

ANGLO-GEORGIAN EXPEDITION TO NOKALAKEVI

Interim report on excavations in July 2009



www.nokalakevi.org

Kathryn Grant MSc AIFA, Chris Russel BA and Dr Paul Everill

With contributions by Ian Colvin, Benjamin Neil, Dr Jane Timby, Dr Phil Marter

December 2009

Abstract

The Anglo-Georgian Expedition to Nokalakevi (AGEN) carried out excavations in the Samegrelo region of western Georgia for the ninth consecutive season at the site of Nokalakevi (Archaeopolis). The excavation season took place between 3rd July 2009 and the 3rd August 2009 and was carried out by a team of British and Georgian professionals with the assistance of student volunteers from England and Georgia.

During this season, work continued in Trench A, located next to the eastern fortification wall, in which further inhumation burials of Hellenistic date were uncovered. Further limestone foundations relating to a series of previously exposed Hellenistic structures were also revealed within this trench.

This season also saw the reopening of Trench B located some 60m to the west of Trench A. A sondage was excavated in the southern part of the trench to expose and record further archaeological remains with a view to completing and backfilling this part. Five Byzantine-period burials were revealed and recorded during these excavations.

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Overview
- 1.2 Site Background
- 1.3 2009 Field Season
- 1.4 2009 Aims and Objectives
- 1.5 Scope of Report

2.0 Archaeological Background

- 2.1 A Brief History of Excavations at Nokalakevi
- 2.2 Summary of Recent Results for Trench A
- 2.3 Summary of Previous Results for Trench B

3.0 Archaeological Methodology

- 3.1 Excavation Methodology
- 3.2 Post-excavation Methodology
- 3.3 The Site Archives
- 3.4 Training

4.0 RTK GPS Survey Results

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Processing the data
- 4.3 Discussion of results
- 4.4 Conclusion

5.0 Excavation Results

- 5.1 Trench A: Results Summary
- 5.2 Trench A: Context Summary
- 5.3 Trench B: Results Summary
- 5.4 Trench B: Context Summary

6.0 Discussion and Conclusion

- 6.1 Trench A: General Discussion of Results

- 6.2 Trench A: Proposed Aims and Objectives for 2010
- 6.3 Trench B: General Discussion of Results
- 6.4 Trench B: Proposed Aims and Objectives for 2010

References

Acknowledgements

Appendix Tables 4-6

Tables

Table 1: Quantification of site archives for NOK 09

Table 2: Recorded contexts from NOK 09/A

Table 3: Recorded contexts from NOK 09/B

Table 4: Table 4: Trench A: Small Finds Register

Table 5: Trench B: Small Finds Register

Table 6: Quantification of the Pottery from NOK 09/A

Figures

Figure 1: Nokalakevi Location Plan

Figure 2: Trench A Location Plan

Figure 3: Trench B Location Plan

Figure 4: 3D Model of Nokalakevi

Figure 5: 3D Model of Nokalakevi

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

- 1.1.1 This document is an interim report of the results of the excavation undertaken at Nokalakevi in the 2009 season. A comprehensive report covering all the work undertaken since 2001 will be produced in the near future.
- 1.1.2 The fieldwork was undertaken in accordance with Georgian state legislation regarding excavation within ancient monuments and the relevant permissions were sought from and granted by the Georgian Ministry of Culture.
- 1.1.3 All aspects of the fieldwork complied with the Standards and Guidance, and Codes of Conduct of the UK 'Institute for Archaeologists' (IfA 2001).

1.2 Site Background and Location

- 1.2.1 Nokalakevi (which translates roughly as 'ruins where once a town was') is located in the west of Georgia in the province of Samegrelo, 15.5km north of Senaki (Figure 1). It sits in a loop of the River Tekhuri at the edge of the Colchian plain with hills on its northern and western perimeters (see the section on the RTK GPS survey). The site consists of an upper citadel atop a high hill and a lower town on the river terrace below, linked by strongly fortified walls.

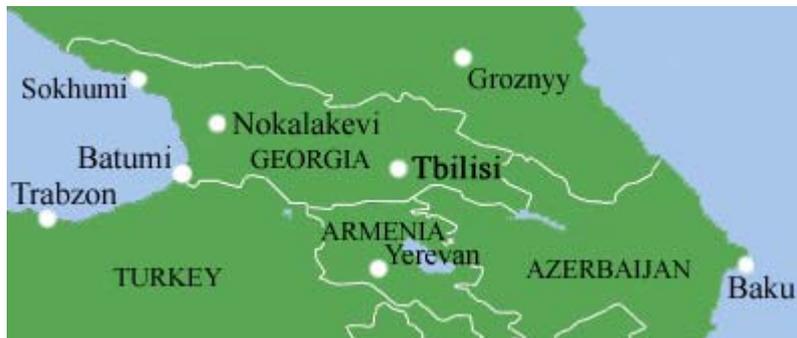


Figure 1: The location of Nokalakevi

- 1.2.2 Since the turn of the millennium, AGEN has focused on two areas within the walls, Trenches A and B. Trench A lies adjacent to the eastern fortification wall of the lower town, just north of the east gate. Work has been ongoing in this trench since 2001 and it was expanded to its current size (10m east-west by 13m north-south) in 2004. Since successfully bringing all parts of Trench A back into phase in 2006 a series of multi-phased structural foundations and burials were uncovered within a rich Hellenistic layer. Trench B, located some 60m to the west of Trench A, was opened in 2002 and measures 7.5m east-west by 20m north-south. Although excavation in Trench B was suspended since the 2005 field season in order to concentrate efforts on Trench A, this year saw the re-opening of Trench B with a view to reaching new cultural layers.

1.3 2009 Field Season

- 1.3.1 The staff and volunteers arrived in Nokalakevi on Saturday 3rd July 2009. Work began on Monday 5th July with the reopening of Trench A for the season's excavation. Protective layers of plastic and backfill from the end of the 2008 season were removed from the base of the trench. Excavation took place between Monday 5th July and Friday 31st July 2009.
- 1.3.2 The expedition staff, led by Professor David Lomitashvili (head of the expedition) and Ian Colvin, consisted of twelve specialists in total. The Georgian team was composed of Dr Besik Lortkipanidze (historian), Dr Nino KEBULADZE (finds conservator), Dr Maka Bokeria (palaeobotanist), Nikoloz Murghulia (site supervisor), Eliso Khvavadze (palynologist) and Natia Dzigua (finds conservator). The British team consisted of Dr Paul Everill and Benjamin Neil (co-directors of AGEN), Kathryn Grant and Chris Russel (site supervisors), Dr Jane Timby (pottery specialist), Dr Phil Marter (archaeologist) and Harry Robson (site assistant).
- 1.3.3 Our Georgian participants were: Giorgi Lomitashvili, Salome Jamburia, Nino Chkhartishvili, Shorena Khetsuriani, Ani Mgeladze, Elene Kenia, Teimuri Kubecia, Beka Lomitashvili, Daviti Gurgenedze, Giga Kakshvili, Zura Giorghadze, Ano Tvaradze and Qetalia Tamazashvili.
- 1.3.4 Our British volunteers were: Lisa Bak, Rebecca Dorran, Gemma Ward and Francesca Edwards.
- 1.3.5 Although the entire field team were involved in the initial opening of Trench A at the beginning of the season, since both of the trenches were open during this excavation season, it was necessary to distribute the field staff and volunteers between the two trenches. Trench A supervision was undertaken by Niko Murgulia and Kathryn Grant with a team of between 11 and 15 student volunteers, while Trench B was supervised by Chris Russel and Ano Tvaradze with assistance from Harry Robson and two student volunteers.

1.4 2009 Aims and Objectives

- 1.4.1 The broad aims and objectives for the 2009 field season in Trench A, based on previous work within the trench, were outlined in last year's report (Grant and Everill 2008) as follows:
- To reduce the northern extent of the trench in an attempt to bring the entire trench into phase.
 - To further expose any continuations of existing structural foundations with a view to better understanding their character and function.
 - To remove any previously exposed/recorded foundation stones which as a result of further excavation into deeper layers are now higher than the current excavation level.

- To fully excavate and record burial (256) which was partially revealed in the 2008 season.
- To determine the existence and type of any further burials belonging to the Hellenistic period.
- To further characterise the relationship between the structures and the burials, i.e. do the buildings relate to a phase of occupation immediately preceding the Hellenistic necropolis, or *vice versa*? If they are broadly contemporary, do the buildings represent funerary monuments and buildings?

1.4.2 The broad aims and objectives for the 2009 field season for Trench B, based on previous work within the trench, were outlined as follows:

- The small area of Byzantine/ Medieval cemetery at the south of Trench B to be fully excavated in order to allow backfilling as a conservation measure to preserve the exposed wall, and support a nearby telegraph pole. This will also provide an opportunity to examine some of the earliest surviving deposits from Nokalakevi, and provide a direct comparison with deposits from a nearby trench excavated in the late 1990s by Professor Lomitashvili.

