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SOMMARIO

<i>James M. Burgin</i> Graphical Origins of ‘Initial-A-Final’ in Hieroglyphic Luwian	7
<i>Mojca Cajnko</i> On Local Particles as Spatial Case Markers in Hittite	33
<i>Jarrett L. Farmer, Michael F. Lane</i> The Ins and Outs of the Great Megaron: Symbol, Performance, and Elite Identities around and between Mycenaean Palaces	41
<i>Silvia Ferrara, Judith Weingarten, Gerald Cadogan</i> Cretan Hieroglyphic at Myrtos-Pyrgos	81
<i>Francesco Iacono</i> Value, Power, and Encounter between the Eastern and Central Mediterranean during the Late Bronze Age	101
<i>Barbara Montecchi</i> <i>pu-ro, pa-ki-ja-na/ne</i> , and the Sanctuary of Poseidon at Pylos	119
<i>Massimo Maiocchi</i> Exploratory Analysis of Cuneiform Archives: A Network Approach to Ebla Texts	137

PU-RO, PA-KI-JA-NA/-NE, AND THE SANCTUARY OF POSEIDON AT PYLOS

Barbara Montecchi

Summary

The focus of this paper is the relationship between the two most important place names mentioned in the Linear B tablets from Pylos: *pu-ro* (alphabetical Greek Πύλος) and *pa-ki-ja-na/-ne* (possibly *Σφαγιῶνα/ες). The first is identified as the seat of the Mycenaean Palace, whose remains lie on the hill of Epáno Englianos, while the second is generally assumed to be an important cult centre close to the Palace, perhaps in the vicinity of Chora Volimidia. So far, however, the attempts made to identify *pa-ki-ja-na/-ne* on the ground have not provided any definitive result. This paper investigates the possibility of a sub-level territorial organisation and, as a consequence, that one of these two place names may be a form of district name, while the other may be the name of the main settlement within such a district. Following this scenario, the hypothesis will be discussed that the temple of Poseidon (*po-si-da-i-jo*), which is linked both to *pu-ro* and *pa-ki-ja-ne*, corresponded to the central Megaron of the Palace, the religious role of which is well known. Poseidon, indeed, seems to be the main god of this Mycenaean realm and religious offerings with a strong fiscal aspect were periodically delivered to him, but no proper sanctuary has been brought to light there.

1. BACKGROUND, AIMS, AND METHOD

In this paper I will focus on a complex topic I have previously only touched on, in order to examine it in more depth and review some provisional attempts I had made to investigate the relationship between the place names *pu-ro* and *pa-ki-ja-na/-ne*, attested in the Linear B tablets from the Pylos Palace, and to identify the sanctuary of Poseidon mentioned there several times (Montecchi 2013, 77-78).

The remains of the Mycenaean Palace, excavated by C. Blegen and also known as Palace of Nestor, lie on the hill of Epáno Englianos, in the modern district of Chora. This place is generally identified with the Linear B place name *pu-ro*, which corresponds to the alphabetical Greek Πύλος.¹ This name is etymologically linked to Greek πύλη “door” (Chantraine 1999, *s.v.* πύλη; García Ramón 2011, 240-241), but we cannot know if it derived, for example, from the material presence of a particular door (*e.g.* the main gate in the fortification wall) or from the location of the site at the entrance to a specific zone.

J. Chadwick (1988, 84) pointed out that *pu-ro* should cover the whole inhabited area surrounding the Palace, since there was no room in the Palace complex for the 28 groups of women and children recorded at *pu-ro*, numbering nearly a thousand in total. Moreover, he suggested that *ke-re-za* was a place at Pylos (*Docs*², 16, 142).

Closely related to *pu-ro* and frequently attested in a variety of records from the Palace archive, is the place name *pa-ki-ja-na* (sing.) / *pa-ki-ja-ne* (plur.), which may be interpreted as *Σφαγιῶνες (*e.g.* García Ramón 2011, 237 n. 83). This is generally thought to be both a ‘district’ – that is a wide territorial indication including more sites – and an important cult centre located somewhere in the territory close to the Palace (*e.g.* Bennet 1998). There are three main reasons for this: 1) it occupies the middle section of lists of nine fixed-order place names, which are commonly regarded as districts (*e.g.* Jn 829, Cn 608, Vn 20, etc.), presumably meaning that it was a district geographically located roughly at the centre of the Hither Province (*infra* § 2); 2) it occurs both in the Locative (*pa-ki-ja-si*) and Allative (*pa-ki-ja-na-de*) form, presumably meaning that it also refers to a specific site; 3) on tablet **Tn 316.2** the Locative *pa-ki-ja-si* is associated with *pu-ro*, which is written in larger signs, presumably meaning that it was a site close to *pu-ro*.

1 For the references to Pylos in Greek historical sources see Meyer (1959, 2137-2161; 1978, 227-228). On the identification of *pu-ro* as Pylos and its location on the hill of Epáno Englianos see recently Bennet (2011, 142 and 151).

Currently two possible reconstructions enjoy great consensus among scholars.

The first one argues for the existence of a four-tiered hierarchy in the place names attested in the Hither Province: at the top *pu-ro*, the political and economic centre of the State; on the second level the nine standard listed place names, considered both “districts” and main towns, including *pa-ki-ja-nal-ne*; on the third level 12 villages which, because of their specialized economic activities, may have been of special interest to the palace; on the fourth level a number of villages in which the palace does not seem to have had a strong direct interest (recently Cosmopoulos 2006b, 212).

According to this reconstruction, *pu-ro*/Pylos was the capital of the kingdom and, as a consequence, was not part of any district. Nevertheless, as we will see in § 2, the text on tablet **Tn 316** may also suggest that *pu-ro* fell within the district or area of *pa-ki-ja-nal-ne*, or, less likely, that *pa-ki-ja-ne* fell in the district or area of *pu-ro*.

Other scholars have discussed the possibility of sub-divisions of settlements, whereby different subdivisions of a single large site were referred to by different names, or naming was ‘nested’, one name referring to a district, another to the chief settlement in that district. This was suggested by M. Lang (1988) in order to explain the large number of probable or possible Pylian place names, which range from about 185 to 256, and the overwhelming evidence of specialization suggested by the many place names associated with only one ideogram. In other words, one-ideogram place names may refer to sections within towns or larger areas in which people working in particular fields congregated and were referred to by a special name, either a collective adjective or a topographical term. This possibility of place names within place names also allows single names to have different references. Although the effort made to use shared masculine names to prove the dependency of one- or two-ideogram places on places whose names we are sure about did not lead to a definitive conclusion, because complicated interconnections raise the question whether dependency could be the same thing as place-within-place or place name subordinated to place name, M. Lang showed that there might be a network of interdependency between several places of unequal importance and that the interdependence might be reflected in some kind of juxtaposition as far as location was concerned.

Following these observations, the second widely shared reconstruction differs from the first one because it looks at *pa-ki-ja-nal-ne* as both the name of the district in which *pu-ro* also stood, and the name of a settlement close to *pu-ro* (recently Hope Simpson 2014, 56). Therefore, the district would have acquired its name from this settlement (recently Lupack 2008, 44-45; 2016, 540). Nevertheless, the fact that a district (*i.e.* a wider geographical and/or higher administrative designation than a single town) bears the name of a secondary settlement, instead of a new name or the name of the main town in the district (Pylos in this case), is, in general, rather unusual.

If we assume that *pa-ki-ja-nal-ne* was the name of both the district in which also Pylos stood, and a town close to it, then we have two possibilities: 1) The districts already existed before Pylos achieved power; 2) The districts were created by the palatial authorities housed in Pylos.

According to hypothesis 1, Pylos happened to be in the *pa-ki-ja-na* district. The district maintained its original name even when Pylos achieved power and became the main site in the district, and *pa-ki-ja-na* (the town) became a secondary settlement. This makes sense to me, but, according to hypothesis 2, the Pylos palatial authorities grouped settlements into districts, and called the district in which Pylos itself came to be (that is their own district) with the name of a settlement other than Pylos itself. This seems unusual to me, or at least I cannot think of a similar case we can prove.

