

# Mochlos IVA

Period III. The House of the Metal Merchant  
and Other Buildings in the Neopalatial Town

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*Volume 1*

TEXT



Frontispiece. Inscribed copper ingot (IVA.150). Watercolor D. Faulmann.

# Mochlos IVA

## Period III. The House of the Metal Merchant and Other Buildings in the Neopalatial Town

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*Volume 1*

TEXT

*By*

Jeffrey S. Soles

*Contributions by*

Tristan Carter, Joanne Cutler<sup>†</sup>, Georgios Doudalis, Douglas Faulmann,  
Jonathan M. Flood, Alessandra R. Giumlia-Mair, Angela M. Hussein, Luke Kaiser,  
Olga Krzyszkowska, Evi Margaritis, Jerolyn Morrison, Dimitra Mylona,  
Maria Ntinou, Katerina Papayianni, Zophia Stos-Gale, and Polly Westlake

*Edited by*

Jeffrey S. Soles and Costis Davaras<sup>†</sup>



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best preserved of the buildings in the excavation, where two large bronze hoards were discovered in 1993 and 2004.

The book also describes the Neopalatial town plan and 13 other structures in the settlement, including two from the

1908 excavation, as a traveler would come upon them when he/she entered the town in the Late Minoan IB period.

It leads the reader on the route one might take on the two roads that ran through the settlement—one a narrow

corridor, the other a major avenue—and describes the buildings that the visitor would pass as he/she came upon

them. They include seven ordinary houses, a hostel, two shrines and their adjacent service buildings, and one

storage facility. The text volume discusses each building, including a description of its stratigraphy, its architecture,

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# Preface

In this two-volume set we present the results of excavations carried out by our Greek-American archaeological team, directed by Jeffrey S. Soles and Costis Davaras<sup>†</sup>, in the Neopalatial Minoan town on the islet of Mochlos, located just off the northeastern coast of Crete. A major part of the work that we conducted on the island in four different campaigns—the first in 1989–1994, the second in 2004–2005, the third in 2009–2010, and the last in 2012—is described, as well as some of Richard Seager’s investigations on the island in 1908 (Seager 1909). The excavation exposed remains of several different periods, including most of the Bronze Age and some later periods: the Archaic, Late Hellenistic, and Byzantine periods. The largest amount of archaeological material and the focus of the project, however, has been the Bronze Age, which spans the years from ca. 3100 to 1250 B.C. at Mochlos and includes the Prepalatial, Protopalatial, and Neopalatial periods of the Minoan civilization, along with the Late Minoan (LM) III or Mycenaean period. These time frames have been identified in the Mochlos publications as Periods I, II, III, and IV, and the most extensive of these periods is Period III, the Neopalatial period, which is the focus here.

The Greek-American team used the years between and after its excavation campaigns as study seasons to publish results of the excavation and to carry out an extensive site conservation program. We have produced nine books to date in the Mochlos excavation series. In the first three books we published remains of Period III that were located on the Cretan coast opposite the islet where a workshop and several farmhouses were found. These excavations were presented in *Mochlos IA* (Soles 2003), *Mochlos IB* (Barnard and Brogan 2003), and *Mochlos IC* (Soles et al. 2004). In the second group of three books—*Mochlos IIA* (Soles 2008b), *Mochlos IIB* (Smith 2010), and *Mochlos IIC* (Soles et al. 2011) we presented the remains of Period IV on the island, where a small LM III settlement was built on top of ruined

Minoan houses, and on the coast opposite, where a cemetery of chamber tombs was located. In a seventh volume, remains of the Hellenistic period on the islet were described in a single book, *Mochlos* III (Vogeikoff-Brogan 2014). Here in *Mochlos* IVA we publish material from the buildings in the Period III town on the islet and discuss their use. In *Mochlos* IVB we will catalog and analyze the pottery that was found in these buildings. These volumes are the first comprehensive look at the Neopalatial town on the islet, and they will be followed by two more works, one describing the main ceremonial complex that was located in the midst of the Neopalatial town and another concerned with a workshop area in the town. The aim of these volumes is to present as much of the Neopalatial town plan as possible, along with its individual buildings and their contents, and to reconstruct the history of the town, the activities of its occupants, and the role the town played in Minoan society.