1.4.3 General Aims and Objectives for 2009:

- To add further information to the stratigraphic matrices for both trenches.
- A complete RTK GPS survey of the lower town, the citadel, the fortifications and their immediate vicinity will be undertaken where conditions allow. This will build upon a partial Total Station survey of the lower town undertaken in 2007, and will also include topographic data.

1.5 Scope of Report

1.5.1 This report documents the findings from the 2009 archaeological field season. It contains the results of the excavations undertaken in Trenches A and B as well as outline results of the RTK GPS survey.

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 A Brief History of Excavations at Nokalakevi

- 2.1.1 For a fuller discussion of the history of Nokalakevi and the study of Nokalakevi please see Armour and Colvin (2004), and Everill and Marter (Forthcoming).
- 2.1.2 Modern study of Nokalakevi can be traced back to 1833 when the Swiss philologist Frédéric Dubois Du Montpéreux proposed the site as Aia, the capital of Homeric Colchis in the Argonautic myths, and Archaeopolis, the capital of late antique Lazika mentioned by the *Novels* of the Emperor Justinian, and by Byzantine historians and chroniclers.
- 2.1.3 The joint German-Georgian expedition led by Dr A.-M. Schneider of the German Archaeological Institute in Istanbul attempted the first Archaeological excavations at the site in the winter of 1930-31. Schneider's results were published in the German periodical *Forschungen und Fortschritte* in September 1931 and confirmed the identification of the site with *Archaeopolis*.
- 2.1.4 In 1973 the S. Janashia Museum of History established a large and well-equipped expedition to excavate and conserve the historical monument at Nokalakevi. This continued until the end of the Soviet Union in 1991 when large scale works at Nokalakevi temporarily ceased. Three volumes of results were edited by Parmen Zakaraia (1981; 1989; 1993).
- 2.1.5 The current excavations at the site began in 2001 with the establishment of the joint Anglo-Georgian expedition to Nokalakevi (AGEN).

2.2 Summary of Recent Results for Trench A

- 2.2.1 A comprehensive account of past seasons excavation results was provided in previous reports (Armour and Colvin 2004, Everill and Ginns 2005, Neil 2006, Everill 2007, Grant and Everill 2008). The following summarised points are pertinent to this year's results:
- In 2006 a line of stones (context 187) was exposed towards the centre of the trench, which was thought to be part of a building/structure.
 - After this area was fully revealed and investigated in 2007, subsequent lines of walls were exposed, confirming that these archaeological remains represented a complex sequence of Hellenistic structures.
 - Further excavation of the area in 2007 and 2008 made it possible to formulate ideas about the types of structure and the building materials used. The walls appear to have been constructed on top of a foundation of large limestone blocks, which was perhaps laid onto the ground surface as there is no evidence for a foundation cut. These blocks were overlain by a horizontal wooden sill consisting of one or more beams, into which were fixed upright posts measuring c.100mm in diameter. Evidence for these posts was recovered as charcoal both

in Trench A and within a comparable structure in nearby Trench B in 2005. Impressions of wattle within pieces of burnt daub in both trenches give further, clear indications that these walls were predominantly of a clay and timber construction.

- No archaeological evidence for roofing material was found in these Hellenistic period contexts (contrary to the great number of tiles excavated from the later Roman contexts), however buildings of a wattle and daub/ clay and timber construction are more likely to have been thatched.
- First exposed in 2003 and more thoroughly in 2006 and 2007, a line of unbonded limestone boulders (context 187) was uncovered measuring approximately 6m from east to west with a return to the north (at the western end) that extends for 1m. At the northern end of this return a large tapered post-pit [219] was revealed and directly east of this a further post-pit [224] was also uncovered. It seems likely that [219] once held a door post for the entrance to the building. These separate contexts were recorded together as parts of Structure 1.
- Structure 2 was made up of a line of unbonded limestone boulders (context 212) on an east-west alignment (4.5m long) with a return at the western end extending for 1m to the south. The east-west element of this structure is almost parallel to the east-west section of Structure 1.
- The earliest structure thus far (Structure 3) is a roughly square structure consisting of a line of unbonded limestone boulders. It was approximately 2.5m square, with the suggestion that there may have been an entrance at the northwest corner. It lay underneath Structure 2 and about half a metre south of Structure 1 on the same orientation as the other buildings. Structure 3 was sealed by a substantial deposit of burnt material (216) – predominantly daub.
- This burnt deposit (216) was excavated in 2007 and has provided a valuable insight into life during the Hellenistic period at Nokalakevi-Tsikhegoji. The sieving and flotation of soil samples in that year produced a wide range of carbonised seeds, including wild and domesticated grape (*vitis vinifera*, *vitis sylvestris*), wheat (*triticum sp.*), pea (*pisum sativum*), rowan (*sorbus sp.*) and black walnut (*juglans regia*).
- A total of twenty-five human burials have been excavated in area A; six in 2003, three in 2005, two in 2006, eight in 2007, four in 2008 and two in 2009.
- The ratio of child to adult is 3:2 within this area, suggesting a high infant mortality rate. However, this is an oversimplified demographic,

based on an insufficient sample that is compounded by low resolution phasing likely to span a few hundred years. A socio-economic differentiation within this sample is possible but there are mixtures of indicators that make some individuals difficult to separate out suggesting in some cases, a homogenisation of culture. There is no doubting the Hellenic influence seen in the layers currently under investigation, the question is whether this was actively (through a physical presence) or passively (through cultural transmission) affected in this province. It is understood in the coastal regions of West Georgia that Greek burials tend to be aligned east-west, lying extended and supine, with a few but ornate burial artefacts (gold, silver and predominantly imported pottery). Alternatively, Colchian burials have no consistent orientation, are often flexed, lie laterally and are richly furnished with paste jewellery and predominantly local ware pottery. We understand the Greek cultural context of cremation well - It was intended to be apotropaic and appeasing involving sacrifice and feasting; the three cremations seen at Archaeopolis demonstrate a consistent and prolonged pyre temperature demonstrating a good understanding of the technology. Accompanying sacrifice and feasting may be evident through the significant quantity of faunal remains within the surrounding contexts, confirmation pending detailed taphonomic analysis.

- In the broadest sense, it is possible to say that up to nine Colchian burials (138) (151) (154) (199) (227) (247) (253) (255) (261) and (265) have been found (two of which are cremations); richly furnished and in a variety of orientations, there is a 5:4 ratio of sub-adult to adult.
- In contrast, skeletons (139) (148) (160) (163) (168) (185) (190) (193) (196) (206) (209) (221) (237) and (241) are either aligned east west and/or with few or no burial artefacts, pointing to a different cultural/social background relating to their interment; there is a 9:5 ratio of sub-adult to adult in this sub-sample.

2.3 Summary of Previous Results for Trench B

2.3.1 A comprehensive account of past seasons excavation results was provided in previous reports (Everill 2003; Everill 2005a; Everill 2005b), therefore only a summary will be reproduced here.

- From 2002 to 2005, twenty-nine human burials were excavated within Trench B, plus a minimum number of six individuals fragmented throughout the cemetery soil. The vast majority were located within the northeast corner of a multiphased (Byzantine/ Medieval) cemetery exposed at the southwest corner of the trench.
- The remains of a Hellenistic period clay and timber building were first exposed in 2004, and further examined in 2005. This building was

characterised by a line of substantial, though undressed, limestone blocks which ran the full width of the far north of the trench. This wall base was orientated roughly east-west, and in places there were remains of the beam that would once have rested upon them. This beam survived in fragmentary form as charcoal, and the fire which apparently consumed the building also resulted in a large quantity of burnt daub which sealed related yard surfaces south of the building. Impressions of wattle within the daub, and fragmentary remains of narrow posts (which were presumably set upright into the beam) gave clear indications of the likely form of the building. Ceramic material sealed between the burnt daub, and the yard surface was identified as belonging to the Hellenistic period.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 Excavation Methodology

- 3.1.1 During this season excavation continued in Trenches A and B. Hand-excavation was carried out using picks, shovels and trowels in order to reduce the level of the trench, define new layers and uncover archaeological features. All removed soil was scanned for the presence of any stray, unstratified artefacts which were recovered and bagged for dating and analysis. An initial cleaning layer context number was assigned at the beginning of the season to ensure that any unstratified finds were kept separate from the underlying layer.
- 3.1.2 A local team of workmen was employed for the duration of the excavation to help with spoil removal and spoil heap management.
- 3.1.3 A digital photographic record was maintained throughout the excavation of the trench, features and finds. A day-to-day written record of all photographs taken was kept for the archive. In addition, a blackboard, north arrow and scales were included within the photographs to ensure that the details of the feature/artefact/structure were better illustrated.
- 3.1.4 Levels of deposits, layers, features and small finds were taken throughout the excavation. In addition, levels were taken across the trench for contour information at the end of the season.
- 3.1.5 Individual features and graves were planned at 1:10 and the trench itself was planned at 1:20.
- 3.1.6 Since thorough drawings of the trench sections were produced in the 2007 season for Trench A, it was not deemed necessary to re-draw these again this season. It will be useful to make amendments and to add on any newly defined layers to these illustrations in subsequent seasons to ensure stratigraphic continuity.
- 3.1.7 This season saw the introduction of a palynological specialist from the Georgian National Museum to the expedition. This meant that a series of smaller samples could be taken from sealed contexts within the graves for pollen analysis. Many soil samples were collected from secure contexts within graves (e.g. from under long bones/within pot vessels) during the course of the excavations.
- 3.1.8 Bulk soil samples were collected throughout the season for environmental and palaeobotanical assessment by Dr Maka Bokeria.
- 3.1.9 The buildings in Trench A, initially exposed in 2006 and fully uncovered in 2007, were given Structure numbers so that the various elements of each building could be grouped within our recording system. See section 2.0 for a

breakdown of these structures. Any reference to the structures within this report relates to context numbers previously assigned in past seasons.

