

Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences
Archaeology and Ethnography Institute

BRIEF SCIENTIFIC REPORT

**Excavations in Qıraq Kəsəmən household pot at KP 384.7
SCPX pipeline**

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1 SUMMARY

The report was devoted to the archaeological excavation of household pottery located near Girag Kasaman village of Agstafa district, on the SCPX pipeline corridor at KP384.700. The household pottery was found in the SCPX pipeline corridor in the very centre intended for the trench. This was revealed as a result of scraping the topsoil. 12 potsherds of various types and one fragment of obsidian were found. The material belongs to the late Middle Ages - XVII - XVIII centuries in form and substance.

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2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 SITE DISCOVERY

A random find - household pot was found in the SCPX pipeline corridor in the very centre of the site intended for the trench as a result of topsoil scraping. Operation of machinery was stopped and studies were conducted directly on the site [1, p.1]. A random find was discovered on May 7, 2017 by the Cultural Heritage Monitor Shamil Najafov when supervising ground works. This household pot was discovered as a new find only during construction of the SCPX project (photo 1).

2.2 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The site is located in Girag Kasaman village in Agstafa district. It was found in a plain area after descending from low hills. Coordinates of the site are: N-4562262; E-85541124. The site is located at an altitude of 210 metres above sea level. The site where the household pot was found is located about 150 metres to the north of the Early Middle Age Girag Kasaman settlement, excavated during the BTC project [3, p 7]. The population uses the territory as a pasture for hayfield and grazing.

2.3 WHO CONDUCTED THE WORK AND WHEN

In order not to delay excavation and construction works on the site, and since the archaeological find was represented by only a single household pot, the Cultural Heritage Monitor (Shamil Najafov) conducted archaeological excavations on this site. Archaeological excavations on the site were conducted for only one day, May 8, 2017 by the leading researcher, Doctor of Philosophy in History Shamil Najafov.

3 RESULTS OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS

3.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The site where the household pot was found is the south-eastern slope of the hill with a wide area extending from west to east (photo 1). Girag Kasaman early middle age settlement excavated during the BTC project is very close [3, p.7-8]. Local population call the height where the settlement was set up "Reme". Geographical location of these territories is generally very beneficial in terms of settling. The site is well insulated and there is fertile land and a water source. The wide Kura valley (Jeyranchol) stretches out from the hill to the east, north and north-west. A Muslim cemetery of late XIX - early XX centuries is located nearby. According to the local population, this cemetery was a single village cemetery before resettlement of Kasaman village. Afterwards, the village was resettled, and villages such as Girag Kasaman, Ashagi Kasaman, Yuxari Kasaman, Dag Kasaman originated. There are gravestones and tombs in the cemetery. Of these, the tomb which the local population named Gara Seyid Pir, was consecrated and is considered one of the most important sanctuaries across the territory. In the territory of the site where the household pot was found, an unused channel was excavated. As previously mentioned, there is no occupation layer and pot is buried on this site.

3.2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDS

A random find - household pot was found near Girag Kasaman village of Agstafa district. This find located on KP384.700 of the SCPX pipeline is represented by one household pot (Photo 1). The pot was of medium capacity with a height of 80cm, a mouth diameter of 24cm, a base diameter of 20cm and a body diameter of 110cm [1, p 1]. Operation of machinery was stopped and studies were performed directly on the site (Drawing 1 3). It became known that no signs of settlement could be traced on this site, and the find was the only one pot. In order not to delay construction, the Cultural Heritage Monitor conducted these excavations by himself and the pot was excavated and removed. The pot, comprised of pieces, was partially restored later. The fabric had been fired at a stable temperature, and was made of a mixed clay composition, thick-walled. The mouth of the pot was slightly damaged. The vessel was buried at a depth of 50cm from the ground surface. It was placed in an upright position. Inside the pot, pink, black jug, pitcher and other potsherds (12 pieces) and one obsidian fragment were found (photo 2-5, Drawing.1-2).A fireplace was located 120cm to the southeast of the pot, at a depth of 165cm from the ground surface. The ash layer of the fireplace was 2cm thick and 40 x 20cm in size. Potsherds were found inside of it, belonging to the late Middle Ages and cover approximately XVII-XVIII centuries.[1, p.1].

