

The Tholos Tombs of Kakovatos: Their Place in Early Mycenaean Greece

*Christine de Vreé*¹

Abstract: The Mycenaean tholos tombs of Kakovatos in the western Peloponnese belong to the largest of their time (LH I–II). Even though they were looted, they still contained a considerable amount of highly valuable objects. Parallels to these objects come from various richly furnished tombs from all over the Greek mainland. Some categories distinguish very few sites only (Mycenae, Dendra, Kakovatos, Pylos, Peristeria, Thorikos, Thebes and Volos-Kapakli): Imports from the Near East as well as from Europe represent specific types of jewellery, while cheek pieces of horse harnesses, bone discs or buttons with the design of the so-called ‘Carpathian-East Mediterranean wave band decoration’ are closely related to the privilege of chariot driving. It is argued that foreign necklaces and collars as well as horse harnesses were part of a set of status symbols that were used only by a small group of peers across the Greek mainland. All these similarities indicate the existence of certain rules concerning the variation and combination of grave goods. In her investigation of the Shaft Graves of Mycenae and the younger ‘Warrior Tombs’ of Knossos Imma Kilian-Dirlmeier has demonstrated that the various sets of grave goods served a hierarchy of social distinction. It will be argued that this general pattern may also be valid for other early Mycenaean regions, and that the comparison among sites will help to place Kakovatos within the network of early Mycenaean sites on the Greek mainland.

Keywords: Kakovatos, horse harness, weapons, amber, palatial jars, social rank

Introduction

The site of Kakovatos with its three tholos tombs, famous for their amber jewellery, was originally excavated by Wilhelm Dörpfeld in two short campaigns in 1907 and 1908. The tholos tombs of Kakovatos lie at the foot of the acropolis hill and their locations follow the rising slope. The hollows of Tombs A and B are still visible today, while the sparse remains of Tholos C have disappeared below the concrete floor of a parking area. With diameters of about 12, 9 and 10 m, the tombs belong to the largest tholoi of the early Mycenaean period.² Of the contemporary tombs, only the Lion Tomb and the Tomb of Aegisthus at Mycenae with diameters of 14.35 m and 13.96 m respectively are larger than Tholos A of Kakovatos (Tab. 1), while Tholos 1 of Peristeria is about the same size. Although the tholos tombs of Kakovatos had all been disturbed or emptied since antiquity, they still contained a large quantity of highly valuable objects including 22 palatial jars, glass objects, gold, lapis lazuli, agate and amber jewellery and even an iron ring. Most finds were recovered in Tholos A, because its dome had already collapsed in ancient times and the debris had protected the objects. Even though quite thoroughly looted, Tholos B still contained a long bronze sword of Type A and a bowl of dark cobalt-blue glass, so far a unique piece in Mycenaean Greece, and Tholos C provided fragments of a bronze vessel with spiral decoration and various pieces of gold.³

The valuable objects that were presented in the reports by Dörpfeld and Walter Müller one hundred years ago provide clear evidence that Kakovatos had been a site of some importance in the early Mycenaean period. However, the subsequent discovery and identification of Bronze Age Pylos at Englianos in Messenia detracted scholarly attention from Kakovatos. While the

¹ E-mail: tinadevree@hotmail.com.

² Diameters of tholos tombs according to Pelon 1976; Kamm 2000; Zavdil 2013.

³ Dörpfeld 1907; Dörpfeld 1908; Müller 1909; Dörpfeld 1913.

Tholos	Diameter	Date of Construction
Mycenae, Lion	14.35 m	LH II
Mycenae, Aegisthus	13.96 m	LH IIA
Kakovatos A	12.00–12.12 m	LH I/IIA
Peristeria 1	12.03–12.04 m	LH I (?)/IIA
Mycenae, Epáno Phournos	c. 11 m	LH II
Antheia	c. 10.50 m	LH I (?)/IIA
Kakovatos C	10.15–10.35 m	LH II
Vapheio	10.15–10.35 m	LH IIA
Mycenae, Kato Phournos	10.40 m	LH II
Volos, Kapakli	10 m	LH II
Prosymna, Heraion	9.50 m	LH IIA
Peristeria 2	9.50–10.50 m	LH I/IIA
Pylos IV	9.35 m	MH III/LH I
Thorikos B	9.25 m	LH IIA
Psari 1	9.10 m	LH I/IIA
Kakovatos B	8.90–9.00 m	LH IIA
Analipsis	8.65 m	LH IIA

Tab. 1: The size of the tombs of Kakovatos compared to other early Mycenaean tholos tombs (with a diameter larger than 8.50 m)

existence of amber, blue glass and other exotica at Kakovatos is still regularly mentioned in the pertinent bibliography, the whole group of finds from the three richly furnished tholos tombs has never been fully published in detail. Only in 2010, as part of a wider research project directed by Birgitta Eder on “Kakovatos and Triphylia in the 2nd Millennium BC”, were the finds from the tholoi completely documented for the first time. They will be published in a forthcoming monograph.⁴ Likewise, there has been no attempt to scrutinise the chronology of the tombs or to re-evaluate the role of Kakovatos within a wider cultural context.

The Re-evaluation of the Chronology of the Kakovatos Tholos Tombs

So far, all three Kakovatos tholos tombs have been dated to LH IIA.⁵ This general assessment was based on the series of large palatial jars, which are considered typical for this period. However, a closer look at the other objects from Tholos A and their parallels supports the assumption that this tomb at least was already in use in LH I (late). Objects such as the ivory and bone buttons with compass-drawn wave-band decoration (‘Carpathian-East Mediterranean wave band decoration’)⁶ have their best and almost only parallels in the Shaft Graves IV and V of Mycenae dating to LH I.⁷ In addition, the recent find of a toggle piece of a horse bridle with this kind of decoration from

⁴ Today the finds are stored in the National Museum in Athens. I am grateful to Lena Papazoglou-Manioudaki, former director of the Prehistoric Collection, for the permit to study and record the finds from the Kakovatos tombs in the framework of the Kakovatos project.

⁵ Furumark 1941, 47.

⁶ Bone discs from Kakovatos (NMA 5675): Müller 1909, 282–287, fig. 5; for the whole complex of the ‘Carpathian-East Mediterranean wave band decoration’ see Harding 2005; David 2007 with further references.

⁷ Karo 1930/1933, 45–46, pl. 29 (Grave III, gold foil ornaments); 85–89, pls. 59–60 (Grave IV); 128–132, pls. 62–65 (Grave V). On the chronology of the Shaft Graves of Mycenae, see Dietz 1991, 250; Graziadio 1991, 406.