- 3.1.8 As graves were uncovered small tools were used to fully expose and clean the skeleton and associated artefacts for planning and photographs. On the completion of a 1:10 plan the skeleton was lifted and bagged by separate elements (e.g. left arm, right leg).
- 3.1.9 The first three weeks of the expedition were in dry and sunny conditions with occasional patches of light rain, which had little effect on excavations. Unfortunately, heavy rain caused a considerable amount of waterlogging in both trenches in the final week. Fortunately, the standing water in Trench B drained away allowing the completion of fieldwork. However, Trench A suffered 23cm of standing water within the trench over the final 5 days and consequently work was forced to cease. As a result of the poor weather conditions and standing water within Trench A, the end of season plan and photographs were not produced.
- 3.1.10 At the end of the season both trenches were re-covered using plastic sheeting as a protective measure between excavation seasons. Due to the heavy waterlogging in Trench A, a team of local workmen carried out this task under the supervision of Professor Lomitashvili and Nikoloz Murghulia several days after the field season had finished, when the standing water had drained away.

3.2 Post-excavation Methodology

- 3.2.1 A finds washing session was undertaken at the end of each day's excavation. All finds were cleaned, dried and bagged according to context and type to ease quantification and assessment.
- 3.2.2 A pottery specialist quantified all of the ceramic material recovered from the site sorting the sherds into different fabrics, form and styles. These results were then catalogued for the production of a separate pottery report (Timby 2009).
- 3.2.3 Some small finds and interesting pottery sherds were illustrated for the archive. In addition, a photographic record of all small finds was maintained.
- 3.2.4 Osteological assessment comprising both the analysis of human and animal skeletal material was carried out over the course of the expedition as and when skeletons/disarticulated bones were lifted. Human skeletal assessment consisted of, where possible, the determination of an individual's sex, age and stature whilst noting any unusual/pathological traits. A separate, forthcoming report will detail this work. (Neil, *in prep*)
- 3.2.5 Work continued on expanding the site matrix using the newly gathered information from this season.

3.3 The 2009 Archives

3.3.1 Two separate site archives were maintained (one for each trench) during the course of the excavations. The context register for this season continues on from past season's excavations within each trench and therefore begins at 254 for Trench A and 398 for Trench B. The contexts have been tabulated below (3.3.3).

3.3.2 Since the expedition works as a collaboration between two international teams the archive is completed on site in both English and Georgian. This means that there are two copies of the site archive for each trench: a Georgian one which is stored at the Georgian National Museum in Tbilisi and an English one which is stored in Cambridge, England. The site illustrations such as feature and trench plans are also copied to ensure that the archive is fully maintained in both the UK and Georgia.

3.3.3 **Table 1:** Quantification of site archives for NOK 09

TRENCH	A	B
Number of Contexts	13	21
Plan and section drawings	6	11
Bulk Soil Samples (more than 1 bag per no.)	7	13
Pollen Samples	41	13
Digital Photographs (total for both trenches)	660	660
Small finds	21	5

3.4 Training

3.4.1 A formal proactive training programme was conceived and first implemented in 2007. Details can be found in the relevant interim report (Everill 2007) and in an analysis of the results of that training programme (Everill Forthcoming).

4.0 RTK GPS SURVEY RESULTS

The definitive version of the report on the RKT GPS Survey can be found in Everill and Marter (Forthcoming). The text presented here is an abridged version of that paper.

4.1 Introduction

A significant goal of the 2009 field season was the establishment of a site grid tied into UTM Zone 38N coordinates, and the mapping of standing structures and topography to develop a terrain model. This model would provide an important insight into the development of occupation at Nokalakevi, and the construction of the fortress. The site had previously only been fully surveyed using theodolites in the early 1980s, and it was that work which formed the basis of the existing general site plan. The opportunity to use a state of the art GPS system would make it possible to check for errors in the original survey, which might have easily occurred as a result of the challenging nature of the terrain.

In July 2009, Drs Everill and Marter travelled to Georgia to undertake the survey, with the Winchester Department of Archaeology's Leica GPS1200+. This system can be used in a variety of ways, but in the absence of a local GNSS Network to provide coordinated RTK corrections, it was configured using a single Leica GX1230 reference receiver (or base station) and a mobile receiver (or SmartRover). The base station antenna was mounted over the main survey point, a 350mm Perma-Mark ground marker with an anchored spike located east of the expedition base. The base station was set up to log static data every 15 seconds for nine hours. This data was then 'post-processed' with satellite positional data (RINEX data) from a fixed, IGS satellite tracking station 173.88km away in Zelenchukyska, Russia. The distance between Zelenchukyska and the base station in Nokalakevi meant that the latter was required to collect its own positional data for at least six hours in order to provide sufficient data for correction. Once the Nokalakevi base station observations were post-processed in Leica GeoOffice, using the RINEX data from Zelenchukyska, it was possible to refine its exact global position in WGS84 UTM Zone 38N coordinates.

During the survey, the base station was always remounted precisely over the main survey marker, with its known co-ordinates, and the SmartRover used to collect survey data. The base station is located on a known point. The base transmits GPS 'corrections' via a radio data-link to the rover to enable the rover to be positioned very accurately in real-time on a known datum. Both American (GPS) and Russian (GLONASS) satellite networks were utilised, ensuring the availability of the largest number of 'visible' satellites. This allows the maximum contact to be maintained between the SmartRover and overhead satellites whilst surveying in difficult terrain that could, on occasion, obscure some from view. With good satellite coverage, away from areas of

dense tree cover or tall standing remains, it was possible for the rover to record points within 10mm accuracy up to 2km from the reference station.

The authors spent a total of 15 days mapping the 20ha site. The first stage was to record in detail all the exposed foundations and standing buildings of the lower town, where the later settlement was focused. Where possible, measurements were taken on both the interior and exterior faces of the walls, enabling a precise plan of the structures to be drawn. With the buildings mapped, the focus shifted to the three phases of fortification walls at Nokalakevi, much of which are still standing. The survey also included the mapping of the walls and towers of the acropolis that sit on the top of the ridge some 200m above the lower town. The banks of the Tekhuri River and the road into the Caucasus Mountains, which the fortress had been built to defend, were also surveyed. Topographic spot heights were also recorded to enable the production of a terrain model.

4.2 Processing the data

A total of 3,145 points were measured during the 15 days of survey. They were post-processed in Leica GeoOffice whilst in Nokalakevi and exported from there as shapefiles into ArcMap 9.2. These were then plotted to produce initial mapping and contour data. Within ArcMap an existing satellite photo was georeferenced to the measured points, and this made it possible to add additional detail to some areas of the survey where tree cover or standing walls had made it impossible to record a point. Usually this consisted of completing sections of wall where it had not been possible to follow its full length, or of creating points for topographical features – such as the fast side of the river where the vertical gorge made access impossible. Further sections of wall were added to the plan where surviving fragments indicated the likely orientation of a wall that had collapsed down the gorge, in order to provide a better understanding of the arrangement of the lower town.

4.3 Discussion of survey results

The post-processed results of this work showed for the first time the true orientation and position of a number of important archaeological finds, including the late-Roman water cistern excavated by Professor Lomitashvili in the 1990s which had previously proved difficult to map due to its location on a steep, heavily overgrown slope. In many respects the original 1980s site plan proved to be a largely accurate representation, but with some key discrepancies, particularly in regard to the orientation of sections of wall within the upper town. It was also noted that heights in the original survey were approximately 20m too low, and this was perhaps an error relating to the backsight used at the time and was, therefore, an external error.

The GPS survey undertaken in 2009 is valuable for a number of reasons, beyond that of checking the accuracy of the original site plan. First and foremost it has allowed the current expedition to produce a modern, digital plan of the site that is tied into an accurate global position. The flexibility of this digital resource will enable future survey work to be added to the data available, as new remains are revealed, and even enable far broader landscape analysis to be undertaken. This work could extend beyond the site and its hinterland, incorporating other archaeological sites in the region. Furthermore, in addition to the main survey marker (BASE 1), 50mm survey point nails were placed along the tarmac surface of the old road that runs through the lower town. The locations of these survey stations were recorded with the GPS so that in the future they could be used to orientate a Total Station and give it a global position, thus enabling accurate survey work in the future to occur anywhere within the considerable complex of archaeological remains.

