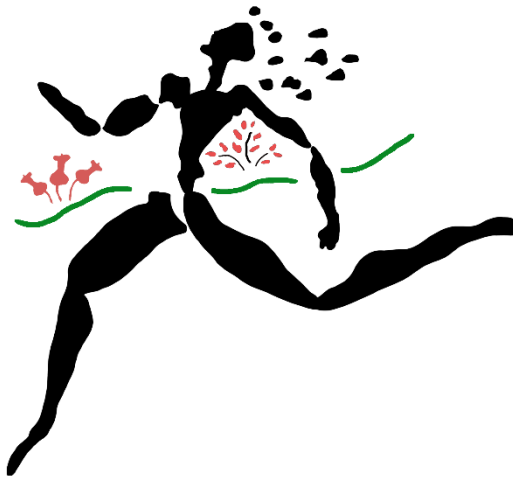


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MYCENAEAN PALATIAL TOWN IN CONTEXT: RELATIONAL ARCHAEOLOGY IN THE STUDY OF LATE BRONZE AGE DIMINI IN THESSALY.

INTRODUCTION

This paper aims at discussing the Mycenaean palatial settlements in the context of their internal and external relations, focusing on the site of Dimini in Thessaly. During the Late Bronze Age/Late Helladic (LBA/LH, ca. 1700–1050 B.C.E.) this region was subject to a process known as Mycenaeanisation, the gradual acceptance of various Mycenaean cultural markers, and witnessed serious changes of both material culture and regional settlement network. Dimini, which was occupied since Neolithic times,¹ starts to show presence of Mycenaean characteristics in LH IIB, together with two other important centers of the Pagasetic Gulf – sites of Kastro/Volos and Pevkakia. This presence is first visible in form of new rich, and sometimes monumental tombs, as we lack architectural remains from the settlements of this early Mycenaean stage.² Those burials testify to the emergence of new elites, that possibly started to identify themselves as Mycenaean and developed contacts with the powerful elites of central and southern Greece. As the centers of Dimini, Kastro and Pevkakia grew, a new network of Mycenaeanised settlements that covered significant parts of south Thessaly was formed. By the end of LH IIIA1, the land between the Pagasetic Gulf and Lake Karla was fully Mycenaean, being part of a core zone of that culture.³ The rest of Thessaly formed a border and frontier zone with gradually decreasing numbers of Mycenaean cultural markers. Dimini was destroyed in late LH IIIB2, together with many other centers on the Greek mainland, during an unstable time around 1200 B.C.E. Destruction was followed by a reconstruction and a brief reoccupation in early LH IIIC, although the site never returned to its former position.

I will try to use the example of Dimini and Thessaly to discuss more general tendencies and patterns of Mycenaean culture, namely formation of palatial towns, i.e. the entities formed of a palace and a lower town, and the emergence of hierarchical settlement networks. Those two processes together led to urbanization, which understood relatively, is a process of developing internal structural and functional divisions within a settlement network and inside at least some of its centers. All these phenomena will be further discussed in the paragraphs below. However, it is important to stress at the very beginning that Thessaly, and Dimini itself is by no means a ‘standard’ region and center for Mycenaean culture. It has to be analyzed in a context of peripheral zones and inter-cultural contacts that occur in them.⁴ It was the very edge of the Mycenaean world, and as so it obviously differed from regions like the Argolid or Messenia. This problem will be also further addressed below. However, it is worth asking if there even is something like a ‘standard’ Mycenaean. In the light of growing evidence, it becomes more and more clear that regional differences, that characterized Early Mycenaean elites, continued also in the palatial era. Despite a certain level of cultural homogeneity, different forms of economic and social organization functioned in every region of the Mycenaean world⁵, including differing administration practices⁶, forms of palaces and settlement networks⁷. Thus, although the data from Thessaly can be useful to discuss more general patterns of Mycenaean culture, one has to be particularly cautious while drawing extra-regional patterns and comparisons.

