NARRATIVIZING DIFFERENCE IN EARLIER BRONZE AGE SOCIETY:

a comparative analysis of age and gender ideologies in the burials of Ireland and Scotland

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ABSTRACT

A feminist-inspired gender archaeology promised to revolutionise how archaeologists talk about people in the past – to take us from what Ruth Tringham (1991: 94) memorably called "faceless blobs" to the kind of messy and complicated lives which we know that real people live. However, this has largely failed to materialise, and social ideologies have too often been sidelined. The statistical methods which have become our main tool reproduce homogenous models of past societies which are too often lifeless and flat. This thesis instead argues for a method which tacks between scales in search of nuance and alterity in gender and age ideologies in the past.

My focus in this thesis is on the Earlier Bronze Age in Ireland and Scotland – often subsumed into wider European models. Mortuary practice is used as a lens to identify communities' age- and gender-related concerns at the graveside. The analysis tacks between scales – the local, the regional and the general. Beginning with a statistical overview of 555 burials representing the remains of 810 people, 438 from Ireland and 372 from Scotland, several subtle trends are revealed relating to the age or sex of the deceased which hint at broad differences between categories of people. However, it is clear that few of these were absolute and something more complicated than binary gender or an age dichotomy was operating.

Following this, a series of case studies of cemeteries from across Ireland and Scotland are introduced and discursively analysed, demonstrating the existence of local patterning in the social ideologies which mourners chose to stress. These are more subtle patterns than could be recognised in the first stage of analysis. The investigation of local groupings of cemeteries allows a consideration of wider regional influences. Ultimately, it is argued that these varying pictures reflect a world in which gender and age expression, and the experience of being a particular gender or age, were not universally guaranteed. Rather, local variation indicates that communities were interested in different narratives at the graveside, and the significance of burial practice would have been locally contingent. Finally, this picture is related to wider models of Bronze Age society developed with central Europe or southern Britain in mind, and it is shown that practice in Ireland and Scotland reflects significantly different realities.

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1 Introduction

On a warm and blustery day in late May of 1954, a group of priests gathered around an open grave on a hillside overlooking Dublin Bay. Their white robes stirred in the wind as they fixated on the cap of the labourer shovelling out the dirt. Of course, they were used to standing at the graveside, and would not normally have given it a second thought, but this time was different, for this body was being disinterred. The construction of a rockery in the grounds of St Augustine's had been disrupted by this intruder from another time. Some of the priests muttered prayers for the soul of the deceased, while another knelt in the dirt to direct the labourer's attention and a novitiate leant back against the Famine-era obelisk whose construction had come within a metre of destroying the grave forever. An oyster shell had been found in the upper layers of the stone-lined cist, and it now lay where it had been placed reverentially at the graveside. And all of a sudden, the bones began to emerge; those of a young adult, yellow and cracked with age. Though one of the priests objected, the bones were packed in a small cardboard box and placed in the back of a van marked 'National Museum of Ireland'. The van spluttered into life and began the journey down the hill towards Blackrock. This person who had lain quiet for nearly 4,000 years was part of the world again; their story continues…

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We take centre stage in our own dramas, in which our identities change and shift; in the short term, we emphasise different elements of our selves in our interactions with different people; in the long term, we may gradually change from one self into another altogether. At critical moments in our lives, this change can be more sudden – the death of a spouse or leaving the family home, for instance. In short, who we think we are is not necessarily stable. Throughout our lives, the people who we come into contact with both affect these changes and are, in turn, affected by them. We are dynamic and malleable beings, whose richness of experience and narrativizing of that experience is at the very core of who we are, and of what we find interesting in others.

The novelist Anne Enright once said, "Ireland is a series of stories it tells itself. None of them are true" (quoted in Anon. 2011). This, I think, is true of all people, not just the modern Irish. The characters we encounter in great works of literature are compelling because they change and grow; they both fit within and stand outside our expectations, and are judged accordingly; in other words, the stories which they tell themselves change. It is a tremendous disappointment, then, that the same cannot be said of most archaeology. Our characters, though they are real people, are too often absent altogether, as if all of history is composed of a world where people have just stepped out of the room. Though, when they *are* in the room, the story is rarely more compelling. The people of the past are lifeless and flat. They form large, homogenous groups like 'women' and 'children' who act the same, think the same, and 'fulfil roles' within communities that remain uniform for long periods of time.

These homogenous and stable social groups do not reflect human lives, and they fail to produce a picture of people in the past who are dynamic; they are far from being as complex and interesting as the people we meet on a daily basis. The media excitement which greets a facial reconstruction might demonstrate the public appetite for such pictures – as if by gazing upon their recognisable humanity we imagine our empathy leads us to understand something of their story. Archaeology must push beyond its boundaries and attempt to find the narrativizing in the past – how were societies constructing their own stories of who they were, and how were real lives affected by those narratives? This thesis is an attempt to nudge the study of the past in this direction by focusing on how social ideologies were made, reinforced and negotiated by communities at the graveside, a key locus for the construction of core stories.

1.1 Gender and age – past and present

Of course, the observation that our pasts are often populated by cardboard cut-outs is not a new one; nearly 30 years ago, Ruth Tringham memorably described 'archaeological people' as "faceless blobs" (Tringham 1991: 94). At that time, a feminist-inspired gender archaeology seemed to be revolutionising how we spoke about the past, and exciting new elements of society became acceptable areas for study. It was this gender archaeology which took up the charge of peopling the past through analysing interpersonal difference (e.g. Tringham 1991; Spector 1991; Sørensen 1992). Although there has been disagreement about the degree to which gender archaeology should be feminist (e.g. Conkey 2013; Longino 1994; Sørensen 2000;

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Wylie 1995), some of its most radical methodological developments arose directly from a feminist-inspired critique of archaeology's systems of knowledge production and communication. 'What this Awl means', in which Janet D. Spector (1991) traces the human lives entangled with a single object, represents a particularly ambitious and influential early example.

However, from this initial promise, gender archaeology appears to have stalled, given the lack of interest now shown at major disciplinary meetings (Tomášková 2011) and in mainstream archaeology (Back Danielsson 2012; Bolger 2013), although feminist-inspired discussions of gender *in* archaeology seem increasingly popular. For instance, a recent ten-year review session of the 'Archaeology and gender in Europe' group at the European Association of Archaeologists' (EAA) 2019 conference concerned with "the current state in gender archaeology" focused entirely on issues of inclusion, education and modern political struggle (Session abstract, Matić et al. 2019). Despite being widely taught and discussed, gender archaeology seems to have had limited impact on the mainstream discipline's approaches to the past beyond the obvious recognition of gender as part of past social dynamics (Back Danielsson 2012; Bolger 2013; Tomášková 2011). A recent overview of archaeological theory aimed at undergraduate students (Harris and Cipolla 2017) features a short discussion on gender theory, most of which is spent discussing the work of non-archaeologist Judith Butler, which is then folded into the story of 'personhood'. Moreover, the kinds of gender research which have been conducted in recent years frequently fail to produce rich accounts of lives in the past. Rather, people fall into a particular homogenous category, such as 'male' or 'female', in a mirror of modern gender relations which has recently been termed the "binary binds" (Ghisleni et al. 2016). The promise of early gender archaeology to disrupt our homogenous view of society has largely only yielded a change to talking about amorphous, and strangely homogenous, groups of men, women and children in the past. Often, these groups give us only the vague sense that people were there in the past and it remains difficult to glimpse their humanity, or the contestations and variations present in their understanding of their gender. Furthermore, we seem to find the same gender relations everywhere and throughout time – men usually held positions of power, but women could sometimes hold power, usually as a result of their kin relations or by virtue of particular circumstances (Haughton 2018a). Hushed conversations over coffee at conferences suggest a widespread feeling that gender studies have stalled, though this is not always put so bluntly in print. Some theoretical literature on gender

has recently kicked back at the term itself (e.g. Fuglestvedt 2014; Hernando 2017) and many theory-driven archaeologists interested in social relations have instead begun to focus on affect, emotion, agency and personhood in their attempts to people the past (e.g. Fowler 2013a; 2016; Robb and Harris 2018). While such studies provide rich avenues for thinking about people, they crucially fail to provide a way to talk about difference between them, and how that difference affected their lived experiences. Places with 'affects', for instance, seem to have them equally for all people (Navaro-Yashin 2009), thus gendered difference fades into the background. Other attempts to people the past are performed by in-depth osteobiographies, sometimes coupled with facial reconstructions (e.g. Hoole et al. 2018). However, as such studies are grounded in a single biological body, they can rarely be fully articulated as studies of interpersonal difference.

And yet, difference is crucial to how we narrativize the lives of others and ourselves. Particularly in the modern West, both gender and socialised age, the other focus of this thesis, are omnipresent. Our expectations of the people we meet are fundamentally shaped by who we expect them to be, and gender, age, and their interaction form key loci for this. As we get to know people, their own personal identity is something which we interpret with reference to their level of fit with the norms we expect of a particular gendered and aged person. Even within families these expectations do not diminish – how often do we tell our family members to 'act their age' or 'man up', even as the world fights against gender stereotypes in particular?

While this cannot inform us of the prehistoric past, it does remind us that social categories are a critical element of how we interact with the world, and the people within it, that cannot be ignored in our studies of the past. While I have been writing this PhD, gender has been at the forefront of many global conversations. The fight for women's liberation is currently undergoing what has recently been termed its fourth wave (e.g. Chamberlain 2017; Rivers 2017). Movements such as '#MeToo' and 'Time's Up' have put the global spotlight on sexual violence and harassment against women. As just one example of their prominence, 'The Silence Breakers' were named *Time*'s 'Person of the Year' for 2017. Against this backdrop, it is no exaggeration to say that there is a crisis in modern masculinity, and a conversation about this too is now starting to emerge, from academia to social justice movements to comedy (e.g. Webb 2017). Age as a social category, on the other hand, is not something which is often discussed, though modern Western society very clearly differentiates its members on an age-

related basis. One area where this does receive public attention is in its interaction with gender – the lack of roles for older women on TV and in film, for instance. This is a nice reminder of the ways in which gender and age are interrelated. Fourth-wave feminism has made use of the term 'intersectionality' (after Crenshaw 1989) to describe this interlocking of identities, particular race, class and gender. However, the lack of discussion of age is a reminder that societies are not always cognisant of, or actively negotiating, their key axes of social difference. Given this modern focus on gender, and the need for wider discussion on aging, it is particularly troubling that archaeological theory seems to have turned away from these questions.

Of course, there are other sites of social differentiation which provide flashpoints for discussion in the present day. Race is perhaps foremost amongst them, though class is also central to many discussions. Gender and age, then, are neither the only, nor necessarily the primary, axes of difference in any society. It is potentially likely that they are amongst the primary axes in prehistoric societies, however, where communities beyond village-size were rare and travel over distances where race would be apparent could only occur in some parts of the world.

The investigation of gender, age and their interrelation is, thus, an investigation of core aspects of people's understanding of themselves, of their bodies, of their capabilities and limitations, and of their standing in relation to others. While it is an investigation which aims at individual understandings, it is also one which accounts for societal worldviews and organisation. The way that groups understand aging bodies, for instance, is a symptom of their wider understanding of the world, and of the way in which their society was structured and functioned. This, of course, feeds back into an individual's experience of life. While there has often been a tension between the individual and societal scale in archaeology's investigation of the past, these are scales which the study of gender and age seem to demand be interwoven.

This thesis investigates what I will later term gender and age 'ideology' – that is, the framework through which people come to define and redefine these aspects of their own identities. Studies of gender have long recognised the different ways in which actual lives differ from any 'ideal' of gender (e.g. Butler 2004; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005), and I want to explicitly recognise from the outset that an investigation of social ideology is not an investigation of the lives which individual people actually lived. Rather, this is an

investigation of the stories which people told themselves about how different sorts of people *should* be, and indeed who they imagined they *could* be. It is against this backdrop that real lives were lived, both in accordance and in conflict with these ideals. My aim is to expand the discussion of lives in the past, to move beyond the homogenous group labelled 'women' to a past which may be peopled with characters who can move through identities, can bash up against the boundaries and feel that difference and disconnect.

Of course, it would be foolish to presume that gender existed in the past in the relatively binary manner in which it has done in the modern West (Ghisleni et al. 2016; Joyce 2008), or that the process of aging had the same connotations or was even recognised as consisting of the same biological stages (Appleby 2010; 2018). Just as binary sex is a fiction of modern science (Laqueur 1990), our understanding of binary gender is a fiction produced by modern discourse (Butler 1993; 2004). Therefore, our investigation is into the nature of gender in the past, and the extent to which it operated then, too, as a binary fiction, or as some other kind of fiction. Within its parameters we can define the lives that were possible to live, and with connection to the data, can infer some of the possibilities within these parameters which people adopted. These are themes to which we shall return throughout the thesis.

1.2 The individual and society, their interconnection

It is quite obvious that speaking of people in the prehistoric past is a difficult goal, for we can never hear their voices or understand the specific ways in which individuals were aware of socially-defined ideals of age or gender and articulated their own understandings of who they were in relation to these. Although we hope to people the past – to write histories populated by dynamic individuals – the evidence which we have for social identities frequently has its origin at a larger scale, in the interaction between people. It was in the community coming together, for instance, that a burial was made. Not only did the deceased have limited control over how they were buried, but it is likely that no one individual at the graveside had complete control either. Therefore, we are looking at a negotiated or compromised version of how the deceased should be represented in the grave.

However, it is also clear that individual identities are formed by continuous interaction with a larger-scale social ideology, and that it is against these shared conceptions that we experience and define who we are. Indeed, people themselves often have multiple different conceptions

of who they are, or of what constitutes themselves (i.e. whether it is linked to the corporeal, bounded body or exists beyond). Thoughts and beliefs are not constant, and even some of those beliefs which might be considered sacrosanct by the person at one point in life may, in time, come to be irrelevant to their self-identity. Trying to explain the self in the present is challenge enough, without attempting to do so for unknown others in a distant past.

This may explain why it is has become common to investigate gender, and socialised age, at the societal level. At this scale, individual people are blurry and formless, but societal structures and broad trends in practice become apparent. How I will approach the past in this thesis works in tandem with such approaches to identify the shape which cultural forces give to individual lives. Understanding society allows us to understand the cultural world in which the individual operated and came to their own understanding of identity. Real lives must involve a constant dialectic between the individual's actions and thoughts, and the cultural world in which those actions and thoughts are brought into being. We cannot enter into the minds of prehistoric people, neither is it my aim to use osteobiographies to follow the lives of particular bodies, rather I am interested in identifying the spaces in which they defined their own selves, in working out the frames which bordered their living identities. Obviously, this does not make the blurry group cohere into visible individuals, but it does provide a map through the uncertainty, and makes visible the cultural pathways down which people walked. What we end up with is a picture of how societies narrativized social identities, the stories which they told themselves about who could be particular ways. That is why the focus of this thesis is on 'ideology', rather than the more individual 'identities', though we will return to this distinction in Chapter 3.

Some recent investigations of gender have pushed the scale outwards – looking at change over large areas and long timescales (e.g. Hernando 2017; Robb and Harris 2018). This has been coeval with a renewed attempt to answer broader questions about social change by recourse to the grand-scale of population movement (e.g. Cassidy et al. 2016; Kristiansen et al. 2017; Olalde et al. 2017). Such studies operate at a degree of remove from the issue which they are actually studying. I argue, as will be outlined in Chapter 3, that social ideology is primarily a local phenomenon. That is to say, difference is felt and contested by comparison with known others. Where broad similarities appear on a wider scale, this may obscure meaningful differences on the local scale at which lives were actually lived and experienced. As I am

primarily interested in people and the lives they lived, rather than the story of long-term change which brought about the modern world, this is a scale which suits my focus of investigation. Here we arrive at a crossroads facing the study of gender in archaeology; while an attempt is made to subsume gender into grand narratives which operate above the heads of individual lives, this thesis returns to gender archaeology's feminist-inspired origins by focusing unapologetically on the people whose lives we are charged with investigating, and the interlocking scales at which they lived.

1.3 Why focus on the Earlier Bronze Age in Ireland and Scotland?

Such a study could, of course, take place in many different time periods, in many different places around the world. Why then is my focus on the Earlier Bronze Age (c.2200–1500 BC) of Ireland and Scotland?

In many ways the reading of this thesis would not be hindered by imagining this to be an arbitrary choice, or by taking the question of selecting the study area as read, either because it is personal to the author or because the reader is themselves interested in the British and/or Irish Bronze Ages. However, I offer the following explanation by way of detailing my situated position as a researcher, rather than pretending that this thesis is solely a product of 'objective science'. To be clear, I do not mean that I have not striven to be objective in this study, but rather that I doubt any investigation of social lives in the past can be conducted without unconscious, subjective value judgements which are relevant to understanding that research.

I am interested, first and foremost, in the history of the island of Ireland. This originates less from a sense of nationalism connected to the modern Irish republic[1] and more from an interest in the place in which I lived while growing up, and for twenty years before coming to Cambridge. The places of the Irish landscape, and in particular the hills of Wicklow in which I spent many weekends, are locations I was captivated by. So too, the idea that this was a stage on which the dramas of other lives had played out for millennia. The burial whose rediscovery was recounted at the opening of this chapter was no more than a 10-minute walk from the house where I grew up. Imagining reaching a hand of familiarity across the centuries to people like this was what drew me to archaeology. And it was in trying to find these lives in the

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[1] Though I will admit to cheering on the (all-island) rugby team during the Six Nations!

literature about Irish prehistory as an undergraduate that I was confronted with a picture so dependent on stereotypical presentations of static and modern gender roles projected onto the past. The resulting people seemed disappointingly flat and unreal, particularly by comparison with the discussions of gender I experienced socially, with my peers in university and through my experiences in competitive debating. This disconnect, and the promise of gender archaeology, indicated that this was an avenue to approaching the past which was capable of providing that sense of humanity which I had struggled to find in the literature.

The other elements of this investigation, Scotland and age, flow from these original concerns. A study of Ireland is enriched by comparison with another region, and the similarities with Scotland prove too intriguing to be overlooked. That the areas were in close contact is well-documented (e.g. Cressey and Sheridan 2003; Needham 2004), thus it provides a tantalising opportunity to investigate whether and to what degree similar material cultures reflect underlying similarities in social ideologies and dynamics. Although my interest in Ireland has formed the genesis for this project, that should not be taken to imply that my primary focus here is on Ireland. The thesis investigates each area equally and draws conclusions out with equal vigour for both study areas. Neither is this a nationally driven project, I am attempting neither to create a picture of an Ireland which was fundamentally different to Britain during the Earlier Bronze Age, nor to create a historical 'pan-Celtic' identity for Scotland and Ireland relative to England during this period of re-definition in the context of the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union. Rather, my interests are explicitly Bronze Age.

In the context of the Earlier Bronze Age, Ireland and Scotland stand on the geographical edge of a European-wide phenomenon. Most syntheses at a continental scale, perhaps still taking their cue from World Systems theory, see both regions as standing on the periphery, more or less passively accepting the cultural norms which were developed elsewhere (e.g. Harding 2000; Kristiansen 1998; Kristiansen and Larsson 2005). Our picture of the Bronze Age has long been dominated by models of male chieftains engaging in heroic travel (e.g. Childe 1928; 1930; Kristiansen and Larsson 2005; Mount 2013a; Needham et al. 2010; Piggott 1938; 1962; Rowlands 1980); this thesis represents an opportunity to question whether the spread of a similar material culture, and perhaps people, represent the concomitant spread of these hierarchical ideals. This is a point to which we will return in much more detail in the next chapter. Suffice it to say for now that the selected study area provides an excellent opportunity

to reassess how we go about investigating social life on the geographical fringe of the 'mainstream' European Bronze Age.

The addition of age to the project hardly needs rigorous discussion here, save to say that it both enables my original goal of understanding the people of the past and their experiences, and it enriches the study of gender. Indeed, a study of gender without consideration of age would be unable to identify variation over the life course. Though my interest in the treatment of the elderly within Western society and the exciting 'call to action' in the works of Jo Appleby (e.g. Appleby 2010; 2018) and Joanna Sofaer (e.g. Sofaer Derevenski 1997a; Sofaer 2004; 2006) certainly contribute to this element's inclusion within the project.

1.4   On the aims of this investigation

This thesis thus attempts to investigate the social understandings of gender and age which prevailed in the Earlier Bronze Ages of Ireland and Scotland, and to investigate the degree to which such understandings varied through time and by location. Rather than attempting to define 'roles' which 'women' or 'men' held within society, I am interested in the processes through which social ideologies were made manifest and the effects they might have had upon the lives of people. We might equally say that this is an attempt to define the range of possible roles, or the range of possible treatments for various types of people, and the social sphere in which real lives were enacted.

The material for study will be the remains of burials, long at the heart of gender and age studies in archaeology (e.g. Arnold 1991; Binford 1971; Rega 1997; Saxe 1971; Sofaer Derevenski 2002). Through burials, we come face-to-face with a community interacting with a specific body which must have retained elements of the gender and age identity of the living individual, for the community could not have divorced the physical remains from the physical body of their loved one and still seen formal burial as a worthwhile endeavour. Of course, this is no perfect proxy for social ideologies, and the idiosyncrasies of burials themselves will be a large feature of the discussion throughout.

Additionally, I aim here to reflect upon and broaden our approaches to social lives in the past more generally. The development of a methodological approach for answering these questions without being reductive or essentialising has greatly exercised my thought over the last three years. The small-scale focus which I advocate here is directly at odds with much that has been

done in gender studies recently (e.g. Hernando 2017; Robb and Harris 2018) and in the preceding decades (e.g. Burchell 2006; Chapman 1997; Treherne 1995). The argument that social relations exist in their becoming in local, that is to say interpersonal, settings (Haughton 2018a) will thus form an important backbone for the arguments here, and will hopefully prove useful in gender- or age-focused studies in other areas and time periods.

1.5   The structure of the thesis

To accomplish these aims, then, we must first review the lay of the land, and this is what I will set out to do in the next chapter. We shall journey through the Earlier Bronze Age across Britain and Ireland as it is currently understood, and the pictures of social ideologies which have been argued for or borrowed from broader European arguments. I will obviously place a particular emphasis on the burial evidence here, both because it has been the source of many societal interpretations and because burials form the focus of the subsequent analysis. However, I think it is important to also overview other elements of the evidence, particularly the settlement sites and the indications of societal organisation which can be gleaned from there. Though the focus of this thesis is Ireland and Scotland, the discussion here will be of research in Britain, Ireland and continental Europe, for so much of the current understanding of the Earlier Bronze Age within the study areas has been dominated by/borrowed from research on southern England (particularly the barrow-rich chalklands of Wessex), central Europe and Scandinavia.

We will then turn to the development of the methodology for this project (Chapter 3). I will first overview the methods which have been employed to investigate gender and age in the past, and investigate how these might be expanded upon to provide the kind of contextual and nuanced picture which I have discussed during this introduction. This will also be the time for an in-depth discussion of what is meant by gender and age ideology when we are talking about the past.

The data for this project will then be presented (Chapter 4). I will explain the process by which a relational database of burials was planned and created, and provide an overview of the scope of the evidence available and the specific methods which can be used to query this database, and subsections thereof.

The results of such queries will naturally follow (Chapter 5), and these will be analysed for their level of fit with the data at large. The purpose of this exercise is to establish what broad trends in practice are evident in the record, and where such trends are undermined by cemetery-level data. Care will be taken at this stage to account for change over time, as well as by location.

From here, this thesis will diverge from the normal route that gender studies have taken. Instead of attempting to explain such trends by reference to ethnography or contextual artefact studies, I will turn to investigate key sites which differ from, and conform with, the established trends (Chapters 6 & 7). The purpose of this analysis is threefold: (i) to investigate whether the general trends are a good reflection of local practice at these sites, (ii) to identify ideologies in operation at a scale appropriate to or approximating lived experience, and (iii) to allow an investigation and demonstration of the approaches laid out in Chapter 3.

The implications of this study for our understanding of social dynamics in the Earlier Bronze Ages of Scotland and Ireland will then be investigated (Chapter 8), before the findings and methods are critically reflected on and directions for future research are suggested (Chapter 9).

While it is intended that this brief overview provides a roadmap for the reader, the text itself will not be limited to so rigid a structure at all times, as it will be explorative and at times speculative, responding to the data and the issues which that engagement raises.

2   Current Models for the British and Irish Earlier Bronze Ages

Before commencing this investigation, it is first necessary to familiarise ourselves with the lay of the land. With this opening chapter, I intend to provide an overview of the current models for social organisation in the British and Irish Bronze Ages, and their relationships with wider European discourse.

Since its earliest days, archaeology has conceptualised the Bronze Age as a time of conquest and the increasing control of emerging trade networks, where communities were led by martial males (e.g. Childe 1928; 1930; Kossinna 1911). Over time, this model has grown to encompass a particular, powerful warrior elite (Kristiansen and Larsson 2005; Skogstrand 2016; Treherne 1995) who engaged in long-distance travel and held power within their local communities. I will begin this discussion by exploring this model and its implications for gender and age dynamics. Following this, I will turn to an alternative model which has originated largely from studies of the British Bronze Age in recent years and has been positioned explicitly in opposition to the hierarchical model, that of a heterarchical society based upon relational personhood (e.g. Fowler 2004; 2013a; Brück 2004a; 2006; 2009; Brück and Fontijn 2013). We will then explore two particular problems with these models: first, that a critical discussion of gender and age has largely been left out despite the implicit centrality of these concepts to the models, and second, that notable regional variations cannot easily be accommodated within either model. Overall, it will be seen that this has created two groups of researchers effectively arguing for different Bronze Ages (Haughton 2018a).

Ireland and Britain are at the fulcrum of where this disagreement is taking place – with researchers working on both islands arguing for the existence of a stratified society, though sometimes based only loosely on the warrior model, (e.g. Fitzpatrick 2009; Mount 1997a; 2013a; Needham and Woodward 2008; Sheridan and Shortland 2003; Woodward and Hunter 2015) or a heterarchical society, often stressing relational personhood (e.g. Barrett 1990; Brück 2004a; 2004b Fowler 2004; 2013a; also see Molloy (2017) for an approach incorporating both over the course of the Irish Bronze Age).

The study area sprawls across the present-day jurisdictions of Ireland, Northern Ireland and Scotland. Each political entity brings with it a different legal and methodological framework which has affected how knowledge of the past has been created and maintained. The drawing, and in the case of the island of Ireland, contestation, of these borders has influenced how communities of researchers formed and the pictures of the Bronze Age that they created. I do not mean that researchers in each jurisdiction have set out with goals in mind related to modern politics or state building, rather the very fact of their partition into research communities and the existence of modern borders has acted to create different research traditions which may produce slightly different pictures of the past. Obviously, there are many ways in which these stories are intertwined, particularly those for Ireland and Northern Ireland.

For all the subtleties in their construction of regional difference, these regions share a complicated set of relationships with scholarship concerning southern England. This often leads to the creation of pictures of the past which take their cue from those in southern England, adopting wholesale particular theories of social organisation or cosmology, but it can also lead to a desire to create difference from the colonial power or southern neighbour which creates an emphasis on variance from England.

I choose to emphasise this here to underline the fact that the past is a modern construction, and nowhere is this more the case than in the very idea of the Bronze Age itself. The concept of a Bronze Age, with its consequent assumption of a split from earlier times and some kind of internal coherence between its communities, is constantly reproduced through our research practice, and this thesis effects a similar manoeuvre. With this chapter, I aim to trace this idea from its creation, and to demonstrate how the ideas which accompanied its creation have proven particularly tenacious and continue to shape our conceptions of the period.

2.1 Introducing the Bronze Age

Generations of archaeology undergraduates have learned of C.J. Thomsen's sequential organisation of artefacts into groups of stone, bronze and iron in the Danish National Museum in Copenhagen. It is here that we might say the Bronze Age really began. These typological sequences, further developed of course over the subsequent centuries, form the backbone of how we understand the progression of time, and demonstrate the centrality of metal to our

definition of the period. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine that bronze would not be of prime importance in 'the Bronze Age', and we should not discount the impact of this on how we understand the functioning of society and the economy.

Of course, there is a reality in the archaeological record to what we call the Bronze Age, marked by the arrival of metal to these islands for the first time. Copper daggers first appear in Beaker-associated individual inhumation graves in Scotland and the south of England, roughly simultaneously. Origin points have been placed in the Netherlands (e.g. Sheridan 2012a) and in France (e.g. O'Brien 2012), though this is not without controversy (e.g. Fokkens 2012). At roughly the same time, copper was first extracted from mines in Co. Kerry, in the south west of Ireland; the origins for this technology are placed in Brittany (O'Brien 2004). In the earliest phase, the copper used for artefacts in Britain and Ireland came from these mines in Co. Kerry, and was traded across Ireland to Scotland, and from there some of it made its way to the rest of Britain (Needham 2004). Several hundred years later, copper mining in northern Wales removed the need for this trade. This early, copper-only, phase (c. 2500–2200 BC) is sometimes referred to as a 'Chalcolithic' or 'Copper Age', though the use of this term is debated (see contributions to Allen et al. 2012). To avoid unnecessary delimitations, I will use the term 'Earlier Bronze Age' to denote the period 2500–1500 BC which is the focus of this thesis. The reasoning for this terminology is further explained in Chapter 4.

2.1.1   The burial record

Most simply, the Bronze Age is characterised by the advent of alloying metallurgy[1] and the introduction of new burial and pottery types to these islands. Stereotypically, these new burials are of single crouched individuals accompanied by a ceramic vessel, sometimes in a stone-lined pit or cist (Fig. 2.1). Over the course of the Earlier Bronze Age, cremation gradually took precedence over inhumation and the remains were often deposited inside the vessels. Both inhumations and cremations were generally placed in small cemeteries or as lone burials in the landscape. In southern England, it was more common for them to be placed in barrows, but in Ireland and Scotland this was rare and locally prominent natural locations were preferred. This is, of course, an oversimplification. The reality is more varied, with multiple

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[1] As mentioned, the use of bronze is preceded by a period of copper use. In some parts of Europe this lasted a considerable length of time and is recognised as a distinct 'Copper Age' or 'Chalcolithic'.

people buried in some graves, a range of grave goods or none at all, and inhumation and cremation both used in the same cemetery and even in the same grave.

In Britain, the earliest knowledge of the Bronze Age was produced by the barrow digging exploits of antiquarians. Two of their ideas, in particular, have had a lasting impact on the discipline: first, that barrows contained powerful and important individuals, usually male chiefs, memorialised by their communities, and second, that a different race of people, originally differentiated by John Thurnam on the basis of skull morphology (Goodrum 2016), was responsible for the Bronze Age round barrow than the Neolithic long barrow.

In Ireland, the adoption of the three-age system was initially resisted (Waddell 2005) and it was not until R.A.S. Macalister's appointment as Professor of Celtic Archaeology in University College Dublin in 1909 that this began to change. His series of textbooks, published in the 1920s, finally began the study of a 'Bronze Age' in Ireland (Macalister 1921; 1928).

Figure 2.1: The stereotypical image of a Bronze Age burial

These new burial forms were accompanied by a series of characteristic pottery types. The general sequence of an initial use of Beakers across Britain, followed by Food Vessels[2] in Scotland, Ireland and pockets of England, then a series of cinerary urn types has long been recognised. Abercromby (1912) produced an influential corpus of the Bronze Age pottery known across Britain and Ireland, effectively introducing typological study. These pottery types have often been the focus of detailed type-specific studies (e.g. Carlin 2011; Law 2009; Wilkin 2013). Updated catalogues for Ireland were a focus of John Waddell's work, producing one of the pottery (e.g. Waddell and Ó Ríordáin 1993) and another of the burials in which they were found (Waddell 1990). Anna Brindley (2007) has recently provided a fine-detailed chronology for the funerary pottery in Ireland, some of which is also applicable to Scotland,

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[2] So named because Bateman (1861: 279) thought they were "probably intended to contain an offering of food". Although he termed them 'small vases', his interpretation became their name. The name has stuck, though the interpretation has not.

alongside the intensive dating programme conducted there by Alison Sheridan and National Museums Scotland (e.g. Sheridan 2004; 2006; 2007).

2.1.2   Hoarding practice

The frequent deposition of metalwork, either singly or collectively in hoards, is another long-recognised hallmark of the Bronze Age, though it builds upon a Neolithic tradition of polished axe deposition (Cooney 2000). Interpretations of these hoards have oscillated between seeing them as utilitarian – the result of merchants or bronzeworkers hiding their wares in difficult times (e.g. Evans 1881; Childe 1930) – or ritual. Janet Levy (1979; 1981) incorporated both interpretations in a model for Bronze Age Denmark which saw wet places connoting irretrievable deposition and therefore ritual, while dryland deposition was more likely to be utilitarian. Levy explicitly argued that the hoarding of rare artefacts proved that society was hierarchical and controlled by a chief who used deposition to display their wealth and control the flow of metal. This model was then applied elsewhere in Europe, including Britain (e.g. Bradley 1982; 1998). More recently, Budd and Taylor (1995) argued from ethnographic analogy that bronze metallurgy would have been viewed as a kind of magic and a potentially dangerous source of pollutant to which hoarding may have been a response. A second major challenge has come from the recognition of the selective nature of deposition, with particular artefact types associated with particular locations (Becker 2013; Brück 2017; Brück and Fontijn 2013; Yates and Bradley 2010). Further, David Fontijn (2007) has argued that certain places themselves evoke deposition, while Knight (2018) has recognised that metalwork destruction was carried out in particular, structured ways. Therefore, it is difficult to maintain an interpretation based on the desire to create scarcity (Brück and Fontijn 2013). Indeed, the relative value of bronze deposited in hoards may indicate that community interests outweighed personal aggrandisement in death (Needham 1988). The picture is of a range of community interests which seem to push beyond the narrow scope of capitalist self-interest and highlight the contextual nature of this evidence.

Although these models form part of the wider discussions of Bronze Age society, it is important to note that hoarding is a practice which became particularly important in the Middle and Late Bronze Age. The hoarding that did take place in the Earlier Bronze Age features different objects to those which appear in burials. Daggers and small tools were deposited in graves, while axes, halberds and spearheads were placed in hoards (Needham

1988). Exceptions to this broad rule of course exist, as the five daggers (from 12 items of Earlier Bronze Age metalwork) found in the Thames demonstrate (York 2002). In Ireland, objects which were not placed in burials, such as v-perforated buttons, gold artefacts and battle-axes, regularly featured in hoards (Becker 2013).

2.1.3   Settlement

By comparison to the graves and metalwork hoards, the settlements of the Bronze Age in Britain and Ireland were much less recognisable to antiquarians, and thus their investigation was a later addition to scholarship. Indeed, the first Bronze Age settlement recognised in Ireland was not discovered until 1933 (Cleary 2007) and by 2000 just eight settlement sites could be dated to the Earlier Bronze Age (Doody 2000). Developer-funded archaeology had increased that number to 34 just a few years later (Cleary 2007). Given the recent recognition of these forms, it is hardly surprising that they have not played a larger role in theories of social organisation.

The currently favoured settlement model for the Earlier Bronze Age across Ireland and Britain is one of dispersed, short-lived farmsteads, where seasonal mobility played a significant role in social and ritual life. Isotopic evidence for mobility seems to reflect local or regional movement (Jay et al. 2012), perhaps occurring within defined territories. Fitzpatrick (Fitzpatrick 2015: 825) refers to this model as "tethered mobility". Within such movement patterns, places of communal gathering, such as henges, *fulachtaí fiadh* (burnt mounds) or flint sources, take on particular social importance at particular times of the year (Brück 2000). Some groups may have made longer journeys, either for "cosmological acquisition" (Needham 2000, employing a term from Mary Helms) or prospection (Fitzpatrick 2013; O'Brien 2004), or to foster and maintain long-distance trading networks. Such journeys may have been undertaken by slightly larger groups, with a crew of between 10 and 20 proposed for the Earlier Bronze Age sewn-plank boats known from several contexts (Van de Noort 2013).

Most settlements comprised 1–3 buildings (Brück and Fokkens 2013), with little evidence for aggrandisement or differentiation between settlements (Rathbone 2013). However, occasional larger sites are known, including the 74 Middle Bronze Age roundhouses at Corrstown, Co. Derry (Ginn and Rathbone 2012), and the 32 building platforms spanning the Early and Middle Bronze Ages at Lintshire Gutter, Perthshire (Terry 1995). Generally, a short-lived occupation

is suggested by the lack of repair at most houses in Scotland (Halliday 2007). Doors tended to be orientated towards the rising sun in both Britain and Ireland (Brück and Fokkens 2013; Harding 2000); as this provides morning warmth and shelter from the prevailing winds, this may reflect practical rather than ideological or cosmological concerns. The lack of defensive structures at these settlements suggests a warrior elite was not strictly necessary (Brück 2017). This pattern of settlement during the Earlier Bronze Age seems to be fairly consistent across Ireland and the whole of Britain.

Fragmentary human remains – both burnt and unburnt – are frequently found on settlement sites throughout the Irish Bronze Age, particularly at entrances or within the postholes of houses (Cleary 2005). Brück (1995) has shown a similar practice at play during the British Late Bronze Age and suggested bone was used as a symbolic resource rather than in memory of specific individuals. The deposition of fractured quernstones at similar boundary points on Middle and Late Bronze Age Irish settlements seems to be part of the same tradition (Cleary 2018).

Even where people lived close to the coast, there was no significant consumption of marine resources (Jay et al. 2012), but the evidence for Earlier Bronze Age farming in most areas of Ireland and Britain is still scant. There is, however, evidence that Irish settlements were sometimes associated with the kind of field systems not widely seen in Britain until the Middle Bronze Age (Cleary 2007). Where field systems have been found in Britain there is disagreement over the extent of organisation which they represent, whether centrally planned, either by an elite or collectively (e.g. Fleming 1987), or growing from individual decision-making (e.g. Johnston 2005). In either case, it is clear that, by the end of the Earlier Bronze Age, the landscape was becoming more structured, and that this in turn would have affected people's lives and practices. In Ireland, too, there is some evidence for more permanent houses with a surrounding field, towards the end of the Earlier Bronze Age (Mount 1997b). Agricultural intensification may have brought about a stronger sense of property rights (Ginn 2014), but this intensification is mainly attested from the Middle Bronze Age on, and thus need not further concern us here.

Mining took place close to parent agricultural settlements, and production of finished artefacts was carried out in these settlements (O'Brien 2007). There is no evidence for the aggrandisement of elite settlement controlling the trade of this supposedly valuable

commodity (O'Brien 2004). Furthermore, that the Migdale-Marnoch tradition flourished especially in northeast Scotland, far from the source of metals and lacking particular technical abilities or distribution systems to single it out, suggests that purely economic explanations will not suffice (Needham 2004).

2.1.4   *Population replacement*

Strikingly, genomic data suggest a 93±2% population turnover between the final Neolithic and the Middle Bronze Age in Britain (Olalde et al. 2017). This is part of a trend of population replacement which happens across Europe in the long Third Millennium BC (Allentoft et al. 2015; Haak et al. 2015; Kristiansen et al. 2017). This has been characterised as 'population replacement', though the speed at which this transition took place, and the degree to which it was recognised by those living at the time is still debatable (e.g. Carlin 2018; Booth 2019). The continuity in practice in many regions suggests that this was not an instantaneous change, and social identity may not have been tied to descent lineages, or at least not to DNA (Carlin 2018).

The effect on Ireland is even more unclear. Modern males from western Ireland belong to the Y-chromosome haplogroup that characterises the Yamnaya expansion in 94% of cases, but the Bronze Age evidence for this replacement is currently based on 3 individuals from Rathlin Island, off the coast of Antrim (Cassidy et al. 2016). Furthermore, less than 33% of their DNA was Yamnaya-derived, the rest was of Middle Neolithic European origin, though perhaps not of Irish origin (Cassidy et al. 2016). Although it is tied by the authors to Beaker migration (Cassidy et al. 2016), the Beaker phenomenon in Ireland is significantly influenced by the Irish Neolithic, and does not reflect patterns observed elsewhere in Europe (Carlin 2018). For instance, Beakers were never deposited alongside inhumation burials in Ireland. At the least, it is safe to say that the speed and social consequences of any potential population replacement are at present undetermined.

2.2   The Bronze Age social elite

We have already encountered a tendency to interpret the Bronze Age as a time of growing social hierarchy in the overview of burials and hoards. This assumption was present from the early barrow digging antiquarians and has been extensively developed over the centuries. Various models have been applied across Europe, although it has naturally been those conducted by English-speaking authors which have had the most impact on Ireland and

Britain. In this section, I will first trace the development of these ideas as they have been applied across the continent. As space is limited, my focus is on the models and theories which have affected scholarship on Scotland and Ireland, the majority of which principally apply to Scandinavia and northwest-central Europe. Not all of these models apply to the Earlier Bronze Age, though the occurrence of grave 'wealth' in the barrows of Wessex has encouraged their use in explanations of this period in Britain. The second part of this section deals with these ideas as they have been applied to British and Irish material. As the work on southern England has been so influential for interpretations in both Ireland and Scotland this will be a major focus here. Naturally, the implications for gender and age ideologies will be highlighted.

2.2.1   A European Bronze Age elite

The rise of metallurgy in Europe has routinely been associated with the emergence of social stratification since the beginning of the discipline (Gilman 1981). V. Gordon Childe's *The Bronze Age* (1930) was particularly influential, and has shaped much of the writing that has followed over the last 90 years. Childe's Bronze Age, modelled loosely on that described by Homer, was one in which metalsmiths travelled freely from community to community, serving local male chiefs and their retinues. Control over scarce resources was a key strategy by which these chiefs and smiths held power – both physical and cosmological. The model is very much proto-capitalist, and represents the first grand narrative for Europe in prehistory (Hølleland 2010). The Bronze Age was argued to be a pan-European phenomenon, forming the beginning of 'European civilisation' (Childe 1928), a perspective which still receives wide support (e.g. Kristiansen 2014; Kristiansen and Larsson 2005; Vandkilde 2016).

Artefacts of rare material such as bronze, copper and gold which were deposited in both hoards and graves have been taken as proof that social inequalities were entrenched (e.g. Childe 1930; Gilman 1981; Harding 2000; Kristiansen and Larsson 2005; Levy 1979; 1981; Piggott 1938; Rowlands 1980; Earle 1997). Particularly well-provisioned burials of children are described as 'over-equipped' and seen as examples of inherited status (e.g. Gilman 1981; Heyd 2012). At times this can become gendered, with boys as "sons and heirs of capital and wealth" and girls "for exogamic marriages to peers" (Heyd 2012: 101). Although it is recognised that this deposition of wealth in graves is "virtually the only evidence for social complexity" (Gilman 1981: 3). Nevertheless, better provisioned burials are often taken to be the remains of the social elite (e.g. Mount 1997a; Needham and Woodward 2008; Needham et al. 2010;

Rowlands 1980; Sheridan et al. 2013; Waddell 2010; Woodward and Hunter 2015). A recent study of those buried outside of barrows in southern Sweden speaks of 'commoners', as if social organisation is a settled question (Bergerbrant et al. 2017). Horn (2017) has even suggested that the lack of strong sex patterning of grave goods amongst 'poorer' graves may indicate that those of a lower rank were gender-less or that they could not afford to express what gender they did have in enduring artefacts.

However, material culture was clearly not required to express gender in the grave, for there was frequently an opposition in how bodies were oriented in European cemeteries from the Late Neolithic Corded Ware into the Early Bronze Age (e.g. Bergerbrant 2007; Bourgeois and Kroon 2017; Rega 1997; Weglian 2001). The seemingly binary nature of this practice allows Robb and Harris (2018: 128) to write of a Bronze Age gender which is "mostly binary" and "stable" across Europe. To their understanding, it was fundamentally different from Neolithic gender (Robb and Harris 2018). Although, the other evidence marshalled to support this view is less firmly attested; Robb and Harris's example of Neolithic figurines not always being concerned with marking gender could also be applied to the Bronze Age rock art of Scandinavia, in which the sex of 75% of figures is indeterminate (Horn 2017). Thus, it is the burial evidence upon which this interpretation of gender most commonly sits. However, there are two issues of note here. First, there is a background minority who fail to conform to these established 'binary' patterns almost everywhere that they occur, and second, in certain areas, notably Ireland, there is no evidence that this binary opposition in burial practice ever existed (and, see below re: Scotland).

A greater similarity between male burials has been noted in several areas in central Europe and Scandinavia (e.g. Bourgeois and Kroon 2017; Hansen 2012). This is taken as evidence of male communication over long distances, and a male-dominated society, while women's identities were focused on local contexts of action and the domestic. If the pattern were reversed, it would not be difficult to construct an argument that this evidenced exogamy and the policing of women's identities by their husbands, thus the social interpretation does not seem to be mandated by the evidence. Elsewhere, local variation in the provisioning of graves has been taken as evidence for local variation in social roles (Horn 2017) and others have argued that, though the Bronze Age sees a rise in connectedness, it is only in particularly

densely populated places, such as Wessex or Armorica (in Brittany), that a strong social stratification including the existence of elites emerged (Briard 1996; Müller 2015).

The introduction of burials in which individuals were recognisable seems to coincide with developing ideas of the body as an arena for display (Sørensen 2010). The use of the male body in this way has been the genesis of a particular idea of the male warrior, a socially elite chief-like figure imagined to have existed as an institution across Europe in the Later Bronze Age (Kristiansen and Earle 2015; Kristiansen and Larsson 2005; Melheim and Horn 2014; Treherne 1995). Burials are argued to be an important arena in which these identities were displayed in order to construct memories, reinforced in the telling of stories and epic poetry (Treherne 2017). The male warrior received a particular set of grave goods: a bronze sword or other blade and toiletry items including razors, tweezers, and tattooing needles (or awls) (Treherne 1995). Although this model concerns the Later Bronze Age, a nascent version is applied to earlier periods, and has been influential in interpretations of British burials (see below).

This model originated in the burial evidence (Treherne 1995). In numerous cases in continental Europe, it does seem to be the case that toiletry items, and particularly razors, are found predominantly with males (Treherne 1995). For instance, at Pitten, a Middle Bronze Age cemetery in Austria, weapons and toiletry items were found exclusively in male-pattern graves, usually accompanying adults (Sørensen and Rebay 2005). The worn edges of razors have been interpreted as evidence for a lifelong connection between person and blade, and may suggest that men grew steadily more bearded over the life course as their razor dulled (Harding 2008). Women, on the other hand, were sometimes buried with heavy and awkward jewellery, particularly in Scandinavia, and this may have been intended to restrict their movement, potentially because women were an important source of wealth for their male kin (Kristiansen and Larsson 2005). However, there are also cases where females were buried with swords (Bergerbrant 2007) and Rebay-Salisbury (2017) has noted that the association between the warrior identity and toiletry items implies that the identity could be taken up temporarily, even by women. While Garwood (2012) noted that the appearance of warriors in graves is not necessarily indicative of warrior identity in life.

Kristiansen and Larsson (2005) project the warrior institution back to the Earlier Bronze Age and give four key features of warrior aristocracies which will prove instructive when we turn to examine the British and Irish evidence: (i) an interest in personal appearance (evidenced by

toiletry items in graves and bodily ornaments/jewellery), (ii) chiefly architecture (evidenced by large halls or farms), (iii) a warrior lifestyle, demanding rigorous training and specialist weapon production (potentially evidenced through osteoarchaeology and weapon standardisation), and (iv) the social organisation of warfare through a system of clients and retinues (difficult to evidence beyond settlement scale). Warrior aristocracies are imagined to be an extraordinarily stable form of social organisation, lasting from 2000 BC to AD 1000 (Kristiansen and Larsson 2005). Occasionally, the age implications of this model have also been made explicit, with arguments for "roaming *young* male war-bands" (Bourgeois and Kroon 2017: 14, my emphasis).

Though it need not overly concern us here, the settlement element of the model seems to be designed with Scandinavia in mind, where the form of settlement changes during the Bronze Age to the long-lasting tradition of the three-aisled longhouse, though these are ubiquitous rather than exceptional (Eriksen 2019). There is little evidence for the aggrandisement of settlement elsewhere in Europe for most of the Bronze Age (Brück and Fokkens 2013).

The evidence for a warrior lifestyle of "skilled professional[s]" (Kristiansen 2002: 323) is harder to assess. Osteological trauma is often not well attested amongst 'warrior burials' (Aranda-Jiménez et al. 2009). Evidence of fairly routine violence was found in seven of 13 adult skeletons from a mass grave at Sund, Norway, and has been argued to support a "professional warrior system" (Fyllingen 2003: 36). Although two of these cases were healed fractures, and of the five cases of cuts in the bone, two could be sexed – one male and one female. That this was a mass grave where the skeletons also showed multiple signs of malnutrition suggests that this site may not be representative of wider Early Bronze Age Norway. The famous 'battlefield' from the Tollense Valley, northeast Germany, (Jantzen et al. 2011) shows further evidence for violence. While the majority of the dead were adult males, women and children were also present. Osteological evidence supporting a warrior elite thus remains lacking.

The evidence from the metalwork suggests that Bronze Age swords were suitable for general purpose fighting (Kristiansen 2002), and use-wear analysis suggests that there were no prevailing trends in fighting practice, though the swords did require skill to use (Molloy 2017). Other ideas, such as that swords were given names and had stories told about them (Kristiansen 2002; Kristiansen and Larsson 2005) are impossible to assess archaeologically. In any case, swords are generally a Middle Bronze Age phenomenon, and certainly do not appear

in Ireland before then (Molloy 2017), thus these elements of the model apply to a later part of the period than is our focus here.

Further evidence for a male warrior identity is argued to exist in the corpus of rock art carvings from southern Scandinavia (Horn 2017; Kristiansen and Larsson 2005). Again, the overlap of this with our period is slight, starting at c.1800 BC. There, the association between sword-wearing males and sex is argued to demonstrate the male public persona and the projection of power (Horn 2017). The greater association between male figures and various objects and characteristics is taken to indicate that they were imagined to "possess more capabilities to 'be' and 'do'" (Horn 2017: 248); however, male figures (831) vastly outnumber female figures (29–37) so it should not surprise us that they are involved in a wider variety of scenes.

Motivating factors within this model are often overtly capitalist. For example, copper and salt mining is argued to have been of an economic significance akin to the modern control and trade of oil and gas (Kristiansen and Earle 2015; Vandkilde 2016) and the period seen as a time of 'pre-modern globalization' (Vandkilde 2016) in which regions focused on what they had 'comparative advantage' in producing (Earle et al. 2015). The importance of bronze overrode other concerns to link societies together and enable the transmission of culture, particularly between the elites (Vandkilde 2016). Thus, the idea that different areas could have radically different social structures is seemingly ruled out. Underlying this kind of argumentation is the assumption that Bronze Age communities had an excellent understanding of capitalist economics. 'Comparative advantage', for instance, is a concept that was not understood by modern Economics prior to the early nineteenth century (Aldrich 2004), so its application to the Bronze Age is questionable.

Within such a system, warriors are imagined to have been the protectors of trade (Kristiansen and Earle 2015) while female networks, and their influence on exchange, have been less considered (Bergerbrant 2007). Identities become a particular preserve of the elite, formed in order to create boundaries between communities and exert their control (Kristiansen 2014). Danubian tells, for instance, are said to have received a regular 'revenue' from foreign trade (Earle et al. 2015; Kristiansen and Earle 2015). However, the best excavated of these, Százhalombatta-Földvár in Hungary, shows very little evidence for Middle Bronze Age trade and exchange, its finds are largely from a local catchment area, and there is no indication of social hierarchy in the forms of structures (Sørensen and Vicze 2013).

Alongside the travelling warrior chief, Kristiansen (2011) proposes that Nordic communities also had a 'ritual chief', of local origin. This echoes elements that were previously proposed for the British Earlier Bronze Age by Stuart Piggott (1962). The ritual chief maintained political cohesion and a sense of the local populace having its own identity, while the warrior chief allowed the group to tap into the interconnected world of Bronze Age trade (Kristiansen 2014). Shaving, maintaining the outward image of the warrior, may have been conducted by ritual specialists, for no mirrors are known (Harding 2008). This is explicitly imagined as a form of double-kingship. The control of women, and marriage partnerships, was a strong element in their exercise of power (Kristiansen 2014).

2.2.2   As applied to Ireland and Britain

Stuart Piggott's work developed Childe's (1930) social elite in the British Bronze Age. He explicitly linked the 'rich' barrows of the Wessex chalklands to powerful individuals (Piggott 1938) and explained the more unusual grave finds with reference to ritual practices associated with this elite (Piggott 1962). The 'wealthy' barrows of the Wessex chalklands were interpreted as evidence for the veneration of powerful individuals and this model was 'exported' to Scotland (Piggott 1982) and the rest of Britain. It is this flourishing of wealth in the grave which has somewhat muddied the waters, encouraging theories concerning the European Middle Bronze Age to be applied to the earlier British and Irish evidence.

Wessex has long been at the centre of discussions of the British Bronze Age and, as scholars in both Ireland and Scotland have looked to this 'centre' for comparison, this has had a knock-on effect on how we understand the present study regions. The conspicuous display evidenced in 'rich' burials has frequently been linked to assertions of power and control over scarce resources, both physical and cosmological (e.g. Barrett 1990; Childe 1930; Piggott 1938; Rowlands 1980), and this has been readily transferred to Ireland (e.g. Cooney and Grogan 1999; Mount 1997a; Sheridan et al. 2013; Waddell 2010) and Scotland (e.g. Needham 2004; Sheridan 2012b; Sheridan and Shortland 2003). However, the importance of the barrow to southern English mortuary practice has led to other theories, such as their connection with particular lineages (e.g. Garwood 2007; Healy and Harding 2007) which have not been adopted in Scotland or Ireland where Earlier Bronze Age barrows are rare.

2.2.2.1   Social Differentiation in Ireland

In Ireland, Charles Mount (1991; 1995; 1997a; 2013a) forwarded a sustained argument for male dominance of society during the Irish Bronze Age, in what he recognised as the first attempts to profile Bronze Age society (Mount 1997a: 156). Mount (1995: 104) argued that adult males were "singled out" for "special treatment" which was not afforded to women and children, and that this treatment suggested a socially differentiated society (Mount 1991). It is worth noting that this treatment did not extend to a binary orientation pattern between female and male graves as was the case in Europe.

Mount applied the wider European models arguing that Bronze Age people strove to be 'individuals' (after Rowlands 1980) and thus interpreted single burial as a marker of status (Mount 1995) and cremation, understood as the "nullification of individual identity" (Mount 1997a: 157), as a sign of low rank. Stone-lined cist graves were also understood to mark status compared to pits owing to the extra investment required for their construction (Mount 1995). The Bowl Food Vessel was seen as part of a 'prestige goods' system and explicitly linked to male burials (Mount 1997a), although they occur in large numbers in female burials too. In a contemporary synthesis of Irish prehistory, Cooney and Grogan (1999: 112) even went so far as to say that the "ability to earn status may have been largely limited to males", though this is a position they would not support now (G. Cooney, pers. comm.). In Cooney and Grogan's (1999: 112) view the influence of gender can be seen in "a dominance of such male-associated items as metal daggers, knives/razors and flint plano-convex knives". However, these are all very rare grave finds, and very few come from reliably sexed male graves (see Stanley 2013).

In cases where females did receive elaborate treatment, as at Keenoge, Co. Meath, Mount (1995) suggested that these graves were the result of inheritance or kin relationships. The woman in the 'central' burial may have been a leader of the family because of "the death of her husband or through her own accomplishments" (Mount 1995: 106), a rare story of a woman's success in a male world. We might note the modern feel of this gendered world, and the supposition of monogamous, stable marriage with resultant inheritance rights (on marriage, see Crellin 2019).

It is easy to see some of this argumentation as outdated, but the background assumption of a link between masculinity and elite violence persists. Where swords occur in hoards, for

instance, they have been linked to "metalworking and male identity" (Becker 2013: 254), although Becker also argues that hoarded gold related to temporarily adopted identities.

2.2.2.2   Social Differentiation in Scotland

There are also clear arguments for a social elite in Scotland, with burial equipment similarly understood. At Doune, Perth and Kinross, a miniature battle-axe found with a child has been taken as an indicator of inherited status, for instance (McLaren 2004). The control over trade is similarly imagined to be the purview of the elite, with connections to Ireland, Yorkshire and other parts of Scotland emphasised (e.g. Needham 2004; Sheridan 2012b). The elite from Kilmartin Glen, for example, are argued to represent a linear, dynastic elite who controlled metal trade from Ireland (Sheridan 2012b) in a world where high-status men engaged in 'heroic' journeys (Sheridan 2012a). Similar references to items procured by long-distance trade and exchange as a backbone for the power of the elite, as we have seen with the European material, have also been advanced in these cases (e.g. Garwood 2012; Needham 2000; Needham and Woodward 2008; Needham et al. 2010; Sheridan 2012b; Sheridan et al. 2013). Powerful women were those identified with similarly exotic items in the form of beads and necklaces of jet, amber and bronze (Sheridan 2012a; Sheridan and Shortland 2003).

The suggestion of status for those buried with beads or daggers has been strengthened by an analysis of their landscape features; these graves frequently overlooked routeways and were monumentalised in ways which would make them obvious to passers-by, and contained objects that referenced far-away places (often Ireland) (Curtis and Wilkin 2012: 247–8; Sheridan 2012b: 177). However, in other parts of Britain, daggers were deposited in a range of circumstances. In Devon and Cornwall, for instance, daggers are argued to have possessed a wider range of meanings (Jones and Quinnell 2013).

There have also been suggestions of a binary grave arrangement which would mirror practice in continental Europe. In southern Britain, Grinsell (1974) suggested a binary based on barrow morphology, with bell barrows for men and disc barrows for women, but this has not been upheld in subsequent research, and many barrows combine elements of these two forms anyway (Bradley and Fraser 2010). Suggestions of a binary in gendered orientation in the earlier Beaker-associated burials in Yorkshire and Aberdeenshire have also been forwarded (Shepherd 2012; Tuckwell 1975) and are widely quoted (e.g. Brück 2019; Curtis and Wilkin 2012; Hoole et al. 2018; Wilkin 2011). However, the small sample size (62 in Yorkshire, 26 in

Aberdeenshire), the quality of some skeletal sexing, and an ever-present minority which did not conform to the pattern suggest that further investigation is still required. It has further been argued that in paired burials in Scotland, the pot accompanying the female was of "reduced elaboration" (Shepherd 2012: 273). The gendered assumptions here become very clear when the easterly direction of males is linked with the rising sun and setting out for hunting, while the westerly direction of females is linked to the setting sun and the preparation of an evening meal for the returning hunter (Shepherd 2012). No arguments have been forwarded suggesting a binary orientation in post-Beaker burials in Scotland.

2.2.2.3   Some Common Trends

The burials of children are under researched in both Ireland and Scotland (Finlay 2000; McLaren 2011). In general, children are considered to have been buried less often than adults in both areas, and they were frequently buried in multiple burials (Bradley 2007; Cooney and Grogan 1999; McLaren 2011). This has been taken to signify that they were not full members of society and may only have received burial if their death coincided with that of an adult (Cooney and Grogan 1999; Ó Donnabháin and Brindley 1989). In Scotland, the inclusion of children in burials was locally variable, though there was a clear preference for the cremation of children alongside adults, particularly young adult females[3] (McLaren 2011). The entry of children into full personhood at some point after birth is well-attested cross-culturally (Eriksen 2017). Throughout Irish (pre)history, children have often been treated differently in the grave, and this may be related to a general sense in which children have been on the periphery of community events (Finlay 2000).

Where children did receive burial with grave goods, this may be important to recognise, for it can be safely assumed that young children were not living a warrior lifestyle to earn this status! The child buried with a battle-axe from Doune, Perth & Kinross, has already been mentioned and the status of this child may be an extension of their family's, or indicate that the child was somehow symbolic of the life of the community in general (McLaren 2004). Small pottery vessels, termed pygmy cups or accessory vessels, were once thought to have been miniaturised for children's burials, but no particular connection between them and children has been found

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[3] It is worth noting that McLaren (2011) accepted antiquarian sexing of skeletons in order to reach this last conclusion.

in Ireland (Ó Donnabháin and Brindley 1989/90) or Scotland (Gibson 2004). However, in the cases where a double burial of a child and an adult received two pottery vessels, there seems to be a tendency for one of these pots to be smaller, potentially acknowledging the differential status of the child (McLaren 2011).

Another similarity is the rarity of metalwork in graves, in contrast to the 'rich' Wessex graves which have defined the period. Where metalwork did appear, this generally took the form of razors or awls/needles. As we have seen, razors were linked to the warrior ideal under Treherne's (1995) model, though this explicitly dealt with the Later Bronze Age material. In Ireland and Britain, razors appear in graves in the Earlier Bronze Age, but their rarity makes it difficult to maintain the argument that they were associated with a particular class of person (Harding 2008), although this has not stopped some scholars from attempting this argument (e.g. Kavanagh 1991; Kincade 2014; Stanley 2013), sometimes extending the expression of a warrior male identity to hoards (e.g. Becker 2013; Kincade 2014). That razors did not appear in Scandinavia until Montelius Period II (c.1500 BC) (Kaul 2019) should caution us against using the same model to explain these two phenomena. The picture is further complicated by several razors which are known to have accompanied female burials in Britain and Ireland (Sheridan et al. 2013).

As in Europe, long-distance contacts are central to these status models. Wessex, in particular, is argued to have had a 'spiritual draw' which saw foreigners buried there in order to claim ancestral links (Needham and Woodward 2008). In Ireland, a burial of an adolescent male with a composite necklace, a razor and a copper-alloy awl at Tara, Co. Meath, has been termed a "local aristocrat" (Sheridan et al. 2013: 207) who engaged in a 'heroic' journey to Wessex. The necklace is argued to have lost its female associations because of distance from Wessex, and become a generalised symbol of exotic lands (Sheridan et al. 2013). However, as this individual travelled to Wessex, we might question the likelihood of there being entrenched gender divisions which this person experienced and transgressed simply to show long-distance connections. Potentially, what we have here is an example which upsets the picture of a comfortable gender dichotomy.

2.3 Heterarchy, relational personhood and the 'new' Bronze Age

2.3.1 Critiquing social elites in the Bronze Age

The model of an entrenched social hierarchy for the Bronze Age has drawn scepticism in recent years, particularly for Britain (e.g. Barrett 1990; Bradley 2007; Brück 2004a; Fowler 2013a) though this has also been extended to Europe generally (e.g. Brück and Fontijn 2013; Müller 2015). Ireland has been included as part of a wider discussion of Britain and Ireland (e.g. Bradley 2007; Brück 2004b), and the lack of evidence for an Earlier Bronze Age warrior elite has recently been stressed (Molloy 2017). There are several 'flashpoints' around which such scepticism has coalesced: the interpretation of grave goods, the imposition of modern worldviews, and the variability in the evidence being chief amongst them. I will explain each of these in turn.

Several authors have questioned the assumption that grave goods were the personal possessions of the deceased (e.g. Brück 2004a; Fahlander 2003; Fahlander and Oestigaard 2008; Fowler 2013a). Other possibilities, such as that grave goods were the remains of ritual action at the graveside (Barrett 1990; Brück 2004a; 2017) or that they represented gifts from mourners (Brück 2004a) have been suggested. Furthermore, the absence of weapons from burials has been argued to suggest that warrior identities were not relevant to those associated with the burial arena (Brück and Fontijn 2013). While the fact that daggers and necklaces found in burials were often heirlooms has also been used to suggest that these were not elite objects (Jones 2011), though it is not clear why an heirloom cannot be a powerful object used by an elite. More worryingly, the assumption that daggers were consistently placed with males while beads were placed with females remains to be demonstrated in a study of reliably sexed skeletal material (Harding 2000).

There has been a certain rush to identify status in any facet of burial ritual, which we already encountered in some of Charles Mount's interpretations (see above). Where grave goods are lacking, researchers have turned to mound size, landscape location, or even burial itself as a marker of social standing (Fowler 2013a). However, instances of grave reopening suggest that the burial was not always a fixed snapshot of status, and that other concerns such as the relationships between the dead may have been important (Barrett 1990; Bradley and Fraser 2010; Brück 2019). Thus, the deployment of grave goods is more complicated than previously

assumed, and how artefacts came to be in the grave must be considered before they can be tallied on any 'status ascription' scale.

A further strong challenge to hierarchical models has originated from the argument that they are based on modern, Western understandings of objects, gender, capitalism and success. Additionally, the notions of competitive individualism on which many of these models rest is androcentric (Brück 2006). As we have seen, economic models for the development of the social elite are very modern in their outlook, and are not rooted in the local context (Bietti Sestieri 1981). Many of the theories which we encountered earlier, such as the destruction of bronze wealth to increase its scarcity (Bradley 1998; Levy 1981) or 'comparative advantage' (Earle et al. 2015), require a detailed knowledge of market forces. It has also been argued that the very idea that what is scarce, beautiful and/or from far away must be valuable may be a modern imposition (Fokkens 2012), although its cross-cultural frequency might lead us to accept it.

Women and things, such as daggers or razors, are objectified and feature as resources to be used for the political strategies of men, assuming both a modern gender binary, with a suppressed female gender, and that objects could not be extensions of the self (Brück 2006). Thus, chiefs appear to be rational, capitalist actors (Brück and Fontijn 2013). The warrior model has also been criticised for being constructed in a way which mirrors modern military groups, and links the male body to the body politic (Sofaer 2017). These models seem like an ideal of the modern male fantasy (Brück 2004a) in which women are assumed to be objects of exchange and 'wealthy' female burials are written out of the picture (Brück 2017). Indeed, Knüsel (2017) explicitly ties the martial component of Bronze Age masculinity to the forms of masculinity still practiced in leadership today. Ultimately, Treherne's (1995) warrior is sanitised and does not reflect the complex nature of human identity (Sofaer 2017). In fact, there may not be anything notably unique in groups of males engaged in violence, drinking and beautification (Rebay-Salisbury 2017).

The variability of the funerary record has also elicited a range of voices opposed to the universality of social-elite models. Waddell (1990: 1) memorably wrote that the funerary record of the Irish Earlier Bronze Age displayed "bewildering variety". However, Bradley (2007) has argued that the range of variation is actually quite low across Britain and Ireland, and that only a few exceptional deposits have been found, which gives little evidence to

suggest a rigid social hierarchy. Curiously, both of these perspectives can actually be supported. It is true that across the period there is great variation in the funerary record – variation in rites, grave form, cemetery size, type of pottery, number of people in the grave, and type and quantity of grave goods. It is also true, though, that there is only a very small number with items referencing distant trade, the majority of graves have simple or no grave goods, though they may be variable in other ways.

Other authors have stressed regional variability in the burials of the European Bronze Age (e.g. Müller 2015), just a few of which can be mentioned here. In terms of burial numbers, males dominate in Danish regions, for instance, but there is a surplus of females in Lower Bavarian burials (Müller 2015). Meanwhile, Hungarian Middle Bronze Age burials can be clearly split into three separate but related traditions, each with its own associated settlement type (Sørensen and Rebay-Salisbury 2008). Others have differed in how patterns should be interpreted, with Benz et al. (1998) arguing, for instance, that gendered differentiation indicates a kind of complementary parity between males and females. The picture, then, may not be as simple and homogenous as some of the models would like us to believe (Brück and Fontijn 2013). Furthermore, the applicability of such models to Britain can be questioned. As Sørensen (2010) has pointed out, the treatment of the body and the artefacts associated with it were very different between continental Europe and England.

Several supposed status markers have been deconstructed over recent decades; the satellite position of cremations in many barrows, used as evidence to corroborate the lower status of that rite, has been shown to be more a marker of chronology – that cremations were later – than of status (Brück 2019). Cremations are also labour intensive and sensually impressive (Brück 2009; Sørensen and Rebay 2007) and so cannot be assumed to be of lower status. Furthermore, it is clear that the unity of the body was often not a concern (contra Mount 1995; Rowlands 1980), with frequent cases of mixing, dispersal and reincorporation of remains, suggesting that no concern for individuality kept bodies together (Brück 2004a; 2019). Retention of single bones is well-attested, with signs of partial mummification and the mixing of elements certain in later periods of the Scottish Bronze Age, but also probable during the Earlier Bronze Age (Booth et al. 2015).

Of course, we have already noted that many of the theories used to interpret the British Bronze Age have been based on the evidence from the Wessex chalklands (Jones 2011). This side-

lining of regional and temporal variability has also occurred in many parts of Europe (Rebay-Salisbury 2017). In northeast England, for instance, there is very little in funerary practice that can be linked to a hunting or warrior identity (Fowler 2013a). Instead, identities presented in the grave often referenced providing or sharing – through feeding, cooking or giving (Fowler 2013a). This is an important hint that local patterns in practice may be particularly important in shaping how burials were conducted. Similarly, spatial relationships between the dead have been shown to have a structuring impact on subsequent funerary practice (e.g. Barrett 1994; Last 1998; Mizoguchi 1993; 1995).

2.3.2   *Relational personhood and the Bronze Age*

In Britain, objections to the hierarchical model have given rise, most prominently, to a model of society which stresses relational personhood (e.g. Bradley 2007; Brück 2004a; 2006; 2009; Fowler 2004; 2013a; Jones 2007). This model originated from the argument that identity is inherently relational – it is brought about in the relations between people, and between people and things (Brück and Fontijn 2013). Thus, interpersonal connections should be stressed in our investigations of Bronze Age worlds, rather than the modern fiction of the bounded individual (Brück 2004a). Grave goods, and relations between graves, were structured by these living relationships (Bradley 2007; Brück and Fontijn 2013), and focusing on these relationships allows us to recognise the entire assemblage in which a burial sits (Fowler 2013a).

Objects grant affordances and may have biographies which intertwine with our own (Brück 2006). Giving and receiving objects places us in an identity-defining nexus of social relations (Brück 2006). Objects may then be deployed at the graveside to provide a metaphorical comment on the relationships between the living and the deceased, and the changes to these wrought by death (Brück 2004a). For instance, Brück argued that composite necklaces, composed of beads of different types and ages, may reflect various kinship relations, or a "stringing together of people across the generations" (Brück 2004a: 314). Grave goods were thus reconceived as representing the relationships between the living and the dead, transcending simple categories of possessions or gifts.

As artefacts could be reconfigured to represent relationships, so could the fragmentary human remains which remained in circulation. The remains of the dead may have been retained as "ancestral relics" (Brück 2006: 80). Particularly intriguing is the suggestion of a gendered

dimension to this practice. Cremation weights amongst female burials may be lower than those for males (Brück 2009). Combined with the evidence for a higher rate of cremation amongst females, this led Brück to suggest that women's identity was more partible, or 'dividual' (after Strathern 1988). After their deaths, their bodies could be fragmented and shared amongst their kin as a physical manifestation of those interpersonal relationships (Brück 2019). There are two important points to make about this argument: (i) this model was, again, tied directly to patterns of exogamy in which women were exchanged as marriage partners, thus retaining their link to the community in which they were raised, and (ii) the data with which this is supported is not firm: 60% of women in the sample were cremated, compared with 50% of men (Brück 2009), it is difficult to maintain an argument for a large difference based upon this evidence. Furthermore, the concept of women as mediators between different kin groups seems to effect the very same imposition of contemporary gender roles onto the past which Brück had set out to counteract.

Fowler (2016) has recently argued that personhood is always relational, but that this may be constructed in different ways and to varying degrees. Rather than an alien mode of personhood compared to the modern individual, then, the difference becomes one of degree. Furthermore, our modes of personhood are variable in different contexts, thus a society does not have a set extent to which it is relational. This recognition allows studies of personhood to respond to the criticism that they rely on an artificial dichotomy between individualism/modernity/us and dividualism/pre-modernity/them (e.g. Garwood 2012). As a corollary, bounded individuals are largely a myth, even in our own worlds (Brück 2006), and this may be why Treherne's sanitised warriors do not seem a reflection of real humanity (Sofaer 2017).

2.4   The current impasse between these worlds

These two models seem intransigently opposed to one another. Those writing of a relational Bronze Age frame their writings in explicit opposition to the hierarchical model (e.g. Brück 2004a; Brück and Fontijn 2013; Fowler 2004; 2013a). There has been little direct critique from the other side, although the applicability of relational personhood has been dismissed out of hand by some proponents of the social elite (e.g. Kristiansen 2011: 206; 2014: 87). Thus, writing from a relational personhood perspective, models of a hierarchical social elite are modern fantasy, capitalist, and androcentric, while seen from the other side, relational personhood can

be rejected without discussion. We have already seen some of the ways in which models of hierarchy are critiqued, and I want to dwell here on two areas of critique of the heterarchical Bronze Age which have broad parallels: gender relations and scale.

2.4.1 Gender relations

As we have seen, one consequence of the turn to personhood has been that an explicit consideration of gender has fallen out of the discussion (Robb and Harris 2018: 130), although it is often still present in the work of Joanna Brück (e.g. Brück 2004a; 2009; 2019). As a result, elements of modern gender relations are deployed uncritically in the discussion. For instance, it is common to find the assumption that marriage operated as a relatively stable social institution, seemingly resulting in long-lasting and monogamous relationships as the norm (e.g. Brück 2009; 2019; Fowler 2013a; Harding 2000, and see Crellin 2019 for a recent critique). In Brück's work, marriage emerges as a major structuring principle of Bronze Age society. Her account of fragmentation at the graveside, for instance, even includes the payment of dowries (Brück 2006: 86), despite her argument that we cannot assume a capitalist economy (Brück 2006: 75). By arguing that the deceased were turned into objects (human remains) which were then turned into a new person (through acquiring a new bride), it could be said that she accomplishes the objectification of women that she initially set out to avoid.

As gender is not actively critiqued in the personhood model, there also seems to be an assumption that it operated in the binary and stable way in which it has been argued to exist in continental Europe (Robb and Harris 2018). Even with a binary, the arguments often assume that male and female status would be garnered in similar ways (Sofaer Derevenski 2002), or indeed mean similar things. Furthermore, the discussions of gender have often taken place at a degree of remove from the data, thus the contextual information key to understanding the ambiguity and nuance in the record is overlooked (Sofaer Derevenski 2002).

2.4.2 Scale and regionality

Regional studies have begun to challenge the notion that shared material culture necessitates shared histories (Curtis and Wilkin 2017). Some areas of Britain, for instance, seem not to have seen the use of Beaker pottery at all (Garwood 2012), and regional variation in the choice of funerary rites within Scotland is well attested (Sheridan 2004). Indeed, there are significant regional patterns even within eastern Scotland – with recumbent stone circles, and many

Beaker-associated burials in flat cemeteries in north-east Scotland, while east-central Scotland saw a much higher rate of burials associated with Food Vessels in cemeteries of barrows and cairns (Curtis and Wilkin 2017). Elsewhere, Fowler (2013a) found that particular idiosyncratic practices often linked some of the burials in cemeteries in northeast England, but rarely all of them, hinting at the potential for interesting links and rhythms in regionalisation.

Barrows in the south west of England were frequently located in similar locales to Neolithic monuments – that is, high or liminal locations – and were often the last feature in a long history of site use (Jones 2011). The erection of a barrow after a long history of use, sometimes including pre-barrow burials, is known elsewhere in England (e.g. Garrow et al. 2014; Last 2007) and Scotland (e.g. Duffy 2007). In fact, many of the barrows in south-west England have no burials at all, but were used for various rituals involving deposition (Jones 2011; Nowakowski 2007). Even within Wessex, saucer barrows seem to rarely have been associated with burials (Jones and Quinnell 2014). There are local differences, then, in what a barrow was for, and the importance of a 'primary burial' seems locally specific.

Beaker burials of north-east Scotland and East Lothian were particularly rule bound (Wilkin 2011: 25), while Food Vessel-associated burials around Fife are much more variable in their orientations and grave good inclusions (Wilkin 2011: 26). The deposition of Beaker-related items in this context may be more about marking the connections between communities than marking the status of the deceased and the Beakers' necks may have been accentuated in response to the neck-less Irish Food Vessel (Wilkin 2011: 30–1).

Of course, the relational personhood model is very different from the warrior model in that it does not attempt to create a grand narrative for this whole area. However, there has been a tendency with overviews of memory construction or relational personhood to 'cherry-pick' examples from across Britain and/or Ireland with a resulting loss of social context (Wilkin 2011). By contrast, the idiosyncrasies of sites has led some to argue that they are better understood through a detailed consideration of the sequence of activity, with reference to its local setting, than through a comparison with other cemetery sites (Last 2007). At this scale, however, questions of social organisation seem to fall out of the picture. The point I intend to make here is simple: when practices were as variable as they were, we should be open to the possibility that modes of personhood and the principles of social organisation may have varied on a similar scale. This is a suggestion Brück has made (Brück 2004a), though this has not been

fully explored yet. Therefore, we should adopt methods which explicitly allow this to be tested, as indeed some investigations of Bronze Age personhood have done (e.g. Fowler 2013a).

