

UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI NAPOLI «L'ORIENTALE»

ANNALI DI ARCHEOLOGIA E STORIA ANTICA

DIPARTIMENTO DI STUDI DEL MONDO CLASSICO
E DEL MEDITERRANEO ANTICO

Nuova Serie N. 15 - 16



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THE POTTERY FROM THE EARLY IRON AGE NECROPOLIS OF TSIKALARIO ON NAXOS: PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS¹

XENIA CHARALAMBIDOU

The ancient cemetery of Tsikalario is located at the site of Alonakia near the modern village of Tsikalario, in the area known as Tragaia in central Naxos. Its location is breathtaking: the landscape is rocky and isolated, a place which seems to stand between earth and sky, appropriate for an imposing necropolis². The study of the material from the necropolis of Tsikalario was recently entrusted to me; my research began in 2008. The brief outline presented in this article should therefore be considered only a preliminary report that brings some discussion points to the table and gives an overview of some of the methods which will be applied to the study of the ceramic material. This research aims to add new evidence to what we know about Naxian pottery and archaeology regarding questions such as the characteristics of production and circulation of the ceramics from workshops in the interior of Naxos compared with those from workshops in Chora (Naxos Town), the main settlement and harbour of Naxos, the use of artifacts in funerary contexts, the relationship between wheelmade and handmade pottery, and the nature of Naxian contacts with other parts of the Greek world.

The pottery from the cemetery includes a variety of wheelmade and handmade vessels. At Tsikalario, the relationship between wheelmade

and handmade pottery, which are present in an approximately half-and-half ratio, becomes readily apparent for the first time in a burial context on Naxos³. The large number of handmade vessels from Tsikalario, which served various purposes in the context of the cemetery, may also be a result of the site's more remote location, perhaps indicating a workshop in the island's hinterland, likely close to Tsikalario cemetery in the vicinity of Tragaia. Typical examples of handmade pottery production, usually embellished with incised and/or stamped decorative motifs in combinations of patterns that often indicate workshops different from those that produced the handmade pottery of Tsikalario, are also known from the South and North Cemeteries (including Plithos) in Chora⁴.

The possibility that a workshop existed near the cemetery of Tsikalario is strengthened by initial macroscopic observations of technical features of the Tsikalario vessels. Kourou has asserted that the Middle Geometric (MG) wheelmade painted pottery from Tsikalario has a provincial character which differs from the Naxian vessels from Chora not only in style, but also in fabric, as the local clay used in the vessels from Tsikalario looks very crumbly and gritty. In contrast, the fabric of the MG vases from Chora is fine and hard-fired, with a very distinctive

¹ My warmest thanks to professor B. D'Agostino for inviting me to contribute to this issue of *AION*. I want to express my gratitude to dr. Ph. Zaphiropoulou (Ephor Emerita of Antiquities, Greek Archaeological Service) for entrusting the unpublished ceramic material from the cemetery of Tsikalario (Naxos) to me for study and final publication. I also wish to thank profs. E. Simantoni-Bournia and N. Kourou for their advice on Naxian pottery. Any errors that remain are purely my own. My sincere thanks go to the J.F. Costopoulos Foundation for supporting this research at its very beginning. In the figures, all the drawings are by the author.

² For the excavations at Tsikalario, see Zaphiropoulou in this issue of *AION*.

³ Though scholars have recognized the close coexistence of handmade and wheelmade pottery in other parts of the Greek world such as Macedonia, the Naxian evidence, which comes from a secure stratigraphical context, is still little known. For the relationship between handmade and wheelmade pottery in Late Bronze and Early Iron Age northern Greece, see Kiriati *et al.* 1997, 361-368; Papadopoulos 2005, especially 416-418.

⁴ Kourou 1984, 108; 1999, 82-84; Zaphiropoulou 2001, 295, fig. 39; 2004, 414, fig. 3.

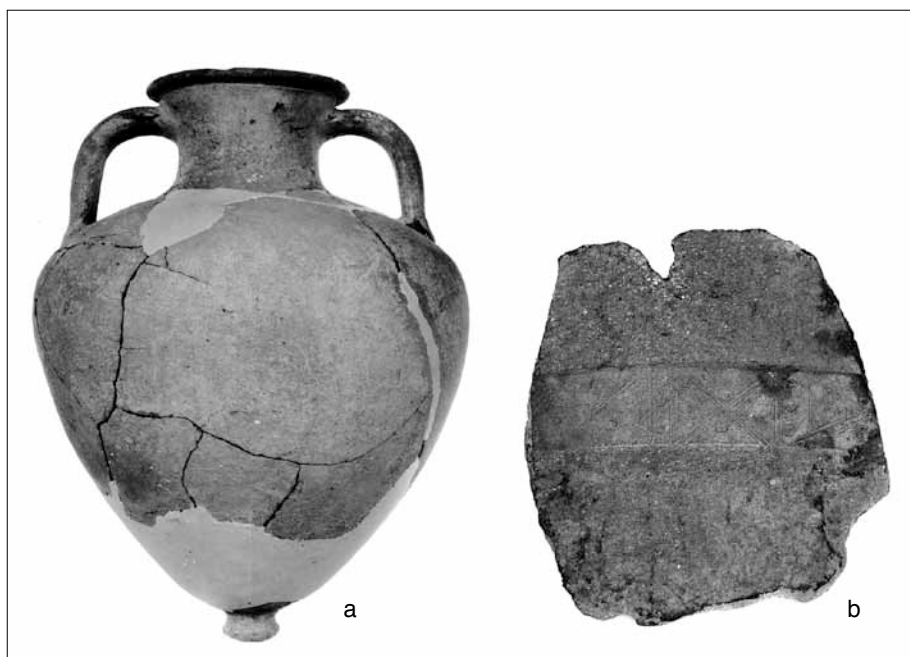


Fig. 1. a) Late archaic - Early Classical pointed amphora; b) Fragment of an Archaic pithos.



Fig. 2. a) Middle-Geometric tripod kalathos-shaped vessel; b) Archaic relief stand.

black shiny glaze, sometimes applied on top of a relatively thick layer of very pale slip⁵. Though these remarks hold true, it should be observed that the fine wheelmade vessels from Tsikalario have suffered considerable damage, likely in part because of soil

⁵ Kourou 1984, 108. For details of the techniques used to produce pottery from the South Cemetery of Naxos Town, see Kourou, 1999, 85-114.

