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Children and Death in Bronze Age and Early Iron Age Greece

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Abstract

The study of children and childhood remains largely marginalised in the archaeology of the prehistoric Aegean. Thus, this study aims to make Mycenaean children visible in archaeological research by discussing the treatment of non-adults at death in mainland Greece during the Bronze and Early Iron Age, with focus placed on grave types, grave furnishings, funerary and post-funerary rites and commemoration, and by highlighting the response of local communities to the death of their unfortunate little members, through the documentation of chronological and regional variations in a long perspective.

INTRODUCTION

Perceptions of childhood have changed in many ways over the course of human evolution. Still, there are a few universal features of childhood that stand out diachronically and cross-culturally. One of these is that before the modern industrialised world children faced grim chances of survival (Stearns 2006; Volk and Atkinson 2013: 182). It is thus not an exaggeration that "the history of childhood is a history of death" (Volk and Atkinson 2013: 182), and this was a reality in the prehistoric Aegean. While, however, the history and archaeology of childhood have become a particularly influential area of academic study in recent years, especially since Grete Lillehammer's seminal article "A Child Is Born" (1989), and despite the advances made in establishing an international academic discourse on the subject in the last 25 years (Lillehammer 2015), the study of children and childhood remains largely marginalised in the archaeology of the prehistoric Aegean. Consequently, "infants" and particularly "children" are defined loosely in the archaeological literature of the region (e.g. Nordquist 1987; Lagia et al. 2007; Ingvarsson-Sundström 2008). For the purposes of this study, "infancy" is defined as ending at one year of age, and "childhood" as ending at puberty, i.e. 12-15 years of age. ~~Second~~ Children are often also underrepresented in the Aegean mortuary record, rendering complete and accurate estimation of non-adult populations difficult (for similar issues, Lewis and Gowland 2007). The series of serious drawbacks that archaeologists stumble upon when studying Aegean children may be summarised as follows (also Gallou 2004: 365; Gallou 2010: 162ff; Gallou-Minopetrou 2015: 57):

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a) taphonomic processes may be dependent on a variety of environmental, individual and cultural factors that can severely affect the preservation of non-adult osteological remains in the Aegean and thus presenting difficulties in determining sample bias (cf. Guy *et al.* 1997; Ingvarsson-Sundström 2008: 25-28, 72-78)
b) lack of proper identification and recording of non-adult skeletal remains by earlier excavators (eg. Frödin and Persson 1938: 115; Nordquist and Ingvarsson-Sundström 2005: 161)
c) relative lack of modern anthropological and scientific analyses of non-adult remains
d) the practice of collective burial, the reuse of tombs, the performance of post-funerary ritual that encourages interference with skeletal remains, the exclusion of children from formal burial and lack of burial furnishings during various phases in ~~the~~ Bronze and Early Iron Age Greece.

Through meticulous assessment of the available evidence, this study provides an archaeological insight into the treatment of non-adults at death in central and southern mainland Greece during the Bronze and Early Iron Age, focussing on grave types, funerary rites and grave furnishings, commemoration and post-funerary rituals, and aims to highlight the responses of local communities to the death of their unfortunate little members through the documentation of chronological and regional variations in a long perspective.

Throughout the Bronze and Early Iron Age, two main types of grave contexts for non-adults may be distinguished:
a) extramural, where burial took place in organised cemeteries outside the habitation area.
b) intramural, where burial was performed in simple graves either within the inhabited space, or outside but very close to the habitation area, sometimes in the ruins of abandoned structures. Intramural graves may cluster in small burial plots (cf. Polychronakou-Sgouritsa 1987: 9-18; Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 24; Maran 1995: 70-71; Gallou 2004: 366-367; Gallou-Minopetrou 2015: 58-59; Aravantinos and Psarraki 2010: 389-390; Milka 2010: 347-355; Pomadère 2010: 419). These burial plots could lie in close proximity to the settlement but the borders between cemeteries and settlements are not always clearly demarcated, and sometimes the two could occupy the same spaces at

different times (Whittaker 2014: 89). ~~It becomes clear then that it is~~ It is thus not always easy to distinguish between intramural and extramural interment as one cannot say with certainty whether "these [intramural] burials are strictly contemporary with the buildings among which they were found, or if the burials represent a distinct phase in which this area of the site was used as a cemetery and not for habitation" (Pullen 1990: 11). The Aegean practice of intra- and extramural interment was first discussed in connection to C. Tsountas' excavations at Sesklo (Tsountas 1908: 126).

BRONZE AGE

Early Helladic (3100-2000 BC)

Inhumation in both intramural and extramural contexts was the preferred mode of interment for adults and children, although adult cremation was sporadically practised too (Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 18; Cultraro 2007: 86). Infants and younger children become more 'visible' in the intramural mortuary record of the middle and late phases of the period (Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 15 and *Catalogue* p. 22; McGeorge 2013: 2; Smith 2011: 48-54). The young dead were usually laid to rest on a bed of stones in simple pits or cists: below the floors of houses, e.g. Eutresis (Goldman 1931: 221), in natural crevices, e.g. Asine (Frödin and Persson 1938: 42, 338, 340-341, figs. 228 and 229; Pullen 1990: 10); in jars as in Lerna IV (Blackburn 1970: 29-33; Angel 1971: 43-46; Forsén 1992: 37; Kovatsi et al. 2010) and Olympia: Altis (Dörpfeld 1935: 94-95; Rambach 2002: 181); or under large vessels, e.g. Askitario (Theocharis 1955: 115), Tiryns (Gercke and Gercke 1975: 9-10, 14) and Kirrha (Dor *et al.* 1960: 119).