2.5 Further evidence for social worlds

This study, thus, cannot begin from an established model of the Earlier Bronze Age in Ireland and Scotland. No agreed upon model exists, and regional variability suggests no single model is possible. Instead, my intention is to start with the data and build a picture of gender and age relations which is directly related to that data. As such, it is important to recognise the evidential framework in which such data sit. For this, we briefly turn to some other elements of burial practice which have not so far impacted upon the discussion.

The size of cemeteries may hint at the size of the communities involved in their use, with most authors imagining these as belonging to a small group, probably a family or extended family (e.g. Waddell 1990). Experimental reconstruction suggests about 8 people could take 2–3 days to construct a stone cist (McAdam and Watkins 1974). The small cemetery size suggests that the scale of social groups was fairly local (Cooney and Grogan 1999). Due to the size of cemeteries it is generally held that many people did not receive burial. Cemeteries are estimated to have received 1–2 burials a decade on average in south-east Ireland (Mount 1997b), a number which matches the 1 burial per 5–6 years at Over, Cambridgeshire (Garrow et al. 2014). In such a scenario, it may be difficult for mourners to remember exactly how they performed the burial ritual previously (Sørensen 2019), thus differences cannot automatically be assumed to relate to status, though we can also assume that several previous burials were of people known to the gathered mourners (Brück 2019).

The choice between cremation and inhumation continues to be enigmatic. It has been suggested that it was largely practical – with cremation practiced when death occurred away from home or when the ground was frozen (Brindley 2007). This, of course, fails to account for the increase in the popularity of cremation over time. Alternatively, it may represent a socio-cultural transition, associated with a change in grand narrative (Gantley 2010) or a change in spiritual belief (Mount 1995). What we can say is that a range of choices were made prior to burial that dictated how these events were conducted.

Recent analyses have shown that diet was very similar for most individuals and that small-scale mobility was a general feature in their lives (Jay et al. 2012), suggesting travel was normal rather than something reserved for heroic male elites. The kind of significant distances covered by the Amesbury Archer (Fitzpatrick 2009) are not generally seen amongst the population (Jay et al. 2012). However, a series of individuals from graves near Stonehenge were found to have travelled significant distances in their lives, including two non-local juveniles (Evans et al. 2006). There are other cases, too, where subadults in Ireland and Britain moved during their lives (e.g. Sheridan et al. 2013). Further afield, there is growing evidence for mobility of women and children in the wider European Bronze Age (e.g. Frei et al. 2015; Frei et al. 2017; Knipper et al. 2017; Mittnik et al. 2019).

2.6   Conclusions

The Bronze Age was born out of a grand narrative, that of the progression of technology from stone to metal. The continuing stories of this period have, as we have seen, made frequent use of wide-reaching narratives. However, we have also seen much to disrupt these stories. Local studies are increasingly making their mark upon the period and demonstrating how thin the narratives can be.

These major theories have had a strong impact on how the Irish and Scottish evidence has been interpreted over the decades. Given how dated the previous surveys of the Bronze Age population in Ireland now seem, it is clearly time for a reconsideration. In Scotland, too, the time is right for a rethink – how much is the dominance of models developed for southern England useful, and what can the many newly excavated and analysed burials tell us about Scotland on its own terms? The lack of preserved bone in many parts of Scotland has perhaps delayed such approaches, but with the growth of developer-funded archaeology, and a large programme of dating of cremated bone by National Museums Scotland, an investigation of the evidence is now possible.

Before we can get to that, however, we must first interrogate the concepts under discussion. 'Gender', 'age', and 'burial' are all words with a long history of academic use and a consequent build-up of theoretical baggage. This is what we next turn to. From there, we will ask how the narratives we have encountered in this chapter can be improved upon. In particular, how can

the gender relations and local variability which provide problems in equal measure for hierarchical and personhood-based models be placed at the centre of our discussions?

3 Defining the Scope of Investigation: gender, age and burial

We have just encountered models of Bronze Age social organisation which are explicitly concerned with the roles of men and women, but which often assume, from the outset, a rigid, wide-reaching and binary gender system, equivalent in form to modern gender. I intend to take a different approach, placing gender and age at the centre of the discussion, allowing their alterity to emerge. This will be an investigation which is firmly rooted in the data, avoiding some of the uncertainty and mutual unintelligibility that has characterised the competing grand narratives.

The worlds which we overviewed in the previous chapter seemed populated by able-bodied young or middle-aged people, with children occasionally making an appearance on the fringe of society. The process of aging, and the social construction of difference which adheres to that process, rarely featured in the discussion (though see Appleby 2011; 2013; Sofaer Derevenski 2000; 2002; Sofaer 2004). Therefore, we must also pay critical attention to how age difference was constructed – to what aging actually meant to people.

Before we can turn to any of this, however, it is first necessary to understand what we mean by gender and age as categories which can be sought in the past, and how it is that they might be revealed through burial practice. Thus, this chapter begins by asking, in turn, what we mean when we speak of gender, age and burials. Obviously, gender has been a focus for much theoretical debate both within and beyond archaeology (e.g. Bolger 2013; Butler 1990; 1993; Gilchrist 1999; Ghisleni et al. 2016; Joyce 2008; Laqueur 1990; Nordbladh and Yates 1990; Sørensen 2000). Age, on the other hand, is under-theorised and has received much less attention in archaeology beyond discussions of childhood (Appleby 2010), though there has been a move to address this in recent years (e.g. Appleby 2011; 2013; 2018; Sofaer Derevenski 1997a; Sofaer 2004; 2006; Sørensen 2004a). I aim here to outline how our assumptions about both categories can be broken down, and how we can begin to approach them in our investigations. Of course, this is a discussion which must take place through the medium of burials, and we cannot pretend that we can access ideologies in some 'pure' form. Although

much theoretical literature on the role of burials exists (e.g. Fahlander and Oestigaard 2008; Fowler 2013b; Hallam and Hockey 2001; Nilsson Stutz 2016; Robb 2013), we rarely consider that they may be completely unrelated to the deceased's identity (Fowler 2013a). This is a critical question for this investigation and must be a particular object of our attention.

With this established, the discussion turns to the methods which have been deployed in mortuary analyses of age and gender previously. The outline of a revised approach, better suited to the nature of the evidence, will be provided, and a secondary aim of the remainder of this thesis will be to test how this method allows us to speak of social ideologies in the past.

3.1 Defining ideology and its relationship with personhood

I want to begin here by discussing the term 'ideology', which I have identified as the object of my investigation. By it, I mean to identify the generally shared, yet ill-defined concepts which a community holds about how certain types of people could or should act and be (Haughton 2018a; Sørensen 2000). I mean here to distinguish such shared understandings from 'identity', or how an individual might describe themselves and their relationships with others. A person's identity is formed within or against the framework of ideology, but it does not necessarily perfectly reflect it. Identity is changeable; depending on circumstances, company or emotions, a person may define themselves differently. However, the overarching cultural expectations, or 'zeitgeist', are less variable. Both 'identity' and 'ideology' are words which have been used in a variety of ways in the literature on prehistory (e.g. Brück 2004a; Parker Pearson 1982; Reiter 2014). My definition of them here is intended solely to illustrate how they will be used and understood throughout this thesis and should not be taken as implying anything further. Though the word 'ideology' is used, I could just as easily have used 'frameworks' or 'shared knowledge' or some other similar term to indicate the collective nature of the ideas under discussion.

When we investigate gender and age, we are seeking the remnants not of simple social divisions and categories, but of invisible societal structures, elements of which may be imagined slightly differently by members of the same community. Such understandings affect and are affected by interactions with others and the physical world (Bulger and Joyce 2013). Thus, ideologies are literally felt through the body and through social interactions (Barad 2003; Butler 2004). However, this is not a simple communication of an idealised type of person,

rather they are a messy collection of forces and ideals which may not be obvious to the people they act upon, but which constrain the range of possibilities which people within that society can imagine and accept (Butler 1990; 2004; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005).

The understanding of ideology as a framework encapsulates the nature of such ideas – we are not speaking here of identities which individuals lived out, but rather ideas about ways of being that were generally shared between people. That they were generally shared, however, does not mean that they were uncontested (Sørensen 2000). For example, the ideology of femininity in 20ᵗʰ century western Europe included the ideal that women should prioritise household chores and child rearing. Although this was generally shared, it meant different things to different people and was the focus of contestation and outright rejection by some women (e.g. de Beauvoir 1949). Other elements of gender ideology might, on the other hand, be less contested. For instance, the ideology of masculinity tied up with ideas of strength, mental and physical, was largely uncontested by most people in the 20ᵗʰ century, though an undercurrent of rejection did, of course, exist.

Furthermore, social ideology affects us situationally (Sørensen 1992). At times we feel it acutely, at other times we would swear we are not acting as a gendered or aged person at all. Two points are important to note here: firstly, any attempt to construct 'categories' of gendered or aged people in the past is an oversimplification which gets us no closer to understanding lived experiences (Ghisleni et al. 2016), and secondly, when we feel we are ungendered or unaged we are, in reality, in no way so. The way in which we hold ourselves, speak, and even think are structured by our social identities, which have realities reinforced by our embodied perspective (Barad 2003; Butler 1993; 2004). As such, even where we are not conscious of gender, it may still be in evidence. This is a point we will return to in considering funerary practice.

Ideology has obvious interconnections with the concept of relational personhood which we encountered in the previous chapter (e.g. Brück 2004a; Fowler 2004; 2016), referring to "the condition of being a person as conceptualised by a given community" (Fowler 2004: 155). Personhood is both contextual and relational. It is defined by our relationships with others, and with animals, things, places and beliefs (Fowler 2004). Personhood is inherently variable, over time and by context, and is thus a site for negotiation and struggle (Fowler 2016: 407). All of these features are shared with ideologies, however ideology foregrounds the shared

understandings and conceptions that bring it into being. Furthermore, ideology contains within it the idea of the hegemonic – that is to say, that there is a *right* way (however broadly construed) of being male or female, young or old, and that these shared ideas have a coercive effect over how people experience their lives[1]. This idea of contestation is not always foregrounded in discussions of personhood.

So far, my discussion of ideology has focused in particular on how our gendered identities are brought about by our relations with ideals, but of course the power of others performing identities is one of the key ways in which we come to form and understand our own (Butler 1990; 1993). It is through repetition in these practices that ideologies are shaped and perpetuated (Fowler 2004). Cultural practices produce the body (Fowler 2004; Sofaer 2006), but this is also a reflexive relationship, with the physicality of the body creating affordances for performativity (Barad 2003). Material culture, too, has a large role to play in reinforcing ideological messages (Sørensen 1992) and objects may act as extensions of the person, allowing an individual to be co-present in their material and social impact upon others' identities (Marshall 2013). Our personal identities, then, are formed at the inter-relation of ideology, the body, and material culture (Fahlander 2012).

The exploration of relational personhood is part of a wider trend towards understanding people and things in terms of the relationships in which they are embroiled (Fowler 2013a), and is related to the wider movement in the humanities often termed posthumanism (e.g. Barad 2003; Kay and Haughton 2019). This reflects a general concern with 'de-centring' the human and beginning investigation from a flat ontology (Harris and Cipolla 2017). While there is certainly merit here, I do not find myself in total agreement with de-centring the human from our investigations, as will be detailed later, neither do I recommend the subsuming of gender concerns into the wider investigation of personhood. As feminists have noted for some time now (e.g. Longino 1994), an explicit focus on gender is necessary to ensure both gender and women do not slip out of view. I would extend this argument, also, for an interest in the

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[1] In this sense, my use of ideology could be described as Marxist, though that word is so poorly defined that it does not seem particularly helpful, and I do not intend to imply that there were necessarily any 'elites' who had a particular role in maintaining the ideology.

aging process. There does not seem another approach to counteract the bias towards healthy, young adults when discussing actors in the prehistoric past.

3.2   Thinking about gender

Gender is a term which has experienced something of an identity crisis since the 1990s. Originally established to differentiate cultural constructions of ideology from the supposedly natural elements delineated by the term 'sex', challenges quickly arose to the fixed, biological character of 'sex' (e.g. Butler 1990; 1993; Laqueur 1990). These challenges pointed out that the classification of the body by sex is itself fraught with cultural expectations and black-boxing (Butler 1993), and that understandings of how the body should be classified have changed, even in recent history (Butler 1990; Laqueur 1990). In its application to archaeology, a more recent critique of our methods has been that we 'map' gender onto biologically sexed bodies, and thus conflate the two concepts (Sofaer and Sørensen 2013), though this argument was also present in the original critique (Butler 1990). Recently, a growing swell of voices from within archaeology has argued that the term is a loaded one, which forces us into expecting and accepting a modern binary split between two genders – man and woman (e.g. Fuglestvedt 2014; Ghisleni et al. 2016; Joyce 2008).

To investigate gender explicitly, then, is somewhat to swim against the stream. I argue here that recent archaeological misgivings have more to do with how we have chosen to use the concept than with how it is understood in academia more broadly, and particularly within gender studies. Thus, what I engage in here is both an explication of gender as a concept, and a simultaneous defence of its use for archaeological questions.

Let us turn, first, to the inter-related nature of the terms 'gender' and 'sex', and the impact of this upon our methodologies. Modern understandings of 'sex' rely on scientific determinations to split bodies into male and female categories, with the occasional 'intersex' body complicating the picture. The approach to this complication in recent history has been a forced simplification – coercing the body to conform with one or other category, often with disastrous effects (e.g. Colapinto 2000). The prevalence of bodies with noticeably different genitalia is low in modern populations, estimated at something in the region of 1 in 1,500–2,000 births (Joyce 2008). Though this reflects a reality that must have occurred in the past, it was probably not a common occurrence and any one individual in the past is unlikely to have come across more

than one such person. Furthermore, there is a range of ways in which bodies can vary (Chau and Herring 2002), thus two variations may not have been considered the same. I imagine, then, that reactions were variable. Sometimes, accommodations may have been made, at other times these people were probably treated very differently, perhaps in ways which we would now look on with horror. Still, there is nothing here that compels us to accept the likelihood of a world in which bodies do not generally cohere into two trajectories, that would have been recognisable on physical grounds in the past (Sørensen 2000). Chromosomal differences and variations, which have been argued to complicate the archaeological picture (e.g. Nordbladh and Yates 1990), would have had no effect on this basic reality.

When we talk about sex in our research, however, we are talking about a modern way of classifying bodies, rooted in a scientific worldview. In this sense, bodies in the past had, and continue to have, a sex. Similarly, these bodies are what biologists would classify as members of the species *Homo sapiens.* That is, they are bodies onto which we can project scientific notions of classification (Laqueur 1990). However, this does not indicate that these classifications had any necessary reality at the time that they were living bodies (Stratton 2016). Laqueur (1990) has demonstrated that different conceptions of natural sex have existed, and that the discursive separation of sex and gender would have been unimaginable in a pre-Enlightenment world. Thus, we must recognise 'sex' as a modern term, denoting our understanding and classification of the body, rather than anything particular about how bodies were understood in the past. This understanding of the concept of 'sex' as a modern phenomenon seems to be the logical end point of the deconstructions of the sex/gender split that began in the 1990s.

Gender, on the other hand, refers to the enculturated understanding of difference between bodies. Thus, it is the correct word to use when studying pre-modern ways of being, even though we refer also to the physical understanding of the body. To speak of studying sex difference is to fix the modern view onto the past (contra Fuglestvedt 2014; Sofaer 2013). Of course, bodies do generally fall into one of two camps depending on their role in reproduction, and we can say that societies do tend to notice this cross-culturally (Sørensen 2000), but just because this is true of bodies in the past does not necessarily mean that it was culturally relevant. Thus, we cannot assume that gender was a primary axis of difference throughout history (Ghisleni et al. 2016; Joyce 2008) and the starting point of any investigation of gender

in the past must be establishing whether this was even a culturally meaningful category. Our methodologies, then, do conflate sex and gender at times, but this is not necessarily problematic, for we need not recognise any separation between the two in the past.

More recently, there has been a growing unease surrounding how the expectation of a binary gender structure constrains our ability to interpret the past, particularly because it does not allow for within-category variation (Ghisleni et al. 2016). It is certainly true, as we shall see when we discuss the methods we have used to access gender, that a search for two categories labelled 'man' and 'woman' curtails our interpretations (Joyce 2008). However, this is not inherent within the concept of gender, which explicitly does allow for variability (Alberti 2006) and intersectionality (after Crenshaw 1989). Becoming one gender to the extent that one is not the other is a product of modern gender discourse (Butler 1990), and other modes are imaginable. It has previously been recognised that what it means to be gendered changes over the life course (Appleby 2010). Neither are gender categories monolithic, in fact the very existence of forms which could be termed hegemonic demonstrates this (Moral 2016). Thus, gender must include within it the counter-hegemonic as well as the hegemonic (Alberti 2006; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005), and certain features of one gender may be taken up by members of another (Gilchrist 1999). Thus, the attack on gender that it only includes the "norms or anti-norms, 'normal' people and fantastic deviants" (Fuglestvedt 2014: 59) does not have to be true. Understood as a spectrum, within which no one embodies the hegemonic (Butler 2004), the idea of a 'normal' person is a fantasy, even if this is how some archaeologists present their subjects. Instead, 'gender' should allow us to identify the broad range of possibilities for how groups of people could act, where confrontations and non-conformities arose against such frameworks, and how these groups formed relationships of power and social obligations.

Simone de Beauvoir (1949) famously wrote that one is not born a woman, but rather becomes one. This statement gets to the heart of the idea that gender is a kind of becoming, or something that people *do* (Butler 1990; Joyce 2008). Judith Butler has, almost equally famously, referred to this becoming as a kind of performance (Butler 1990; 1993). For Butler, performativity is a reiterative and citational practice (Butler 1993). By this, she means that there is no fundamental truth behind expressions of gender. Rather, the 'truth' of gender is brought about through the expressions that we imagine are its results (Butler 1990). More recently, Karen Barad (2003)

has stressed the materiality of performativity and discursive practices. Rather than materials simply being the end products of performativity, they constrain and enable the possibilities of expression (Barad 2003). This is important because the body is also socially developed and is similarly always in the process of becoming (Sofaer 2006; 2013).

Thus, we feel gender in how we experience our own bodies and, through them, our relations with the world. In other words, the individual's knowledge and experience is "*of* the world" (Barad 2003: 829) rather than coming from a position outside it. It is the material nature of the body which forms the basis of its sociality, because we see people through their bodies (Sofaer 2004). Thus, changes to the body during the life course may become important locales for the negotiation of meaning and differences between bodies may signify differences of identity (Sofaer 2004). This can be what we would see as biological differences, such as genitalia, or the accreted differences which built up over the course of a life, such as osteoarthritis, arm strength etc. All of these may be understood through gender ideology, thus there is an involved interplay between gender and the material world, particularly the body.

Bulger and Joyce (2013) argue that repeated citations reproduce the norms they cite, and thus that Butler's account fails to provide a good explanation for change. However, when we speak about gender norms we imply that such norms will only ever be partially and temporarily embodied by any one person (Butler 2004). This recognition hints at how change can occur within Butler's gender ideologies. As noted, they are formed and reinforced largely through performance, however each performer is an inexact copy of the ideal, and elements may fall away or be added through lack of repetition or through association (which may, of course, be accidental or deliberate on first performance). Thus, I argue that performance does not *reproduce* the norms it cites, rather it *re-presences* or *recalls* these norms, which may either reproduce the norms *or* highlight their incongruence with new information/social dynamics/feelings/associations. A key source of such incongruence is material culture, for gender gains substance from and is perpetuated through material culture (Sørensen 2000).

Gender is always open to negotiation, and is thus bound up with notions of power (Sørensen 2000). However, none of this is to say that gender will or should be a primary factor of difference in any society. While some are greatly divided by gender, many societies maintain social categories or units that bring people together in other ways (e.g. kinship, household, ethnicity, class or religion) (Brumfiel and Robin 2008). Neither does this mean that we are

always certain of finding hierarchy wherever we find gender difference, for gender, as difference, does not necessarily imply a fixed or rigid hierarchy (Gilchrist 1999).

Crucially, sharing a gender does not mean that two people share a lived experience (Joyce 2008). Gilchrist has gone so far as to say that gender is experienced by the person as mutable and personal, rather than proscribed or fixed (Gilchrist 1999), but I do not think we can assume that this is how it is experienced. Indeed, because gender involves social constructions of the 'natural' I think it is likely that most individuals experience this as a pre-discursive 'fact'.

There is more nuance in gender, then, than its critics would have us believe. Understood as the ways in which societies understand differences between bodies of different morphologies it is the proper frame with which to investigate the existence of possible differences within prehistoric societies. We next turn to the other facet of social ideology which forms a focus in this thesis, that of age.

3.3   Thinking about age

We have seen that gender exists in performance, and that a person is always in the process of becoming over the life course. Behaviour which is deemed normal at one age, may be deemed socially unacceptable at another (Sofaer Derevenski 1997a). Therefore, our approach to gender must recognise that it can be transformed by age, social role and/or relationships, thus taking it beyond the fixed binary. The concept of intersectionality, originally proposed to account for the extra discrimination experienced by Americans who were both Black and female (Crenshaw 1989), has been deployed effectively to discuss similar intersections of identity in the past (e.g. Arnold 2016; Fahlander 2012).

The linking of gender and age is not a new phenomenon in archaeology (e.g. Sofaer Derevenski 1997a; 2000; Sofaer 2013; Sørensen 2004a). In previous studies, age has provided a useful tool for analysing how gender changes over the life course. However, age also exists as a social phenomenon beyond its intersection with gender, and is worth investigating in its own right (Appleby 2010). Like gender, age is a socialised identity which affects who we think we are and how we are judged by others, and it similarly emerges from the relationship between our physical bodies, our own embodied experience of the world, and the collectively held ideals about types of people. We need only think of our differing expectations of people labelled

'middle-aged' or 'elderly' to see how a social ideology of age affects what we think is appropriate, or even possible, for certain people to think or do in the modern world.

Age, as an embodied and social phenomenon, has not been widely studied in archaeology (but see Appleby 2010; 2018). However, childhood has featured in a number of studies (Bronze Age examples include: Bergerbrant 2014; Ó Donnabháin and Brindley 1989; McLaren 2004; 2011; Sofaer Derevenski 1997b). While the ability to scientifically sex a skeleton may give us an artificial sense of the social meaning of these categories (Stratton 2016), this is also true by extension to age, where the comparatively easy to identify juvenile skeletons have been our primary focus. The methods for aging adult skeletons are fraught with difficulties, and it is accepted that we are likely to be underestimating the ages of many skeletons (Aykroyd et al. 2017; Molleson and Cox 1993). Perhaps it is such difficulties that have led us to shy away from tackling the social phenomena connected with aging in its own right. Alternatively, we may imagine that as most people died young it is unlikely that a prolonged period of aging in adulthood was to the forefront of people's minds. However, it is important to recognise that old people were not rare in the distant past (Appleby 2018). Gurven and Kaplan (2007) demonstrate that, although life expectancies are low amongst modern hunter-gatherer communities as a result of high infant mortality, over two-thirds of those who reach sexual maturity live to grandparental age, often into their 60s. Finally, the lack of theorising may be related to the lack of political interest in issues of aging in the modern world, in stark contrast to the many, overdue discussions of gender.

There is much that a study of age has to offer our understanding of lived experience in the past (Appleby 2010). Like gender, age is a process of becoming (Sofaer Derevenski 1997a) affected by social expectations, our view of others, and our interpretations of our physical bodies. Aging emerges through the body (Appleby 2018). The process of aging brings about changes in the body which may be understood through the lens of gender, such as menopause or puberty. Other changes, however, may be more universal, and therefore may hold social meanings in addition to gendered ones. The greying of hair may, for instance, have meanings relating to both gender and age identity, or meanings may have largely had to do with one, or neither.

Expected social roles or appropriate behaviours change with our bodies, and people may find themselves dropping out of certain ways of being as they move into new ones. Appleby has

suggested four aspects of the body which aging affects: appearance, function, susceptibility to disease and skill (Appleby 2018). Each of these would impact a person's relationship with the world around them, and it is likely that they would have different social implications. Of course, these changes can be obvious and relatively sudden – as with menarche or puberty – or they may be more gradual – as with the steady growth of pain in a spine or menopause – but both can impact upon the person, causing them to literally 'feel' their age. Aging also affects the body's ability to feel sensation, and thus our experience of the world (Appleby 2018). Of course, what these changes 'mean' in a particular society is likely to be variable, as indeed are the particular changes which are deemed to be meaningful.

It also important to note that age operates at multiple scales: universal, culturally-specific and personal (Sofaer Derevenski 2000). That is to say, there are physical realities to aging that are common to most bodies, though these will tend to be understood through cultural lenses and be felt differently by each person within a society. We might also recognise here that aging may be felt on an interpersonal level, with reference to the differences between the self and others. That which we may label 'old age' is not necessarily consistent cross-culturally, and a society's conception of what it constitutes is usually based upon more factors than simple chronological age (Appleby 2010). The concept of biological age (after Jackson et al. 2003) seeks to unite chronological age and physiological status, by focusing on age-related degeneration, and thus to arrive at a more embodied, or real, understanding of what old age might mean (Appleby 2010).

The concept of the 'life course' is particularly useful for emphasising the context-specific and personal nature of human lives (Sofaer Derevenski 2000). Joanna Sofaer's (2000) study at Tiszapolgár-Basatanya, Hungary, demonstrated how material culture was used to mark out different stages in the expected course of an individual life. Objects in this context became metaphors for the stages of the life course as they were understood by that community (Sofaer Derevenski 2000). Although the life course is a cultural and embodied construction, it creates real time for those who live within it.

Age and gender, as thus construed, have much in common as social ideologies. Both relate to a reading of perceived biological realities, but are differentiated from those categories by the degree to which social values and meanings are attached to them. Unfortunately, we lack the language to make this explicitly clear for age. The split between chronological/physiological

and social age would perhaps benefit from the simplicity of language given by sex/gender, all its baggage not discounted. Similarly, we may say that a body is engendered, but it is not possible to call it 'enaged', and 'aged' lacks the specificity which we might require. Of course, it is common in academia to define words into existence, but I seek to avoid this tendency as this thesis should be written in the language which the reader speaks, rather than creating a tacking back and forth between the interpretations and the definitions to try and decipher what I mean. Thus, context, and explanation on my part, will have to be the guide.

3.4 Thinking about burials

Rather than gender and age ideologies in and of themselves, my focus in this thesis is on how these ideologies were negotiated, experienced and contested through funerary practice. Thus, it is vital that we dwell on the particularities of burials themselves, what they are and how they might be said to contain indications of social ideology.

Burials have been an important source for the reconstruction of social dynamics since the foundations of our discipline (e.g. Binford 1971; Parker Pearson 1982; Piggott 1938). They are understandably enticing, putting us in touch with the bodies of the dead, "literally the past personified" (Sofaer 2006: 1). However, this is a complicated relationship, for it has long been recognised that the dead are rarely solely responsible for how they appear in the grave (e.g. Parker Pearson 1982). The old cliché, that 'the dead don't bury themselves', is, however, a little too reductive in its response to this problem. For, while it is trivially true that the dead do not play a conscious role on the day of their burial, it is not the case that they play no role whatsoever. We could point out, somewhat glibly, that the living sometimes plan meticulously for their funerals or leave express instructions of some kind or other. But even where this is not the case, the gathered mourners do not engage in a funerary process of their own invention, with no relation to the corpse or cremated remains which they wish to bury (Fahlander and Oestigaard 2008). The corpse is the centrepiece of funerary practice. Although it may be transformed by the process, the physicality of the corpse encroaches upon the proceedings (Sofaer 2006). The corpse is, of course, the remains of a person that the mourners had presumably known as a living person. Therefore, it cannot be seen as merely an object, to be manipulated or used however the mourners wished. Rather, it contains the vestiges of that individual's personhood, even if only felt subconsciously (Haughton 2018a). If a body has

gender or age in life, that does not simply vanish upon death, and the particularities of that body and that person must be responded to.

As a burial is an explicitly constructed activity, it is therefore likely to reflect concepts like gender (Sofaer and Sørensen 2013), at least where they were actively structuring the way that the mourners thought of the bodies and the people that they were burying. The relationships which the mourners had with each other, and with the deceased, were gendered, and thus the graveside is an engendered space (Sofaer Derevenski 2002), and we can apply this thinking to age also. Even where gender is ignored and sameness is constructed through funerary practice, as in a mass cremation for example, burials present a particular interpretation of gender (Sørensen 2000). The exclusion of certain people from full personhood can also be made manifest through funerary treatment, or their absence from it (Eriksen 2017; Fowler 2004).

Fowler (2004) has argued that funerary practice is about reintegrating the dead into society as different kinds of person and Brück (2004a; 2006; 2009) has emphasised the realigning of relationships at the graveside in the British and Irish Earlier Bronze Ages. There are two points to take from this – firstly, that death, and the rituals that follow it, involves a realigning of the person, who can no longer consciously act or communicate in the same way and the community must both come to terms with this and come to new ways of incorporating those people into their lives. This argument demonstrates why the deceased cannot be wholly absent from funerary practice, but is also a reminder that burials are special events which do not necessarily simply reflect daily life (Frieman 2012). Secondly, funerary practice is an opportunity for the living to engage with each other in new ways; people come together in the face of loss, and in seeking to understand and come to terms with this, they may reconfigure their own relationships and how they act with each other (Brück 2006). Thus, funerary practice is an arena in which identities are up for re-definition and ideologies are likely to be influential and contested.

It is important to note that the negotiation of ideologies does not have to be conscious. A lot of what goes on at the graveside may be perceived to be 'automatic' or 'natural' and in keeping with memories of how something was done previously, or how a person, or group of people, who has taken charge at the graveside dictates that it should be done (Sørensen 2019). This may seem to cloud our ability to access explicit social ideologies, but this is not the case. Where the mourners were not explicitly cognisant of gender or age their actions were, as we have

seen, structured by who the dead person was, and the dead person's identity was certainly structured by how they articulated with notions of gender and age. This is why I have stressed ideology in the description of gender and age above; we are dealing with shared conceptions literally made manifest. Furthermore, performativity of gender, or indeed age, temporarily materialises and stabilises the ideology (Bulger and Joyce 2013), thus graves have effects on mourners that allow us to discuss social ideology as a general force, without it being tied to particular individual identities. Ideology in the burial arena is recursive – the gender or age of the individual affects their burial, and the funerary practice broadcasts messages with gender and age content to the mourners.

The artefacts which the mourners bring to the graveside are similarly connected to and divorced from the deceased. We cannot presume they were the personal possessions of the deceased (Brück 2019), but neither were they unrelated, for they are things which the mourners felt it was appropriate to place in the ground in association with the remains. They may be, then, possessions of the deceased, gifts for the journey to the afterlife, remnants of the funerary practice at the graveside, offerings to the spirits or gods which would protect the deceased, or expressions of the relationship which the mourners and the deceased shared (Brück 2004a). Thus, from our point of view, they are multivalent. This does not, mean, however, that we can find nothing of significance in them. For we may say that these are objects which belong with, rather than belong to, that person. It is worth noting that Brück's (2004a) suggestion that grave goods represent gifts from mourners has turned into somewhat of a double-edged sword for studies of the Bronze Age, with supporters of the male-dominated model using it to clear away the ambiguities in the record. For instance, Turek (2017) argues that the cases of daggers buried with females in Corded Ware and Beaker Burials across central Europe may represent gifts from male relatives and thus have nothing whatsoever to do with female ideology.

Neither must we envisage objects as passive participants in funerary practice. They may both act as markers of particular elements of identity and open up various ways for the mourners to interpret the burial assemblage in different, perhaps contradictory, ways (Haughton and Hill, forthcoming). The objects, too, may be seen to have transformed through the ritual, in a manner similar to the transformation of the body (Arnold 2016). However, gendered analyses often assume that grave goods had primarily gendered associations (Ghisleni et al. 2016), instead we must demonstrate where this was the case.

That the grave goods reflect the wealth and/or power of the deceased has been assumed throughout the discipline's history (Fahlander and Oestigaard 2008), and is still prevalent (e.g. Needham and Woodward 2008; Parker Pearson et al. 2019; Woodward and Hunter 2015). However, power is context dependent and enacted (Hutson et al. 2013). A consideration of age can show us the folly of believing that wealthy graves indicate power within the community, for an elderly person buried with a 'rich' grave assemblage may not have been particularly powerful in their old age. In other words, the ideology of age, particularly surrounding respect or power, does not always reflect the experience of being old (Appleby 2010).

Every burial can be said to have had a historical effect of some kind (Fowler 2013a; Mizoguchi 1995). Funerary events impact upon the living partly by displaying, negotiating and reinforcing social ideology for the gathered mourners. Gender and age are learned through observation and policing. Active policing, where someone is told that their actions are inappropriate for their aged or gendered identity form only a minority of the events where we learn how to be aged or gendered (Butler 2004). Rather, we learn by seeing others enacting these identities. Barad (2003) has stressed the materiality of performativity and discursive practices, rather than materials simply being the end products of performativity. Thus, we must understand practice at the graveside as both material and discursive, stressing the importance of the physicality of the body in proceedings (Sofaer 2006). This is important, because it means that the grave gives us an insight into these identities, and how they were formed, negotiated, and transformed. For the deceased, laid out on the funerary pyre or in the grave, broadcasts messages about the appropriate way to be that kind of person. The things placed in the grave broadcast messages about what it is appropriate to place with that kind of person, and these things were presumably wrapped up in numerous metaphors and connections to other spheres of life (Haughton and Hill, forthcoming). Here we access not one individual's identity, or even the community's conception of individual identity, rather we access a collection of different ideas, most of which we must presume had no explicit link with age or gender at all but were usually age and gender appropriate. We have here, then, an access point for the collective ideals of gender and age – or, their ideologies.

Lastly, it is important to note the local effects of burial practice. Ideological messages are spread to those actually participating or witnessing the burial events, and only tangentially to those who were not present. It has been noted in the previous chapter that burials in the Earlier

Bronze Age have been shown to generate structure – that is to say, burials in a cemetery respond to previous burials made there (Bradley 2007; Last 1998; Mizoguchi 1995). The local context, then, is key to recognising the subtleties in a burial's ideological consequences.

3.5   Critiquing current methods

The argument so far has stressed that gender and age are primarily interpersonal phenomena, and that burials are significantly structured by local practice. They are united, then, by their scale: the local. To conduct a top-down investigation is, I argue, to risk misidentifying correlations within the data. As a result, our investigations of these interlocking phenomena must foreground the local scale, before attempting to broaden the scope of discussion (Haughton 2018a). I will begin here, with a review of the methods which have previously been used, particularly to access gender in the burial record, for age as we have seen has not frequently been a primary focus of archaeological inquiry. Such methods are obviously numerous, and any attempt to define them will, by necessity, be partial and incomplete. Nevertheless, there are certain trends in how such studies have approached the evidence which unite them methodologically, and thus enable us to examine such approaches as a collective.

Early studies were explicitly statistical in their approaches, arising out of the general turn to positivism that characterised processual archaeology, and included sex amongst many variables analysed (e.g. Binford 1971; Saxe 1971). Such studies did not critically discuss gender and focused on identifying broad patterns within a database of burials, often taking the analysis or interpretation no further. An explicit 'gender archaeology' arose in the 1980s, spearheading the broader post-processual movement in the discipline (e.g. Conkey and Spector 1984; Gero and Conkey 1991). Some of this early work was explicitly feminist in its outlook and sought new ways of accessing the past (e.g. Spector 1991; Tringham 1991). However, gender archaeology largely maintained an interest in statistical departure points (e.g. Chapman 1997; Lucy 1997; Simon and Ravesloot 1995), differentiating itself through its questions, theorisation and explanations. Exceptionally well-provisioned burials have occasioned a separate approach, focusing on a detailed study of action at that particular site set against a discussion of the wider networks within which the burial sits (e.g. Arnold 1991; Sørensen 2004b). Some recent studies have included other social variables, looking at the

articulation of gender with age, or other factors (e.g. Arnold 2016; Sofaer Derevenski 1997b; Sofaer Derevenski 2002; Sørensen 2004a).

There are two basic problems with the way in which statistical methods have been deployed in many studies of gender in burial. Firstly, there is frequently a lack of clarity surrounding the methods used, which is simultaneously obscured by pseudo-scientific jargon. And, secondly, elements of interpretation are 'black-boxed' and treated as unproblematic. Both of these problems could be overcome, but there remains a third, larger problem: the quest for valid sample sizes often leads us away from the scale of the question which we seek to answer. I will briefly explore the first two issues, before dwelling upon the issue of scale in more depth (and see Haughton 2018a; and subsequent discussion in Bergerbrant 2018; Fahlander 2018; Fowler 2018; Haughton 2018b).

In the first instance, it is very common for authors to fail to justify their use of statistics, or to fail to explain why one statistical test has been selected over others. Various statistical methods have been employed by researchers, a sample of which include chi-square test (e.g. Hamlin 2001), K-means clustering test (e.g. Shelach 2008), Ward's method cluster analysis (e.g. Simon and Ravesloot 1995), and Yuk's Q test (e.g. Scopacasa 2014). Several of these are particularly obscure to the reader, and though the method itself is often explained, its selection over others is usually given only a cursory, if any, explanation. In other cases, tests for statistical significance are not performed. Furthermore, the finding that a pattern is *statistically significant* appears to encourage the author in the belief that it was *socially* meaningful. There is rarely any discussion of why statistical significance is indicative of social significance.

In the second instance, statistical analyses frequently rely upon the grouping of artefacts based on supposed function or use, such as 'weapons' or 'tools' (e.g. Hamlin 2001; Skogstrand 2016). This approach requires the researcher to make several assumptions about what is, or is not, important, and how they might relate to identity or status (Hanks 2008). Frequently, such parcelling goes unjustified, or is not explained as a potential source of bias. A focus only on categories or objects which we expect to be gendered (e.g. Rubinson 2008) further limits our analyses. The danger of category creation is, ultimately, that it presumes that meaning will be ascribed in particular ways, and that objects cohered into functional categories much as they would today. Where such categories are used, they should be subsequently reanalysed for internal consistency in the light of identified patterns.

The statistical trends identified by these methods usually form departure points for theorising based on ethnography or contextual artefact studies. Ethnography is most useful in situations where there is strong evidence for cultural continuity (e.g. Nelson et al. 2002; O'Gorman 2001), and it has also been argued to be appropriate where evidence is otherwise limited (Bolger 2013). Although the latter category is perhaps relevant for the European Bronze Age, I do not think that it is necessarily useful in understanding anything specific about mortuary practice, and there are particular dangers of simply reproducing modern gender dynamics in the past. Rather, ethnography serves best as a reminder of the range of possibilities.

As previously noted, a careful statistical analysis may prove capable of accounting for these flaws, if not overcoming them entirely. More problematic is the limitation to a particular scale. To be considered statistically valid, analyses must be conducted on a large sample size, not always obtainable from a single site. Thus, gender studies have been particularly fruitful within large cemeteries (Sofaer and Sørensen 2013). In cases where cemeteries are smaller, however, scholars have amalgamated evidence over large geographical (e.g. Doucette 2001) or chronological (e.g. Burchell 2006) spreads. Brück's (2004a; 2006; 2019) important re-evaluation of the evidence for Bronze Age gender is a good case in point, taking, as it does, all of Britain and Ireland as one society. Of course, such an approach necessitates a homogenisation of practice (Marshall 2013). As we have seen, gender and age are relational. Therefore, they are local concepts; they are felt and negotiated by reference to known others (Haughton 2018a), rather than to some aggregate of action over the last several hundred years across several hundred kilometres. Furthermore, population aggregates are a very modern way of thinking about groups of people; indeed, the first time such a gaze was deployed was in the late 18th century (Poovey 1995). Thus, although such lenses provide one way of looking at gender, this is far from the only possible approach.

It has previously been recognised that large-scale approaches tend to emphasise similarities in practice and mask differences, effectively homogenising actions (Fahlander 2003; 2013; Sofaer 2006). When analysing gender at Teotihuacan, De Lucia (2008: 26) focused on the cemetery for just one compound because "compiling data from multiple compounds would obscure variation and similarity within compounds". However, the studies which have thus far been conducted on gender in the British and Irish Bronze Ages have not found a way of analysing the evidence without recourse to the population-level lens. In Ireland, Charles Mount's (1991;

1995; 1997a) studies remain the most recent attempt and relied entirely on statistical level overviews of the evidence. Joanna Brück's approach (Brück 2004a; 2006; 2009; 2019) was more nuanced, paying attention to change over time, but crucially relied on the identification of broad patterns in the evidence (such as the preference for cremating females) to make wider claims about gender identity (that women's personhood was more relational), before pursuing a detailed discussion of the implications of this using ethnography and archaeological examples from across Britain and Ireland to flesh out the story. Ultimately, this ends in a result which is applied equally across these islands. Although these studies provided crucial challenges to androcentric assumptions, two areas of concern remain: i) the investigation takes place at a scale beyond the target phenomenon and ii) the methods presuppose that local variations are less meaningful.

However, this does not mean, of course, that gender and age must always be local phenomena only, and I do not wish to argue that the population-level lens has nothing to offer. Overarching trends in practice may exist, and these may form the backdrop for individuals' lives and relationships. Rather, the problem is in accepting the population-level as the main unit for analysis and not conducting a smaller-scale analysis to assess whether such trends had meaningful affects at the level of lived experience. A valid investigation of social dynamics must, then, be able to account for both large- and small-scale elements of the picture, and this is the challenge I seek to meet.

Beyond scale, a further problem pointed out for such approaches is that by mapping gender onto sexed bodies by correspondence with grave goods they, in effect, conflate sex and gender (Sofaer and Sørensen 2013). This is perhaps less surprising given the reading of sex as a modern perceptive category which I have outlined above. Furthermore, we often fail to include unsexed skeletons in our analyses (Stratton 2016). While there are obvious difficulties in including these skeletons, it is problematic to attempt to build social theories from a subset of the burial population.

Finally, it is worth dwelling upon the outcomes of our research, for our accounts of gender often seem to reflect modern experience – in terms of personhood and productivity (Tomášková 2011). Indeed, we seem to identify the same broad trends in many different times and places (Haughton 2018a). Although it is possible to conduct arguments which seek broad trends in the development of gender across human history (e.g. Hernando 2017; Robb and

Harris 2018), these are conducted at an even greater remove from the data. Above all else, I suggest that this is a sign that our methods are fundamentally not fit for purpose, and neither do they fulfil the promise of feminist-inspired gender archaeology of the late '80s and early '90s.

3.6 Proposing a new method

It seems clear, then, that the most important limitation of previous studies is that of scale – that we lack a method for approaching gender or age at the scale at which they were experienced. This is a problem which is particularly acute in cases where the cemeteries contain only a small number of burials, as in the Irish and Scottish Bronze Ages. While De Lucia (2008) can limit the scope of analysis to just one compound at Teotihuacan, this has never seemed practical when it comes to the handful of burials that make up an Earlier Bronze Age cemetery (though see Haughton 2018a). In order to approach the evidence in this thesis in the traditional manner, then, we would have to collapse the c.800–1000 years of practice across a wide geographical area into one, or a series of, more-or-less homogenous groups (e.g. Brück 2004a; 2006; Rogers 2013). To do so clearly presupposes our result. Instead, I suggest an approach which aims to preserve difference between groups while also recognising the reality of gender and age as *social* ideologies.

I do not intend, however, to erase the possibility of identifying wide-reaching trends in practice, thus the departure point for this study must be a statistical analysis of a large dataset of Earlier Bronze Age burials. While enabling the recognition of overarching trends, this analysis will also serve as a check for the methods described below, allowing a comparison of social ideology as recognised by traditional methods and those gained through a more local focus. I will, therefore, follow this with an investigation of the established trends, analysing the extent to which they might have varied over time or by location. This analysis will allow the identification of particular sites, which either conform with or diverge from the general trends in interesting manners. Such sites will be selected, with reference to geographical spread, for inclusion in the third stage of investigation.

This third stage will be entirely focused on the local context. We will investigate practice at the site discursively, exploring how social ideologies were performed and the subtle local patterns which have been left in their wake. Each discussion will plot a series of relationships that

reflect practice at one particular site, and thus cannot speak directly for the wider picture. This local world, however, is the one which most people experienced in their lives (Harding 2013) and through a series of such discussions the wider framework in which gender and age were enacted will be revealed. This will be a 'bottom-up' approach, focused entirely on the small scale, aiming to produce more nuanced interpretations (Bolger 2013). The context of these actions is key, and the patterns of action and reference which build a framework for the creation of meaning is the focus of investigation. Thus, the discussion charts a series of decisions which a changing community made for a series of deceased members, particularly focusing on how these decisions related to one another, how they reveal their overarching concerns and how they might have impacted upon the gathered mourners – be they at the graveside, or kept at a distance. The trends which emerge from this investigation will finally be compared between the key sites and related back to the overall database.

Such an approach is aimed at taking us closer to understanding the subtle ways in which ideologies were negotiated on the local level, but it is worth noting that although we may embrace intersectionality, it may not prove possible to reconstruct the kind of complex identities we encounter in social anthropology (Matić 2016). Neither are the group who come to the graveside always the same, some people may have died or moved away since the last burial, thus the graveside is 'local' but cannot be thought of as the same community throughout a cemetery's use life.

Gender and age ideology should exist in some form in every grave, because they are fundamental agents of social differentiation which are present not just in every society (Sørensen 2000), but in every interaction between people. When a person interacts with others, they do so through their understanding of who the other is, which is shaped and framed by how they fit or refuse to fit with ideals of gender and age, amongst other factors. The body is the medium through which gender and age are performed (Butler 1990; 1993), and is also central to funerary practice. We can expect, then, for gender and age to be present in any funerary event where they were not purposefully erased.

Finally, this method maintains the ontological primacy of the human, and deliberately so. The various schools under the umbrella of 'posthumanism' can add to our archaeological discourse (e.g. Banfield 2016; Crellin 2017; Fowler 2013a; Harris 2017; Kay and Haughton 2019). However, I am deeply uncomfortable with using a flat ontology as a starting point for this

investigation for two reasons: (i) my interest is in human relations and human identities and understandings, and not in the other elements within the network, except as far as they can inform me of the human, and (ii) I am unconvinced that reality is a flat ontology. There is nothing I have seen to convince me that "humans are not special among organisms" (Fowler 2013a: 62), because we possess unique abilities to process and interpret the world. I do not think that a starting position that denies this only to rediscover it again is a useful one for me to take.

3.7 Conclusions

This thesis, then, is intended both as a study of gender and age in the Earlier Bronze Ages of Ireland and Scotland, and as an extended investigation of the methods which we use to identify such phenomena in the archaeological evidence. The particularities of my proposed method will be best understood through example, as the investigation will to some extent be guided by the differing material that is available at each cemetery site. In the next chapter, we turn to the data itself and the specificity of this particular project. I aim to introduce the sites we shall investigate here, the lay of the land, so to speak, within the database, and the manner in which investigation will be conducted. From here we will delve into the investigation itself, first a traditional statistical analysis of the entire corpus, followed by an examination of key sites, as detailed above. This allows the subsequent discussion to reflect both on the trends identified at these two scales, and on the relationships between these trends.

4 Framing the Narrative: introducing the process of investigation

4.1 Introduction

Analysis within this thesis will tack between two levels – the general, through statistical analysis and overview, and the local, through site-specific examination of key sites. It is now time to introduce the data for this project, and to lay out the methods by which they have been collated and examined. It is simplest to track the progression of the project through time, introducing its elements as I was introduced to them, as this explains how they relate chronologically to one another in the structure of the project and my thinking. Thus, we will first examine the scale of the study and I will explain how the study area was arrived at, and where it sits both in the prehistoric past and in the modern academic landscape. From here, I will explain how the data were identified and collated in a database, and the particular concerns which I had when recording data there. Then, I will detail how the database was analysed in order to identify overarching trends and shared practices, and how these trends were subsequently interrogated. Finally, I will introduce the selection of key sites, and how the analysis of these was conducted. In one sense, this chapter thus forms a history of this project, which should provide the necessary contextualisation for understanding the data presented in the subsequent chapters.

4.2 Chronology and dating

It is important, first, to delimit the time period under discussion in this thesis, as this is the first way in which sites were included or excluded from the dataset. This project is concerned both with a tradition – that of discrete burial of individuals, or small groups of people – and with a time period, the Earlier Bronze Age. Defining when either of these start or end is a tricky process. In Scotland, the start of the Bronze Age has been put at c.2500 BC (Sheridan 2007; 2008), while in Ireland it has been placed at c.2220 BC (Brindley 2007). If we accept these dates, there is a short period where the tradition exists in Scotland, but not in Ireland. In selecting sites, I have not ruled out those which might be too early, being more concerned with

identifying examples of the tradition rather than the exact time period they seem to fall into. The earliest Scottish burials are important both as background for what followed, and because it has been argued that they follow the continental pattern of gendered orientation in Beaker-associated burials (Shepherd 2012; Tuckwell 1975). In Ireland, I have included wedge tombs, as their use, if not their construction, overlaps with the adoption of the specified burial tradition (Jones et al. 2015; Ó Maoldúin 2014), although the lack of excavated examples has made this a very small component of the database. Throughout the thesis, the existence of this early period where practice begins in Scotland will be investigated rather than assumed.

As mentioned previously, this earliest phase is sometimes referred to as a Chalcolithic or Copper Age (e.g. Jones et al. 2015; Ó Maoldúin 2014; Sheridan 2008). The term has proven regionally useful, particularly for analysing some forms of technology, but there is no uniform character of the period across the study area demarcating it from what preceded or followed, rather it is a messy time of transition (see discussion in Allen et al. 2012). In an Irish context, a suggested Chalcolithic (O'Brien 2012) does not seem particularly helpful in organising the social evidence (Carlin and Brück 2012). Therefore, no delimitation of this time period will be assumed.

The end of the Earlier Bronze Age at c.1500 BC is generally agreed upon for both Ireland and Scotland, even where the tripartite division of the Bronze Age is rejected (e.g. Bradley 2007). Sites whose use spans this boundary have been included. The funerary pottery is a useful marker of when practices which are clearly Earlier Bronze Age cease, as forms go out of use widely (Brindley 2007) and Bucket Urns mark the onset of the Middle or Later Bronze Age in Scotland. Nevertheless, some burials are included within the corpus on morphological grounds alone. Inhumations within cists continued in some parts of Scotland into the Iron Age (e.g. Cook 2018; Hawthorne and Paton 2019), thus it cannot be ruled out that a couple of the sites included may later prove to date outside the study period. The high number of dated sites, either directly or by artefact typology, means that this should be a small percentage.

Studies of mortuary practice too frequently fall into the trap of viewing practice as synchronic, and thus treating an entire period as if practice was static (Mizoguchi 1995). Many attempts have been made to create chronological divisions of the Earlier Bronze Age (e.g. Gerloff 2007; Needham 1996; Rogers 2013), but no consensus has emerged as to their usefulness beyond particular artefact types or regions. As such, no periodisation is taken as predetermined here,

but careful consideration will be given to chronology using the well-dated pottery typology (Brindley 2007; Sheridan 2004; 2007) and newly available radiocarbon dates (e.g. Cahill and Sikora 2011; Sheridan 2006).

4.3   Site selection

The second step in the selection of sites was to delimit the scale of the study. Obviously, the island of Ireland needs little justification in this regard; its borders today are very similar to those in the Bronze Age, when its physical reality as an island must have delimited it from other places. The modern jurisdictions which split the island affect access routes to data, but do not otherwise have any Bronze Age realities, therefore the whole of Ireland is included in this study. Scotland, on the other hand, is an arbitrary border for a study of prehistory. However, there are four reasons why it is adequate for this project: 1) it isolates a wealth of material with clear similarities to the Irish material in areas which traded with Ireland (Cressey and Sheridan 2003; Needham 2004), 2) the nearest major change in funerary pottery occurs around Yorkshire (Wilkin 2013), clearly to the south of the border, 3) research traditions have previously discussed Scotland as an entity (e.g. Piggott 1982; Shepherd and Barclay 2004), and 4) access to material is more feasible when located within one jurisdiction.

Sites were only included within the study if they had associated osteological reports which were published in or after 1990. This, too, is an arbitrary line to draw, but it was established to ensure that the analyses are based on modern osteological data, of similar parameters and limitations. While many previous studies of Earlier Bronze Age gender or grave goods have used antiquarian and/or early osteological estimations (e.g. Mount 1995; 1997a; Woodward and Hunter 2015), such data introduce a significant source of bias. Other studies have used 1950 (e.g. Rogers 2013) or 1960 (e.g. Brück 2009) as a cut-off point. However, osteological reports from the middle of the twentieth century may also prove unreliable (e.g. Weiss 1972). A 1985 study estimated the accuracy of sexing remains at 97%, where skull and pelvis were both present (Meindl et al. 1985), while the now famous excavations at Spitalfields in London (Molleson and Cox 1993) demonstrated 98% accuracy amongst a population of known sex. Therefore, 1990 marks a sufficient, conservative estimate of the development of modern levels of reliability. Though, of course, not all analysis is conducted to similar standards, and each report was read critically to identify that the sexing and aging was carried out according to established standards (e.g. Mitchell and Brickley 2017). More on this process is detailed below.

Sites were principally identified using the excavation gazettes of Ireland and Scotland. For Scotland, the publication *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland* (*DES*) provides short descriptions of the excavations and surveys conducted that year, and many of these records are digitised and added to the online Canmore system (https://canmore.org.uk/). For Ireland, similar records to those in *DES* are published on excavations.ie (https://excavations.ie), which replaced the annually published *Excavations* bulletin in 2010, and contains records for all excavations carried out in Ireland, north and south, since 1970. The search terms used for these online repositories is provided in Table 4.1. Additional sites were added from recent issues of local or national journals. The recent publication project of the National Museum of Ireland (Cahill and Sikora 2011) brought a huge number of formerly unpublished sites, with newly conducted osteological analyses, into the public arena. A recent catalogue of burial sites in Northern Ireland (Welsh and Welsh 2014) was also consulted.

cist
Bronze Age cemetery
cist cemetery
burial mound
cremation
Food Vessel
Collared Urn
Cordoned Urn
Encrusted Urn
Pygmy Cup
Accessory Vessel
Beaker
Wedge tomb
crouched inhumation
site type: "Bronze Age burial site"

Table 4.1 – Search terms used to locate sites in online databases
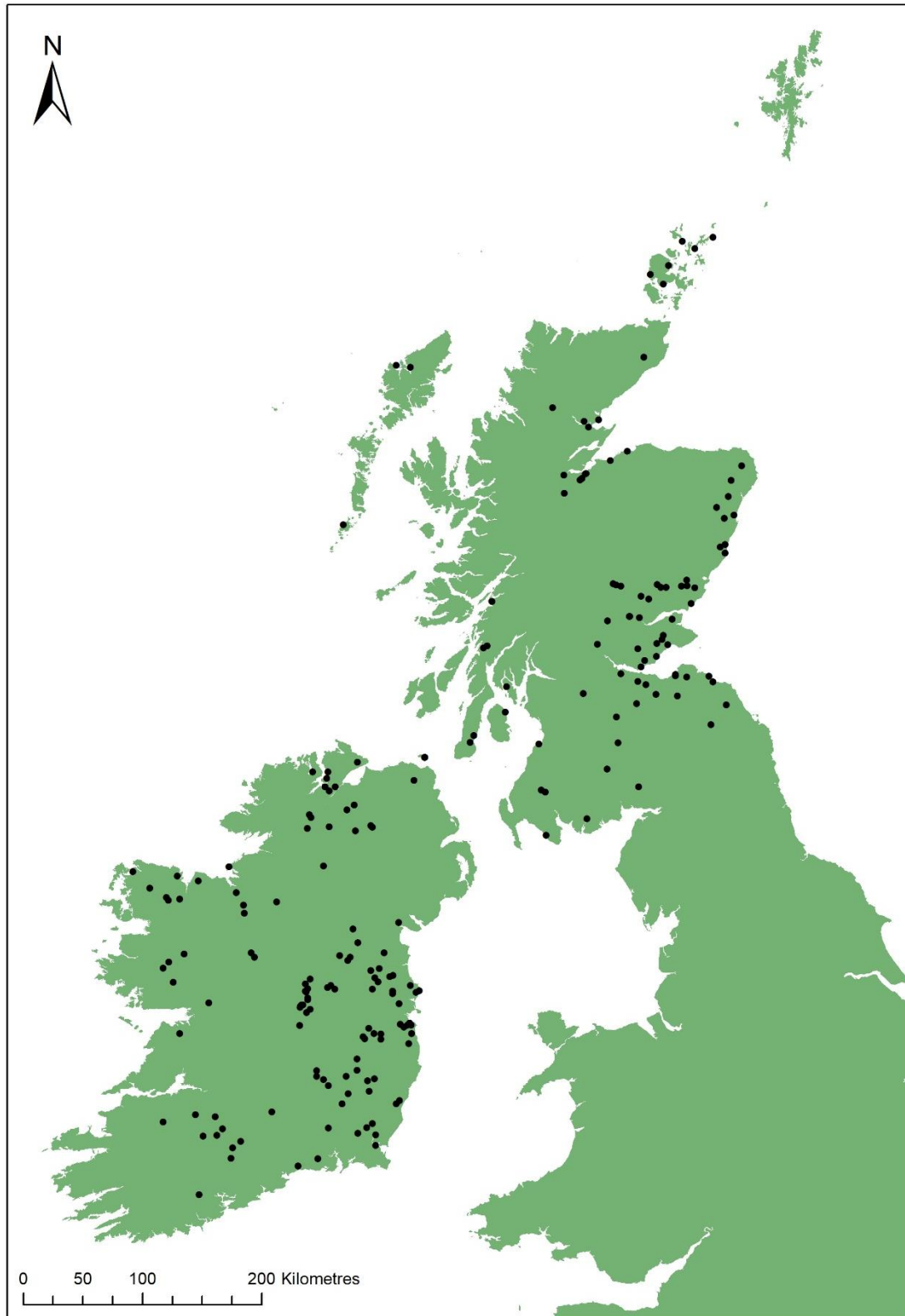
Figure 4.1 – The locations of the burial sites within the database

Once identified, the site reports were obtained from either (i) published sources, (ii) links from, or information on, Canmore for Scottish sites, (iii) searches of the Digital Repository of Ireland (https://dri.ie), a resource which will eventually house (amongst other things) all excavation

reports from Ireland, but which was in the process of being populated during this project, and (iv) the archives and websites of the excavating contractors. Any site for which a post-1990 osteological report could not be obtained was not included in the database. An exception to this rule was a handful of sites where basic osteological information was contained within their *DES* entry which clearly derived from recent osteological studies. The number of such sites was small – 7 sites, totalling 15 burials[1]. The distribution of the identified sites is shown in Figure 4.1.

4.4   Data recording and database construction
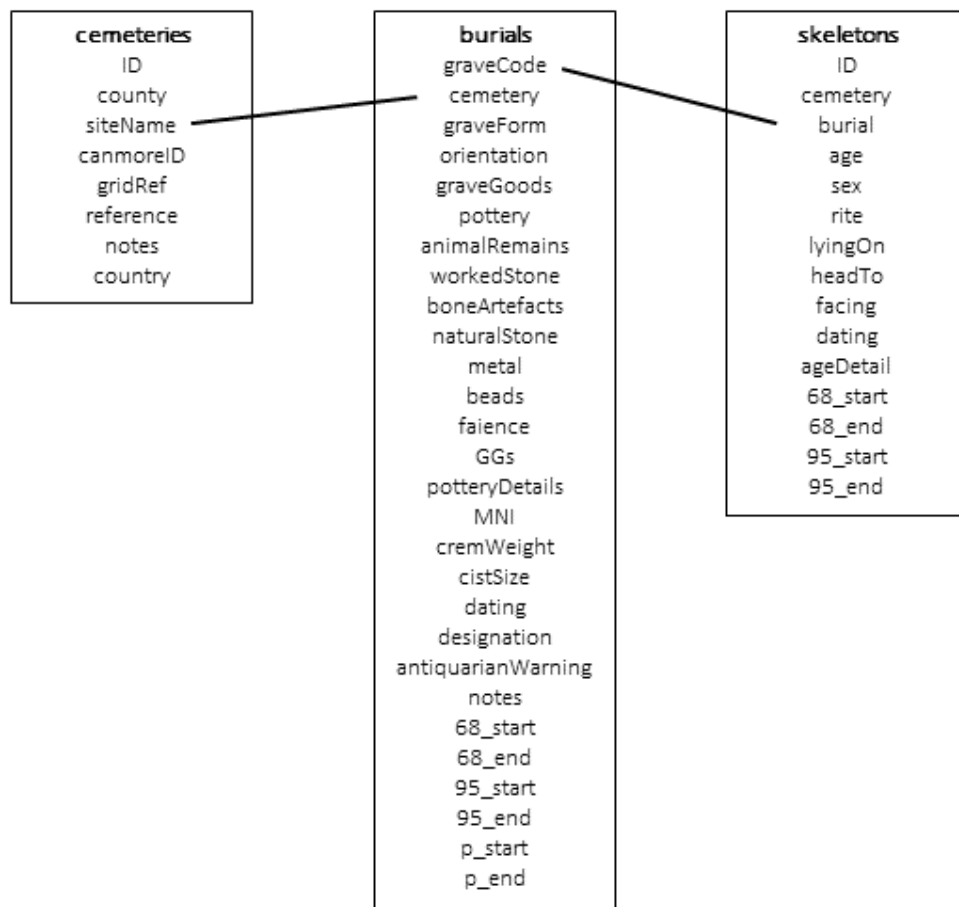
Figure 4.2 – The variables held within the three datasheets and their relations.

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[1] The sites are: Borrowstone, Kingswells, Aberdeen (6 burials); Callum's Hill, Crieff, Perth & Kinross (1 burial); Cullaloe Wood, Aberdour, Fife (1 burial); Easter Essendy, Perth & Kinross (2 burials); Ferndale, Rendall, Orkney (3 burials); Farrochie-Malcolm's Mount, Aberdeenshire (1 burial); Kintyre Nurseries, Campbeltown, Argyll & Bute (1 burial).

Once excavation and osteological reports were located, the data were entered into a relational database, constructed in Microsoft Access. Separate but linked records were kept for cemeteries, burials and skeletons (see Fig. 4.2 for details of database architecture). Any act of database construction requires the conflation of data in categories so that comparisons and statistical analyses may be conducted. Here I want to briefly explain these conflations which form the basis of the largescale analysis (Chapter 5). The subsequent contextual key site analysis (Chapters 6 & 7) began from the full published record (see below).

4.4.1 Cemetery

The variables recorded for each cemetery ('ID', 'county', 'siteName', 'country', 'canmoreID', 'gridRef', 'reference' and 'notes') need little explanation, except to say that 'gridRef' records the grid reference in British National Grid for Scottish sites and Irish Transverse Mercator for Irish sites; these references were later converted for the creation of distribution maps. The 'reference' variable records bibliographic information for the site. Where I have made alterations to the published information, judging sex determinations to be less secure than the analyser for instance, this is stated in the 'notes' variable.

Each entry here records a single cemetery or lone burial. However, the boundaries of each cemetery are somewhat arbitrary. In some instances, the distance between graves is substantial – at Lug, Co. Offaly, Ireland, the ninth grave was found 400m from the main group. The other notable case of this, at Mains of Melgund, Aberlemno, Angus, Scotland, saw the third grave 680m from the other two. Meanwhile, the separately recorded cemeteries of Kilgaroan and Ardballymore, both Co. Westmeath, Ireland were slightly less than 900m apart. The approach to recording largely has to do with their histories of discovery and reporting and is somewhat arbitrary. However, it has very little affect on the majority of the analysis, and is not relevant for the vast majority of the 212 cemeteries in the database.

4.4.2 Burial

A separate table recorded the information relating to each burial, both the 'graveCode' and 'cemetery' variable provided information to link the burial to the cemetery in which it sat.

The remaining variables are explained below:

4.4.2.1 Grave form (database category: graveForm)

Graves were mostly classified as either 'C' (cist) or 'P' (pit), though there is one instance of 'WT' (wedge tomb) and one of 'RC' (rock cut), and 5 have no designation due to incomplete information. This, of course, belies some variation. Some pits, for instance, were loosely lined with stones – in each case a value judgement had to be made between whether the feature represented a denuded or poorly constructed cist, or a pit with stone added.

4.4.2.2 Grave orientation (graveOrientation)

Only four axes were used to record each grave's orientation (N/S, NE/SW, E/W, NW/SE). I thought it beneficial to prioritise simplicity in this recording system in order to allow patterns to emerge. Broad categories are more forgiving, which is a virtue considering the unlikelihood of it being possible to precisely lay out a grave according to compass bearings in prehistory. In instances where the excavators recorded the orientation between these points (e.g. ENE/WSW), I have made a judgement based on the available plans. In a few instances, the text of the excavation reports disagreed with their own plans and with the textual description of other on-site orientations. I have interpreted these as typographical errors and given primacy to the plans.

4.4.2.3 Grave goods (recorded in text as GGs, and as a presence/absence binary as graveGoods, pottery, animalRemains, workedStone, boneArtefacts, naturalStone, metal, beads, and faience)

Grave goods were recorded in full as a free-form text entry ('GGs'), and as presence/absence binaries for grave goods generally ('graveGoods') and for a number of artefacts types ('pottery', 'animalRemains', 'workedStone', 'boneArtefacts', 'naturalStone', 'metal', 'beads' and 'faience'), which should be self-explanatory. Functional categories were not used as it is not always clear how artefacts should be assigned functions. This is most plainly seen in the redefinition of leatherworking awls as tattooing needles when found in male graves (e.g. Harding 2008).

Regrettably, no information was recorded at this stage about the location of artefacts within the grave. This may have yielded useful information but, having missed it in the initial planning phase, it was not feasible to return and gather this information. The key site analysis, however, did allow for a consideration of the placement of objects.

4.4.2.4   Minimum number of individuals (MNI)

This variable recorded an estimate of the minimum number of individuals present in the burial, usually equal to the number of skeleton IDs assigned to the burial.

4.4.2.5   Cremation weight (cremWeight)

This variable was originally recorded in the hope of further testing Brück's (2009) suggestion that women were preferentially cremated so that their remains could be shared amongst their kin. Perhaps, I reasoned, the cremations of women would be systematically lower in weight in relation to a complete female cremation weight than men's to a complete male weight. However, it quickly became obvious that the majority of the recorded weights would be unsuitable for such a purpose; any incidence of multiple people cremated in one grave would exclude that grave, for instance, and many of the excavations recorded by the National Museum of Ireland (Cahill and Sikora 2011) are likely to have left behind an unknown quantity of fragmentary bone. Furthermore, the potential contribution of taphonomic factors would be both too variable and impossible to estimate on a site-by-site basis. I have not, therefore, done anything with this variable in the analysis.

4.4.2.6   Floor area of the cist (cistSize)

The rough floor area (in cm²) of the cist was calculated simply by multiplying its length with its width. In cases where reports give a range (i.e. 0.78–0.96m long) I used the midpoint. This was taken as a proxy for the overall size of the cist, as a potential source of aggrandising the burial. For pit burials, no value was recorded as it is difficult to identify the edges of the pit floor and to know whether the dimensions given in excavation reports are for the start of the grave cut or some point before it reaches its floor.

4.4.2.7   Dating information (recorded free-form in dating, numerically in 68_start, 68_end, 95_start, 95_end, p_start, p_end)

Where radiocarbon dates were available, these were recorded in the variable '68_start' and '68_end' (for the start and end points of the 1-sigma calibrated date), and '95_start' and '95_end' (for the start and end points of the 2-sigma calibrated date). To ensure coherence, all dates were calibrated from the original uncalibrated determinations using OxCal v.4.3.2 (Bronk Ramsey 2009) and IntCal13 atmospheric curve (Reimer et al. 2013). In some instances, skeletons within burials had separate radiocarbon determinations and these were recorded separately in the skeleton entry (see below).

The refined chronology of Irish funerary pottery (Brindley 2007) was used to further narrow the date ranges, and this is recorded as 'p_start' and 'p_end'. Any burial from Ireland with funerary pottery was given the corresponding start and end dates of that pottery type, according to Brindley's model. The specific funerary pottery this is based on is recorded in the variable 'potteryDetails'. Burials which had radiocarbon determinations but no associated funerary pottery had their '95_start' and '95_end' copied to allow these burials to also be included in the analysis. Thus, 182 of 272 Irish burials could be included in this chronological analysis. For Scottish sites, 'p_start' and 'p_end' were left blank as no equivalent model exists.

4.4.2.8 Grave identifier in original report (designation)

The original designation given in the site report was recorded to facilitate cross-checking information at a later date.

4.4.2.9 Alert for analysis (antiquarianWarning, notes)

A binary option to highlight the burial during the statistical analysis was included (termed 'antiquarianWarning'[2]), the reasons for this selection were then detailed in the 'notes' text variable. During analysis, any graves with this tag were thus easily identified and could be removed from each analysis individually or left in if the tag was irrelevant to that particular analysis. The notes section was also used to detail any individual features of the burials not covered under the defined variables, though of course this is difficult to subsequently include within a statistical analysis.

4.4.3 Skeleton

Any case where the presence of the remains of a person was positively identified was given a separate skeleton ID. This means that cases of partial or 'token' burial, and cases where a single bone was placed in a grave with a full inhumation or cremation, were recorded as separate skeletons, although such cases were still identifiable (see: Rite, below). As each case represents a person who was present in some way in the burial record, it seemed important that all could be included in this analysis without presupposing which treatments were designed to presence the whole person in the mourner's memory.

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[2] As I mistakenly thought it would mainly be older excavations for which this was necessary! In practice, it was used most often to flag up situations in which the cremation weight was not reliable.

4.4.3.1 Age information (age, ageDetail)

Age was recorded in two forms. The first, 'age', records a standardised age category, the details for which are given in Table 4.2. These categories were based upon industry standards, though it is recognised that this is an imperfect way of recording skeletal age (e.g. O'Connell 2017; Roksandic and Armstrong 2011). There are variations in how osteologists record ages (i.e. 'young adult' can include different ages under different systems), the selected system represents a compromise position. The second variable, 'ageDetail', records the specific age estimates, if any, which were noted by the osteologist. Where age brackets given by the osteologist overlapped the boundaries of categories, the osteologist's estimation of 'young' or 'middle' adult was accepted. There were other times when the osteologist's information must take precedence (e.g. when their own age boundaries were not defined), or when a judgement call had to be made (e.g. a skeleton with an age of 16–20 would be recorded as a young adult, despite overlapping with the adolescent category). The 'age' variable was used for statistical analyses, with 'ageDetail' included within the database to limit data loss, and to enable further investigation where necessary.

Database Entry	Description	Criterion
OAd	Older Adult	50+
GAd	Middle-aged Adult	30–50
YAd	Young Adult	18–30
Ad	Adult (no specific age)	No estimate of age possible
Adl	Adolescent	12–17
Ch	Child	2–12
Inf	Infant	0–2
Nn	Neonate	Newborn, potentially stillborn
F	Foetus	Pre-term foetus
SA	Subadult	No estimation of age beyond immaturity

Table 4.2 – The age categories used for the skeletal data

In some papers published post-1990 the osteological analysis had clearly been conducted at some point in the past (Taylor et al. 1998; some of Stewart and Barclay 1997; a few in Cahill and Sikora 2011). I have included these sites within the database but have been very risk averse – specific ages have largely been ignored, the certainties in sexing have also been ignored (see below). Other distinctions could be accepted – such as that between 'Adult' and 'Child', on size grounds – so these have been included within the broad boundaries of 'Adult' and 'Subadult'. A further danger associated with these reports is that bones which may indicate

the presence of a second individual may have been missed. Luckily, the number of such sites within the database is small, and they were excluded from analyses where necessary.

4.4.3.2   Sex information (sex)

Sex determinations were recorded according to standard estimations of certainty (Table 4.3). No sex determinations were recorded for subadults, owing to the difficulties of sexing juvenile remains (Mitchell and Brickley 2017), except for a few instances of post-pubescent adolescents (9 cases, 2 of which were 'possibles' and thus discounted from statistical analysis anyway, see below). Adults for whom no sex determination was possible were recorded as 'U', while subadults had this category left blank. This allowed for the easy inclusion of all adults in analyses based on sex data.

While 'possible' determinations of sex were recorded in the database, these were not included in statistical analyses, as I did not feel the certainty associated with these determinations warranted their inclusion. As mentioned above, some of the human remains from burials included in a handful of recent publications were not re-analysed for that publication and instead reported older osteological findings. In these cases, the data were treated with utmost caution, thus sex determinations were recorded as 'possible'.

Database Entry	Description	Criterion
M	Male	Osteologist is fairly certain of sexing
pM	Probable Male	Osteologist strongly suggests but cannot be sure
U	Unknown Sex	Adult skeleton which cannot be sexed
pF	Probable Female	Osteologist strongly suggests but cannot be sure
F	Female	Osteologist is fairly certain of sexing
possM	Possible Male	There is some suggestion that this is a male skeleton, but no certainty
possF	Possible Female	There is some suggestion that this is a female skeleton, but no certainty

Table 4.3 – The sex categories used for the adult skeletal data

In general, I have followed the certainty of the original report, though there were a few instances where I have downgraded the level of certainty based on the evidence reported to substantiate the sexing. This is obviously a subjective process, designed to ensure I am happy with the level of certainty within the database. Ultimately, it can only make this research more cautious as there has been no case where I have increased the certainty of the sex determination. The reasons for downgrading the certainty have been recorded within the database.

4.4.3.3   Rite (rite)

Skeletons were generally recorded as having been cremated ('C') or inhumed ('I'). As noted previously, partial burials under each category also occurred. In these instances, deliberately partial burials were recorded as 'IP' (for 'inhumation, partial') or 'CP' ('cremation, partial'). 'IP' was used for burials where one, or a small number, of unburnt bones were included with a more complete burial, and where it seemed certain that taphonomic factors were not the main reason for the low amount of remaining bone. 'CP' was used for cremations of very low weight – less than 100g – where it seemed similarly certain that taphonomic factors were not the primary cause.

The 'partial cremations' presumably originated from full-body cremations, and the 'partial inhumations' similarly originated from unburnt bodies, thus these categories were often collapsed into the 'cremation' and 'inhumation' categories for particular analyses. It will be explicitly stated in the results where this has occurred.

4.4.3.4   Orientation of the Body (lyingOn, headTo, facing)

Three variables were used to record the orientation of inhumed bodies: 'lyingOn' (the side on which the body was lying), 'headTo' (the direction which the head was toward), and 'facing' (the direction to which the face was directed) (see Fig. 4.3). These variables reflect the standard way in which Beaker burial orientations have been recorded previously in discussions of gendered patterns (e.g. Tuckwell 1975; Shepherd 2012). Burials were usually recorded lying on their left ('L') or right ('R'), though a small minority are also recorded lying on their backs ('B'), or a combination of both, ('B/L', 'B/R'). Both 'headTo' and 'facing' were recorded using the same range of directions as the burial's orientation (discussed above). No record was made of the level of contraction of the skeleton, as it was deemed that this would often be difficult to determine from published data. However, this may mean that instances of potential mummification (e.g. Booth et al. 2015) may have been missed.
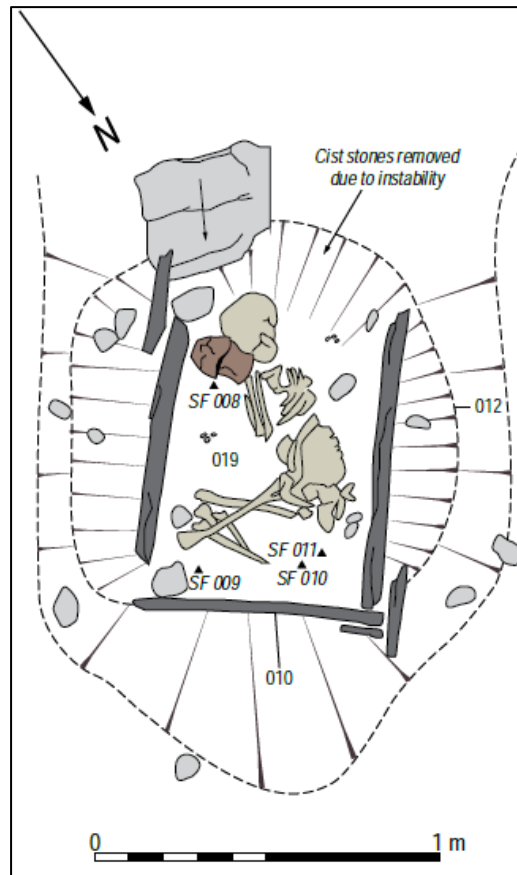
Figure 4.3 – An indicative burial from West Torbreck, Highland, Scotland. In this case, the skeleton would be recorded as: lyingOn:R, headTo:S, facing:E. (Kilpatrick 2014, fig. 6) © GUARD Archaeology Ltd.

4.4.3.5 Dating information (dating, 68_start, 68_end, 95_start, 95_end)

The variables for dating information used here follow the same principles as those for burials (see above). However, these variables were only used in cases where skeletons within the same burial had independent dating evidence. These dates then took precedence over those for the burial as a whole in the chronological analysis where possible.

