

ILIPINAR V B: THE FLUTED WARE PHASE

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In the absence of systematic field research, our knowledge of the Neolithic-Early Chalcolithic period in Northwest Turkey was fragmentary until recently. Since the undersigned started excavations at Ilipinar, in eastern Marmara area and Mehmet Özdögan initiated systematic diggings at Aşagipinar in Turkish Thrace, the overall picture is becoming more transparent.

Ilipinar höyük, situated in the western alluvial plain of the Iznik Lake, is one of the oldest settlements in NW Turkey, having an occupation record dating back about 8000 calendar years. A series of excavations at this settlement carried out since 1987 have revealed more details on the relation of prehistoric men with their habitat. Data recovered in the up to 7 m thick archaeological deposit demonstrate how the inhabitants of prehistoric Ilipinar adapted to this specific environment and acquired its resources. The Neolithic-Early Chalcolithic village, which was inhabited during six centuries from 6000 to 5400 cal. B.C. first consisted of single room post-wall houses and buildings built of sods cut in natural clay deposits (phases X to VII). Thereafter (phases VI and VA), when mud-brick became the building material, the single dwellings were replaced by more elaborate ground plan buildings.

Shortly after the village was abandoned, the mound was resettled during phase VB. Presumably as newcomers, these settlers reused the arable land and lived on the mound in semi-subterranean shelters. Their material culture reveals strong affinities with the Middle-Neolithic cultures of the Balkans. That stage, the "*fluted ware phase*" will be the subject of this paper.