

## THREE MONUMENTAL TOMBS FROM WESTERN LOCRIS AND AITOLIA (CENTRAL GREECE)

(Late Classical / Early Hellenistic – Roman Imperial periods)\*

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**Abstract.** *The monuments, which will be discussed in this paper, did not attract the attention of archaeologists for many decades, even though they were well-known to the locals. As the accepted terminus ante quem non of Greece's Roman Occupation is 146 BC [occupation and destruction of Corinth] the previously mentioned monuments are dated to the late 4th c. BC, and thus can be discussed in this colloquium. We present the up to date results of our research.*

During the years 2005-2006, the 10<sup>th</sup> Ephorate of Classical Antiquities (Delphi Region, Central Greece) decided to reconsider ancient monuments of Central Greece that were found, described [and partially excavated] by well known archeologists of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century – namely N. Pappadakis and E. Mastrokostas. Mrs Rozina Kolonia, at that time Ephor of the Antiquities and director of the Museum of Delphi took an active interest in monuments, such as the Macedonian tomb of *Pente Oria*, the Macedonian tomb of *Artotina* as well as the Heroon of *Malandrino*. The above monuments, which will be discussed in this paper, did not attract the attention of archaeologists for many decades, even though they were well-known to the local inhabitants.

As the accepted *terminus ante quem none* of the Roman occupation of Greece is 146 BC (with the occupation and destruction of Corinth) the previously mentioned monuments are dated to the late 4th c. BC, and thus can be discussed in this colloquium (fig. 1, map).

We present the up to date results of our research:

1. In the area called “*To Pal’ati tou Vassilia*” (“*The King’s Palace*”) (fig. 2, map), not far from the modern village *Pente Oria* (fig. 3) (identified as the ancient Locrian town of *Tritaia*), we excavated a monumental tomb of the Late Classical / Early Hellenistic period, that belongs to the type known as “*Macedonian tomb*”<sup>1</sup>. We cleared the area around it and we cut off the trees that had grown inside the monument (fig. 4). The monument’s superstructure, along with its *entablature* and part of its façade were uncovered.

The tile fragments that were found on top of the three huge stone slabs (fig. 5) covering the tomb, suggest that the tomb was originally covered with a wood-and-tile roof.

The tomb consists of two chambers and belongs to a type of funerary building that originates from Northern Greece – yet well-known among Central Greek populations<sup>2</sup>. The tomb’s relatively tall superstructure and its facade which supports rectangular bas-relief decorative patterns (fig. 6, 7, 8) is a reminiscent of the decoration of the “*The house with the coloured stuccos*” in Pella, Macedonia<sup>3</sup> – and, also, of the “*fake-doorleafs decoration*” pattern of the Macedonian tomb at *Leukadia / Mieza*<sup>4</sup> (fig. 9).

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\* The accepted *terminus ante quem non* of the Roman occupation of Greece is 146 BC [occupation and destruction of Corinth]

<sup>1</sup> Pappadakis 1920-21, p. 151

<sup>2</sup> Pappadakis 1920 – 21, p. 153, Skorda 1984.

<sup>3</sup> Akamatis 2003, p.27.

<sup>4</sup> Romiopoulou 1997, pl.20

The “wave-pattern of cella walls” (γεισοειδές κύμα) of the monument’s superstructure, that would have ended to a NE anta-wall capital [now missing], presents a shape very similar to a capital found in the area of *Ammon Zeus temple* in Chalkidik’e, Makedonia<sup>5</sup> (fig. 10).

The above elements, along with the fine work presented in every detail on the monument, provide evidence towards a Northern Greek workshop that would have travelled along with the Macedonian army, during the South Greek campaigns of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC (3<sup>rd</sup> - or probably 4<sup>th</sup> *Sacred Wars*) – building monumental tombs for the dead among high military officers. If we would like to be more accurate, we could place them immediately after the 338 BC destruction of Amphissa by Philippos and the punishment of the Locrians<sup>6</sup>.

