Chipped stone assemblages of Haci Hüseyin höyük: a new Neolithic site in Gelibolu Peninsula, Turkey. Preliminary results

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ABSTRACT

Recent archaeological work at the Neolithic site of Hacı Hüseyin (also Hüsrev), located in the southern part of the Gelibolu (Gallipoli) peninsula, reveals clear evidence of the presence of a Neolithic settlement that played an important role on the Neolithization of the Thrace region. Discovered during a systematic field survey in the autumn of 2007, Hacı Hüseyin höyük is one of four important Neolithic sites on the Gelibolu Peninsula. Owing to earlier destruction by modern buildings and highway construction along the coast there may originally have been more than these four Neolithic sites in the region. Today the Neolithic settlement of Hacı Hüseyin has the form of a nearly flat settlement divided into two by the road to the village of Bigalı. The intensive fieldwork projects on the peninsula were focused mainly on pre-Neolithic and Neolithic settlements and were undertaken by an interdisciplinary team of archaeologists and geologists. A large number of lithics were collected during 2007–2011 field surveys. This paper presents the preliminary results of a techno-typological analysis of the lithic assemblages from the site.

KEYWORDS

Northeastern Aegean, Gelibolu (Gallipoli), Neolithic, survey, chipped stone assemblages, raw material procurement, jasper

Introduction

Archaeological research has increased on north Aegean coasts and islands in the past decade. This is the case also in the Turkish Thrace region. The southern part of Turkish Thrace is a peninsula that runs in a south-westerly direction for approximately 100 km. The isthmus of this elongated peninsula is just 7 km wide. As a result of surveys conducted between 2007 and 2011, a series of new Early Neolithic and Chalcolithic sites have been recorded. The latest data obtained from the prehistoric surveys on the Gelibolu (Gallipoli) Peninsula suggest an earlier occupation of the southern coasts of Turkish Thrace than reported in previous archaeological literature (see Özbek, Erdoğu 2014). The discovery of the site of Üçdutlar on the Gallipoli peninsula in 2011 and its preliminary analysis indicate that such sites on the peninsula may date back to before 20.000 BP (Özbek 2017, Özbek, Erdoğu 2014).

The present paper focuses on one of the newly discovered Neolithic settlements, Hacı Hüseyin Höyük (also known as Hacı Hüsrev) (fig. 1). This is a prehistoric nearly flat mound situated 5 km north of Eceabat town (40°13′20.67″N 26°22′47.49″E). The site was discovered in 2007 during field survey by a team from Çanakkale University headed by O. Özbek (Öz-

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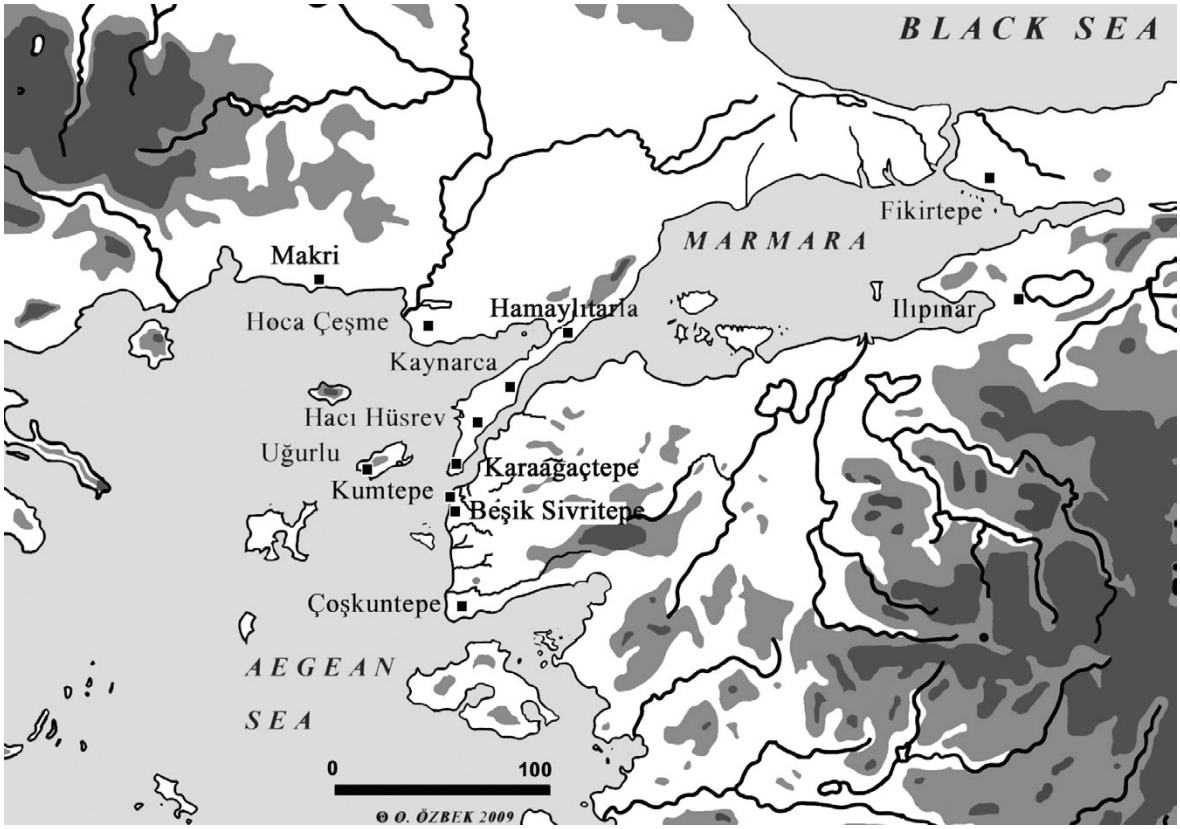


