VOLUME VII, ISSUE 1 – 2012

ARAMAZD

ARMENIAN JOURNAL OF NEAR EASTERN STUDIES



VOLUME VII, ISSUE 1 – 2012

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ZUSAP VII, ZUUUP 1 – 2012

Association for Near Eastern and Caucasian Studies

In collaboration with the Institute of Oriental Studies and the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography (National Academy of Sciences of Armenia)

ARAMAZD

ARMENIAN JOURNAL OF NEAR EASTERN STUDIES (AJNES)

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Editorial Office:

Marshal Baghramyan Ave. 24/4, 375019, Yerevan, Armenia

Tel. (374 10) 58 33 82 Fax: (374 10) 52 50 91

E-mail: ancs@freenet.am, armenianjournal@yahoo.com

http://www.ancs.am

ISSN 1829-1376

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THE PUBLICATION OF THIS JOURNAL WAS MADE POSSIBLE BY A GRANT FROM PROJECT DISCOVERY! FUNDED BY A CONTRIBUTION FROM THE HARRY AND OVSANNA CHITJIAN FAMILY FOUNDATION (USA)

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THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS OF GETAHOVIT-2 CAVE (ARMENIA) IN 2011–2012: THE PRELIMINARY RESULTS

Irena Kalantaryan, Makoto Arimura, Roman Hovsepyan, Christine Chataigner

Introduction

For about fifteen years, the Armenian-French joint project "Mission Caucasus" ¹ has investigated the prehistoric cultures in various parts of the Armenian territory and has been providing fruitful results on the Palaeolithic, Neolithic and Chalcolithic periods. ² In 2010, in the framework of this project, the Armenian-French team started a survey in the Tavush region in northeastern Armenia, a region where prehistoric sites were still poorly known. Here, the Aghstev valley attracted our interest. This valley has served as a route through the Lesser Caucasus range towards the Kura basin. The highlands of the Lesser Caucasus have traditionally served as summer pastures for the herds from the villages of the Kura basin, as indicated in ethnographic sources, but they could also have provided refuge zones in different periods, as the limestone relief contains many karst caves. However, this archaeological potential has hardly been explored up to now, as the thick forest cover impedes research.

During a survey carried out in 2010 in the Tavush region (North-East Armenia) two caves (Getahovit-1 and 2) were discovered on a terrace of the river Khachakhbyur, a left tributary of the Aghstev river. Getahovit-2 cave was chosen for further investigations, because of a thick deposition suggesting prehistoric occupations (Fig. 1). The aim of this article is to introduce the results of excavations carried out at Getahovit-2 in 2011 and 2012.

Excavations

Getahovit-2 cave is located in the small valley of the Khachakhbyur river, near the village of Getahovit, northwest of Ijevan (N 40° 54' 38.48", E45° 05' 59.69"; alt. ca 960 m above sea level) (Tab. I/1–2).

¹ The project is directed by Christine Chataigner (C.N.R.S., Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranéen, Lyon) in cooperation with the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Sciences, Republic of Armenia. The project is financially supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. France.

² E.g. Liagre et al. 2009: 75ff.; Arimura et al. 2012: 135ff.; Badalyan et al. 2010: 187ff.

The sheltered area covers approximately 15×8 m (Tab. II/1). A grid dividing the excavation area in square meters was set up, the X axis corresponding to the north-south direction (Fig. 2). In 2011 in the southwestern part of the cave, the squares B6, B7, C6 and C7 were opened. In 2012, the trench was extended eastward and squares D6, D7, E6 and E7 were opened. One more square meter (half F6 - half F7) was added, in order to excavate the remaining part of the tomb 'Feature 10' (see below).

Two excavation seasons at Getahovit-2 have revealed a Medieval layer and a Chalcolithic layer. Two ¹⁴C dates have been obtained (Fig. 7): 11th-12th centuries AD for the Middle Ages and ca. 4300 cal. BC for the Chalcolithic period. Several ¹⁴C analyses on charcoal and bone samples are in progress and will provide a more precise chronology of these occupations in a near future.

Medieval occupation

The Medieval period in the cave is represented by two, well distinguished horizons. The depth of the features mentioned below was calculated from the reference point (0 point), placed on the wall of the cave.

Phase II (upper horizon)

It is important to mention that Phase 2 (ca. 0.90 m thick) is characterized by a rammed, hard and slightly leveled surface, heavily fired in most parts (Fig. 3). Several features such as fire places, hearths and burials were identified in this phase.

Fire places, such as Features 1, 3, 9 and 11-12 (Fig. 3), were recognized by the intensification of fired sediments in reddish brown color, often including charcoals, and sometimes a concentration of small stones. Feature 2 was most intensively fired with hard sediment in red-orange color; it was located above the pit Feature 8.

Hearths were mostly well preserved. Feature 13 was a round hearth found in square D6 in 2012 (at a depth of 0.91 m). This pit hearth enclosed by small flat stones was nearly 0.70 m in diameter and 0.15 m deep; the pit was full of small stones and charcoals. The other hearth found in 2011, Feature 4 in square B7, shows another basin shaped medieval type. The internal part and the rim of the pit were covered with clay. The diameter was around 0.45 m and the depth was 0.25 m. This pit hearth was filled with white ash.

