

Structures of Inequality on Bronze Age Cyprus

Studies in Honour of Alison K. South

edited by

Linda Hulin, Lindy Crewe and Jennifer M. Webb



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Lapithos Tomb 201. A singular Middle Bronze Age burial assemblage

Jennifer M. Webb

Abstract

Tomb 201, a Middle Bronze Age (MBA) tomb excavated at Lapithos in 1913, is published here for the first time. Chamber A contained three or four burials, one very probably that of a woman wearing a necklace of over 400 faience beads. Other finds include fine decorated vessels, three freestanding plank figures, a jug with an attached plank figure, bird askoi, a necklace of stone beads with a picrolite comb pendant, a silver vessel and what may be a unique metal spinning set, including a copper spindle. These comprise a singular set of valuables which indicate access to highly-crafted goods and distant object networks and suggest that socially displayed inequality was afforded some women in the mortuary domain at Lapithos in Middle Cypriot (MC) I.

Introduction*

This chapter takes as its subject Tomb 201 in the Early and Middle Bronze Age cemetery at Lapithos *Vrysi tou Barba* on the central north coast of Cyprus. It is one of 62 tombs excavated by L.H.D. Buxton (for J.L. Myres) in 1913, which I am preparing for publication. I have chosen it for this volume both because it has something of interest to offer in the context of the volume's theme and because there are some parallels with Alison South's excavation of Kalavassos *Ayios Dhimitrios* Tomb 11, which contained the burials of three elite women and four children (Goring 1989: 98–104, fig. 13.1; South 2000: 349–353). Tomb 11 was one of few undisturbed LC IIA tombs at Kalavassos, making it difficult to judge the distinctiveness of its burial goods and arrangements (but see Knapp, this volume). As Goring notes (1989: 98), 'Although the material from the tomb *seems* remarkable, it may only seem so because

*This study is offered to Alison South with respect and affection. The documentation of Tomb 201 was carried out in May 2018 with the kind permission and collaboration of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, and the generous assistance of the Shelby White and Leon Levy Program for Archaeological Publications. The artefacts were expertly drawn by Jean Humbert and photographed by Athanasios Athanassiou. Luca Bombardieri, David Frankel and Giulia Muti kindly read an early draft and made valuable suggestions. I am grateful to Hedvig Landenius Enegren for allowing me to mention the results of analyses conducted on several mineralised textiles from *Vounous* and Lapithos commissioned by her. Compositional analysis of the metal objects was undertaken by Andreas Charalambous.

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we simply do not know what was the norm.' In the case of Tomb 201A, which also appears to have contained a singular female burial, it is clear that the complement of burial goods is out of the ordinary, allowing us to suggest distinctions in status involving some women at Lapithos in MC I. This is not signalled by a redundancy of metal, as in other tombs at Lapithos, but by the unusual nature and high quality of the pottery and jewellery, the probable presence of a textile production kit in metal, evidence for ritual activity and regional and foreign imports.

Tomb 201 is also of interest because it is one of two tombs that were re-excavated, as Tombs 310 and 321, by Sjöqvist for the Swedish Cyprus Expedition (SCE) in 1927. In the case of Tomb 310, which is likely to be one of the tombs excavated by Markides in 1917, this was 'clearly visible from the commencement of the work' but 'carried through in order to get a complete plan' (Sjöqvist 1934: 76). In the case of Tomb 321, which is Buxton's Tomb 201, it was not immediately apparent that they were digging a previously excavated tomb. Chamber B of Tomb 321 (Tomb 201A) was found 'filled with dromos earth and mud, mixed with culture earth, heaps of potsherds and fragments of bones' (Sjöqvist 1934: 140). These observations, which suggest that Buxton's workmen left a significant amount of sherd material behind, led the SCE to conclude that the tomb 'had ... been excavated earlier' (Sjöqvist 1934: 140). Once again, however, they completed the task and thus we have an accurate plan and sections (Sjöqvist 1934: fig. 53.1–4), the latter not available for any other of the 1913 tombs, which we can use to refine the less comprehensive plans drawn for Tomb 201 (Figs 1a–1b). Mentioned only briefly by Myres (1946: 79) and Gjerstad (1926: 61, 77), this is the first full publication of the tomb and its assemblage.

Tomb 201

Swedish Tomb 321 (Buxton's Tomb 201) was one of three dug east of the main body of excavated tombs, somewhere in the vicinity of the multi-chambered Tomb 322 located 'in the eastern border of the necropolis' (Sjöqvist 1934: 34, 140–157, plan III.1). Tomb 322 was the largest tomb complex excavated by the SCE. Chamber A, with a floor area of 27m², is almost twice the mean size of MBA tomb chambers at Lapithos and the largest excavated chamber in the cemetery (Keswani 2004: 45, 61, table 4.4). Tomb 806, a four-chambered tomb excavated by the Pennsylvania Museum in 1931, was adjacent to Tomb 322 (Grace 1940: 11, n. 1, as Tomb 6). It had an 'unusually large dromos' and 806A, the largest unlooted chamber opened in 1931, contained an imported Kamares ware jar and gold and silver jewellery (Grace 1940).

Tomb 201 was also unusually large. The *dromos* was 3.51x1.85m and 2.12m deep 'with vertical long sides, a step at the semicircular end, and slightly sloping floor' (Sjöqvist 1934: 139). Chamber A opened from the south end and Chamber B from the middle of the east side. Chamber B was oval (1.52x2.32m) with a small niche to the north. Chamber A was 'exceptionally large' (7.10x4.42m, with a floor area of ca 24.6m²) and 'heart-shaped with a central projection in the back wall, which serves as a column to support the roof' (Sjöqvist 1934: 140). On the east side were two spacious niches, one ca 0.35m and the other ca 0.85m above the floor level; and in the other half of the chamber a larger niche ca 0.70m above the floor. The niches were ca 2m wide and defined by low rock-cut partitions. The *stomion* was surrounded by 'a rectangular moulding sunk into the face of the rock' (Sjöqvist 1934: 140, Section C–C, fig. 53.4).