Fig. 1. Important Neolithic and Chalcolithic sites in the study region and the location of Hacı Hüseyin Höyük (HHH) Neolithic mound (after Özbek 2012, fig. 2)
Обр. 1. Карта на проучвания район с по-значимите неолитни и халколитни селища, сред които е обозначена и неолитната могила Хаджи Хюсейн (по Özbek 2012, fig. 2)

bek 2010, a–c). Every year there is ploughing on the mound, and archaeological material was collected in three successive years following the ploughing, which was usually at the end of September or October.

This prehistoric settlement lies on the edge of a gently sloping field which borders a pine forest facing south (fig. 2). Today, the settlement is surrounded by low hills, which are covered by mixed vegetation including *Quercus* spp., *Pinus brutia* and *Juniperus oxycedrus.* The site is only 25 metres above sea level and situated 1.3 km from the Marmara coast and 2 km south of Bigalı village (fig. 3). Just 370 metres to the west, the small perennial Bigalı stream meets the Marmara coast, which could have been an important reason for the choice of the location. Although Neolithic pottery is clustered mainly in an area of 60 x 150 m, the overall extent of the mound seems to cover at least a hectare. Today, a modern stabilized village road divides the mound in half. The Neolithic pottery collected during three successive campaigns can be attributed to the Early Neolithic according to the Balkan chronology. Similar diagnostic sherds were also collected on the surface of Kaynarca Höyük (Özbek 2008) and Hamaylıtarla (Özbek 2010b). These two mounds are much bigger and situated to the east on the same peninsula. Mostly red slipped and burnished wares are attested at Hacı Hüseyin Höyük (HHH from now on), but there are a few black burnished diagnostic sherds as well. The vertically placed tubular lugs and knob-like perforated tubular lugs are a characteristic feature of this settlement (Özbek, 2012).



Fig. 2. HHH Neolithic mound: image taken from south to north: road divides the mound into two (photo by O. Özbek)
Обр. 2. Неолитната могила Хаджи Хюсейн, поглед от юг с пътя, разполовява обекта (снимка О. Йозбек)



Fig. 3. Aerial view of HHH Neolithic mound (Courtesy Google Earth Digital globe images 2018)
Обр. 3. Въздушна снимка на неолитната могила Хаджи Хюсеин (Google Earth Digital globe images 2018)

Chipped stone industry and raw materials

The aim of this report is to provide an overview of the work that we have undertaken on the chipped stone assemblages recovered during two survey seasons at Gallipoli, 2007 and 2011. To do this, the 249 pieces that are the subject of this article were transported from Çanakkale Museum to the Archaeology Laboratory of Çanakkale University where they were previously stored. The material, which we will refer to (not entirely correctly from the petrographic or mineralogical point of view) as a "flint assemblage/collection", was subjected to techno-typological analysis. As stated above, this paper presents a general overview of the flint assemblage from the HHH site with the intention of completing a more detailed analysis in the future. These future analyses could for instance include more reliable contextual information obtained from pottery analysis and/or comparison with similar stratified material, as well as use-wear analysis of samples already identified by one of us (M.G.) as possessing detectable use-wear traces.

The raw material (henceforth RM) variability consists of 16 RM types. These are distinguished on the basis of visual characteristics such as texture, colour, transparency, compactness, homogeneity, presence of inclusions and fracture. At this initial stage of observation and understanding of the assemblage, no particular relation or preference is attested between the RM types and artefact categories. What is apparent is that the typological tools and blades exhibit a wide range of RM. Less varied are the RMs of the cores and other groups of 'débitage' products (except for the blades). The RMs could be assigned to the following principal groups: flint (*sensu strictu*), opal-chalcedony, chalcedony, jasper, quartz and other coarse-grained rocks. Chalcedony and jasper, which usually occur in yellowish-brownish colours in this region, are the most common.

Such a range of RM is characteristic of other Neolithic sites in Turkish Thrace. Similar sites are Hoca Çeşme and Aşağıpınar which were systematically excavated by M. Özdoğan (Özdoğan 1998; 1999). Similar RMs are also identified among Late Neolithic archaeological collections from Bulgarian Thrace as well as among Bronze Age materials from the eastern Rhodopes (Гюрова 2006, 2008; Gurova 2010, 2017). In Bulgaria for instance, specialized geological studies have recognized the occurrence of volcanic rocks rich in jasper and chalcedony veins in the eastern Rhodopes (south Bulgaria) (Кънчев и др. 1981; Начев, Кънчев 1990). Secondary RM sources of jasper, chalcedony and atypical flint are easily accessible in the river beds of the Maritsa and its tributaries where prehistoric groups could have collected them quite easily (Начев 2009; Gurova, Nachev 2008).

