# Expressions of Gender in Mortuary Behaviour from Middle Helladic and Mycenaean Burial Samples in the Aegean

**By**

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I, Kristin Elizabeth Leith, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

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VOLUME I

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## *Abstract*

Gender, particularly in regard to Mycenaean constructions of masculinity and male ideologies and identities, has affected and influenced Aegean Prehistory throughout its history as a discipline. The research aims to critically re-investigate the question of gender roles, status and ideology and to understand how expressions of gender in funerary behaviour varied among different groups across space and time during the Middle and Late Bronze Age (2100 BC-1100 BC) in the Aegean. To do this, statistical analysis of cemeteries in which human remains have been osteologically analysed was conducted using the gender attribution approach, and then results were extrapolated in an exploratory fashion to select cemeteries without sexed skeletal remains. The interpretation of results is informed by archaeological context, current discourses of gender archaeology and archaeological mortuary theory. Analyses revealed that: 1) in earlier Middle Helladic (2100-1800 BC) burial practice individual burials were distinguished but not overtly differentiated in terms of material expressions of identity, however at certain sites high-status female burials were accompanied by small but wealthy assemblages and were often linked to textile production; 2) during the transitional and Early Mycenaean phase (1800-1400 BC), elite mortuary ideology became highly masculinised though not necessarily male-exclusive, and in rare cases, weaponry could be associated with both male and female burials; 3) during the Palatial phase (1400-1100 BC), gendered practices became fixed, and male burials were exclusively associated with weaponry kits whilst female burials were linked often to objects of adornment. Throughout the epoch, there are indications that high status female burials linked to textile production activities were distinguished by gendered burial practices that stem from those observed during the Middle Helladic phase, and that the interplay of gender and other social ideologies was varied and complex.

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Finally, every effort has been made to represent the data and report results as accurately as possible, incorporating the advice, corrections and expertise of many. Any mistakes or errors at this juncture are, of course, my own.

# Chapter 1

# Introduction

## 1.1 Gender … ever present and little understood

This thesis works from the informed assumption that gender is a fundamental structuring principle, deeply embedded in the social matrix of every culture and society and a potential determinant of many aspects of mortuary practice (Arnold and Wicker [eds.] 2001; Parker Pearson 2003, 95-123). It also sees the study of gender as a viable and inherently worthy archaeological frontier, a potential well-spring of invaluable insight into ideological constructs that shape and define the material record (Sørensen 2000), capable of contributing to the understanding of heretofore unidentified, opaque and misinterpreted facets of Middle Helladic and Mycenaean mortuary behaviour.

One problem is that whether purposefully conjured or coolly held at a distance, the image of the Mycenaean warrior, bellicose and boar's-tusk-helmeted, has come to constitute the iconographic and ideological construct from which the Mycenaean prehistorian can never fully disentangle him/herself. Thus, assumptions concerning Mycenaean constructions of masculinity, male identity and male linked ideologies, whether acknowledged or not, have affected and influenced Aegean studies throughout its history as a discipline: shaping biases, colouring interpretations and exciting the imaginations of treasure seekers, astute scholars and laymen alike. This reception of the Mycenaean warrior can be traced back to the auspicious and rather romantic beginnings of Mycenaean archaeology. In 1876 the nascent archaeologist and accomplished treasure hunter, Heinrich Schliemann, unearthed the riches found in Mycenae's Grave Circle A (Schliemann 1878). The unparalleled wealth of the Shaft Grave burial assemblages appeared to provide historical testimony to the existence of the iconic warrior culture depicted in Homer's *Iliad*, effectively validating the prevalence of gendered assumptions in almost every aspect of the field since then. This has resulted in the persistent branding of Mycenaean society as a hyper-masculine warrior culture – one in which little is known or understood about the identities and roles of the actual men and women who lived and died during the onset and duration of the Late Bronze Age in the Aegean.

The over-interpretation of warrior culture, combined with the under-interpretation of female roles, as well as other possible male roles (Chapter 3), is further compounded by the fact that 'warrior kits' (the categorisation of which is clarified in *Section 4.2.2.6*) have been found

with numerous elite and high-status male burials, while there is currently no known female 'kit'. Because warrior kits are easily identified, they speak to the image of the Homeric warrior, contributing to a rather lopsided and self-confessedly warrior-centric interpretation of gender, especially within Mycenaean mortuary studies, despite the fact that the Mycenaean warrior is an ideological construct mainly linked to a minority of male burials documented in small, elite cemetery populations, and by no means applicable to all male burials or all male members of the population. Further, it has been established that the expression of warrior ideology in Mycenaean burial practice did not automatically correlate to a warrior identity or occupation (Kirkpatrick Smith 2009) and was also capable of being highly nuanced, shaped by specific stimuli and social motivations (*Section 5.4.2.1*; Kilian-Dirlmeier 1988; Laffineur 1989; 1990; Voutsaki 1995; 1998; Wright, J. C. 1987). This leads to the question: does the overriding impression that Mycenaean mortuary behaviour provides evidence for the predominance of a hyper-masculine warrior culture represent their purposeful construction or is it the result of our biased reading? Some of the aims of this research are to ascertain whether or not male identities and ideologies were emphasized over that of female identities and ideologies (as argued by Voustaki 2005), and to put the Mycenaean warrior in a proper context – at least within the mortuary milieu.

Another problem is that evidence of gender in the Middle Helladic and Mycenaean mortuary record can be difficult to identify and interpret, and, thanks to environmental constraints, the record is bereft of crucial evidence pertinent to gender, such as funerary costume or documentation of the roles of male and female mourners in the funerary performance. Indeed, the record is constrained not only by limitations specific to the survivability of archaeological context and the nature of the mortuary practice itself, but also by other factors that stem from prevailing archaeological and epistemological approaches which have contributed to a general reticence to engage in gendered studies within the field (*Sections 3.1-2*).

Yet, there exists an incisive body of work devoted explicitly to the understanding of how social transformation and status was expressed in mortuary behaviour. Scholars such as Voutsaki (1993; 1998) and Wolpert (2004) have demonstrated how elite Mycenaean burial practices, including those that are expressive of warrior ideology particularly during the Shaft Grave era, were used to create social reality, construct individual and group identities and function as a social arena in which difference (e.g. social hierarchy) could be created through ostentatious displays of consumption (Voutsaki 1993; 1998). If the expression and transmission of social variables such as status or prestige can be identified and so eloquently mapped, then it follows that the materiality of other social variables, such as gender, may

also identified. In support of this premise, it is worth pointing out that the work of Voutsaki in particular is reliant upon the analysis of mortuary behaviour with particular emphasis upon the interpretation of material culture found in mortuary contexts – an approach that forms the backbone of this research. Thus this work in many ways provides an established theoretical springboard for the investigation not only of the relationship between the gender of the deceased and mortuary behaviours but also of the role that gender ideologies and constructs may have played in the creation and dissemination of Mycenaean ideologies.

## 1.2 The Research

This research critically re-investigates the question of gender, status and ideology in mortuary behaviour from Middle Helladic and Mycenaean cemeteries in the Aegean (*ca.* 2100 to 1100 B.C.). It expands upon previous studies of gender in Aegean mortuary behaviour (*Section 3.2.3*) by considering cemeteries from a comparatively broader cultural context and chronological timeline (*Section 1.4*). It reveals that the construction of gender roles and identities is by no means as simple as previously assumed, that the interplay of gender and other social ideologies is varied and complex and that the expression of gender-related ideologies and constructs was surprisingly fluid and often community specific.

The interpretation of results is informed by archaeological context and current discourses of gender archaeology and archaeological mortuary theory (*Section 2.1-3*). Patterns revealed through analysis are to be seen as indicators of behaviour rather than a picture of widespread burial tradition or social organisation. Secondly, burial practice is seen as a dynamic and fluid performance capable of variation through space and time, of creating social reality and, in some cases, reacting to social stimuli. It is also seen as potentially expressive of identity and/or ideology (Voutsaki 1993, 4, *esp.* Ch. 2.2). Finally, material culture deposited in mortuary contexts is seen as being potentially determined by the complex interplay of social variables such as age, kin, group affiliation, and, of course, gender (Sørensen 2000, 8, 12, *esp.* Ch. 5).

The full scope of the theoretical approach is presented and explained in Chapter 2. Chapter 2 also discusses the relevance of the integration of post-feminist theory and epistemologies into the archaeological discourse, and why universal methodologies, particularly those informed by processualist paradigms,[1] have been largely rejected in favour of more fluid, case-sensitive methodologies informed by a 'pluralistic approach.' Chapter 2 also explains

[1] There is, however, no real reason why gender could not be considered within a processual framework (Wylie 1991a).

why the gender attribution approach is the most suitable means of identifying gender in the Middle Helladic and Mycenaean mortuary record.

Chapter 3 critically examines contributions to the study of gender in the Aegean, laying bare the assumptions about gender which are specific to the sub-disciplines of Aegean archaeology and considering whether or not interpretations of gender represent patterns that exist in the evidence or the analyst's expectations (*Section 3.3*). It also explores why gendered work has been generated within paradigmatic frameworks specific to each sub-field of Aegean archaeology and how the use of often divergent approaches relevant only to each sub-field has resulted in a lack of dialogue between those working in the different sub-disciplines, which in turn contributes to a fragmented and non-comprehensive picture of gender in Middle Helladic and Mycenaean Greece. Chapter 3 also investigates the lack of understanding and the consistent under-interpretation of the gender constructs and roles pertinent to the Mycenaean female.

Chapter 4 explains the methodology by which mortuary behaviour in Middle Helladic and Mycenaean cemeteries was analysed using the 'Gender Attribution Approach' (*Sections 2.3* and *4.2*). This is a flexible, pluralistic approach regarded as being particularly well suited to mortuary analysis, and especially well catered to the analysis of small, variable burial samples active during discrete chronological periods – like those encountered in the Middle Helladic and Mycenaean mortuary record. By taking this approach, I was able to quantify the attribution of object types to osteologically sexed burials. In this way, I could link depositional behaviours to certain groups rather than individuals, ensuring temporally and geographically sustainable codes of meaning on which to base an interpretation of ideological expression(s). How to go about 'getting at' gender has been conceived with the Middle Helladic and Mycenaean mortuary evidence in mind and not as a universal model.

The methodology for the case study of an unsexed burial sample from the Prosymna Cemetery in the Argolid is explained in *Section 4.3*. This methodology uses results of the sexed analyses and cross-tabulation to track the deposition of gender-linked artefact types and burial inventories with unsexed burials creating a means of more reliably revealing gender in unsexed burial samples.

The analyses and interpretations of each burial sample are presented in Chapters 5-8. I have chosen not to start at the beginning, during the Middle Helladic phase, but to begin with the burial samples in which the earliest instance of elite Mycenaean mortuary behaviour can be readily identified and queried most effectively. This will help to clarify what came before and how Early Mycenaean burial practice changed over time in order to make sense of the

relationship between the gender and mortuary behaviour in the larger picture of Mycenaean Greece. Chapter 5 focuses mainly on elite burial samples datable to the Early Mycenaean phase. Then, in Chapter 6, the discussion will track backward to focus on non-elite burial samples datable to the Middle Helladic and Early Mycenaean phases. Chapter 7 focuses on the burial samples from chamber tomb cemeteries datable to the Palatial and Late Mycenaean phases. Chapter 8 presents the results of the case study of the unsexed burial sample from Prosymna. The archaeological context, data and limitations of each burial sample are presented at the outset of each chapter. Results are interpreted within layered contexts, firstly within the context of the cemetery or grave group itself, secondly within the overall site itself (if more than one cemetery existed at the site), and thirdly at a regional level.

Chapter 9 summarises the results, posits a trajectory for the lifespan of identified gendered burial practices within the context of the wider Aegean, attempts to correlate results with interpretations of gender from other types of evidence (textual and iconographic), and finally assesses how this research has affected the understanding of gender in Middle Helladic and Mycenaean mortuary behaviour.

## 1.3 Research Questions

The work presented in this thesis was initially inspired by two main research questions:

1. How should the interpretation of gender be approached for the analysis of Middle Helladic and Mycenaean mortuary behaviour?
2. How do expressions of the deceased's gender vary within different social groups across time and space in Middle Helladic and Mycenaean burial samples?

Question 1 shepherded the construction of an appropriate theoretical and methodological approach for this research, detailed in Chapters 2 and 4 respectively, and raises a subset of theoretical questions that will be discussed in Chapter 2. These are:

3. Is it possible to identify the full range of gender categories in the data?
4. Is it possible or even necessary to rectify or avoid the conflation of gender and biological sex in this type of research?

The pursuance of Question 2 is driven solely by the analysis of the data and gives rise to a set of questions that are informed by and specific to the Middle Helladic and Mycenaean mortuary records. They are:

5. Is the deposition of grave inventories/burial assemblages, artefact types and objects influenced by the gender of the deceased?
6. Is grave complexity linked to the gender of the deceased?
7. Are links between mortuary features (i.e. objects, inventories and burial assemblages, or grave complexity) and the gender of the deceased contingent upon, related to or secondary to other social variables such as the age, status and group affiliation of the deceased at time of death?
8. Do gender-linked burial practices change over time in single cemeteries, and how are they constructed through time on a regional level and in the wider Aegean?

Questions 6-8 are concerned with the identification and tracking of gendered burial practices, chronicled in Chapters 5-8 and summarised in Chapter 9.

During the course of research, it became apparent that the gender of the deceased was expressed mainly through the deposition of material wealth, hence establishing the primacy of associated grave goods as a source of data. This indicates that gender constructs and ideologies were bound up in and expressed via the same social processes that influenced the ostentatious consumption and competitive display of competing elite kin groups so clearly articulated in the work of Voutsaki (1993; 1998). Not only was it possible to map the ebb and flow of certain gendered burial practices throughout the Middle Helladic and Mycenaean eras, but also it soon became apparent that results of the analyses could potentially provide deeper insight into the nuances and shifts in the performance and expression of gender within the funerary milieu. This led to the following questions, posed to make sense of the role that gender may have played in ideological shifts, as well as why certain gendered practices may have been created, appropriated, changed or fallen out of use.

9. Can gendered burial practices be linked to discernible ideological shifts, and if so what role did they play in the transmission of certain ideologies and social values?
10. When and how did material signifiers of elite power and wealth (particularly concerning the expression of elite Mycenaean warrior ideology) come to dominate Mycenaean mortuary symbolism, and how were they transmitted and appropriated over time and to what effect?

11. How did female-focused burial practices fit into Mycenaean mortuary ideology and what can we discern about the changing role of female identities and ideologies in mortuary behaviour?
12. What was the precedent for the distinction of male and female burials, did these behaviours change over time and, if so, why?

The above questions are considered during the course of each analysis and addressed in the *Interpretation* section of Chapters 5-8.

Questions concerning the reflective relationship between mortuary behaviour and social organisation also presented themselves. It became clear that some gendered burial practices also were expressive of social differentiation. Therefore, another layer of investigation was required to assess whether or not detectable patterns of mortuary behaviour were representative of hierarchical or heterarchical relational structures (*Section 2.2.6*). The identification of relational structures as well as the wider social implications for vertical vs. horizontal ranking in each burial sample is discussed in the *Interpretation* section of Chapters 5-8.

Finally, in *Section 9.3*, results of the gendered analyses are compared with scholars' gendered interpretations of Mycenaean iconography and the Linear B evidence presented initially in Chapter 3, in order to ascertain the following: 1) is there any correlation between the performance of gendered burial practices and the roles of men and women listed in the Linear B tablets and the male and female figures represented in Mycenaean art; 2) was gender more or less rigidly defined in burial practice than it was through the media of text and iconographic representation; and 3) do interpretations of gender amongst the sub-fields of Aegean archaeology fail to correlate to one another because no real attempts have been made to do so, because the analysts use disparate epistemological approaches specific to each sub-field, or because there is indeed a real disparity between constructions of gender in the different types of evidence?

## 1.4 Burial Samples and Chronological Framework

Datable mortuary activity from each burial sample has been organized into four chronological phases that reflect major periods of social development. These are:

1. ***The Middle Helladic Phase*** (the MH Phase) encompassing the MHI-II periods, *c.* 2100-1800 BC;
2. ***The Early Mycenaean Phase*** (EMyc Phase) encompassing the MHIII-LHII periods, *c.* 1800-1400 BC;
3. ***The Palatial Phase*** (PMyc Phase) encompassing the LHIIIA-B periods, *c.* 1400-1200 BC; and
4. ***The Late Mycenaean Phase*** (LMyc Phase) encompassing the LHIIIC period, *c.* 1200-1100 BC.[2]

In some cases, mortuary activity was of unclear date, typically straddiling two consecutive chronological phases. This compelled a degree of flexibility in the approach to analysis, and burials associated with assemblages of unclear date are included in analyses for each potential time frame. Graves and burial assemblages of unclear date are flagged in the *Data* sections of Chapters 5-8.

The first issue was to choose burial samples that facilitate gender analysis. These had to meet several criteria. They must be well published. They must yield evidence of Middle Helladic and Mycenaean cultural markers indicative of a common cultural identity. Reliable osteological analysis of skeletal evidence must have taken place. And finally, grave goods must be associated with individual burials. The state of the record dictated how far and wide I could cast my net.

Map 1 shows the locations of the nine cemeteries and grave groups that met the above criteria. They are from sites located in the regions of the Argolid, Attica and the Dodecanese. Cemeteries from the Argolid include the intramural burial location, the East Cemetery and the Barbouna Area Cemetery at Asine; the intramural burials from Lerna; and Grave Circles A and B (also known as 'the Shaft Graves'), the Prehistoric Cemetery and other grave groups from inside the citadel at Mycenae. The Agora Cemetery from Athens and the Aspropilia Cemetery at Pylona on Rhodes in the Dodecanese complete the primary data group. Evidence of mortuary activity datable to the Late Mycenaean phase (LHIIIC) is limited to the small burial sample from the Aspropilia Cemetery (Karantzali 2001) with supporting evidence from the Athenian Agora Cemetery (Immerwahr 1971). In light of this, research focuses primarily on mortuary activity datable to the first three chronological phases: the Middle Helladic, Early Mycenaean and Palatial phases.

[2] The timeline uses 'high' Aegean Bronze Age chronology (Betancourt 1998; Bietak 1998; 2003a; 2003b; Bietak and Czerny eds. 2007; Fantuzzi 2007 [2009]; also see Manning and Weninger 1992; Warren and Hankey 1989).

Additionally, the contents of the assemblage associated with the outstanding male burial from the MHII Shaft Grave in Aegina-Kolonna (Chapter 6; Kilian-Dirlmeier 1997) are also considered. An analysis of the Odos Palama grave group from the LMIII cemetery at Khania on Crete also is presented in *Appendix I*. Results show how gender was and was not expressed in a culturally non-Mycenaean context at an Aegean site and provide a useful counterpoint from which a deeper understanding of gendered Mycenaean mortuary expression can be derived.

In addition to the sexed burial samples, evidence from the Prosymna Cemetery in the Argolid was used for the case study of an unsexed cemetery (Map 1; Chapter 8). Additionally, selective, exploratory analyses of striking burial assemblages from other unsexed burial samples were also undertaken to broaden the scope of the case study as well as to demonstrate the applicability of this methodology (*Section 4.3*). These come from the Argos tumuli, the Third Kilometre Cemetery in Mycenae, Dendra near Midea and Pylos in Messenia (*Appendix II*).

At this time, no other cemeteries from Crete or the regions of Messenia, Boeotia or Northern Greece facilitate this type of analysis.[3] Thus, data are culled from sites located primarily on the Mainland in southern and central Greece. Because the best-documented sites are in the Argolid, burial samples from this region predictably predominate in my dataset. However, because it was possible to include samples from Attica and the Dodecanese[4] and to consider the assemblage associated with the sexed MHII warrior burial from Aegina-Kolonna, analysis facilitated a bigger picture of gender in the Mycenaean world than has heretofore been achieved, providing a platform for discussion in which the performance of Middle Helladic and Mycenaean burial practices beyond the Argolid can be examined.

The main evidence is composed of human remains and grave goods, while supporting evidence of grave architecture and burial 'embellishments' (*Sections 4.1.1-2*) are also considered.

[3] Data were unsuitable because: 1) skeletal evidence had not been osteologically analysed or osteological analyses have not yet been published (especially in the case of the Pylian graves); 2) little or no grave goods were deposited; and/or 3) grave goods could not be associated with burials. There are however certain individual burial assemblages from these regions that facilitated the Prosymna approach (Chapter 4, *Section 4.3*). Some are included in *Appendix II*.

[4] Although the Aspropilia Cemetery from Rhodes yielded evidence of arguably non-Mycenaean burial practices (Chapter 7), evidence of Mycenaean cultural markers such as the use of Mycenaean chamber tombs and primary and secondary burial, and the deposition of Mycenaean wares and object types made it possible to identify sustainable codes of meaning consistent with those observed in burial practices documented in the Mainland burial samples.

## 1.5 Context: Mycenaean Society

The Middle Bronze Age in prehistoric Greece (MHI-II periods, 2100-1800 B.C.) is usually assumed to have been insular and quite poor. On the mainland, settlements were often the size of villages, typically populated by self-sufficient farming communities, such as those found at Asine (Dietz 1980; Nordquist 1987a) and Lerna (Caskey 1953; 1954; 1955; 1956; 1957; 1958; 1969; Rutter 1995; Wiencke 2000). The burial practice in these cemeteries tended to make use of simple grave types, a conservative approach to the deposition of material wealth, and rarely emphasized individual burials with depositions of material wealth. Middle Helladic communities often used intramural locations or former domestic sites (Milka 2010) for the disposal of their dead. Still, a few burials were singled out for distinction, and there was certainly diversity in Middle Helladic mortuary ideology, especially through the construction of elaborate tumuli, which made use of the landscape and were probably expressive of status in some way (Petrakis 2010). Further, settlement evidence indicates that Middle Helladic communities deposited imported grave goods like those found in various tumuli (Protonotariou-Deilaki 1990a; 1990b; Voutsaki *et al.* 2012; Young 1981; also see Pelon 1976, 73-114) and early shaft graves (Kilian-Dirlmeier 1997). Also, cist and pit grave types excavated throughout Mainland Greece, particularly in the region of Messenia (Voutsaki 1993; 1998; also see Blegen *et al.* 1973), provide evidence of burial practices shared with the wider Aegean and regions to the north and west (Rutter 2007; Zerner 1993).

At the end of the Middle Bronze Age and into the early Late Bronze Age (MHIII-LHII, 1800-1400 B.C.), mortuary and settlement evidence strongly suggests that ideological shifts were taking place throughout Mainland Greece. Known as 'the Shaft Grave Period', this phase is characterised by some incredibly rich graves (the most famous of which are Grave Circles A and B at Mycenae [Schliemann 1878; Wace 1921-23]) as well as access to exotic and finely crafted materials and goods (Karo 1930-33; Mylonas 1973) previously unseen or rare on the Mainland (Dickinson 1984; 1989; Dietz 1991; Graziadio 1991; Hiller 1989a). The changes in burial practice (i.e. selective use of the shaft grave type, increased access to exotic materials, the deposition of weaponry and luxury goods in elite graves) have been linked to dramatic social change and mark the emergence of elite Mycenaean ideologies – the propagation and cementation of which were fundamentally reliant upon the consumption and deposition of material wealth to express mainly status and wealth (Graziadio, G. 1991; Voutsaki 1995; 1998; 1999) as well as other potent social ideologies, particularly that concerning ancestral legitimization (Wolpert 2004).

The palatial phase on the Greek Mainland (LIIIA-B, 1400-1200 B.C.) saw the construction of the Mycenaean palaces and the permeation of palatial power throughout the Peloponnese and Central Greece. Evidence of Mycenaean palatial culture and administration is found at Mycenae and Tiryns in the Argolid, Pylos in Messenia, Thebes in Central Greece, arguably Dimini in Thessaly, and Knossos on Crete.[5] It appears that Mycenaean power-strategies greatly affected land and people under palatial control (Bennet 1999a; Cherry and Davis 2001; Halstead 1992a), although little is known of those who interacted with the palace intermittently or fell outside of their jurisdiction, and the extent of palatial administrative power is still somewhat unclear (Foxhall 1995; Halstead 1992b). We do know that palatial society was organised by a complex administrative system as revealed by the Linear B tablets found at Pylos (Bennet 1999a; 1999b), Knossos (Browning 1955; Chadwick and Killen 1964; Driessen 2000; Landenius Enegren 2008; Nosch 2007),[6] Mycenae (Bennett, 1958), Thebes (Bennet 1999b; Halstead 1992b; Killen 1985) and Dimini.[7] For example, the tablets show that the Palace of Nestor at Pylos was capable of exerting control over sites and provinces well beyond its palatial walls. We also know that palatial architecture was standardised in its creation of public space and that public access to areas of industry, administration and the inner ritual and political spaces of the palace was limited and controlled.[8]

During the palatial phase, graves began to be constructed with greater complexity and investment of time and resources. While the simple cist and pit grave type inhumations favoured during the Middle Helladic phase remained popular, the rock-cut Mycenaean chamber tomb type grave (also occasionally documented well before the palatial period) with its characteristic long dromos and interment of multiple burials in a main chamber became the predominant burial practice. In the Argolid, the elite also began constructing monumental tholos tombs, like the Treasury of Atreus, the Tomb of Clytemnestra and the Tomb of Genii at Mycenae (Wace 1921-23, 338-402, Pls. LVI, LVIII, LX).[9] Further to this, large extramural cemeteries were constructed, appearing throughout each region with groups and families maintaining and using tombs sometimes over the course of several generations

[5] Crete was previously palatial. Evidence of Mycenaean palatial culture is from largely post-palatial contexts on the island (the Mainland equivalent of LHIII).
[6] Some Linear B tablets were also found at Khania on Crete (Hallager, E. *et al.* 1990).
[7] For a general overview of the Linear B record see: Morpurgo Davies and Duhoux 1985.
[8] For the form and function of Mycenaean Palatial architecture see: Palaima and Wright 1985; Wright, J. C. 1984.
[9] Tholoi were constructed in Messenia as early as LHI/II as well as during LHIII (Cavanaugh and Mee 1998, 51-54, 58-59, 63, 81-82).

while depositing comparatively larger and more diverse quantities of goods with their dead (Mee and Cavanagh 1984; Voutsaki 1995; Wright, J. C. 1987).

During the course of the Late Mycenaean phase (the LHIIIC period, *c.* 1200-1100 B.C.), the palatial system ceased to exist. Some centres continued to be occupied, albeit on a much smaller scale, and some were abandoned altogether. The cause of this destruction is unclear and hotly debated (Rutter 1992; Sherratt, E. S. 1990; 1998; 2001). Although many of the palatial sites (those with palaces as well as peripheral sites directly under palatial jurisdiction) contracted in both size and wealth, there is evidence of Mycenaean cultural continuity through the end of the Bronze Age throughout Greece. In fact, certain communities, most of which were often (but not always) located beyond the jurisdictions of former palatial hinterlands, such as Lefkandi which was probably under the jurisdiction of Thebes *ca.* 1400-1300 (Evely 2006; Musgrave and Popham 1991), Kalapodi (Felsch 1981, 1983, 1991; Felsch *et al.* 1987; Felsch *et al.* 1980)[10] and Ialysos on Rhodes (Furumark 1950; Jacopi 1930-31, 253-345; Maiuri 1923-24, 86-247; Marketou 1988; Mee 1982, 8-46), thrived. For whatever reason they may have benefited from the disappearance of the palaces and their economic structures, and many enjoyed continuous activity through to the Early Iron Age (Foxhall 1995). Mortuary and settlement evidence datable to the LHIIIC period (such as ceramic wares, grave types, the use of inhumation, and an overall continuity of the Mycenaean burial tradition) demonstrate that these communities remained, at least to some extent, culturally Mycenaean. Large palatial period Mycenaean cemeteries also continued in use, usually on a smaller scale. Typically, fewer graves were constructed than in previous periods, graves were less complex and burials were less wealthy. However, certain cemeteries, like those at Ialysos and the Aspropilia Cemetery at Pylonas on Rhodes, which continued in use during LHIIIC (Georgiadis 2003; Karantzali 2001), yielded wealthy graves with evidence of trade networks to Cyprus, the Near East and the wider Aegean indicating that the end of the Palatial system did not necessarily equate with a loss of wealth or even possibly power for certain groups in certain locations.

## 1.6 Aims

In general, this research aims to illuminate gendered burial practices as well as the ideological constructions of gender that shaped Middle Helladic and Mycenaean mortuary behaviour. Specifically, it hopes to accomplish the following. Firstly, it aims to show that

[10] Both Lefkandi and Kalapodi were included in an arc of trade, which contributed to their LHIIIC success (*cf* Felsch 1999; Kearsly 1989: 35; Morgan 2003: 118-119; Onasoglou 1981:15-23). The case for a palatial link is argued by Crielaard (2006).

gender is a viable line of study integral to the understanding of Middle Helladic and Mycenaean mortuary practice and ultimately social structure. Secondly, it seeks to prevail over a tendency in recent Mycenaean mortuary studies to include gender as an analytic variable of (at most) secondary importance and thus go beyond a limited and subjective interpretation of gender. Thirdly, it strives to establish a methodology for the successful and reliable identification of gendered burial practices that is specific to and informed by the Mycenaean mortuary record itself. This is crucial because, within the context of Mycenaean mortuary studies, gender has yet to be dealt with in any consistent or coherent way. Going beyond the current protocol in which gender is considered as just one of many social variables, this study represents the first gendered mortuary analysis for such a large body of usable mortuary evidence encompassing material from *both* the Middle and Late Bronze Age. Thus, by devising a methodological approach that can make the most of the available evidence, gender related codes of meaning as well as variation in burial samples (across space and time) can be revealed and explicitly identified, tracked and studied. Fourthly, the research also aims to provide a methodological template that can be used to detect gendered burial practice in less accessible forms of evidence, e.g. unsexed burial samples. The creation of such a model will not only benefit future studies but can help to identify gender in mortuary behaviour from older unsexed burial samples – many of which are too compromised to facilitate osteological analysis or have been lost. Finally, this research aims to make sense of different interpretations of gender amongst the various sub-fields in Aegean studies by taking an interdisciplinary approach in which gendered interpretations from textual and iconographic evidence are compared to the results of a mortuary analysis.

In essence, this thesis aims not only to identify gendered behaviours but also to understand and articulate the nuance and fluidity of gender, how it was constructed, expressed, performed and transmitted over time within the Middle Helladic and Mycenaean mortuary milieux. It is hoped that through this research the Mycenaean warrior and his inert, shadowy female counterpart will finally be afforded the archaeological autopsy they so desperately require and deserve.

# Chapter 2

# Theoretical Context: Gender Archaeology and Archaeological Mortuary Theory

This chapter addresses theoretical questions relevant to this research. *Section 2.1* presents key epistemological developments in the discourse of gender archaeology. *Section 2.2* grapples with the question 'What is gender?' and presents the archaeological approach to gender in mortuary behaviour. *Section 2.3* presents the theoretical context for the gender attribution approach and explains how it will be used to reveal gender in Middle Helladic and Mycenaean mortuary behaviour.

## 2.1 Key Epistemological Developments in Gender Archaeology

In this section, I will focus on key epistemological developments within the field and forego an overall history of gender archaeology, because this is documented in numerous publications.[11]

Gender archaeology focuses upon the interpretation of how gender was constructed, construed and performed in past societies through examination of the archaeological record. Almost 30 years since Conkey and Spector (1984) published 'Archaeology and the study of gender', seen by many as the start of gender archaeology as a sub-discipline,[12] the discourse has been defined by an ongoing debate in which objectives have shifted, and the understanding and definition of gender as a concept has been re-evaluated and refined.

Early gender archaeology was influenced by epistemological developments in second-wave feminist and anthropological discourses of the 1960s and 1970s. Second-wave feminists rejected essentialist interpretations of gender as being biologically determined[13] (de Beauvoir

[11] For the first history of gender archaeology see Gero and Conkey 1991; other selected histories include Classen and Joyce 1997; Gilchrist 1999; Hays-Gilpin and Whitley 1998, 3-10; Nelson 2006, 1-27; 2004, 3-17; 1997, Sørensen 2000, 16-40, Whitehouse 2006, 733-84; 1998; Wright, R. 1996; Wylie 1991a; 1991b; 1992.

[12] Most histories of the discipline overlook the early Scandinavian contribution to gender archaeology, which predates Conkey and Spector's 1984 article. See: Bertelsen *et al.* 1987 (papers published in this monograph were presented at the Utstein Kloster workshop almost a decade earlier, but were not published until 1987); Fonnesbeck-Sandberg *et al.* 1972; Gejvall 1970; Næss 1974; Thålin-Bergman 1975. Also see Sørensen 2000, 2-15 and Dommasnes 2009, 3 for discussions of early gender archaeology in Scandinavia.

[13] For a discussion of essentialism and structuralist dichotomies within the context of archaeology and gender archaeology see Gilchrist 1999, 26; 1994, 3-4.

1993; Friedan 1964; Greer 1970; Hole and Levine 1971; Janeway 1971; Millett 1970), while female anthropologists devoted themselves explicitly to demonstrating that social behaviour was not conditioned by biology (Chodorow 1974; Collier and Rosaldo 1981; Ortner 1974; Rosaldo 1974; 1980), sought to redress androcentric views and attitudes within the wider field of anthropology (Linton 1971; Dahlberg 1981) and began incorporating a feminist agenda into research models (Moore 1988; Reiter 1975; Rosaldo and Lamphere 1974). Additionally, binary models of interpretation began to be questioned and rejected resulting in studies that probed the integrity of dichotomies, such as the male-female, culture-nature, public-private and began to investigate the nature and cultural importance of female roles (Rosaldo 1980, especially 401).

During the 1970s and early 1980s, gender was rarely incorporated as a variable into the non-person-oriented processualist epistemologies favoured in the wider field of archaeology (Wylie 1991a). Marginalised and seen as a 'fringe archaeology', gender archaeology was mainly influenced by sociological concerns, advocating the revision of past interpretations and the inclusion of women in the archaeological story (Dommasnes 1982; Stalsberg 1984; 1987a; 1987b; 1991; 2001; for early contributions in Aegean prehistory see *Section 3.1*), while some studies also attempted to elucidate more complex gender ideologies in past cultures (Blackwell 1984; Spector 1983).

During the late 1980s and early 1990s post-structuralist epistemologies began to influence the archaeological discourse. These recognized the variability of human experience and saw power as discursive and gender as a social construction. Archaeologists began to incorporate culture theory frameworks into their studies, which recognised the constructed nature of culture, reality and identity (Hodder 1982; 1984a; 1984b; Shanks and Tilley 1982; 1987; 1989).

Although post-processual archaeological discourse re-conceptualised gender as a social construct and recognised it as a relevant social variable (Robertson 1993; for discussion see Sørensen 2000, 19), gender archaeology was still academically marginalised. The problem was circular: there existed a sexist assumption that the sub-discipline was of specialist interest only to women (Whitehouse 2009), which was reinforced by the fact that gender archaeology was practised mainly by women and predominantly female-focused. Secondly, the uneven success of gendered studies also contributed to criticism of gendered work and the sub-discipline's lack of acceptance within the wider, predominantly male field of archaeology. This was based on gendered studies' failure to meet the expectations of theory or the absence of theory altogether. To be fair, the growth pains experienced by gender

archaeology were hardly extraordinary, because the gap between theory and practice continues to plague archaeology as a whole, and it should be noted that the discourse of gender archaeology has been among the most transparent of the archaeological disciplines concerning this particular impasse (Wylie 1997a). Thirdly, gender archaeologists were compelled to distance themselves from feminist epistemologies (Joyce 2008, 23-24; for a discussion of gender archaeology's uneasy relationship with feminist theory see Conkey 1993; Conkey and Gero 1997; Gilchrist 1991; Hays-Gilpin 2000; Whitehouse [ed.] 1998; 2007; Wylie 1991a; 1991b; 1997) largely because leading male archaeological theorists saw feminist theory as underdeveloped and overtly politicized (Shanks and Tilley 1987; Trigger 1989; for discussions of the archaeologists' initial rejection of feminist theory see Hays-Gilpin 2000; Wylie 1992). This constrained the approach to gender, because gender archaeologists were reticent to use epistemological approaches that see gender as performative (Butler 1990; 1993) or take into account the variability of human experience (a tenet of third-wave feminist theory). Finally, the fact that there was no one way to identify gender reliably or to disentangle it neatly from other social determinants such as status, kin affiliation and age contributed to the perception that these archaeological investigations of gender were lacking in scientific rigour (Engelstad 2004, *esp.* 39-45; for a discussion of the 'add woman and stir' approach see Dommasnes 2009, 7) and ultimately untenable.

That being said, much of the gender archaeology of the late 1980s and 1990s was politically motivated, as quite a few gender archaeologists decisively incorporated a feminist agenda into their work (including Casey *et al.* 1998; Classen 1992a; Conkey 1993; Hjørunggdal 1991; Robertson 1993; Whelan 1995). The decade produced works that contributed to the identification and understanding of female roles in prehistoric cultures (selected references include Arnold 1991; 1995; Arnold and Wicker 2001; Blackwell 1984; Bodenhorn 1990; 1993; Brumfiel 1991; Classen 1997; Classen and Joyce 1997; du Cros and Smith 1993; Gero and Conkey 1991; Gilchrist 1994; Hollimon 1997; Nelson 1997; Roscoe 1988; 1996; Wright, R. 1996) and revealed the complexity of gender (Nelson 1997).

During the late 1990s and 2000s gender archaeologists began to question categories of analysis and research areas and to present different interpretations as well as agendas and theoretical approaches (such as Classen and Joyce 1997; Gilchrist 1999; Hjørungdal 2005; Joyce 2008; Linduff and Rubinson 2007; Nelson 1997; 2004; 2006; 2007a; Rautman 2000; Sørensen 2000; Whitehouse [ed.] 1998; Wright, R. 1996; Wylie 1997b). These studies recognised that variability was the key to unlocking gender, and they advocated and used pluralistic approaches (Brumfiel 2006; Gilchrist 1999, 29) – this may be the most important epistemological development within the sub-discipline to date.

Pluralistic approaches are currently the most reliable means of identifying and studying gender constructs and ideologies, because they enable the analyst to incorporate a variety of sub-approaches and agendas for the analysis of specific cultures (Brumfiel 2006; Nelson 2006, 14). While it could be argued that the use of an agenda is inherently biased, the sub-approaches employed in analysis are chosen for their potential to reveal negative as well as positive patterns in a culturally specific context that can be applied to the analysis of different types of evidence, i.e. material culture, the burial practice, use of architectural space, iconographic representation, etc. Methodologies informed by this approach also can be theoretically specific, making use of theoretical frameworks (e.g. gender archaeology and archaeological mortuary theory) that are relevant to and work from the strength of the data. Thus, the analyst can take into account the nature and limitations of the data to create a culturally specific methodology that is geared towards specific research questions. By doing so, generalisation can be avoided, and the analyst does not have to resort to the superimposition of patterns that may not actually be there (Nelson 2007; Nelson and Rosen-Ayalon 2002).

The analyst also can avoid superimposing an assumed spectrum of gender, while facilitating the expansion of attribution to the full range of gender represented in a given population, including women, men and other possible genders in a single frame of analysis (Alberti 2006; Brumfiel 2006; Connel 1995; Cornwall and Lindisfarne 1994; Gilchrist 1999, 64-71; Knapp 1998; Segal 1990; Spencer-Wood 1998, 23, 24; Whitehouse 2009), thus facilitating the attempt not only to identify and measure gender in the archaeological record but also to explain how it is constructed and negotiated, potentially revealing the complexity or ambiguity of gender (Sørensen 2000, 112). In sum, a methodology informed by a pluralistic approach has the greatest potential to identify evidence of gender reliably in the archaeological record, precisely because it can be historically specific, minimises bias and accounts for and accommodates cultural variability. This research is informed by this methodological approach (*Sections 2.3*, *4.2*).

## 2.2 The Approach to Gender

### *2.2.1 What is Gender?*

In the broadest sense, gender is a social construction informed by culturally specific ideas of femaleness, maleness and variants of these categories. Gender can be applied to individuals, groups, cultures, and ethnicities, as well as ideologies, religions, social roles, identities, occupations, objects, spaces (both architectural and landscape), practices and even language

(Sørensen 2000, 144-67; Gilchrist 1999, 100-5; 1994; Nelson 1997, 113-29). Constructs and ideologies of gender exist within every social system and are created by those who participate in that wider culture at the level of society, a community or a group. Social structures and ideologies usually determine gender roles that are performed within a given culture or group. Thus, gender ideologies and constructs are culturally specific because they are the outcome of processes specific to certain peoples of certain places and times (Sørensen 2000, 8).

In reality, the construction of gender is complex, and gender categories and roles are not universal or fixed. They are often broadly defined, but by no means restricted to being either masculine or feminine and can be informed by, or reactive to, other social factors such as age, status, kin affiliation (Collier and Yanagisako 1987; Diemberger 1993; Dommasnes 1991), perceived sexual differences and group, occupational or religious affiliations (Gilchrist 1999, 89; Sofaer Derevenski 1997a,b). Sometimes, gender constructs can become so embedded in a culture that they appear to be natural and are construed as being biologically determined or a characteristic of biological sex.

### *2.2.2 Gender Vs. Sex*

Interpreting results or rather the relationship of patterns of behaviour to gender within an archaeological mortuary context is a tricky business. Given that the data set used for this research is comprised of small, variable burial samples from cemeteries operating during discrete chronological periods, I chose to use the gender attribution approach (*Section 2.3*) – a deliberately simple statistical approach that, in this case, quantifies the distribution of grave goods to osteologically sexed burials according to sex and age (e.g. adult females, subadult males, children, infants, etc.).

While gender attribution is arguably a straightforward approach for this project (the advantages to gender attribution will be discussed below in *Section 2.3*), it does presume that Middle Helladic and Mycenaean mortuary behaviour was predicated on a binary model of gender that correlated to a two-sex model of male and female. Regrettably, when dealing with prehistoric mortuary evidence, especially when there is a dearth of other types of potentially gender-pertinent evidence (such as literary, iconographic or textile evidence that could potentially fill in the gaps concerning how gender may have been performed and constructed in prehistoric cultures), investigating whether or not there is a relationship between burial sex and mortuary behaviour is often the only starting point available to the prehistoric analyst. In this research, certain artefacts, specifically grave goods, can be reliably attributed to sexed male and female burials often within discrete age group

categories or even according to status or wealth indices. While subtleties regarding distribution to certain burial groups can be revealed (*Section 2.3*), at its most basic level, this approach facilitates the sexing of certain grave goods as either male, female or non-gendered. In this way, the gender attribution approach does not obviously depart from more traditional, even dated approaches, in which the rather simplistic concept of gender, typically based on a western two-sex model of male and female, has underpinned the artefactual gendering of objects according to binary divisions throughout archaeology's history as a discipline (e.g. weaponry = male and textile production tools = female). Thus, the gender attribution approach's general conflation of sex with gender, at the very least, may constrain and, at worst, may pervert the analyst's interpretation of gender. This raises legitimate questions regarding whether or not gender can be revealed in its full scope, if at all, when dealing with prehistoric mortuary data.

The gender vs. sex question has dominated much of Anglo-European gender archaeology.[14] Strictly speaking, sex is either of two general reproductive categories, male or female, in animals and plants. Within the context of human beings, the term 'sex' denotes the physicality of individuals that define them as male or female and is determined by genetic makeup, internal reproductive organs, the organization of the brain (such as in the control of hormone production) and external genitalia.

Scientific evidence of 'intersex' individuals[15] as well as evidence that certain past cultures assigned alternative sex or gender categories to individuals (Herdt 1994; Bolin 1996) underscore the complexity of gender's relationship to biological sex, highlighting the possibility that a two-sex binary model is just one way to conceptualise sex as well as gender (Joyce 2008, 18-19). This has compelled certain gender archaeologists to question whether or not male/female sex variables were appropriate and if sex was a fit category for analysis (Geller 2005; Little 1994; Nordbladh and Yates 1990). Some argued for the creation of an analytical reality in which the interpretation of sex and the construction of gender could be divorced from and described without binary structure (Geller 2005) – no easy task since gender and sex are heavily conflated in Western discourse (Butler 1990). Nordbladh and Yates (1990) attempted to establish a continuum of biological sex categories based on chromosome arrangement going well beyond a two-sex model. While biologically

[14] For discussions concerning gender vs. sex see Classen 1992b; Gilchrist 1999, 13; Munson 2000, 128; Sørensen 2000, 45-59; Stoodley 1999, *esp*. 1.

[15] 'Intersex' is a general term that includes a variety of different clinical conditions in which physical features (e.g. chromosomal, morphological, genital and/or gonadal) that are not clearly biologically male or female (i.e. deviate from the vast majority of individuals who are characterised by a consistent set of characteristics which are divided into two clear groups) are present in an individual (Blackless *et al.* 2000; Fausto-Sterling 2000; 1993; *contra* Sax 2002).

illuminating, these studies fail to offer feasible analytical frameworks because what little evidence we do have for alternative sex and gender paradigms make it difficult to create and maintain alternative sex and gender categories (Herdt 1994). Further, the conflation of gender with sex is unavoidable if we conceive of the biological reality of sex as a continuum in which a very small minority of individuals land neither on one side or the other – a model which confirms that perceptions of sex are in and of themselves social constructions informed by cultural perceptions of an individual's external physical characteristics. What is more, biological differences are not always relevant to social analysis because chromosome variation does not necessarily affect a person's external physicality or even their behaviour in a way that substantially deviates from a two-sex model (Sørensen 2000, 46; also see Lacquer 1990).

While biological sex does not of itself determine a person's gender, a society's understanding of gender is typically correlated with their ideas and interpretation of biological sex, and most cultures typically organise their concept of biological sex based on the binary two-sex model of male and female. For example, alternative sex and gender categories documented in ethnographic studies are social constructions shaped mainly by social and economic factors (see Bolin 1996; Hollimon 1997; Joyce 2008, *esp.* 46-50; Lang 1998-276-79; Roscoe 1988; 1991; 1996; Whelan 1991) and are typically low-incidence and framed within a classificatory framework that starts from the male-female primary binary division, e.g. the 'Zuni man-woman' (Roscoe 1991), 'two-spirits' (Hollimon 1997) and 'manly-hearted women' (Blackwell 1984) – all alternative gender roles documented in certain Native American tribes. Each conforms to a set of binary expectations (for discussion see Sørensen 2000, 49). It can even be argued that the variant anatomy of Byzantine eunuchs (Ringrose 2003) was physically realised through human agency, and most likely performed on young boys who were probably, up to that point, culturally construed and categorised as biologically male.

Still, there is always the possibility that a prehistoric culture may not have correlated gender to the binary, two-sex model (Gilchrist 1999, 9-14, 54-78 [*esp.* 54-56]; Nelson 2006, introduction; Sørensen 2000, 19, 41-59). One way to account for this possibility is to be particularly attuned to recognising the potential ambiguity of grave goods in terms of what they may or may not represent. For example, are they deposited collectively within a grave with no clear association with burials or are they associated with one or more individuals interred in the grave? Do they express status, ideology, biography or perhaps an expression of collective identity or even a combination of the above? Questions must also be asked regarding whether objects represent the deceased directly or indirectly, the burying group or

third parties for that matter. It is also imperative to rigorously investigate 'exceptions' to patterns or variants of behaviour that can be inferred based on evidence of unusual mortuary treatment – something that gender attribution is capable of revealing but may be difficult to interpret. For example when is an 'outlier' just an 'outlier', and when is a behaviour representative of a possible alternative identity or construction? There are illuminating studies in which analysts using the gender attribution approach have managed to reveal gender by considering mortuary behaviour within the wider archaeological context. For example, studies on gender and weaponry deposition in Anglo Saxon and Iron Age burials from central Europe suggests that gender was organized as a variable continuum in this mortuary context, because they revealed that certain types of weaponry were deposited with child burials of both sexes, whereas other types of weaponry were deposited only with adult burials and are clearly gendered (Arnold 2012, 93-94; Härke 1989a, 1989b, 1990, 1997; Lucy 1997; Stoodley 1999). These findings strongly suggest that although gender attribution may not be capable of revealing the full scope of a culture's gender ideology or social organisation, the approach is capable of revealing subtleties concerning the materiality of gender. At the very least, gender attribution can reveal whether or not objects were deposited with certain burials according to sex as well as other social variables, such as age or status. If distribution patterns do present apparent binary divisions in the archaeological record, it is important to acknowledge that they may well be real, not just our ethnocentric creations (Herdt 1994), and evidence of 'outliers' or variants must be inferred based on other available evidence, such as unusual mortuary treatment, textual evidence, ethnography and analogy.[16] Once patterns are identified, the archaeological context (of the grave, the cemetery, the site or affiliated settlement and the wider region) and other types of supporting evidence (such iconographic or textual) or lack thereof will then determine to what extent gender and ultimately social organisation can be interpreted.

### *2.2.3 Gender Ideology*

Gender ideology operates on the collective level. It is socially constructed by a group and informed by the cultural systems and processes with which individuals associate themselves (Sørensen 2000, 8). It can inform and be informed by cultural identity and ethnicity, social structure, kin structure (Collier and Yanagisako 1987; Diemberger 1993; Dommasnes 1991), the division of labour, the gendering of activities, the performance of ritual and an individual's access to certain groups, activities, rights and privileges. It can also inform what

[16] Archaeologists who specialize in the study of prehistoric cultures from the Eurasian Steppe found that sexing of burials as either biologically male or female did not bias or constrain the analysis but underpinned their identification of gender ideologies as well as their interpretation of the complex interplay between these ideologies and other social determinants in warrior-horse cultures (Hanks 2008; Jones-Bley 2008; Rubinson 2008).

it means to be male or female at certain stages of the life cycle as well as how a culture construes sexual differences (Gilchrist 1999, 89; Sofaer Derevenski 1997a,b).

### *2.2.4 Gender Identity*

An individual's gender identity is determined by the gender ideology of the group(s) to which the person belongs (Sørensen 2000, 8; also see Gilchrist 1999, xv). It can also be informed by a person's status, age, affiliation with certain roles, participation in activities and human agency. It can be represented through physical manifestations, such as dress (Barnes and Eicher 1992; Eicher 1995; Eicher and Roach-Higgins 1992; Lucy 1997; Nelson 1997, 109-11; Sørensen 2000, 124-143; 1997), social practice and performance (Butler 1990; Goodison 2009, *esp.* 239), gesture, speaking patterns and the body itself (Fausto-Sterling 2000; Goodison 2009; Rehak 1999a; Nordbladh and Yates 1990; Sofaer Derevenski 2006; Treherne 1995). Gender identity also can determine an individual's affiliation with certain ideologies, groups or sub-groups, activities, occupations, and religions. It can also be informed by an individual's experience of their biological sex (Gilchrist 1999, preface; Talalay 2005, 137). An individual's gender identity can entitle them (or not) to certain privileges and rights and access to certain roles and groups.

### *2.2.5 Gender Roles*

Gender roles are culturally constructed, differing widely among cultures and over time. They embody the social and behavioural norms considered to be culturally appropriate for individuals of a specific gender – generally construed as being either a masculine or feminine role. At the most basic level, it is often biological sex categories of male and female that determine whether or not an individual is allowed to perform certain roles or participate in certain activities. Certainly, some gender roles are correlated to biological sex categories, the cultural conception of sex, reproductive activities and abilities, or even an individual's sexual orientation. What is more, gender roles attributable to male and female sex and gender categories may not be accessible to all individuals categorised as that gender or sex. For example, certain gender roles may be accessible only to individuals of one gender who are also of a certain age, status, religion, and/or kin group. In fact, the complex interplay between other social determinants, cultural systems, human agency and gender is manifested in gender roles that are performed within the milieux of social intercourse, i.e. the family or kinship structure, the secular or religious arena, the funerary milieu or via occupational and production activities. Finally, an individual's affiliation with certain gender roles and identities may not remain constant over his or her lifetime and can shift, drop away or remain fixed due to factors such as age, occupation, religion, status or agency (Butler 1990,

10; Lorber 1994, 18-22; Munson 2000; Pringle 1993, 91-92; Ramet 1996; Stoodley 1999, 2, 5; Whelan 1991).

Certain studies show that gender roles also can be determined purely by social or ideological constructs. For example, in his study of Bronze Age rock art from Sweden, Yates (1993) argued that the depiction of different male body types (warriors vs. non-warriors) suggests that there may have been more than one concept of male sex and masculine roles in Bronze Age Sweden and that social factors independent of reproductive activities and abilities also may have determined the cultural conception of sex. Amongst Native American tribes, there is documentation of cross-gender women, who were biologically female and culturally construed as female within the tribe. These 'manly-hearted women' donned male clothing, participated in hunting activities, took wives and represented an alternative way of being female (Blackwell 1984). There is also documentation in Native American tribes of young men and women of various sexual orientation known as 'two-spirit' individuals, who take on a feminine gender role, usually during adolescence or early adulthood, through dress, gestural performance and participation in feminine gendered occupational activities, namely as undertakers (Hollimon 1997; Roscoe 1988; 1991; 1996). Thus, identification as a 'two-spirit' was not solely linked to biological sex or sexual orientation.

An individual's age or stage in the life cycle is also often a primary determinant of the types of gender roles and activities an individual can perform or participate in, and an individual's social experience of age is directly relatable to their gender (Gilchrist 1999, 81; Joyce and Classen 1997, *esp.* 4). Age can be measured in four ways: 1) chronologically, in which age is based on calendric calibration; 2) socially, in which age is based on paradigms of normal behaviour deemed appropriate for a specific age group; 3) physically, based on a medical construct reflecting levels of physical ability (Gilchrist 1999, 89; Sofaer Derevenski 1997a,b) or observed stages of sexual development (Classen 1997); and 4) as a variant of the social category, such as participation in staged initiation rites which may also be closely related to actual age. For example, in her study of mortuary behaviour in the cemetery at Tiszapolgár-Basatanya, Sofaer Derevenski (1997a,b) observes two stages of the lifecycle: *period 1* in which gender ideology is linked to prestige and achievement, and *period 2* in which gender roles probably were determined by biological sex categories, suggesting that children may have had a separate gender from adults in prehistoric Hungary. In his study of Anglo Saxon mortuary behaviour, Härke (1989a; 1990) observed that adult male burials were buried with knives that displayed longer blades than the knives deposited with child burials, suggesting that the expression of warrior ideology was determined by age at time of death. And Foxhall (1989) argues that ideas of maleness and femaleness in Classical Greece

were based on affiliation with sex-specific stages of the lifecycle, which had very different meanings and roles for each gender and operated along a two-gendered time-scale.

### *2.2.6 Gender Relations*

Gender relations mediate human experiences as well as the ways in which individuals and groups interact with each other and are ranked (or not) in any given society according to several possible models: hierarchy, heterarchy and complementarity.

In a gender hierarchy, genders are ranked on a vertical social axis, in which one gender is ranked above the other, enjoying comparatively more rights and privileges. Within this system, the roles and activities associated with one gender often are culturally construed as being more important and of greater value than those associated with the lower ranked gender (Miller 1993). Often, cultures characterised by a hierarchical gender ranking system practise a sexed division of labour and typically are characterised by male dominance.[17] In these cases, the lower ranked feminine gender is seen as being physically weaker and of less worth, despite the fact that the ranking of gender categories or roles often has little or no bearing on an individual's physical ability to perform a role or activity. This type of relational structure also can affect how products of gendered labour structure will be valued. For example, the archaeological discourse is largely informed by male archaeologists and male ethnographers (van der Leeuw 1977) that assume that female labour is less complex and accorded less prestige than male labour, i.e. females produce handmade pottery in domestic settings never beyond the level of the family or immediate community, while male potters are identified as specialist artisans who manufacture products on a larger scale in a workshop setting (for further discussion see Gero 1991; Gilchrist 1999, 38; Wright, R. 1996).[18]

Gender relations can also be mediated through heterarchical structures. Heterarchies are systems in which components have the potential to be ranked or unranked in a variety of

[17] The assumption of male dominance was seen as the pattern for social organization in almost all anthropological literature until female anthropologists began to question these assumptions (Chodorow 1974; Rogers, S. C. 1975; Rosaldo and Lamphere 1974) and is still at the heart of the nature/nurture controversy, which is concerned with how and to what extent biology (nature) and social environment (nurture) interact, influence and determine gendered roles and activities. Interpretations of sexual dimorphism are still bound up in the assumption of male physical superiority and the 'limiting' effect of reproduction and child rearing upon female physiology and behaviour and continue to inform anthropological and archaeological interpretations of gendered occupational affiliation.

[18] For studies on female production in the archaeological record see Barber 1994; Wright, R. 1991. For early craft production in the Aegean see Laffineur and Betancourt (ed.) 1993; Nordquist 1993; 2000.

ways (Crumley 1979, 144; 1995).[19] This concept serves as a lateral model, but heterarchy does not constitute a defined organisational structure unto itself. Rather, it represents the ways in which the ranking of certain components operate independently of one another. This model is characterised by a sense of diversity and fluctuation in which vertical and horizontal differentiation is incorporated and the existence of multiple rankings along differentiated scales (depending on what variables are considered) can exist within single organisational or cultural systems (Brumfiel 1995; Levy 1995, 47-49; 2006; Rautman 1998, 327-28). This framing concept can be essential for identifying complex gender constructs and ideologies in prehistoric cultures (Levy 1995) forcing 'us to specify more clearly context and temporal duration of the relationships that we are describing' (Rautman 1998, 328).

In a gender complementarity, genders are not ranked above or below one another, and hierarchy is expressed along a two-gender scale, horizontally within each gender and on its own terms (Gero and Scottolin 2002; Pader 1982). For example, the Native American Haudenosaunee nation has a complementary gendered cosmology and worldview centred upon balance achieved through difference (Sydoriak Allen 2010, 61-65, tbl. 3.1; Venables 2010, 26-35; also see Spector 1983), in which 'male' and 'female' are seen as 'different and equal' (Venables 2010, 27). Haudenosaunee women are responsible for the agricultural fields while men are responsible for the wooded area beyond (Venables 2010, 28-35). In this system, different genders also can participate in the same or similar activities, perhaps performing gendered tasks within the context of a larger activity or occupation (such as farming, i.e. women sow seeds and gather the harvest while men plough the fields). On the whole, it is extremely difficult to identify this type of gendered structure in past cultures, because the breadth and scope of a culture's cosmology is difficult to ascertain in the archaeological record and in the absence of ethnographic evidence. This is one of the reasons why the identification of heterarchical structures is so important if we are to be able to identify lateral gender relations in past cultures.

## 2.3 Gender Attribution and Mortuary Evidence

### *2.3.1 Ideology and practice*

The attempt to reveal gender in mortuary behaviour is part of a long-standing history in archaeology, in which mortuary evidence has been investigated to understand social structure better (Ucko 1969; Saxe 1970; Binford 1972; Pader 1982; Parker Pearson 2003; Voutsaki 1998). Initially, mortuary practice was largely understood to be a social

[19] For a discussion of the concept of heterarchy as an organisational structure see Crumley 1995; Rogers, R. J. 1995; Spencer 1994; White 1995.

phenomenon based on a simple tripartite model: 1) *rite of separation*, 2) *rite of marginalisation* and 3) *rite of aggregation*.[20] Current approaches in archaeological mortuary theory see mortuary behaviour as a complex expression of social values and constructs operating at the level of individual identity and/or the broader cultural level of ideology (Parker Pearson 2003; Voutsaki 1993, *esp.* 4). What is more, the rituals used to process death as well as how gender is expressed within mortuary practice may represent social ideology and not necessarily social practice (Brumfiel 2006, 38-40; Hodder 1982; Pader 1982, 37; Parker Pearson 2003, 4).

Social practice is the set of behaviours performed by cultures, communities and groups. These behaviours are culturally specific and construed as appropriate within an agreed upon and shared belief system to which the performers collectively subscribe. This system and the behaviours it shapes are typically informed by a complex array of social variables such as cultural identity, ethnicity, social values, social structure (i.e. hierarchy), kinship structure and the community and individual's physical relationship to the physical and cultural environment in which they live. External variables such as environment, access (or lack thereof) to resources and economic stimuli can also shape social practice. Social practice is also informed by social ideology.

Social ideology represents beliefs and ideas about social structures as well as how a culture construes the world it inhabits. In certain instances it may not correlate to actual practice, but instead informs the value system of a culture, representing an ideal of how the world should be and how an individual should conduct his or her life. Although these ideals may be aspired to, they may be difficult to realise or altogether unattainable (think of Christian doctrine which encourages a life devoted to God completely without sin). Nonetheless, they influence the behaviour and relationships of those who subscribe to them, and, in turn, social practice can directly or indirectly validate these ideological constructions, sometimes even to the point that certain beliefs and practices in time appear to be natural or even biologically determined. Consider 1950s America, in which the social ideal of the American family was personified in early television shows such as *Ozzie and Harriet*, *Father Knows Best* and *Leave it to Beaver*. In these programmes, the representation of gender roles was strictly polarised according to the convention of the time. The father figure was of astute moral character. He worked in a professional job earning a comfortable living for his family. He was home only in the evenings and perhaps on weekends. Despite his absence, he functioned

[20] Originally proposed by van Gennep (2004 [revised edition]) and explained in Parker Pearson 2003, 1-20; I. Morris (1987) and Voutsaki (1993) have used and developed this model as a basis for their research in Iron Age-Archaic and Mycenaean Greece respectively.

as the head of the house, and his authority was never questioned. Conversely, the female figure did not work in the public sector, and her sphere of activity was located firmly within the home and centred on the care of children and house. She dressed herself impeccably and was content, cheerful and nurturing. The children were wholesome, for the most part obedient (when they were not, they quickly turned penitent, usually after intervention and judgement by the father figure) and happily conformed and subscribed to their appropriate gender roles. These shows were hugely popular and are still thought of as American classics. The values and polarised gender roles that they presented succinctly represented and expressed the social ideology of 1950s America, and, in turn, the shows themselves valorised these ideals.

The reality of 1950s America was of course much more complex. For example, many women, both single and married, worked. Yet, because the ideal of womanhood was bound up in the construct of the stay-at-home mother and wife, women were paid less, and a more limited range of jobs and occupations (i.e. secretaries, nurses and teachers) were available to them. Social ideology may not have correlated neatly to social practice, but, in this instance, it certainly underpinned the characteristic devaluation of female occupations and labour and the expectation that women should aspire to become wives and mothers. Nor was everyone white or comfortably middle-class. Although some questioned and even rejected the values and roles projected on television, many aspired to embody them regardless of whether or not they had the resources to actualise them.

### *2.3.2 Mortuary ideology, social practice and material culture: the medium is the message*

In much the same way, I see the funerary arena as a medium in which groups can create and simultaneously validate social ideology and structure. Although mortuary ideology may not correlate directly with social practice, it is capable of representing an idealised version of social values and constructs that, in turn, underpin and validate the group's belief system and behavioural codes. What is more, mortuary behaviour can certainly be informed by culturally specific narratives of how a life should begin, unfold and end and is expressive (at some level) of human biography (Robb 2007, 288) while also being reflective of the social ideology to which an individual and their community subscribes. The funeral effectively represents a last chapter – an epilogue to a human life, and there is every possibility that editorial choices have been made to achieve the desired final effect. Thus, in this research mortuary practice is seen as cultural action (Robb 2007), and, as argued by Voutsaki (1998, 44-46, *esp.* 45), a means by which groups can create social reality 'by creating the spatial and temporal schemes that divide and order the cultural universe, by defining identity at both

the personal and the group level, and by creating differentiation by means of ostentatious and competitive gestures.'

### *2.3.3 The gender attribution approach*

Ostentatious consumption and more generally mortuary practices involving the deposition of material culture can potentially be a means by which groups express and create their ideas about gender, and how they may have valued and constructed idealised versions of certain roles and identities. The gender attribution approach was chosen because of its ability to reveal the materiality of gender by quantifying the attribution of object types to osteologically sexed burials.[21] The mechanics of this methodology are explained in *Section 4.2*. For the sake of clarity, I have chosen *Table 5.58* as an example of a typical query, which investigates the attribution of weaponry to sexed burials. To do this, I have counted the number of weapons associated with each type of burial represented in an Early Mycenaean cemetery sample, shown here in Table 5.58, which suggests that weaponry was generally deposited with adult burials of both genders, but that the deposition of different weaponry sub-types may have been influenced by the deceased's gender: males were provided with all types of weaponry, whereas females were provided only with knives, daggers, spears and swords.

***Table 5.58 Mycenae Distribution of Weaponry Sub-types in Grave Circle B***

| Burials | Arrow | Axe | Helmet | Knife/Dagger | Spear | Sword |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 Elderly Males | | | 1? | 1 | | 2 |
| 16 Adult Males | 47 | 1 | 1 to 2 | 15 | 2 | 5 |
| 4 Adult Females | | | | 4 to 5 | 1 | 3 |
| 3 Unsexed Adults | 1 | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 8 |

While straightforward, the approach has certain limitations. It cannot reveal a culture's gender structure or ideology in its full scope. Instead, it potentially reveals the materiality of gender within the Middle Helladic and Mycenaean funerary milieu by focusing explicitly upon behaviours concerning the deposition of material culture in graves.

Of course, it is impossible to avoid some degree of bias or circularity, and all theoretical approaches are based on certain assumptions. The gender attribution approach is no exception. It assumes that gender stems from a binary two-sex model of male and female and can be revealed through the archaeological record, particularly mortuary evidence (Classen

[21] A significant body of work in both North America (Wilson 1997; Williams and Bendremer 1997; Gillespie and Joyce 1997; Costin 1996; Joyce 1996; Spector 1983) and Europe (Hassan and Smith 2002; Stoodley 1999; Lucy 1997; Rega 1997; O'Shea 1996) has demonstrated the success of methodologies informed by this approach and shows that it is particularly well suited to mortuary analysis (Sørensen 2006; 2000, 8, 12, 72).

1992a; Gilchrist 1999, 41; Sørensen 2000); that deposited object types may have an inherent relationship to the individual and/or their community, circumstances of death, social relations among the mourners and ideologies (Robb 1998; Block and Parry 1982; Gnoli and Vernant 1982; Huntington and Metcalf 1991; Pader 1982; Ucko 1969); that objects can be gendered conceptually or ideologically and be used differently by differently gendered individuals (Sørensen 2000, Chapter 5); and that a culture's gender ideology(ies) may have shaped certain mortuary practices, and behaviours may represent gender ideology(ies) and/or gender identity(ies).

Critics of the gender attribution approach argue that it runs the risk of conflating biology with gender (Gilchrist 1999, 43), which it does. This limitation is borne in mind and the means by which it can be potentially mitigated is discussed above in *Section 2.2*. It has also been argued that gender attribution only reveals the visibility of women, reducing the scope of gender and subsequently reinforcing binary relationships (Gero and Conkey 1991). Speaking to the second point, methodologies informed by gender attribution objectively record attribution to all genders present in a sample, and the identification of alternative genders is facilitated via the in-built means to identify 'exceptions' to patterns of behaviour; evidence of 'outliers' can be inferred based on evidence of unusual mortuary treatment, and archaeological context must be considered in order to ascertain if unusual behaviour represents an alternative or variant behaviour. Therefore, as long as the sample includes both male and female genders (and even potentially alternative genders), there is no reason why it should only reveal one or even two genders. The only reason it might reveal only one gender is if only one gender is present or if depositional practices represent gender superfluity (Arnold 2012, *esp.* 92). This is apparent when only one gender is clearly linked to distinct object types, while the other gender is characterised by a lack of identifiable artefacts. For example, in Late Bronze Age Mycenaean chamber tomb cemeteries, high-status male burials are almost always provided with weaponry (Chapter 7, *Section 7.3.2.3*) while there is a lack of identifiable female artefact types. If we were looking only artefact type distribution, this behaviour would suggest a male superfluity, but we know that relatively equal numbers of female and male burials were included in this sample. Thus, when inclusion patterns as well as distribution patterns for other types of artefacts (such as pottery, tinned ceramic vessels, adornment and spindle whorls) are taken into account, it becomes clear that male burials are not over-represented or necessarily more visible than female burials, but rather that the emphasis of female burials was expressed via the deposition of a variety of object types rather than a circumscribed burial inventory (*Section 7.4.2.2*). By taking cemetery demographics into account, as well as asking pertinent questions about the survivability of gender-specific signifiers made from inorganic materials (such as dress elements), patterns

suggesting a male or female gender superfluity can be deconstructed and appropriately assessed. Therefore, the risk of contributing to a false impression of gender superfluity is the problematic outcome of burials samples in which skeletal evidence is greatly comprised, has not survived or has not been osteologically analysed. The benefit of the gender attribution approach its workability is contingent upon the use of osteologically sexed burial samples. Therefore, inclusion practices determine whether or not a gender is visible in a given sample, and deposition practices reflect only how the materiality of gender may or may not have been expressed.

That being said, the interpretation of artefact type distribution can be problematic due to lack of or ambiguities concerning other types of evidence, such as textual and iconographic evidence. Still, there are instances in which the analysis of material culture and distribution can reveal the potential identity of a burial (see the burial assemblage from the 'Artisan Grave' in the Late Bronze Age Athenian Agora [Immerwahr 1971, 104, 110, 231-32, Pls. 55, 77, 89]) or how objects may have been used in a funerary context (see the tinned ceramic vessels used explicitly for display in Late Bronze Age tombs [Gillis 1992; 1996]). Still, in many cases it remains unclear whether material culture deposited in graves represents identity or ideology.

Nor can all material culture deposited in graves can be considered grave goods. For example, large deposits of pottery were made in the chamber tombs at Aspropilia (Chapter 7, *Section 7.3.2.1.1.2*). None of these pots were linked to individual burials interred in the various chambers of each tomb. Instead, pottery was deposited within the general context of the grave as a whole, thus functioning as a collective deposit that most likely represented the wider family or kin group. In this research, only objects associated with burials are categorised as grave goods, and these are seen as being representative of culturally specific cues, potentially expressive of identity and/or ideology.

The reliable interpretation of material culture within a mortuary context must also incorporate an awareness of the potential value of objects, especially since we know that status was a major determinant for Mycenaean depositional practice, and that the selective expression of wealth, which sometimes took the form of conspicuous consumption, was central to the creation and expression of elite Mycenaean ideologies and power structures (Graziadio 1991; Voutsaki 1993; 1998; Wolpert 2004).

*'... the value of objects and the prestige of people are more than simply related: they are mutually defined. People and objects valorise each other.'*
*Voutsaki 1993, 40*

The archaeological approach to the theory of value has evolved over time. The processualist approach to value was rather blunt in that proponents of the New Archaeology typically equated value with energy expenditure, which was interpreted as being directly reflective of social status (Binford 1972). During the 1980s, Marxist theory, in which labour is seen as a commodity and access to exchange is seen as reflection of social status, began heavily to influence archaeological approaches to theory of value (Renfrew and Shennan 1982). During the 1990s, post-processualists then began to conceptualize social status as being 'created' by dynamic social processes (Voutsaki 1993; 1998).

The valuation of objects was also often based on the analyst's subjective assessment concerning whether or not an artefact type should be categorised as 'practical', 'prestige' or both. Practical objects are seen those that can be used for the purpose for which they were apparently created, based on whether or not: 1) materials were readily available (locally or regionally produced); 2) the object could perform in the environment, was easily handled and easily maintained and repaired; 3) the technology used to create the object was readily available; 4) the production method and labour used to create the object was cost effective; and 5) the object was easily transported and stored (Hayden 1998, 7-8, 10). For example, it is tempting to correlate the deposition of functional tools made from locally procured industrial materials deposited in Middle Helladic and Mycenaean graves with certain production activities, such as the adult male identified as burial AA 166b from the 'Artisan's Grave' in the Athenian Agora. This individual was provided with functional tools used for bead making (Immerwahr 1971, 104, 110, 231-32, Pls. 55, 77, 89) – a stand-alone burial inventory. While it is certainly possible that burial AA 166b was identified as a bead maker during life, can we assume that this depositional behaviour represents his occupational identity? Not exactly. To determine this, the functionality and comparative value (based on rarity or frequency of deposition, material composition, manufacturing provenance, typological features) of tool sub-types can be assessed. Another way of possibly getting at whether objects could be representative of identity is by using aspects of Fiske's (1991; 2004a; 2004b) psychological model (used by Bevan [2007] to great effect in his study of Mediterranean stone vessels), which measures how individuals think about relationships with others: through communal sharing, authority ranking, equality matching, and/or market pricing. For example pottery sets and prestige objects used for feasting may represent

communal sharing (see Bevan 2007, 190 and Voutsaki 1993, Chapter 3; 1998 for discussions of this process).

However, when object types are deposited frequently with a certain burial group, such as the deposition of clay spindle whorls with almost all high-status female burials in the Agora Cemetery during LHIIIA-B, social ideology may have influenced this practice more than identity. In this case, the frequency of deposition suggests that spindle whorls were seen as general markers of female status. While it is certainly possibly that the deceased individuals engaged in spinning activities during life, the fact that these humble spindle whorls were established components of a high-status female inventory in Late Bronze Age Athens indicates that these functional objects were ideologically endowed with prestige in death (*Section 9.2*; the approach to the interpretation of spindle whorls is clarified in *Section 4.2.2.3*).

The categorisation of objects as prestige objects was initially based on technical evaluation or artistic interpretation, but these approaches proved to be misleading. Firstly, advances in technology often play a large role in production of utilitarian objects used for practical purposes. Secondly, judgement of artistic merit is subjective. Finally, the assumption that prestige objects are strictly composed of exotica and non-functional, expensive display pieces is limiting, because prestige objects can also be utilitarian objects that have been culturally endowed with ideological value, as illustrated by the spindle whorls mentioned above. This phenomenon illustrates the potential complexity of objects (especially those found in graves) for which, Treherne (1995) argues, the meanings are complex constructions, derived from the functionality, and restricted and contextually specific use of the object.

Of course, some prestige objects are rightfully classed as exotica or luxury items and principally represent ideology, and because of this, Bevan (2007, 8) observes that the symbolic value and purpose of a prestige object is culturally specific and represents the 'value logics'[22] of prehistoric cultures at the time of deposition. They can be used to express wealth, success, power, authority, honour and affiliation to specific groups, communities or cultures (Voutsaki 1993, 36). They can also be used to create alliances and solve social

[22] Bevan (2007) sees 'value logics' as being derived from a social process in which 'shared logics' have been culturally constructed by a community/culture to establish the value of an object, and the concept of value and the community's value logics are never fixed. Bevan argues that value logics "form part of inherited cultural traditions that have a wider evolutionary context and reveal a degree of cross-cultural consistency about which it might be possible to generalise. Because value logics are often grounded in material things, they are partially structured by this physicality."

problems (Hayden 1998, 11) and to express hereditary legitimization (Voutsaki 1993, 36; Wolpert 2004). Voutsaki (1993, 36; 1997; also see Appadurai 1986, 38 and Bevan 2007, 9-10) argues that this is accomplished often via 'complexity of acquisition through institutionalized scarcity', constructing culturally construed links to ideologies and identities, and/or by transmitting symbols and representations with 'semiotic virtuosity', which makes sense of the 'non-functionality and pure decorativeness' of some of these objects. Approaches used by Bevan (2007, 17-18) and Voutsaki (1993, 73-74) show that the relative status and wealth of burial assemblages can be assessed by comparing the diversity and quantity of artefact types represented in each burial assemblage, if the body of the burial received special or unusual treatment, the construction of grave type and the presence or absence of architectural embellishments.

Currently, the value of objects is seen as a subjectively determined, culturally specific construct (Bevan 2007, 9; also see Voutsaki 1993, 36-38; 1997). Bevan (2007, 8) argues that value can be comparatively assessed via the following means: 1) comparative analysis across space and time; 2) contemporaneous comparisons between different types of objects; 3) analysis of archaeological context; 4) consideration of typological variation; and 5) integration of archaeological, documentary and iconographic evidence.

Admittedly, most Aegean objects could be feasibly categorised as prestige objects, and most Middle Helladic and Mycenaean grave goods are rarely subjected to use-wear analysis. Because of this, the categorisation of objects as prestige, practical or both is limiting. The valuation and interpretation of objects has to be reliant upon informed queries and consideration of the archaeological context. For instance, weaponry can be culturally construed as being either practical or prestige or both (*Section 4.2.2.2*). Archaeological studies of weaponry deposits have illustrated that this sort of burial practice is rarely only representative of warrior identity and is often determined by multiple social factors and loaded with culturally specific signifiers capable of transmitting complex ideologies. In his study of weaponry deposition in Iron Age burials from Eurasian Steppe mortuary sites, Hanks (2008, 21-24, 28-29) showed that weaponry is associated with both children and adults of both genders, and argues that deposition of weaponry was not gendered and instead may have represented 'ascribed as well as achieved status' with no connection to 'the actual use of weapons in combat by those individuals.' In his analysis of 47 Anglo-Saxon burial sites, Härke (1997, *esp.* 125) found that deposits of weaponry varied over time and were not representative of functional military kits. This suggests that this practice expressed and reaffirmed martial symbolism and existing power structures rather than the warrior identity of the associated deceased. In her study of weaponry deposits in the Tilleya Tepe cemetery,

Rubinson (2008, 52-54) argues that weaponry associated with female burials represents not only gendered warrior roles but also 'time and place' and possibly other sorts of identities. Finally, studies of Mycenaean weaponry deposits have shown that elite graves often contained non-functional weaponry used for display rather than military function (Kilian-Dirlmeier 1990), and palaeopathological studies have shown that evidence of trauma in skeletal remains associated with weaponry is ambiguous and can rarely, if ever, be linked to violence or participation in martial activities (Kirkpatrick Smith 2009; Triantaphyllou within Voutsaki *et al*. 2005; 2006; 2007). This suggests that the deposition of weaponry undoubtedly represents ideology and ideas concerning how to appropriately express or construct a certain type of elite persona in death (Graziadio 1991; Voutsaki 1993; 1998; Wolpert 2004).

