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THE ORIGIN OF THE KULTEPE CULTURE



The different opinions have been put forward about the neolithization of the Azerbaijan. Some researchers note that the South Caucasus' Neolithic culture is related to Mesopotamia by origin; some note that this culture developed based on local traditions. New researches conducted in the territory of Nakhchivan are essential for solving these problems.

New excavations conducted in Kultepe I, located near the city of Nakhchivan, led to the discovery of new facts related to the peopling history of this site and the peculiarities of the Kultepe culture. Studies show that there were various centers of Neolithic cultures' formation in the VII–VI millennia BC in Azerbaijan. Moreover, the Kultepe is the oldest ceramic Neolithic site in the South Caucasus. Outputs of these studies indicate that Azerbaijan's Neolithic cultures have no sources in the Middle East's monuments.

Key words: South Caucasus, Nakhchivan, Kultepe site, Neolithic, ceramic.

Introduction

The study of ancient agricultural cultures in the Southern Caucasus was one of the topical archaeological science issues. Although the first studies in this area appeared 70 years ago, some problems remain unresolved, including the Neolithic culture formation issues. Over time, different opinions were put forward about the origin of the Southern Caucasus' Neolithic culture. Researchers have divided the Neolithic monuments of the Southern Caucasus into two groups. The first group included the Shomutepe–Shulaveri culture, and the second, the Kultepe culture. The sites of the Mil steppe, Mugan, and Karabakh groups were attributed to the Kultepe culture (Иессен 1963, рис. 3; Мунчаев 1975, с. 31; Нариманов 1987, с. 61). However, the issues related to the origin of these cultures are not fully resolved. Several

researchers note that the Neolithic culture of the Southern Caucasus was brought from Mesopotamia (Массон 1964, с. 407; Ахундов 2019, с. 98; Намон et al., 2016, р. 168), and some researchers argue that it developed based on the local Mesolithic culture (Кигурадзе, Менабде 2004, р. 362; Бахшалиев и др. 2017, с. 33; Nishiaki et al. 2015, р. 2790). Research carried out in Nakhchivan, located at the junction of the Southern Caucasus and the Middle East, especially in the Kultepe site, is important in terms of clarifying these conflicting opinions.

The Kultepe I site

The Kultepe I site is located on the left bank of the Araz River, at the intersection of the Southern Caucasus and the Middle East, in the center of a favorable region for living, covering the basins of the Urmia, Goycha, and Van lakes (Fig. 1). The diameter of the high hill on the left bank of the Nakhchivanchay, on which this ancient site is located, is 200 × 100 meters, and the total area is about 1.5 hectares.

The site was involved in extensive archaeological research for the first time in 1951–1964 by O. Abibullaev. It was ascertained that one of the layers of this multilayer site, located at a depth of 19 to 21.5 meters, belongs to the Neolithic era (Həbibullayev 1959, s. 14). New excavations conducted under the leadership of V. Bakhshaliyev and K. Morro in 2013–2018 in Kultepe I revealed new facts about the peopling of the site. New finds allow us to determine the features of the Neolithic culture of Kultepe.

Method and archaeological materials

In the study of archaeological materials, the method of comparative analysis was used. An integrated approach to materials and coal samples analyses has enabled identifying the main features of the

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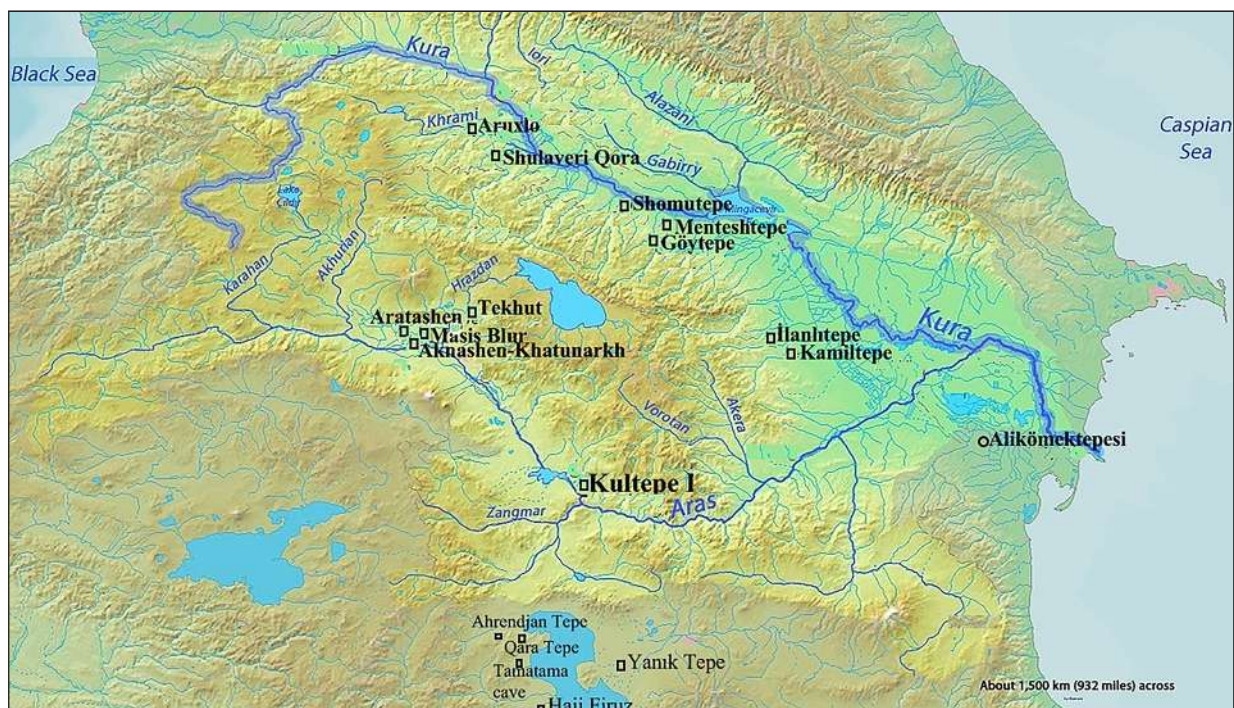