4. Lapithos Tomb 201. A singular Middle Bronze Age burial assemblage

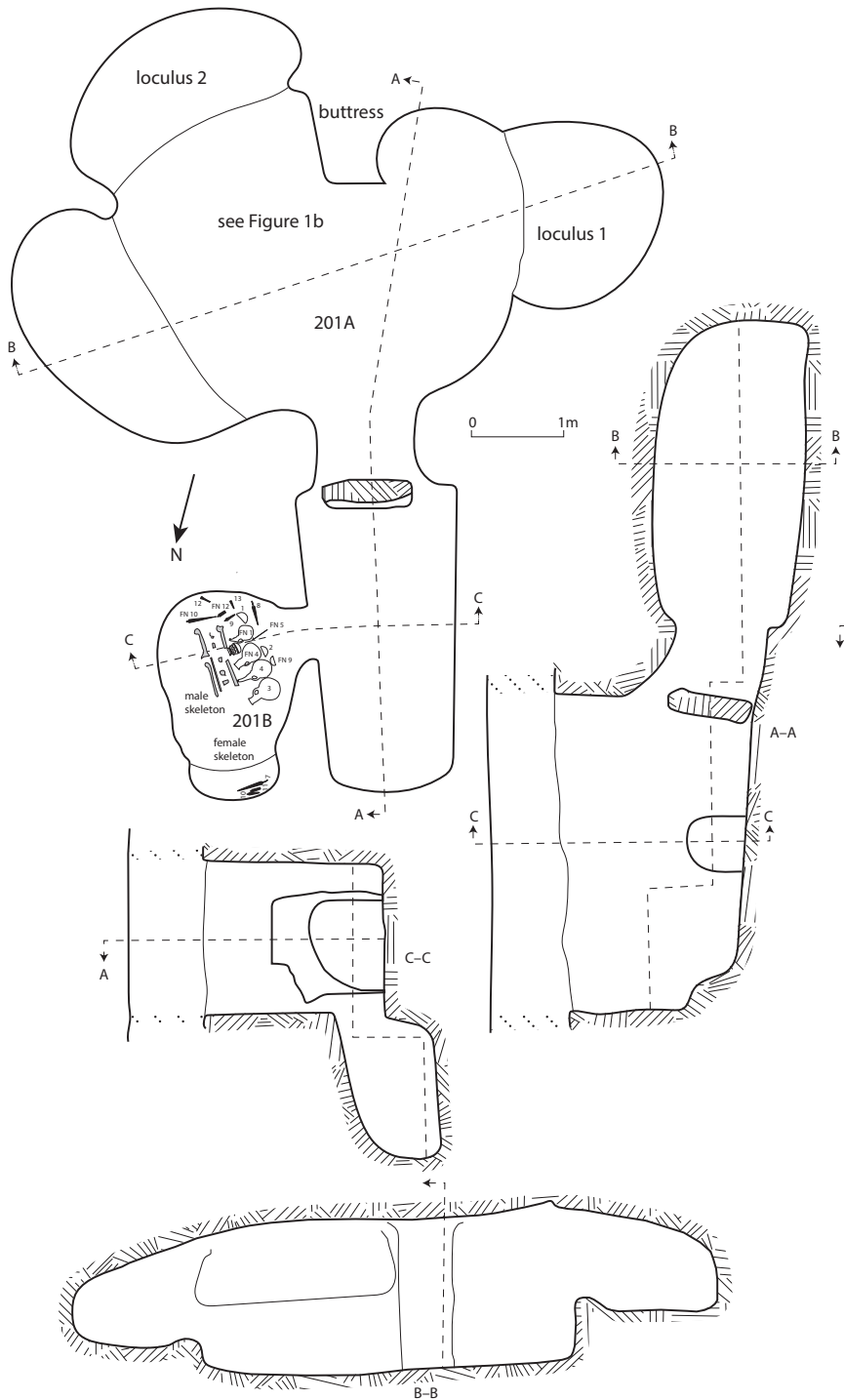


Figure 1a. Tomb 201, after Sjöqvist 1934: fig. 53.1–4 (as Swedish Tomb 321) and Buxton

