



GOBI BÖLGESİNDE ARKEOLOJİK ARAŞTIRMA VE KAZI

(Ganzagad Bölgesinde Arkeolojik Anıtlar)

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ÖZ

Ganzagad bölgesinde, Umnu Gobi ilinin Noyon köyü topraklarındaki arkeolojik araştırmalarda 3 bölge (Ganzagad'ın merkezine ve Vajigiin Khar'a yakın iki antik bölge ve taş aletler bölgesi) keşfedilmiştir. Toplam 9 mezarda kurban anıtları kazılmış, kayadan oluşan bir sanat bölgesi kaydedilmiş ve belgelendirilmiştir. Ayrıca bir taş aletler bölgesi incelenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Arkeolojik araştırma, kazı, taş aletler bölgesi, Ganzagad.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY AND EXCAVATION IN GOBI REGION

(Archaeological Monuments in Ganzagad Area)

ABSTRACT

During the archaeological survey in Ganzagad in the territory of the Noyon soum of Umnu gobi aimag, 3 sites (Stone tools site and 2 ancient grave sites near Ganzagad center and Vajigiin Khar) were discovered. In total 9 graves and sacrificial monuments were excavated, one rock art site was recorded and documented and one stone tools site was investigated.

Keywords: Archeological survey, excavation, stone tools site, Ganzagad.

The area of Ganzagad is surrounded in the north of Tahilt mountain, in the northeast of Ganzagad Shovon and extends to the east, west and south as a plain with small hills and rain water collecting depressions and dry rivers. The Ganzagad bag center, Noyon soum of Umengobi aimag is located in the northern part of the area on the hill between two dry rivers. There are buildings of bag governor, hospital, cultural center and storage in the bag center.

There is stream in 200 m to the west from the bag center and in general the geographical condition of the area around the bag center seems to be very suitable for permanent settlement for ancient people been rich with open water source and abundant vegetation, located in the hills with flint and gravel rocks.

During archaeological survey 9 sites for ancient graves, sacrificial objects, Stone Age settlements, workshops and earthen kiln for metalwork are discovered at three locations within and in near-locating areas.

A. Ancient graves near Ganzagad area

During archaeological survey in Ganzagad area 9 ancient graves and sacrificial sites are discovered and excavated. These graves are labeled as follows:

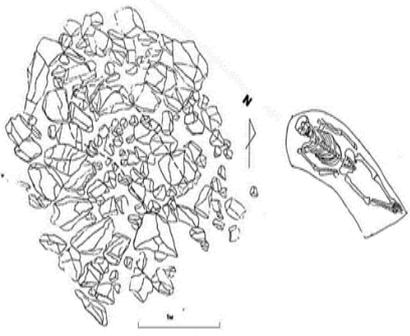
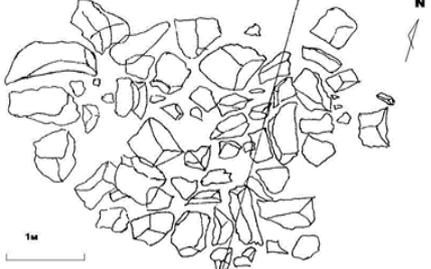
1. Two graves are discovered near the road to Ganzagad bag in 6 km to south from Noyon sum center, on the east of the road on the southern slope of a small hill – **Ganzagad, Grave 1** and **Ganzagad, Grave 2**.

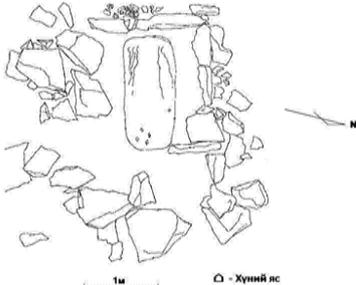
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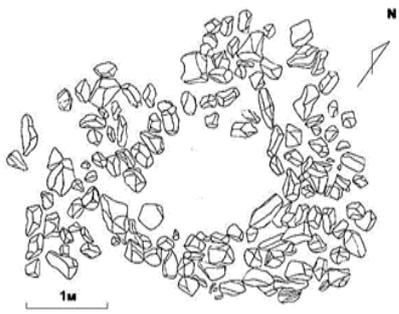
2. Three graves in 3.1 km to northeast from Ganzagad bag center - **Ganzagad, Grave 3, Ganzagad, Grave 4 and Ganzagad, Grave 5.**
3. Two graves in 2 km from the west road to Noyonsoumcenter, or in 6 km from bag center, on the eastern slope of a hill named Vajigiin Khar (Majigiin Khar)
4. Two graves in 500 m to southeast from Vajigiin Khar hill

The detailed description of the archaeological excavations is given below.