Fig. 1. Geographical location of the Kultepe I (map is taken from Google, prepared by Z. Guliyeva)

Kultepe culture. These features are more distinct in the remains of buildings.

Stratigraphy of the Neolithic layer of the Kultepe I site. According to the results of the excavations by O. Abibullaev, the Neolithic layer of Kultepe I was divided into two stages. These stages differed from each other in terms of soil color and architectural remains. Such a stratigraphic sequence was also traced at the 2012–2018 excavation site, which was laid at an old Soviet excavation area on the site southwestern side of the modern one. Moreover, in section E, where the stratigraphy is traced even more clearly, the lowest layer, distinguished by a dark color (depth 943–945), is characterized by semi-dugout type living quarters.

This layer is conventionally called Level 1 (Morro et al. 2019, p. 89). Analysis of coal taken from this layer showed 6372–6084/5921–5717 BC (Table 1).

The light color and many building remains distinguish the second layer (Həbibullayev 1959, s. 15; Morro et al. 2019, p. 88). During this period, living quarters were built of adobe and raw bricks. Analysis of coal from the second layer showed 5469–5228/5987–5772 BC (Table 1). The peculiarities of the Kultepe culture are especially expressed in the architectural remains, which had peculiar forms in each layer.

As already mentioned, the architectural features related to the first layer of the site were re-

Table 1. Results of coal analysis taken from the Neolithic layers of the Kultepe I (Morro et al. 2019: table 1)

No.	Complex No.	Material	Laboratory No.	(BP) Date	(BC) Date (95.4,0%)	Layer
1	A123	Charry seed	LTL 16013A	6158 ± 45	5230–4960	Layer 2
2	A230	Charcoal	LTL 16901A	6786 ± 45	5738–5624	Layer 2
3	B035	Charcoal	LTL 14889A	6374 ± 505	5473–5229	Layer 2
4	C015	Charry seed	LTL 17180A	6999 ± 45	5987–5772	Layer 2
5	C034	Charry seed	LTL 15113A	7099 ± 45	6070–5880	Layer 2
6	D078	Charcoal	LTL 14938A	6485 ± 45	5531–5356	Layer 2
7	E195	Charry seed	LTL 16903A	6359 ± 45	5469–5228	Layer 2
8	E314	Charry seed	LTL 17856A	6827 ± 45	5797–5633	Layer 2
9	E251	Charry seed	LTL 16904A	6921 ± 45	5921–5717	Layer 1
10	E264	Charcoal	LTL 18620A	6667 ± 45	5663–5510	Layer 1
11	E362A	Charcoal	LTL 18618A	7210 ± 45	6210–6004	Layer 1
12	E362B	Charcoal	LTL 18619A	7268 ± 45	6226–6050	Layer 1
13	E362C	Charcoal	LTL 16900A	7361 ± 55	6372–6084	Layer 1



Fig. 2. Living quarters plan of the Neolithic period (Kultepe I)

vealed due to excavations carried out in 2016–2018 at the site E. The first layer was characterized by living quarters of the semi-dugout type (Morro et al. 2019, p. 89). These semi-dugouts are rectangular and trapezoidal with rounded corners.

The premises of the second layer are built of adobe bricks. Moreover, the plans of 12 of these premises can be traced even more clearly (Table 2). These rooms are mainly represented by round buildings (8). Some of them have rectangular annexes (2). In this respect, the plans for two residential complexes are noteworthy.

One of them was discovered in 2014 at site D. This complex consists of a part of a large circular wall 50–60 cm thick. There are hearths and oval rooms with rectangular partitions on its inner side (Fig. 2). The diameter of one of these rooms is 1.8 m, the width of the wall is 23–25 cm, the floor is laid with flat river stones (Baxşəliyev, Quliyeva 2015, s. 26). The second room is located in the western part, it is 1.9 m in diameter, and its walls are 20 cm wide. Brick buildings, which occupy a central place at the second stage of the architecture of Kultepe, are also typical for the ancient sites of Transcauca-

Table 2. Types of Neolithic rooms found at Kultepe

No.	Square	Round rooms		Quadrangular rooms			Wall thickness	Building material	Finds
		Diameter	Height	Length	Width of houses	Height			
1	D	7 m	50 cm	2.7 m	70 cm	20 cm	60 cm	adobe	houses, hearths, pottery
2	D	1.85 cm	15–20 cm cm				25–30 cm	mudbrick	
3	D						23–25 cm	mudbrick	
4	D	1,9–1,7 m	13–15 cm cm	3.8 m	2.8 m	35 cm	30 cm	mudbrick	hearth (II type), tools, stones
5	F	2.2 m	5 cm				35 cm	adobe	
6	E	3/2,8 m	25 cm				50 cm	mudbrick	skeleton, pottery
7	E						55 cm	adobe	2 hearths (II type), bones
8	E	2 m	29 cm				30 cm	mudbrick	hearth (I type), orange pottery, tools
9	E	4 m	20 cm	35 cm	mudbrick	hearth (I type), pottery, tools, obsidian			
10	E	3 m	15–20 cm	35 cm	30 cm	35 cm	adobe	–	
11	E	2 m	29 cm			30 cm	adobe on stone foundation	–	
12	Zh	7 m	35 cm			36–45 cm	mudbrick	hearth (I, II types), skeleton, bones, antler	

