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THESPROTIA EXPEDITION III
LANDSCAPES OF NOMADISM AND SEDENTISM

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Cover: The Bronze Age site of Goutsoura seen from the south. Photo: Björn Forsén

Layout: Esko Tikkala

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Grave Constructions and Landscape Modification at Bronze Age Goutsoura

Sarah Lima

Introduction

Located on the lower eastern slope of the Liminari hill, the site of Goutsoura (PS 12) was identified during the first field survey season of the Thesprotia Expedition in 2004. The survey revealed some Middle and Upper Palaeolithic lithics and Early Bronze Age (EBA) ceramics covering the upper edge of a field. Phosphorus sampling, magnetometer prospection, and excavation indicated a site size of at least 90 m x 120 m (Fig. 1). The site seemed to continue up the slope toward a sheltered natural terrace, totally overgrown with maquis and grass.[1]

Since Neolithic and Bronze Age sites were underrepresented among the sites discovered by the Thesprotia Expedition, and because modern agriculture did not seem to have caused damage to the lower slope of the Liminari hill, Goutsoura was selected for excavation starting in 2007 and continuing until 2010. The objective was to examine how inhabitants of the Kokytos valley lived in comparison with inhabitants of other contemporary sites in Thesprotia and Greece throughout the Bronze Age, from 3000-1100 BC. During the investigations evidence of the way that several generations of communities organized Goutsoura's Bronze Age cemetery spaces was discovered.[2]

Goutsoura was used first as a settlement and subsequently as a cemetery during the Bronze Age. The site was inhabited between 2925 and 2400 BC (i.e., the early to mid phases of the EBA).[3] The cultural layer dating to this period is thick and continuous across the site, with no evidence of geological interruption, suggesting that the site supported a community of people engaged in farming, pastoralism, and hunting. The stratum representing the cultural layer was characterized by dark brown, sticky, clay soil with remains of wattle and daub containing low-fired ceramics, animal bone, flint flakes and stone tools (some of which contained silica gloss, demonstrating their use in harvesting).[4] Evidence of intensive occupation of the site was identified, with indicators for cultivation of plants, animal husbandry, fibre arts, and hide production.

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[1] In this chapter, site phases will be referred to, rather than locus numbers. See Forsén, this volume, fig. 1, for a map of the location of the site, a full description of the site's discovery, and the stratigraphic relationships of its features, including a full concordance of locus numbers.

[2] I am very grateful to Björn Forsén and to the Thesprotia Expedition team for the opportunity to collaborate in publishing this remarkable site. I also wish to thank Michael Galaty, Lorenc Bejko, Aristeides Papayiannis, Lynne Kvapil, Amanda Pavlick, and Brandy Vickers for their thoughtful questions and comments on various drafts of this chapter. Thanks also go to Esko Tikkala, who produced all the figures.

[3] Single lithics dating to the Palaeolithic era were identified at Goutsoura, but they could not be associated with any settlement layer on site. For soil profiles that demonstrate typical site stratigraphy for Goutsoura, see Forsén, this volume, Figs. 9a and 9b.

[4] Forsén 2011, 7; for Goutsoura's Early Bronze Age pottery, see J. Forsén, this volume.

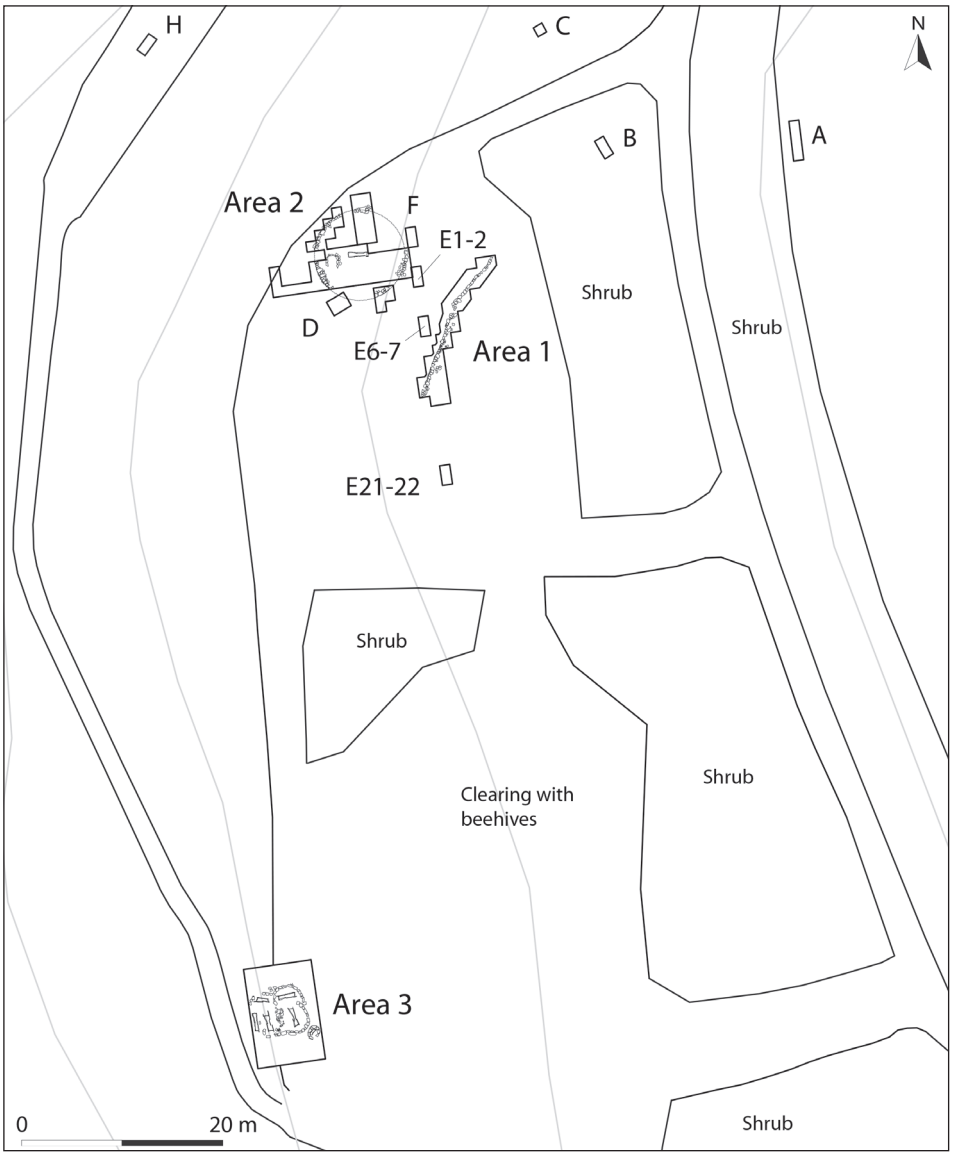


Fig. 1. General map of Goutsoura.

Finds included spindle whorls, bobbins and bone needles, and carbonized seeds such as grass pea (*Lathyrus sativus*).[5]

No evidence was discovered to indicate how life at the EBA settlement might have ended, but the complete absence of diagnostic ceramics and C-14 samples dating between 2400 and 2000 cal. BC implies that Goutsoura lay abandoned for ca. 400 years.[6]

[5] Forsén 2011, 7; in Late Bronze Age (LBA) contexts, carbonized emmer wheat was identified. For full details of the composition of each of the substrata that composed this cultural layer, see Forsén, this volume.
[6] For a full table of Goutsoura's C-14 fixed dates, see J. Forsén, this volume, Fig. 1.

After 2000 BC, the site appears to have functioned as a cemetery without any clear evidence of the presence of a permanent settlement. Excavation revealed a cremation burial with a C-14 date of 2000-1750 cal. BC and a slab-lined cist grave with a C-14 date of 1780-1600 cal. BC, both postdating the EBA cultural layer on the northern edge of the site (Fig. 2, Cremation burial, Central slab-lined cist grave). The cist grave burial took place within the fill of a late MBA or early LBA (i.e., ca. 1800-1600 BC) burial tumulus, enclosed by a circular peribolos wall (Figs. 3-5). The peribolos was deliberately placed to encompass both the earlier cremation grave and the cist grave. These discoveries indicate that human activity resumed at Goutsoura at the beginning of the Middle Bronze Age (MBA) and continued until ca. 1300-1100 BC, that is, to the end of the Late Bronze Age (LBA).

In addition to the two aforementioned burials, several additional graves within the fill of the tumulus and just outside of its wall were revealed by excavation. These discoveries include a pit grave with a cover slab identified just outside of the peribolos (Child grave 1) and a child burial with a cover slab in the fill (Child grave 2). The occupant of Child grave 1 was buried in flexed position with knees drawn to chest. Additionally, there are at least two later graves (Child grave 3 and Child grave 4), which indicates that this tumulus continued to be recognized as a burial space at least as late as 1300 BC, and possibly as late as 1100 BC (Fig. 2, Child graves 1, 2, 3 and 4).

The inclusion of a pre-existing cremation burial into the construction of a new burial tumulus and the reuse of that tumulus through at least several generations and possibly several hundred years prompts questions about the roles that memory and practicality play in the organization of this communal Thesprotian grave site. What was the intention of building a structure above (but not disturbing) the cremation, and what factors contributed to the later reuse of the tumulus during the Late Bronze Age? The discovery of a second cemetery, located some 70 m south of the tumulus, presented further evidence that the site's burial spaces were being reused (Fig. 1, Area 3; Figs. 15-16). There, excavators discovered conjoined stone grave circles surrounding six cist burials with dates varying by spans of hundreds of years. Taken together, this second set of graves dated to a maximum range of 1780-1250 BC (i.e., from the end of the MBA until the end of the LBA). What causes and burial ideology led to the grouping of Area 3's six graves over the course of more than three centuries, and were there any connections with the cemetery in Area 2?

Goutsoura's MBA and LBA grave constructions offer an opportunity to consider how Thesprotian Bronze Age burial activity conforms with synchronous burial practices in northern Greece and Albania. Following a discussion of Goutsoura's features, parallels for MBA and LBA tumuli and cist graves from surrounding regions, including southern Albania, Epirus, the Ionian Islands, and Thessaly, are considered and evaluated.

Description

In the Bronze Age, Goutsoura had several stages of development, which may span up to 1750 years, depending on compression or expansion of their associated C-14 date ranges. The stages of development are defined by the construction of the following features: 1) an EBA open-air settlement, 2) an MBA tumulus on the northern edge of the site, 3) an LBA long wall on the northeastern edge of the site and 4) a series of conjoining late MBA and

Features	Coordinates	Stratigraphic Relationships	Postdates	Antedates
The retaining wall				
Wall 101	494/510-498/513	Set into Area 1's second-youngest cultural layer; covered by Area 1's uppermost cultural layer	1560-1310 cal. BC (from between stones of wall)	1320-1100 cal. BC (from uppermost cultural layer)
The northern tumulus				
Cremation burial	503/505-506	Cuts EBA cultural layer	1980/1955-1865/1755 cal. BC (from grave)	Initial tumulus fill
Burnt clay hearth	507/507	Constructed into EBA cultural layer	2925-2470 cal. BC (from EBA cultural layer)	Upper layer of tumulus fill
Stone semicircle	507/505-506 and 509/505-506	Constructed above EBA cultural layer; stones later added to create a full circle that remained open during initial deposition of the tumulus fill	2925-2470 cal. BC (from EBA cultural layer)	Upper layer of tumulus fill
Peribolos wall	504/501, 501/506-508, 503-504/509.5, 509/506-508, 507/501-502, 508/503-504, 509-504	Cuts EBA cultural layer	2925-2470 cal. BC (from EBA cultural layer)	1780-1600 cal. BC (from central cist grave)
Central slab-lined cist grave	505/505-506	Cuts EBA cultural layer; initial fill of tumulus left unfilled area around central cist	1780-1600 cal. BC (from grave)	1300-1100 BC (date of uppermost cultural layer)
Child grave 1	509/508	Below flat stone just outside of peribolos wall; depth same as tumulus fill, covered by Area 2's uppermost cultural layer	Peribolos wall	1300-1100 BC (date of uppermost cultural layer)
Child grave 2	505/507 and 505/508	Included in tumulus fill; covered by Area 2's uppermost cultural layer	Initial tumulus fill	1300-1100 BC (date of uppermost cultural layer)
Child grave 3	503/508	Cuts Area 2's uppermost cultural layer	1300-1100 BC (date of uppermost cultural layer)	Topsoil
Child grave 4	509/507	Cuts Area 2's uppermost cultural layer	1300-1100 BC (date of uppermost cultural layer)	Topsoil

Fig. 2a. Table of stratigraphic relationships and dates for principal features at Goutsoura, the retaining wall and the northern tumulus.

