

CULTURAL INTERACTIONS AND SOCIAL  
STRATEGIES ON THE PONTIC SHORES

# BLACK SEA STUDIES

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THE DANISH NATIONAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION'S  
CENTRE FOR BLACK SEA STUDIES

# CULTURAL INTERACTIONS AND SOCIAL STRATEGIES ON THE PONTIC SHORES

Burial Customs in the Northern Black Sea Area  
c. 550-270 BC

*By Jane Hjarl Petersen*

AARHUS UNIVERSITY PRESS 

CULTURAL INTERACTIONS AND SOCIAL STRATEGIES  
ON THE PONTIC SHORES

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# Preface

The present volume springs from my PhD dissertation defended at the University of Aarhus in 2007. In recent years I have travelled from Denmark to the Black Sea region on several occasions. Mostly, my trips to the area have been concerned with material studies of burial data on display in museums or topographical 'micro-surveys' of cemetery areas, firstly in connection with my Masters thesis and subsequently in relation to my PhD dissertation, and thus the present project. On other occasions my time has been spent in the dusty storerooms of Olbia looking through endless boxes of pottery for the collaborative project between the Black Sea Centre at Aarhus University and the Academy of Sciences in Kiev. On these trips I have encountered a small fraction of life in the Black Sea region, both in the form which it takes today and as I imagine it to have been in Antiquity. The practical experiences and the mental challenges which I have been faced with during this period have, in various ways, influenced the manner in which I approach and perceive new cultural areas and the people who inhabit them. In these encounters with 'new lands' I have been confronted with many important questions central to the subject of the 'meeting of cultures' and the formation of identities – mainly from an ancient perspective, but also in relation to my own modern-day life. It has been a true privilege to become immersed in these matters and to work with them under such advantageous conditions and in such a rewarding working environment as that provided by the Black Sea Centre.

There are many people to thank for their support, endless patience, comments, critique and encouragements – amongst them my supervisors, Annette Rathje, Jens Krasilnikoff and Catherine Morgan, and all my colleagues at the Black Sea Centre, who have always been willing to share information and ideas as well as to lend a helping hand and a listening ear. Helle Horsnæs at the National Museum, Copenhagen has provided valuable and to-the-point comments and critique of the chapter on southern Italy; George Hinge, University of Aarhus, has given his detailed, expert opinions on the epigraphic material; and Patric Kreuz, University of Bochum, has been very kind and helpful in answering my many questions concerning Black Sea funerary architecture and sculpture. Many more people have been involved in discussions of the work and they are mentioned and thanked in the text accordingly. Elena Stolba and Line Bjerg have done a fantastic job with the bibliography, for which I owe them my deepest thanks. Gina Coulthard has expertly and patiently edited, corrected, and commented the final version of the manuscript.

Last but not least, I owe immense thanks to my friends and family who have been a never-failing support to me during this long process – thank you all for listening, supporting me and still being there after all I have put you through. Finally, my husband Tom deserves a special mention as he is always there beside me with inexhaustible resources of unconditional support, care and encouragement – carissimo mio!

# Chapter 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Presentation of the study

The study *Cultural Interactions and Social Strategies on the Pontic Shores. Burial Customs in the Northern Black Sea Area c. 550-270 BC* was initiated immediately after my Masters graduation in Greek archaeology. Prior to my employment at the Danish National Research Foundation's Centre for Black Sea Studies, I had worked on similar themes in my Masters thesis, specifically Archaic burial customs from Olbia and Taranto (Petersen 2003). The conclusions of this work led me to seek further understanding of the mortuary evidence from the Black Sea region and to elaborate on – as well as to rethink – some of the main questions and problems.

The present volume has as its point of departure the burial data from four coastal localities in the northern region of the Black Sea. Through detailed analyses, the mortuary practices are sought, decoded and interpreted within a framework which is mainly based on concepts of cultural interaction rather than cultural polarization. This means that the dogma of 'The Greeks and the Others' is challenged, and alternative perceptions of the interactions between the peoples of Black Sea region form the basis of the study. The burials are primarily analysed within the tradition of Western burial archaeology with an emphasis on the social strategies which can be reflected in burials.

Furthermore, the Black Sea region is set into a comparative perspective through an assessment of the burial customs and mortuary practices in the colonial milieu of contemporary southern Italy.

The geographical area of the northern Black Sea has been chosen as a primary focal point for the research mainly due to the large bodies of material which derive from the localities here. The intensive and extensive research history of this particular region has also resulted in a great number of specialist studies offering excellent potential for debate and discussion.

The four case-study localities, Olbia, Kerkinitis, Panskoe I and Nymphaion (Fig. 1.1), have been selected for a number of reasons. Firstly, all these localities offer published or otherwise available burial data. Secondly, the localities are situated within a well-defined geographical area of the Black Sea which strengthens the basis for internal comparisons between them. Additionally, each locality represents an individual socio-political aspect which together provide a broad introduction to the practice of burial customs at different



*Fig. 1.1. Map of the Black Sea region with selected localities (map by author)*

levels of social development within the Black Sea settlements. Thus, Olbia can be seen as the first major power of the Black Sea region and one of the leading cities throughout Antiquity; Kerkinitis was a small settlement under the political and social influences of larger cities in the region; Panskoe I was a remote rural settlement; and Nymphaion a well-established city which faced the new dominance of an upcoming regional power, the Bosporan Kingdom. Hence, the aim with regards to this aspect of the selection of sites is to examine if and how the burial data reflect the different socio-political circumstances of the localities.

The chronological time frame of c. 550-270 BC takes as its beginning the date at which most settlements were established and burial data is available in larger quantities, at least from some of the localities. The lower limit of c. 270 is determined by the dramatic social and economic changes which left the northern part of the Black Sea region in a significant crisis, a situation that was possibly enhanced by drastic climate changes and instability amongst the nomads of the steppe regions.

The study starts with the present introductory chapter (Chapter 1) which touches briefly on the project and the practicalities, followed by an introduction to the research history of Russian archaeology, which mainly serves to highlight the historical developments and political influences under which the primary data was created and initially presented. This is followed by a summary of the research history of theoretical burial archaeology in the West, with a presentation of the specific theoretical considerations which lie behind this project. Finally, the introductory chapter touches upon some aspects of the problems connected with the issue of the 'Greeks and the Others'. The main part of the book is made up of four analytical chapters (Chapters 2-5) concerned with the four case-study localities from the Black Sea region. They aim to describe and analyse the burial data of each locality as well as to present and discuss previous approaches and interpretations. The case-study chapters are concluded with assessments of the burial landscapes of nearby regions as well as comparisons with other relevant material. Chapter 6 presents a short summing up of the results of the analyses of the Black Sea localities, and offers some suggestions regarding the implications of the understanding of cultural interactions in the region. A chapter on the mortuary practices of selected localities in southern Italy (Chapter 7) is then presented in order to provide a comparative basis for the Black Sea material. Finally, the book offers a conclusion and a summary in Russian.

The material body of the study has been collected and structured in a database which is presented in detail below. The database is available as a download from Aarhus University Press [[www.unipress.dk](http://www.unipress.dk)].

The general terminology of the study primarily follows the guidelines suggested by Sprague (2005), although there may be instances where the research tradition has led me to use a more commonly accepted term for the sake of consistency with the remaining literature on a specific topic.

If not otherwise stated, all chronological references and dates refer to the era before Christ.

Each chapter has its own set of figures and illustrations; they are numbered according to chapter and figure, thus the first number refers to the number of the chapter, the second to the individual number of the figure or illustration, for example 'Fig. 2.1' is the first figure in Chapter 2. Further, there are a smaller number of tables that run consecutively through the text.

## 1.2 A few practicalities

### *Preservation*

An important aspect in the selection of graves for this study was their state of preservation. As this study deals with large-scale investigations and overall interpretations primarily based on statistics, it was an important criterion that the graves were as intact as possible. This means that robbed, reused or

otherwise disturbed burials have generally not been included in the study. In the rare instances where disturbed graves have been included, this has been done due to the invaluable or unique information they provide. These are mentioned as specific examples and clearly noted as being disturbed.<sup>1</sup> In determining whether a specific grave is disturbed or intact, this study has relied solely on the information provided by previous publications.

It must be stressed that, due to the vast amounts of material included in the study, the time frame of the project, as well as the often poorly preserved material, no 'hands on' examination of the material or the original excavation diaries has been possible. It is therefore more than likely that misinterpretations and mistakes from these initial publications have now become 'my' misinterpretations and mistakes, but this is a fundamental danger of this type of general overview study and must be kept in mind accordingly.

#### *After the excavation*

Another aspect of preservation is the treatment of the burial material after excavation and its fate in the store rooms of museums and other institutions. Often, the material was kept for many years before the actual publication work was started, and, even more often, this was undertaken by scholars other than the excavator (an example is Skudnova 1988 and the majority of the graves in Kutajsov & Lancov 1989a; 1989b). The tradition of archaeological investigations and excavations both in the Black Sea area and in southern Italy goes back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century – a period when the documentation and understanding of archaeological context was not yet necessarily part of the daily agenda. This leaves the material with a long and often uncertain history, and exposed to various damaging factors: storerooms may have been reorganized several times, new numbering systems may have been introduced and material may have been lost, stolen, damaged or misplaced. Times of war, changing administrations and governments may likewise have added problems and complications to the matter (see, for example, Graepler 1997, 23-30 on Taranto; Tsetschladze 2001, IX-XX on the Black Sea region in general; Fless 2002, 78-81 on Pantikapaion).

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1 This is, for example, is the case with the Tarantine chamber tombs which are almost all robbed, but still represent a unique, long-lived and prominent feature within the grave types, and thus are hard to ignore in the treatment of burial customs from Taras (Lo Porto 1967; Maruggi 1994; 1997; D'Amicis, Giboni & Lippolis 1997). The robbing of burials is not at all an exclusively modern phenomenon; ancient grave robbers operated also, evidently so commonly that literary evidence, in the form of lead curses aimed at disturbers of the peace of a grave, is found in quite large quantities in the ancient cemeteries. Furthermore, reburial and secondary use of existing graves also seems to have evoked curses (Faraone & Obbink 1991, Chapter 2; Flint, Luck & Ogden 1999, 19).



*Problems inherent in burials*

It is not only historical factors that play a role in the way the burial material has been preserved and published. The burials themselves represent a rather complicated situation. Most cemeteries have not only a horizontal, but also a vertical stratigraphy. This implies that burials have been placed on top of each other, sometimes *in* one another or very near each other. Unless the burial is in an enclosure clearly visible to the excavator, for example a chamber, a pit burial covered with a lid, a sarcophagus, a cist grave or the like, it can be very difficult indeed to determine if the burial is completely undisturbed. In particular, the most common type of burial, the simple pit grave dug into the soil, is in great danger of losing objects that were placed in or at the grave originally or of gaining objects from other burials in the vicinity.<sup>2</sup> Even when it comes to those burials placed in clearly identifiable enclosures, objects placed outside the grave may suffer the same uncertain fate as objects from pit graves. Naturally, this does not only affect the overall picture of the composition of the grave goods, but can also create severe chronological problems.

For the Black Sea region in particular, this problem is also evident for burials in kurgans (burial mounds). Furthermore, some caution must be exercised when dealing with the burials in this grave type, since it can be difficult to determine the main burial of a kurgan, especially with regard to the rather simple cremation burials often found in them. There are numerous examples of multiple burials within the same kurgan mound, and unless the main burial is very dominant and the mound has been thoroughly investigated, it can be difficult to identify which burial is the 'original' or dominant one, and which has been added later or has a subordinate status to the main burial. Moreover, the situation can be complicated further, since many kurgans were originally erected in the Bronze and early Iron Ages, and then reused and expanded in later periods.

As for identifications and ascriptions of grave goods and the dating of both grave complexes and individual grave goods, this study relies purely on the information given in the publications. The majority of the dating of the graves is based on data provided by the imported pottery, especially Corinthian and Attic imports. One could, of course, reasonably expect a certain delay in these products reaching the shores of the northern Black Sea. However, the most recent study of Attic pottery from the Archaic to Hellenistic periods in the Taman peninsula shows no major chronological discrepancies and no long delays in relation to the Attic sequence; and the picture seems to be confirmed when widening the study to the northern and northwestern Black Sea area (Morgan 2004, 154-155; Handberg & Petersen 2010).

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2 The same problematic situation concerns burials in containers where the grave goods are most commonly placed around the container rather than inside it (see, for example, Graepler 1997, 48-49 for comments on this in his treatment of the Tarantine graves).

Thus, there are no major concerns relating to the chronology and dates for this particular region. Another factor, however, which is more relevant in burial contexts, is the use and reuse of imported pieces, for example as heirlooms.<sup>3</sup> Again, this is a difficult topic to address when working solely from publications with sparse illustrative material and no possibility of ‘hands-on’ study.

## Dealing with the material

### *The database*

The database is the cornerstone of this study. Here, all information relevant to the research has been collected and registered.<sup>4</sup> The database is of a rather simple construction with two corresponding layers of information. The first layer deals with the grave itself. Here, details about location, grave type,<sup>5</sup> orientation, measurements, treatment of body, sex, age, date, total number of grave goods, NOT-value,<sup>6</sup> literature and comments on outside deposits or other features, for example grave *stelai*, are given. The date registered in the database is always the lowest possible date; for example, if a burial is dated ‘5<sup>th</sup> century BC’, the date stated in the database will be 400. This is due to the technical construction of the database and does not necessarily reflect the exact date of the burial context. Further, the graves are divided into chronological phases, introduced in order to break down the long time-span of the study

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3 See, for example, Lillios 1999 on heirlooms in archaeological contexts.

4 The data set which forms the basis of this study has been selected according to the following criteria: firstly according to state of preservation; and secondly according to the level of detail provided in the publications. It was important that the publications gave details on the specific individual characteristics of the burials in question; meaning a catalogue text or similar chapter which described each individual grave and the possible grave goods in as much detail as possible. Information should include: grave type, measurements, the skeletal remains and treatments of the body, orientation, age and gender, the types of grave goods, the state of preservation, place of origin, position in the grave, date, etc. To provide a unique identification in the database, the individual publications are marked with a capital letter in front of every grave number: **A:** Moreschini 1988; **B:** D’Amicis, Giboni & Lippolis 1997; **C:** Lo Porto 1959-1960; **D:** Neeft 1994; **E:** Lo Porto 1962; **F:** Skudnova 1988; **I:** Grač 1999; **J:** Maruggi 1982; **K:** Silent’eva 1959; **L:** Kutajsov & Lancov 1989b; **M:** Knipović 1940a; **N:** Rogov & Stolba forthcoming. Thus, grave 123 refers to Grač 1999, grave 23. (The letters G and H were initially allocated to Kozub 1974 and Parović-Pešikan 1974, which were excluded from this study, see Chapter 2 below).

5 The individual grave types and their characteristics are described in the relevant chapters of the book. The terminology of grave types can differ from publication to publication which can, at times, create some confusion. I have, however, strived to maintain a coherent terminology throughout this study.

6 The NOT-value (Number of Object Types value) has been introduced in order to describe the variation of object types within a grave. This means that a grave with, for example, three drinking cups, two jugs and a knife will score a NOT-value of 3.

into more manageable periods. The phases are thus artificially created and follow the general chronological periods used in traditional Classical archaeology and ancient history:

- 1: c. 550-520 (Archaic)
- 2: c. 519-480 (late Archaic – early Classical)
- 3: c. 479-400 (Classical)
- 4: c. 399-270 (late Classical – early Hellenistic)

Needless to say, avoidance of furthering any biases in the conclusions of the data analysis by the phase divisions has been a matter of constant attention. This means that an open mind has been kept throughout the study regarding potential chronological overlaps as well as long-term developments and patterns exceeding the limitations of the phases.

#### *The definition of gender and age groups*

Concerning the determination of both gender and age groups, the quality of the data and the level of detail vary greatly from publication to publication. Therefore, it has been necessary to work from simple ground rules on this matter; gender is only registered in the database if physical anthropological studies have been applied.<sup>7</sup> Gender determinations which rely solely on the basis of grave goods have not been accepted, since such methods have long been proven too problematic and treacherous (see Sørensen 2000, 74-95; Sofaer 2006; Spencer-Wood 2006).

For the same reasons, the definitions of age groups are also rather problematic and have been approached in a comparably simplistic manner as the gender determinations. Firstly, the study operates with three broad age groups: infants/small children; sub-adults/teenagers; and adults. Whilst it would have been preferable to have had a more detailed and varied approach to the treatment of age groups,<sup>8</sup> the general quality of the data has not allowed for this (the data from Panskoe I and Nymphaion (Grač 1999) is an exception to this). When no age definitions have been given in the publications, the standard approach has simply been to register all graves with a length of more than 1.5m as adults and all below this as sub-adults/teenagers and children. The demarcation line of 1.5m is based on the average height for adult men and women from skeletal material from Hellenistic Athens, which was 1.564m

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7 On the reliability of physical anthropological studies, see Mays 1998, 38; further, Stone & Walrath 2006; Walker 2008.

8 Such as the evidence from Athens which allows for the distinction of three age groups for children: infants (0-1 year old); small children (1-3 or 4 years old) and older children (3-4 to 8-10 years old) (Houby-Nielsen 2000, 152).

for women and 1.719m for men (*Kerameikos XIV*, 159, table 7).<sup>9</sup> Naturally, there are several problematic aspects connected with this methodological approach. Firstly the division line of 1.5m does not reveal children and sub-adults buried in longer graves or buried together with adults in adult-sized graves. Secondly, various crouched positions and other positions which are not supine could also influence the length of the grave. Moreover, there is a potential Athenocentric bias in the approach because the majority of the evidence used for studies of childhood and children in general, both epigraphic and archaeological, derives from Athens. Studies of childhood and children in, for example, Sparta, where the source material is equally available albeit on a smaller scale, suggest that children here had very different living conditions than in contemporary Athens (Golden 1990, 68; 2003, 19). This means that the perceptions of age groups could have varied significantly in the Black Sea region or southern Italy compared to Athens. Also, it is very important to note that the perception of children and childhood not only varied between geographical areas, but also took very different shapes and expressions over time and under the influence of both political and more private social relations. Finally, there is an additional potential social bias in the fact that the majority of the evidence, at least the literary and epigraphic sources, primarily relates to the upper classes of society and thus represents the perceptions of childhood of the wealthy rather than of a broad social section of the population.

One can only regret that the general state of the data does not allow for more detailed and complex analyses of these important and highly interesting aspects of social perceptions in more locations around the Black Sea, or southern Italy for that matter.

#### *Dealing with the grave goods – data reduction*

The second layer of information in the database deals with the grave goods. Here, the individual objects have an inventory number which corresponds to the grave number. The material has been divided into eight object groups:

Table 1:

Ceramics	Weapons	Jewellery	GFA <sup>10</sup>	Terracottas	Tools	Personalia	Varia
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9 For similar methodological approaches see, for example, Morris 1987, 58-59; Houby-Nielsen 1995, 177-178; Graepler 1997, 52. Gowland 2006 provides a very useful theoretical and methodological approach to age identifiers in funerary material in general.

10 Glass, faience and alabaster.

This division has been chosen mainly as a way of coping with the very varied material while keeping a focus both on type and function, as well as a focus on obtaining the best search results from the database. A more simplistic division of the material focused only on material, for example ceramics, metal, bone, glass etc., would weaken the very important aspect of function, while, on the other hand, a focus on function alone would give far too many categories to handle effectively. It is, of course, clear that this division of the material causes some overlapping between the categories, for example between jewellery and GFA or tools and personalia (see Table 3 below for definitions of the various groups), and can be criticized for being too rigid. Moreover, it is necessary to be very clear and consistent about the placing of object types within the categories, for example is a knife a weapon or a tool? Another danger lies in the implications given to objects when placed in specific categories: is a comb a tool, does it belong under personalia or is the symbolic meaning in the mortuary context lost or completely misunderstood when placed in such schematic settings? The pitfalls are obvious and manifold, but, nevertheless, a fundamental condition when handling such a large and varied body of material as that which forms the basis of this study.

Out of context, the resulting system may seem confusing, but I hope to demonstrate that navigating through it can provide fruitful results as to the function and place of the grave goods in both their mortuary and social contexts.

Returning to the layout of the database, the objects are, furthermore, described according to object type (for example, lekythos or spearhead), material (for example, terracotta or bronze), origin (for example, Attic or local), technique (for example black-figured), state of preservation (for example, complete or fragments [restored]), ascription (for example, Haimon Painter), position (for example, at left hand or near feet), date upper and lower, literature and general comments. Where specific information is missing in the publication, fields have been completed as 'not stated'.

The following tables offer an overview of the object type groups and their contents. As for the function of the objects of the ceramic and GFA groups, the shapes are divided into subgroups in order to reflect their most commonly-assumed function. Here, I primarily follow Rotroff and Morgan (*Agora XXIX*, 5-7; Morgan 2004, 12-13).<sup>11</sup>

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11 See also, however, *Agora XII*; Amyx 1958; Richter & Milne 1935 for discussions of ceramic names and functions; more recently, see Clark, Elston & Hart 2002.

Table 2a:

**Ceramics:** drink and food:

Drinking	skyphos, kylix, kantharos, kotyle, cup-skyphos, cup-kantharos, mug and other types of cups/beakers
Pouring	oinochoe, olpe, chous and jug
Serving	plate, saucer, fish-plate, stemmed dish, krater and bowl
Small open	one-handler, salt-cellar and bowl
Storage	amphora, hydria and pelike

Table 2b:

**Ceramics:** oil and ritual:

Oil/other liquid containers	amphoriskos, askos, aryballos, alabastron, lekythos, guttus, unguentarium, lydion and figure-vase
Votives/religious vessels	phiale, kalathos, thymiaterion, loutrophoros, lebes, basket with ribbon-shaped handle, miniature vessel and other

Table 2c:

**Ceramics:** personal:

Toilet vessels	pyxis, lekanis
----------------	----------------

As for the placement of the lekythos and perhaps other vessels which are associated with oil here, I am aware that the functions of the ceramic shapes are not a static matter, especially when examining the examples from the Athenian Agora (Shear 1993): Here, lekythoi were found in an apparent dining context as tableware and thus served a pouring function rather than an oil-related function. It is, of course, quite possible that the lekythoi could have served multiple purposes in a mortuary context, but as this is very difficult to determine without analyses of the contents, the lekythoi are here placed in the oil-related sphere, where they traditionally belong in funerary studies.

The remaining object groups contain the following objects:

Table 3:

<b>Weapons</b>	spearhead, arrowhead, sword, dagger, helmet, horse equipment, etc.
<b>Jewellery, function-related</b>	<i>fibula</i> , dress pin, belt buckle
<b>Jewellery, adorning</b>	necklace, finger ring, ear-ring, bracelet, pendant, girdle jewellery, dress application and others
<b>Terracottas</b>	figurine (both anthropomorphic and zoological), statuette, protome, smaller terracotta relief and others
<b>Tools</b>	whetstone, grinder, spindle whorl, spindle, net weight, needle, knife, spoon, ladle, <i>stylos</i> , farming tool and others
<b>Personalia</b>	mirror, cosmetics, comb, tweezers, toy, <i>strigil</i> , toiletries, athletic equipment, astragal and others
<b>Varia</b>	coin, lamp, nail, small box/container of various materials, furniture, furniture decoration, shell, unidentified objects of bone, metal and other materials

### *Fragments and their place in the statistics*

Related to the question of preservation is the problematic issue of fragments and how to deal with them in the statistics. The term ‘fragments’, when used in this study, mainly covers fragments of pottery found in or outside a grave. Fragments of other types of goods, such as metal, glass, ivory or other materials, are dealt with in the same manner as described below, although these occur much less frequently than fragments of pottery. It has been necessary to set up rather strict and almost rigid criteria for the treatment of fragments in the statistics, in order not to end up with a very unbalanced and misleading picture, heavily influenced by fragments and the differential breaking rates for individual vessel types. Since we may assume that the majority of grave goods were put in the grave as complete objects and that those which were broken on purpose, for example in a ritual, would be identifiable as such, I have chosen simply to exclude from the statistics fragments which are mentioned as *a single example*, or more unspecifically as *some* or *a few*.<sup>12</sup> These fragments are treated separately without any attempt at quantification. The same criterion is used for deposits outside the grave, where insecurities are simply too high to let the material count in the statistics. Depositions outside the graves, which are a very common phenomenon, are, of course, studied

12 In the case where an object is mentioned as, for example, *one* fragmented or broken vessel, I rely on the publication for the quantification, and the object is thus registered in the database as one single item under the term “fragments (restored)”.



as an important aspect of the burial customs, but separately from the grave goods deposited inside the grave.

### **1.3 An introduction to the research history of Russian archaeology**

In the following section a brief introduction to the research history of archaeology, and in particular Classical archaeology, in the north Pontic region will be given. As a result of many decades of activities and investigations under different political and economic circumstances, the archaeology of the region has had many shifting foci and outcomes. These have necessarily been closely linked with and related to the modern societies and their constitutions. This short and simplified introduction is primarily meant to highlight the historical contexts in which the majority of the archaeological data that forms the basis of this study was created. When I first began working with the Black Sea data, my knowledge of the historical circumstances under which the data was created was very limited. For me, the process of gaining a better understanding of Black Sea archaeology inevitably meant understanding the historical and political aspects of research in the region. This has been the main motivating factor for the inclusion of the following introduction. It may seem ordinary to the skilled Black Sea researcher, but to me this invaluable basic knowledge has been an important background tool in approaching a completely new and very extensive field of archaeology.

#### *Archaeology in the Russian Empire*

The first interest in what can hardly be called ‘archaeology’ at this early stage took its form under Tsar Peter the Great in 1715. The story follows that a mine owner presented the Tsar with some objects found in a burial mound in Siberia. Peter the Great was so impressed and taken with these objects that he immediately initiated a decree stating that ‘all objects found under the ground or in water’ should be sent to him in St Petersburg. This was the beginning of one of the most beautiful and rich collections in the world, the Hermitage collections in St Petersburg (Tsetskhladze 2001, IX; Tunkina 2003, 303-304). The collections were at first the private possessions of the Tsar family and the building of the museums, the Winter Palace and the small and large Hermitage to house the objects, was primarily undertaken by Catherine the Great from the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century and onwards.<sup>13</sup>

In 1852, the new Hermitage, built by Nicholas I, was opened to the public and now functioned as a museum with its displays of extensive collections. After the October Revolution in 1917, the Hermitage collections were declared state museums. The Winter Palace was now used for public lectures, films and concerts, and in 1920 a museum of the October Revolution was also estab-

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13 Useful information on the history and collections of the Hermitage can be found on the museum’s website: [http://www.hermitagemuseum.org/html\\_En/05/hm5\\_1.html](http://www.hermitagemuseum.org/html_En/05/hm5_1.html)



lished there. Today, the museum houses more than 3,000,000 objects, amongst them many spectacular finds from the Greek and Roman periods in the north Pontic region.

The initial Tsarian interest in the 'objects under ground and water' gave way to a more general interest in the past which found inspiration and support in the Enlightenment of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. It was furthered by the budding Romanticism and Nationalism of the early and later 19<sup>th</sup> century, not least due to Catherine the Great's initially strong ties with Europe.

An important point to make with reference to the 18<sup>th</sup> century 'archaeology' is the 'élite form' it took. Very much like the European interest in prehistory and Antiquity, it was members of the nobility and upper classes who formed the main core of the new historical and archaeological trend. This produced a strong emphasis on élite-related topics, investigated by the élite and the *nouveaux riches* and presented by them to other members of the upper classes. In a Mediterranean setting, this can be exemplified by Schliemann's 'Homeric' excavations in Mycenae and Troy, the focus on the splendours of Athens as an economically, politically and culturally leading Greek polis in the 5<sup>th</sup> century and the palace excavation at Knossos on Crete. In the Black Sea setting, the focus was primarily on royal Scythian burial mounds and all the grandeur and splendid gold finds with which they were frequently equipped – a true demonstration of the richness and lavish life of the élite in these nomadic societies. Later on, after 1774, when a greater area encompassing the northern regions of the Black Sea came under Russian rule after a long period under the Ottoman Empire, the Greek settlements of the northern Black Sea coast attracted more attention as the notion of the 'higher and more sophisticated' level of ancient Greek civilization took form (Tsetskhladze 2001, X).

The newly recovered north Pontic region saw increased activity to form an infrastructure, and local military governments used the workforce of soldiers to form the backbone of the numerous road construction and engineering projects. This resulted in the destruction of many ancient sites and, furthermore, brought attention to the rich finds often unearthed and plundered during this work. The activities of this 'military archaeology' forced both the central and local government institutions to take action to protect and preserve the heritage, and from the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards archaeology and history became more organized and centrally controlled in Russia. Two important institutions bear witness to this, namely the Imperial Russian Archaeological Society founded in St Petersburg in 1846 and the Imperial Archaeological Commission founded in 1859. Moreover, many local museums were established in this period, especially in the north Pontic region (Dolukhanov 1995, 327, Tsetskhladze 2001, X-XII; also Tunkina 2003 for a very detailed introduction to the birth and formation of Russian Classical archaeology).

The rise of the Nationalist movements of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, both in Russia and Europe, gave new room for archaeological theory and furthered the idea of archaeology as a science which could be used politi-

cally. The idea of archaeological cultures as direct markers of different ethnic groups and the rise (however short-lived) of psychical anthropology became important tools for archaeologists, and thereafter politicians, in the quest for a grand history of descent for every country which believed it needed one (Dolukhanov 1995, 329; for Germany, see Härke 1995, 54-55).

In Russian archaeology of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries one of the most prominent individuals to have put his mark on many important excavations and publications was B.V. Farmakovskij. In 1896 he arrived in the small village of Parutino for the first time to begin work at what would become one of the most famous and extensively excavated sites of the north Pontic region – ancient Olbia or Borysthenes. From 1901 till 1915 Farmakovskij's excavations yielded spectacular objects, but few impressive monuments such as temples and public buildings, as the destruction and reuse of the building materials from the ancient city had been a local practice for centuries.<sup>14</sup> In general, very few ancient sites around the Black Sea have very much preserved above ground level – at least from the Greek period. In Olbia, as in the majority of other localities, archaeological remains were present, but a great difficulty in terms of archaeological research lay in the legal constructs of right of land: private landowners legally owned the right to all wealth on their land including archaeological remains and finds, resulting in regular treasure hunts. The archaeological investigators were, therefore, working at the mercy of local landowners who often wanted the finds for themselves rather than see them disappear into museum collections many thousands of kilometres away (Trigger 1989, 211).

In general, archaeology in the pre-Revolutionary period had its main research focus on the splendours of archaeology, such as impressive kurgan finds or Greek Classical cities (Dolukhanov 1995, 327-328). From this sprung a distinct Hellenocentrism which is still today deeply rooted amongst some scholars in terms of their approach to the understanding of the demographic and cultural situation around the Black Sea in Antiquity. The need to create an 'Us and Them' situation produced a view of the Black Sea region as having been inhabited by civilized Greeks who lived in Greek cities with Greek town planning, practising Greek culture, religion and language and who taught and influenced the surrounding 'barbaric' nomadic cultures through their supreme level of civilization.<sup>15</sup>

The intensive and large-scale excavations that had started up during the last half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century continued well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, establishing

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14 Walking around the village of Parutino today, one can still find ancient building blocks, grave *stelai* and architectural fragments built into the village houses. The ancient city and the area of the nearest cemetery are now protected by a small group of guards, but robbing of unprotected areas is still ongoing.

15 See Chapter 2.5 below for bibliographical references to examples of this type of research.

a proud Russian historical and archaeological tradition which had strong ties with developments within European academic circles. This historical and archaeological tradition was to continue for many more decades, but the links with Europe were to be cut abruptly as the political situation in Russia took a radical turn.

### *Archaeology in the Soviet Union*

The 1917 October Revolution brought radical changes to every aspect of life in the former Russian Empire, including, needless to say, to the academic world (Tsetskhladze 2001, XIV).

Very little archaeological work was undertaken during World War I, the following civil war and the aftermath of the revolution, but in 1919 V.I. Lenin signed a decree reorganising the Imperial Archaeological Commission as the Russian Academy for the History of Material Culture (Trigger 1989, 212; Tsetskhladze 2001, XIV). The new rule was eager to elevate the level of scientific enquiry and fully recognized research as a basic building stone for economic and social growth, and archaeology thrived under this notion with generous funding allocated to research and excavation campaigns. When Trigger wrote his chapter on Soviet archaeology in his 1989 *A History of Archaeological Thought*, he stated that, as an outcome of this policy, there were more than 500 archaeological expeditions carrying out excavations and archaeological investigations every year with more than 5,000 scientific reports (Trigger 1989, 207). Certainly, archaeology held a central place in the sciences right from the beginning of the constitution of the Soviet Union. Trigger explained the central position of archaeology as follows:

*Archaeology is sponsored as an instrument for cultural enhancement and public education...Part of archaeology's task is to enrich an understanding of the origins and history of the many ethnic groups that make up the Soviet Union. A still more fundamental mission is to promote a materialist understanding of human history that accords with the guiding philosophy of the Communist Party (Trigger 1989, 207).*

Firstly, it is obviously important to note the strong link between archaeology and the promotion of Communist Party politics. The newly appointed director of the Russian Academy for the History of Material Culture, N. Marr, was, naturally, a strong believer in Marxist explanations of socio-cultural changes and development models. In line with his own beliefs, the 'stadial concept' of the Marxist archaeologist V.I. Ravdonikas and the political dogmas of the Communist Party, Marr's theories (the so-called 'Japhetic' theories) dictated the nature of archaeological and historical research up until 1950 (Trigger 1989, 212, 216-218; Dolukhanov 1995, 330-331). The focus of this research was mainly to 'historicize' archaeology, which meant that all publications were concerned in some way or other with grand-scale socio-political develop-

ments of the societies or ethnic groups in question; in the words of Klejn: *the reconstructed history of tribes and people, not the boring descriptions and typologies and chronologies of artefacts and assemblages* (Klejn 1993, 340).

Evidently, the Marxist approach to historical development has not only been applied within Soviet archaeology but has also at different periods found ground in Western scholarship, most famously perhaps in the works of V. Gordon Childe (Klejn 1993, 339; Dolukhanov 1995, 332-333; see, for example, Lull 2000 for a recent Marxist approach to burial data). However, it cannot be stressed strongly enough that the basic conditions of the two (Soviet and Western) Marxist research traditions are incomparable as the freedom of research which characterized Western scholarship never existed within Soviet archaeology (Dolukhanov 1995, 336). Thus, during the cultural revolution of the late 1920s and early 1930s, the archaeologists and historians who were not willing to alter their views and conduct their research within the limits of the Party's political construct were arrested and exiled (Trigger 1989, 216-218).<sup>16</sup> The research tradition of the pre-Revolutionary period was deemed to be *bourgeois nationalism* and was criticized, amongst other things, for being too artefact-oriented (the so-called artifactology) and anti-communist in its construct (Trigger 1989, 217-218; Dolukhanov 1995, 331).<sup>17</sup>

Returning to the previous quote from Trigger, we may accordingly turn our attention to his phrase emphasising the importance of the history of the many different ethnic groups within the Soviet Union; it is particularly interesting here since this line of thought brings us to the question of linking ethnicity with material culture and archaeological remains. After the Cultural Revolution, the mid 1930s saw a period of consolidation with a call for better and more developed methodological and technical skills. Many larger universities also established archaeological departments with yearly expeditions (Trigger 1989, 228-229). This increase in research and fieldwork led to a large number of rich finds in regions such as the Caucasus and Central Asia, for example, the frozen tombs of Pazyryk (Rudenko 1970). The ethnic and cultural diversity within the Soviet Union became increasingly evident during this period and the German threat imposed by World War II fostered both patriotism and a national self-consciousness among the Soviet people (Trigger 1989, 229). This

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16 However, it seems that Classical archaeology was perhaps a less dangerous field of work than, for example, the study of Russian history, since the discipline was never as firmly rooted in the political ideological construct (O'Connor 1999, 11). So M.I. Rostovcev spoke of Classical archaeology as 'neutral ground' in a letter to E.H. Minns in December 1929 (Bongard-Levin 1997, 206; see also Bongard-Levin 2005 on a recent contribution to understanding the relationship between Rostovcev and Minns).

17 See also Trigger 1989, 226-227, 240-242; Klejn 1993, 343-347; O'Connor 1999, 8-12 for analyses of the effect which the rejection of typological studies has had on Soviet archaeological research. Soviet Classical archaeology, however, still occupied a special position since the Mediterranean typologies by and large applied to a great part of its material.

manifested itself in a growing awareness of, and search for, ethnic differences and cultural variations as expressions of the origins of the different national groups and peoples. Thus, archaeology and history became even more important tools in the construction of political and national identities – both in an inward-looking and an outward-looking respect. The tradition of linking archaeological remains closely with ethnic identities also rooted itself within the tradition of Classical archaeology, where the topic evolved particularly around demographic studies of the Greek Black Sea poleis. It became increasingly important to separate ‘Greek’ populations from ‘nomadic’, and burial data played a central role in this line of research. It may be added that the cultural-ethnic approach, in its fundamental form, was compatible with many of the nationalistic thoughts which were prominent in archaeology and history in the pre-Revolutionary period both in Russia and Europe (see also Dolukhanov 1995, 331-332, 338-339 on the development of the cultural-ethnic approach).

Although the Soviet political conditions of the 1930s and 1940s were restrictive and limiting for the sciences in many ways, the period also saw some very important new thinking. Within historical and archaeological research, the focus on social dynamics within ancient societies was a completely new approach which encompassed society, organization, people, artefacts and other material remains as a whole. The idea that the motivation for cultural change arose from within society, and that social competition was a primary factor for progression and development, was in stark contrast to the diffusionism of most Western research; here cultural changes were still mainly explained in terms of migrations (Trigger 1989, 224-225). Through these new approaches to the understanding of ancient societies, Soviet archaeology achieved some ground-breaking results, especially within Neolithic archaeology, long before Western research began to move towards similar sets of thought (Trigger 1989, 223-225). It was comparable ideas and thinking that were to form the basis for the New Archaeology of Western research some 30 years later in the 1960s and 1970s, and the resemblances between the fundamental theories of the Marxist stadial concept and the primary ideas of New Archaeology have been pointed out by a number of scholars (Dolukhanov 1995, 332-333). After Stalin’s death in 1953, archaeology and history, together with Soviet scholarship in general, entered a new and more liberal era. There was a growing complexity and diversity in terms of the approach to and interpretation of archaeological material (Trigger 1989, 234). Although still heavily influenced by the Marxist approach in their work, contact with Western archaeologists was initiated by Soviet scholars, and Western publications gradually became more accessible and acceptable (Trigger 1989, 234).

In terms of burial material, the scholars of the Soviet period provided many of the publications used in this study. It has been of utmost importance in this process to recognize the historical circumstances and motivations behind many of their conclusions and interpretations. From the analytical chapters



in this study it will be evident that it has been a priority to present and discuss these previous approaches to the material whilst keeping the potential historical influences in mind.

*Archaeology from the dissolution of the Soviet Union up until today*

The dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 brought about a massive collapse of all state-funded institutions, both administratively and economically. The economic decline had a very obvious consequence for archaeology: a significant drop in excavation funding from the state. Archaeologists, who had previously been well-funded by the state both 'at home' in the universities and in the field on investigation and excavation campaigns, were now forced to raise money through private initiatives. The central role of history and archaeology, which placed the disciplines high on the funding lists during the Soviet period, was now reduced radically, sending departments and researchers into poverty. The days of large-scale expeditions were gone (Chernykh 1995, 139-140; Tsetskhladze 2001, XVII). Hence, the mid 1990s saw hard times for archaeology and ancient history. The new system, with its focus on economic growth and the free market, left little room in the minds of the general public for an interest in the past; the present was hard enough to tackle as it was. The economic crisis hit hard and the everyday life of ordinary people became a struggle for the simplest things. Even though the general situation has improved, at the beginning of the new millennium, Russian and Ukrainian archaeologists may still have to take a second or even a third additional job in order to survive. The excavation campaigns are by and large conducted by enthusiastic archaeologists with the help of volunteers – often private individuals or school children not educated in the methods of archaeological excavation. On the positive side, collaborative projects between Russian and Ukrainian research teams and Western universities and institutions give hope for improved conditions for archaeologists and a much needed increase in resources (Tsetskhladze 2001, XVII). The slightly improved conditions in recent years have resulted in more publications coming out than in the early 1990s – a situation and development which is hopefully only in its early phase.

A less positive development is to be found in the booming illegal market in antiquities and the increase in looting of ancient sites. In Ukraine, the formation of a new national identity after the collapse of the Soviet Union gave way to a blossoming nationalist movement led by the new breed of the rich. In their attempts to create a collective identity, an emphasis on the country's history and culture has been of vital importance. The basic idea is to provide a definition of Ukraine's own identity and its independence from the Soviet past, along with a profound wish for a better reputation on a global level (Guldager Bilde 2003a). This interest in the past is sadly too often instrumented by means of illegally acquired historical and archaeological material which is

collected widely among the *nouveaux riches*.<sup>18</sup> The destruction of monuments and sites is evident in almost every ancient cultural landscape around the Black Sea, and the latest numbers known to me from 2002 list 1,417 localities with illegal excavations registered by the Ukrainian department of antiquities (Guldager Bilde 2003a). An extraordinary example is the ancient city of Olbia where lootings and illegal activities have had a severe impact on the site.<sup>19</sup> Finally, the site has been declared a nationally protected monument and guards now patrol the grounds every day. Unfortunately, the robbers are still as active as ever *outside* the borders of the city limit, where the area of the nationally protected monument ends.

The forces behind the illegal antiquity market are to be found on many levels of society; at the initial level there are poor country people with very little or no income with which to support their families in a society which is racing to make up for decades of a centrally-planned economy and to find its place among the global market economies. These people struggle to leave behind the depressing and futureless life in the countryside that was previously the proud backbone of the Soviet Union. The mafia eagerly provides the middle men who are there to take on and sell the illegal antiquities in the larger cities, where private buyers and large antique markets are waiting impatiently for the next load. The prices are ridiculously low in the initial part of this 'food chain' and markedly higher at its culmination.

Finally, in June 2004 a law on the protection of archaeological heritage was accepted in the Ukrainian Parliament. The law, however, has been much debated and revised twice, resulting in three articles on private collections being removed. This is primarily due to heavy lobbying and strong pressure from people in the highest places; both the former Ukrainian president V.A. Juščenko and his brother are known to have extensive private archaeological collections.<sup>20</sup> The topic is hotly debated in the mass media and thus reaches the broader public, but unfortunately the political situation is today still heavily influenced by lobbying and corruption. Thus, in modern-day Ukraine the interest in and efforts towards creating a national identity through the monuments and material culture of the past sadly result in the exact opposite: the destruction of cultural heritage.

The impact of all this on this particular study relates to the present data and the creation of future data. Burials are notoriously known for their status as location of 'goodies' – for both archaeologists and robbers. This means that

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18 See also a newly posted internet article from 3rd August 2009 <http://novosti-n.mk.ua/analitic/read/?id=552>

19 As an example of the looting in Olbia, more than 600 graves were found plundered in the cemetery area between the excavation campaigns in 2001 and 2002 (personal communication V.V. Krapivina, summer 2002; <http://novosti-n.mk.ua/analitic/read/?id=552>).

20 See, for example, <http://novosti-n.mk.ua/analitic/read/?id=552>

these two groups are racing each other to get to the burials first; the archaeologists to save the undisturbed contexts and the robbers to steal the often complete and very valuable grave goods. Inevitably, this race affects the quality of the archaeological data, and the alarmingly low wages and general poor conditions for archaeologists and other researchers contribute to the often flawed sets of data which are rarely published in international *fora*.

#### 1.4 Western theories of burial archaeology

The study of burial remains has played a significant role in Western archaeological research for many decades now. The intentional 'frozen moment' and often well-preserved nature of burial remains makes them attractive for interpretations of various kinds.<sup>21</sup>

It is, of course, tempting to begin this presentation of Western research history with the new wave of archaeological thought of the late 1960s and 1970s, since this period really did produce new approaches to and ideas about how, and in what way, burial remains can contribute to our understanding of ancient societies. But it is worth mentioning that before this new wave in archaeology, the so-called *traditionalist school* of culture-historical archaeology had already been dealing with the social aspects of burial archaeology. As mentioned above, famous scholars like V. Gordon Childe, inspired by Marxist approaches from contemporary Soviet science, were working with burial customs as markers of social competition in society (for example, Childe 1945; see also Trigger 1989, 222-225; Dolukhanov 1995, 332). On the whole, though, the traditionalist school mainly considered burial remains in a religious context and used them as direct cultural markers. Differences within burials were explained in a straightforward manner as evidence of contacts and/or influences from other cultural spheres (also Härke 1997, 20).

##### *Processual archaeology and burials*

The late 1960s and 1970s saw a new wave of archaeological thought in the West – and within burial archaeology this was primarily promoted by the American L.R. Binford. The first presentation of the impact of the new thinking on burial archaeology was presented by Binford in 1966 at a symposium of the American Anthropological Association, and published in 1971 by James Brown (Binford 1971, 6-29; Brown 1971; also Chapman 2003; Brown 2007).

Binford put himself in opposition to former ideas of burials as markers of styles and fashions, and emphasized the social dimensions of mortuary practices (Binford 1971, 6-11; Chapman 2003, 306). The inspiration came mainly from sociology, primarily from the *L'Année Sociologique* circle around

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21 For bibliographies and research overviews of Western burial archaeology and the development of processual and post-processual theories, see Cuzzo 1996; Härke 1997; Parker Pearson 1999; Lull 2000; Chapman 2003; Cuzzo 2003; Shanks forthcoming.



E. Durkheim, including scholars such as M. Mauss, H. Hubert, R. Hertz and the works of A. Van Gennep (Davies 2000, 97; Chapman 2003, 306; also Hockey 2002). However, as mentioned above, many of the thoughts behind this 'new' social dimension had been the cornerstones of Soviet archaeological and historical research since the 1930s (also Trigger 1989, 222-225; Dolukhanov 1995, 330-332).

One of the principles of the new set of theories was to see human society as a system made up of interconnected sub-systems. The material culture would then, when investigated, reflect all these sub-systems. Binford argued that within burial archaeology this suggested that the burial ritual would be directly connected with the social structures of the relevant society and with the social position of the individual within that society (Binford 1971, 14-15). With this, Binford implicated role theory, and argued that the *social persona* of the dead should be recognized as: *the composite of the social identities maintained in life and recognized as appropriate for consideration at death* (Binford 1971, 17). The main aspects of the *social persona* expressed in burials would be age, sex, social position, subgroup affiliation, cause of death and location of death (Binford 1971, 17).

The publication resulting from the symposium of the American Anthropological Association, and in particular Binford's paper, had an immense impact on the research of burial archaeology and started a whole new trend in this field during the 1970s. Besides Binford, some of the more prominent scholars within this field were A.A. Saxe, R. Chapman, S.E. Shennan and J.A. Tainter. The Danish contributions primarily came from researchers such as K. Randsborg, H. Thrane, U. Lund Hansen, L. Hedeager and K. Kristiansen, amongst others (see also Jensen & Høilund Nielsen 1997, 11).

A full presentation of the main research elements and topics of debate from the 1970s cannot be given here in this overview, but a summarized presentation of the most prominent premises of processual archaeology's approach to burial archaeology can be presented as follows (from Lull 2000, 577).

- 1) Mortuary practices reflect social reality in all its complexity.
- 2) The form and structure of mortuary practices are conditioned by the form and complexity of social organization. The more complex the social organization, the more complex the funerary treatment.
- 3) The burial ritual is a criterion for social identification of the individual: it is a 'faithful epitaph' testifying who he or she was. Burial deposits are a material synthesis of the most important features of the deceased as a social person.
- 4) Processualism depends on various liberal trends in epistemology (role theories, information theories, and so on) and the vindication of the individual as the 'key factor' of society.

- 5) One of the aims is to achieve a Law of Complexity on the basis of the typologies elaborated by neo-evolutionary anthropology or in accordance with levels of entropy.
- 6) There is a demand for a quantitative methodology which will allow comparison between individual cases.

#### *Post-processual archaeology and burials*

During the late 1970s and 1980s a new line of thought sprang from the critics of the processual theories, namely post-processual archaeology. Ian Hodder was among the leading figures in what he himself suggested should be called 'interpretative archaeology' (Hodder 1991). The ideas of post-processual archaeology were mainly developed in the late 1970s and early 1980s in Cambridge as a direct response to the ideas of processual archaeology. Other than Hodder, scholars such as M. Shanks, C. Tilley, D. Miller, J. Barrett, M. Leone and M. Parker Pearson played a significant role in forming these new theoretical approaches (Cuzzo 1996, 3-7).<sup>22</sup>

Over the years, the lively debate within post-processual archaeology has allowed a great variety of different trends and points of departure to emerge. Scholars have worked within the frame of reference of post-processual archaeology under the influence of various literary and cultural theories and with such different approaches as neo-Marxist anthropology, structuralism, feminism, post-positivist social science, hermeneutics, phenomenology and many others (Cuzzo 1996, 7-11; Shanks forthcoming, 1). The many different theoretical approaches have even led to the suggestion that post-processual archaeology should more correctly be referred to as post-processual archaeologies (Shanks forthcoming, 5).

Concerning burial archaeology and post-processual archaeology(ies), the approach has been, running contrary to processual archaeology, that a burial could at best be only an indirect reflection of society and that individual actions and decisions had to be taken into consideration when studying such *rites de passage* as burials (Härke 1997, 21). The British post-processual school developed in two main directions within the study of burial archaeology – symbolic or contextual post-processualism and sociological post-processualism. Symbolic post-processualism takes as its point of departure the premise that human actions are expressed in symbols and that archaeological remains reflect these symbols. The symbols only become clear in the context in which they were created. Burials are then perceived as data which must be decoded in their complete context – that is their temporal, spatial, social, religious and

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22 Until the 1980s the theoretical development of burial archaeology by and large took place within prehistoric archaeology. It was not until Ian Morris in the late 1980s applied theory and method from prehistory to historical Classical archaeology that the discipline really took to these thoughts (Morris 1987; 1992; see also Morris 1998 for an evaluation of his first two studies).

symbolic contexts (Härke 1997, 21). This implies that the grave type, the orientation of the grave, the object associations, the objects' locations inside and outside the grave, the types of objects, the decoration and size of the objects, substitutions of one object type for another, the age, sex and deposition of the body, etc. must all be analysed.

Sociological post-processualism shares many of the premises of other post-processual work, but takes as its point of departure ideas from modern social theory, mainly from scholars such as A. Giddens and P. Bourdieu. The line of thought results in the premise that burials cannot be seen as passive reflections of society but that they are the results of actions that shape society (Härke 1997, 21; Parker Pearson 1999, 84). Furthermore, a burial should be seen not so much as an indicator of the actual social position of the deceased but as a reflection of the intentions of those who buried the deceased (Parker Pearson 1999, 84).

Post-processual approaches to burial archaeology can be summarized as follows (from Lull 2000, 578):

- 1) Funerary remains are not a direct reflection of social system norms.
- 2) Funerary variability does not reflect individual status.
- 3) Particular funerary patterns cannot be classified into universal levels of social complexity.
- 4) Burial contexts are particular and historical scenarios in which power struggles are settled symbolically.
- 5) Individual funerary practices must be analyzed in their own terms.
- 6) Conflict (of gender, class and ethnic groups) is emphasized as the basis of social dynamics.
- 7) There is a continuation of the instrumental and data processing methodologies begun by processual archaeology (formalization, quantification)
- 8) There is a use of traditional procedure based on analogy, but now from the hermeneutic/post-structuralist points of view.

In recent years, burial archaeology has also been influenced by agency theory which has its roots in social and anthropological theory, but has been applied by archaeologists to a wide range of research topics (Dobres & Robb 2000; 2005; Shanks forthcoming). Agency theory acknowledges the individual human being with individual thoughts and motives and downplays structuralism. The main ideas come from the social theories of Giddens and Bourdieu (Dobres & Robb 2000, 4).

Within burial archaeology, this theory has worked well with post-processual approaches, with a greater emphasis on the role of the individual. As Parker Pearson writes:

*funerals are lively, contested events where social roles are manipulated, acquired and discarded. The deceased as he/she was in life may be thoroughly misrepresented in death – the living have more to do than just express their grief and go home. Thus the material culture retrieved by archaeologists as the remains of funerary rites is not the passive ‘statics’ resulting from active behavioural ‘dynamics’ but is itself part of the active manipulation of people’s perceptions, beliefs and allegiances (Parker Pearson 1999, 32).*

However, applying agency theory demands care in order to avoid an ‘over-focus’ on the individual and so as not to downplay, if not ignore, the social/collective aspects of life (and death); the rituals, traditions and common focal points of shared culture and society.<sup>23</sup> The ultimate goal must be to balance the actions of the individual with the reflections of the collective, however difficult this may be when dealing with the archaeological record (see also Laneri 2007b, 309-317).

Although the present study mainly draws upon elements from both symbolic post-processualism and sociological post-processualism, there is a break with the post-processual line as regards the latter’s denial of the reflections of individual status and social complexity. In this study burials are perceived as social arenas where individual social status and the complexities of the burying society *can* be reflected. Burials are understood as symbols and the different aspects of the burials can mask symbols. These symbols can, when decoded, be a rich source and a means to understanding the religious, social and personal aspects and motives of the people and culture in question. One of the main premises of this is to understand the burial as a *rite de passage*: as a common cultural arena where common rituals are followed and practised – and at the same time used, and often manipulated, by individuals with individual motives. So while the emphasis here is on symbolism and structuralism, it is understood and used in combination with a greater focus on the role of the individual as well as the burying society. It follows that a key premise of this study is that burials are ‘mirrors’ both of life and death, and that these mirrors reflect both the deceased and the living (also Laneri 2007a, 2-5).

#### *The nature of burial archaeology: possibilities and limits*

Burials can be categorized as ‘intentional archaeological sources’. This means that burials are results of deliberate and subjective choices made around the time of the funeral. Thus, burials, when not destroyed, robbed or reused, give an intact picture of a certain situation created in a religious and subjective context. Burials are therefore open to studies and interpretations of the

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23 Also Tarlow 1999, 26-27 for a critique of agency theory as applied to burial archaeology.

burial customs, religious practices, social aspects and so on. But it is also important to remember that the burials, as we find them in archaeological excavations, are only a glimpse of the whole funeral ritual – the death of the person, the handling of the body, the *lit de parade* (the ancient Greek *prothesis*), the bringing of the body to the grave (the Greek *ekphora*) perhaps accompanied by music, song and dance, the rituals by the grave, the actual burial and the rituals of the following periods. Furthermore, other important material features such as textiles, foods, cosmetics, leather, wood and other perishable objects are very rarely preserved or discovered. All these elements of the complete ritual have vanished and we are left with only a fragment of the death of an individual and the following funeral; so, as well as intentional, burials must also be seen as ‘fragmentary and incomplete’ (also Härke 1997, 22).

Another aspect of the discussion is the selective nature of burials; selective in the sense that one can not rely on all material available in the society at a certain time to be represented in the graves. Objects for burials may be chosen with specific purposes in mind, and other objects that may have been the choice in an everyday situation may be left out.<sup>24</sup> I shall not dwell long on this, but will just point out that the selective nature of the burial data brings us closer to the choices made and allows for the decoding of these in both a religious and social context. But the selective nature also makes it problematic to answer questions on very general macro levels, for example on the trade or economy of an entire society or region. Such matters must be dealt with in a general perspective, ideally embracing settlement, cemetery and sanctuary contexts in one coherent analysis.

### 1.5 The Greeks and the ‘Others’ in the burial data of the Black Sea region

A central aspect of archaeology in the Black Sea region – as in many other areas of the ancient world – is that of ethnicity and multicultural societies. The Black Sea area in both modern and ancient times constitutes a complex cultural region where many different spheres of cultural influence have been in play at different times. In Antiquity, the Mediterranean world, the cultures of the East (Asia/Persia), central European cultures and nomadic cultures of the steppes to the north and east all met, overlapped and contributed to the cultural complexity of the region in different ways during different periods. Needless to say, the question of the ethnic composition of the Black Sea

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24 On the contrary, it is of course also important not to dismiss the possibility of objects being chosen simply because they were available at the time of the funeral, the organization of which would have had a certain time limit.

populations has attracted much scholarly attention, from the very beginning of research on the southern Russian shores to modern-day scholarship.<sup>25</sup>

Burial material has played a significant and often even central role in the majority of these studies on the basis of both the preservation of mortuary contexts and the abundance of funerary material from the region. But other equally important sources in the debate have been the ancient literary evidence such as Herodotos' *Histories* (Hdt. 4), Dio Chrysostomos's descriptions of Olbia (Dio. Chrys. *Or.* 36) and Ovid's letters from Tomis (Ov. *Tr.*). In many a demographic study, the accounts of these ancient authors have been used to describe the relations between the Greeks and the 'barbarians' of the region. However, no matter how valuable ancient contemporary sources may seem to us modern-day scholars writing thousands of years later, it is of utmost importance to stress that these texts were composed with hidden personal or political agendas in mind, often pursuing specific rhetorical goals which severely weakens their testimony as direct, objective reflections of the actual situations.<sup>26</sup>

In the wake of the faith placed in the ancient accounts of cultural relations and interactions in the Black Sea region, a hellenocentric approach towards cultural processes has prevailed and many studies of the Greek colonization and the meeting of cultures have traditionally taken as their point of departure the notion that the Greeks were the bearers of a high standard of culture, and either forced it upon – or more peacefully taught it to – the 'barbaric' natives or locals. The history of research of Greek colonization, not just of the Black Sea region but also for the ancient world in general, bears testimony to this (also Shepherd 1999, 267, 271-273 for examples from the Greek West).<sup>27</sup> Even though the arguments and discussions have become more complex and sophisticated in recent decades, the hellenocentric approach to the role of the

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25 Just to mention a few of the many studies which I have come across in my research for this project: Minns 1913; Rostovtsev 1918; Rostovtzeff 1922; Kapošina 1941; 1950; Knipovič 1941; Furmanskaja 1959; Skudnova 1960; Kozub 1974; Maslennikov 1978; 1981; 1995; 2005; Grač 1981; Lordkipanidze 1981; Bessonova 1991; Denisova 2001; Kryzhitskiy 2007; Zin'ko 2007. See also, Morgan 2004, 229-231, especially note 405 with references to recent debates in both Western and Russian scholarly approaches. The bibliography of scholars dealing with ethnicity in Western archaeology is indeed long. Here I will only mention the most important works drawn on in this particular study: Lomas & Cornell 1997; Hall 1997; 2002; Jones 1997; Morgan 1999; 2001; Lomas 1997; 2000; 2004; Herring & Lomas 2000; Siapkas 2003.

26 See, for example, Bähler (2007) on Dio Chrysostomos's descriptions of Olbia. See also Allen (2003) for a cross-cultural approach to identity expressions in Attic funerary monuments.

27 Another example can be found in Pugliese Carratelli 1996, 523-554, where all contributions are titled: 'The Impact of the Greek Colonies on the Indigenous Peoples of XX region'. See also Browning 2002; Nippel 2002 for detailed overviews of approaches to and perceptions of 'Greeks and Others' throughout the history of this field of research.



Greeks outside Greece, and especially their role in the Black Sea, still exists amongst many scholars. This notion of Greek culture as being superior to other cultures has produced a picture of the Black Sea area as a region dominated by civilized Greek poleis along the coast which must fight the 'barbaric' nomadic tribes of the steppe.<sup>28</sup>

Very broadly speaking, this approach has been conducted within the framework of one of the most commonly applied theoretical approaches to archaeology and ancient history – the centre-periphery model. This model describes and deals with 'periphery' regions from a Mediterranean or central European perspective and searches for interpretations and explanatory models developed in these parts of the ancient world, rather than focusing on these regions as geopolitical and social unities in themselves (see, for example, Skydsgaard 1993). For the study of burial material, this has resulted in a very dualistic approach mainly concerned with the issue of whether burial customs in the coastal areas of the Black Sea were 'Greek' or 'barbaric'. Consequently, it has been the main task in the majority of the traditional research to determine whether a certain grave type or a certain type of grave good had its origin in this or that culture, hence reflecting a certain, fixed ethnicity. The danger here has been that the essential question of material remains and their place in the study of ethnicity and identity has never been properly addressed. This problem is illustrated below by listing some of the most commonly used 'ethnic markers' within traditional Greek and Scythian burial archaeology.

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28 The first scholars to put forward this picture were Minns 1913; Rostovtsev 1918; Rostovtzeff 1922. For more recent assessments of the matter, see, for example, Ascherson 1995, 80-81; Archibald 2004, 4-5; Rempel 2004, 13-25.

Table 4. Commonly used 'ethnic markers' within traditional Greek and Scythian burial archaeology

Traditional Greek features:	Traditional Scythian features:
A limited variation in grave good types and a tendency towards more homogeneous grave good assemblages over time	Red dye and other mineral substances inside the graves
Wooden coffins and sarcophagi of either wood or stone	Wooden coverings of graves and fluting at the bottom of graves
	Organic bedding (eel grass and other organic materials)
Very few weapons in burials	Weapons, whetstones, knives, needles, spindle whorls, hand-made pottery, mirrors, stone plates ('altars'), jewellery of precious metal
Greek ceramics and other 'Greek' products such as terracotta figurines and protomes	Scythian animal style objects
Supine position	(Various) Crouched and contracted positions
Orientation of the deceased towards the east	Orientation of the deceased towards the west
	Horse burials and remains of other animals in or near the burials
Flat-ground burials	Burials in kurgans
	Niche graves
Greek type <i>stelai</i> with Greek names and inscriptions	Anthropomorphic <i>stelai</i>

In constructing such a dogmatic and static concept based solely on material remains there is a danger of ignoring the fact that objects cross borders, be they of geographical, cultural, social or ethnic construction. Ethnic groups can surely identify themselves through objects, but the perceptions and functions of objects can never ultimately be isolated within one ethnic sphere – at least not in regions constituted of fluctuating cultural groups. Thus, the complexity of materiality is of a much less transparent nature than the dogma of 'Greek' or 'native' allows for.

The core of the problem is precisely formulated by Fless & Treister with examples from Herodotos' story of the Scythian king Skytes (Hdt. 4.78-80) and Dio's description of the young man Kallistratos from Olbia (Dio. Chrys. Or. 36.7-10):



*Was faßte man, fände man die Tracht- und Bewaffnungselemente des Skyles oder des Kallistratos in einem Grabinventar? Würde man die Bestattung des 'griechischen' Skyles, wenn er in einer olbischen Nekropole beigesetzt worden wäre, als Bestattung eines Individuums interpretieren können, das auch eine 'skythische' Identität besitzt, oder die das skythisch gekleideten und bewaffneten Kallistratos als die eines Homer verehrenden Griechen? (Fless & Treister 2005, 10).*

So where do we find an alternative method with which to address these issues and to understand such a culturally complex region as the Black Sea area? Within anthropology and other social disciplines, a long tradition of borderland and frontier theories has developed, drawing primarily on the groundbreaking boundary studies by Fredrik Barth (also Blake 2004, 239-240; Preucel & Meskell 2004, 220-221 for recent bibliography). This field of research took as its point of departure modern American history concerned with the colonization of 'the new land' and the meeting with Native American populations. The relevance of the theory in this particular context could be presented as follows: borderland theory is in opposition to traditional views of borderland regions as zones that separate people and create groups identified from the notions of 'Us' and 'Them'. Rather, the borderlands are viewed as zones of contact and interaction. There is a tendency to downplay the notion of conflicts and ongoing struggles between isolated ethnic groups and to focus instead on dynamic cultural exchange and the creation of new and more complex identities as the result of cultural interactions. These hybrid identities have different faces and are able to change according to personal and social circumstances. Thus, in contrast to the notion of identities being stable, unchangeable and nation-state dependent, identities in borderland regions are seen as flexible, multifaceted and in an ongoing negotiation and development that has no strong connection to the nation-state, and these cannot be approached via the centre-periphery model. Hence, the meeting and co-existence of cultures is not seen as an expression of fixed, static and bounded notions of 'Us and Them', but rather as open, flexible and interactive cultural processes.<sup>29</sup>

Ultimately, these considerations create a platform for this study which does not perceive ethnicities on the basis of static terms such as 'Greek' or 'native', but rather focuses on the cultural complexities that tend to be hidden behind fixed ethnic categories and thus on the cultural affiliations, hybridizations and interactions of different population groups.

In view of the above-mentioned considerations, the following terms are used throughout this study:

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29 Also Lomas 2004, 1-3. Within the study of Classics, the long-standing debate on intermarriage between Greeks and 'natives' has lightly touched upon this aspect of cultural interaction (for a recent discussion of the matter and a thorough bibliography, see Shepherd 1999; Hall 2004, 40-41; also Coldstream 1993).

- 'ethnic identity/ethnicity' is used in its traditional historical meaning to refer to membership of a defined ethnic group – an *ethnos* sharing an association with a specific common territory, a shared history and a collective myth of descent.<sup>30</sup>
- 'cultural identity' is defined as independent of *ethnos* – thus, it is a cultural identity unit constituted by a group of people with similar and/or different ethnic background(s), sharing the same (or some of the same) cultural identity markers such as objects, language, traditions, religious beliefs, etc.<sup>31</sup>
- 'cultural interaction' is understood and used here as a broad term to describe inter-cultural processes such as intermarriage, co-existing populations with mixed cultural backgrounds, exchange of objects, traditions, customs and other (through trade and contact of other sorts), as well as inter-cultural influences on the most general level.

The point of departure for my analysis is the notion that local social processes and strategies are more readily expressed in funerary material than actual ethnic identities or groupings. The local cultural environment and the nearer social processes therefore take a primary position in my analysis. What we may hope to decode, however, is both evidence for cultural interaction and reflections of cultural identities expressed independently from ethnicity.

*Nota Bene – applying comparative material from the Greek homeland*

Although it may prove fruitful to understand the Black Sea area as a borderland region and zone of cultural contacts, it is also still relevant to recognize the Greek cultural background of the coastal milieux and incorporate comparative material from other Greek centres as well as from general studies of Greek burial customs. Meanwhile, in this discourse it is crucial to bear in mind that burial customs varied greatly within the Greek world, and there was no unanimous approach to burial customs and no single particular way to bury or to be buried in the Greek manner. The material record and the written sources,<sup>32</sup> from, for example, Athens or other Greek cities, may not apply completely, if at all, to the way burial customs took shape in the Black Sea region. This is not to say, on the other hand, that there were no common Greek burial rituals or customs, but close comparison of material and the search for similarities between burial customs from various parts of the Greek cultural sphere may not always be as fruitful a quest as hoped for.

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30 Defined so by, for example, Hutchinson & Smith 1996, 3-7; Hall 1997, 17-33; McInerney 2001, 51-54; Hall 2002, 9-17.

31 See also Hall 2002, 17 for a detailed assessment of the relations between ethnicity and cultural identity.

32 For example, the famous public funerary legislations from Athens and Keos (see Hame 1999, 1-3 with further references).

Even when it comes to the relationship between colony and mother city, the matter is complicated.

In his monograph of 1964 Graham argues for strong relations between Miletos and her Pontic colonies, based primarily on trade (Graham 1964, 109-110).<sup>33</sup> One of his main sources is a decree of c. 330 stating mutual citizenship, legal and religious rights, as well as exemption from taxes to be granted to Olbian citizens in Miletos and to Milesians in Olbia (*Milet I.3*, no. 136; Graham 1964, 99-103). A similar decree on the relationship between Miletos and the colony Cyzikos at the Propontis Strait is also known, as well as a badly-preserved decree on the relations between Miletos and Istros, possibly of the same character (Graham 1964, 107-109; *Milet I.3*, nos. 141, 155).<sup>34</sup> However, concerning the Black Sea burials, the question of relations between colony and mother city poses some difficulties since the main colonizer, Miletos, does not offer any burial material of a statistically significant quantity for comparisons (Müller-Wiener, Göksel & von Graeve 1988; Gorman 2001, 206-207; Greaves 2002, 87-88). The same problem is evident for Taras, for example, which has a rich corpus of burial data, but virtually none from the mother city of Sparta. However, G. Shepherd's study of burial customs from selected cities in Sicily and their respective mother cities shows no evident similarities between the burial customs in the colonies and those in the mother city (Shepherd 1995, 72-73). Rather, the results point in the direction of an independent burial culture, possibly related to an urge for a sovereign position with regards to the mother city, and an emphasis on local and regional strategies rather than on broad inter-Mediterranean relations (Shepherd 1995, 76). Additionally, the study by J.M. Hall and C. Morgan on Akhaian colonies of southern Italy further strengthens this picture by demonstrating that close relations and similarities in material culture transferred from the mother city to the colonies, and *vice versa*, do not seem to have been a matter of course (Hall & Morgan 1996, 213-214).

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33 For a recent account of the Milesian colonies, see Gorman 2001, Appendix.

34 For more recent studies, see also Ehrhardt 1983; Gorman 2001, 147-151; Greaves 2002, especially 104-109.



# Chapter 2 Olbia

This chapter firstly presents a short introduction to the research history of Olbia<sup>35</sup> as well as a critique and evaluation of the publications of burial data relevant to this study. Thereafter, an introduction to the main phases of the development of the city, its rural territory and its cemetery is given, followed by an analysis and discussion of the burial data registered in the database; firstly the graves and secondly the grave goods. The results of the analysis are compared to previous interpretations of the burial data. Finally, a summarized overview of burial material of the same chronological period from other localities in the northwestern Black Sea region is offered.

## 2.1 An introduction to the research history of Olbia

Historical and archaeological interest in ancient Olbia began more than 200 years ago when the traveller P.S. Pallas visited the area in 1794. The interest at this early stage was mainly focused on the identification of the site as the ancient Greek city of Olbia, as well as the discovery of the cemetery, the so-called 'area of the hundred graves' (Kryzhytskyy et al. 2003, 391;<sup>36</sup> also Papanova 2006<sup>37</sup>) (Figs. 2.1 and 2.2). During the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, work was mainly concentrated on mapping the area and its visible monuments, such as architectural structures and burial mounds, while proper documented excavations did not take place until the middle of the century. Near the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the first publications on the history and archaeology of Olbia appeared; the most thorough and scientifically reliable for its time probably being V.V. Latyshev's work on the political and economic history of Olbia based on epigraphic and numismatic evidence (Kryzhytskyy et al.

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35 See also Avram, Hind & Tsetschladze 2004, 936-940 for a contribution on Olbia to the *Inventory of Archaic and Classical Poleis of the Copenhagen Polis Centre* (Hansen & Nielsen 2004).

36 The publications by Grammenos & Petropoulos (2003; 2007) leave much to be desired in many aspects, as also pointed out by Baebler (2004) and Morin (2009). However, these volumes still offer the most recent comprehensive collection of studies of the Black Sea region presented by the most eminent eastern European scholars in the field, and there is great value to be gained from the bibliographies and general overviews.

37 A very comprehensive and detailed account of the research history of the Olbian cemetery can be found in Papanova 2006, 7-64.



Fig. 2.1. Olbia. Lower City (photo by Tom Birch Hansen)

2003, 391-392). However, the turn of the century saw radical changes to the scientific situation of the Olbian excavations. From 1901 onwards, one of the most renowned Russian Classical archaeologists, B.V. Farmakovskij, conducted ongoing systematic excavations and investigations in Olbia. As previously mentioned, his work there was to become some of the most important and respected scientific undertakings of the period within the discipline of Classical archaeology in the Black Sea region. The early years of Farmakovskij's excavations in Olbia, from 1901 to 1915, mainly concentrated on the cemetery and the extensive archaeological material which its burials yielded. The results were published preliminarily in the *Otčet Imperatorskoj Archeologičeskoj Komissii* (OAK) with the clear intention by Farmakovskij to publish them in a specialist study. Unfortunately, this intention never came to fruition, and after his death in 1928 all such plans were abandoned.

The focus of Farmakovskij's work in Olbia shifted after 1915 when the intensive excavations of the cemetery were replaced by investigations into the city's topographical layout and development during the different chronological periods from the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC to the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD (Kryzhytskyy et al. 2003, 392). In the main, Farmakovskij's work at Olbia coincided with a period of major political turbulence in Russia – firstly the horrors of World War I and shortly thereafter the October Revolution. These difficult circumstances naturally affected the excavations, which came to an abrupt halt in 1915 and were not resumed until 1924. In the period after Farmakovskij's death in 1928, archaeological research at Olbia was primarily undertaken by scholars such



*Fig. 2.2. Olbia. View of cemetery area (photo by Tom Birch Hansen)*

as L.M. Slavin, A.N. Karasev and E.I. Levin, who had all taken part in Farmakovskij's excavations and now continued his line of work (Kryzhytskyy et al. 2003, 393). The focus was still on the city's topography and architectural development, resulting in extensive explorations of the city's agora, temenos areas, defensive walls and private houses.<sup>38</sup> In general, it must be stressed that the ancient city of Olbia, with its cemetery and surrounding rural territory, has been subject to intensive investigations throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Thus, rarely has a summer passed by without there being large-scale excavations employing an impressive number of people – even through the difficult period of the early 1990s.

After the death of L.M. Slavin in 1972, research in Olbia came under the direction of S.D. Kryžickij and his team of archaeologists and historians from the Academy of Sciences in Kiev. The focus of research was maintained on the city's topographical and architectural development as well as the cemetery, but attention was now also given to the city's religious life and to the rural territory (Kryzhytskyy et al. 2003, 395-397). Many important results sprang from this period of research at Olbia, but unfortunately this brief introduction only allows for a few of them to be mentioned here. However, some of the main developments will be treated in more detail further on in this chapter.

From the early period of the city's existence it is crucial to mention the

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38 See Kryzhytskyy et al. 2003, 393-395 for a through introduction to the research areas and related bibliography for this period of investigation at Olbia.



establishment of the main dwelling type as the so-called 'dug-out' – a type of dwelling formerly thought to belong to the local nomadic or semi-nomadic populations. The research at Olbia has revealed numerous early (6<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> century) examples of this type of dwelling within the city, and has added substantially to our knowledge of life during the earliest period of the Greek presence in the Black Sea region.<sup>39</sup>

Furthermore, within the sphere of private architecture, the living quarters of the Hellenistic period have been investigated, especially through the excavations conducted by N.A. Lepunskaja in the area of the northern part of the so-called Lower City, Sector NGS. The publication of these houses and cellars will be an important and significant contribution to the understanding of the economic and historical development of the city, as well as improving the understanding of the complicated stratigraphy of the Olbian cityscape from the Classical to the late Hellenistic and early Roman period (Lepunskaja et al. forthcoming; Guldager Bilde et al. 2008).<sup>40</sup> Additionally, in the Lower City area, underwater investigations have yielded important information about the extensive flooding of the area, which has resulted in large parts of the city's lower areas being under water, including the harbour and its warehouse areas (Kryzhytskyy et al. 2003, 396-397). The mapping of these underwater localities has added significantly to the understanding of the topography of the Lower City as well as of the city's general development and economic history throughout the different periods of its existence.

Smaller-scale excavations continue to be conducted in the cemetery area today, where a team under the supervision of Ju.I. Kozub, Kiev, is working in the central cemetery sector. Here, burials of the late Classical and Hellenistic periods are revealed in an area of early Classical settlement structures. Furthermore, excavations, as well as research into the burial customs, are conducted annually by V. Papanova of the University of Berdyansk (Papanova 2006, with bibliography).<sup>41</sup>

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39 It seems to be widely recognized today that dug-outs were the primary dwelling structure in most of the coastal settlements of the northern Black Sea region until c. mid 6<sup>th</sup> century, when stone structures seem to have gradually replaced the dug-outs. There is, however, evidence of dug-outs being in use well into the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC. The literature on dug-outs is extensive and different views exist among scholars as to their identification and function, see, for example, Kuznetsov 1999, 531-564; Solovyov 1999, 31-43, 101-112; Kryzhytskyy et al. 2003, 428-429; Sokolova 2003, 766; Solov'ev 2003, 116; Guldager Bilde 2004a, 3; Tsetskhladze 2004, 225-258.

40 See also [http://www.pontos.dk/field\\_projects/olbia\\_sector](http://www.pontos.dk/field_projects/olbia_sector)

41 See also Žuravlev & Lomtadze 2007 for a recent publication of some seven burials dating from the early 3<sup>rd</sup> to the early 1<sup>st</sup> century BC.



## 2.2 An assessment and critique of the primary publications

Before turning to the development of the city, its cemetery and rural territory, an evaluation and critique of the primary publications of burial data relevant to this study will be presented, as this has a fundamental impact on both the chronological frame and quantitative set of data in use in this particular chapter.

The three main publications of tombs from Olbia which contain detailed catalogues of the burials are Kozub 1974; Parovič-Pešikan 1974; Skudnova 1988. These three publications were selected as the starting point for this study on the following grounds:

- All three contain detailed catalogues of the burials which meet the criteria of the database and the analyses;
- The publications cover the entire chronological span of the study;
- The publications contain the largest statistical pool of data from any of the localities in the study, all in all resulting in the presentation of c. 500 graves from the relevant chronological periods.

However, whilst working through the catalogues of Kozub 1974 and Parovič-Pešikan 1974, some severe problems were encountered which, as far as I am aware, have not been addressed in any previous literature on the topic. This observation naturally called for a more detailed examination of the publications and resulted in the following assessment.

A significant number of inaccuracies and discrepancies in the catalogue texts, mainly concerning facts regarding burials, grave types, numbers and types of objects, were detected. These discrepancies came to light since both publications draw on some of the same primary data (from Farmakovskij's preliminary reports) and both catalogues were published in the same year, 1974. This led me to undertake a comparative study of potential 'double' registrations, which confirmed quite a number. The following two examples illustrate this problem. The first example is the registration of Kozub 1974 and that of Parovič-Pešikan 1974 of Grave 74 from Farmakovskij's excavations in 1910.

Table 5:

<b>Parovič-Pešikan 1974, 163.</b>	<b>Kozub 1974, 150-151.</b>
In fill: neck of amphora, stamped.	Inside grave: neck of amphora.
Inside grave: amphora, stamped OX. <sup>8</sup>	
Inside grave: red-figured palmette lekythos.	
On right hand: bronze bracelet.	Near right hand: bronze bracelet.
Inside grave: three bronze (finger?) rings.	Inside grave: bronze rings.
Inside grave: iron finger ring.	
On left hand: bronze bracelet.	
Inside grave: bronze mirror.	
Inside grave: bronze (finger?) ring.	
Inside grave: bronze finger ring.	Inside grave: bronze finger ring.
Inside grave: glass eye beads.	Near head: glass eye beads.
Inside grave: glass pendant (large).	Inside grave: glass pendant.
Inside grave: glass pendant (small).	Inside grave: glass pendant.
Inside grave: glass pendants from a necklace.	
Inside grave: multicoloured bead (large).	Inside grave: blue bead (large).
	Inside grave: bronze bead.
	Inside grave: three bronze pendants (amphoriskos shaped).
Cover of niche opening: 10 amphoras, stamped.	Cover of niche opening: 11 amphoras (9 Heraklean).
	Female burial.
Date: 4 <sup>th</sup> century to beginning of 3 <sup>rd</sup> century BC.	Date: end of 5 <sup>th</sup> century to beginning of 4 <sup>th</sup> century BC.

42 This reproduction of the stamp by Parovič-Pešikan is incorrect and should read XIO (Monachov 1999, 167-168).

From this schematic illustration it becomes clear that the two publications of the same grave context are highly divergent, both as to the recording and identification of the finds, and, not the least, of the date of the burial. If one was unaware of the true situation, it would be easy to assume that these are two completely different grave complexes. Since in this present study both the recording of the finds and the identification of the grave goods play a crucial role in the database registration and the analyses, the outcome and conclusions could be heavily biased as the result of such discrepancies. In the treatment and interpretation of burial customs, it is surely significant whether objects such as a red-figured palmette lekythos, a bronze mirror and glass and metal jewellery were present among the grave goods or not. As to the dating of the grave complex, it is unquestionably extremely significant to know whether the stamped amphora neck was found inside the grave or in the fill, and, even more significant, to know if the stamped amphora (XIO) and the red-figured palmette lekythos were actually present in the burial or not! Furthermore, the identification of the types and the dating of the amphoras covering the opening of the niche inside the grave is of equal importance for the assessment of the grave complex, and here also inaccuracies and discrepancies are evident: Kozub (1974, 150-151) described nine Heraklean amphoras as well as two unidentified ones, whilst Parovič-Pešikan (1974, 163) recorded only 10 amphoras with no further identifications. Monachov (1999, 167-168) identified one Heraklean amphora inside the grave and 10 covering the opening, among them three Chian and some Heraklean. He dated the complex to the 390-380s BC.

This problematic situation concerning serious discrepancies in the dating of some of the burial complexes is also illustrated by a second example: the registrations of Kozub and Parovič-Pešikan of Grave 37 from Farmakovskij's excavations in 1903.

Table 6:

Parovič-Pešikan 1974, 159.	Kozub 1974, 139.
Near head: black-glossed kylix.	Near head: black-glossed kylix.
Near head: black-glossed askos.	
Near right hand: black-glossed bowl.	
At left side of body: iron sword.	Inside grave: sword.
At feet, in corner: amphora.	Near feet: amphora.
In fill: 44 bronze arrowheads.	Near feet: 44 bronze arrowheads.
	Near head: ring-shaped vessel with a 'bridging' handle. (Is this the black-glossed askos mentioned by Parovič-Pešikan?).
	Male burial.
Date: end of 4 <sup>th</sup> century to beginning of 3 <sup>rd</sup> century BC.	Date: first half of 5 <sup>th</sup> century BC.

These discrepancies in dating, with more than 100 years between the two suggestions, cause serious problems, even though my chronological phases are very broad and designed to tackle the broader dating of some of the publications included in the study. Thus, the example above could fall within either Phase 3 or 4, depending on which of the two publications priority was given to. It is highly problematic, if not impossible, to include data with such serious discrepancies in the kind of analyses applied in this study since they may alter the picture too radically, thus heavily biasing the interpretations and conclusions.

All in all, there are 16 graves in the studied material which are published by both scholars, and discrepancies occur in *all* of them.<sup>43</sup> This fact can only create serious doubts as to the accuracy of the remaining registrations. Furthermore, another problem which is very central for the data in this particular work, arises from a detailed study of the publications: some of the double

43 The studied material amounts to a total of 69 burials (which met the criteria of the database and the chronological frame of > c. 270) registered from Parovič-Pešikan 1974 and checked against Kozub 1974. The double registrations concern the following graves: Grave 37, 1903; Grave 8, 1905; Grave 17, 1905; Grave 21, 1905; Grave 34, 1905; Grave 30, 1906; Grave 21, 1910; Grave 53, 1910; Grave 63, 1910; Grave 71, 1910; Grave 74, 1910; Grave 28, 1911; Grave 33, 1911; Grave 71, 1911; Grave 85, 1912; Grave 63, 1913.

registrations are registered by Parovič-Pešikan (1974, 159,161) without any remarks on their state of preservation, while Kozub (1974, 141, 150) has them registered in her catalogue as plundered (Grave 8, 1905 and Grave 71, 1910).

A more general critique can be aimed at the contradictions within the individual catalogue texts, for example skeletons being listed as 'not preserved', but grave goods then being described as placed somewhere on or near specific body parts (for example, Grave 14, 1915). Whether or not this contradictory information stems from the reports of Farmakovskij or from the authors in question, the lack of a critical approach to the primary data is evident in both publications.

Moving away from a critique of the catalogue, there are also some points to be raised with regards to the text parts of the publications. Both scholars date the burial complexes primarily on the basis of the imported fineware (mostly black-glossed and red-figured vessels). However, I have not managed to find one single reference to the dating of any black-glossed types from *Agora XII*, even though this publication was out in 1970 and did at the time add significantly to the chronology, typology and general dating of black-glossed pottery. This means that some of the proposed dates in Parovič-Pešikan 1974 and Kozub 1974 are in serious need of revision.<sup>44</sup>

The solution to this problem could of course be a complete reworking and thereby a redating of the fineware pottery, thus providing more credible dates for the grave complexes in general. Unfortunately, the quality of the photos and illustrations is extremely poor in both publications, and since no technical drawings of the material are included the result is a set of data which offers a very meagre basis for reworking and redating. On a more general level, the inaccuracies and discrepancies detected through comparing the burials published by both scholars can only leave serious doubts as to the credibility and scientific value of the remaining burials included in their publications.

A detailed and critical assessment based on comparisons between these two publications dealing with the cemetery of Olbia is not known to me. In his otherwise very thorough dissertation on the burial customs from Olbia and Pantikapaion from 1999, O'Connor does not mention the problematic state of the publications by Kozub and Parovič-Pešikan. He does, however, have a few critical remarks to make about Skudnova's publication from 1988. Therefore, it is rather peculiar that there are no remarks or critiques concerning the other two, as their works are mentioned by him alongside Skudnova's as the three main publications on the cemetery (O'Connor 1999, 29, 31). In her article from 2001, Denisova very briefly touches upon the works of Kozub and Parovič-Pešikan, but it seems that she limits her critique to the lack of precise identification and dating of the archaeological objects. However, in the same article she

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44 Evidently, we still await the revised edition of the *Agora XII* (by K. Lynch) with an updated and refined chronology of some of the most common types of black-glossed pottery.

goes to some lengths to underline the high quality of the work by Skudnova (1988) in contrast to the two earlier studies (Denisova 2001, 193-194). Denisova further points out that it is necessary to work closely with the handwritten reports of Farmakovskij stored in St Petersburg, as well as to check them against the actual material in the various storerooms. This, she states, is the only way to obtain good, reliable scientific data. This, however, proves to be very problematic, if not impossible, as the material has been divided over the years between different museums in St Petersburg, Moscow, Nikolaev, Parutino and Odessa. Consequently, much of it has suffered the unfortunate destiny of decaying in storerooms – or of having being lost, destroyed or plundered during the two world wars (Skudnova 1988, 5; Denisova 2001, 190-191). These complications have further fuelled my reluctance with regards to investing time in reworking the publications. However, it must be stressed that great rewards would be in store for anyone undertaking such work in the future, since this set of burial data is invaluable for the understanding of Olbian life in Antiquity, as well as to the scientific world in general.

In conclusion, a complete reworking of the publications of Kozub and Parovič-Pešikan has simply not been possible within the limits of this work. On the basis of a fundamental lack of confidence in their scientific value, the publications have been excluded from the present work. This means that, for the material from Olbia, only wholly reliable data have been used to cover the Archaic and early Classical periods. This data set is taken from the 1988 publication by Skudnova.

The publication of the Archaic and early Classical graves by Skudnova offers a close study of the actual material stored in the Hermitage compared with Farmakovskij's initial reports. There are clear indications of where the material record of the Hermitage store rooms does not correspond with the information in the reports. Thus, discrepancies between the actual material in the store-rooms and the written reports are very clearly formulated in the catalogue, leaving the reader with a notion of transparency. Moreover, the catalogue is very detailed, with specific parallels referenced for individual objects. Another strong point is the close attention paid to the dating and the chronology of the individual objects from the burials. However, the treatment of some of the East Greek wares needs revision since much new information has been published on their provenance, production places and dating within the last decade or so (Cook & Dupont 2003).

Colleagues of Skudnova prepared the publication for print after her death in 1964, thus adding crucial information from *Agora XII* and other important publications published after 1964, which resulted in a much more reliable and up-to-date treatment of the grave complexes.

As an important feature, the publication offers a wide range of quality illustrations – both drawings and photos – often grouped according to tomb contexts, which is highly useful and illustrates the full range of the material very well. The initial text part is somewhat sketchy, but all the object groups

are treated in more or less detail, and important information is given about the layout and constructions of the graves, the treatment of the deceased and the grave goods. All in all, the publication by Skudnova seems to be a genuinely reliable piece of scientific work<sup>45</sup> which fully meets the standards and criteria required for this study.<sup>46</sup>

## 2.3 An introduction to the main phases of the city's development

As a result of the problems mentioned above, the following introduction to the development of the city, its cemetery and rural territory will be limited to cover the Archaic and early Classical periods (until c. 450).

### 2.3.1 The city and its rural territory

The most recent comprehensive presentation of Olbia known to me is Kryzhytskyy et al. 2003, and this will be the main source for this very short introduction to the development of Olbia in Archaic and early Classical times. The literature on the history and archaeology of Olbia is of course very extensive with an impressive number of publications of both specific and more general character. However, since these are all referred to in the work by Kryzhytskyy et al. 2003 and listed in the bibliography, I will not refer to them here. Moreover, this introduction also draws on information from the Gazetteer of the Copenhagen Polis Centre (Hansen & Nielsen 2004).