This should be the case for the *Artotina tomb*, too.

2. In the area called “*Chonokklissia*” (Buried Church) (fig. 2, map), near modern village of *Artotina* (fig. 11), we performed a survey around a funerary monument that belongs to the same type as the *Pente Oria tomb*<sup>7</sup>. The tiles that were found (fig. 12) suggest that, in this case too, a wood-and-tile roof was used to cover the tomb. This time there were no stone slabs – but instead, a semi-cylindrical roofing (fig. 13) bordered by a rectangular walling, and surrounding the shaft, in which the structure was originally founded (fig. 14).

The *Artotina* Macedonian tomb is a one-chamber tomb, with a monumental, corridor door to the left – and a window to the right [the door area (fig. 15) was excavated in 1969<sup>8</sup>].

It has been known to the archaeologists since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century – but the reported stone benches (κλίβαι<sup>9</sup> of its interior are no longer visible (because of various debris gathered there) (fig. 16). The *west-slope ceramics*<sup>10</sup> once visible in the surrounding area – along with the tomb’s position away from the ancient settlement reported by Pappadakis<sup>11</sup> – but situated on a hill supervising a road that leads from Aetolia to Coastal Lokris, suggest a military tomb – and a dating similar to the *Pente Oria tomb*.

3. In the search for architectural features that could justify the date attributed to these tombs, we could refer to:

A) ...”Tomb 1” of *Dion*, Macedonia, dating to the late 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, didn’t have a semi-cylindrical roof, but a flat-top, made of stone slabs (similar to the *Pente Oria’s tomb*). Its excavator argues that this type of roof *reflects the monumental buildings of its era*<sup>12</sup>, something that endures the impression of a monument erected for an important person. We should bear in mind that “group A” of the “Macedonian” tombs found in Eastern Macedonia, is consisted of flat-roofed tombs<sup>13</sup>.

B) “Macedonian” tombs with facades of Doric order and jabs instead of columns (fig. 17, *Aggista*), that tend to be dated to the late fourth century BC<sup>14</sup>.

C) Workshops, that are specialized in the construction of “Macedonian” tombs, have already been identified in late fourth century Macedonia and thus, it is natural to assume that the elaborate *Pente Oria tomb* can be accredited to one of them<sup>15</sup>.

D) Many one-chambered, cylindrical roofed “Macedonian” tombs, such as the *Derveni-C tomb*<sup>16</sup>, that present a door bordure similar to the *Artotina tomb*, and are dated to the late 4<sup>th</sup> and / or the early third c.

<sup>5</sup> Petsas 1975, p.85, pl.1

<sup>6</sup> A.Kallegia 2003, p.34

<sup>7</sup> Pappadakis 1920-21, p.153

<sup>8</sup> P.Vokotopoulos 1969, p.242-3: «είσοδος τετειχισμένη προς την οποίαν οδηγεί διάδρομος»

<sup>9</sup> K.Sismanides 1997, p.25, pl.1

<sup>10</sup> Pappadakis 1920 – 21, p.153, «μελαμβαφή με γραπτόν κισσόν»

<sup>11</sup> Pappadakis 1920-21, supra – a Κώμη Βωμιέων

<sup>12</sup> D.Pandermalis 2000, p.14

<sup>13</sup> Ch. Koukouli - Chrysanthaki 2000, p.28-9, the *Argillos tomb*.

<sup>14</sup> K.Sismanides 2000, p.25, the *Aghia Paraskevi tomb*, M.Tsimbidou-Avlonitou, p.45, 108, the *Phoenix and Aghios Athanassios tombs*

<sup>15</sup> Chrysostomou 2000, p.12 –Pella

BC. The “irregural trapezoidal” masonry of the *Artotina* tomb points towards a late 4<sup>th</sup> century BC chronology.

4. In the area called *Asprovryssi* (“White Fountain”), not far from the modern town of *Malandrino* (fig. 2, map) the cemetery of the ancient polis of *Fyskeis* is located. *Fyskeis* used to be (as early as the 4<sup>th</sup> c.BC) the capital of Western Locris.

