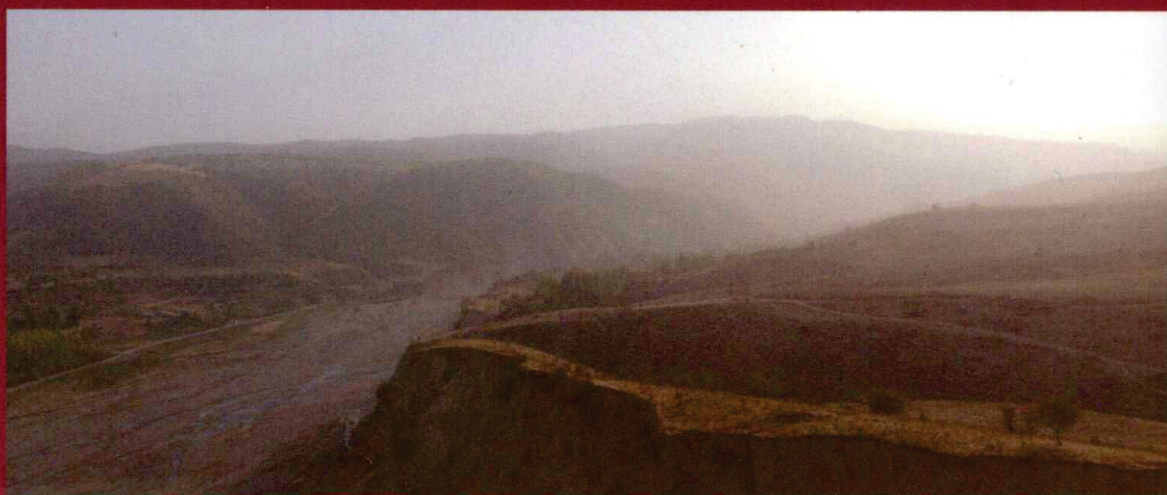


**АРХЕОЛОГИЯ И ПАЛЕОГЕОГРАФИЯ
ЦЕНТРАЛЬНОЙ АЗИИ.
ПАМЯТИ ВЫДАЮЩЕГОСЯ АРХЕОЛОГА
В.А. РАНОВА**

**БОСТОНШИНОСЇ ВА ЧУҒРОФИЁИ ҚАДИМИ
ОСИЁИ МАРКАЗӢ.
БА ХОТИРАИ БОСТОНШИНОСИ БАРҚАСТА
В.А. РАНОВ**

**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
ARCHAEOLOGY AND PALEOGEOGRAPHY
OF CENTRAL ASIA.
IN HONOUR OF ARCHAEOLOGIST
V.A. RANOV**



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New Paleolithic workshop in Jeyrancel – Jandargol

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Introduction. The study of the Paleolithic period in Azerbaijan was started by M.M. Huseynov in the 50s of the XX century. The school of paleolithic studies founded by M.M. Huseynov continued by M.M. Mansurov, A.G. Jafarov and A.A. Zeynalov. Over the past 70 years, 8 caves and more than 20 open-type camps have been recorded and studied. The conducted research allowed to analyze all stages of the Paleolithic period, except for the Upper Paleolithic. As a result, it was possible to follow the migration and evolution of the early species of the Homo genus, as well as the Homo erectus, Homo heydelbergensis and Homo neandertalensis species, as well as their specific cultures resulting from species change.

If we divide these studies chronologically into two periods, we can see that the vast majority of studies were conducted in the 1950s and 1990s. Therefore, the research conducted in the Paleolithic monument of Garaja under the leadership of A. A. Zeynalov should be emphasized in terms of the spread area of the "Gruchay culture", as well as the rich Acheulean culture.

The research conducted by the "Gazakh Paleolithic Archaeological Expedition" in 2024 was carried out in the territory of Gazakh and Agstafa regions. The main goal of this year's archaeological exploration was to identify new Paleolithic traces in ancient river terraces, caves and Baku-Apsheron deposits.

One of the main focus areas was Jeyrancel. At the end of the 30s of the last century, the paleontological expedition of the Baku University (now Baku State University-Y.M.) and the National Museum of Georgia visited Udabno, located on the border of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Georgia, in the center of the Jeyrancel and Eldar plains, near the Keshikchi mountain-Gareci monastery (41.5° N, 45.4°N) were discovered two upper right teeth adjacent to the maxillary bone - the second premolar (P 4) and the first molar (M1) among the creatures of the upper Sarmatian period (Late Miocene) (Mammadov, 2015, p. 225; Burchak - Abramovich, 1950, p. 70; 8 Hajiyevev, 1997, p. 195). Based on the remains of the teeth of Udabnopithecus, it was concluded that an extinct hominin belonging to the subfamily Homini-nae lived in the South Caucasus at the end of the Late Miocene geological period (9,098–8,769 million years ago) (Casanovas - Vilar, 2011, p. 5557).

During the 2024 exploration work, a new Paleolithic site was registered in

Jeyranchol. It should be noted that the study of Jeyranchol paleolithic monuments is connected with the name of Mansur Mansurov. In 1987-1989 M.M. Mansurov recorded and studied open-type Paleolithic sites Garaduz, Sari Burun, and in 2008 the Sagizili which were located on the Baku-aged terrace, in the southern branch of the Greater Caucasus, in Jeyranchol, north of Jandar lake (Ag gol), at the southern foot of the Garabigh range. These sites dating to the middle Acheulean period and called it "Jeyranchol Paleolithic culture" (Mansurov, 2003, p. 18-24; Mansurov, 2007, p. 19-20; Mansurov, 2010, p. 19-25; Mansurov, 2011, p. 24-32).