LBA grave circles on the southern edge of the site. This study focuses on the MBA and LBA phases of use that followed the abandonment of the EBA settlement in ca. 2400 BC.

The characteristics and relationships of the features in each of Goutsoura's phases are described, and then the relationships between the site's features are discussed to examine Goutsoura's development over time, as well as its comparability to other contemporary sites in Greece and Albania.

Features	Coordinates	Stratigraphic Relationships	Postdates	Antedates
The southern cemetery				
Grave 2	521/581	Immediately covered by a thin pebble layer, as well as Area 3's uppermost cultural layer; cut a sterile bottom layer	1780-1620 cal. BC	Thin pebble layer
Grave 1	523/579-581	Immediately covered by a thin pebble layer, as well as Area 3's uppermost cultural layer; cut a sterile bottom layer	1720-1510 cal. BC	Thin pebble layer
Grave 5	525/579-581	Immediately covered by a thin pebble layer, as well as Area 3's uppermost cultural layer; cut a sterile bottom layer	Sterile bottom layer	Thin pebble layer
Grave 4	525/577	Covered by Area 3's uppermost cultural layer; cut a sterile bottom layer	Sterile bottom layer	Uppermost cultural layer
Grave 6	525-527/579	Covered by Area 3's uppermost cultural layer; cut a sterile bottom layer	1580-1430 cal. BC	Uppermost cultural layer
Grave 3	523/577	Covered by Area 3's uppermost cultural layer; cut a sterile bottom layer	1420-1250 cal. BC	Uppermost cultural layer

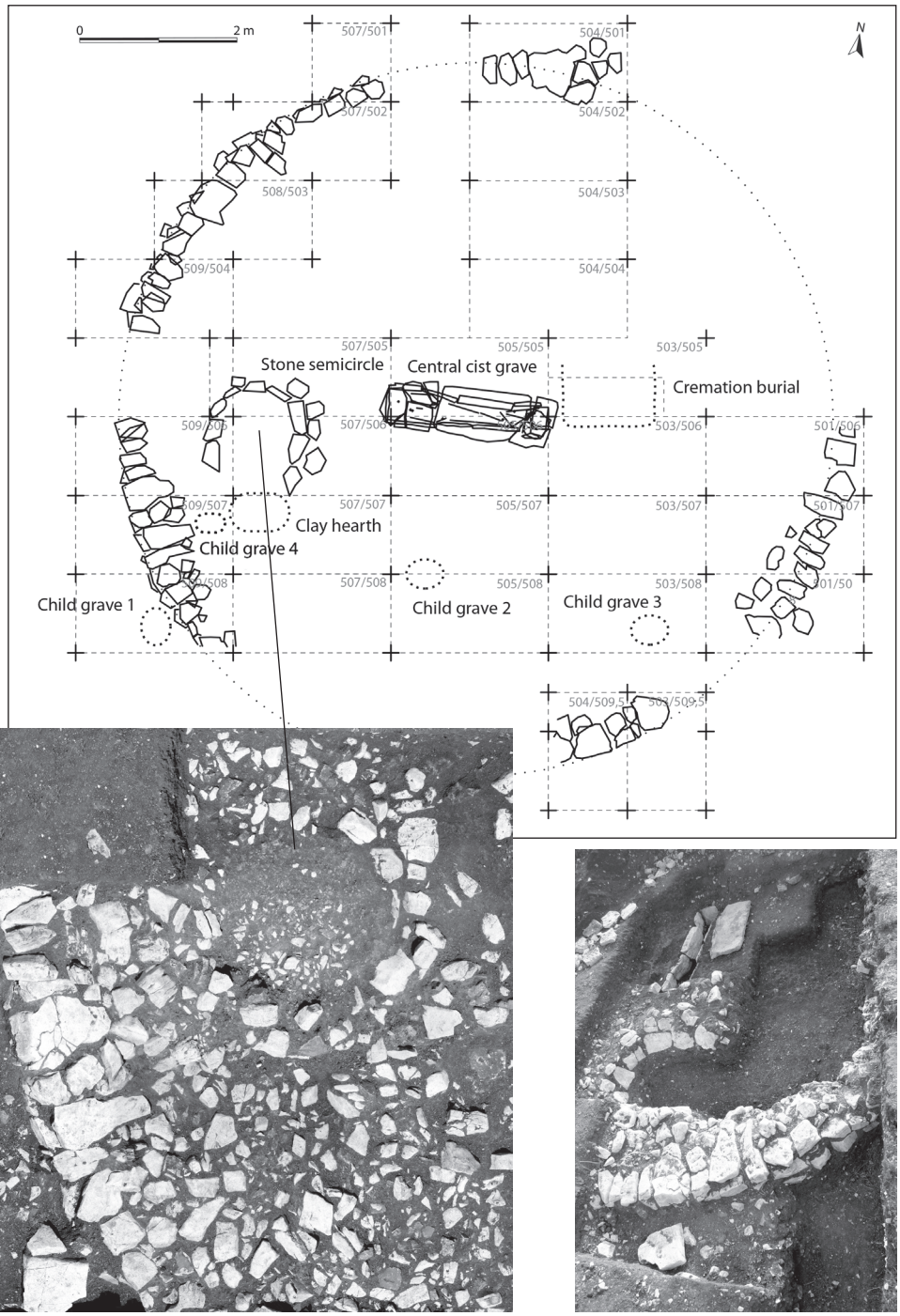
Fig. 2b. Table of stratigraphic relationships and dates for principal features at Goutsoura, the southern cemetery.

The northern tumulus

Goutsoura took on a new function as a cemetery at the beginning of the MBA, and this function endured through the middle of the LBA. Burials from the site, which spanned ca. 2000-1400 BC, included an individual cremation burial, a tumulus with a central cist burial of two adults, and several burials of children.

The cremation burial and the northern tumulus are located on the northern edge of Goutsoura (Fig. 1, Area 2). In 2008, phosphorus sampling of the site prompted investigation both in the area where the northern tumulus was discovered, as well as approximately 70 m to the south (Fig. 1, Area 3). A subsequent magnetometer survey to the north revealed indications of walls, and excavations in 2009 and 2010 uncovered a peribolos wall and a tumulus, constructed around and above a late MBA/early LBA slab-lined cist grave dating between 1780 and 1600 BC (Figs. 3-5).

The tumulus measured approximately 9.56 m in diameter, with a maximum diameter of 10.22 m and an interior diameter of 7.43 m (Fig. 3). The mode thickness for the peribolos wall of the tumulus was about 0.2 m in width, with a maximum width of 0.55 m. In some places, the peribolos wall stood three courses high, but its maximum height only reached 0.1 m above ground level at that time. It was constructed from white, rough-faced limestone boulders and cobbles, with smaller stone chips and dirt filling in the space between the wall's interior and exterior faces (Figs. 4-5).



Figs. 3-5. Area 2, top plan of the northern tumulus (above). Orthographic photo of southwestern corner of peribolos of the late MBA/early LBA northern tumulus with cobble-sized stone fill and outline of semicircular feature with small pebble fill in foreground (below, left). Peribolos of the late MBA/early LBA northern tumulus with semicircular feature and slab-lined cist grave (below, right).

The tumulus fill consisted of small pebbles and stones arranged on top of larger stones.[7] It emerged in the stratigraphy approximately 0.5 m below the surface, and the peribolos wall that had been built to retain this stony fill was discovered about 0.9-1.1 m below the surface. It is possible that the mound of the tumulus was built to stand taller when it was created sometime in the range of 1780-1600 BC and that the upper layers of fill eroded during the time it was used, but it is equally possible that the tumulus was always low to the ground. The recorded height for the tumulus fill was approximately 0.3-0.4 m, and there were some areas, such as the space surrounding the tumulus's central cist grave, where no stone fill was identified during excavation (Fig. 5).

The tumulus was built on top of an MBA cremation burial dating to ca. 2000-1875 BC (Fig. 2, Cremation burial; Fig. 6). The cremation burial had been cut into the EBA cultural layer at some stage after the abandonment of the site. A burnt clay "hearth" feature also predated the filling of the peribolos enclosure (Fig. 7), whereas the central cist grave and child graves dated to the filling phase of the tumulus (Figs. 5 and 9). The same designation was true for a semicircular stone structure near the hearth, and Child grave 1 – a burial of a child in flexed position located just outside of the peribolos (Figs. 8 and 10). Finally, Child graves 3 and 4 were excavated into Goutsoura's latest extant cultural layer dating from ca. 1300-1100 BC (Fig. 12). The LBA cultural layer contained abundant animal bone, LBA chronotype ceramics and flint flakes, which all suggest that fairly intensive visitation and activity occurred at Goutsoura during this period.

Based on C-14 dates from the cremation burial and the central cist grave from the filling phase of the tumulus, the broadest range of possible dates for the MBA burials was ca. 2000-1600 BC (Fig. 2, Cremation burial, Central slab-lined cist grave). A *terminus post quem* of ca. 1300-1100 BC was assigned to Child graves 3 and 4 on the basis of the ceramic evidence (Fig. 2, Child graves 3 and 4).[8]

Details of each of the associated features of the tumulus are briefly summarized.

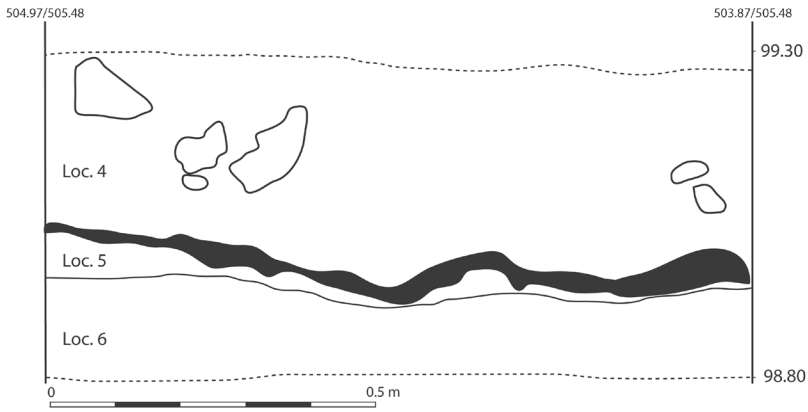


Fig. 6. Area 2, cremation burial, 1980/1955-1755 cal. BC. The burial is visible in the profile as a charcoal layer in the upper part of Loc. 5. Burned human bones and accompanying finds were made in Loc. 5 and in the lowermost part of Loc. 4.

[7] See Forsén, this volume, figs. 11 and 12, for profile drawings of the stratigraphy of the tumulus.

[8] See J. Forsén, this volume, for a discussion of ceramic chronotypes at Goutsoura; see also Forsén, this volume, Fig. 18, for a full list of C-14 dates.

