

NORTH NUROTA STONE AGE OF THE MOUNTAIN RANGE PRELIMINARY STUDIES ON ARCHAEOLOGY

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Abstract:

One of the regions where the study of the Stone Age monuments of Central Asia has entered a new stage is the Nurota mountain ranges. This article provides information on the natural-geographical features of the mountain range, the studies on the stone age in the southern and northern ridges of the Nurota mountain range, and the new monuments and finds recorded in the period after 2018. The newly recorded monuments and finds are mainly recorded from the southern part of the northern Nurota mountain range, from the territories of the present Koshrabot district. In the article, together with the materials of the finds, the preliminary results of Zardolisoi-1 studies, which are recognized by researchers as a monument, are noted.

Keywords: Nurota mountain range, Poshshot, Uchtut, Paleolithic, Neolithic, Oboy, Minishkor, Pangat, Zardolisoi, nucleus, plate.

Introduction

Central Asian history that is waiting for wider study is the Nurota mountain ranges. The Nurota Mountains covered the territory of the ancient Sughd and Bukhara oasis with hot Kyzylkum sands. In the distant past, the Zarafshan oasis could only be reached through the Ilon otti mountain gorge (the road was likened to a snake road because it was a winding road). The most important points in Jizzakh and Nurota were protected by fortress walls (Ungalov LA, 2023, P-187-188).

This area is considered a part of Zarafshan and Mirzachol natural geographical districts, and part of the ridge formed the north-western borders of the Ustrushona state.

As can be seen from the historical-geographic location of the Nurota mountain range, this area served to connect several historical and cultural lands since ancient times. Until recently, written sources mention steppe trade routes, construction and ore deposits that passed through this ridge. Academician Ya. Ghulomov The field around the village in the present-day Nurota and Koshrabot regions appears in the expedition records. In his notes, the scientist concluded that these areas were actively cultivated in the Bronze Age, and that there are also traces of Stone Age communities.

In 1958, the archaeologist Mr. Kosimov came across a flint workshop and "mines" of flint raw materials on the Karatog slopes of the Nurota mountain range (Kasymov M. R. , 1966, pp. 21-27) Stone workshops of the Paleolithic and Neolithic periods were studied during their further research. It can be seen that the primitive history of the southern slopes of the Nurota mountain range was connected with the primitive communities of the Zarafshan valley. During the following years, there are not many researches related to the Stone Age in the Nurota mountain range.

In 2013, in the northern part of the Nurota mountain range, news about the Stone Age began to surface. The fact is that this year a famous scientist

Under the leadership of R. Sulaimanov, an international joint expedition on the study of the Stone Age of Uzbekistan was organized according to the contract concluded between the Museum of the History of the Peoples of Uzbekistan of the RFA and the University of Tokyo. The main goal of this project was to study the Stone Age monuments of Uzbekistan using multidisciplinary approaches. In the first season of field research (in 2013), the Uzbekistan-Japan international partner expedition opened and studied the open-type Poshshot site of the Middle Paleolithic in the northern part of the Nurota Ridge (Suleymanov R. Kh., 2016 - P. 299). The location is about 12–14 km north-west of Nurota, on the northern side of the Nurota mountain range. located at the foothills.

Here, at the foothills of the Nurota mountain range, there is a spring that provides moisture to a rather wide area of the depression, towards the top of the mountain in a southeasterly direction. Immediately to the southwest of the spring are the ruins of a mud castle, which is inferred to have reigned in antiquity and the Middle Ages, based on its pottery. The castle protected Nurota oasis from the west. RH Sulaymanov and AK Kabirov, who first observed the spring and the castle, found several eclats made of silicon from the tributary of the spring and the northern foot of the castle.

The discovery of the Poshshot site, where stone materials made of silicon were found, raised new questions about the Stone Age of the Nurota mountain range. According to scientists, the silicon raw materials found here were brought from the Uchtut raw materials mines about 100 km away or from nearby stone mines.

In 2013, another news about the stone age of the Nurota mountain range was recorded. In the spring of 2013, a group of paleolithic researchers from the Institute of Archeology of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Department of Archeology of SamSU conducted research in the Forish district of the Jizzakh region, and a number of new monuments were found and studied here (Saifullaev BK, Ergashev OT, Rahimov KA, Rajabov A.Y ., Allayorov O`, Pardayev Sh.M., 2014 C.14).In addition to this monument, the expedition also found and studied the monuments of Yangikishloq and Azimbuloq.