Ancient Olbia, or Borystenes, is located on the right bank of the lower Bug River near the modern village of Parutino, some 45km south of the modern city of Nikolaev. The settlement was placed on upper, middle and lower parts of a plateau created by two large ravines. To the west and northwest the vast area of the cemetery stretches as far as the eye can see covering an estimated 500 hectares, whilst the Bug River gives a natural limitation of the settlement to the east (Fig. 2.3).<sup>47</sup>

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45 This is also the conclusion of both O'Connor (1999, 31), despite a few critical remarks, and Denisova (2001, 193-194), who equally found the work by Skudnova reliable and of significant scientific value.

46 Included in the database is also a smaller number of burials excavated by Knipovič in the late 1930s and early 1940s. These excavations and their publications also seem to meet the criteria of this study (Knipovič 1940a; 1940b; 1941). A study by Furmanskaja (1959) published nine burials of which only three were not plundered. They are used here as reference points where relevant.

47 The GPS coordinates were measured by J.M. Højte in 2004 during a tour of the region made by the Danish National Research Foundations' Centre for Black Sea Studies. At the location of the Central Temenos the measurements were as follows: UTM zone 36. X East 0416206. Y North 5171632. °North 46.69300. °East 31.90407. Height above sea level: 30. (The data are available on the webpage of the Danish National Research Foundations' Centre for Black Sea Studies: <http://lys billed.hum.au.dk/total/gazetteer/gazetteer.htm>.)





Fig.2.3. Olbia. Map of settlement (modified after Kryzhytskyy et al. 2003, fig. 1)



The settlement was probably founded sometime in the second quarter of the 6<sup>th</sup> century by Ionian colonists from Miletos, who had initially occupied the colony on the peninsula (now island) of Berezan' (Kryzhytskyy et al. 2003, 397). The city of Olbia was to exist until the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD as one of the most important and influential cities in the northern part of the Black Sea region.

Early life in the newly-founded colony has mainly been attested in the central and southern areas of the Upper City plateau, where dug-outs and semi dug-outs (with foundations of mud-bricks) have been found in greater numbers. The same area was also, at least from the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century, the focal point of Olbian political and religious life housing the agora and temenos areas, where the cults of Apollon Iatros, Apollon Delphinios and the Mother of Gods were practised (Kryzhytskyy et al. 2003, 399). Also at the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century, Olbian bronze coins shaped as dolphins began to appear, all in all leaving the impression of a well-established, prosperous community with a central political and religious administration. The general prosperity which is reflected in the evidence from the city can also be seen in the rural territory of this period. The number of identified rural settlements at this time reached a total number of 107. Hence, the prime economic basis of the early city is thought to have been agriculture based on the abundant resources of the large rural territory with its many farmsteads and smaller settlements (Kryzhytskyy & Krapivina 2003, 515; Bujtskich, S.B. 2006, 115-121).

Traditionally, the second half of the 6<sup>th</sup> century has been considered a peaceful period in the city's existence when contacts with local nomadic tribes were mutually beneficial. However, in their presentation Kryzhytskyy et al. seem to base this assumption solely on interpretations of Herodotos' accounts of the Scythian king Skyles and his relations with Olbia (Hdt. 4.78-80) (Kryzhytskyy et al. 2003, 399-400; also Kryžickij 2002, 1-2). As I have argued elsewhere, the testimonials of Herodotos on the cultural and political situation in the Black Sea region are best approached with caution (Petersen 2004, 1-2), and the debate on the validity of his work and the use of it in modern-day historical and archaeological research is to my mind far more complex than accounted for in Kryzhytskyy et al. (Kryzhytskyy et al. 2003, 400; also Chapter 1 above). The tendency to take Herodotos' accounts very literally is also most evident in the historical interpretation of the political situation in Olbia when we move into the first half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century. Here scholars have used Herodotos as evidence for a Scythian protectorate over the city (see Kryžickij 2002; Kryzhytskyy et al. 2003, 400 for a summarized presentation of the different points of view, with bibliography). Even though a number of divergent opinions on the nature of the presumed Scythian protectorate exist, it seems that the majority of scholars involved in the discussion fail to question the actual validity of their source material – Herodotos' accounts. So Kryžickij (2002) argues for an independent status for Olbia rather than a subdued one in relation to the Scythians, pointing mainly to the weak interpretation of the central Herodotos passage (Hdt. 4.78), but he still does not question Herodo-

tos as a source on a general level (Kryžickij 2002, 5).<sup>48</sup> The whole construction of the discourse on the Scythian protectorate has served to offer an historical explanation to some radical changes in the archaeological material of the early 5<sup>th</sup> century. In the city, researchers consider the early 5<sup>th</sup> century as a period of transformation when the dug-outs or semi-dug outs were succeeded by proper stone architecture. Moreover, the settlement was not only confined to the Upper City plateaux, but the Lower City was also now in use. The new type of houses were planned in blocks arranged around a central courtyard, much in the manner of Greek court houses (Kryzhytskyy et al. 2003, 400, 429). Furthermore, buildings of a monumental character were erected, and towards the middle of the century a defensive wall was constructed. Most significantly, researchers tend to focus on the relations between the city and its rural territory in this period, since it is assumed that a fundamental reduction of the rural territory took place in the first half of the century. It is considered that out of the 107 late Archaic rural settlements mentioned earlier, only about 10 continued in use after the second/third quarter of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, and these remaining settlements were all located close to the actual city (Kryzhytskyy et al. 2003, 400; Kryzhytskyy & Krapivina 2003, 516; Bujskich, S.B. 2006, 122). It seems that the majority of the population may have moved into the city or closer to the city, and the first suburban areas west of the city are thus dated to the period just before the middle of the century. The economic situation may have changed as a result of the drastic reduction in the area of the agricultural territory. At the very least, it seems that the archaeological evidence for an increased trade and craft industry within the city is significant in this period. This commercial and industrial aspect is also reflected in relations with the hinterland, where archaeological evidence suggests strong trade relations already from the 6<sup>th</sup> century, increasing in the 5<sup>th</sup> century (Kryzhytskyy et al. 2003, 400-401, 403; Gavriljuk 2008, 253).

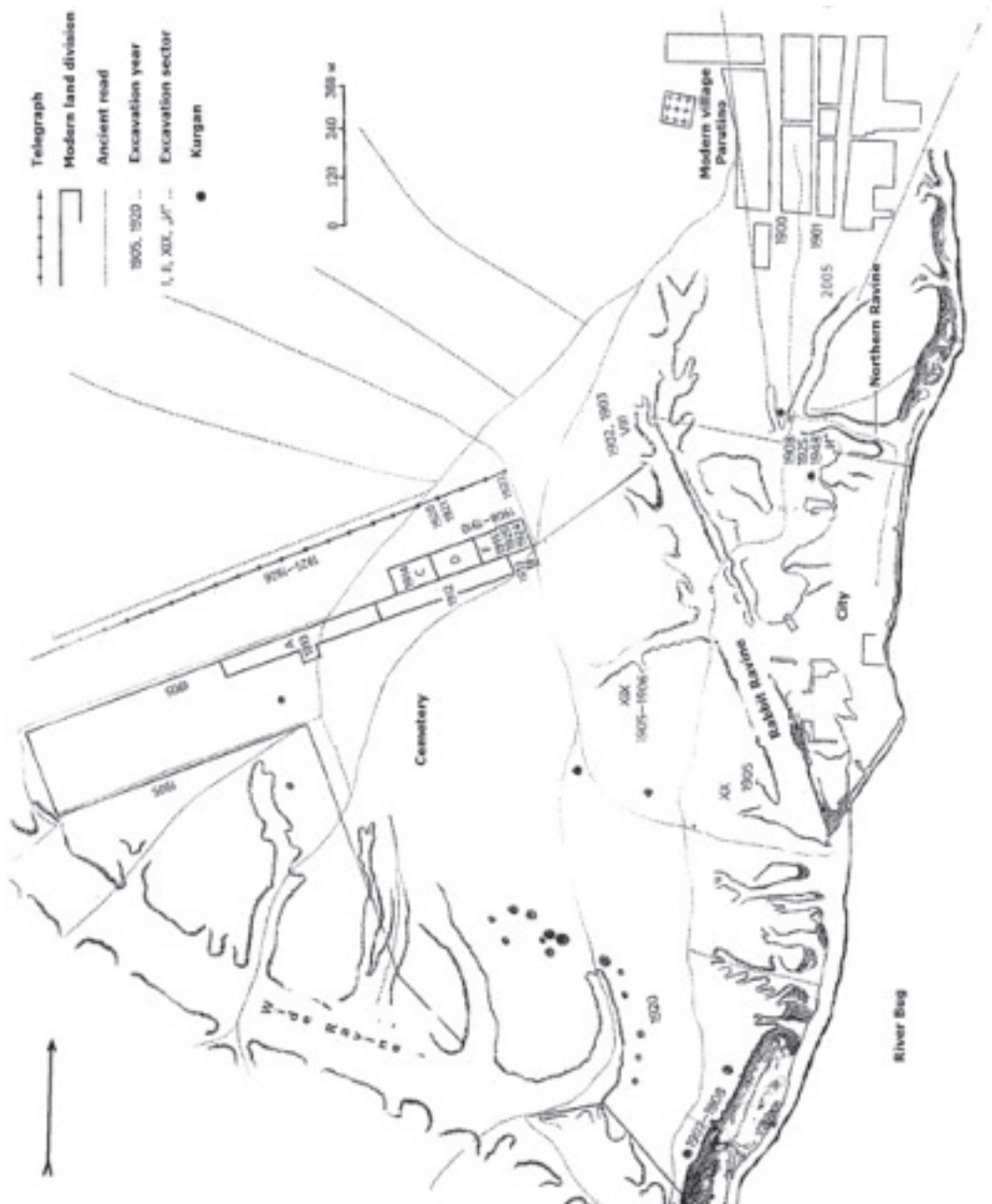
A new development of the rural territory, as well as a general period of prosperity in the city's life, began at the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> century and continued in the 4<sup>th</sup> century.

### **2.3.2 The cemetery**

The general area of the cemetery, corresponding to all periods of the city's existence, is estimated to cover more than 500 hectares spreading out to the west and north of the city (Fig. 2.4.a-c). The borders of the cemetery have not been securely established since much of the northern area is occupied by the modern village of Parutino. To the west, the landscape of the cemetery is dominated by a fork of ancient roads which connected the city with its rural territory.

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48 The scholarly debate on the testimonies of Herodotos mainly grew in the aftermath of Hartog 1988. See also Hall 1989; Thomas 2000; Bakker, de Jong & van Wees 2002 for several important contributions on the topic.





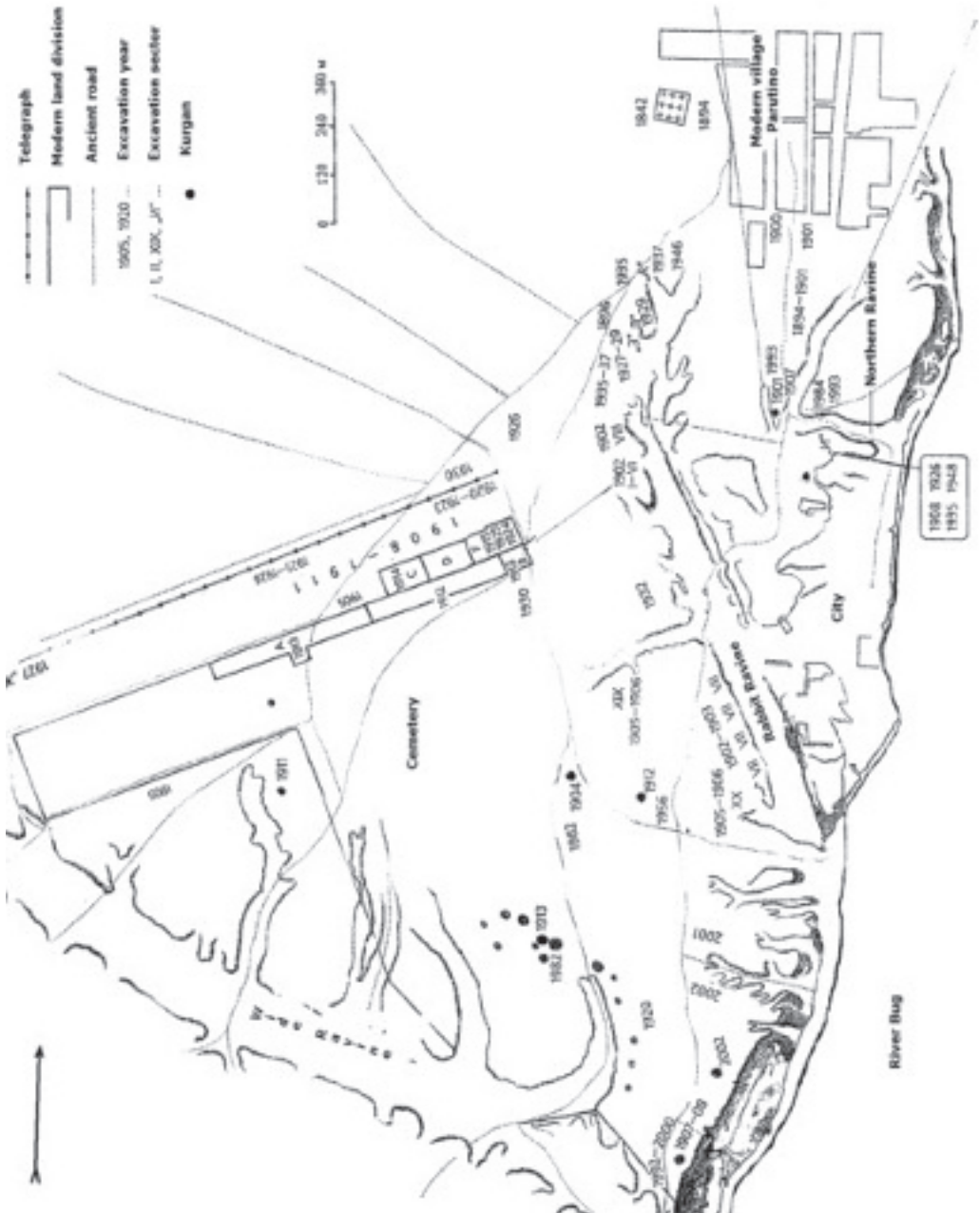


Fig. 2.4.a+b+c Olbia. Maps of the cemetery area indicating year and sector for burial finds of the Archaic (a), Classical (b) and Hellenistic (c) periods respectively (modified after Papanova 2006, figs. 28-30)



Within the long period of excavation activity from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century until the present day, approximately 3,000 burials have been revealed (Kryzhytskyy et al. 2003, 444). Unfortunately, many of these have only been published in a very preliminary manner or not at all. In general, the literature on the cemetery is by no means as extensive as that on the city and its history, despite the fact that the burials of the Olbians have been of major interest to researchers ever since excavations began in the area, and that many magnificent finds have been unearthed from the areas of the cemetery. Modern-day research publications reflect this fact, as is seen clearly in, for example, Kryzhytskyy et al. 2003. Here it quickly becomes very clear that the authors' interest is focused on the settlement and not on the cemetery. The treatment of the latter is very sketchy and superficial, limited to only 2.5 pages, compared with the thorough and very detailed presentation of the city's topography, architecture and historical development which unfolds over 46 pages. O'Connor (1999, 29) remarks that: *the most comprehensive books in western languages on Olbia have their focus on the settlement rather than the necropolis*. This fact can probably be partly explained by the long period of time which has passed since the first excavations in the cemetery by Farmakovskij, who, according to his own diaries and preliminary reports, excavated more than 1,000 burials in the period 1901 to 1915 but unfortunately never published them in a comprehensive study as he intended (Skudnova 1988, 5; Denisova 2001, 191). Subsequent excavations in Olbia after Farmakovskij's death concentrated on continuing the great scholar's most recent work, the layout of the city. Thus, excavations were mainly concerned with the city, and research in the cemetery area was undertaken on a very small scale and often by accident in connection with the settlement investigations. It was not until 1974 that two attempts at a comprehensive study of the Classical and Hellenistic burials from Olbia were to appear – namely the studies by Kozub and Parovič-Pešikan discussed above.

As a detailed, comprehensive map of Olbia and the excavation sectors covering the entire period of archaeological activity has never been produced, it is only possible to make very general statements on the development of the horizontal stratigraphy of the cemetery and its relation with the settlement. The traditional assumptions as regards the spatial and chronological development of the cemetery are all based on the maps and conclusions published by Kozub in 1974 and 1984 (Kozub 1974; 1984; so also most recently Papanova 2006, 65-78) (Fig. 2.4.a-c).

Naturally, due to the sketchy nature of the maps and the data which forms their basis, the maps must be approached with caution, keeping the dating problems of Kozub 1974 and Parovič-Pešikan 1974 detailed above in mind. The main bulk of available Archaic data which interests us here primarily comes from the central and western part of the cemetery area since it stems from the excavations by Farmakovskij concentrated on these sectors (Fig. 2.4.a-c). The excavations of Knipovič mainly focused on Sector II in the northeastern part of the later city area (Fig. 2.4.a-c). It must, however, be kept in mind that Far-

makovskij's descriptions of the exact geographical locations of his excavation sectors were not always accurate enough to allow for an exact identification of them in the modern-day landscape of Olbia. Many changes have been made to the landscape through excavations and other factors, such as the trenches of World War II, which have influenced and altered the area radically since the early days of excavations.

Looking at the maps of Kozub 1984 and Papanova 2006 (Fig. 2.4.a-c) it becomes evident that the areas more or less immediately to the north and south of the main Archaic and early Classical burial area were never systematically excavated. There is no mention of further investigations or surveys which could have established the boundaries or horizontal stratigraphy in these areas more firmly. Therefore, it is difficult to support fully the optimistic conclusion of O'Connor that we have most, if not all, of the Archaic cemetery (O'Connor 1999, 31). I would rather say that we probably have a representative part of the Archaic burials, more than 300 are known, and that we cannot exclude the possibility of other burials situated elsewhere, for example as a result of social differentiation. This is to my mind illustrated well by the example of an Archaic burial which came to light in Olbia in 2005. It was found just behind the northern depot buildings close to the modern gates (marked '2005' on Fig. 2.4.a). The burial was a child *enchytrismos* in an East Greek amphora of the last third of the 6<sup>th</sup> century which was stumbled upon accidentally whilst digging a waste deposit for the nearby tent camp. This find could point in the direction of there having been several different locations of the Archaic cemetery, perhaps situated in different areas in relation to age groups or other social factors. A support for this hypothesis, I believe, is to be found in the material excavated in the late 1930s and early 1940s by T.N. Knipovič in the area northeast of the city, in the so-called Sector VI (Fig. 2.4.a-c). Here, several Archaic and some later burials came to light under settlement remains mainly of the Hellenistic period (Knipovič 1940a; 1940b; 1941). Knipovič did not reach any specific age-related conclusions with regards to the burials, but was mainly interested in using them in a discourse on the ethnic composition of the population of Olbia (Knipovič 1940a, 103-104). However, if the burials are studied in relation to age, an interesting picture arises. From the total of 19 burials excavated by Knipovič in 1937 and 1938, at least four seem to belong in the Roman period (Graves 1, 5, 9, 12), while three are uncertain in date and a further two (Graves 7 and 8) were so badly disturbed that their suggested Archaic date must be seriously doubted.<sup>49</sup> The remaining 10 are remarkably uniform in respect of the age group of the deceased. Six of the 10 burials are child *enchytrismoi* in amphoras with few or no grave goods accompanying them. They are mainly oriented towards the east. Traces of an eel grass bedding were found inside one of the amphoras – a custom which we will return to later (see also note

49 None of these have been included in the database.

53 below). The four pit burials in the group also share conspicuous common characteristics. Apart from the burials all taking the form of a simple pit in the ground, all the skeletons seem to have been oriented towards the east. Grave M2 is that of a teenager with a skeleton length of c. 1.10m, whilst Grave M4 is identified as a child of c. 0.80m. In Graves M6 and M11, the skeletons are both estimated at just under 1.5m in length, identifying them, according to this study, as teenagers. It must be added that Grave M6 differs from the other burials in the group by having the skeleton placed in a crouched position with no grave goods accompanying it at all.<sup>50</sup> Therefore, in examining the 10 burials from the northeast sector, I believe that there is evidence to suggest that this part of the cemetery could have been an area mainly dedicated to the burial of small children, primarily in *enchytrismoi* and older children and teenagers in simple pits dug in the ground. This supposition is further supported by the finds published in Knipovič 1941, though all of them were severely damaged by later settlement constructions (Knipovič 1941, 112-113, burial 29: *enchytrismos* in amphora, burial 30: simple pit burial of teenage girl). The 2005 find of the *enchytrismos* near the depot building was located just on the other side of the northern ravine from Sector II, and further investigations in this area could perhaps reveal even more such child burials, extending this secluded area of the Archaic cemetery possibly dedicated to children and teenagers.

Papanova refers to separate burial areas for children in later periods in Olbia (Papanova 2006, 76-77), and I can only suggest a revision of the conclusion drawn by Skudnova, who saw no evidence for a separate burial area for children in Olbia in the Archaic period. This conclusion was based on the fact that quite a few child burials were found in different areas among adult burials (Skudnova 1988, 9-10). To my mind, the fact that some children were buried amongst adults in other parts of the cemetery does not exclude the possibility of there having been a designated area for other children and young persons, perhaps affected by other social differentiations apart from age. Skudnova herself did actually suggest another aspect of social differentiation in the cemetery when considering the area excavated in 1915 (Fig. 2.4.a). This is clearly a richer part of the Archaic burial ground with isolated family clusters (Skudnova 1988, 6). It is worth noting that the majority of the child burials detailed in Skudnova's work were excavated in 1909-1911 in the sectors immediately next to the 1915 sector (Fig. 2.4.a-c). Perhaps this area with its rich family clusters could serve as a model to explain the 'child burials among the adults' referred to by Skudnova (Skudnova 1988, 9-10). We may

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50 The dialogue in Black Sea archaeology on the significance of crouched burials is indeed long, and different interpretations of them have ranged from ethnic affiliations to gender roles, to slave status and other dependencies (see most recently Zubar' 2006, 50-51 with references); and see below, this chapter. For discussions of crouched burials in Mediterranean contexts, see Carter 1998, 59; Shepherd 2005, 120-123.



well picture a situation where age and, perhaps more importantly, social status played significant roles in the location of a burial. Hence the allocation of a separate area for some of the society's children and young, while children from, for example, higher status families were buried within their respective family clusters. At least, it is striking how few and modest the grave goods from the burials in Sector II are. Most of the burials are not being accompanied by any grave goods at all and a few are equipped with only one or two ceramic vessels.

## 2.4 Analyses of the material

The following analyses are concerned with observations on burial customs as expressed both in the grave itself and in the grave goods that may accompany the grave. The analyses are divided into two parts, one dealing with the grave and the other dealing with the grave goods. The two parts are subdivided into three sections, each dealing with one of the chronological phases of the study.

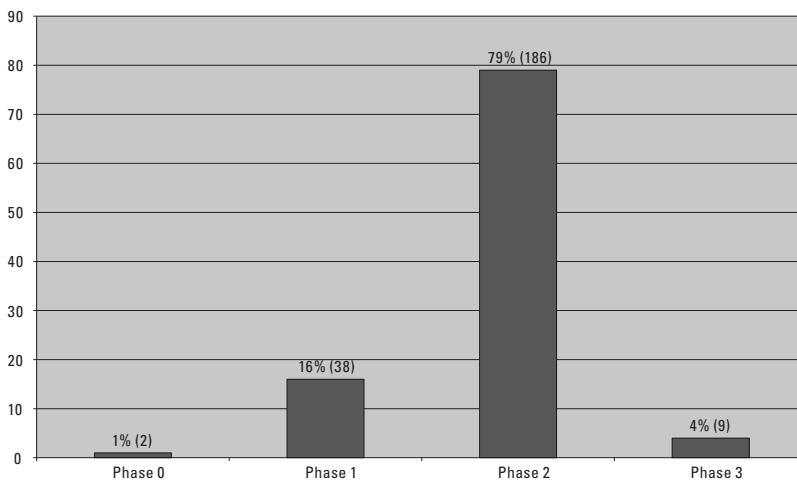


Fig. 2.5. Olbia. The distribution of graves by percentage within the three different chronological phases (total numbers in parentheses; Phase 0 = no certain indication as to a specific date)

### 2.4.1 Graves

The study comprises 235 graves from Olbia. Fig. 2.5 shows the distribution of graves by percentage within the three different chronological phases. The two burials allocated in the figure to Phase 0 had no certain indications as to a specific date, due to the lack of grave goods. Their topographical situation, however, strongly indicates that they should be of Archaic or early Classical date, and therefore they have been registered in the database. As can be seen

from the figure, the earliest phase (c. 550-520) is represented by 38 burials amounting to 16 % of the Archaic and early Classical burials in the database. Phase 2 (c. 519-480) clearly has the fullest representation, with 186 burials or 79 % of the material. Phase 3 (c. 479-450) is the least well-represented period with only 9 burials listed in the database constituting 4 % of the total material. The discrepancy between the different phases is naturally taken into consideration in all comparative analyses of the material.

### Phase 1 (c. 550-520)

#### *Grave types and treatment of the deceased*

Among the 38 burials of Phase 1, four different grave types are represented (Fig. 2.6). The most common grave type is by far the simple pit burial in the ground, whereas wooden sarcophagi and niche tombs are much rarer. The *enchytrismoi* burials for small children are quite well represented, the data for these mainly stemming from the excavations by Knipovič, as mentioned above. All burials from Phase 1 are inhumations except one cremation of a child (F38) which was placed in a pit surrounded by stones. The inhumations are all placed on their backs in a supine position, but further information on the positions of the skeletons is unfortunately not provided. Grave M6, however, is interesting since the skeleton was placed in a crouched position and it featured no grave goods or tomb marker(s) as such. As mentioned above, the skeleton is presumably that of a teenager, the specific position of the skeleton perhaps indicating a specific social status(?).

In three of the pit burials (Graves F21, F97 and F153) there were traces of a wooden covering over the grave – a custom which gained popularity in the following periods (Skudnova 1988, 7; and see below, this chapter). Some scholars have interpreted the wooden coverings as an indication of nomadic burial customs, but, as we shall see later in this chapter, there may be problems connected with this theory.

The *enchytrismoi* burials are interesting. The burials are all inhumations in amphoras which, by their size, must have set a limit to the age and thereby physical size of the child buried in such a manner. From the sparse skeleton material recovered from the *enchytrismoi* it is thus confirmed that the grave type was in use for very small children. For example, Grave M3 is thought to be the burial of a very small baby or a new-born infant (Knipovič 1940a, 95-96). This burial is also interesting because there were traces of organic bedding (eel grass) inside the amphora – a burial custom which is also seen in the pit burials of Grave M2, but which becomes very popular in succeeding periods and which will be treated in more detail below (note 53).

The *enchytrismoi* are all oriented towards the east and are, furthermore, alike with regards to a total absence of grave goods. The interpretation of the *enchytrismos* as a preferred burial custom for children may be connected to the symbolic resemblance of the amphora to a mother's womb. Perhaps the

desire to protect a child during its very young years is somehow reflected in the protected space inside the vessel – perhaps for a small child there was a wish to recreate in death the safety and peace of the mother’s womb? (See also Papanova 2006, 182-184; for *enchytrismoι* in the Archaic period in general, see Kurtz & Boardman 1971, 71-72).

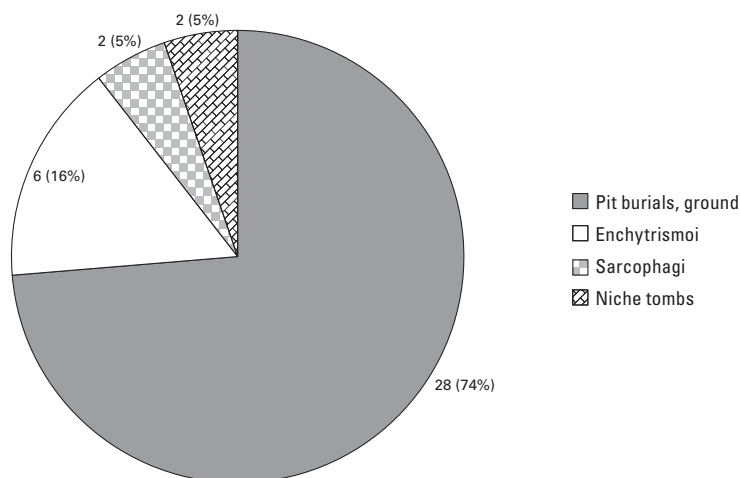


Fig. 2.6. Olbia. Grave types from Phase 1

### Orientation

In the main, all burials within the first phase are oriented towards the east or in an easterly direction (Fig. 2.7), with the exceptions of Grave F21, which has a westerly orientation, and the child burial F248, which has the skeleton oriented with the head towards the north. There may be a specific meaning behind this latter exception, but the single example here does not give away any further clues as to the reason for its differentiation from the other burials. Orientation towards the east seems to be quite common among the Archaic and early Classical burials in many of the settlements in the northern Black Sea region.<sup>51</sup>

### Gender and age

Unfortunately, the genders of none of the burials within Phase 1 have been identified. There is, however, more information on the age groups of the skeletons. Of the 38 burials, 23 have been identified as belonging to adult individuals, while only two belong to teenagers and 13 are identified as child burials.

51 Pantikapaion: O'Connor 1999, Fig. 1.56; Nymphaion and other Bosporan localities: this volume, Chapter 5; Apollonia: O'Connor 1999, Fig. 1.14; Kerinitis: this volume, Chapter 3.

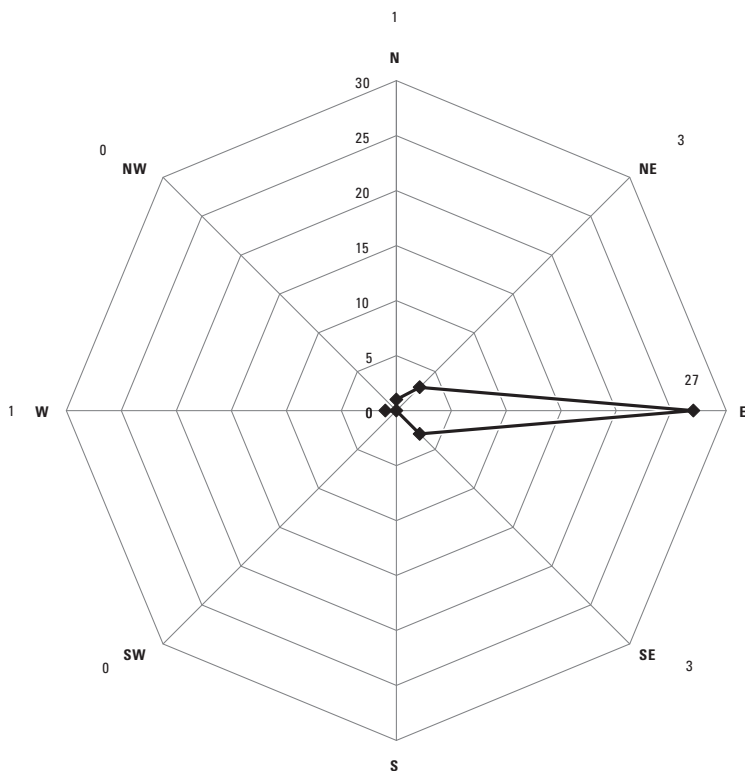


Fig. 2.7. Olbia. Orientations of burials from Phase 1

The adults are mostly buried in pit burials, a few in sarcophagi and there is a single adult in a niche tomb. The number of grave goods accompanying the adult burials varies from one to 42. Ten burials have grave good totals ranging from one to five. Six burials have grave good totals ranging from six to 10. Five burials have 11-20 pieces, and, finally, only two burials have more than 20 pieces of grave goods. In general, the adult burials of Phase 1 are quite well equipped compared to other burials from the same period in the Black Sea region (for example, Nymphaion and Pantikapaion, this volume, Chapter 5). This is in sharp contrast to the child burials of the same period in Olbia. Here, the six *enchytrismoi* burials, as mentioned earlier, had no grave goods at all, while the six child and teenager burials in simple pits had between two and five pieces of grave goods. The remaining child burial in a niche tomb had the most numerous set of grave goods, amounting to seven pieces. So while the burials of the adults feature some very elaborately equipped graves, the child and teenager burials seem to be of very modest character. There could, however, be a differentiation in the child burials since the difference between the grave types and the number of grave goods accompanying them forms

a clear pattern. The material seems to suggest that very small children and babies were buried in the *enchytrismoi* without grave goods, whilst the elder children and teenagers were buried in pits, like the majority of the adults, accompanied by modest grave goods. This is also confirmed by the lengths of the child and teenagers pits, which are all within the span of 1.15m to just under 1.5m. Thus, at some point in an Olbian child's life span, it went from one socially defined age group to another, as far as we can tell from the evidence of the burials. Such differential treatments of age groups in burials are well attested from many localities in the Greek world (Kurtz & Boardman 1971, 70-74, 97-99; Houby-Nielsen 2000, 153; Oakley 2003, 174-177).

#### *Grave types and the number of grave goods*

Since we have already covered the differences in the number of grave goods in the *enchytrismoi* burials and the pits belonging to children and teenagers, just a few words on the remaining grave types will be stated here.

It is worth mentioning that the two adult burials in sarcophagi (Graves F136 and F234) both have 14 pieces of grave goods which are of quite a varied and rather wealthy character, such as a large number of items of precious jewellery of gold, silver and bronze, as well as a bronze mirror, an imported glass necklace and alabastron of alabaster. Furthermore, the sarcophagus of Grave F234 was also decorated with elaborately carved bone ornaments.

The niche tombs are also of interest because of the connection some scholars see with nomadic burial customs. This particular aspect will not be discussed here but will be treated at length further below in this chapter. The two niche tombs from Phase 1 held a child burial (Grave F92) and the burial of an adult (Grave F13). Grave F13 was very sparsely equipped with three pieces of simple ceramic grave goods, whilst Grave F92 was the best equipped of all the child burials, furnished with several pieces of silver jewellery, a bronze mirror and imported ceramics. In conclusion, the two niche tombs of Phase 1 each present rather different aspects in terms of both age and, presumably, social status, and the grave type is thus difficult to associate directly with either higher or lower social status.

### **Phase 2 (c. 519-480)**

#### *Grave types and treatment of the deceased*

The largest body of material in the database from the Archaic and early Classical period comes from Phase 2. Within the 186 burials, five different grave types are represented, as shown in Fig. 2.8. As can be seen from comparing Fig. 2.6 and Fig. 2.8, the only new grave type to occur in Phase 2 is the niche tomb with sarcophagus, while all previous types seem to continue. The general ratio between the individual grave types also seems to be more or less the same as in Phase 1. The simple pit burial is still by far the most common grave type.

Almost all burials in Phase 2 are inhumations placed on their backs in a supine position, though information on this aspect of the burials is generally scarce in the publication by Skudnova. Therefore, there is, unfortunately, no further evidence for the position of, for example, the skull, hands or legs of the deceased with which to enlighten this aspect of the burial customs in more detail. There are, however, three burials where there is mention of the deceased being placed in a crouched position, Graves F89, F176 and F226.

Many of the pit burials of Phase 2 had remains of wood recorded. Where nothing more specific is stated in the publications, there are a number of different possibilities for the occurrence of wooden remains in the burials. The remains could be:

- From very badly-preserved sarcophagi;
- From very badly-preserved simple wooden coffins or biers;
- From very badly-preserved smaller wooden furniture;
- From wooden coverings or roofs over the grave.

It is very hard to establish the most likely definition of each individual burial with wooden remains when the data from the excavations are sparse or non-existent. Thankfully, the excavations by Knipovič seem to have been conducted with much care and attention to such important details. Therefore, it is interesting that all the remains of wood are interpreted by her as evidence for wooden coverings which apparently were a common feature among the burials in Sector II (Knipovič 1940a, 103; 1941, 114; Furmanskaja 1959). Skudnova exercises more caution in her interpretation of the wooden remains noted in the excavation diaries of Farmakovskij. Thus, her conclusion is less definitive, with a focus on the poorly-preserved state of the wood in the Olbian soil and the numerous interpretative possibilities, apart from 'wooden coverings', for the wooden remains (Skudnova 1988, 7-9).<sup>52</sup>

Another important aspect of the early burial customs is the use of organic bedding. The custom of placing seaweed, or more correctly eel grass,<sup>53</sup> and sometimes other kinds of organic material at the bottom of the burials seems to

52 Also Andrianou 2009, 39-43, 67-71, 92, 98 on wooden biers, beds and furniture from funerary contexts.

53 *There are six species of sea grasses in the Black Sea: Zostera marina (eel grass), Z. noltii, Potamogeton pectinatus, Ruppia maritima, R. spiralis and Zannichellia major. Eel grass grows in shallow bays of the northwestern Black Sea in extensive underwater meadows. Following storm events, this species yields abundant litter on the beach. The biomass of eel grass litter cast ashore is estimated to be 50,000 wet tonne. The classification of Black Sea bottom vegetation distinguishes five associations of sea grasses. Actual seed production yielded by eel grass in Sevastopol Bay and adjacent areas is 4,847 seed/m<sup>2</sup>. Peaks of vegetative reproduction are in spring and autumn when lateral shoots are formed most intensively. The eel grass biocenosis provides a habitat to a diversity of marine organisms. Being an important element of the coastal ecosystem, sea grasses have been put under protection in two nature reserves,*

have been quite a common feature in many settlements of the northern Black Sea region from the Archaic period onwards (Sorokina 1957, 50-51; Kastanajan 1959, 262-292; Skudnova 1988, 7; Zhizhina 2001, 252; Papanova 2006, 90). Some scholars have argued that the practice has its roots in Scythian/nomadic burial customs (so, for example, Melyukova 1995, 42). However, Greek literary evidence also confirms the custom of burying the dead on a layer of leaves or other organic material (Hame 1999, 30-31, 76). Skundova mentions traces of bedding in Graves 160 and 170 (both robbed) as well as in the bottoms of Graves 231 (robbed) and F232, where remains of elaborately decorated sarcophagi were also found (Skudnova 1988, 7). Bedding also occurred inside the sarcophagus in Grave 201 (robbed) and inside the amphora of Grave M3, which was considered in the discussion of the previous phase. In general, there seem to have been traces of bedding in many of the burials excavated by Knipovič in Sector II, but this may simply be a result of the more detailed and careful methods of excavation employed in these campaigns.

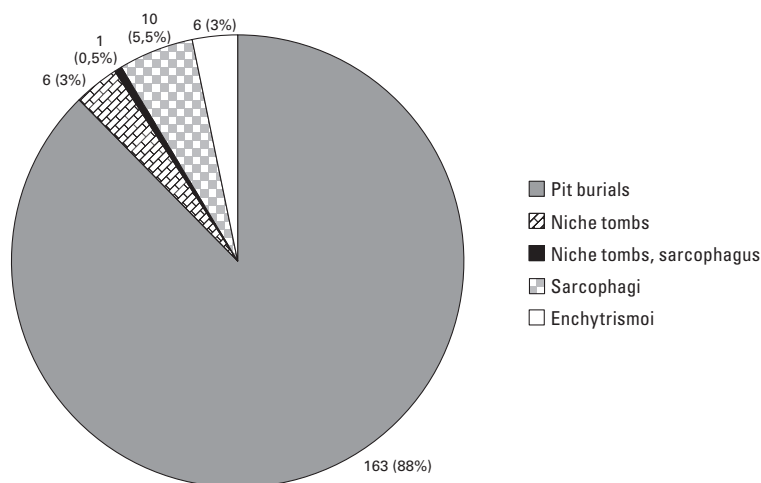


Fig. 2.8. Olbia. Grave types from Phase 2

Finds of eel grass in dug-outs in Olbia confirm its domestic use as well (Kryzhtskyy et al. 2003, 429). Eel grass is still used in modern house construction in the Crimea due to its excellent isothermal qualities (personal communication, Vladimir Stolba, summer 2006). The use of eel grass in dug-outs and its placement in the bottom of burials could be related symbolically – the deceased should be as comfortable in death as in life, and therefore contemporary furniture equipment, such as mattresses of eel grass for wooden beds



or simply for sleeping more comfortably on the ground, were constructed in the burials, as well as in the houses of the living.

The *enchytrismoi* of Phase 2 show a number of differences when compared with the *enchytrismoi* of the previous phase. In Phase 1, only one of the *enchytrismoi* was placed inside a circle of stones (Grave F47), whilst this is the case for four of the six *enchytrismoi* in Phase 2. Additionally, the *enchytrismoi* of the previous period were all placed in amphoras, while Phase 2 shows more variation with *enchytrismoi* in amphoras (Graves F67, F76, M10), in pithoi (Graves F35, F86) and in an Attic lekanis (Grave F253). A further marked difference between Phase 1 and Phase 2 is the number of grave goods that now accompany the *enchytrismoi* compared to the total absence of grave goods with these burials in Phase 1. Only two of the burials are without grave goods, whilst the remaining four burials have one, four, seven and 13 items of grave goods.

There seem to be two plausible explanations for this phenomenon:

- There is a marked change in attitude towards the burial of very small children and babies between Phase 1 and Phase 2;
- There is a topographical bias in the data from Phase 1 and those from Phase 2.

It is of course tempting to interpret the evidence as a change in attitude towards child burial at the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century, at the same time as the city was blooming and a general wealth was established and expressed in public building activities and coin issues. However, if we look at the topographical situation the explanation is more likely to be found here. The child *enchytrismoi* of Phase 2 were all, with the exception of one (Grave M10), found in the western and central parts of the Archaic and early Classical cemetery (Fig. 2.4.a-b), whereas all the *enchytrismoi* from Phase 1, except F47, were found in Sector I. It thus seems that the analysis of the child *enchytrismoi* from Phase 1 and Phase 2 reveals that there is a markedly different treatment and construction of the burials of smaller children and infants in Sector I compared to the central and western parts of the cemetery. This gives good support to the previously stated theory that Sector I was not only an area mainly reserved for child and teenage burials, but also an area where lower status groups buried their dead. The more carefully executed *enchytrismoi* from Phase 2, accompanied by grave goods, are all from the sectors excavated in 1909, 1910 and 1914, in the immediate vicinity of the wealthier part of the cemetery with its well-equipped family clusters (Fig. 2.4.a-b).

The niche tombs have more information attached to them in Phase 2, and thus it is noteworthy that, already from this early stage, the construction of this grave type shows a great deal of variation. It is commonly accepted that the niche tomb as a grave type was introduced to the Greek settlements of the northern Black Sea region at the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century and gained a marked popularity during the 5<sup>th</sup> century and onwards (Skudnova 1988, 7; O'Connor

1999, 53-54).<sup>54</sup> From the evidence of Phase 2 in Olbia it is interesting to see that already at the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century different constructions for the covering of the niche inside the grave were in use. Graves F15 and F262 had a mud-brick wall to cover the niche, whilst amphoras were used in Grave F168, and simple stones served the purpose in Grave F22. In later periods, the mud-brick wall and amphoras become the most common types of closure for the niches (Papanova 2006, 92-93).

### *Orientation*

Fig. 2.9 shows the orientation of the burials from Phase 2. From the figure it is clear that the majority of the burials are oriented with the head towards the east or in an easterly direction.

In some instances the grave was void of a skeleton or the skeletal remains were so scattered that the precise orientation of the head was impossible to determine. These burials were mainly initially published with the orientation listed as west-east, and therefore the group of skeletons noted here as oriented towards the west is rather large. There is, however, an interesting pattern in the burials with proper orientation towards the west – namely that the majority of these burials is of children or teenagers. A database query on the relationship between age and orientation thus confirms that just under half of the 46 child burials were oriented in a westerly direction and a little more than half were oriented in an easterly direction. This is a marked difference compared to the general figure (Fig. 2.9), and it could indicate that the orientation of child burials was sometimes approached with a different set of customs than was the general case for adults. At the very least, I think the result of this breakdown analysis is worth mentioning as an added aspect to Skudnova's statement that 'the orientation was overall towards the east' which does not take into consideration any possible social aspects or differentiations (Skudnova 1988, 8).

### *Gender and age*

As was the case in Phase 1, there are no securely sexed burials in the material from Phase 2. The age groups are again divided between adults, teenagers and children. There are 134 adult burials measuring between 1.55m to 3.3m in length – the longest graves often yielding burials in sarcophagi.

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54 O'Connor points out that the commonly accepted theory that the niche tombs in the Greek settlements were 'borrowed' from the Scythians has been challenged by leading Scythologists, for example Ol'chovskij 1991, and thus calls for caution in this matter (O'Connor 1999, 54). It seems that the niche tombs of the Archaic and early Classical periods in Olbia correspond well with Ol'khovskij's definition of a niche tomb, while later forms correspond to his definition of a proper Scythian catacomb grave. Thus, the earliest niche tombs in Olbia may not have come in to being under the direct influence of the nomadic surroundings, but may well have been inspired by eastern Mediterranean niche tombs, as suggested by O'Connor (1999, 54).

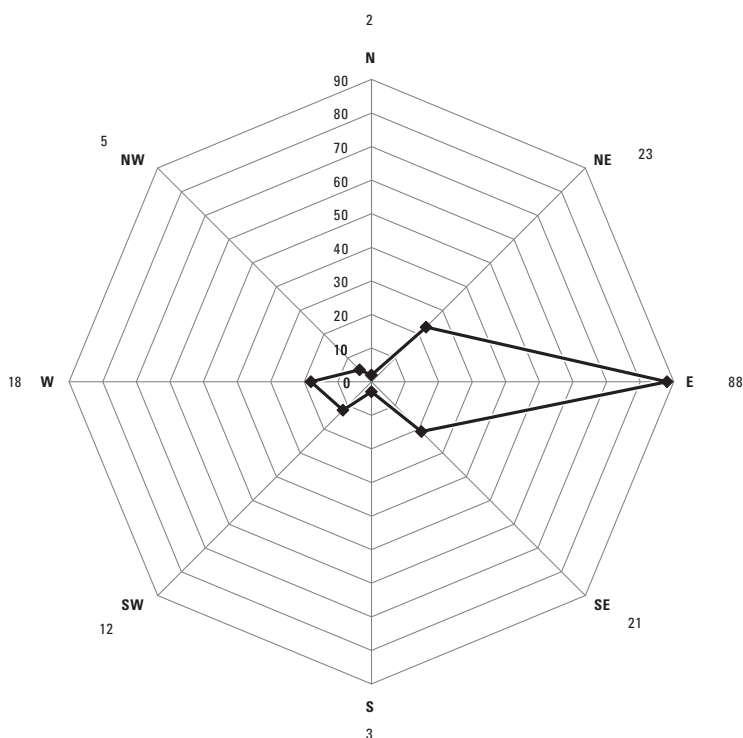


Fig. 2.9. Olbia. Orientations of burials from Phase 2

The numbers of objects and the NOT-values<sup>55</sup> for the adult burials break down into the following set of statistics:

- 65 (49 %) burials have numbers of grave goods between nought to five
- 43 (32 %) burials have numbers of grave goods between six to 10
- 15 (11 %) burials have numbers of grave goods between 11-20
- 11 (8 %) burials have numbers of grave goods more than 20

- 77 (57 %) burials have NOT-values between 0-5
- 45 (34 %) burials have NOT-values between 6-10
- 12 (9 %) burials have NOT-values between 11-20
- No burials have NOT-values over 20

<sup>55</sup> The NOT-value (Number of Object Types value) has been introduced in order to describe the variation of object types within a grave. This means that a grave with, for example, three drinking cups, two jugs and a knife will score a NOT-value of three.

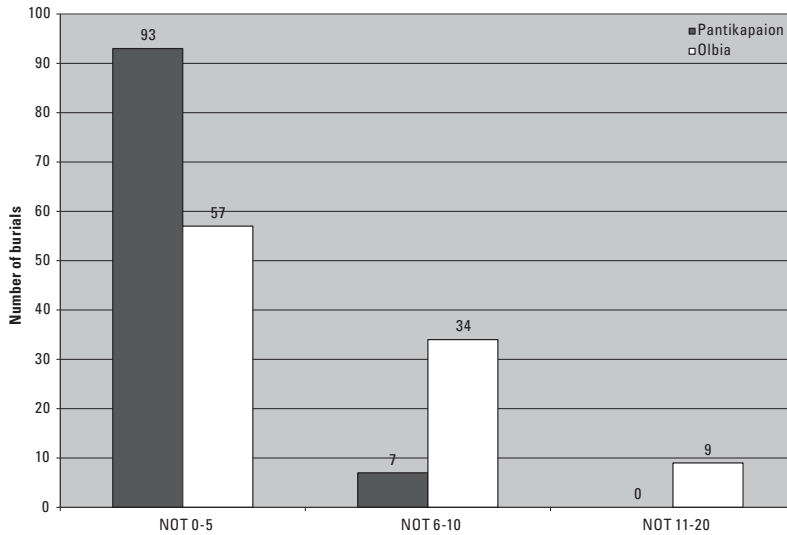


Fig. 2.10. Pantikapaion and Olbia. NOT-values (as percentages)

It is interesting to see that the most common number of grave goods is between nought to five pieces, while there is still a rather significant group of burials with higher numbers of grave goods. The same general picture is true for the NOT-values, although in total these figures, as expected, are generally lower than the total numbers of grave goods. Thus, we may conclude that there is quite a significant number of burials with a rather high number of grave goods and that the range of types of grave goods is also high. This valuation is of course only reliable in comparison with other localities in the Black Sea region from the same period. If we look at Pantikapaion,<sup>56</sup> which offers a similar quantity of adult burials from the late 6<sup>th</sup> and early 5<sup>th</sup> centuries, and compare the numbers with our numbers from Olbia, it is striking how different the two localities are (Fig. 2.10). The Pantikapean burials have a much simpler pattern of grave good variation, whereas the Olbian burials show much more variation and in general have a higher number of grave goods as well. In socio-political terms, this pattern could perhaps be explained in terms of more general wealth in Olbia and its strong political position within the northern Black Sea region in general. The analysis of O'Connor also shows that the Pantikapean NOT-values see a steady increase during the 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries, whilst this situation is just the opposite in Olbia (O'Connor 1999, 91, Figs. 62-64). This further suggests a possible connection between the general socio-political development of the two cities and their burial customs, with Pantikapaion as the upcoming power firmly established by the early 4<sup>th</sup> century. However, the increase or decrease in grave good numbers and

<sup>56</sup> Percentages from the Pantikapaion material are from O'Connor 1999, Fig. 1.62.

NOT-values cannot on their own be expected to be directly proportional to the wealth or poverty of the burying society, since these variables do not take the values of the actual types of objects into consideration – just as a high number of grave goods cannot automatically be taken to represent wealth. Thus, the results of the analysis must be handled with caution.

If we analyse the numbers for the 47 child and teenage burials in much the same way as for the adult burials, we get the following picture:

- 30 (64 %) burials have numbers of grave goods between nought to five
- 14 (30 %) burials have numbers of grave goods between six to 10
- 3 (6 %) burials have numbers of grave goods between 11-20
- No burials have numbers of grave goods exceeding 20
  
- 38 (81 %) burials have NOT-values between nought to five
- 8 (17 %) burials have NOT-values between six to 10
- 1 (2 %) burial has a NOT-value between 11-20
- No burials have NOT-values exceeding 20

From these statistics, it is clear that the child and teenage burials have a much lower number of grave goods and that the variation in the types of grave goods is more simplistic than for the adult burials of the same period. This picture seems to be continued from the previous phase, when some of the child burials had no grave goods at all. There are, of course, more well-equipped child burials and the topographical situation is also important here as we still cannot be confident that numbers of grave goods and wealth are proportional factors.

#### *Grave types and number of grave goods*

Database queries on the relation between grave types and the number of grave goods and NOT-values have not yielded any particular pattern, since all grave types show great variation in numbers, and hence show no clear sign of being either well or poorly equipped. Perhaps one exception to this is the niche tombs, which all have numbers under five in both categories. The tendency here seems to be towards few grave goods, though the construction of the grave itself would probably have been more labour-intensive than, for example, the construction of a simple pit burial in the ground. At the very least, it can be suggested that the relation between the nature of the grave goods and the level of labour investment in the grave construction does not seem to be proportional here.

#### *Stelai and funerary sculpture*

No *stelai* have been found *in situ* amongst the material from the Archaic and early Classical periods in Olbia. However, Graves F25, F122, F182 and F184 were reported to have yielded fragments of marble in the fill above the

burials. The uncertain provenance of these finds in the fills render the conclusions on the use of *stelai* vague, but other finds can add to the discussion. There have been several pieces of funerary sculpture in both marble and terracotta found in the area of the cemetery, amongst them the upper part of a marble *kouros*, ascribed to Richter's Ptoon group, the upper part of a terracotta *kouros* and some late Archaic marble lions, possibly connected with funerary monuments (Papanova 2006, 124-125, 128-129). *Stelai* of both plain type with inscription and relief-decorated type with inscription are also attested from the late 6<sup>th</sup> century onwards (Papanova 2006, 129-131). One very special example deserves particular attention here.

Although not found *in situ* or in connection with any specific burial context the Leoxos *stele* (Fig. 2.11) is a fantastic piece of sculpture and a highly interesting iconographical testimony from late Archaic Olbia. The *stele* with two carved sides was found in the cemetery of Olbia in 1895. Side A depicts a naked youth, presumably resting, with a spear in his right hand, and side B also shows a youth, this time equipped with a (Scythian) *gorytos* for both bow and arrows, holding an arrow in his hands. Along the shorter sides of the *stele* runs an inscription telling us that it was dedicated in memory of Leoxos, son of Molpagores, who died away from home. There have been many suggestions regarding the possible interpretation of the iconography of the *stele*. Some suggest that what we have here is a classic example of 'Greek versus Barbarian', but recently P. Guldager Bilde has put forward the intrigu-

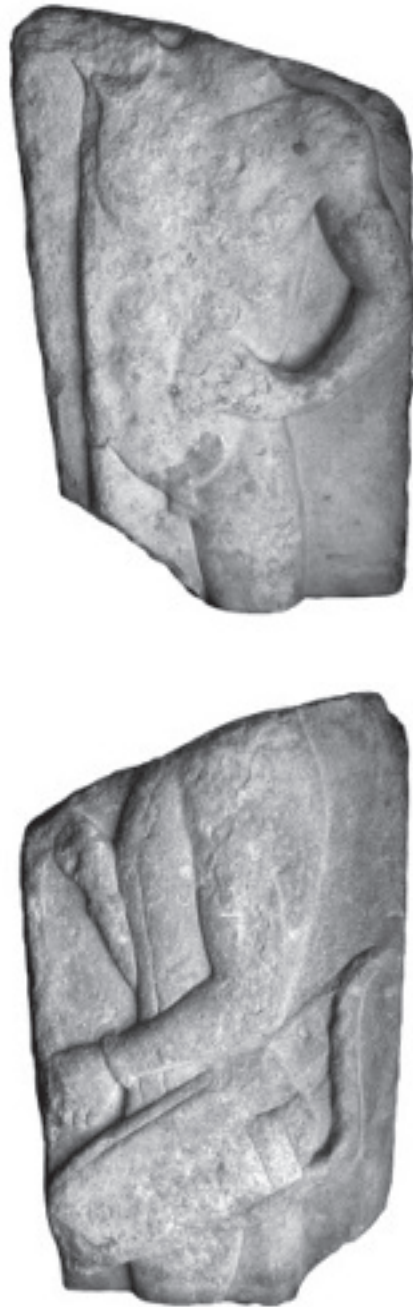


Fig. 2.11. Olbia. The Leoxos *stele*  
(photo by Jakob Munk Højte)



ing argument that the *stele* could reflect the cultural complexity of the region, thus showing one and the same person in two different aspects of life: as civic citizen and as warrior, with the Scythian outfit simply being the most appropriate and technologically advanced for war in this region (Guldager Bilde 2003b, 130; see also Vinogradov 1997b, 230-241). This suggestion would then put the *stele* in the position of an important piece of evidence for the complex and multifaceted identities which could be formed in an area of such intense cultural interactions – a discussion to which we will return.

### *Sacrificial pits*

Another interesting feature of the Olbian cemetery is the sacrificial pits found scattered all over the area. One particular sacrificial pit from the Archaic period has been published by Skudnova alongside the graves in her 1988 publication (Skudnova 1988, no. 266). The pit contained numerous ceramic fragments of cups, plates, a krater, amphoras, oinochoai, olpai, lekythoi and kylikes. The custom of sacrificing food and drink to the dead in pits in a cemetery area is known and attested all over the Black Sea region from Pichvnari to Apollonia (for example, Nedev & Panayotova 2003, 128; Vickers & Kakhidze 2004, 175), and is also attested in Greece, both archaeologically and in ancient Greek literary sources (Kurtz & Boardman 1971, 74, 100; Hame 1999, 86-87).

### **Phase 3 (c. 479-450)**

The graves of Phase 3 are the smallest sample of data from the three chronological periods. There is clearly an over-representation (six out of nine) of burials from the 1913 sector excavated by Farmakovskij (Fig. 2.4.a-c), and the data might therefore be somewhat biased topographically. Hence, the following will be limited to a short overview of the burials based primarily on comparisons with the data of the previous periods.

### *Grave types and treatment of the deceased*

Among the nine burials from Phase 3, there are eight simple pit burials in the ground and one niche tomb covered with five amphoras. All the burials were inhumations placed on the back in a supine position. Only in one of the burials (the niche tomb F217) does there appear to be traces of a bedding of eel grass. Otherwise the information is rather poor and the low number of burials registered for this period calls for caution in any statistic analysis.

On a general note it should be stressed that the tradition of burying in kurgans which became so prominent at other locations during the 5<sup>th</sup> century (see below) apparently did not appeal to the Olbian population at this stage.

### *Orientation*

All burials, except Grave F208 which is without information, were oriented in an easterly direction, as is the norm for the majority of burials in the previous phases.



*Gender and age*

Like the previous two phases, there is no information on the gender of the deceased in Phase 3. Concerning the age groups, there are five adult burials, two child burials and two burials without information about age.

The two child burials offer the most interesting evidence. Grave F209 is a simple pit burial but is equipped with rather a high number of grave goods (14 pieces with a NOT-value of 8), whilst Grave F217 is a niche tomb covered with five amphoras and, as mentioned before, constructed with a layer of eel grass bedding.

*Grave types and the number of grave goods*

As is the case with the niche tombs of the previous phase, the number of grave goods is quite low despite the more labour-intensive and detailed construction of the niche tombs. Grave F217 thus contained three items of grave goods with a NOT-value of 2. In general, the graves of Phase 3 seem to reproduce more or less the same picture as the previous phase concerning grave good numbers and NOT-values.

In conclusion, there are no obvious changes from one period to the other, at least not from elements visible in the limited evidence available for this study.

**2.4.2 Grave goods****Phase 1 (c. 550-520)**

The total body of material from this phase amounts to 38 graves with 245 items of grave goods registered in the database.

The statistics related to the grave goods of Phase 1 are depicted in Fig. 2.12 according to object type groups. For each group, the first column demonstrates the total number of pieces, whilst the second column represent the number of graves where the pieces were found, as well as a percentage of this number in relation to the phase as a whole.

It is interesting to see that there is apparently a marked difference in how the different object groups are deposited in the burials. Ceramics and jewellery are the most numerous groups – both significantly more numerous than the other object type groups. Whilst ceramics occur in the vast majority of the burials (82 %), jewellery is confined to markedly fewer burials (32 %). If we compare this pattern with the remaining object type groups it becomes clear that objects from these latter groups are primarily deposited as single objects rather than in sets, as is the case for ceramics and jewellery. To illustrate this in further detail, Fig. 2.13 shows the deposition pattern of the ceramics. Here, the ceramic deposits of the 38 burials of Phase 1 have been broken down into a frequency diagram. The percentage figures refer to the actual percentage of burials *with* ceramics. The chart clearly shows that the most common deposition pattern of ceramics is two, three or, less frequently, four pieces per burial. In the following we look in more detail at the ceramic deposits of Phase 1.

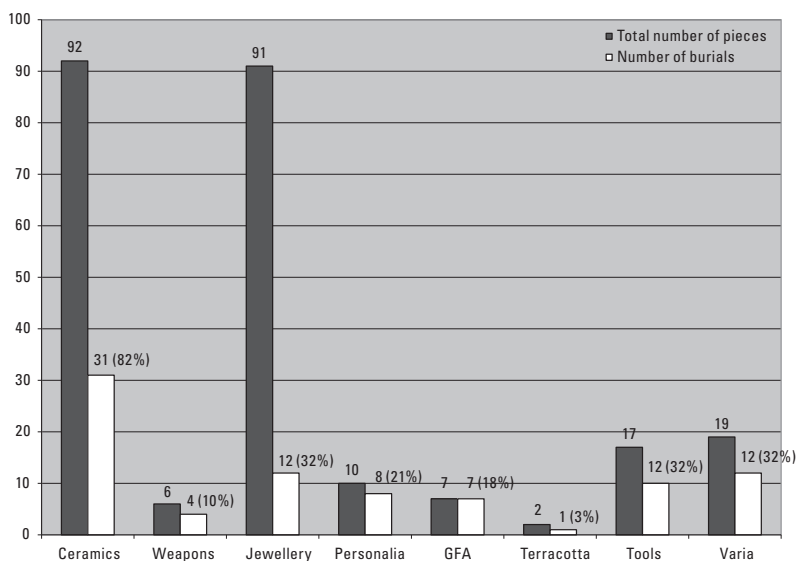


Fig. 2.12. Olbia. Object groups from Phase 1

### Ceramics

The ceramics from Phase 1 are mainly imports. An account of the production centres can be presented as follows: Attic 8 pieces (9 %); Corinthian 8 pieces (9 %); East Greek 42 pieces (45 %); Laconian 1 piece (0.5 %); local (or presumed local) 13 pieces (13.5 %); not stated 21 pieces (23 %). This picture nicely follows the general distribution pattern of imports into the Black Sea region (see, for example, Skudnova 1988, 12-19; Solovyov 1999, 49-52, 83-92; and more generally Morgan 2004, 2, 149-150, 154-155). The local, or presumed local, pieces only include one piece of handmade pottery (0.5 %), which belongs to Grave F38 where it was deposited together with a Corinthian aryballos.

Fig. 2.14 shows the different ceramic shapes deposited in Phase 1. The first column for each type represents the total number of actual pieces, whilst the second column shows the number of burials containing that specific ceramic shape. Hence, from the chart, it is quite clear that all ceramic shapes, whether drinking and food related or oil related, were generally deposited in a 1:1 ratio with the burials. No shapes are typically multiple depositions. We may then conclude that the frequency pattern illustrated in Fig. 2.13 must be related to those shapes constituting sets of two, three or four pieces of ceramics. When also including the aryballoi, alabastra and amphoriskoi from the object group GFA in the examination of the combinations of ceramics there are no obvious patterns or detectable 'sets' of shapes that go together. However, in the graves with two pieces of ceramics the majority of the burials contain an amphora in combination with a lekythos or askos. In graves with three pieces of ceramics,

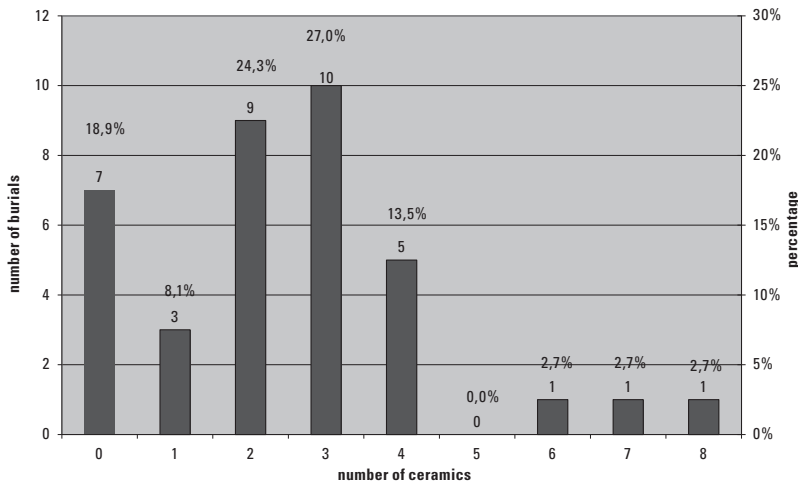


Fig. 2.13. Olbia. Frequency of ceramics in burials from Phase 1

the most frequent combination seems to be amphora, oil container (lekythos, askos or aryballos) and cup or jug. Unfortunately, detailed information on the positions of the ceramics in the burials is often unavailable, but it seems that the amphoras were commonly placed behind the head or near the feet of the deceased, whilst the oil-related vessels were often found closer to the body, for example near the shoulders, hips or arms/hands. Thus, it does not necessarily appear to be a fixed 'set' of ceramics that determined the deposition of, for example, an amphora and lekythos, but rather their being two shapes from different functional spheres of grave good types. The graves with four or more pieces of ceramics are all equipped with ceramic combinations such as amphora, cup, jug, plate and lekythos, and could thus reflect a more function-related deposition of food/drinking sets *contra* oil-related vessels.

### Weapons

The Phase 1 graves with weapons are all identified as adult burials. The weapons are not numerous and occur only in four burials, F30, F85, F111 and F150. Grave F30 was equipped with a Corinthian aryballos and a sling bullet. In Grave F85 a sword was deposited together with a lekythos, an amphora and a knife. Grave F150 had 18 bronze arrowheads of the so-called Scythian type together with a dagger (type not specified) and a range of metal objects, mostly for decoration. Moreover, there was amphora, jug, lekythos and cup in the grave. Grave F111 had a large number of Scythian bronze arrowheads placed together with an amphora and a lekythos. When looking at these weapon burials it becomes evident that the combination of weapons, amphora and oil-related vessels is common for all four graves, though the amphora of Grave F30 was placed in the fill rather than inside the grave.

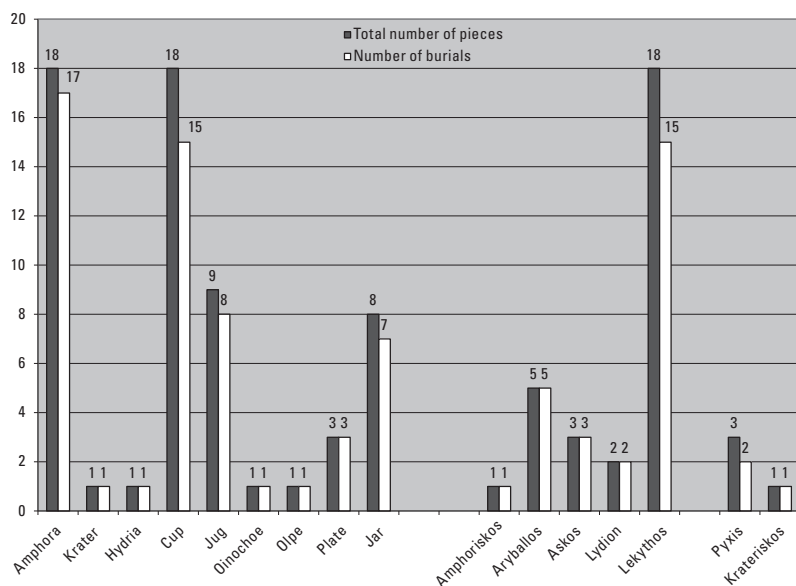


Fig. 2.14. Olbia. Ceramic shapes from Phase 1

Apart from the weapons, there is nothing to indicate that these burials differ in their grave good compositions from the contemporary burials without weapons.

### *Jewellery*

The 91 pieces of jewellery from Phase 1 are all adornments, except for four examples of function-related pieces, namely the bronze *fibulae* from Graves F12 and F109 and the gold button from Grave F21. The adorning pieces of jewellery are mainly beads, bracelets, ear-rings, finger rings, necklaces, pendants, rings and scarabs. These are primarily made of precious metals, glass, faience, semi-precious stones and bone. Only one burial, Grave F92, has been identified as a child grave, otherwise all the burials with jewellery belong to adults.

The graves containing jewellery are slightly more complex in their grave good patterns than the burials with weapons. Firstly, as has already been noticed, jewellery often seems to be accumulated in fewer graves with several pieces accompanying each burial. Secondly, the burials containing jewellery have, for the large part, quite numerous quantities of grave goods in comparison with other burials. These other non-jewellery grave goods come from all remaining object type groups. In terms of ceramics, it is striking that no specific shape seems to be preferred or is more common. The ceramics are a mix of amphoras, cups, lekythoi, jugs, plates and pyxides. Thus, no simplistic pattern can be traced here as was the case with the weapon burials.

A probable conclusion may therefore be that the deposits of jewellery are connected with the deposit of a larger number of grave goods, and that jew-

ellery thus occurs in well-equipped burials with rather elaborate and more complex deposition patterns.

### *Terracottas*

The two terracottas of Phase 1 came from the same grave (F97), identified as an adult burial. The burial is quite unique for its period and contained 29 items of grave goods, among them many rather elaborate pieces of gold and silver jewellery as well as ceramics and terracottas. Additionally, it is important to mention a rounded stone plate also deposited in the grave – its function is uncertain but perhaps it could be similar to the later stone plates of Phase 2 which find their closest parallels in the portable altars of the Scythian steppe culture (see below, this chapter). The terracottas are familiar types from the Greek repertoire: one is an enthroned female figure while the other is a female protome. The figures may be seen as a pair or a ‘set’, and in a Greek mythological context we may be tempted to interpret them as the chthonic deities of Demeter and Kore, chiefly found in large quantities in some of the Ionian cemeteries and in Sicily.<sup>57</sup> The burial is thus very interesting since it is the only one in Phase 1 which combines elements of presumed wealth and high status (the large quantity of precious jewellery and other grave goods) with those of possible religious practice (the terracottas and the altar[?]). Could we be dealing here with the burial of a sacral person – maybe a priestess? At the very least, it is interesting to play with the thought that the burial was somehow related to the presumed sanctuary of the chthonic gods<sup>58</sup> on the western ravine on the border of the city and the cemetery territory which is dated, at its earliest, to the very same period (Kozub 1975, 139-163; 1984, 159; Guettel Cole 1994, 211; Rusjaeva 2005, 359-360; Papanova 2006, 66).

### *GFA*

Imports of glass, faience and alabaster vessels are not numerous in Phase 1 and are all deposited in a 1:1 ration in the burials. There are three alabaster of alabaster and four faience vessels, two of them aryballoi, the other two figure-vases. The vessels are found in both adult and child burials.

Whilst four of the graves have both high numbers of objects and NOT-values, three graves with vessels from the GFA group show low scores in these values. Thus, the four well-equipped burials feature numerous pieces of jewellery and ceramics, whereas the three less well-equipped graves only

57 For Ionia, especially Rhodes: *Clara Rhodos IV*, 180, 230, 233, 237, 249, 266, 296; *Clara Rhodos III*, 127, 200; *Clara Rhodos VI-VII*, 513; Sicily and South Italy: Lyons 1996, 107-108; Carter 1998, 772-773; Wiederkehr Schuler 2004.

58 It must be stressed that identification of the sanctuary as belonging to the chthonic gods has not been firmly established (Kozub 1975, 162-163). An interesting parallel is found in Abdera, where a sanctuary of Demeter and Kore from the late 6<sup>th</sup> to the early 3<sup>rd</sup> century was situated in an area close to the cemetery (Samiou 2004, 292).

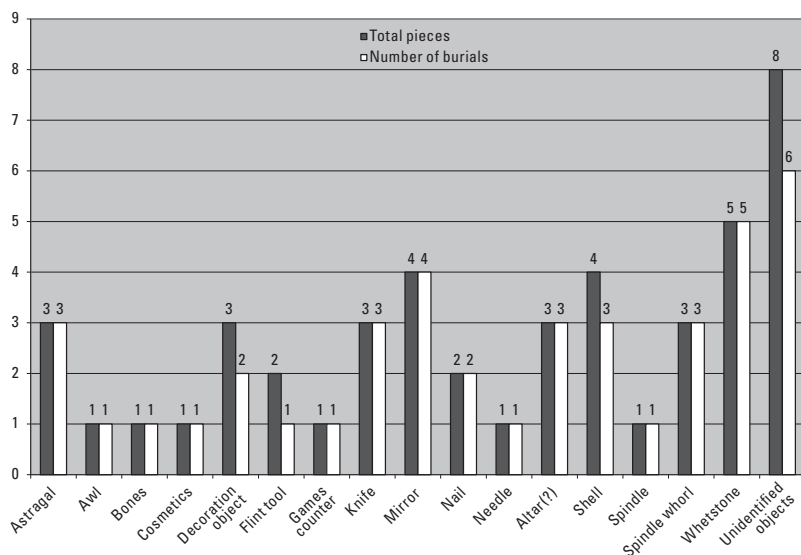


Fig. 2.15. Olbia. Personalia, tools and varia from Phase 1

have a few pieces of ceramics accompanying the GFA vessels. Therefore, we may conclude that the deposition of vessels of glass, faience or alabaster does not seem to be restricted to certain types of grave good assemblages, nor perhaps to certain social strata within society.

#### *Personalia, tools and varia*

The high NOT-values that were presented above under the analysis of the graves mainly stem from the object groups of personalia, tools and varia. Fig. 2.15 shows the different types of objects from these three object groups, and the frequency with which they have been found in the burials. It quickly becomes clear that these objects are mainly deposited in a 1:1 ratio in the burials.

#### *Depositions of metals*

Before concluding this study of the Phase 1 grave goods, we may consider the deposits of metals in the period. There are 19 burials in total which contain metal depositions. Fig. 2.16 shows the range of different metals and the number of graves in which they were deposited (the percentage figure relates to the total number of burials in the phase). From the chart it becomes clear that the precious metals, gold<sup>59</sup> and silver, are well represented in relation to actual numbers of objects but are restricted to rather few graves, while bronze

<sup>59</sup> The actual number of gold objects is higher than 15 since some of the registrations include several gold beads. However, since these belong to necklaces they are registered as one item.

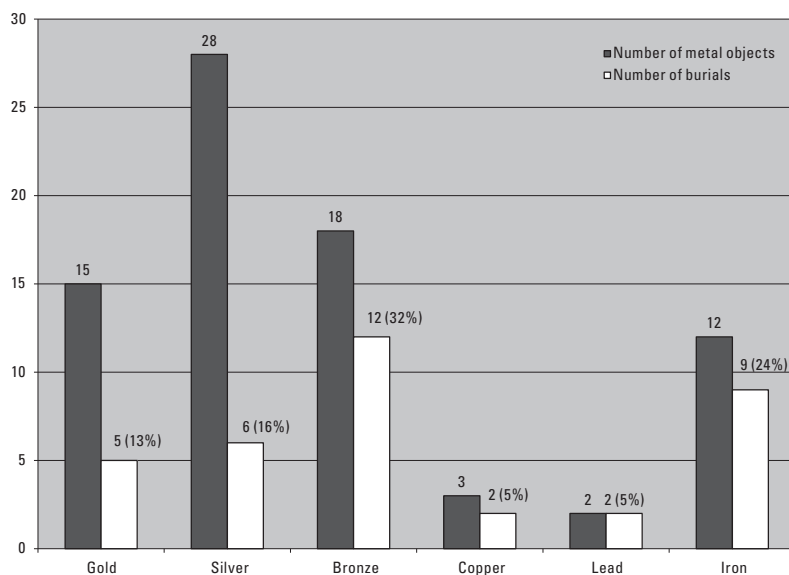


Fig. 2.16. Olbia. Metals from Phase 1

and iron are distributed in a higher number of graves. Copper and lead seem genuinely rare. The number of precious metal objects is quite impressive when we compare it with other localities in the same period, such as, for example, Nymphaion, where there are no metal deposits in Phase 1 and few in Phase 2 (see also this volume, Chapter 5). In percentage terms, the burials with gold and/or silver amount to 18 % of the total number of burials in Phase 1, which seems to be rather an imposing figure both in comparison with Nymphaion and also in comparison with contemporary Pantikapaion, where deposits of precious metals occur in only c. 2 % of the burials (O'Connor 1999, 94, Fig. 1.67). Also, in Pantikapaion 25 % of the burials of the same period had deposits containing some type of metal (O'Connor 1999, Fig. 1.65), whilst in Olbia this figure reaches no less than 50 %! Again, the results of this analysis point in the direction of a well-established society with a significant surplus available for deposit.

Looking at the age groups in relation to the deposits of metal, it is quite striking that only two child burials (Graves F92 and F248) and one teenage burial (Grave M2) contain metal objects. These are low figures compared to the total of 19 graves containing metal, and we must therefore conclude that the deposition of metals was not common in the child and teenage graves.

#### *Outside deposits*

The outside deposits of Phase 1 are generally so badly preserved that it is difficult to reach any firm conclusions about the customs they may represent. However, it is interesting to see that the amphora, as was the case inside the



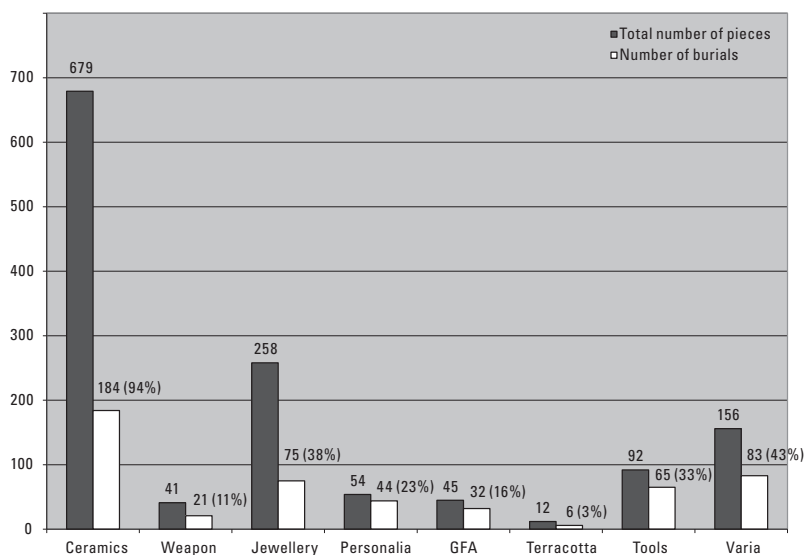


Fig. 2.17. Olbia. Object groups from Phases 2 and 3

graves, is also the most common vessel deposited outside the graves. Other frequent vessels in the fills are some cups, jugs and a few oil-related vessels such as a lekythos and an aryballos. Only in one instance (Grave F85) did the finds in the fill include animal(?) bones, but unfortunately these are listed without any further identification. In general though, we may assume that both the outside deposits and the sacrificial pits mentioned earlier could be part of the same set of burial customs, namely the sacrifices made to the dead during and after the burial, the continuous rituals preformed at the grave after the burial proper and the ongoing visits to the tomb (Hame 1999, 86-87, 110-117; Oakley 2004, 12-13).

### Phases 2 and 3 (c. 519-450)

The treatments of the grave goods from Phases 2 and 3 have been joined under one analytical section since a preliminary study of the grave goods of Phase 3 showed that there are no major differences from the previous phase, and hence no reason to emphasize this artificial data reductive divide. This conclusion is also reflected in the analysis of the graves (above). The total body of material amounts to 195 graves with 1,337 items of grave goods registered in the database.

The grave goods of Phases 2 and 3 are depicted in Fig. 2.17 according to object type groups. In comparison with the same analysis for Phase 1 (Fig. 2.12), there are several observations to make. Firstly, the groups of both ceramics and jewellery see a marked increase in both the number of pieces and in the frequency of occurrence in burials. Interestingly, burials with weapons, perso-

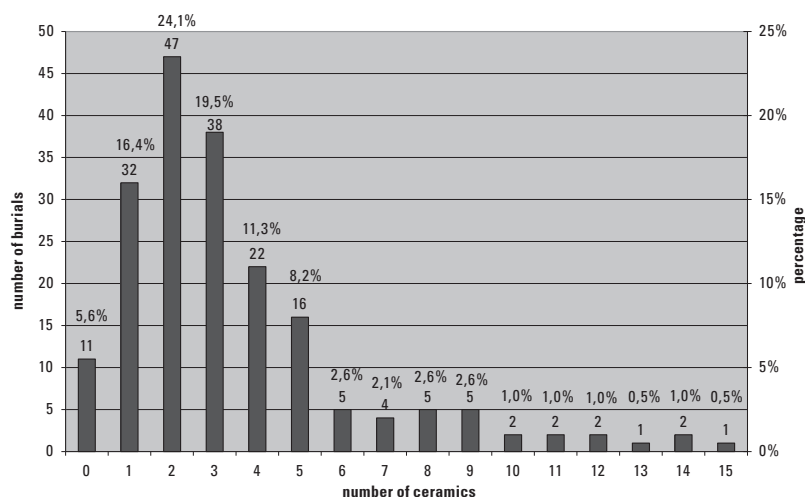


Fig. 2.18. Olbia. Frequency of ceramics in burials from Phases 2 and 3

nalía, GFA, terracottas and tools constitute more or less the same percentage of the total pool of graves as in the previous phase. Varia, however, is now much more common than in Phase 1 with an increase from 32 % to 43 %. In general, there seems to be a steady but slow increase in the development that was already established in the picture resulting from the analysis of Phase 1. The most marked change can probably be detected in the ceramics, which have increased from 82 % of the burials in Phase 1 to 94 % of the burials in Phases 2 and 3.

The frequency diagram of ceramics from Phases 2 and 3 is depicted in Fig. 2.18, the data being presented in the same manner as the analysis of the ceramics of Phase 1 (Fig. 2.13). Firstly it may be noted that the percentage of burials without any ceramics has decreased from 21.1 % in Phase 1 to 5.6 %. This discrepancy can probably be explained by the high number of *enchytrismos* burials in Phase 1 without any grave goods at all. Secondly, there is a marked increase in burials with only one piece of ceramic. A database query on the nature of these single ceramic deposits reveals that the majority of these ceramics are oil-related vessels, most often Ionian ring-shaped askoi<sup>60</sup> and black-figured lekythoi. This tendency is not surprising in a cemetery of the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> centuries, and we may simply conclude that the general pattern of emphasising oil in burials in the early Clas-

60 The Ionian ring-shaped *askoi* are very popular, especially in the northern and western Black Sea region in the late 6<sup>th</sup> century, and are frequently found in burial contexts of the coastal settlements. For recent treatments of the vessel type see Güngör 2006; Teleaga & Zirra 2003, 43-44, Karte 6; for an older typology based primarily on the Black Sea finds, see Skudnova 1945; see, however, also Cook & Dupont 2003, 132-134.

sical period apparently also found its way into the burial customs of Olbia. Looking at the frequency diagram (Fig. 2.18), it also becomes evident that the majority of burials are still concentrated around two to four pieces of ceramics. However, in comparison with the diagram of Phase 1 (Fig. 2.13) there is now a significantly large group of burials with ceramic deposits containing more than four pieces per grave (23 % in total).

It seems that there are two very different trends at play at the same time in Phases 2 and 3 compared with the much more homogeneous pattern of Phase 1:

- A significant increase in burials with one piece of oil-related pottery;
- A significant increase in burials with more than four pieces of ceramic per burial.

### *Ceramics*

The ceramics of Phases 2 and 3 are by far the most numerous type of grave goods: represented by 679 pieces, distributed across 184 graves, which equals 94 % of all burials in the two phases. In comparison with the pattern of production centres identified in Phase 1, there is something of a shift. The imports still dominate, but when broken down into individual production centres, the picture appears as follows: the Attic pieces rise markedly to 29 % against 9 % in Phase 1; the Corinthian and Laconian imports stay at the same level, whereas a dramatic change occurs in the decrease of East Greek imports, with 22 % against 45 % in Phase 1; the local, or presumed local, pieces constitute a significant group of 22.7 % against the previous percentage of 13.5 %. Among the local, or presumed local, pottery, which mainly relates to wheelmade ceramics of grey or red clay, there are only three pieces of handmade pottery, which equal 0.4 % of the total amount of pottery from the two phases. Interestingly, all three pieces are from adult burials which were quite well-equipped with, for example, ceramics, jewellery, mirrors, astragals, and whetstones (Graves F44 [11/9], F106 [6/6] and F174 [21/20]).<sup>61</sup> This very low percentage is somewhat consistent with the low percentage of handmade pottery from Olbian settlement contexts, which Marčenko estimated as a maximum of 4.4 % from the evidence available to him in 1988 (Marčenko 1988, 36, Tab.1).<sup>62</sup> On the basis of the evidence from both settle-

61 The numbers in parenthesis refer to the 'number of objects' and NOT-value in the individual graves. All three burials were inhumations in simple pits; the skeletons were placed in supine positions and oriented towards the east.

62 It must, however, be noted that the numbers given by Marčenko are based on fragment counts and not on an estimated number of complete vessels. This is problematic for all types of pottery, but especially for the handmade pottery which has been demonstrated to break into more pieces than wheelmade pottery, thus resulting in a higher number of fragments per vessel. Meanwhile, this particular analysis is not

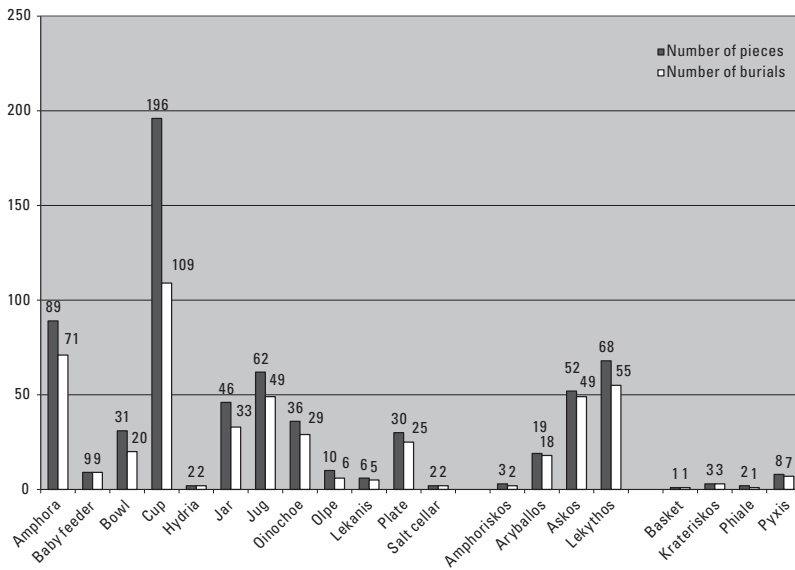


Fig. 2.19. Olbia. Ceramic shapes from Phases 2 and 3

ment contexts and mortuary contexts, it must be concluded that handmade pottery did not play any significant role in the ceramic assemblages of the Archaic period. Further, the ethnic Scythian affiliation which is often attached to it, for example in the study by Marčenko (1988), is difficult to confirm from the burial contexts which feature no specific or uncommon deposition patterns or extraordinary burial customs.

The ceramic shapes from the phases are depicted in Fig. 2.19. As was the case in Phase 1, the majority of the shapes were deposited in approximately a 1:1 ratio with the individual burials. However, we may note that the amphoras, bowls, cups, jars, jugs (here also *olpai* and *oinochoai*), plates as well as *lekythoi*, were occasionally deposited in multiple numbers in the same burial. The explanation for the increase in ceramics from Phase 1 to Phases 2 and 3 may then be not so much connected with a wider range of shapes as with a higher number of pieces in the individual deposits.

A database query on the relation between the most common ceramic shapes and age groups shows that all shapes are used for all burials irrespective of age. However, there is a markedly higher number of child burials listed in the results of the query on jugs; c. 50 % of these burials are of children. This

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markedly affected by this problem since a more accurate calculation would provide an even lower percentage, and thus confirm further the conclusion that there was very little handmade pottery in both the settlement and the burial contexts. A very thorough analysis and critique of this approach to ceramic statistics can be found in Stolba 1991, Chapter 4.

could perhaps reflect the custom, well-known from other localities in the Greek world, especially Athens, of placing jugs in child burials, as an indication perhaps of the child's age and/or social status (Oakley 2003, 177).

Looking in general at the graves with ceramics, the most common shape combinations are illustrated in the table below.

Table 7:

Amphora + cup	44
Cup + jug	37
Cup + lekythos	31
Cup + askos	28
Amphora + askos	20
Amphora + lekythos	16
Amphora + jug	11
Amphora + cup + jug	7

There is a tendency towards groupings of drinking and serving-related shapes, but interestingly there is very often an oil-related vessel in these combinations as well. Thus, the most common pattern of ceramic deposition consists of both drinking/serving-related and oil-related vessels. This tendency breaks with the pattern of many other Greek cemeteries of the same period, when the typical development is toward a very simplistic tradition, known from Athens and other localities, of depositing few and most often oil-related vessels in burials (Kurtz & Boardman 1971, 102-105; Oakley 2004, 9-10). Although this tendency is reflected in the burials with single items of oil-related vessels mentioned above, it seems that in Olbia there remained a strong core of burials which were still equipped in the 'old' drinking/serving manner, but with the additional acceptance of a single oil-related vessel amongst the traditional vessels.