When the raw material procurement strategy at HHH is considered, the clearest evidence comes from Kabatepe hill (Azmak Dere). This hill, which is also an alluvial fan, is a part of a geological unit termed the "Conkbayırı Formation" (Sümengen et al. 1987). The southern slopes of the hill contain outcrops of jasper rocks in a long band where there is a lithic workshop covering nearly one hectare.

Kabatepe locality was discovered in the 2009 survey (Özbek 2010a). The natural occurrences of these rocks at the site of HHH are found in very different sizes. For the most part they occur as nodules covered by a cortex patina very different from the inner part. The jasper outcrops are only 1.7 km from the Aegean Sea coast and 6 km from HHH. The jasper outcrops of Kabatepe locality are scattered over at least 10 hectares. In 2010 new concentrations of these rocks were discovered north of the site. Despite the presence of unmodified nodules on the site, one can recognize many pieces that were tested or reduced by prehistoric people. When the cortex is removed, the colour of the jasper rock varies from brown

to red and black. The presence of some large flakes and cores and the slight appearance of abrasion on the artefacts may be an indication that post-depositional disturbance was not very significant here. Owing to the angle of the slope, artefacts at higher levels on the slope may have been washed away over time.

The general structure of Hacı Hüseyin site chipped stone assemblage is summarized in table 1 and diagram 1.

Artefact categories	Number
cores	26
flakes	71
flake fragments	46
small flakes	14
fragments (debris) and chips	45
blades	33
typological tools	14
total	249

Table 1. General structure of the chipped stone assemblage
Таблица 1. Обща структура на кремъчния ансамбъл

Details of the artefact categories are presented below:

- Cores (n=26) represent a significant component of the assemblage. They are made of 9 (of the 16 identified) RMs with a slight predominance of jasper. They comprise mainly flake cores (19) with the following subdivision: 8 single platform cores (fig. 4.1; 6.3); 4 cores with changed orientation (opportunistic flaking surface); 2 cores on flakes; 1 fragment of a core for massive elongated flakes; 1 core of chalcedony reused as a hammerstone and 3

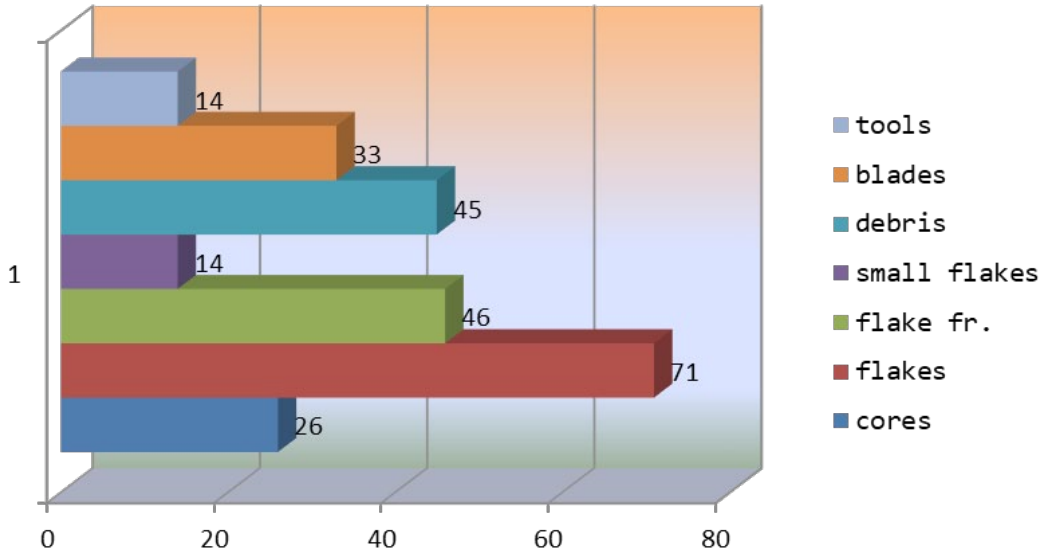


Diagram 1. Frequency of artefact categories
Диаграма 1. Разпределение на категориите артефакти