⁶ Moreover, there are vessels from Tsikalario which include golden and silver mica; this can probably be explained by the geology of Naxos, in particular the formations of metamorphic rocks (schist and gneiss) containing both golden and silver mica

conditions and the environment within the pyres. In addition, there is some evidence that slip was also applied to at least a few of the vessels from Tsikalario, but the vessel surfaces are so badly worn that only faint traces of the slip remain. The picture therefore appears to be far more complex than formerly supposed, so that further archaeometric analysis of samples from both Tsikalario and Chora will be necessary to obtain more detailed information⁶.

The majority of the material from the funerary structures at Tsikalario belongs to the MG period, particularly the MGII period, although certain offerings, for instance a flat pyxis in the vicinity of the cist grave by funerary enclosure n. 11 (see Zaphiropoulou figs. 12-13), which will be discussed below, can probably be dated to the MGI period. The main period of the cemetery's use seems to be the MG period, but sporadic burials still continued in the necropolis area as late as the Archaic period and even later, as indicated for example by a pointed amphora (fig. 1a) with its

mouth overlapped by a pithos fragment decorated with incised crosses and stamped small circles (fig. 1b)⁷. More scanty post-MGII material was also found in the interior (perhaps originating in the upper layers) and in the vicinity of some funerary

that occur in the vicinity of the site (I thank Dr E. Kiriati, director of the Fitch Research Laboratory at the British School of Athens, for this information). Golden and silver mica is also visible on vessels from Chora.

⁷ An inscribed stone plaque was also found in front of the amphora (Papadopoulou-Zaphiropoulou 1966, 395. See also Coldstream 2003, 92). Regarding the Archaic pithos fragment



Fig. 3. a-b) MG flat pyxis with lid; c-d) MG small mastoid jug.

structures, as well as in the buildings in areas A, B, and C (see Zaphiropoulou fig. 3). This material, among which are fragments of large plain pithoi and at least one relief vessel, probably a stand, found in one of the rooms of the area B complex (fig. 2 b)⁸, raises many questions about its function. Determining the role that these vessels played is integral to understanding the activities that took place after most of the funerary structures had been constructed. One possible interpretation, although we should stress that at this early stage of research we cannot draw any conclusions, is that at least some of these vessels were used for cult purposes, including honouring the cemetery's dead. Most of these vessels seem to be of Naxian manufacture. Tomb cult and ancestor cult have a long tradition on Naxos, a tradition that continued for a very long period, as has been observed in Chora, at Grotta and in the area known as Metropolis⁹. The buildings in areas A, B and C have been linked by several scholars to funerary and chthonian cults; others believe that the complex of rooms in area B represents a settlement¹⁰.

(fig. 1b), Simantoni-Bournia has pointed out that incised X's with stamped small circles already have a long history on Naxos going back to the MG period. The most typical example is in fact from Tsikalario, a handmade tripod kalathos-shaped vessel, probably of MGII date, found in funerary structure n. 5 (B) (fig. 2a) (Simantoni-Bournia 1998, 487-516, and especially 493-494; for the first publication of this vessel, see Doumas 1963, 280, pl. 325b). From the last quarter of the 7th and during the 6th century B.C., however, vessels with variations of this motif seem to be produced mainly in Attica and in the Cyclades on islands like Kea, Kythnos, Siphnos, Paros, and Amorgos; in the current state of our knowledge, the limited number of such vessels from Naxos has not favoured the possibility of local manufacture (Simantoni-Bournia 1998, 504).

Let us now turn to a brief survey of the shapes of vessels found in the context of the funerary structures of Tsikalario, mainly MG in date, with some remarks on the most distinctive shapes. At this point, I make no distinction between ash urns and grave goods generally; an effort to do so will be attempted in the near future, although it will be severely hindered by the fact that human bone remains from the cremations at Tsikalario rarely survive. The majority of the material found in the cemetery is ceramic. For this reason, pottery can provide us with the solidest evidence about both production patterns and social and economic conditions in the interior of Naxos.

The wheelmade pottery from Tsikalario shows a significant Atticizing flavour, a feature already remarked in the ceramic material from the burials of Chora¹¹. Signs of local taste in wheelmade pottery can also be observed, however, in addition to the production of handmade pottery. The wheelmade pottery from Tsikalario often finds parallels, both in shape and in decoration, in the wheelmade vessels from Chora; furthermore, the Tsikalario group

⁸ Papadopoulou-Zaphiropoulou 1966, 395.

⁹ Lambrinoudakis 1988, 235-246; Antonaccio 1995, 201-202, 246, 250; Mazarakis Ainian 1997, 188-189; Morris 2000, 246-249. Ancestral cult is also known at other sites in the Cyclades, e.g. at Xobourgo on Tenos (Kourou 2008, 74).

¹⁰ Cultic identification of buildings in areas A, B, and C: Zaphiropoulou 1983a, 2; 2001a, 292; See also Zaphiropoulou in this *AION*. Themelis 1975, 24-25, 40-42; 1976, 240-241; Lauter 1985, 170-176; Mazarakis Ainian 1997, 191-193, 330. Area B complex identified as a settlement: Drerup 1969, 51; Kourou 1988, 32; Coldstream 2003, 92. This problem will be discussed more fully in another paper.

¹¹ Kourou 1999, especially 90-95; Coldstream 2003, 90-92; 2008, 165-171.

