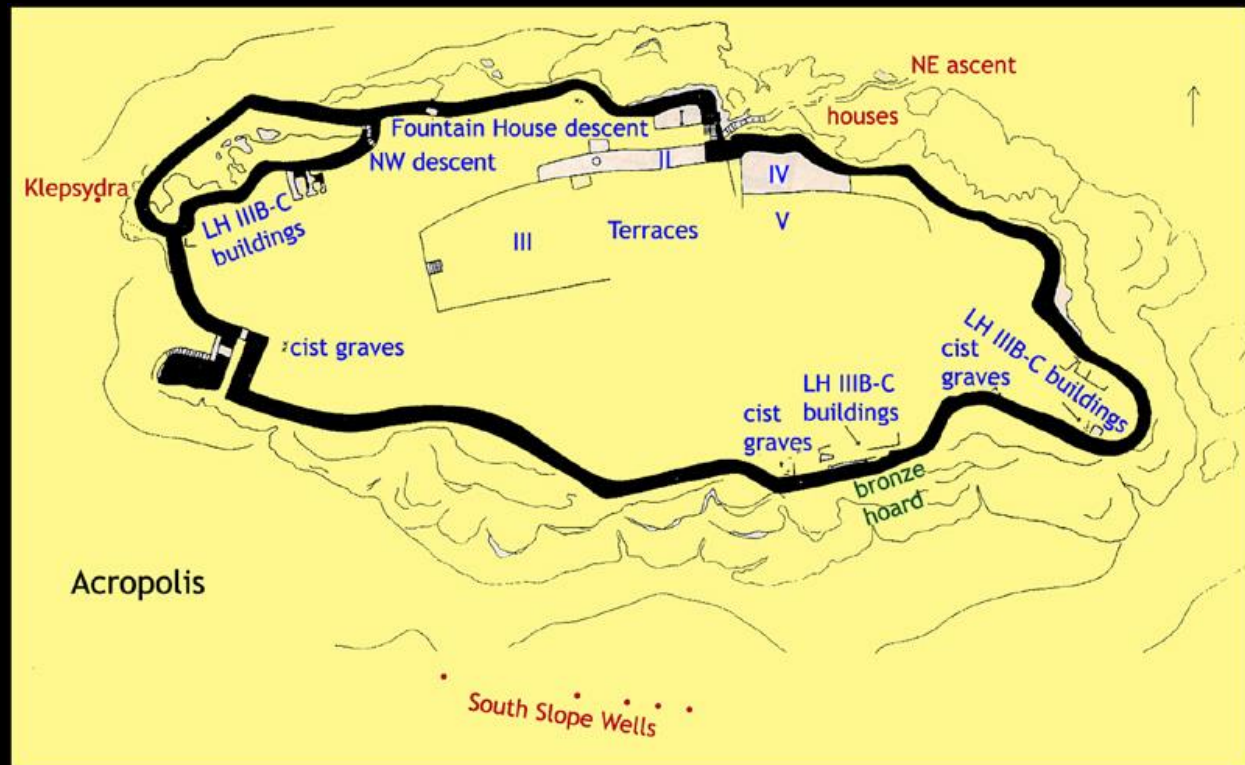


Men of Bronze
Athens and Attiki

Bronze Age Athens

- Incomplete knowledge:
 - continuous habitation
 - problems of urban archaeology
- Main sites:
 - Acropolis
 - Agora
 - Kerameikos