Moreover, the great importance of *pa-ki-ja-ne* for a number of different activities (agriculture, livestock, cult and offerings, metalworking, other craft and building activities) is astonishing if compared with the very limited range of activities related to all the other place names, including *pu-ro*. Taking into consideration this and the fact that the area surrounding Epano Englianos has been thoroughly investigated,² it is striking that no settlement there offers true evidence to actually identify it as *pa-ki-ja-ne*. Thus far, in fact, three identifications have been attempted: Iklaina (Marinatos 1961, 236), Chora Volimidia / Palai-Pylos (Guglielmino 1982), and Metaxada Kalopsana

² See the updated summary of the data from excavations and surveys concerning the Mycenaean settlements in Messenia and bibliography in Hope Simpson (2014, 15-43).

(J.J. Carothers in her unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of California 1992, mentioned in Cosmopoulos 2006b, 216, tab. 5; see also Davis *et al.* 1997, 426, n. 97). Of these, only the second has received some consensus (Cosmopoulos 2006b, 216, tab. 5), but, as we will see in § 3, what we have there is just a cemetery with not particularly rich chamber tombs, even though a thus far undiscovered settlement should be associated with them.

Turning our attention back to the texts, on PY **Tn 316** v.1 the *po-si-da-i-jo* (*Ποσιδάιον), *i.e.* the temple of Poseidon, is linked to *pu-ro* (see *infra* § 2), and the tablets of the **Es** series (from Room 7 of the archive complex) and **Un 718** (from Room 8 of the archive complex) record *do-so-mo* (δόσμοι) to Poseidon, these being (annual) religious offerings with a strong fiscal aspect (De Fidio 1977; Doyen 2011, 124-135 and 172-183).³ They came, in fact, from the products of land holdings which entailed obligations to provide contributions of barley (*120/GRA)⁴ and other commodities, such as wine and animals, to the god (Bendall 2007, 72-75). In these documents the place where the *dosmoi* have to be brought is never specified, but it should be the sanctuary of the god. If such a sanctuary were located in the same geographical area where the administration centre was, this could explain why no place name is mentioned in the records. In any case, the fiscal aspect of the *dosmoi* makes the sanctuary of Poseidon appear to be a kind of State deposit (De Fidio 1977, 179-180), but a common Mycenaean sanctuary could not work this way.

Summing up, we have enough material to decide to investigate more closely the question of a sub-level organisation, in which *pa-ki-ja-ne* may be a wider territorial indication than *pu-ro*, or, conversely, *pu-ro* may be a wider territorial indication than *pa-ki-ja-ne*. Both these working hypotheses, however, also imply a final question of not secondary importance: Is it possible that the temple of Poseidon (*po-si-da-i-jo*) was the Palace or, even better, its core, *i.e.* the Megaron, whose religious role is well known?

The ceremonial and religious function of the Megaron has already been thoroughly argued by many scholars (Hägg 1981, 36; Wright 1994; Hägg 1995; Albers 2001, 132-134; Hiller 2011),⁵ thus, in order to evaluate the possibility of identifying the *po-si-da-i-jo* in the Palace of Pylos, I intend to contribute by separately reviewing 1) epigraphic evidence for *pa-ki-ja-ne* and *pu-ro*, 2) archaeological evidence in favour of the claimed identification of *pa-ki-ja-ne* with relevant Mycenaean sites close to Epano Englianos, and, especially, in Chora Volimidia, 3) archaeological evidence for the cult of Poseidon in the Megaron of the Palace.

It is important to stress that our concern is limited to the LH IIIB2 – LH IIIC early period (the second half of the 13th century – beginning of the 12th century BC), to which the bulk of the Linear B evidence at our disposal dates (Palaima 1983; 1988, 171-189; Pluta 1996-1997, 242-250).

2. LINEAR B EVIDENCE FOR THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PU-RO AND PA-KI-JA-NE

Texts **Ng 319.1**, **332.1**, **Pa 398.a**, **Wa 114.2**, **948**, **On 300.8** mention two large subdivisions of the polity: the *de-we-ro-a₃-ko-ra-i-ja* “the region hither from the Aigaleon (mountain)”, referred to as the “Hither Province” in modern literature, and the *pe-ra₃-ko-ra-i-ja* “the region beyond the Aigaleon (mountain)”, usually referred to as the Further Province. Fixed-order lists situate nine major place names in the *de-we-ro-a₃-ko-ra-i-ja* and seven (**Jn 829**) or eight (**Ma** series) in the *pe-ra₃-ko-ra-i-ja* (Table 1).

3 Complete list of attestations of the term *do-so-mo*: **Es 644.1** .3 .4 .5 .6 .7: [d̥o-ʃo-mo] .8: do-so[-mo] .9 .10: do-so[-mo] .11 .12 .13 (S644-H 1); **645.1** .2 .3 .4 (S644-H 1); **646.1**: do-ʃo-mo (over erasure) .2 .3 .4 (S644-H 1); **647.1** .2 .3 .4 (S644-H 1); **648.1** .2 .3 .4 (S644-H 1); **649.1** .2: do-so-mo .3 .4 (S644-H 1); **651.1** .2 .3 .4 (S644-H 1); **652.1**: [do-so-mo] .2: [do-so-mo] .3: [do-so-mo] .4: [do-so-mo] (S644-H 1); **653.1** .2 .3 .4 (S644-H 1); **703.2** .3 .4 (S644-H 1); **726.1** .2 .3 .4: do-ʃo-mo (S644-H 1); **727.1** .2 .3 .4 (S644-H 1); **728.1** .2 .3 .4 (S644-H 1); **729.1** .2 .3 .4 (S644-H 1); **Un718.1** .2 (S312-H 24); **Nn831.1**: [do-so-mo] (poss. part of the actual text) (S106-H 1); **Wa730.1**: d̥o-ʃo-mo (: d̥a-ʃo-mo) .2: [d̥o-ʃo-mo] (S90?-H 2); **731.A**: do-ʃo-mo (H 24). Texts of the **Wa** class are inscribed on clay labels originally pressed into the wicker-work surface of baskets which we may suppose contained tablets referring to the same subject written on each label.

4 Evidence for the identification of ideogram *120 with barley in Palmer 2008.

5 In particular, we read in Hiller 2011, 195: “There is no doubt that it was the palace which functioned as the (or a) main cult centre”.

HITHER PROVINCE	FURTHER PROVINCE
pi-*82	ti-mi-to-a-ke-e
me-ta-pa	ra-u-ra-ti-ja
pe-to-no	sa-ma-ra
pa-ki-ja-na/-ne	a-si-ja-ti-ja
a-pu ₂	e-ra-te-re-we
a-ke-re-wa	a-te-re-wi-ja
ro-u-so / e-ra-to	za-ma-e-wi-ja
ka-ra-do-ro	e-sa-re-wi-ja
ri-jo	

Table 1. Place names occurring in fixed-order lists.

As shown in Table 1, *pu-ro* does not appear on the lists, while *pa-ki-ja-na/-ne* is part of the Hither Province. Since these place names should be subordinate territorial entities within the Pylian administration, and, more specifically, focal points for the collection of taxes, the absence of *pu-ro* in such lists is normally explained by the fact that it is the centre and would not, for this reason, figure in lists of subordinate places making contributions for the most part (e.g. Bennet 1998, 116; 2011, 152). Nevertheless we must point out that these place names also figure as recipients of supplies, as for example in **Vn 10**.

We can, in any case, argue that *pu-ro* was not a place denomination of the same subdivision level as the place names recorded in these fixed-order lists, which are considered wider territorial indications rather than a single settlement. This should not simply mean towns + their farms, but something more articulated, possibly including more than one settlement, as hinted at by the label “districts”, commonly used in the modern literature to refer to these place names (e.g. Bartoněk 2003, 465; Nakassis 2013). According to this widely shared reconstruction, each province encompassed several districts, and each district had at least one major settlement.

