

‘Turn and Face the Strain’: Continuity and Change on Kos during the Mycenaean Late Palatial and Early Post-palatial Periods

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Abstract: This paper analyses the socio-political trajectories of Kos in the wider eastern Mediterranean context during the second part of the Palatial period and the early stages of the Post-palatial period of Mycenaean civilisation. To do so, elements of continuity and change from Late Helladic (LH) III B throughout LH III C Early are examined with reference to settlement distribution and architecture, burial landscape and tomb typology, and the quantity and quality of significant finds. The evidence indicates that LH III B was a phase of wealth and expansion on Kos, suggesting that during the 13th century BCE, the island may have played a prominent political role in the southeast Aegean. In addition, the analysis of the burial landscape implies a well-organised use of the space, possibly reflecting a solid and clearly defined social structure. The LH III B – LH III C Early transition on Kos was typified by signs of social uncertainty and upheaval, including an emphasis on the display of weapons at Langada and a fire destruction event at the settlement of the ‘Serraglio’. During LH III C Early, the number of sites attested on Kos decreased from LH III B, suggesting that the local population may have concentrated at the ‘Serraglio’. There is also evidence for a more fluid social structure, as suggested by the less organised spatial arrangement of the tombs at Langada. At least two elements, however, indicate the continuation of a certain degree of wealth and vivacity in the Koan community: an increase in the quantity and quality of the jewellery and an expansion in the diversity of imported ceramics, adornments, and bronze implements. Among these imports, a special case is represented by the concentration on Kos of Italian/European-type bronze objects, with a peak between late LH III B and LH III C Middle. The prompt reaction of the Koan community to the crisis following the collapse of Mycenaean Palatial society at the LH III B - LH III C Early transition may have been one of the key factors that led Kos to play a major role in the flourishing of the so-called East Aegean Koine during the successive LH III C Middle phase.

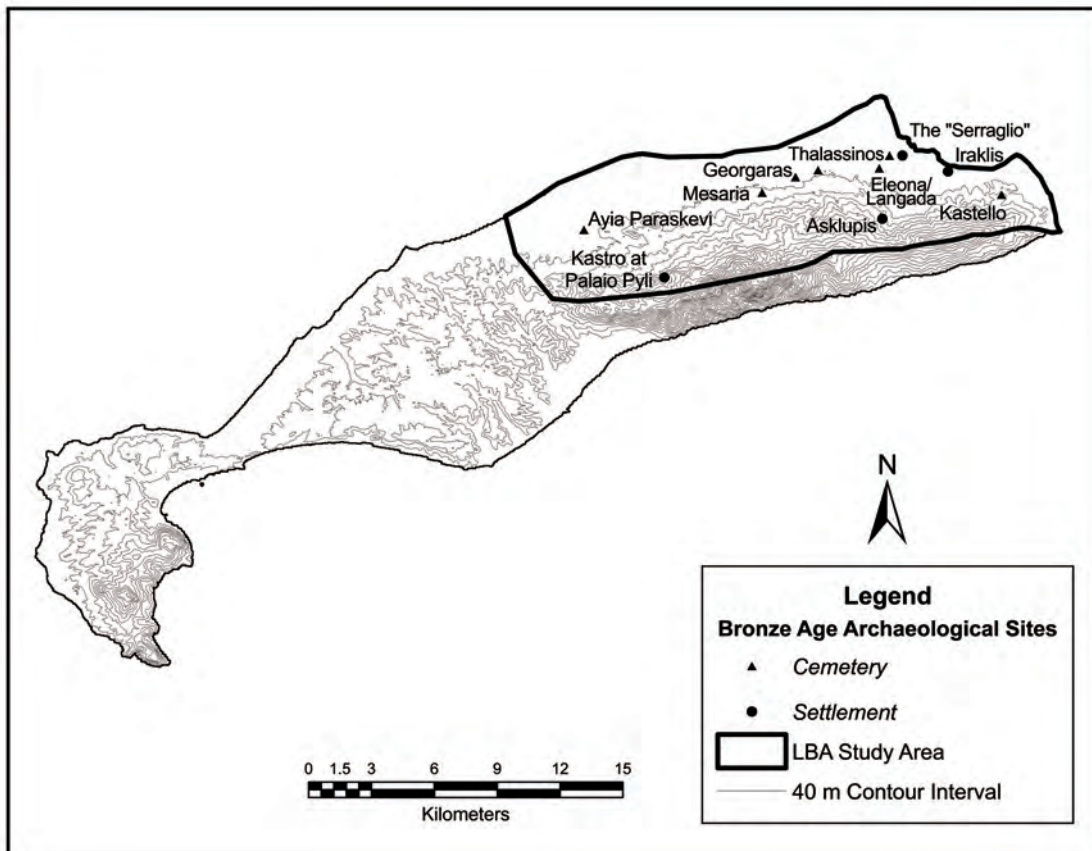
Keywords: Mycenaean Kos; Ahhiyawa; Sea Peoples; Mycenaean Palatial and Post-palatial society; Italo-Mycenaean relationships; funerary practices; burial landscape; spatial analysis

The aim of this paper is to investigate the socio-political history of the island of Kos (Fig. 1) during the second part of the Palatial period and the early stages of the Post-palatial period of Mycenaean civilisation, circa 1300 to 1150 BCE. This research is focused on the northeast part of the island, which provides the richest data set for this period. Attention is devoted to the analysis of three features that characterise Koan developments in material and cultural choices during Late Helladic (LH) III B and LH III C Early. These features include settlement distribution and architecture, burial landscape and tomb typology, as well as the quantity and quality of ceramics, jewellery, weapons, and miscellaneous tools made of bronze and stone. The presentation of the subject is divided into five sections. The first is an introduction on the character of the available data set. This part is followed by a phase-by-phase review of the evidence, an examination of the Italian/European-type bronze objects discovered on Kos, and a discussion of the socio-political meaning of elements of continuity and change during the periods of interest. The fifth and last section includes some final statements on the role of Kos in the wider eastern Mediterranean context from the beginning of the 13th to the middle of the 12th century BCE.

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Fig. 1 Maps of northeast Kos including the main sites and areas under SEALP’s study (1: base map from Google Earth adapted by C. McNamee, S. Vitale, T. Marketou; 2: C. McNamee, S. Vitale)

Data Set

The analysis proposed within this paper derives from the results of the ‘Serraglio, Eleona, and Langada Archaeological Project’ (SELAP), a research endeavour directed by the author and C. McNamee under the auspices of the Italian Archaeological School at Athens. SELAP is primarily based on the evidence recovered on Kos between 1935 and 1946 by L. Morricone.² Additional information on prehistoric northeast Kos is provided by the extensive survey carried out in the 1960s by R. Hope Simpson and J. F. Lazenby and the more recent rescue excavations by the Greek Archaeological service, especially T. Marketou, at the ‘Serraglio’ and at various sites in the vicinity of the modern town of Kos.³

While the investigations by the Greek Archaeological Service were carried out with up-to-date methodologies and provide us with exhaustive records, the resolution of the data from Morricone’s excavations and Hope Simpson and Lazenby’s survey is of uneven quality when compared to modern standards.⁴ Morricone’s materials constitute a large collection of finds, but the sample exhibits a significant bias due to the arbitrary discard strategies that were typical of Morricone’s period. An additional problematic aspect is represented by the partial destruction of the original documentation, which occurred during World War II. Lost or missing data include most of the diaries from the excavations at the ‘Serraglio’, those from Eleona Tombs 1–20, as well as detailed drawings of plans, archaeological sections, and architectural features. Within the rather wide region explored by Hope Simpson and Lazenby, three aspects of the available evidence are particularly problematic: the non-systematic coverage of the area explored, the dearth of accurate information on the spatial distribution and the density of the archaeological artefacts, and the absence of refined geomorphological and environmental data.

Despite these limitations, during the last 11 years, SELAP’s research has produced a significant amount of new information on Koan Bronze Age chronology, landscape, settlement patterns, architecture, burial practices, subsistence strategies, and technology.⁵ SELAP’s results show that substantial progress in our understanding of the past can be achieved by using a multidisciplinary and holistic analytical approach, even when the original data set mostly comes from old excavations.

Review of the Evidence

Kos during the Late Mycenaean Palatial Period: LH IIIB

Four settlements were occupied on northeast Kos during LH IIIB: the ‘Serraglio’, the Askklupis, Iraklis, and the Kastro at Palaio Pyli (Figs. 1–3).⁶ In the ‘Serraglio’ sequence, LH IIIB encompasses the final part of Phase III:4a and all of Phase III:4b (Morricone’s City III; Tab. 1;

² Morricone 1950; Morricone 1967; Morricone 1975; Morricone 1978.

³ Hope Simpson – Lazenby 1970, 55–66, figs. 5–7, pls. 19–20; Papachristodoulou 1979; Papazoglou 1981; Marketou 1990a; Marketou 1990b; Marketou 2004; Marketou 2010, 762–763; Marketou in press (all with previous bibliography).

⁴ For specific observations on Morricone’s excavation practices, see Vitale 2016a, 76.

⁵ Vitale 2012a; Vitale 2012b; Vitale 2013; Vitale 2016a; Vitale 2016b; Vitale 2017; Vitale 2018; Vitale 2019; Vitale – Hancock Vitale 2010; Vitale – Hancock Vitale 2013; Vitale – Trearichi 2015; McNamee – Vitale 2016; McNamee – Vitale 2020; Vitale et al. 2017a; Vitale et al. 2017b; Vitale – Morrison 2017; Vitale – Morrison 2018; Vitale – McNamee 2019. See also Vitale 2006; Vitale 2007.

⁶ Hope Simpson – Lazenby 1970, 55–60, fig. 5; Morricone 1975, 392–393; Skerlou 1998, 553; Vitale 2006, 83–87; Marketou 2010, 763, 765; Vitale 2012a, 1238. Some of the sherds recovered at Misonisi, near Zia, are described as LBA in date and similar in fabric to those from the Askklupis and the Kastro at Palaio Pyli (Hope Simpson – Lazenby 1970, 58–59). However, it is impossible to establish exactly the chronological placement of these fragments based on Hope Simpson and Lazenby’s original report.

Morricone's Excavations (Morricone 1975)		Marketou's Excavations (Marketou 1990a; Marketou 1990b; Marketou 2009; Marketou 2010)		Vitale (Vitale 2006; Vitale 2012a)		Vitale et al. 2017		Approximate Synchronisms	
Building Phases	Suggested Chronology	Suggested Chronology		Building Phases	Suggested Chronology	Crete	Greek Mainland		
-	-	EBA 3 Early	-	I:1	EBA 3 Early	EM IIB-EM III	EH III		
-	-	EBA 3 Late	-	I:2	EBA 3 Late				
-	-	MBA	-	II	MBA	MM IA-III A	MH I-III Early		
Settlement Preceding City I, First Sub-Phase	MM III	LBA IA Early	LBA IA Early	III:1.a	LBA IA Early	MM IIB or LM IA Early-Advanced**	MH III Late		
Settlement Preceding City I, Second Sub-phase		LBA IA Mature	LBA IA Mature	III:1.b	LBA IA Mature	LM IA or LM IA Final***	LH I		
City I	MBA III-LBA I or LBA I	LBA IB	LBA IB	III:2	LBA IB	LM IB	LH IIA		
City II, First Sub-phase	LBA IIIA (= end of the period)	Disturbed	LBA II-LBA IIIA1	III:3.a	LBA II-LBA IIIA1	LM II-LM IIIA1	LH IIB-LH IIIA1		
City II, Second Sub-phase			LBA IIIA1	III:3.b	LBA IIIA1	LM IIIA1	LH IIIA1		
City III, First Sub-phase	LBA IIIA-LBA IIIB	LM II/LH IIB to LM/LH IIIC Late	LH IIIA2-LH IIB1	III:4.a	LH IIIA2-LH IIB1	LM IIIA2-LM IIIB1	LH IIIA2-LH IIB1		
City III, Second Sub-phase	LBA IIIB Final (= end of the period)		LH IIB1-LH IIB2	LH IIB1-LH IIB2 Late	III:4.b	LH IIB1-LH IIB2 Late	LM IIB1-LM IIB2	LH IIB1-LH IIB2 Late	
City IV	LBA IIIC	Sequence	LH IIIC Early-Middle	III:5	LH IIIC Early-Middle	LM IIIC Early-Subminoan	LH IIIC Early-Late ***		

* The earliest phases of the LBA are termed LBA I, II, and IIIA1 because during these periods Koan material culture was still typified by a strong local character. From LH IIIA2 onward, the typical Mycenaean sequence and terminology can also be applied to Kos (see Vitale 2007, 44).