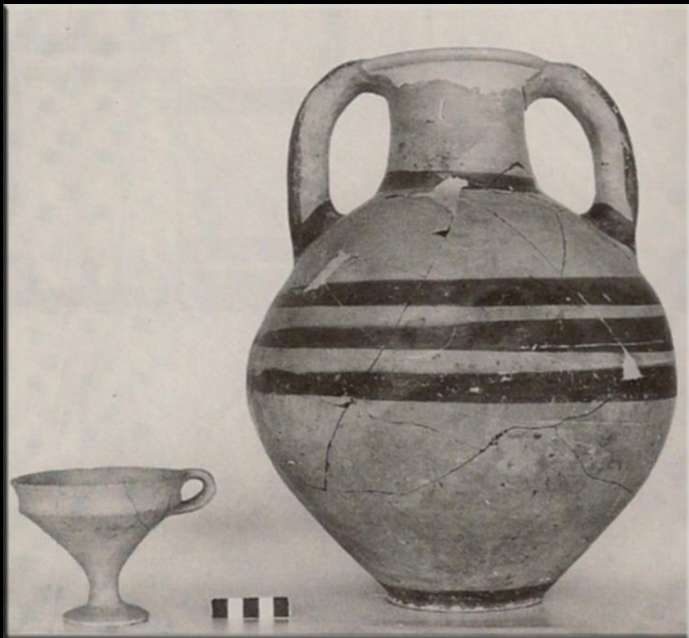


Chronology



- Early Helladic = (EBA)
 - EH I (Eutresis culture)
c.3100-2650 BC
 - EH II (Korakou culture)
c.2650-2200 BC
 - EH III (Tiryns culture)
c.2200-2000 BC
[Arrival of the Greeks?]
- Middle Helladic = (MBA)
 - c.2000-1550 BC
[c.1600-1550 = contemporary with Shaft Graves]

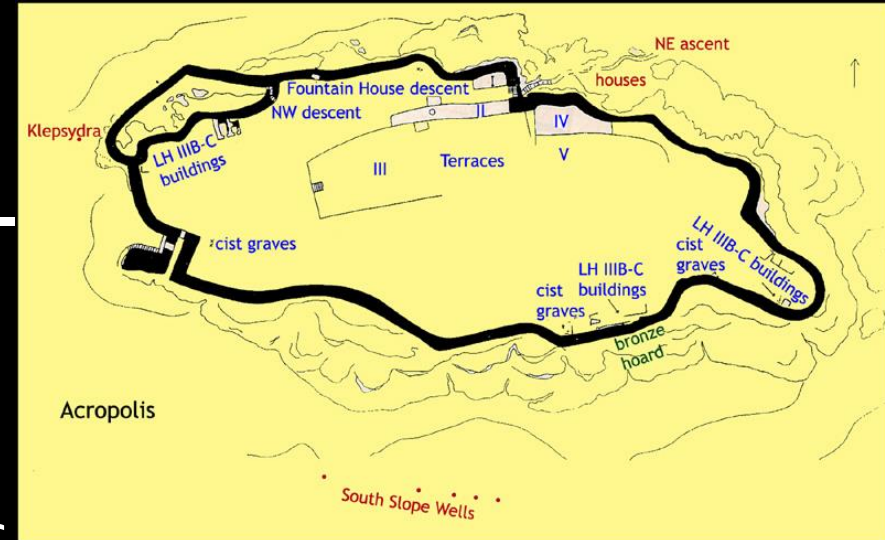
Chronology



- Late Helladic / Mycenaean period = LBA
 - LH I: c.1550-1500 BC
[contemporary with Shaft Graves]
 - LH IIA: c.1500-1460 BC
 - LH IIB: c.1460-1400 BC
 - LH IIIA1: c.1400-1375 BC)
 - LH IIIA2: c.1375-1300 BC) Palaces
 - LH IIIB: c.1300-1190 BC)
 - LH IIIC: c. 1190-1050 BC
 - Submycenaean: c.1050-1000 BC

