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ABSTRACT

of the dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Sciences

**THE ARTISTIC, MYTHOLOGICAL FEATURES AND
SYMBOLIC MOTIVES IN THE MATERIAL CULTURE OF
AZERBAIJAN (THE ENEOLITHIC AND BRONZE AGES)**

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Applicant: **Irada Nizam Avsharova**

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The dissertation work was performed at the Department of “Archaeology and Ethnography” of the Faculty of History of the Baku State University.

Scientific adviser: Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor
Qudret Seyfulla Ismailzadeh

Official opponents: Full member National Academy of Sciences
of Kazakhstan, Doctor of Historical Sciences,
Professor
Dzaken Kodzakhmetovich Taymagambetov

Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor
Maisa Nurbala Rahimova

Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor
Vitaliy Vasilyevich Otroshenko

Doctor of Historical Sciences
Asadulla Gudrat Jafarov

Dissertation council ED 1.30 of Supreme Attestation Commission under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan operating at Institute of History named after A.A. Bakikhanov of Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences.

Chairman of the
Dissertation Council: Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor
Karim Karam Shukurov

Scientific secretary of the
Dissertation Council: Doctor of Historical Sciences, Associate
Professor
Ilgar Vahid Niftaliyev

Chairman of the
Scientific seminar: Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor
Hidayat Farrukh Jafarov

I. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DISSERTATION

Relevance of the topic and the level of development. It is known that the historical and geographical areas of Azerbaijan, one of the world's ancient centers of civilization, have a rich archaeological heritage. During the archaeological excavations carried out in the area for more than a century, a large number of artifacts were discovered that preserve extensive historical information about the religious-ideological worldviews of the tribes of the period of primitive community system.

The submitted dissertation work is also related to the study of the archaeological heritage of two chronologically consecutive periods of the history of Azerbaijan - the Eneolithic and Bronze Age societies, is devoted to the study of religious-ideological outlooks, cultural processes that took place in those times, and the study of material culture examples that include artistic, mythological, and semantic features in various fields of art.

The researched topic is comprehensively studied in Azerbaijani historiography for the first time and for that reason it can be considered as a scientifically new research work.

Thus, during the investigations of the ancient settlements and grave monuments of Azerbaijan, facts were revealed that some mythological artifacts are related to folklore examples with ancient history. Since these products have not been the subject of special investigation until now, the researched dissertation work can be considered the first step in this field, which is the main issue that determines the relevance of the research work.

One of the distinguishing aspects of the research work is the comparative use of archaeological, ethnographic and folklore materials in solving the problem.

It is known from the researches that the religious-philosophical views formed the core of cultures in ancient societies and were relevant for the ancient times of human society. After a closer acquaintance with the mythology of ancient times, we can come to the conclusion that various scientific fields of mankind -

culture, art, literature, philosophy, religion, etc. got its beginning from the people who had philosophical views, from the mythological heritage created by them.

It is known that the artistic and mythological heritage left to present generations by the people of the Eneolithic and Bronze Ages who lived in the ancient societies of Azerbaijan, is mainly traced in the monuments reflecting the religious-ideological and political processes of the time. For the same reason, an attempt was made to analyze and restore the interaction of history, philosophy, religion and art in the research work.

At the same time, the genetic connection between the religious and mythological views of the people who are the creators of those material culture samples, mainly the religious and mythological views of the people who lived in the countries of the South Caucasus, Central Asia, the Near and Middle East, was studied based on the method of comparative analysis, and it was determined that the relationships and genetic connection also had affected the development of archaeological cultures in the area.

We must admit that studying the mythological outlook, traditions, artistic creativity, development of religious-ideological thinking, political-economic, historical-social realities of the Azerbaijani people based on ancient times means clarifying the history of the clans and tribes involved in the lineage. Of course, solving these multifaceted socio-philosophical issues is one of the urgent problems of our time.

One of the main principles of this research work is to be based on accurate facts. It is known that mythology, which is the basis of the spiritual culture of every nation, played a decisive role in the worldview of the Azerbaijani people. As a result, a rich mythological heritage has been created on the basis of the development of ancient societies for millennia. It is for this reason that the involvement of this problem in research and its solution is one of the important issues before us.

It should be noted that although the high scientific value of the obtained artefacts, which includes spiritual culture, has been investigated to some extent in separate scientific works, this

dissertation work can be considered the first step in that field as it is not a special research topic.

A large number of generalized research works, monographs, scientific articles, archival materials in Azerbaijani, Russian, Turkish, English and German languages related to the topic were studied and analyzed in the dissertation work.

Among the researchers who made efforts to study the spiritual culture of the Eneolithic and Bronze Age tribes and distinguished by their interesting scientific evidence, Y.I.Hummel, I.M.Jafarzadeh, J.A.Khalilov, G.G.Aslanov, M.A.Husseinova, G.P.Kesemenli, H.F.Jafarov, V.B.Bakhshaliyev, N.A.Museibli, H.G.Gadirzadeh, F.E.Guliyev's works and services should be especially noted.

Y.I.Hummel's work "Archaeological Essays" is of great scientific value. For the first time, on the basis of archaeological research of grave monuments, the researcher has given brief information about the spiritual culture and ethnic composition of the Late Bronze Age inhabitants of Azerbaijan, made considerations about the application of "beam" system in many Bronze Age burial monuments in Ganjachay¹.

