

MATERIALS OF KALBAJAR MUSEUM OF REGIONAL STUDIES AS A SOURCE IN THE STUDY OF ROCK PAINTINGS

KAYA RESMI ÇALIŞMALARINDA KAYNAK OLARAK KELBECER BÖLGESEL ÇALIŞMALAR MÜZESİ MALZEMELERİ

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SUMMARY

This article deals with the role of the materials of Kalbajar Museum of Regional Studies as a source in the investigation of rock carvings in Azerbaijan and important proofs in its study. In Kalbajar, called second Gobustan, written monuments, including rock carvings, are known as Bronze Age monuments in our country. For the first time, rock paintings were studied on the basis of materials from the Kalbajar Museum of Regional Studies. The article deals with about 4.000 rock paintings recorded by the museum's expedition team in one of the charming corners of Azerbaijan – in Gelin qayasi, Zalkha gholu, Sercheli dagh, Soltan Heydar. Gonag ghormez, Yuzbulaq, Peri chingili, Ayi chingili, Gurbagali chay, Qizil tepe, Gara ghol areas of Kalbajar. The ancient hunting activities of our ancestors, their economic life, as well as the activities of cattle-breeders and farmers, their religious ideas are described on the basis of paintings. In the article is emphasizes that hundreds of rock carvings of the region still needs for research.

Keywords: Kalbajar Museum of Regional Studies, Rock carvings, Soltan Heydar, Zalkha gholu, Kechili qaya.

ÖZET

Bu makale, Kelbecer Tarih ve Etnografya Müzesi'nin malzemelerinin Azerbaycan'daki kaya oymacılığı çalışmalarında kaynak olarak rolünü ve bu çalışmada önemli kanıtları tartışmaktadır. Kelbecer'de İkinci Kobustan olarak adlandırılan yazılı anıtlar ve kaya oymaları ülkemiz topraklarında Tunç Çağı anıtları olarak bilinmektedir. İlk kez Kelbecer Tarih ve Etnografya Müzesi'nin kaynak materyallerinden yola çıkılarak kaya resimleri incelenmiştir. Müzenin keşif ekibi Kelbecer'in Gelin Kayası, Zalkha Gölü, Sarıçalı Dağ, Soltan Haydar, Gonaggörmez, Yüzbulag, Perichingili, Ayıchingili, Gürbağalı Çayı, Kızıltepe, Karagöl'de yaklaşık 4.000 kaya resmi kaydetti. Atalarımızın eski avcılık faaliyetleri, ekonomik yaşamları, sığır ve çiftçilerin faaliyetleri, dindar gençlerin faaliyetleri çizimler esas alınarak yorumlanmıştır. Makale, bölgenin araştırma için hala yüzlerce kaya oymacılığına ihtiyaç duyduğunu vurguluyor.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kelbecer Tarih ve Etnografya Müzesi, Kaya oymaları, Sultan Haydar, Zalkha Gölü, Keçi Kayası

A museum is not only a place where material cultural monuments and valuable things are collected, preserved and displayed. The most important thing is that it plays the role of a center of science and enlightenment. In this sense, the role of the Kalbajar Museum of Regional Studies is indispensable. The

materials of this museum have a wide range of sources. One of them is the ancient rock paintings of Kalbajar. Some of these paintings were brought to the museum yard from the Delidagh and Takhtaduzu areas of Kalbajar. The museum's expedition team also by photographing recorded thousands of rock paintings.

In general, ancient images were drawn on rocks and stones mainly in two ways - Petroglyphs (petros-stone, glyphe-carving method) and palette (color-painting method). Petroglyph-type rock paintings were first seen by Grevnik 160 years ago, in 1848, on the shores of Lake Onega. The existence of palette-type rock paintings was first discovered in the 70s of the 19th century in the Altamiro cave in Spain, and later in a number of French caves (Azərbaycan arxeologiyası. 2008; 173).

