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## **The experiment and the emergence of the prehistoric knowledge in Archaeology<sup>1</sup>**

**Abstract:** *As known, knowledge is a real phenomenon of the human brain, which is observed by the eyes and understanding of the mind of the human and formed through the experience. As it is known from all periods of history, the human's relationships with the environment always call him for new discoveries. Therefore, the emergence of the knowledge is believed firstly started with the transition to agricultural civilization. People's moving from hunter-gathering into sedentary occupation has changed their way of life and, accordingly, the origins of scientific knowledge have gradually emerged. Human values and pleasures have changed from culture to culture, from time to time and from person to person and mankind has developed technology to meet the needs that it perceives as its own, not the basic necessities that nature has enacted. Therefore, there is widespread agreement that the Prehistoric knowledge is based entirely on experiment. With the development of society, natural phenomena have begun to be examined in more detailed and thus a solid knowledge accumulation has emerged. The undeniable fact is that today, all levels of cultural development in the world have been made possible by the achievements of experimental knowledge. In this research paper, the importance of today's archaeological knowledge was studied as the source of scientific knowledge that had been possessed by ancient societies through the practical skills.*

**Key word:** *experiment, knowledge, Prehistory, Archaeology, information, knowledge exchange.*

### **1. Introduction**

Knowledge is an abstract concept without any reference to the tangible world. It is a very powerful concept, yet it has no clear definition so far. Knowing is one of the most specific human processes and knowledge is its result (Bolisani and

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Bratianu, 2018, pp. 1-2). However, the emergence of definitive information is obtained through the experimental studies. In each period, the concept of modern science has been formed by applied experiments, since we have been observing this from the very beginning of science. For example, at the beginning of the civilizations, together with agriculture, mankind has made the seasonal knowledge systematic and created the first calendars. Again with agriculture, measurements related to the field required knowledge of geometry and mathematics. The emergence of such types of knowledge is first seen in the Near East (Egypt and Mesopotamia) during the 4th millennium BC, later in the 3rd millennium BC in India and China that we call the Far East. Scientific insights were later developed in ancient Greece, continuing its existence through the Islamic World and then back to the West, and today the countries of the West and Far East are the key figures of modern science.

In my opinion, while the insight of modern science was empirical (observation, experiment, counting, measurement and other) activity in the past, it has gained intellectual activity such as concept, hypothesis, inductive and deductive reasoning, nowadays. Taking into consideration the archeological investigations, a few proposals can be made to prove these ideas fully. New technological methods used as a result of modern science have been provided to obtain more perceptible knowledge by asking new and different questions to the 7th and 6th millennium BC. Archaeological science reveals the remains of ancient civilizations with modern methods and examines them through a variety of scientific methods such as history, sociology, ethnology, geology, and biology. Lifestyles, contributions to technology and art of cultures for thousands of years were uncovered by archaeology.

## **2. The reasons to investigate the Prehistory**

The dramatic change in the life-activity of this period, representing the most important stage in the history of culture, was the result of complete technological development and technological development, in turn, has prompted people to appropriate more surface and subsurface resources. Therefore, the habits of the ancient societies have changed, and their ability to build their homes, domesticate the animals and cultivate wild plants had been emerged. Later, this cultural evolution were became spreading to other regions. Transition to sedentary occupation, the emergence of farming tribes, initial settlements in different periods of human society and change of lifestyle, formation of new technologies, defining the initial stage of civilization and the formation of living patterns were prioritized studies on the study of the Prehistoric periods.

In the middle of last century, these problems were studied in Nakhchivan, western Azerbaijan, Karabakh, Mil-Mughan, and Georgia where archaeological excavations had been carried out. The rise of international archaeological research in the areas mentioned in recent years contributes to a wider contextualization of the aforementioned issues. In general, after the emergence of Shomutepe culture in the



Caucasus, investigations on other Neolithic sites in this region have led to some questions about the explanation of the emergence of culture occurring in the mentioned region, factors contributing to the transition to a sedentary life and taking place of subsequent technical and technological development, as well as the existence of parallels with the Middle East in terms of cultural and economic relations. Today, the vast majority of scholars are trying to find answers to these questions by referring to the "Neolithic Revolution" concept.

