

## **The Composition of Church Festive Meals in a Medieval Christian Community in Southern Crimea, Based on Ceramics and Faunal Materials**

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The report presents the materials from the excavations of a medieval church located at the top of the Tuzluk Hill in the Yedi Evler area, Crimean Peninsula, near the village of Semidvorie (Alushta, Crimea, Ukraine). The excavations were carried out by the Mountain-Crimean Archaeological Expedition (Crimean Branch of Archaeological Institute, NAS of Ukraine) in 2007. This church was linked to a large agricultural and pottery producing settlement. It was in use from the first half of the 9<sup>th</sup> to the first half of the 10<sup>th</sup> century. It was initially a double apse building belonging to a relatively rare type of churches of the Middle Byzantine period. Around 860-880 it was completely rebuilt and became an ordinary rural Byzantine one-apse, one-nave church.

Thanks to careful excavations and to the involvement of a professional team of researchers for post-excavation studies, many liturgical features and everyday life elements characteristic of Byzantine rural churches could be recorded and studied. In particular, it became possible to localize the places of community festivities and to determine the composition of church festive meals.

It included wine, which have been delivered to the table in local amphorae, as well as a variety of birds, mammals, marine mollusks, land snails, and very few fish. On special occasions, probably associated with the sanctuary consecration after its construction and reconstruction, oxes were sacrificed.