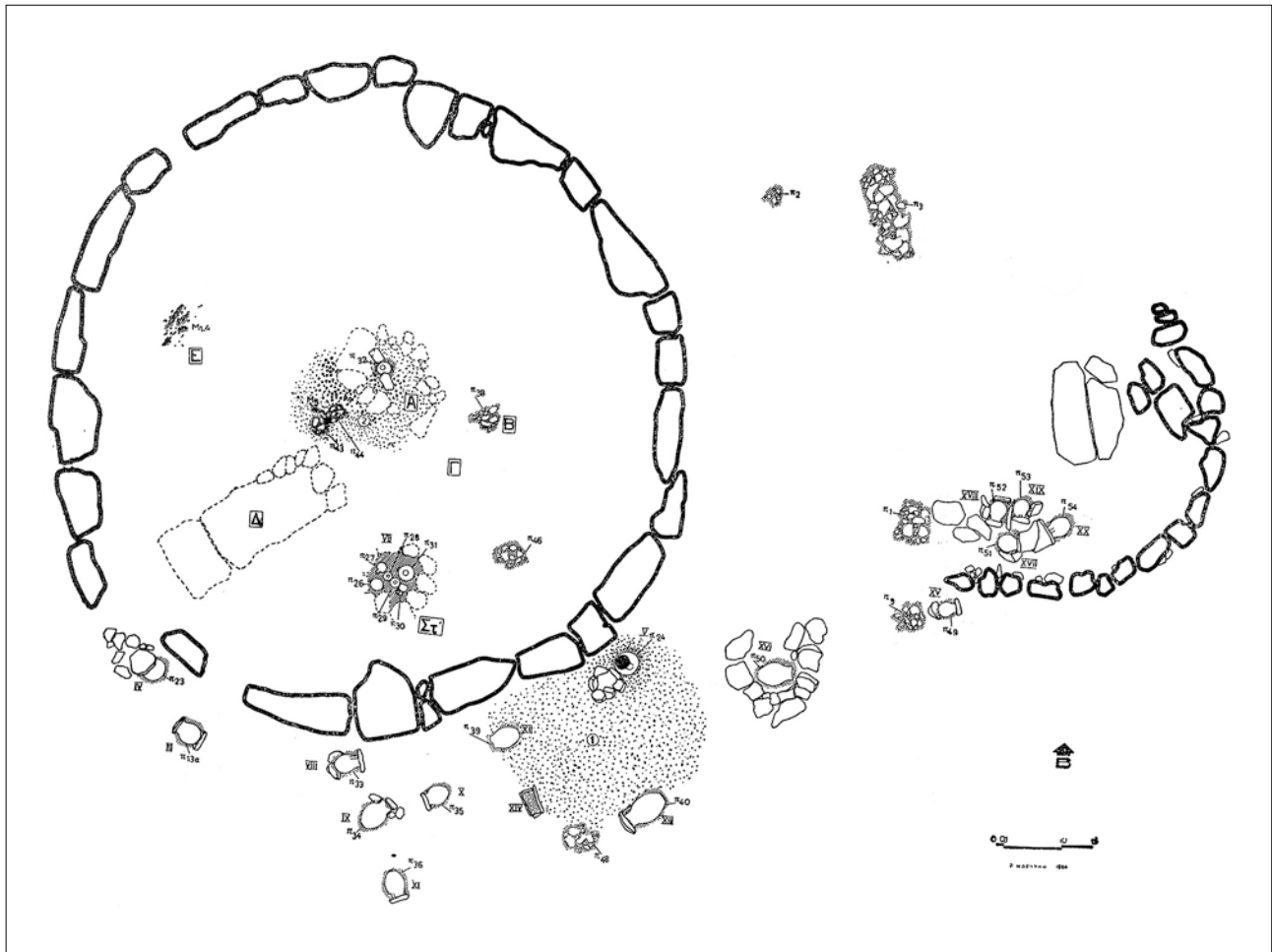


Fig. 4. Tsikalario, funerary structure n. 6 (lowest level) (Papadopoulou-Zaphiropoulou 1965, 516).

includes shapes that until now were unknown at Naxos Town and thus increase our knowledge of the Naxian repertoire. Among the wheelmade closed shapes from Tsikalario, two types of pyxides have been found, globular and flat, the latter (fig. 3a-b)¹² an Atticizing type not previously known in the Cyclades¹³. Uncovered together with several other offerings in the vicinity of the cist grave by enclosure n. 11 (see Zaphiropoulou fig. 13), this flat pyxis finds close parallels in Attic flat MGI pyxides¹⁴ and may be dated to the last quarter of the 9th century B.C., which would make it one of the earliest vases among these offerings and the ceramic material found until now in Tsikalario as a whole, although the conservatism of Naxian potters should be taken into account when constructing a

chronology¹⁵. Amphoras of the belly-handled and neck-handled types are also represented, many of them fragmentary, as well as a tripod pithos showing a shape analogous to handmade tripod vessels. The medium-sized closed shapes that occur at Tsikalario are represented by amphoriskoi, trefoil oinochoai, trefoil lekythoi and jugs with horizontal rim, while some closed vessels of small dimensions have been found mainly in the cist grave by enclosure n. 11 discussed below (an example is the small jug with mastoid projections in fig. 3c-d)¹⁶.

As regards open wheelmade vessels, four bowls have been discovered (in pairs), while cups as well as skyphoi (e.g. fig. 5a-b) were a very common form of offering, represented in two types, deep and shallow. Only a few mastoid cups have been found; one

¹² Papadopoulou-Zaphiropoulou 1965, 522, pl. 656c.

¹³ Coldstream 2008, 169, 468.

¹⁴ Coldstream 2003, 92; 2008, 17, pl. 3f-h.

¹⁵ Examples of Naxian potters' conservatism: Zaphiropoulou

1983b, 132; Kourou 1999, 92-95.

¹⁶ Some small handmade vessels were also found in and around the same cist grave; two will be discussed below.

of them, datable to the MGII period (fig. 5c-d), was in funerary structure n. 6 (fig. 4), inside an elaborate handmade amphora (fig. 5e-f) located just above the central cremation pyre, which seems to be connected with a male burial¹⁷. Kantharoi are well represented at Tsikalario, showing variations in shape. Among these vessels, one kantharos that has high handles with discoid terminals (fig. 6a-b), found inside the cist grave by enclosure n. 11 and dated to MGII, is a type never before seen on Naxos; although its clay does look local, the vessel shows probable northern Greek influences¹⁸. Kantharoi with discoid terminals were popular at Vergina but are also known at other places in the larger region like Pydna and Kastanas, as well as in the Chalkidike, especially at Koukos Sykias, Torone, Ai-Yianni Nikites, and Olynthus on the Sithonia peninsula¹⁹. This type of northern Greek kantharos with discoid terminals is thought to have been in use for a long time, down to the Archaic or perhaps even the Early Classical period²⁰. The handmade version of this type of kantharos was by far the more popular, whereas the wheelmade version appears more rarely in Macedonia²¹. Some variations in form may indicate a local origin for the Tsikalario kantharos. For example, the shape of the terminals is almost flower-like, slightly different from those found at Vergina; high-handled kantharoi with discoid terminals are known only in northern Greece, however, and it is therefore probable that the inspiration for the form of the Tsikalario vessel indeed came from there. Schachermeyr impulsively called this kantharos and some other vases from Tsikalario “Makedonisches”²².