** See Van de Moortel 2001; Rutter – Van de Moortel 2006.

*** LH IIIC Phases 1-5, according to Rutter 1977; Rutter 1978.

Tab. 1 Occupational sequence at the settlement of the 'Serraglio' during the Bronze Age*

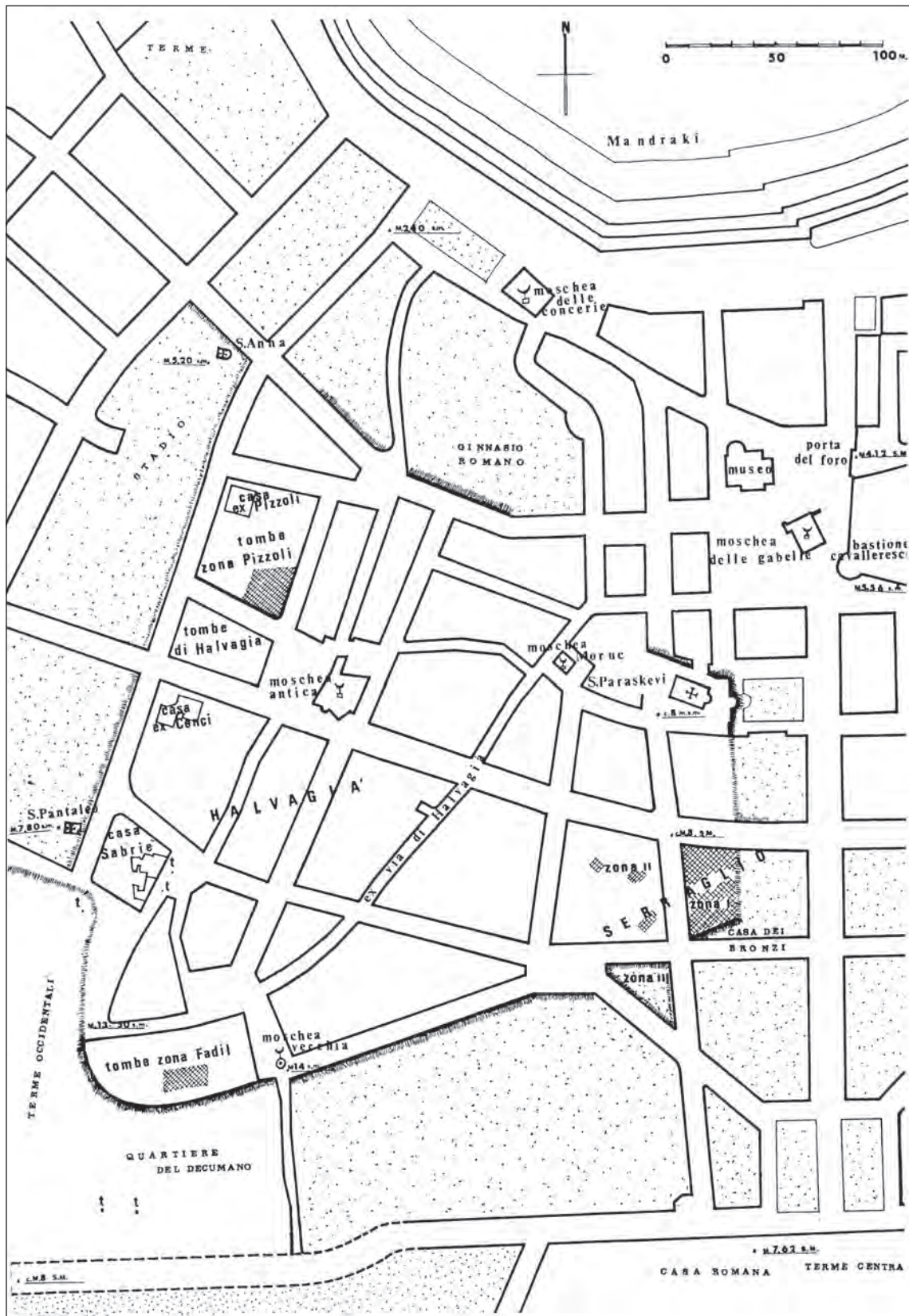


Fig. 2 The Bronze Age settlement of the 'Serraglio' with Morricone's main excavation sectors outlined in grey (after Morricone 1975, 152, fig. 7)

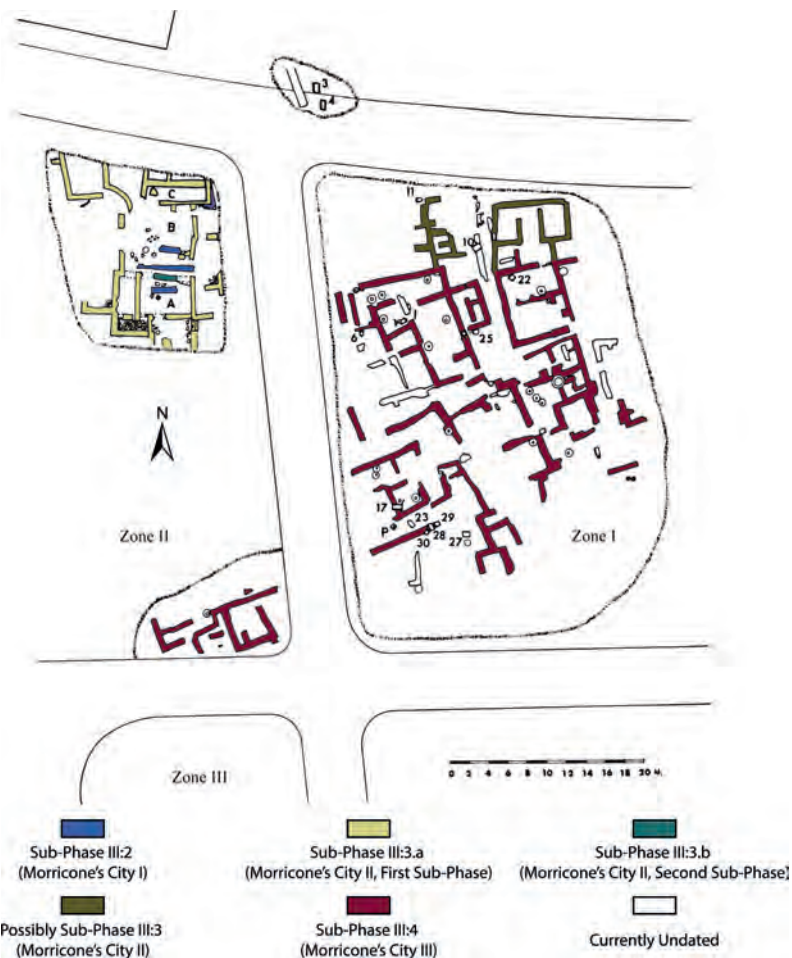


Fig. 3 The 'Serraglio', Zones I–II: Map showing the Early Iron Age tombs and the LBA vessels found in situ within the buildings of Sub-Phases III:2, 3, and 4. The locations of the Early Iron Age tombs are indicated by the occurrence of cardinal numbers (after Morricone 1975, 159, fig. 21, adapted by C. McNamee, S. Vitale).

Figs. 2–4).⁷ The estimated size of the settlement during this period was large, measuring c. 6ha (Fig. 2). According to the excavator, Phase III:4 yielded the most impressive architectural remains within the Late Bronze Age (LBA) settlement. Structures were aligned in a north-northwest to south-southeast direction (Fig. 3). Walls were built carefully with regularly cut slabs and stones and were preserved up to a height of 0.90–1.00m (Fig. 4).⁸

The most informative deposit for Phase III:4a is the fill underneath the floor of the House of the Figs in Zone II of the 'Serraglio' (Fig. 4.3).⁹ This assemblage contained circa 300 sherds, around 80.0% of which date to LH IIIA2 – LH IIIB1 (Fig. 5). Richer evidence is available for Phase III:4b, which included three types of contexts. The first type is represented by a series of rooms from Zone I of the 'Serraglio' with several in situ storage vases (Fig. 3). The second type is an occupation surface with a cleaver-like razor and a single flat axe brought to light in Zone I of the 'Serraglio' (Fig. 6). The third context is a destruction deposit found on the floor of the House of the Figs, which provides a firm LH IIIB2 Late date for the end of Phase III:4b (Fig. 7).¹⁰

⁷ Vitale 2006, 83–87, figs. 13–14; Vitale 2012a, 1238, tab. 1, fig. 7.

⁸ Morricone 1975, 178–179, 206, 227–231, 245, 392–393, figs. 21, 64–66, 111–113, 154, 158–159, 188, 190, plan B; Vitale – McNamee 2019.

⁹ For a preliminary report on these materials, see Vitale 2006, 83–85, fig. 13.

¹⁰ Morricone 1975, 155, 165, 169, 227–231, figs. 12, 36, 47, 154, 158–159; Vitale 2006, 85–87, fig. 14; Vitale 2012a, 1238, fig. 7.

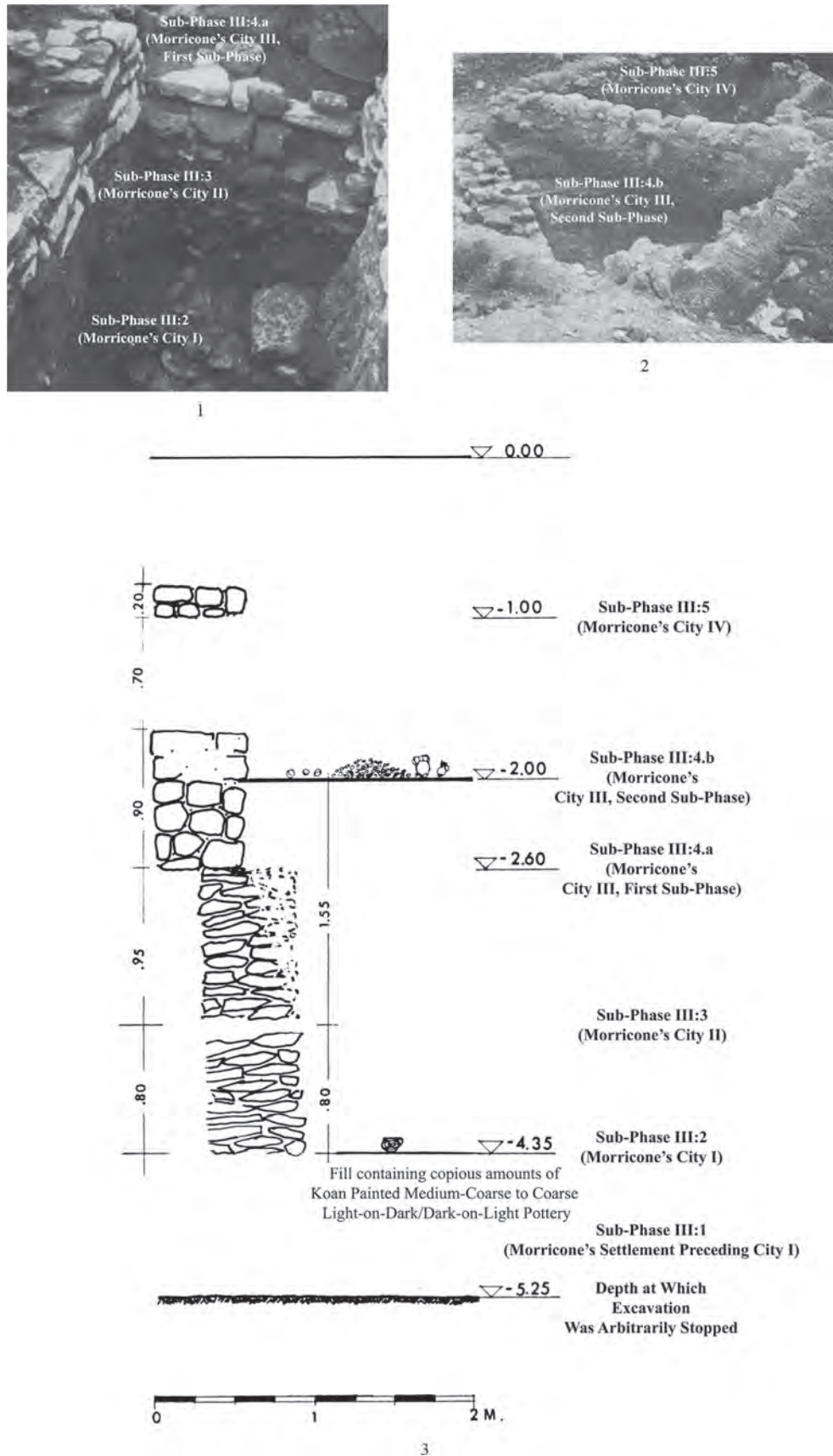


Fig. 4 The 'Serraglio', Zone II, northwest corner: 1. View of the walls of Sub-Phases III:2, III:3, and III:4a; 2. View of the walls of Sub-Phases III:4b and III:5; 3. Reconstructed stratigraphic section after the sounding of February and March 1946 (after Morricone 1975, 227, 230–231, figs. 154, 158–159, adapted by S. Vitale)

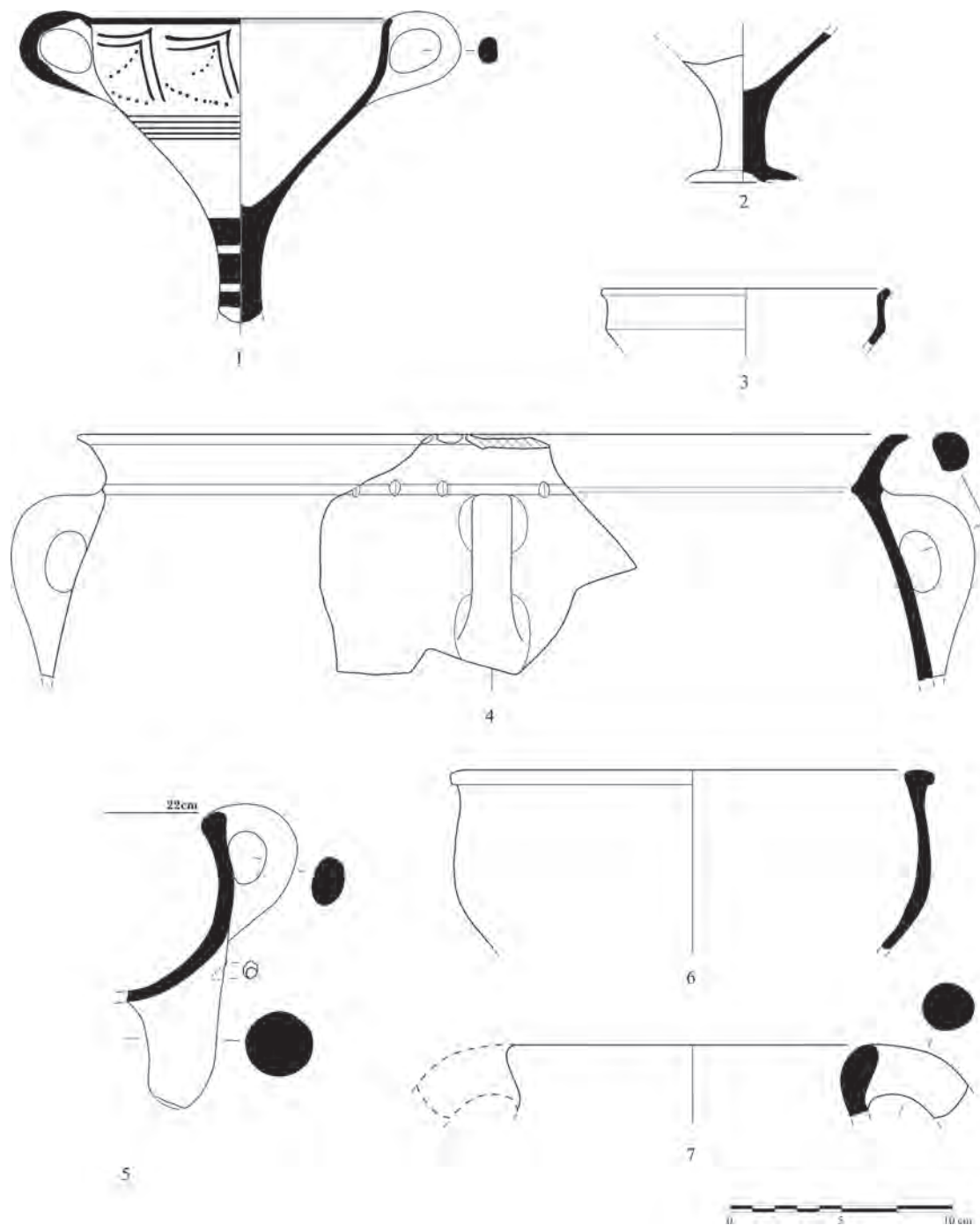


Fig. 5 The 'Serraglio', Zone II, northwest corner: LH IIIA2–LH IIIB1 fragments from the fill underneath the final floor of the House of the Figs. Scale 1:3 (1: S. Regio, M. Rossin, T. Ross; 2: S. Regio, T. Ross; 3: M. Rossin, T. Ross; 4, 6–7: S. Regio, T. Ross; 5: M. Rossin, T. Ross)

Circa three kilometres southwest of the 'Serraglio', LH IIIB human activity in the area of the Asklepis is suggested by a few bowl and kylix fragments recovered by Hope Simpson and Lazenby (Figs. 1, 8), but this evidence is not sufficient to clarify the character of the site during this phase.¹¹ The same consideration applies to the possible settlement remains recovered at Iraklis, located in the area of Psalidi, a couple of kilometres southeast of the 'Serraglio' (Fig. 1).