E.Panayotopoulos, a retired Guard of the Department of Antiquities, showed us the field where, in 1950, the archaeologists L. Lerat et E. Mastrokostas excavated the foundations of a building which the local tradition attributed to the temple of *Athena Ilias* – a goddess worshipped by the *Fyskeans*, and known from a number of inscriptions found in *Malandrino* and published by Mastrokostas.

We excavated the (remaining) first level of a *krepis* / foundation of a wall belonging to a building that would be dated not later than the 1<sup>st</sup> half of 5<sup>th</sup> c. BC (as the *gamma shaped crambons* that connect the stones suggest) (fig. 18). The preparation of the stones and the signs of *anathyrosis* on them – suggest that the interior of this structure was to be found to the south, even though there is no other part of the foundation preserved (fig. 19).

The dimensions of the uncovered foundation stones are similar to those of the *first treasury house* to the east of the ancient theatre of Delphi, whose crambons are also of the “*gamma*” type. So, we opened an test trench in the spot where we expected to find the center of a hypothetical building, with the same dimensions of this particular treasury (i.e. 6 X 5,5m.). Inside this new trench we discovered the remnants of a funerary fire – with bone fragments and a fragment of a *fine ware* bowl of Roman Imperial period<sup>17</sup>.

If we suggest, as Lerat did<sup>18</sup> – and under the light of our new finds – that we are dealing with the foundations of a *funerary monument*, then the uncovered *krepis* should be described as the base of a sculptural *syntagma*, standing on top of an important *Heroon*, of the *polis*’ cemetery. This monumental tomb was re-used as a tomb centuries after its first sepulchral use – something that points towards a *population – tradition* stability through Classical, Hellenistic and Roman periods in this part of Central Greece.

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<sup>16</sup> P.Themelisi-I.Touratsoglou 1997, p.93, 96-7, M.Tsimbidou-Avlonitou, supra, the Phoenix and Aghios Athanassios tombs

<sup>17</sup> Hayes 1972, pl.64,3

<sup>18</sup> Lerat 1952, p.123ff

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A.D. = ARCHAEOLOGIKON DELTION magazine

