

GOBUSTAN ROCK ART, CARPET FIGURES, TOPONYMS AND ANCIENTNESS

The aim of the study to analyze Gobustan rock engravings, petroglyphs, and carpet figures in terms of mythology, history, and philosophy.

Methods. The study used the method of comparative historical methods, statistics.

Results: Ancient calendars have to be systematically investigated and historical ties amongst them ought to be explored from different viewpoints. Calendars in Gobustan rock engravings and carpet figures, next to bringing new insights into history, can give new impetus to the reinvestigation of human history. Rock drawings and carpet figures of Gobustan suggest a new approach for undiscovered layers of history, in terms of mythology, philosophy, and antiquity. Geographical toponyms and their systematic explanations, alongside material sources, can contribute to the historical ties of the world's nations. Adopting a new approach to these engravings and figures perhaps will shed insight into the hidden layers of human history.

Scientific novelty. There is a natural interrelatedness amongst rock arts of seventeen countries of the world. Owing to this feature, new research on Gobustan rock art of much needed. Figures, given in this paper, put forward new arguments concerning historical relatedness and ties of the world nations. Priorities for the development of ethnic festivals in the Gobustan have been identified in order to attract additional tourist flows and promote the development of ethnic culture. All of these state that humanity has a single starting point and the transmission has happened from this point. Gobustan rock engravings and carpets, not being studied by the world, suggest that initial point and the cradle of the civilization was Azerbaijan, which is geographically located between the West and the East. It also demonstrates that, Azerbaijan was one of the earliest prehistoric human settlements in the world, of course, along with its toponyms. Located between southeastern foothills of the Caucasus Mountains and the Caspian Sea.

Keywords: Mugham, Toponym, Carpet, Ateshgah, Calendar, Gobustan.

Problem statement. Azerbaijan is a rich country with regard to the historical and archaeological monuments and sites dating back to ancient times. The study of the stone tools, and artifacts, revealed by archaeological excavations, in the Azykh cave, showed that, prehistoric humans lived on the Guruchay valley more than a million years ago [9, pp. 2]. It also demonstrates that, Azerbaijan was one of the earliest prehistoric human settlements in the world, of course, along with its toponyms. Located between southeastern foothills of the Caucasus Mountains and the Caspian Sea, in an area with diameter of 100km, Gobustan is a large semi-deserted piedmont geographical region, which involves many ancient riverbeds and ravines [8, p. 7].

The aim of the study to analyze Gobustan rock engravings, petroglyphs, and carpet figures in terms of mythology, history, and philosophy.

Analysing of recent studies: The existence of the prehistoric rock drawings at Gobustan was unknown in scientific circles until the 1940s. Since then, I.M. Djafarzade investigated these monuments, and approximately 3500 petroglyphs, writing remnants, engravings and etchings on the surfaces of more than 700 rocks and stones have been discovered, furthermore, other sites, such as, Boyukdash, Kicikdash, Jinghirdag-Yazilytepe were recognized, as well as, studied [4, p. 2].

In fact, foregoing pictographs and petroglyphs are not ordinary marks or signs, conversely, they subsume some mythological aspects unrecognized in academic sphere, therefore, their historical and philosophical analysis could create opportunity for us to get to the root and remote layers of the human history, as well as, shed light on dark sides of that. Rock drawings and engravings are not exclusive to Azerbaijan only, existed in other seventeen countries of the world, as well. To illustrate, we experience rock art in Alaska, in several European countries, in India, in Egypt, in Russia, as well as in other regions of the world. The correspondence amongst rock arts, made in all these countries, confirms that, there have been some relationships among these places existed since ancient times. At least, thanks to identicalness of the rock drawings existed both in referred territories, and at Gobustan.

Observing rock drawings at Gobustan (1984-1996), Thor Heyerdahl came to the final decision by saying that, "I proved that these writings are significantly similar to the history written in Iceland 1800 years ago". As is known, northern man is recognized as Caucasians, so here again, there is a correspondence in terms of history, archaeology, and geography [6, p. 6]. During those days, we had mutual relations with eleven Academy of Sciences of different countries. However, building up a relationship with the state of China was an unexpected development. To put it another way, Chinese scientists had discovered mummies, with white hair, in Karimsk desert. The findings were belong to

people who had lived in cold weather conditions and saline lands. The thing that disappointed Chinese archaeologists, was mummies' origin, so they were not mongoloid, but Vikings. It does not mean that Vikings living in Chinese desert have to be black. Mummies have weaved clothing on, and colors as well as weaving technology of those dresses were quite specific. In order to investigate these apparels China invited specialists from the USA. According to the experts, they concluded after their investigation, those articles of dress were pertinent to Celts of Ireland. In this regard, we checked on the Sagas of Icelanders. According to the Saga, the fathers of the Irishes are Sayzians. From there, their origin goes back to the Caucasus, again [6, p. 8].