A final very interesting feature noticeable amongst the ceramic deposits is a number of vessels deliberately placed upside down in the burials. For example, Grave F249 contained a jug placed upside down, as did Grave M11 whilst Grave F2 held an upside down amphora and Grave F254 had a cup in this position. Perhaps this custom relates to the notion of life after death as being opposite to real life, much in the same line of thought as the breaking or 'cancelling' of objects in order to underline their reversed function in death.<sup>63</sup> The relatively low number of examples of this custom may be explained by

63 The custom of placing vessels upside down is also attested in 5<sup>th</sup> century burials from Poseidonia (Horsnæs 2002, 92) and Corinth (*Corinth XIII*, 82). Also Kurtz & Boardman

the sparse information of the old excavation reports, or simply by a lack of recognition during the excavation process.

### *Weapons*

The weapon burials are exclusively adult burials. In general, both the numbers of items of grave goods and the NOT-values are high in the burials. From the total of 21 burials with weapons, 17 burials have more than five items of grave goods, while 13 have NOT-values above five. None of the burials score lower than four in both categories.

The combination of grave goods in the weapon burials is shown in Table 8.

Firstly, we may note that the range of weapon types is not so great. The burials contain mainly arrowheads and daggers, while only two burials contain pole-axes, one has a sword and one a spearhead.<sup>64</sup> There is a large number of knives from the tools object group which may have served as weapons but may just as well have been used on a daily basis in everyday life.

It is noticeable that amphoras and cups occur in almost equal amounts. This is more or less a reflection of the general pattern in the burials from Phases 2 and 3, while the number of jugs and oinochoai is more or less equivalent with the number of oil-related ceramic vessels such as askoi, lekythoi. The GFA group is modestly represented with an alabastron as well as an amphoriskos.

It may be surprising to some to see the amount of jewellery deposited in the weapon burials. One could be tempted to suggest that the traditional perception of weapons as indicators of male burials would result in a purely function-related representation of jewellery. However, there is no such pattern in these burials since most of the jewellery items are adornments such as beads, finger rings, rings of other types of jewellery and pendants. This result demonstrates that the link between gender roles and gender-specific objects is not always as rigid as one might expect. Further, it also serves to warn strongly against any attempt at sexing burials purely on the basis of the grave goods, which Skudnova did when assessing these burials (Skudnova 1988, 11).

Another interesting feature noticeable in Table 8 is the very low numbers of objects from the GFA and personalia groups; apparently these object types were not part of the deposition patterns for weapon burials. We have already mentioned the knives from the tool group, and we may also note the whetstones, which are actually the most common type of grave good deposited in combination with weapons.<sup>65</sup> Finally, the varia object group

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1971, 216; Oakley 2004, 11. For examples of deliberately broken pottery in burials, see Venedikov et al. 1963, pl. 53-54; Vinogradov 1994a, 28.

64 See Skudnova 1960 for a detailed account of the weapon types found in the burials.

65 The combination of knife (or dagger) and whetstone is the most commonly found weapon assemblage in contemporary nomadic burials of the Don and Volga River delta areas, as well as in the southern Ural steppe region (Dvornichenko 1995, 108).

Table 8. Olbia. Combinations of finds in weapon burials from Phases 2 and 3

Object type	Ceram-ics	GFA	Jewel-lery	Perso-nalia	Tool	Varia	Weapon
Alabastron		1					
Amphora	13						
Amphoriskos		1					
Arrowhead							26
Askos	3						
Astragal				2			
Bead			3				
Boar's tusk						1	
Bone						5	
Bowl	4						
Buckle			1				
Button			1				
Cup	12						
Cylinder						1	
Dagger							11
Decorative object						5	
Decorative plate						1	
Finger ring			4				
Flint					2		
Jar	1						
Jug	3						
Knife					9		
Lekanis lid	3						
Lekythos	4						
Mineral substance						3	
Needle					2		
Oinochoe	4						
Pendant			2				
Plate	1						
Pole-axe							2
Pyxis	1						
Ring			3				
Shell						4	
Spearhead							1
Spindle whorl					1		
Spiral			1				
Sword							1
Unidentified object						6	
Whetstone					14		



features a boar tusk, some unidentified animal bones and a tooth as well as four seashells.

In conclusion, the weapon deposits of Phases 2 and 3 are in themselves rather homogeneous without any great range of weapon types. The inclusions of ceramics in the weapon burials follow the common patterns of the adult burials in general. Meanwhile, there are some peculiar features such as very few deposits of objects from the GFA and personalia groups, whereas jewellery and tools are very well represented.

### *Jewellery*

The 258 pieces of jewellery in the burials from Phases 2 and 3 are mainly adornments, though there are seven dress pins, one buckle, two buttons and two *fibulae* which are all registered as function-related jewellery. The different types of jewellery are detailed in Fig. 2.20. In comparison with the most common jewellery types from Phase 1, it appears that there is not much change from the previous period. The jewellery is predominantly made from precious metals such as gold and silver, glass and semi-precious stones. The majority is decorated in granulation technique, often with lion heads as the main iconographic image. There is, however, also a little gold jewellery executed in the so-called 'Scythian animal style', often in the form of small dress ornaments.<sup>66</sup>

When we examine the relationship between jewellery and age groups, a simple database query shows that 77 % of the 75 burials with jewellery are identified as adults whilst only 19 % belong to children or teenagers. The remaining 4 % are burials without any age group identification. These figures could point at a tendency towards a differentiation in respect of age groups in terms of jewellery deposits. However, if we check these statistics against the total numbers of child and teenage burials in Phases 2 and 3, we see that burials with jewellery amount to 29 % of them, whilst 42 % of the adult burials contain jewellery. Thus, from this second set of statistics there does not appear to be such a significant differentiation with regards to the inclusion of jewellery from one age group to the other.

As was also the case in the previous phase, the jewellery often seems to be accumulated in fewer graves with several pieces accompanying each burial. We also see from an analysis of the deposition pattern for the burials with jewellery that there are higher numbers of grave goods per burial and higher NOT-values. 85 % of all burials with jewellery contain more than five items of grave goods and the same percentage have NOT-values above five. Apart from pieces of jewellery, the other items of grave goods in the jewellery burials come from across the remaining object type groups. It is, however, not surpris-

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The combination is also known from Archaic burials in Nymphaion (see this volume, Chapter 5).

66 See Aruz 2000 for high-quality illustrations of jewellery in the Scythian animal style, as well as a detailed introduction and catalogue.

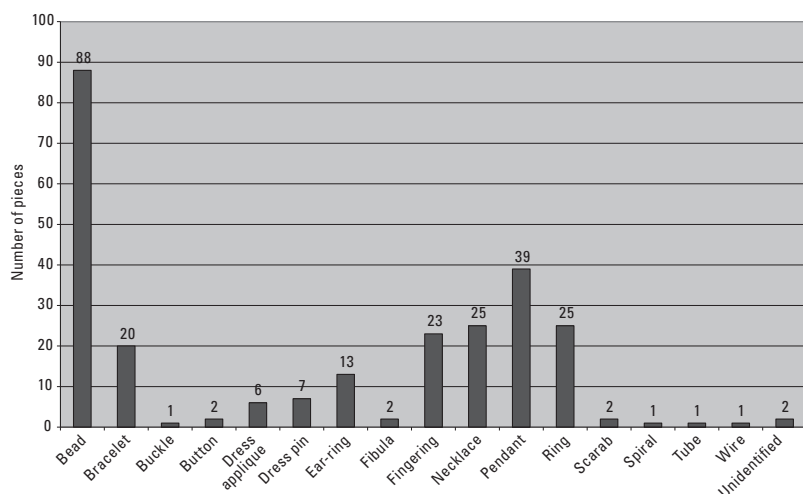


Fig. 2.20. *Olbia. Jewellery from Phases 2 and 3*

ingly that it is the ceramics object group which is most commonly combined with the jewellery. It is striking, however, that no specific shape seems to be preferred or be more common than any other. The ceramics are a mixture of amphoras, cups, lekythoi, jugs and plates, just as was seen in Phase 1.

There are no obvious changes from the previous phase in terms of the pattern of jewellery depositions. We may thus, again, conclude that the deposits of jewellery in Phases 2 and 3 are connected with depositions of larger numbers of grave goods, and that jewellery mainly belongs in well-equipped burials with elaborate deposition patterns.

#### *Terracottas, personalia and GFA*

The terracottas from Phases 2 and 3 comprise 12 pieces which can be divided into two groups: female statuettes (protomes or seated figurines) and animals or mythological figures (dove, bird, boar, lion and Silenus). The female group has already been discussed above and there are no indications that its possible interpretation should have changed character from the previous phase. The group of animals and Silenus belongs to a type of terracotta which is often interpreted as toys for children (Houby-Nielsen 1995, 147-150, Appendix 3; Oakley 2003, 176-177). However, if we look at the age group identification in the burials with animal terracottas from Phases 2 and 3, there are two child burials and three adult burials. The quality of the data is problematic in this particular analysis since we do not have any secure skeletal analyses and identifications of the age groups. The length of a so-called adult grave could, of course, easily accommodate a child, or adults could be buried together with children, for example mother and child, and their bones could easily have disintegrated. Therefore, it is unfortunately not possible to go much

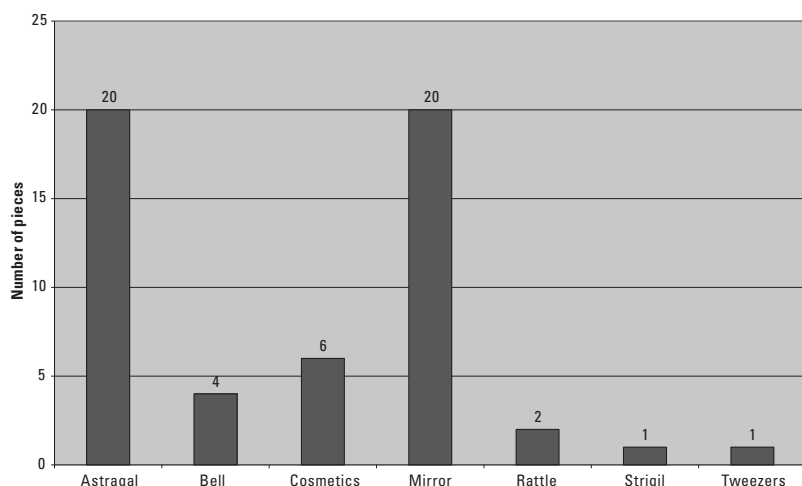


Fig. 2.21. Olbia. Personalia from Phases 2 and 3

further with this analysis on the basis of the material available. With regards to the animal group, it should also be stressed that the boar and the lion may be interpreted within a mythological framework rather than simply as children's toys. We may see them in the same context as the female group and thus relate them to the cult of the chthonic gods in which boars and piglets are among the most common animals used as sacrifices – something that is testified both through finds of terracotta figurines of pigs and actual animal remains (Guettel Cole 1994, 203-204; Rusjaeva 2005, 359-360).

On a general level, we may underline that the burials with terracottas seem to belong to the group of better-equipped burials, often accompanied by precious jewellery, fine Attic imports of black-figured pottery, vessels from the GFA group and objects from the personalia group.

The different objects from the personalia and GFA groups are depicted in Fig. 2.21 and Fig. 2.22. Looking at the GFA group, we may just note that the deposition pattern from the previous phase appears to persist; there is a smaller group of burials, both adults and children, which features few ceramic grave goods in combination with the GFA vessels. A larger group of graves features GFA vessels together with more numerous quantities of precious jewellery, objects from the personalia groups and ceramics. However, the deposition ratio of 1:1 is only evident in burials with few items of grave goods, while the better-equipped burials more often have several items of GFA. We may also note the tendency towards some very elaborate GFA pieces finding their way into the 'wealthier' graves in Phase 2, such as the unparalleled pieces shown in Fig. 2.23.

A further detailed analysis of the personalia and GFA groups has not been

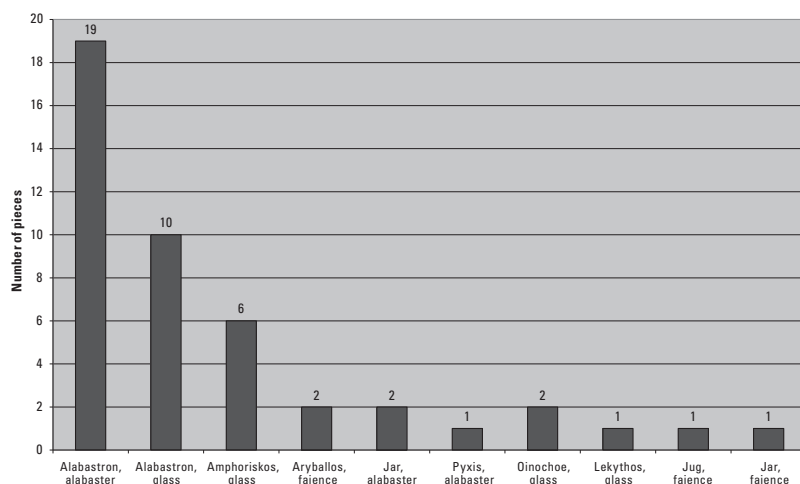


Fig. 2.22. *Olbia*. GFA from Phases 2 and 3

prioritized, but we may stress the significant group of mirrors.<sup>67</sup> The mirrors from Phases 2 and 3 amount to 20 in total, found in a 1:1 ratio in 20 burials. There are two distinctive types of mirrors (which reflect rather well the ethnic polarity of the research) – the so-called ‘Greek type’ with disc and handle cast separately (and often adorned with Greek motives) and the so-called ‘Scythian type’ with disc and handle cast as one (and with finials and sometimes incised decoration of ‘Scythian animal style’ motives) (Fig. 2.24). The production centres of the mirrors and other such topics related to them will not be discussed here.<sup>68</sup> However, since the mirrors play a very prominent role in one of the ethnicity based studies (Bessonova 1991), which we will look at later in this chapter, some central elements related to the contexts of the mirrors will be examined here. Table 9 lists the different types of grave goods found in the burials with mirrors.

The column to the right indicates the total number of graves in which the individual object types were found. We see that amphorae, cups and lekythoi, not surprisingly, are among the most common ceramic shapes included in the

<sup>67</sup> The mirror is a very common type of grave good in almost all parts of the ancient world and also in the Black Sea region, both in burial contexts of coastal settlements and in nomadic societies (O’Connor 1999, 42–43 with references and percentages for mirror finds at selected coastal localities; for examples from nomadic burials, see Dvornichenko 1995, 111–113; Melyukova 1995, 46, Fig. 59; Olkhovsky 1995, 69, 76, 79; see also this volume, Chapter 5 on mirrors from Nymphaion).

<sup>68</sup> The discussion of the Olbian mirrors has given way to a heated debate within Soviet and post-Soviet archaeology. See, for example, Skudnova 1962; 1988; Bessonova 1991; Denisova 2001.

mirror burials, whilst different kinds of adornments also make up quite a substantial part of the grave good combinations. In the ethnic theory proposed by Bessonova, to which we will return later, other features in combination with mirrors constitute special ethnic Scythian markers – namely knives, animal bones, red dye and stone dishes (portable altars) (Bessonova 1991, 93). Meanwhile, from Table 9 it is not evident that these particular objects were overtly or even well represented in the mirror burial assemblages. Furthermore, the general layout of the burials (inhumations in supine positions), the orientation of the deceased (in general towards the east) and the grave types (simple pit burials) give no indication as to any specific ethnic affiliation of these mirror burials. O'Connor has established that the positions of the mirrors in the burials also varied greatly, which could further speak against any static perception of their function in the burial customs (O'Connor 1999, 43-44). Another aspect of the possible significance of mirrors in burials is demonstrated by the famous mirror (Fig. 2.25), from the very same period, bearing the Orphic inscription *Demonassa, daughter of Lenaïos euai, and Lenaïos, son of Demokles eiai*<sup>69</sup> (Guldager Bilde 2008, 31; Petersen 2010 with references). Evidence for possible practise of Orphism can perhaps also be found in another group of grave goods from the personalia group, namely the bells and rattles which were identified in three graves: F79 (child?), F122 (adult+child?) and F167 (child). Naturally, there are several interpretations of these bells and rattles which could have been deposited in the burials, for example, as toys or as apotropaic objects, or they may have played a specific role in the funerary rituals especially associated with children (Villing 2002, 290-293). There are also strong connections between bells and the cult of Dionysos – a fact which is well attested in both literary and iconographic evidence (Villing 2002, 285-289). It must, however, be stressed that bells are also frequently met in Scythian burials where they have been identified as parts of horses' harnesses or hanging from the tops of poles, possibly in connection with shamanic rites (Villing 2002, 272). Although the evidence from the three burials in question points towards the sphere of children, it is tempting to suggest that the bells and rattles could also somehow be related to the early Orphic practices at Olbia, otherwise attested through the famous bronze mirror as well as the inscribed bone plaques found in the Central Temenos<sup>70</sup> (Guldager Bilde 2008, 31-32; Petersen 2010 with references).

69 The late 6<sup>th</sup> to early 5<sup>th</sup> century context of the mirror places it amongst the earliest evidence for Orphism known so far. It is very interesting to note that the Orphic mirror, with its Greek inscription, is actually of the so-called Scythian type, thus adding a nice dualism to the discourse on ethnicity and mirrors!

70 This group consists of five bone plaques found in the Central Temenos of Olbia. They date from the second or third quarter of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC, and bear inscriptions such as, for example, *bios-thanatos-bios* or *soma-psyke*. Further, the bone plaques feature the first attestation of the name of the thiasos of Orphic initiates, *orfikoi* (Zhmud' 1992, 160). The mirror and the plaques have been taken as strong evidence that the population of Olbia was concerned with the worship of Dionysos and with eschato-



Fig. 2.23. Olbia. Alabaster pyxides from Graves F160 and F182 (after Skudnova 1988, 106-107, 119, 121. The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg)









Fig. 2.24. Olbia. Examples of Greek- and Scythian-type mirrors from the cemetery (after Trofimova 2007, figs. 29a + 30. The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg)



Fig. 2.25. Olbia. The Demonassa mirror (modified after Rusjaeva 1978, 97)

Table 9. Olbia. Types of grave goods in burials with mirrors

Object type	Number of burials	Object type	Number of burials
Alabastron	5	Lekanis	1
Amphora	10	Lekythos	12
Askos	3	Lydion	1
Astragal	4	Mineral substance	3
Bead	11	Mirror	20
Bone	2	Nail	3
Bowl	3	Necklace	7
Box	1	Needle	1
Box part	1	Oinochoe	1
Bracelet	3	Olpe	1
Coin	1	Pendant	7
Core, metal	2	Phiale	1
Cosmetics	2	Plate	6
Cup	11	Plate, stone	1
Decorative object	1	Pyxis	2
Dress appliqué	1	Ring	4
Ear-ring	3	Salt-cellar	1
Finger ring	4	Scarab	1
Jar	5	Shell	1
Jug	2	Spindle whorl	1
Knife	5	Statuette	1
Krateriskos	1	Unidentified	7
Lamp	1	Whetstone	8

Table 10. Olbia. Types of grave goods in burials with knives

Object type	Number of burials	Object type	Number of burials
Alabastron	2	Jar	3
Amphora	13	Jug	3
Amphoriskos	1	Knife	29
Arrowhead	9	Lamp	1
Askos	7	Lekythos	12
Astragal	1	Mineral substance	3
Bead	6	Mirror	5
Boar's tusk	1	Nail	4
Bone	3	Necklace	5
Bowl	3	Oinochoe	2
Box	1	Pendant	3
Bracelet	2	Plate	4
Buckle	1	Plate, stone	2
Clamp	1	Pole-axe	2
Coin	1	Ring	3
Core, metal	3	Scarab	1
Cosmetics	1	Shell	2
Cup	17	Spearhead	1
Dagger	6	Spindle whorl	2
Decorative object	3	Spiral	1
Dress pin	1	Statuette	1
Ear-ring	1	Unidentified	8
Finger ring	2	Whetstone	12
Flint	2		

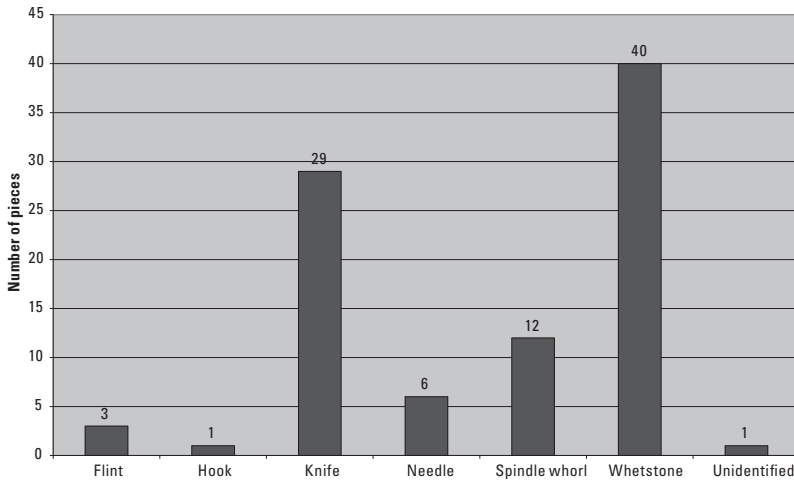


Fig. 2.26. Olbia. Tools from Phases 2 and 3

### Tools

The different types of tools from Phases 2 and 3 are depicted in Fig. 2.26. Here, the same problem as was presented with the mirrors also applies to the knives of this group.

Bessonova focuses on knives as special Scythian ethnic markers especially when found in combination with animal bones (Bessonova 1991, 93). Table 10 lists the different types of grave goods found in the burials with knives.

Again, it is not evident that particular ‘ethnic’ objects are overly or even well represented in the burial assemblages; we see the same pattern of ceramics, mainly amphoras, cups and lekythoi, as well as both adorning and functional jewellery, weapons and objects from the personalia, tools and varia groups. There is no particular emphasis on finds of animal bones. We can see from the table that only one burial with a knife also had a boar’s tusk, whilst three burials featured animal bones of unidentified types.

Whether the knives were deposited in the burials as tools, signifiers of food offerings (banquets?) or perhaps as weapons (less likely because of their small sizes), it seems difficult to identify convincing indications to allow an interpretation of them as specific ethnic markers.

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logical thinking as well as ideas related to death as a new beginning, perhaps even reincarnation (the *bios-thanatos-bios*) (Rusjaeva 1978; West 1982; Zhmud’ 1992; Parker 1997, 485; Vinogradov 1997d; Guldager Bilde 2008; Petersen 2010). Dubois even suggested that the city name ‘Olbia’, meaning ‘happy and bountiful’, may have sprung from the local Orphic milieu (Dubois 1996, 152). A bone plaque mentioning Apollon has been found on the nearby island of Berezan’ and has also been connected with Orphic (or Pythagorean) cult practices. For a detailed study of the Berezan’ evidence, see Onyshkevych 2002.

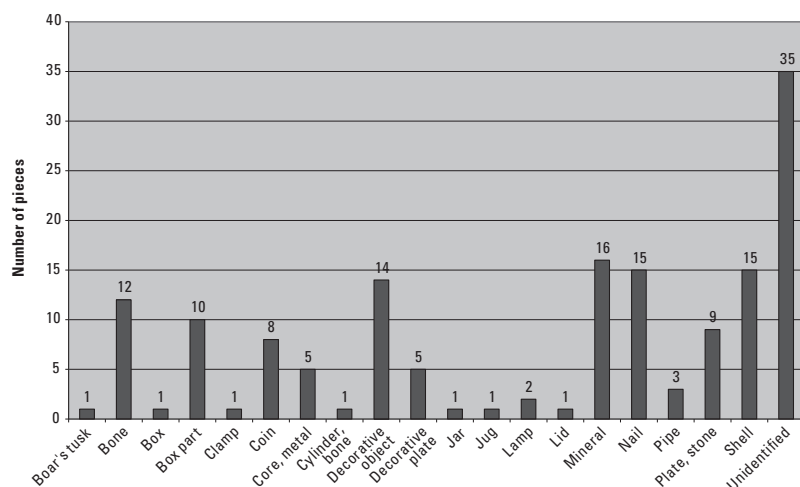


Fig. 2.27. *Olbia. Varia* from Phases 2 and 3

### *Varia*

The different objects from the varia object group are depicted in Fig. 2.27. As can be seen from the chart, the most numerous types are animal bones and shells, decorative objects, often from sarcophagi or other wooden furniture, and different and often unidentified minerals, which may have served as cosmetics, dye or for other personal uses. We may also note the significant presence of nails, often only found as single objects or in pairs, which could indicate a different and perhaps magical connotation from their straightforward, functional use in wooden furniture so often assumed.<sup>71</sup> In Grave F164 there was a nail in the fill of the grave which seems to have been twisted (ritually 'killed' or 'cancelled?'), perhaps another indication of the magical connotations that nails could sometimes have. It is, however, uncertain whether the damaged condition of the nail was purposeful or whether its position in the fill may have damaged and twisted it after the deposition. Another explanation relates to the practice of displaying grave goods on nails from the tomb walls which is well-attested in, for example, burial material from Lucania and in Macedonian and Tarantine chamber tombs.<sup>72</sup> For a well-preserved example of this practice, see colour plate 1.

71 Nails found in burials could have, at least in later periods, magical or symbolical meaning, but could, of course, especially when found in larger numbers, also be from coffins, biers or other pieces of wooden furniture (Kurtz & Boardman 1971, 216-217; on symbolic and magical connotations, see Faraone & Obbink 1991, 3, 9; Flint, Luck & Ogden 1999, 13-14, 73).

72 Lucania: Horsnæs 2002, 55; Macedonia: Butler 2008, 85; Taras: Lo Porto 1967, 86; also this volume, Chapter 7.

Fig. 2.28. Stone plates or altars(?): (a) from Olbia, (after Skudova 1988, 50, cat. 46. The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg); (b) from Berezan' (after Solovyov 1999, fig. 27; courtesy of S. Solovyov); and (c) parallels from nomadic sites (after Davis-Kimball, Bashilov & Yablonsky 1995, 114, fig. 24; courtesy of the Centre for the Study of Eurasian Nomads)



a



b





An important and interesting group of objects is that comprised of stone slabs or plates. The plates are flat, and sometimes rounded, rather large stone slabs with a cut edge (Fig. 2.28). The nine slabs or plates were deposited in a 1:1 ratio with the burials. Their position in the burials is not uniform, but two were placed at the feet of the deceased, whereas three were placed at the head. There is no information on their position in relation to the skeleton for the remaining examples. One of the slabs near the head was even placed under the head of the deceased, perhaps as a kind of pillow(?). The use of pillows in Greek funerary customs is well attested in the ancient literary sources (Hame 1999, 28-29), but, as this is the only recorded example from the Olbian burials of this period known to me, I hesitate to make any conclusive interpretations at this stage. There are, however, other interesting interpretative alternatives for these stone plates. Close parallels to the plates are found in the portable altars of the so-called Sauromatian nomadic culture of the Volga River region and the southern Ural steppes. According to Dvornichenko, the altars are characteristic of female burials of this culture and are very diverse in form and shape (Dvornichenko 1995, 114, Fig. 24). Concerning the possible Olbian alters, Rusjaeva has suggested that they can be interpreted as evidence for intermarriage between the Greek population of Olbia and the Scythian population of the forest steppe region (Rusjaeva 1990, 26). However, there is little further evidence in the burial complexes containing these stone plates to suggest that the plates should be confined to a specific ethnic group.<sup>73</sup> The possible cultic connotation of these altars is attested by firemarks, traces of soot and burned fat. Moreover, there are often remains of a red colour or dye on the surfaces (Dvornichenko 1995, 112-114). Unfortunately, no information about such features has been recorded for the stone plates from the cemetery of Olbia. The occurrence of red substances (often ochre or realgar) in the burials, sometimes translated as 'paint', can be explained by a variety of reasons and functions. These substances could have served as cosmetics or as decorative elements for, for example, wooden sarcophagi or other smaller furniture, or they could have had a symbolic meaning, such as is suggested in Greek burials where the bottom of the grave or the coffin can be smeared with red substances, perhaps in order to illustrate blood or fire(?) (Kurtz & Boardman 1971, 217, 330). Similar interpretations have also been put forward in connection with the red substances found in nomadic burials (Dvornichenko 1995, 105; Olkhovsky 1995, 67). Whatever its symbolic meaning, it must be stressed that the occurrence of red dye in burials is by no means a purely nomadic custom, and its value as a strict ethnic marker is thus not proven.

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73 All the burials are simple pits (one with a wooden sarcophagus) with inhumations in a supine position and oriented towards the east. The grave goods mainly consist of ceramics (cups, amphoras, lekythoi), adornments and a few pieces of personalia such as a mirror, some tools (a knife and a spindle whorl) and varia (a lamp and mineral substances or dyes).

What we may conclude from the occurrence of these possible altars in the burials of Olbia is that they may point towards a religious practice, perhaps as part of the burial customs or as an indication of the deceased's religious life when alive.<sup>74</sup>

One final and very important feature of the grave goods of Phase 2 is the sudden occurrence of coins in the burials.<sup>75</sup> This marks a significant shift in the burial customs from Phase 1 to Phase 2, even though the total number of burials with coins only amount to seven (Graves F66, F82, F165, F187, F191, F209 and F262). There are also more insecure instances of coins found in the fills of burials (Graves F72, F104 and F223), but these are not included in the analysis due to their questionable provenance.

The coins in the burials are all of the so-called 'dolphin type' – a series unique to Olbia and thought to appear for the first time at the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>76</sup> We may note that similar dolphin coins have also been found in the burials of Berezan', both in single deposits and in small hoards (Vinogradov 1994a, 23).

Alongside the dolphin coins, the earliest known coinage of the northwestern Black Sea region are the 'arrowhead coins'. The arrowhead coins are attested from the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century at Apollonia, Tomis, Istros, Ismail, Nikonion, Berezan' and Olbia (Stingl 2005, 119). There are two types of arrowhead coins, the first type is identical to 'proper' arrowheads used for warfare and hunting, while the second type is more rounded with no sharp point at the end, and examples are sometimes referred to as 'leaf' coins (Stingl 2005, 119).

The dolphin coins in the burials of Olbia are all single deposits, with the exception of Grave F187 where two coins were deposited in the southern part of the tomb. The positions of the single coins are either near the legs (Graves F66 and F191) or near/in the hands of the deceased (Graves F82, F209 and F262). There is no information available as to the exact position of the coin inside Grave F165.

The dolphin coins in the burials from Olbia and Berezan' may very well be some of the earliest evidence in the Greek world for the practice of placing coins in burials. In general, there is very little, if any, evidence for coins in Greek burials before well into the 5<sup>th</sup> century (Grinder-Hansen 1991, 210; Stevens 1991, 223). For the Black Sea region, 5<sup>th</sup> century evidence from Pich-

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74 However, we may note that similar stone plate have been found in what is thought to be settlement(?) contexts on Berezan' (Solovyov 1999, 48-49).

75 There are no coins in any of the nine burials from Phase 3 which is most probably due to the low number of burials involved, since coins are frequently found in the burials of Olbia in subsequent periods.

76 Skudnova (1988) published the coins from the burials as copper coins, but copper coins only began to appear in the 4<sup>th</sup> century. Furthermore, there are no other known examples of dolphin coins in copper from this early period, so conceivably the coins are all bronze instead.

vnari shows the earliest known coins actually placed in the mouth of the deceased – most commonly interpreted as Charon's obol (Vickers & Kakhidze 2004, 159-161). However, the studies by Grinder-Hansen and Stevens emphasize that: *the evidence shows that Charon's obol was only one manifestation of a much wider funerary use of coins and suggests a richer and broader context in which it can be understood* (Stevens 1991, 215). Grinder-Hansen even suggests that: *the expression Charon's fee should be removed from the vocabulary of archaeologists and be replaced by the more correct name death-coin, which can stand for a number of different coin uses and notions* (Grinder-Hansen 1991, 215-216). Thus, it may not be correct to conclude that the late 6<sup>th</sup> century dolphin coins in the burials of Olbia and Berezan' are the earliest evidence for the practice of including Charon's fee in a burial, but the presence of coins in this early period is, at least to my knowledge, unparalleled in the Greek world. To my mind this, in combination with the early coin evidence from the Pichvnari burials, puts the Black Sea region in a special position in the late 6<sup>th</sup> and early 5<sup>th</sup> centuries in terms of the deposit of coins in funerary contexts.

Consideration of the deposit of coins and monetary symbols in burials ties in well with a discussion of the deposit of arrowheads. As mentioned above, dolphin coins and arrowhead coins were the earliest coinage in the Black Sea region.<sup>77</sup> This close association between monetary value and arrowheads could perhaps explain the single finds of arrowheads in burials which in no other respect show signs of being related to warfare or hunting. In the material from Olbia there are four burials which have deposits of single arrow heads.<sup>78</sup> In Grave F176 there were other weapons deposited as well as the arrowhead, and here we may suggest a *pars pro toto* interpretation of the single arrowhead. However, in Graves F146, F238 and F254 there are no other weapons and also no indication as to the arrowheads' positions *in situ* in relation to the skeletal remains. Here I should like to suggest an interpretation based on the model that arrowhead = coin. This simple model implies that the 'monetary' value of the arrowhead gives it the same symbolic meaning as a coin in a burial.<sup>79</sup> Not only does this interpretation offer an explanation for the presence of the single arrowhead deposits, it also offers an alternative interpretation to

77 It is commonly accepted that the dolphin coins take over from the arrowhead coins in Olbia during the 5<sup>th</sup> century, but at other places the arrowhead coins remain in circulation well into the 4<sup>th</sup> century (Stingl 2005, 121). Both coin types are also found widely distributed in the rural territory of Olbia (Kryzhytskyy & Krapivina 2003, 528).

78 There are also finds of single arrowheads in the contemporary burials from Berezan' (Vinogradov 1994a, 23). See also Archibald 1998, 257 for evidence of single deposits of arrowheads from Thracian burials.

79 A similar line of interpretation has been put forward concerning deposits of arrowheads in the cemetery of Apollonia (Panayotova 2007, 92, with further references). An important parallel to this phenomenon is found in Iron Age Greece where the *oboloi* spits had a similar monetary value and, likewise, prominent places in the burials (for example, Grinder-Hansen 1991, 215).

the ethnic Scythian deduction so often applied to burials with arrowheads or weapons. Thus, the 'monetary' suggestion leaves us with a social or even religious symbol for the afterlife as an alternative interpretation to that of arrowheads as ethnic markers.

### *Positions of grave goods*

Table 11 gives an overview of the positions of the different types of grave goods. Certain types of adornments, such as finger rings, bracelets and necklaces, are mostly found in positions where we may expect them to occur according to their function, for example near the fingers, hands, wrists and neck. However, we may note the general lack of a clear positioning pattern for most types of grave goods. There are some tendencies in the positioning, such as oil-related vessels being often placed near the head or upper part of body, but all types have more than one example of other positions as well. The table hence illustrates quite well that there are no definite positions for the individual types of grave goods, and that variation and perhaps the individual preference of those conducting the burials played a significant role in the burial customs.

This conclusion ties in well with the combinations of grave goods noted, which also do not demonstrate clear patterns. Although one might find tendencies in, for example, combinations of pottery shapes, as demonstrated above, there are always examples where one or more factors are divergent from the norm. Therefore, it is not possible to define a clear preference for either the position of particular types of grave goods or their combinations; a

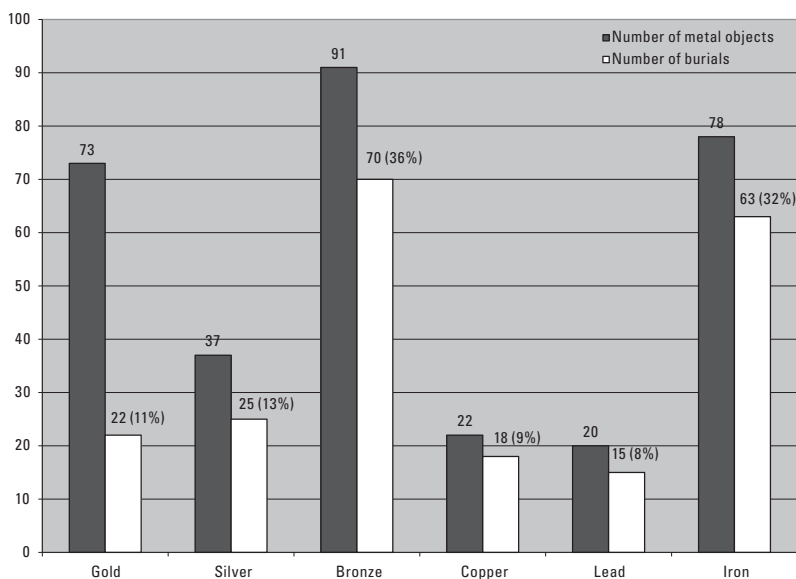


Fig. 2.29. Olbia. Metals from Phases 2 and 3

fact which probably illustrates a rather wide set of parameters for individual taste and/or family tradition within the circle of relatives or others who buried their dead in Archaic Olbia.

### *Deposits of metal*

There are 326 individual deposits of metal from Phases 2 and 3 (in 321 cases the metal is specified, in five no specific metal has been stated). The 326 deposits are distributed across 108 graves. Fig. 2.29 shows the quantities of items of different metals and the number of graves in which they were deposited. From the chart it becomes clear that gold deposits are well represented in relation to the actual numbers of objects but restricted to rather few graves. Thus, the 73 objects of gold are distributed across only 22 graves. This means that 11 % of the burials are equipped with golden objects. Silver shows a different pattern, similar to bronze, copper, lead and iron which are distributed across a larger number of graves. As was the case in Phase 1, the number of objects of precious metal is quite impressive when compared with other localities of the same period, for example Nymphaion where there are many fewer metal deposits in Phases 2 and 3 (see this volume, Chapter 5).

In percentage terms, the burials with the precious metals, gold and/or silver, amount to 24 % of the total number of burials in Phases 2 and 3 – a figure which is slightly higher than the figure of 18 % from the previous phase. Again, this seems to be rather an impressive figure, both in comparison with Nymphaion and also in comparison with Pantikapaion. O'Connor's figure (1999, Fig. 1.65) illustrates deposits of *all* kinds of metal from Pantikapaion, which occur in c. 25 % of the burials from the 6<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> century and in c. 35 % of the burials of the 5<sup>th</sup> century. An analysis of the total number of burials from Olbia from Phases 2 and 3 containing any type of metal shows that no less than 55 % contained metal. Hence, the picture from Phase 1 is continued with a slight increase into Phases 2 and 3. Again, the conclusion points in the direction of a well-established society with a significant surplus available for deposit.

Looking at the age groups in relation to deposits of metal, 13 child and teenage burials have metal objects. This is 12 % of the total number of graves with metal – an increase of c. 4 % from the previous phase. Hence, there does not seem to be any significant changes in the attitude towards metal deposition in child and teenage burials, and we must therefore conclude, as before, that the deposition of metals was not common in child and teenage graves.

### *Outside deposits*

The outside deposits of Phases 2 and 3 are surprisingly varied compared to the previous phase. There are deposits of objects from all object groups except GFA and terracottas. Once more, we may note the very high number of amphoras; this seems to be the preferred ceramic type in the majority of the deposits. There are also cups, jugs and lekythoi, but there can be no doubt

Table 11. Olbia. Positions of grave goods

Object type	Position Group								
	Head	Ear	Neck	Chest	Shoulder	Elbow	Hand	Finger	Hip
alabastron	2			1	4	1	4		
amphora	12				1		2		
amphoriskos					2				
arrowhead	1				1	1	5		
aryballos						2	4		
askos	7				5	5	5		1
astragal	2				2		2		
baby feeder									
basket									
bead	12		14		6	2	5		
bell							3		
boar's tusk									
bone	2								
bowl	6					1	4		2
box	1								
box part									
bracelet	1					2	10		
buckle									
button					1				
clamp									
coin							3		
core	1					1			
cosmetics					1				
cup	16		1		6	2	20		
cylinder									
dagger							2		3
decorative object	1						6		
decorative plate	1						1		
dress applique	1			2					
dress pin	1						1		
ear-ring	9						2		
fibula					1				
finger ring							4	18	
flint									
hook									
hydria	1								
jar	4				3	3	3		
jug	11				1		1		
knife	2				2		4		1
krateriskos	1					1			
lamp									
lekanis							1		
lekanis lid									
lekythos	10				6	6	7		
lid									
lydion									
mineral	1						3		
mirror	5				4		2		
nail	1				1				
necklace	8		6		1		1		
needle	1				1				
oinochoe	5				3		3		
olpe					2				
pendant	6		6		2				
phiale							2		
pipe							1		
plate	1						1		1
plate, stone	3								
pole-axe						1	1		
pyxis									
pyxis lid						1			
rattle							2		
ring	1		1		2	1	12		
salt-cellar									
scarab							1		
shell	2		1				4		
spearhead									
spindle whorl	2	1				1			
spiral	1								
statuette	5				1		1		
strigil	1								
sword									
tube							1		
tweezers									
unidentified	4		2		3	1	4		
whetstone	2					2	1		1
wire							1		
<b>Total</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>9</b>

Position Group (continued)									
Knee	Legs	Feet	Alongside body	Inside grave	Inside other vessel	Not stated	Other	Part of tomb	Total
		1	3	6	1	3		3	29
	11	4	1	9		13		36	89
1	1		1			3		1	9
2	3			2		7		4	26
1						3		11	21
	2			12	1	5		9	52
1	2	1	2	5			1	2	20
1	1			1	1	2		3	9
								1	1
2	3			15	1	14		14	88
				1					4
								1	1
				2		6		2	12
4	1			3		1		9	31
	3								1
			1	1		4		7	10
				1				1	20
				1					1
				1					2
	2			1				1	1
				2				2	8
								1	5
1	2					2			6
6	23	9	8	26	6	28		45	196
				1					1
	1			2		3			11
				3		3		1	14
				3					5
	1					2			6
						2		3	7
				2					13
								1	2
				1					23
				1		2			3
						1			1
	1								2
	8		1	7	2	10		9	50
	3	2	2	11		15		18	64
3	2		1	4		5		5	29
								1	3
								2	2
	2							1	4
3			1						4
	5	4	1	7		11		12	69
						1			1
				1					1
	4		2		1	1		4	16
	3			2		1		3	20
	1		2	3		6		1	15
2				4		2		1	25
			1					3	6
	7	1	1	7		6		5	38
	1			3				4	10
	2			3	1	11		8	39
									2
				2					3
2	3	1		5		6		10	30
	1	1		1	1	1		1	9
									2
1	2			1		1		4	9
									1
									2
	3		1	2				2	25
	1			1					2
					1				2
	1		1	1		2		3	15
						1			1
2	2					3		1	12
									1
	2			1		1		1	12
									1
						1			1
									1
	1								1
1	9			6	1	3		4	38
2	6		3	5		9	1	8	40
									1
35	126	24	33	178	17	201	2	269	1337



that the amphoras hold a prominent position. This is reflected in the grave goods from inside the burials, as we saw above, and also in the construction of many of the niche tombs where lines of amphoras cover the opening of the niche. Additionally, there are several finds, although most of them later (5<sup>th</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> centuries), of so-called amphora circles in the cemetery area – a feature well-known from other coastal cemeteries in the Black Sea region.<sup>80</sup>

A further interesting observation from the deposits of ceramics is the relatively high number of kraters in the fills. This observation is important since there are very few kraters inside the burials. Thus, it seems that kraters were primarily used outside rather than inside deposits. It may also be that the kraters served as grave markers, as was the case for contemporary graves from the Pantanello cemetery near Metaponto. In a similar fashion to Olbia, the kraters were rarely deposited inside the graves in Pantanello (Carter 1998, 125, see also this volume, Chapter 7). As was noticed in Phase 1, the outside deposits were mainly connected with objects which could be interpreted as part of funerary rituals, often libations and food offerings, which would have taken place after the actual funeral. In Phases 2 and 3, however, there is now also a significant amount of other objects, such as coins, shells and unidentified animal bones (bones of a horse and dog in the fill of Grave F162), arrowheads, jewellery, flint and stone tools as well as whetstones. We may be tempted to interpret this as a changed attitude towards outside deposits, but the uncertain nature of outside deposits and the original provenance of the objects should warn us not to make too firm a conclusion on this point.

Before ending this analysis it must be stressed that the groupings and analyses of the material detailed above in general reflect mere tendencies rather than firm, uniform ‘rules’. In conclusion, the Olbian material reveals a very varied and flexible set of burial customs with very few burials showing a static approach to the arrangement and equipment of the graves and treatment of the deceased; this leaves quite some room for variety through individual family traditions and/or the specific personal preferences of those who conducted the burials.

## 2.5 Main conclusions of the analyses

The most important observations from the analyses of the graves and grave goods can be summarized as follows:

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80 For Olbia, see Farmakovskij 1929, 66-69; Papanova 2005, 221-231; 2006, 190-192; for Nymphaion, see Papanova 2006, 191; for Apollonia, see Nedev & Panayatova 2003, 132. From later periods in Olbia there is also ample evidence of recut amphoras in use as small altars, and amphoras found *in situ* with their bases cut off to accommodate libations (Papanova 2006, 155-157; see also this volume, Chapter 4 for similar practices attested in Kurgan 13 from Panskoe I).

- The four different main grave types continue across all periods – there is an homogenous approach to the use of grave types;
- There seems to be a well-established tradition for elaborate burials – often in wooden sarcophagi enclosed in family clusters (mainly based on excavation reports);
- There is certainly a differentiation of age groups, both in terms of the topographical layout of the cemetery and in the grave structures and grave goods;
- The burials feature an unparalleled high number of metal deposits, both of precious metals and of other kinds of metals – as well as a high number of grave goods per grave and high NOT-values reflecting very varied sets of grave goods (for example *varia* see a steady increase);
- There is also a relatively high number of burials with weapon deposits compared with other Black Sea localities and the Greek world in general;
- Clear preference for neither the position of grave good types nor their combinations is seen, which probably illustrates a rather wide set of parameters for individual taste and/or family tradition to be employed within the circle of relatives and others who buried the dead;
- The burials probably reflect the general notion of a prosperous and peaceful period in the city's existence;
- In general, a very diverse, multifaceted and cross-cultural attitude to burial customs can be seen, with possible elements of both Greek and Scythian cultural affiliations;
- The material is in many ways a unique pool of burial data from a coastal city of this period in the Black Sea region, and no published material from any other locality can match it in quantity, variety and richness

## 2.6 Previous interpretations of the Archaic and early Classical burial data from Olbia

The unique nature of the Archaic and early Classical burial material from Olbia has naturally, over time, prompted a number of specialist studies. Common to them all has been a clear interest in the opportunity to use the material in an ethnic discourse on relations between the Greeks and the Scythians of the region.<sup>81</sup>

In the following, I will give a summarized presentation of the main views and interpretations of the previous research.

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81 There is also a number of other demographic studies on the ethnicity of the populations in Olbia and on Berezan', but since they are not based primarily on the burial material they will not be incorporated in this summary. See bibliography in Kryzhytskyy et al. 2003, 486-487 with several references to demographic studies by V.V. Nazarov; see also Marčenko 1988.

There are two main directions within the body of research on the Archaic burials from Olbia: one strand has tried to prove the existence of a Scythian population living in Olbia (Kapošina, Knipovič, Bessonova), whilst the other has been keen to stress its 'Greekness' (Furmanskaja, Skudnova, Papanova).

The basic methodological starting point for both strands of research has been a firm belief in the close connection between material culture and ethnicity. Whether the aim is to prove the existence of a Scythian population or or Greekness, the methodology is based on the same premises: Greeks used Greek objects and practised Greek customs, whereas Scythians used Scythian objects and practised Scythian customs. Even when there are attempts at explaining, for example, Greek ceramics in 'Scythian' burials (Kapošina 1941, 168-169) or Scythian daggers in 'Greek' burials (Skudnova 1960, 72), the arguments only stretch as far as 'Scythians assimilating to Greek customs' (Kapošina 1941, 169), or 'effects of Greek trade with the Scythians' (Skudnova 1960, 72).

For Kapošina (1941; 1950), Knipovič (1940a; 1941) and Bessonova (1991) there are several features which identify an ethnic Scythian burial with certainty:

- Armour and weaponry as grave goods (Kapošina 1941, 167; 1950, 212; Knipovič 1941, 117-118; Bessonova 1991, 93);
- Crouched positions of skeletons (Knipovič 1940a, 104; Kapošina 1941, 167; 1950, 212; Bessonova 1991, 93);
- Wooden coverings and fluting or 'canes' at the bottom of burials (Kapošina 1941, 168; 1950, 212);
- Red dye inside burials and on skeletons (Knipovič 1941, 117-118; Kapošina 1950, 212; Bessonova 1991, 93);
- Objects such as whetstones, portable altars, knives and animal bones as grave goods (Kapošina 1941, 168-169; Bessonova 1991, 93).

For Kapošina and Knipovič, the presence of just one of the above-mentioned features is a certain marker of Scythian ethnicity, whilst Bessonova tries to rank the features according to their 'ethnic cleanliness' although she admits that all these features can be found in Greek burials as well (1991, 92-93). She ends up with a total number of 83 burials attributed to the 'local barbaric' population in Archaic times. This equals c. 30 % of the buried population (Bessonova 1991, 95).

The main arguments against these approaches have been pointed out by Skudnova (1988) and later by O'Connor (1999) who argued that the isolated study of just one aspect of a whole burial ceremony cannot be considered as conclusive with regards to any ethnic identification of the deceased (Skudnova 1988, 8-9; O'Connor 1999, 34-37). Furthermore, as is also pointed out by O'Connor (1999, 37, 43), Bessonova's argument fails to add much more substantial evidence to the dialogue since her study is more or less a developed

edition of Kapošina's earlier ideas. Basically, she is repeating the selective approach to the 'Scythian' group and the female group which she claims to identify in the material, ignoring the great variety in grave good groupings and assemblages in general. All three studies, and especially Bessonova's, thus attempt to produce a very clear picture of these grave groups, but fail to acknowledge the diversity of the burial customs, such as the many instances where elements of their identifiers are found in other assemblages and with none of their other 'ethnic markers'. All in all, the boundaries are not as apparent as the researchers would like to present them, and the 'clear' groups are often at best vague tendencies in a very selective set of data.<sup>82</sup>

Skudnova's presentation of the Archaic burial customs in her 1988 publication is mainly preoccupied with refuting Kapošina's theories. Thus, Skudnova claims that the fluting in the bottom of the graves was probably a functional device to drain the grave if the burials were conducted in rainy weather in the autumn rather than a symbolic ethnic marker (Skudnova 1988, 7). Kapošina's study of the wooden coverings is deemed useless because her material includes graves with all kinds of wooden remains which could just as easily stem from sarcophagi or coffins as from coverings (Skudnova 1988, 8-9). Furthermore, Skudnova criticizes Kapošina for adding graves to her 'crouched group' which feature skeletons with only small deviations from the supine position (Skudnova 1988, 8-9). This is also one of the main conclusions reached by O'Connor when examining Kapošina's 'crouched group' (O'Connor 1999, 33-36). Skudnova simply states that there are no features of Scythian burial customs in the graves from Olbia (Skudnova 1988, 7), and goes on to explain all features of the burial customs as being connected with known Greek customs, stressing the parallels with the Greek world again and again. Much the same picture is found in Papanova's work, where the 'different' aspects such as, for example, organic bedding, anthropomorphic *stelai*<sup>83</sup> and the presence of kurgans are all explained in terms of Greek approaches to the mortuary sphere and illustrated by Greek parallels (for example, Papanova 2006, 99, 106, 142-146, 159, 162, 164-165).

Although there are many important points to Skudnova's criticisms, it must be stressed that the methodological basis of her work is in many ways the same as that of her opponents – just with the direction reversed. Indeed, it is tempting to argue against the Scythian ethnic discourse with counter

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82 O'Connor (1999, 37) further points out that it is surprising that the studies, in particular the one by Bessonova, seem to have gained acceptance within certain circles of Classical archaeologists such as, for example, Tsetskhladze 1998, 45.

83 The possible ethnic affiliations of anthropomorphic *stelai* have been, and still are, very hotly debated within the realm of Black Sea archaeology. Scholars often argue for either Greek or nomadic cultural affiliation (for the most recent contributions apart from Papanova 2006, see Bujs'kich & Zubar 2006, with bibliography; Posamentir 2005, 109-110; in general, see also Moleva 1991a; 1991b; 1999; 2002).

examples of similar features in burial customs from the Greek world or *vice versa*.<sup>84</sup> Meanwhile, it is difficult to find truly convincing arguments for specific ethnic markers, be they Scythian or Greek, in any of the above-mentioned studies, and the ethnic polarity which they are all keen to stress, in one way or another, does not really seem to be obvious from the analyses of the data. The core of the problem may be that these approaches fail to draw a line between ethnicity and cultural identity, and, further, fail to acknowledge the limitations of the data. We may, for example, note that crouched burials do not clearly constitute, *a consistent feature of burial practices in any part of the North Pontic region, except perhaps in the remote Crimean mountain regions* (O'Connor 1999, 36), or that the orientation of the Olbian burials is predominantly easterly, as demonstrated above (Fig. 2.7 and Fig. 2.9), but these observations could perhaps serve rather as a springboard for considerations about social identities and manipulations, and perhaps as reflections of cultural interactions rather than of strict ethnicity. The use of material remains and, in this case burial data, as *direct* reflections of ethnicity proves fruitless where no 'clear cut' expressions or boundaries can be detected. We may stress the presence of a great variety of objects and burial features which have different cultural affiliations, but their reception in the burials of Archaic Olbia is much more blurred and complex than we may like to admit (as demonstrated above, for example, in the combinations of pottery shapes, the table of positions of grave goods or the combination tables of grave good types such as mirrors or knives).

Denisova (2001, 200) comes to the conclusion that before making any further analyses of the Archaic material from Olbia, it is necessary to re-examine and recollect all the burial data in order to have more firmly grounded material to work with. The question is, however, whether such a step would change the basis for the methodologies and alter any results if researchers keep thinking in terms of materials being direct markers of ethnicity?

I suggest that an attempt at a more socially based analysis (which I have demonstrated some aspects of above) would prove much more fruitful. Ultimately, there can be no doubt that the material record of the Archaic burials from Olbia displays a multicultural complexity which can only lead one to suggest a high degree of cultural interaction, perhaps based on hybrid cultural identities which were created and negotiated to fit specific social strategies and situations. In this game, ethnicities may not have played such a prominent role as previous researchers would like to conclude, and the 'empty' calculating concerned with 'ethnic percentages' does not bring us any closer to an understanding of the early population which formed the demographic structure of one of the most prominent cities of the northern Black Sea coast.

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84 Such as the above-mentioned example concerning the use of organic bedding in Scythian burials and the literary evidence of similar customs from Greece.

## 2.7 An overview of other localities in the northwestern Black Sea region

For the second half of the 6<sup>th</sup> century and the early 5<sup>th</sup> century published material parallel to the Olbian data set is very difficult to come by. Therefore, this overview will be rather summarized and will focus on the few localities which have yielded material from the period in question.<sup>85</sup>

### *Berezan'*

There are very large amounts of burial material from Berezan', but, unfortunately, the majority of this work stems from old unpublished excavations conducted on the island in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century by G.L. Skadovskij.<sup>86</sup> Furthermore, it seems that the old excavation reports and also the actual burial finds have been separated, since finds from the cemetery are stored in several different archaeological museums. The few treatments of the burial data from Berezan' are rather short summarized chapters often in overview studies dedicated to the island in general (for example, Solovyov 1999; Kryzhytskyy et al. 2003). From these works, the overall picture is more or less in accordance with the picture we have just seen in Olbia itself.

The information in Kryzhytskyy et al. 2003 is, as was the case with their section on Olbia, focused on the settlement rather than the cemetery. This results in a little more than five lines being dedicated to the burial customs of the 6<sup>th</sup> and early 5<sup>th</sup> centuries. The majority of the burials are reported as being simple pit graves, but there is no mention of other grave types. The deceased were most commonly found in supine positions, but crouched positions occurred as well. There is apparently evidence for cremations, although the majority of the burials are reported as inhumations. A similar feature to the Olbian material is the *enchytrismoi* in amphoras. In general, the grave goods are described as 'poor', mostly consisting of ceramics, but some burials are mentioned for their deposits of weapons and jewellery of precious metals (Kryzhytskyy et al. 2003, 468).

Vinogradov (1994a, 21) is slightly more detailed in his description of the burials. From him we learn that there are three main types of burials: simple pits, *enchytrismoi* and cremations on funerary platforms. The grave goods are primarily ceramics such as amphoras, grey-ware jugs, cups, lekythoi and aryballoi. Furthermore, he mentions spindle whorls, needles, knives, whetstones, adornments and dolphin coins. The weaponry is almost exclusively individual arrowheads (Vinogradov 1994a, 23).

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85 There are several cemetery sites in the Olbian hinterland and surroundings further afield which could have been included in this study, but unfortunately they all relate to chronological periods later than the second half of the 6<sup>th</sup> to the early 5<sup>th</sup> century.

86 Solovyov 1999, 56, note 32: between 500 and 800 burials were opened by Skadovskij, a further 16 burials were discovered in 1967-1968 and 213 burials were studied in 1976-1990. Vinogradov estimates some 750 burials in total from all periods of investigations (Vinogradov 1994a, 21).



Solovyov (1999, 80) allocates some estimated percentages to the different grave types, stating that 89 % of the burials from the second half of the 6<sup>th</sup> to the early 5<sup>th</sup> century were simple pit burials, while 7 % of the burials were child *enchytrismoi* (either in amphoras or less common in pithoi). The cremation burials are estimated at c. 4 %. Moreover, the majority of the burials were placed in a supine position, whilst an estimated 33 % were crouched. Interestingly, Solovyov attributes these crouched burials to what he calls 'the local population' without further explanation or argumentation (Solovyov 1999, 80). Otherwise, the summarized presentation does not add any new information to the picture presented by Vinogradov. However, it is significant that both Vinogradov and Solovyov, in their two relatively recent studies, see the burial material as a direct indication of ethnic differentiation in the population without raising any doubts as to the value of burial materials as ethnic markers (for example, Vinogradov 1994a, 23; Solovyov 1999, 56).

Concerning the burial customs of the early period of the settlement's existence, Damyanov has recently suggested that the much debated cremation pits described by Skadovskij could have been the earliest grave type of the Milesian settlers, and that the northwestern corner of the Black Sea should be viewed as a *koine* with common burial customs at this early stage (Damyanov 2005). She suggests that the custom of primary cremation was shared by settlers from Berezan', Orgame and Istros – a hypothesis which seems to find a basis in the predominant rite of cremation at exactly these localities in the early phase of Greek settlement in the region.

#### *The west Pontic region*

The west coast of the Black Sea region offers many important localities both in the coastal areas and in the hinterlands. The comprehensive articles in Grammenos & Petropoulos (2003; 2007), the Gazetteer of sites by the Copenhagen Polis Centre (Avram, Hind & Tsetskhladze 2004, 931-941) and the thorough study by Manfred Oppermann (2004) are excellent starting points for overviews and introductions to the comprehensive literature which is mostly published in Romanian, Bulgarian or French.

For the Archaic period, which is our interest here for comparisons with Olbia, the data is unfortunately limited to a few locations which will be presented in the following sections.

#### *Istros (Histria)*

Founded around the last third of the 7<sup>th</sup> century by Milesians at the mouth of the Danube River, in the Dobroudja region of modern-day Romania, Istros was one of the earliest Greek foundations of the region (Avram, Hind & Tsetskhladze 2004, 932-933; Oppermann 2004, 18; Lungu 2007, 337-338). The burial material from the Archaic and late Archaic periods is solely represented



by the tumulus cemetery.<sup>87</sup> A flat-ground cemetery has yet to be identified, although speculations about its possible location in areas now under water do exist (Oppermann 2004, 21).

The tumulus cemetery has yielded a handful of burials which relate to the chronological period in question here. Tumuli XII, XVII, XIX and XX are all dated from the middle of the 6<sup>th</sup> to the early 5<sup>th</sup> century. The tumuli were well excavated in the 1950s and early 1960s by a team lead by P. Alexandrescu and subsequently published by him in 1966 in the second volume of the Histria monographs (*Histria II*). The primary burials were all cremations placed centrally in the tumuli. The grave goods of the 6<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> century tumuli mainly consisted of fine imported ceramics, mostly of Attic and East Greek origin, and very similar to the assemblages from the Olbian burials, with a smaller number of handmade vessels, alabastra of alabaster and glass (*Histria II*, 143-168). Another characteristic feature of the tumuli is the presence of sacrificial pits surrounding the tumuli, in which numerous post-funerary offerings were found. Furthermore, inhumations of both human and horse skeletons were discovered in the near vicinity of the tumuli. It was the impression of the excavators that these skeletons bore clear signs of sacrificial practices (*Histria II*, 274; also Oppermann 2004, 21; Damyanov 2005, 82). The horse skeletons and the human sacrifices were the central arguments in previous scholars' reluctance to see the burials as being connected with the Greek population of Istros (Oppermann 2004, 21-22 with references). Thus, the main interpretation originally presented by Alexandrescu saw the tumuli as indicators of an indigenous presence in the Greek settlement or in its near vicinity. It was simply impossible to imagine the civilized Greeks sacrificing humans in connection with burial rituals! This view was commonly shared in other works, and seems to have been the standard viewpoint until Alexandrescu himself changed his mind about the tumuli and proposed a connection with Greek Homeric practice as an alternative interpretation (Alexandrescu 1994).<sup>88</sup> In his 2004 work, Oppermann follows this line. At first he seems happy to accept the idea of the tumuli as a sign of a strong pre-Getic élite, or even aristocracy, living either near Istros or in the city itself and in harmony with the Greeks (Oppermann 2004, 22). However, later in the same chapter his own opinion is perhaps more directly transmitted as he states that this is a conservative approach to an understanding of the tumuli burial contexts, and that *Wenngleich wir die bisher veröffentlichten Hügelgräber des 6. Jh. v. Chr. von Histria weiterhin für*

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87 The term 'tumulus' is generally used in the literature of the west Pontic region rather than the Russian equivalent 'kurgan', which has been used previously in this study. In order to avoid confusion, I follow the two different research traditions depending on the localities in question.

88 For an assesment of Homeric burials, see Sourvinou-Inwood 1995, Chapter II, Chapter III.i).

*getisch halten, so ist die Praxis der Hügelbestattung bei den westpontischen Griechen keineswegs auszuschließen* (Oppermann 2004, 36).

### *Orgame*

The evidence from nearby Orgame presents a natural continuation of the discussion of tumuli.

Situated on the Cape Dolojman promontory some 40km north of Istros, the ancient settlement of Orgame has yielded material from the earliest period in the history of colonization of the Black Sea region. Pottery fragments dating to the late 7<sup>th</sup> century have been found in settlement contexts of Sector FE, and material from the cemetery has revealed some of the earliest contextual finds of the third quarter of the 7<sup>th</sup> century in tumulus TA 95, to which we will return later (Lungu 2002, 6; Avram, Hind & Tsetschladze 2004, 940; Oppermann 2004, 24; Lungu 2007, 346-350). In the summarized presentation by Mănușu-Adameșteanu (2003), we learn that the chronological span of the settlement roughly covers the period from c. the mid 7<sup>th</sup> century BC to the 7<sup>th</sup> century AD. From this long period only c. 100 tombs have been excavated in the cemetery, which is estimated to cover c. 100 hectares. The dominant rite seems to have been cremation, but inhumations also existed, mainly in the form of child burials in *enchytrismoi*.<sup>89</sup> The cremations were mainly placed in simple pits; one type as primary cremations on a pyre in the centre of the tomb, another type as secondary cremations placed in urns. Often these pits were surrounded by small stone circles. The excavators believe that there are clear boundaries within the spatial organizations of the cemetery, thus implying a well-developed system of family clusters (Mănușu-Adameșteanu 2003, 350-352). Furthermore, the cemetery also features several tumuli burials, amongst them the important and impressive Tumulus TA 95 (Lungu 2000-2001; 2002; 2007, 346-350). Excavated between 1995 and 2000, this large tumulus contained a central pyre organized around a cremation pit which was surrounded by an impressive stone ring. In the eastern part of the pit, the remains of animal and bird bones, as well as ceramic fragments, were discovered. The central part of the structure was covered with a tumulus more than 42m in diameter, and around the tumulus a sacrificial ditch was cut into the bedrock into which offerings were placed (Lungu 2002, 6-7). In the central part of the cremation pit, a few remains of a cremated male were found, leading the excavator to suggest that the remains might have been moved or perhaps even scattered over the land as a practice of the hero cult connected to the city founder. The earliest pottery finds date to the third quarter of the 7<sup>th</sup> century, and nowhere else in the Greek settlements of the Black Sea region has such a structure been found at this early stage. Already from the 6<sup>th</sup> century onwards, amphoras were the prevailing ceramic offerings and this may tie in

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<sup>89</sup> This seems to be a parallel situation to that in nearby Istros mentioned above, but also to Theodosia on the southeastern Crimea (see this volume, Chapter 5).

with some of the observations previously mentioned concerning amphoras in burials and circles in the cemeteries of predominantly the west and northwest coast of the Black Sea. The excavator's interpretation of the tumulus complex leans on elements from Greek hero cult. Lungu sees the tumulus as a *heroon* for the Milesian(?) founder of Orgame, and uses this idea to suggest that a hero cult practised at a tumulus, and inspired by the Homeric epics, was an obvious choice for Greeks living in a multicultural environment such as the northwestern part of the Black Sea region (Lungu 2002, 17). This is a highly interesting conclusion which underlines the importance of the cultural milieu and setting in the formation of identities and self definitions. Thus, as a general approach to the tumuli in Istros and Orgame, it is possible to suggest that the concept behind such visual power structures was obvious and appealing to all members of the multicultural societies in the region, despite their individual ethnicities.

### *The hinterland of Istros and Orgame*

In the hinterland of Istros and Orgame, the newly- and very well-published cemetery of Istria Bent features rather poorly equipped burials from the 6<sup>th</sup> century onwards (Teleaga & Zirra 2003). There are seven burials which fall within the period c. 600-450 and which are relevant for us here. The earliest burials feature adults in supine positions placed in simple pits. The grave goods are few, mostly ceramics of East Greek manufacture (a rosette bowl and aryballos), although the male burial 17 had a necklace with beads of bronze, bone, seashell and glass (Teleaga & Zirra 2003, 15). There are also child *enchytrismoi* in amphoras (Graves 51, 82 and 102). From the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century, an adult female burial was equipped with a ring-shaped askos (Grave 100), while the later Grave 44, dated c. 475-450, had a ceramic alabastron accompanying a young female (Teleaga & Zirra 2003, 19-20, 30). All in all, the burials are very modestly equipped with objects also known from the contemporary graves of Olbia.

### *Other west Pontic localities*

Naturally, there are several settlements along the west coast of the Black Sea which have yielded burial material in abundance.<sup>90</sup> Unfortunately, the material is either unpublished or of later periods than the ones relevant to us here. This is, for example, the case with Odessos, where there is no evidence of the burial customs of the early stages of the settlement's existence, since later constructions of both ancient and medieval times have destroyed what was thought to be the city's earliest cemetery area (Minchev 2003, 248). Further south, Apollonia Pontica is another fine example of a locality where one

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90 See Panayotova 2007 for a recent and very detailed account of funerary material from several localities on the Bulgarian Black Sea coast; and Lungu 2007 for a similar account of the cemeteries of Istros, Orgame, Tomis and Kallatis in modern-day Romania.

can find quite detailed analyses of the burial data (most recently Nedev & Panayotova 2003, 123-140; Panayotova 2007). Regrettably, this material only dates from the second half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century onwards, thus yielding very little comparative material for our understanding of the data from Archaic and early Classical Olbia. One can only hope for more excavations and investigations but, first and foremost, for more publications of already existing material in order to enlighten this important period in the history of the northwestern Black Sea region.

## Chapter 3 Kerkinitis

This chapter firstly presents a short introduction to the research history of ancient Kerkinitis.<sup>91</sup> After an introduction to the main phases of the development of the city, its rural territory and its cemetery, there follows an analysis and discussion of the burial data registered in the database, firstly the graves and secondly the grave goods. Finally, a discussion of the kurgan burials of nearby Kalos Limen is offered.

### 3.1 An introduction to the research history of Kerkinitis

The first historical interest in the ancient settlement of Kerkinitis (Fig. 3.1) began as early as 1845 when numismatic evidence from the city in the form of three coins, dated to the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC, reached the *Munz-kabinet* in Berlin from southern Russia. These three coins started a scholarly discussion which was to take a very central place in the research history of Kerkinitis, namely the debate as to whether there was one city or two cities, named Kerkinitis and/or Karkinitis (Kutaisov 2003, 564).<sup>92</sup>

Proper archaeological investigations began in 1873, when P.O. Buračov undertook surveys of the areas between the Quarantine Cape in the modern village of Eupatoria and Lake Mojnak. Here, he encountered the remains of three settlements as well as fortification remains in the shape of circular defence towers. From 1893 to 1897 excavations were undertaken in the area of the cemetery near the Quarantine Cape as well as in the rural area of Lake Mojnak, where farmsteads were recovered by the engineer N.F. Romančenko. The discoveries led him believe that the city was located on the shore of Lake Mojnak (Kutaisov 2003, 564).

It was not until 1917 that this presumption was to be proven wrong. A new era of investigations and excavations was initiated at this time by L.A. Moiseev, who discovered city houses within a fortified area right at the site of the Quarantine Cape at Eupatoria. Apart from the excavations of the city houses and the fortification wall, Moiseev also fully excavated two farmsteads. The

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91 See also Avram, Hind & Tsetschladze 2004, 945-946 for a contribution on Kerkinitis to the *Inventory of Archaic and Classical poleis of the Copenhagen Polis Centre* (Hansen & Nielsen 2004).

92 The earliest sources for the toponym provide Καρκινίτις, -ιδος. However, later sources from c. 300 provide Κερκινίτις (Avram, Hind & Tsetschladze 2004, 945).



Fig. 3.1. Map of western Crimea (map by author)

fieldwork interest in the city and its layout continued into the 1950s under the direction of M.A. Nalivkina.

However, it was only in the 1970s that excavations of the cemetery area were resumed. In 1975 B.Yu. Michlin began a smaller series of rescue excavations in the cemetery area which was in danger of being destroyed by the building activities of the modern city of Eupatoria (Kutaisov 2003, 565). From 1980 onwards, excavations took place on a regular basis within a planned and systematic programme primarily concerned with the establishment of the city's chronological horizons. Thus, five individual chronological building phases were established, a presumed rectangular city planning system was uncovered and further investigations into the city's fortification system were conducted. Furthermore, excavations in the cemetery were resumed on a more regular basis by the researchers V.A. Kutajsov and S.B. Lancov (Kutaisov 2003, 565).<sup>93</sup>

93 See Kutajsov & Lancov 1989a for a detailed account of the research history of the cemetery.

Due to the fact that the majority of the ancient settlement lies beneath the modern city of Eupatoria, most of the excavated sites have been filled in after excavation, and today only two sites have been preserved for public viewing. These are a section of the earliest city wall dating to the end of the first third of the 5<sup>th</sup> century and some private houses dating from the 5<sup>th</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> century. Moreover, a glass pyramid at the end of the modern pedestrian street in the central part of the city outside the archaeological museum provides visitors with a glimpse of the substructures of the ancient city below.<sup>94</sup>

### **3.2 An introduction to the main phases of the city's development**

The most recent comprehensive presentation of Kerkinitis known to me is Kutajsov 2003, which will be the main source for this very short introduction to the development of the city from late Archaic to early Hellenistic times. The work by Kutajsov is accompanied by an extensive bibliography. Moreover, this introduction also draws on information from the recent Gazetteer of the Copenhagen Polis Centre (Avram, Hind & Tsetschladze 2004, 945-946).

#### **3.2.1 The city and its rural territory**

The ancient settlement of Kerkinitis is located on the Quarantine Cape at the site of the modern city of Eupatoria in western Crimea (Fig. 3.1).

The central part of the settlement is situated on the Quarantine Cape, which protrudes into the Kalamit Bay with the waters of the Black Sea to one side and the modern harbour of Eupatoria to the other. The ancient harbour has been identified in the same location as the modern one.

According to the earliest archaeological evidence, the settlement seems to have been founded some time near the middle of the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC, a date which has been connected with the crushing of the Ionian revolt by the Persians (Kutaisov 2003, 566). Graffiti in the Ionian dialect found on some of the earliest fragments of pottery have led to suggestions of a Ionian, perhaps Milesian(?), foundation.

The earliest building structures of the site have been located in the southern part of the cape where houses of mud-bricks placed on stone foundations were found. Finds of architectural terracottas have led the excavators to believe that buildings with cultic functions were also present at this time, although no further evidence for such institutions has been attested (Kutaisov 2003, 576). Coin finds of this early period of the settlement's existence mainly consist of arrowhead coins (also this volume, Chapter 2).

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94 GPS measurement for the pyramid outside the museum: UTM zone 36. X East: 0529064. Y North: 5003816. °North: 45,18723. °East: 33,36996. Height above sea level: 15 (from the website of the Danish National Research Foundation's Centre for Black Sea Studies: <http://lys billed.hum.au.dk/total/gazetteer/gazetteer.htm>; measured by Jakob Munk Højte, spring 2004).



It seems that the end of the first third of the 5<sup>th</sup> century brought about fundamental changes for the small settlement. From c. 470 onwards the city was protected by a well-constructed fortification wall (Kutaisov 2003, 576-577) and the inner city territory shows signs of a well-planned structure of equally allotted plots. Moreover, the city now issued a new coin series of its own, namely the fish-shaped coins with a motif of an arrowhead on the reverse (Kutajsov 1992, 131-133; Kutaisov 2003, 584, 602; Stingl 2005, 122).

Two further periods stand out because of important structural blooming and expansion of the city: the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> to the early 4<sup>th</sup> century as well as the third quarter of the 4<sup>th</sup> century. These periods both saw new building phases for the fortification wall as well as private houses. The estimated area of the city was more or less doubled from the early 5<sup>th</sup> century to the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, when the city within the fortified walls covered c. 5.3 hectares (Kutaisov 2003, 576).

The excavated private houses were all of modest sizes (85-115m<sup>2</sup>) and, in general, the character of the houses, their construction and the finds from inside speak of a rather simple architecture and overall planning.

Due to the the modern city of Eupatoria being built over the ancient site, very little is known about the ancient public buildings. Until now, the fortification walls and the remains of some modest private houses are the only architectural archaeological evidence available to us from Kerkinitis.

The settlement is estimated to have been a rather small city with a population of c. 2,000-2,200 in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, when the population was at its highest (Kutajsov 2006, 144). The conclusion that the city was small, but probably not insignificant in the region, may find support in the assumption that Kerkinitis was a member of the Delian League. The 425/424 Athenian Tribute List features only the beginning of a city name with the letters Κα. However, there are two possibilities for the reference: either the city in question was Karkinitis or Kallatis (Avram, Hind & Tsetschladze 2004, 946; Kutajsov 2006, 146).

Another important historical fact that should be stressed is that Kerkinitis did not remain an independent city for the entire period in question here. There have been suggestions of a 5<sup>th</sup> century Olbian supremacy over the northwestern Crimean region, although Avram, Hind & Tsetschladze (2004, 946) prefer to see the city as an independent polis until the 4<sup>th</sup> century. A Chersonesean oath dating to the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> to the early 3<sup>rd</sup> century mentions Kerkinitis as an integrated part of the polis of Chersonesos (Kutaisov 2003, 569). Unfortunately, there are no further substantial sources which can shed light on the relationship between Kerkinitis and Chersonesos in this particular period, but it seems that the expansion of the Chersonesean rural territory was at its peak at this point (Kutaisov 2003, 568-569; Zolotarev 2003, 613; Nikolaenko 2006, 170).

The beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, however, saw major changes, especially in the rural territories of the cities of the northern Black Sea region, with destruction and reduction of farmsteads and land plots, and neither Chersone-

sos nor Kerkinitis seem to have been free of these problems.<sup>95</sup> From early on in the city's existence, the rural territory of Kerkinitis appears to have been divided into separate land plots by shallow ditches and low earthen walls. The remains of these divisions can be seen clearly on aerial photographs and stretch as far inland as c. 11km. Near Lake Mojnak, a small settlement of rural houses was excavated in 1917, but, at the time, it was not considered important to connect them to individual land plots and it is now not possible to pursue this question due to modern building activity (Kutajsov 2006, 142).

Unfortunately, there are no published cemetery excavations from the rural territory, thus limiting this analysis to the burials connected with the city. However, it is the firm conviction of the researchers Kutajsov and Lancov that the majority of the kurgan burials investigated in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, which were located to the west of the city towards Lake Mojnak, should be regarded as burials of the rural territory rather than belonging to the city cemetery as has been suggested previously (Lancov 1988, 81-82; Kutajsov & Lancov 1989a, 13) (Figs. 3.2 and 3.3). Meanwhile, resolving this question would require more investigation and maps of a much higher degree of detail and quality than those currently available.<sup>96</sup>

### 3.2.2 The cemetery

Dealing with the topographical layout of the cemetery of Kerkinitis is regrettably not an easy task. Firstly, there is very little information, if any, from the old investigations and excavations of Romančenko and Moiseev as to the exact location of their discoveries. The quest is further complicated by the fact that most of the ancient settlement, and also the cemetery it seems, are built over by the modern city. This fact, of course, makes the opportunities for undertaking investigations rather limited with just the occasional chance of a rescue excavation, such as that in 1994 published by Kutajsov and Pridnev (1997). In this they treat 10 burials found during modern construction work in the city centre of Eupatoria. Regrettably, the burials were all more or less disturbed, either by the actual construction work or by previous intrusions (Kutajsov & Pridnev 1997, 165).

Another central obstacle for any topographical study of the cemetery is the lack of a comprehensive archaeological map of Kerkinitis. The best attempt at such a map was published by Kutajsov (2004, Fig. 91). Here, indications of individual burial structures and their interrelations are presented in relation

95 See, for example, Stolba, Hannestad & Ščeglov 2002, 280-282; Bylkova 2005, 225; Kravivina 2005, 249; Stolba 2005a, 166; Zin'ko 2006, 302 on the early 3<sup>rd</sup> century crisis.

96 A mapping project of the region is currently being undertaken by T. Smekalova at the Danish National Research Foundation's Centre for Black Sea Studies, University of Aarhus. The project will shed new light on the regional topography as well as the infrastructure of northwestern Crimea and will surely be an important and much needed contribution to research in this area.



Fig. 3.2. Kerkinitis. Sketch plan of the cemetery and settlement (modified after Kutajsov 2004, fig. 91): (I) outline of ancient settlement; (II) spatial development of the cemetery according to Moiseev; (III) area partially investigated by Romančenko in 1893 and 1895-1897; (IV) area of excavation undertaken by Michlin in 1975; (V) area of excavations undertaken by Kutajsov and Lancov in 1985 and 1987; (a) kurgans from the plans of Buračov, Romančenko and Moiseev; (b) excavation areas; (c) cremations; (d) pit burials; (e) group of pit burials opened by Moiseev; (f) burial in amphora; (g) burial with cremation in vessel; (h) stone crypt opened by Moiseev



*Fig. 3.3. Eupatoria. Map of city centre with indications of streets with burial finds (map by author)*

to known archaeological structures (Fig. 3.2). Unfortunately, this is not a very detailed map in terms of the surrounding topography of both the ancient city and its close rural territory. This constitutes a substantial hindrance for both a superficial and more in-depth study of the city's topographical layout. Furthermore, the question of the kurgans of the Lake Moynak area and their possible relation with the city cemetery is also difficult to address. This is particularly unfortunate since their (distant?) location is the main argument for not seeing them as a part of the city cemetery, and thereby determining them as non-Greek (Lancov 1988, 81-82; Kutajsov & Lancov 1989a, 13; Kutajsov 2004, 100). However, it must be stressed here that such an argument seems very unpersuasive – how can a location in the rural territory automatically function as an ethnic marker? Surely, it is not unlikely that there may be differences between city and rural territory burials, but such differences would perhaps be determined by social parameters rather than by ethnicity. The distance of, for example, the Kurgan 1 complex, which is situated some 1.5km from the city wall, seems to me difficult to use as an ethnicity-related marker (as done by Lancov 1988, 77; Kutajsov & Lancov 1989a, 10), since infrastructural factors such as main roads probably had a more decisive importance for the topography of cemeteries and the spatial layout of burial monuments.

Meanwhile, returning to the topography of the city cemetery, the closest one can get at this stage is probably to pinpoint some of the areas in the modern city where burials have been found, or are reported to have been

found (Fig. 3.3). It seems that most of the burials which have been found in the area of the modern city centre are concentrated around Gagarin Street, Kirov Street (perhaps the southern border?), Demyševa Street (perhaps the northern border?) and November 13 Street (Kutajsov & Lancov 1989a, 12-13). The rescue excavations of 1994 were conducted in the area of Puškin Street, Belin Street and Gogolja Street (Fig. 3.3) (Kutajsov & Pridnev 1997, 163). If we consider the interpretation of Kutajsov (2004, 94), it seems that the cemetery expanded in a northwesterly direction from the ancient city (I on Fig. 3.2). Eventhough the kurgans are not differentiated chronologically we may also note that indications of kurgans are placed rather centrally in the cemetery area (a on Fig. 3.2). Thus, it is even more difficult to accept fully the ethnicity-determining factor in relation to the locations of the kurgans.<sup>97</sup>

These general observations on the topography of the cemetery naturally lead to questions concerning the representativeness of the existing burial data from Kerkinitis. Considering the fragmented nature of the excavations and the long time-span between the different investigations, combined with the difficult topographical situation, it is probably too optimistic to think that we can feel confident of there being a broad representation among the data. However, the data pool is probably large enough to reflect at least some aspects of the general tendencies of the burial customs.

Thus, we leave the topographical questions concerning the cemetery of Kerkinitis unsolved and turn instead to an area where there is the possibility of successful analysis, namely the burial material itself.

### **3.3 Analyses of the material**

#### **3.3.1 Graves**

The complete set of burial data in this study comes from the publications by Kutajsov & Lancov (1989a; 1989b) in which they collected together all the burials discovered during the long period of investigations and excavations in and around Kerkinitis. In relation to this study, it must be stressed that no burials relating to the early periods of the city's existence (Phases 1 and 2) have ever been found. Burials from the 5<sup>th</sup> century (Phase 3) are very few (five in total), while the main bulk of the data (40 burials in total) belongs in the period of the 4<sup>th</sup> to the early 3<sup>rd</sup> century (Phase 4). Thus, the analysis here will focus on the period from the 5<sup>th</sup> to the early 3<sup>rd</sup> century when the city was steadily growing in size, and was probably a member of the Delian League,

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97 It must be added that Kutajsov (2004, 100) tries to present a modified version of the argument by opening up the possibility of a Greek use of kurgans. However, his conclusion is still very much based on the assumption that kurgans inside the city cemetery were related to Greeks, whereas kurgans outside the city cemetery were related to Scythians. Thus, the argument is still a matter of 'Greeks or Barbarians', as he puts it himself (Kutajsov 2004, 99).



and later, sometime in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, came to face the supreme power of neighbouring Chersonesos.

### **Phase 3 (c. 470-400)**

The five burials which are dated within the period c. 470-400 do not offer a solid statistical basis for conclusive analysis. However, we may still study their context and composition for what they do have to offer.

#### *Grave types and treatment of the deceased*

Interestingly, the five burials are remarkably diverse as to grave types and treatment of the deceased. Within the limited material there are two simple pit burials in the ground, a cist grave made from stone slabs, a cist grave with a cremation container and one grave without any specified grave type. The simple pit burials are inhumations, as is the stone slab cist and the grave without a stated grave type. In two of these graves (Graves L12 and L13) the deceased were placed in a supine position with their hands placed on their chest. The simple pit burial of a child (c. eight to nine years of age), L52, also had the deceased placed in a supine position but with the right hand placed on the pelvis. The cremation, Grave L17, was a square cist grave made from stone slabs with the cremation container, a hydria, placed inside. From the five burials of Phase 3, it is interesting to see such variation in grave types and treatment of the dead. However, having established this, it is still difficult to compare the evidence from such low numbers of examples with the other localities in this study.

#### *Orientation*

The orientation of the deceased is stated in only three cases, all of which are recorded as having an easterly direction (two towards the east, and one towards the northeast). As we will see later when studying the burials of Phase 4, this seems to be the most common orientation, just as was the case with the slightly earlier graves from Olbia and Berezan', as well as the burials from nearby Chersonesos (Stojanov 2004, 43), and those from Pantikapaion and Apollonia mentioned in the previous chapter.

#### *Gender and age*

None of the genders of the burials in Phase 3 have been determined. However, two burials, Graves L1 and L52, have been identified as child burials. Again, the modest amount of material makes it difficult to present any conclusive results, but it can be stated that both children were buried in simple pit graves, cut out in the soil. Unfortunately, there is very little additional information available from the publication of these burials, which leaves quite a meagre picture of these 5<sup>th</sup> century child burials.

*Grave types and the number of grave goods*

For all five burials from Phase 3, a very low number of grave goods is a general tendency. Two burials have one item; two burials are equipped with three items, whilst the remaining burial features four items of grave goods. The NOT-values are accordingly low, with scores from one to three. It is interesting to observe that the fairly elaborate burial complex of the cremation in the hydria placed in the stone-slab-lined cist (Grave L17) only features one item. This is, however, a gilded bronze wreath with leaves and berries still relatively intact, despite its crumbled state from being placed inside the hydria<sup>98</sup> (see also colour plate 8 for a beautifully preserved example from Taras). This wreath will be treated in more detail below, but we may conclude here that the ability to pay for the execution of an elaborate funerary complex, and the opportunity to equip this burial with expensive grave gifts, did apparently not necessarily result in a large or varied number of grave goods. It is of course necessary to consider the possibility of the inclusion of perishable grave goods, but it is tempting to speculate as to whether there could be a relation between an elaboration of the grave complex itself and a tendency towards smaller but more expensive assemblages of grave goods. A larger body of comparative data would be required to reveal whether or not this was a common tendency, but we may add that comparative material from chamber tombs in Taras supports this theory. These tombs are also very sparsely equipped with grave goods, despite the very elaborate and labour-intensive architectural constructions (see also this volume, Chapter 7).

**Phase 4 (c. 399-270)**

Except for four examples, the burials of Phase 4 are all related to flat-ground structures. These four burials are all related to a kurgan (Kurgan 2) and will, therefore, in accordance with the general approach of this study, be treated separately from the flat-ground burials.<sup>99</sup>

*Grave types and treatment of the deceased*

The pattern of rather diverse grave types which was evident in the burials of the previous phase is confirmed in the burials of Phase 4. Fig. 3.4 shows the distribution of the different grave types according to total numbers and percentages. The actual relations between the percentages of the grave types

98 Similarly, a bronze hydria from Mesambria had the remains of two wreaths wrapped around the neck (Panayotova 2007, 91). See also colour plate 8 below.

99 Because of the special status which the kurgan burials have had in the traditional Russian demographic research concerned with ethnicity, the kurgans are initially studied separately. In this way, it is hoped that, through comparative analyses, the differences and/or similarities with other grave types and burial patterns in general will be more easily detected, and can provide a better understanding of the kurgans, both in their specific burial setting and in a broader cultural context.



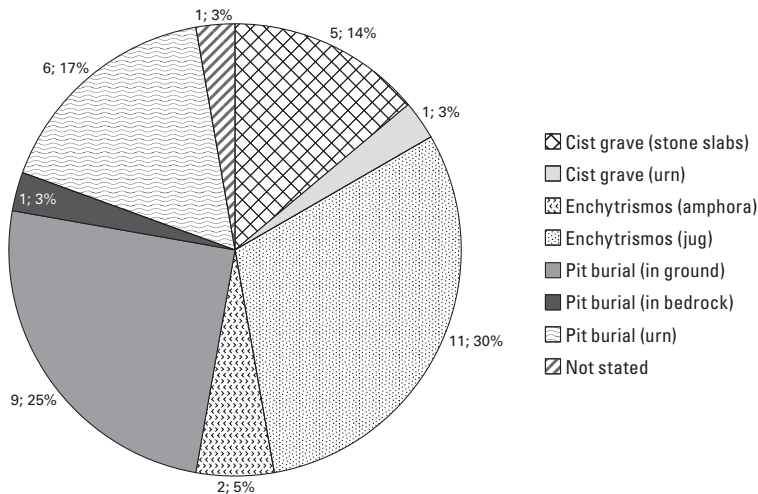


Fig. 3.4. Kerkinitis. Grave types from Phase 4

are, of course, influenced by the data pool, and future excavations in other less-explored parts of the cemetery could alter this picture fundamentally. Therefore, these statistics cannot be considered as precisely accurate as indicators of burial customs in Kerkinitis. However, we may conclude that there seems to be quite a fair range of grave types and variations. Amongst these, a large proportion consists of child *enchytrismoi* in amphoras and jugs.<sup>100</sup> This is a very unusual picture, since most localities tend to have more adult burials than child burials preserved (Shepherd 2006, 311-312; however, see also Panskoe I, this volume, Chapter 4, for another example of a large number of child burials). One could suspect that the topographical bias of the data pool may be the explanation for this 'over-representation', and that the excavators at some point accidentally stumbled upon an area of the cemetery primarily reserved for children and younger persons. At the very least, the evidence from Olbia has shown us that separate areas for these age groups could have existed from very early on, and may have been kept separate through the Classical, Hellenistic and presumably even Roman periods.

