegean islands. The possible existence of such a power base is also supported by the fact that among the early tombs at Ialissos there are several warrior burials, e.g. one from a seemingly closed LH IIIA1 context in chamber tomb 74⁸⁹. Coming back to the role of Attariššiya,

⁷⁷ Beckman et al. 2011, 70 f. 80 f. (§ 1. § 12). Cf. Beckman 1996, 145 (§ 1): ›ruler of Ahhiya‹.

⁷⁸ Beckman et al. 2011, 7. 224 f.

⁷⁹ Heinhold-Krahmer 1977, 260; Kelder 2004/2005, 154 f.; Beckman et al. 2011, 70 f. (§ 1).

⁸⁰ Beckman et al. 2011, 80 f. (§ 12).

⁸¹ Heinhold-Krahmer 1977, 262. 265; Beckman et al. 2011, 94 f. (§ 36).

⁸² Niemeier 2002a, 295 f. Benzi (1996, 951) writes of »displaced aristocrats [...] who set sail to the Aegean in order to try their fortune there at the expense of the local communities«, when in LH IIIA1 mansions were destroyed and »the principalities of early Mycenaean Greece were superseded by the centralized palace system«.

⁸³ Niemeier 2005, 16.

⁸⁴ Marketou et al. 2006, 14–20. 28. 44–49. 54.

⁸⁵ Niemeier 2005, 10–14. This can be seen at the settlement of Trianda and the cemeteries at Ialissos, Paradhissi and Tholos. Cf. Marketou 2010, 785 f. At Trianda a steatite mould for Mycenaean jewellery was found in a context, which is said to date to LH II/III A1. Cf. Karantzali 2005, 148. Similarly, the earliest Mycenaean finds from Iasos also date to LH IIB/III A1. Cf. Benzi 2005, 207 pl. 50 a–j.

⁸⁶ Karantzali 2005, 144. However, a local pottery production, as identified by chemical analyses (cf. Marketou et al. 2006), shows also local stylistic elements partially of Minoan derivation, partially influenced from the Greek mainland styles. Cf. Karantzali 2005, 148.

⁸⁷ Marketou et al. 2006, 54.

⁸⁸ Benzi 1996, 949; Vitale 2009, 1242 tab. 2.

⁸⁹ Benzi 1992, 210 f. 383 f. pls. 104 d–g; 177 b; 178 h; Kilian-Dirlmeier 1993, 45 cat. no. 63 pl. 12, 63. A problem arises from the presence of a large piriform jar FT 35, whose decoration suggests a date in LH IIIA2 Late. The vase is clearly visible on the excavation photograph, but was later ascribed to another tomb by the excavator. Cf. Jacopi 1933, 297 fig. 42, left; Benzi 1992, 383 f. no. a. Nevertheless, tomb 74 with its single inhumation was considered as a closed LH IIIA1 context (on the basis of four LH IIIA1 vessels) by Benzi (1992, 211. 225 tab. I) and Kilian-Dirlmeier (1993, 45 cat. no. 63).

this man was able to establish himself in a foreign country either by taking with him troops including chariots⁹⁰ or by building up his own army upon his arrival in Asia Minor. If he was a refugee, one might ask, why did he leave for a military adventure with very uncertain success instead of defending his own territory in Greece, a territory that was under threat by his neighbours according to Benzi and Niemeier? For these reasons, it seems conceivable to see Attariššiya as a political and military leader who was systematically engaged in expanding the land of Ahhiya on the eastern coasts of the Aegean. He could have been either a high military officer or a brother of the king like Tawagalawa/Ἐτεροκλής in the 13th century, or even the king of Ahhiya himself. In the latter case he was not yet recognised as such by the Hittites, because it was their first encounter with that new political power.

There is yet another document from Hattuša that gives us some information about Ahhiyawan politics at the time of Tudhaliya I, during LH IIB/IIIA1. A letter, probably written by a later king of Ahhiyawa during the 13th century BC, is concerned with some unnamed islands that were claimed by both Ahhiyawa and Hatti. The Ahhiyawan king argues that those islands had been in the possession of his ancestor during the reign of Thudhaliya I, before the latter subjugated them. If the restoration and interpretation of the text are correct, the islands had been given previously to Ahhiyawa as a result of a dynastic marriage between the courts of Ahhiyawa and Aššuwā⁹¹.

To conclude, in the actions reported for the time of Tudhaliya I we may be seeing the very phase of expansion of the Mycenaean kingdom. These politics of aggression may also have been behind the destruction of Miletus IV, which had very much a Minoan character. It happened while LH IIB pottery was in use. Subsequently Miletus V, a new settlement of predominantly Mycenaean character, was built⁹². At the same time the young Ahhiyawan kingdom probably also used the diplomatic instrument of dynastic marriage for extending its borders. If so, it would be an ultimate argument for seeing here the systematic strategy of a growing empire. This interpretation would fit the expansion of Mycenaean material culture and administration on the Greek mainland, and the Aegean islands as far as the coasts of Asia Minor during LH IIB and IIIA1.