Cremation burial (Fig. 6)
Date: 1980/1955-1865/1755 cal. BC; cuts and therefore postdates the EBA cultural layer.
Location: Grid square 503/505 (Fig. 3).
Orientation: Unknown (feature not fully excavated).
Dimensions: 1.1 x at least 0.55 m.
Contents: Charred, fragmentary remains of at least one adult individual, half of a ceramic vessel, and one bone needle.
Description: This burial consisted of a shallow pit containing a single adult. It was first identified as a stain of charcoal in plan view, which, upon excavation, proved to be 0.05-0.06 cm thick and contain charred human remains and fragmentary accompanying finds (Fig. 6). The peribolos appears to have been constructed so that it would include this early cremation burial within its confines. This interpretation is explored in the discussion that follows.

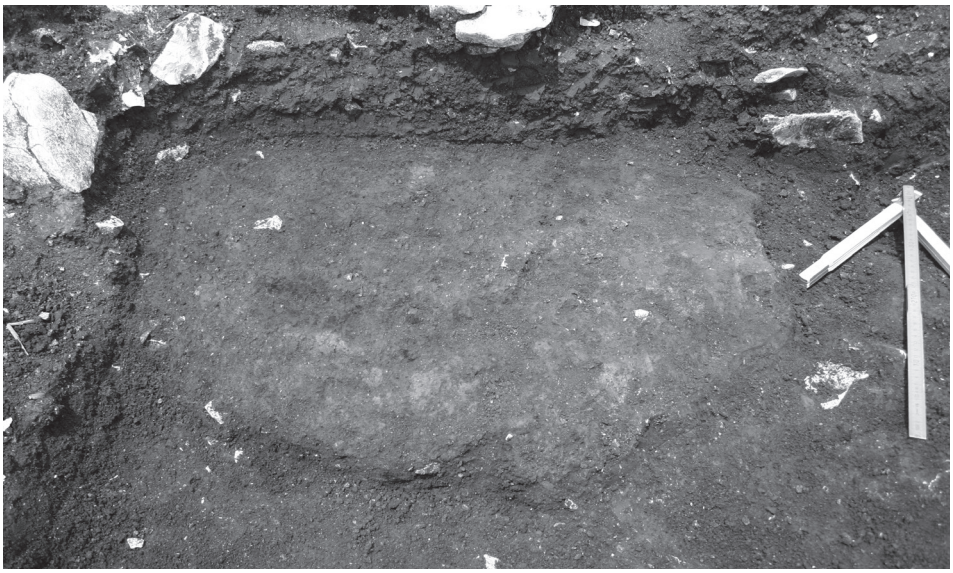


Fig. 7. Area 2, burnt clay hearth.

Burnt clay hearth
Date: Constructed into and thus postdates the EBA cultural layer dating to 2925-2470 cal. BC.
Location: Grid square 507/507 (Figs. 3-5).
Orientation: Unknown (feature not fully excavated).
Dimensions: 0.7 x 0.8 m, 0.1 m depth.
Contents: Burnt clay and bone.
Description: An abundance of burnt clay and bones as well as a boundary on its western end delineated by crushed stone, led to this feature being identified as a gravel-lined hearth with a burnt clay surface (Fig. 7). As was the case with the cremation burial, the hearth was first observed as a charcoal stain in plan view. However, no human bones were found with this feature. Based on its stratigraphic position placing it after the EBA cultural layer and before the fill of the tumulus, it is possible that this burnt clay surface is contemporary with the previously described cremation burial. This clay hearth surface may also be associated with a semicircle of stones abutting this feature to the south, which was also constructed after the EBA cultural layer (Figs. 2-3, Burnt clay hearth; see the following description for Stone semicircle).

Stone semicircle

Date: Constructed above and thus postdates the EBA cultural layer dating to 2925-2470 cal. BC; walled off from a semicircle to a full circle during the initial filling of the tumulus in the MBA; existed as an open structure after the initial tumulus fill was deposited.

Location: Grid squares 507/505-506 and 509/506 (Figs. 3-5).

Orientation: Semicircular with approximately 1 m opening on south side.

Dimensions: about 1.5 m diameter at top (minus opening), 0.8 m diameter at bottom, 0.55 m depth.

Contents: Small amounts of animal bone.

Description: The stone semicircle feature was uncovered during the excavation of the stone fill of the tumulus. There were no primary or secondary deposits of associated finds to assist in determining its function, but characteristics of its construction and its location may offer clues to its association with other nearby features.

Fig. 8. Area 2, stone semicircle with later southern addition and hearth surface to southeast.

First, the semicircle features a construction similar to that of the tumulus's peribolos wall: white, lightly smoothed cobble- and boulder-sized limestone, placed in two courses, with dirt and smaller chip-sized stones filling the space between the faces (Figs. 4-5, 8). Although the stone semicircle was made on a smaller scale, its location and its appearance seem to have been orchestrated based on the presence of the tumulus's enclosure (Fig. 5). In addition, the semicircular stone structure is open on its southern side, which directly abuts the burnt clay hearth that was constructed into the EBA cultural layer (Fig. 8). Based on the proximity of the two features and their relative positions and stratigraphy, they may have at one point operated together.

That being said, the peribolos wall around the tumulus was actually excavated into the EBA cultural layer, which means that it is also possible that the peribolos was constructed around the semicircle. As stated previously, the stone semicircle was walled off to become an open stone circle when the lower fill for the tumulus structure was deposited. When the stone semicircle was eventually filled, angular chips were used rather than the rounded cobbles or pebbles that characterized the fill of the tumulus (Fig. 4). This distinguishes the filling of the semicircle as an event separate from the filling of the other parts of the tumulus (Figs. 2-3, Stone semicircle).

Central slab-lined cist grave

Date: 1780-1600 cal. BC; cut into and thus postdates the EBA cultural layer.

Location: Grid squares 505/505 and 505/506 (Figs. 3, 5).

Orientation: East to west.

Dimensions: Cut: 2.192 x 0.578 m, Interior 1.738 x 0.403 m.

Contents: Two partially represented adult skeletons, one lying outstretched with the head towards

Fig. 9. Area 2, central slab-lined cist grave looking from north to south, 1780-1600 cal. BC.

the west, the bones of the second one in a heap at the east end of the cist. Furthermore a minuscule bronze fragment.[9]

Description: This cist grave consisted of a slab-lined cut into the tumulus fill, which contained the remains of two adults. One skull was included in the grave, whereas the second skull was placed on top of the cover slab.

This lined cist grave, along with the Child grave 2 within the tumulus fill and Child grave 1 outside the peribolos wall, is roughly contemporary with the MBA tumulus stone fill layer (Figs. 2 - 3, Central slab-lined cist grave; Fig. 9). The sequence seems to be that the peribolos wall was cut into the EBA cultural layer, ancillary features such as the semicircular structure were built above the EBA cultural layer in relation to the peribolos and pre-existing features such as the burnt surface, and then the tumulus was gradually filled, allowing for several burials to take place before the construction was covered. During that process, spaces appear to have been roughed out so that human remains could be deposited into pockets, cists, or slab-lined cists inside the fill. There was almost no tumulus fill identified in the excavated squares bordering the central cist grave, which seems to provide further evidence that that space was preselected and left open for the grave's construction.

The careful construction of the cist grave's lined slabs and its arrangement in the center of the tumulus seem to indicate that this feature was the focal point that the tumulus and its peribolos were created to encompass. The central cist grave is further distinguished from the northern tumulus's other contemporary burials because it contains two adults rather than children, and because it is the only burial within a slab-lined cist grave. Parallels with this cist grave can be observed in at least two late MBA/early LBA burials in the southern cemetery of the site (e.g., Graves 1 and 2; see descriptions for graves in the southern Area 3 cemetery).

Child grave 1

Date: Below flat stone just outside of peribolos wall; depth same as tumulus fill, below the uppermost late LBA cultural layer; abuts and therefore postdates the tumulus's peribolos wall (Fig. 2, Child grave 1).

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[9] For the human remains at Goutsoura, see Niskanen, this volume.

Location: Grid square 509/508 (Fig. 3).
Orientation: North to south.
Dimensions: 0.3 x 0.5 m.
Finds: Child burial in flexed position (i.e., knees bent to chest), pottery fragments (Fig. 10).
Description: This burial was placed just outside the tumulus's peribolos wall, and based on stratigraphy, it seems to be contemporary with the other graves that were built when the tumulus was being filled. The thick, lightly smoothed stone selected as the grave's cover slab is in keeping with the cover slabs of the other aforementioned contemporary burials.

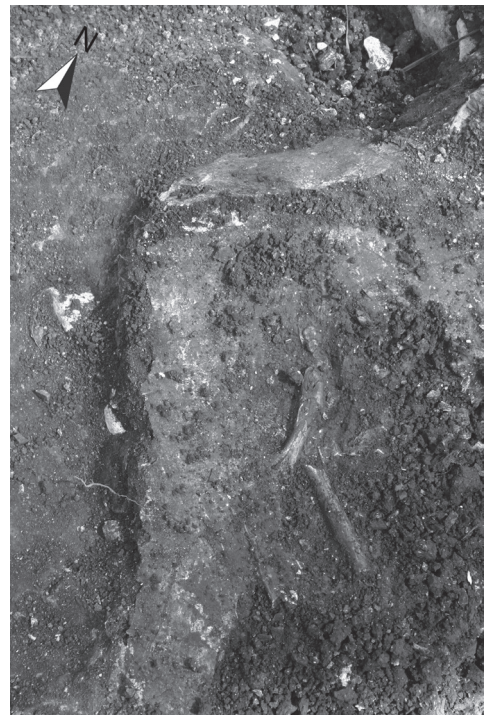

Fig. 10. Area 2, Child grave 1 in situ.

Child grave 2
Date: Included in MBA tumulus fill layer (Fig. 2, Child grave 2).
Location: Human bones in grid square 505/508 (Fig. 3).
Orientation: Unknown, though skull was oriented north to south.
Dimensions: Bones scattered over an area of 0.5 x 1 m.
Contents: Disarticulated bones (Fig. 11).
Description: This burial comprised bones from at least one child and a possible rectangular limestone cover slab, but no actual grave cut was identified. Instead, the bones were found in square 505/508, whereas the remains of the rectangular cover slab were found in 505/507. The dispersed, disarticulated condition of the bones and the location of the slab suggest that the burial had been disturbed, either during the act of filling the tumulus or during a phase before the deposition of the LBA cultural layer. Alternatively, it is possible that the slab was used to prevent the associated remains from being scavenged by animals during the putrefaction process. This burial is stratigraphically contemporary with the central slab-lined cist grave burial described previously, as well as with Child grave 1.


Fig. 11. Area 2, Child grave 2 in situ.

Child grave 3
Date: Overlain by topsoil and cuts the latest surviving cultural layer on site, dated to ca. 1300-1100 BC based on ceramic evidence (Fig. 2, Child grave 3).
Location: Grid square 503/508 (Fig. 3, Child grave 3).

Fig. 12. Area 2, Child grave 3 in situ.

Orientation: Bones were dispersed as fragmentary remains with skull oriented west.
Dimensions: Bones scattered over an area of 0.45 x 0.2 m.
Contents: Child burial with fragmentary, disarticulated remains (Fig. 12).
Description: This burial was found bordering the southern interior surface of the tumulus's perimeter wall. The grave was probably dug into the uppermost part of the late LBA cultural layer postdating the period when the tumulus was originally filled. This means that the burial extended the structure's phase of use beyond the span that originally encompassed the cremation burial, the slab-lined cist, and Child graves 1 and 2, which were constructed before and during its inception.

