

MORTUARY PRACTICES, SOCIAL STATUS, AND WEALTH
AT THE RHODES SITE
IN MOUNDVILLE, ALABAMA

by

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ABSTRACT

The Rhodes residential area is part of the Moundville archaeological site (1TU500), a Mississippian civic and ceremonial mound center located on the Black Warrior River in present-day Tuscaloosa and Hale Counties of Alabama. It was excavated in the 1930s as two areas: the Rhodes site and the Upper Rhodes site. Because the Rhodes residential area was both a residential group and a cemetery, it is productive for examining area specific mortuary practices and how these practices compare to other residential group cemeteries at Moundville. Using mortuary analysis to further explore mortuary practices and social organization inform the research objectives that were set forth for this thesis. The major objectives of the project were as follows: 1) discern when in time the site was occupied and used as measured by ceramic samples; 2) interpret the social status and wealth of the people buried in the Rhodes residential area as measured by the quantity and diversity of artifacts in graves; and 3) compare the social status and wealth of the Rhodes residential area burial population to the social status of other residential burial populations at Moundville as measured by previous studies.

The results demonstrate that a complex intertwining of ascribed and achieved status exists in Rhodes burials. More importantly, the results show that burial goods are not distributed the same way in every residential group. I conclude that access to wealth and status was specific to each residential kin group with a complex system of status based on birth and achievement. This research contributes to the ongoing evaluation of Mississippian and Moundville social organization and mortuary practices as well as ongoing studies of how social inequality was manifested in the past.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

The Rhodes site is a Mississippian period site located just outside the northeast boundary of Moundville Archaeological Park. In 1936, the Alabama Museum of Natural History conducted excavations at the site, which is located on what was the Oliver Rhodes farm, adjacent to the Moundville site (Peebles 1973). These excavations recovered approximately 177 burials, interments of human remains and their associated artifacts, most of which have not been analyzed beyond an inventory of skeletal material. The Rhodes site is important because it appears to be a residential area of the Moundville site but spatially separated from the central mounds and other residential areas by a small stream, Carthage Branch. The aim of this project is to analyze social status and wealth at the Rhodes site as measured by the quantity and diversity of artifacts in graves and to place the site into the Moundville culture chronology. Although Peebles (1973) and the original excavation notes refer to this area as a “site,” its use in Moundville research, proximity to the central mound and plaza, and location within the palisade wall are solid indications that it should not be considered a separate site, but rather a residential area of the larger Moundville archaeological site (1TU500). For the purposes of this thesis, the research area will be referred to as the Rhodes residential area.

Because little research has focused on the Rhodes residential area, basic questions pertaining to when the area was occupied and how it fits into the larger Moundville community have not been answered. And although the Rhodes residential area burials have been used in site-wide surveys and research (such as Peebles 1973, 1974; and Steponaitis 2009), they have not

been analyzed independently in a way that highlights inner-area and inner-site diversity among burial groups (Wilson et al. 2010). Because the Rhodes residential area has not been independently studied, basic culture-history and descriptive analyses need to take place. Moreover, excavation techniques during the 1930s were not as precise as modern excavation techniques (Blitz 2008). Excavations at the Rhodes residential area recorded large features, such as middens (refuse-filled pits), hearths, wall trenches, and burials (Peebles 1973), which are the primary contexts available for the Rhodes residential area research.

Burials are productive units of analysis when exploring ideas of social organization, wealth, status, and basic mortuary practices. Mortuary analysis has been a part of research on wealth and status since the 1970s and continues to be an avenue for researching the ways males, females, and children were treated in death and how this can correspond to past types of social stratification (Binford 1971; Pearson 1999; Sullivan and Mainfort 2013). While much research has been done on prehistoric social organization, many researchers are now questioning the ways in which more complex prehistoric groups were socially organized (Anderson and Sassaman 2013).

Using mortuary analysis to further explore mortuary practices and social organization informs the research objectives that were set forth for this thesis. The major objectives of the project are as follows: 1) discern when in time the site was occupied and used as measured by ceramic samples; 2) interpret the social status and wealth of the people buried in the Rhodes residential area as measured by the quantity and diversity of artifacts in graves; and 3) compare the social status and wealth of the Rhodes residential area burial population to the social status of other residential burial populations at Moundville as measured by previous studies. Although mortuary studies at Moundville have occurred since about 1906, their potential for exploring

social organization was only realized much more recently (Knight 1996; Peebles 1971, 1974; Peebles and Kus 1977).

In Chapter Two, the Moundville site is introduced, giving a brief culture-history that describes the basic chronological phases and the aggregation and subsequent collapse of this complex Mississippian society. I follow this with a brief overview of mortuary analysis both in archaeology and at Moundville. I focus on the use of mortuary analysis in exploring social organization in general, introducing the basic concepts used to formulate my mortuary analysis of the Rhodes residential area.

Chapter Three introduces the Rhodes residential area, providing the information known about it thus far. Here, I explain how the area was excavated in two spatially separate sections, labeled the Rhodes site and the Upper Rhodes site. Combining these closely spaced excavations into a single Rhodes residential area helped to increase sample size and demonstrate the diversity of mortuary goods located in this area of Moundville. In this chapter, the reader should see that the Rhodes residential area conforms to the basic pattern seen in other areas of Moundville; it is a cluster of residential house remains that also was used as burial grounds, probably by specific kin groups (Wilson 2008).

Chapter Four presents the methods of acquiring specific data. I explain how the ceramic and burial samples were chosen and used to explore the three research objectives. It is organized in order of research objective: presenting the methods used to place the Rhodes residential area in the Moundville site chronology, to select the burial sample, and to quantify the associated artifacts to explore status and wealth through mortuary practices.

Also organized by research objective, Chapter Five presents the analysis and results. The first section dates the ceramics used to examine chronology in burial and non-burial contexts.

The second section measures the frequency and diversity of artifacts in graves, presenting the main analytical tools used and their results. The third section discusses the results of previous research on other residential groups by Wilson, Steponaitis, and Jacobi (2010) and how these results compare to results found at the Rhodes residential area.

Chapter Six offers conclusions based on applying basic assumptions used by previous researchers of mortuary practices and social organization. The discussion focuses on how the Rhodes residential area results relate to the three research objectives. I demonstrate that while similarities exist between burial groups at Moundville, distinct differences also exist that can only be seen when burial clusters, such as those found in residential groups, are analyzed independently and then compared. The final chapter also demonstrates how this thesis fits into past and ongoing investigations about Moundville and Mississippian mortuary practices.

CHAPTER 2 MISSISSIPPIAN COMPLEXITY, MOUNDVILLE, AND MORTUARY ANALYSIS

Though much research has been done on Mississippian complexity, archaeologists are still investigating and reformulating ideas about Mississippian social organization (Anderson and Sassaman 2013). Among other avenues of research, archaeologists often explore the ways burials can be used to further interpret social and economic organization among past peoples through the distribution of artifacts in graves. One way to study burial good distribution is through artifact frequency; in other words, finding if burials have equal or unequal numbers of artifacts associated with them. Another way artifact distribution can be studied is through examining the distribution of grave goods across age and sex categories. In order to better understand social and economic relations, mortuary goods also can be separated into the categories of wealth and status (Blitz 1993; Hally 2008; Prentice 1987; Welch 1991). To investigate wealth and status differentiation seen in Rhodes residential area burials and to see if mortuary practices are similar throughout the Moundville site, three objectives were developed. The first objective was to establish when in time the Rhodes residential area was occupied, the second was to interpret the social status and wealth of the people buried in the Rhodes residential area, and the third was to compare the social status and wealth of Rhodes residential area burials to the social status of other residential burial populations at Moundville.

The current chapter provides a background on how mortuary analysis has been important in helping further understand Mississippian social complexity. It begins with a description of Mississippian culture and how the Moundville site fits into Mississippian research. This is

followed by a description of the Moundville site, its location, and a brief culture-history. A general overview of mortuary analysis follows with a more specific review of mortuary studies at Moundville. This chapter emphasizes the ways mortuary analyses have been used to study social organization, how Rhodes residential area mortuary analysis fits into the discussion of social organization, and what can be learned from studying Rhodes burials.

Mississippian Complexity and Moundville

Mississippian cultures appear in the southeastern United States as early as A.D. 900 and start to change or disappear in approximately A.D. 1500 with the start of the Protohistoric period (Anderson and Sassaman 2013). During the Mississippian time period, archaeologists recognize a pattern of increased dependence on maize cultivation, more sedentary communities, an increase in platform mound construction, and more complex social organization than was seen in previous time periods. Mississippian social complexity has often been described in terms of “rank” societies, which are groups mainly organized around kinship with equal access to economic resources (wealth) but unequal access to social status (Blitz and Lorenz 1996:4). The increase in complex social organization in Mississippian societies is indicated by such archaeological evidence as differential burial treatment, differential access to elite or status items, and the settlement patterns of mound centers and their surrounding sites. A mound center is a site that contains multiple mounds and is argued to be a center for a political territory that spreads out to smaller single mound sites and farmsteads (Blitz and Lorenz 2006). While the Mississippian culture spread through the Mississippi River Valley and through the present-day southeastern United States, the spread of Mississippian culture varied through time and space (Anderson and Sassaman 2012). Because of these differences, archaeologists often focus on more specific areas

and time spans, using local time phases to understand cultural changes throughout the Mississippian period.

For instance, in the Black Warrior River Valley, Mississippian culture tends to be understood through reference to Moundville. Moundville (1TU500) is a Mississippian site located on Hemphill Bend on the Black Warrior River in west Alabama. Moundville is considered to be a civic and ceremonial center of a political territory that ran approximately 40 km up and down the Black Warrior River (Blitz 2008; Knight and Steponaitis 1998). While serving many functions, mound centers like Moundville are considered gathering areas for surrounding farmsteads that would be under the ceremonial and political unity of a Mississippian elite unified under a paramount leader (Knight and Steponaitis 1998; Peebles and Kus 1977). Moundville consists of about 29 artificial earthen mounds, 18 of which are situated around a central plaza in an alternating pattern of mounds with primarily burial and non-burial functions (Knight and Steponaitis 1998). The largest mounds are at the north side of the plaza and the mounds diminish in size around the plaza to the south side, where the smaller mounds are located. These mounds are bounded on three sides by evidence of a palisade wall that at one time ran from the Black Warrior River on the northwest side of the site to Carthage Branch Creek in the eastern part of Moundville. The largest part of the site is now a park spanning the border of Tuscaloosa County to the north and Hale County to the south.

One of the first people to excavate at Moundville was C. B. Moore in 1905 and 1906 (Blitz 2008; Knight 1996). As with most of his research in the southeastern U. S., he mainly excavated elite burials found within mounds (Knight 1996). During the 1930s, many archaeological excavations took place at and around Moundville Archaeological Park. Many of these were due to New Deal initiatives, such as the Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC,) under the

auspices of the Alabama Museum of Natural History located on the University of Alabama campus. While many artifacts and burials were recovered, much of the material, including material from the Rhodes residential area, went unanalyzed due to the start of World War II, when many New Deal programs were thought to be no longer useful (Peebles 1973; Steponaitis 2009; Wilson et al. 2010). Peebles (1973), in conjunction with his dissertation study, realized the importance of trying to compile information on Moundville excavations from 1905 to the 1950s and set out to do just that. His efforts culminated in an unpublished manuscript that covers excavations from 1905 to 1951 and employs excavation forms, field notes, and firsthand accounts.

During the late 1970s, Steponaitis (2009) developed a Moundville ceramic chronology organized by style, grave context, and radiocarbon dating. In the 1990s and 2000s, the ceramic chronology was revised by Knight (2010). From mound excavations and other research at Moundville, Knight and Steponaitis (1998) and Knight (2010) have been able to develop a detailed culture-history of Moundville that roughly corresponds to the ceramic chronology.

A brief culture-history of Moundville will be provided in order to understand what was occurring during these ceramic phases (Knight 2010; Knight and Steponaitis 1998). The first phase, the West Jefferson phase, spans from AD 900 to approximately AD 1050 and is considered the “terminal Woodland phase” of Moundville and other sites within the Warrior drainage area (Knight and Steponaitis 1998; Steponaitis 2009). During this phase, people were scattered throughout the region with no solid evidence that the Moundville site was occupied at this time. The Moundville I phase, AD 1050 to 1250, is marked by a growing dependence on maize agriculture with the initial consolidation of peoples at Moundville (Knight and Steponaitis 1998; Steponaitis 2009). By the beginning of the Moundville II phase, AD 1250 to 1400, the

paramount center, with its mounds and central plaza, was constructed. The palisade was also constructed and used during this time (Knight and Steponaitis 1998; Scarry 1998). The Moundville III phase, AD 1450 to 1550, is first marked by the continuation of what has been called a paramount chiefdom with a strict hierarchical nature. The latter half of Moundville III sees the abandonment of most of the mounds and a shift to elite off mound burials (Knight 2010; Knight and Steponaitis 1998). Also, while the population within the site clearly decreases, the number of burials seems to increase, showing continued use of Moundville as a burial site (Steponaitis 1998; Wilson 2008; Wilson et al. 2010). During the Moundville IV phase, AD 1550 to 1700, Moundville is abandoned, except for some poorly understood use of some of the larger mounds, and a number of smaller more economically independent sites are once again seen throughout the Black Warrior River Valley (Knight and Steponaitis 1998; Steponaitis 1998). It was expected that ceramics from the Rhodes residential area burials would place it within the Moundville phases and demonstrate temporal connections to other areas of study within the larger Moundville site.

Mortuary Analysis, Social Status, and Wealth

Mortuary Analysis

Since the 1960s, interest has increased in how mortuary, or burial, practices can be used to interpret social organization. By examining extant cultures in the Human Relations Area Files (HRAF), Binford (1971) found that social organization can have an effect on mortuary practices. Binford (1971:23) observed three aspects of mortuary practices: 1) the types of social dimensions recognized during burial practices differ across societies with different forms of social complexity, “as measured by different forms of subsistence practice”; 2) the number of social dimensions recognized in burial practices differ across societies with different forms of

social complexity; and 3) the form of mortuary practices vary according to the social dimensions recognized. These effects can then be seen in the archaeological record via associated grave goods, body position, geographical location of the burial, and age and sex of the deceased. At the same time that Binford was testing these hypotheses using the HRAF, Saxe was formulating the same ideas with his dissertation research on social status and mortuary practices (Pearson 1999; Saxe 1970).

The ways in which Binford and Saxe analyzed burials in terms of social organization, labeled the Saxe-Binford approach, rests on two major assumptions: 1) as the amount of social identities held by someone in the form of social ranking increases so will the amount of symbols representing these identities, and 2) these symbols are reflected “accurately and unambiguously” through burial practices and grave goods (Binford 1971; Sullivan and Mainfort 2010:4). Binford and Saxe use Goodenough’s concept of “role theory” to propose that people may have multiple roles in life, or “social identities,” and that many or all of these identities will be represented during burial rites (Pearson 1999:73). These identities will come across through burial goods, body position, location, and many other variable aspects pertaining to mortuary practice. While both of the assumptions in the Saxe-Binford approach can be problematic, the second assumption, that symbols unambiguously reflect social identity, is the more problematic of the two. Even Binford (1971) recognized that differing circumstances surrounding a death can influence the symbols buried with the individual. This assumption also ignores the possibility that grave goods are not exactly symbols of social status, but rather markers of individual or group wealth. Also, the living people involved in mortuary practices must be considered when discussing the meaning behind burials and their associated objects (Pauketat 2010). According to Michael Parker Pearson (1999), Saxe discusses the relationship of the living with the dead more

fully in his dissertation. Saxe (1970) recognizes that what is symbolized in burial is determined by the living and that those statuses which the living recognize and choose to symbolize are the only statuses that archaeologists can really approach (Pearson 1999). Thus, what the archaeologist sees will represent only the social statuses (or dimensions) that were recognized post-mortem, not all of the social statuses held by a specific person.

The use of burials to discern social status, using methods like the Saxe-Binford approach, often led researchers to categorize societies by neo-evolutionary ideas (Pearson 1999). Since their inception, the various levels of complexity defined by Service (1962) and Fried (1967) have been used repeatedly in archaeology to characterize past societies and their social complexity. Service (1962) developed four levels of complexity – band, tribe, chiefdom, and state – with band being the least socially complex (so more equitable social status among group members) and state being the most socially complex. Fried (1967) also developed levels of complexity based on social relations: egalitarian, rank, stratified. Egalitarian, like band organization, is the least socially complex category while stratified (class) society, like state organization, is the most complex. The middle categories of tribe and chiefdom organization represent increasing levels of social complexity marked by the appearance of kin groups ranked by ascribed or inherited status. Each of these idealized categories were then operationalized and applied to past groups that have been studied by archaeologists (Johnson 2010).

