

MYCENAE, GRAVE CIRCLE A, SHAFT GRAVE CONTENTS

Shaft Grave I contained three inhumations of women who were furnished with gold jewelry and accompanied by faience vessels, an ivory pyxis, two silver cups (one with a gold rim), bronze vessels and several clay vases.

Shaft Grave II contained the single inhumation of a male with relatively few grave offerings: a gold cup, a thin gold diadem and several bronze weapons, clay vases and faience vessels.

Shaft Grave III, the so-called 'Grave of the Women,' contained three female and two infant interments. The women were literally covered in gold jewelry and wore massive gold diadems, while the infants were overlaid with gold foil. A great number of gold roundels and other gold cut-out foils in various shapes with repoussé decoration were initially embroidered onto, either the deceased's clothes, or their shrouds. The jewelry included large silver and bronze pins with rock crystal heads or with gold ornaments and sheeting, a necklace of amber beads, gold earrings, and gold seals engraved with hunting or dueling scenes. Miniature gold vessels, faience vessels and gold scales were also found.

Shaft Grave IV is conspicuous by its wealth and size. It contained three male and two female inhumations. Two of the deceased were placed on a north-south axis, contrary to the more common east-west axis. The three male burials each had a gold death-mask. One male burial also had a gold breastplate. The deceased were adorned with gold diadems, numerous pieces of gold jewelry, a variety of cut-out foil ornaments, and belts or straps. This grave contained precious gold, silver and stone vases, ritual rhyta (libation vases), either with intricate decoration, or in the shape of animals, large bronze vessels and numerous weapons, including a beautiful dagger with an inlaid lion hunt scene.

Shaft Grave V contained three male burials. Two of the deceased wore gold death-masks, one of which is known as the 'Mask of Agamemnon.' The grave gifts included gold breastplates, elaborate bronze swords and daggers with inlaid decoration, gold and silver vessels, an ostrich egg rhyton with applied faience dolphins, and a wooden hexagonal pyxis with gold revetment. There was less gold jewelry than in the female graves, but a great number of amber beads.

Shaft Grave VI contained two well-preserved male inhumations, which were accompanied by a gold cup, two gold 'knee-bands,' several bronze weapons, including swords, daggers and spear-heads, and an assortment of clay vases.