¹¹ Hope Simpson – Lazenby 1970, 57.

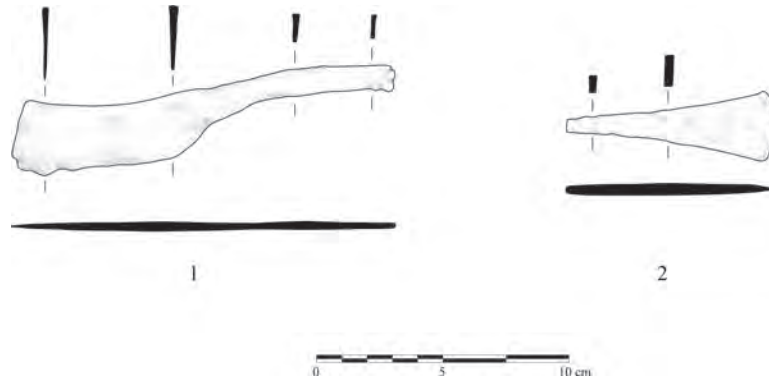


Fig. 6 The 'Serraglio', Zone I: A cleaver-like razor and a single flat axe from an occupation surface dating to Sub-Phase III:4. Scale 1:3 (1-2: S. Regio, T. Ross)



Fig. 7 The 'Serraglio', Zone II, northwest corner, destruction deposit: LH IIIB2 Late vessels found in situ on the final floor of the House of the Figs. Scale 1:3 (1, 3: S. Regio, A. Caputo, A. Trecarichi; 2, 4: M. Rossin, A. Caputo, A. Trecarichi)

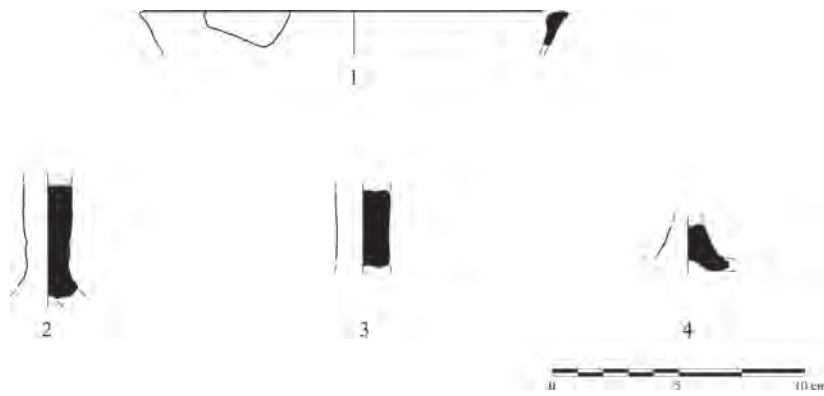


Fig. 8 The Asklopis: Unstratified unpainted LH IIIA2/LH IIIB bowl and kylix sherds. Scale 1:3 (M. Rossin, T. Ross)



Fig. 9 The Kastro at Palaio Pyli: LH IIIB fortification wall (S. Vitale)

Turning to the opposite side of the Mesaria Plain, an impressive fortification wall preserved up to seven courses was discovered along a scree slope at the Kastro at Palaio Pyli (Fig. 9).¹² This structure is the only secure example of a Mycenaean fortification wall in the Dodecanese.¹³ The Palaio Pyli wall, dated to LH IIIB based on surface sherds,¹⁴ implies a fortified stronghold on top of the Kastro hill, which has a commanding view over the fertile Mesaria Plain, the islands of Kalymnos and Pserimos, and the west coast of Anatolia (Fig. 10). The site may have overlooked the rich Mesaria agricultural supplies, as well as the important sea trade routes to the north.¹⁵

¹² Hope Simpson – Lazenby 1970, 59–60, pl. 21.

¹³ The construction technique of the fortification wall at the Kastro at Palaio Pyli is considered cyclopean by R. Hope Simpson (Hope Simpson 1981, 201, pl. 30b). This attribution is rejected by D. Field (Field 1984, 201–202), but there is a consensus on the Mycenaean character of the structure.

¹⁴ See Hope Simpson – Lazenby 1970, 60.

¹⁵ See Vitale et al. 2017b, 246, pl. 75.



Fig. 10 The Kastro at Palaio Pyli: The Mesaria Plain, the islands of Kalymnos and Pserimos, and the Bodrum peninsula from the summit of the fortified LH III B site (S. Vitale)

Turning to the funerary sphere, a total of eight LH III B cemetery sites have been identified on northeast Kos. The largest evidence comes from Eleona and Langada. In addition, isolated chamber tombs were found at Castello, Iraklis, Mesaria, and Ayia Paraskevi, while two tholos tombs were found in the Thalassinos and the Georgaras properties (Fig. 1).¹⁶ It is important to stress that thus far Kos is the only island in the Dodecanese where tholos tombs are attested. The tholos found in the Thalassinos property was used only during LH III B and was located c. 250m west of the Fadil area, which was the western border of the settlement of the ‘Serraglio’ during the LBA. The tholos found in the Georgaras property, on the other hand, was located c. three kilometres to the southwest of the ‘Serraglio’ and was used from LH III A2 Early throughout LH III C Middle.¹⁷

Eleona and Langada were located on the opposite sides of an alluvial drainage, c. 750m southwest of the ‘Serraglio’ (Figs. 1, 11). They included a total of 83 tombs, dating from LBA II to LH III C Middle (Tabs. 2–3). The majority of the tombs were set into pozzolana layers. Others were built into both alluvium and pozzolana or, to a lesser extent, into a deeper and harder clay stratum.¹⁸ Morricone classified all of the 83 graves as chamber tombs.¹⁹ Recent studies on the Koan Mycenaean burial landscape conducted by the author and C. McNamee, however, have questioned Morricone’s original attribution and suggested that 17 of the 61 graves from Langada may have been simple pits rather than chamber tombs.²⁰ This reconstruction is based on the fact that these 17 graves do not exhibit any of the diagnostic features that characterise Mycenaean chamber tombs, including the occurrence of multiple interments, *dromoi*, and built architectural

¹⁶ Morricone 1967; Hope Simpson – Lazenby 1970, 55, 60, fig. 5; Papazoglou 1981; Skerlou 2001; Skerlou 2003; Benzi 2005; Marketou 2010, 765; Vitale 2012a, 1237–1238, tab. 2; Vitale – Trecarichi 2015, 315–316, tab. 2; McNamee – Vitale 2016.

¹⁷ Gregoriadou 2001; Skerlou 2003; Marketou in press.

¹⁸ McNamee – Vitale 2016; McNamee – Vitale 2020.

¹⁹ Morricone 1967, 22.

²⁰ McNamee – Vitale 2016; McNamee – Vitale 2020.

features, such as closure walls, benches, and platforms.²¹ If the same criteria were applied to Eleona, the minimum number of chamber tombs from this site would be 14 out of a total of 22 graves. However, because of the lack of excavation diaries for Eleona Tombs 1–20,²² no conclusive assessment on the type, shape, size, and spatial arrangement of the tombs from this cemetery can be conducted. While the discussion of these characteristics must be limited to Langada, other features, including the chronology of the burials and the quality and quantity of the finds can be discussed for both cemeteries.

	LBA II	LBA IIIA1	LH IIIA2	LH IIIB	LH IIIC Early	LH IIIC Middle	Undatable
Eleona	4	13	5	6	4	13	–
Langada	–	–	10	19	22	27	5
Total	4	13	15	25	26	40	5
LBA II: E. Ts. 2, 4, 8, 18. LBA IIIA1: E. Ts. 3, 4, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17, 18, 21, 22. LH IIIA2: E. Ts. 2, 10, 15, 16, 18; L. Ts. 3, 16, 25, 29, 37, 38, 41, 51, 54, 56. LH IIIB: E. Ts. 4, 5, 6, 15, 19, 20; L. Ts. 10, 15, 19, 20, 21, 28, 30, 35, 36, 37, 40, 46, 48, 49, 52, 53, 57, 59, 60. LH IIIC Early: E. Ts. 4, 11, 13, 20; L. Ts. 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 13, 17, 19, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 31, 35, 43, 44, 52, 53, 57, 59, 61. LH IIIC Middle: E. Ts. 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 15, 20, 21, 23; L. Ts. 1, 2, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 32, 33, 34, 35, 39, 41, 44, 45, 47, 50, 52, 55, 57, 61. Undatable: L. Ts. 7, 12, 27, 42, 58.							
* The total exceeds 83, because many tombs were utilised during more than one phase.							

Tab. 2 Chronological distribution of the tombs in use at Eleona and Langada

	LBA II	LBA IIIA1	LH IIIA2	LH IIIB	LH IIIC Early	LH IIIC Middle	Undatable	Total
Eleona	4	10	1	4	1	2	–	22
Langada	–	–	10	18	14	14	5	61
Total	4 (4.8%)	10 (12.0%)	11 (13.3%)	22 (26.5%)	15 (18.1%)	16 (19.3%)	5 (6.0%)	83 (100.0%)
LBA II: E. Ts. 2, 4, 8, 18. LBA IIIA1: E. Ts. 3, 7, 10, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17, 21, 22. LH IIIA2: E. T. 15; L. Ts. 3, 16, 25, 29, 37, 38, 41, 51, 54, 56. LH IIIB: E. Ts. 5, 6, 19, 20; L. Ts. 10, 15, 19, 20, 21, 28, 30, 35, 36, 40, 46, 48, 49, 52, 53, 57, 59, 60. LH IIIC Early: E. T. 13; L. Ts. 4, 5, 6, 11, 13, 17, 22, 23, 24, 26, 31, 43, 44, 61. LH IIIC Middle: E. Ts. 1, 23; L. Ts. 1, 2, 8, 9, 14, 18, 32, 33, 34, 39, 45, 47, 50, 55. Undatable: L. Ts. 7, 12, 27, 42, 58.								

Tab. 3 Absolute number of tombs built at Eleona and Langada

²¹ McNamee – Vitale 2016; McNamee – Vitale 2020. It is interesting to note how the understanding of the typology of the tombs at Eleona and Langada has changed over time. In 1936, L. Laurenzi reported for the first time on the discovery of the cemeteries and stated that the graves were Mycenaean simple pits (Laurenzi 1936, 141). By contrast, in his first discussion of his excavations at Eleona and Langada, Morricone claimed that the graves were all collapsed chamber tombs, each being provided with a *dromos* (Morricone 1950, 13–25). Finally, in 1967, Morricone confirmed that the graves were all collapsed chamber tombs, but stated that the original cuts for *dromoi* and chambers were very hard to recognise, because of the crumbly consistence of the alluvial and pozzolana sediments into which most of the tombs were dug (Morricone 1967, 13–25). More specifically, Morricone mentions only five instances where he could tentatively identify the traces of a *dromos*, including Tombs 35, 40, 48, 58, and 60 (Morricone 1967, 11, 22, 169, 195, 229, 253, 260).

²² Morricone 1967, 9, n. 1.

