

## **ZAYAMCHAY EXCAVATION 2003 POST EXCAVATION PROJECT DESIGN**

### **1. NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY**

The Zayamchai cemetery was excavated as part of the Phase 3 archaeological works of the BTC pipeline project during 2003. Approximately 130 graves were excavated containing a wide range of human remains and associated grave goods. The site is broadly dated to the 13th to 8th centuries BC and is a typical site of the Hojiali-Kababeg Culture. An associated settlement area was excavated some 300m to the east. Fieldwork in the area shows large numbers of small kurgan stone burial cairns and other settlement evidence indicating that only a small part of the total area of the site has been examined.

This site represents one of the largest excavations carried out by the IoAE and is of international importance in the study of Transcaucasian archaeology.

### **2. SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION**

The site is on the east bank of the Zayamchai river on a number of small hills that are occasionally cultivated. The area lies in the westernmost part of Shamkir Region between the village of Bayramli and Duyarli. The main part of the site lies at KP356 of the BTC pipeline at GPS coordinates 8574747 4534070 (Pulkovo 1942 datum). The site lies at 310m above world sea level.

The subsoil is a gravel and sand alluvial mixture. The ridges are formed of this material with a very shallow topsoil layer. The valleys between the ridges contain greater depth of topsoil, much of it having moved down slope from the ridges.

### **3. CONTEXT OF THE PROJECT:**

Attention was drawn to the area during the Stage 1 archaeological survey by a number of important features and the pipeline route was altered to avoid these. Specific parts of the site were located during stage 2 trial trenching and the full scale excavation commenced as part of Stage 3 of the programme. At present, the construction of the pipeline has not reached this area, but certain parts of the Stage 4 watching brief, identified a medieval cemetery 200m to the west of the site leading to an excavation during February 2004. This design represents the proposals for the Stage 5 works on the site for the preparation of a full archaeological report on findings in the area.

### **4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The area contains a high concentration of occupation areas and cemeteries that date from the late Prehistoric to the medieval periods. Many of these have been identified for the first time as part of the BTC pipeline project. There appears to have been a high level of use of the areas adjacent to the cemetery. This can be seen in the landscape surrounding the site with above ground features being very common except where they have been destroyed by recent cultivation work.

During the course of the excavations, local information led to the discovery of a further cemetery site on the eroded shore of the Shamkir GEST reservoir formed by damming the River Kura in 1982. This cemetery contained directly comparable burial techniques and very similar pottery vessels. Other domestic occupation material of the same date was found during limited survey on the reservoir shoreline.

### **5. AIMS OF FIELDWORK**

The aims of the excavation were to record those features that were threatened by construction of the pipeline. Although the working width of the pipeline was reduced, the quantity and intensity of features recorded were far greater than indicated by the preliminary work in the area. This meant that a larger and longer scale excavation was required on the site.

A large quantity of high quality information was obtained from the cemetery, despite the fact that parts of the site were disturbed. In the settlement area, the results of excavation were disappointing, due to the recent ploughing and erosion of the hill on which it stood. It is hoped however that sufficient information was obtained to show that the two types of site were used at the same time.

## **6. FIELD METHODOLOGY**

Open area excavation along the pipeline width with full excavation by hand of grave features. Drawing and photography of the exposed burials. Complete recovery of artifacts, including sieving for small items. Human remains were very fragmentary, and only those in relatively good conditions were lifted and retained. The other human remains were disposed in accordance with the community's wishes. Archaeological records were kept by BTC and IoAE staff. BTC staff was responsible for surveying, drawing and photography of features. IoAE staff maintained a written narrative and photography of features, together with descriptions and onsite treatment of artefacts.

## **7. POST-FIELDWORK METHODOLOGIES**

Artefacts were moved to the Ganja Guesthouse after initial cleaning and packing into boxes and were then transported to the IoAE offices in Baku.

A basic index of all artefacts broken down by feature (grave) is in preparation at the IoAE.

## **8. REPORT PREPARATION, CONTENTS**

### *Introduction*

summary of the site  
Geographical and natural setting

### *Cemetery*

Description and listing of features  
Burial technique  
Pottery  
Bronzework  
Beads  
Bones  
Obsidian  
Other finds  
Dating of the material

### *Residential Area*

Pottery  
Beads  
Obsidian  
Other finds  
Dating of the material

### *Conclusion*

Discussion of the site  
Significance of the features  
Significance in an international setting

## **9. ARCHIVE DEPOSITION**

Following preparation of the report, the artefacts and a copy of the archive will be handed over to the Archaeological Collection of the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography. The archive will

consist of the physical remains of the artefacts and the archaeological record (a copy of reports, drawing, photographs and written site records).

## **10. APPENDICES**

List of all artefacts and their contexts (brief description of artefact with grave number)  
Mapping and digital images (to be supplied by BTC Co.)

## **11. COSTS AND TIMETABLE**

Payment will be made based on achievement of following milestones with estimated dates:

First payment (3,000 USD) will be made upon agreement of Table of Content between IoA and BTC

Second payment (20,000 USD) will be made upon submission of the First Draft Report by 01 June 2004

Third payment (22,000 USD) will be made upon submission of Final Report by 01 August

## **12. MONITORING PROCEDURES**

To provide information that on monitoring activities, which may include but not limited to the following:

Internal monitoring of the work will be provided by senior members of IoAE. The Ministry of Culture will be given an update of the work in progress and be allowed access to the work if they request.

BTC staff will assist with aspects of the work and also maintain oversight of the work. There will be regular meetings to discuss any areas of concern.

## **13. COPYRIGHT**

BTC Co. respects copyright of authors who worked on archaeological excavations along the pipeline right of way and is keen to cooperate with Institute of Archaeology on this issue. At the meantime, it should be highlighted that according to contract signed between BTC Co. and Institute of Archaeology the following notes need to be followed by both parties:

Section 2 “Conditions of Contract”

### Item 24.1

- a. All information obtained by CONTRACTOR for or in connection with the Contract and CONTRACTOR’s performance of the Services shall be considered confidential and shall not be used by CONTRACTOR other than for the purposes of the Services, or divulged by CONTRACTOR, its servants or agents to any person, firm or corporation other than COMPANY’s designated representative.

### Item 26

- b. CONTRACTOR shall not publish or permit to be published either alone or in conjunction with any other person any information, article, photograph, illustration, motion picture, video, or any other material of whatever kind relating to the Contract, or COMPANY’s business generally, without prior reference to and approval in writing from COMPANY. Such consent shall apply to each specific application and relate only to that application.

### Item 30.1

- c. Technical information (including drawings, designs, specifications, electronically recorded and stored data, computer programs and calculations) developed or arising during the Services or in connection with the performance thereof including the results thereof, as well as equipment supplied or purchased from funds provided by COMPANY, shall belong to COMPANY and COMPANY shall have full access thereto and use thereof.

#### **14. PUBLICATION AND DISSEMINATION PROPOSALS**

IoAE will provide details of a plan of publications, i.e. books – distribution plan, journals – local, international, once this has been finalised after internal discussions

The proposed publication outlets will include both national academic interests of the IoAE and the international audience that BTC is concerned with.