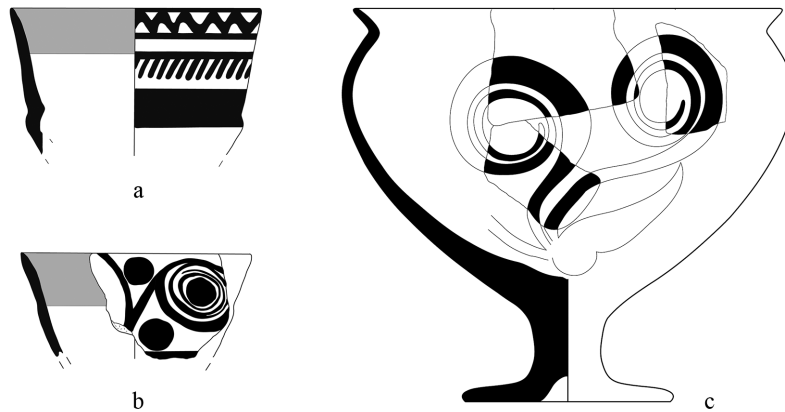


Fig. 1: LH I–IIB pottery from the tholos tombs of Kakovatos: a–b. Tholos A; c. Tholos A, B or C. Scale 1: 3 (drawings: Ch. de Vreé, J. Huber)

Mitrou in East Lokris comes from a destruction layer dating to the end of LH I.⁸ Amber spacer beads, especially those with v-shaped perforations, provide additional arguments for an early use of Tomb A: they have their best and nearly only parallels in Shaft Grave O of Circle B and Grave IV of Circle A in Mycenae, dating to LH I, and in Tholos 2 of Peristeria (LH I/IIA).⁹ This suggests that the amber spacer beads from Tomb A of Kakovatos also belong to the early horizon of the Shaft Grave period.

Among the pottery from the tombs, fragments of two Vapheio cups can be dated between LH I and LH IIA. They belong to Coldstream's Type I or II.¹⁰ The first fragment (Fig. 1a) has a broad midrib and a very unusual lustrous painted design of different horizontal bands and has no direct parallels. The decoration is reminiscent of MH patterns, possibly indicating that it belongs to an early, not yet standardised type.¹¹ The second fragment (Fig. 1b) shows a tangent-spiral design and the interior displays many wheel-marks, indicating an unsmoothed surface, elements that are considered to be typical of the early types.¹²

The presence of an amphora of the so-called Standard Tradition dating to LM IB and an early type of palatial jar (NMA 14140) also support a LH I late/IIA early chronology. The oldest palatial jars of FS 14 come from Shaft Grave V of Mycenae,¹³ the Koukounara-Gouvalari Tholos Tombs 1 and 2,¹⁴ Tholos 3 of Peristeria,¹⁵ and Tholos 1 of Tragana-Viglitsa.¹⁶ These amphorae are all slightly smaller than the later FS 15, their bodies are less well balanced (especially their upper part), and their motifs (hatched loops and spiral designs) are an integral part of the LH I style. Sometimes they display one or more rings above the base. These features are never present on the large amphorae of FS 15.¹⁷ Apart from these stylistic criteria, the context of Shaft Grave V dating

⁸ Maran – Van de Moortel 2014, 530–533.

⁹ Generally, on amber spacer beads with v-shaped borings see Hachmann 1957; Harding – Hughes Brock 1974, 155–157 (147–148, 160–161, fig. 4.20–22, on Kakovatos); Harding 1984, 74–79; Maran 2004. For the parallels from Mycenae and Peristeria see below n. 34.

¹⁰ Coldstream – Huxley 1972, 284–285; Dickinson 1974, 115; Coldstream 1978, 393–396.

¹¹ There is a good parallel from Ayios Stephanos, dated stylistically to LH I by Mountjoy 2008, 371, no. 3654, fig. 6.36. I thank Jasmin Huber for pointing out this vase to me.

¹² Rutter – Rutter 1976, 54–55, no. 866, ill. 17; Lolos 1987, 392–396.

¹³ Mycenae, Grave Circle A, Shaft Grave V (NMA 856): Kalogeropoulos 1998, 96–97, no. 1, pl. 26c. Mycenae, Epáno Phournos Tholos (Nauplion Museum 5392, 5393): Wace et al. 1953, 73–75, nos. 2–3, fig. 43.1–3, 5, pl. 25a; Kalogeropoulos 1998, 98–99, nos. 6–7, pl. 36a.

¹⁴ Koukounara-Gouvalari, Tholos 1 (Pylos Museum 54, 57, 58): Kalogeropoulos 1998, 142–143, nos. 1–3, pls. 27b–c, 31c, 44c–d; Koukounara-Gouvalari, Tholos 2 (Pylos Museum 55): Kalogeropoulos 1998, 143–144, no. 4, pl. 43d.

¹⁵ Peristeria, Tholos 3 (Chora Museum): Kalogeropoulos 1998, 149–150, no. 11, pl. 26b.

¹⁶ Tragana-Viglitsa, Tholos 1 (NMA 6091, 6092): Kalogeropoulos 1998, 141, nos. 1–2, pls. 24a–b, 40c–d.

¹⁷ Mountjoy 1986, 11, 19–21.

to LH I contained the already mentioned amphora with these early features and strongly supports the idea of these amphorae as early types.¹⁸ Most of the above tombs are assumed to have been in use already in LH I. In other words, at least Tholos A needs to be considered contemporary with the latest burials in Grave Circle A of Mycenae. Taking the parallels of the finds from Tholos A of Kakovatos into account, the construction and the first interments of this tomb should be dated to late LH I or the very beginning of LH IIA.

All three tombs at Kakovatos were apparently in use during LH IIA, because each of them contained palatial jars of FS 15 or at least one fragment of such a vessel. At least one of the tombs probably continued into LH IIB. The re-examination of the finds from Kakovatos, which are stored in the Archaeological Museum of Olympia, revealed fragments of an Ephyraean Goblet with an argonaut (Fig. 1c). However, there is no further information as to which tomb it came from. Now, the new chronology may be employed for the comparison of contemporary tomb contexts.

Early Mycenaean Grave Assemblages

The only attempt to identify recurring, not to say standardised, grave assemblages that can be used as indicators of social status was made by Imma Kilian-Dirlmeier in 1985 and 1986, when she examined both Grave Circles of Mycenae and the so-called Warrior Tombs of Knossos.¹⁹ By using only these well-documented contexts, Kilian-Dirlmeier was able to show the existence of various ensembles that were distinguished in terms of hierarchy. In order to find out whether these 'rules' can also be applied outside of Mycenae and Knossos or have to be adapted, I have compared the grave goods of 54 (67) Mycenaean tombs found in 89 (117) 'closed' contexts. 'Closed' refers to the last closing date irrespective of the number of burial episodes. These contexts date to the period between MH III and LH II, although tombs of purely MH III date (e.g. in Grave Circle B) have been omitted. The numbers in brackets refer to a chronologically wider grouping, which includes graves of the period LH IIB–IIIA1. The comparison of these numbers illustrates that some early Mycenaean traditions apparently continued into LH IIB–IIIA1 and which grave goods successively disappeared from early Mycenaean funerary ensembles. I have selected these contexts on the assumption that those graves, shaft or pits, either contained the complete set or selected items of the grave goods of the last interments and 'secondary burials'. The chronology and the descriptions of the form, material and number of objects rely on the information given in the pertinent bibliography.

Before I present the results of my analysis, it is important to stress certain problems we encounter when trying to compare Mycenaean tombs inventories.

1. Most graves were used for multiple burials. The continuous practice of secondary burials makes it frequently impossible to isolate primary burials.

2. For this reason, it is often impossible to associate the grave goods with a specific interment, if they are not still attached to the bones. (This is also the case with the burials in the shaft graves of both grave circles of Mycenae.)

3. A major problem consists in the fact that the tholos and chamber tombs in particular were very frequently cleared out or looted, thus overwriting earlier processes of primary and secondary burials.