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Fig. 3

Fig. 1

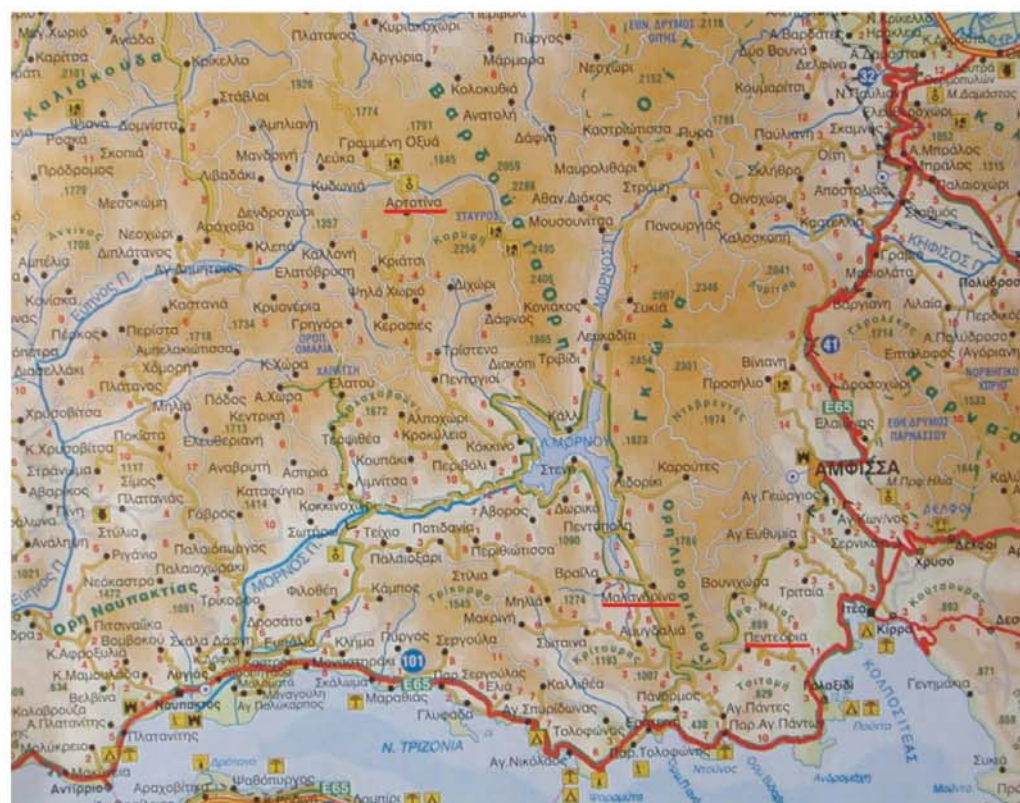


Fig. 2





Fig. 4

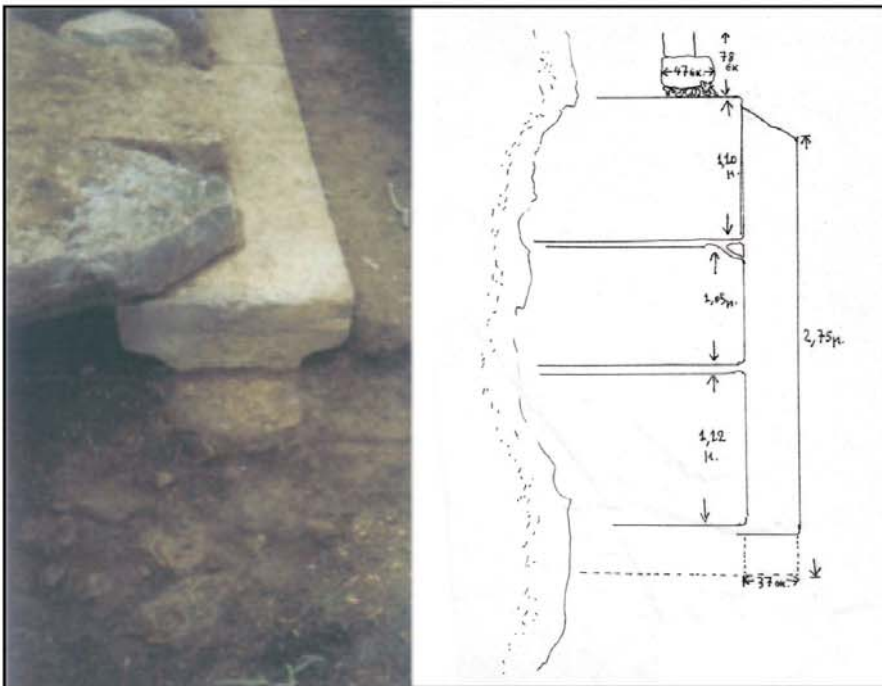


Fig. 5

