
IPOGEI NEOLITICI ARTIFICIALI DI SANTA BARBARA, POLIGNANO A MARE, PUGLIA, ITALIA

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Résumé

The Santa Barbara neolithic settlement (Polignano a Mare, Puglia, Italy) is known for the presence of an entrenched inhabited and of underground structures as Manfredi hypogeum which is datable between 4100 and 3600 b.C. inner the meander-spiralic culture. The creation of this hypogeic complex manipulate in part the disused more ancient ditches: this is confirmed by their own filling and also by typology of the materials contained therein that are different from those that are collected in the deposits located inside the hypogea. This underground structures have no utilitarian use except for some cases where the functional origin is still legible. Often these are locations suitable for the deposition of material (pottery, personal items, horn, deer antlers) and probably also immaterial offers. Therefore a dense set of caves very articulated that is characterized by artificially excavated structures with characteristic bipartite plant which standardizes especially in numerous hypogea placed on internal margins of the ditches located on the sides NW S and SE of the settlement. The bilobed plant that we can define canonical starting from the middle of IV millennium b.C., however it seems to be not the only type of architecture to characterize these beautiful neolithic monuments. The latest research in the Galluzzi area, already frequented by the end of the VI millennium b.C., in fact reveals the presence of complex structures because they involve different aspects between everyday life and non-utilitarian ones.

Underground setting, divided into three independent units, alternate with structures used for water conservation.

Among these the most investigated is the hypogeum F.

The underground structure opens on the front of a natural terrace at the base of which, as already seen, run two sections of ditch.

It appears as a slightly bilobed single-celled structure derived from the remodeling of pre-meander-spiralic underground structures (probably other cisterns), located on the perimeter of the ditches and functional to the housing area on the plateau.

The structure has two entrances, almost diametrically opposite open respectively to the E and NE: two entrances almost certainly made in different phases. Of these, the most recent one corresponds to the smaller entrance with access *dromos* on the inclined plane with

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steps in relief on the plane.

The investigations of the internal deposit exposed a funerary level that concluded the frequentation of the cavity. This level was characterized by a necropolis with crouched burials and partial depositions consisting mainly of large cranial portions and mandibles (referable to at least ten individuals) arranged along the perimeter of the internal walls of the cell.

The depositions were not accompanied by grave goods except in two cases.

The funerary layer, which would correspond to a not too advanced moment of the meander-spiralic *facies*, is preceded by a moment of abandonment of the artificial cavity that separates it from a phase in which it was used for different purposes. Aspects concerning paleonutrition and genetics are being analyzed.

Mots-Clés: Santa Barbara, Polignano a Mare (Italy), Apulia Neolithic, Artificial Hypogea, Funerary, Meander, spiral culture.