Further benefits of the survey relate to the ability to provide detailed maps and images to enable visitors to the site, or even those who have not yet visited it, to accurately understand its topographic location, and the way in which it dominates and controls aspects of the landscape. Traditional reconstructions allow key events in the history of the site or particular views to be visually rendered, while also providing some interpretation of the form and function of structures that have been excavated archaeologically. The three dimensional models (Figure 2 and 3) enable a different kind of visualisation – one which strips the terrain of vegetation, allowing the viewer to understand the true nature of the underlying topography, and the ways in which the site might have developed and grown. This kind of modelling work provides a flexible, digital data set that can be manipulated and developed to provide a tool for analysis, interpretation and presentation of the site. Of course, the inherent value of both forms of reconstruction is that they recognise that the site operates in three dimensions – a reality not so easily expressed through a two dimensional plan.

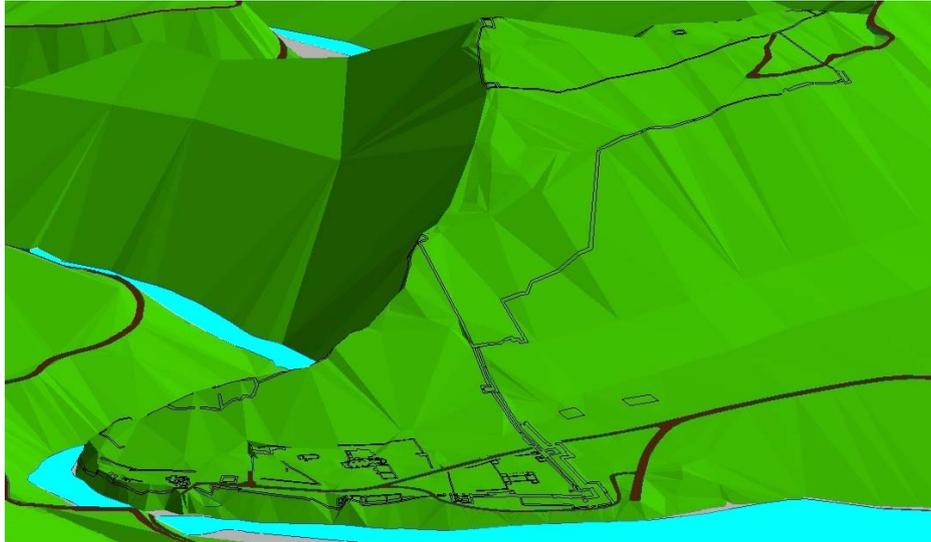


Figure 2: 3D Model of Nokalakevi seen from the south (Everill and Marter Forthcoming).

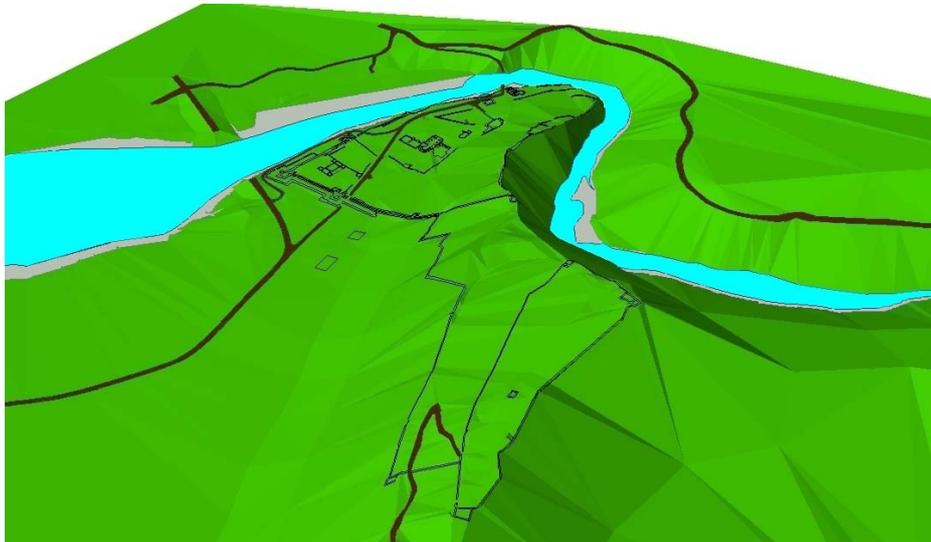


Figure 3: 3D Model of Nokalakevi seen from the northeast (Everill and Marter Forthcoming).

4.4 Conclusion

The survey of the standing remains and topography of Nokalakevi has allowed, for the first time, the entire 20ha site to be mapped to within 20mm, and given an accurate global position. Employing modern RTK GPS technology this work was undertaken in only 15 person days – a feat unimaginable only a few years ago. Although there were some areas where problems with accessibility, tree cover, or standing walls meant that it was not possible to take readings, the ability to georeference existing satellite imagery into ArcGIS allowed many of those areas to be added accurately afterwards.

It is envisaged that the plan that was produced will form the basis of future survey work at the site for many years to come.

The digital nature of the data means that this survey provides a foundation for other methods of visualising the site within its landscape context. Future surveys of related sites, such as other late Roman forts, watch towers and beacons in the region, could be added to the database in order to provide viewshed analyses, which could test theories of intervisibility. With such accurate data it may also be possible to use computer gaming engines to produce highly detailed walkthrough models of the site, allowing visitors to learn more about the walls and buildings that in some places survive only as foundations exposed by excavation. The implications for the production of educational resources are immense, and it is hoped that the survey of 2009 is merely the first step of what promises to be an exciting new phase in the study of Nokalakevi-Archaeopolis.

5.0 EXCAVATION RESULTS

5.1 Trench A

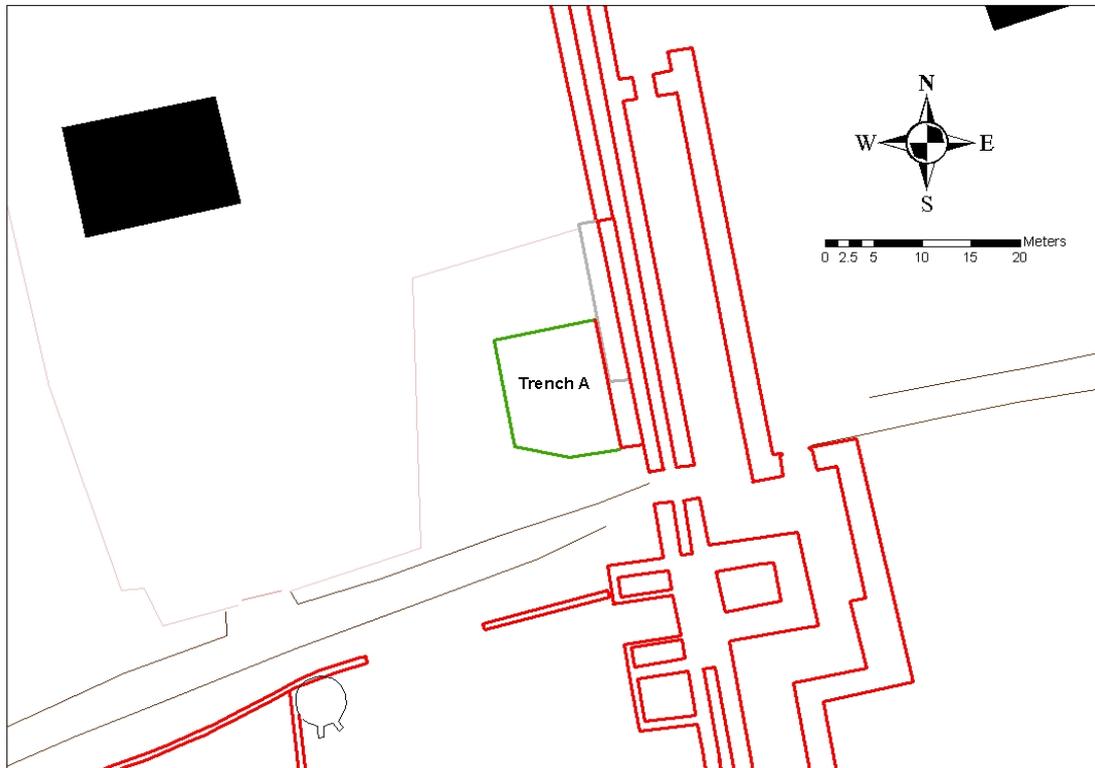


Figure 4: Location of Trench A from the 2009 RTK GPS survey (Everill and Marter Forthcoming)

5.1.1 The results of this season’s fieldwork in Trench A have been presented below. Thirteen context numbers were taken out for this trench this year, although the first three (254-256) represent contexts for a grave which was revealed at the end of last season, but which had not yet been excavated.