¹⁸ However, one of the best parallels for NMA 14140 comes from the destruction horizon of House A of Ayia Irini (Cummer – Schofield 1984, 117, pl. 81.1412), which represents either an 'heirloom' or this type was produced until LH IIA.

¹⁹ Kilian-Dirlmeier 1985; Kilian-Dirlmeier 1986, 159–188. The anthropological analysis of the bones from Grave Circle B proves that the amount and selection of grave goods does not correspond to age or sex: Kilian-Dirlmeier 1988, 164.

I have tried to deal with these issues in the following way: because it seems impossible to compare individual burials, I have decided to compare closed contexts of similar date with each other. In order to balance the problem of the long period of use, I have paid particular attention to items that proved to be chronologically sensitive, that is, they make their appearance only in LH I and IIA. These objects include the large gold sheet ornaments known from the Shaft Graves of Mycenae, e.g. the crowns, diadems, and flower-shaped ornaments, the amber necklaces with spacer beads, the ivory buttons with compass-drawn wave-band ornaments and swords and daggers with inlaid decoration or relief design, flint arrowheads and characteristic types of pottery such as palatial jars and Vapheio cups.

To diminish the effect of looting I have also stressed the existence of small fragments that appear only superficially insignificant. For example, rivets can be taken to indicate the presence of swords or daggers, while metal fragments may represent vessels or gold foil ornaments. Thus, the number and variety of objects per tomb gains greater visibility.

The first step in distinguishing the tomb contexts was to establish categories according to the combination of certain types of grave goods. Following the earlier studies by Kilian-Dirlmeier (who based her work on fundamentally established principles of burial analysis), I have chosen weapons as the prime criterion of my classification, which is followed by the variety of jewellery and vessels.

This large-scale comparison resulted in five different groups or categories. A gradual loss in the variety of goods can be recognised from one category to the next. While the contexts within one category may still show great variability, the variety is not large enough to place them in a new category, so almost every category also contains subcategories.

It is important to keep in mind that these categories should not be considered as a fixed sort of ranking. The borders between each group or category are blurred due to missing information on the original composition of the context. The size of tombs or the character of some original grave goods such as palatial jars are potential indicators for an originally higher category than the remaining objects might suggest.

Although some tombs/burials might have belonged to a higher category, it is clear that they cannot be downgraded to a lower one, as the presence of certain objects and fragments cannot be ignored. The inventory of all objects present in one context provides information on the minimal status of each context.

I would like to stress that my categories may be considered as a tool that represents a cautious approach to a relational grouping of the tombs.²⁰ Although the entire grave inventory reflects the combined status of the tomb occupants, it may be used to infer the original existence of individual burials of a certain social status, which, however, cannot be determined numerically.

Category 1 comprises eleven burial contexts and two pits that can be divided into two subcategories (Categories 1.1 and 1.2).²¹ Contexts of this category encompass the full range of weapons including swords, daggers, arrows, spearheads and a helmet. They may also contain cheek pieces of horse bridles. Apart from weapons, these contexts include jewellery, applications in a large variety of materials and different shapes (including ivory buttons, inlays of glass, alabaster, lapis lazuli, rock crystal, ivory), and gold foil ornaments in the form of crowns, diadems and leaf-shaped ornaments.

²⁰ Due to lack of space, it is not possible to detail the individual grave contexts with their respective publications here. These data form part of a forthcoming monograph (the funerary contexts mentioned below are selected examples to illustrate the respective categories). In summary, I refer to the following publications, which discuss early Mycenaean tombs and contexts: Pelon 1976; Cavanagh – Mee 1998; Boyd 2002; Zavadil 2013.

²¹ Contexts of *Category 1.1*: Mycenae: Grave Circle A, Shaft Graves IV and V; Grave Circle B, Shaft Grave N. Pylos: Tholos V (the so-called Grave Circle), Pit 3. *Category 1.2*: Mycenae: Grave Circle A, Shaft Graves II and VI; Grave Circle B, Shaft Graves Λ, Α, Γ and Δ. Vapheio: Tholos, stone cist. Routsis: Tholos 2, Pit 2 and the burial on the floor. (The order of entries corresponds to the hierarchical order of the graves. This applies to all categories.) If the new Pylos Griffin Warrior Grave belongs to LH IIA, the grave offerings suggest placing this burial in Category 1.2. Larger gold foil ornaments characteristic of Category 1.1 have not been reported so far. This might indicate either Category 1.2 or a different chronology.

Tab. 2: Categories of grave goods according to contexts, dated to MH III-LH II. The numbers in brackets refer to a chronologically wider grouping, i.e. MH III-LH IIB/IIIA1

Category	1-1	1-2	2-1	2-2	2-3	3	4-1	4-2	4-3	5-1	5-2	5-3
Sword	100%	87.5% (89%)	66.7% (75%)	0% (8.3%)	0% (25%)							
Dagger	100%	75% (78%)	33.3% (25%)	66.7% (66.7%)	100% (25%)							
Rivets, pommel, gold ornaments of hilts or scabbards	100%	62.5% (56%)	66.7% (50%)	44.4% (41.7%)	0% (50%)		28.6%					
Spearhead	75%	87.5% (89%)	0% (25%)	0% (8.3%)								
Arrowheads	50%	37.5% (44%)		66.7% (66.7%)		91% (92.3%)	14.3%					
Boars' tusks	100%	12.5% (11%)		11.1% (8.3%)		27.3% (23.1%)						
Cheek pieces of bridle	25%	25% (22%)										
Armour plates	50%			22.2% (16.7%)								
Axe		12.5% (11%)		11.1% (8.3%)								
Masks, diadems or crowns	75%	50% (44%)	100% (75%)				100%					
Leaf-shaped gold ornaments	50%											
Gold beads	75%	12.5% (11%)		11.1% (25%)	0% (25%)	0% (7.7%)	57.1%					
Gold jewellery	25%	12.5% (11%)		22.2% (16.7%)		9.1% (15.4%)	42.9%	33.3% (53.3%)				
Silver jewellery							28.6%	0% (6.7%)				
Bronze jewellery	25%				0% (25%)			16.7% (6.7%)				
Iron jewellery		12.5% (11%)					14.3%	33.3% (13.3%)	16.7% (11.1%)			
Pins	75%	50% (44%)	66.7% (50%)	11.1% (8.3%)	0% (25%)		57.1%	83.3% (40%)				

Tab. 2 (continued)