Gender attribution can be used to track the distribution of objects based on any number of features (e.g. sub-type, material composition, manufacturing provenance, import status and typological variation) to discern how certain object types and sub-types were grouped with other object types. This can accomplish several things. It can facilitate the identification of burial inventories or 'kits' (e.g. warrior kits). It can also reveal whether or not certain groups (based on gender and/or age) were favoured with certain types of objects or with valuable grave goods full stop, thus revealing an informed index of object value. It can be used as a means of categorising burial assemblages and ultimately burials and graves as wealthy or poor. Finally, it can reveal the relationship between gender and the deposition of valuable grave goods and show whether or not the 'value logics' of a community were manifested in terms of gender ranking along a hierarchical (vertical) and/or heterarchical (horizontal) axis.

Also to its advantage, the gender attribution approach does not consider single objects but identifies patterns and dominant tendencies in which object types are attributed to identifiable groups, revealing practices and social constructions that link behaviours to certain groups rather than individuals. This ensures temporally and geographically sustainable codes of meaning on which to base an interpretation of ideological expression(s). For instance, the osteological sexing and aging of burials enables the attribution of grave goods to different age groups (e.g. male and female sub adults, adults and elderly individuals), as well as other individuals that can be aged but not sexed (e.g. children, infants and neonates). It also reveals the attribution of object types to unsexed and/or un-aged individuals, enabling the analyst to gauge whether a behaviour represents a pattern determined by the gender or the under-representation or exclusion of one gender, because cemetery demographics can be taken into account. This is key when analysing burial samples from Middle Helladic and Mycenaean cemeteries, because only a minority of the

skeletal remains have been osteologically analysed and in sexed samples not all burials were provided with grave goods. Because grave goods were typically deposited with less than half of the burials from each Middle Helladic and Mycenaean cemetery sample, gender attribution can only facilitate the analysis of burials associated with material wealth, and therefore will potentially reveal patterns linked mainly to the wealthier members of each cemetery population – an outcome that is borne in mind.

Of course, there also was concern, as many scholars argue, that gender is largely invisible in the mortuary record (Nordquist 1987a; concerning mortuary behaviour at Lerna: Voutsaki 2005) and that the full scope of gender may not be represented in Middle Helladic and Mycenaean burial samples. However, elderly, adult and sub adult men and women as well as unsexed children, infants and neonates are represented to varying degrees in each burial sample used for this research. While certain groups generally were provided with more grave goods (adults and children) than others (infants), each sex and age group was provided with grave goods often enough to facilitate attribution potentially revealing a range of gender constructs and ideologies pertinent to elite and more 'well-off' segments of each cemetery population.

Attribution also can be used to 'disqualify' certain object types that fall off the grid for analysis or tick too many boxes indicating that certain practices are uninformative of gender ideology (as was the case for pottery deposition patterns observed in the Middle Helladic and Mycenaean analyses). It also is capable of revealing 'outliers' or 'exceptions' to collectively performed behaviours, which can then be evaluated within the archaeological context to determine if they represent alternative gender categories or identities. For example, an exception was identified during analysis of one of the Early Mycenaean burial samples that may be possible evidence of an alternative gender identity (*Section 5.4.2.1*).

# Chapter 3

# Previous Work on Gender in the Aegean

This chapter critically examines contributions to the study of gender in the Aegean. *Section 3.1* describes the introduction of gender into the discourse of Aegean archaeology, exploring the nature of early work on the topic. *Section 3.2* discusses work on gender within three sub-disciplines of Aegean archaeology: iconographic studies, Linear B studies and mortuary studies. *Section 3.3* assesses the current understanding of gender in the wider field of Aegean archaeology and relative to the broader picture of gender archaeology.

## 3.1. Gender and Aegean Archaeology

The investigation of gender in Aegean archaeology is a recent phenomenon, with most work having been produced within the last 20 years. Earlier contributions exist (Anderson 1983; Billigmeier and Turner 1981; Carlier 1983; Chadwick 1988; Hiller 1989b; Hooker 1979; Kilian-Dirlmeier 1988; Marinatos, N. 1987; Rehak 1984; Tritsch 1958; Waterhouse 1974), but, for the most part, the authors did not identify their work as 'gender archaeology' per se (except perhaps Rehak 1984). Most of these works came out of traditional frameworks of study, and their interpretations of gender were framed within a context of results derived from the investigation of other social determinants such as status. Early investigations of gender in Aegean archaeology were rarely if ever informed by the contemporaneous discourse of gender archaeology. But what I am getting at here is that gender has only recently been recognised as a viable topic of study.

During the 1970s and 1980s, the discipline of Aegean archaeology was heavily reliant upon epistemological frameworks rooted in the New Archaeology, directly linked to the publication of Renfrew's *The Emergence of Civilisation* in 1972. In this, Renfrew used a comprehensive systemic approach, the first of its kind, to explain social change in the Bronze Age Aegean. In certain respects Renfrew's approach was successful, because it provided new insight into the complexity of social processes within the Aegean while redressing assumptions of the more dated cultural diffusionist approach (Childe 1944). The drawback of his study was that a systems approach did not and could not incorporate individual agency or the pursuance of identity-oriented lines of study, and the study of gender was seen as untenable and inconsequential (Rehak 2009, *esp.* 14).

A few early contributions to the understanding of gender in the Bronze Age Aegean were made during the 1980s. These were produced mainly by analysts working within the specialist sub-field of Linear B studies and were focused on identifying and understanding female personages mentioned in the tablets (Billigmeier and Turner 1981; Carlier 1983; Uchitel 1984; *Section 3.2.2*).[23] Because Linear B specialists often come from a Classical philological background and focus primarily on the linguistic aspects of the tablets, no real efforts were (or have since been) made (by Linear B specialists or specialists from other sub-fields of Aegean archaeology for that matter) to correlate these contributions to other types of archaeological evidence, and, consequently, this work has had little impact upon the wider discourse of Aegean archaeology.

Although post-processualist approaches (Hodder 1984b; 1991; Pader 1982; Robb 1998; 2004; Shanks and Tilley 1982) began to influence Aegean archaeology in the 1990s, this decade saw just a handful of scholars begin to investigate the construction of feminine gender ideologies within the context of Aegean art (Goodison and Morris 1998; Nikolaidou and Kokkinidou 1997; Olsen 1997/8; Rehak 1994; 1995; 1998; 1999a; 1999b; Talalay 1994). These studies used approaches informed by post-processual as well as post-feminist epistemologies that were particularly well suited to the exploration of gender within an art historical framework.[24] However, analysts specialising in 'on the ground' archaeology were reticent to pursue gender as a main line of study largely because of the limitations of the Aegean archaeological record. When gender was considered, it was positioned as a secondary variable of analysis (if that), largely because primacy was given to the investigation of status (Dickinson 1989; Graziadio 1991; Kilian-Dirlmeier 1986; 1988; Laffineur 1989; 1990; 1999; Papadpoulos 1999; Voutsaki 1993; 1995; 1997; 1999).

It was not until the 2000s that scholars specialising in Aegean mortuary studies considered gender as a primary variable of analysis (Voutsaki 2005; McGeorge 2009; Ruppenstein 2010; also see Kirkpatrick Smith 2009). These studies tend to be narrow in focus, incorporating the gender attribution approach (*Sections 2.*1 and 2.*3*) in a limited capacity, if at all.[25] What is more, these studies rely (to varying degrees) upon the use of implicit

[23] A handful of studies were produced prior to this. Tritsch produced a study on the women of Pylos in 1958, De Fidio published a study on the women in the tablets in 1979 followed closely by Billigmeier and Turner's (1981) as well as Uchitel's (1984) examination of the socio-economic roles of women in the tablets. For a list of references for studies of women in Linear B see Olsen 2009, 116, no. 3.
[24] Marinatos, N. 1987 could be seen as a precursor to gendered study in Aegean iconography.
[25] To date, only Ruppenstein (2010) and Voutsaki (2005) have published studies that use the gender attribution approach for the analysis of mortuary behaviour in the Aegean.

approaches, usually producing general descriptions of gender, which do little to clarify the construction of gender ideology and the nature of male and female roles (*Section 3.2.3*).

Even though gender was the topic of the 2005 conference *FYLO: Engendering Prehistoric 'Strategies' in the Aegean and Mediterranean* at the University of Crete, Rethymno in June 2005 (Kopaka [ed.] 2009), there is still next to no consensus concerning the approach to be used for the study of gender in Aegean archaeology, and, as a consequence of this, the understanding of gender lacks coherence. It is still regarded as a challenging and mostly untenable line of study and mainly pursued by a small group of female archaeologists.

## 3.2 Work on Gender within each sub-field of Aegean archaeology

### *3.2.1 Iconography*

The sub-field of Aegean iconographic studies has produced the largest body of work devoted to gender (selected references include Barber 1994; 1997; German 2000; Hitchcock 1997; Hughes-Brock 1999; Koehl 1986a; Lee 2000; Marinatos, N. 1987; 1989; 1995a; 1995b; 2005; Morris, C. 2009; Morris, C. and Peatfield 2001; Rehak 1984; 1992; 1994; 1995; 1998; 1999b; 2002; 2009;[26] Younger 1995). This is probably because Evans (1921) established an early precedent for relying upon male/female polarity models to interpret Aegean art, thus unconsciously introducing the concept of gender into the discourse of Minoan archaeology at its inception as a discipline. What is more, iconographic evidence is more easily wedded to post-feminist and post-structuralist epistemologies (especially pertaining to theories of representation), because it is composed of identifiable representations of gendered individuals (sometimes even including indicators of biological sex) as well as secondary cultural, social and gender signifiers (e.g. attributes, ornaments, costumes). It also often depicts individuals performing specific roles or activities that can be gendered or features individuals of different genders relating to one another.

#### 3.2.1.1 Minoan Iconography

The study of gender in Minoan art focuses primarily on evidence from the islands of Crete and Thera (for all toponyms mentioned in this chapter see Map 2). It is concerned with finding a reliable means of gendering human figures and understanding gender roles in Minoan ritual and society.

[26] Rehak was posthumously recognized for his contributions to the study of gender in the Aegean at the Aegaeum 30 conference in 2005. See Alexandri 2009; Kokkinidou and Nikolaidou 2009; Rehak 2009.

Mentioned above, Evans's (1921, 153) colour convention provided an ostensibly reliable means of gendering human figures in Minoan art. It is based on the ancient Egyptian practice of distinguishing male and female figures by colour: white = female and red = male. It can be used to gender figures in most Minoan art reliably, excepting perhaps depictions of bull leapers,[27] and it is still relied upon for the identification of gender in Minoan frescoes and relief fragments. The fundamental problem/case for this model is the so-called 'Priest King' (Figure 1), assumed by most to be white-skinned because most of the surface has been lost, exposing the white plaster core, despite the fact that there are flecks of red on the figure in the surviving fragments (Waterhouse 1974; Muhly, P. 1990; Rehak 1994; Shaw 2004; see also Cadogan 2009; Goodison and Hughes-Brock 2002). Alberti (2001; 2002, 103-6; also see Butler 1990) argues for a more complex approach in which the identification of 'secondary variables' or symbols of gender also can identify the gender of the figure and show how gender identity was accrued and performed. While this approach does provide recourse for gender identification in instances when pigment colour or indicators of sex, namely the depiction of breasts, are absent, interpretation will ultimately be based on the analyst's subjective identification and reading of 'secondary variables', and unless these can be correlated to other types of archaeological evidence or ethnography, hypotheses cannot be proved.

Even when indicators of sex are depicted, gender can be difficult to interpret. For instance, the depiction of bared breasts may indicate that the figure is female, but beyond sex identification scholars have yet to articulate what the depiction of bare breasted female figures may have represented other than functioning as a general statement of 'power' (Morris, C. 2009; Rehak 2009, 15). C. Morris (2009) does argue that figures with bared breasts from Xeste (Figures 2a,b) represent women of different age groups participating in different activities, giving possible insight into age-related gender roles and activities of Theran women.

The absence of breasts does not necessarily equate with maleness, and scholars often encounter difficulties in interpreting 'unisex' figures, namely the Minoan 'bull leapers' (Figure 3; Alberti 2002) – figures for which the colour convention is not applicable. Both Alberti (2001; 2002) and Hitchcock (2000a, 80-82; 2000b; 2009) have argued for the representation of a third gender in Minoan art based on such figures, but because these studies have not been correlated with other types of evidence, it is difficult to determine

[27] Albert (2001; 2002) explored the limitations of Evans's colour convention and showed that there is some validity to the model; *contra* Marinatos, N. 1989.

whether or not these figures represent alternative gender roles and identities, purely ideological constructs or simply another way of depicting human figures.

Evans also set the initial model for the interpretation of gender roles in Minoan social organisation by describing a peaceful, nature-loving, goddess-worshipping society, peopled by powerful male rulers, whom he identified as 'Priest-kings,' and female priestesses. Recently, analysts have distanced themselves from historical views of Minoan society. Several studies have focused on the possibility of female power within Minoan society. Cadogan (2009, 227-28) argued for gynaecocracy based on the general absence of erotic depictions in Minoan art, a point also explored by Olsen (1997/8). While eroticism is not necessarily a standard component of art in state societies, both authors observe that Minoan art tended to emphasize the social and public spheres of society and that female figures appeared to embody specific roles within these contexts. Olsen (1997/8, 390-91) also argued that there is no iconographic evidence of an ideology of motherhood in Minoan art, indicating that female imagery, like male imagery, is firmly placed in the religious, social and public realms. No one is arguing that Minoan Crete was a matriarchy. Rather, the above scholars argue that the depiction of gender in Minoan art suggests that both males and females had access to public and social spheres, that each gender probably participated in and performed significant gender-specific roles in religious ritual and that both men and women embodied gender-specific roles of power within the religious and secular spheres.[28] Cadogan and Olsen appear to be arguing in favour of a gender complementarity, while Hitchcock (2009) sees Minoan cosmology as more hierarchically ranked.

Using a corporeal approach influenced by Butler's (1990) 'gender as performance' theory, Goodison (2009; also see Morris, C. and Peatfield 2001) herself physically re-enacted poses depicted in 'baetyl-cult' scenes (Figure 4). Based on her experiment, she argued that these poses and positions in which female figures were depicted required physical discipline and flexibility and concluded that these choreographies were 'used to create scenes of sophisticated performance which … may have intersected with issues of social status and control' (Goodison 2009, 239). This suggests that physical ability, perhaps even access to physical training or exclusive religious groups may have influenced whether or not a woman could participate in certain rituals and underscores the specificity and exclusivity of female religious roles. While this approach is innovative, the results are problematic. Firstly, Goodison used herself as a measure for establishing athletic ease vs. difficulty. However, no

[28] Note that a division as we understand it probably did not exist between the religious and secular spheres, and that these sectors of society and the ideologies associated with them surely overlapped and were bound up in one another.

details are provided concerning her physical condition, and we know nothing of the physicality of the average Minoan. Secondly, performance need not equate with power. Finally, it is still unclear whether or not figures depicted in Minoan religious iconography represent ideology or practice or both and how these roles were negotiated within Minoan society.

The Theran frescoes depict male and female figures in domestic settings (Chapin 2008; Rehak 2002) and at various stages of the life cycle (Chapin 2009; Koehl 1986a; Morris, C. 2009; Younger 2009), possibly representing practice and not just ideology. For instance, we know that gendered age group affiliation probably was identifiable by hairstyle and dress (Figures 5a,b).[29] The potential limitation of these interpretations lies in the fact that the frescoes may be culturally specific to LMIA Thera, and it is unclear to what extent they representative of broader Minoan social structure.

Because there is no evidence for female participation in activities of state, it is difficult to gauge whether or not female religious imagery is evidence of female social power. While priestesses are certainly represented in the Linear B archives (*Section 3.2.2*; Olsen 2009; Nosch 2003), these high status women represent a tiny minority of females listed in the tablets. Even though male and female figures are represented in an array of religious and social contexts, both separately and together (especially in the glyptic evidence [Poole 2010]), little is understood about the nature of these roles or how real Minoan men and women may have related to one another. This is due to the ambiguities of representation, the reliance upon secondary variables for gender identification, the emphasis upon studies of female imagery over that of male imagery, and confusion surrounding the interpretation of 'unisex' figures. Further, studies of gender in Minoan art are located firmly within art historical frameworks of analysis and very few attempts (such as Rehak 1999b) have been made to correlate iconographic evidence of gender to other types of evidence.[30]

#### 3.2.1.2 Mycenaean Iconography

Studies of gender in Mycenaean art are represented by a small corpus of work, predominantly focused on the interpretation of male figures. While these studies incorporate some of the approaches used for the study of gender in Minoan art (such as Evans's colour convention and art historical frameworks of analysis), scholars tend to approach this evidence with more caution largely because Mycenaean art depicted a more limited range of

[29] For studies on the representation of age in the Theran frescoes see Davis 1986; Doumas 2000.
[30] Waterhouse (1974) attempted to do this, but failed to demonstrate a compelling link between female religious imagery and Palatial architecture.

settings and contexts than those portrayed in Minoan art, and rarely are male and female figures depicted together.[31]

The understanding of male roles is largely informed by martial images (Davis and Bennet 1999; Hiller 1999; Kontorli-Papadopoulou 1999; Nikolaidou and Kokkinidou 1997), scenes of the hunt (Immerwahr 1990, 123-38) and the iconography of rulership (Younger 1995). Male figures are more often than not pictured in action-oriented scenes performing specific activities. They can be depicted as both individuals and groups and are portrayed relating to one another. Images depicting Mycenaean warriors engaged in violent warfare, such as the Duomachy fresco, located in Hall 64 in the Palace of Nestor at Pylos (Figure 6), validate the view that Mycenaeans were a violent, male-dominant warrior culture (Blegen, 1956, 95; Blegen *et al.* 1973, 249, fig. 197; Lange 1969, 71-74). While it is tempting to over-emphasize the violence depicted in this fresco and other battle scenes (Immerwahr 1990, 123-28), martial scenes represent but one genre of Mycenaean art in which there is a discernible link between male figures, martial and/or hunting activities[32] and elite Mycenaean warrior ideology (Davis and Bennet 1999; Hamilakis 2003; Nikolaidou and Kokkinidou 1997; Voutsaki 2005; also see Wright, J. C. 1987). Again, it is impossible to determine whether or not or to what extent martial imagery represented ideology or practice, and there is no real consensus on the nature of elite male roles or warrior identities. What is more, male figures also were depicted in secular, processional and religious contexts, and in other types of roles (such as the 'Lyre-Player' from the Throne Room at Pylos, Figure 7; Immerwahr 1990, 114, 122, 133-34, 136, Pl. XVIII).

There are a few representations of female figures in martial contexts (*Section 9.3*), such as the depiction of a 'Warrior Goddess' on a stucco tablet from Tsountas' House at Mycenae (Figure 8a; Immerwahr 1990, 121, 140, 167, Pls. 62, 63) and the depiction of a possible female archer (Figure 8b; Brecoulaki *et al.* 2008) as well as scenes of the hunt (Anderson 1983; Rehak 1984). Otherwise, female figures tend to be portrayed in static, non-individualized groups such as the procession of women fresco from Thebes (Figure 9) and are difficult to link to activities or social roles (Rehak 1998, 196). Because of this, scholars have interpreted these roles narrowly, relegating female activities to the general spheres of the domestic and the religious (Marinatos, N. 1987).

[31] Poole's (2010) unpublished PhD dissertation presents the first compendium of gender representation in Mycenaean art.
[32] For hunting scenes in Mycenaean art see Anderson 1983; Cultraro 2005; Immerwahr 1990, 129-32.

Studies of Mycenaean female figurines, identifiable by their breasts (Figure 10), offer little insight into the understanding of gender. Blegen first posited that Mycenaean figurines found in graves were linked to child burials, but Tzonou-Herbst (2009, 165-71) revealed that these objects could be deposited with both adults and children in poor and wealthy graves, as well as within multiple contexts, including settlement (domestic and rubbish sites), cultic[33] and mortuary sites. What is more, figurines could be recycled and formed into other objects with other uses, thrown out/discarded, and even sometimes used for construction fill. In her study of Mycenaean *Kourotrophoi* (images of female figures and infants, Figure 11), Olsen (1997/8, 386-88) argues that these figures probably represent an ideological construct of motherhood rather than the practice of motherhood itself, and that their meaning varies according to context because they too are found as votives, as grave goods in mortuary settings and as deposits in settlement contexts. Shelton's (2009) study of gender and Mycenaean bovine and anthropomorphic terracotta figurines is rather confusing. She conflates the depiction of anatomic female sex with reproductive abilities, and argues that the figurines represent 'standards and typical forms of life and gender-related behaviours: females give life and sustain it through nurturing; males represent the virile power that produces life, human and agricultural, and also protects it' (Shelton 2009, 129). Her interpretation appears to fulfil her expectations rather than reveal evidence of gender ideology. Thus, it is difficult to surmise whether figurines represent deities, votaries or real women. Nor were they uniformly sacred. Instead, they were multi-functional and potentially complex, probably capable of transmitting community-specific ideologies and codes of meaning.[34]

Although scholars have begun to question the models upon which past interpretations have been based, gendered iconographic analysis generally fails to provide insight beyond the limited and highly structured context of Aegean art (Anderson 1983, 224). What is more, binary models continue to inform some of the most current interpretations of male and female imagery in Mycenaean art (i.e. Shelton 2009; Voutsaki 2005, 359-61). It seems that these interpretations embody both the assumptions of the analysts as well as some of the acts depicted.

[33] For work on the cultic function of Mycenaean figurines see French 2001; Pakkanen 2009; Whittaker 2009.

[34] This circularity is not particular to Mycenaean figurine studies. For a general discussion of issues concerning the identification and interpretation of sex and gender in figurine studies see Hamilton 2000; also see Talalay 1993, *esp.* 38.

### *3.2.2 Linear B Studies*

Gendered studies of the Linear B archives make up a very small proportion of research devoted to the analysis of the tablets, but do provide an understanding of mainly female roles and statuses derived from these texts, which are lists of personages, places, services, activities and goods relevant to the organisation and functioning of the palaces themselves. Unlike other forms of literary evidence, the text is not coloured by ideological aspiration. The tablets chronicle the activities and transactions often of sub-elite and non-elite persons engaged on the palace's behalf (Olsen 2009, 116). This allows Linear B scholars to take the evidence more at face value – although of course controversies do arise over etymology, translation and interpretation of the texts.

Linear B studies are constrained by the nature of the material record. The archives are strictly a record of the palace's account activity for an unspecified part of the year in which the destruction of that particular palace took place.[35] What is more, the tablets facilitate consideration only of the industries and economic roles of various members of the Mycenaean population whose production and occupational activities fell under the jurisdiction of palatial administration (Palaima 1990; Palaima and Wright 1985; Shelmerdine 1984).[36]

Gender identity is recognised by the notation of stylized symbols, transcribed by the Latin VIR for man and MUL(ier) for woman (Ventris and Chadwick 1953; 1973). When these symbols are absent, gender has been identified by the use of gender-specific familial, occupational and/or official titles, as well as the use of feminine variants of identifiable Greek names (Olsen 2009, 117, no. 11). Men are mentioned more often than women in the tablets.[37] Roles documented in the tablets for men are also much more varied in terms of status, rights and privileges, and they are associated with many more spheres of economic activity than those with women, spanning the entirety of the palatial social and economic stratum from the highest of the palatial social strata, the *Wanax* (Hooker 1979; Kilian 1998), to menial labourers. Because Linear B studies have focused historically upon the understanding of the palatial structure, production and economies, the understanding of male roles listed in the tablets has been part and parcel of the sub-field's literature since the

[35] Some tablets refer to the previous year by noting totals 'owed.' Palatial sites in which Linear B tablets have been found were destroyed by fire that literally baked the clay tablets, preserving them in the ruins.
[36] Certainly no more than 20% of the population (Whitelaw 2001).
[37] Olsen (2009, 117) counted the documentation of roughly 5000 individuals in the Pylos and Knossos tablets. Of these, 3000 are identifiable as men and roughly 2000 are identifiable as women. Hiller (1989b) counted *c*. 6000 at Pylos.

decipherment of the script by Ventris during the 1950s (Chadwick 1958; for Pylos see Lindgren 1973).

Studies that focus on women mentioned in the tablets were produced mainly within the last three decades.[38] They have shown that women make up a significant but smaller proportion of individuals listed in the tablets and are associated with a much more limited range of social roles and occupations than those associated with men (Billigmeier and Turner 1981; Carlier 1983; Olsen 1999; Tritsch 1958). According to the tablets there is little evidence for female autonomy and access to economic power, and documentation suggests that entrée into the upper echelons of palatial society, at least in economic terms, was extremely restricted for women. However, this may not be the case because most individuals are mentioned in the tablets in connection with use-rights to land, or taxes and rations, and although women seem not to be principal players in these transactions, such activities and transactions are representative of just one angle of social status.

The largest group of women are listed as slaves/servants, many of whom were conscripted to work in the palace's textile industry (some of whom are assumed to be captured because they are designated as 'women of Kythera, Miletos', etc.) (Burke 1997; 1998; Chadwick 1988; Nosch 1997a; 1997b; 2003; Olsen 2009, 118-20). Both Olsen (2009, 119-20) and Nosch (2003, *esp.* 14, 22, n. 7) argue that these women were probably of the lowest social rank in palatial society and should be regarded as slaves, rejecting Tritsch's (1958) and Billigmeier and Turner's (1981) suggestion that these individuals could have been independent contractors. Notably there is no evidence for extra-palatial craftswomen listed in the tablets; whereas craftsmen are listed with relative frequency, especially in the Pylian tablets (Olsen 2009, 120). A much smaller group of women are listed as priestesses and female slaves of the god(dess?) (Boëlle 2004; Carlier 1995; Olsen 2009, 120, no. 31). Olsen (2009, 120-21) argues that these represent the upper-most stratum of female palatial society, and that religion is the only sphere mentioned in the tablets in which women have economic power. Finally, a handful of women are identified as wives of important male personages (Olsen 2009, 121-22). Olsen (2009, 122) argues that these women appear 'to occupy a high level of prestige – presumably they were aristocrats – but their high social status does not seem to translate to a similarly high level of economic status' solely measured by landholding.

The gendered interpretations of the tablets are limited in scope economically, socially, culturally and temporally. Surviving evidence provides a snapshot of a select segment of

[38] *Supra* n. 21 for earlier studies than those discussed in this section.

Mycenaean society; only those members of the population who engaged with the palace would have been mentioned in the tablets and they tell us very little about each. We do know that industrial level textile production was strictly gendered within the palatial administration, but we do not know if women (or men) of other classes or segments of society within and beyond the administrative boundaries of the palace participated in similar activities and roles. While the tablets do reveal privileges and rights accorded to and aspects of religious activities performed by female priestesses, they fall short of elucidating the ideological constructs that informed female religious roles and identities. What is more, the tablets provide little insight into how men and women related to one another, except within the very narrow context of specific economic transactions or through an allusion to a marital relationship between two individuals. For the most part, males and females listed in the tablets seem to inhabit sexually segregated economic spheres of activity and are rarely associated with a political context (those who are, are male). The tablets do not deal with the domestic sphere at all. Nor do they tell us about individuals who had no economic interface with the palace or the full range of social and occupational roles of men and women within the broader context of Mycenaean society. Because of this, it is difficult to determine whether gender roles and activities represented in the tablets are representative of wider Mycenaean social structure or (more likely) are specific to palatial administrative structure.

### *3.2.3 Mortuary Studies*

A small number of studies have been devoted to the investigation of gender and Aegean mortuary behaviour. They are informed mainly by implicit approaches, and analysts tend to be overly cautious, offering general, non-contentious descriptions of gender. This is largely because the state of the evidence is perceived as being particularly challenging due to a limited sexing of skeletal evidence, the use of secondary burial, disturbance and looting, the use of creative and variant depositional practices and the absence of textile evidence (concerning gender and funerary dress).[39]

#### 3.2.3.1 Osteological Studies

On Crete only a handful of burial samples have been osteologically analysed (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992; Papadatos 2005; Paschalidis and McGeorge 2009; Soles and Davaras (eds.) 2011).[40] A minority of human remains from older excavations of Mycenaean

[39] For iconographic studies of gender and Minoan dress see Lee 2000, and of Theran dress see Chapin 2008. For a general discussion of dress and gender see Barnes and Eicher 1992; Colburn and Heyn (eds.) 2008; Schwartz 1979; Sørensen 1997.

[40] The Odos Palama grave group from Khania (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992; *Appendix I*) was the only Cretan burial sample to be included in this research, because osteologically analysed burials

cemeteries on the Mainland have been analysed and published between the 1920s and 1980s (Angel 1945; 1954; 1971; 1973; 1982; Charles 1958; 1963; Fürst 1930a; 1930b), and some of these reports are published inconsistently or in a fragmentary fashion,[41] or are unreliable due to the use of outdated osteological methodologies (Fürst 1930a; 1930b). Fortunately, most of these skeletal samples were analysed by biological anthropologist J.L. Angel (Angel 1971; 1973; 1982; also see Bisel and Angel 1985 and Immerwahr 1971), who observed that: 1) males appear to have enjoyed slightly better health than females during life; and 2) females generally showed more markers of malnutrition and illness and also had slightly poorer dental health than males – all of which was attributed to the stresses of pregnancy. Angel also observed that elite segments of the population enjoyed better health than their sub-elite counterparts, equating better health with status, and was quick to link evidence of trauma observed in male remains to martial activities, even going so far as identifying certain burials as warriors. For the most part, Angel's diagnostic work is still regarded as largely sound, and his methods set the precedent for bioarchaeological studies in Greece.[42]

In Aegean archaeology, incorporation of osteological analysis into mortuary excavation is still not standard practice (due mainly to budgetary constraints). However the last decade has seen the publication of a new generation of osteological studies, which have refined and expanded upon Angel's picture of health and gender in the Aegean.[43] Ingvarsson-Sundström (2003) was the first to argue that poorer female health also could have been attributable to gendered eating and early weaning practices at Lerna, but admits that this premise is difficult to prove. Triantaphyllou (2006; Triantaphyllou within Voutsaki *et al.* 2003; 2004; 2005;

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from the other Cretan sites could not be associated with grave goods and/or were published after the analyses for this research were finished (post-2010).

[41] Angel's (Immerwahr 1971) analysis of the Athenian Agora Cemetery's human remains was published as footnotes in the site report. Angel's (1982) analysis of human remains from the East Cemetery and Barbouna Area Cemetery at Asine was never published in full, and reported fragmentarily in Dietz's (1980; 1982) site report. Charles' (1958; 1963) anthropological analysis of human remains from Argos was published separately from the Deiras site report without any grave context information.

[42] Angel's diagnosis of sex and age characteristics as well as his general assessment of pathologies are considered to be reliable (Buikstra and Lagia 2009, 8-9; Ingvarsson-Sundström 2003; Triantaphyllou pers. comm, 20th January, 2010 and paper presented 20-1-2010, Mycenaean Seminar, Institute of Classical Studies, London; also Triantaphyllou and Ingvarsson-Sundström within Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 88-89; 2007; 2009a). He examined human remains from numerous excavations all over the Greek Mainland (Angel 1954; 1971; 1973; 1982; Immerwahr 1971) and contributed to the understanding of porotic hyperostosis, aenaemias and malaria (Angel 1945; 1946; 1964; 1966; 1967; 1978) and how these diseases and conditions affected health in prehistoric Greece. A pioneer in the discipline of bioarchaeology, he championed a social biological approach and showed how palaeopathological analysis combined with archaeological context could contribute to our understanding of ancient peoples (Buikstra and Lagia 2009, 8-9).

[43] Selected references include Ingvarsson-Sundström 2002; 2003; 2010; Ingvarsson-Sundström and Triantaphyllou within Voutsaki *et al.* 2003; 2005; 2006; 2007; 2009a; 2009b; King (ed.) 2005; Kirkpatrick Smith 2000; 2009; Lagia and Cavanagh 2010; Lagia *et al.* 2007; Liston and Papadopoulos 2003; McGeorge 2001; 2003; Schepartz *et al.* 2009; Triantaphyllou 2001; 2005; 2006; 2010; Triantaphyllou *et al.* 2008; also see Buikistra and Lagia (eds.) 2009.

2006; 2007) and Ingvarsson-Sundström (2003; Ingvarsson-Sundström within Voutsaki *et al.* 2006; 2007; 2009a) recently re-analysed several of the cemetery samples originally analysed by Angel. While they concur that Angel's diagnoses of sex and age group affiliation were largely reliable, they argue that evidence for differences in health between male and female remains in these samples are too slight to be confidently attributed to gendered eating practices,[44] and Triantaphyllou's (2006; 2010, 448) re-analysis of the Lerna skeletal evidence indicated that it was the men who were slightly more vulnerable and likely to die in young adulthood than women. There is, however, evidence for sexed differences in musco-skeletal markers of stress, which suggest that male and females may have participated in gender-specific physical activities (Ingvarsson-Sundström *et al.* 2009; Triantaphyllou 2006; 2010; *et al.* 2008).

Triantaphyllou and Ingvarsson-Sundström have both criticised Angel's identification of warrior burials (burials associated with weaponry) and argue that in most cases it is extremely difficult to link evidence of injury to specific activities, particularly those associated with war (Triantaphyllou 2006; pers. comm, 20th January, 2010).[45] Kirkpatrick Smith (2009) also took up Angel's mantle in an attempt to find a link between evidence of trauma in male skeletal remains and martial activities, and analysed male remains associated with weaponry from the Agora Cemetery. In the end, traumas that were evident in the Agora sample could not be linked to participation in warlike activities.

While osteological studies have revealed that status affected health to the greatest degree (Ingvarsson-Sundström 2010; Petroutsa *et al.* 2009; Triantaphyllou *et al.* 2008; Vaughan *et al.* 2000; also see Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992 and McGeorge 1988 for health in Minoan Crete), most Mycenaeans probably lead lives of hard physical labour and poor health, and sub-elite women probably were more vulnerable than men to ill-health (and possibly to earlier deaths) because of pregnancy. However, it has proven difficult to correlate evidence of ill health or trauma to gendered behaviours, roles or identities. Still, advancements made in the fields of bioarchaeology and forensic anthropology contribute immeasurably to the understanding of gender when considered in tandem with other types of mortuary evidence, such as grave location and architecture, the deposition of grave goods and the placement and position of the body.

[44] Similarly, Schepartz, Miller-Antonio and Murphy (2009) argued the possibility of sexed dietary differences in sub-elite segments of the Pylian population, but admitted that differences between male and female remains were not heavily pronounced enough to confirm this.

[45] See Triantaphyllou and Ingvarsson-Sundström within *Pharos*, Volumes 11-15 and http://www.mhargolid.nl/.

### 3.2.3.2 Gender analysis

To date, only a few studies, all authored by female archaeologists, have used gender as a primary variable for mortuary analysis. Kilian-Dirlmeier (1988) studied patterns of jewellery deposition in male warrior graves (read as male burials also associated with weaponry). She was primarily concerned with understanding how elite male ideologies were represented in mortuary behaviour, and this study should actually be construed as part of a larger group of studies focused on the investigation of ideologies of status within the context of the Shaft Grave phenomenon (see Graziadio 1991; Voutsaki 1993; 1998; 1999; Wolpert 2004). In fact, Kilian-Dirlmeier's (1988) study contributed very little to the understanding of gender due to the consideration of what were assumed to be only male burials and reliance upon artefactual gendering. I mention this article because it exemplifies the underlying assumptions of gender within this sub-discipline: an assumption that only the gender of elite male burials associated with weaponry (usually described as 'warriors') could be identified and investigated in Aegean mortuary behaviour. The present research shows that this is patently not true, and that this assumption reflected the expectations of the analysts rather than patterns of behaviour in the evidence.

Voutsaki (2005) used the gender attribution approach to analyse grave good deposition to sexed burials from Mycenae's Grave Circle B (Chapter 5) and the Lerna Cemetery (Chapter 6). Her interpretation was characterised by a mixture of caution and assumption. She argued that gender was difficult to identify, but may have been a determinant factor for inclusion and depositional practices, particularly in the Shaft Graves. She also argued that in the wealthier Shaft Graves male burials were 'exclusively' associated with weaponry – surprising in light of the fact the adult female identified as burial 58 Myc is associated with an impressive warrior kit and another female burial is associated with a knife/sword (*Section 5.4.2.1*).[46] She concluded that elite male burials were exclusively linked to Mycenaean warrior ideology as well as 'male-exclusive spheres' of elite activities. She then posited a link between female burials and the domestic sphere, based largely on the assumption that the absence of weaponry in elite female burial assemblages somehow correlates to affiliation with domestic activities and ideologies, despite the fact that female burials from Grave Circle B were not associated with domestic artefact types (such as domestic pottery wares) (Voutsaki 2005, 358-61). Problems also arise from the fact that her two samples represent radically different socio-economic communities. She also has little to say about gender at Lerna (Voutsaki 2005, 356), ignoring the more egalitarian distribution of material wealth

[46] Triantaphyllou (pers. comm, 20th January, 2010) re-analysed burial 58 Myc and has confirmed the sex as female. For further confirmation of female sex see Brown *et al.* 2000, 118, tbl. 1; Bouwman *et al.* 2009.

amongst the burials there. This is an interesting point of comparison to the elite activity from the Shaft Graves, suggestive of the possibility that depositional practices were not gendered unless a burial was wealthy enough to command the deposition of more rarefied and exotic objects – a possibility that is investigated in this research. She also attempted to correlate Shaft Grave iconography with Shaft Grave depositional practice using an implicit approach. It did not consider depositional patterns or appear to integrate interpretations of gender from iconographic studies and served only to reinforce her arguments for gender-specific ideological transmission and the sexual segregation of social spheres. While her interpretation of grave good deposition in the Shaft Graves and its link to elite gendered ideologies has points of relevance, these observations are to a certain degree erroneously polarised, especially given the narrow focus of the study.

Until now, the association of a warrior kit with the female identified as burial 58 Myc in Grave Gamma from Grave Circle B at Mycenae (Figure 22) has yet to be investigated despite the fact that when the cemetery and anthropological analysis of the burials were published Mylonas (1973, 47) clearly stated that 'Skeleton 2 = 58 Myc' and went onto to describe the weaponry associated with this burial. Dietz (1991, 110, n. 224) later acknowledged that Skeleton 2 was identified as 58 Myc and sexed as female by Angel (1973, 380-81), but implied that initial confusion arose concerning the burial's sex because Angel erroneously described the burial as the 'south burial', which actually is Skeleton 4 – the adult male identified as burial 51 Myc (Mylonas 1973, 48). Although Dietz re-confirmed that Skeleton 2 = 58 Myc based on his study of Mylonas' (1973) site report and notebooks, he downplayed the sex of the burial by embedding this information within a footnote rather than presenting it in the main body of his text for the discussion of the Grave Circle B burial assemblages – curious in light of the fact that Skeleton 1 is identified as 'male' (Angel 1973, 379-80, Pl. 244) in the main body of his text at the outset of his discussion of this burial's assemblage (Dietz 1991, 108). Further supporting the identification of Mylonas' Skeleton 2 as burial 58 Myc is the fact that Bouwman (*et al.* 2009, 305) confirms that after re-analysing the remains, the female burial identified as Skeleton 2 'was still relatively well articulated' suggesting that these remains were subject to little disturbance, thus allaying fears that the associated assemblage was not actually *in situ* in proximity to the burial. I can only speculate as to why burial 58 Myc and her warrior kit have been (until now) ignored. Perhaps the association of weaponry with a female burial is seen as too extreme an outlier, an anomaly specific only to this highly elite context and therefore not representative of social structure. Yet, this practice is not an anomaly because half of the female burials inhumed in Grave Circle B are associated with weaponry (*Section 5.3.2.3*), and if extremity or singularity should be viewed as disqualifiers for meaningful analysis, then it could be argued that almost

all Shaft Grave mortuary behaviour is un-interpretable and not representative of social structure, which is clearly not the case judging from the large body of work that has been devoted to the study of Shaft Grave social organisation (*Section 5.1*).

Milka (2006a; 2006b; also see Milka within Voutsaki *et al*. 2003; 2004; 2005; 2006; 2007) undertook the funerary analysis for *The Middle Helladic Argolid Project* and considered gender as just one of many social variables. She based her observations of patterns on results derived from the gender attribution approach using data from the osteological analyses carried out by Ingvarsson-Sundström and Triantaphyllou (within Voutsaki *et al.* 2005; 2006; 2007; 2009a; 2009b). She essentially argues that gender may have determined inclusion practices in certain Argolid cemeteries, but had little else to say because her focus lay more in identifying variation in burial practices. Ruppenstein (2010) also used the gender attribution approach to investigate the position of burials from different Middle Helladic cemetery sites and argued that gender and location determined physical posture, despite the fact that the differences represented in the treatment of male and female burials were not pronounced enough to establish reliable patterns of behaviour.

McGeorge's (2009) 'meta-analysis'[47] of gender considered the treatment of female skeletal remains in Tomb 2 from the Aspropilia Cemetery at Pylonas on Rhodes. For some reason, she did not use the gender attribution approach (or if she did, she did not discuss the results or how behaviours observed in Tomb 2 compared to those performed in the rest of the cemetery). It appears that she used an implicit approach to investigate the relationship between high-status female burials from Tomb 2, grave good deposition and grave architecture. She also considered the skeletal evidence, which she analysed firsthand (McGeorge 2001). These burials were chosen for anlaysis because they were sexed as female and categorised as high-status (read as associated with wealthy burial assemblages). In the end, McGeorge arrives at a broad conclusion: Late Bronze Age society was highly stratified and certain female burials warranted high status burial practices. Her study says frustratingly little about the expression of gender at Aspropilia and puts forward conjectural observations concerning the possible status and religious affiliation of the female burials from Tomb 2.

Current views on gender and mortuary behaviour in Middle Helladic and Mycenaean Greece are based largely on the expectations of archaeologists who consider gender. There is acknowledgement that gender ideologies and roles may have varied according to an individual's age, status and cultural affiliation at time of death (McGeorge 2009; Voutsaki

[47] Meta-analysis is a systematic method that takes data from a number of independent studies and integrates them using statistical analysis (Rothman 2008, 758).

2005), but generally all seem to work from the premise that the gender paradigm was stringently binary, with polarized notions of male and female translating into a society in which male and female roles and identities were hierarchically ranked and segregated according to distinct gendered social domains (Voutsaki 2005, 359, 361) overwhelmingly favouring the aggrandisement of elite men (Graziadio 1991; Kilian 1998; Kilian-Dirlmeier 1988).[48] This view is based largely on studies of Shaft Grave burial practice and social organisation, which represent a highly specialised, elite segment of the Mycenaean population from two small adjacent cemeteries at Mycenae active between MHII and LHII – a small chronological window (Graziadio 1988; Karo 1930-1933; Laffineur 1989; 1990; Mylonas 1973; Voutsaki 1993; 1998). While a number of studies have investigated the nuances of masculine, warrior-oriented Mycenaean ideologies, (Cultraro 2005; Davis and Bennet 1999; Kilian 1998; Nikolaidou and Kokkinidou 1997; Voutsaki 2001; 2010a; Wolpert 2004), very few have attempted to understand and clarify feminine ideologies (Olsen 1997/98; Shelton 2009). This is not to say that the above observations of gender are not informed. My criticism lies in the fact that interpretations of gender in Mycenaean mortuary data are often placed within the context of studies that mainly are concerned with understanding the expression of status and ideology in death.

On the whole, gendered mortuary studies have produced limited results and have failed to fully incorporate the gender attribution approach or epistemologies that recognise the variability of gender (*Sections 2.1* and *2.3*). As a result, observations of gender and how it affected Aegean burial practice tend to be overly cautious and full of generalities. Further, most gendered mortuary analyses are site-specific, consider gender as just one of many social variables of analysis and have yet to investigate gender rigorously within a broad cultural or temporal context. Finally, while gendered mortuary studies are mindful of recent theoretical developments in gender archaeology, approaches to gender in Aegean mortuary behaviour are rather inelegant in execution. On the one hand, analysts assume that gender can only be identified if osteological sexing has occurred and artefacts can be assigned unambiguously to individual burials (a sound assumption in itself), while on the other they ignore the current approaches of the broader gender archaeology or fail to incorporate them fully, in the end resorting to some degree of artefactual gendering – a subjective and highly questionable method based on dated binary models. In sum, scholars have argued that gender probably determined certain burial practices, but they have yet to define how, to what extent, where or why.

[48] To date, no one has cited (or looked for) possible evidence of variant genders or categories of sex (except in studies of Minoan iconography, Chapter 3, *Section 3.2.1*).

## 3.3 The 'Big Picture' of Gender in Aegean archaeology

The uneven success of gendered studies in Aegean archaeology does not derive solely from the limitations of the record but also from: 1) the expectations of the analysts; 2) the tardy and uneven integration of gender into the Aegean archaeological discourse; and 3) the reluctance of analysts to use epistemological approaches used in broader gender archaeology.

Interpretations of gender in the Aegean are coloured by each sub-field's underlying assumptions. Archaeologists who consider gender in iconographic studies are quick to polarise their interpretations of gender ideologies represented in Aegean art, often inferring that male ideologies represent the active, while female ideologies represent the passive; sometimes even conflating indicators of female sex with reproduction, motherhood and domesticity whether these things are depicted or not. Linear B scholars' interpretation of gender is generally sound, but constrained by the limitations of that body of evidence, which make it impossible to determine if the identification of gender roles and gender-specific activities are specific to Palatial society or characteristic of wider Mycenaean social structure. Finally, mortuary archaeologists tend to over-emphasise the presence of male warrior burials while reading too much into negative evidence concerning female burials.

There are of course some exceptions that have contributed immeasurably to the understanding of gender in the prehistoric Aegean,[49] but most works are narrow in focus, overly cautious or simply too general. This assessment is particularly true concerning the analysis and interpretation of gender in mortuary studies. In contrast, gendered iconographic studies appear to benefit from a willingness to embrace new, more pluralistic approaches taken from post-structural epistemologies, which, in turn, appear to be tailor-made for this sort of research. These disparities result from the fact that gendered work within the sub-disciplines of Aegean archaeology has been generated within paradigmatic frameworks specific to each sub-field meaning that much of the work, some of which is extremely informative, has been carried out within an epistemological vacuum. In part, this is symptomatic of two phenomena. Firstly, each sub-field of Aegean archaeology has integrated gender into their discourse at different points in time. And secondly, the disparate nature of the iconographic, textual and mortuary evidence has compelled the use of different epistemological and archaeological approaches to get at gender, e.g. the use of theories of representation and corporeality in iconographic studies; the use of a literal approach to the

[49] Particularly contributions by Rehak (1984; 1994; 1998; 2002) and Olsen (1997/8; 1999).

identification of gender in the Linear B tablets, involving straightforward translation and etymological examination; and in mortuary studies, the selective use of archaeological mortuary theory, implicit approaches and/or an abbreviated version of the gender attribution approach, as well as the occasional use of statistical methods, such as cluster analysis.

Ultimately the problem is circular. The fact that no real attempts have been made to compare or reconcile these separate bodies of evidence with one another and the lack of dialogue between those working in different sub-disciplines have resulted in a fragmented and non-comprehensive picture of gender and lack of clarity about male and female social roles in Middle Helladic and Mycenaean Greece, in turn providing little impetus for synthesis among these subfields and contributing to an overall sense of frustration regarding gender as a line of study. The reasons for this are perfectly understandable, and it *is* true that it is extremely difficult to correlate one kind of evidence to another. This is because 1) gendered figures and activities depicted in Aegean art appear to be largely representative of ideology; 2) gender roles represented in the tablets represent identity (probably) pertinent to palatial social structure within the context of economic transactions; and 3) no real attempts have been made to analyse gender in mortuary behaviour within a broad cultural or temporal context – an avenue of investigation that could potentially bridge the gap between interpretations of gender in the other types of evidence by facilitating the identification of intersecting expressions of gender ideologies *and* identities (this possibility is revisited in *Section 9.3*).

# Chapter 4

# Methodology: The Gender Attribution Approach

This chapter describes the methodology used for the analysis. *Section 4.1* explains how data were organised and prepared for analysis. *Section 4.2* explains the methodology, known as the gender attribution approach, used for the analysis of the sexed burial samples (*Section 1.4*). *Section 4.3* describes why and how the alternative method used for the case study of an unsexed burial sample was created and applied.

## 4.1 Data Organisation and Preparation: The Gendertheke

Data have been recorded in a customized database using FileMaker Pro 8.5 software. The database, known as The Gendertheke, organizes mortuary data into three templates: 1) the Graves Detail, 2) the Remains Detail and 3) the Assemblage Detail. Each is relational, facilitating accurate and detailed recording of each burial sample. Preparation for data entry involved three stages. First, categories were created for the consistent recording of graves, burials and material culture deposited in the graves. Second, burials were grouped into chronological phases based on the reliable dating of associated material culture. Queries were designed to facilitate the quantification of demographic profiles of burial populations, the distribution of grave goods, artefact types and subtypes, imported goods, material composition of objects, grave types and embellishments to sexed and aged burials. These queries generated find lists, which were then imported in Excel and prepared for statistical analysis. Following is a description of the *Gendertheke* templates.

### *4.1.1 The Graves Detail*

The *Graves Detail* (Figure 12) records grave location (cemetery, settlement and region), grave chronology/period(s) of use, grave type, grave features, burials, grave assemblage and architectural embellishments. Grave types include simple graves (cist and pit type graves as well as earth-cut graves), pot burials (burials inside pithoi or large ceramic vessels), shaft graves, chamber tombs, tumuli and tholoi.[50] 'Grave Features' records grave dimensions as a whole, as well as separate architectural features (dromos, stomion, doorways, cover slabs and the dimensions of simple graves (usually pits or cists) located inside larger grave structures such as chamber tombs, tumuli and tholoi. The *Graves Detail* also shows the total number of burials inhumed in a single grave (Figure 13), the grave's assemblage detailing

[50] For literature on Middle Helladic and Mycenaean grave architecture see: Cavanagh and Mee 1998, 26-29, 43-48, 62-68, 90-92. For a description of cists and pits see: Immerwahr 1971, 103. For literature on tholoi see: Cavanagh and Laston 1981; Galankis 2007; Pelon 1976.

quantity and listing all objects deposited in the grave with correspondent burial associations (Figure 14) as well as the presence or absence of architectural 'embellishments' (Figure 15).

'Embellishment' categories represent grave features and mortuary practices that are not grave goods, i.e. benches, evidence of tomb fumigation, niches, roofs and wooden posts. I have chosen to use the term 'embellishment' because this type of data represents elaborations upon the burial practice. An embellishment can be composed of structural features that elaborate upon or alter the physical space and/or structure of the grave type, often affecting grave architecture. Embellishments can indeed furnish the mortuary space and should be interpreted as physical evidence of an aspect of established burial practice, an elaboration upon it, or signposts of an alternative burial practice. Practices involving embellishments can be dedicatory in nature and/or signifiers of ideology or collective identity. 'Architectural embellishments' are listed in the *Graves Detail*, because they relate to the whole of the grave rather than to an individual burial and rarely represent the identity of the deceased (except possibly in the case of single burials inhumed within simple grave types). In contrast, 'burial embellishments' relate *only* to an individual burial and can be representative of both ideology and identity. These are listed in the *Remains Detail*, discussed next.

### *4.1.2 The Remains Detail*

The *Remains Detail* (Figure 16) records data pertinent to the burial, including: burial identification; the sex, age and age group affiliation of the burial; chronology; ordinance (e.g. whether or not a burial is categorised as primary or secondary); burial type (e.g. inhumation, pot or pithoi burial, collective bone heap); body position, posture and head orientation; and pathological diagnoses. The *Remains Detail* also lists the assemblage associated with the burial (Figure 17) as well as the presence or absence of burial embellishments (i.e. coffin remnants, scorch marks on bones or the use of stone pillows or burial platforms) (Figure 18). Age group categorisation is based on categories used by Angel (1971; 1973; 1982), Ingvarsson-Sundström (2003) and Triantaphyllou (2001; Voutsaki *et al*. 2005, 95, fig. 1) and are as follows: Neonate/Foetus: < 0; Infants: 0-3 years; Children: 4-12 years; Subadults: 13-18 years; Adults: 19-44 years; Elderly Individuals: ≥ 45 years.

The sexing of skeletal remains is based on informed scientific observations, and, as Geller (2005, 598) observes, 'It is important to underscore that sexual difference refers to an analyst's degree of certainty with respect to categorization and not the presence of sexual variability or ambiguity.' The three most important factors affecting the accuracy of sexual categorization are the observer, the method used and the degree of completeness of the

skeletal remains, ideally including remains of the pelvis, long bones and cranium (Henderson 1989, 78). Accuracy of sexual diagnoses in skeletal remains is also determined by the state of the surviving evidence. For example, if the pelvis and skull are in tact, Meindl (*et al.* 1985) argues that observations of sexual characteristics produce a diagnosis with a general accuracy rate of 96-98%, whereas Lovell (1989) gives it a much lower rate of accuracy at 83%. If only the long bones are available for analysis (from which an analyst can infer the height and general robusticity of an individual), accuracy of sex diagnosis drops significantly. Rates of accuracy are highest when the indexes are based on or include reproductive differences (e.g. measurements of the pelvis) rather than size comparisons (long bones and craniums). For example, the determination of sex in skeletal remains based on examination of the pelvis hinges upon identification of the following tell-tale markers of sexual dimorphism: 1) the greater sciatic notch; 2) the preauricular sulcus; 3) the ventral arc; and 4) the ischiopubic ramus (Bass 1995; Buikstra and Ubelaker 1994, 16-19; Krogman and Iscan 1986; Phenice 1969; White 2000, 366-9). Most bioarchaeologists and physical anthropologists use a five-point scale to determine the presence or absence of male or female characteristics, especially when having to rely on cranial or long bone measurements to determine sex (Buikstra and Ubelaker 1994, 16-21). The point system is based on an assumption of binary opposition with male and female at opposite ends of the spectrum with observations occurring in the middle being scene as sexually ambiguous. Typically, observations of robusticity characterise males and gracility characterise females. Ideally, variation within populations also has to be taken in to account. It is also important to bear in mind that older remains may be incorrectly categorised as male because post-menopausal changes can produce robust crania in older females (Walker 1995; also see Meindl *et al.* 1985).

### *4.1.3 The Artefacts Detail*

The *Artefacts Detail* (Figure 19) records object-related data including: grave location, burial association, proximity to burial/find spot, date, artefact type, material composition, possible function prior to deposition, ware type, decorative features (i.e. simple linear decoration, figures or elaborate decoration input into 'notes' field) and import status. Artefact types were categorized as one of the following whenever possible: vessels, adornment, weaponry, tools, toilet articles, figurines or seals.

Vessels include pottery and non-ceramic vessels. Ceramic vessel shape and function are based on Mountjoy's (1986; 1993; 1999) categorizations of Mycenaean pottery. Adornment includes jewellery, ornaments, dress pins and garment decoration (i.e. buttons and perforated discs). Weaponry includes swords, arrowheads, helmets, armour, javelins, spears, knives and

daggers. Tools are practical objects that can be affiliated with production and occupational activities. Functional knives and daggers are considered within the scope of both tool and weaponry artefact types. Toilet articles are objects used for the alteration of bodily appearance either by mourners or on the deceased (Treherne 1995, 120-23; also see Bourdieu 1984, esp, Ch. 3; Kristiansen 1987; Sherratt, A. 1994). It is assumed that toiletries could have been used during life *and* as part of the mortuary ritual, e.g. preparation of the corpse (Treherne 1995, 124-26). Figurine types present in the Mycenaean mortuary record include 'purely gendered' (e.g. not rooted in biological sex characteristics [Shelton 2009, 126]) female[51] and male figurines, as well as figures of ambiguous sex; quadrupeds and animals; and in rare cases miniature chariots and houses. Seals are composed of a wide array of materials and could have functioned either as ornaments or for administrative activities, or both, prior to deposition. During the course of analysis other unusual or rare artefact types were sometimes encountered, such as textiles, status insignia, instruments and utensils. These are discussed within the context of their affiliated burial samples.

## 4.2 The Gender Attribution Approach

The theoretical context of the Gender Attribution approach used for the analysis of the sexed burial samples was explained in *Sections 2.1* and *2.3*. This is a statistical approach that attributes different types of evidence to men and women. In this case, it is being used for the analyses of the sexed burial samples in which evidence of mortuary behaviours are linked (or not) to the gender of the deceased through attribution. The analyses presented in this thesis mainly focus on the quantification of the attribution of artefact types and subtypes to sexed and aged burials, because during the course of research it became clear that behaviours linked to the gender of the deceased were identifiable mainly through depositional practices. Links (or lack thereof) between other types of mortuary behaviour and the gender of deceased, mainly concerning grave complexity, are considered secondarily in the *Interpretation Section* of Chapters 5-7.

### *4.2.1 Application*

As mentioned above, data were recorded in the *Gendertheke* Filemaker Pro database and find lists were generated and exported to a spreadsheet package (Microsoft Excel). Then the attribution of artefact types and subtypes to sex and age groups (i.e. adult male burials, adult female burials, children and infants) was quantified in order to determine whether or not the deposition of certain objects was influenced by the deceased's gender. If data facilitated

[51] Female types include Naturalistic, proto-Phi, Phi types A and B, Transition, Psi and the *Kourotrophos* forms (Shelton 2009, 126, Pl. XIXa).

further queries, these were then undertaken to quantify the distribution of other objects' features (such as material composition, function and ware type) to sex and age groups. Once frequencies were calculated, it became possible to identify if and when certain depositional practices favoured male or female burials (and/or certain age groups) from each burial sample. Results are discussed in Chapters 5-7. Catalogues of burial samples including artefact types and subtypes represented and corresponding tables and charts showing the results of each query are presented in Volume II.

In order to understand the full extent to which the gender of the deceased affected mortuary behaviour, secondary queries were also run. For example, by generating a demographic profile of each burial sample, it was then possible to assess whether or not the gender of the deceased influenced inclusion in a given cemetery or grave group, ultimately offering insight as to whether or not depositional practices were linked to gender or just proportionally under- or over-represented in that particular sample. Further, analysing the distribution of grave complexity to sexed burials revealed whether or not the gender of the deceased affected grave location, grave type and the use of embellishments and also helped to establish the extent to which other social factors, such as status or kin affiliation, may have influenced these (and other) burial practices. Regrettably, grave dimensions and burial position, posture and orientation were not reported consistently enough to permit meaningful analysis.

### *4.2.2 Methodological Clarifications*

During the course of research, it became clear that the type and function of certain objects was ambiguous. Because reliable results hinged upon the consistent and accurate recording of data, solutions were required.

#### 4.2.2.1 Quantification

Difficulties were encountered when attempting to quantify units of jewellery and ornaments – objects often composed of many small components. Due to disturbance and decomposition, these are often represented in the archaeological record as singular, free-floating objects in wildly erratic quantities. This is best exemplified by the scattered finds of individual beads that may have once formed part of a single necklace or bracelet. If the analyst were to take a literal approach, quantifying each free-floating component as one unit, then he or she would run the risk of over-representing the quantity of jewellery associated with a single burial. In order to facilitate a quantifiable, consistent and accurate representation of these objects, it was determined that free-floating components should ideally be construed as being representative of a single, whole object, and that a group of

components (that could be contextually linked to one another) should be counted as a single unit.

In order to determine whether or not multiple components from a single deposit were originally parts of a single object (or several objects), the archaeological context of each burial assemblage had to be considered. It was determined that components could be confidently identified as parts of a single whole if their context fulfilled some or all of the following conditions: 1) they were found *in situ*; 2) they were found in close proximity to one another; 3) they were found on or near a body part such as a wrist, neck or torso; and 4) they were of similar material or stylistic composition. In other words, if the archaeological context and related published materials plausibly indicated that 100 rosettes were once affixed to a single garment, then the 100 rosettes should be counted as one unit, because the garment itself was the object and the components were decorative elements of this piece. Of course, if a burial is associated with a particularly ornate object, such as this, the extravagance of the object as a whole will be considered and explored independently.

But what to make of burial assemblages containing just one or two beads, while others from the same sample contained hundreds? It was determined that if a burial was associated with an object that was only partially represented (i.e. one or two beads being the only surviving evidence of what may have been a bracelet or necklace adorning a particular individual), the component should be interpreted as being part of what was once a whole object and, therefore, should be counted as one unit. Further, it could also be assumed that the material composition of the surviving component is representative of at least the minimal cost and construed value of the original object. Therefore, burials associated with partial objects can be accurately represented and compared to burials associated with whole objects. This also ensures that the potential wealth and complexity of each burial assemblage is represented as accurately as possible, even if parts of whole objects did not survive or were lost through disturbance or looting.

In some instances, however, archaeological context and published materials could not establish whether or not components could be reliably grouped together as parts of a whole. A system informed by supporting scholarship was needed to calculate the potential number of units represented in burial assemblages with less straightforward contexts. Since, in the course of the analysis, I observed that whole necklaces were often composed of roughly 20 components, I decided to use this number as a guideline. Ergo, if an assemblage contained 16 beads of blue faience and 3 gold spherical beads, the 19 beads were counted as one unit, representing at least one whole object. If more than 20 components of similar style, size,

material and potential function were associated with a burial, then the number of units was calculated accordingly: 21-40 components equals two units, 41-60 components equals three units; 81-100 components equals five units, etc. Although this system is not perfect, nor can it completely mitigate the possibility of error, it is the best way to ensure that all potential material culture associated with a burial can be considered and assessed.

#### 4.2.2.2 Knives and Daggers

The categorisation of knives and daggers also presented problems, because these objects may have functioned as either tools or weaponry and can be categorised either as prestige or practical objects or both at the same time. Potentially, knives and daggers deposited in Middle Helladic and Mycenaean graves could have functioned as one or more of the following: practical tools, practical weaponry, display weaponry and/or status insignia. In some cases, it was possible to determine whether they were practical or prestige objects based on functionality, material composition, decoration cost (investment of labour in the manufacturing process) and manufacturing provenance, but in most cases, knives and daggers were composed solely of bronze and certainly functional. Thus, the function and meaning of these objects, prior to deposition and during the performance of the burial practice, was potentially complex. In response to this, knives and daggers are categorised as a sub-type unto themselves and also considered within the larger context of tool *and* weaponry categories. The archaeological context of these objects (i.e. whether or not they were included in assemblages containing other weaponry or tools) was also taken into account.

#### 4.2.2.3 Conuli

The ambiguous categorization of small, conuli shaped objects as either buttons[52] or spindle whorls presented a perplexing methodological problem. Up until recently, small perforated conuli, deposited in graves and typically composed of clay or terracotta, were interpreted as spindle whorls if: 1) they measured more than two centimeters across; 2) the holes were large enough to accommodate a suitable shaft for the spindle; 3) the hole was centered in order to allow efficient spinning; and 4) their upper limit of weight was 150g (Barber 1991, 51-53). In Aegean archaeology terracotta or clay conuli smaller than two centimeters across generally have been categorised as buttons, because they were considered to be too small and light for spinning, and spindle whorls were assumed to have been much flatter with wider undersides (Iakovidis 1977, 113-19, *esp.* 115). Although there are no criteria for

[52] In some cases, the term 'buttons' is actually a bit of misnomer, since many of these perforated objects were more likely to have functioned as garment weights rather than as fasteners – if they were used in a decorative capacity prior to or during deposition.

establishing the function of perforated conuli, it has been proven that the weight of a whorl is critical to the success of the product. For example, heavier whorls are suited to long-staple wool, full-length flax or for plying wool yarns. Lighter whorls are more suited to short fibres such as short wool and flax tow (Barber 1991, 51-53). A minimum weight for spindle whorls has yet to be firmly established;[53] but this is neither here nor there, because the weights of conuli from Aegean mortuary contexts are rarely published. Yet, experiments conducted in 1998 by the Historical-Archaeological Experiment Center at Lejre in Denmark (Andersson and Nosch 2003, 198-99 and 203) revealed that the function of small (e.g. < 2 cm across) conical objects as spindle whorls could not be ruled out. Further, it is entirely possible that conuli may have had dual functions: as both textile production tools and buttons/garment decorations prior to deposition, and therefore could have been deposited as grave goods or affixed as ornaments to the funerary costume of the deceased. In light of this, conuli, categorised as buttons/whorls, are approached as potentially multi-functional with possible links to textile production activities. Whether they are interpreted as buttons, whorls or both is informed by material composition, shape, evidence of use (if reported), the quantity deposited with a single burial and archaeological context – all of which will be made explicit within the interpretation of each relevant analysis.

#### 4.2.2.4 Figurines

In light of the ambiguity of Mycenaean figurines (*Section 3.2.1.2.*), the interpretation of these objects is approached from the 'figurines as material culture' perspective (Mina 2008, *cf.* esp. 214-16),[54] and it is assumed that the meaning of a figurine was not necessarily connected with its use (Talalay 1993, 37-38) and may have been culturally or even community specific.

#### 4.2.2.5 Sealings

Sealings are another artefact type with a potential multiplicity of use and meaning. The presence of a sealing within a burial assemblage does not automatically correlate with administrative use or link the associated burial with these types of activities. In fact, it is extremely difficult to correlate the entire corpus of seal impressions with seal stones recorded in contemporary contexts from tombs (see Flouda 2010, 64). Thus, sealings

[53] Carrington-Smith (1992, 681, 685) set a minimum weight for spindle whorls at 12 grams. Crewe (1998) set a minimum weight at 10 grams, but has since confirmed that it is certainly possible that even 'the wee ones' could have been used for spinning (pers. comm, October, 2009).

[54] In her analysis of anthropomorphic Neolithic and EBA Aegean figurines, Mina (2008, 214) argues for the potential 'symbolic dimension of figurines' because 'concentration on the purely aesthetic characteristics of figurines severely restricts our understanding of the intention behind their manufacture and the ways in which they operated dynamically at a socio-cultural level.' Other Neolithic scholars have taken the same approach. See Talalay 1993, 1994, 2000; 2005; Bailey 2005; Nanoglou 2005; also see Mina 2005.

potentially have emblematic and amuletic value determined by limited ownership and use (Flouda 2010, 62). In light of this, seals will be interpreted as having been used as either ornaments, administrative tools and/or status insignia. Interpretation of function prior to deposition as well as within the context of the burial practice will be inferred from object shape, material, features (such as perforated holes), evidence of use, the singularity of the object and archaeological context.

#### 4.2.2.6 Warrior Kits

Finally, when a burial practice is interpreted as being expressive of Mycenaean 'warrior ideology' this is usually based on the presence of weaponry or more specifically a 'warrior kit' with a burial. Deposits such as these have been interpreted as an expression of male aggression, power and authority, as well as wealth, status and prestige. Because warrior ideology is seen as being one of the main ideological components of Mycenaean mortuary ideology and culture, it is important to clarify the identification of groups of objects as 'warrior kits.' A 'warrior kit' is defined within the field of Mycenaean studies as groupings of weaponry, sometimes also including toilet articles such as bronze razors and tweezers. Yet, the identification of a 'kit' is based on the analyst's subjective grouping of objects – a grouping that may not correlate to the original arrangement of objects by those who deposited them. Thus, it is difficult to detect where a 'kit' ends and a set of gold or bronze eating and drinking vessels begins within the context of a burial assemblage. Emphasis is not usually placed on nearby metal vessels and other exotic luxury items, but because these objects are often found with weaponry and toilet articles in the Shaft Graves as well as other wealthy Mycenaean graves (e.g. the LHIIIA1-2 Tomb III from the Agora also known as 'the Tomb of the Bronzes' [Immerwahr 1971, 170-7]), a 'warrior kit' may also express other ideologies and values. Further, deposits of multiples, such as swords, in the absence of other weaponry sub-types should not be construed as a 'kit' because 'equipment' (e.g. weaponry *and* armour) is not represented. Thus, it follows that a burial can be associated with weaponry that is not necessarily representative of a 'warrior kit.' In light of this, groupings of objects identified as 'warrior kits' represent the deposition of different weaponry object types, e.g. equipment, in proximity to one another within a single burial assemblage. Still, identifying the expression of warrior ideology is tricky, because weaponry deposits, whether part of a 'warrior kit' or not, are interpreted as expressing Mycenaean warrior ideology to some extent. Therefore, a less restrictive interpretation of 'warrior ideology' seems necessary, and weaponry deposition practices will be interpreted contextually.

## 4.3 The Prosymna Approach: a case study of an unsexed burial sample

To determine whether or not results from the sexed analyses can help to reveal gender in other types of mortuary evidence, an alternative method was devised, which is presented as a case study of the unsexed burial sample from the Prosymna cemetery in the Argolid (Chapter 8). The alternative methodology, hereafter known as the Prosymna Approach, is informed by the results of the sexed analyses, which facilitate artefactual gendering (or not) of Middle Helladic and Mycenaean artefact types and sub-types – most of which are represented at Prosymna. A cross-tabulation was then performed to confirm whether or not gendered inventory groups could be identified at Prosymna, ultimately with a view to gendering unsexed burials as reliably as possible. Following is a discussion of why this method was devised in such a way, and how it was carried out.

### *4.3.1 Nuts and Bolts: Hammering out an alternative methodology*

In an ideal world, one would model an analysis of an unsexed burial sample (and sexed burial samples for that matter) directly upon Hodson's (1990) successful analysis of the Ramsauer graves from the Hallstatt site in Austria.[55] Hodson analysed the distribution of artefact types at Hallstatt by conducting a cluster analysis and was able to identify the presence of different grave good inventories that were distributed among different social groups within the cemetery. In the end, he was able to link the deposition of specific artefact types as well as inventory groups to the gender of the deceased.[56] The Hallstatt sample was tailor made for this type of analysis because: 1) the sample is large, encompassing over 1100 graves; 2) mortuary activity took place during one succinctly defined chronological phase; 3) all burials were primary inhumations; 4) single burial was the norm; 5) burials included all groups (i.e. men, women, children and infants); 6) almost all burials were provided with grave goods in assemblages of similar size and quality; and 7) a manageable and very specific range of artefact types were consistently deposited with certain groups.

Middle Helladic and Mycenaean burial practice does not conform to the Hallstatt behaviour model. First, the size of most Middle Helladic and Mycenaean burial samples range from comparatively small (roughly 200 burials) to tiny (20 or fewer burials). Second, activity in most of these cemeteries in many cases (especially in the larger cemeteries) took place over the course of several generations, encompassing more than one chronological phase. Further,

[55] Hallstatt is the site of an extensive and wealthy cemetery excavated between 1846 and 1863 by Johann Ramsauer. It contained over 1100 graves datable mainly to the 7th and 6th centuries BC, representing a whole community of men and women of all ages as well as children and infants.

[56] O'Shea (1996) used cluster analysis to show how social factors may have influenced depositional practices at Early Bronze Age Maros in the Mures River Valley in Hungary.

the dating of burials and burial assemblages is not always clear, making division into chronological groups less than straightforward. Third, secondary burials (specifically those containing the remains of more than one individual) as well as the interment of multiple burials cannot be included in a usable sample due to the unclear association of grave goods with individual burials. Fourth, grave goods are rarely deposited with all burials, resulting in the exclusion of even more burials from the usable sample. Further, disturbance often renders the association of individual burials to grave goods unclear, disqualifying even more burials. Fifth, as we have seen, Mycenaean burial practice made use of a much larger and more diverse range of artefact types than that represented in the Hallstatt inventory, making it more difficult to organize objects into manageable and reliable categories. Finally, the results of the sexed analyses show that gender-linked depositional practices are more readily visible in wealthier burial samples, precisely because there are more object types deposited in these samples. As a result of this, a typical, usable Mycenaean burial sample is comprised of individual burials associated with grave goods, tends to be chronologically splintered, represents only a small segment of the cemetery population and is associated with sometimes wildly diverse burial assemblages.

While it is certainly an option to cluster data from these small samples, I chose to forego using this statistical method for several reasons. First, there is the possibility that results obtained from a cluster analysis might obscure or misrepresent the true breadth of activity through over-generalisation or, alternatively, by obscuring small distribution patterns. Second, cluster analysis works from a standpoint that all burials are potentially treated in the same manner. This is decidedly not the case in Middle Helladic and Mycenaean deposition practices. In fact, it was normal burial practice for roughly half of all sub-elite burials to be buried without grave goods. For example, the sexed analyses (Chapters 5-7) support Voutsaki's (1993; 1998) observation that status was often a major determinant of mortuary behaviour, and reveal that a kin-group's status and wealth also influenced the degree to which the individual's gender and/or age influenced depositional practices. Further, if a burial from a simple grave in the Palatial phase Agora Cemetery were held to the same standard as one of the cemetery's richest, arguably elite tombs, e.g. Tomb I, The Tomb of the Ivories (Immerwahr 1971, 158-68; Shear 1940, 274-91), insight into how gender was expressed amongst different social groups could be limited. There is also a danger that results could misrepresent the performance of gendered practices in this place and time. In the end, I chose the gender attribution approach for the delicate task of teasing out the materiality of gender in these small, variable samples to ensure that each was analysed on its terms. This also facilitated the identification of outliers and unusual behaviours as well as site and cemetery specific variations.

Thus, the need for a subtle, elastic methodology prompted the use of the Gender Attribution Approach – a pluralistic approach that makes use of all the available data, is responsive to small and idiosyncratic datasets and is incapable of producing patterns that are not there. Therefore, it stands to reason that the alternative approach for the analysis of unsexed burials must share these characteristics. In light of this, the Prosymna Approach has been devised to use what has been learned from the sexed analyses, whilst still being capable of flagging idiosyncrasies and variant behaviours.

### *4.3.2 The Cross-Tabulation*

The success of the *Prosymna Approach* hinges on one key assumption: that there is cultural similarity between unsexed and sexed burial samples (*Section 8.1*). The application of the Prosymna Approach involves two main components: 1) results derived from sexed analyses are used to determine the gender categorization of artefact types and sub-types present in the unsexed sample's burial assemblages; and 2) cross-tabulation is then used to map the presence or absence of gendered artefact types in each burial assemblage.

The sexed analyses revealed that certain depositional practices or objects were determined by the gender of the deceased according to place and time (and that there was general consistency in the performance of gendered depositional practices in each location within specific chronological phases). These gendered practices are labelled 'Firm Expressions of Gender' and are discussed at the end of Chapters 5, 6, and 7 and summarized in *Section 8.3.1*. Objects used for the performance of these practices were then gendered accordingly; e.g. boars' tusk helmet = probable male during the Early Mycenaean and Palatial phase; domestic coarse ware = probable female for the Middle Helladic phase; female figurines = unclear gender for all phases.

Next, data from the Prosymna burial sample was prepared for cross tabulation. First, Prosymna's burial assemblages were grouped according to chronological phase (based on datable grave goods), and each burial assemblage was assigned a number, e.g. **Assemblage #51**. Next, all artefact types present in Prosymna's burial assemblages were gendered (or not) using the above criteria. Following this, artefact types and relevant sub-types were organised into the following groups: artefact types gendered as probable or possible female, artefact types gendered as probable or possible male and artefact types of unclear gender (*Tables 8.7-9*). Then the cross-tabulation was carried out, revealing the presence (X) or absence (left blank) of each artefact type in each burial assemblage. Following this, each burial assemblage was then contextually analysed using the results of the cross-tabulation.

Based on burial assemblage contents, the presence or absence of male or female artefact types and archaeological context, associated burials could then be gendered as 'probable male', 'probable female', 'possible male', 'possible female' or 'unclear'. Categories of 'non-adult' and 'unknown age and gender' were also assigned when appropriate. In the end, the Prosymna Approach was capable of revealing whether or not gendered inventory groups were deposited at Prosymna over time and if these practices correlated to or deviated from gendered depositional practices observed in the sexed samples. Finally, questions were posed to determine whether or not more than one gendered grave inventory group was visible, and whether or not the Prosymna Approach revealed unusual or unique gendered burial practices specific to Prosymna (Chapter 8).

The benefits of this methodology are: 1) it quantifies all artefact types represented in the unsexed sample; 2) it does not work from a predetermined assumption of wealth; 3) it flags anomalies, i.e. assemblages containing artefact types that can be linked to more than one gender or are unique to that sample; and 4) it is capable of showing how and to what degree depositional practices and ideological expression may have varied over time.

# Chapter 5

# Raising the Bar and Establishing Precedent: The Early Mycenaean Phase at Mycenae

Any discussion of gendered mortuary behaviour in Mycenaean Greece must begin with Mycenae, arguably one of the most important and distinctive archaeological sites in Greece because Shaft Grave mortuary practice represents a momentous ideological shift in the wider context of Mycenaean mortuary ideology and social organisation (Voutsaki 1993; 1998; Wolpert 2004).