The extramural depositional practices for EH I (3100-2700 BC) children remain obscure with the exception of the cemetery at Elis: Kalyvia where children were interred either together with adults in rock-cut chamber tombs or singly in cist graves deliberately arranged across the cemetery and usually set close to the entrance of the family graves (Rambach 2007; Smith 2011: 48). In EH II (2700-2200 BC) older children were often buried with adults in rock cut chamber tombs, tumuli or in simple graves (Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 15-17 and Catalogue p. 22; Smith 2011: 48-54), e.g. Agios Kosmas (Mylonas 1959: 72, 117), Marathon: Tsepi (Pantelidou-Gofa 2005: 52) and Manika (Sampson 1985: 222). Although in the Attic examples no sexual discrimination is observed in the double adult- child burials, at Manika children were consistently buried with female adults in the Beligianni and Georgiou plots; by the later stage of the phase the graves in the Beligianni sector were exclusively reserved for children and women (Sampson 1985: 222, 385, tables 27-30). "Perhaps in special cases only or for special reasons" younger children were singly interred in very small simple cists or pits with entrances of diminutive proportions: e.g. Agios Kosmas (Mylonas 1959: 91, 117) and Marathon: Tsepi (Pantelidou-Gofa 2005: 250-

251 plus ref to Graves 15 and 27). The fact that smaller children were treated individually within the extramural cemeteries and graves, sets these burials apart from the model of multiple grave use in extramural contexts, and places them instead in closer connection with the intramural examples (Weiberg 2007: 211).

Overall, the majority of intramural burials appear to belong to infants in EH I and EH III (2200-2000 BC), and of toddlers (2-3 years old) in EH II. This suggests a certain degree of formalisation of this burial practice and choice within these Early Helladic communities. A clear age distinction is also noticeable in extramural burial contexts: only toddlers (2-3 years old) were usually deposited in single graves within the cemetery or in pits by the side of the main grave, whereas "children within the main burial chamber, when aged, range from infants to early teenagers" (Weiberg 2007: 224), e.g. Agios Kosmas (Mylonas 1959: 72-73, 89-92, 94-95, 97-99, 102, 104, 117; Angel 1959: 16, 169, 173, table 1). Sometimes vertically set slabs signalled children's graves (cf. Mylonas 1959: 99).

Some children were ~~offered~~ afforded secondary funeral rites, or at least their skeletal remains were subject to some sort of ritual interference, as at Manika graves 134 and 168 (cf. Sampson 1985: 48, 58, fig. 25, plan 39), Agios Kosmas grave 15 (Mylonas 1959: 94, fig. 85, drawing 33) and Nea Makri (Theocharaki 1980: 82-83, fig. 4). The arrangement of ~~the~~ two child secondary burials ~~in~~ at the feet of the female primary burial in grave 134 at Manika may reflect a "meaningful connection between the children and the female (with importance for the vertical aspect of kinship)" (Weiberg 2007: 335).

Regional and chronological variations characterise the deposition of burial gifts in non-adult graves (cf. Weiberg 2013: Table 1). These were usually of modest types and numbers, and they may reflect the choices (or preferences) of the local community and occasionally the socio-economic standing of the deceased's family. Clay vessels (saucers, cups, goblets, jars, sauceboats, *askoi* and *kantharoi*) ranging from just one vessel (e.g. Asine, Manika, Agios Kosmas, Kirrha, Marathon:Tsepi) to as many as five (Lerna IV), obsidian blades and chips (Asine, Lerna), sea shell (Marathon Tsepi), and bone artefacts (Olympia) were typically offered to children. No terracotta feeding bottles, a class of pottery associated with child burials in later periods, have been identified although *askoi* may have been used for the same purpose; one should not exclude though the possible use of feeding bottles made of perforated animal horns or of animal skin with cloth or leather teats. Alternative suggestions may be that ~~EH~~ mothers in the Early Helladic period continued breastfeeding their offspring for two to three years, ~~and then~~ gradually weaning ~~until~~ the child until it was able to consume all kinds of food, or that the babies were fed from a very young age a diet of soft fat, bone marrow and/or thin gruel-like mixtures of seeds, not unlike what babies were fed in pre-modern rural Greece (see also Jelliffe *et al.* 1962: 910). Miniature vessels, another class of objects traditionally associated with non-adults (cf. Sampson 1988: 58), were commonly found in infant/child burials at Tsepi and Manika but were rare at Agios Kosmas and Zygouries, and not always exclusive to them (cf. Mylonas 1959: 85; Pantelidou-Gofa 2005: 81).

The offering of obsidian blades has been associated with "the cutting of the umblical cord in the moments following birth" (Smith 2011: 55). Alternatively, an association between obsidian and non-adult burials may be ~~seen~~ suggested in the use of the blades for making incisions on the child's body as part of traditional healing practices: a similar tradition of removing any traces of the mother's postpartum blood from the child's body by skin-cutting and scarring during infancy to help prevent infections, was sporadically practised in rural Greece until the mid-20th century (see also Friedl 1997: 59; Lancy 2015: 105).

The possible involvement of children in apprenticeship may be suggested by the marble *phiale* (probably used as a grinder as evidenced by intense wear at its bottom) in child grave 24A at Agios Kosmas (cf. Mylonas 1959: 102-103, fig. 165) and the miniature copper chisel from ~~the~~ adolescent burial R23 at Lefkas (cf. Dörpfeld 1927: 240-241, 63a.9; Marangou 1991: 215). Finally, the necklace of gold beads and the two silver spiral bracelets that adorned the little girl in pithos grave R15B at Lefkas (Dörpfeld 1927: 235, pl. 60) are certainly exceptional, albeit atypical, since there are no other strong indications of inequalities in social status (and subsequently family wealth) among Early Helladic infant/child burials.

Middle Helladic (2000-1600 BC)

One of the main differences from the preceding Early Helladic period is the uniformity of burial practice that characterises Middle Helladic mainland Greece. Scattered groups of simple graves accommodating all age groups, from neonates, infants and children to adults, were placed in the immediate vicinity of settlements, sometimes within the ruins of abandoned structures, e.g. Eleusis, Argos, Asine, Lerna, Peristeria and Agios Stephanos (Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 24-26; Ingvarsson-Sundström 2008: 102ff; Taylour and Janko 2008: 142; Lebegyev 2009:19-22; Milka 2010). One of the issues that archaeologists often encounter is that several of the graves were used from the Middle well into the Late Helladic period, ~~therefore it is~~ making it sometimes difficult to precisely date individual burials, in particular non-adult ones. For ~~matters~~ the sake of consistency, and following the example of Cavanagh and Mee (1998: Chapter 4), Grave Circle B at Mycenae is discussed in this section, whereas Grave Circle A is considered subsequently in the section on Early Mycenaean evidence.