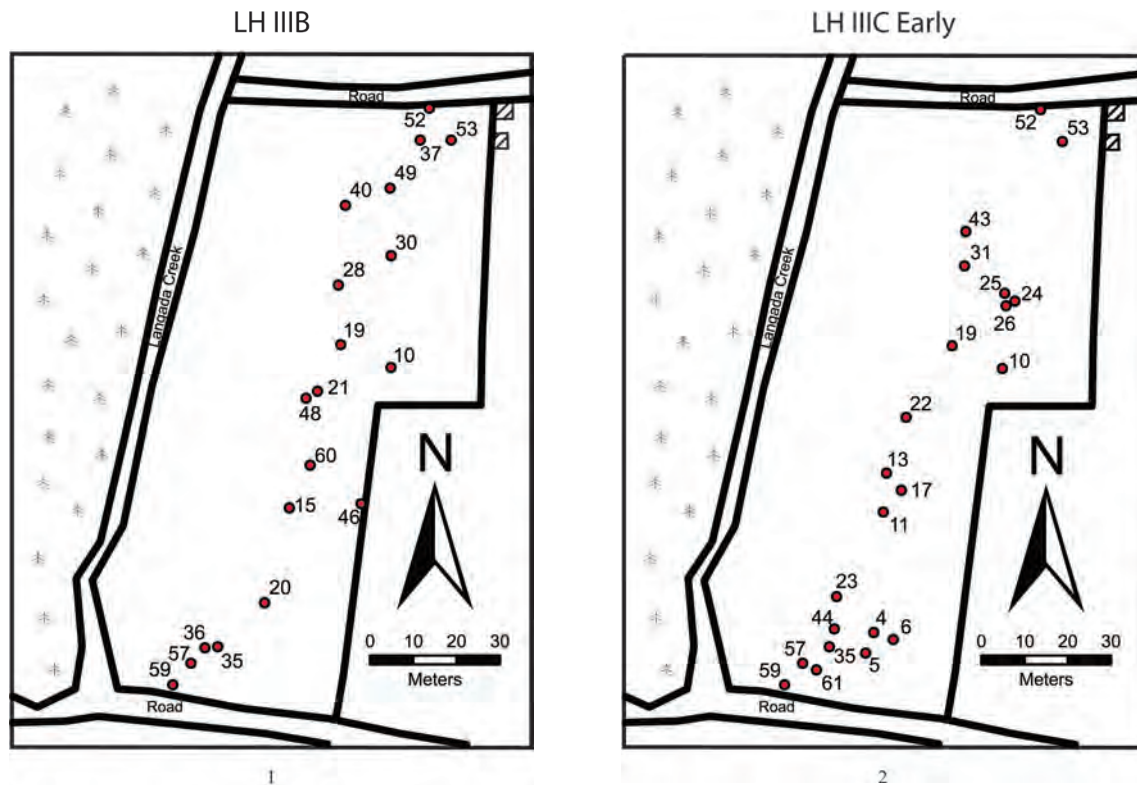


Fig. 11 Eleona and Langada: 1. Plan indicating the location of all of the Langada tombs used during LH IIIB; 2. Plan indicating the location of all of the Langada tombs used during LH IIIC Early (1–2: C. McNamee, S. Vitale)

LH IIIB was the most impressive building period at Eleona and Langada, with 22 newly constructed tombs, representing 26.5% of the total (Tab. 3; Fig. 11.1). When re-used tombs from previous phases are considered, the number of LH IIIB graves totals 25, making up 19.5% of the sample from the two cemeteries (Tab. 2). These figures are even more impressive if they are considered against the data from LH IIIA2. In this case, during LH IIIB there is a 13.2% increase in terms of newly built tombs and a 7.8% increase in terms of the total number of used tombs. These elements suggest demographic growth between LH IIIA2 and LH IIIB.

The exact location of the Eleona tombs is uncertain, due to the lack of the excavation diaries. However, Morricone states that they were all built in a single row on the slope of a low hill facing north.²³ More precise information is available for Langada, where 18 tombs were built during LH IIIB (Tab. 3; Fig. 11.1). According to SELAP's recent analysis, 16 of these graves can be safely attributed to the chamber tomb type.²⁴ The majority of these chamber tombs had a circular shape and faced west.²⁵ Approximate dimensions are provided for only nine of the 16 chamber tombs. Generally, the size was not particularly impressive, with an average of 4.89 square metres.²⁶ The distribution reflects an organised use of the area, with the tombs being widely spaced across the whole field (Fig. 11.1).

²³ Morricone 1967, 22–25.

²⁴ McNamee – Vitale 2016; McNamee – Vitale 2020. Securely identified chamber tombs built at Langada during LH IIIB include nos. 10, 15, 19, 20, 21, 28, 30, 35, 40, 48, 49, 52, 53, 57, 59, and 60. Possible pits include nos. 36 and 46.

²⁵ Morricone 1967; McNamee – Vitale 2016; McNamee – Vitale 2020. Of the sixteen securely identified chamber tombs built at Langada during LH IIIB, five (nos. 35, 40, 52, 53, and 57) had a rough circular shape, two had a roughly square shape (nos. 10 and 59), and two had a roughly rectangular shape (nos. 21 and 60), while the original shape could not be ascertained for seven tombs (nos. 15, 19, 20, 28, 30, 48, and 49). The shape of the two possible pits (nos. 36 and 46) was not recognised.

²⁶ Among securely identified chamber tombs, approximate dimensions are provided for Langada Tombs 10, 21, 35, 40, 52, 53, 57, 59, and 60 (Morricone 1967, 99–111, 136–142, 169–172, 195–196, 233–242, 247–253, 255–264).

Turning to the finds, it should be underlined that no thorough quantitative assessment of the ceramics from the ‘Serraglio’ can be accomplished. In fact, with the exception of the contexts mentioned previously, all of the materials stylistically attributable to Phase III:4 were unstratified and selected arbitrarily by Morricone. A more accurate evaluation is possible for the ceramics from Eleona and Langada, where LH IIIB pottery corresponds to 18.6% of the total assemblage and is 6.0% greater than the pottery dating to LH IIIA2 (Tab. 4).

Date	Eleona	Langada	Total
LBA II/LH IIB	8	–	8 (1.7%)
LBA IIIA1/LH IIIA1	27	–	27 (5.8%)
LH IIIA2	8	51	59 (12.6%)
LH IIIB	17	70	87 (18.6%)
LH IIIC Early	6	85	91 (19.4%)
LH IIIC Middle	27	101	128 (27.4%)
LBA II/LH IIB–LBA IIIA1/LH IIIA1	1	–	1 (0.2%)
LBA II/LH IIB–LH IIIA2	2	–	2 (0.4%)
LH IIIA2–LH IIIB	1	–	1 (0.2%)
LH IIIA2–LH IIIC Early	–	1	1 (0.2%)
LH IIIB–LH IIIC Early	2	3	5 (1.1%)
LH IIIB–LH IIIC Middle	–	2	2 (0.4%)
LH IIIC Early–LH IIIC Middle	3	24	27 (5.8%)
Undatable	8	21	29 (6.2%)
Total	110 (23.5%)	358 (76.5%)	468 (100.0%)

Tab. 4 Chronological distribution of pottery vessels from Eleona and Langada

Overall, three broad observations can be made on the LH IIIB pottery from the ‘Serraglio’, Eleona, and Langada. First, LH IIIB materials are widely represented and all functional categories of Mycenaean pottery are attested.²⁷ Second, locally produced Mycenaean pottery is very widespread and roughly conforms stylistically and technologically to Greek mainland productions. Third, according to SELAP’s macroscopic fabric analysis, most of the imports comes from the northeast Peloponnese.²⁸

The non-ceramic evidence indicates that during LH IIIB precious and semiprecious small finds were spread evenly throughout the tombs (Figs. 12–13), suggesting that adornments were not exclu-

²⁷ Vitale 2016a, 84–86.

²⁸ Mountjoy 1999, 1092–1097, figs. 446–448; Vitale 2016a, 84–86.

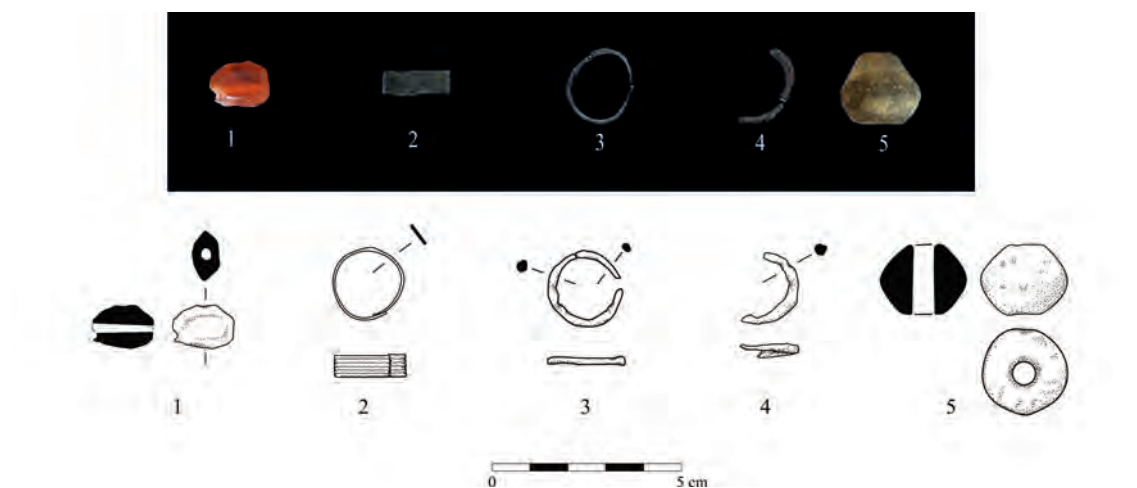


Fig. 12 Langada: LH IIIB2 Late adornments in carnelian (no. 1), bronze (nos. 2–4), and terracotta (no. 5) from Tomb 21. Scale 1:2 (1–5: photo S. Vitale; drawings M. Rossin, T. Ross)

sively reserved for the elite (Tab. 5).²⁹ In fact, during LH IIIB, especially late LH IIIB, social status was underlined by the display of weapons (Tab. 6).³⁰ This is shown particularly well by the finds from Langada Tombs 21 and 46. The former included a Naue II sword and a spearhead with a fully cast socket (Fig. 14), while the latter included a Type F-2 sword, another spearhead, two knives, and a cleaver (Fig. 15).³¹ Langada Tombs 21 and 46 were single burials and both date to LH IIIB2 Late.³²

	Head/Hair	Neck	Hand/Arm	Clothes	Total	Materials
Eleona, Tomb 19	–	–	–	3 - 1 biconical button in terracotta - 2 conical buttons in steatite	3	Ivory (1) Bronze (5) Carnelian (1) Stone (1) Steatite (4) Terracotta (6)
Langada, Tomb 21	–	1 - 1 amygdaloidal pendant in carnelian	4 - 4 band rings in bronze (1 incised)	1 - 1 biconical button in terracotta	6	
Langada, Tomb 30	–	1 - 1 globular bead in stone	–	1 - 1 biconical button in terracotta	2	
Langada, Tomb 36	–	–	1 - 1 band ring in bronze	1 - 1 biconical button in terracotta	2	
Langada, Tomb 48	–	–	–	1 - 1 conical button in steatite	1	
Langada, Tomb 60	–	–	–	4 - 2 biconical buttons in terracotta - 1 conical button in steatite - 1 flattened biconical button in ivory	4	
Total	–	2	5	11	18	

Tab. 5 Distribution of adornments from LH IIIB qualified groups at Eleona and Langada by type and material

²⁹ Vitale 2016b, 260–261, figs. 4–5, tab. 3. The terminology used for adornments conforms to Konstantinidi 2001.

³⁰ Vitale 2012b, 411–412; Vitale 2016b, 260–261, 263, pls. 2a–b, 3.

³¹ The terminology used for weapons conforms to Kilian-Dirlmeier 1993.

³² Morricone 1967, 136–142, figs. 121–128; Vitale 2012a, 1238, figs. 2, 5–6; Vitale 2012b, 410–411, pls. 94a, d–e; 95a–e.

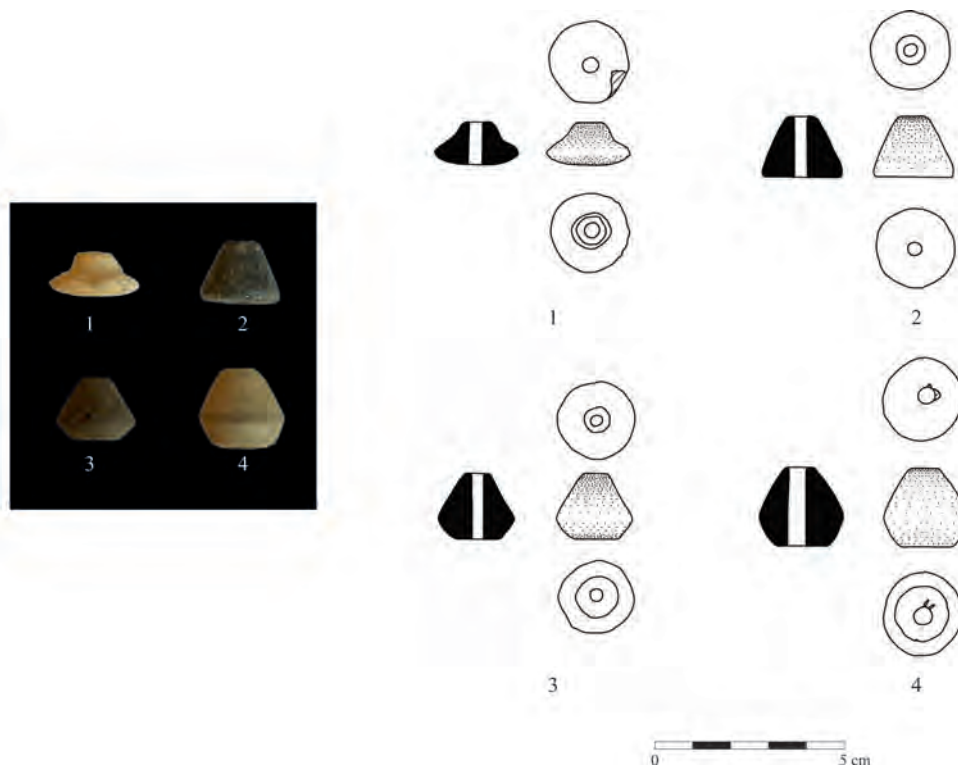


Fig. 13 Langada: LH IIIIB buttons/spindle whorls in ivory (no. 1), steatite (no. 2), and terracotta (nos. 3–4) from Tomb 60. Scale 1:2 (1–4: photo S. Vitale; drawings M. Rossin, A. Trecarichi, T. Ross)

	Bronze			Other Materials			Total
	Weapons	Weapons/Tools and Tools	Subtotal	Weapons	Weapons/Tools and Tools	Subtotal	
Eleona	5 4 spearheads; 1 sword	5 1 casting waste; 1 blade fragment; 1 knife; 2 razors/ cleavers	10 (13.3%)	–	1 1 obsidian blade	1 (4.5%)	11 (11.3%)
Langada	44 37 arrow- heads; 4 spearheads; 3 swords	21 4 awls; 2 chisels; 3 cleavers; 1 conical cap; 7 knives; 2 razors/cleavers; 1 set of tongs; 1 pair of tweezers	65 (86.7%)	–	21 3 whetstones; 18 lead fishing weights	21 (95.5%)	86 (88.7%)
Total	49	26	75 (100.0%; 95.1%)	–	22	22 (100.0%; 4.9%)	97

Weapons: E. Ts. 4 or 5, 6 or 7; L. Ts. 15, 16, 21, 34, 37, 46, 53, stray finds.
 Weapons/Tools and Tools: E. Ts. 15, 17, 20, 21; L. Ts. 11, 15, 25, 34, 37, 38, 42, 43, 45, 46, 52, 58, stray finds (two of the three stray finds are currently unpublished).