The cist grave by enclosure n. 11 (see Zaphiropoulou figs. 12-13) where this kantharos was found would seem to have been of a child because some of the other vases in it were of small dimensions (e.g. fig. 3c-d)²³. This interment can be considered a wealthy burial, for in addition to rare vases such as the kantharos and a two-handled flask of Cypriot type²⁴ it contained fifty-six spindle whorls, a round bead of green glass, a bronze fibula of “East Greek” type (according to Zaphiropoulou), fragments of a bronze ornament which the excavator identified as a spectacle fibula, a bird-shaped clay object with a suspension loop, two smaller bird figurines, and three clay figurines of women. Some offerings in the vicinity of this cist grave may also be connected with the same burial (among them another bird figurine)²⁵. The quantity and quality of these grave goods are at least as suggestive of the family’s status as of the deceased’s own identity²⁶.

The handmade pottery constitutes almost the half of the ceramic material from Tsikalario. The current study is the first time that such a high proportion of handmade wares is being examined in the context of a Naxian cemetery. The repertoire of shapes gives a good picture of the local craftsmanship. Many handmade vessels show high standards of artisanal production, while there is also a group of a few small handmade burnished vessels. Papadopoulos’ observation about the handmade pottery from Torone – «Handmade vessels deposited in tombs served specialized, prestigious, and ideological needs as much as any wheelmade and painted pottery» – could just as easily be applied to the handmade vessels, most plain, some highly ornamented, that

¹⁷ MGII mastoid cup: Papadopolou-Zaphiropoulou 1965, 517, pl. 650b. Parallels for this shape of cup in the South Cemetery of Chora on Naxos: Kourou 1999, 60-62. The decoration of the cup – two pairs of hatched meander hooks – appears on Cycladic drinking vessels such as cups and skyphoi and seems to derive from a typical Attic MGII design: Coldstream 2008, 170. For the significance of mastoid vessels in graves, see Kourou 1999, 176. Among the grave goods inside the central cremation pyre of funerary structure n. 6, a few iron weapons were found: Papadopolou-Zaphiropoulou 1965, 515.

¹⁸ High-handled kantharos with discoid terminals: Papadopolou-Zaphiropoulou 1965, 521, pl. 655b; Coldstream 2003, 92; 2008, 468.

¹⁹ Vergina: Andronikos 1952, 241-252; 1953, 146, fig. 7; 1969, 202-204; Petsas 1961-62, 218-288, pl. 102-103, 119, 150-153; Carington-Smith 1991, 339-340; Trakosopoulou-Salakidou 2004, 271. Pydna: Karliabas, Besios and Triantafyllou 2004, 344, fig. 9. Kastanas: Hochstetter 1984, 99, Taf. 240,1; Carington-Smith 1991, 339. Sites in the Chalkidike:

Carington-Smith 1991, 336, fig. 3 (type 2), 339-340; Trakosopoulou-Salakidou 2004, 271, fig. 10; 2006/07, 48, pl. 3:1; Papadopoulos 2005, 473.

²⁰ Carington-Smith 1991, 342.

²¹ Papadopoulos 2005, 455.

²² Schachermeyr 1980, 331, Taf. 65d.

²³ For this cist grave: Papadopolou-Zaphiropoulou 1965, 520-522; Zaphiropoulou 2001a, 291, figs. 13-14.

²⁴ Papadopolou-Zaphiropoulou 1965, 521, pl. 656d; Zaphiropoulou in Ploes, 258, n. 137; Zaphiropoulou 2004, 414, fig. 5.

²⁵ Papadopolou-Zaphiropoulou 1965, 520-522. See also Zaphiropoulou in this *AION* (figs. 9, 11). Clay bird figurines are also known from a burial in the South Cemetery of Chora: Kourou 1999, 69-81. For bird figurines in burial contexts see also Xagorari 1996, 54.

²⁶ McHugh 1999, 24: «a child is too young to have achieved social identities that would find recognition by wealthy grave goods, so these social identities must have been ascribed at birth.»

were found not only inside the Tsikalario funerary structures but also in their vicinity²⁷. A comparative study of this handmade ware together with the wheelmade pottery found in the same contexts will provide evidence that can help us date them and understand their function.

Many handmade jugs from Tsikalario that can be dated to the MG period have a horizontal rim, short neck, and wide, spherical body with a flat or convex base (e.g. fig. 6e-f)²⁸. Another category of handmade jugs comprises a small number of items: the small burnished jugs, including one with a line of incised lozenges on the handle (fig. 5i-l)²⁹. Different types of handmade amphoras can be distinguished: one of them is a narrow-bodied amphora found among the offerings placed just above the central cremation pyre of funerary structure n. 6, which was, as already noted, most probably a male interment (fig. 5e-f). Its handles were embellished with horn-like terminals, while on the spine of the handle is a row of inverted V's. Inside it was the MGII mastoid cup that dates the amphora, as stated above. This vessel was manufactured with great care, perhaps because it was intended for the main cremation burial in the *tumulus*. In addition to wheelmade amphoriskoi, handmade amphoriskoi were also produced, significant examples of the expertise of the local workshop. Two amphoriskoi were found, one inside the child burial by enclosure n. 11 and the other among the offerings in the vicinity of the same grave (see Zaphiropoulou figs. 12-13). Both of them have spherical bodies and necks terminating in the same type of out-turned rim on which the lid was placed. Both lids have survived. One of them (fig. 6 c-d), adorned with a horse figure, looks like a local adaptation of the lids with handles in the shape of horses found mainly on Attic pyxides of the MGII period³⁰.

Handmade pithoi come in different types. Simple undecorated pithoi (e.g. fig. 5g-h) occur in different sizes and were clearly popular with cemetery users. They were found in several locations: a) inside the burials; b) among offerings located outside the cist graves of one funerary structure;

and c) among vases around the outside of another funerary structure. At least some of them may have been used as ash-urns.

The most impressive handmade vessels from Tsikalario, mainly MGII in date, are undoubtedly those which bear incised or, more rarely, a combination of incised and stamped decoration, usually handmade tripod vases. Naxos has a great tradition of producing handmade pithoi with incised and/or stamped decoration, and several workshops seem to have existed in the neighbourhood of Chora and in the island's interior. The finds from Tsikalario offer additional information about the production and distribution of the workshops which produced such vessels³¹. We can distinguish a few different styles of decoration among these large decorated handmade vases. A few pithoi from Tsikalario share the same incised patterns, for example concentric triangles together with vertical zones of herringbone pattern that decorate part of the body surface as well as the tripod legs, so they are probably products of the same workshop, or even the same potter (fig. 6g-h and 6i-l)³². At Chora, handmade pithoi frequently show different styles: for instance incised decoration which features hatched meander patterns and zig-zags, or pithoi embellished mainly with varying combinations of stamped small circles³³. Some other pithoi from Chora, however, show similarities of decoration with the vessels from Tsikalario. In addition to the tripod kalathos-shaped vessel from Tsikalario (fig. 2a) whose similarities to a tripod pithos from Chora have been discussed by Kourou, there are handmade pithoi from Naxos Town on which concentric triangles or vertical zones in a herringbone pattern also appear – although usually combined with motifs different from those of Tsikalario – indicating a greater number of shared decorative features than previously recognized³⁴.