In MH I-II (2000-1700 BC) the infant/child:adult burial ratio is fairly balanced in intramural mortuary contexts (Voutsaki 2004: 353), and children appear more frequently in extramural cemeteries than in intramural contexts in MH II-III (1800-1600 BC) (Voutsaki 2004: 352-353; Ingvarsson-Sundström 2008: 103ff). From MH III (1700-1600 BC) intramural burial was predominantly reserved for neonates, infants and younger children (Maran 1995: 70-71; Lebegyev 2009: 19-20) with the exception of a few sites such as Kirrha and Krisa in central Greece (Pomadère 2010: 422) and at ~~the~~ Agios Stephanos in Laconia (Taylour and Janko 2008: 142) where intramural adult burial was also practised. ~~MH~~ Children in the Middle Helladic period were usually buried underneath the floors of houses which were still in use (Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 24, 129; Alden 2000: 17; Ingvarsson–Sundström 2008: 103), a custom that may reflect continuity from the preceding EH II and EH III phases. The statistics from the Middle Helladic cemeteries at Asine show that non-adults appear in 62% of intramural graves as opposed to the c. 39% found in extramural graves (Nordquist 1987: 102). A similar high infant mortality rate is attested at Aigina: Kolonna (Kanz *et al.* 2010: 483, esp. fig 2 in p. 487). The Minimum Number of Individuals (MNI) buried often exceeds the number of associated graves, meaning that sometimes two or three small children were buried in the same grave (Invgarsson-Sundström 2008: 34ff). In grave Γ22 Trench C in the Prehistoric Cemetery at Mycenae seven infant burials were placed, both as inhumations on the floor and as jar burials, alongside a double adult and adolescent burial (Alden 2000: 32).

Around 1700 BC the mainland communities underwent dramatic social and cultural changes manifested through the gradual introduction of ostentatious practices and conspicuous consumption in the mortuary sphere, an increased emphasis on descent, and more pronounced age and gender divisions in funerary treatment (Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 41; Voutsaki 2004: 346; Pomadère 2010; Voutsaki *et al.* 2013: 140). These transformations are evident in the widespread use of organised extramural cemeteries, the increasing complexity in grave types, the introduction of multiple inhumations by the end of the Middle Helladic period, and practice of secondary funeral customs. Infant/child burials, both intramural and extramural, are generally underrepresented in the funerary landscape of ~~the~~ MH III/LH I, and the division between children and adults becomes more pronounced towards the end of the period (Voutsaki 2004: 352). Children younger than the age of five are "invisible" from the majority of organised extramural cemeteries. Of the twenty six burials in Grave Circle B at Mycenae only five children were lay to rest in the Circle as opposed to the nineteen men and seven women buried therein (Mylonas 1973: 145-146, 163, 177-178, 185; 188; Mee 1998: 167). In Circle B adults and children were mostly buried together (Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 129), with the exception of Grave

M which was reserved for two child burials (Mylonas 1973: 148-149). On the other hand, the study of the skeletal material from the Prehistoric Cemetery at Mycenae has shown particularly high infant mortality levels (Alden 2000: 43, 43). Could it be that the "missing" sub-adult segment of the families buried in Grave Circle B is to be found among the infants and children buried in the Prehistoric Cemetery, who were for some reason excluded from the special disposal area of Circle B (Triantaphyllou 2010: 445)? A high mortality rate among individuals of less than one year of age, as a result of the difficulties affecting babies during the first developmental months, has also been noticed for Lerna and Asine (Ingvarsson-Sundström 2008: 121-122; Triantaphyllou 2010: 448; Ingvarsson-Sundström et al. 2013: 155). Similarly, individuals younger than 6 years old appear to have had restricted access (if any) to the Argos 'tumuli' as opposed to children older than six years old and juveniles (Voutsaki et al. 2007: 180-181).

Regarding depositional patterns, ~~MH~~ non-adults in the Middle Helladic period were interred either in *pithoi* (or jars), in simple pits, or rarely in stone-built or brick-lined cists, mostly singly in a contracted or less frequently in an extended position (Nordquist 1987: 91-93; Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 23, 26-27; Alden 2000: 26). At Lerna MH I-II burial jars were used exclusively for infants with the sole exception of a small child, with the majority of infants and small children deposited in pits (Voutsaki 2004: 353 and table 10). In MH III/LH I infants were mostly interred in pits, while cists often accommodated infants, children and adults (Voutsaki 2004: 353 and table 10). Middle Helladic child graves were generally small, seldom exceeding 0.35m^2 (Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 27). At Asine infants were sometimes buried in rectangular wooden boxes (Frödin and Persson 1938: 124, 186-187, fig. 146; Mårtensson 2002; Nordquist and Ingvarsson-Sundström 2005: 157).

Non-adults of late Middle Helladic and the transitional MH III/LH I periods were mostly buried in simple grave types (pits and cists), and in or under pots; occasionally children were placed in tumuli. The use of more elaborate types, mainly the Shaft Graves, was restricted to the more affluent members of the local communities, mainly the adult members of the elite; only a few children older than five years of age were buried in such graves (Mylonas 1973; Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 129). Although the preferred mode of deposition for non-adults was single inhumation, double adult-child burials have also been recorded: e.g. Thebes (Touloupa 1966: 187), Kouphovouno (Lagia and Cavanagh 2010: 339), Mycenae (Alden 2000: 21, 33), Asine and Lerna (Invgarsson-Sundström 2008: 104). It has been previously argued that this type of burial does not necessarily indicate a family relationship as this could pattern could denote that "the two died very shortly after one another therefore the burials took place simultaneously or within a very short time" (Nordquist 1987: 105). However, scientific analyses from Kouphovouno have confirmed that skeletons A0009A and A0009B were genetically related (Lagia and Cavanagh 2010: 339), thus providing some firm evidence that "family ties could … have been emphasized through the mortuary treatment of individuals" (Ingvarsson-Sundström 2008: 104). The combination of child and adult burials was not restricted to one sex since both women and men were interred together with children on the same occasion (Ingvarsson-Sundström 2008: 104). By the end of the period non-adults started to receive ~~the~~ customary secondary funeral rites as suggested by the evidence retrieved from Mycenae (cf. Alden 2000: 32-33).