Tab. 6 Distribution of weapons and weapons/tools from Eleona and Langada by type and material

The overall character of the jewellery and weapons from Eleona and Langada roughly conforms to standard Mycenaean funerary assemblages. The occurrence of possible ‘exotics’ is worth noting. An ivory flattened biconical button from Langada Tomb 60 (Fig. 13.1) may have come from either the Near East or Egypt, where this material was common during the 2nd millennium

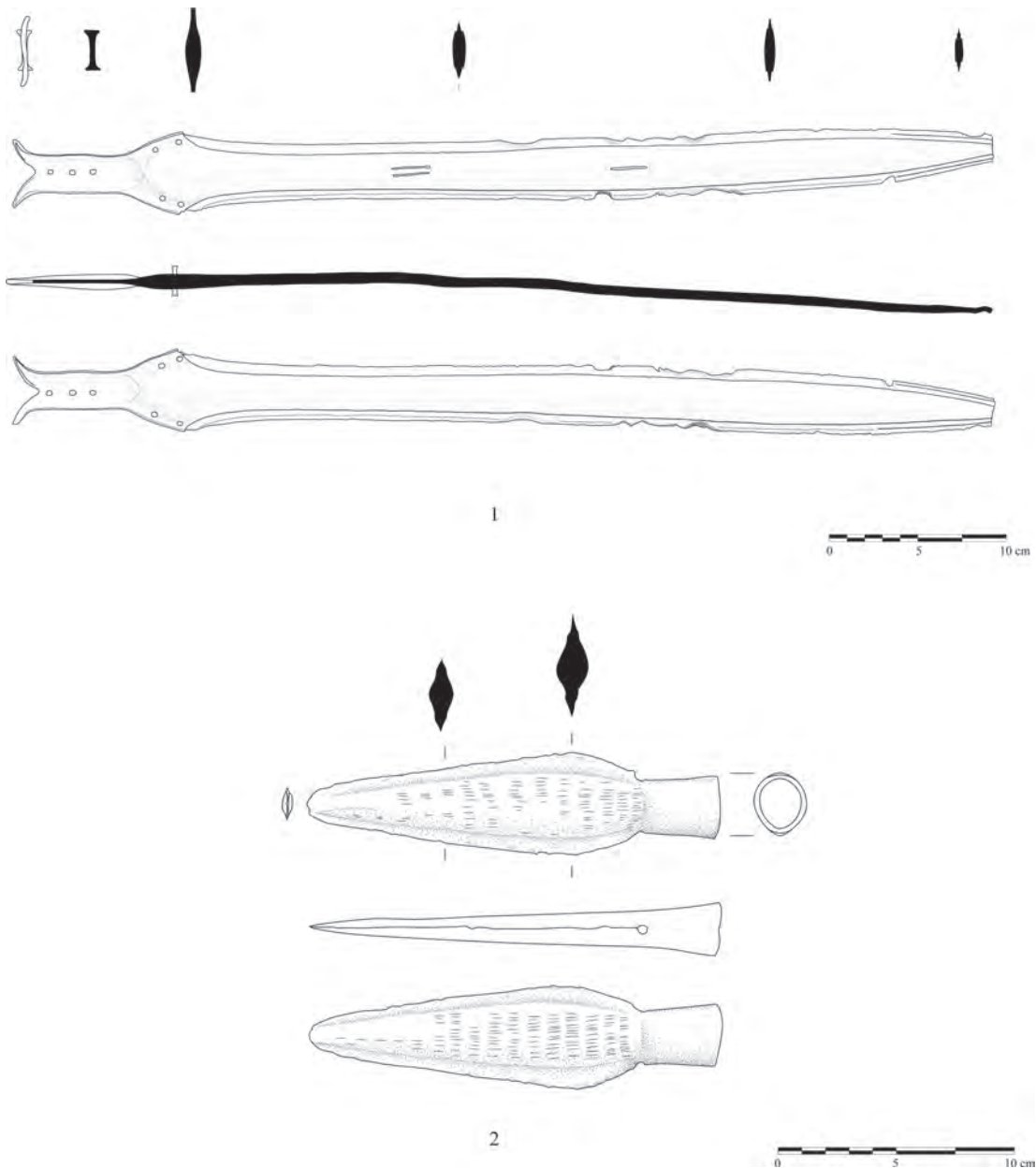


Fig. 14 Langada: LH III B2 Late weapons from Tomb 21. (1) scale 1:4, (2) scale 1:3
(1: S. Regio, A. Trecarichi; 2: S. Regio, M. Rossin, T. Ross)

BCE.³³ A Near Eastern origin is also possible for the amygdaloidal bead in carnelian from Langada Tomb 21 (Fig. 12.1).³⁴ At the same time, the sword and the spearhead from Langada Tomb 21 (Fig. 14) are related to Italian prototypes and their occurrence on Kos may indicate contacts with the central Mediterranean at the end of LH III B (see below).³⁵

³³ Vitale 2016b, 260–261, tab. 3, fig. 4, pl. 1d.

³⁴ See Matarese et al. 2015, 140; Vitale 2016b, 260–261, tab. 3, fig. 5, pl. 1h. The attribution of the small finds recovered during the excavation of Langada Tomb 21 to the single deceased from this burial is possible but not altogether certain (Morricone 1967, 136).

³⁵ Morricone 1967, 137 n. 1; 138 n. 1–2, 139; Vitale 2012b, 411, 413; Vitale 2016b, 261; Vitale et al. 2017b (all with previous bibliography).

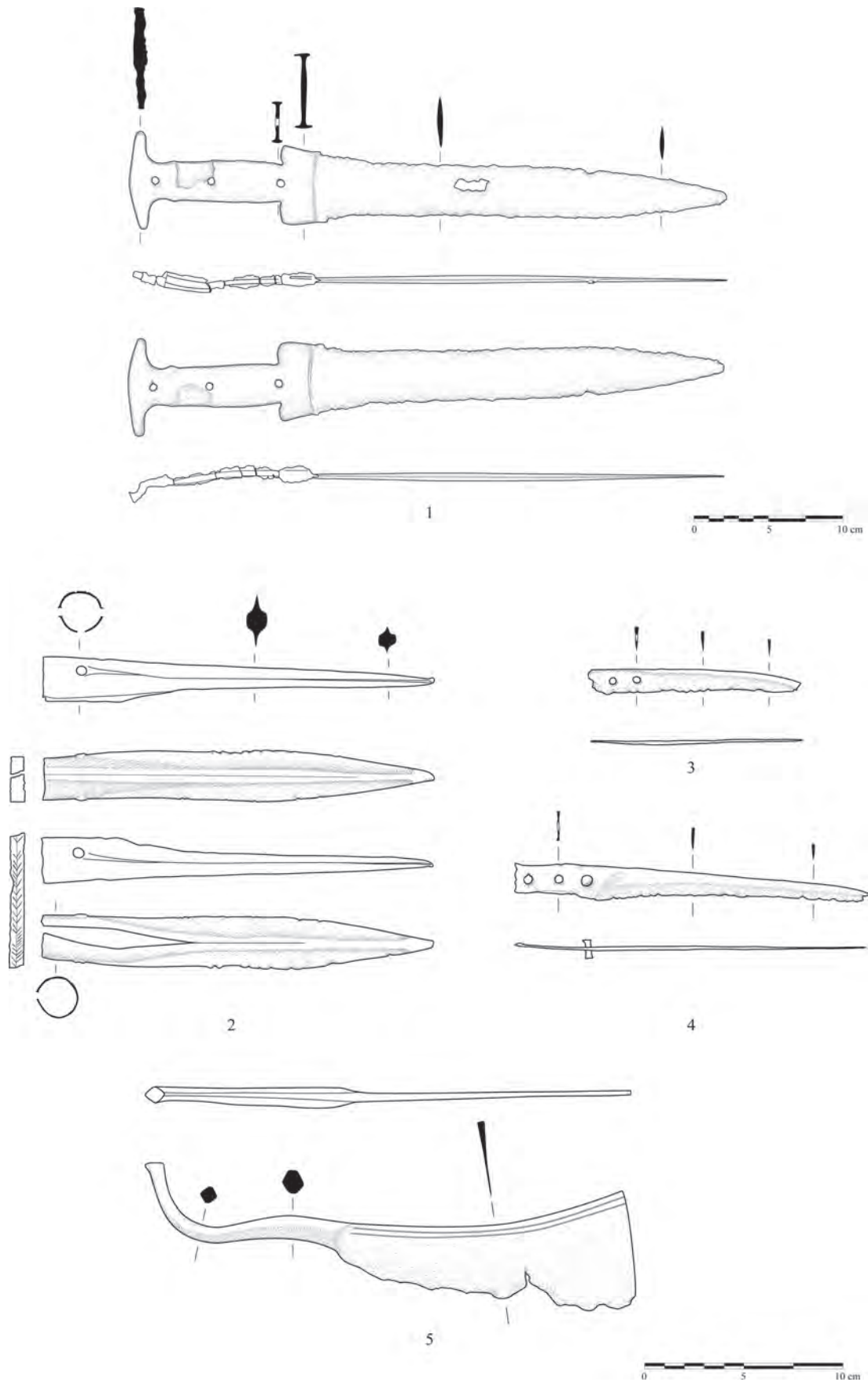


Fig. 15 Langada: LH IIIB2 Late weapons and weapons/tools from Tomb 46. (1) scale 1:4, (2-5) scale 1:3
 (1-4: S. Regio, T. Ross; 5: M. Rossin, T. Ross)

A final important element to be mentioned in this review is the uneven distribution of jewellery, weapons, and tools between Eleona and Langada (Tabs. 5–6). In fact, all of the weapons from LH IIIB qualified contexts come from Langada.³⁶ Similarly, of the 18 adornments from qualified find groups, 15 come from Langada, while only three come from Eleona.

Kos during the Initial Mycenaean Post-palatial Period: LH IIIC Early

The only northeast Koan settlement with secure occupation during this phase was the ‘Serraglio’, where LH IIIC Early is included within Phase III:5 (Morricone’s City IV; Tab. 1; Figs. 1–2, 4.2–3).³⁷ Unfortunately, the architectural remains were heavily disturbed by later building activities and, although unstratified LH IIIC Early ceramics are well represented, no closed contexts from this phase were recovered.³⁸

The size of the settlement of Phase III:5 cannot be securely determined. However, based on the spread of LH IIIC Early stray finds, it seems that no significant change in dimensions occurred from LH IIIB (Fig. 2). The structures of Phase III:5 were aligned in a northwest to southeast direction with a slight change from Phase III:4. Walls were less carefully built than those of Phase III:4 with irregularly cut stones preserved for a single course only up to a height of 0.20–0.30m (Fig. 4.2–3).³⁹

Although a few isolated finds from Iapili have been tentatively attributed to disturbed burials, the only certain evidence from LH IIIC Early funerary contexts on northeast Kos comes from Georgaras, Eleona, and Langada (Figs. 1, 11.2).⁴⁰ At Eleona and Langada, 15 tombs were constructed in this phase, representing 18.1% of the total, with an 8.4% decrease from LH IIIB (Tab. 3). However, when re-used tombs are considered, LH IIIC Early graves total 26, making up 20.3% of the sample, with a slight increase (0.8%) from LH IIIB (Tab. 2).

SELAP’s analysis has established that only 9 out of the 14 graves built at Langada during LH IIIC Early can be attributed definitely to the chamber tomb type.⁴¹ Within this sample, there is more variability in shape than in LH IIIB, with roughly rectangular and square chambers prevailing over circular specimens.⁴² The majority of the tombs continued to face west. Chamber dimensions were smaller than in LH IIIB, with an average of 3.73 square metres.⁴³ In addition, the locations of the LH IIIC Early tombs suggest a less organised use of the space compared to the previous phase (Fig. 11.2).

Among unstratified LH IIIC Early ceramics from the ‘Serraglio’, an important novelty is the appearance of amphoroid and ring-based kraters FS 56 and 282. Four pictorial fragments with men bearing Sea Peoples-like feathered helmets may be dated stylistically either to this period or to the successive LH IIIC Middle (Fig. 16).⁴⁴ At Eleona and Langada, LH IIIC Early pottery

³⁶ Following A. Furumark’s terminology, qualified contexts include closed deposits and stylistically ‘homogeneous find groups’ (Furumark 1941, 32–33).

³⁷ Morricone 1975, 227, 249–250, 393–394, figs. 154, 158–159, 190, plan B. The Kastro at Palaio Pyli may or may not have been in use during LH IIIC Early (see Hope Simpson – Lazenby 1970, 60).

³⁸ Mountjoy 1999, 1097–1105, figs. 448–451; Vitale 2006, 87; Vitale 2012a, 1237, tab. 1.

³⁹ Morricone 1975, 393–394, fig. 154; Vitale – McNamee 2019.

⁴⁰ Hope Simpson 1965, 187; Morricone 1967; Morricone 1975, 271–272, fig. 226; Marketou in press.

⁴¹ McNamee – Vitale 2016; McNamee – Vitale 2020. Securely identified chamber tombs built at Langada during LH IIIC Early include nos. 4, 5, 6, 11, 13, 17, 31, 44, and 61. Possible pits include nos. 22, 23, 24, 26, and 43.

⁴² Morricone 1967; McNamee – Vitale 2016; McNamee – Vitale 2020. Of the nine securely identified chamber tombs built at Langada during LH IIIC Early, one (no. 61) had a roughly circular shape, one had a roughly square shape (no. 17), and three had a roughly rectangular shape (nos. 4, 6, and 13), while the original shape could not be ascertained for four tombs (nos. 5, 11, 31, and 44). The shape of the possible pits was approximately rectangular in the case of tomb no. 23, approximately circular in the case of tomb no. 22, and was not recognised in the cases of tombs nos. 24, 26, and 43.

⁴³ Among securely identified chamber tombs, approximate dimensions are provided for Langada Tombs 4, 6, 13, 17, and 61 (Morricone 1967, 94–97, 116–117, 127–130, 264–268).

⁴⁴ Vitale – McNamee 2019, 572–573, pl. 200e–h (with previous bibliography).