5.1.4 Table 2 (5.1.4) presents a summary of these contexts which have been described in more detail in 4.2.

5.1.2 It should be noted that while only 13 context numbers were issued this season, some contexts that had previously been assigned numbers (e.g. thick cultural layers across the trench) were still ongoing. It is important, therefore, to cross-reference finds information with that contained within previous reports for those contexts.

5.1.3 The finds from Trench A have been quantified in **5.1.4** Table 2 and a list of this year’s small finds can be seen in Table 4 in the Appendix.

5.1.4 **Table 2:** Recorded contexts from NOK 09/A

Context	Type	Description	Dimensions/ Details	Max. Depth/ Thick.	Max. Height/ Level

254	Fill	Inhumation fill within [256]	-	300mm	-
255	Skeleton	Skeleton in [256]	Female (c.35-45yrs)	-	-3.61 (Skull)
256	Cut	Grave cut containing sk.255	2.5m E-W x 0.8m N-S	?	-3.61
257	-	Cleaning Layer for unstratified finds	-	-	-
258	Deposit	Clayey-silt underlying Structure 1 (187)	-	300mm	-3.75
259	Deposit	Clayey-silt underlying Structure 2 (212)	-	300mm	-3.75
260	Fill	Inhumation fill within [262]	-	300mm	-
261	Skeleton	Skeleton in [262]	Male (50+yrs)	-	-3.79 (Sacrum)
262	Cut	Grave Cut containing sk.261		?	-3.79
263	Skeleton	Animal Skeleton		-	
264	Fill	Inhumation fill within [266]		300mm	-
265	Skeleton	Skeleton in [266]	Male??	-	
266	Cut	Grave Cut containing sk.265	0.8m N-S x 0.7m E-W	?	

5.2 Trench A: Context Summary

5.2.1 Trench A: Layers and Deposits

The majority of excavation this year was concentrated on the northern half of the trench. Changes to the relief over time, largely as a result of colluvial activity, has made it occasionally difficult to identify same-phase occupation levels within the trench. It was necessary this year to ensure that this higher northern part was brought into the same phase/level as the southern part of the trench. Excavation continued of the thick layers **217** and **235**, first uncovered in 2007 and 2008 respectively.. Several small finds were recovered from layer **235** this year: 3 Cu alloy point/pin fragments (no.'s 2-4), 2 worked flint tools (no.'s 5 and 17) and a flint arrowhead (no. 20) and a loom weight/spindle (no. 19) (see **Error! Reference source not found.** in Appendix I).

Layer **257** was a context taken at the beginning of the season for the purpose of identifying unstratified finds revealed during the initial cleaning of the trench. It was necessary to use this number to identify and distinguish any residual/intrusive finds uncovered during the cleaning process since the trench had been open for a year and spoil had been partially backfilled to secure the plastic sheet covering the trench.

Work began at the beginning of the season with the removal of structural foundation stones, which were becoming loose as a result of continuous excavation into deeper layers around them. Whilst some of the removed stones were unstructured, the majority were from the two north-south aligned walls of Structures 1 and 2 (contexts 187 and 212 from the 2007 register). For the purposes of finds differentiation and due to the variations between the soil underlying each wall, contexts **258** (under 187) and **259** (under 212) were assigned. Context **258** comprised dark brownish grey loose clayey-silt with occasional small daub and charcoal flecks and context **259** was mid greyish

brown loose clayey-silt with frequent daub flecks and occasional charcoal flecking.

This season also saw a continuation of work on **216**, a compacted layer with frequent daub and charcoal fragments which was uncovered in 2007. This layer was reduced and followed to the north to reveal two large pieces of daub and a concentration of charcoal.

217 was a context excavated during the 2007 season which was described as a possible yard surface located west of Structure 1.

232 was a context revealed in 2007 which was described as a rubble layer underlying 217.

5.2.2 *Trench A: Burials*

This section contains information on the graves uncovered this season as they were assessed in the field. Descriptions of the grave type, cut, backfill, orientation and grave goods (see also section 6.0) can be found within this section, whereas details of the skeletons and also faunal remains can be found in the separate Osteological Assessment (Neil 2009).

Cut **256** (containing human skeleton **255**) was aligned east-west and located in the northern part of the trench immediately south of wall segment **242**. The roughly rectangular cut, measuring 2.5m E-W and 0.8m N-S with a depth of c.0.25m, was delineated by several stones and had a fairly flat base. This inhumation burial contained the remains of an old middle adult female aged approximately thirty-six to forty-three years old. The individual's head was located at the east while the feet were at the west. The skeleton was in a flexed position on the left side with the head tilted back and facing southeast. Although the majority of the skeleton was present within the grave, the bone condition was poor and friable during excavation, which made the lifting of the skeleton difficult. Evidence to suggest some bone movement within the grave was present as parts of the skeleton seemed fairly jumbled. The backfill **254** covering the skeleton comprised dark brown silty clay with some lighter mottling. Occasional small rounded daub pieces, occasional chalk flecks and moderate sub-rounded and angular stone inclusions were present within the fill. Soil samples were taken from the fill, from various areas around the skeleton and from the vicinity of associated small finds for palynological and palaeobotanical analysis. Several small finds/grave goods were also present within the grave: a pot vessel (no. 9) next to the skull, several coloured glass beads (no. 8) from around the neck area, two Cu alloy earrings (no. 16), two Cu alloy bracelets (no.'s 12 and 13) and a small Cu alloy fragment of unknown function (no. 11). It is also likely that the almost complete pot vessel (small find no.4 from the 2008 register) found last season was placed into the western end of this grave, perhaps after the initial backfill given its height above the skeleton.

Cut **262** (containing human skeleton **261** and a partially articulated animal skeleton **263**) was aligned east-west and located in the northern part of the trench a little south of the burial for **255**. The roughly rectangular cut, measuring 1.7m E-W and 0.6m N-S with a depth of c.0.3m, had a fairly flat base with no grave outline or clear delineation. This inhumation burial contained the remains of an adult male individual no younger than a young middle adult (twenty-six to thirty-five years old). The individual's head was located at the east while the feet were at the west. The skeleton was in a semi-supine position (back and arms flat to the base of the grave) with the legs flexed at the pelvis and the knee towards the midline. The right arm was extended alongside the right part of the trunk and the left arm was flexed with the hand lying over the right humerus. A partially articulated, (as yet unspiciated) small animal skeleton **263** was located in the northeast corner of this grave cut. Whether this animal was purposely placed into the same grave cut or whether it was in fact buried in a separate cut alongside the human burial is difficult to confirm due to the poor definition of **262**. However, the close proximity of the animal remains to the human burial and the fact that animal skeletons are seldom in such complete form within this trench, suggests that they are probably associated. The backfill **260** covering both skeletons comprised dark brown silty clay with some lighter mottling. Occasional small rounded daub pieces, occasional chalk flecks and moderate sub-rounded and angular stone inclusions were present within the fill. Soil samples were taken from the fill, from various areas around the skeleton and from the vicinity of associated small finds for palynological and palaeobotanical analysis. Several small finds/grave goods were also present within the grave: a pot vessel (no. 14), several blue paste beads (no. 7) from around the neck area and next to the left humerus, two Cu alloy earrings (no. 15), two Cu alloy bracelets (no. 10)

Cut **266** (containing human skeleton **265**) was aligned north-south and located along the western half of the northern baulk. This grave extended beyond the limits of the trench into the northern baulk revealing only the lower, southern half of the grave within the trench. The individual's head was at the northern end while the feet were to the south. The skeleton was revealed from the waist down with part of the arms also visible. The roughly square cut (all that was visible given the extent of the trench), measuring 0.8m N-S and 0.7m E-W with an approximate depth of 0.3m, was delineated by several stones and had a fairly flat base. This inhumation burial contained the remains of an individual of unknown sex or age range at this time. The backfill **264** covering the skeleton comprised dark brown silty-clay with some lighter mottling. Occasional small rounded daub pieces, occasional chalk flecks and moderate sub-rounded and angular stone inclusions were present within the fill. Soil samples were taken from the fill, from various areas around the skeleton and from the vicinity of associated small finds for palynological and palaeobotanical analysis. No small finds/grave goods were revealed in the southern part of this grave and since the northern extent was not uncovered, the potential for other finds is not known.

5.2.3 *Trench A: Walls and Structures*

As previously mentioned, any loose foundation stones were removed at the beginning of the season. After the removal of these loose stones, lines of more robust, deeper foundation stones were still present in the form of the walls that made up the structures. In some ways the removal of these less significant, fallen stones made the structures a little clearer and in other ways this process unfortunately made our understanding of the structures more complex. At this time the function of the structures is still unknown and is under continuous debate. It is considered most likely that these structures relate to an early Hellenistic period of occupation within the lower town, and that for some reason land-use in this area changed from one of occupation to burial later in the Hellenistic period. It seems likely that it was also at this point that the occupational focus shifted to the top of the adjoining hill, perhaps indicating that this move was for defensive reasons.

