The ‘Mycenaeans’ in the south-eastern Aegean revisited
Eerbeek, J.

Citation for published version (APA):
Eerbeek, J. (2014). The ‘Mycenaeans’ in the south-eastern Aegean revisited
Chapter 1

Background to the research

Mycenaean culture developed on the Greek mainland and in the Aegean during the Late Bronze Age. This period is dated here between about 1700 and 1050 BC.\(^1\) The heyday of Mycenaean culture was from the 14\(^{th}\) to 13\(^{th}\) centuries BC. This period, which is known as the “Palatial period of Late Helladic IIIA-B” (hereafter LHIIIA-B), sees the establishment of several palace-centered territorial states (e.g. Mycenae and Tiryns in the Argolid, Pylos in Messenia and Thebes in Boeotia) (Map 1).\(^2\) Somewhere around 1200 BC, the palaces are destroyed and not rebuilt.\(^3\) Although these destructions marked the end of Mycenaean palace civilization, several elements of Mycenaean culture survived into the subsequent Late Helladic IIIC period (hereafter LHIIIC). Continuities have, for example, been observed in burial customs, pottery-making and bronze work.\(^4\) This period, which is known as the “Post-palatial period” and lasted from about 1200 to 1050 BC, can, therefore, be seen as the last stages of Mycenaean culture.\(^5\)

There are also Mycenaean influences\(^6\) visible in the different geographic regions adjacent to the Greek mainland, such as Crete,\(^7\) the Cycladic islands\(^8\) and the south-eastern Aegean.\(^9\) The penetration of Mycenaean culture is, however, not uniform, but shows strong regional differences.\(^10\) Moreover, Mycenaean (decorated) pottery has been widely distributed in almost the whole Mediterranean.\(^11\) The area in which this group of material has been found includes Spain, Italy, Anatolia (modern-day Turkey), Cyprus, the Levant and Egypt.\(^12\) This

\(^1\) Mountjoy 1999a, 17, Table 1; Manning 2010, 23, Table 2.2; Rutter 2010, 418-20.
\(^2\) Shelmerdine/Bennett 2008, 289; Shelton 2010, 144; Tartaron 2013, 16-7.
\(^3\) Dickinson 2006, 43-6; Deger-Jalkotzy 2008, 392-3; Shelton 2010, 146.
\(^6\) Mycenaean influences may be recognized, for example, in (public) architecture, artistic styles and technologies (e.g. pottery), ritual objects (e.g. terracotta figurines) and graves (e.g. tomb types and mortuary practices) (Mac Sweeney 2008, 105).
\(^7\) Farnoux/Driesen 1997.
\(^8\) Schallin 1993; Earle 2012; Tartaron 2013, 17.
\(^10\) Mac Sweeney 2008; Mee 2008, 365-81; Tartaron 2013, 17.
\(^11\) In this study, the term Mycenaean is not used only to refer to object produced in workshops on the Greek mainland, but also to imitations or reproductions manufactured elsewhere. In Chapter 4, in which the Mycenaean pottery from the west coast of Anatolia and adjacent islands is discussed, depending on the availability of provenance studies, a distinction between imports from the Greek mainland and local products is made.
\(^12\) Van Wijngaarden 2002, 3, 16-22; Mee 2008; Mühlenbruch 2009.
wide distribution is generally seen as an indication of Mycenaean ‘involvement’ in the exchange systems of the Late Bronze Age Mediterranean.\textsuperscript{13}

The focus of this PhD research is on the Mycenaean archaeological evidence from the south-eastern Aegean. Attention is paid only to the material from LHIIIA-B (see above).\textsuperscript{14} The region is made up by the south-west coast of Anatolia and adjacent islands (Map 2). A key feature distinguishing the south-eastern Aegean from other regions in which Mycenaean traits were adopted (see above) is the widespread popularity of Mycenaean-style chamber tombs (Fig. 1 in Chapter 4).\textsuperscript{15} These graves contained mostly Mycenaean-style burial offerings, including (decorated) pottery (Fig. 6 in Chapter 4), bronze weapons (Figs. 6-7 in Chapter 5) and stone and glass jewelry (Figs. 32-4 in Chapter 5).

The Mycenaean finds from the south-eastern Aegean have been variously interpreted. In general, two major interpretive perspectives have tended to dominate the debate surrounding this evidence: the “colonialist” and the “social constructive perspective” (see section 1.2 below). It will be argued in section 1.3 below that both perspectives tend to represent the population of the south-eastern Aegean in the Late Bronze Age as being made up by two opposing social blocs, with Mycenaeans on one side and local groups (Anatolians, Rhodians, etc.) on the other. This is, however, not supported by the archaeological evidence. In order to transcend this apparent dichotomy, a different approach based on the expression of group identities in tombs will be developed here. Questions which will be addressed in this dissertation include “what different group identities are being expressed with the material culture and what does this tell us about the social dynamics and the relations between the different societies of the Late Bronze Age south-eastern Aegean?” Before introducing these questions (see section 1.3 below), however, a short description of the archaeological record of the west coast of Anatolia and adjacent islands, with a focus on the Mycenaean evidence, is given.

### 1.1 The archaeology of the west coast of Anatolia and adjacent islands

\textsuperscript{13} Van Wijngaarden 2002, 5-7; Tartaron 2013, 1.
\textsuperscript{14} For a summary of the material from LHIIIC with further references see, for example, Marketou 2010a (Dodecanese except Rhodes); Marketou 2010b (Rhodes).
\textsuperscript{15} Benzi 1996, 948.
For the purpose of this overview the west coast of Anatolia and adjacent islands has been divided into a southern, a central and a northern zone (Map 3).  

The southern zone is made up by the south-west coast of Anatolia and some of the Dodecanese islands, namely Rhodes, Kos, Astypalaia and Karpathos (Maps 2-3). Mycenaean finds, which are abundantly represented, come from both settlement and tomb contexts. Mycenaean-style (decorated) pottery is especially numerous (Figs. 11 and 14 in Chapter 4). The Mycenaean ceramic assemblage consists of imports from the Greek mainland and local products. Based on the materials that have been published so far, it appears that there is much more pottery of Mycenaean type than of local, non-Mycenaean, type. Other categories of Mycenaean-style artifacts, of which the majority comes from tombs (see below), include bronze weapons (e.g. swords and spearheads) (Fig. 31 in Chapter 5), stone and glass jewelry beads (Figs. 32-4 in Chapter 5), stone seals and implements, and terracotta figurines (Fig. 126).  