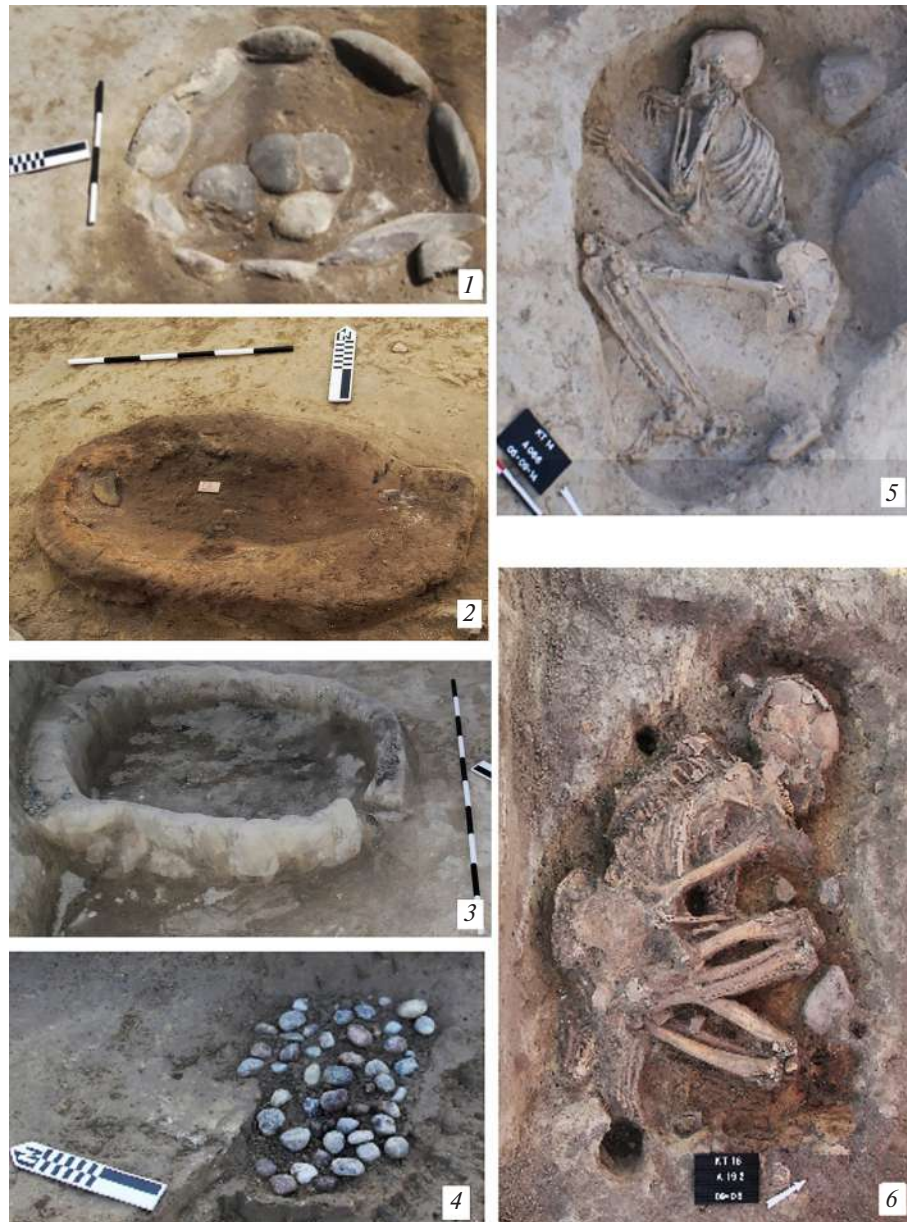


Fig. 3. Hearths (1–4) and burial monuments (5–6) discovered at the Kultepe I site

sia, including the cultural monuments of Mil-Karabakh in Chalagantepe, Shulaveri, Arukhlo I, Shomutepe (Энеолит СССР 1982, с. 104, 106), as well as the monuments of Khatunarkh, Teghut, Adablur, Mashtoblur, and Shengavit I located in the Ararat valley (Ağrı) (Narimanov, 1987, 69).

In the upper layers of Kultepe I, there are also rectangular structures. Quadrangular brick buildings in the Urmia basin appear in the middle of the VI millennium BC in the monuments of Haji-Firuz and Kichik Yanuytepe (Нариманов 1987, с. 87). Moreover, the ancient inhabitants of Kultepe I used brick buildings from the beginning of the VI millennium BC. It can be suggested that such architecture arose earlier than in other Southern Caucasus monuments and the Urmia basin.

Research shows that in the second half of the VII millennium BC in Kultepe I, semi-dugouts were used, and at the second stage, dating back to the first half of the VI millennium BC, buildings built of bricks were used. Round semi-dugouts were found in Shomutepe, Toyratepe, Gargalartepesi, and also Arukhlo I. Such semi-dugouts, dug next to each other in Arukhlo I, had an irregular round plan. The diameter of these dugouts is 4.1–4.6 m (Энеолит СССР 1982, с. 106). In contrast, the semi-dugouts of Kultepe I were rectangular in shape.