The Shaft Graves are both outstanding and limited. They are made up of two small burial samples. Most of the burials are male, but a few adult female, elderly and non-adult burials are included (*Section 5.3.1*). Assemblages from the Shaft Graves are far richer than those from other cemeteries at Mycenae or indeed any other burial samples in this thesis' data group. In fact, the standard of wealth varies dramatically within Mycenae itself. Also, the Shaft Graves are datable only to the Early Mycenaean phase (MHIII-LHII), representing a discrete chronological window of activity. There is documentation of mortuary activity at Mycenae through the entirety of the Bronze Age, but activity datable to other chronological phases (e.g. the Middle Helladic, the Palatial and Late Mycenaean phases) cannot be considered. For instance, the nine Palatial Phase elite tholos tombs (Evans 1929, 66-88; Pelon 1976; Protonotariou-Deilaki 1990b; Schliemann 1878; Tsountas and Manatt 1897; Wace 1921-23; 1953a; 1955) and the vast majority of the 200+ chamber tombs (Shelton 2000; Wace 1932; Xenaki-Sakellariou 1985) in use from LHI-IIIC cannot be included due to looting and disturbance for the former and lack of reliable osteological sexing for the latter.[57] Finally, Mycenae should not be seen as 'the start of it all' nor should it be construed as a 'type' (French 2005, n. 1) or 'control site,' because the social phenomenon of the Shaft Graves did not come out of nowhere. Evidence from the MHII Aegina Kolonna 'Warrior' Shaft Grave (Kilian-Dirlmeier 1997) shows that the expression of similar ideological constructs as well as the use of the shaft grave type predated Mycenae's Shaft Graves. Although there are some similarities between the Aegina Kolonna grave (Kilian-Dirlmeier 1997) and Mycenae's Shaft Graves, Shaft Grave iconography cannot be traced to Kolonna

[57] Fürst (Wace 1932, 226-229) analysed and sexed just 20 crania (from Tombs 514, 516, 519, 525, 526 and 529) from the Kalkani and Third Kilometre Cemeteries. These are listed at the end of *Table 5.1*. Data are unreliable due to Fürst's use of dated osteological methods and reliance on only cranial evidence for diagnoses of sexual characteristics (*Section 4.1.2*). Also, graves from the Great Poros Wall (Taylour 1955, 214, fig. 3, Pl. 41b), Panaghia House (Mylonas Shear 1987, 43, ns. 71, 72) and the Panaghitsa area (Mylonas 1973, 115-6) lacked inventory, were inconsistently documented, and, in some cases, the archaeological context was unclear.

because none of the Kolonna pottery, including the exotica, features figurative motives found in the Grave Circles (Petrakis 2010, 411, n. 39). There also is evidence of similar and contemporaneous burial practices at Pylos' Grave Circle, datable to LHI, and Tholos IV (*Appendix II, Section II.1*), datable to LHII. These tombs yielded evidence of grave goods comparable in wealth to those found in Mycenae's Grave Circle B. There is also Cretan evidence of similar warrior burials (e.g. male burials associated with weaponry and boars' tusk helmets) in contemporaneous contexts such as the Neopalatial Cemetery at Poros (Dimopoulou 1999, *esp.* 29, nos. 15 and 21; for other Cretan 'Warrior Burials' see Evely 1996; Muhly, P. 1992 for bibliography), but these samples could not be included in analysis due to lack of grave good association and/or osteological sexing.[58]

So, why begin here? Mycenae's Shaft Graves are the only fully published elite Early Mycenaean cemeteries in which the burials also have been osteologically analysed. What is more, Shaft Grave mortuary behaviour encompasses all aspects of Mycenaean mortuary practice (i.e. use of simple and shaft grave types, primary and secondary burial, and single and multiple inhumations; and the deposition of artefact types documented in graves throughout Middle Helladic and Late Bronze Age Greece). Versions of Shaft Grave burial practices were replicated to varying degrees over time at mortuary sites throughout Mycenaean Greece, indicating that ideologies and practices specific to Shaft Grave mortuary culture were expressed through time and space (Voutsaki 1993) and probably affected and changed Late Bronze Age funerary ritual on the Mainland and in other parts of the Aegean over the course of the Mycenaean era. Also, the identification of object categories (e.g. vessels, adornment, weaponry, tools, toilet articles, figurines and seals) provides the palette from which burial assemblages from other cemetery samples can be categorised and organised for analysis. Finally, for better or worse, evidence from the Shaft Graves functions as a standard by which Aegean archaeologists recognise, define and measure the expression of elite wealth and status in Mycenaean funerary practice, setting a material precedent to which data from other Mycenaean mortuary sites can be compared and contextualised.

There is long-standing consensus that Shaft Grave social structure is suggestive of a gender hierarchy in which males were not only favoured via inclusion, the deposition of material wealth and prestige expression but also were socially ranked over females (Graziadio 1991;

[58] For the only published material on the Pylian skeletal evidence see Schepartz *et al.* 2009; also see Bisel and Angel 1985. These studies do not provide demographic distribution, burial location or grave good associations for these or any of the Pylian burials that have since been re-analysed as part of PRAP (Pylos Regional Archaeological Project, http://classics.uc.edu/prap/). Further, Tholos IV was disturbed and suffered from looting to such an extent that no objects or burials were recovered *in situ* (Schepartz *et al.* 2009, 162-63) and no objects can be associated with burials (Stocker pers. comm, 5th May, 2011).

Kilian-Dirlmeier 1988; Laffineur 1989; 1992; Mylonas 1966; 1973; Schleimann 1878; Voutsaki 2005; Wace 1921-23). This raises the question: can the re-investigation of gender yield any further insight into elite Mycenaean mortuary behaviour and social structure? This chapter discusses results that indicate that gender was not as strictly or hierarchically negotiated and that warrior ideology in particular was more inclusive than has been assumed. Results also help to disentangle gendered burial behaviour from the previous Middle Helladic phase (Chapter 6), because the groups using the Shaft Graves were reacting to, appropriating or rejecting earlier burial practices as they constructed new social realities relevant to their own ideological and social agenda(s) (Voutsaki 1998; 1993). The analysis also reveals how attributes of elite Mycenaean burial practice crystallised in later periods (Chapter 7).

## 5.1 Mycenae's Archaeological Context

Schliemann (1878) discovered and excavated Grave Circle A during the late 19th century, and news of burials literally covered in gold established Mycenae as a magnet for ongoing, intense archaeological exploration and research. As time went on, the site (Figure 20) became the subject of more systematic study, spearheaded by Wace (1921-23; 1932; 1950; 1953a; 1953b; 1954; 1955; 1956; also see Wace and Stubbings 1954) and Mylonas (1948; 1954-55; 1957; 1966; 1968; 1973; Mylonas and Shear 1987). Thanks to ongoing study (Alden 2000; Dietz 1991; French and Stockhammer 2009; Graziadio 1988; Mylonas 1948; 1954-55; 1957; 1966; 1968; 1973; Mylonas and Shear 1987; Shelton 2010; Taylour *et al.* 1981; 2000; Wace 1921-23; 1932; 1950; 1953a; 1953b; 1954; 1955; 1956; Wace and Stubbings 1954), the stratigraphy of Bronze Age Mycenae has facilitated a multi-faceted if not quite full comprehension of the site's occupational history. Additionally, the small number of Linear B tablets found at the site (Bennett 1958; Chadwick 1963; Olivier 1969) support Mycenae's identification as one of the major hubs of palatial power and wealth during the Late Bronze Age. Analysts have put considerable effort into interpreting Shaft Grave social organisation (Davis 1983; Dickinson 1977; Dietz 1987; 1991; French 2005; Graziadio 1988; 1991; Hiller 1989a; Laffineur 1989; 1990; Muhly, J.D. 1979; Voutsaki 1993; 1995; 1998; 2001; 2005; Wolpert 2004; Wright, J. C. 1987; Xenaki-Sakellariou 1989). Space allows only a brief overview of current interpretations.

The Shaft Graves were walled burial precincts incorporating new, elaborate grave types (Graziadio 1991, 404, n. 7),[59] embellished with architectural features such as roofs and

[59] Currently, the only comparable structure in the Greek archaeological record that pre-dates the Shaft Graves is the MHII Warrior Shaft Grave from Aegina-Kolonna (Kilian-Dirlmeier 1997). Some

wooden support beams (Figures 21a-d). They are seen as the ultimate expressions of status and social competition and were most likely built by elite kin group(s) vying to establish something akin to dynastic power at Mycenae (Voutsaki 1998). These groups were capable of amassing and consuming large, diverse quantities of exotic and expensive material wealth. Their burial practice was creative and innovative, performed as much to express status and prestige as it was to legitimise descent and power and to mourn the dead.

In an attempt to illuminate social stratification in the Shaft Graves, Graziadio (1991) tabulated what he perceived to be the wealth index of individual objects as well as the quantity of objects. His arguments were undermined by the bluntness of his approach and his subjective valuation of objects.[60] Also, his assumption that three unsexed adult burials from Shaft III in Grave Circle A were female (based on artefactual gendering by Schliemann [1878, 420-21] which may have had undue influence over Schuchhardt's [1891, 216-24] highly questionable and dated sexing of two of the skeletons) skewed his analysis of gender and further compromised his observations.[61]

Voutsaki (1993; 1995; 1998) took a more nuanced, post-processual approach by tabulating the diversity and quantity of objects in each grave and considering grave architecture in order to determine overall complexity of graves. Her trailblazing hypothesis is that 1) the main structuring principle of mortuary behaviour during the MH period was kin group affiliation rather than wealth or social status (Voutsaki 1998, 44; *contra* Petrakis 2010); and 2) that external forces contributed to an ideological shift during MHIII-LHII, in which 'the ostentatious deposition of valuable goods became a leading strategy for creating differentiation' while the burial practice also emphasised descent. Thus, new ways of expressing status countered the previous kinship order while still remaining dependent on it (Voutsaki 1998, 46, 47; for more on Voutsaki's approach to Middle Helladic and Early Mycenaean mortuary behaviour see Voutsaki 1993, 50-51, 60; 1998, 44-47; also see Kilian-Dirlmeier 1986).[62] For the most part, I agree with her thesis. However, based on results discussed below, I would argue that the transition to the Late Bronze Age was characterized

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Middle Helladic tumuli also share physical characteristics, e.g. their use of round structures (Graziadio 1991, 404). For scholars who argue that the Shaft Graves were originally tumuli see Müller (1989) and Pelon (1976, 148-52); *contra* Dickinson (1977, 51).

[60] Bevan (2007, 8-9, 17-18, 190) discusses the limitations of this methodology and offers alternative approaches.

[61] For the locations of the recently sexed remains of one female burial and three other possible female burials in Grave Circle A see *Section 5.2.2* and *Table 5.1*; Papazoglou-Manioudaki *et al*. 2010.

[62] Voutsaki does not clarify what she means by 'kin' nor does she state how she conceptualises 'kinship' as a structuring principle in MH or Early Mycenaean social organisation. For her discussion of kinship see Voutsaki 1993, Chapter 5, *esp*. 34, 37, 50-51, 60-61).

by greater fluidity and less stringent gendering than that acknowledged by Voutsaki (1998, 47; 2005).

Some of the limitations of Voutsaki's (2005) interpretation of gender and Shaft Grave mortuary behaviour were discussed above in *Section 3.2.3.2*. She argues that 'fighting, hunting, drinking (and) perhaps feasting' were probably activities in which only males participated, and that women were probably 'excluded and denied access to certain prerogatives of high-status burials' (Voutsaki 2005, 359). She concludes that 'male and female domains are therefore not only separated, they are also differently evaluated (Voutsaki 2005, 359-61)'. Her argument is weakened because she did not consider the following: 1) the association of weaponry with female burials in Grave Circle B (*Section 5.3.2.3*); 2) a significant proportion of male burials were not provided with weaponry deposits; and 3) *neither* male nor female burials are exclusively associated with *any* specific artefact types. Also, Voutsaki's emphasis of the fact that female burials were included in the Grave Circles to a lesser extent than male burials does not explain whether female burials were excluded from certain burial practices or merely under-represented in the performance of said practices.

Finally, Wolpert (2004, 127) attempted 'to recover the cultural sensibilities that enabled mortuary deposits to accelerate so quickly' and to find out how objects deposited in the Shaft Graves came to acquire collective meaning. To do this, he considered social phenomena such as agency. Like Voutsaki (1998), he is acutely aware that status had to be negotiated within an agreed social and ideological framework, and agrees with her argument that social reality was created via mortuary practice. He then extends this further, by trying to illuminate the negotiations that resulted in the legitimisation of these practices, in which the expression of status was not solely linked to the deposition of material wealth but also to factors such as kinship structures, marriage and lineage affiliation (Wolpert 2004, 133-35). Unfortunately the ambition of this approach outweighs its practicality, because it is far better suited to ethnographic studies of living peoples, and while Wolpert was able to recognise that factors like kinship structure and marriage and inheritance rules determined mortuary behaviour, he could not articulate the nature of these structures or how they worked. Yet, Wolpert's (2004, 135-36) observation that the reuse of graves revised and created ancestral lineages and re-ified and legitimised intentionally deposited objects as 'ancestral objects' is integral to understanding Shaft Grave mortuary behaviour. It also underscores the enduring importance and influence of the kin group and helps to explain the fluid creation and manipulation of social identities expressed in this burial practice.

In sum, we know that, during the Early Mycenaean phase at Mycenae, the following took place: 1) a transformative ideological shift manifested itself in Early Mycenaean mortuary practice; 2) elite adult females were also present in the burial ritual – although the nature of this is less clear than the ritual reserved for elite adult male burials; 3) the architectural complexity of graves was directly linked to the expression of status and kin group affiliation; 4) the need to establish and express ancestral legitimisation drove some of the practices observed in the Shaft Graves; and 5) the special treatment of male burials in the Shaft Graves has been construed as evidence of social and gender hierarchy within burgeoning elite Mycenaean culture. This analysis will attempt to elucidate the fundamental differences between the treatment of male and female burials, with an eye to determining whether or not (and how) elite male and female burials were separated into different ideological and social domains or if the ideological expression of gender was more subtly executed.

## 5.2 Mycenae: Data and Limitations

The Middle Helladic and Early Mycenaean burial sample from Mycenae is comprised of 127 burials from *c.* 140 graves, catalogued in *Table 5.1* and shown in *Table 5.4*. Seven additional graves datable to the Late Mycenaean phase are listed in *Table 5.2*. These yielded six burials – a sample too small to support a site-wide analysis.

### *5.2.1 Mycenae Grave Sample*

Grave Circle A (Figures 21b,c) is composed of six shaft graves identified as Shafts I-VI (Åckerström, 1978, 49; Dietz 1991, 247-249; Karo 1930-33; Mylonas 1966, 90-96; Schliemann 1878). Although Alden (1981, 78, n. 4) reports three other possible shafts, identified as Shafts VII, VIII and IX, actual graves have yet to be identified, and even if the graves do exist, their exclusion from analysis will not affect results because no material or skeletal evidence has been linked to these locations.

Grave Circle B (Figure 21d) contained 26 graves: 18 shaft graves, seven cist graves and one pit grave (Dietz 1991, 106-31; Graziadio 1988; Mylonas 1957; 1966; 1973).

Fifty-nine graves from Prehistoric Cemetery facilitated analysis (*Table 5.1*).[63] These included two pot burials, one earth-cut grave, three shaft graves, 26 pit graves, 18 cist graves and nine graves of unspecified type (Alden 2000, fasc. 7; Wace 1955; Voutsaki *et al.* 2006,

[63] The area designated as the Prehistoric Cemetery is composed of over 150 graves but many more may have originally existed. At present, 139 of these have been published (Alden 2000 *fasc. 7*; Voutsaki *et al.* 2007, 141).

89; 2007, 140-42). Although much of the Prehistoric Cemetery was used for burials during the Middle Helladic phase (Shelton 2010), it is unclear how early the cemetery was in use due to lack of datable grave goods and/or disturbance (Alden 2000, fasc. 7; Voutsaki *et al.* 2009a, 141).

The Citadel House grave group consists of 20 graves including two pot burials, one earth cut grave, three pit graves, one cist/pit grave and 13 graves of unspecified type (Alden 2000, fasc. 7, 221-80; Desborough 1973, 94-8, fig. 2, Pl. 33d).

Areas C and F, the Area West of Grave Circle A, House M and N, Tsountas House, the Cult Centre, the Granary, the Ramp House, and the Museum yielded 16 simple graves composed of two pot burials, one earth cut grave, one stone enclosure, four shaft graves, five pit graves, one cist grave and two graves of unspecified type (Alden 2000, fasc. 7).

Seventeen simple graves of unclear date, listed in *Table 5.3*, were not suitable for analysis due to lack of datable grave goods. Their exclusion should have little effect upon results, because these graves comprise a small proportion of Mycenae's simple grave sample, grave goods were rarely present and most of the graves are undisturbed, indicating that grave goods were deliberately not deposited. Exclusion could slightly skew demographic inclusion patterns in simple grave groups at Mycenae, but this will be flagged for discussion as needed.

Some of Mycenae's simple graves are of unclear date and may have been in use as early as the Middle Helladic phase (MHI-II). These graves yielded very few or no grave goods, and when objects were present they were often not datable. Most activity in the Prehistoric Cemetery probably was contemporary with the earlier graves in Grave Circle B, placing activity within the Early Mycenaean phase (Alden 2000, fasc. 7; Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 89; 2007). In order to observe all possible activity, graves of unclear date have been included in the Early Mycenaean sample, because erroneous inclusion should have little effect upon results due to the small number of these graves and the paucity of objects deposited within them. In *Table 5.1* graves of unclear date are denoted by an asterisk, and graves firmly datable to the Middle Helladic phase have been specified as such.

### *5.2.2 Mycenae Burial Sample*

The known demographic distribution of burials at Early Mycenaean phase Mycenae is listed in *Table 5.4* and includes at least 127 burials. Although this project has made every effort to include the most current bioarchaeological data, many details of recent skeletal analyses

have yet to be fully published. This analysis is therefore reliant upon much of Angel's published anthropological analyses of skeletal evidence from Grave Circle A, Grave Circle B and the Prehistoric Cemetery (Alden 2000, fasc. 7, 725-75; Angel 1954; 1973; Bisel and Angel 1985), which are regarded as sound (*Section 3.2.3.1*). Because this project relies upon accurate categorisation of sex and age group (not absolute age) in skeletal samples, Angel's observations combined with the published aspects of Triantaphyllou's (Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 90-91) and Papazoglou-Manioudaki's (*et al.* 2010) re-analyses of the Shaft Grave and Prehistoric Cemetery skeletal samples will more than suffice. Further, Triantaphyllou (paper presented at Mycenaean Seminar 20-1-2010; pers. comm, 20th January, 2010; Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 90-91) identified only small discrepancies with Angel's original analyses concerning only the minimum number of individuals and the presence or nature of pathological lesions, which were either missed or over-interpreted by Angel.

At least 18 burials were found in Grave Circle A, including one to four adult females, 11 adult males, one unsexed adult, two unsexed subadults and one infant (Angel 1973, 384; Papazoglou-Manioudaki *et al.* 2010, 169, tbl. 1). Much of the skeletal evidence from Grave Circle A was damaged and incomplete, (some) may have been lost to decomposition and, as in the case of Shaft Graves I and II, certain skeletons can no longer be located (Kilian-Dirlmeier 1986, 161-177; Nafplioti 2009, 279; Papazoglou-Manioudaki *et al.* 2010, 158, 167). Therefore, the 18 burials should be considered the minimum number of individuals (Papazoglou-Manioudaki *et al.* 2010, 168).

Triantaphyllou (2010, 444; Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 88-91, nos. 57, 58) has since identified the remains of 30 burials from Grave Circle B, composed of four elderly males, 16 adult males, four adult females, three unsexed adults, one child and two infants. Angel (1973) originally identified 23 individuals. For the most part, Triantaphyllou's new findings have been incorporated, and the numbers used here for female and infant burials in Grave Circle B are consistent with her counts, but information regarding the sex, age and location of the seven newly identified burials is not accessible. She has identified one additional male burial – the details of which also have yet to be published. As a result, this thesis' sample of male burials from Grave Circle B will be short one individual, creating a slight under-representation of adult male burials, while unsexed adult burials will be over-represented by one burial in order to create a continuity in terms of the number of individuals represented in the sample. This discrepancy will be flagged for discussion whenever relevant.

The Prehistoric Cemetery yielded evidence of at least 56 burials, including one elderly female, one adult female, one unsexed adult, two sub adult males, one sub adult female, 28 children and 21 infants (Alden 2000, *fasc.* 7, 75).

The Citadel House grave group yielded 20 burials, including two elderly females, one adult female, two unsexed adults, one unsexed subadult, one child and 13 infants.[64] Scattered graves yielded remains of four individuals, consisting of: one elderly female burial, two unsexed adult burials and one subadult male burial (Alden 2000, *fasc.* 7, 75).

Finally, a number of graves, listed in *Table 5.5*, contained no remains due to removal or disturbance. Object quantities from these graves have been attributed to 'Unknown Individuals.' The quantities for 'Unknown Individuals' should be understood to represent the lowest possible number of individuals that may have been buried in each of these graves.

### *5.2.3 Mycenae Object Sample*

Over 1300 objects are documented as grave goods at Mycenae. The pottery sample has been the focus of intensive study, with publications providing reliable dating, descriptions and manufacturing provenance in the majority of cases (Alden 2000; Crouwel 1991; Dickinson 1974; Dietz 1987; 1991; Mountjoy 1986; 1993; 1999). Detailed studies of the ivories (Krzyszkowska 2007), weaponry (Matthäus 1980), special vessels (Hooker 1967), gold and silver objects (Davis 1977; 1983; Niemeier 1990; Younger 1978), the bronzes (Matthäus 1980) and faience objects (Foster 1981) have also been published.

There is some confusion over the contents of Grave Alpha in Grave Circle B. Just seven vessels were definitely found in the grave, and there is much contention over the assignation of other inventory listed in Mylonas' (1973, 21-34) site report.[65] I have used Mylonas' (1973) grave goods catalogue and taken into account subsequent arguments advanced by Dietz (1991), Kilian-Dirlmeier (1986) and Laffineur (1989).

### *5.2.4 An amended approach for the analysis of Grave Circle A*

Grave Circle A presents specific problems concerning the association of objects with burials, because Schliemann (1878) did not specify where objects and burials were found within each shaft, and the National Archaeological Museum in Athens has not labelled many of

[64] Triantaphyllou (Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 88-89) identified the remains of 18 burials from the Citadel House/Prehistoric Cemetery areas: one adult female, one elderly female, 15 non-adults and one adult of unknown sex. The non-adults include the remains of 14 pre-term foetuses or neonates and one child. Burial locations have not been published.

[65] Dietz (1991, 106, n. 207) did not catalogue the contents of this grave because of 'lacunae'.

these objects. Although Karo (1930-1933) attempted to associate specific objects with burials using Schliemann's notes, I have chosen not to use his associations because: 1) Schliemann was not focused on recording object association; and 2) it is unclear to what extent Karo's speculations were influenced by his assumptions about artefactual gendering. Otherwise, I have relied upon Karo's catalogue as a source for the inventory deposited within each shaft. Fortunately, the problem of burial sex association is somewhat reduced by the presence of a single sex grave (e.g. Shaft VI) as well as graves containing more male burials than female burials (e.g. Shafts IV and V) (Angel 1973, 384; Papazoglou *et al.* 2009, fig. 12; Papazoglou-Manioudaki *et al.* 2010). Objects not linked to a specific shaft (Karo 1930-1933, 155-60) have been excluded from the sample.

To cope with the lack of grave good association, I have amended my approach for Grave Circle A. Instead of testing for patterns based on the attribution of grave goods to sexed burials, I will identify the *likelihood* of grave good association with male burials vs. possible female/unsexed burials based on attribution to the grave as a whole. To do this, I have organised the data as such: 1) objects from Shafts I and II were associated with 'unsexed burials' because none of the sexed burials were located in these graves; 2) objects from Shaft III could potentially be associated with burials of both genders, because it contained the sexed remains of one adult female and two adult male burials; 3) objects from Shafts IV and V were more likely to have been associated with 'adult male burials' because the majority of the burials inhumed in these graves were sexed as male, while a minority of burials were tentatively sexed as 'female?'; and 4) objects from Shaft VI are certain to have been associated with male burials, because the shaft contained only the remains of two sexed male burials (Angel 1973, 384; Papazoglou *et al.* 2009, fig. 12; Papazoglou-Manioudaki *et al.* 2010, 169, tbl. 1). Results quantifying the *likelihood* of association of objects to either male or female/unsexed burials can then be compared to patterns identified in Shaft Grave VI and Grave Circle B. By doing so, I can facilitate the gleaning of useful information from a valuable data group – one that is arguably indispensable to the understanding of elite mortuary activity in Mycenaean Greece – while avoiding gross errors and unusable results.

## 5.3 The Analysis: Gender Attribution at Mycenae

### *5.3.1 Inclusion*

*Table 5.4* confirms Voutsaki's (2005, 359) observations that in the Shaft Graves adult male burials were favoured for inclusion, while adult female and non-adult burials were selectively included. In terms of elite practices, the predominant inclusion of male burials is

argued by Voutsaki (2005, 358-61) to be evidence of a hierarchical social structure that ranked males above females and excluded females. Yet, the Grave Circle A and B burial samples included just 18 and 30 burials respectively. The small size of each sample as well as the comparable wealth of each cemetery strongly suggests that when burials were interred in these locations, it was for a reason, and the inclusion of a minority of female (and non-adult) burials should not be summarily dismissed – a point that is pursued in *Sections 5.3.2-3* below.

Conversely, the Prehistoric Cemetery and Citadel House grave group almost exclusively included infants and neonate burials (Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 89).[66] Triantaphyllou (within Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 89) posits that the two adult female burials inhumed in the Prehistoric Cemetery may be mothers of buried infants who died during childbirth. If so, this practice was unusual, due to the overall lack of adult remains in these locations. Clearly age influenced inclusion in these locations, which were reserved for infant burials probably from all social groups active within the settlement.

Ultimately, there are too few burials to detect patterns of inclusion in the scattered simple graves.

### *5.3.2 The Deposition of Grave Goods*

*Table 5.6* and *Chart 5.1* indicate that in Grave Circle B grave goods were almost always deposited with all types of burials regardless of gender or age. Although a minority of male burials (four adults and one elderly individual) could not be linked to objects, this is most likely due to disturbance or purposeful removal rather than a deliberate exclusion from practice.[67]

[66] Four adult burials are documented in the Prehistoric Cemetery: 1) the unsexed Skeleton II from HWV'50 Grave Ib,II (Alden 2000, fasc. 7, 188); 2) the adult female (?) identified as burial 112 Myc from PCE'53 Grave XXXVI; 3) the adult female identified as burial 108 Myc also from PCE'53 Grave XXXVI; and 4) the adult male identified as burial 89 Myc from PCE'53 Grave XLI (Alden 2000, fasc. 7, 774).

[67] Grave Sigma contained the remains of an elderly male identified as burial 131 Myc and was devoid of objects (Mylonas 1973, 225, Pl. 203a). The secondary burial of a possible adult male identified as Skeleton 3 from Grave Gamma had been moved from its original position and may have been originally associated with objects (Dietz 1991, 110, fig. 32, n. 225; Mylonas 1973, Pl. 38a). Any grave goods that may have been associated with the adult male identified as burial 69 Myc from Grave Alpha 1 presumably were removed when Grave Alpha was constructed (Mylonas 1973, 34-35). None of the Grave Alpha assemblage can be linked to its two burials, though it is probable that some objects were originally associated with the primary adult male burial identified as 62 Myc (Dietz 1991, 106; Mylonas 1966, 98, 99; 1973, 21-34). Angel identified just one burial from this grave (burial 62 Myc) and Triantaphyllou (within Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 90) has since identified a second.

*Table 5.7* and *Chart 5.2* indicates that in the Prehistoric Cemetery most child and adult burials were provided with grave goods, whereas slightly less than half of the sub-adult and infant burials were provided with objects. Due to the small number of sexed adult and sub-adult burials, it is unclear if gender affected deposition. However, age appears to have influenced this practice. Because this practice was selectively performed for the distinction of sub-adult and infant burials, grave good deposition also was influenced by the discretion (agency) and resources of the burying family(ies). Graves with no remains were usually devoid of objects, indicating that when the burials were removed so were their contents.

*Table 5.8* and *Chart 5.4* indicate that roughly proportional numbers of Citadel House burials from each sex and age group received grave goods compared to those that did not, suggesting that neither gender nor age determined the deposition of objects. It is unclear how status affected this practice due to uncertainties concerning grave type and complexity as shown in *Table 5.9*. So few burials are represented in the scattered simple graves, listed in *Table 5.10*, that deposition patterns cannot be interpreted.

*Tables 5.11-13* indicate that age, not gender, affected the quantity and diversity of grave goods deposited with burials at Mycenae. We also know that all adult and elderly burials in the Shaft Graves and select adult burials of higher status from Mycenae's simple graves almost always received grave goods. Burial assemblages associated with child burials were comparatively smaller, simpler and less wealthy (e.g. one to three pots, and perhaps an item of jewellery or a tool) than those associated with adult burials. Infants were generally excluded from depositional practice altogether. However, infant burials from the Shaft Graves were provided with wealthy assemblages, but because there are so few of these types of burials in the Grave Circles, this practice probably expressed ascribed status (Parker Pearson 2003, 77-78; Shennan 1975).

*Tables 5.11-13* also show the distribution of artefact types in each location. More accurate readings of gender-linked burial practices can be revealed through analysis of each artefact type.

#### 5.3.2.1 Vessels

##### *5.3.2.1.1 Pottery*

*Table 5.14* catalogues all ceramic vessels from Mycenae's burial samples. *Table 5.15* shows how these were distributed in each location. It is unclear whether gender influenced the deposition of pottery in Grave Circle A. In Grave Circle B, both male and female adult burials were provided with pottery, and the large number of vessels linked to unsexed adult burials conceals whether or not gender affected this practice. Comparatively modest deposits of pottery were found with non-adult burials in Grave Circle B, suggesting that age determined the quantity of vessels deposited with each burial. Finally, Mycenae's simple graves yielded a small number of vessels. These were associated mainly with child burials from the Prehistoric Cemetery. Just eight infant burials were associated with pottery, which suggests that this age group was generally excluded from this practice.

*Table 5.14* also suggests that child burials associated with pottery were routinely provided with smaller ceramic assemblages than adult burials (e.g. child burials identified as burial 134 Myc from Grave Lambda 2, the skeleton from Museum Grave 8, and the Prehistoric Cemetery's child burials associated with pottery). However, the contents of pottery assemblages associated with child burials are similar in form and function to those deposited with adult burials (even in the Shaft Graves). This suggests that age, status and grave location determined the quantity of vessels deposited, and that the distinction of high-status child burials was expressed through the performance of a scaled down version of the adult pottery deposition practice – especially in Grave Circle B. It also indicates that the burial practice used for child burials had more in common with that of adult burials than it did with infant burials suggesting that, at time of death, children's identities were already bound up in adult ideologies, and these individuals may have had more developed social identities than infants and neonates (Garland 1985, 78-88; Hertz 1960, 84).

*Table 5.16* shows the distribution of pottery shape in Grave Circle A. Just two ceramic rhyta, a shape found only in Grave Circle A at Mycenae, were deposited: the Minoan egg-shaped rhyton from Shaft Grave II (Dickinson 1974, 113, n. 21; Dietz 1991, 239, 242, 247, n. 583, fig. 76; Furumark 1950, 186, n. 6; Karo 1930-1933, 70, No. 221) and a half of a rhyton from Shaft Grave V (Karo 1930-1933, 139, No. 774). Although little is understood about the function(s) of rhyta, the selective nature of these deposits suggests a symbolic link between the burial and/or kin group with Minoan culture, ideology, and/or rituals. The egg-shaped rhyton was likely to have been associated with an unsexed burial, leaving it open whether ceramic rhyta were associated with adults of either gender, while the elaborate Minoan rhyton was likely to have been deposited with an adult male burial based on its location in

Shaft V. Amphoriskoi and kantharoi also were more likely to have been associated with adult male burials, whereas bowls, cups, jars and jugs were possibly associated with adult burials of both genders. *Table 5.17* shows the distribution of pottery function in Grave Circle A. Display, drinking, eating and pouring vessels and unguent and other containers could have been associated with adult burials of both genders, whilst storage vessels were more likely to have been associated with adult male burials. *Table 5.18* shows the distribution of ceramic wares in Grave Circle A. Argive,[68] Minoan and Polychrome Mainland wares were possibly associated with adult burials of both genders; Cycladic and Grey Minyan wares were more likely to have been associated with select adult male burials. *Table 5.19* shows the distribution of imported vs. local wares in Grave Circle A, and reveals that adult male burials were much more likely than female burials to be associated with imported pottery. *Table 5.20* also suggests that adult male burials were more likely than female burials to have been buried with elaborately decorated pottery; whereas, burnished, handmade, and lustrous painted vessels possibly were associated with burials of either gender. These telltale associations with male burials located in Shaft Graves IV and V should not be over-interpreted due to small sample size, unclear association and inclusion practices (*Section 5.3.1*). Ultimately it is unclear if pottery was deposited with certain types of burials according to composition, features and manufacturing provenance.

By way of contrast ceramic vessels are the most popular type of grave good deposited in Grave Circle B. *Table 5.21* indicates that: 1) the askos and jug are perhaps the only shapes associated with adult burials of both genders as well as non-adult burials; 2) adult burials of both genders were potentially associated with amphorae, amphoriskoi, goblets, hydriae and jars; and 3) no shape is exclusively associated with a single gender or age group. *Table 5.22* and *Chart 5.4* show that drinking and pouring vessels were associated with burials of all types. Pots possibly used as containers for display, eating, or storage were potentially associated with adult burials of both genders. A fine, imported unguent container (the Minoan askos M-156 [Dietz 1991, 123, 239, fig. 76; Mylonas 1973, 156]) was associated with the infant burial from Grave Mu. Although this burial was associated with an otherwise typical (read as small and rather humble) non-adult assemblage, age at time of death as well as the deposition of the LMIA askos suggests special treatment, certainly afforded by the elite location and identity of the burying group. Otherwise, the vessel's function does not appear to be linked to gender or age in Grave Circle B. *Table 5.23* shows the distribution of ceramic ware types in Grave Circle B. Adult burials of both genders were potentially associated with Aeginetan, Argive, Cycladic and Polychrome Mainland wares. Child burials were associated only with Argive wares, and infant burials were associated selectively with

[68] These wares are local to the region.

Argive and Grey Minyan wares as well as the singular Minoan askos discussed above. *Table 5.24* indicates that it is unclear whether or not the deposition of specific Argive wares was influenced by gender due to the high number of unsexed burials associated with unspecified Argive and Argive Light wares. If anything, it appears that the deposition of Argive wares was an established, perhaps even ubiquitous, burial practice for this group and that imported wares (e.g. Aeginetan, Cycladic, Fine Orange and Polychrome Mainland wares) were selectively deposited only with adult burials. However, *Table 5.25* indicates that generally neither gender nor age determined the deposition of imported vs. locally or regionally manufactured wares. This discrepancy suggests that the deposition of imported ceramic wares was not determined by gender or age and that all burials received local wares, but that the deposition of specific non-Argive wares may have been influenced by these or other social variables. *Table 5.26* and *Chart 5.5* indicate that the distribution of decorative features on pots probably was not linked to gender, although age may have shaped this practice, because figures were not depicted on pots associated with non-adult burials and more types of decorative features were associated with adult burials than non-adult burials. Thus, the deposition of pottery is not expressive of gender, but instead largely expressive of group and/or individual identity, while age also influenced this practice to a certain degree.

*Table 5.27* shows the distribution of pottery according to shape in the Prehistoric Cemetery. As mentioned above, infants were rarely provided with pottery. *Table 5.27* suggests that the small number of adult burials were provided with the greatest variety of shapes, while the more numerous child burials were provided with a more limited range of shapes, usually including jugs and/or cups – a practice consistent with that observed in burial samples from Middle Helladic Asine and Lerna (Chapter 6, *Section 6.3.2.2.1-5*). *Table 5.28* shows the distribution of ceramic vessel function and indicates that drinking vessels were mainly deposited with child burials. The use of a pithos as a burial container for the child burial from PC SE'50 Grave XVI (a grave of unclear date) (Alden 2000, fasc. 7, 411) is similar to a practice observed in the Middle Helladic burial samples from Asine (Dietz 1980, 62-63; Frödin and Persson 1938, 116, 123) and possibly Lerna (*Section 6.4.1*; Caskey 1955, 28, n. 5, Pl. 12,b; Zerner 1990, 23-24, figs. 10-11) where non-adult burials were buried in pots or pithoi in Asine's intramural burial location – an age-related practice. Actually, the use of pithoi in Early Mycenaean depositional practice at Mycenae varied according to location. For instance, pithoi from the Shaft Graves were not used as burial receptacles but as elaborate storage containers that were deposited exclusively with adult burials.[69] This

[69] See the three pithoi (R-225-27) associated with the unsexed adult identified as the Skeleton in the Original Shaft Grave (Mylonas 1973, 223-24, Pls. 197b, 198a,b and 199a) and the pithos (A-4) of no association from Grave Alpha (Graziadio 1988, 347, tbl. 2; Mylonas 1973, 25, Pl. 14a,b).

suggests that previously established age-related pottery practices reserved for the burials of children, like those observed at other Middle Helladic sites in the Argolid, were attested here in simple grave locations possibly during the Middle Helladic phase and certainly during the Early Mycenaean phase. What is more, the use of pithoi as elite storage containers for adult burials in Grave Circle B during the later phase show that pithos deposition was representative of a different burial practice. Unguent containers also appear to have emphasised select child and infant burials in the Prehistoric Cemetery. Their deposition probably was determined by kin-group affiliation and expressed status. Very little decoration was documented on pots from the Prehistoric Cemetery, and there is not enough data to determine whether or not decorative features were linked to gender or age. However, the deposition of fairly exotic vessels with two child burials from simple graves of Early Mycenaean date suggests a more elaborate burial practice for child burials affiliated with high-status families. A child burial from PC'30 Gr. VIII was associated with an imported Ephyraean goblet that featured simple linear decoration (Alden 2000, fasc. 7, 349); and another child burial from PC'39 Grave X was associated with two alabastra and a goblet – both featuring simple linear decoration (Alden 2000, 355-60). Finally, the unknown sex of non-adult burials, small sample and lack of detail make it impossible to discern whether or not gender influenced the distribution of certain pottery wares, and it can only be surmised that age and kin affiliation affected pottery deposition to varying degrees in this location.

*Tables 5.29* and *5.30* reveal that cooking vessels were found in the Citadel House grave group as well as some other simple graves and appear to be associated exclusively with non-adult burials. A tripod cauldron (Alden 2000, 226-27) from Gamma Grave 2 in the Citadel House associated with a child burial, and a tripod cooking pot (Alden 2000, 254, 256) apparently from Gamma Grave 14[70] was associated with an infant identified as burial 155 Myc. Ceramic cooking vessels were not found in the Shaft Graves; however, copper and bronze cooking vessels were found in Shafts III, IV and V from Grave Circle A (Karo 1930-1933, 65, 118, 148, 152), possibly evidence for an elite, adult-focused version of this practice. A burnished handmade jar featuring simple linear decoration, grooved patterning and a wedge impression (Alden 2000, fasc. 7, 264) is the only vessel from the Citadel House grave group that features any decoration. It was associated with one or both of the elderly females, identified as burials 148 Myc and 149 Myc from Gamma Grave 15 (Alden 2000, fasc. 7, 261-65), suggesting that gender and age could have influenced this practice. However, the small, humble assemblage deposited with the elderly female burials comprises only a jar and terracotta spindle whorl, indicating that theirs was nothing more than a simply

[70] The tripod cooking pot could alternatively have been deposited in Gamma 12 or 13 (Alden 2000, fasc. 7, 254, 256).

furnished grave located in an area used by sub-elite families. Due to possible contamination and the limited burial sample, neither age nor gender appears to have shaped pottery deposition in these locations.

In sum, pottery deposition at Mycenae does not appear to be determined by gender, but practices were affected by age and also express group and/or individual identity. To a certain degree location (also read as kin affiliation) affected whether or not certain burials were provided with pottery, as well as the quantity and nature of pottery included in each ceramic assemblage. Adult burials were provided with much larger quantities and a greater variety of pottery than non-adult burials, child burials were associated with smaller versions of adult assemblages, and infants generally were excluded from this practice. Also, age-determined practices concerning the use of pithoi appear to have varied according to location and possibly over time. Finally, the abundance of pottery deposited with adult burials in Grave Circle B, especially during MHIII (Dietz 1991, 108-132), may be related to the elite burial practice in which literally hundreds of impressive pots (including fine, decorated and imported wares) were deposited to emphasise the MHII warrior burial from Aegina Kolonna (Kilian-Dirlmeier 1997). Then during the latter half of the phase (from LHI-II), this practice shifted. The group using Grave Circle A chose to practice 'conspicuous substitution' by scaling back (but not rejecting) the deposition of pottery in favour of the deposition of large quantities of 'special' non ceramic vessels (discussed in the next section) – effectively aggrandising and appropriating an otherwise very traditional aspect of Greek burial practice to express prestige and differentiation.

#### *5.3.2.1.2 Non-Ceramic Vessels*

*Table 5.31* catalogues non-ceramic vessels deposited at Mycenae, most of which were found in Grave Circle A. *Table 5.32* indicates that the deposition of non-ceramic vessels was reserved almost exclusively for the distinction of elite adult burials, excepting the small serpentine vessel associated with the remains of a child identified as burial 121 Myc from Grave XXV in the Prehistoric Cemetery (Alden 2000, fasc. 7, 436-38; Wace 1953b, 7, Pl. 3a). This singular deposit probably represents the high-status of the burying family/kin group. Little can be observed concerning two lead vessels (Alden 2000, fasc. 135) found in the empty Shaft Grave from the Granary due to lack of remains. The vessels from the Golden Treasure in the Ramp House (Alden 2000, fasc. 7, 170-71; Schliemann 1878, 352-4, fig. 528) will be excluded from discussion due to the likelihood that these were not grave goods but hoarded treasure.[71]

[71] Schliemann (1878, 362) could not identify whether the bones found inside the stone enclosure were human or animal.

*Table 5.33* shows that in Grave Circle A cups, hydriae and jugs were more likely to have been associated with adult male burials based on large deposits in Shaft Graves IV, V and VI. Rhyta, a shape only found in Grave Circle A (also discussed above within the context of pottery deposits), were more likely to have been associated with adult male burials and may have expressed an ideological affiliation between the deceased and/or kin group with Minoan culture and/or ritual (although it is unclear whether the Minoan ritual was funerary, cultic or both).[72] *Table 5.34* shows that adult male burials in Grave Circle A were also more likely to have been associated with the greatest variety of exotic and expensive vessels, and were at least twice as likely to have been associated with vessels composed of bronze, copper, gold and silver as were female/unsexed burials. This, of course, may represent inclusion practices (*Section 5.3.1*) rather than depositional practice. Only faience vessels were more likely to have been associated with female/unsexed burials in Grave Circle A.

Two wooden pyxides were deposited in Shaft V (Karo 1930-1933, 245-46; Muhly, P. 1996, 197), and could be associated with any of the burials inhumed in this shaft, which included four adult males, one possible adult female, two unsexed subadults and one infant. Pyxides are generally interpreted as being make up containers, and usually artefactually gendered as female – despite a lack of evidence verifying this assumption.[73] The white marble pyxis from Grave Nu in Grave Circle B (described as 'alabaster' by Mylonas [1973, 176, Pl. 154d]) was associated with either of the two male burials inhumed within: an adult male identified as burial 66a Myc and an elderly male identified as burial 66 Myc.[74] This pyxis is datable to Early Cycladic II (*c.* 2700-2200 B.C.), making it already at least five centuries old upon deposition (Bevan 2007, 129). It may have been a prestige good (Graziadio 1991, 406, nos. 32, 33) or an heirloom (Mylonas 1973, 176). There is also the possibility that it was a re-find

[72] Regarding the animal rhyta, Laffineur (1987; also Marinatos, N. 1986) argues that these objects may have been deposited as substitutes for animal sacrifice – what Carstens (2001, 96) refers to as an 'abbreviated sacrifice' to the dead.

[73] Most pyxides are found in later contexts, usually in LHIIIA chamber tombs. The ivory pyxides associated with the missing remains from Tomb I in the Agora (Immerwahr 1971, 166-67, Pls. 32, 33), argued by Immerwahr (1971, 151) to have been those of an elite adult female, may be the only example of a possible link between prestige pyxides and elite female burials. Other examples of pyxides as grave goods include ceramic pyxides found among the secondary burials of Cist II in Tomb 33, with the remains of a child in Cist I in Tomb 8 (Blegen 1937, 160-64, Plan 34; Shelton 1996, 92), and scattered fragments of another found in the chamber of Tomb 2 at Prosymna (Shelton 1996, 2). A ceramic pyxis of no clear association was also found in Tomb II (Deshayes 1953, 63, fig. 6,2; 1969, 582, fig. 11; Volgraff 1904, 374), and a fragment of another was found in Tomb XXXIII at Deiras in Argos (Deshayes 1966, 99, 100, Pl. XCI,8). An earlier possible example datable to MHIII is a wooden pyxis recovered from Grave 5 (92) in Tumulus E at Argos (Dietz 1991, 139) and another ceramic pyxis datable to the Middle Helladic was found among five skeletons in Grave BE.30 at Lerna (Zerner 1990, 31, fig. 24).

[74] Dietz (1991, 123) reports that a jawbone of a child was found in the fill and argues that this may be evidence of an earlier burial. Triantaphyllou (pers. comm, 20th January, 2010), however, found no evidence of a child burial in Grave Nu.

from Akrotiri (Bevan 2007, 129-30). How and when it arrived at Mycenae is anyone's guess. The rarity and antiquarian character of the Grave Nu pyxis strongly suggests that it no longer served a utilitarian function, and prior to deposition, it certainly could have been construed as a symbolically charged 'ancestral object' (Wolpert 2004, 135-36). In turn, the singularity of the object probably emphasised the identity of one or both burials interred in Grave Nu while simultaneously expressing prestige, differentiation and ancestral legitimacy of the affiliated kin-group. Thus, the deposition of the wooden pyxides in Shaft V may be evidence of a practice reserved only for distinction of select elite male burials or preservation conditions.

*Table 5.35* shows that, in Grave Circle B, the majority of bowls were associated with male burials, but that burials of both genders may have been associated with other vessel shapes based on the quantity attributed to unsexed adult burials. *Table 5.36* shows the distribution of vessels based on material composition. Here, both male and female burials were associated with a broad variety of materials. Yet, the most exotic vessel, a rock crystal bowl with bird's head (Dietz 1991, 130; Mylonas 1966, 103; 1973, 203-05, Pls. 183-85), is the only vessel made from this material and was associated with what was probably a female burial identified as Skeleton 1 from Grave Omikron. This singular object was probably of extreme value.[75] Because Grave Omikron was in use from MHIII-LHI, the deposition of such an object with an elite female burial may represent an elaboration upon a similar practice in which the distinction and identity of select high-status female burials was expressed via the deposition of single luxury items during the Middle Helladic phase at Asine (*Section 6.4.2.1*).

General observations can be made concerning both Grave Circles: 1) vessels made from imported materials, especially precious metals, appear to have been predominantly deposited with adult male burials; however, it is more likely that the low number of vessels deposited with adult female burials correlates to the low number of female burials included in the Shaft Graves and does not represent gendered practice; and 2) non-adults were excluded from this practice. This is where the similarities end. The comparatively small number of non-ceramic vessels found in Grave Circle B vs. the strikingly large number deposited in Grave Circle A, as well as differentiation in the shape and material composition of vessels represented in each Grave Circle, suggests that this practice changed over time. During the earlier part of the phase (MHIII-LHI), the deposition of non-ceramic vessels in Grave Circle B was used to express status and wealth in the broader sense, but also served to differentiate the individual

[75] Pliny discusses rock crystal in a Roman context in his *Natural History* 37.23-29. He states that it was seen as one of the most precious stones in Roman times and other periods.

identities of the burials from others. Later (during LHI-II) in Grave Circle A, the deposition of non-ceramic vessels seems to have become ubiquitous for (at least) all adult male burials, implying that ideology and group identity rather than individual identity was expressed. What is more, this elite ideology could have been specific to male burials, though this is difficult to prove.

#### 5.3.2.2 Adornment (Jewellery, Ornaments, Pins and Buttons)

##### *5.3.2.2.1 Jewellery*

*Table 5.37* catalogues all jewellery from Mycenae – most of which was deposited in the Shaft Graves. Jewellery from the treasure hoard in the Ramp House (Alden 2000, fasc. 7, 167; Schliemann 1878, 350-62; Tsountas and Manatt 1893, 114; Schuchhardt 1890, 311-15; Wace, 1921-23a, 118; 1950, 207) is excluded from discussion. *Table 5.38* indicates that jewellery was deposited with burials of both genders in the Shaft Graves and with select child and infant burials in the Prehistoric Cemetery.

*Tables 5.39-40* and *Chart 5.6* suggest that, in Grave Circle A, burials of both genders were potentially associated with all jewellery sub-types represented, undermining Graziadio's (1991, 424, n. 180) argument that armlets were the only adornment that could have been associated with burials of both genders. *Table 5.41* shows the following: 1) amber, agate and carnelian pieces were more likely to have been deposited with female/unsexed burials; 2) amethyst beads were likely to have been associated with adult male burials; 3) bronze, faience, silver and gold pieces potentially were associated with burials of both genders. A single piece of rock crystal (Karo 1930-1933, 145, No. 821c) from Shaft V was likely to have been associated with an adult male burial, potentially contradicting behaviour observed in Grave Circle B, in which the distinction of an elite female burial may have been expressed via the deposition of the rock crystal bowl (mentioned above). Overall, it is unclear whether or not gender affected this practice, except perhaps in the case of necklace deposition for which distribution patterns indicate a possible link to female burials.

*Table 5.42* and *Chart 5.7* show the distribution of jewellery sub-types in Grave Circle B. Due to the association of all sub-types with unsexed adult burials, it is unclear if gender influenced this practice. The fact that certain jewellery subtypes were by no means exclusively associated with male burials combined with the low ratio of female to male burials (4:16) also suggests that patterns of distribution do not represent gendered adornment practices but reflect the under-representation of female burials in the cemetery, as is probably the case for Grave Circle A. In support of this hypothesis, *Table 5.43* shows that the deposition of jewellery based on material composition probably was not influenced by

gender. Further, most materials (e.g. amethyst, bone, bronze, carnelian, electrum, faience/vitreous, lapis lazuli, rock crystal and sardonyx) were deposited in low frequencies and represent tiny samples. Overall, Grave Circle B's burials were provided with smaller jewellery assemblages than were burials from Grave Circle A – including those contemporaneous with those buried in the earlier Grave Circle A shafts.[76] Specifically, gold jewellery was deposited in much smaller quantities than it was in Grave Circle A. Silver jewellery was also rarely deposited and is the only material exclusively associated with adult female burials in Grave Circle B. This suggests that, in Grave Circle B, jewellery was purely an accessory expressive of individual status and identity; whereas it was probably a standard part of the funerary costume for burials interred in Grave Circle A. This substantiates Graziadio's (1991, 423, n. 167) argument that exotic funerary accessories were selectively deposited in Grave Circle B in order to express the identity of the deceased and may have been the prized personal possessions of the deceased during life, which in turn suggests that jewellery deposition expressed the identity of the deceased and was not determined by gender.

*Table 5.44* shows that it is not possible to link the miniscule amount of jewellery from the Citadel House and Granary grave to types of burials.

*Table 5.44* indicates that jewellery found in the Prehistoric Cemetery consisted mainly of beads perhaps representing necklace components. These were associated with three to four child burials and possibly one infant burial. Interestingly, the variety of materials represented in *Table 5.45* suggests that certain children were adorned with necklaces that were similar in composition to those associated with adult burials in Grave Circle B – statement pieces, albeit on a smaller and less ostentatious scale. Interestingly, jewellery was not deposited with any non-adult burials from Grave Circle B. This suggests that non-adult burials typically were excluded from this practice and that this practice was not linked to gender, but expressed identity as well as kin affiliation and status. The presence of non-adult burials associated with jewellery in simple grave locations provides further evidence that high-status children and infants shared this cemetery with sub-elite members of their age group, supporting the hypothesis that high-status was not a precluding condition for inclusion in the Prehistoric Cemetery (*Section 5.3.1*).

[76] Graves Kappa, Tau, Lambda1, Rho as well as later burials from Graves Epsilon, Delta and Nu were contemporaneous with Grave Circle A Shafts II and VI as well as early burials from Shaft Graves III (?), IV and V (Dickinson 1977, 51; Graziadio 1988).

#### *5.3.2.2.2 Ornaments*

Thousands of ornaments, catalogued in *Table 5.46*, were found in the Shaft Graves. The vast majority were deposited in Grave Circle A. *Table 5.47* suggests that adult burials of both genders were provided with ornaments in both Grave Circles. While most ornaments were probably used for bodily adornment, *Table 5.48* reveals that a small number of these could have decorated weaponry or furniture.[77] These were most likely to have been associated with adult male burials in Grave Circle A and are associated with adult male burials in Grave Circle B. This suggests that elite male burials were more likely to be provided with furniture than female burials (*Section 5.3.2.8.5*). Yet, gold inlays (Karo 1930-1933, 59-60, Nos. 119/120; Younger 1978, 288, fig. 6), possibly used as furniture decoration, were more likely to have been associated with female/unsexed burials in Grave Circle A. Gender and weaponry deposition will be discussed in the next section.

Bodily adornment occurred mainly in the form of buttons, discs, garters, girdles, masks and perforated seals. *Table 5.49* indicates that gold buttons were more likely to have been associated with adult male burials in Grave Circle A because they were deposited in Shafts IV, V and VI, and are associated with adult male burials in Grave Circle B. This suggests that gold buttons may have adorned the funerary shrouds of elite male burials. Gold discs and other shapes probably used as garment decoration were potentially associated with burials of both genders in Grave Circles A and B, suggesting that these ornaments could have been affixed to the funerary shrouds of all elite adult burials. Garters and masks were more likely to have been associated with select adult male burials in Grave Circle A, but could not be linked to the gender of the deceased in Grave Circle B. Finally, perforated gold cushion seals used as ornaments were deposited exclusively in Grave Circle A in Shaft III (Nos. Karo 34-36; Karo 1930-1933, 49; Younger 1978, 288, 291 figs. 7,8, 9 and 10) and are potentially associated with burials of both genders.

Because funerary masks are only found at Mycenae and are iconic of Shaft Grave burial practice, they merit further discussion. It is difficult to link them to individuals because they may have been used for several generations (Cavanagh 1998, 105-04), and faces portrayed on the masks are not portraits of the dead (Musgrave *et al.* 1995, 119-20) but stylised representations of faces (Figure 23). Although the electrum mask from Grave Gamma (Figure 24; Dietz 1991, 110; Mylonas 1966, 102; 1973, 76, fig. 35, Pl. 60a) is not associated by proximity to an individual burial, it can be plausibly linked to an adult male burial based

[77] Only ornaments of objects identified as such by Karo (1930-1933) or Mylonas (1973) were included in this sub-category. It is possible that other ornaments could have decorated objects originally, but may not have been published as such due to either disturbance or lack of clear documentation.

on the following: 1) the face portrayed on the mask (Mylonas 1973, Vol. II, Pl. 60a) is explicitly male based on the depiction of a beard; 2) Angel (1973, 381) argues that the funerary mask could have fit the adult male identified as burial 51 Myc; and 3) burial demographics within the grave (two males : one female) imply greater odds of association with a male burial.[78] It could also be argued that five of the six gold masks found in Grave Circle A[79] were more likely to have been associated with adult male burials, because faces depicted on these also are explicitly male and they were found in Shafts IV and V. As part of the funerary performance, a mask may have been removed from the earlier male burial – the ancestor – and bestowed upon the body of the recently deceased senior male perhaps even being passed down through each successive generation. Thus, it follows that funerary masks were complex: capable of transmitting identity at the level of both the individual and the group, simultaneously expressing the status, authority, power and prestige of elite male figureheads. It also is possible that the masked male burial enjoyed senior status during his life, probably performing or being affiliated with a leadership role within the kin group and/or the wider community. Upon death, his persona was ideologically endowed. Later, when the tomb was re-opened to process the passing of another individual, the mask may have been passed on to a newer burial allowing the earlier burial to join the ranks of the ancestors, i.e. former leaders. Thus, over time, funerary masks became symbols not only of wealth and elite male identity(ies) but also of ancestral legitimisation.

Only a few ornaments were found elsewhere at Mycenae. This sample, too small to warrant a distribution table, includes the following. Fragments of ornamental gold sheet and five gold ornaments were found in PC 39 Grave III (Alden 2000, fasc. 7, 318-38) in the Prehistoric Cemetery. The rest of the assemblage in PC'39 Grave III was also wealthy (within the context of this location) and included seven decorated ceramic vessels, one gold bead, seven amethyst beads and one amber bead. Although the remains had been removed, the missing burial's location as well as site-wide inclusion and general deposition practices suggest that the deceased was probably a child of high-status (or related to a high-status family). Other than this, a perforated bronze cylinder seal (Alden 2000, 231; *Section 5.3.2.7*) that may have been used as an ornament was found in Gamma Grave 4 from the Citadel House grave group, and 20 gold rosettes with pierced edges and an unspecified number of

[78] Angel (1973, 379-81, Pls. 244, 249; also Brown *et al.* 2000, 118, tbl. 1), identified burials 55 Myc and 51 Myc as adult males. Dietz (1991, 110, n. 225) reports that Angel also considered Skeleton 3 (one of the two unsexed secondary burials from Grave Gamma) to be that of a male, although this skeleton was not analysed by Angel. It also is unclear on what Angel based this opinion or how Dietz came by this information.

[79] Two masks were found in Shaft III (Graziadio 1991, 437; Tsountas and Manatt 1897, 99), three (Karo nos. 253, 254 and 259) were found in Shaft IV (Karo 1930-1933, 75, 76; Mylonas 1966, 92) and two (Karo nos. 623 and 624) were found in Shaft V (Dickinson 1977, 49; Graziadio 1991, 435; Karo 1930-1933, 121; Kilian-Dirlmeier 1986, 175; Laffineur 1989, 237; Matthäus 1980, 20-21).

gold discs (Alden 2000, 129) were located in the possible Shaft Grave in the Granary. These originally may have been attached to the funerary costume of the deceased. Confused context and missing remains make it difficult to interpret these ornaments.

#### *5.3.2.2.3 Dress Pins*

Dress pins, catalogued in *Table 5.50,*[80] were exclusively deposited in the Shaft Graves. *Table 5.51* indicates that in Grave Circle A pins were more likely to have been associated with adult male burials than female burials, but *Table 5.52* shows that almost all materials represented in the pin assemblage were potentially associated with burials of both genders. Further, the general construction and design of dress pins (*Table 5.50*) varies little from shaft to shaft. Thus, it is possible that gold pins may have been another important element of elite funerary costume for burials of both genders, while smaller numbers of bronze pins were more likely to have been deposited with the female/unsexed burials. Therefore, the gender of the deceased probably did not determine the general deposition of dress pins, but it may have influenced the use of pin-type based on material composition. For instance, male burials may have been provided with the larger gold pins, while female burials may have been provided with the smaller bronze versions.

In Grave Circle B, pins could only be linked to one sexed burial: the adult female identified as burial 132 Myc, who was associated with a bronze pin with grooved rock crystal head (U-320) and the bronze 'Hirtenstabnadeln' pins (Dietz 1991, 131-132). The other pins from Grave Circle B were associated with unsexed burials and the infant burial from Grave Mu was associated with a comparatively humble set of bone pins (Dietz 1991, 123, n. 260; Mylonas 1973, 149). The infant burial is the only one from this sample associated with pins made from bone. The association of less expensive pins with a non-adult burial supports the observation that a less ostentatious, scaled-down deposition practice (and presumably adornment practice) was reserved for these. *Table 5.53* indicates that in Grave Circle B bronze pins were often linked to adult female burials; it is unclear whether gender influenced the deposition of pins composed or inclusive of silver and/or gold because these potentially were associated with burials of both genders; and rock crystal pin heads were mainly associated with select adult female burials. Interestingly, the pins with rock crystal features are datable to MHIII contexts, which suggests that the distinction of select female burials with expensive dress pins and rock crystal objects for that matter may be related to the burial practice in which high-status females from Middle Helladic burials were emphasised with choice deposits of portable wealth (mainly jewellery) (see *Section 5.3.2.1.2* for the discussion of the rock crystal bowl associated with a female burial and Chapter 6). This

[80] Excludes objects ambiguously catalogued as 'Nail/Pin Heads' by Karo (1930-1933).

further suggests that the group using Grave Circle A elaborated upon the Grave Circle B practice, assimilating the use of luxury dress pins into male funerary costume (as well?). Thus, while we can conclude that valuable pins adorned the funeral shrouds of select elite adult female burials in Grave Circle B, it is unclear whether or not this particular accessory was strictly feminine or selectively deposited amongst adult burials of both genders.

#### 5.3.2.3 Weaponry

*'It is fallacious to assume that all types of burials with weapons are male.'*
*(Jones-Bley 2008, 48)*

*Table 5.54* catalogues all weaponry from Mycenae's graves. *Table 5.55* indicates that in Grave Circle A over a hundred weapons were likely to have been associated with adult male burials based on deposition mainly in Shafts IV, V and VI. *Table 5.56* indicates that smaller numbers of knives and daggers were also deposited in Shafts I, II and III, suggesting that female burials could have been associated with smaller weaponry assemblages than male burials.

The above hypothesis is supported by evidence from Grave Circle B, in which 64 weapons were associated with adult male burials, 5 were associated with elderly male burials, four were associated with adult female burials and 12 were associated with unsexed adults or of no clear association. Non-adult burials were not provided with weaponry, indicating that age also affected this practice. *Table 5.58* shows how weaponry sub-types were distributed in Grave Circle B. Sub-types included arrows, boars' tusk helmets and swords, as well as knives, daggers and axes. Three of the 16 adult male burials inhumed in Grave Circle B were associated with large quantities of arrowheads, which probably expressed identity and affiliation with archery activities within contexts of the hunt and/or war. Adult male burials were also associated with a single axe, one or two helmets, two spears and five swords, and elderly male burials were associated with two swords and possibly one helmet. Two of the four adult female burials were associated with weaponry, including a spear and three swords. *Table 5.59* shows that adult male burials were associated mainly with a large quantity of bronze weaponry, as well as small numbers of weaponry composed of or incorporating alabaster, bone, flint, ivory, silver and stone. Elderly male burials were associated with weaponry composed of or incorporating alabaster, bronze, ivory and possibly bone. Adult female burials were associated with weaponry composed mainly of bronze as well as a single unit of ivory. These results support observations posited above concerning the deposition of weaponry Grave Circle A, such as: 1) more types of weaponry made from a greater variety of exotic and costly materials were associated with adult male burials; and 2) small numbers

of bronze-based functional weaponry, e.g. swords, knives and daggers, are associated with adult female burials.

The association of weaponry with female burials merits further investigation. The distribution of relatively small numbers of weaponry subtypes (excepting the 47 arrowheads, which appear to express the identities of the male burials with which they are associated) to both male and female adult burials in Grave Circle B is relatively equal per capita. Nine of the 16 male burials (including adult and elderly males) were associated with weaponry, whilst two of the four adult female burials were associated with weaponry. This indicates that just over half of the male burials and exactly half of the female burials included in the cemetery were provided with weaponry. It seems that adult female burials were just as likely as adult male burials to be buried with weaponry. There are also 12 weapons/weapon components associated with unsexed adults or of no clear association. Granted most of these objects are statistically more likely to have been associated with adult male burials based on cemetery demographics, but three of the unassociated swords (Mylonas 1973, 47, 70, 71, fig. 5) were deposited in Grave Gamma, which contained a comparatively large and impressive warrior kit that was associated with the adult female identified as burial 58 Myc/Skeleton (Figure 22).[81] These swords could have been deposited with any of the three burials including the female located at the top of the grave. Further, the adult female identified as burial 63 Myc from Grave Theta was associated with a single bronze sword/knife (Mylonas 1966, 98). Further to this, female/unsexed burials in Grave Circle A were also more likely to be associated with swords and spears – weaponry sub-types present in the assemblage of the adult female identified as burial 58 Myc from Grave Gamma. This suggests that it is not impossible that a similar practice for weaponry deposition was retained and performed with little or no change – at least concerning the distinction of female burials – into the latter part of the phase. In sum, weaponry deposition with elite female burials appears to have been an accepted burial practice.

This refutes observations made by Kilian-Dirlmeier (1988), Graziadio (1991) and Voutsaki (2005) who argue independently that only select male burials in both Grave Circles were associated with weaponry. Kilian-Dirlmeier (1988) further argues that the male burials in Grave Circle B associated with weaponry also tended to be associated with sets of weapons, gold ornaments and generally wealthy assemblages. Yet, only three of the nine male burials who are associated with weaponry fit this profile: the adult males identified as burial 70a Myc from Grave Lambda and burial 66a Myc from Grave Nu and the elderly male identified as burial 66 Myc also from Grave Nu. Her argument is also undermined by: 1) the firm

[81] *Supra.* n. 44 on Triantaphyllou's confirmation of female sex for burial 58 Myc.

association of weaponry with the adult females identified as burials 58 Myc from Grave Gamma and burial 63 Myc from Grave Theta; 2) the assumption that weaponry associated with unsexed skeletons or of no clear association was originally associated with male burials; and 3) the lumping together of observations concerning behaviour in Grave Circle A (for which there are no grave goods associated with burials) and Grave Circle B, regardless of the variations in burial practice specific to each grave circle (such as the striking disparity in the quantity of weaponry deposited in each cemetery).

The deposition of multifunctional weaponry can also be considered. Almost all knives deposited in the Shaft Graves were composed of bronze and probably functional prior to deposition. A bronze knife with ivory inlay (D-281) from Grave Delta in Grave Circle B (Mylonas 1972, 87) may have been used only for display. The majority of daggers from Grave Circle A also were composed of bronze, and quite a few (identified as Karo 394, 395 and 294/50 from Shaft IV; Karo 736, 744, 746, 764 and 765 from Shaft V; and Karo 904, 927 and 936 from Shaft VI) incorporated inlays in precious metals and featured beautifully rendered decoration, suggesting that certain daggers may have been ideologically endowed with prestige and used for display, and that some of the more intricately constructed, delicate daggers may not have been functional at all. Two copper axes (Karo 1930-1933, 111) and one stone axe (Mylonas 1973, 42) were found in Grave Circles A and B respectively. These objects were functional and could have been used in a variety of contexts for hunting, tree felling, martial activities, and others. Thus, weapons and tools were potentially complex and multifunctional, and even the plain bronze weaponry was probably ideologically endowed and expressive of warrior ideology.

Male burials associated with weaponry deposits were emphasised in much the same way as female burials associated with weaponry deposits in Grave Circle B during the earlier part of the phase. It is interesting that certain aspects of this practice appear to have changed during the later part of the phase, and the changes probably were influenced by the gender of the deceased, because male burials inhumed in Grave Circle A were probably provided with a greater quantity and variety of weaponry than their male counterparts interred earlier in Grave Circle B. This inference is based on the location of strikingly large weaponry deposits in Shafts IV, V and VI. This is also supported by the following: Grave Circle A yielded more weaponry (121 units) than Grave Circle B (89 units); swords, in particular, were selectively deposited in Grave Circle B, whereas in Grave Circle A they appear to have been ubiquitously deposited with adult male burials (and potentially all female burials in smaller quantities); and the large quantity of swords in Grave Circle A indicates that weaponry composed exclusively of imported raw materials, specifically multiple swords, not only

symbolised status and wealth in both Grave Circles, but expressed elite group identity, status, power and authority in Grave Circle A. Conversely, the deposition of swords in Grave Circle B is more selective, and possibly more expressive of the deceased's identity. Because swords, knives and daggers were deposited in larger quantities than other weaponry sub-types, it is clear that they carried significance, although they do not appear to have been integral to expressing the collective identity of the group. Thus, the deposition of swords in Grave Circle B during the earlier part of the phase could have been decided by any of the following: the individual's role within the group and community during life; the individual's affiliation to an elite kin group; and gender only up to a certain point, since swords were deposited with female burials, indicating that the expression of elite status clearly superceded gender in this instance. Perhaps the male version of this practice changed over time, while the female version did not. In closing, it appears that warrior ideology was more flexible and less stringently gendered than has been assumed. It also appears that, at least in Grave Circle B, the expression of warrior ideology may have correlated to warrior identity. Whether or not this included participation in martial activities is unclear (*Section 5.4.3*). Further, female burials do not appear to have been excluded from weaponry provision any more than male burials. Therefore, weaponry deposition probably was not determined by gender, and distribution patterns instead reflect the under-representation of female burials and gender-linked variations of this practice over time. The nuanced relationship between warrior ideology, identity and female gender is further explored in *Section 5.4.2.1*.

The association of weaponry deposits with non-adult burials from the Prehistoric Cemetery is tenuous and *Table 5.55* suggests that non-adults were generally excluded from this practice not only here but also at Mycenae as a whole. Due to small sample size and lack of association, it is unclear whether weaponry deposition in the Prehistoric Cemetery was determined by gender. The empty Shaft Grave from the Granary yielded evidence of what may have been an imitation of a boars' tusk helmet made from sheep or goat horn (Alden 2000, 132, 133; Wace 1921-23, 57, fig. 14g-h), suggesting possible emulation of Shaft Grave burial practice.

#### 5.3.2.4 Tools

*Table 5.60* lists all tools from Mycenae's graves. The majority consists of unembellished bronze knives and daggers. Although use-wear analysis has not been performed on these objects, it is certainly possible that they were functional prior to deposition. *Table 5.61* indicates that bronze knives and daggers and other tools were potentially deposited with adult burials of both genders in Grave Circle A and B, very few tools were deposited in simple graves, no clear patterns of association are discernable in the Prehistoric Cemetery

sample and select adult and elderly female burials in the Citadel House grave group may have been associated with textile production tools.

*Table 5.62* shows that in Grave Circle A knives and daggers, 'butcher' knives, sharpening tools, and tools for scraping, tearing or splitting were likely to have been associated with adult male burials, but it is possible that some knives and daggers could have been deposited with female burials. *Table 5.63* shows that other tools composed of bone, bronze, stone and wood were more likely to have been associated with adult male burials than female burials. Burials of either gender may have been associated with bronze knives and daggers, the clay spindle whorl and a bronze and ivory knife handle.

Three possible textile production tools were found in Grave Circle A: a clay spindle whorl from Shaft III (Karo 1930-1933, No. 163, 64); a bone needle from Shaft V (Karo 1930-1933, No. 898, 155); and a bronze needle from Shaft VI (Karo 1930-1933, No. 924, 162). The spindle whorl was potentially deposited with a burial of either gender, while a needle was more likely to have been deposited with an adult male burial in Shaft V, and the other needle was associated with a male burial from Shaft VI. The possible link between male burials and needles is perplexing. The function of the needles is unclear, and their deposition is rare in Mycenaean mortuary contexts, typically occurring in later LHIII contexts.[82] Overall, this suggests that alongside grandiose expressions of collective wealth and status, discrete deposits were made that expressed individual and possibly gender identity.

Grave Circle B's tool sample is almost entirely composed of functional knives and daggers. Just one spindle whorl (Dietz 1991, 119; Mylonas 1973, 121) was deposited, and it is composed of electrum (a naturally occurring alloy of gold and silver rarely found in Mycenaean mortuary contexts and very specific to the Shaft Graves), differentiating it from the less expensive clay and steatite whorls deposited in Grave Circle A, Mycenae's simple

[82] In the data group used for this research a bone pin or needle of no association is from Tomb I:1 in Asine's Necropolis I and was found in a Late Helladic context (Hughes-Brock 1996, 77). A needle of unknown material was associated with an unsexed primary burial from the Pit Grave near the Great Poros Wall at Mycenae and is datable to LHIIIB (Taylour 1955, 214). An ivory needle of no association from an LHIIB-IIIA2 context was found in the Walston I chamber tomb at Prosymna (Blegen 1937, 68). A bronze needle of no association was found in the LHIII Tomb XI J 8:3 (A,B) in the Agora Cemetery (Immerwahr 1971, 196, Pl. 42). Another bronze needle of no association was found in the LHIIIA2-C Tomb I in the Aspropilia Cemetery at Pylonas on Rhodes (Karantzali 2001, 15, 72, figs. 4-5, Pl. 47f). Finally, a bronze needle (M 519) from the LMIII Tomb 2 at Odos Palama at Khania on Crete was associated with an adult female burial identified as Skeleton 2 (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 14, n.7, Pl. 10B).

graves and the Middle Helladic burial sample (*Section 6.3.2.6*).[83] Further, it is associated with a secondary adult male burial (Triantaphyllou, pers. comm, 20th January, 2010) from Grave Iota, contradicting the burial practice at Asine in which whorls were almost exclusively deposited with female burials in Middle Helladic graves. The electrum whorl was probably endowed with prestige and could have been used for spinning in an elite context,[84] perhaps deposited to identify the deceased as a participant in elite spinning activities or to symbolise the individual and their kin group's link to elite textile production activities.

*Table 5.64* indicates that in Grave Circle B half of all adult female burials (2:4) and just over half of adult male burials (9:16) were associated with knives or daggers, again mirroring patterns observed above concerning the deposition of weaponry (*Section 5.3.2.3*). Results also support the hypothesis that functional knives and daggers were deposited with burials of both genders in Grave Circle A. It is also probable that deposited knives and daggers were construed as components of elite warrior kits, regardless of their functionality or appearance.

*Table 5.61* also shows that tools may have been associated with adult female and non-adult burials in the simple graves, but unclear association and lack of remains in several of the graves make this difficult to interpret. Only the terracotta spindle whorl (Alden 2000, fasc. 7, 265) from Gamma Grave 15 can be firmly associated with one of the two elderly females identified as burials 148 Myc and 149 Myc, suggesting a link between an elderly woman and textile production. Otherwise, it is unclear whether tool deposition was determined by gender, age or occupational affiliation. It is plausible that this practice did express the identity of the deceased and represent continuity of practice between the Middle Helladic (*Section 6.3.2.6*) and Early Mycenaean phases, suggesting that older practices in which female identities were expressed remained relevant to the sub-elite segment of Mycenae's population.

Overall, patterns of tool deposition at Mycenae indicate a break in continuity because textile tool deposition like that observed in the Middle Helladic burial samples (*Section 6.3.2.6*) was not practiced in Grave Circle B. Yet, during the latter part of the phase, the group using Grave Circle A resumed this practice. What is more, all knives and daggers deposited in Grave Circle B were found in MHIII contexts (Dickinson 1977, 51; Graziadio 1988) –

[83] There is no reason to assume that the electrum spindle whorl was not useable. See Barber (1991, 39-78, *esp.* 60, 61) for a discussion of spindle whorls made from precious metals found in earlier Near Eastern contexts.

[84] One cannot help but recall Helen of Tory, who was given the gift of a gold and silver spinning set from a noble lady in the *Odyssey* (4:130-35).

excepting the knife and dagger from Grave Lambda, datable to the only slightly later MHIII/LHI transitional phase (Graziadio 1988, 370) and associated with the adult male burial identified as 70a Myc. So, the group using Grave Circle B appears to have broken from tradition, i.e. the deposition of functional tools that expressed the gender and (gendered) occupational identity of the deceased. Instead, this group chose to deposit more complex, prestige tools or weapons with burials regardless of gender in order to express general status and affiliation with warrior ideology and to appropriate textile tool deposition practice, effectively eschewing the link between high-status female burials and textile production tools so clearly expressed at Asine during the Middle Helladic phase (*Section 6.4.2.1*).

#### 5.3.2.5 Toilet Articles

*Table 5.65* catalogues toilet articles from Mycenae, all of which were deposited in the Shaft Graves. *Table 5.66* suggests that toilet articles from Grave Circle A were likely to have been associated with adult male burials, whereas the five objects from Grave Circle B were associated with adult burials of both genders. In Grave Circle A, razors (Karo 1930-1933, 101-102, 105, 108, Nos. 422, 467, 482; Kilian-Dirlmeier 1986, 161, 179, tbl. 3) were likely to have been deposited with adult male burials based on find spots in Shafts IV and VI. One other razor (Karo Nos. 225c) was found in Shaft II and was associated with an unsexed burial. No razors were deposited in Grave Circle B. Tweezers (Karo 1930-1933, 145, fig. 469, No. 818; Kilian-Dirlmeier 1986, 161, 179, tbl. 3) were likely to have been deposited with adult male burials in Grave Circle A based on find spots in Shafts IV and V. In Grave Circle B, two pairs of bronze tweezers (Mylonas 1973, 119) are associated with the adult male identified as burial 68 Myc from Grave Iota, and bronze tweezers (Dietz 1991, 126) were associated with the elderly male identified as burial 66 Myc from Grave Nu.

Combs, mirrors and pyxides are objects usually artefactually gendered as female, yet a gold and ivory comb (Karo 1930-1933, 84, No. 310) was more likely to have been associated with an adult male burial in Grave Circle A based on its deposition in Shaft IV. Pieces of a bronze mirror handle (Karo 1930-1933, 142, No. 785, fig. 58, 59) and the two wooden pyxides (*Section 5.3.2.1.2*) were also likely to have been associated with adult male burials in Grave Circle A, based on find spots in Shaft V. In Grave Circle B, an ivory comb (Dietz 1991, 110, no. 227; Graziadio 1991, 414, n. 92; Mylonas 1973, 78-79) from Grave Gamma is associated with the adult female identified as burial 58 Myc, and fragments of an ivory comb (Mylonas 1966, 100; Dietz 1991, 130) were deposited with one of the burials from Grave Omikron (an adult female(?) identified as Skeleton 1 and two unsexed adult burials). The alabaster pyxis from Grave Nu (*Section 5.3.2.1.2*) was probably associated with an adult male burial.

All this suggests that for the entirety of the phase: 1) the deposition of toilet articles was reserved for the distinction of select elite burials; 2) the deposition of tweezers and probably razors emphasised select elite male burials; and 3) it is entirely possible that ideologies governing the deposition of combs, mirrors and pyxides contradict current artefactual gendering stereotypes (which assume that combs, mirrors and pyxides are female attributes) because adult burials of both genders were associated with these objects.

#### 5.3.2.6 Figurines

Figurines were rarely deposited at Mycenae and are found only in Grave Circle A. The sample is too small to warrant a distribution table. It consists of the following. Evidence of two ceramic figurines of unclear gender was found in Shaft I: a figurine with upraised arms (Karo 1930-1933, 68, No. 204) and the head of another (Karo 1930-1933, 69, No. 205). These were associated with unsexed adult burials. A faience animal figure from Shaft V (Karo 1930-1933, 155, No. 899, fig. 73) was more likely to have been deposited with an adult male burial than a female burial. Given the selective deposition and singularity of each object, it is not possible to identify what social variables influenced this practice.

#### 5.3.2.7 Sealings

Roughly 10 seals, a sample also too small to warrant a distribution table, were found in our sample of Mycenae's graves. Most were used as parts of jewellery or as ornaments. Grave Gamma in Grave Circle B yielded an amethyst seal and six faience objects that may have been either beads or seals. Originally part of a necklace and found in a wooden box (Dietz 1991, 108, no. 212; Mylonas 1966, 102; 1973, 77-78), these objects could not be associated with a burial. A stone seal from Grave Mu in Grave Circle B was associated with an unsexed adult identified as Skeleton 1. It was also part of a small necklace composed mainly of semi-precious stones (Mylonas 1966, 102; 1973, 156-57). A bronze cylinder seal, which was perforated on one side and used as an ornament, was found in Gamma Grave 4 from the Citadel House grave group (Alden 2000, 231; Tamvaki 1974, 259-60, Pl. 42a). There were no remains in this grave.

