

# Euboea and Athens

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of Malcolm B. Wallace

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## Euboea, Athens, Thebes and Kadmos: The Implications of the Linear B References <sup>1</sup>

The Linear B documents contain a good number of references to Thebes, and theories about the status of Thebes among Mycenaean centers have been prominent in Mycenaean scholarship over the last twenty years.<sup>2</sup>

Assumptions about the hegemony of Thebes in the Mycenaean palatial period, whether just in central Greece or over a still wider area, are used as the starting point for interpreting references to:

a) Athens: There is only one reference to Athens on a possibly early tablet (Knossos V 52) as a toponym *a-ta-na* = Ἀθήνη in the singular, as in Hom. *Od.* 7.80<sup>3</sup>. Even this reference is not recognized for what it is by some scholars because the form of the toponym in the singular is identical with the name of the eventual goddess.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> I am honoured to write about places in Euboea and central Greece that were important to Mac Wallace as a scholar, and to take topics that interested him back into the protohistoric period. In my experience, and in the experience of scholars whose opinions I trust and who knew the inner man much better than I did, he was a gentleman, a deep-thinking and quietly passionate scholar, a reliable collaborator, and an encouraging mentor. He reminded all of us that it is a privilege to study Greek antiquity and that the scholarly work we do is not about us. I thank Tracey Cullen, Dimitri Nakassis, Kevin Pluta, and Malcolm Wiener for helpful discussions that informed the ideas in this paper and kept me from all but the errors that still remain.

<sup>2</sup> Beginning with Bartoněk 1988 and Piteros, Olivier, and Melena 1990. See now Niemeier 1999, 2005; Mee 2008, pp. 362–365, 372–374.

<sup>3</sup> In the *Odyssey* passage, the goddess Athena (spelled the same as the place name) ἴκετο δ' ἐξ Μαραθῶνα καὶ εὐρυάγειαν Ἀθήνην.

<sup>4</sup> Gulizio, Pluta and Palaima 2001, pp. 453–461.

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b) the Euboean sites *ka-ru-to* = Κάρυστος and *a-ma-ru-to* = Ἀμάρυνθος.<sup>5</sup>

It is important to understand the nature of place-name references within the Thebes tablets. The forms of lexical items that could refer directly or indirectly to place names have to be interpreted carefully, taking into account what ethnic adjectives and place names in the Linear B inscriptions imply about relationships between palatial centers and other settlements. Understanding the peculiar nature of the Linear B economic documents and the contexts of the data contained within them is crucial for assessing them as historical evidence. This paper, therefore, also deals with methods of interpretation and epistemology.

The “homeland” of the kingdom of *Ahhiyawa* in Near Eastern texts is situated on the Greek mainland.<sup>6</sup> This location is relevant here because some theories place the capital of this kingdom at Thebes in Boeotia<sup>7</sup> and extend the kingdom to Euboea, central

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<sup>5</sup> Piteros, Olivier, and Melena 1990, pp. 153–154. Amaranthos also shows up in Thebes tablet Of 25 in the allative form *a-ma-ru-to-de* specifying a shipment of 18 kg of wool to an individual at the site. There is nothing in the Linear B tablets from Thebes, not even an order of listing in relation to other known sites, that specifies that the Late Bronze Age sites named Karustos and Amaranthos are located on the island of Euboea.

<sup>6</sup> Niemeier (1995) locates *Ahhiyawa* on the Greek mainland (with extensions to the Aegean islands and certain points on the southwest coast of Asia Minor, notably Miletus, Hittite *Millawanda*). For a succinct historical discussion of the *Ahhiyawa* references from a Mycenological perspective, see de Fidio 2008, pp. 99–102.

<sup>7</sup> Most recently advanced by Niemeier (2005, p. 203; first suggested in Niemeier 1999, p. 144), based on two assumptions: a) that Mycenaean Thebes controlled a large kingdom that included Euboea, and b) that a man said to be from Miletos was mentioned in the Linear B tablets as someone who was “involved in sacrificial rituals and apparently played an important role at the court of Thebes.” For the serious problems besetting the “religious” interpretations of the Thebes tablets, see Palaima 2003 (with references). Interpretations positing ceremonial functions of the “man from Miletus” and other individuals and occupational terms on most of the Thebes texts are no longer tenable: Palaima 2006. Finally, Theban control of Euboea is speculation based on the place names *ka-ru-to* and *a-ma-ru-to*. Even if these two sites are located on Euboea, their occurrence in the Thebes tablets does not prove that Thebes “controlled” them, much less the entire island of Euboea.

Greece south of Boeotia (including Aegina in the Saronic Gulf), and certain points on the southwest coast of Anatolia, notably Miletus, which is known as *Millawanda* in Hittite texts.<sup>8</sup> It should be noted that this enlarged sphere of Mycenaean-*Ahhiyawan* influence, contact, or domination is based primarily on the references in the Linear B tablets from Pylos, not from Thebes, to women workers identified by place-name adjectives that identify the sites from which these women were acquired, not what we would call their “nationalities” *per se*. These women came from *Aswiya* (= Ἀσία = Hittite *Aššuwa* = the area of later Lydia), Halikarnassos, Chios, Knidos, Kythera, Lemnos, and Miletos.<sup>9</sup>

The serious implications that the location of the center of the kingdom of *Ahhiyawa* has for scholars interested in the geopolitical relationships of the Mycenaean palatial territories have been well formulated by Trevor Bryce:

“If *Ahhiyawa* was in fact a Mycenaean kingdom, where was the seat of its power? At Mycenae itself, the kingdom of Agamemnon in Homeric tradition? Or at one of the other important centers of the Mycenaean world? How extensive was the kingdom? Did it involve a confederation of Mycenaean states, under the leadership of a single ruler – perhaps a *primus inter pares* as in Homeric tradition? Were there shifts in the center of power during the 200 years for which *Ahhiyawa* is attested in the Hittite texts?”

Bryce further speculates:

“We cannot rule out the possibility of other major Mycenaean centers, like Orchomenos in Boeotia or Argos in the Peloponnese, as possible nuclei of *Ahhiyawan* power.”<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Sergent 1994; Aravantinos, Godart, and Sacconi 2001, pp. 355–358.

<sup>9</sup> The extra-territorial place names in the Pylos Aa, Ab, Ad series: Chadwick 1988, pp. 78–84. For the distinction here between adjectives derived from place names specifying the sources of the women workers and adjectives that are true ethnics, and the importance of making this distinction generally in Linear B studies, see Palaima 2005. Hittite contacts with the *Arzawa* and *Mira* in central western Anatolia (near Ephesos) and the links between the rulers of those peoples, the site of *Aššuwa* (Ἀσία) and the *Ahhiyawa*: Starke 1997, 448–456.