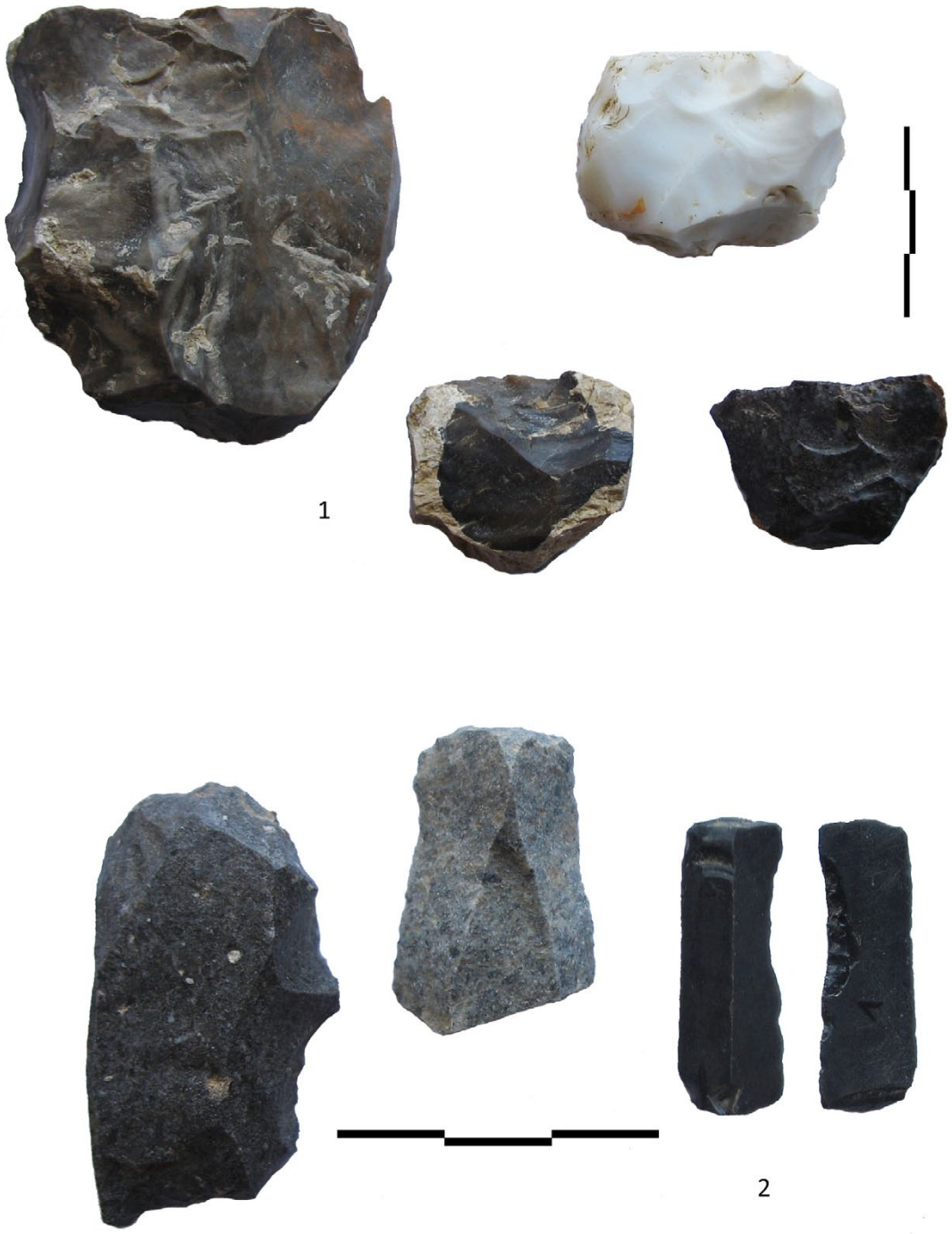


Fig. 4. HHH site artefacts: 1 – flake cores, 2 – typological tools (photo by M. Gurova)
Обр. 4. Артефакти от обекта: 1 – ядро за отломъци, 2 – типологически оръдия (снимки М. Гюрова)

concretions with sporadic scars for initiation of debitage or simply RM testing. Among the cores for blade removal there are 3 meticulously prepared and maintained cores (fig 5.1a, 2; 6.1, 4); 2 fragments (parts of the flaking/removal surface) of blade cores; and 2 endscraper-like cores with a flaking surface resembling laminar retouched fronts of endscrapers (fig. 6 2; 8.1d). Their attribution to the core category is arbitrary, but in the context of the whole assemblage, this interpretation seems to be more appropriate and relevant. According to



Fig. 5. HHH site artefacts: 1 – blade core (a) and blades of the same RM, probably removed from this core (b); 2 – blade core (photo by M. Gurova)
Обр. 5. Артефакти от обекта: 1 – ядро за пластини (а) и пластини от същата суровина, отделени най-вероятно от това ядро (b); 2 – ядро за пластини (снимки М. Гюрова)

the negatives of blades on the core removal surfaces, the length of the blanks varies from 2 cm (endscraper-like cores) to 9.2 cm on the most elaborate core for blade production (fig. 6.4; 5.1a). This core is semicircular in transverse section with bifacial flaking on the back and small areas of 'natural-like' surface of quartz inclusions. Rejuvenation of the striking platform by tablet removals is attested, but these were not found among the artefacts studied.