A characteristic feature of the southern zone is represented by the popularity of subterranean Mycenaean-style chamber tombs (Fig. 1 in Chapter 4). Other types of tombs (e.g. small tholoi and pit graves) are rare. Most graves contain (multiple) inhumations. Cremation burials are very rare.  

The central zone is centered on the Gulf of Izmir (Map 3). Mycenaean materials have been found in both settlements and tombs. There is more local Anatolian than Mycenaean-style pottery (Fig. 176 in Chapter 4), of which the corpus consists of imports from the Greek mainland and locally manufactured vessels. Certain mainland Greek ceramic pot shapes were imitated in unpainted local wares, of which examples are the straight-sided alabastron

---

16 A different terminology is used by P.A. Mountjoy (1998). The “East Aegean-West Anatolian Interface”, by which she refers to the west coast of Anatolia and adjacent islands, is divided by her into a “Lower”, “Central” and “Upper Interface”. These “Interfaces” geographically overlap with the “zones” used here (Mountjoy 1998; see, also, Mac Sweeney 2011, 68-71).
17 E.g. Miletus and Iasos on the west coast of Anatolia; Trianda on Rhodes; and the “Serraglio” on Kos  
18 E.g. Değirmentepe/Kalabaktepe and Müskebi on the west coast of Anatolia; Ialysos on Rhodes; and Eleona/Langada on Kos  
21 Mee 1982, 20-2, 26-7 (Ialysos); Benzi 1992 (Rhodes); Tartaron 2013, 17 (general).  
23 There are examples from the chamber tomb cemetery of Müskebi on the Anatolian south-west coast (Boysal 1967; Mee 1978, 137) and Vonies (single tomb) on the island of Karpathos (Melas 1985, 39-40).  
24 E.g Limantepe and Çesme-Bağlarası  
25 E.g. Ephesus (Ayasoluk Hill), Panaztepe and Baklatepe  
26 Niemeier 2005a, 16.
Ch. 1. Background to the research

(Fig. 181 in Chapter 4) and the small piriform jar (Fig. 182 in Chapter 4). Other Mycenaean-style artifacts are less numerous and varied than in the southern zone (see above), and come mostly from tombs (see below). The commonest are stone and glass jewelry beads (Figs. 96-8 in Chapter 5), and stone seals (Fig. 94 in Chapter 5). There were also a bronze sword and a terracotta figurine found.

The commonest tomb type in the central zone is the pot or pithos burial (Fig. 165 in Chapter 4). There are also some small tholoi (Fig. 172 in Chapter 4) and built rectangular chamber tombs. Most tombs held single or multiple inhumations. Cremation burials are also relatively common.

The northern zone is centered on the Troas region in the north-western part of the west coast of Anatolia (Map 3). Mycenaean-style artifacts, of which the majority is made up of decorated pottery, have been found in both settlement and tomb contexts. The regional ceramic assemblage is dominated by unpainted local wares, i.e. Grey and Tan wares. Mycenaean-style pottery was imported from the Greek mainland and produced in local workshops (Fig. 199 in Chapter 4). Similar to the central zone (see above), certain mainland Greek ceramic pot shapes were imitated in unpainted local wares, such as the one-handled rounded kylix (Fig. 205 in Chapter 4) and the small piriform jar (Fig. 196 in Chapter 4). Mycenaean-style artifacts other than pottery are less frequent than in the central zone (see above). They come mainly from tombs. The commonest are stone and glass jewelry beads (Fig. 103 in Chapter 5) and (stone) seals (Fig. 114 in Chapter 5). There was also a bronze sword found.

The dominant tomb type in the northern zone is the pot or pithos burial (Fig. 99 in Chapter 5), which is used for both inhumations and cremations. Another type, of which so

---

27 Çınardalı-Karaaslan 2012 (Panaztepe).
28 Erkanal-Öktü 2000 (Baklatepe, Limantepe and Panaztepe).
29 Ersoy 1988 (Panaztepe).
30 Günel 1998 (Limantepe).
32 E.g. Panaztepe and Kolophon
33 E.g. Samos, Baklatepe and Panaztepe
34 Mountjoy 1998, 37; Günel 1999b, 170; Basedow 2002, 469.
36 E.g. Hisarlık-Troy
37 E.g. Beşiktepe and the Cemetery of Cinerary Urns in the Lower Town of Hisarlık-Troy
38 See, for example, Mountjoy/Mommsen 2006 (Hissarlık-Troy).
39 Basedow 2000, 134-40 (Beşiktepe).
40 Basedow 2000, 132-4 (Beşiktepe); Pini 1992 (Beşiktepe); Korfmann 1996, 36, Taf. 2.2 (Hissarlık-Troy); Korfmann 2004, 653-4 (Hissarlık-Troy).
41 Basedow 2000, 122-3 (Beşiktepe).
42 Mountjoy 1998, 37; Basedow 2002, 469-70.
far only two examples have been discovered at the cemetery site of Beşiktepe, is a free-standing structure in the form of a house (German: “Grabhaus”) (Fig. 100 in Chapter 5).

The above overview shows that there is a clear distinction between the southern zone on the one hand and the central and northern zones on the other. The archaeological record of the south-west coast of Anatolia and adjacent islands is strongly Mycenaean in character. Local expressions in material culture seem to be hardly represented. Mycenaean culture is much less pervasive in the central and northern zones. Local traditions dominate the archaeological record. This applies to the pottery as well as to the burial customs. Mycenaean-style chamber tombs appear only in the south-eastern Aegean. There are also some differences between the central and the northern zone. In tombs in the former, more and a wider variety of Mycenaean-style objects have been found. In addition, there is a tomb type, namely the small tholos, which only occurs in the central zone.

1.2 Previous interpretations: “colonialist” and “social constructivist”

The archaeological overview in the previous section shows that there are strong regional differences in the distribution of Mycenaean (material) culture along the west coast of Anatolia. This is especially apparent between the ‘Mycenaeanized’ southern zone and the culturally more locally-oriented central and northern zones. How has this material ‘divide’ been interpreted?