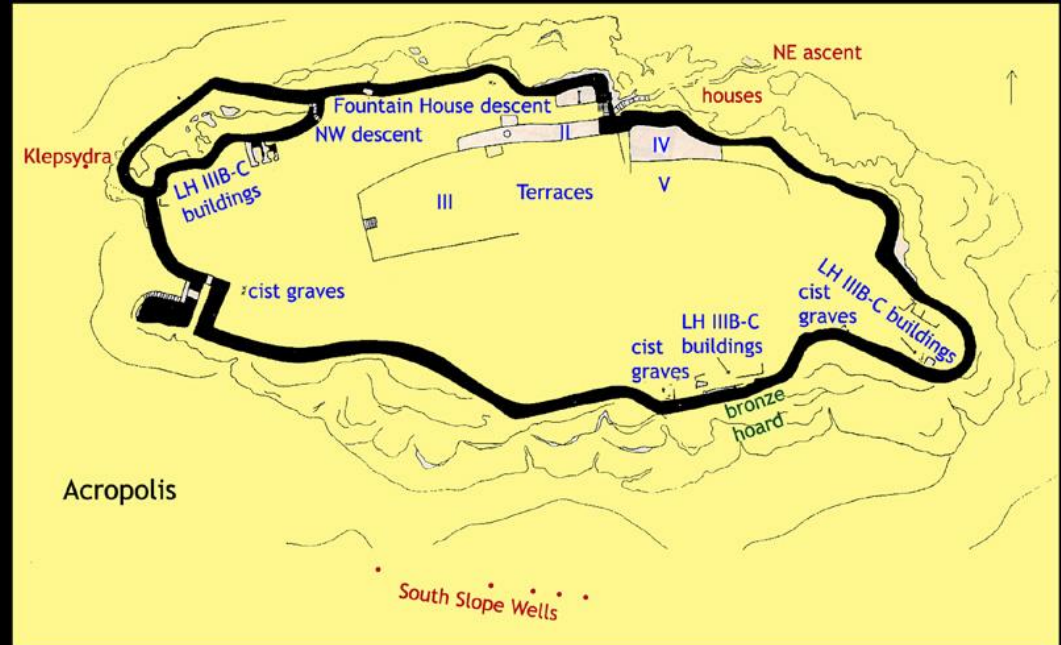
Early Bronze Age

- Period of expanding maritime contact
- Attica: thriving communities along south & east coast
 - eg. Ayios Kosmos, Thorikos
- Athens: very little evidence:
 - not involved in exchange networks?
 - Pottery from south slope of Acropolis & Agora



Middle Bronze Age

- MH Athens: thriving community
- Acropolis & Agora:
 - MH wells on north slope
 - deposits of Grey Minyan ware, north & south slope & summit
 - Habitation in area of Erechtheion
 - 5 MH cist graves



Mycenaean Period



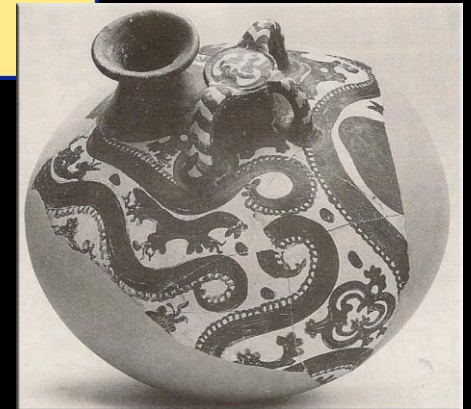
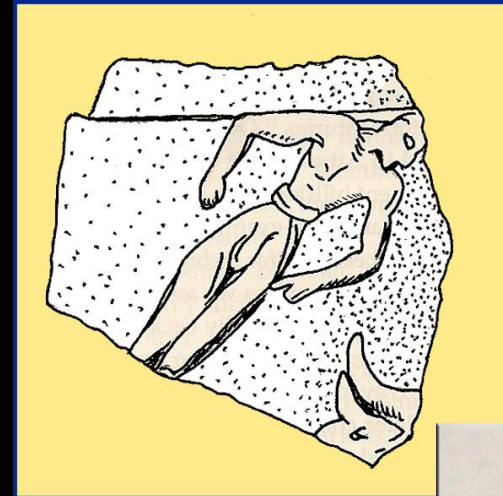
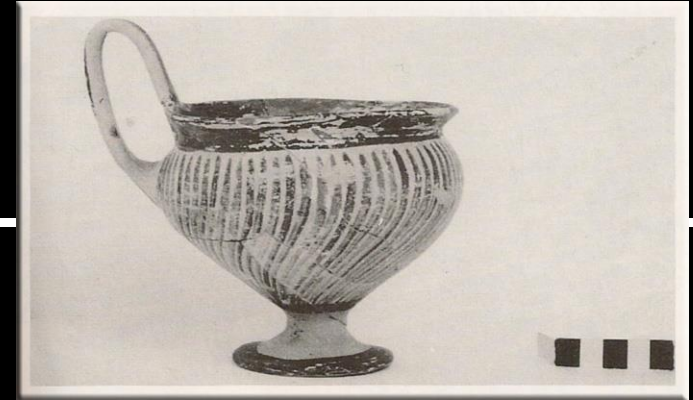
- “Age of Heroes” ?
- Peloponnese = main focus of power on Greek mainland
- 16th-14th centuries: competing polities in Greece
 - Traded with Crete, Near East & northern Europe
 - Removed from circulation in rich burials
- 14th century: appearance of palaces

Athens during Mycenaean Period?