5.3 Trench B

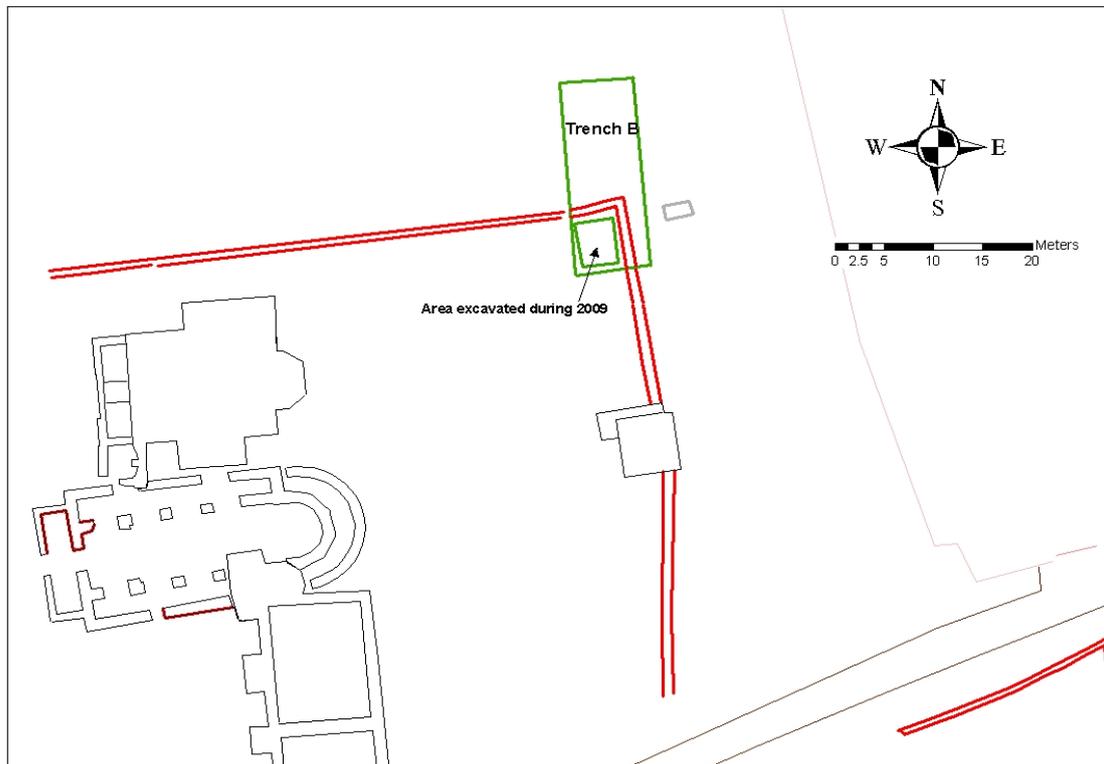


Figure 5: Location of Trench B from the RTK GPS survey results (Everill and Marter Forthcoming)

5.3.1 The results of this season's fieldwork in Trench B have been presented below. 21 context numbers were taken out for this trench this year. **5.3.2**

Table 3 (5.3.2) presents a summary of these contexts which have been described in more detail in 5.4.

5.3.2 **Table 3:** Recorded contexts from NOK 09/B

Context	Type	Description	Dimensions/ Details	Max. Depth/ Thick.	Max. Height/ Level
398	Deposit	Cleaning layer for unstratified finds	-	-	-
399	Cut	Grave cut containing long bones in (400)	200mm x 200m	120mm	-
400	Fill	Fill within [399]	200mm x 200m	120mm	-3.85
401	Deposit	Layer beneath daub layer (340)	Not fully excavated		-
402	Fill	Inhumation fill within [403]	1200mm x 700mm	200mm	-
403	Skeleton	Northern skeleton in [403]	-	-	-4.04 Sacrum
404	Cut	Grave cut for sk.'s. 403 & 406 Double burial	1200mm x 700mm	200mm	-
405	VOID	VOID	-	-	-
406	Skeleton	Southern skeleton in [403]	-	-	-4.11

					Sacrum
407	Fill	Inhumation fill within [409]	1050mm x 360mm	120mm	-
408	Skeleton	Skeleton in [409]			-4.18 Sacrum
409	Cut	Grave cut for sk.408	1050mm x 360mm	120mm	-
410	Fill	Inhumation fill within [412]	1600mm x 500mm	300mm	-
411	Skeleton	Skeleton in [412]	-	-	-4.05 Sacrum
412	Cut	Grave cut for sk.411	1600mm x 500mm	300mm	-
413	Layer	Rubble spread in north	Not excavated		
414	Fill	Inhumation fill within [416]	Not excavated		
415	Skeleton	Skeleton in [416]	Not excavated		
416	Cut	Grave cut for sk.415	Not excavated		
417	Fill	Inhumation fill within [419]	Not excavated		
418	Skeleton	Skeleton in [419]	Not excavated		
419	Cut	Grave cut for sk.418	Not excavated		

5.4 Trench B: Context Summary

5.4.1 Trench B: Layers and Deposits

Layer numbers **303** and **340** were assigned in previous seasons. Layer **303** describes the mixed cemetery soil in the portion of Trench B south of the cemetery wall. The layer number **340** was assigned to a daub rich deposit identified in 2005. Both **303** and **340** were described in previous seasons; on excavation, **340** was found to be shallow (circa 20-30mm deep) and consisted of a fine silty clay with very frequent sub angular daub or fired clay, some fragments of which were large in diameter (circa 100mm). These larger fragments were chiefly concentrated in the north-western extent of the context. A 10% sample of this fired material was collected and weighed, the sample weight being 13kg. Context **340** formed a rough 'L' shape in the north of the excavation area with an apparent island of **303** between it and the baulk. A concentration of animal bone in the south-eastern extent of **303** was noted.

Layer **398** was a context taken at the beginning of the season for the purpose of identifying unstratified finds revealed during the initial cleaning of the trench. It was necessary to use this number to identify and distinguish any residual/ intrusive finds uncovered during the cleaning process since the trench had been open for four years and spoil had been partially backfilled to secure the plastic sheet covering the trench.

Context **401** was assigned to the deposit immediately below context **340**. This number was assigned for the purposes of finds differentiation and to accommodate the possibility that the daub rich deposit represented the remnants of a disturbed layer that may have once covered the excavation area. Context **401** consisted of dark brown grey fine clay silt with frequent limestone fragments and daub flecks and large sub angular limestone blocks. This layer superficially resembled the cemetery deposit **303**.

Layer **413** was assigned a number in 2009 but was not described as it remained unexcavated. The context number was assigned to a limestone rubble spread uncovered at the close of the 2009 season. This spread appeared to be confined to the north-eastern part of the excavation area and extended south as far as the grave cut **411** (see below). This layer contained a high percentage of limestone rubble, which was very dense and compact in its north-western extent suggesting that it may be the remains of a surface of some kind.

5.4.2 *Trench B: Burials*

Cut **396** contained a burial previously identified in 2005. On excavation the skeleton (**395**) was found to be orientated east-west with the head in the west. The individual appeared to be a juvenile or sub-adult with its arms folded across its chest. The jaw had become detached and was lying inverted on the chest. The grave cut (**396**) continued under the eastern baulk and appeared ovoid in plan and 0.4m wide by 0.10m deep. The grave cut appeared to be lined by three limestone blocks in the south and one in the north which was positioned under or just beside the individual's left elbow. The fill **394** consisted of a mid grey brown fine clay silt with rare daub fragments and common limestone fragments and frequent limestone flecks. It was noted that **394** was extremely similar to **303**.

Cut **399** was assigned to a discreet burial consisting of a group of apparently human long bones discovered close to the northern baulk within the island of **303** contained by **340**. The cut of the shallow pit was ovoid in plan and appeared to be orientated east-west with steep side and a flat base. A possible lining of limestone was noted. The fill **400** was made up of dark brown grey fine clay silt with daub and limestone fleck. As noted above angular limestone blocks of approximately 80mm were noted towards the base of the fill. The fill was distinct from the cemetery deposit surrounding it (**303**) by noticeably fewer daub inclusions. This apparent reburial episode was located physically above the double burial **404** (see below) and may be associated.

Cut number **404** was assigned to an apparent double burial located physically below the reburial episode **399** described above. This consisted of an inhumation of two individuals, **403** and **406** both of which were buried on an east-west orientation with the heads to the west. Skeleton **403** was the southern most of the two individuals and was very disturbed with most of the left side and almost the entire lower portion of the individual missing. The similarity in orientation between this individual and **406** suggests that they may have been interred together with **403** slightly deeper in the cut and that both were disturbed by later activity. It should be noted however that the possibility remains that **403** is the earlier of the two burials and that there were successive phases of later disturbance. Skeleton **406** was located higher up in the grave cut and was more complete than **403** although signs of disturbance were still present. The remains of this individual were partially

truncated by the northern baulk and the left side of the pelvis along with the lower portion of the right leg were missing. A Cu alloy earring was found close to the left side of the skull and recorded as small find number 3. Both **403** and **406** appeared to be juvenile or sub-adult individuals of similar ages. The grave cut for these burials (**404**) continued under the northern baulk and it was difficult to delineate with any certainty due to the similarity between the grave fill **407** and the surrounding cemetery soil. It appeared to be ovoid in plan and 1.2m wide at its maximum and 0.2m deep with a length of 0.7m. The fill of the burial, **407**, was dark brown grey fine clay silt with inclusions of small sub-angular limestone fragments and rare weathered pottery sherds. The presence of disarticulated human and animal bone was also noted. This context was very similar to the surrounding cemetery soil, as noted above, and was differentiated from this only in compaction, with the fill being slightly looser than the surrounding soil.

