

UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI NAPOLI «L'ORIENTALE»

ANNALI DI ARCHEOLOGIA E STORIA ANTICA

DIPARTIMENTO DI STUDI DEL MONDO CLASSICO
E DEL MEDITERRANEO ANTICO

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Altezza: h.; ad esempio: ad es.; bibliografia: bibl.; catalogo: cat.; centimetri: cm.; circa: ca.; citato: cit.; colonna/e: col./coll.; confronta o vedi: cfr.; *et alii: et al.*; diametro: diam.; fascicolo: fasc.; figura/e: fig./figg.; frammento/i: fr./frr.; inventario: inv.; larghezza: largh.; lunghezza: lungh.; metri: m.; numero/i: n./nn.; pagina/e: p./pp.; professore/professoressa: prof.; ristampa: rist.; secolo: sec.; seguente/i: s./ss.; serie: S.; sotto voce/i: s.v./s.vv.; supplemento: suppl.; tavola/e: tav./tavv.; tomba: T.; traduzione italiana: trad. it.

Non si abbreviano: *idem*, *eadem*, *ibidem*; in corso di stampa; nord, sud, est, ovest; nota/e; non vidi.

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THE TUMULUS NECROPOLIS AT TSIKALARIO ON NAXOS

PHOTINI ZAPHIROPOULOU*

In the heart of the Ionian Cyclades, the ancient necropolis at Tsikalario located on a bleak, rocky plateau, commanding a rich olive trees plain of central Naxos (fig. 1), in the area of Tragaia, near the modern village of Tsikalario (fig. 2), is one of the most impressive cemeteries of the Geometric period in Greek lands.

At this site there is a complex of about twenty – five tumuli out of which seventeen, as well as other types of burials and buildings were investigated in three seasons of excavation between 1963 and 1966 (fig. 3)¹. The tumuli, some as large as 9 to 12 m. in diameter, were made of a stone kerb (the stones were huge rock upright slabs) approximating to a perfect circle and in one case to an ellipse (figs. 4-5). Most of them had one or more cremation pyres inside, usually on flat ground, but also some others had large and smaller rectangular cist graves (fig. 5), that unfortunately had been found robbed; judging however from their dimensions they did not probably contained the ashes or bones of cremated persons. The offerings were distributed between the cremations themselves, other deposits inside, and further burnt deposits outside, some of which contain animal bones. The offerings include plentiful coarse ware and vessels with linear geometric decoration painted and in five cases incised, clay figurines, three of women and three of birds (figs. 9, 11), fifty – six small conico – pyramidal clay spindle whorls, iron swords and daggers, a bronze arched fibula of East Greek type, a bronze spectacle fibula, a silver ring, three gold bracelets of twisted wire (fig. 8), a small figured diadem with animal scenes of thin sheet gold and a lot of fresh fruits

for the most figs and grapes (fig. 10). Outside a rectangular area given over to offerings, was a small cist grave (figs. 12-13) for a child, with traces of a pyre and burnt bones.

Apart from the tumuli graves, many other complexes of constructions have come to light as well as a big peribolos (= enclosure), whose stone kerb was not made of the usual rock upright slabs, common for all the other tumuli = periboloi. This peribolos, up to 9,40 m. across (figs. 3, 4 right, 6), was built with a low wall of small stone slabs in two rows, as it was common for the constructions in the Archaic period. No cremation pyra has been found inside but only traces of burial ceremonies and remains of ceremonial pyres.

Another very interesting peculiarity of this cemetery is that there was a kind of “road web” (figs. 3, 14) in the whole area of the valley, with two pathways conducting the visitors among the tumuli – graves to find their own burial construction. The main path from low, from the plain, up to the plateau, at the South, ended in the cemetery entrance where a huge “menhir” was erected as “sema” – marker of the grave area (figs. 3, 7). The “menhir”, 3,20 m. high, was a rocky huge upright slab, laid in front of a big peribolos – which was not for burial use because it was full of thrown stones; the “menhir” then was perhaps an early form of a Hermes stele, put there at the end of the path from low up to the plateau where the path was divided in two others among the tumuli – graves (fig. 3). Therefore the “menhir” was erected in a crossroad in order to protect the passengers, who, as they went away from the necropolis area, used probably

* Dr. Ph. Ephor Emer. of Antiquities.