Although rock carvings have been known in Azerbaijan since 1939, World War II delayed their registration and study until 1945. From 1947 to 1965, under the leadership of G.M.Jafarzadeh, more than 3.500 forging and engraving drawings of people and animals, life scenes on various topics, boat drawings, signs, brands, inscriptions, hole, piercing, and other monuments made by human hands has been recorded. Rock carvings, the first examples of art of our ancestors, are found in Absheron Peninsula, Gemi gaya in Nakhchivan, as well as in Kalbajar. As a whole, in the 60s and 70s of the 20th century, a great number of rock paintings were discovered by G.M.Aslanov in Absheron, V.G.Aliyev in Gemi gaya, and G.S.Ismayilov in Kalbajar (Fərəcova, 2009; 4).

Written monuments as well as rock carvings in Kalbajar, called the second Gobustan, are a great contribution to the ancient and rich history of our country. It appears from the information provided by Shamil Askarov, the director of the Kalbajar Museum of Regional Studies, that although he had seen these paintings in 1956, at first he did not pay attention to them. Afterwards together with the prominent Azerbaijani scientist Khudu Mammadov and poet Abulfaz Husseini, they went to Soltan Heydar Mountain, where they discovered the paintings of our ancestors on the rocks. The fact that the shepherds who came to the summer pastures from low-lying lands used these stones as salt-marsh (stone where salt was given to animals on -R.N) for a long time made it difficult at first sight to see the paintings on these rocks. However, a great deal of rock paintings were discovered and photographed at that time (Əsgərov, 1997; 12-13; 17.3). Shamil Askarov and well-known scientist Khudu Mammadov discovered some of the first rock paintings in the Kalbajar area and took pictures in the area called Agchay in the direction of Delidag.

No doubt, that the authors of the Kalbajar rock paintings have long been local residents of these areas. The most important factor that proves this is that these paintings are concentrated among the rocks with favorable conditions, and the technology of drawing paintings relating to different periods, as well as its style is the same. The paintings were mainly engraved on basalt stones. There are several types of basalt rocks in Kalbajar region. It should be noted that the basalt stones without paintings have been more eroded than those with paintings on them. This proves once again that our ancestors were the aborigines of these places and knew the stones well. There are numerous images of goats, hunting scenes, dinosaurs, wild bulls, the sun, stars and mountains on the hard basalt stones (Şamil Əsgər, 1987; 9-10; 17.4252). These descriptions reflect the way of life of the ancient inhabitants of the area, their economy, religious beliefs and traditions.

The second hall of the Kalbajar Museum of Regional Studies ("Martyrs' Museum"), devoted to the ancient period, and the courtyard of the museum presented the rock paintings of this region to the audience live. These exhibition halls remind the world of fairy tales. Also, 28 monolithic (solid) rocks in the yard of the museum brought from the Kalbajar mountains illuminated the way of life of our ancestors as a living history. (Kəlbəcər qayaüstü təsvirlərinin şəkilləri, 3). Pictures of Kalbajar rock carvings. Photographed by Zakariyya Mehrali oğlu). The area where the pictographic monuments of the region are located, their pictures and models on the stands are reflected both here and in the second hall. The rock paintings in the Kalbajar area date back to the Early and Middle Bronze Ages, and mainly located at the foot of the Qirmizi dagh (Red Mountain), at a 20 km distance from Istisu. Various paintings were discovered in Gelin Qayasi, Zalkha Gholu, Sercheli Dag, Soltan Heydar, Gonag ghormez, Yuzbulag, Peri chingili, Ayi chingili, Gurbagali Chay, Gizil tepe, Gara ghol.

The recording and study of Kalbajar rock paintings began in 1968. There are about 4.000 rock paintings in the Kalbajar plateau. In 1976 the well-known archaeologist Gudret İsmayılov discovered about 800 rock paintings around Gara ghol in the Kalbajar region alone. The researcher showed the true value of this place in Delidag and surrounding areas. He writes that this charming corner of Azerbaijan was formed from the lavas of the fourth geological period. Over the millennia, this lava coat has disintegrated under the influence of natural forces and formed vast gravelly-rich areas. Our ancestors engraved their paintings on the solid basalt stones in these gravelly -rich areas (İsmayılov, 1977; 6).