Category	1-1	1-2	2-1	2-2	2-3	3	4-1	4-2	4-3	5-1	5-2	5-3
Rings (seals and jewellery)	50%	25% (22%)	0% (25%)	0% (8.3%)		0% (7.7%)	28.6%	50% (40%)				
Ivory combs and jewellery	25%	25% (22%)		22.2% (16.7%)				16.7% (6.7%)				
Amber jewellery	75%	12.5% (22%)		22.2% (25%)	0% (25%)	9.1% (7.7%)	85.7%	16.6% (13.3%)				
Amber collars	50%	12.5% (22%)		8.3% (0%)			14.3%					
Glass jewellery	25%	12.5% (11%)	0% (25%)	22.2% (25%)	0% (25%)	18.2% (23.1%)	42.9%	50% (53.3%)	50% (55.6%)			
Faience jewellery				11.1% (8.3%)			28.6%	0% (26.7%)	0% (11.1%)			
Beads of various precious stones	75%	25% (22%)	0% (25%)	33.3% (25%)	0% (50%)	18.2% (23.1%)	85.7%	50% (46.7%)	50% (44.4%)			
Gold vessels	75%	50% (44%)	0% (25%)				28.6%	0% (13.3%)				
Silver vessels	100%	50% (44%)	0% (25%)	22.2% (16.7%)			42.9%			0% (100%)		
Bronze vessels	100%	75% (67%)	66.6% (75%)	11.1% (16.7%)	0% (25%)	0% (7.7%)	42.9%					
Ivory vessels/pyxides		12.5% (11%)										
Faience/glass vessels	25%	25% (22%)					28.6%					
Alabaster vessels	50%	12.5% (11%)					14.3%					
Stone vessels		12.5% (11%)										
Unique vessels of different materials	50%		0% (25%)			9.1% (7.7%)	14.3%	0% (6.7%)				
Palatial jars	50%		33.3% (25%)	33.3% (25%)				16.7% (6.7%)			8.3% (6.7%)	
Closed vessel, pottery	100%	100% (100%)	33.3% (25%)	33.3% (25%)	100% (50%)	36.4% (46.1%)	71.4%	50% (53.3%)	33.3% (44.4%)	0% (50%)	75% (73.3%)	66.7% (68.8%)
Open vessel, pottery	50%	87.5% (89%)	33.3% (25%)	33.3% (25%)	100% (50%)	36.4% (30.8%)	57.1%	66.6% (33.3%)	33.3% (33.3%)	0% (50%)	75% (66.7%)	85.7% (81.8%)

Tab. 2 (continued)

Category	1-1	1-2	2-1	2-2	2-3	3	4-1	4-2	4-3	5-1	5-2	5-3
Gold foil ornaments	75%	12.5% (11%)		22.2% (16.7%)	0% (25%)		57.1%	0% (13.3%)	11.1% (22.2%)		8.3% (6.7%)	
Gold foil relief ornaments	50%	25% (22%)	33.3% (25%)				28.6%	0% (6.7%)				
Small fragments of gold	25%						28.6%	0% (6.7%)				
Figural gold foil reliefs	50%	12.5% (11%)		22.2% (16.7%)	0% (25%)	9.1% (7.7%)	57.1%	16.7% (40%)			0% (6.7%)	
Silver ornaments			33.3% (25%)	11.1% (8.3%)			14.3%					
Ivory ornaments	50%	12.5% (11%)				9.1% (7.7%)	14.3%	16.7% (6.7%)		0% (50%)	8.3% (6.7%)	
Ivory/bone objects with wave-band ornaments	50%	12.5% (11%)										
Glass ornaments, inlays	25%					0% (7.7%)						
Alabaster ornaments	50%											
Ornaments, inlays made of precious stones	50%											
Scale pans		25% (22%)		11.1% (16.7%)		0% (7.7%)	14.3%	33.3% (13.3%)				
Weights		12.5% (11%)		11.1% (8.3%)								
Diverse gold objects	50%	37.5% (33%)		11.1% (8.3%)				0% (6.7%)				
Seals	25%	37.5% (44%)	0% (25%)	33.3% (41.6%)	0% (25%)	9.1% (15.4%)	28.6%	66.7% (40%)	0% (11.1%)	0% (50%)	16.7% (20%)	
Wire				11.1% (8.3%)			57.1%				8.3% (6.7%)	
Tweezers, Toiletries	50%	37.5% (33%)		11.1% (8.3%)	0% (25%)		14.3%	16.7% (6.7%)	16.7% (11.1%)	0% (50%)	8.3% (6.7%)	
Mirrors	25%	50% (56%)		0% (8.3%)	0% (25%)	0% (15.4%)		16.7% (6.7%)				
Nails	50%	25% (22%)		11.1% (8.3%)			14.3%					

Tab. 2 (continued)

Category	1-1	1-2	2-1	2-2	2-3	3	4-1	4-2	4-3	5-1	5-2	5-3
Bronze knives	100%	87.5% (89%)	66.7% (75%)	44.4% (41.7%)	0% (50%)	27.3% (30.6%)	28.6%	16.7% (6.7%)	16.7% (11.1%)	0% (50%)	41.7% (40%)	
Various bronze objects	50%	37.5% (44%)		11.1% (8.3%)	0% (50%)	18.1% (23.1%)	14.3%	0% (13.3%)	0% (11.1%)			
Various ivory objects	75%	37.5% (33%)					14.3%	0% (13.3%)			8.3% (6.7%)	
Figurines	25%					9.1% (15.4%)	14.3%	0% (13.3%)				
Lamps		12.5% (11%)						0% (6.7%)				
Stone objects	75%	37.5% (33%)	33.3% (25%)	22.2% (16.7%)		18.2% (15.4%)					8.3% (6.7%)	
Faience objects	25%											
Glass objects												
Spindle whorls				22.2% (16.7%)	0% (50%)	27.3% (30.8%)	28.6%	37.5% (33.3%)	33.3% (33.3%)		33.3% (40%)	

Spacer beads indicate the presence of multiple string necklaces that can be made of amber, precious stones, glass or faience. These contexts also contain a combination of vessels made of gold, silver and bronze and of exotic character (i.e. of glass, faience, alabaster). Objects such as the amber necklaces with spacer beads or the ivory or bone discs with compass-drawn ornaments also indicate that these contexts belong to the same chronological horizon. The differences between the two subcategories are very small, but still visible. In Category 1.2 some pieces are already missing or the criteria for selecting the objects were slightly different from Category 1.1. For example, 100% of the contexts in Category 1.1 contain swords and daggers, whereas in Category 1.2 these numbers are reduced to 87.5% (89%) and 75% (78%) respectively. A different strategy for selecting the burial gifts applied to spearheads. In Category 1.1 spearheads are present in 75% of the contexts and in Category 1.2 in 87.5% (89%) of the contexts (Tab. 2).

Category 2 consists of 13 (20) contexts; six (eight) of these are burial contexts, the others comprise secondary burials and material assemblages in pits and niches.²² *Category 2* can be divided into three subcategories. In general, all contexts of this category contain weapons, jewellery or vessel inventories that are still almost complete, but lack a few types. For example, cheek pieces of horse bridles are missing from all contexts of *Category 2*, while in *Category 2.1* and *Category 2.3* arrowheads, boars' tusks, pieces of armour and axes are also absent. The larger quantity of swords and the presence of large gold foil ornaments rank *Category 2.1* before *Category 2.2*, which, however, shows a larger variety of weapon types. There are no more vessels made from exotic materials, various stones or faience. Applications made from ivory, precious stones and glass and spacer beads are also missing from *Category 2* and the subsequent categories with single exceptions (dated to LH IIB–IIIA1) proving the rule (Tab. 2).

Category 3 comprises eleven (13) contexts, and four (five) of those are primary burial contexts.²³ A division into subcategories did not prove necessary. With one exception, *Category 3* includes only contexts without swords or daggers or rivets that might indicate their original presence. Concerning weapons, only arrows appear frequently, namely in 91% (92.3%) of those contexts. The inventories of jewellery and vessels are again a little more meagre than in the previous category. The jewellery consists only of simple beads, very rarely of precious metals, and also the variety of precious stones declines. The inventory of vessels contains mainly ceramic vessels. Metal vessels and vessels made from other materials constitute the exception (Tab. 2).

