

This article was downloaded by:[Subías, Sandra Montón]
[Subías, Sandra Montón]

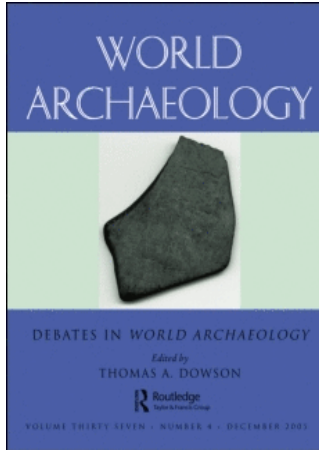
On: 14 May 2007

Access Details: [subscription number 778161541]

Publisher: Routledge

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954

Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK



World Archaeology

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:
<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title-content=t713699333>

Interpreting archaeological continuities: an approach to transversal equality in the Argaric Bronze Age of south-east Iberia

To cite this Article: , 'Interpreting archaeological continuities: an approach to transversal equality in the Argaric Bronze Age of south-east Iberia', World Archaeology, 39:2, 246 - 262

To link to this article: DOI: 10.1080/00438240701257721

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00438240701257721>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Full terms and conditions of use: <http://www.informaworld.com/terms-and-conditions-of-access.pdf>

This article maybe used for research, teaching and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, re-distribution, re-selling, loan or sub-licensing, systematic supply or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The accuracy of any instructions, formulae and drug doses should be independently verified with primary sources. The publisher shall not be liable for any loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.

© Taylor and Francis 2007

Interpreting archaeological continuities: an approach to transversal equality in the Argaric Bronze Age of south-east Iberia

Sandra Montón Subías

Abstract

As archaeologists, we seek to understand how the people of the past we study lived and interacted. In approaching this complex enterprise it has been fundamental to discern to what extent social equality and inequality were present among them. In the case of the Bronze Age communities I will present here, mainstream research has interpreted a selected range of perceived discontinuities in material culture as evidence of the presence of unequal social groups of equals and, additionally, has usually considered equality and inequality as exclusive categories. This paper will attempt to demonstrate that this is not always the case, using examples from the Argaric Bronze Age of Iberia. Here, and despite the evident existence of a general social inequality, a closer look at women's material culture allows us to interpret continuities in the funerary record as signs of a social transversal equality.

Keywords

Social intersections; transversal equality; gender identity; archaeological continuities; Bronze Age Iberia; El Argar.

Introduction

In this paper, I will propose a hypothesis to interpret continuities in the Argaric Bronze Age funerary record in terms of 'transversal equality'. Transversal equality refers to the fact that, in most societies, there are conditions that connect some of their members independently of the position they occupy across social divides. These conditions cut across the complete social spectrum and may create relations of equality among members who may be unequal when considered under other circumstances.

Discussions on social equality and inequality have occupied a central position in the social sciences and the humanities. A great body of scholarship has tried to understand why, how and when we have become socially unequal (assuming that social inequality is a historical event), or why, how and when social inequality has been institutionalized (assuming that inequality and human society are two concomitant phenomena). Interpretations of the archaeological and ethnographic record have been pre-occupied with illustrating the previous divergent approaches and the debate on social equality, and inequality has also become fundamental to archaeological and anthropological discourse (Flannery 1972; McGuire 1985; Flanagan and Rayner 1988; Flanagan 1989; Paynter 1989; Paynter and McGuire 1991; Clark and Blake 1994; Price and Feinman 1995).

Different interpretations of the archaeological and ethnographic evidence are to be expected considering the ideological nature of the debate. The very definition of social inequality (or even its recognition) is inevitably a product of the researcher's ideology and the causes, mechanisms and pathways considered to explain the emergence and/or institutionalization of social inequality are influenced by our own understanding of inequality in the present. This is one of the reasons why there is such a wide spectrum of variation for the explanation of this phenomenon (see, for a discussion, Flanagan 1989; Paynter 1989; Price and Feinman 1995).

While discussions of the emergence/institutionalization of social inequality have been very fruitful in archaeology, importantly the study of social equality and inequality also has other dimensions. It seems obvious that, as archaeologists, we seek to understand how the human beings of the past we study lived and interrelated. To approach this complex enterprise we need to draw out the social context of these interrelations and determine the extent to which and circumstances under which equality and inequality were present among them. For those societies defined as unequal, as is the case I will be dealing with in this paper, research efforts have concentrated on explaining their social organization through the social grouping of their members. That is to say, research has focused on recognizing unequal social groups of equals. In developing this endeavour, archaeologists have examined mechanisms to read perceived discontinuities and continuities in the archaeological record in social terms. While archaeological discontinuities have assumed a privileged status as evidence for social inequality (-ies), less attention has been devoted to the social interpretation of archaeological continuities. This is precisely what I will do in this paper, using as an example Argaric culture and interpreting some archaeological continuities in women's funerary material culture as signs of transversal equality, transversal connection and social intersection. In very broad terms, Argaric culture represents a set of communities that would have been living in southeast Iberia during the Bronze Age, i.e. from *c.* 2350 BC to *c.* 1500 BC (Fig. 1).