Description of excavated Burial

 <p>Ganzagad, Grave 1. Stone feature and burial</p>	<p>Ganzagad, Grave 1. (Mongolian period)</p> <p>N 43° 06'36.5" ALT 1894 m E 102° 10'47.8" Size 3.50x3.50 m</p> <p>The cleaning of the surface in 3.5 to 3.5 m area revealed slightly depressed stone feature. After removing the stones and leveling the surface, east-west oriented burial pit filled with earth is revealed. The deceased was buried with face turned to right and legs bent, oriented to the northwest. Except the lower right canine all the teeth were at the place. During the examination of the pit, a dried up organic material (possibly dried ear) with metal ring worn to it and stone bead of blue colour which was likely the part of the ring, are found from the underneath the skull soil. The further examination revealed no other artefacts and the graves reburied.</p>
 <p>Ganzagad, Grave 2. Stone feature</p>	<p>Ganzagad, Grave 2.(Sacrificial site)</p> <p>N 43° 06' 36,5" ALT 1893 m E 102° 10' 47,8" Diameter 2.3 m</p> <p>The grave is located in 20 m to southwest from the Grave 1 on the western slope of a hill. The surface construction is a circular feature with diameter of 2.3 m. The excavation in the 2 to 2.5 m area did not reveal any burial materials and artifacts.</p>

 <p>Ganzagad, Grave 3. Stone feature</p>	<p>Ganzagad, Grave 3. (Sacrificial site)</p> <p>N 43° 00' 86,6" ALT 1647 m E 102° 06' 24,7" Size 4x4 m</p> <p>This is a circular construction close to the summit. After cleaning and planning the western part of the construction was removed. But in 10 cm depth natural subsoil is reached and excavation is stopped. The construction was likely built with sacrificial purpose.</p>
 <p>Ganzagad, Grave 4. Stone feature</p>	<p>Ganzagad, Grave 4. (Bronze Age)</p> <p>N 43° 00' 55.1" ALT 1664 m E 102° 11' 09.0" Size 4:4 m</p> <p>The original construction was likely built with large stones – the lower stones were removed. The enclosure size is 360 cm long and 190 cm wide. Fragments of bones were found from the lower part of the grave. In 30 cm of depth 170 cm long and 60 cm wide burial pit carved in natural rock is revealed. Excavation of burial pit gave no artefacts and human remains. Findings of human remains from the lower part of the enclosure and absence of the burial in grave pit suggest the grave was robbed in ancient time. By the surface feature the grave might belonged to the Bronze Age.</p>
 <p>Ganzagad. Grave 5. 2nd level</p>	<p>Ganzagad, Grave 5.</p> <p>N43°00'54.7" ALT: 1648 m E102°11'09.0"</p> <p>This is a rectangular enclosure made of large stones without stones in the center. The excavation revealed any artifacts and burial materials and in 40 cm natural soil is reached. The grave was probably robbed in very ancient time.</p>
<p>Archaeological monuments in Vajigiin (majigiin) Khar mountain</p> <p>One of the two hills to south from Tahilt mountain is named Vajigiin Khar. We found two graves on the east of a hill next to Vajigiin Khar and labeled them as Vajigiin Khar 1, and Vajigiin Khar 2.</p>	