- Mentioned in the Catalogue of Ships
- Legendary rulers : Aegaeus, Theseus, Erechtheus
- **Thucydides 21.15.3**: folk memory of time before Theseus when city only comprised Acropolis & area to south:
- Limited material:
 - Mycenaean stronghold /citadel at Acropolis
- Other important sites in Attica (separate polities?):
 - Thorikos
 - Menidi

Mycenaean Athens

- Settlement centre on Acropolis
- Until LH IIIA – only patchy evidence:
 - LH II: “palatial” style pottery
 - rare Minoan imports
 - local imitation Marine style pots
- Possible “chieftain’s house” on top of Acropolis – precursor of palace?

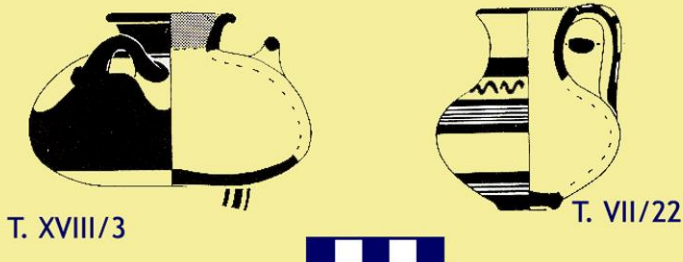


Mycenaean Athens

- LH IIIA: expansion of settlement beyond Acropolis
- Large cemetery in area of Agora:
 - 50 chamber tombs
 - Agora T.1: wealthy female burial?



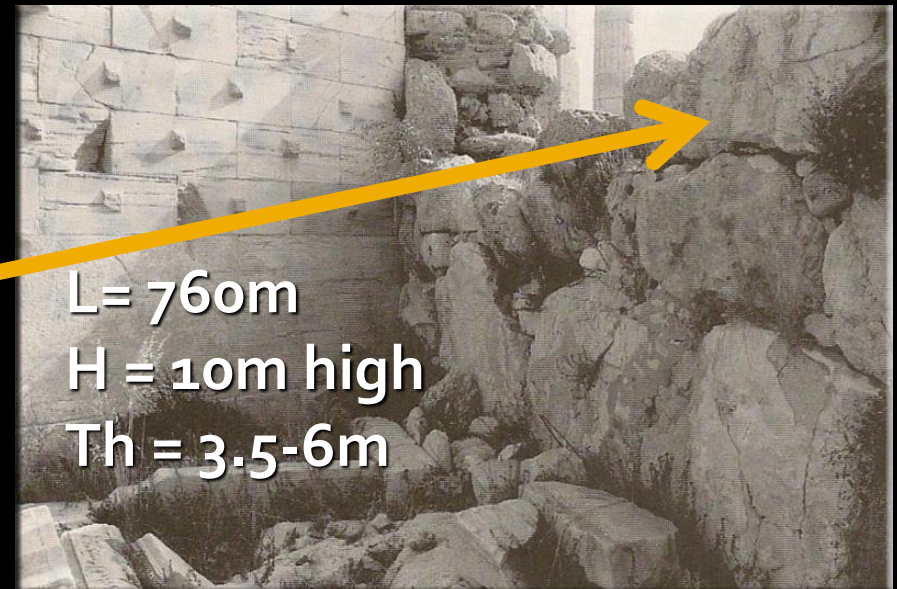
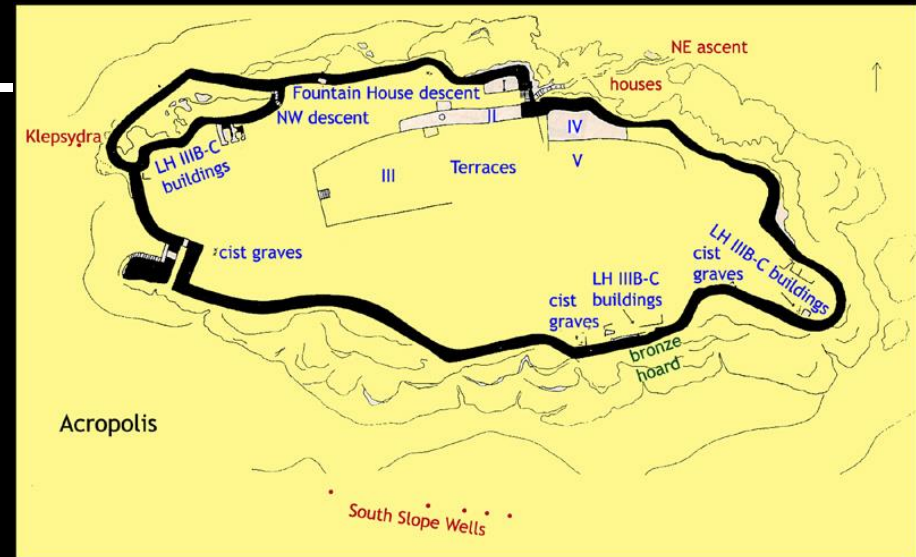
LH IIIA2: Agora tombs