<sup>10</sup> Bryce 1998, pp. 57–60.

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Notice that Bryce here does not mention Thebes in Boeotia among the contenders for the “seat of power” of the *Ahhiyawa*.

Such hypothesizing has other correlates. Sergent (1994) and Aravantinos, Godart, and Sacconi (2001) interpret toponyms and *ethnica* in the Linear B tablets from Thebes in support of their hypothesis that Thebes controlled the island of Euboea as well as having a harbour at Aulis, and also had a larger sphere of influence that extended through Attica down to the Saronic Gulf and all the way to Lakonia. They propose that Thebes was the center of power on the Mycenaean mainland in the LH III B period. But the occurrence in the Linear B tablets from any particular palatial center of an *ethnicon* or a place name beyond the territory of that center does not prove that it exerted control over that place.

Nonetheless, Latacz used these ideas in proposing that the re-reading of a disputed sign in cuneiform text *KUB 26.91* (the first letter in Hittite to be sent from *Ahhiyawa* to the Hittite capital of Hattusa) yields the name *Kadmos*, legendary founder of Thebes, said by the Greeks themselves to have come from the east. Such an interpretation, it is claimed, confirms the political primacy of Thebes in the Mycenaean world in the 13th century.<sup>11</sup>

The main problem in evaluating such a hypothesis lies in seeing it for what it is: a “hypothesis,” in other words, an idea “set forth” with arguments. The Greek-derived term “hypothesis” actually emphasizes the “under-setting” of an idea, its role in “sub-porting” further arguments connected with our scholarly opinion or δόξα. An “argument,” however, is literally connected with the root “to make clear.” As Malcolm Wallace well knew, “arguments” are not “thoughts,” “theories,” “conclusions,” or necessarily even original ideas. Arguments lay open the logical strengths and weaknesses in our reasoning and test our ideas. Arguments should not bring to bear selective evidence in support of conjecture, which is “what our minds throw together.” Here,

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<sup>11</sup> Latacz 2004, pp. 243–244, with reference to a still-unpublished reading and explication by F. Starke. Katz (2005, pp. 423–424) seriously questions Starke’s reading of *KUB 26.91*.

then, are arguments about the name *Kadmos* as it has been used in regard to the relationships among Mycenaean Greek centers in the late Bronze Age.

There are many important questions here. What would the name *Kadmos* mean in a late Bronze Age Mycenaean palatial culture? Is there evidence that such a name, perhaps with a different non-Greek morphology, was in common use at that time in any Semitic culture? How would the name *Kadmos* have come to be part of the Mycenaean (or historical) Greek repertory of personal names? How would the name *Kadmos* have become imbedded in the foundation myth of the site of Thebes in later Greek mythology? Is it feasible that a Mycenaean *wanaks* at Thebes or any Mycenaean palatial site would have had the name *Kadmos*?<sup>12</sup>

Since we are essentially concerned here with etymology in its basic sense of “a true explanation of a word,” it is relevant to recall the clear-minded statement of the late Werner Winter:<sup>13</sup>

“An etymology is an attempt to establish and describe a formal and semantic relationship of linguistic items in two or more languages compared; the comparison implies a historical connection of the items and the languages they are part of, either in terms of contact or of genetic relatedness. An etymology may be probable or improbable; the degree of probability depends on the degree of *clarification* of details in the formal and, secondarily, the semantic correlation. If new data cannot be reconciled with an etymology so far accepted, then the etymology has to be modified or abandoned; *etymologies are never data themselves, but only working hypotheses.*” (italics mine)

Winter here reminds us that primary evidence takes precedence over our own reconstructions. We should always follow where that evidence leads and ask as many questions as we can about the data and our provisional ways of thinking about it.

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<sup>12</sup> Remember that the Linear B texts give us no king lists or royal histories or diplomatic correspondence; they only give us one personal name that may be the name of the *wanaks* of Pylos, although this has been disputed most recently by Petrakis (2008).

<sup>13</sup> Winter 1958, p. 205.

M. L. West has discussed the name *Kadmos*, laying out a detailed “argument” in the proper sense.<sup>14</sup> One weakness of his exposition, however, is that he does not review the full range of alternative etymologies. Instead he considers only the standard Semitic etymology.

In historical Greek legend, Kadmos is brother of Europa, and son of either Agenor or Phoenix. West makes three observations: (1) the ethnic terms *Kadmeioi* and *Kadmeiōnes* are used in historical Greek texts as “standard epic designations of the ancient Thebans;” (2) these are “the primary name[s] to be explained;” (3) “[p]eoples do not take their names from individuals,” by which he means real, historical individuals.<sup>15</sup> He therefore rightly concludes: “Kadmos was not an historical person but simply the mythical eponym of the Kadmeioi.”

If West is correct, and my own work (Palaima 2005) with Mycenaean Greek, Cypriote, and historical Greek ethnics and toponyms and place-name adjectives inclines me to think that he is, then it is impossible to accept Latacz’s claim that a real Bronze Age ruler of Thebes named *Kadmos* was in direct correspondence with the Hittite king and that his palatial center Thebes was the capital of the *Ahhiyawa*.

It should also be noted that (1) the Thebes and Mycenae tablets attest the plural form of the place name Θῆβαι (allative accusative *te-qa-de* and dative locative plural *te-qa-i*), (2) the Knossos (KN Ap 5864.4) and Pylos (PY Ep 539.6) corpora of texts each contain a single woman named *te-qa-ja* (\*Θηγ<sup>w</sup>αίᾱ, feminine version of the toponymic adjective), and (3) the Thebes sealings record one man named *te-qa-jo* (\*Θηγ<sup>w</sup>αῖος). The designations *Kadmeioi* and *Kadmeiōnes*, however, are not attested in the Linear B tablets.

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<sup>14</sup> West 1997, pp. 448–451.

<sup>15</sup> Notice, in contrast, the fictive names of ethnic founders: Ion for the Ionians; Aeolus for the Aeolians; Dorus for the Dorians; even, in the 20th century, Minos for the Minoans. Thus, *a priori*, it would be astounding to discover a real Mycenaean *wanaks* with a mythological name, allowing, however, for the repertory of “real names” that are common to Linear B texts and the texts of Homer, e.g. *e-ko-to* and Hector.