The interpretation of the Mycenaean evidence from the south-eastern Aegean was, and still is, a hotly debated issue in Aegean Bronze Age archaeology. In general, two major interpretive perspectives have tended to dominate the debate surrounding this evidence. The first, to which I will refer as the “colonialist perspective”, is based on the assumption that there were colonists or immigrants from the Greek mainland in the south-eastern Aegean. Supporters of the second approach, which has become increasingly popular in recent years and to which I will refer as the “social constructivist perspective”, think that the

---

43 Basedow 2000, 45-8 (Beşiktepe).
44 This is based on the information from the cemeteries of Panaztepe on the Anatolian mainland and Archontiki on the islet of Psara, adjacent to Chios. Both sites are, unfortunately, still largely unpublished. In the northern zone two cemeteries have been excavated. One is at Beşiktepe; the other – the Cemetery of Cinerary Urns – in the Lower Town of Hissarlık-Troy (Map 3). Admittedly, the two sites are located close to each other, but since there are no other known necropoleis in the region it is unclear whether the patterns identified here should be seen as indicative of local rather than regional trends.
45 Georgiadis 2003, 110-1; Benzi 2013a, 509, fn. 1.
The archaeological pattern reflects the behavior of local groups who selectively adopted and adapted traits of Mycenaean (material) culture.

The “colonialist perspective” has been advocated by scholars such as C. Mee, W.-D. Niemeier and M. Benzi. They believe that the populations at the different sites were made up by people of colonial (i.e. Mycenaean) and local descent. Since there are hardly any styles other than ‘Mycenaean’ represented in the archaeological record of the south-eastern Aegean (see section 1.1 above), one of the main difficulties is how to distinguish, archaeologically, between Mycenaeans and local groups. For example, the excavated part of the settlement of Miletus has mainly produced finds of Mycenaean character. Hence, if the nature of the artifacts recovered represents a reliable indicator of the different groups living at the site (for a discussion see section 1.3 below), the presence of local, non-Mycenaean groups is not immediately apparent. According to Niemeier, who is currently working on the final publication of the excavations that he and his team carried out at Miletus between 1994 and 2004, this shows that the people of local descent had adopted Mycenaean culture. The locals were acculturated to Mycenaean culture.

The difficulty in distinguishing between ‘real’ and ‘made’ Mycenaeans is also apparent in the work of Mee and Benzi. The former notes that even though he is convinced of the presence of Mycenaean settlers in the south-eastern Aegean, he cannot completely rule out acculturation. According to Benzi, the first Mycenaeans arrived in Rhodes in the early 14th century BC (ceramic phase LHIIB-IIIA1). This coincides with the first appearance of Mycenaean-style chamber tombs (mostly in the north-west at Trianda/Ialysos). The second half of the 14th century BC (ceramic phase LHIIIA2) sees a strong increase in the number of sites with Mycenaean-style chamber tombs (Chapters 4 and 5). Benzi is, however, not sure about whether this has to be regarded as indicative of a further influx of settlers from the Greek mainland or the acculturation of local communities (contra LHIIB-IIIA1). Note that

---

46 Mee 1988b; Mee 1998; Mee 2008.
48 Benzi 1988b; Benzi 1996, 973.
49 E.g. Trianda on Rhodes, the “Serraglio” on Kos, and Miletus and Iasos on the Anatolian south-west coast.
51 According to A.M. Greaves, only a small part of the settlement area (ca. 3.5%) has so far been investigated (Greaves 2007, 8).
55 Mee 1988b, 303.
56 Benzi 1988b, 59.
57 Note that in an earlier article Benzi expressed the thought that this increase was due to “the arrival of a second wave of Mycenaean settlers” (Benzi 1988b, 62).
both Mee\textsuperscript{59} and Niemeier believe that there was a second wave of Mycenaean settlement in the south-eastern Aegean in the second half of the 14\textsuperscript{th} century BC (ceramic phase LHIIIA2).\textsuperscript{60}

A source of information which is often included in discussions about the supposed Mycenaean presence in the south-eastern Aegean is a small group of contemporary Hittite texts (ca. 25 fragments) discovered in the ruins of the Hittite capital of Boğazköy-Ḫattuša in central Anatolia.\textsuperscript{61} In these texts, a kingdom or country by the name of Aḫḫiyawa is mentioned.\textsuperscript{62} It is indicated that this country was politically and militarily involved in the south-west of the west coast of Anatolia.\textsuperscript{63} The texts tell us that by the late 14\textsuperscript{th} century BC (ceramic phase LHIIIA2) the settlement of Miletus (see above), which has been identified with the country called Millawanda or Millawata in the Hittite texts, had come under the control of the king of Aḫḫiyawa.\textsuperscript{64} They also inform us that the king of Aḫḫiyawa controlled a number of islands off the Anatolian (south-west) coast.\textsuperscript{65}

A topic of discussion has been the localization of the kingdom of Aḫḫiyawa.\textsuperscript{66} Over the years different locations have been suggested, including the mainland of Greece, Thrace, Cyprus, Crete and the islands in the south-eastern Aegean, especially Rhodes. An increasing number of scholars now believe that Aḫḫiyawa can be identified with one or several of the Mycenaean palace states on the Greek mainland (see introduction, Chapter 1). A number of textual and archaeological arguments have been proposed to support this hypothesis. First, the term Aḫḫiyawa is very similar to one of the terms used by the legendary poet Homer for the Mycenaean Greeks (i.e. Achaioi) in his epic writing.\textsuperscript{67} Furthermore, there are two Hittite texts in which the ruler of Aḫḫiyawa is designated as “Great King”.\textsuperscript{68} Only a select group of powerful kings is known to have been addressed by this title, including the kings of Hatti, Egypt, Babylon, Mittani, Assyria and – apparently – Aḫḫiyawa.\textsuperscript{69} The fact that the ruler of Aḫḫiyawa was, at least for a short while – the two texts concerned are assigned to the Hittite