Equality and inequality as opposite binary categories

As previously noticed, archaeologists have long been engaged in recognizing equality and inequality in the archaeological record. In tune with the Western philosophical tradition,

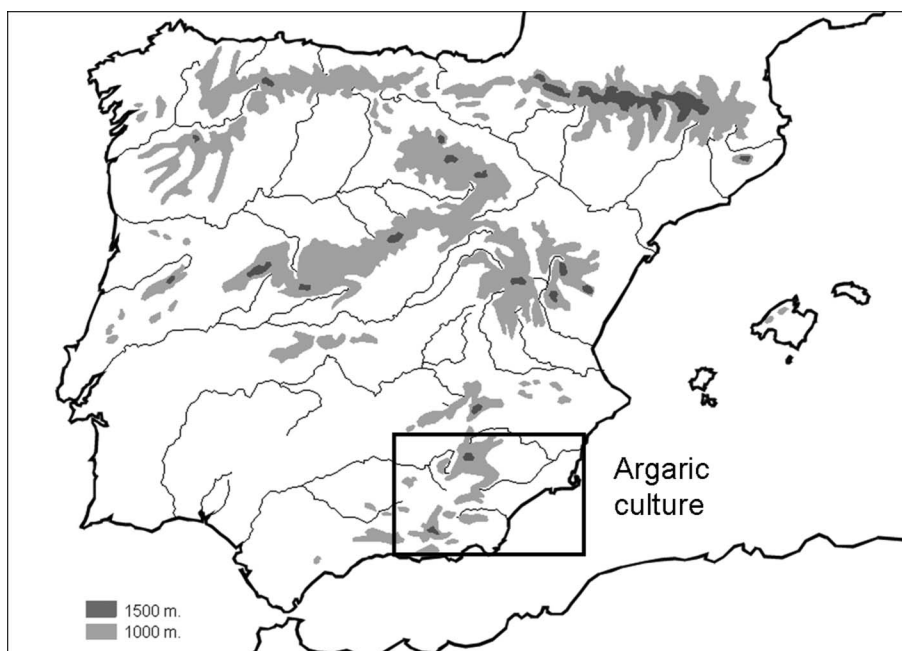


Figure 1 Geographic area of Argaric culture.

this enterprise has been carried out following a theoretical scheme that considers equality and inequality as opposite, binary categories (Scott 1988: 46).

In this way, the application of this 'polarized model' (Leacock 1978) to the interpretation of communities' inner social organization has often rendered both archaeological social groups and their constituent individuals as unitary phenomena, as fixed monolithic entities defined by contrast to one another, where it is feasible for them to be only equal or unequal to each other, but not equal and unequal at the same time. But if we consider persons not as close entities but as open and dynamic networks of relationships, one person may exhibit aspects of social equality and inequality to another, making it necessary to study the social intersections that usually exist among persons placed by archaeologists in different social groups. Any person exhibits aspects of egalitarian and non-egalitarian relations with another person (Price and Feinman 1995: 4) and we must be aware of this when interpreting specific groups of people and the specific set of relationships that configured their social framework.

This plurality of social group membership has already been noticed and stressed by the body of theory referred to as constructivist in the analysis of social identities (for a general discussion, see Jenkins 1997). Feminist research has also insisted that social groups are not unitary when the gender dimension is considered (Rosaldo and Lamphere 1974; Friedl 1975; Johnson 1980; Jennet and Stewart 1987; Scott 1988; Lerner 1993). In fact, there is a well-known tradition that has drawn attention to the inequalities concealed in groups of apparent equals. It is possible, conversely, as I will stress here, to establish links of social intersection among people ascribed to different social groups.

Transversal equality

Does the above mean that social inequality is not a valid analytical category for understanding social organization and social relationships? Not necessarily. Social inequality (in its various forms) exists in human groups, but the panorama may be more complex and plural than the one offered by some archaeological analyses.

Considering social transversality among persons ascribed to different social groups is not new in our discipline, as feminist and queer contributions have demonstrated (Jagger 1983; Scott 1994; Mathews 2000; Dowson 2000; Voss 2000). This does not mean that it is not possible to establish that archaeological groups of people have a social meaning. What I want to emphasize is that the social groups created by archaeologists for the past do not necessarily have exclusive rights over the persons of that past, who probably crossed the boundaries between such groups at different moments of their lives.

This notion of the person as comprising a dynamic network of interpersonal relationships, a 'human' interpretative scale focused on the person and their face-to-face interactions, needs to guide archaeological practice. Only in this way, is it possible for people of the past to emerge from the abstract social categories to which they have often been confined and for us to understand the richness and complexity of their interactions and intersected nature.

Until recently, archaeological accounts have favoured abstract social categories and tendencies that, in a sense, have neglected human actors, as was recognized by the general postmodern archaeological movement at the end of the 1980s. The case I will use in this paper provides a good example, since population and agrarian increase, technological advances and military conquest have been seen as the main factors in the characterization of the dynamics of Argaric culture. Little or no attention has been paid to how these changes interlock with specific human actions and experiences.

This *décalage* between social structures and individuals in historical interpretation has received a great deal of attention, especially in the last twenty years (Lüdtke 1989; Medick 1987; Ginzburg 1986). However, it has been the agency/structure debate in theoretical sociology and anthropology that has most significantly affected the archaeological discipline and made archaeologists begin to consider the importance of the motivations and actions of individuals in order to understand the dynamics of social structures (for discussions in archaeology, see Shanks and Tilley 1987; Hodder 1987; Wobst 1997; Dobres and Robb 2000; Gilchrist 2000; Foxhall 2000).

In addition to this, the extensive reflection on the experiences of women that feminist scholarship has carried out from different perspectives since the 1970s has included the experience of daily life and the study of material traces left behind (Cowan 1989; Bray 1997). In our discipline, feminism has given expression – particularly in the Anglo-Saxon world – to numerous studies dealing with gender archaeology (see Gero and Conkey 1991; Claasen 1992; Wright 1996; Nelson 1997; Sorensen 2000; Gilchrist 1993; Donald and Hurcombe 2000). All these studies, in emphasizing in their interpretations the material culture of women's daily life, have also paid attention to specific persons and their daily interpersonal relations.

Equality and inequality in Prehistoric Iberia: the culture of El Argar

As previously mentioned, I propose here an interpretation of the continuities expressed in the Argaric funerary record and, particularly, of the presence of female awls in the Argaric tombs. Stress will be placed on the transversal social equality they seem to indicate. In doing so, I will focus on the mechanisms that contributed to creating the Argaric social identities in relation to daily practices, relationships and interactions, addressing questions of how Argaric people buried their dead, where they did it, what kind of containers they used and why they chose certain objects but not others as funerary offerings. Thus, I shall attempt to better understand the complex network of social interaction in the second millennium BC in this part of the western Mediterranean.