4.5 Statistical analyses

Once the database was complete, statistical analysis could begin. This was run from the Access database, using queries to produce a series of simple tables showing the correlations between particular features and different sorts of skeleton. These tables were then exported to Excel where they could be formatted for inclusion in the thesis. Where potential trends were identified in these correlations, they were tested for statistical significance using a simple chi-square test in R. Chi-square tests were selected as they are frequently used to determine statistical significance, though the small sample sizes for some grave good categories sometimes presented a challenge.

4.5.1   Stage One: Overview

The first stage of analysis was a general overview of the evidence in each study area. This established any broad trends in practice which applied to the entire period. Scotland and Ireland were treated separately even at this stage as, despite the similarities in practice, there are clear geographical and practice-based grounds for considering them as distinct entities (differences in pottery types, different responses to Beakers and their deployment in funerary contexts, etc.). Following the first stage of analysis, a list of identified trends was produced, which will be presented at the end of the appropriate section in the next chapter. This list provides the first indications of the core differences and similarities between the two areas.

4.5.2   Stage Two: Chronology

The second stage of analysis focused on querying the previously identified trends, to establish whether they changed over time. Thus, the burials were split into smaller groups on chronological grounds. The dating information allowed this analysis for groups split according to their 1-sigma and 2-sigma dates for both areas, and to their date according to Brindley's (2007) scheme for the Irish sites. Instead of splitting the burials into distinct chronological groups, which would require subjective value judgements about their sequencing, segments of time were used to separate them into overlapping groups.

Burials were analysed in both wide (250 years) and narrow (125 years) segments. A burial was taken as falling within a group if any part of its radiocarbon date fell between the corresponding dates. Thus, a burial with a date of 2321–2010 cal. BC would fall into the 2500–2250, 2300–2050, and 2100–1950 groups. This method thus gives equal weighting to all years covered by its date estimate and spreads a single event out through time. Thus, the graphs represent change over time, but not change over calendar years. This method is similar to population density estimate (e.g. Shennan et al. 2013) used to estimate population change over time, but instead of using an arbitrary time spread it uses the actual error of the radiocarbon date. Due to the comparatively lower number of dates involved, this seemed to produce a picture which more accurately represents the data. However, it is worth noting that a radiocarbon date with a large error range will lead to its corresponding burial being counted amongst more of the groups. Thus, Dillonsdown, with a 95.4% date range of 2280–1786 cal. BC was counted amongst nearly every group in the sequence. Given the sample size, it seems unwise to proceed as if dates such as this were more accurate. The resulting models of change

were plotted on a single graph and a trend line added to aid comparison. The 'narrow' time ranges (of 125 years) have been used for the graphs within the thesis, as they allow a better appreciation of change over time.

This method is very similar to the splitting of the Earlier Bronze Age into several phases or stages, as has been utilised previously to narrow the period of time which a statistical analysis considers (e.g. Brück 2009). As in such cases, while it narrows the number of burials under consideration, it cannot produce a real slicing of time and is thus a rough approximation of what such a sequence would look like.

A further note must be made on the sequence using Brindley's (2007) model for pottery-use dates: for burials with both radiocarbon dates and pottery, the pottery-modelled dates took precedence, except where the radiocarbon date range was narrower. For the cases where the radiocarbon date range fell completely outside Brindley's corresponding pottery date, I accepted Brindley's dates, on the basis that her model presents a probability for all pottery of this type, that outliers may be a result of unrecognised minor contamination, and that this provides the closest fidelity to the model. As this sequence is only as strong as her model and is contingent upon many choices made during her research to which I have limited access, the change curves modelled on radiocarbon dates alone provide some control. In cases where multiple types of pottery occurred in one grave, the time in which their currencies overlapped was used. An exception being Carn More 9, where a Bowl Food Vessel (2160–1920 BC, according to Brindley's model) and a Cordoned Urn (1730–1500 BC, according to the model) co-occurred, so no date was assigned.

There are obvious problems with this approach, largely shared by all statistical approaches. At this scale, we lack the resolution to pull apart the burial's formation processes and take account of, for instance, the possibility of multiple interments at separate times, as presumably occurred at Carn More 9. This will be rectified by the approach advocated later. A further problem with the sequences based on Brindley's model, is that graves with pottery are obviously over-represented. As the first stage of analysis shows that roughly two thirds of Irish burials had pottery (see Chapter 5), this may be an acceptable bias, or at the least, an interesting and meaningful subgroup to investigate. Similarly, the burials which excavators choose to radiocarbon date are not an unbiased sample, usually reflecting more interesting or problematic assemblages.

Although all variables that were analysed in the first stage were analysed again here, only those which are pertinent to the trends identified in the first stage are presented in this thesis, alongside those where significant new trends emerged. The remaining graphs, which largely show little of interest to this discussion, are included in Appendix 1.3.

4.6 Key site analyses

4.6.1 Selection of key sites

From the preceding analysis certain sites emerged as of particular interest – some because they seemed to conform with the generally identified trends, others because they differed markedly in one or a range of ways. As hinted at previously, the purpose of the investigation of key sites is to assess what meaningful inferences can be made about social ideology from the scale at which it was enacted and practiced. As such, those with large amounts of burials or grave goods were enticing candidates for further investigation. However, I was keen to avoid cherry-picking only sites which looked particularly useful or fruitful for this type of analysis, and rather wanted to analyse a wider range of Earlier Bronze Age sites. As such, sites were also selected for their geographical location (ensuring a good spread across the study areas), their proximity to others (in an attempt to identify regional patterns), their site type (ensuring that a number of 'lone burials' were discussed, for instance), and finally a few sites were chosen at random, to test whether the methods produced meaningful inferences everywhere.

The selection of the key sites will be discussed in more detail later when the choices can be discussed in context (Chapters 6 and 7). For the moment, it suffices to say that it is comparatively easy to focus on the construction of gender and age at large, relatively well-provisioned grave sites, where there is ample material for comparison. If we want to build a full picture of Bronze Age societies, however, we need to find a way of incorporating the full range of sites into our discussions. As such, sites with small numbers of burials, those with low-provisioning, and indeed those frequent sites which include just a single burial will all be included in this stage of the analysis.

4.6.2 Discursive analysis of key sites

The approach taken to the analysis of key sites can best be described as a discursive analysis. As the sites are often small, the full scale of practice can usually be laid out in the text, building

up the picture of how the site came into being as well as this is known. This story telling of how funerary practice was conducted at the site throughout its use-life, allows subtle patterns in practice and similarities between burials to emerge. Theoretically, this is an important realisation because it reflects how members of a community might experience burials themselves. The subtle building of a story of place, and of the repeated visits to enchain the dead into the story of that place, with those community members already buried there, is both how the mourners interacted with the site in the past and how we reconsider it in the present. Local context is thus foregrounded in this stage of analysis.

Of course, there is much that we are not party to, but when we are speaking of broader trends then, by definition, we are discussing a funerary landscape which these mourners were not themselves party to. Thus, it is a delicate balancing act between what we can know now and what we can expect them to have known then.

The patterns that are recognised at this scale are rarely statistically verifiable, though they do allow a wider statistical reflection through comparison. Though sites may have local variations in how they marked out difference, it may be the case that there are repeated patterns in the types of people who were marked out as different. Thus, the final stage of the analysis of key sites (Chapter 8) will be to reflect on their similarities and to seek to identify broader trends of similarity which may be statistically demonstrable but which would not be identified by a traditional grave good analysis, such as conducted in Chapter 5.

This method fits in with broader trends in the Humanities at present. Anna Tsing (2015) refers to a similar practice as 'noticing', while at another point in her study of mushroom pickers she writes "If a rush of troubled stories is the best way to tell about contaminated diversity, then it's time to make that rush a part of our knowledge practices." (Tsing 2015: 34). While I do not attempt here to present quite a "rush of troubled stories", it is just possible that paying attention, or 'noticing', reveals more about social action at the graveside than we have hitherto allowed. Of course, this is just the latest turn to close attention in the Humanities. Parallels may be found between this method and those as different as English's 'close reading' (e.g. Prendergast 1990) and Clifford Geertz's (1973) 'thick description'.

The standard way of presenting data and interpretation is to separate them, so that the data may 'stand alone' and interpretation is conceived as a wholly separate project. This is not

something which is practical with this sort of research method, where multiple cemeteries are presented in detail, for if all are presented before any interpretation is done the reader will forget what was to be interpreted. Furthermore, the data and the interpretation are, in effect, co-constituted, emerging together in the discussion. As such, this thesis will interpret as it presents data, recognising that future data can only be properly understood through the frames of interpretation that have come before. The trends from each key site will therefore be laid out clearly at the conclusion of its analysis, and these trends can then be compared between sites.

The final chapter of analysis is the discussion chapter (Chapter 8), which will bring together the trends found at the key sites and those identified in the statistical analysis. This is the proper place for tacking between scales to investigate the research questions which have been presented in these opening chapters.

4.7   Conclusions

The process of this research as outlined in this chapter proceeds from the familiar to the unfamiliar. We begin in the next chapter with a quest to identify statistically verifiable trends, wholly in line with how the vast majority of gender studies, and particularly those on burials, have previously been conducted. The attempt to then breakdown and query these trends is, however, where we will diverge from the standard approach and embedded ways of thinking about social practice. I have made it clear that I find it theoretically problematic to investigate gender and age solely at this large scale, and the deconstruction of these trends will demonstrate that in the case of the Scottish and Irish Earlier Bronze Ages, this methodology is also practically unsound. The trends which we identify are a façade which hangs over evidence which is much more complex.

The remainder of the thesis is an attempt to provide a 'way in' to discussing gender and age in the period. These methods may not feel as 'comfortable', diverging as they do from the reassurance provide by a low p-value. However, when cemeteries are small, local affairs it is not clear that a societal level lens is the only way to speak about socially meaningful actions and the ideological narratives which they generated. It is my hope that this change of scale will show much in the way of meaningful patterns to counteract the "bewildering variety"

(Waddell 1990: 1) that is apparent at the larger scale, and that it will allow local Bronze Age people's decisions and actions to come through more clearly.

But let us first turn to the statistical analysis. This will allow us to familiarise ourselves with the data, and to begin on the comfortable ground which gender archaeology has traversed many times since its inception.

5 Analysing the Database: a statistical investigation

Let us turn, then, to investigate these social ideologies as they are revealed through burial practice. The burials across Ireland and Scotland share much in common, and they make sense as a coherent 'type' or series of 'types'. An Earlier Bronze Age burial can often be recognised on morphology alone, for instance. This indicates that some sort of overarching structure was in place which encouraged people to make selections from a shared repertory. My aim in this chapter is to smooth out some of the difference between burial contexts and to look for the things which they have in common, identifying whether these commonalities can be extended to the social ideologies which they make manifest. While later we will pay attention to local idiosyncrasies, this is a scale at which broader concerns that were held in common can be identified and thus allows us to investigate the background cultural zeitgeist in which individual decisions were made. My aims here are both to introduce the data for this study and to identify trends which mark difference between types of people. We will then carry these trends with us through the subsequent site-specific analyses.

Throughout this chapter, the text will be saturated with numbers and tables which will be practically impossible to hold in the mind beyond the immediate question being discussed, particularly because of the similarities inherent in the trends and visual tables. To make the analysis easier to follow, the identified trends will be listed at the conclusion of the first section, and these will form the basis for the examination of change over time.

Where included in tables in this chapter, p-values have been calculated on the combined certain and probable categories (for sex) or the combined adult and subadult categories (for age). Where less than 0.05, p-values are considered significant and marked with an asterisk. Where low sample numbers recommend caution in the p-value determination these results have been placed in angle brackets.

Although the purpose of this chapter is to conduct a statistical analysis of the entire dataset, it is also worth noting that it serves as an introduction to this dataset and the various idiosyncrasies therein. As such, the reader may like to be aware of the key sites discussed in

subsequent chapters as they crop up in the text. Although the discussion of how they have been selected and the features that have marked them out for attention will come at a later point, the list is provided here for reference (Table 5.1).

Ireland	
Site Name	County
Ardballymore	Westmeath
Ballickmoyler	Offaly
Ballybrennan	Westmeath
Ballynacarriga	Cork
Benalbit and Derryroe	Westmeath
Brackbaun	Limerick
Conranstown	Westmeath
Culleens	Sligo
Edmondstown	Dublin
Grange	Roscommon
Lug	Offaly
Keenoge	Meath
Kilcroagh	Antrim
Kilgaroan	Westmeath
Martinstown	Meath
Milltown	Westmeath
Redmondstown	Westmeath
Stranagalwilly	Tyrone
Tomfarney	Wexford
Scotland	
Site Name	County[8]
Balblair	Highland
Culduthel, Inverness	Highland
Drumnadrochit	Highland
Dunure Road	South Ayrshire
Glennan	Argyll & Bute
Holm Mains Farm	Highland
Kirkton of Cults	Fife
Langwell Farm, Sutherland	Highland
Seafield West, Inverness	Highland
Sketewan, Balnaguard	Perth & Kinross
Slacknamarnock Quarry	Highland
Stoneyfield, Raigmore	Highland
West Torbreck	Highland
West Water Reservoir	Scottish Borders

Table 5.1 – The key sites to be discussed in Chapters 6 & 7.

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[8] I have used the current local authority names for Scotland, as these have not been stable over the centuries. The current system groups disparate sites together in the 'Highland' area.

5.1   An overview of the data

Let us begin with an overview of the basic demographic information. Given that it is generally accepted that only a portion of the community were formally buried in Earlier Bronze Age cemeteries (Cooney and Grogan 1999), the first question to ask concerns who was selected for burial. Tables 5.2 and 5.3 show the demographic breakdown of the burial populations in Ireland and Scotland in this database. As can be seen, the overall adult:subadult ratio is similar in both places. Chamberlain (2006) points out that infant mortality would have been high in pre-industrial societies, and estimates of between 30% (Lewis 2007) and 40% (Goodman and Armelagos 1989) have been suggested. With the unknowns excluded, the ratio of adults to subadults in Ireland (71.67:28.33) and Scotland (72.48:27.52) fall only slightly shy of this range. The similarity between these figures suggests that children were equally likely to be buried in both places. Furthermore, the proportion of children falls just below Lewis's (2007) estimate of 30% and, given that taphonomic factors are likely to differentially affect immature skeletons, we might suggest that the proportions are similar because they reflect the living ratio of children. In other words, adults and subadults were equally likely to be buried.

Age Profile				
	Ireland		Scotland	
	Total	%	Total	%
Older Adult	21	4.78%	19	5.11%
Middle Adult	23	5.24%	38	10.22%
Young Adult	40	9.11%	42	11.29%
Adult	212	48.29%	138	37.10%
All Adults	296	67.43%	237	63.71%
Adolescent	28	6.38%	14	3.76%
Child	51	11.62%	48	12.90%
Infant	30	6.83%	12	3.23%
Foetus/ Neonate	3	0.68%	11	2.96%
Subadult	5	1.14%	5	1.34%
All Subadults	117	26.65%	90	24.19%
Unknown	26	5.92%	45	12.10%
Total	439	100.00%	372	100.00%

Table 5.2 – Age profile of the burial populations

Sex Profile				
	Ireland		Scotland	
	Total	%	Total	%
Male	61	20.20%	47	19.83%
Female	33	10.93%	24	10.13%
prob Male	27	8.94%	21	8.86%
prob Female	11	3.64%	25	10.55%
poss Male	17	5.63%	12	5.06%
poss Female	7	2.32%	6	2.53%
Unsexed Adult	146	48.34%	102	43.04%
C-Male[9]	88	29.14%	68	28.69%
C-Female	44	14.57%	49	20.68%

Table 5.3 – Sex profile of the burial populations

The data for sex reveal a clear dominance of male burials in Ireland, where males outnumber females by 2:1 (Table 5.3). In Scotland, too, males outnumber females. However, a word of caution is necessary as the sexing of males may be comparatively easier, particularly in cremation burials and there was a large number of unsexed adults in both regions. However, the pattern also appears to hold when just inhumed bodies are considered (Table 5.4), so there may well be some veracity to this bias, particularly for Ireland.

[9] C-Male and C-Female are used throughout this chapter to denote the combined groups of 'Male' and 'probable Male' and 'Female' and 'probable Female' respectively.

Rite by Sex										
	Scotland					Ireland				
	Crem	Crem %	Inh	Inh %	Total	Crem	Crem %	Inh	Inh %	Total
Male	29	61.70%	18	38.30%	47	33	54.10%	27	44.26%	61
Female	13	54.17%	11	45.83%	24	17	51.52%	15	45.45%	33
prob Male	9	42.86%	12	57.14%	21	18	66.67%	9	33.33%	27
prob Female	16	64.00%	7	28.00%	25	7	63.64%	4	36.36%	11
poss Male	7	58.33%	5	41.67%	12	10	58.82%	7	41.18%	17
poss Female	5	83.33%	1	16.67%	6	4	57.14%	3	42.86%	7
Unsexed Adult	59	57.84%	29	28.43%	102	105	72.41%	31	21.38%	145
C-Male	38	55.88%	30	44.12%	68	51	57.95%	36	40.91%	88
C-Female	29	59.18%	18	36.73%	49	24	54.55%	19	43.18%	44
	p-value = 0.5338					p-value = 0.7606				

Table 5.4 – The rite practiced for each sex category. Crem=Cremated, Inh=Inhumed.

Variations in the rite afforded the dead may have been one of the most obvious differences in funerary practice, as it structured the proceedings before deposition. The sex determinations (Table 5.4) show that cremation was the favoured rite for both sexes. Although there were slight sex-based differences in both regions, these are not statistically significant. The age determinations (Tables 5.5 and 5.6) are difficult to interpret. The broad adult:subadult ratio shows no statistically significant difference, yet children seem to have been preferentially cremated, particularly in Scotland. Interestingly, there were ten cases of an adult buried with a, presumably in-utero, foetus and in every case the deceased were cremated.

Rite by Age (Ireland)								
	Crem	Crem %	CP	CP %	Inh	Inh %	IP	IP %	Total
Older Adult	9	45.00%	1	5.00%	10	50.00%	1	5.00%	20
Middle Adult	9	39.13%	0	0.00%	14	60.87%	0	0.00%	23
Young Adult	18	45.00%	0	0.00%	22	55.00%	0	0.00%	40
Adult	156	73.58%	6	2.83%	46	21.70%	4	1.89%	212
All Adults	192	65.08%	7	2.37%	92	31.19%	5	1.69%	295
Adolescent	13	46.43%	0	0.00%	14	50.00%	1	3.57%	28
Child	35	68.63%	4	7.84%	11	21.57%	1	1.96%	51
Infant	17	56.67%	4	13.33%	5	16.67%	4	13.33%	30
Foetus	3	100.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	3
Subadult	2	40.00%	0	0.00%	3	60.00%	0	0.00%	5
All Subadults	70	59.83%	8	6.84%	33	28.21%	6	5.13%	117
Unknown	15	57.69%	8	30.77%	2	7.69%	1	3.85%	26
Total	277	63.24%	23	5.25%	127	29.00%	12	2.74%	438
p-value = 0.9473								

Table 5.5 – The age profile of those cremated and inhumed in Ireland. Crem=Cremated, CP=token Cremation, Inh=Inhumed, IP=token Inhumation.
(Note: Given low numbers, chi-square test was conducted on the full cremations and inhumations only)

Rite by Age (Scotland)								
	Crem	Crem %	CP	CP %	Inh	Inh %	IP	IP %	Total
Older Adult	10	52.63%	0	0.00%	9	47.37%	0	0.00%	19
Middle Adult	18	47.37%	0	0.00%	18	47.37%	2	5.26%	38
Young Adult	25	59.52%	0	0.00%	17	40.48%	0	0.00%	42
Adult	86	62.32%	10	7.25%	37	26.81%	5	3.62%	138
All Adults	139	58.65%	10	4.22%	81	34.18%	7	2.95%	237
Adolescent	7	50.00%	0	0.00%	7	50.00%	0	0.00%	14
Child	34	70.83%	0	0.00%	12	25.00%	2	4.17%	48
Infant	6	50.00%	1	8.33%	2	16.67%	3	25.00%	12
Neonate	2	50.00%	0	0.00%	2	50.00%	0	0.00%	4
Foetus	7	100.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	7
Subadult	2	40.00%	1	20.00%	1	20.00%	1	20.00%	5
All Subadults	58	64.44%	2	2.22%	24	26.67%	6	6.67%	90
Unknown	13	28.89%	22	48.89%	8	17.78%	2	4.44%	45
Total	210	56.45%	34	9.14%	113	30.38%	15	4.03%	372
p-value = 0.2205								

Table 5.6 – The age profile of those cremated and inhumed in Scotland. Crem=Cremated, CP=token Cremation, Inh=Inhumed, IP=token Inhumation. Foetus and Neonate categories are left separate here, though the difference is not always definite, to demonstrate the high level of cremation of foetuses.
(Note: Given low numbers, chi-square test was conducted on the full cremations and inhumations only)

5.1.1 Grave form and occupancy

The construction of a grave, either as a stone-built cist or a pit, represents an expense of labour on behalf of the community. As the cist requires both quarrying the stone and bringing it to the burial site, this has previously been investigated as a potential sign of the status of the

deceased (e.g. Mount 1997a: 134–136). This appears to be one instance in which there was a broad difference between the regions, with 61.28% of burials in Ireland made in cists, compared to just 48.12% of those in Scotland (Table 5.7). However, it is worth bearing in mind that the recent publication of old rescue excavations by the National Museum of Ireland (Cahill and Sikora 2011) has increased the number of cists in Ireland.

	Grave Form by Age									
	Ireland					Scotland				
	Cist	Cist %	Pit	Pit %	Total	Cist	Cist %	Pit	Pit %	Total
Older Adult	10	47.62%	11	52.38%	21	9	47.37%	9	47.37%	19
Middle Adult	12	52.17%	11	47.83%	23	19	50.00%	16	42.11%	38
Young Adult	25	62.50%	15	37.50%	40	25	59.52%	16	38.10%	42
Adult	128	60.38%	80	37.74%	212	71	51.45%	67	48.55%	138
All Adults	175	59.12%	117	39.53%	296	124	52.32%	108	45.57%	237
Adolescent	19	67.86%	9	32.14%	28	8	57.14%	6	42.86%	14
Child	38	74.51%	11	21.57%	51	21	43.75%	27	56.25%	48
Infant	20	66.67%	9	30.00%	30	7	58.33%	5	41.67%	12
Foetus/ Neonate	2	66.67%	1	33.33%	3	5	45.45%	6	54.55%	11
Subadult	5	100%	0	0.00%	5	2	40.00%	3	60.00%	5
All Subadults	82	71.93%	29	25.44%	114	38	48.10%	41	51.90%	79
Unknown	10	38.46%	13	50.00%	26	12	26.67%	32	71.11%	45
Total	269	61.28%	160	36.45%	439	179	48.12%	187	50.27%	372
	p-value = 0.009286*					p-value = 0.4113				

Table 5.7 – The age profile of those buried in cists and pits
('Other' and 'Unknown' categories excluded, n=10 from Ireland, n=6 from Scotland)

Although there was no differentiation between males and females (Table 5.8), the data from Ireland show that subadults, particularly children, were significantly more likely to receive cist burial there (Table 5.7). While it might be argued that the cist aids preservation of subadult remains, that this pattern was not repeated in Scotland suggests that there is a Bronze Age reality behind this trend.

Grave Form by Sex										
	Ireland					Scotland				
	Cist	Cist %	Pit	Pit %	Total	Cist	Cist %	Pit	Pit %	Total
Male	40	65.57%	20	32.79%	61	23	48.94%	23	48.94%	47
Female	21	63.64%	11	33.33%	33	11	45.83%	12	50.00%	24
Prob Male	12	44.44%	15	55.56%	27	13	61.90%	7	33.33%	21
Prob Female	5	45.45%	6	54.55%	11	16	64.00%	9	36.00%	25
Poss Male	11	64.71%	6	35.29%	17	6	50.00%	6	50.00%	12
Poss Female	6	85.71%	1	14.29%	7	3	50.00%	3	50.00%	6
Unsexed Adult	84	57.53%	60	41.10%	146	52	50.98%	48	47.06%	102
C-Male	52	59.09%	35	39.77%	88	36	52.94%	30	44.12%	68
C-Female	26	59.09%	17	38.64%	44	27	55.10%	21	42.86%	49
	p-value = 0.9393					p-value = 0.8566				

Table 5.8 – The sex profile of those buried in cists and pits
('Other' and 'Unknown' categories excluded, n=10 from Ireland, n=6 from Scotland)

Grave Orientation (Ireland)									
	E/W	E/W %	N/S	N/S %	NE/ SW	NE/ SW %	NW/ SE	NW/ SE %	Total
All Adults	30	17.44%	65	37.79%	45	26.16%	32	18.60%	172
All Subadults	17	21.79%	22	28.21%	21	26.92%	18	23.08%	78
Total	51	19.47%	91	34.73%	69	26.34%	51	19.47%	262
	p-value = 0.4742								
C-Male	11	18.33%	28	46.67%	13	21.67%	8	13.33%	60
C-Female	6	20.69%	8	27.59%	7	24.14%	8	27.59%	29
	p-value = 0.2531								

Table 5.9 – Summary of demographic profile of grave orientations from Ireland. Full Detail in Appendix 1.1.1.
(E/W=East/West; N/S=North/South; NE/SW=Northeast/Southwest; NW/SE=Northwest/Southeast)
One older adult poss. male was recorded as ENE/WSW without an available plan and is counted as both NE/SW and E/W.

The orientation of the grave is usually only discernible for inhumation graves, thus investigating this variable deals with a subset of the burials discussed thus far. It also closely relates to the body's orientation (see section 5.1.3). In Ireland, north/south was the favoured orientation, occurring in over a third of the graves for which this information was available (Table 5.9). This was most common amongst adults as opposed to adolescents and children, where northeast/southwest was preferred. However, the sex data reveal that there was no particular preference for a north/south orientation amongst females, and that this was in fact a heavily male trend, with nearly half of the male burials being arranged in this manner[10].

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[10] Though this just falls outside of a statistically significant difference (p = 0.0856)

Grave Orientation (Scotland)								
	E/W	E/W %	N/S	N/S %	NE/ SW	NE/ SW %	NW/ SE	NW/ SE %	Total
All Adults	30	27.27%	21	19.09%	48	43.64%	11	10.00%	110
All Subadults	12	32.43%	14	37.84%	8	21.62%	3	8.11%	37
Total	46	29.11%	38	24.05%	59	37.34%	15	9.49%	158
<p-value = 0.04661*>								
C-Male	10	29.41%	4	11.76%	15	44.12%	5	14.71%	34
C-Female	7	26.92%	6	23.08%	11	42.31%	2	7.69%	26
<p-value = 0.6159>								

Table 5.10 – Summary of demographic profile of grave orientations from Scotland. Full Detail in Appendix 1.1.2.
(E/W=East/West; N/S=North/South; NE/SW=Northeast/Southwest; NW/SE=Northwest/Southeast)

In Scotland, on the other hand, northeast/southwest was the dominant trend, occurring for nearly half of the adult burials (Table 5.10). However, subadults were more likely to be buried in burials aligned north/south, particularly the child age group. Males and females were buried in the most popular orientation (northeast/southwest) in roughly equal proportions, though there may be hints of a gendered difference in the less popular orientations.

Burial Occupancy by Age										
	Ireland					Scotland				
	S	Sngl %	M	Multi %	Tot.	S	Sngl %	M	Multi %	Tot.
Older Adult	8	38.10%	13	61.90%	21	16	84.21%	3	15.79%	19
Middle Adult	11	47.83%	12	52.17%	23	23	60.53%	13	34.21%	38
Young Adult	24	60.00%	16	40.00%	40	32	76.19%	10	23.81%	42
Adult	75	35.38%	122	57.55%	212	85	61.59%	52	37.68%	138
All Adults	118	39.86%	163	55.07%	296	156	65.82%	78	32.91%	237
Adolescent	13	46.43%	15	53.57%	28	8	57.14%	6	42.86%	14
Child	13	25.49%	38	74.51%	51	15	31.25%	33	68.75%	48
Infant	3	10.00%	27	90.00%	30	3	25.00%	9	75.00%	12
Foetus/ Neonate	0	0.00%	3	100%	3	1	9.09%	10	90.91%	11
Subadult	1	20.00%	4	80.00%	5	2	40.00%	3	60.00%	5
All Subadults	30	25.64%	87	74.36%	117	29	32.22%	61	67.78%	90
Unknown	15	57.69%	6	23.08%	26	35	77.78%	7	15.56%	45
Total	163	37.13%	256	58.31%	439	220	59.14%	146	39.25%	372
	p-value = 0.002105*					p-value = <0.001*				

Table 5.11 – The age profile of those buried in single (S/Sngl) and multiple (M/Multi) graves
('Other' and 'Unknown' categories excluded, n=20 from Ireland, n=6 from Scotland)

Burial Occupancy by Sex										
	Ireland					Scotland				
	S	Sngl %	M	Multi %	Tot.	S	Sngl %	M	Multi %	Tot.
Male	26	42.62%	35	57.38%	61	27	57.45%	20	42.55%	47
Female	13	39.39%	20	60.61%	33	17	70.83%	7	29.17%	24
Prob Male	14	51.85%	13	48.15%	27	17	80.95%	4	19.05%	21
Prob Female	4	36.36%	7	63.64%	11	17	68.00%	8	32.00%	25
Poss Male	13	76.47%	4	23.53%	17	8	66.67%	4	33.33%	12
Poss Female	3	42.86%	4	57.14%	7	6	100%	0	0.00%	6
Unsexed Adult	49	33.56%	82	56.16%	146	64	62.75%	35	34.31%	102
C-Male	40	45.45%	48	54.55%	88	44	64.71%	24	35.29%	68
C-Female	17	38.64%	27	61.36%	44	34	69.39%	15	30.61%	49
	p-value = 0.456					p-value = 0.5961				

Table 5.12 – The sex profile of those buried in single (S/Sngl) and multiple (M/Multi) graves ('Other' and 'Unknown' categories excluded, n=20 from Ireland, n=6 from Scotland)

The combination of individuals in the grave, or their burial singly, provides another potential avenue for differentiation. It is immediately apparent that there is a difference in practice between Scotland and Ireland, with single burial far more common in the former (Table 5.11). As there were three burials in Ireland with a combined 43 occupants, these were excluded to confirm this trend. The subsequent analysis compares those burials which fall into the range of occupants of those in Scotland, that is only those with an MNI of less than 7 (Table 5.13).

In Scotland, there was a clear trend towards the burial of adults singly, and of subadults in multiple graves (Table 5.11). The increased prevalence of single burial amongst adolescents when compared with younger children serves to underline this. Though, interestingly, there are single burials in every age category, including of a neonate (estimated age of birth±2 months), at Cnip Headland, Isle of Lewis (Lelong 2018). Amongst adults in Scotland, females were slightly more likely to be buried singly, though this is not statistically significant (Table 5.12).

	Burial Occupancy by Age									
	Ireland (exc. Burials with MNI > 6)					Scotland				
	S	Sngl %	M	Multi %	Tot.	S	Sngl %	M	Multi %	Tot.
Older Adult	8	40.00%	12	60.00%	20	16	84.21%	3	15.79%	19
Middle Adult	11	47.83%	12	52.17%	23	23	60.53%	13	34.21%	38
Young Adult	24	61.54%	15	38.46%	39	32	76.19%	10	23.81%	42
Adult	75	39.06%	102	53.13%	192	85	61.59%	52	37.68%	138
All Adults	118	43.07%	141	51.46%	274	156	65.82%	78	32.91%	237
Adolescent	13	48.15%	14	51.85%	27	8	57.14%	6	42.86%	14
Child	13	31.71%	28	68.29%	41	15	31.25%	33	68.75%	48
Infant	3	12.00%	22	88.00%	25	3	25.00%	9	75.00%	12
Foetus/ Neonate	0	0.00%	1	100.00%	1	1	9.09%	10	90.91%	11
Subadult	1	20.00%	4	80.00%	5	2	40.00%	3	60.00%	5
All Subadults	30	30.30%	69	69.70%	99	29	32.22%	61	67.78%	90
Unknown	15	65.22%	3	13.04%	23	35	77.78%	7	15.56%	45
Total	163	41.16%	213	53.79%	396	220	59.14%	146	39.25%	372
	p-value = 0.008742*					p-value = <0.001*				

Table 5.13 – The age profile of those buried in single (S/Sngl) and multiple (M/Multi) graves, with the three largest graves from Ireland excluded.
('Other' and 'Unknown' categories excluded, n=20 from Ireland, n=6 from Scotland)

Similarly, the evidence from Ireland shows that adults were more likely to be buried singly. Particularly interesting is the scaled nature of this trend, with infants seemingly less likely than children to receive single burial. However, in both Ireland and Scotland, it must be remembered that amongst a mixed assemblage it is easier to identify subadults of different ages than multiple adults because the recognition of the latter would rely on duplication of skeletal elements rather than simple recognition of size difference. This may mean that the number of adults in multiple burials is artificially depressed. The sex data from Ireland shows the opposite trend to Scotland – a slightly higher prevalence of males in single burials, though again this is not statistically significant.

	Demographic Summary of Average Cist Size	
	Ireland Average Cist Size (cm^3)	Scotland Average Cist Size (cm^3)
All Adults	4480.754	6269.483
All Subadults	4155.903	5373.357
Total	4307.44	6005.088
C-Male	4673.114	6590.0
C-Female	4978.8	4618.786

Table 5.14 – Average cist sizes afforded to summary demographic groups. Full detail in Appendix 1.1.3.

The cist size data reveal that the average cist from Scotland was c.50% larger than its Irish equivalent (Table 5.14). The data from Ireland reveal no significant difference between the size of cist provided to any demographic group. In Scotland, however, there was a difference between the cists afforded to adults and subadults, which may reflect the different sizes of those bodies. There was also a large difference between males and females, however that the average size for males (c.6600 cm^3) was not significantly larger than the average for all adults (c.6300 cm^3, presumably encompassing a large number of currently unrecognised female burials) suggests that this is an artefact of sampling bias.

5.1.2 Grave good analysis

The analysis of grave goods has been a consistent feature of gender archaeology since its inception. While we must be careful about the inferences which we draw, it does give us a good opportunity to get a sense of the overall cultural context in which objects were deposited, and to assess potential instances of artefacts being associated with particular types of people. The most logical place to start is with the question of which burials received grave goods at all (Tables 5.15 & 5.16). Again, we encounter a broad difference here between the regions, with Ireland featuring a higher rate of grave good provision (78.54%) than Scotland (63.61%). In both cases, these numbers demonstrate the limited proportion of the burial population we speak about when discussing differences in grave good provision.

Age Profile with Grave Goods						
	Ireland			Scotland		
	With	Total	%	With	Total	%
Older Adult	18	21	85.71%	12	19	63.16%
Middle Adult	20	23	86.96%	28	38	73.68%
Younger Adult	29	40	72.50%	35	42	83.33%
Adult	160	204	78.43%	77	137	56.20%
All Adults	227	288	78.82%	152	236	64.41%
Adolescent	23	25	92.00%	9	14	64.29%
Child	40	50	80.00%	35	48	72.92%
Infant	21	29	72.41%	7	12	58.33%
Neonate	-	-	-	3	4	75.00%
Foetus	3	3	100.00%	4	7	57.14%
Subadult	3	4	75.00%	3	5	60.00%
All Subadults	90	111	81.08%	61	90	67.78%
Unknown	16	25	64.00%	23	45	51.11%
Total	333	424	78.54%	236	371	63.61%
	p-value = 0.6164			p-value = 0.5675		

Table 5.15 – Grave good provision for the various age groups

Sex Profile with Grave Goods						
	Ireland			Scotland		
	With	Total	%	With	Total	%
Male	53	60	88.33%	34	47	72.34%
Female	25	33	75.76%	17	24	70.83%
prob Male	18	25	72.00%	16	21	76.19%
prob Female	7	11	63.64%	18	25	72.00%
poss Male	11	17	64.71%	9	12	75.00%
poss Female	7	7	100%	2	6	33.33%
Unsexed Adult	111	140	79.29%	58	103	56.31%
C-Male	71	85	83.53%	50	68	73.53%
C-Female	32	44	72.73%	35	49	71.43%
	p-value = 0.1471			p-value = 0.9202		

Table 5.16 – Grave good provision for the various sex groups

The age profiles of those receiving grave goods show little variation in both regions. A slight trend towards provisioning children's graves in Scotland, and away from the provisioning of infants' graves, may be relevant, though the total numbers involved are too small to make this a statistically significant difference. It is also of interest that middle and older adults were slightly more likely to receive grave goods in Ireland, while younger adults were more likely to receive them in Scotland. Males received grave goods slightly more often than females in

both regions, though the fact that children in Scotland received grave goods more often than adults might lead us to question whether this was necessarily a marker of status.

Demographic Summary with Pottery						
	Ireland			Scotland		
	With	Total	%	With	Total	%
All Adults	185	283	65.37%	91	236	38.56%
Young Adult	27	40	67.50%	24	42	57.14%
All Subadults	78	109	71.56%	36	90	40.00%
Total	276	417	66.19%	143	371	38.54%
	p-value = 0.2427			p-value = 0.8115		
C-Male	56	83	67.47%	31	68	45.59%
C-Female	28	43	65.12%	21	49	42.86%
	p-value = 0.7905			p-value = 0.7693		

Table 5.17 – Summary of pottery provision for the main demographic groups. See Appendix 1.1.4 for full detail.

While pottery was the most frequent grave good in both regions, there was a large difference in the proportion receiving it in Ireland (66.19%) and Scotland (38.54%) (Table 5.17)[11]. This suggests pottery was more integral to practice at the graveside in Ireland. It is interesting, then, that the rate of pottery provision was fairly consistent across age and sex categories in both regions. An exception was the increased rate of deposition with Young Adults in Scotland (57.14%, p=0.00635*). Other slight variations by age category (see Appendix 1.1, Table A1.8) were not statistically significant.

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[11] One grave ('LOT2', Loth Road, Sanday, Orkney, Scotland) contained a steatite urn – although not made of ceramic, its role in the grave as an urn means that it was counted amongst the pottery. However, it is possible that the unusual material, and its differing construction processes, produced different affects for the community than a ceramic urn.

Demographic Summary with Worked Stone						
	Ireland			Scotland		
	With	Total	%	With	Total	%
All Adults	57	267	21.35%	70	235	29.79%
All Subadults	25	105	23.81%	30	89	33.71%
Adolescent	10	23	43.48%	3	14	21.43%
Child	9	48	18.75%	22	48	45.83%
Total	89	395	22.53%	112	369	30.35%
	p-value = 0.6063			p-value = 0.4953		
C-Male	18	82	21.95%	24	68	35.29%
C-Female	10	40	25.00%	18	49	36.73%
	p-value = 0.707			p-value = 0.8727		

Table 5.18 – Summary of worked stone provision for the main demographic groups. See Appendix 1.1.5 for full detail.

The next most common grave good in both regions was worked stone (Table 5.18), generally comprising small flint tools or flakes. In Ireland, adolescents were significantly more likely to be buried with worked stone (p=0.01322*), though the low number of identified adolescents certainly provides a caveat here. Similarly, in Scotland, there was a fairly clear increased association between children and worked stone (p=0.01238*). Despite these subtle variations by age category, there were no significant differences between males and females in either region.

Demographic Summary with Animal Remains						
	Ireland			Scotland		
	With	Total	%	With	Total	%
All Adults	41	269	15.24%	46	235	19.57%
All Subadults	21	107	19.63%	14	89	15.73%
Total	66	399	16.54%	63	369	17.07%
	p-value = 0.3012			p-value = 0.4266		
C-Male	15	82	18.29%	15	68	22.06%
C-Female	6	41	14.63%	13	49	26.53%
	p-value = 0.6112			p-value = 0.576		

Table 5.19 – Summary of animal remains provision for the main demographic groups. See Appendix 1.1.6 for full detail.

Animal remains occur in roughly similar proportions in both Ireland and Scotland (Table 5.19) and may represent remains from funerary feasting, offerings, or symbolic inclusions. There were slight variations amongst the age groups in both regions, but these were not statistically significant (see Appendix 1.1, Table A1.15). The numbers buried with animal remains are so

small that patterns are difficult to verify in this way. The sex data are also difficult to interpret, though there may be a slightly increased association with males in Ireland and with females in Scotland, this is again not statistically significant. Looking at the individual incidences within the database, however, there was a preponderance of burnt animal remains in Scotland, while the remains from Ireland were largely unburnt. There may, then, be some patterning associated with these practices representing differences in how funerary practice was conducted.

Demographic Summary with Metal						
	Ireland			Scotland		
	With	Total	%	With	Total	%
All Adults	19	270	7.04%	33	235	14.04%
All Subadults	4	105	3.81%	11	89	12.36%
Adolescent	4	23	17.39%	3	14	21.43%
Other Subadult	0	81	0.00%	8	75	10.67%
Total	23	398	5.78%	46	369	12.47%
	p-value = 0.2422			p-value = 0.6931		
C-Male	7	84	8.33%	10	68	14.71%
C-Female	6	41	14.63%	7	49	14.29%
	<p-value = 0.2786>			p-value = 0.9493		

Table 5.20 – Summary of metal provision for the main demographic groups. See Appendix 1.1.7 for full detail.

Metal grave goods are a particularly contentious point, as they have often been linked to ideas of status in the grave (e.g. Harding 2008; Mount 1997a; Sheridan et al. 2013; Treherne 1995). It is striking that metal is unevenly distributed between the regions (Table 5.20), occurring more than twice as frequently in Scotland, where it appears in 30 burials (out of 283), than in Ireland (16 out of 272). However, 15 of the Scottish cases were of green staining of bones with no trace of the metal artefacts surviving, potentially removed and recirculated during the Bronze Age. A recent analysis of cremations from Scotland has found a surprisingly high incidence (73%) of green staining amongst 75 burials (Medina-Pettersson 2013). Although most of those burials did not feature in this database, it suggests that incidences of green staining are underrepresented amongst burials from Scotland, and potentially also from Ireland, where just four such incidences were recognised.

The demographic breakdown (Table 5.20) reveals important differences between Ireland and Scotland in how metal was deployed in the grave. In Ireland, metal was absent from any grave in this dataset which contained a child, infant or neonate. Adolescents, however, were buried

with metal artefacts. In fact, adolescents were the most likely to receive metal in both regions, though the low overall numbers make this difficult to verify statistically. In Scotland, on the other hand, metal was spread across the age and sex groups fairly evenly. Females were more likely than males to receive metal in Ireland, but this was not statistically significant. It is still worth noting, though, to counter any narratives of a particular association between metal and men in the grave.

Demographic Summary with Bone Artefacts						
	Ireland			Scotland		
	With	Total	%	With	Total	%
All Adults	15	267	5.62%	17	235	7.23%
All Subadults	9	107	8.57%	10	89	11.24%
Total	24	395	6.08%	28	369	7.59%
	p-value = 0.2966			p-value = 0.2447		
C-Male	5	82	6.10%	6	68	8.82%
C-Female	1	40	2.50%	4	49	8.16%
	<p-value = 0.3883>			<p-value = 0.8997>		

Table 5.21 – Summary of bone artefact provision for the main demographic groups. See Appendix 1.1.8 for full detail.

Artefacts made from worked bone (here including antler) are amongst the rarer grave goods in both Ireland and Scotland (Table 5.21). The low numbers involved do not allow the identification of any broad trends, though it is clear that, similar to other grave good types, these artefacts were not used exclusively for any group of people.

Demographic Summary with Natural Stone						
	Ireland			Scotland		
	With	Total	%	With	Total	%
All Adults	12	268	4.48%	14	235	5.96%
All Subadults	6	105	5.71%	4	89	4.49%
Total	19	396	4.80%	20	369	5.42%
	p-value = 0.6162			<p-value = 0.6078>		
C-Male	5	82	6.10%	7	68	10.29%
C-Female	2	40	5.00%	1	49	2.04%
	<p-value = 0.8067>			<p-value = 0.08097>		

Table 5.22 – Summary of natural stone provision for the main demographic groups. See Appendix 1.1.9 for full detail.

The low overall numbers of natural stone inclusions similarly make the identification of trends difficult (Table 5.22). However, there is slight evidence of a tendency towards the burials of males with natural stone in Scotland (7:1). There is more subtle evidence of a gendered dimension to Irish practice, where four of the five inclusions of natural stone with males were

of fossil-bearing stones, and these were the only four instances of fossils in Ireland in this database. In Scotland, no fossils accompanied the burials in this database, except a bead fashioned from a crinoid fossil which accompanied a child's burial at Holly Road, Leven.

Demographic Summary with Beads						
	Ireland			Scotland		
	With	Total	%	With	Total	%
All Adults	7	267	2.62%	17	235	7.23%
All Subadults	3	105	2.86%	6	90	6.67%
Total	11	395	2.78%	25	370	6.76%
	<p-value = 0.8647>			p-value = 0.8583		
C-Male	4	82	4.88%	0	68	0.00%
C-Female	3	40	7.50%	6	49	12.24%
	<p-value = 0.6278>			<p-value = 0.003051*>		

Table 5.23 – Summary of bead provision for the main demographic groups. See Appendix 1.1.10 for full detail.

The deposition of beads provides a second example of a general rule within this dataset, alongside the absence of metal in subadult graves in Ireland (Table 5.23). Here, the 'rule' applies to Scotland, where males were not buried in graves with beads. However, two of the 16 bead-bearing graves were of single children (one aged 3–5 at West Water Reservoir, and another the crinoid bead with a child aged 6.5–12.5 at Holly Road, Leven). This suggests that the strong adult female link did not preclude other situationally appropriate associations. Furthermore, two burnt bone beads accompanied a possible male at West Water Reservoir, offering a tantalising hint that the gendered rule could sometimes be transgressed. Six of the 16 bead-bearing graves contained full necklaces, often seen as a female item (e.g. Sheridan and Shortland 2003; Woodward and Hunter 2015). One did accompany an adult female, though four were with unsexed adults and the sixth with the aforementioned child at West Water Reservoir.

Interestingly, this relationship did not extend to Ireland[12], where beads were found in graves with both males and females. Five Irish bead-bearing graves contained multiple individuals[13], only two of these containing full necklaces. The only single burial was the famous adolescent male burial with a composite necklace at Tara, Co. Meath. The focus on multiple burials might

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[12] One grave (Tomfarney, Co. Wexford) was excluded from the Irish analysis as its 17 occupants accompanied by a single clay bead would have significantly shifted the picture.
[13] Including Tomfarney.

lead us to consider whether the role of beads in highlighting links, between the living and the dead, or between the dead themselves, was given primacy in Ireland.

5.1.3   Body orientation

As we have seen, the arrangement of the body within the grave has frequently been investigated as a marker of gender difference (e.g. Shepherd 2012). Such patterns are usually reported in the format Lying On/Head Direction/Facing/Sex (e.g. LESM = lying on the left, head to the east, facing south, male). For ease of comparison, I will follow this order here. It is worth stressing that the numbers here are quite low; the largest category, which direction the head was in, is represented by 69 skeletons in Scotland, and 61 in Ireland.

Lying On (Ireland)							
	R	Right%	Left	Left %	B	Back %	Total
All Adults	19	48.72%	16	41.03%	4	10.26%	39
All Subadults	9	75.00%	2	16.67%	1	8.33%	12
Total	28	54.90%	18	35.29%	5	9.80%	51
<p-value = 0.2551>							
C-Male	9	40.91%	8	36.36%	5	22.73%	22
C-Female	9	69.23%	4	30.77%	0	0.00%	13
<p-value = 0.1163>							

Table 5.24 – Summary of the demographic profile of those buried lying on a particular side of the body in Ireland. One adolescent male was recorded as Back/Right and is thus recorded in both categories. Full detail in Appendix 1.1.11.

Our analysis is immediately complicated by the fact that the Irish evidence demonstrates that burial lying on the back, usually in a flexed or tightly bound position, was also practiced for inhumations during the period (Table 5.24). Interestingly, all five cases of this were of males. However, when the body lay on a side, the right was favoured for males, females and subadults, though to varying degrees.

Lying On (Scotland)							
	R	Right%	Left	Left %	B	Back %	Total
All Adults	18	43.90%	23	56.10%	0	0.00%	41
All Subadults	5	55.56%	3	33.33%	1	11.11%	9
Total	24	47.06%	26	50.98%	1	1.96%	51
<p-value = 0.06364>							
C-Male	4	19.05%	17	80.95%	0	0.00%	21
C-Female	7	58.33%	5	41.67%	0	0.00%	12
<p-value = 0.02128*>							

Table 5.25 – Summary of the demographic profile of those buried lying on a particular side of the body in Scotland. Full detail in Appendix 1.1.12.

In Scotland, burial on the back was almost entirely absent, and both right-sided and left-sided burials occurred in roughly equal numbers (Table 5.25). As previously identified (Shepherd 2012), there is a significant correlation between sex and the side the body was laid on. Males were much more likely to be buried on their left, in line with the Beaker-associated pattern, however females were only slightly more likely to be buried on their right. In both cases there were numbers of both males and females who were buried on the non-dominant side. We will return to this later to assess whether this is an artefact of time and the progression away from Beaker burials.

(a)   (b)
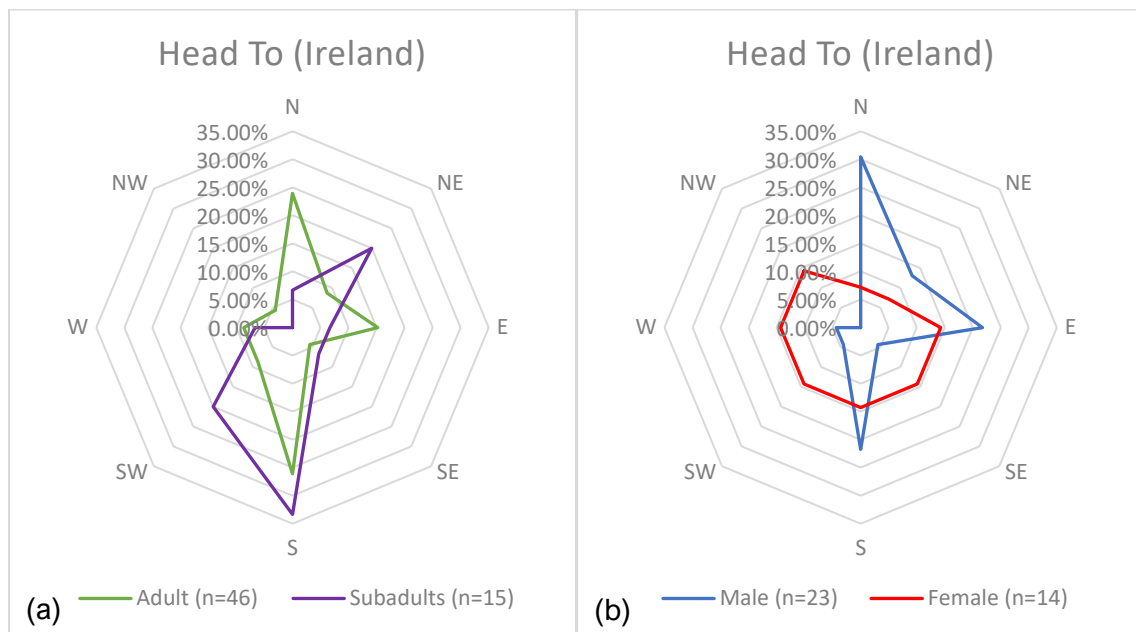
Figure 5.1 – Radar charts depicting the direction the head was oriented towards for summary age (a) and sex (b) groups in Ireland.

In order to assess the direction to which the head was oriented, the data were plotted on radar charts. This gives a graphical representation of the propensity for the head to be buried in each direction, and enables comparison between demographic groups. The detailed tables are provided in Appendix 1.2.

In Ireland, there was a spread across all compass directions, but north and south were the most common (Fig. 5.1a). Males seem to cluster in the quarter of the compass between north and east (combined over 65%), but nearly 22% were also oriented to the south (Fig. 5.1b). Females were more evenly spread, though north and northeast were the least common. Given the low number of female burials (n=14), it is difficult to give too much weight to these trends.
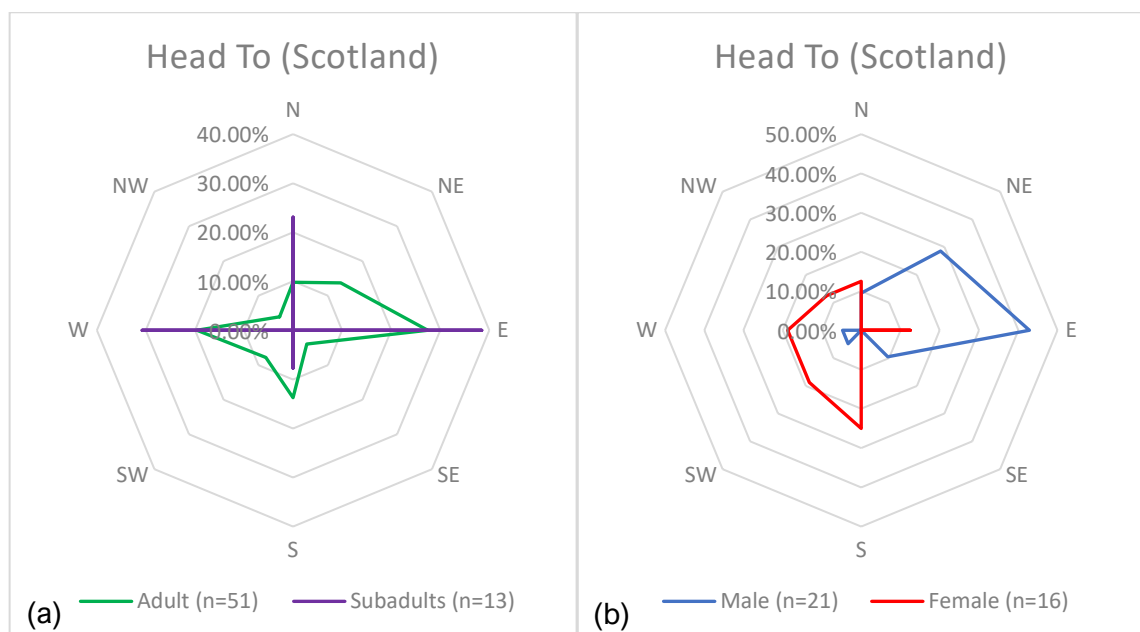
Figure 5.2 – Radar charts depicting the direction the head was oriented towards for summary age (a) and sex (b) groups in Scotland.

The Scottish burials demonstrate lower variation, with west and east the most common orientations among adults and subadults (Fig. 5.2a). The sex data is particularly striking, with males generally orientated to the east or northeast, with females in the opposite quarter of the compass, from south to west (Fig. 5.2b). It is worth noting that there were still some oppositions and overlaps in these trends, including two (of 16) females with their heads to the east.
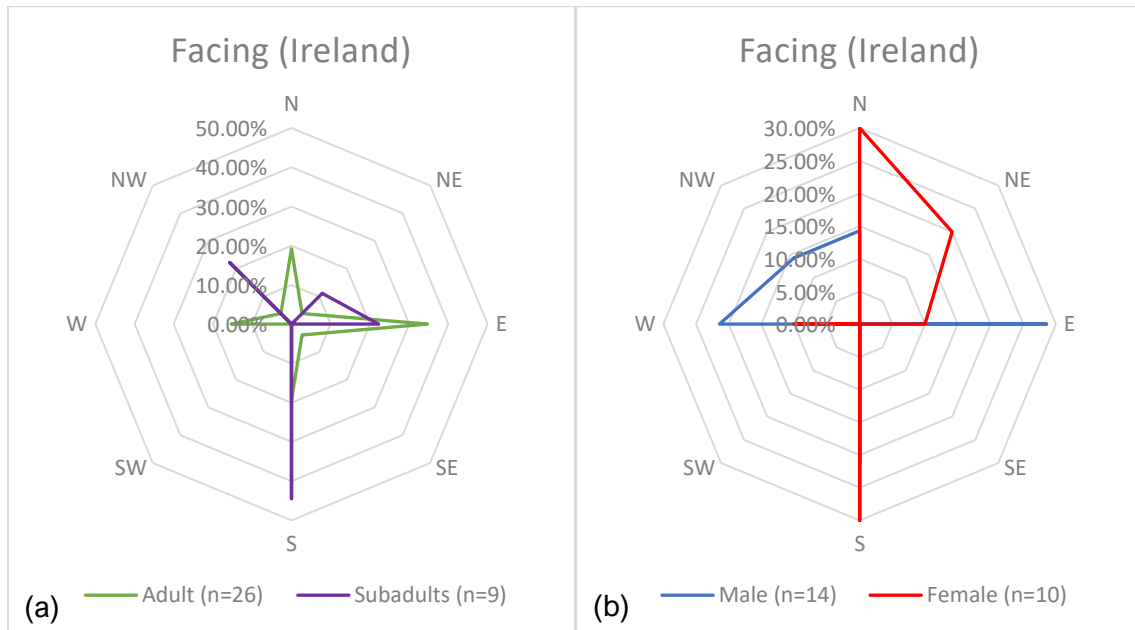
Figure 5.3 – Radar charts depicting the direction the head was facing for summary age (a) and sex (b) groups in Ireland.

In terms of the direction that skulls were facing, the most popular directions in Ireland were south (c. 25%) and east (c. 31%), though variation is in evidence (Fig. 5.3a). Even with a low sample number the sex data show fairly broad variation (Fig. 5.3b).

In Scotland, the picture is quite different, with an overwhelming trend towards facing south (Fig. 5.4a). This was the most common trend amongst both males and females, though there was more variation amongst the, admittedly small, group of females (Fig. 5.4b).
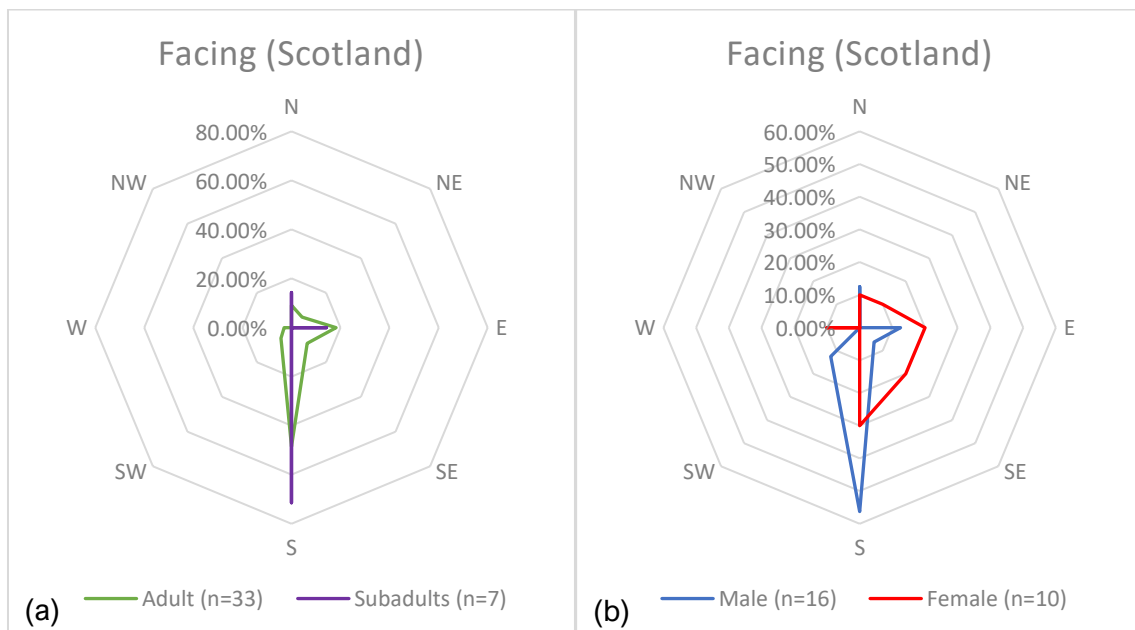
Figure 5.4 – Radar charts depicting the direction the head was facing for summary age (a) and sex (b) groups in Scotland.

Taken overall then, there is much to suggest that the Beaker-associated pattern of orientation may hold up under further scrutiny, but, as expected, it cannot be said to be an overarching rule for all Scottish burials throughout the period. For Ireland, there may be some trends, but they do not conform with what was happening in Scotland. Thus, the analysis so far has left us with some hints of differentiation in the grave that require further investigation.

5.2   Enumerating the trends

At this point, it may prove useful to attempt to summarise what has been identified thus far, as it is easy to become lost in the melee of tables and figures. The most striking trends which we have encountered are:

1. Males were more likely to be buried, particularly in Ireland
2. Children were preferentially cremated, particularly in Scotland
3. Subadults were more likely to be buried in multiple graves in both regions
4. Males may have received grave goods more often in Ireland, but this is not significant. In Scotland, the numbers seem the same.
5. Young adults were more likely to be buried with pottery in Scotland.
6. Children were more likely to be buried with worked stone in Scotland, while adolescents were more likely to be buried with it in Ireland.
7. Females may have been more likely to receive metal in Ireland
8. In Scotland, natural stone seems to have been associated with males
9. Male burials favoured a north/south orientation in Ireland
10. Scottish males were often buried on their left side
11. Scottish burials often show a gender disparity in the orientation of the head in the grave

These 11 trends can be tracked through time and will form the focus for discussion below. The following four trends are close to absolute and thus cannot be investigated for variation through time:

12. Females with a foetus/neonate were nearly always cremated
13. Metal was not placed in graves containing children or younger people in Ireland
14. The rare addition of fossils to Irish graves was always in association with a male body
15. Male adults were not buried with beads in Scotland (though a possible male may be an exception)

Although these trends focus on difference between burials, it is worth reminding ourselves that there is much that was similar between the burials, and many cases where no difference between the demographic groups could be seen. Interestingly, there were also exceptions to nearly all of the trends identified. Thus far I have also treated the entire period as if it were one bloc, resulting in homogenising practice across the thousand years of the period. I will next attempt to break this up somewhat, identifying ways in which these trends change over time.

5.3   Chronological breakdown of burial data

Due to limitations of space, I will focus here primarily on the previously identified trends. At the end of the section a couple of additional points arising from a chronological breakdown of the data will be emphasised. More complete data on change over time is contained in Appendix 1.3. As mentioned previously (Chapter 4), the graphs here are not true representations of quantities over time but rather indicators of a broad sequence of change. The date labels on these graphs refer only to the radiocarbon date range which qualifies a burial for inclusion in the category rather than to any real calendar years, though they are of course loosely connected to this. Furthermore, as is fairly obvious, the sample size shrinks here, but a good coverage of radiocarbon dates, and particularly Brindley's pottery model for Ireland, ensure that 315 (of 439) Irish skeletons and 188 (of 369) Scottish burials are included. The three modelled groups are displayed on each figure with a single, averaged trend line. The modelled groups are '95' (the radiocarbon date at 95.4% certainty), '68' (the radiocarbon date at 68.2% certainty) and 'p' (Brindley's Bayesian model of pottery dates). One final caveat is that the sample sizes at the start and end of the period are often very small, thus sudden rises or falls at either end must be treated with extreme caution. With all that said, let us return to the trends above.

5.3.1 Males were more likely to be buried, particularly in Ireland
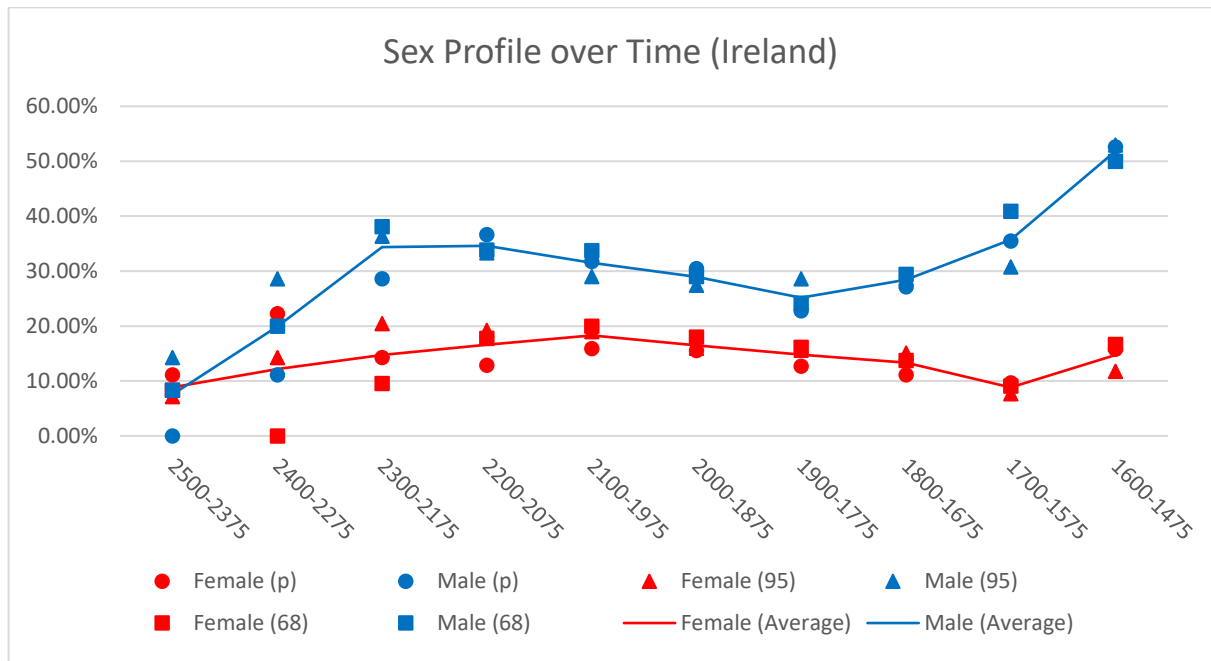
Figure 5.5 – The change in the proportion of male and female burials over time in Ireland.

The slight bias towards the burial of males is persistent over time in Ireland (Fig. 5.5). This seems more pronounced at the end of the period, but a small sample size at this extreme should encourage caution. In Scotland, however, the disparity between males and females is particularly pronounced at the beginning of the period (Fig. 5.6). In the second half of the period (roughly post 2000 BC), the rate of male and female burials is broadly comparable. All of the caveats related to the comparative ease of sexing male skeletons of course still apply.
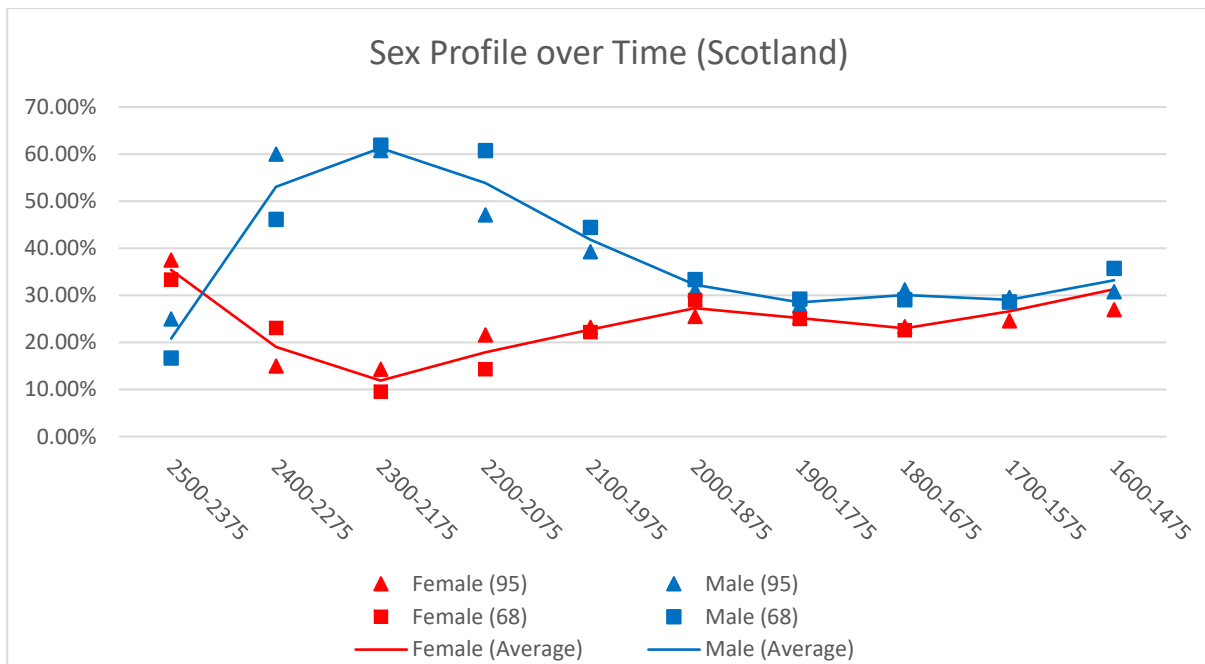
Figure 5.6 – The change in the proportion of male and female burials over time in Scotland.

5.3.2 Children were preferentially cremated, particularly in Scotland
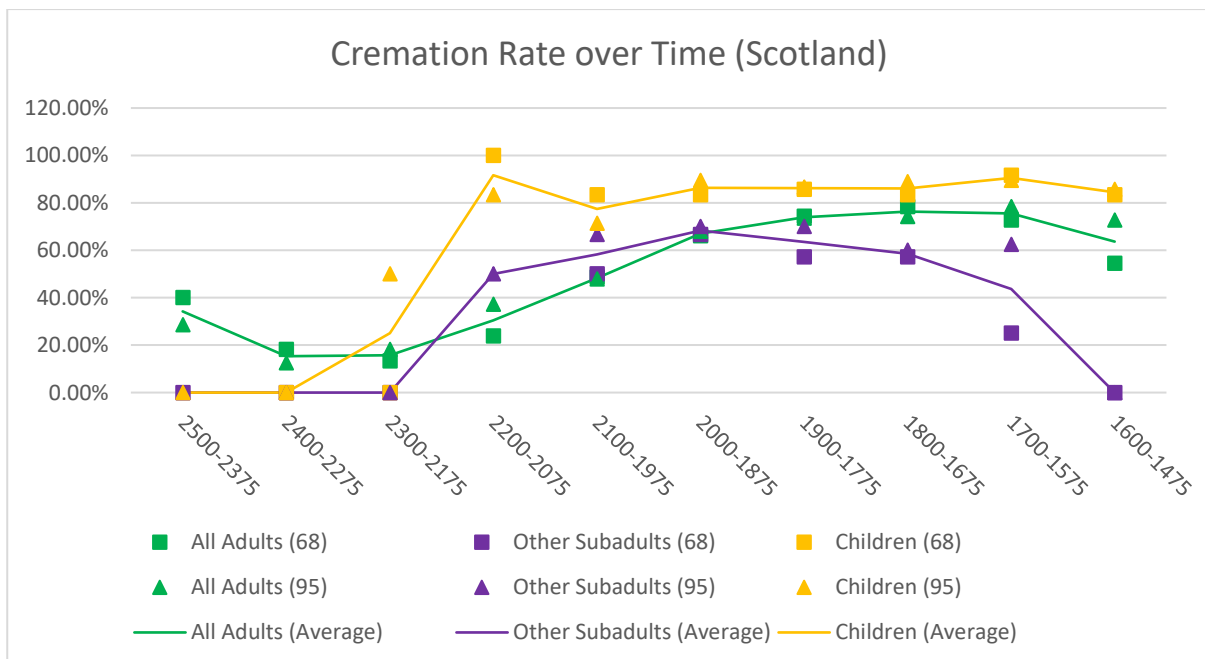
Figure 5.7 – The change in the rate of cremation of age groups over time in Scotland.

A larger proportion of children were cremated throughout much of the period in Scotland, though the figures were fairly closely parallel (Fig. 5.11). There is some suggestion in these models of an earlier uptake of cremation for child burials; though this is impossible to confirm from this dataset, it could produce an overall imbalance when viewing the period as a totality.

5.3.3 *Subadults were more likely to be buried in multiple graves in both regions*
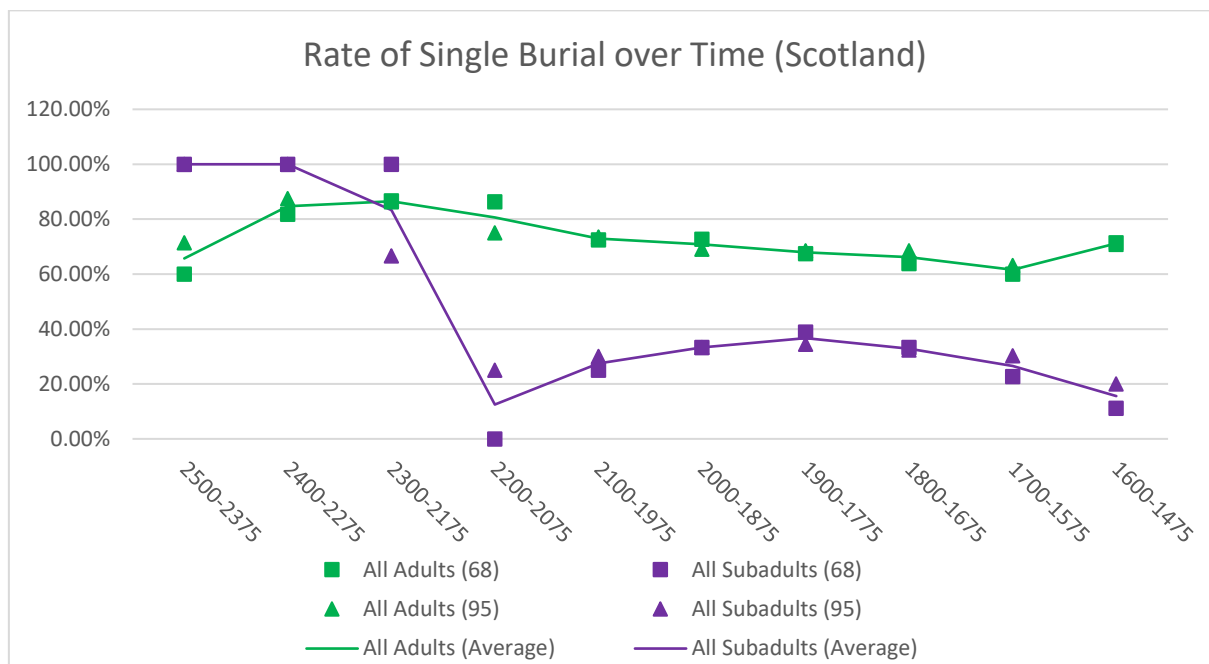
Figure 5.8 – The change in the rate of single burial of summary age groups over time in Scotland.

Excepting the earliest date ranges, subadults were consistently less likely to receive single burial in Scotland (Fig. 5.8). In this instance, the earliest date ranges feature just two subadult burials which may be significantly biasing this early phase.
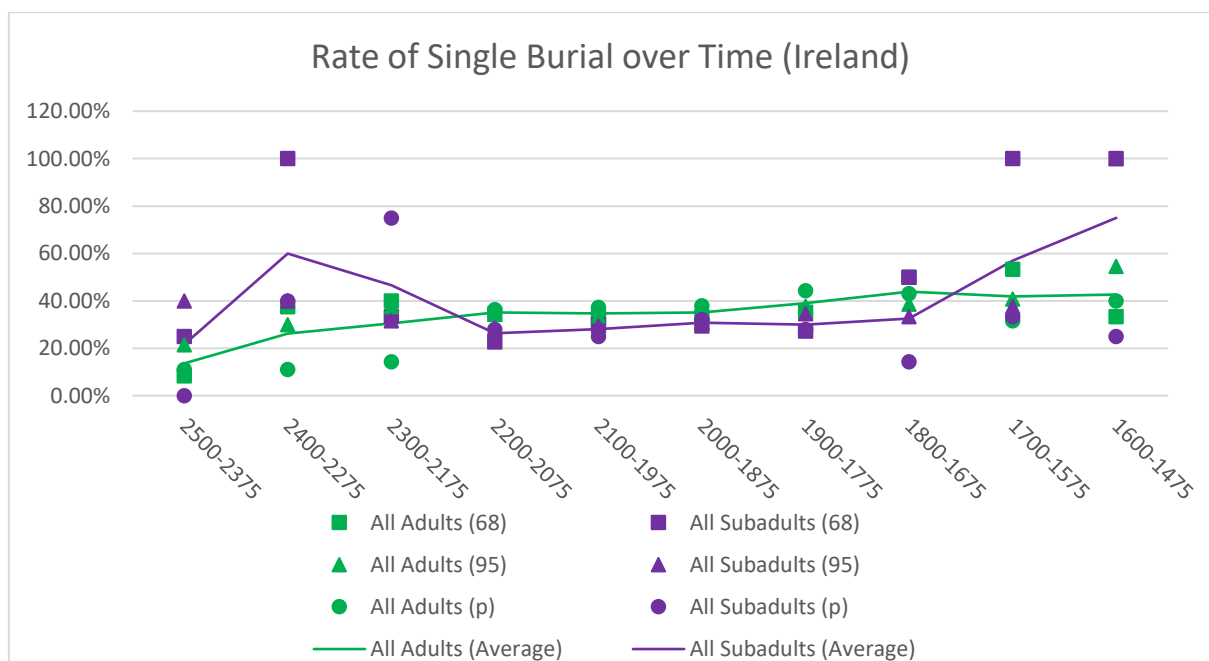
Figure 5.9 – The change in the rate of single burial of summary age groups over time in Ireland.