Returning to *pu-ro*, accepting as guaranteed the fact that it was the name of the major Messenian site at that time, that was the one on the hill of Epano Englianos, with its megaron, large storerooms, workshops and Linear B archive, two scenarios could explain its absence from the fixed-order lists: 1) it was higher than a district, because it was the centre of the kingdom, and enjoyed a special administrative *status*; 2) it was the name of the central settlement within one of the listed district names (and also the centre of the kingdom).

According to the first scenario, *pu-ro* was apart from the assumed districts system: *pu-ro* was not in the district of *pa-ki-ja-na/-ne*, nor in any other district. Nevertheless, as I will try to show below, evidence does exist for the hypothesis that *pu-ro* stood in the *pa-ki-ja-na/-ne* district.

First of all, it is worth remembering that the order in which the place names are listed seems to reflect a geographical structure within the polity. The most plausible reconstruction (e.g. Bennet 1998, 116-119) would see the Hither Province list running along the western coast of Messenia, from north of Kyparissia, around the Akritas Peninsula, then down the western shore of the Messenian Gulf, near the Nichoria area (Nichoria itself is thought to be in the Further Province). *Pa-ki-ja-na/-ne* occupies the fourth position in the list and, as a consequence, must lie roughly in the middle of the Hither Province. Moreover, the case of *e-ra-to* and *ro-u-so* is interesting: the two place names seem to be interchangeable, because they appear in identical positions in the list order on **Jn 829.10** (*ro-u-so*), as opposed to **Cn 608.9** and **Vn 20.9** (*e-ra-to*). John Chadwick (1972, 102) explained the alternation by suggesting that one was the district term, possibly *ro-u-so*, and the other, possibly *e-ra-to*, the one for the central settlement; but it is equally possible they were twin major settlements, either side of a major topographical feature (Bennet 1999, 147).

Finally, we must note that most of the names preserved for the Further Province are formed with the adjectival suffix *-io-* meaning “district of X”, or something similar. We find, for example, *ra-wa-ra-ta₂*, or *ra-u-ra-ti-ja*, i.e. “the land of **ra-wa-ra-to*” (**Ma 216.1**), and among other place names also located in the Further Province we find *pu-ro ra-wa/u-ra-ti-jo* (e.g. **Ad 664**, **Cn 45.1**), so called to avoid ambiguity with the *pu-ro* of the Hither Province thanks to the additional adjective (Bennet 1999, 143; 2011, 142). Thus, it is possible that *pu-ro ra-wa-ra-ti-jo* was a

smaller settlement close to and/or belonging to *ra-wa-ra-ta₂*, or even its centre. It has already been pointed out that this type of place name, formed with the adjectival suffix, is in striking contrast to those of the Hither Province, and may depend on the fact that they were created to describe the districts later, once the area east of Aigaleon was incorporated into the Pylos polity, perhaps only around 1300 BC (Ruipérez, Melena 1990, 115; Bennet 1998, 128).

In any case, it is reasonable to suggest that the Hither Province place names which appear in the same lists were also broader geographical indications, *i.e.* wider than a single site. J. Bennet has suggested that the Palace (*i.e.* *pu-ro*) stood in the territory of *pe-to-no*, which occupies the third place in the list, because *pe-to-no* alone forms a tax unit, as does *ra-u-ra-ti-ja*, where, as we have already said, the “other” *pu-ro* was located, and *pa-ki-ja-ne* was the adjacent territory (Bennet 1999, 144). Nevertheless, *pe-to-no* is never associated with *pu-ro* or the *wa-na-ka*, as *pa-ki-ja-ne* is (PY Tn 316 and Un 2.1). Moreover, since it occupies the third place in the list, *pe-to-no* could be located on the coast, south of the Kyparissia valley (DMic II, *s.v.*).

Let us now focus on the very peculiar features of *pa-ki-ja-na/-ne* and its relationship with *pu-ro*. First of all, it is meaningful that our place name is attested under two variants: *pa-ki-ja-na* and *pa-ki-ja-ne*. The first is a singular -ā stem */sphagiānāl*, while the second is a plural consonant stem */sphagiānes/*, both from the root of the verb σφάζω “slay”, “sacrifice” with an additional nasal suffix: */sphag-iān-/* (Deroy, Gérard 1965, 31-34, 168-172; García Ramón 2011, 237). In Greek this suffix is generally used to form ethnics, therefore, it would mean something like “the place of the slaughter officers, sacrificers”. The use of the plural form might also reflect a process of unification of various settlements in the same district.

It is also worth noting that neither *re-u-ko-to-ro* / Leuktron, the most important town of the Further Province, as shown by the fact that six groups of women and their children, about 200 women and children in total, are located there in the Ad series (Chadwick 1988, 85-86), occurs in the regular tribute lists of the sixteen districts. The reason why neither Pylos nor Leuktron appear in those lists may be the same: they are town names, while those in the fixed-order lists are district names.

The idea that *pa-ki-ja-na/-ne* was not the name of a single settlement also fits with the fact that many sanctuaries, plots, and activities were accommodated there. The Fr series records perfumed oil sent to sanctuaries and gods for ritual purposes. On Fr 1217 perfumed oil is sent to Sphagiānes (*pa-ki-ja-na-de*). On Fr 1236.1 perfumed oil is sent to the *pa-ki-ja-ni-jo a-ko-ro* (*Σφαγιάνιος ἄγρός, that is, the “plain” or “rural territory” of Sphagiāna/es) for the *u-po-jo po-ti-ni-ja*, *i.e.* “the Potnia of Upos” (Doyen 2011, 207-209). On Fr 1224 Poseidon receives oil scented with sage *pa-ki-ja-ni-jo-jo me-no* “in the month of Sphagiānes”, while on Fr 343[+]**1209** he receives oil at *pa-ki-ja[-si]* (Locative plural) (Petrakis 2010, 199-215). Therefore, it is quite safe to assume that there was a sanctuary of Poseidon at *pa-ki-ja-ne*, and that a festival dedicated to this god was celebrated there (Docs², 478; Doyen 2011, 205-207). In the list of banqueting supplies Fn 187, barley and figs are given to temples, personnel and place names, among which we find the *Posidaion* and its personnel (*po-si-da-i-je-u-si*), and *pa-ki-ja-na(-de)*, but we cannot argue that the *Posidaion* mentioned here was actually the one located at *pa-ki-ja-na* (Killen 2001, 435-436, 440). From Fr 1219, indeed, one may infer that Poseidon was also worshipped at a place called *wa-na-so-i*, either an actual toponym in the Locative plural, or a place indicated by its inhabitants (Docs², 478-479; Petrakis 2010, 203-205). Following this hypothesis, it has also been suggested that *wa-na-so-i* indicates the Palace, where the *wa-na-ka* (alphabetical Greek φάναξ “Lord”) is expected to live and act, thus *wa-na-so-i* would be the king’s place (Shelmerdine 2016, 277-278). This hypothesis is attractive because of the etymological link between the two terms and the actual association of this place name with the *Wanax* in the Fr series. Moreover, on Fr 1222 this toponym is associated with the term *to-no-e-ke-te-ri-jo*, the name of a festival involving either a throne (θρόνος) or flowers (θρόνα), even if the second part of this compound is far from clear (Petrakis 2002-2003).