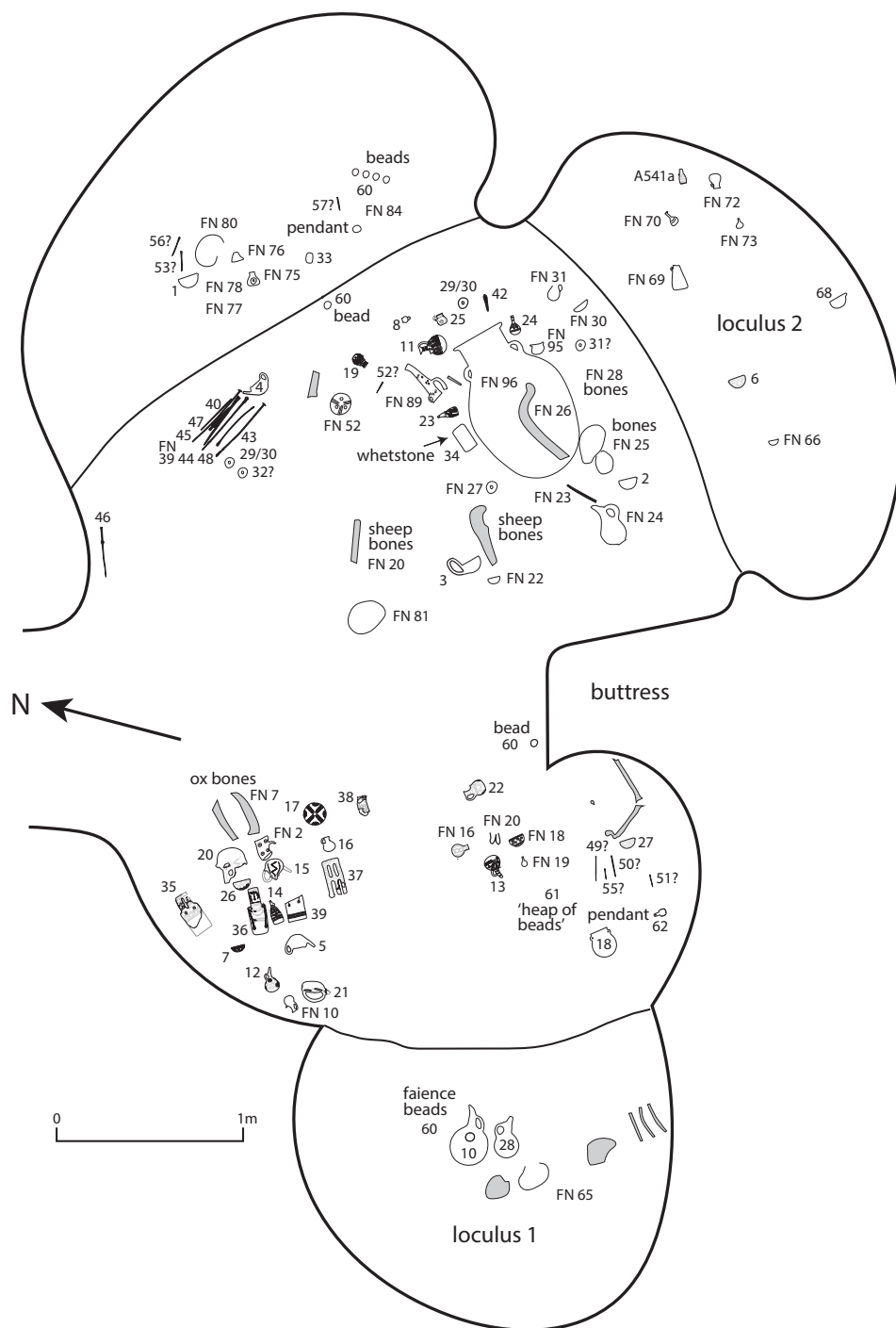


Figure 1b. Tomb 201A, with approximate location of finds, reconstructed from Buxton's field plans

Pennsylvania Tombs 805 and 806 were located in 'the southern part of the northern field of Lot 18', Survey Sheet XI, 15W (Grace 1940: 11, n. 1). Tombs 201–205 were located in 'Augustine's field', which bordered to the east the field where the majority of 1913 tombs were located. In the absence of a site plan, it is impossible to place these tombs precisely, but it would appear that Tombs 201–205, 322, 805 and 806 were located in the same eastern area of the cemetery in or near Plot 18. Tomb 805 had the largest *dromos* excavated in 1931 and one chamber with at least six burials (Herscher 1978: 154–155). It was rich in metal and contained an imported jug, two faience necklaces and numerous pins which led Herscher (1978: 790) to suggest that the 'dead may have been costumed rather elaborately'. Tombs 203 and 205 were not particularly large, but Tomb 202 was similar in size to Tomb 201A and Tomb 204, described by Buxton as 'deep and magnificent', contained 41 copper/bronze objects and silver and gold jewellery. It seems that the majority of tombs in this part of the cemetery were large, structurally complex and rich in burial goods.

Sjöqvist dated Tomb 201 (as Tomb 321), on the basis of the remaining sherds, to EC III. Gjerstad (1926: 77) and Myres (1946: 79) followed suit. Stewart (1962: 383) assigned Tomb 201A to MC II (early) and Tomb 201B to MC II (middle), while Åström (1972: 185) placed both in the first half of MC II, noting that Tomb 201B contained a WP IV tankard. There is, however, a problem with this vessel. Although it appears in the inventory and in the 1915 photo of the Chamber B assemblage, it is not among Buxton's sketches of finds and unlikely to come from this tomb. There is, in fact, considerable confusion regarding material from Tomb 201. Inv. 3 from Chamber B appears in photographs of both Chambers A and B, inv. 4 from Chamber B appears in the inventory and photos of finds from Chamber A and a BP flask inventoried and photographed as from Chamber B is almost certainly from Chamber A. Thanks to Buxton's plans and sketches, these mistakes can be rectified. In all instances, his records are assumed to be the primary archival source.

Leaving aside the WP tankard, the pottery from Tombs 201A and 201B is, with one exception, RP III and BP (Figs 2–5). The exception is a small BS II jug (inv. 28) (Fig. 3) from locus 1 in Tomb 201A, which postdates all other vessels in the chamber. The fine quality of the RP III and the absence of WP suggest a date in EC III or, more probably (given the quantity of BP), in MC I for the burials in Tomb 201A. The BS jug, as an isolated find, is unlikely to have been associated with a burial and may be a result of on-going activity in the chamber. Tomb 201B may be assigned to MC I or II.

Other tombs in this part of the cemetery are of similar date. Tombs 202, 205, 805 and 806C contained only RP III or RP III and BP. Two WP III vessels found inside the entrance of Tomb 806A (Grace 1940: 30, nos 3, 73) appear to have been associated with the closing of the chamber and 'do not date the main group' (Grace 1940: 38). The only other WP vessels are two WP IA bowls. Tomb 806B also produced a WP IA bowl in an otherwise RP assemblage (Herscher 1978: 209–210). Tombs 322D and 322E, however, contained WP II, and Tombs 203 and 204 produced WP III and IV, indicating continued use of some tombs in this area in MC II and III (Åström 1972: 185–186).

No osteological material from Tomb 201 was kept for analysis. Buxton, however, was a trained physical anthropologist (and later Reader in Physical Anthropology at Oxford, see Blackwood 1939) and we may give more than the usual credence to his identification of the skeletal remains. Human bones were found in four locations in Tomb 201A: 'the crumbled remains of a small female skeleton too fragmentary to

ascertain the age' in *loculus* 1; 'a few remains of a skeleton ... in the little niche made by the buttress and the wall' (i.e. between *loculus* 1 and the buttress), 'in the left hand corner' and in the *pithos*, the latter comprising 'femora, tibiae and humeri—presumably of the same skeleton ... of very large size'. There would therefore appear to have been three or four burials, one almost certainly female and one at least partly gathered up after decomposition and placed in the *pithos*. Sheep bones were found 'close to [the] body' to the left of the door and ox bones to the right of the door. In relation to Tomb 201B Buxton notes: 'On the right hand was a male skeleton lying on it's [*sic*] back, on the left near the niche the crumbled remains of a female skeleton without a skull.'

The finds

Twenty-nine vessels from Tomb 201A were inventoried in 1915 (21 RP, seven BP, one BS) (Figs 2–4). Field numbers (FN), however, were assigned to 42 vessels, identified on Buxton's sketches as incised RP (19), incised BP (8) and 'plain red' or 'red polished' (15). Among those not retained are the *pithos* (FN 96), with a recorded height of 1.10m, a cutaway-mouthed jug (FN 24) and fragments of three large incised RP jugs (FN 2, 52, 89). Buxton's plan and field sketches of Tomb 201B show three knob-lug bowls, three jugs and an incised amphora, all of RP. Of these, two bowls and two jugs were inventoried and only the bowls located in 2018 (Fig. 5).