In Ireland, however, the discrepancy between adults and subadults is difficult to detect over time (Fig. 5.9). In the middle time ranges, with larger sample sizes, subadults do receive single

burial slightly less frequently. The very low population outliers of single burials at the end and start of the period somewhat disrupt that picture.

5.3.4 Males may have received grave goods more often in Ireland, but this is not significant. In Scotland, the numbers seem the same.
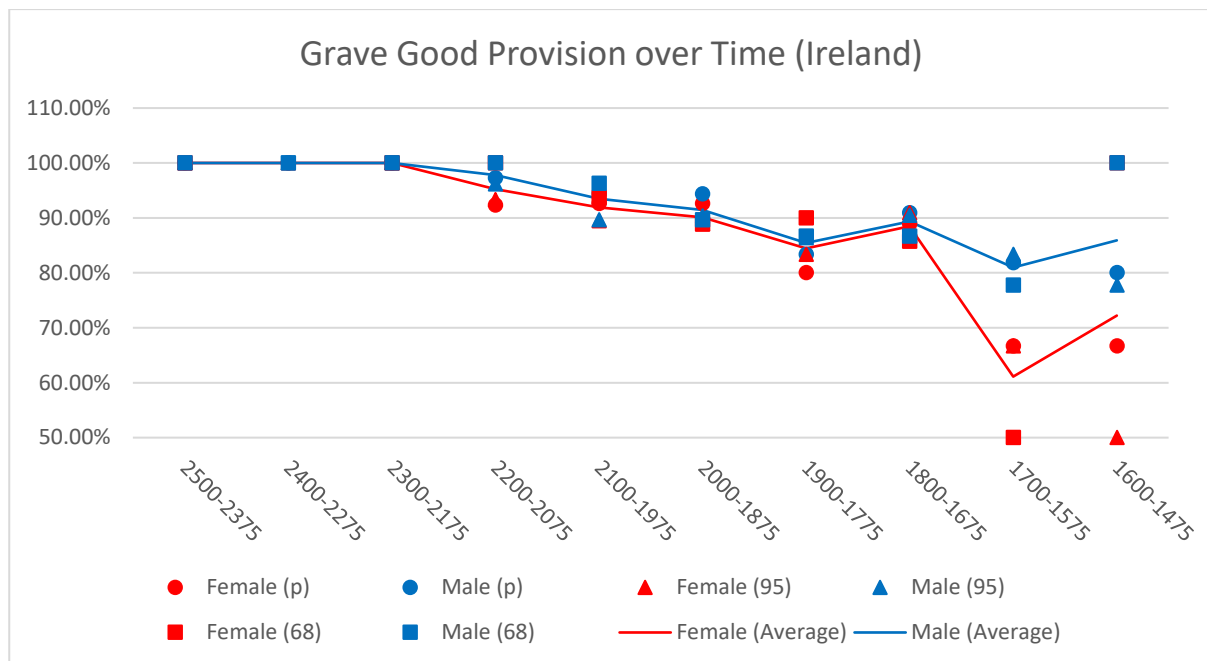
Figure 5.10 – The change in the rate of grave good provision to males and females over time in Ireland.

In Ireland, the proportion of burial with grave goods declined together for both males and females throughout the period (Fig. 5.10). There is a divergence in the latest time ranges, but the numbers involved here are small. In Scotland, there was a slightly higher rate of grave goods accompanying females for most of the period (Fig. 5.11), that this does not translate into a statistically significant difference overall suggests that the undated burials skew in the opposite direction.
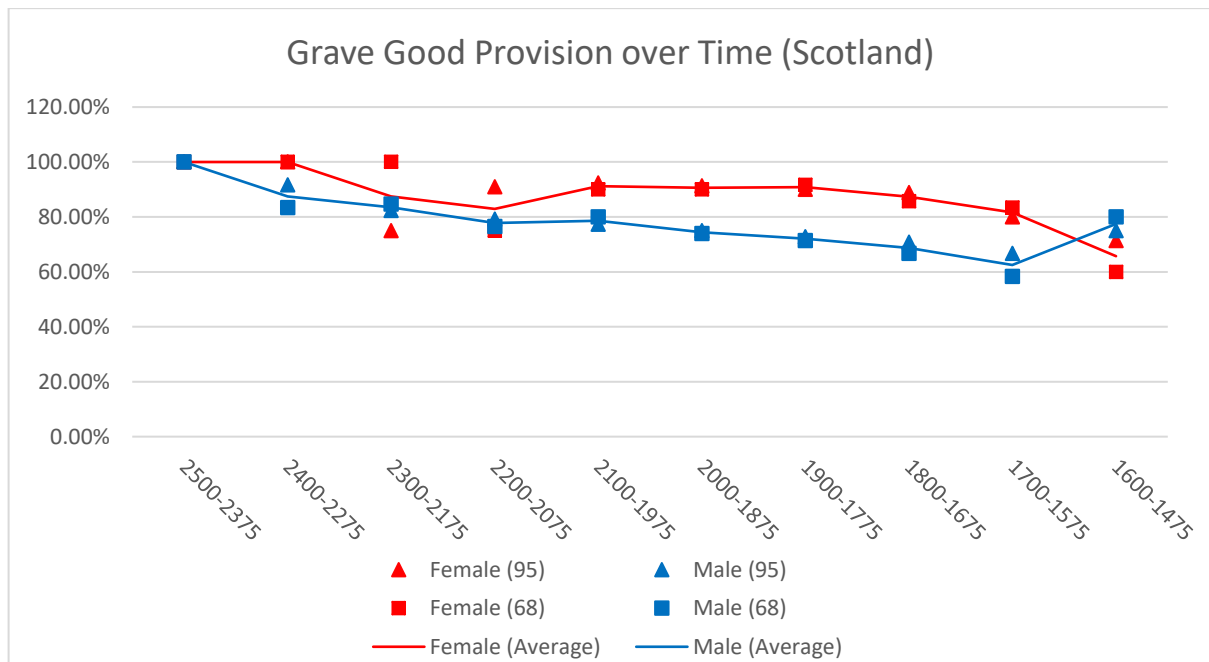
Figure 5.11 – The change in the rate of grave good provision to males and females over time in Ireland.

5.3.5   Young adults were more likely to be buried with pottery in Scotland.
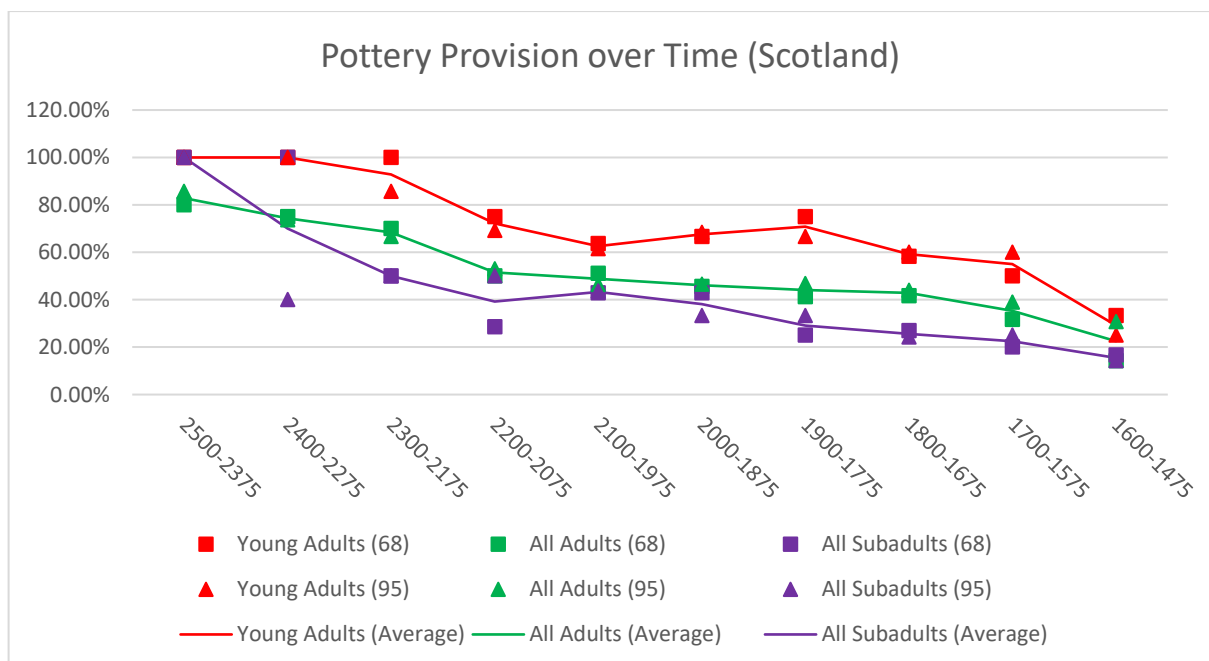
Figure 5.12 – The change in the rate of pottery provision to summary age groups over time in Scotland.

A comparison of young adult graves with those of all adults and subadults (Fig. 5.12) shows the generally higher level of pottery provision is consistent throughout the period. However, when compared with the other ages of adults (Fig. 5.13), young adults are not discernible from older adults, though both received pottery more often than middle-aged adults, except towards the end of the period.
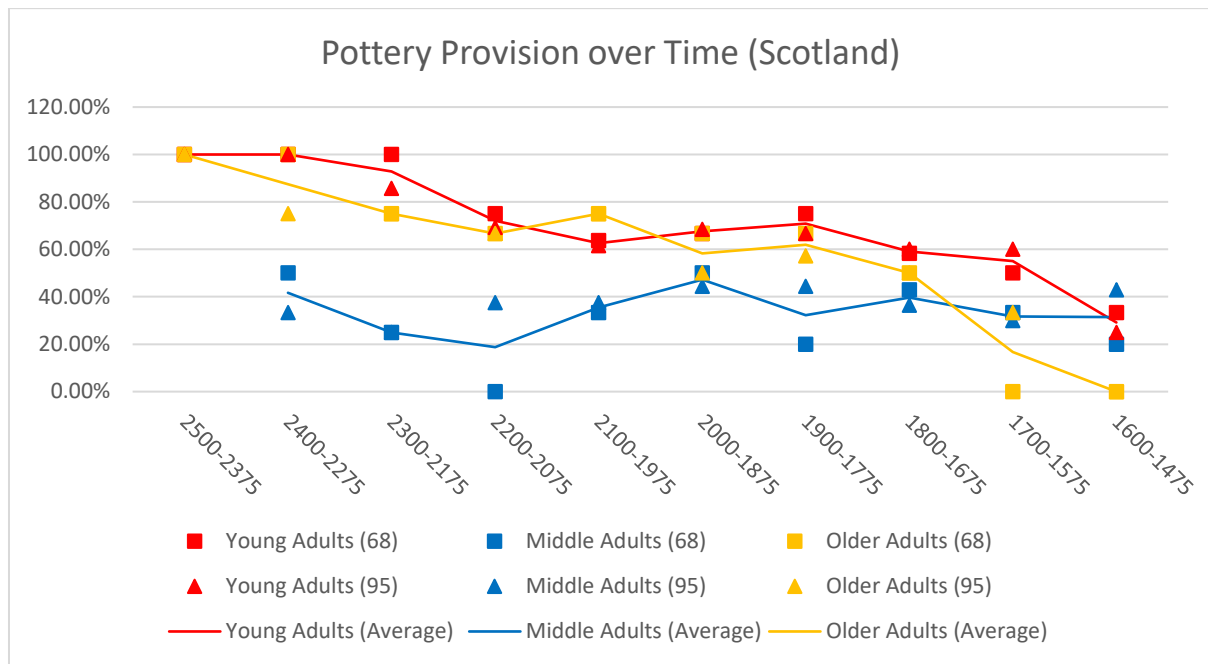
Figure 5.13 – The change in the rate of pottery provision to adult age groups over time in Scotland.

5.3.6   Children were more likely to be buried with worked stone in Scotland, while adolescents were more likely to be buried with it in Ireland.
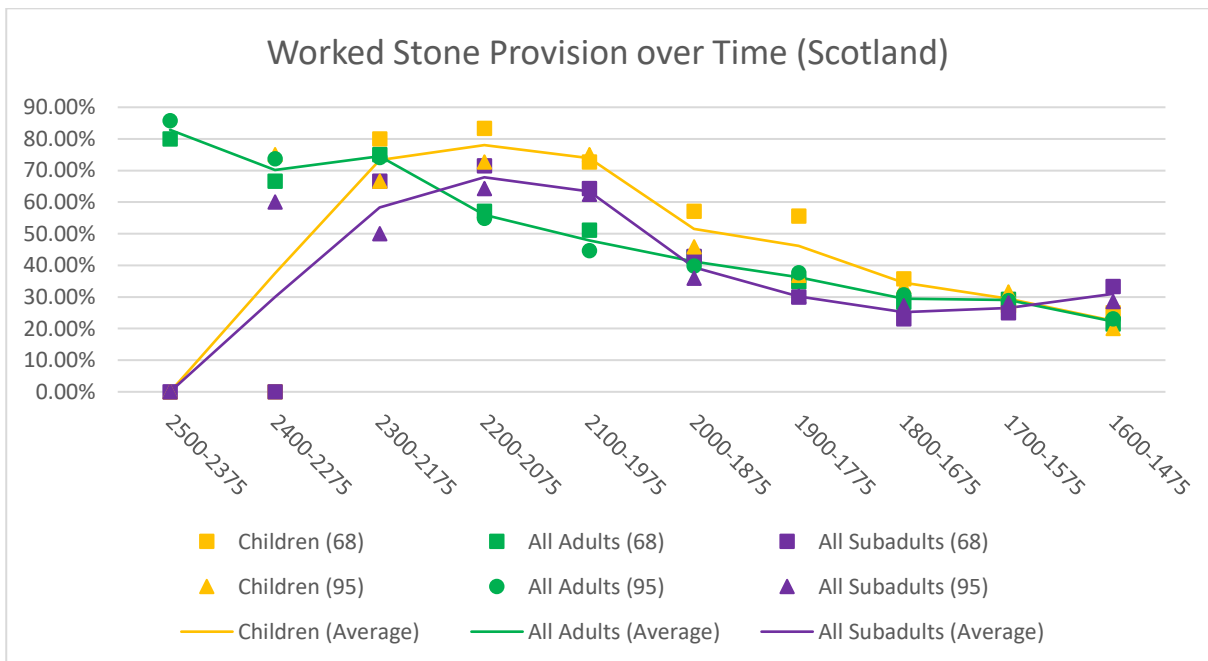
Figure 5.14 – The change in the rate of worked stone provision to summary age groups over time in Scotland
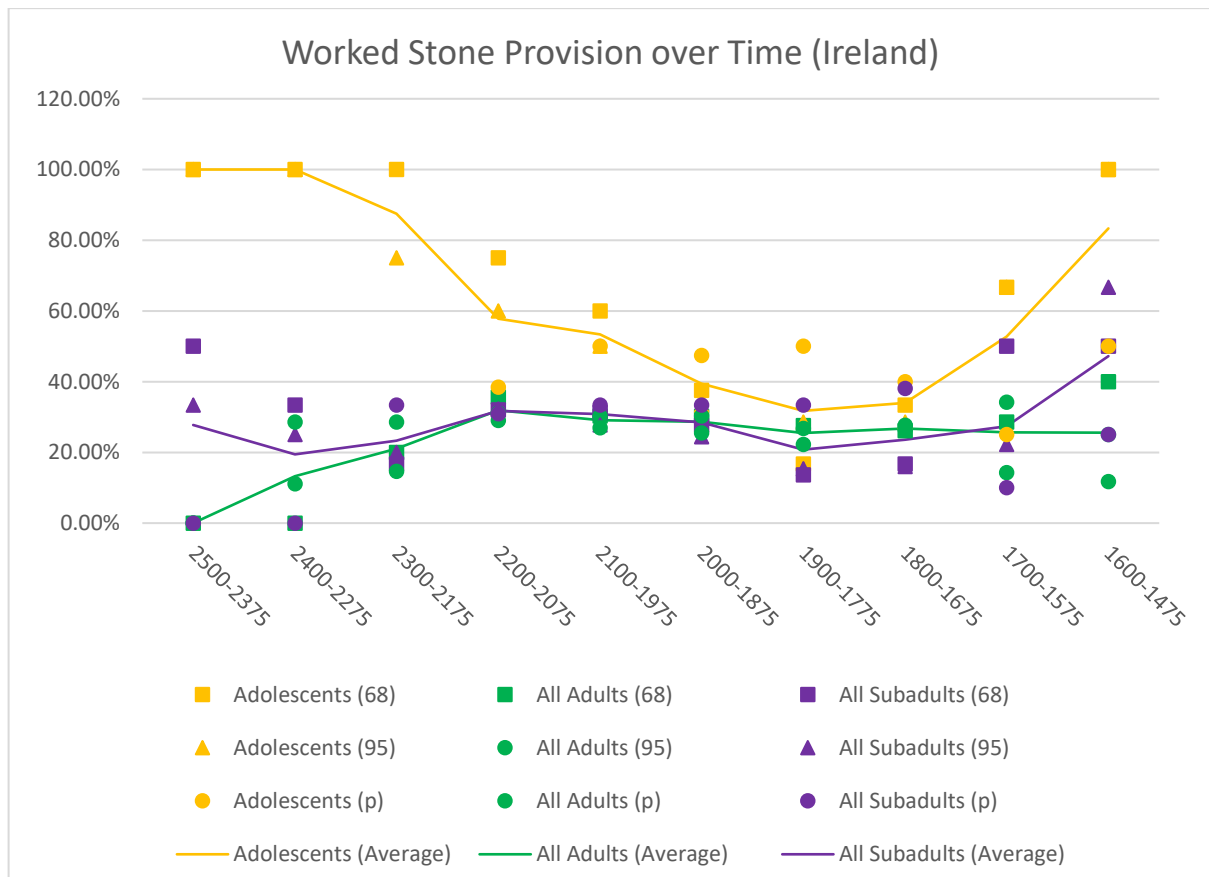
Figure 5.15 – The change in the rate of worked stone provision to summary age groups over time in Ireland

In Scotland, burial with worked stone seems to decrease generally over time (Fig. 5.14). Children seem to have been slightly more likely to be buried with it in most periods, though stretched out in this way this relationship would of course lose its statistical significance.

In Ireland, the levels of worked stone provision remain relatively consistent over time (Fig. 5.15). Adolescents received more worked stone in most periods, though the small numbers in the early and late time ranges exaggerate this picture. In both cases, the numbers buried with worked stone are too small to allow firm inferences to be drawn from these pictures.

5.3.7 Females may have been more likely to receive metal in Ireland
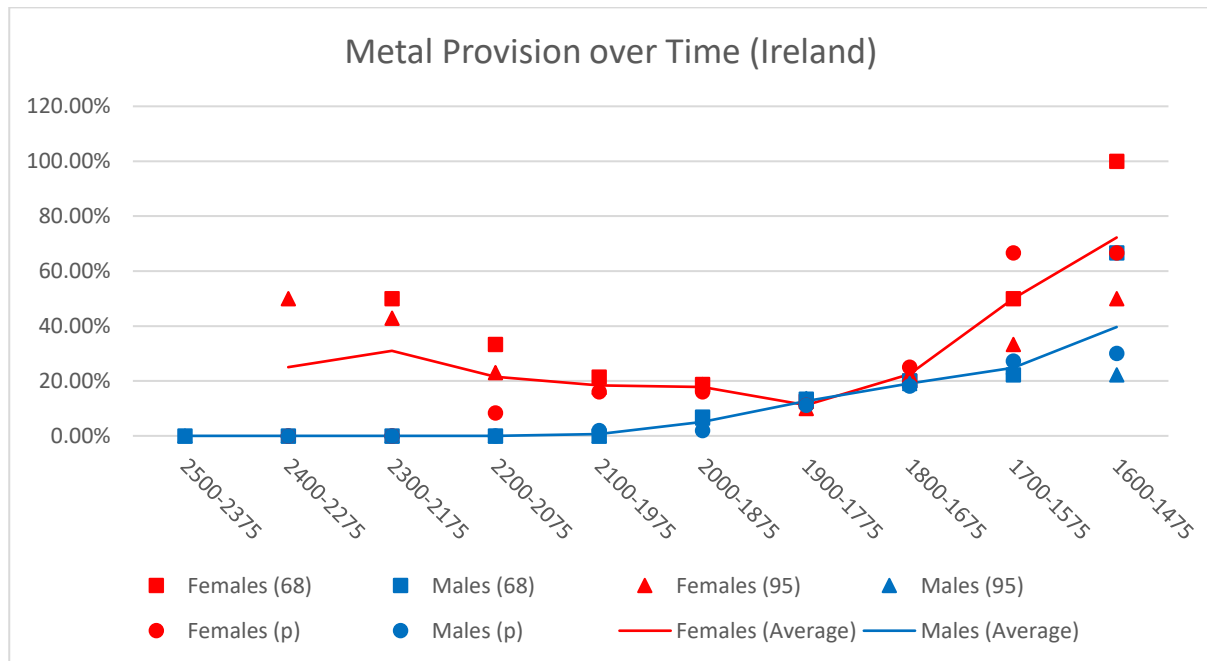
Figure 5.16 – The change in the rate of metal artefact provision to males and females over time in Ireland

In the early part of the period, there are several time ranges in which only females were buried with metal (Fig. 5.16). Later, both males and females were buried with metal, and the numbers concerned in the final stages are so small that we should be wary of saying anything more than both males and females were buried with metal by this stage.

5.3.8 In Scotland, natural stone seems to have been placed with males more often
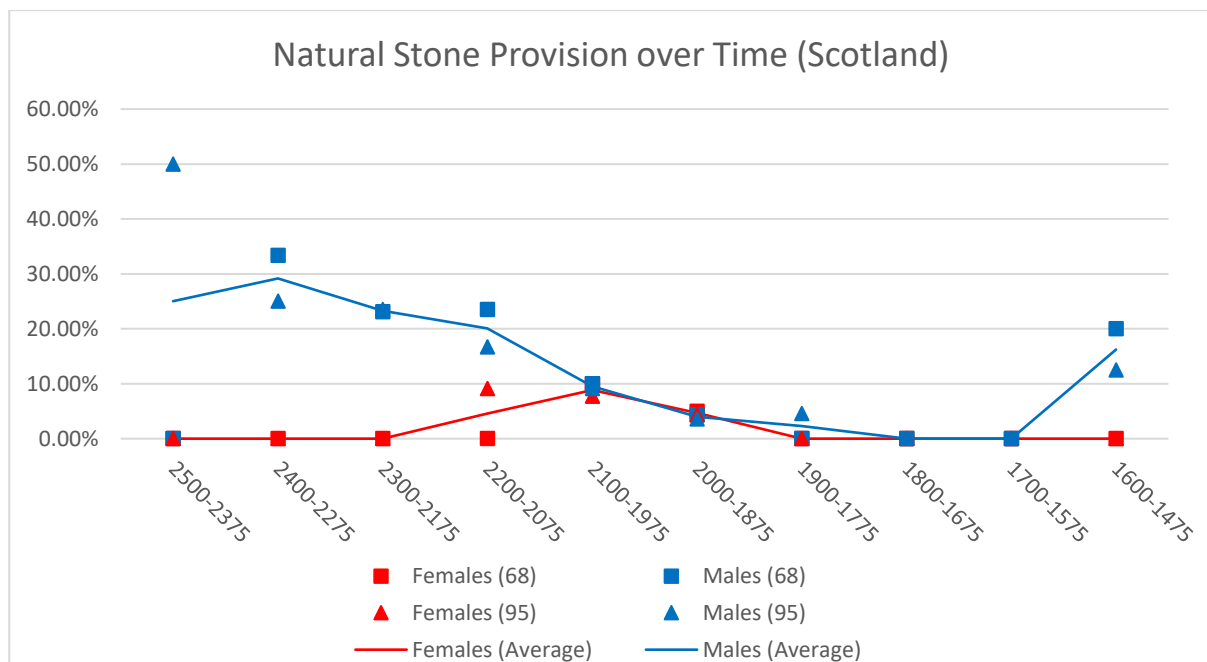
Figure 5.17 – The change in the rate of metal artefact provision to males and females over time in Ireland

As with metal in Ireland, the use of natural stone in graves seems to be affected by the sex of the deceased in the earlier part of the period, before it became equally likely for both sexes (Fig. 5.17). Additionally, the data suggest that the popularity of this practice declined over time.

5.3.9   Male burials favoured a north/south orientation in Ireland
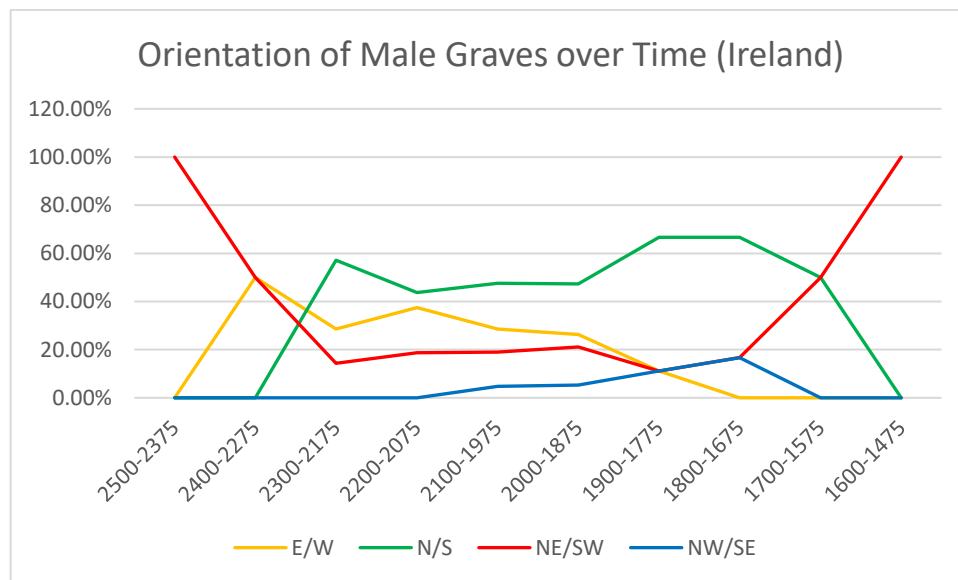
Figure 5.18 – The change in the proportion of grave orientations for males over time in Ireland

Bar the low population early time ranges, north/south seems to have been a fairly consistent preference for the orientation of male graves in Ireland. The proportion data (Fig. 5.18) suggests an increase in the number buried north/south towards the end of the period (ignoring the n=1 final time range), while the raw numbers (Fig. 5.19) do a better job of conveying the consistent dominance of this orientation. It is worth noting, however, that only a little over 50% of male inhumation graves were oriented north/south in any time range.
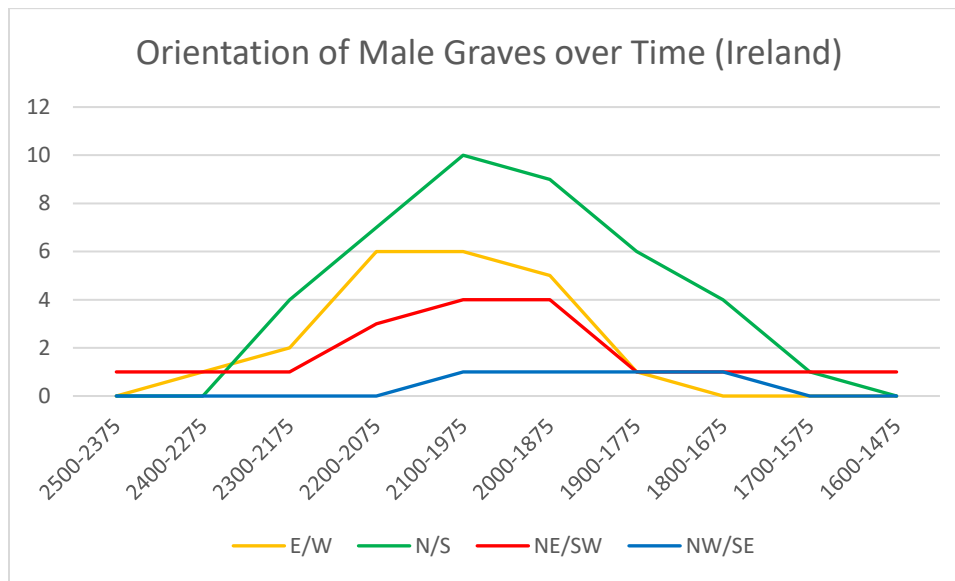
Figure 5.19 – The number of male graves oriented in various directions over time in Ireland

5.3.10 *Scottish males were often buried on their left side*

We have previously seen that Shepherd's (2012) recognition of sex-related differences in the side the body was lain on in Beaker graves is borne out in this data, but that it is much more strongly so for males. This becomes even clearer when chronology is considered (Fig. 5.20). For most of the time ranges, all male inhumations were laid on their left, but this begins to break down later in the period. However, even when burial on the left-hand side was absolute for males, a significant number of females were also buried in this way. Thus, there is no clear evidence that a preference for burying males on their left was either matched by an equal preference to bury females on their right, nor a desire to mark the difference between males and females by excluding females from the 'male' practice. This suggests something more complicated than binary gender was affecting these burials.
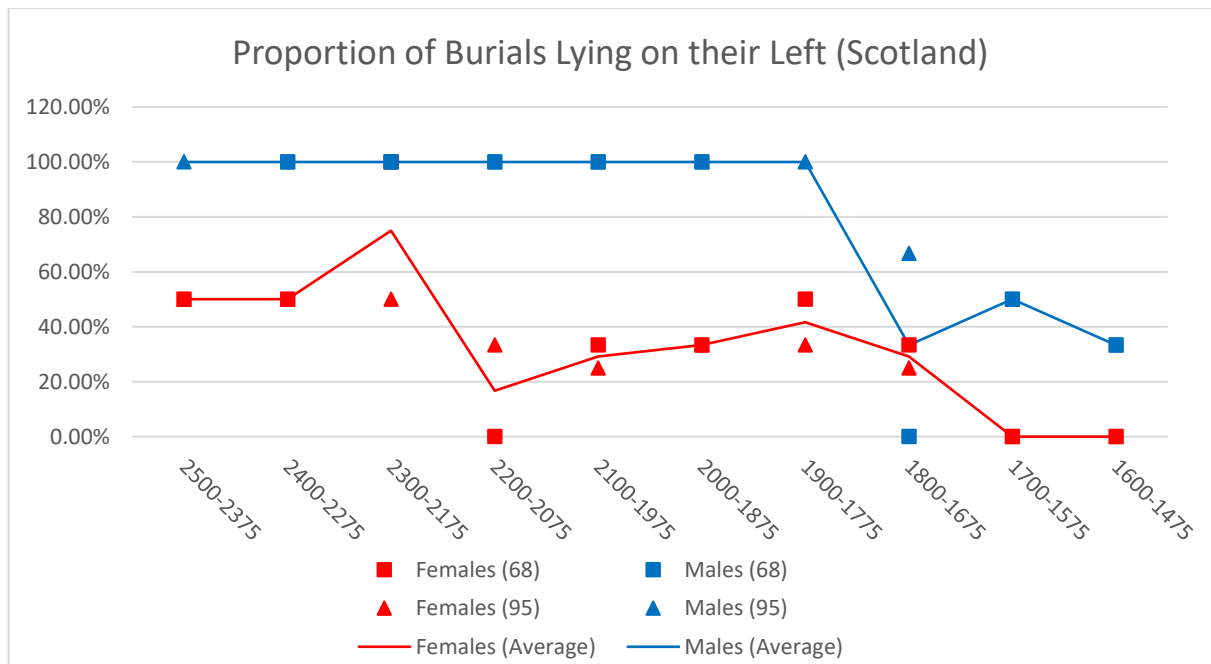
Figure 5.20 – The proportion of male and female inhumations buried on their left-hand side over time in Scotland

5.3.11 Scottish burials often show a gender disparity in the orientation of the head in the grave
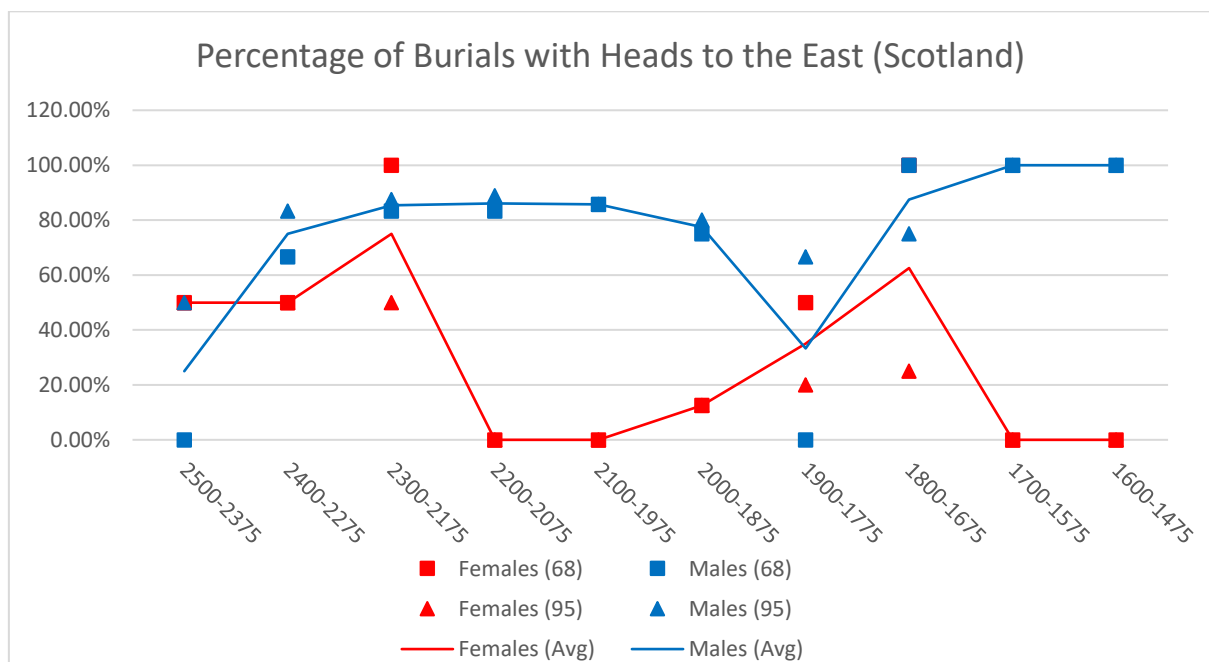
Figure 5.21 – The proportion of male and female inhumations buried with their heads pointing northeast, east or southeast over time in Scotland

In order to assess this trend, two broad directions were defined based on the dichotomy seen earlier (Fig. 5.4) – those facing 'west' comprising a group with heads to south, southwest, west and northwest, and those facing 'east' comprising those with heads to northeast, east and

southeast. As roughly equal amounts of males and females were seen to have their heads to the north in the previous analysis these were discounted here.

This picture is more complicated than that for the side the body was lying on. In order to assess general trends, the proportion of males and females buried with their heads to the easterly directions (northeast, east and southeast) was plotted (Fig. 5.21). This reveals a time in the middle of the period when males were generally oriented towards the east, and females generally were not, but that in the beginning of the period and again towards the end this breaks down. It is, however, re-established for the final time ranges (covering just five burials).

5.3.12 Further trends

Two further trends arose during this analysis. The first concerns metal in Scotland (Fig. 5.22). Here it seems that metal was initially a grave good associated with males but that females grew to be more associated with it later in the period. Of course, as the numbers are small, this is a difficult trend to verify.
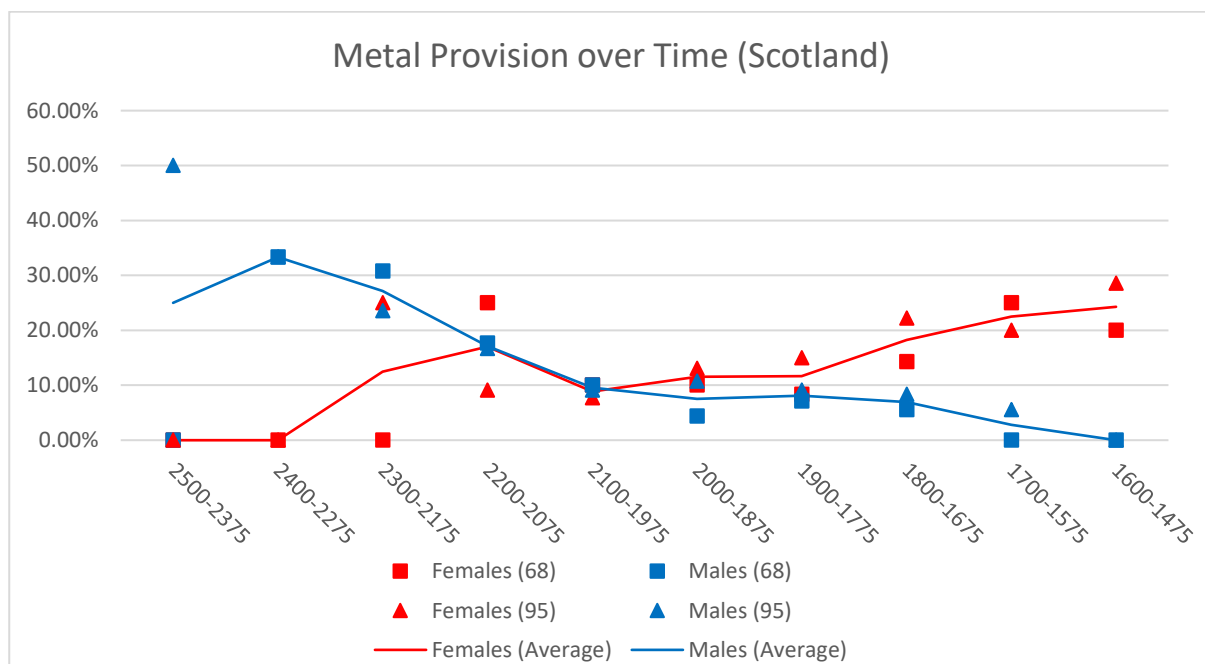
Figure 5.22 – The change in the rate of metal artefact provision to males and females over time in Scotland

The second interesting trend does not relate directly to the expression of social identity in graves but is still worth reporting. The tale of the Bronze Age in Ireland has long been, as in Britain, that a period of inhumation as the primary rite was followed by a period where cremation gradually became dominant. That picture can clearly be seen in the data for Scotland

within this study (Fig. 5.23), where inhumation was dominant in the early time ranges, there was a period of crossover and then cremation was dominant.
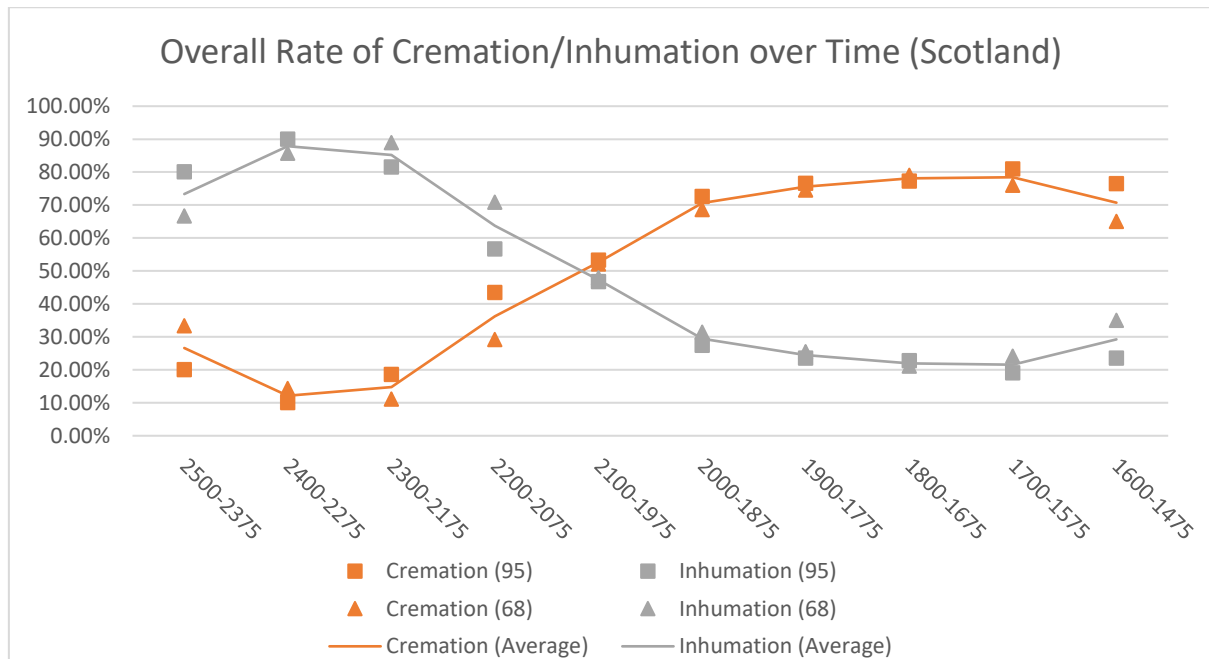
Figure 5.23 – The proportion of burials cremated and inhumed over time in Scotland

Turning to the Irish data, however, the picture looks somewhat different (Fig. 5.24). Here, cremation was more common even among the few very early burials, and there was no period where inhumation was the preferred rite. This may be an artefact of the particular dataset available here, and certainly cannot be seen as conclusive upon this evidence, but it clearly warrants closer investigation in the future.
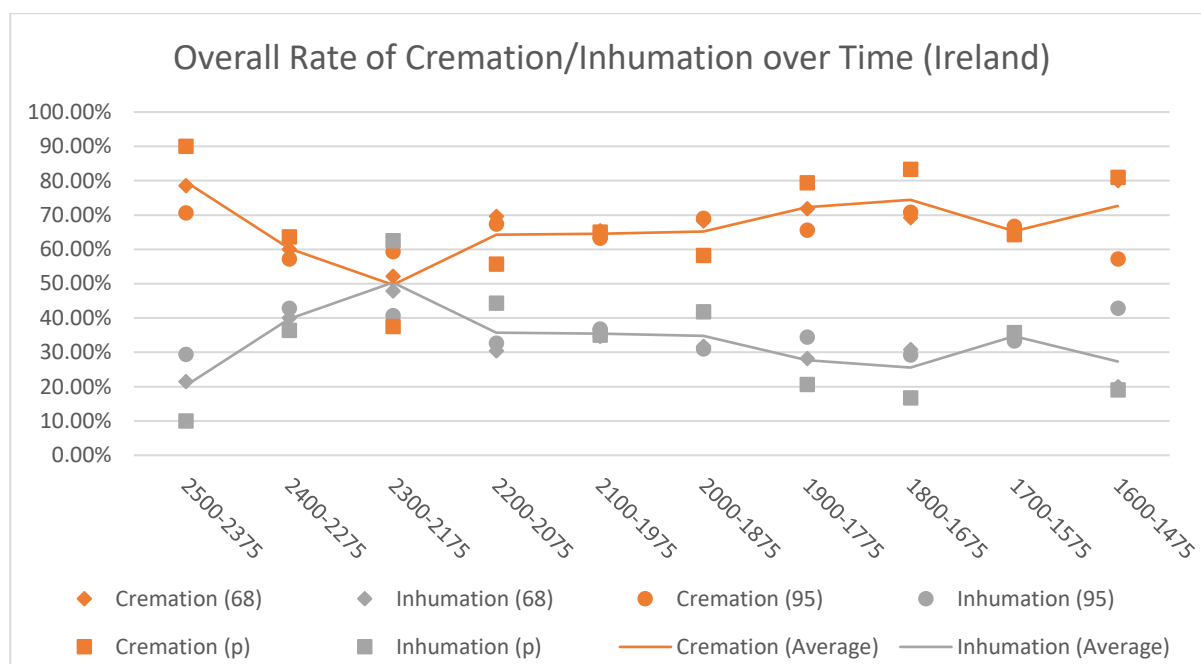
Figure 5.24 – The proportion of burials cremated and inhumed over time in Ireland

5.3.13 Females with a foetus/neonate were nearly always cremated

Finally, due to the low numbers involved it is not worthwhile tracking the cremation of foetuses/neonates through time. However, it is worth dwelling on these cases in a little more detail. In Ireland, three midterm foetuses were present. Two, of less than five months' gestation, were part of an assemblage of cremated bone containing a neonate, three other subadults and at least five adults at Altaghaderry, Co. Donegal. At Ballynacarriga, Co. Cork, a midterm foetus was present with the cremated remains of a young adult female, a single cremated clavicle from an older adult was also present. In both cases the age of the foetuses suggests *in utero* cremation.

In Scotland, however, the foetus remains were usually of more advanced pregnancies, and were cremated in nine cases (see Table 5.25). In two cases in Scotland a 'neonate' was inhumed rather than cremated. In the first, a foetus of 40 weeks' gestation was inhumed with an adult female at Allasdale Dunes, Barra, Western Isles. This may have been a case of *in utero* burial, but this is not certain. A single inhumation of a neonate, aged at birth ± 2 months was found at Cnip Headland, Isle of Lewis, Western Isles. Across both regions then, it seems that there was a consistent link between pregnant females and cremation.

Cemetery	Foetal age	Accompanying burials	Notes
102 Findhorn	Third trimester or newborn	Young adult female	
Beech Hill House	Neonate	3 adults	
Cloburn Quarry		Middle-aged adult female	Described as "possibly in utero"
Dunure Road	Neonate	2 adults and a child	
Kirkton of Cults	c. 7 months' gestation	Adult female, adult male and a child	
Sketewan		Adult, child, infant	
Sketewan	Foetus or neonate	Adult female	
Sketewan		Adult male and child	No female, so cannot have been in utero
Skilmafilly	35–40 weeks	Middle-aged adult female	

Table 5.26 – Cremated foetuses from Scotland.

5.4   Conclusions

At this point in the analysis we have become familiar with the general trends apparent within this dataset and how they vary through time. It is obviously the case that more could be said about these trends, and this data could be interrogated in various alternative ways. However, the analysis to this point has given us a solid understanding of the subtle ways in which the burials of different sorts of people varied across the study regions. I do not intend to draw these differences out yet, nor to begin to unpick what they tell us about social ideologies. This will be deferred until after we have approached the data from a different direction, to investigate how a concern for the detail of practice at the local level can expand upon the sketch of practice which the statistics have allowed us to build.

It has been clear throughout the analysis thus far that there is very little in the way of clear structuring principles within this data. Males and females were not treated in vastly different ways, and neither were the age groups rigidly treated differently. In other words, whenever we were able to identify a trend within the data it was clear that there were usually counter examples where the trend did not hold. On the most basic level, we have seen, for instance, that males were more likely to be buried in both regions. This does not prepare us for the lone burial of an adult female at Langwell Farm, Highland or the three females, four subadults, and one unsexed adult found at Ballynacarriga, Co. Cork. Moving forwards, the challenge is to integrate the trends identified from this population overview with the scale of lived action. For, clearly, there is variation within this dataset which we have not yet fully confronted. It is

to this that we next turn. We will return to the trends identified in this chapter in the discussion (Chapter 8) and attempt to unite the pictures of the Earlier Bronze Age which have emerged through these varying analyses.

6   Seeking Local Practice I: Ireland

6.1   Introduction

The purpose of the next two chapters is to investigate practice at the local level in order to assess whether potentially meaningful trends that could help us better understand social organisation in the Bronze Age were obscured at the general level. One difficulty of an approach such as this is the resources it demands of the reader. For these regions, detailed local data cannot be presented for several sites in easily digestible tables. Rather, we must explore burial practice at a site and slowly build a picture of the actions that were part of the funerary ritual and what remains they left behind. From this, a sketch of the social ideologies which lay behind these decisions may start to emerge.

Figure 6.1 – Distribution of sites discussed in the text. The Ballybrennan Group, at centre, is detailed in Fig. 6.7.

I want to begin this chapter with a discussion of a single burial. This is the kind of site to which gender analysis is rarely applied. Particular attention will be devoted to our first site, Culleens, Co. Sligo, walking through the process of burial, for this was almost entirely absent from the discussions in the previous chapter, focused as they were on the outcomes of these processes. As it would be somewhat repetitive, though not wholly so, this level of detail will not be followed at every site, particularly those with multiple burials where similarities and differences can be more readily identified.

After this initial discussion of the burial of a single person we will visit Ballynacarriga, Co. Cork (10 people), Brackbaun, Co. Limerick (1 person), Kilcroagh, Co. Antrim (6 people), Stranagalwilly, Co. Tyrone (8 people) and Edmondstown, Co. Dublin (21 people) (Fig 6.1). The subsequent section of this chapter is then devoted to discussing Ballybrennan, Co. Westmeath, and neighbouring cemeteries to investigate a cemetery within its regional setting (19 people across 8 sites; see Fig. 6.7). Finally, trends identified at 5 sites considered in my MA thesis (Haughton 2014) will be briefly elucidated (89 people). In total, then, this chapter deals with the burials of 155 people, or 35.3% of the 439 people from Ireland dealt with in the previous chapter.

The investigation concerns the construction of memory at the graveside. Whether funerary practice was explicitly aimed at remembering the dead, I argue that it would be impossible to remember either the events or the deceased without thinking of the other, such is the nature of evocative practice. The discussion is necessarily speculative as it aims to open up our interpretative possibilities. I do not suggest that every interpretation is 'true', rather that I am tracing the lines to which memory could adhere, and thereby tracing the various narratives which could be told about the deceased.

6.2   Culleens, Co. Sligo

Beginning with a site at which only a single burial was ever made is perhaps counterintuitive for a study concerned with differentiation between people. Admittedly, nothing can be said here about differentiation, at least not on a local scale, and thus speaking of relational identities is a challenge. What we do have, however, is the record of an event marking the response of a group of people to the death of a particular person, a middle-aged adult female (Ryan and Cherry 2011). In its essence, the burial is a relational construction, both a result of and a

contribution to the community's understanding of their relationship with this person. As such, it should be possible to consider the burial itself and the relations of which it was comprised to speak of social ideology in a radically different way to that attempted in the previous chapter.

The cist burial at Culleens was discovered by a local farmer in 1989. Some bones were moved and subsequently replaced before a proper excavation was conducted (Ryan and Cherry 2011). The cist was located 6km east of Killala Bay, on the summit of a low ridge (Fig. 6.2). It was, thus, a prominent place in the landscape, similar to many of the burial sites within this corpus. The trapezoidal cist was aligned east/west and had a rough internal area of 8208 cm^2. The cist thus ranks among the larger of those in the database but is by no means exceptionally so. The skeleton lay on its left-hand side with its head in the northwest corner – this information is corroborated by differential decay on the skeleton and some loose teeth which were found during excavation in the northwest corner. Thus, the head was towards the bay and her gaze must have been north towards the open sea. A Vase Food Vessel had also been removed from the cist prior to archaeological investigation; it was reported to have been in the southeast of the cist, which would place it somewhere around or below the knees of the crouched skeleton, though its exact location could not be confirmed. Brindley's (2007) dating of the Vase Food Vessel tradition suggests a tight window into which this burial fits, for it belongs to her Stage 1 group, dating to 2020/1990–1920 BC. There were presumably also objects made from organic materials within the grave, but no trace of these was recovered. To begin to unpick what, if anything, this can tell us about gender or age ideology, then, we must be guided by what happened here, and the opportunities which those practices opened up for the creation of meaning amongst the mourners.

After deciding to make an inhumation burial, the next and most obvious choice which the mourners made was to select the location. As no sign of other burials was recognised, we can suggest that this was the first burial the community made here. By comparison with other sites, we can argue that their selection was governed by the topography of the surrounding area; a locally high place within the sphere of daily life was often deemed suitable. Something about this particular death also made this the right time to choose a new burial site. The fact

that none of the mourners had gathered there for a burial before, and that this was a place they may have encountered in other circumstances, enabled meanings that were different to those that would have been suggested at an established burial ground. The content of these
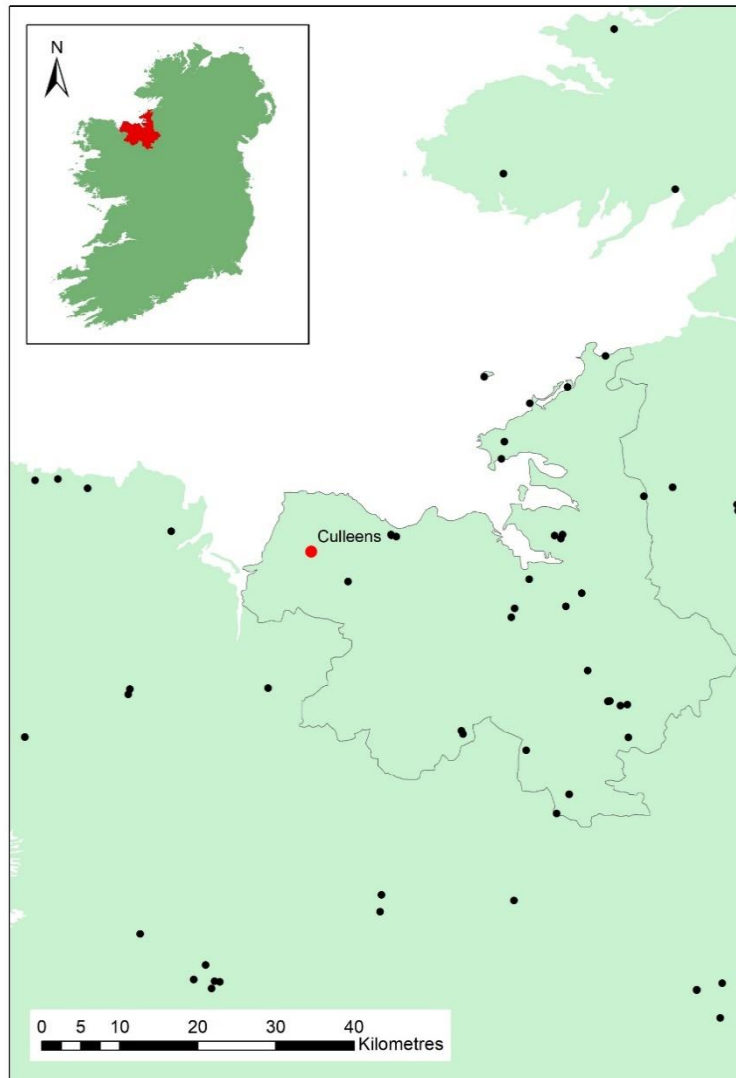
Figure 6.2 – The location of the cist at Culleens, Co. Sligo, showing other lone cist burials in the vicinity

meanings is not necessarily our concern here, as they would undoubtedly have varied from person to person, but we can imagine that for some the presence of the sea may have made an impact on how they remembered this woman; for others, it was the presence of other landscape features that could be seen from this vantage point – perhaps a farmstead, or a locality where food or other resources were procured which this woman had been involved with. Maybe, in these instances, the position of this woman in relation to the lived landscape was comparatively more important than her position in relation to specific ancestors or a community of the dead, features which would have been more emphasised had she been buried in an existing cemetery.

The mourners next had to quarry and move the stone for the construction of the stone-built burial cist, dig a pit to receive it, and construct the cist itself. All of these were physically involved acts that required both time, energy, and group coordination. This may have been an opportunity for the active remembering of the dead, the kind of storytelling and narrativizing of their life which might have helped the community come to terms with the change in circumstances. Perhaps, too, this involved a wider social group than their usual daily activities, remembering that up to 8 able-bodied people may have been necessary to construct a cist (McAdam and Watkins 1974). We can further note that here, unlike with the location of the burial, they were repeating specific actions which they might have taken before. For the construction of one cist must, physically, resemble the construction of another and must proceed from an abstract understanding of what a cist was and how to construct them. Thus, those that had been involved in making burial cists before would have felt in their bodily movements and in the physicality of the various actions the memory of those other burials (Haughton and Hill, forthcoming). Burial events may thus blur into one another in the minds and bodies of the mourners, suggesting links between these practices and ones which had occurred before. Burial is, thus, a form of citational practice (after Butler 1990, and see Jones 2007). This must have acted to situate the deceased amongst the community of the dead as well as that of the living. The act of locating her here, though, allowed a contradiction between this burial's singularity and its position within a wider corpus of such burials. However, this could not have been felt equally by all. Those who had participated in several such burials could experience the 'situatedness' of this event in different ways to those for whom this was their first cist construction or to those who merely observed.

The accompanying vessel may have been selected from an existing set or been created specifically for this burial. Its presence at the graveside and in the grave opened up different pathways for meaning, evoking the association between pottery and certain acts, such as cooking or storage, or the embodied experience of pottery production, or other burials where similar pottery had been deployed. The designs on the vessel too would have been involved in wider citational practices (Jones 2007) and might thus evoke other vessels, objects, or clothing for those who caught sight of it during the ceremonies. For those further back or excluded from the immediate action at the graveside, or for those with no hands-on experience of pottery, these would probably be meanings that were not presenced. We cannot say for

certain which, if any, of these meanings were important here, and for whom, but we can recognise these as amongst the pathways for meaning which this pot's presence evoked.

Finally, the body was brought to this place, accompanied we must imagine by a group of people. Some of them must have been involved in carrying the corpse, another in carrying the pot, or perhaps it was passed between several, yet others perhaps carried other items made of organic material or which were not deposited. The body was laid out in a particular position in the grave: its crouched nature evoked the graves of others, and perhaps a sleeping position. For some of the mourners, seeing the body like this must have brought home to them the reality of this person's absence – literally demonstrating that they were now of the other world, laid out as they had seen others before. We cannot know the extent to which this was a time of grief or sadness (Tarlow 2000), but it was certainly a time of loss and change (Brück 2009). Other elements of this practice of course reflected further opportunities for the creation of meaning which are now lost to us. Consider, for instance, the contents of the pot, how the body was dressed or wrapped, what other items of cloth or wood were placed alongside it, the words spoken, and the actions performed.

Through this burial, the woman became part of a wider dispersed community of the dead. The occurrence of other cists in the surrounding landscape gives us some indication of this (Fig. 6.2), though of course others may remain to be found and not all known now were contemporary. This creates an interesting tension between this single burial, contained within this single cist, and the extended community of which it was a part. Similarly, the burial was presenced in the landscape. At the top of this particular rise, the burial was a powerful event which extended outwards in time; its location in this prominent place ensured that the mourners would see this place again when they were in the wider landscape, and thus this rise may later evoke memories of the burial event. Indeed, the people who were there might experience such memories in the future without consciously rethinking it. What they have achieved, in a number of ways, is to write this person's memory into their landscape, their memories and their bodies. She was connected to various places, thoughts and actions that they would encounter again. Thus, she was granted an enduring presence within the community. This does not tell us of difference, or how male lives differed from female ones, or adults from children, but it is a useful place for us to begin this investigation – recognising that a burial such as this established this person as a powerful memory in her own right. In

practice, the memories of this event must have been tied to the memory of a gendered and aged person, because it mattered who she was and that their memories were appropriate to her. This burial allowed relationships to be stressed and remembered – between the mourners and this person, between the deceased and a broader community of the dead, and between the mourners themselves. Crucially, nothing here suggests that the memory of this woman was limited by gender, or by gendered relationships. She stood, and this rise likewise came to stand, for herself.

6.3   Ballynacarriga, Co. Cork

Let us next turn to a site where the discussion of difference between burials is possible, that of Ballynacarriga, Co. Cork, excavated as part of the N8 Fermoy–Mitchelstown Bypass scheme. This site was located in fairly low-lying arable land, though as with Culleens the cemetery itself was in a prominent location with wide panoramic views (Lehane and Leigh 2010). It was bordered to the north by a sharp drop to the Glencorra stream, and to the west by the River Funshion 300m away. The surrounding landscape was fairly densely populated with Bronze Age burials, another at Glenatlucky, roughly 8km north of Ballynacarriga, was also part of the roadtake and this thesis's corpus. The site itself consisted of two ring-ditches with associated burials (Fig. 6.3) and lay just to the south of an enclosure with evidence for structures and pottery dating from the Middle Neolithic to Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age Beaker. The association may be fortuitous, or the location of this cemetery may have been a response to this earlier settlement.

At the centre of the eastern, larger ring-ditch was the burial of an Encrusted Urn containing the cremated remains of an adult female, and a foetus in the second trimester of development (Grave 1). The clavicle of an older adult was also present in this deposit. There were several other pits within the ring-ditch, some associated with burning, but only one other contained human bone – a small amount of cremated bone from two subadults, an infant (aged 0–1) and a child (aged 4–7). This pit had clearly been recut. To the north of this ring-ditch, a cist was found containing cremated remains of an infant and a child of the same ages, and with no recurring elements between the two deposits. The osteologist considered it likely that the remains from these two pits were the same people (Lehane and Leigh 2010: 276). It seems, then, that the pair were originally buried within the ring-ditch, only to be dug up later and placed in a cist (Grave 5). An adult's clavicle was also present alongside these remains.
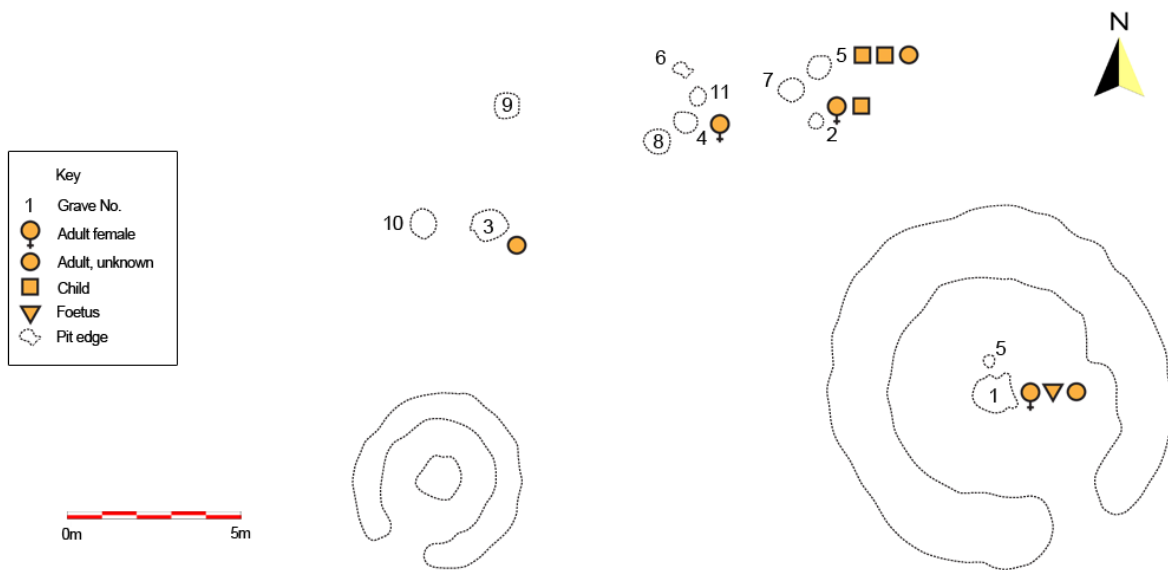
In the vicinity of the redeposited burial of Grave 5 were a further eight cists and a pit. Three of these cists contained cremated human remains (Graves 2–4), details of which can be found in Table 6.1. Of the remaining six features, the pit contained a Vase Food Vessel (Grave 6[14]), one cist contained an Encrusted Urn (Grave 7), another some fruit wood charcoal (dated anomalously early and thus perhaps residual) (Grave 8), while the final three cists were empty (Graves 9–11). All the cists had side stones and a floor stone, except Grave 9 which was only partially lined with stone. Grave 4 was the only cist with a capstone.

The second ring-ditch showed no signs that it had been used for burial. Instead, it had a hearth at its centre (dating 2018–1885 BC, at 95% probability), and several deposits within its confines may represent the remains of dumped hearth material. This may indicate the use of this space during funerary practice, for the cooking of a meal for the mourners perhaps, or the hearth may have been used at some other time unconnected to funerary practices. In either case, this does not seem to have been a pyre location.

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[14] The term 'Grave' will be used throughout these analyses to denote any feature which could have held human remains. It is simply deployed for the ease of a common language to talk about features in a cemetery site and should not be understood to imply that a burial was once present, or that such features were considered the same in the past.

Grave Number	Form	Occupants	Finds
1	Pit	Young adult, female (20–29) Foetus (midterm) Adult, clavicle only	Encrusted Urn Food Vessel Possible burnt bone pin
2	Pit	Older Adult, prob. female Child (8–12)	2 Vase Food Vessels Cherry or sloe charcoal
3	Cist	Adult, unknown	
4	Cist	Young adult, female (20–25)	
5	Cist	Child (4–7) Infant (0–1) Adult, clavicle only	
6	Pit	None	Vase Food Vessel
7	Cist	None	Encrusted Urn
8	Cist	None	Fruit wood charcoal
9	Partial Cist	None	
10	Cist	None	
11	Cist	None	

Table 6.1 – Summary of burial evidence from Ballynacarriga, Co. Cork.

This site, then, presents us with a range of evidence quite different from that encountered at Culleens, though the use of Vase Food Vessels at both sites shows us that there were certain connections between them, and hints that they were at least roughly contemporary. This is a site which was clearly visited many times through the period of its use. Indeed, its location here may reference the Neolithic activity in this vicinity. The hearth, associated pits and Graves 6–11 evidence an interaction with deposition which was not limited to burial. In other words, various strategies were deployed here only some of which were concerned with the burial of human remains. This does not mean, however, that the other activities were not also concerned with remembering the dead.

We might begin to speak of the social ideologies operating here by noting the repeated occurrence of adult females and children in these burials. Three of the four more complete adult burials were determined to be females or probable females. It is also interesting to note that children were only buried here in association with other people – the child with the older adult female in Grave 2, and the child and infant buried together in Grave 5. Interestingly, the inclusion of an adult clavicle in Grave 5 ensured that no child was buried without at least a part of an adult. The addition of a stray adult clavicle was repeated in Grave 1. We have previously seen the retention of human bone for later deposition as a feature of the wider Bronze Age in Britain and Ireland, what is interesting here is that a particular bone from a particular type of person was repeatedly chosen. This implies that the bone retained something

of the deceased's identity in death, that it mattered that this bone had come from an adult and which bone it was. We will see this practice again at Ballybrennan later. In this instance, the repeated use of adult clavicles links these burials. Their original positions, both within the ring-ditch, reinforces this connection. It is possible that the practice marks some kind of relationship between the people in these burials, but it also may enable specific meanings for the mourners. It is particularly interesting, then, that Grave 5 was later disinterred and redeposited in a cist to the north.

Four of the six vessels here had a residue on their interiors which attests to their former use, potentially in cooking. The two which did not (one each in Graves 1 and 2) may also have been used. This tells us that the pottery was probably not constructed as part of the funerary ritual but rather selected from the domestic assemblage, thus providing a strong link between that sphere and the grave. This is not simply to say that women were connected with cooking. Rather, the use of these vessels, intentionally or not, suggested links to food preparation and social gatherings involving food, perhaps those that they also engaged in within Ring-ditch 2. This becomes, then, a feature of the burial which encouraged the mourners to look 'out' to the world beyond the graveside. The burials without pottery, two of single adults, one of the two children, did not emphasise such connections in this way. We must also recognise that deposition here was not solely related to funerary practice – several of these cists seem not to have been used for permanent burial, though Graves 6 and 7 were clearly used to deposit pots of types often used in funerary rituals.

The disposition of cremated remains is also worth noting – though most skeletal elements were represented for the adults within the cemetery, the three subadults were represented by skull and long bones (in the case of the child in Grave 2) and by skull, long bones, vertebrae and ribs (in the case of those in Grave 5). The high element representation for adults is despite the low cremation weights – 118.4g for Grave 3, and 269.7g for Grave 4 – indicating that there was no concern to collect all bones from the pyre. This hints that representation of the full adult body was important, but that this was not so for children, although this must be a tentative suggestion given potential taphonomic factors.

The ring-ditch acts to mark out a particular space, and the burial here of the adult female with foetus and an additional adult clavicle is potentially significant. The fact that this woman was seemingly pregnant when she died, and that she was buried in this place where other women

and children were buried seems noteworthy. We cannot know the sequence, whether this burial predates or postdates the other women and children, but it may help to define this space as one concerned with motherhood, or it may respond to an existing association with this. The physicality of the ring-ditch, the boundary it circumscribed around this space, would concentrate the attention on that which was done within it. That Grave 5 was originally dug within it and then moved must have been redolent with meanings, though we strain to see them now. Perhaps this pregnancy, and the very idea of motherhood, was central to the construction of place and the selection of certain people for burial here. Might we even consider links between pregnancy and the interactions with the children in Grave 5? They seem to have rested here for a while, gone through a transformation of some kind in this powerful place, then emerged into the world again before being reburied in a place alongside other burials, in a part of the site which may have seen depositional activity since the Late Neolithic (Carlin 2018: 113–114). I do not mean to argue here that there was a parallel between the first burial and conception, the exhumation and birth, rather I mean to suggest that if this was a place which the mourners associated with pregnancy and motherhood, some of them may have considered these connections when redepositing this bone. Burial in this place thus represents a significantly different experience for the mourners, likely to evoke different narratives about who the buried were, and why they were carrying out the burial.

6.4   Brackbaun, Co. Limerick

From Ballynacarriga we need journey just 16km northeast to find our next site at Brackbaun, Co. Limerick, excavated as part of the same road scheme, though this time on the Cashel–Mitchelstown section (McQuade 2007). Unlike Ballynacarriga, this site is a second example of the single burial, challenging us to approach social ideologies without direct comparison to neighbouring burials.
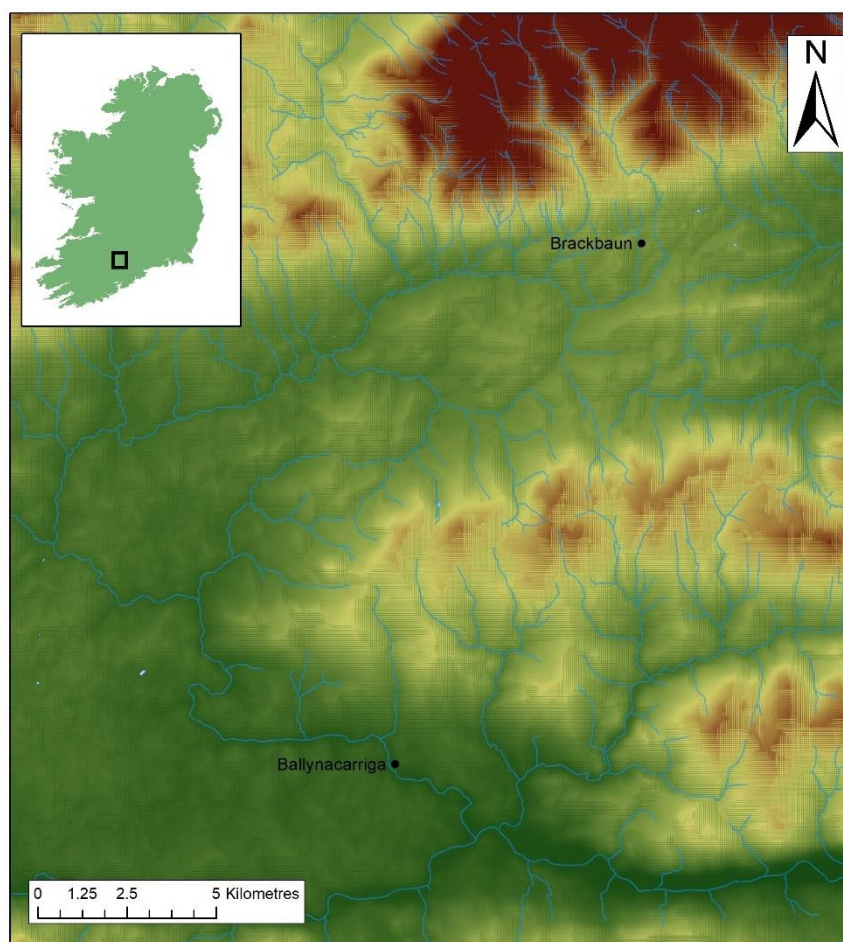
Figure 6.4 – The location of the burial at Brackbaun, the cemetery at Ballynacarriga, and the water courses connecting them

The burial at Brackbaun was 550m east of the modern course of the River Funshion, which also passed Ballynacarriga downstream, and 20m northeast of a small tributary (Fig. 6.4). Several *fulachtaí fiadh* were found within 200m of the site attesting other Bronze Age activities in the locality. The site was on fertile ground, overlooked by the Galtee Mountains, and no hint of raised local ground was reported by the excavators (McQuade 2007). The burial was of cremated remains in an upright Vase Food Vessel in an unlined pit. Single pit burials are easily missed by farmers during ploughing and are thus probably underrepresented in the archaeological record (Mount 1997a).

The pot had been subjected to post-depositional damage, largely caused by root action and groundwater, but the majority of the vessel survived. Around 371g of cremated remains were recovered, suggesting that, taphonomic factors notwithstanding, there had been no particular concern with the recovery of all the remains from the pyre, though they had been cleaned of pyre material prior to deposition. The remains were those of an older adult male accompanied by two cremated fragments of sheep metacarpal. The charcoal remains were dominated by

oak, but hazel was also present; both grew in the vicinity and were frequently used for Bronze Age pyres (Grogan et al. 2007). No other artefacts were recovered from the burial. A date of 2198–2035 BC (at 95% probability) was obtained for charcoal from the burial. This is slightly earlier than Brindley's (2007) range for these vessels (2020–1740 BC), though as the date was derived from charcoal, it must be likely that the burial fits within the early period of Vase Food Vessel use.

The site's location near the River Funshion immediately invites comparison with Ballynacarriga, and the use of Vase Food Vessels in both cemeteries suggests that they were roughly contemporary. The communities may have been connected by the river network and the travel which it enabled, though its modern course is by no means a direct route between the two places (see Fig. 6.4). The excavation report stresses the importance of the view of the Galtee Mountains, which begin to rise just north of the site and are the source of the river. Thus, while this site seems not to have been placed within a locally prominent rise in the ground, there was ample opportunity to connect memories of the deceased and the funerary practice with significant landscape features.

Two differences between this sequence of funerary activity and that at Culleens should be stressed: this burial was made in an unlined pit, and it was preceded by a cremation. Both changed the embodied experience of the mourners in potentially significant ways. Firstly, the physically involved tasks of stone quarrying and cist construction did not occur. Thus, that muscle memory was not evoked. The digging of a pit is less demarcated physically as burial practice, for many pits seem to have been dug for a variety of different reasons during the period. It also required fewer people to complete. Instead, a large amount of wood, mostly oak with some hazel, was sourced. This required a different set of physical tasks, a different array of knowledge, and perhaps a different range of people. Given the sensually arresting nature of cremation events (Brück 2019), it is likely that it tied these practices to different memories of different burials (perhaps even to those at Ballynacarriga, where cremation was the norm, and some of the mourners may have witnessed, or partaken in, those burials). The sheep bone here may have been the remains of feasting or have been placed on the pyre as an offering, and similarly opens up connections to other episodes of sheep consumption and other mortuary occasions.

There are also, however, similarities with practice at Culleens. For instance, the making of the pot, following a form used multiple times at Ballynacarriga, situated this burial within a wider shared tradition of treatment of the Bronze Age dead. If we imagine a web of connections between these burials, then some of those connections are stronger than others. Those with sensory links, such as the smell of the cremation, or the physical effort of constructing the cist, may have been the most affective.

It is interesting, then, that practice here was physically quite similar to that at Ballynacarriga, though it left rather different results. Instead of being part of an immediate community of the dead in a place marked by previous burials and other ritual activities, this burial was made alone in the landscape, in a place seemingly untouched by rigorous human activities. Although this may represent the approaches of two different communities, we might suggest that they were at the very least aware of each other, linked as they were by the River Funshion. This seems, then, a deliberate attempt to mark this burial in a different way and to conduct funerary practice in a space marked by different associations. Perhaps, as we have already seen, the cemetery at Ballynacarriga was associated with ideological aspects of childbirth or childhood which did not suit this adult male. While we cannot say that the treatment here is a direct consequence of being male, it is clear that a different type of location was sought for this burial, and that the narratives which it could tell about the deceased were affected by that decision.

6.5   Kilcroagh, Co. Antrim

Kilcroagh is home to two of the six Irish burials containing beads which we overviewed in the previous chapter. This comparative richness in grave goods, and the combination of male and female skeletons in the grave make this site worthy of further attention.