 <p>VajigiinKhar, Grave 1. Stone feature</p>	<p>VajigiinKhar, Grave 1. (Sacrificial site)</p> <p>N 43°00'86,8" ALT 1889 m</p> <p>E 102°07'25,0"</p> <p>This a stone construction of triangular shape, with no stone in the center. The cleaning of the surface and the further excavation revealed any burial pit or stone construction. But from underneath of the northern part stones conic shaped pestle is found.</p>
 <p>Vajigiin Khar, Grave 2. Stone feature</p>	<p>VajigiinKhar, Garve 2. (Mongolian period?)</p> <p>N43°00'49.1" ALT 1671 m</p> <p>E102°06'72.3" Size 4.5x4.5 m</p> <p>The grave is located in 200 m to the south of the Vajigiin Khar mountain. This a stone mound with size 4.5 m in diameter. During the cleaning the surface in 5 to 5 m area human bones are found from the central stone box. Excavation revealed human skeleton out of the anatomical position. Probably, robbers dug into the central stone box and staffed human bones into the robbing hole. Near the human bones one "Bu" type coin is found.</p> <p>Description of the find:</p> <p>"Bu" type coin from Manchu period, diameter 2.5 cm.</p> <p>Iron knife fragment: 9.5 cm long, found during the cleaning the surface.</p>
	 <p>Vajigiin Khar.</p> <p>Grave 2."Bu" type coin from Manchu dynasty</p>

 <p>Vajigiin Khar, Grave 3. Stone feature</p>	<p>VajigiinKhar, Grave 3. (Bronze Age)</p> <p>N 43°00' 86,6" ALT 1889m</p> <p>E 102°06' 24,7" Size 5.50x4.50 m</p> <p>The surface feature is stirrup shaped construction which has a wall made of standing flat stones on the northeastern side and round enclosure made of arranged stones in the other sides. The middle stone of the northeastern wall is 85 cm tall, and has an image of rhinoceros. Stone enclosure is 40 cm tall and was filled with rocks. There are no stones in the center – might be a trace of robbery. In the depth of 45 cm, by leveling the excavation area we revealed a stone layer, where a small fragment of hard bone is found. The fragment was very hard to identify if it was animal or human origin. The further excavation for 55 cm revealed natural soil and the grave is backfilled.</p> <p>The surface construction of the grave grabs an interest. The grave is located in front of a small hill, where we found many petroglyphs from Bronze Age. Among these petroglyphs there is an image of a seal identical to the shape of the Grave 2 – semi-egg shape. We suggest that a tribe living in this area had a seal of this shape and maybe by their tradition they had a burial ritual to bury their deceased in the same shape grave construction.</p>
 <p>VajigiinKhar. Grave 4. Surface feature</p>	<p>Vajigiin Khar, Grave 4. (Sacrificial site)</p> <p>N43°00'23.6" ALT 1672 m</p> <p>E102°06'72.3" Size 2.5x3 m</p> <p>The grave is located in 300 m to southeast from the Grave 2 and is a rectangular feature. The excavation revealed any burial or artifacts. The site was possibly made with sacrificial purpose</p>

C. Stone tool site in Ganzagad area

During the archaeological survey conducted in Ganzagad area numerous stone tools are collected. Most of these tools were made of rock of greenish color from the hill in 5 km to north from bag center.

Stone tools site 1. N 42°59' 50.0" ALT 1594 m E102° 12'15.7"

This is a small sand dune in 20 m to north from the bag center overgrown with broom grass, where most of the stone tools were found. At this dune and in 20 m radius 30 fine stone tools of several types and tens of fragments and pieces of stone tools are collected from the surface. In order to determine the location of the stone tool workshop and possible settlement of the stone tool makers we conducted a test trench excavation. The trenches were 1 m wide and the longer trench was 24 m long oriented along latitude and passed by the center of the sand dune. Another trench was 16 m long and started from the middle point of the longer trench and was along the longitude. Each meters of the trenches are labeled alphabetically from A to X for longer trench and from A to O for shorter trench. The excavation is made by 20 cm layer and in total 6 layers or 120 cm were excavated. Findings were recorded according to the layer and quadrant.

170 stone tools are found from the surface and Layer 1.

40 stone tools are found from the Layer 2.

21 stone tools are found from the Layer 3.

The further excavation revealed any stone tools or signs of a settlement.