Shaft III from Grave Circle A yielded three gold cushion-shaped seals (Karo 1930-33, 49, nos. 33, 34, 35) that could have been deposited with a burial(s) of either gender. The first seal (Karo No. 33) features a lion rearing to bite a man who wields a dagger; the second (Karo No. 34) depicts a lion pierced with an arrow; and the third (Karo No. 35) features a warrior in a duel (Younger 1978, 288, 291, figs. 7-10). The imagery has a decidedly violent tone and is specific to elite activities of the hunt and war. Based on their rarity, selective

deposition, craftsmanship and material composition, the seals were luxury and/or prestige items and may have functioned as portable status symbols. Could their grave location suggest that a select elite female burial was provided with ornamental status insignia steeped in the vernacular of elite Mycenaean warrior ideology?[85] This is perfectly conceivable but ultimately unprovable.

#### 5.3.2.8 Other Objects

Samples for each of the following are too small to warrant distribution tables.

##### *5.3.2.8.1 Sceptres and Staffs*

Sceptres are atypical Mycenaean grave goods, and there are no other examples in the Aegean Bronze Age mortuary record.[86] Mylonas (1973, 30, Pl. 20a) interpreted the object identified as A-259 from Grave Alpha in Grave Circle B as a sceptre. It is composed of rock crystal and gold and could not be linked to either of the two individuals inhumed in this shaft: an adult male identified as burial 62 Myc and an unsexed adult.[87] Its identification as a significant status symbol (Graziadio 1991, 406) is logical and plausible; however its function remains unclear.

Although staffs are rarely deposited in Mycenaean mortuary contexts, they have been interpreted as parts of elite Mycenaean warrior kits. Two staffs were found at Mycenae. These are the large bronze staff or rod from Shaft IV in Grave Circle A (Karo 1930-1933, 120-21) that is likely to have been deposited with an adult male burial, and a bronze (?) staff from Grave Alpha in Grave Circle B (Mylonas 1973, 30, Pl. 20a) with no clear association to either burial (the adult male identified as burial 62 Myc and an unsexed adult burial).

##### *5.3.2.8.2 Gaming Sets*

Gaming sets are also atypical Mycenaean grave goods. One was found in Grave Circle A. Knucklebones and a silver sheet (Karo 1930-1933, 65, Nos. 167-69) from Shaft III were potentially associated with burials of one or both genders. Based on find spots in Shaft IV, adult male burials were more likely to have been associated with an unspecified number of ivory game pieces (Karo 1930-1933, 110, Nos. 507, 550) and tiles from a faience game

[85] Rehak (1999b, 234) also suggests the same possibility.
[86] Mylonas (1957, 141) reports that Schliemann (1878, 287, nos. 451-52; Karo 1930-1933, no. 294, Pl. 87) originally identified the top of another sceptre, which is now known to be a gold sword hilt from Shaft IV.
[87] Mylonas (1973, 30) assumed the sceptre belonged to burial 62 Myc, which he interpreted as the remains of a Mycenaean prince. This assumption has contributed to the artefactual gendering of the unsexed skeleton, which shares Grave Alpha with burial 62 Myc, as female (Laffineur 1989, 230, no. 20). Angel (1973, 379) originally found one burial in this tomb, but Triantaphyllou (Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 90) has since identified two individuals – the sexes have yet to be published.

board (Karo 1930-1933, 114, Nos. 555-56, 558, fig. 41). Based on find spots in Shaft V a round stone that may have been used for gaming (Karo 1930-1933, 145, No. 821b), a small knucklebone (Karo 1930-1933, 147, No. 840) and an unspecified number of larger knucklebones (Karo 1930-1933, 148, Nos. 845-47, fig. 454) were also likely to have been deposited with adult male burials. These objects were most likely used for leisure, entertainment and gambling. They also may have provided an outlet for non-violent social competition during their use life. It is certainly possible that they may have had religious significance and bound the dead, e.g. the ancestors, to the living (Voutsaki 1993, 34). Thus, the deposition of gaming pieces may have expressed elite male gender identity, wealth, status and group and ideological or religious affiliation. Deposition also suggests that associated burials may have participated in male-focused leisure activities during life. Because gaming pieces were also found in Shaft III, the possibility that elite female burials also were emphasised via deposition and could have participated in predominantly masculine gaming activities should be entertained.

***5.3.2.8.3 Instruments and Utensils***

A functional ceramic dipper (Alden 2000, 419-24) was associated with the remains of a child buried in PC SE 50 Grave XXIII in the Prehistoric Cemetery. Other objects of this type are found only in Grave Circle A. They are: a white marble ladle (Karo 1930-1933, 64, No. 164; Leinwand 1980, 519) and a miniature gold scale or balance (Karo 1930-1933, 53-54, fig. 13, Nos. 70, 91) from Shaft III, both potentially associated with a burial of either gender; a gold spoon from Shaft V (Karo 1930-1933, 145-46, Nos. 824, 825, fig. 62) that was likely to have been associated with an adult male burial; and a bronze meat hook or fork from Shaft IV (Karo 1930-1933, 111-12, No. 515) that was likely to have been associated with an adult male burial. The meat hook or fork as well as the ladle and spoon could have been used for eating rituals (Bevan 2007, 131; Karantzali 2001, 34; also see Tournavitou 1992, 196-97), but it seems more plausible that these and the Shaft Grave instruments and utensils were not necessarily expressive of gender, but were presentational objects, perhaps even construed as expensive 'trinkets' for the personal use of their owners (Leinwand, 1980, 521).

Scales are relatively uncommon in Mycenaean graves.[88] The Shaft III scale is the only example of a scale in gold. It is too small and delicate for actual use (Griffiths 1991 287-291; Schliemann 1878, 197, fig. 301-02; Wace 1932, 37, 173) and probably served a symbolic rather than functional purpose. The possible association of the scale with a female/unsexed

[88] Vermeule (1972, 298, 349 n. 7) cites 20 examples from Mycenae, Vafio, Dendra, Myrsiochorion, Prosymna, Argos and Pylos. Many consist of scale parts, usually small discs and scale pans in bronze and sometimes lead.

burial has interesting implications, because the singularity of this practice suggests that it may have expressed not only status and wealth but also the identity of the deceased.

#### *5.3.2.8.4 Clothing and Textile Evidence*

Mycenae has yielded several textiles that may have been part of funerary costume. A belt (Dietz 1991, 130; Mylonas 1966, 100) decorated with electrum beads and amber spacers was found by the waist of what may have been an adult female identified as Skeleton 1[89] in Grave Omikron from Grave Circle B. A gold girdle (Dietz 1991, 110; Mylonas 1973, 76) in Grave Gamma from Grave Circle B was associated with the secondary burial of an unsexed adult identified as Skeleton 5. Pieces of linen fabric (Karo 1930-1933, 71, No. 228) may have originally adhered to one of the weapons associated with an unsexed burial from Shaft II in Grave Circle A. Miscellaneous small bits of linen (Karo 1930-1933, 142, 145, Nos. 784, 816) were associated with an adult male burial from Shaft V in Grave Circle A. The small sample and compromised state of the evidence makes it impossible to interpret how fabric or clothing was used to express gender; however the wrapping of weapons (perhaps to protect precious metals from damage or more likely dirt) may have been part of the funerary ritual practised by the group using Grave Circle A.

#### *5.3.2.8.5 Furniture*

Evidence of two wooden tables (NM 890, 891) having been placed in Shaft V as funerary furniture was argued by P. Muhly. (1996, 197-202, figs. 1-6) to be similar in style and construction to examples of tables from relatively contemporaneous Near Eastern contexts as well as Theran tripod tables. It is certainly possible that wooden furniture may have originally furnished some or all of the other shafts in Grave Circle A, and lack of evidence prohibits the observation of any relationship between grave furniture and gender.

### *5.3.3 Distribution of Raw Materials*

Mycenae's burial assemblages were composed of a large and diverse range of materials including precious metals, ivory, faience, alabaster/gypsum, white marble, rock crystal and other semi-precious stones, obsidian, flint, stone, steatite, bone and clay. Although the distribution of objects based on material composition was analysed above, it is worth investigating whether or not and how specific materials were deposited with different types of burials.

[89] This skeleton was not studied by Angel, but is reported by Dietz (1991, 128) as an 'adult female (?).'

*Tables 5.67* and *5.69* show that it is unclear whether or not the deposition of objects composed of bone or clay were affected by gender due to the paucity of the sample.

*Table 5.68* shows that in Grave Circle A most ivories were likely to have been associated with adult male burials. In Grave Circle B, ivory appears to have been associated with adults of both genders as well as elderly male burials, drawing a possible link between select elite male burials and this exotic material.

*Table 5.70* lists objects composed of faience or other vitreous materials (usually identified as glass paste). *Table 5.71* shows that 22 of these objects were found in Grave Circle A and were more likely to have been associated with female/unsexed burials than male burials. In the Prehistoric Cemetery vitreous objects appear to have been deposited with adult burials of both genders as well as select non-adults of higher status.

*Table 5.72* lists objects composed of limestone, stone, wood and steatite. The paucity of the samples from Grave Circle B and simple grave groups prohibits observation. However, *Table 5.73* shows that in Grave Circle A male burials were more likely than female burials to have been associated with these materials, due mainly to the deposition of wooden pyxides and grave furniture in Shafts IV, V and VI. This appears to be linked more to object type than to material composition (*Sections 5.3.2.1.2* and *5.3.2.8*).

*Table 5.74* lists objects composed or partially composed of imported bronze.[90] *Table 5.75* indicates that adult burials of both genders were associated with bronze.

*Table 5.76* lists objects composed of or incorporating precious metals. *Table 5.77* shows that electrum was found only in the Shaft Graves and was selectively deposited in highly elite contexts with adult burials of both genders. Imported gold[91] was mainly used for adornment, vessels and weaponry and, to a far lesser extent for instruments, seals and toilet articles. *Table 5.78* indicates that in the Shaft Graves burials of both genders were associated with gold, which was rarely deposited in the Citadel House or the Prehistoric Cemetery and is associated only with select non-adults thus expressing ascribed status. Twenty gold rosettes (Alden 2000, fasc. 7, 129) were found in the possible Shaft Grave in the Granary. Confused context and missing remains make this deposit difficult to interpret. Finally, it is more likely that the 42 gold objects and one silver finger-ring (Alden 2000, fasc. 7, 167, Plan 2, 5; Schliemann 1878, 350-62, Plans B, G; Tsountas and Manatt 1893, 114; Wace 1921-23, 118;

[90] Raw bronze probably came from Cypriot ore deposits (Stos-Gale *et al.* 1997).
[91] The majority of gold found in the Aegean was sourced from the Near East, and derived, to a lesser degree, from Egyptian, Central European and other unknown sources (Nordquist 1987b, 47).

1950, 207) found in the Golden Treasure stone enclosure were deposited as a hoard rather than grave goods. This suggests that the deposition of gold was shaped primarily by status and age and not linked to gender. *Table 5.79* indicates that silver (probably imported from Laurion [Stos-Gale and Gale 1981]) was associated with adult burials of both genders in the Shaft Graves. Just three lead-based objects were deposited at Mycenae, and no observations can be offered.

Objects composed of imported alabaster/gypsum and white marble from Egypt or the Levant (Bevan 2007, 66, 108-10) are listed in *Table 5.80*. These were deposited exclusively in the Shaft Graves. Bevan (2007, 129-30) argues that white stone vessels from the Shaft Graves were more Cycladic (in shape) that Cretan, but that they suggested a link with the site of Akrotiri in particular. *Table 5.81* shows that in Grave Circle A white marble or gypsum was likely to have been associated with adult male burials, and in Grave Circle B it appears to be associated mainly with select adult and elderly male burials. It is possible that one or both of the alabaster pommels from Grave Gamma (Mylonas 1973, 77, Pl. 61a1) could have been associated with the adult female identified as burial 58 Myc. Thus, it is possible that these materials expressed the distinction of select elite male burials. Still, the sample is too small to discern whether or not gender was a determinant factor. It is possible that deposition may have expressed the individual and/or kin group's affiliation with Crete or Thera.

Small quantities of flint, obsidian and sardonyx (a kind of quartz) were also deposited at Mycenae. Some of these materials were easily attainable from sources within the Aegean with long-established trade routes to the mainland (i.e. obsidian from Melos). *Table 5.82* shows the following: obsidian was associated mainly with non-adults in the simple graves, while 12 obsidian arrowheads (Karo 1930-1933, 113, figs. 247, 435, Nos. 536-40) were more likely to have been associated with an adult male burial from Shaft IV in Grave Circle A; flint, also in the form of weaponry, is associated with another adult male burial; and sardonyx, in the form of jewellery, is associated with an adult female burial. This strongly suggests that artefact type rather than material composition guided this gendered burial practice.

Semi-precious stones are listed in *Table 5.83*. Rock crystal is rarely found in graves on the Mainland but often occurs in earlier Egyptian and Cretan elite funerary contexts (Bevan 2007, 64, 66, 72, 114, 122). Eighteen objects composed of or incorporating rock crystal were

deposited in the Shaft Graves.[92] *Table 5.84* suggests that in Grave Circle A rock crystal was likely to have been associated mainly with adult male burials, while in Grave Circle B it was mainly associated with adult female burials, but could have been deposited with select adult male burials as well. Objects made from this material probably were ideologically endowed with elite status. Thus, rock crystal deposition appears to have been influenced mainly by status and age in both Grave Circles. It is possible that gender also influenced depositional practice in Grave Circle B, but this could also represent the serendipity of a small sample.

*Table 5.85* shows that in Grave Circle A semi-precious stones were likely to have been associated mainly with female/unsexed burials, but amethyst was likely to have been associated with adult male burials. *Table 5.86* shows that no patterns of association are discernible in Grave Circle B. *Table 5.87* shows that child burials from the Prehistoric Cemetery were associated with amber, amethyst and serpentine. Thus, semi-precious stones were used as adornment for select burials throughout Mycenae, and deposition appears to have been shaped by status rather than gender or age.

## 5.4 Interpretation of Results

### *5.4.1 Gender Relations and Kin Affiliation*

Musgrave (*et al.* 1991, fig. 1; 1995) cites osteological evidence and DNA results in support of the hypothesis that familial relationships were the major determinant factor for inclusion in the Shaft Graves. Based on measurements of facial bone structure in Grave Circle B skeletal remains, this study identified at least three familial groups within the cemetery. Because forensic facial reconstruction is limited in terms of reliability,[93] this argument is not overwhelmingly convincing; yet, DNA results, location and cemetery size do seem to support the premise that a small number of families were using the Grave Circles. This suggests that inclusion was primarily determined by kin affiliation and status, and that gender and age were secondary factors.

Male and female burial assemblages deposited in the Grave Circles contained inventories that were distinctly different from one another, suggesting that burial assemblages were not

[92] Bevan (2007, 129) argues that the rock crystal bowl with bird's head from Grave Omikron (Figure 24) could have been made by Cretan artisans, but because there are no parallels for this shape in Crete or the surrounding Mediterranean, the vessel could be 'foreign.'

[93] Problems associated with forensic facial reconstruction include insufficient tissue thickness data (Lebedinskaya *et al.* 1993; Rathbun 1998), lack of methodological standardisation (Reichs and Craig 1998) and artistic subjectivity (Helmer *et al.* 1993). Bouwman (*et al.* 2010, 455) also acknowledges that 'there is a limit to how far this method can go, even using forensic techniques of facial comparison to match one face against another…'

only expressive of collective identity and multiple ideologies (including warrior ideology and ancestral legitimisation), but also expressive of multiple identities and roles. For instance, one of the ways in which the distinction of most elite adult burials was expressed was through the deposition of one of two types of burial inventories: 'weaponry kits or 'luxury' kits (inventories that did not contain weaponry but included a variety of luxury items and portable wealth). Whether or not a burial was provided with a 'weaponry' or 'luxury' kit was not determined by gender, because each inventory type was deposited with adult burials of both genders. In fact, the diversity among both female and male burial assemblages within the context of each gender shows that inclusion was not reliant upon affiliation to any one role or group within this elite community. This suggests that female inclusion was primarily determined by kin affiliation and status, and secondarily by individual identity, gender and the agency of the group. It also suggests that Mycenaean gender constructs encompassed more than one way of being an elite man or woman.

In contrast, most non-adult members of the population as well as a few sub-elite members of the adult and elderly population at Mycenae were buried mainly in humbly furnished simple graves[94] located mainly in the Prehistoric Cemetery and the Citadel House area (Alden 2000, fasc. 7). The construction of simple graves rarely incorporated architectural embellishments, but the use of cover slabs and grave markers may have been standard burial practice, because these are documented throughout the Mycenaean mortuary record and often survive in piecemeal condition. Therefore, grave embellishments, excepting possibly the bench from HWV'50 Grave VII (Alden 2000, fasc. 7, 178), did not distinguish certain graves or burials from others in these locations, and it is unlikely that gender affected inclusion in the Prehistoric Cemetery or Citadel House area.

### *5.4.2 Gender and the Deposition of Material Wealth*

Gender appears to have influenced the quantity of grave goods deposited with adult burials in Grave Circle A, while elite male and female adult burials in Grave Circle B were associated with assemblages of similar size, diversity and wealth. This is indicative of a shift in practice during the latter part of the phase that favoured the aggrandizement of elite male burials via the deposition of outstandingly large, hitherto unmatched, quantities of material

[94] Four potential shaft graves are located in these areas: the 1955 Shaft Grave from Area C (Alden 2000, 117-18, 121; Papadimitriou, I. 1955, 228-9, fig. 6; 1957, 105-9, Pls. 146a-b); PAE 1955 Grave 1 (Alden 2000, fasc. 7, 709-10) from the Area West of Grave Circle A; PC'39 Grave III (Alden 2000, 318-38; Wace 1950, 210-13, Pls. 19a, 21b) and HWV'50? Grave VIII (Alden 2000, 178; Wace 1950, 254) from the Prehistoric Cemetery. Most contained little or no grave goods due to robbery or later removal.

wealth. What is more, the deposition of material wealth expressed a range of gender constructs and identities, which are worth exploring further.

#### 5.4.2.1 The Shaft Grave 'Penthesileia?'[95]

Elite female status was expressed in nuanced, ideologically complex ways, one of which was realized through the deposition of weaponry. Analysis has revealed that weaponry was associated with half of the female burials interred in Grave Circle B and it is not impossible that weaponry was deposited in a similar fashion with female burials in Grave Circle A (*Section 5.3.2.3*). This raises several questions: 1) was the deposition of weaponry with elite female burials representative of normal or an alternative burial practice and was this practice specific to Shaft Grave mortuary ideology; 2) were warrior kits or weaponry assemblages gender specific, i.e. is there evidence for a female weaponry kit vs. a male weaponry kit; 3) did the deposition of weaponry represent the identity of the deceased, i.e. were there women warriors at Mycenae; and finally 4) were female burials associated with weaponry deposits culturally construed as women during life, or do they represent an alternative gender role, e.g. a masculinised female role or 'manly-hearted women'?[96]

In response to question 1), I will refer to *Section 5.3.2.3*, which discussed weaponry deposition practices. It was revealed that although adult male burials from Grave Circle B appear to be favoured with more weaponry than females, this discrepancy actually reflects the under-representation of female burials rather than a practice that prohibited the deposition of weaponry with elite adult female burials. Also, the deposition of small quantities of weaponry in Grave Circle A's Shafts I, II and III suggests that adult female burials from this location were also provided with small weaponry kits. Therefore, the distinction of elite female burials with weaponry deposition was well-attested in the Shaft Graves and probably construed as 'normal', and warrior ideology appears to have been more elastic and inclusive than has usually been posited.

Question 2) is concerned with whether or not there is evidence of a distinction between female and male weaponry assemblages. The general deposition of weaponry in Grave Circle B was not determined by gender, still, the attribution of certain weaponry sub-types to male and female burials represents gendered warrior identities and constructs. Let us consider the weaponry sub-types that are associated exclusively with male burials in Grave Circle B: arrowheads and boars' tusk helmets.

[95] Penthesileia was an Amazon who fought on the side of Troy (Diodorus Siculus, ii. 46; Quintus Smyrnaeus, *Posthomerica* i.18*ff*).

[96] 'Manly-hearted women' is a description used for cross-gender females documented in certain Native American tribes (Chapter 2, *Section 2.2* [Gender vs. Sex]; Blackwell 1984).

Large numbers of flint arrowheads were deposited with male burials from Graves Delta and Lambda (Dietz 1991, 112, 122, no. 240; Mylonas 1972, 89, 140). Because these are the only burials associated with arrowheads in Grave Circle B (excepting the single obsidian arrowhead associated with an unsexed secondary burial also from Grave Lambda [Dietz 1991, 122; Mylonas 1973, 140]), it follows that weaponry assemblages inclusive of arrowheads represent a distinct type of warrior kit or rather 'archery kit'. This suggests that the deposition of 'archery' kits was gender-specific and expressive of a specific elite male identity and role, which differentiated these individuals from other types of 'warrior' constructs. The functionality of the arrowheads also suggests that these 'archers' may have participated in specific hunting and/or martial activities during life.[97]

Boars' tusk helmets also are exclusively associated with select elite male burials in Grave Circle B and by implication Grave Circle A. In order to obtain the requisite number of tusks to create a single boars' tusk helmet, a substantial number of wild boars had to be hunted and killed – a rather gruesome and dangerous task requiring skill and strength. Thus, the helmet simultaneously functioned as armour while representing an ideologically charged hunting trophy capable of symbolically broadcasting the individual's prowess and skill as a hunter as well as their confirmed rite of passage into an exclusive all-male group and sphere of activities. The boars' tusk helmet, in effect, encapsulated the male identity as Mycenaean warrior, ultimately enabling the individual to derive authority and power from the act of obtaining and wearing the helmet (Hamilakis 2003; also see Davis and Bennet 1999; Morris, C. 1990).

In answer to question 2), male warrior kits can be discerned based on the presence of either arrowheads or boars' tusk helmets – the deposition of which clearly expressed distinct male identities and roles as well as affiliation with certain groups. Contrary to Voutsaki's (2005) observations, the deposition of other weaponry subtypes (such as the sword, knife, dagger and spear) was not overtly gendered or necessarily expressive of male constructs and identities. What is interesting about these two male weaponry inventory types is that arrowheads and boars' tusk helmets do not co-occur in any single burial assemblage (arrowheads were found only in Graves Delta and Lambda, while boar's tusk helmets were found only in Grave Nu and Alpha) and are therefore expressive of non-overlapping different male warrior identities. Therefore, the expression of warrior ideology encompassed

[97] Arrowheads are depicted in some wall paintings with white skinned people/gods (white = female according to Evans's colour code [Chapter 3, *Section 3.2.1*]), but these are from later LHIII contexts. See the Archer Fragment on which a white human arm is depicted. The subject appears to hold a bow (Figure 8b; Brecoulaki *et al.* 2008).

the representation of more than one male identity/role as well as non-gender specific warrior identities in death.

During the later part of the phase, the group using Grave Circle A altered elite weaponry deposition practice, and the gender of the deceased appears to have influenced the quantity and quality of weaponry that was deposited with a burial. Male weaponry kits increased dramatically in size whereas female weaponry kits conceivably remained similar in size and scope to those deposited with both male and female burials in the earlier part of the phase in Grave Circle B.

This then leads to question 3), which considers whether or not the deposition of weaponry with female burials represents an alternative gender identity. It should be stressed that because half of the female (and male) burials in Grave Circle B were not linked to weaponry deposits, the deposition of weaponry may have been a normal burial practice but was by no means default mortuary behaviour. In fact, the two adult female burials not associated with weaponry, Skeleton 1 from Grave Omikron and burial 132 Myc from Grave Upsilon, were associated with wealthy assemblages composed of jewellery, ornaments, pins and pottery. It has already been established that status and kin affiliation probably determined the inclusion of female burials in Grave Circle B (*Section 5.3.1*) and different female grave inventories show that affiliation with warrior ideology or warrior identity(ies) was not a primary determinant for female inclusion. Therefore, selective deposition of weaponry implies that when female burials were provided with weaponry it was for a reason.

It has been established that the association of weaponry with female burials in Grave Circle A is not impossible, and that the adult female, identified as burial 63 Myc from Grave Theta in Grave Circle B, is associated with a single sword/knife (Mylonas 1966, 98). This does little to reveal whether or not an alternative female identity was being expressed via weaponry deposits. The weaponry assemblage associated with the adult female identified as burial 58 Myc from Grave Gamma in Grave Circle B is potentially more revealing. Burial 58 Myc was associated with a warrior kit that contained two bronze knives, a bronze dagger, an ivory pommel, a bronze spearhead and two bronze swords (as well as an ivory comb). The grave also contained other burials associated with grave goods. These included the adult male identified as burial 55 Myc, associated with an alabaster pommel, two bronze daggers and one bronze sword; the un-aged male identified as burial 51 Myc, associated with pottery; and the unsexed burial identified as Skeleton 3, associated with a gold cup, gold jewellery and ornaments. Grave Gamma also yielded additional weaponry that could not be associated with burials: two alabaster pommels, one ivory pommel and three bronze swords. When

considered as a whole, burial 58 Myc's assemblage is certainly on par (in terms of quantity, diversity and composition) with that associated with the primary burial of the adult male identified as burial 55 Myc – the only other burial in the grave associated with a warrior kit. Further, the un-associated weaponry from Grave Gamma is similar in character to the weaponry contained within these warrior kits – excepting of course burial 58 Myc's spearhead. Spearheads are largely specific to elite contexts and on the whole rarely deposited in the Mycenaean mortuary record. Burial 58 Myc's spearhead is the only known example of a female burial being associated with this type of weaponry, and just four bronze spearheads were found in Grave Circle B: one with burial 58 Myc, one with the adult male identified as burial 70a Myc from Grave Lambda (Mylonas 1973, 140), one with the adult male identified as burial 66a Myc from Grave Nu (Avila 1983, 10; Mylonas 1973, 172) and one with no association in Grave Alpha (Mylonas 1973, 30, P. 19b,1). Thus, we can conclude that the deposition of spearheads expressed a distinct kind of warrior identity, perhaps expressing affiliation with a certain role or activity. This role was not gender-specific because spearheads are associated with burials of both genders. What is more, the deposition of the spearhead differentiated burial 58 Myc from other warrior burials in Grave Gamma as well as the whole of the cemetery.

The fluid and gender-inclusive expression of Mycenaean warrior ideology in Grave Circle B was connected to specific identities and roles and specific to time and place. What is more, warrior constructs and symbols were often applicable to both genders while being simultaneously expressive of kin affiliation, prestige and differentiation specific to this highly elite context. During the latter part of the phase, the expression of Mycenaean warrior ideology and identities shifted, because much larger assemblages of prestige weaponry appear to have been ubiquitously deposited with almost all male burials in Grave Circle A. This suggests that the expression of warrior ideology and identity had become a general marker of elite male prestige and fundamental to the expression of group identity and differentiation. Rubinson (2008, 54, 57-60) argues similarly that weaponry deposition in the funerary practice of Eurasian Steppe culture represented multiple identities (including gender) but also represented cultural identity, specifically speaking to the 'time and place of cultural and political transition' (Rubinson 2008, 54, 57-60).

Clearly, there was something special about burial 58 Myc as well as the mortuary ideology of the group using Grave Circle B. This context represents elite Mycenaean mortuary ideology in a nascent form – a form amenable to the creation, expression and distinction of alternative gender identity(ies). Whether or not a masculinised female identity was construed as 'normal' and representative of social structure at the level of the group, community, or

wider Early Mycenaean culture, or whether or not the creation of this construct was a special phenomenon linked to the agency of burial 58 Myc and/or her kin group is anyone's guess. Without evidence of other such cases, it seems more likely that this burial practice was specific to the highly elite context of the Shaft Graves and expresses the distinction of a singular elite woman, whose wealth and social connections afforded unusual, even exceptional treatment.

#### 5.4.2.2 The Boys' Club: Ancestors, Status Insignia and Conspicuous Leisure

It is probable if not certain that only male burials were adorned with funerary masks, and on the whole, status insignia are overwhelming linked to male burials. Funerary masks present in both Grave Circles were typically deposited as parts of male burial assemblages that often included warrior kits, indicating that certain elite male burials may have embodied positions of authority, power and/or leadership during life. By placing masks (which explicitly depicted male faces) upon the faces of select male burials, these burials also were symbolically absorbed into a select and ideologically potent group of male ancestors, establishing and reinforcing the ancestral legitimisation of the burying group. Female exclusion from mask deposition indicates that female burials were excluded from practices that legitimated and confirmed/conferred ancestral power.

Mask and weaponry deposition with burials may have been less consistently practised in Grave Circle B than in Grave Circle A. This suggests that the group using Grave Circle B was forging the tenets of ancestor-focused, elite mortuary ideology, and that the group using Grave Circle A appropriated and retained these values, further codifying and refining them later in the phase.

In Grave Circle B, male burials also appear to be associated with other status insignia, such as the 'sceptre' (Mylonas 1973, 30, Pl. 20a), the ECII white marble pyxis (Mylonas 1973, 176, Pl. 154d) and boars' tusk helmets. The link between male burials, status insignia and the expression of ancestral legitimisation strongly suggests an emphasis upon patrilinial lines of descent and authority and very well could represent social practice. It also suggests that if ancestral legitimacy and power were conferred through male personages, gender was probably ranked hierarchically (vertically) in respect to leadership structure and the transference of dynastic power.

Gaming pieces may have been linked to participation in elite male leisure activities. There is evidence for a connection between funerary practice, mortuary ideology and board games from Egypt. The game *Senet* was depicted on wall paintings as being a suitable activity for

the dead, and from the time of the New Kingdom the game may have symbolised the transition from life to death (Decker 1992, 129; Swiny 1986, 46; Vandier 1964, 500). Further, some Egyptian boards were manufactured for exclusive use in burial (Needler, 1953, 65). Van Effenterre (1955) also argues that objects identified as Minoan *kernoi*, were forerunners for a later documented Egyptian game of chance called Naumachi (Pollux VII.206), tying Minoan gaming practice to Egyptian; and Whittaker (2002) argues that it is possible that Early and Middle Minoan examples of games of 'chance' found in settlement, ritual and funerary contexts on Crete may have had religious significance while connecting the player with everyday activities. She also ties evidence of board games to the Minoan elite throughout the Minoan palatial period, particularly ivory gaming pieces, and argues that the playing of board games required time and skill, but was essentially a 'non-productive' activity and should be seen as a form of 'conspicuous leisure' regardless of whether or not it had religious significance (Whittaker 2002, 83).[98] It is unlikely that the Mycenaean elite shared Egyptian ideas about the afterlife, because these were very specific. However, it is plausible that gaming activities provided not only entertainment (for the living and the dead) but also a forum for the display of 'conspicuous leisure' and the religious aspect (if there was one) of this activity may have bound players to one another socially while facilitating a shared ideology (Voutsaki 1993, 34) specific to the group's identity. Gaming activities may have also served to bind elite males to one another via inclusion in an exclusively elite male leisure activity – symbolising not only group membership but also the privileged status of the elite. This not only differentiated elite males from others (i.e. other competing elite kin groups, sub-elite members of the population and even women), but it also may have connected elite males and by proxy the group to exotic Cretan or Near Eastern social values. Thus, the presence of gaming pieces and sets may be representative of multiple intersecting social phenomena.

The bowl with the rock crystal bird's head (Mylonas 1966, 103; 1973, 203-05, Pls. 183-85) deposited in Grave Circle B and associated with the probable adult female identified as Skeleton 1 from Grave Omikron, as well as the miniature gold scale (Karo 1930-1933, 53-54, fig. 13) from Shaft III in Grave Circle A, are the only possible examples of female status insignia. But the singularity of these objects suggests expression of identity and prestige rather than the expression of female ideologies of power or institutionalized authority. Another possible example of female status insignia may be the three gold cushion seals (Karo 1930-1933, 49; Younger 1978, 288, 291, figs. 7-10) also from Shaft III in Grave

[98] Veblen (1970, 41-60) first identified the theoretical concept of conspicuous leisure in 1899. He defined it as the means by which an elite individual distinguishes him/herself from the lower classes by participating in non-productive activities.

Circle A (*Section 5.3.2.7*), but the link between these objects and female burials is tenuous at best.

### *5.4.3 Warrior Identity and the Pathological Evidence*

Angel (1973) described the male burials as 'warrior princes' based on their comparatively large stature, robust muscularity, and (some) evidence of cranial injury.[99] But, what was the nature of Mycenaean warrior identity? Jones and Graves-Brown (1996, 1) argue that processes that contribute to the creation of identity formation are at their most dynamic during times of political and social change, which are typically characterised as times of 'inventing traditions', in which 'the destruction of existing socio-cultural patterns and shifting power relations lead to the re-evaluation and re-presentation of identities as new communities arise' – an insight also successfully argued by Rubinson (2008) and Voutsaki (1993; 1998). This suggests that even if elite Mycenaean warriors were not warriors by occupation, the presence of weaponry and warrior kits suggests that warfare was simply being represented differently in the Shaft Graves, and, most importantly, that this ideological formation and inventing of tradition incorporated complex roles and identities for both genders within this highly elite social context.

Triantaphyllou's (within Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 91) re-analysis has verified evidence of cranial injury in four of the 20 male burials identified in Grave Circle B: burials 51 Myc, 59 Myc, 54 Myc and 66 Myc. She also confirms that long-term healed cranial injuries and rib fractures were identified *only* in male individuals from Grave Circle B (Triantaphyllou, Mycenaean Seminar 20-1-2010). Yet, she is justifiably reticent to link these injuries to martial activities, arguing that trauma is not necessarily warfare related because: 1) there is 'minimal representation of postcranial traumatic lesions' in Grave Circle B's overall sample (Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 91); 2) none of these injuries were fatal; and 3) evidence of trauma is actually similar to that observed in skeletal evidence from the comparatively sub-elite population buried in Lerna's simple graves. Further, none of the adults from Lerna, Argos or Mycenae (all re-analysed by Triantaphyllou) actually died of their injuries (Triantaphyllou, Mycenaean Seminar 20-1-2010). Instead, Triantaphyllou (2010, 444-45; Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 90-91) argues that the evidence is much more compelling for participation in strenuous physical activity – evidence of which was also identified by Angel (1971; 1982) and is manifest in the sub-elite populations from Asine and Lerna datable to the Shaft Grave period (MHIII-LHII) (Ingvarsson-Sundström 2003; Voutsaki *et al.* 2005, 2006, 2007).[100]

[99] Angel (1973, 380-81) identified evidence of cranial injury in just two male burials: 51 and 59 Myc.
[100] During the discussion after Triantaphyllou's paper at the Mycenaean Seminar (20-1-2010) Whitelaw argued that while it is certainly possible that individuals killed during war were not buried

Interestingly, little if anything has been made of the fact that Angel (1973) described similar physical characteristics in female burials from Grave Circle B by using the same terms as those he used to describe the physicality of individuals he readily identified male 'warrior princes' from the same cemetery. For instance, the female 'warrior' burial identified as burial 58 Myc is described as tall and strongly built with strong neck muscles and a 'full male size' skull (Mylonas 1973, 70-73, 78). Further, her right humerus showed evidence of a healed mid shaft fracture (Angel 1973, 380-81). The adult female identified as burial 63 Myc from Grave Theta, who is associated with a single bronze sword/knife (Mylonas 1966, 98), was described as wide shouldered with good muscularity and 'large feet' (Angel 1973, 382). While these descriptions often elicit amusement, they do illustrate the bias inherent in Angel's interpretation of only male burials as warriors. Although evidence of trauma in female burials was slightly less pronounced than that in the male sample, evidence of normal wear and tear resulting in arthritis was also observed in most of the adult and elderly male burials in Grave Circle B (Triantaphyllou, Mycenaean Seminar 20-1-2010; Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 91), suggesting that male and female individuals engaged in activities of relatively similar physical stress levels. Thus, it appears that elite females were as likely as their elite male counterparts to have participated in war-like or strenuous physical activities during life, based on the inconclusive evidence of war-related trauma and the firm and potential association of weaponry with female burials from the Shaft Graves.

This raises the question: was burial 58 Myc from Grave Circle B a female warrior by occupation – Mycenae's own Penthesileia? Another famous female burial known as 'the Princess of Vix' datable to *c.* 500 BC and located in Burgundy, France, may represent a similar phenomenon in terms of the interrelation of gender and status and how these social factors may have informed the cultural and funerary processing of an elite female burial (Arnold 1991). Like burial 58 Myc, 'the Princess of Vix' was a biological female buried in an elite tomb fitted out with a weaponry assemblage as well as metal vessels for feasting. She was emphasised with material culture usually deposited only with elite male burials within the Celtic Late Hallstatt and Early La Tène cultures. Arnold (1991) posited the question: did the Princess of Vix actually have the same roles in life as a male of the ruling class? While the evidence could not provide a clear answer, Arnold was able to show that this burial practice was primarily determined by status, and that status clearly trumped

in their home communities, the fact that adult males tend to be over-represented in cemetery populations does little to support a scenario in which men of prime age should be absent from cemeteries.

gender in this case.[101] Thus, evidence of physical trauma and the contents and wealth of her assemblage indicate that burial 58 Myc was just as likely to have participated in martial activities as any of the male warrior burials from Grave Circle B.

### *5.4.4 Conclusion: Expressions of Gender at Mycenae during the Early Mycenaean Phase*

During the Shaft Grave era at Mycenae, the funeral was a medium through which elite kin groups expressed complex, multi-layered and often flexible elite mortuary ideologies via a wide range of depositional practices capable of expressing nuanced and multiple gender constructs, roles and identities. Expressions of status, prestige and kin affiliation were inextricably bound up in the expression of gender identities and roles, and in some instances, other social determinants overshadowed expressions of the deceased's gender, or gender simply did not factor into the performance of certain depositional practices.

Firm expressions of gender included the following. Only elite male burials were associated with status insignia, heirlooms, boars' tusk helmets, arrowheads, tweezers, razors, gold buttons and probably funerary masks, gaming pieces and butchery knives. Male burials were also exclusively affiliated with archery and leisure/gaming activities and provided with objects that expressed ancestral legitimisation. Female burials were excluded from deposition practices that expressed affiliation with leadership roles or ancestral legitimacy. Pins featuring expensive and exotic elements, such as rock crystal heads, were linked to elite female burials in Grave Circle B.

Age-determined mortuary practices include the following. Inclusion in the Prehistoric

[101] There is also the case of a possible female burial associated with weaponry in Minoan Crete. This burial was found in Tholos D, part of an elite Mycenaean grave complex at Fourni in Archanes. Tholos D is datable to the LMIIIA period (14th century) and is contemporaneous with LHIIIA on the Mainland. It contained the remains of an unsexed adult, which the excavators presume was female based on artefactual gendering (Sakellarakis and Sapouna-Sakellaraki 1997, Vol. 1, 185-86). The burial was associated with a bronze mirror, a gold diadem, various necklaces, gold hair spirals, two dress pins, gold ornamental garment decorations, a silver ring, a jasper seal, a bronze knife and a terracotta pyxis. If this grave and the burial are culturally Mycenaean, I cannot confidently gender the remains based on the contents of this assemblage, because in Mycenaean burial practice: 1) the deposition of bronze mirrors, gold diadems, gold garment decoration and ornamental seals cannot be linked to gender; 2) necklaces are often linked to high-status female and child burials although patterns do not demonstrate canonical gendering; 3) gold hair spirals are often linked to elite female burials; 4) bronze knives are associated with elite and high-status burials of both genders during the Early Mycenaean phase (MHIII-LHII) and strictly with male burials during the Palatial phase (LHIIIA-B); and 5) there is no evidence on the Mainland that links the deposition of pyxides to female burials throughout the entire Mycenaean epoch (*supra.* n. 71). If hard pressed, I would reluctantly gender the Tholos D burial as male, if and only if the grave context is culturally Mycenaean, because: it was in use during a period contemporaneous with the Mycenaean Palatial phase, and the results of this analysis show that adult male burials were exclusively linked to bronze knives during this time on the Mainland (*Section 7.3.2.3*).

Cemetery was determined by age and reserved mainly for the inhumations of non-adults, especially infant and neonate burials. Non-adult burials were generally excluded from the Shaft Graves. Non-adults were also exclusively buried in pot or pithos graves in the Prehistoric Cemetery and other simple graves. Select children buried in the Prehistoric Cemetery, who were provided with grave goods, were almost all associated with small assemblages of pottery, while infants and neonates are rarely associated with grave goods. This implies that generally a different burial ritual was practised for infants than for adults and children, thereby suggesting infants may have had a less developed social identity during those first vulnerable years of life (Garland 1985, 78-88; Hertz 1960, 84). In sum, elite adult burials were almost always provided with grave goods, while a few child burials received smaller, usually more humble assemblages. Almost all infant burials were excluded entirely from depositional practices. Non-adult burials from the Shaft Graves were provided with comparatively smaller but wealthy assemblages most likely expressing the ascribed status of these individuals.

What is striking about mortuary activity at Mycenae is how the elite expression of gender in Shaft Grave funerary behaviour was characterised by complexity, creativity, innovation and a degree of fluidity, and that mortuary practice dedicated to the expression of warrior ideology and certain warrior identities was not always gender-specific. Further, there was more than one way in which the distinction of elite burials could be expressed, even within the context of each separate gender. Further, Mycenaean warrior ideology was part of the wider mortuary ideology, and this ideology incorporated multi-layered gender constructs, including a possible alternative or masculinised female identity. This is not to say that elite Mycenaean society was not male-focused in key ways or that it did not favour the construction and expression of masculine hierarchies and ideologies. In certain respects it did. Inheritance and descent rules probably were structured patrilineally. Funerary performances contrived to establish ancestral legitimisation and power appear often to have been filtered through the burials of male personages and symbolically expressed through masculine representations and the performance of male-focused/exclusive activities. Also, certain warrior identities and roles (namely expressed through the deposition of ‘archery’ kits and boars’ tusk helmets) were explicitly male. Yet, patterns derived from depositional behaviour strongly indicate that select elite women, in death and perhaps even in life, could participate in masculine spheres of activity, contribute to the creation of Mycenaean social values and embody roles of authority and power. Thus, it is likely that the upper echelon of Early Mycenaean society was male-focused but not necessarily exclusively male. Shaft Grave mortuary ideology was expressive of binary gender but certainly not constrained by it,

and the construction of complex roles and identities for both genders was borne out of a highly elite social context in a certain place and time, pertinent to a certain group of people.

# Chapter 6

# It Takes a Village: Gender and Mortuary Behaviour during the Middle Helladic Phase

The Argolid sites of Asine and especially Lerna are considered to be Middle Helladic 'type-sites' (Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 60).[102] Each has been systematically excavated, documented and studied, with mortuary activity datable to both the Middle Helladic and Early Mycenaean phases.[103] Settlement evidence as well as the relative geographical proximity of Asine and Lerna to one another (and to Mycenae) strongly suggests access to shared trade routes and other kinds of cultural exchanges among their populations. Asine and Lerna also share other characteristics, such as similar setting, structure and estimated population size (Nordquist 1987a, 24). Burial evidence from both sites includes the use of simple pits and cists as well as the introduction of shaft grave types during MHIII-LHII, also the use of primary inhumation and the deposition of recognisable Mycenaean artefact types (*Section 4.1.3*). This investigation of the relationship between gender and mortuary behaviour at Asine and Lerna conforms to an already established precedent in the field in which evidence from both sites has been considered *in tandem* to better understand Middle Helladic mortuary behaviour in the Argolid (Boyd 2002; Ingvarsson-Sundström 2003; Nordquist 1987a; 1990; 2000; 2002; Nordquist and Ingvarsson-Sundström 2005; Voutsaki 1993; Voutsaki *et al.* 2005; 2006; 2007). Supplementary evidence from the warrior grave assemblage from MHII Aegina-Kolonna will also be considered.

## 6.1 Archaeological Context

### *6.1.1 Aegina-Kolonna's Archaeological Context*

*'It has become justifiably impossible to discuss MH elites without reference to the outstanding male burial from Kolonna IX (MHII).'*
*(Petrakis 2010, 404)*

[102] Also see MHI-LHII intramural burials from Agios Stephanos in southern Laconia (Taylour and Janko 2008, 121-44) and the Kouphovouno Cemetery in Sparta, Laconia – both of which benefit from osteological analysis of skeletal evidence (Duhlig *et al.* 2008; Lagia and Cavanagh 2010), however these samples did not facilitate analysis for this research due to the almost complete lack of grave goods.
[103] For Asine see Dietz 1980; 1982; Frödin and Persson 1938; Hägg and Hägg 1980; Hägg *et al.* 1996; Nordquist 1987a; Wells 2002. For Lerna see Caskey 1953; 1954; 1955; 1956; 1957; 1958; Gejvall 1969; Nordquist 1979; Rutter 1995; Vitelli 2007; Wiencke 2000.

The site of Kolonna is located on the island of Aegina in the Saronic Gulf. Systematic excavation of the Middle Bronze Age settlement has revealed that Kolonna was a hub of major architectural construction (Felten 1986; Felten and Hiller 1996; Gauss and Smetana 2010, 168-69; Walter and Weisshaar 1993) including massive fortification walls and large building complexes (Walter and Felten 1981, 50 *ff*) with evidence for production (Gauss and Smetana 2010; Papadimitriou, N. 2010; Petrakis 2010; Zerner 1993) and trade specializing in the import and export of vessels (Gauss and Smetana 2010, *esp*. 168; Hiller 1993, 197; Kilian-Dirlmeier 1997, 123; Reinholdt 1992, 57). In particular, evidence for relations between Aegina and Attica (Papadimitriou, N. 2010, 249-50) demonstrate that Aegina was 'a powerful centre with strong Minoan and Cycladic affinities already from the MHII period,' which appears to have managed contacts with the Cyclades for the entirety of the Saronic Gulf coastal region (Papadimitriou, N. 2010, 249-50, for quote see 251, n. 58) – a profile that complements Rutter's (1993, 778, fig. 13, 779, fig. 14) hypothesis that the Aeginetans may have been a seafaring people based on the Middle Bronze Age iconography of the island. Zerner (1993) also cited Kolonna as one of at least two major centres of pottery manufacture that exported their products widely throughout central and southern Greece, specialising in the production of large jars and kraters,[104] many of which were deposited in graves at Lerna (*Section 6.3.2.2.5*). Further, J. C. Wright (2010, 814) argues that Lindblom's (2001) study on Middle Helladic Aeginetan potter's marks is demonstrative of a demarcation of a 'notional territory of political economy for Aegina.'

Faunal remains at the site indicate reliance upon a mixed livestock economy (Forstenpointner *et al.* 2010). There is also evidence for dependence on cereal crops, grape, fig and olive (Forstenpointner *et al.* 2010, 737), and ample evidence of marine resources (Galik *et al.* 2010). Osteological analysis of 48 subadult skeletons retrieved from various locations in its MBA levels (Kanz *et al.*. 2010, 484) showed that the infants of Kolonna were not subjected to the same stresses or levels of malnutrition as were the infants from Lerna or Asine.[105]

This as well as Kolonna's Shaft Grave (Kilian-Dirlmeier 1997) mark the site as 'atypical.' What is more, the Shaft Grave burial appears to anticipate the 'accumulative ethos' of

[104] For the range of MH Aeginetan pottery see: Gauss 2010; Gauss and Smetana 2007; Lindblom 2001; 2007; Philippa-Touchais 2007. The other manufacturing centre was probably located somewhere in southern Laconia or perhaps on the island of Kythera (Zerner 1993; also Philippa-Touchais 2003).

[105] Remains were recovered from various excavations, using different approaches and probably do not represent all the non-adults buried within Kolonna (Kanz *et al.* 2010, 483).

Mycenae's Grave Circles (Petrakis 2010, 405), because its burial practice is identical in many respects to that observed in Mycenae's Shaft Graves – particularly Grave Circle B. The Kolonna grave contained about 300 objects, including pottery comprised of local wares as well as imports from the Mainland and Crete, a gold diadem, bronze weapons, a boar's tusk helmet and an elaborate long-sword (known as the Type A variant), which provides the earliest datable example for this type of weaponry deposit outside Crete (Kilian-Dirlmeier 1997, 13-23, figs. 5, 6, 7). Because of this, the Kolonna burial is usually interpreted as a leader of the town, a central authority, or at least as a member of the ruling elite.[106] Ultimately, this burial provides an early example for the expression of male prestige and wealth, similar in many respects to the practice used for the distinction of elite male (and probably female) burials from Mycenae's Shaft Graves discussed in the previous chapter.

### *6.1.2 Asine's Archaeological Context*

The coastal settlement of Bronze Age Asine is one of the most consistently excavated and well-documented Mycenaean sites in the Aegean. The first excavations began during the 1920s and produced detailed publications of finds from both settlement and mortuary contexts (Persson 1921; 1922; Frödin and Persson 1924; 1938). Styrenius (1974) went on to excavate and publish the Levendis Sector of the Barbouna Area. Dietz (1980; 1982) then excavated the area East of the Acropolis and re-analysed Asine's Early Mycenaean ceramic assemblage (Dietz 1991). The mortuary evidence also benefits from re-examination as well as supplementary study of finds from the excavations of the 1920s (Hägg *et al.* 1996; Wells 2002). Recently, Ingvarsson-Sundström (2003) published a bio-archaeological study of Asine's non-adult remains and has since re-analysed many of Asine's skeletal remains for the *Middle Helladic Argolid Project*, for which preliminary results have been published (Voutsaki *et al.* 2005, 109-13; 2006, 68-81; 2007, 138-40).

The site of Asine is situated near the north coast of the Argos Gulf at the foot of the Kastraki cliff (Figure 25). During the Middle Helladic phase, Asine appears to have been a farming village reliant mainly upon animal husbandry and crop cultivation, supplemented by the gathering of local flora (Moberg 1986; 1996, tbl. 6; Nordquist 1987a, 20, 23, 31). The population is estimated to have been 285 to 399 persons in 50 to 93 households (Nordquist 1987a, 24). There is little evidence for local ceramic production, and no evidence for a metal

[106] Manolis and Neroutsos (1997, *esp*. 173-74, tbls. 2, 3) argue that the male burial was an ancestor of the group buried in Grave Circle B at Mycenae, based on similarities in morphological measurements, shape, size, stature and robusticity, as well as similar levels of health. This scenario, however, is difficult to prove without DNA analysis. What is more, the good health and heartiness of the Aegina-Kolonna burial may simply reflect his privileged status (Chapter 3, *Section 3.4.2*). For studies of Aegean skeletal remains in which high-status was equated with better health see Angel 1971; 1973; 1982; Bisel and Angel 1985.

workshop, although terracotta whorls were probably produced on site and used for textile production (Dietz 1991, 23-90; Nordquist 1987a, 44, 48 and 56; Gillis 1996). Based on architectural evidence from the Lower Town, consisting of two main building plots, Nordquist (1987a, 28-29, figs. 13-15) characterised Asine as being 'inward' and isolated.

During MHIII at the onset of the Early Mycenaean phase, Asine began to participate in trading systems operating in the Argolid, perhaps even functioning as a mid-point or en-route trade centre for settlements in or around the Asine plain (Nordquist 1987a, 67), based on evidence of imported pottery from Aegina, Argos, (possibly) Lerna, Crete and the Cyclades in the extramural graves (Dietz 1991, 42-92; 1980, 33-43, 48; Nordquist 1987a, 49-50, 63, 65-67, tbl. 5.3). Asine's two extramural cemeteries also were constructed during this time, suggesting a shift in mortuary (and perhaps social) practice (Dietz 1982, 101; Nordquist 1987a, 24).

### *6.1.3 Lerna's Archaeological Context*

Lerna has also benefited from systematic excavation and study (Caskey 1953; 1954; 1955; 1956; 1957; 1958; 1962; 1969; also see Krystalle 1967; Verdelis 1956). Blackburn (1970) undertook the first systematic analysis of mortuary behaviour at the site, and several osteological studies of Lerna's human remains have been published (Angel 1971; Ingvarsson-Sundström's 2003; Triantaphyllou 2006; 2010; Triantaphyllou within Voutsaki *et al.* 2005, 93-107; 2006, 60-68). The village probably was a typical Middle Helladic coastal settlement much like Asine, i.e. self-sufficient, reliant upon farming and animal husbandry (Gejvall 1969) and similar in size and population (Nordquist 1987a, 24). Evidence of ceramic imports from Crete, the Cyclades and Aegina indicate that Lerna also participated in Southern Aegean trade networks. There also is evidence that Lerna's population may have included part-time craft specialists based in individual households (Hartenberger and Runnels 2001; Runnels 1985), who, amongst other things, produced local imitations of Aegean wares (Caskey 1953; 1954; 1955; 1956; 1957; 1958; 1962; 1969; Gejvall 1969; Zerner 1990). Surviving mortuary evidence appears to be representative of typical Middle Helladic burial practice in its use of simple grave types, mainly single inhumations and select deposition of small, humble burial assemblages (Dietz 1991, 275, 285; Voutsaki *et al.* 2005, 106-07). There also is possible evidence of elite Early Mycenaean activity that may have taken place at the site of Shaft Graves 1 and 2 (Caskey 1955, 32-4, fig. 3, Pls. 15-17,a; 1956, 155-57, Pl. 39,a,b,c,d,e; Lindblom 2007; 2008; Zerner 1990, 31, 33).

The limitations of Voutsaki's (2005, 348-570) and Ruppenstein's (2010) recent studies of gender and mortuary behaviour at Lerna were explained in *Section 3.2.3.2*. This study largely concurs with Voutsaki (2005, 350) that it is extremely difficult to identify gender in mortuary behaviour at Lerna because so few grave goods were deposited, and that 'the deposition of offerings may (instead) express other concerns …' For this reason, the results of Lerna's gender attribution analysis will not be considered in isolation, but in tandem with Asine and within the same cultural context as that of Aegina-Kolonna and Early Mycenaean Mycenae. By doing so, I was able to utilise results from samples in which more material wealth was deposited to identify trends and variations at Lerna.

## 6.2 Aegina-Kolonna, Asine and Lerna: Data and Limitations

### *6.2.1 Aegina-Kolonna Data:*

The archaeological context of the Aegina-Kolonna Shaft Grave (Figure 26) is detailed in *Das mittelbronzezeitliche Schachtgrab von Ägina* (Kilian-Dirlmeier 1997). This includes the results of the osteological analysis of the adult male burial (Manolis and Neroutsos 1997) and a catalogue of all grave goods.

### *6.2.2 Asine Data and Limitations*

#### 6.2.2.1 Asine's Grave Sample

Asine's grave sample consists of 150 graves dispersed among three locations. The first is located in the excavated area of the Lower Town (Figure 27; Frödin and Persson 1938; also see Nordquist 1996). It includes 115 intramural graves, which are mainly pit and cist types or variants of these forms. The second consists of 19 graves located in the extramural East Cemetery (Figure 28). These include 16 cists, two pithos burials and one simple grave of unspecified type (Dietz 1980). The third includes 16 graves located in the extramural Barbouna Area Cemetery, consisting of seven cists, five pits, three shafts and one grave of unspecified type (Dietz 1982; Backe-Forsberg *et al.* 1978; Nordquist 1987a, 135-36).

The absolute dating of finds and graves at Asine seems to be constantly in flux, making it difficult to clarify in which phase activity occurred. This is due to: 1) the unclear relationship between certain graves and architectural remains; 2) lack of datable grave goods in some intramural graves; 3) disturbance due to later construction; 4) unclear documentation of the 1920s excavations (Nordquist 1987a, 95); and 5) confusing results of the recent radiocarbon analysis of samples from Asine's extramural cemeteries (as well as Lerna's intramural burials) (Voutsaki *et al.* 2005, 32; 2006, 69-70; 2009a,b). For instance, radiocarbon dating

suggests that some of the East Cemetery graves were in use as early as MHII but that activity datable to MHIII and LHI cannot be excluded (Voutsaki *et al.* 2009a,b). Every effort has been made to use new dates for graves, but in many cases many of the radiocarbon-dated graves contained no grave goods and/or remains and could not be analysed for this research. Chronological discrepancies should have minimal effect, but will be flagged for discussion when appropriate.

Thirteen simple graves excavated in the Lower City on Terrace III (Frödin and Persson 1938, 128-9, 144, 146, 354-5) are not included in this analysis because: 1) most contained no grave goods; 2) there is a lack of published detail concerning all other aspects of the graves; 3) skeletal evidence has not been osteologically analysed; and 4) it is unclear whether activity is datable to the Early Mycenaean or Palatial phase.

#### 6.2.2.2 Asine's Burial Sample

The demographic distribution for Asine's burial sample is listed in *Table 6.1*. It includes at least 171 individuals from the three grave locations. Remains located in the intramural burial group consist of at least 125 individuals. The remains of 24 individuals were buried in the East Cemetery, and there were remains of up to 23 individuals in the Barbouna Area Cemetery. Fürst (1930a,b; see footnotes in Frödin and Persson 1938) initially sexed and aged *c.* 107 skeletons from Asine's intramural burial location using now dated methodologies. Angel (1982) initially analysed 44 individuals from the extramural cemeteries. Ingvarsson-Sundström (within Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 70-76, figs. 4-8) re-analysed 41 of these individuals. She confirms that Angel's original diagnoses of sex and age are generally in agreement with her findings (within Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 71).[107] While the preliminary results of Ingvarsson-Sundström's re-analysis of the adult population from the extramural cemeteries informs this analysis, details concerning the sex and age of adult burials from the extramural cemeteries have yet to be published. Because of this, results from Angel's (1982) analysis have been used to fill in the gaps. All of Asine's non-adult burials have been re-analysed by Ingvarsson-Sundström (2003).

Burials from Tombs I:1 and I:7 from Asine's Necropolis I (Frödin and Persson 1938; Hughes-Brock 1996; Mountjoy 1996) have not been osteologically analysed and cannot be included in this analysis.

[107] Ingvarsson-Sundström was forced to exclude burials 65 As, 75 As and 92 As (Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 71). These burials are not included in this analysis because two of the graves were datable to the post-Mycenaean period and the other grave is of unclear date (Dietz 1982, 85).

#### 6.2.2.3 Asine's Object Sample

About 120 objects were found in Asine's graves (Dietz 1980, 23-69; 1991, 145-46; Frödin and Persson 1938, 336-55; Furumark 1941; 1944; Nordquist 1996). At the time of excavation the graves in the East Cemetery were mostly under water. Originally, there may have been more grave goods than those that were found.

### *6.2.3 Lerna Data and Limitations*

#### 6.2.3.1 Lerna's Grave Sample

Lerna's grave sample consists of 228 graves located within the excavated settlement. The vast majority are pit and cist grave types. There are also five shaft graves.

Newly revised grave dates have been incorporated whenever possible (Milka 2010, 351-52; Voutsaki 2010b); however, chronological revision of Lerna's mortuary evidence (Zerner forthcoming) may shift the dating of activity in Lerna's graves. This should have little effect on analysis because most of the revised dates will most likely shift within the Early Mycenaean phase itself (MHIII-LHII), and just 40 of Lerna's 228 graves contained grave goods, indicating that revised dates will potentially affect only a minority of the sample relevant to this analysis.

Shaft Graves 1 and 2, two of the largest and potentially richest graves at Lerna, are missing grave goods and skeletal evidence probably due to removal during the Late Bronze Age or later in antiquity (Lindblom 2008). Datable sherds from the fill have established that the graves were constructed in the Early Mycenaean phase during LHI, and both were probably used during the same generation, perhaps even on the same occasion.[108]

#### 6.2.3.2 Lerna's Burial Sample

The demographic distribution for Lerna's burial sample is listed in *Table 6.1*. It includes the remains of at least 264 individuals (Angel 1971, 41-66). Triantaphyllou (within Voutsaki *et al.* 2005, 95) has re-analysed the remains of 210 of these burials and has published preliminary results. DNA analysis of 12 samples from Lerna has confirmed sex identifications made by Triantaphyllou and Angel (Voutsaki 2010b; Voutsaki *et al.* 2005, 103; 2006, 62-64). The Lerna Shaft Graves yielded only two human bones from an unsexed adult although it is unclear to which grave they originally belonged.

[108] Lindblom (2008) argues that Shaft Graves 1 and 2 were constructed during LHI, but that there is possible evidence of activity during LHIIIA2(early) based on a set(?) of kylikes found near the graves.

#### 6.2.3.3 Lerna's Object Sample

Over 150 published objects were deposited with Lerna's burials (Zerner 1986; 1990; 1993; Wiencke 2000). At some point during LHI, it is likely that Shaft Graves 1 and 2 were the site of a feast for *c.* 1000 people based on the quantity of pottery (Lindblom 2007; 2008) as well as animal bones (Gejvall 1969) present in the fill. It is difficult to assess what happened at the site because there is no internal stratification in the single fill associated with the two shafts and the location of objects and bones are completely mixed. The compromised evidence creates a considerable gap in Lerna's mortuary history.

## 6.3 The Analysis: Gender Attribution at Asine and Lerna with consideration of the Aegina-Kolonna Shaft Grave

### *6.3.1 Inclusion at Asine and Lerna*

*Table 6.1* shows the distribution of burials at Asine and Lerna. Most of this activity is datable to the Middle Helladic phase. In Asine's intramural burial location the deceased, in many cases, was buried within the architecture of his or her family home. Unlike the Prehistoric Cemetery at Mycenae, there was no area at Asine or Lerna specifically dedicated to non-adult burials, and all types of burials were included in each site's intramural cemetery, indicating that this practice was probably inextricably linked to the household and the family unit, as argued by Nordquist (1987a, 95). It is widely known that high numbers of non-adult burials were interred in Asine and Lerna's intramural burial locations (Ingvarsson-Sundström 2003; Milka 2010, 351-52; Voutsaki 2005, 350), and although significant numbers of adult burials were included in each intramural cemetery (Asine: 49 adult burials, Lerna: 115 adult burials), the inclusion of non-adult burials was favoured at both sites (Asine: 115 non adult burials, Lerna: 137 non-adult burials). What is more, a larger proportion of the non-adult burials were infants, indicating that age strongly influenced but did not determine inclusion in these locations. Comparatively low numbers of sub adult, child and elderly burials at each site could be linked to any number of external factors, such as more deaths during infancy due to a greater index of vulnerability, and smaller proportions of the population actually reaching old age. Due to the high number of unsexed adult burials, it is unclear whether or not gender influenced inclusion in Asine or Lerna's intramural burial locations.

During the Early Mycenaean phase the group using Asine's extramural East Cemetery mainly included a select group of adult burials of both genders (slightly favouring the inclusion of adult male burials, 10 : 8) and generally excluded children, infants and the

elderly (Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 73, 75, figs. 4-6). The group using Asine's other extramural cemetery in the Barbouna Area also included a small group of adult burials of both genders, but inclusion practice here differs from the East Cemetery in one key respect: a comparatively large group of non-adult burials (one child and up to 12 infant and neonate burials) were included in this cemetery. Although age certainly influenced inclusion practices in different ways in each extramural cemetery, gender appears to have had little effect upon inclusion. Age-related practices differentiated the extramural groups from one another at Asine, and the inclusion of proportionally high numbers of infant and neonate burials in Asine's Barbouna Area Cemetery suggest that inclusion was as much an expression of the household or family unit as it was in Asine's intramural burial location during the earlier Middle Helladic phase. Thus, inclusion practices in the East Cemetery represent a more radical shift in mortuary ideology during the Early Mycenaean phase at Asine.

### *6.3.2 The Deposition of Grave Goods*

*Table 6.2* and *Chart 6.1* indicate that 26 of the 122 burials inhumed in Asine's intramural burials were provided with grave goods, suggesting that the deposition of objects with burials was the exception rather than the rule. It is unclear whether or not the use of deposition practices was determined by gender, but gender may have influenced the quantity of objects deposited with burials, because adult female burials were associated with larger burial assemblages. *Table 6.3* indicates that grave goods were selectively deposited with Asine's East Cemetery burials. Generally, gender did not determine this practice because adult burials of both genders were associated with grave goods. However, infant burials were excluded from this practice, indicating that age was a primary determinant. In contrast to the intramural cemetery, adult male burials from East Cemetery were favoured with the largest burial assemblages. *Table 6.4* indicates that the deposition of grave goods was standard but not required practice in Asine's Barbouna Area Cemetery. Here gender and age do not appear to have influenced object deposition because select adult burials of both genders and select infant burials were associated with grave goods. *Table 6.5* and *Chart 6.2* indicate that grave goods were rarely deposited at Lerna. Just 59 of 264 burials were provided with objects. Many of these were unsexed adults, thus obscuring whether or not gender shaped this practice. Age, also appears to have had little effect upon whether or not a burial was provided with grave goods.

#### 6.3.2.1 Artefact Types

Asine and Lerna's burial assemblages are catalogued in *Table 6.6*. The following artefact types were present: pottery, adornment, weaponry, tools and toilet articles. There is an

absence of certain elite Mycenaean artefact types, such as non-ceramic vessels and ornaments, and weaponry (including knives and daggers) was also entirely absent from Lerna. *Tables 6.7-10* and *Charts 6.3-4* show the distribution of artefact types in each location, and only *Table 6.8* seems to indicate a link between artefact type deposition and gender in Asine's East Cemetery, in which male burials were favoured with the deposition of specific artefact types. The Aegina-Kolonna burial was associated with a concise range of artefact types including pottery, adornment and weaponry. These will be discussed within the contexts of each artefact type category.

#### 6.3.2.2 Pottery

Pottery assemblages from Asine and Lerna are catalogued in *Table 6.11*.

##### *6.3.2.2.1 Pottery and Asine's Intramural Burials*

*Table 6.12* indicates that select adult female and child burials from Asine's intramural burial location were favoured with pottery deposition, while adult male and infant burials were rarely if ever provided with pottery. *Tables 6.13-14* indicate a possible but tenuous link between elderly male burials and bowls, while drinking vessels (Nordquist 2000) as well as those used for storage were deposited with adult female burials. *Table 6.15* indicates that mainly plain and a few painted vessels with no decorative motifs were deposited in Asine's intramural burial location, and that gender does not appear to have influenced their deposition. *Table 6.16* also indicates that Argive and Lustrous wares were associated with one child and one infant burial respectively, while domestic coarse ware was deposited exclusively with adult female burials. Because domestic coarse ware was probably used in the household prior to deposition, perhaps even by the deceased herself during life, this suggests that the distinction of certain high-status female burials was linked to association/identification with the domestic sphere. The deposition of comparatively fine pots with non-adult burials probably expressed ascribed status. Otherwise, it is difficult to link the deposition of pottery shape, potential function and other features to gender or age.

##### *6.3.2.2.2 Pottery and Asine's East Cemetery*

*Table 6.17* suggests that adult male burials were favoured with pottery deposition in Asine's East Cemetery, but in reality burials of both genders were provided with pottery, indicating that gender did not determine general pottery deposition. Age, however, did influence this practice, because non-adult burials were excluded.

*Table 6.18* and *6.19* indicate that adult male burials were associated with all pottery shapes, a wide variety of pottery shapes and potential functions were associated with burials of both

genders and a bowl was associated with an elderly male burial. This suggests that gender affected the nature of pottery deposition. What is more, within the cemetery, the deposition of pottery was heavily concentrated with one male burial. Eighteen vessels were deposited with the adult male identified as burial 54 As from Grave 1971-3. These included three cups, four jugs, two jars, two kantharoi, six goblets and a bowl – all of which were imports, and several of which featured incised decoration (Dietz 1980, 34-55, 109, figs. 30-33; 1982, 2, 75; 1991, 145; Nordquist 1987a, 85-86). *Table 6.20* indicates that the majority of Argive wares were also associated with burial 54 As. J. C. Wright (2004, esp. 94) argues that this male burial 'illustrates the emergence of a distinct Mycenaean set of drinking vessels, which also appear in domestic deposits at Asine.'[109] The other adult burials associated with pottery were provided with ceramic assemblages that were smaller and more humble in scope. This strongly suggests that the quantity and quality of pots deposited with burial 54 As was certainly determined by his status and probably identity, but due to the small sample size it is unclear whether or not and to what extent gender may have also shaped the distinction of this burial.

#### *6.3.2.2.3 Pottery and Asine's Barbouna Area Cemetery*

*Table 6.21* indicates that in Asine's Barbouna Area Cemetery adult burials of both genders as well as child burials were associated with pottery, adult male burials were provided with slightly larger pottery assemblages than female and child burials, while most infant burials were excluded from this practice. *Table 6.22* indicates that male burials were associated with all pottery shapes except kantharoi, and that bowls were deposited exclusively with male burials. Male, female and child burials were associated with cups, goblets and jugs in relatively equal proportion, and kantharoi were associated only with female and infant burials. *Table 6.23* indicates that all types of burials were associated with drinking vessels and that the provision of these was normal burial practice in this location. Adult male burials were associated with both eating and drinking vessels. A bowl/cup identified as a cooking vessel (Hägg and Hägg 1978, 60, fig. 42) was associated with an adult female identified as burial 84 As from grave B 7,[110] providing evidence for the practice, performed by the group using Asine's intramural burial location, in which select adult female burials were emphasised via the deposition of domestic coarse ware. The only decorated vessel found in this cemetery was a MHIII kantharos in Argive ware featuring simple linear decoration

[109] J. C. Wright (2004, 94, 96-97) argues that 'variation in the display of items of wealth and of vessel forms is a function of the lack of a single recognized authority.'

[110] The bowl/cup from grave B 7 is of unclear association, however the adult female identified as burial 84 As (Angel 1982, 85, 109; Hägg and Hägg 1973, 63-65; Nordquist 1987a, 98, 135) was the only burial documented in this grave. Therefore, it is probable that the cooking vessel was deposited with this individual.

(Dietz 1991, 146). It was associated with the adult female identified as burial 108 As from grave B 32. The deposition of fine pottery probably expressed the status of this burial. Interestingly, the practice used for the distinction of this female burial differs from the practice used for the distinction of the female identified as burial 84 As via the deposition of domestic coarse ware. This suggests that this group was using at least two different pottery deposition practices, one which expressed female status, identity and affiliation with the domestic sphere (similar to the practice documented during the Middle Helladic phase in the intramural burial location), and the other which expressed (non-gendered?) status via the deposition of fine pottery (similar to the practice documented later during the Early Mycenaean phase in the East Cemetery and Grave Circle B at Mycenae).[111]

*Table 6.24* shows that the majority of the Barbouna Area ceramic assemblage was composed of Argive wares as well as a few other imports. These were deposited in almost equal proportion with adult male, female and child burials, indicating that the manufacturing provenance of vessels could not be linked to the gender of the deceased. Age may have determined the deposition of kitchen ware with infant burials, but so few infant burials were provided with pottery, and the kitchen ware sample is so small, that it is difficult to gauge whether or not this represents behavioural patterns.

#### *6.3.2.2.4 Summing up Pottery and Gender at Asine*

The deposition of pottery at Asine suggests that different mortuary ideologies were at play and concurrently performed in the various burial locations and sometimes within the same cemetery. This is exemplified by the deposition of domestic coarse ware with high-status female burials in Asine's intramural burial location and Barbouna Area Cemetery and with the deposition of fine wares acquired from afar via new connections with adult burials of both genders in the East and Barbouna Area cemeteries. While the deposition of domestic coarse ware clearly represents a distinct female practice, the deposition of fine pottery assemblages during the Early Mycenaean phase was not overtly shaped by gender. Although the largest and most wealthy fine pottery assemblage was associated with the adult male identified as burial 54 As from the East Cemetery, this does not represent a distinctly male practice, because other fine pottery assemblages of roughly equal size and wealth indices to one another (within the context of each cemetery) were associated with adult burials of both genders. Thus, the introduction of a new pottery deposition practice during the Early

[111] Elite female burials from Grave Circle B were often provided with decorated fine pottery (Chapter 5, *Section 5.3.2.1*). See the LHI pottery assemblage associated with the adult female identified as Skeleton 1 from Grave Omikron (Dietz 1991, 128-30, fig. 44) as well as the MHIII-LHI assemblage associated with the adult female identified as burial 132 Myc from Grave Upsilon (Dietz 1991, 131-32, fig. 45).

Mycenaean phase did not necessarily favour the distinction of one gender over another, but in fact expanded upon the scope of gender distinction through pottery deposition practices. For instance, the intramural location of high-status female burials associated with domestic coarse ware suggests that the identity and status of the household was also bound up in the personages of high-status female burials. The shift that took place during the Early Mycenaean phase was two-fold: 1) it de-emphasised gender through pottery deposition because status was no longer bound up in female personages, roles and identities, and 2) it emphasised outside contacts and access to luxury items rather than the household unit. Therefore, the shift in practice should not be construed as a de-emphasis of female burials, but rather as the introduction of a more expansive pottery deposition practice expressive of elite Mycenaean mortuary ideology and clearly similar to that documented in the contemporaneous Grave Circle B (*Section 5.3.2.1.1*).

#### *6.3.2.2.5 Pottery and Lerna*

*Table 6.25* and *Chart 6.5* show the distribution of pottery at Lerna. It is unclear to what extent if at all gender may have influenced pottery deposition due to the association of pottery with adult burials of both genders as well as the high numbers of ceramic assemblages associated with unsexed burials. Certain burials were emphasised with slightly larger ceramic assemblages. These are: the unsexed adult skeleton in Grave B.1 that was associated with a fine spouted jar and fragments of cups, bowls, jars and jugs all datable to LHI (Caskey 1955, 32-34, fig. 3, Pls. 15-17,a);[112] the unsexed adult burial from Grave BC.3 that was associated with a Vapheio cup and three jugs of unclear MH date (Caskey 1956, 157, fig. 1, n. 14, Pl. 40a,b; Zerner 1990, 31, 33, figs. 42-43); the child identified as burial 24 Ler in Grave D.5 that was associated with two stemmed kantharoi and a jug of unclear MH date (Caskey 1954, 10, 11, Pl. 7,a; Zerner 1990, 31, 33, fig. 56); and the child identified as burial 148 Ler in Grave DC.2 that was associated with two cups, a jug, two jars and a goblet datable from MHIII-LHI (Blackburn 1970, 174-75; Caskey 1957, 144-45, Pl. 39,e; Zerner 1990, 31, 33, figs. 54, 55, 57). Infant burials were not associated with large ceramic assemblages, indicating that age may have influenced the quantity of pottery deposited with a burial.

*Table 6.26* and *Chart 6.6* indicate that gender and age cannot be linked to vessel shape. Although goblets were associated exclusively with non-adult burials, kantharoi were

[112] Although the pottery assemblage from Grave B.1 is not obviously richer than the other burials associated with multiple pots, Caskey argued that the grave was a 'tomb of a royal person or at least of a rich and powerful noble'. He also assumed that this was a male burial based on the perceived wealth of the grave.

associated with adult burials of both genders as well as non-adult burials, suggesting that the deposition of drinking vessels was not determined by gender or age.

*Table 6.27* and *Chart 6.7* suggest that vessel function was not linked to gender, but may have been linked to age. This correlates to the arguments made by Milka (within Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 67-68, tbl. 3, fig. 3), Nordquist (1979, 120), Voutsaki (2005, 353) and Zerner (1990), according to which ceramic burial receptacles were used for the burials of non-adults at Lerna – especially infant burials during the Middle Helladic phase. Results from Triantaphyllou's reanalysis of the Lerna skeletal evidence enabled Milka (Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 65) to clarify that neonate and newborn and burials were inhumed in smaller, coarse piriform jars, while a child burial was placed in a larger, matt-painted Aeginetan jar. Based on this, she surmised that Middle Helladic burial practice incorporated the disposal of neonates and infants in domestic vessels that had conceivably belonged to and had been used by their kin group. She also argues that the child burial in an imported jar could be a separate and distinct burial practice, but that lack of other examples implies that this was not an age-related practice, but rather an expression of ascribed status. This practice is similar to that documented in Mycenae's contemporaneous Prehistoric Cemetery pot burials.

*Table 6.28* and *Chart 6.8* suggest that vessel decoration was not linked to gender, but that age may have shaped this practice. Knobbed vessels were mainly associated with infant burials – excepting the knobbed jar found in Grave B.28 in which no remains were reported (Zerner 1990, 23-24, fig. 4), and possibly the knobbed cup found in Grave BD.6, which contained the double burial of an infant identified as burial 86 Ler and what may have been the remains of an unsexed adult skeleton (Angel 1971; Zerner 1990, 31, figs. 19-20). Otherwise, pots featuring simple linear decoration may have emphasized the status of adult male burials datable to the Early Mycenaean phase, although this connection is rather tenuous due to the high number of pots associated with unsexed adults.

Data concerning manufacturing provenance are limited, but *Table 6.29* and *Chart 6.9* suggest that the distribution of pottery based on ware type and manufacturing provenance may have been influenced by gender and status to varying degrees. A strainer jug and ewer (Zerner 1990, 31, 33, figs. 44, 45) were associated with the adult male identified as burial 95 Ler in Grave BD.19. Both vessels are Cycladic imports equivalent in date to MHIII-LHI. This indicates that certain high-status male burials were being emphasized with assemblages containing imported fine wares during the Early Mycenaean phase – a practice clearly similar to that in which the distinction of high-status adult burials was expressed via the deposition of often imported fine ceramic wares in Asine's extramural cemeteries and Grave

Circle B (*Section 5.3.2.1.1*) during the Early Mycenaean phase. The same may argued for the Early Mycenaean phase burials associated with two imported Minoan vessels: a spouted jar associated with the remains of a three-year-old child identified as burial 148 Ler in Grave DC.2 (Caskey 1957, 145, Pl. 39,f; Zerner 1990, 31, 33, fig. 57), and another spouted jar associated with an adult male identified as burial 217 Ler in Grave J.4 (Caskey 1956, 154, Pl. 43,c; Zerner 1990, 31, fig. 39). Child burials provided with pottery could be datable to the Middle Helladic phase, while the adult ceramic assemblages were deposited mainly during the Early Mycenaean phase. This temporal distinction may represent a shift in ideology, symptomatic of later attempts to emulate Shaft Grave pottery deposition practices in which adult burials were emphasised via the deposition of fine pottery. Although two of the three Lerna burials associated with imported fine pottery were adult males, small sample size and the similarity of this practice with pottery deposition practice at Asine and Mycenae during the Early Mycenaean phase strongly suggests that the distinction of high-status burials via the deposition of fine pottery at Lerna was probably not gendered.