In *Mochlos* IVA we describe 12 buildings (B.1, B.4, C.1–C.6, C.8, C.10, C.12, D.7), a bench shrine, and a small temenos. Most of these buildings are incomplete. Some were previously excavated in part or in their entirety by Seager (B.1, C.1, C.2, C.6, C.8), others were partly destroyed by beach erosion or earthquake (C.1, C.4, C.12), one remains largely buried beneath a Byzantine building and modern cemetery (C.4), and all were damaged by later Mycenaean and Hellenistic activity. Only two or three might be described as “well preserved,” and House C.3, the House of the Metal Merchant, is the best example of these, with its ground floor and basement walls still standing and many of its contents intact. Despite their varying states of preservation, most of the buildings produced large amounts of Neopalatial pottery in remarkably well-stratified deposits. The earliest deposits date to Middle Minoan (MM) IIIA and mark the beginning of the new town that was laid out ca. 1700 B.C. Most of the houses belong to this initial phase of building, while some date only to the LM IB period (ca. 1530 B.C.), when new settlers arrived and the town was enlarged to accommodate them. All structures were standing and in use at the time of the final LM IB destruction (ca. 1430 B.C.), which demolished them all and ended the Minoan occupation of the site that had lasted over a thousand years.

We present here all the evidence about these buildings that a modern excavation can uncover. The book begins with a presentation of the site’s excavation and a description of the town’s plan and development in the Neopalatial period. Following this introduction, Chapters 1 and 2 discuss the physical remains of the different buildings, beginning with the House of the Metal Merchant, which preserved two great metal hoards, and ending with the temenos, which served as one of the town’s principal shrines. Each building is presented in the same manner, starting with an overview and then proceeding with a room-by-room description ordered as one might move through the building. The stratigraphy of each room is discussed first, followed by its architecture and finds, and then, whenever possible, the identification of its function is considered. As in previous *Mochlos* volumes, a complete list of artifacts and ecofacts found in the room is presented after the description of each room. The finds are discussed in more detail in the following chapters—metal objects in Chapter 3; seals in Chapter 4; ceramic, stone, bone, and shell objects in Chapter 5; loomweights and evidence for textile production in Chapter 6; obsidian and ground stone implements in Chapters 7 and 8, respectively; and the plaster in Chapter 9. As part of the excavation program, an exhaustive soil sampling project was carried out, and in Chapters 10–13 the organic remains that were retrieved as a result of this effort are described. These include the animal remains, the microvertebrate fauna, the palaeobotany, and the wood charcoal. In Chapter 14 the principal author makes general conclusions about life at *Mochlos* in the Neopalatial period. This is followed by the references and index. Volume 2 of *Mochlos* IVA begins with a concordance matching field numbers used in most architectural drawings with the bold catalog numbers in this two-volume set. Tables, figures, and plates complete this companion volume of the set.

Minoan civilization was an urban civilization, and Neopalatial Mochlos was an important town in this civilization, partly because of its location on an important trade route that allowed its inhabitants to prosper and partly because of its function as a center of production that met the needs of the surrounding population and travelers passing through on ships. In addition, Mochlos also played an important role in the religious activities of the region and was a sacred place to those who lived there and to many visitors. The town reached its peak of development in the LM IB period, the last century of Minoan civilization, and most of the remains that the excavation was able to document belong to this period, a time before its destruction in 1430 B.C.

Jeffrey S. Soles  
Costis Davaras<sup>†</sup>



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The Greek-American excavations at Mochlos were carried out in collaboration with, and under the auspices of, the Hellenic Archaeological Service and the American School of Classical Studies at Athens (ASCSA) with the support of the Ephorate of Antiquities of Lasithi (formerly the 24th Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities). A number of individuals served as supervisors of the ephoreia over the course of the excavation, including Costis Davaras<sup>†</sup> (1989–1994), Nikos Papadakis (1995–2002), Vili Apostolakou (2002–2012), and Chrysa Sofianou (2012–present), and we are indebted to all of them for their support and encouragement. We are also indebted to the directors of ASCSA during these years who supported the project, particularly William D.E. Coulson, James D. Muhly, Jack L. Davis, and James Wright.

Excavation is an expensive undertaking. The project has been funded by several agencies, including the Institute for Aegean Prehistory (INSTAP), which has supported the project every year since 1989 and provided the lion's share of the funding, and also the National Endowment for the Humanities, which provided funding for three campaigns (1989–1992, 2005–2006, 2010–2011), the Loeb Classical Library Foundation of Harvard University (2004, 2005, 2009, 2012), and the Samuel H. Kress Foundation (1992–1994, 1996–1997, 1999–2000, 2004). Additional support has been provided by the Solow Art and Architecture Foundation, the William A. Stern Foundation, and the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Private donors also played an important role in supporting excavation, and we are especially grateful for the support of the late Baron Philippe and Baroness Marion Lambert who were generous friends of the excavation from its first season of work in 1989. We are also indebted to Michael D. Ratner who excavated on the project, made an important discovery that has been published in a preliminary report (Soles 2007),

and supported the project generously. Last but not least is Karen Morely Westcott who has supported the project every year for nearly 20 years.

