

“CULTURAL RELATIONS OF STONE AGE COMMUNITIES (BASED ON THE KALTAMINOR SITE)”

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Annotation. This article analyzes the cultural relations of the Kaltaminor historical-cultural communities, formed during the Neolithic period in Central Asia, with neighboring Neolithic groups such as the Eastern Caspian region, Southern Turkmenistan (Joyitun culture), the Southern Urals, and the Kazakh steppes. The research compares the scholarly views of S.P. Tolstov, V.M. Masson, A.V. Vinogradov, and G.E. Markov, highlighting the origins of the Kaltaminor culture, its influence on neighboring cultures, and similarities in stone industry and pottery technology. Late Paleolithic–Mesolithic sites discovered in the Kyzylkum and Zarafshan valleys confirm the local roots of this culture and demonstrate that its relations with neighboring regions were complex and multilayered.

Keywords. Kaltaminor culture, Neolithic period, neighborhood relations, Eastern Caspian, Joyitun culture, Kyzylkum, microlithic tools, archaeology, Neolithic–Mesolithic continuity, Ural culture.

Introduction. The study of Neolithic-period archaeological processes in Central Asia serves as an important source for illuminating the economic activities, cultural development, and mutual relations of ancient communities. The Kaltaminor historical-cultural communities stand at the center of these processes and are known as Neolithic groups engaged in hunting, fishing, and gathering in lowland areas. S.P. Tolstov was the first to comment on the cultural relations of these communities with the Eastern Caspian, Southern Turkmenistan (Joyitun culture), the Southern Urals, Kazakhstan, and other regions of Central Asia. Later, V.M. Masson, A.V. Vinogradov, and other researchers conducted in-depth analyses, developing the scholarly foundations for the formation of the Kaltaminor culture and its ties with neighboring communities. The following sections provide a detailed account of Kaltaminor's neighborhood relations, origins, cultural similarities, and regional influence.

Main Part. The issue of cultural relations between the Kaltaminor historical-cultural communities, traditionally engaged in hunting and fishing, and neighboring Neolithic groups was first noted by S.P. Tolstov. Based on sources from the Jonbos-4 site, he observed that the Kaltaminor culture shared many similarities with the Joyitun

communities of southern Central Asia, who were among the earliest farming societies (in terms of stone industry characteristics and pottery features)¹.

Extensive research has been conducted on the origins of the Kaltaminor culture. A major difficulty lies in the absence of fully studied Late Paleolithic and Mesolithic sites within the settlement boundaries of the Kaltaminor communities. Many scholars link the roots of Neolithic material culture in the Central Asian lowlands to the Mesolithic cultures of the Eastern Caspian, specifically the Balkhan region. V.M. Masson associated the formation of the Kaltaminor culture with the migration of Caspian tribes through the Uzboy, while emphasizing that this was not the sole factor and that still unidentified local cultures also played a role². This view is supported by A.V. Vinogradov's recent studies³.

Discoveries of Mesolithic sites such as Uchashi 131, Kok-ayoz 1–2, and Chorbaqti in the Kyzylkum region confirm the local roots of the Kaltaminor culture⁴. Later studies also noted its cultural ties with Neolithic groups of the Southern Urals and Trans-Ural regions, evidenced by microlithic technologies, trapezoidal tools, and pottery decorations.

For example, A.V. Vinogradov highlighted similarities between the Kaltaminor culture and the Joyitun culture of Southern Turkmenistan and the Eastern Caspian. However, he argued that the influence of Central Asian communities on Eastern European cultural processes was overstated, noting that such influence was mainly visible in the Southern Urals and Trans-Ural regions. Trapezoidal tools were widespread in sites such as Cheruk, Sulama, Oqtayloq, and Aydabol in the Eastern Caspian and Ustyurt. In Kazakhstan, the influence of Kaltaminor is observed in symmetric and “horn-shaped trapezoid” microliths. These similarities indicate cultural relations during the Mesolithic–Neolithic transition. The Oyukli culture of Northern Balkhan, studied by G.E. Markov and S. Hamroquliev, also shows close ties with Kaltaminor, as evidenced by microlithic tools and decorated pottery⁵.

In conclusion, the cultural proximity between the Joyitun and Kaltaminor cultures can be explained by three factors:

¹ Толстов С.П. Хорезмская археологическая экспедиция, 1939. КСИИМК, вып.6, 1940; Хорезмская археологическая экспедиция, 1940. КСИИМК, вып.12, 1946,с.91,92

² Массон В.М. Земледельческий неолит юго-запада Средней Азии. // Средняя Азия в эпоху камня и бронзы. – Л.: Наука, 1966. С.144.

³ Виноградов А.В. Қўрсатилган адабиётлар. 1981. 162-бет.

⁴ Хужаназаров М., Сайфуллаев Б. Кук-аяз - новый палеолитический памятник в Северо-Восточных Кызылкумах. ИМКУ, №31. Самарканд, 2000. С.9-16.

⁵ Виноградов А.В. Қўрсатилган адабиёт, 1981. 126, 127-бетлар.

1. Formation based on local continuity.
2. Roots connected to the Late Paleolithic–Mesolithic cultures of the Eastern Caspian.
3. Influence of farming communities migrating northward from Eastern Iran and western regions.

Conclusion. The above scientific analyses demonstrate that the Kaltaminor culture was the result of complex and multilayered historical processes that took shape in Central Asia during the Neolithic period. Its formation was significantly influenced by local Mesolithic–Neolithic communities, the cultures of the Eastern Caspian, and the northward migration of farming centers from the south. Archaeological materials — trapezoidal arrowheads, microliths, and decorated pottery — clearly confirm the cultural relations of the Kaltaminor culture with neighboring regions. However, these relations manifested more as technological exchanges rather than ethnic proximity. The discovery of new sites further strengthens the evidence of local roots while showing that the Kaltaminor culture had only limited influence on cultural processes in neighboring regions. The study of the Kaltaminor culture remains an important scholarly source for reconstructing Neolithic cultural relations in Central Asia.

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