The most interesting features of the medieval levels at Getahovit-2 are burials.

During the first excavation season, the remains of a skeleton were found in the centre of the trench (squares B6-B7) at a depth of 1.06 m (Fig. 3, Tab. II/2). Only the lower part of the skeleton was found, the upper part having been disturbed by a later pit. The skeleton was extended on the back, the feet towards the east. There was no clear evidence of a pit or any structure, except few stones preserved near the feet bones. According to the anthropological study by Modwene Poulmarc'h (University of Lyon 2, France), the buried was an adult aged 28-45 years; the sex could not be determined.

In 2012 a tomb (Feature 10) was discovered in D7, E7 and F6-7 at a depth of

0.80m (Fig. 4, Tab. III). This structure was approximately 3.0×0.85 m, and 0.50 m high. Built along a southwest – northeast axis, this structure was boat-shaped. The SW end was narrowed; the other end was not clear, because of the disturbance of this part by a pit. According to the observation of the sections, the tomb was constructed as follows (Fig. 4): a pit was dug and slabs were placed against the upper walls of the pit; then the tomb chamber was covered with small slab pieces and packed in a clayish soil. The tomb was divided into two chambers by a slab. Each chamber contained a burial - by the heads oriented to the southwest. No funeral goods were found.

It should be mentioned that two types of stones were used in the construction of the tomb. The southwestern part of the structure was built of large stone slabs, carefully chosen and prepared, whereas the northeastern part was made of more robust stones. This could indicate two phases in the construction of the tomb.

Burial-1 was found in the southwestern chamber (Tab. IV/1). The position of this burial is quite interesting. The bones of the arms were placed on the chest in cross position. The leg bones were laid parallel on the bones of the arms. Other body parts were placed in a normal position for a primary burial extended on its back. Therefore Burial-1 was partly resettled after its burial.

Burial-2 was a primary burial extended on its back (Tab. V). The leg bones were missing, probably due to the disturbance caused by a pit. In fact, one leg bone was found in the bottom level of that pit.

Based on these observations on the construction of the tomb and the funerary ritual, we conclude that, at the beginning, the tomb was a cist made of well-prepared slabs. A burial (*Burial-1*) was placed in extended position on its back, arms crossed over chest. After some time, the cist was opened and rearranged in order to place a second burial. The leg bones of *Burial-1* were removed from their original place and were carefully laid on the arm bones. So, space was cleared for a new burial (*Burial-2*). During this process, one of the slabs of the cist has been moved to create a subdivision between two chambers. After expanding the grave to the northeast with stones of various sizes, the second burial (*Burial-2*) was laid extended on its back, arms crossed over chest. According to the anthropological study by Modwene Poulmarc'h (University of Lyon 2, France), *Burial-1* was a woman of about 50 years old and *Burial-2* an immature aged 17-24 years; sex of the latter could not be determined.

Phase I (lower horizon)

The earlier phase of the Medieval occupation (Phase 1) is characterized by a large number of pits. The bottom of these pits has reached the underlying Chalcolithic layer. All of them were dug from a compact surface located at a depth of 1.18-1.30 m, probably some sort of ground level. Four pits (Features 6-8, 14) belong to this Phase 2. They all were less than 1.0 m in diameter and 0.70 m in depth and generally pear shaped. Most of these pits do not seem to have been used

for storing grain, as up to now we did not find any trace of clay plaster inside. It is possible that the inhabitants kept food there, in clay vessels or other containers. Pit F6 was used for domestic waste.

Pit F8 (located in square C-6, at a depth of 1.15 m), was 1.0 m in diameter and 0.60 m in depth. It was filled by a big rock and several big stones; a few medieval sherds were found there.

Pit F6 (located in B-7, at a depth of 1.25m) was also pear shaped, 1.0 m in diameter and 0.50 m in depth. Some well preserved pottery pieces of the 12th-14th centuries were found in that pit.

Pit F7 (located in B-7, at the same level as F6, but a little earlier (as it was cut by F6) was about 0.60 m in diameter and 1.27 m in depth. It contained no material, except one obsidian arrowhead (Tab. IX: 7), which probably came from the Chalcolithic layer.

And finally Pit F14 (located in E-6, 1.19 m in depth), 0.50 m in diameter and 0.50 m in depth, was again pear shaped (Tab. IV/2). The sediment from this pit was taken for archaeobotanical investigation. Some very fragmentary medieval potsherds were found there.

Medieval finds

Dozens of medieval sherds were found in the excavations. Most of them are wheelmade and their surface varies from orange to yellowish brown (10YR5/6, 7.5YR6/6, for instance). Some are hand-made (Fig. 5: 6, 8-9). Pottery shapes vary is little. The most frequent form is a jar with a slightly everted neck (Fig. 5: 1-7) and a rim often flattened and thickened. In addition to this shape, there are one plate with an incised line on the rim (Fig. 5: 9), hole-mouth jars (Fig. 6: 1-2), a lid with incised decoration (Fig. 6: 4) and a fragment of a churn with a handle (Fig. 6: 5). Incised decoration, made with a sharp tool or with a nail, can be observed on different types of pottery (Fig. 5: 7-8, Fig. 6: 4, Tab. VII: 10-11). Other types of decoration include red painted pottery (2.5YR5/6; Fig. 5: 1-2, Tab. VII: 5), a single example of plastic decoration (pattern unclear) (Tab. VII: 4) and several grazed wares with green glassy surface (Tab. VII: 1-3). The ceramic repertoire consists mostly of simple kitchen ware.