Although there are Greek etymologies of the term *Kadmos*, which I think should be brought back into scholarly consideration, West proposes, as others have, that the root of the name *Kadm-* is most likely non-Greek, and derived from Semitic *qdm*.<sup>16</sup> It means “before, in front,” spatially “the east” (see Ugaritic *qadmu* “the east”), temporally “the past, antiquity.” In Ugaritic, we find a personal name *Qdmn* (= *Qadmōn* “Easterner”).

One economical explanation for *Kadmeioi* (Καδμείοι, e.g., Hom. *Il.* 4.391; Ionic Καδμήϊοι) and *Kadmeiones* (Καδμείωνες, e.g., Hom. *Il.* 4.385, where the meter requires that the form have five syllables: Καδμείωνας)<sup>17</sup> as ethnic terms in the epic and later tradition is that at some point before or simultaneous with our written alphabetic versions of epic verse, a population group designated in Semitic as *Qadmiyūma* or *\*Qadmiyyīm*, which West explains as “men from the east” or “men of old,” was present and noteworthy at Thebes.

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<sup>16</sup> Note that Chantraine (1970, p. 478, s. Κάδμος, and p. 511, s. κέκασμαι) expresses serious doubt about conjectured Greek etymologies; he considers the gloss in Hesychius (κάδμος · δόρυ, λόφος, άσπίς. Κρήτες) a homonym, and judges the proposed link with the Greek perfect form κέκασται (cf. the participial form κεκαδμένος in Pindar) “glitter, sparkle, be preeminent” to be problematical. The explanation for the latter starts with a root *\*kad-*, καδ- and points to -σμ- extending itself and replacing -δμ- in historical Greek word formation (personal names and toponyms are often conservative: cf. the famous “old spelling” of the name Ὀρτύλοχος still embedded in Homer after the τ ι > σ ι shift). An Attic vase gives the spelling Κάσμος. On the etymology and morphology of *Kadmos* as a Homeric personal name, see also von Kamptz 1982, pp. 137, 241. I see no reason to reject the gloss in Hesychius as a possible source for the name *Kadmos*. If there is a substrate term meaning “the aspen tree” (later “shield” as applied to the acropolis at Argos) or “the crest or ridge of a hill” (appropriate for a hill site) or even “tree” (later “spear”), why might it not be used as the source for an ethnic designation? And might not that ethnic designation later, during a period of intensive Phoenician contact, be conflated with a common Semitic root?

<sup>17</sup> Note that these forms occur in the passage in the *Iliad* in which Agamemnon chastises and encourages Diomedes to measure up to his father Tydeus, who went with Polyneikes of Thebes to Mycenae to gather troops for an attack on Thebes which was under the control of Polyneikes’ brother Eteokles (a *klewes*-based name attested in Mycenaean Greek). The five-syllable form is undoubtedly based on an original form with a now lost digamma, i.e., it comes from *\*kadmew-s*, as discussed below.

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West goes over the various scenarios wherein Greek-speakers would identify a group of immigrants by using a name formed from a Semitic root for “the east.” One problem that should be noted, however, is that if there were a quarter in Thebes where “easterners” (from a Greek perspective) resided, we might imagine that the Greeks would refer to them using a term formed from the root for the concept “east” in their own Greek language.

It is also reasonable to ask how the Greeks would differentiate among different groups of peoples from the “east.” How broadly would the Greek term ἀνατολή be applied? Might *kadm-* somehow specify a part of “the east,” just as we, in speaking of ancient eastern Mediterranean geography, distinguish the Greek-derived “Anatolia” from the French-derived “Levant”? Both terms are equivalent to the Latin-derived “orient,” meaning “the place of rising [of the sun],” and these three terms are akin to the English term “east,” which comes from the Indo-European root *awes-* and *aus-* “to shine” = “the direction from which the (rising) sun shines and dispels the darkness.”

Would people from non-Greek culture groups identify themselves by adopting the Mycenaean Greek perspective and therefore claiming to be “easterners”?

Keep in mind that the Mycenaean records and, as Thucydides famously remarked, the Homeric epics contain no general term for “Greeks.” For that matter, we do not know, for example, whether there was an ethnic term that defined those who resided under the hegemony of Pylos in the Mycenaean palatial period in Messenia. We do not find *Pulioi vel sim.* And the occurrence in the Linear B texts from Thebes of terms like *te-qa-jo* = “Theban” masculine singular, *au-to-te-qa-jo* = “self-Theban” masculine singular (most likely with some meaning like “truly original Theban;” cf. historical Greek ἀυτόχθων “sprung from the land itself”), and *te-qa-jo-i* “to the Thebans” masculine plural, implies that the place name adjectives here were used in a restricted way within the population of the territory that was monitored by the Linear B records from Thebes. The remarkable form *au-to-te-qa-jo*

(TH Ug 4) could be our first recorded attempt truly to identify ethnicity as opposed to locality.<sup>18</sup>

What kinds of sensibilities, then, would the inhabitants of the different Mycenaean palatial territories, lacking an all-encompassing term equivalent to our “Mycenaeans,”<sup>19</sup> have had for grouping foreigners into inclusive or exclusive categories?

West himself thinks the most probable period for terms connected with the *kadm*- root to have been introduced into the Greek sphere is the 9th or 8th century, with the arrival of Semitic people from Phoenicia. These Semitic incomers themselves might have referred to the “old citadel” of Thebes as built by the “men of old,” or \**qadmiyyîm* in their language. The ambiguity of the phrase, combined with the ongoing formation of hero cults around ancient graves, might have led these Phoenician settlers to refer to themselves as *bnê qadm* “sons of the east.”

Alternatively, however, we might associate *Kadmeioi* and *Kadmeiōnes* with another Semitic term, *kadam*, a substance found in metallic form (referred to as “cobalt”), as a mineral (known as *lapis calaminaris*), or as zinc oxide that forms as residue on the surfaces of furnaces during the smelting process for making bronze (because traces of zinc are found in tin deposits), and later brass.

The naturally occurring metallic form is valuable for the sapphire- or cobalt-blue color it imparts to glass during its manufacture. The mineral form was later otherwise known as “calamine,” a name that ultimately derives from the Greek *καδμία* through Latin *cadmia*, medieval Latin *calamina*. Although later tradition had it<sup>20</sup> that the mineral was so-called because Kadmos, as a culture hero, introduced metals, or because there are significant deposits of *καδμία* (sc. γῆ) near Thebes, it is more likely

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<sup>18</sup> See Probonas 1978, s. *Ἀυτοθηβαῖος*.