Non-adult graves, mainly of the earlier Middle Helladic phases, are usually found 'unfurnished', rendering their dating in or within the period rather difficult. Still as with Early Helladic burials the fact that several graves are found devoid of artefacts does not necessarily mean that children were not offered any gifts at all; the deposition of food offerings and/or objects of perishable materials cannot, and should not, be excluded. Typical gifts, when evidenced, primarily include pottery, followed by jewellery and tools. These offerings are usually similar to those associated with contemporary adult graves. The deposition of drinking and pouring vessels with children in EH III and Middle Helladic times has been taken to signify a connection between children and water rites in life, although not without reservations about the nature of the liquids involved (Marangou 2001:153ff. See Ingvarsson-Sundström 2008: 111 for further discussion). Seashells, pierced or unpierced, are commonly found in connection with child burials, and have variously been attributed meaning: practical, as food offerings and/or indicators of children's involvement in the collection of the molluscs; decorative as ~~part~~elements of jewellery; symbolic, as amulets or for ritual deposition in the graves; or ritually connected with water rites (Nordquist 1987: 105; Ingvarsson-Sundström 2008: 111). Most of the children in Grave Circle B at Mycenae featured no preserved offerings (Laffineur 1989: 232) with the exception of the child in Shaft Grave Ξ who received a ~~good~~ number of vases, precious ornaments and a gold object (probably a rattle) (Mylonas 1973: 177-185, pls 159-160). MH III/LH I children seem to "receive a more diverse set of offerings than adult burials" (Voutsaki 2004: 356): pottery comprising drinking sets, storage vessels, miniature pots and occasionally feeding bottles, jewellery and clothing accessories of various types were among the typical burial gifts. Zooarchaeological remains, possibly indicating food offerings and/or feasting activities, are occasionally recorded (Norquist 1987: 105; Norquist 1990: 40 note 43).

Precious offerings are rarely attested and if found, they may be connected to the child family's economic and social status: e.g. the flattened bronze cylinder seal that was probably given to an infant at Mycenae (cf. Alden 2000: 32). The seal may have ~~held~~ had protective properties, as also may have had the amulet that accompanied ~~the~~ a child at Aigina: Kolonna (cf. Kanz et al. 2010: 483) and possibly the necklaces or bracelets made of single beads in graves B33 at Asine and D8 at Lerna (cf. Nordquist and Ingvarsson-Sundström 2005: 159). The practice of depositing jewellery even with premature babies is notable at Lerna (Nordquist and Ingvarsson-Sundström 2005: 159) and Asine (cf. Blackburn 1970: 140-142; Nordquist 1987: 44, fig. 22). Pins may be interpreted as clothing accessories and/or shroud fasteners, and rings either as finger-rings (when found singly), earrings (when in pairs) and/or as hair rings (cf. Nordquist and Ingvarsson-Sundström 2005: 159).

Weapons are rarely ~~connected to~~ found in Middle Helladic child burials; however, Grave 5 in Tumulus E at Argos accommodated the remains of a six-year-old child, most probably a boy, buried with two daggers and a sword (Protonotariou-Deilaki 1980: 115-119; Protonotariou-Deilaki 1990: n. 10). Given that it would have been impossible for the child to "have been able to demonstrate his prowess as a warrior, the offensive weapons might have alluded to the child's anticipated abilities" (Nordquist and Ingvarsson-Sundström 2005: 159). The same properties may be attributable to the green stone celts or axes that furnished the premature infant in Grave MH87 and the small children in graves MH72 and MH73 at Asine (Frödin and Persson 1938: 124-125; Nordquist 1996: 29-33; Ingvarsson-Sundström 2008: 110). A knife from a child's grave in Argos (Divari-Valakou 1998: 88) and ~~the~~ an obsidian arrowhead from Grave DE6 of a one-year-old infant at Lerna (Blackburn 1970: 156-157) could be interpreted as indicating the family's expectation that the child would become a successful hunter in adulthood. These artefacts cannot always be treated as gender indicators (cf. Nordquist and Ingvarsson-Sundström 2005: 159). Rarely tools such as bone awls, usually used for piercing, boring, scraping and incising, were deposited with children, e.g. graves BE30, D19 and D14 at Lerna and MH63 at Asine (Lerna: Blackburn 1970: 40-42, 57, 93-94; Asine: Frödin and Persson 1938: 123; Nordquist 1996: 28). They could be an indication of the economic contribution of children, without though excluding a ritual purpose (Ingvarsson-Sundström 2008: 110).

Mycenaean period

The Early Mycenaean period (LH I-II: 1600-1450 BC) marked societal changes which were clearly reflected ~~on~~ in the greater diversity of burial practices and mortuary traditions. These changes were distinctly related to the age, sex, kin-group and social status of the dead. The tradition of extramural and intramural burial continued (Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 130), but from LH II onwards infants younger than one year of age were mostly deposited in simple intramural graves. The majority of intramural burials date to Early Mycenaean and LH IIIC (1200-1080 BC) times: e.g. Korakou, Chalandritsa, Katarrachti:

Agios Athanasios, Agios Stephanos, Peristeria, Malthi, Lefkandi and Kynos: Pyrgos Livanates (Gallou 2004: 367; Lebegyev 2009: 20, 22; Gallou-Minopetrou 2015: 58-59). Exceptional are the child burials in small terracotta sarcophagi under the floor of LH IIIC House S at Agios Kosmas (Mylonas 1959: 61-62). The unfurnished LH IIIB-C child and adult burials in the Lower Citadel at Tiryns (Kilian 1981: 170ff, 182; Lewartowski 2000: 23) could be connected to the long tradition of intramural burials in the area (Kilian 1979: 386).