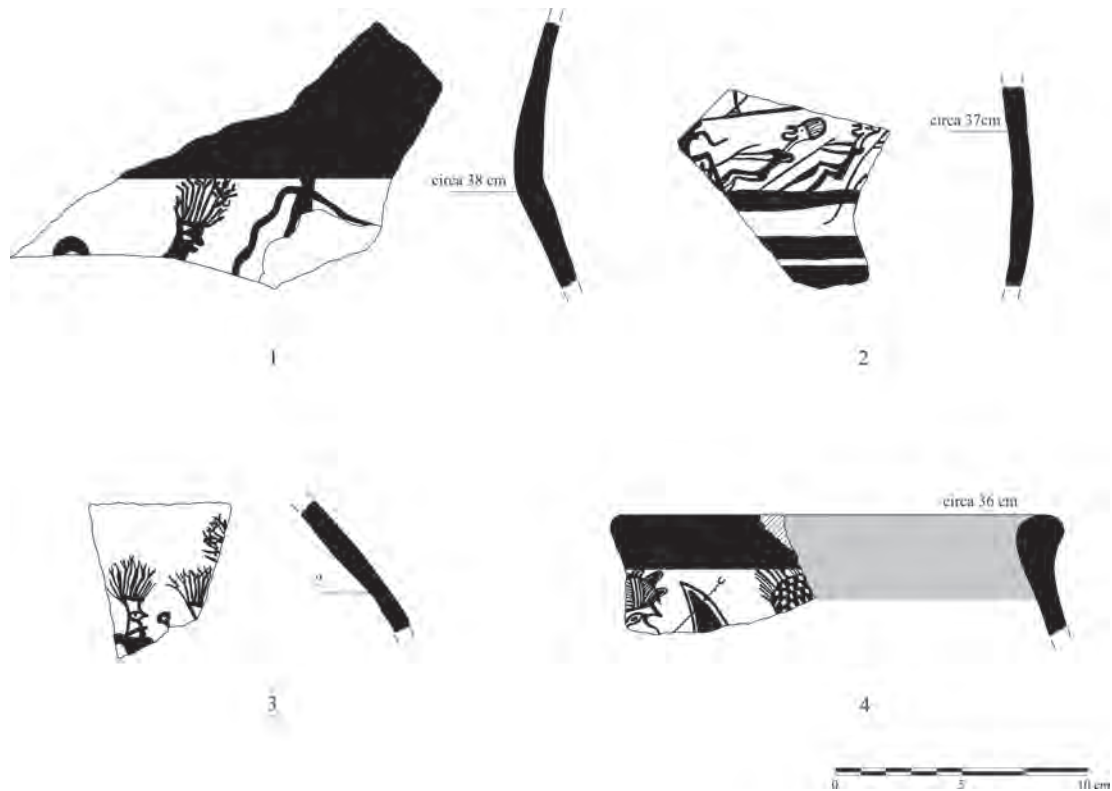


Fig. 16 The 'Serraglio': Unstratified LH IIIC Early/Middle amphoroid and ring-based kraters FS 56, 282 with Sea Peoples characters FM 1. Scale 1:3 (1–4: M. Rossin, A. Trecarichi)

corresponds to 19.4% of the total, with a 0.8% increase from LH IIIB (Tab. 4). The general characteristics of Koan LH IIIC Early ceramics also continue without dramatic changes from the previous phase. However, two shifts can be noticed. The first is an increase in the proportion of locally produced pottery. The second is the occurrence of a more varied pattern of imports that, in addition to the northeast Peloponnese, now also include Cretan (Fig. 17.1), Cypriot (Fig. 17.2–3), and possibly Trojan vessels (Fig. 17.4).⁴⁵ In terms of local ceramic manufacture habits, there is a clear continuity between LH IIIB and LH IIIC Early.⁴⁶

While no weapons from Eleona and Langada can be securely dated to LH IIIC Early, this phase brought a rise in the quantity of precious and semiprecious adornments from qualified contexts at Eleona and Langada (Tabs. 5, 7; Figs. 18–19), as well as a change in the diversity of the offerings, with more exotic materials and shapes being seen. A peak in the concentration of the finds was discovered in Group 2 of Langada Tomb 57, providing an argument for the use of jewellery as a status symbol (Tab. 7; Fig. 19).⁴⁷ The assemblage from this tomb suggests direct or indirect contacts with the Baltic region or Italy, as well as with the Near East or Egypt. Contacts with the Baltic or Italy are shown by the occurrence of an amber bead (Fig. 19.4), while contacts with the Near East or Egypt are suggested by a discoid bead in carnelian (Fig. 19.2) and five pendants in the shape of lotus flower buds, two in coral and three in carnelian, which are now

⁴⁵ Mountjoy 1999, 1097–1105, figs. 448–451; Vitale 2016a, 84–86. Cypriot imports are represented by two simple style stirrup jars from Langada Tomb 53. These vases, which are dated here to LH IIIC Early, were previously assigned to LH IIIB by R. Jung (Jung 2008, 167 n. 80).

⁴⁶ For Koan LBA manufacturing practices, see Vitale 2017; Vitale – Morrison 2017.

⁴⁷ Morricone 1967, 247–253, figs. 273–277. The materials from Langada Tomb 57 have been subdivided into three groups based on stratigraphic and contextual evidence (Vitale 2016a, 77, tab. 5.2; Vitale 2016b, 262, tab. 4). Group 2 includes the finds associated with vases nos. 230, 233, and 235.

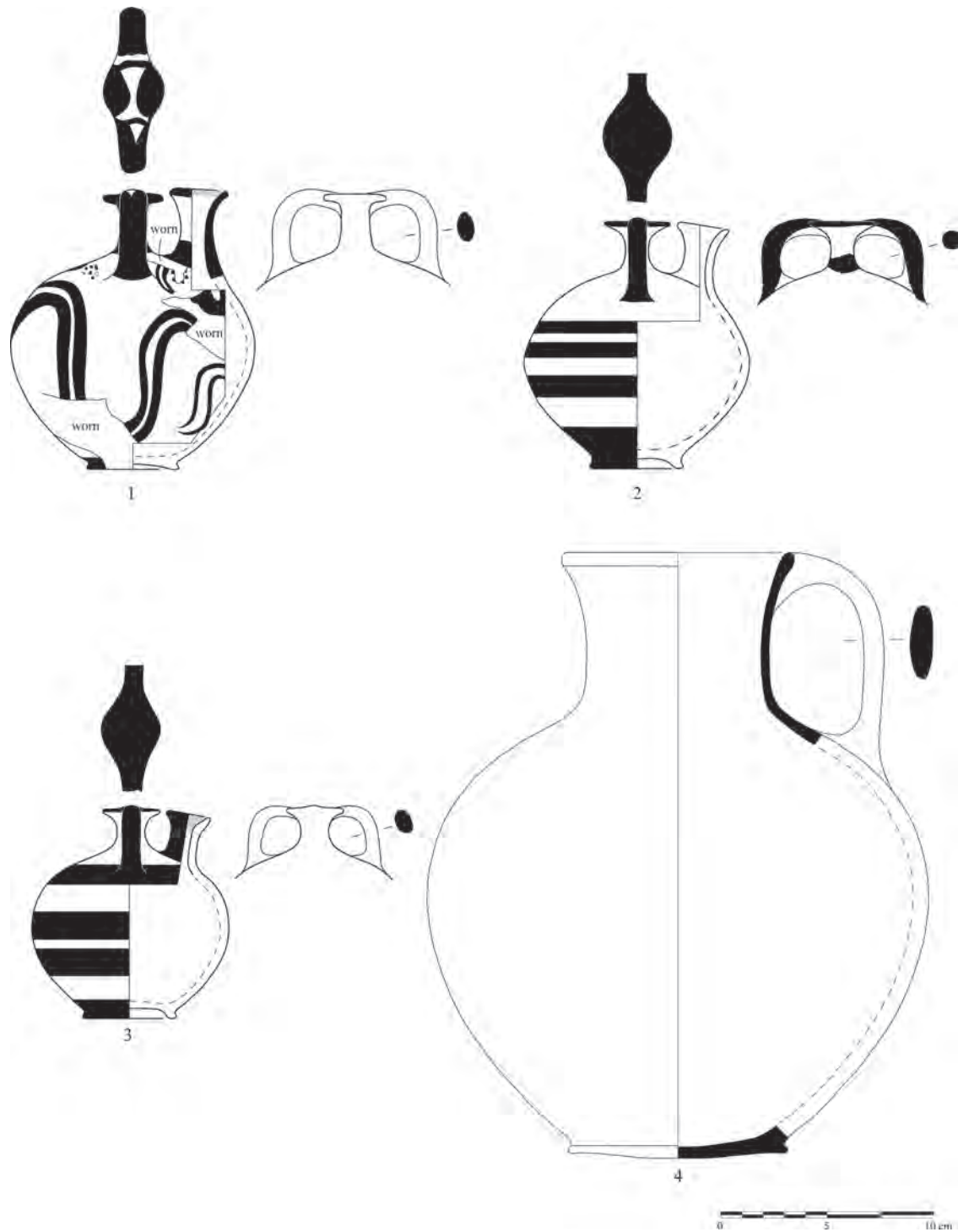


Fig. 17 Langada: LH IIIC Early (nos. 1–3) and LH IIIC Early/Middle (no. 4) ceramic imports from Crete, Cyprus, and Troy. Scale 1:3 (1: S. Regio, M. Rossin, A. Trecarichi; 2–3: S. Regio, T. Ross; 4: S. Regio, A. Trecarichi)

lost.⁴⁸ Additional evidence for possible contacts between Kos and the Near East is provided by another globular bead in carnelian from Langada Tomb 31.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Vitale 2016b, 261–263, tab. 4, fig. 7b, pl. 2g.

⁴⁹ Morricone 1967, 159–161, figs. 156, 159–161. Vitale 2016b, 261–262, tab. 4. For the possible Near Eastern provenance of adornments made in carnelian see Matarese et al. 2015, 140.

	Head/Hair	Neck	Hand/Arm	Clothes	Total	Materials
Langada, Tomb 23	1 - 1 spiraliform hairclip in bronze	-	-	-	1	Amber (1) Bronze (5) Coral (2) Carnelian (5) Faience (1) Glass (6) Steatite (3)
Langada, Tomb 24	-	1 - 1 amygdaloidal bead in faience	1 - 1 bracelet in bronze	1 - 1 conical button in steatite	3	
Langada, Tomb 26	-	-	1 - 1 spiraliform ring in bronze	1 - 1 conical button in steatite	2	
Langada, Tomb 31	-	1 - 1 globular bead in carnelian	2 - 2 bracelets in bronze	-	3	
Langada, Tomb 57 (Group 2)	-	14 - 1 discoid bead in carnelian - 2 coral pendants in the shape of lotus flower buds - 6 glass beads (4 globular, 2 tapered) - 1 amygdaloidal bead in amber - 1 pendant in steatite - 3 carnelian pendants in the shape of lotus flower buds	-	-	14	
Total	1	16	4	2	23	

Tab. 7 Distribution of adornments from LH IIIC Early qualified groups at Eleona and Langada by type and material

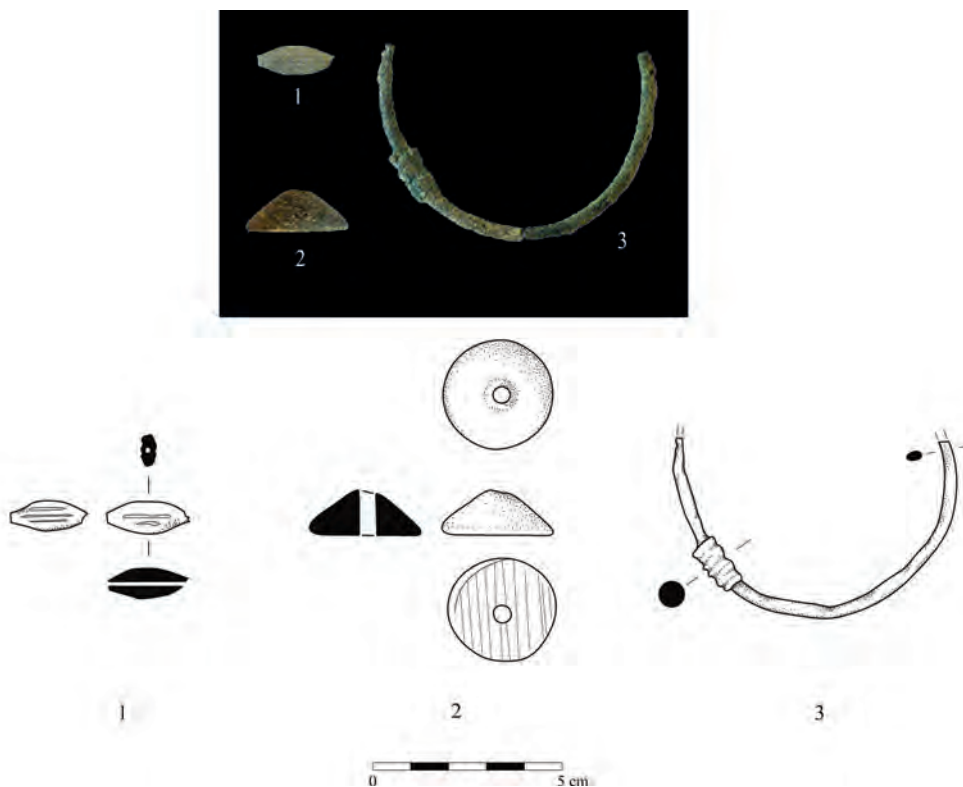


Fig. 18 Langada: LH IIIC Early adornments in faience (no. 1), steatite (no. 2), and bronze (no. 3) from Tomb 24. Scale 1:2 (1–3: photo S. Vitale; drawings S. Regio, T. Ross)

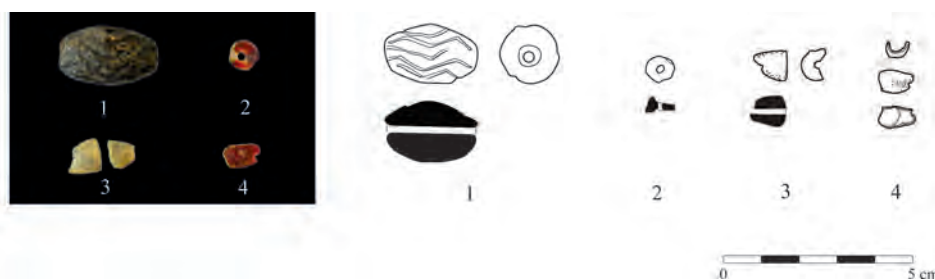


Fig. 19 Langada: LH IIIC Early adornments in steatite (no. 1), carnelian (no. 2), glass (no. 3), and amber (no. 4) from Tomb 57, Group 2. Scale 1:2 (1–4: photo S. Vitale; drawings M. Rossin, T. Ross)

Besides qualified contexts, an increase in the quantity and quality of the jewellery is also suggested by the evidence from Langada Tomb 10, the richest burial ever found at this site.⁵⁰ This grave contained six embossed golden sheets decorated with double Argonauts (Fig. 20.1–6); two golden rings (Fig. 20.7–8); a golden hair clip (Fig. 20.9); two necklaces, one in gold (Fig. 20.10) and one made of gold and precious stones (Fig. 20.11); a stone cylinder with golden coatings on both sides (Fig. 20.12); two silver or iron rings (Fig. 20.13–14); a bronze, finely incised violin-bow fibula (Fig. 20.15); two amber beads; a steatite button; a bronze hook, and a fragmentary bronze ring. Contacts with Italy/Europe are again suggested by the incised fibula and the amber beads. Of the 28 vessels found within Langada Tomb 10, eleven date to LH IIIC Early, seven date to LH IIIC Early/Middle, eight date to LH IIIC Middle, one dates to LH IIIB2 Late, and one cannot be assigned to a specific phase based on stylistic grounds.⁵¹ The chronological distribution of these vessels implies that most, if not all of the jewellery from Tomb 10, was deposited during LH IIIC Early and LH IIIC Middle.