The material from Tsikalario offers a limited range of imports as a sign of contacts with other places such as Attica, Paros, and the eastern Mediterranean³⁵. The small number of imports found in the cemeteries of Naxos, rural Tsikalario among them,

²⁷ Papadopoulos 2005, 464.

²⁸ Cfr. the form of Attic handmade jugs: Reber 1991, 30.

²⁹ Papadopoulou-Zaphiropoulou 1965, 517, pl. 650a. Burnished small-sized handmade vessels in tombs: Kourou 1999, 109-111.

³⁰ This lid (Papadopoulou-Zaphiropoulou 1965, 522, fig. 19) seems to fit the handmade amphoriskos of fig. 6 c-d.

³¹ See also Kourou 1999, 111-114.

³² Papadopoulou-Zaphiropoulou 1965, 522, pl. 651, c-d.

³³ E.g. Kourou 1999, 111-114.

³⁴ Kourou 1999, 113-114. Pithos from Plithos: Zaphiropoulou 2001a, 295, fig. 39.

³⁵ For the two-handled flask of Cypriot type, see n. 24.

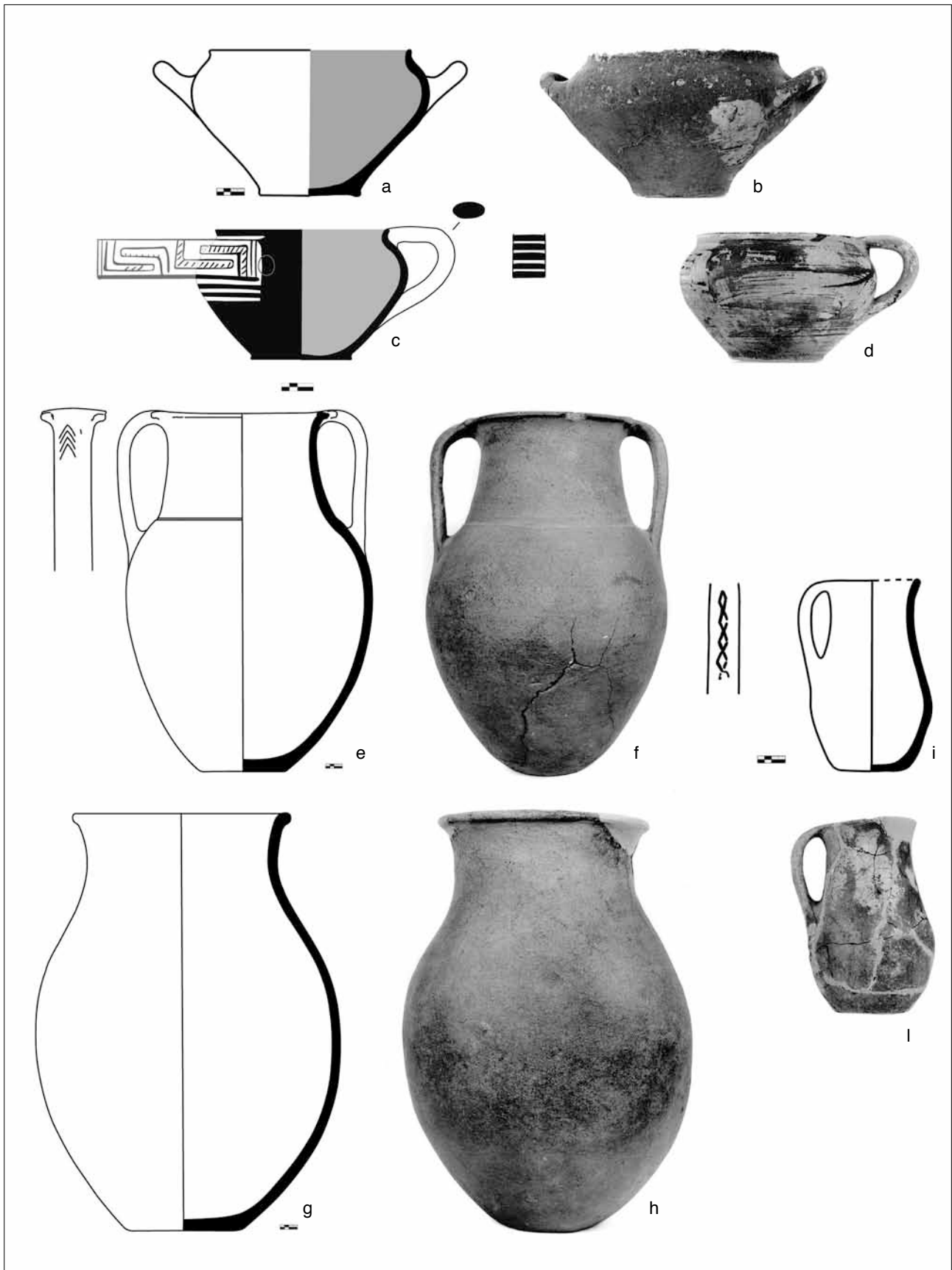


Fig. 5. Tsikalario, funerary structure n. 6. Characteristic MG finds from the central cremation pyre: the skyphos a-b was found deep within the cremation pyre, the rest of the offerings (c-l) just above the pyre.

may indicate the self-sufficient character of the local inhabitants³⁶.

Some preliminary observations, based on an initial quantitative estimate, are summarized as follows³⁷: the most common wheelmade vessels are amphorae and jugs, together with cups and skyphoi; shallow cups are more numerous than deep cups, while deep skyphoi are more abundant than shallow ones. Apropos of the handmade vessels from Tsikalario, the most common shape is plainly the jug, followed by the amphora and the pithos. Plain, unadorned pithoi are more common than decorated tripod pithoi; the latter may be regarded as more lavish offerings. Many of these vessel shapes as well as many of the vessel types also appear in the published material from the South Cemetery of Chora, which is more limited because the exact origin of most of the offerings from the graves is unknown. Fifty-seven vases from the South Cemetery have been identified, fifty-five wheelmade and two handmade; study of this material has achieved a partial reconstruction of the burial units³⁸. Limitations exist also in the case of Tsikalario, since some of the material comes from funerary structures that had already been robbed, which reduces our ability to reach an overall assessment of the burial contexts in the Tsikalario necropolis. Publication of the North Cemetery material will furthermore help to clarify the relationships between the ceramics from Chora and those from Tsikalario³⁹.