Mycenaean Athens

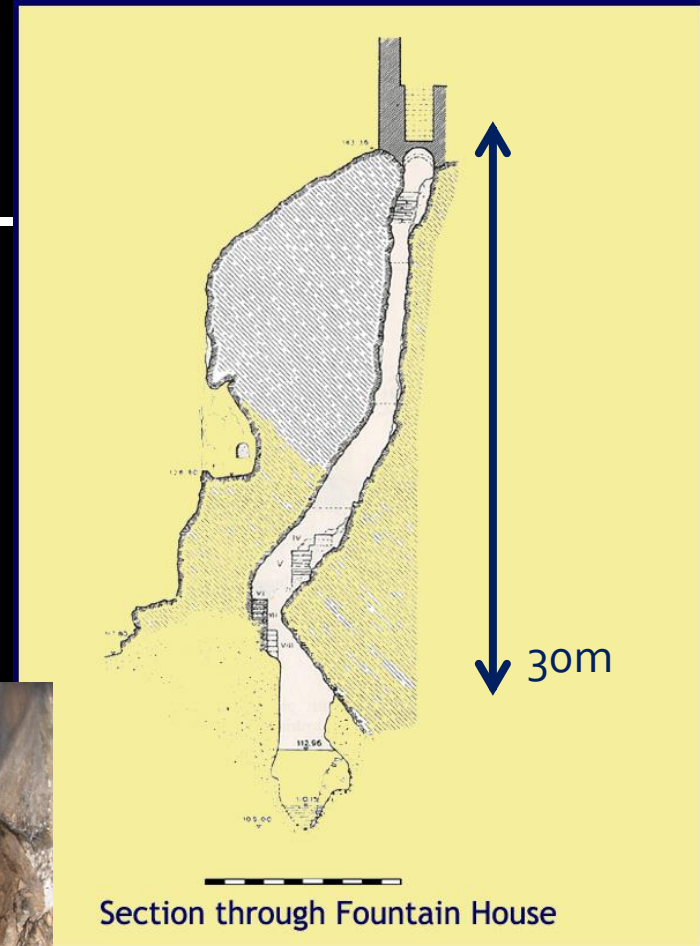
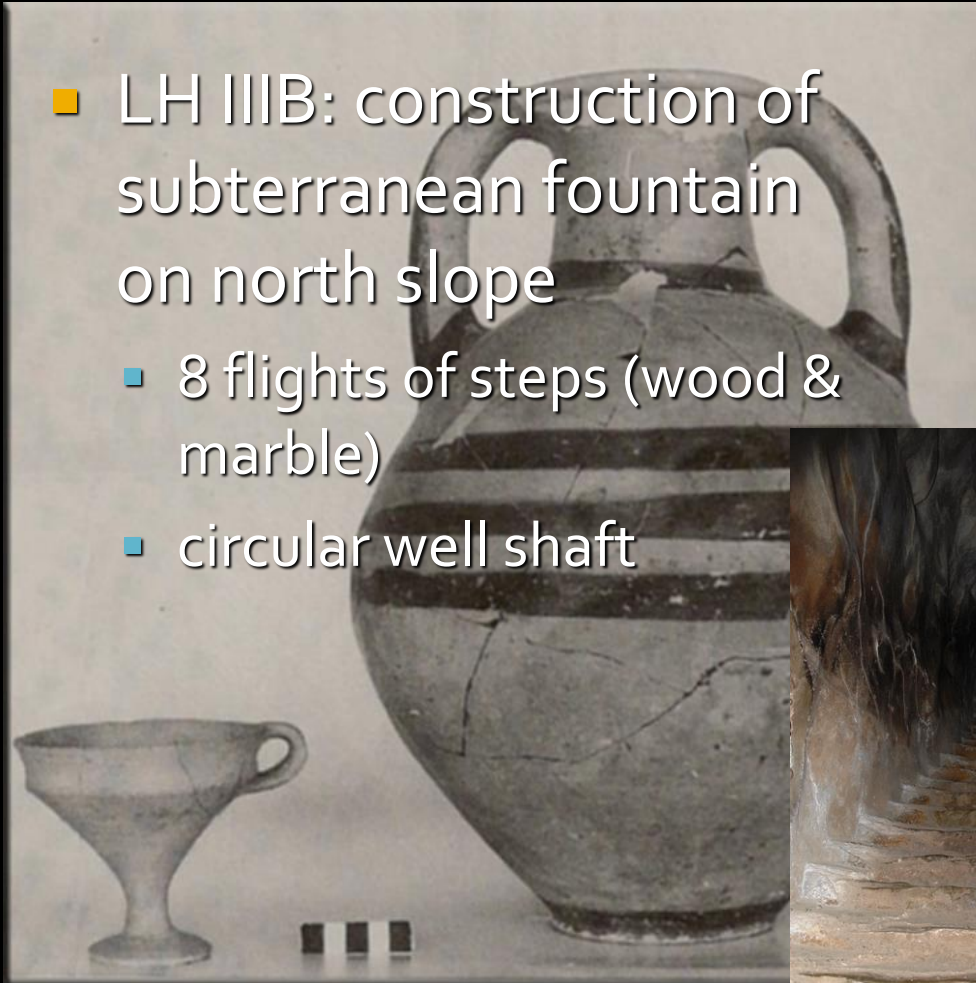
- Acropolis: architectural evidence:

- LH I house north of Erechtheion
- LH IIIB: 5 artificial terraces for construction of major complex – palace?
- LH IIIB: construction of Cyclopean fortification wall



Mycenaean Athens

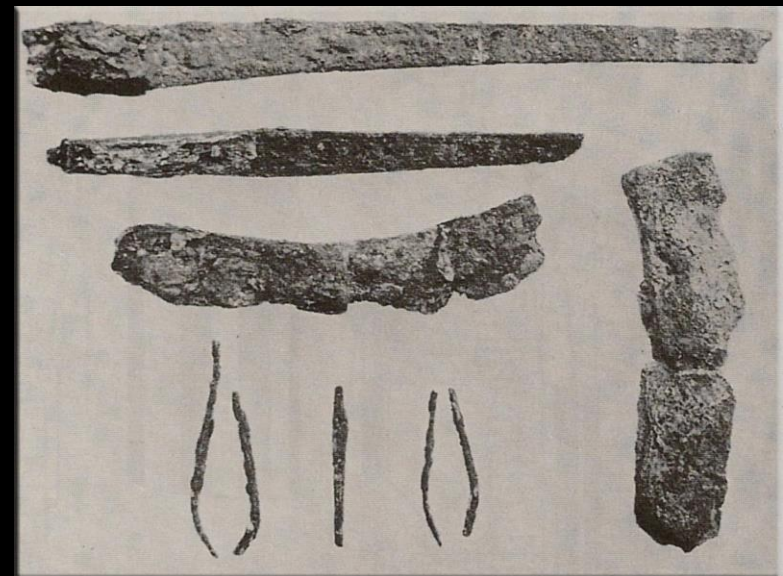
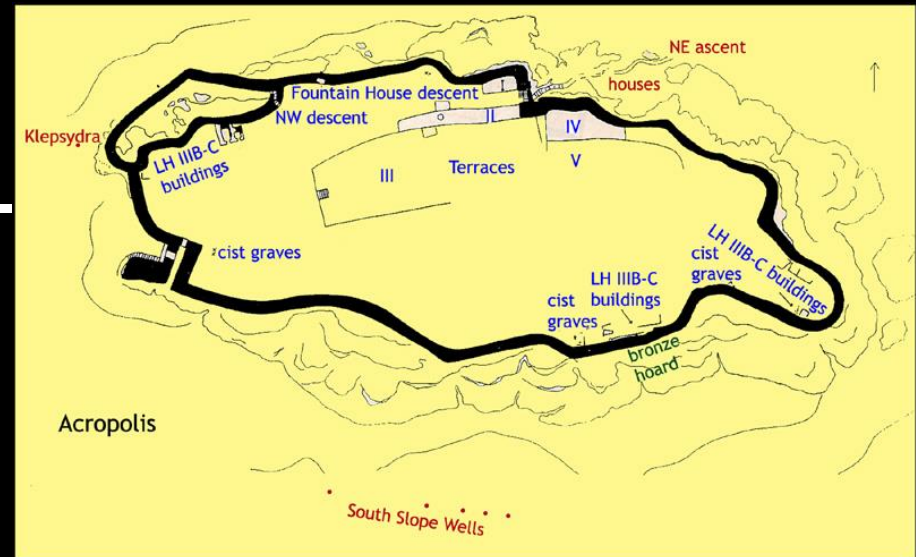
- LH IIIB: construction of subterranean fountain on north slope
 - 8 flights of steps (wood & marble)
 - circular well shaft