\textsuperscript{58} Benzi 1996, 973; Benzi 2005, 206; Benzi/Graziado 2013, 19.
\textsuperscript{59} Mee 1988b, 304.
\textsuperscript{60} Niemeier 1998, 41; Georgiadis 2003, 111; Niemeier 2005a, 16.
\textsuperscript{61} Georgiadis 2009, 28.
\textsuperscript{62} Beckman/Bryce/Cline 2011, 7-8.
\textsuperscript{63} Bryce 1989, 11-2.
\textsuperscript{64} Bryce 2005, 58; Beckman/Bryce/Cline 2011, 271-2.
\textsuperscript{65} Beckman/Bryce/Cline 2011, 272-6.
\textsuperscript{66} Simpson 2003; Niemeier 2008, 303-9; Wiener 2009; Burns 2010b, 69.
\textsuperscript{67} Bryce 2010, 479.
\textsuperscript{68} Bryce 2005, 57; Beckman/Bryce/Cline 2011, 275, 280.
\textsuperscript{69} Beckman/Bryce/Cline 2011, 275.
kings Ḫattušili III (c. 1276-1237 BC)\textsuperscript{70} and his son/successor Tudḫaliya IV (c. 1237-1228 BC)\textsuperscript{71} – considered a Great King by the rulers of Hatti has led several scholars to reject the idea that the center of Aḫḫiyawa was on one of the islands off the Anatolian (south-west) coast, especially Rhodes. It is argued that it is unlikely that such an important title could apply to the ruler of a relatively small-sized island state.\textsuperscript{72} In addition, no palaces or royal tombs have been discovered on any of the islands in the south-eastern Aegean.\textsuperscript{73} On the basis of these arguments (name similarity, the title “Great King” and lack of monumental architecture on any of the islands in the south-eastern Aegean), most scholars now place Aḫḫiyawa on the Greek mainland, with its main center at Mycenae in the Argolid\textsuperscript{74} or at Thebes in Boeotia (Map 1).\textsuperscript{75} In this light, it should be noted that we know of at least one and perhaps two local Anatolian rulers to whom the status of “Great King” had been accorded around the same time as the king of Aḫḫiyawa (i.e. 2nd half of the 13th century BC).\textsuperscript{76} As stated above, one of the arguments on the basis of which Rhodes or the south-eastern Aegean in general is rejected as the possible location of the Great Kingdom of Aḫḫiyawa is that the archaeological record has not yielded any monumental architecture. With regards to the validity of this argument, it has to be pointed out there are also no known monumental tombs or palaces from either one of the Anatolian Great Kingdoms mentioned above.

If Aḫḫiyawa really refers to – one or several of the Mycenaean kingdoms on – the Greek mainland, the Hittite texts seem to confirm that there were Mycenaens active along the west coast of Anatolia during the Late Bronze Age. According to J.M. Kelder, who strongly believes in a Mycenaen colonial presence in the south-eastern Aegean,\textsuperscript{77} “[i]t can no longer be realistically doubted that ‘Ahhiyawa’ in Hittite texts must refer to one or several of the Greek Mycenaean palatial states”.\textsuperscript{78} There are, however, still scholars who believe that Aḫḫiyawa can be identified with one or several of the islands in the south-eastern Aegean. Benzi, for example, thinks that the center of Aḫḫiyawa was on Rhodes (this also shows that the colonialist perspective and Aḫḫiyawa=Greek mainland are not definitely bound to each

\begin{footnotes}
\item[70] The text assigned to Ḫattušili III (c. 1267-1237 BC), the so-called “Tawagalawa letter”, is given a date in the middle of the 13th century BC (Beckman/Bryce/Cline 2011, 119-20).
\item[71] The text assigned to Tudḫaliya IV (c. 1227-1209 BC) is a treaty between the king of Hatti and Shausgamuwa, ruler of the Syrian vassal state of Amurru. Aḫḫiyawa appears in a list of rulers whom Tudḫaliya considered his equals. Interestingly, however, the name of the king of Aḫḫiyawa was not included in the final version of the treaty, the name subsequently being erased (Beckman/Bryce/Cline 2011, 67).
\item[72] Benzi 2002, 368.
\item[73] Mee 2008, 374; Niemeier 2008, 304.
\item[74] Niemeier 2008, 304, fn. 112; Wiener 2009, 713-4.
\item[75] Niemeier 2008, 304-6; Wiener 2009, 708-12.
\item[76] Hawkins 1998, 20-1.
\item[77] Kelder 2004-2005, 72-5; Kelder 2012a, 61.
\item[78] Kelder 2012b, 1.
\end{footnotes}
other). According to him, the Mycenaean world did not constitute a unified political entity (see above), but consisted of a number of independent palace-centered territorial states. It is not immediately apparent which were the Mycenaeans referred to in the Hittite texts. These texts indicate that Aḫḫiyawa was a coastal power located in proximity to Anatolia. Moreover, Benzi believes that the archaeological evidence shows that Trianda/Ialysos on Rhodes was the main trading center in the south-eastern Aegean during the Late Bronze Age. Hence, he proposes that Trianda/Ialysos was the center of Aḫḫiyawa. He thinks that large parts of the Late Bronze Age settlement may have been washed away by floods. This could account for the ‘missing’ of a palace and any other monumental architecture (e.g. fortifications and tombs). Other scholars who in recent years have suggested that Aḫḫiyawa was an island-based kingdom centered on Rhodes are P.A. Mountjoy (see below), S. Sherratt and C. Gates. With regard to the location of the ‘missing’ palace, Sherratt has suggested that there might be an administrative center buried under the heart of the historical center of the modern city of Rhodes.