Child grave 4

Date: Overlain by topsoil and cuts into the latest surviving cultural layer on site, dated to ca. 1300-1100 BC based on ceramic evidence (Fig. 2, Child grave 4).
Location: Grid square 509/507 (Fig. 3).
Orientation: Unknown. The bones were identified as human during post-excavation analysis.
Dimensions: Bones scattered over an area of ca. 0.3 x 0.2 m.
Contents: Child burial with fragmentary, disarticulated remains.
Description: This burial was found bordering the western interior surface of the tumulus's perimeter wall. The grave was dug into the late LBA cultural layer postdating the period when the tumulus was originally filled. As in the case of Child grave 3, the burial action of Child grave 4 extended the use of the northern tumulus as a burial place after the original construction and fill of the earthwork.

The retaining wall

In 2008, before the discovery of the northern MBA tumulus, an LBA long wall (hereafter Wall 101) was uncovered some 10 m east of the tumulus. The long wall was explored further in 2009 (Fig. 1, Area 1; Fig. 13).

Initially, the excavated section of the wall measured approximately 9 m in length and was presumed to be the wall of a house. Excavators followed the line of the wall northward and expected that it would eventually corner eastward based on the smoothed faces of the stones on its west-facing profile. No corner was ever identified, and instead, a magnetometer survey revealed that the long wall stretched an additional 15 m, making its length at least 24 m (Fig. 13).

Wall 101 follows the natural contours of the Liminari hill and it was built with a single jog located close to grid square 497/513. This wall is one of the easternmost features identified at Goutsoura, though it is important to note that the presence of thick vegetation, a modern road, and agricultural fields prevented further excavation to the east. To the south, a series of beehives prevented further exploration.

The 2009 excavations in Area 1 exposed seven additional meters of Wall 101. Evidence for the wall's date and its dimensions are related in the following section.

Fig. 13. Area 1, top plan of Wall 101.

Wall 101

Date: Wall 101 was set into the second cultural layer in Area 1, which lay above an MBA cultural layer with a C-14 date of 1920-1730 cal. BC. A charred bone recovered from between the stones of the wall provided a *terminus post quem* for the wall's construction of 1560-1310 cal. BC (i.e., the mid-to-late LBA). The wall was also covered by the uppermost cultural layer in Area 1, which established the wall's *terminus ante quem* with a C-14 date of 1320-1100 cal. BC – i.e., the end of the LBA (Fig. 2, Wall 101).[10]

Location: Grid squares 494/510 to 498/513 (8 m east of the Area 2 Tumulus), topmost course 0.4 m below the surface, foundation approximately 1 m below the surface (Fig. 1, Area 1).

Orientation: North-northeast to south-southwest, with a slight jog at grid square 497/513.

Dimensions: 24 m (15.4 m excavated) x 0.18-0.8 m high (1-3 preserved courses). Stone sizes ranged from 0.25-0.33 m wide x 0.42-0.52 m high.

Contents: Fill deposits in the two uppermost cultural layers contained a consistent mix of MBA and LBA ceramics. The second cultural layer had large quantities of bone, charcoal, and pebbles.

Description: The wall was constructed from cobble- and boulder-sized limestone, with smoothed faces to the west and unsmoothed faces placed toward the east. As stated previously, builders set Wall 101's stones (i.e., its "riser") into the second cultural layer, which carries a *terminus post quem* of 1920-1730 cal. BC based on the C-14 date of the cultural layer that it, in turn, lies above. The wall's course was plotted along the contour of the hillside, and then a fill of stone chips, cobbles, and soil (i.e., its "packing") was deposited as part of the second cultural layer (Fig. 14).[11]

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[10] For a detailed description of the stratigraphic relationships and C-14 dates associated with the terrace wall, see Forsén, this volume.

[11] Kvapil 2012, 83, enumerates the component parts of LBA terraces.

Fig. 14. Area 1, Wall 101 riser with packing visible, *terminus post quem* 1560-1320 cal. BC.

Based on the composition of the wall's packing, the sequence of its construction, and its proximity to the tumulus feature, the long wall appears to have been constructed to extend the level area of the hillside's contour, acting as a support for a platform or even as the subpacking for a thoroughfare, such as a dirt road or path.[12] Were Wall 101 an agricultural terrace, it is likely that the western side of the wall would have contained more homogeneous soil and less stone.[13]

By standards of terrace construction, a larger amount of cobbles should have been identified on the western, upward slope side of the wall, and the riser stones should have been placed with their smoothed side facing "outward" to the downward slope side; instead, the riser stones were faced on their upward slope surfaces.[14] Quantities of white stone chips were noted within the wall's foundation, and they may represent part of the packing phase of the wall's construction. As in typical examples of the construction of LBA retaining walls, stone and dirt tread were also deposited to the west, upward sloping, side of Wall 101 to complete the packing process (Fig. 14).[15] Stone material was employed to provide support to the retaining wall as packing, but it was also added as tread to lend the resulting surface porosity and stability.

The southern cemetery

In 2009, a second cemetery was identified 70 m south-southwest of the northern tumulus and Wall 101 (Fig. 1, Area 3). A phosphorus anomaly and surface scatters of prehistoric ceramics led to the discovery of Grave 1, a slab-lined cist grave. Grave 1 was unfortunately

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[12] Cf. Spencer and Hale 1961, 8 and 9: "Crude stone walls may be built laterally across sloping surfaces, accompanied by back-slope digging and earth filling of the fore-section against the embankment…"
[13] Cf. Kvapil 2012, 83.
[14] This proposed construction sequence is based on standards for the creation of a platformed terrace, which appears to be the most likely feature that this wall represents. Kvapil 2012, 192 and 193.
[15] Kvapil 2012, 192 and 193.

looted during the course of the excavation and consequently only one human bone was recovered from the cist. Additional fragments of the scattered burial were identified during a fuller excavation of the space inside the stone-lined circle surrounding the grave in 2010. However, the majority of the burials from the southern cemetery were intact. In 2010, an area of approximately 8 x 10 m was excavated to determine the extent of the cemetery, its features, and the relationship of these burials to the rest of Goutsoura's MBA and LBA features (Figs. 15-16).

The cist graves were shallow pits lined with stones, double-reinforced on their shortest ends.[16] Each grave was covered with its own stone slab, which was, in most cases, made from reddish local limestone, with thicknesses ranging from 0.03-0.06 m. Five of the cist graves were surrounded by partial rings of stones and all but one of these grave circles were conjoined (Figs. 15-16). The area occupied by the conjoined circles measured around 5.65 x 6 m, with a wall thickness mode of approximately 0.34 m. Grave circle stones ranged in size from 0.26-0.74 m x 0.1-0.39 m and their outward-facing sides appear to have undergone some smoothing. In some locations (e.g., on the western side of the southern cemetery near Graves 4, 5, and 6), it appears that parts of the walls were shifted around before the area went out of use.

The six graves and their surrounding grave circles lay beneath a late LBA or Early Iron Age cultural layer (Fig. 2, The southern cemetery).[17] Graves 1, 2, and 5 were also each covered directly by a distinctive layer of white pebbles (Fig. 2, Graves 1-2, 5).[18] All the graves were cut into sterile soil. Stratigraphic analysis and C-14 dating have indicated at least two phases of construction for the complex, with Graves 1, 2, and 5 dating to the late part of the MBA or to the early part of the LBA (1780-1510 cal. BC), and with Graves 6, 3, and possibly 4 dating from the middle or later part of the LBA (1580-1260 cal. BC).

During the course of the Thesprotia Expedition's excavations, graves were named in order of their discovery. However, in the following description, details of the southern graves' features are summarized starting with the earliest graves and working through to the latest graves. Therefore, the order of description is Grave 2, Grave 1, Grave 5, Grave 4, Grave 6, and finally Grave 3, rather than the numerical order.

Grave 2

Date: 1780-1620 cal. BC. Immediately covered by a thin pebble layer, as well as Area 3's uppermost cultural layer; cut a sterile bottom layer (Fig. 2, Grave 2).

Location: Grid square 521/581 (Figs. 15-16).

Orientation: Northeast to southwest.

Dimensions: Cist grave cut: 0.77 x 0.38 m. Cist grave interior: 0.72 x 0.224 m. Grave circle: approximately 1.304 m in diameter (not a perfect circle), one course high.

Finds: Gastropod shells, charcoal, and disarticulated bones of a 4- to 5-year-old child in small fragments.[19]

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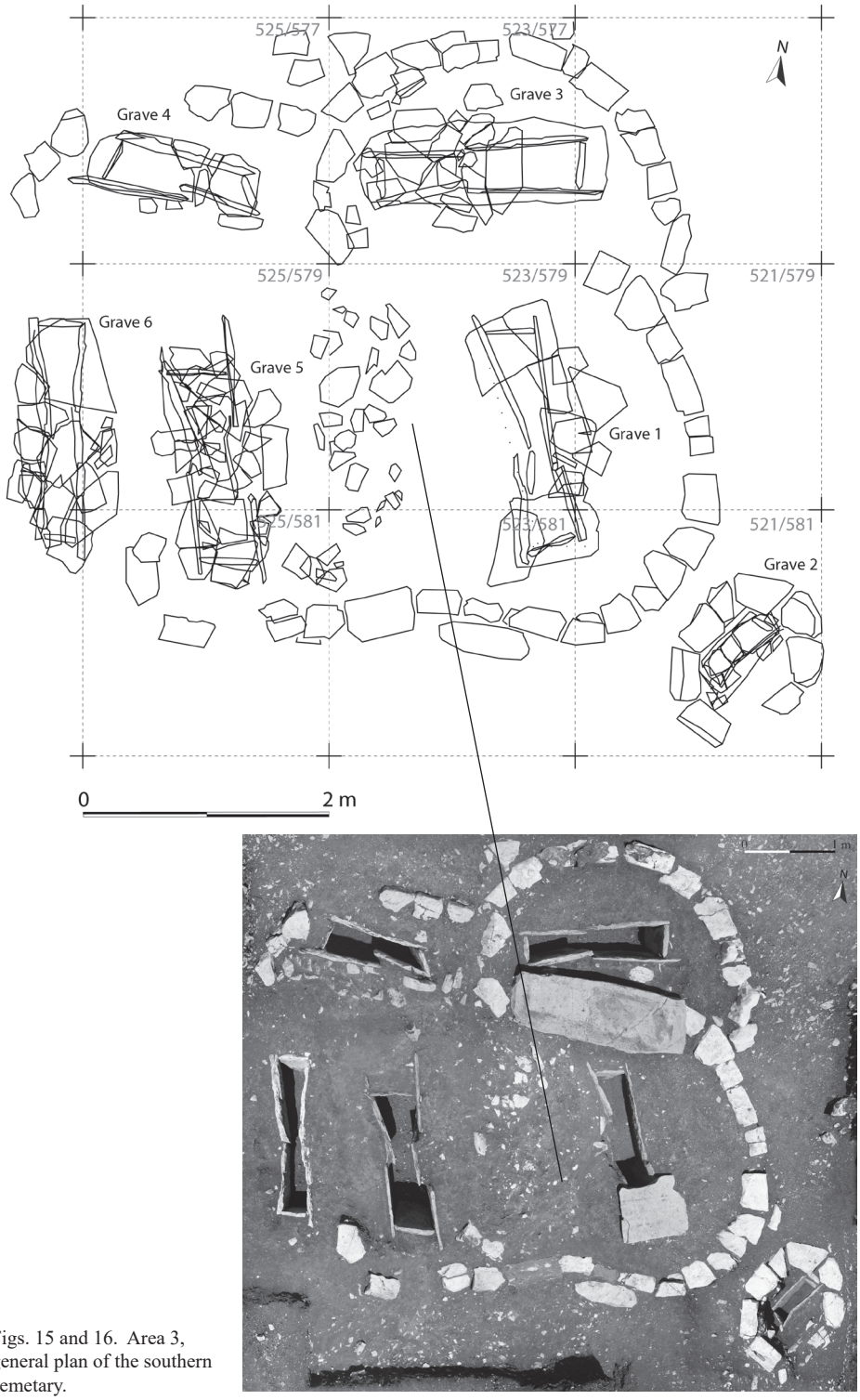
[16] Cf. the the form of the LBA cist grave at Thesprotia Expedition site E 16 (Forsén *et al.* 2011, 84.)