Who were the people who built the funerary structures of Tsikalario, which include many tumulus-like constructions, used them, and placed

their offerings there? This distinctive quasi-tumulus burial type has not been previously recorded in Naxos, though it shares some features with Iron Age tumuli found in other regions of the Greek world such as Macedonia⁴⁰. Cremations, however, common in the cemetery of Tsikalario, were also performed in the cemeteries of Chora as a funerary practice parallel with inhumation⁴¹. The use of tumulus-like structures for the Tsikalario burials is not necessarily an indicator of a different ethnic group in Tragaia (Macedonians?) but rather the Naxians' adoption of funerary elements acquired through their contacts with other regions of the Greek world during the Early Iron Age⁴². Ceramic evidence can contribute to this discussion, for most of the ceramic material from Tsikalario finds closer parallels in the ceramics from the burials of Chora. Certain vases which could indicate influence from northern Greece – the high-handled kantharos with the discoid terminals, for instance – seem to be locally produced, suggesting that there is less of this quasi-northern material than originally thought. The possibility that the fragments of bronze found in the burial by enclosure n. 11 (see Zaphiropoulou figs. 12-13) might belong to a spectacle fibula should also be taken into account, but this evidence may be insufficient to support the hypothesis of a Macedonian community at Tsikalario when the majority of the ceramic evidence still points to the existence of a Naxian workshop. Other imported items show that rural Tsikalario also had contacts with the eastern Mediterranean, to judge from the presence of a two-handled flask of Cypriot type, which, as

³⁶ See Kourou 1994, 266.

³⁷ For the present, the MNI (=Minimum Number of Individuals) quantification method has been used. Although it has more frequently been applied to material from settlements and cult deposits, it was chosen as a preliminary tool because it ensures that the fragmentary material from Tsikalario will also be taken into account. The MNI system counts the minimum number of vessels restored from fragments as well as the complete vases. The material from the necropolis was counted first to obtain the number of complete vessels; the number of rims and body sherds from the fragmentary material was then added. The quantification was limited to complete vases, fragments of rims, and body fragments and did not extend to bottoms and handles, although bottoms and handles are also categorized into types, since it is very difficult to avoid recounting items that have already been counted according to their rims when counting handles and bottoms. Counting body fragments from vessels which cannot belong to the rims already quantified proved to be very useful in many cases: for instance, it helped in estimating the number of

post-MGII pithoi found in fragments at Tsikalario. This experimental application uses the MNI system's rules; where it differs is in the proportion of complete vessels to fragmentary ones, which, as said before, is much higher in comparison with settlement material. This quantification was made after restoration and conservation of vessels and fragments had been completed at the Naxos (Chora) Museum. According to my initial MNI estimate more than 200 vases have been found up to now in the necropolis of Tsikalario, although further recalculation of the number of recovered vessels will be required as research proceeds. For methodological details, see Arcelin *et al.* 1998.

³⁸ Kourou 1999, 7.

³⁹ The Plithos cemetery, representing part of the North Cemetery of Chora, will shortly be published by Photini Zaphiropoulou and Karl Reber.

⁴⁰ Cfr. Zaphiropoulou in this *AION*.

⁴¹ Snodgrass 1971, 156; Kourou 1999, 161-167.

⁴² Cfr. Zaphiropoulou in this *AION*. For Naxian contacts see also Snodgrass 1971, 125; Kourou 1984, 111; 1994, 263-330.