To put this discussion in perspective, I will first briefly present the main characteristics of El Argar culture and its funerary record, review the main elements that Argaric people used to mark the difference between men and women and, finally, show how these elements could have been connected to different notions of selfhood and personhood.

The archaeological culture of El Argar

At the end of the nineteenth century, a new archaeological culture, that of El Argar, was proposed by Louis and Henri Siret (Fig. 1). Ever since their first publication (Siret and Siret 1886), the classical definition of Argaric culture has centred on a combination of elements that include: a specific settlement pattern, the presence of certain kinds of metal and ceramic production, and a characteristic burial rite.

Although not always the case, Argaric settlements were usually built on the terraced slopes of mountains and hills. Their houses were arranged in a staggered pattern along these slopes. They frequently had diverse defence elements: stone walls, towers, bastions and fortified areas on the top of the hills. In addition, these settlement centres had obvious differences between them (mainly in size, in location and in the proportion of productive activities carried out). These differences have been used to suggest that there was a hierarchical and territorially structured settlement pattern, in which different settlements had specialized strategic and economic functions (Lull 1983; Molina 1983; Mathers 1994; Contreras 2000).

Among the varied collection of material objects recovered, the attention of researchers has traditionally been focused on the grave goods deposited in tombs, and more specifically on metal and ceramic objects. Some of these have come to represent the Argaric culture in themselves, and have enabled genealogies and chronological links to be established (see Figs 2 and 3 for Argaric metal and pottery types).

But, due to its peculiar nature, one of the most significant features of the Argaric world is the location of burials within dwelling structures. All settlements classified as Argaric had burials inside their houses. In fact, if anything quintessentially defines the Argaric culture it is precisely the fact that one space – the dwelling – combined the spheres of life and death. This represents an important change with respect to the previous period, when the dead were buried in cemeteries of collective tombs outside the settlement walls.

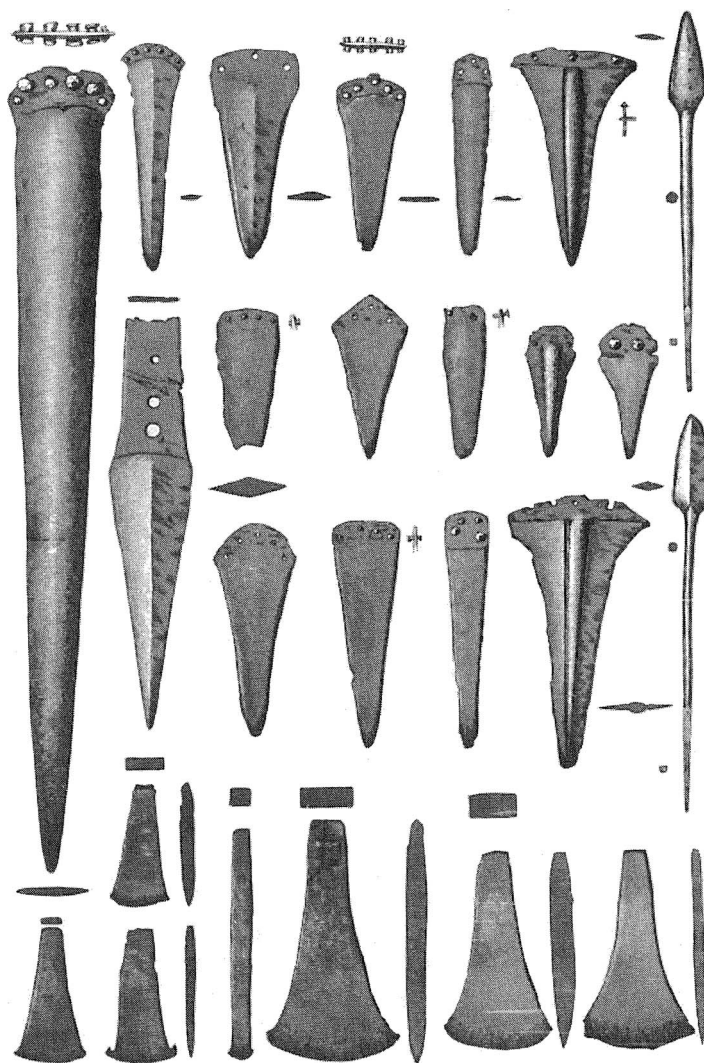


Figure 2 Argaric metal types according to Blance (1971).

Social complexity and the funerary sphere

Burial customs and the objects deposited in tombs as funerary offerings have always played a prominent role in the definition and characterization of archaeological cultures. The structures and objects that groups from the past chose to bury with their dead have been crucial to a variety of interpretative models with a strong focus on trying to understand the world inhabited by the dead (Binford 1971; Brown 1971; Randsborg 1974; Shennan 1975; Peebles and Kus 1977; Chapman 1981; Chapman et al. 1981; Parker Pearson 1999; Arnold and Wicker 2001).

In the case of the Argaric society, the analysis of corpses, funerary containers and, particularly, grave goods and 'ritual' elements used in the burial has enabled some