Discussion. The Sagas, from toponimyc aspect saga, refer to the first texts by humans of time, and that their origin can be traced back to Azeri- Turks.

1) Sag - origin, root, distinctive

2) Saga (sagi) - time, ancient texts, and rhetoric or addressing [4, p. 531].

The Norwegian explorer Thor Heyerdahl writes that, "Azerbaijan was in the center of a developing civilization"! One of the first indicators of the beginning of civilization, even the earliest one, was watercrafts associated with navigation. The first toponymic marks of the humanity are also connected with boats (sickle-shaped boats, foldable boats, reed boats). Taking into consideration the mythology related to The Flood, we see that Noah and his generation survived the flood thanks to ark. Furthermore, the boat appears as a boosting factor for the first cultural trade relations, as well.

T. Heyerdahl observing the sickle-shaped boats, during his last visit to Azerbaijan (Gobustan), putting his hands in the air, says; "I acknowledge, these are boats, the oldest boats of the world, even older than those of Sumerians and Egyptians." The interpreter accompanied by the scholar also added saying that; these boats have certainly been made of cane [8, pp. 87-96]. Heyerdahl associates the ancientness of the watercrafts at Gobustan with an illustration of the Sun on them. There is a sun image on the edge or at the front side of the boat depicted on Gobustan rocks, while in Egyptian examples sun has been depicted in the center. The former style, sun illustration at the front, is being regarded as an indicator of ancientness.

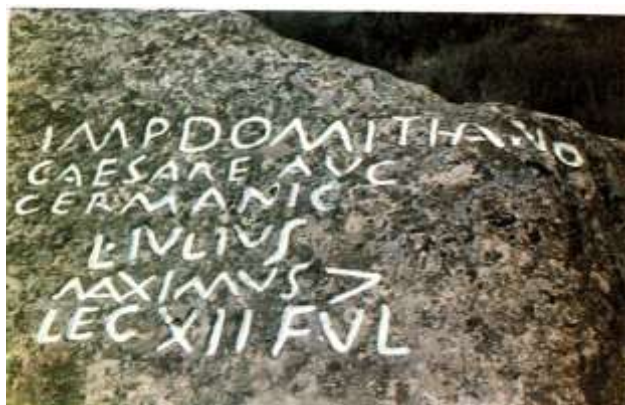


Fig 1. 12th Roman legion's memorial plaque at Gobustan

By contrast, in Gobustan rock engravings, boat petroglyphs involve a bird impression in the central part, which is a symbol of the Great Flood. Other than these, either in Gobustan rock engravings or in Gobustan carpets the Noah's flood, the major mythological event, has been illustrated in an extensive way (The number of the people on the ark, the month and even the hour in which the Flood occurred have been depicted, in a mythical manner). However, unluckily misreading or illegibility of the petroglyphs lead to misunderstandings. Two main petroglyphs from Gobustan rock art site attracted the attention of T. Heyerdahl. First one was the memorial plaque which was written by 12th Roman legion on Gobustan rocks, together with a cross figure.

The second petroglyph, which was scholar's focus of interest, was sickle-shaped line with vertical lines on deck, and sun image on the top corner and other line figures. Norwegian scholar regarded this semicircle as a boat and emphasized on its ancientness.

Being able to read these petroglyphs freely, I believe that the great scientist's account is misdescription. Because the mentioned figure is not a type of boat, but the earliest calendar Shams or Azer calendar, which another very image of it is available in America, belong to the Shamans of Maya. Because the numbers of lines, inside and under these semicircle, make it possible to make such a claim [7, p. 5-11].



Fig. 2. The illustrations of the Azer Shams calendar on Gobustan rocks and carpets

The explanation of the first figure shows that Romans, as well as Pompey made a visit to Gobustan for religious purposes rather than came to fight. Because, prehistoric nations were idolatrous. The primary examples of icons were the petroglyphs, pictures, paintings, and images of religious significance. The following sources give evidences for our account.

Icon - image or figure worshiped by idolaters, 'sanam' (Sun). Second meaning is girl or boy.

House of gods (butkhana) - house of worship, temple [1, p. 82]. Romans (approximately 80-120 people) came here to Gobustan due to the drawings at Gobustan, to pilgrimage it, which again confirms our opinion (image 12th legion). With regard to cross figure, according to religious mythological understanding, it is a quadruple system represents both the birth and the death.