The Ahhiyawan military interventions, which also happened in the later 14th and in the 13th centuries, and the recognised hierarchical equality between the Great King of Ahhiyawa and the Great King of Hatti make it difficult to believe that small Greek regions such as the Argolid or Boeotia (as suggested by Niemeier) form the historical reality behind that Great Kingdom of Ahhiyawa⁹³. We must remember that all Hittite documents refer only to one kingdom situated further west than the shores of Asia Minor, a kingdom that had only one king⁹⁴. This lends support to the idea that we have to imagine one single Mycenaean kingdom and not several small and – compared to the Hittite empire certainly rather weak – kingdoms all over southern and central Greece. The philologists working on Hittite texts were quick to arrive at such a conclusion⁹⁵. By contrast, the philologists working on the written sources from Greece, who insist that the Linear B record can only be interpreted in terms of independent kingdoms with one wanax each, prefer to compromise: They imagine many wanakes and one hegemonial wanax, who would be the Great King

⁹⁰ Chariot transport by sea might have been possible, as chariots were also stored disassembled by the Mycenaean palaces (see the tablets from Knossos and Pylos: Hiller 1986). However, the hypothetical transport of the necessary horses would have caused much more serious problems. However, if one follows that interpretation, Attariššiya would have had the possibility to leave the Greek mainland in a very organised way with considerable military forces.

⁹¹ Beckman et al. 2011, 134–139.

⁹² Niemeier 2005, 10 f. fig. 24. Interestingly, pottery of LH IIB style (Voigtländer 1986, 24. 34 fig. 10 A) was already produced locally (Niemeier 2002b, 56 f. fig. 7 a; 2002c, 95 cat. no. 1), which testifies to Argive contacts preceding the probable immigration of settlers from the Greek mainland in LH IIIA1.

⁹³ Cf. Kelder 2010, 44.

⁹⁴ Carlier 2008, 122. 130; Eder 2009a, 8.

⁹⁵ Starke 2001, 34 fig. 41. 38.

known to the Hittites⁹⁶. However, Pierre Carlier rightly remarked that a system like this would have generated confusion in the Mycenaean administration, because the officials would have had to manage the affairs of a local wanax and his suzerain, the Great King, at the same time⁹⁷. But the texts do not indicate that this was so. By contrast, the scribes only had a single term ›wanax‹ for the king, a term which is never specified in Linear B – neither ›wanax of so and so‹ nor ›great wanax‹ or in any other way. Pierre Carlier arrived at the solution for that problem, however without subscribing to it: »Il y aurait une manière radicale de surmonter cette difficulté, ce serait de supposer que toutes les comptabilités de tous les sites palatiaux sont tenues une seule administration au service du seul grand roi, et que toutes les mentions de *wa-na-ka* renvoient à ce même souverain; les divers palais ne seraient alors que les centres provinciaux de l'administration panachéenne. Je crois que personne jusqu'à maintenant n'a suggéré cette hypothèse extrême...«⁹⁸. Well, we would like to be those, who do.

To conclude, we believe that the simplest historical proposal provides the best explanation for combining the written and the archaeological sources from within the Aegean and its neighbouring countries from the later 15th down to the end of the 13th century BC:

- (a) a reconstruction with one Great Kingdom covering all those territories, where Mycenaean administrative documents (tablets and sealings) and instruments (seals) regularly occur
- (b) an administration led by a single wanax and his representative, the lawagetas
- (c) a political and economic organisation that is identical in all territories of the kingdom, but at the same time based on geographical units that were inherited from the formative phase of the kingdom and could never be merged into a true territorial state administered from a single central place.

A Note on Kelder 2010

Jorrit Kelder, another advocate of the Mycenaean Great Kingdom, assumed that the »Ahhiyawan military [...] must have had the military capacity at least three times the size of that of the Kingdom of Pylos«⁹⁹. He based this conclusion on some very speculative calculations of population numbers and possible army sizes in Egypt and Mycenaean Pylos. He then went on to argue that »the military capacity of Ahhiyawa as indicated in the Hittite texts, as well as certain political and geographical characteristics, point towards a larger entity in the Aegean than anything that is attested in Linear B texts«¹⁰⁰. Therefore Kelder opted for seeing Ahhiyawa »as a conglomerate of some – or all – of the known palatial states [of Mycenaean Greece]«¹⁰¹.

Kelder assembled many more arguments for this hypothesis in his recent monograph. However, his theory is seriously flawed, because he excludes one of the most important areas of Mycenaean palatial administration from the kingdom of Ahhiyawa – that is Crete. This astonishing conclusion results from his reading of the Kom el-Hettan inscription. He uses the often uncertain identification of the toponyms in the list and a one-to-one equation of Tanaya and Ahhiyawa to reconstruct a precise territory of that kingdom. According to Kelder it comprised the Peloponnese, the Thebaid, some unspecified islands in the Aegean and Miletus in Asia Minor. He excluded

⁹⁶ Cf. Palaima 2012, 347: »The palatial systems managed to place the Mycenaeans on the ›world stage‹ in the form of whatever coalition of palatial territories made up the kingdom of the Ahhiyawa«.