[17] By comparison with other parts of the site, this cultural layer seems to correspond with the late LBA cultural layer in Area 1 (covering Wall 101) and with the late LBA cultural layer in Area 2 (covering the tumulus's fill).

[18] See Forsén, this volume, for a detailed description of Area 3's stratigraphy; Forsén, this volume, Fig. 18 also contains a concordance of the strata from Area 3.

[19] The gastropod shells were presumed by excavators to be modern. For the human remains at Goutsoura, see Niskanen, this volume.



Figs. 15 and 16. Area 3, general plan of the southern cemetary.

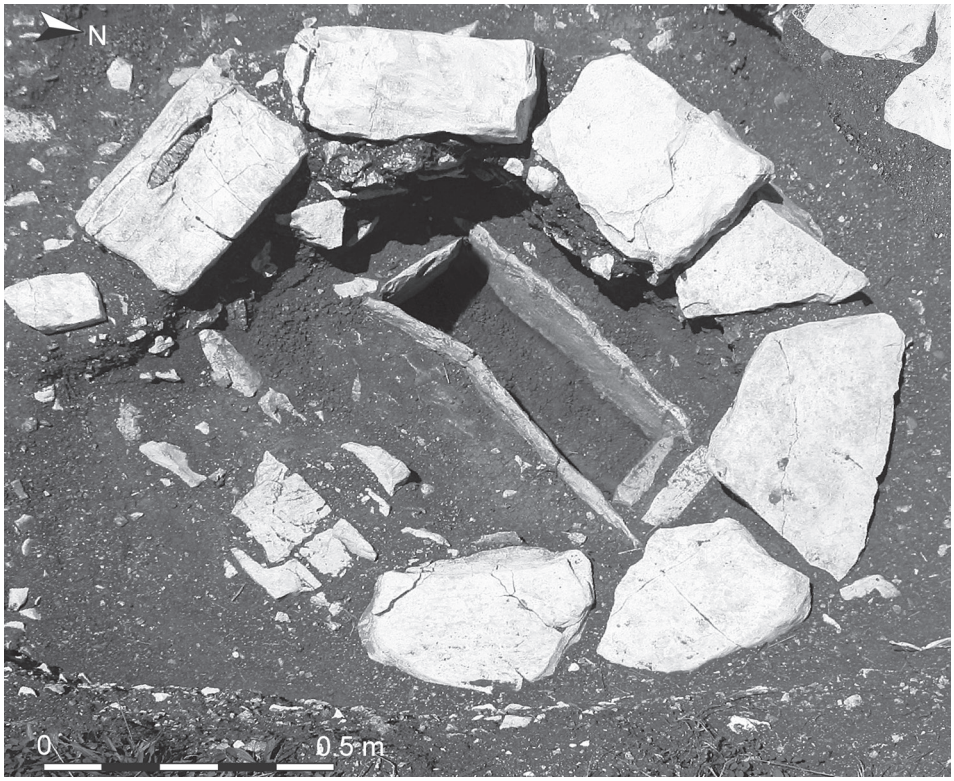


Fig. 17. Area 3, Grave 2, 1780-1620 cal. BC.

Description: This burial was executed in a limestone-lined cist and was covered by two reddish limestone slabs, which were broken into three pieces and separated by some soil.

Grave 2's surrounding stone circle differs from that of the other grave circles from Area 3, because it does not abut any of the other constructions in the area and it is much smaller, forming nearly a full ring (Fig. 17). It is the earliest of the Area 3 graves with fixed dates, and its closed form raises the question of whether all the earliest graves may once also have had separate circles.

The stratum that directly covered Grave 1 contained white limestone pebbles. The presence of these pebbles is a feature shared by the early graves of the southern cemetery. This idea is expanded upon at the end of this section.

Grave 1

Date: 1720-1510 cal. BC. Immediately covered by a thin pebble layer, as well as Area 3's uppermost cultural layer; cut a sterile bottom layer (Fig. 2, Grave 1).

Location: Grid squares 523/579-581 (Figs. 15-16).

Orientation: Northwest to southeast.

Dimensions: Cist grave cut: 2.07 x 0.69 m. Cist grave interior: 1.91 x 0.42 m. Grave circle: approximately 2.09 m in diameter (not a perfect circle), one course high.

Finds: One human bone inside the grave, with additional human bones identified outside it, to the west.

Description: This burial was executed in a limestone-lined cist and was topped by a reddish limestone cover slab, which was found broken when the grave was excavated. The grave's date

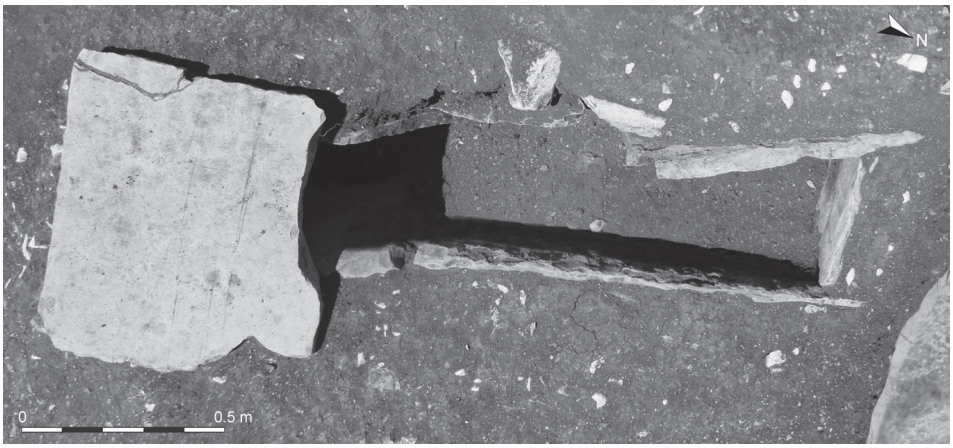


Fig. 18. Area 3, Grave 1, 1720-1510 cal. BC.

and the appearance of its surrounding stone circle indicate that Grave 1 and nearby Grave 2 were probably two of the original constructions in the cemetery (Figs. 15-16, 18). The scattered condition of the grave's remains and of its cover slab suggests that it was disturbed during the Bronze Age, perhaps as part of a robbing event or as a disinterment associated with secondary burial practices before the upper cultural layer was deposited over all the graves in Area 3 (Fig. 2, Grave 1). This idea is further supported by what appears to be an interruption in the line of stones located on Grave 1's western side. There, a string of irregular stones appears to divide it haphazardly from Grave 5, and may even indicate the remains of a stony fill covering another slab of a yet unidentified grave. Unfortunately, there was illegal digging into Grave 1 during the course of the excavation, so its contents may have been compromised.

As was the case with Grave 2, the soil that directly covered Grave 1 contained white limestone pebbles.

Grave 5

Date: Immediately covered by a thin pebble layer, as well as Area 3's uppermost cultural layer; cut a sterile bottom layer (Fig. 2, Grave 5).
Location: Grid squares 525/579-581 (Figs. 15-16).
Orientation: Northwest to southeast.
Dimensions: Cist grave cut: 1.96 x 0.58 m. Cist grave interior: 1.57 x 0.48 m. Grave circle: approximately 2.61-1.86 m (incomplete on its north and west sides), one course high.
Finds: Disarticulated burial with bones badly preserved; pottery fragments.
Description: This burial was executed in a limestone-lined cist and was covered by a reddish limestone slab (Fig. 19). The stones forming the south side of Grave 5's accompanying circle are spaced so far apart that they appear either to have been hastily placed or to represent the remains of a robbing or disinterment (Figs. 15-16). In fact, the grave circle that surrounded Grave 1 appears to have been altered from a self-encompassing circle into a longer line of stones meant to wrap around both Grave 1 and Grave 5. Another possibility is that a larger circle of stones may have surrounded both Graves 1 and 5. This larger circle could later have been shifted around to result in the irregular north-south dividing line dividing Graves 1 and 3 from 5 and 4. Regardless, Grave 6 appears to have interrupted the path of stones running between Grave 5 and Grave 4.

As was described for Graves 1 and 2, the stratum that directly covered Grave 5 also contained white limestone pebbles.

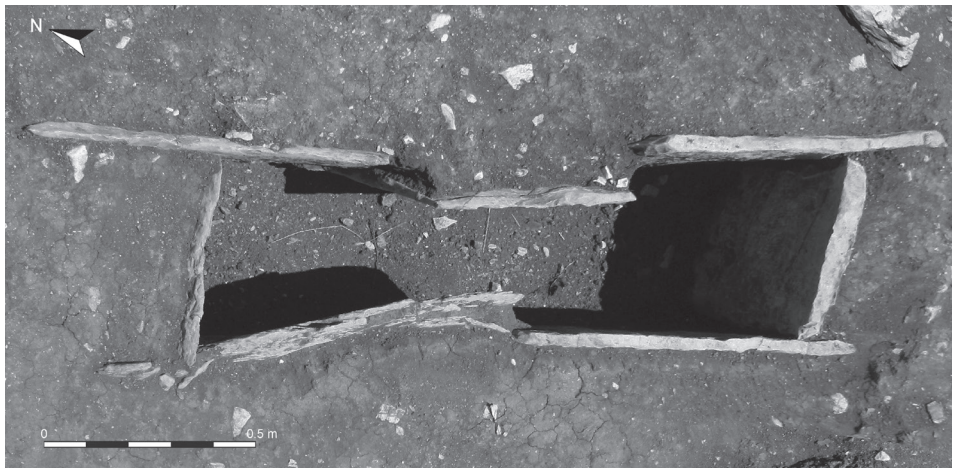


Fig. 19. Area 3, Grave 5.

Grave 4

Date: Covered by Area 3's uppermost cultural layer; cut a sterile bottom layer (Fig. 2, Grave 4).
Location: Grid square 525/577 (Figs. 15-16).
Orientation: East to west.
Dimensions: Cist grave cut: 1.37 x 0.50 m. Cist grave interior: 1.2 x 0.37 m. Grave circle: approximately 2.46 m diameter (incomplete on its south side), one course high.
Finds: Disarticulated remains with cranium and teeth placed in the western end of the grave, and long bones in the middle.
Description: This burial was executed in a limestone-lined cist that was covered by a broken white limestone slab (Fig. 20). The interior walls of the cist were finely cut and smoothed. The discovery of bones outside the cist, along with the broken cover slab, appeared to indicate that the grave had been disturbed before the deposition of the Area 3 cultural layer (Fig. 2, Grave 4). Grave 4's grave circle wall also appears to be incomplete on its southern side, which may be additional evidence that it was modified.

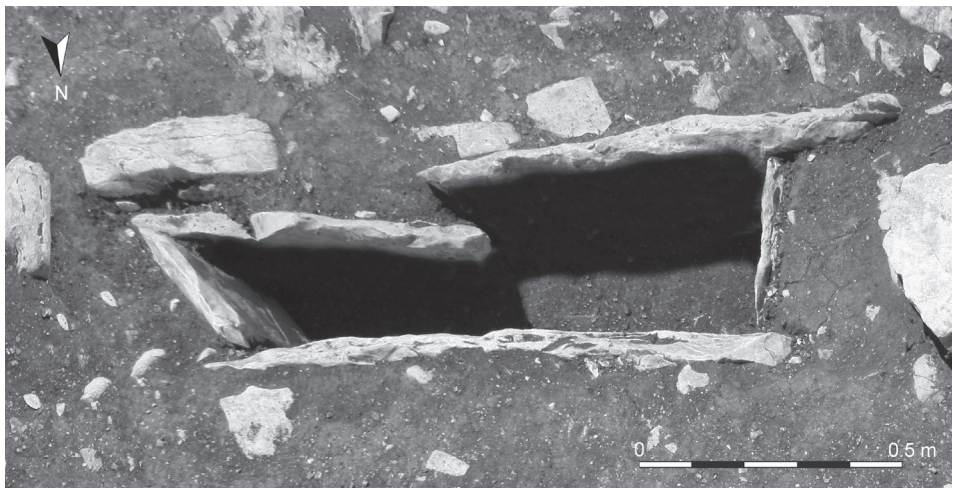


Fig. 20. Area 3, Grave 4.