Cut number **409** was assigned to a burial uncovered adjacent to, and truncated by, the southern baulk. This contained skeleton **408** buried on an east-west alignment with the head to the west. Much of the right side of the individual was recovered from within the baulk and the skeleton appeared to be almost complete and of another juvenile or sub-adult of similar stature to **406**. A Cu alloy pendant or drop earring was recovered from the right side of the rib cage. As noted above the cut **409** was truncated in the south by the baulk but had a sub ovoid shape with moderately sloping sides and flat base. It was 1.05m long, 0.36m wide and 0.12m deep as seen and was on an east-west alignment. The grave fill **407** consisted of loose dark brown grey fine clay silt with daub and limestone inclusions alongside rare, abraded pottery sherds.

Cut number **412** was given to an adult inhumation discovered in the middle of the trench. The skeleton **411** was aligned east-west with the head in the west. The skeleton was in good preservation and had both arms folded across its chest. The feet were found resting on the lower leg bones and had probably fallen back during decomposition. This combined with the appearance that the skeleton was lying hard up against the grave cut suggests that the grave itself was slightly too small for the individual. The cut **412** was fully revealed in plan and was sub-rectangular in shape with although the cut was difficult to establish with certainty in the north. The cut measured 1.6m long by 0.5m wide by 0.3m deep. The fill **410** was a loose dark grey brown fine clay silt with small daub and limestone inclusions alongside weathered pottery and disarticulated bone. It should be noted that both skeleton **408** and **411** were disturbed during excavation due to heavy rainfall.

Two further burials were revealed at the close of the 2009 season and were given the cut numbers **416** and **419**, **416** being the northernmost of the two. These were located in the west of the excavation area close to **412**. These inhumations were not excavated and will be described in a subsequent report. The position of these two burials was marked by stone cairns to ease location in future seasons.

6.0 DISCUSSION

6.1 Trench A: General Discussion of Results

6.1.1 *Layers and Deposits*

The layers in which excavation was carried out this season have been a continuation of thick contexts (**217** and **235**) from previous seasons. The nature of these layers is as yet, still unclear, although the abundance of burials within context **235** strongly indicates that the deposit is a mixed cemetery soil.

This season saw an increase in the quantities of worked flint uncovered within Trench A. The presence of this flint and how it came to be within these layers (e.g. whether it is residual or derived from colluvial deposits) is extremely interesting and may indicate the survival of significant prehistoric remains.

The presence of the cobbled surfaces in the northwest corner and towards the south of the trench is interesting, although their function is not yet clear. These areas were further cleaned this year and any previously recorded, looser cobbles were removed. It is hoped that further excavation in 2010 will shed light on the reason for these stones in these areas.

6.1.2 *Burials*

The grave cuts for the many burials revealed within layer **235** have been inconspicuous as in previous seasons largely due to the similar backfill to the graves' surrounding context. As a result, it has been difficult to confirm with confidence whether these burials are cut into the top of this deposit or whether in fact, they are cut through this deposit from the overlying layer **211**. Sampling to determine micromorphological processes will provide resolution on provenance and movement pending rare earth elemental analysis. Radiocarbon dating and stable light isotope analyses will further refine the datasets in reconstructing phasing and personal provenance respectively. To establish this would greatly improve our dating and understanding of the relationship between the structures and burials. Furthermore, these techniques have potential value in reconstructing past symbolic and economic categories (concerning animal husbandry, mortuary behaviour, status and human relations with the natural world).

The placement of the dead in a flexed position in the Black Sea region is a widely recognised phenomenon, if not hotly debated as an indicator of cultural affiliation. As a typical practice in Greece prior to the 5th century BC the rite subsequently died out to be replaced with an extended inhumation (Vickers & Kakhidze 2004); however, the flexed inhumation is commonly seen from the 5th century BC onwards throughout the Pontic region (Petersen, 2004). Whether this is a direct Milesian influence or a result of a more rhizomatous interaction with the local population is an area that needs further research.

Initial understanding of cultural phasing can be seen from examples of other sites in the region; excavations at Pichvnari see dissolving segregation through space and time between Greek settlers and the local Colchian population; around the 5th century BC it is seen that there are separate Greek and Colchian burial grounds, distinct in the practice of inhumation (located west and north respectively). Two hundred years later a culturally integrated cemetery emerges to the south of these areas.

The results of the 1974 to 1979 Archaeopolis excavations determined that the site was continuously populated throughout the Hellenistic period. Burials dated to the end 4th to the middle 3rd century BC were placed directly into the ground in a strongly flexed position; from the middle 3rd to the 2nd century B.C. burials were also placed in a strongly flexed position but within ceramic vessels. From the end of the 2nd to the 1st century B.C. burials were again placed directly into the ground but this time in a more relaxed flexure. Analogies of these burial rites can be seen throughout west and east Georgia and is a testament to the idea that Colchis was a unified ethnic and cultural population during the Hellenistic era, (supported at the time by craniometric studies carried out on the human remains) (Gvincize 1988).

The alignment of stones as well as the presence of large pottery fragments and vessels in context **217** (directly south of the cobbled area **232**) demonstrated potential for further burials in this area of the trench.

6.1.3 *Walls and Structures*

Excavation in Trench A over the last few years has made it possible to formulate ideas as to the nature of the Hellenistic period structures and their building materials. There is still little evidence of tile of this date within Trench A, with the exception of a single whole tile covering cremation burial **[248]** and the tile fragments uncovered within deposit **211**, which was thought to pre-date the use of the building (Everill 2007). This supports the theory that the Hellenistic buildings in this area were of a clay and timber construction and probably had a more lightweight roof, perhaps of thatch.

Unfortunately, the function of the structures is still not clear and each season we endeavour to find evidence which may better our understanding of the purpose of these buildings.

6.1.4 *Overall Conclusions for Trench A*

The broad aims and objectives for Trench A, as outlined in last year's report (Grant and Everill 2008) and summarised in Section 1.4, were addressed as follows:

- The northern extent of the trench was reduced and the trench is now level and in phase.

- The areas around each structure were reduced and cleaned so that any continuations of the existing structures could be identified.
- Any loose stones which had been previously exposed and recorded were carefully removed.
- The partially revealed burial **256** in 2008 was fully excavated and recorded during this season.
- Further burials of Hellenistic date were uncovered and recorded accordingly.
- The position of burial **256** directly south of wall segment **242**, suggests that there is a relationship between the structures and the burials in that one certainly seemed to respect the other.

In this respect the excavations in Trench A this season can be seen to have fulfilled the aims and objectives set out at the end of the 2008 season. Unfortunately, bad weather caused the premature end of the digging season, which meant that a few days were lost. It is hoped that any loss as a result of bad weather this year may be compensated for next year.

6.2 Trench A: Proposed Aims and Objectives for 2010

- To clean layer 217 in the northwest corner of the trench to the immediate south of 232 in order to clarify whether further burials are in fact present.
- To continue excavation around the cobbled area in the southern part of the trench in an attempt to clarify its function and to ascertain whether it is a continuation of 232 or is in fact isolated.
- To ensure that any incomplete records as a result of the bad weather and premature finish of this year's digging season are brought up to date.
- To further explore the relationship between the structures and surrounding burials.
- To provide improved covering over the Byzantine cobbled pathway that is present along the southern extent of the trench. This feature was revealed and recorded in 2006/2007, but is to remain preserved *in situ* and as a result, it will be necessary to discuss an improved procedure for ensuring the feature is effectively preserved throughout future excavations.

6.3 Trench B: General Discussion of Results

6.3.1 Layers and Deposits

The removal of the daub rich layer **340** revealed the rubble layer **413** sitting immediately below **401** in the north of Trench B. It is possible the base of the cemetery activity has been reached in this area as no further burials were detected here and the layer appeared to be relatively homogenous in nature. There appeared to be a clear demarcation between **413** and **401** with the latter context limited to the southern and western areas of the trench. If **413** does indeed signal the base of the cemetery activity or if it is merely a colluvial deposit capping more burial will only be revealed through further excavation. The deposit **401** still heavily resembles the cemetery soil described as **303** and may contain more burials alongside those noted at **416** and **419**.

6.3.2 Burials

Of the five skeletons excavated during the 2009 season only **411** appeared to be of an adult. All were aligned east-west and supine. All the juvenile burials were either incompletely excavated because of their continuation under the baulk or they had been disturbed by cemetery activity. The double burial of skeletons **403** and **406** was associated with the reburial episode in cut **399** and it may be that bones from one or both of these individuals were reburied in a small pit after being disturbed by later activity. It is interesting to note that there were items of jewellery associated with two of the burials (**403** and **408**) suggesting that they may have been buried with these items.

