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**Yaldili Report
On Excavations of Yaldili Jar Burial Site
At Kilometre Point 241 of
Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan and South Caucasus Pipelines Right Of Way**

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I. Introduction

- ***Description of the BTC and SCP Archaeology Programme***

Archaeological excavations in connection with the construction of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) and South Caucasus Pipeline (SCP) pipelines were conducted prior to, and during the construction of these pipelines. These excavations generally were carried out within the 44m wide pipeline corridor from 2001 to 2005. The archaeology program consisted of five phases of which the first four phases constituted field investigations:

Phase I – actual and potential archaeological sites were visually identified during walkover or baseline surveys during the selection of the pipeline route.

Phase II – the sites that were identified during Phase I as archaeologically potential were tested by digging test pits and conducting small-scale trial excavations.

Phase III – small and large-scale excavations were carried out within the BTC Right Of Way (ROW).

Phase IV – small and large-scale excavations were carried out within the SCP ROW.

In addition to these, all the construction activities were monitored by watching brief archaeologists.

In general, during the core Phase III and Phase IV archaeological excavations were carried out at 41 sites with thousands of artefacts discovered. None of these sites had been previously known to archaeological science.

Phase V – preparation of scientific reports on the archaeological excavations carried out during the previous phases.

- ***Discovery of the Archaeological Site***

The Yaldili jar burial site at KP 241 of the BTC ROW was not discovered during Phase I or Phase II of the archaeology programme. The reason is that the site, located on level land, had no visible surface markers or signs to attract attention. The landuse is predominantly arable farming and had standing crops at the time of baseline surveys. The site was identified as a potential archaeological site by a watching brief archaeologist following trench excavation for the BTC pipeline in September 2004. At least three jar graves were observed in the side of the trench. During January 2005 the SCP pipeline route was topsoil stripped by an excavator with a toothless bucket working under archaeological control.

Excavations at the site were carried out in January and February 2005 and led by Gahraman Agayev and Farhad Guliyev. Participating in the excavations were Vagif Asadov, Ahliman Abdulrahmanov, Fuad Huseynov and Ziya Hajili, all from the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography (IoAE), National Academy of Sciences of the Azerbaijan Republic. Work was supervised by the BTC archaeology representative David Maynard.

II. Archaeological Contexts for Understanding the Site

- ***General Archaeological Overview of this Portion of Azerbaijan***

The Ganja-Gazakh region of Azerbaijan, particularly the Kura riverside areas including the Yevlax District, is rich in archaeological monuments of different types. The fertile soil of the area, plentiful water sources, and favourable climatic conditions were the reasons that people have been occupying this area since ancient times.

Settlement and cemetery sites dating from different historical periods have been identified and explored in the area. Archaeological excavations have been conducted in the area since the first half of the 19th century, however initially the artefacts recovered from different sites were taken out of the country. For instance, the Swiss archaeologist Dobua de Monperi excavated in the area in 1834 and took to France numerous artefacts he recovered from sites. N. O. Selosani and V. Belk robbed over 300 monuments in the area and took the invaluable finds to the Munich and Hamburg museums.

The Azerbaijan Archaeological Committee set up in 1923 played an important part in the planned investigation of archaeology in Azerbaijan. The services of such Azerbaijan scientists as A. Alakbarov, I Jafarzade, D. Sharifov, S. Gaziyeu and Y. Hummelin in the study of archaeology of the western part of Azerbaijan cannot be overestimated. The Mingachevir archaeological expedition launched in 1946 made an outstanding contribution to the development of archaeology not only in this region but entire South Caucasus.

Very important and valuable sites were discovered and explored in the western region of Azerbaijan in connection with the BTC and SCP pipelines construction. The excavated sites could be said to date to almost all historical periods. These were Yaldili, Borsunlu, Fakhrali, Lak I and Lak II, Hajialili I, Hajialili II and Hajialili III, Garajamirli I and Garajamirli II and other sites.

• *General Summary of the Geography and Geology of the Area*

The relief, geographic and geological characteristics of any region condition the economics, material culture and consequently the entire mode of life of people in this area during different periods of history. From this point of view of particular interest is the Ganja-Gazakh region which is divided into three distinctive parts in terms of relief, geography and geology: mountainous, sub mountainous and flat. From the west and south-west the area is locked with high ridges of the Minor Caucasus. The highest peaks in these ridges are the Goshgar Dagi (3378m) and Hinal Dagi (3373m). The alpine and sub alpine grasslands high in the mountains and foothills of the Minor Caucasus are covered with thick green vegetation even in the hottest summer months which is the major factor in the development of summer animal husbandry. These areas are covered with woods at a height of 500-600m and up to 2200-2300m. Higher up the woodland changes taking the shape of narrow strips of forested land which gradually passes into sub alpine meadows and fields. At a height of 2500m the mountainsides mostly covered with alpine grasslands sometimes rather scarce, alternate with steep rocks. It is in these mountains that the Kura river right-hand tributaries feed from plentiful water sources and snow-covered mountain peaks. The sub mountain wood and brushwood zones are the natural habitat for wild boar, bear, wolf, badger, jackal, hare and other animals. Of birds the most precious are pheasant and francolin.