<sup>19</sup> Unless it is the Homeric default *Ἀχαιοί* which is unattested in Linear B. *a-ka-wi-ja-de* = \**Αχαυιάων-δε* in a Knossos record of fifty he-goats (tablet C 914.B) clearly refers to a minor settlement in Crete. Its relationship to *Ἀχαιοί* is often cited, but it is hard to interpret as, or to connect with, a universal name for pan-Mycenaean ethnic identity.

<sup>20</sup> Crabb 1823, s. *cadmia*.

that *kadmia* in Greek comes straight from the Semitic term *kadam*. If so, the Semitic root might be the origin of the ethnic adjectives *Kadmeioi* and *Kadmeiōnes*. This is crucial if we acknowledge that West is largely correct that “[p]eoples do not take their names from individuals.”

There is yet another problem with all these theories. The form *Kadmeioi* (nominal suffixation in *-eios*) and not *\*Kadmioi* (nominal suffixation in *-ios*) suggests that the historical ethnic adjective arose through an intermediate form, a noun form with the formative suffix *-eus*, which was quite productive in Mycenaean Greek. We might compare *ka-ke-u* and *ke-ra-me-u* as exact parallels of important professional terms based on non-Greek substrate roots for important mineral substances: *khalk-* (copper) and *keram-* (potter’s clay). The words *i-e-re-u* or *i-je-re-u* (“man dealing with the holy”) and *wi-ri-ne-u* (“man dealing with oxhide”) are formed in the same way. So we may be dealing here with original “*kadam* men” (singular *\*καδμεύς*),<sup>21</sup> corresponding to “copper men” (singular *χαλκεύς*) and “clay men” (singular *κεραμεύς*) and “holy men” (singular *ιερεύς*) and “oxhide men” (singular *\*φρινεύς*).

It is also possible<sup>22</sup> that the gloss in Hesychius – *κάδμος · δόρυ, λόφος, άσπίς, Κρήτες* – holds the truth. It says that *κάδμος* is a substrate term attested in Crete and means *δόρυ* “tree” (later “spear”) or *λόφος* “crest of a hill” or *άσπίς* “aspen tree” (later “shield”<sup>23</sup>). These are just the kind of primitive words for elements of the natural world that give rise to a number of nouns with *-εύς* suffixation.

Either reconstruction, deriving the later ethnic forms *Kadmeioi* and *Kadmeiōnes* from Semitic *kadam* or from Cretan substrate *κάδμος*, in my opinion makes good sense of the linguistic evidence.

There is ample reason, then, to doubt that *Kadmos*, which we otherwise take to be a purely mythical name, is the name of a real

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<sup>21</sup> Notice that the word *καδμία* from *kadam* shows that *kadam* would produce the desired *καδμ-* root for *\*καδμεύς*. Likewise the substrate *κάδμος* which we will now discuss.

<sup>22</sup> See n. 16 above.

<sup>23</sup> Presumably because at some point, just like *doru*, which went from meaning “tree” to meaning “spear,” a shield was made from aspen wood.

Mycenaean ruler at Thebes or anywhere in the late Bronze Age, or that the ethnic designations in Homer provide any basis for supporting a strong “eastern” presence at Thebes in the Mycenaean palatial period, whatever that might mean or imply.

The ethnic terms *Kadmeioi* and *Kadmeiōnes*, which do not occur in Linear B, most likely arose through an intermediate form in -εύς. This suffix is used to designate persons who “have to do with” whatever substance or sphere of human life is denoted by the root to which the suffix is joined. In this case it would be the non-Greek *kadm-*, a term that identifies a mineral substance (Semitic root) or wood from trees or a feature of natural geography (Cretan substrate). Both roots have attested formations in the historical Greek lexicon or lexicographical tradition.

If there was a confusion of vocabulary or conscious syncretism in a later period of serious Phoenician influence when foundation legends for Thebes stressed the Phoenician connection with a mythical founder named “man from the east,” it may well have been with a term of this kind. We should note also that the pairing of Europa and Kadmos as brother and sister is mythological and artificial. Kadmos is taken to be “man from the east” and Europa derives from a Semitic root meaning “land of the setting sun.” They are a perfect brother-sister contrasting pair, east and west. That is how Kadmos was eventually used in historical times. The origin of the ethnic terms, as we have seen, is much more complicated.

In conclusion, then, there are no grounds for interpreting the Linear B evidence with the *a priori* assumption of the political primacy of Mycenaean Thebes over central Greece or over whatever coalition of Mycenaean communities was conceived of as the *Ahhiyawa* by the Hittites or other foreign cultures in the 13th century B.C.

The Linear B tablets are very narrowly focused upon the local interests of palatial centers in the economic resources – material, manufactured, human, and animal – that were or had come to be within their regions. There are no royal testaments or decrees, diplomatic letters, public propagandistic inscriptions or law codes, or records of royal gift exchange, nor any tablets that

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systematically monitor trade or the infrastructure relating to trade. The clay texts from given palatial sites rarely refer in any way to sites outside the regions that we now consider their palatial territories. This is true of all sites that have produced tablets (in descending order by number of discrete documents): Knossos, Pylos, Thebes, Mycenae, Tiryns, Midea, and Chania.

“La grande Béotie,” as imagined by Sergent and Aravantinos, Godart, and Sacconi, is accordingly just that, something imagined.<sup>24</sup> In fact, as already mentioned, the palatial center with records that provide the most serious evidence of extra-territorial contacts is Pylos. No other site, including Thebes, has anything comparable to the groups of women identified as coming from Aswiya, Halikarnassos, Chios, Knidos, Lemnos, and Miletos in Anatolia and from the island of Kythera just to the south of Messenia. Athens was continuously inhabited, so remains of its Mycenaean center have been nearly obliterated and its likely Linear B archives destroyed. The inscribed stirrup jar from Eleusis, with its reference to *wa* or “royal” (*wanakteron*)<sup>25</sup> oversight of the perfumed oil manufacturing process, proves that it was a major center in central Greece, confirmed by the tradition in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*.

We may add references to extra-territorial groups that appear on other Pylos tablets: (1) men from Zakunthos (*za-ku-si-jo*) in the list of rowers (An 610) who are defined as settlers (*ki-ti-ta*), after-

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<sup>24</sup> Sergent 1994; Aravantinos, Godart, and Sacconi 2001. Relying on Mycenaean discussions of place-name references in the Thebes tablets (Piteros, Olivier, and Melena 1990; Aravantinos 1987), Sergent draws on mythological and traditional cultic references in historical authors and records to argue that central Greece from Phocis down through Attica and into the Megarid was split into two kingdoms in the late Mycenaean palatial phase: (1) a central eastern kingdom with Thebes as its capital comprising eastern Boeotia, Euboea (at least the island’s central part), Attica (at least as far as Athens), and the Megarid; (2) a western kingdom controlled by Orchomenos that stretched westward to include the Kephisos River valley and extended all the way to Delphi. The Linear B data offer no evidence for Orchomenos, which is known mainly by its tholos and inscribed stirrup jar.