In the Linear B texts, the *Wanax* is linked to extensive landholdings and to the religious and ritual sphere, more than to political roles *stricto sensu*. Thus, he was probably the richest and most powerful person in the Mycenaean society, and undoubtedly had a special, but unfortunately ill-defined, religious role (Carrier 1984, 99-100). Although we cannot say with certainty if he was, for example, a priest chief, or a sovereign in some way divine, to whom honours equal to those of the gods were due, it seems safe to suggest that his powers and authority were

intimately connected with his religious role (Palaima 1995, 129). On the other hand, in addition to the *Wanax*, *wa-na-so-i* is associated with the Potnia, Poseidon, and with two doubtful terms. The first is the previously mentioned *to-no-e-ke-te-ri-jo*, while the second is the even more obscure *e-re-de* (DMic I, s.v.). Moreover, the *Wanax* also occurs in association with other place names, including *pi-ka-na* (Na 334), *pu-ro* (Va 15), and *pa-ki-ja-ne*, where the ceremony for his ‘initiation’ is located (Un 2.1: *pa-ki-ja-si* in Dative plural with locative sense). Significantly, *pu-ro* is not attested in the **Fr** series and, as a consequence, is never associated with *wa-na-so-i*, which is attested only in six tablets in that series (Table 2). Therefore, assuming that *wa-na-so-i* is a place name, *pa-ki-ja-ne*, *pu-ro* and *wa-na-so-i* might be three nested place names. Nevertheless, *wa-na-so-i* might also have a dual meaning, such as “the two queens/goddesses” (Ruijgh 1999, 532-534), or might be the name of a festival, like “the King’s celebration days” (Doyen 2011, 212-215 and 221-223), as well as the name of religious functionaries (Lupack 2016, 538 and 540, with previous references).

We now move to tablet **Tn 316** (Fig. 1), which is the most meaningful offering tablet for our consideration because both Pylos and Sphagiānes are mentioned here.⁶ This tablet records contributions of gold vessels and people (whether as personnel or sacrificial victims is not certain) to various gods and goddesses at several shrines. The record covers both sides of the tablet and is divided into six sections (two on the *recto*, and four on the *verso*). In each section, the scribe wrote “Pylos” in majuscules, the first time in the middle of the section (*r. 3*), all the other times at the bottom. After the heading with the name of the month or the festival concerned, *po-ro-wi-to-jo* (Doyen 2011, 228-232), the first section on the *recto* begins with a formulaic and ambiguous sentence, in which Pylos could either be the subject (“Pylos performs a cult ceremony at Sphagiānes and brings gifts and leads *po-re-na*”), or a Locative (“At Pylos a cult ceremony is performed at Sphagiānes, and one brings gifts and leads *po-re-na*”). Moreover, the first section on the *verso* begins with an ambiguous and formulaic sentence, which may mean either “Pylos performs a cult ceremony in the shrine of Poseidon and leads (*a-ke-qe* = */agei-k^wel*) the town (*wa-tu* = */wastul* gr. ἄστυ) and brings gifts and leads *po-re-na*”, or “at Pylos a cult ceremony is performed in the shrine of Poseidon and the town makes a consecration/purification (*a-ke-qe* = */hagei-k^wel*) and brings gifts and leads *po-re-na*”, or “at Pylos a cult ceremony is performed in the shrine of Poseidon and the town goes ahead (*a-ke-qe* = */arkhei-k^wel*) and brings gifts and leads *po-re-na*” (Duhoux 2008, 332-333).

If we interpret each extra-large “*pu-ro*” as the subject of the action, we must conclude that: 1) all the sanctuaries, including those mentioned on the *verso*, are at *pa-ki-ja-ne*, which is the only place name appearing in the heading, and 2) that *pu-ro* is not in *pa-ki-ja-ne*, i.e. the latter is a clearly distinct cult place, or that *pu-ro* refers to the kingdom as a whole and *pa-ki-ja-ne* to a “canton” of Pylos (Doyen 2011, 232-233 and 237). This latter hypothesis, however, is not supported by the rest of the evidence at our disposal, since *pu-ro* is used as an ordinary place-name and serves as an adequate definition of the whereabouts of two masons in **PY An 35** (Docs², 142).

Instead, in the first case, one might even hypothesise that *pa-ki-ja-nal-ne* is both the district name and the name of the major site, that is the palatial site. If so, the Palace on the hill of Epáno Englianos would have been at *pa-ki-ja-nal-ne*, possibly in the specific site of *wa-na-so-i*. According to this scenario, *pu-ro* could be the specific name of the lower town, the *wa-tu* / ἄστυ mentioned on **Tn 316** v.1. In alphabetical Greek, in fact, ἄστυ can either generally refer to the “town”, as opposed to ἀγρός “country”, or to the “lower town” as opposed to the akropolis. In **Tn 316**, however, *pu-ro* does not seem to be the same as the *wa-tu*. Therefore, I agree with J. Chadwick (1988, 84): *pu-ro* should cover the whole inhabited area surrounding the Palace.

It may be worth remembering that we cannot take it for granted that the name of the LH IIIB Messenia capital was *pu-ro*/Pylos, since in historical times the memory of the original Mycenaean Palace place name could have been lost. Homeric mentions of the Palace of Nestor in Pylos (Πύλος ἡμαθόεις, “sandy Pylos”, in *Il* II, 591-602; VII, 132-156; XI, 670-762; *Hymn. Hom.* III, 392 ss.), in fact, seem to refer to a place located on the coast and some scholars have suggested it was on the western coast of the Peloponnese in Triphylia, rather than in Messenia

⁶ The bibliography on tablet **Tn 316** is immense, I will limit myself to mention only two recent analyses of the tablet made by Duhoux (2008, 321-335) and Godart (2009). The latter suggests a reading partially different from the one usually accepted and transcribed here.

PY Tn 316

(H 44)

Recto

- .1 po-ro-wi-to-jo ,
 .2 { i-je-to-qe , pa-ki-ja-si , do-ra-qe , pe-re , po-re-na-qe
 .3 pu-ro { a-ke , po-ti-ni-ja AUR *215^{VAS} 1 MUL 1
 .4 ma-na-sa , AUR *213^{VAS} 1 MUL 1 po-si-da-e-ja AUR *213^{VAS} 1 MUL 1
 .5 ti-ri-se-ro-e , AUR *216^{VAS} 1 do-po-ta AUR *215^{VAS} 1
 .6 *angustum*
 .7 *vacat*
 .8 *vacat*
 .9 *vacat*
 .10 pu-ro { *vacat*

Verso

- .1 { i-je-to-qe , po-si-da-i-jo , a-ke-qe , wa-tu
 .2 { do-ra-qe , pe-re , po-re-na-qe , a-ke
 .a { -qe -ja
 .3 pu-ro { AUR *215^{VAS} 1 MUL 2 qo-wi-ja , ṇa-ti , ko-ma-we-te-
 .4 { i-je-to-qe , pe-re-*82-jo , i-pe-me-de-ja-qe di-u-ja-jo-qe
 .5 { do-ra-qe , pe-re-po-re-na-qe , a , pe-re-*82 AUR *213^{VAS} 1 MUL 1
 .6 { i-pe-me-de-ja AUR *213^{VAS} 1 di-u-ja AUR *213^{VAS} 1 MUL 1
 .7 pu-ro { e-ma-a₂ , a-re-ja AUR *216^{VAS} 1 VIR 1
 .8 { i-je-to-qe , di-u-jo , do-ra-qe , pe-re , po-re-na-qe a-ke
 .9 { di-we AUR *213^{VAS} 1 VIR 1 e-ra AUR *213^{VAS} 1 MUL 1
 .10 { di-ri-mi-jo[] di-wo , i-je-we , AUR *213^{VAS} 1 [] *vacat*
 .11 pu-ro { *vacat*
 .12 *angustum*
 .13 *vacat*
 .14 *vacat*
 .15 *vacat*
 .16 pu-ro { *vacat*

Fig. 1. Transcription of tablet **PY Tn 316** (adapted from *PTTI*).