Category 4 is made up of 19 (31) contexts covering three subcategories.²⁴ With one exception, contexts in this category do not contain any weapons or indications of such,²⁵ but inventories of jewellery that are only comparable to and sometimes even richer than those of *Category 1*. 100% of the contexts in *Category 4.1* contain gold foil ornaments such as crowns or diadems and 57.1% contain flower-shaped gold foil ornaments. Some of them also included ivory applications and necklaces with spacer beads of amber. The same phenomenon can be observed for the inventories of vessels and applications. In terms of variety and number, those of *Category 4.1* are only comparable to *Categories 1* and *2.1* (Tab. 2).

²² Contexts of *Category 2.1*: Routsis: Tholos 1, niche. Pylos: Tholos V, Pit 1 and Pit 4. Dendra: Tholos (so-called king). *Category 2.2*: e.g. Dendra: Chamber Tomb 8, the objects under the stone bench. Kazarma: Tholos, Pits II and III. Pylos: Tholos IV, Pit A, and the objects from the stone cist. Nichoria: MME Tholos, Pit 1. Mycenae: Grave Circle B, Shaft Grave B. Kakovatos: Tholos C, pit. *Category 2.3*: e.g. Tiryns: Chamber Tomb VII, northern pit. Nichoria: MME Tholos, Pits 3 and 4. Prosymna: Chamber Tomb 28, Pit 2.

²³ Contexts of *Category 3*: e.g. Mycenae: Granary Shaft Grave. Pylos: Tholos V, Pit 2; Palace of Nestor, Room 97, Shaft Grave. Makrysia: Tholos, grave pit. Koukounara-Gouvalari: Tumulus α , Grave $\alpha 9$, pit.

²⁴ Contexts of *Category 4.1*: Mycenae: Grave Circle A, Shaft Graves I and III; Grave Circle B, Shaft Graves O, Y and E. *Category 4.2*: e.g. Mycenae: Grave Circle B, Shaft Grave M. Koukounara-Phyties: Tholos 2, female burial. Dendra: Chamber Tomb 10, Shaft 1; Tholos, Pits 1, 3 and 4. Volos-Kapakli: Tholos, Skeletal Groups Γ and E. *Category 4.3*: e.g. Dendra: Tholos, Pit 2. Routsis: Tholos 2, Pit 1. Pylos: Chamber Tomb E-8, Pit 1.

²⁵ Shaft Grave O of Grave Circle B probably contained an ivory pommel and Shaft Grave III of Grave Circle A included a gold sheet ornament that might have adorned a blade, rivets and a pommel.

In comparison with Category 4.1 the subcategories (4.2 and 4.3) lack the large gold foil ornaments and, with one exception, metal vessels or vessels made of exotic materials. In Category 4.3 even jewellery becomes rare. Gold beads, rings or bronze pins are missing entirely. Generally, the beads are now of glass, faience or precious stones.

Category 5 includes 23 (39) contexts, subdivided into three subcategories.²⁶ The first subcategory comprises only two contexts and their composition may have been governed by completely different rules than those for burials. The first context is a pit in Chamber Tomb 2 of Dendra that was located close to an altar-like structure and the second is a shaft without any bones in Chamber Tomb 10 of Dendra. Both contexts contained silver vessels and other probably selected items such as a bronze knife and a sealstone and both belong to the LH IIB–IIIA1 horizon.²⁷ The other contexts of Category 5 did not contain any weapons, any jewellery or any metal vessels. The inventories comprise only pottery, and sometimes a few applications and ornaments or other items such as spindle whorls (Tab. 2).

The following conclusions can be drawn from the changing variety of objects in the different categories.

1. The contexts and graves of Category 1 and Category 4.1 surpass all other burial contexts. These categories contain large gold foil ornaments like masks, crowns, diadems or flower-shaped pieces. Only there we find vessels and objects made of precious metals, different types of stone, faience or other exotic materials and applications and also inlays of precious stones and ivory/bone with compass-drawn ornaments. Apart from single exceptions, only graves of these categories contain amber necklaces with spacer beads or cheek pieces of horse harnesses. The lack of weapons as well as the anthropological analysis undertaken on graves of Cat. 4.1²⁸ show that they encompass the solely female graves of the highest social rank, while Cat. 1 most likely contains the male burials or graves with both sexes of the same rank.
2. Following this line of thought, it appears that flower- or leaf-shaped gold foil ornaments belong to female burials. They accompanied those women buried in graves of the Categories 1.1 and 4.1 and thus can be identified as possessions and adornments of women of the highest social status. Large quantities of those ornaments come from Shaft Grave III of Grave Circle A of Mycenae (one female and two probable males are buried here). Such ornaments were found in smaller amounts in Shaft Graves IV and V of Grave Circle A (one woman next to a man) and in the Graves O, E, and Y of Grave Circle B (those graves contained only women).
3. The same rules appear to have governed the presence of earrings. They were found only in Shaft Grave III of Grave Circle A and Pit 1 in Chamber Tomb 10 of Dendra.
4. A criterion that apparently separates Categories 2 and 3 consists in the absence of weapons in Category 3, which also shows a lesser variety of objects than Category 2. Thus, members of this social group either were not entitled or could not afford to use and own a sword.
5. The graves and contexts of Category 5 seem to encompass the lowest hierarchical level that can be detected in the archaeological record. No weapons, jewellery or vessels other

²⁶ Contexts of *Category 5.1*: Dendra: Chamber Tomb 2, pit close to the altar-like structure; Chamber Tomb 10, Shaft 2. *Category 5.2*: e.g. Mycenae: Grave Circle B, Shaft Graves P and K. Volos-Kapakli: Tholos, Skeletal Group Δ. Karpophora/Nichoria-Akonos: Built Grave III. Kleidi-Samikon: Tholos, Skeletal Groups Δ and E. *Category 5.3*: e.g. Kleidi-Samikon: Tholos, Skeletal Groups B, Γ, ΣΤ, Ι, ΙΑ, ΙΒ and ΙΔ. Mycenae: Grave Circle B, Shaft Grave II. Volos-Kapakli: Tholos, Skeletal Group Ζ.

²⁷ Without weapons and jewellery, these find contexts may probably represent ritual assemblages.

²⁸ An anthropological analysis of the bones from the following graves was carried out: Mycenae: Grave Circle B, Shaft Graves O, Z, and M; Grave Circle A, Shaft Grave I. Koukounara-Phyties: Tholos 2, pit. See Angel 1973, 379–397. For Shaft Grave III see now Papazoglou-Manioudaki et al. 2010, 159–161, 172, 179, 175. The new data suggest the presence of one female and two most likely male individuals. The female was identified with Stamatakis' Burial M, to which most of the grave goods were assigned. The few pieces indicating weapons (see above n. 25) could be explained as belonging to one or both probably male individuals in Shaft Grave III.

than pottery are present in those graves or pits. Only very rarely do they contain applications and inlays of gold and ivory, more frequent are items such as knives or spindle whorls.

The comparison of 89 (117) closed contexts of the early Mycenaean period therefore illustrates that the principles of the combination of grave goods, established by Kilian-Dirlmeier on the basis of her analysis of the two grave circles of Mycenae, are also applicable to the rest of early Mycenaean tombs. This revealed which elements of the grave furniture belonged only to one group and therefore constituted external signs of status.