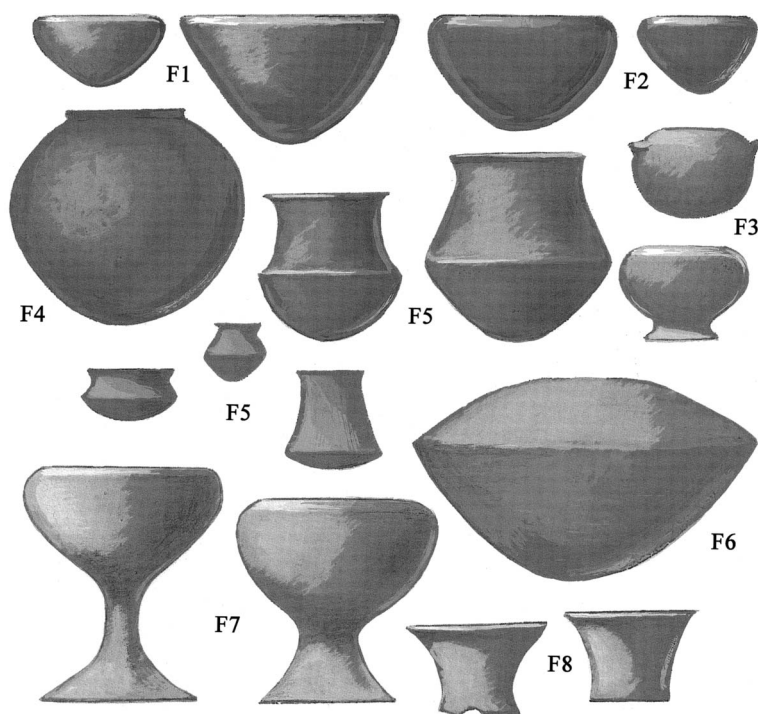


Figure 3 Argaric pottery types according to Siret and Siret (1886).

researchers to propose, mainly from a Marxist perspective, that there were clear social inequalities in the heart of these communities, and an unequal access to economic resources and politico-ideological power.

While these works have been influential in the interpretation of the Argaric world, what I will argue here is that it is possible to produce further insights in the interpretation of the Argaric record focusing on the decisions that Argaric people took regarding where, how and with what objects to bury their dead. These decisions were undoubtedly related to the experiences they had, the practices they carried out, the interrelationships they developed and their specific way of understanding the surrounding reality.

Bodies and body treatment. Despite the probable existence of social differences in the heart of Argaric communities, the treatment of corpses was highly homogeneous. Everything indicates that, with regard to this specific aspect of the Argaric funerary practices, the respect accorded to the corpse transcended differences in wealth, sex and age. The majority of tombs comprise individual interments, although we have some examples of multiple burials (double, triple, quadruple and quintuple). The corpses were deposited in similar positions in receptacles made specifically for this purpose (ceramic containers, stone cists, pit graves and small artificial caves called *covachas*).

Burial location. Tombs tend to be located under the floors of the dwellings, although they are sometimes found in small structures built specifically for such purposes and attached

to the walls of the house or in open spaces between buildings. It seems clear that people did not seek out funerary spaces differentiated and removed from their daily environment. Quite the opposite: it was the areas used by the inhabitants on a daily basis that were considered the ideal locations to bury their dead. Indeed, the Argaric tombs were an integral part of the everyday domestic landscape. Although it is evident that there was no direct visual access to the tombs, there would have been some indication that they existed as many of them were reused after a number of decades had passed.

While we cannot be sure that those individuals buried in a dwelling were the inhabitants of the same dwelling, what seems quite evident is that the inhabitants of the house participated in the ritual: for example, conditioning the specific burial site and the dwelling where the ritual had to be carried out, the instruments and objects needed for such a ritual, the corpse, and even, in some cases, making the construction of the receptacles used as tombs.

Funerary materials. Finally, we know that the Argaric community generally buried their dead with a series of objects that represented a funerary offering (Figs 4 and 5). We know that they deposited certain objects but not others and it also seems that a few categories were associated with one or the other sex, although the vast majority of objects were placed in the tombs of both women and men.

As we have already mentioned, since the beginning of research into Argaric culture, funerary offerings have been prominent in most studies, as well as being the most scrutinized materials in analyses of socio-economic organization. Generally speaking, there are three main groups of funerary offerings: pottery, copper/bronze weapons and

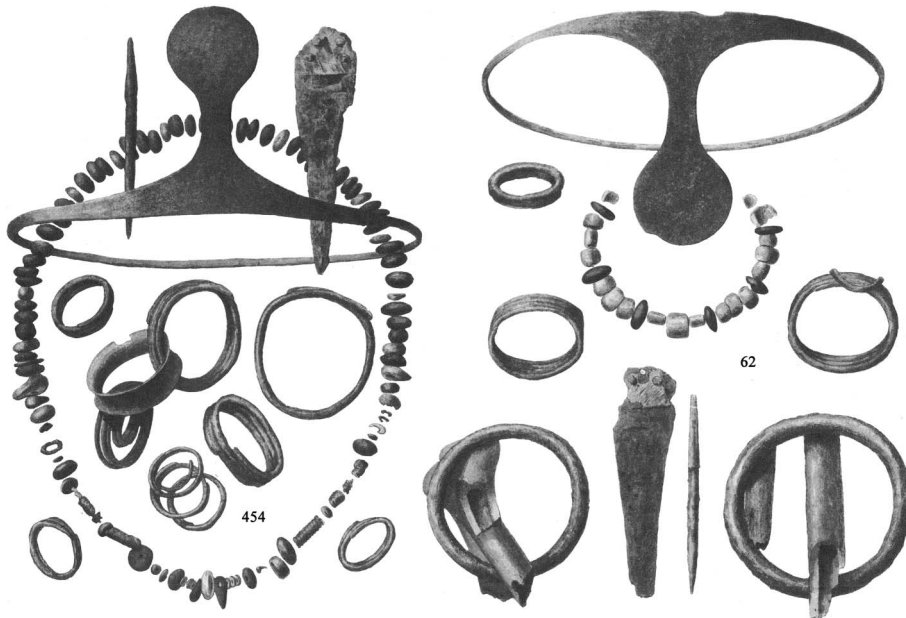


Figure 4 Female grave goods from two tombs from El Argar.