The content of the petroglyphs here is related to the life and activities of humans and animals. As a rule, people are depicted from the front and back, from the side, from the profile. In these paintings, people performing a ritual dance together, a scene of deer hunting, a two-wheeled cart with two oxen, etc. are depicted. Images of humans and animals differ for their specific features. The images of deer and mountain goats are decorative. Ancient artists in their works used to pay special attention to the dynamic, moving figures. In this regard, the images of humans and tigers (Fig. 21) are of particular interest (Rzayev, 1985; 43-48).

One of the most important features is that on a highland on the left bank of the Terter River, near these rock carvings was discovered an ancient settlement. Remains of an ancient circular building with a diameter of more than 20 m have been revealed here. The walls of this complex structure were built of large rock pieces and river stones. Its outer walls are up to 2 m thick. The remains of another relatively small building was also found around the building during the exploration. These are also circular. Exploration excavations have revealed great number of pottery fragments, querns, obsidian and flint knives and arrowheads dating back to the 3rd millennium BC (İsmayılov, 1977; 7). Most likely this building was a public building belonging to a powerful tribe. The small buildings around the large building (public building) were used for living. During the Early Bronze Age, this form of construction was widespread not only in the South Caucasus, but in all eastern countries.

Hunting scenes. Some scholars consider rock depictions to be the most complete form of information about the material and spiritual way of life of people thousands of years ago (Формозов, 1987; 15-20). Anyone who thinks deeply about the Kalbajar rock carvings can be of this opinion. These paintings are a life story that reflects how our ancestors lived. Hunting scenes occupy a certain part among the rock carvings of Kalbajar. In general, hunting covers the 12th-8th millennia BC. Prior to the invention of the bow and arrow, primitive people who sought food found it difficult to hunt wild animals, and their hunts were often unsuccessful, even falling prey to wild animals. Our ancestors, who mastered arrows and bows, aimed at animals from a long distance and escaped from this danger. The arrowheads of primitive hunters were made of flint and obsidian. Arrows and arrowheads made of obsidian (volcanic glass) preserved in the second hall and exhibit fund of the Kalbajar Museum of Regional Studies are a visual proof of this. (Əsgərov, 1997; 14).

Hunting artists, who laid the foundations of ancient art, engraved their daily lifestyles on indelible rocks. The hunting scenes painted by our ancestors on hard basalt stones are of a colorful content. Most of them are scenes of mountain goats and deer being hunted with arrows and bows. (İsmayılov, 1981; 50). A hunter, while trying to hunt a deer with a noose in his hand, another hunter runs towards the deer. The hunter with the noose in his hand catching the deer pulls the rope back. One hand of the hunter is folded above the elbow. The other hunter is depicted with both arms and legs open to the side. It shows that this hunter bars the deer's way, who is trying to escape and helps his companion hunting with a noose. Another depicts a deer with big horns. Five protrusions are given on each horn. The body of this deer is given in a straight line and depicted in profile, the front and back legs are shown separately. In this painting the deer's short tail is also striking (İmanov, 2014; 53).

Predatory and wild animal scenes. Some of the Kalbajar rock paintings are predatory and wild animals. In general, images of predators are more common in Azerbaijan in Gobustan, Gemi qaya, Kalbajar, Absheron and Goyam Mountain in Western Azerbaijan. Most of the rock paintings in Kalbajar were revealed on the shores of Zalkha ghol and Gara ghol, located at an altitude of two - three thousand m above sea level.

The materials of the Kalbajar Museum of Regional Studies show that mostly wolves and leopards among the predators on the rock carvings in this region. Specifically, the leopards are depicted ones and or in pairs on some stones and in others in herds. Gudret Ismayilov writes that the description of leopards is compact, but very lively and dynamic. On some stones, they are described in herds. Their similarity can be seen in the pictures where they stand in different poses. (İsmayılov, 1977; 7). There was a favorable natural environment and sufficient fodder supply for predators to live and spread in the territory of Azerbaijan. Among the paintings there are some members of catlike and canine (doglike) subfamily belonging to the class of mammals (İmanov, 2015; 27). It has long been known that primitive art developed in the Bronze Age. Therefore, these paintings also reflect the lifestyle of the Bronze Age people. The aesthetic views and artistic thinking of these people fascinate those, who look at them as if they watch in the rock screen.