Despite the occurrence of exotica, Koan small finds do not deviate from the typical Mycenaean repertoire. All of the LH IIIC Early jewellery from Eleona and Langada comes from the latter cemetery, showing the same uneven distribution noticed for LH IIIB (Tabs. 5, 7). Such a tendency, implying a wealth distinction between Elena and Langada, is not limited to LH IIIB and LH IIIC Early. Around 90,0% of the jewellery from these two cemeteries comes from Langada⁵² and a similar distributional pattern is implied by weapons and other miscellaneous tools in bronze and stone throughout the history of these cemeteries (Tab. 6).

Italian/European-Type Bronze Objects on Kos

The Naue II sword and the spearhead with a fully cast socket from Langada Tomb 21 (Fig. 14), as well as the fibula from Tomb 10 (Fig. 20.15) are part of a larger group of bronze objects of possible Italian and/or European origin discovered on Kos.⁵³ This assemblage includes another spearhead with a fully cast socket (Fig. 21.1) and a knife of the so-called Scoglio del Tonno type with incised decoration along its top (non-cutting) edge (Fig. 21.2), both from the ‘Serraglio’; one razor with incised handle decoration from Langada Tomb 34 (Fig. 21.3); and one violin-bow fibula with a leaf-shaped bow from Langada Tomb 20 (Fig. 21.4).⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Morricone 1967, 99–111, figs. 81–91, 315a.

⁵¹ See Morricone 1967, 103–11, figs. 85–91, 315a. The vessels attributable to LH IIIC Early are nos. 8, 10, 54, 105, 109, 111, 114, 279, 281, 282, and 284. The vessels attributable to LH IIIC Early/Middle are nos. 99, 101, 104, 106, 107, 108, and 113. The vessels attributable to LH IIIC Middle are nos. 100, 102, 103, 110, 112, 278, 280, and 285. Finally, vessel no. 1365 can be assigned to LH IIIB2 Late, while no. 291 cannot be dated closely.

⁵² Vitale et al. 2017a, 275–277, tab. 22.

⁵³ For a more thorough discussion of the relationships between Italy/Europe, Kos, and the Dodecanese, including details on bronze and amber objects, see Vitale et al. 2017b, 248–251.

⁵⁴ See Benzi 2009b (with previous bibliography); Jung 2009; Jung – Mehofer 2009.

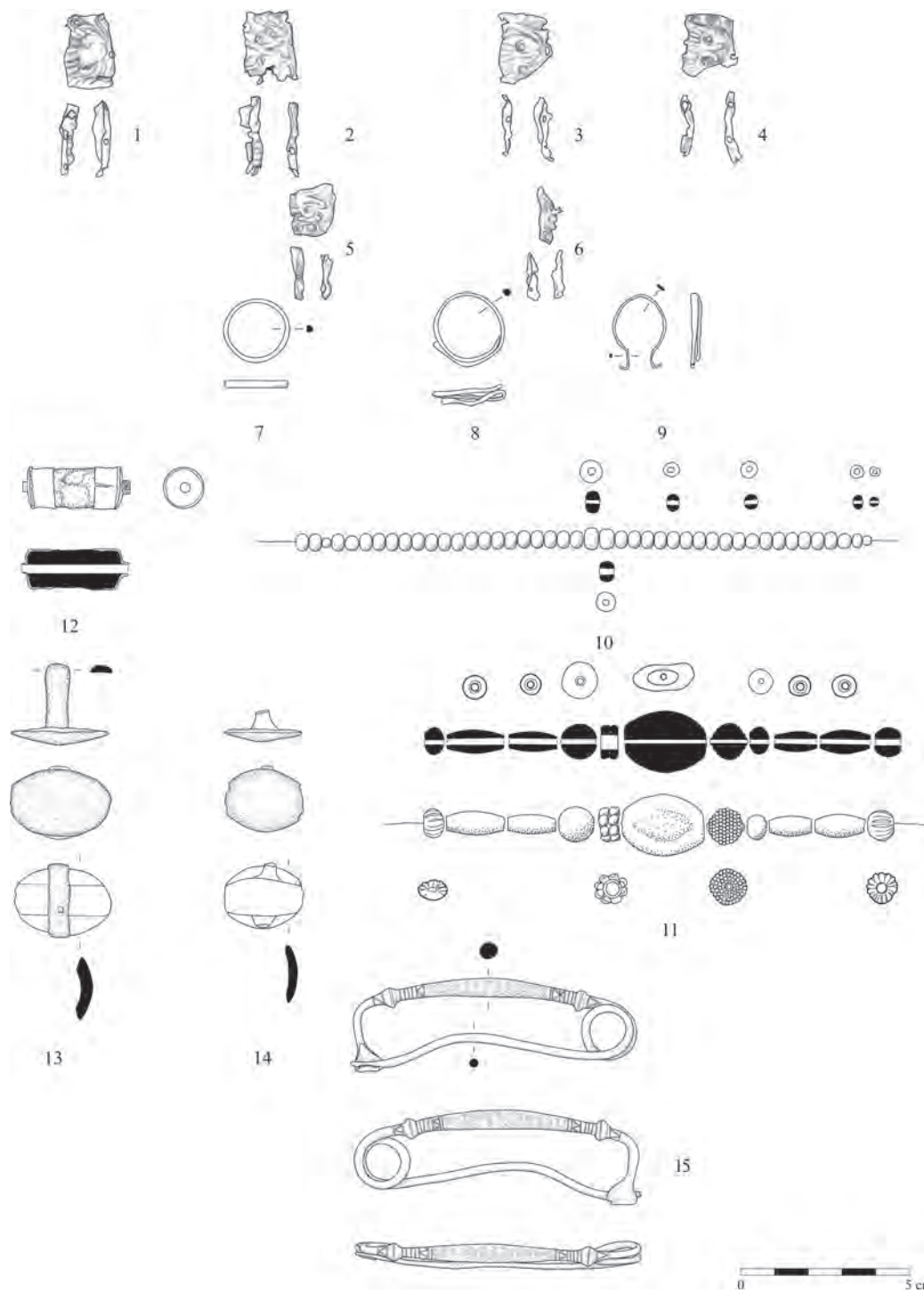


Fig. 20a Langada: LH IIIC Early/Middle (?) adornments in gold (nos. 1–10), gold, amethyst, carnelian, agate, and faience (no. 11), gold and blue stone (no. 12), silver or iron (nos. 13–14), and bronze (no. 15) from Tomb 10. Scale 1:2 (1–15: drawings M. Rossin, T. Ross)

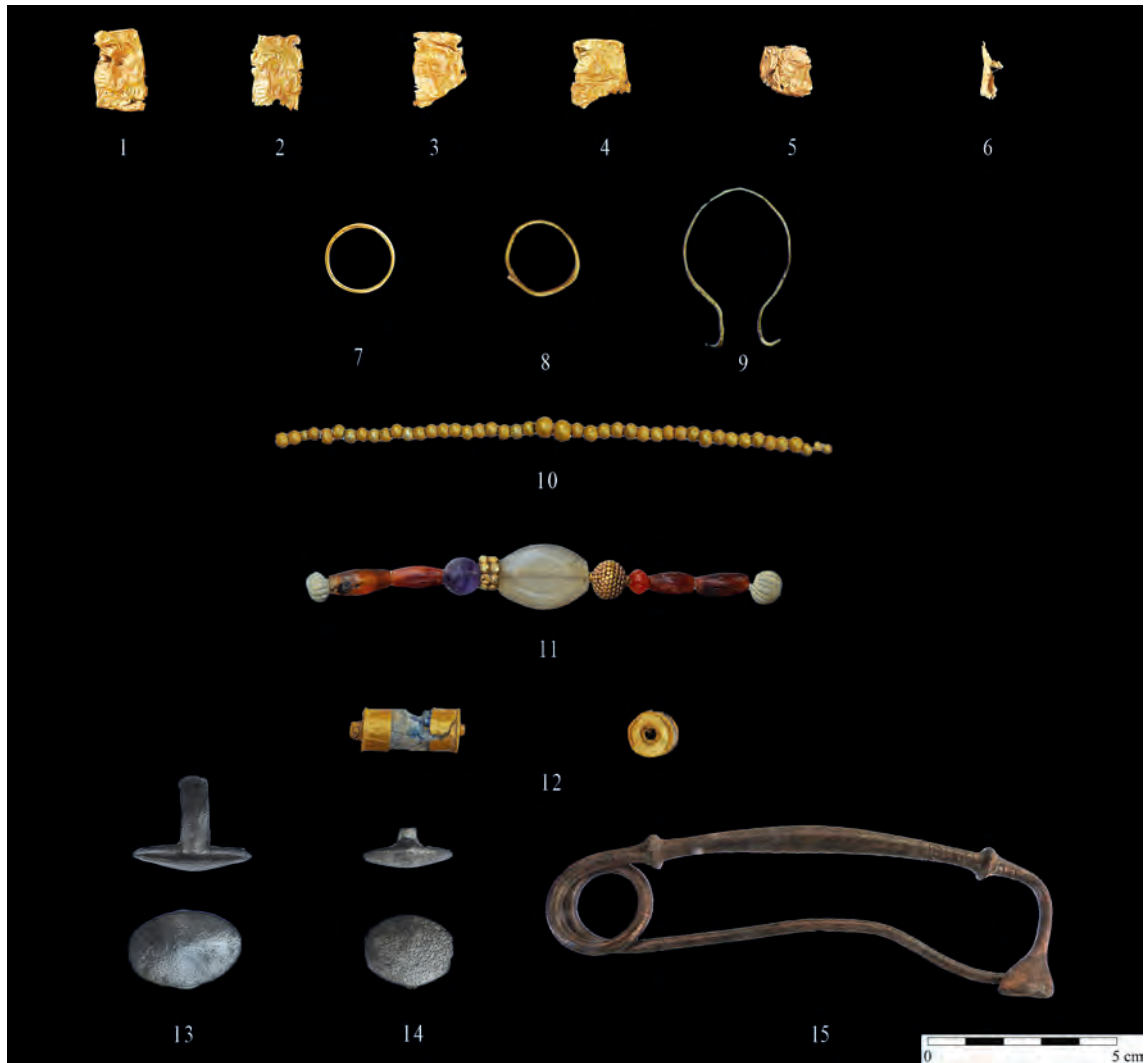


Fig. 20b See Fig. 20a (1–15: photo S. Vitale)

Due to SELAP's analysis of the stratigraphy and the complete or largely restorable vases from the 'Serraglio', Eleona, and Langada, the majority of these objects can now be dated with greater precision than they were in Morricone's publications (Tabs. 2–3, 8). As mentioned previously, the weapons from Langada Tomb 21 (Fig. 14) date to LH IIIB2 Late.⁵⁵ Langada Tomb 10 yielded pottery dating from LH IIIB2 Late to LH IIIC Middle, but the fibula from this tomb (Fig. 20.15) must be attributed typologically either to LH IIIC Early or LH IIIC Middle.⁵⁶ The vases from Langada Tomb 20 date to either LH IIIB1 or LH IIIC Middle, suggesting that the leaf-shaped fibula within this grave (Fig. 21.4) belongs to the later of these phases.⁵⁷ The razor from Langada Tomb 34 (Fig. 21.3) must belong to LH IIIC Middle, as do all the vases from this grave.⁵⁸ Finally, the Scoglio del Tonno knife and the undecorated spearhead with a fully cast socket recovered at the 'Serraglio' (Fig. 21.1–2) come from unstratified contexts. While the

⁵⁵ Morricone 1967, 136–142, figs. 121–128.

⁵⁶ Morricone 1967, 99–111, figs. 81–91.

⁵⁷ Morricone 1967, 134–135, figs. 119–120. While LH IIIC Middle is the most accurate date based on contextual evidence, on stylistic grounds, a date within LH IIIC Early for the fibula from Langada Tomb 20 cannot be completely excluded (see Kilian 1985, 183, 194, fig. 8).

⁵⁸ Morricone 1967, 163–168, figs. 166–171.