Mortuary Analysis at Moundville

The southeastern United States has been the subject in a long history of research centered on mortuary remains. One of the earliest examples of this research is in the work of C. B. Moore. His excavations of burial remains focused on mound contexts and provided a large amount of artifacts for museums, many of which are now at the Museum of the American Indian at the

Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D. C. (Blitz 2008). However, his work at Moundville and other American Indian sites throughout the region were not highly analytical in nature, but more of a survey of occupation and cemetery sites close to boat accessible waterways (Blitz 2008). Similarly, research during the Great Depression entailed excavating numerous burials. Between 1929 and 1941, the Alabama Museum of Natural History and the CCC, performed numerous excavations at Moundville, ultimately excavating 4.5 hectares and recovering approximately 2000 burials (Steponaitis 2009). Many of these burials have been examined for various research projects, which often are used to help study occupation history or social organization (Pearson 1999; Wilson 2008; Wilson et al. 2010).

Using the idealized neo-evolutionary categories discussed above, Moundville was thought to be a “ranked” society with chiefdom organization, containing a chief at the apex and a descending order of nobles and commoners whose status was primarily ascribed according to birth (Peebles and Kus 1977; Sullivan and Mainfort 2010). Taking into consideration the aforementioned social categories, Peebles and Kus (1977) examined Moundville burials, differentiating between subordinate and superordinate aspects of social status as they did so. Subordinate characteristics of social status pertain to age, sex, and achievement. Superordinate characteristics of social status pertain to grave goods, symbols, and other aspects of burial that are not attributable to subordinate qualities. Thus, Peebles and Kus (1977) argue that the more social status items included in and energy expended on burials can indicate social stratification. In more recent years, research on Mississippian mortuary practices have shown the additional importance of achieved status based on a complex system of kin groups who elected people to high status positions based on attributes such as achievement and experience (Knight 1990; Marcoux 2010; Wilson et al. 2010). Status based on birth (ascribed) can be seen in burials where

high status artifacts, such as ceremonial objects, occur across all age and sex groups. Even though younger members of ascribed elite statuses may not have enough time in their life to achieve wealth or their status, they may be buried with high status items indicative of scribed hierarchies. Achieved status can be seen in burials where high status artifacts are restricted to a certain age and sex category (Marcoux 2010). If status is achieved through experience, then only people who have longer life histories may have enough time to gain statuses that will be seen in burial items.

Gregory Wilson, Vincas Steponaitis, and Keith Jacobi (2010) explore the ways social status can be seen in Moundville burials excavated during the 1930s and 1940s. Their data derives from excavations done in order to make room for the Roadway that encircles the center of the park. While most of the burials were extended, primary burials, some bundle and skull burials were also excavated (Wilson et al. 2010:78). Bundle and skull burials are indicative of secondary burial practices in which an individual is first buried or left to decompose in one place, probably close to where they died, and then exhumed and transported to a second location for reburial. Of the Roadway burials, 83 had age and sex information which could be used to discuss distribution of artifacts. What was found was that most individual burials had no associated grave goods, men were buried with more artifacts than women, and that artifacts indicative of wealth and social status were present in the burials. Although the majority of burials were not associated with artifacts, artifacts were found with individuals ranging in age from 0-50 years and across both sexes. From this information, Wilson et al. (2010) conclude that both ascribed and achieved status were present at the same time in Moundville groups.

Wealth and Social Status in Burials

To apply these concepts to burials, one must take into account the problem mentioned above, that burials are made and arranged by the living. Thus, one is not exactly studying the status or identity of the deceased, but rather the status and other aspects of burials as they are perceived by the individuals acting out the burials (Hally 2008; Sullivan and Mainfort 2010). Some researchers argue, however, that, like most actions within culture, mortuary practices can be largely dictated by the customs of the culture under study. Therefore, to better understand the symbols of grave goods, there should be an understanding of how these goods functioned among the living (Hally 2008).

One of the best ways to understand how grave goods functioned among the living is by distinguishing between status and wealth items. Status items are artifacts that are restricted to individuals as a result of their specific social status, role, or position in society. Access to these items is determined by the individual's social position or persona, independent of their economic wealth. Examples of such a social status might be an office of political leadership, a status defined by kinship, or a priest or similar religious practitioner, which may be marked by items representative of this status, such as a badge or crown. Previous research at Moundville and related sites by Peebles (1971), Welch (1991), Blitz (1993), Marcoux (2010) and others suggests that status items were rare, highly crafted, non-utilitarian artifacts of copper, stone, and shell that functioned as ornaments, symbol badges, and other specialized accoutrements often decorated with complex iconography. In contrast, wealth items are artifacts that are valued because ownership confers prestige and/or the items have a high utilitarian use value. Wealth items are not restricted to a particular social status but are potentially accessible to all members of society. Identification of status versus wealth in archaeological contexts is not an easy task. However, wealth items are likely to be much more widely distributed in society than are status items

(Prentice 1987). Probable wealth items at Moundville and related sites, commonly found discarded in residential trash when broken, include pottery, mineral pigments, and stone or bone tools. Individuals may accrue both status and wealth items regardless of their ascribed or achieved status.

Summary

Moundville was a Mississippian mound center occupied between A.D. 900 and A.D. 1700. The site has been researched since the early 1900s, when C. B. Moore first excavated there. This long tradition of research continues into the present, primarily with the University of Alabama. During this long research history, much has been learned about the social organization of Moundville's inhabitants. However, due to changing ideas about chiefdoms and rank societies, many questions remain to be answered. Since the 1960s, burials have been used to help interpret social organization of past societies, starting with Binford's (1971) article on the potential of mortuary practices to be used in such studies. This research combined with the work of Saxe led to the development of the Saxe-Binford approach, which argues that social status can be seen through the treatment of the deceased and the deposition of grave goods.

Peebles and Kus (1977) argue that Moundville was a ranked society with ascribed status present, meaning that individuals inherited their status by being born into a high-ranked kin group. Ranked societies is a term informed by Service (1962) and Fried (1967) and their neo-evolutionary stages of social complexity. By their definitions, the work of Peebles and Kus (1977), and much subsequent research, Moundville is often considered a chiefdom of hierarchical organization based on birth with a chief at the apex and a descending order of nobles. Wilson et al. (2010) apply the Binford-Saxe approach to the Roadway burials at Moundville, determining that both ascribed and achieved status are present there. Their

conclusion demonstrates that social organization at Moundville is more complicated than previously suspected.

While the Rhodes residential area is considered part of Moundville, no research has focused more exclusively on this section of the site. Following the work of Wilson et al. (2010), examining the distribution and diversity of grave goods at the Rhodes residential area can provide more information on status and wealth at Moundville. This research is significant because it can answer the question of whether the social status of burial populations in different residential areas of the Moundville site was similar or different, which has implications for understanding Moundville's social and community organization. Varying distributions of grave goods across burials in different residential groups will demonstrate whether mortuary practices, status, and wealth are uniform across Moundville or different according to residential kin group areas. If different manifestations or distributions of grave goods across residential groups occur, then there was most likely differential access to wealth and status objects, indicating a hierarchy of kin groups. If more uniform distributions of grave goods across residential kin groups occur, then wealth and status items may not have been an important aspect in developing social differences. Knowing the distribution of grave goods within residential kin groups and comparing said distributions across Moundville can help in understanding the role wealth and status items played in Moundville's social organization.

CHAPTER 3 THE RHODES RESIDENTIAL AREA

During the 1930s Great Depression excavations, Walter B. Jones took a special interest in the Moundville site. Using his own money he and the Alabama Museum of Natural History bought parts of the site and donated them to the University of Alabama (Blitz 2008:21). Thus, the portion of the Moundville site that makes up the archaeological park consists of the pieces of land that Jones and the University of Alabama could purchase. However, portions of the site, including the Rhodes residential area, still remain outside the park's boundaries. The Rhodes residential area is located northeast of Moundville Archaeological Park, sharing a small unnamed stream as a boundary and being bounded to the north by Carthage Branch Creek (Figure 1). Besides being located outside the park, the Rhodes residential area is also interesting because, though it is separated from the rest of Moundville by a small stream, it is still considered to be inside the palisade wall (Peebles 1973). In this chapter, what is known about the Rhodes site will be presented. With this chapter, it is the author's hope that the reader can understand what past excavations were conducted at the Rhodes residential area, what is already known about this area, and how the presented research fits into this record.

The Rhodes residential area was excavated as two sites (Rhodes and Upper Rhodes sites) in 1935 and 1936 by the Alabama Museum of Natural History. To prevent confusion within their respective descriptions, each excavated section will be called the Rhodes site and Upper Rhodes site. When they are discussed together at the end of this chapter and throughout the rest of this thesis, they will be referred to collectively as the Rhodes residential area. The Rhodes residential

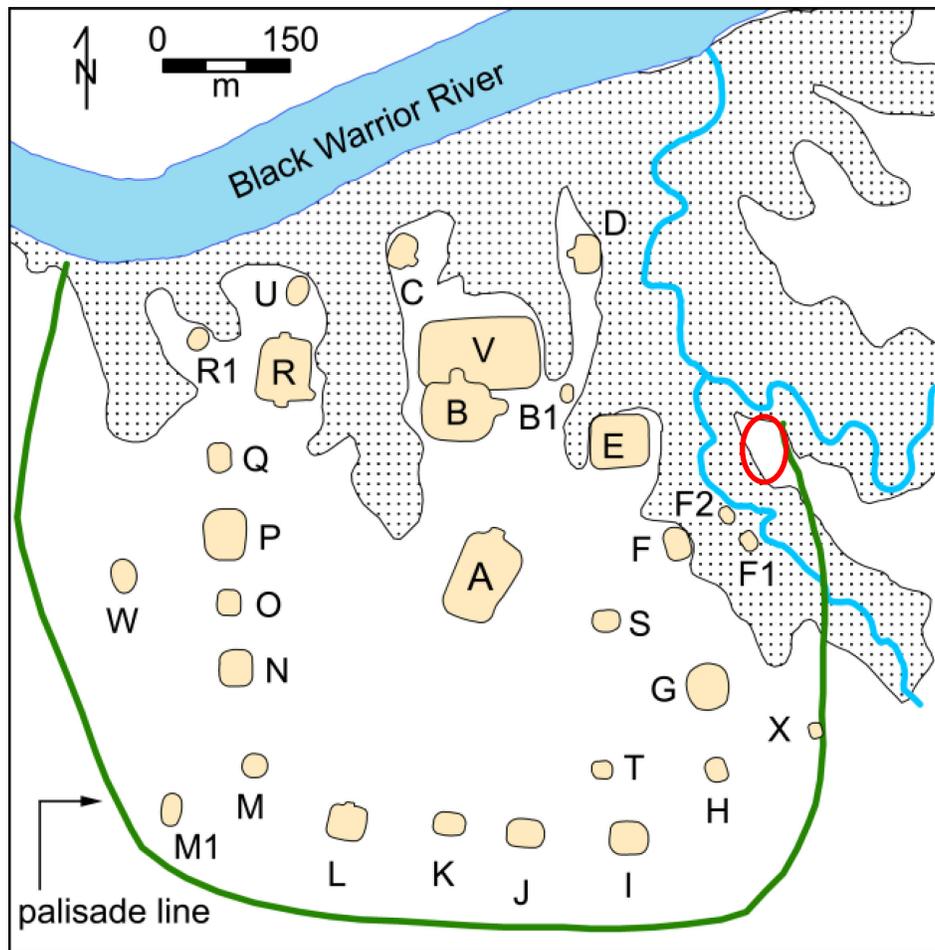


Figure 1: Map of Moundville (Copyright, 2009, John H. Blitz, used by permission). The red circle denotes general location of the Rhodes residential area.

area is located on what was, at the time of excavation, a 15 acre farm owned by Oliver Rhodes. Unfortunately, at the time when Christopher Peebles (1973) was compiling information on Moundville excavations from 1905 to 1951, only the Rhodes site could be placed on the landscape with any degree of accuracy. For the purposes of this thesis, however, burials from both the Rhodes site and the Upper Rhodes site are examined together. Because both artifact collections were used, both will be presented here, first the Rhodes site and then the Upper Rhodes site. After presenting general information about both sites, the burials and grave goods selected for the current study will be explored in greater detail.

The Rhodes site was excavated from January 16 to January 30, 1936. Within that time, many burials and other features were identified and excavated. Approximately 108 burials were excavated at the Rhodes site, many of which were not recovered from the field, most likely due to excavation methods and bone preservation. According to Peebles (1973), 64 were single burials, 41 were multiple burials, and 3 had no data available. Even though the excavation notes were not written with very much detail, many of the note cards assigned to each burial do state how far below the surface each burial was located, what grid square the burial was located in, whether the individuals were extended or flexed, and what artifacts were associated with the burials. All artifacts were given an artifact number that begins with "Rho." With this system the artifacts were numbered Rho1 through Rho211, and the burials were numbered Rho1894 to Rho2000. Besides burials, wall trenches, middens, and hearths were also identified as features and excavated accordingly. In the literature, Peebles (1977:1092) refers to middens as "garbage pits" and hearths as "firebasins." While my research does not pertain to other features besides burials, Peebles (1977:1092) does note that many of the burials that contained many artifacts were positioned around firebasins (Figure 2 and Figure 3). For the Rhodes site, many of these features can be seen on Figures 2 and 3 in sketch maps that were redrawn from Peebles (1978:Figures 13.6 and 13.7). The excavation area (and, thus, the maps) was gridded into five foot increments. The east-west axis is centered on a central axis and numbered in five foot increments to the left and right. These numbers are then designated with an "L" or "R" depending on cardinal direction: west is left ("L") and east is right ("R") of the central axis. The north-south axis starts at zero at the base of the excavations and continues north at five foot increments, reaching 180 feet north of the east-west axis. Using these five foot increments,

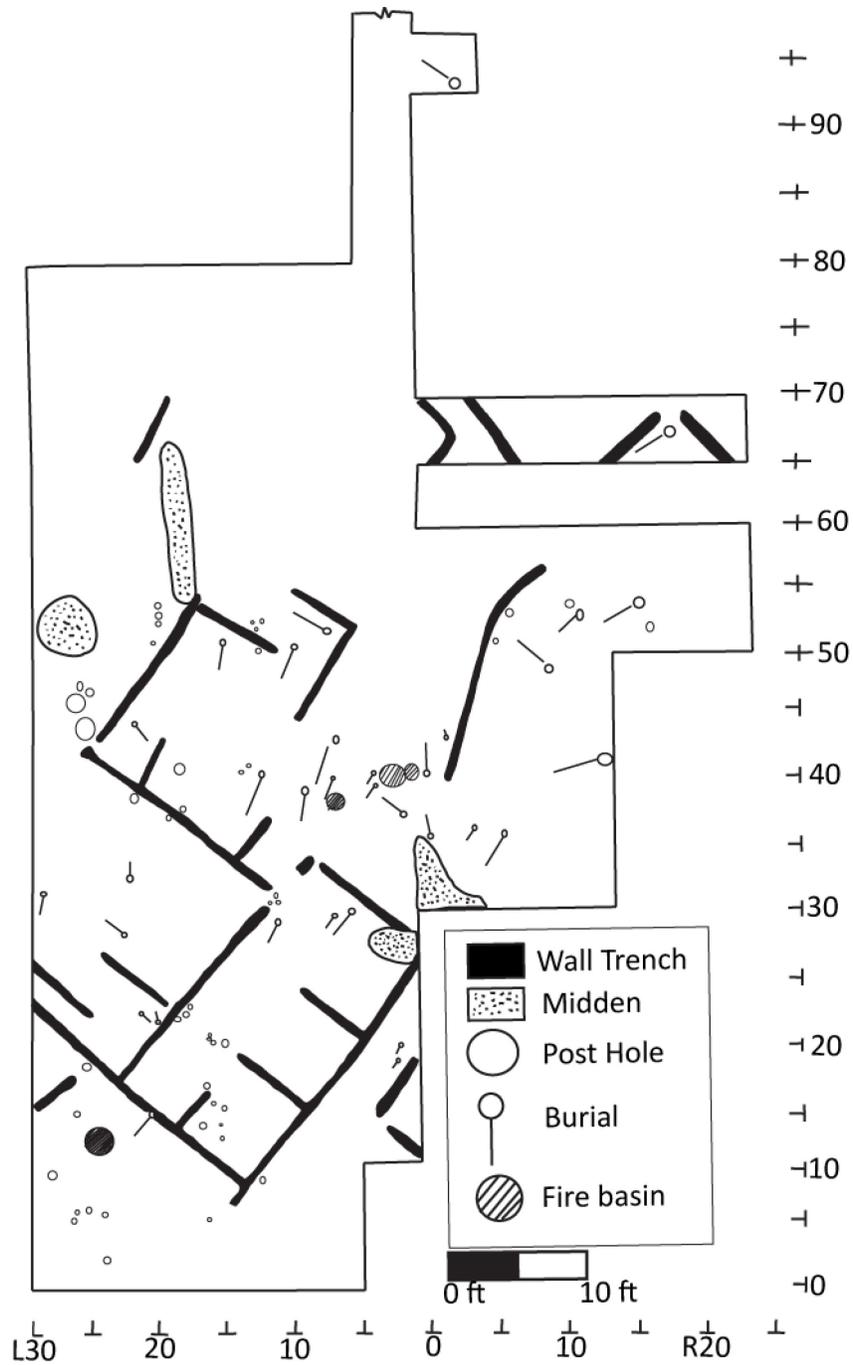


Figure 2: Excavation map of the Rhodes residential area (Redrawn from Peebles 1978:Figure 13.6).