I do not intend to revisit the (unresolved) Aḫḫiyawa question here. The aim is to point out that the archaeological evidence is not unequivocal (immigration-acculturation duality) and that there is a tendency to employ the few Hittite texts in which the country of Aḫḫiyawa is mentioned (25 texts of a total ca. 30.000 found at the Hittite capital of Boğazköy-Ḫattuša), of which the interpretation is also not completely straightforward (see above), as evidence to demonstrate that there were Mycenaean Greeks in the south-eastern Aegean. The texts are said to ‘prove’ that this region was controlled by one or several of the Greek Mycenaean palatial states. In this way, an image of a Mycenaean colonial power with overseas territories is constructed. The Mycenaeans established control by subjugating the natives. This view is, for example, expressed by Niemeier, who states that “[a]t the different sites the portion of natives living together with the Mycenaean overlords may have differed” (italics not in

---

79 This view has, however, recently been proposed by J.M. Kelder (see Kelder 2012a; Kelder 2012b).
82 Benzi 2002, 376; see, also, Simpson 2003, 225-6.
83 Mountjoy 1998.
84 Sherratt 2001.
86 Sherratt 2001, 217-8, fn. 9; Sherratt 2009, 90-1.
87 In a chapter called “Mycenaean history” in the monograph “A companion to Linear B. Mycenaean Greek Texts and their World” (2008), P. de Fidio notes that during the palatial period of LHIIIA-B “the Mycenaeans ... established themselves in actual colonies, like Miletus on the Carian coast, Ialysos on the island of Rhodes, Kos, Iasos and Müsgebi (Halicarnassus)” (De Fidio 2008, 92).
Ch. 1. Background to the research

original). Similar ideas have (previously) been expressed by Benzi (for LHIIB-IIIA1). The main argument in this line of reasoning is that among the earliest Mycenaean tombs at Trianda/Ialysos on Rhodes, which are dated to the early 14th century BC (ceramic phase LHIIB-IIIA1), there are a few that contained bronze weapons, which have been interpreted as belonging to “a number of displaced aristocrats (and their households) [from the Greek mainland who] set sail to the Aegean in order to try their fortune there at the expense of the local communities”. In this light it might be interesting to point out that bronze weapons remain common in tombs in the south-eastern Aegean throughout the LHIIIA-B period (Chapters 5 and 6). In other words, they should not been seen as a phenomenon typical of or chronologically restricted to LHIIB-IIIA1 (i.e. when the first Mycenaeans are supposed to have arrived). It should be pointed out, however, that there also scholars who think that the Mycenaean presence was mainly commercial in nature (i.e. for trading purposes). According to E. Karantzali, for example, the LHIII settlement at Trianda/Ialysos first and foremost functioned as a trading station.

The colonial situation in the south-eastern Aegean tends to be described in dualist terms, with Mycenaeans on one side and local groups (e.g. Anatolians, Rhodians, Koans, etc.) on the other. Scholars working from a “colonialist perspective” focus largely on the colonizers’ perspective. This is reflected in the emphasis placed on the dominance of elements of Mycenaean origin in the archaeological record. Only little attention is paid to the natives (i.e. the colonized), who are represented as passive ‘recipients’ of Mycenaean culture, “[aping] the manners of their overseas masters in matters like tomb architecture and funerary offerings”. The colonial situation is thus seen as a unidirectional process. The Mycenaeans influenced the people of local descent – and not the other way around.

The general characteristics of this Mycenaean casus (colonizer-centered perspective, disregard of natives and unidirectional character of the interactions characterizing the colonial situation) are shared by a large number of other studies on colonialism in the ancient Mediterranean. Similar assumptions are, for example, inherent in such descriptive concepts as Hellenization and Romanization (cf. Mycenaeanization or Mycenaean acculturation),

88 Niemeier 2005b, 203.
89 Benzi 1988b, 59; see, also, Georgiadis 2003, 111.
90 Benzi 1996, 951; see, also, Niemeier 2005a, 16.
93 French 1986, 278.
95 Voskos/Knapp 2008, 660-1
which are used to account for the adoption of Greek and Roman (material) cultures by indigenous populations in areas of ancient Greek and Roman colonization.  

In recent years, under the influence of postcolonial thought, the colonizer-centered perspective has come under increasing criticism in archaeology. Scholars such as M. Dietler, P. van Dommelen and A.B. Knapp argue that the social realities of colonial situations are too complex to be reduced to a single structuring colonial divide separating the colonizers from the colonized. This divide also tends to naturalize the dominant position of the colonizers. From a postcolonial perspective, colonial societies are seen as integrated wholes, made up by people from both indigenous and colonial descent, who together build new colonial communities (i.e. unlike the colonizers’ home situation) characterized by their own distinctive forms or styles of (material) culture, combining elements from different cultural traditions. This process is called cultural hybridization.

This postcolonial trend is also apparent in a number of recent studies concerning the nature of the Mycenaean presence in the south-eastern Aegean. The focus of these studies has been on local ‘responses’ to Mycenaean culture. In what follows, I will refer to these studies as the “social constructivist perspective” (see above). Scholars who have been working from this perspective include P.A. Mountjoy, M. Georgiadis and N. Mac Sweeney. Neither one of these authors believes that there were immigrants from the Greek mainland in the south-eastern Aegean (contra “colonialist perspective”). According to them, the heterogeneous distribution of traits of Mycenaean material culture along the west coast of Anatolia (see section 1.1 above) can best be understood as the result of (regional) differences in interactions and exchanges between local groups and Mycenaean culture. In that sense, this region is no different from other areas, such as Crete or the Cycladic islands, where various elements of Mycenaean culture were also adopted, but in a distinctive local fashion (see above). By ‘participating’ in Mycenaean culture, the different regions making up the Late Bronze Age Aegean expressed their socio-cultural connectivity, which is not the same as claiming that they were politically united.

98 Dietler 2005.
99 Van Dommelen 2005.
102 Mountjoy 1998.
103 Georgiadis 2003; Georgiadis 2009.
Ch. 1. Background to the research

A prominent supporter of the “social constructivist perspective” is P.A. Mountjoy (also, see fn. 16). According to her, the archaeological evidence should not be interpreted in terms of either the presence or the absence of Mycenaean settlers in the southern, and central and northern zones, respectively, but rather as indicative that the different local groups inhabiting the west coast of Anatolia had undergone various degrees of Mycenaean acculturation. She uses the concept of cultural hybridity (see above) to explain the appearance of new forms of material culture.  