Comparing the variation of grave types from Kerkinitis with other locations in the region, it becomes evident that the burial structures of Kerkinitis are in line with the general development of grave types from such localities as Nymphaion and Pantikapaion in the 4<sup>th</sup> century (Nymphaion: this volume, Chapter 5; Pantikapaion: O'Connor 1999, 89-90). Importantly, it should

<sup>100</sup> The amphoras are mainly transport amphoras from different centres in Ionia and the Black Sea region. One burial, L38, had the deceased child placed on a bedding of organic material (probably eel grass) in the same manner as was seen in the earlier material from Olbia in the previous chapter.

be stressed that the more complex rock- or earth-cut chamber tombs and the stone-built roofed tombs, which seem to gain popularity in later periods in many of the localities in the Crimea, are not yet a significant feature at any of the localities mentioned above. This must be contrasted with the rise of the very same labour-intensive burial constructions in Olbia already in the 4<sup>th</sup> century (O'Connor 1999, 66-67).

The consistency in the development of grave types among some of the larger localities in the Crimea is, however, not followed by Kerkinitis when we examine the treatment of the deceased. Here there is a substantial number of cremations among the burials (seven in total = 19 %) – a feature which separates Kerkinitis from Nymphaion, where there is only a single cremation among the burials of the 4<sup>th</sup> and early 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries (this volume, Chapter 5), and from Pantikapaion, where only c. 7 % of the 4<sup>th</sup> century burials are cremations and even less (c. 4 %) of the 4<sup>th</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> century burials (O'Connor 1999, 86). It may seem that the burials from Kerkinitis at this point find a closer parallel in nearby Chersonesos or in the cemeteries of the northwestern Black Sea coast, where cremation existed alongside inhumations with more or less equal popularity (Stojanov 2004, 40; Damyanov 2005; also this volume, Chapter 2). Again, the potential bias of the data may disturb the picture for us here, and the high number of cremations may have a topographical explanation connected with the nature of the excavations rather than a different cultural explanation connected with the local approach to burial customs. Amongst the cremations, Grave L20 offers an interesting analogy to the cremation in the hydria placed in a cist which was considered above. Grave L20 is likewise a square cist grave lined with stone slabs in which a cremation in a jug, closed by a small plate of lead, was placed. Furthermore, this complex is a valuable comparison since the one item of grave good is the only piece of gold jewellery in the burials from Phase 4! Thus, the previous assumption of there being less emphasis on the number of grave goods is strengthened by this combination of cist with urn with a single but precious item of grave good.

The inhumations offer no new information to add to that from the previous phase since only a few have additional remarks on the position of the deceased, other than supine. However, independently of grave type or gender and age group, there seems to be a tendency among a small group of burials (six in total) towards placing the hands, or hand, on the pelvis – a feature which was also recorded in one of the burials from the previous phase.

### *Orientation*

The orientation of the deceased is recorded in 58 % of the burials. Fig. 3.5 shows the total numbers of the different orientations. Not surprisingly, the majority of the burials are placed with the head in an easterly direction as was also the case in the previous phase. This seems to be the general rule in

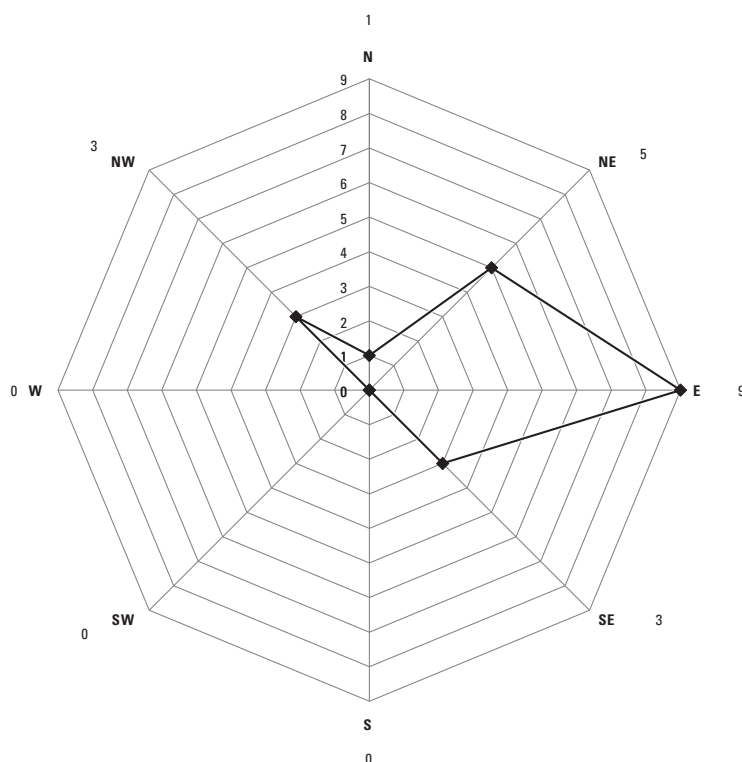


Fig. 3.5. Kerkinitis. Orientations of burials from Phase 4

all periods of this study for the majority of the analysed localities.<sup>101</sup> Three burials have a northwesterly orientation. Even though two of them are child burials (*enchytrismoi*) and the third is the burial of a teenager (in a cist grave), other identified child/teenage burials among the easterly-oriented burials seem to undermine the idea of age as a determining factor for the deviating orientation in this case.

#### *Gender and age groups*

There are three identified adult male burials among the burials of Phase 4. These male burials are characterized by simple pits, dug in the soil, one of them (Grave L61) with a cover of simple stone slabs. Another common feature is that all three have the hand(s) of the deceased placed on the pelvis. The number of grave goods is also low in all three burials (two have no grave goods at all while one burial (Grave L54) has just two items of grave goods).

<sup>101</sup> As was the case in the previous chapter on Olbia, with its outlook to the northwestern region, as well as in Chapter 5 on Nymphaion with its outlook to the Bosphoran Kingdom (Chersonesos: Stojanov 2004, 43; Panskoe I: this volume, Chapter 4).

In general, this picture seems to be quite similar to the identified adult female burials as well. The simple pits, the supine position with the hands on the pelvis and the low number of grave goods, are all common features which these burials share with their male counterparts. Thus, for those burials with identifiable genders, there are no indications from the available data that point towards differentiated burial customs determined by gender.

A slightly larger body of material is available from which to analyse the age groups, since eight burials contained skeletons which have been identified as adults and 15 burials fall within the group of children and teenagers. Amongst the child burials, the *enchytrismoi* burials, especially in amphoras, dominate by far. There are also two *enchytrismoi* in large jugs, one of which (Grave L6) is the only *enchytrismos* accompanied by grave goods. Thus, the remaining *enchytrismoi* are all without identified grave goods, though at least Graves L33 and L34 are presumed to have a connection with Grave L36 and the large assemblage of grave goods found in the close vicinity of this burial (see below).

The absence of grave goods with the *enchytrismoi* is similar to the picture we saw in Olbia and will see in the Panskoe I material in the following chapter. This fact could thus lend some support to the theory that, also at this much later date in Kerkitis, smaller children were differentiated in terms of funerary disposal or even in terms of the religious constructions of burial customs.

#### *Grave types and the number of grave goods*

The results of a database query on the relation between the individual grave types and the number of grave goods (and NOT-values) naturally presents some difficulties due to the biased nature of the data. However, it may be possible to present some rough tendencies amongst the material at hand. Firstly, it is striking how low both the numbers of grave goods and the NOT-values are in general. Table 12 presents a list of the numbers of grave goods (objects), the NOT-values and the grave types, sorted by the number of grave goods and NOT-value.

One could have expected the high number of child *enchytrismoi* without grave goods to explain for the low numbers in general. However, from the table it seems that the other grave types are equally contributing to this pattern. Hence, it is possible to conclude that all grave types are represented by both low value (0) and slightly higher values (1-3), and that there are no clear correlations between specific grave types and the numbers of items. Moreover, the table also includes the age group of the individual graves, the analysis of which results in a similar conclusion: there seems to be no obvious pattern related to the numbers of objects or the NOT-values in child, teenage or adult burials.

Table 12. Kerkinitis. Relation between grave types and numbers of grave goods and NOT-values in Phase 4

Grave no.	Grave type	NOT-value	Number of objects	Age
L43	<i>Enchytrismos</i> (amphora)	0	0	Child
L25	<i>Enchytrismos</i> (amphora)	0	0	Child
L33	<i>Enchytrismos</i> (amphora)	0	0	Child
L34	<i>Enchytrismos</i> (amphora)	0	0	Child
L35	Pit burial (urn)	0	0	Not stated
L37	<i>Enchytrismos</i> (amphora)	0	0	Child
L38	<i>Enchytrismos</i> (amphora)	0	0	Child
L39	Pit burial (urn)	0	0	Not stated
L4	Cist grave (stone)	0	0	Not stated
L41	<i>Enchytrismos</i> (amphora)	0	0	Child
L62	Pit burial (in ground)	0	0	Adult
L45	<i>Enchytrismos</i> (amphora)	0	0	Child
L47	<i>Enchytrismos</i> (amphora)	0	0	Child
L48	<i>Enchytrismos</i> (amphora)	0	0	Child
L49	Pit burial (urn)	0	0	Not stated
L5	<i>Enchytrismos</i> (jug)	0	0	Child
L61	Pit burial (stone plates)	0	0	Adult
L55	Pit burial (in ground)	0	0	Adult
L40	Pit burial (urn)	0	0	Not stated
L18	Pit burial (in ground)	1	1	Not stated
L20	Cist grave (urn)	1	1	Not stated
L60	Pit burial (in ground)	1	1	Child?
L57	Pit burial (in ground)	1	1	Adult
L59	<i>Enchytrismos</i> (amphora)	1	1	Child
L56	Pit burial (in ground)	1	1	Adult
L51	Pit burial (urn)	1	1	Not stated
L11	Cist grave	1	1	Not stated
L16	Cist grave	1	2	Not stated
L54	Pit burial (in ground)	2	2	Adult
L6	<i>Enchytrismos</i> (jug)	2	3	Child
L10	Cist grave	2	3	Adult
L19	Pit burial (in ground)	2	3	Not stated
L14	Not stated	2	3	Not stated
L58	Pit burial (bedrock)	3	4	Adult
L44	Cist grave (stone)	5	8	Teenager
L36	Pit burial (urn)	8	15	Not stated

Comparing the numbers of grave goods and NOT-values of Kerkinitis with other localities of the same period is not without complications. Looking at a similar table for the burials from Nymphaion (Table 13) there appears to be quite a different pattern to that seen at Kerkinitis.

Table 13. *Nymphaion. Relation between grave types and numbers of grave goods and NOT-values in Phase 4*

Grave no.	Grave type	NOT-value	Number of objects	Age
I186	Not stated	0	0	Child?
I150	Pit burial	0	0	Adult
I153	Pit burial (bedrock)	0	0	Adult
I10(V)	Pit burial (in ground)	1	1	Adult
I157	Pit burial	1	1	Adult
I159	Pit burial (bedrock)	1	1	Adult
I213	Pit burial (in ground)	1	1	Child
I101	Pit burial	2	2	Child
I112	Pit burial (in ground)	2	2	Child
I125	Pit burial (in ground)	2	2	Adult
I134	Pit burial (in ground)	2	2	Teenager
I149	Pit burial (bedrock)	2	2	Child
I1	<i>Enchytrismos</i> (amphora)	1	2	Not stated
I199	Pit burial (in ground)	2	2	Adult (4), child
I6(G)	Pit burial (in ground)	2	2	Adult
K59	Cist grave	2	2	Not stated
I95	Pit burial (in ground)	2	2	Not stated
I135	Pit burial (bedrock)	3	3	Adult
I219	Pit burial	2	3	Child
K74	Not stated	2	3	Not stated
K54	Cist grave	3	4	Not stated
I130	Pit burial	4	4	Adult
K107	Niche tomb	4	4	Not stated
K83	Not stated	3	4	Not stated
I7(V)	Pit burial	4	4	Child
I6(V)	Pit burial	4	5	Child
K78	Not stated	3	6	Not stated
I82	Pit burial (in ground)	4	7	Adult
I166	Pit burial	6	8	Child
K52	Not stated	5	10	Not stated

On a general level, the burials from Nymphaion show a much clearer tendency towards more items of grave goods and also slightly more variation within the deposits (reflected in the NOT-values). The complications primarily lie in the (presumed) over-representation of *enchytrismoi* without grave goods in the Kerinitis data. Meanwhile, even when these are not included in the comparison, the burials of Kerinitis are still notably more sparsely equipped than those of Nymphaion. Naturally, this picture is even clearer when making a comparison with contemporary Pantikapaion where the deposits become notably more varied in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, resulting in only c. 15 % of the burials being equipped with just one item (O'Connor 1999, 91, Fig. 1.64).<sup>102</sup>

Looking at the burial patterns of neighbouring Chersonesos, one of the main conclusions reached by Stojanov is that there is very little variation and development in the assemblages of grave goods and the grave types in general for the Classical and Hellenistic periods (Stojanov 2004, 85). This is interpreted by him as a preference for conservative attitudes towards burial customs. Zubar (2006) also stresses the traditional and often sparse funeral structures and assemblages of grave goods, but takes the argument further. He prefers to link the sparsely-equipped burials and limited variation of grave types with Orphic-Pythagorean ideas of afterlife (Zubar 2006, 59-60). Furthermore, he ties this closely with a conservatism and traditionalism which he claims to see in the Doric approach to burial customs (Zubar 2006, 51, 60). There are a couple of interesting points to be raised in this discussion. Firstly, the Orphic-Pythagorean approach is tempting and could perhaps be feasible since these thoughts were quite firmly rooted in the northern Black Sea region. However, there is no evidence that Orphic burials should necessarily be simple or sparse in their construction or assemblage of grave goods (see also this volume, Chapter 7). Meanwhile, it is less persuasive that the Orphic ideas were particularly applicable or unique to Dorian perceptions of burial customs, since the most firm evidence for this set of beliefs is found in Olbia and other Ionian areas of the northwestern Black Sea region.<sup>103</sup> Moreover, in relation to the question of elaboration and lavish equipment of graves, surely the large body of Chersonesean *stelai* and architectural fragments from painted funerary *naiskoi* bear testimony to a well-defined and conscious understanding of rather grand status displays within the media of the funerary sphere.<sup>104</sup>

102 Unfortunately, it is not clear from O'Connor's figure whether there are no graves with no items or whether these have not been included in the figure.

103 See, for example, Rusjaeva 1978; 1986; Zhmud' 1992; Guldager Bilde 2004b; 2008; Petersen 2010; also this volume, Chapter 7.

104 For recent approaches to the Chersonesean *stèle* material and funerary architectural remains, see Carter 2002; 2006; Posamentir 2005.



*Stelai and funerary sculpture*

Kutajsov (2004, 98) mentions three *stelai* of typical Chersonesean type found in the cemetery area of Kerkinitis and dated to the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century. The most well-known of these is perhaps the *stèle* with the inscription AMBATIAS TΑΣ HPOΔOTO (Fig. 3.6). It was found in 1903 and has no known relation to any specific grave complex. The female name Ambatias is unique, despite the relatively well-known Greek name of her father, Herodotos (152 entries in LGPN). There are two possibilities for a reading of the inscription, namely: *Ambatias tas Hêrodoto* or *Ambatiastas Hêrodoto*. The first option is, however, preferable because the name would then derive from the substantive *anabatos* / -ês, *ambatos* / -ês, meaning rider or horseman – in this case horse-woman! The inscription is composed in the Doric dialect (*tas*), and according to the orthography it can hardly be dated later than the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century (the genitive of -O instead of -OY). Furthermore, the general shape of the letters supports a 4<sup>th</sup> century date (personal communication, Geroge Hinge, winter 2007).<sup>105</sup>

Also in connection with the *stelai* and the funerary architecture, a large fragment of a pediment, found at Kerkinitis and presumably from a funerary *naiskos*, should be mentioned (Kutajsov 2004, 98, Fig. 109). The type is well-known from Chersonesos and belongs to the city's well-established tradition for erecting elaborately-painted *stelai* and funerary *naiskoi*. The *naiskoi* and other architectural finds connected with the funerary sphere are currently being treated in an ongoing research project being undertaken by A.V. Bujskich, Kiev (Bujskich, A.V. 2006) and the results from this investigation are awaited with anticipation.

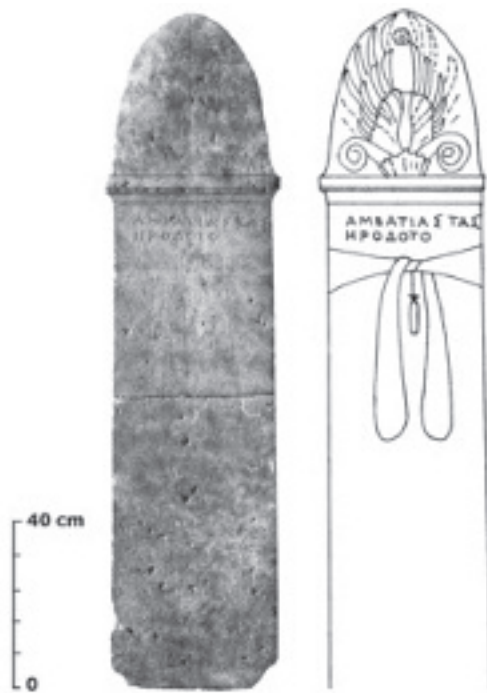
*Kurgan 2*

The 'Kurgan 2'<sup>106</sup> complex is the only kurgan structure for which the state of preservation and the level of information have met the criteria for registration in the database. The kurgan was excavated by Moiseev in 1917 and then reinvestigated and published in 1988 by S.B. Lancov. The kurgan was located somewhere on the Demyševa Street (Fig. 3.3). The structure was 11m in diameter with the remains of a stone *crepis* and four burials, of which one was the central burials with the others considered secondary additions. On the basis of the grave goods, all four burials are dated sometime in the first half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century.

105 I am deeply grateful to George Hinge for this information which he so willingly and kindly supplied and for his great patience with my many questions in general.

106 The term 'Kurgan 2' is found in Kutajsov & Lancov 1989b, 5, whereas the publication by Lancov (1988, 78-80) has the complex registered as 'Kurgan 4'. Both publications deal with several kurgans found in Kerkinitis and in the relatively close vicinity of the city. However, on the grounds of either their state of preservation (robbed/disturbed) or their late date, they mostly fall outside the criteria set out for this study.

Fig. 3.6. Kerkititis. The Ambatias stele (drawing modified after Kutajsov 2004, fig. 110.1; photo courtesy of Vladimir Stolba)



The central burial, Grave L27, is a simple pit (2.27 x 1.45m) dug in the soil. At the bottom of the pit a paving of smaller stones was laid. The grave contained an inhumation of an adult oriented with the head towards the east. The burial was accompanied by two items of grave goods: a red-figured lekythos and some unidentified fragments of iron. In the fill above the pit, several fragments of amphoras and remains of wood were found. The second burial, Grave L28, was placed on the very edge of the kurgan to the north of the central burial. This burial was also a simple pit, dug in the soil, with the inhumed deceased oriented towards the northeast. There is no information on the measurements of the grave or the age group of the deceased. The burial was accompanied by an iron knife, placed near the right arm/hand of the deceased as well as a black-glossed kylix placed at the right shoulder.

The third burial was situated much closer to the central burial. It was a child *enchytrismos* in a Chian amphora oriented with its throat towards the east. The grave was accompanied by a black-glossed kylix and a guttus or feeder. The fourth burial was situated to the west of the central burial on the edge of the kurgan. It was a Chian amphora containing the ashes from a cremation as well as two guttae or feeders. Lancov proposes that, because the cremation was placed in an amphora and accompanied by two guttae, this was a child's burial, and even goes as far as suggesting that this must have been a joint burial of twins because of the two feeders (Lancov 1988, 79). However, there

is no mention of any specialized analyses of the cremation remains which would confirm the age of the deceased. Moreover, the comparison between child *enchytrismoi* and cremations placed in ceramic containers could seem a bit like comparing apples and pears, and does not provide a very convincing basis for determining the age of the deceased. Thus, there are no indications that cremation in ceramic containers should be considered as a grave type used especially for children. Furthermore, although feeders certainly often accompanied child burials, they are also found in adult burials, for example in Olbia (see previous chapter). Finally, that the presence of *two* feeders, or any other vessel shape for that matter, should indicate a doubling in the number of buried individuals finds no support in any analysis of the deposition ratios of grave goods.

Further finds in the kurgan comprised a collapsed stone structure, interpreted as a collapsed burial vault(?) and situated in the immediate vicinity of the central burial, and two embankments with fragmented material such as glass vessels (presumably of Roman date), amphoras, a copper button and a fragmented red-figured lekythos.

Both in the article by Lancov (1988) and in the following publications of all known burials from Kerkinitis by Kutajsov & Lancov (1989a; 1989b), the kurgans of Kerkinitis are mainly thought to be connected with a Scythian segment of the population, whose presence among the populations of the Greek settlements of the northern Black Sea region the authors are keen to stress (Lancov 1988, 77; Kutajsov & Lancov 1989a, 9-10). This conclusion is explained as follows: in the early stage of the Greek colonies' existence in the Black Sea region, burial customs of Scythian and Greek types were not yet 'mixed' and the kurgans therefore belong to the sphere of Scythian burial customs. This is supported by the small number of kurgans dating to the 5<sup>th</sup> century and the fact that they are unknown at this stage in, for example, the Olbian cemetery (Lancov 1988, 77; Kutajsov & Lancov 1989a, 9-10). Firstly, I find it difficult to base an argument of ethnic division solely on grave types and isolated factors such as 'a kurgan'; such complexes must be interpreted in their full context. Secondly, it is similarly questionable whether the 5<sup>th</sup> century should be viewed as 'early' in terms of cultural interrelations and coexistence: the multicultural situation in the region had been a well-established fact for more than a century! Furthermore, there might be a confusion in the line of argument: a few lines later in the discussion of the 5<sup>th</sup> century kurgans and their absence from Olbia, the authors use the handmade ceramics in Olbia and on Berezan' (the study by Marčenko criticized in Chapter 2 above) to prove a Scythian presence amongst the early populations there, but this seems to me to contradict their statement about the absence of kurgans in Olbia which would equate to an absence of a Scythian presence! If there is a Scythian population in Olbia and Scythians bury in kurgans – why are there then no kurgans in Olbia?

Alternatively, I would like to suggest an interpretative approach for the Kurgan 2 complex, which is not based on an ethnicity-related point of depar-

ture. The labour-intensive nature of the construction of kurgans, even smaller ones, as well as their monumentality and often dominance in the landscape or cityscape, lead to the assumption that these structures should be seen as élite or high status burial monuments communicating prestige and power. With this in mind, the burials of Kurgan 2 should then represent a picture of how the élite or higher social stratas chose to bury and perceived burial customs. Examining the different structures and components of Kurgan 2, it is evident that the complex links well with, and even supports, the theory of the 'less is more' approach to grave goods in Kerkinitis which was put forward during the analysis of the flat-ground burials. The structure and its outward appearance is emphasized, whilst the actual burials are more 'common' in their character and very sparsely equipped in terms of grave goods. There is no mention of any grave markers other than the remains of the stone *crepis*, but it is not unlikely that the complex had one or more *stelai* or other pieces of funerary sculpture drawing the attention of passers-by to the high social status of the buried, and thereby possibly manifesting and underlining the current status of the living relatives.

Thus, regardless of ethnicity, the family who buried their dead in Kurgan 2 was most probably fully aware of the symbolic value of such a construction and, furthermore, seem well-acquainted with the concept of the value of an outward status display rather than an elaborate set of grave goods, which apparently did not play a significant role in the burial customs of the higher levels of society in early 4<sup>th</sup> century Kerkinitis. In conclusion, the kurgan complex fits well into the established burial customs of the city and can perhaps be seen as an example of how more culturally complex identities would use several different prestige markers (from different cultural spheres) to underline their social positions.

### 3.3.2 Grave goods

#### Phase 3 (c. 470-400)

The grave goods of Phase 3 are very sparse, with only 12 entries in the database from all five burials. There are only three pieces of ceramics, one piece of GFA, five pieces of jewellery, one entry from personalia and two terracottas. This means that there are no occurrences of weapons, tools or objects from the varia group.

#### *Ceramics*

The three pieces of ceramics come from two graves, L13 and L52. The child burial L52 was accompanied by a red-clayed askos and a black-glossed skyphos was placed near the hip of the deceased, whilst L13 had a jug placed at the feet of the deceased of unidentified age. In comparison with other localities in the region such as Olbia, Nymphaion, Pantikapaion and even Chersonesos, where ceramics are well-represented in most burials, it is striking that ceramic deposits are so few in Kerkinitis. The pessimistic understanding of this could

be that the body of material is too small and meagre by far, at least in Phase 3, to form the basis for any accurate conclusive interpretations.

### *Jewellery*

The five pieces of jewellery stem from three graves, L12, L13 and L17. In L12 and L13 one and two silver pendants, respectively, were found near the shoulders of the deceased. Furthermore, another silver pendant was found at the feet of the deceased in Grave L13. This seems to be a rather unusual position for an adornment—at least when compared with the positions of the jewellery from Olbia examined in the previous chapter, which seemed to correspond quite well with the positions in which the jewellery would have functioned.

Grave L17 contained the funerary wreath which was mentioned earlier (Kutajsov 2004, Fig. 113).<sup>107</sup> In the Crimea, it seems that finds of funerary wreaths are particularly common amongst the burial material from Chersonesos, where there are 25 burials containing wreaths of different types (Stojanov 2004, 74-76; see also Tunkina 2003, 343 with complete bibliographical references and a drawing of a pedestal from Chersonesos decorated with wreaths). Other locations in the northern Black Sea region have also yielded impressive finds of great elaboration and craftsmanship.<sup>108</sup> In general, the wreaths were produced in many shapes imitating a great variety of plants such as oak, ivy, vine, olive, laurel and myrtle (Williams & Ogden 1994, 37) (see also colour plate 9 for some examples from Taras). Finds have come from sanctuaries and burial contexts from all over the Mediterranean and Pontic regions. Moreover, inventories from sanctuaries attest to the massive popularity of wreaths as dedications, as adornments in religious processions and as prizes in games (Deppert-Lippitz 1985, 196; Williams & Ogden 1994, 37; in general, see Blech 1982). From Rhodes there is also ample evidence for private funeral associations which could grant funerary wreaths or sometimes lend them to the family of the deceased for display at the *prothesis* (Fraser 1977; Gabrielsen 1994).<sup>109</sup>

### *Terracottas*

The terracottas actually present the most interesting examples of the grave goods from Phase 3. There are two items, one a female head from a small

107 A Tarantine burial of the 4<sup>th</sup> century provides a nice parallel, also in gilded bronze, for the ivy(?) piece from Kerkinitis (Guzzo 1996, 114-115).

108 See, for example, Williams & Ogden 1994, 165, 178-179, 180-181 for beautifully-illustrated examples from the Kekuvatskij Kurgan near Pantikapaion, from Zelenskaja Gora on the Taman peninsula and from the Bol'shaja Bliznica near Phanagoria; also Preda 1961, 295-297, 299 for the wreaths found in the so-called 'Tomb of the papyrus' in Kallatis; Panayotova 2007, 91 for examples from Apollonia Pontica and Mesambria.

109 I am deeply grateful to Konstantin Kitsais-Jørgensen for his generous help and discussions of the Rhodian material.

statuette and the other a female *protome*, from Graves L12 and L13 respectively. The identification and interpretation of the female statuettes and *protomes* were discussed in the previous chapter; however, the positions of the two terracottas from Kerkinitis are interesting since both were placed at the feet of the deceased. Furthermore, it seems hardly a coincidence that the two burials were apparently found close to each other topographically, and that each of them was equipped with two similar sets of silver pendants. L12 was determined as a burial of an adult, whilst L13 had no age group identification. Meanwhile, it is tempting to see the two burials as related somehow, perhaps as tragic deaths within the same family, or linked by another social relation which could have instigated such ‘simultaneous’ burials.

#### *GFA*

The group of glass, faience and alabaster is only represented with one piece from the assemblages of grave goods from Phase 3. Grave L1 was solely equipped with a glass amphoriskos placed at the head of the deceased child. Core-formed glass vessels were very common in the Black Sea region from the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century onwards, and their place in burial contexts is attested in numerous publications.<sup>110</sup> However, in this specific case from Kerkinitis, it seems to be an unusual deposit since it is a relatively rare type of grave good to be deposited on its own. Perhaps it is another reference to the specific perception of simple deposits of grave goods which has been discussed earlier(?).

#### *Personalia*

The only deposition from the personalia group was found in Grave L52, where 14 astragals were deposited alongside the ceramics discussed earlier. The toys (we can probably safely interpret them as such) were distributed between the legs of the deceased child. Astragals were common grave goods in the Black Sea region and the deposit of several pieces in the same burial seems to be quite common as well. In this respect, the burial follows the pattern of so many other burials of both children and adults (see, for example, this volume, Chapter 2 on Olbia and Chapters 4 and 5 on Panskoe I and Nymphaion).

#### **Phase 4 (c. 399-270)**

There are 51 items of grave goods registered in the database for Phase 4. These all come from the burials registered as flat-ground burials, since the grave goods from Kurgan 2 were treated separately. The different groups of object types are detailed in Fig. 3.7 by the number of pieces within each group and the number of graves in which the objects from each group were distributed.

<sup>110</sup> Gajdukevič 1959, 185; Venedikov et al. 1963, 305-312; Skudnova 1988, 30-31; Vickers & Kakhidze 2004, 184-185. See also Kunina 1997, 247-250 for glass vessels from the collection of the Hermitage; Grose 1989, Chapter III for a more general approach to the group.



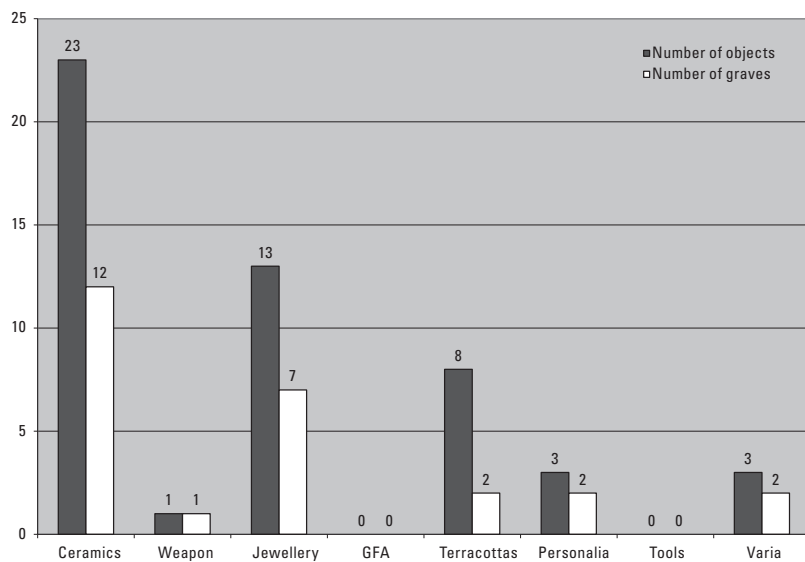


Fig. 3.7. Kerkinitis. Object groups from Phase 4

### *Ceramics*

There were 23 pieces of ceramics distributed across 12 burials. This gives an average of 1.9 pieces of ceramic per burial, which is exactly the same rate we find for the contemporary burials from Nymphaion (40 pieces distributed across 21 burials). The most common shape is the amphora, which is found in five burials. In four of these burials, L10, L14, L16 and L19, the amphoras were paired in groups of two and placed at the feet of the deceased. L11 contained a single amphora placed in a similar fashion at the feet.

Apart from the amphoras, there are seven lekythoi, two salt-cellars, one jug, one feeder, two cups and a bowl. The popularity of the amphora and the lekythos is also reflected in the contemporary burials from, for example, Nymphaion and Pantikapaion (see this volume, Chapter 5). In general, there is very little information about the ceramics, for example on technique and production place, but it appears that most types are common for the region and the period, such as red-figured net-pattern lekythoi and black-glossed cups (kantharoi). There is no mention of handmade pottery.

### *Weapons*

There is only one piece of weaponry in the burials from Phase 4, which is not surprising considering the total absence of this group in Phase 3. Compared with other Crimean localities, we find a similar situation in Nymphaion (this volume, Chapter 5) and in Chersonesos, where only three burials of the same period contained weaponry, in the form of arrowheads (Stojanov 2004, 84).

Perhaps surprising, however, is the burial context in which this one piece



of weaponry was found at Kerkititis. Grave L58 was a female burial, inhumed in a simple pit grave dug out from the bedrock. The adult woman was accompanied by three pieces of jewellery, two bronze beads and an iron finger ring, as well as an iron dagger placed near her right hip. This combination of adornments and weaponry without any further types of grave goods is very atypical and finds no immediate analogies in the comparative material from this study. If we may speculate on the basis of this rather small data set, it is tempting to suggest a different attitude towards certain female gender identity expressions – keeping Ambatias the ‘horse-woman’ in mind. Is it possible that the reference to horses in a female name and the deposition of a dagger in a female burial could point in the direction of a gender perception which plays with traditional masculine markers? Unfortunately, further support for this speculation is not found as the only other clearly identified female burials from Phase 4 (L56 and L57) contained only a finger ring and a lekythos respectively.

### *Jewellery*

The jewellery types of Phase 4 do not vary greatly. The 13 pieces are more or less equally distributed between finger rings, pendants and beads of either glass or metal. Only one pendant, from Grave L20, is of gold, whilst the bulk of the remaining metal jewellery is of bronze (with one finger ring of iron). It seems that this rather sparse picture stands out in comparison with jewellery from contemporary burials in Nymphaion and Chersonesos, where the variation in the types of jewellery (bracelets, necklaces, finger rings, beads, pendants, *fibulae*, dress pins, dress ornaments and scarabs) and the materials (gold, silver, bronze, iron, glass, rock crystal, amber, semi-precious stones and bone) is much greater (see this volume, Chapter 5 for Nymphaion; Stojanov 2004, 76-82 for Chersonesos). Again, it is difficult to determine whether the explanation for this is to be found in the possible bias of the data set or in a more simplistic approach to the equipment of burials at Kerkititis.

### *Terracottas*

A terracotta deposition very similar to that of Grave L13 from Phase 3 was found in Grave L14. Once more, a female *protome* was placed at the feet of the deceased where the remaining grave goods, two amphoras, were placed also. Though chronologically later it could be tentatively suggested that the burial was somehow connected with graves L12 and L13 – at the very least the modus of the deposit is strikingly similar.

The second deposit of terracottas from Phase 4 deserves some special attention. Grave L36 has been registered in the database with 15 items of grave goods (of which seven are unspecified terracottas) as well as an impressive number of fragments of terracottas (45 unspecified fragments), in addition to numerous fragments of black-glossed vessels found in the surrounding fill. The burial is a cremation placed in a hydria. The grave goods are not securely identified as belonging to L36 solely, since the borders of the cremation were

not clearly marked. It has been suggested by Kutajsov and Lancov that the assemblage of grave goods could also be related to graves L33, L34 and/or L35 (Graves L33 and 34 are child *enchytrismoι* in amphoras, while L35 is a cremation placed in an amphora). This large number of grave goods, especially the terracottas, is truly an atypical assemblage in the data set. The connection with the child burials is not unexpected and could perhaps explain the unique composition of the grave goods, especially the terracottas. If the four burials are related, which seems likely, there might be family relations behind the construction of the complex. However, since we do not know the age of the two cremation burials we may also be dealing with a social relation which is conditional upon an age group definition.

#### *Personalia and varia*

A further indication of the special nature of the Grave L36 complex is found when examining the personalis and varies object groups. In the personalia group there are two registrations from L36: a bronze mirror and 51 astragals. Moreover, several chestnut shells were found alongside a carved decorative object(?) made from bone. The mirror and the shells and decorative object are all unique in the assemblages of grave goods from Phases 3 and 4. Thus, this assemblage supports the general picture of the Grave L36, and the possibly related burials, as an atypical complex equipped with a much larger number of grave goods and with a much more varied composition than the majority of the contemporary burials. Not only can we speculate as to the age groups of the deceased and their possible family relations, but we may also consider how this burial complex stands out in terms of presenting a perception of and attitude towards the more common and traditional approach to burial customs and status displays represented in the majority of the remaining burials of the period.

Finally, there is one other burial which deserves some special attention with regards to the finds from the varia group. Grave L10 is the only example among the studied material from Kerkinitis which contained a coin. This was placed in the right hand of the deceased adult. Moreover, the burial was equipped with a pair of amphoras placed at the feet of the deceased. This is very striking when compared with the situation in nearby Chersonesos, where 21 contemporary funeral complexes contained coins (Stojanov 2004, 83). Coins also seemed to enjoy popularity in the burials of Nymphaion in Phase 4 (see this volume, Chapter 5).

Comparing the material of Phase 4 from Kerkinitis with both Chersonesos and Nymphaion, there is in general more variation in the assemblages of grave goods from the two latter localities, as well as a tendency towards more explicit displays of social identity and status.<sup>111</sup> It is difficult to assess,

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111 This is also the conclusion reached by O'Connor for the development of the burial material from Pantikapaion (O'Connor 1999, 91-93).

on the basis of the current state of the archaeological evidence, whether the explanation for this discrepancy between Kerkinitis and other Crimean localities is to be sought in the potential bias of the data from Kerkinitis or in a different perception of burial customs and a different attitude towards grave goods. However, we may speculate that a more simplistic attitude towards grave goods and perhaps a differential approach towards social competition were in play at Kerkinitis.

### **3.4 The kurgans of Kerkinitis and an overview of nearby Kalos Limen**

A more detailed look at some of the kurgan complexes not registered in the database is a final focal point of this analysis of Kerkinitis. It is, furthermore, important to compare these complexes with material from the kurgan cemetery of neighbouring Kalos Limen, where recent excavations have cast new light on these structures and their deposits. During the 1990s, a group of researchers was preoccupied with the investigation of the ancient settlement of Kalos Limen, situated on the coast northwest of Kerkinitis (Fig. 3.1) (Kutajsov et al. 1997). Apart from the structures of the settlement, the team also conducted excavations in the adjacent kurgan cemetery. Here they opened eight kurgan complexes of which five were situated in the central part of the cemetery area (Fig. 3.8) and three at a distance of c. 240m to the east of these (not on map).

The kurgans of Kalos Limen provide an important comparative basis for the kurgans of Kerkinitis, which we shall look at in detail first.

In his comprehensive book on Kerkinitis, Kutajsov mentions two kurgan complexes from which there is valuable information (Kutajsov 2004, 95). However, from the map of the cemetery areas from the same work, it seems that there is a considerable number of kurgans both in the central cemetery area and in the adjoining areas towards the northwest (Fig. 3.2, kurgans marked with symbol 'a'). These kurgans have found their way onto the map from the old reports of the earliest excavations for which further information was either not recorded or is now lost. It is therefore not quite clear how these 'extra' kurgans fit into the general description of the cemetery, or how they relate to the flat-ground burials, both topographically and chronologically. Thus, it is unfortunate that only two kurgan complexes are available for closer examination. The Kurgan 2 complex has already been dealt with in detail above, while the Kurgan 1 complex (termed Kurgan 3 in Lancov 1988, 76-78) was found unsuitable for registration in the database of this study because it was plundered. However, there may be sound reason to look a little closer at this complex. The kurgan had one central burial which was constituted of a simple pit burial, dug out from the bedrock. Because of the plundering no traces of skeletal remains or grave goods were found. However, in the fill of the kurgan, various pieces of ceramics were found, among them fragments of black-glossed vessels, amphoras and a black-figured krater – presumably the

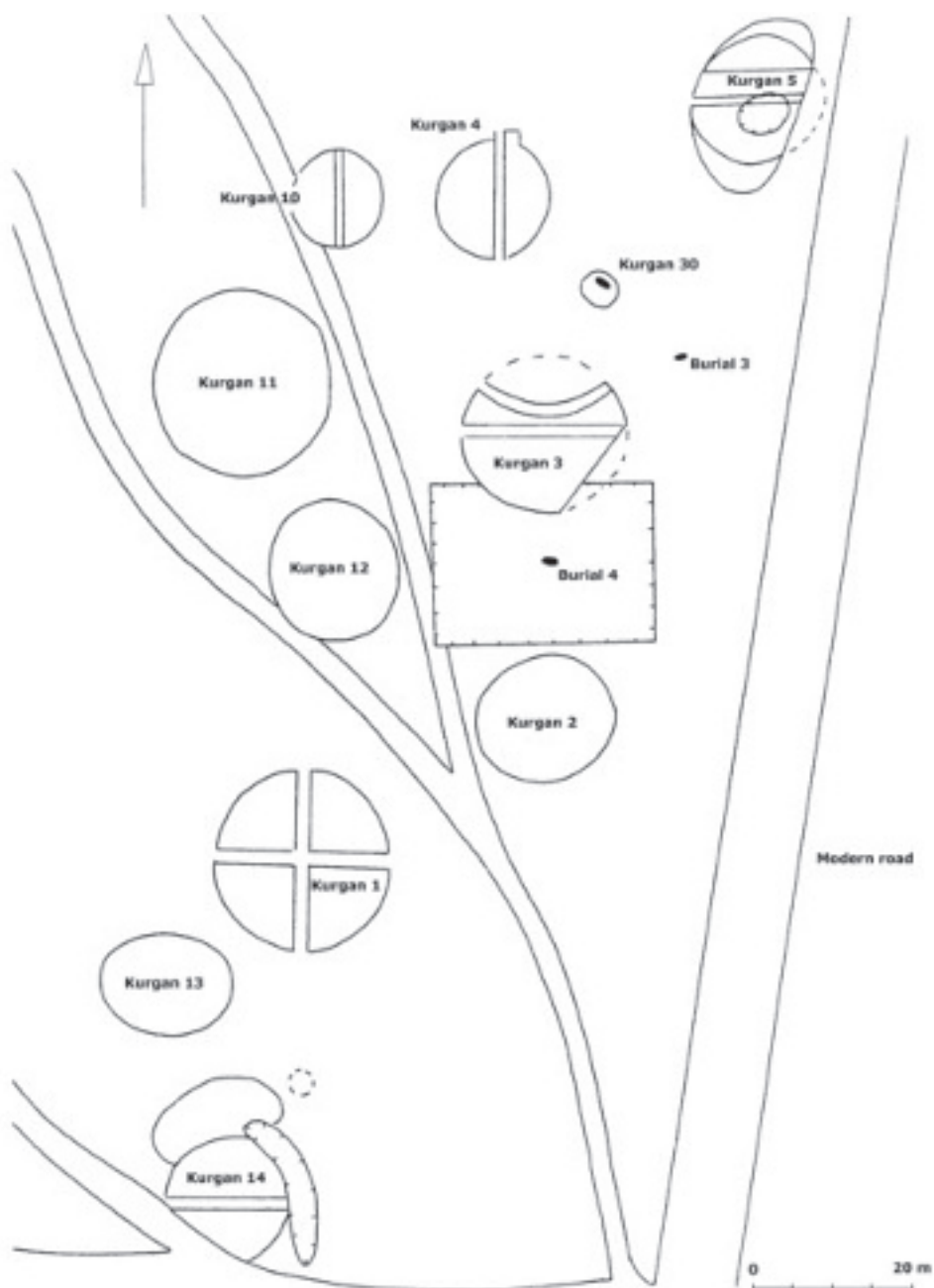


Fig. 3.8. Kalos Limen. Map of the central kurgan cemetery (modified after Kutajsov et al. 1997, fig. 97)

remains of funerary feasts, post-funerary sacrifices or grave markers. Assuming that the depositions in the fill were more or less contemporary with the construction of the kurgan and the central burial, Lancov dated the kurgan complex to c. 450-425 (Lancov 1988, 77). Whilst admitting to the very fragmented state of the evidence and the resulting complication of interpretation, Lancov still puts forward the idea that the kurgan must have been a Scythian burial – mainly due to its (distant) position c. 1.5km from the settlement and due to the fact that he considers kurgans to be nomadic burial structures in the 5<sup>th</sup> century, as mentioned earlier. I have already argued against this view and can only add that, to my mind, the kurgan in question offers much too fragmented material to actually assess such a complex issue as the ethnicity of the deceased and those who buried him/her.

So, while one is left to wonder about the further details of the burial and the nature of the grave goods in Kurgan 1, as well as for other kurgans from Kerkinitis, the kurgan cemetery of Kalos Limen offers some interesting parallels, especially for the 4<sup>th</sup> century material.

The relation between the kurgan cemetery of Kalos Limen and its flat-ground cemetery has not yet been established, although flat-ground burials of later periods have been found between the kurgan structures.

Out of the eight kurgan complexes from Kalos Limen, all but one have been disturbed and plundered either in Antiquity or in modern times. This of course complicates the reliability of the data, and limits the interpretative possibilities. However, some of the observations which can be made from the evidence give fairly good indications as to how the original structures and complexes may have looked.

In general, the burials contained many familiar features which can be recognized from both the flat-ground burials and the kurgan burials from Kerkinitis. The complexes primarily date within the period of the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century to the early decades of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century. Similarly to Kerkinitis, there are mainly more burials within the individual kurgans. The grave types also show quite a variety and encompass simple pits, dug in the soil, some of them covered with stone slabs or paved with a layer of smaller stones on the bottom of the pit,<sup>112</sup> others are regular cist graves lined with stone slabs.<sup>113</sup> Child *enchytrismo*i in amphoras seem very common as well,<sup>114</sup> and are arranged in much the same simple way, without grave goods, as was observed in Kerkinitis and as we will see next in the material from Panskoe I. There is also evidence for the practice of both cremation and inhumation – the latter

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112 Burial 1 in Kurgan 3; Burial 1 in Kurgan 5; Burial 2 in the multiple Burial 1 from Kurgan 14 (Kutajsov et al. 1997, 173, 178, 179).

113 The burials of Kurgan 33 (Kutajsov et al. 1997, 183-184).

114 Burials 5 and 6 in Kurgan 3; Burial 3 in Kurgan 4; Burials 1 and 4 in Kurgan 10 (Kutajsov et al. 1997, 176, 178, 179).

often associated by the excavators with wooden remains and nails presumed to be from coffins or biers.<sup>115</sup>

In the majority of the kurgans, embankments in the fills have revealed the remains of amphoras, black-glossed vessels and other drinking and banquet-related ceramic shapes (such as the fish-plate from Kurgan 14), often found alongside ashes in burnt areas. These are probably remains of funerary feasts or post-funerary sacrifices, just as was the case in the kurgan complexes from Kerkinitis.

The assemblages of grave goods are more difficult to address here due to the massive plundering and destruction of the burials. In the majority of the burials, the grave goods are either completely absent or so battered from the plundering that it is very difficult to establish a conclusive picture of the composition and original nature of the deposits. The remains of grave goods which have been left behind are mainly ceramics such as amphoras, lekythoi, jugs, a fragment of a kantharos, handmade jars, some metal scraps, an iron knife, a fragment of a bronze *fibula*, a bronze finger ring and bracelet, glass beads, a spindle and a fragment of bronze mirror. In the fill of Kurgan 5, three bronze arrowheads were found.

One of the few well-preserved burials which had a complete set of grave goods was Burial 1 in Kurgan 32 (Kutajsov et al. 1997, 180, 183). In a simple pit grave covered with stone slabs lay an inhumed adult in supine position with the right hand placed on the pelvis and the lower parts of the legs crossed. The deceased was oriented with the head towards the east. In the southeast corner of the grave a red-figured palmette lekythos was placed together with a small jug of Chersonesean manufacture. A large bronze *fibula* was found at the left shoulder and close to this a fragment of a bronze awl. On the pelvis in the right hand was an astragal (from a sheep) and in the northeast corner an iron battle axe with a wooden shaft was found. The excavators dated the complex to the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century. We may note the presence of both imported Greek and handmade pottery as well as weapons, knives, jewellery and mirror fragments which draw on the same multicultural expressions as we will see later in the Panskoe I material (this volume, Chapter 4).

Neither the assemblage of grave goods from Burial 1 in Kurgan 32 nor the sad remains from the plundered burials offer any major discrepancies from the combinations and depositions which were examined from Kerkinitis. Burial 1 from Kurgan 32 seems to offer fairly accurate parallels to both flat-ground burials and kurgan burials in terms of grave type, treatment of the deceased, orientation and also in the overall nature of the relatively simple assemblages of grave goods.<sup>116</sup>

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115 Burial 1 in Kurgan 5; Burial 1 in Kurgan 14; Burials 1 and 2 in Kurgan 32; Burial 2 in Kurgan 33 (Kutajsov et al. 1997, 178, 179, 180, 183, 184).

116 The original nature of the assemblages of grave goods is naturally more uncertain since robbers are most likely to have removed objects of precious metal and complete



Thus, on the basis of the evidence from Kalos Limen, as was the case in Kerkinitis, it may be possible to speak of a conscious approach to outward status displays and possibly a more simplistic approach to depositions of assemblages of grave goods. The close geographical location of the two settlements, as well as a shared political situation as (subdued?) parties in the distant rural territory of Chersonesos in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, could perhaps be part of the explanation for such close (if not nearly identical) sets of burial customs.

If we compare the situations of Kerkinitis, Kalos Limen and the north-western Crimea in general with Chersonesos, it is an interesting point that Chersonesos does not feature any kurgans within the proximity of the city cemetery. This peculiarity is explained by strict regulations in the spatial organization of the city cemetery, and in the conservative attitude towards burial customs which is suggested for the city in that period (Stojanov 2004, 90-91). Consequently, it is intriguing that in the exact same period kurgan cemeteries blossom in the city's newly acquired distant rural territories; and that they seem to enjoy great popularity throughout the 4<sup>th</sup> century and into the early decades of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.<sup>117</sup> Could this mean that the settlements in the new rural territory were not inclined to be influenced by their new 'mother city' – at least not in their burial customs? Were the local traditions concerning the status displays linked to burying in kurgans too strong to be dismissed? Could the rural settlements have kept their traditions or even expanded on them further during the 4<sup>th</sup> century in order to stand out from the new 'mother city'?<sup>118</sup> These kinds of ideas, based on traditional resistance theory, could perhaps be further supported by the suggestion from some researchers that the northwestern Crimea was a part of the distant Olbian rural territory, or was at least under Olbian economic influences, at the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century (Ščeglov 2002a, 16-17), and that the expansion of Chersonesos around the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> century was more aggressive and dramatic than has been previously assumed (Ščeglov 2002a, 17).

Whether such political and social changes could be reflected in aspects of the burial customs will probably remain unconfirmed, but it is nevertheless tempting to see a socio-political connection between the blooming kurgan cemeteries of the rural coastal settlements and the total absence of the self-same phenomenon in the city which (aggressively?) dominated the wider area at the very same time.

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fineware vessels.

117 This is not a phenomenon exclusive to the northwestern Crimea, but can also be observed in many of the contemporary cities in the Bosporan Kingdom which feature blossoming kurgan cemeteries in close vicinity to the settlements (see this volume, Chapter 5).

118 Examples of such socio-political motivating factors are given by Gillian Shepherd for localities in Sicily which wanted to emphasize an independence from their mother cities through individual burial customs (Shepherd 1995).



Meanwhile, there might be other factors which could influence local funerary expressions. The indigenous hinterlands were fundamentally different from the Taurian area around Chersonesos and the Scythian steppe areas around the northwestern Crimea. Thus, the Taurian mountain region did not display kurgans in such a dominant way as did the Scythians of the steppe in the northwestern part of Crimea.<sup>119</sup> The different visual and inter-cultural influences of these two regions could have been strong players in the development of the perception and use of status displays in the coastal settlements. If we agree to an understanding of these settlements as multicultural and complex in their formation and expressions of identities, burials in kurgans may have been a quite straightforward and obvious way of demonstration prestige and status for the people of these areas.

In the following chapter we shall have a closer look at another important distant rural kurgan cemetery of the northwestern Crimea, Panskoe I, which offers excellent comparative material for many of the topics touched upon in this chapter.

### 3.5 Main conclusions of the analyses

On the basis of the analyses the following conclusive points can be made.

- It is probably too optimistic to think that we can feel confident about there being a broad representation within the data – notably within the very small data set from the 5<sup>th</sup> century. However, the data pool from the 4<sup>th</sup> century is probably large enough to reflect at least some aspects of the general tendencies of the burial customs, even though the representativeness is dubious and there could be a bias in the over-representation of child *enchytrismoi*;
- Already from the 5<sup>th</sup> century there is a clear tendency towards great variation among grave types and the treatment of the deceased;
- Age groups seem to be mainly differentiated for the class of very small children (*enchytrismoi*), whereas older children and adults were buried in the same grave types;
- There may be evidence for family clusters or members of the same social circles being buried together, such as, for example, Graves L12 and L13 as well as the burials related to Grave L36;
- Compared with other Crimean localities, it is striking how low both the numbers of archaeologically identifiable grave goods and the NOT-values are in general. This ties together with observations regarding high status grave types (cremations in cists and kurgans) with single deposits of precious grave goods (gold and other precious metals). Thus, there seems to be a strong inclination to suggest that a high number of (archaeologically

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119 See also Stolba 2007b for similar conclusions based on the numismatic evidence from the reigon.

identifiable) grave goods was not necessarily an indicator of wealth in the Kerkinitian burial customs;

- We may suggest that there seems to be an emphasis on outward displays of status, such as burials in kurgans, rather than on elaborate sets of grave goods;
- The kurgan burials do not seem to diverge from the flat-ground burials in terms of ethnicity, which has been suggested by previous research, and they follow the same higher social status display pattern as that observed in some of the wealthier flat-ground burials;
- There seem to be several similarities between the kurgans of Kerkinitis and those of nearby Kalos Limen, which primarily blossomed in the 4<sup>th</sup> and early 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries. This is in direct opposition to the situation in Chersonesos where kurgans are absent. Perhaps there were socio-political motives behind this, as a means of distancing oneself from the new mother city of the region? Another possible explanation for this phenomenon could be related to the influences of the different indigenous hinterlands of the southern and northwestern Crimea, hence implying that the tradition of erecting kurgans was not met in the landscapes surrounding Chersonesos but was a very powerful and highly visual part of the northwestern steppe region, thus furthering its use in multicultural prestige burials of higher status individuals.



# Chapter 4 Panskoe I

This chapter firstly presents a short introduction to the research history of Panskoe I in the northwestern Crimea. Then, after an introduction to the main phases of the development of the settlement and its cemetery is given, an analysis and discussion of the burial data registered in the database will follow, detailing firstly the graves and secondly the grave goods.<sup>120</sup>

## 4.1 An introduction to the research history of Panskoe I

Systematic archaeological exploration of the coastal steppe landscape of the northwestern Crimea began in 1959 under the direction of A.N. Ščeglov. This venture, which was to become known as the Tarchankut Expedition, was the beginning of several decades of intensive investigations into the ancient past of the region, as well as of thorough excavations of selected monuments and localities. Among these localities was the settlement site of Panskoe I with its adherent cemetery (Ščeglov 2002a, 12). Many researchers and university departments were brought together for this expedition, and a wide variety of different scientific disciplines were involved. The main aim of the Tarchankut Expedition was to reconstruct *the natural and cultural (anthropogeneous) landscapes in the historical period* (Ščeglov 2002a, 14), the region's economic structures and relations, as well as the spatial, economic, social and ethnic structures of the rural settlements (Ščeglov 2002a, 14-15). At first, these aspects were primarily seen in relation to the historical development of Chersonesos and interpreted within a framework closely linked with that city, which itself was considered as the major power factor of the region in the Greek and Roman periods. However, as the work progressed, it became evident that this hypothesis was probably neglecting the role of other important cities in the region such as, for example, Olbia to the west. Ščeglov therefore proposed a revision of some of the main conclusions on the development of the region,

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120 I am deeply grateful to Vladimir Stolba, University of Aarhus, for the generous opportunity to study the burial data from Panskoe I before publication. I am further in debt to him for answering all my many questions, ever patiently and kindly, during this process. The publication of the cemetery is currently under preparation by Professor Stolba, and there can be no doubt that Black Sea scholarship will benefit enormously from this important work. (See also [http://www.pontos.dk/research/ra\\_3/ra-3a-Panskoe-i](http://www.pontos.dk/research/ra_3/ra-3a-Panskoe-i) for a brief introduction to the Panskoe I research project).

especially those concerned with the role of Chersonesos and the distant rural territories. It is now preferable to see the initial phase of the development of the region as closely tied to the expansion of the Olbian rural territories at the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> or early 4<sup>th</sup> century (Ščeglov 2002a, 16-17; also Vinogradov 1997c; see further Stolba: [http://www.pontos.dk/research/ra\\_3/ra-3a-Panskoe-i](http://www.pontos.dk/research/ra_3/ra-3a-Panskoe-i)).<sup>121</sup>

The research and intensive excavations at Panskoe I began in 1969 and continued through almost three decades until 1994. In this period, both settlement structures and the cemetery were excavated and important archaeological material was brought to light. In the following introduction some of the expedition's main results concerned with the development of the settlement and the cemetery are presented.

#### 4.2 An introduction to the settlement's development

The settlement of Panskoe I was situated on Lake Panskoe near the modern-day town of Černomorskoe (Figs. 4.1 and 4.2). A large number of publications, both on the settlement and the cemetery of Panskoe I, have appeared over time. However, this presentation relies mainly on the summarized introductions by Ščeglov (2002a; 2002b).<sup>122</sup>

It is now suggested that the foundation of the settlement was probably initiated by Olbians some time in the late 5<sup>th</sup> or early 4<sup>th</sup> century when the city's rural territories were expanding greatly. At some point during the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, the settlement was included in the distant rural territories of Chersonesos. Around c. 270 BC it suddenly ceased to exist, quite probably as a result of a violent and devastating attack, which left behind clear traces of fire and destruction.

The majority of the settlement area and the northern part of the cemetery were found in relatively undamaged condition at the initial phase of excavation. However, the southern part of the cemetery and most of the land around it had been destroyed by intensive farming (Ščeglov 2002a, 23).

The settlement, Panskoe I, was the largest amongst a number of rural settlements or single farmsteads situated in the area around Lake Panskoe, which can probably best be described as an agglomeration of large agrarian complexes. The remains of the settlement cover an area of c. 4 hectares, of which approximately 2 hectares have been submerged under the waters of the lake as a result of fluctuating water levels and erosion of the lake shores.

Excavations uncovered c. 7,000m<sup>2</sup> of the most densely built areas of the

121 A newly initiated large-scale survey project by the Danish National Research Foundation's Centre for Black Sea Studies is currently preoccupied with further detailed investigations into the northwestern Crimean region (Guldager Bilde, Winther-Jakobsen & Attema forthcoming).

122 See [http://www.pontos.dk/research/ra\\_3/publications-devoted-to-Panskoe](http://www.pontos.dk/research/ra_3/publications-devoted-to-Panskoe) for a bibliography related to Panskoe I compiled by Vladimir Stolba.

*Fig. 4.1. Map of the Tarchankut Peninsula (map by author)*



*Fig. 4.2. Panskoe I. View from the settlement towards the cemetery (photo by Søren Handberg)*



Fig. 4.3. Panskoe  
I. Sketch map of  
U-structures and the  
cemetery area (after  
Stolba, Hannestad &  
Ščeglov 2002, pl. 6)

settlement. Along the northeast side of the settlement an ancient road was located, although intensive ploughing of the area somewhat complicated the identification of infrastructural features (Ščeglov 2002a, 22-23).

The settlement comprised several building structures which were excavated in the period 1969 to 1994: the monumental building U6, the central area (U7) of the settlement, a structure to the north (U13), remains of a house (U14) now situated in the present-day lagoon, as well as additional house structures in the areas U2 and U10 (Fig. 4.3). The most comprehensive publication of one of these structures appeared in 2002 with the study of the monumental building U6 (Stolba, Hannestad & Ščeglov 2002).

The building U6 was constructed on a square plan measuring c. 34.5 x 34.5m. It had a central courtyard which was flanked by rooms on two storeys on all four sides, with additional rooms in front on the southwest and southeast sides (Ščeglov 2002b, 33-34; Hannestad 2005, 179). In the central part of the courtyard, there was a single well and entrance to the building could be made only through a single gate in the southwest side of the complex. The rooms served different purposes such as living quarters, storage (mainly for grain and oil) and there was probably a common dining room as well. Room 12 seems to have functioned as a house sanctuary with finds of a stone altar, a portable terracotta altar, sacrificial pits containing ashes and burnt bird



bones and seashells, six terracotta figurines, probably depicting Demeter, Aphrodite and a presumed terracotta of Sabazios to whom a black-glossed cup-skyphos was also dedicated (Ščeglov 2002b, 47-48; Hannestad 2004, 68-70; 2005, 190-191).

The excavators suggest that the building complex was inhabited by several families or groups of people, and the find of a female skeleton accompanied by a child in the courtyard well supports this idea. The fire which destroyed the building sometime around c. 270 caused the upper floor to collapse, leaving the lower rooms covered by debris but otherwise intact and *in situ* from the time of the destruction. The excavators have suggested that the fire was caused by an attack from Scythian nomads who fired upon the building from the north-east. Here arrowheads have been found, still in the walls, in front of the walls and inside the courtyard, in great numbers, – all with their points facing in a westerly, southwesterly or southerly direction (Hannestad 2005, 179).

The most ancient structures of the settlement have been located in the U7 area, which still awaits publication. However, it seems to be quite clear that the work of the expedition has brought to light evidence which fully covers the entire chronological period of the settlement's existence from its foundation in the late 5<sup>th</sup> or early 4<sup>th</sup> century to its destruction around c. 270, and on until the sporadic habitation of no more than a few families in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century. The evidence from this time-span does not only relate to the settlement structures, but also to the settlement's cemetery. Thus, Panskoe I offers a unique opportunity to study a smaller, well-preserved rural settlement on a micro scale, in both its domestic and mortuary aspects.

#### 4.2.1 The cemetery

The cemetery of Panskoe I was situated to the northwest of the main settlement area (Fig. 4.3). It consisted of both kurgan burials and flat-ground burials spread over an area of approximately 3.5 hectares. The kurgans were grouped in clusters and chains with the flat-ground burials scattered between. The kurgan cemetery was first registered on Russian military maps in the 19<sup>th</sup> century but did not attract any scientific archaeological interest before P.N. Schulz described them in his field diary in 1932 (Ščeglov 2002a, 23).

The cemetery was mainly excavated during the period 1969 to 1986. During this time-span, 33 kurgans and several dozen flat-ground burials were excavated. Archaeological investigations in combination with aerial photography have revealed more than 60 kurgans in the cemetery area varying in height from only 10cm to 2m.<sup>123</sup> They were constructed from loam and encircled at the

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123 Surely, it should be considered whether it is reasonable to assume that the same level of social status would be displayed by a kurgan of only 10cm in height as one of 2m in height. Moreover, it was established that the kurgan (K1) which was c. 2m. in height was actually a reused Bronze Age kurgan, which, naturally, further complicates the questions of social status (personal communication, V. Stolba, spring 2007). However,

base with a *crepis*, much in the same manner as was observed in the kurgans from Kerkinitis and Kalos Limen.

The largest number of kurgans was concentrated in the northern part of the area, whilst a smaller group of four kurgans was situated to the south-east. The excavators assume that the area between the two kurgan groups was used for flat-ground burials, but the extensive cultivation of the land has made this a difficult question to answer conclusively. Also, the four southern kurgans were severely damaged by ploughing, the clearing of stones for farming and by hunting activities (Ščeglov 2002a, 23). The general state of preservation in the northern part is remarkably fine for a kurgan cemetery, and very few of the many kurgans have been severely damaged by grave robbers or other modern intrusions (Ščeglov 2002a, 24). Overall, the burial data from Panskoe I seem to be of a much less biased character than many of those from the other localities studied here. The preservation of the site has been better, with less robbing and fewer modern disturbances. The site is not built over by any modern structures, and the boundaries of the area are thus more easily identifiable, resulting in a higher degree of spatial representability in the material. Furthermore, the excavations have been conducted in the 20<sup>th</sup> century in a successive series of annual campaigns with a more uniform approach to methodology and practice, both in the actual excavations and in the successive treatment of the data, than seen elsewhere.

Until now, studies of the material from the cemetery have been carried out mainly by the late E.J. Rogov who, unfortunately, did not live to finish and publish his work.<sup>124</sup> The publication of the material is now, as mentioned before, being undertaken by Vladimir Stolba (Rogov & Stolba forthcoming).

### 4.3 Analyses of the material

The material from the Panskoe I cemetery included in this analysis comprises 151 graves, both kurgan and flat-ground burials, accompanied by 256 items of grave goods. The material will be treated in two chronological phases according to the previous practice of this study.<sup>125</sup>

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in general, the individual measurements of the kurgans have not been available to me in this study and such considerations must therefore be treated at a later stage when the full publication is available.

124 A preliminary publication was made in his dissertation from 1998 and in various articles (Rogov 1980; 1985; 1986; 1988; 1989; 1993; 1998; 2000; Ščeglov & Rogov 1985; Rogov & Tunkina 1998; Monachov & Rogov 1990a; 1990b).

125 I have chosen to name the chronological phases according to the terms and periods used in the previous chapters of this study in order to make comparisons between the localities more straightforward. Thus, it may seem strange to name the actual first phase of the Panskoe I settlement 'Phase 3', but this is simply to maintain consistency with the chronological periods of the present study.

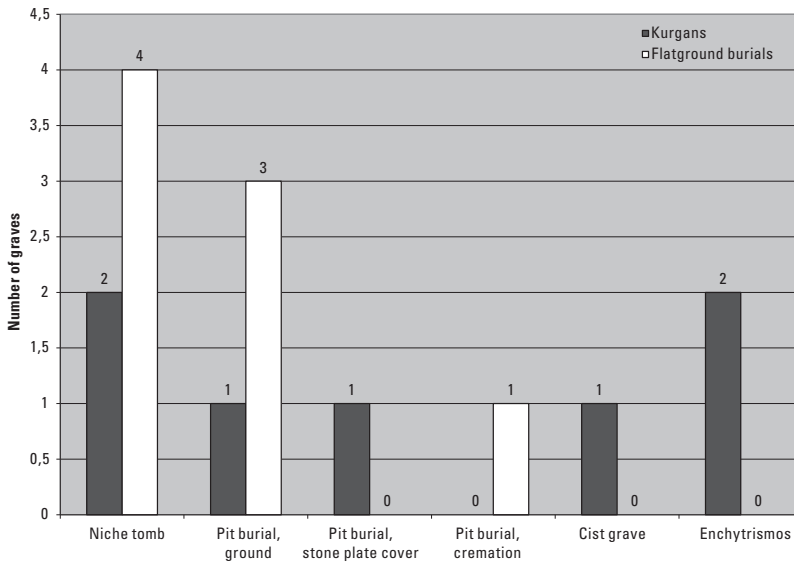


Fig. 4.4. Panskoe I. Grave types from Phase 3

#### 4.3.1 Graves

##### Phase 3 (last decades of the 5<sup>th</sup> century)

The burial data of the first phase of the settlement's existence is represented by 15 burials. According to Rogov, these early burials were all situated in the central area of the cemetery which could thus be the point from where the cemetery developed with a more or less horizontal stratigraphy (Rogov 1998, 6-7). However, the area to the northwest of these early burials has not been thoroughly investigated and could very well contain more flat-ground burials which could alter radically this conclusion about the spatial development (Rogov & Stolba forthcoming).

##### *Grave types and treatment of the deceased*

The grave types of Phase 3 are depicted in Fig. 4.4. The burials come from kurgans (seven burials from five kurgans) and flat-ground burials (eight). Comparing the grave types from the kurgans and the flat-ground burials, we see that simple pit burials and niche tombs occur in both forms, whilst the cist grave, the pit burial with a stone-plate cover and the two child *enchytrismoi* are confined to the kurgans. On the other hand, the single cremation in a pit comes from a flat-ground burial. Thus, it seems that the burials of the kurgans display slightly more variation in terms of grave types than the flat-ground burials.

The graves are, in general, quite simple in their design and construction. A single burial, N-K13 M1,<sup>126</sup> had the deceased placed on a bed of eel grass as we have seen at so many of the other localities around the northern Black Sea coast. The two *enchytrismo*i burials placed in amphoras of the Solocha II type<sup>127</sup> were also placed in simple soil pits, but the skeletons were almost completely disintegrated. The mud-brick cist grave N-K34 M1 is the only grave which shows signs of a more elaborate construction; it was lined with plaster and at the bottom decayed wood was found, presumably the remains of a wooden coffin or bier.

The sizes of the graves also show some variation between kurgans and flat-ground burials. The measurements of the niche graves and the mud-brick cist from the kurgans are (2.70 x 1.00 x 0.50); (2.50 x 1.00 x 0.50) and (2.00 x 1.20 x 0.70), whilst the measurements of the niche graves from the flat-ground burials are (2.58 x 0.70 x 0.40); (2.20 x 0.80); (1.72 x 0.55 x 0.40) and (1.90 x 0.45 x 0.60). At first sight it seems that the burials related to the kurgans are larger than their flat-ground equivalents. We may note that two of the flat-ground niches have similar lengths to the kurgan niches, but the widths are significantly smaller, as are all measurements from the last two flat-ground niches.

Although the number of graves is relatively small for Phase 3, there could be evidence to suggest that the kurgans display more variation and larger sized burials than the flat-ground burials.

Apart from the single cremation burial, all burials in Phase 3 are single inhumations. Apparently, multiple burials, which become very popular in the course of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, as we will see below, were not yet an established custom.

Information on the positions of the skeletons mainly indicates that the predominant custom was to place the deceased on the back in a supine position with the hands along the body. However, in one instance, niche grave N-M039, a young female was placed with her lower legs flexed, while the adult female in pit grave N-M034 was placed in a proper crouched position. Both burials were accompanied by grave goods (two and five items) and the orientations of the deceased as well as the general structures of the burials seem to be quite normal for the phase. Apart from the gender of the deceased, which may be significant, there are no immediate features which

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126 The numbering of the graves is decoded as follows: the capital letter N is the database reference for the locality, Panskoe I, used in this study. The capital letter K is the reference applied by Vladimir Stolba indicating 'Kurgan', while the capital letter M indicates the individual burials within the kurgans and M0 the flat-ground burials.

127 See Monachov & Rogov 1990a for amphoras from the cemetery. The Solocha II type has now been identified as Peparethos I by Doulgéri-Intzessiloglou & Garlan, while it is suggested that the Solocha I type be identified as Peparethos II (Doulgéri-Intzessiloglou & Garlan 1990, 380-388).

could give us an indication for other motives behind these deviations in the positioning of the deceased. From the evidence of the following period, we may be inclined to suggest that gender could play a central role in the positioning of the deceased, with females being placed in crouched positions. We shall return to this below.

#### *Orientation*

The orientations of the deceased are very uniform for both kurgan burials and flat-ground burials. With the exception of two burials, N-M038 and N-K34 M6, the remaining burials all had the deceased placed with the heads towards the northeast, north-northeast or east. The two exceptions, the niche grave N-M038 (adult female) and the *enchytrismos* N-K34 M6 (child) had the deceased placed with the heads towards the north and the southeast respectively. For the *enchytrismos*, we could expect the orientation of the amphora neck to reflect the orientation of the child inside, despite the poor state of preservation of the skeletal remains. As was the case with the deviations in the positions, there are no obvious indications in the burial features which could enlighten us as to the reason for the different orientations.

#### *Gender and age*

When it comes to the analysis of gender and age, there is a potential bias in the data from Phase 3. From the five kurgans, the material only offers two sexed burials, partly due to the poor state of preservation of the skeletal material and partly due to the high number of child burials (four out of seven burials), which are notoriously difficult to sex. On the contrary, the flat-ground burials offer gender and age determination for all eight burials, except, of course, the cremation. This is probably largely due to the intriguing fact that all the flat-ground burials are of adults.

The child burials confirm the picture which has been emerging through the previous analyses: very small children (infants) were buried in *enchytrismoi* without any grave goods. The situation is very similar to the *enchytrismoi* from Kerkinitis and Kalos Limen, but also to the earlier graves of Olbia and the general picture from the eastern part of the northern Black Sea region, which will be treated in the next chapter. Two graves, the pit burial N-K34 M3 covered with stone slabs and the pit burial N-K35 M2, are also presumed to have contained burials of children, although this identification relies on the length of the grave rather than physical anthropological analyses. If we accept that the deceased were probably children rather than adults placed in crouched positions (which is also a possibility since the skeletal material in both burials was apparently too poorly preserved to be useful in determining this matter), we may note that children older than infants received burials in grave types similar to those of the teenager and adult population. Thus,

the age-related divergence in burial primarily focused on children of a very young age, probably infants of c. 0-6 months.<sup>128</sup>

Finally, we may dwell upon the two child burials N-K35 M2 and N-K40 M4, which are the earliest burials in Kurgan 35 and Kurgan 40 respectively. Both kurgans have a long chronological span and were in use from the settlement's earliest period to at least c. 350 (Kurgan 35) and c. 325 (Kurgan 40). That the earliest burials in these kurgans were of children is perhaps not so surprising taking into consideration the generally high child mortality rate, but it is certainly an interesting feature when we look at the child burials in a social perspective.

The early child burials in the kurgans could testify to a conscious understanding of the child as an important part of the family structure. The right to a visual burial and grave was quite probably a central aspect of status displays; and, therefore, to bury a child first in such a prominent feature as a kurgan underlines not only the individual status of the child, but also the status of the burying family. Furthermore, the focus on the child may lead to the assumption that family relations played a central role in status displays. Thus, power and wealth were probably not only confined to individuals but were, rather, expressed collectively for and by the family group as a whole, including the small children.

As we have seen in the concrete examples from Olbia and as also exemplified in many studies of Greek cemeteries, children, and especially infants, would often receive non-visual and informal burials due to their lack of social status and membership of the community (for example, Morris 1987, 62, 105; 1992, 81; Crielaard 1998, 48-49; Arnold 2006, 151). However, by presenting a visual burial monument which included all social layers of the family group (i.e. including women and children), the leading families testified that wealth and higher status were not solely related to personal achievements, but were primarily inherited through birth and strengthened within the boundaries of the bloodline.<sup>129</sup>

We may speculate whether elite representation based on the family group would have been especially attractive for, or applicable to, agrarian micro-societies such as the Panskoe I settlement. Here, one may ask whether a setting was provided for power displays related to the male-dominated public administration and political life of the polis? Could it be conceded that the exclusion and dissociation of women and children from status-related aspects, such as public power and prestige, thus became less obvious? The traditional pattern of the poleis is presented by Sarah Pomeroy who, amongst other things, concludes: *Descriptions of cemeteries from the Classical period indicate that*

128 At least this age span is suggested by Vladimir Stolba for the majority of the *enchytrismoi* in the material (Rogov & Stolba forthcoming).

129 A similar conclusion was, for example, reached by Crielaard in his analysis of the elite burials from Eretria (Crielaard 1998).



*the vast majority of people were not interred in family groupings, but rather as individuals or as pairs* (Pomeroy 1997, 123), and, further: *Considering that respectable women were never independent from their families, one might have expected to find them buried predominantly in large, protective, family groups, but this is not the case* (Pomeroy 1997, 124). Finally, *Just as every citizen had to belong to an oikos, but was expected to put loyalty to the polis first, so in death the polis took precedence. The ideology expressed is political and male-oriented* (Pomeroy 1997, 126).<sup>130</sup> In conclusion, it could seem that there is a basis for assuming different approaches to gender roles and representations in funerary contexts in the city and in the rural areas.<sup>131</sup> The more predominant role of females in farming societies is also stressed in a recent study by Peterson (2006, 538-542).

#### *Grave types and the number of grave goods*

In the results of a comparative analysis of the adult burials from kurgans and those from flat-ground burials, there are no major differences to be detected in the number of grave goods or NOT-values. For both kurgans and flat-ground burials, these numbers lie between two and seven, with the majority of the burials lying at the lower end of the scale with between two and three items of grave goods and corresponding NOT-values. Thus, higher numbers of grave goods occur in both kurgans and flat ground burials as do low numbers. Moreover, as has also been the conclusion in the previous analyses of high status burials, a display of higher social status is not always accompanied by a deposition of a larger number of grave goods.

The burials with the highest number of grave goods (niche tombs N-K13 M1, N-M033 and pit burials N-M032A and N-M034) all contained between five and seven items of grave goods. Accordingly, the NOT-values are equally high, showing a great range of deposited grave goods. Since the four burials are sexed as two males and two females, it seems that there is a high degree of equality in the size of male and female deposits. This could perhaps tie in with the previously suggested perception of a more predominant role of 'the family' as a status marker.

#### *Stelai and funerary sculpture*

There are no finds which can confirm the use of *stelai*, funerary sculpture or other types of grave markers in the early period of the settlement's existence. The custom, however, finds its way into the settlement's funerary traditions during the course of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, when a small number of anthropomorphic *stelai* appear, as we will see later in this chapter.

<sup>130</sup> See also Spencer-Wood 2006, 299-302 on traditional and new approaches to perceptions of gender in Classical societies.

<sup>131</sup> Groupings of family plots are also suggested by Carter for the rural cemeteries at Pantanello near Metaponto (Carter 1998, 143-166).



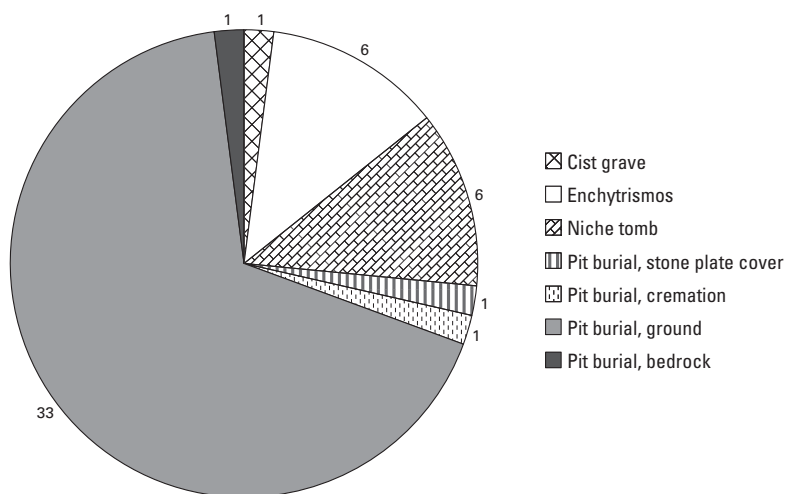


Fig. 4.5. Panskoe I. Grave types from Phase 4, flat-ground burials (total numbers of burials)

#### Phase 4 (c. 399-270)

##### *Grave types and treatment of the deceased*

The body of material from Phase 4 is significantly larger than that from the previous phase. One hundred and thirty six burials are registered in the database, comprising 87 burials from 31 kurgans and 49 flat-ground burials.<sup>132</sup>

The grave types of Phase 4 are depicted in Figs. 4.5 and 4.6 and broken down into age groups in Figs. 4.7 and 4.8 (see also *Gender and age*, below). The figures show quite a difference between the grave types used in the kurgans and those for the flat-ground burials. In Fig. 4.5 the simple pit completely dominates the picture with 33 burials, which equates to a total of 66 % of the flat-ground burials. *Enchytrismoi* and niche tombs are the second most popular grave types, both with 6 burials (= 12 %). However, this picture changes when we look at the kurgan burials in Fig. 4.6. Here, the popularity of the simple pit is much more moderate with only 19 burials (= 22 %), while the most popular grave type is the pit covered with stone slabs (= 34 %). For comparison, it is interesting to note that this type is represented by only one burial among the flat-ground burials. There is also a higher percentage of *enchytrismoi* among the kurgans than in the flat-ground burials, and this may be explained by

<sup>132</sup> There is a small potential bias in the data from Phase 4 since a few of the burials did not contain any datable material and have, therefore, been included in Phase 4 on the grounds of the *terminus ante quem* provided by the destruction of the site around c. 270. Although the burials could just as well belong in the previous phase, they are treated under Phase 4 since the latest possible date is always used in this study.

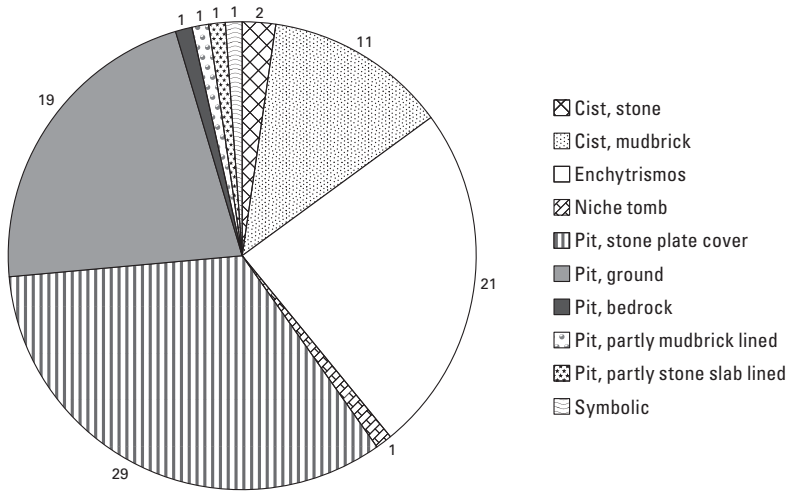


Fig. 4.6. Panskoe I. Grave types from Phase 4, kurgans (total numbers of burials)

the likely under-representation of visual/proper child burials among the flat-ground burials in contrast to the perhaps higher numbers of children who received a proper/visual burial in the kurgans.<sup>133</sup>

Although the numbers are very small from Phase 3, a general comparison with the grave types shows that already at this earliest stage the stone-plate covered pit, the cist grave and the *enchytrismoi* were exclusive to the kurgan burials, perhaps indicating the élite's preference for these grave types already from the beginning of the settlement's existence.

In general, it seems that the grave types of the kurgan burials find close and obvious parallels in the kurgan burials from nearby Kerkinitis and Kalos Limen (this volume, Chapter 3).

As is similar with the previous phase, the construction and equipment of the graves are of rather simple designs. The custom of placing the deceased on a bedding of eel grass is evident in seven kurgan burials, but does not occur in any of the flat-ground burials. These beddings are found in niche graves, pit burials in the ground and in the bedrock, and it would seem that they are mainly used for adults (in two cases a teenager and a small child were buried with adults on organic beddings).

In contrast to the burials of Phase 3 which only contained single inhumation

<sup>133</sup> Due to the limitations of this study, a detailed relative chronological typology of grave types has not been attempted here. However, such a relative chronology is part of the detailed analyses applied to the burial material in the forthcoming publication on Panskoe I, and will surely shed more light on the development of grave types within the Panskoe I material (Rogov & Stolba forthcoming).

tion burials, the graves of Phase 4 (both kurgans and flat-ground) contain both single and multiple burials (13 multiple burials from kurgans and 10 multiple examples among the flat-ground burials).<sup>134</sup> The multiple burials of the flat-ground graves are primarily burials of two adult individuals, often, but not exclusively, male and female. Two burials (N-M012A and N-M010) are of four individuals, but unfortunately only one adult female has been positively identified amongst the group. There are no multiple burials which only contain children. Thus, it seems that the custom of placing more than one individual in the same grave was mainly directed at the adult members of the society. However, it is important to stress that the bone material of children disintegrates much easier than adult skeletal material, which, of course, could be a biasing factor here.

In the majority of the multiple burials, the skeletal material of the first burial was displaced, often piled together in a heap in a corner or near one of the walls of the grave to make room for the new burial. This means that the multiple burials were not conducted simultaneously, but, rather, that a particular grave, perhaps that of a family member, would be opened and reused for others. In the Black Sea region this custom is not exclusive to the Panskoe I burials, but is also found in contemporary burials from, for example, Nymphaion (see this volume, Chapter 5). Furthermore, the practice of multiple burials is not uncommon in many of the Greek settlements in southern Italy and Sicily (for example, the rural cemetery of Pantanello near Metaponto, Carter 1998, 108-109, 111), where it has often been associated with the burial customs of the indigenous populations (Shepherd 2005, 118-120; see also this volume, Chapter 7).<sup>135</sup>

The multiple burials of the kurgans also featured some double burials of adult male and female couples, but there are more multiple burials (six in total) which contained three or four individuals, of both adult and adults with children. Grave N-K43 M3 contained a young female (18-20 years) buried with a small child – presumably a typical example of mother and child or perhaps siblings who died from a disease or in an accident? In a similar fashion to the multiple burials of the flat-ground graves, several skeletons were displaced to make room for others, but placement of the newly dead straight on top of the previously buried is seen as well.

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134 Evidence of the practice of multiple burial is also found in nomadic burials of the northern Black Sea region. Here, most often these burials are interpreted as nobility accompanied by servants or close family (for example, Davis-Kimball, Bashilov & Yablonsky 1995, 44-45, 123), but more ordinary burials also feature multiple disposals. Multiple burials are also frequently found in the burials of the coastal settlements in various periods, albeit there seems to be a preference for this practice in the later periods, mainly from the 4<sup>th</sup> century and onwards.

135 For evidence of multiple burials in Greece proper see, for example, *Corinth XIII*, 69; *Clara Rhodos III*, 11; Robinson 1942, 139.

In keeping with the previous phase, both kurgans and flat-ground burials feature inhumations, with the exception of one cremation, N-M053, set in a simple flat-ground pit. The inhumations for which we have information on the position are mostly placed on their backs in a supine position.<sup>136</sup> However, there are six burials among the flat-ground graves where the deceased were placed in crouched positions. This is markedly more than in the kurgans, which only feature one crouched burial. The six crouched burials from the flat-ground graves show no immediate common features which could group them nor do they indicate any specific motivation for this divergent position. However, a database query on age and sex shows that the skeletons are all adults with the exception of one teenager; three of them are females, whilst the remaining three were not sex determined. It must remain pure speculation, but might these presumed common age (adult) and gender (female) features play an indirect role in the special positioning of the deceased? As we have seen before, the discussion of crouched burials and their interpretation is manifold and has yielded a number of different suggestions as to the motivations behind them (see this volume, Chapter 2). In his forthcoming publication, V. Stolba suggests that the crouched burials from Panskoe I may have connections with Taurian burial practices of crouched females, oriented towards the southwest and found in multiple burials (Rogov & Stolba forthcoming; personal communication, V. Stolba, spring 2007). Considering the material at hand, it cannot be excluded that there may be ethnic (or cultural) affiliations as well as gender specific treatment in play here. However, we may add that evidence from, for example, Istria Bent indicates that here the motivation for placing the deceased in crouched positions is less obviously connected with sex or age, since both adult female, males and children were placed in crouched positions (Telegea & Zirra 2003, 94, tab. 9). Hence, we may expect specific local motivations behind these matters, varying significantly from locality to locality.

The construction and equipment of the graves in Phase 4 show signs of more complexity than what was observed in the previous phase. In particular, the kurgan burials feature more variation in the use of, for example, wooden covers, eel grass beddings, stone-slab covered grave bottoms (for example, N-K34 M2 and N-K38 M2) and remains of wooden platforms, from biers or coffins(?) (for example, N-K38 M1). An important observation concerns the eel grass beddings. In Phase 3 the only eel grass bedding was found in a kurgan burial. The larger body of material from Phase 4 sheds markedly more light on the use of this particular practice, and, interestingly, it seems to be exclusive to the kurgan burials. Of the 49 flat-ground burials, none had eel grass bedding, whereas it was noted in eight kurgan burials. The eel grass burials of adults and children alike are encountered in different grave types, in mul-

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136 Grave N-M027 is exceptional for it contained an adult female found in an upright seated position. See also note 181 below on riders' and other deviating positions.