Placing the Tholos Tombs of Kakovatos within Early Mycenaean Greece

Following the presentation of these categories, I shall discuss the inventory of the Kakovatos tombs to define their category of rank.²⁹

In terms of weaponry, Tomb A contained fragments of an ornamented blade with a prominent spiral design along the midrib, and the excavation diaries mention additional fragments of swords or daggers that are lost nowadays. There is also a fragment of a spearhead, 43 flint arrowheads, some of which are of the finest workmanship, and twenty boars' tusks from a helmet. We can thus conclude that although the tomb was looted, all types of weapons and armoury were present, even if only in fragments.

An ornamented disc-shaped cheek piece of a horse harness (Fig. 2) with a diameter of 12.1 cm also comes from Tomb A.³⁰ The front side of the cheek plate carries an ornament of bands with small cockleshells lining the rim of the disc and forming a curved diamond-like shape around the four bosses in the centre of the disc. On the reverse of the cheek plate, four spikes can be securely reconstructed. Similar types occur in Shaft Grave IV of Circle A and Shaft Grave Γ of Circle B in Mycenae.³¹ Only a single example appears in a grave that would belong to a Category 3 context, in Pit 5 in Chamber Tomb 7 of Dendra.³² Driving a chariot in battle, on the hunt, or during processions was certainly a privilege reserved to only a few. Accordingly, these cheek pieces only appear regularly in graves of the first category.

The jewellery found in Tomb A includes beads of gold, amethyst, lapis lazuli and almost 600 amber beads. Apart from globular or biconical shapes, there are at least seven spacer beads with complex borings in the form of v-perforations and at least ten ring-shaped pendants and eight multiple or figure-of-eight beads.³³ These numbers allow the reconstruction of three large amber collars of multiple rows, of which at least one must



Fig. 2: Reconstructed disc-shaped cheek piece of horse bridle made of ivory from Tholos A of Kakovatos, NMA 5680. Scale 1: 2 (photo: I. Geske)

²⁹ For the inventory of the tholos tombs of Kakovatos see Müller 1909. The full publication of all finds is part of a forthcoming monograph.

³⁰ NMA 5680: Müller 1909, 289, fig. 11. Disc-shaped cheek pieces in Mycenaean Greece: see Penner 1998, 48–51; Aravantinos 2009.

³¹ Karo 1930/1933, 113, nos. 532–535, pl. 70; Mylonas 1972/1973, 79, pl. 62γ.

³² Persson 1943, 36–37, fig. 36.4; Penner 1998, 48–49, no. 39, pl. 7.2.

³³ NMA 5688, 11580: Müller 1909, 278–282, figs. 3–4, pls. 15, 23–24.

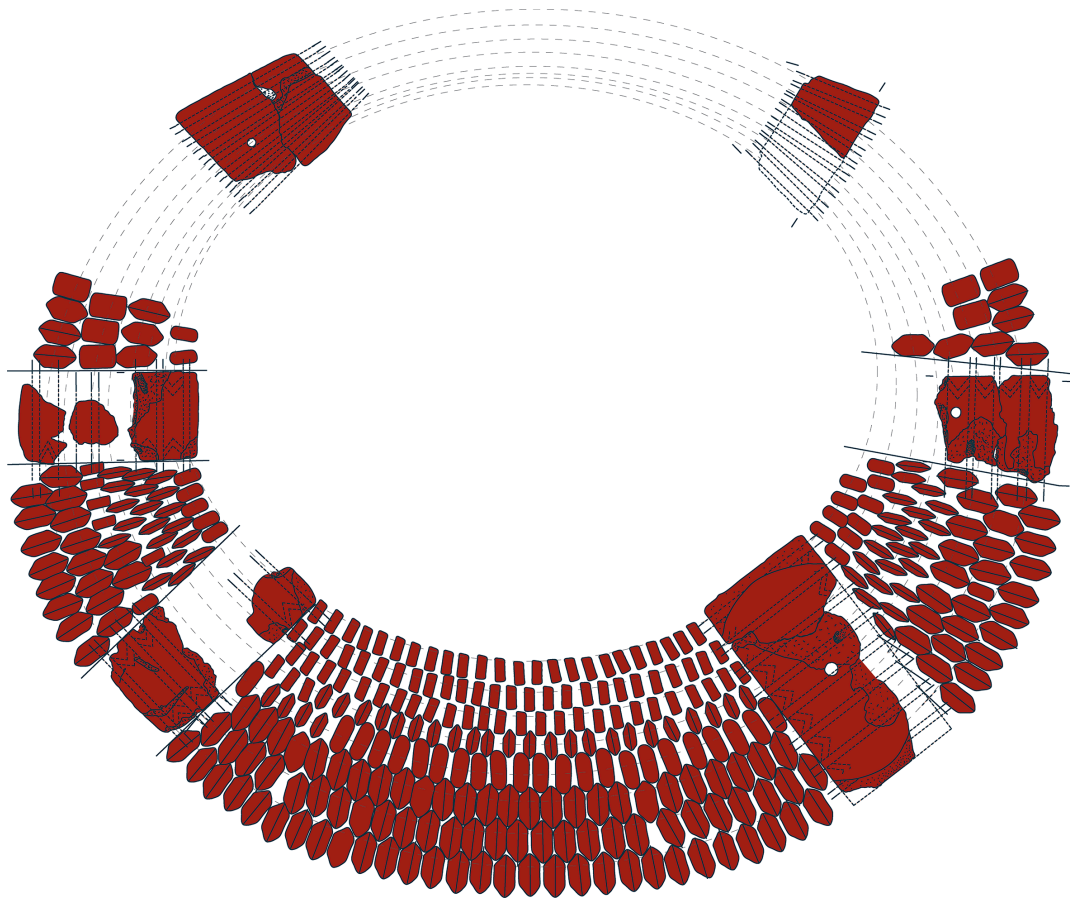


Fig. 3: Reconstruction of Wessex-type collar with amber beads and spacers from Tholos A of Kakovatos (Ch. de Vre )

have been a large collar with spacer plates of the so-called Wessex type (Fig. 3).³⁴ Comparable jewellery belongs to the inventories of Shaft Grave O of Circle B, Shaft Grave IV of Circle A and Tholos 3 of Peristeria.³⁵ In addition, two agate and two glass spacer beads that also belong to the inventory of Tholos A of Kakovatos once would have been part of collars or necklaces of multiple strings of other precious materials.

The turquoise glass pendant in the form of a standing bull³⁶ represents a unique object without any known parallels in Mycenaean Greece. The bull is standing perfectly still and facing the viewer. The surface shows indentations of irregular shape, which were probably once inlaid with materials of different colours to represent the patches in the coat of the animal. Other very rare pieces include the glass pendant of a small female figure,³⁷ which is only half preserved, and fragments of an Oriental star disc pendant of blue glass, which was last described in detail by Dan Barag.³⁸

³⁴ The numerous amber beads derive from a limited area within Tholos A. Therefore, they probably belong together and indicate the presence of at least one Wessex type amber collar. For a different reconstruction requiring significantly fewer beads, see Maran 2013.