The architecture of the round and rectangular buildings of the second stage of the site of Kultepe has a certain similarity both with the architecture of the Southern Caucasus and with the architecture of the Urmia basin of that period. Research indi-

cates that the Kultepe site has a distinctive architecture. This originality was also manifested in the construction of hearths.

Hearths. During excavations at the Kultepe I site, the remains of 33 hearths were recorded (Table 3). They are represented by four types (Fig. 3: 1–4). The first type is represented by hearths with stone floor and a stone circle (19 pcs.). The second type is represented by hearths with a clay wall (5 pcs.); the third type — with a brick wall (5 pcs.). The fourth type (3 pcs.) is dug out in the soil and supplemented with round stones. Furthermore, 18 of 25 hearths registered by O. Abibullaev in the last century were stone hearths (Абибуллаев 1982,

c. 25, 28). Overall, 37 of 58 hearths found at the Kultepe I are made of stone. That fact may indicate that such centers occupied a special place in the life of the Neolithic tribes of Nakhchivan.

The hearths with stone circles had been in use for a longer time and are typical for the Kultepe. Such hearths are found in both I and II layers, which is important from the point of view of determining their period.

The hearths, representative for semi-dugouts recorded in layer I, had the shape of round pits dug into the floor and lined with flat river stones. O. Abibullaev noted a gradual change in the diameters of hearth pits of this type found in the I–IV

Table 3. Types of Neolithic hearths found at Kultepe

No.	Square	Types and forms of hearths				Finds	Layers
		Stone	Clay	Brick	Dug in soil		
1	E 279	Oval				Black-gray ash, pottery, animal bones, obsidian	1 layer
2	E 270	Round				Black-gray ash, charcoal	1 layer
3	E 264	Round				Black-gray ash, charcoal	1 layer
4	E 254	Round				Ash	1 layer
5	E 255	Round				Ash	1 layer
6	E 253	Round				Ash	1 layer
7	E 252	Round				Ash	1 layer
8	E 251	Round				Cobblestones	1 layer
9	E 220	Round				Cobblestones	1 layer
10	E 181				Round	Small round stones, ash	2 layer
11	E 206		Round			Ash	2 layer
12	E 196	Oval				Ash	2 layer
13	E 194		Oval			Black-gray ash	2 layer
14	E 062			Obsidian		Red ocher, bone tools, obsidian, flint	2 layer
15	E 31		Oval			Burnt earth and ash	2 layer
16	E 70	Oval					2 layer
17	E 89	Oval					2 layer
18	E 125	Round				Fragments of red-orange pottery	2 layer
19	E 129	Round				Pottery	2 layer
20	E 132	Semicircular				Ash	2 layer
21	E 147	Oval				Brown pottery, stones	2 layer
22	E 156				Round	Small round stones, ash	2 layer
23	Zh 088.	Semicircular				Fragments of orange pottery, bones, ash and bricks	2 layer
24	Zh 039.		Oval			Ash	2 layer
25	Zh 050.			Round		Antler fragment, 1 piercer, clay, ash	2 layer
26	Zh 023.			Round		Ash	2 layer
27	Zh 016.			Round		Animal bones incl. antler, charcoal, fragments of red-orange pottery	2 layer
28	Zh 005.			Round		Ash, clay	2 layer
29	Zh 045.			Round		Ash, stones	2 layer
30	Zh 055.		Oval			Ash	2 layer
31	F 083	Oval				Cobblestones and brick remains	2 layer
32	F 056	Quadrangular					2 layer
33	D 107				Round	Small round stones of different colors, ash	2 layer

building layers of the Kultepe site. The diameter of hearths surrounded by river stones varies between 30–60 cm (Абибуллаев 1982, с. 36, 25). The presence of such hearths is confirmed by the excavations of V. Bakhshaliyev and K. Morro. In these types of hearths found at the site E, a thick layer of ash, stone litter, and charcoal remains were revealed (Marro et al. 2019, p. 89). Analysis of coal from these hearths suggests that they were used in the second half of the VII millennium BC.

Several types represent the hearths found in layer II. At this stage, stone-lined hearths also retained their advantage. However, unlike the previous one, such hearths were not dug in pits at this stage, but laid out with flat river stones on the floor. The stone hearths of the Kultepe I differ in shapes: oval, crescent-shaped, quadrangular, rounded at the corners. An adobe structure complements stone hearths. Analogies of the hearths with stone floor are found in layer V of the Khatunarh-Aknashen (Badalyan 2010, fig. 4–3) in the lower layers of Mentestepe (Lyonnet, Quliyev 2011, s. 314).

Along with stone hearths, round-shaped brick-built hearths and oval adobe ones were found in this layer (Fig. 3: 3–2). Inside them were found the remains of various animal bones, and in some hearths, stone tools made of obsidian or flint, and pottery samples were found. The variety of hearths and finds revealed in them indicates that they were used for various purposes. In this respect, the unique hearths of the Kultepe I, particularly the hearths surrounded by stones, are a valuable attribute of the local culture formed here in the VII millennium BC. Apparently, they had not only practical applications, but also were used for religious rituals. The graves found at the Kultepe I are of particular importance in studying rituals.