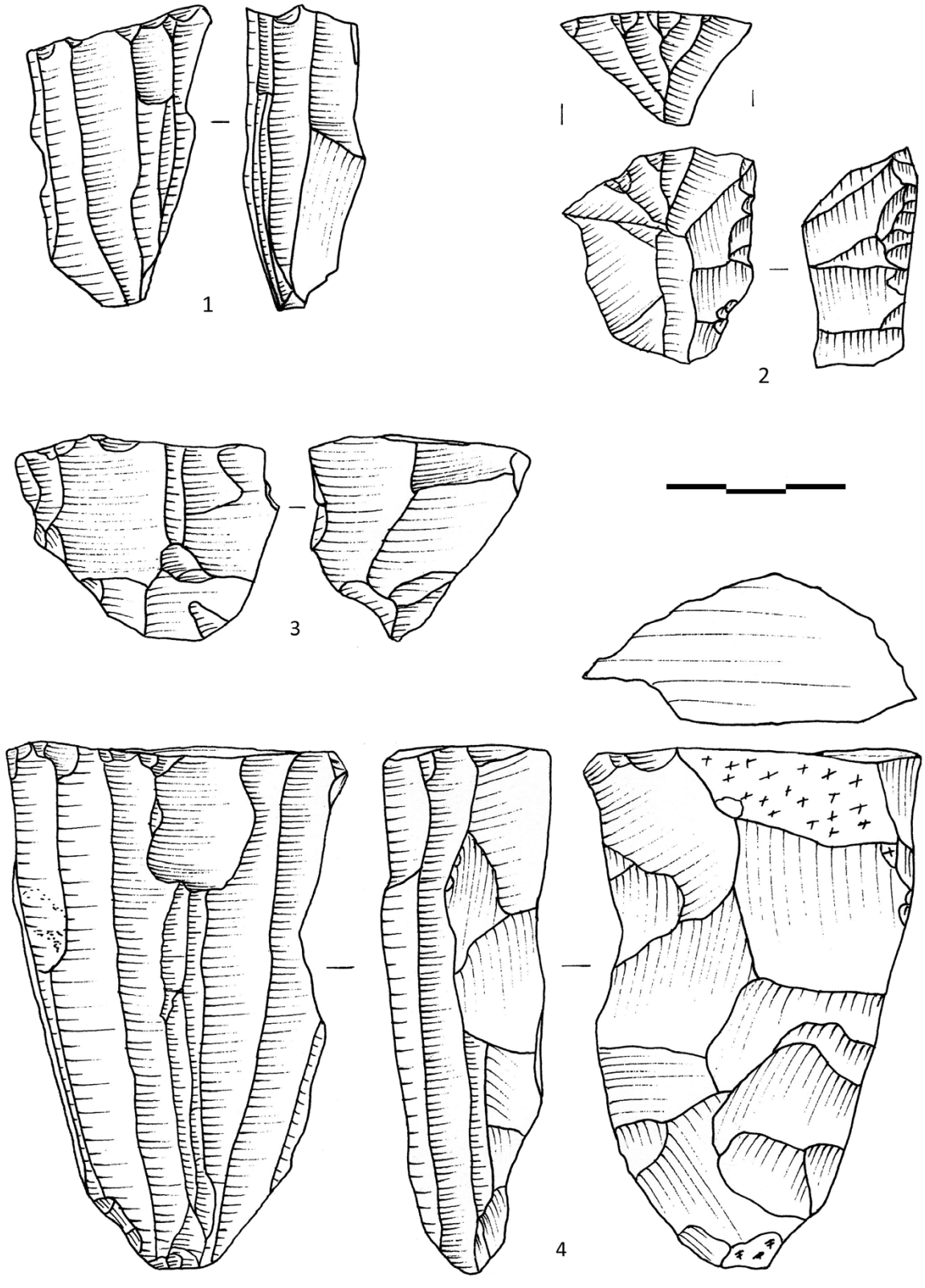


Fig. 6. HHH site artefacts: blade cores (1, 4), flake core (3) and endscraper-like core (2) (drawings by M. Gurova)

Обр. 6. Артефакти от обекта: ядра за пластини (1, 4), ядро за отломъци (3) и стъргалко-подобно ядро (рисунки М. Гюрова)

The actual striking platform is formed by a single blow due to the rejuvenation.

- Flakes (n=71) with a clear predominance of specimens 2 to 4 cm long (55 artefacts); 11 are between 4 and 6 cm and 5 over 6 cm. Cortex is preserved on 11 artefacts. The flakes are irregular in shape with mainly single blow butts. Very rare are broken and linear butts. The plain (single blow) butts are often combined with an obtuse angle, indicating hard hammer direct percussion which is a characteristic of the flake removal technique in opportunistic and expedient lithic industries. Also, no evidence of rejuvenation or other core preparation flakes was observed.

- Flake fragments (n=46). These are fragments without proximal parts whose morphological characteristics (shape and thickness) suggest they are broken flakes. Their dimensions are in the following range: length – from 1.9 to 4.6 cm; width – from 1.6 to 4.9 cm and thickness – from 0.4 to 2.2 cm. Within this group there are 9 cortical specimens.

- Small flakes (up to 2.0 cm) (n=14) among which are three cortical pieces.

- Indeterminate fragments/debris and chips (n=45) in the ratio 37: 8, with 13 pieces with cortex.

- Blades (n=33) are all removed from single platform cores (fig. 7.3-6; 8.2). There are only 3 intact specimens; one of them is removed by pressure with dimensions 3.2 × 1.2 × 0.4 cm. The ratio of fragments is as follows: proximal – 14, mesial – 15 and distal (massive plunging blade – 1. The blade dimensions vary as follows: length – between 1.4 and 4.8 cm; width – between 1 and 2.3 cm and the thickness from 0.3 to 0.7 cm. The ratio of trapezoidal to triangular cross-sections is 16:17. Their proximal extremities are not sufficiently instructive regarding the debitage/removal technique applied, but the evidence favours indirect percussion (punch technique) (fig. 7.3). The regular thin blades are preserved only as mesial fragments that don't allow the identification of the removal technique. There are however some implements: 2 blades of obsidian (proximal and mesial fragments) and four blades of flint, the regularity and thickness of which does not exclude the application of pressure technique (Inizan et al. 1995, 75-77) (fig. 7.4, 5).