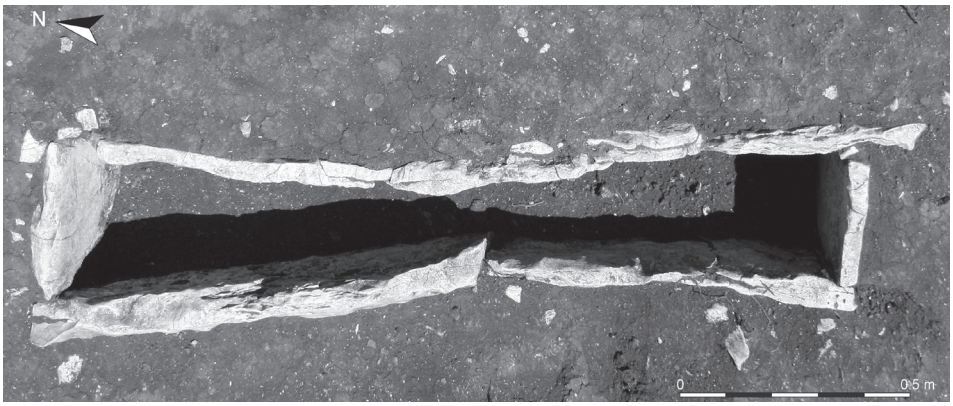


Fig. 21. Area 3, Grave 6, 1580-1430 cal. BC.

Grave 6

Date: 1580-1430 cal. BC. Covered by Area 3's uppermost cultural layer; cut a sterile bottom layer (Fig. 2, Grave 6).

Location: Grid squares 525-527/579 (Figs. 15-16).

Orientation: North-northwest to south-southeast.

Dimensions: Cist grave cut: 2.06 x 0.85 m. Cist grave interior: 1.737 x 0.326 m. No accompanying grave circle.

Finds: Fragmentary burial remains, with some human bone identified outside the grave; some green clay.

Description: This burial was executed in a limestone-lined cist and had a broken cover slab (Fig. 21). Like Grave 4, Grave 6's cist walls had been cut and smoothed differently from those of the other graves. The two also shared the differentiating trait of white limestone cover slabs.

As noted previously, Grave 6 appears to have interrupted the path of stones running between Grave 5 and Grave 4 (Figs. 15-16).

Grave 3

Date: 1420-1250 cal. BC. Covered by Area 3's uppermost cultural layer; cut a sterile bottom layer (Fig. 2, Grave 3).

Location: Grid square 523/577 (Figs. 15-16).

Orientation: East-northeast to west-southwest.

Dimensions: Cist grave cut: 1.80 - 0.67 m, 0.55 m depth. Cist grave interior: 1.6 x 0.38 m. Grave circle: 2.66 m across its northeast to southwest side (actually incomplete on its south side), one course high.

Finds: Disarticulated bones of several individuals; green clay.

Description: This burial was executed in a limestone-lined cist and was topped by a reddish limestone cover slab (Fig. 22). In spite of the mixed character of its deposition, this grave was undisturbed before excavation, probably because of the size of its huge cover slab, which required four workers to lift.

It appears that Grave 3's surrounding grave circle may have been constructed to conjoin with Grave 1, which is independently confirmed by the fact that Grave 3 represents the latest known C-14 dated feature in Area 3 (Fig. 2, Grave 3; Fig. 22). The construction of the Grave 3 circle may have borrowed stones from the neighbouring construction encircling Grave 4, where the stones now survive rather widely spaced apart (Figs. 15-16).

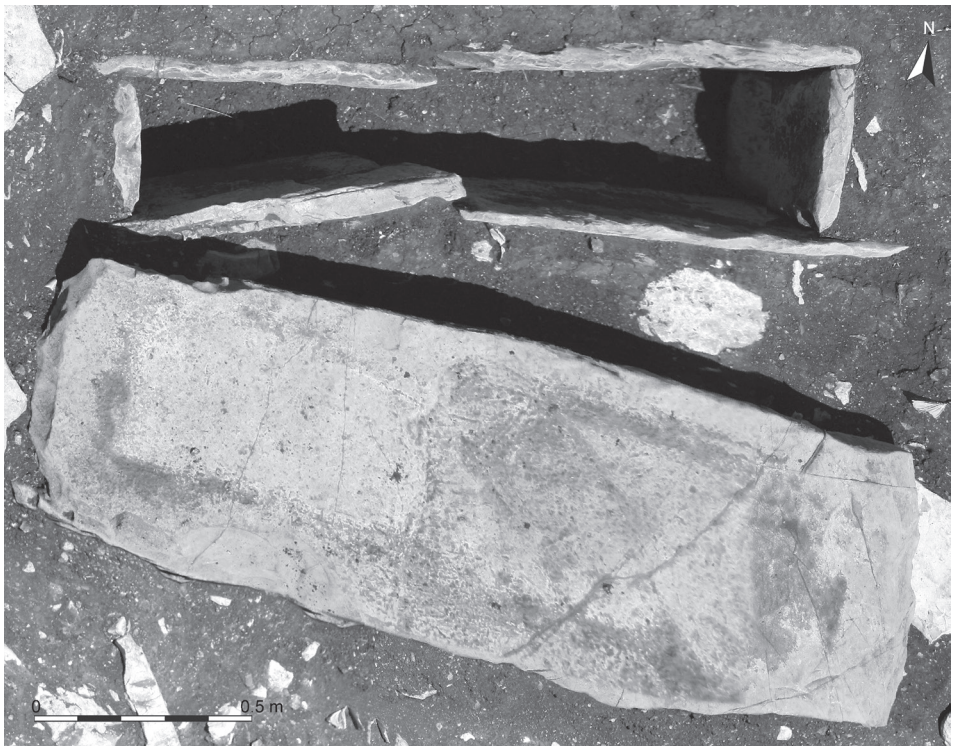


Fig. 22. Area 3, Grave 3 with reddish limestone cover slab, 1420-1250 cal. BC.

Several observations about the Area 3 cemetery follow, based on the previous evidence.First, based on the condition of the graves that were excavated, perhaps the stone cists in each of the conjoined graves functioned as ossuaries rather than as repositories for articulated remains. In each case, bones were encountered in a fragmentary state, with some parts of the skeleton missing. The consistency of one type of MBA and LBA burial practice in the southern cemetery distinguishes this area from the MBA tumulus in Area 2, which exhibited greater variety of burial practices. This interpretation excludes Grave 2, which is unique because it has its own separate and complete grave circle (Fig. 17). A possible interpretation that takes Grave 2 into account is that the southern cemetery had two stages of development: its creation, in which the graves of Area 3 contained individual burials (exemplified by Grave 2), and a second phase, in which the Graves 1, 2, and 5 were opened and the bones of additional individuals were added to the original burials.[20] For this scenario to be possible, however, all reuse of these graves would need to have ensued before the final deposition of the pebble layer that was discovered above them.[21]

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[20] Cf. the late LBA Tumulus C at Ephyra, which contained one cist grave with a single child burial and a second cist grave with an extended adult plus 13 secondary burials. Papadopoulos 1987, 140.

[21] The pebble layer could be remaining evidence for a mound that may have covered the early reused graves. Cf. the built circular tombs of the mid-to-late EBA R-Graves at the site of Steno on Lefkas, which appear to have been individual slab-cist, cremation and scatter burials with circular walls surrounding them, possibly mounded over by one continuous layer of earth. Wardle 1972, 33-35, 40.The scenario of an earlier tumulus is explored further at the end of the section.

Second, the C-14 dates of Area 3 Graves 1, 2, 3, and 6 span ca. 500 years, when taken at their maximum possible ranges. After their initial construction, these six graves underwent alterations and disturbances that changed the shape of the southern cemetery and defined new relationships among the burials. For example, it was suggested that perhaps, initially, Graves 1 and 4 each had their own stone circle (i.e., in the way that Grave 2 and its surrounding stone circle have survived) but that later these early grave circles were shifted. Stones may have been moved in order to enlarge the circles, or perhaps in order to accommodate additional burials or to relocate secondary burials. Grave 1, which features faced blocks spaced closely on its eastern side, seems to be missing stones on its western and northern sides (Figs. 15-16). Likewise, the circles around Graves 4 and 5 appear to have been disturbed, perhaps resulting in the formation of the north-south line of stones dividing the entire grave complex in half.

Another possible explanation for the position of the stones is that Graves 1 and 5 were originally encompassed by a single grave circle that was later altered to be subdivided by the north to south "wall" running between Graves 1 and 5 and possibly even later rearranged to accommodate Graves 3, 4, and 6, perhaps with some shifting of stones from the previous structure.[22] The graves themselves might also have been robbed and disturbed during these periods of reconstruction; Graves 1, 4, and 6 all showed evidence of disinterment and/or shifting of contents in antiquity, and the use of a different white limestone in the construction of Graves 4 and 6 may represent a later phase of burial in the cemetery, when that was the preferred style and stone type (Figs. 20-21; cf. with Fig. 22).

Finally, excavators were careful to note that Graves 1, 2, and 5 were all directly covered by a noticeable layer of white limestone pebbles mixed with pottery, lithics, and animal bones (Fig. 2, Graves 1, 2, 5). The white pebble stratum also covered the stone circles that surrounded those graves and even continued below the uppermost stones of the grave circle to the stones' outward-facing edges. A possible interpretation for the presence of the pebble layer is that it indicates the original construction of a southern tumulus that eroded over time.[23] This could offer an explanation as to why Graves 3 and 6, which were found, based on C-14 dating to have originated later, did not feature the pebble layer above their cover stones. Grave 4, which shared a similar construction style with Grave 6, also did not have signs of the pebble layer. The conclusion is that Graves 1, 2, and 5 were probably constructed during earlier phases and were included within a tumulus mound during the late MBA or early LBA, and Graves 6, 3, and possibly 4 were constructed later, after the tumulus mound had eroded during the middle LBA or late LBA (Fig. 2, Graves 4, 6, 3).[24]

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[22] N.B. the haphazard north-south wall was identified as being below the uppermost cultural layer in 523/579 and 523/581.

[23] This seems similar to the mixture of sandy, stony soil that Lera *et al.* 2009, 333, have observed in the construction of tumuli at the southwestern and south central Albanian sites of Vodhinë (Prendi 1956), Kakavi (Prendi 1959; Hammond 1967, 204), and Luaras (Aliu 2004). Cf. Papadopoulos 1987, 139, who observes that pebble paving is present in the tumuli at Marathia in Aetolia (however, the Marathia tumuli are several hundred years later than the possible tumulus in Goutsoura's southern cemetery).

[24] For a full description of the white pebble layer and its extent, see Forsén, this volume.

Discussion

The preceding description of Goutsoura's features outlined how the site developed over time, beginning with its phase as an EBA settlement from ca. 3000 to 2400 BC, followed by a hiatus from 2400 to 2000 BC, after which it became a cemetery with a variety of burial customs and the construction of at least one tumulus between ca. 1800 and 1600 BC. Both the northern tumulus and the southern cemetery showed evidence for subsequent burials and ongoing alterations, disinterment, occasional robbing and monumentalization taking place until the end of the LBA, possibly as late as 1100 BC.