RELATIONAL URBANIZATION AND MYCENAEAN PALATIAL TOWNS

Mycenaean palaces have been a focus of scholarly attention for decades and inspired multiple discussions. Firstly, to properly define a Mycenaean palace it should be seen in a dualistic way. On the one hand as a monumental architectural complex centered around a megaron (rectangular hall with an open front porch), of residential, defensive, administrative, economic and religious functions. At the same time, it is the highest institution of Mycenaean society, embodying the power of a *wanax* (king) and an elite supporting him, over a hierarchical social system and centralized palatial economy.⁸ Yet each of these palaces did not exist in a vacuum, and was surrounded by more or less extensive settlements, traditionally named lower towns. Their development is inevitably linked to the question of urbanization in the Mycenaean culture. During the Late Bronze Age, palatial centers became key nodes in the Mycenaean settlement networks. Gradual centralization of administration and economy around the palaces, led to the distinction of their role in the settlement network and development of lower towns. By LH IIIA2 Mycenaean elites in central and southern Greece, after subordinating other regional centers and obtaining control over conspicuous burials and prestigious goods,⁹ turned towards forming a new social and economic organization, centered around the palace and involving all the dominated settlements within a single network of various dependences. This transformation created a new, urbanized society, with settlements differing between each other, and some of

them showing internal structural divisions, too. To see the latter, one has to approach the lower town from a new perspective, recognizing it as one entity, together with the palace it surrounded. My hypothesis is that during the Mycenaean period, a new form of settlement appeared that might be named palatial town. This new term refers to a settlement consisting of the palace and the lower town, two parts that are mutually related to and dependent on each other. They form an entanglement of objects (people, buildings, artifacts), with multiple internal and external relations.¹⁰ They were the key points of Mycenaean social, economic and administrative systems. With the collapse of the Mycenaean palaces around late LH IIIB2/IIIC Early, not only the palatial towns ceased to exist, but also the entire regional networks shifted completely. Some of the sites prevail, but in new conditions, with different functional and structural divisions and new positions in the settlement network.¹¹

Another crucial definition regards urbanization. I accept a relative definition of urbanization. In this approach, the development of functional and structural differences within settlement networks and individual settlements defines if they are urbanized or not. "Towns, in other words, imply the countryside", to quote Greg Woolf, who largely developed the approach.¹² The relational approach replaces a search for arbitrarily fixed features that are supposed to constitute a city. Obviously, if one assumes that a settlement is urbanized only when it includes certain elements, like appropriately high population density, fortifications, large public buildings, features related to trade and craft etc., most of the Aegean settlements fail to be recognized as such. However, a relational approach to urbanization allows one to focus more on the social processes underlying it than on the formation of specific urban forms that differ from region to region. It provides an opportunity to investigate why similar processes of population movement and hierarchization of settlement systems occur in different societies and how they affected the history of those societies.

So far there are only five Mycenaean palatial towns, located on the Greek mainland, that are identified with certainty. These are sites of Dimini, Thebes, Mycenae, Tiryns and Pylos, that are agreed to have a palatial center by most scholars (although there is a discussion about the palace at Dimini, see below) and a sufficient amount of data on a lower town. Thus, some well-known mainland Mycenaean centers cannot be so far counted among palatial towns, because of lack of data or unclear nature of the site. Those are for example Orchomenos (virtually nothing is known about the settlement), Gla (a massive stronghold of potentially great importance, but yet too poorly understood), Athens (very little known about both the palace that potentially was on the Acropolis, and the lower town) and Midea (not commonly recognized as a palatial center, with almost nothing left of the possible palace). Noteworthy, those sites can be said to have a potential for identifying a palatial town that depends on future research.

Another site worth mentioning is Knossos that undoubtedly can be counted among Mycenaean palatial towns, maybe even since LH IIB/Late Minoan (LM) II, and for sure in LH/LM IIIA.¹³ However, the situation on Crete was much more complicated, with a lot of economic and social developments coming from a Minoan Neopalatial period. Thus, the Knossian palatial town has to be discussed as a case of 'hybridization' of Mycenaean and Minoan culture, which certainly affected its form and development.