¹ Doumas 1963, pp. 279-280. Papadopoulou-Zaphiropoulou

1965, pp. 515-522; 1966, pp. 391-395. See also 1983a, pp. 1-4. 2001a, pp. 285-292; 2001b, pp. 7-11.



Fig. 1. Map of the island of Naxos (A.G. Vlachopoulos [ed.], *Archaeology: Aegean Islands*, Athens 2006, 272).

to throw stones behind them to prevent the evil. As far as I know that is a quite rare or a unique archaeological document for such a ceremonial practice and especially from a so early period.

There is also another “puzzling feature”²: the frequency of large closed vessels lying outside the tumuli, close to the stone kerb, having a slab on the base and another on the mouth containing nothing but sand, which was not from the area, but transported from somewhere else (figs. 15-16). The hypothesis that these large vases, protected by slabs as if they were ash urns or as if they contained infant inhumations the bones of which have been decomposed, must be under consideration; in an infant cist grave of this cemetery the bones of the dead child have been found with the grave offerings as well as at Paros, in the geometric and archaic cemetery³, where the bones of infant inhumations in big vessels have been found, almost intact, inside with the offerings.

According to the grave goods the cemetery at Tsikalario was mainly used during the MG period⁴, but it seems, that it continued into the 6th cent. B.C. as a place of veneration probably of the ancestors; the peribolos of the Archaic period (fig. 6) is a

characteristic document of this kind of veneration activities as well as the complexes of constructions outside the tumuli areas, which don't belong to a settlement⁵, small or big, but they must be linked to funerary cult and especially to the cult of the dead and of family ancestors⁶. It is also to be noticed that this cemetery belongs to a feudal “aristocracy” that dominated in the whole Naxian land and practiced its cult ceremonies not far away from there, in the plain near Tragaia, at the area of Sangri, in the sanctuary at the site Gyroulas, that later was dedicated to the goddess Demeter⁷.

The last problem that is to be considered is the burial type of the tumuli in the South Greek lands. Well represented in other regions of the North Greek world in the Bronze and Iron Ages, such as in Macedonia, Thessaly and Epirus⁸ their appearance in the Naxian inland is perhaps due to experiences received during some warlike expeditions that these feudal warriors have realized alone or with their allies, the Euboeans, into the Northern Greece. The weapons among the grave offerings, the shape of the kantharos type with discoid handle terminals common in Macedonia adapted by local ceramists in the inland of Naxos⁹, the imported Cypriot vase, all these are elements supporting the hypothesis above, of a warlike population adapting some impressive, unknown to them art types as well as ways of cultural life or of burial practices and at the same time developing commercial connections with some wealthy cities as i.e. with Cyprus. At the same period too, the inhabitants of the coastal Naxos, as far as we can judge from the ceramic evidence, have made connections farther north with the Thessalians and closer ones with the Euboeans, with whom they have taken part to the colonization of a new city, in the far Owest, Naxos in Sicily.

In conclusion, this strange cemetery at the Naxian highland contains some unique burial complexes that open new horizons for the investigation of the cult practices of the remote so called “Dark Age”, changing much of our knowledge about the extreme diversity of early burial customs in the maritime Cycladic world.

² Coldstream 2003, p. 92.

³ Zaphiropoulou 2002, pp. 283-284 and n. 16-20; Zaphiropoulou 2003, p. 8 and n. 15.

⁴ Coldstream 2003, p. 92; Charalambidou in this *AION*.

⁵ Coldstream 2003, p. 92.

⁶ Cfr. Charalambidou in this *AION*, p. 61.

⁷ Cfr. Lambrinoudakis, Gruben, Korres, Simantoni-Bournia *et. al.* 2001.