Cistern - Mycenae

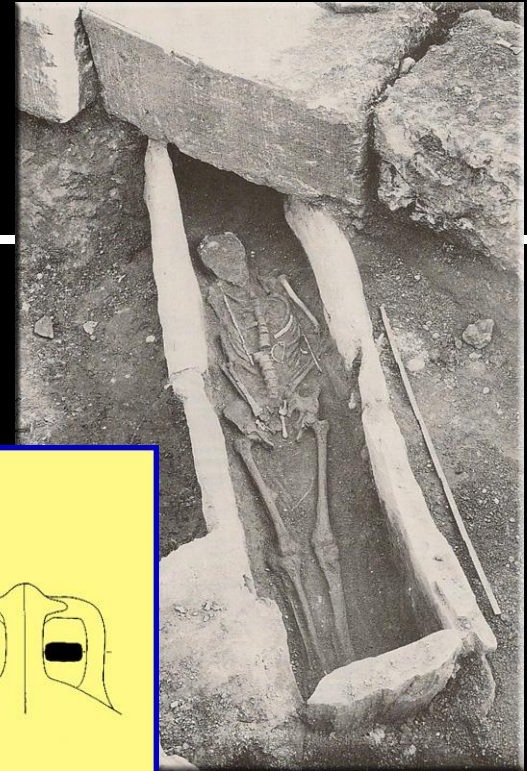
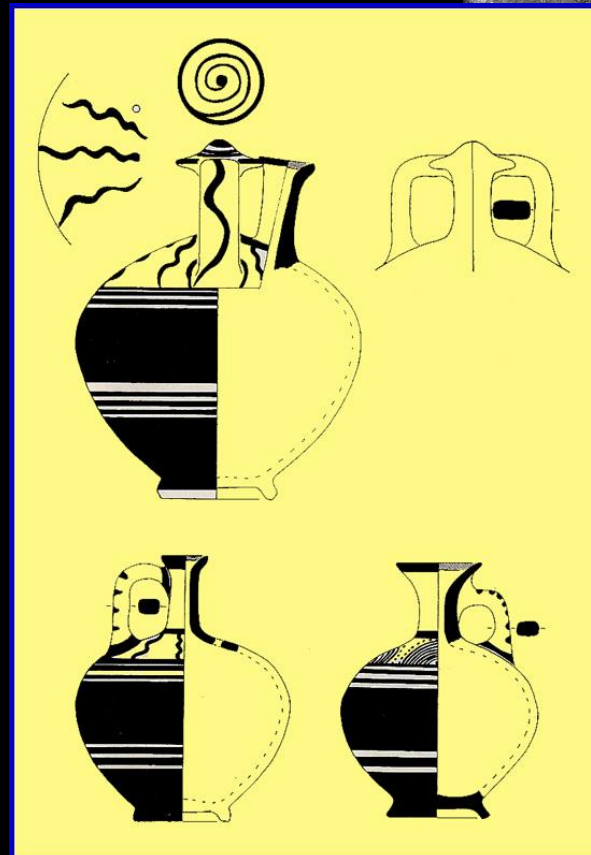
LH IIIC

- Very little evidence on Acropolis
 - Bronze hoard by southern fortification wall
 - Chamber tomb cut on south slope of acropolis = single warrior burial
- Establishment of the Pompeion cemetery



Submycenaean

- Regional Athenian style identified by Desborough
- Acropolis: 14 cist graves
- Pompeion cemetery at the Kerameikos
- Simple grave goods:
 - a few pots, bronze pins & fibulae



Summary

- Very patchy evidence: urban archaeology & covered by important archaeological sites (World Heritage).
 - Much settlement evidence dependent on pottery from wells
 - Very little architectural evidence.
- Important cemetery evidence
- Athens appears to be a cultural backwater throughout much of Bronze Age – though how accurate is this assessment?
- LH IIIC/Submycenaean: period when Athens begins to increase in political & economic importance