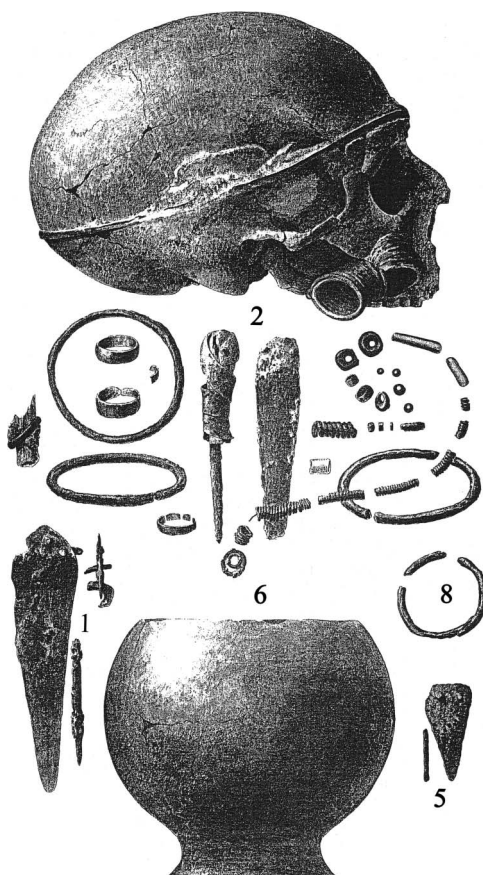


Figure 5 Grave goods from different tombs found in Gatas (Siret and Siret 1886).

tools (sometimes made of bone) and, lastly, ornaments (necklaces with stone, bone or shell beads and rings, bracelets, earrings and diadems, made from copper, silver or gold).

The metallic objects, particularly the copper weapons and instruments, reveal a relatively stable and limited catalogue of types which, broadly speaking, can be grouped into five main categories: halberds, swords, axes, daggers and knives and, finally, awls and pins.

With respect to funerary offerings, two common lines of research have been developed: first, the study of the material characteristics of the objects from a typological and, occasionally, technological point of view; and, second, the study of the combination of patterns in which such objects appear in the tombs as a base from which to infer chronological and/or socio-economic aspects (Molina 1983; Lull 1983, 2000; Lull and Estévez 1986).

Following the second line, it has been hypothesized by Lull and Estévez (1986) that Argaric society can be characterized by five main social groups. These range from a minority dominant class with rich offerings to a class of servants and slaves, with scarce or no funerary offerings, also encompassing intermediary clientele and artisan classes. More

specifically, the combination patterns of grave goods interpreted in social terms are as follows:

1. First social group: metal halberds, swords, diadems, presence of gold and pottery shape F6 (Fig. 4 and Fig. 5.2 are examples of this group)
2. Second social group: metal earrings, rings, bracelets associated with pottery, especially the goblet F7, and presence of silver
3. Third social group: standardized grave goods with associated dagger-awl, with or without pottery, for women and with associated dagger-axe, with or without pottery, for men (Fig. 5.1, 5.5)
4. Fourth social group: one metallic item of the second group or some pottery shapes, especially shape F1 and shape F5 (Fig. 5.8, 5.6)
5. Fifth social group: no funerary offerings.

As we see, a model of social inequality has been proposed on the basis of interpreted inequalities in funerary material culture. The discontinuities in funerary material culture have been central to the core of Argaric research and explanation in terms of social characterization. Less attention has been paid to exploring continuities and the meaning these continuities may have had (see, for a similar idea, Kuijt 1996: 313). Notably, such continuities exist in the Argaric material culture and they cross the boundaries of the hypothesized social groups. The case of female awls presents us with an outstanding example.

Interpreting continuities in Argaric funerary offerings

Awls as female objects

From the very first studies carried out in the 1980s, it was noted that, together with the hierarchical asymmetry of the funerary assemblage, there was evidence of a clear differentiation between the assemblages of men and of women. In the statistical analysis carried out by Lull and Estévez (1986: 449) of just under 400 Argaric tombs, the significant presence in the tombs of females of awls, associated primarily with short daggers and certain ceramic types, was highlighted, as well as the exclusive presence of diadems and a trend towards necklaces. The male tombs, on the other hand, were the only ones to contain halberds, axes, swords and certain specific ceramic shapes different from those present in the tombs of women, as well as few examples of necklaces and ornaments.

Important research conducted by González Marcén (1991) pointed out that female funerary grave goods showed fewer changes over time than the funerary offerings of men. This is expressed most clearly by the recurrent and continuous appearance of awls in the tombs of females over the entire Argaric period, while in male tombs the metallic objects present a greater variation both synchronically and diachronically.

Effectively, the longevity of the awls was much greater than that of the male metallic tools (halberds, swords and axes). In fact, awls were the only tool ascribed to a particular gender to be found during the entire Argaric period (González Marcén and Montón in

press). Besides, the presence of an awl appears to be independent of the social category to which the women belonged. The awl can be found in any female tomb, regardless of the quantity or quality of the rest of the female offerings (an example of this can be seen in Figure 5, showing an awl from tomb n. 2, which belongs to the first category, and another two awls from tombs ns 1 and 5, which belong to the third category). This is not the case with the exclusive male tools, which were associated with one or another social group.

If we accept the possibility that the presence of the awl in infants' tombs also has a gender-related meaning, then awls were also placed in the tombs of girls (Castro et al. 1993–4). In contrast, there are no tombs of children in which we find the metallic tools exclusive to males. (For a similar pattern in other European Bronze Age sites see Rega 2000.)

Finally, of all the metallic funerary offerings recovered, the awl is the element that appears most frequently in non-funerary domestic contexts. Importantly, it has been noted that the awls present in tombs are not the same as those being recovered from habitation levels. The funerary awls (Moreno 2000) would appear to be longer and may have been produced specifically for this purpose. They would not therefore be objects that women used while alive, although they would resemble those other objects that appear in domestic contexts.

Awls as symbolic objects

Why is it only women who were associated with one particular tool, the awl, over the entire Argaric period, lasting for more than 500 years? And why is it only women who were associated with one particular tool, the awl, regardless of their age and other social positions? The answer to these above questions should be related to the type of practices carried out by Argaric women, to the kinds of social relationships needed for these practices and to an understanding of reality derived from this. In short, they are also related to the understanding that the women had of themselves, their identity and their way of being in the world.