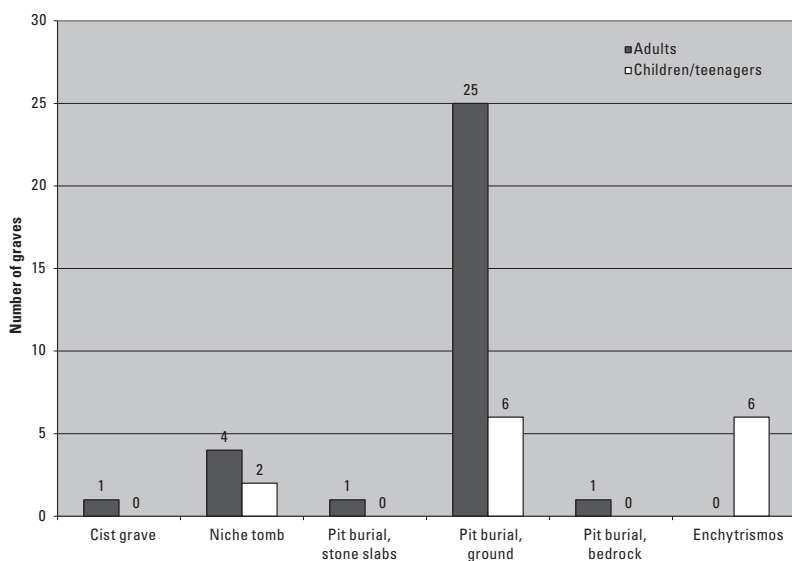


Fig. 4.7. Panskoe I. Grave types from Phase 4, flat-ground burials (by age groups)

tiple and single burials and in both well-equipped and less well-equipped burials (in terms of grave goods). Thus, we may conclude that the custom of placing the deceased on eel grass beddings was apparently exclusive to the kurgan burials in Panskoe I, whereas it occurs in different grave types of, for example, the burial material from Olbia, as demonstrated previously.

Another interesting feature which deserves some attention is the symbolic burial – a *cenotaph* burial. Amongst the data from Phase 4, kurgan burial N-K32 M1 displayed a full set of grave goods with an amphora and a cup, a *strigil* and a battle axe; the skeleton, however, was completely absent and the vertical construction was without any stratigraphical evidence for burial. This phenomenon, which is attested already from an early stage at, for example, Istros (Tumuli XI, XIII and XXV; *Histria II*, 283) and indirectly at Olbia (the *Leoxos stele*), most probably relates to *cenotaph* burials of society members who died away from home, for example in battle or at sea. This, at least, was the hypothesis of Rogov who mentioned 10 burials from the kurgans which did not contain any skeletal remains (Rogov 1998, 7). However, it seems that these numbers are probably too high since the reworking of the material by Vladimir Stolba has reduced the number of symbolic burials to just the one securely identified *cenotaph* burial. Newly-published epigraphic evidence sheds further light on the matter since a private letter inscribed on an amphora sherd found at Panskoe I in 1987 quite probably testifies to the practice of sacrificing on a *cenotaph* (Stolba 2005b).

Finally, we may consider one special feature which can perhaps be iden-

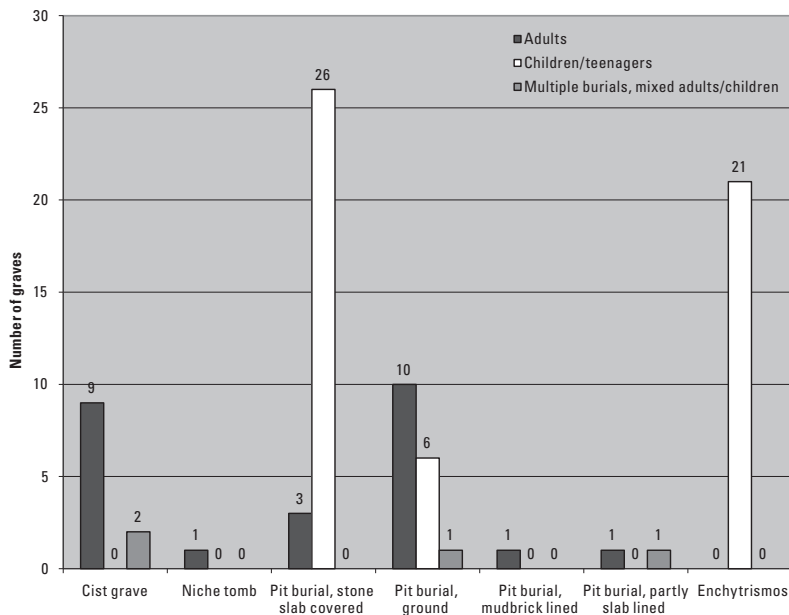


Fig. 4.8. Panskoe I. Grave types from Phase 4, kurgans (by age groups)

tified among the Panskoe I material – namely the practice of *akephalia*.<sup>137</sup> As described by Shepherd (2005, 123), the custom of treating the skull differently from the rest of the body is primarily attested in Sicily, and is mainly associated with native Sikel practice. However, there are also examples from Greek cemeteries both in Sicily and in southern Italy<sup>138</sup> and, as argued by Shepherd, the *akephalia* burials are essentially ‘Greek’ in their appearance and assemblages of grave goods, excluding any straightforward connection with native elements (Shepherd 2005, 125-128). In the Panskoe I material there are several examples of skulls found on their own, but the majority of these relate to a heap of displaced skeletal material within the respective graves. However, graves N-K50 M1 and N-M035 may give a firmer indication of the practice of the deposition of skulls. Here, the only skeletal remains found were the skulls, and, interestingly, both allegedly came from females.<sup>139</sup> N-M035 was a simple

137 The term actually refers to a ‘headless body’, but has come to cover quite a wide range of differential treatments of bodies and body parts including depositions of skulls (see also Shepherd 2005, 123).

138 See Lyons 1996, 120; Shepherd 2005. Evidence for differential treatment of the skull is also attested in Prinias on Crete and in Argos in Greece for the Geometric period (Shepherd 2005, 124, 128). See also Talalay 2004 for a detailed study of the evidence of *akephalia* from prehistoric Anatolia and Greece.

139 However, physical anthropological examinations of skulls for gender determination can be problematic and are often inconclusive without comparable data from the pelvis (Mays 1998, 38; Walker 2008, 39).

pit burial containing two adult females, one of which was only represented by her skull. The burial contained no grave goods. N-K50 M1 was a single burial in a slab-covered pit, and was also of an adult female unaccompanied by grave goods. Suggestions for the motivations behind the practice have included salvage of the skull from the battlefield for a proper burial at home (Shepherd 2005, 128) and evidence for some kind of criminal punishment (Carter 1998, 110-111). The first option concerned with warfare is perhaps less likely for our two females, whilst the latter option is probably more plausible. However, the fact that N-K50 M1 is a kurgan burial perhaps complicates the possibility of the criminal aspect somewhat, though we may only speculate upon the nature of the crime and the consequences for a subsequent burial – perhaps it was simply not problematic to be buried in a high status burial monument despite one's crime?

To this discussion we may add that Herodotos (Hdt. 4.64-65) writes of a Scythian custom of taking the skulls of their enemies from the battlefield and presenting them to their king in order to secure a share of the war booty. Afterwards, he states, they turned the skulls into drinking bowls. However, if we choose to place faith in this testimony, and somehow try to relate it to the archaeological evidence, we should expect to find headless bodies rescued from the battlefield and buried at home, rather than skulls without bodies!<sup>140</sup>

### *Orientation*

The orientation of the burials in Phase 4 principally follows the same pattern as in Phase 3. Both kurgan and flat-ground burials are primarily oriented towards the northeast or in a northeasterly direction (Figs. 4.9 and 4.10).

However, there are exceptions to this practice which become more evident when the data is broken down into age groups. Admittedly, the majority of the child burials have the same northeasterly orientation as the adult burials, but from Figs. 4.11 and 4.12 it becomes clear that the majority of the deviations concerning orientation of the deceased occur in the child burials. When broken down even further, the analysis shows that the deviation from the northeasterly orientation occurs mainly in the *enchytrismoi* burials, which could narrow the age aspect down even further. Thus, it could be suggested that the homogeneous orientation was first and foremost an important issue for the burial of adults and older children, whereas the burial of smaller children, especially infants, did not necessarily fall within the limits of this practice.

### *Gender and age*

The analyses of gender and age in the material from Phase 4 are the most reliable amongst the data analyses used for this study of Black Sea localities. This is due to the fact that all the burials have been subjected to physical

140 See also Kris 1981, 54-55 for a discussion of Taurian burial material in connection with Herodotos' accounts of Scythian skull treatment.



anthropological examination, when the preservation of the skeletal material has allowed for it.<sup>141</sup>

Although some of the aspects concerning gender and especially age groups have been touched upon in the previous analyses, further interesting observations related to these topics are still to be made.

Firstly, we may look at the distribution ratio of age-determined burials from kurgans and flat-ground graves:

Table 14 Panskoe I. The distribution ratio of age-determined burials from kurgans and flat-ground graves from Phase 4

	Kurgan burials	Flat-ground burials
Adult	24 (28 %)	32 (64 %)
Child	52 (60 %)	11 (22 %)
Teenage	0 (0 %)	3 (6 %)
Multiple, mixed age	5 (6 %)	0 (0 %)

The most notable differences between the age groups of the two grave types are the discrepancies between the modest number of adults identified in kurgans and the predominant adult group of the flat-ground burials, and *vice versa* (also Figs. 4.7 and 4.8). An important conclusion from this assessment could very well be identification of differential attitudes towards the burial of infants and smaller children compared to the burial of other social layers of society. Hence, a larger number of children from higher status families (the kurgan burials) received a proper and visual burial. This results in a ratio between adult burials and child burials which is probably more realistic in consideration of the high child mortality rate. The opposite is seen in what could be lower social status flat-ground burials, where children rarely received proper or visual burials. This ties in nicely with the previously-presented conclusion on the family-related nature of the status symbols of the higher social layers.

Looking for correlations between age groups and grave types, a database query shows that the child burials of the flat-ground graves are either *enchytrismoi* or simple pits (also Figs. 4.7 and 4.8). The adult and teenage burials show more variation, consequently indicating a more complex approach to the choice of grave types for adults and young persons. For the kurgan burials, this picture is similar, in as much as the child burials are *enchytrismoi* and pits, but in a more labour-intensive variant, covered with stone slabs rather

141 In those cases where the skeletal material was not preserved sufficiently for anthropological analyses, the size of the grave has been used as a parameter for age determination. These burials are marked with 'child?' or 'adult?' in the database.

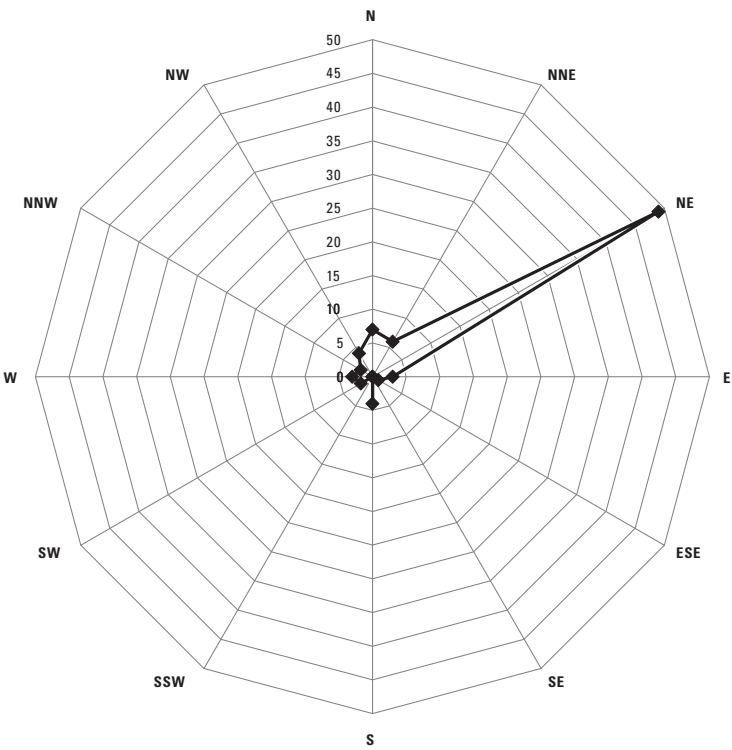


Fig. 4.9.  
Panskoe I.  
Orientations of  
kurgan burials  
from Phase 4

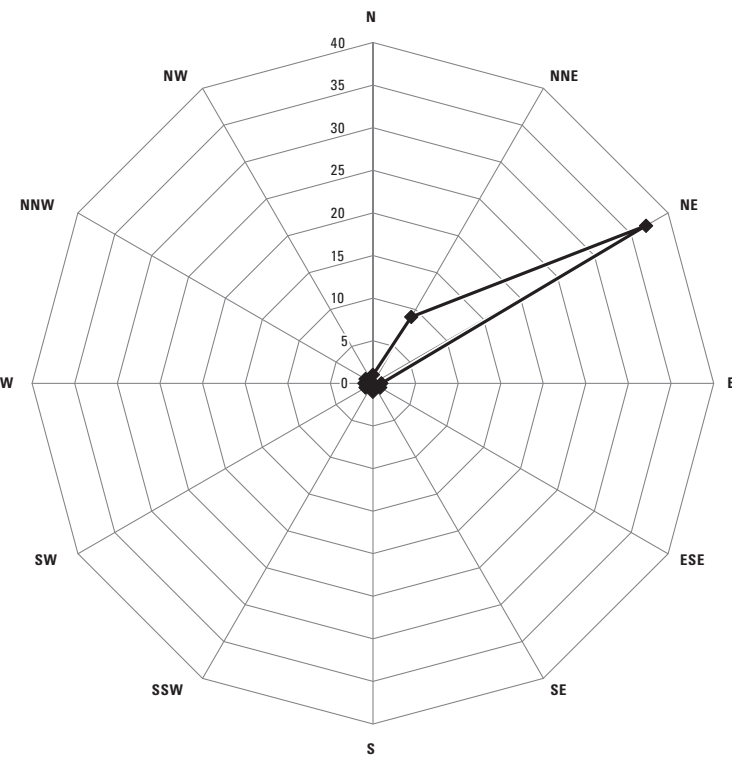


Fig. 4.10.  
Panskoe I.  
Orientations  
of flat-ground  
burials from  
Phase 4

Fig. 4.11.  
Panskoe I.  
Orientations  
of child burials  
from Phase 4

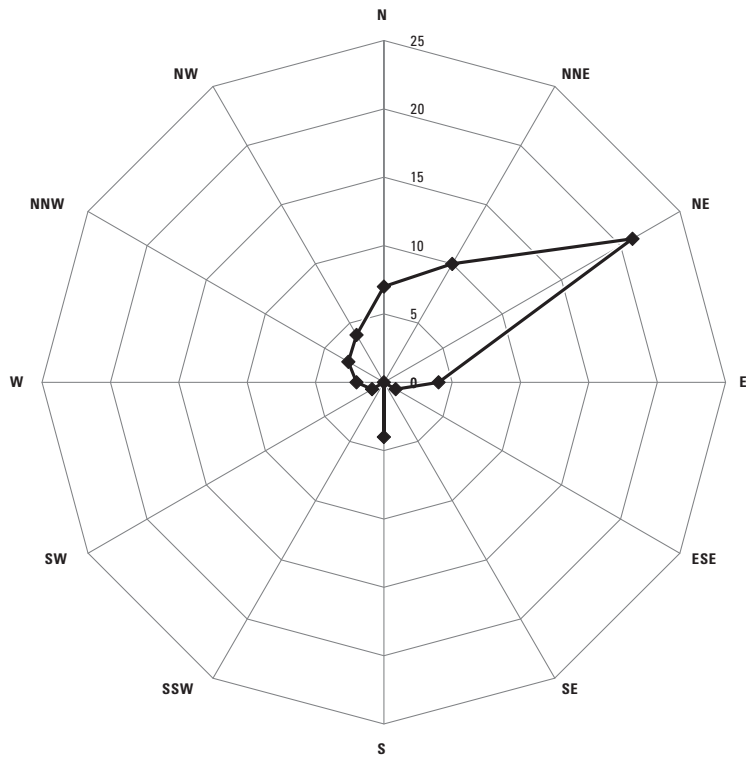
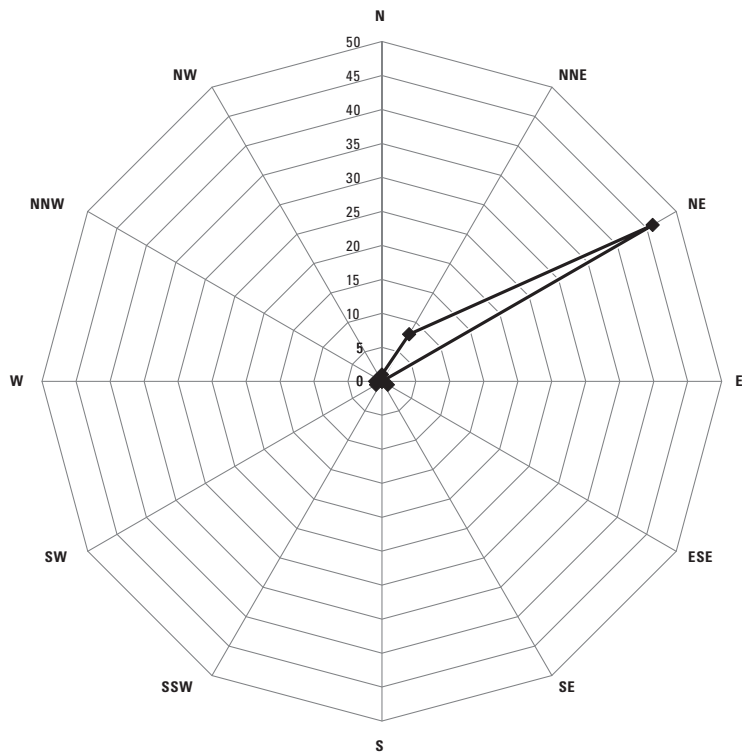


Fig. 4.12.  
Panskoe I.  
Orientation of  
adult burials  
from Phase 4



than just cut into the ground. For the adults, the grave types are again markedly more varied, primarily cists of stone slabs or mud-bricks, pits dug in the ground, niche tombs and a few pits covered with stone slabs. The overall picture, however, presents a rather strict division between different grave types and age groups – most evident in the kurgan burials, but also seen to a lesser degree in the flat-ground burials. Moreover, there is a clear social division between the stone-slab covered child pits of the kurgans and the simple child pits of the flat-ground graves. This is highly interesting. Despite tendencies in the material from the previously analysed localities, no such obvious and clear pattern reflecting perceptions of age groups has been observed nor have the consequences of this for approaches to burial customs, both on a practical and social level, been so noticeable. Thus, the Panskoe I data are not only of high quality but also form much clearer patterns when compared to other more biased bodies of material used within this study.

Moving the focus from the correlations between age groups and grave types to age groups and grave goods, we see that only one child burial from the flat-ground graves had grave goods (one piece), while 11 child burials from the kurgans were accompanied by grave goods. The pattern for both types is consistent when it comes to the *enchytrismoi*, which are never accompanied by grave goods. Consequently, it seems that smaller children and infants in *enchytrismoi* were treated in a similar fashion for both flat-ground graves and kurgans with regard to grave goods. Older children buried in kurgan pits covered with stone slabs were occasionally accompanied by one or more items of grave goods, but the majority was without grave goods.

Adults and teenagers buried in kurgan graves are mostly accompanied by grave goods; only five burials (18 %) are without grave goods. This number is markedly higher in the flat-ground graves where 17 burials (49 %) of adults and teenagers are without any grave goods. The point here must be that even though we may not feel confident to conclude that there is a correlation between high status burials and the quantity of grave goods, kurgans and flat-ground burials share some common approaches towards grave goods in child burials, but display a markedly different attitude when it comes to grave goods in adult and teenage burials. Perhaps this difference is motivated by status and wealth, or perhaps other less easily recognizable factors are at play.

Assessing the database query of adult sexed burials and grave goods, it becomes evident that the kurgan burials show no immediate signs of a differentiation in terms of the deposits related to the two sexes. Admittedly, there are few burials with single males or females since the majority of the adults are placed in multiple burials, a fact which complicates this matter somewhat. However, separating the individual burials within the multiple disposals (where this is possible) and comparing them with the proper individual burials, demonstrates a tendency towards fewer items of grave goods being placed with the adult males than with females. The picture is also rather blurry for the flat-ground burials, but all in all, it does seem to be similar to that of the

kurgans; adult female burials more often display grave goods than adult male burials. It is not possible, however, to view this as a straightforward reflection of females holding wealth, mainly because it is not possible to take into consideration perishable grave goods. Status symbols such as, for example, meat sacrificed to the deceased will only have survived in very rare cases (as we will see later) as will other perishable valuables which could be gender specific, either in actual life or in the context of burial customs.<sup>142</sup>

#### *Grave types and the number of grave goods*

Comparisons of individual grave types and the number of grave goods do not show any obvious patterns. Kurgan burials with more than one item encompass simple pit burials, niche and cist graves as well as pits covered with stone slabs and, therefore, represent the main repertoire of the most common grave types. For the flat-ground burials, the simple pits are the most common grave types amongst the burials with grave goods. These simple observations serve to underline the secondary role which grave goods may have played in the status display of the burials. The situation might be parallel to that observed from the material from Kerkinitis and Kalos Limen in the previous chapter. There could have been perishable grave goods, which for obvious reasons cannot be considered in this analysis, but, as a general rule, the number of grave goods appears to be unrelated to any status displays recognizable in the archaeological record. Similarly to Kerkinitis and Kalos Limen, we might observe with a more outward-oriented burial culture where grave types and visual status markers, and perhaps non-material elements, played a predominant role.

#### *Stelai and funerary sculpture*

Anthropomorphic *stelai* occur in three burials where they were found *in situ* marking the individual burials. This is a rather unusual situation since the majority of *stelai* and other above-ground funerary markers are in general reused or at least difficult to relate with certainty to a specific grave. The finds of the anthropomorphic *stelai in situ* yet again underline the exceptional state of preservation which has prevailed at Panskoe I. The three *stelai* come from the kurgan burials N-K3 M1, N-K36 M3 and N-K53 M1. It seems that no *stelai* or identified funerary markers have been found at or near the flat-ground burials. Looking more closely at the three burials with anthropomorphic *stelai*, it immediately becomes evident that they share several common features. Firstly, no grave goods were found in any of the three burials. However, fragments of a handmade jar, a spindle whorl of lead and some seashells were found in the fill of N-K3 M1, whilst the fill of N-K36 M3 contained fragments of

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142 Crielaard (1998, 48) emphasizes the high status connotations of both the consumption and preparation of meat, which was predominantly a male prerogative. See also Wilkins & Hill 2006, 145-147 on the high status of meat and its close relations with the male gender.

amphoras as well as an unspecified terracotta. As we will see with regards to the treatment of grave goods and outside deposits, these assemblages are very characteristic for the majority of outside deposits found at Panskoe I. Two of the burials are tentatively suggested as child burials, but unfortunately the skeletal material is very badly preserved and the age determinations rely on the sizes of the graves. The third burial has been identified as belonging to an adult. No anthropological sex determination has been made for any of the three burials. As for orientation, all three burials seem to have had the deceased placed with the head towards the normative northeast.

The interesting question here is, of course, why precisely these three burials were marked by anthropomorphic *stelai*? Regrettably, the answer to this important question must remain rather elusive and speculative. As has been mentioned earlier (in Chapter 2), the debate concerning the possible ethnic affiliations of anthropomorphic *stelai* in the Black Sea region has been heated, even up until the present day.<sup>143</sup> Obviously, linking the anthropomorphic *stelai* directly with either a nomadic or Greek ethnicity of the deceased presents some problems since the *stelai* have been found in both nomadic steppe contexts and coastal settlements. Moreover, at least from the coastal settlements, very few such *stelai* have been found *in situ* in burial contexts which could elucidate the discussion further. Their sudden rise in popularity in many coastal settlements during the 4<sup>th</sup> century also raises some questions as to a possibly more fashion-related interpretation of their use rather than a specific ethnic affiliation.

Although the *stele* burials from the Panskoe I material share several similarities, none of these features – or the combination of them for that matter – are unique for this particular group or stand out from the norm. The lack of grave goods is not exactly helpful here either, even though this might be one of the aspects which could perhaps point in the direction of a motivating factor to be found among social aspects. We are left with a vague suggestion of the *stelai* as status markers in kurgan burials, but a closer definition seems difficult to grasp for now and there is ample room for speculation here.

While it cannot be identified as a grave marker or as funerary sculpture, we may still mention here the strong tradition in Panskoe I for erecting a stone *crepis* around the foot of a kurgan mound. The *crepis* was mostly constructed from limestone slabs and also uncut stones set in a circle at the foot of the kurgan mound. Rogov described some kurgans, for example K34, which had two or even three stone rings in their *crepis* (Rogov 1998, 5-6). The *crepis* probably served both a practical function in keeping the earth masses of the mound in place (which was perhaps more necessary in a kurgan cemetery than for kurgans situated in the open landscape) and further underlined the kurgan as an exclusive burial feature – a private precinct encircled by boundary markers as a status expression of the ownership by an individual family group. Similar

143 See, for example, Posamentir 2005; Bujs'kich & Zubar 2006 for some of the most recent approaches to this topic; in general also Moleva 1991a; 1991b; 1999; 2002.

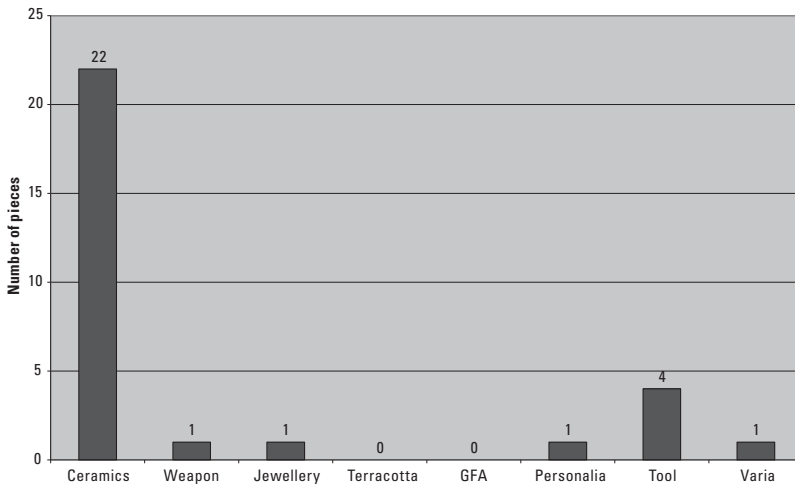


Fig. 4.13. Panskoe I. Object types from flat-ground burials from Phase 3

constructions with *crepis* have been mentioned earlier from Kerkintis and Kalos Limen, but are also known from the tumuli of the west coast of the Black Sea, such as examples from Kallatis, Istros and Orgame (Damyanov 2005, 80-81).

#### 4.3.2 Grave goods

There are 256 items of grave goods registered in the database from both phases.<sup>144</sup> One hundred and seventy five of these relate to kurgan burials, whereas the remaining 81 pieces were found in the flat-ground burials. The flat-ground burials of Phase 3 contained 30 items of grave goods (from eight burials), whilst the kurgans of the same period contained 15 pieces (from five burials). In the material from Phase 4, the flat-ground burials contained 51 items (from 19 burials), whilst the kurgans displayed an impressive 160 pieces (from 37 burials).

If we break down these numbers, it becomes evident that in Phase 3 there were slightly more items of grave goods per burial in the flat-ground graves (an average of 3.8 items per burial) than in the kurgan burials (an average of 3 per burial). For Phase 4 this picture changes drastically and the average number of grave goods in the flat-ground burials declines (to an average of 2.7 items per burial), while that of the kurgan burials increases (to an average of 4.3).

<sup>144</sup> Unfortunately, it has not been possible to include analyses of the positions of the individual grave goods since this element of the research has not yet been incorporated in the set of data given to me by Professor Stolba for this study in January 2007. However, analyses of the positions of the grave goods will appear in the final publication (Rogov & Stolba forthcoming).



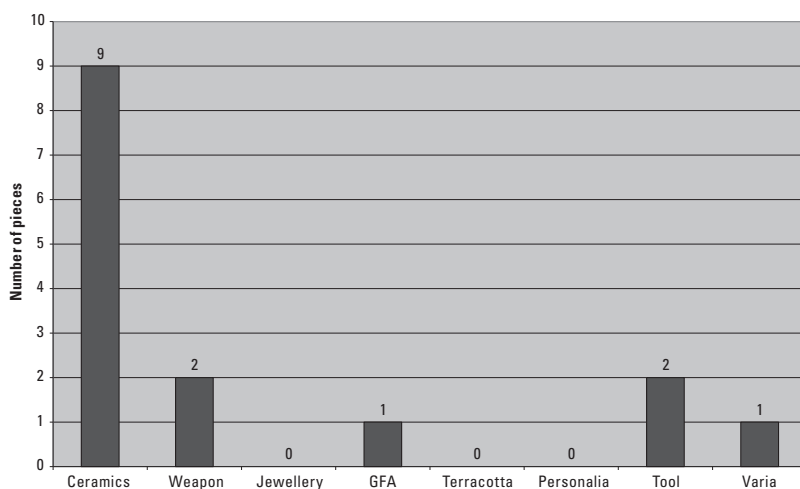


Fig. 4.14. Panskoe I. Object types from kurgan burials from Phase 3

Thus, we may preliminarily conclude that the deposition of grave goods is more equally distributed between kurgans and flat-ground burials in the early phase of the settlement's existence. In the course of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, the differentiation between the two grave types becomes more evident: the flat-ground burials see a decrease in the size of grave good deposits and the kurgan burials display a marked increase. This pattern may reflect a change in attitude towards status displays, although it seems unlikely that the grave goods can be perceived as isolated status markers.

### Phase 3 (last decades of the 5<sup>th</sup> century)

The different object groups of the grave goods are depicted in Figs. 4.13 and 4.14. There are no significant differences between the distribution ratios of the object groups found in kurgans and those found in flat-ground burials. For both grave types ceramics constitute the largest element of the deposits, whereas other object types are mainly represented by a few items.

#### *Ceramics*

The ceramic assemblages are very uniform in both kurgan burials and flat-ground graves. It seems that the shapes and general deposition patterns do not vary from one grave type to the other. The shape repertoire is rather limited and primarily comprises transport amphoras (Herakleian, Chian and Thasian), cups (cup-skyphoi, bolsals, kylikes and kantharos), lekythoi (grey-ware, red-figured), jugs (red- and grey-ware), one handmade jar, some black-glossed one-handlers and a bowl, as well as black-glossed salt-cellar.

Grave N-M032A was well-equipped with an amphora, a cup, a lekythos and a jug. Interestingly, both the lekythos and the jug had perforated bases,

quite probably for libation – a practice for which the evidence is much fuller in the material of the following periods. The combination of vessel shapes also seems, at least for some of the burials, to be rather uniform. Rogov argued for what he called the ‘ceramic set’, which he found in four burials. This set consisted of three components: an amphora, a drinking vessel and an oil-related vessel. Rogov believed that this set testified to an already established burial custom introduced to the settlement from somewhere else (Olbia) in the early period of the settlement’s existence (Rogov 2000, 270). The idea of the ‘ceramic set’ was used by Rogov (2000) as one of his arguments in a theory of a burial *koine* of the lower Dnieper region and the northwestern Crimea, which we will examine more closely later. However, from a database query on the relations between ceramic shapes in Phase 3, Rogov’s ‘ceramic set’ is only actually encountered in two burials, N-K12 M1 and N-M032A. There are more burials which are equipped with parts of the ‘set’, and if we look at the combinations presented in Table 15 it becomes obvious that the combination of amphora and cup is the most common (identified in five burials), the combination of cup and lekythos is found in four burials, whilst the set of amphora and jug is met in two burials. The most common three-piece set is the combination of cup, jug and lekythos (found in three burials), but it is difficult to see such an overall persistent pattern as ‘the set’.

Tabel 15. Panskoe I. Ceramic combinations from Phase 3

Grave no.	Amphora	Cup	Jug	Bowl	Lekythos	Salt-cellar	One-handler	Jar
N-K12 M1	1	1			1			
N-K13 M1	1	1						
N-K34 M3	1		1	1				
N-K35 M2						1		
N-M302A	1	1	1		1			
N-M033		1	1		2		1	
N-M034		1	1		1			
N-M038							1	1
N-M039							1	
N-M040	1	1				1		
N-M049	1	1						
N-M062		1				1		

*Weapons*

Weapons were rare in the burials of the early phase in Panskoe I. Three graves (N-M032A, N-K34 M1 and N-K13 M1) were equipped with weapons, which in all three cases were bronze arrowheads. For the two kurgan burials, N-K34 M1 and N-K13 M1, two and seven arrowheads were found respectively, whilst the flat-ground burial, N-M032A, contained just a single arrowhead. Two of the burials have been sexed as male, whereas the skeletal material of the last burial was too poorly preserved to determine gender and age. It must be observed that all three weapon burials also contained iron knives, which conceivably could be either tools or, less likely, weapons. All the knives were of a very small size and some of them were even deliberately broken ('cancelled' or 'ritually killed'?). Furthermore, they showed signs of great wear and this, in combination with their small proportions, could perhaps indicate that they were everyday tools rather than weapons for warfare.

*Jewellery*

As was the case with weapons, depositions of jewellery were also very sparse in Phase 3. Only in one burial, N-M039, was the adult female accompanied by jewellery; a necklace made from 19 glass beads. It is quite curious that the jewellery is so sparsely represented taking into consideration that there are actually six burials of adult females in Phase 3. Perhaps jewellery stayed above ground and was passed on to family members as heirlooms rather than being parted with as grave goods? Or perhaps larger depositions of jewellery simply did not play a significant part in the burial customs at this stage?

*GFA*

There is only one vessel from the GFA object group represented in Phase 3. Burial N-K13 M1 contained an alabastron of alabaster deposited with the adult male alongside an amphora and a cup, seven bronze arrowheads, an iron knife and a decorative object(?) of bronze. This assemblage of grave goods seems to support the notion that alabaster vessels were probably luxury items, since this burial is by far the best equipped among the early burials both in terms of the number of objects and the range of materials, such as the imported alabaster and the metals. The connotation of the assemblage is of clear references to aspects of élite life: drinking and banqueting, oil practices and hygiene, as well as warfare and battle or hunting. In this kurgan burial, the traditional high status male identity is clearly communicated and expressed through very obvious symbols.

*Personalia, tools and varia*

Only one burial contained objects related to the personalia category. The flat-ground burial N-M033 had a deposit of seven astragals accompanying the adult female alongside various ceramic vessels and a ceramic spindle whorl. As for the category of tools, we have already touched upon the

knives and the spindle whorl which leave just a lead weight and a pair of iron scissors to note.

Objects relating to the varia group are only met in two burials, the bronze decorative object(?) of Grave N-K13 M1 and an unidentified piece of iron from Grave N-M034.

#### *Deposits of metals*

Deposition of metal is met in only four of the 15 burials from Phase 3. Two of these burials contained adult males, one contained an adult female, while neither the gender nor the age of the last burial has been determined. There are no deposits of precious metals such as gold or silver, and the 10 items of metal grave goods are mainly iron and bronze, as well as one piece of lead. Thus, we must conclude that the deposits of metal underline the general picture of very sparsely-equipped burials in the early period of the settlement's existence. It appears that a significant material surplus was either not present or simply did not find its way into the burials, perhaps because burial customs did not demand this(?).

#### *Outside deposits*

Outside depositions of grave goods or of objects connected with funerary feasts or with post-funerary sacrifices are not numerous in Phase 3. In two instances fragments of amphoras and black-glossed vessels were found. However, an important deposit was found at Kurgan 13 where numerous Heraklean amphoras had been placed outside the burial with their bases cut off (Monachov 1999, 171-173). In the fill of another kurgan burial stones, fragments of an iron knife and two bronze arrowheads were encountered. The precise function of these objects and the motives behind their deposition are difficult to interpret. The ceramics and the knife could be connected to funerary feasts and sacrifices, although the larger ceramic shapes could also have served as grave markers as was the case in, for example, Pantanello (see also this volume, Chapter 7). The arrowheads are perhaps less obvious as post-funerary deposits. They belonged to the burial N-K34 M1 where another very interesting deposit was found outside the grave, namely the remains of three or four eggs. Remains of eggs were also found inside the child(?) burial N-K37 M1 from Phase 4. In the 'Tomb of the Papyrus' from Kallatis, eggs were deposited in the fill (Preda 1961, 295) and in Corinth the North Cemetery of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries yielded numerous burials which contained deposits of eggs (*Corinth XIII*, 70, 84). For Corinth, the authors suggest that the eggs could be interpreted as symbolic representations of fertility and, perhaps, growth, rather than having a more straightforward function as food elements from funerary feasts. This suggestion is mainly based on the fact that the deposits of eggs in Corinth occur primarily in burials of children and females (*Corinth XIII*, 70, 84). This aspect is, of course, intriguing, particularly when we consider the possible child burial N-K37 M1 in the Panskoe I material. However, there are many examples of the deposition of eggs

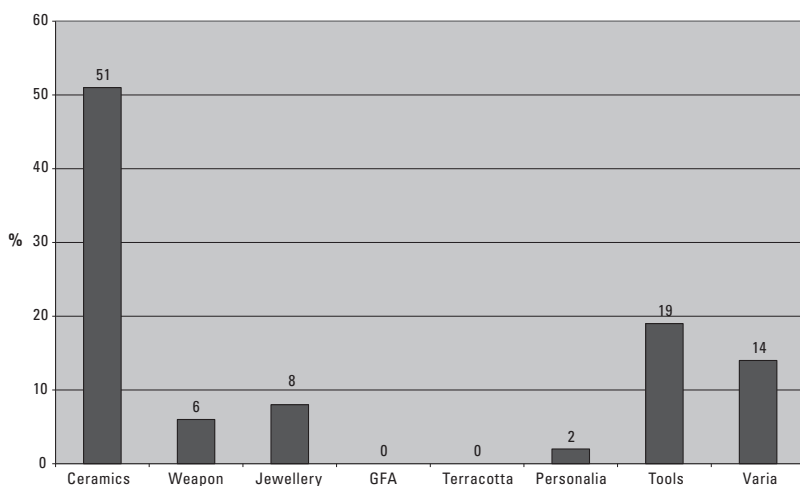


Fig. 4.15. Panskoe I. Object types from flat-ground burials as percentages of all burials from Phase 4

being associated with Greek burials,<sup>145</sup> and a connection with the Underworld and the egg as a symbol of the Chthonic gods is very commonly assumed as the most likely explanation for their presence.<sup>146</sup>

#### Phase 4 (c. 399-270)

The different object groups are depicted in Figs. 4.15 and 4.16. However, before examining these in more detail we may take a closer look at Fig. 4.17. Here, both kurgan burials and flat-ground graves are depicted according to the number of grave goods. From the chart it becomes evident that the two grave types share some common features, such as a very high percentage of graves with no grave goods. However, this result may be biased by the much higher number of child *enchytrismoι* preserved in the kurgan burials compared with a much lower number of child burials and the relatively high rate of adults in the flat-ground burials. Breaking down the data and separating the values for adult and children, we may get a less biased picture (Figs. 4.18 and 4.19).<sup>147</sup> Now the figures show a quite different picture; the percentages of child burials with no grave goods are much closer for the two types than

145 See, for example, Robinson 1942, 192-194; eggs are also found at the presumed mixed Greek and indigenous settlement of Morgantina in Sicily, Lyons 1996, 124; in general Nilsson 1951.

146 Connotations with the iconography of the Underworld can, for example, be seen in Lucanian funerary painting with its depictions of eggs; Horsnæs 2002, 87.

147 Four multiple burials which contained both adults and children have not been included in this analysis.

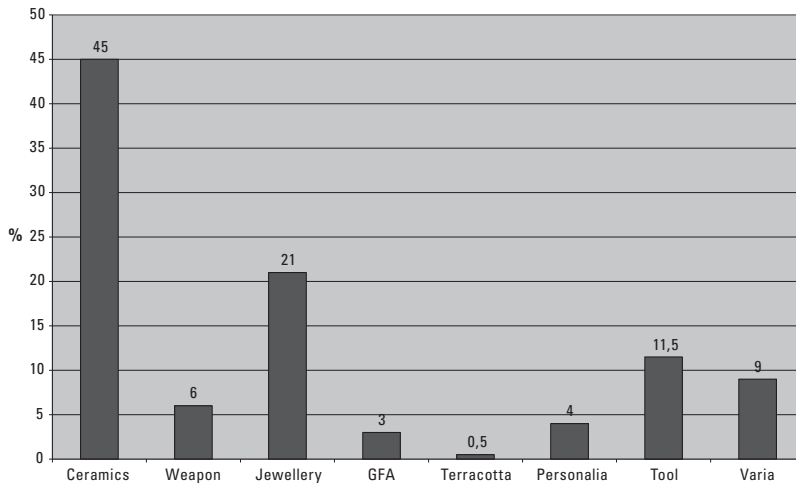


Fig. 4.16. Panskoe I. Object types from kurgan burials as percentages of all burials from Phase 4

they are for the adult burials. In the child burials, the values for both kurgans and flat-ground graves show that the majority of the burials have no grave goods, but the kurgans do have smaller percentages of burials with a higher number of grave goods. For the adult burials this picture is markedly different. Here there is still a significant percentage of flat-ground burials without

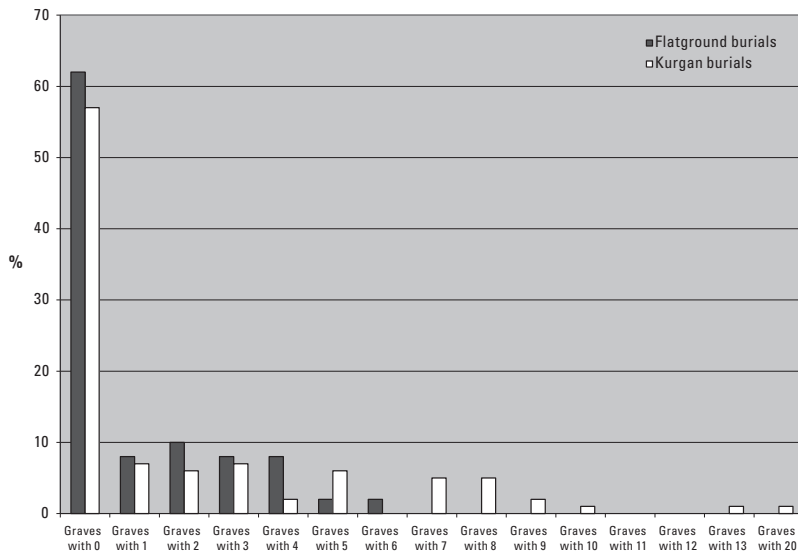


Fig. 4.17. Panskoe I. Numbers of objects per grave as percentages of all burials from Phase 4

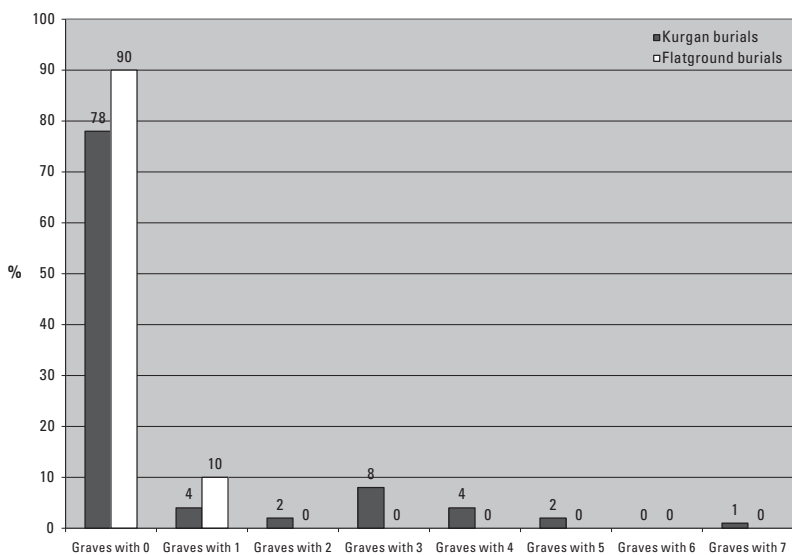


Fig. 4.18. Panskoe I. Numbers of grave goods per child burial as percentages of all burials from Phase 4

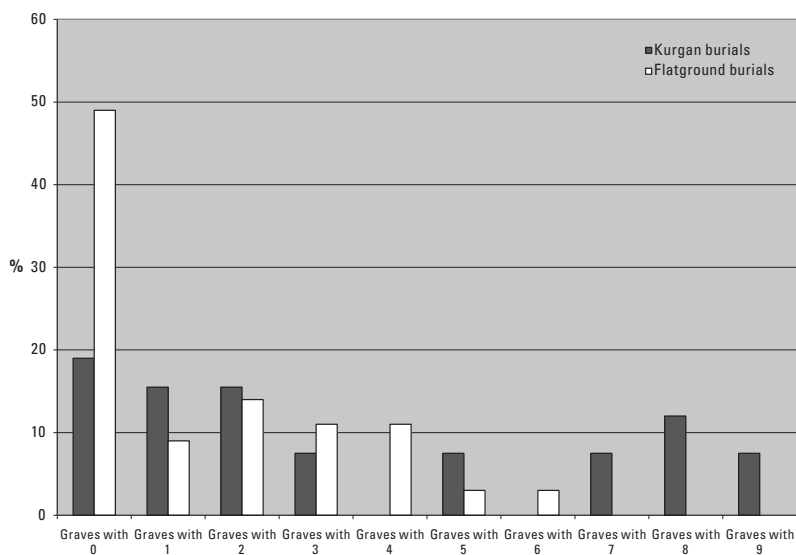


Fig. 4.19. Panskoe I. Numbers of grave goods per adult burial as percentages of all burials from Phase 4



grave goods (almost 50 %), whilst the kurgan burials score much more equally across most of the range from nought to nine pieces. Thus, it may be possible to conclude that a difference between the deposits in the flat-ground burials and the kurgans is only just noticeable in the child burials, but is much more obvious in the adult graves.

Although it has been suggested earlier (in Chapter 3) that deposits of grave goods may not have been directly connected with status displays, this more detailed analysis does at least shed light on a differential approach towards deposits made in kurgan burials and those made in flat-ground burials. This pattern could reflect a social competition which did not only exploit the permanent visual power displays of the kurgan structures themselves, but also the more short-lived status displays of the actual funeral itself.

Returning to the nature of the grave goods, we may look at the object groups depicted in Figs. 4.15 and 4.16. The ratio between the different object groups does not seem to differ radically from flat-ground burials to kurgans; ceramics are still the most frequent grave goods, and tools and objects from the varia group are also common. Meanwhile, the kurgans do seem to display slightly more variation in the object types as well as a markedly higher percentage of jewellery compared to the flat-ground burials.

#### *Ceramics*

The ceramic shapes of Phase 4 are very similar to those deposited in the previous phase. The amphora, jug, cup and lekythos are the most popular shapes for both kurgans and flat-ground burials.

However, looking at the combinations of the ceramic shapes (Table 16), it seems that the kurgan burials continue the pattern of the previous period with amphora and cup being the most common combination (found in 10 burials). The 'ceramic set' (see above) is now met in eight burials, and in general the lekythos seems to increase in popularity both as a single deposit and as a pair. Individually, the amphora and the cup still remain the most popular shapes, and, while the amphora is predominantly noted as a single deposit, the cup is often found in pairs.



The flat-ground burials are less consistent in terms of a pattern of ceramic combinations (Table 17). Only in two burials do we find the combination of amphora and cup; one of which actually displays the only combination of the 'ceramic set'. The lekythos is the most common shape (encountered in seven burials) while the amphora takes second place (six burials). Only in one instance do we find a ceramic pair (two amphoras), whilst all other deposits are of single pieces. Thus, it is possible to suggest that the flat-ground burials display a much more random and, perhaps, what-was-at-hand approach to ceramic deposits compared with the more obvious and conscious patterns of the kurgan burials.

Table 17. *Panskoe I. Ceramic combinations from flat-ground burials from Phase 4*

Grave no.	Amphora	Cup	Jug	Bowl	Lekythos	Jar
N-MO10	1					
N-MO11				1		
N-MO12	2				1	1
N-MO12A					1	
N-MO15						
N-MO16			1			
N-MO26			1			
N-MO27					1	
N-MO29						1
N-MO30		1			1	
N-MO31			1		1	
N-MO4	1	1			1	
N-MO44	1	1				
N-MO47		1				
N-MO48	1				1	
N-MO52			1			
N-MO55			1			

### Weapons

The weapons of the flat-ground burials repeat the repertoire of the previous phase: bronze arrowheads in one single deposit and in two deposits with several arrowheads. The kurgan burials, however, display much more complex deposition patterns when it comes to weapons. Firstly, there was a broader range of weapons; a battle axe, arrowheads, spearheads and a piece of horse equipment (a cheek piece). The weapons were found in six burials. Half of these were multiple burials where the weapons were found with adults (both male and female), while the other half of the weapon burials were single burials. One burial stands out in particular: Grave N-K39 M1 held the skeleton of a young teenage female accompanied by the 'ceramic set' as well as an arrowhead and a knife. We may speculate that perhaps the male domination of the weapon burials which was evident in Phase 3 had declined, and thus these burials became a more status-related manifestation (for both males and females) rather than gender specific?<sup>148</sup>

### Jewellery

Similarly to the weapons, the jewellery deposits of Phase 4 also show considerably more variation than in the previous phase. In particular, the jewellery deposited in the kurgan burials is of various types and materials. There is adornments and functional jewellery among the material, although the adornments are by far the most numerous. The most common type of jewellery is beads, mostly of imported(?) glass but also of jet and a single example made from seashell.<sup>149</sup> Finger rings and ear-rings are also quite common, while bracelets and dress ornaments are rarer. The functional jewellery is represented by buckles and buttons. In the majority of the burials, both adornments and functional jewellery accompanied females. There are, however, a few cases of multiple burials where the jewellery was placed with adults of both sexes. Unfortunately, it is difficult to determine exactly which of the skeletons the jewellery was related to, and in general it seems safer to conclude that jewellery was mostly, but not always, connected with female burials.

### Terracottas, GFA and personalia

The groups of terracottas, GFA and personalia comprise *strigils*, mirrors, astragals and alabastra. The majority of the objects were found in kurgan burials, while only one flat-ground burial displayed an object related to any of these object groups; the male burial N-M044 had an iron *strigil* placed alongside an amphora and a cup as well as an iron knife. This combination, with some variation, is also found in the kurgan burials N-K32 M1, N-K35 M1 and N-K45 M1. Here, adult males were accompanied by amphoras and sometimes cups

148 For weapon depositions in female burials in general see also Chapter 5 below. For the evidence from Thrace see Archibald 1998, 255.

149 Stolba 2007a on cowrie shells from Panskoe I and their presumed apotropaic function.

as well as knives or weapons in combination with *strigils*. It is truly interesting that even a flat-ground burial displays such a clear manifestation of male status and, as we have seen in some other examples in the previous analysis, the deposition pattern does not always support a clear-cut case between kurgans as higher status burials and flat-ground burials as lower status. It seems that there is a general tendency towards this phenomenon, but as we know from many a study, burials are seldom rigid expressions of static customs but rather flexible manipulations of identities. An interesting example of this is the double burial N-K43 M3 which held a teenage female and a younger child. They were accompanied by no less than 20 items of grave goods, of which three were alabastra of alabaster and one was an alabastron of glass.<sup>150</sup> Compared with the deposition pattern of contemporary burials in, for example, Nymphaion, which we will look at in the following chapter, the alabastron and the *strigil* seem here to form a more normative 'set' with connotations to the world of the *gymnasium* and athletes (see this volume, Chapter 5). Amongst the large body of material from Chersonesos, *strigils* are only reported to have been found in two burials dated to the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century (Stojanov 2004, 83). Moreover, Stojanov's otherwise very detailed presentation of the funerary material mentions neither clay nor alabaster alabastra at all. A similar lack of both *strigils* and alabastra can be observed in the burials of both Kerkinitis and Kalos Limen (see this volume, Chapter 3) which sets the material from Panskoe I in an interesting light compared to that of the rest of the local area. However, as will be demonstrated later in this chapter, looking further to north rather than to the south for closer parallels to the Panskoe I material will prove more successful.

#### *Tools and varia*

The tools and varia object groups are quite extensively represented. Fig. 4.20 shows the many different objects included in these categories. In keeping with many other localities, knives are very common, but only in two cases, Graves N-M055 and N-K57 M1, were they found in the popular combination with whetstones (see this volume, Chapter 2 on Olbia and Chapter 5 on Nymphaion). The knives were found both in flat-ground burials and in kurgans, and, interestingly, they occurred more often in female than in male burials. Often the knives were deposited in multiple burials alongside sets of an amphora and a cup. In Graves N-K41 M1 and N-K42 M1, which were both double burials of a male and a female, two knives were placed with the

150 Other grave goods comprised an amphora and a cup, various pieces of jewellery of gold, silver and bronze, a bronze mirror, a small terracotta votive basket, 334 astragals, a portable altar(?) as well as some seashells and remains of crab claws. For the shells and crab claws, see also Stolba 2007a. The exceptionally large number of astragals finds rare parallels, even in the Greek world (see, however, Redfield 2003, 327-328 for burials with considerable numbers of astragals from Locri).

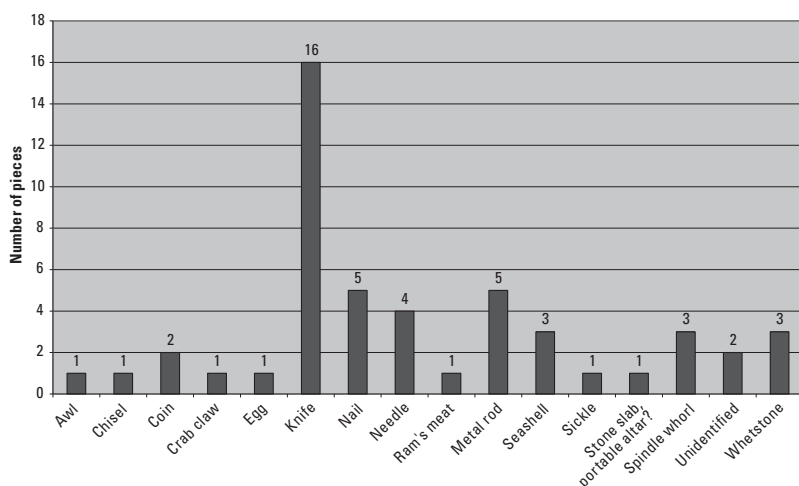


Fig. 4.20. *Panskoe I. Objects from the tools and varia groups from Phase 4*

deceased, reflecting either ownership from real life or the wish for a well-equipped afterlife. If we may assume that knives in funerary contexts can be related to banqueting, the data from Panskoe I provide us with valuable and interesting information on gender perceptions with regards to this particular aspect. If the consumption of meat, as well as participation in (public) banquets, was normally restricted to males (as traditional Greek customs prescribed, Pomeroy 1997, 30; Wilkins & Hall 2006, 74-75),<sup>151</sup> might a significant observation be that the material from Panskoe I reflects a different attitude to expressions of gender roles in mortuary contexts and perhaps also in real life? Were the women just as actively a part of the banquet as males, as depicted, for example, in the iconography and ancient sources related to Etruscan contexts?<sup>152</sup> At the very least, other objects from tools and varia groups seem to support these ideas. For example, Grave N-K57 M1 had ram's meat, a whetstone and a spindle whorl placed with an adult female (whereas in Grave N-M014 a spindle whorl was placed with an adult male!). On the basis of this material, it may be stretching the argument too much to make firm conclusions regarding perceptions of women at public banquets, but at least it may show us that the private sphere was indeed a place where higher status women had a prominent place at banquets.

In conclusion on this matter, we may ask whether the traditional normative gender framework in which burial data is often understood and interpreted

<sup>151</sup> See also the critique on gender perceptions in Classical scholarship in Spencer-Wood 2006, especially 299-302.

<sup>152</sup> See, for example, Pomeroy 1997, 30 on Etruscan gender roles in funerary and banquet-related contexts.

could be challenged by these analyses of the Panskoe I material? Perhaps we see a rural agrarian society structure which differed in its attitudes towards gendered status expressions in funerary contexts and perhaps even in real life?

### *Deposits of metals*

Looking at the deposition of metal, there are 79 registrations of metals of all kinds in the database. These 79 registrations are distributed across 37 burials. Thus 27 % of all burials in Phase 4 contained some sort of metal. Although the data pool from Phase 3 is considerably smaller than that from Phase 4, we may note that the percentage of burials with metal has not changed from the early phase into the 4<sup>th</sup> and early 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries. In Phase 3, four out of 15 burials (= 27 %) had metal deposits. Likewise, the average number of metal objects in these burials is more or less steady from Phase 3 (2.5 metal objects per burial) to Phase 4 (2.1 metal objects per burial).

The main deposits are still of iron and bronze, with a few lead objects as well. However, although present in only very small numbers, a few objects of precious metals such as gold and silver did find their way into the graves of Phase 4.<sup>153</sup>

### *Outside deposits*

Finds of outside deposits have been reported for 33 burials, from both kurgans and flat-ground graves. The most common deposits are amphoras, which are present in almost every outside deposit, but mostly preserved in fragments. Other common objects are seashells (*marine molluscs*)<sup>154</sup> and various ceramic vessels such as handmade jars, fragments of a red-figured jar, black-glossed cups and bowls, red-ware jugs and unspecified black-glossed and grey-ware vessels. Interestingly, there is also a number of fish-plates and a red-ware pan – shapes which are not represented in the actual grave good assemblages themselves but which were apparently frequently used for outside deposits. Thus, this is a good example of how different ceramic shapes had different functions and were probably associated with different practices, in everyday life and also in the funerary sphere.<sup>155</sup> Further finds from the outside deposits include a spindle whorl of lead, fragments of an unspecified terracotta, a terracotta protome, iron nails, a bronze arrowhead, fragments of an iron *strigil*, an iron finger ring, a bronze button, an iron bracelet and a net sinker. The motivation behind the placement of these objects in the outside deposits is

153 The precise numbers for the metal deposits are: gold: 1; silver: 3; bronze: 33; iron: 40; lead: 2.

154 These are also common in burials outside the Black Sea region, for example from Cyrene (Copland Throne 2005, 658-660; Stolba 2007a).

155 Parallels for this phenomenon from Pantanello near Metaponto are the *lekanis* and *krater*, which are always deposited outside the graves, never inside the burials (Carter 1998, 119, 125; see also this volume, Chapter 7).



less clear than that for the ceramic deposits, which were probably related to funerary feasts just as we have seen from so many other localities. Post-funerary sacrifices may have included objects other than food- and drink-related vessels, for different purposes and practices, but these aspects are difficult to tackle both in terms of chronology and preservation.

#### 4.4 An overview of the surrounding burial landscape of the northwestern Crimea

Widening the perspective to include burial material from other localities in the local region, it becomes evident that the closest parallels for the 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> century Panskoe I data are not to be found in Chersonesos to the south. Firstly, there are obviously no direct similarities in the topographical situations or in the actual socio-political situations of the city Chersonesos and the rural settlement of Panskoe I. Moreover, burials in kurgans are not known from Chersonesos and the construction and equipment of the flat-ground burials do not immediately display many common features. The material from Kerkinitis and Kalos Limen is somewhat closer in character, but not as well-preserved and reliable as the material from the cemetery excavations which were conducted by Max Ebert at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Ebert excavated cemeteries at the localities of Adzhigol and Petuchovka situated in the modern-day region of Kherson (Ebert 1913). Although the excavation and publication of these burials took place almost 100 years ago, and the chronology and the dating of many of the grave goods have been altered and refined since then, the attention to detail in this work speaks for itself.

The sites displayed numerous kurgan burials, the majority of which seemed to have been well-preserved while a smaller group had been plundered. Ebert provided his detailed publication with a valuable overview of the burials and the grave goods (Ebert 1913, 102-113) from which the following summarized presentation stems. There are four main grave types, shaft graves with wooden coverings, shallow rectangular pits, niche tombs often closed with amphoras and chamber tombs. In very general terms, it seems that the shaft grave and the niche tomb were the most popular grave types in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, whilst the chamber tomb gained popularity during the 3<sup>rd</sup> century. We may note the similarity to the grave types from Panskoe I, where both niche graves and pits with wooden covers were observed, although the niche tombs decreased in popularity during the 4<sup>th</sup> century. Similarly to Panskoe I, the majority of the burials contained a single supine skeleton, although several burials contained the remains of two or more persons – often male and female, sometimes with a child. Wooden remains at the bottom of the graves, just as in Panskoe I, are also mentioned. Moreover, some of the burials were marked by anthropomorphic *stelai*.

The grave goods deserve some special attention since the assemblages are very close to those observed at Panskoe I. The ceramics mainly consist of

amphoras, black-glossed cups, bowls and lekythoi, as well as a smaller number of handmade vessels. Weapons were plentiful, often deposited in large numbers, such as the 337 bronze arrowheads from Grave 3.<sub>1</sub>.G.<sup>156</sup> Meanwhile, there seems to be interesting patterns in these weapon deposits which roughly follow the 5<sup>th</sup> and the 4<sup>th</sup> to early 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries. In the graves of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, the weapons are often deposited in full sets such as a *gorytos* of arrows, spears, a sword and a harness. Moving into the 4<sup>th</sup> and early 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries, the weapon deposits decrease both in terms of the number of weapons in the individual burials and the range of weapon types. The deposits were now mainly smaller numbers of arrowheads with an occasional spearhead or dagger. Jewellery was also less plentiful and mostly consisted of glass beads, seashells, bronze and iron finger rings, and a few bronze bracelets. All in all, this presents a picture which is very recognizable from the analysis of Panskoe I. Another very important similarity is the number of iron knives, which seem to have been popular throughout the entire period in question, as well as mirrors and different iron tools, spindle whorls and whetstones which were also found at Panskoe I. Parallels for the alabastra of alabaster and glass, which were lacking in the material further south of Panskoe I, are encountered here. Few coins were found and these mostly of Olbian origin. Portable altars were found, similar to the ones from the Archaic and early Classical burials of Olbia as well as the example from N-K43 M3.

All in all, the burials from the cemeteries at the localities of Adzhigol and Petuchovka display strikingly similar constructions and grave good assemblages to the graves from Panskoe I, and underline the much more differentiated burial customs of Panskoe I compared with the powerful neighbour to the south, Chersonesos.

Moreover, the locality of Nikolaevka, situated in the Lower Dnieper region, yielded burial material of very similar composition to that of Panskoe I, Adzhigol and Petuchovka (Meljukova 1975) and further supports the theory of common mortuary approaches in this region. However, these observations are not new or ground-breaking. A comparable conclusion on the dissimilarities between the burials of Chersonesos and Panskoe I was put forward by Ščeglov and Rogov in 1985 and followed up by Rogov in 1998 and 2000. The main hypothesis was a 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> century burial *koine* of the northwestern Crimea, Lower Dnieper region and Olbian territories (Ščeglov & Rogov 1985; Rogov 1998, 20-21; 2000). As was pointed out in the introduction to this chapter, recent research has put Olbia in a prominent role in the Lower

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156 The assemblage of grave goods from kurgan burial 3.<sub>1</sub>.G consisted of ceramics related to drinking, a full set of weapons (a *gorytos*, 377 bronze arrowheads, two spearheads, a sword and a harness), a bronze ladle and sieve, knives and other minor objects. This assemblage is strikingly close to the assemblages of grave goods which were found in contemporary kurgan burials in Nymphaion and which will be treated in more detail in the next chapter.

Dnieper region and northwestern Crimea from the late 5<sup>th</sup> or at least early 4<sup>th</sup> century, and the hypothesis of Rogov seems to find support in many different aspects of this research. The previous 'survey' of the burials from Adzhigol and Petuchovka certainly seems to me very persuasive in a discourse which is oriented towards the northwest rather than to the south of Panskoe I. The material from Olbia definitely features significant parallels such as portable altars, niche tombs closed with amphoras, pit burials with wooden covers, weapons and assemblages of grave goods very similar in terms of their compositions.<sup>157</sup> The vital difference lies in the construction of the burials in kurgans, which is not found at this early stage in Olbia. However, it could be plausible to see the rural settings of both the Lower Dnieper region and the Panskoe I area as significant factors in determining such a difference. Here, the settlers were far away from the safe environment of the city, situated in the steppe with nomadic culture close by, undoubtedly affected by the different means of power communication, monitored by, for example, kurgan markers in the landscape. Perhaps we can see these people as a hybrid population of Greeks and nomads and people from other regions of the Black Sea. At the very least, it seems that they knew quite well how to navigate their way through the particular power and status displays of the area, and that they formed a strong cultural micro-alliance until their neighbour to the south, Chersonesos, became too dominant a power factor in the region.

#### 4.5 Main conclusions of the analyses

The following conclusions can be suggested on the basis of the analyses of the material:

- There are obvious differentiations in the grave types used for kurgan burials and for flat-ground burials, possibly implying social competition and status-related considerations in the choice of grave type. Differentiations are also particularly visible in relation to age groups. In particular, the disposal of younger children seems to have been approached and conducted in a specific manner distinguished from that for adults;
- In general, the assemblages of grave goods are rather modest, mainly featuring deposits of ceramics with occasional deposits of modest jewellery, some weaponry and a number of objects from the tools and varia groups;
- The quality of the material allows for observations about rarely-identified phenomena, such as, for example, the practice of *cenotaph* burial, the deposition of skulls, anthropomorphic *stelai* found *in situ*, and the use of meat and other foodstuff in funerary contexts;

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157 There are also significant similarities between the types of handmade pottery from the U6 building and the handmade pottery found in the Lower Dnieper region (Stolba, Hannestad & Ščeglov 2002, 187-189).

- Children and women are highly visible in the kurgan burials. This may indicate that 'the family and bloodline' are displayed as status markers, perhaps as a specifically important feature in agrarian societies in contrast to the male-dominated public world of urban life in the polis;
- There are very few similarities between the burial material from Panskoe I and that from Chersonesos. However, the material from Adzhigol, Petuchovka and Nikolaevka constitutes striking parallels for the Panskoe I material, and the hypothesis of a burial *koine* of the northwestern Crimea, Lower Dnieper region and Olbian territories seems very plausible;
- The material displays elements of both traditional Greek and Scythian features and objects, and even though this material is difficult to use as direct indicators of specific ethnicities it is highly plausible that the population was mixed and had strong affiliations with both cultural spheres.



# Chapter 5 Nymphaion

As has been the custom in the previous chapters, this chapter presents a short introduction to the research history of ancient Nymphaion<sup>158</sup> and then an introduction to the main phases of the development of the city, its rural territory and its cemetery. An analysis and discussion of the burial data follows, firstly the graves and secondly the grave goods. Finally, a summarized overview of burial material from other localities in the northeastern Black Sea region and the Bosporan Kingdom is offered.

## 5.1 An introduction to the research history of Nymphaion

The first documented modern historical interest in the locality of ancient Nymphaion goes back to the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first proper archaeological investigations took place in the 1860s. In particular, it was the extraordinary finds of gold jewellery and Greek painted pottery that called attention to the burials of Nymphaion, especially the kurgans, since these were easily identifiable in the landscape.

The first investigations and excavations from 1866 onwards were published in the *Otčet Imperatorskoj Arkheologičeskoj Komissii* (OAK) by the director of the Kerč Museum of Antiquities, A.E. Ljutsenko, and, later, in 1959, they were published by P.F. Silant'eva concomitantly with accounts of excavations from the years 1876 to 1880 (Silant'eva 1959). However, the extraordinary finds from the burials of Nymphaion attracted not only historians and archaeologists but also the general public, which resulted in intensified robbing and looting of many of the burials (Grač 1999, 23; Sokolova 2003, 760-761). At the time, such unauthorized excavations were easy to conduct as both the ancient city and the cemetery were situated on private estates.<sup>159</sup>

In 1880 a collection of grave goods and skeletal material from several burials arrived in Oxford. The collection was said to have come from kurgan burials in Nymphaion and was brought to England by Sir William Siemens, an engineer working on the laying of a part of a telegraph line across the Kerč

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158 See also Avram, Hind & Tsetskhladze 2004, 948 for a contribution on Nymphaion to the *Inventory of Archaic and Classical poleis of the Copenhagen Polis Centre* (Hansen & Nielsen 2004).

159 Solov'ev & Zin'ko 1995, 73; Solov'ev 2003, 9 for an account of the different land plots and their owners.

Strait (Vickers 1979, 7-9; 2002, 5-7; Grač 1999, 61, note 2; Sokolova 2003, 761). The material, now kept in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, illustrates in its own isolated context the rich, elaborate and varied grave goods of many of the Nymphaion kurgans and offers a fine example of the mixed cultural setting in which these burials can be understood and interpreted (see colour plates 2-7 for selected examples of the material).<sup>160</sup>

From the 1930s onwards, systematic archaeological investigations and excavations were carried out in Nymphaion, initiated by Professor V.F. Gajdukevič. With his work commenced a long tradition of expeditions in Nymphaion undertaken by the State Hermitage Museum (Sokolova 2003, 763). From the 1940s to the mid 1960s work in the city itself was primarily undertaken by the scholars M.M. Chudjak and V.M. Skudnova. From the mid 1960s, the work was taken over by N.L. Grač who, from 1973 onwards, extended the investigations to include the cemetery as well. Her excavation results were published in 1999 in the monograph *Nekropol' Nimfeja* (1999), which forms the basis of the present study together with the above-mentioned work by Silant'eva from 1959.

Recent work at Nymphaion has, amongst other things, been concerned with the topography of the city, the fortification system and the buildings of the Hellenistic period.<sup>161</sup> Rescue excavations in the cemetery area have concentrated on the plundered burials – a problem which is unfortunately still a major concern in the region (Avetikov 1997). Furthermore, a combined team of Ukrainian, Russian and Polish scholars has conducted investigations both on the rural territory and in the city of Nymphaion, applying advanced survey methods. This has resulted in the publication of a detailed archaeological map of the area.<sup>162</sup> Another recent and important contribution is the comparative study of the city and its rural territory by Solov'ev (Solov'ev 2002; 2003).<sup>163</sup>

## 5.2 An introduction to the main phases of the city's development

The ancient city of Nymphaion is situated on the Kara-Burun Cape near the modern village of Eltigen, c. 17km from the ancient city of Pantikapaion in

160 For a complete publication of the material and its history, see Vickers 1979; 2002. I am deeply grateful to Professor Vickers for access to this material and for his kind advice and remarks.

161 Sokolova 2003, 762-764, with the most recent extended bibliography; also Scholl 2000 for a bibliography of Nymphaion up to 1999.

162 Scholl & Zin'ko 1999; Wasowicz 2000; Butyagin & Solovyov 2001; Zin'ko 2001, 313-317; 2006.

163 Solov'ev 2003 includes 42 burials excavated in the city cemetery, but unfortunately almost all these burials were plundered either in Antiquity or in modern times and thus fail to meet the criteria of this study. Therefore, they are not included in the database of this study.





Fig. 5.1. *Nymphaion*. View of settlement (photo by Jakob Munk Højte)

modern-day Kerč.<sup>164</sup> (Fig. 5.1) The city is located on a plateau bordered to the east and northeast by the Kerč Strait, to the west and northwest by a shallow ravine, and slanting towards the south into the sandy lowland (Fig. 5.2) (Scholl & Zin'ko 1999, 23; Sokolova 2003, 759; Zin'ko 2006, 290).<sup>165</sup>

The earliest Greek finds suggest a foundation date sometime in the second quarter of the 6<sup>th</sup> century, probably initiated by colonists from Ionia, conceivably Milesians or Samians (Sokolova 2003, 765; also Avram, Hind & Tsetskhladze 2004, 948 for a full chronological presentation).

164 See also Olszaniec 1996; Sokolova 2003, 759-760; Avram, Hind & Tsetskhladze 2004, 948 for accounts of the ancient sources mentioning and describing *Nymphaion*.

165 The GPS coordinates have been measured by Smekalov as 45° degrees 23'67'' (N) and 36° degrees 41'73'' (E) (Smekalov 1999, 366; 2001, 252). The coordinates were also measured in 2004 by J.M. Højte during a tour of the region made by the Danish National Research Foundations' Centre for Black Sea Studies. At the location of the acropolis the measurements were as follows: UTM zone 37. X East 0297474. Y North 5012599. °North 45.23773. °East 36.41967. Height above sea level: 7. (The data are available on the webpage of the Danish National Research Foundations' Centre for Black Sea Studies: <http://lys billed.hum.au.dk/total/gazetteer/gazetteer.htm>.)

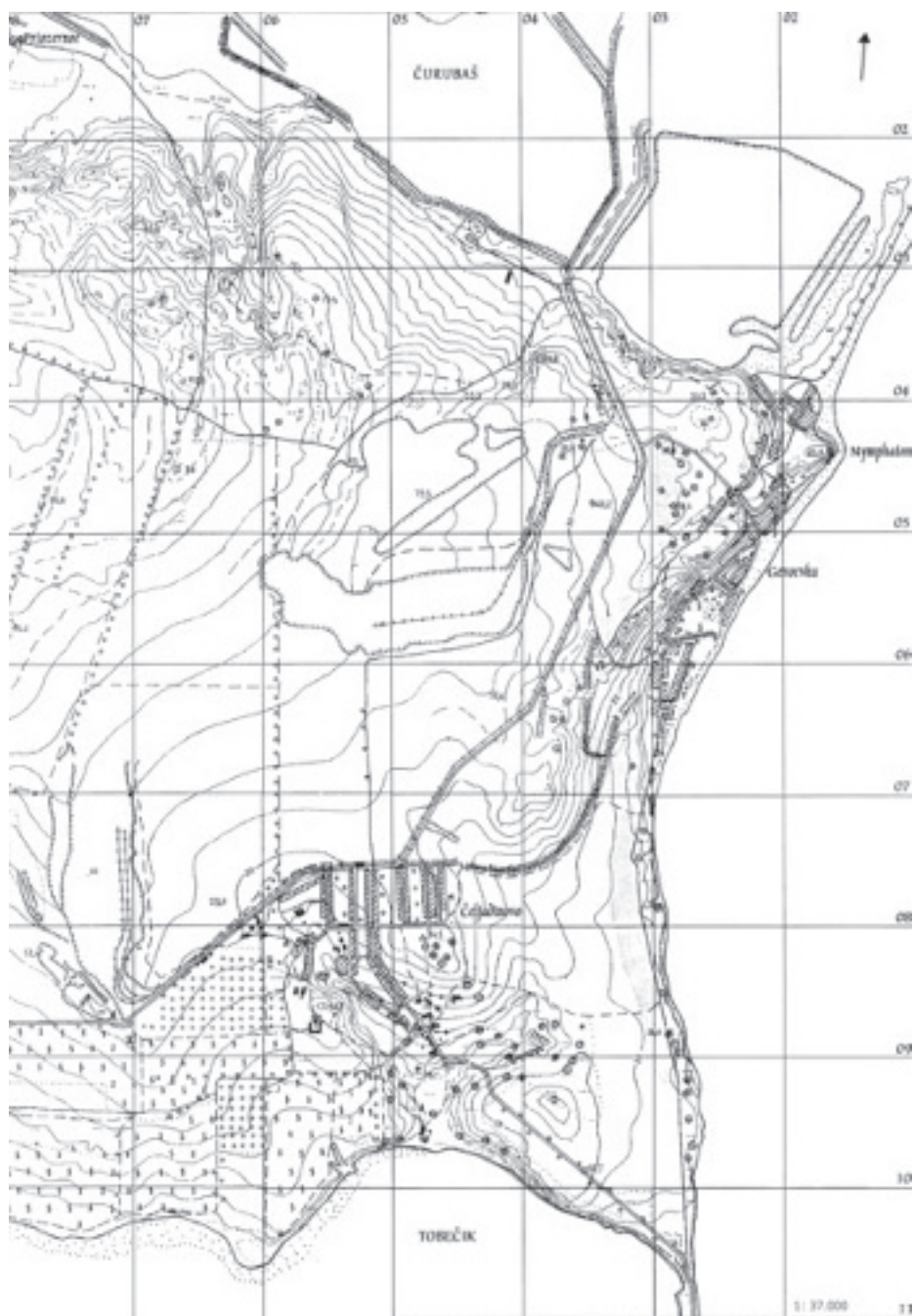


Fig. 5.2. Nymphaion. Map (after Scholl & Zin'ko 1999, map 3; courtesy of V. Zin'ko)

### 5.2.1 The city and its rural territory

From the middle of the 6<sup>th</sup> century, domestic structures of stone began to appear at the Kara-Burun Cape, and towards the end of the century a building complex interpreted as a sanctuary was erected on the acropolis. The sanctuary comprised four buildings of regular and rather large size, along with an entrance paved with slabs of pink stone, and is traditionally referred to as 'The Sanctuary of the Kabires'. Another building complex from the same period or slightly later, also of rectangular shape with a paved courtyard, is thought to have been a sanctuary for Aphrodite (Sokolova 2003, 766-767). Yet another sacral complex from the middle of the 6<sup>th</sup> century is understood to be the Sanctuary of Demeter. The building complex was situated in the northeastern part of the city and seems to have been a tiled building with an entrance adorned with painted terracotta plates. The first building was probably destroyed in a fire as early as the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century (Sokolova 2003, 767; Guldager Bilde 2004a, 3).

The end of the 6<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 5<sup>th</sup> centuries BC were difficult and dangerous times for many of the cities in the northern part of the Black Sea region, not least within the northeastern region.<sup>166</sup> Nymphaion did not escape the trials of this period but resisted joining the Bosporan Kingdom and seemed to find support through membership of the Delian League instead (Sokolova 2003, 768; Avram, Hind & Tsetschladze 2004, 948).<sup>167</sup>

At least the second half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century to the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century appears to have been a period of prosperity for the city, and constructions of both secular and sacral character took place, including a reconstruction of the Sanctuary of Demeter and a large terrace complex on the south slope of the city.

At the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, Nymphaion was incorporated into the Bosporan Kingdom. According to ancient literary sources, this was the result of treasonable activities by a certain Gylon of Ceraeais (Aeschin. 3.171-172; also Dilts 1997). At least from the Athenian point of view (Aeschines) Nymphaion was 'lost to the enemy' and scholars have been eager to link the event with the archaeological record of a massive fire in the city, resulting in the destruction of both domestic and sacral structures, possibly datable within the period 390-360 BC (Sokolova 2003, 770). This does, however, seem rather unconvincing in light of the fact that the Delian League was dissolved in 404/403 and the treason of Gylon and the loss of Nymphaion quite probably had taken place already around c. 410-405 (according to Avram, Hind & Tsetschladze 2004, 948).

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166 The literature on this topic is extensive, but the following represent some of the most recent approaches: Maslennikov 2001, 247; 2005, 158-159; Tolstikov 2003, 721-722; Vinogradov 2008, 14-15.

167 Also Hornblower 2002, 13-18 on the terms and conditions of membership of the Delian League.

Despite the extensive destruction, the city was rapidly rebuilt and a defensive wall was constructed, in great part from the debris. In the same period, a new propylon was built for the temenos. The building was executed in local grey limestone and enough architectural fragments are preserved to reconstruct the Ionian façade. It is dated by the inscription on its architrave, mentioning the Bosporan King Leucon as 'archon of Bosporos and Theodosia and of all the Syndica', to somewhere between 393/392 and 347, depending on the various dates suggested for the reign of Leucon (Sokolova 2003, 771 for references to most recent discussions and bibliography).

Another important building dating presumably from somewhere within the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, is the Temple of Aphrodite/Isis, where more than 8,000 pieces of painted stucco have been found depicting various scenes, most famously a ship with the name Isis painted on it. These maritime scenes have been interpreted as depictions of the strong political ties between the Egyptian royal court and the Bosporan Kingdom. Various dates ranging from the late 4<sup>th</sup> to the 2<sup>nd</sup>-1<sup>st</sup> century have been suggested for the event which may have instigated the painting of the ship (Grač 1987, 87-95; Nowicka 2000, 67-72; Gagen 2001; Sokolova 2003, 773).

The city seems to have prospered, at least in the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, and building activity included both new structures and restorations of the Demeter sanctuary and other sites. Unfortunately, it appears that the sanctuary stood only for a short time, as sometime towards the middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century an earthquake caused massive destruction, not only in Nymphaion but in many other Bosporan cities also (Sokolova 2003, 774).

Throughout history, the rural territory of Nymphaion has principally attracted the attention of scholars for its numerous and rich kurgan burials. From the first identification of the site, investigations and excavations were concentrated on these massive monuments. Thus, until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, little attention was given to the rural settlements, the infrastructure of the rural territory and the relationship between the rural territory and the city (Solov'ev & Zin'ko 1995, 73-74). Systematic investigations into the rural territory of Nymphaion were initiated through the combined Polish-Russian-Ukrainian project in 1992/1993.<sup>168</sup> Other scholars had previously been preoccupied with isolated research topics in the rural territory, but a broader approach to the city and its hinterland remained to be undertaken. This came to be the main aim of the 'Nymphaion Project' (Scholl & Zin'ko 1999, 7).

The rural territory is limited to the north by Lake Čurubaš, to the west by the Ički-Džilga ravine, to the east by the Kerč Strait and to the south by Lake Tobečik (Fig. 5.2) (Zin'ko 2006, 289-290). The first settlements in the rural territory appeared in the last quarter of the 6<sup>th</sup> century, situated relatively close to the city. Among them is the well-dated Geroevka-2, where Ionian pottery

168 Solov'ev & Zin'ko 1995; Wasowicz 1995; 2000; Zin'ko 1997; 2006; Butjagin 1998; Fedoseev & Zin'ko 1998; Nawotka 1999; Scholl & Zin'ko 1999.



from the late 6<sup>th</sup> century has been found (Zin'ko 1997; 2006, 292-293; Scholl & Zin'ko 1999, 44-47). In the 5<sup>th</sup> century the rural territory seems to have expanded towards the west and south and is estimated to have encompassed more than 7 x 7km. Nine settlements dating to the 5<sup>th</sup> century have been located here, amongst them a large building complex with four towers and an inner courtyard measuring 50 x 50m (Zin'ko 2006, 295). On the border of the rural territory there was a system of settlements, with a distance of c. 1-2km between them. These settlements were connected with each other and with the city by way of several pathways, detectable in the landscape and often marked by kurgan burials (Scholl & Zin'ko 1999, 104-106; Smekalova & Smekalov 2006, 221; Zin'ko 2006, 295).

In Zin'ko's view, the incorporation of Nymphaion into the Bosporan Kingdom had a positive effect on the development of both the city and its rural hinterland. Strata from the 4<sup>th</sup> century have been found at all known rural settlements and 10 new settlements appeared centrally in the rural territory. These new complexes were of a considerable size, with numerous rooms and a central courtyard. It has been suggested that they could reveal a new form of land ownership and, furthermore, the remaining part of the 4<sup>th</sup> century sees several other large and even fortified farmsteads flourish (Zin'ko 2006, 296-297). This period of prosperity continues until the early 3<sup>rd</sup> century when the rural territory suffered greatly and the majority of the settlements were destroyed.

The cemeteries investigated in the rural territory are mainly kurgan clusters, but flat-ground cemeteries were also located. The majority of the sites have been extensively plundered and the investigations and few excavations have been repeatedly faced with disturbed contexts and empty graves (Scholl & Zin'ko 1999, 70-93). These circumstances make comparison between the burials of the city and those of the rural territory rather difficult and the main focus of this work will therefore concentrate on the intact and well-published city burials.

### 5.2.2 The cemetery

The cemetery of Nymphaion is situated to the south, west and northwest of the city (Fig. 5.3). The landscape is dominated by the large kurgans placed on the natural ridges surrounding the city. The kurgans are mainly located to the south of the city on the hills along the shore of the Kerč Strait and to the northwest on the steppe lands along Lake Čurubaš (Scholl & Zin'ko 1999, 70). When approaching the site today, one is struck by the sheer size and majestic appearance of the burial mounds and the impact they still make on the landscape and on people in general, be they visitors or residents. The words of Neal Ascherson, in his highly poetic and very well-written book on the history of the Black Sea, became very meaningful to me when I first visited



Fig. 5.3.  
Nymphaion. Map  
with supposed  
extent of the cem-  
etery indicated by  
grey shading (after  
Scholl & Zin'ko  
1999, map 2; cour-  
tesy of V. Zin'ko)

### Nymphaion:

*..looking at the burial mounds notching the infinite straight skylines, I realised how kurgans concentrate meaning. In a featureless place, they are the only features. Once they have been raised, it becomes inevitable that any act with human significance will be done on them, under them or around them. To lay a dead body anywhere else on the steppe would be an abandonment, a burial at sea (Ascherson 1995, 126).*

A journey through the northern Black Sea region will reveal a number of ancient kurgans now in use as modern village cemeteries – a fine example of the impact these monuments still have on the sacred conscience of the people living in the region (Fig. 5.4).

Apart from the clearly visible kurgans, the cemetery of Nymphaion also consists of flat-ground burials. Furthermore, an 'invisible' burial custom seems to have been the rite of exposure, according to which the deceased was laid



Fig. 5.4. *Snežnoe, western Crimea. A kurgan in use as a modern cemetery (photo by Trine Madsen)*

out for the wild animals and birds to ravage before the burial proper. The study of skeletal material has revealed the practice of this custom (Sokolova 2003, 778-779) and Solov'ev (2003, 120) believes this to be the case in burials 36 and 42 of his material.<sup>169</sup>

Excavations in the cemetery are still being conducted today, revealing burials from around the middle of the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC until the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD (Grač 1999, 25-31; Sokolova 2003, 777).

The state of the publications unfortunately does not permit any detailed analysis of the topography of the cemetery and leaves me very reluctant to offer suggestions on the horizontal and, for that matter, vertical stratigraphy of the cemetery in the period in question here. However, it is estimated that the area of the cemetery, from all periods in use, occupies c. 60 hectares (Scholl & Zin'ko 1999, 70). (Fig. 5.3).

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<sup>169</sup> Some scholars suggest that the custom has its roots amongst the nomads of the steppe and traces of the practice have been used for ethnic differentiation of the burial material (so, for example, Sokolova 2003, 779).



*Previous research on the burial material*

Before turning to the analysis of the material a few critical words will be offered on the previous research and interpretations of the Nymphaion graves, primarily put forward by Silant'eva (1959) and Grač (1999).

Silant'eva's publication from 1959 is an assessment of previously published material from some of the earliest excavations in Nymphaion. Her publication contains a thorough description and, for her time, a rather advanced treatment of the cemetery, the grave types and finds. Moreover, a valuable and detailed catalogue is included along with a text section. The most relevant part of the work for this study is her attempt to interpret the kurgans of the 5<sup>th</sup> century as belonging to the local Scythian élite (Hellenized barbarians). Therefore, her work on the kurgans and her interpretations of them will play a central part in my assessment of this material.

The publication by Grač from 1999 presents some 277 tombs excavated by the author. The publication has a very good and detailed catalogue and relatively useful illustrations – some of better quality and accuracy than others. The catalogue is clearly the strong point of the publication as the text part comprises only a very short introduction to the research history of the cemetery, a short presentation of different standpoints in the debate on the ethnic composition of the population and a rather summarized presentation of the grave types and finds. The work would truly have benefited from a detailed analysis and an attempt to interpret the burials, which could have led to more than the summarized conclusions presented in the short introduction.

### 5.3 Analyses of the material

#### 5.3.1 Graves

The study comprises 87 graves from Nymphaion. Fig. 5.5 shows the distribution of graves by percentage within the different chronological phases. It must be noted that the percentage of graves from Phase 1 (c. 550-520) is very small (3.4 % = 3 graves), and thus these cannot form the basis of any statistically significant conclusions. As shown in the figure, the highest percentage of graves comes from Phase 4 (c. 399-270) (48.3 % = 42 graves), about a third belong to Phase 3 (c. 479-400) (32.2 % = 28 graves), whereas graves belonging to Phase 2 (c. 519-480) constitute 16.1 % (14 graves). As in previous chapters the discrepancy between the different phases will be taken into consideration in the comparative analyses.

As we shall see below kurgans only occur in the material of Phase 3 and Phase 4. In a similar manner to previous analyses they will mainly be dealt with separately from the flat-ground burials but are on occasions integrated for comparative purposes where relevant.

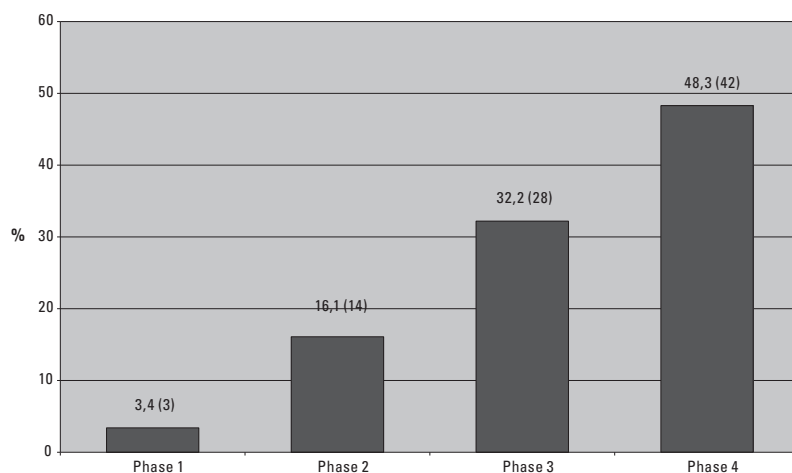


Fig. 5.5. *Nymphaion*. The distribution of graves within the chronological phases as percentages (actual numbers are presented in parentheses)

### Phase 1 (c. 550-520)

Although few in number, a presentation and description of the graves of Phase 1 is still appropriate here.<sup>170</sup>

#### *Grave types and treatment of the deceased*

The graves of Phase 1 are all simple pit burials; two are simple pit burials dug into the soil, whilst one is a pit burial dug into the bedrock. All the graves contained inhumations. One had the skeleton placed in a crouched position (Grave I148), while the other skeletons were placed in supine positions with the hands along the body (Grave I59 and I71). In one instance (Grave I59) traces of wood were found under the deceased and four shallow holes have been noted in each corner of the grave. Presumably these are the remains of a wooden bier, also known from other burials in the *Nymphaion* cemetery of the 6<sup>th</sup> century (Grač 1999, 47-48, 205, Burial A59).