The site, set in a natural gravel knoll near the Bush river, was excavated in 1986 and found to comprise four burials (Williams et al. 1991). All of the burials were cremations, and three were contained within Cordoned Urns. According to Brindley's (2007) scheme, the currency of these urns was 1730–1500 BC. This is broadly in line with the dates reported in the excavation report, and Brindley also re-dated Grave 1 to 1686–1502 BC (at 95% confidence). This, then, firmly places the cemetery at the very end of the period under discussion in this thesis. As the fourth

burial had no grave goods, it is difficult to place chronologically, but it may have been deposited at a similar time.

The site was discovered during quarrying by the landowner, and though the urns were excavated under lab conditions, it seems that the site itself was not subject to a full excavation and no site plan is available (Williams et al. 1991). We are, then, limited in the observations which can be made, particularly we are unable to discuss issues relating to spatial relationships between these graves. Neither can we be certain that all graves on this site were recorded.

The demographic breakdown of the burial population is given in Table 6.2. It is immediately obvious that children seem to have been absent from the recovered burials, and that males were probably present in every grave.

Grave Number	Occupant(s)	Grave Goods	Rite
1	Young Adult prob. Female (c.20–25) Young Adult prob. Male (c.25–30)	Cordoned Urn, bovine long bone, faience bead, chlorite bead, fragment of bronze, perforated bone object	Cremated Cremated
2	Adult Female (c. 30) Adolescent Male (c. 15–16)	Cordoned Urn, bronze razor knife, segmented faience bead	Cremated Cremated
3	Older Adult prob. Male (over 40)	Cordoned Urn, 8 fragments of another vessel, 2 fragments of a third	Cremated
4	Middle Adult prob. Male (over 30)	None	Cremated

Table 6.2 – Summary of burial evidence from Kilcroagh, Co. Antrim

Of the four cremations deposited here, three were contained within Cordoned Urns. In Grave 1, the urn was inverted over the remains, while in Grave 2 the remains were deposited within the upright urn. Grave 3 was destroyed during the quarrying making the relationship of the vessel and fragments of two others to the human remains unknown, and Grave 4 was unaccompanied. Although Grave 3 was reported as a complete Cordoned Urn alongside fragments of two other vessels, it is possible that the burial originally contained three urns and that not all sherds were recovered.

Although Graves 1 and 2 contained an array of artefacts, of some similar types, there are interesting hints of different post-cremation activities. Faience beads of similar segmented form occurred in both graves, but in Grave 1 the bead had been burnt on the pyre, while in Grave 2 the unburnt bead was found at the top of the urn, and thus must have been added after the cremated remains, rather than with them. A razor knife was also found in Grave 2,

and this was perhaps mirrored by the find of a bronze fragment in Grave 1. Again, the metal in Grave 1 had passed through the pyre, while that in Grave 2 was unburnt. The razor knife was placed vertically within the urn in Grave 2, its hilt upwards, suggesting that it had been pushed into a portion of already present cremated remains. Thus, linking this item to just one of the individuals is difficult. In Grave 1, however, there was green staining on the bones of the female only, suggesting that this metal artefact had been associated with the female's body on the pyre. Grave 1 contained further grave goods which were not replicated in Grave 2 – a chlorite bead, a bovine long bone and a perforated bone object. It is tempting to view the beads as offered for each of the two people on the pyre.

It is worth mentioning here that a 'traditional' interpretation of this practice might argue that the razor-knife represents the male while the bead represents the female in these burials. However, several pieces of evidence present us with a more complicated story: (i) the razor-knife in Grave 2 was pushed into the mixed bone deposit in the urn, thus was only introduced to the burial after the individual bodies were indistinguishable. Furthermore, the bone present was largely from the adult female rather than the adolescent male. While, it is still possible that it was used for ritually shaving the dead (e.g. Kavanagh 1991), this act does not seem to have been stressed in its deposition here. (ii) In contrast, the metal object in Grave 1, potentially a razor-knife, seems to have been placed on the female body on the pyre. (iii) It is worth remembering that a single bead is not a necklace, thus these inclusions are at best metaphorical, and it is easier to see the beads as comments upon the relationships with the dead, one provided on the pyre in connection with each of the deceased in Grave 1, while in Grave 2 just one was provided, perhaps to 'seal' the deposit. Thus, these burials presence different attitudes to material things. In Burial 1, the things were associated with the individuals on the pyre – the metal with the female, for instance. Whereas in Grave 2, the identities of the deceased seem to have been combined, and the artefacts associated with the mixed cremated bone.

The treatment of those in Graves 3 and 4 is yet more different. The male in Grave 3 seems to have been buried with ample pottery, but without any of the accompanying artefacts that were seen in Graves 1 and 2, while the male in Grave 4 was buried without any artefacts at all. There are clearly large differences between the burials of males on this site, though females, where they appear in the grave, have more similar burials.

This site demonstrates a burial environment in which children were absent. The repeated trips that were made here concerned the adult world, and commemorating the lives of adults. In the case of the adolescent in Grave 2, this is an adult life which might have been considered to have been just beginning. This is a person who we might say has just crossed the threshold into adulthood, and was thus incorporated in this adult place. There seems, however, to be little made of the differences between males and females here. The deployment of artefacts typically seen as gendered does not seem to follow any gendered rules. The beads, too, are not formed into any wearable jewellery, and we might thus view them as a comment on the relationships between the deceased and the living (Brück 2019).

Here, we have a strongly aged burial environment, but not a strongly gendered one; burial was open to both males and females, and females were arguably in more prominent positions in the burials in which they feature. That the combination of male and female is repeated here may hint at a complementarity between two types of being, but it is difficult to suggest on this evidence alone.

6.6   Stranagalwilly, Co. Tyrone

The next site which we will visit lies at the foot of the Sperrin Mountains and was excavated in the 1960s and brought to publication in the '90s (Waterman and Waddell 1993). The cemetery was set in a mound of glacial sand and gravel and consisted of four burials, one of which was found and destroyed by the landowner. A fifth burial was found 100m away from the mound. Though reported together, it is possible they were unrelated. All four of the recorded burials, and the one previously destroyed, were made in cists of local sandstone.

The first recorded cist, oriented north/south, contained a mixed deposit of gravel and cremated bone with occasional charcoal inclusions. Two Bowl Food Vessels were recovered from the cist – one at the southern end had been disturbed during the cist's discovery and was removed before the excavators arrived. The second stood upright in the north-eastern corner and was covered and filled by the gravel/cremated remains deposit. The bone represented two adults and a child (aged 5–6).

The second cist, oriented northeast/southwest was smaller and contained the inhumed remains of a child (c. 6), lying on its right-hand side, head to the south, facing east. A Bowl

Food Vessel placed near the skull had apparently fallen over at some point and gravel had infiltrated the cist.
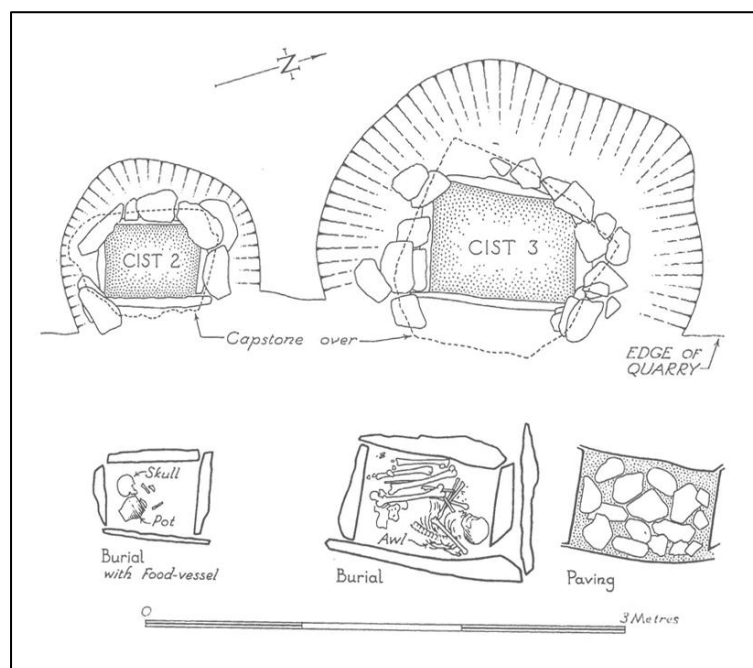
Figure 6.5 – Plan of Graves 2 and 3 at Stranagalwilly, Co. Tyrone (after Waterman and Waddell 1993, fig. 4). Reproduced by permission of Ulster Archaeological Society.

The third cist was very close to the second and shared the same alignment (Fig. 6.5), but was both larger and deeper within the mound. It contained the inhumed remains of an adult, reported as being male and over 60. As this analysis appears to have been conducted pre-1990, it was recorded as 'Probable Male' and 'Adult' in the database for the purposes of this thesis[15]. The skeleton lay on its right-hand side, head to the northeast, facing northwest. Lying on his chest was a bronze awl with wooden handle, nine flint debitage flakes and a roughly square area of dry, crumbly soil interpreted as the remains of some organic material, perhaps a container for the objects.

The final cist, 100m from the mound, was oriented northwest/southeast and contained an inhumed adolescent, a Bowl Food Vessel and a flint knife. A second deposition had been made later of cremated remains, representing an adult and a child, accompanied by a Bowl Food Vessel, three burnt flint scrapers and a burnt bone object deriving from a sheep/goat

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[15] The good survival of the pelvis recommended the acceptance of the male determination, with a slight downgrading of confidence based on the possible antiquity of the determination. Some reservations about the aging are expressed within the report, thus the skeleton was recorded simply as 'Adult', though it does seem likely to have been an older individual.

metatarsal. A flint end-scraper and sherds of the primary bowl were found outside of the cist but within the grave cut. This may indicate some activity undertaken at the time of the second interment, or it may have been done as part of the rituals associated with the burial of the adolescent.

Grave Number	Occupant(s)	Grave Goods	Rite
1	Adult Adult Child (c. 5-6)	2 bowl food vessels	Cremated Cremated Cremated
2	Child (c. 6)	Bowl food vessel	Inhumed
3	Adult, probable male, perhaps Older	Bronze awl, 9 flint flakes, possible organic material	Inhumed
4	Adolescent Adult Child (c.10–12)	2 bowl food vessels, flint knife, flint end scraper, 3 other flints, bone tube	Inhumed Cremated Cremated

Table 6.3 – Summary of burial evidence from Stranagalwilly, Co. Tyrone

This cemetery thus represents a diorama of Earlier Bronze Age funerary practice: here we have inhumations and cremations, multiple and single burials, variation in grave goods, and even the reopening of a burial. Perhaps as a result, it is difficult to discern clear patterning in the evidence. Children appear in three of the burials, were buried both singly and with others, and associated with grave goods. Adults, too, were buried with others or singly. The adult in Grave 3 has been interpreted as a 'leatherworker' by the excavators, with a toolkit of flint and a bronze awl in a pouch or bag on his chest. The inclusion of the awl is rare, but this is not the only grave here with flint tools. It is, however, the only grave (and perhaps the only burial event) not marked by Food Vessel pottery.

The deposition of Bowl Food Vessels seems to have been particularly important in this cemetery. It could be argued that as the community repeated this practice they became caught up in it, and burial in this place was in part defined by the presence of the Bowl Food Vessel. When they returned for the second burial in Grave 4 it was with a new Food Vessel, and may have involved an interaction with the old one. That Grave 3 was left out of this sequence is puzzling. It need not indicate a 'lack', rather it indicates that there were different ways to think about this burial. Whatever went on with pottery at the graveside and before the burial did not happen on this occasion. Meaning, then, must have been created along different pathways. Instead, an array of different objects allowed the mourners to tell different stories and for this individual to stand apart from the rest of the community. The lack of sexing for other adults

in this cemetery is frustrating, for we are seeing a male singled out in some way here. It is possible that this singling out in some way related to the age of this individual, though the advanced age has not been confirmed by a modern analysis.

The flint tools in Grave 4 potentially link it with the practices in Grave 3. The two burials in Grave 4 can be separately argued to be linked, both made in the same physical space they also repeated the motifs associated with pottery and flint tools although the rite had changed. There are subtle structuring patterns here, and the burials are interlinked in different ways, but it is difficult to track how that relates to social ideologies.

6.7   Edmondstown, Co. Dublin

Let us next turn our attention to the large cemetery of Edmondstown, in south Co. Dublin at the foot of the Wicklow mountains (Mount et al. 1993). This cemetery, comprising at least four cists and 17 pits, is the largest of those we shall look at in detail in Ireland. The large number of burials at this site presents a challenge in terms of their discursive analysis. A detailed overview of each burial would take some space, thus a brief summary is provided here (and in Table 6.4). Full detail is available in the published excavation report.

The site, which was excavated in the 1950s, and brought to publication with a new osteological report in the 1990s, lay just off the brow of an esker ridge. The views from the site are dominated by the mountains rising to the south, and Dublin bay 8km to the east (though this may not have been visible through Bronze Age tree cover).

We will begin our discussion with the four cists which sit, to various degrees, towards the centre of the cemetery and around which a number of other burials cluster. The cists seem to share a rough alignment, and Graves 3 and 4 abutted one another and were covered by a single capstone. Each cist contained the remains of just one individual, all adults except an adolescent (aged 15–18) in Grave 2. The three adults were sexed male with varying degrees of certainty (see Table 6.4). Bowl Food Vessels accompanied the burials in Graves 1–3, in front of the faces of the skeletons in Graves 1 and 2, the only inhumations on the site.

Grave 5 lay adjacent to Grave 1, partially overlying its capstone, and featured a spread of cremated bone mixed with pottery sherds. Grave 2 also had a satellite burial (Grave 12), which was similarly a spread of cremated bone partly overlying the capstone. Finally, Grave 14, an

upright Encrusted Urn surrounded by packing stones possibly removed from Grave 3 or 4, sat adjacent to the double cist. This picture is complicated by two burials the finds from which do not survive – a cremation overlying the southwestern corner of Grave 1, and a pit burial, perhaps also a cremation scatter, appearing on the plans overlying the west of Grave 2.
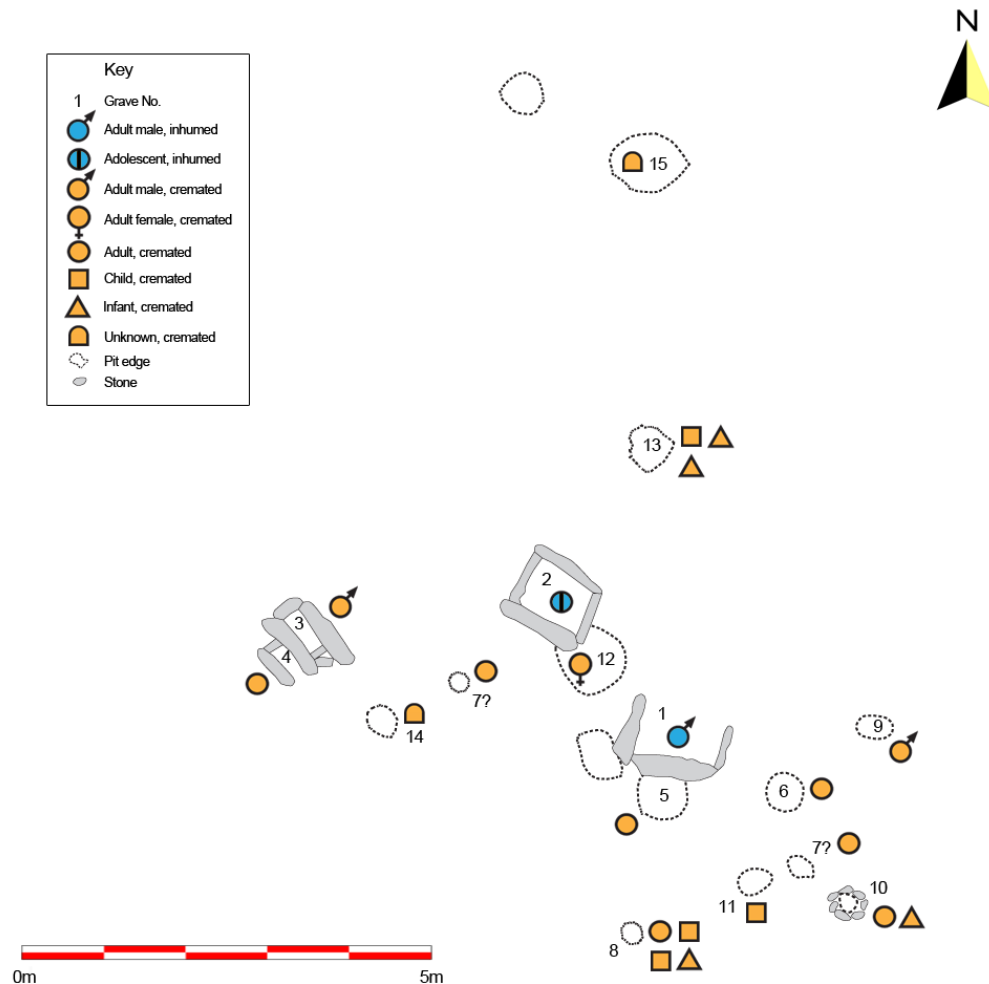
Figure 6.6 – Simplified plan of the cemetery at Edmondstown, Co. Dublin (after Mount et al. 1993, fig. 2)

Southeast of the cists was a concentration of pit burials (Graves 6, 9, 10, 11). Grave 7, the cremation of an adult within a Vase Urn, may have been located within this group or closer to Graves 3 and 4 (see Fig. 6.6), two burials were labelled similarly during the excavation and the finds from one was subsequently lost. The soil in this area was rich in sherds, of up to five vessels, and also included a flint end scraper and three stone disc-shaped beads, none of which were associated with a burial as traditional grave goods. Grave 8, a pit within a stone setting, was perhaps an outlier of this concentration. Interestingly a basal sherd of a Food Vessel found

within Grave 8 derives from the fragmentary vessel in Grave 9 suggesting an interaction between these two depositions.

Burial	Form	Occupant(s)	Grave Goods	Rite
1	Cist	Young adult, male	Bowl Food Vessel	Inhumed
2	Cist	Adolescent (15–18)	Bowl Food Vessel containing a single human bone (Backfill contained cremated and unburnt bone and an animal tooth)	Inhumed
3	Cist	Young adult, prob. male	Bowl Food Vessel, small flint round scraper	Cremated
4	Cist	Older adult, poss. male		Cremated
5	Pit	Adult	Sherds of pottery, poss. Vase Urn	Cremated
6	Pit	Adult	Inurned (urn lost), covering soil rich with finds	Cremated
7	Pit	Adult	Vase Urn	Cremated
8	Pit	Adult, poss. Male Child (c. 5–12) Child (c. 5–12) Infant	Inverted Encrusted Urn, burnt hollow bone tube, burnt plano-convex knife, fragment of the head of a metacarpal bone pin	Cremated Cremated Cremated Cremated
9	Pit	Young adult, male	9 sherds of pottery, a Pygmy Cup, a flint burnisher	Cremated
10	Pit	Adult Infant		Cremated Cremated
11	Pit	Child (< 7)	rough fragment of quartz	Cremated
12	Pit	Adult, female		Cremated
13	Pit	Child Infant Infant	Collared Urn, 3 small pieces of quartz	Cremated Cremated Cremated
14	Pit	Unknown	Encrusted Urn, number of quartz pebbles and stone also in vessel	Cremated
15	Pit	Unknown	Some animal teeth, 5 flints, 2 cinerary urn sherds	Cremated

Table 6.4 – Summary of burial evidence from Edmondstown, Co. Dublin

North of the cists were three burials. The most northerly, a cremation associated with two flint finds, has not survived. The other two were pit burials containing cremations (Graves 13 and 15).

Thus, of 15 confirmed burials, four were made in cists, only two were inhumations, and just three contained more than one person. Adults predominated, with children occurring in the multiple burials, except the child (aged about 7) in Grave 11. The cists appear to have been foundational here, acting as a focus for subsequent burial activity and being accompanied by

Bowl Food Vessels, an early form of pottery. The inhumations may have been the first activity, though we have seen that cremations were equally possible from the beginning of the period. Males were chosen probably at least twice to form the centrepiece of funerary activity in these cists, and the possibility remains that all four were burials of males. In this context, the adolescent (aged 15–18) in Grave 2 is particularly striking and we might suggest that this person fulfils a role in the burial environment akin to that fulfilled by the adults nearby, and may have been considered socially to be an adult.

At its beginning, then, this cemetery may have been a space associated most closely with the burial of adults, and adult males at that. These burials then became a focus for subsequent activity with cremations deposited both directly beside them and at a slight remove. In each case the newly buried was tied into the narrative of this place and a conceptual interaction with these earlier burials. Indeed, the ability to bury next to these early burials may enable a shift in the space's character, from one primarily associated with masculinity to one in which the whole community were represented.

The focus on individual burial here was maintained throughout time, though any association with males seems to have faded away. No adults were buried together here, multiple burials instead reserved for instances where an adult was buried with children. The two burials without adults, then, are particularly interesting: the single child in Grave 11 and the child with two infants in Grave 13. In these graves, quartz was deployed in a particularly interesting way. In Grave 13, the three subadults were accompanied by three small pieces of quartz. The child buried alone in Grave 11 was accompanied by a single piece of quartz. The only other use of quartz here was in Grave 14, a grave with just 25g of indeterminate crushed bone. It is possible to suggest that quartz had a role to play here when children were to be buried alone, potentially serving an apotropaic function in the place of an adult. Perhaps the first instance where quartz was used in this way was deemed successful and it was then repeated, potentially on two occasions, reinforcing an understanding specific to this place of the proper way to treat a child which was not shared amongst a broader community.

6.8 Ballybrennan and environs

This potted exploration of Irish funerary sites has thus far allowed us to identify some interesting trends in practice which can be related to social ideologies, but we have not thus far been able to speak of the relations between sites in a meaningful way, beyond the relative proximity of Brackbaun and Ballynacarriga. For the final substantive section of this chapter, I want to take a different approach, concentrating on the similarities or otherwise between neighbouring cemeteries. As the densest concentration of sites within the database is in the midlands, we will start with the site of Ballybrennan, Co. Westmeath, situated roughly in the centre of the island. From here we will move to other nearby cemeteries which seem to be broadly contemporary – Benalbit and Derryroe, Redmondstown, Conranstown, Milltown, Kilgaroan, Ardballymore, all in Co. Westmeath, and Ballickmoyler, Co. Offaly. The largest of these, Redmondstown, features just 3 graves. All of the cemeteries were excavated by the National Museum of Ireland in the early twentieth century and were analysed as part of the 'Breaking Ground, Finding Graves' project (Cahill and Sikora 2011), thus the level of osteological information available is directly parallel in most cases though the excavations were conducted in differing circumstances. Lehinch, Co. Offaly, which is also part of the cluster on a distribution map, is radiocarbon dated to several centuries later than Ballybrennan, and thus is excluded from this discussion. We will begin this discussion with Ballybrennan, before moving to its closest neighbour, Benalbit and Derryroe. Then we will examine the group of 3 cemeteries to the north, before moving to the group of 3 to the south. Due to space constraints the discussion must exclude some of the detail which could be explored at previous sites.
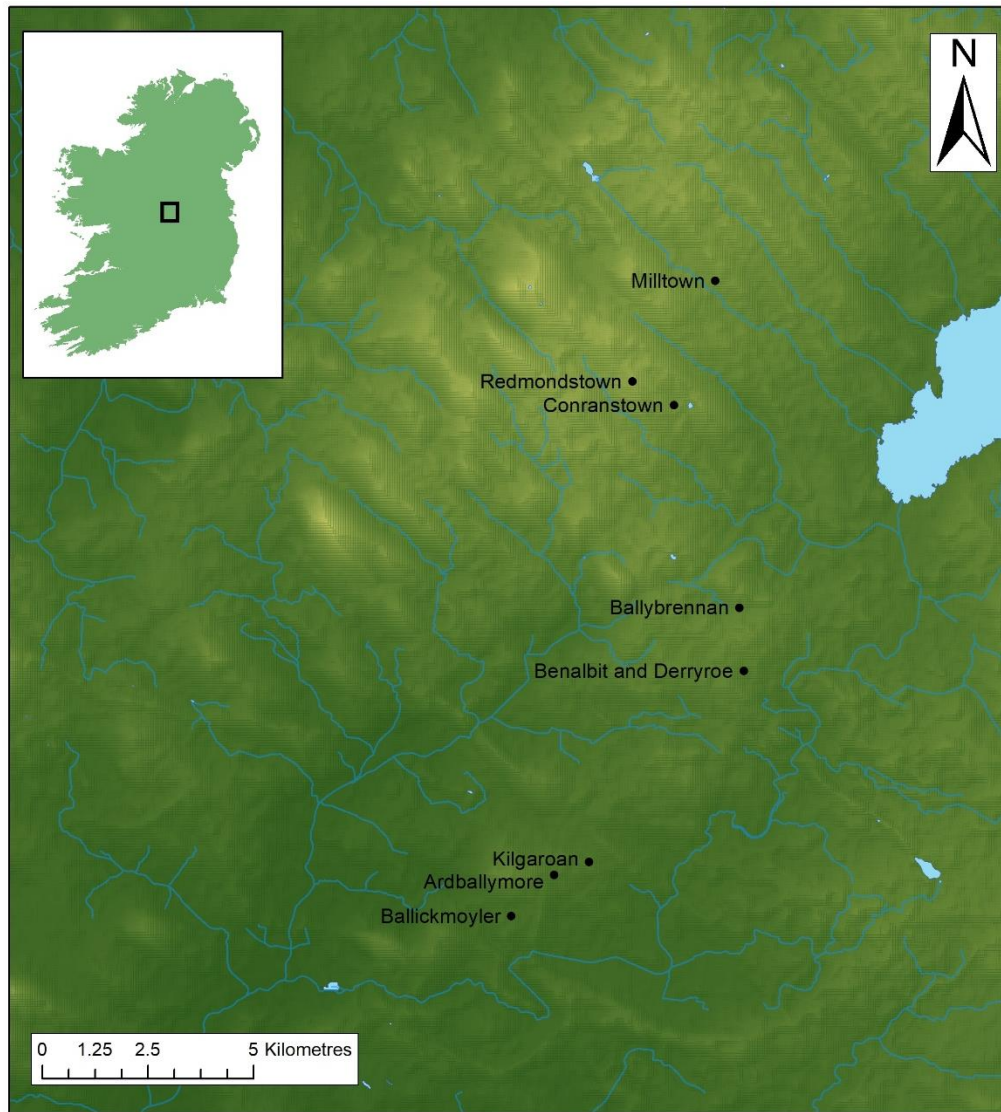
Figure 6.7 – Locations of the cemeteries surrounding Ballybrennan in the Irish Midlands

6.8.1   Ballybrennan, Co. Westmeath

Ballybrennan was set within a densely packed Bronze Age landscape (Fig. 6.7). Topographically, the area was relatively flat, featuring many lakes and wetlands. In the present, it is partly covered by peat bog which is commercially extracted by Bord na Móna. In the Bronze Age, this bog had begun growing in some parts of the midlands, while in others a fairly arable soil prevailed. Four cists were excavated here on four different occasions in the 1940s by Ellen Prendergast and P.J. Hartnett (Hartnett and Prendergast 2011; Prendergast 1945). The spatial relationships between the graves are thus unknown, but their contents were well recorded (see Table 6.5).

Like others that we have encountered, the cemetery was set in a low gravel ridge, about 31m in length (Prendergast 1945). Several pit graves had been found in the area previously but

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were not reported (Prendergast 1945). Thus, this is only a partial record of the cemetery, and the fact that it only contains the cist burials is a potential source of sample bias.

Grave Number	Occupant(s)	Grave Goods	Rite
1	Subadult (prob. Child)	None	Inhumed
2	Middle-Aged Adult Female Infant (femur only)	Flint artefact	Inhumed Inhumed
3	Middle-Aged Adult Male Adult Male (Middle or Older)	Bowl Food Vessel	Inhumed Cremated
4	Adult Male Infant (femur only)	Vase Food Vessel, 6 flints, chert flake, unburnt animal bone	Cremated Cremated

Table 6.5 – Summary of burial evidence from Ballybrennan, Co. Westmeath

That said, there are clearly trends in the funerary treatment (Table 6.5). In simple demographic terms, neither age nor sex were barriers to a person being buried here, or indeed to their burial in a cist. It is particularly striking that two of the three multiple graves contained an infant represented by a sole femur. We may venture, then, that there was something special about infant femurs in particular, or perhaps something deemed particularly successful about the first instance in which it was used that recommended its repetition. Two things are crucial for us to note here: first, as at Ballynacarriga, this community seems to maintain an active knowledge of whom bone has come from; far from being a depersonalised potent resource, it seems to be important that the bone is a specific one from a specific sort of aged person. Second, both male and female bodies were appropriate companions for this material in the grave, and indeed its utility also cut across any divide between inhumation and cremation, whether temporal or mental, which may have existed. This recalls the repeated use of the adult clavicle at Ballynacarriga, though it is a different bone with different associations that was used here.

There were also differences between the artefacts which were deposited with the dead here, ranging from the unaccompanied child in Grave 1, to the range of artefacts in Grave 4. It may be tempting to see this as a sign of status for the male in Grave 4, but even if this is so, the comparative lack of grave goods accompanying two males in Grave 3 suggests that this was not related to sex in a straightforward way. There is, however, a potential link here between pottery and males, it being present in the two graves where males were present and absent in the two where males were absent.

Finally, the only truly single burial here is the child in Grave 1. Depending on how we treat the infant remains in Graves 2 and 4, of course, these could also be classed as single burials

accompanied by a potent resource or bone-as-grave-good. Either way, we can say that age was no barrier to an individual being the sole focus of the community during the burial.

6.8.2 Benalbit and Derryroe, Co. Westmeath

The single cist burial at Benalbit and Derryroe was 1.5km south of Ballybrennan (see Fig. 6.7). On unforested ground, this is a distance which would easily be covered in under half an hour's walk. It is easy to imagine, then, that these were communities in contact, or possibly the same community.

This burial was located at the highest point of a low hillock. On its excavation in 1969, the bone within the cist was considerably disturbed, though it is difficult to know when this had occurred (Waddell 2011). No artefacts were found within the cist, and it can only be dated to the Earlier Bronze Age based on morphology. The human remains were not reanalysed for the 'Breaking Ground, Finding Graves' project, thus I have limited my observation to the fact that this was the inhumation of an adult.

Given the disturbance, the sequence of activities here is shrouded. Artefacts may have been present but removed at the time of disturbance, for instance. We are left, then, with the recognition that this adult was placed in a prominent place in the landscape, and was made the centrepiece of this funerary action without connection to any other human remains, as far as we can tell. There is, at least in this way, a difference established between the treatment of this adult and those at Ballybrennan. It is possible that the community returned here, perhaps causing the disturbance, and they may even have made further burials, the available evidence does not allow us to be certain of this.

6.8.3 Redmondstown, Co. Westmeath

From these two neighbouring cemeteries we next travel c.7km north-northwest to a cemetery set in a small gravel mound at Redmondstown. The site was within a couple of hours' walk of Ballybrennan and could easily have been visited by that community.

Grave Number	Occupant(s)	Grave Goods	Rite
1	Adult, probable Male	None	Inhumed
2	Young Adult Female (c. 15–20)	None	Inhumed
3	Child (c. 4–7)	Anomalous pottery bowl	Inhumed

Table 6.6 – Summary of burial evidence from Redmondstown, Co. Westmeath

Grave 1 was considerably larger than the other two, and though all shared a similar orientation the association between Graves 2 and 3 seems closer, both in terms of size and orientation. Also, worth noting is the fact that the probable male in Grave 1 lay on the left, while the female in Grave 2 lay on the right, though both heads were to the north. It is possible that the sides on which the body lay were coincidental, but there are interesting hints here that the male body was purposely treated in a different way. Alternatively, whichever burial was constructed second may be responding to the first, as the result of this comportment is that the adult skeletons 'face' each other. It is frustrating, then, that no information on the orientation of the child's body is available – the bone seems to have been disturbed prior to excavation (Prendergast and Ó Ríordáin 2011).
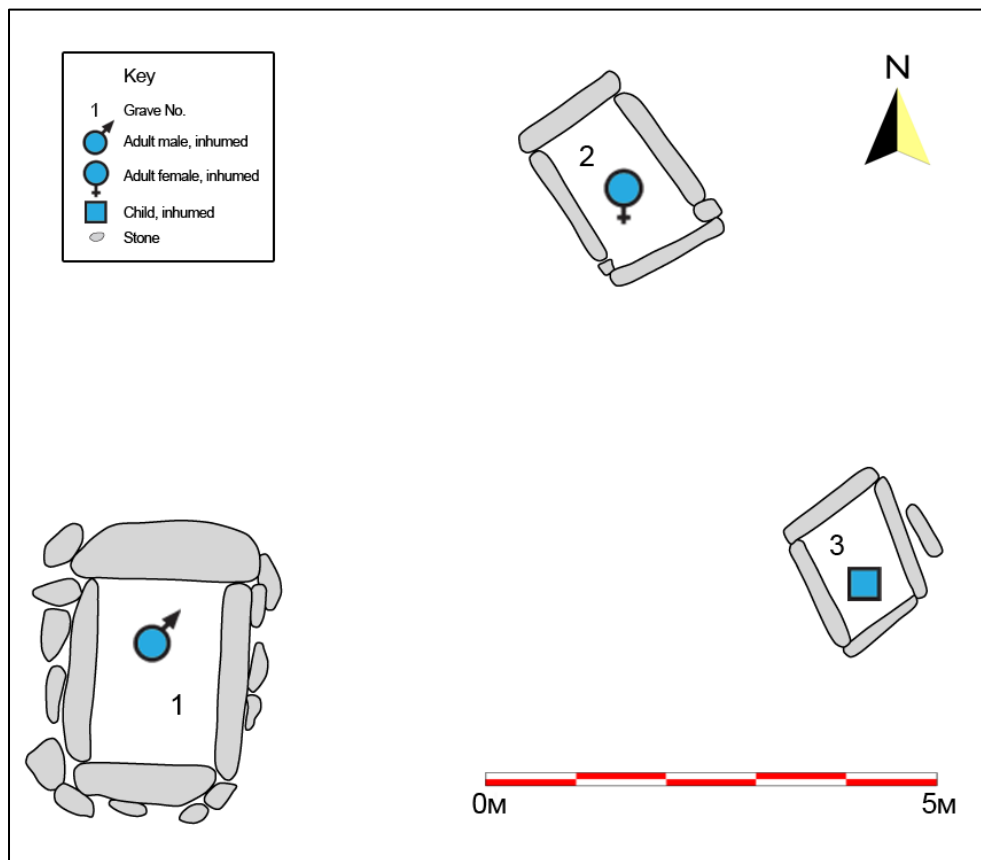
Figure 6.8 – Simplified plan of the cemetery at Redmondstown, Co. Westmeath (after Prendergast and Ó Ríordáin 2011, fig. 3.199). Original © National Museum of Ireland.

Grave goods were rarely provided, the pottery included in Grave 3 being the only case. This speaks to a difference in the burial practice afforded on this occasion. This could be seen as a reversal of practice at Ballybrennan, where graves generally had grave goods except the child's grave. Thus, in a different way, it was the child's grave which was made to stand out through material practices.

6.8.4 Conranstown, Co. Westmeath

The second cemetery in the northern cluster is Conranstown, slightly over 1km southeast of Redmondstown. Given the proximity, it is likely that the people who made this single burial occupied the same immediate area, and the site was similarly a couple of hours' walk from Ballybrennan.

This site, excavated in 1946, consisted of a single cist, though other burials may have been present beyond the immediate area (Raftery 2011a). An adult male (c. 25–40) was inhumed alongside a single fragment of cremated bone, part of the frontal bone of an adult, probably male, with green staining. The contents of the grave were in some disarray, and it seems likely that the burial was disturbed in antiquity (Raftery 2011a). Therefore, we cannot be sure that grave goods were not removed at some point, or indeed that the piece of cremation was not added later, perhaps to a grave that was considered ancestral.

We can say, however, that here again we have evidence for the inclusion of a single bone of another person in the grave. Unlike at Ballybrennan, here there was a mix of rites and part of an adult skull was used rather than an infant's femur. Therefore, the associations drawn in the minds of the mourners are unlikely to be similar to those enabled at Ballybrennan. We might consider, however, that this does replicate the male-buried-with-male that we have seen at Ballybrennan. Although the second male here is very partial, we have already seen at Ballybrennan and Ballynacarriga that the memory of the type of person a bone came from can persist, thus there may have been an understanding of this burial as one which brought together male and male.

6.8.5 Milltown, Co. Westmeath

The final burial in this northern group was at Milltown, about 3km north of Conranstown. This cemetery was within an easy walking distance of Redmondstown and Conranstown, though a trip to Ballybrennan might now exceed two hours. It is still very easy to imagine that

the community which used this site could have been in regular contact with those living near Ballybrennan.

This was another cist burial, excavated in 1971 (Raftery 2011b), set within a slight elevation in an agricultural landscape. This time, the burial was an inhumation of an adult, though the bone has not undergone a modern analysis. Loose earth had been thrown into the cist, to a depth of 15cm, apparently to cover the body, which lay on its right side with its head to the southeast. A Food Vessel was placed near the head. According to Raftery, the hands were placed either side of the bowl, but as the pot had been removed by the farmer who found the cist (Raftery 2011b), this cannot be certain. This type of pot can be placed in Brindley's Stage 2 of Bowl Food Vessels, thus she suggests this burial dates between 2080 and 1980 BC (Brindley 2007: 246).

As with Conranstown, it is difficult to know if this burial was truly a single burial, or if it formed part of a larger cemetery. In any case, when this burial was made, a single adult was placed in a well-constructed cist, a pot was placed near their head and their hands may have been specially positioned, the body was then covered with a layer of soil, blurring the distinction between cist and earth, and removing the body from view, before the capstone was placed on top. Elements of this burial could be understood similarly to those we have already seen, while other elements are unusual and different.

6.8.6 Kilgaroan, Co. Westmeath

We now move our attention south, to a concentration of three cemeteries southwest of Ballybrennan. The first of these, Kilgaroan, lies 7km from Ballybrennan, but less than 900m from Ardballymore, and just over 2km from Ballickmoyler (see Fig. 6.7). This single burial was discovered, and damaged, during land clearance work in 1956 (Prendergast 2011a).

The site consisted of a small cist constructed of local stone, within which was a large rounded stone, occupying the south-eastern corner, which seemed to be the top of an outcropping rock. The flat surface of this stone is described as being "firmly jammed" against the cist wall (Prendergast 2011a: 514). The cist, then, must have been built around this natural feature, with a floor of tightly compacted gravel which must have been dug through to reach this point. The inhumation of a child within was not accompanied by grave goods. The osteological report was conducted at the time of the excavation, thus no further osteological determinations are

accepted here, but it is worth noting that it is possible that a few remains of a second child were also present in the grave (Prendergast 2011a).

6.8.7   Ardballymore, Co. Westmeath

The site at Ardballymore was also discovered in 1956, just one month after that at neighbouring Kilgaroan, and an excavation was conducted though the cist had been disturbed by workmen (Raftery 2011c). Like many of the cists in this area, it sat atop a small gravel hill.

The cist had been filled with sand, and cremated bone was apparently scattered throughout this sand. A Bowl Food Vessel had been placed in the cist, apparently in the northwest corner as Raftery found further fragments of it there. The bowl is part of Brindley's (2007) Stage 1, dating from 2160–2080 BC, and radiocarbon dates align with this (Raftery 2011c), placing this burial slightly earlier than that at Milltown, potentially by several centuries, but likely by less than that. The collected cremated remains weighed 790g and represented the remains of an adult, possibly male, and an older child or adolescent. A single unidentified piece of long bone may represent a small animal or an infant. The sample consisted mainly of sizeable pieces of bone, thus many small pieces were probably not collected by the workmen/Gardaí when the cist was emptied (Raftery 2011c). The number of multiple burials has been low within this group in general, but this is potentially the first case of a child being included in one, although this may have been an adolescent who was socially considered to be an adult.

6.8.8   Ballickmoyler, Co. Offaly

The single cist at Ballickmoyler, on the border between Westmeath and Offaly, was excavated by Ellen Prendergast in 1961 (Prendergast 2011b). The cist contained the crouched remains of an adult and the cremated remains of another adult which lay over the thorax of the inhumation, a similar relationship to that seen in Ballybrennan, Grave 3. These remains were not reanalysed for the National Museum's project, so the inferences we can draw are limited. The original report is very confident that the inhumation was of an older adult female. Owing to the description of this sexing it has been recorded as 'probable female' for this project. The chance that this is an adolescent is thought to be low as it is also reported as showing signs of advanced age. The cremation deposit was not analysed, probably because of the small quantity of bone that was deposited. No grave goods were recovered.

6.8.9   Discussion of Ballybrennan Group

This group thus gives us an opportunity to investigate whether there are regional similarities between the group as a whole, and between the north and south clusters. The trends identified in each cemetery are summarized in Table 6.7.

Cemetery	Trends identified
Ballybrennan	Repeated use of infant femur Adults buried in combination with other human remains Males and females in similar roles More males buried Child buried singly
Benalbit and Derryroe	Adult buried singly
Redmondstown	All buried singly Male grave bigger, and possibly set apart Child's grave is the only one to receive grave goods Heads oriented to the north
Conranstown	Skull bone as inclusion Male buried with male
Milltown	Adult buried singly Bowl at head Body covered by soil
Kilgaroan	Child buried (singly?) Incorporated natural feature into cist
Ardballymore	Pockets of cremated bone in sand-filled cist Adult and subadult together
Ballickmoyler	Adults buried together Cremation lain over inhumation

Table 6.7 – Summary of the trends identified amongst the cemeteries of the Ballybrennan Group

The group of cemeteries is dominated by cist burials and inhumations, with cremations featuring occasionally, in several instances in combination with an inhumation. They seem to have been roughly contemporary, with burial taking place broadly between 2150 and 1900 BC. It cannot be ruled out that a single community moving around the landscape used all of these places for burials, or that each cemetery was used by a separate community at different points in time. Rather than combining them into averages, which would presuppose some relation, I want to explore the more subtle trends which emerged from this group.

From an overview such as this, it is clear that there were some trends which were specific to particular cemeteries. Those with several burials, Ballybrennan and Redmondstown, both displayed this. At Ballybrennan, the infant femur was repeatedly deployed in the funerary arena, while at Redmondstown the orientation of the graves was shared, with the two adult

bodies potentially oriented to face each other. These practices were not shared across the cemeteries. However, some aspects of practice did crop up in modified form. At Ballickmoyler, we have seen the cremation lain over the inhumation return, again featuring adult burials, while at Conranstown the burial of male-with-male was repeated, this time using a piece of skull to represent the second individual. Thus, two motifs seen at Ballybrennan were deployed in different contexts, though we cannot presuppose any causal relationship between the two.

Throughout this group, children were generally buried singly, except the cases where they were represented by a single bone. This is unlike practice at several of the other sites we have visited, but crucially children were still marked out for particular treatment. At Ballybrennan and Redmondstown this was achieved in contradictory fashions – the pottery was placed only with the child at Redmondstown, while at Ballybrennan the child's burial was the one without grave goods. Where the older child/adolescent occurred at Ardballymore this appears to be in a manner that suited adults.

Overall, then, the treatment of children suggests that there were similarities here in how these communities *thought* about childhood – for both Redmondstown and Ballybrennan the death of a child was met with a subtly different response to that of an adult. Although the manners used to achieve this did not align, the underlying social ideology may have been similar.

Where, though, can we see evidence of *gender* difference? The instances where females were buried seem indistinguishable from those where males were buried. However, the occurrence of males together in the grave at two sites suggests that some bodies were brought together to elicit particular responses. We shall return to discuss this in further depth in Chapter 8.

6.9 Further trends

A pilot study for this project was conducted as part of my MA research at University College Dublin in 2014 (Haughton 2014). That analysis was not presented in the discursive manner which I now favour, but I have not re-tread the same ground to avoid issues with overlap. However, some of the trends identified there will prove useful in the later discussion, thus the following brief summary is provided.

6.9.1 Keenoge, Co. Meath

This large cemetery, which formed the centrepiece of the thesis, featured at least 12 burials including the remains of at least 24 people (Mount and Buckley 1997). The burials were particularly variable, representing a large range of practices. Nevertheless, certain trends were recognised:

1) Infants and adults were buried here, but there were no burials of children.

2) When animal bone was deposited as a grave good (in three graves) this took the form of a tooth or tusk. Males, females and infants were associated with this practice.

3) A jet necklace was worn by a young adult female.

4) A bronze razor was deposited in a grave with an adult cremation and a female inhumation. Several flint artefacts were also found in this grave. The excavators considered that the razor was associated with the cremation, and that the cremation must have been male. However, the cremation was with a Bowl Food Vessel, rather than a Cordoned Urn and thus cannot be considered typical of a razor cremation (Kavanagh 1991).

5) Small amounts of human remains were included in the graves of others. The 'host' burial could be of a male, female or infant, and likewise the small amount could represent a male, female or infant.

6) Burials seem to be 'paired' in several instances. The most interesting of these is two burials at opposite ends of the ridge. One contained the young adult female with the jet necklace; she was accompanied by part of the skull of an older adult male and three fragments of cremated bone. The other grave contained the burial of an older adult male; he was accompanied by part of the pelvis of an adult female and a cremation was subsequently interred.

6.9.2 Martinstown, Co. Meath

The cemetery at Martinstown lay 30km from Keenoge. It featured 5 burials, containing the remains of 9 people. All adults were sexed, thus a ratio of 4 males to 1 female could be confirmed for this site. The space may, thus, have felt more male with the repeated visits to bury male members of the community here.

6.9.3   Grange, Co. Roscommon

The accretion of masculinity at a cemetery may also be relevant at Grange. Here, 17 adults were buried, 9 of them male or probably male, the other 8 remaining unsexed. Of course, there could have been a relative gender parity here, but it seems likely that males significantly outnumbered females. 5 children and 3 infants were also buried here, in contrast to practice at the similarly large site at Keenoge. 7 of the 14 graves were associated with animal remains, though rather than teeth they were varied bones, often from cattle. A case of shell and crinoid fossil was also amongst them.

6.9.4   Lug, Co. Offaly

The cemetery at Lug contained 9 graves set in a cairn, 8 of which definitely contained human remains. An additional cist was discovered 400m from the site. Although 3 infants were buried here, there were no cases of children or adolescents. The infant burials were always fragmentary and accompanying adults. Of 11 adults, 4 were female and 2 were male. The male graves were generally poorly furnished while the female graves contained several artefacts. This space, then, is largely an adult one, with a hint of gender differentiation between the burials of males and females.

6.9.5   Tomfarney, Co. Wexford

The final site analysed was that of Tomfarney, a single cist containing the mixed cremated remains of 17 people, both adults and children. The funerary practice here seems to have purposely erased differentiation with all appearing the same in death. It is possible that the bones had been gathered from another resting place, perhaps a more standard cemetery, but the inclusion of children and infants within the picture hints at a balanced selection of the population even if that were the case.

6.10 Conclusions

This journey around the island of Ireland has highlighted several trends in practice which we have not noticed before, some which have cropped up multiple times while others seem confined to particular cemeteries. Rather than attempt to summarise this material here, I will defer the broader discussion of these trends until after we have explored the evidence from Scotland in the next chapter. We will return to the trends identified here, and those identified by the use of statistics in the subsequent discussion (Chapter 8)

7   Seeking Local Practice II: Scotland

7.1   Introduction

Our journey through a selection of the Scottish burials will start at Seafield West, Inverness, a site with a long history of repeated use for funerary practice. From here, the focus will expand to take in seven neighbouring cemeteries whose period of use overlaps with one or more of the phases at Seafield West. This Beauly Firth/Great Glen group forms the departure point for our subsequent discussion.

Figure 7.1 – Distribution of sites discussed in this chapter. Detail of the Beauly Firth/Great Glen group is given in Fig. 7.2

We will then move around Scotland visiting Langwell Farm, Sutherland, Highland (1 person); West Water Reservoir, Scottish Borders (7 people); Glennan, Argyll & Bute (1 person); Sketewan, Balnaguard, Perth & Kinross (21 people); and, finally, Kirkton of Cults, Fife (5 people). Together with the 25 people covered in the Beauly Firth/Great Glen group and the 23 people from Dunure Road previously analysed (Haughton 2018a) and summarised here, this chapter will thus discuss the burials of 83 people, or 22.3% of those dealt with in Chapter 5. The locations of all sites discussed in this chapter is shown in Figure 7.1.

7.2 Beauly Firth/Great Glen Group
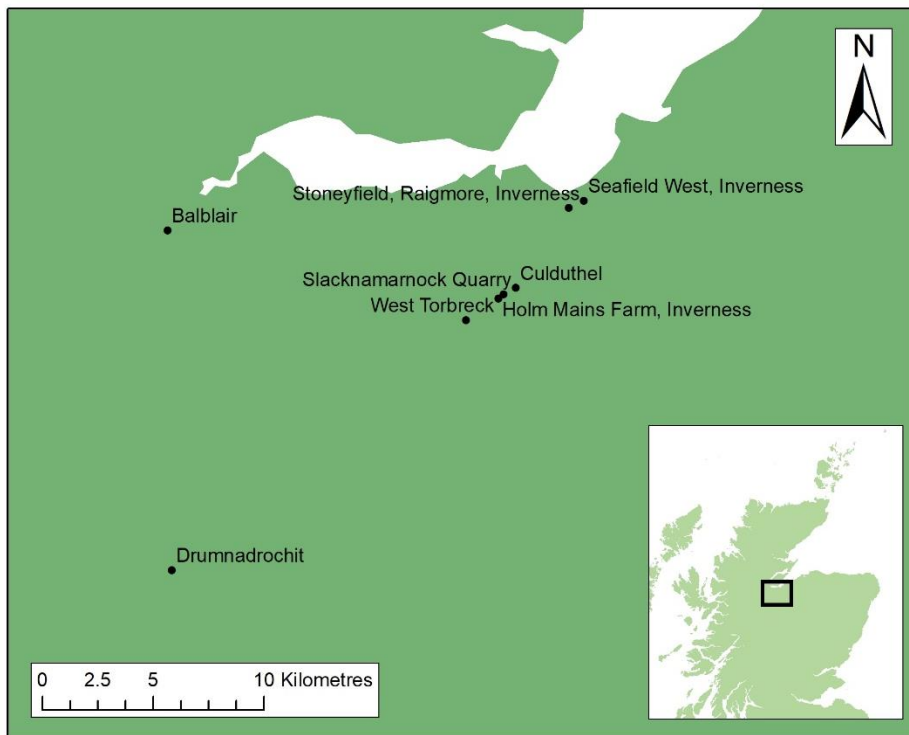
Fig. 7.2 – The distribution of the sites within the Beauly Firth/Great Glen group

7.2.1 Seafield West, Inverness, Highland

The cemetery at Seafield West, situated on a sand/gravel ridge overlooking the Moray Firth, was excavated in 1996 (Cressey and Sheridan 2003). I have selected it as our departure point for several reasons: firstly, funerary practice here evidences concrete links to Ireland with which we are now familiar; secondly, practice here covers the major elements of Earlier Bronze Age funerary practice as marked by the accompanying pottery: Beaker, Food Vessel, and cinerary urn; thirdly, the surrounding area is rich in Bronze Age burials; and finally, this area

of Scotland, though once neglected (MacGregor 1999), has recently received increased interest (e.g. Curtis and Wilkin 2012; 2017; 2019; MacGregor 1999; Nimura and Bradley 2016).

The site reveals a complicated history of activity, which is well-sequenced by the excavators. From the evidence, we can suggest three main phases of funerary activity (Fig. 7.3). The first use of the site seems to have involved the construction of two graves, roughly 20m apart (Graves 3 and 14). Grave 14 was a cist containing a Beaker, but no human remains survived. Grave 3 was a simple pit covered by sub-rounded boulders containing the remains of an adult, possibly female though information was contradictory, alongside pyre debris, three barbed-and-tanged arrowheads, a fragment of cremated mandible of dog/fox and some other fragments of possible animal bone. Charcoal from within this grave dated to 2470–2140 BC. Flint found within this grave probably represented residual Mesolithic activity. Grave 2, c. 4m southeast of Grave 3, was a cist of similar construction and orientation to Grave 14. It contained sand, charcoal and a small amount of degraded cremated bone. The similarities with Grave 14 might suggest that it also belongs to this early phase.
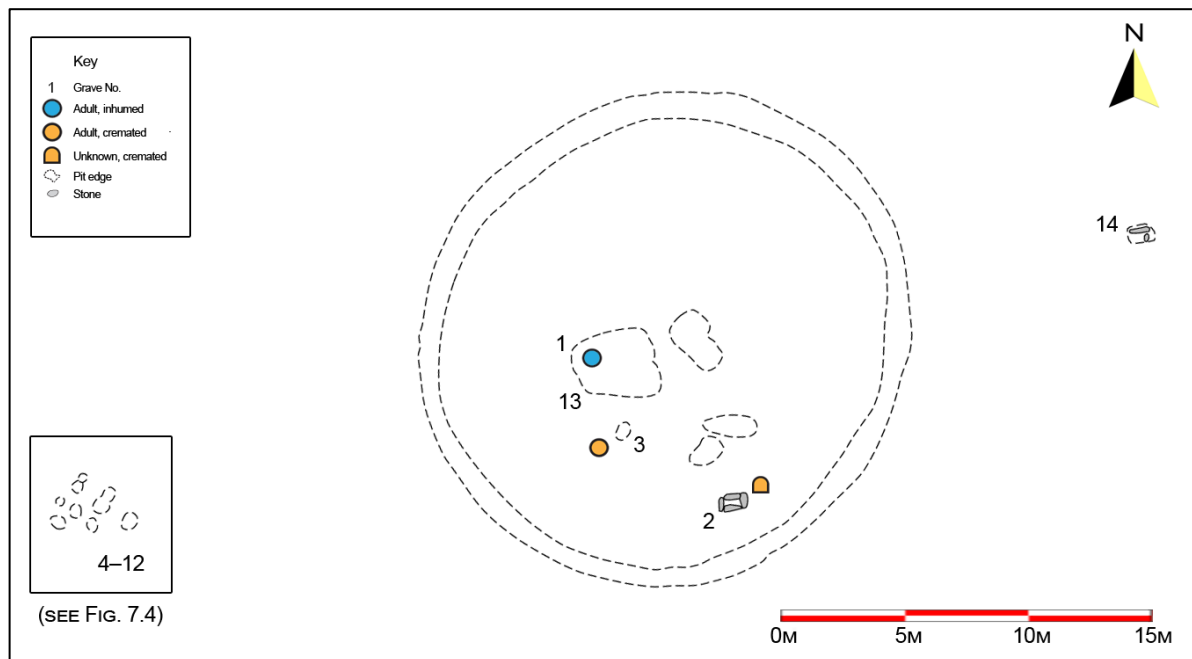
Figure 7.3 – Simplified plan of the cemetery at Seafield West, Inverness, Highland (after Cressey and Sheridan 2003, illus. 3)

The second phase of activity saw subsequent burial in the area of Graves 2 and 3: Graves 1 and 13, and three empty pits which may have contained now-degraded inhumations. A ring-ditch and cairn later came to cover the burials, and we might consider this the final act of this phase. Grave 1 featured a large soil stain interpreted as a boat-shaped log-coffin within which were

the severely degraded remains of an adult inhumation with a scabbarded bronze dagger (seemingly made from Irish metal) behind the waist. Pollen analysis suggested that bracken fronds had also been present, perhaps covering the burial and boulders seem to have been placed to support the coffin. A flint flake probably reflects residual Mesolithic activity. A date of 1870–1533 BC (at 95% probability) was obtained for the dagger; though some of the excavators reject this, the metal analysis suggested a broadly concurring 1900–1800 BC date.

Grave 13 featured a stain interpreted as a plank-built coffin containing an Irish Bowl Food Vessel in the southeast corner and four flint artefacts, including a knife and a scraper. Phosphate analysis suggested the former presence of a body, but no visible remains or staining were present. That the Food Vessel presumably came here from Ireland might suggest a time delay from its manufacture, and we can tentatively suggest an early 2nd millennium date for this burial too.
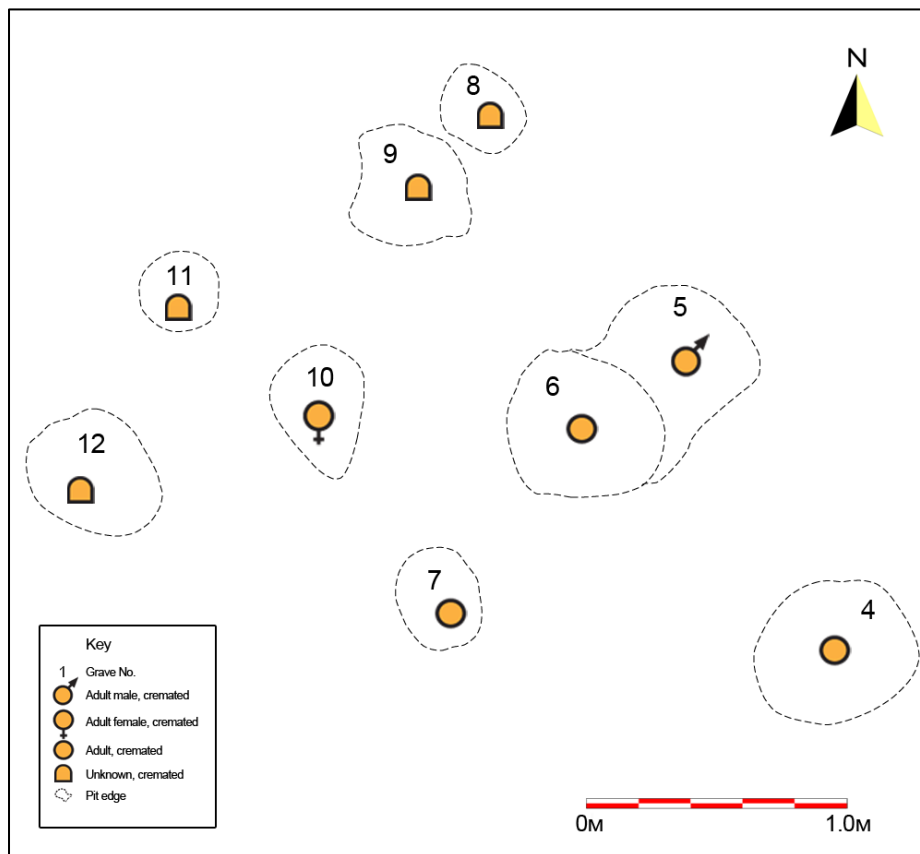
Figure 7.4 – Simplified plan of Graves 4–12 at Seafield West, Inverness, Highland (after Cressey and Sheridan 2003, Illus. 9)

14m to the west of the ring-ditch, was a tightly grouped series of plough-truncated cremation pits (Graves 4–12), the third phase of activity here (Fig. 7.4). The form of these graves suggests that they were made later in the third millennium BC than the wood-lined graves of phase

two. Each pit seemed to represent the burial of a single person, only Grave 10 contained pottery: sherds of an urn and an accessory vessel, both plough damaged. Details of other occasional graves goods are given in Table 7.1. Although the weights of these cremations are very variable, plough damage suggests this difference is taphonomic. Graves 5 and 6 are the only two with a stratigraphic relationship, showing that 6 postdated 5. In Grave 5, the cremation had been placed in the pit, perhaps in a container, and subsequently packed around with pyre material. While in Grave 6, the pyre material was placed in the pit first and the cremated remains were subsequently added. No evidence of similar practices was detected in the other burials here.

Grave Number	Occupant(s)	Grave Goods	Rite
1	Adult	log-coffin, bronze dagger, scabbard, flint flake	Inhumed
2	Unknown		Cremated
3	Adult (18-45)	3 burnt barbed-and-tanged arrowheads, frag. of cremated dog/fox mandible + poss. frags of animal bone, flint fragment(s)	Cremated
4	Adult, poss. female (112.6g)	None	Cremated
5	Adult, prob. male (18-45) (550g)	fragmented, burnt antler pin, possible burnt animal bone	Cremated
6	Young adult (18-30) (812.7g)	burnt bone toggle, possibly burnt animal bone	Cremated
7	Middle-aged adult (30-45) (615.2g)	fragments of unburnt and burnt animal bone	Cremated
8	Unknown (1.2g)	None	Cremated
9	Unknown (0.2g)	None	Cremated
10	Adult, prob. female (351.1g)	possibly worked animal bone, sherds from two vessels	Cremated
11	Unknown (0.4g)	None	Cremated
12	Unknown (2.7g)	None	Cremated

Table 7.1 – Summary of burial evidence from Seafield West, Inverness, Highland.

The time periods between these phases are unclear, it is possible that three intense periods of activity were separated by centuries without active burial, or there could have been a more drawn out process of engagement with the space. The first two phases may have been

overlapping, though the sharp difference in spatial focus and grave form in phase three suggests a subsequent gap in practice. The construction date of the ring-ditch and cairn is difficult to place, though it must have followed the burial activity of phases one and two which it overlies. Thus, those who made the cremation burials may have had no direct knowledge of the previous activity and instead been responding to the ring-ditch and cairn.

Despite the size of this cemetery, identifying patterns relating to gender or age ideology is challenging. In the first phase, the burials in cists were unaccompanied (Grave 2) or had a Beaker but no surviving human remains (Grave 14). The pit cremation (Grave 3), on the other hand, featured goods which had accompanied the body on the pyre, demonstrating the use of a dog/fox mandible during that ceremony and three arrowheads, tying this person into Beaker-related connections, though their burial was far from typical. Then, the wood-lined burials (1 & 13) speak of connections with Ireland – Irish pottery and Irish metal. Though we lack the human remains to say much about the people within them, these graves clearly referred to each other in both orientation, location, grave form, rite and the associations of the grave goods in a way which the three other burials do not. Finally, we are left with the series of pit burials, often truncated, which make up Graves 4–12. Animal bone hints at the ceremonies performed at the pyre, while there was also evidence of pins which dressed the deceased. Both males and females were involved in these practices, though there is no positive evidence for children at any point in the site's use. This seems to have been a space reserved for thinking about the remains of adults. Overall, though, we lack the evidence here to speak too readily of the people themselves, and can instead speak of the shifting connections of the community – first, with the Beaker world, the newly arrived immigrants (Parker Pearson et al. 2019), the other Beaker-using communities in northeast Scotland, perhaps isolated from other areas of Scotland (Curtis and Wilkin 2012; Wilkin 2011); then, the connections to Ireland within the context of a flourishing metal trade (Needham 2004), but perhaps deposited after that trade had died down; and finally, the more insular burial tradition, a turn inwards by the local community, placed near the earlier cairn but not directly interacting with this heritage.

Let us move, then, to some of the nearby sites, moving gradually away from this site to a view of practice in the local area.

7.2.2   Stoneyfield, Raigmore, Inverness, Highland

The site at Stoneyfield, Raigmore, is just 700m from Seafield West and set within the same gravel ridge. It was excavated in the 1970s and brought to publication in 1996 (Simpson 1996). A circle of kerb stones were found to be the remains of a partially denuded kerbed cairn (Fig. 7.5), beneath which were several cists and pits. There were four cists (Graves 4–7), three of them set against the kerb stones with the fourth within the cairn, none having capstones. Fragments of cremated bone were found within the fills of Graves 6 and 7, just one fragment in Grave 6, but neither of these have been counted as burials here as they are indistinguishable from the background level of cremated bone fragments within the disturbed soil. A Food Vessel was found on the floor of Grave 4. An extended inhumation was found beside Grave 5, partly covered by its overlying cairn material. This suggests that it was of some antiquity, but the extended nature of the body does not match with Bronze Age practice in this area and it has not been radiocarbon dated. Thus, this is also not considered here. At least 24 pits on the site were prehistoric, many containing Later Neolithic Grooved Ware pottery and indicating that the site was in use long before the construction of the cairn or the Bronze Age burials. Three pits were found to contain cremation burials, and these form the portion of the cemetery sure enough to have formed part of the statistical analysis – Grave 1 contained the remains of a young adult, probably male. Grave 2 contained an inverted Cordoned Urn containing the remains of a child (c. 2–3) and a burnt bone toggle. Both Graves 1 and 2 were covered by cairn material inside the kerb. Grave 3 contained cremated remains and sherds of Grooved Ware pottery which identify it as a Late Neolithic feature. Several large pits outside the kerb may also have held inhumation graves.

The site is further complicated by a Grooved Ware-related structure at the centre of what became the kerbed cairn and a posthole alignment of uncertain date. All of which allows us to say that the two burials dealt with here were made in a place with a long history of ritual activity, presumably while the kerb was already extant.
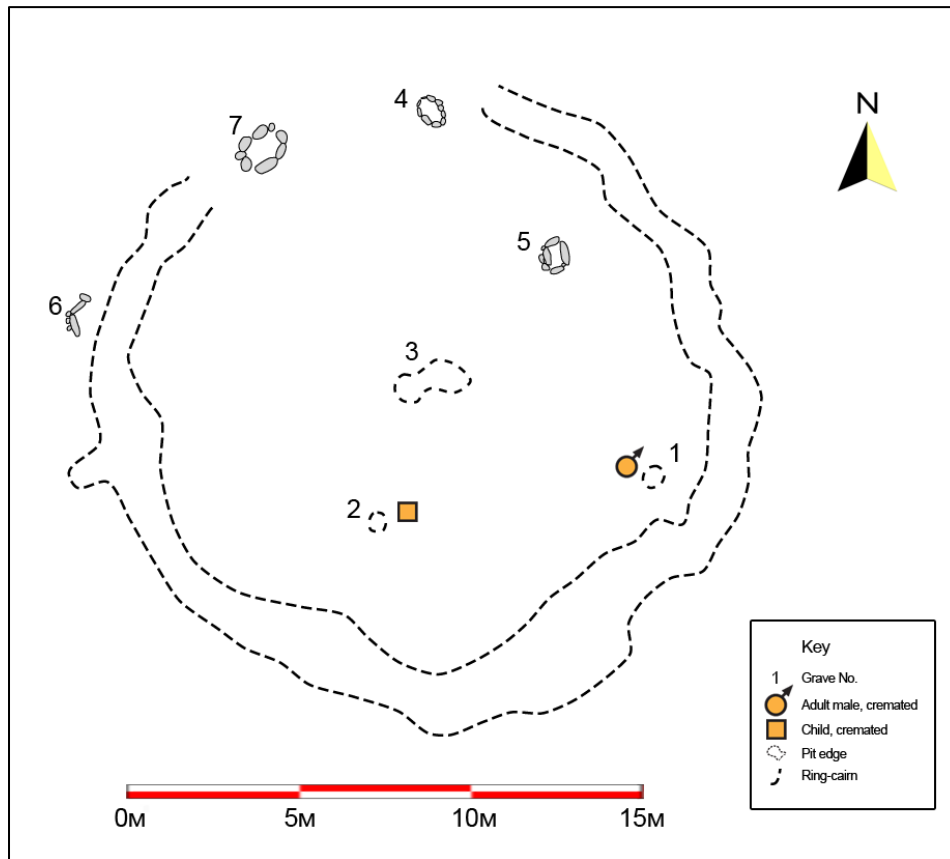
Figure 7.5 – Simplified plan of the cemetery at Stoneyfield, Raigmore, Highland (after Simpson 1996, Illus. 2)

Thus, the two certain Bronze Age burials, and the four potentials in the cists, were deposited in a place that had seen previous use for burial and other rituals. This ties a link between practice here and at Seafield West, though in the form of the previous interactions this place is clearly very different. The child's burial here is also worth noting; as we shall see, this was rare in the local area, though as it was associated with a Cordoned Urn it is clearly later in the period than many of the graves we will encounter here. That the young child was buried with pottery (and the bone toggle) while the adult was not may indicate the folly of treating grave assemblages as indicators of status by this point in the history of the area, even if we accept it for some of the earlier Beaker-associated graves.

7.2.3   Culduthel, Inverness, Highland

Not originally part of this dataset, as it lacked a modern osteological analysis, two burials at Culduthel are frequently mentioned in the discussion in the excavation reports of the various burials we are discussing here, and were recently reanalysed as part of the 'Beakers and Bodies Project' (Curtis and Wilkin 2019). As such, they can now be discussed here alongside a third less well-known burial, though all were absent from the statistical analysis. The burials at

Culduthel were spread over a reasonably large area and were excavated separately (Fig. 7.6). Furthermore, the boundary between these sites and those at Slacknamarnock Quarry and Holm Mains Farm (see below) is very uncertain. Thus, they may not represent a coherent cemetery, but are presented together here.
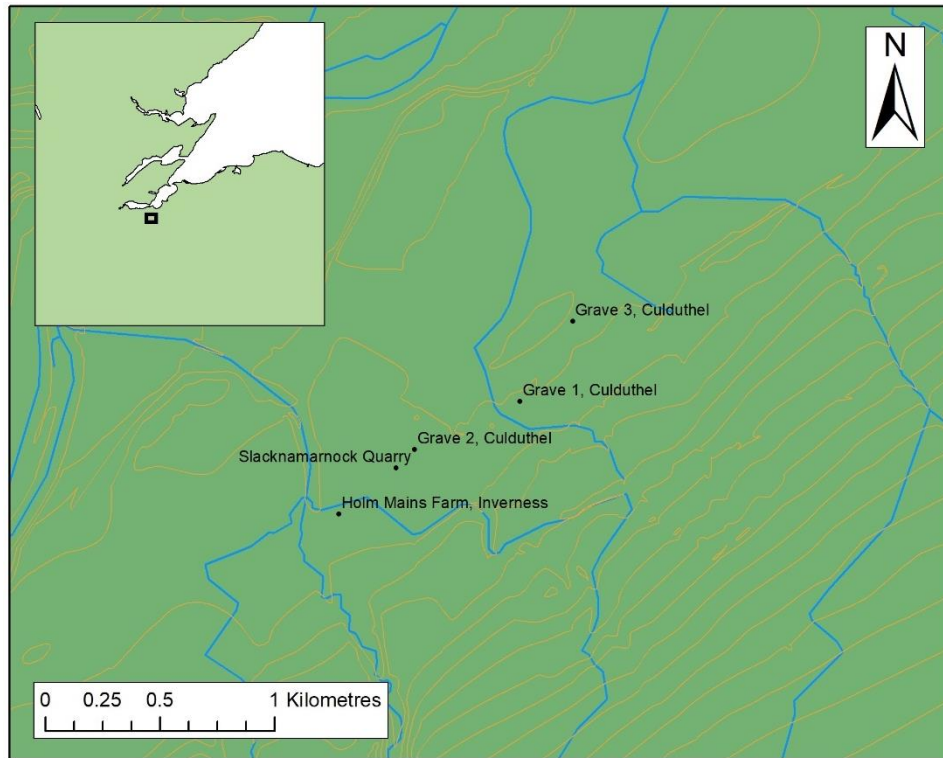
Figure 7.6 – The location of the graves around Culduthel, Inverness, Highland

Grave 1 (Canmore ID: 13513) was discovered in 1928 set in a gravel knoll (Low 1929). The cist was aligned northeast/southwest, like others in this area, and contained an inhumed skeleton of a young adult female, lying on her back, though her crouched legs lay on the right-hand side (Fig. 7.7). More than 500 jet beads and a boat-shaped fastener were found in the area of the pelvis and hands. Many of the smaller beads were found behind and under the pelvis, suggesting they formed a 'girdle' or elaborate belt. A bronze awl was found near the head, and a flake of Arran pitchstone was also found, perhaps through sieving the cist soil.
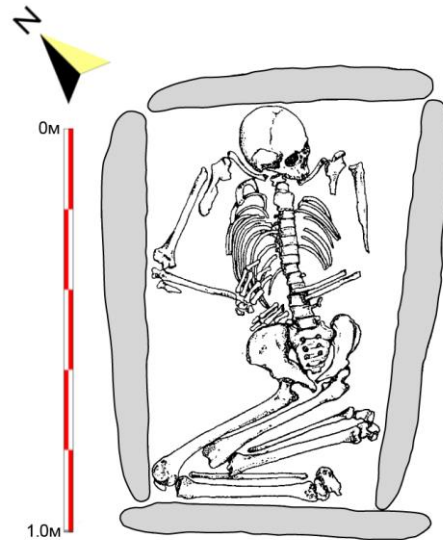
Figure 7.7 – Grave 1 at Culduthel, Inverness, Highland (after Low 1929, fig. 1)

Grave 2 (Canmore ID: 13516) was found in 1970, c.500m from Grave 1. It consisted of a cist containing an unaccompanied crouched inhumation on its left-hand side with the head to the north-northeast. As this grave was not included in the Beakers and Bodies Project, a modern osteological analysis is unavailable. Grave 3 (Canmore ID: 13519) was discovered in 1975, c.420m from Grave 1. It contained a crouched skeleton of an adult male accompanied by a Beaker, eight flint arrowheads, a bone toggle, an amber bead and a stone wristguard with four gold-capped copper studs. There was also a Clava cairn in this area (Canmore ID: 13508), though this has not been excavated.

The rich equipment of Graves 1 & 3 is remarkable in the area, and certainly marks these two individuals out as different in death. It is notable too that both were incomers to the area (Parker Pearson et al. 2019: 395), with the female in Grave 1 probably coming from somewhere in southern Britain and the male in Grave 3 probably coming from Co. Antrim. Their burial in this landscape near the unaccompanied Grave 2 shows these people tied into the local picture of burial, but the various grave goods suggest a concern with marking links that extend much further. It may be significant that a single male and a single female were selected to fulfil this role.

7.2.4 Slacknamarnock Quarry, Highland

This burial landscape continued at Slacknamarnock Quarry, just 150-200m southwest of the recorded site of Grave 2 at Culduthel and, as we shall see below, just 300m northwest of two further cists at Holm Mains Farm (see Fig. 7.6).

Here, a cist (Grave 1) containing the inhumed remains of an older adult, lying on their right-hand side, was found aligned northeast/southwest (Murray 2009). The skeleton was possibly that of a female, but the highly degraded nature of the bone precludes any certainty. A small pit (Grave 2) lay 0.2m east of the cist, containing burnt bone and charcoal. The bone represented an adult and a child. There were no grave goods with either burial and a radiocarbon date has not been obtained for either feature. The cist burial can be fairly confidently attributed to the Earlier Bronze Age by its form and orientation; the proximity of the cremation deposit suggests that it is associated but if the location was coincidental then it may date from a broad range of possible prehistoric periods..

7.2.5   Holm Mains Farm, Inverness

The next site, at Holm Mains Farm, Inverness, occupied a small plateau which now overlooks the Holm Burn, a tributary of the River Ness (Headland Archaeology 2007). One cist was found set within a low rise on the plateau (Grave 1), with another (Grave 2) found 80m to the west. The site was less than 6km from Seafield West, and just 300m from Slacknamarnock Quarry (see above).

The easterly cist, aligned north/south, contained the inhumation of an adult male, lying on his left-hand side with his hands in front of his face. A Beaker was found behind his head and a small barbed-and-tanged arrowhead near his left hand. Ten stone tools made of different colours of chert were found grouped in the southwest corner of the cist, as if deposited in one instance. Varying degrees of use wear indicated that the pieces were not made specifically for the grave. The group included five flakes, a bifacial knife, a backed knife, a cutting tool, and two scrapers – one heavily worn, the other partially finished. Part of an ovicaprid humerus was recovered from the area of the left knee. The floor of the cist had been paved with pebbles, and a larger, broken barbed-and-tanged arrowhead was discovered between the pebbles.

The westerly cist (Grave 2), aligned northeast/southwest, had been much disturbed by ploughing but was found to contain the inhumation of a young adult male (aged 20–24), also lying on his left-hand side. Sherds of a Beaker, with similar decorative traits to that from Grave 1, were also present near the feet. Carbonised cereal grains (of oat and barley) were found on the floor of the cist. The parallels between the burials are clear in the decorative traits, the orientation of the bodies and the graves, and the sex and adulthood of the skeletons.

Radiocarbon dates suggest a close proximity in time between the two events – Grave 1 dates to 2278–2034 BC and Grave 2 dates to 2286–2040 BC (both at 95% probability). Despite being 80m apart they form a more convincing 'programme' of burial than some of the other cemeteries we have encountered.

Grave 1 contained several stereotypical Beaker-associated grave goods, and the orientation of both males on their left-hand side fits with the gendered ideas we have seen were a feature of these early contexts (and see Shepherd 2012). We must consider, however, why the westerly burial did not contain artefacts to rival the easterly (excepting the possibility that some may have been moved by plough action). We might also consider the flooring – Grave 1 featured a cobbled floor, while the floor of Grave 2 was unpaved. The placement of the pottery also marks a difference between these burials – in Grave 1 it is at the head, while in Grave 2 it is at the feet, though behind the body in both cases. We could interpret this as status differences between these two men, the one in Grave 1 having the more elaborate treatment, with more items in their grave and the effort of the cobbled floor. In this regard, the barbed-and-tanged arrowhead from between the cobbles, said to be "finely worked" by the excavators (Headland Archaeology 2007: 4), is puzzling. It was found below the centre of the body and could have "found its way between the pebble floor" as the excavators suggest (Brown in Headland Archaeology 2007: 21) either because it was deposited on top of the body or worn on the body somehow or even lodged within the body, having been the cause of death. Alternatively, the arrowhead may have been deliberately placed in the fabric of the floor before the body was inserted. In either case, it complicates our reading of this as a simple marker of 'status'.