⁸ Snodgrass 1971, pp. 154-155, 160-163, 172-173, 257-261.

⁹ Charalambidou in this *AION*, pp. 63, 68.



Fig. 2. General view of the plateau with the necropolis from south.

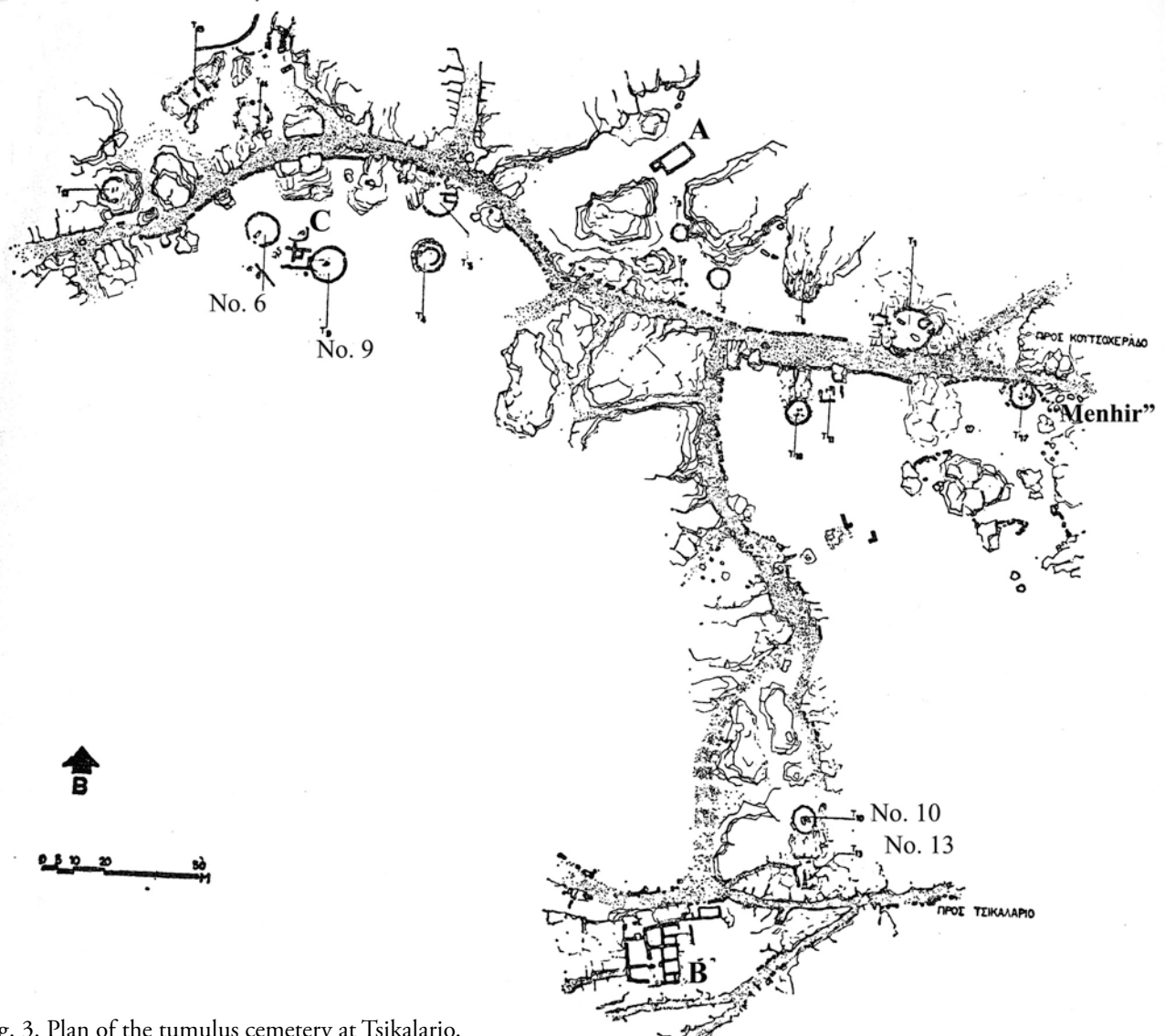


Fig. 3. Plan of the tumulus cemetery at Tsikalario.