Other small finds include a fragment of a glass vessel (Tab. VII: 6), three fragmented glass bracelets (Tab. VII: 7-9; two are twisted) and a bone pendant, with holes and incised circle (Tab. VII: 10). The bracelets and the pendant ornamentation have analogies from Dvin excavations, where they are dated to the 9th-12/13th centuries.¹ Among metal findings are an iron awl and an iron nail.

Archaeobotanical study of the samples from Pit F14

To study the archaeobotanical material, two lowest samples (N5,6) were processed, as the original contents of the pits usually accumulated in lower 1/4 or 1/3.² Soil samples

¹ Ghafadaryan, Kalantaryan 2002: 122.

² Hovsepyan 2011b: 58ff.

were processed by flotation using sieves with 0.3 mm mesh size. The volume of each sample was 10 liter. Preservation of recovered archaeobotanical material is bad; very few seed material was preserved: 25 units. Concentration of carpological material is higher in the lowest part (N 6) of the pit (1.4 unit/liter) than in the sample above (N 5, 1.0 unit/liter; Fig. 8).

Despite the poor preservation of the recovered plant specimens, it was possible to identify nine taxa of Higher Plants. Among cultivated plants, only cereals were recovered: charred grains of cereals constitute the majority of findings. It was possible to identify part of cereal remains as emmer (*Triticum dicoccum*; Tab. VI/2: 1-3, 5-6, Fig. 8). Emmer is one of the permanent cultivated species of the South Caucasus: it has been cultivated since Neolithic period¹ to present days without breaks. One well preserved naked grain of broomcorn millet (*Panicum miliaceum*; Tab. VI/2: 8) was found. Question of cultivated millets appearance time in the Caucasus is still under discussion. In Armenia, millets were recorded only since the Late Bronze Age. In this matter we would like to mention archaeobotanical finds from neighboring cave site of Yenokavan-2: common bread wheat, emmer, hulled common barley and broomcorn millet were found in an Iron Age vessel.²

The rest of cereal remains were classified as unidentified wheats (*Triticum sp.*) and unidentified cultivated cereals (*Triticeae gen. spp.*; Fig. 8). One remain of leguminous plant was found, but preservation does not allow to identify its wild or cultivated species.

Two nutlets of arboreal plants were recovered from the site; one of them belongs to plum (*Prunus sp.*; Tab. VIII) and the other one to hackberry (*Celtis sp.*; Fig. 8). Nutstone of hackberry was found during excavation and it is not from the pit discussed here.

Hackberry repeatedly is being found from many archaeological sites of the region. The findings evidence is since Palaeolithic period.³ Plum is very common in the region, too. There are many wild and cultivated species of plums in the Caucasus. The earliest evidence of plum use on the territory of Armenia comes from the Chalcolithic settlement of Godedzor.

The rest of archaeobotanical findings from Getahovit-2 are seeds of weeds: Lithospermum officinale, L. purpureo-coeruleum and Galium cf. spurium. L. officinale and G. spurium are common weeds for the region since prehistoric times. Archaeobotanical finding of Lithospermum purpureo-coeruleum has been recorded in Armenia for the first time. That finding enriches paleo-agrobiodiversity of the region. Seeds of plants recorded are maturing in the second half of summer-first half of autumn.

As there are very few cultivated plant remains in the discussed pit, we suppose

¹ Hovsepyan, Willcox 2008: 63ff.

² Hovsepyan 2011a: 83f.

³ By R. Hovsepyan (in: Pinhasi et al. 2008: 803ff.).

that the pit has not been used for grain storage; more probably it has been used for domestic waste.

Chalcolithic occupation

The medieval occupation is laid over a dull yellowish brown layer, partly including ash soils. Several potsherds and obsidians were found there: this layer could be a transitional layer between the medieval occupation and the heavily burnt sediments of the Chalcolithic period (see below).

The Chalcolithic layer unearthed in the deepest level is characterized by burnt soils and white ash accumulation, 5-10 cm thick. This deposit contained numerous animal bones (Tab. VI/1). According to the preliminary study of the faunal remains by Adrian Balasescu (National Museum of Romanian History, Bucharest), many bones are fragmented, probably due to heavy fire. In fact, bones found in these squares often show a white surface, indicating that they were burnt at high temperature. Because of the fragmentation of the bones, determined samples were not many. There are only mammals such as caprine (Ovis / Capra), sheep (Ovis aries), dog (Canis familiaris), red deer (Cervus elaphus) and a large carnivore (a Ursine or feline). The state of domestication could not be identified due to the poor state of preservation.

This burnt layer of the Chalcolithic period continues in deeper levels and it will be excavated in the following seasons.