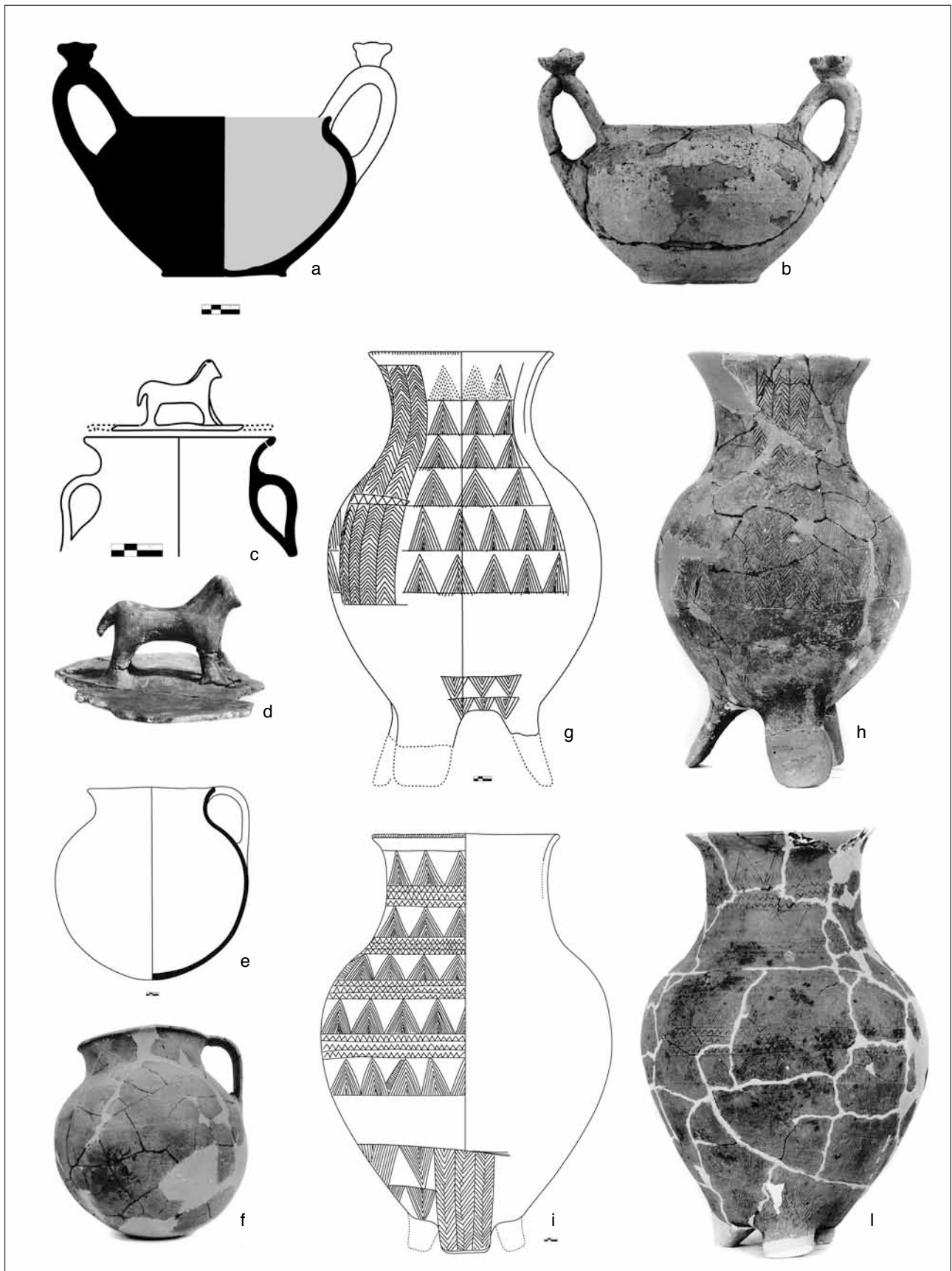


Fig. 6. a-b) MG high-handled kantharos; c-d) MG amphoriskos with lid; e-f) MG jug; g-h) MG tripod pithos; i-l) MG tripod pithos.

mentioned above, was actually found in the same cist grave as the kantharos with discoid terminals⁴³.

The question of why a community would choose to adopt burial practices that seem unique within its own regional context also arises in other areas of the Greek world, as for example in Thessaly, where the Halos tumuli present a unique pyre-cairn tumulus combination⁴⁴. In the case of Halos, the evidence supporting a local origin for the occupants of the unique tumuli there comes from the site itself: in addition to metal artefacts, most of the pottery discovered in the pyres has been recognized as belonging to the local repertoire⁴⁵. As Georganas points out in the case of the Halos tumuli, «the people from Halos choose mortuary differentiation in order to create a new social reality, namely a new identity; an identity which does not necessarily have to do with a distinctive ethnic group struggling to promote its different ethnic background, but with a community trying to promote its individuality by detaching itself from both past and contemporary traditions»⁴⁶. As with Halos, it would be rather daring, if not indeed reckless, in the present state of the evidence to deduce the existence of a distinctive ethnic group trying to promote a different ethnic tradition at Tsikalario. Addressing the issue of ethnicity is always difficult; as Hall has argued, it cannot be conducted according to just one type of evidence but must extend across all possible classes of evidence⁴⁷. For the present, we can observe that certain elements in the mortuary habits of the community at Tsikalario signal an effort to set it apart from Chora⁴⁸. The plateau on which Tsikalario cemetery was situated commands the richest valley in the interior (as Zaphiropoulou observes in this *AION*). The people who constructed these funerary structures and placed their offerings – at least at the beginning – may have been the leading families of a community, who were trying to assert their ownership of the valley by establishing an

impressive landmark that legitimated their claim to the place.

From which model or models the inhabitants of Tsikalario drew their inspiration is difficult to discern. One reason may be that they had no intention of imitating it/them directly; rather, they may have preferred to adapt it/them more closely to their own world-view. For instance, the high popularity of the kantharos type with discoid handle terminals in Macedonia, especially at Vergina⁴⁹, may indicate that vessels from northern Greece could have served as models for the kantharos from Tsikalario, whose somewhat different shape and technical features suggest it may have been locally made. As well, an important distinction can be made between Vergina and Tsikalario in the matter of burial practices, for cremation is far rarer at Vergina than inhumation in pit graves⁵⁰.

After the main period of the use of the funerary structures, which was the MG period, vessels of different categories were also being deposited, some of them offered in the course of activities which may be understood as rituals for the dead. This long period of cemetery use is strongly indicative of the site's importance; some post-MG offerings, which go down at least into the Archaic period, may be interpreted as probable acts of veneration of the dead, who were regarded as the ancestors of the people living around Tragaia, and perhaps as a means of articulating the community's territorial claims.

List of the pottery

Fig. 1a. Late archaic - Early Classical pointed amphora (inv. 3921). Wheel-made, plain. H. 0,39 m., Diam. (rim) 0,145 m., diam. (knob-like foot) 0,042 m.

Fig. 1b. Fragment of an Archaic pithos (inv. 3922). Wheelmade, incised and stamped decoration. Max. h. 0,265 m., max. w. 0,242 m., h. (decorative band) 0,055 m.

Fig. 2a. Middle-Geometric tripod kalathos-shaped vessel (inv. 5081). Handmade, incised and stamped decoration, Max. pres. h. 0,26 m., max. pres. d. (body) 0,32 m.

Fig. 2b. Archaic relief stand (inv. 4000). Wheel-made, stamped decoration, Max. pres. h. 0,20 m., max. pres. d. (body). ca. 0,244 m.

Fig. 3a-b. MG flat pyxis with lid (inv. 3881). Wheelmade, painted decoration.

Pyxis: Max. h. 0,056 m., d. (rim) 0,136 m., max. d. (body) ca. 0,155 m., d. (base) 0,103 m., lid: max. pres. h. 0,072 m., d. (rim) 0,13 m.

⁴³ Papadopoulou-Zaphiropoulou 1965, 521 and pl. 656d.

⁴⁴ Halos burial tumuli: Georganas 2002, 289-298, with bibliography; Malakasioti and Mousioni 2004, 359-363.

⁴⁵ Georganas 2002, 294-295.

⁴⁶ Georganas 2002, 295.

⁴⁷ Hall 1995, 10.

⁴⁸ The diversity of Cycladic island funerary practices is also stressed in Papadopoulos and Smithson 2002, 183.

⁴⁹ For Vergina tumuli kantharoi, see n. 19 above.

⁵⁰ Andronikos 1969, 163-166; Snodgrass 1971, 161; Georganas 2002, 293.

Fig. 3c-d. MG small mastoid jug (inv. 3878). Wheelmade, painted decoration. H. 0,07m, d. (rim) ca. 0,031 m., max. d. (body) 0,053 m., est. d. (base) ca. 0,04 m.

Fig. 5a-b. MG skyphos (inv. 3830). Wheelmade, surface degraded. H. 0,105 m., max. d. (rim) 0,15 m., max. d. (body) 0,17 m., d. (base) 0,071m.

Fig. 5c-d. MG mastoid cup (inv. 3826). Wheelmade, painted decoration. H. 0,083 m., max. d. (rim) 0,117 m., max. d. (body) 0,133 m., d. (base) 0,063 m.