### **3. Archaeological investigations in the Caucasus**

Almost, the Caucasus region has been witnessed to all stages of human history. The climate of region is moderate and subtropical. Sporo-Pollen spectra from more than 20 Caucasian Holocene deposits demonstrate that truly optimal climatic conditions in the Caucasus occur during the Boreal period (7<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> millennia BC). From the beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup> millennium BC, temperatures increased and reached a few peaks that were repeatedly followed by cold phases. In the 7<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> millennia BC (the Boreal), the temperatures reached a maximum, also termed the Climatic Optimum. (Akhundov and Almamedov, 2009, p. 35).

The Caucasus is noted for its palaeoecological diversity, vertical zonality, distinctive palaeoclimate and landscape, presence of endemic plants, and richness of raw material sources. All of these circumstances influenced the formation of different cultures, their specific character and their development. Quite remarkably this region retained its distinctiveness during all stages of history. (Korobkova, 1996, p. 57).

There is no doubt that, Southern Caucasus lands were home to a number of prehistoric cultures throughout the millennia. It was home to wandering foragers since the Paleolithic period, as shown by the discoveries of the Azikh Cave or attested by the famous Gobustan rock art dated to the beginning of the Holocene. This highly attractive region was, from this point on, occupied by communities who took up farming and herding towards the end of the 7th mill. BCE at the latest (Lyonnet and Helwing, 2012, pp. 2-3.).

In 1945, after the establishment of the National Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan, it was opened the section of Archaeology and Ethnography within Institute of History and the investigations of archaeological sites expanded.

The state of research in the Caucasus is marked by another dynamic. (Hansen, Mirtskhulava and Bastert-Lamprichs, 2013, p. 387). Substantial research and excavations by colleagues from Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Russia in the 1960–1980s have provided startling evidence for the existence of a number of original prehistoric cultures over the millennia (Lyonnet and Helwing, 2012, p. 2).

For the first time, the remains of the Neolithic period were recorded at the bottom layer of Toyretepe, Shomutepe, bottom layer of Gargartepe, Chalagantepe in Karabakh and (1a) layer of Kultepe in Nakhchivan. These allowed to confirm the hypothesis that Azerbaijan must have been an area where from a very early date

onwards, farming communities were established. Subsequent research has since allowed to discover about 150 Neolithic and Chalcolithic settlements in Azerbaijan (Akhundov and Almamedov, 2009, p. 29). But incorrectly, at that time, a number of Neolithic settlements have been studied published as Eneolithic (Chalcolithic) sites. But, according to the researches carried out during the last twenty years most investigators consider that ancient settlements concerned early group of Shomutepe-Shulaveri culture (VI<sup>th</sup> mil. B.C.) defines the peculiarities of last Neolithic Period. (personal communication with Guliyev F.).

C-14 Analysis from Shomutepe dates 2<sup>nd</sup> half of VI millennium B.C. (5560±701E-631) (Narimanov, 1987) and after the discovery of the Shomutepe settlement in the Kura River basin of northwestern Azerbaijan, the newly revealed culture was then named the Shomutepe. Later in the mid-1960s, analogous sites (Shulaveri, Arukhlo) were discovered in Georgia resulting in the names Shomutepe-Shulaveri or Shulaveri-Shomutepe culture.

In the basin of the Kura, in Georgia and Azerbaijan, it is only at the beginning of the 6th millennium cal BC that a culture appeared (the Shulaveri-Shomutepe culture) that possessed an advanced mastery of the domestication of plants and animals.

The settlements of central and eastern Transcaucasia, located in valleys, flat lowlands and steppe regions present an entirely different character. During the sixth to the fourth millennium B.C. the Kvemo-Kartli and Ararat Plains, the Alazan river valley, the Kura Araxes lowland and the Mil, Karabakh and Mughan steppes (along the confluence of the Kura and Araxes rivers in Azerbaijan) were settled (Kushnareva, 1997, p. 21).

#### **4. Innovations brought by modern scientific achievements to Azerbaijan archeology**

Namely, archaeological studies in Azerbaijan started in the middle of the 20th century and continue to present day. Unlike archaeological research in the South Caucasus in the twentieth century, international archaeological researches, which fully meet the requirements of contemporary science in recent decades, have begun a new stage in the study of Neolithic culture in the region. Until these studies, there were surmise, unproven, biased ideas and approaches about ancient societies. The reasons for these were the lack of more advanced archeology school at that time, the lack of technological innovation and the failure to apply for the research. In this case, the accuracy of the data has been questioned and conditioned further investigations. In order to clarify questions that have not been answered so far, substantial archaeological investigations meeting the requirements of modern science have been started in the region. Especially in international archaeological excavations, a multi-disciplinary approach to the study of cultural heritage has emerged, using the latest theoretical and methodological techniques in the Azerbaijani archeology.