Chalcolithic finds

In comparison with the large amount of faunal remains, other materials are rare: a few potsherds and lithic artifacts.

Some sixty potsherds were found in the Chalcolithic layers. They all belong to the same category of pottery: mineral tempered (Tab. IX: 1-2), with a blackish core (low firing temperature). Although many sherds were burnt in places and became blackish, their original color is brown — dark brown; the outer and inner surfaces are generally wet-smoothed or lightly polished. The lips are mostly flat; bead rim or beveled rim are found (Tab. IX: 1). A sherd has a horizontal knob (Tab. IX: 2). No sherd is decorated.

Lithics, found in the burnt layer of the Chalcolithic period, numbered 138 (Fig. 9): 116 in obsidian (84.0%), 21 in flint (15.2%) and 1 in dacite (0.8%).

Some obsidian pieces show an original cortical surface, suggesting that they were collected on the outcrops. Twenty five obsidian samples from this Chalcolithic layer were analysed¹: 19 are from Tsakhkuniats (northeast of Mt. Aragats), 4 from Geghasar (southwest of Lake Sevan) and 2 from Gutansar (20 km northeast from Yerevan). Most of the obsidian artifacts are flakes or chips. There are one flake core and 11 retouched tools. Some of the flakes have a well prepared platform and a curved profile, which could result from preparation of making tools. In retouched tools (11 specimens), standardized

¹ By LA-ICP-MS (Dr B. Gratuze - IRAMAT, Orléans, France).

tools are few: retouched blades (Tab. IX: 3), end scrapers (Tab. IX: 5), bilaterally retouched blade (Tab. IX: 6), and lunates (Tab. IX: 8). The obsidian arrowhead found in the medieval pit F7 was retouched by pressure and probably belongs to the Chalcolithic layer (Tab. IX: 7).

Most flint artifacts are of high quality and reddish brown in color (10R4/4). There are some flakes with a white calcareous cortex, indicating that they come from nodules. All the flint artifacts are flakes or chips except for one retouched tool (Tab. IX: 4): this specimen is a burnt piece with one edge formed by parallel retouches.

Most of the lithics were found in squares C6, C7 and D6 (128 of 138). This concentration corresponds well to the concentration of burnt soils and ash deposits.

Conclusions

The study of the pottery from the Medieval layer suggests a date between the 11th and 14th centuries¹, which is confirmed by the ¹⁴C date (11th-12th centuries AD). The medieval occupation of Getahovit-2 cave was quite long, as two horizons with a lot of pits and hearths show.

The most interesting feature of the Medieval occupation is the boat-shaped cist grave.

Analogies in Armenia show that the cist of such form and reuse refers mostly to the Early Medieval (ca. 4th to 9th centuries), or to the transitional from the Classical to Early Medieval periods. Such examples have been excavated at the southern and south-western parts of Agarak in 2001-2002 (number 2 and 7). They were oriented from west to east, and the skeleton remains were extended on the back, with crossed arms (Christian canons). No funeral goods had been found except one needle and a pin. Those burials were dated with the 4th-6th centuries and should belong to late Classical (Roman) - Early Medieval period.²

Other examples of the transitional from Classical to Early Medieval period can be the ones from the Talin cemetery, where all the skeletons were on the back, extended, with the crossed arms on the chest or belly (Asatryan 1986). The orientations of the cists were generally from west to east, sometimes northeast to southwest. Funeral goods were rare also here. By their architectural features those tombs (some of them are boat-shaped) are very close to the Getahovit example. In the tomb number 54, there were traces of a secondary burial. It had two chambers and the second chamber was with the extended skeleton. Also the Tomb N 25 is important to mention as an example of reuse.³

Getahovit tomb can also be compared with those from Yereruyk located in the Akhurian River Valley (at the border between Armenia and Turkey), excavated by the

¹ For consulting we thank Dr. H. Melkonyan (Head of the Medieval department of the Institute), and Dr. I Karapetyan, whom we express our thanks.

² Karapetyan, Yengibaryan 2002: 61.

³ Asatryan 1986: 16-17.

archaeological mission of Ani-Pemza (MAE) under the direction of Patrick Donabedian.¹ Majority of these graves were cists. The forms are mostly rectangular, but some had the form of "shuttle", like the Feature 10. The head of the deceased is always oriented to the west and the feet to the east, like in Getahovit. One of the graves at Yereruyk (Tomb 46) shows a reduction phenomenon, which is very similar to the one observed in Getahovit cave: the lower limbs of a man aged between 30 and 49 years were folded on his torso, and a newborn was buried in the space. The belt buckle found in the tomb finds analogies in Dvin, dated from the 9th -13th centuries.²

The existence of Christian burials in the caves rises a lot of questions. During that period, by the known canons, the burials might have been conducted at the cemeteries, as usually people were buried in the pits covered with slabs.

In some cases, in Armenia of the Developed Medieval period, we can find examples of rock cut complexes, such as in Ani³ and Spitak.⁴ The ancestral tombs and the mausoleums belonging to the high class were done mostly in rock-cut caves, displayed nearby the rock cut churches. In another case, if the person was guilty, the church could interdict the burial in the cemetery. Otherwise the appearance of burials out of the cemeteries can be explained by extreme reasons (for example, an invasion).