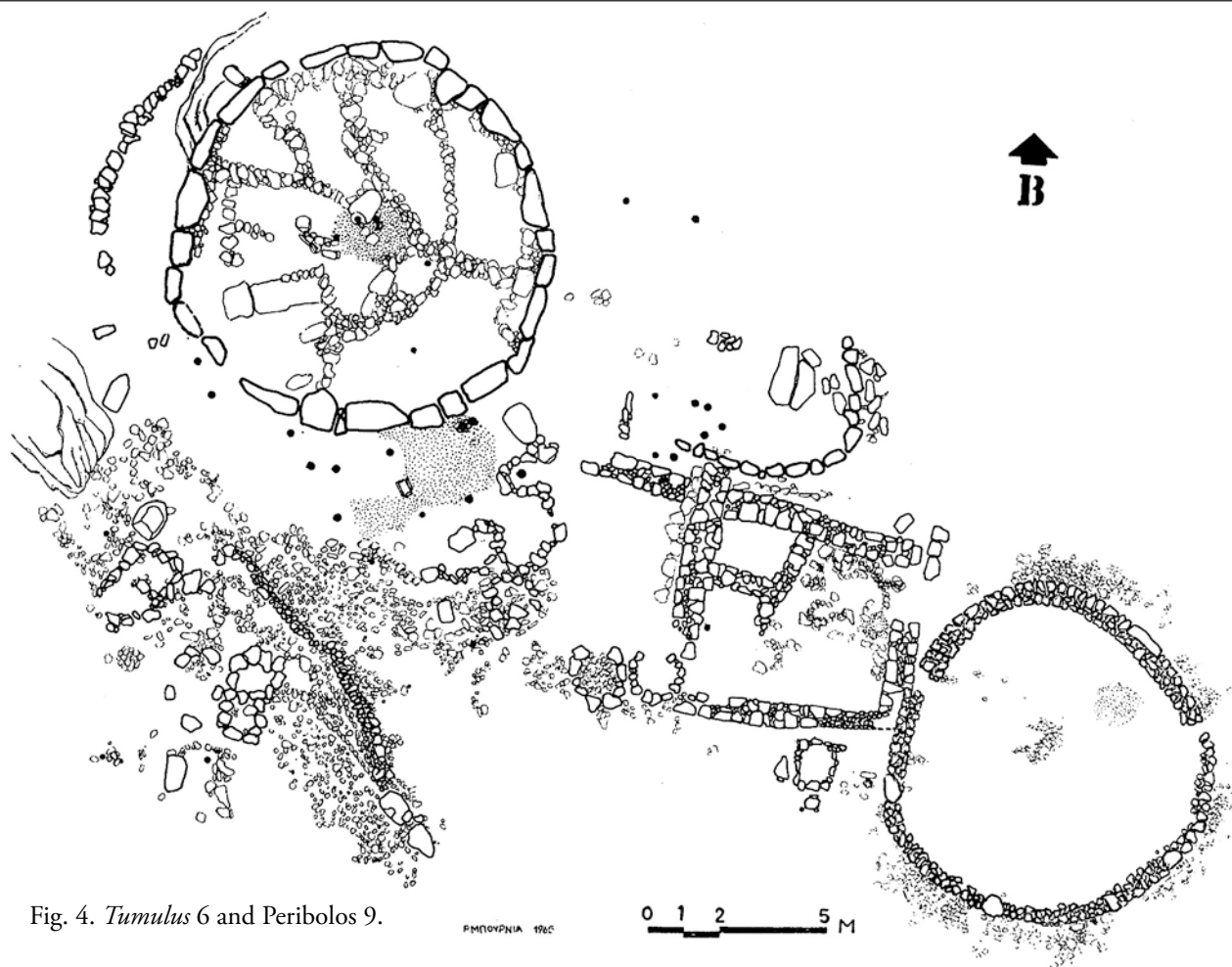
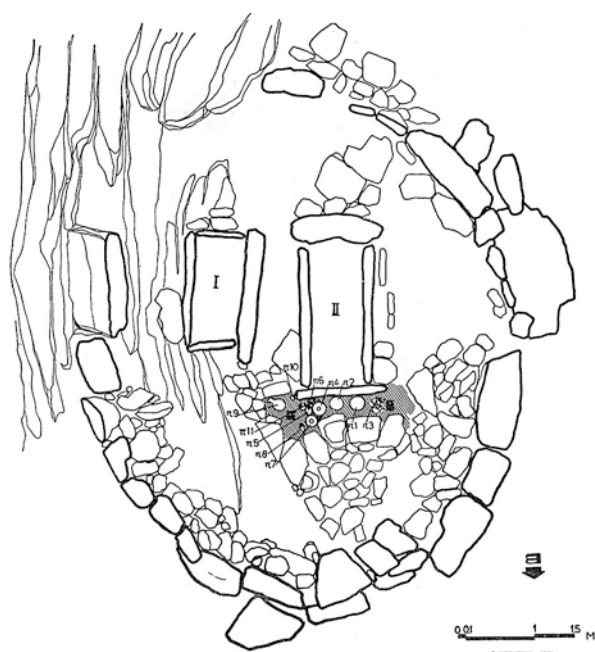
Fig. 4. *Tumulus 6 and Peribolos 9.*Fig. 5. *Tumulus 10.*Fig. 6. *Peribolos 9.*