<sup>25</sup> Van Alfen (2008) provides a succinct overview of the inscribed stirrup jars. For a still useful comprehensive view, see Hallager 1987.

settlers (*me-ta-ki-ti-ta*), and *arrivistes* or “incomers” (*po-si-ke-te-re*); and (2) men identified as Cretans (*ke-re-te*)<sup>26</sup> on another list of men (An 128) who are receiving allotments of grain, a standard form of compensation (along with higher-order rewards like parcels of land allotted in usufruct) for service rendered to the palatial centers.

We do not know under what conditions or arrangements these groups of men and women arrived or were being put to work in LH IIIB Messenia. The status of the rowing men indicates that they were performing military service in return for land grants. They may have come of their own accord as immigrants, or may have been recruited or even compelled. The Pylos texts also contain records of Zakunthian-style chariot wheels, which might imply steady contacts with the island of Zakunthos to acquire products or crafts personnel.

The assumption has been that the women at Pylos were acquired either through a kind of slave trade or by raids. One group of women, not yet assigned to work functions or locations, is designated as “captives” or “women acquired through plunder” (*ra-wi-ja-ja*). We do not know whether that description also applied to the other women. Given Pylos’ location along an important trade route up the Ionian Sea and across to Italy, and given that some women come from Kythera, by virtue of its location undoubtedly an important stop on trade routes, it is feasible that some of these women (ca. 650 in number) and children (ca. 275 total) came to Pylos through trade in which Pylos was passively, rather than actively, involved.

Still, no one has reasoned that these references imply that Pylos had hegemony or even strong influence over the southwest Anatolian coast and the islands of Lemnos and Chios further north. Yet this is just what is being done with the fewer and more dubious references to different localities in the Linear B records from Thebes.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> See Palaima 2005, pp. 17–19, and the reference to heirloom tripods of Cretan workmanship in the Pylos Ta series.

<sup>27</sup> Likewise, no one has argued that the occurrence in the Linear B records of individuals of important standing named *ku-pi-ri-jo* (= *Kuprios*, the man “from” or

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The spread of the toponymic adjective *te-qa-ja* (identifying single women at Knossos and Pylos in longer lists and series) and the attestation of the allative *te-qa-de*<sup>28</sup> at Mycenae do not offer much support for the high standing of Boeotian Thebes in the Mycenaean palatial period.

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“having to do with Cyprus”) implies that the Mycenaeans controlled Cyprus: Palaima 2005, pp. 22–29.

<sup>28</sup> As discussed in Palaima 1991, Linear B tablet Mycenae X 508 (House of the Shields) is the most probable evidence for the shipment of goods and materials (in this case wool of the *pu-ka-ta-ri-ja* type) from one palatial territory (based around a major palatial center) to another:

.a           ]       *te-qa-de, ta* [     with perhaps traces of LANA (wool) at right  
           ]ze-ta, / pu-ka-ta-ri-ja<sub>1</sub> ma-ri-ne[

There is also the famous Pylos “rower” tablet An 1, whose header reads *e-re-ta, pe-re-u-ro-na-de, i-jo-te* = “rowers, to *Pleurōn*, going (nominative masculine plural),” then lists five groups of men, 30 total (8, 5, 4, 6, 7), against the specific localities in Messenia from which they are coming. One is a main district center *ri-jo* (the southernmost “capital” site in the Hither Province, the region controlled by the palatial center at Pylos). Another is the possible harbour town of Pylos: *ro-o-wa*. For *Pleurōn*, Stephanus of Byzantium’s entry reads: “A polis of Aetolia; the citizen of the polis [is called] *Pleurōnios* and *Pleurōnia* and *Pleurōneus*. And the expression “to the place” [is] *Pleurōnade*.” This entry is undoubtedly based on the famous citation (Hom. *Il.* 2.639) which names five communities over which the contingent of warriors from Aetolia hold power: *Pleurōn*, *Ōlenos*, *Pulēnē*, *Chalkis*, and *Kalydon*. The existence of *Chalkis* in this list of Aetolian communities is another example of how widely dispersed ancient place names may be.

My own feeling, based on (1) long study of the patterns of record-keeping information at Pylos, (2) the example of a Messenian Bronze Age site named *Korinthos* in the Pylos texts, and (3) the nearly total silence in the text regarding the movement of goods and materials to sites outside the palatial territorial centers that produced the Linear B inscriptions is that An 1 is more likely to be referring to the movement of these “rowers” to a site named *Pleurōn* in Messenia. The scribe writes this tablet so that these communities may have their contributions of rowers recorded. He records where they come from and what place they are going to “in Messenia.” *Pleurōn* may be a point of embarkation. Another example is the *o-ka* (“command contingent”) group of 30 men (An 661.13) designated as *ne-do-wo-ta-de* “going to the (river) *Nedōn* (in eastern Messenia).” The entry *me-ta-qe pe-i pe-re-u-ro-ni-jo e-qe-ta* on An 656.16 may suggest a “follower” of the Pylian king either named *Pleurōnios* or in control of that locality. His status and role here again may imply that *Pleurōn* is in Messenia.



The Knossos reference is in the texts of Hand 103, who is cataloguing women and women work groups (along with children). Some of these women are identified by place-name adjectives associated with Cretan toponyms, for example *e-ra-ja* (the Mycenaean site *e-ra*) and *pa-i-ti-ja* (later Phaistos). Likewise, the Pylos reference to the *te-o-jo do-e-ra* (“servant of the goddess”) named *te-qa-ja* occurs in the full landholding series (Ep), wherein two other women are designated by the toponymic adjectives *ko-ri-si-ja* (related to a site called Korinthos in Messenia) and *ka-pa-ti-ja* (perhaps referring to the island of Karpathos).

Besides the famous site in Boeotia, Stephanus of Byzantium discusses settlements with the place name Θήβη in Thessaly, Cilicia, Ionia near Miletus, and Attica. He also refers to sites named Θήβη in Syria, Italy, and Egypt. It is a widespread place name. Just as *\*ko-ri-to* (= Korinthos, the site to which *ko-ri-si-ja* refers) in the Pylos records refers to a site in Messenia, the adjective *te-qa-ja* may refer to sites on Crete or in Messenia. Given that Miletos is a main supplier of women workers to the kingdom of Pylos, it is even possible that the single *te-qa-ja* women in the Knossos and Pylos tablets come from the Θήβη that Stephanus documents as being near Miletos.