Birth - water, fire, earth, wind.

Death - heaven, earth, human, corruption, perishment.

Arabs, either, had made visits to this region until the 8th and 13th centuries. Nevertheless, in their memorial writings they depicted half-moon instead of cross figure. Two facing half-moons, which called *jowza*, has meaning of twin brother. In general meaning it is a sign of religious fellowship, and this religion was sublime Mugh religion, Zoroastrianism [10, pp. 42-60].

Second image involves two drawings, as we mentioned above, which are two identical sickle-shaped lines similar to watercraft. The mythological interpretations of the figures reveal that this is the world's earliest timekeeping system, the Azer-Shams – the Mayan calendar (image calendar). The calendar has been depicted both on Gobustan rocks and in carpets (Maraza-Sundi carpets). Owing to numbers of the lines, it appears to be the first calendar of the world, the Shams-Mayan calendar, and another example of that, being mentioned above, is in America. Possibly, similar pictographs or petroglyphs exist at rock art sites of different countries, as well. Now we want to concentrate on the calendar, and its interpretation, to unlock its mystery using decoding key words.

Azer – fire, Ateshgah, fire worship angel (religious); ninth month of the solar calendar, in Iran (22 November-21 December). Azeri – worshiper of fire and a name represents Azerbaijanis [1, pp. 15-16]. That is why, in 2012, a rumor that according to Mayan December 21 is the end of the world was sounded, and at that time people was in a state of confusion, as a matter of course. Actually, it had to be regarded as the end of Mayan annual calendar. It had come to the world in Gobustan and Tabriz, and came to close in the West with Mayan. Due to this, Alexander the Great following the battle of Gaugamela, in 331 BC fired and destroyed all unauthentic ateshgahs (places of fire worship) in Iran, whereas, pilgrimaged the Ateshgah in Baku. When it comes to Prometheus fire, it is associated with the next periods. Originally, their names are also connected with Azerbaijan, Baku and Zoroastrianism. Three holy fires and their places. Avesta, the sacred texts of Zoroastrianism, especially, emphasizes on these three fires [10, p. 9].



Fig 3. The carpet figures to illustrate the prehistoric human's transmission

These three fires are Yanar Gagh (Baku), Pirallahi (Baku), and Ateshgah (Baku); concerning other representations, they should be regarded as flame pedigrees. In rock drawings and carpets, these sickle-shaped marks are not occurring in the case of single, but double or pair, yet figures here are not identical. In one of the semicircles, total number of lines made up 22, in another that of lines account for 21, so that these features reaffirm the decoding words, again. The ten lines, mentioned above, have been given as a description of the ten known constellations of the time, on the other hand, the ten perceptions (five of them are internal and other five external) that are given to humankind. Four cross lines point out to four sublime elements (water, fire, earth, and wind), while other four lines are symbolise the afterlife.

In terms of carpet figures, quadriant concerning different numbers in terms of dirt, soil, earth, human being, corruption, and perishment has been given in the form of “T”, in the lower part, five exclamation marks are symbolise the day and night, day and week, and month and year. Altogether, these illustrations unveil the intrinsic nature and essence of the calendar [9, p. 230]. In order to support this statement it will be usefull to consider following terms such as Hun, Shaman, and Maya, from toponymic aspect, to see their linguistic formula.

Hun – means Hun, indeed. Hin means time, epoch. Hindu – hin time, du – two, so, second stage or period, second stage of time [1, p. 735].

Maya – entity, origin, base, fundament [1, p. 324].

Shaman – the word comprises of two parts, *sham* or *shem*, and *an*. Sham or shem means Sun or solar, and *an* is time [1, p. 779]. This word is associated with fire worship, thus, this religious belief comes from Gobustan and Tabriz. The question is that does this calendar originally belong to Mayan or to Gobustan. Gobustan rock drawings, of course, they are more and more ancient, as well as significant. Other rock engravings and drawings can be considered as genealogical trace and historical sources of them. With regard to toponymy, following classification is possible. Sham (Gobustan), Shamakhi (Sham's brother), Aqsayi Sham - far Sham, (Syria), but Shamans represents the western extent of this derivation. Based on sources it is possible to claim that the transmission of humans occurred here, across seven regions and in six directions, thus, Gobustan is the cradle of humanity. A rock drawing, for instance, at Gobustan, accounts for this idea. In that drawing we see a shaman with a hat on his head, on one side of the hat there are seven lines, but on the other side six lines or arrow have been depicted. In carpets, on the other hand, this figure appears to be a tree and a cancer description in its center. Coming to the second calendar, which is known as Dalw calendar, again we find it in Gobustan rock engravings and in carpet figures. Dalw is eleventh month of Kayan's (Iran) solar calendar (22 february-22 March) [1, p. 142]. These clandars historically gose back to approximately 6th-8th millennium, and these are religious symbols of Mugh, Zoroastrians, and fire worshipers. In terms of historical ancientness of Zend-Avesta, the scriptures of Zoroastrianism, we find an account in Plato's Alcibiades saying that Zoroaster had lived six thousand years before Plato, and this five thousand years earlier than the date Trojan War happened [10, p. 12].