Burials. The graves discovered during archaeological excavations carried out at the Kultepe I site during the Soviet period (Абибуллаев 1982, с. 39–51), and in the period of independence, consist of oval pits dug into the floor of living quarters. Such depth of the pits was about 25–30 cm; the diameter was 1.0 × 1.5 m (Бахşәлиев, Quliyeva 2015, s. 12). Among 91 burials found at the Kultepe I, the skeletons of 48 of them are well-preserved. In 25 burials, the skeletons were buried on the left side and in 15 burials on the right side. Of these skeletons, six were stretched out on their backs, and dog skeletons were found in two graves. The directions of the skeletons are not uniform. In one part of the graves, the head of the deceased was located in the western direction and its legs — in the eastern. In other burials, skeletons were in the northwest and southeast directions. In this respect, they are simi-

lar to the burials of the VI layer of the Chatal Hoyuk site of the Anatolian burial mounds (Mellaart 1975, p. 103) belonging to the last stage of the Neolithic. Ocher remains were occasionally recorded on skeletons to a lesser or greater extent, both buried on the right and left flanks (Fig. 3: 5–6). Apparently, this was due to the presence of faith in the afterlife. The deceased were sometimes buried with grave goods and often without grave goods¹.

The burial custom recorded at the Kultepe I is similar to burials at the Chalagantepe, Alikomektepe (Нариманов 1987, с. 87), Masis-Bloor (Martirosyan-Olshansky 2016, p. 7), Haji Firuz (Voigt 1983, p. 71) sites, which indicates a common tradition for the Southern Caucasus and the Urmia basin in the Late Neolithic.

Tools. The tools found at the Kultepe I were made from various types of stone, bone, and horn. Some of the tools, which are stone mortars, grain grinders of various sizes, sickle inserts, hoes, etc., are similar to the samples found at the Kultepe site earlier. The traditions of the transition from the Mesolithic to the Neolithic were even more expressed in the widespread use of obsidian and flint, typical for both periods. The discovered black, brown, gray flint and obsidian tools consist of knives, lithic cores, blades, and a significant number of unfinished fragments. Sickle inserts are mainly made of flint and obsidian (Бахşәлиев, Quliyeva 2015, s. 4).

Microliths represent a certain group of tools. Microliths of geometric shapes were recorded at Kultepe in small quantities (Нәбибуллаев 1959, таб. 3–4; Marro et al. 2019, p. 99). Samples of a trapezoidal, asymmetrical triangular shape of these types of tools, as well as an arrowhead discovered during excavations by O. Abibullaev, both in shape and in the processing of edges (Абибуллаев 1982, таб. XIII: 22–29) are similar to microliths found at the Firuz I and II sites of Gobustan and Damjili at Azerbaijan territory (Кушнарёва 1984, с. 36, 51, 98–99; Гусейнов 2010, fig. 98–99). The microliths samples found at the Kultepe I have their parallels among the tools discovered in the Mesolithic and Neolithic sites of the Caucasus (Connor, Sagona 2007, Plate 2, 10; Museibli 2017, figs. 1–4), which indicates the connection between these two stages of the Stone Age. The earliest examples of tool fragments, which are obsidian trapezoidal plates and cutting tools, are known in Azerbaijan from the I and II Firuz sites in Gobustan (Кушнарёва 1984, с. 45). This similarity can be traced to the manufacturing technology

¹ The anthropological identity of the skeletons from the Kultepe site has not been ascertained yet.

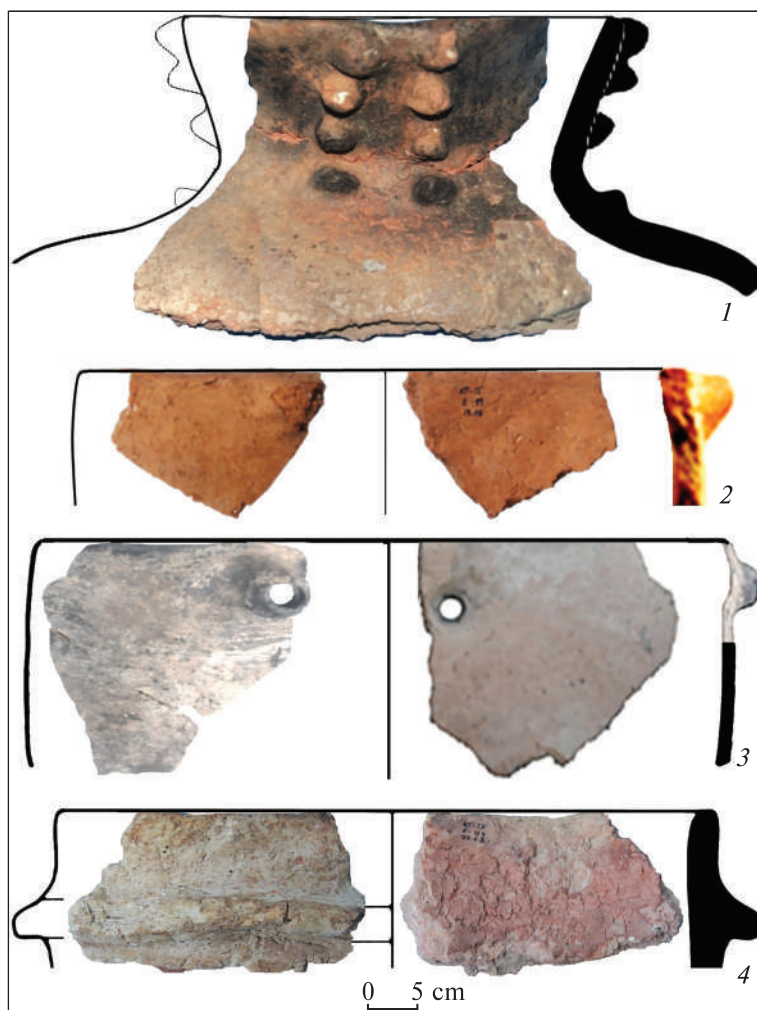


Fig. 4. Neolithic vessels of the Kultepe site

of the tools. For example, the old techniques were used to some extent in the Neolithic era. Impact and pressure flaking played an important role in the processing of labor tools during this period. Such technology was also used in the production of the Kultepe I microliths.