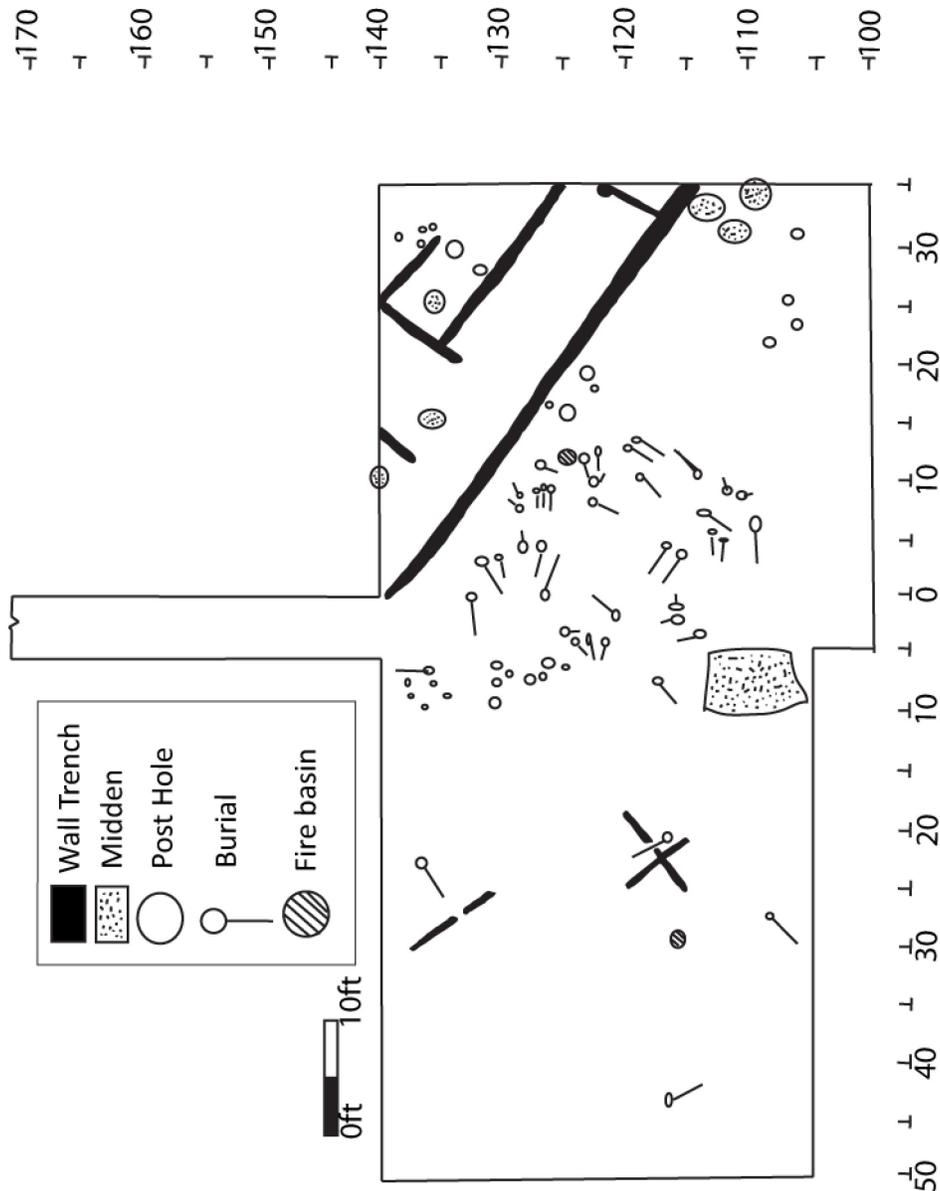


Figure 3: Excavation map of the Rhodes residential area (Redrawn from Peebles 1978:Figure 13.7). The figure connects to Figure 2 at N100E0.

artifacts, burials, and other features were designated to 25 square foot blocks within the excavation area.

The Upper Rhodes site was excavated during December of 1935 and January of 1936 by the Alabama Museum of Natural History (Figure 4). Even though Peebles (1973:1146) could place the Rhodes site on the landscape with some degree of accuracy, he could not say the same for the Upper Rhodes site. Its general location is thought to be east and southeast of the Rhodes

site, but no landmarks could be found that would provide any more information. Spatial information for burials, artifacts, and features was recorded similarly to Rhodes site spatial information, using a grid system of five-foot-by-five-foot squares. Along with wall trenches, hearths, and burials, excavators also found areas of hard packed earth that are described as prepared floors. Nineteen “firebasins” were identified and, as with the Rhodes site, some firebasins seem to have burials focused around them (Peebles 1973:1149).

In general, Peebles (1973) lists 129 individuals found at the Upper Rhodes site. Of the 129 individuals, 76 are recorded as single burials, 45 are multiple burials, and 8 had no data available. Like with the Rhodes site, these burials and all artifacts were given numbers and a prefix. Although Peebles (1973) lists Upper Rhodes site artifacts and burials under the prefix “URho,” the artifacts and burial information examined labeled Upper Rhodes materials under the same prefix as the Rhodes site (Rho). For simplicity, the Upper Rhodes site is considered to have the prefix “Rho.” Artifacts are numbered Rho212 to Rho373, and burials are numbered Rho2001 to 2116a. The burials and artifacts from the two sites are numbered consecutively, indicating the strong relationship between the two areas.

As with the Rhodes site, Peebles (1973) compiled his data for the Upper Rhodes site from the excavation notes produced in 1935 and 1936. Along with listing each skeleton by number and labeling them as parts of single or multiple burials, he also listed which artifacts were contained in each burial, whether the individuals were flexed or extended, how close each burial was to a firebasin, how far below the surface each burial was located, and whether or not any of the skeletal remains were recovered. Even though Peebles (1973) also listed whether the excavation notes stated the skeleton was male or female and adult or child, this information is not very reliable. Luckily, more accurate sex and age information is available now. In the 1990s,

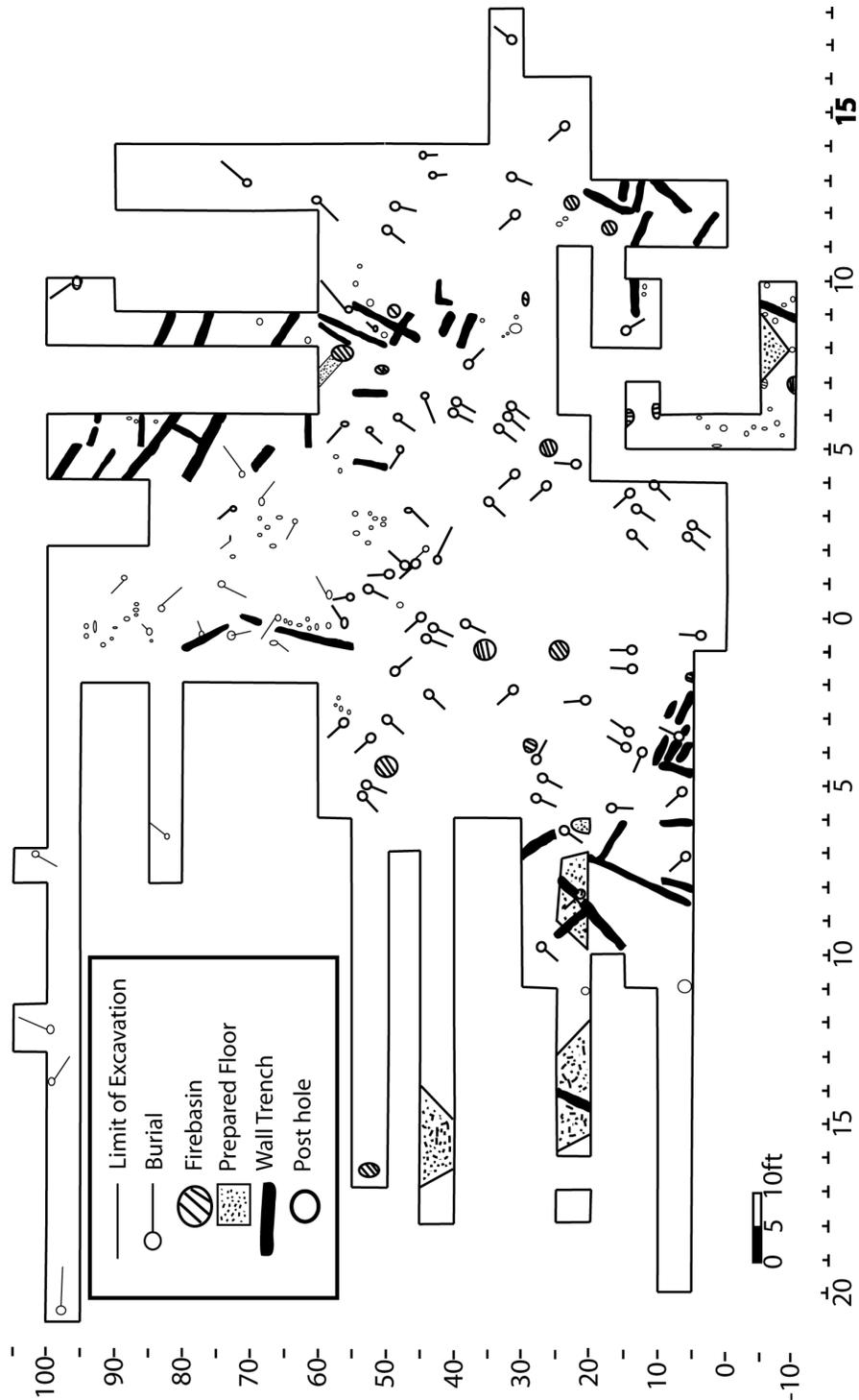


Figure 4: Excavation map of the Upper Rhodes site (Redrawn from Peebles 1973:Figure XI-6).

under the direction of Keith Jacobi, an inventory was made of all skeletal remains held by the University of Alabama per requirements of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA).

In the following chapters, more information will be provided about the specific methods for choosing a burial sample as well as the methods for analyzing burials in regards to frequency and diversity of artifacts. One analytical tool that will be introduced in Chapter 4 is the Sherrat diagram, a visual aid used in exploring the distribution of grave goods across age and sex categories. This diagram, however, requires very specific information for each burial, such as artifact context, age range, and (for adult burials) sex. These data severely limit the sample size available to me from the Rhodes residential area due to preservation and excavation methods.

Using information from the NAGPRA inventory and Peebles's (1973) unpublished manuscript, age, sex, and artifact association information was found for 37 burials, 20 of which came from the Rhodes site and 17 from the Upper Rhodes site (Table 1). While data on the burials, including their associated artifacts, age, and sex, come from from Peebles (1973) and Jacobi's NAGPRA inventory, chronological information is derived from Steponaitis (2009). In the late 1970s, Steponaitis (2009) used some of the whole ceramic vessels found in burials at the Rhodes site to construct a Moundville ceramic chronology based on grave lot seriation. Using his data gained from the Rhodes site, burials with chronologically diagnostic ceramics can be temporally placed within the Moundville chronology and used to meet the first research objective – to place the Rhodes residential area into the Moundville chronology. The second objective – to assess wealth and status through mortuary practices – will be met through examining the Rhodes residential area burials.

Through the above description of the Rhodes residential area, a few important points for my research become clearer. First, the wall trench, firebasin, and midden features present in the study area demonstrate that the excavations on the Rhodes farm are in a residential area. Secondly, the burials seem to cluster similarly to other residential areas at Moundville (Wilson 2008). Because it is a residential area, the results found for objectives one and two can be compared to other residential groups in Moundville. Comparing mortuary practices, as seen in the frequency and diversity of grave goods, across different residential groups will help determine if different kin groups treated their dead differentially. To understand if uniform mortuary practices, or even uniform access to wealth and status, existed across Moundville, inner-site comparisons between residential groups must be undertaken. The third research objective, then, is to perform such a comparison using the Rhodes residential area burials (investigated in this thesis) and burials from a Roadway residential area that were investigated by Wilson et al. (2010). In the following chapter, the methods used to gather ceramic and burial samples are explained.

Table 1: Single burials sample from the Rhodes residential area.

Burial No.	Sex*	Age Class	Burial Type	Artifact Contents
1894	M	24-30	Extended, Supine	Water Bottle, Bowl, Large Vessel Fragment
1895	I	9-10	Extended, Supine	Duck Effigy Bowl, Water Bottle
1897	M	42-50	Fully Flexed, Right Side	
1899	I	2-3	Extended, Supine	20 tubular shell beads
1900	I	2-4	Extended, Supine	
1901	M	35-39	Extended, Supine	Bowl, Large Projectile Point, 3 Bone awls, Blaze (ceramic?), Red paint on bone awls
1902	F	40-44	Extended, Supine	
1905	I	4-8		6 bone awls
1914	M	45-55	Extended, Supine	

1917	F	20-24	Extended, Supine	
1921	F	16-21	Disturbed	
1933	M	45-55	Disturbed	
1934	F	20-24	Extended, Supine	Pot, Bowl Fragment, 2 Shell Beads, Large Pot Fragment, Stone tool, Bowl, Greenstone Slab, Bear Tooth, Galena
1941	F	24-30	Disturbed	
1950	F	31-35	Extended, Supine	large pot fragment, bottle, bowl
1954	M	18-22	Extended, Supine	Clam shell effigy
1955	F	16-22	Disturbed	Water Bottle, pot, bowl, ceramic discoidal
1984	F	35-45	Extended, Supine	ceramic discoidal, shells
1985	F	20-24	Extended, Supine	
1994	F	20-24	Extended, Supine	
1996	F	40-50	Extended, Supine	Ceramic fragment
2023	F	21-31	Extended, Supine	shell beads (245RHO)
2025	I	1-3		
2026	I	1- 18 months	Extended, Supine	
2028	I	3-5	Extended, Supine	
2034	I	1-2	Extended, Supine	
2040	F	18-22	Extended, Supine	Bone awl (249), Mussel Shells (248)
2042	F	24-30	Extended, Supine	Large Bowl (251), Waterbottle (252)
2047	F	20-30	Extended, Supine	Water Bottle (256), Bowl (257)
2048	M	30-35	Extended, Supine	
2051	M	35-39	Extended, Supine	
2064	I	15 months - 21 months	Extended, Supine	
2078	I	Birth	Extended, Supine	
2079	F	20-30	Extended, Supine	
2087	F	45-55	Extended, Supine	Bowl (333), Awl (334), Bowl (336), Water Bottle (337), Turkey bone (335) in bowl 333
2099	F	20-25	Extended, Supine	
2106	F	16-20	Extended, Supine	

* M = Male, F = Female, I = Indeterminate

CHAPTER 4 METHODS

To meet the research objectives of this project, various methods had to be implemented. The first objective, to place the Rhodes residential area into the Moundville chronology and compare the site, chronologically, to other parts of Moundville, used ceramic phases developed by Steponaitis (2009) and Knight (2010). The second objective, examining wealth and status, entailed analyzing the frequency and diversity of artifacts found within burials using frequency analyses and the construction of a Sherrat diagram. The third objective, comparing the wealth and status of the Rhodes residential area to the Roadway burials examined by Wilson et al. (2010), involved a visual analysis of the Sherrat diagrams for each of these areas and the frequency of artifacts per burial.

This chapter is organized into sections according to objective. The first section describes the Moundville ceramic chronology with descriptions of all relevant ceramic types. The second and third sections describe the selection of the burial sample, the categorization of artifacts into wealth and status objects, and the method used to compare these categories at the Rhodes residential area to the Roadway burials analyzed in Wilson et al. (2010). All artifact information was compiled from Peebles (1971) and from examining artifacts housed at the University of Alabama Office of Archaeological Research (OAR) in Moundville, Alabama.

Moundville Ceramic Typology and Chronology

Although many of the ceramics found in the Rhodes residential area burials have been analyzed as part of a larger sample to construct an overall chronology of the Moundville site, this

chronology has not been applied specifically to the Rhodes residential area. Thus, the Moundville ceramic chronology is important to this research in order to highlight specifically when the Rhodes residential area was occupied and used. The Moundville ceramic chronology is a dendritic style classification system consisting of types and varieties (Steponaitis 2009: 50-51). The type-variety system is one of the most elaborate and one of the more frequently used forms of pottery classification (Rice 1987). It is a “hierarchical system” with varieties being the smallest unit recognized. Similar varieties are then grouped together into types (Rice 1987:282-283). For Moundville, the type-variety system was devised by Vincas Steponaitis (2009) in the 1970s and 1980s in order to more accurately subdivide the approximately 500-year period of Moundville’s use and occupation between A.D. 900 and A.D. 1500. Before this venture, ceramics had already been put into various types, such as Moundville Incised, Moundville Engraved, etc.; however, this only separated a Moundville phase from an earlier Woodland phase, called the West Jefferson phase, and a later proto-historic phase, called the Alabama River phase (McKenzie 1966; Steponaitis 2009). In order to avoid too much confusion, Steponaitis (2009) developed the Moundville type-variety system using and refining already developed types and grouping similar ceramics together within those types to make different varieties. Both types and varieties are generally characterized by paste composition, surface finish, and decorative technique (Rice 1987; Steponaitis 2009:50).

