



Information about the Environment and for travellers in Crete:

Minoan tholos tomb at Maleme / Northwest Crete
New archaeological excavations at Axos / Central Crete

Based on grave typology the Tholos of the Minoan time is a grave vaulted with an earth hill. Tholos tombs are usually characterized by a strong emphasis of the interior and the entrance area. Since Hellenistic time the grave hills have also been used for multiple funerals; on average of 4 to 15 single funerals radial arranged in pit, stone cist and Pithos tombs. Individually, but also within necropolises Tholos tombs were found in a multiplicity on Crete; see in addition also the info leaflet No. 049-04/E of the **CRETE EnvironmentInfo**.

About Maleme (northwest Crete) and the description of way to there see also our leaflet No. 086-05/E (page 2) of the **CRETE EnvironmentInfo**. In Maleme the road to the German soldier cemetery (where the Tholos tomb is located) is indicatively and very well signed; from Chania coming, the road in the village goes off to the left of the main road. In the last left curve on this route (short before the parking lots to the German soldier cemetery) a sign is located pointing to the Tholos tomb (see fig.); at the left-sided slope leads here an approx. 100 m long trail to the destination.



The Minoan Tholos tomb at Maleme originates from the late palace time. Unusually here is the long entrance to the rectangular grave chamber. Although the burial place (probably already in the antique) had been sacked, in 1966 accomplished excavations provided still 2 seals. The illustration left shows the grave “from earlier days”, the remaining photos originate “from today's time”.



From the multiplicity of the Tholos tombs found on Crete hereafter 3 further graves presented with pictures and short description

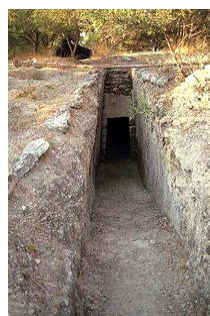


Fig. left shows a typical Tholos tomb at Kamilari / South Crete. Probably the grave had once a stone roof. Its former form is unfortunately only to be suspected. The center photo shows a Minoan Tholos tomb at Kournas / Northwest

Crete. The grave is outside from Filaki on a hill. It is located between trees “hidden” and is only very difficult to find. The right shown **Tholos tomb at Fourni** is located on a hill at **Archánes / Central Crete** (south of Iraklion), on which also an equivalent named necropolis is; which is considered as one of the largest and most important from the Bronze age in the Mediterranean area.

Important note:

The archaeological excavation at Axos is unfortunately not to be visited anymore! It fall victim to road constructions; therefore the following picture documents are the only proof in the Internet

New archaeological excavation at Axos

Axos is to be reached from the national route (to the west of Iraklion) via the villages Ammoudara, Gazi, Tilissos, Gonies and Anogia. From Anogia then drive northwest (direction Perama - Stavromenos) to Axos. The new archaeological excavation place is about 100 m behind the local exit of Axos on the right of the road, directly at the roadside.

Unfortunately the excavators “locally” were not very gladly with information; therefore no statement can be made at present about this, probably from Minoan time coming settlement remainder. Also no photos could be made for incomprehensible way from the excavation happenings (probably because they worked with “pickaxe and large shovel” instead of “putty knife and small whisk broom”!). However photographing is no problem on Saturday and Sunday. Test pits/- ditches for the investigation of the surrounding field and area containment could not be determined. They are hopefully put on at a later stage, in particular, because in range of vision of the excavation area lie “round stone grounds” (see fig.), which point to former (possible to the antique settlement belonging) grave hills (or could point to).



The left fig. of the upper picture row shows one (of two) excavation sections with wall remainders; in the background the panorama of Axos. The middle photo shows the front range of the left excavation section in the detail. The right fig. shows the area of the second excavation section, likewise with wall remainders. The pictures left show the two stone grounds, about 100 m west the excavation place. The left photo show reminds of a floor space smoothed for a Tholos; according to their position on the hillside and provable soil compaction (standing water puddles) it is usually rinsed free by surface water and is therefore probably vegetation-free. The right shown stone plant (at the foot

of the same mountain-slope) is similarly “built”; Stones from the edge (in the foreground of the picture) were probably used by Olive croppers as way limitation (to the slope) and the bordered area obviously as “burn place”.

Pictures: (5090/25..07.2005) *K. Eckl* / (5256, 5260, 5490, 5493-5496/25.07., 31.07.2005) *H. Eikamp*