#### *6.3.2.2.6 Pottery and the Aegina-Kolonna Shaft Grave*

No burials at Asine or Lerna approach the wealth, diversity and quantity of vessels deposited with the male burial from the MHII Aegina-Kolonna Shaft Grave (Kilian-Dirlmeier 1997). It is impossible to interpret this pottery deposition practice, because this is a singular burial and there are no other contemporaneous examples of this sort of opulent deposition. The comparatively tiny deposits of fine pottery with male burials at Asine and Lerna post-date the Aegina-Kolonna burial, indicating that elite Mycenaean ideologies did not gain a foothold at Asine and probably Lerna (based on Lindblom's [2007; 2008] study of sherds from Lerna's Shaft Graves 1 and 2) until much later, during the Early Mycenaean phase. Therefore, it is unclear what if any aspects of the elaborate Aegina-Kolonna pottery deposition were related to the warrior burial's gender.

### 6.3.2.3 Adornment

#### *6.3.2.3.1 Jewellery*

Jewellery found in Asine and Lerna's burial assemblages is catalogued in *Table 6.30*. *Table 6.31* shows the distribution of jewellery in all burial locations.

**Jewellery and Asine's Intramural Burials**

*Table 6.31* indicates that jewellery was deposited with two burials in Asine's intramural burial location. An unsexed adult from grave MH 4 was associated with two bronze beads (Frödin and Persson 1938, 116, fig. 91), and a female adult identified as burial 2FA from grave MH 98 was buried wearing bronze earrings (Frödin and Persson 1938, 126, fig. 106, n.

2). Grave MH 4 is datable to MHIII, and grave MH 98 is probably datable to MHII (Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 66). It is tempting to interpret the deposition of bronze jewellery with the female identified as burial 2FA as an early expression of elite Mycenaean mortuary ideology, but this would predate similar practices documented at Asine and the Shaft Graves (*Section 5.3.2.2*) in which elite female burials were emphasized with bronze objects of adornment.[113] However, the date of the grave and the singular nature of the practice suggest that it represents another way of expressing female distinction in this location and that the deposition of jewellery was influenced by gender and expressive of identity.

**Jewellery and Asine's East Cemetery**

Three individuals from Asine's East Cemetery were associated with jewellery: 1) bronze earrings were deposited with a child identified as burial 42 As from Grave 1970-7 and 1970-8, datable to MHII/III (Dietz 1980, 27); 2) a gold diadem was associated with an adult male identified as 44 As from Grave 1970-12, datable to late MHII (Dietz 1980, 30, figs. 20, 21; Nordquist 1987a, 47);[114] and 3) a gold earring was associated with an adult male identified as burial 60 As from Grave 1971-10, datable to MHIII/LHI (Dietz 1980, 59, fig. 66; Nordquist 1987a, 123). Gender and status appear to have influenced this practice. The two adult male burials also are the only burials at Asine and Lerna that were associated with gold objects. What is more, the gold diadem associated with the adult male identified as burial 44 As comes from an MHII context (Dietz 1980, 30, figs. 20, 21), which predates similar practices documented in Mycenae's Grave Circle B (in which adult male burials were emphasised via the deposition of gold ornaments)[115] and suggests a link to Aegina-Kolonna based on the contemporaneous deposition of a gold diadem that is similar in design with that site's outstanding male burial (Petrakis 2010, 409).

**Jewellery and Asine's Barbouna Area Cemetery**

Jewellery was associated with no more than four individuals from the Barbouna Area Cemetery. Adornment consisted mainly of beads, probably representative of necklace (or perhaps bracelet) components. Grave B 15, which is datable to MHII/III, yielded one bronze, one bone and three carnelian beads as well as two bronze ear/hair rings (Nordquist 1987a,

[113] See the adult female identified as burial 132 from Grave Upsilon in Grave Circle B that is associated with three bronze finger-rings, bronze and silver earrings and three bronze pins – one of which features a rock crystal head (Mylonas 1973, 228-36).

[114] In her re-analysis, Ingvarsson-Sundström was unable to sex burial 44 As and reports that skeletons from the East Cemetery were poorly preserved due to 'post-excavation mishaps' (within Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 79, n. 24). Because Angel (1982, 85) initially sexed this burial as male, and because Ingvarsson-Sundström reports a 'general agreement' with Angel's classification of broad age groups and sex (Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 71), I have decided to classify this burial as male.

[115] The adult male identified as 66a Myc from Grave Nu in Grave Circle B was associated with two gold diadems (N-391 and N-392) (Mylonas 1973, 174-75, Pls. 153ß,1,2).

114, 115, 119). These were associated with a child identified as burial 91 As (Angel 1982, 85; Nordquist pers. comm, 5th November, 2010). A single bone bead was found among the remains of what may have been two infants/neonates, identified as burials 109 and 109a in Grave B 33, which is datable to MHIII (Nordquist 1987a, 114). And finally, a shell necklace composed of 11 cerastoderma was associated with an unsexed adult from Grave B 61, which is also datable to MHIII (Nordquist 1987a, 115). Age influenced this practice, but it is unclear to what extent (if at all) gender affected the deposition of jewellery. This practice appears to be similar to that observed in Mycenae's Prehistoric cemetery, in which non-adult burials were provided with moderately valuable necklaces expressive of ascribed status (*Section 5.3.2.2.1*).

**Jewellery and Lerna**

*Table 6.31* indicates that jewellery was associated with up to eight burials at Lerna and that gender did affect this practice, however age may have influenced jewellery deposition because infant and neonate burials were excluded from this practice. Necklaces (or more specifically their components) were the predominant jewellery sub-type represented and were associated with adult burials of both genders and child burials. *Table 6.32* indicates that jewellery made from what may have been locally procured materials (e.g. bone, shell, and steatite) was associated mainly with adult female burials. Child burials are the only group associated with jewellery composed of imported raw materials, and bronze is exclusively associated with child burials. Faience(?) beads are associated with both adult female and child burials. Child burials appear to have been provided with the most valuable jewellery.[116] Thus, the distinction of high-status child burials, especially during the Middle Helladic phase, may be similar to practices observed at Asine, in which select adult female and child burials were provided with jewellery composed of bronze and/or semiprecious stones. This also is similar to practices in which the ascribed status of child burials from Mycenae's Prehistoric Cemetery was expressed (*Section 5.3.2.2.1*). However, we may be missing a crucial part of the picture, because evidence from Lerna's emptied Shaft Graves may have provided evidence for elite adornment practices there.

#### *6.3.2.3.2 Dress Pins*

Dress pins were rarely deposited at Asine and Lerna, and the sample is too small to warrant a table. It consists of the following. A fragment of a bronze dress pin (Frödin and Persson

[116] The terracotta bead associated with the child identified as burial 35 Ler from Grave BA.3 does not appear to undermine this pattern, because he or she was also associated with one of the two largest jewellery assemblages from Lerna, consisting of the bronze finger-ring, two carnelian beads and one vitreous bead (Caskey 1955, 36). The other large jewellery assemblage was associated with the adult female identified as burial 31 Ler in Grave H.1 (Caskey 1954, 21).

1938, 122; Nordquist 1987a, 122, no. 9) was associated with an adult female identified as burial 15FA from grave MH 53, which is datable to MHIII.[117] This practice may be similar to the practice observed in Grave Circle B, in which high-status females from MHIII graves were buried wearing bronze pins.[118]

At Lerna, a bronze pin was associated with the unsexed adult burial from Grave BC.3, which is of unclear MH date (Caskey 1956, 157). Another bronze pin may have been associated with one of the three burials inhumed in Grave DC.1, which is datable to MHIII/LHI. These burials consisted of an elderly male identified as burial 145 Ler, an elderly female identified as burial 146 Ler and an adult female identified as burial 147 Ler (Caskey 1957, 144). Finally, fragments of a bone pin are associated with an adult female identified as burial 31 Ler from Grave H.1, which is datable to MHII (Caskey 1954, 21). Based on comparable contemporaneous evidence from Asine's intramural burial location and the presence of two female burials vs. one male burial in Grave DC.1, it is likely that the bronze pin from Grave DC.1 was associated with one of its female burials, and echoes the Grave Circle B practice in which select elite female burials were adorned with bronze dress pins (*Section 5.3.2.2.3*). Select female burials from MHII contexts also appear to have been adorned with dress pins, although these were of a much more humble variety.

#### 6.3.2.4 Weaponry

No weaponry was deposited in Asine's Barbouna Area cemetery or at Lerna, although it is possible that Lerna's Shaft Graves 1 and 2 may have originally contained weapons. Weaponry deposited in Asine's intramural burial location and East Cemetery is catalogued in *Table 6.33*.

##### *6.3.2.4.1 Weaponry and Asine's Intramural Burials*

Gender and age affected the deposition of weaponry in Asine's intramural burial location. A bronze spearhead was associated with the adult male identified as burial 6FA from grave MH 58, which is datable to MHII/III, and a silver plated bronze knife/razor[119] and arrowhead

[117] Grave MH 53 was partly on top of grave MH 52. Grave MH 53 contained the adult female identified as burial 15FA, while the adult male identified as burial 14FA was found on the northwest side of grave MH 52 (Frödin and Persson 1938, 121, n. 1; Nordquist 1996, 27). The excavators attributed the bronze tweezers, bronze pin and a Grey Minyan vessel to the female burial in grave MH 53 (Frödin and Persson 1938, 122; Nordquist 1987a, 122, no. 8).

[118] An adult female identified as burial 132 Myc from Grave Upsilon was associated with three bronze dress pins (U-318, 319, 320 [Mylonas 1973, 234, Pls. 208ß,1,2 and 208g]), and Skeleton 1 from Grave Omikron was associated with three bronze pins with rock crystal heads (O-312, 313, 314 [Mylonas 1973, 203, Pls. 182,a,1,2,3]).

[119] Very little can said of the silver plated bronze implement (Nordquist 1987a, 134) from grave MH 107. It is a one-off at Asine. It may have been a weapon, a tool or even a toilet article, and we know nothing of the burial with which it is associated.

(of unspecified material) were associated with an unsexed adult burial from grave MH 107, which is datable to MHII. Although select elite female burials from Grave Circle B were provided with weaponry (*Section 5.3.2.3*), there is no precedent for arrowheads being associated with female burials. Thus, it is probable that the unsexed adult burial from grave MH 107 was male. If so, the distinction of high-status male burials with weaponry in Asine's intramural burial location predates Shaft Grave mortuary practice. What is more, the only male burial from Grave Circle B datable to MHII is the infant identified as burial 57 Myc from Grave X1 (Angel 1973, 383; for confirmation of sex based on DNA analysis see Brown et al 2000, 118, tbl. 1), and there is no evidence for congruent burial practice here, because burial 57 Myc's assemblage contained only pottery (Dietz 1991, 128, 155, 173, 175, 177, 179, figs. 48, 53). Therefore, the practice at Asine may be more similar to ideologies of prestige being expressed through weaponry deposition in the MHII Aegina-Kolonna Shaft Grave.

#### *6.3.2.4.2 Weaponry and Asine's East Cemetery*

Weaponry deposition in Asine's East Cemetery was determined by gender, because these objects are exclusively associated with adult male burials, all of which are from Early Mycenaean contexts (MHIII-LHI specifically). There are direct similarities between weaponry deposition practice in Asine's East Cemetery and Grave Circle A at Mycenae. Traces of organic material were found on a dagger associated with the adult male burial identified as burial 54 As (Nordquist 1987a, 127, n. 22), and pieces of linen fabric (Karo 1930-1933, 71, No. 228) may have originally adhered to one of the weapons deposited in Shaft Grave II, which is datable to LHI. Further, Nordquist (1987a, 43; also see Dietz 1980, 37 and 48, figs. 53-4; Karo 1930-1933, 108-09, 139, 142, fig. 57) argues that the only parallels to the white limestone pommel associated with burial 54 As are the alabaster/white marble pommels from Shafts IV and V in Grave Circle A, which also are from MHIII-LHI contexts. This further supports the premise posited above (*Section 6.3.2.2.2*; also see Wright, J. C. 2004) that the group using this cemetery was investing in the expression of elite Mycenaean mortuary ideology. However, weaponry deposition in the East Cemetery differs from that performed in Grave Circle B and probably Grave Circle A in one respect: weaponry was not deposited with female burials in the East Cemetery. The emphasis on male burials might be explained by the fact that the group using the East Cemetery had comparatively limited resources, and, as a result, fewer burials could be distinguished with prestige weaponry; just two male burials were provided with weaponry. But this scenario seems unlikely because male burials were also provided with gold jewellery (*Section 6.3.2.3.1*). Thus, the concentrated distinction of select male burials with weaponry, gold jewellery and fine pottery suggests that the group using the East Cemetery chose to

selectively deposit weaponry as well as other types of luxury items with certain male burials to express male prestige and identities. What is interesting is that this group also chose to eschew the performance of female-focused practices documented elsewhere at Asine concerning the deposition of textile production tools (*Section 6.3.2.6*) and domestic coarse ware (*Section 6.3.2.2.1,3*). It is possible that the East Cemetery group did not engage in female-focused practices because practices expressive of elite Mycenaean warrior ideology were locale–specific – practiced only in the East Cemetery. However, this seems unlikely, because select male burials from the intramural burial location were also provided with weaponry as early as MHII. Thus, it is more likely that the group using Asine's East Cemetery heavily invested in the performance of male-focused depositional practices to differentiate themselves from other groups at Asine and to create an identity evocative of Shaft Grave mortuary ideologies. The select nature of weaponry deposition also suggests that elite male identity(ies) also were being expressed. Therefore, this differentiation via weaponry deposition in the East Cemetery is not necessarily indicative of a radical ideological shift at Asine, but rather represents the choice made by this group: to home in on practices expressive of elite Mycenaean identities at the level of the group and male individual through the exclusive use of Shaft Grave mortuary practices.

#### 6.3.2.5 Toilet Articles

Toilet Articles were rarely deposited at Asine or Lerna. The sample is too small to warrant a table.

Two toilet articles were found in Asine's intramural burial location. A pair of bronze tweezers was associated with an adult female identified as burial 15FA from grave MH 53, which was datable to MHIII, and a bronze razor was associated with an unsexed adult burial from grave MH 107 (Nordquist 1987a, 134), which was datable to MHII (Nordquist 1987a, 134).[120] Because tweezers were strictly deposited with male burials in the Shaft Graves during the Early Mycenaean phase (*Section 5.3.2.5*), it is possible that the deposition of tweezers with a female burial represents a different mortuary ideology and is indicative of yet another way in which female distinction was expressed via the deposition of luxury items in Asine's intramural location during the Middle Helladic phase. The fact that no toilet articles were deposited with the male burial from the Aegina-Kolonna Shaft Grave also suggests that the link between male burials and bronze toilet articles was a later development

[120] Grave MH 107 also yielded a silver plated object that is either a razor or knife (Frödin and Persson 1938, 258, fig.182:3; Nordquist 1987a, 65, 122, no. 5). The only other female burial associated with tweezers in this research sample is Burial A in Tomb 2C from the Aspropilia Cemetery at Pylonas on Rhodes and datable to an LHIIIA2-C context (Karantzali 2001, 17, 72, Pl. 48a).

rooted in Shaft Grave mortuary ideology, which may explain why tweezers were deposited with a female burial in this location.

The only possible toilet article from Lerna is the bronze object tentatively identified as a razor, which is associated with an adult male identified as burial 217 Ler (the earlier burial) from Grave J.4, which is datable to MHIII/LHI (Caskey 1956, 154). The burial 217 assemblage also included four ceramic vessels, most of which were imports, including a spouted jar from Crete (Zerner 1990, 31, 38, figs. 36-41), and it represents one of the wealthiest burial assemblages at Lerna. Although the sample is too small to discern whether or not the deposition of toilet articles was linked to gender, the possible presence of a bronze razor and date of the burial suggest a link to Shaft Grave warrior ideology.[121]

#### 6.3.2.6 Tools

Tools from Asine and Lerna are catalogued in *Table 6.34*. No obvious tools (objects affiliated with production activities) were deposited with the male burial from the Aegina-Kolonna Shaft Grave.

***Tools and Asine's Intramural Burials***

*Table 6.35* and *Chart 6.10* indicate that in Asine's intramural burial location tools were deposited with select adult burials of both genders, and this practice favoured adult female burials. Awls, axes/celts and obsidian chips and blades[122] may have been deposited with adult burials of both genders due to association with unsexed burials. Shuttles and spindle whorls were associated almost exclusively with female burials, the exception being one terracotta spindle whorl (Nordquist 1996, 23; 1987a, 123, n. 12:3) found between the elbow and chest of an adult male identified as burial 20FA from grave MH 23, which is datable to MHIII/LHI. The deposition of a textile production tool with a male burial suggests that this burial practice did not entirely exclude male burials, and that certain males may have participated in these activities or may have been affiliated to these occupational groups. It is however possible that Fürst's identification of this individual as an adult male was incorrect (Frödin and Persson 1938, 117, n. 3.).

[121] See bronze tweezers associated with the adult male identified as burial 68 Myc from Grave Iota (Mylonas 1973, 119), and bronze tweezers associated with the elderly male identified as 66 Myc from Grave Nu (Mylonas 1973, 172-73. Pl. 151g).

[122] It is difficult to interpret tiny bits of obsidian found in graves, because it cannot be confirmed whether or not pieces were deliberately deposited or accidentally discarded or lost, finding their way into the fill of the graves.

The select deposition of textile production tools may have expressed the burial's affiliation with textile production activities. Because most of these objects were spindle whorls, the deposition of whorls may represent a specific practice that expressed not only status but also identity. Therefore, the deposition of whorls may have represented a high-status gendered occupational role and identity. While it is possible that children could have participated in such work too, it is more likely that the awl and spindle whorl deposited with the child and infant burials expressed ascribed status via affiliation with these activities and roles. Although it is impossible to ascertain to what extent the burial performance represented the social realities and negotiations of the living, it is probable that deceased female spinners were afforded special treatment as a direct reflection of the status they commanded during life.

***Tools and Asine's East Cemetery***

The group using Asine's East Cemetery chose not to deposit tools affiliated with specific production activities. Instead, they deposited functional knives and daggers with select adult male burials, as catalogued in *Table 6.34*. This provides further evidence for the emulation of Shaft Grave burial practice and expression of elite Mycenaean warrior ideology.

***Tools and Asine's Barbouna Area Cemetery***

Tools were rarely deposited in Asine's Barbouna Area Cemetery. Only a terracotta whorl was deposited with an adult female identified as burial 84 As from grave B.7, which was datable to MHIII (Hägg and Hägg 1973, 65; 1978, 60, Catalogue #68). Burial 84 As is also associated with domestic coarse ware. Based on the contents of her assemblage, this practice is similar to the female-focused practice, which expressed the distinction of high-status female burials via spindle whorl deposition in Asine's intramural burial location.

***Tools and Lerna***

*Table 6.34* indicates that tools were rarely deposited at Lerna, and that it is unclear whether or not gender determined this practice due to lack of sexing and unclear association. Yet, some behaviour may be similar to that observed at Asine such as: 1) Lerna's tool sample mainly comes from graves datable to Middle Helladic contexts, which suggests that these practices are expressive of mortuary ideology that pre-dates the Shaft Graves; 2) tools are mainly associated with select adult burials; 3) similar tool sub-types are represented; and 4) selectivity of deposition as well as the broad range of potential function suggests that these objects were not only affiliated with a broad range of activities but also expressive of identity. Because the only textile production tool deposited at Lerna was associated with an

unsexed adult, it is certainly possible that the link between high-status female burials and textile production tools was specific to Asine.

### *6.3.3 Distribution of Raw Materials*

*Table 6.36* catalogues the materials represented in Asine and Lerna's burial assemblages. Materials represented include bone, bronze, clay, vitreous materials (faience?), gold, lead, obsidian, quartz, shell, silver, stone and terracotta (for ceramic distribution see *Section 6.3.2.2*).

Basalt, bone, bronze, clay, obsidian, shell, silver, stone and terracotta were represented in Asine's intramural burial assemblages. *Table 6.37* indicates that industrial and non-exotic/non-imported materials, such as basalt, bone, clay and possibly shell were often deposited with female burials. Imported bronze, obsidian and silver were deposited with select adult burials of both genders. Non-adult burials were rarely if ever associated with expensive or exotic materials. *Table 6.38* suggests that to a certain degree the deposition of bronzes in the form of luxury items was one of the ways in which high-status female burials were emphasised.

*Table 6.39* indicates that bronze, gold, lead, limestone, shell and stone were deposited in the East Cemetery's graves datable from MHII to LHI. Adult male burials were associated with almost all these materials. Select adult male burials were also the only burials from Asine or Lerna to be provided with gold objects, suggesting a link between emerging elite male burials and gold. Although this is considered the wealthiest of Asine's burial locations, there is a noticeable absence of semi-precious stones.

*Table 6.40* shows that bone, bronze, carnelian, shell and terracotta are represented in the Barbouna Area Cemetery. Material deposition does not appear to have been determined by gender. Age, however, appears to have affected this practice, because infant burials were not provided with imported or expensive materials.

*Table 6.41* shows the distribution of materials at Lerna by chronological phase. Materials represented include bone, bronze, clay, vitreous paste (faience?), lead, obsidian, quartz, shell, stone and terracotta. Bronze is the only metal represented. This array of materials is similar to those present in Asine's intramural burial location. It is unclear whether or not gender determined distribution due to the high number of unsexed adults in the Lerna sample. Age may have influenced this practice, because non-adult burials were associated with the smallest variety of materials. Otherwise, it appears that adult and even elderly

burials of both genders could be provided with objects composed of bronze, carnelian and faience/vitreous paste. The greatest variety of materials is associated with the adult female identified as burial 31 Ler from Grave H.1, which is datable to MHII (Caskey 1954, 21; Zerner 1990, 31, fig. 34). This suggests that at Lerna select high-status female burials were emphasised via concise deposits of small portable luxury items – in much the same way as they were in Asine's intramural burial location.

## 6.4 Interpretation of Results

During the Middle Helladic and Early Mycenaean phases at Asine and Lerna, gender influenced the performance of certain deposition practices. What is more, there was more than one way to express gender ideologies and identities, especially at Asine.

### *6.4.1 Social Hierarchy and Gender at Asine and Lerna*

Generally, the spatial organisation of graves within each of Asine's burial locations does not appear to express social hierarchy overtly, because richer graves occur alongside poorer graves in all burial locations. Nor can it be determined whether grave features (e.g. size, shape and orientation) and burial position at Asine were shaped by gender or age.[123]

In the intramural burial locations, the dead were buried within houses or within abandoned domestic architecture (Milka 2006b; 2010) and probably were encountered by the living on a day-to-day basis; therefore easily, perhaps even unavoidably, integrated into the social cosmology of the community (Georgousopoulou 2004, 210-11) or perhaps serving to 'reconstitute the social community in a world of the dead' as argued by Robb (2007, 292) concerning the location of burials in and around Italian Neolithic villages. As Nordquist (1987a) argues, spatial organisation appears to be an expression of the family unit and was not determined by gender.

We know that gender did not overtly affect inclusion practices in either of Asine's extramural cemeteries. Yet, age-related inclusion practices were perhaps used to express differentiation (*Section 6.3.1*). The group using the East Cemetery generally excluded non-adult burials, while the burial practice used for child burials was relatively similar to that used for most adult burials, in terms of grave architecture, complexity and artefact type deposition (Dietz 1980) – a practice similar to that observed at Mycenae (Chapter 5, *Section*

[123] Dimensions are published for 30 of the intramural graves, 16 of the East Cemetery graves and two of the Barbouna Area graves (Dietz 1980; Frödin and Persson 1938; Hägg and Hägg 1973; 1978; Nordquist 1987a; 1996).

*5.3.1*). Comparatively, the practice used for infant burials was characterized by strikingly less investment. In contrast, the group using the Barbouna Area Cemetery included a large proportion of infant and neonatal burials, interring their remains in double and multiple burials in simple grave types with little or no architectural embellishment. This could reflect any of the following: high infant mortality rates, economic necessity resulting in a more cost effective means of disposal, and/or social values that defined infants and neonates as beings lacking fully developed social identities.

The use of grave type also differed according to location and the age of the deceased at Asine.[124] The intramural burials were interred in simple grave types.[125] Most contained pebbled flooring and made use of cover-slabs. Pits were used mainly for infant burials, while cists were used mainly for adult burials (Frödin and Persson 1938, 336-40; Nordquist 1987a, 92, tbl. 8.1; 1996; Pullen 1990, 10*ff*). Conversely, the groups using Asine's extramural cemeteries inhumed select adult burials mainly in cists (Nordquist 1987a, 92, tbl. 8.1).

Pots or pithoi were used as burial receptacles for a small number of burials. This practice was also age-related and differed according to location. *Table 6.42a* lists pot/pithos burials from Asine's intramural burial location and indicates that this practice was used exclusively for the interment of non-adult burials. Conversely, *Table 6.42b* indicates that the group using the East Cemetery used burial receptacles for the interment of select adult burials, most of which were female (Dietz 1980, 58, 62-63). This is similar in some respects to pot/pithos burials at Mycenae, because a few non-adult burials were interred in pots in simple graves in the Prehistoric Cemetery (*Section 5.3.2.1.1*). However, although elite male burials from Grave Circle B were associated with pithoi, they were not inhumed in these vessels. In this elite context, pithoi were used for storage of goods. Therefore, the practice for adult female pot burials in Asine's East Cemetery does not correlate to that used in Grave Circle B (*supra* n. 67) and probably represents a practice specific to the group using the East Cemetery. It also is unclear whether or not gender determined the use of pot burials in the East Cemetery, because most of the other female burials from this cemetery were not buried in pots but inhumed in simple grave types. Perhaps pithoi were used for individuals who may have died in close succession to one another under unique circumstances. This practice also could have

[124] Milka (within Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 76, figs. 9, 10) demonstrates that the different uses of grave type in the intramural and extramural groups at Asine were the most pronounced during MHII and MHIII, indicating that this shift in mortuary ideology was linked to changes within the larger picture of the site, e.g. the settlement of the Barbouna Area and Asine's increasing participation in modest trade.

[125] Grave types found in the Lower Town included brick cist, regular cist, semi-cist, semi-clay cists, earth cut graves, pits, rock cut pits, pit/stone enclosures, pithos or pot burials, stone enclosures and uncertain types (Nordquist 1987a, 92, tbl. 8.1)

been influenced by economic necessity. The construction of the graves in which pot burials were placed is unremarkable, as is the deposition of material wealth and the plain and coarse appearance of the pithoi themselves.[126]

The group using the Barbouna Area cemetery chose to differentiate themselves from other groups by constructing three shaft graves during the Early Mycenaean phase – a precise expression of elite Mycenaean mortuary ideology. Shaft B 30 contained the remains of an adult male identified as burial 107 As and five plain imported pots (Dietz 1980, cat. 107 As; 1991, 146; Hägg and Hägg 1975, 158-60, fig. 12; Nordquist 1987a, 99, 135). Grave B 32 contained the remains of an adult female identified as burial 108 As and four imported pots – some of which featured simple linear decoration and plastic features [Dietz 1991, 146; Nordquist 1987b, 99, 135]). Grave B 34 contained the remains of an adult male identified as burial 110 As and one undecorated Grey Minyan cup (Dietz 1980, cat. 110 As; 1991, 146; Nordquist 1987a, 99, 100-01, 135). Flights of steps were constructed down into each shaft – a time consuming and innovative architectural embellishment (Nordquist 1987a, 100-1). Grave complexity probably was not determined by gender. Instead, the behaviour appears to express: 1) an ideological shift in burial practice at Asine; 2) an affiliation with elite Mycenaean mortuary ideology; 3) the distinction of select, high-status, adult burials of both genders; and 4) the collective expression of group status, differentiating this group from others active at Asine.

Lerna is characterized by the almost ubiquitous and egalitarian use of simple grave types (mainly pits and cists), which tells us little about social hierarchy or how gender was negotiated (Voutsaki 2005, 353-54).[127] Five shaft graves are documented at Lerna, but the absence of remains in some of these deprives the record of crucial information. All are datable to the Early Mycenaean phase, and their construction clearly signals an ideological shift at Lerna in which elite Mycenaean mortuary ideologies were being expressed at the very least through grave architecture. Grave B.1 (Caskey 1955, 32-34, fig. 3, Pls. 15-17) and Shaft Graves 1 and 2 (Caskey 1956, 155-57, Pls. 39,a,c,d,e) were disturbed and all but void of remains and grave goods. Grave B.10 contained the remains of an adult male identified as burial 72 Ler (Angel 1971) and contained no grave goods. Grave B.2 (Caskey 1956, 155-57) was intact and contained the remains of an elderly female identified as burial 12 Ler that was associated with two cups and a bronze fragment. Lerna's shaft graves were located

[126] Grave 1971-7 yielded a lead rivet (Nordquist 1987a, 123, n. 10), and Grave 1971-15 yielded handmade pottery including two cups, a jar and a flat stone square of unknown function (Dietz 1980, 63).

[127] For studies on social organisation at Lerna see Nordquist 1979; 1987a; 1987b; 1990; 2002; Nordquist and Ingvarsson-Sundström 2005; Ingvarsson-Sundström 2003; Voutsaki *et al.* 2006.

intramurally, each constructed in spatially distinct burial clusters. Shaft Graves 1 and 2 were located in Square F6 below the House of the Tiles, and shaft graves B.1, B.2 and B. 10 were located proximally in Area B. Thus, we might loosely identify Shaft Graves 1 and 2 as being representative of a distinct group and Graves B.1, B.2 and B.10 as being representative of another group. The Area B 'group' could arguably be linked to domestic architecture. This suggests that the loci for the expression of kin-affiliated wealth at Lerna was not located within extramural cemeteries, as at Asine and Mycenae, but was fixed and located within small family units. This practice, in so far as we can tell given the limitation of the evidence, was not determined by gender, because burials of both genders were included. Age, however, may have effected this practice, because the individuals identified as burials 72 Ler and 12 Ler were both aged in their forties (Angel 1971). This suggests that status may also have been derived from the experience and authority of the deceased during life.

### *6.4.2 Gender and the Deposition of Material Wealth*

Generally, individual burials were distinguished but not overtly differentiated in terms of material wealth. However at certain locations some depositional practices appear to have expressed the distinction of high-status burials that varied according to gender as well as identity.

#### 6.4.2.1 Status and Gender Identity at Asine

*Table 6.43* lists Asine's adult female burials and their assemblages. High-status female assemblages were mainly found in Asine's intramural burial location and associated with a handful of burials from this location. They could include any combination of the following: spindle whorls, shuttles, adornment, obsidian chips, tweezers and pottery. *Table 6.4.3* indicates that high-status female burials associated with spindle whorls (or other textile production tools) could also be provided with domestic coarse ware that conceivably could have been used in the home of the deceased and/or her family prior to deposition, thus linking these burials to textile production activities as well as the domestic sphere. However, some female burials associated with domestic coarse ware were not provided with textile production tools, and female burials associated with textile production tools were not necessarily provided with domestic coarse ware. This suggests that affiliation with textile production was not intrinsic to the expression of gender ideology or family identity, but a matter of choice. Further, just one of the two female burials associated with small portable wealth and luxury goods (e.g. burial 15FA from grave MH 52 and MH 53 and burial 2FA from grave MH 98) was associated with textile production tools. This indicates that although wealth and status could be correlated to affiliation with textile production, the two factors were by no means bound up in one another. Therefore, the select deposition of textile

production tools seems to have expressed a distinct gender role and/or identity. What is more, the select nature of deposition as well the variability among high-status female assemblages suggests that multiple female identities and roles were being differentiated and expressed through grave good deposition at Asine.

Spindle whorl deposition at Asine was very specific and the functionality of these objects potentially illuminates the nature of one of these female roles. Spindle whorls deposited at Asine were composed of clay and terracotta. All were functional and probably used for spinning prior to deposition. This suggests that these objects were not merely markers of female status, but also expressed identity based on the living occupational identity of the deceased as a female spinner. Certainly, skills such as these would have contributed immeasurably to the community, so it is plausible that female spinners could have been afforded high-status and even authority within the community. It is unclear whether status was derived from this occupational identity or if this occupational role was reserved for women of high-status.

The distinction of high-status female spinners appears to be singular to Asine, because it is not practiced with any degree of recognizable continuity at Mycenae and is noticeably absent from Lerna. This is interesting, because Lerna was engaging in similar burial practices, namely through its use of an intramural location and grave types as well as the deposition of similar artefact types, including production tools that may have expressed identity. Yet, only one high-status female burial is associated with a possible textile production tool: the adult female identified as burial 31 Ler that was associated with two pierced flat bone implements (Caskey 1954, 21). This raises the questions: Why were textile production tools comparatively under-represented at Lerna, and why did this group choose not to emphasize female burials affiliated with these sorts of activities? Perhaps Lerna's high-status female burials were not affiliated with textile production activities, or these types of roles and identities did not warrant material expression in the burial practice.

For the most part, the group using Asine's East Cemetery did not deposit grave goods with female burials. Only one female burial was provided with objects. The adult female identified as burial 51 As was associated with a handmade jug with conical neck in Argive Lightware (Dietz 1991, 145, 181; 1980, 33-4; figs. 26, 27) and a slightly burnished, handmade double jug in Argive ware that featured bichrome decoration of three alighting birds (Dietz 1991, 145; 1980, 33-4; figs. 26, 27) – one of the finest, most elaborately decorated pots to be found at Asine. This pottery assemblage was arguably not 'domestic' in character and of a wholly different style and function to the domestic coarse ware deposited

with female burials in Asine's other burial locations, and, therefore, represents a different practice than those that expressed female distinction elsewhere in Asine. What is more, the distinctive character of burial 51 As's assemblage is often eclipsed by the comparative scale of the fine pottery assemblage associated with another East Cemetery burial: the adult male identified as burial 54 As from Grave 1971-3 (Dietz 1991, 145; 1980, 34-55, 109, figs. 30-33). Yet, the two ceramic assemblages essentially represent the same practice and ideological expression. Both ceramic assemblages are datable to the Early Mycenaean phase. Both express distinction via association with fine pottery, and both are expressive of elite Mycenaean mortuary ideology.

Almost all assemblages associated with high-status female burials were found in graves datable between MHI-III, indicating that some of these female-focused practices pre-dated the Shaft Graves and represent earlier mortuary ideology(ies). The exception is the non-gendered practice that expressed the distinction of the adult female identified as burial 51 As from Grave 1971-2 in the East Cemetery discussed above. Grave 1971-2 may datable to MIII or LHI and, therefore, is located firmly within an Early Mycenaean context and contemporaneous with similar practices documented in Mycenae's Grave Circle B – practices that emphasised elite adult burials of both genders via the deposition of fine pottery (Chapter 5, *Section 5.3.2.1*). What is interesting is that the group using the East Cemetery chose to eschew female-focused mortuary ideology, whereas the groups using Asine's intramural burial and Barbouna Area locations expressed both mortuary ideologies (e.g. female-focused and elite Mycenaean mortuary ideologies) indicating that more than one mortuary ideology was being expressed within the context of single locations. This suggests not only a creative approach to the expression of identity and status, but that gender roles and ideological constructs rooted in earlier female-focused mortuary ideologies endured and maintained ideological resonance into the next chronological phase, despite the introduction of other prestige-oriented mortuary ideologies.

#### 6.4.2.2 Gender and Location at Asine

We know that location was often one of several factors that determined the use of certain depositional practices, particularly those linked to gender. For instance, male burials were favoured for distinction via the deposition of material wealth in Asine's East Cemetery during the Early Mycenaean phase, while the distinction of female burials was emphasised mainly in Asine's intramural location during the Middle Helladic phase through the onset of the Early Mycenaean phase (MHIII). Based on this, it is tempting to hypothesise that the distinction of burials was sexually segregated according to cemetery location. But, is this accurate?

The answer is no. First, there was more than one way to express female status at Asine. The adult female identified as burial 51 As from Grave 1971-2 in Asine's East Cemetery was provided with a fine pottery assemblage expressive of elite Early Mycenaean mortuary ideology (*Table 6.43*; Section *6.4.2.1*; Dietz 1980, 33). This crucially indicates that the same practice used to emphasise the adult male identified as burial 54 As was not necessarily representative of a male practice, and that different distinction practices were spatially segregated at Asine based not on the gender of the deceased but on the ideological affiliation of the burying group. What is more, ideological affiliation does not appear to correlate neatly to chronological or even spatial distinction. High-status female assemblages from Asine are datable mainly to the Middle Helladic phase (MHI-III), only slightly pre-dating the deposition of high-status male kits (MHII-LHI). Clearly there is overlap between the two practices. This is why it is more appropriate to identify practices based on their ideological affiliation. Although female-focused mortuary ideologies may pre-date elite Mycenaean mortuary ideologies on the Mainland, its expression clearly overlaps expressions of elite Mycenaean mortuary ideologies possibly during MHII and certainly during MHIII at Asine.

But can location be correlated with ideological affiliation? Regrettably, no, because male distinction via the expression of elite Mycenaean warrior ideology,[128] non-gendered distinction via the expression of elite Mycenaean mortuary ideology and female-focused practices were all performed in Asine's intramural burial location, and female-focused and elite Mycenaean mortuary ideologies of status were performed in the Barbouna Area Cemetery. To illustrate this coalescence of mortuary ideologies, let us consider the richest and probably most complex female burial assemblage from Asine's intramural burial location. The adult female identified as burial 2FA from grave MH 98 (of unclear MH date[129]) was associated with a terracotta whorl, a bone awl, a possible shuttle, an undecorated imported Grey Minyan bottle, a decorated black polished amphora or jar and a pair of bronze earrings (Frödin and Persson 1938, 126, 264, figs. 106, 184:8; Nordquist 1987a 95, 113, 124, n. 19; 1996, 34, 37). Her assemblage expresses her identity as a female spinner. It also expresses status personified through the deposition of singular luxury goods. Further, this

[128] The adult male identified as burial 6FA from grave MH 58 was associated with a bronze spearhead (Frödin and Persson 1938, 123; Nordquist 1996, 27), and an unsexed adult from grave MH 107 was associated with an arrowhead and razor (Frödin and Persson 1938, 258, fig. 182:3; Nordquist 1987a, 65, 122).

[129] Frödin and Persson (1938, 126) dated grave MH 98 to MHI. Later Nordquist (1987a, 95) listed the date as uncertain based on the black polished amphora/jar. Recently, Voutsaki (*et al.* 2006, 66, tbl. 2) argued that graves located in Terrace II, including grave MH 98, may be datable to MHII, but stresses that new datings of Lower Town burial clusters are not yet confirmed. If grave MH 98 is datable to MHII, this practice could possibly predate the Aegina-Kolonna Shaft Grave and may suggest another nascent ideology.

assemblage represents one of the largest burial assemblages at Asine and Lerna, and *Table 6.44* indicates that this burial is also one of a very select group of burials associated with bronze. What is more, burial 2FA is the only burial from Asine's intramural location to be provided with jewellery (except the unsexed adult skeleton from grave MH 4 associated with two bronze beads [Frödin and Persson 1938, 116, fig. 91]). Unlike the ceramic assemblages associated with other high-status female burials in the intramural location, burial 2FA's ceramic assemblage did not include domestic coarse ware. In fact, her ceramic assemblage is quite singular. Her Grey Minyan bottle is imported, the amphora/jar is decorated and of a shape not found in any other grave at Asine and both vessels may have been intended for display. The combination of textile production tools, bronze jewellery and imported fine pottery suggests that the distinction of burial 2FA was expressive of more than one mortuary ideology. The deposition of textile production tools was expressive of earlier female-focused mortuary ideology, while the deposition of bronze jewellery and display vessels was expressive of elite Mycenaean mortuary ideology (see *Section 5.3.2.2.1* for a link between bronze jewellery and elite female burials in Grave Circle B), thus representing the expression of more than one mortuary ideology within the context of a single assemblage.

Why was burial 2FA not located in one of the more exclusive extramural cemeteries, especially since radiocarbon analysis has revealed that activity in these locations probably dated as early as MHII (Voutsaki *et al.* 2006a,b; 2009a,b)? Burial 2FA does not appear to have been excluded from the extramural cemeteries based on her gender, because adult female burials were certainly included in the extramural cemeteries. It is doubtful that her identity as a female spinner precluded inclusion, because another female spinner identified as burial 84 As was interred in the Barbouna Area Cemetery (discussed below) even though the group using this cemetery was heavily invested in the expression of elite Mycenaean mortuary ideology. Therefore, it is probable that burial 2FA was interred in the intramural burial location based on kin and ideological affiliation. It also is possible that her grave predated construction of the extramural cemeteries.

There is further evidence for the expression of different ideologies in the Barbouna Area Cemetery, some of which is pertinent to gender. Burial assemblages, mainly composed of undecorated handmade pottery, were deposited with nine of the 20 burials and distribution was fairly egalitarian among all types of burials (excepting infant burials, who were mainly excluded from this practice). Similar pottery assemblages were deposited with three burials: the adult female identified as Burial 108 As, the adult male identified as 107 As and another adult male identified as 110 As (Dietz 1991, 146; Nordquist 1987a, 99, fig. 97). These burials were also interred in shaft graves (graves B 30, B32 and B 34). This indicates that

here, as in the East Cemetery, pottery deposition generally expressed status but was not gender-related. Because no domestic coarse ware was deposited, and based on placement within a shaft grave, this practice probably expressed elite Mycenaean mortuary ideology. Alternatively, the adult female identified as burial 84 As from Grave B7 (datable to MHIII) was associated with a single terracotta whorl (Hägg and Hägg 1973, 65; 1978, 60). This is expressive of female-focused mortuary ideology and correlates to practices documented in Asine's intramural burial location, in which high-status female spinners were emphasised via the deposition of spindle whorls. Thus, the group using the Barbouna Area Cemetery also expressed more than one mortuary ideology.

In sum, ideological affiliation affected grave location to a certain extent. However, different burials could be emphasised in different ways regardless of location, excepting perhaps in the East Cemetery, which was used by a group committed to the exclusive expression of elite Mycenaean mortuary ideologies. What is interesting is that when a group chose to express these, they mainly used practices that were not overtly expressive of gender but articulated collective status and differentiation, whereas the earlier female-focused mortuary ideology was intrinsically, even strictly gendered and expressive of female status and identities.

#### 6.4.2.3 Gender and the Deposition of Material Wealth at Lerna

Based on evidence from a handful of burial assemblages from Lerna, as well as corroborative evidence from Asine and Mycenae, gender was expressed, although subtly, at Lerna via the deposition of material wealth. Here too, there is possible evidence for the co-expression of elite Mycenaean and female-focused mortuary ideologies. An adult female identified as burial 31 Ler from grave H.1 was associated with one of the wealthiest assemblages documented at Lerna. Her remains were surrounded with stones – one of the few burial embellishments documented at Lerna, and her assemblage included 12 seashells or animal bones worn as adornment, three bone dress pins, four vitreous beads, two bone beads, a spiral form vitreous bead, two obsidian chips, two pierced flat bone implements, two quartz polyhedrons and a jug in Matt Painted ware (Caskey 1954, 21; Zerner 1990, 31, fig. 34). The recent dating of Grave H.1 to MHII (Voutsaki 2010b) as well as burial 31 Ler's association with jewellery and a possible link to production activities (based on the possibility that two pierced flat bone implements were shuttles or loom weights) suggest that this practice was similar to that used for the wealthiest burial from Asine's intramural burial location: burial 2FA from Grave MH 98 discussed above. Additionally, a possible bronze razor was deposited with the adult male identified as burial 217 Ler from Grave J.4 (Caskey 1956, 154; Zerner 1990, 31, figs. 36-41) – a probable expression of elite Mycenaean warrior ideology.

### *6.4.3 Gender and the Pathological Evidence from Asine and Lerna*

In *Section 3.2.3.1* the results of the re-analyses of the Lerna and Asine skeletal evidence were discussed. It has been established that adults of both sexes struggled with ill health, and while there is no evidence supporting hypotheses for gendered eating practices, the stresses of pregnancy and childbirth slightly increased the vulnerability of the female population (Angel 1971; Ingvarsson-Sundström 2003; within Voutsaki *et al.* 2007; Triantaphyllou 2010, 449; within Voutsaki *et al.* 2005, 97, fig. 3).[130] There also has been speculation that high infant mortality at Asine and Lerna was linked to poor maternal health, possibly derived from feeding and early weaning practices (Ingvarsson-Sundström 2003; Nordquist and Ingvarsson-Sundström 2005, 163-64). Ingvarsson-Sundström (2003, Chapter 4, *esp.* 104; within Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 64, fig. 2; 2007, 140) acknowledges that this is difficult to prove, and evidence for weaning practices from each burial site is contradictory and confusing. There also is no conclusive evidence that mothers were suffering from poor health during and/or after pregnancy, and it is very difficult to identify how the relationship between environment, diet, physical stress and cultural practices affected different members of the population at Asine and Lerna.

Angel (1971, 84-89) found evidence of arthritis and exostoses in more than half of the Lerna population, most of which can be attributed to simple physical wear and tear, and Ingvarsson-Sundström's re-analysis of Asine's extramural burials revealed degenerative joint disease was 'almost equally distributed between the sexes' (Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 74, fig. 7). This suggests that the samples from both Asine and Lerna were subject to similar amounts of physical stress. However, Triantaphyllou's (*Mycenaean Seminar* 20-1-2010) re-analysis of the Lerna remains revealed that males generally suffered more physical injury and trauma than females. It is also probable that male injuries were linked to environment and resulted from arduous labour, prompting Triantaphyllou to argue that adult males from Lerna may have been more likely to participate in physically strenuous activities and that this is suggestive of a sexed division of labour – a tantalising hypothesis than can neither be validated or refuted based on the deposition of unspecific production tools at Lerna.

Both Angel (1971, 91-92) and Triantaphyllou (*Mycenaean Seminar* 20-1-2010) argue that trauma identified in human remains from Lerna cannot be directly linked to warfare and can tell us little about social organisation. The complete lack of weaponry in Lerna's graves also

[130] For studies on how pregnancy can compromise the immune system and detract from health see Fildes 1995; Maher 1992. For studies on how dietary constraints impact maternal health and affect lactation see Chávez and Martinez 1980; Fildes 1995.

suggests an absence or at least the de-emphasis of any sort of warrior ideology (except perhaps the deposition of a possible razor with the adult male identified as burial 217 Ler from Grave J.4 [Caskey 1956, 154]). Yet, missing evidence from the Lerna Shaft Graves leaves large gaps in the story of Bronze Age Lerna, and the possibility must be entertained that elite(?) burial practices may have expressed warrior ideologies and identities in these Early Mycenaean contexts. At Asine, there is little if any compelling evidence for warrior activities and occupations. A functional bronze dagger (Dietz 1980, 37 and 43, figs. 51-2) was deposited with the adult male identified as burial 54 As from Grave 1971-3 in the East Cemetery, a functional bronze knife (Dietz 1980, 59, fig. 66) was deposited with the adult male identified as burial 60 As from Grave 1971-10 in the East Cemetery and an arrowhead (Nordquist 1987a, 134) was deposited with an unsexed adult (that is probably male [*Section 6.3.2.4.1*]) from grave MH 107 in Asine's intramural burial location. The selective nature of weaponry deposition suggests that objects were deposited as identity and/or prestige markers. However, the unclear function of some of the objects and lack of recognisable warrior kits renders it impossible to identify the expression of warrior identity reliably, although it is conceivable that some or all of these individuals were affiliated with martial or hunting activities.

### *6.4.4 Conclusion: Expressions of Gender at Asine and Lerna during the Middle Helladic and Early Mycenaean Phases*

Firm expressions of gender are present at Asine. Some of these practices are also documented at Lerna, albeit with much less frequency. Bronze jewellery, dress pins, textile production tools, and domestic coarse ware were associated exclusively with high-status female burials. Weaponry (including knives and daggers), razors, gold jewellery and head jewellery (diadems) were associated exclusively with male burials. The distinction of male burials via the deposition of material wealth was mainly performed in Asine's intramural burial location and East Cemetery, whereas the distinction of female burials was expressed in all burial locations in varying degrees.

The link between bronze objects of adornment and female burials is more ambiguous at Lerna, because dress pins and jewellery are associated with female, non-adult and unsexed burials. Male burials were not provided with dress pins at Asine or Lerna.[131] The adornment of female burials with bronze pins and jewellery also was practiced at Mycenae's Grave Circle B (*Section 5.3.2.2*). Correlative activity at Mycenae and Asine support the premise that this practice was probably gender-related at Lerna as well. Because no obvious textile

[131] Milka (within Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 65) made the same observation.

production tools were deposited with female burials at Lerna, except perhaps the adult female identified as burial 31 Ler (*Section 6.4.2.3*), the distinction of female spinners was probably specific to Asine, and it is unclear whether or not the deposition of other types of tools at Lerna expressed female identity and status.

Other practices may have been subtly affected by gender. *Table 6.45* and *Chart 6.11* indicate that the deposition of bowls may have been influenced by gender, because more elderly and adult male burials were associated with this ceramic shape. There is also suggestive evidence at Lerna that the distinction of high-status male burials was expressed via the deposition of imported ceramic vessels as well as pots featuring simple linear decoration, and Milka (within Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 65) argues that multiple vessels appear to have been associated with more male burials than female (4:1).

Milka (within Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 65; also see Voutsaki 2005, 353, tbl. 11) has shown that at Asine age and chronological phase influenced use of grave type. Adult pit graves are mainly datable to MHI-II, while non-adult pit graves are datable to MHIII-LHI. In Asine's intramural burial location, the pit was the most popular grave type for the burial of infants, while adult burials were interred mainly in cists (Frödin and Persson 1938, 336-40; Ingvarsson-Sundström 2003; Nordquist 1987a, 92, tbl. 8.1; 1996; Pullen 1990, 10*ff*). Milka (within Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 65) also observes that only adult burials are buried in cists with vertical slabs, and that only adult burials are buried with one or both hands across the waist. The groups using Asine's extramural cemeteries used pit graves almost exclusively for infant and neonate burials (except cist grave B 18 from the Barbouna Area Cemetery [Nordquist 1987a, 135]). Finally, in Asine's East Cemetery, infant burials were inhumed mainly in single burials, while in the Barbouna Area cemetery, they were grouped together in double or multiple burials within single graves (Graves B 18, B 29, B 33, B 35 [Angel 1982, 85; Ingvarsson-Sundström 2003, 123]).

Age also influenced depositional practices. Adult burials of both genders from Lerna were associated with drinking vessels, whereas non-adult burials were not. Jewellery made from bronze, vitreous material and semi-precious stones was associated almost exclusively with child burials from Lerna. Milka (within Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 65) observes that miniature vessels and terracotta whorls were never deposited in neonate burials, and that the miniature vessels were more often associated with infant or child burials. Also, tools were rarely associated with non-adult burials at either Asine or Lerna, and for the most part non-adult burials tended to be associated mainly with pottery and selectively with jewellery. Finally,

most non-adult burials from Asine's intramural burial location were excluded from grave good deposition.

Infant burials, on the whole, appear to have been subject to a different burial practice than that reserved for adults, the elderly and children – a phenomenon also observed at Mycenae (*Section 5.3.2*). It is possible that the use of a different burial practice for infant and neonate burials was firmly entrenched in the mortuary ideology of Asine's population and compelled the more wealthy members of the population to exclude their own infants from the East Cemetery and bury them within their homes in the intramural location. Surely, memories or even markers of graves were encountered by the living on a daily basis and the memories of deceased family members were deeply entrenched in Asine and Lerna's social fabric. It follows that the home may have been construed as the most appropriate place to process the premature deaths of the youngest and most vulnerable members of the population – individuals who had yet to develop social identities.[132] This, however, does not explain the inclusion of a high proportion of infant and neonate burials in the Barbouna Area Cemetery.

Age also appears to have determined the use of burial receptacles at Lerna and Asine (*Section 6.3.2.2*). At Asine's intramural burial location and Lerna, ceramic vessels were used as receptacles for non-adult burials. At Lerna, knobbed vessels in particular were used for the burial of infants during MHI-II (Blackburn 1970, 285; Milka within Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 65; Nordquist 1979, 120; Voutsaki 2005, 353; Zerner 1990).[133] Alternatively, mainly adult females were inhumed in pots in Asine's East Cemetery during the later Early Mycenaean phase. Thus, there is a shift in practice according to location and over time.

What is striking about gender and mortuary behaviour at Asine and Lerna is the emphasis of multiple female identities and roles and the expression of different mortuary ideologies. Expressions of earlier female-focused mortuary ideologies are documented in Middle Helladic and Early Mycenaean phase contexts, and expressions of elite Mycenaean mortuary ideologies are documented in MHII and Early Mycenaean contexts. Each mortuary ideology was expressed at Asine and probably Lerna. What is more, the different mortuary ideologies were expressed concurrently within the context of single cemeteries and, in rare instances, graves. The fluid co-existence of at least two mortuary ideologies at Asine and probably Lerna may help to explain why gender-related Shaft Grave mortuary practice was more

[132] Similar arguments are made by Ingvarsson-Sundström (2003). Also see Voutsaki (*et al.* 2006, 73, 75, figs. 4-6) for possible contributing factors, especially those related to methodological limitations of age determination.
[133] Milka (within Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 65) argues that the deposition of the imported jar (associated with the child burial) implies ascribed status and probably does not represent an age-related practice.

inclusive and creative than has been assumed and certainly provides a precedent for the construction of numerous gender roles for both men and women observed in Shaft Grave mortuary behaviour (Chapter 5).

What is also striking is that there was more than one way to express the distinction of adult burials of both genders. The distinction of adult male burials was expressed primarily through elite Mycenaean mortuary ideologies via the deposition of weaponry, fine pottery and/or adornment. What is interesting is that the deposition of weaponry and certain jewellery sub-types (gold jewellery and diadems) was gender-related, whereas the general deposition of fine pottery (except at Lerna where this practice favoured adult male burials) and adornment was not clearly gendered. This suggests that by and large groups investing in the expression of elite Mycenaean mortuary ideology did not overtly favour the distinction of one gender over the other. Conversely, earlier female-focused mortuary ideologies favoured the distinction of female burials to the exclusion of male burials, indicating that at Middle Helladic Asine female identities, roles and personas were bound up in ideologies of status and social organisation. This is particularly apparent in the distinction of high-status female burials associated with textile production tools and/or domestic coarse ware in Asine's intramural burial location and Barbouna Area Cemetery. It seems that the archetypal female constructs of the female spinner and head of house were intrinsically and symbolically linked to the domestic sphere and bound up in the expression of the family as well as the individual.

The rejection of female-focused mortuary ideology in Asine's East Cemetery, however, does not necessarily equate to a rejection of female distinction, because adult female burials were included in almost equal proportion to male burials in this location, and the distinction of the adult female identified as burial 51 As was expressed via the deposition of fine, even singular pottery. Rather, the absence of female-focused mortuary practices in the East Cemetery represents this group's ideological affiliation, which manifested in their commitment to the expression of elite Mycenaean mortuary ideologies that sometimes favoured the distinction of both genders. These practices were primarily focused on collective expressions of prestige, status and differentiation, and did not express occupational identity. While elite Mycenaean mortuary ideology was creative and even expansive in its distinction of burials of both genders (*Section 5.4.4*), it lacked the symbolic language to express occupational identity succinctly, and so the archetypes of the female spinner and head of house could not be located firmly within the context of collective identity and prestige expression. In light of all this, it seems fitting to re-categorise the ideological 'shift' that scholars have posited was taking place at Asine as being, in fact, an

ideological 'compilation,' in which the performance of different co-existing mortuary ideologies were carried out.

In contrast, mortuary behaviour at Lerna generally favoured the suppression of social identity rather than the expression of it, except in the case of a small select group of individuals: burials inhumed in Shaft Graves and select adult and child burials. Certain high-status female burials were linked to generic occupational activities, but there is no explicit evidence for the expression of female-focused mortuary ideologies like those observed at Asine. It is unclear whether the suppression of social identity at Lerna reflects a lack of wealth, an ideological choice or a gap in the evidence. It is interesting that the lack of evidence for weaponry and physical trauma as well as questionable evidence for toilet articles implies that the Lerna population were not participating in or ideologically investing in warrior ideology. It is possible that they may have chosen to express status in other ways, e.g. the use of the shaft grave type. Still, a wealthy burial assemblage in and of itself did not express gender or age. Rather, the deposition of individual objects within each assemblage (i.e. pins perhaps used for adult female funerary dress, possible toilet articles deposited with adult male burials and tools linked to production or occupational activities) was primarily expressive of identity and secondarily expressive of gender (if at all).

The analysis of Asine and Lerna paints a picture of two populations in which family was paramount. When status was expressed, mortuary ideology was transmitted chiefly through the burials of high-status adult females whose identities were symbolically bound up in and representative of the family unit, the domestic social sphere and socially valued occupations. Against this backdrop, a combination of external influences (including that of nearby Mycenae and possibly even Aegina-Kolonna), access to trade, new levels of wealth and expansion within the settlements themselves contributed to and facilitated an ideological 'compilation' of mortuary practices perhaps even as early as MHII.[134] The use of different mortuary ideologies, inclusive of the deposition of ideologically endowed luxury items as well as self-identified objects expressive of occupational identity, hearth and home, help to explain how and why Shaft Grave funerary practice reached such a fever pitch of creative expression at Mycenae.

[134] There is compelling evidence that this practice reached an apex of expression at Asine at the end of the Early Mycenaean phase. Excavators found a LHIIB level in Chamber Tomb I:1 in Asine's Necropolis. Grave goods deposited here included a gold plated toggle, six amber beads, a gold, bronze and silver finger-ring, a bronze and gold finger-ring, the carnelian 'Moon' amulet and an amber 'Barnstensbricka' (Frödin and Persson 1938, 371; Hughes-Brock 1996, 70-72, 78). Little is known of the burials from Asine's Necropolis and most of the chamber tombs suffered from disturbance. At the very least, this group of chamber tombs confirms that a highly exclusive elite sub-set of Asine's population was established by LHII.

# Chapter 7

# Warriors and Women of Substance: Gender and Mortuary Behaviour in Chamber Tomb Cemeteries during the Palatial and Late Mycenaean Phases

This chapter focuses on the Palatial and Late Mycenaean phases (LHIIIA-C) and aims not only to investigate the relationship between gender and mortuary behaviour at this stage, but also to establish whether the expression of gender represented new burial practices and ideologies or a continuation of those observed in burial samples datable to previous phases (Chapters 5 and 6). The Palatial (LHIIIA-B) and Late Mycenaean phase (LHIIIC) burial samples are composed of sexed burials from two well-documented Mycenaean chamber tomb cemeteries. This is limiting in that it provides insight only into specific socio-economic groups, probably second-tier elites and reasonably well-off families. This is not deliberate, but reflects the state of the available evidence. The upper elite burials from the LHIII tholos tombs were not included, because no osteological analysis has taken place, and these monumental tombs were either looted or too disturbed to facilitate analysis.[135] This is unfortunate, as these tombs could have provided valuable insight into the mortuary behaviour of first-tier elites, which were the focus of Chapter 5. In light of this, this chapter is, by necessity, an exploration of how culturally Mycenaean populations (though not necessarily in all cases reliant upon, controlled or even wholly informed by palatial infrastructure and social values) expressed gender through mortuary behaviour. The samples represent a discernible range of wealth and complexity in their own right. They come from the Athenian Agora Cemetery in Attica and the Aspropilia Cemetery near Pylona on Rhodes in the Dodecanese.

Since the 1931 excavations began, the Agora Cemetery has benefited from ongoing excavation and publication by the American School at Athens (Camp 1999; 2003; Immerwahr 1971; Shear 1935; 1936; 1937; 1938; 1940; 1975; Thompson 1948; 1949; 1950; 1952; 1953; Vermeule and Travlos 1966). It was also one of the earliest excavations to incorporate a comprehensive programme of anthropological analysis overseen by the pioneering physical anthropologist J.L. Angel (Angel 1945; Bisel and Angel 1985; Immerwahr 1971). Because of its location in Attica, this rich data group is often overlooked.

[135] For LHIIIA tholos tombs see Cavanagh and Mee (1998) and Pelon (1976). Publication of the skeletal evidence and archaeological context of the MHIII/LHI Pylian Tholos IV will post-date submission of this thesis (S. Stocker, pers. comm, 5th May, 2011). For Tholos IV see Bennet and Shelmerdine 2001, and for the Pylian Tholoi see Schepartz *et al.* 2009, 162-63, tbl. 10.2. The Prosymna Tholos Tomb is included in the unsexed burial sample analysis (Chapter 8).

Most broad mortuary studies (Voutsaki 1993; 1998; 2004; Voutsaki *et al*. 2005; 2006; 2007) focus exclusively on Argolid sites because this is where most of the Mycenaean data comes from, it is the home of the Shaft Graves and (perhaps as a reflection of the first two) it appears to have been the Mycenaean heartland. Yet, the Late Bronze Age Agora graves are culturally Mycenaean, based on the exclusive use of Mycenaean grave types such as the chamber tomb, pit and cist types, the deposition of typical Mycenaean artefact types and the use of inhumation and multi-generational and secondary burial. The Attic location adds to the potential for insight into the cultural uptake of Mycenaean mortuary ideology throughout Greece during the Palatial and Late Mycenaean phases.

The small Rhodian extramural cemetery located at Aspropilia is thought to be associated with a settlement in the vicinity of Pylona village (Mee 1982; Mee and Cavanagh 1990, 229-30). Excavated in 1993, the LHIIIA-C cemetery is thoroughly documented (Karantzali 2001), including anthropological analysis of the skeletal evidence (McGeorge 2001). Many aspects of mortuary behaviour at Aspropilia can be categorised as culturally Mycenaean (such as the exclusive use of chamber tombs and inhumation, the use of multi-generational burials, secondary burials and the deposition of Mycenaean artefact types and objects), and the chamber tomb cemetery is also an example of how Mycenaean mortuary ideology penetrated and was appropriated by SE Aegean societies during LHIIIA-C (Georgiadis 2003).

No Palatial or Late Mycenaean phase chamber tomb cemeteries from the Argolid facilitate skeletally sexed analysis. The Kalkani and Third Kilometre chamber tomb cemeteries from Mycenae (Wace 1932) could not be included because Fürst analysed only 20 crania from these large burial samples and sexed these based on dated and unreliable osteological methodologies (*supra.* n. 55; for reliable methods concerning the sexing of skeletal remains see *Section 4.1.2*). The Deiras Cemetery of Argos was analysed using the gender attribution approach and kept in play as part of the data group for this project until an advanced stage of research. It was finally omitted because results of the analysis neither support nor refute results of the Agora or Aspropilia analyses, and ultimately the state of the data cannot sustain any real interpretation. Although the Deiras burial sample, the demographics for which are shown in *Table 7.1*, consists of *c.* 150 individuals, the sample is limited because: 1) Charles (1958; 1963) analysed the remains of just 47 individuals; 2) his methodologies are dated and considered unreliable; and 3) many burials are of unclear date because they were located in tombs that were used over the course of more than one chronological phase. Regretfully, the results of Hapiot's re-analysis of Deiras' skeletal evidence will not be published until after the submission of this thesis. What is more, *Tables 7.2-3* demonstrate that grave good

association with burials is reported for only a small minority of the sample, and when objects could be linked to burials, most of these were unsexed. In some cases, this is due to the separate publication of Deshayes (1966) and Charles' (1958; 1963) results. Each analyst used a different notational method to identify burials making it impossible to correlate objects to Charles' analysed burials. There also are several instances in which Deshayes lists all burials from a tomb (e.g. Skeletons No. 1, 2, 3), but fails to specify their find spots or report associations with grave goods. Adding further to confusion, Volgraff (1904) died before publication of the Deiras chamber tombs, and data concerning the tombs he excavated is now lost.

Argos is also home to several other cemeteries and grave groups that cannot be included in analysis. Although Charles (1958; 1963) analysed many of the skeletons buried in the Middle Helladic simple graves located in the South Quarter of the settlement (Grandjean and Bommelaer 1972), the full archaeological context (e.g. grave construction, burial location and grave associations) is still, for the most part, unpublished. The Argos tumuli, datable to the Middle Helladic and Early Mycenaean phases, benefit from detailed publication (Dietz 1991, 132-39) as well as recent osteological analysis by Triantaphyllou (2009, Mycenaean Seminar, Institute of Classical Studies, London; *et al.* 2008; within Voutsaki *et al.* 2006, 88-89, tbl. 4; 2009b, 179-88), but lack of clear association and the compromised state of the skeletal sample prohibit inclusion,[136] although analyses of some of the burial assemblages using the method for unsexed burial samples (*Section 4.3*) are presented in *Appendix II*. Built chamber tombs datable to LHI-III have also been found on or near the Aspis (Papadimitriou, N. 2001). These consisted of T. 29, T. 164 and Tomb X2. All but T. 164 were robbed and/or disturbed (Papadimitriou, N. 2001). Forty three graves located in the N. Kouros plot at Argos (including the Tripolis Street Graves [Kanta 1975], most of which were datable to LHIIIC) were unsuitable for analysis due to lack of osteological analysis.

Finally, Messenian and Boeotian chamber tomb cemeteries did not allow analysis.[137] The 63 LHIII chamber tombs documented at Ialysos on Rhodes (Jacopi 1930-31, 253-345; Maiuri 1923-24, 86-247; Mee 1982, 8-46) also did not allow analysis because burials were not osteologically analysed.

[136] Triantaphyllou (pers. comm, 20th January, 2010) reported that just 25 burials out of the 116 were in a state that facilitated osteological analysis and admits that the tumuli burial sample is so limited that a gendered analysis of the tumuli's graves is not possible.

[137] For the LHIII Messenian chamber tombs in Pylos see Blegen *et al.* 1973; in Volimidia see *PAE* 1952-54, 473-96; 1953, 238-50; 1954, 299-306; 1960, 198-201; 1964, 78-95; 1965, 102-20; *Arch. Delt.* 27 1972, 256-58. For the LHIII Boeotian chamber tombs see *Ergon* 1984, 51; Marinatos, S. 1970, 61; *PAE* 1969, 5; 1970, 29; 1971, 7; 1973, 11; 1974, 9; 1975, 415; 1976, 61; Spyropoulos 1969, 20.

Because it is important to remember that Mycenaean gender and mortuary ideologies were not necessarily characteristic of other communities populating the Aegean, an analysis of the Odos Palama grave group from the LMIII cemetery at Khania on Crete is presented in *Appendix I*. Results provide a useful counterpoint from which a deeper understanding of the relationship between gender and Mycenaean mortuary behaviour can be derived.

## 7.1 Archaeological Context

### *7.1.1 Archaeological Context: Athens and the Agora Cemetery*

Athens has probably been occupied since the Neolithic period. Mortuary and ceramic evidence suggest that it may have experienced a surge in activity and change in funerary practice towards the end of the Middle Bronze Age (MHIII) (Papadimitriou, N. 2010, 247-48).[138] There is no firm evidence of a Mycenaean palace on the Acropolis (Iakovidis 1983, 77-79, 87-88; Mountjoy 1995, 22, 24, 41-42), and very little datable settlement architecture has been found. It is possible that evidence of a palatial Athens may have been removed by subsequent destruction or remains undiscovered. Mountjoy (1995, 9, 18) sees LHII Athens as a thriving Mycenaean settlement, while Immerwahr (1971, 150) sees it as non-palatial and backward. We do know that a substantial Mycenaean fortification wall ringed the Acropolis, and that Athens enjoyed access to valuable goods and materials comparable to those found in other major Mycenaean settlements (Immerwahr 1971; Kraiker and Kübler 1939, 1-88; Mountjoy 1995; Pantelidou 1975; Papadopoulos 2003). Still, it is unclear whether Athens was: 1) a palatial centre; 2) under the control of an external palatial administration; or 3) fell outside the economic jurisdiction of the palatial economy while operating independently and participating in Mycenaean culture.[139] Inconsistencies in the record as well as other factors, such as erosion, later construction and the reliance upon rescue excavations for discovery, make it difficult to form a clear picture of the social organization of Athens during the Mycenaean epoch.

### *7.1.2 Archaeological Context: Rhodes and the Aspropilia Cemetery*

Evidence of trade with the Argolid and widespread use of chamber tomb cemeteries on Rhodes contribute to the now predominant characterization of LHIII Rhodes as being 'thoroughly Mycenaean' (Karantzali 2001, 78). Still, it is unclear whether or not the Rhodian

[138] N. Papadimitriou (2010, *esp*. 247) admits that this interpretation is based on 'piecemeal evidence'.
[139] Halstead (1992a; 1992b) and Foxhall (1995) have argued that farmers could have produced crops that did not directly generate income for the palace administration, or they may have practised small-scale independent production, which would have presented labour-saving advantages to the large-scale palatial production practices.

population was composed of or included immigrants from the mainland and/or Crete; or for that matter whether the population may have been composed of mainland Mycenaeans, Rhodians assimilating Mycenaean culture or a combination of mainland Mycenaeans, Rhodians and Cretans (based on the presence of Cretan-inspired artifacts found in mortuary and settlement contexts). We know that Rhodes served as an important midpoint for trade between mainland Greece, Cyprus and the Levant (French 1986, 279; Mee 1982; Portugali and Knapp 1985, 52), but it remains unclear if trade activities were organised or administrated by individuals or a central Mycenaean authority. There also is evidence that Rhodians were participating in an exchange or sharing of mortuary practices rooted in Mycenaean, Rhodian and Cretan mortuary ideologies.[140] Despite compelling evidence for a diverse and rather cosmopolitan Late Bronze Age population, the predominant view seems to favour an interpretation of Mycenaean material culture as evidence of a dominant mainland presence on the island (Benzi 1988; 1992, 212; 1996, 949; Cadogan 1993, 93; Hankey 1993, 103; Karantzali 2001, 78; Mee 1988, 57; for a summary of the arguments concerning migration, colonization and invasion on Rhodes and in the South Eastern Aegean see Georgiadis 2003, 10-19). However, the assimilation of Mycenaean culture into Rhodian culture was not straightforward and may have taken surprising or even unpredictable forms. For example, E. S. Sherratt (1998, *esp*. 295; 2005) argues for restraint concerning the assignation of 'ethnicities' and 'ethnonyms' to prehistoric populations based solely on the presence of material culture, especially pottery. She specifies that the presence of imports probably more accurately reflects a lack of 'centralized or tight "palatial" forms of economic and political control' (Sherratt, E. S. 1998, 306).

Bearing this in mind, it seems prudent to recognize the expression of Mycenaean mortuary ideology at Aspropilia, while viewing the population, not within the constraints of a single identity constructed in hindsight by scholars, but as an example of how far-reaching Mycenaean mortuary ideologies could be at this juncture in time. In addition to ceramic wares from the Northern Peloponnese, the group using Aspropilia also deposited Cretan shapes and a large number of locally manufactured Rhodo-Mycenaean pottery – a stylistic composite of influences from the mainland, Crete and Anatolia as well as Rhodian shapes and motives (Karantzali 2001, 25-25; Mountjoy 1998, 39-41; 1999, 983-84). Further, the presence of local and Rhodian objects as well as grave goods from and inspired by cultures beyond Mycenaean Greece show how this group effectively created a 'home-grown' burial practice. Thus, Aspropilia's mortuary ideology was rooted in Mycenaean grave construction

[140] Carstens (2001) argues for a possible cultic connection between Late Bronze Age Rhodian and Hittite culture based on evidence of drinking vessels from the Mycenaean cemetery at Müsgebi necropolis on the Halikarnassos peninsula, in use from LHIIIA1-C.

and modes of expression while integrating practices specific to Rhodes itself and assimilating influences from the host of cultures and peoples who populated and traversed the South Eastern Aegean during this time. Therefore, a gendered analysis of the Aspropilia cemetery provides a point of comparison with the Agora Cemetery sample and also demonstrates the extent to which an LHIIIC population chose to and could sustain trade contacts and uphold Mycenaean burial traditions after the collapse of the palatial administration.

## 7.2 Data and Limitations

### *7.2.1 The Agora Cemetery*

The Bronze Age Agora Cemetery includes 61 graves ranging in date from LHII-SM (Figure 29; Camp 1999; 2003; Immerwahr 1971).[141] These include chamber tombs, simple grave types and a shaft of unclear MH date (Immerwahr 1971, 52-53, 92-95; Shear, 1936, 20-21, fig. 17). *Table 7.4* lists 15 graves datable to the Palatial phase that were reported as disturbed. Many were classified as such because grave dimensions were unclear. Because most of the burials and grave goods remained intact (though not *in situ*) many cases of 'disturbance' reflect lack of clear association rather than an absence of evidence. In reality, just nine of these graves may have originally contained more objects and/or burials. *Table 7.5* lists 11 graves that were in use during the Submycenaean period (*c.* 1000 B.C.). Ten of these were in use only during this period and are beyond the scope of this research. Grave J 2:11 (Camp 1999, 265) is included in analysis because it may have been in use during the Late Mycenaean phase.

The Agora burial sample is composed of roughly 125 individuals, listed in *Table 7.6*. Some of these are or could be datable to the Early Mycenaean phase and will be mentioned when appropriate. Otherwise, the analysis focuses primarily on Palatial phase activity, because the small size of the Early and Late Mycenaean samples does not enable interpretation. Some Palatial phase burials were part of secondary bone collections and are of unclear date. In an effort to represent the distribution of burials as accurately as possible, numerical ranges rather than absolute numbers have been used when appropriate. Most of the skeletal evidence was anthropologically analysed by Angel (1945, 269-363; Immerwahr 1971 158-262). Liston (Camp 2003, 254, 263-64) and Little (Camp 1999, 265, nos. 11, 12) analysed skeletal evidence from the recently excavated Grave J-K 2:2 and Grave K 2:5, and Kirkpatrick Smith (2009) re-analysed the Agora's male burials. Tomb I, also known as 'The

[141] Styrenius (1967, 31) and Syriopoulos (1983, 525) published other simple graves.

Tomb of the Ivory Pyxides' and arguably the richest grave from the Agora, contained no human remains.[142] For purposes of analysis, the missing remains from Tomb I are categorised as an 'unsexed adult,' and all objects from the tomb will be attributed as such.[143]

The cemetery yielded *c.* 720 artefacts (Immerwahr 1971; Camp 1999; 2003; also see Dahm 2007; Koehl 1986b; Paterakis 1999). Most were associated with individual burials. However, grave goods from Tomb XIV, Tomb XXIII, Tomb XXIV and Tomb XXVI (Immerwahr 1971, 201-03, 218-29) cannot be associated with individual burials. In some cases, Immerwahr (1971) and Angel (1945) used different notation systems to identify burials, further muddying identifiable associations. For example, Immerwahr published the grave good associations with burials identified by the order in which the burials were excavated (i.e. Burials I, II, III, etc.), and in turn sometimes failed to correlate her notation with Angel's (i.e. AA 158), making it impossible to link anthropological profiles with grave good association in a few cases. These are discussed as needed.

### *7.2.2 The Aspropilia Cemetery*

The Aspropilia Cemetery is composed of six chamber tombs (Figure 30). Tombs 1 through 5 were for the most part undisturbed and contained a total of eight burial chambers (Tombs 2 and 5 were constructed with multiple chambers). The chamber of Tomb 6 was destroyed and plundered (Karantzali 2001, 21, figs. 21-22, Pl. 16b-d), and the tomb could not be included in analysis. Cemetery activity is datable to the Palatial and Late Mycenaean phases. *Table 7.7* lists the remains of 31 individuals. All skeletal evidence was analysed by McGeorge (2001). The tombs yielded more than 250 objects (Karantzali 2001).

Originally there may have been up to five more tombs that have since been lost due to natural erosion and modern construction (Karantzali 2001, 14). Grave goods originally deposited with some burials may have been displaced or re-located when these were swept aside as part of secondary burial practice. Lack of association is mainly attributed to one artefact type, pottery.

[142] Tomb I's remains were removed during the Mycenaean period. Otherwise, the grave and its contents were undisturbed (Immerwahr 1971, 158-68; Shear 1940, 24-91).
[143] Immerwahr (1971, 151) artefactually gendered the missing remains as female and interpreted the grave as that of an 'an aristocratic princess.'

## 7.3 The Analysis: Gender Attribution in the Agora and Aspropilia Cemeteries

### *7.3.1 Inclusion*

*Table 7.6* indicates the possible range of burials included in the Agora Cemetery over time. During the Palatial phase, burial practice here expanded to include a greater number of burials of both genders from almost all age groups, excepting infant burials, which are all but totally excluded. The small size of the Late Mycenaean phase sample prohibits observation, but suggests that inclusion practices were similar to those observed in the Palatial phase sample – albeit on a smaller scale. Therefore, gender probably did not determine inclusion practices during any phase of use, but age did influence whether or not infant (and neonate) burials were included during the Palatial phase.

*Table 7.7* indicates that inclusion practice at Aspropilia altered from one chronological phase to the next. During the Palatial phase, adult burials of both genders as well as a small but significant number of elderly burials of both genders were included, whereas child burials were underrepresented and infant burials were completely excluded.[144] The practice then shifted during the Late Mycenaean phase, and twice as many non-adult burials were inhumed as adult burials. McGeorge (2001, 94) speculates that the increase in non-adult burials may reflect an increase in infant and child mortality representing a 'reversal of fortune' (McGeorge 2001, 94) for the groups using Tombs 4 and 5, but this is difficult to prove because rates of infant burials are as much about burial decisions and recovery methods as they are reliable indices of mortality rates.

The limited size of the Late Mycenaean sample from the Agora Cemetery makes it unclear whether the inclusion of non-adult burials in the Aspropilia Cemetery represents regional/cemetery specific practices or possibly missing deposition areas.

### *7.3.2 The Deposition of Grave Goods*

*Table 7.8* indicates that during the Palatial phase in the Agora, the deposition of material wealth was routinely practised, and that slightly more than half of all burials from each gender and age group (in most cases) were provided with grave goods. Because a comparatively high number of burials were located in graves with objects of unclear association and comparatively few burials were not provided with grave goods, it is likely that grave good deposition was standard but not required burial practice, and that primary

[144] Because no datable grave goods were associated with the child identified as Burial 3 in chamber 5B from Tomb 5, it is unclear when the burial took place.

burials were more often than not provided with material wealth regardless of gender or age. *Table 7.9* indicates that at least half of the burials datable to the Late Mycenaean phase were provided with grave goods, and that gender probably did not determine deposition. Ultimately, age and burial ordinance (e.g. whether or not a burial is categorised as primary or secondary) influenced whether or not a burial was provided with objects, because primary adult burials were almost always associated with grave goods, while less than half of all secondary burials were associated with grave goods.