The preceding discussion indicates that (1) the Hittite evidence does not support the claim that Thebes is the capital of the *Ahhiyawa*; (2) the place-name evidence in the Linear B texts is problematical; and (3) this evidence implies little about the nature of political relations between settlements in different palatial territories. Let us now turn to consider how the Linear B data applies to Athens, Thebes, and Euboea.

Sergent’s view that Thebes had primacy or hegemony as one of two major palatial kingdoms (centered on Thebes and Orchomenos) in central Greece has already been mentioned.<sup>29</sup> The dominion of Thebes, in his opinion, extended southward from Thebes through Attica and at least into the Megarid.

Another view of a grand Theban state was advanced in the publication and interpretation of the Thebes tablets that were

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<sup>29</sup> Sergent 1994; see also n. 24 above.

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discovered in the period 1993-1995.<sup>30</sup> Here, quite literally every reference – place name or adjective, sure, tentative, or imagined – to any site was used as an indication not of contact or influence, or even of the mere presence of individuals of rather unimportant status who “come from” or “have to do with” a site elsewhere, but of hegemonic political power.

Within the Thebes nodules, we have two place names that have tentatively been located on Euboea because of the evidence for the same place names on the island in the historical period (*Amarunthos* and *Karustos*) and because of slim archaeological evidence for settlements in the late Mycenaean period.<sup>31</sup>

Stephanus of Byzantium’s entry *Amarunthos* tells us that (1) it is on the island of Euboea; (2) its name derives from an eponymous dog-leader [or “hunter”] of Artemis named *Amarunthos*; (3) the ethnic adjective for the toponym is attested both as an earlier form without a *t<sup>hi</sup> > si* shift *Amarunthios* and a later form with a *t<sup>hi</sup> > si* shift *Amarusios*, citing the adjectival form *Trikorusios* for the site of *Trikorunthos*, one of the four communities that make up the Marathonian tetrapolis in Attica. Stephanus’ entry for *Karustos* tells us that (1) it is a *polis* beneath Mt. *Okhē* in Euboea; (2) the mountain is so named from the fact that cattle are set there to graze, “because the *Akhaioi* call *trophē* [i.e., food, fodder] *okhē*,” (3) it is a stone quarry; (4) it is also called *Aigaia*; (5) there is also a place called *Karustos* within the territory of *Aigus* in Arkadia, famous for its wine according to Strabo, citing Alkman.

Given the proximity to Thebes of the historical sites of *Karustos* and *Amarunthos* on Euboea and the occurrence of the two sites within the inscribed texts from Thebes, it is tentatively accepted that the Theban records refer to the sites in Euboea. The records are as follows. Two inscribed nodules give the following texts,

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<sup>30</sup> Aravantinos, Godart, and Sacconi 2001, pp. 355–358: “L’extension territoriale du royaume de Thèbes.”

<sup>31</sup> Sergent 1994, p. 369, n. 26. Evidence for Late Bronze Age settlement in the Euboean Karystia is negligible: Talalay, Cullen, Keller, and Karimali 2005, pp. 23–24; Keller 1985, pp. 175–179.

each part of a separate administrative subset impressed by a distinctive seal.<sup>32</sup>

Wu 58 (group C [5]) reads: “PIG finishing work of *qe-ri-jo*” and then either “at *Amarunthos*” (in the dative-locative) or “*Amarunthos*” (as a kind of caseless rubric). The difference may seem minor, but given that the words of the entries on nodules are written on different facets of the three sides formed during their manufacture and impression, the people writing on the nodules were disposed to write in a more abbreviated way than on tablets. The form of the nodule gave them a greater incentive to use words essentially syntax-free, as we do when filling out forms. Therefore, the rubric form may have a sense of the community in charge, as opposed to the dative-locative entry, which locates the animal, perhaps at the time the sealing was written. It is still unclear, however, exactly where or when nodules of the individual sets among the sealings from Thebes were manufactured, impressed, and inscribed.

Wu 55 (group H[2]) reads: “MALE PIG ‘at *Karustos*” or, again, just the rubric “*Karustos*.” Among the Of wool distribution tablets at Thebes we have two texts, Of 25 and Of 38, that refer to wool going *a-ma-ru-to-de* = “to *Amarunthos*” and *ra-mo-de*, reasonably associated with the river Λάμπος near Mt. Helikon in Boeotia and undoubtedly specifying a community there = “to *Lamos*.”<sup>33</sup>

Three (Wu 51, Wu 65, Wu 96) of the seven nodules impressed with yet another seal **D** are inscribed: on facet β, with the allative form *te-qa-de* “to *Thebes*” and on facet γ, with the word *qe-te-a<sub>2</sub>* “to be offered as a religious fine” (MALE PIG, EWE, SOW). Two other nodules have word-units that are connected with place names: Wu 94 of the **D** [7] group: SHE-GOAT *a<sub>2</sub>-pa-a<sub>2</sub>-de* (likely an allative

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<sup>32</sup> The boldface letter indicates a specific seal, the number in brackets the number of nodules that the seal has impressed. The seal impression identifies the individual, office, or institution authorizing the action connected with the item with which the nodule is associated.

<sup>33</sup> For reference to a place identified by a local river, compare the Pylian locative place name *ne-do-wo-te* = \*Νεδόντει “the hollow,” related to the river Νέδων that runs into the Gulf of Messenia (cf. the modern city of Waco, from Spanish “hueco”).

form); Wu 88 GOAT *Lamios* (most likely a personal name derived from the place name we have just discussed: “the person from *Lamos*”) “finishing work.”

The Thebes Of and Ug tablets contain other potential and secure references to places, direct or indirect. The newer Thebes tablets offer a long list of lexical items, a relatively small number of which have been interpreted, soundly or speculatively, as connected with place names.

Here follow the references that have reasonably been proposed to have some relationship to Boeotian place names.<sup>34</sup> Only those in boldface are place names *per se*.

***a<sub>3</sub>-ki-a<sub>2</sub>-ri-ja*** (TH Of 25.1) ***a<sub>3</sub>-ki-a<sub>2</sub>-ri-ja-de*** (TH Of 35.2) This is a common place name since it is related to the word αἰγίαλος “shoreline.”<sup>35</sup> A related personal name *a<sub>3</sub>-ki-a<sub>2</sub>-ri-jo* is found on Pylos tablets Fn 50.4 and Fn 79.15 = “man from *Aigihalos*.”