The largest ceramic groupings are separated by temper, primarily on the presence or absence of shell temper or grog temper. Temper is usually a non-plastic material that is intentionally added to a clay paste in order to improve characteristics of the clay for working, firing, or drying (Rice 1987). Different tempers can also change the performance capabilities of finished pottery, allowing pottery to have a higher tensile strength or survive more heat stress

without breaking (Rice 1987). Shell temper is characteristic of Mississippian pottery, replacing the earlier grog temper found during the Woodland period (McKenzie 1966). Grog temper consists of crushed fired ceramics, ranging from fine, hard to see grain sizes to coarser, easily recognizable pieces within the ceramic paste (Rice 1987; Steponaitis 2009). Shell temper also ranges from fine to coarse and comprises the majority of Moundville ceramics (Steponaitis 2009). At Moundville, shell temper consists of crushed mussel shell from the Black Warrior River.

For the Moundville ceramics, shell tempered pottery is then classified into two different groups based on surface treatment: burnished or unburnished. Burnishing refers to both a technique and a finished appearance. The finished appearance known as burnished is a lustrous, compact surface with no signs of temper. It is accomplished when an instrument, such as a smooth pebble or bone, is rubbed across the surface of a vessel in a leathery hard state (Shepard 1956; Rice 1987; Steponaitis 2009). In Moundville ceramics, it is also usually black, indicating a reduced atmosphere firing (Steponaitis 2009). In a reduced atmosphere firing, the vessels are covered, during the firing the process, with some material that causes the fire to burn off oxygen in the firing atmosphere and on the surface of the vessel (Rice 1987). In the earlier attempts to categorize Moundville pottery, black burnished pottery was often placed under the classification black filmed (Steponaitis 2009; McKenzie 1966).

Once the ceramics have been assigned to a group based on surface treatment, they can then – through examination of decoration, paste composition, and (sometimes) vessel form – be placed into types and varieties (Steponaitis 2009). Each type and variety that has been delineated in Moundville ceramics has specific decorations or other characteristics that are described in detail by Steponaitis (2009) and Knight (2010).

Once Steponaitis (2009) established the Moundville ceramic types and varieties, he placed them into relative chronological order through grave lot seriation and super positioning of modern excavations. This relative chronology was then cross referenced with carbon dates to place it in a range of absolute dates (Knight 2010). Steponaitis (2009) and Knight (2010) also broke the large Moundville phase discussed by McKenzie (1966) into five basic ceramic phases that make up the ceramic chronology: West Jefferson phase, Moundville phase I, Moundville phase II, Moundville phase III, and Moundville phase IV. This last phase is labeled the Alabama River phase by Steponaitis (2009) but was later changed by Curren (1984) to Moundville phase IV (Knight 2010).

The Rhodes Residential Area Ceramic Sample

My research used two different ceramic samples from the Rhodes residential area. The first sample comes from ceramics that are not associated with burials and are more indicative of occupation or use of the site outside burial contexts, while the second sample contains ceramics typed by Steponaitis (2009) from Rhodes residential area burials. OAR currently houses five boxes of unassociated ceramic sherds from the Rhodes residential area. Boxes 4 and 5 of this collection contain unwashed, unprocessed sherds that are mostly too small to type or are completely plain and therefore not useful for chronological purposes. Consequently, and for the sake of time, I removed these from my sample. For the ceramic chronology to work, the sherds must either have a diagnostic decoration and surface treatment or have certain shapes. Because these are all sherds and the full shapes of the vessels cannot be definitively determined, I mainly focused on decorated pottery. Thus, my sample was restricted to only decorated body and rim sherds from boxes 1- 3 that identify chronological types, giving me a sample of 134 sherds.

To begin the study, all sherds were examined and marked decorated or undecorated and body or rim and then categorized by lot number. All decorated sherds were then analyzed and recorded according to lot number (record number for OAR), original artifact number (given to it when first processed), original type (as provided by OAR), temper (shell; grog; sand; shell and grog; or shell, grog, and sand), surface treatment (burnished or unburnished), orientation (body sherd or rim sherd), type/variety (as determined through decoration, temper, and surface treatment), and chronological phase with which the type/variety corresponds (based on *terminus post quem* or earliest known occurrence). The sherds that could not be placed into varieties were given a type but labeled *variety Unspecified*.

For the non-burial sample, a presence/absence method was used to gain a preliminary conclusion of when the site was occupied. Because plain types and varieties are not very helpful in determining ceramic phases, only decorated ceramics are included in the first sample. The second sample consists of ceramics that are associated with the burials included in the Sherrat diagram that will be discussed below. These ceramics, which were typed by Steponaitis (2009:231-233), tend to be complete vessels or large sherds. For this second sample, I do include all ceramics, even the plain, in order to gain more detail as to what types of ceramics were included in Rhodes residential area burials. Definitions of all relevant types and varieties in at least one of the two samples are presented in Appendix A.

Some secondary decorations that need to be noted are as follows: nodes, beaded rims, handles, and noded handles. Nodes are small protrusions that tend to be smoothed over, leaving a sort of bump on the surface of the vessel. Beaded rims are notched bands of clay that are applied to an already formed vessel (*appliqué*) just below the lip. Handles are pieces of clay that are

attached to a vessel near the rim and can be either utilitarian or decorative in nature. A noded handle is a handle that has nodes attached to it (Steponaitis 2009).

After the ceramics were typed, they were assigned to their associated phases. These phases then were used to determine when the area was most likely occupied and when the people were most likely interred. These corresponding phases then were compared to results found in Wilson et al. (2010) in order to examine if the burials at and occupation of the Rhodes residential area were contemporaneous with other parts of Moundville and followed the same patterns. Along with ceramics, many other artifacts were taken into consideration when examining the wealth and status of the burials in order to meet the second and third research objectives.

Burial Sample

The main analytical tool for examining the wealth and status found in mortuary practices at the Rhodes residential area is the Sherrat diagram, used in conjunction with the frequency and diversity of artifacts associated with graves. The Sherrat diagram is a visual tool that organizes individual burials according to sex and age (Sherrat 1982:Figure 8.2), allowing the researcher to see the distribution of artifacts across age and sex categories. Because the Sherrat diagram assigns associated artifacts to specific burials, no multiple burials could be used in this sample; however, all individual adult burials that could provide age and sex information were used, as were all individual child burials that could provide age information. Initially, only the original excavations labeled “Rhodes site” were used in the analysis; unfortunately, the sample size was extremely small. As mentioned in Chapter 3, to remedy this situation, the excavations labeled “Upper Rhodes site” also were included in the sample because the two locations were in close proximity.

Age and sex information was available from the University of Alabama Human Osteology Laboratory. No skeletons were analyzed in this study. Instead, all age and sex identifications came from inventory forms previously completed under the supervision of Keith Jacobi as a requirement of NAGPRA. In total, 37 burials were sampled to construct the Sherrat diagram, including 8 males, 19 females, and 10 children between 0 and 10 years of age that could not be assigned a sex. These burials were then organized into the Sherrat diagram with males and females separated by a central axis and all skeletons grouped into age ranges.

The age ranges given on the NAGPRA forms do not present very concise groupings: some of the remains are given wide age ranges, such as the skeleton (Rho1996) aged between 40 and 50 years; some of them are given small ranges, such as the skeleton (Rho2034) aged between 1 and 2 years; and many of them overlap. To group the burials into more organized age ranges, the median age for each burial was determined using the NAGPRA age ranges. These median ages were then used to place the individuals into the following groups: 0-4 years, 5-9 years, 10-19 years, 20-29 years, 30-39 years, 40-49 years, and 50-59 years. Thus, burial Rho1996 (listed as 40-50 years) has the median age of 45 and was placed in the 40-49 years category. Because children are easier to age, the first two groups (0-4 years and 5-9 years) were able to be 5 year ranges instead of 10 year ranges. These two categories are also the only ones without sex information.

After the burials were organized by age and sex, they were given symbols that correspond to their associated artifacts. These artifacts were classified using similar categories found in Wilson et al. (2010). Whole ceramics were classified by shape: bowl, bottle, and jar. Other artifacts were classified into the following categories: stone tool, bone awl, bone pin, ceramic sherd, shell, shell bead necklace, shell bead, greenstone palette, galena, red ochre, bear

claw, and animal bone. Using these general groupings helps facilitate comparison between the Rhodes residential area and the Roadway burials examined in Wilson et al. (2010). Similar groupings are also used to examine and compare the frequency of artifacts and artifact types between the two groups.

Other Artifact Analyses

Wilson et al. (2010:83-84) illustrate the inequality in Roadway individual burials by examining the frequency of artifacts within each burial. Artifact frequency is determined by examining both the number of artifacts and the number of artifact types within individual burials. The number of artifacts (NA) analysis gives a frequency of artifacts per individual burial in which each artifact counts equally. In the number of artifact types (NAT) analysis, each artifact type is counted once per burial. Because whole ceramic vessels are some of the most numerous artifacts in the burials, all whole vessels were counted as a single artifact type. Thus, if a burial contains the whole vessels of a bottle and a bowl, it will have a frequency of two in the NA analysis but a frequency of one in the NAT analysis. Both of these frequencies assist in demonstrating the distribution of artifacts in individual burials (Wilson et al. 2010:84; Marcoux 2010:160-161). These same frequency analyses also were used to examine if artifact information is lost by examining just single burials. Instead of examining all artifacts directly, artifact frequencies for all single and multiple burials were gained using the burial lists compiled by Peebles (1973). One point of confusion is that Peebles (1973) refers to each skeleton as a burial; so, a multiple burial has more than one burial number, generally one per skeleton. If multiple skeletons were found in a burial, I presume that they were all interred at the same time. To use multiple burials in any artifact analyses, where the unit of analysis is a burial, the skeletons excavated together as multiple burials are grouped as one entity. For example, burials Rho924,

Rho1925, and Rho1926 were labeled as multiple burials interred together. Because I cannot definitively say which of these burials had the most artifacts (since they were all in the same context) I count them as a single burial. The problem of association (which artifacts belong to which skeleton) is also the reason multiple burials are excluded from more qualitative analyses, such as the Sherrat diagram and wealth and status analysis.

Wealth and Status Analysis of Artifacts

Along with exploring the frequency of artifacts in a sample of individual burials, I also explore the distribution and frequency of artifacts placed in categories of wealth and status items. In the study of Mississippian political economy, it has long been understood that many artifacts can be considered indicative of social status among hierarchically ranked groups (Blitz 1993; Welch 1991; Wilson et al. 2010). Welch (1991), Blitz (1993), Marcoux (2010) and others suggest that status items were rare, highly crafted, non-utilitarian artifacts of copper, stone, and shell and functioned as ornaments, badges, and other specialized ornamentation often decorated with complex iconography. Moreover, other items of more local origin can be considered status items. For example, Welch (1991) hints that some finely made ceramic serving wares can be considered status items because they require more production steps than coarser utilitarian ceramic wares and are of more value. However, Moundville ceramics that fit this category are very abundant in trash deposits and are distributed across the site. Their abundance goes against the definition of status items, which are supposed to be exclusive and not widely distributed. For this reason, all ceramics, even highly decorated serving wares, are considered wealth items. From the Rhodes residential area, the following artifacts were classified as status items: greenstone palettes, galena, and bear claws.

When broken, probable wealth items at Moundville and related sites are commonly found discarded in residential trash. These include local pottery, locally found mineral pigments, and stone or bone tools (Blitz 1993). Wealth items tend to be available to all people, though in variable frequency, regardless of social status and lend their owner a certain amount of prestige. Along with the above named, mainly utilitarian wares are shell beads, which can be viewed as a source of wealth for many people within a Mississippian group (Prentice 1987; Thomas 1996). The following artifacts from the Rhodes residential area were classified as wealth items: ceramics, stone tools, bone awls, shell beads, shell necklaces, bone pins, and red ochre. These categories then were used to compare whether wealth or status items were seen more in males, females, or children and whether they were localized in certain age categories. This sort of categorization also helps to simply explore if wealth and status items can be found within the same cemetery. Furthermore, to examine how status may be different across the Moundville site and Moundville cemeteries, a comparison is made between the Roadway residential area burials studied by Wilson et al. (2010) and the Rhodes residential area.

Intra-site Comparison

To explore how burials from the Rhodes residential group might be similar or different to other areas at Moundville, sections from the Roadway burials will be compared to the Rhodes residential area. This comparison uses the Sherrat diagram and the NA analysis from the Rhodes residential area and from the Roadway burials found in Wilson et al. (2010). The Sherrat diagrams were compared visually and then quantitatively analyzed by examining the relative frequencies of artifacts associated with each burial and between gender groups and age groups. The two diagrams and artifact frequencies are comparable because of the similar artifact categories used in both studies. One discrepancy is the number of age categories found in each

diagram. The Rhodes residential area Sherrat diagram uses 10 year age ranges for adults and 5 year age ranges for children under 10 years. In comparison, the Sherrat diagram by Wilson et al. (2010) use five age ranges for both children and adults. Due to my smaller sample size in the Rhodes residential area, only two age groups (0-4 years and 5-9 years) are not sexed. However, the Sherrat diagram by Wilson et al. (2010) has three not sexed age groups (0-4 years, 5-9 years, and 10-14 years). To remedy this discrepancy, I combined their 10-14 years and 15-19 years categories and did not examine this group in either diagram with sex information. Other than this one discrepancy, the diagrams are similar enough to examine relative frequencies and percentages of artifacts distributed through age and sex.

Summary

To explore mortuary practices, wealth, and status at the Rhodes residential area, three objectives needed to be addressed with specific methods. The first objective, examining the site temporally, used two samples of ceramics that gave information on when the site was occupied and when the site was used for burying the dead. These ceramics were put into types and varieties and assigned to ceramic phases with known time spans using the system developed by Steponaitis (2009) and Knight (2010). The second objective, examining the wealth and status found in mortuary practices, required the examination of the frequency and diversity of artifacts in Rhodes residential area burials. To meet this objective, a Sherrat diagram was developed to examine the distribution of artifacts across sex and age categories. The frequency of artifacts and artifact types per burial was recorded in order to examine the distribution of artifacts across burials. Artifacts also were categorized by wealth and status to see the distribution of these categories in the Rhodes residential area. Once this was done, the necessary data were available to achieve the third objective, an intra-site comparison of the Rhodes residential area to a

Roadway residential area in order to examine the overall diversity of mortuary practices in single burials across the Moundville site. Analysis and results of the data obtained through these methods – the chronology of the Rhodes site, presentation and interpretation of the Rhodes Sherrat diagram, and evaluation of the relative status and wealth of the Rhodes residential area – are presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5 RESULTS AND ANALYSES

In the previous chapter, my methods for selecting ceramic and burial samples and examining the wealth and status through mortuary practices seen in the Rhodes residential area were explained. In this chapter, I operationalize my research on mortuary practices, wealth, and status and present the analysis and results of the methods. This chapter is broken into three main sections according to research objective. The first section examines the chronological associations from two Rhodes residential area ceramic samples and then compares these to the chronological results found in the Roadway burials reported by Wilson et al. (2010). The second section presents the analysis of burial goods and their distribution throughout Rhodes residential area burials. The third section reviews the results of similar procedures performed on Roadway burials by Wilson et al. (2010) in order to compare the relative status and wealth of the burials from the Roadway residential area and the burials from the Rhodes residential area.

Objective One: The Rhodes Area and the Moundville Chronology

Since Steponaitis (2009) refined the Moundville chronology, adding multiple phases and then separating them by early and late sub phases, a more concise diachronic analysis of Moundville assemblages now can be achieved (Welch 1991:30). This chronology, as described in Chapter Two, is based on ceramics that have been organized into chronological ceramic phases using grave lot seriation, controlled natural stratigraphic excavations, and radiocarbon dating. By associating a site or artifact assemblage with its corresponding ceramic phases (whenever an association is possible), temporal information can be gained. In order to examine

when the Rhodes residential area was occupied and used, two samples of ceramics were analyzed. The first ceramic sample comes from Rhodes habitation debris. This non-burial ceramic sample gives a preliminary estimate of when the residential area was occupied and used for non-burial purposes as well as when it was abandoned. The second sample focuses on ceramics found in Rhodes residential area burials. Most of this burial ceramic sample was previously classified by Steponaitis (2009:231-233). The burial ceramic sample is used to compare when in time the Rhodes residential area was used as a cemetery as opposed to when it was occupied and used for non-burial activities. This is an important distinction because of the common pattern found at other Moundville residential groups. Many of these residential areas were abandoned during late Moundville II and Moundville III and then exclusively used as cemeteries (Steponaitis 1998; Wilson 2008). Part of the first objective is to determine whether this same phenomenon is seen in the Rhodes residential area.

