



PERDIGÕES
 COMPLEXO ARQUEOLÓGICO
 Núcleo Expositivo da Torre do Esporão
 ARCHAEOLOGICAL COMPLEX
 The exhibition at Torre do Esporão

1. NIA'S INTERVENTION IN PERDIGÕES CENTRAL AREA

In 2009, the Archaeological Research Group (NIA) of Era Arqueologia S.A. begun new excavations in the central area of Perdigões enclosure complex.



Location of the 2009 intervention.

The archaeological trench, with 56m², was placed in an area where was expected (according to the first geophysics results) to be a ditch, negative structures related to a palisade and part of a circular structure, which correspond to the central circular spot of the aerial photograph.

After four weeks of work, results are quite significant and particularly relevant for understanding temporality of different structures and places at Perdigões.

The central circle visible in the aerial photograph correspond to a large stone structure, with 15 to 20 metres diameter. A section of that structure was actually comprised by the surveyed area.

Associated archaeological material (namely bell beaker pottery) suggest that this is one of the most recent structures of the enclosure complex, possibly dating from late Chalcolithic (approximately 2nd half of the 3rd millennium BC (4000 to 4500 years from present).

In the same survey area, but at the West extremity, several negative structures were identified (a possible palisade trench, one pit, one ditch and three clay combustion structures (possible ovens)), dating from the Late Neolithic, that is to say, from the 2nd half of the 4th millennium BC (5000 to 5500 years from present).

Some of these structures and deposits were partially cut and superimposed by layers and constructions at a middle chalcolithic period, possibly dating from the 1st half of the 3rd millennium BC (4500 to 5000 years from present).

Is now clear that the aerial image of Perdigões reunites structures from different periods, during a time span of about 1500 years. This constitutes a significant development in the knowledge of Perdigões structural diachronic sequence, stressing the importance of conjugating the geophysics diagnosis and archaeological excavation in this type of large sites: as the first approach provides accurate images of the general present structures, the second, acting at precise chosen locations, allows their characterization (functionally and chronologically), establishing the temporality of the different structures and contexts, which will allow the understanding of the life's dynamics of the site.

António Carlos Valera



2. INTERVENTION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MÁLAGA IN THE SE GATE

During three weeks, a team from the University of Málaga, coordinated by José Enrique Márquez Romero, continued the excavation of Ditch 1 (outside ditch) near the SE gate, which was initiated (but not finished) by Era Arqueologia in 1997.

CONTENTS

1. NIA's intervention
2. Intervention of the University of Málaga
3. Geophysics 2009
4. Perdigões in congress
5. New FCT project
6. Perdigões in the media
7. Perdigões in archaeological tour
8. Dental studies
9. Bibliography



Excavation areas in 2009

The intervention occur in the context of a project developed by that university, related to the SE gate, which is integrate in the Global Archaeological Research Program (INARP).

This first intervention of Málaga's team (which will continue next year) starting to render concrete the ambition of bringing other research projects and teams to collaborate in the INARP programme, and was a first local experience of interaction of two different teams working simultaneously in the field.



Excavation in Ditch 1.

As to the results, the bottom of the ditch was not yet reached, which reveals an extremely large and profound structure. The initial trench was enlarged, allowing to obtain the ditch's plan just next to the SE gate.

In excavation, an overturning of stones, already identified, was completely removed from the interior of the ditch. In the associated archaeological material, plates with enlarge rims were dominant. Under the stone overturning were faunal deposits (specially swine jaws and long bones and horns from cows). The conclusion of the excavation of this trench is programmed for next year.

Information from
José Enrique Márquez Romero

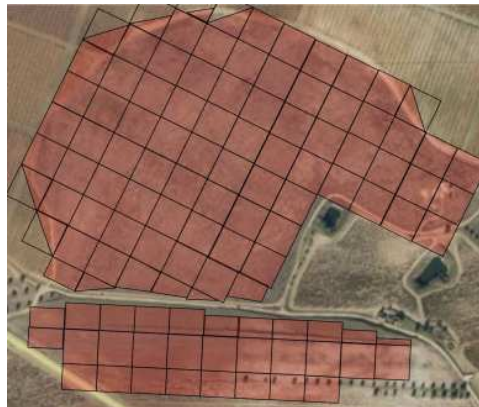


3. GEOPHYSICS 2009

Magnetic geophysics survey was concluded at the Perdigões enclosure complex. It was financially supported mainly by the Conselheria da Cultura da Junta da Andaluzia (in the context of the project of the University of Málaga) and partly by ERA Arqueologia S.A and Esporão S.A.

The survey was carried out by Helmut Becker with the support of a team from Era Arqueologia and other from the University of Málaga.

Almost all the site's area was prospected, with the exception of an area at the SE side and a small stripe in the South side, where vineyards were already planted (the presence of abundant iron makes it impossible use the method).



Area of the magnetic geophysics survey. Each square has 40 m side length.

The results are of great scientific relevance, showing an extraordinary amount of structures, specially negative, but also positive.

The collected information rises a lot of new problems concerning the life dynamics of this set of roughly concentric enclosures and constitutes an important tool that will orientate all future archaeological excavation in the site.

The results will be publically presented (by the teams of ERA Arqueologia and University of Málaga) next January at ERA's Annual Meeting in Lisbon and in February at the University of Málaga, being then published in both countries.

António Carlos Valera



4. PERDIGÕES IN CONGRESS

15ª Annual Reunion of the European Association of Archaeologists (Italy).

A paper and a poster regarding Perdigões research were presented at the 15ª Annual Reunion of the European Association of Archaeologists, that took place in Riva del Garda (Italy).