During the independence years, as a continuation of archaeological investigations that began in the middle of the last century, studies have set the stage for a new era. Since 2008, the ancient settlements of the Neolithic and Chalcolithic periods in Ganja-Gazakh, Mil-Karabakh, Mughan and Nakhchivan regions have been widely involved in international archeological investigations. Cooperation with Azerbaijan, Georgia and European archeologists in Goytepe, Arukhlo, Mentesh, Haji Elamkhanlitepe, Kamiltapa, Ovchularitepe and other monuments played an important role in the comprehensive development of this science.

In 2008, major archaeological excavations started at Göytepe ancient settlement. In 2009, a memorandum of cooperation was signed between the two parties (Institute of Archeology and Ethnography and Tokio University), as agreed by the Japanese University of Tokyo on joint researches in Goytepe ancient settlement and other archaeological sites located in Tovuz region. (Guliyev et al., 2008). In this way, the studies of the site have been involved in international investigations. Afterwards, the research has gained a wider scope within the project called "Archaeological complexes reflecting the early civilizations" on grants by the Science Development Foundation under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan (EIF-2011-1 (3)). Subsequently, the topic of the "Archaeological study of Göytepe Neolithic settlement" has become a major factor in the study of the Neolithic problem in the region and has increased the interest towards the study of the site. Following the stratigraphic sequences during the investigations, the site was studied according to building layers or horizons. Architecture and materials of each of the 14 building horizons have been studied in detail on the background of various sciences.

In addition, the full analysis of the material and cultural samples found from Hajielamkhanlitepe (Guliyev et al. 2015) Neolithic settlement as a result of archaeological excavations together with Japanese archaeologists enabled an opportunity to present new insights about the early stage of Shomutepe culture, confirming the fact that the site is still the oldest known Neolithic settlement in the South Caucasus.

Excavations with French archeologists at Menteshitepe settlement, which comprises 3 main periods - Neolithic, Chalcolithic, Bronze Ages situated in Tovuz region, have been started in 2008 and ended in 2015 (Guliyev and Lyonnete, 2013). As a result of the research, the stratigraphy issues of the site have been clarified, allowing for the development of the dynamics of the economy of the mentioned period. It is important to note the rich findings on the history of ancient metallurgy found at the site. As a result of the excavations, tools and metal objects used for metal ore processing at Mentesh settlement were revealed. The excavations suggest that the bottom layer of the ancient settlement belongs to the late Neolithic period, that is, the beginning of the 6th millennium BC.

After the international archaeological excavations at Ovchularitepe in Nakhchivan (Bakhsaliyev, Marro and Ashurov, 2013) the archaeological finds revealed at this site, particularly ceramic products, have proved that the site presents

from the late Chalcolithic Period to Bronze Age which is the transition to the Kura-Araxes cultural stage. At the same time, these findings clarify the issue of the homeland of the Kura-Araz culture, which is the subject of dispute in the Caucasus archeology, and proved the fact that the Nakhchivan region represents the center of the emerging of this culture.

It is also worth mentioning the excavations carried out jointly by Azerbaijani and German archeologists at Kamiltepe ancient settlement in Karabakh that belongs to the Late Neolithic period. According to the results of radiocarbon analysis, Kamiltepe IV is the oldest along the Karasu river, as well as all the sites of the Mil Plain and it belongs to the beginning of 6th millennium BC (Aliyev, Helving, 2010.). Along with German and Azerbaijan specialists, the expedition included researchers from France, Great Britain, Italy, Japan and other countries. On the other hand, involving not only historians-archeologists but also paleontologists, physiologists, topographers and other specialists in the expedition made possible complex researches, such as analysis of soil layers, osteological remains, defining the location of the sites, magnetological situation, landscape study, topographical mapping, and clarify the position of Kamiltepe in the Caucasus and Near East region. As a result, the researches of the German-Azerbaijani archeological expedition suggested that the culture of the Mil plain was densely linked with the archaeological cultures of Iran and cultures around the Caspian Sea, and the Mil Plain was a part of the Halaf, later Ubeyd and Uruk cultures.