Non-burial Ceramic Sample

The non-burial ceramic sample (n=134) is a sample of decorated ceramics found throughout the Rhodes residential area. Of the roughly 1500 ceramic sherds, 134 could be placed into decorated types. Within this sample of decorated ceramics, 78 were classified into local type-varieties, 25 were classified into nonlocal types, 24 were classified into local types with no variety specified or identified, and 7 were shell tempered sherds placed in a residual category because they could not be assigned to a known type. Next, ceramics in the non-burial ceramic sample were assigned to their corresponding ceramic phases provided by Steponaitis (2009) and Knight (2010) (Table 2). The only sherds not assigned to specific phases or phase sequences are the unspecified local types and the unspecified shell tempered type. By these classifications, these ceramics span from Moundville I to late Moundville III. While some of the ceramic types

Table 2: The non-burial ceramic sample with corresponding ceramic phases.

Type/Variety	Total Sherds	Ceramic Phases
Mdville Inc/Carrollton	20	Early Moundville I – Late Moundville II
Mdville Inc/ Mdville	26	Early Moundville I – Late Moundville II
Mdville Inc/Snows Bend	2	Early Moundville I – Late Moundville II
Mdville Inc/ Oliver	4	Early Moundville I – Late Moundville II
Mdville Inc/ Unspecified	4	N/A
Carthage Inc/Akron	5	Early Moundville I – Early Moundville III
Carthage Inc/ Carthage	11	Moundville III
Carthage Inc/ Fosters	1	Moundville III
Carthage Inc/ Lupton	2	Moundville III
Carthage Inc/ Summerville	1	Late Moundville I
Carthage Inc/ Unspecified	18	N/A
Mdville Eng/ Havana	1	Early Moundville I – Early Moundville III
Mdville Eng/ Hemphill	4	Early Moundville I – Late Moundville III
Mdville Eng/ Wiggins	1	Late Moundville II – Late Moundville III
Mdville Eng/ Unspecified	2	N/A
Shell Tempered/ Unspec.	7	N/A
D'Olive Incise	4	Moundville II
D'Olive Engraved	11	Moundville II
Pensacola Incised	8	Late Moundville II – Late Moundville III
Mound Place Incised	2	Late Moundville II – Early Moundville III
Total:		134

and varieties span up to three phases, specific type-varieties provide tighter chronological control. For example, Carthage Incised, *variety Summerville* corresponds to late Moundville I; D'Olive Incised and D'Olive Engraved date to the Moundville II phase; and Carthage Incised varieties *Carthage*, *Fosters*, and *Lupton* all correspond specifically to Moundville III. From these

time spans we see that the Rhodes residential area was probably occupied as early as early Moundville I (A.D. 1050) and abandoned in late Moundville III (A.D. 1550). While the ceramic analysis could be expanded to include additional ceramic attributes that might be chronologically sensitive, this sample is sufficient to estimate when the Rhodes residential area was used for non-burial activities. Even though I do not explore what these activities could be, the presence of wall trenches and hearths at the Rhodes area is strong evidence that it was residential (Peebles 1973:1089-1092).

Burial Ceramic Sample

This sample consists of ceramics in association with the single burials that were used for the majority of the mortuary analysis. Most of these ceramics are whole vessels that were classified by Steponaitis (2009:231-233) when he originally compiled his grave lot seriation for the Moundville chronology. Even plain ceramics, such as Bell Plain and Mississippi Plain types, were included in this sample. This inclusion was done to accumulate as much detail as possible about the burial ceramics to supplement the examination of grave good distribution. In total, 13 single burials contained 23 ceramic vessels (Table 3). Four of these vessels were not typed by Steponaitis (2009), nor could they be found in the museum collections. While these four vessels were included in other analyses that did not require further information, they were omitted from analyses where types and varieties were needed (such as in discussions of chronology).

Of the remaining ceramics, the plain undecorated vessels (Mississippi Plain, *variety Warrior*; Mississippi Plain, *variety Unspecified*; Bell Plain, *variety Hale*; and Bell Plain, *variety Unspecified*) all correspond to the rather unhelpful and large time frame from Moundville I to Moundville IV, thus spanning the whole Moundville chronology from A.D. 900 to about A.D. 1520 (Knight 2010). Decorated vessels are more useful than undecorated vessels for identifying

Table 3: Rhodes residential area burial ceramic sample

Burial Number	Ceramics (artifact number)	Ceramic Phases*
1894	Bottle (34)	N/A
	Bowl (35)	N/A
	Mississippi Plain, <i>variety Warrior</i> sherd (36)	M I – M IV
1895	Bell Plain, <i>variety Hale</i> (37)	M I – M IV
	Moundville Engraved, <i>Maxwells Crossing</i> (38)	LM II – EM III
1901	Moundville Engraved <i>variety Havana</i> with band of nodes (48)	M I – EM III
1934	Mississippi Plain, <i>Warrior</i> (84)	M I – M IV
	Mississippi Plain, <i>Warrior</i> (90)	M I – M IV
	Mississippi Plain, <i>Warrior</i> (90)	N/A
	Unclassified Incised, nonlocal (153)	N/A
1950	Moundville Incised, <i>Carrollton</i> (132)	M I – EM II
	Bell Plain, <i>Hale</i> (134)	M I – M IV
1954	Bell Plain, <i>Hale</i> (136)	M I – M IV
1955	Unclassified Incised with festoons (138)	M I – M IV
1984	Bottle (137)	N/A
	Bell Plain, <i>Hale</i> (139)	M I – M IV
1996	Bell Plain, <i>Hale</i> with beaded rim (211)	LM II – LM III
2025	Bell Plain, <i>Hale</i> with beaded rim (227)	LM II – LM III
2042	Carthage Incised, <i>Moon Lake</i> (251)	M I
	Mississippi Plain, <i>Unspecified</i> (252)	M I – M IV
2047	Bell Plain, <i>Unspecified</i> (256)	M I – M IV
	Carthage Incised, <i>Moon Lake</i> (257)	M I
2087	Bell Plain, <i>Hale</i> with beaded rim (333)	LM II – LM III
	Bowl (336)	N/A
	Bell Plain, <i>Hale</i> (337)	M I – M IV

*M = Moundville; EM = early Moundville; LM = late Moundville; I, II, III, and IV = Ceramic Phase

ceramic phases. Two burials (Rho2042 and Rho2047) each contain a Carthage Incised, *variety Moon Lake*, which dates exclusively to Moundville I, demonstrating that the residential area began as a cemetery rather early in Moundville’s history. Burial Rho1950 dates from Moundville I to early Moundville II, demonstrating continuity in mortuary activity through the first two phases of the Moundville chronology. To further illustrate this point, burials Rho1895, Rho1996, Rho2025, and Rho2087 date to a time span from late Moundville II to late Moundville III. In fact, if one examines the burials with vessels of decorated type-varieties that correspond to tighter time frames (excluding the plain vessels that span all four phases), evidence suggests that the Rhodes residential area was used as a cemetery from Moundville I to sometime in the Moundville III phase (Table 4).

Table 4: Rhodes residential area burials with chronological information.

Burial Number	Ceramic Phase
1895	Late Moundville II – Early Moundville III
1901	Moundville I – Early Moundville III
1950	Moundville I – Early Moundville II
1996	Late Moundville II – Late Moundville III
2025	Late Moundville II – Late Moundville III
2042	Moundville I
2047	Moundville I
2087	Late Moundville II – Late Moundville III

Inner-area Samples Chronology Comparison

Since the two ceramic samples are only being used to address the chronology based research objective, they were not qualitatively compared for differences in ceramic assemblages. Thus, to compare them for chronological purposes, we can examine just the ceramic phases to which they correspond. In order to perform this examination, a visual comparison was made to answer the basic question of when the site was occupied and used as a burial ground. When comparing ceramic phases seen in the presence/absence of temporally sensitive ceramics from

burial and non- burial contexts, the two contexts are temporally similar because both samples contain ceramics with time spans that range into the late Moundville III phase. In fact, the non-burial ceramic sample contains three varieties of Carthage Incised that date specifically to Moundville III, indicating that the Rhodes residential area was simultaneously used as a burial ground and occupation area.

Chronology in Rhodes and Roadway burials

After examining the two samples from the Rhodes residential area, I then turned my attention to a comparison between when the Rhodes area was used as a burial ground and when a section of the Roadway burials was used for the same purpose. In Wilson et al. (2010), the authors give temporal information for the single burials they used in their mortuary analysis. Out of the 83 burials examined, Wilson et al. (2010:Table 5.1) report temporal information for nine (Table 5). These range in time from Moundville I to Moundville III. Only one burial (RW 2884) dates to Moundville I with the others postdating this phase (Wilson et al. 2010:85). This indicates that these areas of Moundville were primarily used as burials between Moundville II and Moundville III, or from about A.D. 1260 to A.D. 1520 (Knight 2010:17; Wilson et al. 2010:85).

Table 5: Roadway residential area burials with chronological information.

Burial Number	Chronological Phase
2664	Moundville III
2665	Moundville III
2673	Moundville II – Moundville III
2687	Moundville II
2726	Moundville II – Moundville III
2856	Moundville II – Moundville III
2859	Moundville II
2882	Moundville II
2884	Moundville I

Due to the more restricted time span of the Wilson et al. (2010) Roadway residential group, I will not compare residential chronologies between the Rhodes residential area and the Roadway residential area. I can still, however, compare burials from the two areas with temporally diagnostic ceramics and their corresponding time spans. As stated earlier, the Rhodes burials date from Moundville I to late Moundville III. Unlike data from Wilson et al. (2010), the Rhodes burials do not have any single burials that specifically date to Moundville II or III. However, the ranges given indicate that burials could have been placed as late as late Moundville III. Also, both contain clear evidence of burial practices starting during the Moundville I phase and continuing through to Moundville III. Even though Rhodes burials do not give as precise a chronology as the Roadway burials, when compared to each other, the two samples are fairly contemporaneous. This indicates that Rhodes area burial practices follow the same basic chronological pattern seen in other residential areas of Moundville. Although people start burying the dead in both areas early in Moundville's history, most burials post-date Moundville I and then stop before Moundville IV, when the site is almost completely abandoned (Knight and Steponaitis 1998:22).

Objective Two: Burials, Status, and Wealth at Rhodes

My second research objective was to examine social organization (in the form of wealth and status) seen in burials from the Rhodes residential area. To meet this objective, the frequency and diversity of artifacts in graves were analyzed. The frequency of artifacts in burials is explored through a number of artifacts (NA) analysis and a number of artifact types (NAT) analysis. The NA analysis simply measures the amount of artifacts per burial with each artifact counting as one. The NAT analysis groups artifacts by types, such as ceramic, stone tool, shell bead, etc. NAT analysis helps distinguish high diversity from high frequency. A burial may have

multiple artifacts, but the NAT analysis helps show if these burials actually have a diverse number of artifacts. Both the NA and NAT analyses were conducted on all burials recorded by Peebles (1973) and are discussed below as the total sample. From these burials, a more specific sample, labeled the Sherrat diagram sample, was chosen for further analysis. Along with using NA and NAT analyses, the smaller Sherrat diagram sample was used to develop the Sherrat diagram and to explore the distribution of wealth and status items in burials.

The Rhodes Burials: Total Sample

In total, there are 177 burials in the Rhodes area; of these, 28 are multiple burials (more than one individual in a grave) and 148 are single burials (one individual in a grave). Using Peebles (1973), a count of artifacts and artifact types, described in Chapter Four, was recorded for each burial case. Both multiple burials and single burials were recorded as individual burial cases. In other words, a multiple burial with one artifact was counted the same as a single burial with one artifact. The frequency of artifacts in multiple burials was calculated this way to avoid confusion about with which skeleton each artifact was associated. In total, 232 artifacts were recorded with the burials, of which 172 were associated with single burials and only 60 with multiple burials. As expected, the NA analysis shows that grave goods were not evenly distributed: 106 burials (59.9%) contained no associated artifacts, 28 burials (15.8%) contained one artifact, and 18 (10.2%) contained two artifacts (Figure 5). Few burials have artifact frequencies over three associated grave goods. In fact, approximately 90% of burials have three artifacts or less. The most abundant burial was single burial Rho1949 with 21 artifacts.

The NAT analysis demonstrates the same phenomenon (Figure 6). Some burials are more diverse than others: 106 (59.9%) burials contained no associated artifact types, 36 (20.3%) contained one artifact type, and 18 (10.2%) contained two artifact types. Approximately 90% of

the sample had two or less artifact types. Burial Rho1949 is not only the most abundant burial, but also the most diverse burial with 11 artifact types.

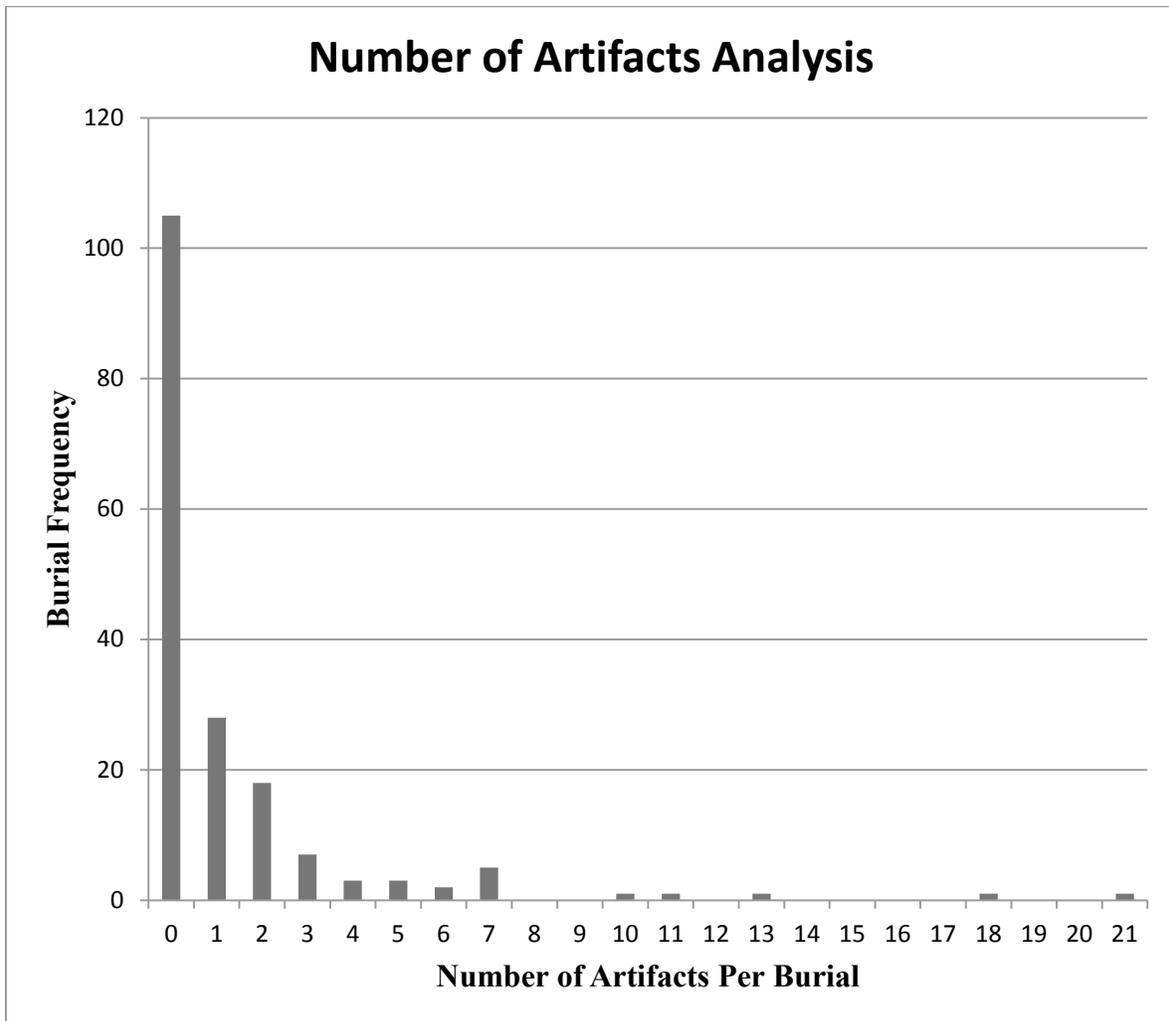


Figure 5: Number of artifacts (NA) analysis of the Rhodes residential area total sample.