- Typological tools (n=14) among which 9 are on flakes and 5 on blades (fig. 4.2, 8.1). There are four endscrapers on flakes (fig. 7.8, 9; 8.1a-c) and one endscraper on a blade with laminar retouch located at the front (fig. 7.2); three retouched flakes, and one notched flake (fig. 7.11). The tools on blades consist of four retouched blades: one (white flint) – with irregular ventral retouch on the right edge and slightly angular cereal polish (silica polish) on both edges – this tool has been used as a sickle insert with alteration of the working edge (fig. 7.10); the second small fragmented blade has bilateral convergent retouch on the distal part; the third example consists of a blade with bilateral abrupt retouch (double backed tool) the left edge being slightly denticulate (fig. 7.7); the last one is an obsidian fine blade with ventral retouch on the right edge – notched tool (fig. 7.1). There is a fragment of a tool – a retouched flake with irregular denticulate retouch.

The most intriguing tool is an endscraper on a flake with lateral retouch displaying a kind of 'cape' in the middle of the right edge (fig. 7.9; 8.1a). This tool contains several elongated negatives on the left dorsal part, a 'relict' of the previous function of this surface as the flaking surface of a core. Subsequent removal of the massive flake has likely destroyed the core. This flake was secondarily retouched and shaped into an end-scraper.

The second remarkable tool is a bilaterally retouched blade (double backed tool) which morphometrically and typologically does not fit within the typological repertoire of the available specimens. This tool formally is closer to the Upper Palaeolithic/Mesolithic tradition than to a common Neolithic typological spectrum in this part of SE Europe (and especially Turkish Thrace as presented by Gatsov [2009]).

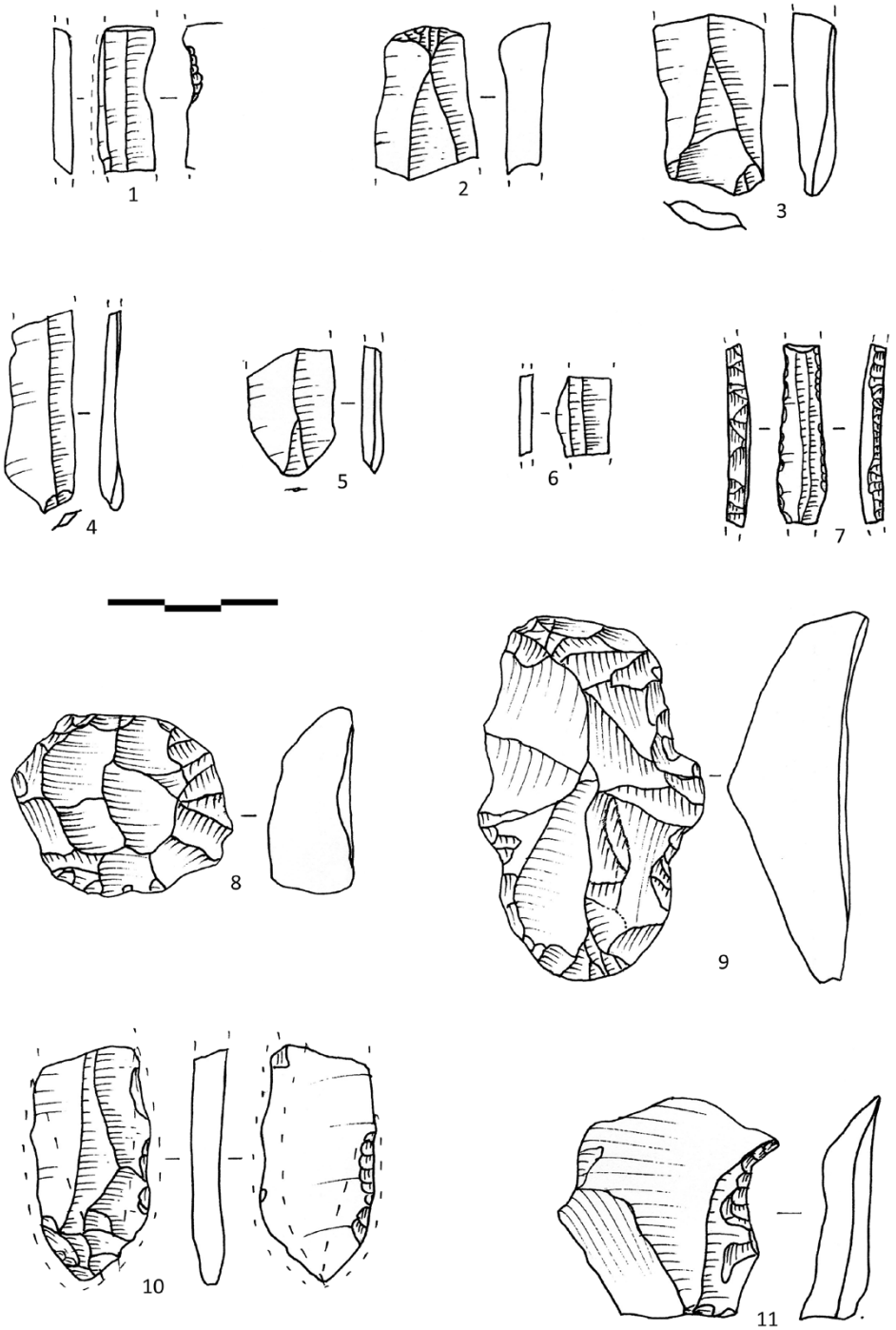


Fig. 7. HHH site artefacts: blades (3-6) and typological tools (1-2, 7-11) (drawings by M. Gurova)
Обр. 7. Артефакти от обекта: пластини (3-6) и типологически оръдия (1-2, 7-11) (рисунки М. Гюрова)