Fig. 7. The “menhir”.

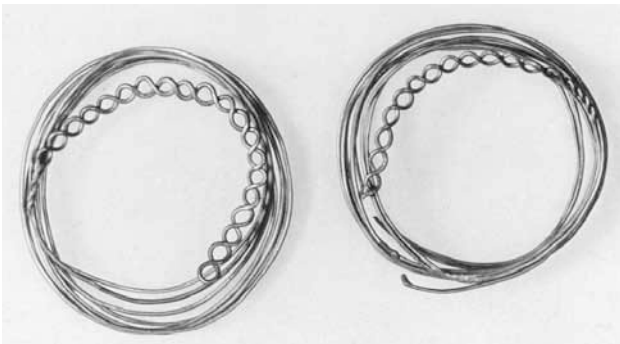


Fig. 8. Gold bracelets of twisted wire.



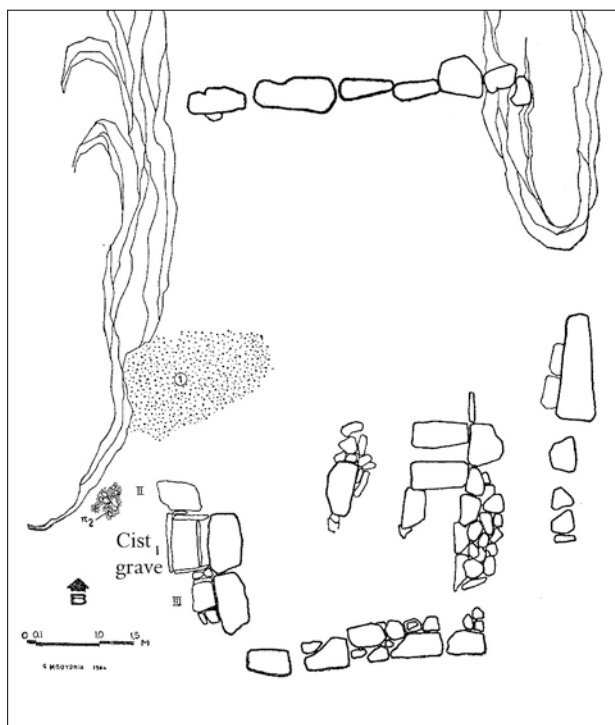
Fig. 10. Burned fruit offerings.



Fig. 9. Clay figurines of birds.