Children usually older than five years old are rarely reported in LH I-II extramural family tombs (tholos, built and chamber tombs) in contrast to LH III times (Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 51-52, 54, 129; Lebegyev 2009: 20, 22). Despite the visibility of children in family tombs in the main palatial period (LH III), an adult bias is discernible with children accounting for only 25% of the dead buried therein (cf. Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 129). The picture remains unchanged in post-palatial times (LH IIIC) with, for example, children representing just 13% of the entire burial assemblage at the extensive cemetery of Perati (Gallou-Minopetrou 2015: 57-58). In the Sub-Mycenaean period (1080-1050 BC) burials of older children were much more frequent than those of infants: e.g. at Athens (Houby-Nielsen 2000: 155). Attempts to distinguish infants as a distinct age group in the mortuary sphere are witnessed during ~~the~~ Sub-Mycenaean times when infants were often, although not exclusively, buried in pits or graves built of small stones, as opposed to older children and adults who received burial in cists (Houby-Nielsen 2000: 152).As a general observation, a progressive separation of age groups that began in the Middle Helladic period ~~times~~ appears ~~rather~~ to become consolidated in the Late Bronze Age.

Only a few children, as younger members of local elite groups, received formal burial in Shaft Graves at Mycenae and in tholos tombs either directly on the floor of the main chamber or in pits/cists in the tomb, during the Early Mycenaean period and the main palatial phases: e.g. Koukounara 2, Midea, Oxylinthos, Mouriatada, Volos Kazanaki, and possibly in ~~the~~ LH IIIB/C Medeon 239 and Pteleon B (Polychronakou-Sgouritsa 1987: 10-11; Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 43-44, 51-52, 54, 129; Gallou 2004: 367; Lebegyev 2009: 20, 22; Gallou-Minopetrou 2015: 58). Chamber tombs accommodated non-adult burials in niches and pits in the *dromos*, or passageway, or in pits or benches in the main chamber, or in the side chamber of the family tombs throughout LH IIB-IIIC times (Polychronakou-Sgouritsa 1987, 11-12; Lewartowski 1996, 753-758; Cavanagh and Mee 1998, 129; Gallou 2004: 367; Thomatos 2006: 162-163; Muskett 2008: 42-43; Gallou-Minopetrou 2015: 58). Child burials in terracotta or stone sarcophagi are occasionally attested from LH IIIA: e.g. Prosymna XXVII (Blegen 1937: 54, 269), Vraserka 1 (Demakopoulou 1987: 70–72) and grave XXXIX in the area of the Prehistoric Cemetery at Mycenae

(Polychronakou-Sgouritsa 1987: 13), with the most instructive examples reported from LH IIIB-C Tanagra (Spyropoulos 1969: 10; Spyropoulos 1970: 186–187). Sometimes chamber tombs, usually with ~~of~~ smaller dimensions, were exclusively used for children: e.g. Thebes: Kolonaki (Agia Anna) 1 and 2 (Keramopoullos 1917: 127, 128); Tanagra 102 (Spyropoulos 1976: 64); Athenian Agora XX, XXXIII and XIII (Immewahr 1971: 105-109, 199-201, 212-231); Brauron (Papadimitriou 1956: 85); Perati (Iakovides 1969: 26, 68-69, 77-78, 116, 150-151, 229, 243, 249-250, 324, 330, 331, 341, 342, 346-347, 413, 414, 437, 446; Iakovides 1970: 67); Prosymna XVI and XIX (Blegen 1937: 52, 60-61; Cavanagh 1987: 167); Mycenae: Aspria (Demakopoulou 1981: 99, fig. 9; Lebegyev 2009: 22) and Kapsala (Mylonas 1972: 115; Shelton 2000); Nauplion: Palamidi (Protonoratiou-Deilaki 1973: 901); and Achaia Klauss Δ (Paschalidis and McGeorge 2009: 96). Non-adult inhumations are also attested in organised cemeteries of simple graves (pits, cists, shafts) or in single graves (pits, cists, shafts) dispersed among chamber or tholos tombs (Polychronakou-Sgouritsa 1987: 14-18; Lewartowski 2000: 16; Gallou 2004: 367). Pot-burial was revived in the last phase of LH IIIC, for example at Mesopotamos, Xylokastro, Argos and possibly Mycenae, but without ever becoming particularly popular (Gallou-Minopetrou 2015: 59). Occasionally Middle Helladic graves were reused for the interment of non-adults in LH IIIA-B: e.g. cist grave Mπ8 in the West Cemetery at Eleusis (cf. Mylonas 1975: 162-163). Grave markers on child graves rarely survive (cf. Polychronakou-Sgouritsa 1987: 19-20; Gallou 2004: 367 and Gallou-Minopetrou 2015: 60 for further discussion), though two vessels marked the position of LH IIIC cist grave 2 near the Electrean Gates at Thebes (Keramopoullos 1917: 25) and a triangular stone grave marker a LH IIIC cist grave in the Prehistoric Cemetery at Mycenae (Desborough 1954: 259).

Inhumation was the preferred mode of burial for non-adults throughout the Late Bronze Age, with cremations sporadically attested in LH IIIC: e.g. Perati, Argos, Mycenae: Chania and Elateia: Alonaki (Gallou-Minopetrou 2015: 59-60 for further bibliography). No particular orientation nor consistency in the posture have been noted: supine, flexed (or semi-flexed), extended and contracted positions are all attested (Polychronakou-Sgouritsa 1987: 20-21), though a preference was probably shown towards the deposition of children on their side in simple graves (Lewartowski 2000: 21-22). At LH IIIB-C Perati children and adults were mostly placed on their backs with their knees drawn-up (Iakovides 1970: 29-31). On occasions the child's head was laid to rest on a pile of stones or on a stone slab, e.g. Perati and Agios Stephanos (Polychronakou-Sgouritsa 1987: 21; Gallou-Minopetrou 2015: 59). On a number of occasions, children and adults were laid to rest simultaneously (Polychronakou-Sgouritsa 1987: 21; Lewartowski 2000: 23-24; Gallou 2004: 367; Gallou-Minopetrou 2015: 59); the adult is traditionally identified as the mother of the child although one should not rule out the possibility of the grown-up being another close relative, who unfortunately died at the same time as the child due to illness or accident (Gallou-Minopetrou 2015: 59). No double adult male-child burial have been reported after the Middle Bronze Age, and this pattern may be consistent with the co-listing of mothers with young children in the Linear B personnel tablets (cf. Gallou 2010). Child remains systematically received the customary secondary funeral rites throughout the Mycenaean period: children's *disiecta membra* have been found either mixed with disarticulated adult remains or singly in pits, niches or benches, accompanied by funerary gifts (Gallou 2004: 368; Gallou-Minopetrou 2015: 63; Gallou 2016).