A number of related studies have stressed the importance of a series of practices and experiences of women in most societies, connected with the creation and management of daily social life. Although these activities, referred to as maintenance activities (Picazo 1997; Colomer et al. 1998; Montón 2002; González Marcén et al. 2005; González Marcén and Montón in press) and traditionally included under the rubric of the 'domestic', may take place in different social realms, they all fulfil the social need to nurture and care for the members of the social group. They also require the creation of interpersonal networks made up of relational actions. These practices and these relations are both central to the sense of personhood in a community and fundamental to the conceptualization of those who undertake them.

A series of studies in the fields of psychology, anthropology and communication have highlighted the fact that personal identity is forged by a variety of mechanisms (Geertz 1973; Markus and Kitayama 1998), of which two are the most important. In some cases 'identity develops from social relationships and those relationships with others actually constitute identity', whereas, in other cases, 'identity develops as the individual separates

from primary relationships and those features and experiences unique to him or her constitute identity' (Kim 2001: 6). It has been shown that these two trends represent groups with a different understanding of selfhood and personhood.

From an archaeological standpoint, Hernando (2002) has also emphasized that these two types of identity can coexist within the same social group. Individuals who have started a process of personal individualization and others who continue building their identity more from relationships can coexist. I propose that this is what could have happened in Argaric communities, where the presence of the awl in female tombs suggests that, in the social construction of women's identity, connection and interdependence were key elements (to a greater degree than is observed in male tombs).

My interpretative hypothesis of the continuities expressed in women's funerary material culture presumes that what we understand from the mortuary record is connected with women's identity while alive. It could be argued, however, that the expression of this identity is compatible either with a decision made by women or with the imposition by other sectors of society, for example, dominant men. In the first case, the decision would imply women's self-acknowledgement of a social cross-cutting female identity and even a desire to assert themselves as equals in some aspects of life. In the second case, the imposition would have taken place for different reasons, and would imply a lesser role or no role at all for women in ritual decision-making.

Various considerations argue that the role of women was active in the management of the funerary world. The very domesticity of the funerary context itself and the characteristics associated with depositions makes plausible a close link between women and the activities that death generated. Although the funerary world was guided by general social rules, it is clear that some associated practices were managed from the domestic sphere. This management of some practices associated with the funerary world can be seen as an extension of the caring dimension of the maintenance activities mentioned above (see, for a similar idea, Gilchrist 2005).

Pottery analyses from Argaric sites (for example, Gatas) also appear to support the close link between the domestic world and the funerary world. Argaric pottery is highly standardized (Aranda 2004; Colomer 2005), even though there may not have been full-time pottery specialists in Argaric society (Colomer 2005). Given the absence of evidence for workshops or areas set aside for ceramic manufacture, and taking into account ethnographic parallels of similar traditions (Barbour and Wandibba 1989; Barley 1994), the most plausible hypothesis for Argaric pottery production is that specific women were in charge of this production on a part-time basis as part of what could be referred to as 'household industry'. These women would have fulfilled the ceramic needs in the community and would have distributed their products through small trade or in exchange for other products or work.

In this context of highly standardized ceramics some unusual and curious cases can be found, cases that do not follow the norm (Colomer 2005: 206). These are pieces of ceramic that are badly made or badly finished, precisely because they attempt to copy the Argaric models. All these containers with anomalies were used to bury small infants of under 18 months. It is possible that young mothers made these containers in abnormal circumstances trying to follow the canons of ceramic manufacture but with little mastery. These vessels suggest that, although there were people who knew how pottery was made through

observing the process on the site, they themselves did not usually manufacture pottery. The reproduction (although with errors) of the manufacturing techniques in the way attested by the archaeological record must imply a direct and quotidian contact with pottery manufacture, and this seems incompatible with the existence of a specialized artisan sector separated from the performance of daily maintenance activities. This evidence suggests that women were actively involved in processes linked to the funerary world and, probably, in those that sustained socio-symbolic practices in Argaric communities. In this context, awls could have acted as symbolical elements so as to make reference to women's practices, experiences and relationships.

It is also logical that the element chosen to mark female relational identity was associated in life with domestic contexts, and therefore with practices that maintain the processes of creation and recreation of life, and that require this relational character. The very fact that funerary awls, although resembling those recovered in domestic contexts, were especially created for ritual purposes strengthens the interpretation of awls as symbolic elements and attributes of identity. In this way, the awl would be a connecting element, marking continuity on several levels: chronological continuity throughout the Argaric time, continuity throughout the social scale and continuity between the domestic context of daily life and the domestic context of death.

It is precisely continuity that is not detectable in male tombs, at least not to the same degree. Material culture in female tombs seems to reinforce relationships since awls could have been selected to display connection. In contrast, one can observe a tendency to emphasize more individual attributes in male tombs and to differentiate the occupants from the rest of the community, also through the use of material culture.

This does not mean that there were no social inequalities among Argaric women. Such inequalities are clearly manifested by the differences in the material culture of female tombs. But women, as we have pointed out earlier, displayed plural social group membership. In this sense, the presence of awls in female tombs may be indicative of an active symbolic use of material culture as a transversal interconnection element and thus be representative of an intention to display equality relations among women in some realms of life.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Paloma González-Marcén and James McGlade for helpful comments and suggestions on a previous version of this paper. Additionally, I am grateful to James McGlade for his improvement of my English.

ICREA Research Professor, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain

References

Aranda, G. 2004. Craft specialization in pottery production during the Bronze Age in South-eastern Iberia. *Journal of Iberian Archaeology*, 6: 157–79.