MYCENAEAN DIMINI

There are no traces of Mycenaean material culture from the LH I-IIA period in Thessaly. However, in LH IIB the situation rapidly changes and multiple built cist graves with rich Mycenaean grave goods appear on the site.¹⁴ Shortly after this, in LH IIB/LH IIIA1, three large tholoi are erected in the areas close to Dimini (Lamiospito tholos) and Kastro (Kapakli and Kazanaki tholoi).¹⁵ Those monumental tombs testify to the development of a new social class of elites, possibly already identifying themselves as Mycenaean. The picture of that period is further supplemented with built chamber tombs from the site of Pevkakia. All together it seems that at this early stage there were at least three elite groups around the Pagasetic Gulf,¹⁶ possibly competing, although there are no traces of any armed conflicts and all three sites (Dimini, Kastro, Pevkakia) develop simultaneously without any fortifications. Around this time the settlement at Dimini was already densely built and planned along two main roads, running through a north-south and east-west axis. However, not much can be said about the use of the buildings from that period, as they were repeatedly rebuilt on the same spot.¹⁷ Noteworthy, in LH IIIA1 there was already a large pottery kiln working in Dimini and producing a local Mycenaean ware. At that time, Mycenaean pottery is already widespread in the region, it appears even in the north of Thessaly and 80% of it is locally made. Dimini was one of the main regional producers and exporters of highly valued Mycenaean pottery that closely resembled products from the south and was part of the so-called Mycenaean ceramic *koine*.¹⁸ At the end of LH IIIA2 the entire settlement was destroyed by fire.¹⁹

The settlement was rebuilt immediately after the fire, with exactly the same layout and most buildings

erected in the same orientation, still along the two main roads. Most of our archaeological data on the settlement comes from this phase as it was preserved after the main destruction of the site in late LH IIIB2. At the time, the site occupied around 10 ha, being of comparable size with two other Mycenaean centers in the area – Kastro occupied around 12 ha, and Pevkakia – 8 ha.²⁰ The roads mentioned above were both over 4 m wide, and probably served for regional communication and processions rather than for the daily movement of people. There were eleven houses excavated on the site, all freestanding, single-storied structures with stone foundations and mud brick walls. They are mostly asymmetrical, with many variations in size and plan, consisting of rectangular rooms, some of which were coated with colored plaster. Each house seems to be more or less economically independent, having its own space for storage for agricultural products. Noteworthy, at least one and possibly more houses also had an own shrine and space dedicated for religious activities.²¹ In LH IIIB a new large tholos tomb is also built in Dimini (so called 'Toumba' tholos). It is now the only such structure used in the region, as all the other tholoi went out of use by the end of LH IIIA2.²²

At the same time the administrative center is built in the middle of the settlement, most probably on top of older structures of similar function. It comprises two large parallel buildings, called Megaron A and Megaron B, with two wings of smaller rooms and a central courtyard, framed by a monumental gate called propylon. All together the complex occupied 4970 m², with dimensions of 70 x 71 m.²³ The buildings were set on strong stone foundations, with mud brick superstructure and roofs of clay tiles. Some rooms had white lime-plaster floors and walls, sometimes with decoration in red.²⁴ Six stone molds together with other metallurgical tools used for production of jewelry and tools were found in Megaron A, except from many other finds, mostly pottery that indicated storage and daily consumption.²⁵ On the central courtyard there was an altar with burnt animal bones around it, suggesting religious activity.²⁶ The same function has been also assigned to Megaron B, which included two other altars, a shrine, a *kernos* for deposition of offerings, and a specific assemblage of pottery that seems to be connected mostly with communal feasts. Furthermore, there were more stone tools and storage areas around this part of the complex.²⁷ There are only two objects that testify to the use of Linear B on the site – an engraved stone object from Megaron A, and an inscribed kylix rim from Megaron B.²⁸

At the end of LH IIIB2 the entire settlement was burned again, to be rebuilt shortly after. However, no more large mansions or tombs were erected, and the economic decline is obvious from both architectural and ceramic evidence. The administrative center was partially rebuilt, but large parts of it were now used for small houses. The capacity of stored goods lowered significantly. The settlement is finally abandoned at the end of LH IIIC Early.