Tomb 201A contained an unusually high proportion of fine decorated vessels: 64.2% of those recorded by Buxton and 79.3% of the inventoried assemblage (14 incised and two relief-decorated RP, seven incised BP). Fourteen of the latter were selected by Dikaios as vessels of special interest and placed in the Museum's A Collection in 1935, the highest number from any tomb excavated in 1913. The inventoried assemblage includes nine small bowls, seven juglets, three flasks, a miniature amphora, two bird-shaped askoi (one with smaller modelled birds attached to the body), an amphora, three jugs and a multiple bowl vessel. A number of these are of particular interest.

Jug inv. 10, from *loculus* 1, was not located in 2018 but appears on several early photographs. On the upper body on one side is a circular hole into which a circular sherd from another large vessel has been neatly inserted. The purpose of this unique arrangement is unclear. The tripartite handle, inv. 37 (1935 A62), was once attached to four small bowls. Similar multiple bowl vessels occur in other tombs at Lapithos (Sjöqvist 1934: 44, 94, 131, 154, Tombs 302B.7, 313B.37+61, 319B.44, 322E.69) and at *Vounous* (Dikaios 1940: pls XXVII–XXVIII; Dunn-Vaturi 2003: 39–40, 161, Tombs 56.27, 76.17), in several instances with a plank figure incorporated into the handle. Bird askoi, similarly, appear in a number of other north coast tombs (Sjöqvist 1934: 65, 94, 131, 150, Tombs 307B.12, 313B.28, 319B.40, 322B.33; Dikaios 1940: pl. XXXIXd, f–h; Dunn-Vaturi 2003: 44, 55, Tombs 56.91, 57a.24) and elsewhere (des Gagniers & Karageorghis 1976: pls XXXIV.1–2, XLVI.1–3; Georgiou 2013: 86, fig. 7). Birds also perch on vessels and pyxides (Dikaios 1940: pls Xb–c, XIVa–d, XVa–b, d, XXXVa–b) and constitute 74% of animals attached to vessels in mortuary assemblages at *Vounous* (Knox 2013: 53, fig. 4).

Inv. 38 (A20), a richly decorated plank figure holding a baby (Karageorghis 1991: 80, Bh7), was once attached to a RP III vessel, almost certainly the jug to which the incised mouth rim, inv. 17, also belonged. The core of the figure is a rectangular plug

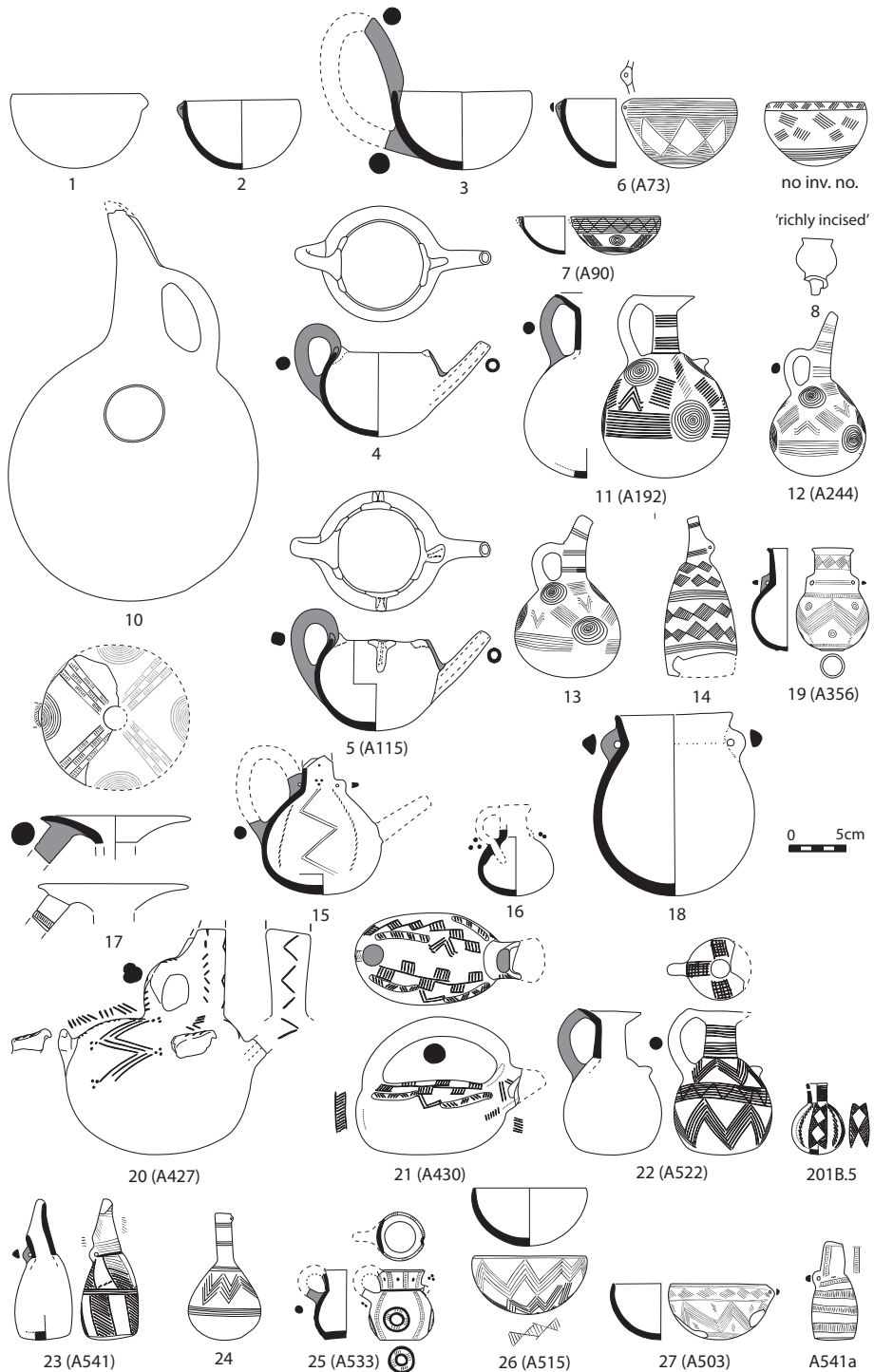


Figure 2. Tomb 201A.1–27 (nos 1, 8–10, 13–14, 24 and bowl with no inv. no. drawn from photo)