*Table 7.10* indicates that, during the Palatial phase at Aspropilia, all primary burials (all of which were aged as adults and elderly) were associated with grave goods. Half of the secondary adult burials of both genders were also associated with grave goods, suggesting that secondary burial rites or disturbance may have displaced original grave goods. It is possible that child burials were excluded from this practice, but all child burials datable to this phase were secondary burials, making it likely that the exclusion of children does not represent age-related practice but instead reflects the displacement of objects during secondary burial rites.[145] *Table 7.11* suggests that during the Late Mycenaean phase depositional practices were performed in much the same way as they were during the previous phase. The remains of just one individual were categorized as a primary burial: an adult male identified as Burial 1 from chamber 5B in Tomb 5 (Karantzali 2001, 20, fig. 20, 92), and only the secondary burial of an adult female from chamber 5B in Tomb 5 (Karantzali 2001, 20, 92-93) may have been associated with a shell (Karantzali 2001, 20, Pl. 15e) that may or may not have been intentionally deposited.

In the Agora and Aspropilia cemeteries, almost all primary burials were associated with grave goods. Then as part of secondary burial rites, objects were often removed or relocated within the tomb and stored collectively. This suggests that once a burial had ceased to be identified by his/her individual identity (Voutsaki 1993, 32), skeletal remains were physically re-located into collective groups, perhaps completing their social and ideological transformation into ancestors (Voutsaki 1993, 34). This metamorphosis may have prompted the re-allocation of grave goods, which were no longer considered necessary or appropriate.

#### 7.3.2.1 Artefact Type Distribution

*Table 7.12* catalogues all artefact types deposited in the Agora Cemetery. *Table 7.13* indicates that, during the Palatial Phase, the range of artefact types grew to include more objects of adornment and luxury goods. It is probable that adults of both genders were

[145] It is unclear whether the child identified as Burial 3 from chamber 5B in Tomb 5 (Karantzali 2001, 20, fig. 20, 92) was a primary or secondary burial. This burial was not associated with grave goods.

associated with most object types, but weaponry was exclusively deposited with male burials. Select child burials were associated with a more limited range of goods. *Table 7.14* indicates that the range of artefact types deposited in the Agora contracted during the Late Mycenaean phase, and here again select adult female burials appear to have been favoured with objects of adornment.

*Table 7.15* lists artefact types deposited in the Aspropilia Cemetery. *Table 7.16* indicates that, during the Palatial phase, deposition was shaped by gender and age. Jewellery and toilet articles are exclusively associated with female burials. Tools are associated with adult burials of both genders, and finally weaponry is almost exclusively associated with adult male burials. Unfortunately, most of the grave goods datable to the Late Mycenaean phase are not associated with individual burials, making it impossible to identify depositional patterns.

More accurate readings of gender-related burial practices can be revealed through analysis of the distribution of each artefact type.

#### *7.3.2.1.1 Vessels*

##### *7.3.2.1.1.1 Pottery and the Agora Cemetery*

*Table 7.17* lists ceramic vessels deposited in the Agora Cemetery. *Table 7.18* indicates that it is unclear whether or not pottery deposition was influenced by gender during the Palatial phase, largely due to the high number of unassociated vessels placed near secondary bone piles. *Table 7.19* suggests that most shapes were associated with unsexed adult burials or of unclear association, and *Table 7.20* suggests that the deposition of vessels according to potential function was not related to gender or age. *Tables 7.21* and *7.22* indicate that neither the presence nor absence of decoration can be linked to any burial type, and that burials of all types, regardless of gender or age, could be associated with vessels featuring a range of decorative techniques and motives. Yet, three ceramic vessels featuring more elaborate decoration, including marine motifs, were associated with three male burials: a jug featuring a nautilus associated with the adult male burial AA 28 in Grave XXXVII; a krater featuring nautili (Immerwahr 1971, 244, Pl. 59) associated with the elderly male identified as burial AA 300 (also associated with five other pots, a bronze spearhead and a carnelian seal stone) from Tomb XL; and a ewer with nautilus (Immerwahr 1971, 245, Pl. 59) associated with an elderly male identified as burial AA 299 also from Tomb XL. Just seven other pots, all of unclear association, could be interpreted as being elaborately decorated. They consist of three vessels from Tomb I, three vessels from Tomb VII, and a single vase from Tombs XXIII and XXVI. Thus, pots featuring figures and/or elaborate decoration could be

deposited with high-status male burials, but were by no means exclusive to this type of burial. Ware type and import status were too inconsistently reported to elucidate whether or not these features could be linked to gender or age. Results suggest that the expression of identity, status and wealth were still focal points in this practice particularly concerning the deposition of decorated fine pottery with high-status burials, which is probably why the most elaborate pots were found in the Agora's wealthiest graves: Tombs I (Immerwahr 1971, 164-65; Langenbucher 2007, 79, fig. 83; Shear, 1940, 283), Tomb III (Immerwahr 1971, 170-7), Tomb VII (Immerwahr 1971, 182-90) and Tomb XXI (Immerwahr 1971, 215, Pl. 50).

*Table 7.23* shows that during the Late Mycenaean phase in the Agora pottery probably was deposited with most burials regardless of gender or age, but on a much smaller scale than it was during the previous phase. This indicates that the fundamentals of this practice did not obviously change over time.

#### *7.3.2.1.1.2 Pottery and the Aspropilia Cemetery*

*Table 7.24* lists pottery deposited in the Aspropilia Cemetery. One hundred twenty seven vessels are datable to the Palatial phase. *Table 7.25* indicates that most of these were not associated with burials, while only a few pots were deposited with adult burials of both genders, suggesting that this practice expressed identity and status. *Table 7.26* and *Chart 7.1* indicate that the small number of burials associated with pottery makes it unclear whether or not gender determined the deposition of pottery based on shape. *Table 7.27* shows that a coarse cooking vessel was associated with an elderly female burial, and that vessels possibly used for drinking, eating, pouring and display were associated with select adult burials of both genders. It is tempting to over-interpret the association of the coarse cooking vessel with an elderly female burial, but such a small sample hardly constitutes a pattern or establishes similarity with the practice documented at Middle Helladic Asine, in which high-status females were emphasized with the deposition of domestic coarse ware, especially given the temporal and geographic distance between the two samples. *Table 7.28* indicates that vessel decoration cannot be linked gender, and *Tables 7.29* and *7.30* also show that the deposition of pottery based on ware type and manufacturing provenance does not appear to be related to gender.[146]

Because the vast majority of pottery was found *in situ* but not clearly associated with burials, it is possible that it was displaced during secondary burial rites or that it represents a different pottery deposition practice, perhaps deposited after the performance of funerary

[146] Ware type was identified in 41% of the Aspropilia ceramic assemblage datable to the Palatial phase.

rituals (e.g. eating, drinking and fumigation rituals).[147] Thus, pottery deposition at Aspropilia differs from the pottery practices observed in the Agora and at Prosymna (Chapter 8) in two key respects: the group(s) using this cemetery emphasized the deposition of collective tomb assemblages vs. burial assemblages; and they deposited a significant proportion of Rhodo-Mycenaean, Rhodian A and B and SE Aegean wares (see *Tables 7.31* and *7.32*). In addition to these, they also deposited imported wares from the Argolid, Attica and Boeotia as well as Cretan motifs and shapes (Karantzali 2001, 24-65, 105-13; Karantzali and Ponting 2000). *Tables 7.31* and *7.32* show that the Aspropilia group(s) deposited local and regional wares in proportion to imported wares from the mainland, and that the group using Tombs 2, 3 and 5 deposited mainly imported wares from the mainland. Therefore, the deposition of ware type was deliberate and varied from tomb to tomb, suggesting that this practice expressed different group identities and even cultural or ideological affiliation.

*Tables 7.33* shows that almost all pots datable to the Late Mycenaean phase were of unclear association, suggesting the continued deposition of collective tomb assemblages. Only a few pots were associated with one burial – two amphoriskoi and a small flask were associated with the adult male identified as Burial 1 in 5B from Tomb 5 (Karantzali 2001, 20, 63-64, fig. 20). It is unclear whether deposition was related to gender based on the small sample size. The high number of unassociated pots does not allow further analysis of shape, function, decoration or ware type and manufacturing provenance.

#### *7.3.2.1.1.3 Non-Ceramic Vessels*

*Table 7.34* lists all non-ceramic and tinned ceramic vessels deposited in the Agora Cemetery. Most are datable to the Palatial phase. *Table 7.35* indicates that vessels deposited during the Palatial phase were associated with select burials of both genders. Three were bronze, consisting of a bronze lamp originally associated with the missing remains from Tomb I (Immerwahr 1971, 167-8, Pl. 33; Shear 1940, 285, fig. 6), a bronze bowl associated with the adult male identified as burial AA 41 from Tomb III (Immerwahr 1971, 171, 176-77) and a small bronze bowl associated with a subadult female identified as burial AA 129 from Tomb XIII (Immerwahr 1971, 200, Pl. 44; Langenbucher 2007, 78, fig. 82). The bronze lamp and bowl may have been deposited as heirlooms and/or as 'ancestral objects' capable of expressing legitimization (Wolpert 2004), thus perpetuating values and symbolic language

[147] Unassociated pottery shapes include basket vases (Mountjoy 1995, 22-25), widely interpreted as having been used in domestic contexts and for special food offerings for the dead (Catling 1964, 210; Furumark 1941, 73-74; Karantzali 2001, 47); braziers/incense burners, also possibly used for food preparation (Karantzali 1994, 290-91; 1999, 404; 2001, 49-50); hydrias; piriform jars; rhyta; and torch holders.

identifiable with elite Early Mycenaean mortuary ideology. The deposition of bronze vessels does not appear to be influenced by gender or age.

Fifteen tinned ceramic vessels were found in the Agora Cemetery. These are a type of display vessel not seen before the advent of the Palatial phase in Mycenaean Greece (Immerwahr 1966). Too delicate and easily damaged for practical use, Gillis (1991; 1992; 1996; 2002) argues that they probably drew special attention to the funerary practice reserved for select members of the population and may have been displayed in lieu of silver or gold vessels. She also suggests that they were an affordable alternative to the display of more expensive and exotic vessels like those used for Shaft Grave mortuary practice, which certainly seems to be the case in the Agora. Four tinned ceramic vessels were associated with an elderly male burial identified as burial AA 41a (Immerwahr 1971, 171-3, Pls. 35, 67), and seven tinned ceramic vessels were associated with an adult female identified as burial AA 40 (Immerwahr 1971, 171, 172-74), both of which were inhumed in Tomb III. Two tinned ceramic vessels were also deposited in Tomb 1 (Immerwahr 1971, 164), further emphasizing the elite status of the missing remains. And, finally, a tinned ceramic vessel was associated with an unsexed skeleton from Tomb II (Immerwahr 1971, 170, Pls. 34). *Table 7.38* indicates that gender did not determine this practice and suggests that group affiliation and status probably were the primary determinants.

Tomb I yielded two ivory pyxides with accompanying lids, which were already antiques at time of deposition (Immerwahr 1971, 166-67, Pls. 32, 33). Pyxides were rarely deposited as grave goods, and as has already been established, despite assumptions to the contrary, they cannot be linked firmly to female burials at Mycenae (*5.3.2.1*). While the deposition of these singular vessels further establishes the elite status of the missing remains from Tomb I, their presence tells us little about the gender of the missing burial.

The Aspropilia cemetery yielded two bronze bowls, both of which were found in Palatial phase contexts in Tombs 1 and 3 (Karantzali 2001, 15, 18, 66-67, figs. 4-5 and 12-13). They were not associated with burials.

#### *7.3.2.2 Adornment*

Jewellery, ornaments and dress pins are represented in both burial samples.

#### 7.3.2.2.1 Jewellery

##### *7.3.2.2.1.1 Jewellery and the Agora Cemetery*

*Table 7.36* catalogues all jewellery datable to the Palatial phase. Jewellery from Palatial phase deposits was rather lacklustre when compared to jewellery from Early Mycenaean phase burial assemblages at Mycenae and even the Agora itself, indicating that although the practice was more popular in the chamber tomb cemeteries during this time, it was more subdued – perhaps representative of what this segment of the population had access to. *Table 7.37* indicates that lack of association and the high number of objects associated with unsexed burials make it difficult to discern whether or not gender was a determinant factor for this practice. At least two child burials datable to the Palatial phase were associated with jewellery, and it also is possible that some of the jewellery allocated to unsexed burials may have been associated with non-adult burials, because Tomb XXIII, Tomb XXIV and Grave K 2:5 contained multiple burials made up of both adult and non-adult burials. This suggests that jewellery could be deposited with adult and child burials. Thus, status and wealth seemed to have been the sole determinants for this practice.

*Table 7.38* shows that when jewellery sub-type is considered distribution patterns become slightly more refined. Necklaces and bracelets were associated with select adult male burials. Necklaces of no association were also found in tombs that contained adult male remains, suggesting the possibility that these sub-types may have been used expressly for the adornment of male burials. But this pattern may be circumstantial because beads, possibly used as necklace components, were associated with an adult female burial identified as AA 119 from Tomb XIV. Beads could also have been associated with an elderly female identified as burial AA 154 from Tomb XXIII, as well as four adult females identified as burials AA 145, 145a, 146 and 146a from Tomb XXIV. Therefore, it is more likely that necklaces emphasized the select adult burials of both genders.

The ivory hair ornaments found in Tomb I could be classified as either jewellery or ornaments. They are difficult to interpret because: 1) the remains from Tomb I are missing; 2) ivory objects were rarely deposited in the Agora; 3) hair ornaments such as these are not documented elsewhere;[148] 4) the wealth of this tomb is exceptional within the context of the cemetery; and 5) ivory deposited in Mycenaean graves typically came in the form of combs or disembodied pieces used for object decoration.[149] Further, Krzyszkowska (1996, 86) notes

[148] Hair ornaments usually occur in the form gold or bronze hair spirals and are artefactually gendered as female.

[149] An ivory pendant from the Palatial phase Tomb I:5 in Asine's Necropolis (Frödin and Persson 1938, 178, 400), and an ivory bead from the Early Mycenaean phase Tomb 44 in the Heraion at

that ivory objects are notoriously difficult to date and argues that some may have been heirlooms upon deposition. It is certainly possible that the Tomb I hair ornaments could have been heirlooms – especially in light of the fact that the ivory pyxides were antiques at time of deposition. It is also possible that gender may have influenced the deposition of the hair ornaments, because the distinction of high-status male burials (particularly those buried in Tomb III, the Tomb of the Bronzes) was expressed through the deposition of assemblages wholly different in character (i.e. the deposition of bronzes and necklaces and bracelets composed of gold and/or semi-precious stones). What is more, ivories are only found in Tomb I. Therefore, the Tomb I ivories, particularly the hair ornaments, may be an example of an elite Athenian female kit – expressive not only of wealth and status, but also representing the fusion of elite Mycenaean mortuary ideology with a distinctly Athenian, female-focused burial practice.[150]

This leads to the consideration of another unusual piece of jewellery, the engraved carnelian seal stone found on the left wrist of the adult male identified as burial AA 300 in Tomb XL (Immerwahr 1971, 247, Pl. 75; Vermeule and Tavlos 1966, 78, Pl. 24f, fig. 4). It is possible that the seal was functional and could have been used prior to deposition, but whether it was used in an administrative capacity or as adornment is anyone's guess.

The deposition of jewellery in the Agora Cemetery during the Palatial phase appears to have been used not only to express status and wealth, but also as a strategic device to express the gendered identity and status of the burial as well as group affiliation and differentiation. Strikingly, during the Late Mycenaean phase jewellery deposition practices appear to have all but ceased. Only a heavily corroded bronze finger-ring was found in an LHIIIC/SM pit grave identified as J 2:11 and was associated with the remains of an adult female burial (Camp 1999, 265, n. 12, fig. 15).

#### *7.3.2.2.1.2 Jewellery and the Aspropilia Cemetery*

*Table 7.39* catalogues all jewellery deposited at Aspropilia during the Palatial phase. *Table 7.40* indicates that jewellery was associated with elderly and adult female burials; strongly suggesting that gender heavily influenced this practice. Female burials were adorned with elaborate necklaces composed of vitreous paste, faience and other semi-precious stones. It is also possible that the majority of beads associated with the elderly female identified as Burial 3 from Tomb 1 and the adult female identified as Burial A from chamber 2C in Tomb

Prosymna, which is associated with an adult burial identified as Skeleton No. 48 (Blegen 1937, 206-15).

[150] Immerwahr (1971, 151) also argues that the missing remains were female based on artefactual gendering of the hair ornaments.

2 may have been used for garment decorations, suggesting that exotic beads may have been an integral decorative element of the funerary dress of elite females affiliated with the group(s) using this cemetery.

The only beads not associated with a specific burial consist of a blue vitreous paste and carnelian bead (Karantzali 2001, 15, figs. 4-5) from Tomb I. Based on the abundance of beads associated with the elderly female identified as Burial 3 it is probably safe to assume that these two beads were deposited with her burial, perhaps originally decorating her funerary costume. Even if the beads were not associated with Burial 3, they could have been associated with the other adult female identified as Burial 2, also interred in Tomb 1. Still, lack of association for just two beads out of a cache of almost 300 from Tomb 1 and over 500 from the Palatial phase jewellery sample does little to undermine a strong link between exotic beading and high-status female burials.

*Table 7.41* lists jewellery from Aspropilia's Late Mycenaean phase contexts. No pieces could be associated with burials. Given that similar jewellery sub-types (e.g. necklaces, exotic beads and bronze finger-rings) are also found in Aspropilia's Palatial phase jewellery sample, it is plausible that similar rites concerning the adornment of high-status female burials continued to be practiced on into the later phase – albeit on a slightly less ostentatious scale to judge from the smaller quantities of objects datable to this phase.

**7.3.2.2.2 Ornaments**

Ornaments were selectively deposited in the Agora Cemetery during the Palatial phase and are listed in *Table 7.42*. They were used mainly as garment decorations and occasionally as object decorations. *Table 7.43* indicates that ornaments were deposited mainly with adult burials of both genders. It also shows that while the garments of both male and female adult burials could be ornamented, furniture featuring ornamental decoration was selectively linked to adult male burials, reminiscent of suggested patterns for male association in the Early Mycenaean phase Grave Circle A (*Section 5.3.2.8.5*).

Garment decorations mainly consisted of conical objects identified as buttons/whorls – the ambiguity of which was addressed in *Section 4.2.2.3*. The Agora's buttons/whorls are composed of steatite, stone and terracotta. They could have functioned as textile production tools, garment decorations or both prior to deposition. Bearing that in mind, *Table 7.44* indicates that buttons/whorls were associated mainly with adult female burials. Just three were deposited with the adult male identified as burial AA 113 (Burial VIII) from Tomb VII (Immerwahr 1971, 190, Pls. 40, 77), and possibly one was deposited with the child identified

as burial AA 140 from Tomb XXI (Immerwahr 1971, 216, Pls. 50, 77). In all, 31 buttons/whorls were deposited with unsexed burials or were of unclear association, and 21 of these were interpreted as being either buttons or beads from Grave K 2:5 (Camp 2003, 272-73), which contained the remains of four burials consisting of three children and one adult male. Because buttons/whorls were deposited in much smaller quantities than this per burial, the large number of buttons/beads found in Grave K 2:5 suggests that these objects were probably components of a single necklace rather than textile production tools or garment decorations. If so, the deposition of a necklace with an adult male or child burial makes much more sense, because it conforms to practices observed above (*Section 7.3.2.2.1.1*). Therefore, the deposition of whorls represents a female-focused practice and is probably related to earlier mortuary ideology in which high-status female spinners were emphasized via the deposition of textile production tools during the Middle Helladic phase (*Sections 6.3.2.6* and *6.4.2.1*) – a practice that was continued in the Early Mycenaean phase (*Section 5.3.2.4*).

What is interesting is that this female-focused practice appears to have changed over time. During the Palatial phase, the function of spindle whorls became more ambiguous and complex, and Athenians deposited comparatively large numbers of buttons/whorls with a greater proportion of burials from the cemetery compared to their predecessors at Asine and Mycenae. This suggests that the practice was still female-focused but no longer overtly expressed a gendered identity or role. The ambiguity of buttons/whorls suggests that they no longer carried the symbolic specificity of the past or expressed the individual significance of the burials to which they were associated. Instead, they were deposited as general markers of female status and were no longer necessarily representative of participation in female occupational activities. This is indicative of an ideological shift pertinent to the distinction of high-status female burials.

Quite distinct from the above practice was the select deposition of exotic and expensive garment decoration composed of large quantities of gold leaf ornaments from Tombs I and III. One hundred twenty eight gold leaf ornaments and fragments were found in Tomb I with no clear association, and 38 thin gold leaf rosettes are tenuously linked to the adult male identified as AA 41/Burial C. Thirty two of these rosettes lay at the base of the wall near the feet of burial AA 41, which prompted the excavator to posit that a peg found above the find area suggests that they had fallen from a now disintegrated cloak hung on the wall (Immerwahr 1971, 171, n. 8, 177). Ultimately, association is unclear. If the above assumptions are correct, then it would follow that ornaments composed of expensive, imported materials may have decorated the funerary shrouds of elite male burials. The

association of five ivory rosettes intended as inlays (probably for furniture that did not survive in the record) with burial AA 41 from Tomb III lends further support to the distinction of high-status male burials via the deposition of exotic ornamental objects.

The decoration of funerary shrouds with elaborate beading for elite female burials datable to Palatial and possibly Late Mycenaean contexts in the Aspropilia Cemetery was discussed above. Otherwise, no other ornaments were deposited at Aspropilia.

#### 7.3.2.2.3 Dress Pins

*Table 7.45* lists dress pins found in the Agora Cemetery. They are associated with three unsexed adults (including the missing remains from Tomb I) and one child burial. Except for the exquisite set of ivory dress pins found in Tomb I (Immerwahr 1971, 167, Pl. 33) all are composed of bone. Due to the small sample, little can be said concerning these objects. Just one pin was found in the Aspropilia Cemetery. A bronze fibula datable to LHIIIC was found in Tomb 4 (Karantzali 2001, 19, 70-71, figs. 16, 42, Pl. 47a). It was located towards the middle of the tomb on the chamber's east side, separate from the other grave goods. This suggests that it was most likely associated with the secondary burial of an adult female identified as Burial 2 – also located on the east side of the tomb (Karantzali 2001, 19, 89-90). Because bronze fibulae were commonly deposited in Submycenaean burial assemblages, it is likely that this deposition represents the introduction of later mortuary ideologies that are beyond the scope of this research. In all, the selective nature of pin deposition suggests that these objects were used as they were during the Early Mycenaean phase – as accessories, perhaps affixed to the shrouds of high-status burials.

### *7.3.2.3 Weaponry*

#### 7.3.2.3.1 Weaponry and the Agora Cemetery

*Table 7.46* catalogues all weaponry from the Agora Cemetery. All objects are datable to the Palatial Phase. *Table 7.47* indicates that weaponry was associated mainly with male burials ranging in age from subadult to elderly. Six daggers, one knife, one spear and a shaft (presumably from either a spear or javelin) were not associated with burials. All but two of these objects were located in graves containing male burials: Tomb XIV contained the remains of four children, one elderly male, one adult female and two adult male burials (Immerwahr 1971, 201-03); Grave J-K 2:2 contained the remains of one female, one child and two adult male burials (Camp 2003, 254-62); and Grave K 2:5 contained the remains of one adult male and three child burials (Camp 2003, 263). A possible dagger was found in the disturbed chamber tombs, which yielded no human remains (Immerwahr 1971, 181-82), and another possible dagger was found in Tomb XV, which contained the remains of an elderly

female and child burials and is reported as being very disturbed (Immerwahr 1971, 205, Pl. 46; Kirkpatrick Smith 2009, tbls. 6.1, 6.2).[151] This is the only possible exception to the otherwise consistent association of weaponry with male burials – and this exception is tenuous is best. This suggests that weaponry was exclusively deposited with male burials.

The nature of these weaponry deposits suggests a shift in practice. The weaponry is functional and does not include objects that are readily recognized as prestige or display weaponry like some of those found in the Early Mycenaean Shaft Graves. It includes a more limited range of general Mycenaean weaponry sub-types, e.g. swords, knives, daggers, arrowheads and spears. All objects are bronze, except the four obsidian arrowheads from Tomb VII (Immerwahr 1971, 189, Pl. 40). No precious metals were found, excepting the gold rivets on the bronze dagger from Tomb III, which is associated with the adult male identified as burial AA 41 (Immerwahr 1971, 171, 176). Identifiable warrior kits were rarely deposited. Just two burials were provided with kits: the adult male identified as burial AA 41 from Tomb III that was associated with a bronze sword with gold rivets, the bronze dagger mentioned above, a bronze razor and a bronze bowl, and the adult male identified as burial AA 113 from Tomb VII that was associated with the surviving tip of a bronze weapon, five bronze arrowheads and four obsidian arrowheads. This suggests that while this practice was ideologically aligned with elite Mycenaean warrior ideology, the deposition of functional weaponry rarely expressed male identity, but functioned mainly as a general marker of male status. Perhaps the group(s) using the Agora Cemetery did not have access to prestige weaponry, or the popularization of Mycenaean warrior ideology compelled a more streamlined, less ostentatious version of earlier elite versions of this practice.

What is striking is that over time the distinction of male 'warriors' had become more strictly gendered than in the previous phase, because it *only* distinguished male burials. This indicates that the male-focused, but not necessarily male-exclusive, weaponry deposition practice observed in the Early Mycenaean Shaft Graves (*Section 5.3.2.3*) had shifted and crystallized into a strictly performed, male-exclusive practice – the symbolic vernacular of which was no longer extended to the distinction of select or special female burials as it was in the past. Notably, the richest grave in the Agora cemetery, Tomb I (the Tomb of Ivories), contained no weaponry, further suggesting that the missing remains were those of an elite female.

[151] Kirkpatrick Smith (2009) associated the possible dagger with an elderly female burial, but Immerwahr (1971) reported no such association.

#### 7.3.2.3.2 Weaponry and the Aspropilia Cemetery

*Table 7.48* indicates that the group(s) using the Aspropilia Cemetery probably deposited weaponry in much same way as the Athenians did in the Agora Cemetery. During the Palatial phase, a cleaver and spearhead of no association were deposited in Tomb 1, which contained the remains of an adult male, an adult female and an elderly female burials (Karantzali 2001, 14-15); and a cleaver, spearhead and sword were associated the adult male identified as Burial 1 from Tomb 3 (Karantzali 2001, 18, 67-70, figs. 13). A knife of no association was found in the Late Mycenaean levels of Tomb 4. This chamber tomb contained the remains of nine burials including one adult male, one adult female, five child and two infant burials (Karantzali 2001, 18-19). Weaponry was either firmly associated with select adult male burials or located in graves containing adult male burials. Further, all objects were composed of bronze, and sub-types also included standard Mycenaean forms, e.g. swords, knives and daggers. It is also likely that a streamlined Mycenaean warrior kit distinguished the adult male identified as Burial 1 from Tomb 3. It included a bronze spearhead, a bronze sword, a bronze cleaver and a whetstone (Karantzali 2001, 18, 67-70, figs. 13, Pl. 46f). Thus, the performance of this practice was also streamlined, male-focused and aligned with elite Mycenaean warrior ideology.

### *7.3.2.4 Tools*

#### 7.3.2.4.1 Tools and the Agora Cemetery

*Table 7.49* lists all objects from the Agora Cemetery that could have been affiliated with production activities or used as tools prior to deposition. All deposits are datable to the Palatial phase. *Table 7.50* indicates that tools were deposited with select burials of all types, excepting elderly and infant burials, suggesting that age influenced this practice. It is possible that the deposition of tools expressed the occupational identity of the deceased and/or the burying family. For example, the stone mould that was used for bead production prior to deposition (Immerwahr 1971, 231-32, Pls. 55, 77) was associated with an adult male identified as burial AA 166b from Grave XXIX. It is part of a larger tool assemblage, which included a steatite celt and a bone implement of unclear function (Immerwahr 1971, 232, Pl. 55). Tools from other graves were also linked to activities involving scraping, tearing or splitting or possibly textile production. Knives, daggers and axes are associated exclusively with male burials. Conuli identified as buttons/whorls may have functioned as textile production tools at some point during their use life, but did not overtly express the occupational affiliation of the deceased. They were deposited as general markers of female status and are discussed above (*Section 7.3.2.2.2*). Therefore, the deposition of tools used for purposes other than textile production expressed occupational affiliation and identity and also appears to be shaped by age.

#### 7.3.2.4.2 Tools and the Aspropilia Cemetery

*Table 7.51* lists all tools from the Aspropilia Cemetery. No more than five burials were provided with these objects throughout the use of the cemetery. They were made from steatite, clay, limestone and bronze, and may have been used for sewing, textile production and butchery and metal production activities. The sample is very limited, because tools found in Tomb 1 were of no association, and Karantzali (2001, 17, 76, figs. 10, 42, Pl. 50b) linked the two steatite spindle whorls with the adult female identified as Burial A in chamber 2C from Tomb 2 based solely on artefactual gendering.

The only objects from the Palatial phase sample that are associated with burials are the bronze cleaver and whetstone (Karantzali 2001, 18, 69-70, figs. 13, Pl. 46f), deposited with the adult male identified as Burial 1 from Tomb 3 – the only Aspropilia burial associated with a possible warrior kit. It is possible that the cleaver was used for butchery activities,[152] and the whetstone may have been used to sharpen metal objects, perhaps even within the context of metal production; however, it is possible that Burial 1 used this object during life to sharpen his weaponry. The deposition of his assemblage expressed status and affiliation with elite Mycenaean warrior ideology.

A small number of tools are datable to the Late Mycenaean phase. Tomb 4 yielded a bronze knife of no association, and the adult male identified as Burial 1 in 5B from Tomb 5 was associated with two objects that were probably used as spindle whorls prior to deposition[153] as well as a bronze knife. As a rule, spindle whorls are artefactually gendered as female, but Aspropilia may be a case in point that this approach is ill advised, and that adult male burials could be linked to textile production in this location. This suggests the use of a different mortuary ideology, and that earlier female-focused mortuary ideology in which elite or high-status female spinners were socially distinguished via the deposition of textile production tools at Asine, Mycenae and the Agora did not inform this burial practice, or, based on the singular incidence of this behaviour, was either an indirect expression of status derived from such activities. It is also possible that the deposition of a spindle whorl with a male burial is not representative of practice, but is evidence of individual agency.

[152] There is the possibility that the cleaver could also have been used within the household or a workshop.

[153] Of course it is possible that they could have had a dual function as buttons, but dimensions strongly suggest that these objects could have been highly functional spindle whorls, because they each measured more than two centimeters across (Barber 1991, 51-53). The steatite button/whorl measures 2.2 x 2.8 cm and the clay button/whorl measures 2.5 x 2.8 cm with a hole diameter of 0.5 cm (Karantzali 2001, 20, 76-77, fig. 20).

### *7.3.2.5 Toilet Articles*

#### 7.3.2.5.1 Toilet Articles and the Agora Cemetery

Toilet articles from the Agora Cemetery are listed in *Table 7.52*. During the Palatial phase, a few other toilet articles were deposited mainly with adult burials of both genders as well as child burials. The toiletry assemblage consists of ivory combs, bronze mirrors, bronze grooming tools and the ivory pyxides. Bronze razors were all but exclusively associated with select adult male burials,[154] indicating an alignment with earlier elite Mycenaean mortuary ideologies, in which bronze based grooming articles were deposited with elite adult male burials to express status, wealth and warrior ideology.

The deposition of the large and small ivory pyxides (Immerwahr 1971, 166-67, Pls. 32, 33) in Tomb I may have expressed ancestral legitimization. This practice has much in common with the deposition of an Early Cycladic II white marble pyxis associated with an adult male from Grave Circle B (*Section 5.3.2.1.2*). Firstly, like the white marble pyxis from Grave Nu at Mycenae, the Tomb I ivory pyxides were also already antiques at time of deposition, probably datable to the late 15$^{th}$ century. Secondly, they too were singular objects, having been imported, composed of exotic, expensive material[155] and considered to be among the finest carved Mycenaean ivories on the Greek Mainland, featuring artwork that combined Minoan, Mainland and Levantine aesthetics (Immerwahr 1971, 166, Pl. 32; Langenbucher 2007, 66, figs. 91A,B,C). And, thirdly, they were deposited in what is arguably the only elite tomb in the Agora Cemetery. The fact that the white marble pyxis from Grave Nu was most certainly associated with an adult male burial potentially undermines Immerwahr's argument that the missing remains from Tomb I were female, but given the expanse of time and distance between the two singular pyxides, the male attribution of the Grave Nu pyxis should not constrain the interpretation of the ivory pyxides. Langenbucher (2007, 88) argues that the traces of tin lining found inside the box of the large pyxis suggest that it was originally used for the storage of oil or perfume. Tomb I also yielded an ivory wedge-shaped object (argued by Immerwahr to have been the tooth of a comb) and a bronze mirror (Immerwahr 1971, 167-68, Pl. 33) – artefact types that have not been linked to a specific gender or age group (*Sections 5.3.2.5* and *6.3.2.5*).

[154] It is unclear whether a bronze object found in Tomb XIV is a knife or a razor and the object is of unclear association (Immerwahr 1971, 201, n. 3, 203, Pl. 46).

[155] Langenbucher (2007, 88) argues that the ivory pyxides were most likely from Syria or Egypt based on their carvings Immerwahr (1971, 166-67) argues that they were manufactured in either Knossos or the Argolid, with the tusk being imported from the East.

#### 7.3.2.5.2 Toilet Articles and the Aspropilia Cemetery

Two toilet articles were found in the Aspropilia Cemetery. The first is a pair of bronze tweezers (Karantzali 2001, 17, 72, Pl. 48a) datable to the Palatial phase. They are from Tomb 2 and were associated with an adult female identified as Burial A in chamber 2C (Karantzali 2001, 17, fig. 10, Pl. 8a, 86, Pls. 57, 66no.2, 67no.1-2, 73no.1, 76). Karantzali (2001, 17) posits that the tweezers could have been suspended around the neck of Burial A. Based on the wealth of the rest of Burial A's assemblage and the fact that her remains appear to have been lain upon a constructed bier (Karantzali 2001, 17), this was a high-status burial. Further, because it is very unusual for bronze tweezers, or bronze grooming objects for that matter, to be associated with female burials from Mycenaean contexts, this suggests that it was expressive of a site- or region-specific mortuary ideology or that Aspropilia's burial practice had assimilated Mycenaean ideology elaborating upon or changing it by re-gendering the object.

The second toilet article is a piece of a bone comb (Karantzali 2001, 19, 77, fig. 16, Pls. 11b-c, 50d) datable to the Late Mycenaean phase. It was found in Tomb 4 near the north side of the chamber and has no clear association with any burial. The comb was closest in proximity to the remains of an adult male identified as Burial 1.[156] If it was deposited with Burial 1, this practice adds further credence to the argument that the deposition of ivory combs was not determined by gender (*Sections 5.3.2.5* and *6.3.2.5*), and undercuts the assumption that combs should be artefactually gendered as female.

### *7.3.2.6 Figurines*

All figurines were selectively deposited in both burial samples in Palatial phase contexts.

Six figurines were found in Agora graves. A terracotta figurine was found in Tomb X (Immerwahr 1971, 194, P. 42) and may have been associated with any of the three burials found in the tomb: an adult male identified as burial 176a; an adult female identified as burial 176b; and the secondary burial of a child identified as burial 176c. A terracotta Psi Figurine was found in Tomb XX (Immerwahr 1971, 213, Pl. 49) and is associated with the remains of a child identified as burial AA 141. Two terracotta statuettes were found in Tomb XXVI (Immerwahr 1971, 229, Pl. 54) and may have been associated with any of the four burials found in the tomb, including an elderly male identified as AA 148; an adult female identified as burial AA 148a; an infant identified as burial AA 149; and a child identified as burial AA 149a. Two terracotta female figurines were found in Grave K 2:5 (Camp 2003,

[156] Karantzali (2001, 19) argues for association of the bone comb as well as the bronze spatulas with the adult female identified as Burial 2 (Karantzali 2001, 19, 89-90) based on artefactual gendering.

270, figs. 36, 37) and may have been associated with any of the four burials interred in the tomb, consisting of the remains of three children and one adult male. Although firm associations are rarely present, all figurines were associated with or deposited in tombs containing child burials. This hints that this practice was shaped by age and suggests that these figurines could have been used as toys during their use life.

A clay chariot group, an unusual artefact type, was found in Tomb 3 in the Aspropilia Cemetery (Karantzali 2001, 18, 50-51, figs. 12-13, Pls. 10a-b, 38c-e). It is datable to the Palatial phase. It is unclear with which of the tomb's three burials it was associated. These include an adult male identified as Burial 1; an adult female identified as Burial 2; and a child identified as Burial 3. Karantzali (2001, 51) argues that the figurine may have served as a toy during life for the child identified as Burial 3,[157] or that it could have expressed the status and/or referenced the elite identity(ies) of any or all of the burials.

Typically, the chariot was linked to warfare, funerary and hunting activities and is interpreted as being representative and expressive of status or even royalty (Crouwel 1973, 345; 1981; Catling and Millett, 1965, 221; Karageorghis 1959, 198; Nefëdkin 2001). Chariot figurines are also interpreted as possible votives (Mylonas 1954-55, 139-52). Decorative details of the Aspropilia chariot group provide little scope for iconographic interpretation. Indicators of status and sex are completely lacking, and the exact nature of the activity in which the figures are engaged is unclear due mainly to simple execution and nondescript simple linear decoration. If the chariot was expressive of elite Mycenaean warrior ideology, it is most plausible that it was associated with the adult male identified as Burial 1, because Burial 1 was also associated with a Mycenaean warrior kit. Thus, the inclusion of a chariot figure in Burial 1's assemblage may have been a logical embellishment upon the warrior symbolism already linked to this burial. Of course, we cannot rule out the possibility that the object may have been deposited with one of the other burials, or that it was not linked to a burial, but deposited in the tomb as a collective expression of status and differentiation, which were not necessarily of a Mycenaean ilk and possibly expressive of SE Aegean or Rhodian mortuary ideology.

#### *7.3.2.7 Other Objects (Clothing/Textiles and Utensils)*

Textile evidence and utensils were found in the Aspropilia Cemetery during the Palatial phase. Pieces of calcified linen textile were found on the forehead, jaw and forearm of an

[157] Blegen (1937, 255-56) argues that figurines may have served as toys or offerings for children in a mortuary context – an argument that was later disproved by Tzonou-Herbst (2009). For a discussion of studies of Mycenaean figurines see Chapter 3, *Section 3.2.2*.

elderly female identified as Burial 3 from Tomb 1 (Karantzali 2001, 15, 83, Pl. 77), and an imprint of material was preserved on the brow and above the left eye of an adult female identified as Burial A from chamber 2C in Tomb 2 (Karantzali 2001, 17, fig. 10, Pl. 8a, 86, Pls. 57, 66no.2, 67no.1-2, 73no.1, 76). Karantzali (2001, 15) argues that these were 'probably the remains of the funerary band which was fastened around the dead person's jaw and skull. This band … was intended to secure the mouth.' Perhaps due to the fragility of this type of evidence, no other bands of this sort have been documented on Rhodes or the Mainland during the Bronze Age. Thus, it is unclear whether or not this was a uniquely Rhodian or gendered burial practice.

Two ceramic ladles of no association were found in the Aspropilia Cemetery. The first is from Tomb 3 and is an import featuring simple linear decoration (Karantzali 2001, 18, 34, figs. 12-13). The other is from Tomb 1, was locally manufactured and also features simple linear decoration (Karantzali 2001, 15, 34, fig. 5). Ladles are rarely found in Mycenaean mortuary contexts and rarely occur in Rhodian tombs. Typically they are found in domestic contexts. It is unclear whether or not this practice was determined by gender or age. Karantzali (2001, 34; also see Tournavitou 1992, 196-97) argues that these objects were used in feasts at the funeral. Given the lack of association, this scenario is certainly plausible.

Two bronze utensils were deposited during the Late Mycenaean phase in Tomb 4 (Karantzali 2001, 19, 71-72, fig. 16, Pls. 11b-c). They may have been used as spatulas or toilet knives. They were of unclear association and could not be linked to any of the Tomb 4 burials, which included what was probably the primary burial of an adult male identified as Burial 1 as well as the secondary burials of an adult female identified as Burial 2, two infants identified as Burials 3 and 4 and five children identified as Burials 5-9. Because grave goods were routinely removed or re-allocated during the performance of secondary burial rites, it is likely that the utensils were associated with the primary burial: the adult male identified as Burial 1. This is also supported by the fact that the utensils were located on the north side of the chamber closest in proximity to Burial 1, which was located in the NW part of the chamber. Although high-status adult male burials are commonly linked to bronze toilet articles such as tweezers and razors, archaeologists routinely artefactually gender bronze spatulas as female, despite the fact that these objects rarely occur in the Greek archaeological record. Generally, spatulas are interpreted as being used for 'medical purposes, for a woman's toilet, or for cutting cloth and leather' (Karantzali 2001, 71; also see Papaeuthymiou-Papanthimou 1979, 262). Artefactual gendering is why Karantzali (2001, 71) argues that the spatulas could be associated with the adult female identified as Burial 2 (whose fragmented bones were found in the East side of the chamber). Yet, there is no

reason why an adult male could not use a spatula for medical or grooming purposes or participate in production activities involving the cutting of material.

### *7.3.3 The Distribution of Raw Materials*

*Table 7.53* lists all raw materials represented in the Agora Cemetery assemblage. The Late Mycenaean phase sample is too small to facilitate observations, but *Table 7.54* indicates that during the Palatial phase adult male burials were associated with the widest and most exotic range of materials as well as the most imported raw materials. Adult male burials were primarily linked to objects composed of bronze, which is largely due to their exclusive association with weaponry, and the array of bronze objects associated with the male burials in Tomb III (Immerwahr 1971, 175-77). Due to the high frequency of materials associated with unsexed adult burials or of no association, it is unclear whether or not gender informed the deposition of certain materials. Beyond this, the deposition of materials seems to have been largely shaped by status, wealth and access, and/or it directly reflects practices that were explicitly related to artefact type.

*Table 7.55* lists raw materials represented in the Aspropilia Cemetery assemblage. *Charts 7.2* and *7.3* show that during the Palatial phase imported semi-precious stones, vitreous paste and gold are linked to female burials in both adult and elderly age groups, whilst bronze was associated with adult burials of both genders. Locally procured materials, like bone and steatite are linked to adult female burials, whilst limestone was associated with a single adult male burial. Female burials appear to be associated with the greatest variety of materials as well as more imported raw materials than adult males. *Table 7.55* also shows that very little can be observed regarding the distribution of raw materials during the Late Mycenaean phase due to lack of association; however, it is clear that adult males continued to be linked to bronze objects as well as objects made from locally procured industrial materials.

## 7.4 Interpretation of Results

### *7.4.1 Gender relations and the LHIII chamber tomb cemeteries*

In the Agora Cemetery, social hierarchy was expressed via grave complexity and spatial organisation. The sample datable to the Palatial phase was composed of four socially tiered grave groups: 1) Tombs I and III – the only graves that can reasonably be categorised as elite; 2) Tombs VII and XL and Graves J K 2:2 and K 2:5 – all complex graves containing more than 10 grave goods in their assemblages; 3) Tombs VIII, XIV, XXI, XXIII and XXIV – all yielding noteworthy grave goods with otherwise small assemblages; and 4) the remaining simple graves – all of which were modestly furnished or contained no grave

goods. These groups were spatially defined (Figure 29). Tombs I and III were located near one another in the far south end of the cemetery, physically separate from other graves and forming part of a cluster made up of four of the largest chamber tombs in the Agora. Tomb I is the largest tomb in the entire cemetery, and Tomb III is only slightly smaller. The second group is spatially dispersed. Tomb VII is located in relative isolation in the far northwest corner of the cemetery. Tomb XL is in the middle of the cemetery, with only two simple graves as neighbours (Graves XXXVII and XXXIX). Chamber Tombs J K 2:2 and K 2:5 are located near one another (Camp 2003, 248, fig. 8). This suggests that well-off families were laying claim to what can be interpreted as family sites within the cemetery. The tombs in the third group are comparatively small. Tombs VII and VIII are in a smallish cluster of graves located just west of the main cluster in the north east of the cemetery. The remainder of the graves in the northeast cluster is composed of the rest of group three: Tombs XIV, XXI, XXIII and XXIV. The fourth group of simple graves were clustered together in the middle and NE part of the cemetery and were the smallest in size. The demarcation of space shows that members of different social strata were burying their dead in specific areas of the cemetery, and that status was expressed through grave location, type and size. Neither the gender nor age of the deceased appears to have determined any of the above practices.

The Aspropilia mortuary practice also used embellishment of grave architecture and burial ritual to express social hierarchy. Judging from the small number of tombs[158] and the multi-generational use of most tombs, it probably was used by several families (Karantzali 2001; McGeorge 2009), indicating that inclusion practices expressed social hierarchy, family affiliation and collective identity. Here, at least two socially stratified groups were active within the cemetery. Tombs 2 and 5, situated on the southeast side of the hill side by side, were the most structurally complex graves at Aspropilia (Figures 30, 31). Activity with both is primarily datable to the Palatial phase. These graves contained multiple chambers, featured what were probably the longest dromoi in the cemetery[159] and contained roughly 50 grave goods each. The remains of the adult female identified as Burial A were laid out on a bier in chamber 2C of Tomb 2, and the remains of what was probably a family were laid together on a bier in chamber 5B of Tomb 5. McGeorge (2009) observed that females, such as Burial 2, were emphasized by the positioning of their remains within the chamber, however body position throughout the cemetery could not be definitively linked to gender due to the small size of the sample. Although the treatment of Burial 2 is clearly an

[158] The original size of the cemetery is unclear.
[159] Tomb 5's dromos measured 10.80-10.90m long, 1.70-1.55m wide and 0.40-1.60m deep. Although a mechanical digger cut part of the dromos of Tomb 2, Karantzali (2001, 16) argues that the dromos 'must have been comparable in length with the other tombs on this side of the slope…' The remaining section of the dromos is 3.20m long, 1.50-1.30m wide and 1.30-2.20m deep.

expression of social hierarchy, neither McGeorge's analysis nor this research makes a case for gender being a determinant for the location, placement or positioning of a burial in the Aspropilia Cemetery.

The groups using Tombs 1 and 3 were also active mainly during the Palatial phase and appear to have been of slightly lower status than the groups using Tombs 2 and 5. Tombs 1 and 3 were constructed side by side just to the west of Tombs 2 and 5. Though their chambers are slightly larger than those in Tombs 2 and 5, Tombs 1 and 3 featured single chambers, slightly shorter dromoi and no further architectural embellishments. Tomb 1 contained roughly the same number of objects as Tombs 2 and 5. Tomb 3 contained slightly fewer grave goods yielding a total of 32 objects. Burial embellishments were also lacking, except in the case of the adult male from Tomb 3 who may have also been laid out on a 'low bier' (Karantzali 2001, 18), further supporting the argument that gender was a determinant for this type of practice.

It is more difficult to interpret Tomb 4 (Figure 32). It was located on the other side of the hill and must have been part of a larger grave group. Its structure is smaller and simpler than that of the other graves. No embellishments were present. Tomb 4 did yield an assemblage of 43 objects and was in use from LHIIIB2-C. Thus, the distinction of certain burials via the means listed above appears to have been reserved for adult or elderly burials from certain families.

### *7.4.2 Gender and the Deposition of Material Wealth*

Chapter 5 described how elite kin groups using the Shaft Graves performed highly creative burial rituals, capable of articulating and expressing nuanced masculine ideologies (that were not necessarily male-exclusive) – an ethos that appears to have been characterized and driven by a *work in progress* approach to the expression of wealth and power. As time went on, elite Early Mycenaean mortuary ideology was culturally disseminated and adapted by other Mycenaean groups. This development resulted in the continuation, alteration or cessation of certain gender-related deposition practices. This generally affected certain burials in that creativity was constricted, ideological expression became less complex, individual identity was de-emphasised and female and male practices became more rigidly polarized, but on the other hand, some practices expanded, expressing new or more developed gender constructs indicating a surge in inventiveness. The streamlining of certain burial practices may reflect the mostly non-elite context of the chamber tomb cemeteries. But, because there are wealthy, even arguably elite, graves present (e.g. the Tomb of Ivories and the Tomb of the Bronzes in the Agora, and Tombs 2 and 5 at Aspropilia), the ideological

impetus driving these practices probably reflects wider ideological shifts, indicating that the polarisation of gender was representative of social structure.

#### 7.4.2.1 The simplification of the Mycenaean warrior kit

The clearest expression of gender in the chamber tomb cemetery samples was realized through the deposition of weaponry with male burials. Weaponry assemblages usually contained one or two bronze knives, daggers, or (rarely) swords and sometimes arrowheads. Bronze vessels and toilet articles were also sometimes included. Warrior kits were not deposited with all male burials, nor were they deposited with all male burials associated with weaponry. When male burials were associated with warrior kits, they were also usually associated with prestige objects. This indicates that the deposition of weaponry was construed as a general marker of male status, although it could also express identity in certain, usually elite, cases.

Weaponry assemblages were on the whole bronze-based and completely devoid of precious metals – barring the occasional gold rivet and the ornaments possibly used for garment decoration that may or may not have been associated with the adult male identified as burial AA 41 from Tomb III in the Agora Cemetery (Immerwahr 1971, 171, n. 8, 177; Vermeaule and Travlos 1966, 71). Also absent were status insignia and specialized weaponry (e.g. boars' tusk helmets, other types of armour and shields). It is possible that the deposition of the clay chariot group in Tomb 3 (Karantzali 2001, 18, 50-51, figs. 12-13, Pls. 10a-b, 38c-e) may have functioned as male status insignia expressing warrior ideology and affiliation with elite Mycenaean activities, such as warfare and/or hunting, but this interpretation hinges on whether or not the chariot group was deposited with the adult male identified as Burial 1 – an association that is unclear. Also, because there is no physical evidence for participation in martial activities in the Agora or Aspropilia burial samples (*Section 7.4.3*; Kirkpatrick Smith 2009; McGeorge 2001), it is doubtful that male burials associated with weaponry deposits were closely linked to fighting.

Thus, the expression of Mycenaean warrior ideology in these contexts had become more constrained and pared down. During the Palatial and presumably Late Mycenaean phases weaponry deposition unambiguously expressed male status – a practice that was easily read and muddied by little or no variation. What is more, this practice was inflexible compared to weaponry deposition in the Early Mycenaean Shaft Graves, and no longer inclusive of female burials. Granted, the record has been deprived of crucial evidence from the elite LHIII tholos tombs, so it is certainly possible that elite segments of the Mycenaean

population may have taken an approach reminiscent of the Shaft Graves to the distinction of special or unusual elite female burials via the deposition of warrior paraphernalia.

#### 7.4.2.2 Where are the female kits?

The Athenians who buried their dead in the cemetery's two richest tombs, Tombs I and III (Figures 33, 34), both of which were in use during LHIIIA, appear to have used and manipulated mortuary practice to express sophisticated, complex ideologies, such as ancestral legitimacy, prestige and power – all components of elite Mycenaean mortuary ideology. Interestingly, these practices may have been reserved for the distinction of high-status female burials. First let us explore whether or not it is possible to gender the missing remains from the Agora's wealthiest grave, Tomb I (the Tomb of the Ivories). Thanks to the osteological sexing of remains from the Agora Cemetery, we know that, as a rule, almost all male burials of high-status were provided with weaponry. We also know that the richest male burials, located in Tomb III (The 'Tomb of the Bronzes') were associated with weaponry and/or bronze vessels. Therefore, it follows that because the contents of Tomb I were not recognizably 'male' or, more specifically, they were uniformly different from the contents of the male burial assemblages from Tomb III. This suggests that Tomb I's missing remains were female or representative of a different kind of male (e.g. a priest).

Consideration of the specific nature of the burial practices performed in each tomb should reveal much about what each burying group was trying to express. Tomb I contained more ceramic vessels than Tomb III, but had less variety in ceramic shape, while Tomb III yielded a much greater quantity of tinned ceramic vessels. Bronze objects were present in both tombs, but they were fundamentally different in type, shape and function according to location. Tomb I contained a pure copper lamp probably used for illumination or possibly fumigation as well as a toilet article in the form of a bronze mirror (Immerwahr 1971, 167-8, Pl. 33; Shear 1940, 285, 288, figs. 6, 30), whereas Tomb III yielded the bronze weaponry and display bowl associated with one of its male burials (Immerwahr 1971, 171, 176-77). Ivory vessels and hair ornaments were deposited exclusively in Tomb I. Tomb III contained nine conical steatite buttons/whorls associated with its female burial, while tools were entirely absent from Tomb I. Finally, the male burials in Tomb III were associated with weaponry, display vessels composed of bronze and tinned ceramics, fine pottery and ornamental objects, and the female burial in Tomb III was associated with tinned ceramic display vessels and the steatite button/whorls. Despite the fact that the deposition of tinned ceramic display vessels was not gendered, the burial assemblages otherwise were gendered according to the following tomb-specific model: warrior kit (including bronze vessels) and

possible gold ornaments = male; buttons/whorls = female; tinned ceramic vessels = non-gender related status.

What is more, the singularity of the Tomb I hair ornaments cannot be likened to the deposition of any luxury or prestige items deposited with male burials in the entire Mycenaean burial sample. The elite nature of Tomb I's burial assemblage as well as grave complexity also strongly suggests that had a male burial been interred in the tomb, weaponry surely would have been present, because, as discussed above, weaponry was a general marker of male status. The fact that the elderly male from Tomb III, identified as the secondary burial AA 41a, was not associated with weaponry does not undermine this pattern, because this is the earliest burial in the tomb, and the burial's bones had been swept into a heap near the west wall of the chamber, thus broaching the possibility that this burial could have originally been provided with weaponry as a primary burial. Therefore, the absence of weaponry and bronze toilet articles combined with the presence of exotic ivory hair ornaments and ivory vessels in Tomb I strongly suggest that the missing remains from Tomb I were those of an elite female burial.

Yet, the Tomb I assemblage is wholly different in character from the assemblage associated with the remains of the sexed adult female identified as burial AA 40 (Immerwahr 1971, 171, n. 4) from Tomb III. A possible explanation for this may be that the treatment of each burial was influenced by different social variables. There is nothing to suggest that burial AA 40 was an elite burial, apart from inclusion in Tomb III, and this is not extremely compelling. She was associated with seven tinned ceramic vessels and nine steatite buttons (Immerwahr 1971, 171, 173-74, 177), while the objects associated with the male burials are arguably more expensive (Immerwahr 1971, 170-77). It appears that the group using Tomb III commemorated the burial of this high-status female via the deposition of objects that were signifiers of status, e.g. the *faux* prestige vessels, as well as the buttons/whorls – general markers of female status (*Section 7.3.2.2.2*). Because burial AA 40 was associated with a comparatively large quantity of buttons/whorls, it seems that this practice was somewhat embellished in order to express the burial's group affiliation indirectly.

There also is hard evidence from the Aspropilia Cemetery that the distinction of high-status female burials was performed in various, more elaborate ways. High-status female burials mainly datable to the Palatial phase were buried wearing funerary head bands (perhaps to hold the jaw shut) and elaborately beaded funerary shrouds. The elderly female identified as Burial 3 from Tomb I was associated with 272 vitreous/faience beads, four agate beads and two faience necklaces (Karantzali 2001, 15). The adult female identified as Burial A from

chamber 2C in Tomb 2 was associated with three bronze rings and roughly 150 vitreous/faience beads that may have decorated her burial shroud (Karantzali 2001, 17). And the adult female identified as Burial 2 from Tomb 3 was associated with a large collection of vitreous beads as well as 15 gold beads (Karantzali 2001, 18).[160] Finally, there is evidence that two elderly female burials, Burial 3 from Tomb 1 and Burial A from chamber 2C in Tomb 2 (Karantzali 2001, 15, 17), were buried wearing linen headbands. Therefore, female burials were not only favoured with the deposition of material wealth but also were emphasised via the use of elaborate funerary dress – a custom that may have been a Rhodian embellishment upon a largely Mycenaean burial practice.[161]

At Aspropilia, there is also evidence for the re-gendering of artefact types recognizable as standard Mycenaean grave goods. Bronze tweezers were deposited with an adult female burial, while ivory combs were deposited with adult male burials – a reversal of behavioural patterns in other burial samples in which bronze toilet articles are linked to male burials, and of modern assumptions concerning artefactual gendering in which combs are assumed to be linked to female burials. Also, spindle whorls, almost always deposited with female burials in other samples, were deposited with the adult male identified as Burial 1 in 5B during the Late Mycenaean phase. This suggests that the Late Mycenaean link between textile production activities and male burials may be a one-off phenomenon, and to interpret it as evidence for a re-gendering of spindle whorls from LHIIIB1 to LHIIIC within the same small cemetery and based solely on a sample of one for each chronological phase is to say the least rather theatrical. Thus, during the Late Mycenaean Phase, the link between adult females of high-status and jewellery and the link between adult males and bronze tools/weaponry remained consistent with the previous phase. This suggests that the group(s) using this cemetery was informed by both Rhodian and Mycenaean mortuary ideologies, and appropriated Mycenaean practices, sometimes resulting in the re-gendering of artefact types.

In contrast to the Early Mycenaean phase, male ideologies no longer informed the distinction of high-status female burials. Instead, other means were sought to emphasise female burials, some of which appropriated and diluted earlier female-focused practices, re-gendered objects or invented new highly individuated female kits. Excepting perhaps the use of

[160]McGeorge (2009. 104) attributes 15 gold relief beads that originally formed a necklace as well as 77 blue glass-paste beads that may have formed a diadem to an adult male warrior identified as Burial 1 from Tomb 3, whereas Karantzali (2001, 18) states in her site report that the bones of the adult female identified as Burial 2 and this jewellery were both found on the SE side of Tomb 3.

[161] We know little about Mycenaean funerary dress beyond the fact that the deposition of jewellery and ornaments indicates that bodily adornment was practised as part of the funerary ritual. For a discussion of dress and gender see Barnes and Eicher 1992; Eicher and Roch-Higgins, 1992; Sørensen 1997.

buttons/whorls as markers of female status, all other practices probably were community-specific. The presence of possible elite male and female kits identified in the Agora (e.g. the ivory kit from Tomb I and the warrior kits from Tomb III) and Aspropilia Cemeteries raises the possibility that gender had become more polarized. This suggests a more strict segregation of male and female social spheres, albeit in different ways among different communities as time went on. Yet, contrary to the popularization and simplification of male warrior kits, the establishment of a codified Mycenaean female kit does not appear to have taken hold in any culturally consistent way, indicating that the expression of female status and prestige in mortuary behaviour cannot be linked to any identifiable, overarching Mycenaean gender ideology. The handful of high-status female burials discussed above do represent a feminine element of Mycenaean mortuary ideology and practice, but it should be made explicit that women of substance were commemorated in death through the expression of region or community-specific feminine ideologies and constructs. In this way, female-focused Mycenaean mortuary ideologies appear to have been in flux and comparatively dynamic compared to the rather static expression of male mortuary ideologies.

### *7.4.3 Gender and the Pathological Evidence*

Kirkpatrick Smith (2009) re-analysed some of the Agora's male burials to determine whether or not there was evidence of war-related trauma in the skeletal evidence. Just two adult males from the Agora sample exhibited pathological evidence of injury. The adult male identified as burial AA 28 from Grave XXXVII (originally identified as a 'warrior' by Angel [1945, 296-97, n. 37, Pl. 45, figs. 2,3; also see Immerwahr 1971, 240, Pls. 58, 76, 82; Shear 1936, 21-23]) exhibited evidence of a wound in the shoulder blade as well as a well-healed fracture of the right radius. An adult male buried in Grave K 2:5 (Camp 2003, 263) survived a broken collarbone and ribs. Kirkpatrick Smith acknowledged that these findings provide no proof that these individuals or their injuries were linked explicitly to violence or martial activities. Further, these two male burials were not associated with weaponry, and skeletal remains that were associated with weaponry showed no evidence of trauma as a direct result of violence (Kirkpatrick Smith 2009).

Kirkpatrick Smith (2000) also conducted a cluster analysis of the Agora's osteological evidence and combined these results with results from her osteological analysis to determine whether or not pathological characteristics of status were visible. She found that there were 'no significant differences in dental wear, caries or ante mortem tooth loss between males and females' (Kirkpatrick Smith 2000, 109-10).

Results from the analysis of skeletal evidence from the Aspropilia Cemetery revealed that men and women exhibited generally similar levels of good health and suffered from similar symptoms of disease and trauma (Karantzali 2001, 82-104). Overall, females appeared to have better dental health than males. Evidence of enamel hypoplasia was evident in burials of both sexes, suggesting that individuals were vulnerable to environmental and nutritional stresses at early ages regardless of gender (Karantzali 2001, 95). Although Karantzali (2001, 18) described Burial 1 as a 'warrior' or 'officer', pathological analysis of his remains (Karantzali 2001, 89, Pl. 72 nos. 1-3) revealed no evidence of injury linked to warfare, other than a healed fracture of the fibula shaft that occurred between the ages of 12 and 15 – an innocuous injury attributable to a variety of non-violent activities. Thus, it follows that the weaponry associated with Burial 1 may not express a warrior occupation.

In sum, pathological evidence does little to support the idea of a warrior culture in Mycenaean Athens or at Aspropilia, and weaponry was deposited chiefly to express male status. Finally, pathological evidence shows that male and female burials were generally subjected to similar levels of physical and nutritional stress, suggesting that, at least within the segment of these populations using these cemeteries, one gender was not favoured over the other in terms of access to resources or participation in highly physicalized or labour-intensive activities.

### *7.4.4 Conclusion: Expressions of Gender in the Agora and Aspropilia Cemeteries*

Firm expressions of gender were identified in the chamber tomb burial samples. During the Palatial phase well-off Athenians using the Agora Cemetery deposited weaponry (including knives and daggers), bronze toilet articles and bronze vessels with only high-status adult male burials. During the Palatial phase in the Aspropilia Cemetery, burying groups lavished adornment almost exclusively upon their high-status female burials and clothed select elderly and adult female burials in funerary costumes that incorporated elaborate decorative beading and linen headbands. They also deposited weaponry exclusively with high-status male burials and emphasised high-status female burials with comparatively larger more expensive burial assemblages including greater varieties of object types and larger numbers of imported objects and raw materials. They also constructed biers for the distinction of high-status female burials. Finally, buttons/whorls were almost exclusively deposited with female burials in the Agora burial sample. No firm expressions of gender can be detected in burial practice datable to the Late Mycenaean phase in any of the three burial samples. Yet, there is evidence for the continuation of practices observed during the previous phase at each cemetery.

The direct relationship between gender and some other practices was ambiguous. In the Agora Cemetery the following burial practices may have been shaped by gender. The deposition of a possible elite female kit containing ivory vessels and hair ornaments in Tomb I suggests that burials of elite and high-status females could be emphasized through the deposition of singular assemblages containing prestige vessels and ornaments. It is also possible that gold leaf ornaments may have been part of a high-status male funerary costume. Also, deposits of elaborately decorated fine pottery were more often associated with high-status adult male burials (at least more so than other burial types).

Ambiguous or rather tentative expressions of gender observed in the Aspropilia Cemetery have been categorized as such because the links between these practices and gender are, in every case, based on a sample of one burial. Possible gendered practices datable to the Palatial phase include: 1) the deposition of domestic cooking pots with an elderly female burial; 2) the deposition of chariot group figurines with a high-status adult male burial; 3) the deposition of bronze tweezers with an adult female burial; 4) the deposition of an ivory comb with an adult male burial; 5) the deposition of textile production tools with an adult female burial; and 6) the deposition of a bronze cleaver and whetstone with an adult male burial. It is also possible that during the Late Mycenaean phase the deposition of bronze spatulas and spindle whorls may have been linked to high-status male burials, while high-status adult female burials continued to be associated with beads and finger-rings and high-status adult male burials probably were emphasized by the deposition of bronze tools and weaponry.

Age also influenced certain practices. In the Agora Cemetery, elderly and child burials were under-represented, and infant burials were all but excluded. Infant burials were almost never distinguished with grave goods. Finally, figurines may have been deposited with select child burials. Oddly, artefact type distribution to child burials is similar to distribution patterns to adult male burials, perhaps implying that only male children were given formal burial. Overall, adult burials were emphasized with the greatest quantities and variety of grave goods, suggesting that those who died in the prime of life warranted the most elaborate practices.

During the Palatial phase in the Aspropilia Cemetery, infant burials were excluded, and child burials rarely were included or provided with grave goods. During the Late Mycenaean phase this burial practice appears to have been reversed, and non-adult burials were favoured for inclusion over that of adult burials. Finally, age and status appear to have informed the distinction of elderly female burials with linen funerary headbands.

During the Palatial and probably Late Mycenaean phases, the relationship between the gender of the deceased and Mycenaean mortuary behaviour was informed by structures in which gender was negotiated according to a binary model and male and female ideologies and constructs were polarised. In the chamber tomb cemeteries, the distinction of high-status male burials was both popularised and simplified, and the expression of male status was marked by the deposition of small weaponry assemblages. This practice as well as affiliation with warrior ideology expressed the distinction of only male burials. Warrior paraphernalia was no longer deposited with select female burials, and the symbolic vernacular of Mycenaean warrior ideology was no longer extended to the distinction of special female burials. On the other hand, the distinction of high-status female burials was less constrained by tradition and appears to have been informed by mortuary ideology specific to each community/region and in some cases may have been specific to distinct burial groups. The deposition of buttons/whorls with high-status female burials as general markers of female status recalled earlier mortuary ideologies in which high-status female burials from Middle Helladic and Early Mycenaean phase burial samples were emphasised via the deposition of one or two spindle whorls – a practice that expressed female identity and roles as well as status. The stark differences between male and female depositional practices suggests a pronounced polarization of gender that is specific to the Palatial and possibly Late Mycenaean phases as well as the well-off families who used chamber tomb cemeteries.

The implied exclusion of females from male ideological spheres and activities should not be seen as limiting. Interestingly, when male and female gendered practices are compared, the paring down and simplification of male assemblages compared to the creative and often elaborate approach to female distinction suggest that high-status female burials were favoured with greater investment of material wealth and burial embellishments as well a greater spirit of creativity. Further, female burials from the Aspropilia Cemetery were also favoured with elaborate and culturally distinctive funerary costumes, perhaps expressing group identity as well as the individual status of the deceased. It is plausible that this behaviour was representative of social structure. It also could represent a shift in practice brought about by the need to create a (more) female-focused mortuary ideology in light of the current restrictions affecting the performance of male-focused burial practice, especially pertinent to constriction of warrior ideology as a male-exclusive ideology.

It is possible that high-status female burials enjoyed more rights and privileges, or were just generally wealthier than their male counterparts in the Aspropilia Cemetery (based on grave complexity, the deposition of material wealth and burial embellishments), but small sample

size suggests that this may reflect the dynamics of distinct groups rather than Rhodo-Mycenaean social structure. In the Agora, wealthy burial assemblages were deposited with adult burials of both genders, although the contents were in some cases clearly related to gender. On the whole, gender appears to have been expressed horizontally, and it is possible that the strict gendering of depositional practices represents a complementarity based on the inclusion of relatively equal numbers of male and female burials and the distinction of burials of both genders in relatively equal proportions. Thus, the favouring, or at least the comparably more nuanced distinction of high-status female burials in each cemetery, was probably a product of both social organisation and the need to construct and express feminine ideologies and to express distinctly feminine prestige within the context of an ideological framework that had not yet established a fundamentally feminine codex of signifiers in any uniform fashion beyond the mortuary context of disparate individual communities.

Within the communities that used the Agora and Aspropilia cemeteries, certain burial practices were rooted in earlier mortuary ideologies. The Athenians deliberately incorporated practices that probably expressed elite Mycenaean mortuary ideologies, such as those expressive of ancestral legitimization (via the deposition of the ivory pyxides with what was probably a female burial) and warrior ideology. There is also evidence at both cemeteries that practices expressive of female status and perhaps female roles continued to be bound up in attributes that represented or at least symbolically referenced affiliation to textile production activities and occupational identities.

Another striking aspect of Palatial and Late Mycenaean phase burial practice is the reversal of assumptions regarding the artefactual gendering of toilet articles and perhaps spindle whorls in the Aspropilia Cemetery. Thus far, no other cemetery in the sample has contained a female burial associated with bronze tweezers[162] – a grooming object usually associated with adult males, often included in Mycenaean warrior kits, and as a rule, artefactually gendered as male. Further, male burials rarely were provided with spindle whorls.[163] Bronze spatulas are also sometimes categorised as part of the female toilet kit, but at Aspropilia they were most likely associated with the adult male identified as Burial 1 in Tomb 4. The burials that were provided with these objects were also associated with assemblages containing

[162] Except perhaps the female burial from Grave MH 53 at Asine. However, the tweezers could have been deposited with the male burial from Grave MH 52, because grave MH 53 was constructed on top of Grave MH 52 and collapsed into it (Frödin and Persson 1938, 121; Nordquist 1996, 27).

[163] The adult male identified as burial 20FA from the MHIII/LHI grave MH 23 at Asine was associated with a terracotta whorl (Nordquist 1996, 23; 1987a, 123, no. 12:3). Then there is the singular case of the electrum whorl associated with the possible adult male burial from Grave Iota in Grave Circle B (Dietz 1991, 119; Mylonas 1973, 121).

objects that conformed to traditional Mycenaean depositional practices, i.e. the deposition of weaponry with male burials. Therefore, it is doubtful that the presence of these objects indicates anything as dramatic as a third gender. Instead, these activities suggest that high-status females might have tweezed unwanted hairs with expensive grooming objects, and that likewise high-status males may have untangled their hair with ivory combs as readily as archaeologists posit they groomed their beards (Treherne 1995). Further, there is no tangible reason why males could have been physically prohibited from engaging in textile production activities or at least being socially affiliated with occupational groups engaging in these valued activities. Although the people using this cemetery were amassing and depositing Mycenaean objects in their tombs, it seems that some of these objects became signifiers of Rhodian values and gender ideologies.

This creative approach to the deposition of Mycenaean artefact types and to the distinction of female burials within a milieu that was otherwise constrained by tradition and in some cases limited resources suggests that outside the core area Mycenaean mortuary ideology was still very much in flux. It also is interesting that region-specific variations of Mycenaean mortuary practice were in full swing well before the demise of the palatial system (*c.* 1200 B.C.). This suggests that while Mycenaean administrations were amassing power and presumably people, Mycenaean mortuary ideology was not only permeating new territories and communities, but was being affected by dynamic processes – processes capable of constraining some practices, diversifying others and introducing entirely new ones.

Because the burial practice continued to be performed in a similar vein but on a smaller scale during the Late Mycenaean phase, this may be evidence of an ideological wind-down in the post-palatial period, indicative of either a scarcity in resources, a shift in priorities or both. While these factors certainly could have affected mortuary behaviour, this does not explain why a recognizable Mycenaean female kit never gained an ideological foothold comparable to the iconic male warrior kit.

# Chapter 8

# The Prosymna Case Study: Detecting Gendered Mortuary Behaviour in Unsexed Burial Samples

In Chapters 5, 6 and 7, the gender attribution approach was used to identify gendered mortuary behaviours in sexed cemeteries datable from the early Middle Helladic to Late Helladic IIIC periods on the Mainland and Rhodes, as well as Khania on Crete (*Appendix I*). The results informed what has turned out to be a nuanced and varied portrait of how gendered burial practices were performed and how gender ideologies were constructed and expressed. Results also show how these practices varied from cemetery to cemetery as well as how and when they faded from use or changed over time. In light of this, the gender attribution approach has proven itself to be a feasible, reliable and relevant way to pursue a gendered line study of Middle Helladic and Mycenaean mortuary behaviour.

Given the fact that unsexed burial samples comprise the bulk of the Mycenaean mortuary record, is it possible to use what we have learned from the sexed cemeteries to detect gendered mortuary behaviours in unsexed burial samples? To attempt this is imperative, because finding a means by which we can reliably identify evidence of gendered practices in unsexed samples is the only way to achieve a comprehensive understanding of gendered mortuary behaviour in Middle Helladic and Mycenaean Greece. The aim of this chapter is to show that results of the sexed analyses can be used to reveal evidence of gendered mortuary behaviour in unsexed burial samples. To demonstrate the possibility of this, a case study of one of the larger and well-documented Mycenaean cemetery samples, the Prosymna Cemetery in the Argolid, was conducted. What follows is a detailed discussion of the Prosymna analysis and results, with a view to establishing what can and cannot be revealed using this methodology, hereafter referred to as 'the Prosymna Approach' (*Section 4.3*).

Prosymna's burial sample is an ideal candidate for this case study because of several key points: 1) the sample has cultural similarities with the sexed burial samples, based on the presence of Mycenaean cultural markers evident in its grave architecture, grave and burial embellishments and deposited artefact types; 2) the burials are unsexed; 3) the cemetery constitutes one of the best documented and clearly published unsexed cemetery sites in Mycenaean Greece; 4) the comparatively large size of the cemetery; 5) the presence of grave goods datable to both the Early Mycenaean and Palatial phases – chronological phases that are well-represented in the sexed burial samples; and 6) the range of material wealth

represented in the cemetery is comparable to that observed in the other chamber tomb cemetery samples.

My hope is that, ultimately, this approach can be used to identify gendered mortuary behaviour in other unsexed burial samples from Middle Helladic and Mycenaean Greece. To demonstrate the applicability of this approach further, *Appendix II* discusses the analysis of other notable burial assemblages from other unsexed cemetery sites at Mycenae, Argos, Dendra and Pylos.

## 8.1 Archaeological Context: Bronze Age Prosymna

The prehistoric settlement of Prosymna is located in the Argolid not far from Mycenae and straddles the West and East Yerogalaro hills. The 'unambiguously extramural cemetery' (Voutsaki *et al.* 2009b, 145) was excavated by Blegen (1937) and Wace (1921-23) during the 1920s and yielded graves datable from MHII (at the earliest) to LHIIIB. Abundant ceramic evidence, including externally manufactured ceramic wares found in both settlement and mortuary contexts (Blegen 1937; Dietz 1991, 14-45; Shelton 1996), indicates that Prosymna was a substantial Mycenaean settlement that participated in regional trade networks. The dating of grave stratigraphy based on ceramic chronology is particularly reliable thanks in large part to Shelton's (1996) study of Prosymna's LHIII ceramic assemblages and Dietz's (1991, 14-45) study of the LHI-II ceramic assemblage.

There is no evidence that Prosymna was a palatial site or that it was administratively or militarily self-sufficient. The settlement does boast a Cyclopean wall on its terrace, whose date of construction has been the subject of considerable debate (Blegen 1937; Tilton 1902; Wright, J. C. 1982).[164] It is entirely possible that Prosymna fell under the jurisdiction of nearby Mycenae, most likely during the Palatial phase, and certainly proximity to Mycenae, Tiryns and Argos facilitated access to Mycenaean trade routes based on the presence of imports, luxury goods and regionally diverse ceramic wares at the site. There is also evidence of a rising elite at Prosymna during the Early Mycenaean phase, based on evidence of exotic grave goods in Prosymna's Tholos Tomb (Wace 1921-23, 330-338) and Tombs 14 and 26 (Blegen 1937, 93-98, 166-70), but this surge in prosperity seems to have come to a halt, at least as far as the deposition of material wealth is concerned, at the end of LHII.

[164] J. C. Wright (1982, 192, 194) dates the wall to the 7th century based on architectural and settlement evidence from Prosymna, the nearby Argive Heraion on the site and comparative architectural evidence from the rest of the Argolid. He argues, 'at best it could be considered an imitation of the Mycenaean' (Wright, J. C. 1982, 192).

After the demise of the palatial system at the end of LHIIIB, there is a noticeable gap in activity at Prosymna until the late seventh century.

Typical Mycenaean grave types are present, including a tholos tomb, chamber tombs, pit and cist graves and one shaft grave (Blegen 1937). All burials are inhumations, and the use of multiple and secondary burial was normal practice. Burial assemblages contained a wide variety of Mycenaean artefact types, such as ceramic vessels (mainly Argive Ware as well as some Lustrous, Polychrome and Coarse wares [Dietz 1991, 14-45; Shelton 1996]) featuring common Mycenaean shapes and motifs; a few metal vessels including a large bronze basin from Tomb 10 (Blegen 1937, 199, fig. 506); typical Mycenaean weaponry sub-types including remnants of at least three boar's tusk helmets (Blegen 1937, 94, 168), arrowheads, knives and daggers; and bronze tweezers, textile production tools and jewellery composed mainly of vitreous paste, faience and other semi-precious stones. The population using the cemetery seems to have had limited but established access to luxury goods and materials. Fumigation also was performed in certain tombs, and drinking and eating rituals may have been performed as part of the burial practice as well.[165]

Blegen (1937) identified many child burials, typically based on the 'small size' of the grave or the bones themselves and sometimes based on association with figurines. Yet he was actually quite restrained in his interpretation of burial gender. He typically interpreted a few burials as being male, based on their association with weaponry, which we shall see is in keeping with the results of the analysis. He did interpret the skeletal remains from Grave XI as being those of a mother and child (Blegen 1937, 48) based on the combination of what appeared to be an adult skeleton buried with a child skeleton and artefactual gendering.

## 8.2 Data and Limitations

*Table 8.1* shows that at least 506 burials were inhumed in Prosymna's Bronze Age cemetery.[166] This number is based on Blegen's (1937) skull counts. *Table 8.2* catalogues all individual burials (a total of 317 burials that were not collectively grouped with the remains of other individuals) as well as secondary bone heaps and the burial assemblages. Because

[165] Drinking activities may have taken place during funerary rituals and/or for the reopening of tombs, based on the presence of kylix stems, ranging in numbers from two to 38. These were found mainly in the dromoi and doorways of tombs. Kylix stems were also associated with roughly 18 burials from the following graves: Tombs 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 14, 24, 26, 27, 28, 33, 34, 37, 38, 39, 41, 42, 43, 44, 46, 48, 49, 51 (Blegen 1937; Shelton 1996).