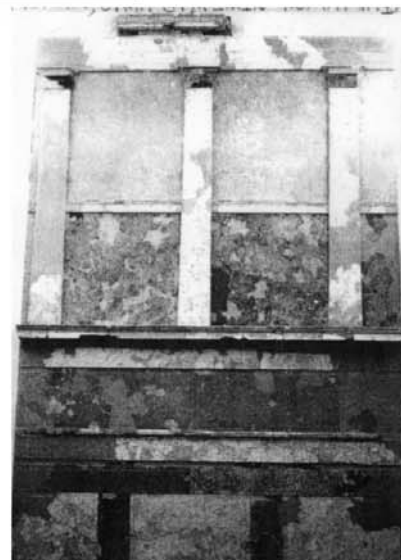


Fig. 6

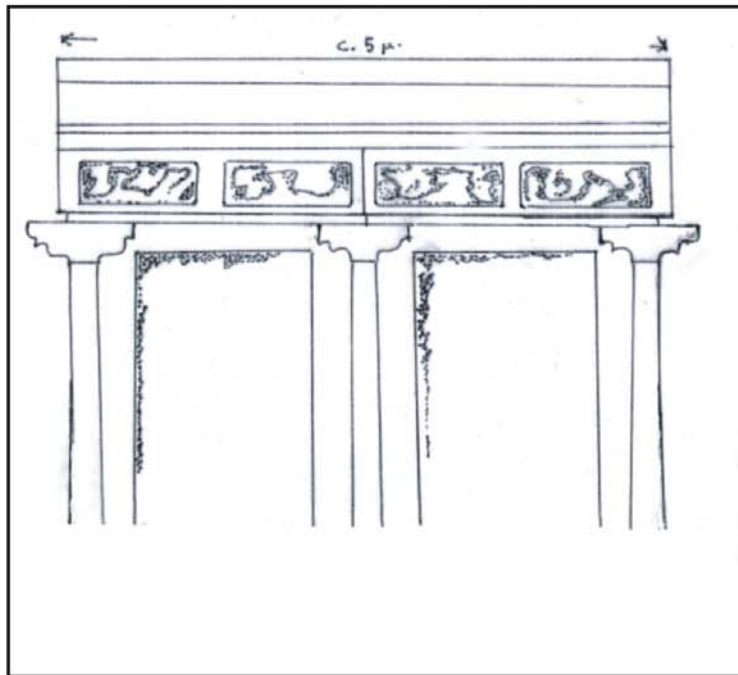


Fig. 7

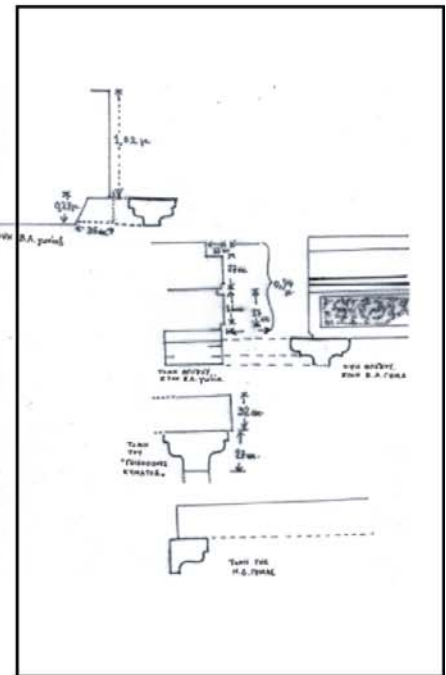


Fig. 8

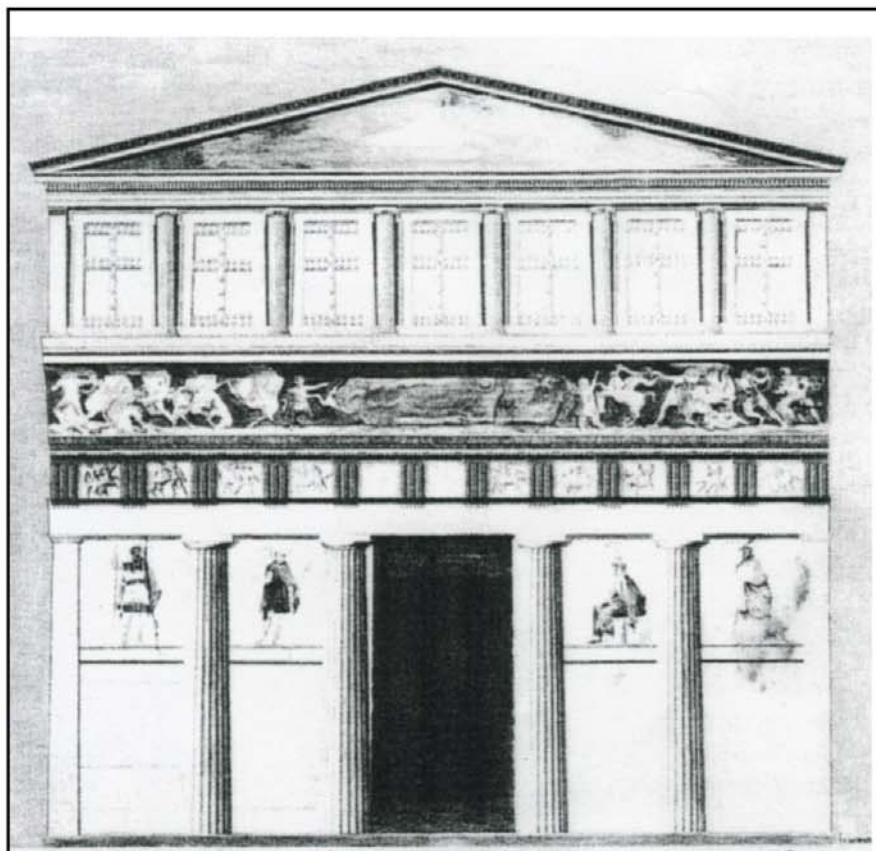


Fig. 9