Finally, it should be noted that, as a result of international archaeological investigations, modern technological methods have been applied, these studies have formed a new look to the Azerbaijani archeology, the dates of these sites were based on accurate and consistent facts, not as presumptively stated in the Soviet Period, conferences and exhibitions were organized in our country and abroad to deliver new information to the world community, the final results were published in English-language high-rated journals and eventually, the achieved results have made significant contributions to world archeological science and proved that Azerbaijan is one of the earliest human settlements and the creator of the initial culture. It should be noted that researching with the requirements of modern science also leads to the development of new and more experienced specialists. There are few experts in the field of archeology working on the civilizations that have lived in the borders of our country throughout history. However, the students who have recently been involved in international archaeological investigations have been informed about the prehistoric Azerbaijan archeology, the Ancient, Early Middle and Middle Ages, and were directed to one of these periods for being specialized in the needs of modern science.

### **5. Dissemination of knowledge**

As in all periods, rapid development and exchange of knowledge and technology, along with stimulating the development of societies' scientific knowledge,

also enable them to be aware of technological innovations. Research centers and educational institutions in each country conducting experimental studies, adopt knowledge and skills, technological innovations in these or other ways. But as we have seen from the outside, science and its new achievements are not practiced everywhere in the same way. As a science getting developed as a result of the practice, research centers in each country operate in different ways and gain knowledge in a variety of ways. Of course, depending on the methods and skills of scientists here, one institution is developing at a higher level in terms of acquiring practical and scientific knowledge for some of its features. Therefore, the exchange of knowledge is a crucial factor in the sharing of this development and the dissemination of scientific and technological knowledge.

Based on the experience, we can note that each excavation season emerges new questions, new problems. As the researches expand, resulting questions are conditioning relatively large and different research methods. Part of them can be partially implemented, even within existing capacities. However, there is a need for new research to acquire new, more detailed and sensational information. Therefore, different and new research that fully meets international standards and the requirements of modern science must be followed. I think that modern scientific achievements in archeology will contribute to the future investigating of archaeological sites without excavation and their transfer to the future generations.

Contemporary scientific achievements in the world are only transmitted by exchange to other areas. As to dissemination of modern science to other areas, modern science institutions are of great importance in this field. Because the science is institutionalized in modern age, researchers now should be in interaction with other researchers of the Institutes, work with them in research projects, share their results in conferences and meetings. These have a key role in spite of mobility and training of researchers that aim to contribute to the progress of knowledge and technology. Thus, these actions support researchers in different stage of their career. As a result, modern scientific innovations occurring in different parts of Europe are spread around and exchange of modern knowledge is carried out more efficiently.

Based on all this, we must note that it is important to organize training of young professionals both in archaeological excavations and in leading educational institutions of foreign countries in order to acquire high scientific knowledge in the field of archaeological science. This can only be achieved through the exchange of knowledge by participating in international projects. In this respect, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions have also a key role in spite of mobility and training of researchers that aim to contribute to the progress of knowledge and technology.

## **Conclusion**

The emergence of scientific knowledge began with the transition to agricultural and sedentary life. With agriculture and sedentism, requirements have changed and the roots of scientific knowledge have gradually emerged. At the basis of these,

the acquired knowledge stands as a result of the experience. The origins of today's scientific knowledge have reached this level as a result of the experience people gained in ancient time and returning back to investigate its origin.

In the early 20th century, the beginning of research on the Prehistoric period in the Middle East, as well as in other regions, has also stimulated the archaeological research in the Caucasus region. Investigation of the developed civilization that people today possess, along with scientists, began to draw attention to other ordinary people who were not engaged in this work. With the expansion of excavations, new knowledge and questions began to grow. From the early attempts to study the period, it became clear that the studied period was just the beginning of civilization. With the transition to the sedentary life, people have also improved their understanding of art by increasing their thinking ability. At first sight, archaeological investigations showed that in the Southern Caucasus the emergence of the first Neolithic cultures is dated to the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> millennium cal. BC or to the very beginning of the 6th millennium BC. However, some aspects on the chronological and cultural development of the region still remain unclear.

Investigations were continued in the last decade to find the answers to those unknown questions and complete the remainder of the knowledge. Most of these studies are international archaeological excavations. To achieve the goal, it has been tried to take advantage of the knowledge and technologies of advanced educational institutions and advanced practice laboratories. For this reason, knowledge exchange is rather necessary. Effective implementation of knowledge exchange will lead to the achievement of all the objectives and will result in new information.

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