(Meyer 1959, 2137-2161; 1978, 227-228). The most famous Pylos in Classical times, however, was the one in Messenia, in the Navarino bay, which, according to Thucydides, was called Koryphasion by the Lacedaemonians (Thuc. 4.3.2.). Nevertheless, the identification of the archaeological site at Epano Englianos as *pu-ro*/Pylos is strengthened by Strabo, who reports a tradition that gave the original location of Messenian Pylos elsewhere “under Aigaleon” (Strabo 8.4.1-2; on this topic see also *Docs*², 140-141 and 415).

On the other hand, if we interpret each extra-large “*pu-ro*” in a locative sense (“at Pylos”), **Tn 316** *r.2* would imply that Sphagiānes was in Pylos, or, on the contrary, that Pylos was in Sphagiānes, while *v.1* would imply that there was a shrine of Poseidon (*po-si-da-i-jo*) at Pylos. We must also note that, although the shrine of Poseidon is mentioned in *v.1*, the offerings here are not given explicitly to this god, but rather to at least two goddesses, including *qo-wi-ja* *Ι^wοφία “the bovine one” (*v.3*).

Finally, tablets **Eb 338**, **339**, **1176** and **Eo 224** explicitly record land held by religious personnel at *pa-ki-ja-na* and **En 609.1** feminine (religious) personnel of *pa-ki-ja-na* (*pa-ki-ja-ni-ja da-ma-te*), but, as was successfully shown for the first time by M. Lejeune, all the land records of the **PY Eb/Ep**, **Ed** and **En/Eo** series refer to allotted cultivated fields in the *pa-ki-ja-na* territory (Lejeune 1974, 256-258; Del Frio 2005, 112; Lane 2012). Moreover, the possible presence of 256 carpenters (*te-ko-to-ne*) at *pa-ki-ja-ne* (**An 18.11-12**, but the reading of the number is not clear) would suggest the presence of a very important building or buildings there, rather than just sacred open-air spaces or small, common Mycenaean sanctuaries and houses. Thus, the difficulty in identifying on the ground

a cult centre of extraordinary importance, located close to Pylos, such as *pa-ki-ja-ne* is thought to be, becomes striking (*infra* § 3).

	pa-ki-ja-na/-ne	pa-ki-ja-ni-jo	pu-ro	wa-na-so-i
po-se-da-o		X		X
po-si-da-i-jo	X		X	
pu-ro	X		-	
wa-na-ka	X	X	X	X

Table 2. Co-attestations of the Linear B terms discussed in the paper.

To sum up, we have no evidence for the hypothesis that *pu-ro* and *pa-ki-ja-na/-ne* were toponymic indications on the same level. On the contrary, the arguments which have been put forward in favour of the proximity of these two place names (Guglielmino 1982, 146), and namely the association between the large letter *pu-ro* and the Locative *pa-ki-ja-si* on **Tn 316 r.2**, may suggest that they were two nested place names, *i.e.* the name of the district (*pa-ki-ja-na/-ne*) and that of its capital (*pu-ro*).

Bearing in mind the evidence collected above (§ 1 and 2), two possibilities therefore remain feasible:

1. *pa-ki-ja-na/-ne* is both the district name and the name of the major cult place in the kingdom, and may be the top of the hill of Epāno Englianos, while *pu-ro* was the lower town, or the settlement at Epāno Englianos as a whole, or something similar. According to this working hypothesis, the toponymy related to the area surrounding the hill of Epāno Englianos would have been even more detailed and complex than previously imagined. It should be noted that in classical times we are often confused by the extraordinary level of detail in place indications and, at the same time, by the use of specific parts of a town to refer by metonymy to the whole of the town (as is the case with Pitane, the name of the area corresponding to the akropolis of Sparta, for Sparta: Lupi 2006, 204-205), or, on the contrary, of a wider place indication to refer to a town only (as is the case with Lacedaemon for Sparta). In any case, evidence for district names originated with names of secondary settlements is scanty.

2. *pu-ro* is the name of the major settlement, and *pa-ki-ja-na/-ne* is only the district name, *i.e.* a wider geographical designation centred on *pu-ro*, the site on the hill of Epāno Englianos. Of course, the Allative form *pa-ki-ja-na-de* (**Fn 187.4**, **Fr 1217.3**, **Fr 1233**, **Vn 20.6**) means that there was a place called *pa-ki-ja-na* to which wheat (*121/HORD),⁷ figs, perfumed oil, and wine were sent. This is also the case with other fixed-order place names, most of which, as we have already seen, should be district names. **Vn 20** lists wine (*wo-no*) going to the Hither Province districts (including *pa-ki-ja-na*): all are listed in the Allative. Nevertheless, it remains difficult to define how extended (or limited) a geographical indication should be to allow the use of the Allative form. Also in the case of a town, the specific place where the products are meant to be delivered, in fact, remains unspecified. Implicit information is often plausible in the short linear B records, such as for *di-ka-ta-de* in the Knossos tablets, literally translated as “to (the) Dikte”, but probably meaning “to the sanctuary on the Dikte mountain” (*DMic I*, *s.v.*). In Linear B, the Allative suffix *-de* is added to building names (*e.g.* *wo(-i)-ko-de*), to unidentified place names (*e.g.* *sa-ma-ra-de*), as well as to clear city names (*e.g.* *te-qa-de*), and to mountain (*e.g.* *di-ka-ta-de*) and sanctuary names (*e.g.* *po-si-da-i-jo-de*). In alphabetical Greek the Allative suffix can be regarded as a fossil: θύραζε “to the door”, οἴκαδε “to home”, Ἀθῆναζε “to Athens”, Οὐλυμπόν δε “to Olympus” (Chantraine 1984, 118).

Moreover, it is worth remembering that in Linear B the use of grammatical cases is not always plain, as place names in Instrumental form show. In tablets **PY Eb 338.A**, **Jn 829.7**, and **Ma 221.1**, in fact, *pa-ki-ja-pi* /*sphagiāmphī*/ is used with the Ablative sense “from Sphagiānes” (Bartoněk 2003, 465-466; García Ramón 2011, 237). Therefore we cannot completely rule out the possibility that a semantic extension from the Allative to the

⁷ Evidence for the identification of ideogram *121 with wheat in Palmer 2008.

Recipient has already occurred in Mycenaean Greek.⁸ In this case, if we accept a polysemy Allative-Recipient for *pa-ki-ja-na-de*, we could explain it as “to/for the *pa-ki-ja-na* district”.

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE FOR THE IDENTIFICATION OF *PA-KI-JA-NA/-NE* IN SITES CLOSE TO EPANO ENGLIANOS

First of all, the name *Sphaghiānā* can be compared with Σφαγία, the more ancient name of the island of Σφακτηρία in the Navarino Bay (Ventrìs 1953, 98), but its rocky and arid environment does not offer cultivated fields such as those recorded on the tablets, and, furthermore, no relevant archaeological traces, in particular related to Late Bronze Age cult places, have been found there (*Docs*², 143; Guglielmino 1982, 157-158). Although *pa-ki-ja-na* is mentioned in close relationship with *pu-ro*, this does not necessarily imply that these two places were as close as is generally assumed. This is not enough to completely rule out the possibility that *pa-ki-ja-na* was a settlement on the Navarino Bay, which controlled a large territory, including that island. In such a case, ancient Pylos/Koryphasion could be a good candidate, because we could imagine that the inhabitants of Epáno Englianós moved there after the fall of the Mycenaean kingdom, bringing the name “Pylos” with them and superimposing it on a pre-existing coastal settlement and restricting the name *Sphaghia* to the island. On the other hand, we lack the evidence to prove it, since only the presence of the sanctuary of Poseidon might support the idea that *pa-ki-ja-na/-ne* was a coastal settlement.

Also interesting are the hypotheses based on the attempt to match the levels of site hierarchy recorded in the tablets with the levels of hierarchy of archaeological sites in the Hither Province (Bennet 1998, 123; Cosmopoulos 2006b, 207). At the top of this settlement hierarchy is Epáno Englianós, where the remains of the Palace lie; in second place we find a small number of large sites such as Gargaliani Ordines, Chora Volimidia, Koryphasion Beylerbey, Iklaina Traganes; then, in third place, a number of medium-sized sites, and finally, at the bottom, a large number of small sites (Cosmopoulos 2006b, 215).