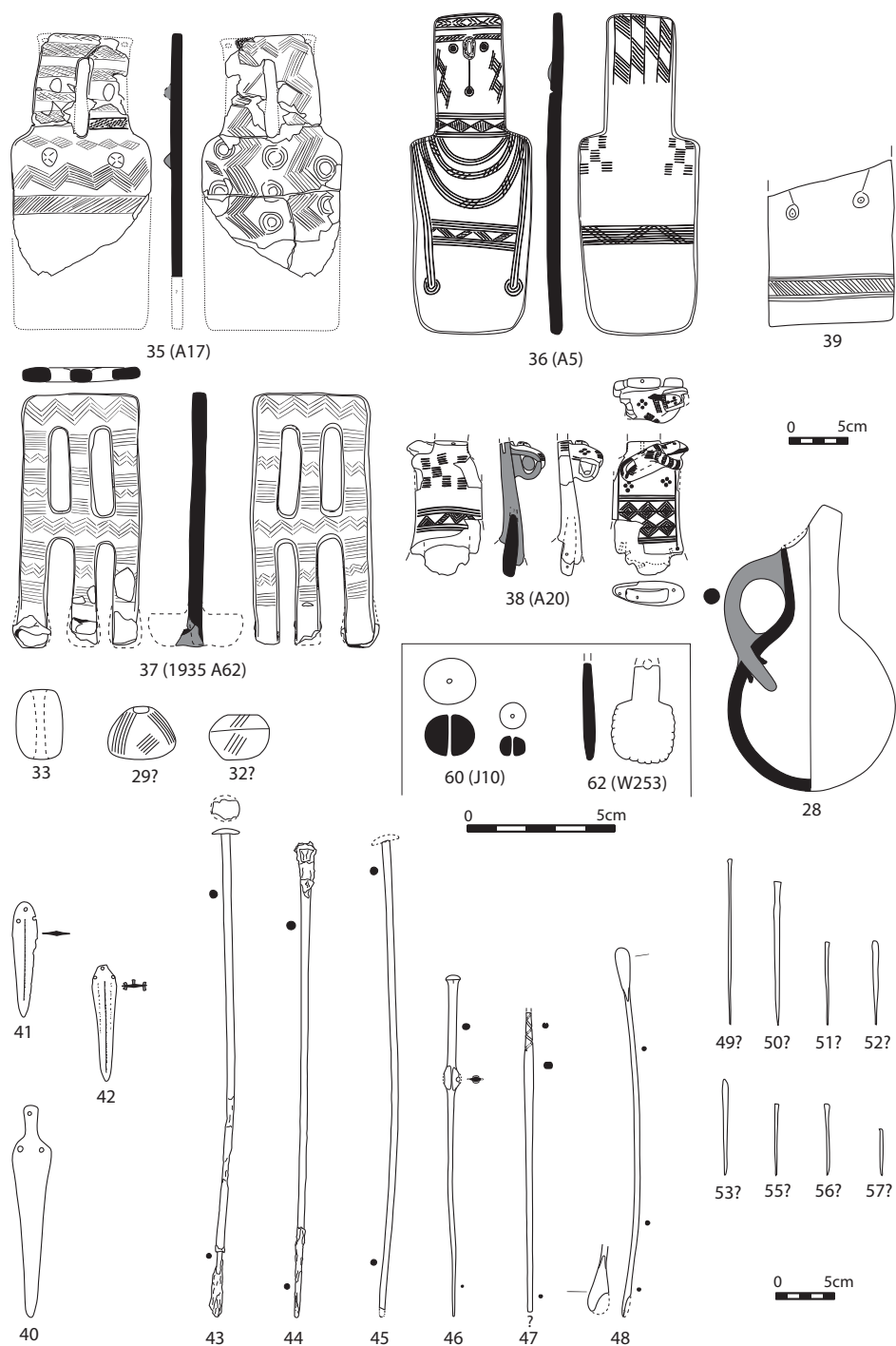


Figure 3. Tomb 201A.28, 29, 32, 33, 35-48, 49-53, 55-57, 60, 62 (29, 32, 33, 40 drawn from photo; 39, 49-53, 55-57 from field sketches) (identification of 29, 32, 49-53, 55-57 uncertain)



Figure 4. Tomb 201A.19–20, 25, 36, 38, 43–48, 60–62. Lower right: suggested reconstruction of inv. 17 and 38