*Mochlos* IVA, like all *Mochlos* volumes, is a collaborative publication that has relied upon the expertise of several scholars and the hard work of many students. The major contributors are the authors whose names are listed in the Chapters 3–13: Alessandra Giumlia-Mair, Zophia Stos-Gale, Olga Krzyszkowska, Angela M. Hussein, Joanne Cutler<sup>†</sup>, Tristan Carter, Jonathan M. Flood, Polly Westlake, Dimitra Mylona, Katerina Papayianni, Evi Margaritis, and Maria Ntinou. Many of these scholars have published material in earlier *Mochlos* volumes and are permanent members of the *Mochlos* team. Several of these individuals would like to express their own thanks to others who helped them in various ways. Olga Krzyszkowska wishes to thank Eleni Papadopoulou for permission to study and photograph the Vrysinas seal that she discusses in her chapter. Dimitra Mylona would like to thank David Reese for undertaking the first stage of processing and identifying the molluscan remains. Katerina Papayianni wishes to thank Petros Lymberakis and Lars Van den Hoek Ostende for providing micromammal comparative material, as well as Stefania Michalopoulou for assisting with the reptile-amphibian identifications. She is also indebted to ASCSA for an Advanced Fellowship in 2008–2009, which funded a large part of her study. No less important are the individuals who have studied the pottery and provided the dates for the various deposits discussed in the book, Jerolyn Morrison, who is responsible for the publication of the pottery in *Mochlos* IVB, and Georgios Doudalis and Luke Kaiser, who undertook the statistical analysis of the deposits. The lists of finds, including the floral and faunal material, that follow the descriptions of individual rooms in Chapters 1 and 2, are also the work of all these individuals. Douglas Faulmann, who has served as the project's architect and artist every year since 1990, is also a key member of the *Mochlos* team. He provides invaluable expertise as an important interpreter of the site's architecture and stratigraphy and is responsible for most of the state plans, architectural sections, and small find drawings presented in this book. Finally, we would like to thank the many people who supported our work in other ways, especially Angela Ratigan, who organized our apotheke, Kelly Barnard, Tom Brogan, and Ann Nicgorski, who helped identify pottery fabrics and shapes early in the project, and Stanley Chang and Scott Rosenjack, who put our statistical tables in order. We are also grateful to the numerous undergraduate students from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro who have worked so hard on the project over the years, especially Chase Brinkley, Ryan Burns, Kelly Caldwell, Damon Cassiano, Sarah Duncan, Brianna Jenkins, Ari Lukas, Robert Mallette, Benjamin Miller, Jessie Miller, Samuel Previtte, Joey Roberts, Lauren Souther, and Kristen Welsh.

In 1997 the INSTAP Study Center for East Crete opened its doors and transformed the way excavation is conducted in Crete and in many other parts of the Aegean. It provided many resources that were previously lacking and upgraded much of the equipment that excavations had been using. Among the new services it offered was a state of the art conservation laboratory, directed by Stephania Chlouveraki and more recently by Kathy Hall, which provided the project with experienced conservators. Voula Golfomitsou treated the bronze objects published in this book, and Matina Tzari and Zoe Chalatsi conserved most of the pottery and small finds. The Study Center also provided photographic services under the direction of Chronis Papanikolopoulos, who transitioned us into digital photography, making a world of difference in the quality of the project's photographs, and introduced us first to overhead boom photography and then, with Douglas Faulmann, to drone photography. Nearly all the small find photographs in the volume were taken by Papanikolopoulos, while the site photographs were taken mostly by the author assisted by Jesse Obert and a series of amateur photographers, who are thanked in *Mochlos* IIA (Soles 2008b, xx–vii). The study center also provided the services of Eleanor Huffman, its business manager,

who assumed the burden of hiring Greek workers, an incredibly bureaucratic and time-consuming process, thereby liberating the project's directors from traveling to Siteia every month and standing in line to pay IKA (Ιδρύματος Κοινωνικών Ασφαλίσεων/Idryma Koinonikon Asfaliseon/Social Insurance Institution) benefits.