The Rhodes Burials: The Sherrat Diagram Sample

Now that I have given a general overview of Rhodes burials, I will focus on the Sherrat diagram sample. I used this sample to further investigate the frequency of artifacts with the NA and NAT analysis. Following those results are more qualitative analyses of burials, which include sorting the artifacts into wealth and status categories and then examining the burials

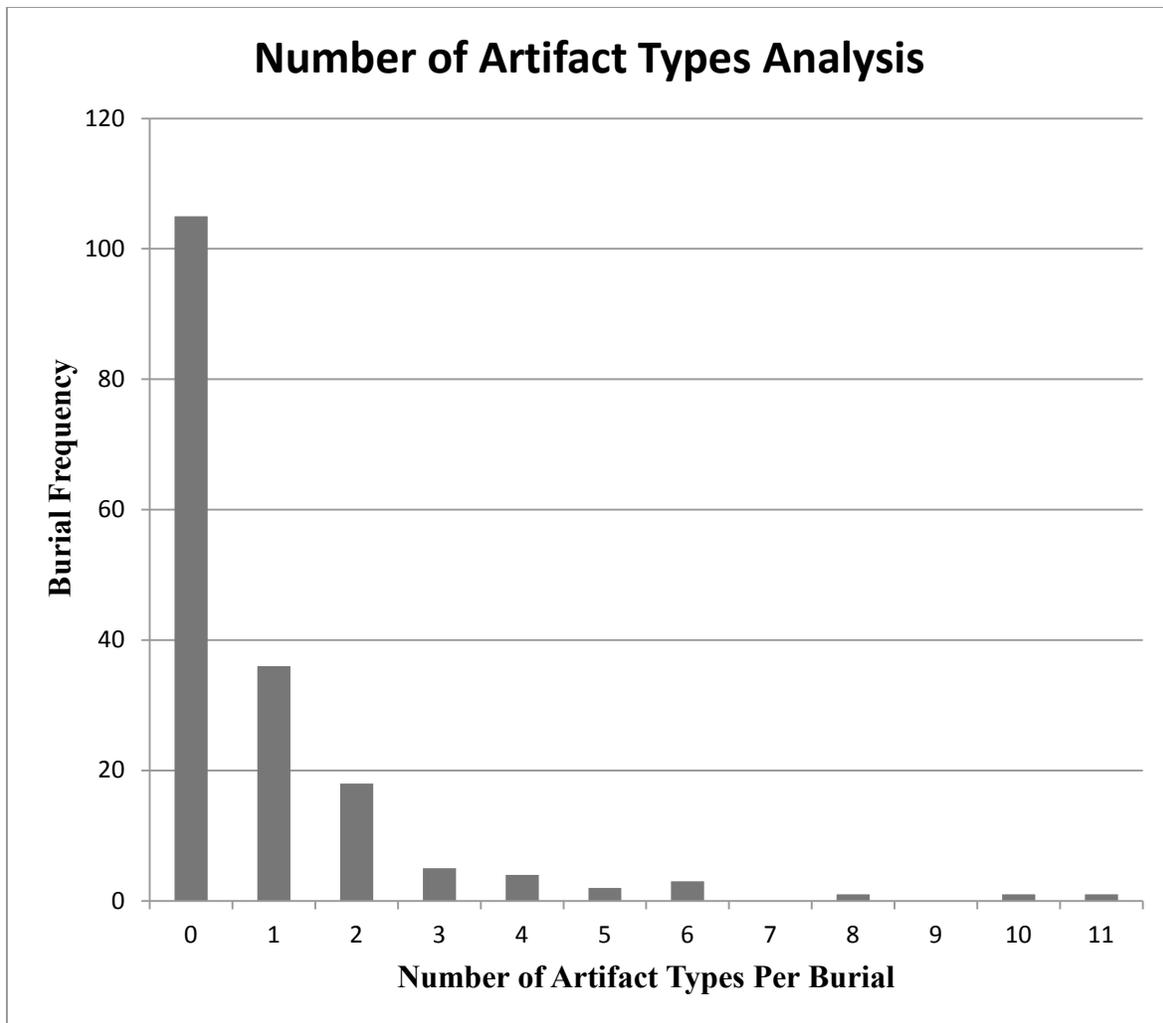


Figure 6: Number of artifact types (NAT) analysis for the Rhodes residential area total sample.

using a Sherrat diagram. The Sherrat diagram will demonstrate the distribution of artifacts in burials across age and sex categories.

In Chapter Four, I discussed the specific requirements used to select burials for my Sherrat diagram sample. To be included in the sample, all burials had to be single burials and be assigned to an age category. All adolescent and adult burials had to also be assigned to a sex (male or female). The Sherrat diagram sample includes 37 burials, or 25% of the total number of single burials. The NA analysis demonstrates results that are similar to the total sample discussed above (Figure 7): 19 (51.4%) burials contain no associated grave goods, 6 (16.2%) contain one

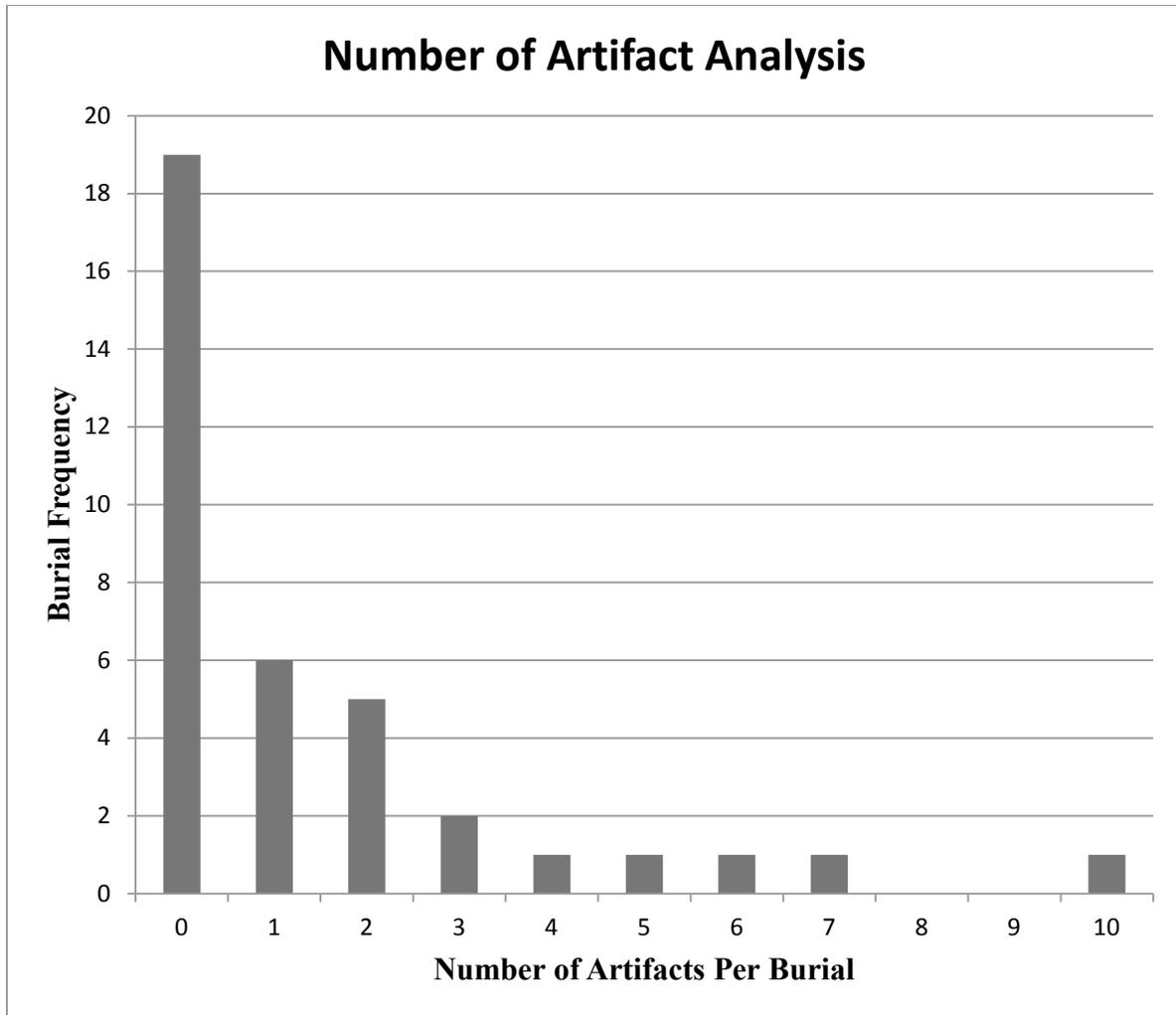


Figure 7: Number of artifact (NA) analysis of the Rhodes residential area Sherrat diagram sample.

associated grave good, 5 (13.5%) contain two associated grave goods, and 2 (5.4%) contain three associated grave goods. Five burials contain four, five, six, seven, and ten artifacts respectively, each burial counting as 2.7%. Similar results are seen in the NAT analysis measuring artifact diversity. The maximum number of artifact types seen in one burial (2.7%) is six, with most burials (51.4%) containing nothing (Figure 8).

These analyses demonstrate a couple of points. First, even though I have to work with a small sample of single burials, my sample demonstrates similar information for artifact

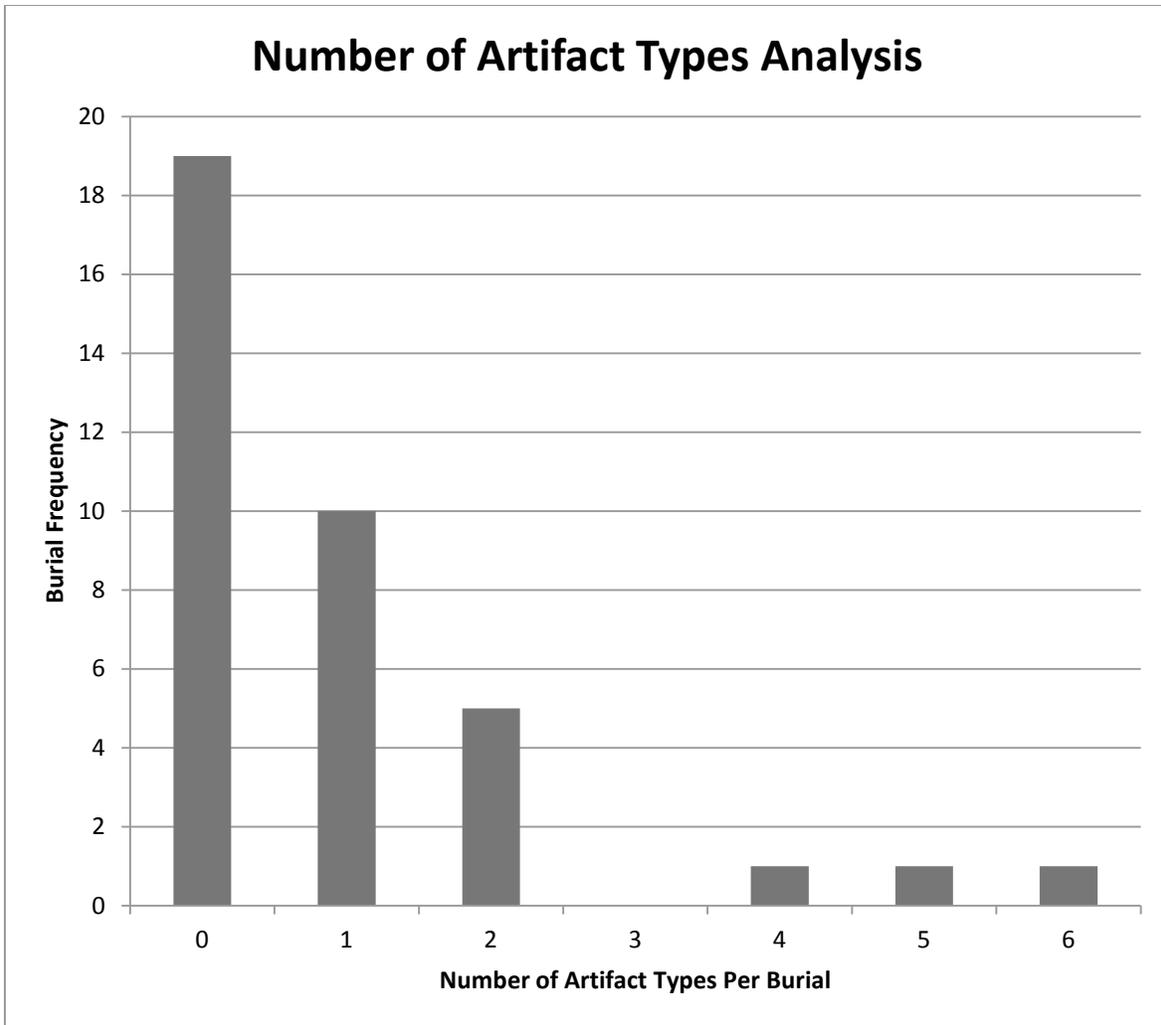


Figure 8: Number of artifact types (NAT) analysis of the Rhodes residential area Sherrat diagram sample.

frequency and diversity, as seen in the total sample. This means that my sample can be considered fairly representative of the Rhodes residential area, at least when discussing simple artifact frequency. Secondly, both the total sample and the Sherrat diagram sample show that most people were buried with nothing. The burials associated with artifacts tend only to contain few artifacts with little to no diversity. Thirdly, some burials are on the other end of the spectrum, containing relatively great amounts of artifacts with much diversity. To further characterize the types of artifacts found within burials while also exploring status and wealth

differentiation, artifacts in the Sherrat diagram sample were placed into wealth and status categories as defined in Chapter Four.

Wealth and Status Artifacts. Of the 52 artifacts examined, 43 (82.7%) were classified as wealth items, only 3 (5.8%) as status items, and 6 (11.5%) were indeterminate. The indeterminate category includes an unworked turkey bone and items that were included in Peebles' (1971) manuscript but could not be found in museum collections. The three status items were all associated with the same burial (Rho1934), a biological female between the ages of 20 and 29 (see below). These items are a greenstone palette, a bear tooth, and a cube of galena. Interestingly, burial Rho1934 is also one of the wealthiest with a frequency of 7 wealth items. Because the wealth category includes many burials, I will now characterize it in the same way I did the artifact frequency analyses.

Once again, 19 (51.4%) burials contain no artifacts, leaving 48.6% of the sample with artifacts. Seven burials (18.9%) contained one wealth item, seven (18.9%) contained two wealth items, one (2.7%) contained three wealth items, two (5.4%) contained six wealth items, and one contained seven wealth items. Many of these wealth items are locally made ceramics, whole vessels, and ceramic sherds. While some of the ceramics within the assemblage are believed to be nonlocal, they are not of any known type and are not of any better production quality than the local ceramics; thus, they are categorized as wealth items. While two burials (Rho1901 and Rho1905) contain six wealth items, they are very different in their composition. Rho1901 contains a worked stone tool, three bone awls, red pigment, and a Moundville Engraved, *variety Havana* bowl; Rho1905, on the other hand, is much less diverse, containing only six bone awls.

These categories of wealth and status tell us that all but one single burial within the sample were buried with items that were most likely available to all peoples. These items –

pottery, local pigments, stone and bone tools, worked and unworked shell – could cross cut social hierarchy and be found with many different people. What is interesting, though, is the distribution of these artifacts across age and sex. In the following subsection I present the Sherrat diagram. Using this tool, one can see the ways artifacts, especially wealth items, are distributed according to age and sex, giving key insights into Moundville mortuary practice and what it can tell us about wealth and social status.