Dalw calendar is also celebrated as “Nowruz”. Now means new [1, p. 483], and ruz stands for day [1, p. 526]. Thinking logically, if Nowruz is a new calendar, then there had to be older calendar too. From historical point of view, Mayan's calendar is the earliest timekeeping system, and that of Dalw or Nowruz is the subsequent one, which there are thousands of years between the two. Thor Heyerdahl while being in Azerbaijan (Gabala) rhapsodized that they also have Nowruz, circumambulation of the fire is available in their tradition too. As a matter of course, these characteristics occur in various traditions of other European countries. Because these are the historical or genealogical directions or ways of history.



Fig 4. The impression of Adam and Eve on a Gobustan rock

Third conception of us is associated with the tree engraving with a cancer figure in its center, which has been engraved on rock surfaces, as well as illustrated in carpets. In mythology, folklore, and epics tree appears as a symbol of ancestry, while cancer represents the transmission of prehistoric humans. That is to say, the prehistoric humans have spreaded out across the world. One of the folk songs of Azerbaijan says:

I am a son of the soil
 This winter here, this winter here
 My *madar* (way of living) is changeless [3]

Madar – centre, reliance, starting point. In geography Tropic of Cancer, which is also referred to as Northern Tropic. An account from the epic of Dede Gorgud attests our claim, once more.

“Some day or other, Bayandir khan son of Gamghan, had stood up. Had built the Sham (Shami gunluyu) on the earth”. In fact, there should be *kunhu* (endpoint of something) instead of *gunluk*. That is, his descendants had spreaded to the end of the world, and it should be understood in this way [2, p. 16]. All of these state that humanity has a single starting point and the transmission has happened from this point. Gobustan rock engravings and carpets, not being studied by the world, suggest that initial point and the cradle of the civilization was Azerbaijan, which is geographically located between the West and the East.

Conclusion

1. Ancient calendars (calendars were elements came into existence by studying star systems) have to be systematically investigated and historical ties amongst them ought to be explored from a different viewpoints.

2. Calendars in Gobustan rock engravings and carpet figures, next to bringing new insights into history, can give new impetus to the reinvestigation of human history.

3. Rock drawings and carpet figures of Gobustan suggest a new approach for undiscovered layers of history, in terms of mythology, philosophy, and antiquity.

4. Geographical toponyms and their systematic explanations, alongside material sources, can contribute to the historical ties of the world's nations.

5. There is a natural interrelatedness amongst rock arts of seventeen countries of the world. Owing to this feature, new research on Gobustan rock art of much needed. The basis for is already formed. Presently, world scientific environment ought to show interest in this issue.

6. I am able to read these drawings and petroglyphs freely, so that I have made broad interpretation on these monuments in my writings.

References

1. Arabic and Persian dictionary, Yazichi Publishing House. – Yazichi, Baku, 1985. – 1030 p.
2. Arasli H., The epic of Dede Gorgud – Azerneshr, Baku, 1962. – 175 p.
3. Azerbaijan Folk Songs. – Önder Publishing House, Baku, 2005. – 166 p.
4. Djafarzadeh I.M., Drawings on the Gobustan rocks. – Azerneshr, Baku, 1973. – 119 p.
5. Gabusnameh I. – Daneshe Hamidun, Baku, 2005. – 240 p.
6. Heyerdahl T., Shaki. – Shaki, Shaki, 2000. – 8 p.
7. Human time (tables) traces. – Ishiq, Baku, 1974. – 60 p.
8. Rustamov J. Gobustan dünyası (World of Gobustan). – Azerbaijan State Publishing House, Baku, 1994. – 173 p.
9. Rustamov J., Gobustan Petroglyphs. – Kooperasiya, Baku, 2003. – 104 p.
10. Shamsi I. Avesta. – Azerneshr, Baku, 1995. – 103 p.