⁹⁷ Carlier 2008, 129.

⁹⁸ Carlier 2008, 129.

⁹⁹ Kelder 2004/2005, 157–159.

¹⁰⁰ Kelder 2004/2005, 159.

¹⁰¹ Kelder 2004/2005, 157.

much of central Greece, Thessaly and Crete from that kingdom¹⁰², because the mentioned regions of the mainland cannot be identified on the Kom el-Hettan list and because Crete appears as a separate entity in that list. To him, archaeology is not a reliable tool for reconstructing the state territory¹⁰³.

There are several chronological and historical objections to his approach. First, the Kom el-Hettan list dates from the early period of the Mycenaean Great Kingdom. One has to keep in mind that the Egyptians had a long tradition of diplomatic contacts with Crete as the series of Minoan frescoes decorating the Pharaonic palaces at Tell el-Dab^a/Avaris illustrate¹⁰⁴. ›Kaftu‹ may have been retained in a geographical list simply because of that strong historical tradition, even when it had become part of a larger kingdom. We may find an analogous case in the use of the political term ›Arzawa‹ by the Egyptians as late as the time of Ramesses III, although the kingdom of Arzawa had been split into smaller vassal kingdoms by the Hittites in the late 14th century BC. The vassal kingdom of Mira became stronger during the 13th century and this may be the reason why the name ›Arzawa‹ revived in the early 12th century BC¹⁰⁵. Apparently, this could only happen if the political-geographic designation of the country had never been forgotten. Coming back to the issue of Kaftu/Crete, even the Greek-speaking Mycenaean seem to have recognised the specific cultural character of Crete, when recording objects of ›Cretan workmanship‹¹⁰⁶. One has to keep in mind that many of the toponyms of the Kom el-Hettan list cannot be identified with any certainty. Therefore one can only state which regions were most probably part of Tanaya, but one cannot use the list as a general description of that kingdom. Nor can one assume that such a description would be valid through all its time of existence. We are probably only dealing with a list of places which were known to the Egyptian seafarers and diplomats by personal experience at the start of the 14th century BC.

Kelder's theory meets a serious problem when excluding Crete from the Kingdom. This may seem justified by the Kom el-Hettan list, but only for LM/LH IIIA1 anyway. Kelder's interpretation of the Linear B term ›wanax‹ as the title of the Great King and the term ›lawage-tas‹ as the designation of his individual vassal kings in the different palaces all over Greece¹⁰⁷, cannot be reconciled with the Linear B archives of Crete. From the time of the earliest Linear B tablets in the Knossian Room of the Chariot Tablets (early LM IIIA1 at the latest), the functions of both the wanax and the lawagetas are attested for Crete¹⁰⁸. Furthermore, the assumption of a hegemonic political system based on vassal kings meets serious difficulties when it comes to the corpus of the Linear B texts in its entirety, as we have shown. These problems would become insurmountable by assuming one Great Kingdom Ahhiyawa/Tanaya with different vassal kings ruling over mainland Greece and large parts of the Aegean, and another independent kingdom on Crete, which used however an identical administrative system to the one on the mainland. If Kelder was right, the Cretan kingdom would have closely interacted with Ahhiyawa (see the inscribed stirrup jars), but would have failed to produce any clear sign of its independence in the Linear B archives.

¹⁰² Kelder 2010, 118–120.

¹⁰³ Kelder 2010, 119.

¹⁰⁴ Bietak et al. 2007. The excavators date the palace district with the Minoan frescoes to the Tuthmoside period and propose Tuthmosis III as the most likely builder of the complex (Bietak 2007a). Manfred Bietak (2007b, 67. 85) argues for a stylistic date of the paintings to the Minoan Neopalatial Period, preferring the phases MM IIIB–LM IA though without excluding LM IB. Sturt Manning (2009, 222–225) prefers to link Thutmosis III and the Minoan frescoes at Tell el-Dab^a with LM II and the Monopalatial Period and thus to the earliest years of Mycenaean rule over Crete. See Driessen 2000, 219 f.

¹⁰⁵ Hawkins 1998, 15 f. 21.

¹⁰⁶ Tripods in Pylos: PY Ta 641.1, Ta 709.3. Cf. Palaima 2003b.

¹⁰⁷ Kelder 2010, 45 f.

¹⁰⁸ Driessen 2000, 213 fig. 5. 6.

Finally, fragments of two Linear B tablets from Volos (Kastro-Palaia) prove that a regular Mycenaean administration was controlling at least the coastal regions of Thessaly¹⁰⁹. If one accepts that the King of Ahhiyawa was constantly trying to extend his influence on the other side of the Aegean, in Asia Minor, it will appear quite logical that he will not have been slow to exploit also the agricultural riches of the Thessalian plains.

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