Stone tools site 2. N 42°59'27.6" ALT 1599 m E102° 12'16.2"

This is a sandy area in 200 m to southeast from the bag center overgrown with broom grass. By the light survey 12 fine made stone tools and more than 20 fragments of stone tools are collected.

Stone tools site 3. N 42° 59' 47,4" ALT 1893 m E 102° 12' 32,0"

This is an area to west from the bag center: hills and sand dunes around a small stream. Numbers of stone tools and fragments are found in this area.

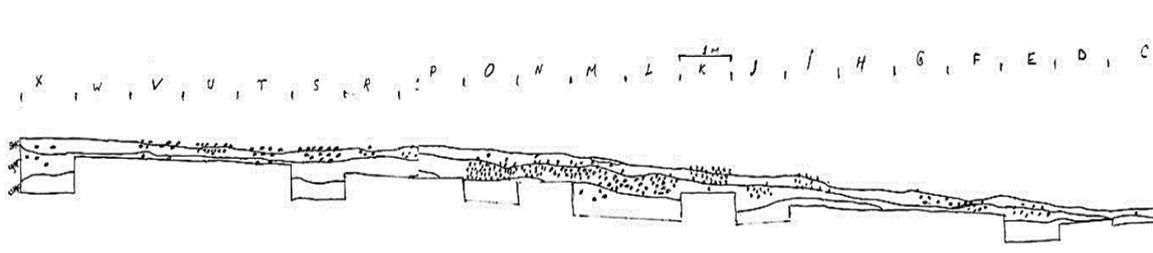
Ganzagad kiln? N 42° 59' 32,0" ALT 1894 m E 102°12' 19,3"

On the southeast from the stream, at the foot of a small hill an oval construction with size of 6 to 8 m made of clay with hard grass is found. There are masses of melted metal pieces revealed near the construction, which suggest the construction be an ancient kiln for metallurgy. Stone tool findings from Ganzagad show that the site may belong to the lower Paleolithic or Neolithic period (40000 to 15000 BP). Abundant findings of stone tools, such as very well made ones, fragments and broken in hunting and everyday activity pieces, suggest about the existence of the stone tool workshops and permanent or temporary settlements of ancient people from Paleolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic periods in the area. Not only the settlement, but it is quite possible, that

sacrificial places, and burial grounds of Neolithic people to be in very near surrounding areas.

For that reason, it is highly required the further comprehensive archaeological investigation of the site to determine the area of the stone tool distribution, its type, technology and to reveal ancient settlement and burials from Neolithic period.

The results of the preliminary archaeological investigation conducted in Ganzagad area show that since very early time – Paleolithic and Neolithic period to the very near historical period – Mongolian period, the area has been inhabited by ancient nomad people, which can be seen from the archaeological monuments revealed in the area. .



Stone tool site 1. Cross-section of the trench excavation

Test trench of the Stone tool site. Noyon soum, Umengobi aimag.

Stone tool site. Trench reburied.



Test excavation. Cross-section. Noyon soum, Umengobi aimag.

STONE TOOL FINDS FROM GANZAGAD**Conclusion**

During the archaeological survey in Ganzagad in the territory of the Noyon soum of Umnu gobi aimag, 3 sites (Stone tool site and 2 ancient grave sites near Ganzagad center and Vajigiin Khar) were discovered. In total 9 graves and sacrificial monuments were excavated, one rock art site was recorded and documented and one stone tools site was investigated. Among the graves and monuments excavated there are 2 graves belonging to the Mongolian period, 3 graves belonging to the Bronze Age (2nd millennia BC) and 4 sacrificial sites. Out of three graves from Bronze Age, there are two slab graves and one "stirrup" type grave. Abundant findings of stone tools found near Ganzagad bag center likely belonging to the Upper Paleolithic and early Neolithic period suggest about the existence of not only the stone tool workshop and settlements of ancient people from Paleolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic periods, but also lead to propose of sacrificial places, and burial grounds of Neolithic people to be in very near surrounding areas. For that reason, the further comprehensive archaeological investigation of the **Ganzagad site** is highly required in order to determine the area of the stone tool distribution, type, culture and technology, and to reveal ancient settlement and burials from Neolithic period in the area.