Farm scenes: Depictions of agriculture and cattle breeding, means of transport (vehicles)

If we look closely at the rock carvings of Kalbajar, we can say that cattle breeding was highly developed there. The development of cattle breeding necessitated the development of high mountainous areas with rich pastures. All this had resulted in the construction of sedentary settlements (Arxeoloqiceskie otkritiya 1977; 492). Some of these paintings depict ancient farming. Some of these paintings depict ancient farming. Scenes such as plowing with primitive wooden plough to be yoked at oxen, reaping and threshing, the image of a man holding a hoe on his shoulder, etc. are given on separate stones. As for the image of a man with a hoe on his shoulder, one can come to a certain controversial opinion about the history of these paintings. As it is known, hoe farming is a tool of the Eneolithic period. That is, this tool was replaced by wooden plough in the early Bronze Age. It can be concluded from this that some of these images, including the image of a man with a hoe on his shoulder, were created at the end of the Neolithic - the beginning of the Eneolithic period. Thus, agriculture - a production economy, was established in the Mesolithic, and its formation was completed in the Neolithic. The first agriculture was hoe farming. The period of development of this agriculture coincides with the Eneolithic period. Therefore, it is possible to think that some of the paintings here, including the image of a man with a hoe on his shoulder, were developed before the Bronze Age. Another approach is also possible. According to this approach, it is likely that hoe was still being used in the early Bronze Age, when the wooden plough was invented. Thus, the wooden plough was more productive than the hoe, and heavy. Naturally, the wooden plough was yoked at an ox. There were areas that was difficult for an ox to move. Therefore, in some mountainous areas, even in the Bronze Age, light hoe was used as well.

Along with rock paintings, we see **images of horses** on tombstones. But they should not be mixed up. The tombstones are mostly hewn from basalt stones in the form of statues. These figures hesitate from 1.5 m to 85-90 cm, 30-40 cm in length. The figures are the product of the Middle Ages. The history of rock paintings, as mentioned above, dates back to the Bronze Age. The role of the horse in the lives of ancient people is found not only in historical facts, but also in legends and myths. Cattle-breeding tribes used them as saddle-horse and a means of transportation. That is why the horse, their permanent helper and friend, was deified. It is no coincidence that the ancient people often buried the horse together with its owner. If to take into consideration the role of horses in human life, a real and ancient image of this good animal was created. (Həvilov, 1991; 228).

One of the interesting scenes is the paintings of the vehicle. They are two-wheeled carts. (İsmayılov, 2009; 60-61). This painting is somewhat similar to the carts in Gemi gaya. Here the horns of the oxen are depicted as arched, slightly folded inwards. This painting gives us reason to say that cattle-breeding tribes migrated to the highlands to acquire new pastures (İmanov, 2014; 53).

Scenes related to religious ideas, ceremonies and beliefs

Looking at the written monuments in the materials of the Kalbajar Museum of Regional Studies, we see religious and mythological elements there. Considering that the ancient people had primitive religious ideas still in the Paleolithic period, one can say that the beliefs of the Bronze Age advanced in this area. This can also be seen in the paintings on the solid rocks. The figures of a horse, a ram and a goat with a 6-7