The Rhodes Burial Sherrat Diagram Sample. As discussed in Chapter Four, the sample used for the bulk of my research was very limited because preservation and recovery techniques of the 1930s limited the accuracy and kinds of data available, such as individual age and sex, needed to form a Sherrat diagram. In total, 37 single burials were analyzed for sex, age, and artifacts (Figure 9). In the following discussion, the term sex refers to biological sex, the assignment of the skeleton to biologically male or female as recorded by the OAR osteologist. In terms of sex, the sample contains 8 males, 19 females, and 10 indeterminate (children of unsexable age). From this, we see that 51.4% of the sample is female, outnumbering the males and indeterminate children combined. Moreover, one of the initial expectations when gathering the sample was that children would be one of the larger categories because they were not measured using the sex variable. In reality, they only outnumber the males in the sample by two, representing 27% of the total 37 burials in the Sherrat diagram sample. However, this result still indicates a high infant mortality rate, something that is seen throughout Moundville (Powell 1988; Wilson et al. 2010). Each burial in the Sherrat diagram is identified by burial number without the prefix “Rho.” Age categories were created based on the amount of detail needed for analysis and for compatibility to the Roadway Sherrat diagram (Wilson et al. 2010:Figure 5.4). The burials are organized into horizontal rows by age groups, with the oldest at the top of the

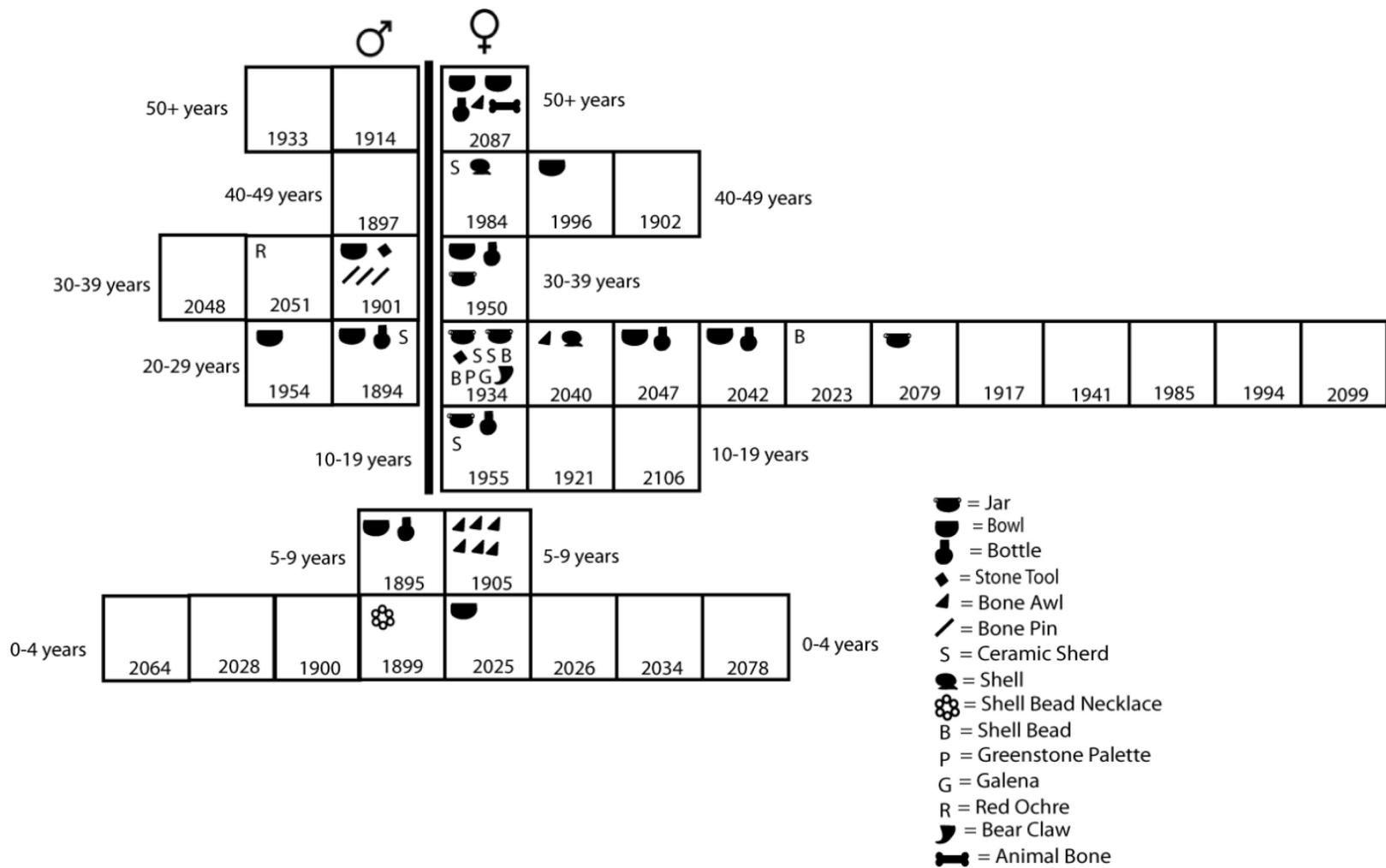


Figure 9: Rhodes residential area Sherrat diagram.

diagram and the youngest at the bottom of the diagram. The rows of sexable age groups are then split vertically by sex, with males on the left and females on the right. In each age and sex row, the burials are organized by artifact frequencies. Burials with the most artifacts are to the inside of the diagram, whereas burials with no artifacts are to the outside of the diagram.

The group with the highest frequency of artifacts is the female group with 32 (61.5%) of a possible 52 artifacts. The male and indeterminate gender category both contain 10 (19.2%) artifacts. For the Rhodes area, this outcome is fairly predictable because of the larger number of females in the sample. Also, when taking into account the age groups, females outnumber males in three of five age categories: 10-19 years (three females to zero males), 20-29 years (eleven to two), and 40-49 years (three to one). Males outnumber females in two age categories: 30-39 years (one female to three males) and 50+ years (one female to two males). The female to male ratios of each age group could be for a number of reasons. For example, sampling problems were likely a major contributing factor. Another contributing factor could be that females had higher mortality rates in the younger categories, such as 10-29 years. In these categories women would have been at an age to birth children, which was probably a dangerous undertaking.

Another way to examine this diagram is to see the distribution of artifacts in age categories. While no one age group contains the majority of artifacts, the 20-29 years age range contains the highest frequency with 22 (42.3%) artifacts. The next highest frequency is seen in the 30-39 age group with nine (17.3%) artifacts. Interestingly, the category with the lowest number of artifacts is the second largest category when examining the number of burials; the 0-4 years age range has eight burials (21.6% of the total) but only two artifacts – a shell bead necklace and a ceramic bowl. One can also see that burial Rho1934, one of the burials discussed above when analyzing artifact frequencies, is in the most abundant category of females aged 20-

29 years. No male burials are in the age ranges 40-49 years and 50+ years that are associated with artifacts. The lack of artifacts with males in these age groups is in opposition to the females in the same age categories, especially when burial Rho2087 is taken into consideration. Rho2087 is a female burial that was aged 50+ years and was buried with two ceramic bowls, a ceramic bottle, a bone awl, and an unmodified turkey bone.

Summary of the Second Objective

From these results, and by examining the Sherrat diagram, one can see the distribution of artifacts across age and sex categories in the Rhodes residential area. While many of the burials are associated with some kind of artifact, not all burials have artifacts or equal numbers or types of artifacts. There are more female burials than either male or indeterminate burials. Moreover, from examining the Sherrat diagram and the artifact frequencies, one sees that most artifacts are with women and are not equally distributed. Examining the NA analysis and the NAT analysis shows that most burials contain no associated artifacts and very few burials are associated with more than three items. Also, when the artifacts are categorized as wealth or status items, we see overwhelmingly more wealth items than status items. In fact, only three status items are present, and all are associated with the same burial. Now, the results of the Sherrat diagram and the artifact frequency analyses can be compared to the results of similar procedures completed by Wilson et al. (2010), leading to the third objective of this thesis.

Objective Three: Intra-site Comparison

Because the Rhodes residential area is just a section of the larger Moundville site, it can provide significant amounts of information about wealth and social status through independent examination of its mortuary practices (such as in objective two) and comparison to similar research conducted in other parts of Moundville. An examination of mortuary practices and

social hierarchy with similar methods was conducted by Wilson et al. (2010:74) using burials from sections of the Roadway excavations performed in 1939 and 1940. While their research was first introduced in Chapter Two, their more specific results will be presented here for a more detailed comparison. The major aspects that will be discussed are their NA analysis and their Sherrat diagram, which best illustrate their conclusions. Because they did not perform an NAT analysis, or categorize artifacts by wealth and status, those parts of objective two will be omitted from the comparison.

Roadway Number of Artifact Analysis

In their essay “Social and Spatial Dimensions of Moundville Mortuary Practices,” Wilson et al. (2010:84) use artifact frequency, or NA analysis, in single burials to explore whether artifacts are equally or unequally distributed. Their analysis of 220 single burials demonstrated comparable results to my own NA analysis. One hundred ninety-six burials from the Moundville Roadway were not associated with any artifacts (Wilson et al. 2010:83). This number represents approximately 89.1% of the single burials examined. A small total of only 24 (10.9%) single burials were associated with grave goods, showing a striking difference between burials without artifacts and burials with artifacts. Of these 24 burials, most were buried with only one to two items. The most abundant burial was interred with six items; however, this is a rare find for the Roadway burials. Even though artifact frequencies range from zero to six, only 10.9% of the single burials actually contained artifacts. To examine the distribution of these artifacts across age and sex, we must turn to the Roadway Sherrat diagram.

Roadway Sherrat Diagram

The Roadway Sherrat diagram developed by Wilson et al. (2010:Figure 5.4) is made up of 68 adult and child burials distributed across 11 age categories, with adults separated by sex

(Figure 10). To the right of their diagram are 16 unsexed adult burials that are omitted from my comparison. Like the Rhodes Sherrat diagram, the Roadway analysis can be interpreted as indicating a high infant mortality rate that is seen throughout Moundville (Powell 1988).

Nineteen (27.9%) burials are unsexed children between the ages of 0 and 14 years.

As Wilson et al. (2010:84) note, the 24 burials with artifacts are not evenly distributed across age and sex. If one excludes the unsexed adult burials from the analysis, a total of 35 artifacts are represented: 19 (54.3%) artifacts are associated with male burials, 4 (11.4%) with female burials, and 12 (34.3%) with unsexed child burials. Because of their larger sample, Wilson et al. (2010) also were able to separate the entire Sherrat diagram into five-year age ranges as compared to my ten-year age ranges. While this may make visually comparing the two Sherrat diagrams a little more difficult, the relative frequencies of artifacts for ten-year age ranges can still be extrapolated.

The two age ranges with the most artifacts are the 10-14 years category with seven artifacts (20.0%) and the 50+ years category with eight artifacts (22.9%). If the 10-14 years and 15-19 years categories are combined, as in the Rhodes Sherrat diagram, then eight artifacts are spread throughout the 10-19 years age range, which is interesting because these categories do not contain the most burials. The 50+ age category contains only 5.9% of the 68 burials, and the 10-19 age range contains only 10.3% of the total burials. Clearly, while artifacts are found in almost every age category, they are not equally distributed across age or sex.

The only artifacts interred with females are one ceramic bottle, a pottery disc, and two chert projectile points, none of which are associated with the same burial. The only burials containing more than one artifact are either males or unsexed individuals in the 10-14 age range. The only items that could possibly be seen as status items are a greenstone spatulate celt, two

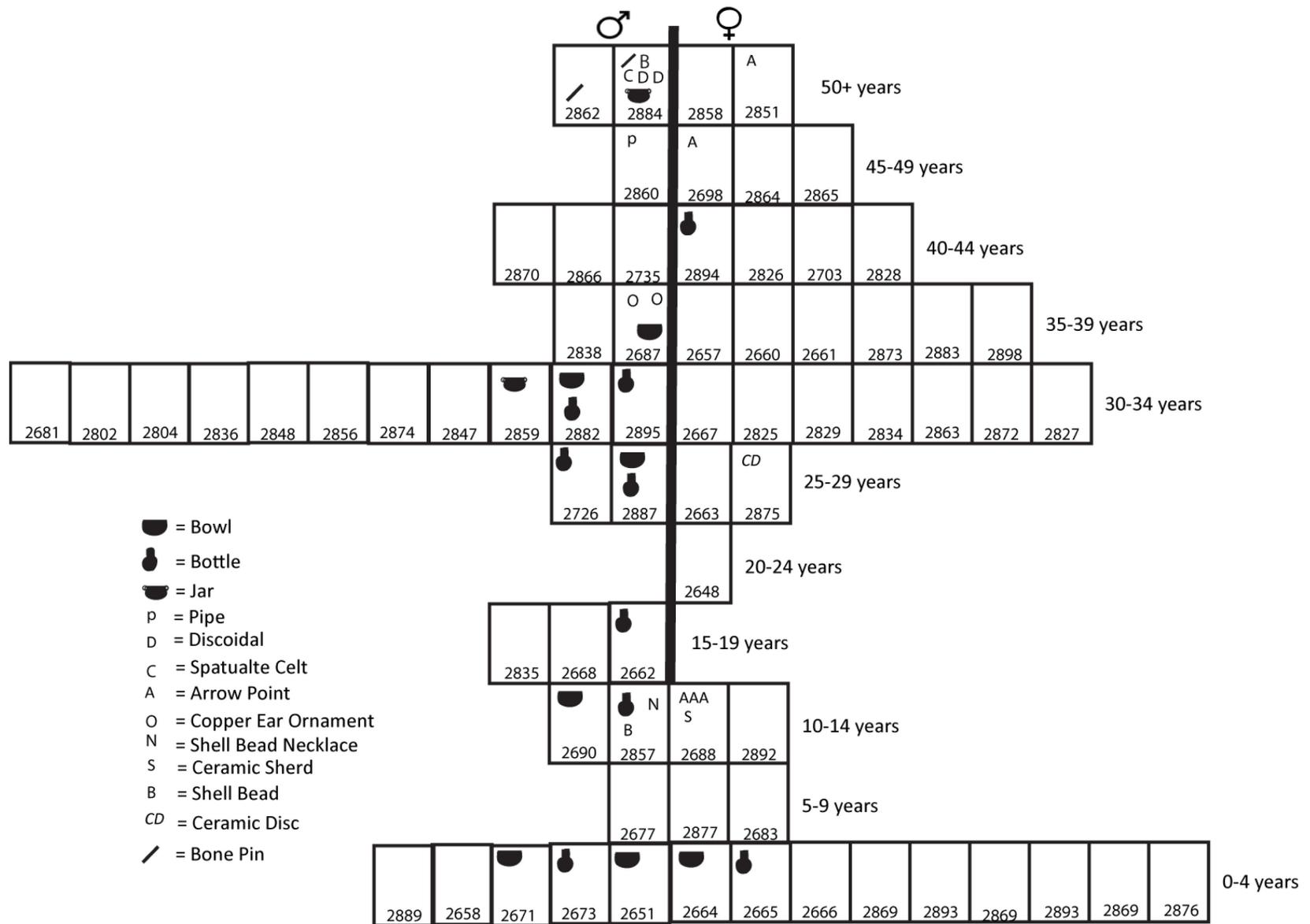


Figure 10: Roadway residential area Sherratt diagram (Redrawn from Wilson et al. 2010:Figure5.4).

stone discoidals (which Wilson et al. [2010:84] identify as chunky gaming stones), two copper ear ornaments, and a shark tooth. The shark tooth is interred with a 10-14 year old person, while the rest of these items are found with men ranging in ages from 35 to 50+ years. The burial with the most abundant grave goods assemblage is Rw2884, a 50+ year old man and the only burial that was positively dated to the Moundville I phase. This burial contained the spatulate celt, the two stone discoidals, a bone pin, and a Carthage Incised, *variety Summerville* jar (Wilson et al. 2010:84). This assemblage is in stark contrast to the only 50+ years female burial containing artifacts (Rw2851), which contained only one chert arrow point.

Summary of Third Objective

In summary, 68 burials are distributed through ages ranging from zero to 50+ years. The burials 15 years or older are divided by sex (male or female), with the majority of artifacts being found with males. Female burials are lacking in grave goods, containing only 4 of the total 35 artifacts. Using these results, Wilson et al. (2010) concluded that the burials demonstrated mainly achieved status, as opposed to ascribed status, due to the hypothesis that if mortuary goods are of higher frequency and diversity in older burials (such as Rw 2884), then a system of achieved status is in place (Wilson et al. 2010:83). However, because of other studies of Moundville cemeteries and the presence of some artifacts in infant burials, Wilson et al. (2010:85) do propose that a system of ascribed status was probably combined with achievement, both of which are present in Moundville mortuary practices. Now that the results of the Rhodes residential area research and the Roadway mortuary analysis have been presented, the conclusions will be presented with a brief discussion of possible implications of this research.

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSIONS

My study of the Rhodes residential area at the Moundville site had three objectives: 1) determine when in time the Rhodes residential area was inhabited and used; 2) explore the wealth and social status through the frequency and diversity of grave goods; and 3) determine if residential group mortuary practices, wealth, and status were uniform throughout the larger Moundville site. In this chapter, I summarize my findings and present conclusions.

Chronology of the Rhodes Residential Area and Burials

When examining the presence/absence of various ceramic types and varieties from a ceramic sample, a basic understanding of when an area was inhabited can be obtained. The Rhodes non-burial sample contains ceramics dating from early Moundville I to late Moundville III. Because residential features were excavated at the Rhodes residential area, this non-burial sample represents residential associations as opposed to burial associations. Thus, we can say that the Rhodes residential area was most likely occupied early in Moundville's history during the ceramic phase Moundville I and abandoned sometime between A.D. 1450 and A.D. 1550 during Moundville III. The non-burial ceramic sample indicates that the Rhodes residential area may have not been made exclusively into a cemetery as early as other parts of Moundville. During Moundville III, when the majority of people buried at Moundville were interred, many parts of the site already had stopped being used as residential areas (Steponaitis 1998; Wilson et al. 2010). Conversely, the Rhodes residential area shows some evidence of habitation in

Moundville III, indicating that while other residential areas of the site were already abandoned, the Rhodes residential area was simultaneously used for occupation and burial.

The burial ceramic sample reinforces this conclusion. While most burial ceramics do not give very tight time frames, some burials do indicate certain temporal patterns. People were first buried at the Rhodes residential area in Moundville I. People continued to be interred in the Rhodes residential area through Moundville II and into Moundville III. This temporal span of burial activity also corresponds well with the overall chronology of the Moundville site. Since no burials can be positively dated to Moundville IV, the last Moundville phase, the Rhodes residential area probably was completely abandoned sometime during late Moundville III. Thus, like most of Moundville, the area was not used at all during Moundville IV (approximately A.D. 1520). If this is so, then the Rhodes residential area was probably used as a cemetery contemporaneously with the Roadway residential areas. This is indicated by Roadway burials that positively date to Moundville I, II, and III, demonstrating continuous use as a burial ground for the first three phases of Moundville's history (Wilson et al. 2010:Figure 5.4).