[166] Counts and descriptions of human remains are derived from reports by Blegen (1937). Triantaphyllou (pers. comm, 20th January, 2010) has confirmed that Prosymna's skeletal evidence can no longer be located.

lack of chronological specificity potentially detracts from the identification of temporal variations in burial practice at Prosymna, I have divided Prosymna's burials and their associated assemblages into three groups, denoted by: EMyc, EMyc/PMyc (for the assemblages of unclear date) or PMyc. By doing so, I have avoided contamination of data that is reliably dated and prevented the loss of valuable data from the undatable burial assemblages.

Almost 1700 objects were deposited in the cemetery, and *Table 8.3* shows that roughly two-thirds of all burials at Prosymna were provided with grave goods.

As for objects associated with secondary bone heaps containing multiple remains, it is not possible to determine which objects were associated with individual burials. Because of this, assemblages associated with collective secondary bone heaps have been excluded from the sample. Based on association with distinct assemblages, *Table 8.4* shows that, of those associated with grave goods, 28 individual burials were datable to the Early Mycenaean phase, 20 individual burials were of unclear date and 84 individual burials were datable to the Palatial phase. This is the working sample for the Prosymna case study. It is composed of a total of 133 assemblages including the grave assemblage from Prosymna's LHII Tholos Tomb, and is catalogued in *Table 8.5*.

Evidence from Prosymna's LHII Tholos Tomb, located just west of the cemetery (Stamatakis 1878; Wace 1921-23, 330-338) is extremely compromised. The skeletal evidence from the three pit graves located in the floor of the tholos is not published in any detail, and it is unclear how many burials were interred in the tomb or whether they were secondary or primary burials. Further, the tomb itself was plundered, and only pottery datable to the Classical period was found in the grave pits, specifically Pit 3 (Wace 1921-23, 331-36). Finally, objects found in the tomb cannot be associated with burials. Still, what remained of the tomb's original grave assemblage, though incomplete and scattered in disarray throughout the dromos and tomb, was impressive. Evidence of objects composed of ivory, white marble, lapis lazuli, faience and bronze, as well as evidence of a boar's tusk helmet, display vessels and gold ornaments and jewellery (Wace 1921-23, 334-37) suggest that this was an elite tomb, probably once representing the uppermost standard of wealth and status at Early Mycenaean Prosymna. Despite this, the contents of the surviving grave assemblage and the implications of this burial practice will be borne in mind and considered.

## 8.3 Prosymna: The Analysis

### *8.3.1 Establishing Criteria and Categories*

Below is a summary of results obtained from the sexed analyses categorized as *firm expressions of gender* in the conclusions of Chapters 5, 6 and 7. I have listed only the practices that are generally applicable to the entirety of the sexed Mycenaean sample for each chronological phase. Site-specific gendered behaviours will be discussed as needed.

***Gendered Middle Helladic Depositional Practices***

The distinction of high-status adult and elderly female burials was expressed via the deposition of:

- Objects of adornment, often including bronze jewellery or beads of semi-precious stones;
- spindle whorls;
- domestic coarse ware.

The distinction of high-status adult and elderly male burials was expressed via the deposition of

- weaponry;
- fine, decorated pottery;
- sometimes ceramic bowls.

***Gendered Early Mycenaean Phase Depositional Practices:***

The distinction of select high-status adult and elderly female burials was expressed via the deposition of

- objects of adornment, especially bronze jewellery and dress pins of various materials;
- spindle whorls;
- sometimes domestic coarse ware;
- weaponry, including daggers, swords and spears – but only in upper elite cases;
- possibly status insignia such as gold cushion seals and miniature instruments

The distinction of select high-status adult and elderly male burials was expressed via the deposition of

- a greater quantity and variety of objects and materials than those associated with female or non-adult burials;
- standard weaponry (e.g. swords, knives and daggers);

- prestige and specialised weaponry (e.g. boar's tusk helmets, other armour, spears, arrowheads and javelin points);
- status insignia (e.g. boar's tusk helmets, staffs, heirloom/antique objects);
- bronze toilet articles;
- possibly gaming equipment and gold buttons.

***Gendered Palatial Phase Depositional Practices:***

The distinction of select high-status adult/elderly female burials was expressed via the deposition of

- a greater quantity and variety of objects and materials than those associated with male or non-adult burials;
- jewellery;
- buttons/whorls composed of steatite or clay;
- possibly ivory, beaded funerary costume and linen headdresses.

The distinction of select high-status adult/elderly male burials was expressed via the deposition of

- weaponry;
- bronze toilet articles;
- bronze vessels.

Ambiguous expressions of gender (also detailed in the conclusions of Chapters 5, 6 and 7) will also be considered. Some, which correlate to artefact types present at Prosymna, have been included above and are described as 'possible' practices.

Age-determined depositional practices are harder to track. High-status child burials were often provided with assemblages that were similar in content but smaller in scale than high-status adult assemblages – although this is not always the case. Further, age-determined depositional practices were usually expressed via the provision or lack of provision of grave goods, which cannot be identified using this methodology because it was routine for a significant proportion of the adult burials in all Middle Helladic and Mycenaean cemeteries (except perhaps in the Shaft Graves) to be excluded from grave good deposition. Additionally, most age-determined burial practices affected inclusion and exclusion in cemeteries, subtle differences in use of grave type and the use of burial embellishments such as burial container – all of which (except for possible burial containers) cannot be flagged using this methodology. Therefore, the identification of a burial's approximate age at death

will only be categorised if there is correlative evidence from the burial's archaeological context.

For the list of artefactually gendered object types and sub-types present at Prosymna see *Table 8.6*.

### *8.3.2 The Cross-Tabulation*

Using the gender categories in *Table 8.6*, cross-tabulation was performed in order to establish whether or not artefact types that could be categorised as male, female or unclear were present in each burial assemblage. For results of cross tabulation for the LHII Tholos Tomb grave assemblage see *Table 8.7*, for the Early Mycenaean phase assemblages and assemblages of unclear date (EMyc/PMyc phase) see *Table 8.8*; for the Palatial phase assemblages see *Table 8.9*.

Several interesting patterns are immediately visible. First, burial assemblages almost always contained pottery, indicating that here too, at Prosymna, pottery was deposited irrespective of gender in accordance with results of the sexed analyses (*Sections 5.3.2.1.1*, *6.3.2.2* and *7.3.2.1.1.1-2*). Although the deposition of domestic coarse ware and bowl shapes appears to have been determined by gender during the Middle Helladic and possibly Early Mycenaean phases in some of the sexed burial samples, these pottery sub-types were not reported at Prosymna in contexts datable to these phases. In light of this, the following discussion will focus almost exclusively on burial assemblages containing other artefact types. Burials associated with assemblages that *only* contained pottery will be automatically gendered as 'unclear', although unusual pottery depositions will be discussed as needed.

Second, burial assemblages containing male artefact types typically contained *only* 'male' linked objects plus objects of unclear gender (typically pottery). The converse was mostly true for assemblages containing 'female' artefact types, suggesting that it is possible to identify male and female grave inventories at Prosymna using this approach. The only discrepancy to this pattern involves the deposition of conical buttons/whorls, which are categorised as 'Probable Female' based upon the deposition of these objects mainly with female burials in the contemporaneous sexed samples from the Agora and Aspropilia Cemeteries, and it has already been established that these objects could have had dual functions during their use life, as spindle whorls and garment decorations (*Section 4.2.2.3* and *7.3.2.2.2*; also see Andersson and Nosch 2003). Blegen categorised conical objects from Prosymna's tombs as 'buttons.' They were composed of either steatite or terracotta. The

implications of their presence within the context of the various assemblages will figure greatly in the following discussion.

Third, although a number of assemblages appear to be predominantly 'female' in character, a 'female' inventory group is less well-defined, and as a result it is much more difficult to identify female assemblages confidently.

Fourth, the cross-tabulation shows that Prosymna's depositional practices generally conformed to gendered depositional practices observed in the sexed burial samples, with little or no evidence of possible outliers, e.g. deviations from normal Mycenaean burial practice, and there are only a few artefact types and subtypes that are specific to the site. Unusually, steatite was commonly used for adornment and even vessels at Prosymna;[167] whereas steatite jewellery rarely occurs in the other Mycenaean cemeteries from the sexed burial samples.[168] Other examples of unusual artefacts at Prosymna include silver spoons,[169] a bronze scale-pan[170] and the larnax used as a burial container for the skeleton buried in Tomb 17 (Blegen 1937, 53-54; Shelton 1996, 37), which may indicate affinity with Crete. The most striking difference is in the great quantity of arrowheads deposited amongst Prosymna's 'male' burials – the implications of which are discussed in *Section 8.5.2.1*. Still, there are very few instances in which the contents of an assemblage greatly differ from those observed in the sexed burial samples. Because of this, it was possible to confidently gender many of Prosymna's burial assemblages. The results establish a compelling case for cultural and ideological similarities between Prosymna's burial practices and those observed in the

[167] Two steatite beads are associated with the skeleton from Grave XVII (Blegen 1937, 41); seven steatite pendants were associated with the collective bone heap found in the double niche from Tomb 8 (Blegen 1937, 162); another steatite pendant was associated with a single bone from Tomb 19 (Blegen 1937, 60); a steatite bead was found amongst the collective bone repository in the north side of the chamber from Tomb 25 (Blegen 1937, 89); another steatite pendant was found in Cist III in Tomb 35 (Blegen 1937, 119) and yet another was located amongst the collective bone heap in the rear chamber of Tomb 45 (Blegen 1937, 219); and finally a cylindrical steatite bead was found amongst the collective bone heap in the rear of the chamber in Tomb 51 (Blegen 1937, 226). Two steatite lamps and fragments from others and fragments of a steatite bowl (Wace 1921-23, 336, Pl. LV.,b) were found in the LHII Tholos Tomb.

[168] These include a steatite bead of no association from Tomb VII in the Agora Cemetery (Immerwahr 1971, 190, Pl. 40); a steatite bead from a necklace associated with an unsexed skeleton from Grave DC.4 at Lerna (Caskey 1957, 145); and a steatite necklace of five beads (DM 41) associated with the unsexed remains identified as Burial No. 1 from Tomb XXIV at Deiras (Deshayes 1966, 66, 68, Pl. LXIX,11). The only other example from this sample is a pierced steatite seal-stone associated with the child burial identified as Skeleton 3 from Tomb 11 in the Odos Palama grave group. It was probably used as an ornament on a necklace or bracelet (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 19, 20, Pls. 22A-B). Although Odos Palama is not a Mycenaean cemetery, the seal-stone may have been imported from the Mainland and could be interpreted as an example of steatite jewellery.

[169] Silver spoons were found amongst the collective bone heap located near the right wall of the chamber in Tomb 30 (Blegen 1937, 74) and with the burial identified as Skeleton No. 48 from Tomb 44 (Blegen 1937, 212).

[170] The bronze scale-pan is associated with the burial identified as Skeleton No. 48 from Tomb 44 (Blegen 1937, 212, fig. 543).

sexed burial samples as well as for a general degree of uniformity concerning gendered Mycenaean depositional practices within (at least) the Argolid. Finally, and most importantly, results show that this methodology can be used for the gendered analysis of other unsexed Middle Helladic and Mycenaean burial samples.

What follows is a discussion of the burial assemblages that contained artefact types in addition to or instead of pottery.

### *8.3.3 The Contextual Analysis: Prosymna's burial assemblages*

#### 8.3.3.1 The Early Mycenaean Phase at Prosymna

**Assemblage #0** is composed of the surviving assemblage from the LHII Tholos Tomb. It represents the surviving remnants of probably multiple burial assemblages. The contents suggest that adult burials of both genders were originally interred in the tomb, and that the practice incorporated aspects of gendered burial practices observed in Grave Circle A at Mycenae.

**Assemblage #3** is associated with the secondary burial from Grave IV (Blegen 1931, 37-39, fig. 36) and probably datable to LHI.[171] It included a jug, two cups, a goblet, a bronze dagger and a pair of bronze tweezers. The deceased is gendered as a probable male based on the deposition of weaponry and the bronze toilet article.

**Assemblage #7** is associated with the primary burial from Grave XVII and is datable to MHIII-LHI (Blegen 1931, 41, fig. 61; Dietz 1991, 142-43). It included bronze objects of adornment that may have functioned as either hair fasteners or earrings, a small bronze ring, remnants of a necklace originally composed of six bronze beads, two crystal beads and two steatite beads as well as four perforated seashells, a cup and small jug (Blegen 1931, 41, fig. 61; Dietz 1991, 142-43). The burial is gendered as a probable female based on the presence of bronze objects of adornment. Blegen (1931, 41) argued that the small size of the cist suggested a child burial. If this is true, Assemblage #7 may mirror a similar practice, albeit on a smaller scale, to that used for distinction of the infant burial, identified as burial AA 127, from the LHII Lily Bowl Grave in the Agora Cemetery (Immerwahr 1971, 205-8, Pls. 47, 65-66, 79, 87; Thompson 1952, 107-8, Pl. 26c). The Lily Bowl Grave burial assemblage also included 10 beautifully rendered and decorated ceramic vessels of various shapes, the 'Lily' pendant composed of amethyst or quartz, an ivory comb, bone or ivory dress pins and

[171] There is a small possibility that this assemblage could be datable to the Palatial phase (Dietz 1991, 141).

seashells probably used as adornment (Immerwahr 1971, 208, Pl. 47). Based on similarities between **Assemblage #7** and the Lily Bowl Grave burial assemblage, it is certainly possible that the burial from Grave XVII was a non-adult.

**Assemblage #8** is associated with the primary burial from Grave XVIII and is datable to MHIII-LHI (Blegen 1931, 41-42, fig. 66; Dietz 1991, 143). It consisted of four small jugs, a cup, a loop of bronze that may have functioned as an earring and the possible remnants of a necklace including 10 bronze beads and one carnelian bead. The burial is gendered as a probable female based on the presence of bronze adornment.

**Assemblage #10** is associated with the primary burial from Grave XX and datable to LHI (Blegen 1931, 32-33, fig. 40; Dietz 1991, 143). It contained five jugs, seven cups, a bracelet composed of seven vitreous beads, a necklace composed of 61 fluted cockleshells and a fragment of a bronze dress pin. Because bronze dress pins appear to be linked to adult female burials in Grave Circle B at Mycenae during the same chronological phase,[172] the combination of bronze ornaments and jewellery suggest that this burial should be gendered as a possible female. Also, the relatively large quantity of pottery, jewellery and the shell necklace (in particular) are similar to the contents of **Assemblage #*7*** as well as Lily Bowl Grave assemblage, which suggests that the remains could have been those of a non-adult female.

**Assemblage #14** is associated with the primary burial from Grave XXVI and is datable to MHIII (Blegen 1931, 45, fig. 78; Dietz 1991, 144). The cist contained two jugs, two cups, a terracotta spindle whorl, a bronze wire ring and a bronze pin. Based on the combined presence of a textile production tool with bronze objects of adornment, this burial is gendered as a probable female.[173]

**Assemblage #16** is associated with the secondary Cist Burial From Tomb 11 and datable to LHII (Blegen 1937, 201-03, Plan 45; Shelton 1996, 25). It included two cups, a ceramic hedgehog-shaped vessel of unknown function and a few vitreous beads. The skeletal remains were found in a heap, and Blegen surmised that the cist probably contained the remains of a single burial. The character of the assemblage is ambiguous and prohibits confident gendering. The gender of the burial is unclear.

[172] Bronze dress pins are associated with the adult female identified as burial 132 Myc from Grave Upsilon (Mylonas 1973, 234) and with the possible female identified as Skeleton 1 from Grave Omikron (Mylonas 1966, 100).
[173] Blegen (1931, 45) thought this to be the burial of a child, despite the fact that the skull was missing and the skeletal evidence included only three small fragments of bone.

**Assemblage #17** is associated with the skeleton found in the lower layer of the western side chamber of Tomb 25 and is datable to LHI (Blegen 1937, 88). It included a jar and a cup featuring simple linear decoration and a bronze dagger. The combination of the date of the burial and the presence of possible weaponry and decorated fine pottery suggest that this burial should be gendered as a possible male, because certain elite female burials could be provided with weaponry during this phase. If this assemblage were datable to the Palatial phase, the burial would be gendered as a *probable* male.

**Assemblage #21** is associated with the skeleton found in the southern part of the side chamber from Tomb 26 and is datable to LHI-II (Blegen 1937, 96, fig. 209). It contained a jug and two jars featuring simple linear decoration, a terracotta button/whorl and a bronze dagger. This is an example of one of the discrepancies mentioned above, in which an object that is artefactually gendered as male occurs in an assemblage with an object that is artefactually gendered as female. There are several possible scenarios to explain this: 1) the assemblage was disturbed; 2) the terracotta object functioned only as a button suggesting that the burial could be male; or 3) the terracotta object functioned as a whorl/button and the dagger was deposited with a high-status female burial. The first scenario is unlikely, because Blegen did not report any disturbance in the tomb. The third scenario is also unlikely despite the fact that select elite female burials of Early Mycenaean date were sometimes buried with daggers, knives or swords,[174] because this practice was typically reserved for the distinction of elite female burials – and this is not an elite burial. Further, there is no evidence that a female burial associated with textile production tools could also be associated with weaponry. In fact, wealthy and high-status female burials provided with spindle whorls were often associated with comparatively larger and wealthier assemblages than the male burials with whom they shared their cemetery; but these assemblages included jewellery, ornaments and/or pottery – never weaponry. In short, if a burial was identified as a spinner through depositional practices, it is doubtful that she also could be identified as a 'warrior'. Ideologically, this tenet appears to have been strict. Based on this, it seems more likely that the skeleton from the south side chamber was an adult male, and that the terracotta button/whorl was used for garment decoration. This suggests that this burial practice was a scaled down version of practices reserved for elite male burials like those observed in the Shaft Graves at Mycenae – in which Grave Circle A shafts containing sexed male burials

[174] See the adult female identified as burial 58 Myc from Grave Gamma (Chapter 5, *Section 5.4.2*; Mylonas 1973, 70-73), and the adult female identified as burial 63 Myc from Grave Theta (Mylonas 1966, 98), both of which are from Grave Circle B at Mycenae.

yielded large quantities of weaponry and gold buttons,[175] and the deposition of an electrum spindle whorl emphasized the adult male burial from Grave Iota in Grave Circle B (Dietz 1991, 119; Mylonas 1973, 121). Following this logic, the burial associated with **Assemblage #21** is gendered as a possible male.

**Assemblage #22** was associated with the Cist 3 Burial from Tomb 29 and is datable to LHII (Blegen 1937, 78, fig. 153, Plan 11). It contained a plain goblet and amphora and an unspecified number of black vitreous beads. This assemblage prohibits confident categorisation, and the burial is gendered as unclear.

**Assemblage #24** was associated with Skeleton No. 48 from Tomb 44 and is datable to LHII (Blegen 1937, 209-10, Plan 47). It contained an amethyst lentoid shaped seal stone, a bronze scale-pan, a large array of beads (including 17 gold beads, 11 carnelian beads, four crystal beads, seven malachite beads, two amber beads, one ivory bead and upwards of 25 vitreous beads), bits of decorated gold leaf, a small silver spoon, a flint arrowhead and fragments of lead wire. When taken at face value, it seems logical to gender Skeleton No. 48 as a probable male based on the presence of the arrowhead alone. Yet, the presence of so many beads in such an array of materials as well as gold leaf ornaments makes the gendering of this burial much less straightforward. Blegen describes the beads as being found in the 'stratum of yellow or whitish clay between the floor and burnt layer' – the same find context described for the entire assemblage. It is also unclear if Skeleton No. 48 was a primary or secondary burial. Because the beads were found in the same stratum it is likely that they were part of a single group and did at one time adorn the person of a single burial. They could have formed one or two elaborate necklaces, or have functioned as elaborate beading upon the funerary shroud. The latter scenario is less likely, because the only other example of this is from the Aspropilia Cemetery on Rhodes and datable to the later Palatial phase. Elaborate shroud decoration datable to the Early Mycenaean phase is found in the Shaft Graves, but it is characterized by the use of gold discs and rosettes, not beading. Therefore, it is more likely the beads were originally strung together as necklaces or bracelets – a jewellery sub-type that cannot be firmly linked to one gender or the other, or even a specific age group for that matter. Further to this, the small silver spoon could suggest a child burial, while the bronze scale-pan may have been expressive of affiliation to certain occupational groups. The exotic material and early chronology suggests that the seal probably functioned as an ornament. The artefact types represented in this assemblage do not conform to the gendered inventories

[175] Shaft Grave IV yielded remains of two adult males identified as burials 22 Myc and 27 Myc, and Shaft Grave V yielded the remains of two adult males identified as burials 25 Myc and 26 Myc. Each grave yielded large quantities of gold buttons.

seen in the sexed burial samples. This raises the question: were all of the objects originally associated with one burial? Mainly because there are no other instances of single burials being affiliated with two occupational groups via object deposition in the sexed analyses, it is highly doubtful that **Assemblage #24** represents a single burial assemblage and ought to be a conglomerate group of objects composed of contents from more than one individual burial assemblage. The gender of Skeleton No. 48 remains unclear.

**Assemblage #25**, also from Tomb 44, was associated with a secondary burial identified as Skull No. 13 and is datable to LHII (Blegen 1937, 211-12). It included one or two jugs, two cups, a jar, two alabastra, three or four rhyta and a plain amphora. Skull No. 13 was also associated with a coarse ceramic 'table of offerings' (Shelton 1996, 146-47), which featured numerous circular depressions and incised rosettes.[176] A bronze knife and 10 bronze arrowheads completed the assemblage. Based on the presence of arrowheads, Skull No. 13 is gendered as a probable male.

**Assemblage #26** is associated with the burial from Cist 1 in Tomb 49 and is datable to LHII (Blegen 1937, 138, figs. 331, 336, Plan 27). It included an alabastron featuring simple linear decoration (Shelton 1996, 156), two amber beads, an unknown number of bronze arrowheads and a steatite button/whorl. The assemblage is similar in some respects to **Assemblage #21** (discussed above), in that it contained objects artefactually gendered as male and female. While **Assemblage #21** contained a dagger – a weaponry sub-type that could be deposited with select elite female burials during this phase at Mycenae – arrowheads were instead present in **Assemblage #26**. Arrowheads are an artefact sub-type that was associated exclusively with male burials during all phases of the Mycenaean epoch. Also, a spindle whorl was deposited during MHIII/LHI with one male burial at Asine: the adult male identified as burial 20FA from grave MH 23 (Nordquist 1996, 23; Frödin and Persson 1938, 117, n. 3). Based on this, the remains from Cist 1 in Tomb 49 are gendered as a possible male, because arrowheads are exclusively associated with male burials.

**Assemblage #27** is associated with the burial from Cist VIII also in Tomb 49 and is datable to LHII (Blegen 1937, 138-39, figs. 338, 339, Plan 27). It included a ring-handled cup featuring simple linear decoration (Shelton 1996, 157), a plain gold finger-ring, two silver pins, a collection of beads (consisting of one bronze, two carnelian and 98 vitreous beads), a crystal lentoid seal and a steatite button/whorl. Some elite male burials from the Shaft

[176] Two tables of porous stone, this time interpreted as being a 'slaughter table' and a 'sacrificial table' were found at Dendra in Chamber Tomb No. 2. (Persson 1931, 100-01, fig. 76, Pl. XXIX 2). They are datable to LHIII.

Graves were provided with a combination of decorated fine pottery and gold jewellery – (all of which were datable to an earlier MHIII context),[177] but the remaining objects could also be deposited with high-status female burials. The combined presence of jewellery, silver dress pins and the button/whorl as well as the absence of weaponry give more weight to the likelihood that this was a female burial. Based on this, the burial from Cist VIII in Tomb 49 is gendered as a possible female.

**Assemblage #28** is associated with the skeleton located on the right side of the chamber of Tomb 52 and is datable to LHI (Blegen 1937, 117, Plan 20). It included a pithoid jar, small jug and cup featuring simple linear decoration (Shelton 1996, 162-63), as well as a plain goblet (Shelton 1996, 163) and a large terracotta button/whorl. The combination of the button/whorl and fine pottery strongly suggests that this was a high-status female burial. The burial is gendered as a probable female.

#### 8.3.3.2 Assemblages of unclear date: the Early Mycenaean/Palatial Phase at Prosymna

**Assemblage #32** is associated with Skeleton 2 from Tomb 3 and is datable from LHII-IIIB (Blegen 1937, 182-83). It included a bronze arrowhead, a fragment of a terracotta animal figurine, a steatite button/whorl and a bronze knife. The combined presence of the arrowhead and knife strongly suggest that Skeleton 2 was a male burial, but the presence of the button/whorl muddies the equation. It is possible that the contents of the tomb were disturbed, and this may perhaps account for the lack of clarity concerning the date of the burial. Due to probable disturbance and a rather daunting list of unknowns, the burial is gendered as unclear.

**Assemblage #33** is associated with the Cist II burial also from Tomb 14 and contained no datable objects (Blegen 1937, 168, fig. 419). It included two arrowheads, one composed of flint and the other of obsidian, and also a single piece of boar's tusk. Based on the presence of arrowheads and prestige armour, the Cist II burial is gendered as a probable male.

[177] The adult male identified as burial 52 Myc from Grave Beta (datable to MHIII) was associated with pottery and a gold armband (Mylonas 1973, 41-42, Pl. 28a). The elderly male identified as burial 66 Myc from Grave Nu was associated with a gold diadem and pottery (Mylonas 1973, 158-76). The adult male identified as burial 68 Myc from Grave Iota was associated with gold sheet garment decoration, a possible gold garter and pottery (Graziadio 1991, 423, n. 169; Mylonas 1973, 120; 1957, 152). An adult male identified as burial 70a Myc from Grave Lambda was associated with gold ornaments for a sword or scabbard and fine pottery (Mylonas 1973, 142-43).

**Assemblage #34** is associated with the skeleton found on the floor of the main chamber in Tomb 25 and is datable from the LHI-III periods (Blegen 1937, 87, Plan 14). It consisted solely of a bronze dagger. Based on this, the burial is gendered as a probable male.

**Assemblage #35** is associated with the Cist burial in the North Chamber of Tomb 25 and is datable from the LHI-III periods (Blegen 1937, 89). It included a bronze dagger, a bronze sword and two vitreous beads. Based on the sub-elite status of the burial, the presence of weaponry and unclear chronology the Cist burial is gendered as a probable male.

**Assemblage #36** is associated with the burial from Cist 2 also in Tomb 26 and is datable from LHI-III (Blegen 1937, 94). It included only two steatite buttons/whorls. Based on this, the burial is gendered as a probable female.

**Assemblage #37** is associated with the upper platform burial located in Tomb 26 (Blegen 1937, 95-97). The assemblage contained pottery datable to both LHII and LHIIIB1 (Shelton 1996, 69-71) consisting of a jar, four alabastra, a cup, two jugs, two carinated kylikes and two bowls. The rest of the wealthy assemblage included a bronze finger-ring, an eight-sided gold bar of unknown function, pieces of an ivory vessel, and a large weaponry cache consisting of 13 bronze arrowheads, a single obsidian arrowhead, two bronze knives, a bronze dagger with silver-plated rivets, a bronze spearhead, a detached bronze rivet with gold-plated ends, and a single boar's tusk. Based mainly on the weaponry and the absence of artefacts firmly gendered as female, the earliest and most undisturbed primary burial within this tomb is gendered as a probable male.

**Assemblage #38** is associated with the Cist 1 burial from Tomb 28, which is datable from LHI-III (Blegen 1937, 81). The assemblage included just one terracotta button/whorl. Based on this, the burial is gendered as a probable female.

**Assemblage #39** is associated with the secondary remains of what may have been a single burial identified as a bone heap in the niche of Tomb 29 (Blegen 1937, 77). It included an LHIIIA2 alabastron featuring simple linear decoration (Shelton 1996, 80), a ceramic pot handle, two steatite buttons/whorls and three vitreous beads. **Assemblage #39** has been categorized as being of unclear date due to the ambiguous nature of the group of bones found in the niche of Tomb 29. It is unclear whether this group of objects is a single burial assemblage. Because of confusion surrounding context and association, the secondary remains are gendered as unclear.

**Assemblage #40** is associated with the burial from Cist 1 also in Tomb 29 and is datable from LHII-IIIB periods (Blegen 1937, 77). It includes kylix fragments, some vitreous beads, a steatite button/whorl and two bronze fragments. The Cist 1 burial is gendered as a probable female based on the presence of the button/whorl.

**Assemblage #41** is associated with the burial interred in Cist 6 from Tomb 29. It included three figurines. The gender of the burial is unclear.

**Assemblage #42** is associated with the primary burial in Cist 7 also from Tomb 29, and is datable from LHII-IIIA1 (Blegen 1937, 78-79). It included a plain goblet, conical cup and jug, a shallow cup, a two-handled jug and four alabastra all featuring simple linear decoration. It also included a miniature bier and a female figurine both composed of terracotta as well as an unspecified number of vitreous beads. Blegen suggested that this was a child burial based on the deposition of the figurine. While this is certainly possible, the gender of the Cist 7 burial is unclear.

**Assemblage #43** is associated with the burial from Cist 9 in Tomb 29 and is datable to sometime between LHII-IIIB (Blegen 1937, 79). Blegen (1937, 79) suggested that this was a child burial. The only grave good, a steatite button/whorl, suggests that the burial should be gendered as a probable female but does not establish the age of the burial.

**Assemblage #44** is composed of a single steatite button of unclear date, which is loosely associated with the arm bones found northeast of the door in Tomb 32 (Blegen 1937, 102). This burial is gendered as a possible female because of the loose association of the object with the burial.

**Assemblage #45** is associated with the primary burial of a skeleton found in the lower stratum in the inner left corner of Tomb 34 and it may be datable to either LHI or LHIIIA2 (Blegen 1937, 112, fig. 262). The burial is categorised as a probable male, because the assemblage is composed of a single bronze knife.

**Assemblage #46** is associated with the burial from Cist II in Tomb 36, and is datable from LHII-LHIIIA2 (Blegen 1937, 121). It included *c.* 56 vitreous beads, probably remnants of a necklace, and three steatite buttons/whorls. Based on this, the Cist II burial is gendered as a probable female.

**Assemblage #48** is associated with the cist burial from Tomb 50 and may be datable to LHII-IIIA2 (Blegen 1937, 141). It consisted of three conoid steatite buttons/whorls. Based on this, the burial is gendered as a probable female.

#### 8.3.3.3 The Palatial Phase at Prosymna

**Assemblage #49** is associated with the skeleton from Grave XXV and is datable to LHIII (Blegen 1937, 44-45). It contained a lustrous painted, decorated askos (Blegen 1937, 45, fig. 62), a bronze knife (Blegen 1937, 45, fig. 77) and an unworked stone (Blegen 1937, 44). The skeleton is gendered as a probable male based on the presence of weaponry in a Palatial phase context.

**Assemblage #51** is associated with the primary burial identified as Skeleton 1 located inside the door of Tomb 3 and is datable to LHIIIA-B (Blegen 1937, 182). It consists of a large jug and shallow cup featuring simple linear decoration (Shelton 1996, 9-10), as well as a carnelian seal-stone and steatite button/whorl. Skeleton 1 is gendered as a probable female based on the presence of the button/whorl.

**Assemblage #53** is associated with the primary burial of a skeleton located in the centre of Tomb 6 and is datable to LHIIIB2 (Blegen 1937, 156). It included an alabastron and large jug featuring simple linear decoration, a handmade miniature bowl also featuring simple linear decoration, a steatite seal, a steatite button/whorl and a vitreous bead. Although bowls were deposited with select male burials during the Middle Helladic and even sometimes during the Early Mycenaean phase, there is no evidence that this practice continued to be performed during the Palatial phase. Based on the combination of objects and the date of the assemblage, the burial is gendered as a probable female.

**Assemblage #55** is associated with the primary burial of a skeleton located on the left side of the chamber of Tomb 8 and is datable to LHIIIA2-B (Blegen 1937, 161, fig. 400). The assemblage is composed of one object: a stone pounder found to the right of the skeleton's pelvis. This practice clearly links this burial to certain production activities, but because pounders are not routinely deposited and cannot be gendered, the gender of the burial is unclear.

**Assemblage #56** is associated with the primary burial of a skeleton found in the left rear chamber of Tomb 8 and is datable to LHIIIA (Blegen 1937, 161, figs. 401, 402). It included 12 ceramic vessels: a monochrome two-handled jug and a monochrome beaked jug as well

as five small jugs, a piriform jar, a feeding bottle, an alabastron and a biconical jug – all featuring simple linear decoration. While the gender of this burial is unclear, the presence of the feeding bottle suggests that the burial may have been that of a non-adult.

**Assemblage #58** is also from Tomb 8, is associated with a primary burial located in Cist 1 and is datable to LHIIIA2 (Blegen 1937, 162). It contained only ceramic vessels, consisting of a plain kylix and jug, a small pyxis with lid and a feeding bottle featuring simple linear decoration (Shelton 1996, 22). The gender of the Cist 1 burial is unclear, and the presence of the feeding bottle suggests that this was the burial of a non-adult.

**Assemblage #63** is associated with the secondary bone heap (yielding only one skull) located in the centre of the Tomb 10 and datable to LHIIIA2-B (Blegen 1937, 199). It included roughly 20 objects. Pottery consisted of three stirrup jars, two miniature jugs, a miniature bowl, a wide-mouthed jar, an alabastron, a shallow cup featuring simple linear decoration and another small jug (Shelton 1996, 24-25). Eight figurines of unspecified type and a large bronze basin (Blegen 1937, 199, fig. 506) were also deposited. Under the basin three bronze spearheads, a bronze knife, a bronze cleaver, a bronze pair of tweezers, a bronze arrowhead and a whetstone (Blegen 1937, 199, Plan 44, figs. 510-12) were also found. Based on the presence of weaponry and a bronze toilet article as well as the whetstone and cleaver, the burial is gendered as a probable male.

**Assemblage #65** is associated with the bones found in the center part of the chamber of Tomb 11 and is datable to LHIIIA-B (Blegen 1937, 202). It contained fragments of a plain amphora (Shelton 1996, 25-26) and two steatite buttons/whorls. The remains are gendered as a probable female, based on the deposition of the button/whorls.

**Assemblage #70** is associated with the skeleton found on the chamber floor of Tomb 14 and is probably datable to LHIIIA2 (Blegen 1937, 168). It was composed of a steatite button and a bronze arrowhead, both of which were found at the back of the chamber. The burial is unclear due to the presence of one male artefact and another female artefact.

**Assemblage #71** is also from Tomb 14 and is associated with the secondary burial from Cist III (Blegen 1937, 169). It includes an obsidian arrowhead and bronze dagger (Blegen 1937, 169, figs. 420, 421) as well as three terracotta button/whorls, an ivory comb and a long tubular bronze socket of unknown function. Although there is no evidence firmly linking ivory combs to female or male burials, the warrior kit associated with the female identified as 58 Myc from Grave Gamma in Grave Circle B at Mycenae also contained an ivory comb

(Dietz 1991, 110, no. 227; Graziadio 1991, 414, n. 92; Mylonas 1973, 78-79). Combs were rarely deposited at Prosymna.[178] The deposition of an unusual ivory object may have signalled that there was something different about this particular 'warrior' burial. Still, the combination of buttons/whorls and the arrowhead is difficult to reconcile, and the probable LHIIIA2 date of the Cist III burial assemblage undermines attempts to confidently gender the burial as male or female. Because the Cist III burial was a secondary burial it is possible that objects that were not originally deposited with this burial were re-allocated to Cist III during secondary burial rites. Therefore, the gendering of this burial is unclear.

**Assemblage #73** is associated with the primary burial of the skeleton from Level 3 on the right side of the chamber in Tomb 17 and is datable to LHIIIA2 (Blegen 1937, 54). It is composed of a larnax featuring an octopus and simple linear decoration (Blegen 1937, 54, figs, 99, 101), a monochrome bell cup, an alabastron and beaked jug featuring simple linear decoration, three other vases (Blegen 1937, 53-54; Shelton 1996, 38), six vitreous beads and a steatite button/whorl (Blegen 1937, 54, fig. 107). Blegen suggested that this was the burial of a child. Although the remains of non-adults were sometimes inhumed in pots and pithoi during the Middle Helladic and Early Mycenaean phases, (*Sections 5.3.2.1.1* and *6.3.2.2.1*; *Table 6.42a-b*) there is no evidence that age determined the selective use of larnakes.[179] The presence of the button/whorl suggests that this burial should be gendered as a probable female.

**Assemblage #74** is associated with a single bone found in the right corner of Tomb 19 and datable to LHIIIA2-B (Blegen 1937, 60). The assemblage included two stirrup jars, a small piriform jar and an alabastron, all featuring simple linear decoration. It also included two steatite buttons/whorls, a steatite pendant, a fluted vitreous bead, a conical vitreous button/whorl and two seashells. Blegen (1937, 60) suggested that this burial was also probably that of a child based on the size of the bone. Based on the presence of multiple buttons/whorls, the burial is gendered as a probable female, but the artefactual evidence does little to establish the age of the burial.

**Assemblage #75** is also from Tomb 19, is associated with the primary cist burial and is datable to LHIIIA2-B (Blegen 1937, 60). The assemblage contained a bronze finger-ring, 10

[178] Evidence of four combs were found at Prosymna: the ivory comb associated with the Cist III burial from Tomb 14; a fragment of another ivory comb with no association also from Tomb 14; an ivory comb associated with the LHIIIA2 secondary bone heap (containing the remains of at least three individuals) from Tomb 41; and several decaying fragments of an ivory comb with no association from Tomb 29.

[179] The remains of what was probably an adult burial was found in the LHIIIC Larnax Grave located in the Granary at Mycenae (Desborough 1973, 100; Wace 1921-23, 36).

steatite buttons/whorls, and *c.* 150 vitreous beads. Based on the presence of bronze jewellery and the button/whorls this burial is gendered as a probable female. Blegen also suggested that this burial was that of a child, although there is nothing in the assemblage to confirm this interpretation.

**Assemblage #77** is associated with the primary burial of a skeleton found on the left side of the chamber of Tomb 22 and is datable to LHIIIA2-B (Blegen 1937, 66, fig. 130). It consists of a jug, feeding bottle, handmade miniature feeding bottle and stirrup jar all featuring simple linear decoration. It also included four animal figurines (Blegen 1937, 66, fig. 132) and a small terracotta chariot figurine placed beside the head. Blegen suggested that this skeleton was that of a child, and the presence of feeding bottles supports this hypothesis. The small chariot figurine also suggests that the burial may have been male. Although this type of figurine occurs so rarely in the Mycenaean record and has not been definitively linked to male burials,[180] the iconographic resonance of a chariot is so striking, particularly within a Mycenaean cultural context, that it is difficult to separate the object from perceived links to elite hunting and martial activities and ultimately male social domains (*Section 7.3.2.6*; also see Karantzali 2001, 18, 50-51). Based on this, the burial is gendered as a possible male and may have been that of a non-adult.

**Assemblage #82** is associated with the skeleton from the upper layer on the west side of the chamber in Tomb 25, and is datable to LHIIIA (Blegen 1937, 86-87, fig. 183). It included a plain side-spouted jar, a monochrome feeding bottle and a stirrup jar (Blegen 1937, 87, fig. 184; Shelton 1996, 64-65, n. 187). The feeding bottle suggests that the burial may have been a non-adult. The gender of the burial is unclear.

**Assemblage #84** is associated with the burial from Cist 1 in Tomb 26 (Blegen 1937, 94) and is datable to LHIIIB1. The assemblage included an amphora (Shelton 1996, 69), the stem of a kylix, fragments of bronze arrowheads, a bronze rivet, a boar's tusk fragment, a tool composed of worked bone of unknown function, four steatite buttons/whorls and a piece of obsidian. The gender of the burial is unclear based on the presence of objects that are artefactually gendered as both male and female. Disturbance is a likely explanation for the fragmented state of the grave goods and burial itself (only a few bones and the crushed

[180] Two chariot figurines were found in Tomb 22 at Prosymna: the chariot associated with the primary burial and the terracotta chariot of no association found against the right wall of the tomb (Blegen 1937, 66-67). There is also a clay chariot figurine probably associated with the adult male identified as Burial 1 from Tomb 3 at Aspropilia in Pylona on Rhodes (Chapter 7, *Section 7.3.3.6*; Karantzali 2001, figs. 12-13, Pls. 10a-b, 38c-e).

remnants of a skull remained) and indicates that **Assemblage #84** probably represents more than one burial assemblage.

**Assemblage #87** is associated with the primary burial of the skeleton located on the bier in Tomb 29 and is datable to LHIIIA2 (Blegen 1937, 76-77). It contained a jug with cutaway neck, a beaked jug and a spouted cup all featuring simple linear decoration as well as a bronze dagger and the remnants of the wooden bier. Based on the deposition of the dagger, this burial is gendered as a probable male.

**Assemblage #92** is associated with a primary burial located in the doorway to the side chamber of Tomb 33 and is datable to LHIIIA-B (Blegen 1937, 108). It included a one-handled bowl and stirrup jar, both of which featured simple linear decoration, two plain kylikes, one plain carinated bowl and a pair of bronze tweezers. Based on the presence of a bronze toilet article, the doorway burial is gendered as a probable male.

**Assemblage #93** is associated with the burial found in the right corner of the chamber of Tomb 33 and is datable to LHIIIA (Blegen 1937, 108). It included a plain cup, a jug featuring simple linear decoration (Shelton 1996, 95), a flat-toothed saw and two stone seals featuring scenes in intaglio. This assemblage cannot be artefactually gendered, and the gender of this burial is unclear.

**Assemblage #94** is associated with the secondary remains heap found in the inner right corner of Tomb 34 and is datable to LHIIIA (Blegen 1937, 112-13, fig. 250). This is an unusually large assemblage for Prosymna, including roughly 40 objects: a small bronze knife, a lentoid seal, four cups, six jugs, an amphora, three alabastra, five stirrup jars, a narrow necked jar, a deep bowl, a small piriform jar, up to seven arrowheads, a steatite button/whorl, 22 vitreous beads and three pierced shells. Most of the pottery featured simple linear decoration. Although the heap yielded only one skull, the number of objects suggests that multiple burial assemblages are represented. Further, the heap contained both male and female artefact types including weaponry and buttons/whorls. Based on this, the gender of the burial is unclear.

**Assemblage #95** is associated with a secondary niche burial from Tomb 34 and is datable to LHIIIA2 (Blegen 1937, 113, fig. 253). It included a ring-handled cup, a spouted cup, a small jug and five alabastra. All vessels featured simple linear decoration. It also included a monochrome mug and goblet, a plain kylix and two plain amphorae (Blegen 1937, 113, figs. 254-55; Shelton 1996, 99-101), 35 vitreous beads, three steatite buttons/whorls, five bits of

bronze wire dress pins and a bronze arrowhead. The deposition of bronze pins and buttons/whorls suggest that this burial should be gendered as female, while the arrowhead suggests that it should be gendered as male. Based on this, it is likely that more than one burial assemblage is represented in **Assemblage #95**. Because ambiguously gendered burials are not a Palatial phase phenomenon, the gender of the niche burial is unclear.

**Assemblage #96** is associated with the Cist III burial from Tomb 35 and is datable to LHIIIA-B (Blegen 1937, 118-19, fig. 273). It included a small jug, a beaked jug and bowl, all featuring simple linear decoration. It also included a plain amphora, a monochrome cup (Shelton 1996, 105-06), four terracotta female figurines – one of which was a *kourotrophos* (depiction of a female holding an infant), a necklace composed of five small pierced shells (Blegen 1937, 119, fig. 276) and a steatite pendant. The assemblage is similar to **Assemblage #74 (**discussed above), and, as was the case for the burial associated with **Assemblage #74**, Blegen suggested that the Cist III burial was that of a child. A rather large group of figurines is also present in **Assemblage #77** from Tomb 22 and is associated with an individual tentatively categorized as a non-adult. However, **Assemblage #77** contained animal figurines as well as the chariot figurine and is, therefore, decidedly different from the figurines in **Assemblage #96**. Further, there is no evidence that the deposition of figurines was linked to non-adult burials (Tzonou-Herbst 2009, 165-67). Yet shells and shell necklaces were deposited with select non-adult burials in Middle Helladic and Early Mycenaean contexts.[181] The only other non-adult burial datable to the Palatial phase that is associated with shells is the child identified as burial AA 140 from Tomb XXI in the Agora Cemetery. Burial AA 140 was associated with a necklace composed of gold and vitreous beads and pierced shells (Immerwahr 1971, 216-17, Pl. 50). Thus, the link between Palatial phase non-adult burials and shells is rather tenuous. Based on this as well as the fact that there are no artefact types present that can be categorised as definitively male or female, the gender and age of the Cist III burial remains unclear.

**Assemblage #98** is associated with the niche burial from Tomb 37 and is datable to LHIIIA-B (Blegen 1937, 124). Only the sherds of a plain shallow cup (Shelton 1996, 111, n. 277)

[181] A murex shell was associated with the skeleton of a child from the MHIII cist MH 18 in Asine's intramural burial location (Frödin and Persson 1938, 117; Nordquist 1987a, 40). A shell was associated with an infant burial from the MHII/III grave B12 in Asine's Barbouna Area Cemetery (Nordquist 1987a, 135). Perforated shells were used in a necklace that was deposited with remains of a child identified as burial 91 As from the MHII/III grave B15 also in Asine's Barbouna Area Cemetery (Nordquist and Ingvarsson-Sundström 2005, 160). Seashells were deposited with the infant in the Agora's LHII Lily Bowl Grave (Immerwahr 1971, 208, Pl. 47). A necklace composed of 61-fluted cockleshells may have adorned the remains of a possible child burial inhumed in the MH Grave XX at Prosymna (Blegen 1931, 33).

and a bronze knife (Blegen 1937, 124, fig. 299) were found. Based on the presence of the knife, the burial is gendered as a probable male.

**Assemblage #102** is associated with the skeleton found in the lower layer of the middle of the chamber of Tomb 37 and is datable to LHIIIA-B (Blegen 1937, 126). It included a beaked jug featuring simple linear decoration, a piriform jar (no description provided) (Blegen 1937, 126, fig. 294; Shelton 1996, 112), a nautilus-shaped vitreous bead, a seashell and a steatite button/whorl. The seashell suggests that the burial could have been a non-adult, although Blegen chose not to categorize the remains as such presumably based on the size of the lower jaw found amongst the skeletal remains (the rest of the skeleton was shattered). Although whorls were sometimes deposited with non-adult burials, they were mainly associated with adult female burials during all phases of the Middle Helladic and Mycenaean epoch. Based on this, the burial is gendered as a probable female.

**Assemblage #103** is associated with the primary burial of the skeletal remains located inside the door to the chamber of Tomb 38 and is datable to LHIIIA2-B (Blegen 1937, 129). It included a large piriform jar, a beaked jug and a shallow cup, all featuring simple linear decoration. It also included four plain kylikes and a fragment of another, a plain cup, bowl and askos (Blegen 1937, 129, fig. 305; Shelton 1996, 114-16) as well as an animal figurine and a bronze cleaver and knife (Blegen 1937, 129, fig. 309). Based on the presence of the knife and cleaver, the burial is gendered as a probable male.

**Assemblage #104** is associated with the skeletal remains located in the northeast corner of the chamber of Tomb 38 (Blegen 1937, 130). It included a steatite lentoid shaped seal, six carnelian beads, 158 vitreous beads, vitreous pendants and three crescent-shaped terracotta female figurines. Blegen interpreted the burial as that of a child based on the presence of 'two small teeth' and the size of the skull. The artefact types deposited do not confirm this, but the possibility cannot be ruled out. Because no artefact types present can be definitively categorised as either male or female, the gender of the burial is unclear.

**Assemblage #108** is associated with a single skull found in a small secondary bone heap in Tomb 40 and is datable to LHIIIA2 (Blegen 1937, 134, fig. 321). It included a beaked jug, two alabastra, a small piriform jar and a flask, all featuring simple linear decoration. It also included a plain cup, a plain kylix, two plain amphorae (Blegen 1937, 134, fig. 322; Shelton 1996, 118-19) and three steatite buttons/whorls (Blegen 1937, 134, fig. 323). Based on the presence of the three buttons/whorls, the burial is gendered as a probable female.

**Assemblage #111** is associated with the skeletal remains located in the center of the chamber in Tomb 41 and is datable to LHIIIA2 (Blegen 1937, 144-45). It included a stirrup jar and shallow cup both featuring simple linear decoration, three plain conical cups (Blegen 1937, 144, fig. 354; Shelton 1996, 120-21), a lead wire of unknown function, 22 gold beads (Blegen 1937, 144, fig. 360), a bronze cleaver and a carnelian seal stone with intaglio design (featuring three galloping quadrupeds). Based on the presence of the cleaver, the burial is gendered as a probable male.

**Assemblage #112** is associated with the primary burial from Cist I in Tomb 41 and is datable to LHIIIA2 (Blegen 1937, 145-46, fig. 362). It included two gold rosettes, remnants of a necklace composed of 18 gold beads, 12 vitreous beads, two carnelian beads and one amber bead as well as a hollow bronze tube of unknown function and a steatite button/whorl. Based on the absence of weaponry and the presence of the button/whorl, the Cist I burial is gendered as a probable female.

**Assemblage #113** is associated with the primary burial from Cist II also in Tomb 41 and is datable to LHIIIA2 (Blegen 1937, 146, fig. 363). It included 21 vitreous beads, parts of a bone dress pin and a fragment from a bronze arrowhead. Bone pins have been associated with both adult female and non-adult burials, but have never been associated with male burials.[182] The bronze arrowhead and the date of the burial suggest that the Cist II burial should be gendered as a probable male. The bone pins may suggest that the burial was also that of a non-adult (*supra.* n. 180).

**Assemblage #115** is associated with the secondary burial of a skeleton found in the northwest part of the chamber in Tomb 42 and is datable to LHIIIA1-B (Blegen 1937, 149-50). It included an alabastron and piriform jar, both of which featured simple linear decoration, as well as a plain cup (Shelton 1996, 126) and four crescent type female figurines. Blegen described the remains as being that of a child aged 'ten or less'. The limited range of artefact types, however, prohibits the confident gendering or aging of this burial.

**Assemblage #117** is associated with the secondary burial of the skeleton located east of the bier also in Tomb 42 and is datable to LHIIIA1-IIIB (Blegen 1937, 150-51). It included a

[182] Bone dress pins are associated with the adult female identified as burial 31 Ler from the Middle Helladic Phase grave H.1 at Lerna (Caskey 1954, 21); the infant burial identified as Skeleton 2 from Grave Mu in Grave Circle B (Mylonas 1973, 149) datable to the Early Mycenaean phase; and, the 10-year-old child identified as burial AA 137 from the Palatial phase Tomb XXI in the Agora Cemetery (Immerwahr 1971, 217, Pl. 50).

small piriform jar, two jugs, a flask and a cup, all featuring simple linear decoration as well as another monochrome jug (Blegen 1937, 150, fig. 372; Shelton 1996, 126-28), three necklaces (consisting of *c.* 200 beads composed of vitreous, carnelian and amber [Blegen 1937, 150, fig. 379]), a disc that had once probably been part of a mirror, two steatite buttons/whorls and a collection of bronze objects including a knife, pair of tweezers and fragments of arrowheads. Based on the presence of weaponry and buttons/whorls, artefact types that are definitively categorised as male and female respectively, it is likely that the objects within **Assemblage #117** represent more than one burial assemblage because ambiguously gendered burials, especially those associated with such large and wealthy assemblages, are not a Palatial phase phenomenon. Because the skeleton east of the bier was a secondary burial, it is possible that the burial was relocated near objects that were not necessarily deposited with it during primary interment. Therefore, the gender of this burial is unclear.

**Assemblage #118** is associated with the remains of a secondary burial identified as the smaller bone heap on the southwest side of Tomb 43 (Blegen 1937, 188) and is datable to LHIIIA2. It included a plain jug, a stirrup jar (no description), an alabastron and spouted kalathos featuring simple linear decoration, and finally a decorated feeding bottle (Blegen 1937, 188, fig. 480; Shelton 1996, 137). The feeding bottle suggests that this burial may have been that of a non-adult, but the gender is unclear.

**Assemblage #121** is associated with the primary burial identified as Skeleton 1 also from the third stratum of Tomb 44 and is datable to LHIIIA2-B (Blegen 1937, 209). It included only a gold signet ring that had apparently been worn as an ornament on a cord tied about the wrist of the deceased (Blegen 1937, 209, fig. 576). Because gold jewellery from Palatial phase contexts could be deposited with burials of both genders, the gender of Skeleton 1 is unclear.

**Assemblage #131** is associated with a secondary bone heap that probably included the remains of just one individual. The burial and the assemblage were located near the outer wall on the right side of the chamber from Tomb 50 and are datable to LHIIIB1 (Blegen 1937, 141, fig. 342). It included a plain hydria, a plain amphora, a cup and an alabastron featuring simple linear decoration (Blegen 1937, 141, fig. 343; Shelton 1996, 157), a single steatite bead, a single vitreous bead and five steatite buttons/whorls. Based on the presence of the buttons/whorls the burial is gendered as a probable female.

## 8.4 Summary of Results

The gendering of burials based on the result of the cross-tabulation and contextual analysis is shown in *Table 8.10*. *Table 8.11* shows that a total of 42 burials (just over 1/3 of the burial sample) were confidently gendered using the Prosymna Approach. Of the 28 burials associated with assemblages datable to the Early Mycenaean phase, 11 burials were gendered while 17 were not. Of the 20 burials associated with assemblages of unclear date (Early Mycenaean or Palatial phase), 12 burials were gendered while seven were not. Of the 84 burials associated with assemblages datable to the Palatial phase, 19 were gendered while 65 were not. *Table 8.12* shows how many burials were gendered as either male or female in the sample. Fairly equal proportions of gendered male and female burials are represented during each chronological phase.

The Prosymna case study shows that by using results from the sexed analyses it is often possible to identify gendered depositional practices through the use of cross-tabulation and contextual analysis of burial assemblages in unsexed Middle Helladic and Mycenaean burial samples – of which there are many. Although roughly two thirds of Prosymna's individual burial sample could not be gendered, the ability to confidently gender a third of the sample is indeed a mark of success, based on the fact that the sexed analyses showed that gender was only expressed via depositional practices for a similar proportion of those cemetery populations. This is because gendered depositional practices were mainly performed at the funerals of elite, high-status or unusual adult (and elderly) burials. The rest of the cemetery population typically was not emphasized in such a way. Instead, the majority of burials were often provided with little more than humble pottery assemblages or no grave goods at all. Therefore, the Prosymna Approach can be used to reliably gender burial assemblages associated with elite and high-status burials from unsexed Middle Helladic and Mycenaean burial samples, potentially unlocking the scope and breadth of gendered depositional practices within a broad cultural and temporal context. It also has the potential to reveal cemetery and site-specific behaviours, such as those observed at Prosymna, e.g. the unusual deposition of steatite jewellery, ornaments and vessels, as well as the emphasis upon the deposition of arrowheads with male burials. What is more, the Prosymna Approach can evolve to incorporate new findings as newly excavated Middle Helladic and Mycenaean burial samples are analysed using up-to-date osteological and bioarchaeological methodologies. This will in turn expand and refine the approach making it possible to make more sense of the large body of older mortuary evidence that is either too damaged to facilitate re-analysis or lost.

## 8.5 Interpretation of Results

### *8.5.1 Gendered Social Hierarchy at Prosymna*

In an effort to assess whether or not gender could have determined a burial's location at Prosymna, the twelve grave clusters identified by Blegen (1937) were considered. Blegen interpreted these groups as being either small cemeteries or burial areas belonging to different families, which ultimately suggests that kin affiliation and status were probably the main determinants for a burial's grave location. *Table 8.13* lists all individual burials and their ascribed gender category according to grave group. *Table 8.14* shows the distribution of Prosymna's newly gendered burials within Blegen's grave groups and seems to confirm that kin affiliation as well as wealth and status most likely determined the location of a burial in most clusters. Due to the high number of burials of unclear gender in each group, it is unclear whether gender determined grave group location.

Yet there is evidence that high-status male burials (or more specifically male burials associated with weaponry) were more likely to be buried in certain locations. Male burials associated with weaponry are listed *Table 8.15*, which indicates the following: 1) almost all of these burials are located in chamber tombs (except for the burial associated with **Assemblage #3**, which was located in an Early Mycenaean cist grave); 2) weaponry was deposited selectively in 14 tombs; 3) weaponry deposition does not appear to favour any one of Blegen's grave groups, except perhaps Group 4, which includes Tombs 14, 25, 26, 34 and 44; and 4) the deposition of multiple warrior kits in these tombs took place during both the Early Mycenaean and Palatial phases. This suggests that the deposition of weaponry at Prosymna was linked to grave complexity and was probably determined by kin affiliation and status as well as the gender of the deceased. This burial practice also appears to have come under the domain of certain families or groups, some of whom appear to have deposited warrior kits with select high-status male family members over the course of several generations. This is especially evident in Tomb 14, in which three burials were associated with weaponry, e.g. the skeleton from the chamber floor, the Cist II burial and the Cist III burial (Blegen 1937, 166-70).

The use of grave and burial embellishments also expressed social hierarchy at Prosymna, but they do not appear to have been determined by gender. *Table 8.16* lists burials linked to evidence for fumigation practices. It shows the following: 1) multiple fumigation practices were selectively performed at Prosymna during both chronological phases and occur in only 11 tombs; 2) this practice does not appear to favour any particular Grave Group; 3)

fumigation only took place in chamber tombs; 4) burning rituals were never used for individual primary burials and were practised only within the general context of the tomb *or* were used to process collective secondary burials; 5) fumigation practices only took place in wealthy tombs with large quantities of grave goods; and 6) when burning rituals were used for the processing of secondary burials, bone heaps were almost always associated with substantial quantities of grave goods. This suggests that by the time fumigation was performed the gender identity of the deceased was no longer relevant to the burial practice or indeed may have even faded from cultural memory. Fumigation was therefore a collective act. On the one hand, it was a practical ritual, because it facilitated the re-use of the tomb – literally cleaning and airing the tomb. On the other hand, it enabled the symbolic erasure of the social identities of older burials and was perhaps a ritual intrinsic to the physical and ideological transformation of burials into 'ancestors'. Because fumigation was selectively practised, its performance also may have served to cement the status and ancestral legitimacy of the burying family. The link between fumigation practices and status is supported by the fact that half of the tombs containing weaponry assemblages also exhibited evidence of fumigation. These include Tomb 10, Tomb 14, Tomb 34, Tomb 41, Tomb 42, Tomb 44 and Tomb 49.

Select burials were also inhumed in containers and coffins or upon biers and burial platforms. These are listed in *Table 8.17*. Just two of these burials could be gendered: the skeleton on the bier from Tomb 29 and Skeleton 3 from Tomb 44 – both of which were gendered as male. The variety of burial embellishments and the unclear gender of most of the burials make it difficult to determine whether or not gender determined this practice.

### *8.5.2 Artefactual Gendering at Prosymna: Revelations and Limitations*

The contextual analysis of Prosymna's burial assemblages not only revealed compelling evidence for gendered burial practices also observed in the sexed burial samples, but also revealed site-specific variations of some of these gendered practices. What follows is a discussion of the implications of these finding as well as the limitations of the methodology.

#### 8.5.2.1 Prosymna's Archers

Although the groups using Prosymna's graves largely conformed to weaponry deposition practices observed in the sexed Mycenaean burial samples, weaponry deposition at Prosymna differed in certain key respects. Weaponry deposited in Prosymna's graves was mainly bronze, utilitarian (i.e. not intended for display) and consisted mainly of knives, daggers and arrowheads. Swords are notably absent at Prosymna. Just two were deposited: one with the cist burial from Tomb 25 (Blegen 1937, 89) and another with a collective mass

of bones (representing at least six secondary burials) from Tomb 37 (Blegen 1937, 127, fig. 298). Both are datable to the Palatial phase. This is not unusual, because essentially the same behaviour was observed in the LHIII Agora and Aspropilia Cemeteries (and even Deiras), in which utilitarian, bronze-based warrior kits were deposited with relatively few swords. Yet, two key variants in this male burial practice were revealed at Prosymna: 1) boar's tusk helmets, the ultimate Mycenaean male status insignia (Hamilakis 2003), were selectively deposited during the Early Mycenaean and possibly Palatial phases; and 2) a strikingly large quantity of arrowheads was deposited with a large number of burials.

Speaking to the first point, the selective deposition of boar's tusk helmets at Prosymna is directly expressive of elite Mycenaean warrior ideology, despite the otherwise subdued nature of weaponry deposition in the cemetery. A boar's tusk was found with the Early Mycenaean/Palatial phase Cist II burial from Tomb 14 (Blegen 1937, 168). A boar's tusk fragment was associated with the Early Mycenaean phase Cist 1 Burial from Tomb 26 (Blegen 1937, 94). Finally, another boar's tusk, also from an Early Mycenaean phase context, was associated with the Upper Platform Burial also from Tomb 26 (Blegen 1937, 95). This is striking in light of the fact that boar's tusk helmets were not deposited in other Early Mycenaean phase burials samples used for this research outside of the Shaft Graves. The deposition of boar's tusk helmets in select family tombs at Prosymna (such as Tombs 14 and 26 [*Section 8.5.1*]) only during the Early Mycenaean phase indicates that, for whatever reason, this sort of elite expression was subdued during the later phase of the cemetery, suggesting that during the Palatial phase Prosymna's warrior class was no longer as wealthy as they were during the previous phase or that they no longer had access to these particular elite Mycenaean activities. Perhaps Prosymna had become more closely subordinated to nearby Mycenae?

Speaking to the second point, the abundance of arrowheads at Prosymna is atypical, because arrowheads were rarely deposited at most other Mycenaean cemeteries. No arrowheads were present in Asine's extramural cemeteries, Lerna, the Aspropilia Cemetery or in the Argos Tumuli. One arrowhead was deposited in a MH grave from Asine's intramural burial location (Nordquist 1987a, 134), another two were found in LHIII tombs from Asine's Necropolis (Frödin and Persson 1938, 158, 165, 390, fig. 252; also see Hughes-Brock 1996, 73), nine were recovered in the LHIII Agora Cemetery (Immerwahr 1971, 189, Pl. 40), and five were documented in a grave datable to the LHIIIA at Deiras (Volgraff 1904, 387). Two were found in Mycenae's Prehistoric Cemetery (Alden 2000, 146-47, 629-41), while 12

were recovered from Grave Circle A.[183] Forty-eight arrowheads were deposited in Grave Circle B, but most of these were associated with just two adult male burials, identified as burials 61 Myc and 70a Myc from Graves Delta and Lambda respectively (Mylonas 1973, 89, 140).[184] In fact, all of the above examples were associated with just one or two burials in each cemetery, suggesting that the deposition of arrowheads was expressive of the individual identity of the deceased and not of the burying group's collective identity or a widely established occupational or social group or role. Alternatively at Prosymna, the deposition of arrowheads *was* widely performed throughout the cemetery during both phases of use – arrowheads were deposited in Tombs 2, 3, 7, 10, 14, 26, 34, 38, 41, 42, 43, 44 and 49 (Blegen 1937). Therefore, the deposition of arrowheads at Prosymna is suggestive of collective expression and probably represents a site-specific variant of this male burial practice.

But what does it tell us about Prosymna's mortuary and social ideologies and its male burials? The small number of boar's tusk helmets from mainly Early Mycenaean phase contexts suggest that by the Palatial phase Prosymna's warriors were no longer (if they ever were) of such high status. If we interpret the deposition of arrowheads as being representative of an occupational identity or role, which it appears to have been, these burials would be more accurately described as archers or hunters. What is more, the 'archer' role appears to have been specific to a significant proportion of Prosymna's Late Bronze Age male population.[185] It is also tempting to posit that Prosymna's archers functioned in a specialized fighting role for the wealthier elite warrior-leaders from nearby Mycenae.[186]

#### 8.5.2.2 Spinning and High-status Female Burials at Prosymna

The contextual analysis of Prosymna's burial assemblages revealed that the presence of buttons/whorls was the main means of identifying possible female burials at Prosymna. Given the ambiguity of these objects, it is worth exploring whether or not this can be considered evidence for female distinction. *Table 8.18* lists all objects from Prosymna's graves that could have functioned as textile production tools, including conuli identified as 'buttons/whorls'. *Table 8.19* shows that most of these, 33 objects to be exact, were

[183] Twelve obsidian arrowheads were found in Shaft Grave IV (Karo 1930-1933, 113, figs. 247, 435).
[184] One obsidian arrowhead was associated with the unsexed secondary burial identified as Skeleton 1 from Grave Lambda in Grave Circle B (Mylonas 1972, 140).
[185] Based on their study of male burials from Samara-Ural in Russia that were associated with arrows but not provided with other types of weaponry, Bernabei, Bondioli and Guidi (1994) argue that the deposition of arrows may have represented hunting, rather than warrior identities or participation in warfare. Hanks (2008, 26-27) argues that it is possible that arrows could represent *both* activities.
[186] Graziadio (1991, 421-22, n. 55; also see Kilian-Dirlmeier 1986, 186; 1988, 163) argues that the small number of spears and arrowheads present in the Shaft Graves can possibly be explained by the fact that archers were of lower rank and not included in the Shaft Graves.

associated with 11 burials that could be confidently gendered as female, while 13 objects were associated with eight burials of unclear gender, e.g. assemblages that also contained weaponry. It was also argued that some of the assemblages containing both weaponry and buttons/whorls were from disturbed contexts and may have represented more than one burial assemblage. In light of this, the deposition of conuli and other textile production tools at Prosymna appears to be similar to behaviour observed in the Agora Cemetery (*Section 7.3.2.4.1*), where a comparatively small number of male burials were also associated with conuli. This suggests that deposition of textile production tools, especially conuli, in most cases expressed general female status at Prosymna.

This practice also may have been expressive of occupational identity in some cases, because there is other evidence from the cemetery indicating that the expression of occupational affiliation was part of the burial practice. This includes the case of the Prosymna's male 'archers' discussed above, and the deposition of objects that could have been used as other types of tools shown in *Table 8.20*. Therefore, it is certainly possible that female status and identity were somehow linked to affiliation with textile production activities. Whether or not this affiliation was literal or symbolic is of course unclear.

#### 8.5.2.3 Wealthy Female Burial Assemblages at Prosymna: Where are they?

If it were not for the presence of conuli and other potential textile production tools in certain burial assemblages, it would be almost impossible to identify female burials at Prosymna based solely on artefactual gendering. This is not surprising in light of the fact that results from the Agora and Aspropilia analyses showed that high-status female burials were emphasized with creative and non-conformist depositional practices via the deposition of various and often singular luxury items, fine pottery, elaborately decorated funeral shrouds and occasionally buttons/whorls (*Section 7.4.4*). Results from the analyses of the sexed Palatial phase samples also show that weaponry was exclusively and almost routinely deposited with high-status male burials. Therefore, it is plausible that wealthy assemblages that did not include weaponry but contained other artefact types (in addition to pottery) were more likely to have been deposited with high-status female burials than they were with male burials. *Table 8.21* lists artefacts types present in the Prosymna burial assemblages that: 1) were datable to the Palatial phase (including those of unclear date); 2) were associated with burials of unclear gender; 3) did not contain weaponry; and 3) were not solely composed of pottery and/or figurines (the deposition of which was not determined by gender). By doing so, it is possible to identify 17 additional assemblages that may have emphasised high(er)

status female burials. These are Assemblage Numbers: 42, 47, 58, 59, 60, 61, 79, 88, 90, 93, 96, 100, 104, 105, 121, 128 and 129.[187]

Regrettably, this is the limit of the Prosymna Approach. The methodology can only identify gendered practices observed in the sexed burial samples and does not facilitate the identification of gender identities that fall off this particular grid. Thus, without the powerful aid of osteological sexing, it is simply not possible to confidently identify special female burials, such as Grave Circle B's female warrior identified as burial 58 Myc. Given the limitations of the Prosymna Approach, the gender of this unusual burial would simply be misdiagnosed, because this burial was associated with artefact types that are all but exclusively associated with high-status male burials. Bearing this in mind, it is entirely possible that the presence of high-status female 'warriors' or other unusual gender identities and ideologies could slip under the radar.

#### 8.5.2.4 Blegen's Child Burials

*Table 8.22* shows that Blegen identified evidence for the burials of 40 possible children at Prosymna.[188] The remains in question were not osteologically analysed, and Blegen based his interpretation of age at death mainly upon the size of the recovered bones, some of which were decayed, fragmented or missing altogether. Subordinate factors that influenced his interpretation of burial age were the dimensions of the grave itself and association with figurines. Blegen was an extremely experienced excavator who was certainly capable of 'eye-balling' remains with a certain degree of accuracy. While his observations of bone size should not necessarily be dismissed, recent studies of non-adult remains (esp. Ingvarsson-Sundström 2003) show that the identification and accurate aging of non-adult skeletal evidence is reliant upon rigorous osteological standards and methodologies. While size of grave could certainly be correlated to the size of the burial in these cases, there is no proven association between child burials and figurines (Tzonou-Herbst 2009). Therefore, Blegen's aging of the primary burial from Tomb 22 (see **Assemblage #77**) and the Cist III burial from Tomb 35 (see **Assemblage #96**) as child burials should be discounted.

Eight of Blegen's child burials were interpreted as such based on the size of the skeletal evidence and were also associated with assemblages that were gendered as part of this case study: **Assemblage #s** 10, 14, 58, 73-75, 77, 96, 104 and 115. **Assemblage #s** 10, 14, 73, 74

[187] **Assemblages #39** and **#55** were excluded because it is unclear if the secondary remains associated with **Assemblage #39** from Tomb 29 represented one or two burials (page XX), and the stone pounder which is identified as **Assemblage #55** was rarely deposited and cannot be gendered.
[188] He only interpreted one burial as being the remains of an infant: one of the Cist III burials from Tomb 4 (Blegen 1937, 192).

and 75 were gendered as female. **Assemblage #s** 96, 104 and 115 were of unclear gender. **Assemblage # 58** was of unclear gender but was artefactually aged as a non-adult burial based on association with a feeding bottle. Only **Assemblage #77** was gendered as a possible male. This suggests that either child burial assemblages may have been similar in content to female adult assemblages or that the deposition of male artefact types was reserved almost exclusively for the emphasis of adult or elderly male burials. It is also possible that some of the child burials may have been female, especially since it has been proven that child burials were often emphasized with smaller versions of adult burial assemblages. But, without the crucial aid of osteological analysis to determine the age of Prosymna's burials, the 'eye-balling' of even the most experienced excavators and the limitations of the Prosymna Approach only permit speculation concerning the age of individual burials.

## 8.6 Conclusion

The Prosymna case study has shown that much can be gained through the use of this methodology (see *Appendix II* for further analyses of other notable unsexed burial assemblages). It revealed that gendered depositional practices at Prosymna generally conformed to gendered practices observed in the contemporaneous sexed burial samples from Mycenae, Asine, Lerna and the Agora and Aspropilia cemeteries. It also revealed site-specific variants, such as the distinction of high-status male burials with arrowheads, the deposition of which probably expressed the occupational identity of Prosymna's warrior class of 'archers'. It also helped to illuminate how high-status female burials were emphasized and further informed reasons why analysts have never been able to identify a standard, easily recognizable female kit. What is more, the conservative nature of the approach ensures the reliability of the methodology, because this approach is incapable of leading the analyst down false roads or creating additional patterns where there are none. Admittedly, there are limitations inherent in this methodology. It is incapable of revealing highly nuanced, unusual and/or non-conformist gendered mortuary behaviour, and it is also extremely limited in terms of identifying age-determined depositional practices. Yet, the success of the case study is apparent, because the approach has proven to be reliable and it can be refined through the ongoing incorporation of new data from sexed mortuary analyses.

# Chapter 9

# Conclusion: Gender in Middle Helladic and Mycenaean Mortuary Behaviour

The first section (*Section 9.1*) of this chapter summarises the results of the analyses and also explains the fundamental differences and similarities between male and female gendered burial practices. The second section (*Section 9.2*) addresses the changing nature of spindle whorl and weaponry deposition. The third section (*Section 9.3*) attempts to correlate the findings of this research with other types of evidence. The final section (*Section 9.4*) takes stock, assessing the wider understanding of gender in the Aegean.

Before discussing the results I would like to call attention to a missing piece of the puzzle: the lack of textile evidence in the Aegean mortuary record. This deprives us of insight into the performance of gender.[189] Although small portable jewels and ornaments may have been accessories on funerary dress, we know next to nothing about how male and female burials (and mourners) were dressed for the funeral. There is the possibility that linen head bands (Karantzali 2001, 15) were used for the burials of high-status females in the Aspropilia Cemetery, but it is more likely that these were used as devices to keep the mouth of the corpse closed. Ultimately, dress pins, beads and discs, garment weights, stylized masks and linen strips provide limited insight into how the corpse was actually clothed. But iconographic evidence does depict male and female figures in gendered clothing, and there is no reason to believe that funerary costume radically departed from dress conventions used in everyday life or special occasions such as processions depicted in Mycenaean art. Therefore, it must be stressed that patterns identified in this research surely represent only some of the means by which gender was expressed in mortuary behaviour. This qualification puts the interpretation of material culture in graves in its proper context, and reminds us that although gender is detectable in depositional practice, much of the human embodiment, performance and experience of gender remains lost in time.

[189] For a discussion of the relationship between gender construction and funerary costume see Adovasio *et al*. 2007, 177-82, esp. 178.

## 9.1 Summary of Results

### *The Middle Helladic Phase*

Generally, in early Middle Helladic burial practice, individual burials were not overtly differentiated in terms of material expressions of wealth and identity. However at certain sites, high-status burials were provided with small but wealthy burial assemblages, and some of these expressed not only the gender of the deceased but different roles, identities and ideological affiliations.

Weaponry was exclusively deposited with a small number of male burials in Asine's intramural burial location. It is difficult to gauge the degree to which the deposition of weaponry was expressive of warrior ideology because this behaviour hardly correlates with the burial practice used for the outstanding male burial from Aegina-Kolonna, which was provided with a large warrior kit during MHII. The weaponry deposits at Asine were miniscule and poor in comparison, usually accompanied, if at all, by a single, simply executed pot, and none can be interpreted as being warrior kits. We do know that no female burials were provided with weaponry, that most of the male burials from Asine's intramural burial location were not provided with weaponry, and that no weaponry was deposited at Lerna. This indicates that the Asine practice was selective and probably expressed a male identity or role, the nature of which is unclear.

Domestic coarse ware, textile production tools and jewellery were associated exclusively with high-status female burials in Asine's intramural burial location and also possibly at Lerna. Female burials could be associated with any combination of these types of objects. The select and variable nature of deposition indicates that there was more than one way to express female status and identity. The deposition of domestic coarse ware expressed a link to the domestic sphere. The deposition of textile production tools, most of which were spindle whorls, expressed affiliation with textile production activities. The select nature of this practice suggests that deposition also expressed distinct female identities and roles. The deposition of spindle whorls identified the burial as a female spinner, and the deposition of domestic coarse ware arguably identified her as the embodiment of the household. These gender constructs are expressed in contexts as early as MHII and represent a female-focused mortuary ideology that probably pre-dates the Shaft Graves.

The selective nature of whorl deposition at Asine and the absence of weaponry and other tool types in female assemblages also suggest a sexed division of labour at Asine, in which males were excluded from textile production activities. To all intents and purposes this

system seems to represent a complementarity, in which female and male activities were distinct and separate but were not vertically ranked against one another.

High-status male, female and child burials were also emphasised via the deposition of fine pottery and adornment, indicating that these practices were not shaped by gender but generally expressed status and wealth. This suggests that different mortuary ideologies were being expressed in this cemetery and even within the context of single graves, as was the case for grave MH 98, in which the female identified as burial 2FA was provided with textile productions tools, bronze earrings and fine pottery.

### *The Early Mycenaean Phase*

During the Early Mycenaean phase, elite mortuary ideology encompassed grandiose statements of prestige and wealth. Although some elite Mycenaean burial practices were male-focused, depositional patterns suggest that gender was often ambiguously expressed. What is more, weaponry could be associated with both male and female burials.

In Grave Circle B at Mycenae, the deposition of weaponry was normal practice for elite burials of both genders, because half of the male burials (nine of the 16) and half of the female burials (two of four) were provided with weaponry. What is more, identifiable warrior kits were also deposited with select male burials (at least five) and one female burial. Thus, the expression of warrior ideology, including the deposition of warrior kits, was not determined by gender. This phenomenon is specific to the upper-elite context of Grave Circle B and is not documented at any other Mycenaean cemetery, although it is not impossible that similar practices were performed in Grave Circle A.

In Grave Circle B, certain types of weaponry were exclusively deposited with male burials: boars' tusk helmets, armour and arrowheads. On the other hand, burials of both genders were provided with knives, daggers, swords and spearheads. This indicates that non-gendered warrior identities as well as specialised male warrior identities and roles were expressed through the deposition of different kinds of weaponry. Whether or not these roles were ideological or representative of social practice is unclear.

Weaponry was not deposited at Lerna, and very little was deposited at Asine. A bronze spearhead was deposited with the adult male identified as burial 6 FA in grave MH 58 in Asine's intramural burial location during MHII-III (Nordquist 1996, 27; 1987a, 122, 127, nos. 4, 20). A bronze dagger and imported limestone pommel were deposited with the adult male identified as burial 54 As in Grave 1971-3 in Asine's East Cemetery during LHI (Dietz

1980, 37, 43, 48, figs. 51-54; Nordquist 1987a, 43, 122, 127, nos. 3, 22). Finally, a bronze knife was deposited with the adult male identified as burial 60 As in Grave 1971-10 in Asine's East Cemetery during MHIII-LHI (Dietz 1980, 59, fig. 66; Nordquist 1987a, 122, n. 22). All objects were associated with male burials. The deposits were composed of single objects, and none were identifiable as warrior kits. This suggests that although elite Mycenaean warrior ideology was being expressed through this behaviour, the nature of weaponry deposition remained male-focused and subdued at Asine as time went on. The largely understated character of weaponry deposits probably reflects the population's limited access to luxury goods and materials, such as precious metals and bronze (*Section 6.3.3*).