According to the data and excellent analogy from Yereruyk we have, the discussed cist grave can be dated not earlier than the 11^{th} - 12^{th} centuries.

The cist grave from Getahovit is the only known case done in a cave, that is why it seems to be so important for enriching knowledge of medieval burial practice.

The excavations revealed also an interesting *Chalcolithic layer* at Getahovit-2. Large quantities of heavily fired and fragmented animal bones suggest the occupation of the cave by hunters. Future investigations will focus on the characters of cave occupation in the Chalcolithic, such as duration (temporary or permanent) and function (hunting activity or daily habitat).

According to the single ¹⁴C date, the Chalcolithic occupation of Getahovit-2 belongs to the 2nd half of the 5th millennium BC (ca. 4300 cal. BC). This period has been recently investigated at Tsaghkahovit (a rockshelter on the northern flank of the Aragats massif) and in the Areni-1 cave, that have shown a variety of activities in the Late Chalcolithic in Armenia.⁵ Our results from Getahovit-2 will give new insights for understanding the regional traits of the Late Chalcolithic in Armenia.

Acknowledgements

We would like to express our deep gratitude to the constant cooperation to our project from Dr. Pavel Avetisyan and the staff of the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of the National Academy of Sciences, Republic of Armenia. The project

¹ Donabedian et al. 2012: 47f.; Bailet et al. 2012: 315ff.

² Ghafadaryan, Kalantaryan, 2002: 120.

³ Orbeli 1963: 123; Kipshidze 1972: 88f.

⁴ Kalantaryan, Sargsyan 1980: 22f.

⁵ Arimura et al. 2012: 135ff.; Wilkinson et al. 2012: 20ff.

was funded by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and partly supported by JSPS KAKENHI (Grant-in-Aid for Young Scientists (B): Grant no. 22720301) of one of the authors (Makoto Arimura).

Irene Kalantaryan

Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography NAS RA Charents Str. 15, 375025, Yerevan Armenia

irenkalantarian@mail.ru

Makoto Arimura

Center for Cultural Resource Studies, Kanazawa University Kakuma, Kanazawa 920-1192 Japan

arimura.mako@gmail.com

Roman Hovsepyan

Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography NAS RA Charents Str. 15, 375025, Yerevan Armenia

roman.hovsepyan@yahoo.com

Christine Chataigner

Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranéen 7 rue Raulin, 69007 Lyon France

christine.chataigner@mom.fr

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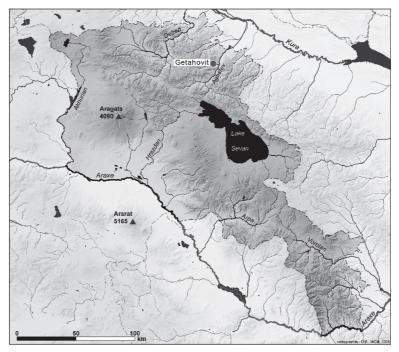


Fig. 1. Location of Getahovit site.

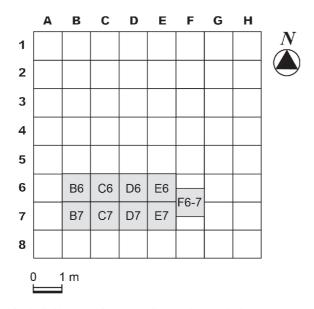
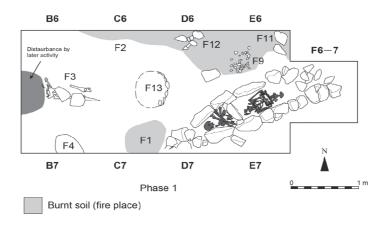


Fig. 2. Grid system for excavations at Getahovit–2.



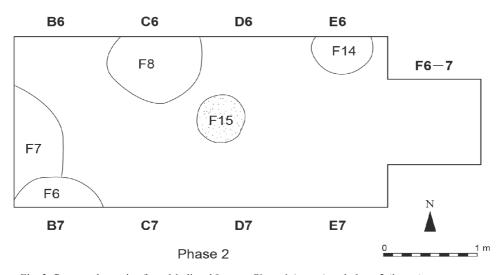
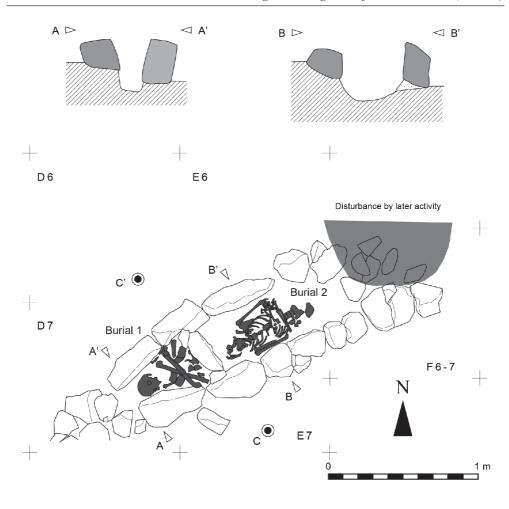


