The project focuses on Mycenaean lower towns, a key problem in modern Aegean archaeology. Mycenaean civilization developed in central and southern Greece during Late Bronze Age (II millenium BC), gradually dominating the Aegean. At the height of its development, it formed an institution of a palace - monumental ruler's residence with numerous economic and social functions. Settlements developed around the palaces due to gradual centralization of administrative and economic functions. They are usually called the lower towns. Thus, in Mycenaean civilization we can observe urbanization understood as a relational process. This approach focuses on observing functional differences between settlements in the same network and appearance of structural, internal division inside of settlements. In this sense, we can only see urbanization in Mycenaean civilization within the dualistic layout of two entangled entities (palace+lower town), which in the project is named palatial town. Character and dimension of urbanization in Mycenaean settlement system, as well as function and significance of lower towns, are still debated, and the current state of research on these issues requires supplementation. The presented project is going to collect all archaeological and historical data on Mycenaean lower towns that are available in literature. Subsequently the analysis and reinterpretation in a new, contextual and holistic approach is planned.

Relational and interactive computer data base will be created for the purpose of the project, in order to achieve planned results. It will collect all the data obtained during numerous library queries. The analysis of multiple categories of data (regarding mostly plans of settlements, types of buildings and distribution of artefacts inside of them) will lead to creating models of the discussed sites at a micro scale, and then placing them in broader regional and supra-regional comparative contexts (Crete, cities of the eastern Mediterranean). In the same time each level of interpretation will be characterized with different, appropriately selected theoretical background. The synthesis of the project's results will require integration of all levels if interpretation, which will lead to a holistic and groundbreaking character of the research.

Within the project, the first ever monograph on Mycenaean lower towns will be prepared. It will not only gather all the available data but will also be the voice in a recent discussion on nature of Mycenaean culture . It will present complex interpretations of collected data, building a new narration regarding Late Bronze Age settlement patterns on the Greek Mainland. Scientific literature on lower towns and urbanization in the Mycenaean culture needs to be supplemented by a conceptual work. The presented project as the first one will make an attempt to perform such a verification and create a lower towns interpretation corresponding to modern knowledge about settlements and palatial centers of the Bronze Age. The work would also be the first to discuss extensively all published Mycenaean houses from discussed sites. Therefore, it would become a key work for archaeology of Mycenaean settlement, at least for the amount of collected archaeological data. Such a monograph would fit in current trend in Aegean archaeology to focus research on non-palatial and non-elite contexts of Mycenaean culture and reach the lower classes of its society. Despite the crucial role of the relation between the lower town and the palace (lower classes of society – elite), the project is strongly focused on the former one. The use of extensive and universal theoretical background will lead to giving the work dimension going beyond specialist field of Aegean archaeology and touching issues of creation of the first cities, formation of the social hierarchy and developed settlement network or finally – the first states. It would also be an important point in a discussion on the position of Mycenaean culture in the Bronze Age world and its importance for creation the modern euro-Atlantic culture.