The flat and partially foothill zone is located 150-600m above sea level. This zone is characterised by brown and chernozem soils fit for crop growing. At the same time large portions of this zone are semi-desert lands with sagebrush being the major vegetation. At a height of 500-600m the areas covered with sagebrush scrub are replaced with woods. Rapid rivers running through deep gorges of the Minor Caucasus come out to the flat area and form wide river beds in these places which become even wider closer towards the river of Kura. The fairly large rivers in this area are Agstafachai, Hasansu, Tovuzchai, Zayamchai, Shamkirchai and Goshgarchai. In the summer months the water flow in these rivers decreases to the extent that some of them may completely dry up and yield no water to the river Kura.

There are a number of mineral deposits in the region's mountainous areas. Commercially significant of these are a copper mine in Gedabey and an iron ore mine in Dashkasan. Deposits of semiprecious stones such as agate, opal, chalcedony, amethyst, jasper, aragonite and crystal were also discovered in this area. A gold mine and one of the largest obsidian mines in the Caucasus are located in the Kelbajar Mountains in the immediate vicinity of Gedabey and Dashkasan.

III. Field and Office Methods

- *Field Methods*

Excavation initially covered an area 40m long by 4m wide. For ease of locating potential graves, the uppermost subsoil layer was additionally removed by machines to 15-20cm depth. After that the work was performed by the IoAE archaeologists and BTC project labour force using shovels, barrows, trowels, brushes and other hand tools to clean and expose features as they were located. The excavation site was divided up into eight 4m by 5m trenches along the SCP pipe centre-line and numbered successively with Arabic numerals. After partial removal of the upper soil layers it became obvious that the excavation site should be extended 30m eastward. However, only 8 out of 14 trenches along the 70m length were fully excavated. Except for a few pottery sherds, no traces of burials or other cultural material were recorded in Trenches 9 to 14. Therefore it appeared expedient to stop excavating these trenches. Trenches 1 to 8 produced nine jar burials. There was also an ash deposit layer in Trench 8. It measured 1.4m northwest-southeast by 70cm southwest-northeast. The feature was interpreted as a hearth which could have been used as a sanctuary.

- *Office/Laboratory Methods*

The material from the graves was boxed and sent off to the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography in Baku, to be processed and made available for writing a report. At the “Archaeological Service” department of the IoAE the pottery finds were cleaned of soil and repaired. Photographs of finds were taken and their drawings were made which were then digitally processed to be incorporated into the illustrative part of this Report.

- *Archive Disposition*

After final treatment the material from the Yaldili jar burial cemetery was stored in a special archive set up in the IoAE for the finds retained from the BTC and SCP archaeological excavations. Part of the finds were handed over to the Yevlax Museum of History and Local Studies.

IV. Excavation Results

- *Site Description*

The jar burial cemetery is located south of Yaldili village in the Yevlax District, at KP 241 of the BTC ROW at Pulkovo coordinates 8669022, 4499641. The land is predominantly flat and used for arable farming. The upper layers of the site had been damaged by years of ploughing by heavy machines. Nevertheless, some of the burials within the pipelines construction corridor were relatively well preserved.

- *Description of Graves and Finds*

| Grave | Jar Grave | Mouth direction | Skeleton | Head | Outside vessels | Inside Vessels | Other Goods |
|-------|-----------|-----------------|----------|------|-----------------|----------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 | 1 | E | 1 | N | 5+ | 3 | 7 beads, Pendants, Bronze bracelet |
| 2 | 1 | | 1 | N | 8 | 4 | |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|----------|---|---|---|---|--|
| 3 | | E | 1 | E | 7 | 6 | Beads, Pendants, Ear rings, Spindle whorl |
| 4 | 1 | | | | 3 | 3 | 12 beads Bronze bracelet |
| 5 | 1 | | 1 | E | | 1 | |
| 6 | | | | | | | |
| 7 | 1 | E | 1 | S | | | |
| 8 | 1 | N | 1 | S | 4 | 2 | |
| 9 | 1 | Vertical | 1 | | 2 | | |

Jar Burial 1

Jar Burial 1 was exposed 1.1m away from the north-west wall and 1.8m away from the south-east wall of Trench 1 (Photo1). The burial jar lay on its side with the mouth directed towards the east. The pot, 1m in length and 85cm in diameter, was pink coloured and had thick walls. A set of different pottery vessels more or less in situ were found densely disposed near the base of the burial jar. Two more pottery vessels could be seen side by side 70cm west of the base of the jar. Another two pots were exposed north of these vessels. Placed on the mouth of one of these pots was a bowl-type ceramic pot.