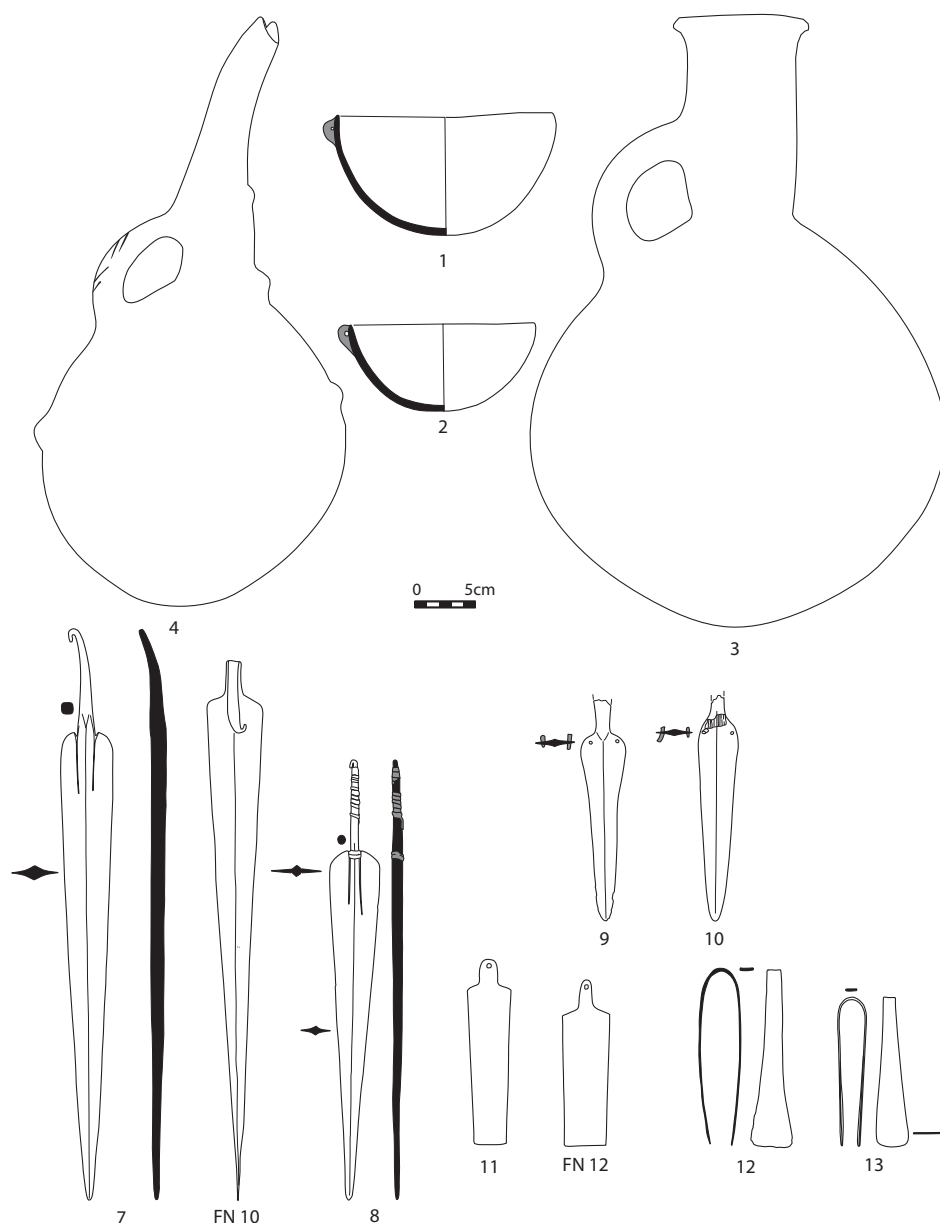


Figure 5. Tomb 201B.1–4, 7–13, FN 10, 12 (3–4 drawn from photo, FN 10, 12 from field sketches)

which was inserted through the vessel wall. Cylindrical holes in the plug and neck may have held wooden struts to assist in the forming of the figure. It belongs to a group of jugs with extensive decoration and one or two figures on the shoulder, possibly all produced in the same workshop (Karageorghis 1991: 127–132, Group I). Two other examples hold cradled infants. Of nine provenanced vessels, four are from Lapithos (Tombs 201A.38, 302A.22, 302C.6, 314B.42, 806A.44), three from *Vounous*

(Tombs 2.49, 76.27, 130B.6) and one from Dikomo *Mavro Nero*. The height of the figures ranges from 2 to 7cm. With an estimated height of 14.5cm (ca 13cm of which would have been visible), inv. 38 is much larger. Inv. 17 has a rim diameter of 12.8cm and must also have been larger than other jugs in this group. A richly incised jug from Lapithos Tomb 309A with an identically decorated mouth rim stands almost 40cm high (Stewart 1962: fig. XCII.13). A suggested reconstruction of the vessel from Tomb 201A appears on **Figure 4**, lower right.

Three freestanding plank figures were found ‘close to one another’ to the right of the door. Inv. 35–36 (A5, A17) have been published previously (Karageorghis 1991: 56, Ba.10 (as 201.43, where 43 is the FN), 68–69, Bd8, with refs). Inv. 39, which can no longer be located, is reproduced here from Buxton’s sketch. It is described as ‘of the usual form’ with ‘only fragments preserved’. Inv. 35 is double-headed, inv. 36 single-headed and inv. 39 missing the head and upper body.

A fragmentary silver vessel (not located) and 20 copper-base artefacts were also recovered in Tomb 201A (three knives, ten ‘pins’, a spindle, a double ‘spatula’, three needles and an awl); and nine copper-base artefacts in Tomb 201B (three spearheads, two knives, two scrapers, two pairs of tweezers) (**Figs 3–5**). The metal objects from Tomb 201A are of particular interest.

Pin inv. 46 (Cu-As), found just inside the *stomion*, is flattened above the mid-point to form a thin rounded extension to each side of the shaft. On one side a small circular hole has broken through the edge (Catling 1964: 72, Type C3b2, no. 2, fig. 5.18; Åström 1972: 148; Balthazar 1990: 407, table 164. Note that it is not pierced twice as drawn (as FN 53) in Myres 1946: fig. 4). With the possible exception of a fragment from a MC tomb at Linou (Flourentzos 1989: 65, fig. 120), pins of this type, identified by Stewart as ‘plate pins’ (Webb & Frankel 2012: 199, Class O, Group III), are known only from Lapithos (Tombs 18B.8, 24.11, 11bis unpublished, 322A.15, 20, 55c, Sjöqvist 1934: 148, 806A.7–8, Grace 1940: 47–49, CS 1708/20, Karageorghis 1969: 472). The small hole may have been used to attach a string threaded with beads (see Stork 2014: 323 for similarly embellished pins from the Levant). Tiny disk beads of faience were found adhering to the shaft on both examples from Tomb 806A.

Inv. 40, 43–45 and 47–48 were found close together on the left side of the chamber, aligned as though contained in a box or bag. They include a large knife (inv. 40), three very long ‘pins’ (inv. 43–45), a spindle (inv. 47) and a double ‘spatula’ (inv. 48). Two spindle whorls and a small spouted bowl (inv. 4) were found nearby.

The spindle, of pure copper, has an S-shaped thread groove. The lower shaft is circular, the upper part flattened on opposing faces (8x6.3mm). The upper end is broken, the lower possibly also. The preserved length is 25.2cm and the weight 51g. Previously identified as an awl (Myres 1946: pl. 25.3; Åström 1972: 142; Balthazar 1990: 374, table 132), it is undoubtedly a spindle and a very rare object. A copper-base spindle of similar date from Cyprus in the Zintilis Collection also has an S-shaped thread groove and a whorl and mineralised fibre on the shaft, clearly indicating that these were functional objects (Webb 2002). Both were probably suspended spindles. Copper spindles with grooves for hitching S-twisted thread, of similar length and weight, are also known from third and first millennium contexts in northern Iran (Barber 1991: 57–58). Notably, analyses of mineralised cloth on a spearhead from *Vounous* Tomb 26 and a knife from Lapithos 1913 Tomb 16 have shown both to be S-spun bast fibres, likely flax (unpublished report, 12.3.2018, Ina Vanden Berghe, KIK-IRPA, commissioned by Hedvig Landenius Enegren).