#### *Orientation*

The deceased were placed with their heads to the northeast or east for the two supine burials, whereas the crouched burial was oriented with the head to the southeast. These orientations correspond quite well with the general orientations of contemporary burials from, for example, *Olbia* (see this volume, Chapter 2).

<sup>170</sup> All the graves in Phase 1 are published in Grač 1999.

*Gender and age*

All the skeletons in the graves from Phase 1 have been anthropologically determined as male. The age was estimated to c. 35 years for the deceased in Grave I59 and 25-30 years for I148, while the age of the deceased in Grave I71 is much less specific and thus he is assumed to have been an 'elderly' man.

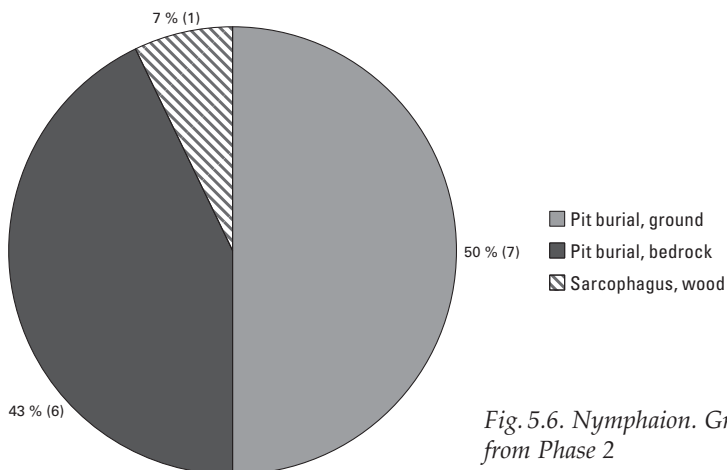
The number of grave goods in the graves is rather modest. Grave I71 contained one item, whilst Grave 59 contained two. Grave I148 with the crouched skeleton was void of grave goods.

**Phase 2 (c. 519-480)**

The graves of Phase 2 constitute 16.1 % of the graves from Nymphaion (Fig. 5.5).<sup>171</sup>

*Grave types and treatment of the deceased*

The grave types from Phase 2 are shown in Fig. 5.6. As seen in the figure, 50 % (= 7) are simple pit burials dug into the ground, whereas 43 % (= 6) are pit burials dug into the bedrock. There is a single example of a burial in a wooden sarcophagus (Grave I4[G]). All graves contained inhumations with the deceased placed in supine positions; the majority with their hands placed alongside the body. A single burial had the hands placed on the hips (Grave I78), while Grave I114 had the deceased placed with the lower part of the legs crossed. This pattern is much the same as previously observed in contemporary graves from Olbia. Similar to Phase 1, traces of wood from coffins or biers have been found, as well as four shallow holes in each corner of the grave (I114 and I60).



*Fig. 5.6. Nymphaion. Grave types from Phase 2*

<sup>171</sup> All the graves in Phase 2 are published in Grač 1999.

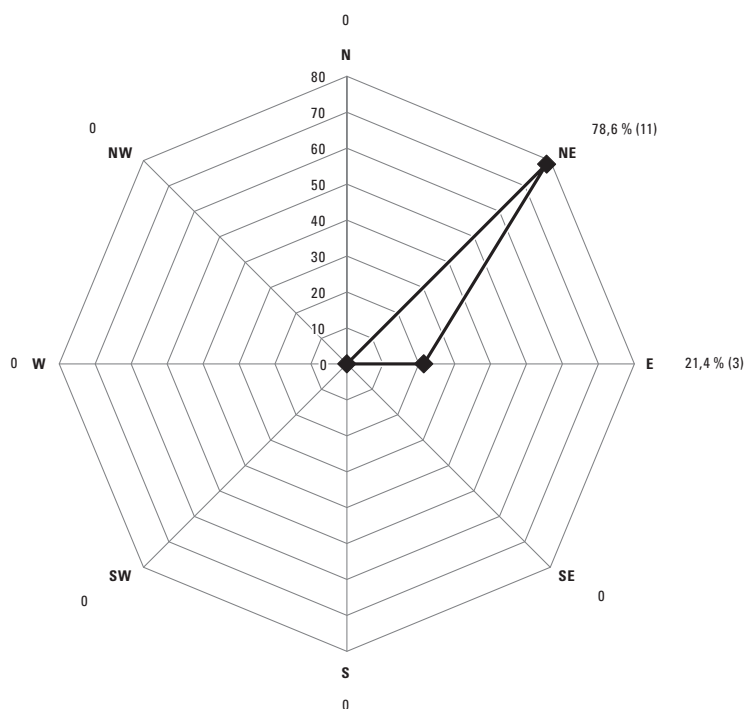


Fig. 5.7. *Nymphaion*. Orientations of graves from Phase 2

### *Orientation*

The orientations of the deceased are very homogeneous in Phase 2: as three skeletons were found with the head towards the east and 11 with the head towards the northeast (Fig. 5.7).

### *Gender and age*

All the skeletons have been anthropologically gender determined: nine (= 64 %) were determined as male, four (= 29 %) were determined as female and one was so poorly preserved that the determination of gender was not possible. Both males and females were all presumed to be adults between c. 30-55 years old, whereas the poorly-preserved skeleton of Grave I105 is thought to belong to a child.

The results of a database query on the relationship between grave type and gender show that all the pit burials in bedrock belong to males. The females were buried in simple pits in the ground, apart from one woman, who was buried in the wooden sarcophagus of Grave I4(G). Of the male group, six individuals were buried in pit graves in the bedrock, whereas only three were buried in simple pits in the ground. Thus, this might suggest that burial in pits dug into the bedrock could have been a custom exclusively preserved for males in this period, although the numbers are low for firm statistical purposes.

As for grave goods, there does not seem to be any relation between the gender of the deceased and the number of grave goods. The female graves contained between nought and seven items and the male graves between one and eight pieces. The presumed child burial contained two items.

The NOT-values for the male graves lie between one and seven with the majority of the values between two and three. The NOT-values for the female graves give a more varied picture as half of the graves have values between nought and one, and the other half have values between six and seven. The results for the female graves are interesting for two reasons: they show either very low numbers of grave goods with limited variation; or rather high numbers of grave goods with very varied ranges of items. It is, however, important to keep in mind that the female burials are represented by a rather low number of graves (four) and thus may not be a fully valid basis for general interpretations and conclusions.

For both Phase 1 and 2 the absence of child burials is striking, especially when compared to the contemporary burials from Olbia where the number of child burials in both simple pits and, not the least, the *enchytrismoi* constituted a much higher percentage of the material. Explanations for this phenomenon could perhaps be found in biases in the available material, 'invisible' grave types or the non-burial for children, or simply a lack of localization of a separate area for child burials similar to the one identified in Olbia.

### Phase 3 (c. 479-400)

The graves of Phase 3 constitute 32.2 % (= 28) of the graves from Nymphaion (Fig. 5.5).<sup>172</sup>

#### *Grave types and treatment of the deceased*

The grave types within the phase are depicted in Fig. 5.8. It is interesting to note the more varied picture compared to the two previous phases, where only the simple pit burial in the ground or in bedrock and sarcophagi existed. Even though the numbers are relatively low, new grave types occur in this period, such as *enchytrismos* (in krater) and cist grave. The simple pit burial is still popular; both in the ground and dug into the bedrock.

The large number of burials for which the grave type is not stated mainly relate to the republication of material from the early years of investigations in Nymphaion by Silant'eva, originally published in OAK in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is, however, very likely that the majority of these burials are simple pit burials as other more 'exotic' grave types are often specifically mentioned when they occur.

The new feature is of course the kurgan burials, which here constitute 25 % (= 7) of the graves from Phase 3. They will be treated in further detail below.

The practice of inhumation still dominates, with 71 % of the burials involv-

<sup>172</sup> The graves from Phase 3 are published in Silant'eva 1959 and Grač 1999.

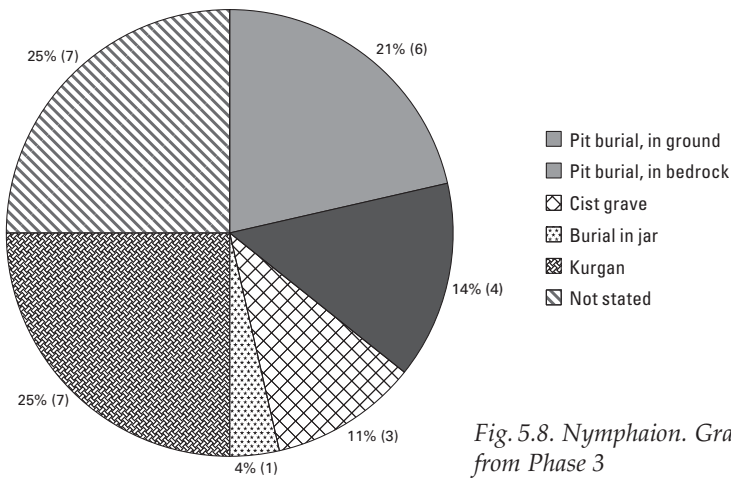


Fig. 5.8. *Nymphaion*. Grave types from Phase 3

ing this particular rite. For the first time we see cremation practised, albeit only in a single instance. The cremation (K2) was placed in an Attic red-figured krater and had no grave goods. The krater was found buried c. 90cm under ground and was encircled by smaller stones (Silan'teva 1959, 97).

In the case of the inhumations, the deceased were placed on their backs in supine positions with the hands along the body. In two instances traces of wooden coffins have been found (Graves I11(G) and K49) and in Grave I1(V) the deceased had been placed on a wooden bier similar to the practice seen in previous phases. Furthermore, this grave had the skeleton placed on a layer of seaweed<sup>173</sup> and some fine rounded stones were placed under the head. Seaweed in the bottom of the grave is also observed in another grave from Phase 3 (I11[V]) as well as in other graves from *Nymphaion*, some even dating well into the Roman period (Zhizhina 2001, 252).

### *Orientation*

The orientation of the deceased is, in the majority of the graves, with the skull towards the southeast, northeast or east. It should be noted that the number of graves where orientation is stated amount to nine in total; a rather low number which calls for some caution with regards to interpretations. A single grave has the deceased oriented towards the southwest and another towards the northwest (I1(V) and I208) (Fig. 5.9). Interestingly, both these graves contained child burials of younger children. Another two graves from Phase 3 (I11(G) and I83) contained the burials of older children of c. 13 years of age and these were oriented southeast and east, like the majority of the adult graves. Might this material, though meagre, reflect a connection between the

173 Presumably eel grass used in a similar manner as observed in the burials from Olbia and Panskoe I.

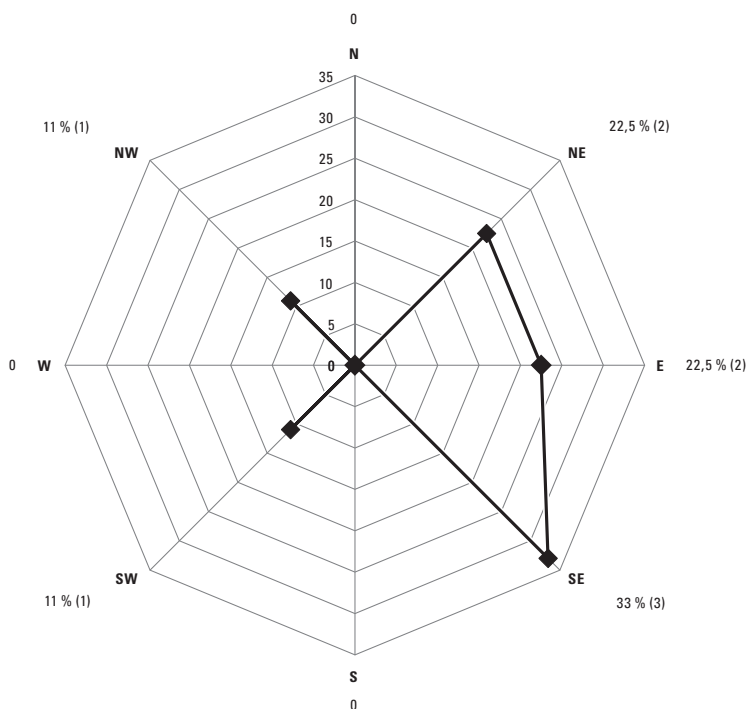


Fig. 5.9. *Nymphaion*. Orientations of graves from Phase 3

orientation of the grave and the age of the deceased, thus indicating an age-related differentiation towards the burials of smaller children?<sup>174</sup> Regrettably, similar analyses from the previous case-study localities have not yielded any conclusive results to further support this vague assumption.

#### *Gender and age*

Only six graves in Phase 3 have been anthropologically gender determined. Of these two were male and four female. The male burials were a child of c. seven years and an older child of c. 13 years. The female burials all contained skeletons of adults estimated to be 25, 35, 40 and 55 years of age. In total, six graves belonged to assumed child burials, another four belonged to assumed adult burials, whilst the remaining graves had no information on age.

The two male burials (Graves I1[V] and I11[G]) of children aged seven and 13 are both simple pit burials. One was dug out of the bedrock with the skeleton placed on a wooden bier and seaweed and stones under the head, whereas the other burial contained the remains of a wooden coffin. The female

<sup>174</sup> Two other graves in Phase 3 are noted as possible child burials (K72 and K82), but unfortunately the orientations of the deceased are not stated in the publication and therefore they cannot contribute to this particular discourse.



burials were also all simple pit graves, two of them dug out of the bedrock (Graves I177 and I57). In one instance (Grave I11[V]) a young woman was placed on a layer of seaweed.

As there are no adult males in the sexed graves it is difficult to determine whether there are any patterns with regards to grave types and gender. However, we may conclude that the possible pattern of the previous Phase 2, where no women were buried in pit graves dug out of bedrock, is no longer valid in Phase 3.

The results of a database query on the relationship between age and the numbers of grave goods and the NOT-values show that the child burials contained between 1 and 11 grave goods, though the majority of the graves were equipped with just one to three items. The NOT-values lie between one and six, and in general the range of the grave goods in the child burials was rather broad. The adult females had between nought and nine items with the majority at the lower end of between nought and four. The NOT-values range from nought to six; and all graves had a rather broad range of grave good types. Unfortunately, the total number of age determined graves is low (six children + four females), hence some caution is demanded as to whether they can form the basis of general conclusions and interpretations.

#### *Grave types and the number of grave goods*

As for the relationship between grave types and the numbers of grave goods and NOT-values, the burials in simple pit graves dug out of bedrock have between two and eleven items of grave goods, the high number clearly being an exception here. The NOT-values range from two to six with a tendency towards great variation amongst the object types. This pattern seems to be very similar for the simple pit burials in the ground. The cremation in the krater had no grave goods, whilst the cist graves provide a more interesting picture. Here the number of grave goods is rather low in two cases (Grave K61, one item and Grave K60, two items), but very high in the last case (Grave K50, 18 items). The NOT-value, however, is not very high in this latter grave (only five) as the majority of the grave goods are terracottas. Thus, it seems that the cist grave type is not confined to having either very well-equipped assemblages of grave goods or very poorly-equipped ones.

#### *Kurgan burials*

The kurgan burials constitute 25 % (= 7) of the grave types in Phase 3 (Fig. 5.8). The kurgans occur in the material for the first time in this period and the datable ceramics from the burials seem to suggest a date towards the middle of the 5<sup>th</sup> century for the introduction of this 'new' grave type. Compared with other localities in the Crimea it is interesting to see that the kurgans of Nymphaion seem so relatively well established as a grave type already from the middle of the 5<sup>th</sup> century. The localities from the northwestern Crimea dealt with previously in this study all feature kurgan cemeteries which

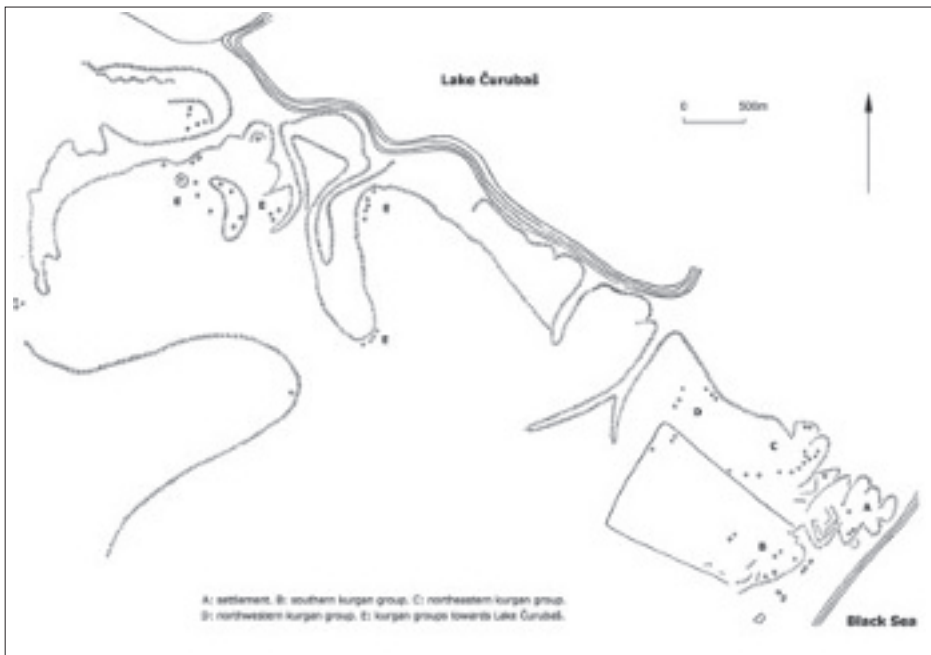


Fig. 5.10. *Nymphaion*. Locations of the kurgan groups (modified after Silant'eva 1959, fig. 1)

are only fully established during the 4<sup>th</sup> century (Kerkinitis, Kalos Limen and Panskoe I). Also in nearby Pantikapaion kurgan burials are mainly a phenomenon of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, which leaves *Nymphaion* as unique in this early development.

All the kurgan burials included in this study have been published by Silant'eva, and information on their size and general measurements is unfortunately rather sparse. The specification of the topographical situation of the kurgans is also rather vague as well, and the most detailed descriptions place kurgans K114 and K115 near Lake Burun and K1 on the Erokhin Estate. Meanwhile, Fig. 5.10 illustrates quite well the problematic quality of the available map material. Thus, the state of information does not at this stage allow for interpretations of the topographical situation, the internal relation of the kurgans or their relation with the flat-ground cemetery area.<sup>175</sup>

#### *Grave types and treatment of the deceased*

The burials within the kurgans can be divided into two distinct groups. The first group is characterized by a rather simple cremation placed in a ceramic container, in one instance an Attic red-figured hydria closed with an amphora

<sup>175</sup> See also Silant'eva 1959, 11-12 on the state of the information from the old reports and the substantial plundering of the kurgans.

foot (kurgan K1) and in another instance an unspecified amphora also closed with an amphora foot (kurgan K4). The cremations are not equipped with grave goods, apart from a fragmented, presumed Attic red-figured krater in the fill above K1. The cremation of K1 is set in a deepening covered with stone slabs. Both cremation burials are dated around the middle of the 5<sup>th</sup> century on the basis of the ceramic containers. These cremations are quite similar to the cremations which were encountered in the material from Kerkititis and Kalos Limen, albeit being almost a century earlier.

The second group of kurgan burials is characterized by inhumations in cist graves constructed with stone slabs (kurgans K23, K113, K114, and K115).<sup>176</sup> The slabs are made from limestone, presumably of local origin. The graves are rather large, measuring 3.2m, 2.5m and 2.3m in length and 1.7m, 1.25m and 1.0m in width.

The deceased were placed in wooden sarcophagi, and in kurgan K113 the sarcophagus was decorated with incrustations (Silant'eva 1959, 104). Decorated sarcophagi seem to have been quite popular in Nymphaion and other Bosporan cities, and finds from Nymphaion date from the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC into the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.<sup>177</sup> Finds of wooden sarcophagi fragments and plaster and bone appliquéés have frequently been found in Olbia as well (Skudnova 1988, 7-9) and the Archaeological Museum in Odessa displays a marvellously well-preserved sarcophagus which is reported to be a find from Olbia. Later examples from Pantikapaion take the elaboration of the decorations even further with inlays of gold and semi-precious stones (see also below this chapter).

### *Orientation*

All the kurgan burials have the deceased placed with the head to the east, much in line with the general orientation of the contemporary flat-ground burials.

### *Gender and age*

Unfortunately none of the kurgan burials in the material have been determined as to gender or age of the deceased, and therefore no analysis can be made on the relation between gender/age and kurgan burials in this phase.

### *Grave types and the number of grave goods*

The numbers of grave goods in the inhumation burials are rather high, ranging from nine to 21, with the majority of the burials displaying between 17 and

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176 Albeit being plundered, Kurgan K118 has been included in the database and mentioned in the text because of the interesting feature of the burial of five horses. However, in accordance with the guidelines of this study the data has been excluded from the general analyses in order not to bias the conclusions.

177 Jijina 1998; Baranova, Chekhova & Krachun 2001; Sheinina 2001; Smolyanitskaya, Slavosheskaya & Svetlichnaya 2001; Zhizhina 2001, 249.

21 items. This seems to correspond with one of the previously mentioned cist burials from the flat-ground cemetery, where this particular type also scored rather high with regards to the number of grave goods. However, unlike the cist burial from the flat-ground cemetery, the kurgan cists also feature high NOT-values. In the kurgan burials the NOT-values thus range from eight to 18, with the majority of the NOT-values at the high end of the scale within the range of 14 to 18. This means that the kurgans in general are well-equipped with grave goods and that these assemblages of grave goods are significantly more varied than the deposits from the flat-ground burials.

#### *Outside deposits*

Like so many of the kurgans already examined in the previous chapters, the kurgans of Phase 3 have outside deposits mainly consisting of unspecified burnt animal bones and ceramics, which in all probability are remains from funerary feasts or post-funerary sacrifices. However, on top of the burial in kurgan K113, a mass burial of eight horses was found alongside two terracotta satyrs, fragments from a red-figured krater (perhaps a grave marker or a libation vessel) and three ceramic jars, one of which contained burnt animal bones. In another location in the kurgan, two additional human burials were found, but without grave goods to date them and/or relate them to the main burial. Kurgan K118 contained a burial of five horses while a pit with the skeletons of several horses was found near the burial in kurgan K114. Furthermore, an additional cist grave came to light in kurgan 114, but without any grave goods, as it had been plundered.

Naturally, it is difficult to establish the relationship between the central burials and the additional burials, especially when these are without grave goods or have been plundered. However, we may speculate whether social relations such as family ties could be the motivating factor behind some of the secondary graves, as could perhaps other social relations such as slave/slave owner ties. We may also here refer to the parallels from the tumuli of Istros examined above in Chapter 2.

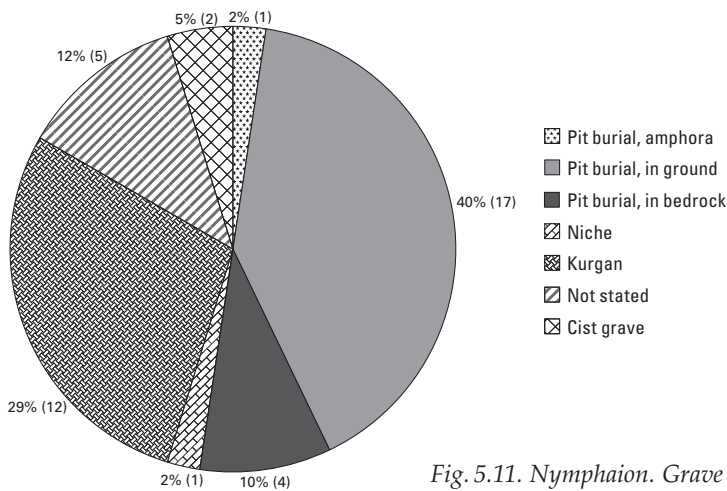
#### **Phase 4 (c. 399-270)**

The graves of Phase 4 constitute 48.3 % (= 42) of the graves from Nymphaion included in this study (Fig. 5.5).<sup>178</sup>

#### *Grave types and treatment of the deceased*

The different grave types of the phase are depicted in Fig. 5.11. Simple pit burials dug in the ground still constitute the most popular grave type (40 % = 17), whereas the pit burial cut from the bedrock seems to be decreasing in popularity (10 % = 4) compared with the previous phases. There is a double cremation in a simple pit, a niche tomb and two cist graves, but the other major grave type

<sup>178</sup> The graves from Phase 4 are published in Silant'eva 1959 and Grač 1999.



*Fig. 5.11. Nymphaion. Grave types from Phase 4*

within the phase apart from the pit burial, is the kurgan. Compared with the previous phase the burials in kurgans have increased slightly and now constitute 29 % (= 12). We shall return to the kurgans in more detail below.

Inhumation is still by far the most popular rite, whilst cremation, on the other hand, is represented by only one burial.

The cremation was a double burial in two amphoras orientated north-south. The amphoras are of East Greek and north Greek manufacture, one being from Chios the other from Mende.<sup>179</sup> They are dated rather broadly by Grač to the 4<sup>th</sup> century, but a more specific date seems to place the Chian amphora in the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century and the Mendean one in the third quarter of the same century (Grač 1999, 88).<sup>180</sup> The amphora cremations had no grave goods and no outside deposits are reported in the publication. They were found in the so-called Sector B of the cemetery area. Here a small number of cremations were found placed c. 1.0-1.2m below the surface and mainly dating to the Hellenistic period. The double burial in the amphoras was the only burial which provided solid datable material, since only one other piece of ceramic was found apart from the amphoras, namely a small, rather simple cup of red clay (Grač 1999, 88-89, 184).

The Sector B burials seem to be placed in a group, which could suggest that they were linked, possibly by social status such as, for example, family ties. However, no evidence regarding gender and age of the burials in this location is available.

<sup>179</sup> See also Butyagin & Solovyov 2001, 279-280 for similar cremation burials from the rural territory.

<sup>180</sup> The more specific dates are kindly provided by Mark Lawall, University of Manitoba, personal communication, summer 2005.

In the case of the inhumation burials, 21 have information on the position of the deceased. The majority of the bodies had been placed in a supine position and most of them had their hands placed along the sides of the body. One burial (Grave I134) had the body of a c. 15-year-old boy placed on the right side with his leg bent, while another burial of a female of c. 20 years of age (Grave I153) had the body placed in a regular crouched position. Graves I135 and I159 both contained the skeletons of adult females. The first had been placed on her back, with her hands along the sides of the body and her legs spread to each side – in the so-called rider's position.<sup>181</sup> The latter was also placed on her back but her hands had been placed in front of her on the pelvis and the legs were likewise spread to each side in the 'rider's position'. The often assumed idea that deviating positions may reflect either ethnic or social connotations (or both – in this case Scythian ethnicity and/or slave status) is, however, difficult to prove here.<sup>182</sup> Neither the layout of the grave nor the grave goods point in the direction of any specific markers of Scythian ethnicity or slave status: both burials are common, simple pits dug out of the bedrock. Grave I159 contained an iron *fibula* and some fragments of a black-glossed kantharos were found in the fill, whilst Grave I135 contained a miniature net pattern lekythos, an Attic red-figured pyxis with a shell on the lid and an unidentified iron object. None of these objects, the layouts of the graves or, for that matter, any combination of these features, can be said with certainty to indicate specific Greek or nomadic cultural affiliations in any particular way. The presence of grave goods with both burials, although not high in number, also renders the interpretation of the buried individuals as belonging to a lower social class problematic, since both burials are associated with metal and fineware ceramics. Thus, if any particular social status or ethnicity was displayed in these burials, it is of

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181 The so-called 'rider's position' is commonly thought to be a deviation from the crouched position and has been treated as such in quite a few studies of local nomadic burial customs related to the coastal cemeteries in the northern Black Sea area (see, for example, Kapošina 1941; Maslennikov 1978; Stojanov 2002; Sudarev 2004). It has been suggested that this peculiar position can be explained by the original position of the deceased in a coffin or pit with cover being on their back with their legs bent towards the pelvis and abdomen and possibly held in place with a piece of string. The decay of the string and the body then eventually leads to the legs falling apart to each side. However, it seems just as likely, if not even more so, that the legs would fall to the same side had they been tied together initially. Moreover, it seems unlikely to me that simple pit burials in the ground would produce such neatly laid out skeletons had they been in a crouched position originally and fallen randomly during decay. Furthermore, the original position should be more intact in undisturbed pit burials since the soil would presumably prevent the body parts from ending up very far from their original position.

182 In general, see, for example, Carter 1998, 59; Shepherd 2005, 120-123 on ethnic and/or social connotations in crouched burials.



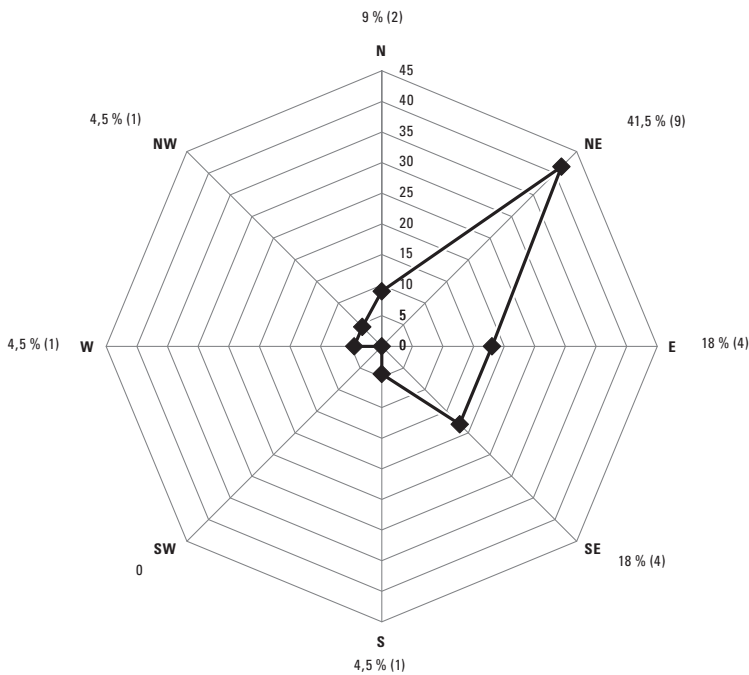


Fig. 5.12. *Nymphaion*. Orientations of graves from Phase 4

a more complex nature than can immediately be grasped by analysing the archaeological remains.

Returning to the general treatment of the graves from Phase 4, only in one instance have remains from a wooden coffin been preserved (Grave K107) and, in contrast to the previous phases, no other observations are made of wooden biers, beddings or small stones placed under the deceased. It would seem that these features have either decreased in popularity or are simply by coincidence not represented among the data.

#### *Orientation*

Like previous burials, the majority of the deceased are oriented with the heads towards the east, northeast or southeast (Fig. 5.12). Twenty two graves in total have their orientation stated, whereas no information has been provided for the remaining graves (eight in total).

#### *Gender and age*

The skeletons of the burials are generally rather poorly preserved, but it has been possible to determine both the age and gender of quite a few skeletons. Interestingly, it seems that no particular order was applied as to the orientation of the deceased in relation to age and/or gender. The possible special treatment of the child graves in Phase 3 regarding orientation can thus not be detected in the material of Phase 4.



Eleven burials have been anthropologically sexed and the material includes nine female and two male burials. Furthermore, nine child burials have been age determined. Regarding these nine child burials, the general indication is that the skeletons are badly preserved. In one instance (grave I149) all that remains of the deceased is the bottom part of the jaw with teeth.<sup>183</sup> Because of the poor state of preservation none of the child burials have been sexed. All the child burials are pit burials in the ground, with the exception of one instance cut out from the bedrock, which seems to suggest that the practice of burying children in *enchytrismoi* may not have enjoyed the same popularity in Nymphaion as it did in so many of the other locations of the northwestern Crimea (Kerkinitis, Kalso Limen, Chersonesos and Panskoe I or in the Bosporan Kingdom (see below this chapter), as well as in the earlier material from Olbia and the west Pontic localities). Keeping in mind the example of the separate child and teenager areas in the cemetery of Olbia, another possibility is of course that child *enchytrismoi* from Nymphaion were restricted to a different location within the cemetery which has yet to be localized.

The results of a database query on the relationship between the number of grave goods and child burials show that the child burials contained between nought and seven items, with the average number of grave goods ranging between two and four. In the studies material there is thus no significant pattern to the numbers of grave goods placed in child graves. The NOT-values in the child graves range from nought to six, giving a rather varied picture concerning the types of grave goods. Any potential tendencies towards fewer or less varied grave goods in child graves can hence not be confirmed.

Three burials fall within the age group of sub-adults. Two of the burials are sexed as male (I130 and I134), whereas the last one is identified as female (I153). The burials were all placed in pit graves either dug in the ground or cut from the bedrock. Interestingly enough, two of them were placed in a crouched position, while the last one (I130) was placed on its back with the hands along the sides. The two burials of teenagers in crouched positions are the only ones in all the Phase 4 burials to be identified in such a position. It is tempting to suggest a connection between the position of the deceased and the age, but the material is probably not statistically significant enough to encourage such speculation.

In conclusion, as regards the analysis of the burials of children and teenagers in Phase 4, it is not possible to distinguish the child graves from the burials of teenagers or adults in any of the above-mentioned respects, and it appears that there are no clearly visible borders between children and teenagers and adults readily expressed in the burial customs.

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183 Regrettably, the state of publication makes it difficult to determine whether this would be a deposition of a skull similar to the practice observed in the previous chapter on the material from Panskoe I.

The results of a database query on the relationship between female burials and grave type shows that all females were buried in simple pit graves, three in pits dug out of the bedrock, four in pits in the ground and two in pits where it has not been stated whether the pit was dug from the soil or bedrock. The numbers of objects range from nought to six, but in general the number of grave goods lies between nought and three and is thus rather low. The NOT-values for the female burials range between nought and four, with the majority of burials falling within the lower range of the scale with nought to two object types per grave.

Among the female burials one grave in particular is worth studying in more detail. Grave I125, a female of c. 35 years of age, very interestingly had a large stone placed over her breast, perhaps in order to keep the deceased in the grave once the funeral was over. The practice of binding or restraining the dead, either literally or by curse tablets (*defixiones*) is well known in the Greek world and has a particularly well-defined place in the northern Black Sea region since a substantial amount of lead curse tablets have been found in Olbia dating from as early as the 5<sup>th</sup> century onwards (Audollent 1904, nos. 88-89; Jordan 1985, 195-196; 2000, 29-30; Faraone & Obbink 1991, 3-10).<sup>184</sup> It seems that the powerful practice of binding the deceased, at least through curses, was often aimed at younger persons, who had died prematurely, persons who had not received the proper funerary rites, persons who had died a violent or unusual death and therefore could not find rest, or persons with whom one had an unsettled juridical matter (Garland 1985, 6-7; Flint, Luck & Ogden 1999, 22). The practice here could suggest one of these aspects, but it is of course also possible that this particular deceased female was believed to possess magical or religious powers of some sort. The grave goods of I125 are also highly interesting as they seem to be of a rather peculiar kind. Inside the grave a blue glass pendant, in the shape of a *phallos*, was found, presumably of east Mediterranean or Egyptian origin. This fertility symbol could have been a personal possession of this young woman or was perhaps placed in the grave as a marker of age and/or social status such as 'unmarried' or 'without children'. Another possible interpretation of the *phallos* is also connected with the world of magic as the *phallos* is known to have apotropaic connotations in other 'magical' contexts (Flint, Luck & Ogden 1999, 73). Another puzzling piece of equipment also found inside the grave, is an iron horse cheek piece. As was also observed in the previous chapter on Panskoe I, weapons and horse equipment are not uncommon in female burials of the northern Black Sea region, but usually they constitute a more complete 'set' of weapons with arrowheads, harness, bridle and so on, and are primarily confined to kurgan burials.<sup>185</sup> The single piece of horse equipment in this particular female burial

184 See also Vinogradov 1994b, 103-111; Tochtas'ev 2007, 48-49.

185 Sorokina 1957, 52-53; Melyukova 1995, 43 on arrowheads in female burials; also Archibald 1998 on weaponry in female burials from Thrace.

is thus more difficult to interpret. It could, of course, be understood as a *pars pro toto* gesture referring to a complete set of horse equipment. It could perhaps refer to an actual position as horse owner or rider in real life (we may remember the Ambatias *stele* from Kerkinitis), or it could simply be a reference to the deceased's social status as a woman married to a wealthy man or from a wealthy family who owned horses.

Furthermore, the fill of the grave yielded several fragments of amphoras of Thassian and Chian manufacture as well as fragments of different kinds of red-clayed cups, bowls and jars.<sup>186</sup> All in all, this suggests that a funerary feast or post-funerary sacrifices may have taken place at the grave.

In conclusion, it seems that this unique burial represents connotations of a higher social status, quite possibly connected with magical and/or religious powers. Less likely is the possibility of a violent or premature death since the anthropological determination on age is given as c. 35 years and there are no mentioned indications of violence detectable in the skeletal material. The abundant remains of a funerary feast, and imported glass jewellery and horse equipment inside the grave could suggest a higher social status, despite the rather sparse number of grave goods. Yet again it could be suggested that the social status expressed in the burial did not affect the actual number of grave goods as much as their nature, and the religious practices that may have been displayed at the funeral itself.

### *Multiple burials*

The multiple burial I199 is unique in terms of the number of individuals buried in the same grave (four adults and one child). Unfortunately, the grave goods are of little help as to the chronological frame of the use of the grave, since the only finds here were a copper coin of Pantikapean manufacture dating to the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century and a lead box, which provides no further evidence for dating. The coin was found on one of the male jaws and could thus be a more certain indication of the use of Charon's fee in the burial customs than we have seen elsewhere in the previous chapters. However, the skeletons were spread out randomly in the pit and this disturbance leaves room for the possibility that the coin accidentally found its place on the male jaw. Furthermore, the disturbed appearance of the grave supports the idea that the burials could have taken place at different times and that the remains from previous

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186 The publication by Grač mentions 'red-clayed' (*krasnoglinjanaja*) and 'brown-glazed' (*burolakovaja*) ceramics in the fill and gives drawings of some of the fragments in the catalogue (Grač 1999, 66-67, 231). However, I am dubious as to the term 'brown-glazed' as this simply suggests to me a misfired black- or red-glossed vessel rather than a fineware group in its own category. I am aware, though, that several Black Sea researchers strongly believe in such a category within the repertoire of the later Hellenistic pottery (personal communication, T.L. Samojlova and V.V. Krapivina in Olbia, summer 2005; see also the introduction in Handberg & Petersen 2010).

burials might have been pushed aside for the succeeding burial(s). Evidence for this practice has been documented at several sites both in Greece proper and in Magna Graecia, where the practice also seems to have been used both in pre-Greek times and in contemporary (so-called) indigenous inland sites (Carter 1998, 108-109, 111, note 203).<sup>187</sup>

### *Stelai*

Grave I130 is interesting because a grave *stele* was found in the fill above the burial. It is uncertain whether the *stele* originally belonged to the burial, since it is not possible to gain any information from the catalogue text about the probable *in situ* position of the *stele* or any more specific details about the excavation of the *stele* (Grač 1999, 67, 234).<sup>188</sup> The *stele* however seems fairly complete, and as far as the drawing shows, has survived in only two pieces. The inscription in Greek is rather short; quite probably stating the name of the deceased, ΔΕΙΝΙΑΣ, with the patronym ΕΟΦΡΑΙ[ΟΣ]. The name Δεινίας is rather well known while the name Eo- or Ευφραϊος is somewhat rarer. The date of the letters is not obvious and the schematic drawing provided in the publication is very unhelpful here. As the letters seem very regular and the only documentation comes from the drawing, it is probably too risky to date the piece without a photograph or other proper documentation.<sup>189</sup>

Similar to the Ambatias *stele* from Kerkinitis one may focus on the fact that the name is of Greek origin and written in Greek letters. It is, however, not unproblematic to use prosopographic evidence as an indicator of ethnicity even though this has been used as such in many a demographic study.<sup>190</sup> A name can be given or taken on for a number of reasons, such as tradition, family affiliations or a wish to fit into a certain social framework or context, but contrarily it can also be a tool in distancing oneself from the above-mentioned factors. Thus, a name on a grave *stele* does not necessarily directly reflect the actual ethnicity of the buried person or the family who buried the deceased.

Concerning the *stele* in question, we may conclude that either the deceased or the burying family wished to express an affiliation with the linguistic aspect of Greek culture – with names and language. Whether they were ethnic Greeks or not, the individuals in question were certainly well-acquainted with the Greek name tradition and had been so for at least two generations.

187 For Greece, see also *Corinth XIII*, 69; *Clara Rhodos III*, 11; Robinson 1942, 139.

188 A recent study by Patric-Alexander Kreuz shows that out of c. 1,200 *stelai* from Pantikapaion, only a dozen or so were found *in situ* according to the excavation reports, and these cannot with certainty be linked with particular burials as they mainly served a secondary purpose as covers for later graves (Kreuz 2005, 44; personal communication, P.-A. Kreuz, winter 2006).

189 I am most grateful to George Hinge for his comments on this *stele* and the inscription; personal communication August 2005.

190 So, for example, Zgusta 1955; Venedikov et al. 1963; Vinogradov 1981; Vinogradov 1997a; but see also Stolba 1996; Cojocar 2004 for more careful approaches.

The material from Nymphaion also features several anthropomorphic *stelai*, although the majority stems from later periods than that covered by this study (Moleva 1999). Grave I10(V) is associated with the find of an anthropomorphic grave *stele*. The grave contained a female of c. 25 years, placed in a supine position with her hands along the body and her head orientated towards the northeast. The grave goods were very sparse and nothing was found inside the grave but an iron nail near the right hand. However, the grave was covered with stone slabs and in the fill above these slabs the anthropomorphic *stele* of limestone was found. Moreover, in the fill above the grave a bronze arrowhead came to light. The position of the *stele* in the fill naturally makes it difficult to ascribe it with certainty to this particular burial, I10(V). The additional find of the bronze arrowhead in the fill would perhaps indicate to some that this burial could be related to nomadic ethnicity, and it is naturally a possibility that this young woman had a nomadic cultural background, but from the evidence available this is pure speculation as nothing else in her disposal points in this direction, or could claim to support one cultural or ethnic affiliation rather than another.

### *Kurgans*

We turn now to the kurgan burials of Phase 4. This grave type constitutes 29 % (= 12) of the grave from this period, superseded only by the pit burials in the ground (Fig. 5.11).

As with the kurgans of Phase 3, the topographical situation presents some difficulties, due to the poor level of information from the initial publications.<sup>191</sup> The rather broad topographical indications given in the publication are as follows: three kurgans lie near Lake Burun; two of the kurgans are situated on the Eltigen Estate; two on the road towards Lake Čurubaš; and the five remaining kurgans have no specific locations stated (Fig. 5.10) It is, however, noteworthy that the locality near Lake Burun, where some of the kurgans of Phase 3 were also situated, still seems to enjoy popularity as a kurgan cemetery in Phase 4.

### *Grave types and treatment of the deceased*

As was the case in Phase 3, the rites of cremation and inhumation are both found in the kurgans of Phase 4. Also similar to Phase 3 is the dominance of the inhumations and the relatively low number of cremations (seven inhumations and two cremations; the remaining three burials have no information on the treatment of the body). For clarification the two types are treated separately below.

191 As was the case with the kurgans from Phase 3, the kurgans from Phase 4 are all from Silant'eva 1959. See this publication also for information on the sparse data provided in the old reports and the difficult topographical situation (Silant'eva 1959, 11-12).

*Cremations*

The cremations are placed in a hydria (Grave K7) and in a simple pit in the ground (Grave K8). It seems that the hydria (K7) was found placed in a pit measuring 2 x 3m amidst debris of burnt wood and that it contained cremated bones and charcoal. The grave goods were placed inside the hydria, constituting an impressive set of elaborate gold jewellery including a necklace with lion and griffin motifs, an ear-ring which also had a lion head motif and two finger rings (Silant'eva 1959, Fig. 50). Apart from this rich set of jewellery, the hydria and pit were void of grave goods. The date suggested by Silant'eva is broadly set to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, but the style and execution of the jewellery may well point to a slightly earlier date in the late 4<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>192</sup> The sparse information on the hydria and the lack of useful pictures or drawings, unfortunately make it difficult to judge fully the validity of the suggested date. In many ways the complex does bear strong parallels to the contemporary cremations from Kerkinitis, where similar high status cremations were placed in ceramic containers alongside jewellery made of precious metal.

The cremation from grave K8 is of a slightly different character since the cremation was not placed in a ceramic container but, rather, directly in a pit in the ground. Here the cremated bones were mixed with both coal and grave goods. The grave goods consisted of an Attic black-glossed kylix, an alabastron of alabaster, a bronze ladle for serving, a bronze *strigil* and several fragments of copper nails which could possibly be related to a wooden bier placed on the pyre. The date of the assemblage is broadly stated as '5<sup>th</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> centuries' (Silant'eva 1959, 98), and, again, we are left without any detailed information, pictures or drawings of the material to narrow the date further. The grave goods, however, are interesting. The drinking cup and spoon set clearly relates to a drinking or banquet-related context, whereas the alabastron and *strigil* obviously come from the world of the *gymnasium* as part of an athlete's equipment. These two aspects of traditional Greek male culture underline the message of the grave complex: the buried individual was clearly represented in death as a person who, irrespective of ethnic origin, possessed or wanted to possess important and well-defined links to central elements of Greek polis culture.

*Inhumations*

The kurgans with inhumation burials amount to seven burials in total, of which two are identified as child burials and the remaining five have no information on the age of the deceased. None of the burials have been anthro-

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192 See Deppert-Lippitz 1985, 222-224. It is important to bear in mind the possibility of heirlooms being included in burials, especially when considering such valuable grave goods as jewellery made of precious metal. Thus, the date of the jewellery can be considerably earlier than the actual deposition in the grave in question (see also Lillios 1999, 237 on heirlooms in archaeological contexts).



pologically sexed. From the seven securely identified inhumation burials, four are placed in cist graves made from mud-bricks and covered with stone slabs. One (K44) is stated as a simple pit burial in the ground and one (K32) has no information on the grave type. Furthermore, two burials (K102 and K103) have no information on the treatment of the body but are cist graves made of mud-brick covered with stone slabs. It is thus possible that they may be inhumations as well, since the majority of the inhumation burials are of this type.

### *Multiple burials*

The multiple burials are found in three of the seven inhumations. However low the number may be in statistical terms, this is a significant rise in multiple burials compared to the one unique multiple burial (I199) from the flat-ground burials mentioned above. Two of the multiple burials are double burials, one of them (K33) in a wooden coffin placed in the cist grave. The third multiple burial (K36) has five individuals buried together in a cist grave covered with three stone slabs much in the same manner as was observed at Panskoe I. Information on the grave goods is again insufficient, and details of the positions of the grave goods are rarely specific. Two graves (K36 and K34) contained coins, in both cases more than one. Unfortunately, their positions in the burials are not stated in the publication. The same two graves also contained alabaster, presumably of east Mediterranean or Egyptian manufacture. Grave K33 had an Attic red-figured pelike placed near one of the deceased and a gilded bronze ring near the other. The numbers of objects per grave are fairly moderate (six, two and five items) as are the NOT-values (four, two and four), reflecting a relative variation in the type of grave goods. Albeit traditionally often associated with non-Greek burial customs, there are no other clearly visible markers in these multiple burials to point in the direction of a specific affiliation with nomadic ethnicity. The grave goods are predominantly imported from the Mediterranean and the coins are in two cases of Pantikapean manufacture. K33 and K34 have both individuals orientated with the heads towards the east, whilst no information on orientation is given for K36.

### *Gender and age*

Of the two child burials, one is equipped with an alabastron (K32) and the other with a bronze bracelet with gilded lion heads at the ends (Silant'eva 1959, Fig. 13.4; see also note 203 below). The child burials are thus rather sparsely equipped with regards to the number of grave goods, but, on the other hand, they are well-equipped with with regards to the inclusion of precious metal and imported goods. There is no information on the orientation of the children.

None of the kurgan burials have information on the gender of the deceased.

### *Orientation*

On a general note, information on the orientation of the deceased in the kurgan burials is quite sparse. As mentioned above, the two double burials



in cist graves (K33 and K34) have their orientation stated as east while the single burial K35 is said to have the head facing west. Grave K102 is stated to be planned on a west-east axis, but there is no information on the orientation of the deceased. The remaining eight burials have no information on orientation.

#### *Grave types and the number of grave goods*

Taking the child and multiple burials aside, the remaining burials from kurgans amounts to five (K35, K38, K44, K102, and K103). The number of grave goods deposited in these burials has a wide range from two to seven with NOT-value from two to five. The assemblages are, interestingly, mostly comprised of imported painted Attic pottery such as pelikai and lekythoi. K35 has an iron *strigil* placed next to the legs of the deceased and an iron knife, also placed inside the grave. Furthermore, the grave has a copper coin of Pantikapean manufacture, but again the position of the coin is unfortunately not stated. Apart from two red-figured palmette-lekythoi and an unspecified number of fragments from black-glossed bowls, Grave K103 has a set of tools consisting of an iron knife and a whetstone (which was also encountered several times at both Olbia and Panskoe I). The grave is further equipped with two lamps, which seem to be a rather rare deposition in this period, not only at Nymphaion but also at the other localities of this study. Graves K102 and K103 both have smaller rings of copper and iron, possibly from items of jewellery or dress ornaments.

The burials K38 and K44 were the more sparsely equipped of the kurgans burials with two and three items respectively. They both featured a bronze spoon or ladle as well as black-glossed ceramics (lekanis and kylix). Further, K44 contained a bronze mirror.

The dates of the burials all fall near the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century and are rather well-established by the imported pottery and coins inside the graves.

### **5.3.2 Grave goods**

#### **Phase 1 (c. 550-520)**

The grave goods of Phase 1 are very few in number and rather homogeneous. As the number of burials in Phase 1 amounts to only three, the material can hardly be seen as representative for the burials of the period in general. Of the three burials, only the two were equipped with grave goods (Graves I71 and I59). Grave I148, which was void of grave goods, has already been dealt with previously in this chapter.

#### *Ceramics*

The grave goods are restricted to ceramics and consist of an Ionian ring-shaped askos (Grave I71), and, in Grave I59, another Ionian ring-shaped askos as well as a black-glossed amphoriskos of (presumed) Attic manufacture. The askoi were both placed at the left shoulder of the deceased, which is also the case

in a burial from the succeeding Phase 2 (I56). All three burials have been determined as males of adult age, c. 35-40 years. When comparing the position of the askoi in these burials from Nymphaion with the evidence from Istria Bent, it is highly interesting to note the position of ring-shaped askoi near the shoulder or elbow in the burials from Grave 39, possibly Grave 57, Grave 59 and Grave 100 at Istria Bent (Teleaga & Zirra 2003, taf. 7-9, 13). These burials are of one male (Grave 39), one deceased of unidentified gender (Grave 57) and two females (Graves 59 and 100). In this instance, it seems that the ring-shaped askoi were used as grave gifts for both male and female burials, and that the area near the shoulder was the favoured location. Furthermore, the picture from Olbia confirms the observation that the upper side of the body from hand to neck is the most commonly used area for the placement of askoi.<sup>193</sup> In Greek Mediterranean contexts askoi were quite possibly used as oil containers, and one might suggest that they served the same purpose as the lekythoi of later periods, namely that of containing oil for balming the body before and during *prothesis*, and to be carried alongside the *ekphora* in order to keep the air around the decaying body heavily perfumed. Evidence for this practice is known from iconographical evidence from Athens (Boardman 1955, 51-66; Oakley 2004, 11) and from ancient literary sources,<sup>194</sup> but it may be too optimistic to draw any direct parallel between Athenian burial practices and the material evidence from the Black Sea. A certain vessel or object may not necessarily have served the same purpose in a Black Sea context as it did in an Athenian context.<sup>195</sup>

There are no outside deposits connected with the burials from Phase 1 – a practice which, however, seems to gain popularity in the succeeding phases.

### Phase 2 (c. 519-480)

Of the 14 graves within Phase 2, only one burial (I52) was devoid of grave goods. The remaining 13 held a total of 45 grave good items, mainly objects from the ceramics, jewellery, weapons and GFA groups. Fig. 5.13 shows the different object groups and their distribution in terms of the total number of graves in which they were found.

193 The rather numerous Olbian burials with ring-shaped askoi are, unfortunately, not all published with detailed information as to the exact position of the vessel in the grave. The stated positions are as follows: near the neck (Graves F106 and F140), near the hand (Grave F230), at the left shoulder (Grave F225) and near the elbow (Grave F191).

194 In, for example, Aristophanes' *Ekklesiazusai* (Ar. Eccl. 1030). See also Kurtz & Boardman 1971, 103.

195 Hence Chris Gosden's 'recontextualization' of objects (Gosden 2004, 36-37). See also O'Connor 1999, 46-47 on Greek lekythoi found in Scythian burials in the forest steppe and steppe region.

*Ceramics*

Eight graves contained ceramics: four lekythoi, two ring-shaped askoi, two cups, an amphoriskos and an unidentified jar. From a function-related point of view it is essentially the oil containers which dominate the ceramics of Phase 2.

The lekythoi were all, except one, black-figured (presumably) Attic products. One of these three was a miniature placed at the right shoulder of the adult male buried in Grave I8(G) together with 15 bronze arrowheads and an iron sword. An important observation is that this miniature lekythos was found in a grave where the skeleton has been age determined as an adult, thus indicating that the inclusion of miniature pottery is not reserved for child burials. Another possibility is, of course, that the burial originally contained a child's skeleton, the remains of which were not preserved. Another black-figured lekythos was placed near the right arm of the deceased male of Grave I 114. The neck of the lekythos was broken off, presumably on purpose as this practice of 'cancelling' grave objects is well-known from other burial contexts and from iconographic evidence from white-ground lekythoi.<sup>196</sup> The third black-figured lekythos was also broken, but has been restored completely from the fragments. It was found near the head of the adult male buried in Grave I44. In general, it seems that the lekythoi, as was also the case with the askoi, were placed near the upper part of the body of the deceased, relating to the arms or the head and perhaps indicating close links with the active centres of the body, or perhaps referring to the anointment of the body's main parts. The last lekythos (Grave I105) is possibly of local manufacture, being published as plain and red-clayed which was also the case with the amphoriskos from Grave I4(G). Unfortunately, information in the publication on the red-clayed ware is sparse and details about the state of preservation and the position in the grave are not given.

The ceramics of Phase 2 are divided between different production centres as follows: five pieces of Attic manufacture, three pieces of East Greek manufacture and two pieces of presumed local manufacture.

*Weapons*

Five graves from Phase 2 contained weapons: three with arrowheads, two with swords and two with daggers.<sup>197</sup> In both Graves I171 and I8(G) the combination of sword and bronze arrowheads (15 and 23 pieces) was encountered.<sup>198</sup> As we

196 Kurtz & Boardman 1971, 216; Oakley 2004, 11. See, for example, Venedikov et al. 1963, pl. 53-54; Vinogradov 1994a, 28. However, Robinson (1942, 182-183) believes the broken pottery from Olynthos to be without symbolic connotations.

197 In general, the publication of the weapons does not allow for any detailed presentation or interpretation of the specific types of weapons. In only one instance, Grave I171, are the types of arrowheads mentioned as several three-sided arrowheads of so-called 'Scythian' type.

198 Grave I171 also contained an arrowhead of iron and another made of bone.

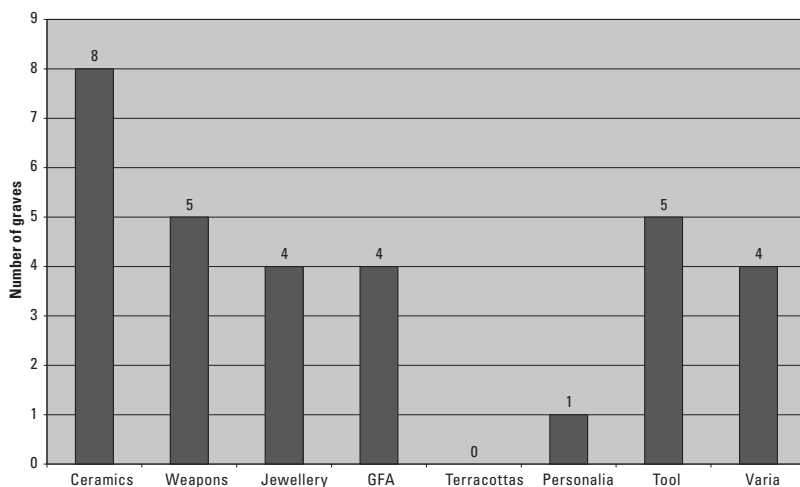


Fig. 5.13. *Nymphaion*. Object groups from Phase 2 (total numbers of graves)

have seen earlier, finds of arrowheads in burials are very common in the coastal settlements of the northern Black Sea region. As was previously suggested, single finds of arrowheads may relate to a monetary perception, whereas the finds of an arrowhead *in situ* in the body, such as in Grave I44 from Phase 2, must be understood as the direct or indirect cause of death. Naturally, there is also the possibility of a *pars pro toto* interpretation of the single arrowhead as a symbol of a whole set which could perhaps not be parted with.

The daggers were found in two individual graves (I60 and I78) and were not accompanied by other types of weaponry. The dagger from Grave I60 was made from iron with traces of wood from the preserved shaft. The specimen was heavily corroded but the characteristic features were still recognizable. The type is rather short and broad in the blade with a butterfly-shaped guard and a bar-shaped pommel on the hilt. It is dated to the second half of the 6<sup>th</sup> century (Grač 1999, 48).<sup>199</sup> The dagger types differ mainly in the shape of the guard, which can be heart-, butterfly- or bud-shaped (Dvornichenko 1995, 106, 108). The dagger from Grave I78 was also made from iron. It had a rather long slim blade with a butterfly-shaped guard and a crescent-shaped pommel with volutes at the ends.<sup>200</sup> Both daggers were placed in the grave at the head end of the deceased. In Grave I60 the dagger was found near the right-hand side of the shoulder, while Grave I78 had the dagger placed

199 This type is common in the contemporary nomadic burials of the Don and Volga River delta areas, as well as in the southern Ural steppe region, but is also attested in burials from coastal settlements in the region (Gajdukevič 1959, 159-160).

200 Again, the type is common in the Don and Volga River delta areas, and dates to the end of the 6<sup>th</sup>/beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> century (Dvornichenko 1995, 106, 108).

under the head of the deceased so that the cranium rested on the upper part of the blade (Grač 1999, pls. 32, 45). This position near the upper part of the body and head seems to indicate a strong connection with the centre of action and power (both mental and physical) in the human body and could thus underline both the functional and power-related connotations of the daggers.

Interestingly, both daggers were found together with only one other grave good item. In Grave I60 the accompanying object was a bone decorative plaque adorned with a meander pattern and pierced at one end. The plaque had possibly been attached to a piece of wood or textile that did not survive. Together with the dagger from Grave I78, a whetstone was placed under the skull, near the lower part of the jaw. It is a fine, oblong whetstone that is pierced at one end for suspension.

As has been demonstrated previously, such weapon assemblages are sometimes interpreted as indicating that the deceased was of a nomadic ethnicity buried in a Greek milieu.<sup>201</sup> However, in these burials from *Nymphaion* (Graves I60 and I78) it is difficult to pinpoint a specific ethnicity on the basis of the grave complexes. Both skeletons were placed on their backs in supine positions with their heads oriented towards the northeast and east. The male in Grave I78, with an estimated age of c. 55 years, had his hands placed on his hips. The younger male, c. 35 years, in Grave I60 has his hands placed along his body. There is nothing specifically 'nomadic' or 'Greek' in these features, since both cultures use these practices, and, as pointed out earlier, the supine position of the body is just as common in nomadic burials as in Greek ones (Brašinskij & Marčenko 1984, 70; Melyukova 1995, 38).

### *Jewellery*

Four graves from Phase 2 contained jewellery. From these four burials nine pieces of jewellery were recovered. Graves I51 and I105 both had a single piece of jewellery – a boat-shaped silver earring<sup>202</sup> and a dress pin of bronze – whilst graves I55 and I56 contained three and four pieces of jewellery respectively. Grave I55 contained two bronze bracelets and a glass necklace, whereas Grave I56 contained two silver finger rings, a bronze dress pin and a glass necklace with a pendant of stone. The bronze bracelets are of a type very commonly found in burials of the northern Black Sea region; simple rounded tubes with an elaborate plastic representation of lion or ram heads at the ends (see colour plate 5 for an example).<sup>203</sup> In Grave I55 the bracelets were found *in situ* on

201 See, for example, Grač 1981 on the ethnic composition of the population of Archaic *Nymphaion*, and Maslennikov 1976; 1978; 1981; 1995; 2005 on the ethnic composition of the Bosporan population in different periods.

202 For boat-shaped earrings of the northern Black Sea region, see most recently Bessonova 2007.

203 The bracelets are made from a range of precious metals, such as bronze, silver, electron and gold. In general, animal finials on bracelets and jewellery are known from both

the right and left wrists of the deceased female. In the same burial the glass necklace was also found *in situ* around the neck.

In general, as has been observed previously, the locations of the jewellery items seem to correspond quite accurately with their function; the dress pin of Grave I51 was found on the right shoulder, the necklace of Grave I56 (male) was found around the neck of the deceased and the silver finger rings of the same grave were found on the hands.

Of all the jewellery, only two pieces out of nine were function-related, whilst the remaining items were all adornments. Concerning the relation between gender and jewellery, the small numbers of burials presented here are hardly statistically valid, but, nevertheless, it is worth noting that two have been anthropologically sexed as female, one as male and one had no indication of gender. The male and the female burials contained both functional jewellery and adornments, and it is hence not possible, even in a general manner, to ascribe jewellery, whether function-related or adorning, to any specific gender. This fact has been established from several analyses in this study.

#### GFA

The four burials in Phase 2 containing objects from the GFA group are all dated around c. 500-490, and had one vessel distributed in each grave. The shapes, all made from glass, are two alabastra, an amphoriskos and one unidentified jar. The alabastra both belong to male burials and were both placed at the left upper side of the body. The unidentified jar, also from a male burial, was found on the hip, whilst the amphoriskos, which had no information on position, belonged to a female burial.

#### *Personalia and terracottas*

The only object from the personalia group in Phase 2 is a bronze mirror. It was found in grave I4(G) where a female of c. 35 years of age was buried in a wooden sarcophagus. The grave goods for this burial are fairly elaborate in comparison with other burials of Phase 2. Besides the bronze mirror, the above-mentioned glass amphoriskos was located here, as well as a Chian cup, a red-clayed amphoriskos and nine bronze nails and one iron nail, which possibly came from the sarcophagus. Unfortunately, the information is very sparse and nothing further is known about the mirror or the remaining grave goods (Grač 1999, 89-99, 279).<sup>204</sup>

Terracottas are not represented amongst the material from the burials of Phase 2. In comparison with the sample of terracottas found in, for example,

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pre-Achaemenid, Achaemenid and Greek jewellery from the 6<sup>th</sup> century onwards (Silant'eva 1959, 36, Fig. 13; Deppert-Lippitz 1985, 131-132, 153-159, 189-191; Williams & Ogden 1994, cat. nos. 25, 32, 96, 118, 124, 161, 189; Özgen & Öztürk 1996, 59; Vickers 2002, 34-35, 52-53; Vickers & Kakhidze 2004, 186; Curtis & Tallis 2005, 137-143).

204 See also this volume, Chapter 2 on mirrors from Olbia with references.



contemporary burials from Olbia, this is puzzling (12 terracottas from six Olbian burials of Phase 2). Evidently, the total number of burials in Phase 2 is rather small (14) and this, of course, could bias the picture, but the complete absence of terracottas is nevertheless striking. Keeping in mind, however, that only one burial from Phase 2 was considered a child's burial, it might be possible that this age aspect plays a significant role in the absence of terracottas.<sup>205</sup> We may, however, also note that previous analyses of contemporary burials in Olbia demonstrated that terracottas were deposited in both child and adult burials.

#### *Tools and varia*

Within the tools group we find the following objects in Phase 2: a knife, a flint tool, two spindle whorls, a spindle and two whetstones. The unusual burial, Grave I56, again underlines how difficult and also misleading sexing by objects can be: the burial contained a spindle, a spindle whorl and a whetstone alongside adornments (two silver finger rings, a bronze dress pin and a glass necklace with a pendant of stone) all of which accompanied the anthropologically identified male burial.

Objects from the varia group are represented in four burials. The nails of Grave I4(G) quite possibly belonged to the wooden sarcophagus mentioned previously. Two objects of bone were found as well. Grave I55 contained a tooth from a cow,<sup>206</sup> perhaps an amulet of some sort, while a small decorative plaque with incised meander motif was found in Grave I60.

#### *Outside deposits*

Outside deposits in Phase 2 are rather sparse. Only two graves, I55 (female) and I56 (male), had fragments of broken amphoras on top of the burials. There is no further information in the publication on the type or date of these fragments. It is noteworthy, however, that the two burials, both in simple pits, were placed topographically near each other and both date to c. 500-490, with each containing some seven to eight pieces of varied and rather rich grave goods. It may be plausible to suggest a family relation between these two rather similar burials.

#### **Phase 3 (c. 479-400)**

In the following the grave goods of the flat-ground burials will be treated separately from the kurgans as was done in the previous sections on the graves.

<sup>205</sup> For the frequent deposition of terracottas in child burials see, for example, Houby-Nielsen 1995, 147-150, Appendix 3; Oakley 2003, 176-177.

<sup>206</sup> Kasparov 1996, 78, table 1, on faunal remains from Nymphaion, shows that cow bones are the second most frequently found type of animal remains in the 5<sup>th</sup> century.



### Flat-ground burials

Of the 21 flat-ground burials from Phase 3 only one burial (I119) is without any grave goods. The remaining 20 are equipped with objects from the following groups: ceramics (17 burials), weapons (one burial), jewellery (eight burials), GFA (five burials), personalia (three burials), terracotta (two burials), tools (two burials) and varia (two burials).

#### *Ceramics*

Within the group of ceramics (Fig. 5.14), the lekythos is by far the most popular shape (18 examples), which is not surprising for the 5<sup>th</sup> century. Thirteen flat-ground burials contained lekythoi; three of these had two or more lekythoi in the same burial.<sup>207</sup> Three burials (Graves K53, K92 and I208) had single lekythoi as the only grave goods, whilst the single alabastron in Grave K61 may have served the same purpose as an oil container. Hence, the 5<sup>th</sup> century practice of placing single or multiple lekythoi in burials as the only piece(s) of grave goods seen elsewhere in the region, finds its way into the burial customs of Nymphaion as well.<sup>208</sup>

Seven out of the 18 lekythoi were placed near the upper part of the body of the deceased, primarily near the hands, four were found near or at the legs of the deceased, whereas the remaining seven had no information as to their position in the graves. Compared with previous phases, it seems that the focus on the upper part of the body is still relevant for the lekythoi from Phase 3, although a position at the legs/feet is now also in use.

In general, it is quite clear that the ceramics of Phase 3 are shapes traditionally related to oil practices; the group of lekythoi, aryballoi and askoi is represented by 21 pieces from 13 graves, whilst the group of food- and drink-related shapes, such as oinochoai, jugs, bowls and cups, is represented by just 12 pieces from six graves. Moreover, the arguments for a prevailing focus on oil-related practices are strengthened by the three burials containing glass alabastra (Graves K60, K61 and I11(V), the latter contained two glass alabastra placed at each arm of the deceased female).

207 The lekythoi are almost all of Attic manufacture, mostly black-figured, red-figured and black-glossed with a single piece of Attic white ground.

208 In general, Kurtz & Boardman 1971, 102-105. As seen before, material from Pantikapaion, Chersonesos and Olbia confirms the practice and the increased popularity of the vessel type (this volume, Chapter 2 for Olbia; Belov 1976, 114 for Chersonesos; O'Connor 1999, 46, 84, Fig. 11 for Olbia and Pantikapaion; also Fless 2002, 191-198; Fless & Lorenz 2005, 24 for Pantikapaion. In general the literature on lekythoi from the northern Black Sea region is extensive, but the most recent publications by Teleaga & Zirra and Morgan give good general references to a large number of sites both east and west (Teleaga & Zirra 2003, 49-50; Morgan 2004, 188-194).

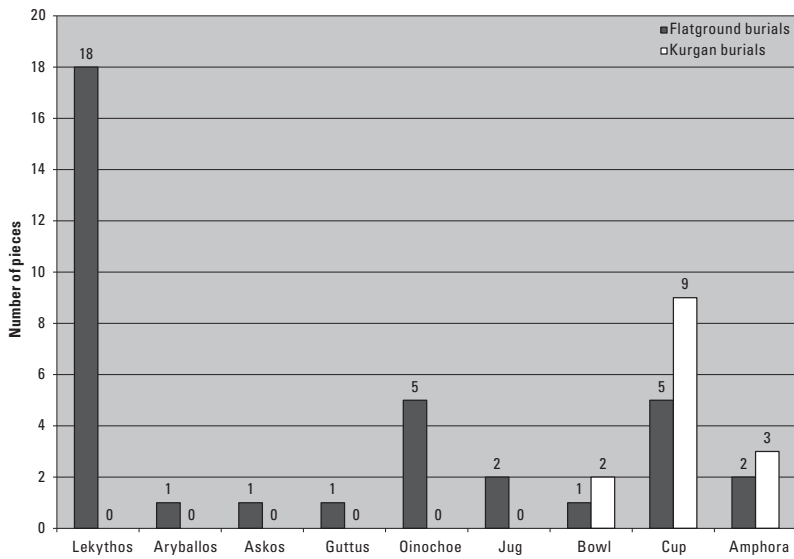


Fig. 5.14. *Nymphaion*. Pottery shapes from Phase 3

### *Weapons*

The weapons group is only represented in one flat-ground burial from Phase 3, Grave I177, where a stone spearhead was found. As for the identification of the object as a spearhead, it must be noted that the flint object in the drawing from the publication strongly resembles quite ordinary flint tools (Grač 1999, 250), and hence may have served different purposes not necessarily associated with weapons or warfare. However, the general absence of weapons in the burials from Phase 3, compared with the popularity of weapons in the previous phase, is very interesting. Perhaps the explanation for this change in the burial rites is to be found in the turbulent times of the early 5<sup>th</sup> century when weapons were needed above ground(?). However, it was not the case that the entire 5<sup>th</sup> century was turbulent and dangerous, and new trends, perhaps towards more simple assemblages of grave goods, from other localities internally within the Black Sea region and from surrounding cultural spheres, may also have played a significant role, as demonstrated by the lekythoi. At the very least, the evidence from the contemporary kurgan burials yields ample depositions of weaponry, as we shall see below.

### *Jewellery*

The jewellery of Phase 3 tells of an increase in the inclusion of precious metals in the flat-ground burials. Phase 2 had no gold and very little silver jewellery, whilst the jewellery of Phase 3 is mainly made from these two metals. In the eight burials which contain jewellery, two golden necklaces were found, one golden finger ring with a griffin and horse motif and two golden pendants. The silver jewellery encompasses two bracelets, two ear-rings, a silver pen-

dant and a silver and bronze pendant. Only one piece of jewellery is made from bronze, namely a dress pin. Furthermore, glass jewellery now enters the scene in the shape of a pendant and a so-called 'eye bead'. Regardless of the increase in gold and silver jewellery, the data must be treated cautiously, since the sample is very modest for such a long chronological period as Phase 3; eight burials with jewellery over a c. 80-year period is a very weak basis for interpretation. So, whether or not the increase in the inclusion of precious metal can be taken to indicate an increase in wealth must be left undecided on the basis of the burial material at hand. However, making somewhat general comparisons with the interpretations of the settlement material presented in the introduction to this chapter, at least the last half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century seems to have been a period of prosperity for the city, since construction of both secular and sacral structures took place on a larger scale than previously. Furthermore, the kurgan burials add to this picture of prosperity, as we will see later.

#### *Personalia and terracottas*

Objects from the personalia group are only represented in three flat-ground burials. In Grave I11(G) several astragals were found near the right hand of the deceased male of c. 13 years of age. In Grave I11(V) a bronze mirror was placed under the head of the deceased female, whilst Grave K73 had a pair of tweezers placed near the deceased's head.

Looking at the terracottas, it seems that objects from this group now finally enter the burials of Nymphaion. However, the 13 terracottas of Phase 3 are actually only found in two burials; 12 of them came from K50 and one from K51. Regrettably, there is no information on the gender or age of the deceased or on the positions of the terracottas in graves. The cist grave K50 is interesting, with its high number of terracottas including a large female protome, two sitting figures embracing, four flying birds, two monkeys holding bowls, a dolphin, a second dolphin with a figure riding it, a seated female and a figurine with fitted limbs.<sup>209</sup> Furthermore, the assemblage encompassed a sitting dog made from alabaster and the burial also contained three miniature drinking cups and an aryballos-shaped lekythos (Silent'eva 1959, Figs. 14-16). The nature of the grave goods, mainly the miniature pottery and terracottas, could point to this being a child's burial,<sup>210</sup> and it is interesting to note the high number of grave goods and the carefulness with which this burial was executed (a cist

209 There are various suggestions regarding the function of the figurines or 'dolls' with fitted limbs. The most recent study known to me, by M. Muratov (2005), considers these terracottas to be cult objects, presumably representing dancers, and suggests that the deposition of these figurines in burials was of a secondary nature to their original cultic function. The figurine in question from Nymphaion is probably an Athenian or Corinthian import (personal communication, M. Muratov, February 2006).

210 See, for example, Marti 1940 for a similarly equipped, only slightly later, child's burial from Tyritake. Also Peredolskaja 1964.

grave made up from cut stone slabs). Amongst the burials from Nymphaion this (child?) burial is unique in terms of its assemblage of grave goods, as well as the quantity of grave goods, and we must at least consider it, if not rich, then very extraordinary.<sup>211</sup>

#### *Tools and varia*

Objects of the tools and varia groups are not numerous in the flat-ground burials of Phase 3. The two burials with tools contained a whetstone and a needle (I83) and a bronze ladle (K71). The two burials with objects from the varia group contained an unidentified iron object, an iron nail, some fragments of a small bronze box (I1[V]) and a deposit of several iron nails (I11[G]).

#### *Outside deposits*

The outside deposits of the flat-ground burials from Phase 3 are not very plentiful and relate only to Graves I11(V) and I57. In I11(V) the fill contained fragments of an East Greek jug, iron nails, a bronze dress pin and some unidentified pieces of bronze. It seems that these artefacts closely resemble an assemblage of grave goods, and could thus relate to an individual burial rather than a secondary deposit to Grave I11(V) as suggested by Grač (1999, 96). Grave I57 had fragments of amphoras placed on top of the burial, a practice which was also seen in Phase 2 and is known from all of the previously analysed localities. The very sparse record of outside deposits in Phase 3 can probably not be interpreted reliably as a significant decrease in this practice, since there is a heavy bias in the material of the database; the majority of burials of this period come from the publication by Silant'eva where such information was not recorded.

#### *Kurgans*

The grave good assemblages of the kurgan burials of Phase 3 consist mainly of the following: weapons such as harnesses, arrowheads, spearheads and daggers; horse equipment such as check pieces and bridles; and drinking- and banquet-related ceramics. Furthermore, there are other vessels and objects present, such as kylixes, amphoras, kraters and serving ladles in bronze, personal equipment such as elaborate jewellery of precious metals, often decorated in the 'animal style', and bronze mirrors. The burial assemblages have good parallels in the material from the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford which displays weapons and drinking- and banquet-related objects, as well as jewellery of exactly the same types (colour plates 2-7; also Vickers 2002, 14-55, for further high-quality illustrations).

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211 We may be warned against using a high number of grave goods as an indicator of wealth or high status by the results from both Olbia and Kerkinitis analysed previously.

Here the focus will be on the ceramics found in the kurgans, since this particular object group offers some interesting perspectives for an interpretation of the kurgans. Ceramics are present as grave goods in all the kurgan burials from Phase 3. Graves K1 and K4 are cremations placed in a hydria and an amphora, whilst the remaining burials all have ceramics as proper grave goods. The results of a database query on the types and shapes of pottery present a very interesting picture, since nine out of the 14 pieces of ceramics are cups (eight Attic black-glossed kylikes and one Attic red-figured skyphos), two are Attic black-glossed bowls and the remaining three are amphoras (two toes and one complete vessel). Thus, all the ceramics from the kurgans are drinking- or banquet-related shapes, whilst the majority of the shapes in the flat-ground burials were oil-related shapes (Fig. 5.14). It seems then, that there is a fundamental difference in the perception of pottery shapes and thus pottery functions between the two grave types.

Looking at the GFA group, it becomes clear that the oil-related shapes missing from the ceramic repertoire are also not well represented in the kurgans by vessels made from alabaster or glass.<sup>212</sup> Furthermore, the examples from the varia object group underline this pattern, as two kurgan burials had bronze oinochoai, one had a bronze hydria and a bronze bowl, and one had a silver phiale.

Thus, taking the monumentality of the kurgans and the elaborate nature of the grave good assemblages of weapons, horse equipment and jewellery into consideration, we may suggest that the élite who chose to bury or be buried in this elaborate manner had a clear preference for pottery and metal vessels used for drinking and banqueting rather than for oil-related practices.

Now, how are we to interpret the kurgans of 5<sup>th</sup> century Nymphaion?

In her conclusion to the 1959 publication, Silant'eva presented a picture of a Greek population in a Greek polis interacting actively with the Scythian élite and tradesmen of the surrounding nomadic cultures. This élite were buried in the kurgans and described as connoisseurs of Greek luxury goods and in possession of civilized habits and ways of life and as being under the strong influence of the Greek polis culture – quite simply, they were Hellenized barbarians (Silant'eva 1959, 93-97). This interpretation was based on the burial material from the kurgans, and, with this picture, Silant'eva's thoughts were very much in line with those of previous well-known scholars such as M. Rostovsev and V.F. Gajdukevič. However, even in modern scholarship this interpretation still finds support, for example as recently as 2005 by A.A.

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212 Only one kurgan burial (K114) had fragments of an alabaster alabastron, placed near the legs of the deceased. It should be mentioned that the material from the Ashmolean Museum does include a glass alabastron (Vickers 2002, 50), a red-figured lekythos (Vickers 2002, 20) and two red-figured askoi (Vickers 2002, 28). However, whether all these objects did actually come from the kurgans originally, or were added to the assemblage later, is uncertain.

Maslennikov (Maslennikov 2005, 159; this view is also shared by Olkhovsky 1995, 67).

Certainly, it would be valuable to know *exactly* what ethnicity was held by the people buried in the kurgans of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, but, ultimately, this question is very difficult to answer solely on the grounds of the archaeological record. We may go so far as to identify different cultural markers (objects) with specific cultures, but the reception and use of these objects cannot directly be taken as a concrete reflection of ethnicity. As stressed previously, material culture *can* be a strong player in the display of ethnic identity, but the flexible and adjustable nature of identity – be that ethnic, cultural and/or social – is often, as we have seen before, manipulated with material culture used as a strong tool.

However, what the kurgans *may* tell us about are the social strategies of the élite – whatever ethnicity its members may have held.

The Nymphaion kurgans speak of a rather homogeneous approach to status display: the monumentality of the burial mound itself, the reference to warfare and hunting, the wealth display of jewellery and other metal objects as well as the ownership of horses, and the references to drinking and banqueting. However, these features are not élite markers specifically confined to the Black Sea region or, for that matter, to the Scythian élite *per se*. Such features are well-known from élite milieux in the Near East, in the Greek world and in Etruria, just to mention some of the closest geographical parallel areas (see also Archibald 1998, 247, 252-255, 298 for the Thracian evidence). This ties in with the multicultural power language mentioned earlier and underlines the flexibility of the identities created to fit a complex hybrid society.

The socio-political context of the 5<sup>th</sup> century kurgan burials in Nymphaion could probably tell us why a strong ruling class chose to bury and be buried in such dominant and powerful displays. The fight to maintain independence from the Bosporan Kingdom cannot have been an easy task, given the geographical and political situation of the city, situated only some 17km south of Pantikapaion. What we see in the kurgan burials may very well be reflections of an élite response to the pressure exerted by the upcoming dominant power factor of the region.<sup>213</sup> Membership of the Delian League may have communicated

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213 Even though, due to the lack of sources, we may question the scale of dominance imposed by the Bosporan Kingdom at the beginning of its existence, it is probably still valid to propose that the political environment of the northeastern Black Sea region in the 5<sup>th</sup> century was one of turbulence and change. Other cities of the same region seem to have been hostile towards the Bosporan Kingdom and resisted joining, as was, for example, the case with Theodosia further to the south of Nymphaion (Avram, Hind & Tsetschladze 2004, 952) and Gorgippia in the southern part of the Taman (Alekseeva 2003, 962-963). See also Avram, Hind & Tsetschladze 2004, 949 on the political aims of the Bosporan Kingdom. Braund 2003, however, argues for a non-hostile relationship between Nymphaion, Athens and the Bosporan Kingdom in the late 5<sup>th</sup> century. I have previously treated this matter at length (Petersen 2008).



a strong political message as well,<sup>214</sup> but near the end of the century, when Athens was in deep trouble herself, Nymphaion's position weakened. Aeschines, however (Aeschin. 3.171-172), claimed that it was internal problems – the treason of Gylon – that caused the loss of Nymphaion to the enemy, the Bosporan Kingdom. This happened c. 410-405 according to Avram, Hind & Tsetskhladze (2004, 948).<sup>215</sup> Moreover, the argument for a strong élite in Nymphaion seems to be strengthened by the fact that the late 5<sup>th</sup> century silver coinage of Nymphaion can be chronologically connected with the period of membership of the Delian League, as can a smaller silver coin hoard possibly referring to a local Tyrant – ΣΑΜΜΑΣ (Stolba 1998, 608-609; 2002).

The present analysis demonstrates that by shifting the focus from the ethnicity-related issues of 'Hellenized Scythians', focused on by Silant'eva and others, to a socio-political approach the understanding of the kurgan burials is placed in a much broader and more interesting context which provides an overall interpretation of both the culturally complex élite burials and their function as social and political markers. Furthermore, on the basis of this line of argument the radical shift in the equipment of the 4<sup>th</sup> century burials finds a plausible explanation, which I will present in the following section. This radical shift was noted by Silant'eva, but not addressed in details or interpreted in any way (Silant'eva 1959, 97).

#### Phase 4 (c. 399-270)

The grave goods of Phase 4 form the largest bulk of data in the Nymphaion material (131 pieces) and will thus be presented here in a more summarized manner than has been done for the previous phases. Eventhough, kurgan burials and flat-ground burials will not be treated in different sections below they are still clearly separated in the analyses.

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214 The 425/424 tribute list mentions Apollonia and Herakleia as securely identified members from the Black Sea district and evidence is strong for Nymphaion's membership as well, further attested by Krateros (see *ATL* 2:A9; *ATL* 1, 527-528, *ATL* 3, 116-117). It is most likely, however, that many more cities from the Black Sea district were members, as there is a large *lacuna* in the lists at this particular passage (see also Meiggs 1975, map I, (VI) for other possible members among the Black Sea cities, see Kryzhytskyi et al. 2003, 401, with bibliographical references).

215 The situation in Athens at this point was probably not conducive for sending military aid to far-away corners of the Black Sea in protection of some smaller city, and we may speculate whether the last years and final outcome of the Peloponnesian War played a crucial role in the loss of Nymphaion. Later on in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, when the second Athenian Confederacy was established in 377 and the city's power somewhat restored, Athens surely had no interest in interfering with the internal politics of the Bosporan Kingdom as the grain supplies from that very region were in constant demand (see also Moreno 2007).



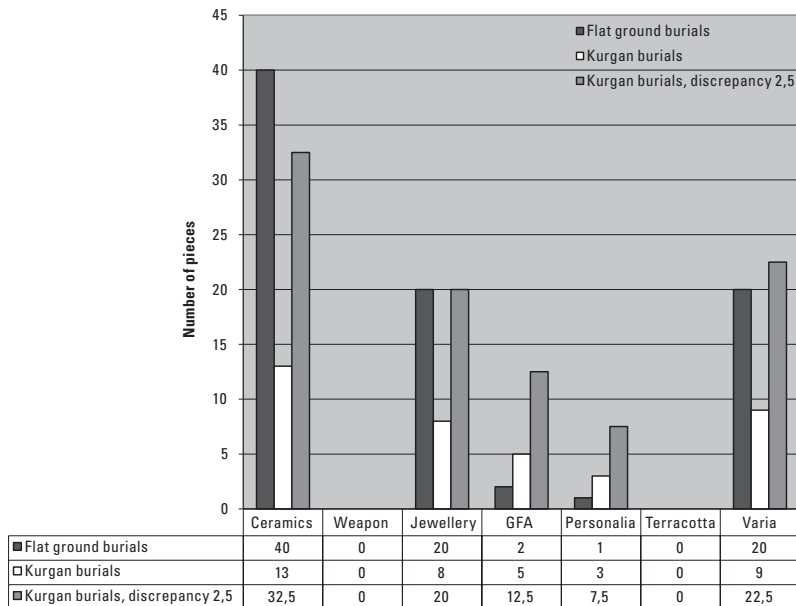


Fig. 5.15. *Nymphaion*. Object type groups from Phase 4

A general diagram (Fig. 5.15) of the different object groups illustrates how the 131 items of grave goods were distributed between the flat-ground burials and the kurgans.<sup>216</sup> Furthermore, Fig. 5.16 shows the number of individual graves from both burial types containing elements from each of the object groups, with the percentage value relating to the total number of graves presented in parentheses. Thus, there are, for example, 21 graves with ceramic deposits, which correspond to 70 % of all the flat-ground burials within the phase. Hence, it is important to note that there is a marked percentage difference in the deposits of items from the jewellery, GFA and personalia groups, which are all distinctly more frequent in the kurgan burials than in the flat-ground graves.

### *Ceramics*

Ceramics are by far the most common type of grave goods in Phase 4, found in both the flat-ground burials and in the kurgan burials. Fig. 5.17 shows the distribution of the different pottery shapes, and it is quite clear that the lekythos is the most popular shape, even though the evidence, at least from the kurgans, is based on very low numbers. Whereas the lekythoi and other oil-related ceramic shapes played a very insignificant part in the assemblages

<sup>216</sup> As there is a discrepancy (1:2.5) between the total number of flat-ground burials (30) and the kurgan burials (12) in Phase 4, a third column indicating the results with this discrepancy factored in has been added to the comparative diagram.

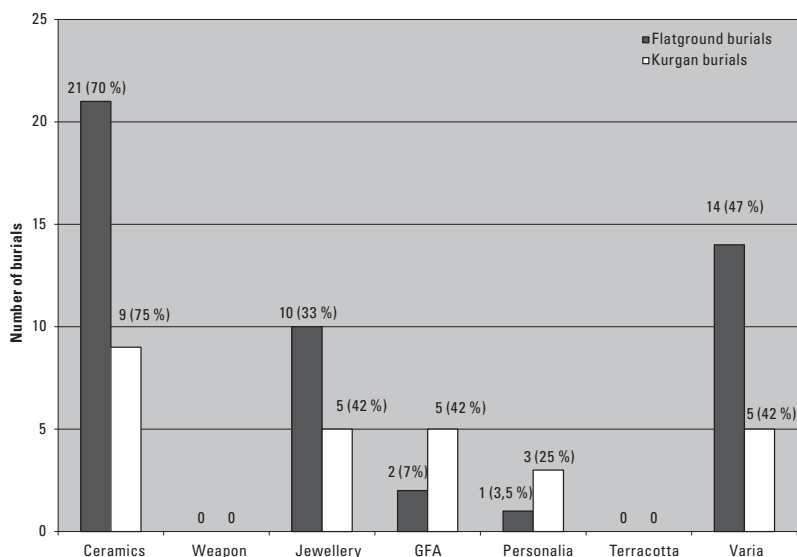


Fig. 5.16. *Nymphaion*. Object groups from Phase 4 (as percentages)

of the kurgans of Phase 3, they are now present in the kurgans from Phase 4. However, the four lekythoi from the kurgans were found in only two burials (K102 and K103) out of 12 kurgan burials; each of the two burials was equipped with a pair of red-figured lekythoi decorated with palmettes.<sup>217</sup> This could indicate that the use of lekythoi was still not common in the kurgans and that the burials in K102 and K103 may be related in some way; perhaps in terms of family or other social relations.<sup>218</sup>

The amphora seems to have disappeared from the kurgan burials, whereas it is quite a popular shape in the contemporary flat-ground burials (Fig. 5.17). The drinking cups, however, still enjoy more popularity in the kurgan burials than in the flat-ground graves, whilst jugs are very rare in the kurgans (only one). In three cases the cups were found together with serving ladles of bronze, and in the case of Grave K52 an assemblage of cup, amphora and serving ladle was found together.