The obsidians found at the Kultepe I were brought from the Zangezur deposits located to the north. Studies show that the Neolithic tribes of the Kultepe I were engaged in obsidian exchange and mainly used obsidian from Geyhasar (50 %) and Zangezur (49 %) (Бахшалиев 2015, с. 143).

Metal items from the Kultepe I and other monuments of the Southern Caucasus, in which the main place is occupied by copper-arsenic admixture, indicate that mining in the Neolithic period was formed based on local raw materials. The researchers noted that arsenic ore was mined mainly in Salvarty, Bashkend, Ortakend, Paradash in Nakhchivan; the richest arsenic deposit was located in the Julfa region (Qashqai 1975, p. 122). The fauna and flora of these territories are of particular importance

in determining the features of each region's industrial economy forming. The wheat species found at the Kultepe I are soft wheat (*Triticum sativum* L), durum wheat (*Triticum Compostum* Dest), dwarf wheat (*Triticum Compastum* Hest), spherical wheat (*Triticum steriococum*), as well as millet (naked barley), and bottle-shaped barley (*Hordeum lagunculiforme*) were also found in Shomutepe, Toyratepe, and other synchronous sites. These crops have an early history of cultivation in the Southern Caucasus region and belong to the local fauna (Абибуллаев 1982, с. 211). The bone tools found at the Kultepe I were made mainly from local animal bones, including mountain goats, and antlers. Research manifest that these species were typical for the local fauna.

Pottery of both layers is made of clay mixed with chopped straw and fired unevenly. A variety of shapes and purposes distinguishes the pottery of the second layer. The jugs, cauldrons, pots, pans, and bowls found here are of particular importance from the point of view of determining the characteristic features of the Kultepe pottery.

The jugs are divided into two groups according to cylindrical and funnel-shaped necks (Fig. 4: 1, 4). Specimens with a cylindrical neck, rounded body, and without patterns are also found in Khatunarkh (Badalyan et al. 2010, fig. 9—1, 22). One of the specimens, made of clay with a small admixture of sand and straw, is distinguished by its red-brown color and the presence of a relief ornament on it. The ornament (Fig. 4: 1), consisting of eight nipple-like protrusions, is similar to the ornament of the vessel found in Arukhlo I (Энеолит СССР 1982, tab. XXXIV: 1). This jug with a funnel-shaped neck is made of clay mixed with straw and a small sand amount. Firing is good; it finds its analogs among the materials of the late Neolithic layers of the Shomutepe (Ахундов 2012, tab. 205, d-10, 14) and Haji Firuz sites (Voigt 1983, fig. 85: g, h, v).

Vessels of the cauldron type have a cylindrical shape, and a thick gray layer can be traced between their walls. Bottoms with external projections are thin compared to the wall part. Their analogies are known from the Shomutepe layers (Ахундов 2012, табл. 214: d-11), Khatunarkh III-IV (Badalyan 2010, fig. 9: 1, 4, 6, 13).

The cups were small in size, neatly made, and varied. They are represented by convex and conical shapes (Fig. 4: 2). One of the vessels is jar-type, brown, has thin walls and a spout (Fig. 4: 3). The outer surface of the vessel is slightly polished on both sides and covered with a lining. Parallels of this vessel are found in the Near East sites such as Yanygtepe, Filia, Mersin (Mellart 1975, fig. 78, 74), and so far, no parallels are found in the Southern Caucasus monuments.

Discussions

The difference in the stratigraphy of the Kultepe Neolithic layer is more clearly expressed in architecture and pottery production. The pottery of the first layer, which is typical for semi-dugouts, was rough and uniform. The painted pottery found in this layer consisted of only two samples; the paint was applied to the clay surface in red. The variety of pottery items increases in the second layer. In this layer, the quantity and quality of painted pottery have increased, and their painting technique has changed. However, the pottery of both layers have the same manufacturing technology. At one time, A. A. Jessen assessed pottery with an admixture of chaff, found at the Gebirli, Garakhanbeyli, Shakhtepe sites on the Mil plains, Chalagantepe, Chiraglitepe, Azginnitepe in Karabakh, as the influence of the Kultepe culture to the north (Мунчаев 1975, с. 41—62; Иессен 1963, с. 10).

The pottery with a touch of chopped straw in the Karabakh sites' Neolithic pottery on the example of Ismailbeytepe is 81 % (Алмамедов, Quluzada 2012, s. 74), 38.9 % in Goytepe (Гулиев, Гусейнов, Алмамедов 2009, с. 28), 46 % in Khatunarkh (Badalyan et al. 2010, p. 192), and 15 % in Shomutepe (Ахундов 2012, с. 53). Based on the analysis of pottery, it can be said that the Kultepe culture had, to a certain extent, influenced the Neolithic culture of the Southern Caucasus.