The jar fill and surrounding soil contained charcoal flecks. When cleaned of fill, a human skull was first detected in the jar. Further cleaning exposed arm and leg bones near the skull suggesting the body was buried in a crouched position. A small dopu and a bowl lying on its side were found near the leg bones of the skeleton (towards the mouth part of the burial jar). One more relatively large bowl was retrieved from under the ribs of the skeleton. A total of 12 pottery vessels and various jewellery fragments were recovered from Grave 1. Some of the pots turned out to be highly fragmentary to yield full measurements.

Finds from Jar Burial 1

Pottery

1. Pink coloured jug with a globular body, narrow neck and everted rim. The pot has two handles slightly below the mouth on the upper part of the body. The upper portions of the handles are missing. The neck is decorated with two encircling rows of stamped patterns resembling a cart wheel. The flat and wide base is coated with yellowish angobe. Dimensions: body diameter – 45cm, base diameter – 18cm. The mouth and neck portion of the pot is broken therefore the pot did not yield full measurements.

2. Pink coloured jug with a globular body, narrow neck and everted rim. The pot has two bow-shaped handles attached to the mid section of the body. The base is flat and coated with yellowish angobe. Decoration consists of a series of dot-like patterns. Dimensions: body diameter – 33cm, base diameter – 18cm. The pot is highly fragmentary to yield full measurements.

3. Pink coloured bowl-type pot with a flaring body. The base is oval with a depression in the central part. Two incised lines run around the body slightly below the rim. Mouth diameter – 13.5cm, mouth height – 7cm. The pot is highly fragmentary to yield full measurements.

4. Pink coloured, flat-based jug-type pot with a narrow neck and everted rim. The pot has a handle attached to the rim and mid-section of the body and a spout 9cm below the rim. Mouth diameter – 12cm, spout length – 6.5cm. The pot is highly fragmentary to yield full measurements.
5. Pink coloured jug-type pot with a narrow neck and rounded everted rim. Height – 16cm. The pot is highly fragmentary to yield full measurements.
6. Small, pink coloured, flat-based jug-type pot with a petal-like mouth. The pot has a handle attached to the mouth and shoulder. The surface is coated with yellowish angobe. Dimensions: height – 18.5cm, base diameter – 10cm, body diameter – 17cm, mouth diameter – 10cm, neck height – 6cm.
7. Small, pink-coloured dopu with a narrow mouth and outwardly directed rim. The body with a single lug-handle is globular, the base is flat. Dimensions: body diameter – 25cm, height – 8.5cm, mouth diameter – 4cm.
8. Brown coloured, flat-based bowl-type pot with an incurving mouth. Base diameter – 5.5cm. The pot is highly fragmentary to yield full measurements.
9. Large, brown coloured bowl-type pot. Dimensions: height – 18.5cm, mouth diameter – 10cm, body diameter – 17cm, base diameter – 10cm, neck height – 6cm.
10. Small, brown coloured flat-based jug with a narrow neck and straight rim. A plain handle is attached to the mouth and shoulder of the pot. There are traces of great heat on the lower part of the body. Dimensions: height – 10cm, base diameter – 11cm, handle diameter – 3cm.

Beads

1. Seven mother-of-pearl beads covered with goldish coloured foil. The beads are diamond-shaped and have holes on both ends. Length – 2.5cm.
2. Three triangular-shaped encrusted pendants. Length – 1.2cm.
3. Six small oblong-shaped agate beads with a hole in the centre.

Metal Objects

Fragment of a bronze bracelet.

Jar Burial 2

Jar Burial 2 was uncovered 80cm away from the south-east wall and 2.25m away from the north-west wall of Trench 2 (Photo 2). Adjacent to the base of the burial jar, were the broken remains of three vessels and to the north of these, the remains of another large jar, all in situ. The crushed remains of three more pottery vessels in situ could be seen in a row aligned perpendicularly to the north side of the burial jar. There was one more pot placed adjacent to the burial jar on the east of these three pottery vessels.

The burial jar contained a skeleton lying flexed on its right side with the knees drawn up and the head facing north. There were also two small bowls, a dopu and a platter-type pot placed in the jar with the dead.

Finds from Jar Burial 2

1. Pink coloured jug with a globular body and flat outwardly directed rim. The surface is coated with yellowish angobe. Dimensions: body diameter – 55cm, base diameter – 25cm, wall thickness – 1cm. The upper part missing, the pot did not yield full measurements.