For example, Mountjoy distinguishes a regional style of pottery combining Anatolian, Minoan and Mycenaean traits, which was developed in south Rhodes in the second half of the 14th century BC (ceramic phase LHIIIA2). (This so-called Rhodo-Mycenaean style is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.) Another case study discussed by her is the Mycenaean-style chamber tomb cemetery at Müskebi on the Anatolian south-west coast (situated opposite the island of Kos) (Chapters 4 and 5). While chamber tombs are typically used for inhumation burials on the Greek mainland (Chapter 3), there were three graves – of a total forty-eight – at Müskebi which also had cremation remains found inside of them. The practice of cremation is usually regarded as Anatolian in origin. Mountjoy also pays attention to a group of four bronze swords from the chamber tomb cemetery at Değirmentepe near Miletus (Chapters 4 and 5). Only one of the swords is of Aegean/Mycenaean origin. An Anatolian/Hittite origin has been suggested for the others. What these examples (regional pottery style on Rhodes, ‘mixing’ of burial practices and different sword types) demonstrate is that the material culture associated with the south-eastern Aegean is not wholly or typically Mycenaean, at least in terms of the Mycenaean Greek mainland. According to Mountjoy, this shows that the different groups that lived along the west coast of Anatolia used Mycenaean (material) culture to produce unique hybrid identities of their own. She suggests that Mycenaean culture may have been more easily adopted in the southern than in the central and northern zones, because it had already been exposed to a strong Minoan influence in the late Middle and Early Late Bronze Age (LBA IA and IB periods) (Chapter 4).

Similar to Mountjoy, Georgiadis believes that the Mycenaean finds from western Anatolia need not be interpreted in terms of the presence of migrants, but, rather, are the result

109 Mountjoy 1998, 37; according to H. Genz these what Mountjoy calls Hittite/Anatolian swords should rather be seen as Levantine in origin (Genz 2011, 304).  
111 Ibidem, 37.
of interactions and exchanges with the mainland of Greece. According to him, the south-eastern Aegean was, socio-politically, autonomous.

In his study, Georgiadis concentrated on similarities and differences in funerary practices (cemetery, tomb architecture, burial rituals and offerings) within the south-eastern Aegean. There were also comparisons made with the Greek mainland. According to him, in terms of the rituals performed and the offerings deposited, the cemeteries on the south-west coast Anatolia and adjacent islands are not unlike the ones recovered on the mainland of Greece. He, however, also identified a number of regional traits, such as that tombs in the same cemetery often have a common orientation. Since the origin of this custom is supposed to go back to earlier burial practices in western Anatolia and the south-eastern Aegean, this shows how new traditions were created by incorporating old ones (cf. hybridization concept mentioned above). Another idiosyncrasy is represented by a regional preference for secondary burials or treatment of the dead (scattering of bones after decomposition). Georgiadis believes that this can be seen as a process through which the dead were transformed into ancestors. By ‘intervening’ with the dead, their protection and help was directed towards or conferred upon the community of the living. According to Georgiadis, this may also explain why some tombs are oriented towards the settlement. Another regional trait is that terracotta figurines appear only rarely in tombs (for more comments on the distribution of terracotta figurines in the south-eastern Aegean, see section 1.3 below). By contrast, they occur much more frequently in funerary contexts on the Greek mainland. Georgiadis sees “Mycenaean” as a socio-cultural identity, which was expressed in various ways in different parts of the Aegean. A similar view has been developed by N. Mac Sweeney, who also doubts whether there were Mycenaean settlers in south-eastern Aegean in the Late Bronze Age. Her argument is based on a deconstruction of the idea that the Greek mainland should be seen as the center from which Mycenaean

113 Georgiadis 2003, 114.
115 Georgiadis 2003, 77.
117 Georgiadis 2003, 85.
118 Ibidem, 85.
120 It should be noted that there is also some variation on the Greek mainland. For example, terracotta figurines are more common in cemeteries in southern than in northern Attica, including some sites without any figurines at all (Cavanagh 1998, 109-110).
121 Georgiadis 2003, 111.
culture originated and was spread to other parts of the Aegean. According to Mac Sweeney, there are precedents for many elements typically associated with Mycenaean culture from the Aegean beyond the Greek mainland. One of the examples discussed by her is Mycenaean fresco painting combining earlier Cretan and Cycladic traditions. Minoan influences are also visible in Mycenaean pottery. Moreover, the use of sealings in the Mycenaean palatial administration is seen by Mac Sweeney as a possible Near Eastern influence. She concludes that “Mycenaean” should not be regarded as a clearly-defined cultural package originating from one area and being transferred to others, but as a composite culture, which is the result of the interconnection between, and the mutual influence of, the different élites in the Aegean proper. Rather than as indicative of the presence of ‘mainlanders’, the adoption of elements of Mycenaean culture in the south-eastern Aegean reflects local élites participating in, and expressing their identity in relation to, a pan-Aegean élite network.

In the next section, the approach used in this PhD study will be introduced. I will explain why a different approach is needed by highlighting a number of weaknesses in the two general perspectives discussed above relating to the arguments that have been used to prove or disprove the presence of Mycenaean in the south-eastern Aegean.

1.3 A different perspective: the contextual production of identities in the south-eastern Aegean

In the previous section, it was discussed that the debate on the interpretation of the regional differences in the distribution of Mycenaean material culture along the west coast of Anatolia tends to be dominated by two interpretive perspectives: the “colonialist” and the “social constructivist perspective”. The latter arose in response to the inherent tendency of the “colonialist perspective” to represent the south-eastern Aegean as a wholly Mycenaean area, with a population made up by people of Mycenaean Greek (i.e. colonizers) and local descent (i.e. colonized). According to scholars working a “colonialist perspective”, the predominance

\[124\] Ibidem, 108.
\[125\] Ibidem, 108.
\[126\] Ibidem, 108.
of Mycenaean culture indicates that the local inhabitants had been acculturated to Mycenaean culture. But if there is no way of archaeologically distinguishing between settlers from the Greek mainland (i.e. ‘real’ Mycenaeans) and people of local origin (i.e. ‘made’ Mycenaeans), then how can we be sure that there were ‘real’ Mycenaeans to begin with?