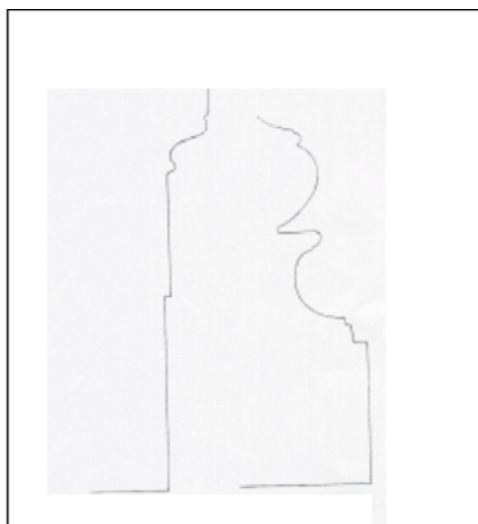


Fig. 10



Fig. 11



Fig. 12



Fig. 13





Fig. 14

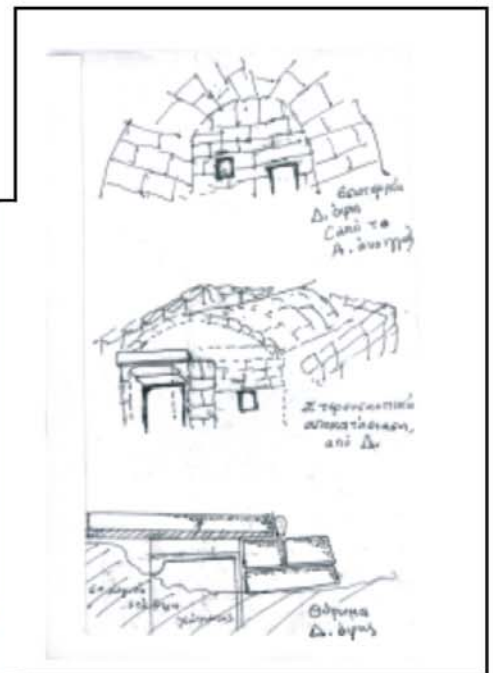


Fig. 15

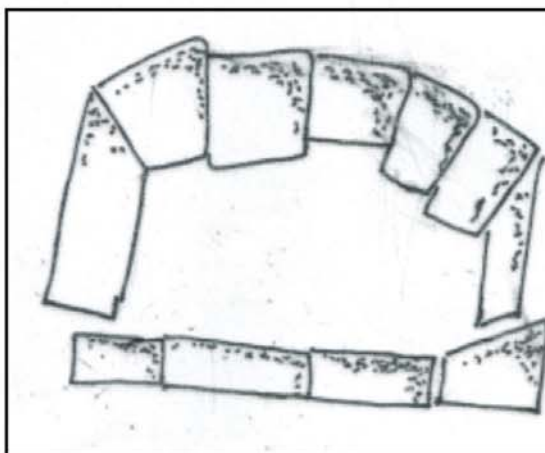


