

9. Τῆς Γεωφυσικῆς Ἐπιτροπῆς, τακτικά: οἱ κκ. Α. Βουρνάξος, Κ. Κτενάς, Κ. Μαλτέζος, Δ. Λαμπαδάριος. Ἀναπληρωματικά: ὁ κ. Σ. Λυκούδης.

10. Τῆς Ἐφορευτικῆς Ἐπιτροπῆς συντηρήσεως Μεγάρου καὶ Κήπων Ἀκαδημίας, τακτικά: οἱ κκ. Ι. Πολίτης, Β. Κουρεμένος, Α. Ὁρλάνδος, Δ. Λαμπαδάριος, Γ. Κυριακός, Π. Κοντός. Ἀναπληρωματικά: ὁ κ. Ε. Θωμόπουλος.

11. Τῆς Ἐπιτροπῆς περὶ τοῦ Διεθνoῦς Κοινοῦ τῶν Ἀκαδημιῶν, τακτικά: οἱ κκ. Θ. Βορέας, Α. Κεραμόπουλλος, Γ. Οἰκονόμος, Κ. Ρακτιβάν, Γ. Στρεΐτ.

ΚΑΤΑΘΕΣΙΣ ΣΥΓΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΩΝ

Ὁ κ. Ἄριστ. Κούζης ὁμιλεῖ περὶ τοῦ τελευταίως ἐκδοθέντος 10^{ου} τόμου τῆς Μεγάλης Ἑλληνικῆς Ἐγκυκλοπαιδείας.

ΑΝΑΚΟΙΝΩΣΕΙΣ ΑΚΑΔΗΜΑΪΚΩΝ

ΑΡΧΑΙΟΛΟΓΙΑ.—*Marathoniaca*. — III, *by George Sotiriadis*.

THE NECROPOLIS OF THE ANCIENT TOWN OF MARATHON.

The ruins of the Necropolis of the ancient town of Marathon cover a considerable part of the whole plain between Mount Agrielikí and the opposite Mount Kotroni, in the middle of which is situated the Mycenaean tomb of the same town. These ruins are varied. They consist chiefly of huge blocks of marble and worked stones which cover the fields in great mounds. Marble bases of funeral stelæ and of statues, of which one bears an inscription with the name of the sculptor on it, have been found amongst them. Also bases of marble columns, which ornamented the tombs, are to be seen, besides broken pieces of vases, which in other parts of the surrounding country would denote human habitations, here are evidently the remains of pillaged or otherwise destroyed tombs.

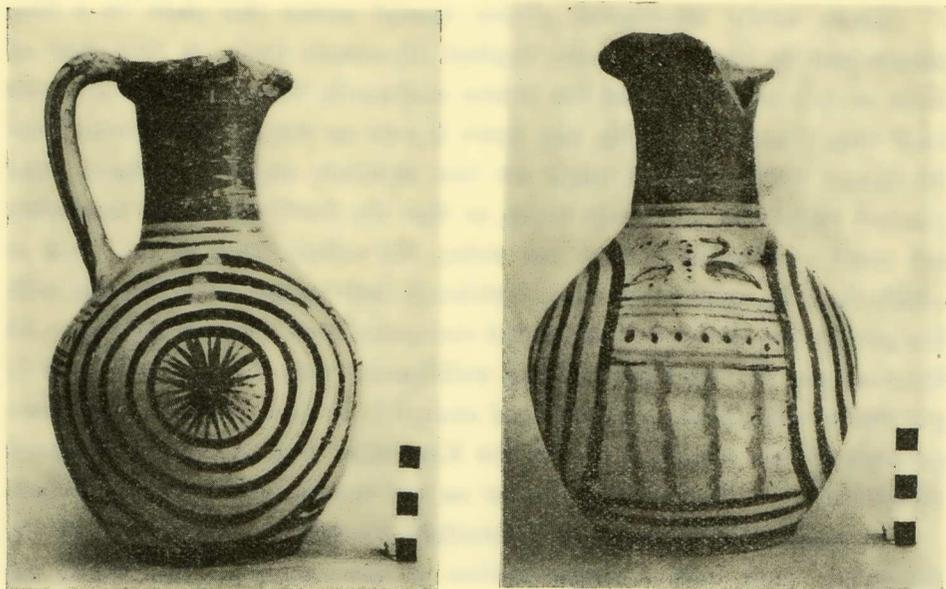
But no tombs whatever exist amongst these ruins.