- Arnold, B. and Wicker, N. L. 2001. *Gender and the Archaeology of Death*. Oxford: Altamira Press.
- Barbour, J. and Wandibba, S. (eds) 1989. *Kenyan Pots and Potters*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Barley, N. 1994. *Smashing Pots: Feats of Clay from Africa*. London: The British Museum.
- Binford, L. 1971. Mortuary practices: their study and their potential. In *Approaches to the Social Dimensions of Mortuary Practices* (ed. J. Brown). Washington, DC: Memoir of the Society for American Archaeology, pp. 390–420.
- Blance, B. 1971. *Die Anfänge der Metallurgie auf der Iberischen Halbinsel*. Berlin: SAM.
- Bray, F. 1997. *Technology and Gender: Fabrics of Power in Late Imperial China*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.
- Brown, J. A. (ed.) 1971. *Approaches to the Social Dimensions of Mortuary Practices*. Washington, DC: Memoir of the Society for American Archaeology 25.
- Castro, P., Chapman, R., Gili, S., Mico, R., Rihuete, C., Risch, R. and Sanahuja, E. 1993–4. Tiempos sociales de los contextos funerarios argáricos. *AnMurcia*, 9–10: 77–105.
- Chapman, R. 1981. Archaeological theory and communal burial in prehistoric Europe. In *Patterns of the Past: Studies in Honour of David L. Clarke* (eds I. Hodder, G. Isaac and N. Hammond). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 387–411.
- Chapman, R., Kinnes, I. and Randsborg, K. (eds) 1981. *The Archaeology of Death*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Claasen, C. (ed.) 1992. *Exploring Gender through Archaeology*. Madison, WI: Prehistory Press.
- Clark, J. and Blake, M. 1994. Power of prestige: competitive generosity and the emergence of rank in lowland Mesoamerica. In *Factional Competition and Political Development in the New World* (eds E. Brumfiel and J. W. Fox). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 3–13.
- Colomer, L. 2005. Cerámica prehistórica y trabajo femenino en El Argar: una aproximación desde el estudio de la tecnología cerámica. In *Arqueología y género* (ed. M. Sánchez). Granada: Universidad de Granada, pp. 177–217.
- Colomer, L., González Marcén, P. and Montón, S. 1998. Maintenance activities, technological knowledge and consumption patterns: a view from a Prehistoric Iberian Site (Can Roqueta, 1200–500 cal BC). *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology*, 11: 53–80.
- Contreras, F. (ed.) 2000. *Proyecto Peñalosa. Análisis histórico de las Comunidades de la Edad del Bronce del Piedemonte Meridional de Sierra Morena y Depresión Linares-Bailén*. Granada: Junta de Andalucía, Consejería de Cultura.
- Cowan, R. 1989. *More Work for the Mother: The Ironies of Household Technologies from the Open Hearth to the Microwave*. London: Free Association Books.
- Dobres, M. A. and Robb, J. (eds) 2000. *Agency in Archaeology*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Donald, M. and Hurcombe, L. (eds) 2000. *Gender and Material Culture in Historical Perspective*. London: Macmillan.
- Dowson, T. A. 2000. Why queer archaeology? An introduction. *World Archaeology*, 32: 161–5.
- Flanagan, J. G. 1989. Hierarchy in simple 'egalitarian' societies. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 18: 245–66.
- Flanagan, J. C. and Rayner, S. (eds) 1988. *Rules, Decisions and Inequality in Egalitarian Societies*. London: Gower.
- Flannery, K. 1972. The cultural evolution of civilizations. *Annual Review of Ecology and Systematics* 3: 339–426.
- Foxhall, L. 2000. The running sands of time: archaeology and the short term. *World Archaeology*, 31(3): 484–98.

- Friedl, E. 1975. *Women and Men: An Anthropologist's View*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- Geertz, C. 1973. *The Interpretation of Culture: Selected Essays*. New York: Basic Books.
- Gero, J. and Conkey, M. (eds) 1991. *Engendering Archaeology: Women and Prehistory*. Cambridge: Blackwell.
- Gilchrist, R. 1993. *Gender and Material Culture: The Archaeology of Religious Women*. London: Routledge.
- Gilchrist, R. 2000. Archaeological biographies: realizing human life-cycles, -courses and -histories. *World Archaeology*, 31(3): 325–8.
- Gilchrist, R. 2005. Cuidando a los muertos: las mujeres medievales en las pompas fúnebres familiares. In *Dones i Activitats de Manteniment en temps de canvi* (eds P. González-Marcén, S. Montón and M. Picazo). Bellaterra: Treballs d'arqueologia 11, pp. 51–72.
- Ginzburg, C. 1986. *Miti emblemi spie: morfologia e storia*. Torino: Giulio Einaudi Editori.
- González Marcén, P. 1991. Cronología del grupo argárico. Doctoral dissertation. Department of Prehistory, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Bellaterra.
- González Marcén, P. and Montón, S. in press. Time, women, identity and maintenance activities: death and life in Argaric communities. Paper delivered at the international conference Engendering Prehistoric Stratigraphies in the Aegean and the Mediterranean. University of Crete: Rethymnon, June 2005.
- González Marcén, P., Montón, S. and Picazo, M. (eds) 2005. *Dones i Activitats de Manteniment en Temps de Canvi*. Bellaterra: Treballs d'Arqueologia 11.
- Hernando, A. 2002. *Arqueología de la Identidad*. Madrid: Akal.
- Hodder, I. 1987. *Archaeology as Long-Term History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Jagger, A. M. 1983. *Feminist Politics and Human Nature*. Brighton: Harvester.
- Jenkins, R. 1997. *Rethinking Ethnicity: Arguments and Explorations*. London: Sage.
- Jennet, C. and Stewart, R. G. 1987. *Three Worlds of Inequality: Race, Class and Gender*. Melbourne: Macmillan.
- Johnson, B. 1980. *The Critical Difference: Essays in the Contemporary Rhetoric of Reading*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Kim, M. S. 2001. Perspectives on human communication: implications for transcultural theory. In *Transcultural Realities: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Cross-Cultural Relations* (eds V. Milhouse, M. Asante and P. Nwoso). London: Sage, pp. 3–31.
- Kuijt, I. 1996. Negotiating equality through ritual: a consideration of Late Natufian and Prepottery Neolithic A Period mortuary practices. *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology*, 15: 313–36.
- Leacock, E. 1978. Women's status in egalitarian society: implications for social evolution. *Current Anthropology*, 19: 247–75.
- Lerner, G. 1993. Reconceptualizing differences among women. In *Feminist Frameworks: Alternative Theoretical Accounts of the Relation between Women and Men* (eds A. Jagger and P. S. Rothenberg). New York: McGraw Hill, pp. 237–48.
- Lüdtke, A. (ed.) 1989. *Altsgeschichte*. Frankfurt: Campus Verlag.
- Lull, V. 1983. *La 'cultura' de El Argar: Un modelo para el estudio de las formaciones económico-sociales prehistóricas*. Madrid: Akal.
- Lull, V. 2000. Argaric society: death at home. *Antiquity*, 74: 581–90.
- Lull, V. and Estévez, J. 1986. Propuesta metodológica para el estudio de las necrópolis argáricas. In *Homenaje a Luis Siret (1934–1984)*. Sevilla: Junta de Adalucía, pp. 441–52.