Mee and Niemeier (see section 1.1 above) have suggested a number of archaeological criteria, most of which have been derived from a similar debate on the identification of Minoan colonies outside Crete, as indicative of Mycenaean occupation abroad: the presence of Mycenaean-type (undecorated) domestic pottery, religious customs and cult patterns, mortuary practices and tomb types, house architecture and administrative practices. There is plentiful evidence for Mycenaean mortuary practices and tomb types in the south-eastern Aegean (see section 1.1 above). This manifests itself in the presence of a large number of cemeteries with Mycenaean-style chamber tombs. New tombs and cemeteries continue to be discovered in the region. The evidence for the other criteria is much more limited. Vestiges of domestic architecture of (possible) Mycenaean-type have, for example, so far only been uncovered at Miletus. The evidence for Mycenaean religious customs and cult patterns is also limited. There are only a few terracotta figurines dated to LHIIIA-B from tombs on Rhodes. Their interpretation as religious items is, however, not certain. The lack of figurines in funerary contexts is one of the local characteristics discussed by Georgiadis to demonstrate the local nature of the adoption and adaption of Mycenaean culture in the south-eastern Aegean. The evidence from the tombs is only partially counterbalanced by that from the settlements. Small numbers of Mycenaean terracotta figurines have been found at Trianda on Rhodes, the “Serraglio” on Kos, and

---

129 Mee 1988, 302; Niemeier 2005a, 5-6, 10-16; Niemeier 2005b, 202 (see, also, Benzi 2005, 206).
130 Hägg/Marinatos 1984, 221.
131 Mycenaean unpainted ceramics – kylikes and shallow angular bowls – and (tripod) cooking pots
132 Mycenaean female and animal terracotta figurines
133 Chamber tombs, primary and secondary inhumations and Mycenaean-style burial gifts
134 Mycenaean lentoid seals and seal impressions, and Linear B writing
135 E.g. Ialysos on Rhodes, Eleona/Langada on Kos, and Müskib and Değirmenchtepe/Kalabaktepe on the south-west coast of Anatolia
136 Note that in 2012 a new tomb at the previously known cemetery has been excavated. In addition, a new cemetery has been discovered at the nearby hill of Kalabaktepe (Herda 2013, 434, fn. 52). Moreover, in the summer of 2013, a new necropolis has been found in the Bodrum/Ortakent district nearby the previously known cemetery of Müskib (http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/mycenaean-artifacts-found-in-bodrum.aspx?pageID=238&nID=51909&NewsCatID=375).
137 The evidence is, however, very fragmentary. There are two possible Mycenaean houses (Niemeier 2005a, 12-3).
139 For a discussion of the function(s) of terracotta figurines, see Gallou 2005, 52-4.
140 Benzi 1988a, 53; Papazoglou-Manioudaki 1990, 181, Fig. 86b; Karantzali 2005, 148.
141 French 1971, 180.
Iasos\textsuperscript{142} and Miletus on the Anatolian south-west coast.\textsuperscript{143} It has to be admitted that at all of these sites the Bronze Age stratigraphy had been badly disturbed as a result of building activities in later periods. In any case, if the criteria suggested by Mee and Niemeier are considered useful for establishing the presence of Mycenaeans, the available evidence for Mycenaean occupation in the south-eastern Aegean is far from conclusive.\textsuperscript{144} As indicated on Map 2, the only habitation site with a full ‘package’ of Mycenaean cultural traits is Miletus. Nevertheless, Niemeier believes that the southern zone can be regarded as “a zone of Mycenaean settlement”.\textsuperscript{145}

Scholars working from a “social constructivist perspective” interpret the mixed character of the Mycenaean evidence as the result of the behavior of local peoples selectively adopting and adapting traits of Mycenaean (material) culture in order to construct hybrid identities of their own (for a summary of Mac Sweeney’s argument, which follows a different line of reasoning see end of section 1.2 above). The combination of Mycenaean elements and features of supposed local provenance (e.g. Rhodo-Mycenaean pottery style and uniformity in orientation of cemeteries) tends to be regarded as proof that the peoples developing these hybrid identities did not have Mycenaean but local backgrounds. It may be argued that in this way, this perspective – implicitly – reinforces the image that ‘Mycenaeaness’ can somehow be measured (cf. criteria discussed in the context of the “colonization perspective” above) and that the only ‘real’ Mycenaean is a Mycenaean Greek Mycenaean.

As noted in section 1.2 above, the emergence of the “social constructivist perspective” may be linked to the increasing influence of postcolonial theory in archaeology in recent years.\textsuperscript{146} The basis of postcolonial thought is that colonial situations are made up by people of different origins or descents. They are interlinked through their interactions, which can be conceptualized as a mutually constitutive cultural dialogue. In other words, this is not a unilateral or one-sided process in which the colonizers act as sole ‘givers’ and the colonized as passive ‘receivers’ (cf. processes of Mycenaeanization, Hellenization and Romanization discussed in section 1.2 above): “[b]oth parties eventually become something other than they were because of the processes of entanglement and their unintended consequences”.\textsuperscript{147}

\textsuperscript{142} Benzi 1999, 275; Benzi/Graziadio 2013, 3.
\textsuperscript{143} Niemeier 2005a, 11, fn. 262, 13, fn. 301-2.
\textsuperscript{144} Benzi 2002, 368.
\textsuperscript{145} Niemeier 2005a, 203.
\textsuperscript{146} Voskos/Knapp 2008, 660-1.
\textsuperscript{147} Dietler 2005, 54.
Chapter 2 in this respect).\textsuperscript{148} In this light consider the following statement by Mee on the apparent ‘invisibility’ at Miletus of any indigenous population segment: “The existence of a chamber tomb cemetery at Değirmentepe suggests that Mycenaeans settled at Miletus, a conclusion which is supported by the domestic architecture, especially of the third period. Anatolians are less in evidence”.\textsuperscript{149} The different groups that make up colonial situations together create new communities.\textsuperscript{150} Their interactions can lead to new meanings and forms of (material) culture, a process referred to as hybridization. What this implies is that there is no \emph{a priori} reason to deny the presence of settlers from the Greek mainland on the basis of the incorporation of old and new traditions to create new forms of material culture (cf. “social constructivist perspective”). In other words, the existence of a hybrid (archaeological) culture and the presence of Mycenaean immigrants need not be mutually exclusive.\textsuperscript{151}

It can thus be concluded that neither one of the two interpretive perspectives completely agrees with or offers a satisfying explanation for the archaeological evidence. One of the problems is that there is a tendency to think about the population of the south-eastern Aegean in the Late Bronze Age in terms of two opposing social blocs, with Mycenaeans on one side and local groups (Anatolians, Rhodians, etc.) on the other. As is clear from the discussion above, from an archaeological perspective, this clear-cut distinction cannot be made. It is not the intention of this study to revisit this laden issue. The aim is to transcend the impasse in the debate by adopting a different approach, the application of which will hopefully shed new light on the south-eastern Aegean during the Late Bronze Age.