Fig. 3. Structural remains from Medieval Layers: Phase 1 (upper) and phase 2 (lower)



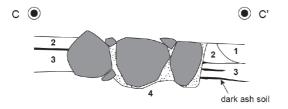


Fig. 4. Medieval tomb (Feature 10)

Sediment description

- 1 Soft soil, dull yellowish brown (10YR4/3)
- 2 Hard clayish soil, dull yellow orange (10YR6/3)
- 3 Soft ash soil, dull yellow orange (10YR6/4)
- 4 Slightly soft and compact soil, dull yellowish brown (10YR5/4)

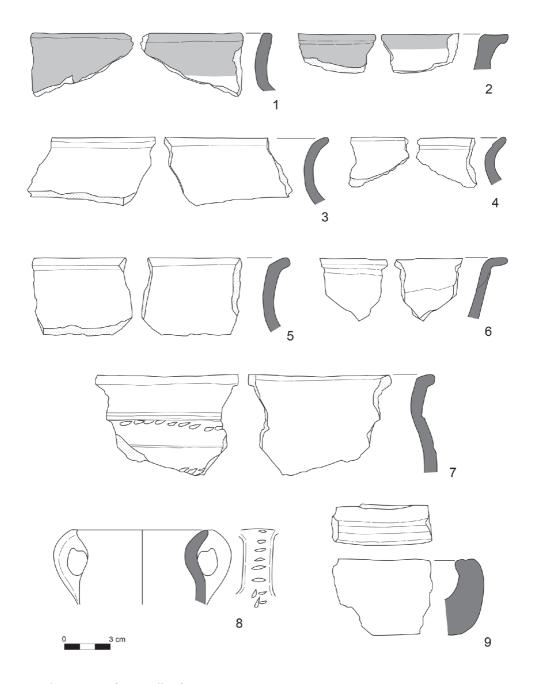


Fig. 5. Pottery from Medieval Layers.

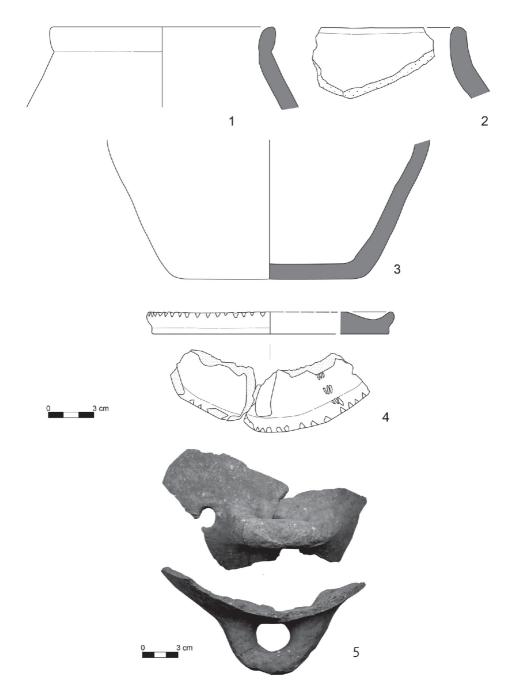


Fig. 6. Pottery from Medieval Layers.

Fig. 7. ¹⁴C radiometric dates from Getahovit-2 (calibration program: Calib 6.1.0).

Code	Material	Grid	Context	C14 date (BP)	Calibration (2 sigma)
LTL-12043A (Lecce)	carbon	C7	Level 3	933 +/- 45 BP	1021-1207 cal AD
BETA-306022 (BETA)	carbon		Level 5, "white floor"	5490 +/- 30 BP	4444-4262 cal BC

Fig. 8. Archaeocarpological material from lower parts of the Feature 14 (pit) of Getahovit-2.

Date of sampling		29.08.2012	04.09.2012	04.09.2012	
Square		E6	E6	E6	
Layer		Layer 2	Layer 3c	Layer 3c	
Feature		Feature 9	Feature 14	Feature 14	
Context		-	pit	pit	
Sample No.		-	N5	N6	
Volume of floated sedimen	-	10	10		
Concentration (unit/liter)	-	1.0	1.4		
Plant taxa	Finding	Preservation	1	10	14
Triticeae gen. sp.	grains fragm.	charred	-	1	3
Triticum sp.	grains	charred	-	1	4
Triticum cf. dicoccum	grains	charred	-	-	2
Triticum dicoccum	grains	charred	-	1	2
Panicum miliaceum	naked grain	charred	-	-	1
Fabaceae gen. sp.	seed fragm.	charred	-	1	-
Celtis sp.	nutlet fragm.	biomineralized	1	-	-
Prunus sp.	nutstone	charred	-	-	1
Lithospermum officinale	nutlets	biomineralized	-	2	-
Lithospermum purpureo- coeruleum	nutlet	biomineralized	-	1	-
Galium cf. spurium	mericarps	charred	-	1	1
Unidentifiable	-	2			

Fig. 9. Lithics from the Chalcolithic burnt layer.