- Markus, H. and Kitayama, S. 1998. The cultural psychology of personality. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 29: 63–87.
- Mathers, C. 1994. Goodbye to all that? Contrasting patterns of change in the south-east Iberian Bronze Age c. 24/2200–600 BC. In *Development and Decline in the Mediterranean Bronze Age* (eds C. Mathers and S. Stoddart). Sheffield: Collis, pp. 21–71.
- Mathews, K. 2000. The material culture of the homosexual male: a case for archaeological exploration. In *Gender and Material Culture in Archaeological Perspective* (eds M. Donald and L. Hurcombe). London: Macmillan.
- McGuire, R. 1985. Breaking down cultural complexity: inequality and heterogeneity. In *Advances in Archaeological Method and Theory 6* (ed. M. Schiffer). New York: Academic Press, pp. 91–142.
- Medick, H. 1987. Missionaries in the row boat: ethnological ways of knowing as a challenge to social history. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 29: 76–98.
- Molina, F. 1983. *La Prehistoria: Historia de Granada I: De las primeras culturas al Islam*. Granada: Don Quijote.
- Montón, S. 2002. Cooking in zooarchaeology: is this issue still raw? In *Consuming Passions and Patterns of Consumption* (eds P. Miracle and N. Milner). Cambridge: McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, pp. 7–15.
- Moreno, A. 2000. La metalurgia de Peñalosa. In *Proyecto Peñalosa: Análisis histórico de las Comunidades de la Edad del Bronce del Piedemonte Meridional de Sierra Morena y Depresión Linares-Bailén* (ed. F. Contreras). Granada: Junta de Andalucía, Consejería de Cultura, pp. 167–221.
- Nelson, S. M. (ed.) 1997. *Gender in Archaeology*. Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press.
- Parker Pearson, M. 1999. *The Archaeology of Death and Burial*. Stroud: Sutton.
- Paynter, R. 1989. The archaeology of equality and inequality. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 18: 369–99.
- Paynter, R. and McGuire, H. (eds) 1991. *The Archaeology of Inequality*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Peebles, C. and Kus, S. 1977. Some archaeological correlates of ranked societies. *American Antiquity*, 42: 421–48.
- Picazo, M. 1997. Hearth and home: the timing of maintenance activities. In *Invisible People and Processes* (eds J. Moore and E. Scott). Leicester: Leicester University Press, pp. 59–67.
- Price, D. T. and Feinman, G. M. (eds) 1995. *Foundations of Social Inequality*. New York: Plenum.
- Randsborg, K. 1974. Social stratification in Early Bronze Age Denmark. *Praehistorische Zeitschrift*, 49: 38–61.
- Rega, E. 2000. The gendering of children in the Early Bronze Age cemetery at Mokrin. In *Gender and Material Culture in Historical Perspective* (eds M. Donald and L. Hurcombe). London: Macmillan, pp. 238–49.
- Rosaldo, M. Z. and Lamphere, L. (eds) 1974. *Woman, Culture and Society*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Scott, E. 1994. Through the lens of gender: archaeology, inequality and those of little note. In *Those of Little Note: Gender, Race and Class in Historical Archaeology* (ed. E. M. Scott). Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, pp. 3–24.
- Scott, J. W. 1988. Deconstructing equality-versus-difference: or, the uses of post-structuralist theory for feminism. *Feminist Studies*, 14: 33–50.
- Shanks, M., and Tilley, C. 1987. *Re-constructing Archaeology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Shennan, S. E. 1975. The social organisation at Branc. *Antiquity*, 49: 279–87.

Siret, H. and Siret, L. 1886. *Les Premiers Âges du Métal dans le Sud-Est de l'Espagne*. Anvers.

Sorensen, M. L. 2000. *Gender Archaeology*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Voss, B. L. 2000. Feminism, queer theories, and the archaeological study of past sexualities. *World Archaeology*, 32: 180–92.

Wobst, H. M. 1997. Towards an 'appropriate metrology' of human action in archaeology. In *Time, Process and Structured Transformation in Archaeology* (eds S. Van der Leeuw and J. McGlade). London: Routledge, pp. 426–48.

Wright, R. (ed.) 1996. *Gender and Archaeology*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Sandra Montón Subías is ICREA Research Professor at Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona and a member of the Centre for the Study of Prehistoric and Archaeological Heritage-CEPAP. Her recent publications include 'Cooking in archaeozoology: is this issue still raw?' (in *Consuming Patterns and Patterns of Consumption*, eds N. Milner and P. Miracle, McDonald Institute Monographs, Cambridge, 2002, pp. 7–15) and, edited with P. González-Marcén and M. Picazo, *Dones i Activitats de Manteniment en Temps de Canvi*, Treballs d'Arqueologia 11 (Servei de Publicacions de Bellaterra, Barcelona, 2005).