Furthermore, the burials seem to reflect or 'reference' one another. We can imagine that the community returned to this area for the second burial because the identity of one man seemed to match or reflect or fit with the identity previously established in the space. Whether they were truly of different statuses is less the point than the idea that there is a concretion here of gendered ideas. The return to this space, though at a remove, for the burial of a second male in a similar fashion does not seem coincidental.

7.2.6   West Torbreck, Highland

The site at West Torbeck lies 7.5 km southwest of Seafield West and was excavated in 2012 (Kilpatrick 2014). It consisted of a single cist containing an inhumation accompanied by a

Beaker and seven flint fragments. The cist was set within an esker ridge, 200m east of the Late Neolithic Torbreck stone circle. The inhumation was of an adult, probably female (aged 40–44), lying on her right side, facing east. The undecorated Beaker had been placed in front of her head. One flint, a retouched flake, was by the Beaker and another three, including a thumbnail scraper, were scattered in the vicinity of her feet. Another flint lay within material that had entered the cist post-deposition, apparently moved by bioturbation or water percolation. That this burial was dated to 2020–1889 BC (at 95% probability) is a reminder that the first two phases I identified at Seafield West may not have been chronologically distinct.

In terms of local parallels, there are only three other undecorated Beakers known from northeast Scotland, two of which are miniaturised versions (Kilpatrick 2014). One of these was found just 6km away in a pit at Beechwood Park, Raigmore accompanied by a plano-convex knife (Suddaby and Sheridan 2006). At that site, however, the east/west orientation of the (potential burial) pit and the use of a spatula in the pottery manufacture are argued to represent Dutch influences (Suddaby and Sheridan 2006), suggesting that this may be several centuries earlier than the West Torbreck example.

An unusually large number of flints was deployed in different places around this burial. This may suggest deposition by different people who were drawn into the burial process. In either case, that two were retouched and two were scrapers indicates that this was probably not the residue of flint knapping as part of funerary practice but that these pieces were selected and deposited for particular reasons. If deposited by different mourners, they would have provided a tactile connection with the burial practice. We might imagine people clutching the flint while waiting for the opportune moment to deposit them or picking them from a bag held by another. The feeling of flint in their hands later in their lives could have triggered memories of the ceremony. Thus, flint itself may have become an affective trigger of memories of this burial, and the woman who was buried here, for whoever participated in this element of practice.

7.2.7   Balblair, Highland

The site at Balblair lay west of Inverness and the mouth of the river Ness, set in another fluvio-glacial gravel ridge. To the south and east, it overlooked the River Beauly, while the land rose steadily to the north and west (Hanley and Sheridan 1994). It is the most westerly of the sites

discussed here, lying just under 19 km from Seafield West, perhaps a day's travel by boat and/or foot. A single cist was found here, containing two Beakers and a high phosphate count suggesting the former presence of at least one inhumed body. The two Beakers were of different sizes, with one of them taking a miniature form. It is possible that this indicates the presence of two people in the grave, though the cist itself was unusually small. The sandstone for the construction of the cist was derived locally, and it was oriented northeast/southwest.

Lacking even the ability to assess the number of people who were buried here, speaking of social ideologies is particularly difficult. The cist, empty of all grave goods but the Beakers, is reminiscent of the similarly empty grave at Seafield West, though it stresses the slightly unusual nature of the east/west orientation of that cist. What this site does contribute, though, is that these people, or this person, was linked to the broader sequence of Beaker burial in this area; that there was a way of constructing such burials which is followed here – the cist, the orientation, the Beaker itself, the inhumation. The elements of flint deposition we have seen previously were not repeated here, perhaps emphasising the power that these would have had when deployed at West Torbreck.

7.2.8   Drumnadrochit, Highland

The site at Drumnadrochit consisted of another cist burial and a possible pit burial, broadly contemporary with later Beaker activity (Peteranna 2015). Of those discussed in this group, this was the furthest removed from Seafield West, lying 25km southwest up the Great Glen. The burials were set in a slight rise within a low-lying plain between two rivers – the Enrick to the north and the Coiltie to the south. A steep knoll rose to the west, and Urquhart Bay in Loch Ness lay to the east, though was mostly obscured by the rise of Strone Point (Fig. 7.8). This cist was also aligned on a northeast/southwest axis and built of local sandstone. It contained a single crouched inhumation of an adult or adolescent, lying on their left-hand side, head to the north, facing east. Close to the cist, was an elongated pit, also aligned roughly northeast/southwest, though the features were not parallel (see Fig. 7.8). Centrally within its upper fill was a charcoal-rich area containing a smashed Beaker and a stone wristguard, its

position perhaps suggesting that this was not a formal burial. The burial was radiocarbon dated to 2140–1960 BC[1].
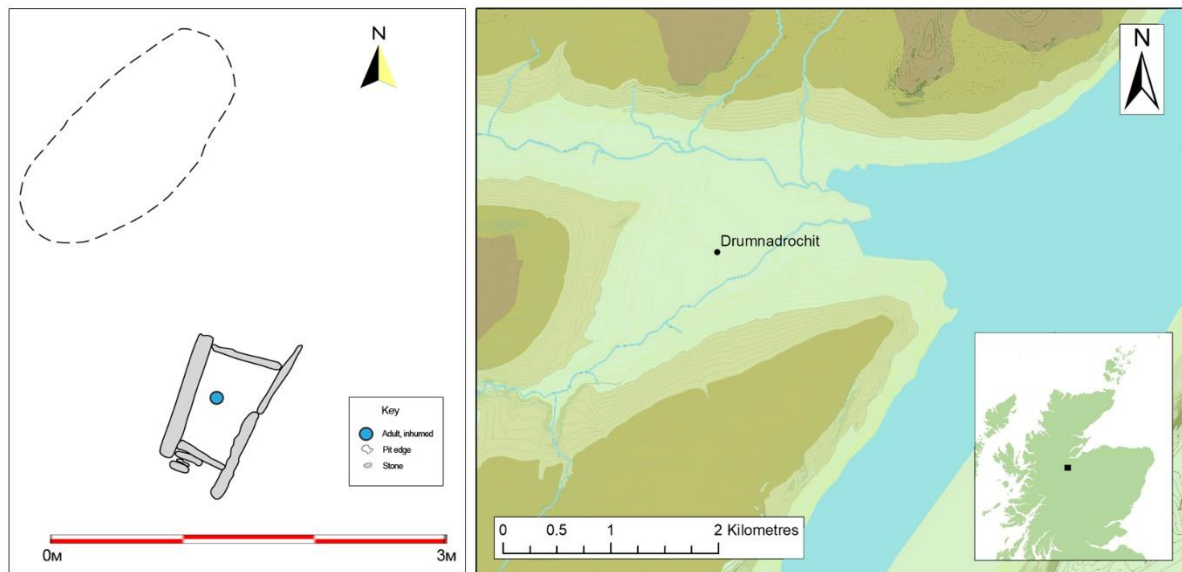
Figure 7.8 – Simplified plan of the cemetery at Drumnadrochit, Highland, (after Peteranna 2015, fig. 4) and the site's location in the immediate landscape

This burial foregrounds the challenges of talking of the deceased's status – the cist required a concerted effort to build, and yet this is not where the artefacts were deposited. Instead, two stereotypically 'Beaker' artefacts were laid in a separate pit. If we read these two as connected we might say that an attempt is being made to tie the deceased to this material world, but it is done neither clearly nor in the typical manner, marking this burial as unusual. However, other features, such as the alignment of the cist or the disposition of the body clearly tie the burial in to the local trends of practice.

Other burials have subsequently been discovered in this area (AOC Archaeology 2019), and a better appreciation of this burial can now be garnered in its cemetery surroundings. However, as fieldwork and post-excavation work are ongoing this could not be achieved in the lifetime of this project.

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[1] This date is reported in text at 95.4% confidence, the details of the determination were not available so this date could not be re-calibrated in OxCal.

7.2.9   Discussion

Cemetery	Trends identified
Seafield West	▪ Three phases: Beaker, Irish-influenced, Cremation ▪ Cists aligned east/west ▪ No evidence for children in any phase
Stoneyfield, Raigmore	▪ Two cremation graves, one an adult male the other a child
Culduthel	▪ Female with elaborate necklace ▪ Cist aligned northeast/southwest
Slacknamarnock Quarry	▪ Cist aligned northeast/southwest, older adult on right poss. female ▪ Cremation of an adult and child
Holm Mains Farm	▪ 2 males in cists which seem to reference each other – both lying on their left accompanied by Beakers ▪ One is northeast/southwest, the other north/south
West Torbreck	▪ Adult female, on right, head to south, looking east ▪ High number of flints (and Beaker) ▪ Cist aligned northeast/southwest
Balblair	▪ Two beakers in cist aligned northeast/southwest
Drumnadrochit	▪ Cist aligned northeast/southwest ▪ Typical grave goods in pit beside cist

Table 7.2 – Summary of cemeteries in Beauly Firth/Great Glen Group

It is immediately clear from an overview of these graves (Table 7.2) that an established norm for Beaker-related funerary activity had developed in this area – a cist was constructed on a northeast/southwest axis and an adult accompanied by a Beaker and perhaps a few other artefacts was interred there. This norm extends at least to the beginning of the 2nd millennium BC, as witnessed at West Torbreck, and also seems to encompass a gendered orientation of bodies, as recognised by Alexandra Shepherd (2012) and shown to be relevant across Scotland in the previous analysis (Chapter 5). However, this orientation relates to the side of the body which the person was lain on but does not seem to extend to how they were oriented within the grave itself.

Three aspects of this practice are immediately striking by comparison with what we witnessed in Ireland: (i) compared to the Ballybrennan area in Ireland, graves within this area seem to share a closer common understanding of burial 'norms', (ii) there is evidence for gender-based differentiation which was not seen in the Irish Midlands, and finally (iii), children were treated differently within the Beaker-related graves, as was broadly the case in Ireland. However, these trends did not seem to apply to the two sites with cremation graves. These are trends which will be reflected upon further in the next chapter.

This overview also allows us to question the designation of 'cemetery' in this context; the graves in the southwest of Inverness which are presented here as separate cemeteries appear to form a continuous funerary landscape. The two cists making up Holm Mains Farm, for instance, are 80m apart, yet the cist at Slacknamarnock Quarry is just 300m away. If all were excavated at the same time they could easily be reported as part of the same cemetery. As such, the people buried in these graves were drawn into a wider narrative and a wider community of the dead, where perhaps it did not always matter that they were not spatially close to other individuals for they were placed beside them in the mind through the regularity and similarity of practice.

In general, it seems that grave goods were often lacking here, but there are striking instances where many graves goods were included, as at Culduthel and Holm Mains Farm. However, there does not seem to have been a gradation within these grave goods suggesting a hierarchy, with some rich, some poor, and some middling graves. The middling in this instance seem hard to identify.

7.3 Langwell Farm, Strath Oykel, Sutherland, Highland

Our next site takes us north of Inverness, into the heart of the Sutherland uplands. It features just a single burial, but offers unrivalled preservation allowing us to glimpse what might be missing from the sites we have examined around the Beauly Firth.

Image redacted. Map of location of the site at Langwell Farm.

Figure 7.9 – Location of cist at Langwell Farm (Lelong 2014, illus. 1)

The site was excavated by GUARD in February and August 2009 (Lelong 2014). It lies close to the south bank of the river Oykel within Strath Oykel, which forms a natural routeway across northern Scotland (Fig 7.9). The site consisted of a cist burial set in a small, low rise, discovered accidentally during peat clearing. The cist contained the remains of a single adult female, aged 25–29, lying on her left side with her legs tightly flexed (radiocarbon dated to 2122–1888 BC, at 95% confidence). The burial lay on the alluvial subsoil, and a cattle hide had been wrapped around the body and was potentially weighed down with several stones. A bark-covered stick also accompanied the burial. It is possible that the body had been mummified, though the flooding of the cist can also account for the excellent state of preservation. Some river cobbles around the cist suggest a cairn may have covered the grave, but this could not be confirmed. The capstone of the cist was much larger than necessary. Stable isotope analysis determined that the woman had grown up in eastern Sutherland.

The excavation report demonstrates that there are numerous ways in which the hide and the body position can be interpreted to suggest various different metaphors or potential statuses

which could be read for the woman buried here, but none of them are argued for in particular (Lelong 2014). Indeed, it is difficult to argue for anything in particular when we cannot understand how unusual this burial was. This serves as a reminder that similar processes may have occurred with the other burials in this corpus for which no organic evidence survives.

There are obviously many elements of this burial which are reminiscent of those we have previously encountered around the Beauly Firth, and within the population-level analysis. The first point to note is that energy was clearly expended upon this burial – from the careful construction of the cist and its outsized capstone, to the wrapping and preparing of the body (be that by mummification or otherwise), and the selection of the site and the bringing of the elements together for the ceremony at this particular place, on an important routeway. We can only guess at why this burial was left alone and the site did not become a cemetery. Perhaps this woman died on the move and her travelling companions had to bury her and move on, or perhaps the community which made this burial either moved away from the area or ceased to exist altogether. Alternatively, the isolation of the burial may reflect some aspect of her social identity – that she was worthy of particular honour along this routeway, or that she was dangerous and had to be isolated from the rest of the community in death.

We are ill-equipped to determine between these interpretations, just as the excavator could not select just one interpretation for the hides included in the burial. There are, however, some insights we can gain relevant to this study. Firstly, the community have deliberately selected this low rise in a prominent routeway for the burial of this woman. They chose to mark this place with her presence, certainly for themselves, but perhaps for others through the construction of a cairn. We might suggest, then, that her identity was linked to the routeway, or that this routeway strengthened and enhanced her identity in the grave. Secondly, this woman was isolated in the landscape – the burial had not been connected to those of other members of the community. Her identity did not need to be defined by membership of a community in death, but was worthy of record alone. There is no reason for us to jump to modern concepts of marriage or trade to account for this, rather we should say that we have recognised here another community in which being female was not a barrier to being recognised as the focal point of funerary rituals, and with the addition of the link to the routeway, that her identity was not tied to the community, to a marriage partner, or to the location of the homestead. This was a woman who, whether she was buried where she died or

was buried here because it complements her identity, was not tied to the homestead as the models of male warrior chiefs would so frequently lead us to believe, but was seen to belong here on this routeway.

7.4 West Water Reservoir, Scottish Borders

The cemetery at West Water Reservoir consisted of nine cists, six of which were positively identified as containing human remains, two possible pit graves, and 2–3 other pits (Hunter 2000). The site lies in an upland valley in the Pentland Hills, which was flooded for a reservoir in the 1960s, and is far to the south of the areas we have discussed so far. The cemetery itself was exposed on an island during a period of low reservoir levels in the 1990s, indicating its location was a place of locally high ground within the Bronze Age valley.

Grave Number	Form	Occupant(s)	Grave Goods	Rite
1	Cist	Subadult	Evidence of meadowsweet pollen	Inhumed
2	Cist	Child (3–5)	Cannel coal and lead necklace, agate lump, quartz pebble, poss. meadowsweet tribute	Inhumed
3	Cist	Adolescent (11–13)	Vase Food Vessel, bronze awl	Inhumed
4	Cist	Adult Young adult, poss. male (17–19)	Vase Food Vessel (with Inh.), Bowl Food Vessel, burnt flint tool, 2 burnt bone beads (with Crem.), flint flake and quartz flake (prob. accidental), meadowsweet pollen	Inhumed Cremated
5	Cist	Young adult, poss. female (18–25)		Cremated
6	Cist	Adolescent (12–16)		Cremated
7	Cist	None	Food Vessel, flint tool, chert flake (intrusive)	
8	Cist	None		
9	Cist	None		

Table 7.3 – Summary of burial evidence from West Water Reservoir, Scottish Borders

The site had been disturbed by water erosion and overzealous on-site contractors, and unburnt bone did not survive in the acidic soil. However, the enamel crowns of teeth were block lifted and attest to the former presence of inhumations in a number of graves. Cists 7–9 appeared

empty, but were significantly affected by water action which may have removed or destroyed enamel remains. Thus, six graves remain for interpretation (Table 7.3).

Two hollows to the west may have been the remains of eroded grave pits, but neither artefacts nor evidence for human remains were found there. On the eastern edge of the cemetery were three features: one contained a few stones, another sherds of at least three Beakers and an orthostat, and the third, a grouping of stones which may be coincidental (and included post-Iron Age silver). These features may have related to ritual activity at the site, but their state of preservation does not encourage interpretation. Of note, however, is the excavators' suggestion that the Beakers formed part of a foundation deposit for the cemetery (Hunter 2000).
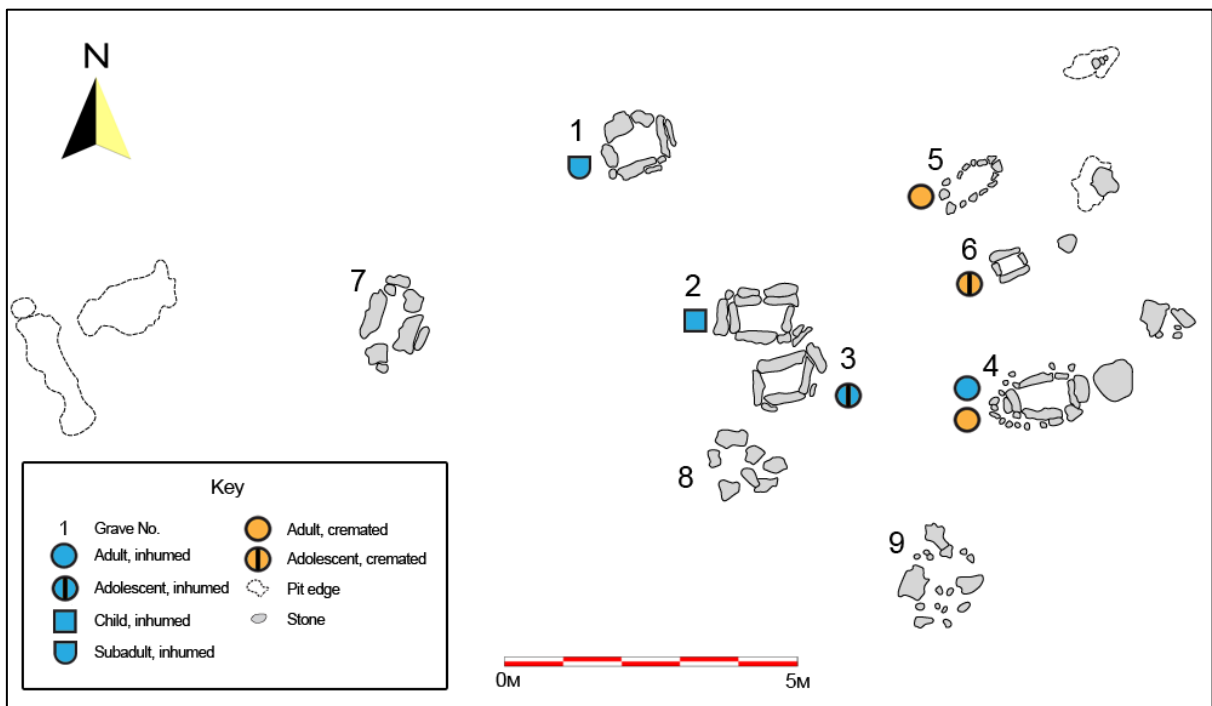
Figure 7.10 – Simplified plan of the cemetery at West Water Reservoir, Scottish Borders (after Hunter 2000, Illus. 3)

Burial practice at West Water Reservoir seems to have been quite formalised, with several clear patterns in the funerary practice: first, the occupied cists shared similar alignments (Fig. 7.10), and the heads of inhumations were always at the west end, facing south in the two instances where evidence survived (Graves 1 & 2), although the apparently empty Grave 7 was oriented north/south. Second, where pollen analysis was possible, large amounts of *Filipendula sp.* (meadowsweet or dropwort) were present in the cists, indicating the potential presence of floral tributes, a practice known at other Scottish Bronze Age cemeteries (e.g. Tipping 1994). Third, all cists were deliberately backfilled as part of the funerary ritual, usually in layers of

different material, though in Grave 2 the fill was different at each end of the cist. Most notably, the backfilling appears to have been delayed in Grave 4. This contained an inhumation and a cremation, and it seems that the cist was not backfilled until after the cremation was inserted, after the skeletisation of the inhumation. This may indicate that the community was always intending to return for a subsequent burial, in a way which they were not for the other cists. Though there was potentially a time delay in other cases, there is no evidence for the disturbance to the dentition, bones or grave goods which this might have been expected to cause.

There are patterns too in the connections between pottery and people here. In two cases, Food Vessels accompanied inhumations (Graves 3 and 4), and in both cases were placed by the head. The third Food Vessel, accompanying the cremation in Grave 4, was placed within the deposited cremated bone, maintaining the proximity between person and pot. The position of the cremation at the opposite end of the cist to the inhumation's head and its own Food Vessel may indicate an intention to keep both bodies/vessels somewhat discrete. Other grave goods – an awl in Grave 3, a necklace in Grave 2, and burnt beads and a flint in Grave 4 – were also associated with the head or body. The awl was by the adolescent's head, while the necklace was seemingly worn by the child. This dual-strand necklace of 181 cannel coal disc-beads and 31 lead beads is a rare find, particularly in association with a child. The burnt grave goods from Grave 4 had presumably accompanied the deceased on the pyre and were collected and mixed with the human remains in deposition.

In terms of grave construction, Grave 5 resembled a stone-lined pit more than a cist, and this may have marked this burial out as different. So too must the orientation of Grave 7, it is unfortunate then that we cannot see who, if anyone, was buried in this cist. In Grave 6, the main cremation deposit was on the floor of the cist, but a small amount of the bone was retained and deposited within the layered fill. Finally, stones in the vicinity may have been grave markers for Graves 4 and 6.

This cemetery provides rich evidence for funerary practice, and the excavators wondered whether this was a 'specialist' cemetery for the young (Hunter 2000), though this raises the question of whether our category of 'young adults' can be assumed to group with understandings of 'young' in a Bronze Age reality. For clearly, this is a cemetery with both adults and children, and with fewer adults reaching old age in Bronze Age communities there

may have been less associations of this as a place for young people. However, there is evidence for a subtle ordering within the cemetery – the graves appear to form into two groups, almost rows, running north to south, such that the burials were lying alongside each other. The appearance of rows breaks down with Graves 8 and 9, but the grouping is still valid. Interestingly, the westerly group (Graves 1–3) comprised the three youngest people amongst the burial population, while the easterly group (Graves 4–6) comprised the older/adult people. If Grave 7 truly was another burial, this would place the children's burials in the centre of the cemetery.

As we have seen, the burial of children alone, and with elaborate grave goods does appear to be rarer within the Scottish record. Even without a singular focus on the young, this may have changed the nature of this place, and affected the wider landscape in which people were living. The rare necklace buried with the child in Grave 2 would have been particularly memorable for the mourners, and must have enhanced the resonance of the funerary activity here. This speaks to a child as central to the memory of this place and the actions which went on here. Whatever about elsewhere, it seems children could be central to this community. Rather than saying that this was a child with status, we might consider that this was both a reflection of the fact that this child was central to the story this community was telling about itself and reified the child as central in narratives to come.

Another interesting element is the repeated use of *Filipendula* in the graves. As these species flower in the summer months, this may have been a cemetery used at a particular time of year. It is possible that this was a cemetery visited as part of seasonal movements, as was found to be common amongst Beaker-using communities (Parker Pearson et al. 2019), although these burials were not analysed by that project. The possibility allows us to think not just of the rise in the land, or the possible markers, as physical reminders to the living of the dead but to extend this beyond the immediate locality. The distinctive smell of flowering *Filipendula* would provide that sensory link to those memories, too. It may be important, then, that this place represented a broad cross-section of the society, and that there seems to be little to differentiate the adults from the children beyond the locations of their burial.

7.5   Glennan, Argyll & Bute

The site at Glennan is on a different scale to that at West Water Reservoir, consisting as it does of a single cremation burial found in a small boulder shelter at the base of a prominent outcrop within a small glen northeast of Kilmartin Glen (Fig. 7.11). The inverted urn had been deposited in a pit formed by pulling scree from the shelter's floor deposits. As found, the site had been disturbed and the lower portion of the urn (uppermost as it was sitting) had been broken and sherds, bone and a retouched flint flake were excavated from the surrounding area (MacGregor 2003).

Image redacted. Photograph of rock outcrop at Glennan.

Fig. 7.11 – The location of the burial at Glennan, Argyll & Bute (MacGregor 2003, Illus. 3)

The urn was of the Enlarged Food Vessel/Vase Urn variety. It contained the remains of a middle-aged adult male (c. 30–40) and an immature sheep/goat. Careful excavation attested that the animal bone was mixed throughout the human deposit, suggesting that the animal, or a part of it, had been burnt with the body on the pyre. The bone was carefully collected, sorted from pyre material and possibly washed before deposition. There is some evidence that the animal was skinned, possibly using the knife that accompanied the burial. We might suggest that the rest of the animal was consumed by the mourners, though this was not necessarily the case. If it was, this would have provided a sensory link between the funerary practices and those of daily life which opens further pathways for memory.

One of the most unusual elements of this burial may be its location. The landscape has already intruded upon our discussion at several points and here it must do so again, for anyone living within, or regularly passing through, the glen must have been aware of this imposing outcrop as a feature of their daily lives. The deposition of this person here, within the rock itself, almost makes the body part of the outcrop. The physical experience of this burial would have been

very different – we can think of the sensations involved in removing the jagged pieces of scree to form the hollow for deposition and the limited space for mourners in the boulder shelter itself. It is, in some ways, an intimate space – a small hollow against a mountainous outcrop – but its placement within this dominating physical form extends its impact beyond the immediate, sheltered space of the burial itself. This may have created distance – the deceased had dissipated into the mass of the rock – or proximity – the memory of the tight confines of the burial event itself. The links between the burial and the rock would form a daily, or seasonal if they were moving further afield, reminder of what was done here, until the memory became either story or something which the outcrop did not immediately bring to their conscious minds. Nevertheless, whenever they caught sight of this outcrop there was something of this person there, giving him a lasting residency in their minds. To this end, it may be meaningful that he was buried alone. Meaningful not in the sense that it must have been deliberately created so, but rather that he was set apart in this way caused him to be remembered differently, with the rock, which may have had animacy of its own, perhaps with a wider landscape of ancestors, but not with a specific community of the dead, not with others whom he lived with, and not with a place where people returned for further acts of deposition, if they returned at all. This is, very clearly, a different form of memory to that we have just encountered at West Water Reservoir, or that encountered in the dispersed but similar burials around the Beauly Firth.

7.6   Sketewan, Balnaguard, Perth & Kinross

With 14 graves, the cemetery at Sketewan is amongst the larger Earlier Bronze Age cemeteries excavated in Scotland (Mercer and Midgley 1997), and contrasts with the scale of activity at previously discussed sites like Glennan and Langwell Farm. This site consisted of a large cairn covering an earlier ring-cairn, within and beneath which a number of burials had been made. Both the cairn and the underlying ring-cairn were made of stone available in the local area, though not immediately adjacent to the site. The northeastern sector of the ring-cairn, and a small amount of the overlying cairn had been removed at some point in an attempt to clear it, perhaps during the construction of the nearby railway. The modern course of the river Tay runs 300m north of the site, and Balnaguard standing stone and a large possible Late Neolithic mound are just 100m away. A Food Vessel had been recovered from the vicinity of Balnaguard

standing stone in the late-19th century, and a cist containing a Beaker and cremated remains was excavated nearby in 1969.

Grave Number	Form	Occupants	Grave Goods
1	Cist	Young adult, prob. female	Food Vessel, plano-convex knife, cremated foreleg (deer?)
2	Cist	Unknown	
3	Cist	Middle-aged adult, prob. female	
4	Cist	Adult Child (2–5) Infant Foetus	
5	Cist	Adult female Neonate/foetus	
6	Cist	Adult, prob. female Adult, prob. male	Cremated foreleg (deer?)
7	Cist	Adult, prob. female	
8	Pit	Adult, male Child Neonate/foetus	
9	Pit	Young adult, male	Collared Urn
10	Pit	Child (2–5)	Collared Urn, 2 trout vertebrae (accidental?)
11	Pit	Adult, male	
12	Pit	Unknown	
13	Pit	Adult	
14	Pit	Middle-aged adult, prob. male	

Table 7.4 – Summary of burial evidence from Sketewan, Balnaguard, Perth & Kinross

This site had a complicated history of use and the clarity with which it can be presented is a testament to the work of the excavators. Funerary action seems to have begun here with a central pyre and a series of 6 cists (Graves 2–7) containing washed cremated bone, presumably deriving from the pyre. The bones of at least 6 individuals were found within the remains of the pyre, for database construction this was not considered to be a 'burial'. Later, a ring-cairn was constructed around the pyre, this must have taken place after the construction of Graves 4, 5 and 7 which lie under it, and probably also after Grave 3 under the now vanished northeast sector. A seventh cist (Grave 1) cut the pyre after its first lighting, but before its final use. This cist was covered by its own small cairn. As this cist and cairn was not central to the ring-cairn, the excavators suggest that it post-dated the construction of the ring-cairn. A burial within the

fabric of the ring-cairn (Grave 14) is difficult to place in the sequence, though its form matches the later activity here.
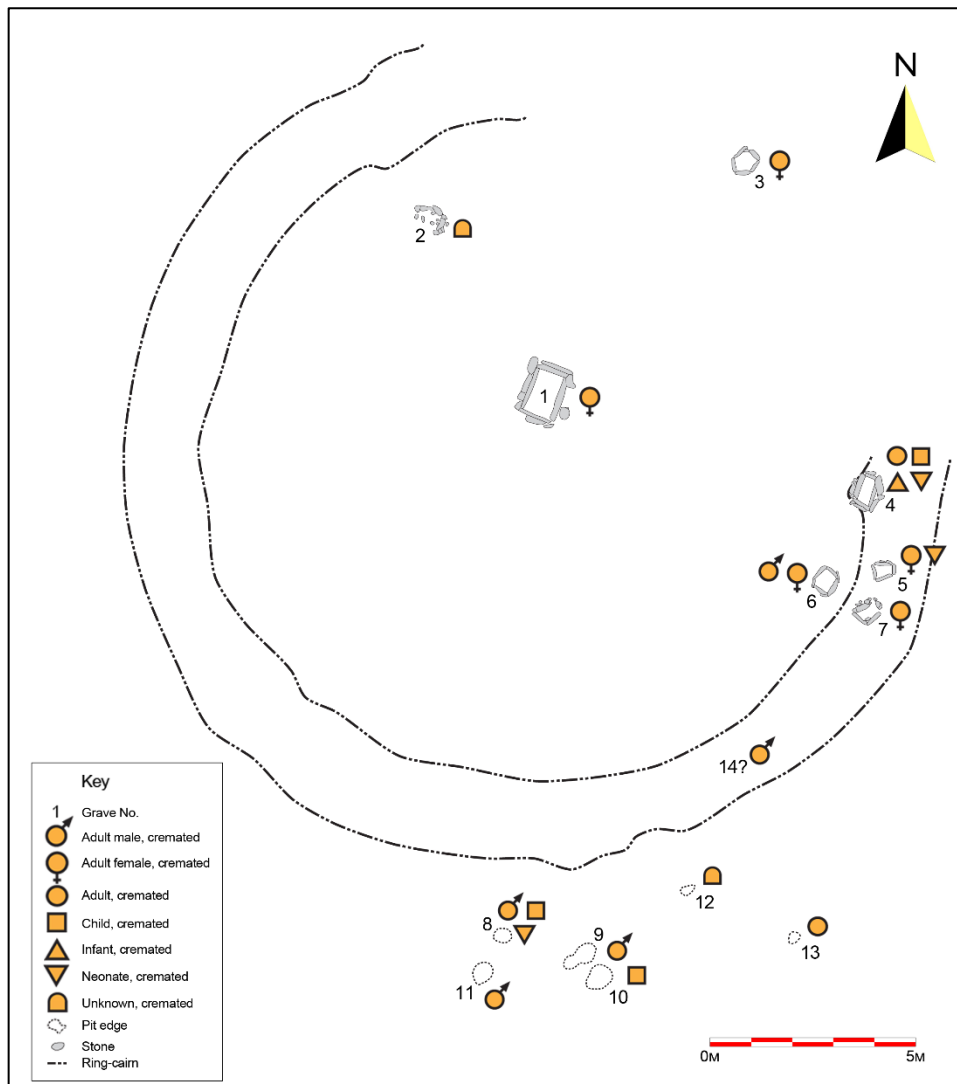
Figure 7.12 – Simplified plan of the cemetery at Sketewan, Balnaguard, Perth & Kinross
(after Mercer and Midgley 1997, figs. 9, 11, 17 and 20)

The large pyre-adjacent cist contained a scattered 'token' amount of cremated bone from a young adult female. As this bone had been carefully washed and scattered around the cist, it was not an accidental inclusion from the pyre debris. The bone was frequent in the southern corner, beside an unused plano-convex flint knife and Food Vessel. Two organic stains were also present, one containing large amounts of *Filipendula vulgaris* (dropwort) pollen. The cist was left open for some time, before it was finally deliberately backfilled with sand and then cobbles. For a time, a post then stood within the cist pit, but this was later removed. The second phase of the firing of the pyre then occurred, before a large capstone closed the cist, and

became the centre point of a cairn, off-centre within the ring-cairn (Fig. 7.12). Scorching on the lower stones indicates that the pyre was probably still hot when this cairn was constructed.

Four of the satellite cists were closely grouped to the east of the pyre. One of these, Grave 4, was the only satellite cist with a capstone, though it had been dislodged. It was also the only cist with a paved floor. None of the satellite cists contained any grave goods, except for the cremated foreleg (possibly of deer) found in Grave 6. The demographic details of the occupants are provided in Table 7.4. Of particular note is the presence of females in 5 of these 7 graves. The foetus in Grave 4 suggests that the accompanying adult may also have been female, though burial of a stillborn, pre-term infant cannot be ruled out.

The final major construction act at the site was the introduction of more boulders to 'unite' the cairns, creating the appearance of a single, kerbed cairn. To the south of the cairn, three crescentic palisades were sequentially constructed and dismantled. Four cremation deposits were made in the area enclosed by these palisades. In one of these (Grave 8), the remains had been washed and sorted from pyre debris, but the other 3 contained a mixture of cremated remains and pyre debris, representing a change from the earlier practice. Grave 8, which was also the shallowest of these pits, was cut into the slot of what seems to be the latest of the three palisades. One of these deeper pits contained the remains of an adult male (Grave 11), while the other two contained a young adult male (Grave 9) and a child (aged 2–5, Grave 10) contained in Collared Urns. This area then seems to have been covered by a secondary cairn, though it had been much disturbed, and two further deposits of charcoal and cremated bone were made (Graves 12 and 13) directly on top of collapsed cairn material. The volume of bone in both was relatively low, with one representing an unknown human (430g, Grave 12), and the other an adult (280g, Grave 13). A date derived from charcoal in Grave 12 suggests that this activity took place at the beginning of the Middle Bronze Age (1601–1297 BC, at 95% confidence). Grave 14, an unfurnished cremation of a middle-aged adult, probably male, was deposited within the ring-cairn constructed around the pyre close to the location of these burials. As an unaccompanied cremation in a pit it seems to match best with the later phase of activity on the site, but this cannot be certain.

The demographic information (Table 7.4) gives a first impression of gender-balanced practice, with 5 females and 5 males, and little difference to be seen in grave good provisioning. However, there is a clear spatial distinction between the burials of males and females (see Fig.

7.12). All 5 of the females were buried in cists, while only 1 male was buried in a cist, alongside the female in Grave 6. The other 4 males were buried in pits in the south or southeast of the cemetery. As we have seen, the sequence of action at the site suggests that this also represents a chronological patterning to the practice, with the cist burials being the earlier activity. Thus, this seems to represent a chronological shift, from a space for burying females, and the occasional child or male, to a space for burying males, and the occasional child. In this context, it is tempting to see Grave 6 as the moment of transition, when male and female were brought together here, but this is purely speculation. The construction of the cairn and the consequent shift in the locational focus for burial which this enforced can also be considered in the context of this cemetery's change in association from female to male. Literally constructing a different space for mourners to experience and making the previous locations of burial and the cremation pyre inaccessible may have been important steps in this process.

There are also interesting trends in the treatment of children here. While multiple burials are in the minority, when they did occur children were often included. Indeed, the only multiple burial without children is the unusual Grave 6 burial of a male and a female. The only child buried singly is that in Grave 10, one of the pair of Collared Urn burials at this site. Both spatially and in material terms this grave is linked to the adult male accompanied by a Collared Urn in Grave 9. This close link may have replaced the need for the adult to be present in the same grave. Adults taking 'accompanying' roles in the grave is seen at other sites, including Dunure Road (see below, and Haughton 2018a), but West Water Reservoir has demonstrated that this was not the case everywhere. The high rate of neonate/foetus burials is also worth noting here. While they always occur with an adult, this was a male in Grave 8. This testifies both to the care with which the newborn or stillborn seem to have been treated, and to the care to collect some bones of each person from the pyre.

The lack of grave goods in the satellite cists perhaps indicates that the material relations of the corpse were not of primary concern after the cremation. That is, the dead did not 'require' anything after burial. The washing/cleaning and deposition of the remains in separate cists, however, indicates a period of concentration on preparing the remains (and preparing the location) that was focused on responding to those particular bones, and by extension that particular person. In other words, the fact that a separate cist was used on each occasion indicates that these people may have been individualised or differentiated to some extent after

the pyre and before deposition. The locations of the cists also afforded opportunities for meaning, with four clustered tightly together. These repeated visits to this part of the cemetery allowed for the clustering of these people in the mind, and the recall of previous instances of burial. It is interesting in this context that the burials of two females, and the unknown in Grave 2, stand apart from the various clusters. Whatever this might have meant, it is a meaning construction that was only applied to these particular women and did not form a part of later practice. Thus, whatever meanings were created here may not have been attached to males or children.

Overall, then, this cemetery presents a picture of a community that were acutely aware of and responding to gendered difference in their burial practices, and of a broad difference between adults and children. Importantly, however, these do not manifest as 'status' differences, particularly the gendered differences. If there are messages we can interpret here, they are suggesting that men and women are separated at different times, that a space can be for the burial of females, and then become a place for the burial of males, perhaps through a lynchpin in Grave 6, but it cannot be maintained as for both at once for long. This is most unlike what we have encountered elsewhere, though it is reminiscent of the practice we briefly overviewed at Grange, Co. Roscommon, which seemed to be primarily a male space, or the early stages at Edmondstown, Co. Dublin, where an initial focus on adult males was expanded to allow the burials of the wider community. It could be argued that children's burials do manifest as 'status' differences – with adults playing some form of apotropaic/guiding/enabling role for children in many cases, perhaps continuing into the late-in-the-sequence Collared Urn burials, though it had now morphed into separate but related graves.

7.7 Kirkton of Cults, Fife

The final cemetery we will review in detail brings us back to eastern Scotland, to Kirkton of Cults, excavated in 1995 by GUARD (MacGregor 1998) as part of the laying of a new water mains. Four pits, two of which contained cremation deposits, were found in close proximity (Fig. 7.13) and may be part of a larger cemetery not falling into the excavated area. A cropmark indicated a possible barrow 150m away. The most westerly pit (Grave 1) contained a heap of washed cremated bone representing the remains of four individuals – a child (aged 4–7), an adult female (aged 25–50), an adult, probably male, (aged 25–40), and a foetus of c. 7 months' gestation. Amongst the deposit was an unburnt retouched flint flake, two other fragments of

burnt flint (one of which seemed to be a fragment of a larger polished artefact), and part of a copper-alloy awl. The neighbouring pit to the east was badly plough-truncated but contained the remains of another cremation of which just 13.3g survived (Grave 2). The remains here represented an adult, of unknown sex, who was perhaps aged over 40 and no accompanying grave goods survived. The sharp definition of this feature suggested deposition in an organic container to the excavators.
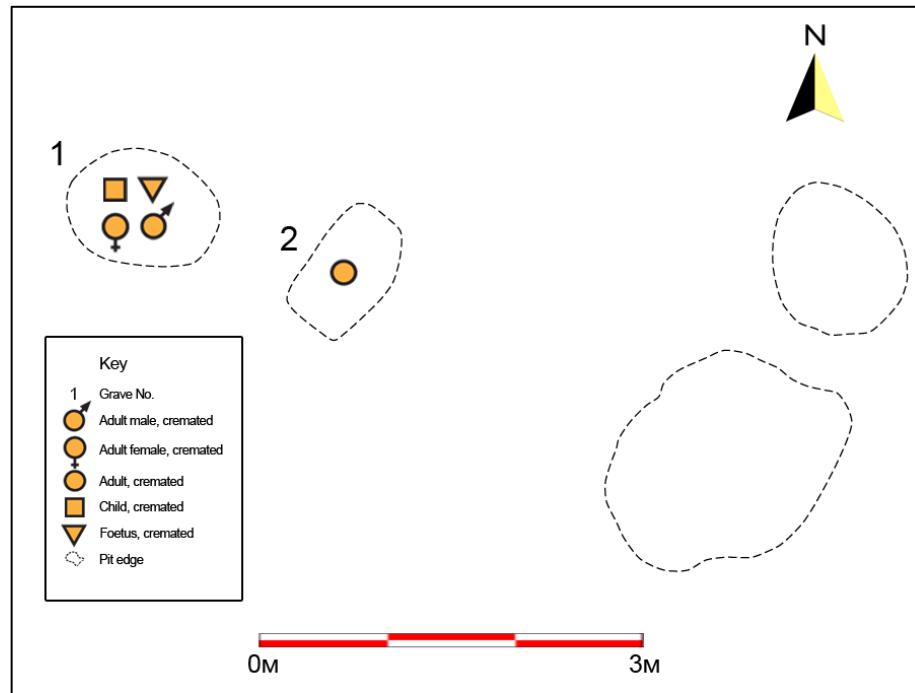
Figure 7.13 – Simplified plan of the burials at Kirkton of Cults, Fife (after MacGregor 1998, illus. 4).

Of the two remaining features, the northerly one may represent the remains of a cist, but it was not found to contain anything. The southerly one appears to have been a grave pit containing a Food Vessel at its westerly end. However, no human remains survived, if they ever were present.

The excavator postulated that a cross-section of stages in funerary activity could be viewed here – the stone 'box' or cist may be a reliquary for the temporary storing of remains (presumably held in containers), while the remains in Grave 2 see this sort of storage in action, and Grave 1 shows the deposition of the remains of several people, potentially after storage. The frequency with which we have encountered these multiple cremation burials certainly suggests that storage for later deposition may have been a common feature of funerary practice. It is tempting from this vantage point to say that Grave 1 represents different 'types' of person, the male, the female, and the child, with the foetus perhaps arriving here from

within the womb and not recognised as a person. The more radical interpretation of the unborn as a separate 'class of person' while not impossible would require further evidence. The excavator also considers whether the four artefacts here might in some sense belong or respond to the four individuals in this grave. While this cannot be verified, it is interesting that one of the flints here was unburnt, and thus arrives in the grave following a different sequence of activity than the others. There is the ability here for this grave to indicate ideological differences between these people, but they seem to be treated in a very similar fashion. The adult in the truncated Grave 2 may be treated differently, or may indeed be 'earlier' in the sequence of funerary activities which were never completed. In either case, it is potentially significant that they were treated in this different manner. Finally, again we see here a concern for children to be buried with adults, and again one of those adults is male.

7.8 Dunure Road, South Ayrshire

I have previously published an analysis of the cemetery at Craig Tara Holiday Park, Dunure Road, South Ayrshire (Haughton 2018a). As it will be useful to include these findings within the discussion, I briefly overview them here: the burials of children were the most strikingly different in this cemetery, with every child buried in a multiple grave containing an adult, and only co-occurring once across the five multiple burials containing children. Adults were treated in more variable ways, with both males and females in a range of grave types. However, when adults were buried together there were always children present. From this evidence I argued that children were conceived of as different from adults, and perhaps requiring more protection in the grave, though their frequent occurrence in graves at different ages showed that they were central to the community. The overlapping treatment of males and females demonstrates that they were not ideologically distinct, but that neither depended on the other for their representation in the way that children did. In other words, a relationship did not define either males or females, but it seems that it did for children. When adults' relationships with each other were considered, this only made sense in the context of children, that is to say, within representations of wider society.

7.9 Concluding remarks

This collage of practice across different centuries and locations has led to the identification of many different patterns, and the recognition that some sites resist interpretation far more than

others. At present, it has the feel of a mess of themes and variation, with no obvious way to tie these sites to the broader picture. There is obviously a virtue to recognising each of these instances, and by encountering a series of such instances of building a picture of the range of possibilities and variations in graveside narratives of social ideologies in Earlier Bronze Age Scotland. However, what can we say that Earlier Bronze Age gender or age actually represented in Scotland? This will be the theme which we take up in the next chapter as we ask whether there are wider trends which can be picked out from this overview, and how such trends interact with those which could be identified in the statistical analysis.

8 Converging Paths? Narratives from the Gravesides of Ireland and Scotland

8.1 Introduction

Each of the burials discussed in the preceding two chapters is a record of a particularly emotionally charged period of time, during which a community gathered and responded to the death of a particular person and, in effect, cemented an image or series of images of the deceased in their memories. These responses must have caused them to internalise messages about this person and the appropriate way to treat a particular body, and thus the environments and actions in which certain bodies should be caught up. And yet, at some of the sites which we toured it seemed almost impossible to say anything of substance about gender or age ideology, even where several burials with differences between them were present. At other sites, messages seemed to reach us very clearly – remember the switch of the gendering of space from female to male at Sketewan in Scotland or the exclusion of subadults completely from several spaces. In this chapter, I want to reflect on what the consequences of this are for our understandings of age and gender ideologies more broadly within these landscapes, and how such understandings accord with our wider view of Earlier Bronze Age society.

I will begin the discussion with the evidence for ideologies relating to age and the changes in social understandings of the person over the lifecourse. As we have seen, the number of adults which could be confidently assigned an age category was quite low in both Ireland and Scotland, thus the discussion will often focus on the broad differences between representations of adults and subadults. We will then turn to the gendered ideologies which we have encountered, assessing how this reflects differences between people, and indeed how frequently gender seems to have been a graveside concern at all. After which, I want to dwell upon the areas of commonality which we have encountered in these burials, recognising the similarities as well as stressing differences.

Finally, we will return to the elite social models explored at the beginning of this thesis, asking how the evidence we have seen accords, or indeed discords, with such models. The evidence suggestive of both a social elite and the partibility of personhood (both reviewed in Chapter 3) will be presented and assessed.

Throughout this discussion, I will try to limit the observations drawn upon only to those trends identified in Chapter 5 and the sites investigated in depth in Chapters 6 and 7. It would be possible to bring other examples into the discussion, for instance a child buried with the talons of a Golden Eagle at Skilmafilly, Aberdeenshire (Johnson and Cameron 2012), certainly makes an impression, however we have seen that the context in which an action sits is vitally important to understanding it, thus such additional examples may be misleading without further contextual analysis. The reader should be aware of how representative the discussed trends are, and the context in which the examples sit, in order to best understand the implications which are drawn out.

8.2 Thinking through age ideology

We might begin an investigation of age with the most obvious observation: the case studies in both Ireland and Scotland frequently revealed instances where subadults were marked as different, either through particular mortuary practice or by their absence altogether. This manifested in very different ways – at Sketewan, Perth & Kinross, subadults were only included in multiple burials; at West Water Reservoir, Scottish Borders, subadults were grouped in a particular part of the cemetery; while at Kilcroagh, Co. Antrim, subadults were entirely absent. Time and again, we encountered cemeteries in which this difference was drawn. Though it was not universal. At Stranagalwilly, Co. Galway, for instance, children were not treated in a noticeably different manner. Instead, the burial of a possibly older individual seemed to have been marked out.

For both Ireland and Scotland, the general overview also hinted in this direction. In both places, subadults were significantly more likely to have been buried in multiple graves, while in Ireland burial in a cist was also more likely. In fact, there was a consistent trend towards the burial of individuals singly as they aged e.g. adults were more likely to be buried singly than adolescents, who were more likely than children, who were more likely than infants. This pattern held for both Ireland and Scotland and was recently confirmed by Medina-Petterson

(2013) on an almost completely separate sample of 103 inurned cremation burials from Scotland.

Interestingly, children did not seem particularly underrepresented overall (contra Mount 1997a; Cooney and Grogan 1999). Although it is difficult to be certain what proportion of subadults should be expected, the figures in both Ireland and Scotland fall just below the c.30% of the burial population which has been suggested as an expectation for preindustrial societies (Chamberlain 2006; Lewis 2007). The exclusion of children from burial, then, seems to have been largely conducted on a site-by-site basis and was not an overall trend.

Thus, two points regarding age can be made from the outset: first, that there was often a distinction drawn between the burials of subadults and adults; and second, that this manifested in different ways. Beyond this simple but important division, the story can be further developed on a regional basis.

8.2.1 Age ideology in Scotland

As already noted, the key sites which we visited in Scotland gave the strong sense that adults were a different category of being – that it was possible or desirable to remember them in a range of ways, or on their own. Meanwhile, subadults were enfolded into the burials in more community-focused ways, sometimes, as at Kirkton of Cults, Fife, or Sketewan, Perth & Kinross, they were placed in graves also containing adults, while elsewhere they were central to the geography of the cemetery, as they seem to have been at West Water Reservoir, Scottish Borders, or Dunure Road, South Ayrshire, and yet other times they were not included within the burials at all, as was the case for the Beaker-associated graves around the Beauly Firth.

Indeed, the statistical analysis in Chapter 5 revealed that less than a third of subadults were buried singly in Scotland (compared to c.70% of adults), and where we encountered single subadult burials in the key sites – at West Water Reservoir and Sketewan – they were treated in specific ways within the cemetery. In the wider dataset, there were just three cases of subadults who were buried singly outside of cemeteries – two of whom were aged 9–12 (Blairbuy, Dumfries & Galloway, and Barbush Quarry, Perth & Kinross) and could plausibly have been pushing towards puberty, and the third was an infant (aged < 3, at Kingsteps, Highland). Thus, while it was theoretically possible for a child to be buried alone in Scotland, this was a very rare occurrence. A fourth case, at Harvieston Cottage, Aberdeenshire, was

found close to the site of an earlier excavated burial (at Uppermains, Catterline), and thus was probably buried within a cemetery.

Considering the attitudes to children which such trends reveal, two points seem particularly of interest: first, children frequently appear to have been understood relationally, and second, the treatment of a dead child seems to have been strongly structured by previous practice in that specific cemetery site. Let us, then, examine each of these points in turn.

The fact that children were frequently placed in multiple burials or sometimes clustered towards the centre of a cemetery allowed the creation of links in the mourners' memories which firmly located them within the community. Thus, when the mourners came to the graveside to bury a child, they seem to have usually done so with their relationship to the child at the forefront of their minds. How the mourners remembered these people, then, was tied to their relationship with the community, often made manifest through physical proximity. At West Water Reservoir, this meant literally placing the children in a specific area, which seems to have been central to the cemetery space itself. The inclusion here of a child buried with a composite cannel coal/lead necklace (Grave 2) may provide a further means of emphasising relationships with the previous owners of the various beads (Frieman 2012; Brück 2019). At Kirkton of Cults, this concern was addressed through the inclusion of children within a broader community grave, while at Sketewan subadults were similarly always accompanied by at least one adult. This extended to the final burial of an inurned child (aged 2–5) alongside an accompanying inurned adult.

These sites present different instantiations of a shared approach to children, though manifested in different ways. And this is the second important point here: to some extent, local communities seem to have come to their own understandings of how to treat the body of a dead child. However, this is not the same as saying that because there were no rules that people acted in whatever way suited them. Rather, there seem to have been very particular rules that were repeated through time but were specific to particular cemeteries. We might consider the last child buried at Sketewan, for instance. Here, there was a history of children only being buried in graves with adults, but for this final grave the burial rites generally had changed to cremation followed by burial within an urn. Thus, the concern with placing children with adults has morphed and allowed this child to be inurned, as was the new tradition, and seemingly buried singly. However, because this burial was alongside a similarly

inurned adult, the older tradition could be maintained. This is equally the case with the repeated placement of the graves at West Water Reservoir, as each burial further entrenched the local pattern. There is, then, something specific to these places, and a way of doing things which was remembered, perhaps passed down orally within the community. Importantly, in both cases children were receiving a subset of normal burial practices. These communities were not reinventing burials for children or placing them in wholly new types of grave, rather they were enfolding them within a limited version of what was applicable for adults. Yet, it was not important that these approaches matched those taken by other communities.

The statistical analysis in Chapter 5 also suggested that children were preferentially cremated in Scotland. This may be because it was rarer for children to be buried in the inhumation-dominated burials of the earliest period, as we saw when dealing with the Beauly Firth/Great Glen group in Chapter 7. However, it may also relate to the partibility of the body following cremation and some desire to retain bone, as Brück (2009) has suggested was the case for women elsewhere in the British Bronze Age, or indeed to enable the mixing of the remains of children with those of adults in multiple graves. In essence, this rite may have been a tool which enabled the relational elements of children's identities to be further emphasised, although this dataset does not allow this possibility to be explored further.

If we have fertile data for the discussion of subadults' burials, we are on much less solid ground when it comes to adults. We have seen little that indicates the differentiation of adults on age grounds, indeed where older adults occur, they seem to be buried in similar ways to younger adults. We might note the excavator's suggestion (Hunter 2000) that West Water Reservoir was particularly associated with youth, as the adults buried there all seem to have been relatively young, though of course what appears to be a 'young adult' to our gaze was not necessarily considered so in the Earlier Bronze Age. The increased association of young adults with pottery flagged up in the statistical analysis is also worth restating, though it is difficult to associate this with any particular social ideological connotations.

The major age-based division in these burials is between the adults and the subadults. This does not mean, of course, that adult burials form an equally homogenous group, for some adults were buried in a way that stresses relations with others or with particular materials, while others were buried alone, stressing relationships with locations or routeways, as we saw

at Langwell Farm and Glennan. The narratives which the burials of adults stress seem to have been much more various. What we can say, however, concerns the relationship of adults to children. For it was presumably adults who were responsible for planning and conducting funerary practice, and for maintaining the memory of the appropriate ways to treat children in death. That children were so often treated relationally in graves may tell us more about this relationship, adults and children, than it does about the children's identities. As people reached adolescence, they seem to have moved from this category to join the adults, and their burials seem less distinguishable from the general population.

8.2.2   Age ideology in Ireland

A broad concern with differentiating subadults from adults was also evident in the burials from Ireland, though the manner in which this was achieved had certain regional specificities. This divergence was particularly evident at the population level, where a number of trends different to those in Scotland could be identified.

While it was broadly the case that subadults were also more likely to be buried in multiple graves in Ireland, the level of this difference was on a different scale to Scotland (33%:68% in Scotland, 55%:74% in Ireland). Both adults and subadults were more likely to be buried in a multiple grave than a single one in Ireland, suggesting that this was widely seen as the norm, and, unlike in Scotland, subadults, and in particular children, were significantly more likely to be buried in cists. This is interesting as the cist requires more labour and has been argued to be a marker of high status (e.g. Mount 1997a).

The difference between adults and subadults was further evidenced in the distribution of metal grave goods. Of 23 skeletons from Ireland associated with metal in the grave, four were adolescents, but none were younger than this age bracket. Furthermore, of these four adolescents, two were in the same grave at Carrowntober East, Co. Galway. This grave featured an inhumation of an adolescent female (aged 14–18) and a mixed cremation of another adolescent and an adult female. As the evidence for metal was green staining upon the cremated bone, the inhumed adolescent was not actually a recipient of metal. The other two cases were adolescent males – one we met at Kilcroagh, Co. Antrim, where a bronze razor knife had been plunged into the pot containing the mixed cremated remains, mostly representing an adult female. The other case was the famous so-called 'Tara Boy' (aged 14–15,

from Tara, Co. Meath), who had made a journey that involved long distance travel, perhaps to southern Britain (Sheridan et al. 2013), and was buried with a necklace, a bronze razor and a possible bronze awl in what was potentially the closing act of the Mound of the Hostages cemetery at Tara (O'Sullivan 2005). These cases suggest that metal was rarely associated even with adolescents, and that when it was it seems to have been as part of 'adult' rites. It is wholly possible that some of these adolescents, on the cusp of puberty, may have been socially considered adult. This growing association of adolescents with adult burial practices is something we also observed in Scotland, though here it was associated with an artefact-type exclusion.

The key sites from Ireland also revealed interesting approaches to the treatment of children. A particularly striking example was that at Edmondstown, Co. Dublin, where subadults were buried with adults or with a piece of quartz, but not with both. This suggests a role for adults within these graves which could equally be fulfilled by quartz. In essence, the quartz may have taken on the role of the adult, perhaps because it was considered to have some power or quality which an adult also possessed, whether protective or otherwise. The lustrous nature of quartz may have aided its identification with these special qualities. Either way, this is a specific local practice concerning the burial of children, which seems to respond to an occasional problem of having no adults available to bury with children.

Children were also at the centre of practice at Ballynacarriga, Co. Cork, where links with pregnancy and/or motherhood seem to have been particularly prominent. As a reminder, we saw here (Chapter 6.3) a young adult female and foetus buried at the centre of a ring-ditch with other burials of children and females to the north. One grave assemblage (Grave 5), representing a child and an infant, had been disinterred from the ring-ditch and reburied with the group to the north, their exhumation perhaps evoking further metaphors to birth. Both Grave 1 and Grave 5 contained an adult clavicle alongside the other remains. In Grave 5, this ensured that no grave was left without adult representation, but it also linked this grave into the wider practice at the site, placing these children into the story of this place, as did their reburial with the other group of burials. Indeed, these two burials, one of a pair of children, the other of a pregnant woman, may represent the most 'troublesome' burials here, perhaps requiring the extra response afforded by the inclusion of an adult clavicle. What this might have symbolised to the gathered mourners is difficult to discern, but we can assume that it is

not coincidental that the adult clavicle was used twice, and it must have played a part in the sense of place here and these children's role within it.

Although these examples stress the incorporation of children within burial practice, there were others where children were absent altogether, as in Scotland. Although such sites were often those featuring just one or two burials, there were some larger examples. The cemetery which we dwelt upon was at Kilcroagh, Co. Antrim, where five adults and one adolescent were buried across four graves. These burials, each containing the remains of a male body, may encourage interpretation along gendered lines (see below), but it is also worth noting that despite the repeated visits to this place for burial this community excluded children from deposition. Here, the relationships of adults may be stressed, but this was achieved in a space which seems to have been restricted in some way. This may not have been a formal restriction, but each repeated visit for the burial of an adult may have contributed to a growing sense of what was appropriate here.

It was clearly possible, as in Scotland, to use mortuary practice to stress the links of adults to their community, both directly in the same grave, and by tying them into a 'community in death' in the cemetery itself, but it was also frequently appropriate to place adults alone in the landscape and thus to link them to topographical features or routeways, as at Culleens, Co. Sligo, and Brackbaun, Co. Limerick. This does not necessarily mean that these people were thought of as 'individuals' as opposed to the 'relational' identities of those in larger cemeteries, rather it reflects a wider understanding of the various appropriate ways of linking these people to the world around them, only some of which were commonly used for subadults.

As in Scotland, the Earlier Bronze Age world seems to break down into two major camps on age grounds – the adults and the subadults; there are no obvious dividing lines between particular age groups at other stages. However, it is worth dwelling further upon the burial practice we encountered at Stranagalwilly, Co. Galway, where the individual marked out was not a subadult, but rather the possibly older adult within the group. This burial was the only one of the four without a Bowl Food Vessel, though a bronze awl and nine flint flakes were placed in the grave. There was no simple way of equating this difference in grave good provision to 'wealth' or 'status', for another grave also featured a number of grave goods alongside a Bowl Food Vessel. Rather, these artefacts were appropriate to this individual in a way which the pot accompanying the other members of the community was not. It is worth

noting, too, that the cist in which this burial was made was very close to a cist containing the burial of a child and shared the same alignment. Therefore, this individual is very much connected to the other burials in this community, despite standing apart in one way through the use of pottery. There are hints here that the differing relations of this older member of the community were responded to through this burial, but this is not something that is widely repeated and it is, thus, difficult to discern anything specific about these relations.

8.3 Thinking through gender ideology

With a clearer picture of age ideology in both regions, let us turn to the question of gender. On this issue, there seemed to be a wider divergence between Ireland and Scotland, thus they will largely be treated separately here again. Though it is worth noting that for both regions hard-and-fast rules did seem to be largely absent. The exception was the gendered orientation of burials in Scotland. This has been argued to be an equivalent practice to that seen in Europe (e.g. Shepherd 2012), but seems to have been slightly more complicated: this was seemingly a rule for male burials, but not for female burials. About half of female burials were buried in the 'male' pattern even at the earliest time in Scotland. Moreover, at many of the sites we visited in Scotland no concern for marking difference between male and female was evident. There is, thus, more subtlety to these patterns than might otherwise be recognised. As we turn to Ireland, patterns relating to gender were even harder to identify. Trying to unpick a narrative of gender ideology told at the graveside is, thus, an altogether different task from the age ideology we have just reviewed.

8.3.1 Gender ideology in Scotland

It is worth stressing at the outset that there were many similarities between the graves of males and females in Scotland when viewed through a statistical overview. For instance, there was no discernible difference in the overall rate of grave good provision between the sexes. In fact, the only difference was a slight tendency towards the placement of natural stone in the graves of males; this was a trend which was only present in the early part of the period and never involved a majority of male graves. So far as we can tell, then, artefacts made from durable materials were unlikely to be caught up in narratives of gendered difference.

The rate of single to multiple burial, which was a major axis of difference between the burials of adults and subadults, was almost identical between males and females. This suggests that, whatever differences existed between males and females, they were of a different character to those between adults and subadults. And, indeed, this was corroborated by observation at the key site cemeteries.

However, the main axis of differentiation between males and females was in the orientation of the body. This has previously been characterised (Shepherd 2012) as a dichotomy between males, on their left-hand side, with their heads to the east, and females on their right-hand side with their heads to the west. However, this was never demonstrated to be a clear-cut or absolute dichotomy, and this was also so in this study. In fact, males were laid exclusively on their left-hand side for the early part of the period, but it was never the case that females were laid exclusively on their right-hand side. Indeed, while left-hand side burial was seemingly 'mandatory' for males, it was also provided for between a third and half of females. Additionally, the separation of male and female burials based on the direction their heads were oriented towards seemed to come in and out of fashion during the period. Although clearly related to the sex of the deceased, this appears to be more complicated than a simple sex-based dichotomy.

It is also worth noting at this point that different elements of this pattern were of different importance. It is generally true that bodies were arranged to face south, but this only occurred in just over 50% of the sampled burials. Similarly, males were buried with their heads to the east in many cases, usually running at over 80% throughout the period, but it does not seem to have been an absolute rule. This contrasts with the left-hand sided male burials, which does seem to have been an absolute rule during the early centuries of the period, before breaking down sometime after c. 2000 BC. It is interesting that a rule such as this existed which may not have affected cremation burials, and the rise of cremation after 2000 BC may have accompanied the relaxing of this rule. When males were cremated it is possible that they were usually laid on their left-hand sides on the pyre as well, but this is difficult to determine (Medina-Pettersson 2013).

The other interesting thing to note here is that children's bodies were not thus treated. Subadult orientations were not a noticeable third category, but neither did they occur in totally different orientations – east and west were still the most popular orientations for children's

heads. We might, thus, tentatively suggest that it is possible that gendered rules, conceived of as separate to age-related rules, sometimes also applied to children's burials. This is, however, only a suggestion and further research, perhaps by obtaining aDNA sexing of subadult remains, would be required to verify this.

Thus, it cannot simply be said that a continental style LESM/RWSF pattern (on their Left, head to the East, facing South, Male/on their Right, head to the West, facing South, Female) was in operation. In fact, there is no evidence for a strong sidedness preference amongst female burials at all. This challenges us to find other explanations than a simple dichotomy representing binary gender. Something was uniting these male burials, but did not act to similarly unite the female burials, or even exclude females from being buried in the 'male' way.

It is possible that many males were incomers or travellers, thus they may have become involved in wider networks which allowed this norm to flourish i.e. there was a Beaker associated notion of 'masculinity' which had transferred to Scotland at the beginning of the Bronze Age and held sway there for a number of centuries. However, this was not accompanied by an equally strong sense of Beaker 'femininity'. This may have resulted from a greater number of male incomers, or from a greater sense of connectedness between males at this time. This is what Bourgeois and Kroon (2017) argue creates similarity between male Corded Ware burials in the Low Countries. However, the evidence which we have suggests that there was widespread movement among the population in Scotland within local networks at this time, which should have allowed for high levels of contact between all levels of society (Parker Pearson et al. 2019). Therefore, it seems implausible that male movement was overwhelmingly responsible for maintaining this ideal.

Instead, it is possible that this was a mistranslated ideal from Beaker communities. Perhaps, the incomers did bring the ideal of male and female burial on opposite sides, but this was not fully understood or adopted by the local community. Thus, while a tentative version could take hold, mandating males be buried on their left, this did not extend to female burials, where the community was still free to lay the deceased in the grave as they saw fit. That they were not following the Beaker 'norm' may have passed them by entirely.

There was a further hint of gendered practice in the use of beads as grave goods, which were not deployed in graves with males, though they featured in the graves of both females and children. The link between necklaces and female bodies has been identified previously, and this has been seen as an example of a female prestige item (e.g. Sheridan 2008; 2012b; Sheridan and Shortland 2003). It is important to recognise that this is a different practice to the sidedness of males, for there is no sense in which beads were 'required' for females. Indeed, they appeared in a very small number of burials. Furthermore, that beads also appeared in the graves of children suggests that there were situational meanings which they could take on beyond prestige associations. The distinction between beads and necklaces, not drawn previously as the numbers of each were small, may also be useful to dwell upon. For a complete necklace speaks of the way in which a body was dressed, hinting that it was appropriate for this type of person to wear this type of jewellery in life. A bead, on the other hand, may be introduced to the grave by a mourner, perhaps commenting upon their relationship with the deceased, but it need not imply that this person would ever have worn the bead in life.

Complete necklaces at Almondbank, Perth & Kinross, Easter Essendy, Perth & Kinross, Mains of Melgund, Angus, and Balfarg Riding School, Fife, accompanied unsexed adults. Thus, while we can say that necklaces seem to have generally been associated with adults, the sexing of these adults is, in many cases, unknown. We have already seen in our discussion of West Water Reservoir, Scottish Borders, that the wearing of necklaces in burial was not limited to adult females, for there a child (aged 2–5) was buried wearing one. Here there were also two burnt bone beads accompanying a cremation of a young adult possible male. This is a tantalising suggestion that it was sometimes appropriate for males to be associated with beads, though we cannot know if these derived from a necklace or other ornament worn on the pyre or if they were loose beads added to the pyre by the mourners. Neither is the sexing of this skeleton at all secure.

There was no link between metal and males, as is sometimes thought to be a corollary to this argument. Indeed, a recent reanalysis of cremated bone from Scotland found that green staining was present in 55 of 75 deposits (Medina-Pettersson 2013). In these cases, as in 15 cases of staining recognised in this analysis, the metal had not ultimately ended up within the grave. The inclusion of metal thus seems to represent a stage in the cremation process which was

frequently employed in Scotland but was unrelated to gender concerns, at least as far as can currently be determined.

At the level of the individual site, a picture emerged of gendered difference as an important structuring element of funerary practice at several sites, varying from the subtle to the obvious. The Beauly Firth/Great Glen group provided examples of bodies conforming to the orientation patterns seen at the larger scale. Within that group, the two burials at Holm Mains Farm might prove useful to dwell upon. There we saw two burials of males, on a similar alignment separated by 80m, and accompanied by various grave goods. Although there was a sharp contrast in the number of things placed in these graves, the similarities between them, and the return to this place was suggestive of an interlacing of the identities of these two people in death. Or in other words, by bringing the second male here the community deliberately intended to evoke the burial of the first. There was something about their social identities which tied them together. Of course, this need not be gender specific, but the shared orientation of the bodies suggests that their articulation with this wider ideal was to the forefront of the mourners' minds. The relative differences between grave good provision then become meaningful in new ways – these males were linked by the similar design programmes of their Beakers, but differentiated by the number of tools deposited. Here, we might suggest the mourners internalised messages of relative difference: the eastern grave was more connected to an active world of making and doing, and this would have had implications for how the mourners interpreted the relative gendered identities of these two people, though both similarly sat within a wider 'male' sphere.

Perhaps the most striking incidence of gender differentiation was at Sketewan, where a cremation was surrounded by a series of burials, mostly of females. After the site was covered with a cairn, the focus switched to the south of the site and the burial of males. This site speaks to a clear division between males and females which extends to the character of the space. Each successive burial of a female would have reinforced this as a place where females were buried and remembered. However, a female and male were buried together before the construction of the cairn, and I have previously noted that this burial may have served as the point of change, after which male burial became possible in this space. The elaboration of this site with a ring-cairn and a subsequent all-encompassing cairn also hints at the remaking of space anew. The move from female to male space thus seems to have coincided with a complete

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remodelling of the physical appearance of that space. This speaks to a strong division of spheres, and that the transition from female to male space was neither straightforward nor uncomplicated. Of course, this site is not emblematic of practice elsewhere. We have briefly mentioned Dunure Road, for instance, at which there were no discernible signs of difference between the male and female bodies in the grave (Haughton 2018a). That both cemeteries featured cremations in cists alongside Food Vessels only serves to emphasise the social difference. It is difficult to conceive of a narrative which could neatly fit these apparently contradictory approaches into a united gender ideology. Instead, the communities at each of these sites seem to have had different understandings of the character of space and how that related to the bodies which could or should be placed there.

More subtly, we have encountered a number of cases in which the two adults buried alongside children in a multiple grave were male and female. This occurred at both Dunure Road and Kirkton of Cults, and the two adults buried together at Sketewan were male and female, though in that instance no child was present. These graves suggest that a concern with drawing upon the links between male and female was sometimes appropriate in the burial arena. The desire to seek different bodies hints at an underlying recognition of gendered difference, but this is a subtle trend which bears little relation to differences in status.

This recognition of places at which differentiation is lacking or more subtle, at Dunure Road or Kirkton of Cults for instance, places my argument in stark contradiction to that espoused by scholars looking at a wider dataset (e.g. Parker Pearson et al. 2019; Sheridan 2008; 2012b). In such cases, the general association of men with daggers, V-perforated buttons and pig tusks, and the association of women with awls and beads is a sign that "the provision of grave goods largely respected the gender divide" (Parker Pearson et al. 2019: 200). Of course, we have seen that in the more common grave good categories this division was not expressed, even in the earlier Beaker graves about which the quoted statement was made. The next question to consider is how we can resolve this picture into an understanding of what kind of gendered worlds these burials represent or were part of. We will return to this question after examining the picture in Ireland.

8.3.2   Gender ideology in Ireland

In contrast to Scotland, the population overview from Ireland revealed little in the way of sex-based trends. Although three trends possibly relating to sex were identified, none was particularly strong. The absolute nature of male sidedness and beads' association with females in Scotland was not paralleled here. Instead, males were placed in graves oriented on a north-south axis more often than females. However, this was still only the case for 46% of male graves for which this variable could be recorded. This, of course, is only a subset of male burials, as pit burials for cremations generally lack any discernible orientation. The second trend was a higher incidence of metal amongst the graves of females. This is an important finding for undermining a proposed link (e.g. Mount 1997a; Sheridan et al. 2013) between males and metal implements, particularly daggers and razors, which have been suggested to represent status symbols. The chronological analysis showed that early graves featured metal exclusively in female graves, although the numbers were very low. It would be difficult, therefore, to sustain any argument seeking to link female bodies, identities, and metal. However, we *can* reject any proposed link associating such items with males. A final tantalising hint was the association of four males with fossil-bearing limestone across three graves. Given this limited number of occurrences, it would also be unwise to infer much from this observation. However, future work may consider a possible gendered link between fossil-bearing stone and males.

From this picture, then, we approached the key sites in Ireland with a far murkier idea of what to expect from gendered differentiation in the grave. And indeed, it was the case that gender differentiation was difficult to identify at sites such as Kilcroagh or amongst the Ballybrennan group, but at other sites a more subtly gendered picture emerged. Several sites appeared to display a separation of space reminiscent of that at Sketewan in Scotland. Most notably, at Edmondstown, the cemetery seemed to have formed around four cists containing adult (or adolescent) males. After this initial, potentially highly gendered, phase, the cemetery was used for the burial of the whole range of community members. A different pattern emerged at Ballynacarriga, where we encountered the burials of children and females, and were able to suggest a link with motherhood or pregnancy, not unlike that also suggested for West Water Reservoir in Scotland by that site's excavators. The isolation of the burial of a male at nearby Brackbaun cannot, of course, be linked to practice at Ballynacarriga, but it is interesting that

male burial was practiced in the locality, in this instance in a markedly different form. Finally, we also briefly encountered Grange, Co. Roscommon, which may have been a place for the burial of males, though the high number of unsexed skeletons makes this proposal insecure.

Each of these instances seems to reveal subtle understandings of differentiation grounded in sexed bodies which reveal hints of gender ideology. There seem to have been spaces, and perhaps times, in which certain bodies were more appropriate than others. This does not necessarily indicate a large differentiation in terms of lived identities or 'social roles' for most of those people, but it does indicate some awareness of and concern for recognising and responding to differences between bodies at particular times, or in particular places.

There is an interesting extension of this trend into the area of pairing, or perhaps 'complementarity', which we encountered several times within the key sites. This is a subtle phenomenon, and consequently a tentative argument. We might begin to explore it with the two cremations with beads and bronze at Kilcroagh. Both of these burials featured the remains of a male and a female, mixed in different ways with metal, beads, and other artefacts and contained within Cordoned Urns. In many ways these burials referenced each other, and thus were paired in a way similar to those we encountered at Holm Mains Farm in Inverness. In this case, though, the graves contained a male and a female body. We also encountered paired burial practices at Keenoge, which Richard Bradley (2007) has argued was a site where the burials were physically laid out in pairs. An interesting and more subtle pairing occurred between Graves 5 and 13, at opposite ends of the cemetery. Grave 5 contained a young adult female accompanied by a piece of the skull of an older adult male, while Grave 13 contained the burial of an older adult male accompanied by a fragment of the pelvis of a female. In both instances, cremated bone of a third individual was also present in the grave. Here again we seem to have a reference built between these two 'types' of body, this time the older adult male and the (perhaps young) female. The co-occurrence does not seem random, but even if unintentional it speaks to a community drawing upon a repertory of meaning that links these bodies as appropriate to occur together in the grave. It is not meaningless that we are looking at a pairing of male and female again.

This is not to say, however, that every burial containing two adults was a male/female pair. Indeed, at both Ballybrennan and nearby Conranstown we encountered an adult male inhumed with a cremated adult male. In these cases, the pairing was not referencing a

difference between male and female bodies, however it does not seem to be an arbitrary repetition. The mixing of rites with the consistency of adult male bodies suggests that these graves drew on similar metaphors that were appropriate in this instance for male bodies.

There is, then, evidence that at some points in time burial practice in Ireland was cognisant of gender and that this had a structuring effect on who was buried, or who they were buried with. However, this was not always a concern. We might say that we are looking here at a 'loose' gender. There is no evidence that it was prescriptive, nor that it was overarching. Indeed, at times gender seems to have been completely irrelevant. We might wonder whether this was also the case in living situations – sometimes gender had a role to play, while at other times the more immediate concern was differentiating adults from subadults, or of not differentiating at all. We might also consider as gendered differences the repeated mix of cremation with inhumation amongst the paired male burials at Ballybrennan and Conranstown; what did it mean that one body was treated differently to the other in these burials? Of course, it need not indicate two separate lived identities, a 'third' gender for instance, but it does suggest a desire to mark the differences between these bodies, indeed to literally create difference through separate post-mortem treatment. Therefore, we should consider the possibility of situational differences between male bodies in life, perhaps brought about through physical interaction with those bodies.

Of course, it should not surprise us that sometimes the difference between male bodies should be stressed. For gender, as we know, contains within it the counterhegemonic as much as the hegemonic (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). In other words, not all males were the same, and sometimes these communities seem to have been particularly concerned with emphasising this through mortuary treatment. This is not to say, however, that these easily map onto status differences. The meanings of these differences are difficult, if not impossible, to decipher. Indeed, it is probably an oversimplification to assume that they had any *one* meaning rather than a series of potential meanings based on the situated experience of the interpreting mourner. Instead, I wish to say that difference between these bodies was created, that that difference was meaningful, that it responded to the sexed difference between bodies (in this instance through its limitation to male bodies), and that this had meaningful social realities with which it interplayed. In other words, being 'male' in these Bronze Age societies was contingent and relational, their different masculinities were formed in the grave by

reference to one another. Placing them together shaped how the community remembered them, by tying their identities in reference to one another. By limiting this interaction to just these two bodies, though, it was limited in scope and the messages concerned comparison. While bodies in Neolithic monuments could be lost in the collective, subsumed by the community of ancestors, here these bodies were meant to be seen and remembered as separate entities by specific reference to one another.