Orgographic and geological structure of Jeyranchol: The Jeyranchol-Acinohur lowland, which is included in the Kura depression, is sharply distinguished from the rest of the depression (within Azerbaijan) due to its orographic features. While most of the large orographic elements within this depression consist of plains and plains with a smooth surface, the main orographic elements of the Jeyranchol-Acinohur zone consist of low-mountain ridges, valleys, depressions, and plateaus. All orographic units extend from northwest to southeast in the pan-Caucasus direction (Museyibov, 1998, p. 15).

This zone stretches 280 km from the border with Georgia in the west (the western extension of the zone passes into the territory of Georgia) to the Girdiman valley in the southeast, and is called the arid-denudation lowland zone in the geomorphological literature. The western part of the lowland, located between the Kura and Gabirri (Iori) rivers, is called Jeyranchol. Its length is 130 km from west to east, and its width is 20-30 km.

The area gradually decreases from north to south. The mountains and valleys located in the north are 200-400 m higher than the mountains and valleys located in the south. Such tendency is also observed from north-west to south-east. The highest mountain range in the area is Chobandağı (892 m). At the western end of the territory is Udabno (871m). In the west of Jeyranchol, in the north of Jandar lake (Agh gol) the Garatepe ridge (725 m) stretches and continues to the Saloglu depression in the east. To the east of Garatepe is the Jandar plateau (400 m). To the south of Jandar lake, the Boyuk and Kichik Kasik range extend in a parallel direction (300 m) (Museyibov, 1975, p. 12-19).

Jeyranchol geologically belongs to the Middle Kura depression. Neogene rocks are mainly involved in the geological structure of this area. According to the geological structure, Jeyrañol is divided into two different geological or tectonic zones: Chatma - Goychay anticlinorium and Jeyrañol - Yevlakh synclorium.

The geological complex of the Chatma-Goychay sub-zone includes the sedimentary complex from Upper Maykop to the Quaternary period. Upper Maykop layers are exposed only in the arch part of Alachık, Armudlu, Chobandag and Yaylacık anticlines. In the Chatma subzone, the sediments of the Sarmatian floor (Lower, Middle and Upper Sarmatian) are more widespread

(about 2000-2500 m thick). Rocks of Agcagil and Absheron strata are observed in the far South-Eastern part of the Chatma Subzone in the Boyuk and Kichik Palantoken fields and in the Udabno Syncline in the North-West.

The rocks of the Aghcagil and Absheron floors occupy the largest area in the Jeyranchol-Yevlakh syncline. Some areas of the zone rose 120-140 m in the post-Khazar period. Thus, the modern tectonic structure of synclorium and the modern landscape developed on the structure were mainly formed on the eve of the Quaternary period.

Corresponding to the semi-desert zone included in the Jeyranchol district, the physical geographical region of Garayazi is wide in the west (12-16 km) and gradually narrows in the east (1-2 km). The region is composed of Upper Pliocene and Quaternary mudstones and gravels. The relief has a wavy inclined surface. In the north-west of the district is the Candar lake, the only natural lake in the Jeyranchol massif. Candar is a lake located at an altitude of 285 m above sea level. The total area of the lake is 5.43 km², the average depth is 4 m, the deepest place is 7 m. There are no permanent rivers in Jeyranchol, which generally has a mild-hot semi-desert dry steppe climate. Gazangöl, Gajirisi and other temporary lakes can be seen during the rainy season.

Site of discovery: During the research conducted in the Jeyranchol zone, a new site of the Paleolithic period was discovered in the territory of the "Keshikchidag" State historical and cultural reserve, 950 meters south of Jandar Lake, at an altitude of 320 meters above sea level. The area where stone products from the Middle Paleolithic period were found was tentatively registered as "Jandargol Paleolithic site". Levallois cores and Levallois flakes, which attract more attention among the finds, allow us to attribute the find site to a fairly advanced stage of the Middle Paleolithic.

During exploration, 124 samples were taken. It should be noted that there are thousands of such specimens in two nearby areas of about 1.5 hectares. The space between the two sites is about 50 m.

Of the collected stone artifacts, 78 pieces are flakes (including 18 triangular flakes), 15 are cores, and 7 are tools and the rest are waste flakes. Flakes of 12 is the numerical initial flakes.

A volcanic bomb was used as raw material. A total of 4 artifacts were made of river stone. Among the obtained stone artefacts, there are only 5% of preparations, including primary sherds, cores and waste, and only 5% of tools, giving grounds for evaluating the find site as a Middle Paleolithic workshop.

In order to study the site (workshop) in detail, we dug 4 exploration pits at a distance of 20-30 m from each other. The total depth of the first pit excavated in the 2 x 1 m area was 30 cm, and it was observed that the layer of small stones and gravel continued. The area of the second shurf was 1 x 1 m, the depth was 40 cm, and it was observed that the soil with lime mixture continued. The area of the third pit is 1 x 1 m, the depth is 90 cm, the area of the

fourth pit is 1 x 1 m, and the depth is 60 cm. In both fields, the upper 10 cm consisted of black, and the other part consisted of a yellowish soil layer. Unfortunately, no archeological or paleontological material was found from the mentioned fields.



General view of the Jandargol Paleolithic workshop

The result. Thus, the composition of the obtained stone collection gives grounds for evaluating the newly discovered Paleolithic site as a workshop belonging to the advanced stage of the Middle Paleolithic. In general, during the last 30 years, the Paleolithic monuments discovered on the left bank of the Kura River - in Jeyranchol, in the foothills of the mountain range in the north of Jandar lake, indicate intensive settlement by people in several stages of the Late Acheulean and Middle Paleolithic. The newly discovered Jandargol workshop camp supports this hypothesis more than it refutes it.

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