³⁵ Mycenae: Grave Circles A and B: Karo 1930/1933, 110, no. 513, pl. 57; Hachmann 1957, 31–32, nos. 9–10, fig. 12.1–8; Mylonas 1972/1973, 206, pl. 186 ; Harding – Hughes-Brock 1974, 147–149, tab. 1; 157, tab. 3; 162–164, fig. 5.18–20; Gerloff 1975, 215–222, 263, nos. 52–53; Gerloff 2010, 629–631, fig. 33.32–36. Peristeria: Marinatos 1966, 95–96, pl. 98 –  (= Marinatos 2014, 202–203, fig. 53); Harding – Hughes-Brock 1974, 148, tab. 1, 155, 164; Korres 2012, 463, fig. 981.

³⁶ NMA 5683: M ller 1909, 278, pl. 12.5.

³⁷ NMA 5683: M ller 1909, 278, pl. 12.6.

³⁸ M ller 1909, 277–278; Barag 1970, 190. The fragments are currently not available for study.

Both pendants have only few known parallels in Mycenaean Greece. A comparable female glass figure was found on the acropolis of Mycenae³⁹ and star disc pendants come from Thorikos in Attica, Daras in Messenia and the acropolis of Mycenae.⁴⁰ These kinds of pendants are related to the Ištar cult in Mesopotamia and are clearly Near Eastern imports.

An iron ring with bezel also comes from Tholos A of Kakovatos.⁴¹ The surface is heavily corroded, and it is impossible to tell whether the bezel originally carried an illustration or was once covered with gold. However, one needs to consider that iron was an extremely valuable material during the Bronze Age. It has never been analysed whether it was composed of different materials. This is also true for the iron ring from the tholos of Vapheio, which comes close in terms of chronology.⁴² Rings made of different metals, including sheets of iron, appear to be especially popular in the Late Bronze Age periods II–III.⁴³



Fig. 4: Fragment of vessel made of gold sheet from Tholos A of Kakovatos, NMA 5663. Scale 3:2 (photo: I. Geske)

Tholos A is also known for its impressive quantity of palatial jars.⁴⁴ In the course of the re-evaluation of the finds from the tomb, we were also able to add at least seven oval-mouthed amphorae to this number. Moreover, the old excavation reports mention fragments of an alabaster vessel and a marble lamp that would raise the number of stone vessels to at least two.⁴⁵

Moreover, fragments of bronze and silver prove that at least one bronze and most likely one silver vessel were once placed in Tomb A.⁴⁶ A very small fragment of gold sheet wrapped around a bronze wire (Fig. 4) might represent the handle of a gold cup or otherwise, although rather less likely, it could have belonged to a triangle of gold foil such as are known from the gold diadems found in the Shaft Graves of Mycenae. The

long sides of the large triangles in particular were strengthened with bronze wire. In addition, there are also fragments of gold foil ornaments in the shape of an owl and rosettes and gold foil relief fragments that characterise tomb assemblages of Category 1.1.⁴⁷

The presence of ivory fragments with relief decoration (Fig. 5) indicate that small boxes or furniture decorated with ivory ornaments or even a gaming board like the exceptional one from Knossos belonged to the inventory of Tomb A. Among the fragments are 35 ribbed ivory strips⁴⁸ of what once must have been a moulding, framing a piece of furniture or a box like the one known from Chamber Tomb 8 in Dendra⁴⁹ or the gaming board found at Knossos.⁵⁰ Other similar pieces

³⁹ Tsountas 1888, 78–79; Barag 1970, 188–191; Cline 1994, 24, 143–144, no. 100, pl. 2.4.

⁴⁰ Star disc pendants: see references in Barag 1970, 189–191, figs. 100–101; Cline 1994, 24, 140; Eder 2011, 108–109, 116, fig. 3; Zavadil 2016.

⁴¹ NMA 5682: Müller 1909, 275–276, pl. 13.35.

⁴² Tsountas 1890, 147; Kilian-Dirlmeier 1987, 200.

⁴³ Dendra: Tholos: Persson 1931, 33, 56, fig. 35; cf. Konstantinidi-Syvridi, this volume. This ring is supposed to be made of four layers of different metals: iron, copper, silver and lead. Mycenae: Chamber Tomb 58: CMS I, no. 91; Asine: Chamber Tomb I:1: CMS I, no. 200. See Müller 2003a, 150; Müller 2003b, 477–478; Krzyszkowska 2005, 199–201, 246; Müller 2012, 467.

⁴⁴ Müller 1909, 302–321, pls. 16–24; Kalogeropoulos 1998, 128–135, pls. 23c, 24d, 25c, 28c–d, 29b, 30b–c, 34b–c, 36b, 38b–d, 39c–d, 40b, 42a–b.

⁴⁵ Müller 1909, 293; Excavation Diary 20, 23 and 24 May 1907. For the oval-mouthed amphorae, see also Huber et al., this volume. These alabaster fragments and the marble lamp from Tholos A are currently not available for study.

⁴⁶ NMA 19148 (silver fragments); NMA 5679, 19145 (bronze fragments): Müller 1909, 276.

⁴⁷ NMA 5662: Müller 1909, 271–272, 275, pl. 13.28, 42.

⁴⁸ NMA 5676: Müller 1909, 291.

⁴⁹ Persson 1943, 47–48, pl. 2; Poursat 1977a, 31–32, pl. 2.3.

⁵⁰ Evans 1921, 472–477 with colour plate V.



Fig. 5: Fragments of ribbed ivory moulding from Tholos A of Kakovatos, NMA 5676. Scale 1:2 (photo: I. Geske)

were found in the tholos of Kokla, the tholos of Vapheio, and in the Palace of Pylos.⁵¹ Moreover, various decorated pieces of ivory from Tomb A were most likely parts of lids of pyxides,⁵² and the lapis lazuli and glass ornaments might have formed inlays on furniture, boxes or the like.

As already mentioned, the best parallels for the 47 bone or ivory discs decorated with wave band and compass-drawn circles that belong to the wider group of the ‘Carpathian-East Mediterranean wave band ornaments’ come from Shaft Graves IV and V of Mycenae.⁵³ Only two other similar pieces, but with less elaborate designs were found in the tholos of Volos-Kapakli.⁵⁴ These characteristic motifs are chronologically limited to the Shaft Grave horizon and are frequently associated with weaponry and horse harnesses.

This overview makes clear that the inventory of Tholos A, even in its fragmentary state, fulfils the requirements of a Category 1 context.

Assessing the categories of Tombs B and C proves slightly more difficult, because there is less material preserved from those tombs than from Tholos A.

Tomb B⁵⁵ contained a sword of Type A of 92 cm in length and rivets of at least one additional weapon. There were beads of amethyst, glass, gold and lapis lazuli, a seal of lapis lazuli and fragments of bronze pins. Three palatial jars, a marble lamp, the only known early Mycenaean bowl of dark cobalt-blue glass, and a steatite stone vessel, which is currently not available for study, but was published by Müller, represent the variety of vessels.

Tomb C⁵⁶ was almost empty and contained only rivets of a sword or dagger, seven amethyst beads, a rock crystal inlay and a few ornamental gold beads and gold foil with relief decoration. There was also at least one bronze vessel (Fig. 6) and one palatial jar.

This summary of objects found in Tholos Tombs B and C illustrates that there was weaponry in the form of swords and/or daggers and a variety of vessels of precious metals and materials (glass, marble). The jewellery is less elaborate than that in Tholos A, and, as far as the state of

⁵¹ Kokla: Demakopoulou 1990, 119, fig. 16; Vapheio: Poursat 1977b, 123, pl. 38, 377/1907; Pylos: Room 31: Blegen – Rawson 1966, 155, fig. 285.9–12.