Grid	В6	В7	С6	C7	D6	D7	E6	E7	F6- 7	
Obsidian										total
Debitage			33	42	22		2	4		103
Core			1							1
Tool			3	6	2	1				12
total			37	48	24	1	2	4		116
Grid	В6	В7	C6	C7	D6	D7	E6	E7	F6-7	
Flint										total
Debitage			2	10	5		1	2		20
Tool			1							1
total			3	10	5		1	2		21
	•								'	'
Grid	В6	В7	C6	C7	D6	D7	E6	E7	F6- 7	
Dacite										total
Debitage					1					1
total					1					1

SUMMARIES ԱՄՓՈՓՈՒՄՆԵՐ

«ԳԵՏԱՀՈՎԻՏ 2» ՔԱՐԱՅՐԻ 2011-2012 ԹԹ. ՊԵՂՈՒՄՆԵՐԻ ՆԱԽՆԱԿԱՆ ԱՐԴՅՈՒՆՔՆԵՐԸ

ԻՐԵՆԱ ՔԱԼԱՆԹԱՐՅԱՆ, ՄԱՔՈԹՈ ԱՐԻՄՈՒՐԱ, ՌՈՄԱՆ ՀՈՎՍԵՓՅԱՆ, ՔՐԻՍՏԻՆ ՇԱՏԵՆՅԵ

Տավուշի մարզի Գետահովիտ գյուղի տարածքում, Աղստևի վտակ Խաչաղբյուր գետի դարավանդներից մեկի վրա տեղակայված "Գետահովիտ 2" քարայրը հայտնաբերվել է 2010 թվականին, Հայ-ֆրանսիական համատեղ արշավախմբի կողմից իրականացված հնագիտական շրջայցի արդյունքում։ 2011 և 2012 թվականների ընթացքում կատարված փոքրածավալ ստուգողական պեղումները բացահայտեցին միջնադարյան և պղնձեքարեդարյան ժամանակաշրջանների բնակեցման փուլեր։

Միջնադարյան փուլի երկու հորիզոններում արձանագրվել են բազմաթիվ օջախկրակատեղիներ և հորեր, որոնցից մեկից (F 14) վերցված հողի հնաբուսաբանական քննությունը, առաջին անգամ Հայաստանի տարածքում, թույլ տվեց արձանագրել Lithospermum purprureo-coeruleum մոլախոտի տեսակը։

Հետաքրքրական էին միջնադարյան շերտերում կատարված թաղումները։ 2011 թվականին բացված թաղման կառույցը խաթարված էր և հնարավոր եղավ փաստագրել միայն մասամբ պահպանված կմախքը։ Սակայն, 2012 թվականին, նույն հորիզոնում բացվեց նավակաձև, հարավարևմուտքից-հյուսիսարևելք ուղղվածությամբ, 3.0×0.85×0.50 մ չափերի, սայարկղային տիպի երկխուց դամբարան։ Պետք է նշել, որ թաղման կառույցի հարավարևմտյան կեսը բավականին մշակված և խոշոր սայերով էր շարված, այնինչ՝ մյուս հատվածը կառուցված էր անմշակ, տարաչափ քարերից։ Աշխատանքների արդյունքում պարզ դարձավ, որ սկզբում կառուզվել էր հարավարևմտյան հատվածին համապատասխանող` մշակված սայերով դամբարանը, ուր դիադրումն արվել էր մեջքի վրա, թևերը կրծքին խաչած դիրքում։ Որոշ ժամանակ անգ այն բացվել էր, վերափոխվել՝ երկրորդ թաղման հետ կապված։ Ոտքերի ոսկորները հավաքվել էին և տեղադրվել ձեռքի ոսկորների վրա, դրանց ցուգահեռ, ինչի հետևանքով տարածություն էր ազատվել երկրորդ թաղման համար, որից հետո կառուցվել էր տարաչափ քարերով շարված հյուսիսարևել յան խուզը, ուր ննջեզյալը ևս մեջքի վրա էր դրվել` կրծքին խաչված թևերով։ Առաջին կառույցի սալերից մեկը վերադրվել էր` դառնալով բաժանարար երկու խզերի միջև։

Ըստ մարդաբանական ուսումնասիրությունների` առաջին խցից գտնված ոսկորները պատկանել են մոտ 50 տարեկան կնոջ, իսկ երկրորդ կմախքը` 17-24 տարեկան անորոշ սեռի անհատի։

Թաղման կառույցի զուգահեռների ուսումնասիրությունները ցույց տվեցին, որ

նմանօրինակ կառույցների և ծեսի օրինակները կարելի է գտնել մի շարք անցումային՝ հելլենիստականից-վաղ միջնադար և վաղ միջնադարյան փուլի հուշարձաններում։ Սակայն, քարայրի միջնադարյան շերտերից գտնված խեցեղենի նմուշների ուսումեասիրության, ոադիոածխածնային տվյալների (11-12-րդ դարեր), ինչպես նաև վերջերս Երերույքում բացված նմանատիպ դամբարանից ստացված նյութերից ելնելով՝ Գետահովիտ քարայրի թաղումները պետք է թվագրվեն ոչ ավելի վաղ քան 11/12-14 դարերով։ Այժմ կարելի է ասել, որ նման թաղման կառույցների ձևերը հարատևել են մինչ գարգացած միջնադար։