Inv. 43–45 are identified in the inventory as ‘pins’. Inv. 43 (Cu-As) is 41cm long and weighs 98g. It has a circular shaft and a wide flat disk head (Catling 1964: Type C3a3). Inv. 44 (Cu-Sn) is similar, with the head obscured by corrosion. It is 40cm long and weighs 84g. Both terminals of inv. 45 (Cu-As) are missing. The upper end is flat and smooth, suggesting that a head similar to that on inv. 43 and 44 was once attached. It has a preserved length of 39.5cm and weighs 73g. These are not the only such objects from Lapithos. Two ‘pins’, 39.5cm long, both Tomb 313A.73, have similar ‘large flat button-heads’ (Sjöqvist 1934: 91) and there are a number of shorter examples (Sjöqvist 1934: 95, Tomb 313B.72; Grace 1940: 47–49, Tomb 806A.6, 9). Use as dress pins, particularly in the case of the longer examples, is unlikely, unless they were produced only to dress the dead or as shroud pins. Alternatively, given their association with a spindle in Tomb 201A, the use of these examples as distaffs may be suggested. Distaffs (rods used to hold raw fibre during spinning) were primarily of wood and are rare in the archaeological record. Inv. 43–45 resemble Gleba’s Types 2B3 (with one disk head) and B4 (with two disk heads) from pre-Roman Italy (Gleba 2008: fig. 83). Similar copper ‘rods’ with ‘flat nail-like’ heads, also identified as distaffs, were found with copper spindles at late third millennium Kish and Abu Salabikh in Iran (Mackay 1925: 168, pl. 58.1–3; Postgate & Moon 1982: 131, 134, pl. Vc). The long examples, used for spinning long fibres (flax according to Gleba 2011), were positioned under the arm or in the ground or attached to a backstrap or belt (Barber 1991: 69).

Inv. 48, of pure copper, is without parallel. A thin, circular, slightly curved shaft flattens at each end to a thin elongated oval, set at right angles and one larger than the other (half the larger end is reconstructed) (Catling 1964: 75, Type E1, fig. 5.11; Åström 1972: 143; Balthazar 1990: 427, table 185). It is 31cm long and weighs 38g. A similar object, 37.9cm long with one spatulate terminal and a loop and ring at the other end, comes from Tomb 315A at Lapithos (Sjöqvist 1934: 110, no. 56). They resemble two objects identified as ‘furnace spatulae’ from Enkomi (Catling 1964: 75, 101–102, fig. 11.1–2), but are surely too fragile to have been used in this way.

The recovery of inv. 48 with a spindle and three possible distaffs allows us to suggest that it, too, was used in cloth production and that this set of objects, including the knife and perhaps the spouted bowl, comprised a spinning set or textile worker’s tool kit. How, more precisely, it was used is unclear. It seems too fragile and is of an inappropriate form to have served the same purpose as the bone beaters found with Late Bronze Age (LBA) textile tools (Smith 1991). It is also far less robust than three bronze ‘double spatulae’ found with a likely spindle, distaff and whorls in Enkomi French Tomb 6, which are said to be ‘identified in Egypt as a linen cutting tool’ (Sauvage & Smith 2016: 201).

The two whorls which were associated with this group of metal items were not located in 2018 and we cannot know whether the diameter of their perforations would have allowed use with the spindle. The find location of the three needles recovered from Tomb 201A is uncertain.

Tomb 201A also produced two impressive necklaces (Fig. 4). Inv. 60 is listed as comprising 413 globular faience beads, of which 151 were located in 2018, strung into two necklaces (also registered as J10). The great majority were associated with the female burial in loculus 1, two single beads were found on the floor of the chamber and four in the loculus to the left of the *stomion*. They vary in diameter from 6 to 17mm with narrow central thread holes. The core material is finely ground and variously white and brown. On at least 28 beads a copper-based blue-green glaze is preserved.

Similar necklaces (or bracelets) with a total of over 1000 globular or, more rarely, cylindrical, biconical or disk-shaped faience beads were found in 29 other chambers at Lapithos. None, however, contained as many beads as the Tomb 201A necklace (the nearest being ca 150 from Tomb 322B). Globular beads occur in small numbers elsewhere (Frankel & Webb 2007: 129 with refs; Webb *et al.* 2009: 128, 155, 246–247; Georgiou 2013: 87; Bombardieri 2017: 243–245); they are relatively common at Kalavassos (Todd 2007: 260, Type II), where ca 432 were recovered in 15 tombs. The maximum number in a single necklace (108) is, however, far less than in Tomb 201A.

Faience beads from EC and MC Cyprus have long been identified as imports (Stewart 1962: 280; Keswani 2004: tables 4.11b–c). While this has been questioned (South 1995: 190), recent studies continue to assume that faience was not produced in Cyprus until the LBA (Tite *et al.* 2008: 126–127). Panagiotaki (2008: 35–37) has suggested that globular beads of similar date from Crete may be Minoan products, raising the possibility that such necklaces reached Cyprus from Crete. Other faience objects from Lapithos, however, are certainly imports from Egypt or Syria. They include two frog-shaped beads/amulets (Tombs 15.72, unpublished; 306A.24, Sjöqvist 1934: 61) and a face pendant (Karageorghis 1988: 8–9, fig. 1) made using an Egyptian technique (Lucas & Harris 1962: 161–162, Variant A).

The second necklace, inv. 61, was found near the burial between locus 1 and the buttress. It is comprised of ca 440 red (jasper) and 107 white (calcite or bone) disk beads and two four-hole spacers of black quartz or basalt (registered as J8, restrung and on exhibition). Beads of this type come primarily from the south and centre of the island, close to the source of the raw materials (Georgiou *et al.* 2011: 309 with refs; also Georgiou 2016: 123–125; Bombardieri 2017: 242). Inv. 61, one of few stone bead necklaces from the north coast (Lapithos 313B.78 has faience and jasper beads, Sjöqvist 1934: 95), probably incorporated a comb-shaped pendant of pale blue picrolite (inv. 62, also registered as W253) found nearby. These are distinctive south coast products, known from Episkopi, Pyrgos and Erimi (Bombardieri 2017: 240–241 with refs). One example from Erimi also formed part of a multi-stranded necklace (Bombardieri 2017: 88, 90–91, fig. 3.115, Tomb 240.9–15). Picrolite otherwise occurs only occasionally on the north coast in the form of perforated disks and beads (Lapithos Tombs 314B.31–32, 805.87, Sjöqvist 1934: 103; Herscher 1978: 172; *Vounous* Tombs 65.27, 72.130[b], 80.1, Stewart & Stewart 1950: 46; Dunn-Vaturi 2003: 10, 95). Tomb 201A contained another two spindle whorls, a macehead and a whetstone, which were not located in 2018. A second ‘pendant’ (FN 84), found near the four beads in the eastern locus, was not inventoried.