Fig. 16a. Section

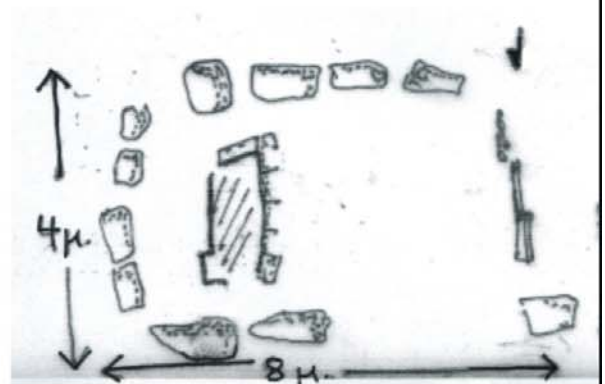


Fig. 16b. Plan

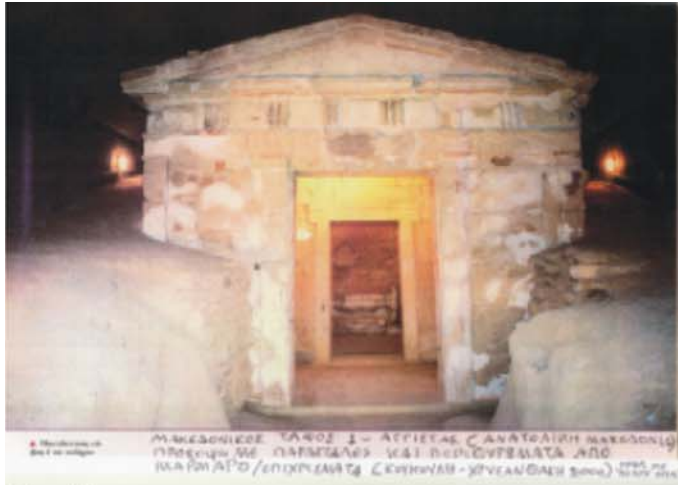


Fig. 17



Fig. 19

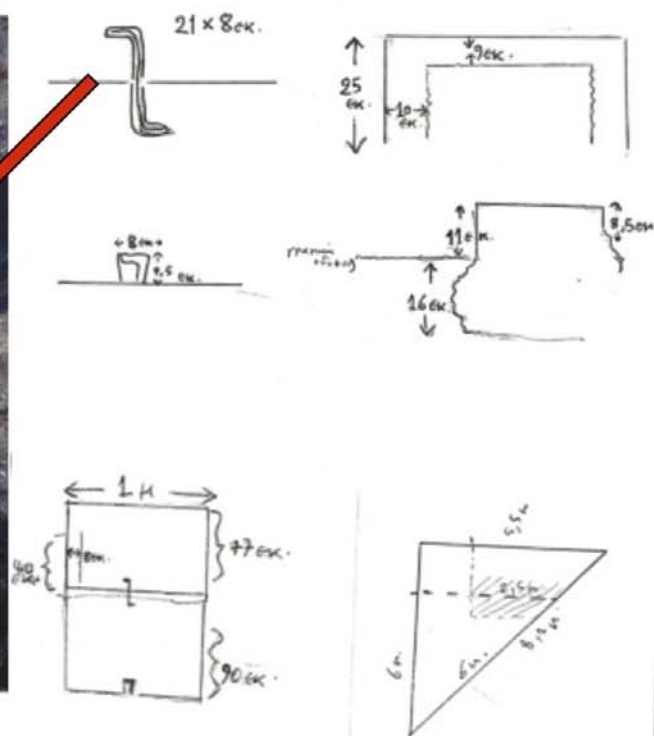


Fig. 18