Scientific research

As we have seen from the above-mentioned history of archeological research , monuments and findings were found from the northern and southern slopes of the Nurota mountain range, which provide information about the existence of the Stone Age (Fig. 1). It was mainly in the territories of present-day Nurota and Forish districts. However, no stone age monuments were found in the areas of the present Koshrabot district between the northern and southern parts of the Nurota mountain range. Research and observations of scientists soon made it possible to find materials that reveal the history of the Stone Age communities of this area.

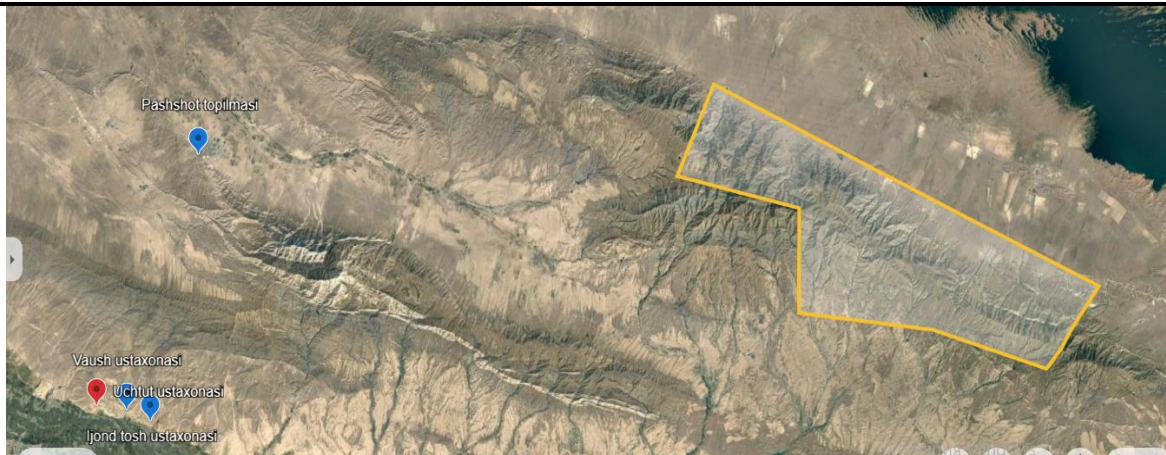


Figure 1: Location of Stone Age finds in the South and North Nurota mountain range as of 2018.

In March 2018, Samarkand State University and the Eurasian Department of the German Institute of Archeology signed an agreement on "Organizing the Uzbek-German archaeological expedition and carrying out reconnaissance work in the Zarafshan oasis" in 2018-2020. In this regard, a joint archaeological expedition will be organized on April 21-May 30, 2018 in Koshrabad district and neighboring areas. As a result of the research in the caves, 2 stone objects were obtained (Fig. 2) .