Discussion and conclusions

During two seasons of field survey in the area a considerable number of artefacts were collected and served for a comparative study at a regional scale[1]. Taking into consid-

1 Kerem Demir has studied the lithic material of Hacı Hüseyin to compare it with Kaynarca mound under a Master of Art study (Demir 2012).

eration the facts that it is scattered surface material and the sample available for study is rather small, we cannot offer any definitive conclusions about the HHH assemblage, but the following preliminary observations can be drawn:

- There are several types of high quality RM attested among the artefacts, and further field surveys could be very useful in order to identify (apart from jasper) other accessible primary flint outcrops or secondary deposits that could be involved in the RM procurement strategy of the HHH settlers;

- No artefact category shows a preference for a particular RM;

- An interesting observation is that there are 9 fragmented blades (2 from 2007 and 7 from the 2009 season) that can be treated as 'subproducts' resulting from the exploitation of the best and biggest blade core (fig. 5.1);

- Two types of reduction sequence are attested, though it is difficult to reconstruct the 'chaîne opératoire': one is for flake production that presumably was performed *in situ* (in spite of the scarcity of cortical and rejuvenation flakes). The flake cores are mainly at the last (exhausted) stage of exploitation and there is no direct relation/refitting evidence between the flakes and the cores. The second reduction sequence consists of blade production and is represented by 3 blade cores and blades. It is noteworthy however that the most numerous are blades made of coarse-grained rocks (incl. quartzite). It is obvious that they were suitable for knapping. The blade cores suggest an advanced debitage technology (punch technique and pressure) the origin of which was probably in the central Anatolian background;

- As far as the assemblage we have at hand is concerned, the toolkit attested is not homogeneous; there are single tool types that are not highly diagnostic and do not allow the assemblage to be attributed with certainty to a particular cultural context. Further surveys and the eventual excavation of the promising site of HHH will hopefully provide an opportunity for detailed analysis and interpretation of the chipped stone assemblages;

- Although equipment for a proper use-wear analysis was not available, the sickle insert attested is a good indicator for a further functional study. Though only a single example this artefact is an undeniable marker of agriculture practice at the site and can be a relative chronological indictor of Neolithic activity. A large series of similar sickle inserts has been identified by M. Gurova among Early Neolithic assemblages at sites such as Ilipinar and Menteşe in the Marmara region (Gurova 2006, 2008).

To conclude, it is worth emphasizing that further research (excavations) and any resulting stratified finds from the Gelibolu (Gallipoli) peninsula will be of particular interest for ascertaining the connectivity between people and goods from western Anatolia and the south-eastern Balkans (ergo – Europe). As has already been convincingly argued, the site of Uğurlu on the island of Gökçeada (Imbros) played a key role in the context of the Aegean path in the spread of the Neolithic from Anatolia to the Balkans (Erdogu 2017). In this respect the region of Gelibolu represents a very important mediation point between the western Anatolian coast and the southern interior of Aegean Thrace – still a puzzling region in the perpetual debate over Neolithization.