Some of the pottery found at the Kultepe I is similar in shape to the Neolithic materials of the Haji Firuz (Voigt 1983, p. 99), Yanygtepe (Ayorloo 2013, p. 35) sites. Even though the materials of the Kultepe have common features with the materials of the Southern Caucasus and Lake Urmia sites, the pottery of the Kultepe site has peculiar features. On the other hand, unlike the Neolithic culture of Mesopotamia, the early stage of the ceramic Neolithic in the Kultepe is not characterized by painted pottery. As is known, the Neolithic Kultepe I layer is represented by two stages (Table 1). The early-stage I layer is dated from 6372—5663 and II layer — 5745—5200 BC. Neolithic sites in other regions of the Southern Caucasus from the point of view of periodization are synchronous with the layer II of Kultepe I. Thus, the sites in the Kura basin (Haji Alemkhanly) are dated 5987—5846 BC, sites of the Shomutepe-Shulaveri culture — 5900—5800 BC, including Hasansu I — 5992—5847 BC (Museibli 2017, p. 49), Goytepe — 5650—5460 BC (Nishiaki et al. 2018, p. 119), sites on the Miles Plain — 5650—5200 BC (Ricci et al. 2018, p. 1445), and the Neolithic layer of Khatunarkh from the Ararat (Ağrı) valley sites is dated from 5986—5054 BC (Badalyan et al. 2010, p. 210), that is, they were limited to the VI millennium.

The stratigraphic features of the Neolithic layer of the Kultepe I coincide with the Lake Urmia basin's Neolithic sites. Neolithic sites, such as Haji Firuz, Yanygtepe, Arinjan-Tepe, are dated back to 6500—5000 BC (Voigt 1983, p. 348; Ayorloo 2013, p. 36). We can trace here, as in the Kultepe, both the early and the last stages of the Neolithic pottery.

Conclusion

Studies show that Nakhchivan is up to now the oldest ceramic Neolithic center in the Southern Caucasus. The site of the Kultepe was inhabited in the second half of the VII millennium. The Shomutepe-Shulaveri group of sites existed in the Southern Caucasus and the Neolithic period sites in Mil-Karabakh and Agra valleys are synchronous with the layer II of the Kultepe I.

Analysis of new archaeological materials indicates that the Neolithic cultures of the Southern Caucasus, including the Kultepe culture, had local features. It can be proved by the rounded architecture of the Kultepe, tools made of local obsidian, and items of the local fauna and flora. The periodization of both the Urmia basin sites, located to the south of the Araz River, and the Shomutepe-Shulaveri, Mil steppe, and Mugan cultures, indicates that these cultures had been formed after the Kultepe I. Apparently, various centers of Neolithization existed in the Southern Caucasus. Even in the advanced stage, the Neolithic culture of Azerbaijan does not entirely coincide with the Mesopotamian cultures. One can only say about cultural and economic ties or local migrations.

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ГЕНЕЗИС КЮЛЬТЕПІНСКОЙ КУЛЬТУРИ

Про неолітизації Азербайджану висувалися різні думки. Деякі дослідники відзначають, що ця культура за походженням пов'язана з Месопотамією, інші ж вважали, що вона розвивалася на основі місцевих традицій і міграцій з Месопотамії. У вирішенні цих проблем надзвичайно цінні нові дослідження, що проводяться в південному регіоні Азербайджану, зокрема на території Нахчіван.

Нові розкопки, проведені в 2013—2018 рр. на поселенні Кюльтепе I, розташованого недалеко від м. Нахчіван, привели до виявлення нових фактів, пов'язаних з історією заселення зазначеної місцевості і особливостями кюльтепінської культури. Ці знахідки свідчать, що поселення Кюльтепе утворилося в другій половині VII тис. до н. е. що відповідає пізньому періоду неоліту. Нові знахідки надзвичайно важливі для оцінки культури неоліту.

Неолітична культура Кюльтепе I загалом характеризується архітектурою округлого плану, вогнищами на кам'яній підлозі, зібганими похованнями, полірованою керамікою червоно-оранжевого кольору, виготовленою з додаванням соломи та з рельєфним орнаментом, зняряддями праці з обсидіану чорно-коричневого кольору, кременю, інших каменів, а також кісток і рогу. Матеріали, виявлені в самих нижніх шарах Кюльтепе, датовані 6370—5200 рр. Мають схожі риси з матеріалами пам'яток Ментештепе, Камільтепе, Хатунарх, Техут, Масис-Блур, що належать до VI тис. до н. е. Але кераміка Кюльтепе все ж має свої особливості. Це було пов'язано, з одного боку, з локальним розвитком культури Кюльтепе, а з іншого — з архаїчністю Кюльтепінської кераміки.

Дослідження показують, що в VII—VI тис. до н. е. в Азербайджані були різні осередки формування неолітичних культур. Кераміка месопотамського походження, виявлена з неолітичного шару Кюльтепе під час розкопок під керівництвом О. Г. Абібуллаєва показує наявність між Месопотамією і Південним Кавказом культурно-економічних зв'язків, і певних міграцій, однак неолітичні культури Південного Кавказу, зокрема культура Кюльтепе, мали локальні особливості. Про це свідчить і округла архітектура Кюльтепе, і використання на цьому поселенні місцевого обсидіану з родовищ Південного Кавказу, на відміну від країн Близького Сходу. Ймовірно, ця культура, яка сформувалася в Кюльтепе в третій чверті VII тис. до н. е., певним чином вплинула на регіони Міль-Муга-Карабах і долину Агри, в яких переважає кераміка з домішкою половини. Разом з тим у VI тис. до н. е. культура Міль-Муга-Карабаху відрізнялася певними особливостями, зокрема керамікою із відтисковою орнаментациєю.