Following this approach, we can argue that there are four sites close to Epáno Englianós which show relevant features in LH IIIB and which, as a consequence, could be possible candidates for identification with *pa-ki-ja-na*: Chora Volimidia, Myrsinochori Routsì, Iklaina Traganes, and Koryphasion Beylerbey (Fig. 2). The first has already been suggested as the most likely, thus we will start with this.

The modern village of Chora lies in a productive water-rich area north-west of Epáno Englianós (Guglielmino 1982, 148). A Mycenaean cemetery with 32 chamber tombs and one shaft grave was brought to light here by S. Marinatos between 1952 and 1965 (Marinatos 1965, 102-109). This cemetery should belong to a substantial Mycenaean community, but from the poor settlement remains it was not possible to determine its original size (Hope Simpson 2014, 30). The identification of this settlement with *pa-ki-ja-na* has been argued on the grounds of: 1) the proximity to Epáno Englianós, 2) the number and peculiar typology of the chamber tombs, and 3) some pottery linkable to ritual and cult activities, such as a *depos amphikypellon* (a tall slender goblet with two vertical handles), dating back to the end of the Middle / beginning of the Late Bronze Age (Marinatos 1964, 86-89, tab. 82 and 90), a miniature double axe and a miniature bronze jug from chamber tomb no. 5, and some clay figurines with probable votive purposes, besides a globular rhyton from tomb no. 6 with a specific cult function (Guglielmino 1982, 149-152). These objects, however, could have been used during funeral ceremonies and then deposited in the tombs as part of the grave goods, and even if we assumed that they belonged to priests, this would not prove that it was the *pa-ki-ja-na* cemetery, since there were also sanctuaries and priests in other places.

The grave type, on the other hand, is indeed unusual: rock-cut chamber tombs with circular chamber and corbelled roof (Guglielmino 1982, 156). This form is extremely rare in Mycenaean Greece, where chamber tombs usually have an irregular square plan and roof, while tholos tombs have a circular plan and corbelled roof. Nevertheless, it is also found in the cemetery of Thouria (Messenia), and Pellana (Laconia). The rarity of this tomb type, however, is probably due to a practical, rather than a religious reason: the disadvantageous ratio between the effort

8 For the Allative-Recipient polysemy in ancient alphabetical Greek see Georgakopoulos (2013).

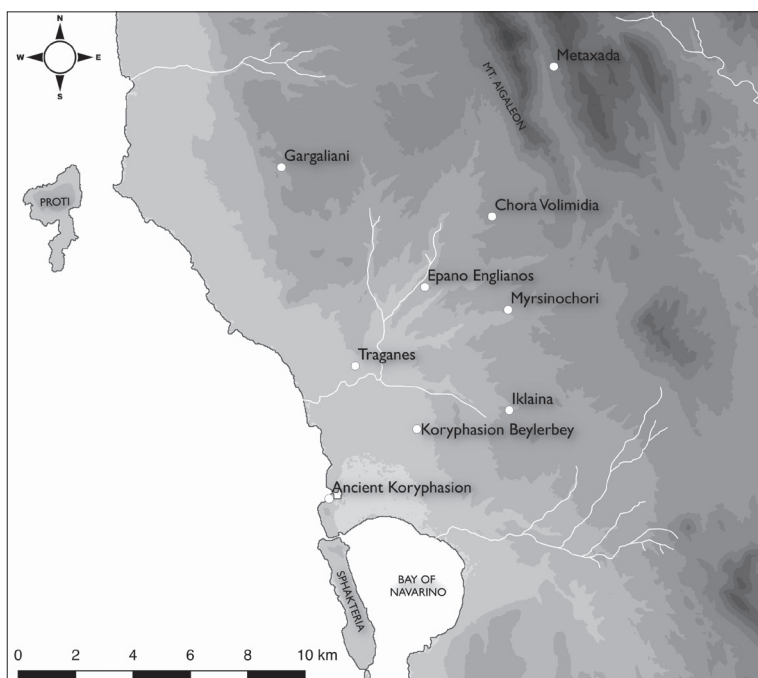


Fig. 2. Map of the Messenia region with the main archaeological sites mentioned in the text.

however, date to LH II-III A1, and we have no evidence for a special (religious) importance of this settlement during the LH III B2 period.

It has already been argued that the widespread distribution of tholos tombs in Late Helladic Messenia shows a fairly variegated situation, where many high-status groups controlled small distinct areas (Mee, Cavanagh 1984, 50-51; Darcque 1987, 185-205), at least until the LH III B when the site of Epáno Englianos affirmed its predominance.⁹ This is shown not only by the archaeological evidence, but also by the territorial organisation reflected in the fiscal records written on the clay tablets found in the Palace complex (Bennet 1995).

Moreover, changes to the Palace and its architecture during the 13th century BC likely reflect political or economic and thus ultimately social changes. Continued territorial expansion of the Pylian polity during the 13th century BC and/or a rise in importance of palatial feasts as occasions of the re-constitution of palatial society have been suggested as possible explanations (Thaler 2005, 332-337; 2006, 107-108).

In any case, the idea that the Palace of Epáno Englianos was not the only monitoring centre throughout the Late Bronze Age has been proved by the excavations at Iklaina Traganes (to the South of Epáno Englianos), where fresco paintings and one Linear B tablet, possibly dating to LH III A1, have been recovered (Cosmopoulos 2010; Shelmerdine 2012). Here, above the LH II-III A1 strata, part of an important LH III A2-III B complex and the remains of a circuit wall have been also revealed (Cosmopoulos 2006a; 2008; 2009; 2010). The relevance of the architectural remains from this settlement would seem to match the specific profile of *pa-ki-ja-na* better than Chora Volimidia, but it is generally claimed that *pa-ki-ja-na* must be closer to the Palace. Consequently, the identification of Iklaina as *a-pu₂-we*, a place name listed between *pa-ki-ja-na* and *a-ke-re-wa*, which might be a port, enjoys greater consensus (Bennet 1999, 147; Cosmopoulos 2006b; Hope Simpson 2014, 57). It is worth remembering, however, that a close relationship does not necessarily mean such a close geographical position.

Koryphasion Beylerbey, to the south-west of Epáno Englianos was one of the largest settlements of this area in LH III, as is shown by the large amount of pottery collected there, although we lack evidence for its architecture.

required to cut circular chambers into the rock and the results.

After the Mycenaean period, from the Late Geometric age, some graves continued to be visited by worshippers (Coulson 1988; Antonaccio 1995, 94-100). Nevertheless, this is not a prerogative of the cemetery of Chora Volimidia alone, a fact that would have allowed us to distinguish the exceptional religious importance of this Mycenaean site through its echoes in historical times. On the contrary, this is a very common practice in the Mycenaean cemeteries of Messenia (Antonaccio 1995, 70-102). Therefore, we have no evidence for the exceptional sacred nature of the settlement at Chora Volimidia.

At Myrsinochori Routsis a large LH I-II and III A-III B site was probably associated with the tholos tombs (Hope Simpson 2014, 21 and 30). The latter,

⁹ The number of new tholoi declines already in LH III A, but the old ones continue to be regularly used (Pelon 1976, 187-221, 392-403).