thousand years of history, which are included in the fund of the museum and are located in the yard, and the bronze goat totem displayed in the second hall testify to the development of totemism in this region. Before the occupation of Kalbajar villages by the Armenian armed forces, goat horns were still kept in most houses. Goat horns presented to the museum by the residents were displayed in the exhibition halls of the museum. Place names such as Kechili rock (village in Kalbajar), incision of goat's back (pasture-village in Zeylik village), Kechiduz mountain (mountain of Alagaya village), Kechiqalan (mountain in Bashlibel village, Kechidami gorge (Chepli village), Kechiqirilan (a place in Demirchidam village), Kechiqirilan rock (a rock in Istibulaq village), Kechibeli yurdu (hearth) (a hearth in Keshdek village), Kechibeli (a place in Shahkerem village), Kechiarkhaji (a place in Yanshak village) also help us not to be mistaken in our thoughts about totemism, including the goat totem. We believe that the formation of totemism in the territory of Kalbajar can be compared with Gobustan. Many of the images on the Gobustan rocks can be found on the rocks of Kalbajar - Gelin gayasi, Soltan Heydar mountain, Peri chingili, Ayi chingili, Gurbagali chay, Turshsu gorge, Serchali dag and Sarimsaqli dag. The totems of horses, oxen, rams and goats are more common here (Kəlbəcər Tarix-Diyarşünaslıq Muzeyinin inventarları, 3279; 2749).

Among these written monuments, one of the descriptions is of a deeper content than the others. A carved painting of a mighty human figure, with one foot in one circle and the other in the other, looking at the ball figure above is very interesting. It is believed that the man dreams of flying from one planet to another. One of the images of ball under the feet of the human figure is the earth, and the other is the moon. In this description, a man ahead of the present time dreamed of flying to the moon, and from there to another planet (Əsgərov, 1997; 14). We are witnessing serious religious and philosophical elements in the description of a person who dreams of flying to the moon and from there to another planet. This monument adds color to the rock paintings of Kalbajar, further expands and enriches the content of the paintings.

One of the most valuable written monuments in the museum is a stone that symbolizes the sacrifice of a horse to the sun. A man with an ax in one hand and holding the reins of a horse in the other and leading it to the sun was engraved on this stone. The image of the sun is clearly visible above. Although thousands of years have passed, this precious stone has preserved the ancient religious belief of our ancestors. (Kəlbəcər Tarix-Diyarşünaslıq Muzeyinin inventarları, 3) We see the sacrifice of a horse to the sun in the beliefs of the Turks, including the Massagets, who participated in the formation of the Azerbaijani people. According to Herodotus, the father of history, the Massagets considered the sun to be the only God and sacrificed horses to it. A similar custom was observed in the Sarmatians. In Siberia and the Altai, white horses were sacrificed to the sun and fire. In shamanic legends, the sun is described as the beginning and protector of the good forces of the world (Azərbaycan Etnoqrafiyası. 2007; 478). Taking into account the worship of the sun dates back to the Bronze Age, there is no doubt that the scene of the horse's sacrifice to the sun was depicted in the Bronze Age.

Abstract signs that have not been studied are also found in Kalbajar rock paintings. The occupation of Kalbajar by the Armenian armed forces in 1993 interrupted this or that research. However, the symbols in the Kalbajar rock paintings are similar to the Gobustan and Gemi gaya signs.

The inclusion of the rock carvings in the materials of the Kalbajar Museum of Regional Studies is of a great importance. Thus, both Azerbaijani citizens and foreign visitors looking at the rock paintings in the exposition corner of the museum's yard get acquainted with examples from the ancient history of our country. It is a positive event that more than 3.500 rock paintings registered by the museum, as well as the preservation of some of these images in the yard and fund of the museum. These paintings reflect the way of life of our ancestors - first of all, hunting, their economic life, as well as the activities of cattle breeders and farmers. These paintings are a clear proof that our ancestors were engaged in primitive art. Most importantly, these materials have scientific significance as a source. For the first time, these rock paintings as material of the Kalbajar Museum of Regional Studies are presented as a scientific source. There are still hundreds of rock paintings in the area that need to be studied. The liberation of Kalbajar from the Armenian occupiers will allow for a deeper study of our written monuments and the preservation of our cultural heritage. We believe that the inclusion of Kalbajar rock paintings in the UNESCO World Heritage List should be one of the most urgent measures. Because the preservation and transmission of these monuments to future

generations cannot only serve the survival of Azerbaijan's cultural heritage, but can be considered one of the achievements of mankind in this area.

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