2. Pink coloured single-handled, spouted jug with a pear-shaped body, narrow-neck and everted rim. The surface is coated with yellowish angobe. The upper section of the body is girded with two parallel wavy lines spaced at 3cm distance from each other. There are notched patterns at the juncture of the neck and body. Dimensions: neck height – 8cm, handle height – 13cm, handle diameter – 3cm, spout length – 6.5cm. The pot is very fragmentary to yield all measurements.
3. Pink coloured bowl with a straight rim. Extremely fragmentary, the pot did not yield measurements.
4. Pink coloured globular body jug with a low neck and everted rim. The pot has two upward folded handles on the body. The neck is decorated with an encircling line of dot-like depressions. Below this pattern, there are three more rows of dot-like depressions – 4 patterns in each row. Dimensions: body diameter – 35cm, base diameter – 11.5cm, handle diameter – 3cm. The pot is highly fragmentary to yield full measurements.
5. Pink coloured globular body jug with a low neck, everted rim and twin handles attached to the body. The pot surface is coated with yellowish angobe. Encircling the jug's body are thin incised lines. Dimensions: body diameter – 37cm, handle diameter – 6cm. The pot is highly fragmentary to yield full measurements.
6. Pink coloured twin-handled jug with a flat outwardly directed rim. There is no neck or shoulder, the mouth is formed by the continuation of the body. One handle is broken off. The remaining handle has dot-like decoration. Handle diameter – 9cm. The pot is highly fragmentary to yield full measurements.
7. Fragments representing two different pink coloured pots. One pot has a single 4cm diameter handle. The body is decorated with a strip in high relief. A second pot has also a single handle, but the pot is smaller than the first one. The handle diameter of a second pot is 2cm. The pots are highly fragmentary to yield full measurements.
8. Pink coloured jug with a globular body, low neck, narrow mouth and everted rim. A single handle connects the rim and mid-point of the pot body. The neck is girded with a thin incised line. Beneath, also encircling the pot's neck are three parallel incised wavy strips. Further down, a single straight line and three more wavy lines form a pattern around the mid section of the pot. The surface is coated with yellowish angobe. Handle diameter – 4cm, handle length – 13cm. The pot is highly fragmentary to yield full measurements.
9. Small, pink coloured bowl with a flat base and rounded rim. Height – 4cm, mouth diameter – 10.9cm, base diameter – 4cm.
10. Straight-walled bowl with a wide-mouth and concave footed base. Mouth diameter – 15cm, height – 9.5cm.
11. Pink coloured platter-type pot with a flat base and straight rim. The pot was fully restored in the laboratory. A hook-like handle attached to the mouth has a hole in its central part and is decorated with a dot-like pattern. There is a wide strip encircling the juncture between the mouth and body. Dimensions: height – 9.8cm, mouth diameter – 24cm, handle outer diameter – 5cm, handle inner diameter – 2cm, base diameter – 10.5cm.
12. Lower part of a wide- and flat-based pot well fired to a light pink surface. Base diameter – 21cm, wall thickness – 1cm.

A total of 17 pottery vessels were retrieved from Jar Burial 2. Four of these were very fragmentary and therefore did not yield measurements. No jewellery or other material was contained in the jar grave.

Jar Burial 3

Jar Burial 3 was excavated in Trench 3 (Photo 3). The burial jar, 1.85m long, was lying on its side with the mouth oriented to the east. A dense cluster of pots was seen adjacent to and around the base of the burial jar. One more pot was placed on the north of this group of pots.

The burial jar contained a skeleton and accompanying grave goods consisting of pottery vessels and items of jewellery. The skeleton was laid on its right side with the head at the east end of the grave (towards the jar mouth). Beads of different types were found above the body and a pair of bronze earrings in the ear region of the skeleton. Two bowls and a small dopu were found disposed near the knees of the dead and three more pottery vessels around it. In addition, a single spindle whorl was found near the skull of the skeleton. The burial jar fill contained flecks of charcoal. Bits of charcoal could also be seen in the soil around the jar.

Finds from Jar Burial 3

Pottery

1. Dark pink-coloured narrow-mouthed jug. The neck is girded with pressed in dots. Beneath this pattern are two wave-shaped and two spike-shaped strips parallel running around the pot's circumference. The pot base is flat and wide. The surface is coated with yellowish angobe and well polished. Dimensions: base diameter – 15.3cm, wall thickness – 0.5cm. The pot is highly fragmentary to yield full measurements.
2. Dark pink-coloured large-handled jug-type pot with a wide and flat base. The lower section of the pot near the base has spike-shaped decoration. The pot surface is coated with yellowish angobe. Dimensions: base diameter – 20.5cm, wall thickness – 0.8cm. The pot is highly fragmentary to yield full measurements.
3. Pink coloured jug-type pot with a large globular body and twin handles. The base is flat and wide. Well executed and coated with yellowish angobe. Dimensions: body diameter – 57cm, base diameter – 11.3cm, wall thickness – 1cm. The pot is highly fragmentary to yield full measurements.
4. Small, grey coloured flat-based jug with a wide mouth and slightly everted rim. The pot has no neck or shoulder, the mouth is formed as a continuation of the body. A single handle connects the mouth and upper section of the body. The pot is poorly fired and has heat-caused stains on the surface. Dimensions: handle height – 7cm, handle outer diameter – 3cm, handle inner diameter – 1cm, wall thickness – 0.6cm. The pot is highly fragmentary to yield full measurements.
5. Pink coloured narrow-necked jug with a wide and flat base. The inner surface of the base is decorated with concentric circles. Body diameter – 31cm, wall thickness – 0.8cm. The pot is highly fragmentary to yield full measurements.
6. Light pink-coloured jug-type pot with a wide mouth. There are three triangular-shaped lugs around the flat and wide base. The lugs are 2cm high and spaced at 8cm distance from each other. The pot surface is coated with white angobe. Dimensions: body diameter – 35cm, base diameter – 23.5cm, wall thickness – 0.8cm. The pot is highly fragmentary to yield full measurements.
7. Large, pink coloured flat-based jug with a globular body, narrow neck and twin handles. Well fired. Dimensions: body diameter – 36cm, neck height – 12cm, handle diameter – 2.5cm, wall thickness – 0.7cm. The mouth missing, the pot did not yield full measurements.