All the pottery was well made on a potter's wheel. Some sherds are polished and covered with a thin layer of engobe. Most fragments of jugs, cups and pots are made of pure clay, thick-walled, cooked at a stable temperature.

3.3 ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

As a result of archaeological excavations, a single pot containing 12 potsherds was found (photo 2-5).This household pot was probably used for storage and was buried here by residents a nearby settlement. This site is in a region with a density of Middle Ages' sites. The Girag Kasaman village. is about 200-300 years old. It can be concluded that this household pot was buried in an apartment near the residential houses of villagers in the late Middle Ages. Patterns of pottery found in household pot have a different shape and content and could be used mostly to store liquid (wine, syrup) (Drawing 1-2).

4 ANALYTICAL RESULTS

The site where the vessel was found is not a settlement, and there is no an occupation layer here. The material suggests that this can be classified as a single, random find (Photo 1). Various pottery fragments found, along with the pot, relate to a number of vessels for storage of the Late Middle Ages.

4.1 GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF MATERIAL

Clay: all the artefacts belonging to this class of materials are fragments of various parts of pottery, most sherds of the bases of vessels. They are plain and thick-walled. Rimsherds are mostly slightly curved outward, their surface well-polished, and sometimes relate to engobe dishes (Fig.1-2). These grey, light red ceramic fragments are well cooked. The main vessel is thick-walled and has a spherical body. Despite being broken, the part below the body remained intact and allowed the dimensions of the vessel to be established.

Stone: Obsidian, represented by one unworked flake.

4.2 PERIOD AND CHRONOLOGY

The material belong to the Late Middle Ages and covers approximately the 17th-18th centuries.

5 5. DISCUSSION

5.1 INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

Total of results are based on generalization of both field and office/laboratory works. In the area, there were no traces of settlement, no occupation layer found. Only one pot apparently buried in the area where it was discovered in ancient times.

6 INVENTORY

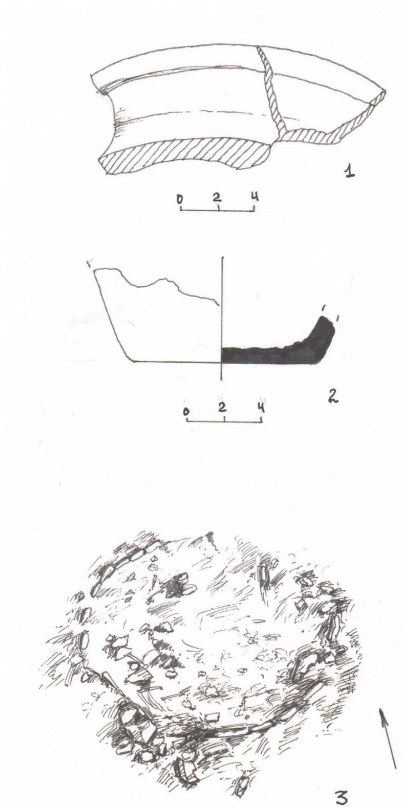
No	Type	Description	Unit and depth	Dimensions
1	Household pot	Light red, spherical, thick-walled (1.5cm) household pot and its parts. Clay composition of is mixed and comprise a mixture of fine sand and gravel. Fine gravel is also felt in clay. There are large chips on the inner surface. Thin polishing and engobe layer is clearly visible on the pot. On the outer surface, on the mouth edge and the body there are patterns painted by scratching. Part of the pot above the body is broken. Part of the pot below the body remained intact. Pot is partially restored .	Depth 30cm	Height 80cm Mouth diameter 24cm Base diameter 20cm Body diameter 110cm
2	Potsherd	Rimsherd of thin-walled pottery type cup with pure clay content. Mouth edge is curved outward. On the part below the mouth, parallel scratching and wavy patterns are applied. Drawing 2, Photo 4.	Within inv 1	4.5 x 5cm
3	Potsherd	Small-sized ceramic fragment. Traces of a potter's wheel are clearly visible on the inner surface. Thin-walled.	Within inv 1	2.5 x 3.1cm
4	Potsherd	Light red ceramic. No shape given. It is rather a fragment of the shoulder part of the vessel.	Within inv 1	2.6 x 2.7cm
5	Pot-sherd	Black ceramic fragment. Body-sherd. Thin-walled and well-polished and chiselled.	Within inv 1	2 x 4cm
6	Potsherd	Fragment of rimsherd. Light red. Clay content is sandy.	Within inv 1	4 x 2cm
7	Potsherd	Shoulder and body fragments of pottery. Bowl-type dish. Thin-walled.	Within inv 1	
8	Potsherd	Base-sherd. Thin-walled. Clay composition is mixed.	Within inv 1	
9	Potsherd	Large fragment of light red pitcher with pure clay content. Surface is very well polished, painted. Pear -shaped. There are coloured patterns decorated in the shape of vertical furrows on the surface. One handle is circular, but connects the mouth with the shoulder.	Within inv 1	
10	Potsherd	Base thick-walled pottery made on a potter's wheel.	Within inv 1	D 8cm
11	Potsherd	Base-sherd. Red and contains pure clay.	Within inv 1	D 6cm
12	Potsherd	Base of thin-walled pottery. Small chips on the surface.	Within inv 1	
13	Potsherd	Base-sherd with a large body. Roughly made. Thin-walled.	Within inv 1	
14	Obsidian	Unworked black transparent obsidian flake. Photo 2.	Within inv 1	1.7 x 4.3cm