THE 'PALACE' AT DIMINI?

There is an ongoing academic discussion on whether the administrative center in Dimini should or should not be named a 'palace'. Initially, the excavator – Vasiliki Adrymi-Sismani – interpreted the site as a palatial center and a seat of a Mycenaean *wanax* – a local ruler.²⁹ However, this claim has been criticized by others, mainly Panagiota Pantou, who would see Dimini rather as part of a heterarchy of Mycenaean centers along the coast of the Pagasetic Gulf.³⁰ Recently, Adrymi-Sismani has revised her interpretations, calling the central complex only the 'administrative center' in the latest publications.³¹ She also agreed that Dimini did not dominate the region, and rather peacefully coexisted with the other two neighboring Mycenaean centers.³² I would like to once again briefly return to the question of the palatial nature of Dimini. Pantou rightly pointed out that the complex lacks certain features of a palace, such as architectural sophistication, monumentality, use of ashlar masonry and decorative features, i.e. figurative wall paintings. She also suggested that the size of the structure is not sufficient, as both large megara, when separated, fall into the category of intermediate buildings in Darcque's classification. Thus, the gap in size between the megara and regular households is rather small. Two objects inscribed in Linear B are dismissed by her as not the evidence for administrative literacy. Finally, evidence for extra-regional contacts and craft specialization indicates only a small scale of operation, not a large industry.³³

Those claims are all undeniably true, and it is impossible to see Dimini as a center comparable in scale to Pylos or Mycenae. However, if we go back to the definition of a Mycenaean palace, it seems that the center at Dimini served almost all the same functions – certainly religious and economic, probably also administrative. It was possibly also a residence for a local elite (even if they did not have a *wanax* among them yet), as there is no other building in the settlement that suggests so. Noteworthy, the Dimini center possibly had a second floor, as suggested by Adrymi-Sismani, that could include more elaborate domestic space.³⁴ There is no sign of a defensive function, but that is also true for the palace of Pylos.³⁵ If the center's

area is calculated all together, it is certainly a dominant structure of the settlement with its 4970 m², not much smaller than other Mycenaean palaces (palace at Pylos occupies around 6300 m²). There is no reason to treat Megaron A and B as separate structures, except from the need to classify them as buildings. The second part of the definition is somewhat more problematic, as the institutional dimension of the palace is visible solely in the organization of large storage capacity and concentration of craft production. However, those two are enough to say that the place played a crucial role in the settlement's social and economic system. If we add to it the evidence from burials, it is obvious that Dimini's society was stratified and organized, led by the elite group who controlled the 'administrative center' and buried their dead in the tholoi.³⁶ Of course, the 'center' lacks some palatial features and is somewhat poorer in terms of both architectural appearance and social control, in comparison with citadels to the south. However, as it seems to play the same role in society, just on a different scale, I would still tend to call it a palace, explaining those differences with two points – a) regional variability and b) Dimini being a Mycenaean palace in the making.

The first point has to be discussed with relation to the peripheral nature of Thessaly in the Mycenaean world. The Mycenaean cultural markers appear here quite rapidly and generally late, only in LH IIB. Except from the area between the coast and Lake Karla, which is fully Mycenaeanized not later than in LH IIIA1, the rest of the region accepts only some parts of the Mycenaean cultural package, with possibly only some of the local elites using it. This is suggested by the presence of few Mycenaean tombs and some pottery further north, although the latter usually with a limited repertoire of shapes.³⁷ In such conditions it would be no surprise that some elements of Mycenaean culture – like social and economic organization or religious beliefs – disappear or are significantly less pronounced. Such a thing could be, for example, *wanax* ideology or warrior identity. Noteworthy, there are almost no weapons in Mycenaean burials around the Pagasetic Gulf³⁸, and in general burial habits seem to be different with a certain emphasis on the use of the cist grave that is considered a traditional tomb form in Thessaly.³⁹ Furthermore, the regional variability can be manifested through a different accessibility of resources. Feuer mentions lack of hills of soft rock suitable to dig chamber tombs, that are far less common in the Mycenaean part of Thessaly than in the south of Greece.⁴⁰ The same can apply to lack of ashlar masonry and monumental stone walls at Dimini.