Кюльтепе є найдавнішим поселенням керамічного неоліту на Південному Кавказі. Ця пам'ятка поряд з Південним Кавказом має спільні риси з пам'ятками басейну Урмії. Цей факт свідчить про те, що в епоху неоліту культурно-економічні зв'язки між Південним Кавказом та Урміїським басейном здійснювалися через Нахчіван. Але аналіз як пам'яток Урміїського басейну, розташованого на південь від р. Араз, так і поселень, які називаються культурою Шомутепе-Шулавері, розташованих на півночі, свідчать про те, що вони були заселені після Кюльтепе. Незважаючи на те, що під час останніх досліджень були отримані певні знахідки, що належали до епохи докерамічного неоліту, однак поки фактів недостатньо. Ймовірно, відсутність на Південному Кавказі, зокрема і в Азербайджані періоду докерамічного неоліту, було пов'язано з недостатнім вивченням цієї культури. Результати досліджень показують, що неолітичні культури Азербайджану не мають витоків у пам'ятках Близького Сходу. Вона формувалася в результаті розвитку місцевих тенденцій, мабуть, за сприяння міграції населення Близького і Середнього Сходу.

К л ю ч о в і с л о в а: Південний Кавказ, Нахчіван, поселення Кюльтепе, неоліт, кераміка.

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ГЕНЕЗИС КЮЛЬТЕПІНСКОЙ КУЛЬТУРЫ

О неолитизации Азербайджана выдвигались различные мнения. Некоторые исследователи отмечают, что эта культура по происхождению связана с Месопотамией, некоторые отмечают, что она развивалась на основе местных традиций и миграций из Месопотамии. В решении этих проблем чрезвычайно ценны новые исследования, проводимые в южном регионе Азербайджана, в том числе на территории Нахчывана.

Новые раскопки, проведенные в 2013—2018 гг. на поселении Кюльтепе I, расположенного недалеко от города Нахчывана, привели к выявлению новых фактов, связанных с историей заселения указанной местности и особенностями кюльтепінской культуры. Эти находки свидетельствуют, что поселение Кюльтепе заселено во второй половине VII тыс. до н. э. что соответствует позднему неолиту. Новые находки чрезвычайно важны для оценки культуры неолита.

Неолитическая культура Кюльтепе I в основном характеризуется архитектурой округлого плана, очагами на каменном полу, скорченными погребениями, полированной керамикой красно-оранжевого цвета изготовленной из соломы с рельефным орнаментом, орудиями труда из обсидиана черно-коричневого цвета, кремня, других камней, а также костей и рога. Материалы, обнаруженные в самых нижних слоях Кюльтепе, датированные 6370—5200 гг., имеют сходные черты в материалах памятников Ментештепе, Камильтепе, Хатунарх, Техут, Масис-Блур,

которые относятся к VI тыс. до н. э. Но керамика Кюльтепе отличается своеобразными особенностями. Это было связано, с одной стороны, с локальным развитием культуры Кюльтепе, а с другой — с архаичностью Кюльтепинской керамики.

Исследования показывают, что в VII—VI тыс. до н. э. в Азербайджане имелись различные очаги формирования неолитических культур. Керамика месопотамского происхождения, обнаруженная из неолитического слоя Кюльтепе во время раскопок под руководством О. Г. Абибуллаева показывает наличие между Месопотамией и Южным Кавказом культурно-экономических связей, и определенных миграций, однако неолитические культуры Южного Кавказа, в том числе культура Кюльтепе, имели локальные особенности. Об этом свидетельствует и округлая архитектура Кюльтепе, и использование на этом поселении местного обсидиана из месторождений Южного Кавказа, в отличие от стран Ближнего Востока. Вероятно, эта культура, сформировавшаяся в Кюльтепе в третьем четверти VII тыс. до н. э., оказала определенное влияние на регионы Миль-Муган-Карабах и долину Агры, в которых преобладает керамика с примесью мякины. Наряду с этим в VI тыс. до н. э. культура Миль-Муган-Карабах отличалась определенными особенностями, больше всего керамикой с вдавленной орнаментацией.

Кюльтепе является самым древним поселением керамического неолита на Южном Кавказе. Этот памятник наряду с Южным Кавказом имеет общие черты с памятниками бассейна Урмии. Этот факт свидетельствует о том, что в эпоху неолита культурно-экономические связи между Южным Кавказом и Урмийским бассейном осуществлялись через Нахчыван. Но анализ как памятников Урмийского бассейна, расположенного к югу от р. Араз, так и поселений, называемых культурой Шомутепе-Шулавери, расположенных на севере, свидетельствуют о том, что они были заселены после Кюльтепе. Несмотря на то, что в ходе последних исследований были получены некоторые находки, относящиеся к эпохе докерамического неолита, но пока фактов недостаточно. Вероятно, отсутствие на Южном Кавказе, в том числе и в Азербайджане периода докерамического неолита, было связано с недостаточным изучением этой культуры. Результаты исследований показывают, что неолитические культуры Азербайджана не имеют истоков в памятниках Ближнего Востока. Они формировались в результате развития местных тенденций, по-видимому, благодаря содействию миграции населения Ближнего и Среднего Востока.

Ключевые слова: Южный Кавказ, Нахчыван, поселение Кюльтепе, неолит, керамика.

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