Fig. 5e-f. MG amphora with horn-like terminals (inv. 3825). Handmade, incised decoration on the handle. H. 0,43 m., d. (rim) 0,205 m., max. d. (body) ca. 0,293 m., d. (base) 0,10 m.

Fig. 5g-h. MG pithos (inv. 3827). Handmade, plain. H. 0,485 m., d. (rim) 0,251 m., max. d. (body) ca. 0,35 m., d. (base) 0,134 m.

Fig. 5i-l. MG small jug (inv. 3829). Handmade, burnished, incised decoration on the handle. H. 0,137 m., d. (rim) 0,07 m., max. d. (body) 0,087 m., d. (base) 0,052 m.

Fig. 6a-b. MG high-handled kantharos with discoid terminals (inv. 3876). Wheelmade, black-glazed. H. 0,123 m., max. d. (rim) 0,115 m., max. d. (body) ca. 0,135 m., d. (base) 0,065 m.

Fig. 6c-d. MG amphoriskos with lid adorned with a horse figure (inv. 3790). Handmade, plain. Amphoriskos: Max. pres. h. 0,046 m., d. (rim) 0,074 m., lid: max. h. 0,029 m., est. d. (rim) ca. 0,07 m.

Fig. 6e-f. MG jug (inv. 3841). Handmade, plain. H. 0,313 m., max. d. (rim) 0,205 m., max. d. (body) ca. 0,305 m.

Fig. 6g-h. MG tripod pithos (inv. 3857). Handmade, incised decoration. H. 0,48 m., est. d. (rim) 0,205 m., max. d. (body) ca. 0,295 m.

Fig. 6i-l. MG tripod pithos (inv. 3839). Handmade, incised decoration. H. 0,645m, max. d. (rim) ca. 0,29 m., max. d. (body) 0,445 m.

Abbreviations

D. = Diameter
Est. = Estimated
H. = Height
Max. = Maximum
Pres. = Preserved
W. = Width

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| Zaphiropoulou 1983a | = Ph. Zaphiropoulou, 'La necropoli geometrica di Tsikalario a Naxos', in <i>Magna Grecia</i> 18. 5-6, 1983, pp. 1-4. | <i>AEMΘ</i> | = <i>Το Αρχαιολογικό Έργο στη Μακεδονία και Θράκη</i> . |
| Zaphiropoulou 1983b | = Ph. Zaphiropoulou, 'Γεωμετρικά αγγεία από τη Νάξο', in <i>ASAtene</i> 61, 1983, pp. 121-136. | <i>OJA</i> | = <i>Oxford Journal of Archaeology</i> . |

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

those from workshops in Chora (Naxos Town), the use of artifacts and the relationship between wheelmade and handmade pottery in funerary contexts, and the nature of contacts that this cemetery's users had with other regions of the Greek world. Comprehensive examination of the ceramic material gives an overview of the complexities of the evidence, contributing to the identification of various shapes and types of local material, an assessment of the degree to which it was influenced by production from other regions, and an estimate of the quantity of imported ware. Such findings will shed light on the identity of the people who built, buried, and made offerings at the funerary structures of Tsikalario.

M. CIVITILLO, *Sulle presunte "iscrizioni" in lineare A e B da Itaca*

In debating the still open question of Homer's Ithaca proper identification, the finding of any Linear A and/or B inscriptions would be of capital importance in reconstructing the way and the extent the Island took part in the wider Aegean cultural landscape of the II millennium B.C.

The issue of findings with Linear A or B inscriptions has been recently brought forth since a highly suspect 'sign' has been identified by L. Kontorli-Papadopoulou, Th. Papadopoulos and G. Owens on a 'tablet' discovered in the so-called water-logged 'tholos tomb' of Aghios Athanasios/School of Homer. The site is not far from Pelikata, where Paul Faure, in 1989, enthusiastically announced the discovery (based on W.A. Heurtely's excavations) of two ostaka inscribed in Linear A, which actually have shown to be unrecognizable as any of the second millennium writing systems we already know. Moreover, the examination of the recent 'inscribed' object from Aghios Athanasios has allowed to conclude that it should be expunged from the corpus of Minoan or Mycenaean inscriptions. As a result, these alleged 'inscribed' objects don't seem to be able to advance the ongoing debate on Homer's Ithaca proper identification.

J.K. JACOBSEN - S. HANDBERG - G.P. MITTICA, *An early Euboean pottery workshop in the Sibaritide*

Euboean presence in the 8th century B.C. in Italy is foremost recognized in Sicily, Campania and southern Etruria. Research on recently excavated

material from the sanctuary on the Timpone della Motta close to present day Francavilla Marittima, CS, however, shows that Euboeans were also well acquainted with the south Italian Ionian coast. Genuine Euboean imported ceramics and the recent identification of a local pottery workshop, which specialized in highly Euboeanizing vessels, provide the material evidence for a Greek presence in Francavilla Marittima before the middle of the 8th century B.C. This article outlines the archaeological evidence for possible Greek influence on indigenous religious rites on the Timpone della Motta during the 8th century B.C.

L. CERCHIAI - M.L. NAVA, *Uno scarabeo del Lyre-Player Group da Monte Vetrano (Salerno)*

The study aims to give a preliminary report on archaeological discoveries at the site of Monte Vetrano, at the right bank of the Picentino River, near the main Villanovan settlement of Pontecagnano (Salerno).

It offers an outline of the topographical organization and material culture of the necropolis, dating between EIA2 (Pontecagnano Phase II B) and the beginning of Orientalizing period (second half of the 8th century B.C. - first years of the 7th).

A detailed analysis is also dedicated to a seal of the *Lyre-Player Group*, decorated with an exceptional scene of dance, comparable to the iconography of the Greek *komos*.

M.A. RIZZO, *I sigilli del Gruppo del Suonatore di Lira in Etruria e nell'Agro Falisco*

The very limited corpus of the Lyre-Player Group seals from Etruria and the Faliscan ager (5 pieces) gains one more specimen from the grave 345 of the Banditaccia necropolis in the area of Laghetto at Cerveteri and representing a lyre player in front of a big bird. The seal was found with a female burial which the objects of personal adornment and the vases date between the end of the third and the beginning of the last quarter of the 8th century.

We also reconsider the contexts of two seals from the same group, the grave 17/XXVI from Montarano at Falerii (containing a seal with a double headed monstrous creature) and the trench from Castelvechio at Vetulonia (containing the seal with a hawk and a winged solar disk). Both contexts are dated between the end of the 8th and the

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