

Sondage excavations of Tell Burgas in 2008-2009 Preliminary report (Abstract)

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In 2008 and 2009, sondage excavations were carried out at Tell Burgas. The tell is at 10 km from the city centre, in Abadzhiev Chiflik locality. It is also at 1.4 km from the western shore of the Atanasovsko Lake, and at 7.5 km from the Black Sea coast. The tell lies on a terrain slightly sloping to east/northeast, at 8-10 m above sea level. It is about 80 m in diameter and 2.7 m in height.

Around 190 m² were excavated in the course of the two campaigns, which is about five percent of the tell surface. The bedrock was reached only over an area of 8.5 m². The thickness of the cultural layer reaches up to 2.7 m.

Field observations and the analysis of the finds have established that the tell piled up in the course of two prehistoric periods, the Neolithic and the Chalcolithic, with several levels of occupation in each period.

There are eight stratigraphic layers from top to bottom, as follows:

Layer 0 - plough-zone with mixed material from the Late Neolithic and Early, Middle, and Late Chalcolithic.

Layer 1 - Middle Chalcolithic. There are traces of a strong fire. The layer was registered as the remains of Dwelling 6. The investigated area is 1.6-1.8 m E-W by 10.5-10.6 m N-S. The thickness of the dwelling's remains is 0.5-0.6 m.

Layer 2 - Middle Chalcolithic. There are no traces of fire. The layer was registered by the presence of an oven and two vessels.

Layer 3 - Early Chalcolithic. There are traces of a strong fire. The layer was registered by the remains of two burnt dwellings. The investigated area of Dwelling 1-2 is 7.7-8 m E-W by 10.7 m N-S. The thickness of the remains is 0.5-0.7 m. The investigated area of Dwelling 5 is

4.6 m E-W by 6.5-7 m N-S. The thickness of the remains is 0.5-0.6 m.

Layer 4 - Early Chalcolithic. There are traces of a strong fire. The layer was registered by the remains of two burnt dwellings. The investigated area of Dwelling 3 is 2.6 m E-W by 4.2 m N-S. The thickness of the remains is 0.85 m. The investigated area of Dwelling 4 is 1.65-1.8 m E-W by 7 m N-S. The thickness of the remains is 0.8-1 m.

Layer 5 - Early Chalcolithic. There are no traces of fire. The layer was registered by two independent structures; part of an oven and a part of a T-shaped trench (probably from a dwelling) with postholes.

Layers 6-7 - Late Neolithic. There are no traces of fire. There is no clear stratigraphic boundary between the two layers. They are distinguished on the grounds of the total thickness of 0.4-0.6 m and some characteristics of the pottery. Layer 6 lacks any distinguishable archaeological structures. A pit was registered in Layer 7 that is 0.7 m in diameter and 0.35-0.4 m in depth.

Ovens, grinding stones and other interior features were investigated in the dwellings. There are a large number of tools and objects made of different materials like stone, flint, bone, horn, copper, *Spondylus* shells, and clay.

Aurochs, European bison, deer, fallow deer, roe deer, wild boar, hare and wild birds were hunted in the Early Chalcolithic. The domestic species were cattle, goats, sheep, pigs, and dogs. According to the index of *Minimum Number of Individuals*, the ratio between the wild and domestic species is 15 percent to 85 percent. Preferred crops were 'naked' barley, and two kinds of wheat (einkorn emmer and bread wheat). Lentils were also

used for food, while ash wood was used as construction material and fuel.

According to the main characteristics of the finds and the pottery, the two Late Neolithic layers could be synchronized with Karanovo III-IV and Karanovo IV periods in Thrace. The overall character of the Early and Middle Chalcolithic layers could be related to Sava Culture. The forms and decoration of some vessels show

also elements from Maritsa Culture. The typical decoration on some shards indicates secure links with the Early and Middle Chalcolithic Hamangia Culture to the north. During the Late Chalcolithic, the region belonged to Kodzhadermen-Gumelnita-Karanovo VI complex, and only a few shards were found that demonstrate surface treatment and decoration typical of Varna Culture.