Rhodes Wealth and Status

Now that I have shown that the Rhodes residential area was used and occupied from Moundville I to Moundville III, I will draw conclusions and comparisons from the analysis of mortuary practices, specifically an analysis of frequency and diversity in grave goods. In Chapter Two I presented a brief history of mortuary analysis and how it has been applied to understanding wealth and social status. From Binford's (1971) classic work, and following the same ideas presented by Wilson et al. (2010:83), I found indications of social organization, hierarchy, and wealth through the distribution of grave goods. First, social inequality can be seen through differential artifact distribution. In other words, social inequality is suggested if few

burials contain many different artifacts; conversely, social equality is more likely if artifacts are not diverse in type and are distributed evenly throughout the graves. These patterns are detected through a simple number of artifact (NA) analysis that measures artifact frequency in burials as well as a number of artifact types (NAT) analysis that indicates artifact diversity. The results of these analyses from the Rhodes residential area tell us two things: few burials have artifacts, and the ones that do tend to only have one or two artifacts per burial. Burials with the highest NA also tend to be the ones with the highest NAT. However, there are some exceptions to this rule, as seen in the burials Rho1901 and Rho1905 presented in Chapter Five, both of which have relatively high frequencies of artifacts. Rho1901 is really diverse with worked stone, bone awls, local pigment, and ceramics; Rho1905, in comparison, is not diverse, containing only bone awls. Overall, few burials have many artifacts, but those that do also tend to have high artifact diversity. This leads me to conclude that social inequality of some kind is present in the Rhodes residential area burials.

The second aspect that needed to be explored for this research objective was the distribution of artifacts across age and sex. This type of analysis helps indicate whether achieved status (acquired by individual agency) or ascribed status (inherited kinship rank) are present in burials. Once again, following the arguments presented by Binford (1971) and Wilson et al. (2010:83), these generalized types of social status can be seen in burial artifact assemblages. I argue that if grave goods are associated with burials regardless of age and sex, then ascribed status is represented. Alternatively, if more grave goods are interred with older individuals than with younger individuals, then a system of achieved status was most likely present in the society. To determine this distribution, I produced a Sherrat diagram of Rhodes residential area burials.

The first and most obvious conclusion that can be drawn is that not everyone in the Rhodes residential area is treated the same in burial. As stated earlier, some are buried with many artifacts while other individuals have no artifacts. Even though artifacts are found in all age categories, they are not found in equal numbers. Moreover, the most abundant child burial (Rho1905) did not have a lot of diversity. The burials that had the most abundant and most diverse assemblages were mostly females between the ages of 20 and 50+ years. Because of this distribution, I conclude that we are mainly seeing the results of status based on achievement. As stated in the results above, the only burial that contained status items is burial Rho1934, a female between the ages of 20 and 29. If interpretation of these phenomena can follow the similar conclusions made by Wilson et al. (2010), one can say that hints of achieved and ascribed status are taking place within the burials. For instance, achieved status is represented by the absence of status goods, or all grave goods, cross-cutting age and sex categories. In other words, infants do not have enough time to accumulate wealth or achieved statuses before their deaths, and therefore are not buried with many, if any, grave goods. This is also reinforced by the fact that the oldest female (Rho2087), who could have achieved higher status through age and experience, was buried with five items.

However, ascribed status may be seen in the fact that there are some infant burials associated with artifacts. One special case is burial Rho1905, a child between the ages of five and nine who was buried with six bone awls. This assemblage is confusing because one would presume that such a utilitarian item, used for puncturing materials, would normally be buried with someone that used this item in life. For example, none of the men presented in the Sherrat diagram were buried with this item, and Rho2087 is the only female burial containing a bone awl, indicating that the use of bone awls could have been primarily handled by women. The bone

awls in a child's burial are more likely an indication not of the child's own wealth, but of the wealth of adult participants in the mortuary practices. Another interesting point that is illustrated by the Sherrat diagram is that most artifacts are associated with females. This could indicate some sort of ascription based on sex, in which women and men occupied two different social statuses prescribed by their gender roles. This possibility becomes even clearer from the fact that no men 40 to 50 years old are associated with artifacts.

So, the distribution of artifacts is not as simple as a dichotomy of ascribed or achieved status. From the Sherrat diagram, the categorization of wealth and status items, and the analysis of artifact frequency and diversity, one can see a number of social aspects being communicated through the dead and their grave goods. The accumulation of wealth items could be through the deceased's own accomplishments, or for the children that could not accrue these items on their own, it could be an indication of the deceased family's accomplishments or grief of their loss. The localization of most artifacts with female burials, besides indicating the possibility of gender-divided social status, demonstrates the diversity seen in cemeteries, and consequently social groups, throughout Moundville.

Rhodes and Roadway Wealth and Status Compared

While achieved status is seen in both the Rhodes residential area burials and the Roadway residential area burials, it is expressed in different ways. Also, even though the NA analysis shows comparable results with inequality, the distribution of artifacts across age and, especially, sex is rather different. For instance, the majority of artifacts in the Rhodes burials are associated with females, whereas the majority of artifacts from the Roadway burials are associated with males. This is best illustrated when comparing burials Rw2884 from the Roadway excavations and Rho2087 from the Rhodes residential area. Rw2884 illustrates how older males in the

Roadway burials were held in high esteem as compared to the other males and females (Wilson et al. 2010:84). Rho2087 illustrates the opposite, how older females could be held in high esteem compared to other females and males. However, the difference becomes even more complicated when one compares Rw2884 and Rho1934 and their relatively high status items. Rw2884 is a 50+ male with a greenstone spatulate celt and stone discoidals; in comparison, Rho1934 is a 20-29 year old female with a greenstone palette, galena, and bear claw. Many of these artifacts, such as the stone discoidals, galena, and greenstone palette are included by Peebles and Kus (1977) in their superordinate social dimension. The presence of these artifacts in both residential areas indicates superordinate or ascribed status individuals in both residential areas. The varying types of status artifacts seen in each area may indicate different forms of status in the two areas or even different processes among different residential kin groups in awarding, communicating, or ascribing statuses.

In all, many different and complicated conclusions can be drawn from examining mortuary practices. By determining the frequency, diversity, and distribution of grave goods, I concluded that a mixing between ascribed and achieved statuses occurred among the people buried in the Rhodes residential area. Also, even though the Rhodes residential area fits into the Moundville chronology following the same patterns as the rest of the site, it still has distinct qualities that separate it from other parts of Moundville. This is best seen when comparing the Rhodes residential area mortuary data to similar analyses performed on burials from a Roadway residential area. Although we see that primarily achieved status was common in both places, the ways in which this status was manifested in burials was distinctly different. While some of the artifacts were similar, the items that can be considered status items were distributed differently

and took different forms. Additionally, all artifacts had different distributions in each area when examined in age and sex categories.

Even though the Sherrat diagram, the main analytical tool used in this thesis, has some problems, this research shows its utility in comparing different cemeteries throughout Moundville and other archaeological sites. The need for age and sex data and the limitation of exclusively using single burials can severely limit sample sizes. However, the ease with which the Sherrat diagram allowed differences and similarities between individual burials and different cemeteries to be seen is very useful when exploring the ways in which people organized themselves and their dead. Examining detailed information of artifact distributions can help researchers to better understand the ways in which Moundville and other Mississippian people organized themselves, treated their dead, and valued material culture. By researching the distribution of grave goods, this thesis illustrates the complex ways in which Moundville was organized, allowing an even more detailed understanding of its culture.

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APPENDIX A RELEVANT CERAMIC TYPES AND VARIETIES

Mississippi Plain is the local unburnished, non-decorated ceramic. The temper is primarily shell but can sometimes be a mixture of shell and grog. Steponaitis (2009) then differentiates between two different varieties (*variety Hull Lake and variety Warrior*); however, Knight (2010) argues that the differences between the two varieties can be very difficult, if not impossible, to be understood well enough to be used appropriately. For this reason, it is kept here as simply a type with no varieties.

Moundville Incised, *variety Carrollton* is based on a design of single or multiple parallel arches that occur without any other decorations. It occurs on vessels sherds that, if lacking decoration, would be considered Mississippi Plain (Knight 2010; Steponaitis 2009). It occurs temporally from early Moundville I to late Moundville II phase (Knight 2010).

Moundville Incised, *variety Moundville* is similar to *variety Carrollton*, but has the addition of closely spaced incisions or “eyelashes” that radiate from the topmost arch (Knight 2010:34). While usually only occurring with one arch, it can also occur with multiple, stacked, parallel arches. The arch is also often produced with a flat and broad stylus that forms an “overhanging effect” in the decoration (Steponaitis 2009:324). It corresponds temporally to early Moundville I through late Moundville II phase, but most prominent in Moundville I (Knight 2010).

Moundville Incised, *variety Snowsbend* also has incised arches. But, instead of radiating lined incisions, the tops of the arches are embellished with punctations. If there are multiple

parallel arches, the punctations only occur on the topmost arch. Also, the punctations can be one or two rows and are generally evenly spaced. At times, the punctations are almost perfectly round with raised centers (Knight 2010; Steponaitis 2009). It is found temporally from early Moundville I phase through late Moundville II phase (Knight 2010).

Moundville Incised, *variety Oliver* is a variety developed by Knight (2010) and subsumes Steponaitis's (2009) Barton Incised, *variety Unspecified*. It is characterized by "oblique parallel lines" converging on the mouth of the vessel, just below the lip. The design seems like line filled triangles. Knight (2010) argues that this variety should be included in Moundville Incised and not Barton Incised because most other varieties of Barton Incised are found temporally later than what this version as been found. There seems to be more historical linkage between this variety and other Moundville Incised varieties, than with Barton Incised. It is temporally diagnostic of the Moundville I phase (Knight 2010).

Moundville Incised, *variety Unspecified* is the catchall for ceramics that fit the Moundville Incised type but cannot be confidently placed into any variety. This primarily, if not completely, consists of ceramics that have a Moundville Incised decoration, but lack enough decoration on the sherd to find a variety.

Bell Plain, *variety Hale* is the local burnished plain ceramic. While it often has a finer shell tempering when compared to Mississippi Plain, this is not always the case. In the older typologies, which the ceramics from Rhodes site had been placed into, it is categorized as Moundville Filmed or Moundville Black Filmed (DeJarnette and Wimberly 1941; Knight 2010). Also, the variety is unique to Steponaitis's (2009) typology; Knight (2010) argues that a variety is not needed and so only uses the type, Bell Plain.

Carthage Incised, *variety Akron* consists of horizontal incisions just below the lip of the vessel. At times the incisions can have loops or dips and the vessels often have effigies. It is also extremely similar to the nonlocal type Mound Place Incised. Also, Knight (2010) argues that the lip is very important in classifying this variety because without it, the decoration cannot be confidently oriented. And, like with all Carthage Incised designs, the incisions are fairly broad and u shaped in cross-section (Steponaitis 2009). The ceramics are burnished and usually black (Knight 2010). It is found temporally from late Moundville I through early Moundville III phase (Knight 2010).

Carthage Incised, *variety Carthage* is a design of continuous running scrollwork that goes around the entire vessel, just below the lip. On sherds, this tends to look like parallel lines of arches with possible scroll-work, or winding lines underneath them (Knight 2010). Like on all Carthage Incised ceramics, is burnished and usually blackened. If it was plain, it would be included in the Bell Plain type (Steponaitis 2009). It is temporally diagnostic of the Moundville III phase (Knight 2010).

Carthage Incised, *variety Fosters* consists of two representational motifs that encircle a vessel, usually in an alternating pattern. The ware is burnished and usually blackened. The two motifs are a hand and a forearm bone. It is usually seen on the interior lip of a shallow vessel (Knight 2010; Steponaitis 2009). It is located temporally from the early Moundville III through Moundville IV phase (Knight 2010).

Carthage Incised, *variety Lupton* is a newer modification made by Knight (2010). It was originally included in Steponaitis's (2009) *variety Moon Lake*. Knight (2010) separated this design from *Moon Lake*, redefining the original variety. This design is on the exterior of burnished, blackened vessels and consists of alternating, oblique parallel lines near the rim of the

vessel. When seen consecutively, the design is chevron like as it goes around the vessel (Knight 2010). Temporally, it corresponds to the Moundville III phase (Knight 2010).

Carthage Incised, *variety Summerville* is similar in design to Moundville Incised, *variety Carrollton*. The design consists of consecutive arches that encircle the circumference of a burnished, usually blackened vessel. It is temporally diagnostic of the Moundville I phase (Knight 2010).

Carthage Incised, *variety Unspecified* is, once again, the catch all for the sherds that could not be confidently placed into a variety of Carthage Incised, but otherwise fit the type. While it also can hold sherds with fully known designs that do not fit into the varieties, the purpose here is specifically for sherds that do not give enough information about what the design entailed. Generally there may be one line that trails along the edge of the sherd, from this line's nature, such as trailed, u-shaped incision, and the surface treatment, burnished and usually blackened, it could fit into many different varieties and thus has to be left unspecified.

Moundville Engraved, *variety Havana* is similar to Carthage Incised, *variety Akron* except that it is engraved as opposed to incised (Knight 2010). The difference from engraved and incised is that engraved is done when the vessel is almost completely hardened, making shallower, thinner lines when compared to Carthage Incised. Knight (2010) argues that this is still done before firing, but the vessel is past the leathery hard state and almost completely dry. The design consists of 3 to 15 closely spaced, parallel lines encircling the vessel, near the lip. The lines are usually broken up with loops and dips in the lines. All Moundville Engraved designs appear on burnished, usually blackened ceramics, similar to Bell Plain and Carthage Incised types (Knight 2010; Steponaitis 2009). It is chronologically positioned from late Moundville I phase through early Moundville III phase (Knight 2010).

Moundville Engraved, *variety Hemphill* is a design that consists of various free standing motifs, such as hands and eyes, feathered serpents, scalps, bones, etc. (for a full list and illustrations, see Steponaitis 2009:60). The vessels are burnished, usually blackened (Knight 2010). This is seen temporally from early Moundville II phase to Early Moundville III phase (Knight 2010).

Moundville Engraved, *variety Wiggins* is a design with what Knight (2010:32-33) calls “horizontal guilloches, or interlocking S-shaped scrolls” that are placed horizontally around a vessel. The engraved design often has triangles of cross-hatching, or really closely spaced engrave lines that cross each other in a checkered pattern (Knight 2010; Steponaitis 2009). It is chronologically found in the late Moundville II phase through the late Moundville III phase (Knight 2010).

Moundville Engraved, *variety Unspecified* is the catchall category for all sherds that can be placed into the Moundville Engraved type but cannot be placed into a variety. These categories are quite useful for gaining accurate counts of the number of sherds per type, while still not conflating the results of the other varieties (Knight 2010).

Shell tempered Incised, *Unspecified* is a category used by me to include any of the incised shell tempered sherds that could not be placed into any of the types above, or any of the nonlocal types about to be discussed. The majority of these are smoothed, but not burnished and could not be placed into the types above due to differences in design or paste.

All of the categories above, except for possibly the Shell Tempered Incised, *Unspecified* are considered local types because of their ties to Moundville and surrounding sites (Steponaitis 2009). The next four categories are types that are considered nonlocal designs. While Steponaitis (2009) argues that these also can be nonlocal because of paste composition, the main focus of

this investigation was on typing by design, surface treatment, and presence of certain tempers. For this reason, I do not begin to argue that they were complete imports, but do agree they were imported ideas (Knight 2010; Steponaitis 2009). Also, because of my knowledge on nonlocal types and varieties is even more lacking than my knowledge on the Moundville local typology, all of these are basic types without more specific varieties.

D'Olive Incised consists of mainly shallow vessels with interior designs (meaning that if there was a whole vessel, the decoration would be on the inside or concave portion). These are incised on a dry paste (Steponaitis 2009). These are types from the Mobile-Pensacola Region, and is found at Bottle Creek (Fuller 2003; Steponaitis 2009; Weinstein and Dumas 2008). The decoration consists of "line-filled festoons" or arches with lines oriented from rim to center of vessel and also appears with rims that are notched or scalloped to form a wavy appearance (Steponaitis 2009). This design is chronologically diagnostic of the Moundville II phase (Fuller 2003; Steponaitis 2009).

D'Olive Engraved is a predecessor of D'Olive Incised and contains arches filled with wider spaced lines than D'Olive Incised. It is fine shell tempered, burnished, and sometimes blackened (Weinstein and Dumas 2008). It has lines that seem a bit shallower than D'Olive Incised because it is engraved on a dryer paste (Futato, personal communication April 2013). Pensacola Incised consists of designs of curvilinear scrolls, representational motifs, and punctations. The motifs, if available are usually a hand-and-eye motif, skulls, and forearm bones. It also can occur with cross-hatching (Knight 2010; Steponaitis 2009; Weinstein and Dumas 2008). This ware dates from the late Moundville I phase to the Early Moundville II phase (Fuller 2003; Weinstein and Dumas 2008)

Mound Place Incised also is associated with Bottle Creek and is, in some cases, very similar to Carthage Incised, *variety Akron* (Knight 2010). Steponaitis (2009) notes that the horizontal lines that encircle the vessel just below the rim are not evenly spaced. The last incision usually is spaced farther from the lines that come above it. They also show evidence of having rim effigies, or representational pieces that come up off of the rim and face the inside of the vessel (Steponaitis 2009). This dates from late Moundville II phase to late Moundville III phase (Steponaitis 2009).