<sup>217</sup> The lekythoi from Phase 4 are either decorated with palmette decoration or with a net pattern, which is not surprising as these were by far the most common types of lekythoi in the 4<sup>th</sup> century (see also Morgan 2004, 192-193, 249 on the squat lekythoi of the region). Unfortunately, the information on the positions of the lekythoi in the burials of Phase 4 is very sparse, and only three pieces have specific indications on the position: at the right hip, at the left arm, at the right shoulder (I157, I82 and I135).

<sup>218</sup> K102 and K103 are also similar in terms of their grave good assemblages, both having an iron knife and an iron ring. Furthermore, both burials were placed in mud-brick cists (Silant'eva 1959, 103).

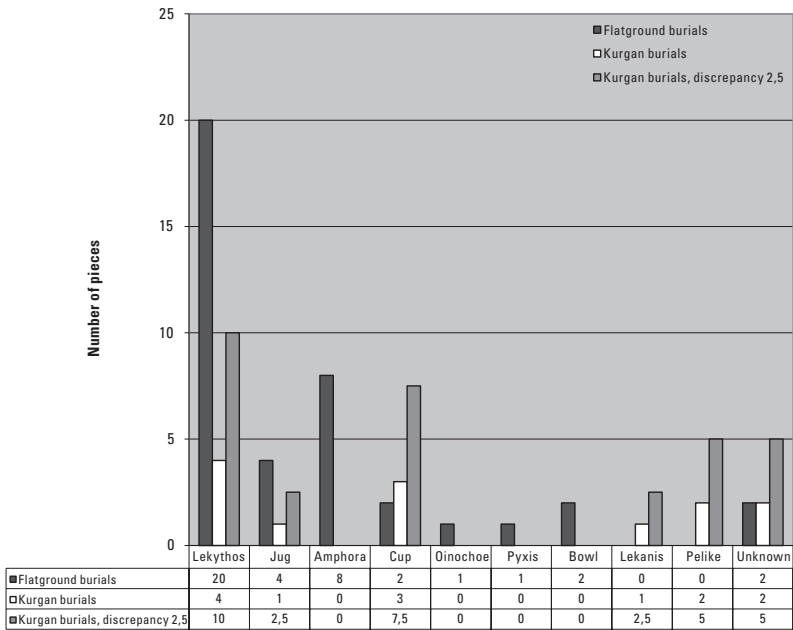


Fig. 5.17. *Nymphaion*. Ceramics from Phase 4

The new pottery shapes entering the scene are confined to the kurgans and are the pelike (two red-figured pieces) and lekanis (one black-glossed piece). These shapes, especially the pelike, are hardly surprising in a 4<sup>th</sup> century Bosporan context (Fless 2002, 88-95; Morgan 2004, 176-177). What may be more puzzling in fact is that there are *only* two pelikai in the corpus of 42 burials from Phase 4.<sup>219</sup>

#### *Weapons*

An important observation is the total absence of weapons (Fig. 5.15). Compared with the previous two phases, where weapons were not uncommon in the grave good assemblages, it is striking that those burying or being buried in the 4<sup>th</sup> century seem to have no interest at all in the display of objects of warfare, or perhaps they had only a very limited surplus to spare. I will return to the possible interpretations of this absence of weapons in Phase 4 later.

#### *Jewellery*

Both flat-ground burials and kurgan burials contained jewellery in more or less equal measures (when the discrepancy is factored in, Fig. 5.15). There are,

<sup>219</sup> Morgan mentions several 4<sup>th</sup> century cemetery contexts with pelikai from the Taman (Morgan 2004, 177-179). However, it should be noted that, in terms of storage, the amphora may have been for some what the pelike was for others (personal communication, C. Morgan, summer 2006).

however, differences in the type of jewellery and the types of metal used. The jewellery from the flat-ground burials consists of necklaces, pendants, *fibulae*/dress pins, a few finger rings and a few bracelets made from bronze, iron or glass. On the other hand, the jewellery from the kurgans consists of ear-rings, finger rings and bracelets made of bronze, copper, iron, gilt bronze and gold. Although there are kurgan burials in Phase 4 which were much more simply equipped, the richer metal finds *are* connected to the kurgan burials and thus confirm the notion of this being an élite burial type, even though we may again emphasize the change in the nature of the grandeur of the power displays from Phase 3 to 4.

#### GFA

Items from the GFA object group are rather well represented in the flat-ground burials of Phase 3, but were not popular in the kurgan burials. In Phase 4, this picture is quite the opposite. As shown in Fig. 5.15, the flat-ground burials contained only two examples of alabastra (Graves K54 and K107), whereas the kurgan burial had five pieces (from five burials: K8, K32, K34, K36 and K102). In percentage terms, this means that only 7 % of the flat-ground burials were equipped with alabastra, whilst 42 % of the kurgan burials were. It seems, therefore, that the attitude towards oil-related practices in relation to the kurgan burials altered radically from Phase 3 to Phase 4.

#### *Personalia and tools*

As regards the personalia group, we see that another important grave good item, namely the *strigil*, has entered the scene, although not in any great numbers (three *strigils* from three burials K8, K35 and K59). The small numbers apart, it is interesting to note that two of the three burials with *strigils* are kurgan burials. It is tempting to propose this as a further indication, albeit on a small scale, of a change in élite attitude towards oil-related practices being incorporated in burial customs. It could be suggested that the world of the *palaestra* with its connotations of athletic strength and youth as well as focus on hygiene (oil and *strigil*) may have played a more prominent role in the 'new' élite expressions of Phase 4.<sup>220</sup>

In conclusion, it could be proposed that the social and political strategies of the élite expressions of Phase 4 have taken on a very different perspective when compared to the weapon- and warfare-related power expressions of Phase 3. The motivation for this may have been a radical change in the political situation, as in Phase 4 Nymphaion joined the Bosporan Kingdom. The resulting fundamental change of power structures could have forced the élite

220 The popularity of *strigils* and alabastra or other oil containers in 4<sup>th</sup> century and early Hellenistic burials is also evident in a vast number of cemeteries across the Mediterranean world (Kurtz & Boardman 1971, 101, 208; Houby-Nielsen 1997, 221-223; Carter 1998, 757-758).

to alter their perceptions of both prestige and status displays. Further along these lines, it may be added that it was during this period that the large kurgans in Pantikapaion were erected with weapons, jewellery and drinking- and banqueting-related ceramics, constituting impressive grave good assemblages very similar in character to those of the kurgans of 5<sup>th</sup> century Nymphaion. We will return to the kurgans of Pantikapaion below, but for now it seems fair to conclude that the changing political situation of the Bosporan Kingdom had, in all probability, a prominent effect on the burial customs and the way these were used in the public arena.

Three burials (Graves K102, K103 and K35) contained iron knives. There are no other objects or circumstances in these burials involving knives that could confirm or deny their possible function as weapons, nor are there any objects that point to these knives being considered as banquetting equipment in these specific contexts.<sup>221</sup> However, the previously analysed assemblages with knives provide no indication to suggest that they would have functioned as weapons.

### *Varia*

Another very important and prominent feature of the grave goods from Phase 4 is the occurrence of coins which are found in both flat-ground burials and kurgans burials. Moreover, the number of objects registered in the database under the varia heading has more than doubled from Phase 3 to Phase 4, and the coins constitute 57 % of this group.<sup>222</sup> The coins are mainly copper coins of Pantikapean manufacture and only in one instance is a coin made of bronze (Grave I7[V]). Unfortunately, the publications are very sparse with regards to information about the positions of the coins in the burials. Thus, only two of the 11 burials containing coins have specific positions such as 'at neck' (I130) and 'on jaw of deceased male' (I199) noted. Surely, it is tempting to interpret these coins as Charon's fees, particularly so for those coins positioned at the jaw or at the neck of the deceased. In the majority of the burials, however, the question as to whether the coins are related to this specific rite or were placed in the burials for a number of other reasons must remain unsolved (also Grindler-Hansen 1991, 215-216; Stevens 1991, 215, 223-225).

221 Apart from the knives, the burials contained: alabastron, two lekythoi and a ring (K102); two lekythoi, a whetstone, two lamps and a ring (K103); a pelike, a strigil and a coin (K35).

222 When compared with the percentages of burials with coins from various localities around the Mediterranean in the 4<sup>th</sup> century presented in Stevens's 1991 article, it is interesting to note the 26 % of burials with coins from Nymphaion in the same period. This number is markedly higher than Stevens's examples from Olynthos (10.2 %), Poseidonia (4.5 %), Ampurias (4 %), Argos (10 %) and Myrina (c. 10 %) (Stevens 1991, 223-224).

*Deposits of metal*

The deposits of metal (of all kinds) support the above-mentioned conclusions on the radical changes from Phase 3 to 4. Fig. 5.18 shows the metal deposits of Phases 3 and 4. The figure illustrates quite clearly that there are major discrepancies in the deposition patterns of Phases 3 and 4 between the kurgan burials and the flat-ground burials, and especially for the kurgan burials between the two phases. The kurgans of Phase 3 have a very high number of metal deposits distributed across a small number of burials, whereas the kurgans of Phase 4 have fewer metal deposits distributed across more burials. Of the Phase 3 kurgans, 71 % contained metal deposits, whilst this rises to 92 % in Phase 4. In general, the flat-ground burials of Phase 3 and Phase 4 are more similar to each other. In Phase 3, 43 % of the flat-ground burials contained metal items, whilst this rises to 57 % for Phase 4. Thus, from the 5<sup>th</sup> to the 4<sup>th</sup> century there was a modest rise in the percentage of burials with metal deposits.

This general picture from Nymphaion can be compared with a similar analysis undertaken by O'Connor for Pantikapaion (O'Connor 1999, Fig. 1.65). This showed a significantly more marked increase in metal deposits from the 5<sup>th</sup> century to the 4<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries (from an average of c. 25 % of all burials to an average of c. 55 %). However, it must be stressed that the burial data which constitutes the basis for O'Connor's figures have not been divided into flat-ground burials and kurgans as done for the analysis in this current study. Nevertheless, the figures still support the interpretation of the general development within the two settlements and their internal relations.

*The grave goods in general*

Widening the analysis to a more general perspective, it seems that the grave good assemblages can be divided roughly into three categories:

- Burials with one (or more) oil container(s) and one or more items from the personalia, jewellery and varia groups (11 = 44 %);
- Burials with drinking-/serving-related vessels and one or more items from the personalia, jewellery and varia groups<sup>223</sup> (5 = 20 %)
- Burials with tems from the personalia, jewellery and varia groups, but no ceramics (7 = 28 %)

In the first two subgroups it seems that there is no general pattern as to the type of objects with which the oil or drinking/serving vessels are combined. Different pieces of jewellery, and items from the personalia and varia groups

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223 The two burials I166 and K52 do not find a place in these categories as they have both oil- and drinking-related ceramics as well as items from the personalia and jewellery groups. Interestingly, these burials have the highest numbers of grave goods and NOT-values within the flat-ground burials. Furthermore, four burials in Phase 4 have no grave goods.

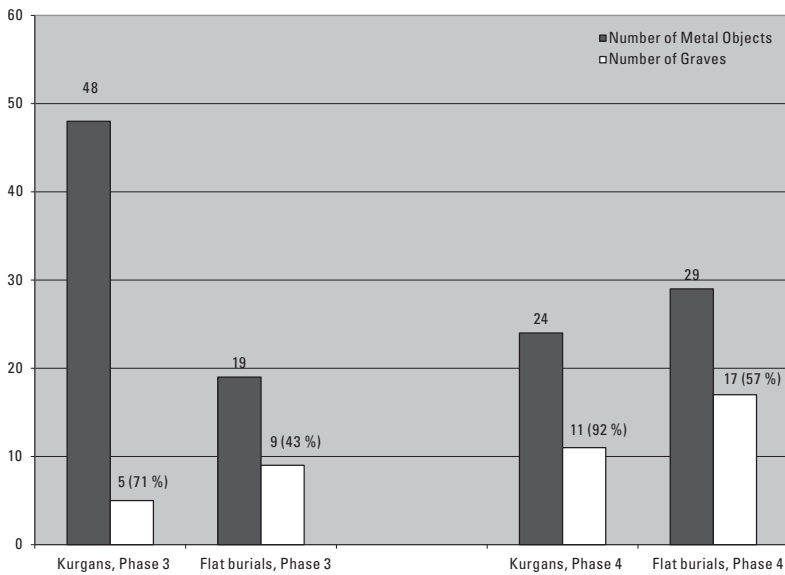


Fig. 5.18. *Nymphaion*. Metal deposits from Phases 3 and 4

occur. What does seem to be a pattern, however, is that the burials with oil-related items are mainly adult burials, whilst the burials with drinking/serving vessels are primarily child burials. Hence, it may be plausible to suggest a distinction between age groups in the burial customs being reflected in the choice of grave goods and, thus, perhaps in the presumed rituals involving these objects.

The third subgroup shows no signs of age- or gender-related distinctions in the grave good assemblages. Here the burials belong to adults and children, male and female alike. Again, there are no general patterns within the object assemblages or 'sets'. A topographical analysis may have provided an interesting perspective on this group and its relation to the other subgroups, but unfortunately such an analysis is not possible given the state of publication, as already mentioned. We may speculate whether the group's distinction is in some way related to social structures, which would be evident in a spatial analysis(?).

#### *Outside deposits*

The customs of depositing grave goods outside the grave and/or conducting funerary feasts are still evident in the burials of Phase 4. As was the case in the previous phases, the outside deposits mainly consist of fragments of amphorae and drinking cups, which are sometimes accompanied by coarser types of kitchenware. There is no mention of animal bones or of animal remains in the publications, but it is most likely that deposits of food stuff and perhaps meat formed part of the burial practices performed at the grave both during



and after the funeral, as evidence from many other localities has shown (also Garland 1985, 110-113; Hame 1999, 83-86).

In general, it can be concluded that to some extent the majority of the burials in Phase 4 could reflect the relatively stable and prosperous situation which the city seems to have experienced, at least in the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, when building activity included both new sacral and private structures as well as restorations of the Demeter sanctuary. Moreover, we may also remember Zin'ko's general statement on the prosperity of the rural territory in the 4<sup>th</sup> century (Zin'ko 2006, 296-297).<sup>224</sup> From a political perspective, it may thus seem that a more stable situation had been established.

#### 5.4 Main conclusions of the analyses

Based on the analyses above, the following developments and observations can be identified.

- There is a clear tendency towards more variation in grave types over time. The material shows more complex grave types occurring during the Classical and late Classical periods;
- Parallel with this development is more variation in, for example, treatment of the deceased, positions, inhumation/cremation and multiple burials,
- There is likewise a development within the assemblages of grave goods with similar tendencies towards more variation;
- In general, the Classical and late Classical burials seem to have a much more conscious approach to expressions of identities and status displays.
- In general, there are no obvious, or immediately detectable, differentiations in the approaches towards burial customs for different age groups or in connection with biological sex. However, there may be a differentiation in the assemblages of grave goods for children in Phase 4, since the majority of the child burials are equipped with drinking-related vessels whilst the adults most often received oil-related vessels;
- The élite burials in kurgans are very dominant in their display of status and power in the 5<sup>th</sup> century, which was based mainly on the inclusion of weapons, horse equipment, precious jewellery and drinking- and banquet-related vessels and objects. This picture undergoes a radical alteration in the 4<sup>th</sup> century kurgans, when oil-related vessels (and *strigils*) suddenly gain popularity. These changes could be explained in socio-political terms,

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224 Attention should also be drawn to the unique *stèle* and the grave goods of the Three Brothers Kurgan situated in the southern part of the rural territory (Scholl & Zin'ko 1999, 87-90; Kreuz 2005; some of the elaborate gold finds are published in Reeder 1999, 214-217), attesting to what can probably be described as very wealthy and powerful rural landowners.

rather than by the previous ethnicity-related approaches. They can be seen as reflections of an independent multicultural society with a strong élite fighting against an upcoming regional power (5<sup>th</sup> century) and the result of the subdued society adapting to the new power structures and élite expressions under a new supremacy (4<sup>th</sup> century).

### 5.5 An overview of other localities in the northeastern Black Sea region

The northeastern corner of the Black Sea and especially the area known as the Cimmerian Bosporos – both European and Asiatic – was one of the most densely settled areas of the Black Sea region in Antiquity. As such, the area offers many potential cemeteries for comparative studies.<sup>225</sup> It is, however, not without complications to look for suitable comparative material since some of the most important cities, for example Phanagoria, unfortunately offer very little published cemetery material (Morgan 2004, 3, note 12, for an account of the earliest cemetery excavations in Phanagoria). The problem is not only one of suitable and detailed publications but also of quantity, since many samples comprise only a few burials accidentally stumbled upon whilst excavating settlement structures.<sup>226</sup> As a result, the very substantial and rich materials from the cemeteries of Pantikapaion constitute the best comparative data set. Where many of the comparative analyses in the previous part of this chapter have dealt with specific aspects of the burial data from Pantikapaion, the following presentation is an attempt to summarize the main tendencies observed in the material. Moreover, details of other localities from the region are included to a lesser extent where appropriate.

#### *The cemeteries of Pantikapaion*<sup>227</sup>

Founded by Ionian colonists from Miletos sometime in the early 6<sup>th</sup> century, Pantikapaion was situated at a very strategic location on the Kerč Strait at the narrow passage between the Black Sea and the Sea of Asov (Tolstikov 2003, 715-717; Avram, Hind & Tsetschladze 2004, 949).

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- 225 The rural areas of the region were likewise quite densely populated compared with other rural areas of the Black Sea region. The rural burial landscapes also offer a large number of highly interesting cemeteries, unfortunately it is not possible for this study to deal with them in detail. However, see Maslennikov 2003, 1175-1181, for a summarized presentation and characterization of the many localities and their burials (see also Vinogradov 2001).
- 226 So, for example, the earliest burials of Gorgippia recorded while excavating settlement structures from the 1<sup>st</sup> century (Treister & Vinogradov 1993, 561), or the 10 Archaic burials excavated in Phanagoria during rescue excavations ahead of the laying of a pipeline (Morgan 2004, 4).
- 227 For this presentation of the cemeteries and burial customs of Pantikapaion, I draw mainly on the following studies: Cvetaeva 1951; 1957; 1968; Kastanajan 1959; Gajdukevič 1971; O'Connor 1999; Rempel 2004; Fless & Lorenz 2005; Kreuz 2005.

The earliest burials, from the 6<sup>th</sup> century onwards, are found in the flat-ground cemetery which is situated close to the settlement. By the 4<sup>th</sup> century, kurgans surrounded the city on all three land sides (Cvetaeva 1951, Fig. 1; 1957, 227-230; Fless & Lorenz 2005, 17-18, taf. 1).

The main focus here will be on the burials of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, as the comparisons with the Nymphaion material are most evident here. In the 4<sup>th</sup> century, the main grave type of the flat-ground cemetery was, as in Nymphaion, the pit burial, either in the ground or cut into the bedrock, with the deceased oriented towards an easterly direction (O'Connor 1999, Fig. 56; Fless & Lorenz 2005, 20). As in Nymphaion, the majority of these burials were inhumations, but cremations have been found as well. Interestingly, early cremations from the 6<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries have been found in a separate part of the cemetery near the north slope of Mount Mithridates (Cvetaeva 1951, 75; O'Connor 1999, 86). In the 4<sup>th</sup> century, the cremations of the Pantikapean flat-ground burials were located on the south slope of Mount Mithridates and these constitute a little less than 10 % of the burials of the 4<sup>th</sup> century according to O'Connor (1999, 86, Fig. 58). This seems to be a parallel topographical situation to Sector B of Nymphaion, where, as previously mentioned, cremations mainly dating to the Hellenistic period were concentrated.

The flat-ground burials often had a standard set of grave goods, which was detectable in the burials from the 6<sup>th</sup> century onwards: oil containers in combination with a larger vessel such as an amphora, a pelike or a jug. Thus, the lekythos was by far the most popular ceramic shape in the Pantikapean flat-ground burials of both the Archaic and Classical periods (O'Connor 1999, 84, Fig. 11).

From the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> century and into the 4<sup>th</sup> century, there were a number of graves with greater quantities of grave gifts which most frequently consisted of more oil containers, wooden objects, coins, mirrors, terracottas, *strigils*, spindle whorls, dress ornaments, etc. (Gajdukevič 1971, 263; Fless & Lorenz 2005, 21). This could reflect a marked increase in wealth during the late 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries in Pantikapaion, something which has also been pointed out by O'Connor in his analysis of burials from Olbia and Pantikapaion (O'Connor 1999, 91-94). The possible increase in wealth in this particular period is not surprising as it is well established, both archaeologically and epigraphically, that the Bosporan Kingdom at this stage flourished markedly, expanding its territory and trading grain with Athens (and others) on a large scale. The wealth of the 4<sup>th</sup> century Pantikapeans and the political (and perhaps ethnic?) changes in the ruling class of the Bosporan Kingdom are often connected with the construction of numerous impressive kurgans placed in strategic positions around the city. The kurgans were quite possibly erected very deliberately in chains on the high ground and ridges of the landscape in order to improve the visual effect. Thus, one line of kurgans ran west from Mount Mithridates, one line ran to the north of the city and, to the south, the Juz-Oba chain dominated the landscape (Cvetaeva 1957, 229-231; Fless & Lorenz 2005, taf. 1-3 for maps).

The kurgan burials were often placed in very elaborate stone chambers with impressive *dromoi* leading to them – these would have been much more architecturally challenging and expensive to construct than the cist graves of mud-bricks from the Nymphaion kurgans of the same period. The burials were rather differently equipped to what we have just observed from the flat-ground burials. Often, finds of elaborate wooden sarcophagi with inlays of glass and semi-precious stone or gold have come to light, as well as coloured textiles used for wrapping the sarcophagi (Gajdukevič 1971, 275-277; Fless & Lorenz 2005, 21). The excessive jewellery and metal objects also found belong to some of the most well-known and elaborate gold finds of the Black Sea region from this period.<sup>228</sup>

The other types of grave goods mainly comprised an almost standardized set of amphoras and pelikai, but there were also drinking cups of precious metals, alabastra made from alabaster or glass, as well as *strigils* and weapons in the male burials (Fless & Lorenz 2005, 22, taf. 7-11). The weapon assemblages were combinations of Greek- and Scythian-style weapons, as for example in the Kekuvatskij Kurgan and in the central burial in the Kul'-Oba Kurgan, at the western end of the Juz-Oba chain, where Scythian-type arrowheads and daggers were found together with a Chalkidian-type helmet and Greek-type greaves (Cvetaeva 1968, 44-50; Gajdukevič 1971, 283-289; Fless & Lorenz 2005, 22-23).

The issue of the ethnic origins of the Bosporan rulers and élite of the 4<sup>th</sup> century will not be addressed here, as this scholarly debate has generated enough material for a separate study in its own right.<sup>229</sup> It is, however, safe to assume that the kurgan burials of the 4<sup>th</sup> century in Pantikapaion must have belonged to the élite, and that this élite was very aware of the strategic and visual positions of the burial mounds in the landscape, and the cityscape for that matter. Furthermore, we see a parallel situation to the 5<sup>th</sup> century kurgans from Nymphaion in the status displays incorporating the inclusion of weapons, horse equipment, jewellery and luxury items and references to drinking and banqueting.

#### *Other Bosporan localities*

The cemetery of nearby Myrmekion<sup>230</sup> is much less well explored than the cemeteries of Pantikapaion, even though investigations have been conducted there since the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It seems that the borders of the cemetery actually overlap with the borders of the northern cemetery of Pantikapaion (Kastanajan 1959, 287; Gajdukevič 1971, 258; Vinogradov, Butyagin

228 See, for example, the well-illustrated catalogue from the British Museum (Williams & Ogden 1994, 136-171).

229 So, for example, Rempel 2004.

230 See also Avram, Hind & Tsetskhladze 2004, 947-948; Vinogradov, Butyagin & Vakhtina 2003, 819-821 for a recent account of the research history of the cemetery.

& Vakhtina 2003, 819). The early investigations pointed to the fact that at least some of the earliest burials were simple pit burials dug into the ground and covered with tiles. They are dated to the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> to the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> century and contained few grave gifts such as black-figured lekythoi, amphoras and astragals. Another similar burial dating to the early 5<sup>th</sup> century had two skeletons buried in the same simple pit grave covered with three tiles. Here, a black-figured lekythos of the Haimon Group was found, as well as an iron knife, a bronze needle and a dagger of Scythian type. At the feet of the deceased two amphoras were placed (Vinogradov, Butyagin & Vakhtina 2003, 820-821). A more substantial body of burials were excavated by S.I. Kapošina in 1953 and published with a full catalogue in 1959 (Kapošina 1959). The burials date from the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> to the middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century and were mainly pit burials in the ground, again covered with tiles or stone slabs. Some of the burials had a niche closed with a stone slab in addition to the main pit or even small *dromoi*. More often the graves contained multiple burials, presumed to be family members buried in the same plot over several generations (Kapošina 1959, 108-113; O'Connor 1999, 100-101).

The grave goods consisted of red-figured lekythoi, pelikai, jugs, drinking cups and simple, red-clayed vessels such as jugs and bowls. Moreover, there were mirrors, *strigils*, alabastra of alabaster, terracottas and a little jewellery. In general, the assemblages of grave goods seem to be rather similar to the less rich flat-ground burials from Pantikapaion. Furthermore, in this respect they are also quite similar to the flat-ground burials from Nymphaion from the same period, although we may note the marked presence here and in Pantikapaion of the red-figured pelikai which was absent from Nymphaion. Additionally, it may also be noted that there is a peculiar absence of elaborate jewellery of precious metals. This may be due to the limited topographical area of the excavations, thus implying a social differentiation in the horizontal stratigraphy of the cemetery areas; or a more plausible and simple explanation may be the extensive and continuous looting of the cemetery areas of the region.

Moving further south, we may look at the evidence from Theodosia<sup>231</sup> where excavations in the kurgan cemetery area of the Quarantine Hill first began in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In later years many more kurgans were excavated, unfortunately with very little documentation or publication (Katyushin 2003, 649). In general, the cemetery of Theodosia is poorly investigated and conclusions about the burial customs must at this point be preliminary.<sup>232</sup>

The flat-ground cemetery seems to have been situated in the area to the south of the city (Katyushin 2003, map 1) and, as a rather peculiar feature, the predominant rite seems to have been cremation (Katyushin 2003, 649).

231 See Avram, Hind & Tsetschladze 2004, 951-952, for an introduction to the locality.

232 See also Gavrilov 2004, 141 on the state of information from the cemetery investigations.

According to Katyushin, all the adult burials were fully or partly cremated in wooden coffins. This amounts to an estimated 90 % (no total number given) of all burials being cremations, with the remaining 10 % primarily being *enchytrismoi* burials of children (Katyushin 2003, 655). This picture is unique in comparison with other cemeteries of the northeastern Black Sea region<sup>233</sup> and thus singles out Theodosia as an example of just how varied the attitudes towards burial customs could be within the same region and cultural sphere, hence warning us not to make too many generalizations about mortuary practices within the Black Sea region.

From the remains of the cremations, and in particular the partly cremated skeletons, it has been possible to establish that the majority of the deceased was cremated with their heads towards the southeast (Katyushin 2003, 656). In the areas around the cremation pits, traces of funerary feasts were attested in pits along with outside deposits, implying that food and drink were offered and consumed at the grave. Excavations in the cemetery during the years 1977 to 1994 yielded burials accompanied by the following grave goods: terracottas, *strigils*, red-figured pelikai and lekythoi, amphoras, silver and gold jewellery, coins, a few weapons, bronze mirrors and glass beads. Furthermore, three *enchytrismoi* burials of children in amphoras dating from the late 4<sup>th</sup> to early 3<sup>rd</sup> century were found (Katyushin 2003, 651-653). In comparison with the flat-ground burials of neighbouring Nymphaion, the grave good assemblages are not very different when viewed in this very general way. More detailed information on the composition and nature of the grave goods would perhaps enable us to detect further similarities or differences in the burial customs and speculate on the social stratifications of the cemetery areas. For now, however, the only safe assumption we can make is that the marked predominant rite of cremation in the burials of Theodosia is unparalleled in the known cemetery material from the rest of the northeastern Black Sea region, and that the more uniform approaches to grave types and treatment of the deceased, which can be detected in the burials of the localities further to the northeast, apparently had little appeal to the people of Theodosia.

### *The Taman peninsula*

Crossing the strait and moving from the European to the Asiatic Bosphoros in this short survey of burial customs in the northeastern corner of the Black Sea, the Taman peninsula offers a number of interesting localities and cemeteries.

To describe fully the cemeteries of the Taman peninsula in such a short survey as is possible here is an almost impossible task. Therefore, some key sites will be presented and references will be made to other important localities for which there is no place here for fuller descriptions.

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233 As was mentioned in Chapter 2, Orgame on the west coast had a similar majority of cremations of adults. For children, the grave type was typically *enchytrismoi* (also Mănuclu-Adameşteanu 2003, 350-352; Lungu 2004, 85-97).



The cemetery of Phanagoria<sup>234</sup> is considered the largest in the Taman. It surrounds the city on three sides (Kuznetsov 2003, 902; Morgan 2004, Fig. 2). To the east, the cemetery stretches some 2-3km along the shoreline, dominated by a large concentration of smaller kurgans which have now been levelled by the work of previous periods of excavation. The kurgan chain seems to have been placed along the ancient road leading from the east gate and parallel with the sea shore. The western cemetery also runs parallel with the sea shore and is attested for some 2km (Kuznetsov 2003, 902). As was the case for the eastern cemetery, the western cemetery is marked by a chain of kurgans, but a flat-ground cemetery is also attested here. To the south the so-called 'alley of burial mounds', consisting of two chains of kurgans, runs along the ancient road from the city gate behind Mount Pervomajskaja (Kuznetsov 2003, 902; Morgan 2004, Fig. 2). The same topographical situation seems to have been the case in Hermonassa<sup>235</sup> where the settlement was also surrounded by cemetery areas with three main kurgan groups to the west, east and south (Finogenova 2003, 1011).

The earliest investigations and excavations in Phanagoria from the 19<sup>th</sup> century are characterized by a serious lack of documentation, but later periods of research have revealed a large number of burials, mainly dating from the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century (Kuznetsov 2003, 903). The earliest burials of the 6<sup>th</sup> and early 5<sup>th</sup> centuries are only attested in very small numbers from rescue excavations (Treister & Vinogradov 1993, 557-558; Morgan 2004, 4, note 19).<sup>236</sup>

The earliest burials seem to have been simple pits in the ground roofed by wooden structures, whereas the later burials mainly consist of simple pits in the ground, cist graves made from tiles or stone slabs and child *enchytrismoi* (Kobylyna 1956, 40-41; O'Connor 1999, 101). Burials from nearby Tuzla,<sup>237</sup> presumably the cemetery of ancient Korokondamis, have yielded material from the period of the late 7<sup>th</sup> century BC to the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD. These burials illustrate quite well what we may have expected of the grave good assemblages from the early graves of Phanagoria. For example, the large amount of Ionian pottery in the 6<sup>th</sup> century is not surprising, consisting mainly of smaller amphoras, banded cups, ring-shaped askoi and banded lekythoi (Sorokina 1957, 8-11). In the 5<sup>th</sup> century, black-figured Attic lekythoi enter the scene – a shape which stays in fashion well into the 4<sup>th</sup> century, as we have seen also in so many other localities. Furthermore, the use of oil is attested through finds

234 Avram, Hind & Tsetskhladze 2004, 950-951.

235 Avram, Hind & Tsetskhladze 2004, 945.

236 One of the key figures of the cemetery excavations was M.M. Kobylyna, who excavated and published the majority of the burial material from Phanagoria during the 1950s and onwards (Kobylyna 1951; 1956; 1957). See also Kuznetsov 2003; Morgan 2004 for a full bibliography of the publications by Kobylyna.

237 For the Tuzla cemetery, see Sorokina 1957; Kastanajan 1959, 288-290; Tsetskhladze & Kondrashev 2001.



of glass vessels. Weapons are fairly rare, but finds of arrowheads (in male and female burials) and daggers in the burials from the 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries attest to their place in the mortuary sphere here as well. Personal objects such as mirrors, jewellery and *strigils* are also present, mainly in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> century burials (Sorokina 1957, 18-23). The grave types are dominated by the simple pit burial in the ground, which is the main grave type from the beginning to the very end of the chronological span of the cemetery. The pit burials are mainly covered with wooden features and often lined at the bottom with seaweed, sand or shells, in a similar manner to what was observed from the previous case-study localities.

In the 4<sup>th</sup> century, a smaller number of cist graves appeared, and, as in many other localities, the stone crypt gains popularity during from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century onwards. Sorokina further points out that child *enchytrismoi* are not attested in the Tuzla cemetery (Sorokina 1957, 50-51). This fact seems somewhat surprising taking into consideration the popularity of the grave type in all previously analyzed localities, with the exception of Nymphaion.

In general, there are very few cremation burials amongst the material and the deceased are mostly placed on their backs and orientated in an easterly direction; although O'Connor observes *a less consistent pattern of orientation than in Olbia and Pantikapaion for all periods* (O'Connor 1999, 102).

The Archaic cemetery material from the sister colony of Phanagoria, Abdera in Thrace, has yielded an impressive 239 child *enchytrismoi* in amphoras, cooking pots, smaller jars and so-called 'pithos-amphoras' (Skarlatidou 2004, 249). Further, 22 adults, a few teenagers and children were buried in simple pits, placed in both supine and crouched positions. One cist grave made from stone slabs contained a child burial. Grave goods consisted of a little jewellery and larger amounts of pottery, mainly of East Greek and Corinthian production (Skarlatidou 2004, 249). Burials from the late 6<sup>th</sup> and early 5<sup>th</sup> centuries, both under tumuli and in the flat-ground cemetery, confirm the continuation of the simple pits and the *enchytrismoi* as popular grave types, although it seems that the colonizers from Teos brought with them the customs of burying in clay and stone sarcophagi (Kallintzi 2004, 277, 279).

In general, it seems that both the slightly earlier and the contemporary burials from Abdera correspond quite well with the later burials of Phanagoria and other Taman localities, both in respect of the grave types and in the relatively modest grave good deposits and their nature.

In nearby Kepoi<sup>238</sup> also the picture is not so different. From the late 6<sup>th</sup> to early 5<sup>th</sup> century simple pit burials in the ground, cist graves made from mud-bricks and child *enchytrismoi* have been identified. Grave goods are mainly cups, amphoras and lekythoi and a smaller number of weapons and objects particular to personal use. The cemetery was relocated in the 4<sup>th</sup> century and no one was buried at the old site thereafter. As was the case with Tuzla,

238 Sorokina 1962; 1963; 1967; Avram, Hind & Tsetschladze 2004, 946.

new tomb types appeared in the late 4<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries, such as niche and chamber tombs. Moreover, the 4<sup>th</sup> century saw a significant rise in the number of kurgans in the city cemetery, just as we have seen in many of the other Bosphoran cities.<sup>239</sup>

Finally, Gorgippia,<sup>240</sup> to the very south, has yielded a large number of burials from the city cemetery situated to the east and south east of the settlement. Some of the earliest burials of Gorgippia were found while excavating settlement structures from the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC in the centre of the ancient settlement (Treister & Vinogradov 1993, 561). In her work from 2003, Alekseeva describes 22 burials dating to the first half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century (Alekseeva 2003, 959). These burials were mainly inhumations placed in simple pits, but there is also a reference to a cremation placed in a red-figured krater of presumed southern Italian manufacture. Furthermore, a child *enchytrismos* in a Chian amphora was found, as was a grave *stele* with an inscription written in the Ionian dialect (Alekseeva 2003, 959). The grave goods mainly consisted of pottery, jewellery and some weapons, but later burials also contained terracottas, especially female statuettes (Alekseeva 1982). Similar to the majority of the other coastal settlements, kurgan groups of different sizes and chronological periods were located in the immediate vicinity of the city cemetery.

In general, the Taman peninsula cemeteries seem to be characterized by many similar patterns in the burial customs and topographical layouts, although minor differences are observed from locality to locality. On the whole, the late 4<sup>th</sup> and early 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries offer new grave types, and, as pointed out by O'Connor in his work on Olbia and Pantikapaion, there seems to have been a marked change taking place in the burial customs of the region in this period (O'Connor 1999, 103). The grave goods and constructions of the burial complexes in general underline the cross-cultural complexity which has been observed in so many of the localities of the previous analyses. Furthermore, the increase in wealth in the 4<sup>th</sup> century is paralleled in the sites of the European Bosphoros and the emergence of the numerous kurgans in the cityscape testifies to a more explicit recognition and use of a visual power language, perhaps to be connected with the political situation of the region(?).

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239 In the rural areas of the Taman peninsula, the later 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries are rich in large, elaborately equipped kurgans such as the Seven Brothers Kurgan group, the Malaja and Bol'shaja Bliznica, just to name a few (Gajdukevič 1971, 296; Alekseeva 2003, 961-962. See also Žuravlev et al. 2007 for a thorough and beautifully-illustrated publication of an elaborate, although slightly later, kurgan from Kepoi).

240 Avram, Hind & Tsetschladze 2004, 944.

## Chapter 6 Summing up the Black Sea burial evidence

This chapter offers a short summing up of the results of the analyses of the Black Sea localities and puts forward some suggestions for the place of burial data in the contexts of cultural interactions and creations of identities in the region.

### 6.1 The results of the analyses

Firstly, we may consider some of the central conclusions which have resulted from the detailed analyses of the previous four chapters.

#### *Phase 1 and 2 (c. 550-480)*

By far, the data from Olbia constitutes the largest and most statistically valid body of evidence from these early periods. Comparative material is mainly to be found in localities in the northwestern region, although Nymphaion offers a smaller body of material from this period as well. There are several important observations which can be made from the Olbian material.

Firstly, we may note a homogenous approach to the use of grave types (four main grave types: pit burials, *enchytrismoi*, sarcophagi and niche tombs). There seems to have been a well-established tradition for elaborate burials, often in wooden sarcophagi and enclosed in family clusters; the latter phenomenon is paralleled in many of the localities in the northwestern region in the same period. There is certainly a differentiation of age groups, both in the spatial layout of the cemetery at Olbia and in the grave structures and grave goods. Perhaps the differentiation was primarily related to the children of the less well-to-do strata of the population, since the more well-equipped (and, presumably, more wealthy) family burials often contained children buried in the same grave types as adults, with more elaborate sets of grave goods than met in the burials in general.

Generally, the burials at Olbia featured an unparalleled high number of metal deposits, both of precious metals and of other kinds of metals, as well as a substantial number of 'luxury' imports such as elaborate alabaster and glass vessels. This is seen in contrast to contemporary material from Pantikapaion, Nymphaion and other northeastern localities, as well as localities in the northwestern corner of the Black Sea region. This tendency can probably be correlated with an equally high number of grave goods per grave and high

NOT-values, reflecting very varied sets of grave goods (for example, items from the varia group see a steady increase). We may also point to a relatively high number of burials with weapon deposits compared with other contemporary Black Sea localities and the broader Mediterranean world.

On a general level, the burials at Olbia display a very diverse and multifaceted attitude to burial customs, both in terms of rather wide parameters for individual taste and/or family traditions to be practised within the circle of relatives or others who arranged the burials, and in terms of the use of objects and customs with both Greek and Scythian cultural affiliations. Mention should also be made of the emergence of indications of Orphic beliefs, which various material groups testify to, and to which we shall return in the following chapter.

In many ways, the burials from Olbia constitute a unique pool of burial data from this period in the Black Sea region, and no published material from any other coastal locality can match the material in terms of its quantity, variety and richness.

Elaborate status expressions can also be identified in Istros and Orgame, where the tumuli of the late 7<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries display cremation burials accompanied by both human and animal sacrifices (primarily horses). The assemblages of grave goods, however, are quite modest and do not reflect the extraordinary material from Olbia. Thus, it seems that the main focus in these western cities was on outward status displays and power manifestations achieved through the visual effects of tumuli and, possibly, funeral processions with horses and slaves or other humans for sacrifice.

#### *Phase 3 (c. 480-400)*

Although we lack substantial material from Olbia, the general data from the 5<sup>th</sup> century is quantitatively better represented and available from more localities than those from the earlier periods. However, in the case of Kerkinitis, it is probably too optimistic to think that we can feel confident about there being a broad representation among the 5<sup>th</sup> century data.

Differentiations of age groups were observed in Kerkinitis and Panskoe I, whereas the material from Nymphaion, in general, seems less conclusive in this respect –in terms of differentiations between age groups and also genders. In Panskoe I, the emphasis on high status burials of females and children burials could perhaps indicate that ‘the family and bloodline’ were being displayed as status markers. Perhaps this was a specifically important feature of smaller agrarian societies, in contrast to the male-dominated public world of the polis.

In general, it seems that the 5<sup>th</sup> century burial customs were characterized by greater variation among grave types and treatment of the deceased. In Kerkinitis, Panskoe I and Nymphaion there was a marked tendency towards more complexity, perhaps reflecting more social competition within the mortuary sphere. This complexity is also reflected in the assemblages of grave goods in

Panskoe I and Nymphaion, whilst the burials from Kerkinitis display a significantly low number of archaeologically identifiable grave goods and low NOT-values. This phenomenon is also observed in the presumed high status grave types (cremations in cists and kurgans) which have single deposits of precious grave goods (gold and other precious metals). Thus, there seems to be solid evidence to suggest that the number of (archaeologically identifiable) grave goods was not an indicator or marker of wealth in the Kerkinitian burial customs. We may point to an emphasis on outward status displays rather than on elaborate sets of grave goods.

*Phase 4 (c. 399-270)*

The body of material from Phase 4 is by far the quantitatively largest and most representative from all the case-study localities (with the exception of Olbia), and in respect of comparative material from the northern Black Sea region in general.

The complexity and variation within grave types and treatments of the deceased continue and, especially in Nymphaion, this development is visible through more variation in, for example, the positions of the deceased, the relation between inhumation and cremation as well as the occurrence of multiple burials. The same phenomena were observed for Panskoe I, where the high quality of the data further allows for observations of a rarer nature, such as the practice of *cenotaph* burial, the deposition of skulls, anthropomorphic *stelai* found *in situ* and the use of meat and other foodstuff in the burial customs. Furthermore, in Nymphaion there is a noticeable development within the assemblages of grave goods with tendencies towards more variation and complexity, and generally the Classical and late Classical burials seem to have a very conscious approach to expressions of identities and status displays.

Material displays of elements which relate to both traditional Greek and Scythian objects are typical to all localities, but particularly to Panskoe I. The burial data seem to reflect strong relations with both cultural spheres, to which we will return below.

In most localities in Phase 4 across the northern Black Sea region, younger children were fully distinguished and differentiated in the burial record by interment in ceramic containers (*enchytrismoi*), most often amphoras. Importantly, this custom is not observed on any significant level in the material from Nymphaion, which sets this site aside from the majority of the Black Sea localities as well as a great part of the Mediterranean world. The reason for this specific situation in Nymphaion could perhaps be found in a topographical bias of the material, but it was most likely to have been driven by social motivations such as the invisible burials of infants (= non-persons) or differential approaches to perceptions of age groups. However, there is in Nymphaion a very distinct pattern in which burials containing oil-related ceramic shapes are mainly adult burials, whilst those with drinking/serving vessels are primarily child burials. Hence, it may be plausible to suggest a

distinction between age groups in the burial customs reflected in the choice of grave goods, at least for the 4<sup>th</sup> century.

Another prominent feature of the burial data from Phase 4 is the many indications of social and socio-political being strategies reflected in the funerary material. In Kerkinitis, previous research has interpreted the kurgans as markers of an ethnic Scythian element in the rural population. However, on the basis of the present analyses, the kurgan burials do not seem to diverge from the flat-ground burials in terms of ethnicity, but rather they follow a culturally complex display pattern of higher social status. Furthermore, there seem to be close similarities between the kurgans of Kerkinitis and nearby Kalos Limen, which all blossomed primarily in the 4<sup>th</sup> and early 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries. This is in direct opposition to the situation in Chersonesos where kurgans are not observed in or near the city cemeteries. A number of different explanations can be suggested for this phenomenon. Perhaps the populations of Kerkinitis and Kalos Limen had a closer connection to the north where the burial *koine* of the Lower Dnieper region, including Panskoe I, featured kurgans and more obvious similarities in the assemblages of grave goods. Perhaps we may even go so far as to suggest that there were socio-political motives behind the blooming custom of using kurgans; that is, they were a means of distancing oneself from the new regional power – a classic example of resistance theory. Further, the different indigenous hinterlands of Kerkinitis/Kalos Limen and Chersonesos could perhaps also have played a role here, since the Taurians of the Crimean mountains did not bury in kurgans whilst the Scythians of the steppe region to the north did. It is very likely that these visual and cultural influences from the adjacent indigenous territories played a significant role and they should be taken into consideration here.

Another important example of socio-political influences and reflections in the burial data is the kurgans of Nymphaion. These are very dominant in their display of status and power in the 5<sup>th</sup> century, mainly based on the inclusion of weapons, horse equipment, precious jewellery and drinking- and banquet-related vessels and objects. This picture undergoes a radical alteration in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, when oil-related vessels (and *strigils*) suddenly gain popularity. In the present study, these changes have been explained in socio-political terms, rather than within the framework of the previous ethnic approach to the material. The complexes of the 5<sup>th</sup> century are viewed as reflections of an independent society with a strong élite attempting to resist the upcoming regional power, the Bosporan Kingdom. In contrast, the complexes of the 4<sup>th</sup> century are seen as the result of the recently subdued society adapting to the new power structures by the adoption of much less dominant élite expressions. This argument is further strengthened by the appearance of kurgans with weaponry and luxury items in 4<sup>th</sup> century Pantikapaion in much the same fashion as was seen in 5<sup>th</sup> century Nymphaion.

In conclusion, I suggest that the élitist status displays in all the different chronological periods of this study were shaped and constructed to accom-



modate an audience which, in the Black Sea region, furthered a culturally complex idiom, drawing on kurgans/tumuli, weapons, horse equipment, elaborate jewellery, banquet-related objects, etc. These features would have struck responsive chords with wide circles of the multicultural societies where social and cultural identities were manipulated to fit the order of the day. In many ways, though generally on a smaller scale, the more ordinary burials seem to have followed similar local, culturally complex schemes of social competition and differentiations on various levels.

Also, in terms of the different social and political situations of the four localities analysed in detail, there are obvious impacts on the mortuary evidence. Although we need to exercise caution in these matters, convincing arguments can be constructed to support the notion of there being distinct variations in the funerary record based on, for example, city versus rural settlement (such as in the case of Chersonesos versus Panskoe I), or political currents (Nymphaion versus the Bosporan Kingdom).

In general, for all periods studied here issues of gender have been approached with caution. This is a result of the observation that a considerable number of burials from all locations contained combinations of objects from both traditional male and female spheres. Burials with deposits of both jewellery and weapons have been encountered, as have anthropologically sexed male burials containing jewellery, spindles and other objects traditionally ascribed to the female sphere. Moreover, anthropologically sexed burials containing females (and children) accompanied by weapons and horse equipment are not uncommon amongst the analysed data. Not only do these instances warn us against sexing burials on the basis of (prejudiced) 'gender-related' objects and deposits, they also further underline the complex and sometimes unpredictable expressions of identity which often work across modern concepts of borders, be they gender- or age-related, social, geographical, political or ethnic.

Studies of the orientation of the deceased have at best yielded tendencies from the various periods. There does not seem to be much variation or development in a chronological perspective, and the general easterly orientation prevails at most localities throughout the time span of the study. Deviations from the easterly orientation have been observed, sometimes tentatively linked with age groups or gender, but only in a few instances are these backed up by further common features to support a theory of proper differentiation.

## **6.2 Looking for aspects of cultural interaction in the burial data**

It is of utmost importance to stress that the burial material is only one strand of all the available material which can be used to elucidate aspects of cultural interaction. To create a fuller picture of such a complex process, different archaeological contexts (settlements and sanctuaries) as well as epigraphic and historical sources must be tied together and weighed against each other.



However, such lengthy and broad analyses have not been the aim of this study and would in every way exceed both the practical limitations and the original objective of the work. Having said this, there is still the possibility within these limitations to suggest that *aspects* of cultural interaction, and perhaps even of hybrid identities, can be deduced from the material.

During the analytic process of the four case-studies, the possibility of there being different cultural backgrounds for several types of features and objects has been encountered and highlighted again and again. Compared with many of the Greek settlement sites in the Mediterranean, it is obvious that the coastal settlements of the northern Black Sea region offer a very interesting and culturally complex mortuary record. During my treatment of the burial data I have tried to free myself from the fixed notion of there being 'Greeks and Others', and I have approached the funerary evidence with an open mind, making an effort to avoid any inexpedient ethnic categorizations. The conclusive results of this approach may seem minimal to some and perhaps vague to others who prefer more daring interpretations of the archaeological record. Nevertheless, I present the following thoughts as an alternative understanding of how inter-cultural processes could have influenced the formation and perception of identities in these societies.

The motivations for using specific cultural features and objects in burials, as in real life, may derive from various incentives, for example:

- The wish to express a direct affiliation with a specific culture (for example, 'the deceased was Scythian');
- A tradition within, for example, the family of expressing a certain cultural background of descent (for example 'our grandmother was Greek');
- Expressions of status and prestige (for example, elaborate weaponry, precious jewellery, horses etc);
- As part of social competition (for example, 'our neighbour was buried with an anthropomorphic *stele*, our family must now do the same');
- Trends and fashions;
- Technology (for example, Scythian arrowheads were the best and the most readily available on the market or Greek pottery was the most hard wearing);
- Convenience and practicality (for example, Scythian-style trousers were warm and comfortable in the freezing winters).

These examples may seem trivial, but nevertheless they are realistic motivations, although each is very difficult to identify and separate in a mortuary context. However, no matter which motivations we prefer to see in the material record, one thing is certain: these visual messages were created to suit specific local environments and, in particular, specific local audiences. Naturally, we may ask how broad an audience funerals would have attracted, and it is probably safe to conclude that elite burials must have had broad local

and regional audiences. More common burials would have been, likewise, important social events, but would have taken place in a more local setting where status displays were obvious companions to the practical side of parting with the deceased. In these cases it seems that the local audiences were well acquainted with the several different culturally complex components of the burial customs which belonged in a specific local environment which understood and used this multifaceted 'symbolic language' across the boundaries of the modern perception of one ethnic group versus another.

Hence, I suggest that the people who inhabited the coastal settlements of the northern Black Sea region were fully aware of the symbolic values and potentials signalled by the various multicultural components, since they identified themselves on the basis of such cross-cultural features. In this line of argument, we may further seriously question whether expressions of Hellenic identity held a top priority in borderland regions where multicultural everyday lives must have been the reality. Similar doubts have been expressed by several researchers concerning identities in *Magna Graecia* (Lomas 2004), particularly by Hall who suggested that cultural influences and the formation and perception of identities were strongly connected with social strategies, taking their point of departure in much more narrow milieux/circles than that of a wide Greek (Hellenic) identity (Hall 2004, 50). For the Black Sea funerary material, I have emphasized that local social processes were more readily expressed, which supports Hall's assumption that the social identities of everyday practical life played a much more significant role than expressions of broader definitions of ethnicity.

In the following chapter, comparisons between the Black Sea material and the data from southern Italy will be presented, but for now it seems obvious to conclude that the evidence calls strongly for a reappraisal of the idea of cultural influence being a 'one-way' process. On the basis of the results of the present analyses, as well as the general perceptions of cultural identity in colonial research, it is no longer possible to support the notion that Greeks never changed and were immune to influences from other cultures.

To my mind, the material record tells not of isolated ethnicities but of mixed populations and hybrid identities which could be negotiated and manipulated to fit specific situations. One of the most obvious examples of this is the *Nymphaion* kurgans where the structure and entire composition of the élite burials were closely linked to the radically different socio-political situations which the élite had to face in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries. The complexes of the 5<sup>th</sup> century were composed by several hybrid and universally recognized components which would have been understood by the broadest possible audience as manifestations of independence, status and power. The kurgan complexes of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, however, reflect the alteration in the political situation with a radical shift in the nature of the expression of identity which was adjusted to fit the new order of the day.

In conclusion, the individual sets of burial data which this large area has

offered have given a varied and at times complex picture, with both similarities and differences in the approaches to burial customs, as well as to the expressions of identities which they reflect. The geographical, social, political and chronological aspects of the analyses have added a broader horizon to many of the trends which developed both simultaneously and individually from locality to locality, and from region to region.

However, in an attempt to grasp a better understanding of the cultural complexities, as well as the internal and external dynamics of the burial material, many of the results may benefit from a comparative input from sepulchral landscapes outside the northern Black Sea region. Thus we now turn to southern Italy.

## Chapter 7 From the Black Sea to southern Italy

This chapter offers a comparative overview of the funerary customs practised in contemporary localities in southern Italy. The main aims of the chapter are: a) to provide the data from the Black Sea region with a set of comparative perspectives; and b) to compare two macro-scale colonial milieux and the ways in which cultural interactions and social strategies might have influenced the funerary expressions in these two different parts of the so-called 'Greek' world.

The choice of southern Italy for this comparative exercise is based on a number of factors. Firstly, the region offers some solid data sets as well as a variety of studies, both recent and older research, which cover the chronological period c. 550-270, and thus present an obvious comparative basis for the Black Sea material. Not only do these studies offer a significant body of comparative material, but recent research has, additionally, yielded a number of important contributions on ethnicity and cultural identity in the region.<sup>241</sup>

Secondly, my previous work on this region (Petersen 2003) yielded some interesting perspectives from comparative studies of the burial material from Olbia and Taras, which call for further consideration of the cultural complexities of these regions. Finally, recent studies, mainly undertaken by employees of the Black Sea Centre in Aarhus, have demonstrated evidence of remarkably varied contacts between the Black Sea region and southern Italy – contacts which have, until now, been addressed in very few studies.<sup>242</sup> The studies by the Black Sea Centre show that the contacts between the Black Sea region and southern Italy were not only of a material nature, but quite probably also of a social and/or spiritual character, implying a similar set of religious beliefs

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241 For example, Shepherd 1995; 1999; 2005; 2006; Lyons 1996; Lomas 1997; 2000; 2004; Lomas & Cornell 1997; Antonaccio 2001; 2004; Horsnæs 2002.

242 For the Centre's publications, see Hinge 2004; 2008; Guldager Bilde 2005; 2008; Petersen & Handberg 2006. Comparative studies on the Black Sea region and the western Mediterranean have appeared, but have mainly focused on isolated, individual particularities of the different localities rather than common features of a material and/or social/spiritual character (so, for example, *AttiTaranto 40*; Carter 2006). See, however, Blázquez 1999; García-Gelabert 1999, for assessments of the material as well as of mythological relations between the Iberian Peninsula and the Black Sea region. Aspects of the contacts between the two regions also form the basis of an ongoing research project conducted by Dr Vasilica Lungu, Budapest; see, most recently, Lungu 2009.

and approaches to such fundamental aspects as, for example, life after death (for example, Orphism). These similarities were perhaps furthered by convergent living conditions in colonial milieus where cultural interaction played a central part in the creation of hybrid identities (so Hinge 2004; 2008; Guldager Bilde 2008; Petersen 2010).

The following 'survey' is structured in a similar manner to the previous treatments of the material from the Black Sea region. Hence, different aspects of the burials will be addressed in the traditional chronological order from the Archaic to the early Hellenistic period. The lower chronological limit of c. 270 which was applied to the Black Sea region coincides remarkably well with the limit for the southern Italian material, as provided by the Roman conquest of Magna Graecia in that very same decade. The point of departure for this chapter will be the localities which have been selected for their high degree of relevance for the particular line of study followed here. The main sites which will contribute to this chapter are Taras, Metaponto, Locri and Poseidonia.<sup>243</sup>

The mortuary record for Taras is impressively large, but, in general, it is not very easily accessible. In previous research, there has been a tendency towards 'object group' publications, where certain graves were published because they contained a certain type of object, be that Laconian or Corinthian pottery, terracottas, gold jewellery, Ionian figure-vases or athletic equipment.<sup>244</sup> Due to intensive modern building activity, the ancient city and its cemeteries are all under modern concrete and, as a result, many of the publications in the *NSc* and other publications tend to focus on burials from certain limited topographical areas, such as a street or a land plot where rescue excavations have been carried out (so, for example, Bartoccini 1936; Drago 1940; Moreeschini 1988). Naturally, this has left a rather biased data pool and this must be taken into consideration when analysing the material.<sup>245</sup>

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243 Additional evidence from other localities will naturally be incorporated when relevant.

244 Just to mention a few examples: Pelagatti 1955-1956; Lo Porto 1962; 1967; De Juliis 1984; Neeft 1994; Graepler 1997; see also Dell'Aglio 1994, 18-37 for a collected bibliography on the research history of the Tarantine cemeteries.

245 Efforts to collect together the funerary material in one study have been initiated by the joint German/Italian database project TARAPLAN which contains more than 12,000 registered graves from the Greek and Roman periods. Regrettably, the database is still not available to the public as I complete this study (winter 2010). The database is to be hosted by the Bering & Brinkmann Verlag on the Dyabola homepage, [www.dyabola.de](http://www.dyabola.de) (see also Bering & Graepler 1991, 351-371 for a presentation of the database project). For the purpose of this study, I have collected and registered in my own database some 228 graves, covering roughly the period c. 550-270. The database material will be supplemented by the data from Hoffmann 2002, an assessment of Tarantine graves with Apulian red-figured vases from the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries. Hoffmann deals with a very large group of graves which I have considered representative for the period in question despite the 'object group' focus of the publication; after all Apulian red-

For Metaponto, I draw on Carter's thorough and detailed publication of the rural cemeteries at Pantanello. This study offers excellent material, clearly presented and easily accessible for comparative analyses. It is, of course, necessary to keep in mind that there may be social differences between the material from rural and urban cemeteries, and thus, the material from Pantanello should be viewed with this precaution in mind.

The Locri material is somewhat problematic; it seems that the publications in *NSc* by Orsi from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were composed according to the graves which Orsi himself, for some reason or another, found interesting – some 1,675 graves were excavated but only 162 were published (Orsi 1917, 101; Redfield 2003, 220). Thus, there is apparently a heavy bias in the published material record here due to ignorance of, for example, graves with very few or no grave goods.<sup>246</sup>

For Poseidonia, the main study used here is Horsnæs 2002, which offers a recent and excellent overview of the burial material from both Poseidonia and its hinterland.

It must be stressed that the localities are not in any way seen as a unit in themselves, and that both their mortuary records and social situations were not necessarily similar or directly comparable across all the chronological periods in question here. It should also be stressed that many localities on Sicily are of utmost relevance for this study as well. The reason for the primary focus on the mainland material stems mainly from practical limitations laid down by the scale of this work, rather than from a scientific priority.

### 7.1 The Archaic to early Classical period (c. 550-480)

Compared with the available Black Sea data from this period, the localities of Magna Graecia yield a much larger and more statistically valid corpus of mortuary material. This can perhaps be explained in terms of chronology since the colonies of the West had been founded somewhat earlier than the Black Sea colonies and thus were much more established by the mid 6<sup>th</sup> century than the settlements in the Black Sea region. Also, it seems that southern Italy and Sicily were more densely settled than the Black Sea region, at least at this relatively early stage.

Looking at the material record, several interesting features emerge.

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figured vases were a very significant part of the grave goods in the majority of the Tarantine graves of the period.

246 References will be made to this material, but with caution in mind (Orsi 1911; 1912; 1913; 1917).

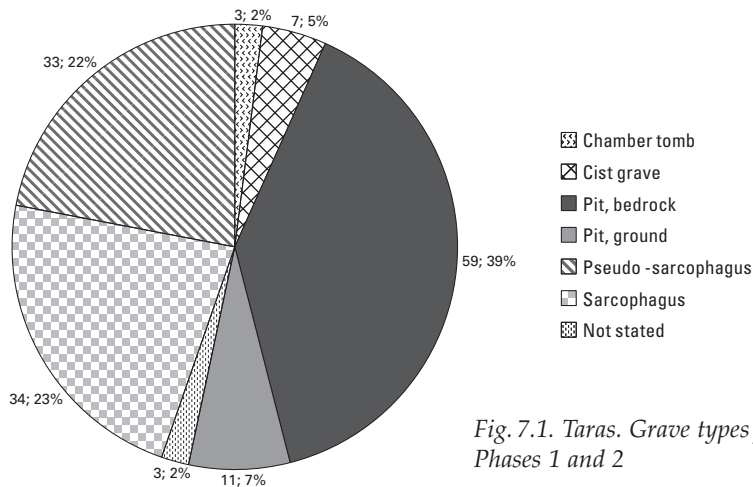


Fig. 7.1. Taras. Grave types from Phases 1 and 2

#### *Grave types and treatment of the deceased*

For Taras,<sup>247</sup> the evidence from Phases 1 and 2 is quite extensive, comprising some 150 graves registered in the database. The different grave types are depicted in Fig. 7.1. From the diagram it becomes clear that there were several different grave types in existence in this period. Pit burials cut in bedrock constitute the most common grave type among the material. These graves are described as being cut in a rectangular shape from the bedrock and often covered with one or more plates of stone or terracotta. According to the dates suggested in the publications, the pit burials in bedrock are found throughout the entire period of Phases 1 and 2. In contrast, simple pits dug in the ground constitute only 7 % of the graves. Similarly to the pit cut into the bedrock, this pit can also be covered with one or more plates of stone or terracotta. The chronological spread of this type shows that the largest concentration is to be found at the beginning of the period, from c. 550-550, whilst only one burial is dated around c. 525. After this, the grave type seems to disappear from the late Archaic grave repertoire. The evidence from Metaponto<sup>248</sup> (Pantanello) displays a similar picture – the pit burial dug in the ground is popular in the period predating c. 515, whereas it seems to decline in popularity in the following period (Carter's period of 515-461; Carter 1998, 61, table 3.2). In Posei-

247 Founded from Sparta c. 706, according to the testimony from Eusebius as well as early ceramic finds (De Juliis 2000, 9; Slej & Göransson 2001, 20; also Hansen & Nielsen 2004, 299-302).

248 Founded by Achaeans from Sybaris, according to Strabo, some time in the early second half of the 7<sup>th</sup> century. However, archaeological material seems to point to a date in the late 7<sup>th</sup> century (Carter 1998, 7; also Hansen & Nielsen 2004, 279-282).



donia<sup>249</sup> the grave types of the 6<sup>th</sup> century burials do not show much variation, with the majority of the burials being simple pits, although burials placed on tiles and child *enchytrismoι* appear towards the end of the century (Horsnæs 2002, 159). From Locri,<sup>250</sup> Cerchiai (1982, 289) mentions simple pits as being the most common grave type for the early burials until about the middle of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, when other types enter the scene (see below).

From Taras there is also quite a substantial group of burials in sarcophagi (Fig. 7.1., 23 %). The sarcophagi are mostly made of stone and terracotta (some painted), but there are two much smaller groups made up of sarcophagi made of tiles and pseudo-sarcophagi partly cut in the bedrock and partly built of stone plates.<sup>251</sup> In general, it seems that the sarcophagi gained popularity especially from c. 520 toward the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century. This picture is mirrored in the Pantanello material, where there is a steady rise in the number of stone sarcophagi from c. 515 and onwards throughout the 5<sup>th</sup> century (Carter 1998, 61, table 3.2). Poseidonia and other Lucanian sites do not appear to feature sarcophagi, at least not on any significant scale (Horsnæs 2002, 54-56).

In Taras, cist graves are fairly rare in Phases 1 and 2 (5 %) and are mostly rectangular pits lined with tiles or, more rarely, with stone slabs. The type is most popular at the beginning of the period, c. 550- 530, whilst the only later Archaic cist burial is dated around c. 490. From the data of the later Phases 3 and 4, it seems that the cist burials declined throughout the 5<sup>th</sup> century but regained popularity during the 4<sup>th</sup> and early 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries (see below). This picture is interesting compared with the Lucanian evidence which also features the use of tiles already from the late 6<sup>th</sup> century, when, amongst other things, they were used to cover child burials (Horsnæs 2002, 54). Stone and tile cists occur in the material from Pantanello in the period from c. 515-461, but, as with Taras, only on a fairly small scale (Carter 1998, 61, table 3.2).

A special group of graves within the set of Tarantine burials is constituted by the chamber tombs.<sup>252</sup> While the grave type becomes increasingly popu-

249 Founded by Achaeans from Sybaris sometime near the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> century (Hansen & Nielsen 2004, 287-289; also Skele 2002, 18-27).

250 Founded in the first decades of the 7<sup>th</sup> century by Locrians, perhaps with participation from Taras (Hansen & Nielsen 2004, 273-278).

251 In many cases, nails of either bronze or iron are found in the burials, which could, of course, point to the use of wooden sarcophagi as well (see also Boschung 1994, 180), although the occurrence of nails can be attributed to other reasons (see, for example, this volume, Chapter 2). Furthermore, we may remember the evidence from Lucania for the hanging of grave goods on the walls of the tomb, which could also be an explanation for the occurrence of nails inside the graves (Horsnæs 2002, 55). The Tarantine chamber tombs have also yielded evidence for this practice (Lo Porto 1967, 86).

252 From the Archaic period only three of the allegedly eight chamber tombs (Graepler 2002, 206) have been published to a standard which met the criteria of the database. Access to the TARAPLAN database would most probably yield the necessary level

lar in many localities during the course of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, not just in Magna Graecia, only a few chamber tombs are known from other localities in the Archaic period (Kurtz & Boardman 1971, 312). In Poseidonia, as in many other Lucanian sites, chamber tombs only occur in the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century and continue into the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, and, in Poseidonia especially, a tradition for elaborately painted chamber or *cassa* tombs arises (Horsnæs 2002, 55-56, 160).

The Archaic Tarantine chamber tombs are either constructed with a rectangular or a square ground plan, and can be built with or without a *dromos*. The tomb itself is built with large blocks of limestone and the roof is supported with one or more central columns, often of the Doric order. The burials are all in stone sarcophagi and there is often more than one burial in the same chamber tomb. The earliest of the three chamber tombs in the database of this study is dated c. 530, whilst the other two are placed around c. 490-480. The interpretation of the chamber tombs has been greatly debated ever since Lo Porto (1967) published them as 'athlete's graves'. A more recent and quite appealing interpretation is given by Maruggi, who suggests that the chamber tombs must be understood as demonstrations of power by a well-established Tarantine élite who used athletic equipment, amongst other objects, as references to the world of the *gymnasium* in their power displays (Maruggi 1997, 29). From Metaponto some monumental tombs from the urban cemetery at Crucinia have recently been published by De Siena (2008). The rich finds, including elaborate metal objects, led De Siena to suggest that the monumental tombs must be closely connected with the aristocracy and the political situation in the Archaic period (De Siena 2008, 10-11).

Generally, we may conclude that the evidence from Taras reflects a marked preference for tombs cut from the bedrock or more elaborately constructed of processed stone slabs (cists, sarcophagi or chamber tombs). This may reflect a tendency towards more labour-intensive choices rather than simpler and perhaps cheaper grave types such as earthen pits.<sup>253</sup>

The material from Taras only features inhumations placed in supine positions. The most common burial type is the single burial (63 %), although 10 % of the burials are double or multiple burials, either of adults or adults and children. There is a large group of burials (27 %) which has no specific information on the number of interred individuals, but we may presume that they were probably single burials, as multiple or double burials tend to be mentioned as a 'special feature'.

The double or multiple burials were interred in a variety of grave types, from pits to sarcophagi, and cists to chamber tombs. The majority of these burials were double burials of adults, and, in two instances (B39 and B70),

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of information on this important group of monuments, and its publication is eagerly awaited.

253 There does not seem to be any indication of a particular bias in the material towards an over-representation of rock-cut tombs.

a child was also interred with the adults. A straightforward interpretation of these complexes would be as family-related groups, but, unfortunately, the data do not give any information on the genders of the deceased, which could have strengthened this hypothesis further. Carter mentions nine multiple burials in total from Pantanello, of which two (T131 and T191) belong to the Archaic period. In general with regards to the Pantanello multiple burials, Carter states that: *Few necropoleis of this size, either Greek or indigenous, had so many* (Carter 1998, 108). Nonetheless, further down the same paragraph several early Greek sites in Sicily and southern Italy which feature multiple burials are mentioned. It should be stressed here that the evidence from Taras demonstrates much more than the one multiple burial mentioned by Carter (Carter 1998, 108, note 182). As discussed earlier, multiple burials have often been associated with indigenous burial customs, but the evidence from most localities seems much less clear-cut on this matter than from the conclusions reached via an ethnic discourse. At the very least, the evidence from the early phases of Taras should warn us against a one-sided approach to the understanding of double and multiple burials, since no other features (including the assemblages of grave goods) bear any markers which could point towards a specific cultural affiliation.

As in Taras, inhumations in supine positions are also the most common treatment of the body in both Pantanello and Poseidonia (Carter 1998, 59, 66; Horsnæs 2002, 56). However, there are examples of burials (five) with crouched skeletons from Pantanello, although they have proved difficult to date precisely (Carter 1998, 64-66). As with Taras, burials with skeletons placed in crouched positions are not mentioned for Poseidonia or Locri in this period, but the evidence from the hinterland of Poseidonia yields ample examples of inhumations placed both in supine and in crouched positions of varying degrees (Horsnæs 2002, 57). Here, both customs seem to have flourished until the 5<sup>th</sup> century, when inhumations in supine positions gradually took precedence. In Sicily, the evidence for crouched burials is likewise ample, as it is in the coastal settlements. As with the Black Sea region, crouched skeletons have been central in the debates about indigenous ethnic markers in burials. However, recent research tends to question strongly the validity of skeletal positions as 'a sure guide to ethnic identity' (Carter 1998, 59; Shepherd 2005, 123). Horsnæs sees the crouched positions of northern Lucania as a marker of cultural (not ethnic!) identity working in combination with other specific cultural features, such as the inclusion of a particular local cup type and the use of matt-painted pottery of the Ruvo-Satriano class (Horsnæs 2002, 136).

Like Taras, cremation does not seem to have been practised at Pantanello in the Archaic period. However, despite Carter's testimony that there are no cremations from Poseidonia (Carter 1998, 104), Horsnæs mentions a few examples of early cremations (urns placed in simple pits) from the 6<sup>th</sup> century cemeteries (Horsnæs 2002, 159). In the Poseidonian hinterlands there are also examples of cremations from the 6<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries. In general, the Luca-

nian cremations have been interpreted as evidence of Greek burial customs, but Horsnæs argues that the rite was not common to the Achaeans of Greece 'proper' in the Archaic period (Horsnæs 2002, 57) and neither, may we add, to the settlements on the southern Italian east coast, with the exception of Siris, where almost all 7<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> century adult burials were secondary cremations placed in amphoras or other containers (Berlingó 1986, 120-121). Furthermore, the 'Greekness' of the cremation rite is seriously challenged by the fact that the central Italian areas practised cremation as the predominant rite from the Early Iron Age onwards (Horsnæs 2002, 57). The debate is in many ways similar to the discussion of Thracian *contra* Greek burial customs in the western Black Sea region. Here, traditional research has argued back and forth with regards to the ethnic origin of cremation burials in the coastal areas, with reference to both Thracian and Greek prerogatives (also this volume, Chapter 2). Meanwhile, there is ample room to speculate on the motivations behind choosing the rite of cremation: display of (higher?) social status could be one factor, as could transportation over longer distances (for at burial 'at home') or the practical need to purify a socially or physically infected body for hygienic purposes (also Horsnæs 2002, 136).

### *Orientation*

For Taras, the orientation of the graves does not seem to be directed towards any specific direction. Fig. 7.2 depicts the orientation of the 89 burials from Phases 1 and 2 which have specific information on this matter. As demonstrated by the figure, there is a tendency towards orientation in an easterly direction but there are large groups with northerly and southerly orientations as well. The results of a database query on the relation between age groups and orientation show no immediately recognizable patterns, as both adults and children were buried with varying orientations. The same phenomenon is apparent when the query is concerned with the relation between orientation and grave type.

For Pantanello, Carter states a predominant southeasterly orientation for the majority of the burials, with a few exceptions (Carter 1998, 179). This phenomenon lasts until c. 325, when a radical shift took place and the predominant orientation became northwesterly. Assessing the evidence in more detail, it becomes evident that during the early phase at Pantanello, which is more or less chronologically comparable with our Phase 1 from Taras, the majority of the burials were placed with a southeasterly orientation, whilst orientations towards the northeast and northwest account for smaller percentages. The following period, which coincides with burials from Taras Phase 2, sees a less varied picture with only southeasterly (predominant) or northwesterly orientations (Carter 1998, 459). Correlations between age groups and genders have also been made for the Pantanello material, although here they have been made according to each individual chronological phase. The results are very similar to those from Taras; no marked

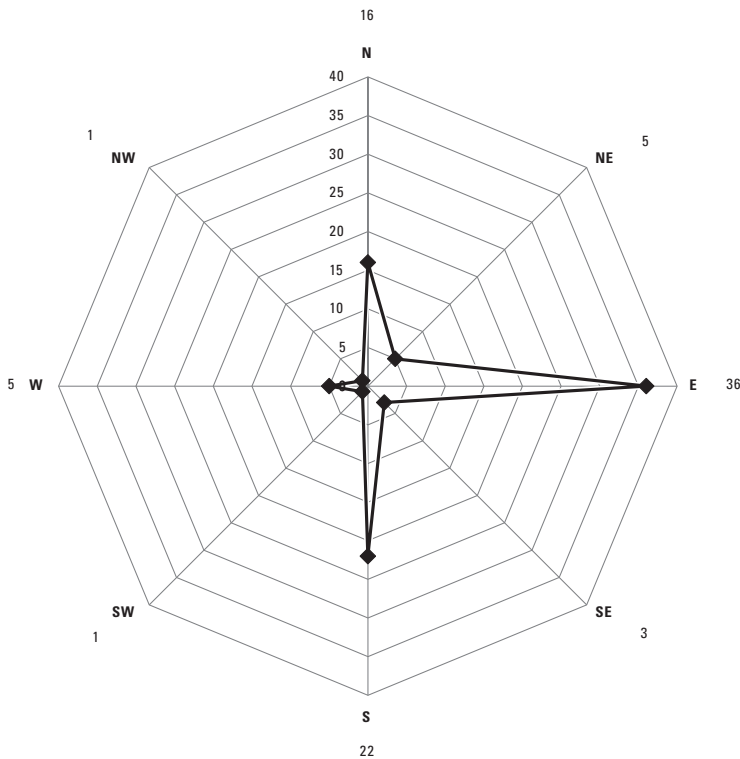


Fig. 7.2. Taras. Orientations of burials from Phases 1 and 2

differentiation of tomb orientation could be linked with specific gender or age groups (Carter 1998, 460). For Locri there is no mention of orientation being a differential marker of gender or age groups in the analyses conducted by Cerchiai (1982, 290-291).

#### *Age groups*

In general, child burials from Taras are found within all grave types from Phases 1 and 2, with the exception of the chamber tombs which seem to have been restricted to adult burials. The majority of graves (62 %) can be classified as adult burials, while 10 % can be classified as child burials.<sup>254</sup> This low number of child burials mirrors some of the Black Sea case-study localities and probably reflects, as they do, a differential attitude towards child deposition, as has been discussed on several occasions previously. Neeft concluded that separate burial plots for adults and children could be a feature of the Tarantine burial customs (Neeft 1994, 197-198). I would add that non-visible burials for children should also be considered a plausible explanation for this

<sup>254</sup> Moreover, there are two burials with an adult(s) and child and a large group (27 %) which has no information on either age or grave size.

low number. It is also worth noting that *enchytrismos* burials of children have been identified neither in the material from the periods under consideration here nor for the later phases – a phenomenon which seems to indicate that this burial custom was simply not used in Taras, or, less likely, was restricted to a separate burial plot yet to be discovered.<sup>255</sup>

Comparing the situation observed in Taras with the evidence from Pantanello, a very similar picture is produced. In the earliest period (before 515) there are no identified child burials among the material, while the subsequent period sees just five child burials (25 % of all burials in this period). The conclusion reached by Carter is very clear – certainly a large number of children were, for one reason or another, excluded from burial at Pantanello or were buried elsewhere (Carter 1998, 144). Meanwhile, it does seem that at later stages child burials were concentrated in specific areas of the cemetery. Carter mentions Nucleus 3 as an example, although he rejects the possibility that the area could be regarded as a child cemetery as such (Carter 1998, 147). However, such considerations are difficult to apply to the Tarantine data which are much too incomplete and topographically problematic, and they can, in general, rarely be more than speculations unless a full set of cemetery material, such as the Pantanello evidence, is at hand.

From Siris there is evidence for a differentiation of children and juveniles, which tend to be inhumed, from adults, which are mainly cremated (Berlingó 1986, 120-121). For the evidence from Locri, the analyses by Cerchiai yield only the length of the grave as a differential factor between adult and child disposals, and there do not appear to be any distinct differences between the burials of children and adults (Cerchiai 1982, 293). For late 6<sup>th</sup> century Poseidonia, Horsnæs mentions burials of children in *enchytrismoι* (Horsnæs 2002, 159), and, in general for the West and Sicily, *enchytrismoι* seem to have been the predominant rite of disposal of children from the early days of the colonial settlements and onwards (Lyons 1996, 25; Shepherd 2006, 312).

Indeed, the evidence points in the direction of a general differential attitude towards the burial of children, and it may be added that the analyses from the Black Sea localities have proven rather informative on this matter as well. As demonstrated in Chapter 2, there is ample evidence of a differentiation based on both age and social status from late 6<sup>th</sup> century Olbia, and perhaps the results from Taras should be viewed in the light of these conclusions. Conceivably, the visible child burials among the early Tarantine material are characterized by a common level of higher social status, while the lower (or even non) status child disposals were either not visible burials or were grouped in a separate area as suggested for the burials in Sector II of Olbia(?).

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255 We may note the similarity between the treatment of child burials in Taras and Nymphaion, where *enchytrismoι* were also very rare (this volume, Chapter 5).



*Grave goods*

The assemblages of grave goods from Archaic Taras mainly consist of ceramics; of the 1,273 grave objects registered in the database, 1,074 are ceramics (84 %). Jewellery is represented by 118 pieces, items from the GFA group by 20, from the personalia group also by 20, weapons by only 3, terracottas by 8, whilst items of the varia group are represented by 30 pieces. There are no tools amongst the grave goods. The ceramics were found in 149 out of the 150 graves and the average number of ceramics per grave is 7.2. All ceramics are from so-called 'Greek' production centres, and thus no local matt-painted pottery has been found in the burials.<sup>256</sup>

Breaking down the period under consideration into Phase 1 (c. 550-520) and Phase 2 (c. 519-480), an interesting pattern emerges. From previous analyses (Petersen 2003) a marked shift in the pottery shapes and their presumed functions was observed from Phase 1 to Phase 2.

*Table 18. Taras. Percentages of graves in which specific grave good types have been identified from Phases 1 and 2*

Object types	Phase 1	Phase 2
Ceramics: drinking/banquet-related	90.8 %	61.5 %
Ceramics: oil-related	43.8 %	67.3 %
Jewellery	21.3 %	25 %
Personalia	6.1 %	13.4 %
Varia	9.2 %	19 %

Thus, there is a marked shift in the burial customs from an emphasis on drinking/banquet-related objects in Phase 1, towards oil-related objects in Phase 2. The jewellery deposits are more or less equal in each of the two phases, while deposits of items from the personalia and varia groups see an increase from Phase 1 to Phase 2. The most common combination of ceramics is a cup and amphora, which was also the case in the contemporary graves from Olbia (this volume, Chapter 2). Also similar to Olbia, the cup and jug is fairly popular, while the combination of cup and hydria is restricted to the Tarantine material.

Comparing the deposits and combinations of ceramics from Taras with those of Poseidonia, it becomes clear that there are similarities to be found.

<sup>256</sup> A very interesting find of c. 350 pieces of so-called Iapigian pottery came to light during excavations in the area of the urban cemeteries in 1880. The hoard came from a well and was interpreted as a sign of religious purification of the indigenous cemetery area before the foundation of the Greek city (Graepler 2002, 203).



Although the late 6<sup>th</sup> and early 5<sup>th</sup> century graves in Poseidonia in general contain many fewer items of grave goods, it seems that the overall picture of an emphasis on drinking/banquet-related vessels in the 6<sup>th</sup> century (cups, amphoras, jugs, stamnoi – a few of them local ware) followed by an emphasis on oil-related vessels (lekythoi) after c. 500 is paralleled here (Horsnæs 2002, 64, Fig. 20).

At Pantanello, ceramic (and other) deposits dated to before 515 are very sparse and cannot contribute, even on a general level, to the discussion. However, after 515 the situation changes markedly and a drastic rise in deposits of lekythoi can be observed (Carter 1998, 566, table 12.3). There are also more deposits of amphoras and cups, but the lekythoi are clearly the dominant shape of the period. The preference for oil-related shapes can also be seen in the sudden appearance of alabastra. The combination of alabastron and *strigil*, however, does not seem to appear until the succeeding period, when there is a marked rise in the deposits of these objects (Carter 1998, 566, table 12.3).

For Locri, there is a distinct change around the middle of the 6<sup>th</sup> century, and it seems that the grave goods are now certainly much more important with regards to expression of social identity and status (Cerchiai 1982, 291). There is a noticeable rise in grave goods deposits and also an increase in the variety of the objects. Where the previous period mainly saw a few ceramic deposits per grave, the burials of the late 6<sup>th</sup> and early 5<sup>th</sup> centuries demonstrate deposits of jewellery, mirrors, *strigils*, wooden boxes, pyxides, lekythoi, alabastra and drinking cups (Cerchiai 1982, 291).

The only grave from Taras that does not contain either drinking-/banquet- or oil-related vessels is grave B43. This grave, a pit dug from the bedrock, was equipped with two athlete's weights, four nails, a spearhead and a *strigil*. There are clearly both athletic and warfare connotations in this assemblage of grave goods. Deposition of weapons is only attested in one other grave in the material, grave B57 (two spearheads, an Attic black-figure cup and four iron nails). For Poseidonia there are no registrations of weapons in the burial material of the late 6<sup>th</sup> and early 5<sup>th</sup> centuries (Horsnæs 2002, 64-65, Fig. 20), but, as we will see below, this picture changes during the second half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century. From Locri, Cerchiai (1982, 292) mentions two graves (748 and 754) with weapons and horse equipment (also Orsi 1913, 32). At Pantanello, weapons are only attested in one burial which dates to the period c. 440-370 (see below).

From the Tarantine hinterlands the localities of Ginosa and Laterza have yielded late 6<sup>th</sup> and early 5<sup>th</sup> century élite(?) burials, often in stone cists, equipped with weaponry (mainly spearheads and swords, but also more elaborate weaponry sets with helmets, greaves and horse equipment)<sup>257</sup> and in one case also a *strigil*. The ceramic deposits which accompanied these weapon assemblages featured a mix of local matt-painted and Greek products, mainly drinking-

257 From two elaborate pit burials with painted walls (Tinè Bertocchi 1964, 122).

and banquet-related shapes, but there were also bronze vessels and serving equipment, such as a strainer (Dell'Aglio & Lippolis 1992, 40-59, 76-82, 114-124, 162-166). Similar elite burials with weapons and mixed pottery came to light during excavations at the inland site of Botromagno in Puglia (Whitehouse, Wilkins & Herring 2000, 302-304). The excavators perceive the burials as indigenous burials which incorporate Greek traditions (wine drinking) and used weapons and Greek objects as status symbols within their own local system of power (Whitehouse, Wilkins & Herring 2000, 305). However, as an alternative interpretation, I suggest that the simple pit burials, the weapon deposits and the pottery assemblages of drinking- as well as oil-related shapes may indicate that these people had well-developed ideas about general status displays, and placed themselves within a local rural context, where elements from different cultures were used by a hybrid population group regardless of ethnicity.

Sites closer to Taras<sup>258</sup> show assemblages of grave goods which are much more consistent with the city material, and it is likely that the influence of the city weakened as the distance from it increased. Parallels for this pattern are also found in the Lucanian evidence where, notably, helmets and swords have turned up in various hinterland sites (Horsnæs 2002, 77-81), while the main city, Poseidonia, became increasingly 'Greek' in its grave good assemblages.

I suggest that this evidence should be viewed as a reflection of a rural cultural hybridity, rather than as a division between Greeks in the cities and indigenous people in the hinterland. Hall (2004, 45) clearly has reservations about these interpretative possibilities for this particular body of material:

*The receptivity of indigenous elites to Greek prestige items and status markers such as bronze hoplite armour, the accoutrements associated with the symposium, or even Homeric-style burial is well documented, but the adoption of these elements has less to do with cultural assimilation than with the appropriation of symbols whose efficacy in legitimating leadership and authority was guaranteed by the difficulty of their acquisition (Hall 2004, 45).*

In response to Hall's position, it should be noted that there are no indications or evidence that supports the theory of 'Greek prestige items' being difficult to obtain or acquire for an indigenous elite. Hall seems to base his position

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258 Casino Siciliano (5<sup>th</sup> century) (Osanna 1992, 27); Capo S. Vito (5<sup>th</sup> century) (Osanna 1992, 28); possibly Lucignano di Talsano (5<sup>th</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries) (Osanna 1992, 29); Leporano, loc. Amendulo (6<sup>th</sup> century) (Osanna 1992, 29); Leporano, loc. Purgatorio (7<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> centuries) (Osanna 1992, 31); Leporano, loc. S. Marco (6<sup>th</sup> century) (Osanna 1992, 31); Lizzano, loc. La Toretta (Archaic period) (Osanna 1992, 31); Roccaforzata (Archaic period) (Osanna 1992, 34); possibly S. Giorgio Ionico, loc. Belvedere (Archaic period) (Osanna 1992, 34); Monteiasi, loc. Stazione Ferroviaria (6<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> centuries) (Osanna 1992, 35); possibly Crispiano, loc. Amastuola (7<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> centuries) (Osanna 1992, 36).

on a 'top-down' picture to explain why these population groups would use such items as status markers – they admired the Greek lifestyle! We may complicate matters by suggesting that hybrid identities manoeuvred within sophisticated power languages with cross-cultural symbolic connotations which would touch chords with a wide, culturally complex audience. Thus, it is feasible to widen our vision to see these material expressions in a social rather than an ethnic light. In this line of thought the emphasis is not so much on the division between ethnicities or the boundaries between groups, but rather on a common symbol language resting on the perception of *identity as not only multi-layered and constantly changing in response to the needs and priorities of particular communities, but also varied throughout the western Mediterranean* (Lomas 2004, 3).

On a general level, it seems that the Archaic assemblages of grave goods from the southern Italian localities in question are slightly more homogeneous in their composition than the contemporary Olbian assemblages, which had a great variety of grave good types and a high percentage of, for example, tools and weapons. However, we may wonder whether Archaic Olbia was not a special case, even for the Black Sea region. Despite the poorer evidence, the Archaic graves from Nymphaion and Pantikapaion are closer to the simplicity of the southern Italian assemblages than to the Olbian ones.

## 7.2 The Classical period (c. 480-400)

The 5<sup>th</sup> century body of evidence from Taras is markedly smaller than that from the previous phases. Only 25 graves are registered in the database from this period.<sup>259</sup> Meanwhile, it must be noted that there is a large group of graves without grave goods within the Tarantine material. These graves are naturally difficult to date and it has been discussed previously whether they belong in the Archaic or in the Classical period (Neeft 1994, 185). A more recent point of view puts the majority of the 'empty' graves in the Classical period, coupling them with the Tarantine democratic reforms of the 470s, and thus suggesting a regulation of mortuary practices towards a stricter set of burial customs as a result of these political events (Graepler 2002, 207-208).<sup>260</sup> In many ways, this theory seems compelling and offers an interesting and plausible explanation for the remarkably low number of datable 5<sup>th</sup> century burials. However, as will be demonstrated below, several sites have yielded a larger number of 'empty' graves tentatively datable to different periods, often to the 5<sup>th</sup> century, and there may be a social as well as a political dimension to these more sparsely equipped or even 'empty' graves.

