

Investigations at the Settlement of Oglankala

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Abstract : Settlements and grave monuments discovered by archeological excavations conducted in Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic have a special place in studying the Ancient history of Azerbaijan between the 4th century B.C. and the 3rd century A.C. From this point of view, the archeological excavations and investigations conducted at Oglankala, Goshatapa, Babatapa, Pusyan, Agvantapa, Meydantapa and other monuments in Nakhchivan have a specific place. From this point of view, the conclusions of archeological research conducted at the Oglankala settlement enable studying of Nakhchivan history, economic life and trade relationships broadly. Oglankala, which is located on Garatapa Mountain with a space of 50 ha, was the largest fortress in Nakhchivan and one of the largest fortresses in the South Caucasus during the Middle Iron Age. The territory where the monument is located is very important in terms of keeping Sharur Lowland, which has great importance for agriculture and is the most productive territory in Nakhchivan, where Arpachay passes starting from the Lesser Caucasus. During the excavations between 1988 and 1989 at Oglankala, covering the fortress's history belonging to the Early and Middle Iron Ages, indisputable proofs showing that the territory was an important political center were discovered at that territory. Oglankala was the capital city of an independent government during the Middle Iron Age. It maintained economic and cultural relationships with the neighboring Urartu Government and was the capital city of a city government covered by a strong protection system in the centuries after the collapse of the Achaemenid Empire. It is need say that broader archeological excavations at Oglankala City were first started by Vali Bakhshaliyev, the Department Head of the Institute of History, Ethnography and Archeology of ANAS Nakhchivan Branch. Between 1988 and 1989, V.B. Bakhshaliyev conducted an excavation within an area of 320 square meters at Oglankala. Since 2006, Oglankala has become a research object for the International Azerbaijan-USA archeological expedition. In 2006, Lauren Ristvet from Pennsylvania State University, Veli Bakhshaliyev from the Nakhchivan Branch of Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences and Safar Ashurov from Baku Office of Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences, together with their other colleagues and students, started to study the ancient history of that magic area. During the archeological research conducted by an international expedition between 2008 and 2011 under the supervision of Vali Bakhshaliyev, the remnants of a palace and the protective walls of a citadel constructed between late 9th century B.C. and early 8th century A.C. were discovered in that residential area. It was found out that Oglankala was the capital city of a small government established at Sharur Lowland during the Middle Iron Age and struggled against the Urartu by establishing a union with the local tribes. That government had a specific cuneiform script. Between the 4th and 2nd centuries B.C., Oglankala and the territory it covered was one of the major political centers of the Atropathena Government.

Keywords : Nakhchivan, Oglankala, settlement, ceramic, archaeological excavation

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