Discussion

The loss of the human remains and the fact that fragmentary ceramic material was left behind preclude a full analysis of Tomb 201, as of all tombs excavated in 1913, but a number of observations can be made. The finds from Tomb 201B are not out of the ordinary, but those from Tomb 201A comprise a set of social valuables of considerable interest. They include finely-crafted pottery, a spindle and possibly a complete spinning set in metal, a group of objects likely related to ritual (plank figures, multiple bowl vessel, bird askoi) and both intra-island (stone beads, pendant) and foreign imports (faience beads, the silver vessel). The spindle, spatula and disk-

headed 'pins', which Catling (1964: 71) suggests were cast in a two-piece mould, are also either imports or products of skilled local metalsmiths.

While there are few consistent associations in north coast burial assemblages, the recovery of multiple bowl vessels, plank figures, bird askoi and ox bones to the right of the entrance in Tombs 201A, 313B and possibly looted Tomb 322B (Sjöqvist 1934: 93–94, nos 20, 21, 28, 40, 66, 150, nos 32, 33, 36) at Lapithos, and of a plank figure, multiple bowl vessels and a jug with attached figure in *Vounous* Tomb 76 (Dunn-Vaturi 2003: 160–163, nos 1, 17, 27, 31, 42, 63) suggests that these objects were connected with mortuary ritual. Similar activity involving complex vessels and anthropomorphic figures has been proposed for Lapithos Tomb 322D (Webb 2017a); and the proximity of plank figures and faience necklaces in Tombs 201A, 306A and 313B is suggestive of an association with female burials (Webb 2016a: 245, figs 3–4).

Spindle whorls are not rare in Early and Middle Cypriot burials and it is quite possible that they were occasionally or even routinely accompanied by wooden spindles. The presence of a spindle, and perhaps an entire spinning kit, in metal, is, however, unique. Elsewhere such tools are viewed as primarily or exclusively associated with women and the use of spindles and distaffs in precious materials is seen as an indicator of elite female status (e.g. Gleba 2009). Ivory spindles and distaffs appear in high status LBA graves in Cyprus and beyond (e.g. Sauvage 2014; Sauvage & Smith 2016: 201) and spindles of gold, silver, alabaster, lapis lazuli and ivory were circulated as official gifts between kingdoms in the LBA (Moran 1992: 79).

An association between textile production and elite female status in Tomb 201A may not be without precedent on the north coast. Tomb 164B, one of the wealthiest tombs at *Vounous*, contained 43 pottery vessels, including an imported Syro-Levantine jug, and two burials. The earlier burial was associated with two copper-base needles and a hair ornament of unique type, a gold object, possibly also a hair ornament, and a ceramic model of a spindle and whorl (Stewart & Stewart 1950: 239, nos 39–41). Keswani (2013: 211) suggests that this was the burial of 'a female of considerable wealth and prestige'. At the very least, the model spindle from Tomb 164B and two others from Tombs 29 and 92 (Dikaïos 1940: pl. LVI; Stewart & Stewart 1950: 99, no. 6), together with terracotta 'comb figures' identified as models of carding combs or tapestry beaters (Bombardieri 2017: 241 with refs), suggest the symbolic importance of cloth production in north coast communities in the Early Cypriot period.

The spinning tools in Tomb 201A were not found in direct association with the female burial in loculus 1 and the sex of the other burials is unknown (although the large size of the bones in the pithos may suggest a male). The remains in loculus 1, however, were associated with the largest faience necklace known from Lapithos and the body between loculus 1 and the buttress may have been wearing the disk bead necklace found nearby. Both may postdate the remains in the pithos which are clearly in secondary deposition. Thus, while the spinning kit cannot be linked with a specific burial, the chamber does appear to have contained one or more elaborately adorned female burials. It is perhaps no coincidence that it also produced a picrolite comb pendant of a type found in a MBA textile workshop (and Tomb 240) at Erimi and considered to be a symbolic representation of a textile tool (Bombardieri 2017: 241).

The Tomb 201A assemblage fits the parameters of socially displayed inequality as expressed in the mortuary realm through privileged access to rare and prestigious materials and status-related burial or/and post-burial observances. Utilitarian goods normally made of 'cheap' materials are here uniquely made of metal. Other items

demonstrate access to highly-crafted, aesthetically pleasing goods and distant object networks and the plank figures and other symbolic items suggest ritual practices focussed, perhaps exclusively in this instance, on women. Tomb 201A is, however, one of a number of large, richly accoutred tombs located in the same area of the cemetery. Privileged access to goods and labour was not the prerogative of a few individuals but appears to have involved a larger, possibly kin-related, segment of the community (see also Keswani 2004: 71).

Several other large tombs of similar or later MC date (e.g. Tombs 18, 313) located elsewhere in the necropolis are also remarkably rich in metal and personal ornaments. Their presence suggests increasing levels of social competition during the MBA at Lapithos (Keswani 2004: 69; Webb 2016a, 2016b, 2017a, 2017b, 2018). The conspicuous use of pins is particularly evident. Pins are common grave goods, but the number and size (>200g) of some examples go well beyond the utilitarian fastening of clothing or shrouds. It is likely that such visual display was related not just to metal but to the (now invisible) textiles with which pins were used and that textiles and textile production played a significant role in the construction of social identity in mortuary contexts (for a similar argument regarding EB burials in the Upper Euphrates Valley, see Stork 2014).

Increasing evidence for specialised production in the MC period presumes a significant degree of inter-regional trade. The external demand for Cypriot copper, likely managed through Lapithos, opened up new landscapes and internal networks (Webb 2018) and is likely to have promoted trade in other goods, notably agricultural staples and wool and flax for cloth production. The presence in Tomb 201A of an elite spinning tool (or tools) and items of south coast origin suggests not only that textiles were highly valued but that some people at Lapithos looked to southern workshops for textiles or/and that skilled textile workers occasionally moved to the north coast. This focus on textiles and their implications for self-presentation and display serve to bring emerging Cypriot elites into line with their contemporaries in Anatolia and the Levant, where elite investment in cloth production was closely allied to the exchange of metals and other commodities (see e.g. Şare-Ağtürk 2014; Bachhuber 2016).

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