Other types of objects were also exclusively associated with elite male burials from Grave Circle B: status insignia and objects expressing ancestral legitimisation. The link between male burials, status insignia and objects that expressed ancestral legitimisation strongly suggests an emphasis upon patrilinial lines of descent and authority and could very well represent social practice. It also suggests that if ancestral legitimacy and power were conferred through male personages, gender was probably ranked hierarchically (vertically) in respect to leadership structure and the transference of dynastic power.

Otherwise, burials of both genders at Mycenae and Asine were associated with a wide range of luxury and prestige objects, suggesting that these practices were not gender-related. It is possible that the deposition of certain sub-types was influenced by gender, such as the provision of bronze dress pins with female burials, gold jewellery with male burials, and rock crystal objects with elite female burials. However, small sample size makes it difficult to determine whether these behaviours represent gendered burial practices or singular expressions of identity that were not necessarily gender-related.

Earlier female-focused mortuary ideology was also expressed via the deposition of functional spindle whorls with female burials at Asine's Barbouna Area Cemetery, Lerna and at Mycenae's Prehistoric Cemetery, Citadel House Grave Group and possibly in Grave Circle A. This suggests that different mortuary ideologies could be expressed within the context of these cemeteries. This expression was noticeably absent in Mycenae's Grave Circle B and Asine's East Cemetery. Both of the latter groups were heavily invested in the expression of elite Mycenaean mortuary ideology, an ideology that did not express occupational identity via the deposition of production tools. This suggests that the groups using Grave Circle B and the East Cemetery chose not to emphasise female spinners because there was no way to locate these gender constructs within the symbolic vocabulary of elite Mycenaean mortuary ideology or because these roles were no longer prestigious. Yet Shaft

Grave mortuary practice did encompass spindle whorl deposition because a clay spindle whorl was found in Grave Circle A. If anything, this underscores the creative breadth of Shaft Grave mortuary practice.

The argument presented in *Section 5.4.2.2* in which the deposition of male funerary masks is cited as possible evidence of an inheritance system based on patrilinial descent suggests that elite Early Mycenaean social structure was predicated on a gender hierarchy, in which males were ranked above females and favoured with more rights and privileges at least in terms of leadership roles and descent structure. The favouring of male burials in inclusion practices seems to support this premise. However, the extent to which this affected elite female authority, power and access to social spheres is unclear because certain depositional practices greatly emphasised female burials and some were not gendered. Granted, female burials were not favoured for inclusion, but they *were* there, and more to the point they were associated with burial inventories often comparable in wealth, prestige and complexity to those associated with male burials. Further, the deposition of swords, knives, daggers and spearheads linked select female burials to martial activities and the hunt. Thus, gender was potentially complex, and it is erroneous to view elite Early Mycenaean mortuary ideology as hyper-masculinised, male-exclusive or male-focused, because the ideological syntax of mortuary symbolism was capable of expressing complex and varied constructs, roles and identities for both genders. What is unclear is which if any male roles were ranked above female roles beyond the context of leadership and descent structures or if some mortuary practices represent heterarchical structures.

### *The Palatial Phase*

During the Palatial phase, male burial practices became fixed whilst female burial practices changed. Well-off families using Mycenaean chamber tomb cemeteries on the Mainland and in the Dodecanese deposited weaponry exclusively with high-status male burials. Most were provided with single deposits of functional bronze knives or daggers. Only two male burials were provided with identifiable warrior kits in the large Agora Cemetery. These were from Tomb III, 'The Tomb of the Bronzes,' which is arguably one of only two elite graves in this location indicating that the deposition of warrior kits was specific to largely elite contexts. The relatively widespread deposition of functional weaponry with high-status male burials suggests that this practice was as a general marker of male status, while the more rarely deposited warrior kit expressed not only status, but also prestige and identity. This phenomenon is certainly specific to this socio-economic group, i.e. second-tier elites and well-off families using large chamber tomb cemeteries. It is unclear if this was similar to elite Palatial phase mortuary practice due to lack of evidence. Interestingly, weaponry

provision was not a prerequisite for male prestige in the previous phase, indicating that this practice shifted during the Palatial phase and became more popular, pared down and codified. Thus, it appears that during the later phase well-off families, who were not necessarily elite, appropriated the elite Mycenaean warrior kit and deposited scaled-down, less expensive versions of these to express male status or received these from the palaces as trickle-down rewards.

The distinction of high-status female burials was comparatively complex, and the contents of their assemblages varied from place to place and sometimes within the context of the cemetery itself. Female burial inventories included any combination of the following: fine pottery, textile production tools, special vessels, adornment, and toilet articles. In fact, high-status female assemblages shared only one feature, namely the absence of weaponry. Thus, the absence of weaponry connoted that a burial was not male or not high-status. This suggests that male and female ideologies, roles and perhaps spheres of activity were more strictly polarized than in previous phases and/or within this socio-economic group. The variability among female burial assemblages also suggests that female constructs and ideologies were community-specific and not necessarily representative of wider Mycenaean social structure. What is interesting is that the construction and expression of feminine mortuary ideologies and identities was characterized by variability and creativity, indicating that Mycenaean culture had yet to establish a fundamentally feminine codex of signifiers in any uniform fashion beyond the mortuary context of disparate individual communities.

## 9.2 The changing nature of gendered burial practices

This section presents trajectories of behavioural variation concerning two burial practices, the deposition of spindle whorls and the deposition of weaponry. Consideration of each practice illuminates the changing nature of the relationship between mortuary behaivour and gender ideology in specific communities and socio-economic groups.

### *Threads of lives: the changing nature of spindle whorl deposition*

The widespread deposition of spindle whorls with high-status female burials points to a link between female status and textile production activities, and in some cases may be indicative of the expression of female roles and identities. What is more, it appears that the performance of this burial practice changed over time.

As stated above, during the Middle Helladic phase whorls were associated almost exclusively with a small number of female burials located in Asine's intramural burial location. The select and deliberate nature of deposition suggests certain high-status female burials were distinguished as such for a reason. This phenomenon was specific to Asine. One terracotta spindle whorl was deposited with an adult male burial from grave MH 23 (Nordquist 1996, 23; 1987a, 123, n. 12:3). This practice is difficult to interpret and represents a true 'outlier', because it is the *only* example of a whorl being associated with a male burial from the Middle Helladic and Early Mycenaean burials samples.

High-status female assemblages from Asine's intramural burial location are mainly datable to the Middle Helladic phase, while a terracotta whorl associated with a female burial from the Barbouna Area Cemetery was deposited during MHIII at the onset of the Early Mycenaean phase. This is significant because it indicates the following: 1) the distinction of high-status female burials via spindle whorl deposition was performed from one chronological phase to the next; 2) spindle whorl deposition was practised by different burial groups in different locations at Asine; and 3) spindle whorl deposition was performed by an elite group invested in the expression of elite Mycenaean mortuary ideologies (for example, the group using the Barbouna Area Cemetery also invested in the construction of the shaft grave type, a major architectural component of elite Mycenaean mortuary practice).

One spindle whorl was deposited in Grave Circle B (Mylonas 1973, 121). It is hard to correlate this practice with spindle whorl deposition at Asine because this object was made of electrum, and it was associated with the secondary burial of an adult male. It is certainly possible that this burial's original assemblage may have been reconstituted during re-burial, but even if this is the case, the only other burial found within the shaft is also that of an adult male, ruling out any possibility of female association. Certainly the exotic and valuable electrum whorl was endowed with prestige and could have been used for spinning in an elite context, however its deposition appears to be evidence of a stand-alone burial practice specific to this highly elite context and thus difficult to interpret.

The deposition of a clay spindle whorl in Shaft Grave III in Grave Circle A (Karo 1930-1933, 64), may represent the same female-focused practice observed at Asine, because this object is practical. It was made of clay and was found in a grave containing the remains of an adult female burial. So, although the group using Grave Circle A was mainly concerned with grandiose expressions of collective wealth and prestige, they also may have chosen to synthesise different mortuary ideologies by making a few discreet references to the identities of certain burials. There is additional evidence for the enduring nature of this practice in

Mycenae's simple graves. A terracotta spindle whorl (Alden 2000, fasc. 7, 265) was deposited with two elderly female burials in Gamma Grave 15. Thus, behaviour at Mycenae indicates that the distinction of certain female burials via the deposition of whorls was practised, and that here too the identity of the deceased was probably being expressed through the selective nature of deposition. In sum, the distinction of female spinners via the deposition of single spindle whorls appears to have been performed consistently from one chronological phase to the next and to have been used by different socio-economic groups active in completely different cemetery locations within the Argolid. What is more, this practice predates the ideological shift that took place in Mycenae's Shaft Graves during MHIII-LHII, suggesting a shift that focused less upon the expression of identity and instead emphasised prestige, wealth and kin affiliation. It was also retained by elite groups heavily invested in the performance of elite Mycenaean depositional practices, which suggests that even within highly elite contexts the distinction of female spinners remained a viable and appropriate means of mortuary expression in certain cases.

Deposition patterns in the LHIII chamber tomb cemetery in the Agora reveal a shift in the nature of spindle whorl deposition. *Table 7.52* reveals that 11 buttons/whorls were associated with female burials, three were associated with one adult male burial, possibly one was deposited with a child burial of unknown sex, and 11 could not be associated with burials. But because nine of the unassociated spindle whorls were deposited in graves containing adult female remains, it appears that these objects were deposited mainly with adult female burials. This indicates the following. First, the practice became much more popular than it was during the previous chronological phases, with spindle whorls being deposited with almost all female burials of higher status. By that I mean that when adult or elderly female burials from the Agora were associated with grave goods, they were almost always provided with buttons/whorls. Second, larger quantities of whorls were deposited per burial in the Agora, ranging from two to nine spindle whorls per burial, whereas at Asine and Mycenae during the Middle Helladic and Early Mycenaean phases only single deposits of spindle whorls were made: one whorl per burial. Thirdly, the function of these objects became more ambiguous over time. Small conuli could have functioned as textile production tools, garment weights or both prior to deposition. This indicates that during the Palatial phase whorls became culturally construed as general markers of female status and were no longer necessarily expressive of individual identity or affiliation with production activities as they were during the earlier phases.

The deposition of spindle whorls was just one aspect of a rich and varied approach to the distinction of high-status and elite female burials during the Palatial phase. Due to the

variability of material wealth represented in these high-status female assemblages, it is impossible to disentangle the full scope of female constructs and identities expressed through complex and often community-specific gendered depositional practices. Bearing this in mind, it is striking that the practice of distinguishing female burials via the deposition of whorls is the only female practice performed across time and space throughout the Middle Helladic and Mycenaean epochs. The fact that the performance of this female-focused practice shifted over time, emphasising status *and* identity during the earlier phases and simply marking general status during the latter, indicates that the need to include and distinguish high-status female burials linked to textile production did not change. Rather, it was the expression of female identities and roles that altered.

### *Putting the warrior into perspective: the changing nature of weaponry deposition*

Weaponry was deposited during all phases in almost all burial samples, the exception being Asine's Barbouna Area Cemetery and Lerna. This practice expressed Mycenaean warrior ideology, status, and in certain cases identity. It also changed over time and according to location.

During the Middle Helladic phase weaponry was deposited only with select male burials in Asine's intramural cemetery. This suggests that the provision of single units of weaponry (e.g. knives and daggers) expressed male status and possibly identity.

During the Early Mycenaean phase, weaponry was deposited with elite burials of both genders. It expressed prestige and in certain cases identity, specialised roles and affiliation with specific spheres of activity. This indicates that over time, weaponry deposition became more complex and less strictly gendered. What is more, because the inclusion of both genders in this practice is documented only in Grave Circle B, this phenomenon was probably specific to the upper elite context of the Shaft Graves and, therefore, was symptomatic of the ideological shift that took place from MHIII-LHII. Still, the deposition of specialized weaponry such as boars' tusk helmets and arrowheads was exclusively associated with male burials in this context. This suggests that certain constructs and roles were exclusively male. There is additional evidence for male affiliation with archery activities and perhaps specialised fighting or hunting roles in Grave Circle B and at Prosymna (during the Early Mycenaean and Palatial phases) because select male burials were associated with large quantities of arrowheads in both locations. Thus, it would be more accurate to see elite Early Mycenaean warrior ideology as an umbrella encompassing non-gendered and gendered elite warrior identities and roles.

During the Palatial phase, weaponry was deposited exclusively with high status male burials in the chamber tomb cemetery samples. These deposits usually consisted of single functional knives or daggers. Identifiable warrior kits were rarely, if ever, deposited and prestige weaponry, such as swords, boars' tusk helmets, spearheads and armour was almost entirely absent in the Agora and Aspropilia Cemeteries.[190] Because almost all high-status male burials were associated with some form of weaponry, this practice was used as a marker of general male status in these locations. This phenomenon may be specific to these cemeteries, because some prestige weaponry was deposited at Prosymna (Blegen 1937) and Deiras (Deshayes 1966) during the Palatial phase. At Prosymna, boars' tusk helmets as well as large quantities of arrowheads were deposited with male burials during the Early Mycenaean and Palatial phases (Blegen 1937). The deposition of arrowheads probably expressed specialised fighting or hunting roles and this phenomenon seems to be largely specific to Prosymna (*Section 8.5.2.1*).

Thus, ideas concerning what it was to be male (and female) varied according to time and place. In elite mortuary contexts, weaponry deposition potentially expressed multiple warrior constructs and represented an idea of what it meant to be a leader, a hunter, a 'big-man' or even more generically, a 'big-person'. In later sub-elite contexts, functional weaponry was deposited as the primary means of expressing general male status, and only in certain cases did the deposition of identifiable Mycenaean warrior and archery kits express male prestige, identities and/or specialised fighting or hunting roles.

The idea that an Early Mycenaean elite female burial may have been culturally construed as a 'big-person' brings to mind a question posed by Alexandri (2009, 21): 'is an elite woman "closer" to a non-elite woman or to an elite man?' The association of the female identified as burial 58 Myc with a warrior kit indicates that in this upper-elite context female burials were sometimes provided with objects that typically are construed as male (also see the bronze sword/knife deposited with the adult female identified as burial 63 Myc from Grave Theta in Grave Circle B [Mylonas 1966, 98]). Clearly, the burial practice used for burial 58 Myc has much more in common with assemblages associated with elite and high-status male burials than non-elite female burials, which were never provided with weaponry let alone warrior kits. Yet, the deposition of weaponry was not the only way to express female prestige and wealth in Grave Circle B. For example, the female burial identified as Skeleton 1 from

[190] Only one sword was deposited in the Bronze Age Agora Cemetery. It was associated with the elite male identified as burial AA 41 from Tomb III (Immerwahr 1971, 171, 175-76). Only one sword was deposited in the Aspropilia Cemetery. It was associated the adult male identified as Burial 1 from Tomb 3 (Karantzali 2001, 18, 67-68, figs. 13).

Grave Omikron was provided with a wealthy assemblage containing large quantities of beautifully crafted jewellery, ornaments, prestige vessels, fine pottery and the singular electrum bead belt (Graziadio 1991, 408, tbl. 3; Mylonas 1966, 99; 1973, 187-207, Pls. 162-89). This suggests that either general weaponry deposition was not overtly gendered, or that burial 58 Myc was given a 'male' burial treatment. In *Section 5.3.2.3* I argued that the first scenario is more likely, because the deposition of weaponry was not intrinsic to the expression of elite male (or female) prestige and wealth in Grave Circle B, and because only half of the male burials and half of the female burials were provided with weaponry. What is more, almost all Shaft Grave burials were provided with grave goods. When burials were not provided with weaponry, they were provided with exotic and valuable luxury items. Because weaponry deposition was just one way of expressing elite male prestige and status, it follows that non-gendered weaponry deposition was also just one of several ways to express elite female prestige and status. The deliberate deposition of weaponry with certain elite burials also suggests that this practice expressed warrior identity and/or affiliation with certain roles and activities. Thus, the deposition of a warrior kit with burial 58 Myc could have expressed any of the following: an established non-gendered or elite female warrior identity, an alternative gender identity that represented another way of being female, or an 'outlier' indicative of a highly unusual individual case.

## 9.3 Correlating results with other types of evidence

### *Women Listed in the Linear B Tablets*

Can role and occupational affiliation attributed to high-status female burials provided with textile production tools be correlated with the large numbers of conscripted female textile workers in the Linear B tablets? Probably not. First, female burials provided with textile production tools were, as a rule, high-status. Second, female textile production workers listed in the tablets engaged in large-scale production within a workshop setting. There is no archaeological evidence to suggest that Palatial phase female burials associated with textile production tools worked in similar environments or generated a similar level of production, because no Mainland site of this date has yet yielded evidence of a textile production workshop. It is also possible that female spinners represented in the mortuary record were free agents.[191] Third, it was only during the Middle Helladic and Early Mycenaean phases that the deposition of textile production tools with female burials expressed occupational identity and direct affiliation with textile production activities, while deposition of textile production tools with female burials during the Palatial phase was expressive of status and

[191] For a discussion of how and when the act of textile production became commodified in prehistoric cultures see Adovasio *et al.* 2007.

gender and could not be connected to production activities or roles. Thus, burials that were contemporaneous with women listed in the tablets were associated with textile production on a purely ideological level. Finally, female textile production workers listed in the tablets may have been of other non-Mycenaean ethnicities or cultures, suggesting that policies such as this were applicable only to war booty and the lowest, most destitute rung of society, having little to do with the organisation of gendered occupational activities and roles for peoples who were culturally Mycenaean and not necessarily living directly under Palatial control. If anything, the fact that textile production was sexually segregated and represented a female production activity supports the premise that this particular activity was seen as female in the wider Mycenaean world, but clearly the similarities between the females buried in Mycenaean cemeteries and female workers listed in the tablets ends there. This may be explained by the fact that none of the settlements associated with the Palatial phase burial samples were palatial sites, and the degree to which (if at all) they were under palatial administrative control is unclear.

A small group of Pylian females are listed as priestesses of one sort or another in the tablets. They were of high status, enjoying social visibility and economic autonomy (Olsen 2009, 121). It is very difficult to link mortuary behaviour to affiliation with female religious roles, mainly because we know so little about Mycenaean religion. While it is often posited that certain types of objects were expressive of religious ideology (e.g. rhyta and figurines), these artefact types were associated with burials of all types and none can be linked to female burials or confidently designated as 'religious' objects. High-status female burials were often associated with exceptional prestige objects, but these examples are mainly datable to the Early Mycenaean phase and come from the Shaft Graves, pre-dating the tablets. There are, of course, singular female burials from the LHIII mortuary record, but whether or not these represented the burials of priestesses or other religious personages is unclear.

Finally, the tablets list a few women or wives affiliated with high-ranking men, indicating that these individuals may have enjoyed ascribed status and privileges (Olsen 2009, 121-22, no.37; Hiller 1989b). There is a long-standing tradition of assuming that wealthy and high-status female burials were treated as such based on their relationships to men. In other words, it is assumed that they were the wife or daughter of an important man. Of course, this can be subjectively imposed on interpretations of any high-status female burial and is demonstrative of male bias (although that does not mean that it is always wrong).

### *Female Warriors and Hunters in Mycenaean Art*

One of the most intriguing results of this research was the identification of an Early Mycenaean elite warrior female in Grave Circle B (*Section 5.4.2.1*), a phenomenon that is not represented in art from the Shaft Graves. No depictions of women were found in art from Grave Circle B. Women depicted in art from Grave Circle A are static, while it is men who are pictured in battle, duels and hunting scenes (Voutsaki 2005, 359-61). Mortuary evidence of warrior and hunting paraphernalia associated with male burials is easily correlated with iconographic representations of male warriors and hunters in the Shaft Graves and in the larger Mycenaean iconographic record (*Section 3.2.1.2*). Still it is unclear whether male representations represent ideology, real events and people or both. Yet depictions of women in martial or hunting scenes beyond the Shaft Graves do exist, indicating that there was ideological precedence for these types of female constructs. The problem is that the contemporaneous imagery is from Minoan contexts, while imagery from the Mainland is datable to later, mostly Palatial phase contexts, a timeframe for which there is no mortuary evidence for the provision of weaponry with female burials.

Swords and boars' tusk helmets were depicted with male and female figures. Rehak (1999b, 229-31) interpreted representations of these objects as being 'multivalent' symbols 'with a wide range of potential meanings', and he argues that they were not necessarily gendered. This is interesting because Early Mycenaean mortuary behaviour suggests that swords were non-gendered markers of warrior identity and status in Grave Circle B. Yet there is little iconographic evidence to support my hypothesis, because images that are of similar date to Grave Circle B are found mainly in Minoan contexts, such as the image of a woman carrying a sword on a cushion seal, which was found in a LMIA context at Knossos (Figure 35; Rehak 1999b, 230, n.34, Pl. XLVIf).

Patterns concerning the deposition of boars' tusk helmets suggest that these were fundamentally male objects and there is no case of the deposition of helmets with female burials. Yet there are depictions of women or goddesses (white skinned figures) wearing helmets. A Palatial phase fresco fragment from Thebes shows a white figure wearing a boars' tusk helmet. Another fresco fragment of unclear date from Tsountas House at Mycenae depicts a helmeted female with a griffin (Figure 36; Rehak 1999b, 229-30, Pls. XLVIc,d).

Rehak (1999b, 232-36) observes that representations of shields date back as early as LMIA on Crete and LHII on the Mainland (although far fewer depictions of shields have been found on the Mainland than on Crete) and notes that there was a concentration of Palatial

phase shield imagery at Mycenae in which female figures were depicted with shields (Figure 8a). It is not possible to correlate this evidence with mortuary behaviour because female burials associated with weaponry were not provided with shields, and just four shields were deposited in Shafts IV and V in Grave Circle A (Karo 1930-1933, 76, 92, 123, 146, fig. 468), which suggests that these objects were more likely to have been deposited with male burials based on their locations.

The archer fragment from Pylos depicts the white hands of what are presumably women or female divinities (Figure 8b; Brecoulaki *et al.* 2008; Rodenwaldt 1912, 120f. no. 156, Pl. 17,1; 121 no. 157, Pl. 14,1). This cannot be correlated with the mortuary evidence because arrowheads were not deposited with female burials in any contexts.

The Hunt Fresco from the LHIIIB palace at Tiryns depicts numerous young women driving and riding chariots, women (possibly dog-handlers) in high laced boots and huntresses in fragments depicting white hands holding spears (Anderson 1983, 12-14). Although the adult female identified as burial 58 Myc from Grave Gamma in Grave Circle B was provided with a bronze spearhead (Mylonas 1973, 73), it difficult to correlate mortuary behaviour datable to MHIII with such a late context from another Palatial centre.

While there was precedent for the association of females with martial and hunting constructs in both mortuary and artistic contexts, it is not possible to match Early Mycenaean weaponry deposition with later images of women in martial or hunting scenes. This incongruity suggests that weaponry deposition with female burials was an Early Mycenaean phenomenon specific to Grave Circle B, and that later iconographic representation of female warriors represented ideology or religion rather than social practice. While it is unclear to what extent cultural memory informed Palatial phase art, depictions of this sort indicate that martial female constructs were part of the Mycenaean gender cosmology. How these related to social practice in either chronological phase is unclear.

### *The Kourotrophoi*

In *Section 3.2.1.2* Olsen's (1997/98) study of Mycenaean kourotrophoi (images of female figures and infants, Figure 11) was discussed. She argues that these figures probably represent an ideological construct of motherhood rather than the practice of motherhood itself, and that their meaning varies according to context (Olsen 1997/8, 386-88). It also is unclear whether these female figurines were goddesses. Correlating burial practice to kourotrophoi imagery is tenuous at best. While there are instances in which adult female burials were interred with infant burials in single graves, there are also instances in which

adult male burials were interred with infant burials in single graves, such as grave MH 29 (Nordquist 1996, 24; Frödin and Persson 1938, 119, n. 1), grave MH 62 (Nordquist 1996, 28; Frödin and Persson 1938, 123, n. 6.) and Grave 1972-7 from Asine. Further, Nordquist and Ingvarsson-Sundström's (2005) study of Middle Helladic and Early Mycenaean remains of children from the Argolid shows that non-adult burials were interred with other types of burials in a diverse range of groupings: non-adult burials were interred with adult female, adult male, other child and other infant burials. Thus, it is not possible to tie this imagery to funerary practice. In fact, the mortuary evidence suggests that double and multiple burials were interred together because of a potentially wide range of factors such as familial relationships to one another, circumstances in which deaths occurred in close succession or investment practices (or lack thereof) enabling the processing of more than one individual through more cost-effective means.

### *Aegean Priests?*

Rehak (1994) convincingly argues a link between male burials wearing seal stones on their wrists and roles of authority although it is unclear whether or not this was of a religious nature. These observations are supported by evidence from the Agora Cemetery in which a male identified as burial AA 300 from the LHIII Tomb XL wore an engraved carnelian seal stone on his wrist (Immerwahr 1971, 247, Pl. 75). This may provide insight into male constructs that were not linked to warrior ideology or identities. However, it is worth pointing out that the expression of burial AA 300's identity was potentially complex, because he was also associated with decorated fine pottery and a bronze spearhead (Immerwahr 1971, 242-47).

## 9.4 Taking stock: Gender in the Aegean

This study has revealed that the interplay of gender and other social ideologies was varied and complex and that gendered burial practices expressed a broad range of male and female roles and identities that were often specific to certain locations, groups and periods.

Middle Helladic and Mycenaean mortuary behaviour was not at any point in time overtly suggestive of the hierarchical ranking of one gender over the other, except perhaps within the most elite context, the Shaft Graves, and here this is mainly suggested through the possible deposition of male funerary masks with elite male burials. Instead, gender more often than not appears to have been negotiated along heterarchical or complementary axes (*Section 2.2.6*).

When I embarked upon this study, the prevalent assumption in the field, especially within Mycenaean mortuary studies, was that gender was extremely difficult to identify, excepting the identification of high-status male burials, recognisable by their tell-tale association with weaponry (Graziadio 1991; Kilian-Dirlmeier 1988; Kirkpatrick Smith 2009; Voutsaki 2005). Analysts also leaned toward to the assumption that burials with spindle whorls, jewellery, pyxides and ivory combs should be artefactually gendered as female, despite the fact that there had been no studies (to date) beyond the scope of single site-analyses (McGeorge 2009; Voutsaki 2005) devoted to understanding the nature of these burial practices. In fact this research revealed that there is no necessary link between several of these artefact types and female burials.

Although it is acknowledged that high-status female burial assemblages do not comprise readily identifiable inventories, analysts often infer in the absence of osteological sexing that wealthy assemblages without weaponry are associated with female burials. A case in point is the famous 'Queen's' burial from Pit 1 in the royal tomb at Dendra (*Appendix II, Section II.7*; Persson 1931, 38), which was artefactually gendered as female. Yet none of the artefact types associated with this burial are readily recognisable as female based on the results of this research. Despite its successes, the case study of the unsexed burial sample from Prosymna also shows that the complexity of Mycenaean depositional practices cannot be fully explored when the analyst is reliant upon artefactual gendering, especially within elite mortuary contexts.

Bioarchaeological analysis, particularly concerning the osteological sexing and aging of human remains, clearly remains crucial to mortuary studies. Without it, the adult female identified as 58 Myc from Grave Gamma would have been interpreted as male based on her association with weaponry, and the male burial from Grave Nu would have been interpreted as female based on his association with a pyxis. What is more, a host of high-status female burials would not have been identified. Osteological analysis also facilitated the debunking of several artefactual gendering 'myths' during the course of this research. Ivory combs and pyxides are associated with burials of both genders. Due to the breadth of jewellery and ornament sub-types represented in the record, it is difficult to link any except a very few to gender (for example, bronze dress pins may be linked to elite female burials and gold buttons may be linked to elite male burials during the Early Mycenaean phase).

In closing, I would like to take stock, in order to determine whether or not this study has achieved a more mature interpretation of gender. To do this, I would like to pose a simple

question, adhering to one of archaeology's most basic binary models: does weaponry = male and does spindle whorl = female? The answer is: yes and no. The answer is 'yes' because weaponry was attributed mainly to sexed male burials while textile production tools were attributed mainly to sexed female burials, and admittedly, the results of the sexed analyses do not directly refute the above model. The answer is 'no', because there were exceptions documented in certain places at certain times, and this paradigm fails to capture the complexity and changing nature of weaponry and spindle whorl deposition practices during the Middle Helladic and Mycenaean eras.

What is more, Middle Helladic and Mycenaean mortuary behaviour represented the intersection of sometimes diverse and always complex ideological constructs – constructs that changed over time and were appropriated in slightly different ways by different communities. The sexed analyses revealed that each grave group, each cemetery, and each community warrants investigation on its own terms. This approach in turn elucidated a wider picture of gender, revealing which practices were broadly Mycenaean and which were community or cemetery-specific. While each sample shared cultural markers, the population using each burial site made certain choices and approached the performance of mortuary practices and the expression of ideologies in distinctive ways, some of which affected the ways in which the gendered identity of the deceased or the gender ideology of the community was expressed.

Much of what was revealed in this research was pertinent to the materiality of the female gender. This invites questions concerning what might be deemed the reverse problem of potentially over-representing women through the use of the gender attribution approach. As I pointed out in Chapter 2 (*Section 2.2*) the superfluity of one gender over another is typically not symptomatic of this type of analysis as long as both genders (read as males and females) are included in the sexed burial samples, which, in this case, they were. However, there were instances in which one gender was favoured with identifiable kits, while the other was associated with burial inventories containing a variety of object types. For example, during the Middle Helladic phase, high status female burials were identifiable by kits containing textile production tools, domestic coarse ware or a combination thereof, whereas male burial assemblages did not yield recognisable kits. The opposite scenario was true of the Late Bronze Age samples, particularly those datable to the Palatial phase, in which high-status male kits almost always contained weaponry, whereas high-status female burial assemblages yielded (sometimes vast) arrays of different object types. Because we can track how each gender was emphasised via the deposition of different inventories and object types, the results of the analysis are revealing of the materiality of both genders, and the approach

itself does not inherently favour one gender over another as long as both genders are present in a sample. I freely admit that I have devoted more space to the investigation of female inventories and assemblages, because so much scholarship has already been devoted to the investigation of male kits, particularly those containing weaponry (select works include Evely 1996; Kilian-Dirlmeier 1988; Kirkpatrick Smith 2009), and so little is understood about female burial assemblages. Therefore, if women appear to be over-represented in this dissertation, it is down to the analyst; the limitations of space and my aim to fill in the gaps concerning our understanding of gender in Middle Helladic and Mycenaean mortuary behaviour certainly influenced the investigation of female depositional practices.

(e) Upon final reflection, the gender attribution approach has proven to be a reliable means of revealing the materiality of gender in the sexed burial samples included in this research. But what is the likely workability of the attribution approach for other Aegean burial samples beyond those considered in this dissertation? As we know, attribution only facilitates analysis for samples in which skeletal remains have been osteologically sexed and can be reliably associated with grave goods. Currently, workability is limited by the state of the evidence, because this criteria currently applies to a mere handful of published Aegean burial samples. Yet there is hope for the future, because, ultimately, workability is contingent upon the incorporation of osteological analysis into future cemetery excavations – an outcome that seems likely given recent developments in the field of bioarchaelogy in Greece (Buikstra and Lagia 2009), the emphasis given to osteological analysis in recently excavated mortuary sites like Aspropilia (McGeorge 2001), the Prepalatial Tholos Tomb Gamma at Phourni in Archanes on Crete (Triantaphyllou 2005), and in recent analyses and re-analyses of skeletal material from older excavations, such as those published by the Middle Helladic Argolid project (Ingvarsson-Sundström 2010; Triantaphyllou 2010; Voutsaki 2005; Voutsaki *et al.* 2005; 2006; 2007; 2009a; 2009b; 2012) and recent studies of the skeletal evidence from Pylos (Schepartz *et al.* 2009), Asine and Lerna (Ingvarsson-Sundström 2002; 2003) and Grave Circle A at Mycenae (Papazoglou-Manioudaki *et al.* 2009; 2010).

As for the Aegean burial samples in which the skeletal evidence is too compromised to facilitate analysis (e.g. the Argos Tumuli [Triantaphyllou 2009; *Supra.* n. 136] or has been lost (e.g. the Prosymna burial sample [*Supra.* n. 166]), the workability of the Prosymna approach is also promising. The analysis presented in Chapter 8 demonstrates that results of sexed analyses can be used to inform analyses of culturally similar unsexed burial samples. However, at this point in time, there is a risk of introducing a universalising approach if we were to apply the Prosymna approach to all unsexed Bronze Age burial samples located

across the disparate regions of the Aegean, because there are currently so few sexed burials samples from regions outside of the Argolid that facilitate gender attribution. This means that the incorporation of osteological analysis into future cemetery excavations is all the more imperative, because the Prosymna approach can be refined through the ongoing incorporation of new data from future sexed mortuary analyses. Thus, the more we invest in the study of gender and in the study of new sexed burial samples, the more we can reveal gender in the record, and in time there is hope that we can eventually reveal the wider and bigger picture of a richly gendered Aegean Bronze Age.

# Appendix I

## The LMII Odos Palama Grave Group at Khania: A Gender Analysis of a Cretan Burial Sample

The section of the community who used the Odos Palama grave group lived under an administration that was (at least) partly Mycenaean in structure (Hallager, E. *et al.* 1990), and the settlement of Khania is firmly placed within a Late Bronze Age Mycenaean social and political context. Evidence from the Odos Palama grave group has been included in this research to serve *only* as a point of comparison between Palatial phase Mycenaean burial tradition and contemporary Cretan burial tradition and provides indicators of behaviour rather than a picture of widespread burial tradition particular to LMII Crete or even Khania.

## I.1 Archaeological Context

Seventeen Late Bronze Age graves were discovered on Odos Palama in Khania on Crete during a rescue excavation conducted in 1987 by the Archaeological Service under the direction of Andreadaki-Vlasaki. Meticulously documented and published in 1992 by B. P. Hallager and McGeorge, Odos Palama has the distinction of being the first LMII tombs in Crete in which the skeletal sample was published along with associated tombs and grave goods.[192] The area in which the graves were found was probably part of a large LMII cemetery (Andreadaki-Vlasaki 1981, 52-57; Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 13, 26, 46; Kanta 1980, 223-27; Karantzali 1986, 53-87), most of which lies beneath the modern town.

The grave group is datable to LMII, equivalent to LHIII on the Mainland, and was active during the Mainland's Palatial phase. Settlement evidence from LMI-II Khania confirms that the site was an urban centre. Evidence of Linear A (Papapostolou *et al.* 1976) and Linear B tablets (Hallager, E. *et al.*1990) found in the town also indicates that it may have had administrative control over the region of West Crete or could have fallen under Knossian political dominance at the time.[193] Evidence of imports shows that Khania maintained trade contacts with Mainland Greece, Cyprus, the Near East, Southern Italy and Sardinia

[192] Since then, Papadatos (2005) published the archaeological context of Tholos Tomb Gamma from Phourni at Archanes, which was founded in EMII and used until the Late Bronze Age. The monograph included an Appendix of the results of Triantaphyllou's osteological analysis of the skeletal remains. The tholos was so disturbed that no grave goods could be associated with any burials, prohibiting inclusion in this research.

[193] Preston (2000, 36) argues that Knossian political dominance in Crete ended at some point during LMIIA2, but stresses, 'This does not, however, preclude the continuing existence of a local elite at Knossos' (or Khania for that matter).

(Hallager, E. 1987, 183-87; 1988; Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 45). It also may have hosted a diverse population (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 45) composed of local Cretans as well as immigrants from the Mainland and possibly Italy, based on Mycenaean figurines and coarse cooking wares from Taranto in Southern Italy found in the settlement (Hallager, B. P. 1983; Tzedakis and Hallager 1983, 14). B. P. Hallager and McGeorge (1992, 45) argue that the Cypriot pit cave grave type[194] is also represented at Odos Palama (Gjerstad 1926, 57-64, fig. 72; Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 45).

LMII Cretan burial tradition can be characterized by a marked lack of wealth and innovation (Hatzaki 2005, 88; Preston 2004a,b; 2008), use of the pit cave and Cretan chamber tomb grave types, and the deposition of Cretan ceramic wares – all of which were in use or are present at Odos Palama. The small section of the community who used the grave group appears to have been, for the most part, culturally Cretan based on material evidence as well as the presence of the Cretan chamber tomb grave type. Like their Mycenaean contemporaries on the Mainland, the community using these graves exclusively practiced inhumation, and made use of secondary burials in their chamber tombs. Depositional practices revolved mainly around the consumption of locally manufactured ceramic wares and the provision of the odd small find. Most primary burials were provided with modest grave goods, comprised of no more than three ceramic vessels and a few small portable objects. Because of this, B. P. Hallager and McGeorge (1992, 46) argue that there is no evidence of social hierarchy in the grave group, and that this resulted most likely from the predominance of Cretan depositional practices, which de-emphasised material displays of wealth and/or the limited means of the section of the community using Odos Palama. However, the graves do provide a general picture of an urban LMII population of limited means who deposited a very modest amount of material wealth in their tombs (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge1992, 46).

## I.2 Data and Limitations

The Odos Palama grave group includes 17 graves. Up to 11 of these are of the pit cave type (Tombs 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15), four are of the Cretan chamber tomb type (Tombs 5, 10, 16 and 17) and one grave (Tomb 7) is a simple pit. The grave type of Tomb 6 is not given (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992). The remains of 29 individuals were identified. They include: one elderly male burial; six adult male burials; nine adult female

[194] Only one other Cretan site has yielded the pit cave tomb type. Eighteen pit caves were found in a cemetery containing both chamber tombs and shaft graves at Zapher Papoura near Knossos (Pini 1968).

burials; 10 child burials and two infant burials (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 37-42). The graves yielded evidence of at least 84 objects (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 13-23).

The sample is limited in several respects. First, it is actually a grave group within the context of a much larger cemetery, a context that remains unclear (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge1992, 26, 46). Second, no grave goods were deposited with secondary burials, which comprise a third of the sample (*Table I.2*), thus contracting the sample to an even smaller number of burials actually associated with grave goods. Third, no grave goods were found in Tomb 1 (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 13, fig. 3), and no datable grave goods were found in Tomb 16 (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 22-23, fig. 21). Fourth, only part of the dromos of Tomb 5 could be excavated because the chamber of the tomb continued under and into a neighbouring plot (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 15-16, fig. 9, Pl. 4A). Fifth, Tomb 6 was not excavated (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 16). And finally, no human remains were found in Tomb 13 (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 21, fig. 18).

## I.3 The Analysis: Gender Attribution in the Odos Palama Grave Group

### *I.3.1 Inclusion*

*Table I.1* indicates that the burials of adult females and children were favoured for inclusion. Yet, *Table I.2* suggests that secondary burials, which form a substantial part of the sample, included more adult male burials than adult female burials. Because the grave group is part of a larger, unexcavated cemetery, it is unclear if inclusion practices favoured one gender over another. However, osteological analysis of the Odos Palama skeletal remains revealed evidence of inherited traits in some of the burials (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 31-34, 36, 41, Pls. 19-30, 57-68, 71-81, 123, 124), suggesting that it was probably family affiliation that determined inclusion. Because the bones of reburials were found in all grave types and appear to have been 'carefully collected,' Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge (1992, 47) argue: 'It seems that the intention was to lay together the remains of family members, dead and buried at different times, in a final resting place.' This has much in common with contemporaneous secondary burial practices observed in the LHIII Mainland and Rhodian samples (*Section 7.3.1*).

### *I.3.2 Deposition of Grave Goods*

*Table I.3* indicates that the group using the Odos Palama burial location deposited grave goods with primary burials of adult female and child burials, and not with elderly male, adult male and infant burials. Grave goods were also rarely associated with secondary burials. B. P. Hallager and McGeorge (1992, 23, 47) argue that secondary burials may have been buried elsewhere originally and then later re-buried at Odos Palama without grave goods. This scenario is plausible, because it is possible that objects originally deposited elsewhere with burials could have been re-allocated or absorbed back into the living population when these burials were re-buried at Odos Palama. It follows that despite the fact adult female and child burials appear to be favoured with depositional practices, it is unclear whether or not gender or age determined this behaviour and that extant circumstances probably contributed to this outcome.

It is possible that ill health could have resulted in higher mortality rates for female and non-adult burials, thus skewing perceived depositional patterns. This may be the case for the five child burials from Tomb 11, identified as Skeletons 11-1, 11-2, 11-3, 11-4 and 11-5 (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 33-34). Their mass burial in the same tomb strongly indicates that they died around the same and probably of similar causes, such as epidemic (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 41), demonstrating how vulnerable the generally malnourished population was to disease. But, ultimately, there is no way to directly correlate pathological evidence at this or other sites with inclusion patterns, especially in a sample that represents a random selection from a much larger cemetery.

Tomb 15 presents compelling evidence that other factors determined this practice. This grave contained the remains of two adult male burials. It is unclear whether either of these burials could be linked to the large number of pottery sherds, representative of at least 12 vessels, that were found in the fill of the grave (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 22, fig. 20, Pls. 7B, 8B). It is of course possible that these vessels may have been used for funerary rituals performed by the burying group and had an indirect social connection to the deceased(s). Whatever the case, eating and drinking rituals *were* emblematic of social distinction. Thus it is likely that the deposition of grave goods was determined by burial ordinance (e.g. whether a burial was primary or secondary), and grave goods appear to have been routinely deposited with select primary burials that just happened to be female and child burials, whilst secondary burials probably were separated from their burial assemblages as part of the re-burial ritual – a practice that fundamentally diverges from contemporaneous Mainland and Rhodian burial samples, because the secondary burials at Odos Palama may have been originally interred at other locations altogether.

### I.3.2.1 Artefact Type Distribution

*Table I.4* lists the artefact types and quantities present in the Odos Palama graves. Non-ceramic vessels, dress pins, weapons, toilet articles and figurines (all standard Mycenaean artefact types) were not deposited in the grave group. This suggests that deposition practices were not overtly informed by Mycenaean mortuary ideology, at least to the extent that they were on the Mainland and at Rhodes. In fact, a comparatively limited variety of object types are represented in the Cretan sample, consisting of jewellery, possibly ornaments, ceramic vessels, tools and utensils.

*Table I.5* indicates that primary adult female burials are associated with almost all artefact types represented. Artefact types of unclear association may have been associated with adult or non-adult burials OR may have been used for eating and drinking rituals. Following is a discussion of the distribution of each of the artefact types represented.

#### *I.3.2.1.1 Pottery*

*Table I.6* lists all pottery from the Odos Palama grave group. Evidence of at least 67 vessels was found.

*Table I.7* indicates that one vessel may have been associated with an elderly male burial; 13 to 29 vessels were associated with adult male burials; 10 to 37 vessels were associated with adult female burials; 11 vessels were associated with child burials and up to ten vessels were associated with infant burials.

The reason that association frequencies are given in ranges is because much of the Odos Palama ceramic assemblage was found in the fills of Tomb 5, Tomb 7, Tomb 8, Tomb 10 and Tomb 13 (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 15-18, 21). Ceramic vessels purposely deposited as grave goods are almost always associated with primary burials (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 23, 47) and are represented most accurately by the lowest number in the range (e.g. 13 pots for adult males, 10 pots for adult females). As for pottery from the fills that cannot be associated with burials, B. P. Hallager and McGeorge (1992, 16) argue that it is probably evidence of eating and drinking rituals performed at the funeral and should not be considered grave goods – similar to the practice performed by the community using the Aspropilia Cemetery during the same time (*Section 7.3.2.1.1.2*). Therefore, the deposition of pottery only indirectly (if at all) represents identity. Even more likely, this practice probably expressed collective identity and status. Otherwise, the deposition of pottery as grave goods was not influenced by gender or age.

*Table I.8* shows the distribution of ceramic shape. Male secondary burials appear to be associated with the greatest range of shapes including an amphora, a bowl, cups/mugs, jars, a krater, kylikes and a tankard. Shapes associated with primary female burials are comprised of six cups/mugs and one jar. Shapes associated with child burials include one alabastron, a basket vase, cups/mugs, a feeding bottle, one jar and one jug. It is difficult to discern whether or not vessel shape was linked to gender or age.

*Table I.9* shows the distribution of possible ceramic vessel function. The functions attributed to vessels with no association, most of which were found in the fills, consist of containers (including unguent containers) and may have been used for cooking, fumigation, drinking, eating and pouring. Adult male burials were associated mainly with drinking vessels, as well as vessels used as containers and for eating and storage. Adult female burials were associated mainly with vessels used for drinking and can also be linked to vessels used as containers. The drinking vessels that were associated with female burials were cups and mugs, suggesting that primary female burials were linked to domestic drinking shapes instead of those that are readily identified with drinking rituals (i.e. kylikes and kantharoi). Child burials were associated with the broadest range of possible functions including eating or display, drinking, pouring and unguent containers. This practice was not shaped by gender or age, although it is possible that drinking rituals may have been performed during the re-burial of the adult male secondary burials identified as Skeletons 15A and 15C from Tomb 15.

*Table I.10* shows the distribution of ceramic vessel decoration. Vessels found in the fill were mainly plain or covered with a simple coat of paint ('Surface Treatment Only'). Adult male burials were associated with two plain vessels and six painted vessels. Adult female burials were associated with two plain vessels, one painted vessel, and two vessels featuring simple linear decoration. Child burials were associated with three plain vessels, one painted vessel, six vessels featuring simple linear decoration and one vessel with plastic features. One of the more elaborate vases, an alabastron featuring stylized shells (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 19, Pl. 20A), was also associated with the remains of a child identified as Skeleton 3 from Tomb 11. Because the majority of vessels featured no more than an all over coat of paint or a wash, it not possible to link decorative features to the gender or age, although it is tempting to suggest that the more elaborate vessels were linked to child burials.

*Table I.11* shows the distribution of ceramic ware type. Coarse vessels appear to have been deposited with adult burials of both genders. Vessels manufactured in the local Kydonian

workshop, as well as plain and local wares appear to have been deposited with burials regardless of gender or age. While child burials could be associated with almost all Cretan wares represented at Odos Palama, they were almost exclusively associated with Kydonian vessels, whereas only two vessels of this ware type were associated with adult female burials. This suggests that children were favoured with pottery manufactured close to home.

All vessels were Cretan wares excepting one: a Mycenaean piriform jar imported from the Mainland. This had been placed between the legs of an adult female identified as Skeleton 4 from Tomb 4 (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 15, 27, Pl. 11A). The deposition of this vessel differentiates this burial from others, because Skeleton 4 is the only burial associated with an imported vessel and is also the only burial associated with a piriform shape. Although Skeleton 4, the only burial interred in Tomb 4, was not associated with any other grave goods, the piriform jar may represent ties to the Mainland or certain Mycenaean industries. It also suggests a possible ideological affiliation with Mycenaean burial ritual and is the only direct reference to Mycenaean burial practice in this grave group. However, one pot is not much to go on, and it is more likely that the piriform jar indicates a connection to Mycenaean industry and goods rather than affiliation with Mycenaean mortuary ideology.

Odos Palama pottery deposition practices greatly diverged from those performed by its Mycenaean counterparts. The pottery was primarily Cretan, much of it was not deposited as grave goods, and the re-burial of secondary remains may have involved the re-location of these burials. Interestingly, vessels of the greatest variety of shape and range of possible functions were associated with just two secondary male burials identified as Skeleton 15A and Skeleton 15C from Tomb 15. Because grave goods were almost always associated with primary burials, and because Tomb 15 did not contain any primary burials, the burial practice performed at the re-burial of these two individuals appears to have been a bit unusual. Although large amounts of pottery recovered from the fills of the Odos Palama graves may have been used for eating and drinking rituals (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 16), much of Tomb 15's ceramic assemblage is composed of pottery probably used as unguent containers as well as eating and drinking rituals. This suggests that either fumigation rituals were part of the funerary performance or that many of the vessels from this assemblage could have been deposited as grave goods. If the latter is true, the deposition of unguent containers in Tomb 15 may be evidence for the distinction of two male secondary burials.

***I.3.2.1.2 Adornment***

*Table I.12* lists all jewellery from the Odos Palama grave group. It is associated with four of the nine adult female burials and three of the ten child burials. Another six pieces were found in Tombs 8 and 10 and could not be associated with burials.

*Table I.13* indicates that jewellery sub-types were distributed to adult female and child burials with relatively equal frequency. Jewellery of no association was found in tombs containing the remains of adult female primary burials. The adult female identified as Skeleton 8C from Tomb 8 and the adult female identified as Skeleton 10A as well as the two infants identified as Skeletons 10B and 10C from Tomb 10 were primary burials (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 32-33, Pls. 32, 105).[195] Because secondary burials were as a matter of course excluded from depositional practices, it is probable that jewellery of no association found in Tombs 8 and 10 originally may have been deposited with or on one of the primary burials from these graves. All this suggests that the deposition of jewellery was determined by gender, regardless of age. This also suggests that the associated child burials may have been female. Therefore, it is probable that female burials of all ages wore one or two pieces of simple jewellery as part of the funerary costume.

The Cretan sample differs from the LHII Mycenaean burial samples in that adornment practices were much more subdued, less selective and strictly gendered at Odos Palama in that only female burials were adorned. While adornment practices at the Aspropilia Cemetery were also female-focused, the Rhodo-Mycenaean female burials were elaborately adorned and much wealthier. Further, high status burials of both genders from the Agora Cemetery could be richly adorned (*Section 7.3.2.2*). Thus, Odos Palama adornment practices were exclusively female, probably standard practice for the treatment of all female burials, and discrete. These objects were probably the personal possessions of the deceased and may have been worn during life as well. Thus, these understated pieces expressed identity as well as gender and have little to do with Mycenaean preoccupations concerning prestige and wealth.

Only three objects from the Odos Palama grave group could be interpreted as being ornaments. A button/bead was associated with an adult female identified as Skeleton 2 from Tomb 2 (Hallager, B.P. and McGeorge 1992, 14, Pl. 10B), and two buttons/beads were associated with one of the three burials interred in Tomb 10 (an adult female identified as

[195] It is unclear whether the other burials in Tomb 8, the adult female identified as Skeleton 8B and the adult male identified as Skeleton 8A, were primary or secondary burials (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 31).

Skeleton 10A, an infant identified as Skeleton 10B and another infant identified as Skeleton 10C) (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 18, Pl. 16B). Although it is tempting to draw a correlation between this practice and the link between adult female burials and buttons/whorls observed in the Agora, the Odos Palama sample is too small to confirm the presence of a related Mycenaean custom in Khania. Further, there is the strong likelihood that these objects should be definitively categorised as jewellery, because they could have functioned as such and their distribution is in keeping with behaviours observed for the deposition of jewellery discussed above.

#### *I.3.2.1.3 Tools*

One tool was deposited at Odos Palama. A bronze needle was found close to the left arm of the adult female identified as Skeleton 2 from Tomb 2. Its length indicates use for woollen darning or for the sewing of substantial coarser materials (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 14,n. 7, Pl. 10B). It is difficult to interpret the presence of a single object, however its uniqueness in the sample indicates that Skeleton 2 probably used the needle during life and can reasonably be associated with specialised sewing activities. It is difficult to draw a correlation between this deposition and practices, of a wholly different nature, observed in the LHIII Mainland burials samples in which high status female burials were linked (indirectly) to spinning activities (*Sections 7.3.2.4.1* and *9.2*).

#### *I.3.2.1.4 Sealings*

A steatite seal was found on the chest of a primary burial: a child identified as Skeleton 3 from Tomb 11. Pierced through the middle, it was also most likely worn as jewellery or as an amulet worn around the neck or on the wrist of the deceased. It also may have been imported from the Mainland and suggests a possible relationship between with the glyptic art of the Mainland (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 19, 20, Pls. 22A-B).

#### *I.3.2.1.5 Utensils*

A single utensil, part of an undecorated ceramic ladle, was found in the fill of the dromos of Tomb 10 and was probably part of the larger ceramic assemblage found in the fill (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 18, Pl. 27D). It may have been used for serving food or drink in funerary rituals performed during the funeral of an adult female and two infants, identified as Skeletons 10A, B and C respectively.

### *I.3.3 Distribution of Raw Materials*

*Table I.14* lists the small range of materials represented in the Odos Palama grave group, consisting of bone, bronze, glass, silver and steatite. Ceramics are discussed above in *Section I.3.3.1*.

*Table I.15* suggests the following: 1) adult male burials may have been associated with silver; 2) adult female burials may have been associated with the widest range and most exotic materials (probably due to their association with jewellery); 3) child burials were associated with bronze, faience/glass paste and steatite; and 4) infant burials may have been associated with bone, carnelian and steatite. The deposition of objects based on their material composition does not appear to be linked to gender, but instead reflects practices that governed the deposition of different artefact types. It is also unclear whether precious metals were deposited with female burials or with primary burials irrespective of gender. Thus, the deposition of materials was probably determined by multiple intersecting factors involving group affiliation, status, gender and burial ordinance.

## I.4 Interpretation of Results

### *I.4.1 Social Hierarchy at Odos Palama*

The expression of social hierarchy was subtle at Odos Palama.[196] Several aspects of the burial practice were *not* expressive of status, such as spatial organisation of graves and grave size. Although different grave types were constructed close to one another, there is no uniform orientation, and tomb size was probably determined by available space within the cemetery as well as the number of burials and the physical size of those inhumed (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 25).

Social identity and hierarchy does appear to have been expressed through the use of grave type. The four chamber tombs (Tombs 5, 10, 16 and 17) and three pit cave graves (Tombs 8, 11 and 15) appear to be the wealthiest graves at Odos Palama based on construction and quantities of grave goods. Although the chambers of the chamber tombs do not appear to be strikingly larger than the main burial chambers of other graves at Odos Palama, the four graves all appear to be constructed on a similar scale,[197] had rather long dromoi, and featured

[196] This argument contradicts that made by B. P. Hallager and McGeorge (1992, 23, 46) who maintain that social distinction was not expressed in the grave group.

[197] Tomb 5's dromos measures 7.45 m x 1.15-0.47 m, and its chamber is unexcavated (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 15-16, fig. 9, Pl. 4A). Tomb 10's dromos measures 5.65 m x. 0.60-1.00 m, and its chamber measures 1.30 m x 1.70 m x 1.22 m (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 17-18, fig. 13, Pls. 4B, 5A). Tomb 16's chamber measures 1.70 m x 1.88 m x 1.50-1.60 m, and its dromos is

the only architectural embellishments documented for the entire grave group. Tomb 5 and 10 had grave markers, and Tomb 10 had constructed steps. Of course it is possible that other graves may have had markers that did not survive, but it seems too much of a coincidence that this sort of evidence only marked the chamber tombs and not the other types of graves. Further, the dromoi of Tombs 5 and 10 yielded comparatively large numbers of objects.[198]

The pit cave graves, Tombs 8, 11, and 15, also appear to have been moderately wealthy in comparison to the rest of the graves. Ten cover slabs (the only cover slabs documented in the grave group) were found above Tomb 8. B. P. Hallager and McGeorge (1992, 25) also observed that Tomb 8 and 15 'were exceptional in construction' further distinguishing them from other graves in the cemetery.[199] Like the chamber tombs, these graves also yielded larger quantities of grave goods.

The 'round construction' discovered in the central eastern part of the cemetery (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 24) does not appear to have a spatial relationship with any specific tomb, and is surrounded by graves of different types (pit cave tombs 8, 4, 3 and 9, the pit grave Tomb 7 and Chamber Tomb 16). Yet, relations between the 'round construction' and Tombs 8 and 15 were established based on the presence of joined pottery from the three areas. The site also appears to have been used on several occasions contemporaneously with the cemetery and may have been the locus of drinking rituals perhaps practiced during the funeral for burials being inhumed in Tombs 8 and 15 (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 24, n. 92). This suggests that these two were differentiated intentionally from the other graves in the grave group.

Less wealthy graves at Odos Palama are comprised of Tombs 1, 2, 3, 4, 9 and 12, all of which are pit cave graves. They are roughly the same size as the wealthier graves discussed above, but contained fewer primary burials and smaller assemblages. Tomb 7 is a bit of an anomaly. It is the only pit grave found at Odos Palama, has no precedent on Crete (Hallager,

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unexcavated (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 22-23, fig. 21). Tomb 17 could not be fully excavated and no measurements were obtained due to risk of collapse (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 23). Based on available dimensions and the plan of the grave group it is likely that all chamber tombs were of similar size.

[198] Although Tomb 5's chamber could not be excavated, ceramic evidence from its dromos indicates that there were burials in the main chamber, and, therefore, grave goods. Tomb 16 contained only secondary burials with no grave goods, indicating that either Tomb 16 was awaiting primary inhumations or was intended specifically to house re-buried ancestors. Tomb 17 was not excavated fully due to risk of collapse.

[199] Tombs 8 and 15 also featured extra remains thrown 'head first' into the fill of the corridor, which B. P. Hallager and McGeorge (1992, 25, n. 93) argue to be indicative of 'an incident which must have taken place when the corridor was more than half filled and a pit seemed to have been made for the purpose. The circumstances suggest a rather hasty, careless and disgraced manner of burial not so far seen in Minoan tombs of this period.'

B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 26-27), and appears to be the poorest grave based on the quality of its construction (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 16, fig. 10, Pl. 3A).

Thus, two social strata may have been operating in this grave group. These consisted of the group investing in the construction of Cretan chamber tombs, and the group using the pit cave grave type. These groups were probably using the 'round construction' for eating and drinking rituals. It is possible that the graves housing mainly secondary burials may not necessarily have been less wealthy, but merely reflected the practice of different customs intended for secondary burials, which did not incorporate object deposition and discouraged larger scale eating and drinking rituals. It seems that different groups can be identified by their choice of grave type, which socially distinguished these groups from one another and expressed subtle but varying degrees of status within the community. In no way did the gender or age of a burial determine any of the above practices.

### *I.4.2 Gender and the Deposition of Material Wealth at Odos Palama*

Gendered adornment practices, in which female burials, probably of all ages, were inhumed wearing one or two small pieces of jewellery is the only concrete evidence for gendered depositional practices at Odos Palama. This practice seems to have been unrelated to status, because almost all female burials were associated with one or two pieces of understated jewellery, and status was explicitly expressed through the performance of other behaviours concerning use of grave type as well as the size and scale of eating and drinking rituals conducted at the funeral and/or reburial of the deceased. Because jewellery was most likely worn on the body at time of interment, and because these small pieces were of relatively modest design and materials, it is probable that such objects could have also been worn during life and therefore may have represented the individual's gendered identity during life and death.

This tells us that gender may have been expressed horizontally subsidiary to the larger umbrella of family-determined status structures. While burials of both genders and all age groups were eligible for burial treatment that expressed the group or ascribed status, only females could be buried wearing objects of adornment. Thus, jewellery deposited with burials is not indicative of a highly nuanced expression of gendered status. Instead, this behaviour, shows that certain families and/or individuals had the means and chose to participate in female fashion trends. Thus, gendered adornment was technically a by-product of wealth (even if it was on the lower end of the economic scale) and status.

It is apparent that social competition did subtly inform the burial practice at Odos Palama, because groups chose to distinguish themselves and their dead through labour investment, the disposal of jewellery with their female burials and the consumption of mostly accessible, inexpensive objects (e.g. locally manufactured ceramics) in a non-uniform manner. It is unclear whether they chose to emphasize status through these comparatively humble means based on ideological tenets or because they simply did not have access to the resources procured by other wealthier populations, like those using the Agora and Aspropilia cemeteries. The argument for a lack of resources is supported by the material and pathological evidence, which shows that the population using Odos Palama was poor and of limited means. In fact, skeletal analysis revealed that the deceased suffered from malnutrition, engaged in physically gruelling occupational activities, and lived generally shorter lives than their contemporaries in other Mycenaean cemeteries – regardless of gender or age (Hallager, B. P. and McGeorge 1992, 37-42). It seems that lack of wealth and resources appear to have greatly limited the practice of burying grave goods with the dead and may have affected funerary tradition to the point that the deposition of grave goods at Odos Palama was practised on an incidental level, so that the expression of status was not wholly contingent upon the deposition of material wealth.

## I.5 Conclusion

In the Odos Palama grave group, female burials of all ages appear to have worn discrete amounts of jewellery as part of the funerary costume, which represented female fashion in daily life, the gendered identity of the deceased and indirectly familial status. It is also possible that the deposition of a bronze needle expressed the specialist occupation of a female burial. Whether or not this represented a gendered occupation or social role is unclear.

The Odos Palama grave group offers a counterpoint to the Mycenaean cemeteries, because it shows that a group of families living under a Mycenaean administration (at least to some degree) incorporated little or no recognizably Mycenaean mortuary practices in their funerary ritual. What is more, the expression of group identity dominated all aspects of social expression. Status was expressed primarily through grave construction and eating and drinking rituals. Gender was expressed horizontally also under the umbrella of group affiliation (and status), and age does not appear to have determined any aspect of the mortuary practice. At Odos Palama, the deposition of material wealth with burials was understated, subsidiary to the emphasis on family and often eclipsed the individual. Any

distinction of individual burials was incidental compared to the more overt and staged funerary rituals involving eating and drinking (especially at the sites of Tombs 7, 8, 11, 12, 14, 16) and re-burial, which were likely to have been performed within the context of a funerary event probably involving the immediate family (based on the number of vessels). In short, burial at Odos Palama was a family affair, and the cultural affiliation(s) and status of the family appears to have determined the nature of the treatment of the dead regardless of gender or age.

# Appendix II

# A selection of other unsexed burials amenable to gender analysis

To further demonstrate the applicability of the Prosymna approach, the analyses of several notable burial assemblages from other unsexed cemetery sites at Mycenae, Argos, Dendra and Pylos are presented here.

## *II.1 Tholos IV, Pylos in Messenia*

Evidence of Mycenaean burial practice from the Pylian tombs (the tholoi, the Grave Circle, chamber tombs and Koudou, Kokkevis and Tsakalis graves) is compromised by disturbance and looting, making it difficult if not impossible to analyse mortuary behaviour at this important palatial site. Tholos IV, datable to LHII at the end of the Early Mycenaean phase (Blegen *et al.* 1973, 95-134), however did yield quantities of small finds, despite looting in antiquity. The tomb contained the remains of 17 burials (10 males, six females and one child), originally identified by Angel. None of the burials, or finds were *in situ*, no grave goods can be associated with burials and the skeletal evidence is now lost (Schepartz *et al.* 2009, 155, n. 3, and 162; Stocker pers. comm.. 5th May, 2011).[200] The surviving grave assemblage, however, was extensive and suggests the deposition of numerous elite burial assemblages. The excavators unearthed an abundance of gold leaf used for adornment and furniture decoration; beads composed of glass paste, lapis lazuli, amethyst, amber and gold; jewellery composed of bronze, precious metals and semi-precious stones; four complete pots and many sherds; bronze and stone vessels; furniture parts; and weaponry including swords, spearheads and arrowheads (Blegen *et al.* 1973, 110-34). The large semi-circular pit grave located parallel to the northwest wall of the chamber contained a gold pendant in the shape of a figure eight shield, a gold bead featuring a griffin and an amber spacer bead (Blegen *et al.* 1973, 105). The stone cist located against the southeast wall of the tomb contained numerous small finds including a gold signet ring. Artefactual gendering of the weaponry indicates that the male burials were probably emphasized through weaponry deposition and even perhaps via the deposition of fine vessels and adornment. No artefact types present can be confidently gendered as female, although we do know that six adult female burials were

[200] In fact, the 2009 study on the relationship between dental health, status and sex at Pylos (Schepartz *et al.* 2009, see 155) is the only published information on Pylos' skeletal evidence to date, besides the broader study on Mycenaean health by Bisel and Angel (1985). Stocker (pers. comm.. 5th May, 2011) is co-authoring a forthcoming publication on Tholos IV (the publication of which will post-date the submission of this thesis) and confirms that individual burial assemblages cannot be identified in this grave or the Grave Circle or any of the other Pylian tholoi.

interred in the tholos. This suggests the burial practice performed in Tholos IV was similar to that observed in Grave Circle B and probably Grave Circle A, in which elite female burials were emphasized via the deposition of adornment, ornaments, select vessels and even perhaps weaponry. Interestingly, no evidence of textile production tools or conuli were found in Tholos IV. The absence of textile production tools suggests that the group using this tomb did not emphasize female burials with this practice, and that female status was not bound up in this type of symbolism.

### *II.2 Interment E from Tomb E-6, Pylos in Messenia*

The unsexed burial identified as interment E from Chamber Tomb E-6 at Pylos lay on its back with its head supported on two flat stones just inside the door on the eastern side of the chamber. The burial, datable to LHIIIA2, was associated with a bronze sword, a bronze cleaver, a bronze spear point, a bronze dagger and two pithoid jars, one of which was filled with fragments of bone, sherds and ash (Blegen *et al.* 1973, 185-86). This burial is gendered as a probable male based on the presence of a weaponry kit. The burial practice is typical of depositional practices observed in the sexed Palatial phase LHIII chamber tomb burial samples, in which the distinction of wealthy and high status male burials was expressed through the deposition of bronze weaponry.

### *II.3 The Pit 1 burial from Tomb E-8, Pylos in Messenia*

The unsexed primary burial from Pit 1 in Chamber Tomb E-8 at Pylos is datable to LHII-LHIIIA and was associated with two glass paste beads, a terracotta spindle whorl, and three small pots featuring simple linear decoration, including an alabastron, a squat jar, and stemmed goblet with high handles. The assemblage was *in situ* (Blegen *et al.* 1973, 195, also see 196, 200). Based on the presence of the spindle whorl, the Pit 1 burial is gendered as a probable female. Although the date of the burial is unclear, the practice clearly exemplifies the practice observed in the sexed Early Mycenaean and Palatial burial samples, in which high status female burials were emphasized through the deposition of textile production tools, and this practice is very similar to the practices observed at Asine in which female burials interred in simple grave types were emphasized with assemblages containing spindle whorls, decorated pottery and adornment (*Section 6.4.2.1*).

### *II.4 Skeleton III from Chamber Tomb 502 from the Third Kilometre Cemetery, Mycenae*

The assemblage associated with the unsexed burial known as Skeleton III[201] from Chamber Tomb 502 from Mycenae's Third Kilometre Cemetery included six kylikes, two amphorae, three jugs, two askoi, two stirrup vases, two jars, one feeding bottle, two incense burners, two shallow cups, one deep bowl, the base of a possible larnax, a gold embossed ornamental rosette, necklace(s) composed of 49 glass paste beads and one amethyst bead and three steatite spindle whorls (Wace 1932, 7-10, figs. 3, 4, Pls. XI-III). It is datable to LHIII, and activity most likely took place during the Palatial phase (Wace 1932, 6). The presence of spindle whorls suggests that Skeleton III should be gendered as a probable female.

### *II.5 Grave 21bis and Tomb XXIV at Deiras in Argos, the Argolid*

The assemblage from the pit grave identified as 21 *bis* from Deiras is datable to LHIIIA1 (Deshayes 1966, 82-83). It included a plain jug, a jug featuring simple linear decoration, a three-handled jar also featuring simple linear decoration, fragments of plain kylikes, three conical steatite buttons/whorls and a bronze weight and scale (Deshayes 1966, 82-3, Pl. LXXX,1,3). Based on the presence of three buttons/whorls, the associated burial is gendered as a probable female.

The assemblage associated with Burial No. 1 from Chamber Tomb XXIV is datable to LHIIIA (Deshayes 1966, 64-69, Pl. VIII,2). It included a plain beaked jug, a plain three-handled jar, an alabastron featuring simple linear decoration, five steatite buttons/whorls, a bronze scale and a necklace of five beads (probably composed of greenish glass paste). The presence of the buttons/whorls suggests that the burial should be gendered as a probable female. Interestingly, the two probable female burials from Deiras were not only emphasized through the deposition of possible textile production tools, but were also provided with bronze scales, despite the fact that one was buried in a simple pit grave while the other was included in wealthier, more architecturally complex chamber tomb. This supports observations made in *Sections 7.3.2.4.1* and *9.2* that female status and identity continued to be bound up in material symbols that expressed affiliation to spinning activities during the Palatial phase.

The burial assemblage associated with Burial No. 2 from Tomb XXIV is also datable to LHIIIA. It included a plain cup, a ceramic spoon, a large bronze knife, a bone dress pin and a bronze mirror (Deshayes 1966, 66, Pls. IX,4, LXVI,2). While the date of the burial and the

[201] Crania of Skeleton III was not analysed by Fürst (1932).

deposition of the knife suggests that the burial should be gendered as a probable male, the presence of the mirror and pins deserve further exploration. There are examples of a bronze mirror and weaponry being deposited together in burial assemblages in Palatial phase contexts.[202] This supports the argument that bronze mirrors were not female artefact types (as has usually been assumed) and could be included in male warrior kits. Bone dress pins were sometimes deposited with non-adult burials, which suggests that the possibility that Burial No. 2 was a non-adult. However, it is unlikely that Burial No. 2 was female because knives, as a rule, were not deposited with female burials during the Palatial phase. Therefore, Burial No. 2 should be gendered as a probable male and possible non-adult burial.

### *II.6 Grave 26, Grave I (140) and Grave 5 (92) in the Argos Tumuli, The Argolid*[203]

The assemblage associated with the primary burial from Grave 26 (XXVI) in Tumulus Gamma (Protonotariou-Deilaki 1980; Dietz 1991, 134) is datable to the Early Mycenaean phase and included a lustrous painted cup featuring simple linear decoration, another cup and a small jar featuring simple linear decoration, a clay spindle whorl of double conical shape and five bone dress pins. The spindle whorl suggests that the burial should be gendered as a probable female, and the bone dress pins further suggest that the burial could have been that of a non-adult or adult.[204]

Grave I (140) located in Tumulus Delta yielded one of the largest assemblages to be firmly associated with an individual burial in the Argos Tumuli. This assemblage is datable to MHIII during the Early Mycenaean phase. It included: a plain goblet, cup and two jugs; a bichrome jug; matt-painted pottery including a jug and four carinated cups; a cup featuring simple linear decoration; two necklaces found *in situ* on the neck of the burial, composed of bronze, rock-crystal, clay, faience, glass paste, and carnelian beads (Dietz 1991, 136); a bronze dress pin found *in situ* (Dietz 1991, 136; Kilian-Dirlmeier 1984, 39, No. 68); and a bracelet of unspecified material found on each arm *in situ* (Dietz 1991, 136). The combined presence of the bronze dress pin and jewellery suggest that this burial should be gendered as a possible female. Although Dietz (1991, 136) published the burial as a 'sub adult', it is

[202] For example, the skeleton located east of the bier in Tomb 42 (Blegen 1937, 150-51) was associated with bronze grooming objects, arrowheads and a knife (see Assemblage #117); pieces of a bronze mirror were found in Shaft V in Grave Circle A (Karo 1930-1933, 142, fig. 58, 59), which contained the remains of two adult male burials and one unsexed adult burial; and a bronze mirror was included in the assemblage associated with the probable male warrior buried in Tomb 12 – The Cuirass Tomb from Dendra (Åström 1977, 16, 51, Pl. VI:3; Catling 1964, 224 *ff*).

[203] The results of the Argos 'Tumuli' project (Voutsaki *et al.* 2009b) establishes more refined dates for many of the graves and also discusses the ceramic assemblage as well as mortuary behaviour at the site.

[204] Bone dress pins were associated with the adult female identified as burial 31 Ler from Grave H.1 of unclear MH date at Lerna (Caskey 1954, 21).

unclear what this age category is based on since the skeletal evidence from the Argos Tumuli was unanalyzed until Triantaphyllou attempted to age and sex the skeletons as part of the MH Argolid Project almost 20 years later (Voutsaki *et al.* 2009b). Based on the contents of the assemblage, the age of the burial cannot be determined, although it is more likely that the burial was that of an adult based upon the quantity of deposited objects.

The assemblage associated with the skeletal remains from Grave 5 (92) in Tumulus Epsilon (Protonotariou-Deilaki 1980, 115-19; Dietz 1991, 139), described as 'an elaborate cist' grave (Voutsaki *et al.* 2009b, 179, n. 69), included two bronze knives, a bronze sword, two gold diadems, a wooden (?) pyxis, a micaceous amphora with lid/plug featuring simple linear decoration possibly from Kythera (Dietz 1991, 139, 236, 238), a matt-painted ovoid jar and two kantharoi. The deposit is datable to MHIII (Voutsaki *et al.* 2009b, 160, tbl. 4). The combination of weaponry and the gold diadems[205] strongly suggests that this burial should be gendered as a probable male.

### *II.7 The Tholos and Cuirass Tombs from Dendra near Midea in the Argolid*

Grave goods found in the Early Mycenaean phase tholos tomb from Dendra approach the standard of wealth observed in Mycenae's Shaft Graves. The tholos tomb (Persson 1931) contained three burials, which Persson interpreted as being the remains of a King, Queen and Princess. The skeletal evidence has not been analysed.

Pit 1 yielded two burial assemblages. The first was associated with the so-called King's burial and included a broken wooden vessel, a gold cup, six lentoid seals carved from various semi-precious stones, four finger-rings composed of various combinations of iron, copper, lead and silver, a silver goblet featuring hunting scenes, a silver cup, a cup of gold and silver featuring bull figures, a circular bronze box, five swords, four spearheads, two bronze knives, two lead horns and pieces of blue glass paste from a helmet, a pendant of rock crystal and an agate plaque in the shape of a heart (Persson 1931, 31-37). Based on the presence of weaponry as well as vessels composed of precious metals, Persson's assumption of a probable male gender appears to be correct. It should be noted that the horned helmet is unusual in that it is not a traditional Mycenaean boar's tusk helmet. The presence of

[205] Gold diadems in particular were often associated with elite male burials, such as: the adult male identified as burial 44 As from Grave 1970-12 in Asine's East Cemetery (Dietz 1980, 30, figs. 20, 21; (Nordquist 1987a, 47); the elderly male identified as 66 Myc/Skeleton 2 from Grave Nu in Mycenae's Grave Circle B (Mylonas 1973, 174, Pl. 153B,1); and the adult male identified as burial 66a Myc/Skeleton 1 from Grave Nu in Mycenae's Grave Circle B (Mylonas 1973, 174, Pl. 153B,2); as well as gold diadems found in Shaft Graves III 9 (Karo 1930-1933, 43-44, 49) and IV (Karo 1930-1933, 71-73, 80-81) that were likely to have been associated with adult or elderly male burials.

elaborate and exotic jewellery further supports the argument that elite Early Mycenaean male burials were emphasized through adornment practices.

The second assemblage is also from Pit 1 and was associated with the burial that Persson (1931, 38) dubbed the Queen. It was smaller than the other assemblage and included a gold and silver cup featuring bulls' heads, a carnelian seal featuring two boars (and perhaps another seal) with threading suggesting that the object was worn as an ornament (probably a bracelet since it was located by the left wrist of the deceased) and a small gold box (Persson 1931, 38-39). None of these objects can be securely gendered. If anything, the depiction of two boars might be interpreted as being expressive of male warrior ideology and hunting activities. Yet the iconographic depiction of boars back to back is not specific to the activity of hunting itself. The bulls' heads depicted on the gold and silver cup could also suggests an ideological affiliation with Cretan ritual, which raises issues of transmission of meaning from Crete – a subject that is beyond the scope of this research. Thus, this depositional context may have been expressive of both elite Cretan and Early Mycenaean ideologies. Four unassociated objects located squarely between the two burials could not be firmly associated with either individual. These were a mounted ostrich egg, a steatite lamp, a necklace of 61 gold beads and some pieces of decayed blue glass paste (Persson 1931, 37-38) – exceptional objects that again cannot be confidently gendered. Bearing all of the above in mind, it is certainly possible, but by no means certain that the burial associated with the second assemblage was female, but it is equally as plausible that it was the burial of another elite male, perhaps even an elderly male.[206]

The assemblage from Tomb 12 - The Cuirass Tomb (Åström 1977, 7-25) is an example of a highly elaborate Mycenaean warrior kit, the contents of which are datable to the transition between the Early Mycenaean and Palatial phase (LHIIB/IIIA1). Despite the fact that the tomb was looted just prior to excavation, remnants of over 30 objects associated with the remains of a single skeleton assumed to have been that of an adult male warrior (Åström

[206] The gendering of the burials from Pit 1 as a royal couple has never been questioned. Persson (1931, 68-69) even suggested that the queen was a suttee, although it is unclear what this was based on outside of the fact that the two burials had been buried at the same time or in close proximity to one another (Hughes 1991, 30). There is also no evidence for suttee in Bronze Age Greece, and the only possible example is from the Toumba Building at Lefkandi, which is datable to Early Iron Age, *c.* 950 B.C., some 500 years later. The case for suttee at Lefkandi is rather weak and does not fulfil the requirements of suttee (Hughes 1991, 45; for a full discussion see Leith 2005, 16, nos. 109-11). Granted the use of a single long pit for two primary burials during the Early Mycenaean phase is exceptional, because typically burials were interred separately in the floors of tholos tombs, and pits were normally reused for secondary burials (see Pelon 1976, 362-63 for exceptions). Because of this, Hughes (1991, 30) reluctantly concurs that the possibility of a suttee in Pit 1 cannot be excluded, no matter how elusive the proof, but argues that a simultaneous death (which may also have been caused by disease, accident or violence) 'might well have caused a departure from normal burial practices, particularly in the case of an important and wealthy couple, whether royal or not.'

1977, 12) survived. These included two gold-plated, bronze ornamental buttons, a silver toggle dress pin, two bronze basins, boar's tusks, a bronze knife and dagger, bronze greaves, bronze arm guards, a bronze mirror. a gold-plated bronze ring, two elaborately designed swords composed of bronze, ivory and gold, the bronze cuirass and bronze, silver and ceramic vessels (Åström 1977, 12-18, 51-52, 54). Artefact types present strongly suggests that Åström is correct, and that this burial should be gendered as a probable male. This is also an example of another elite male burial that appears to be associated with pins, decorative buttons and mirrors made from semi-precious and precious metals, similar in composition to those found in Grave Circle A.

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