The following section explores what impressions we are left with about the site's visitors, based on the Thesprotia Expedition's findings, as well as the implications that this diachronic picture has for discussions of Bronze Age burial traditions within the region of Thesprotia. This discussion begins with the site's earliest architectural features (i.e., the MBA cremation burial and burnt clay "hearth" in Area 2), and works forward through the site's latest architectural feature (i.e., the LBA or Early Iron Age Child graves 3 and 4 in Area 2).

The main point that can be argued based on the continued use of Goutsoura as a cemetery between 2000-1250 BC is that burial constructions were continually employed to commemorate the site as a place of communal memory and as a focal point of ongoing burial traditions. Evidence of this point can be observed in all three areas of the site, throughout its MBA and LBA phases.

In the description of the northern tumulus in the Description section, it was proposed that the location of the tumulus was deliberately selected to encompass a cremation burial that had taken place between 1980/1955 and 1865/1755 BC, before the peribolos wall's construction. The basis for this proposal was the cremation's location near the slab-lined cist grave in the centre of the tumulus, which was C-14 dated to 1780-1600 cal. BC (Fig. 3). The central cist grave's placement acknowledges the existence of the earlier grave. While the cremation showed no signs of being marked by a cover stone or mound, it was excavated into the surface above which the tumulus was constructed. The surrounding peribolos wall of the tumulus also seems to have been placed to include the cremation burial rather than to ignore or exclude it. The initial deposition of the tumulus's stone fill, in turn, appears to have occurred at roughly the same time as the construction of the central cist grave, perhaps with the form of the cist being roughed out ahead of time (Fig. 2, Central slab-lined cist grave). Although stratigraphic positioning designates the cremation burial as earlier, it is possible, based on the ranges of these burials' C-14 dates, that they could have been executed within a brief span of time from one another.

The incorporation of a cremation burial area into a tumulus structure is not a common MBA practice in northern Greece. In fact, the tumulus at Goutsoura is currently the earliest known example from Thesprotia. However, there are some examples of cremation burials included within tumuli in Albania. The best comparison comes from Tumulus I at the site of Vajzë.[25] Vajzë lies near Albania's central coast, within the region of Vlorë, approximately 40 km from the well-known Archaic Greek colony Apollonia (Fig. 23). Vajzë has four tumuli with graves dated between ca. 1800-1500 BC on the basis of

[25] Prendi 1955; Prendi 1957; Cf. Hammond 1967, 228-230.

Fig. 23. Locations of sites where comparanda are cited.

grave goods (i.e., late MBA to mid LBA).[26] In addition to featuring an in situ cremation burial, the graves of Vajzë's Tumulus I are mainly slab-lined cists, comparable with the Goutsoura northern tumulus's central slab-lined cist grave and with the contemporary graves from the Area 3 cemetery.[27] A second Albanian burial site further to the south, Vodhinë in the region of Gjirokastër (Fig. 23), offers another comparison.[28] There, the excavators reconstructed a sequence whereby a small cairn, a cist grave, and a cremation burial preceded the creation of an MBA tumulus.[29]

Returning to the northern tumulus and Goutsoura, it may be possible to observe evidence of further memorial rituals if the burnt clay hearth and stone semicircle features are considered together with the MBA cremation burial and subsequent cist grave (Figs. 3, 5). Unlike the cremation burial and the central slab-lined cist grave, the hearth and stone semicircle features did not have associated C-14 dates. However, their stratigraphic positions do make it possible to clarify the order of their construction and use. The hearth was constructed into the EBA cultural layer (i.e., the same stratum into which the cremation burial's pit was cut). The stone semicircle was revealed during the removal of the tumulus fill, suggesting that it either predates or was constructed with the tumulus and its peribolos (Fig. 2, Burnt clay hearth, Stone semicircle).

The stone semicircle's location in relation to that of the northern tumulus's peribolos wall clarifies the sequence further, as the western side of the stone semicircle abuts(and therefore postdates) the interior of the peribolos (Figs. 3-5). This interpretation is further supported by the fact that the peribolos wall extends an additional course lower

[26] Prendi 1982, 214, 217-226 and fig. 6 (nos. 4 and 5).
[27] Hammond 1967, 228-230, concludes that Vajzë's Tumulus I (A) was deliberately constructed to enclose and cover a single cremation burial (Grave 12).
[28] Prendi 1956.
[29] Hammond 1967, 201-204, 310. Wardle 1972, 40, compares the form of the tumuli at Vodhinë and Kakavi with the Cemetery S tumulus at Skaros on Lefkas (Dörpfeld 1927, 211-217).

than the stone semicircle, suggesting that the semicircle rests on top of a layer of fill that is being retained by the peribolos wall. Nevertheless, the similarities in the way that both walls are constructed and the way that they run together suggest that they were in contemporary use (Fig. 2, Peribolos wall).

It was noted previously that the stone semicircle was open on its southern side, directly bordering the margin of the burnt clay hearth area (Fig. 8). These features may have been used together, before the completion of the tumulus's filling phases. One interpretation is that these constructions operated with one or both of the earliest burials in the tumulus as a focal point for burnt offerings, funerary meals, or other mortuary rituals. Based on the chronology of the tumulus's creation, these features could have functioned alongside the tumulus's aforementioned central cist grave, which was located only around 1 m to the east and was also excavated into the tumulus fill (Fig. 5). Depending on the amount of time that the filling of the tumulus took, it might even be possible to consider the stone semicircle and the hearth being used in association with the original cremation burial C-14 dated to 1980/1955-1865/1755 cal. BC (Cremation burial, Burnt clay hearth, and Stone semicircle).

There are several good MBA comparanda for the inclusion of stone semicircles within tumuli, from southwestern Greece (from the tumuli at Papoulia and Routsi in Messenia) and from the Ionian Islands (from the site of Kokolata on Kephallenia; Fig. 23).[30] As at Goutsoura, there were no grave offerings associated with these semicircular stone structures. However, Tumulus 6 at Shtoj, which had its first grave dated to the EBA and its later graves dated to the MBA (ca. 1900 or 1800 BC), did have a circular feature with associated finds. Tumulus 6 featured an oval-shaped, stone-lined platform of pressed earth, located just above a central EBA burial.[31] Several violin-shaped figurines were discovered in association with the platform, indicating that it was used as a focal point for ritual.[32] Shtoj also featured a hearth surface with charcoal and pottery finds; a similar hearth was identified in excavations of another LH III period tumulus at Vajzë.[33]

If Goutsoura's hearth and semicircular stone structures were in use when the cist grave was constructed, this chronology adds further support to the identification of the central cist grave as the feature around which the tumulus was centered. However, any speculation about their relationship depends on being able to clarify how the tumulus was built – specifically, whether the horseshoe and hearth structures were still exposed when the central slab-lined cist grave was cut into the tumulus's layer of dirt, cobble,

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[30] This feature is nicely reviewed and illustrated by Oikonomidis *et al.* 2011, 196 and 197, and figs. 2f and 2g. At these sites, the semicircular structures are described as "horseshoes," and they are located inside their associated tumuli. Like Goutsoura, Papoulia had a variety of burial types, including cist burials and scattered remains with an ash layer. Wardle 1972, 39 and 40, discusses the implications of these parallels among MBA tumuli in western Greece, the Ionian Islands, and Albania, observing similarities among the Messenian tumuli and the tumuli at Vodhinë and Kakavi.

[31] Oikonomidis *et al.* 2011, figs. 1c and 1d; Koka 1990, figs. 28 and 29; and figs. 2-4.

[32] Koka 1990, 70, Tab. VIII (nos. 95-101) and 72, Tab. X (nos. 1-6). Galaty and Lafe 2008, 267 point out that the violin figurines at Shtoj are comparable to EBA violin figurines discovered at the southern Greek site of Lerna, and to a violin figurine discovered in one of the tumuli at the central Albanian site of Apollonia (Amore 2010).

[33] Shtoj's hearth: Koka 1990, 3129 and 3130. Vajzë's hearth: Prendi 1957, 92 and 95. Tumulus 6 at Shtoj has some differences in form from the example at Goutsoura and it is located in a region that lies a significant distance from Thesprotia- close to the northern coast of Albania, in the region of Shkodër. In spite of these differences, Shtoj is a contemporary site with a similar set of features being used together.

and chipped-stone fill. If the construction and filling of the tumulus took place over an extended span of time, it is plausible, based on both their proximity and their stratigraphy, that all these features could have at one point been interrelated.

In addition to the central slab-lined cist grave, two other burials were deposited along with the tumulus fill at Goutsoura: Child grave 1 (a cist burial of a child with knees drawn in flexed position; Fig. 10) and Child grave 2 (a deposit of disarticulated children's bones without a grave cut; Fig. 11). Considered as a whole, the central cist grave, the scattered child burials, and the flexed burial, each executed with different rites in the same use phase of a single tumulus, present a varied assemblage for the community that used this structure. Preference of varied burial techniques is common for southern Albanian tumulus sites during the MBA and LBA, when there could be slab-lined cist graves, stone-lined cist graves, and simple pit graves at a single site and even under a single mound (cf. burials at Vodhinë, Vajzë, and Barç located in Korçë in southeastern Albania).[34]

At the same time that Goutsoura's northern tumulus went into use in Area 2, a parallel form of large-scale burial construction was taking place on the southern edge of the site. In the previous description of the graves of Area 3, it was proposed that the white limestone pebbled layer, shared by several of the early Area 3 graves (Graves 1, 2, and 5) is a possible indicator that they were once covered by a second pre-existing tumulus that eroded over time. Based on the C-14 date for Grave 1, the *terminus post quem* for the construction of this structure would have been 1720-1510 cal. BC (Fig. 2, The southern cemetery).[35] This range conforms closely with the C-14 range assigned to the northern tumulus's central slab-lined cist burial (1780-1600 cal. BC; Fig. 2, Central slab-lined cist grave). The fact that Area 3's earliest graves, 1 and 2, were also slab-lined cists supports the idea that these constructions could have taken place around the same time.

Many Albanian sites, including the aforementioned site of Apollonia (located 10 km inland from the central coast), Piskovë (located in the southern district of Përmet), and the previously discussed sites of Shtoj, Vajzë, and Vodhinë, offer comparable, contemporary examples of the construction and use of multiple tumuli at a single site.[36] However, the site of Goutsoura presents an exception for northern Greece, because there are few, if any, MBA tumuli with surrounding peribolos walls in Thesprotia, nor are there any in the neighbouring regions of Epirus and Thessaly until the LBA period.[37] This fact makes the presence of the northern tumulus more remarkable and the possibility of a second, contemporary tumulus even more exciting. Another characteristic that should

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[34] Prendi 1982, 234-235.

[35] Area 3's Grave 2, which appears to have its own small peribolos still intact, would carry a *terminus post quem* of 1780-1620 cal. BC.

[36] Apollonia: Amore 2010; Piskovë: Bodinaku 1981; Shtoj: Koka 1985; Vajzë: Prendi 1957; Vodhinë: Prendi 1956.

[37] Oikonomidi *et al.* 2011, 192, 197; Georganas 2002, 289. During the late LBA, the tholoi at the sites of Kiperi and Ephyra come into use. Papadopoulos 1987, 140-142, observes that tumuli have a contemporary and earlier presence north of Epirus, and the presence of tumuli in Bronze Age Greek and Albanian burial landscapes appears to have its origins in the north, with a movement southward. While it is the case that some tumuli (e.g., the Kiperi tholos) may be indicators of Mycenaean influence in the region, there is no strong parallel evidence at Goutsoura to explain the construction of the MBA/LBA tumuli as the result of contact with southwestern Greece.

not go unnoticed is the size of Goutsoura's grave constructions. Based on the number of graves included, both cemeteries are twice as large as they need to be in order to fulfill their functions of merely covering over each of the burials. These burial structures share the characteristic that the amount of physical space occupied by the constructions appears to have mattered to the individuals performing the rites. This tendency to occupy more space than needed continued to resonate throughout Goutsoura's history, from the primary use phase of the northern tumulus and throughout the centuries of use of the southern cemetery.