However, maybe even more important is my second point for the palatial nature of Dimini, or rather its forming palatial nature. It seems to me that a coexistence of three Mycenaean centers at the coast could be an intermediate stage on the way to build an actual palatial state. Of course, it is not certain that Dimini would pass this stage, but there is some evidence to suggest that the competition between those three sites, even if not of military nature, was still ongoing in LH IIIB, and that Dimini was actually winning. This evidence is mainly the construction and use of the 'Toumba' tholos in LH IIIB. At this time neither Kastro, nor Pevkakia had a functioning tholos tomb.⁴¹ Control of conspicuous burials was one of the main ways of gaining domination over their regions by both Pylos and Mycenae. However, it was a long process which only at the end featured the formation of a palatial state and new mechanisms of control.⁴² Secondly, the appearance of another monumental administrative building at Kastro also finds parallels in the Mycenaean world. At Iklaina, close to Pylos, there was a large stone structure, the so called Cyclopean Terrace Complex, before this site fell under Pylian domination.⁴³ At this time there was already some pre-palatial structure functioning on the acropolis of Pylos,⁴⁴ but we do not know much about its appearance – maybe it looked a little like Dimini's palace, still lacking a lot of monumental and decorative features, but already serving as a cornerstone of a community, concentrating its communal economic, religious and social activities. Nevertheless, the existence of another monumental complex in the area does not exclude the possibility of Dimini being on its way to dominate the region and form the actual palatial state (if it would be successful – that is a different question). This delay in formation of such structures, in comparison to the south, can be easily explained by both regional differences – long tradition of coexistence of all three centers, at least from the late Middle Helladic (MH), if not from Late Neolithic times,⁴⁵ different geographical settings, with no single dominant location⁴⁶ - and that simply not enough time has passed for the final victor of the competition to emerge. Assuming that the stratification of the society and emergence of the new Mycenaean elite in LH IIB mark the beginning of rivalry, it is significantly less time for competition than the communities from Messenia or Argolid had, as those processes started there already in MH III.⁴⁷ Noteworthy, the passing of generations and growing cult of ancestors could play an important role in forming and strengthening the ruling Mycenaean elite, as suggested for example by incorporation of Grave Circle A into the citadel of Mycenae.⁴⁸

I would see Dimini's center as an early form of a Mycenaean palace, or a pre-palatial structure. The entire LH IIIB settlement is then an early or regional form of a Mycenaean palatial town. It is already an urbanized center, with clear structural division between the elite zone and the regular households, which is further spatially organized with two main roads. It appears that the elite zone, in the form of an early palace,

concentrated a number of religious and economic functions, although it did not yet completely dominate either of these zones of activities. Many of the houses were still quite independent and the community was led, but not yet controlled, by the inhabitants of the palace. A mutual set of relations and dependence was possibly very complicated, with the elite still sharing a lot of resources, land and prestige with the rest of community. The process of monumentalization of power and maximizing control over economy and social life that we know from other LH IIIB Mycenaean centers was not finished. However, some power prerogatives, and thus possibly also an actual control over at least some key aspects of economy, were well rooted within the elite group by LH IIIB, as is suggested by the rebuilding of the palace and continuous use of tholoi by construction of the new one (of course the internal rivalry between the elite, and a possible change of the ruling family at that moment is not to be excluded).