António Carlos Valera, "Mind, Cosmos and the Circle: the ditched enclosure ambience in Iberian Recent Phrehistory".

Cláudia Costa & António Valera, "The presence of animal bones in Perdigões (Portugal): a first attempt into it's meaning". (Poster available for download at <http://www.nia-era.org>, at "publicações").



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NIA's intervention:
neolithic "oven" and
general perspective of
the excavation



Geophysics 2009



XV Brazilian Archaeological Society Congress (Belém)

The ERA Arqueologia S.A. was invited to present the Perdigões project at the XV Brazilian Archaeological Society Congress that took place in September 2009 in Belém (Brazil) :

Miguel Lago, "The Perdigões Project (1998-2009)".

8º Annual Meeting of ERA Arqueologia (Lisbon, January 2010)

In the 8º Annual Meeting of ERA Arqueologia S.A. that will take place in the 23 of January 2010 in the auditorium of the Metropolitan de Lisboa at Alto dos Moinhos, several papers on Perdigões research will be presented:

António Carlos Valera e José Márquez Romero, "Results of the geophysics survey and archaeological excavations of 2009".

António Monge Soares e colab., "Archeometallurgy of gold in Perdigões".

Cláudia Costa, "Faunal remains in Sector I: ditches and pits".

Papers followed by debate.

III Archaeological Journey on Perdigões Site (Málaga)

A presentation of the results of geophysics and archaeological excavation of 2009 will be done at this meeting organized by the University of Málaga.



5. NEW FCT PROJECT

A new project for Perdigões was approved and financed by the Portuguese Science and Technology Foundation (FCT):

Title:

"Death management in Recent Prehistory: funerary practices in Perdigões enclosure".

Participants (institutions) :

- Faculdade de Ciências da Universidade de Coimbra, Centro de Investigação em Antropologia;
- Núcleo de Investigação Arqueológica (NIA) da ERA Arqueologia S.A.
- Instituto Tecnológico e Nuclear

Principal researchers:

Doutora Ana Maria Silva; Doutor António Carlos Valera; Doutora M^a Isabel Prudêncio; Doutora M^a Isabel Dias; Mestre Cláudia Costa; Mestre Maria Manuela Coelho; Mestre Ricardo Godinho; Dr. Christopher Burbidge.



Pit human burial excavation in Sector I of Perdigões

Goals:

The project aims to study death management in the Perdigões enclosure, trying to understand the multitude of funerary practices present at the site and the ways in which they were articulated, through an interdisciplinary approach.

The project will congregate the study of burial places (tombs, pits and ditch depositions) and the characterization of individual remains, aiming funerary ritual and biological population understanding.

Studies of faunal remains and archaeometry appear as complementary approaches to the funerary ritual research of Perdigões inhabitant communities and of peripheral ones from Ribeira do Álamo valley.

A presentation of the project will be published in the journal Revista Apontamentos de Arqueologia e Património, nº 5 (Download at www.nia-era.org, publication section).



6. PERDIGÕES IN THE MEDIA

In the sequence of a press conference and press visit to the site in the end of 2009 excavation campaign, several newspapers, radios and internet sites published news regarding the archaeological results.



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Beaker dagger collected at surface in the central area of Perdigões



Decorated schist plaque collected at surface in the central area of Perdigões



Gold metallurgy at Perdigões





The following media were present and published the news:

Jornais: Público; Correio da Manhã; Diário de Notícias;

Sites: Alivetaste; Ciência Hoje; Diário Digital; Portal Alentejano; Portugal Global;

Rádio: Despertar.



7. PERDIGÕES IN A ARCHAEOLOGICAL TOUR

"That is an excellent question" is the "teaser" for an archaeological weekend proposal in the Alentejo region, promoted by Ative company, in which Perdígões has a central role.



(<http://www.ative.com.pt/roteiro1/>)

Perdígões Research Programme.

Coordination: Núcleo de Investigação Arqueológica (NIA) da ERA Arqueologia.

Contacts: António Carlos Valera
(antoniovalera@era-arqueologia.pt)

8. DENTAL STUDIES

Dental paleopathological profiles in the human populations buried at Perdígões (Reguengos de Monsaraz).

Álvaro Figueiredo, Cidália Duarte, António Valera, Miguel Lago e Vanda Pinheiro.

This was a paper presented in congress in 2003, but never published. It will be transformed in a Poster that will be available for download at www.nia-era.org, publication section.



9. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Last titles:

Nelson Cabaço (2009), "Restos faunísticos em contexto funerário nos Perdígões, Reguengos de Monsaraz (Sepulcros 1 e 2), Dissertação de mestrado apresentada no Instituto Politécnico de Tomar (Master Erasmus Mundus em Quaternário e Pré-História).

Ana Mª Silva, António C. Valera, Cláudia Costa e Mª Isabel Dias (2009), "A new research project on funerary practices at Perdígões enclosure", *Apontamentos de Arqueologia e Património*, 5, Lisboa.

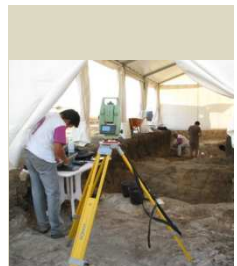
Cláudia Costa e António Valera, "The presence of animal bones in Perdígões (Portugal): a first attempt into it's meaning". (download at <http://www.nia-era.org> publication section / Posters).

A list of bibliography on Perdígões enclosure is available at:

<http://www.nia-era.org/content/view/280/33/>



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Excavating at Perdígões.



Perdígões exhibition in medieval tower at Herdade do Esporão (Reguengos de Monsaraz)