6.4 Trench B: Proposed Aims and Objectives for 2010

- Remove the burials **416** and **419** and remove the deposit **401** to determine whether it caps a continuation of the rubble layer, **413**.
- To continue the sondage through the cemetery layers whilst maintaining the baulks supporting the walls. This to be done with a view to reaching early cultural layers and enabling the unstable southern portion of trench B to be backfilled.

6.5 General Aims and Objectives for 2010

- 6.5.1 Since 2010 will be the 10th anniversary of excavations carried out by the *Anglo-Georgian Expedition to Nokalakevi*, plans to undertake a synthesis publication of the Expedition's work at the site so far are underway.

REFERENCES

- Armour, N. and Colvin, I. 2004. Nokalakevi Expedition Interim Report 2001-2003 Seasons. Unpublished AGEN report.
- Dubois du Montpéroux, F. 1839. *Voyages autour du Caucase*. Paris.
- Everill, P. 2003. Anglo Georgian Expedition to Nokalakevi: Trench B: 2002-2003. Unpublished AGEN report.
- Everill, P. 2005a. Anglo Georgian Expedition to Nokalakevi: Trench B: 2004. Unpublished AGEN report.
- Everill, P. 2005b. Anglo Georgian Expedition to Nokalakevi: Trench B: 2005. Unpublished AGEN report.
- Everill, P. and Ginns, A. 2005. *Anglo-Georgian Expedition to Nokalakevi: Trench A 2004*. Unpublished AGEN report.
- Everill, P. 2005. *Research Proposal for a Post-Doctoral 'Community Archaeology' Research Project in Nokalakevi, Mingrelia, Georgia*. Unpublished AGEN document.
- Everill, P. 2007. *NOK 07/A Interim Excavation Report*. Unpublished AGEN report.
- Everill, P. Forthcoming. Reflections on site-based student training: The experience of the Anglo-Georgian Expedition to Nokalakevi. *Research in Archaeological Education*, Higher Education Academy.
- Everill, P. and Marter, P. Forthcoming. Mapping Archaeopolis: GPS survey at the multi-period site of Nokalakevi, Samegrelo, Georgia. *Anatolian Studies*: 60
- Grant, K. and Everill, P. 2008. *Anglo-Georgian Expedition to Nokalakevi: Interim report on excavations July 2009*. Unpublished AGEN report.
- Giorgi Gvincize, 1988, *Elinisturi xanis kolxetis mosaxleobis istoriisatvis: nokalakevis zv. c. IV s-is bolo--I s-is samarxeuli zeglebi*.
- IFA 2001. Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standards and Guidance* documents.
- Neil, B. 2006. *Area A Field Report*. Unpublished AGEN report.
- Petersen, J.H., 2004 Greek or Native? A case study of burial customs in the northern and western Black Sea Region - Olbia and Apollonia Pontika. Paper delivered at the seminar "Golden Treasures of the Dacians. Rumania through 7000 years", 1-3 October, 2004. The Museum of Mediterranean Antiquities, Stockholm, Sweden.
- Schneider, A. M. 1931 'Archaeopolis (Nokalakewi)' in *Forschungen und Fortschritte* 7 Jahrg. Nr 27 p. 354-5.

Vickers, M., and Kakhidze, M., 2004 *Pichvnari 1: Greeks and Colchians on the East Coast of the Black Sea: Results of Excavations Conducted by the Joint British-Georgian Expedition 1998-2002*. Ashmolean Museum, Oxford and the Batumi Archaeological Museum.

Zakaraia, P. (ed) 1981. *Nokalakevi-Arkeopolisi: arkeologiuri gatxrebi I 1973-1977*. Tbilisi

Zakaraia, P. (ed) 1987. *Nokalakevi-Arkeopolisi: arkeologiuri gatxrebi II 1978-1982*. Tbilisi

Zakaraia, P. (ed) 1993. *Nokalakevi-Arkeopolisi: arkeologiuri gatxrebi III 1983-1989*. Tbilisi

FURTHER READING

Grant, K and Russel, C. 2009. Nokalakevi, Georgia: Potential in Ruins. *Archaeology International* 11. Institute of Archaeology, UCL

Neil, B. *In prep*: Area A and B Osteology Report, Nokalakevi, Republic of Georgia. Unpublished AGEN report.

Neil, B. 2008. Area A Osteology Report, Nokalakevi, Republic of Georgia. Unpublished AGEN report.

Neil, B. 2007. Area A Osteology Report, Nokalakevi, Republic of Georgia. Unpublished AGEN report.

Neil, B. 2005. Area A and B Osteology Report, Nokalakevi, Republic of Georgia. Unpublished AGEN report.

Neil, B. 2004. Area B Osteology Report, Nokalakevi, Republic of Georgia. Unpublished AGEN report.

Neil, B. 2003. Area A and B Osteology Report, Nokalakevi, Republic of Georgia. Unpublished AGEN report.

Neil, B. 2002. Area B Osteology Report, Nokalakevi, Republic of Georgia. Unpublished AGEN report.

Robson, H. 2009. Outreach: an International Perspective. *Posthole* 7: 16-23. <http://www.theposthole.org/read/issue/7/>

Timby, J. 2008. *Nokalakevi, Georgia: Interim Report on the Pottery from the 2008 Season*. Unpublished AGEN report.

Timby, J. 2009. *Nokalakevi, Georgia: Interim Report on the Pottery from the 2009 Season*. Unpublished AGEN report.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The expedition has received financial support over the years from FaRiG, Oxford's Marjory-Wardrop and Craven funds, Archaeology Abroad, the British Academy's Black Sea Initiative, the British Institute of Archaeology in Ankara and Worcester College, Oxford. Their generosity has made the expedition possible.

Support has also been forthcoming from a great many individuals, foremost among them our many volunteers. We owe particular gratitude to the following individuals and institutions: Winchester University Archaeology Department, Bradford University Archaeology Department, Professor David Braund (Exeter University), Cambridge University Archaeology Department, the Cambridge Archaeology Unit, David Connolly (BAJR.com), Enrico Kokaia (late Director of the Nokalakevi Museum) and his staff, MoLAS, RESCUE, Southampton University Archaeology Department, Professor Michael Vickers (Oxford University).

Lastly, our greatest debt is to our Georgian colleagues, and the government and residents of Nokalakevi and Senaki, whose friendship and hospitality have been overwhelming.

APPENDIX

Table 4: Trench A: Small Finds Register

Small Find No.	Context No.	Description	Trench Coordinates	Level
1	259	Ceramic loom weight/spindle	104.66, 204.10	-3.71
2	235	Cu alloy point	103.10, 207.35	-3.75
3	235	Cu alloy fragment	103.23, 207.39	-3.72
4	235	Cu alloy pin (N. Edge)	101.95, 212.84	-3.47
5	235	Arrowhead?/Flint tool N. of trench	100.78, 211.50	-3.55
6	260	Cu alloy bracelet x2, L. wrist of skeleton (261)	100.85, 208.15	-3.79
7	260	Blue past beads from lateral side of (261)	100.60, 207.80	-3.83
8	254	Mixed beads from neck of (255)	101.25, 209.75	-3.72
9	254	Pot at S. of head of (255)	101.25, 209.75	-3.70
10	260	Cu alloy bracelet, R. wrist of (261)	100.40, 208.20	-3.78
11	254	Cu alloy by left femur (255)	101.65, 209.80	-3.75
12	254	Cu alloy? bracelet (255) with Fe	101.07, 209.75	-3.73
13	254	Cu alloy? bracelet (255) by soil sample 9	101.15, 209.75	-3.70
14	260	Pot by left tibia (261)	99.80, 208.25	-3.81
15	260	Earrings? Cu alloy (261)	100.06, 207.95	-3.80
16	254	Cu alloy earrings (255)	101.25, 209.85	-3.73
17	235	Worked flint tool	101.75, 210.00	-3.61
18	232	Cu alloy, flat piece	97.45, 211.55	-3.59
19	235	Spindle	101.90, 211.75	-3.59
20	232	Flint arrowhead	96.00, 212.65	-3.63
21	217	Jewellery stone	97.56, 205.13	-3.74

Table 5: Trench B: Small Finds Register

Small Find No.	Context No.	Description	Trench Coordinates	Level
1	303	Cu alloy bead	103.58, 204.52	-3.76
2	401	Neolithic polished hand-axe	101.12, 202.23	-3.73
3	402	Bronze earring from left side of skull (406)		
4	340	Inscribed potsherd		
5	470	Bronze earring from right of skull (408)		

Table 6: Quantification of the Pottery from NOK 09/A

Context No.	Quantity of fragments	Weight (grams)
-------------	-----------------------	----------------

216	59	776
217	51	1682
232	43	982
235	2419	48811
254	122	1268
255	10	127
257	239	4955
258	186	2274
259	291	3670
260	21	289
264	7	28
Total	3448	64859