

Evidence for late Neolithic salt production near Provadia: chemical analyses

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We analyzed six sherds from open ceramic vessels belonging to the earliest (late Neolithic) layer (Karanovo III-IV culture) of Tell Solnitsata-Provadia. The interior of the sherds was covered by thick white crust.

Information about the chemical composition of the white substance was derived by 1 M nitric acid extraction followed by an atomic absorbing

analysis of the sodium, potassium and magnesium as well as by titrimetric determination of the chlorides in the relevant extracts. The high content of potassium chloride and magnesium chloride as well as the presence of sodium chloride provide conclusive evidence that these ceramic vessels were used for salt extraction by evaporating brine (water taken from salt springs).