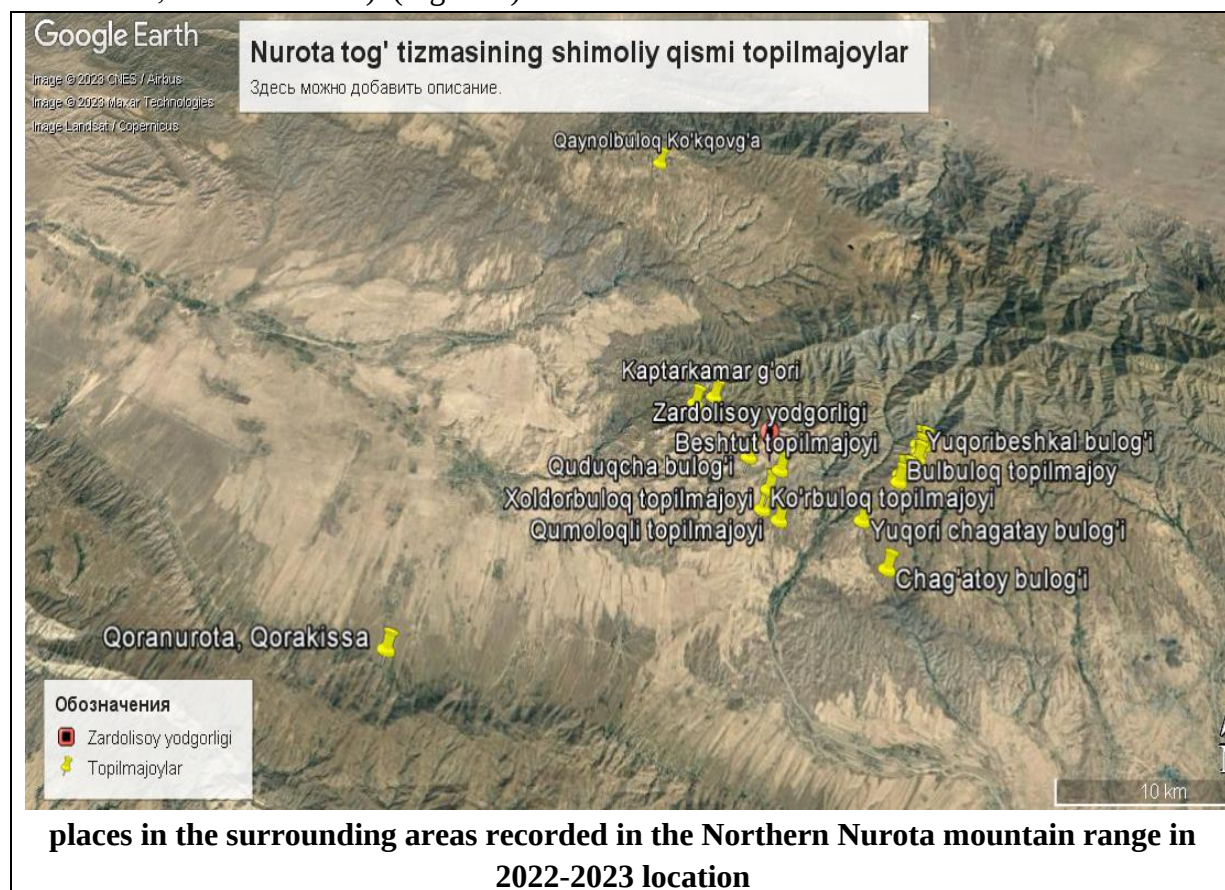


Figure 2: Location of caves recorded in 2018-2022 in North Nurota mountain range.

The stone tools found in the caves belong to the Late Paleolithic period (40-12 thousand years old) according to the processing technique. Experts concluded that the age of these findings is 30-25 thousand years. The discovery of these findings aroused the interest of scientists to conduct

research in the following years (Avanesova N., Luno E., Ergashev O., Kholmatov A., 2020. B.12-20).

The team's further research in this area began with field exploration during July-August 2022. B.Saifullaev, A.Rajabov, doctoral student A.Imomov, L.Ungalov, M.Berdikulov, A.Bakhronov took part in the search. Research was carried out on the archaeological study of the territory of Minishkor, Pangat, Oboy villages and the creation of a map of the places where the stone age findings of the region were found (Sayfullaev B., Ergashev O., Radjabov A., Ungalov L., Imomov A., 2023. B. 15-18). (Figure 3)



Results

During the research, a rock consisting of strongly silicified limestone is identified at the beginning of Oboy village. During the research carried out here, it was noted that there are many scattered raw materials of highly silicified limestone used in the manufacture of stone tools. It is considered too early to call this point a workshop. The reason is that stone objects made by primitive craftsmen have not yet been identified in this place. However, near this village, at the Kyzilboshbulok site, an eclat of the Late Paleolithic period, made of raw materials identified from this point, was obtained. The exterior of this eclat had a heavy mold (patina) coating, and there was a negative indicating that it had been broken with a hard eclat.

The team of scientists thought about dividing the stone objects obtained during the research into two periods. Late Paleolithic eclats, quartz scrapers, silicified limestone nuclei are dated to the Late Paleolithic due to their manufacturing techniques and patina.

The distal part of the retouched éclat, made of green silica, is believed to be Neolithic based on the technique and preservation of the silica plaques.

August and October of 2023, research work was continued. The Zardolisoï site belonging to the Neolithic period was identified from the village of Minishkor, and preliminary excavations were carried out. In this space, a depth of 2x4 m was excavated to 1.10 m. More than 100 stone objects were found during excavations. Plates, plates, stone cores, spears and stone tools were found during the excavations (Fig. 4).

