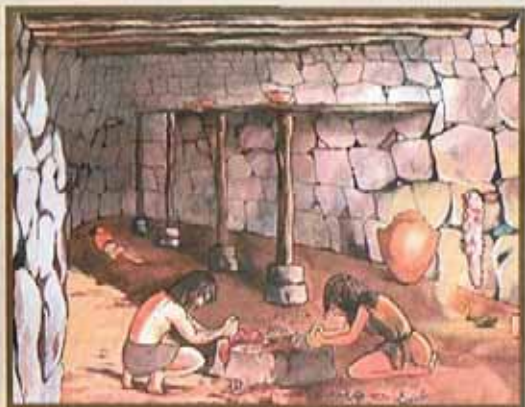


THE NAVETA I. MORE THAN A DWELLING.

As we have seen, the characteristic structures of the settlement are the navetas. Traditionally, these structures have been interpreted as domestic spaces, i.e. as dwellings. The problem with these interpretations is that they do not allow us to understand their particular characteristics (Why were the navetas in this way and not in another? Which functions and significances did they have in the Balearic societies of the Bronze Age?).

Through the research done in the Naveta I at Closos, we have demonstrated that the navetas were not only the neutral space in which the human groups lived and developed their activities, but also that they were the bodies where a great deal of the identity of the group that lived there was concentrated. This means that we interpret the navetas, with their monumentality and the high collective effort underlying their construction, as a symbol which identifies and structures the human group which lives in them.



For instance in the Naveta I at Closos, we could observe two differentiated stages. In the first one, with a chronology, the naveta, besides of being the building where a group of persons is living, it also functions like a public place where the social relationships took place. Instead of that, during the second stage and by means of a series of architectural modifications, the naveta becomes an exclusive domestic space, acquiring a more private character, whilst the activities which were more of the community are moved to other areas of the settlement.



If you want more information on the settlement or our activities you can get in touch with us writing to our e-mail:

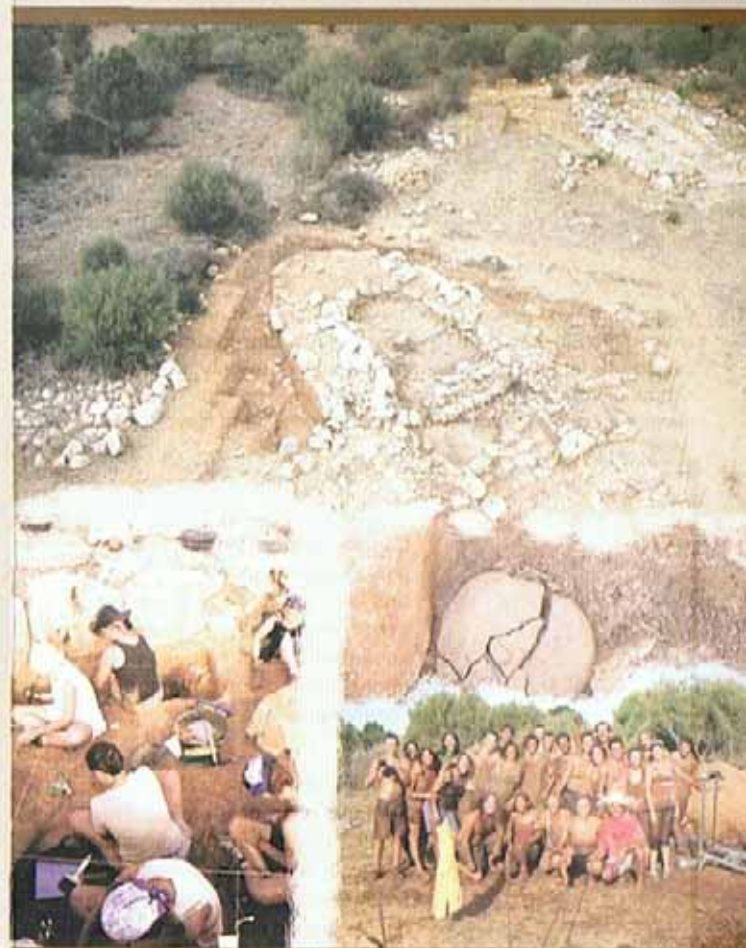
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CLOSOS DE CAN GAIÀ

(Felanitx, Mallorca)

A prehistoric site in the 21st Century



Ajuntament
de Felanitx



ArqueoBalear
Projecte Closos

THE NAVETIFORM SITE OF "ELS CLOSOS DE CAN GAIÀ".

The site of Els Closos de Can Gaià is a settlement of the Bronze Age (Navetiform Stage) which was inhabited approximately from 1700 to 850 B.C. It is located in the Eastern part of Majorca, outside Portocolom (Felanitx), next to a road linking this village with S'Horta, and consists of a minimum of nine structures, of which the compounds I and II have been completely or partly excavated.



Compound I consists of Naveta I, a building with an horseshoe-shaped ground plan, 16m length and 7 m width, constructed with cyclopean technique. Presently the walls are only 1.5m high, although whilst in use they could reach 3m. The roof, which has disappeared, was probably made of branches and clay.



Compound II consists of Naveta II, presently under excavation process, and also of a whole series of structures using different construction techniques, which might have been buildings for communal work or workshops.

Compound III consists of a double, perhaps even triple naveta. Next we find Compound IV, consisting of a plain ground plan naveta, and finally Compound V consisting of a double ground plan naveta. These structures have not been excavated by now.



THE BRONZE AGE AT THE BALEARIC ISLANDS.

The Bronze Age at the Balearic Islands is known as Navetiform Stage, as the naveta is the most typical architectural element of that period. For this stage we propose the following chronology:

- Navetiform I (Beginning and Consolidation) 1700 - 1400 BC
- Navetiform II (Height) 1400 - 1200 BC
- Navetiform III (Transition towards the Talayot Period) 1200 - 850 BC

The navetas mainly group together and form dispersed settlements of more than 50 units. By 1400 BC we find important changes, such as arising communal structures at Closos (Compound II). Already in 1100 BC we see a very slow change of the pattern of the settlements, as can be seen in examples such as Figueral de Son Real or S'Illot, as well as changes in the setting up of the navetas, such as for instance the Naveta I at Closos. Towards the end of the period we will see the appearance of the first talayots (1000 BC.).



Within the funerary world, the main characteristic of the period is the diversity. The communities of the Bronze Age use a large variety of structures, such as dolmens, hypogea with circular and specially elongated ground plan, characteristics of the Navetiform, as well as natural caves. Besides, on Minorca we also documented tombs with triple wall and burying navetas.

We know very little about their economical activities. The cereal growing is obvious and possibly they had some leguminous crops. As to animal husbandry, the breeding of sheep, goats, cows and pigs, in this order of importance, has been documented. Finally also hunting has been documented, as well as shell-fish picking and a quite incipient fishing activity in the areas near the sea. The problem is that nowadays the research conditions do not allow us to know the specific weight of each of these activities, nor its particular characteristics.

The Balearic Islands were in constant contact with abroad during the whole prehistory, from their first occupation at some indefinite moment of the 4th century BC. Nevertheless around 1400 BC such relationship enters in a new stage. We document the appearance of an important and complex system of coastal posts, quite probably to control the coastline and to facilitate the travelling by sea. At the same time the metallurgic activity undergoes important changes: the introduction of new metallic devices and of new metalwork techniques, both elements having a clear Mediterranean origin. Besides, tin, a mineral which does not exist in its natural form on the Balearics, is arriving now in considerable quantities.