8. Small, pink coloured thin-walled, flat-based jug with an everted rim. The pot has no neck or shoulder, the mouth is formed as a continuation of the globular body, which tapers down towards the base. Poorly fired. Dimensions: body diameter – 7.5cm, base diameter – 5cm, mouth diameter – 4.5cm, wall thickness – 0.5cm. The pot is highly fragmentary.

9. Small, orange coloured flat-based bowl-type pot. The straight mouth is separated from the body by a thin groove. Dimensions: height – 4.8cm, mouth diameter – 12cm, base diameter – 5.5cm.

10. Pink coloured oval-based bowl-type pot with a straight rim. The pot is highly fragmentary to yield full measurements.

11. Pink coloured flat-based plate with an incurving rim and hook-like handle. Dimensions: mouth diameter – 14cm, base diameter – 8cm.

12. Brown coloured flat-based jug with a wide mouth and everted rim. The pot has no neck or shoulder, the mouth is formed as a continuation of the globular body. The pot is highly fragmentary to yield full measurements.

13. Small, pink coloured jug-type pot with a globular body, flat base and narrow neck. There are two applied moulded lugs on the opposing sides of the petal-like mouth. The lugs resemble bird's eyes, which allow this pot to be identified as a zoomorphic vessel. The neck-to-body transition is decorated with notched patterns, each consisting of four dot-like depressions. A single handle connects the rim and body.

Beads

1. Diamond-shaped mother-of-pearl beads with holes on both ends. The beads are covered with goldish coloured foil.

2. Three triangular-shaped encrusted pendants.

Description of Jar Burial 4

Jar Burial 4 was unearthed at the balk of Trenches 6 and 7, close to the north walls of the trenches (Photo 4). As is obvious in the photo, the upper portion of the jar grave is missing. However, despite this damage, the burial jar and accompanying grave goods could be identified to forms. The three complete bardag-type pots found in situ by the base of the burial jar were also fragmentary. Preservation of the pottery vessels inside the burial was relatively good. The burial jar was approximately 1.2m high, with its body diameter being 85cm.

Finds from Jar Burial 4

Pottery

1. Plain, light brown coloured bardag-type pot with a bow-shaped handle connecting the mouth and shoulder. Highly fragmentary. Dimensions: height – 15cm, mouth diameter – 8cm, body diameter – 15cm, base diameter – 10.5cm.

2. Plain, light brown coloured bardag-type pot with a circular handle connecting the mouth and shoulder. Highly fragmentary. Dimensions: height – 16cm, mouth diameter – 7cm, body diameter – 14cm, base diameter – 5cm.

3. Light brown coloured jug-type pot with a bow-shaped handle connecting the mouth and shoulder. The pot is extremely fragmentary to yield measurements.

4. Small, plain, light brown coloured jug with an everted rim. Dimensions: height – 7.5cm, mouth diameter – 5.4cm, body diameter – 10cm, base diameter – 4.5cm.

5. Plain, light brown coloured platter with a small handle attached to the rim. The handle has a hole in its central part. Dimensions: height – 5.5cm, mouth diameter – 12.5cm, base diameter – 5.5cm.

6. Plain, light brown coloured mug-type pot with a circular handle attached close to the mouth. Dimensions: height – 9cm, mouth diameter – 8.5cm, base diameter – 3.8cm.

Jewellery

1. Twelve agate and paste beads.
2. Bronze bracelet.

Jar Burial 5

Jar Burial 5 was located 2.5-3m north-east of Jar Burial 4, against the south-west wall of Trench 7 (Photo 5). The skeleton, aligned north to south was lying flexed on its left side with the knees and elbows drawn up and the head facing east. The skeleton covered an area 51cm across and up to 85cm long.

A small jug-type pot was visible between the knees and feet of the skeleton. Other pottery finds contained in the dark silty grave fill, were fragments of a large vessel which presumably were the remains of the burial jar. The burial chamber, roughly oval in shape was 1.4m wide by 1.85m long and 95cm deep. The grave appeared to have been robbed at some point in time after the burial which resulted in the breakage of the burial jar. This assumption was further supported by the discovery of pottery sherds representing other types of vessels.