Above all the project is indebted to the trench masters, who kept the excavation notebooks and directed the digging in their trenches, to the trench assistants, who assisted them in the field, and to the Greek workers, who did the actual digging. We were lucky to attract such a large number of able and enthusiastic teammates. Many of them have already been thanked in the acknowledgments of previous Mochlos volumes, and to those names already cited should be added Caitie Barrett, Konstantinos Chalikias, Ryan Clarke, Chad DiGregorio, Georgios Doudalis, Jonathan M. Flood, Karen Necciai, Jesse Obert, Douglas Park, Ariel Pearce-Chalikias, and Evi Saliaka. Many of them were graduate students at the time, but they have since gone on to earn their doctoral degrees and make names for themselves as distinguished archaeologists.

Finally, we would like to thank the anonymous reviewers of this book for their careful reading of the manuscript before its publication and suggestions for improvement. We also thank the INSTAP Academic Press and its stalwart copy editor who caught numerous errors in the manuscript and corrected them all. Any that remain are ours alone.

Jeffrey S. Soles  
Costis Davaras<sup>†</sup>



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## Abbreviations

a	length of olecranon	cm	centimeter(s)
AAS	atomic absorption spectrometry	cm <sup>2</sup>	square centimeters
ANM	Hagios Nikolaos Museum	C/P	canine or premolar
AS	architectural stone inventory number	CS	chipped stone inventory number
ASCSA	American School of Classical Studies at Athens	d.	diameter
avg	average	DC	depth of condyle
AW	anterior width	Dd	depth distal
B	bone; blade (in the context of chipped stone) inventory number	de	distal end
Bd	breadth distal	di. ep.	distal epiphysis
BL	buccal length	dims.	dimensions
Bp	breadth proximal	dist.	distal
C	ceramic inventory number	Dp	depth proximal
CA	copper alloy inventory number	dp <sup>4</sup>	deciduous maxillary premolar
ca.	circa	EB	Early Bronze Age
cat.	catalog	ED-XRF	energy dispersive X-ray fluorescence
CF	Coarse Ware fabric	EM	Early Minoan
CMS	<i>Corpus der minoischen und mykenischen Siegel</i>	est.	estimated
		F	fused (animal bones); flake (chipped stone); faience (jewelry)

FF	Fine Buff fabric	n/a	not applicable
FM	Furumark Motif number	n	number (count)
FORTH-IESL	Foundation for Research and Technology–Hellas, Institute of Electronic Structure and Laser	NAA NISP	neutron activation analysis number of identifiable specimens for each anatomical part/taxon of mammals and fish
FS	Furumark Shape number		
g	gram(s)	no.	number (designation)
Gl	greater length	nonID	nonidentifiable fragments of mammals and fish
GLl	greater length lateral		
GLm	greater length medial	P	pottery inventory number
Glb	glenoid breadth	P <sup>3</sup>	premolar
GS	ground stone inventory number	Pb	lead inventory number
h.	height	PCA	Principal Components Analysis
HM	Herakleion Museum	pe	proximal end
HT	height	PE	length to the posterior emargination
indet.	indeterminate		
INSTAP	Institute for Aegean Prehistory	pers. comm.	personal communication
inv.	inventory	pers. obv.	personal observation
kg	kilogram(s)	Pl	plaster inventory number
L	left	pr. ep.	proximal epiphysis
L.	length	prep	preparation piece
LBA	Late Bronze Age	pres.	preserved
LC	Late Cycladic	PW	posterior width
LIA	lead isotope analysis	R	right
LIBS	laser-induced breakdown spectroscopy	RRN RT	Royal Road North roof tile
LL	lingual length	rej	rejuvenation piece
LM	Late Minoan	s	shaft
m	meter	S	stone
M	mineral inventory number	SE	southeastern
M <sup>1</sup>	permanent maxillary molar	Sh	shell inventory number
M <sub>3</sub>	permanent mandibular molar	SM	Siteia Museum
m <sup>1</sup>	deciduous maxillary molar	TAW	talonid width
m <sup>2</sup>	square meters	th.	thickness
m <sub>3</sub>	deciduous mandibular molar	tr.	trace amounts
max.	maximum	TRW	trigonid width
min.	minimum	vol.	volume
MM	Middle Minoan	w.	width
MNI	minimum number of individuals of marine invertebrates	XRF yr(s)	X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy year(s)
mo(s)	month(s)		
MS	Mediterranean Section number, Penn Museum, Philadelphia, PA, USA		

# Mochlos IVA

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*Volume 2*

CONCORDANCE, TABLES, FIGURES, AND PLATES



Frontispiece. Inscribed copper ingot (IVA.150). Watercolor D. Faulmann.

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