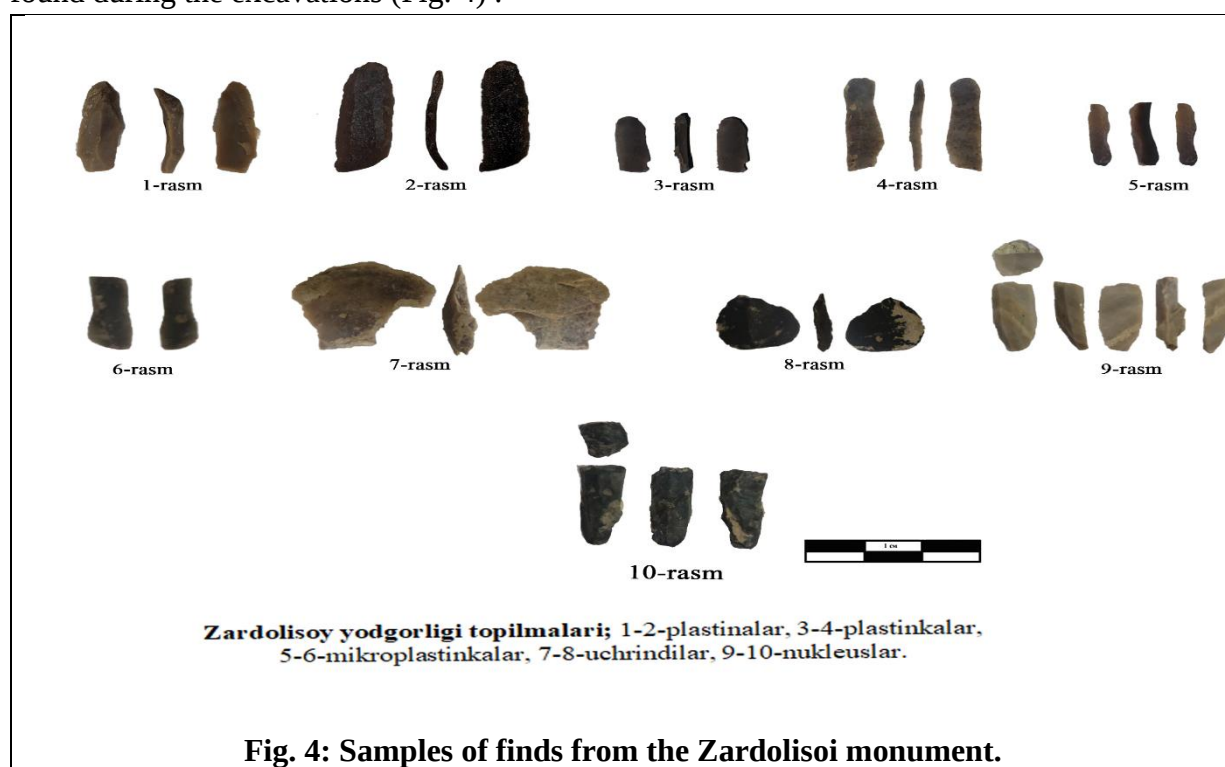


Fig. 4: Samples of finds from the Zardolisoï monument.

Stoneware is mainly made of gray, brown, green flint, slanes, a small amount of chalcedony, silicified limestone. According to the technique of making stone products, we suggest that Zardolisoï area belongs to the Neolithic period. Also, 1 prismatic nucleus and 2 prismatic plates belonging to the Late Paleolithic period according to the technique of making around the spring near the site, as well as 1 radially processed stone from the top of the Beshtut spring, which is about 1 km from the stream where the site is located. zak was detected. It is clear that these findings are promising for research in the area. During our research, Nurota is located in the mountain range In the territory of the villages of Pangat, Oboy, Minishkor, Kumologli, Kokkhavga, Tobali, Mullalim (Koshrabot district) search continued. This is research Although few, the region allows to find artifacts from the Paleolithic and Neolithic eras, which prove that the region was occupied by humans in the Stone Age. As a conclusion, it can be said that the researches expected to be continued in the region will undoubtedly gain a number of scientific innovations in the study of the archeology of the Zarafshan Oasis Stone Age. The first results show this.

Summary

According to the research results, the occupation of the Nurota mountain range and its northern and southern slopes by primitive communities dates back to the Paleolithic period. Research shows the need for more extensive research in this area. We can give several reasons for this.

- First, to determine the place of this area in the study of the history of the primitive period. Clarifying the question of the genesis of the primitive communities that lived here by studying the findings of the Late Paleolithic period found in the region.

- Secondly, how the primitive communities living in the area met the need for raw materials for making stone tools.

- Thirdly, what was the relationship of Neolithic communities with neighboring cultures and which cultural units are the newly identified monuments. What are the economic types of the population of the region.

The answers to the above questions will certainly be found in further research. After all, the history of the primitive period, hidden in the old Nurota mountain range, continues to be revealed through the services of hardworking scientists.

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