Finds from Jar Burial 5

Small, light coloured plain jug-type pot with a small hole on the shoulder. A circular handle connects the mouth and shoulder of the pot. Dimensions: height – 14cm, mouth diameter – 7cm, body diameter – 12cm, base diameter – 7.5cm.

Jar Burial 6

Human bones and fragments of various types of pottery vessels were exposed to the north of Jar Burial 5, at the balk of Trenches 7 and 8 (Photo 6). The burial chamber aligned northwest to southeast had a dark, extremely hard fill. Excavation showed the grave had been badly damaged by robbers. The burial chamber was approximately 1.6m long by 95cm wide and 85cm deep.

Finds from Jar Burial 6

No intact pottery vessels were recovered from the grave. The available fragments represent bardag-, jug and platter-type pots.

Jar Burial 7

Jar Burial 7 was uncovered 65cm below the ground surface in the northeast facing section of Trench 8 (Photo 7). Fragments of a jar-type vessel were first visible at 60cm depth. When the area around the remains of the broken jar was cleared out, it became obvious that like in all the other graves this burial jar had also been badly truncated during the machine stripping. The burial jar had an east-west orientation with the mouth directed to the east and measured 35cm in height,

85cm in body diameter, 60cm in mouth diameter and 50cm in base diameter. The burial chamber together with the pots around the burial jar was 1.5m long by 1.05m wide and 95cm deep.

A twin-handled jug-type pot was found adjacent to the south wall of the burial jar. The pot still in situ was highly fragmentary. When cleaned of soil, a small platter-type vessel was recovered from this pot. In addition, several other pottery sherds were found within and around the burial jar.

The burial jar contained human bones and a single pottery vessel at a depth of 75cm below the surface of subsoil. The skeleton, aligned east to west, was lying flexed on its left side with the knees and elbows drawn up towards the body and the head facing south. The area covered by the skeleton was 1.85m long by 1.45m wide. The ceramic pot lay on its side by the north wall of the jar, close to the skull.

Finds from Jar Burial 7

1. Light brown coloured jug-type pot with twin handles attached to the body. The shoulder is decorated with hook-like patterns. Highly fragmentary. Dimensions: height – 30cm, mouth diameter – 13.5cm, base diameter – 12cm.

2. Light brown coloured zoomorphic ceramic pot with a multi-angle mouth. Two circular handles connect the rim and shoulder on either side of the body. One of the handles is broken off. The pot is decorated with a single incised line encircling the vessel's shoulder. Dimensions: height – 5cm, mouth diameter – 12.5cm, base diameter – 8cm.

3. Plain, light brown coloured dopu-type pot. Dimensions: height – 5cm, mouth diameter – 12.5cm, base diameter – 4.5cm.

4. Light brown coloured zoomorphic dopu. The pot is highly fragmentary to yield full measurements.

Jar Burial 8

Jar Burial 8 was uncovered in the west facing section of Trench 1 (Photo 8). Excavation produced occasional spreads of pottery at a depth of 70cm against the north wall of Trench 1. The trench appeared to have a more extensive pottery spread extending northward beyond the trench edge. To fully excavate the feature, the trench was extended 2m to the north. Excavation carried on and the broken remains of a large burial jar were exposed in the westward portion of the excavation site. Four pottery vessels of different shapes were detected near the south-facing base of the jar. Like in all the other graves this burial jar had also been badly truncated. In fact, all the pottery were found was broken and highly fragmentary.

When cleaned of fill, the burial jar produced human skeletal remains. The body was laid in a flexed position on its left side with arms and legs folded up towards the body, with the head at the east end of the jar and the face turned to the south. A bardag-type pot lay behind the bones and a jug-type pot was placed on the chest of the skeleton. The burial jar measured 1.35m in length, 85cm in body diameter, 55cm in mouth diameter and 50cm in base diameter. The total area of the jar burial together with the pottery vessels disposed around it, was 2.2m long by 1.15m wide. The overall depth was 1.1m.

Finds from Jar Burial 8

1. Plain, light brown coloured butter churn with a circular handle connecting the mouth and shoulder. The shoulder has an applied moulded spout with a hole in the centre. Dimensions: height - 27cm, mouth diameter – 12cm, body diameter – 25cm, base diameter – 16.8cm, neck height – 5cm, spout length – 5cm.

2. Plain, light brown coloured jug-type pot with a circular handle attached to the mouth and shoulder. Mended from several pieces. Dimensions: height – 15cm, mouth diameter -13.2cm, body diameter – 17cm, base diameter – 10cm.
3. Plain, light brown coloured dopu-type pot with an everted rim. Dimensions: height – 13.5cm, mouth diameter – 5.2cm, body diameter – 11.5cm, base diameter – 8cm.
4. Plain, light brown coloured platter-type pot. Highly fragmentary, the pot did not yield measurements.
5. Plain, light brown coloured jug-type pot. Mended from many small fragments. Dimensions: height – 35.5cm, mouth diameter – 20.3cm, body diameter – 35cm, base diameter – 18cm.
6. Three light brown coloured jug-type pots. Highly fragmentary, the pots did not yield measurements.