One of the aims of this PhD study is to establish whether the Mycenaean material culture, which appears to have been predominant in the south-eastern Aegean, was used to express different group identities. In contrast to the “colonialist” and the “social constructivist perspective”, in which the identification of groups – Mycenaeans and locals – tends to be based on only a few material indicators occurring in the archaeological record, in this research a more holistic approach is adopted. This approach is referred to as “neo-culture history” (Chapter 2). The basis of this perspective is that identities should not be seen as natural ‘properties’, which are passively reflected in the archaeological record,\textsuperscript{152} but as social ‘constructs’, which are actively constituted and manipulated by actors via associations

\textsuperscript{148} Jones 1999, 106-10; Knapp/Van Dommelen 2010, 1.
\textsuperscript{149} Mee 1978, 149.
\textsuperscript{150} Van Dommelen 2005, 116-7.
\textsuperscript{151} Niemeier 2005a, 203.
\textsuperscript{152} Díaz-Andreu/Lucy 2005, 2.
between objects, persons, ideas, signs, etc.\textsuperscript{153} It follows that it is not possible to assign identities by considering objects in isolation or out of context. Since identities are constructed via associations, one type of object can have different meanings depending on the other material factors together with which it is found.\textsuperscript{154} In other words, “material culture is meaningfully constituted”.\textsuperscript{155} The contextual approach proposed here, therefore, makes it possible to see whether there are any differences, of a regional or chronological nature, in the identities expressed with Mycenaean material culture in the south-eastern Aegean. In this way, a better understanding of the different groups in society in the Late Bronze Age south-eastern Aegean than the one based on the “colonialist” and “social constructivist perspectives”, reducing it to an ‘artificial’ opposition between Mycenaeans and natives (see above), may be developed.

Identities are expressed in all different kinds of socio-cultural settings. For both practical and theoretical reasons, in this PhD study, the focus is on the construction of identity in tombs. As noted above, a large – and still growing – number of sites with Mycenaean-style chamber tombs have been uncovered in the south-eastern Aegean. As a matter of fact, it is the only type of context, of which sufficient material has been published. There is only relatively little available from the settlements.\textsuperscript{156} Moreover, as noted above, at most habitation sites the Bronze Age stratigraphy had been badly disturbed because of building activities in later periods.

Mycenaean-type chamber tombs may be seen as well suited for studying the construction and expression of group identities, because they are multiple tombs, which means that they were designed to be used for multiple inhumations, and could be used by one group for several generations (Chapter 3).\textsuperscript{157} Moreover, in general, burial practices are often highly group-specific, related to ancient myths and legends, beliefs about the afterlife, gender (men versus women) and age differences, etc.\textsuperscript{158} In this way, it can be assumed that there was a close connection between a particular group or community and tomb. The key unit of analysis in this dissertation is represented by the archaeological assemblages found inside the tombs, which are regarded as the materialized remains of the activities through which group identities were constructed and expressed. The methodology used in this PhD study is further explained in Chapter 2.

\textsuperscript{153} Jenkins 2008, 16-8.
\textsuperscript{154} Hodder/Hutson 2003, 5.
\textsuperscript{155} Ibidem, 1.
\textsuperscript{156} E.g. Trianda on Rhodes, the “Serraglio” on Kos, and Iasos and Miletus on the Anatolian south-west coast
\textsuperscript{157} Mee 2010, 286.
\textsuperscript{158} Van Wijngaarden 2012, 64.
The group identities in the south-eastern Aegean are not viewed in isolation, but are compared with the identities expressed in (chamber) tombs on the Greek mainland, which are discussed in Chapter 3. The south-eastern Aegean will be addressed in Chapters 4 and 5. In the sixth chapter, a comparison is made between the identities expressed in the different regions making up the south-eastern Aegean on the one hand, and the Greek mainland on the other. In this way, the connectivity of the south-eastern Aegean on a regional and supra-regional level (Greek mainland) can be assessed.

It should be pointed out that there is some overlap between the approach adopted here and the work of Georgiadis discussed in section 1.2 above, which is also based on a comparative analysis of funerary practices in the south-eastern Aegean. In addition, he also makes comparisons with the Greek mainland. However, the focus in his work was on (the organization of) cemeteries, tomb architecture, burial rituals, burial offerings and their connected beliefs. Although here attention is also paid to tomb architecture and burial rites, I will concentrate mainly on the objects found within the tombs. My approach differs from the one adopted by Georgiadis in that he treats the burial gifts (pottery, weapons, jewelry, etc.) as one single data set. Moreover, his approach is based on the assumption that the burial record can be seen as offering a representation, albeit idealized, of the socio-political realities of everyday life. He regards the burial context as an active socio-political arena. This is, for example, reflected in the emphasis placed by Georgiadis on the consumption or deposition of valuable or exclusive items (eclecticism) in tombs, interpreted as such based on their relative rarity or probable specialized content, as (possible) status markers. In the present study, however, objects are not singled out but considered as part of tomb assemblages (contextualized), which are seen as the materialized remains of the activities through which group identities were expressed. By looking at similarities and differences in the construction of group identities on site, regional and inter-regional level a better understanding of the social dynamics characterizing the communities in the Late Bronze Age south-eastern Aegean than one based mainly on differences in social status can be developed.

---

159 Georgiadis 2003, 2.
160 Ibidem, 66.
161 Ibidem, 50, 66-7
162 See, for example, Georgiadis’ discussion of unguent containers and ritual vessels (rhyta) on Rhodes (Georgiadis 2003, 96). Similarly, since bronze weapons are seen as status markers, the fact that they occur in most excavated tombs on Karpathos is perceived as an indication that only the wealthiest of the local community had this kind of tomb (i.e. chamber tomb) with socially-laden offerings, such as weapons. Alternatively, the popularity of bronzes is explained as showing that weapons had an important metaphysical symbolism on the island (ibidem, 98).