Moving beyond the atypical burials in Grave Circle A at Mycenae, where the children were literally buried in gold alongside their adult female relatives (cf. Karo 1930-33: 62, no 146, plate LIII; Dickinson 1977: 48, no 1; Demakopoulou 1990, 98), the provision of gifts in Early Mycenaean non-adult graves is extremely inconsistent and contradictory. Most child burials were found unfurnished (Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 49-50, 129) but exceptions did exist: e.g. the "princesses" in Koukounara tholos 2 (Marinatos 1954: 191-192) and in the Dendra tholos (Persson 1931: 15, fig. 12), and the rich burials in humbler contexts as the "Lily Bowl Grave" in the Athenian Agora (Immerwahr 1971: 205-208), the Unterburg at Tiryns (Kilian 1982: 418-420, figs. 36-38), cist grave 4 at Argos (Kaza-Papageorgiou 1985: 4-6, pls. 2-3), the intramural graves at Korakou (Blegen 1921: 102-103) and the cist grave near the "Prytaneion" at Analipsis (Kalogeropoulos 1998: 23ff., pl. 154). Girls were often the recipients of impressive jewellery and valuable tokens in Early Mycenaean times (cf. Laffineur 1987: 233; Graziadio 1991: 430ff, 439ff; Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 129, 168). Although this might have been the result of a special sympathy for the unmarried dead, "assertions of hereditary privilege" (Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 129), have also been attributed to them. The special status of girls as potential mothers and bearers of heirs for the clan has also been noted (Gallou 2004: 369). During the main palatial period burial offerings become standardised and are rarely impressive, as in Prosymna tomb II (Blegen 1937: 177), Alyki tomb A (Papadimitriou 1955: 80ff) and grave Θπ4 at Eleusis (Mylonas 1975: 10ff.). Appropriate funerary gifts for non-adults consisted usually of pottery, jewellery (pins, necklaces, bracelets, rings, pendants, amulets, buttons, seal) and figurines, and less frequently of toiletry items such as mirrors and combs (Polychronakou-Sgouritsa 1987:23-26; Gallou 2004: 368).

Cultic vessels (mainly *rhyta*), feeding bottles, vases for storage and for the consumption of food and liquids, and *alabastra* are frequent in extramural child graves, the latter attested almost exclusively in this context (Gates 1992: 163-166; Lewartowski 2000: 29-30; Gallou 2004: 371). Miniature vessels occur slightly more frequently in intramural child graves (Lewartowski 2000: 29) and they "were presumably made for the grave, size and status being considered commensurate" (Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 129). However miniatures are also attested in adult graves and domestic contexts, thus exclusivity cannot be claimed with certainty for non-adult funerary contexts. Among several other examples, the Eleusinian tomb Θπ4, the chamber tombs at Prosymna and Glyka Nera clearly illustrate the "traditional" association of child burials with terracotta figurines, feeding bottles and miniatures (Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 129; Gallou 2004: 368); still, as in the case of miniatures, regional variations linked with localised patterns of belief are attested in the decision to deposit figurines with LH IIIA-B child and adult burials (Cavanagh 1977: 161-163; 1998: 10-9, 113; Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 74; Gallou 2005: 52ff). Figurines of various types including the *kourotrophos* type appear in child burials from the Early Mycenaean period onwards, e.g. Aidonia tomb 6 (cf. French 1972; Gallou 2005: 54; Kaza-Papageorgiou 1998: 10-12).

The deposition of funerary gifts (mainly pottery, figurines and jewellery) with non-adults varied from cemetery to cemetery in LH IIIC times with a general tendency towards offering more gifts to children than to adults in chamber tombs (cf. Iakovides 1969: 66). ~~On the contrary,~~ By contrast, intramural non-adult burials appear to receive fewer and poorer gifts, if any at all (Gallou-Minopetrou 2015: 25). The presence of terracotta feeding bottles, vessels of miniature and standard shapes (wheel-made or handmade), seashells, figurines and bird-shaped *askoi* continue to be considered as clear indications of a child burial during this period, even where skeletal material is totally absent.

EARLY IRON AGE (1050-700 BC)

From the very beginning of the Early Iron Age children were given formal burial, either in specially reserved areas (e.g. ~~at~~ in the Kerameikos under the "Sacred Road" near the "Dipylon Gate", Mycenae: Lion Gate, in the north-western sector of the Toumba cemetery at Lefkandi, and Volos: Nea Ionia) or with adults in family graves and burial plots (e.g. at Kolonos Agoraios and near the Stoa of Attalos in the Athenian Agora, in the north-western part of Argos, Asine, Tiryns and Alos:Voulokalyva (Hägg 1974: 51-53; Houby-Nielsen 2000: 156-157; Lemos 2002: 155, 160, 165, 189; Lemos 2011: 638; Papadimitriou 2003: 713-727; Malakasioti and Tsiouka 2011. For the alternative suggestion that children were given less formal burial in ~~PG~~ Athens in the Protogeometric period, see Morris 1987: 97-109; Morris 1992: 45-74). The radical shift in burial tradition, with the introduction of cremation for the vast majority of ~~PG~~ adults in the Protogeometric period, did not affect the disposal of infants and young children, who continued to be inhumed, preferably in a contracted posture, extramurally and less frequently intramurally in stone- or slab- lined cists, shafts, or simple pits, occasionally alongside adults (cf. Houby-Nielsen 2000: 152; Lemos 2002: 152, 153, 155, 173; Sipsie-Eschbach 1991: 180-181; Mazarakis-Ainian

2008). Exceptions are the child cremations at Athens: Erechtheion Str. and Krannon (cf. Morris 1987: 120; Houby-Nielsen 2000: 152; Lemos 2002: 154, 164ff, 177-178). Their graves were sometimes strewn with pebbles or a slab, and covered with a slab, a layer of stones, or large fragments of jars or *pithoi*. Regional variations are attested not just in the choice of intramural or extramural burial, their inclusion or exclusion from a specific burial ground, or their deposition in different tomb types even within the same region, but also in their exclusion from particular burial rites, e.g. inhumation and cremation side by side as at Krannon (Tziafalias and Zaouri 1999: 147-149; Lemos 2002: 155, 189-190; Mazarakis-Ainian 2010).