Jar Burial 9

Jar Burial 9 was uncovered 1.1m south of the south wall of Trench 1. The presence of a burial jar vertically buried into the ground was revealed at 50cm depth. The burial jar contained human arm and leg bones and a small completely deformed skull. The grave, most probably of a child, appeared to have been robbed at some point in time after the burial. No other items were contained in the burial jar. Outside, there were two adjacent jug-type pots – one on the west, the other on the east of the jar. The burial jar was 70cm in body diameter, 35cm in base diameter and 90cm deep. The burial chamber measured 1.2m in length by 1.05m in width. The overall depth was up to 1.25cm.

Finds from Jar Burial 9

1. Plain, light brown jug with an everted rim. Highly fragmentary. Dimensions: height – 15.5cm, mouth diameter – 8.5cm.
2. Plain, light brown jug with an everted rim and bow-shaped handle attached to the mouth and shoulder. Highly fragmentary to yield measurements.

V. Analytical Results

• *Interpretation of Excavation Results*

The practice of jar burial has been known since ancient times. Jar burials were widespread in Western Asia and the Caucasus during different periods of history. In Caucasian Albania the tradition to bury the deceased in jars arose in the 2nd half of the 1st millennium, B.C and continued into the 8th century, A.D. Such burials have been discovered in the Mil, Garabag and Shirvan Plains, sub mountain areas and on the banks of the Kura River. Hundreds of jar burials have been investigated in the Agjabedi, Agdam, Ismayilli, Ujar, Shamakhi, Kankendi and Gabala Districts and around the ruins of ancient Mingchevir and Galatepe.

• *Dating*

Through the stylist study and comparative analysis of artefactual material the Yaldili jar burial site was identified as dating to the 2nd-1st centuries, B.C.

- ***Discussion and Analysis of the Results of the Work Compared with Other Sites of a Similar Nature on the Pipeline Route***

In terms of similarity to other sites excavated within the pipelines construction corridor, the Yaldili jar burial site can be compared to the Antique Period jar burials at KP 194, KP 200, KP 204.25, KP 237 and KP 272. The latter was an intrusive burial of the same date discovered under the Borsunlu kurgan mound.

Large-scale excavations have taken place at jar burial sites discovered in different areas of Azerbaijan, including Mingechevir, Nakhchivan, Agdash, Ujar, Lachin, Shamakhi, Agdam and other Districts. The first research into the jar burial culture was undertaken in 1927 in the Lachin District by V. M. Sysoyev, who later in cooperation with I. I. Meshchshchaninov explored several more similar monuments in the Mil Plain of Azerbaijan. In Yevlax, Agjabedi, Ismayilli, Shamakhi and Agdam Districts jar burial sites were explored by Y. M. Pakhomov. The jar burial site discovered and thoroughly investigated by S. M. Gaziyeu during the construction of the Mingechevir Hydroelectric Power Station is of paramount importance for the study of this culture.

With respect to the Yaldili jar burial site, particularly noteworthy is the scarcity of cultural material. As a rule, jar burials produce large quantities of grave goods. However, the nine graves excavated at Yaldili made an exception which calls for further, larger-scale research.

- ***Recommendations Regarding the Protection of the Site or Future Research***

The area should be protected as archaeologically sensitive should any future construction or earth moving work be planned in the immediate vicinity of the site.

VI. Illustrations



Photo 1. KP241, Yaldili Grave 1.



Photo 2. KP241, Yaldili Grave 2.



Photo 3. KP241, Yaldili Grave 3.



Photo 4. KP241, Yaldili Grave 4.



Photo 5. KP241 Yaldili Grave 5.



Photo 6. KP241, Yaldili Grave 6.



Photo 7. KP241, Yaldili Grave 7.



Photo 8. KP241, Yaldili Grave 8.



Photo 9. Grave 9.



Photo 10. KP241, Yaldili pottery vessels.