*pe-ta-o-ni-jo* (TH Ug 12), “the man from *Petaōn*” (cf. Boeotian *Peteōn* in the Catalogue of Ships, Hom. *Il.* 2.500, perhaps a locality en route to the port of Anthedon).

*qa-ra<sub>2</sub>-to-de* (TH Of 37.1), interpreted as perhaps a rather common personal name (*qa-ra<sub>2</sub>* = Πάλλανς) in the genitive case, to which is attached unusually the allative suffix *-de*. *qa-ra<sub>2</sub>-to-de* would then be a kind of shorthand for the normal formula *qa-ra<sub>2</sub>-to wo-ko-de* or *do-de* (personal name in genitive followed by the

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<sup>34</sup> I omit conjectures made elsewhere such as *ke-re-u-so* (TH Av 106.3), a masculine personal name that is hard to identify as either the ethnic or adjectival form of the site of Kreusis, and *o-ke-u-ri-jo* (TH Av 104.3, Ft 140.4), a man’s name from an ethnic with a tenuous connection to Okalea in Boeotia in the Homeric Catalogue of Ships (*Il.* 2.501). Also excluded are identifications with place names for which the Mycenaean formation would be without parallel (and whose morphology is hard to explain), e.g., Aravantinos, Godart and Sacconi 2001, p. 356: *po-to-a<sub>2</sub>-ja-de* (TH Av 104.2) = (Τῶ) Πτωΐαδε. In this interpretation, the allative suffix is applied without good explanation to a festival name. Likewise, *te-re-ja-de* (TH Av 104.2) is interpreted as *Teleia-de*? “vers les fêtes organisées par les Platéens en l’honneur de Héra Teleia” on Mt. Cithaeron. Most problematical is the form *a<sub>2</sub>-pa-a<sub>2</sub>-de* (TH Wu 94), which Aravantinos, Godart and Sacconi (2001, p. 355) explain as a plural form *Aphaiās-de* of a toponym (cf. *Potniai* and *Athenai* and *Thebai*) linked with the later epithet of Athena on the island of Aegina (*Athena Aphaia*).

<sup>35</sup> The first half is from a primitive word αἴγες meaning “waves,” the second from ἄλς “salt.”

standard phrases *wo-ko-de* or *do-de* “to the house” or “to the establishment”). Compare *po-ti-ni-ja wo-ko-de* (TH Of 36.2), “to the house of *potnia*.” Even if this strained explanation is correct, it does not help us identify places outside the core area of Boeotia that Mycenaean Thebes might reasonably have dominated.

***e-re-o-ni*** (Ft 140, X 155.1): Eleon (Strabo 9.2.14), the site to the east of Thebes.

*e-u-te-re-u* (Ft 140) a man’s name from an ethnic, perhaps connected with the root seen in the place name Eutresis.

*i-si-wi-jo* (TH Gp 127.1) a man’s name from an ethnic, cf. Isos (Strabo 9.2.14: “a sacred place in Boeotia, having traces of a polis”).

Let us now consider the words in the new Thebes tablets that have been interpreted as suggestive of foreign, or at least extra-territorial, connections. Again, only those in boldface are place names *per se*:<sup>36</sup>

***a-ra-o*** (TH Fq 214.13, 254[+]255.7, Gp 197.2, 227.1, 131.2), viewed as possibly connected with Halai? in eastern Locris on the Gulf of Euboea, but the spelling without the sign for aspirated *a* (/ha/ = *a*<sub>2</sub>) is problematical, as is the overall morphology. We would expect *a*<sub>2</sub>-***ra-jo***.<sup>37</sup>

***a*<sub>3</sub>-*ni-jo*** (Gp 167.2 cf. KN As 1517.13), an ethnic name with a proposed connection with Ainos, a locality in Thrace. But, again, the ethnic name of an individual is no proof of Theban control over the place that gives rise to the ethnic.

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<sup>36</sup> Left out here, in addition to suspect conjectures of the kind reviewed in n. 34 above, are proposals by Aravantinos, Godart, and Sacconi (2001, p. 356) that, for example, the man’s name *si-mi-te-u Smintheus* (TH Av 106.3 KN Am 827.1, V 1583.B) refers to an epithet of Apollo in the Troad and thus attests to a special connection of Thebes with that region. Such an identification and special Theban connection are disproved by the incidence of the same personal name in records from other Mycenaean sites.

<sup>37</sup> Aravantinos, Godart, and Sacconi (2001, p. 355) equate this form with *Ἁλαί*, without explanation, but the tablets on which it occurs show it must be a personal name. And a spelling of the expected *a*<sub>2</sub>-***ra-jo*** *Halaïos* as ***a-ra-o*** (without the glide *jo*) is hard to maintain. See regularly *te-qa-jo* and never *\*te-qa-o*.

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*mi-ra-ti-jo* (Fq *passim*), an ethnic name connected with the place name *Milatos* (cf. the working women so designated in the Pylos tablets).

*ra-ke-da-mi-ni-jo* and alternative spellings (Fq tablets *passim*), an ethnic connected with *Lakedaimōn*

*to-ro-wo* (TH Gp 164, also KN Ag 89, PY An 129, Vn 130), a personal name, cf. *Trōs*, *Trōwos*, “the Trojan” or *Tlōs*.<sup>38</sup>

If we eliminate all conjectures that are unsupportable and concentrate on forms that have a chance to offer information on the relationship of the center at Thebes to communities in Boeotia, on Euboea, and in the broader Greek and non-Greek world, the remaining evidence for a broad Theban hegemony or influence is minimal.

On principle, all such data have to be understood in their epigraphical contexts, and the limits of their value as evidence have to be made clear. What we conventionally call ethnic names prove only that individuals linked with specific places had some kind of connection to the essentially economic actions being monitored by the Linear B tablets and nodules. Especially when they are found at more than one Mycenaean center, the same ethnics can only be used to argue for a strong relationship between two centers or dominance of one center over another if they are part of a larger pattern, as in the case of the women from Anatolia and the Anatolian coast in the Pylos A- series tablets.

Single pigs being sent from the sites of *Karustos* and *Amarunthos* (the former only tentatively accepted as Euboean in the Mycenaean palatial period), most likely to a commensal ceremony at Thebes<sup>39</sup> and from a specific individual named *qe-ri-jo*, prove very little about the political relationships of the sites involved. In the case of *Karustos*, we have working women at Pylos who are designated as *ka-ru-ti-je-ja-o* (Pylos Ad 671 genitive plural) = “women of the man who controls Karustian cloth products *vel sim*.” They are women to whom older and younger boys are

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<sup>38</sup> On problems relating this term to Anatolian place names, see Palaima 2007.