Both these facts – *i.e.* the wide spread of LH III surface sherds and the lack of preserved architecture – may be partially due to the very severe erosion at this site (Hope Simpson 2014, 30), but, beyond the limits imposed by the dispersion of the material, we can be confident enough in the assumption that, even though the site was relatively large, there was no monumental architecture, since otherwise large stone bases would have been at least partially preserved. Given the size of Beylerbey in LH III, J. Davis suggested identifying it with one of the place names recorded in the Hither Province lists, namely the presumably costal district of *a-ke-re-wa* (Davis *et al.* 1997, 426-427). Such a hypothesis has recently been rejected by Hope Simpson since Beylerbey is not on the coast, thus, in the absence of another suitable candidate among the fixed-order place names, he suggests that this large settlement was within *pa-ki-ja-na* (Hope Simpson 2014, 57-58). Both these hypotheses, however, rest on the assumption that *pa-ki-ja-na* was the Mycenaean name for the settlement of Chora Volimidia. Indeed, we have no further evidence other than the pottery collected there to make a better argument for identification.

For the sake of completeness, we must also mention the identification of *pa-ki-ja-na* with the settlement of Metaxada Kalopsana suggested by J.J. Carothers in her unpublished Ph.D. dissertation (University of California 1992, mentioned in Davis *et al.* 1997, 426, n. 97; Cosmopoulos 2006b, 216, tab. 5). We must, however, reject such a hypothesis, for two reasons: 1) although it must have been a large village in MH-LH II, the Pylos Regional Archaeological Project (PRAP) showed that it declined significantly in the LH III period (Davis *et al.* 1997, 423, 426 n. 97, 441); 2) this settlement lies on the eastern slope of Mount Aigaleon, thus it might already be in the Further Province, rather than still in the Hither Province (*supra* § 2).

From this brief survey, we can argue that, at the present stage of the field research, *pa-ki-ja-na* cannot definitely be identified with any of the excavated settlements near Epáno Englianos. Rather, the following two possibilities can be envisaged: either this place name covered the hill of Epáno Englianos, as well as the surrounding settlements, including Chora Volimidia, or, if it identified a specific site, this must be located a bit further from it, possibly in the modern village of Iklaina.

4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE FOR CULT IN THE MEGARON OF THE PYLOS PALACE WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE CULT OF POSEIDON

Mycenaean religious ceremonies involved ritual feasting and were probably linked to the need for political acceptance of the hierarchical structure (Kilian 1987; Wright 1994, 54-60; Hägg 1995). It is likely that the continuing vitality of palatial society institutions was nourished by traditions, religious beliefs and rituals, including communal feasting. The importance of religion for the Mycenaean Palaces is undoubted, and Pylos is not an exception, since the vast majority of the commodities recorded as outgoing on the administrative documents found there have religious purposes (Bendall 2007, 265-270).

Archaeological evidence shows that cult activities focused on the Megaron (Rooms 4-5-6). First of all, the circular central hearth in its main hall (6) is the largest in the building and seems suitable for burnt offerings (*PoNI*, 78: “it could well have been used even for roasting a whole ox for a banquet”). Secondly, the throne hypothetically placed before the hearth could well have been used by the most relevant person involved in religious ceremonies, as the iconographic evidence suggests, even though no trace has survived (*PoNI*, 87-88).¹⁰ Thirdly, the griffins in the wall decoration behind the throne may be interpreted as indicators of the divine world or manifestations of a divinity (*PoNI*, 78, 79, fig. 74; Shank 2007. For griffins in the Aegean art see Long 1974, 29-32; Immerwahr 1990, 136-137). Fourthly, the roughly circular basin-like hollows, with narrow channel, sunk into the stucco floor beside

10 Since the vast majority of the representations of seated figures in Bronze Age Aegean art are women, it has been argued that in the Mycenaean megaron ceremonies and rituals were performed in the presence of a seated woman (Rehak 1995, 101, 109-110, 117). On the contrary, J. Bennet (2007, 13) has suggested that the coherence of the program of wall paintings in the Throne Room depended on the *Wanax* being seated on the throne. Moreover, U. Thaler (2015, 350-354) has suggested that visitors followed a clockwise circular route around the central hearth with ritual purposes, with a particular significance for the interaction between them and enthroned ruler.

the throne, and the two miniature kylikes placed on a fairly large offering table show that votive and libation rituals took place in this room (*PoN* I, 88-89). Finally, the wall paintings with procession and banqueting scenes, along with the remains of burnt bovines and deer, recall in this part of the building feasting and animal sacrifices, which were likely to have taken place outside the Palace (for the frescos *PoN* II, 109, pl. 119 and 125; Immerwahr 1990, 117-118; for the animal bone remains Isaakidou *et al.* 2002, 86-92).

G. Säf Lund (1980, 245), on the basis of the distribution of the large number of kylikes found both inside and outside the Palace, showed that the ritual sphere even prevailed there. He suggested that the complex was not a Palace, but a sanctuary, where many people gathered to feast in honour of the divinities that had their seat there. Following on from this idea, L. Cosmetico (1999, 239) suggested that it was a gathering place, with communal storerooms and ceremonial halls, where rituals involving many people took place.

It is most probable, however, that the building complex located on the hill of Epáno Englianos, which in LH IIIB was organised around the Megaron (Rooms 4-5-6), surrounded by storerooms, workshops, archives, residential quarters (possibly located on the second storey), and banqueting halls, such as Pillar Room 65 in the South-Western Building (Graham 1967, 353-360), hosted functions of many kinds, both religious and secular (Shelmerdine 2007, 84-86). Nevertheless, its core, the Megaron, seems to have been used for religious ceremonies, that may be equal to saying it functioned as a temple, if we mean a well-defined architectural space, devoted to official cult. This hypothesis also fits the idea that the spatial differentiation of the Palace into distinct functional sectors, to which different social groups would have had differential access, reflects efforts to manage visitors, who would have come to and entered the palace or parts of the palace in large numbers in the later stages of the Palace's existence (Hacigüzeller, Thaler 2014, 237-247).

Although the Palace Megaron was used for religious ceremonies and representations, there is still no evidence for the cult of a particular god. The possibility that it was the temple of Poseidon is suggested because this is the most important god mentioned in the Linear B texts found in the Palace (*supra* § 1), thus it seems appropriate to attribute to him the ceremonial core of the Palace, but archaeological evidence in favour of this is admittedly scanty, albeit not wholly absent.

In this regard, let us first consider the topographic position. The Palace is located on a hill far from the sea, but this does not constitute a real problem since in Classical Greece most of the sanctuaries dedicated to Poseidon were not necessarily located by the sea, but on promontories, places commanding a direct view of the sea (Schilardi 1998, 273).

Secondly, we must consider which attributes of Classical Poseidon might already be detected in the Mycenaean period,¹¹ and, specifically, in the Pylos Palace. According to tradition, he was the ruler of the sea and the earth-shaker and was worshipped at many sanctuaries, with festivals dedicated to him, large communal celebrations which were normally held once a year (Kokkinou 2014, 59). The most popular Classical representations show the god holding a trident and riding a horse or a bull, or driving over a 'rejoicing sea' drawn by hippocamps. The earliest certain representations of Poseidon are on Corinthian clay tablets dated from the late seventh century to the early sixth century BC. They depict the god not only riding, but also walking with his trident and a dolphin, or seated together with his spouse Amphitrite (Simon 2014, 44-45). Obviously nothing comparable to this is recognisable in the Mycenaean Palace iconography, but only some connections to bulls, horses and the sea, which are the three major attributes of the god in Historical times (Kokkinou 2014, 60-61).

A procession with a large bull, probably being led to sacrifice, dominates the fresco program from the inner propylon to Room 5, the anteroom of the central Megaron (*PoN* II, 192-193). The importance of bull sacrifice is confirmed by the analysis of several bone groups found at the Palace, representing a single feasting event (Isaakidou *et al.* 2002). At least two elements are consistent with the idea that Poseidon was already associated with bulls in the Mycenaean period: 1) King Nestor offers bull's thigh pieces to Poseidon as a thank-offering for his safe return home

11 This is also the topic of Shelmerdine 2016.

from Troy (*Od* III, 176-179), 2) the *verso* of tablet **Tn 316** attests the presence of *qo-wi-ja* *Γ^wοῖᾱ “the bovine one” (*v.3*) in the shrine of Poseidon (*po-si-da-i-jo*).