The Protogeometric to Early Geometric transition was marked with homogeneity and standardisation in death ritual and practices. During the Protogeometric (1050-900 BC) and Middle Geometric (850-750 BC) periods the number of child burials declined leading to a further reduction in the number of infant burials, a pattern consistent with the preceding Sub-Mycenaean funerary record (cf. Houby-Nielsen 2000: 155; Pappi and Triantaphyllou 2011: 677). With reference to Argos, for example, children may not have been "regarded as full members of the society and thus they were possibly disposed of in a mode which was archaeologically invisible" (Pappi and Triantaphyllou 2011: 677). The profound transformations which took place in the Late Geomteric socio-political and cultural landscape (cf. Morris 1987) had a similar effect on the Early Iron Age deathscape too: an unprecedented increase in burials, and therefore in visible graves, is suggestive of "an increase in the number of people accorded the privilege of normal burial" including young children, greater diversity, variety and choice in burial practices, and an increase in the number of grave offerings (Pappi-Triantaphyllou 2011: 677; Beaumont 2012: 89; Alexandridou 2016: 334-343). Infant burials began to rise dramatically in numbers, forming the overwhelming majority of non-adult burials; graves became family disposal areas and vivid expressions of continuity, collectivity and descent (Houby-Nielsen 2000: 155). Non-adults were frequently buried either within family burial plots (e.g. to the south of the Classical Tholos in the Athenian Agora and Kerameikos: *Plattenbau*, Marathon and Oropos), or in larger cemeteries either among the adult burials or in the periphery of the burial grounds (e.g. Kerameikos, Thorikos and Eretria: Young 1939; Brann 1960: 402-416; Coldstream 2003: 120, 145; Morris 1987: 59; Papadopoulos and Smithson 2002: 184-185; Liston and Papadopoulos 2004: 26; Blandin 2007: 195-211; Vlachou 2007: 213-240; Mazarakis Ainian 2011: 704). Family traditions and ties, perceptions of age and status or simply convenience, may have informed the choice of particular grave types and burial posture, rather than class or wealth (cf. Pappi and Triantaphyllou 2011: 677, 721; Coldstream 2003: 122, 174; Crielaard 2007: 170-171, 178).

Consistency is observed in the Late Geometric (750-700 BC) funerary treatment of children: infants and younger children (up to five years old) were inhumed inside coarse jugs, *amphorae* and *pithoi* which were positioned on their side in shallow pits and sealed with a large sherd, a small vase or a stone. A series of small stones often placed on the periphery of the urn secured it in place; the pit was then filled in with earth (Vlachou 2012: 382-383). There does not appear to have been a fixed pattern of orientation for the positioning of these *entrychismoi,* although in larger cemeteries child burials seem to follow the orientation of adult burials (Vlachou 2007: 227 note 59). The head of the child was placed towards the opening of the vase and the feet were drawn up to the chest. The burial gifts (if any) were deposited either inside the urn or in the shallow pit. Older children were inhumed in an extended supine posture with both arms at the side in cist and shaft graves, similarly to adults; younger children were occasionally buried in this way too (Vlachou 2007: 227 and n. 61). Funerary markers are difficult to identify although small stone cairns, stone slabs or vases may have been used for this purpose.

Sometimes double burials involving an adult and a child in *pithoi* (e.g. Aigion: Kolokotronis Str; Gadolou 2008: 80) or in cist tombs, were practised at Nea Ionia (Volos), Velestino (Intzesiloglou 1980: 270-271) and possibly Lefkandi (Lemos 2011: 638). In the area of the "House of the Shields" at Mycenae a woman was buried with two children (Desborough 1955: 239-241; Hägg 1974: 114; Lemos 2002: 160). There are also instances of double burials with children only ~~like~~ as at Athens, Krannon, Eretria (twins) and possibly Volos: Near Ionia (Lemos 2002: 178, 189). The debate as to whether all double burials were carried out simultaneously is ongoing due to the absence of analyses pertaining to the gender, age and possible causes of death (cf. Lemos 2002: 189).

The deposition of burial offerings often present age- and gender-based variations. Burial Γ31 in the Citadel House at Mycenae is one of the most impressive burials dating from the transitional Sub-Mycenaean/Protogeometric period: the child was furnished with pottery, fibulae, and rings (Lemos 2002: 160; Desborough1973: 94-98). ~~PG~~ Children in the Protogeometric period received a range of burial gifts, and on occasions their burials were richer than those of adults: e.g. the intramural interments at Asine: Karmaniola and the double infant-adult burial at Velestino (Intzesiloglou 1980: 270-271). Pottery of miniature and standard sizes, wheel- and hand-made, was commonly deposited with children, in particular cups and jugs, similar to those from settlement deposits: e.g. Volos: Nea Ionia (cf. Lemos 2002: 109, 164, 173. A late tenth century child cremation in the Kerameikos received eighteen miniature vessels and five clay balls (Stroszeck 2012: 58-59). Multiple vases characterise child burials throughout the Early Iron Age (Kourou 2007), and feeding bottles are often but not always associated with children (cf. Lemos 2002: 164). They might also have been given to young mothers or a mother who died during childbirth (Lemos 2002: 164 and n. 154, 189) or they might have served as drinking aid devices for the elderly and the sick (cf. Pomadère 2007: 278). Precious jewellery and exotica, such as Egyptian pendants, scarabs, vases and beads of faience, were also offered to some children, probably of elite status: e.g. Lefkandi (Popham *et al.* 1980: 223-224; Popham et al. 1982: 219-220; Lemos 2002: 164 and note 155) and tomb XXIII at Atalanti (Dakoronia 1987: 226-227). The richest Protogeometric tomb at Asine belonged to a premature baby girl who was furnished with faience beads, sea shells, an iron ring and a fibula (Lemos 2002: 158-159), whereas at Tiryns a child received a large number of pots, iron and bronze earrings and a pin (Protonotariou-Deilaki 1969: 104, pl. 80e). The earliest Early Iron Age indication of the association of sea shells with children comes from the late tenth century Kerameikos (Stroszeck 2012: 58-59, Cat. 1). Seashells in non-adult graves are frequently interpreted as toys, objects for use ~~of use (e.g.~~ as feeding tools, replacing feeding bottles, or as measures and containers for a very small amount of liquid, remnants of food dedications or remedies, symbols of the afterlife, fertility and beauty, parts of pendants/bracelets of amuletic, apotropaic or decorative nature (Stroszeck 2012: 67-71). Occasionally, weapons are associated with children: e.g. Lefkandi: Toumba T.39 (Popham *et al.* 1982: 217-220); Kerameikos (Lagia 2007: 277; Lemos 2011: 648); and Plasi (Brouskari 1980, 21); in this case the child’s status expressed by this age- and male-specific artefacts should be considered " ascribed and not achieved” (Lemos 2002: 165; Lemos 2007, 275 and n. 9; D’Onofrio 2011: 657; Pomadère 2011: 571-572).