Altogether, then, this is a picture of gendered difference which is quite subtle, seeming to emerge relationally and situationally, and stands somewhat in contrast to that which we encountered in Scotland. I want next to consider how these differences might be explained, and why there is so much that seems to be similar between the two regions.

8.4   Comparing social ideologies in Scotland and Ireland

The two ideologies which we have explored suggest different ways in which these regions were connected. The evidence for age ideology was very similar in both places. Meanwhile, a subtle divergence between the treatments of gender was identified. The question of social differentiation is, of course, complicated by the knowledge that burial was variable and communities do seem to have come to different understandings of the appropriate ways to treat a dead body, within broader frameworks of acceptable practice. However, the fact that age differentiation was relatively consistent across these regions indicates that the source of the differences in gendered practice was not variation in burial practice for its own sake. For this reason, it is important to dwell upon these gendered differences first.

8.4.1   Differences in gender ideology

The variations in gender ideology can be summarised in quite simple terms. In Scotland, there was an accepted way of burying males – on their left-hand sides – which was absolute in the early centuries of the Bronze Age. There was also a less common association between females and beads. Several sites spoke to us of a dichotomy between the sexes, and yet others did not. In Ireland, there was no firm evidence for a gendered dichotomy, yet difference between certain types of gendered bodies was emphasised in some settings, and not at all in others.

Overall, both regions can be characterised by the impression of gendered worlds that were coming into being. At some sites, the roles of males and females seem heavily prescribed, but

these were not in the majority. However, there are many sites which have demonstrated a hint of 'complementarity' between types of people, and these types often correspond with bodies which we can biologically sex as male and female. It is entirely possible that gender was locally important, that the scale of lived experience, surrounded as it was by known individuals, allowed gendered relationships to fall to the background on many occasions, and that these sometimes came to the fore in funerary commemorations. In other places, gender was more firmly entrenched, with more circumscribed ways of burying types of bodies. Scotland seems to have accepted a firmer differentiation between 'male' and 'female' than Ireland, but some sites in Ireland also hinted at a firmer differentiation. Ultimately, local communities were reacting in different ways to these ideas, which were potentially arriving on these islands along with the new people in the early centuries of the Bronze Age.

However, it seems clear that any migration across Europe at the beginning of the Bronze Age did not bring static and "stable" gender (*contra* Robb and Harris 2018: 133) to either region. In Scotland, male burial patterns do hint at an awareness of wider European norms, but the burial of females in the 'male' way suggests something more complicated was going on. In Ireland, gender seems to be particularly important as it emerged in relations, sometimes stressing difference, but more commonly locating people within a local nexus. However, this migration may have been part of the beginning of the story by which such gender dynamics began to ossify and, ultimately, gain uniformity. We know that gender roles were quite heavily entrenched by the contact periods that ended the Iron Age in both regions, and became further entrenched in the Early Christian law codes in Ireland (Bitel 1996; Ó Corráin 1995), but the evidence from the Earlier Bronze Age shows us only hints of a gendered social world, with times and spaces in which they were apparently irrelevant or contradicted. Scotland's connections with mainland Europe seem to have led to a greater uptake of gendered ideals of practice which did not transfer perfectly, and were again less likely to transmit on to Ireland.

But any simple story of developing gender is complicated by the reality of the evidence. In Scotland, it seems that gender produced more rigidity in burial practice at the beginning of the period, but that this gave way to variation over time. This may be a result of newcomers bringing an idea to the burial environment which did not have long-term staying power, or perhaps the later burials mask a growing sense of gendered difference which was building within the communities. This question will have to await further investigation.

8.4.2 Ideologies in common

It is important, however, that the differences between Scotland and Ireland are not overblown. It is easy to forget when we are seeking gender and age-related *difference* just how similar the burials which we have been examining are. Certainly, Earlier Bronze Age burials in these regions are variable, but we need not find this "bewildering" (Waddell 1990: 1), for it actually occurs within a remarkably similar set of constraints. The mourners were not, for instance, laying inhumations out in an extended position, or creating the kind of large cemeteries known from the continent at this time. In other words, these communities were not making up the rules afresh with each burial; in fact, there is far more which they hold in common than divides them.

The investigation of the Beauly Firth/Great Glen group in Scotland allowed us to see this coherence of practice in action. There, nearly all of the cists were aligned northeast/southwest, and the bodies within were therefore laid out in a common way. This suggests a dispersed set of communities who were regularly in contact and shared an understanding of proper burial conduct. Many of these elements were shared on a larger scale, but some, including the orientation of the cists, held sway in this area without extending across Scotland more widely. The group around Ballybrennan in Ireland did not show this kind of local coherence, yet there were common ways of treating and combining bodies which were repeatedly drawn upon. This hints at a wider conversation about bodies which these people were tied into, but without the prescriptive elements which seems to have determined the orientation of cists around the Beauly Firth.

The features which these burials have in common, then, link Scotland and Ireland as part of the same wider world. And yet there are trends which marked difference between them: the higher rate of grave good provision in Ireland, and the higher rate of single burial in Scotland, for instance, reflect long-held ideas about appropriate mortuary practice which diverged by degree. Things were not absolute or set in stone, but neither were they so fragmented that each community did things in their own way. In a sense, then, these regions formed a loose grouping, with smaller networks of interaction bringing about subtle patterns, such as the relative levels of grave good provisioning. The communities involved need never have been aware of the broad differences their actions created, though of course they may have been. This is a radically different picture to the kind of rulebound, large cemeteries which we see in

continental Europe at this time (e.g. Bourgeois and Kroon 2017; Rebay-Salisbury 2018; Rega 1997; Sofaer Derevenski 2000; Sørensen and Rebay 2005; Sørensen and Rebay-Salisbury 2008). The time depth of those cemeteries and the binary nature of their gender pictures are seemingly lacking here, though some elements of the gender picture have 'leaked' into Scotland.

Another major difference from European cemeteries is the unproblematic nature of cremation. In several cemeteries in Europe, for instance, the earliest cremation graves were laid out as if they were inhumations – with the same orientation and grave cut, and the same placement of grave goods (Sørensen and Rebay 2007). However, in both of the regions under discussion here there was no sign that cremation was unusual and it was incorporated into inhumation cemeteries in a range of different ways. That the practice may never have died out after the Neolithic in Ireland may go some way to explain its unproblematic nature there.

The choice between cremation and inhumation would, as we have seen, had a major impact upon the progression of the burial ritual itself and the mark it would have left upon the mourners. This is particularly interesting because, by and large, we have seen little in the way of trends of social differentiation which seem to adhere to this dramatic division. One potential exception was the treatment of pregnant women, who were possibly all cremated in both Ireland and Scotland. The combination of males, one inhumed the other cremated, at both Ballybrennan and Conranstown, also speaks to an awareness of these rites 'doing something' to these bodies which marked their difference and that bringing them together could draw upon.

The burials in Ireland and Scotland are also marked out from those in southern England because there was, by and large, no real interest in mounding and the construction of barrows. Although the occasional site was mounded, a concern with selecting sites of pre-existing slightly raised ground was much more common. The same pattern of small cemeteries and lone burials persisted in both places throughout the millennia or so that we have considered, and despite the frequent contact with southern Britain and continental Europe the distinctive pattern of site selection and use was maintained.

Overall, then, there was much to unite these practices. Their divergences concerning gender ideology become even more interesting in this light. If Scotland was closer to the picture of

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gender argued for in southern Britain or continental Europe, this was not a way of treating the dead which transferred easily to Ireland. The hints of complementarity there are subtle and locally specific; by and large Ireland presents a picture of burial that was strongly concerned with marking the difference between bodies and their connections, but without tying this directly to a dichotomous model of gender. The broad difference between adults and subadults, however, united these regions. Burial itself may have been an adult arena; probably conducted by adults, it seems to be the relationships of children to the community that were usually stressed at the graveside in both places.

8.5   Returning to the social models

Having sketched a picture of age and gender differentiation as it appeared in the evidence from both Ireland and Scotland, I finally want to return briefly to the competing models of social differentiation which we encountered at the outset (Chapter 2) and to ask how this evidence accords or differs from what we might have expected given these models.

8.5.1   The evidence for a social elite

The social elite, marked out by elaborate burial treatment, have been difficult to identify within this corpus. There have, of course, been particularly well-provisioned graves, the famous burial of a young adult female with necklace and the male with Beaker accoutrements at Culduthel, which we encountered in the Beauly Firth/Great Glen group, being a prime example. However, it was not easy to equate such burials with status. The child buried with a necklace at West Water Reservoir, for instance, reminding us of the apparent folly of one-to-one interpretations of grave goods.

Many of the elements of burial which were statistically investigated in Chapter 5 have been argued to be a hallmark of the elite (e.g. burial singly, burial in a cist, inhumation, burial with grave goods). When we came to look at these elements of practice, however, we did not see a clear case for a social elite. It was children who were more likely to receive cist burial in Ireland, for instance. This, perhaps, does not suggest that children were of a higher social rank, rather it suggests that cist construction was not related to elite status.

Another supposed marker of status is burial singly, with multiple burials seen as reserved for the lower ranks (e.g. Cooney and Grogan 1999; Mount 1991; 1995; 1997a), though this idea has

been strongly critiqued for relying on a modern notion of the valorised individual (Brück 2004a). Our investigations have shown us that adults were more likely to be buried singly. This might add credence to the argument for a social elite, made up as it might be by adults. However, it may equally inform us of relational personhood. Indeed, we saw this as we journeyed around the cemeteries; there were several places where children were not included unless they could be buried with adults. Rather than a desire to individuate adults, this trend seems to be related to a concern with how children should be treated in burial and the broad ideological difference between adult and subadult.

Grave goods showed very little sign of being associated with particular types of people, indeed vague trends suggesting an association between females and metal in Ireland, for instance, were equalled by trends showing adolescents as more likely to receive worked stone. It is not easy to tie these slight trends into wider narratives of a social elite whose burials were aggrandised. Indeed, the rare instance of 'elaborate' grave goods which we have encountered do not accord with other elements of 'elaboration'. Consider, for instance, the spacer-plate necklace, bronze awl and Arran pitchstone flake found with the woman at Culduthel, Inverness, Highland. If this is to be understood as a straight-forward expression of the social standing of this woman, why was she not also afforded a pot as accompanied many of the other graves in the Inverness area?

At West Water Reservoir, too, we saw an example of a body buried wearing a necklace, but in this case the body was that of a child, aged 3–5, surely too young to have held the highest status in this community. Though those who favour this model might brush this off by arguing that (i) this child's parents may have been of a particularly high status and (ii) that this necklace is lower quality than that at Culduthel, indicating relative status differences amongst the elite. All of which, still leads us back to the lack of other high-status items co-occurring, and to wonder what is meaningful about comparisons over such a long distance. It seems unlikely that these two individuals were involved in a long-distance social elite which those they were buried near played no part in. It is far simpler to suggest that the necklace achieves something else here, unrelated to marking out a rigid social elite.

In an Irish context, there were no grave goods which seemed to represent an elite. Though bronze razors have been argued to represent male status (e.g. Baine 2014; Kavanagh 1991;

Mount 2013b; Stanley 2013), metal was more often found in female graves, though usually so fragmentary that the tool it came from remains unknown[17]. At Kilcroagh, Co. Antrim, we saw the bronze dagger plunged into the cremated bone rather than in association with one person, a reminder that grave goods may not represent possessions of the deceased, or even have been associated with their fleshed body. For Iron Age Germany, Arnold (2016) interpreted the sparse inclusion of daggers as a sign that they represented a serially-held role in the community which had no prerequisite link to masculinity, and this may also be a possibility here. Previous arguments that pottery provision was the mark of the male elite (e.g. Cooney and Grogan 1999; Mount 1997a) are not borne out, partly perhaps because this sample does not include antiquarian estimations of sex.

At Edmondstown, Co. Dublin, Mount et al. (1993) considered the fact that males were buried in cists in the earliest phase of site-use to demonstrate that these men were "at the head of their social elite" (Mount et al. 1993: 61). However, we saw no evidence there that this was a social elite. The cist burials certainly were a focal point for later practice, though the fact that they were earliest may be good enough explanation for this. We do not know that being first in a cemetery was desirable or indicative of status. How, also, do we explain the low number of grave goods in these cists compared to Graves 8 or 9 for instance? Mount et al. (1993: 61) subsequently argue that this site was then either opened up or saw a "downgrading" to feature the burials of women and children. However, the quartz deployed to take the place of adults suggests that status was not the primary concern when these depositions were made, rather the inclusion of grave goods was intended to *achieve* something, in this case perhaps to embody a quality that the child lacked. Though it may, as we saw, have started out as a place associated with masculinity, this does not mean that it was a place for a hierarchical elite.

Overall, then, both the statistical overview and our site-by-site analyses have provided little evidence for any strongly instituted social hierarchy, and particularly not for its association with age or gender.

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[17] Of three confirmed awls, two were with males and one was unknown; the seven daggers or razors were associated with both males and females.

8.5.2   *Body fragmentation and identity*

A competing model based on the fragmentation of the body and the partibility of personhood (e.g. Brück 2004a; 2019; Fowler 2013a; 2017) seems to better accord with the evidence which we encountered throughout this investigation. However, this need not surprise us as all societies are relational in various ways (Fowler 2016). So, too, have we found that within these societies, relationships were often important in defining the narratives which people wanted to emphasise at the graveside. Some important distinctions must be made, however. Firstly, within this dataset, there is no evidence for the preferential cremation of any particular type of person (*contra* Brück 2006; 2009), thus this argument may only relate to southern Britain, or may only become apparent on an even larger scale, suggesting distance from the communities actually involved in these decisions.

Secondly, although relationships were often important to framing the action at the graveside, there are many times where they do not seem to have been particularly emphasised. The frequent burial of individuals away from cemeteries being the most obvious example of this. When it came to the burial of children, though, we frequently encountered a concern with relating their graves to others within the community. However, the kind of kinship links which encourage largescale cemeteries which endure through time seem to be absent from both Ireland and Scotland, while they were present in mainland Europe, and in some of the barrow cemeteries in southern Britain. Long-term relations with the community, then, were either not important to mortuary practice, or perhaps could be achieved through a general appeal to similarity with wider burial practice, as we may have seen in the dispersed yet similar burials that surrounded the Inverness area.

8.6   Conclusions

We are left with the overwhelming impression here of small-scale societies which, while certainly in contact with one another, were able to maintain their own traditions and narratives. Their relations with the wider community were important but not overridingly so. The model of a heterarchical society, relying on relationships to define identities broadly fits with the evidence we have seen here, though we might perhaps wonder whether hierarchy was beginning to creep up on these communities. The existence of rare objects, like the jet necklaces, may have afforded opportunities for such differentiation at particular times. It may

well be the case that they were deployed situationally, and that beads were sometimes used instead to comment upon relationships, as they seemingly were at Kilcroagh in Ireland. However, in other instances they may have begun to mark out certain individuals as different. This does not mean, however, that we need jump to a model of entrenched hierarchies and chiefs ruling over local populaces; there is no consistent evidence for that kind of social organisation. And this lack of consistency may well be key. Some families, some communities, or some individuals may at times have been able to briefly control a larger than usual share of resources, but this indicates only that situational hierarchy could arise within a dispersed, heterarchical social formation. In other words, social arrangements were in flux, and no fixed political dominance can be identified. As with entrenched gender, then, meaningful hierarchy cannot be assumed in a given Earlier Bronze Age community, but neither can it be ruled out *prima facie*.

This brings us almost to the end of this investigation. What I want to do as we turn to the final section is to reflect upon the methods which have brought us this far, and to place this study within its wider context, both with the research which is currently happening on Bronze Age Europe and the directions which it might traverse in future.

9   Conclusions

Figure 9.1 – The scene at St Augustine's Colony during the excavation of a cist in May 1954 (Cahill and Sikora 2011, Pl. 26)
© National Museum of Ireland

At the beginning of this thesis, I thought about the moment of discovery of the remains of a young adult, possibly female, on the grounds of what was then St Augustine's Colony in south county Dublin. A photograph shows us the scene on that morning in 1954 (Fig. 9.1) – the male-dominated world of mid-twentieth century Catholic Ireland on show. That site is now the entrance to a housing estate where my brother's best friend lived when we were young; the base of the eighteenth-century obelisk in the shadow of which those men stood is now fenced off behind railings. There are many stories intercutting here: the burial itself, its rediscovery on the grounds of a Catholic institution, its modern setting in a housing estate for Dublin's massive expansion in the late twentieth century, the obelisk looming over it all, built to give jobs as a form of poverty-relief during famine, and my own modern gaze back through them all. To return to any point among them is obviously impossible: to even create a meaningfully deep story of the lives of any of the individuals in that photograph is impossible unless we can positively identify them. One of those with his hands in the grave is probably Joseph Raftery, about whom much could be written, but for the others we can only guess. To look even further back is yet more difficult. I say all this by means of acknowledging that creating 'human'

stories of the distant past is no easy undertaking. And yet my stated goal in this thesis has been to do just that: to return a more human understanding of lives in the Earlier Bronze Age in Ireland and Scotland. Within this final brief chapter, I want to assess the success of this venture and to place it within the discipline more widely.

9.1   Methods for thinking about social ideology in the past

Human stories of the past, then, are difficult to create given such a time depth, and the present study has not attempted to provide just one story or to fully explore what can be told of the life of one individual. Rather, the focus has been on identifying the social framework in which people constructed and lived their identities. This framework enlivens lived experience, and ideally allows us to see the variability in people's lives and the stories they were told about each other. The question which remains is how far did the key sites explored in Chapters 6 and 7 enlarge the picture of gender and age which we encountered in Chapter 5? And, what shortcomings does this still leave us with?

The addition of key site explorations allowed us to notice small-scale patterns otherwise lost in the milieu, and therefore to recognise the critical component that was local decision making in the construction of these burials and how their gender and age ideologies were made manifest. For instance, the specific treatment of children at Edmondstown united them in needing some form of external support – adults or quartz – while the treatment of space at Sketewan demonstrated a rigid interpretation of the gendered nature of space which we would otherwise have been unable to identify. So too, the shared programme of burial in the Inverness area, which featured more that united these burials than united the broader corpus of burials in Scotland. This approach, then, allows us to talk through why burial is important, and how it impacts upon the local community. This is different from saying that burial was a mark of rank. Rather, it is saying that burial was impactful no matter the social standing of the deceased. A burial is the literal creation of memory, and here I have attempted to untangle how that memory was created and some of the things to which it cohered.

And yet, the key sites did not contradict the general narrative. Rather, they provided instances which pointed the way to a fuller understanding of how the nascent gendered concerns functioned in Scotland, for instance. The individuals set alone in the landscape could, too, be better understood through their idiosyncrasies, but also make more sense when thought of as

part of a wider programme of similar burials. This tacking between scales seems, then, the best way of speaking of lives which were individual and yet shaped by wider gender and age concerns shared between many more members of the same or similar communities.

However, despite the recognition of far more variety in both burial practice and social relations than can be managed from the population level alone, there is certainly a degree to which this study is still homogenising. There are, of course, only so many ways that one can meaningfully write about the construction of a cist, or its placement within the landscape. While the memory associated with a rock outcrop at Glennan, Argyll & Bute, may be different to that of the slight rise and the sea view at Culleens, Co. Sligo, these burials do not afford us the ability to talk in detail about the individuals buried there. Rather, we can speak of the memory practices of the community, something of the sphere in which their narratives of the deceased were created, even though the narratives themselves are lost to us. This critical recognition of context seems to provide a more human engagement with the past, though it is difficult to produce meaningful differences between these types of memory which can be neatly packaged into social roles or identities.

And perhaps this very confusion is itself a virtue – the loose ends and tantalising metaphors which pervade this thesis are reflections of human lives and stories that have been obscured but not erased by time. The discussion of a social model in the previous chapter has, to some extent at least, avoided creating groups of 'men' and 'women' with roles in the community, and instead noted where society was broadly divided (that is, between adults/adolescents and subadults) and where more subtle distinctions between individuals had gendered connotations (as between males and females, and between two males or two females). This is a picture of society, then, in which we can imagine various roles for the people of whom we speak, without having to be prescriptive. Men here do not have to be warriors, but situationally some men may take on roles within a nascent hierarchy. Thus, this study begins a move beyond the oversimplified caricatures that have plagued Bronze Age studies for too long.

A relatively simple observation is that this method is rather time consuming. This thesis simply could not cover the same number of burials discursively which could be covered statistically. Furthermore, even were space unlimited, the brain simply will not hold endless

trends and subtle variations in mind. Thus, as the tale of one cemetery is told, that of another drifts away. Neither can all the sites visited be easily deployed in a discussion of what we have learnt of gender or age relations writ large. Rather, the key site analysis provides three important opportunities – first it allows us to recognise local patterns, such as the repeated use of the adult clavicle at Ballynacarriga, which give particular meanings to local practice that would be unrecognisable at a larger scale; second, it allows us to see the degree to which sites accord with, or diverge from, the norms which we expect them to follow; and third, it allows us to tack between scales – the site-specific, the regional, the national – to build a picture of social relations that accounts for idiosyncrasies and similarities.

Finally, although some nuance has been brought to bear on these discussions, it is regrettably still the case that this study collapses time. Comparisons between cemeteries involve a conflation of their times of use, and cemeteries which may be in use for centuries are spoken of as a coherent programme of burial, although in some cases we have been able to recognise a sequence to mortuary practice. Expanding the focus to look at similar sites, as we did at Ballybrennan and in the Beauly Firth/Great Glen group, presumes some kind of broad contemporaneity, which can of course be suggested by the grave goods, but the possibility remains of gaps between burials of several centuries. The chronological analysis at the overall level goes some way to alleviating this, as does the careful attention to site sequences, but a degree of homogenisation over time remains inevitable.

Altogether then, these methods have proven most effective in enabling a tacking between scales which reflects the realities of social ideologies and an all-important recognition of the site-level, the scale of actual lived experience. The picture created has maintained much of the messiness and confusion and is thus a better representation of the archaeological record itself and, hopefully, of the lives which it represents.

9.2   A word on the wider context

I spent some time unpacking the ramifications of this study for our understandings of gender and age in the study areas in the previous chapter, and I want as a final word on that topic to briefly reflect upon the implications beyond social ideology for our understanding of the Bronze Age.

The European Bronze Age has long been considered a time of growing interconnection, both physically, in terms of trade and the movement of people, and socially, in terms of shared ideals and hierarchies (e.g. Childe 1928; 1930; Harding 2013; Kristiansen and Larsson 2005; Robb and Harris 2018; Rowlands 1980). The recent addition of aDNA evidence showing an influx of people with Steppe ancestry into most parts of Europe coinciding with the Bronze Age transition and resulting in a largescale replacement of the population's ancestry (Cassidy et al. 2016; Haak et al. 2015; Olalde et al. 2017) has done little to change this conception. Some scholars even see this as further evidence for their models of male-dominated warbands controlling communities across Europe (Kristiansen et al. 2017), although in reality the aDNA evidence provides no such support (Booth 2019).

My analysis here has suggested a significant difference between the social ideologies of communities in Ireland and Scotland and those on the continent, and perhaps in southern Britain. That Scotland exhibited gender characteristics that were closer to that expected in continental Europe suggests both that this is not merely an artefact of the method of study and that gender was neither statically binary nor necessarily stable, as Robb and Harris (2018) suggest. Although these regions may be characterised as on the 'periphery' of Bronze Age Europe (e.g. Harding 2013; Kristiansen and Larsson 2005), it is clearly important to recognise that they do not represent localised versions of the broader Bronze Age models. This is critical to wider studies for it indicates that the movement of people which occurred at the beginning of the Bronze Age was not necessarily accompanied by the gender and age ideals of their places of origin. Any model which seeks to simply tie changes in social ideology to the movement of people must therefore account for its failure to do so in some areas.

There are two further points to be made regarding our interpretations of burials, both relating to the inclusion of small amounts of bone within the grave of another. Such finds are often written off as the result of the reuse of a pyre site with the mourners accidentally collecting some of the bone from a previous cremation. This project has provided two lines of evidence which suggest that this was not usually the case. First, several of the sites which we visited showed the repeated use of specific bones for inclusion in the grave. At Ballybrennan, the femur of an infant was deployed as a grave good in two graves, while at Ballynacarriga the clavicle of an adult was similarly deployed in two graves. This shows deliberate selection of particular bones for these inclusions which should not be the case were they randomly

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collected from the pyre. Furthermore, the site at Sketewan saw the deposition of burials around a pyre that was reused several times, presumably for the cremations buried in this cemetery. This central pyre contained the left-behind remains of at least six individuals, yet none of the graves in this cemetery featured accidental inclusions of the remains of an extra person. Thus, even in a case where a pyre was reused there is no evidence that bones were accidentally included. This speaks to us of the care, attention and indeed skill with which cremations were conducted and the remains collected and curated for the grave.

Furthermore, the second point I wish to make about these bone inclusions is that they represent the extension of the lived identity of the individual, or at least the memory of the specific type of bone and the type of person from whom it had originated. It mattered, for instance, that the femurs deployed at Ballybrennan were from infants. This is an extension of Brück's (1995; 2019) recognition that bone was an important and powerful substance as it demonstrates that the living identity of the deceased, and the parts of the body, were often responsible for giving that bone the particular meanings which were drawn upon in these mortuary practices.

9.3   Where do we go from here?

I have already made note of several aspects of funerary practice which could potentially reflect gendered practice if larger datasets were to be explored, the inclusion of fossils in male graves in Ireland for instance, and will not review that further here as little could be added. It is, however, certain that this kind of analysis could be greatly revolutionised by the cheap availability of DNA sexing which is hopefully just around the corner. Reliable osteological sex determinations were possible for less than half of the adults in this study, and of course subadults could largely not be sexed beyond a couple of older adolescents. To have DNA-based sex determinations for a significant number of skeletons within a similar study would massively improve the results at all scales.

That said, caution will also have to be exercised in such studies. It would be a supreme shame to allow the ability to sex most skeletons within a population to return us to a view of gender which identifies a biologically determined binary. One of the advantages of the current work is that it is not prescriptive about the binary nature of gender, imagining the differences between two males – one cremated the other inhumed – is as important as the difference

between a male and a female. To use the large sample numbers which could be generated using DNA-based sex determinations as an excuse to return to population overview analyses alone would be to forget the lessons of gender archaeology thus far.

There is a further avenue for aDNA analysis which will prove very fruitful for investigations of social dynamics, and that concerns family structure. I have remained fairly silent on family structure within this study, but this is often not the case for Bronze Age scholarship. In general, there is a presumption of, if not monogamous, at least long-term preferential marriage which pervades much of the literature on Bronze Age worlds. This is true both of those who favour a hierarchical model (e.g. Kristiansen and Larsson 2005; Parker Pearson et al. 2019) and those who argue against it (e.g. Brück 2009; 2019). Indeed, in recognising that grave goods were not necessarily the personal possessions of the deceased, Parker Pearson (2019: 171) can only admit that 'rich' graves might indicate the status of "families", but what is a family here? We simply have no evidence in either Britain or Ireland that supports or rejects the practice of marriage in anything approaching a recognisable form. Neither have we any idea whether a family unit as we would conceive it is actually what occupied the dispersed farmsteads, though we regularly assume that it was (e.g. Brück 2019; Cooney and Grogan 1999). aDNA analysis will allow us to assess whether the people buried in the same cemetery and in the same grave were biologically related and to trace any patterns of descent which might have been present. Where this has been applied to Bronze Age material in southern Germany it has produced fascinating results (e.g. Mittnik et al. 2019).

Further suggestions could be made of scientific analyses which could be conducted on Irish material to give the kind of insights into diet and mobility found recently on well-funded British projects (e.g. Parker Pearson et al. 2019), but I do not wish to labour that point as the procurement of funding is surely the main question. Instead, I want to dwell briefly on the significant challenge that remains to push this kind of work beyond the burial arena. How can an archaeology sensitive to local variation and nuance, or what Anna Tsing (2015) calls 'noticing', open up social worlds in other arenas?

For the Bronze Age, so much has been written about social structure based on burials and hoards, that it now seems right that devoted attention be given to social lives as they were enabled and constrained by other aspects of this world – the settlement record (though see

Brück 2000; 2019; Cleary 2018; Ginn 2014), craft and skill, trade and *fulachtaí fiadh*, to name but a few of the aspects of Bronze Age society which, though investigated to varying degrees, have yet to fully articulate with models for society at this time. Our social models, even when built through burials, must, as I argued at the beginning of this thesis, account with the evidence which we gather from other arenas, and yet this is a check which is seldom performed. Indeed, even within this work beyond noting the general pattern of settlement evidence little else has impinged on our discussion of burials. There is certainly scope to return to these other areas and to build social models starting from there, interweaving them with the stories which have previously been created elsewhere.

For instance, there seems to be a broad solidifying of the house and a turning inwards of its occupants over the course of the Bronze Age – from the ephemeral traces of activity that often characterise the first millennium (2500–1500 BC, i.e. the time that we have considered here) to the roundhouse with outside hearths common in the Middle Bronze Age, to the internal hearths of the Late Bronze Age. It is possible that this gradual change in domestic architecture speaks to a wider change in social relations – the turning in of the social unit, in which the impact of gender relations may have been strengthened and brought to the fore. The differences between men and women, which may have been broadly codified during the Earlier Bronze Age, could thus start to become more solid by the later period. Perhaps an analysis of the long-term changes in domestic architecture could start to awaken some of this longer-term story of gender becoming.

And, of course, the burials of the Later Bronze Age could, too, have a part to play in telling this story. Although they have not featured much in our analyses thus far, recent research on Middle Bronze Age burials in England (Caswell and Roberts 2018) has shown that these burials are not as mute as is often imagined, and hints of analyses on similar material in Irish formal burials (Cooney 2017) and informal deposition on settlements (Cleary 2005; 2018) suggests that variation exists between the treatment of the dead that would reward a careful social analysis. Therefore, there remains much to tell that would expand our understanding of the development of gender and age ideologies, despite the generally held presumption that the 'token' nature of burial would confound our attempts in this endeavour.

9.4   Final words

At the beginning of this thesis, I set out to bring something of the human narrative into our discussions of the past. A focus directly on the stories which people in the past told to each other about who they were is a solid initial step in this direction, but much still needs to be done. The 'men' and 'women' of this study do not fit neatly into two camps or 'types' of people, but are presented in the grave in ways which messily overlap to differing degrees depending on time and place. They are still, however, caricatures glimpsed from behind a curtain. We cannot really engage with them fully as people because we can never fully speak to them, or them to us. This guessing, of opening up the possibilities and attempting to interpret the meanings that were created by their actions, places us at the centre of a story that was enfolding, and that in many ways still is. I have argued several times that actions do not have simple 'meanings', rather they allow others to interpret, to come to their own understandings of the framework of meaning in which an action sits. This is what we do as mourners at the graveside, and this too is what we do as archaeologists. Any one interpretation is no more correct than any one mourner's reading of events would have been at the time of the burial. But through the noticing and storytelling and interpreting, we are slowly arriving at an understanding of Earlier Bronze Age burial, and the social ideologies which it reflects, that is messy and difficult to summarise; that is, so to say, more real.

10 References

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Appendices – Table of Contents

Appendix 1 – Additional Statistical Information

1.1 Complete Tables

The first section of this appendix simply presents expanded versions of the tables given in the main text of Chapter 5. The tables appear here in the order in which they appeared in the main text with no other contextual information, as that has already been provided. Where a test for statistical significance was performed on a single variable this is indicated by a number in superscript, and the details of these tests follow.

1.1.1 Table 5.9 – Grave Orientation, Ireland

Orientation by Age (Ireland)									
	E/W	E/W %	N/S	N/S %	NE/ SW	NE/ SW %	NW/ SE	NW/ SE %	Total
Older Adult	4	33.33%	3	25.00%	3	25.00%	2	16.67%	12
Middle Adult	3	18.75%	9	56.25%	1	6.25%	3	18.75%	16
Young Adult	4	16.67%	12	50.00%	1	4.17%	7	29.17%	24
Adult	19	15.83%	41	34.17%	40	33.33%	20	16.67%	120
All Adults	30	17.44%	65	37.79%	45	26.16%	32	18.60%	172
Adolescent	4	23.53%	3	17.65%	6	35.29%	4	23.53%	17
Child	7	18.92%	9	24.32%	11	29.73%	10	27.03%	37
Infant	5	26.32%	7	36.84%	4	21.05%	3	15.79%	19
Foetus/ Neonate	0	0.00%	2	100%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	2
Sub-adult	1	33.33%	1	33.33%	0	0.00%	1	33.33%	3
All Subadults	17	21.79%	22	28.21%	21	26.92%	18	23.08%	78
Unknown	4	33.33%	4	33.33%	3	25.00%	1	8.33%	12
Total	51	19.47%	91	34.73%	69	26.34%	51	19.47%	262
p-value = 0.4742									

Table A1.1 – Age profile of grave orientations from Ireland.
(E/W=East/West; N/S=North/South; NE/SW=Northeast/Southwest; NW/SE=Northwest/Southeast)
One older adult was recorded as ENE/WSW without an available plan and is counted as both NE/SW and E/W.

Orientation by Sex (Ireland)									
	E/W	E/W %	N/S	N/S %	NE/ SW	NE/ SW %	NW/ SE	NW/ SE %	Total
Male	9	20.00%	21	46.67%	9	20.00%	6	13.33%	45
Female	4	17.39%	6	26.09%	7	30.43%	6	26.09%	23
Prob Male	2	13.33%	7	46.67%	4	26.67%	2	13.33%	15
Prob Female	2	33.33%	2	33.33%	0	0.00%	2	33.33%	6
Poss Male	2	16.67%	2	16.67%	5	41.67%	3	25.00%	12
Poss Female	0	0.00%	3	50.00%	1	16.67%	2	33.33%	6
Unsexed Adult	11	15.94%	25	36.23%	21	30.43%	12	17.39%	69
C-Male	11	18.33%	28[1]	46.67%	13	21.67%	8	13.33%	60
C-Female	6	20.69%	8	27.59%	7	24.14%	8	27.59%	29
p-value = 0.2531									

Table A1.2 – Sex profile of grave orientations from Ireland.
(E/W=East/West; N/S=North/South; NE/SW=Northeast/Southwest; NW/SE=Northwest/Southeast)
One poss. male was recorded as ENE/WSW without an available plan and is counted as both NE/SW and E/W.

1.	North/South	Other Orientations
Male	28	32
Female	8	21
	Chisq = 2.9549, df = 1, p-value = 0.08562	

Table A1.3 – Testing male north/south burials for statistical significance

1.1.2   Table 5.10 – Grave Orientation, Scotland

Orientation by Age (Scotland)								
	E/W	E/W %	N/S	N/S %	NE/ SW	NE/ SW %	NW/ SE	NW/ SE %	Total
Older Adult	1	10.00%	4	40.00%	3	30.00%	2	20.00%	10
Middle Adult	7	31.82%	4	18.18%	10	45.45%	1	4.55%	22
Young Adult	6	28.57%	2	9.52%	9	42.86%	4	19.05%	21
Adult	16	28.07%	11	19.30%	26	45.61%	4	7.02%	57
All Adults	30	27.27%	21	19.09%	48	43.64%	11	10.00%	110
Adolescent	2	33.33%	0	0.00%	2	33.33%	2	33.33%	6
Child	7	35.00%	10	50.00%	3	15.00%	0	0.00%	20
Infant	1	20.00%	1	20.00%	2	40.00%	1	20.00%	5
Neonate	0	0.00%	2	100%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	2
Foetus	2	66.67%	1	33.33%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	3
Sub-adult	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	100%	0	0.00%	1
All Subadults	12	32.43%	14	37.84%	8	21.62%	3	8.11%	37
Unknown	4	36.36%	3	27.27%	3	27.27%	1	9.09%	11
Total	46	29.11%	38	24.05%	59	37.34%	15	9.49%	158
<p-value = 0.04661*>								

Table A1.4 – Age profile of grave orientations from Scotland.
(E/W=East/West; N/S=North/South; NE/SW=Northeast/Southwest; NW/SE=Northwest/Southeast)

Orientation by Sex (Scotland)								
	E/W	E/W %	N/S	N/S %	NE/ SW	NE/ SW %	NW/ SE	NW/ SE %	Total
Male	7	30.43%	3	13.04%	10	43.48%	3	13.04%	23
Female	3	25.00%	4	33.33%	3	25.00%	2	16.67%	12
Prob Male	3	27.27%	1	9.09%	5	45.45%	2	18.18%	11
Prob Female	4	28.57%	2	14.29%	8	57.14%	0	0.00%	14
Poss Male	4	80.00%	0	0.00%	1	20.00%	0	0.00%	5
Poss Female	1	33.33%	0	0.00%	2	66.67%	0	0.00%	3
Unsexed Adult	9	21.43%	11	26.19%	18	42.86%	4	9.52%	42
C-Male	10	29.41%	4	11.76%	15	44.12%	5	14.71%	34
C-Female	7	26.92%	6	23.08%	11	42.31%	2	7.69%	26
<p-value = 0.6159>								

Table A1.5 – Sex profile of grave orientations from Scotland.
(E/W=East/West; N/S=North/South; NE/SW=Northeast/Southwest; NW/SE=Northwest/Southeast)

1.1.3   Table 5.14 – Cist Size

Average Cist Size – Age		
	Ireland Average Cist Size (cm^3)	Scotland Average Cist Size (cm^3)
Older Adult	4640	7296.25
Middle Adult	4379.556	7596.5
Younger Adult	5162.05	5909.375
Adult	4344.712	5786.122
All Adults	4480.754	6269.483
Adolescent	4590.467	6445.2
Child	4362.028	5542.882
Infant	3450.722	3150
Neonate	-	6440
Foetus	5313	-
Sub-Adult	3740.667	4959
All Subadults	4155.903	5373.357
Unknown	2561.778	5274.75
Total	4307.44	6005.088

Table A1.6 – The average cist size for each age category

Average Cist Size – Sex		
	Ireland Average Cist Size (cm^3)	Scotland Average Cist Size (cm^3)
Male	4503.05	6462.857
Female	4465.212	6494.684
prob Male	3802.5	4879.182
prob Female	5296.818	6754.636
poss Male	5763	3664
poss Female	3783.2	7256.2
Unsexed Adult	4406.081	6487.879
C-Male	4673.114	6590
C-Female	4978.8	4618.786

Table A1.7 – The average cist size for each sex category

1.1.4 Table 5.17 – Pottery Provision

Age Profile with Pottery						
	Ireland			Scotland		
	With	Total	%	With	Total	%
Older Adult	14	21	66.67%	8	19	42.11%
Middle Adult	17	22	77.27%	15	38	39.47%
Young Adult	27	40	67.50%	24[1]	42	57.14%
Adult	127	200	63.50%	44	137	32.12%
All Adults	185	283	65.37%	91	236	38.56%
Adolescent	20	25	80.00%	6	14	42.86%
Child	34	48	70.83%	20	48	41.67%
Infant	18	29	62.07%	4	12	33.33%
Neonate	-	-	-	1	4	25.00%
Foetus	3	3	100.00%	3	7	42.86%
Sub-Adult	3	4	75.00%	2	5	40.00%
All Subadults	78	109	71.56%	36	90	40.00%
Unknown	13	25	52.00%	16	45	35.56%
Total	276	417	66.19%	143	371	38.54%
	p-value = 0.2427			p-value = 0.8115		

Table A1.8 – The rate of pottery provision for each age category

1.	With	Without
Young Adults	24	18
Other Adults	67	127
	Chisq = 7.448, df = 1, p-value = 0.006351*	

Table A1.9 – Testing young adults with pottery in Scotland for statistical significance

Sex Profile with Pottery						
	Ireland			Scotland		
	With	Total	%	With	Total	%
Male	42	59	71.19%	22	47	46.81%
Female	21	32	65.63%	12	24	50.00%
prob Male	14	24	58.33%	9	21	42.86%
prob Female	7	11	63.64%	9	25	36.00%
poss Male	10	17	58.82%	6	12	50.00%
poss Female	5	7	71.43%	0	6	0.00%
Unsexed Adult	90	138	65.22%	34	103	33.01%
C-Male	56	83	67.47%	31	68	45.59%
C-Female	28	43	65.12%	21	49	42.86%
	p-value = 0.7905			p-value = 0.7693		

Table A1.10 – The rate of pottery provision for each sex category

1.1.5 Table 5.18 – Worked Stone Provision

Age Profile with Worked Stone						
	Ireland			Scotland		
	With	Total	%	With	Total	%
Older Adult	2	20	10.00%	7	19	36.84%
Middle Adult	5	20	25.00%	13	38	34.21%
Younger Adult	8	38	21.05%	16	41	39.02%
Adult	42	189	22.22%	34	137	24.82%
All Adults	57	267	21.35%	70	235	29.79%
Adolescent	10[1]	23	43.48%	3	14	21.43%
Child	9	48	18.75%	22[2]	48	45.83%
Infant	6	28	21.43%	3	12	25.00%
Neonate	-	-	-	1	4	25.00%
Foetus	0	3	0.00%	1	7	14.29%
Sub-Adult	0	3	0.00%	0	4	0.00%
All Subadults	25	105	23.81%	30	89	33.71%
Unknown	7	23	30.43%	12	45	26.67%
Total	89	395	22.53%	112	369	30.35%
	p-value = 0.6063			p-value = 0.4953		

Table A1.11 – The rate of worked stone provision for each age category

1.	With	Without
Adolescents	10	13
All Others	79	293
	Chisq = 6.139, df = 1, p-value = 0.01322*	

Table A1.12 – Testing adolescents with worked stone in Ireland for statistical significance

2.	With	Without
Children	22	26
All Others	90	231
	Chisq = 6.256, df = 1, p-value = 0.01238*	

Table A1.13 – Testing children with worked stone in Scotland for statistical significance

Sex Profile with Worked Stone						
	Ireland			Scotland		
	With	Total	%	With	Total	%
Male	12	58	20.69%	15	47	31.91%
Female	9	30	30.00%	7	24	29.17%
prob Male	6	24	25.00%	9	21	42.86%
prob Female	1	10	10.00%	11	25	44.00%
poss Male	1	16	6.25%	3	12	25.00%
poss Female	3	7	42.86%	2	6	33.33%
Unsexed Adult	28	127	22.05%	22	102	21.57%
C-Male	18	82	21.95%	24	68	35.29%
C-Female	10	40	25.00%	18	49	36.73%
	p-value = 0.707			p-value = 0.8727		

Table A1.14 – The rate of worked stone provision for each sex category

1.1.6 Table 5.19 – Animal Remains Provision

Age Profile with Animal Remains						
	Ireland			Scotland		
	With	Total	%	With	Total	%
Older Adult	6	20	30.00%	4	19	21.05%
Middle Adult	4	20	20.00%	8	38	21.05%
Younger Adult	7	38	18.42%	6	41	14.63%
Adult	24	191	12.57%	28	137	20.44%
All Adults	41	269	15.24%	46	235	19.57%
Adolescent	5	23	21.74%	3	14	21.43%
Child	12	50	24.00%	7	48	14.58%
Infant	3	28	10.71%	1	12	8.33%
Neonate	-	-	-	2	4	50.00%
Foetus	0	3	0.00%	1	7	14.29%
Sub-Adult	1	3	33.33%	0	4	0.00%
All Subadults	21	107	19.63%	14	89	15.73%
Unknown	4	23	17.39%	3	45	6.67%
Total	66	399	16.54%	63	369	17.07%
	p-value = 0.3012			p-value = 0.4266		

Table A1.15 – The rate of animal remains provision for each age category

Sex Profile with Animal Remains						
	Ireland			Scotland		
	With	Total	%	With	Total	%
Male	12	58	20.69%	11	47	23.40%
Female	4	31	12.90%	6	24	25.00%
prob Male	3	24	12.50%	4	21	19.05%
prob Female	2	10	20.00%	7	25	28.00%
poss Male	1	16	6.25%	2	12	16.67%
poss Female	3	7	42.86%	0	6	0.00%
Unsexed Adult	17	128	13.28%	17	102	16.67%
C-Male	15	82	18.29%	15	68	22.06%
C-Female	6	41	14.63%	13	49	26.53%
	p-value = 0.6112			p-value = 0.576		

Table A1.16 – The rate of animal remains provision for each sex category

1.1.7 Table 5.20 – Metal Provision

Age Profile with Metal						
	Ireland			Scotland		
	With	Total	%	With	Total	%
Older Adult	0	20	0.00%	3	19	15.79%
Middle Adult	2	22	9.09%	7	38	18.42%
Younger Adult	2	38	5.26%	7	41	17.07%
Adult	15	190	7.89%	16	137	11.68%
All Adults	19	270	7.04%	33	235	14.04%
Adolescent	4	23	17.39%	3	14	21.43%
Child	0	48	0.00%	2	48	4.17%
Infant	0	28	0.00%	1	12	8.33%
Neonate	-	-	-	1	4	25.00%
Foetus	0	3	0.00%	3	7	42.86%
Sub-Adult	0	3	0.00%	1	4	25.00%
All Subadults	4	105	3.81%	11	89	12.36%
Unknown	0	23	0.00%	2	45	4.44%
Total	23	398	5.78%	46	369	12.47%
	p-value = 0.2422			p-value = 0.6931		

Table A1.17 – The rate of metal provision for each age category

Sex Profile with Metal						
	Ireland			Scotland		
	With	Total	%	With	Total	%
Male	4	59	6.78%	7	47	14.89%
Female	5	31	16.13%	4	24	16.67%
prob Male	3	25	12.00%	3	21	14.29%
prob Female	1	10	10.00%	3	25	12.00%
poss Male	1	16	6.25%	2	12	16.67%
poss Female	0	7	0.00%	0	6	0.00%
Unsexed Adult	8	127	6.30%	13	102	12.75%
C-Male	7	84	8.33%	10	68	14.71%
C-Female	6	41	14.63%	7	49	14.29%
	<p-value = 0.2786>			p-value = 0.9493		

Table A1.18 – The rate of metal provision for each sex category

1.1.8 Table 5.21 – Bone Artefacts

Age Profile with Bone Artefacts						
	Ireland			Scotland		
	With	Total	%	With	Total	%
Older Adult	0	20	0.00%	0	19	0.00%
Middle Adult	1	20	5.00%	1	38	2.63%
Younger Adult	2	38	5.26%	4	41	9.76%
Adult	12	189	6.35%	12	137	8.76%
All Adults	15	267	5.62%	17	235	7.23%
Adolescent	4	23	17.39%	2	14	14.29%
Child	4	48	8.33%	7	48	14.58%
Infant	1	28	3.57%	1	12	8.33%
Neonate	-	-	-	0	4	0.00%
Foetus	0	3	0.00%	0	7	0.00%
Sub-Adult	0	3	0.00%	0	4	0.00%
All Subadults	9	107	8.57%	10	89	11.24%
Unknown	0	23	0.00%	1	45	2.22%
Total	24	395	6.08%	28	369	7.59%
	p-value = 0.2966			p-value = 0.2447		

Table A1.19 – The rate of bone artefact provision for each age category

Sex Profile with Bone Artefacts						
	Ireland			Scotland		
	With	Total	%	With	Total	%
Male	4	58	6.90%	4	47	8.51%
Female	0	30	0.00%	2	24	8.33%
prob Male	1	24	4.17%	2	21	9.52%
prob Female	1	10	10.00%	2	25	8.00%
poss Male	1	16	6.25%	2	12	16.67%
poss Female	1	7	14.29%	0	6	0.00%
Unsexed Adult	8	127	6.30%	5	102	4.90%
C-Male	5	82	6.10%	6	68	8.82%
C-Female	1	40	2.50%	4	49	8.16%
	<p-value = 0.3883>			<p-value = 0.8997>		

Table A1.20 – The rate of bone artefact provision for each sex category

1.1.9   Table 5.22 – Natural Stone

Age Profile with Natural Stone						
	Ireland			Scotland		
	With	Total	%	With	Total	%
Older Adult	0	20	0.00%	1	19	5.26%
Middle Adult	3	20	15.00%	3	38	7.89%
Younger Adult	0	38	0.00%	4	41	9.76%
Adult	9	190	4.74%	6	137	4.38%
All Adults	12	268	4.48%	14	235	5.96%
Adolescent	1	23	4.35%	1	14	7.14%
Child	3	48	6.25%	3	48	6.25%
Infant	2	28	7.14%	0	12	0.00%
Neonate	-	-	-	0	4	0.00%
Foetus	0	3	0.00%	0	7	0.00%
Sub-Adult	0	3	0.00%	0	4	0.00%
All Subadults	6	105	5.71%	4	89	4.49%
Unknown	1	23	4.35%	2	45	4.44%
Total	19	396	4.80%	20	369	5.42%
	p-value = 0.6162			<p-value = 0.6078>		

Table A1.21 – The rate of natural stone provision for each age category

Sex Profile with Natural Stone						
	Ireland			Scotland		
	With	Total	%	With	Total	%
Male	5	58	8.62%	4	47	8.51%
Female	2	30	6.67%	1	24	4.17%
prob Male	0	24	0.00%	3	21	14.29%
prob Female	0	10	0.00%	0	25	0.00%
poss Male	0	16	0.00%	1	12	8.33%
poss Female	1	7	14.29%	0	6	0.00%
Unsexed Adult	5	128	3.91%	5	102	4.90%
C-Male	5	82	6.10%	7	68	10.29%
C-Female	2	40	5.00%	1	49	2.04%
	<p-value = 0.8067>			<p-value = 0.08097>		

Table A1.22 – The rate of natural stone provision for each sex category

1.1.10 Table 5.23 - Beads

Age Profile with Beads						
	Ireland			Scotland		
	With	Total	%	With	Total	%
Older Adult	1	20	5.00%	1	19	5.26%
Middle Adult	0	20	0.00%	4	38	10.53%
Younger Adult	3	38	7.89%	5	41	12.20%
Adult	3	189	1.59%	7	137	5.11%
All Adults	7	267	2.62%	17	235	7.23%
Adolescent	3	23	13.04%	0	14	0.00%
Child	0	48	0.00%	3	48	6.25%
Infant	0	28	0.00%	2	12	16.67%
Neonate	-	-	-	0	4	0.00%
Foetus	0	3	0.00%	1	7	14.29%
Sub-Adult	0	3	0.00%	0	5	0.00%
All Subadults	3	105	2.86%	6	90	6.67%
Unknown	1	23	4.35%	2	45	4.44%
Total	11	395	2.78%	25	370	6.76%
	<p-value = 0.8647>			p-value = 0.8583		

Table A1.23 – The rate of bead provision for each age category

Sex Profile with Beads						
	Ireland			Scotland		
	With	Total	%	With	Total	%
Male	3	58	5.17%	0	47	0.00%
Female	2	30	6.67%	3	24	12.50%
prob Male	1	24	4.17%	0	21	0.00%
prob Female	1	10	10.00%	3	25	12.00%
poss Male	0	16	0.00%	1	12	8.33%
poss Female	0	7	0.00%	0	6	0.00%
Unsexed Adult	2	127	1.57%	10	102	9.80%
C-Male	4	82	4.88%	0	68	0.00%
C-Female	3	40	7.50%	6	49	12.24%
	<p-value = 0.6278>			<p-value = 0.003051*>		

Table A1.24 – The rate of bead provision for each sex category

1.1.11 Table 5.24 – Burial Lying On, Ireland

Lying On by Age (Ireland)							
	R	Right%	Left	Left %	B	Back %	Total
Older Adult	3	50.00%	2	33.33%	1	16.67%	6
Middle Adult	3	30.00%	5	50.00%	2	20.00%	10
Young Adult	7	63.64%	3	27.27%	1	9.09%	11
Adult	6	50.00%	6	50.00%	0	0.00%	12
All Adults	19	48.72%	16	41.03%	4	10.26%	39
Adolescent	5	71.43%	1	14.29%	1	14.29%	7
Child	3	75.00%	1	25.00%	0	0.00%	4
Infant	1	100%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1
Foetus/ Neonate	0	-	0	-	0	-	0
Sub-adult	0	-	0	-	0	-	0
All Subadults	9	75.00%	2	16.67%	1	8.33%	12
Unknown	0	-	0	-	0	-	0
Total	28	54.90%	18	35.29%	5	9.80%	51
<p-value = 0.2551>							

Table A1.25 – The frequency of burial lying on a particular side of the body for each age group in Ireland.
One adolescent was recorded as Back/Right and is thus recorded in both categories.

Lying On by Sex (Ireland)							
	R	Right%	Left	Left %	B	Back %	Total
Male	7	38.89%	6	33.33%	5	27.78%	18
Female	8	66.67%	4	33.33%	0	0.00%	12
Prob Male	2	50.00%	2	50.00%	0	0.00%	4
Prob Female	1	100%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1
Poss Male	2	100%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	2
Poss Female	1	50.00%	1	50.00%	0	0.00%	2
Unsexed Adult	2	40.00%	3	60.00%	0	0.00%	5
C-Male	9	40.91%	8	36.36%	5	22.73%	22
C-Female	9	69.23%	4	30.77%	0	0.00%	13
<p-value = 0.1163>							

Table A1.26 – The frequency of burial lying on a particular side of the body for each sex group in Ireland.
One male was recorded as Back/Right and is thus recorded in both categories.

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1.1.12 Table 5.25 – Burial Lying On, Scotland

Lying On by Age (Scotland)							
	R	Right%	Left	Left %	B	Back %	Total
Older Adult	3	37.50%	5	62.50%	0	0.00%	8
Middle Adult	6	60.00%	4	40.00%	0	0.00%	10
Young Adult	3	27.27%	8	72.73%	0	0.00%	11
Adult	6	50.00%	6	50.00%	0	0.00%	12
All Adults	18	43.90%	23	56.10%	0	0.00%	41
Adolescent	2	66.67%	1	33.33%	0	0.00%	3
Child	1	33.33%	2	66.67%	0	0.00%	3
Infant	2	100%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	2
Foetus/ Neonate	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	100%	1
Sub-adult	0	-	0	-	0	-	0
All Subadults	5	55.56%	3	33.33%	1	11.11%	9
Unknown	1	100%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1
Total	24	47.06%	26	50.98%	1	1.96%	51
<p-value = 0.06364>							

Table A1.27 – The frequency of burial lying on a particular side of the body for each age group in Scotland.

Lying On by Sex (Scotland)							
	R	Right%	Left	Left %	B	Back %	Total
Male	4	28.57%	10	71.43%	0	0.00%	14
Female	5	71.43%	2	28.57%	0	0.00%	7
Prob Male	0	0.00%	7	100%	0	0.00%	7
Prob Female	2	40.00%	3	60.00%	0	0.00%	5
Poss Male	2	100%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	2
Poss Female	1	100%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1
Unsexed Adult	5	71.43%	2	28.57%	0	0.00%	7
C-Male	4	19.05%	17	80.95%	0	0.00%	21
C-Female	7	58.33%	5	41.67%	0	0.00%	12
<p-value = 0.02128*>							

Table A1.28 – The frequency of burial lying on a particular side of the body for each sex group in Scotland.

1.2 Body Orientation

The information on the direction to which the head was oriented and that the skull was facing were presented in the main text as radar charts. The tables upon which those charts were based are provided over the next four pages.

Head To by Age (Ireland)																
	N	N %	NE	NE %	E	E %	SE	SE %	S	S %	SW	SW %	W	W %	NW	NW %	Total
Older Adult	3	50.00%	0	0.00%	2	33.33%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	16.67%	0	0.00%	6
Middle Adult	1	10.00%	2	20.00%	1	10.00%	0	0.00%	3	30.00%	1	10.00%	1	10.00%	1	10.00%	10
Young Adult	2	15.38%	0	0.00%	3	23.08%	2	15.38%	4	30.77%	0	0.00%	1	7.69%	1	7.69%	13
Adult	5	29.41%	2	11.76%	1	5.88%	0	0.00%	5	29.41%	3	17.65%	1	5.88%	0	0.00%	17
All Adults	11	23.91%	4	8.70%	7	15.22%	2	4.35%	12	26.09%	4	8.70%	4	8.70%	2	4.35%	46
Adolescent	1	14.29%	1	14.29%	0	0.00%	1	14.29%	2	28.57%	2	28.57%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	7
Child	0	0.00%	2	28.57%	1	14.29%	0	0.00%	3	42.86%	1	14.29%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	7
Infant	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	100%	0	0.00%	1
Foetus/ Neo-nate	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0
Subadult	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0
Unknown	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0
Total	12	19.67%	7	11.48%	8	13.11%	3	4.92%	17	27.87%	7	11.48%	5	8.20%	2	3.28%	61

Table A1.29 – The frequency of burial with the head oriented towards each direction for each age group in Ireland

Head To by Sex (Ireland)																
	N	N %	NE	NE %	E	E %	SE	SE %	S	S %	SW	SW %	W	W %	NW	NW %	Total
Male	5	29.41%	1	5.88%	5	29.41%	1	5.88%	3	17.65%	1	5.88%	1	5.88%	0	0.00%	17
Female	1	7.69%	1	7.69%	1	7.69%	2	15.38%	2	15.38%	2	15.38%	2	15.38%	2	15.38%	13
Prob Male	2	33.33%	2	33.33%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	2	33.33%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	6
Prob Female	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	100%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1
Poss Male	1	50.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	50.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	2
Poss Female	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	100%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1
Unsexed Adult	3	30.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	4	40.00%	2	20.00%	1	10.00%	0	0.00%	10
C-Male	7	30.43%	3	13.04%	5	21.74%	1	4.35%	5	21.74%	1	4.35%	1	4.35%	0	0.00%	23
C-Female	1	7.14%	1	7.14%	2	14.29%	2	14.29%	2	14.29%	2	14.29%	2	14.29%	2	14.29%	14

Table A1.30 – The frequency of burial with the head oriented towards each direction for each sex group in Ireland

Head To by Age (Scotland)																
	N	N %	NE	NE %	E	E %	SE	SE %	S	S %	SW	SW %	W	W %	NW	NW %	Total
Older Adult	2	25.00%	1	12.50%	2	25.00%	0	0.00%	2	25.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	12.50%	8
Middle Adult	1	7.69%	3	23.08%	2	15.38%	1	7.69%	3	23.08%	3	23.08%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	13
Young Adult	1	7.69%	2	15.38%	4	30.77%	1	7.69%	0	0.00%	1	7.69%	3	23.08%	1	7.69%	13
Adult	1	5.88%	1	5.88%	6	35.29%	0	0.00%	2	11.76%	0	0.00%	7	41.18%	0	0.00%	17
All Adults	5	9.80%	7	13.73%	14	27.45%	2	3.92%	7	13.73%	4	7.84%	10	19.61%	2	3.92%	51
Adolescent	1	20.00%	0	0.00%	2	40.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	2	40.00%	0	0.00%	5
Child	2	40.00%	0	0.00%	2	40.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	20.00%	0	0.00%	5
Infant	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	50.00%	0	0.00%	1	50.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	2
Foetus/ Neo-nate	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	100.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1
Subadult	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	100.00%	0	0.00%	1
Unknown	0	0.00%	1	25.00%	1	25.00%	1	25.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	25.00%	0	0.00%	4
Total	8	11.59%	8	11.59%	20	28.99%	4	5.80%	8	11.59%	4	5.80%	15	21.74%	2	2.90%	69

Table A1.31 – The frequency of burial with the head oriented towards each direction for each age group in Scotland

Head To by Sex (Scotland)																
	N	N %	NE	NE %	E	E %	SE	SE %	S	S %	SW	SW %	W	W %	NW	NW %	Total
Male	1	7.69%	5	38.46%	6	46.15%	1	7.69%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	13
Female	2	22.22%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	3	33.33%	1	11.11%	1	11.11%	2	22.22%	9
Prob Male	1	12.50%	1	12.50%	3	37.50%	1	12.50%	0	0.00%	1	12.50%	1	12.50%	0	0.00%	8
Prob Female	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	2	28.57%	0	0.00%	1	14.29%	2	28.57%	2	28.57%	0	0.00%	7
Poss Male	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	33.33%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	2	66.67%	0	0.00%	3
Poss Female	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	100.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1
Unsexed Adult	1	8.33%	1	8.33%	3	25.00%	0	0.00%	2	16.67%	0	0.00%	5	41.67%	0	0.00%	12
C-Male	2	9.52%	6	28.57%	9	42.86%	2	9.52%	0	0.00%	1	4.76%	1	4.76%	0	0.00%	21
C-Female	2	12.50%	0	0.00%	2	12.50%	0	0.00%	4	25.00%	3	18.75%	3	18.75%	2	12.50%	16

Table A1.32 – The frequency of burial with the head oriented towards each direction for each sex group in Scotland

Facing by Age (Ireland)																
	N	N %	NE	NE %	E	E %	SE	SE %	S	S %	SW	SW %	W	W %	NW	NW %	Total
Older Adult	2	40.00%	0	0.00%	1	20.00%	0	0.00%	1	20.00%	0	0.00%	1	20.00%	0	0.00%	5
Middle Adult	1	16.67%	1	16.67%	2	33.33%	0	0.00%	1	16.67%	0	0.00%	1	16.67%	0	0.00%	6
Young Adult	2	33.33%	0	0.00%	2	33.33%	0	0.00%	1	16.67%	0	0.00%	1	16.67%	0	0.00%	6
Adult	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	4	44.44%	1	11.11%	2	22.22%	0	0.00%	1	11.11%	1	11.11%	9
All Adults	5	19.23%	1	3.85%	9	34.62%	1	3.85%	5	19.23%	0	0.00%	4	15.38%	1	3.85%	26
Adolescent	0	0.00%	1	25.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	2	50.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	25.00%	4
Child	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	2	50.00%	0	0.00%	1	25.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	25.00%	4
Infant	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	100.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1
Foetus/ Neo-nate	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0
Subadult	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0
Unknown	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0
Total	5	14.29%	2	5.71%	11	31.43%	1	2.86%	9	25.71%	0	0.00%	4	11.43%	3	8.57%	35

Table A1.33 – The frequency of burial facing in each direction for each age group in Ireland

Facing by Sex (Ireland)																
	N	N %	NE	NE %	E	E %	SE	SE %	S	S %	SW	SW %	W	W %	NW	NW %	Total
Male	2	20.00%	0	0.00%	3	30.00%	0	0.00%	3	30.00%	0	0.00%	1	10.00%	1	10.00%	10
Female	2	22.22%	2	22.22%	1	11.11%	0	0.00%	3	33.33%	0	0.00%	1	11.11%	0	0.00%	9
Prob Male	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	25.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	2	50.00%	1	25.00%	4
Prob Female	1	100%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1
Poss Male	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	100%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1
Poss Female	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0
Unsexed Adult	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	4	100%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	4
C-Male	2	14.29%	0	0.00%	4	28.57%	0	0.00%	3	21.43%	0	0.00%	3	21.43%	2	14.29%	14
C-Female	3	30.00%	2	20.00%	1	10.00%	0	0.00%	3	30.00%	0	0.00%	1	10.00%	0	0.00%	10

Table A1.34 – The frequency of burial facing in each direction for each sex group in Ireland

Facing by Age (Scotland)																
	N	N %	NE	NE %	E	E %	SE	SE %	S	S %	SW	SW %	W	W %	NW	NW %	Total
Older Adult	0	0.00%	1	12.50%	2	25.00%	1	12.50%	3	37.50%	0	0.00%	1	12.50%	0	0.00%	8
Middle Adult	3	42.86%	0	0.00%	2	28.57%	1	14.29%	0	0.00%	1	14.29%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	7
Young Adult	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	10.00%	1	10.00%	7	70.00%	1	10.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	10
Adult	0	0.00%	1	12.50%	1	12.50%	0	0.00%	6	75.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	8
All Adults	3	9.09%	2	6.06%	6	18.18%	3	9.09%	16	48.48%	2	6.06%	1	3.03%	0	0.00%	33
Adolescent	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	2	100%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	2
Child	1	33.33%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	2	66.67%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	3
Infant	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	100%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1
Foetus/ Neo-nate	1	100%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1
Subadult	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	100%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1
Unknown	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	100%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1
Total	5	11.90%	2	4.76%	7	16.67%	3	7.14%	22	52.38%	2	4.76%	1	2.38%	0	0.00%	42

Table A1.35 – The frequency of burial facing in each direction for each age group in Scotland

Facing by Sex (Scotland)																
	N	N %	NE	NE %	E	E %	SE	SE %	S	S %	SW	SW %	W	W %	NW	NW %	Total
Male	2	18.18%	0	0.00%	1	9.09%	1	9.09%	6	54.55%	1	9.09%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	11
Female	0	0.00%	1	20.00%	1	20.00%	2	40.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	20.00%	0	0.00%	5
Prob Male	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	20.00%	0	0.00%	3	60.00%	1	20.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5
Prob Female	1	20.00%	0	0.00%	1	20.00%	0	0.00%	3	60.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5
Poss Male	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	2	100%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	2
Poss Female	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	100%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1
Unsexed Adult	0	0.00%	1	16.67%	1	16.67%	0	0.00%	4	66.67%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	6
C-Male	2	12.50%	0	0.00%	2	12.50%	1	6.25%	9	56.25%	2	12.50%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	16
C-Female	1	10.00%	1	10.00%	2	20.00%	2	20.00%	3	30.00%	0	0.00%	1	10.00%	0	0.00%	10

Table A1.36 – The frequency of burial facing in each direction for each sex group in Scotland

1.3 Additional Chronological Analysis

The chronological analysis presented in Chapter 5.3 focused on investigating the trends present in the data. Additional figures are presented here for the variable combinations which were not discussed in the main text. The same caveats regarding the low sample sizes apply in many of these cases, and no trends that warranted further discussion in the main text are identified here. The hints of various trends here may, nevertheless, provide stimuli for further research, though they are presented here without further comment. The order of the figures follows that in which the corresponding tables were presented in Section 5.1 of the main text.

1.3.1 General Overview
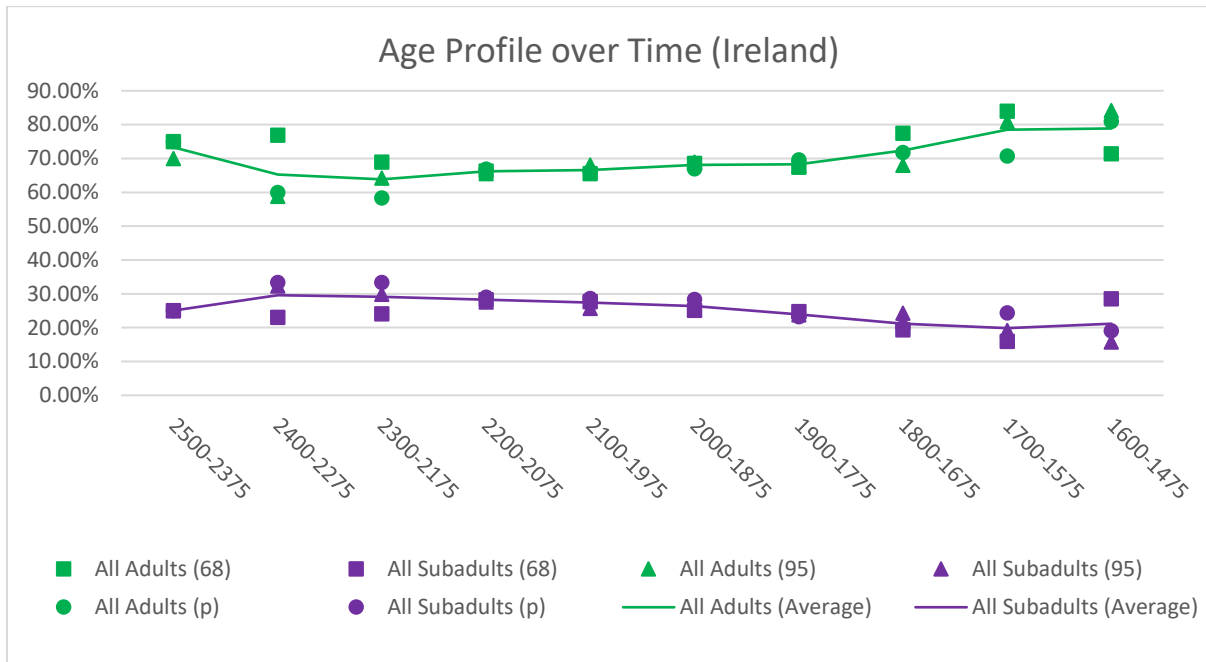
Figure A1.1 – The change in the proportion of adults and subadults amongst the burial population over time in Ireland
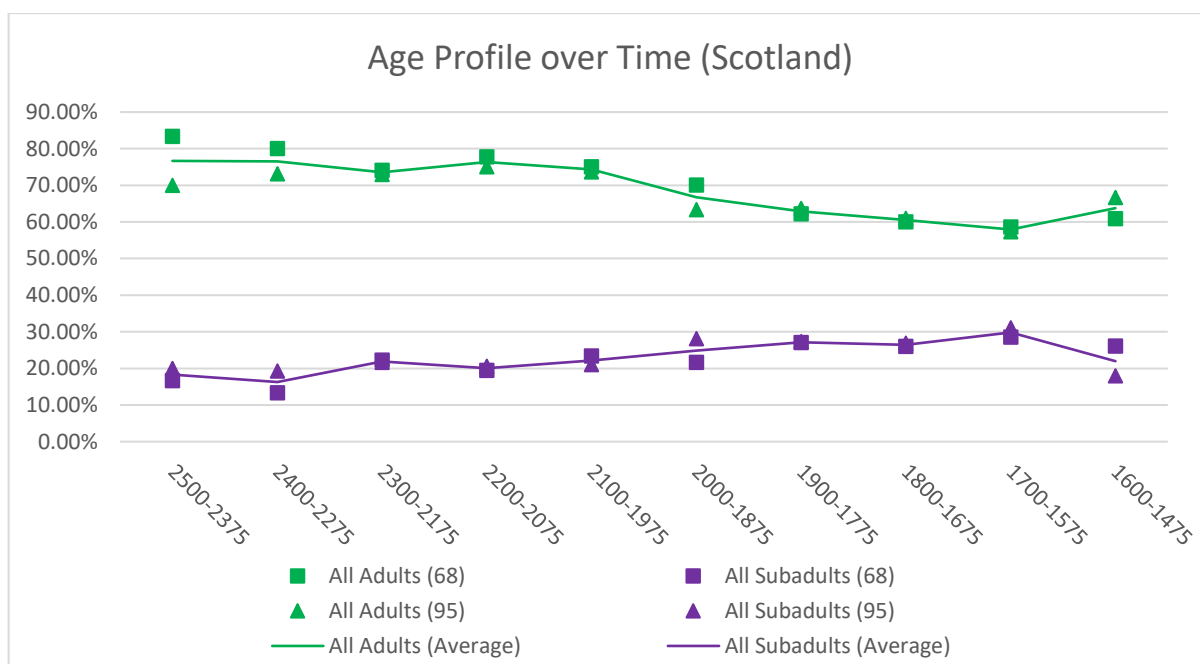
Figure A1.2 – The change in the proportion of adults and subadults amongst the burial population over time in Scotland
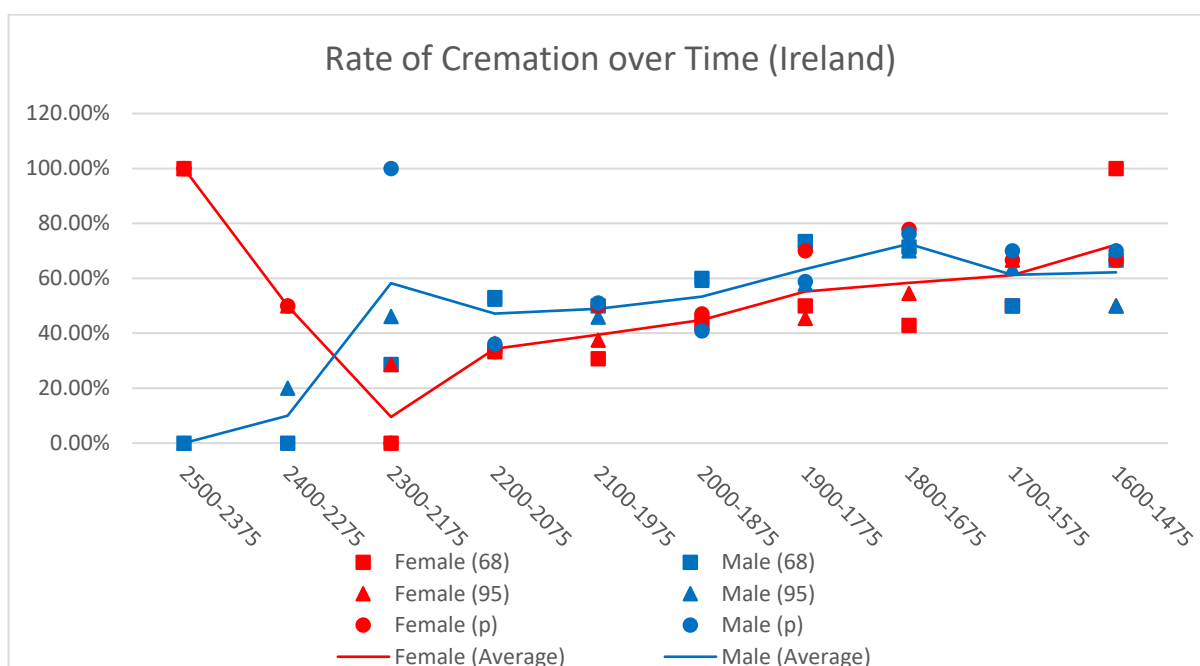
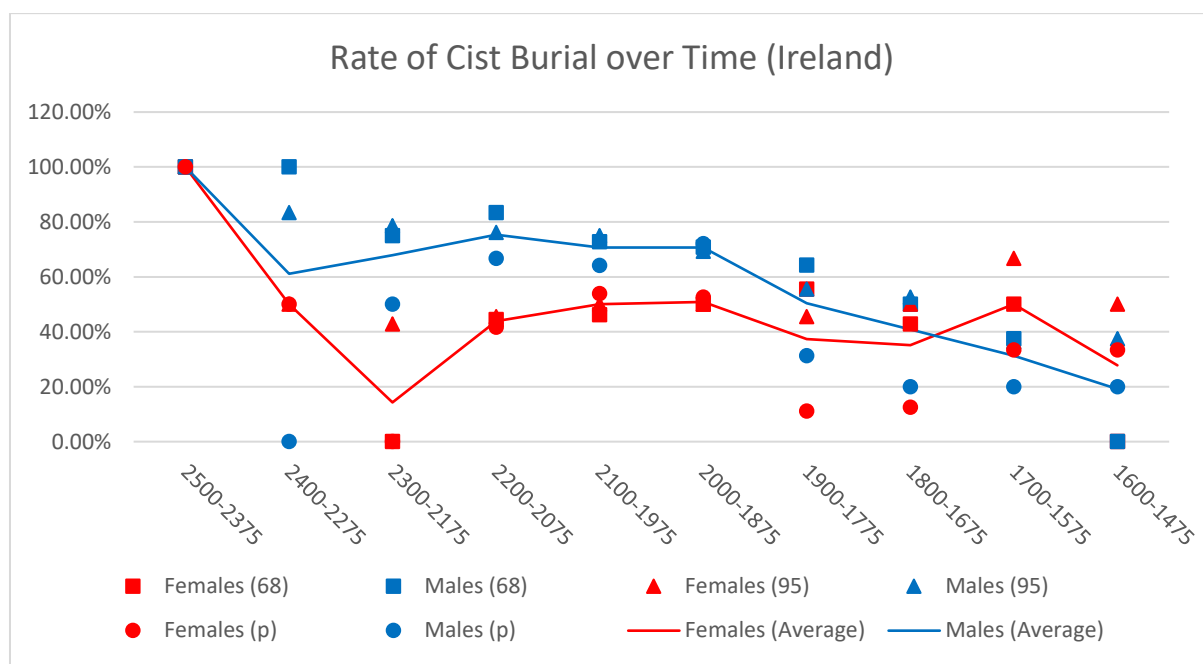*Figure A1.3 – The change in the rate of cremation of males and females over time in Ireland*
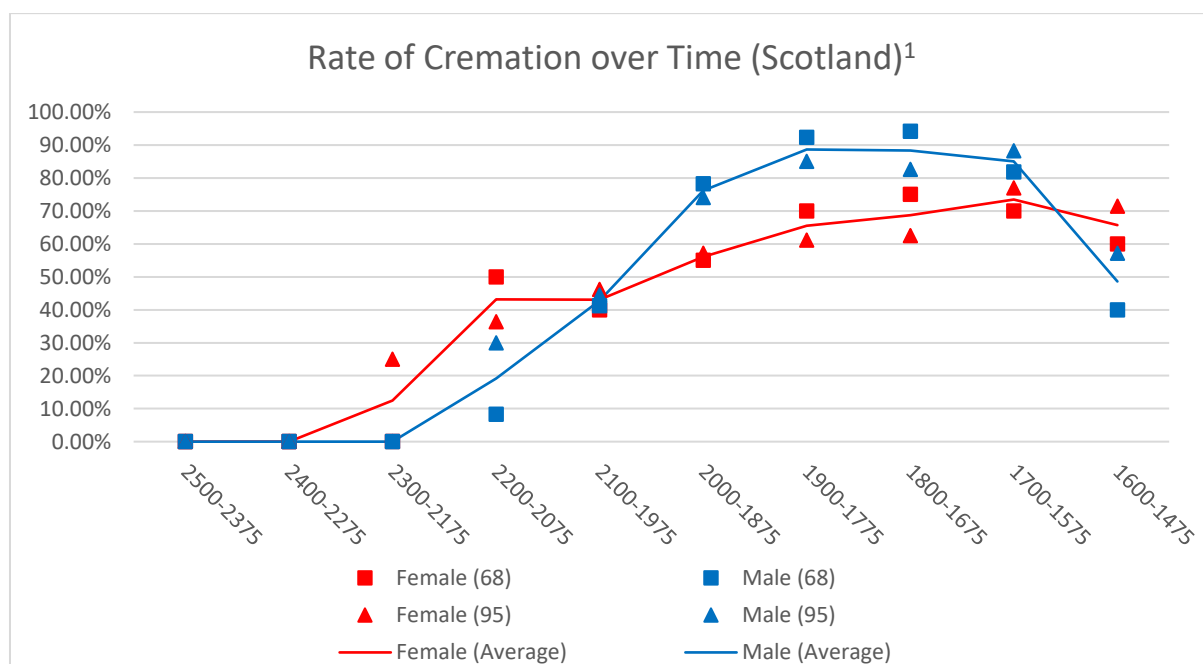
Figure A1.4 – The change in the rate of cremation of males and females over time in Scotland[1]
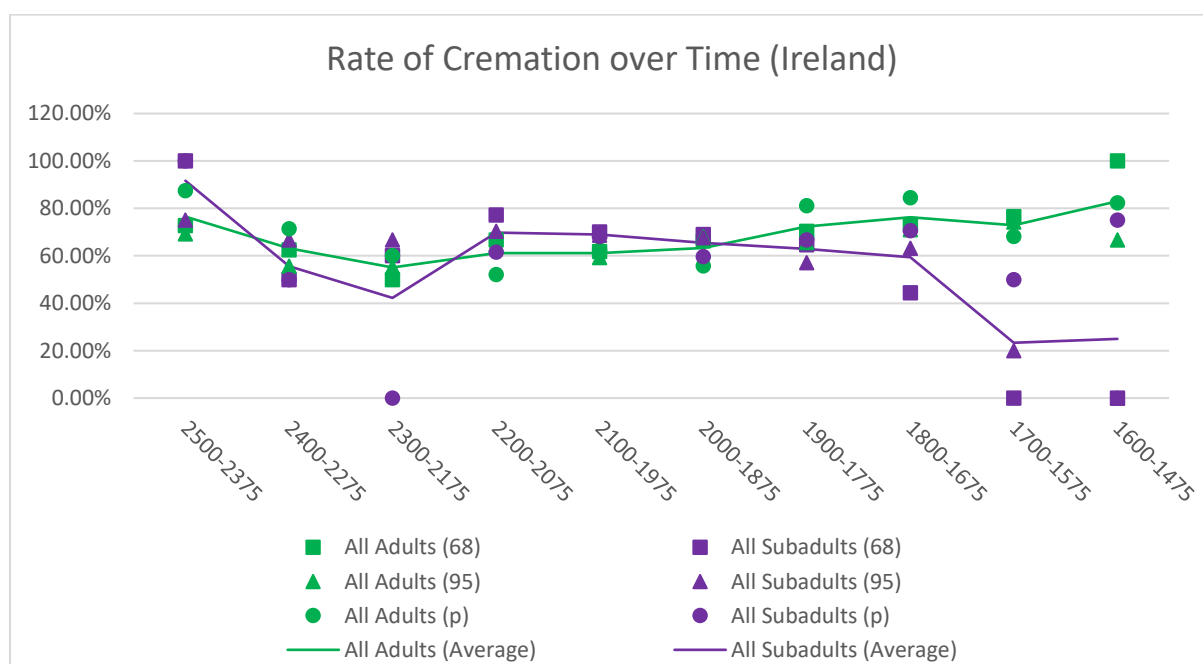
Figure A1.5 – The change in the rate of cremation of summary age groups over time in Ireland

[1] This graph is a nice illustration of the problems with low sample size inherent within this approach. A tantalising hint that cremation was taken up earlier amongst females actually represents just two probable females.