<sup>39</sup> See Palaima 2004.

”attached” in the context of “headband-makers,” which suggests that the site of *Karustos* was known as a source of specialized cloth production.

In closing, let us consider one historical example that Malcolm Wallace would have appreciated. It demonstrates the difficulty in using ethnic designations, especially when the ethnic is a personal name, to determine political relationships. Thucydides 1.24-55 analyzes the developing conflict in 433 B.C. between Corcyra and Corinth triggered by revolution in Epidamnus and the subsequent appeals of Corcyra to Athens for assistance. Not wanting to breach the terms of the 30-year truce made with Sparta in 445 B.C., but still wanting to support Corcyra and minimally not let its naval power fall into Corinthian hands, Athens sent out ten ships (Thuc. 1.45) under three commanders, the first of whom was *Lakedaimōnios*, son of *Kimōn*.

What does the occurrence of that ethnic personal name signify in terms of the relationship of Athens and Sparta (*Lakedaimōnia*)? Here it indicates that the father of this general had strong conservative, pro-Spartan leanings and once led an army of Athenians to Messenia to support Sparta after an earthquake during the Messenian helot revolt in 466-461 B.C. The position of *Lakedaimōnios* as one of three commanders on this diplomatically and strategically delicate mission to Corcyra, his very name, in fact, signalled to Sparta and the Peloponnesian League the caution with which Athens was embarking on this initiative.

It does not indicate, however, that Athens ever had control over Sparta or, in this case, even that an ethnic Spartan or descendant of ethnic Spartans had reached high political status within the polis of Athens. At this time, Athens and Sparta had in reality been at war with each other off and on for decades.

Likewise, *ra-ke-da-mo-ni-jo* is a single human being in the Thebes Fq tablets. He receives regular routine allotments of small amounts of barley. He occurs in seven extant entries. The known quantities he receives of barley on given days are not large (V 1 and Z 1 in the two entries where the number survives, i.e., 1.6 litres and 0.4 litres). Fifty-five to sixty other individuals and

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groups who are identified by their personal names and by mundane professional terms receive comparable allotments. *ra-ke-da-mo-ni-jo* thus cannot be used as proof that Theban power had a long reach.

The Linear B tablets do not prove that Thebes controlled any area far outside its own natural geographical zone in Boeotia. This comprehensive look at the potential place-name references in the Linear B documents from Thebes fits in better with the conclusions reached by Dakouri-Hild on the basis of a thorough assessment of the archaeological remains for Boeotia in the Late Bronze Age, which are as follows:<sup>40</sup>

(a) “Thebes, the seat of the east Boeotian palatial administration, is surrounded by satellite settlements within a 20 km radius” that fall under its control (see Fig. 1);

(b) “certain facilities in Euboea operated within the sphere of Theban economic and political influence,” including possibly *Amaranthos* and *Karustos*, but the existence of a “greater Boeotian polity” extending into Euboea and southward outside Boeotia is doubtful;

(c) remains at Gla and Orchomenos suggest the existence of a large polity to the west, perhaps separate from Thebes.

There is no doubt in my mind that Mycenaean Athens was formidable, although constrained to the west by Eleusis and perhaps unable to impose its control over the Marathonian tetrapolis to the northeast; consider the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* and the later tradition of independent religious ambassadors sent out from the Marathonian tetrapolis. Traditional evidence in the myths of Theseus and Athens and Minos and Crete may be reflected in *a-ta-na po-ti-ni-ja* (the *potnia* of the site *Athēnē*) among the “Hellenic” deities on KN tablet V 52 from the Room of the Chariot Tablets at Knossos. The hypothesis of a Theban kingdom that extended to Athens and down into the Megarid and Aegina is not supported by traditional evidence, the Linear B evidence, or the archaeological evidence.

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<sup>40</sup> Dakouri-Hild 2010, pp. 619–624, esp. 619–622.



The sites of *Karustos* and *Amarunthos* in the Mycenaean palatial period, if they are located on the island of Euboea, did interact with Thebes in small ways. But whether they fell within the boundaries of a Theban-controlled palatial territory is impossible to tell from the Linear B data.

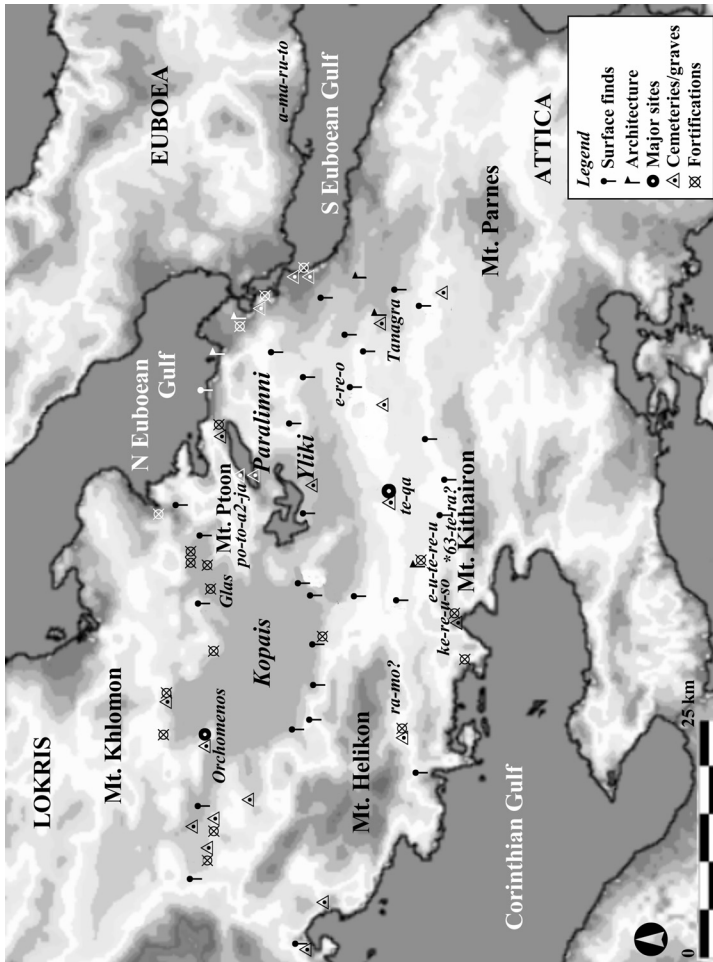


Figure 1. General Boeotian settlement patterns in the Mycenaean palatial period (LH II-LH III B). Map © A. Dakouri-Hild 2010. Courtesy A. Dakouri-Hild

