

Archaeological map of the Bolyarovo municipality, Bulgaria

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Abstract

The Bolyarovo municipality is situated in the south-eastern part of Yambol district, Bulgaria on the border with Turkey. The municipality covers 667.88 square km. of hilly terrain leading up to the northern slopes of the Strandzha Mountain. The main rivulet winding between the hills is the Popovska River.

Yambol district has been the focus of many intensive archaeological field surveys since the end of 19th century. Bolyarovo municipality has until 1989 been a border zone with restricted access. The first archaeological excavation in the municipality happened in 1979. The special status of the area had excluded it from the field surveys during the 20th century and made it into a “blank space” on the archaeological map of Bulgaria.

In the autumn of 2018, international team led by Todor Valchev and Dr. Adela Sobotkova organized archaeological field survey in the Bolyarovo municipality. The project had two aims: 1) to visit and registered all burial mounds and other features, like settlement mounds, bunkers, or water reservoirs listen in old military maps, and 2) to investigate the watershed of the Popovska River. For feature recording, the team used FAIMS Mobile, a GIS-aware digital applications for offline collection of GPS points, photos, and systematic descriptions of each structure. For informal survey, the banks of Popovska River were scrutinized for ceramic scatters, which were documented with long-hand notes and handheld GPS. This record provides a foundation for future intensive surveys and for the reconstruction of past human activity in the area.

This report will present the used methodology and results from the field survey in Bolyarovo municipality. The development of computer technologies, especially mobile GIS applications in the last decades allow us to record both the precise position of the archaeological sites as well as the status of these sites in a standardized manner. Systematic documentation during site monitoring coupled with precise position of archaeological sites is very important for the protection of culture heritage during future development and infrastructure projects.