REGIONAL SETTLEMENT NETWORK – THESSALY IN THE LATE BRONZE AGE

Dimini was part of a regional settlement network of Mycenaean settlements in Thessaly. The network covered the shore of the Pagasetic Gulf and went north up to Lake Karla. Except from the three coastal sites of Dimini, Kastro and Pevkakia, it also included centers at Velestino/ancient Pherai and Petra, with multiple smaller, satellite settlements around them (see Fig. 1). Also, three more sites to the south – Almyros, Halos and Pteleon – belonged to it.⁴⁹ This is the area described by Feuer as the ‘core’ of Mycenaean Thessaly, with sites that exhibit presence of a full Mycenaean cultural package, including architecture, burials and rest of the material culture. Further north this package is gradually diminishing, as we transfer through the border zone, with still significant numbers of Mycenaean tombs and pottery found, to the frontier zone of mountain ranges surrounding Thessaly from the east, north and west, with virtually no Mycenaean cultural markers. The core area had to develop contacts between the sites inside of it, which is suggested by the spread of Mycenaean culture and geographical proximity of settlements within it. However, we do not yet understand the actual nature of relations within this network in LH IIIB, as it is clear that it did not form a Mycenaean palatial state. As I suggested above – it can be a formative stage of such a state with competition between various centers still ongoing. Pantou saw this network as a heterarchy with fluctuating domination. She also suggested that three coastal sites – Dimini, Kastro and Pevkakia – in fact formed a ‘supercenter’ that would be a regional adaptation of palatial organization to a local, stable socioeconomic environment. This would form a settlement hierarchy of three tiers – the coastal ‘supercenter’, Velestino and Petra, and smaller surrounding settlements.⁵⁰ This hypothesis does not exclude my ideas presented above, and in fact can be a key extension to it, suggesting how such an early, pre-palatial system with centers competing, but not yet dominating each other, could work.

Certainly, more research is needed to properly understand the links between different sites of Late Helladic Thessaly and the local political situation. However, some preliminary, speculative thoughts regarding possible cooperation within this system can already be formed. It seems possible that sites like Velestino and Petra (both over 20 ha) could act as local centers, collecting agricultural goods from villages and hamlets around. At the same time, their elite groups, who buried their members in rich Mycenaean graves, needed external contacts to acquire metals and imports. Three coastal, marine centers of the Pagasetic Gulf are perfect candidates to deliver such goods in return for inland resources. Thus, it seems possible that such a network worked with functional divisions between the inland and coastal sites and structural divisions between the big centers – Velestino, Petra, Dimini, Kastro, Pevkakia – and small settlements, or hierarchy of three settlement tiers proposed by Pantou. This system was not centrally organized or dominated by any of the sites (or at least we do not have evidence for it yet), but can be already called urbanized, as both functional and structural differentiation appear and at least Dimini shows internal division between the elite zone and the rest of the settlement.

FINAL REMARKS

This paper is a result of an on-going study on Mycenaean palatial towns, that is yet in a very early stage. Thessaly, as specific as it is, constitutes an important part of the study, with a large amount of available and published data, including Dimini - the largest so far excavated urbanized space within any Mycenaean site. The issues of peripheral zones and regional variability affect the research on the region greatly, but in the light of general heterogeneity of Mycenaean culture, do not exclude Thessaly as an important region, also in the study of Mycenaean urbanism. Of course, interpretations presented above have to be treated with caution and they are only one possibility of understanding local situation. Taking into account the time dimension of the development of Mycenaean societies allowed me to find a new explanation of phenomena observed in Thessaly and particularly on the site of Dimini. It is an example of history of material culture driving away

from history of society, as using the LH IIIB cultural assemblage does not automatically mean being in the LH IIIB, 'palatial' state of mind.

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Piotr Zeman
PhD candidate
Adam Mickiewicz University Poznań



Fig. 1: Southern part of Thessaly with sites that are mentioned in the article indicated (source: Google Earth Pro, modified by the author).