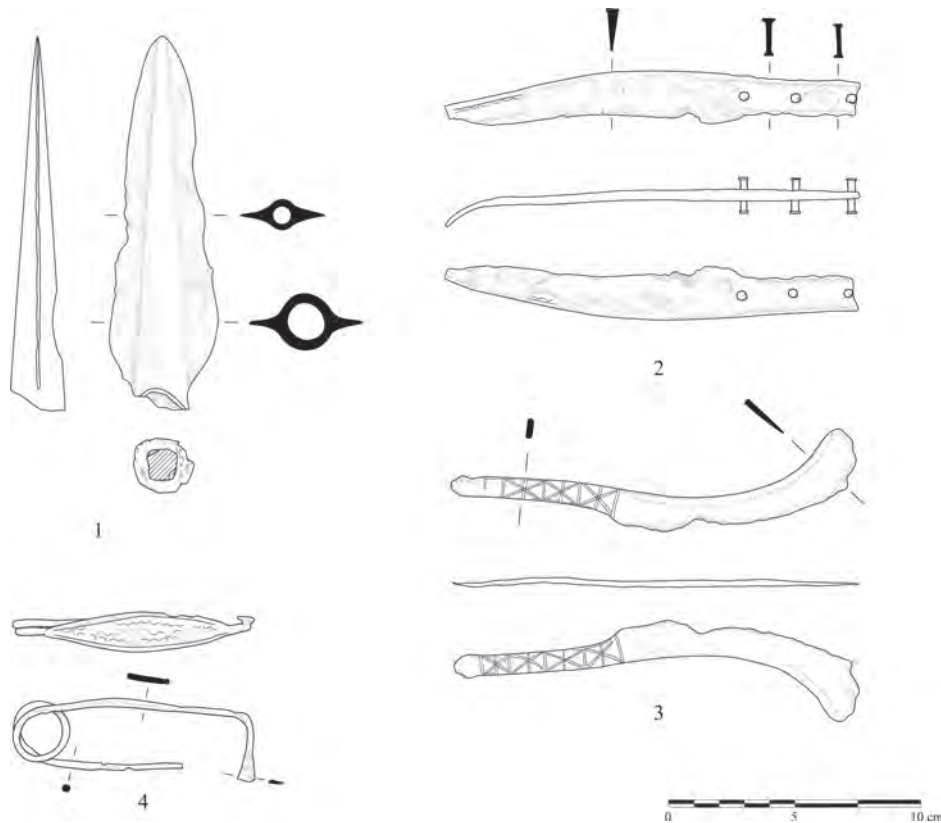


Fig. 21 The 'Serraglio' and Langada: Italian/European-type bronze objects. Scale 1:3
(1: S. Regio, R. Jung, T. Ross; 2–4: M. Rossin, T. Ross)

chronology of the former remains uncertain, the latter can be assigned typologically to the end of LH IIIB or to LH IIIC.

If the wider Dodecanesian area is considered, the spatial and chronological distribution of bronze objects of possible Italian/European origin shows interesting patterns. These finds were especially concentrated in funerary contexts. Kos seems to have had a prominent role in the region, as it includes 7 out of a total of 10 Italian/European-type bronzes from the Dodecanese. The remaining three bronzes⁵⁹ all come from Rhodes.

These data are particularly remarkable, if one considers the uneven number of excavated sites, especially cemeteries, on Kos compared to Rhodes and the disparate quantity of bronzes between the two islands. The total of known Mycenaean tombs on Kos (89 examples) is almost dwarfed by the Rhodian data set (166 examples).⁶⁰ Excluding adornments, LBA bronzes from Kos include 111 specimens (58 weapons and 53 weapons/tools or tools), while bronzes from Rhodes include 188 objects (80 weapons and 108 weapons/tools or tools).

The chronological distribution of the Italian/European-type objects from Rhodes has similarities and differences with the trends outlined previously for Kos. On Rhodes, two of the bronzes with Italian/European parallels date to LH IIIC, while one cannot be assigned to any specific

⁵⁹ The Italian/European-type bronzes from Rhodes consist of a ring-handled knife found in Tomb 15 from A. Maiuri's excavations at Ialysos, an arched fibula with plastic knots from Tomb 4 at Aspropilia, and a knife with a slightly sinuous blade of uncertain provenance, currently stored in the Archaeological Museum of Florence (see Benzi 1992, 223; Benzi 2009b, 157–163, figs. 1–3; Karantzali 2001, 18–19, 21, 70–71, fig. 42, pl. 47a). The latter specimen closely resembles the Scoglio del Tonno knife from the 'Serraglio'.

⁶⁰ The 89 Koan tombs include 83 graves from Eleona and Langada, the isolated chamber tombs from Ayia Paraskevi, Mesaria, Iraklis, and Castello, as well as the Georgaras and Thalassinos tholoi. The 166 Rhodian tombs include 129 graves from Ialysos and 37 from other Mycenaean cemeteries on the island (see Vitale et al. 2017b, 249).

period, as it lacks contextual evidence.⁶¹ This information implies that, within the Dodecanese, Italian/European-type bronze objects made their initial appearance on Kos during LH IIIB2 Late and that the uneven distribution of these imports on Kos and Rhodes increased during the phases between LH IIIB2 Late and LH IIIC Middle.

Discussion of the Data

The evidence presented above indicates that LH IIIB was a phase of expansion on Kos. The good quality of the structures of Phase III:4 implies the importance to the local community of a carefully built architectural environment. The distribution of the sites suggests that the north-eastern part of the island was densely occupied with two prominent sites, one at the ‘Serraglio’ and another at the Kastro at Palaio Pyli (Fig. 1). The ‘Serraglio’ and the associated cemeteries at Thalassinos, Eleona, and Langada show evidence for demographic growth and social stratification during LH IIIB. Demographic growth from LH IIIA2 is suggested by the increase in the number of the tombs and the vessels accompanying the deceased individuals at Eleona and Langada (Tabs. 2–4). Social stratification is implied by two elements. The first is the difference in tomb typology between the tholos at Thalassinos and the chamber tombs at Eleona and Langada, while the second is the status distinction between Eleona and Langada, with the latter including the wealthier burials in the community. At the same time, the spatial distribution of the graves at Langada (Fig. 11.1), as well as the existence of specific trends in tomb typology and shape, with a preference for chamber tombs with roughly circular plans, are indicative of a well defined social structure. On the opposite side of the Mesaria Plain, the importance of the Kastro at Palaio Pyli during LH IIIB is shown by the impressive defence wall, most likely implying the existence of a fortified stronghold (Figs. 9–10).

The LH IIIB to LH IIIC transition on northeast Kos was typified by potential signs of social uncertainty and upheaval. At Eleona and Langada, during LH IIIB2 Late, social distinction was expressed through the display of weapons (Fig. 14–15). At the end of the same phase, the ‘Serraglio’ was affected by a fire destruction event (Fig. 7). Slightly later, during LH IIIC Early and/or LH IIIC Middle, Sea Peoples-like characters were depicted on four local kraters (Fig. 16).

During LH IIIC Early, the number of sites attested on northeast Kos decreased from the previous phase. This fact suggests that the population may have abandoned smaller settlements and concentrated at the ‘Serraglio’ (Fig. 1), where the unimpressive quality of the structures of Phase III:5 indicates a decrease in the importance to the local community of a carefully built architectural environment. While status differentiation between Eleona and Langada continues, there is evidence for a more fluid social structure. This is shown by the less organised spatial arrangement of the tombs at Langada (Fig. 11.2), the increased variability in the shape of the chamber tombs, and the growth in the number of less formalised burial types, such as pit graves. In addition, the tholos tomb at Thalassinos was no longer used during LH IIIC Early.

These possible signs of social change by no means implied an impoverishment of northeast Kos. Two elements testify to the wealth and vivacity of the Koan community during LH IIIC Early. The first one is an increase in the quantity and quality of the jewellery (Tabs. 5, 7; Figs. 18–20). The second is the expansion in the diversity of ceramic and non-ceramic imports (Tabs. 4–5, 7; Fig. 17–20), which may have included the northeast Peloponnese, the Baltic region, Italy/Europe, the Near East, Cyprus, and Egypt, thus suggesting a more varied pattern of contacts as compared to LH IIIB.

Besides elements of change, there is also evidence for continuity in the material culture. The LH IIIB to LH IIIC transition on Kos was smooth in terms of local ceramic manufacturing hab-

⁶¹ The ring-handled knife found in Tomb 15 from Ialysos and the arched fibula from Tomb 4 at Aspropilia date to LH IIIC Early-Middle and LH IIIC Middle-Late respectively. The knife stored in the Archaeological Museum of Florence cannot be dated precisely (Benzi 2009b, 157–163).

its.⁶² Similarly, despite the acquisition of a more diverse array of imported jewellery during LH III C Early, the repertoire of the adornments from Eleona and Langada preserved an overall Mycenaean character.

The Italian/European-type bronze objects discovered on Kos (Figs. 14, 20.15, 21) and in the wider Dodecanesian area raise two significant questions. The first one concerns the reason why these items appeared during the phases from LH III B2 Late to LH III C Middle (Tab. 8). A possible answer is that the peak in the circulation of Italian/European-type objects in the southeast Aegean may relate to piracy, a phenomenon that likely grew during the troubled last decades of the 13th century BCE with the collapse of the Mycenaean palaces.⁶³ In addition to the previously mentioned signs of social upheaval on Kos at the LH III B to LH III C Early transition, other data indicate political tension in the southeast Aegean waters during LH III B. In the mid-13th-century Tawagalawa letter, a Hittite king, presumably Hattusili III, addressed the king of Ahhiyawa complaining about the Hittite renegade Piyamaradu, who repeatedly raided the western frontier of the Hittite empire before fleeing back to safety in the Ahhiyawan territory.⁶⁴ Eventually, tension along the western Anatolian coast may have culminated in the destruction of Miletus at the LH III B to LH III C Early transition.⁶⁵

	LH III B2 Late	LH III B2 Late – LH III C Middle	LH III C Early–Middle	LH III C Middle	Un- datable	Total
Scoglio del Tonno type knife (the ‘Serraglio’, stray find)	–	–	–	–	1	1
Spearhead with a fully cast socket (the ‘Serraglio’, stray find)	–	1	–	–	–	1
Violin bow fibula (Langada, Tomb 10)	–	–	1	–	–	1
Naue II sword (Langada, Tomb 21)	1	–	–	–	–	1
Spearhead with a fully cast socket (Langada, Tomb 21)	1	–	–	–	–	1
Violin bow fibula, leaf-shaped bow (Langada, Tomb 20)	–	–	–	1	–	1
Razor with incised handle decoration (Langada, Tomb 34)	–	–	–	1	–	1
Total	2	1	1	2	1	7

Tab. 8 Chronological distribution of Italian/European-type bronzes from the ‘Serraglio’, Eleona, and Langada

Based on these data, piracy may provide a good explanation to address the increased presence of Italian/European-type objects on Kos from LH III B2 Late to LH III C Middle. Considering the iconography of the characters depicted on locally produced LH III C Early and/or Middle kraters from the ‘Serraglio’ (Fig. 16), it seems probable for pirates in the southeast Aegean to have been connected to the raids in the region by the so-called Sea Peoples.⁶⁶

The second question raised by the Italian/European-type bronze objects found in the Dodecanese concerns the prominent role of Kos, which is demonstrated by the quantitative distribution of these items. Considering the chronological placement of the finds, with a significant peak

⁶² For Koan LBA manufacturing practices, see Vitale 2017; Vitale – Morrison 2017.

⁶³ Jung 2009.

⁶⁴ Beckman et al. 2011, 101–122.

⁶⁵ Mountjoy 2004.

⁶⁶ Mountjoy 2005; Jung 2009; Vitale 2012a, 1236; Vitale 2012b, 413–414, pl. 95f–i.

between the end of LH IIIB and LH IIIC Middle, the answer to this question may lay in the different trajectories followed by Kos and Rhodes in the 13th century BCE. In contrast to Koan wealth and expansion, the major settlements and trading outposts in northwestern Rhodes, as well as the nearby cemeteries, appear either to have been abandoned or in substantial decline during LH IIIB.⁶⁷ Rhodes witnessed a revival in the Post-palatial period, especially at Ialysos, as indicated by the rich finds from Tombs 20 and 61.⁶⁸ However, it is likely that once the Italian/European contacts with Kos increased at the end of the 13th century BCE, the pattern continued naturally into the 12th century. As a result, Rhodes may have been more marginally involved in Dodecanesian connections with Italy/Europe during LH IIIC, despite its rich revival at that time.

Final Statements

Following the brief discussion of the data provided above, three final statements can be made concerning Koan socio-political trajectories in the wider context of the eastern Mediterranean from the beginning of the 13th to the middle of the 12th century BCE. First, considering the wealth of the island during LH IIIB, it is likely that the importance of Kos within this phase may have grown at the expense of Rhodes. This fact suggests that, during LH IIIB, Kos may have had a prominent political role in the southeast Aegean, an area which was most likely Ahhiyawan territory at that time.⁶⁹

Second, Kos was affected by the crisis that marked the transition between the 13th and the 12th century BCE not only within the Aegean area, but, more generally, all over the eastern Mediterranean. This fact is demonstrated by the final destruction of the settlement of Phase III:4b at the ‘Serraglio’ during LH IIIB2 Late and by the emphasis placed on weapons in the offerings accompanying the deceased individuals buried in Tombs 21 and 46 at Langada, which also date to LH IIIB2 Late.⁷⁰

Third, despite the upheavals that occurred at the end of LH IIIB, the Koan inhabitants were able to face the crisis and profit from the opportunities created by the more fluid ‘international’ socio-political scenario after the fall of the Mycenaean palaces. This fact is demonstrated by the degree of wealth of LH IIIC Early burials at Eleona and Langada (Tabs. 6–8). Such a prompt reaction may have been one of the key factors that led Kos to play a major role in the flourishing of the so-called East Aegean Koine during LH IIIC Middle.⁷¹

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⁶⁷ Mee 1982, 87; Benzi 1992, 214–216; Vitale 2012a, 1246; Vitale 2012b, 413.

⁶⁸ Benzi 1992, 222, 271–275, 361–365.

⁶⁹ See Vitale 2012a, 1246; Vitale 2012b, 413; Vitale 2016a, 87. On the Ahhiyawa question, see Re 1986; Re 1994; Mountjoy 1998; Niemeier 1999; Benzi 2002; Hope Simpson 2003; Benzi 2009a; Fischer 2010; Hawkins 2015 (all with previous bibliography).

⁷⁰ Vitale 2012a, 1238, figs. 2, 5–6; Vitale 2012b, 410–412, pls. 94a, d–e; 95a–e; Vitale 2016b, 260–261, 263, pls. 2a–b, 3; Vitale et al. 2017b.

⁷¹ Mountjoy 1999, 45, 50, 1106–1125, figs. 452–461.

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