Of the seven fresco fragments with parts of horses found in the Pylos Palace, none comes from the Megaron itself, and only four were on the walls at the time of the destruction. The other three (a battle scene and two landscape scenes) were found outside, therefore we do not know what their original location was and it is probable that they are earlier than those found in the Palace (*PoN* II, 75-76, 97, 107, 109). It is interesting, however, that the upper storey, above the Megaron, was decorated with horses on rocks and, probably, a male figure: fragments 7 C 20 and 8 C 21 found in Rooms 20-21 (*PoN* II, 97, 106, pls. 47, 48, 132 and E). Finally, and most significantly, the wall of the inner propylon (2), through which one reached the main entrance of the Megaron, was decorated not only with the above-mentioned procession scene, but also with a nautilus frieze featuring horses (*PoN* II, 147-149, pls. 79, 80, 81, J, R).

As for the sea, although marine motifs are characteristic of Aegean art in general, it is worth noting that marine creatures are the only figurative decoration on the floor of several rooms in the main building: Portico 4, Megaron 6, Corridor 49, and Room 50 (*PoN* II, *passim*; Shelmerdine 2016, 282-283), of which the most prominent is the octopus in the Megaron, placed before the throne (*PoN* I, 84, fig. 73). Moreover, an argonaut is significantly placed in the procession scene. If the argonaut motif was previously considered as purely decorative, it has now been linked to seafaring and naval strength, and perhaps to political power and religion (Egan, Breacoulaki 2015). Finally, a large Naval Scene, recently ‘re-discovered’ in Hall 64, might record an event or ceremony of religious character, conducted on the sea for the sake of the larger community (Breacoulaki *et al.* 2015, esp. 288).

5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

In concluding this study, it appears that the LH IIIB2 realm of Pylos had a complex territorial organisation with nested topographic designations, which, in a minimalist view, are: two provinces (*de-we-ro-a₃-ko-ra-i-ja* and *pe-ra₃-ko-ra-i-ja*), in turn divided up into various districts, including *pa-ki-ja-nal-ne* in the Hither Province, where some major towns lay, including the capital *pu-ro*, perhaps as the most important town within *pa-ki-ja-nal-ne*, and many villages, possibly of two different levels, as previously suggested by Bennet (1998). Because of the Allative form *pa-ki-ja-na-de*, which may mean both to the town or to the district of *pa-ki-ja-na*, we cannot completely rule out the possibility that *pa-ki-ja-nal-ne* was both the district name and the name of a settlement or cult place.

This is, for example, the idea of R. Hope Simpson, who suggests that: 1) *pa-ki-ja-ne* was a district name, 2) the centre of *pa-ki-ja-ne* was at Chora Volimidia, 3) *pu-ro* and the Palace dependencies were within the district of *pa-ki-ja-ne* (Hope Simpson 2014, 56). As I have explained in this paper, I am not convinced of the reliability of such a reconstruction. First, both archaeological and textual evidence for Chora Volimidia as *pa-ki-ja-nal-ne* is inconsistent (*supra* § 3), and second, if the major settlement within the district was *pu-ro*, and *pa-ki-ja-na* a secondary settlement, the fact that the district bears the name of the secondary settlement needs to be explained. A district, that is a wide territorial indication including more settlements, usually bears either a different name from those of the settlements included in the district, or the same name as the major town in the district. How a district could bear the name of a secondary settlement I cannot imagine, unless it was the result of a switching in power between two sites.

If the 9 and 7 or 8 place names which occur in fixed-order lists were originally (in Early Mycenaean times) autonomous / independent, and controlled a certain area, the Pylos Palace would have simply taken control over them and unified the territory in larger groupings (the two Provinces) for fiscal and organizing purposes. In this case, and on the grounds of the evidence summarized in section 3, a switching in power from Iklaina to Pylos could be also imagined. The scenario would be the following: *pa-ki-ja-nal-ne* would have been located at Iklaina, and would have been the former (LH IIIA) power centre of the district in which *pu-ro* also lay. The district of *pa-ki-ja-nal-ne* would have preserved this name even when the ‘capital’ moved to *pu-ro*/Pylos (LH IIIB).

On the other hand, the idea that the district organization was created by palatial administrators is also valuable. This is consistent with the disappearance, or at least the transfer, of all major place names mentioned in the tablets after the fall of the Pylian kingdom (on this topic see *Docs*², 416 and García Ramón 2011, 243). As we have already said, Pylos also changes its original location, and the only Linear B place names which can be easily compared with place names of historical Messenia are the two which derive from fixed natural elements: 'Πίον "promontory", and Αἰγαλέον ("the goat stone"), the name of the major Messenian mountain (*DMic* I, s.v. *de-we-ro-a₃-ko-ra-i-ja*; II, s.v. *ri-jo*). If we take into consideration the fact that place names are usually very conservative, the loss of what we conventionally call provinces and districts, once the system collapsed, would be less surprising if they were created for administrative purposes by the ruling elites based in *pu-ro*/Epano Englianos.

In *Docs*², 143 we read: "It is possible that the name (*pa-ki-ja-nal-ne*) refers to the whole area of the mainland bordering the bay of Navarino, but this is only a guess". We could further discuss whether *pa-ki-ja-ne* extended to the South until the Navarino bay, or, as suggested by Hope Simpson (2014, 20, 58), corresponded to the area of Epano Englianos and environs (including Epano Englianos, Chora Volimidia, Chora Hagios Ioannis, Abelofytos Lagou, Myrsinochori Vaies, Pisaski Kokevi, Koryphasion Portes, Koryphasion Beylerbey, Koryphasion Charatsari, Tragana Viglitsa, Tragana Voroulia, and Romanou), but I feel it is safe to say that more evidence has been gathered for the hypothesis that *pa-ki-ja-nal-ne* was not the name of a single settlement, but a wide geographical indication, the most important district in the kingdom, while *pu-ro* was the name of the major settlement within this district, that is the settlement with the Palace on the hill of Epano Englianos.

We cannot rule out the possibility that different parts of Epano Englianos itself were called with different names, as for example one name for the lower town and another one for the top of the hill, and perhaps a third for the specific area where the Palace lies. In such a case we could imagine that *pa-ki-ja-nal-ne* refers both to a specific part of the major settlement at Epano Englianos and to the district name.

In any case, if we accept the hypothesis of two nested place names, the sanctuary of Poseidon (*po-si-da-i-jo*), which is linked to both the *pu-ro* and *pa-ki-ja-nal-ne* place names, might be identified with the Palace's central megaron, the religious and ceremonial functions of which have been demonstrated by the bulk of the evidence. Since the rite of initiation of the *Wanax* took place at *pa-ki-ja-ne* (**PY Un 2.1**), it has been suggested that religious personnel of *pa-ki-ja-ne* may have played a role in legitimizing the authority of the *Wanax* (Lupack 2008, 47), my suggestion is that people belonging to the ruling community, which had its centre in the Palace on the hill of Epano Englianos, identified themselves as "the slaughter officers", since their power would have been firmly tied to their prominent role in religious activities, and called the central district, where *pu-ro* and the Palace stood, "the place of the slaughter officers".

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Abbreviations

DMic Aura Jorro F., Adrados F.R., *Diccionario Griego-Español. Diccionario Micénico*, Madrid, 1985-1993, vol. I-II.

*Docs*² Chadwick J., Ventris M., *Documents in Mycenaean Greek*, Cambridge, 1973 (2nd edition).

PoNI Blegen W.C., Rawson M., *The Palace of Nestor at Pylos in Western Messenia I: The Buildings and their Contents*, Princeton, 1966.

PoNII Lang M.L., *The Palace of Nestor at Pylos in Western Messenia II: The Frescoes*, Princeton, 1969.

PTTI Bennett E.L., Olivier J.-P., *The Pylos Tablets Transcribed. Part I. Text and Notes*, Roma, 1973.

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