259 Graepler (2002, 208) notes 40 known graves from the period 470-400 in the unpublished TARAPLAN database.

260 For a similar interpretation of the 5<sup>th</sup> century Athenian burial data, see Graepler 2002, 210 with references.

*Grave types and treatment of the deceased*

Grave types in the Tarantine material from Phase 3 more or less continue in the tradition of the previous phases. The pit burial, still executed in bedrock and sometimes covered with stone plates, and the stone sarcophagi are still dominant features. Among the 25 graves only one cist grave is registered, but it is difficult to determine whether this is actually a reflection of a decrease in this grave type or simply a result of the poor data set. The chamber tombs of the 5<sup>th</sup> century are of much the same construction as their Archaic predecessors, although there is a gap of almost 50 years from the latest Archaic chamber tomb (B50, c. 480) to the first late 5<sup>th</sup> century one (B123, c. 430). This gap could possibly also be explained by the (potentially) biased material of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, but perhaps it is feasible to suggest that this change in élite funerary displays could also tie in with the democratic reforms mentioned above(?).

For Pantanello, the periods 515-461 and 460-426 see a marked rise in a number of different grave types compared with the 6<sup>th</sup> century, which had only earthen constructions. Stone constructions now appear either as cists or sarcophagi, sometimes with a tile cover. Additionally, different types of tile graves, a *cappuccina*, cists, a 'bathtub' and Laconian tiles to cover child burials are encountered, as well as a single example of a plaster-lined pit, which was to become increasingly popular in the following period (Carter 1998, 61, table 3.2). Carter suggests that the burials of the early 5<sup>th</sup> century relate mainly to a more prosperous group of the population at Pantanello, whereas the middle of the century sees a much wider segment of the population disposed in visible burials (Carter 1998, 178, 193). Rather than interment in actual *enchytrismoi*, children were mainly interred in Laconian tile tombs and simple pits, although there are no strict rules to be observed on this matter. At the very least though, it seems that there was some kind of differential attitude towards child burial, although this does not appear to have been strictly dictated.

In Poseidonia, the simple pits were now covered with travertine slabs, some even dug into the soft travertine bedrock. Similarly to Pantanello, plaster-lined walls of tombs began to appear in the 5<sup>th</sup> century. Among the burials from the Santa Venera cemetery (c. 475-425), some 15 tombs had traces of white plaster. One of the most famous tombs from this period is probably the unique Tomb of the Diver from the Tempa del Prete cemetery some 2km outside Poseidonia. With a complete set of 'Greek' grave goods (a lekythos, a lyra and two aryballos mouths), the tomb features paintings of a *symposion* on all four sides, and the famous diver scene on the inner side of the lid (Horsnæs 2002, 159-160; also Pontrandolfo, Roveret & Cipriani 2004, 19-24). In Locri, the mid 5<sup>th</sup> century sees a new grave type, the tile cist, which continues to be in use into the 4<sup>th</sup> century when the *a cappuccina* tomb gains considerable popularity (Cerchiai 1982, 289).

Cremations were still not practised in Taras or Pantanello in the main part of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, and the Santa Venera cemetery at Poseidonia only featured inhumations in slab covered pits (340 tombs in total) (Carter 1998, 103;

Horsnæs 2002, 160). For cremation burials in Locri, Orsi (1917, 160) mentions the existence of secondary cremations placed in ceramic containers but no chronological periods are specified. Furthermore, Redfield (2003, 220) mentions that one in 10 burials from Locri is a cremation but does not specify what period this observation is related to.

In all localities the deceased are placed in supine positions, although the small group of crouched burials from Pantanello is not securely identified within any certain period, as mentioned above. From Taras, there are two multiple burials – one of two adults interred in a stone sarcophagus (B134) and one of three adults placed in a simple pit covered with stone plates (A305). Moreover, the chamber tomb B123 featured three adults in individual stone sarcophagi. From Pantanello the only multiple burial from the 5<sup>th</sup> century, presumably of a young mother and her child, was uncovered in grave T210 (Carter 1998, 110, table 3.18). Generally, there seem to be few multiple burials from this period compared with the previous periods. However, we may mention the famous example from Locri of a young couple buried side by side and encircled by a massive number of astragali (some 1,400 in total = c. 350 animals!) (Orsi 1913, 11-12).

### *Orientation*

The orientation of the burials from Phase 3 in Taras is a little varied: 11 burials were oriented towards the east, one towards the southeast, five towards the south and two towards the north (five burials were without specific information on orientation). In Pantanello, the period 515-461 features orientation only towards the southeast (most common) and northwest (less common). However, in the subsequent period, c. 460-426, orientations towards the southwest and northeast also feature among the burials (Carter 1998, 459, graph 9.2). For Poseidonia, Horsnæs (2002, 160) reports a general easterly orientation of the burials from the Santa Venera cemetery.

By and large, when looking at the grave types and orientation of the deceased, it appears that the material from Taras and Pantanello points in the direction of more complex and varied approaches towards this aspect of the burial customs than the slightly more homogeneous picture from Poseidonia.

### *Age groups*

Within the Tarantine material there are only two identifications of child graves (J10(a) and A4++). Both are stone sarcophagi with lengths of 1.01m and 0.8m. The child in sarcophagus A4++ was accompanied with only one grave good item – a cup placed on the lid of the sarcophagus. The child in J10(a) received markedly more items, in the form of six cups and four iron *fibulae*. These quite diverse approaches to the otherwise rather elaborate disposal of a child are rather interesting and could perhaps reflect a similar attitude towards the expression of wealth and status through grave goods as has been the case in some localities in the Black Sea area. Apparently, grave goods were not neces-



sarily used in a display of wealth or status, but were perhaps more affected by or even subject to personal taste or individual family tradition(?). The custom of placing grave goods on the lids of sarcophagi or on the stone slab covers is quite common in this period.<sup>261</sup> The child burial J10(a) is also the burial with the most numerous items of grave goods of all the graves from Phase 3. In general, the adult burials were sparsely equipped and even in the chamber tomb B123 two of the three sarcophagi were without grave goods, whilst the third was accompanied by a Panathenaic Prize amphora and two cups – all placed on the sarcophagus lid.

This picture of sparse grave goods is mirrored in the Poseidonia material from the Santa Venera cemetery, where the burials, in the main, held very few objects (often a lekythos) and a large group of 57 burials were without any grave goods at all. Interestingly, it seems that this latter group contained a high percentage of burials of adult men over 40 years of age (Horsnæs 2002, 160). The motivation for this differentiation by gender and/or age group is not easily grasped. In a traditional interpretative framework of ancient Greek society, it may come as a surprise to find an adult male group disposed of in such modest manner. The possibility of these being slave burials or burials of the lower social strata is not likely, as has been observed by Horsnæs (2002, 161). At the very least, the above-mentioned evidence from Taras (as well as from numerous other Greek settlements of the period) rather supports the idea that a marked change towards grave good depositions took place during the 5<sup>th</sup> century, and that the display of status was probably not necessarily directly proportional to or linked with the number of grave goods.

In Locri, however, Cerchiai seems to present a general picture of rather elaborate funerary deposits,<sup>262</sup> although we should bear in mind the potentially biased material mentioned earlier. It is, of course, rather difficult to judge fully the extent of a move towards sparser funerary depositions when precisely the sparsely equipped burials have been excluded from the published material!<sup>263</sup>

It may be added that not all localities seem to have followed this minimalist approach towards grave good deposits. At Pantanello, the periods 515-461 and 460-426 saw a marked increase in deposits of various kinds of objects, notably drinking-related ceramics and items from the personalia group such as mirrors, *strigils* and jewellery (Carter 1998, 566, tables 12.3, 12.4).

261 The practice is also noted in contemporary burials at Pantanello, notably T350 which had 11 pieces of pottery arranged around the lid (Carter 1998, 116).

262 Redfield, on the other hand, observes that Locrian assemblages of grave goods are scant compared with Sicilian cemetery material, although, again, there is no mention of what specific period is being referred to (Redfield 2003, 221).

263 This must also account for the observation on the disposal of older children, which are generally thought to have been disposed of in a similar manner to the adults (Cerchiai 1982, 293).

*Sacrificial pits*

There is no mention of sacrificial pits or other similar structures in the Tarantine material, which may just as well be a result of the fragmentary registration and excavation record as a solid piece of evidence for their non-existence. However, there seems to be quite a number of sacrificial pits from all periods of the cemetery's use at Pantanello, where the practices of outside deposits, funerary feasts and post-funerary rituals are well attested (Carter 1998, 115-123). More detailed excavation reports would most probably have revealed similar practices for other localities, but it is rare to find this kind of information recorded.

*Grave goods*

The assemblages of grave goods from the Tarantine Phase 3 material are truly less numerous and varied than the grave goods of the previous phases. From the 25 graves, 71 items of grave goods have been registered. Of these 71 pieces, 60 are ceramics, five are jewellery, two are from the GFA group, three belong to the personalia group and one to the varia group.

Ceramics are represented in all 25 burials of the period. The main production centre is still Attica, although a larger number of red-figured vessels, which are presumed to be local products, Apulian or Lucanian, now turn up.<sup>264</sup> The most interesting point here is the complete lack of matt-painted pottery, otherwise widely distributed in the Apulian area (see, for example, Dell'Aglio & Lippolis 1992, 153-157). There are two main deposition patterns; the first is the deposit of oil-related vessels, often a single lekythos or a pair of lekythoi, an askos or an aryballos. This phenomenon can be observed in 13 graves. The second main deposition pattern is related to drinking cups (as was also the case in the previous phases) which occur in 11 graves. Around half of these have more than one cup, whilst the other half feature only one cup, often in combination with one or more lekythoi. The previously favoured amphora is now only represented in two assemblages, while jugs are found in three graves – always deposited with cups. The only new shape is the pelike which is found in two graves as single deposits.

Looking at the ceramic deposits from Poseidonia, the general tendency towards oil-related shapes can be observed here as well. Looking at Horsnæs' Figs. 20-21, a much more homogeneous picture arises when comparing the later 5<sup>th</sup> century with the late 6<sup>th</sup> and early 5<sup>th</sup> centuries (Horsnæs 2002, 64-65). The lekythos and alabastron are now markedly dominant, often in combination with *strigils*. Cups, amphoras and other drinking-related shapes are increasingly rare and occur mostly in isolated instances. The finds of aryballos mouths are interesting. Used for leather aryballoi, they appear to be a rela-

264 For the sometimes problematic identification of these production centres and their products, I rely solely on the identifications in the various publications, since such matters would by far exceed the limitations of this study.



tively short-lived trend within the period c. 480-450. There is also evidence of several leather aryballoids with metal mouths, from which the body is rarely preserved.<sup>265</sup>

In general, the level of information from the various publications seems to be rather sparse on the identification of production centres, and the majority of the vessels in Horsnæs' Figs. 20-21 are unidentified. What may particularly interest us here, however, is the (presumed) lack of local matt-painted pottery (also Horsnæs 2002, 62-63). This brings us back to the observations of the Archaic period, when matt-painted pottery was not found in the burials of the urban areas and the deposition patterns seemed to be rather 'Greek' in their composition – both in local and regional perspectives, but also in a more general Mediterranean perspective as well (such as the shift towards oil-related vessels during the early 5<sup>th</sup> century).<sup>266</sup>

For the remaining object groups of grave goods, the Tarantine material features very little variation. There are two alabaster alabastra, one of which was deposited together with two lekythoi and a *strigil* (in grave B134). The five pieces of jewellery are all iron *fibulae* of the leech type, while the only other metal objects are eight iron nails (from B138) and a bronze mirror (from A305). Weapons, terracottas and tools are completely absent from the material.

Dissimilar to the general observations on the material from Taras, the evidence from Pantanello shows a marked increase in deposits of jewellery, most notably *fibulae* and pins, in the second half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century. This corresponds well with the general picture observed from the deposits of ceramics, and could reflect a tendency towards a more socially competitive conscience in the funerary sphere, rather than the opposite trend observed for Taras, Poseidonia (until the very end of the century) and perhaps Locri.

Locri is, of course, famous for its deposits of mirrors and other supposedly 'female' grave goods, but male tombs were also well-equipped, often with *strigils*, and one tomb had an athlete's weight similar to the Tarantine examples mentioned earlier (cremation tomb 944, Orsi 1913, 47). Another Locrian burial (Grave 624; Orsi 1913, 16-17) contained a collection of agricultural equipment, which seems to be the first evidence of objects from the tools group that were so popular in the Black Sea region.<sup>267</sup> However, these examples appear to be rather isolated incidences and can not be taken to indicate a general trend or even a shift in the attitude towards burial customs.

At Pantanello, the only grave equipped with a weapon belongs to this

265 For Pantanello, see Carter 1998, 199, 201, 818, 819 with references to other finds and localities including Poseidonia, Siris and Athens.

266 For this trend, see Kurtz & Boardman 1971, 209.

267 Also Braund 1994, 115 for the frequent deposits of agricultural implements in Colchian burials.

period.<sup>268</sup> T315-2 held the skeleton of a male of c. 28 years. He was interred in a *a cappucina* grave, with an iron spearhead placed between the right elbow and the chest. The only other grave good was a single pyxis.

In Poseidonia, a group of burials of the late 5<sup>th</sup> century features an impressive quantity of weapons compared with previous periods. The burials which come from the Gaudo and Santa Venera cemeteries have been identified as evidence of an indigenous segment of the population – probably a sign of the new Lucanian population in Poseidonia (Cipriani 1996; Horsnæs 2002, 67, 97). The period which antedates these burials featured a very homogeneous ‘set’ of grave goods – namely the lekythos and/or alabastron and the *strigil* – which was found in the majority of the burials (Cipriani 1994, 171, 174-177; Horsnæs 2002, 64-65, Figs. 20-21). This pattern seems to dominate the data until sometime in the late 5<sup>th</sup> century (perhaps around c. 425 or slightly later), when the deposition pattern changes character. Firstly, the burials display a marked increase in drinking-related ceramic shapes, such as cups and jugs, notably the olla, which had a prominent place in many of the inland cemeteries of the region (Horsnæs 2002, 67-68). The lekythos was less common and the alabastron was completely absent as was the *strigil*. Grave goods in the form of jewellery (*fibulae*, finger rings, bracelets, necklaces, beads and pendants), a few knives, lance/spearheads, breastplates and the so-called ‘Samnite belts’ are very common indeed (Cipriani 1996, 140-158; Horsnæs 2002, 65, Fig. 21). Generally, there is a marked increase in the number of objects per grave compared with the sparsely furnished burials of the previous periods. The entire group of ‘weapon burials’ has the deceased placed in a supine position, with most of the grave goods placed at the feet. The sudden change of character in the assemblages of grave goods, the deposition patterns and the strong emphasis on weapons and jewellery surely indicate a radical shift which was quite possibly connected with different social values and manifestations of status. It should be stressed that this seems to be an isolated development for Poseidonia. Thus, such fundamental changes in the funerary material at the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> century have not been observed at other localities (Taras, Metaponto, Locri, etc.). It is very likely that at Poseidonia the social changes which are reflected in the burials were furthered by fundamental changes in the population, as suggested by Cipriani (1996) and Horsnæs (2002, 97), and that here we are dealing with a new élite with a different cultural background, communicating their newly-acquired status in death as well as in life. At the very least, we may conclude that the ‘weapon burials’ of late 5<sup>th</sup> century Poseidonia indicate a rather obvious and convincing case of population movement.

For this discourse on the 5<sup>th</sup> century, one important topic still stands unaddressed: namely that of the Orphic elements for which evidence has allegedly been found in many burials in Magna Graecia. In this study, the evidence is

268 The burial belongs somewhere in the period c. 440-370, which means there is a slight overlap with the early part of Phase 4 of this study.

perhaps most apparent in the burials from Locri, Hipponion and on a smaller scale in those from Pantanello. This is by no means the place for venturing into a detailed and exhaustive discussion of the evidence for Orphism in Magna Graecia, but the evidence for the practice of the belief both in southern Italy and in the Black Sea area demands a small discourse at this point.

Firstly, it may be important to present briefly some of the elements on which the interpretation of the Orphic beliefs in both southern Italy and the northern Black Sea area rests. One of the most direct bodies of evidence for the practice of Orphism is the large group of inscribed tablets found in numerous burials all over the Mediterranean world, but in a notably high number in southern Italy (Pugliese Carratelli 1993). These texts are mainly concerned with instructions to the deceased on how best to act on their journey towards the happy afterlife of the initiated. One of the most famous and detailed tablets was found at Hipponion in the grave of a young girl<sup>269</sup> dated to the late 5<sup>th</sup> or early 4<sup>th</sup> century (Foti 1974; Pugliese Carratelli 1993, 20-31; Redfield 2003, 338). A more recent find of a papyrus from a burial in Derveni in Macedonia also offers a detailed account of the eschatological thoughts behind Orphism (Betegh 2005).<sup>270</sup> Meanwhile, as was mentioned in Chapter 2, the earliest epigraphic evidence for Orphic beliefs is attested in Black Sea contexts from Olbia (the Demonassa mirror and the inscribed bone plaques).

For the archaeological evidence in general, however, the record is slightly less direct. A number of objects could probably have served a specific purpose or have been deposited with connotations to Orphism, but most of them are objects which are also common in broader burial contexts. In the main, it is probably safe to say that Orphic burials rarely stand out archaeologically in specific or distinctive ways, apart from those which contain inscribed tablets, from more common burials (Morris 1992, 17; Carter 1998, 184). The tablet aside, the example from Hipponion would have been difficult to recognize as

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269 The young girl was interred in a *cappucina* tomb. She was placed in a supine position with the skull in an easterly direction and accompanied by 14 items of grave goods. Two bolsal cups and a lamp were deposited outside the tomb. Inside were found a small undecorated jug, a bronze ring, two miniature undecorated hydriai, fragments of bronze jewellery, a bolsal cup, a golden finger ring, a lamp, two lekythoi and, placed on the upper part of her chest, the gold tablet with inscription (Foti 1974, 93-107).

270 The papyrus was found in a large cist grave (Tomb A) which contained an impressive number of metal and clay vessels, jewellery and various smaller objects. Betegh also mentions a large bronze krater which contained remains of a cremation as well as two funerary wreaths, oinochoia and other drinking vessels, a lamp, several alabastra, glass objects, ivory figurines, bronze rings, several dozen *strigils* and many astragals. Moreover, the remains of the funeral pyre contained spearheads, greaves, a horse harness and yet another wreath, small objects such as astragals, glass objects and two eyes of ivory, as well as fragments of clay column capitals (Betegh 2005, 57). In general, the group of burials to which Tomb A belonged was very richly and elaborately equipped (Betegh 2005, 56-59).

an Orphic burial on the basis of the layout of the grave and the grave goods alone. However, it is possible to identify some elements from the burials which *could* have Orphic connotations. Firstly, we may consider the lyre which is said to be a Dionysiac instrument used in the *dithyrambs* together with the *aulos* (Carter 1998, 820; Landels 1999, 61-68). There is evidence of the deposit of lyres in 5<sup>th</sup> century burials from Locri (Graves 996, 1050, 1143 with tortoise lyres, and perhaps even more examples; Orsi 1917, 165-167) and of an *aulos* (Grave 1050; Orsi 1917, 104). From Pantanello, Grave T336-1 held a tortoise lyre (Carter 1998, 820-823) and lyres are also attested from Poseidonia (Horsnæs 2002, Fig. 20). Both the lyre and the tortoise<sup>271</sup> seem to have played significant roles in Locrian iconography, which is evident in several representations of tortoises on smaller objects such as mirrors (Redfield 2003, 318-324). In fact, mirrors are another type of object which have some connection with the Orphic beliefs (Carter 1998, 184 with reference to the mirrors in the Olbian burials). However, the interpretation of the use of mirrors as grave goods is probably multi-faceted and may have both social and religious connotations according to the context. Redfield (2003, 320, 330), for example, sees mirrors as symbols of marriage rather than 'linking them with initiatory and ecstatic ritual'. Naturally, it is tempting to refer here to the inscribed Olbian mirror mentioned above, but, as demonstrated in Chapter 2, the Olbian mirrors were deposited in very differential contexts and assemblages, which makes their interpretation both complex and manifold, as is also the case for the many finds of mirrors in Scythian burial contexts. However, it is interesting to note that both Locri and Pantanello had very frequent deposits of mirrors, compared with Poseidonia and Taras, as well as other Greek localities.<sup>272</sup> From Locri, there are several iconographic representations of Dionysian themes which could have connections with Orphism – an example being the fantastic terracotta figurine depicting an ecstatic maenad (from Grave 934; Orsi 1913, 45-47; also Orsi 1917, 118-119). Another group of possible Orphic objects – also known from late 6<sup>th</sup> to early 5<sup>th</sup> century Olbia – is that of bells and rattles (see this volume, Chapter 2). As previously stated, literary and iconographic evidence testify to their extensive use in the practices of the cult for Dionysos and their occurrence in burials is widely known from numerous cemeteries (Villing 2002, 289-290). They are also attested in the material from Locri (a bell: Grave 739; Orsi 1913, 27, note 1; a rattle: Grave 1614; Orsi 1917, 136) and from Morgantina (Lyons 1996, 105). However, as mentioned earlier, bells are also

271 Tradition has it that Hermes invented the lyre out of a tortoise shell (Landels 1999, 61-68 with references).

272 Orsi (1911, 22) called the Locrian cemetery 'the cemetery of the mirrors'. Pantanello has 26 mirrors which equates to 8% of all burials (Carter 1998, 184). Mirrors are modestly represented in both Poseidonia and Taras (Horsnæs 2002, Figs. 20-21, 25; Taras: two from Phase 2, one from Phase 3 and three from Phase 4). See also Carter 1998, 184 for comparisons with other Greek localities.

associated with the cult of Demeter and are also found in numerous Scythian burials in the Black Sea region either as part of a horse's harnesses or on a pole connected with shamanic rituals (Villing 2002, 272). Thus, it is difficult to point to one interpretative path for the bells and rattles in the burials.

For the later evidence from Taras, there are ample examples of jewellery in the form of ivy wreaths, bronze mirrors and terracotta figurines with motifs from the Dionysian sphere (maenads, satyrs, nymphs, etc.) which could testify to the practice of Orphism in Taras (Graepler 1997, 184-185), as could the numerous Dionysian depictions on Apulian red-figured vessels found in the burials (Hoffmann 2002, 168-169). Carter (1998, 67-69) proposes that a group of burials from Pantanello with white plaster covering the deceased (like a shroud?) could have connections with Orphism, but this is only a tentative suggestion.

Looking back to the evaluation of the funerary evidence from Olbia, there is little to point securely in the direction of Orphic beliefs other than the famous inscribed mirror and perhaps the bells and rattles. Neither lyres nor plaster coverings have been found in these burials, nor for that matter inscribed Orphic tablets. In later periods, evidence of Orphism is most probably attested in the iconography of a group of small terracotta altars (Guldager Bilde 2008, 32-33).

Meanwhile, we may still speculate on the occurrence of early 5<sup>th</sup> century evidence for Orphism on the shores of the northern Black Sea and on the southeast coast of Italy – perhaps as reflections of similar colonial mindsets in a foreign environment where hybrid cultures and cultural identities were in constant negotiation(?) (also Hinge 2004; 2008; Guldager Bilde 2008; Petersen 2010). In terms of cultural interaction, it is obvious to ask: can these Orphic cults and rituals be taken as evidence for Greek religious practice appealing only to those who had a Greek cultural background and, if so, may we interpret the evidence for these religious activities as clear markers of Greekness? Firstly, it is important to stress that the popularity of Orphism seems to have been very strong in the so-called colonial milieux where identities were probably more dynamic and flexible, possibly even hybrid (Lomas 2004), in comparison with perceptions of Greek identity on the Greek mainland and in the Aegean. Secondly, it seems that Orphism was generally viewed as something 'foreign' in the Greek homeland areas (Guldager Bilde 2008, 39) and even perceived as being dangerous and immoral by the Romans who condemned participation in Bacchic rituals in 186 BC (Graepler 1997, 183 with references). This should probably warn us against excluding certain population groups from our understanding of religious practices – a fact firmly underlined by the Black Sea example of the Scythian king Skyles who was initiated in the Olbian Dionysos Bacchaïos cult (if we choose to trust Herodotos' testimony!) (Hdt. 4.78-80).



### 7.3 The Late Classical to early Hellenistic period (c. 399-270)

Generally, this period is very well represented by fairly large bodies of material from most localities, as was also the case in the Black Sea region.

The data from Phase 4 in Taras is represented by 53 graves registered in the database, supplemented by general information from the large body of material presented in Hoffmann 2002 (549 graves),<sup>273</sup> as well as some of the general data presented by Graepler (1997).

Maruggi compiled a catalogue of 177 Tarantine chamber tombs which featured 170 Hellenistic chamber tombs (1994, 87-98). These have not been registered in the database of this study because the general level of information is very poor and the vast majority of the tombs did not meet the general criteria of information for the database. Meanwhile, they will be mentioned and referred to when relevant since they are, of course, a very important and dominant feature of the late Classical and Hellenistic periods in Taras. Furthermore, chamber tombs appear in many other localities in Magna Graecia<sup>274</sup> (and other places in the Greek world) – a phenomenon which is also observed for the Black Sea region, as mentioned earlier.

#### *Grave types and treatment of the deceased*

For Taras, the grave types of the different chronological periods are outlined by Graepler (1997, 46), who refers to the general information available to him from the TARAPLAN database. Graepler's table 2 is chronologically limited to the 4<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries, and shows that simple pits cut into the bedrock are by far the most common grave type, constituting some 76.3 % of all burials. Slab-covered pits and stone sarcophagi are much less common. Ceramic and stone containers for cremations only constitute some 0.4 % of all burials in this period (Graepler 1997, 46). At Poseidonia,<sup>275</sup> the simple pits are still covered with travertine slabs, although a new variant enters the scene in the form of

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273 The material collected and published by Hoffmann has not been registered in the database of this study since the quality of the publication and the level of detail makes it easily accessible and highly applicable, thus eliminating the most obvious reasons for reregistration. However, as was the case with the material of the previous phases, this study would certainly have benefited from access to the late Classical and early Hellenistic graves registered in the TARAPLAN database – hopefully a task for future work.

274 For example, the impressive 3<sup>rd</sup> century chamber tomb from Casa Ricotta near Crucinia which, among other grave goods, contained a lead curse tablet (Lo Porto 1981, 342-352), and a similar elaborately equipped chamber tomb at Laos with a rich assemblage of grave goods, including a golden wreath, a full set of weapons, a lead curse tablet and a horse burial (Horsnæs 2002, 150-151).

275 The 4<sup>th</sup> century body of material from Horsnæs 2002 comprises 60 painted and 50 unpainted tombs from the period (Horsnæs 2002, 70-71, 161, Figs. 24-25). Results from analyses show *no notable difference in the composition, number or quality of the grave goods depending on whether the tomb was painted or not* (Horsnæs 2002, 161).

a slab-constructed ridge roof (Hornæs 2002, 160). By and large, for Lucania the 4<sup>th</sup> century sees tiles incorporated in a number of different constructions, such as a bed for the deceased, as a lining of the sides in the burial pit and as a cover of the tomb (either horizontally or a *cappucina*). In Poseidonia, as in many other Lucanian sites, the chamber tombs occur in the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century and continue into the 3<sup>rd</sup> century (Horsnæs 2002, 54-56, 160) and, in Poseidonia especially, a tradition for elaborately painted chamber or *cassa* tombs arises (Horsnæs 2002, 55-56; also Rouveret 2002; Pontrandolfo, Roveret & Cipriani 2004). Generally, there is a blooming complexity among grave types and a growing awareness of outward status displays, which we may compare with the scenarios at sites in the Black Sea region such as Kerkitis and the majority of the localities in the Bosporan Kingdom in particular (this volume, Chapter 5).

In Taras, the outward status displays are especially well represented by the impressive funerary architecture which is so characteristic for the period here: elaborately executed funerary *naiskoi*, sculpture and grave markers constitute a complex of monuments which are paralleled in few places in the contemporary Mediterranean world (Carter 1975; Lippolis 1994). A parallel development, however, can also be observed, albeit on a smaller scale, in Chersonesos, where funerary *naiskoi* similar to the Tarantine corpus became increasingly popular during the late 4<sup>th</sup> century and early Hellenistic period (see this volume, Chapter 3; also Carter 2002; Bujtschich, A.V. 2006).

Although there is no evidence for elaborate funerary architecture or painted tombs, the Pantanello material displays a steady continuation of its broad range of grave types (earthen, stone and tile) with more emphasis on stone and especially tile graves (Carter 1998, 61, table 3.2). We may note, however, that stone sarcophagi disappear in the early 4<sup>th</sup> century. Cremation also increases markedly – a phenomenon to which we will return below.

Multiple burials at Taras became increasingly rare – a picture which is supported by the data from Hoffmann (2002, 195-283). Most multiple burials registered in the material came from chamber tombs and cannot as such be categorized as multiple or double burials since these burials are really single disposals in sarcophagi placed in the same chamber.

Pantanello has five multiple burials of the 4<sup>th</sup> and early 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries (Carter 1998, 110, table 3.18). They are of an adult female and male (T80 – a couple?), a female and child (T195 – a mother and child?), two males of unspecified age (T194) two females also of unspecified age (T193) as well as two children, one 3-4 years old and one newborn (T116 – siblings?). Another interesting feature of the Pantanello data is the evidence for *akephalia* or decapitation, a process which has been touched upon earlier in the analyses of the Panskoe I material (this volume, Chapter 4). There are three examples of decapitation from burials dated to the 4<sup>th</sup> century (Carter 1998, 110).

The majority of the Tarantine burials recorded in the database are still inhumations placed in a supine position – a picture which is confirmed by



Hoffman's data (2002, 195-283). However, there is one early cremation, B157, which is present in the database material. In general, cremation burials gained some popularity, especially during the course of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, which is at the very end of, and even after, the period in question for this study. Due to this chronological limit, cremations are not represented in large numbers in the database (see also D'Amicis 1994, 152; Maruggi 1994, 70, 85).<sup>276</sup> However, there is a smaller group of cremations from the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century which is described by D'Amicis in very general terms (1994, 152-154). The cremation containers of these early secondary cremations<sup>277</sup> are mainly hydriai, made from either ceramic or bronze, which were placed in simple earthen or bed-rock pits covered by stone slabs or tile or sometimes clad with stone slabs in a similar manner to the hydria cremation from Kerkinitis described in Chapter 3. Interestingly, it seems that cremations are more rarely found in sarcophagi and in chamber tombs, which could perhaps indicate a more conservative attitude towards the treatment of the body among the owners of these higher status burials(?). At the very least, the phenomenon adds an important aspect to the discussion about the allegedly high status connotations of cremation burial. Topographically, the cremations are found side by side with the inhumation burials and no system, other than perhaps a hypothetical system of family clusters, can be observed. An important feature of these cremations is the deposition of funerary wreaths, either of terracotta or metal, which now become popular.<sup>278</sup> As mentioned earlier, this is a very similar situation to that observed in Kerkinitis, Chersonesos and also Kallatis as presented in Chapter 3. The cremation placed in a hydria and accompanied by a funerary wreath is a well-known burial type of the contemporary Macedonian funerary record<sup>279</sup> and is also known from ancient literary sources. Interestingly, a strong political and cultural contact between Taras and Macedonia is assumed for this period (D'Amicis 1994, 157; Graepler 1997, 48 with all relevant references). See also colour plates 8 and 9.

The grave goods which accompany these cremations are ceramics, often jugs and cups along with a considerable number of fragments from large red-figured kraters, which are interpreted as grave markers (D'Amicis 1994, 156). From Locri, similar kraters were found placed outside the tomb, but these were not, apparently, visible above ground (Orsi 1917, 106-111). In the

276 The late Hellenistic and, notably, the Roman periods saw a considerable increase in cremations, a trend which is traditionally connected with the coming of the Romans to the region (D'Amicis 1994, 152; Colivicchi 2001, 30; Hempel 2001, 79-81). This development is also evident from the tables of grave types compiled by Graepler (1997, 46, tables 2 and 3), where the increased popularity of cremation can be noted in the rise in the number of urns.

277 There is also some evidence for a smaller group of primary cremations with remains of wood and burnt grave goods (D'Amicis 1994, 153-154).

278 See Horsnæs 2002, 82 for wreaths found in the Lucanian area.

279 See, for example, Butler 2008; also the Derveni burials.

slightly later cremations of the late 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries, outside the chronological limits of this study, *strigils*, mirrors, terracottas and precious jewellery are also attested (D'Amicis 1994, 154-156).

A similar trend towards an increase in cremation burials can be observed at Pantanello. Here, most cremations fall within the period 325-275 (Carter 1998, 61, table 3.2, 103), and these are also connected with a presumed Macedonian contact or influence (Carter 1998, 104-105). Carter lists horse burials as part of the evidence for this Macedonian influence – but horse burials were also found in Lucanian inland sites (Horsnæs 2002, 81-82; see also below, this chapter). Carter also mentions Samnite influence as a possible reason for the rise in cremations. Meanwhile, he is rightly very tentative in making these suggestions, as no other alterations in the grave complexes or in the assemblages of grave goods can be observed (Carter 1998, 105).

At Poseidonia there is no mention of cremations for the 4<sup>th</sup> century or the early Hellenistic period. It seems that the previous tradition of inhumation in a supine position continued unaltered (Horsnæs 2002, 160-161).

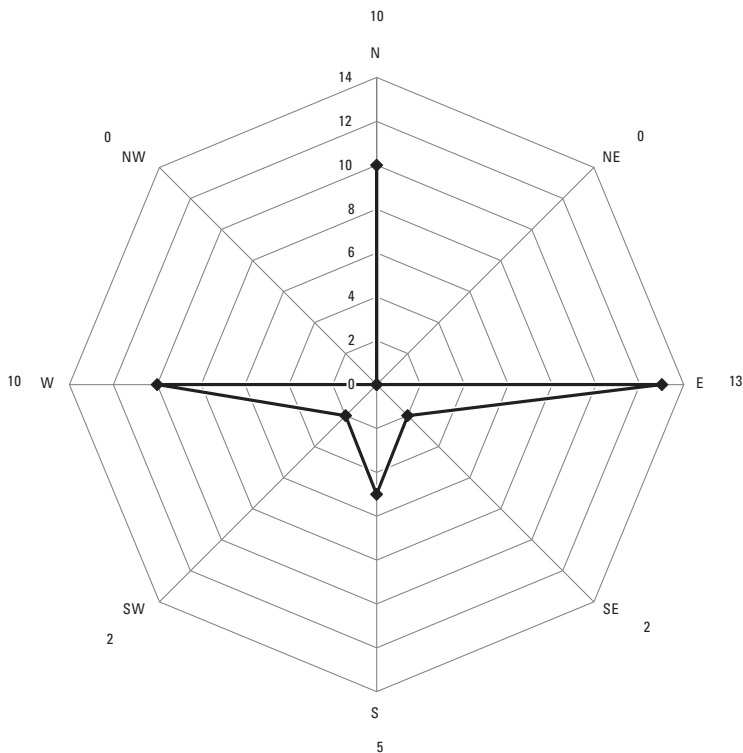


Fig. 7.3. Taras. Orientations of burials from Phase 4

### *Orientation*

For Taras, the orientation of the burials in the 4<sup>th</sup> and early 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries seems to be much less homogeneous than for the previous periods, when an easterly orientation was the most common direction. Fig. 7.3 depicts the different orientations of the burials from Phase 4. From the data provided by Hoffmann, the broad picture is that the majority of the burials are oriented towards either the east or north, with minor groups oriented in other directions as well (Hoffmann 2002, 195-283). Although an easterly orientation is still popular with a large proportion of the burials, both direct northerly and westerly directions are apparently preferred by groups of somewhat similar sizes. There are no indications in the results of database queries on relations between age groups and orientation that a differentiation on the basis of age is apparent in the orientations. Meanwhile, we may be cautious here since very few child burials are represented in the database material, thus biasing the data towards adult burials. For Pantanello, the 4<sup>th</sup> century shows a similar picture, while a radical shift can be observed after 325 when more than half the burials are oriented towards the northwest. There are still, however, smaller groups of burials which maintain other orientation directions which were popular in previous periods (Carter 1998, 459, graph 9.2). Based on comparative material from indigenous sites in Lucanian, Carter plays with the idea that such sudden and radical changes of orientation could indicate a new indigenous population at Pantanello. In Lucania, a northern orientation has been observed, but, rightly, he ultimately dismisses the idea of a new indigenous population at Pantanello, concluding that: *A case for the presence of a new population in the chora would require support from a multiplicity of varied archaeological sources* (Carter 1998, 226).

### *Grave goods*

The grave goods of Phase 4 from Taras are manifold and not easily analysed collectively, mainly because of the tendency to publish the material in 'object groups', as mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. In the database there are 289 registrations of grave goods. However, these constitute a tiny fragment of the numerous deposits of ceramics, precious jewellery, terracottas, items from the personalia group and other objects which were deposited in the 4<sup>th</sup> and early 3<sup>rd</sup> century burials of Taras. However, looking at the distribution of the different object groups and comparing them with the data from Hoffmann (2002), Graepler (1997) and De Juliis (1984), it becomes evident that the main deposition pattern of the database material is more or less accurate (Fig. 7.4).

In addition to those types of items listed in Fig. 7.4, the material from Graepler (1997) provides evidence of numerous terracotta depositions, which are quite impressive both in a regional and Mediterranean perspective. De Juliis (1984) presents precious jewellery of very elaborate design, most readily paralleled in the Macedonian burials, whilst the data from Hoffmann adds a little more to the personalia, tools and varia groups, and even includes a piece of

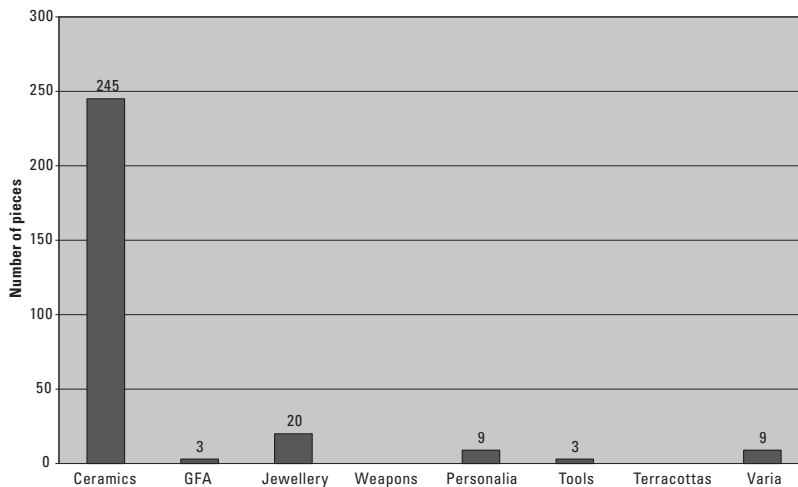


Fig. 7.4. Taras. Types of grave goods from Phase 4

weaponry in the form of an arrowhead (from Grave 369,<sup>280</sup> Hoffmann 2002, 53, 255). In general, though, ceramics are the main type of grave goods deposited, both drinking/banquet-related and oil-related shapes. From Ginosà, the evidence from the 4<sup>th</sup> and early 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries still features rich élite burials with a mixture of drinking- and oil-related ceramic shapes from both 'Greek' and 'indigenous' production centres, as well as weapons, in much the same tradition as observed earlier (Dell'Aglio & Lippolis 1992, 58-72). See colour plates 10-15.

For Poseidonia, the 'weapon burials' continue, as do the deposits of both drinking/banquet and oil-related ceramic vessels in a similar manner to Taras (Pontrandolfo & Rouveret 1996, 159-183; Horsnæs 2002, Figs. 24-25). An interesting observation from Horsnæs' Fig. 25 (grave goods from unpainted tombs), is the numerous deposits of weapons and belts, which were apparently not exclusively reserved for those who could afford a painted tomb, but perhaps grew to become a more common assemblage for the expression of status within wider social circles. The iconography of the painted tombs shows influences from both Greek and local Lucanian cultural spheres, as well as elements which are suggested to have been borrowed from Etruscan mythology.<sup>281</sup> In the main, the assemblages of grave goods, as well as the layout and decoration of the tombs, point in the direction of elements and influences

<sup>280</sup> A pit burial in bedrock covered with stone slabs and orientated towards the east. The inhumation was placed in supine position, with the arrowhead deposited alongside an Apulian red-figured oinochoe and a small simple mug (Hoffmann 2002, 255).

<sup>281</sup> Such as the cross between Charon and Vanth (Pontrandolfo, Rouveret & Cipriani 2004, 59; also Rausch 2004, 251).

from different cultural spheres. Thus, we may see a picture of a hybrid population whose élite navigated without complication between multiple cultural influences, and used different and culturally complex status markers in their power manifestations.

At Pantanello, there were major changes in the early 4<sup>th</sup> century from c. 380 onwards. There were fewer deposits per grave and alterations in the ceramic shapes deposited can also be observed. The amphora is replaced by the pelike, and the lebes gamikos regains popularity. There are still drinking-related vessels, but considerable numbers of dishes and pyxides, perhaps associated with the lebes gamikos, are now also present (Carter 1998, 572). Also from this period comes the only grave with a so-called Samnite belt, on the basis of which an indigenous ethnicity is tentatively suggested, although the remaining grave goods are all well-known 'Greek' objects (Carter 1998, 572). At the end of the period, closer to c. 300-275, unguentaria appear as well as coins, while the *strigil* and alabastron as well as terracottas regain popularity. Jewellery such as *fibulae* and dress pins completely disappear, a feature which has led to the attractive suggestion of a radical change in the nature of the funerary shroud (Carter 1998, 575).<sup>282</sup>

In keeping with Pantanello, the burials from the first half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century from Locri display a marked decrease in the deposition of grave goods, even though some female burials are still accompanied by elaborate jewellery and metal objects (Cerchiali 1982, 294).

#### *Animal remains*

From Taras there is no mention within the material of the recovery of animal bones or remains. At Pantanello, however, a few animal disposals have come to light. Close to grave T315 (a male buried with a spearhead and a pyxis), a horse skeleton was uncovered.<sup>283</sup> Although fragmented and somewhat badly preserved, there were no signs of cut marks on the skeletal remains, which led the excavators to suggest that these was the remains of a warhorse (Carter 1998, 561). Horse burials are also found near Croton (Carter 1998, 561) and in the impressively equipped chamber tomb from Laos, where they were deposited alongside a full set of weaponry (Horsnæs 2002, 150-151; also above note 274).

With reference to the Homeric description of the funeral of Patroklos, many

282 Also from this period is grave T13 (Carter 1998, 575, 817-818, 254) which contained a deceased adult male adorned with a gilded bronze wreath and an iron key placed at the centre of the pelvis, perhaps as an indication of his affiliation with the cult of the Chthonic deities. However, keys may also have played a significant role in Orphic beliefs (Guldager Bilde 2008, 30-32). Furthermore, the deceased was accompanied by an unguentarium, a feeder, some ceramic fragments and an iron *strigil* (Carter 1998, 254).

283 Other animal remains identified were that of a mule (T62), a dog (T194), a wolf (T321) as well as remains of several sheep, goats, cattle and pigs (Carter 1998, 562).

scholars have concerned themselves with interpretations of 'Homeric' burials, especially when horses have been found in or near the tombs (Carstens 2005, 63). In the two examples from Pantanello and Laos, however, we may suggest that extreme opposites are represented, rather than homogeneous 'Heroic' burials; there is the sparsely equipped and rather ordinary burial from Pantanello<sup>284</sup> contrasting with the extravagant and elaborately equipped chamber tomb from Laos. In both instances it is difficult to apply fully the concepts of 'Heroic' or 'Homeric' burial – the importance of the horse and allusions to horses havelong traditions in many societies and cultural spheres (as demonstrated by Carstens 2005; also Hyland 2003), and the identification of any cultural affiliations limited to Greek culture and used in an ethnicity-related debate seems outdated. However, what could be regarded as a universal interpretation of the horse is its status as an élite possession – even in nomadic societies where it was a more common (and necessary) possession than in urban societies. From the kurgans of Nymphaion and the tumuli of Istros, to the rural cemetery of Pantanello and the elaborate chamber tomb of Laos, the horse marked a very specific and cross-cultural status indication – namely that of a wealthy and powerful person whose family could afford to part with such a precious possession at the funeral.

#### **7.4 Cultural identities in southern Italy and the northern Black Sea**

Ending this overview of burial customs from selected localities in southern Italy, it should be pointed out that the area offers just as much material for the study of cultural interaction and the formation of hybrid cultural identities as the Black Sea region. Whilst we may conclude that some material from the Black Sea region perhaps offers more direct evidence of hybrid or complex cultures in the form of a very varied multicultural archaeological record, there are still many important aspects to be traced in the material evidence from the southern Italian localities. For southern Italy, the ancient sources which refer to the cultural interactions between the population groups of the region are just as problematic as the source material from the Black Sea region described in Chapter 1. According to Lomas (2004, 8), the problems mainly stem from the fact that most ancient sources were created outside the colonial milieu. Thus, in this respect, the source material from the two regions offers little direct evidence for the actual mindsets of the people living there.

The funerary record naturally holds a number of interpretative limitations (see also this volume, Chapter 1), and such complex cultural phenomena as interaction between population groups, the creation of hybrid identities and self-perceptions are not completely and fully studied by examining the evidence from one context of a society. I have already argued (this volume, Chapter 6) that settlement and sanctuary contexts offer equally important

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284 If it does indeed belong with the horse (Carter 1998, 213).



and relevant angles. However, there can be no doubt that the archaeological record of both the Black Sea region and southern Italy holds ample material for future studies into the mindsets of the populations which settled and lived in these 'borderland zones', and who created identities based on self-perceptions which were in all probability of a much more complex construct than previously assumed.

Both in the spiritual and material sense, there are several important common denominators which the Black Sea region and southern Italy seem to share; in particular, we may emphasize the emergence of Orphism and the succeeding popularity of this particular set of religious beliefs which few other places so readily accepted and eagerly practised. The motivating factors behind this phenomenon are likely to be found in the constructions of colonial identities in milieux where identities were in a state of constant change, adapting to new cultural impulses. Interestingly, the spiritual similarities between the Black Sea region and southern Italy find further strength in the numerous literary sources describing *metempsychosis*, or the transmigration of souls, between the Black Sea areas and southern Italy (Hinge 2004, 26; 2008).

When it comes to tackling the question of interaction between Greeks and indigenous population groups, the two regions share a similar number of interpretative directions and the southern Italian material in many ways confirms the picture which emerged from the analyses of the Black Sea evidence – namely that cultural influences and the formation and perception of identities were strongly connected with social strategies, taking as their point of departure much more narrow milieux/circles than that of a wide Greek (Hellenic) identity (also Hall 2004, 50; in addition Antonaccio 2003). The local and, perhaps, regional strategies of social mobility, competition and power struggles may provide the best basis from which to understand identity formations, rather than polarized perception of 'Greeks and Others'. Certainly, there is evidence from different periods from both the Black Sea region and southern Italy which speaks of conflict and violent events between population groups, but this is poor evidence on which to found a universal perception of isolated, ethnic groups living in static and separated 'Greek' or 'indigenous' milieux.

Moreover, as pointed out by Hall:

*The lack of any clear evidence for early fortifications in the western Greek colonies ought to imply that these cities had no more to fear from indigenous populations than they had from rival colonial foundations* (Hall 2004, 40).

This statement could perhaps also apply to the Black Sea region where fortifications of archaeologically visible material are not attested before the 5<sup>th</sup> century (Højte 2008, 152 with discussion). However, as suggested by Højte, the situation in some parts of the Black Sea region may have been more com-



plex, implying that the slowness of the colonization process and the many stretches of uninhabited coastal zone could indicate problematic foundation circumstances, possibly linked with a lack of indigenous 'goodwill' towards the newcomers (Højte 2008, 153-155).<sup>285</sup> Such theories may allow us to acknowledge that no matter how appealing we may find the theory of hybrid identities and flexible cultural interactions, we cannot expect to find a homogeneous picture at every locality and in every context in which we look. In the words of Lomas on the western colonies:

*It is clear from a wide variety of evidence that the Greeks of the western Mediterranean shared trading contacts, political alliances, social relations and even intermarriage with their non-Greek neighbours. In some contexts, this seems to have had the effect of crystallising cultural identities sharply, but in other contexts, flexibility and cultural exchange seems to have been the norm* (Lomas 2004, 8).

This is also a central point to keep in mind when evaluating the localities examined and analysed above: particularly the less varied funerary material assemblage of Taras which, in general and throughout the entire chronological span of the study, shows very little influence from cultural spheres other than what we know to be traditionally Greek. Also, the rural territories closer to the city are very homogenous in their mortuary complexes, and so-called 'non-Greek' features are only encountered when we look to localities at a considerable geographical distance from the city. What we may see here is perhaps an example of the varying expressions of identity from one social context to another and the lack of one homogeneous picture formed unanimously in all colonial settings. However, we do not necessarily need to 'judge' Taras as having been less multicultural, or even non-multicultural, in comparison with other localities, on the basis of the identity expressions (or the lack of them) observed in the mortuary record. Many different factors played significant roles in the construction of funerary complexes, and, not least, in the social expressions which can be decoded from them: the evidence from Metaponto possibly encourages us to feel confident that the cultural processes of the 'Greeks' and the 'Others' were generally not polarized and separated. On the basis of anthropological examinations of skeletal material from Pantanello, which showed closer resemblances with coeval populations of Italy rather than with those of mainland Greeks, Carter concluded (2004, 388-389) that mixed populations of different ethnic groups are a perfectly natural result of colonization!

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285 However, see, for example, Tsatskheladze 2002 and Petropoulos 2005 for a different perception of the relationship between colonizers and locals.



# Conclusions

This study of burial customs in selected coastal settlements of the northern Black Sea region has yielded a number of interesting points and results. Some of these results have helped to shed more light on the dynamics and developments within the mortuary sphere, also from a chronological perspective, whereas others have added a social and at times even socio-political dimension to many of the phenomena and changes observed within the burial record. Alongside general observations on the burial customs, local social processes and changes have repeatedly been identified as explanatory models for the expression of identity reflected in the burials, thus closely linking the world of the dead with the world of the living. This has also been the case for the analyses looking at aspects of cultural interactions and formation and expressions of cultural identity.

Understanding the research history of both Russian/Soviet and Western scholarship was a central issue in my initial approach to this 'new' study area, and many correlations and interpretations which I have met along the way have become much clearer to me in the light of the social and political contexts in which they were created. 'We are all products of our time' as the saying goes, and, surely, the interpretative perspectives which we tend to emphasize are often closely linked with currents in our everyday lives. In a world of globalization and multicultural societies, where coexistence and integration are headline stories on the news every night, it is difficult not to be constantly confronted with one central set of questions: how do people meet, live together, mix and act across boundaries of different ethnic backgrounds and nation-state borders? Therefore, questions fundamental to this work have been fundamental to the way I perceive the contemporary world and *vice versa*. However, before venturing into a discussion on ethnicity and cultural interaction, some conclusive results from the analytical part of the study will be presented.

Concerning the analytical Chapters 2-5 relating to the four Black Sea case-study localities, the following conclusions were reached.

## *Phases 1 and 2 (c. 550-480)*

The data from Olbia by far constituted the largest and most statistically valid body of evidence from this early period. The comparative material is mainly to be found in localities in the northwestern region, although Nymphaion offers

a smaller set of material from this period as well. The analyses of the Olbian material yielded several important observations and conclusions.

A rather homogenous approach to the use of grave types was observed, with four main grave types. This contrasts somewhat with other contemporary localities which featured less variation in the grave types and mainly yielded burials in simple pits. Furthermore, there seems to have been a well-established tradition for elaborate burials – often in wooden sarcophagi enclosed in family clusters; the latter phenomenon is paralleled in many of the localities in the northwestern region in the same period. A clear differentiation of age groups is evident, both in the spatial layout of the cemetery and in the grave structures and grave goods – perhaps this differentiation was primarily related to the less well-to-do strata of the population, since the more well-equipped family burials often contained children buried in the same grave types as adults and with ‘rich’ sets of grave goods.

In general, the burials featured an unparalleled high number of metal deposits, both of precious metals and of other kinds of metals, as well as a substantial number of ‘luxury’ imports such as elaborate alabaster and glass vessels. This is seen in contrast to contemporary material from Pantikapaion, Nymphaion and other northeastern localities, as well as localities in the northwestern corner of the Black Sea region. The tendency can probably be correlated with an equally high number of grave goods per grave and high NOT-values reflecting very varied sets of grave goods (for example, the numbers of items from the varia group see a steady increase). Another important feature is the relatively high number of burials with weapon deposits compared with other contemporary Black Sea localities and the Greek world in general.

In the main, the Olbian burials display a very diverse and multifaceted attitude to burial customs, both in terms of rather wide parameters for individual taste and/or family traditions within the circle of relatives or others who undertook the burials and in terms of the use of objects and customs with both Greek and Scythian cultural affiliations. Mention should also be made of the emergence of Orphic beliefs which various objects, such as mirrors, bells and rattles, as well as bone plaques, probably testify to.

In many ways the burials from Olbia constitute a unique pool of burial data from this period in the Black Sea region, and no published material from any other coastal settlement can match it in quantity, variety and richness.

Elaborate status expressions are also found in Istros and Orgame where the tumuli of the late 7<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries display cremation burials accompanied by both human and animal (primarily horses) sacrifices. The assemblages of grave goods, however, are quite modest and do not match the extraordinary material from Olbia. It seems that the main focus in these western cities was on outward status displays and manifestations obtained through the visual effects of tumuli and possibly funeral processions with horses and slaves or other humans for sacrifices.

*Phase 3 (c. 480-400)*

Despite the lack of substantial material from Olbia, the data from the 5<sup>th</sup> century is quantitatively better represented and from more localities than the data from the earlier period.

Differentiations of age groups are observed in Kerkinitis and Panskoe I, whilst the material from Nymphaion in general seems less conclusive in this respect – both in terms of differentiations between age groups and also gender. In Panskoe I, the emphasis on high status burials of females and children of both 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>/early 3<sup>rd</sup> century burials could perhaps indicate that ‘the family and bloodline’ were displayed as status markers, perhaps as a particularly important feature in smaller agrarian societies and in marked contrast to customs of the male dominated public world of the polis.

In the main, it seems that the 5<sup>th</sup> century burial customs were characterized by greater variation amongst grave types and treatment of the deceased – in Kerkinitis, Panskoe I and Nymphaion a marked tendency towards more complexity, perhaps reflecting more social competition within the mortuary sphere, was observed. This complexity was possibly also reflected in the assemblages of grave goods in Panskoe I and Nymphaion, whilst the burials from Kerkinitis in general displayed a significantly lower number of archaeologically identifiable grave goods and lower NOT-values. These phenomena can also be observed in the high status grave types (cremations in cists and kurgans), which had single deposits of precious grave goods (gold and other precious metals). Thus, the number of (archaeologically identifiable) grave goods was most probably not an indicator or marker of wealth in the Kerkinitian burial customs, but, rather, the emphasis was placed on outward status displays.

*Phase 4 (c. 399-270)*

The body of material of Phase 4 is by far the quantitatively largest and most representative for all the case-study localities (with the exception of Olbia), as is the case for the body of comparative material from the northern Black Sea region in general.

The complexity and variation within grave types and treatment of the deceased continued and, especially in Nymphaion, this development was visible through more variation in, for example, the positions of the deceased, the relation between inhumation and cremation as well as the occurrence of multiple burials. The same phenomena are observed for Panskoe I, where the high quality of the data further allows for observations of a rarer nature, such as the practice of *cenotaph* burial, the deposition of skulls, anthropomorphic *stelai* found *in situ* and the use of meat and other foodstuffs in the burial customs. The flat-ground burials of Nymphaion yielded evidence of a noticeable development within the assemblages of grave goods, with tendencies towards more variation and complexity, and, in the main, the Classical and late Classical burials seem to have had a much more conscious approach to expressions of identities and status displays.

In all localities, and particularly in Panskoe I, the material displays a variety of elements related to both traditional Greek and Scythian features and objects, the implications of which we will return to below.

In most localities in Phase 4 in the northern Black Sea region, smaller children were now fully distinguished and differentiated in the burial record by interment in ceramic containers (*enchytrismoι*), most often in amphoras. However, this custom was not observed on any significant level in the material from Nymphaion, an observation which sets this site aside from the majority of the Black Sea localities as well as a great part of the Mediterranean world. The reason for this specific situation in Nymphaion can perhaps be found in a topographical bias of the material, but it could also be socially motivated, such as, for example, by the invisible burials of infants (= non-persons) or by differential approaches to perceptions of age groups. However, what does seem to be a pattern in Nymphaion is that the burials with oil-related ceramic shapes occurred mainly in the adult burials, whilst the burials with drinking/serving vessels were primarily found in child burials. This leads to the suggestion of a distinction between age groups in the burial customs which is reflected in the choice of the types of grave goods, at least for the 4<sup>th</sup> century.

Another prominent feature of the burial data from Phase 4 is the many examples of social strategies reflected in the funerary material. In Kerkinitis, previous research had interpreted the kurgans as markers of an ethnic Scythian element in the rural population. However, the results of the analyses of this study show no obvious evidence for an ethnicity-based division between the kurgan burials and the flat-ground burials. Rather, the kurgans seemed to follow the display patterns of the higher social status burials. Furthermore, a close similarity between the kurgans of Kerkinitis and nearby Kalos Limen can be observed. This is in direct opposition to the situation in Chersonesos where kurgans are not encountered in or near the city cemeteries. A number of different explanations for this phenomenon can be suggested. Perhaps the populations of Kerkinitis and Kalos Limen had a closer connection to the cultures of the north where the burial *koine* of the Lower Dnieper region, including Panskoe I, featured kurgans and more obvious similarities in the assemblages of grave goods. Perhaps there were socio-political motives behind the blooming custom of using kurgans, as a means of distancing oneself from the new regional power.

Another important example of socio-political influences and reflections in the burial data is the kurgans of Nymphaion. Here, the dominant display of status and power in the 5<sup>th</sup> century was mainly based on weapons, horse equipment and precious jewellery as well as drinking- and banquet-related vessels and objects. In the 4<sup>th</sup> century kurgans, oil-related vessels (and *strigils*) suddenly gained popularity. In the present study these changes have been explained in socio-political terms, rather than within the framework of the previous ethnic approaches.

On a general level, the élitist status displays across all the different chrono-

logical periods of this study are notably shaped and constructed to accommodate an audience which in the Black Sea region furthered a culturally complex idiom drawing on kurgans/tumuli, weapons, horse equipment, elaborate jewellery, banquet-related objects, etc. These features would have struck responsive chords within wide circles of these multicultural societies where social and cultural identities were manipulated to fit the order of the day. The more ordinary burials in many ways, though generally on a smaller scale, seem to have followed local internal schemes of social competition and differentiations on various levels. At the very least, we may conclude that there were several examples of distinct alterations in the nature of the burial customs which occurred simultaneously with socio-political events in the local milieux.

In terms of the different social and political situations of the four case-study localities, obvious impacts on the mortuary evidence have been observed. Although I have argued for caution on these matters, there are obvious proposals for the roots of the differences observed in the funerary record, based on, for example, city versus rural settlement (such as the case of Chersonesos and Panskoe I) or the 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> century regional political currents of Nymphaion and the Bosporan Kingdom.

The importance of a cautious approach to manifestations of social identity has also been underlined by the analyses of gender-related expressions. This mainly derives from observation of considerable numbers of burials from all locations containing combinations of objects from both traditional male and female spheres. Burials with deposits of both jewellery and weapons have been encountered, as have anthropologically sexed burials of males containing jewellery, spindles and other objects traditionally ascribed as 'female'. Moreover, anthropologically sexed burials containing females (and children) accompanied by weapons and horse equipment are not uncommon amongst the analysed data. Not only have these instances warned against sexing burials on the basis of (prejudiced) 'gender-related' objects and depositions, they have also served to underline the complex and sometimes unpredictable expressions of identity which often work across modern concepts of borders, be they social, geographical, political or ethnic.

### *Comparing with southern Italy*

An important and valuable overview of the burial material and funerary practices from southern Italy yielded several interesting comparative perspectives for the Black Sea material. In many ways, one of the most central contributions of the chapter was the focus on the similar milieux in which identities were formed and manipulated. Several comparable aspects of the mortuary spheres have been accentuated, in terms of both in the actual developments of the burial customs and funerary practices, as well as in the spiritual formation of the religious constructs of Orphism. The basic conditions for the development of Orphic ideas in the late 6<sup>th</sup> and early 5<sup>th</sup> centuries in the coastal milieux of the northwestern Black Sea region and the southeast Italian area



are very likely to have been closely linked with the formation and creation of cultural identities in multicultural settings. The development of different and radically altered mindsets in terms of self-definition, and thus eschatological considerations, could indeed spring from milieux where identities were under a state of constant change, adapting to new and different cultural impulses.

Ideas about cultural complexity and the formation of hybrid identities have been formed mainly during the analytic process of the four Black Sea case-studies, but also during the analyses of the southern Italian material. For the northern Black Sea evidence, it is obvious that the coastal settlements offer a very interesting and culturally complex mortuary record, and, as a result, the different cultural backgrounds of several features and objects have been encountered and highlighted again and again. One of the central points in this discourse is to underline the various and very different motivations for using specific cultural features and objects in burials, as well as in real life: a wish to express a direct affiliation with a specific culture; a tradition within, for example, a family of expressing a certain cultural background of one's descent; an expression of status and prestige; an element of social competition; a result of changing trends and fashions or advancing technology; or simple convenience and practicality. The motivations may have been manifold and the result was a complex of visual expressions which were created to suit specific local environments and, in particular, specific local audiences who were well-acquainted with several different cultural strands of communication. This specific local environment understood and used a multifaceted 'symbolic language' across the boundaries of (our modern) perceptions of ethnic polarization. Hence, I have suggested that the people who inhabited the coastal settlements of the northern Black Sea region were fully aware of the symbolic values and potentials of these various multicultural components, since they identified themselves on the basis of exactly such cross-cultural features.

In this line of argument, I have, furthermore, questioned whether expressions of Hellenic identity held a top priority in such borderland regions where culturally complex everyday lives must have been the reality and where local social concerns seem to have been expressed more readily in the mortuary record. Hence, as has also been observed in connection with the southern Italian material, cultural influences and the formation and perception of identities were strongly connected with social strategies, taking as their point of departure narrow milieux and circles rather than a broad Greek (Hellenic) identity. The local and perhaps regional strategies of social mobility, competition and power struggles may have provided more obvious catalysts for the formation of identities than polarized perceptions of 'Greeks and Others'.

On the basis of the results of these analyses and also the general perception of cultural identity in the field of colonial research, it is no longer possible to maintain the notion that Greeks never altered and were immune to influences from other cultures. An examination of the evidence calls strongly

for a reconsideration of the idea that cultural influence is a 'one-way' process rooted in a cultural hierarchy. In other words, the material record tells not of isolated ethnicities, but of mixed populations and hybrid identities which could be negotiated and manipulated to fit a specific local or regional situation.

Meanwhile, the analyses, particularly those of the material from Taras, have demonstrated that different colonial settings may have had different approaches to, and expressions of, cultural identity, and that we cannot expect to find a homogeneous picture across every locality or context we examine. In a way, this somehow serves to underline the very nature of identities – restraining them or boxing them in static categories conflicts with their fundamental character as susceptible, negotiable and adjustable. This, naturally, makes the study of cultural processes and the formation of identities a great deal more challenging and complex. However, future studies into these issues along the lines of the above-mentioned thoughts should yield exciting and valuable results in a field of research which can bring us an important step closer to understanding the cultural processes of borderland societies. There can be no doubt that the archaeological records of both the Black Sea region and southern Italy hold ample material for such future studies into the mindsets of the populations which settled and lived in these 'borderland zones', and created identities based on self-perceptions which were of a much more complex construct than previously assumed.

#### *A final word*

As a consequence of the political history of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the importance of the Black Sea material in a Mediterranean perspective has never been fully acknowledged and incorporated on a prominent level. However, the importance of the Black Sea archaeological record in the understanding of ancient historical developments cannot be stressed firmly enough. The material from the region offers ample evidence which should play a vital role in the way cultural processes and colonial milieux are approached and interpreted in Classical scholarship in general. The results of this study have repeatedly underlined the importance of cross-regional comparisons and future Mediterranean studies are bound to gain considerably from the rich data pool of the Black Sea region. For Western scholars, accessibility to both the material and the literature has increased noticeably in recent years, although there is still a general lack of Slavic language skills. Moreover, newly established collaborations across the old historical borders between East and West testify to a promising future for modern cross-cultural studies into the complexities of ancient societies.



## Summary in Russian

Отправной точкой диссертации *“Культурные взаимодействия и социальные стратегии на берегах Понта. Погребальные обычаи Северного Причерноморья в 550-270 гг. до н.э.”* являются материалы из погребений, обнаруженных в четырех прибрежных районах Северного Причерноморья. Погребальная практика анализируется и интерпретируется с позиций, опирающихся более на концепции культурного взаимодействия, нежели противостояния культур. Это означает вызов традиционному противопоставлению *“Треки – негреческое население”*, в противовес которому в качестве основы исследования рассматриваются именно взаимодействия между обитателями Причерноморья. Погребения анализируются в традициях западной археологии с акцентом на социальных отношениях, которые могут косвенно отражаться в погребальной практике. Кроме того, погребальные обряды причерноморских поселений рассматриваются в сопоставлении с таковыми в греческих колониях Южной Италии.

С географической точки зрения исследование сфокусировано прежде всего на памятниках Северного Причерноморья вследствие огромного объема полученных на них материалов. Благодаря длительному и интенсивному изучению данного региона появилась масса специальных работ, предоставляющих прекрасное поле для дискуссии. Исходные материалы для исследования занесены в базу данных, позволившую формировать запросы по различным направлениям анализа и использовать статистические методы.

Рассматриваются некрополи трех античных городов и поселения: Ольвии, Керкинитиды, Нимфея и Панского I. Эти объекты выбраны по ряду причин. Во-первых, для всех этих памятников имеются опубликованные или доступные для исследования материалы из погребений, которые удовлетворяют критериям, предъявленным в рамках данного проекта для анализа и регистрации в базе данных. Во-вторых, все эти географические пункты располагаются в единой причерноморской зоне, что расширяет возможности внутреннего сопоставления этих памятников.

Кроме того, данные четыре памятника представляют относятся к разным категориям социально-политических образований, что обеспечивает значительный охват рассмотрения практики погребальных обрядов. Это и мощнейшее государственное образование Причерноморья — один из ведущих его полисов (Ольвия), и сравнительно небольшой город, социально и политически зависящий от более крупных центров региона

(Керкинитида), это и сельское поселение (Панское I) и самостоятельно сформировавшийся город (Нимфей), который впоследствии оказывается в зависимости от новых сил в регионе. Именно такой выбор объектов для исследования позволяет понять, отражают ли материалы погребений (и если да, то каким образом) различные социально-политические условия на данных поселениях.

В исследование включены памятники, начиная с середины VI в. до н.э. — времени возникновения большинства поселений изучаемого региона; часть из них имеет достаточно представительный погребальный материал. Верхний временной предел, ок. 270 до н.э., определяется важными политическими событиями, которые, в частности, приводят северную часть Причерноморского региона к острому кризису, возможно усиленному резким изменением климата и нестабильностью в среде степных кочевников.

Диссертация подразделяется на вводную главу (глава 1), которая кратко описывает проект и практическую часть; за ней следует введение в историю российской археологии, что вызвано необходимостью выявления исторического фона и политических обстоятельств создания, интерпретации и освещения исходных данных для исследования. После этого представлен краткий обзор истории развития теоретической археологии погребений на Западе, в том числе рассмотрены конкретные теоретические концепции, положенные в основу данного проекта. Наконец, вводная глава затрагивает некоторые вопросы, связанные с проблемой “греки и негреческое население”.

Основная часть диссертации состоит из четырех аналитических глав (главы 2 – 5), рассматривающих четыре причерноморских памятника, выбранных для исследования. Задачей данных глав являлось описание и анализ погребальных материалов, полученных на каждом из памятников, а также изложение и обсуждение предшествующих подходов к их изучению. Главы, посвященные анализу памятников, включают обзор ландшафтов прилегающих районов, а также сопоставления с прочими материалами, относящимися к исследованию. В главе 6 представлен краткий итог анализа причерноморских памятников и высказан взгляд на культурные взаимодействия в регионе. В завершение анализа представлена глава о погребальных обычаях на некоторых поселениях Южной Италии (глава 7), позволяющая сделать сопоставления с причерноморскими материалами. Диссертация заканчивается заключением и приложением, в котором приведены основные исходные данные и представлена база данных, использованная для исследований.

#### *Характеристика погребальных материалов Северного Причерноморья*

Детальный анализ материалов из причерноморских погребальных памятников позволил прийти к ряду заключений, не отраженных в предыдущих исследованиях. В целом, были реконструированы погребальные обычаи и соответствующие социальные процессы, легшие

в основу интерпретационной базы для предложенных описательных моделей. Эти социальные, в некоторых случаях даже политические, интерпретационные модели до сих пор использовались скорее с точки зрения материальных, чем этнических аспектов. Погребальный материал наиболее ранней фазы (ок. 550-480 гг. до н.э.) происходит в основном из Ольвии и свидетельствует о чрезвычайно богатой и разнообразной погребальной практике, сильно дифференцированной в социальном плане и в отношении различных возрастных групп, что проявляется как в топографии могильника, так и в характере отдельных захоронений. Наблюдается также совершенно явственный комплекс черт, относящихся к межкультурным взаимодействиям, что указывает на более сложную демографическую ситуацию, чем это предполагалось ранее.

Для V в. до н.э. материал становится более разнообразным и на других памятниках, отчетливо выражены различия погребального обряда. На некоторых из памятников наблюдаются явные различия в социальном статусе погребенных, в то время как на других ситуация еще более сложная, что выражается в типологии захоронений и в составе погребального инвентаря.

В целом, погребальные обычаи для V в. до н.э. становятся по-видимому более разнообразными как по типам захоронений, так и по характеру погребальных действий; имеется тенденция к их усложнению, что, вероятно, отражало рост социальной дифференциации через погребальную сферу.

Для последнего из рассмотренных периодов (ок. 399-270 гг. до н.э.) погребальный материал хорошо представлен на большинстве выбранных для изучения и сопоставляемых с ними памятниках. Сохраняются наблюдавшиеся в предыдущем периоде сложность и разнообразие типов могил и положения умерших. Мотивацией такого усложнения очевидно являлось опять же социальное расслоение. На всех памятниках материал содержит набор элементов, уходящих корнями как в греческую, так и в скифскую культуры. Таким образом, погребальный материал в целом по-видимому отражает прочные связи между различными культурными группами. На большинстве памятников наблюдается отчетливая дифференциация между взрослыми и детьми, особенно младенцами.

Другой характерной чертой 4-й стадии являются многочисленные примеры социальных и общественно-политических отношений, отразившихся в погребальных материалах. Керкинитида, Нимфей и Панское I дают все основания предполагать, что политическая ситуация в местном и региональном масштабе оказывала влияние на форму и конструкцию погребений знати. Имеется ряд примеров заметного изменения погребальных обычаев одновременно или непосредственно вслед за определенными общественно-политическими событиями в соответствующей среде. Более того, различный социальный и политический характер четырех рассмотренных памятников несомненно

оказал влияние на погребальную практику. Имеются убедительные свидетельства того, что, например, различия между городскими и сельскими поселениями отразились на типе погребений.

В заключение, можно предположить, что на протяжении всех рассматриваемых периодов подчеркнутые проявления элитарности были рассчитаны на предпочтения той самой группы населения Причерноморья, которая имела пристрастие к культурологически усложненному самовыражению при выборе типа курганов, оружия, лошадей, изящных украшений, парадной посуды и т.д. По всей видимости, эти черты не носили непосредственно этнический характер, а скорее должны были восприниматься как универсальный признак, затрагивавший чувствительные струны у широких кругов представителей поликультурных сообществ, в которых социальная и культурная принадлежность личности должна была приспосабливаться к текущим обстоятельствам. Хотя, как правило, и в меньшей степени, более рядовые погребения по-видимому следовали местным схемам социального расслоения на различных уровнях, что, возможно, наиболее отчетливо отразилось в отношении возрастных групп.

*Материалы из Южной Италии – Орфизм в Великой Греции и в Северном Причерноморье*

В основном из-за особенностей политической истории XX в. важность причерноморских материалов в отличие от средиземноморских нередко недооценивалась, и они зачастую не привлекали достаточного внимания. В действительности же значение археологического материала из Причерноморья для понимания процессов древней истории трудно переоценить. Данные многочисленных исследований, проводившихся в регионе, должны играть чрезвычайно важную роль при изучении культурных процессов и состава населения в греческих колониях античной эпохи. Результаты данной работы подчеркивают важность межрегиональных сопоставлений, и дальнейшее изучение Средиземноморья должно в значительной мере опираться на богатейшие данные из причерноморского региона.

Обстоятельный обзор погребального инвентаря и практики в Южной Италии позволил сделать ряд сравнительных наблюдений для причерноморских материалов. В главе фокусируется внимание на сходных группах населения, оказывавших влияние на формирование и поведение личности. Внимание было сосредоточено на ряде сопоставимых моментов развития погребальных обычаев и обрядов, а также на формировании сознания, основанного на религиозных положениях орфизма. Основные условия развития орфических представлений в конце VI и начале V столетий у жителей прибрежных районов Северо-Западного Причерноморья и в Юго-Восточной Италии, скорее всего, тесно связаны с возникновением и формированием культурных общностей на фоне многокультурного окружения. И в самом деле, развитие самосознаний,



различающихся и резко изменяющихся с точки зрения самооценки, и таким образом эсхатологически, могло происходить в тех средах, где личность находилась в процессе постоянной трансформации и адаптации к новым и разнородным культурным импульсам.

*Культурные взаимодействия и выражение культурной принадлежности.*

Представления о культурных комплексах и формировании гибридных личностей возникли главным образом в ходе анализа четырех представительных памятников Причерноморья, а также при рассмотрении материалов из Южной Италии. Что касается Северного Причерноморья, очевидно, что прибрежные поселения дают интереснейший и культурологически сложный погребальный материал, и поэтому снова и снова появляются и рассматриваются культурные фоны и находки разного типа. В диссертации подчеркивается разнообразие и многогранность мотиваций использования конкретных культурных черт или предметов в погребениях, как и в реальной жизни (желание выразить непосредственную принадлежность к конкретной культуре; традиция, например семейная, выражать определенные культурные черты, связанные с происхождением; выражение статуса и элитарности, как отражение общественных противостояний, изменяющихся взглядов и моды, технологии, быта, практики). Мотивации могли быть совершенно разнородными, но в результате возникал комплекс их внешних выражений, которые были связаны с конкретным локальным окружением, и в частности, с конкретным населением, которое прекрасно понимало все тонкости общения в местных культурах. Это конкретное местное окружение понимало и использовало многогранный “язык символов” в границах зон, характеризующихся, как предполагается, этнической поляризацией. Поэтому я выдвинула предположение, что люди, населявшие прибрежные поселения Северного Причерноморья, прекрасно разбирались в символическом значении и информационном потенциале различных многокультурных компонентов, так как они и себя идентифицировали на основе именно таких межкультурных признаков. Вследствие этого я далее постаралась проанализировать, имели ли выражения принадлежности к эллинской культуре абсолютный приоритет в таких приграничных регионах, где в реальной жизни существовала комплексность культуры и где в погребальных традициях, по-видимому, отражены скорее местные социальные отношения. Следовательно, как это уже отмечено при рассмотрении южно-итальянских материалов, культурные воздействия, формирование личности и ее самосознание были прочно связаны с общественными условиями, зарождаясь в гораздо более узкой среде, чем та, которую можно характеризовать общегреческой (эллинской) принадлежностью. Местные, а может быть и региональные, стратегии социальной мобильности, соперничества и власти вероятно являлись более явным катализатором формирования личности, чем поляризованные представления “греки и не-греки”.

Результаты проведенного анализа и общие представления о культурном самосознании населения колоний не дают больше оснований считать, что греки совершенно не изменялись и не испытывали воздействия прочих культур. Вообще, такое рассмотрение материала подчеркивает необходимость пересмотра представлений о культурных влияниях как об одностороннем процессе, исходящем из иерархии культур. Другими словами, совокупность материалов говорит не об изолированных этносах, а о смешанном населении и гибридном самосознании личности, с которой можно было вступать в диалог или которой можно было управлять в соответствии с локальной или региональной политической ситуацией.

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# Abbreviations

<i>Agora XII</i>	Sparkes, B.A. & L. Talcott 1970.
<i>Agora XXIX</i>	Rotroff, S.I. 1997.
<i>AIONArchStAnt</i>	<i>Annali di archeologia e storia antic. Istituto universitario orientale. Dipartimento di studi del mondo classico e del Mediterraneo antico.</i>
<i>AJA</i>	<i>American Journal of Archaeology.</i>
<i>AJPA</i>	<i>American Journal of Physical Anthropology.</i>
<i>AMA</i>	<i>Antičnyj mir I archeologija. Saratov.</i>
<i>AnnPisa</i>	<i>Annali della Scuola normale superiore di Pisa.</i>
<i>ArcheologiaWarsz</i>	<i>Archeologia. Rocznik Instytutu archeologii I etnologii, Polskiej akademii nauk.</i>
<i>ArcheologijaKiiv</i>	<i>Archeologija. Nacional'na akademija nauk Ukraini. Institut archeologii.</i>
<i>ArkDer</i>	<i>Arkeoloji Dergisi. Ege Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Yayınları.</i>
<i>ASAtene</i>	<i>Annuario della Scuola archeologica di Atene e delle missioni italiane in Oriente.</i>
<i>ASbor</i>	<i>Archeologičeskij sbornik Gosudarstvennogo Ermitaža. Leningrad/St Petersburg.</i>
<i>ATL 1</i>	Meritt, B.D., H.T. Wade-Gery & M.F. McGregor 1939.
<i>ATL 2</i>	Meritt, B.D., H.T. Wade-Gery & M.F. McGregor 1949.
<i>ATL 3</i>	Meritt, B.D., H.T. Wade-Gery & M.F. McGregor 1950.
<i>AttiMemMagnaGr</i>	<i>Atti e memorie della Società Magna Graecia.</i>
<i>AttiTaranto 37</i>	<i>Confini e Frontiera nella grecità d'Occidente. Atti del Trentasettesimo convegno di studi sulla Magna Graecia. Taranto 3-6 Ottobre 1997. Taranto 1999.</i>
<i>AttiTaranto 40</i>	<i>Problemi della Chora coloniale dall'Occidente al Mar Nero. Atti del Quarantesimo Convegno di Studi sulla Magna Graecia. Taranto 29 settembre – 3 ottobre 2000. Taranto 2001.</i>
<i>AttiTaranto 41</i>	<i>Taranto e il Mediterraneo. Atti del Quarantunesimo Convegno di Studi sulla Magna Graecia. Taranto 12-16 Ottobre 2001. Taranto 2002.</i>
<i>BCH</i>	<i>Bulletin de correspondance hellénique.</i>
<i>BdA</i>	<i>Bollettino d'arte.</i>
<i>BSA</i>	<i>The Annual of the British School at Athens.</i>

BSR	<i>Papers of the British School at Rome.</i>
Clara Rhodos III	Jacopi, G. 1928-1941a.
Clara Rhodos IV	Jacopi, G. 1928-1941b.
Clara Rhodos VI-VII	Jacopi, G. 1928-1941c.
Corinth XIII	Blegen, C., H. Palmer & R.S. Young 1964.
Gold 1989	Hornbostel, W. (ed.) 1989.
GrRomBysSt	<i>Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies.</i>
Histria II	Alexandrescu, P. et al. 1966.
IstMitt	<i>Istanbuler Mitteilungen.</i>
JAMT	<i>Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory.</i>
JMedA	<i>Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology.</i>
KAS	<i>Klassiske Arkæologiske Studier.</i>
Kerameikos XIV	Kovacsovics, W.K. 1990.
KSIA	<i>Kratkie soobščeniya o dokladach I polevych issledovaniyach Instituta archeologii.</i>
KSIMK	<i>Kratkie soobščeniya Instituta istorii material'noj kul'tury.</i>
LGPN	<i>The Lexicon of Greek Personal Names.</i>
MatIssLA	<i>Materialy i issledovaniya po archeologii SSSR.</i>
Milet I.3	Rehm, A. & G. Kawerau 1914.
NSc	<i>Notizie degli scavi di antichità.</i>
OxfJA	<i>Oxford Journal of Archaeology.</i>
PP	<i>La parola del passato.</i>
ProcDanInstAth	<i>Proceedings of the Danish Institute at Athens.</i>
PZ	<i>Prähistorische Zeitschrift.</i>
RM	<i>Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Römische Abteilung.</i>
SovA	<i>Sovetskaja archeologija.</i>
Taranto 1994	Lippolis, E. (ed.) 1994
Taranto 1997	D'Amicis, A., G. Giboni & E. Lippolis 1997.
TrudyErmit	<i>Trudy Gosudarstvennogo Ermitaža. Leningrad/St Petersburg.</i>
VDI	<i>Vestnik drevnej istorii.</i>
ZPE	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik.</i>

## Colour plates



*Colour plate 1. Tomba 2/1982 from the cemetery in Via Traiana in Bitonto. Grave goods in situ hanging from nails on the tomb wall (after Riccardi 2003, 48; courtesy of A. Riccardi)*



*Colour plate 2. Nymphaion. Arrowheads from Grave 1a (Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford)*



*Colour plate 3. Nymphaion. Gold necklace from Grave 4 (Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford)*



*Colour plate 4. Nymphaion. Bronze strainer from Grave 4 (Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford)*



*Colour plate 5. Nymphaion. Pair of bracelets possibly from Grave 4 (Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford)*

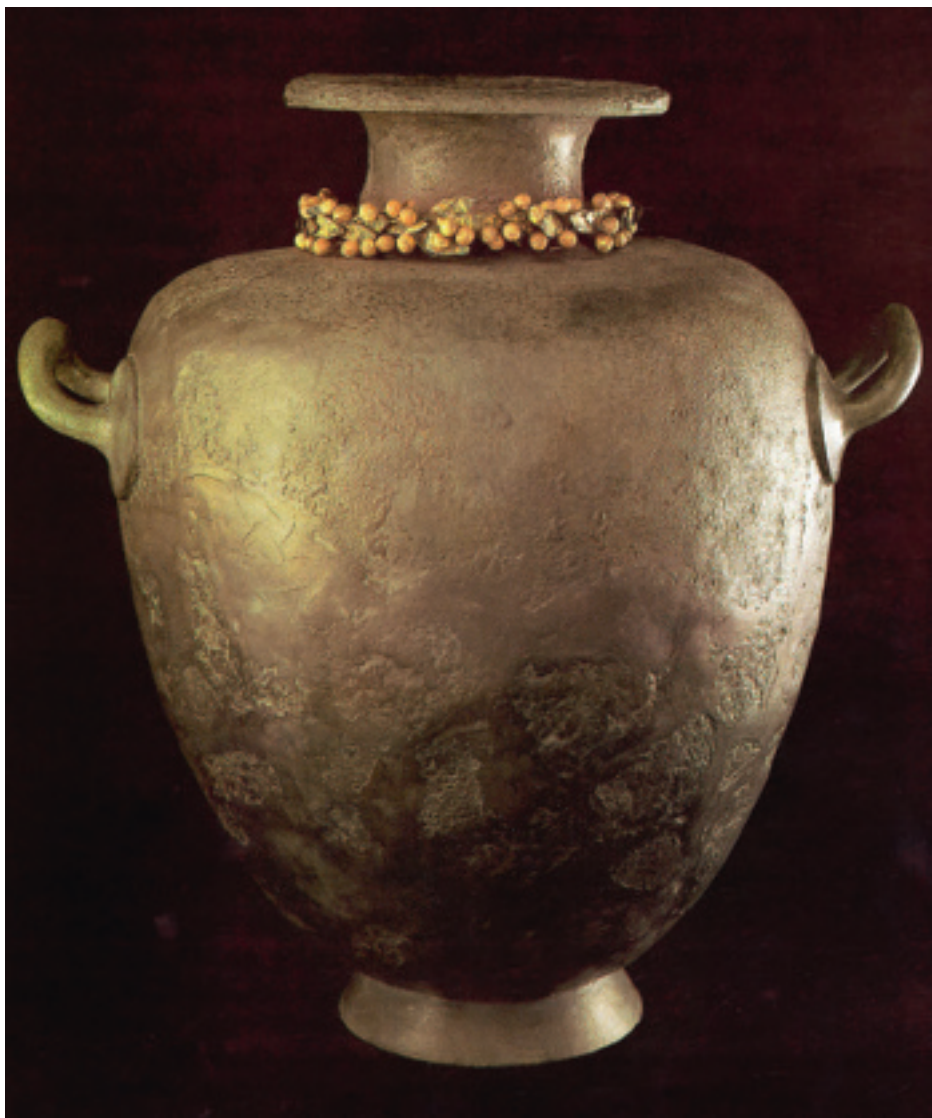




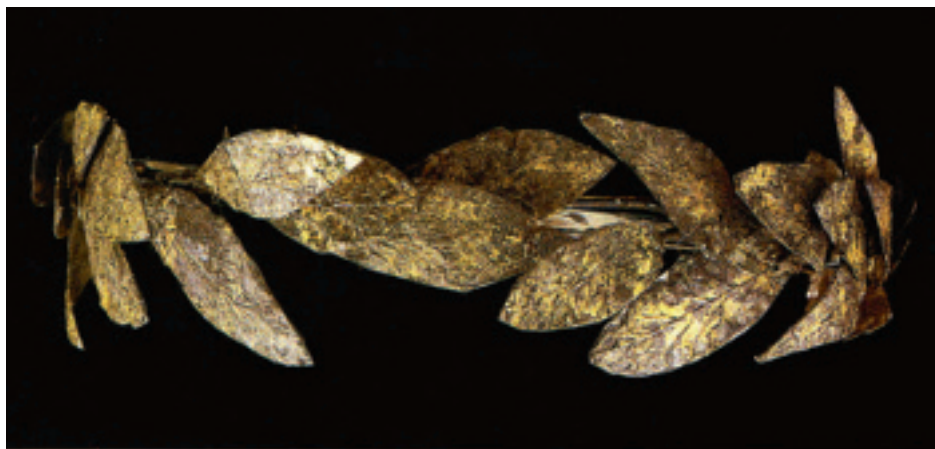
*Colour plate 6. Nymphaion. Bronze elk's head plaque from Grave 6 (Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford)*



*Colour plate 7. Nymphaion. Fragment of scale armour from Grave 6 (Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford)*



*Colour plate 8. Taras. Bronze hydria (after Guzzo 1996, fig. 69; courtesy of P.G. Guzzo)*



*Colour plate 9. Various types of wreaths (after Guzzo 1996, figs. 70-72; courtesy of P.G. Guzzo)*





Colour plate 10. Ginosa. Bronze helmet of Corinthian type from Tomba 40, Proprietà B. Sangiorgio, v. Vittorio Emanuele II, 132. Courtesy of the Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali-Direzione Regionale per i Beni Culturali e Paesaggistici della Puglia-Soprintendenza per i Beni Archeologici della Puglia.



Colour plate 11. Ginosa. Bronze helmet of Apulian-Corinthian type from Tomba 40, Proprietà B. Sangiorgio, v. Vittorio Emanuele II, 132. Courtesy of the Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali-Direzione Regionale per i Beni Culturali e Paesaggistici della Puglia-Soprintendenza per i Beni Archeologici della Puglia.







▲ Colour plate 13. Ginosa. Bronze lebes from Tomba 40, Proprietà B. Sangiorgio, v. Vittorio Emanuele II, 132. Courtesy of the Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali-Direzione Regionale per i Beni Culturali e Paesaggistici della Puglia-Soprintendenza per i Beni Archeologici della Puglia.

◀ Colour plate 12. Ginosa. Bronze greaves from Tomba 40, Proprietà B. Sangiorgio, v. Vittorio Emanuele II, 132. Courtesy of the Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali-Direzione Regionale per i Beni Culturali e Paesaggistici della Puglia-Soprintendenza per i Beni Archeologici della Puglia.





▲ Colour plate 15. Ginosa. Bronze strainer from Tomba 40, Proprietà B. Sangiorgio, v. Vittorio Emanuele II, 132. Courtesy of the Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali-Direzione Regionale per i Beni Culturali e Paesaggistici della Puglia-Soprintendenza per i Beni Archeologici della Puglia.

◀ Colour plate 14. Ginosa. Bronze olpe from Tomba 40, Proprietà B. Sangiorgio, v. Vittorio Emanuele II, 132. Courtesy of the Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali-Direzione Regionale per i Beni Culturali e Paesaggistici della Puglia-Soprintendenza per i Beni Archeologici della Puglia.



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