The tombs, which must have been very close together, as were the sumptuous monuments, had doubtless been pillaged in early Christian times when the necropolis became a mere field which was cultivated then, and repeatedly ever since, till the present day, to the detriment of the tombs.

For this reason it must be considered an exceptionally important fact in the present archæological work at Marathon, that in at least one part, and that not a small one, close to the ruins of the old necropolis, tombs

were found which not only showed no signs of having been pillaged, either in antiquity or in recent years, but also because they were found to contain objects of remarkable interest.

The contents of these tombs were numbers of large and small vases, both useful and decorative, which were placed as offerings to the dead in their coffins by their family and friends, according to the custom of the time. These vases show a gradual development of local art in Marathon



from the beginning of the first millenium B. C. to the third century B. C. But it is still premature to speak of this and I simply show a few sketches



of the vases which will be sufficient to give an idea of the shape and decorations of the majority. Here I will only accurately describe the tombs themselves, as they remained intact for thirty centuries and were thus

able to preserve their contents. The iron point of the plough-share had momentarily shown up one of the tombs by damaging part of it but afterwards, by good luck, hid it completely from the sight of chance grave-robbers. In fact in a certain place the pick-axe of a labourer had brought to light, who knows when, a small vase from the earth above one of the graves, which proved of great value to me as it helped to indicate the position of the hidden tombs which, by good luck again, the grave-robbers had overlooked.

These newly discovered graves extend across the plain in a line, interrupted by the well-known vaulted Mycenaean tomb, so that part of them stretch eastwards and the others westwards, but at a certain distance each from the tomb. In this way there is now an empty space around the Mycenaean tomb which I think we can certainly suppose to have been planted with trees in ancient times, so that the dwellings of the dead were not mere cemeteries, as they are today, but rather cities of the dead in which they, in some occult way, continued their earthly lives. Parallel with the graves was an important road of communication between the town and the near and far outskirts, it being well-known that the ancients used to put the dwelling places of their dead alongside of such roads. A wellknown example of this custom is that of the Keramicos road of graves in Athens which led to the Sacred Way further on and towards the Academy of Plato.

In their double array the Marathon graves on either side of the Mycenaean vault form a single section of the necropolis, but which are separated into two groups, unlike one to the other.

That to the east consisted only of the tombs of babies and little children, and, as seen in the vases, were geometrical, whereas the row to the west begins with numerous geometrical tombs but only of grown-up people. These were at once followed by others of both geometrical and classical times and the dead were of various ages, old and young.

The graves of both groups were mostly dug out ditches with four sides, like those of the present day, surrounded by erect stone slabs, and covered by three or four transversal ones. The sides too were not formed by large single slabs, but by several smaller ones. Those however of the babies and little children had both their sides and their covers formed by a single slab to each grave. Other ancient graves of about the 4th century B.C. were made differently, having earthenware slabs, and those along the

sides leaning inwards, in the wellknown way of sewer construction, instead of standing erect like the others. Besides the dug-out graves were many other types. These were simple earthenware jars which of course could only contain the bodies of little children with the vases offered with them. Others again were urns and contained only ashes, as evidently the bodies of children were burnt on a pyre, or different fires, but of which no sign is to be seen near the graves, perhaps because time and cultivation have effaced their traces.

These urns having narrow openings no vase could be put in, therefore the offerings of vases were placed on the outside.

The graves—the dug-out ones, the earthenware jars, and the urns—were all found at a depth of not more than 40 or 50 centimetres beneath the surface of the earth. Some even at a much shallower depth and which basely escaped being damaged by the iron bar of the ploughshare. No traces of bones were found in any of the tombs. This phenomenon was noticeable also in the case of the Mycenaean vault and can perhaps be attributed to the quality of the earth, as it most certainly was not a question of cremation.

Moulds of skulls from these bodies were found in the earth after all the bones had crumbled to dust. The dead bodies lay from west to east with only one single exception. In this case the body, which lay in an earthenware grave, was placed from north to south. Nor did these graves form a straight line but, when seen from in front, seemed to be arranged in groups of three, with the middle one slightly forward and the two side ones further back, but these also at unequal distances from the middle one. In any case they had the appearance of being arranged like a squad marching along on their last journey.