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- ¹ Alexakis et al. 2008. In fact there was a possible break in the occupation between the late Early Bronze Age (EH III) and late Middle Bronze Age (MH III) as said by Adrymi-Sismani (see the infra reference).
 - ² Adrymi-Sismani 2016, 40–41.
 - ³ Feuer 1983; 2016, 189–92.
 - ⁴ Feuer 2011; 2016.
 - ⁵ Pantou 2010, 383.
 - ⁶ Shelmerdine 1999.
 - ⁷ Galaty and Parkinson 2007.
 - ⁸ Shelton 2010, 143–45.
 - ⁹ Voutsaki 2001, 2010.
 - ¹⁰ Hodder 2012.
 - ¹¹ Kramer-Hajos 2016; Maran and Papadimitriou 2016.
 - ¹² Woolf 1993, 227.
 - ¹³ Hallager 2010, 143–44.
 - ¹⁴ Adrymi-Sismani 2016, 41.
 - ¹⁵ Pantou 2010, 385; Feuer 2016, 194–95. According to Feuer, large tholoi are the ones with diameter over 5 m. Noteworthy Thessalian tholoi seem to be generally bigger than contemporary structures from Messenia.
 - ¹⁶ The tholos in Kazanaki has been described by Pantou as not linked to any known settlement, and so she wrote about four elite groups in the region at the time. However, Feuer seems to link it with the center at Kastro, and on the basis of geographical proximity I also tend to do so.
 - ¹⁷ Adrymi-Sismani 2016, 42. Adrymi-Sismani also sees LHIIIA1 as the moment when the administrative center and a local ruler's residence has to already appear in Dimini, albeit that is suggested only by the presence of the tholos.
 - ¹⁸ Adrymi-Sismani 2016, 42–43; Feuer 2016, 195–96. The Dimini kiln is the largest example of such a construction in Central Greece, with 3.6 m in diameter. According to Feuer, there were at least two other workshops producing Mycenaean pottery in Thessaly, one in Velestino/ancient Pherai and another one somewhere further north in the location yet unidentified.
 - ¹⁹ Adrymi-Sismani 2016, 42.
 - ²⁰ Adrymi-Sismani 2007, 161; Pantou 2010, 386.
 - ²¹ Adrymi-Sismani 2007; 2016, 43–46.
 - ²² Pantou 2010, 393; Adrymi-Sismani 2016, 47
 - ²³ Adrymi-Sismani 2016, 46.
 - ²⁴ Adrymi-Sismani 2016, 49.
 - ²⁵ Adrymi-Sismani 2007, 164; 2016, 50.
 - ²⁶ Adrymi-Sismani 2016, 51.
 - ²⁷ Pantou 2010, 387; Adrymi-Sismani 2016, 52–56.
 - ²⁸ Adrymi-Sismani and Godart 2005; Pantou 2010, 387.
 - ²⁹ Adrymi-Sismani 2007.
 - ³⁰ Pantou 2010.
 - ³¹ Adrymi-Sismani 2016. That is why earlier in the text I use this term, as I refer directly to Adrymi-Sismani's publications.
 - ³² Adrymi-Sismani 2016, 57–58.
 - ³³ Pantou 2010, 382–83.
 - ³⁴ Adrymi-Sismani 2016, 49.
 - ³⁵ Blegen and Rawson 1966, 32.
 - ³⁶ Pantou 2010, 389. This claim agrees with Pantou's observations. She divides Dimini's society into a two-tiered hierarchy, with ruling, priestly elite and lower class of 'agriculturalists and lesser craftsmen'.
 - ³⁷ Feuer 2016, 189–96.
 - ³⁸ Pantou 2010, 385.
 - ³⁹ Feuer 2016, 195.
 - ⁴⁰ Feuer 2016, 195.
 - ⁴¹ Pantou 2010, 393.
 - ⁴² Voutsaki 2010.
 - ⁴³ Cosmopoulos 2016.
 - ⁴⁴ Bennet 2007, 34.
 - ⁴⁵ Alexakis et al. 2008; Pantou 2010, 392. All three centers certainly existed in the Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age, although as Kastro and Pevkakia exhibit a continuous sequence of occupation up to Late

Helladic, Dimini had a possible break in occupation between late EBA and Late Middle Helladic (see above, reference 1).

⁴⁶ It is rather commonly accepted that both Pylos and Mycenae owe some part of their success to their dominant geographic location. The palace at Pylos is set on a ridge of the hill that controls all movement from the west coast of Messenia to the inland. On the other hand, Mycenae had a convenient location in the north of the Argolid, which enabled control of competing centers to the south and in the same time expanding the economic activities to the valleys in the north and east.

⁴⁷ Voutsaki 2001; Bennet 2007.

⁴⁸ French 2010.

⁴⁹ Feuer 2016, 190–91.

⁵⁰ Pantou 2010, 395–97.