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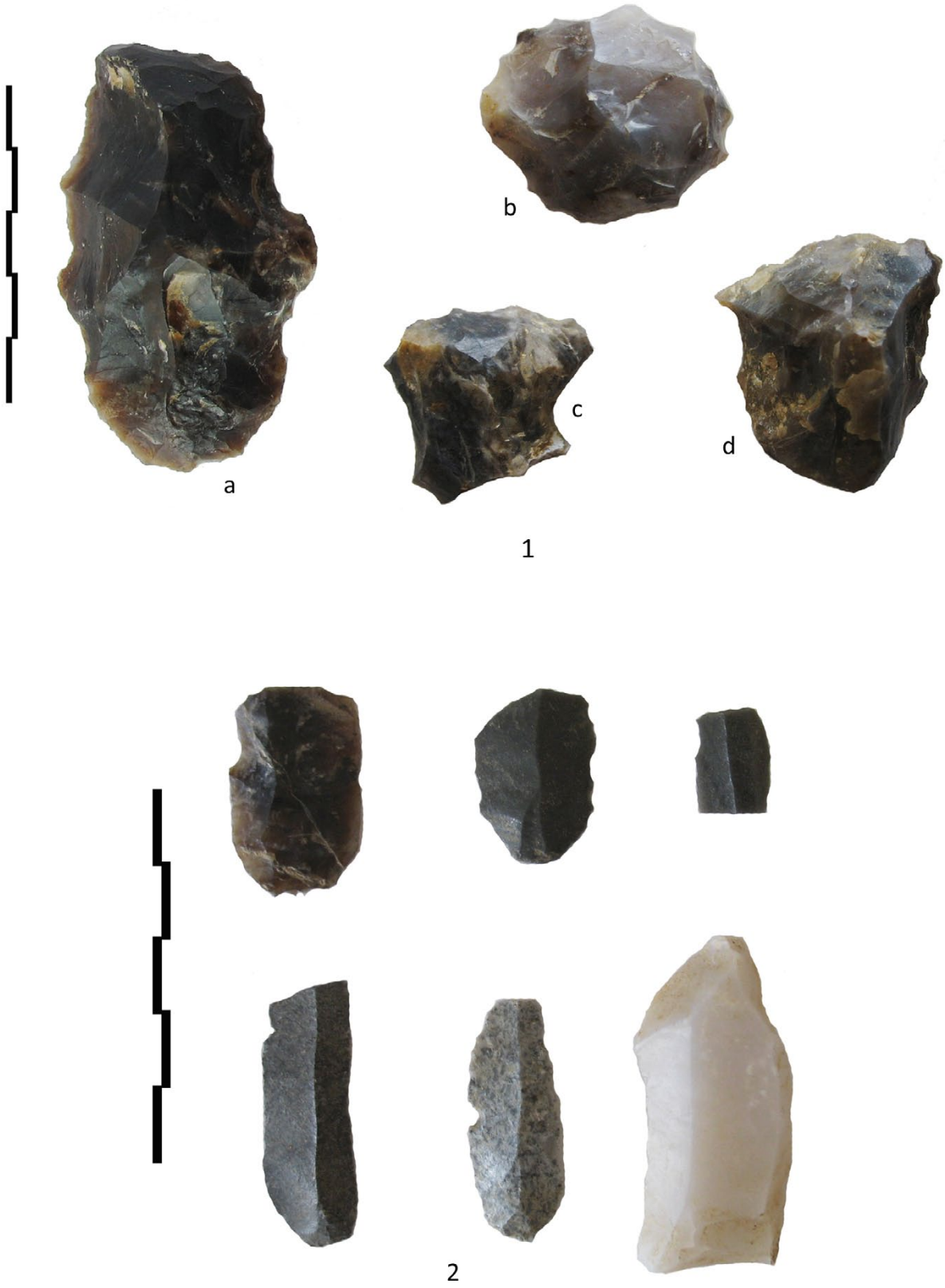


Fig. 8. HHH site artefacts: 1 – typological tools (a-c) and endscraper-like core (d), 2 – blades (photo by M. Gurova)
Обр. 8. Артефакти от обекта: 1 – типологически оръдия (а-с) и стъргалко-подобно ядро (снимки М. Гюрова)

obtained from the Turkish Ministry of Tourism and Culture-Dept. of Cultural Assets and Museums.

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Кремъчни ансамбли от Хаджи Хюсейн хююк – ново неолитно селище на Галиполския полуостров, Турция. Предварителни резултати

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(резюме)

Галиполският полуостров представлява най-южната част на Източна (Турска) Тракия и е разположен между северозападния бряг на Мала Азия и южния бряг на Егейска Тракия. Това местоположение го превръща в територия от особен интерес и значение в контекста на връзки и влияния между Анатолия и Балканите в праисторията, и в частност – в контекста на нестихващия дебат за пътищата и етапите на неолитизацията на Югоизточна Европа .

През последното десетилетие се задълбочиха проучванията в северната част на Егейския басейн, включително и на Галиполския полуостров. В резултат на теренни издирвания, проведени в периода 2007–2011 г. и с активното участие на един от авторите (О. Йозбек), бяха открити и документирани серия нови неолитни и халколитни обекти. Последните открития свидетелстват за праисторическо обитаване на района от около 20 000 г.

Статията представя предварителни резултати от проучването на кремъчни ансамбли от неолитното селище Хаджи Хюсейн хююк, добити в две кампании (2007 и 2011 г). Репрезентативната извадка от масовия кремъчен (условен термин) материал наброява 249 артефакта. Колекцията позволява макроскопско разграничаване на 16 вида суровини сред които халцедон, аспис, кварцит и други едрозърнести скали, както и флинт *sensu stricto*. Най-близките до обекта местонаходища са на ясписи, които се срещат сред материалите от неолитния обект както под формата на естествени конкреции, така и като продукти на дебитажа. Като цяло суровини, подобни на представените в Хаджи Хюсеин хююк, се срещат в неолитни обекти от Турска Тракия (Носа Çeşme и Aşağıpınar), така и в България – сред материали от неолита и бронзовата епоха от селища във водосборния басейн на Марица и Източните Родопи.

Проучената колекция е извадка от общото количество кремъчни материали, добити при теренни издирвания, което не позволява релевантни изводи и заключения. Въпреки това обстоятелство, общите наблюдения свидетелстват за добре развито производство на отломъци, които са представени масово сред продуктите на дебитажа, както и сред малобройната група на типологическите оръдия. Регистрирана е и отделна производствена верига, насочена към добиване на пластини. Тя е представена чрез ядра (три от които старателно оформени, използвани и поддържани), неретуширани пластини (в голямата си част фрагментирани) и малочислена група от пластини с ретуш.

Идентифицирана е ретуширана пластина с безспорно билатерално излъскване от употреба като елементи от сърп. Бъдещи проучвания от Галиполския полуостров, които да предоставят раннохолоценски материали (включително кремъчни колекции) от сигурен стратиграфски контекст, биха били много полезни и съществени за изясняване на културните явления и процеси в тази малко позната част на раннонеолитната ойкумена.