Fig. 11. Clay figurine.



Figs. 12-13. Funerary enclosure 11 with a child cist-grave.



Fig. 14. Detail of the “road web”.



Figs. 15-16. Vessels outside *tumuli*.

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P.-CH. MALAMUD, *Entendre et voir avec Jean-Pierre Vernant*

This paper presents a few remarks on the way Jean-Pierre Vernant perceives and analyses the relation between seeing and hearing in Ancient Greece. As a contrast to Greece, where the importance of seeing is overwhelming, in Ancient India, speech as voice and sound is the way the Absolute manifests itself and although the poets are described as «seers», what they «see» is made of sound and speech as sound is the subject matter of systematic speculations, myths and explanations of the ritual.

D. RIDGWAY, *Nicolas Coldstream e l'Italia*

This obituary essay notes the lasting contribution made by Nicolas Coldstream (30 March 1927 – 21 March 2008) to the understanding of the pre-Classical Greek world. The archaeological record of Italy and Sicily played a crucial role in his two major works (*Greek Geometric Pottery*, 1968; 2008²; *Geometric Greece 900-700 B.C.*, 1977; 2003²), and in many papers devoted to the material from individual sites. His œuvre is distinguished throughout by an extraordinary capacity to extract history as well as chronology from the archaeological record – and nowhere more so than at Giorgio Buchner's Pithekoussai, where he was a frequent and welcome visitor.

P.G. GUZZO, *Tucidide e le isole, tra Fenici e Greci*

The ancient sailor technology by Phoenicians and Greeks used the islands, so frequent in the Mediterranean Sea, as landing-places during the navigation. Evidence of this use is found in the literary sources as well as in the place names. Among the last ones those with the suffix -oussa are studied, and it is made a list of them. Moreover, the islands were used as safe places to have relations with mainland population, of which they didn't trust. The analysis about this subject confutes what has been transmitted by Thucydides (6,2,6) about the previous presence in Sicily of Phoenicians compared to the Greek presence. The reconstruction made by the Historian has been compared with other passages of his own text, which suggest the interpretation here proposed.

M. D'ACUNTO, *Una statuetta fittile del Geometrico Antico da Ialysos*

This paper deals with the clay female figurine which was found in the tomb 470 in the plot Platsa Daphniou at Ialysos (Rhodes). This figurine dates back as early as 900-875 BC. Its wheel-made body and the head with pronounced features may show influences from the Dark Age plastic productions of Cyprus and Crete. The function of this statuette and its identification are not clear. It is unlikely that the figurine was a doll. Some iconographic details, as the diadem, and its comparison with other statuettes buried in the Dark Age tombs suggest two alternative interpretations: the statuette could represent a rank figure, as the mother, or otherwise a death goddess or demon, as Persephone / Kore.

PH. ZAPHIROPOULOU, *The tumulus necropolis at Tsikalario on Naxos*

In the Cyclades archipelago of the Aegean Sea a most impressive tumulus necropolis of the Geometric period has come into light on a rocky plateau of central Naxos.

At this site there is a complex of about twenty-five tumuli out of which seventeen were investigated. The tumuli, some as large as 9-12m in diameter, were made of a stone kerb (the stones were huge rock upright slabs) approximating to a perfect circle; most of them had one or more cremation pyres inside but also some others had large and smaller rectangular cist graves. The offerings include coarse ware, painted vessels and many small objects. Also there was a kind of "road web" among the tumuli and a huge "menhir", a rocky huge upright slab 3,20m high, erected at the main entrance of the cemetery as a marker of the grave area.

This cemetery was used during the MG period but it seems that it continued into the 6th century B.C., as a place of veneration of the ancestors who belonged to a feudal "aristocracy".

X. CHARALAMBIDOU, *The pottery from the early Iron Age necropolis of Tsikalario on Naxos*

Pottery from the imposing necropolis of Tsikalario in central Naxos is the main focus of this study, which aims to offer new information about the nature of production and circulation of ceramics from workshops in inland Naxos compared with

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