In the Geometric period children’s graves are often found with a wide range of fine and coarse pottery (cups, *kantharoi*, *askoi*, spouted feeding cups, *kalathoi*), mainly of small to miniature size, and terracotta objects comprising anthropomorphic and zoomorphic figurines, wheeled pull toys, rattles, clay counters for play and model pomegranates (Langdon 2007: 173ff and Table 9.1; Mazarakis Ainian 2011: 704; Langdon 2015: 27; Alexandridou 2016: 349-350). From the Protogeometric to Middle Geometric I periods typical burial gifts for girls (mostly >10 years old) comprise Attic Fine Handmade Incised Ware (HIW) dolls, terracotta models of boots and chests, openwork *kalathoi*, and metal hair spirals (‘maiden kit’; Langdon 2007: 182ff and Table 9.1). Around the early eighth century the handmade dolls, model boots and terracotta chests disappear with horse *pyxides* replacing the chests (Langdon 2007: 188). Large pitchers, often recognised as a female gender indicator with a nuptial use comparable to that of the loutrophoros, accompanied older girls’ inhumations in late eighth century Attica and should too be treated as gender-specific gifts associated with the deceased’s unfulfilled marital status (cf. Alexandridou 2016: 350). Multi-storeyed vases (previously known as *trick vases*) appear with some Attic child burials in the mid-eighth century BC. They may perhaps be taken to "suggest the grief of the relatives ~~they are~~ as expressions of love, and possibly also of the belief in an afterlife, as they offer the departed with the opportunity of amusement in the grim surroundings of Hades" (Simantoni-Bournia 2011:975*).* In Corinth one ~~of the children~~ child received an imported Argive krater (Coldstream 2003: 174). Jewellery (pins, fibulae, hair spirals, rings) of various materials was also deposited in Geometric child graves (cf. Langdon 2007: table 9.1). These ornaments are usually of 'adult' size which show that they were in most cases made for adults, who deposited them in the tomb as offerings, and also "suggesting that the display of disposable wealth was at least one factor in its deposition" (Shepherd 2013: 545).

CONCLUSIONS

The placing of a child within the deathscape of Bronze and Early Iron Age Greece appears to have been a conscious choice of the family and of the local community, firmly woven into the socio-political and economic fabric of the chronological phases and sub-phases covered in this study. The distribution pattern of adults versus non-adults at death comprises distinct elements of inclusion and exclusion with regional and temporal variations (cf. Pappi and Triantaphyllou 2011). In general, inclusion was predominantly based upon age categories as manifested, for example, in the deposition of older children ~~either~~ in double adult-child burials, within the family grave or in the same burial ground with adults, ~~double adult-child burials,~~ and the deposition of neonates, infants and younger children below the floor of houses that were still in use. This may reflect an attempt to stress family ties, kinship or lineage, especially in the case of the inclusion of older children in the graves or burial grounds where grown-ups were interred. The intramural burial of infants may reveal a feeling of "togetherness" (Nordquist 1990: 38): "some idea of the soul returning in a new bodily shape to take the place of the dead, or a fear of a spirit that is not well appeased or 'kept an eye' on" (Nordquist 1990: 40), or the grieving parents' unwillingness to give up the child despite the danger of pollution (cf. Parker 1983: 41; Golden 1988: 156; Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 129; Gallou 2004: 370). On the other hand, intramural burial may have been a means of overcoming a social taboo linked to the stigma caused by the premature loss of a child. This would have been particularly evident at times of transition or of social instability when the loss of descendants could forebode an ominous future for the family. The double and multiple burials may suggest "a similar concern for kinship, heredity, lineage and/or status of the group that 'owned' the grave" (Nordquist 1990: 39), although "the intention may have been to give the child the protection of an adult, in those cases when the two died very shortly after one another and therefore the burials took place simultaneously or within a short time" (Nordquist 1990: 39 note 21).

On the other hand, the concentration of the burials of "non-initiated" children (i.e. newborn, infant and younger children) in the margins of the inhabited area or of the formal burial ground, and the diverse mortuary practices reserved for specific non-adult age groups including their disposal in a mode which is archaeologically invisible, point to exclusion. There is no doubt that age was a crucial factor in the construction of social identity and that social divisions appear to have been made along lines of age categories (cf. Pappi and Triantaphyllou 2011: 677). Spatial differentiation alongside age segregation may be seen as the result of the renewal and (re)definition of social identities and divisions (cf. Pomadère 2010: 422-427; Gallou-Minopetrou 2015: 63).

Burial furnishings made and deposited by adults (or on some occasions by children as in Late Geometric Attica) reflect primarily the 'emotional capital' invested ~~on~~ in those unfortunate children. At the same time, the inclusion of valuable gifts and the conspicuous investment in the sepulchre or the funerary receptacle for non-adults would have been stage-managed to advertise the social power and prominence of the family within the local community. After all, the Bronze and Early Iron Age Aegean response to a "tiny death" was not always simply emotional.

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