7 APPENDICES

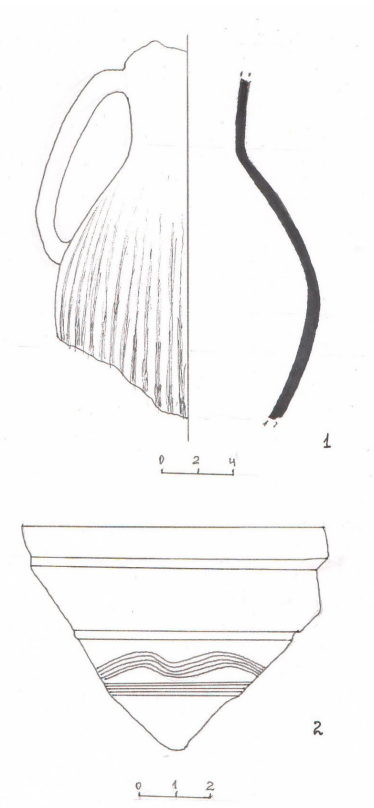
7.1 REFERENCES

1. Najafov Sh N. *A brief scientific reference to the archaeological excavations around Girag Kasaman Household pot, located on 384,700 km of the pipeline route under the SCPX infrastructure project.* Baku, 2017, IAE of ANAS, SASNCS sector, 1 p.
2. Najafov Sh N. *On the results of archaeological studies in Sarvantepe village in 2010 (Gazakh district).* Archeological studies in Azerbaijan -2010 (IAE of ANAS), Baku, 2011, "Khazar University", pp.143-151.
3. Dostiyev T M, Kvachidze V A, Guseynov M M. *A wide scientific report on archaeological excavations in Girag Kasaman village on 405 km of the BTC route.* Baku, 2007, IAE of ANAS, SASNCS, 122 p.

7.2 ILLUSTRATIONS



Drawing 1.



Drawing 2 Inv9 and Inv2.

7.3 Photos



Photo 1. Household pot. Inv 1.



Photo 2. Ceramic patterns Inv2 rim and Inv14 Obsidian.



Photo 3. Fragments of pure clay pottery.



Photo 4. Pitcher fragment Inv9.



Photo 5. Fragments of pottery.