Պղնձեքարի ժամանակաշրջանին վերաբերող շերտը առայժմ ներկայացված է մոտ 5-10 սմ հաստություն ունեցող սպիտակավուն երանգ ունեցող հատակով։ Այն համատարած ծածկված էր կենդանիների բեկոտված ու մասամբ այրված ոսկորների մնացորդներով։ Նշմարելի են խարույկի հետքեր, շատ են ածխի բեկորները, և հատակը համարյա ամբողջությամբ ծածկված էր ածխափոշու շերտով։ Հատակի արևմտյան հատվածը, որը բացվել էր 2011 թվականին, իր սպիտակավուն գույնը ստացել էր հավանաբար կալցիտային նստվածքների կուտակման հետևանքով։ Եվ այս մասում պահպանվել էին ձողերի հիմքերի փոսորակները։ Չնայած նրան, որ վանակատից և կայծքարից պատրաստված գործիքներն ու ցլեպները առայժմ մի քանի տասնյակից չեն անցնում, դրանց մեջ առկա են բավականին հետաքրքիր նմուշներ։

Պղնձեքարի ժամանակաշրջանին վերաբերող շերտը, ըստ ռադիոածխածնային վերլուծության տվյալների, թվագրվում է Ք.ա. հինգերորդ հազարամյակի վերջին քառորդով (մոտավորապես Ք.ա. 4300-4000 թթ.)։

ԵՐԿԳՈՒՅՆ ԲՐՈՆԶԸ ԵՎ ԼՈՌԻ ԲԵՐԴԻ ՎԱՂ ԵՐԿԱԹԻ ԴԱՄԲԱՐԱՆՆԵՐԸ

ՍԵԴԱ ԴԵՎԵՋՅԱՆ

Լոռի Բերդի դամբարանադաշտում 1980 թ. պեղվեցին վաղ երկաթի (Ք.ա. XII դ. II կես) հարուստ դամբարաններ (թիվ 29, 30), որտեղ ի հայտ եկան երկգույն (ոսկեգույն և արծաթագույն) բրոնզե ձուլածո իրեր (Աղ. X/1-3, XI/1-3)։ Հայտնաբերվեցին նաև բրոնզե երեք, կոբանյան տիպի դաշույններ (դամբ. թիվ 29, Նկ. 1/8-9, Աղ. XII/1), սակրեր, տափակ կացիններ, սրեր (Նկ. 1/5-7, Աղ. X/9-11), երկժանիներ (Նկ. 2/3), կեռ (Աղ. X/8), ձիասանձեր (Աղ. X/4), ձիասարքի կոձակներ (Նկ. 1/1-2, 2/2, Աղ. X/7, XI/4), բրոնզե նետասլաքներ (Նկ. 2/1), մեծ կաթսա, խեցեղեն (Նկ. 1/4, 2/4-5), ոսկե զարդեր (Աղ. X/5) և այլն։

Երկգույն բրոնզի հետազոտությամբ պարզվեց, որ արծաթափայլ բրոնզը պղնձի և մկնդեղի համաձուլվածք է` 24,2% և 27,6% մկնդեղի պարունակությամբ, իսկ ոսկեգույնը` դասական անագային բրոնզ` 9,2-10,2% Տո-ի պարունակությամբ։ Խնդիրն այն է, որ պղնձի հալման ջերմաստիձանում մկնդեղը դառնում է շատ փխրուն, և թե վաղ անցյալում ի՞նչ եղանակով են այն ստացել, դեռևս բացահայտված չէ։

Ուշադրության է արժանի նաև ցլիկի գլխի քանդակով բրոնզե մականի գլուխը (Նկ. 1/3, Ադ. X/5)՝ գեղարվեստական մետաղագործության մի հրաշայի նմուշ, որտեղ նույն-

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Table III

1. Medieval tomb (Feature 10).

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- 1. Burial 1 of the medieval tomb.
- 2. Medieval pit (Feature 14) of the Phase 2 (from the south).

Table V

1. Burial 2 of the medieval tomb.

Table VI

- 1. Burnt layer of the Chalcolithic (from the southwest).
- 2. Some plant remains from pit excavated at Getahovit-2 site in 2012 (E6, F14 (pit), layer 3c).
 - 1-3, 5-6 grains of emmer (*Triticum dicoccum*),
 - 4,7 grains of unidentified wheat (*Triticum sp.*),
 - 8 naked grain of broomcorn millet (*Panicum miliaceum*),
 - 9-10 Lithospermum officinale, L. purpureo-coeruleum,
 - 12-13 Galium cf. spurium. v ventral side, l lateral side, d dorsal side.

Location: 1, 9-12 - sample N5, 2-8, 13 - sample N6.

Table VII

1. Finds from medieval layers. 1-3: glazed wares, 4-5, 11-12: potteries, 6-9: glass objects, 10: bone pendant.

Table VIII

1. Nut stone of plum (*Prunus*) from pit in Getahovit-2 site (E6, F14, Layer 3c, sample N6).

Table IX

1. Finds of the Chalcolithic period. 1-2: potteries, 3, 5-8: obsidian artifacts, 4: flint artifact.





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