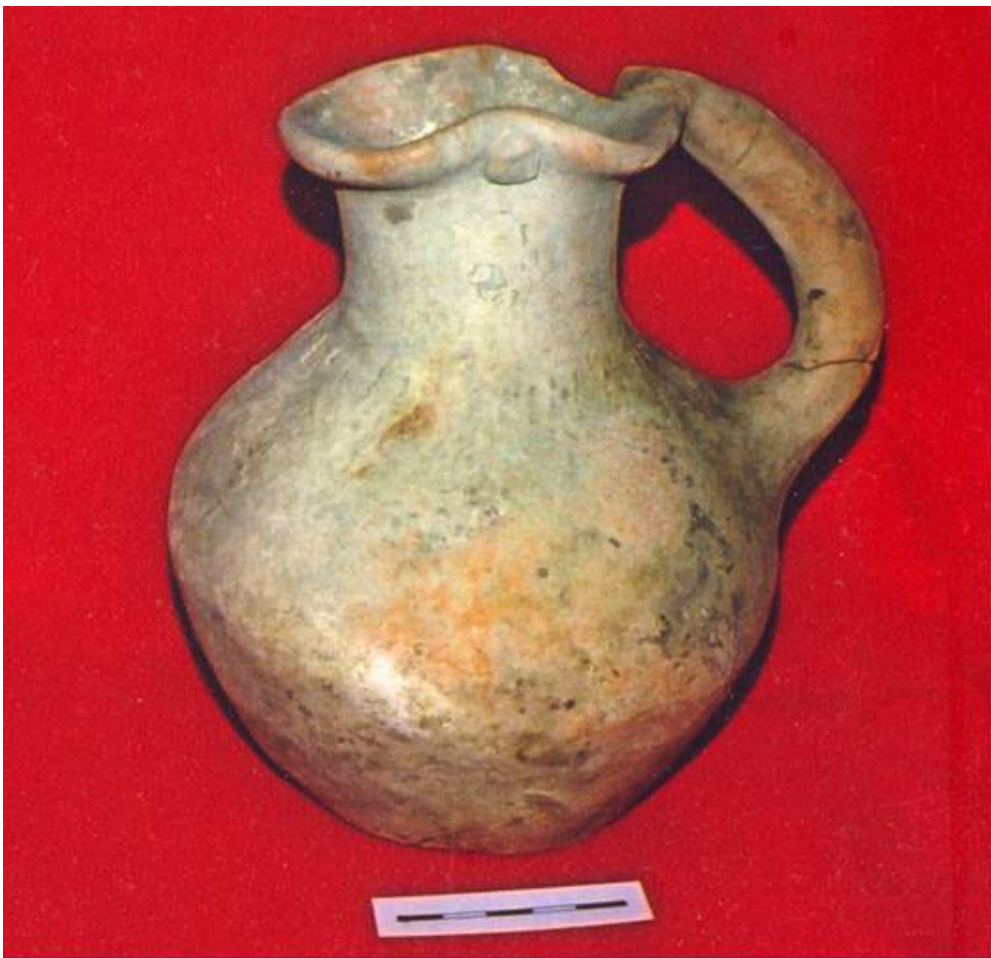


Photo 11. KP241, Yaldili pottery vessel.



Photo 12. KP241, Yaldili pottery vessel.



Photo 13.



Photo 14. Jewellery from jar graves.



Photo 15.



Photo 16. KP241, Yaldili finds- Jar, Grave 3.

VII. Inventory of Artefacts

| No. | KP | Type of Site | Material | Find | Grave | Comment |
|------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------------|-------------|--------------|----------------|
| 16 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | Jar | 1 | broken |
| 17 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | Jug | 1 | broken |
| 18 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | Jug | 1 | broken |
| 19 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | bowl | 1 | |
| 21 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | Jug | 1 | broken |
| 22 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | Jug | 1 | |
| 23 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | bowl | 1 | broken |
| 24 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | dopu | 1 | |
| 25 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | bowl | 1 | |
| 26 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | bowl | 1 | |
| 39 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | decoration | 1 | 7 pieces |
| 40 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | decoration | 1 | 3 pieces |
| 41 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | bead | 1 | 2 pieces |
| 42 | 241 | jar grave | cornelian | bead | 1 | 6 pieces |
| 43 | 241 | jar grave | metal | bracelet | 1 | |
| 44 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | bowl | 1 | |
| 45 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | plate | 1 | |
| 46 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | bowl | 1 | |
| 47 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | Jug | 1 | broken |
| 48 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | dopu | 1 | broken |
| 49 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | Jug | 1 | |
| 1 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | jar | 2 | |

| | | | | | | |
|----|-----|-----------|---------|-----------------|---|--------|
| 2 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | jug | 2 | broken |
| 3 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | jug | 2 | broken |
| 4 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | vessel fragment | 2 | broken |
| 5 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | Jug | 2 | broken |
| 6 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | Jug | 2 | |
| 7 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | Jug | 2 | broken |
| 8 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | Jug | 2 | broken |
| 9 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | Jug | 2 | broken |
| 10 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | dopu | 2 | broken |
| 11 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | bowl | 2 | |
| 12 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | platter | 2 | |
| 13 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | dopu | 2 | broken |
| 14 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | bowl | 2 | broken |
| 15 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | Jug | 2 | broken |
| 20 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | Jug | 2 | broken |
| 27 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | Jug | 3 | |
| 28 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | Jar | 3 | broken |
| 29 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | Jug | 3 | broken |
| 30 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | Jug | 3 | broken |
| 31 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | bowl | 3 | broken |
| 32 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | Jug | 3 | broken |
| 33 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | Jug | 3 | broken |
| 34 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | Jug | 3 | |
| 35 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | vessel fragment | 3 | broken |
| 36 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | vessel fragment | 3 | broken |
| 37 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | Jug | 3 | broken |
| 38 | 241 | jar grave | ceramic | bowl | 3 | broken |