All the graves—the stone ones, the earthenware ones, the jars, and the urns—were naturally full of earth which had been swept into them in the course of ages.

The jars and urns, firmly closed by their stone covers, were never found up right, but lying down and supported at the sides by stones. Stones were also found inside the jars, placed there with the little body. The reason for this is unknown. Perhaps it was simply to steady the jars when the weight of the bodies no longer kept them firm. But the weight of the layers of earth which covered the graves often cracked or broke

them, so that only one jar was found quite intact, being a very well-made one, whereas most of the others were of interior quality or in a crumbling condition.

Close to the urns a small quantity of charcoal was always found, which had probably been used for the purpose of burning perfumes or incense.

Other perfectly preserved graves also came to light, full of the dust of ages, but with no vestige of vases. Could these have been cenotaphs in memory of some unfound dead, as in the case of two others which I will mention further on?

Most of the vases were placed around the head of the dead. In one case an amphora had been put beneath the head like a cushion. Sometimes they were at the feet, and the vases were of different sizes. The position of the head and feet could always be recognized by the shape of the grave which was broad for the head and shoulders and narrower for the limbs.

With the exception of some copper rings, no metal utensils or coins were found in the tombs.

Neither were any funeral stelæ or pieces of them found anywhere. If they had existed they would have betrayed the existence of the tombs to the iron-bar of the ploughshare, which was of the still existing Hesiod type. Only outside the above-mentioned sections of the necropolis and at a considerable distance, the jar of a dead body was indicated by the presence of a broken stele protruding slightly from a trench of rain water. This trench is the present day cart-track and in ancient times must have been the avenue leading from the town to Vranà and, a little before, to the Heracleion. While working in this avenue I found, protruding from the sand of the cart-track, the above mentioned piece of broken stele. A small excavation afterwards brought to light a rather large-sized jar-grave of a child. This was filled with the usual earth and stones and some small geometrical vases. Other vases were found close to it, obviously because they did not fit inside. At a short distance, in a newly planted vine-yard, I was happy in finding traces of another jar of the same type, as shown later on by some of the broken pieces. This had been almost completely destroyed by the vine-dressers, as I concluded. By the discovery of these two grave-jars it was now made evident that the necropolis of the ancient town of Marathon, beginning at the same town, followed the road and extended also as a town, but of citizens established in their graves.

When the excavation reached the group of tombs to the west of the Mycenaean vault I again found two empty graves, but intact, as proved by the carefully placed stone slabs which covered them. They were in a layer of charcoal which formed the low mound of a large pyre on which obviously either once or during many years, the dead were burnt. Almost on the surface of this pyre I found pieces of a large amphora which of course was an offering to the burnt dead. Here I was obliged to conclude my work for the time being, and it will be resumed, I hope, at a later date. Happily beneath the pieces of the amphora I was in time to unearth the head and the whole chest of an earthenware female idol, without either arms or legs, and quite blackened by the fire. This is a beautiful example of the potter's art in the Vth century B.C. The two adjoining graves, which were only covered by stone slabs and had no side supports, must have been simple cenotaphs, now full of accumulated dust but containing no vases. They were certainly not constructed for the ashes of the bodies on the pyre and I think it not unlikely that they were the humble graves of men killed in battle by land or sea.

ΣΩΤΗΡΙΑΔΟΥ, Γ.—*Δύο επιγραφαὶ τοῦ 15^{ου} αἰῶνος μ. Χ. ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ Αἰγινείου τῆς Μακεδονίας (πρώην Λιμπανόβου) παρὰ τὴν ἐκβολὴν τοῦ Ἀλιάκμονος¹.*

ΚΟΥΓΕΑ, Σ.—*Περὶ βασιλικοῦ διαγράμματος ἐκ Χαλκίδος².*

ΚΟΥΓΕΑ, Σ.—*Περὶ ἀγνώστου προστάγματος τοῦ Ἀυτοκράτορος Διογένους τοῦ Ρωμανοῦ³.*

¹ Ἀνεκοινώθη κατὰ τὴν συνεδρίαν τῆς 1 Φεβρουαρίου 1934.

² Ἀνεκοινώθη κατὰ τὴν συνεδρίαν τῆς 26 Ἀπριλίου 1934.

³ Ἀνεκοινώθη κατὰ τὴν συνεδρίαν τῆς 8 Νοεμβρίου 1934.