⁵² E.g. NMA 5677: Müller 1909, 288, pl. 14.15.

⁵³ See above n. 6. Karo 1930/1933, 85–89, pls. 59–60 (Grave IV); 128–132, pls. 62–65 (Grave V).

⁵⁴ Avila 1983, 32, fig. 6.3–4; 36, no. 28.

⁵⁵ Müller 1909, 294–299.

⁵⁶ Müller 1909, 299–301.



Fig. 6: Fragments of bronze vessel(s) from Tholos C of Kakovatos, NMA 19144–19145. Scale 1:1 (photo: I. Geske)

preservation allows us to tell, the set of weapons cannot be considered complete. We should therefore place Tombs B and C into Category 2, preferably into Category 2.2. These tombs may have originally belonged to a higher category (like Tholos A), and they may be taken as examples for the effects of looting.

As tentative as the proposed categories of grave assemblages might appear, they may prove helpful for defining regular, repetitive combinations of certain types of goods. In fact, unlooted tomb assemblages apparently correspond to these categories. Four tombs in Grave Circle A and five in Grave Circle B of Mycenae as well as the burials in Pit 3 in Tholos V in Pylos belong to the Categories 1.1 and 1.2,⁵⁷ and the same is true for the burial of the ‘Griffin-Warrior’ from Pylos.⁵⁸ Another two graves in Grave Circle A and three in Grave Circle B belong to Category 4.1.⁵⁹ They contain very rich grave assemblages that illustrate that the members of certain groups had access to certain objects such as spacer beads, swords and daggers with ornamented blades, ivory objects with wave-band ornaments and certain exotic or imported objects.

In Categories 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3,⁶⁰ Shaft Grave B in Grave Circle B of Mycenae as well as the burials in Pits 1 and 4 of Tholos V of Pylos represent undisturbed contexts that clearly differ from those contexts in Category 1 or 4.1. The same rules of differentiation apply to the burials in Pit 2 of Tholos V of Pylos and the Granary Shaft Grave of Mycenae that represent well-known

⁵⁷ For contexts of Category 1 see above n. 21.

⁵⁸ Davis – Stocker 2016; Stocker – Davis 2017; Davis – Stocker 2018.

⁵⁹ Category 4.1: Graves O, Y and E of Circle B, Shaft Graves I and III of Circle A.

⁶⁰ For contexts of Category 2 see above n. 22.

closed contexts of Category 3⁶¹ and three graves in Grave Circle B that belong to Categories 5.2 and 5.3.⁶² Each category represents different combinations of grave goods and the recurrent patterns of combinations of offerings reflect the existence of certain rules that governed the composition of funeral assemblages according to social ranking. Eventually, the existence of different categories of burial assemblages within one tomb might indicate that this form of differentiation also applied to the members within a group (family?) who were buried together in a tomb.

The coexistence of contemporary graves of different categories at a single site, like for example at Mycenae or Pylos, suggests that this kind of hierarchy of burial assemblages should be translated to the hierarchy of different social groups.

The hierarchy of tombs is also visible on the regional level in Triphylia (Fig. 7). Kakovatos Tholos A proved to belong to Category 1, the highest category of early Mycenaean tombs. Tholos Tombs B and C correspond to Category 2 and seemingly did not meet the level of Tholos A. In the region around Kakovatos there are no further graves belonging to the highest categories. The closest early Mycenaean site is Kleidi-Samikon, where a small tholos contained one grave or group of burials that still belong to Category 3, but also more than eleven such burial groups that belong to Categories 5.2 and 5.3, because these contexts contained neither weapons nor jewellery.⁶³ The tholos of Makraysia, which lies a little further to the north, contained a burial pit of Category 3, because it comprised at least arrows and bronze pins.⁶⁴

Summing up, this attempt to compare 89 (117) closed funerary contexts of the early Mycenaean period suggests that my five categories reflect the existence of commonly accepted rules to express social rank in a wide geographical area. Comparable assemblages indicate a high degree of communication among the various social groups of early Mycenaean Greece. The recurrence of the same type of grave goods in different burial contexts indicates the original presence of certain sets, as individual burials illustrate. Special occasions like high-ranking funerals may have offered opportunities for developing and entertaining a common set of values and normative behaviour.

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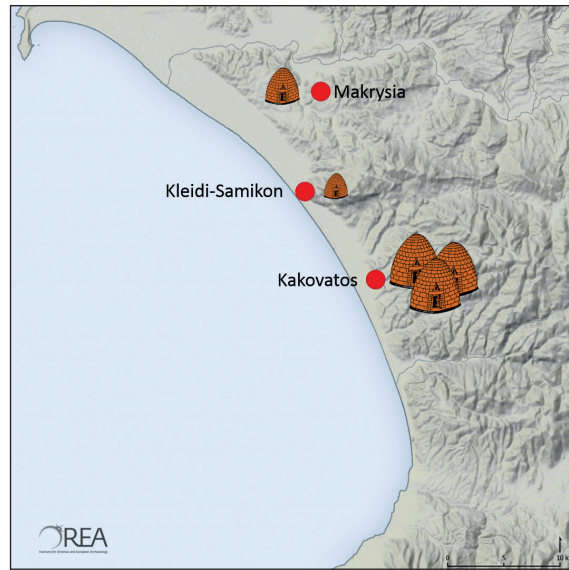


Fig. 7: The tholos tombs of early Mycenaean Triphylia compared in terms of size and grave furniture

⁶¹ For contexts of Category 3 see above n. 23.

⁶² For contexts of Category 5 see above n. 26.

⁶³ Yalouris 1966.

⁶⁴ Themelis 1968/1969.

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Illustrations

Fig. 1: LH I–IIB pottery from the tholos tombs of Kakovatos: a–b. Tholos A; c. Tholos A, B or C. Scale 1:3 (drawings: Ch. de Vreé, J. Huber)

Fig. 2: Reconstructed disc-shaped cheek piece of horse bridle made of ivory from Tholos A of Kakovatos, NMA 5680. Scale 1:2 (photo: I. Geske, D-DAI-ATH-2014-0735)

Fig. 3: Reconstruction of Wessex-type collar with amber beads and spacers from Tholos A of Kakovatos (Ch. de Vreé)

Fig. 4: Fragment of vessel made of gold sheet from Tholos A of Kakovatos, NMA 5663. Scale 3:2 (photo: I. Geske, D-DAI-ATH-2014-0658)

Fig. 5: Fragments of ribbed ivory moulding from Tholos A of Kakovatos, NMA 5676. Scale 1:2 (photo: I. Geske, D-DAI-ATH-2014-0680)

Fig. 6: Fragments of bronze vessel(s) from Tholos C of Kakovatos, NMA 19144-19145. Scale 1:1 (photo: I. Geske, D-DAI-ATH-2014-0722)

Fig. 7: The tholos tombs of early Mycenaean Triphylia compared in terms of size and grave furniture

Tables

Tab. 1: The size of the tombs of Kakovatos compared to other early Mycenaean tholos tombs (with a diameter larger than 8.50 m)

Tab. 2: Categories of grave goods according to contexts, dated to MH III–LH II. The numbers in brackets refer to a chronologically wider grouping, i.e. MH III–LH IIB/IIIA1