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1.3.2   Grave Form and Occupancy
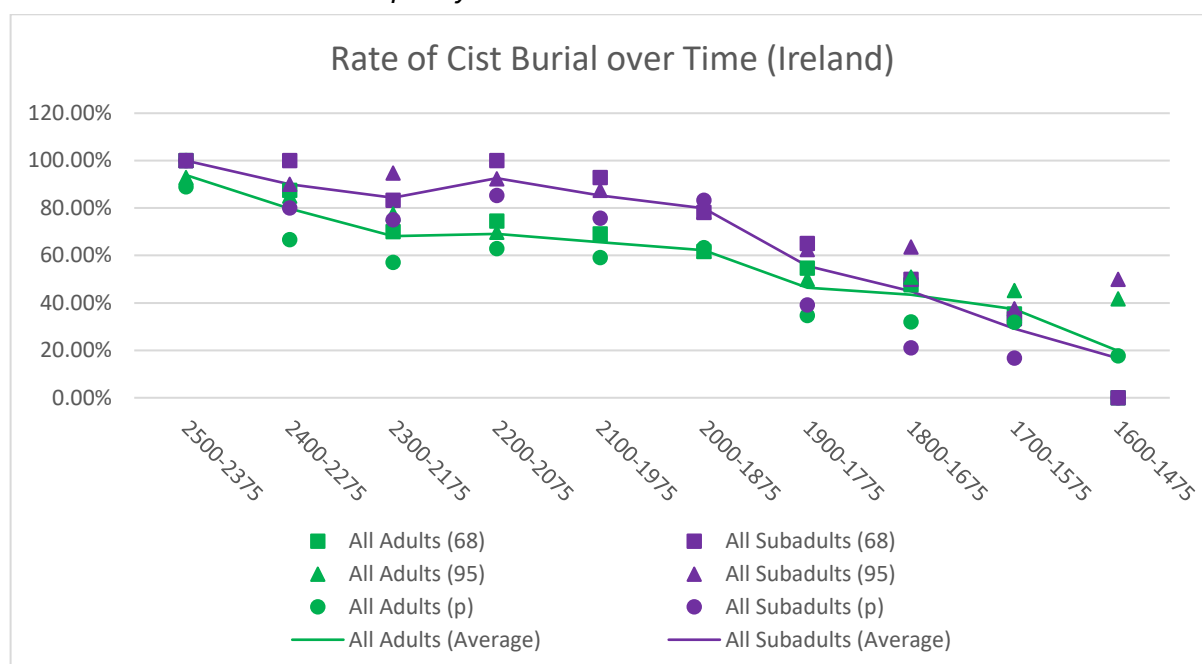
Figure A1.6 – The change in the rate of cist burial for summary age groups over time in Ireland
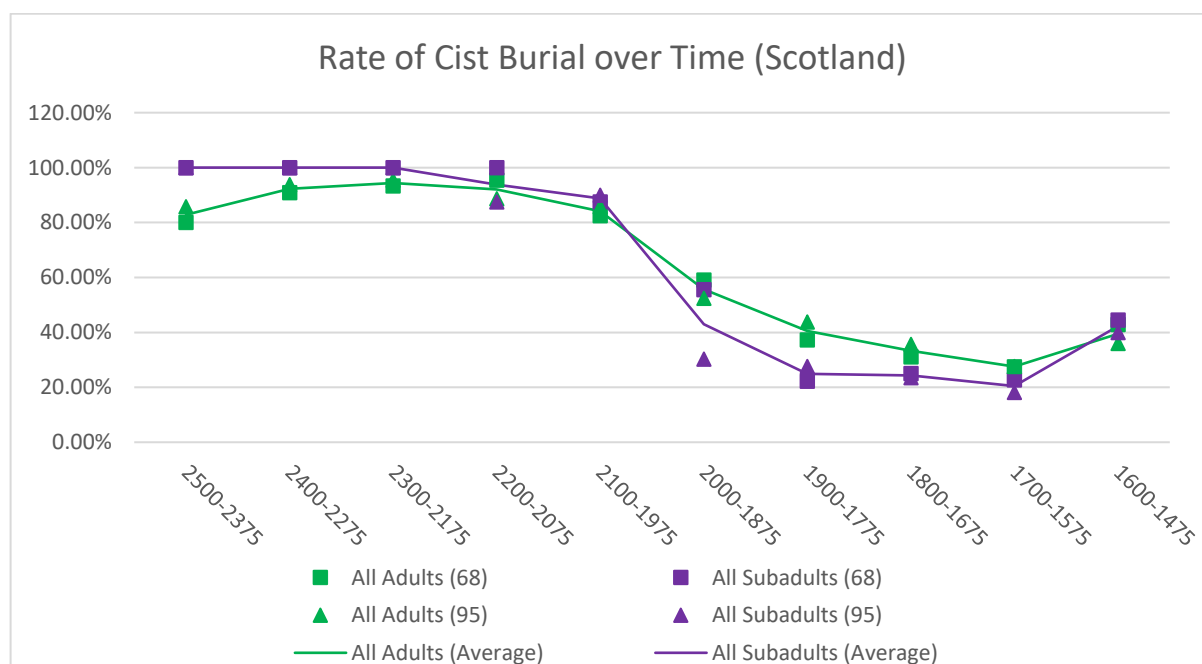
Figure A1.7 – The change in the rate of cist burial for summary age groups over time in Scotland

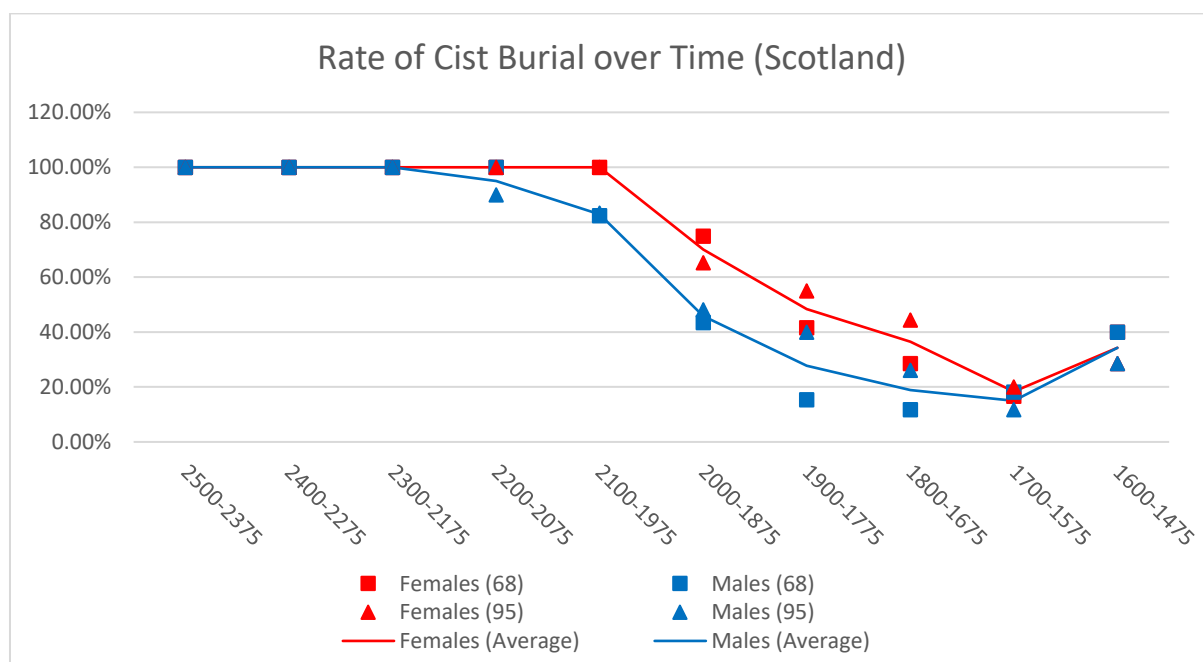*Figure A1.8 – The change in the rate of cist burial for males and females over time in Ireland*

Figure A1.9 – The change in the rate of cist burial for males and females over time in Scotland

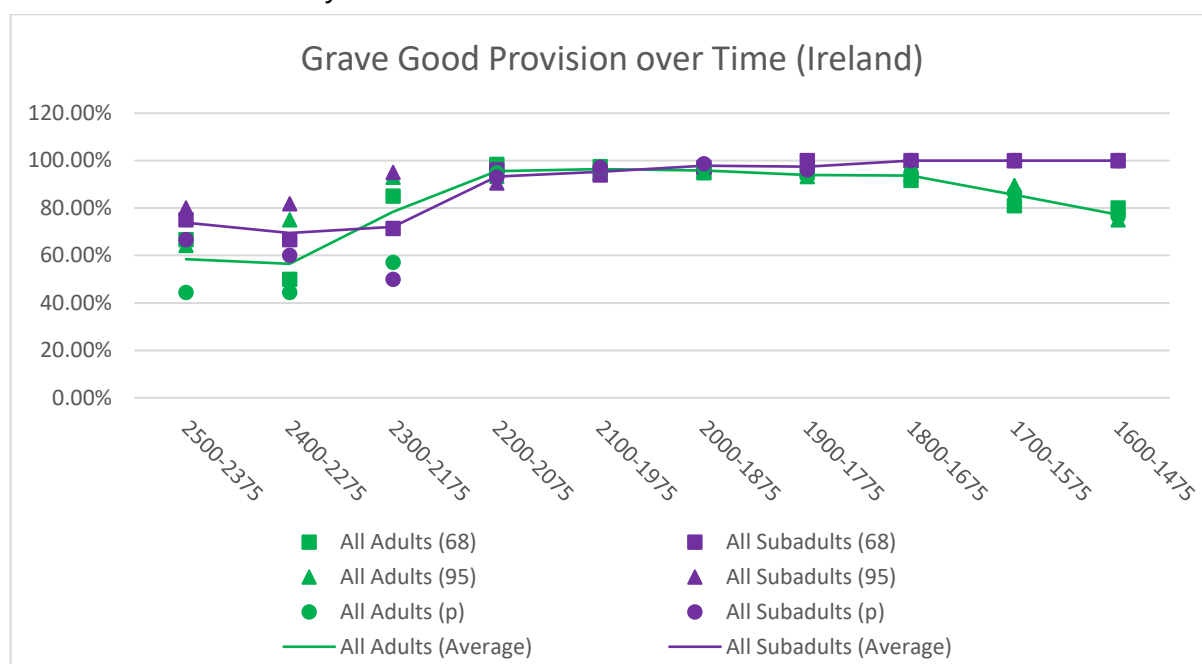*1.3.3   Grave Good Analysis*

Figure A1.10 – The change in the rate of grave good provision to summary age groups over time in Ireland.
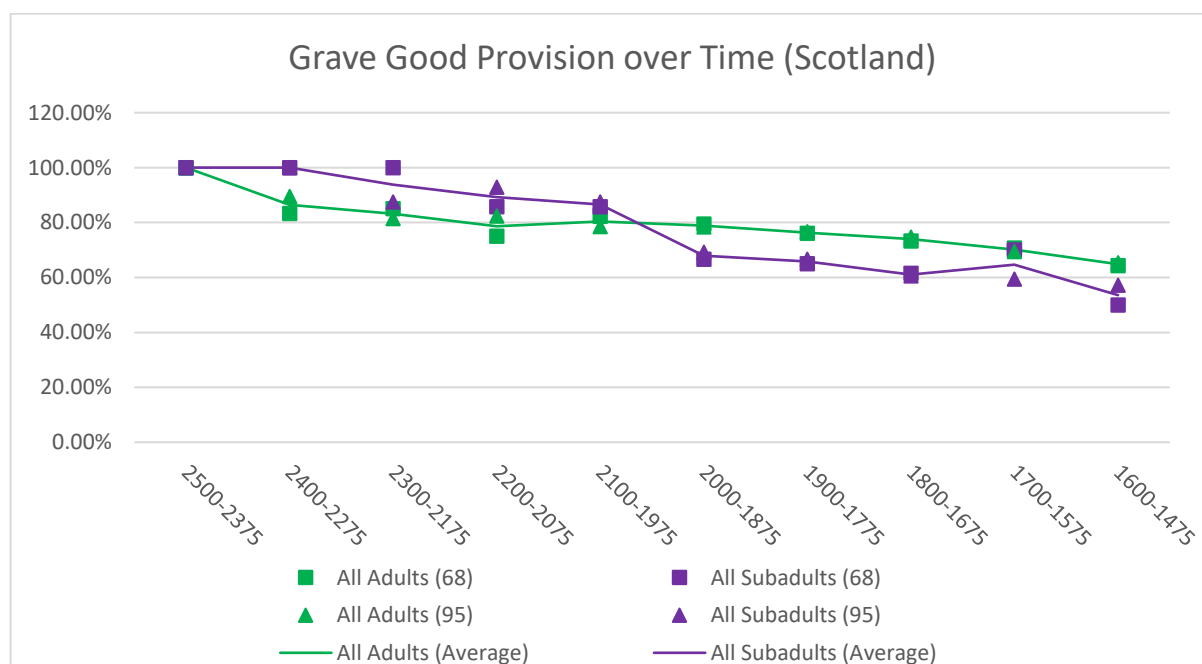

Figure A1.11 – The change in the rate of grave good provision to summary age groups over time in Scotland
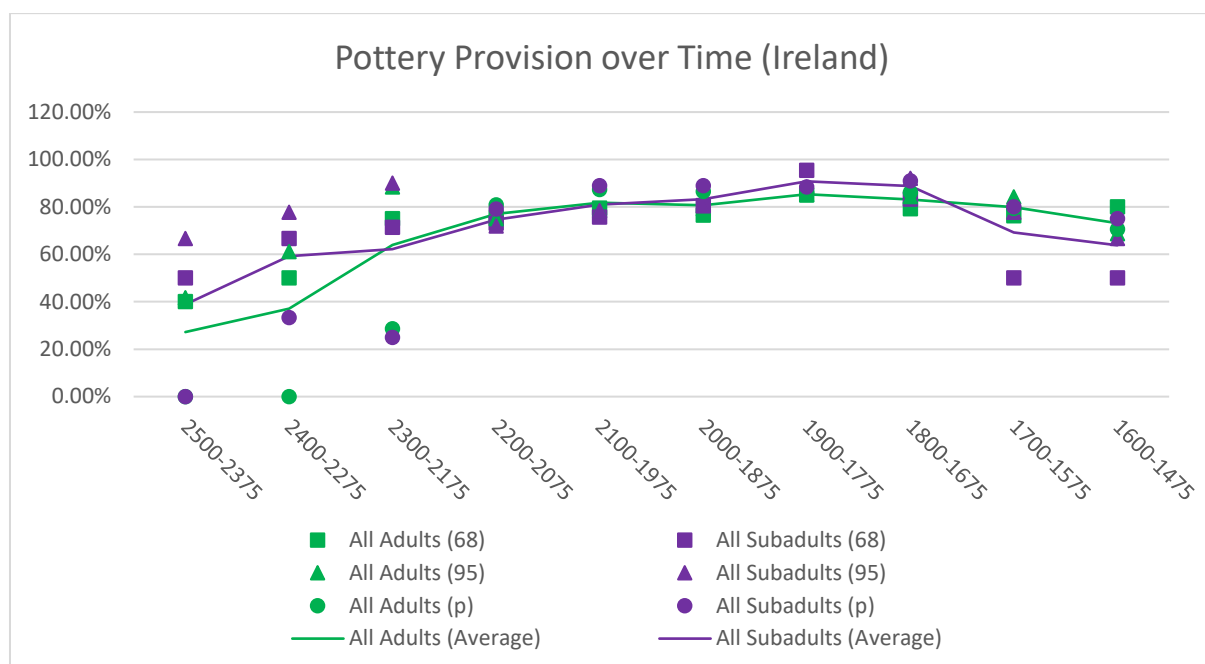
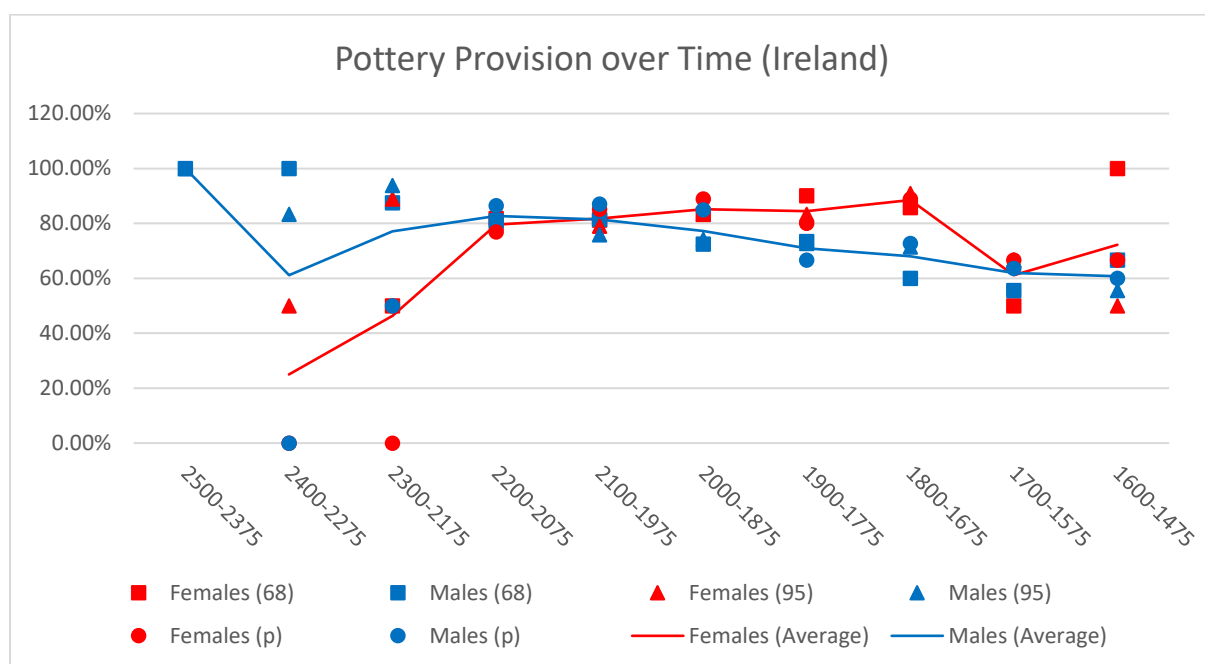*Figure A1.12 – The change in the rate of pottery provision to summary age groups over time in Ireland*

Figure A1.13 – The change in the rate of pottery provision to males and females over time in Ireland
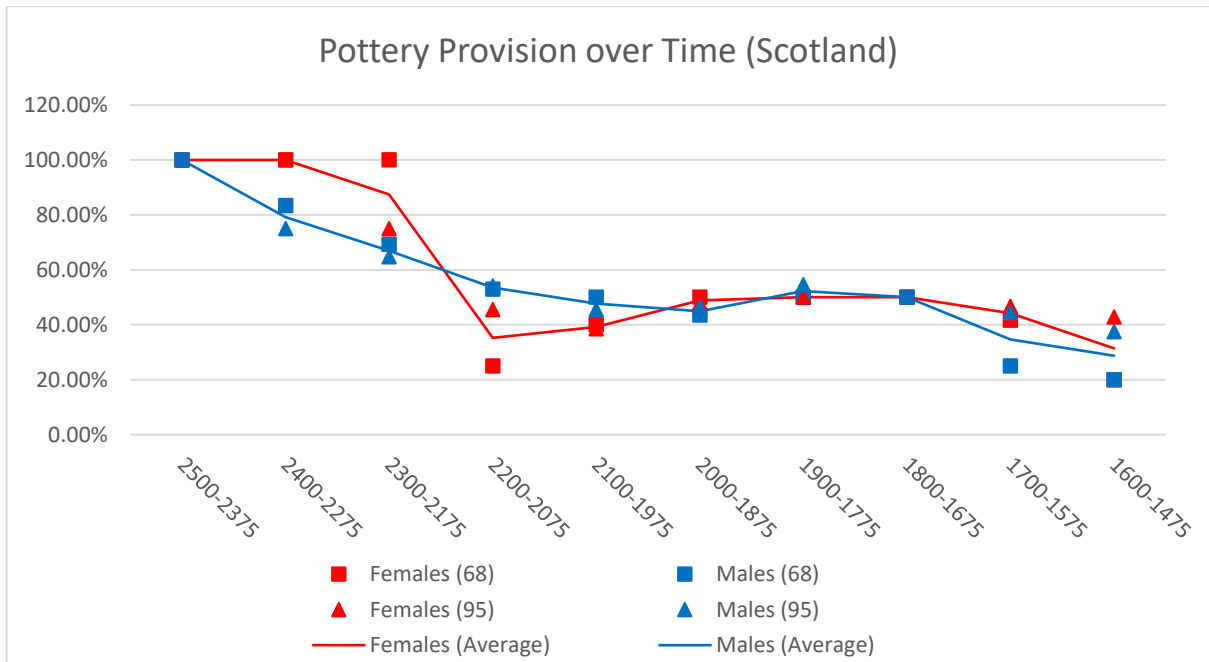
Figure A1.14 – The change in the rate of pottery provision to males and females over time in Scotland
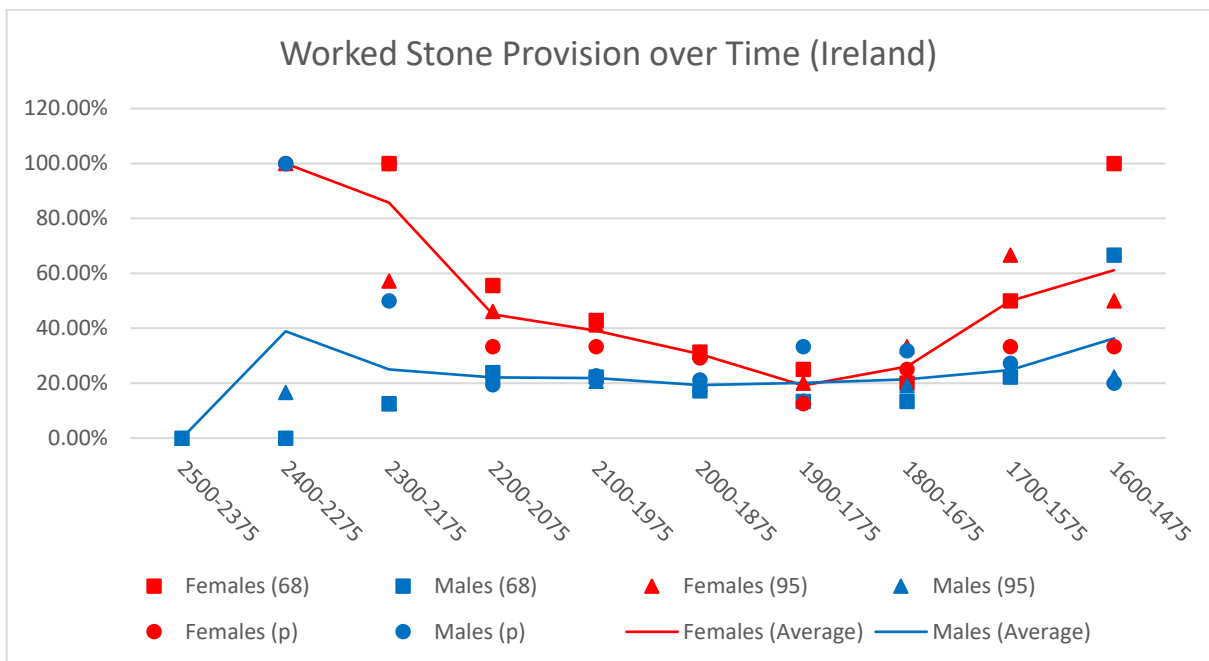

Figure A1.15 – The change in the rate of worked stone provision to males and females over time in Ireland

Figure A1.16 – The change in the rate of worked stone provision to males and females over time in Scotland

Figure A1.17 – The change in the rate of animal remains provision to summary age groups over time in Ireland

Figure A1.18 – The change in the rate of animal remains provision to summary age groups over time in Scotland
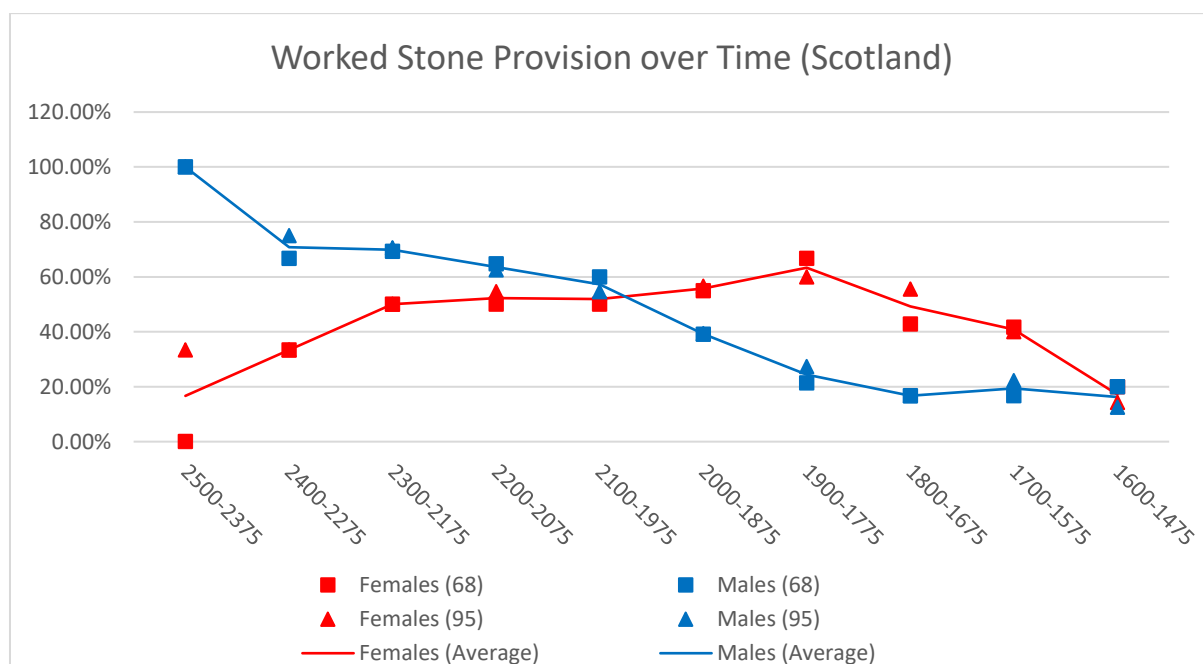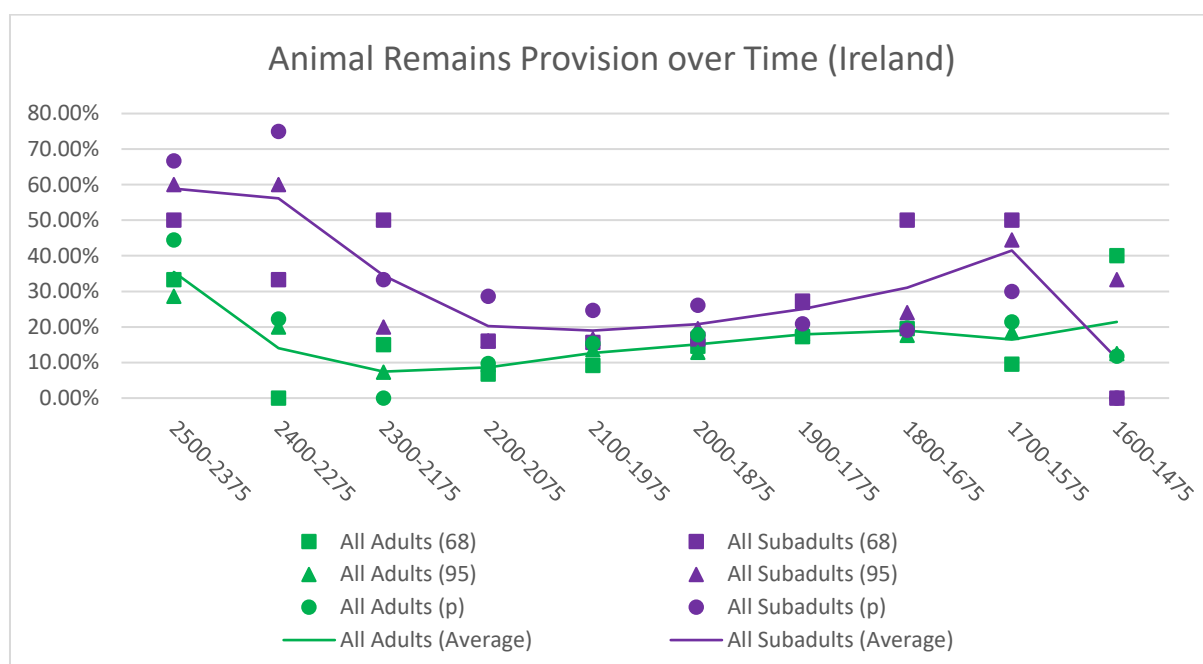

Figure A1.19 – The change in the rate of animal remains provision to males and females over time in Ireland

Figure A1.20 – The change in the rate of animal remains provision to males and females over time in Scotland[2]
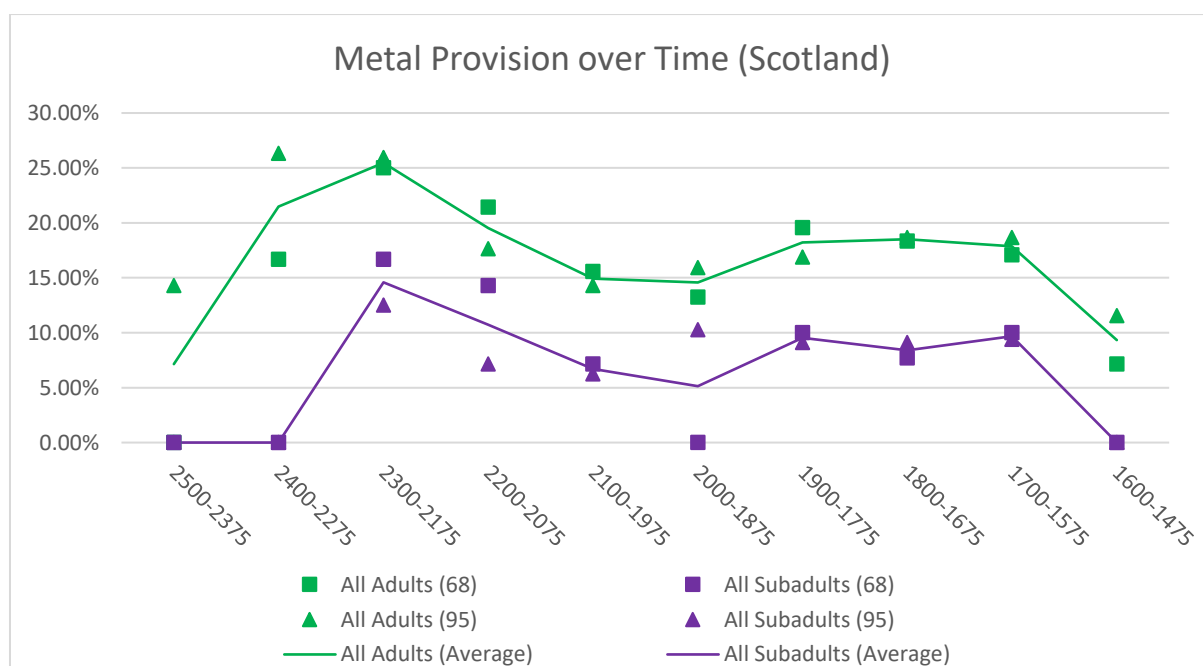
Figure A1.21 – The change in the rate of metal provision to summary age groups over time in Scotland

[2] The discrepancy between males and females in the early part of the period appears pronounced, but the low number of females makes this an uncertain proposition.

Figure A1.22 – The change in the rate of bone artefact provision to summary age groups over time in Ireland

Figure A1.23 – The change in the rate of bone artefact provision to summary age groups over time in Scotland

Figure A1.24 – The change in the rate of bone artefact provision to males and females over time in Ireland

Figure A1.25 – The change in the rate of bone artefact provision to males and females over time in Scotland

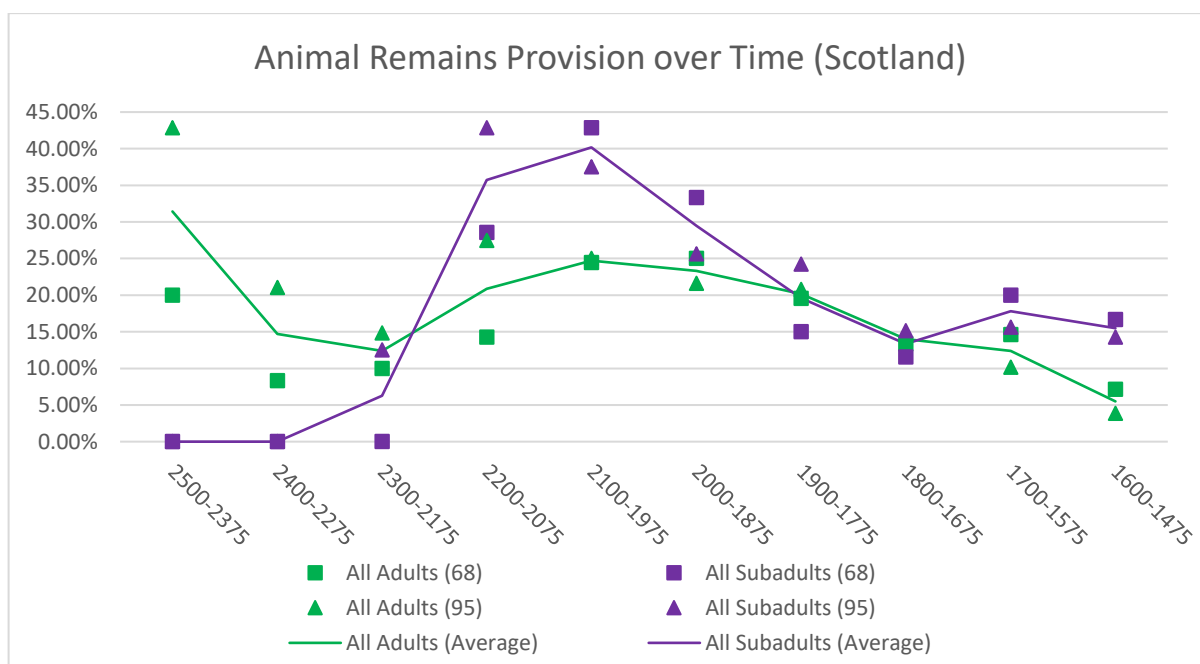*Figure A1.26 – The change in the rate of natural stone provision to summary age groups over time in Ireland*
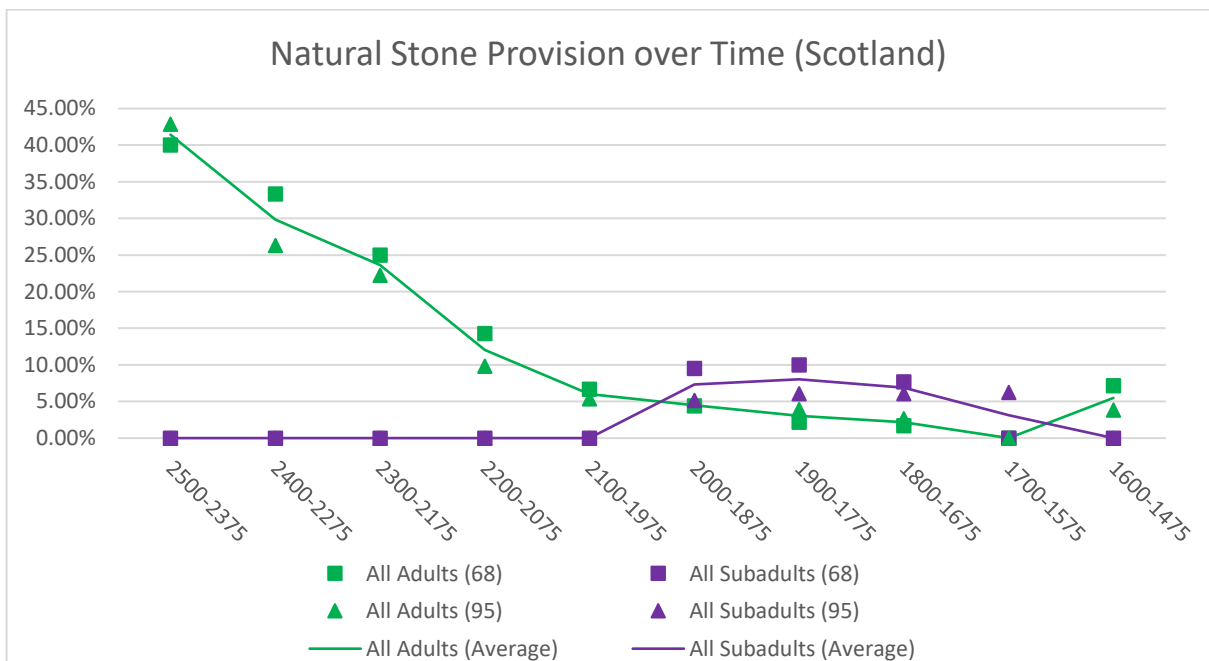
Figure A1.27 – The change in the rate of natural stone provision to summary age groups over time in Scotland
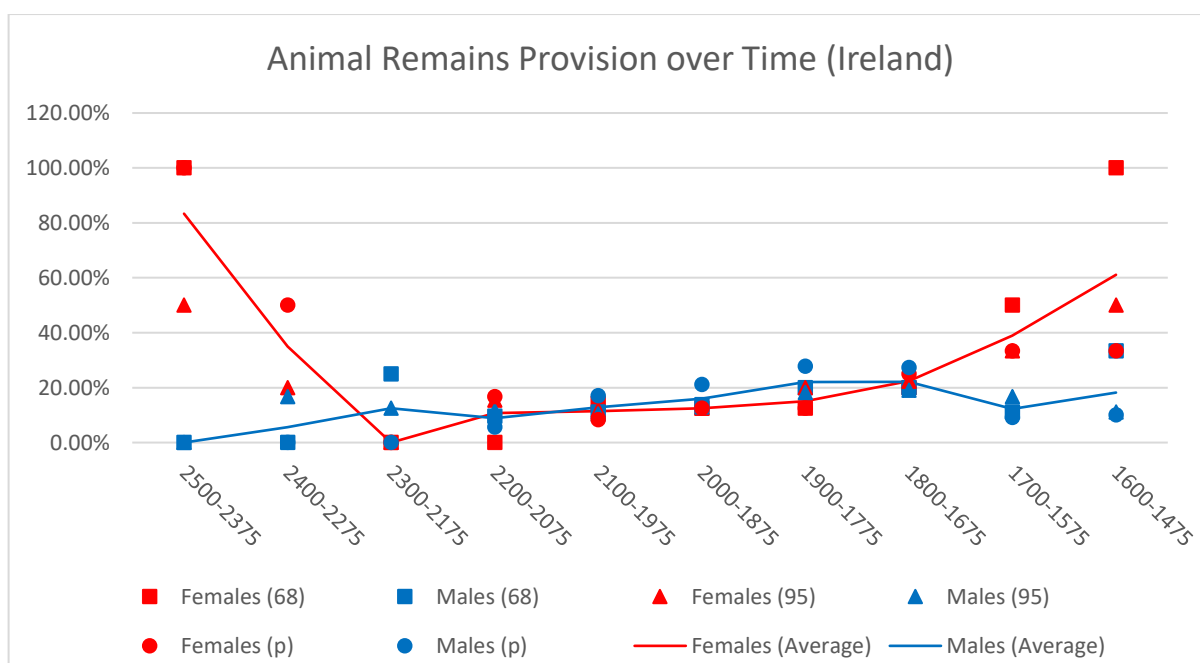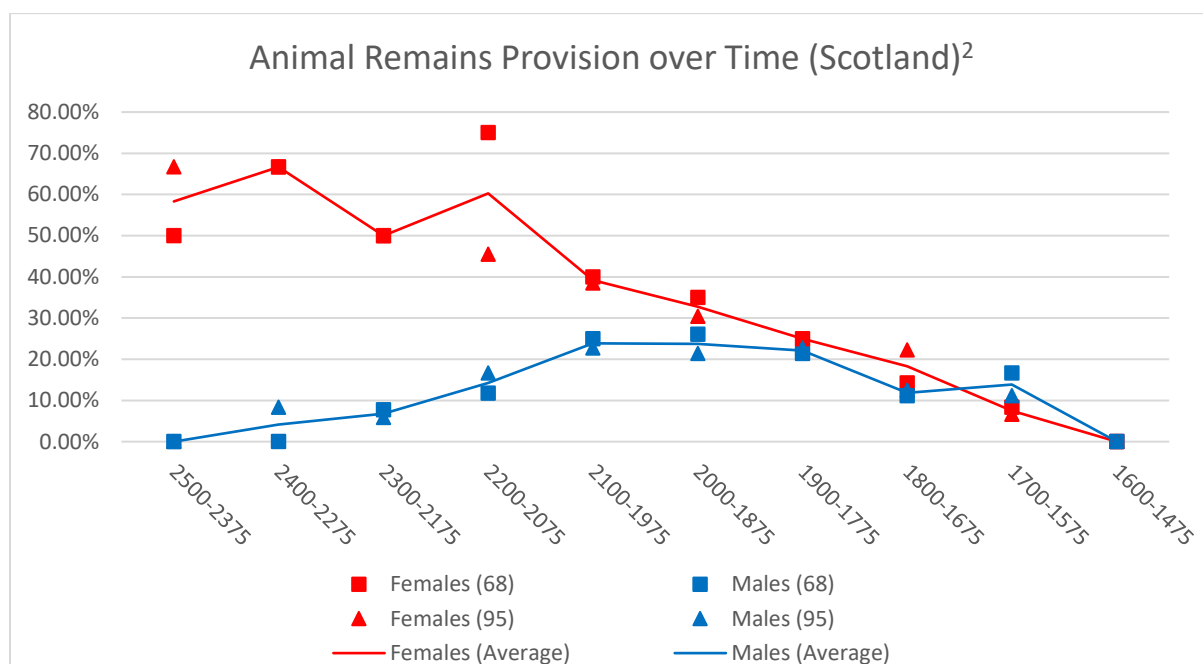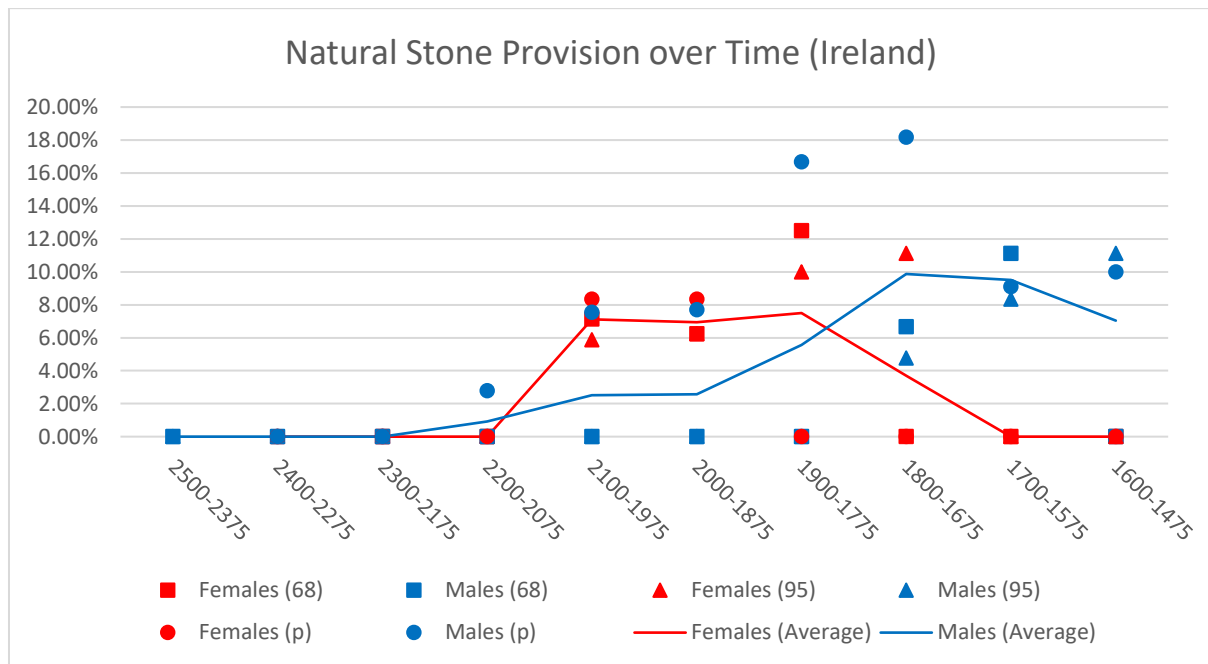
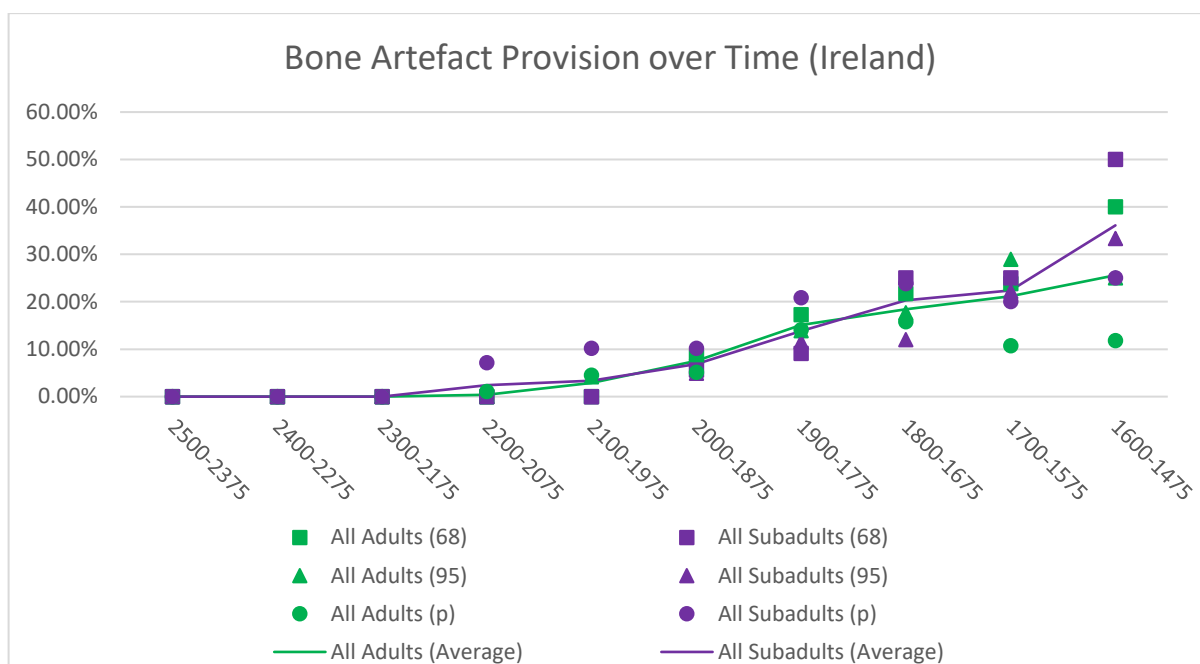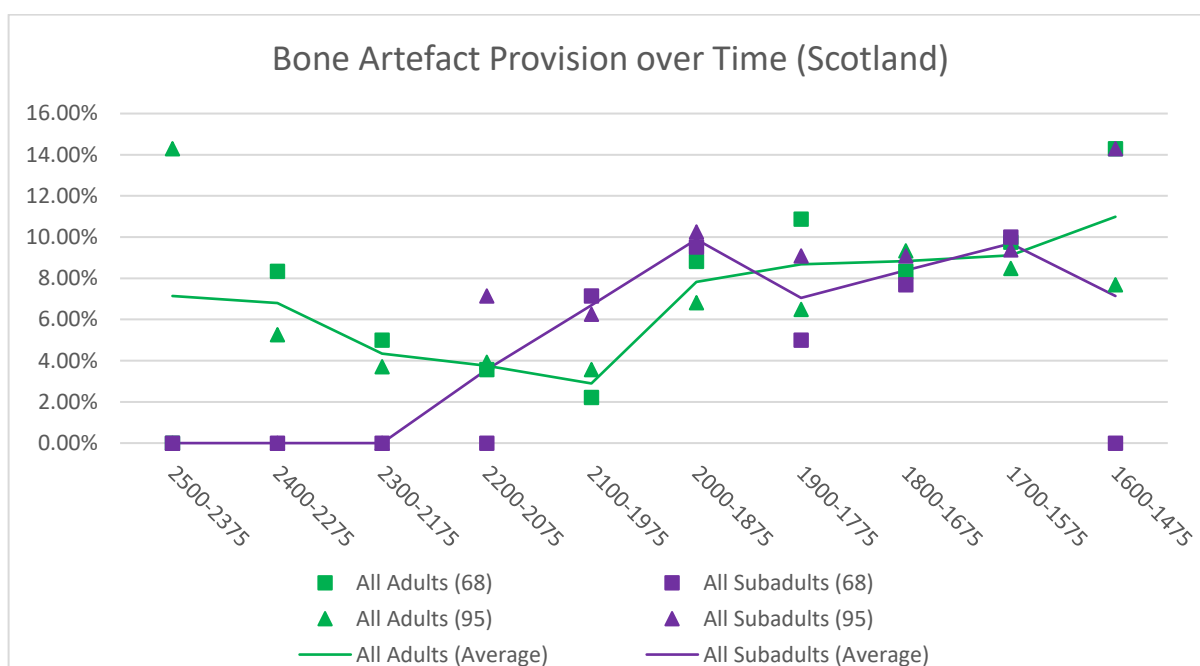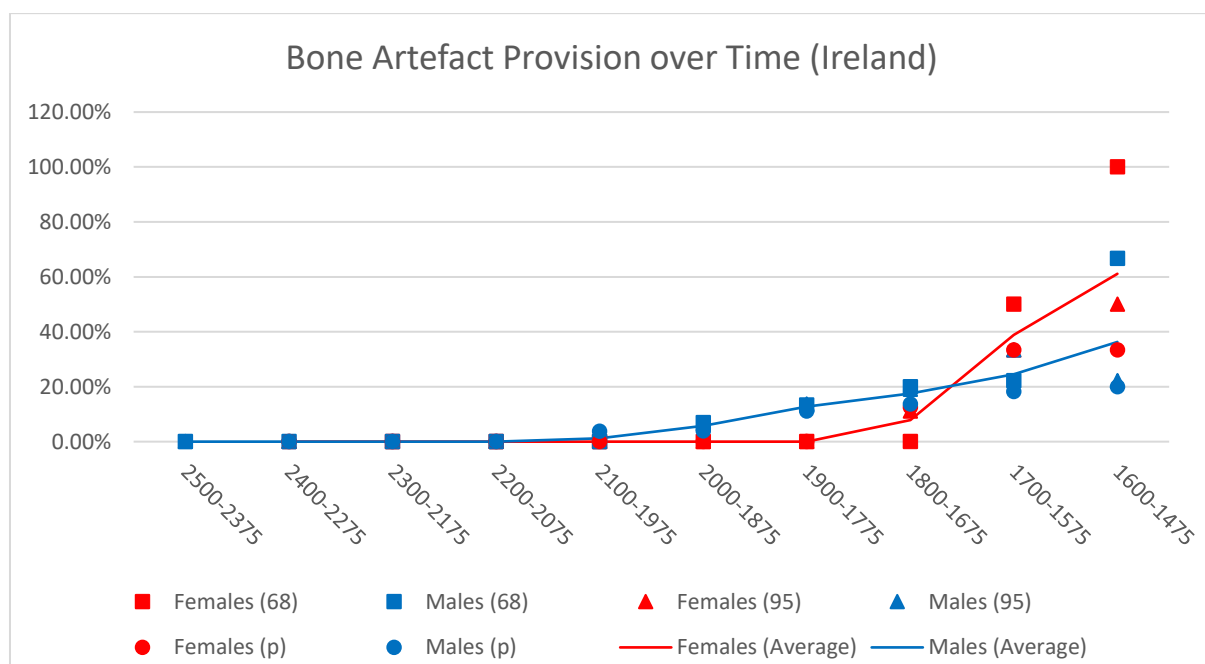*Figure A1.28 – The change in the rate of natural stone provision to males and females over time in Ireland*
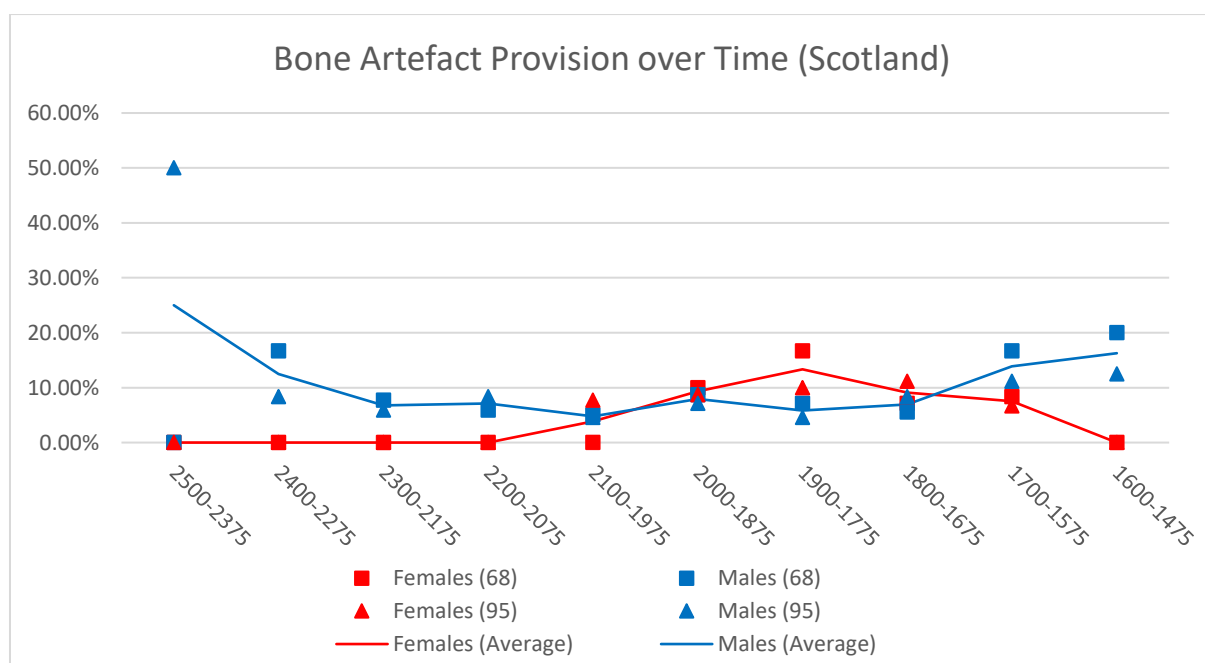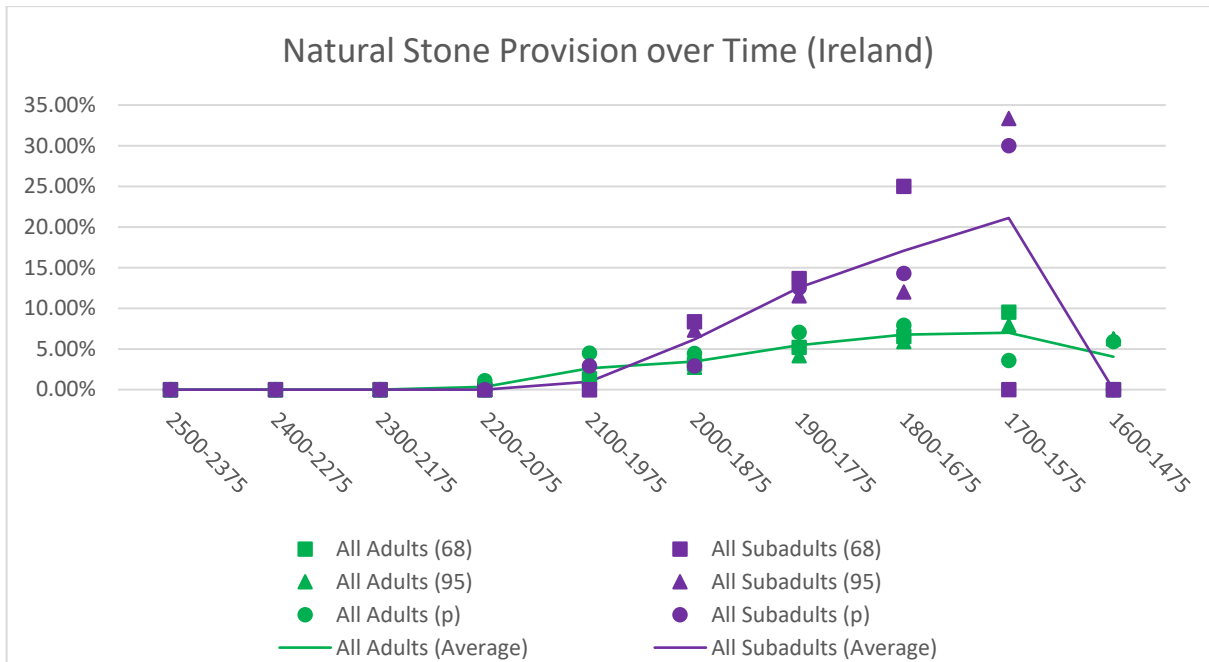
Appendix 2 – List and Bibliography of Sites

As the main text did not reference every site within the database, a complete list is provided here alongside, with a reference in the table and a complete bibliographic list after.

2.1 List of Sites

County Code	Site Name	Reference
DL	Altaghaderry	(Halpin and Roche 2011)
G	Annaghkeen	(Ó Floinn 2011a)
DL	Ardaravan	(Kelly 2011a)
WH	Ardballymore	(J. Raftery 2011a)
MH	Ardmulchan	(J. Raftery 2011b)
KK	Ardra	(Ó Floinn 2011b)
MH	Ardsallagh	(Clarke 2008)
LK	Baggotstown	(Ó Floinn 2011c)
OY	Ballickmoyler	(Prendergast 2011a)
MO	Ballinchalla	(Raftery and Seavers 2011)
LK	Ballinlyna Upper	(O'Shaughnessy 2011)
MH	Ballinvally	(J. Raftery 2011c)
WH	Ballybrennan	(Hartnett and Prendergast 2011)
DY	Ballybriest	(Hurl and Murphy 2001)
WX	Ballygillistown	(Cahill 2011a)
MO	Ballykine Upper	(Gosling 2011)
D	Ballyman	(Cahill 2011b)
C	Ballynaboola	(Ó Ríordáin and Healy 2011)
C	Ballynacarriga	(Lehane and Leigh 2010)
KK	Ballyoskill	(Prendergast and Ryan 2011)
MO	Ballyvicmaha	(Aldridge 2011)
KK	Ballyvool	(Prendergast 2011b)
WH	Benalbit and Derryroe	(Waddell 2011a)
CW	Boherduff	(Prendergast 2011c)
DL	Bohullion Upper	(Cahill 2011c)
DY	Brackagh Quarry	(O'Regan et al. 2009; O'Regan 2010)
LK	Brackbaun	(McQuade 2007)
DL	Bredagh Glen	(J. Raftery 2011d)
SO	Brougher	(Ryan 2011)
KE	Brownstown	(Mount et al. 1998)
WW	Burgage More	(Gógan 2011a)
D	Carmanhall	(Reilly 2005; Reilly 2009)
LH	Carn More	(Bayley 2010; Hayes 2007)
MO	Carrickanass	(Riley 2011)
SO	Carrigeens	(Cahill 2011d)
DL	Carrontlieve	(Ó Ríordáin 2011a)
G	Carrowntober East	(Mahr 2011)

SO	Cleavry	(Sikora 2011a)
WH	Clonickilvant	(Cahill 2011e)
MO	Clooneen	(Kelly 2011b)
WH	Conranstown	(J. Raftery 2011e)
MH	Cookstown	(Clutterbuck 2009)
WX	Coolnaboy	(Cahill 2011f)
CE	Coolnatullagh	(Eogan 2002)
KK	Coolraheen North	(Phelan and Monks 2011)
D	Courtlough	(Kilbride-Jones and Monks 2011)
MH	Crossakeel	(Cahill 2011g)
SO	Culleens	(Ryan and Cherry 2011)
D	Deansgrange	(Ó Ríordáin 2011b)
AM	Demesne, Rathlin Island	(Wiggins 2000)
WW	Dillonsdown	(Price 2011)
MH	Doon	(Barron 2011)
TE	Dun Ruadh	(Simpson 1991)
AM	Dunloy	(Conway and Williams 1994)
DL	Dunmore	(Ó Ríordáin 2011c)
D	Edmondstown	(Mount et al. 1993)
WX	Enniscorthy	(J. Raftery 2011f)
TY	Fussough	(Devane 2011)
MH	Gaulstown	(Tallon 2011)
WW	Glasnamullen	(Ó Floinn 2011d)
AM	Glebe, Rathlin Island	(Sloan 2008)
C	Glenatlucky	(Hegarty and Johnston 2010)
LK	Glenlary	(Halpin and Brindley 2011)
WX	Gorey Corporationlands	(Ó Floinn 2011e)
MO	Gortmellia	(Seavers 2011)
KE	Graney West	(Mount et al. 1998)
RN	Grange	(Ó Ríordáin 1997)
WH	Greatdown	(McCabe and Ronayne 2011)
C	Greenfield	(Danaher 2004)
MH	Harlockstown	(O'Connor 2008)
LS	Haywood Demesne	(O'Shea 2011)
KE	Hempstown Commons	(Price and Danaher 2011)
MH	Keenoge	(Mount and Buckley 1997)
AM	Kilcroagh	(Williams et al. 1991)
WH	Kilgaroan	(Prendergast 2011d)
CW	Kilgraney	(Cahill 2011h)
WX	Kilmurry	(Cahill and Sikora 2011a)
D	Kilshane	(Moore 2009)
MO	Kinard	(Caulfield 2011)
SO	Knockmullin	(Prendergast 2011e)
OY	Lehinch	(Ó Floinn 2011f)
WW	Liscolman	(J. Raftery 2011g)

DL	Liscooly	(Sikora et al. 2011)
TE	Lislaird	(Hurl and Murphy 2004)
WD	Lisnakill	(Cahill and Sikora 2011b)
DL	Lisnamulligan	(O'Connor and Ó Floinn 2011)
OY	Lug	(Duignan 2011)
MH	Martinstown	(Prendergast and Lucas 2011)
WH	Milltown	(J. Raftery 2011h)
WW	Money Upper	(Kelly 2011c)
LK	Morenane	(Cantwell 2011)
MH	Nevinstown	(Cahill 2011i)
WX	Newtown	(Sikora 2011b)
TE	Newtownstewart Castle	(Ó Baoill et al. 2005)
KE	Oldtown	(Mount et al. 1998)
KE	Ploopluck	(Mount et al. 1998)
KE	Punchestown Great	(Kelly and Mullarkey 2011)
WH	Rahugh	(Mahr and Gógan 2011)
LK	Rathcahill West	(Kelly and O'Connor 2011)
WH	Rathconrath	(Ó Floinn 2011g)
MO	Rathduff	(Sikora 2011c)
RN	Rathmore	(B. Raftery 2011)
WD	Rathnaskilloge	(Mongey 2011)
WH	Redmondstown	(Prendergast and Ó Ríordáin 2011)
WH	Riverstown	(Waddell 2011b)
D	Rush	(Ó Ríordáin and Price 2011)
DY	Shantallow	(Chapple and Dunne 2009)
LH	Smarmore	(Lucas 2011)
WH	Sonnagh Demesne	(Ó Ríordáin 2011d)
D	Stillorgan Park	(J. Raftery 2011i)
DY	Straid	(Brannon et al. 1990)
TE	Stranagalwilly	(Waterman and Waddell 1993)
CW	Strawhall	(Mount et al. 1998)
MH	Tara	(O'Sullivan 2005)
CN	Tattyreagh	(Gibbons 2011)
MO	Tawnaghmore	(Lucas and Rynne 2011)
D	Tiknock	(Gógan 2011b)
KE	Timolin	(Ó Floinn and O'Connor 2011)
WX	Tomfarney	(Sikora and Reilly 2011)
FH	Tonyglaskan	(Hurl and Murphy 2004)
CW	Vermount	(Prendergast 2011f)
D	Whitestown	(Mahr and Price 2011)
MH	Woodpole	(Cahill 2011j)

Table A2.1 – List of Irish sites in the database

County Code	Site Name	Reference
MY	102 Findhorn	(Shepherd and Shepherd 2001)
EL	Abbey Mains Farm	(Lawson et al. 2002)
HD	Achavanich	(Hoole et al. 2018)
WI	Allasdale Dunes	(Thompson 2008)
PK	Almondbank	(Stewart and Barclay 1997)
HD	Balblair	(Hanley and Sheridan 1994)
FE	Balfarg Riding School	(Barclay and Russell-White 1993; Gibson 2010)
AS	Balneaves	(Russell-White et al. 1992)
PK	Barbush Quarry, Dunblane	(Holden and Sheridan 2001)
DG	Bargrennan	(Cummings and Fowler 2007)
PK	Beech Hill House, Coupar Angus	(Stevenson 1995)
AB	Benderloch	(MacGregor 1998b)
DG	Blairbuy	(Bailie 2013)
A	Borrowstone, Kingswells	(Shepherd 1977; Shepherd and Greig 1980; Shepherd 1984)
SB	Broomlands, Kelso	(McLaren and Wilson 2015)
OY	Bu Farm, Westray	(Barber et al. 1996)
DG	Cairnderry	(Cummings and Fowler 2007)
PK	Callum's Hill, Crieff	(Dalglish 1967; Henshall 1968; Hall and Sheridan 2008)
AS	Carlinwell	(Johnson 2012)
DG	Carronbridge	(Johnston 1994)
SL	Cloburn Quarry, Cairngryffe Hill	(Lelong and Pollard 1998)
WI	Cnip Headland, Isle of Lewis	(Close-Brooks 1995; Dunwell et al. 1995; Lelong 2018)
HD	Culduthel	(Low 1929; Parker Pearson et al. 2019)
FE	Cullaloe Wood, Aberdour	(Ritchie 2012)
FE	Dalgety Bay	(Proudfoot 1997)
SB	Doons Law, Leetside Farm	(Clarke and Hamilton 1999)
HD	Dornoch Nursery	(Ashmore 1989)
HD	Dridaig Cottage, Edderton	(Ralston 1996)
HD	Drumnadrochit	(Peteranna 2015)
EL	Dryburn Bridge, Inner Wick	(Dunwell 2007)
SA	Dunure Road	(Duffy 2007)
AS	East Campsie	(Taylor et al. 1998)
PK	Easter Essendy	(Thoms 1974; Sheridan 2006)
EL	Evergreen House, Longniddry	(Baker 2003)
AE	Farrochie-Malcolm's Mount	(Shepherd 1987; Shepherd 2005)
OK	Ferndale, Rendall	(Duffy 2005)
PK	Gairneybank	(Cowie, T.G. and Ritchie 1991)
AB	Glennan	(MacGregor 2003)
EL	Grainfoot, Longniddry	(Dalland 1991)
PK	Grandtully	(Simpson and Coles 1990)
OY	Gyre Farm, Orphir	(Simpson et al. 2007)
AE	Harveston Cottage, Catterline	(Small et al. 1988; Parker Pearson et al. 2019)

FE	Holly Road, Leven	(Lewis and Terry 2004)
HD	Holm Mains Farm, Inverness	(Headland Archaeology 2007)
AE	Home Farm, Udny Green	(Murray and Shepherd 2007)
SB	Hoprig	(Rees 2001)
E	Juniper Green	(Sheridan 2007)
HD	Keas Cottage, Spinningdale	(Arabaolaza 2013)
AB	Kildavan Farm, Bute	(Proudfoot 2008)
AB	Kilkeddan Farm, Campbeltown	(McLaren and Wilson 2016)
HD	Kingsteps	(Farrell 2002)
AB	Kintyre Nurseries, Campbeltown	(Sheridan 1992)
FE	Kirkton of Cults	(MacGregor 1998a)
HD	Langwell Farm, Sutherland	(Lelong 2014)
AE	Lindsayfield, Stonehaven	(Johnson 2015)
DG	Loanleven	(Russell-White et al. 1992)
DG	Lockerbie Academy	(Kirby 2011)
OK	Lopness, Sanday	(Innes 2016)
OY	Loth Road, Sanday	(Sharman 2007)
AS	Mains of Balgavies	(Taylor et al. 1998)
AS	Mains of Melgund, Aberlemno	(Taylor et al. 1998)
A	Mains of Scotstown, Bridge of Don	(Ralston 1996)
WL	Mill Road Industrial Estate	(Cook 2000)
OY	Mousland, Stromness	(Downes 1994)
PK	Muirhall Farm	(Stewart and Barclay 1997)
AS	Murton, Forfar	(Taylor et al. 1998)
E	near Ratho/Ratho Quarry	(Smith 1995)
ML	Newbigging Open Cast Coal Scheme	(Johnson and Anderson 2007)
SL	Newton Farm, Cambuslang	(O'Brien et al. 2009)
FE	North Straiton	(Stronach et al. 2006)
WI	Olcote, Isle of Lewis	(Neighbour 2005)
DG	Park of Tongland	(Russell-White et al. 1992)
AS	Powmyre Quarry	(Bailey and Smith 2012)
FE	Priory Park, Kirkcaldy	(Yeoman 1992)
FE	Rameldry Farm	(Baker et al. 2003)
AE	Sandhole Quarry	(Ralston 1996)
NA	Sannox Quarry	(Arabaolaza 2014)
HD	Seafield West, Inverness	(Cressey and Sheridan 2003)
PK	Sketewan, Balnaguard	(Mercer and Midgley 1997)
AE	Skilmafilly, near Maud	(Johnson and Cameron 2012)
HD	Slacknamarnock Quarry	(Murray 2009)
SB	Soutra Hill	(Will and Blair 2011)
SL	Stoneyburn Farm, Crawford	(Banks 1995)
HD	Stoneyfield, Raigmore, Inverness	(Simpson 1996)
AE	Tavelty Farm	(Ralston 1996)

AB	Upper Largie	(Mercer and Rideout 1987; Cook et al. 2010)
AS	West Scryne	(Taylor et al. 1998)
HD	West Torbreck	(Kilpatrick 2014)
SB	West Water Reservoir	(Hunter 2000)
PK	Westhaugh of Tulliemet	(Stewart and Barclay 1997)

Table A2.2 – List of Scottish sites in the database

2.1.1 Key for Counties

A	Aberdeen City	EL	East Lothian	MO	Mayo	WI	Western Isles
AB	Argyll and Bute	ER	East Renfrewshire	MY	Moray	WL	West Lothian
AE	Aberdeenshire	FE	Fife	NA	North Ayrshire	WW	Wicklow
AH	Armagh	FH	Fermanagh	NL	North Lanarkshire	WX	Wexford
AM	Antrim	FK	Falkirk	OD	West Dunbartonshire		
AS	Angus	G	Galway	OK	Orkney		
C	Cork	GC	Glasgow City	OY	Offaly		
CE	Clare	HD	Highland	PK	Perth and Kinross		
CK	Clackmannanshire	IE	Inverclyde	RE	Renfrewshire		
CN	Cavan	KE	Kildare	RN	Roscommon		
CW	Carlow	KK	Kilkenny	SA	South Ayrshire		
D	Dublin	KY	Kerry	SB	Scottish Borders		
DC	Dundee City	LD	Longford	SD	Shetland		
DG	Dumfries and Galloway	LH	Louth	SG	Stirling		
DL	Donegal	LK	Limerick	SL	South Lanarkshire		
DN	Down	LM	Leitrim	SO	Sligo		
DY	Derry	LS	Laois	TE	Tyrone		
E	City of Edinburgh	MH	Meath	TY	Tipperary		
EA	East Ayrshire	ML	Midlothian	WD	Waterford		
ED	East Dunbartonshire	MN	Monaghan	WH	Westmeath		

Table A2.3 – Key for Counties

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