The diversity of the assemblage of burial types in the northern (Area 2) tumulus stands in contrast to the similarity of the burials executed in the southern (Area 3) cemetery, all of which were deposited in slab-lined cist graves (cf. Figs. 3, 15-16). The consistency of practice in the southern cemetery, in contrast to the variability of the graves from the northern tumulus, suggests that different groups may have been in charge of administering practices in each location, in spite of some of the burials possibly taking place within the same generation or time span.

Whether a tumulus (or several small tumuli) covered southern cemetery Graves 1, 2, and 5, or whether they were ringed by grave circles, it is clear that stones and some graves were disturbed in Area 3 after its earliest burials took place. A possible parallel for the rearranging that occurred with the construction of southern cemetery Graves 6 and 3, and possibly Grave 4, is observable in Tumulus G at the LBA site of Pogoni-Meropi, located just south of the Greek border.[38] Tumulus G contained slab-lined cist graves surrounded by similarly loose circles of stones, which perhaps once functioned as a single-course grave circle or as a series of orthostats.[39]

Goutsoura's Wall 101, which follows the contours of the Liminari hill, presents further evidence for how burial practice received focus at the site between 1540-1310 BC (Figs. 13-14). In the preceding section, it was proposed that Wall 101 was constructed as a retaining wall that would have extended the Liminari hill's contours to create a thoroughfare. The decision to shore up ground level in Area 1, approximately 10 m east of the northern tumulus during the mid-to-late LBA indicates that the tumulus retained significance for visitors to the site centuries after its construction. Moreover, this activity indicates intensified modification of the landscape, and a community participating in a joint enterprise, perhaps viewing it as an act imbued with ritual significance. It indicates a sense of stewardship toward the site and a physical acknowledgment of its continued significance.[40] The southern extent of Wall 101 remains unknown because of the presence of beehives in the central part of the site, but the possibility of a path linking the site's northern and southern cemeteries is an attractive one (Fig. 1, Area 1). A comparison may be drawn with the later example of the cyclopean wall that was built to support the edge of the hillside at Ephyra at a cemetery site featuring three LBA tumuli.[41]

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[38] Andreou and Andreou 1999.

[39] Andreou and Andreou 1999, 86, figs. 40 and 41; Oikonomidis *et al.* 2011, 194-195, fig. 3c. A second parallel that may provide fuel for arguing a more deliberate construction is the much later vicinity of Halos in Thessaly; cf. Georganas 2002, 289-292.

[40] Cf. Kvapil 2012, 5.

[41] Papadopoulos 1987, 140. Although it is presumed to have been constructed in the LBA, the date of tumulus B is actually unknown, as it contained no diagnostic artifacts. Note that the dimensions of the cyclopean wall at Ephyra were 6.85 x 2.15 x 0.45 m, which was considerably thicker than the wall at Goutsoura.

Regardless of whether the grave circles of Area 3 represent the afterlife and the change of use of a tumulus structure or whether they represent individual burials that have been meaningfully grouped together, the circles serve to reinforce Goutsoura's function as a communal burial site during the MBA and LBA. Taken along with the site's other features, it is evident that whereas the EBA settlement lasted some six centuries, the site's life as a focal point for burial could have lasted as long as 750 years. A salient final illustration of the power of memory in dictating practice at Goutsoura lies in the site's latest known burials: Child graves 3 and 4 in Area 2, dated on the basis of ceramics to ca. 1300-1100 BC or later, and Grave 3 in Area 3, C-14 dated to 1420-1250 cal. BC. These three graves, executed long after the original construction phases of their respective cemeteries, demonstrate that the area continued to be a focus of memorializing burial activity even after the tumuli and/or grave circles were altered from their original forms.

Conclusion

The people who maintained and used the cemetery site of Goutsoura adopted a variety of burial rites and construction, destruction, and rebuilding practices that each reinforced the site's significance to its community over time. These rites and practices served to physically instill the landscape with a sense of visible and ongoing remembrance, in the form of large-scale structures such as the northern tumulus, Wall 101, and the southern cemetery.

A closer examination of the site's main features and their comparanda from other parts of the Mediterranean has demonstrated that Goutsoura has at least one and possibly two late MBA or early LBA tumuli, which are currently unique for the region of Thesprotia. The locations of their closest known comparanda are informative for considering how the region may have oriented itself between ca. 1800 and 1600 BC, as the northern tumulus's features indicate parallels to MBA examples from the Ionian Islands (e.g., Kephallenia, Leukas), and from Albania (e.g., Vajzë in Vlorë, Vodhinë in Gjirokastër, and Shtoj in Shkodër). Based on Thesprotia's location, these connections are not surprising, as both land and sea routes would have allowed for the exchange of goods and ideas during the MBA and LBA.[42] There is evidence for the adoption of new goods and social practices up and down the Ionian coast during this span of prehistory.[43]

The dynamics of Bronze Age communication between southern Albania and northwestern Greece continue to be explored, and many scenarios for communication have been proposed.[44] The most persuasive of these scenarios account for evidence of influence operating in multiple directions. For example, although Goutsoura represents one of the earliest examples of a tumulus with a peribolos wall in the region of Thesprotia (a phenomenon better represented in MBA Albania), the graves at Vajzë also feature

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[42] Hammond 1967, 33-37; Wardle 1997, 514 and 516; Lera *et al.* 2009, 330; Galaty and Lafe 2008, 265-267.

[43] Tartaron and Zachos 1999, 63, 71, and 72; Tartaron 2005, 157; cf. Onnis 2011, 499, arguing for intense contact between southern Greece and northern Greece/southern Albania in the MBA. Onnis argues that these networks of exchange cooled in the early part of the LBA as southern Greece turned its focus to other Adriatic zones, including Apulia. Galaty and Lafe 2008, 265 similarly observe the relationship between coastal Italy and coastal Albania at the very end of the Bronze Age and suggest that this new series of interactions may demonstrate the significance of sea contacts to exchange in earlier phases of the Bronze Age.

[44] E.g., Soueref 1986; Soueref 1989; Papadopoulos 1987; Wardle 1972; Wardle 1997; Tartaron and Zachos 1999; Tartaron 2004; Tartaron 2005; Galaty 2007; Lera *et al.* 2009; and Onnis 2011.

some of the earliest securely dated occurrences of MBA Aegean metalwork and type artifacts in Albania.[45] The role that the Ionian Islands played in assisting the transmission of these goods and social practices during the MBA and the LBA warrants further exploration.[46] Overall, Goutsoura appears to have been an early adopter of the tumulus custom in northwestern Greece, and this burial practice seems to have remained rare in LBA Thesprotia and Epirus in comparison with regions in southern and western Albania, where it was popular.[47]

The sequence of events that led to the southern cemetery's construction is uncertain. Several possible phases of development have been explored for the southern cemetery, including an initial large tumulus construction, an initial large grave circle construction and an initial layout of individual graves, each with its own surrounding grave circle.[48] Regardless, it seems clear that a distinct change took place in Area 3 at the time of the construction of Graves 3, 6, and 4, at which point the stones and several graves in the area were shifted, possibly in accompaniment with disinterment of their contents. The evidence presented during the exploration of both the southern and the northern cemetery calls attention to the need for more information about what landscape markers can be used to identify eroded tumuli, as well as what that process of erosion may have meant to a cemetery's self- or community-appointed stewards.

The activities that took place at Goutsoura during its MBA and LBA use phases were resonant enough with the community that performed them to sustain the site's use as a cemetery for between 350 and 750 years, depending on how compressed the site's chronology proves to be. These communal activities included burial rites, rituals, and modification of the cemetery's landscape. These activities are intriguing because the site's burial structures, as they are currently preserved, are slightly smaller in scale but also less crowded with graves than their counterparts from the Ionian Islands.[49] The construction of Goutsoura's structures to stand larger than they needed to be was a conscious choice that should be taken into account in considering the population and social organization of the communities that used the site over time.

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[45] Several graves at Vajzë contained goods with connections to the Middle Helladic southern Aegean, including shoed and slotted spearheads, horn-shaped bronze swords with multiple rivets, Sandars type A swords, and Sandars type 6a knives. Prendi 1957, 85-88; Prendi 1982, 216-224, fig. 6 (nos. 7-10) and fig. 11 (nos. 1-5); Hammond 1967, 311, 312, 320, 328, 337, and 352, and figs. 20, 21, 23, and 27. See also Bejko 1994, 110-114 and fig. 4.2, who does not dispute the dates of these artifacts but who argues that tumuli are an LBA phenomenon in the case of the southeastern Albanian region of Korçë.

[46] In addition to the previously described MBA tumuli at Kokolata on Kephallenia, there are also several early tumuli on Lefkas: MBA Cemetery S at Skaros and MBA Cemetery F (also known as Familiengrab F) at Steno, and even a series of EBA circular stone-built graves with cremation burials at Steno (i.e., the previously mentioned Cemetery R or the R-Graves; Dörpfeld 1927). During the LBA, later tumulus structures on Kephallenia contained grave goods indicating contact with both the Peloponnesos and Central Europe (amber, bronze, violin fibulae, and Mycenaean pottery alongside handmade wares in both imitation Mycenaean and local forms). Wardle 1972, 22, 26, 37-40, 44, 108; Hammond 1967, 331.

[47] Papadopoulos 1987, 142; Oikonomidis *et al.* 2011, 197.

[48] E.g., as in the case of the EBA cemetery site of Kriaritsi in the region of Chalkidiki in northeastern Greece, where periboloi surround individual graves. The site differs, however, in that burials are more numerous and are executed as cremations in urns. My thanks to Aristeides Papayiannis for bringing this site to my attention.

[49] Similarly, the graves constructed at Goutsoura over a period of several centuries are few in contrast to graves constructed over several centuries in contemporary southern Albanian cemeteries. In addition, the discovered height of the northern tumulus at Goutsoura was 0.4 m, while the heights of the tumuli at Vajzë range from 2.0 to 2.2 m. Hammond 1967, 228.

Further clarification of the chronological sequencing at Goutsoura would add to the current account of how the site's burial structures interacted. For example, current chronological resolution does not make it possible to say whether the creation of the southern cemetery was an act of reinforcement carried out in concert with the construction of the northern tumulus of Area 2, or whether it was, perhaps, an indication of competition between disparate groups making use of (and perhaps laying claim to) the same space. Likewise, further explorations of the southern boundary of Wall 101 would clarify whether the wall served to connect the two cemeteries in any way. Understanding these structures together could assist in identifying forms of ritual practice that might have accompanied burial practice at Goutsoura, providing a richer view of activities that took place at the site.

Overall, the dates of Goutsoura's heaviest phases of site modification – the construction of the northern tumulus, the inception of the southern cemetery, and the creation of Wall 101 – even at their most compressed, would still have spanned a period of at least 80 years, 1620-1560 BC. Maintenance of the site would have required the commitment of multiple generations and may have been predicated on seasonal returns to Goutsoura, based on the ongoing activities of disinterment that appear to be evidenced in both the northern tumulus and in the southern cemetery. Based on the low number of graves discovered, these secondary burial processes appear to have been enacted on a subset of a larger population. This observation demonstrates a need for research geared toward examining evidence for the roles that status and memory played in determining these practices at Goutsoura and at comparable cemeteries.

This picture of Goutsoura shows the site's visitors harnessing the power of monuments to imprint lasting memories onto the burial landscape, which, in turn, perhaps served to strengthen the networks of living communities.

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