I.M.Jafarzadeh's book "Gobustan" (rock paintings) has great scientific value in the study of ancient art, material and spiritual culture, religious worldviews of the Azerbaijani people. In the book, the researcher tries to reflect the general appearance of Gobustan rock paintings, highlighting the scientific, historical and artistic significance of the cultural heritage inherited from ancient people in Gobustan.²

J.A.Khalilov's monograph "Archaeological monuments of Western Azerbaijan in the Bronze and Early Iron Ages (Shamkhor and Zayamchay basins)" contains certain ideas about the cult of the

¹ Гуммель, Я.И. Археологические очерки / Я.И. Гуммель. – Баку: АН СССР, Азербайджанский филиал Института истории, – Издательство Аз. ФАН СССР, – 1940. – 166 с.

² Джафарзаде, И.М. Гобустан (наскальные изображения) / И.М. Джафарзаде. Академия Наук Азербайджанской ССР Институт Истории, – Баку: Элм, – 1973. – 345 с.

bull³.

G.G.Aslanov's work "Bronze halberd axes of Azerbaijan" was dedicated to the discovery of the characteristics and religious features of the halberd axes and halberd-shaped ornaments of the Late Bronze Age tribes used in economic and military work⁴. The researcher connected the halberd type material-culture samples with the belief of "Moon" and drew scientific conclusions.

In M.A.Husseinova's monograph "Eastern Transcaucasian ceramics in the Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages (14th -9th centuries BC)" and the article "The cult objects and symbols of power in the Late Bronze and Early Iron Age monuments" along with the classification of ceramics, there are ideas about the spiritual culture of the Azerbaijani people. In the monograph, along with the characteristics of ceramic products obtained from the western regions of Azerbaijan, a mythological-scientific classification and analysis of the depictions of the "Tree of Life" on them is given as well⁵.

G.P.Kesemenli's monograph "The Late Bronze and Early Iron Age archaeological monuments of the Dashkesan district" provided information about Middle Bronze Age archaeological monuments, their analogical, characteristic features and classifications, and mythological analysis. He made judgments about the other world⁶.

H.F.Jafarov's article "From the history of the formation and development of horse-breeding and horse worshipping in North Azerbaijan" provides us with information about the horse burial observed in ancient graves of Azerbaijan and the high development of

³ Xəlilov, C.Ə. Qərbi Azərbaycanın tunc dövrü və dəmir dövrünün əvvəllərinə aid arxeoloji abidələri (Şamxor və Zəyəm çay hövzələri) / C.Ə. Xəlilov. – Bakı:– Azərbaycan SSR Elmlər Akademiyası nəşriyyatı, – 1959. – 169 s.

⁴ Aslanov, Q.Q. Azərbaycanın tunc təbərzin baltaları / Q.Q. Aslanov.– Bakı: Elm, – 1982. – 65 s.

⁵ Гусейнова, М.А. Керамика Восточного Закавказья эпохи поздней бронзы и раннего железа (XIV-IX вв. до н.э.) / М.А. Гусейнова. – Баку: ЭЛМ, – 1989. – 127 с.

⁶ Кесаманлы, Г.П. Археологические памятники эпохи поздней бронзы и раннего железа Дашкесанского района. АН Азербайджана / Г.П. Кесаманлы. – Баку: Агридаг, – 1999. – 179 с.

horse-breeding at the period under study, the ideas of the tribes about horse worshipping.⁷

The main purpose of V.B. Bakhshaliyev's monograph "Spiritual culture of the ancient tribes of Nakhchivan" consisted of a systematic study of the semantics of images, objects of worship, figures on the samples of material culture of the 6th-1st millennia BC. By presenting the spiritual culture of the ancient tribes living in Nakhchivan on the basis of rock carvings and ceramics, the researcher based on the scientific and comparative analysis had identified the genetic connection between them and the ethnography and folklore of the Azerbaijani people⁸.

N.A.Museibli's monograph "Gemigaya" was devoted to the rock carvings of the Gemigaya monument complex located in the Ordubad district of Nakhchivan, their chronological sequence, semantics and, in general, the study of the material and spiritual culture of Azerbaijan in ancient times⁹.

H.G.Gadirzadeh's article "Overview on the tree of life, fruit of life and the cult of the goat in Gemigaya" contains the mythological thoughts of the Azerbaijani people about the "Tree of Life" and the "Goat Cult". The researcher studied both descriptions on the basis of folklore texts of the Turkic peoples and drew valuable conclusions¹⁰.

In his monograph "Horse burial in the kurgans of Azerbaijan" F.E.Guliyev gives a detailed information about the kurgans of the primitive community period in Azerbaijan (4th – 1st millennia BC)

⁷ Cəfərov, H.F. Şimali Azərbaycanda atçılığın və ata sitayişin təşəkkül tapması və inkişafı tarixindən // Azərbaycan Respublikası gənc tarixçilərinin III elmi konfransının materialları, – Bakı: – Elm, – 1995. – s.17-19.

⁸ Baxşəliyev, V.B. Naxçıvanın qədim tayfalarının mənəvi mədəniyyəti / V.B. Baxşəliyev. – Bakı: – Elm, – 2004. – 320 s.

⁹ Müseyibli, N.Ə. Gəmiqaya / N.Ə. Müseyibli. – Bakı: Çəşnoğlu, – 2004. – 317 s.

¹⁰ Qədirzadə, H.Q. Gəmiqayada həyat ağacı, həyat meyvəsi və keçi kultu məsələsinə dair baxış // – Bakı: Azərbaycan arxeologiyası. Xəzər Universitetinin nəşriyyatı, – 2008. №1-2, – s. 92-101

accompanied by horse burial¹¹.

An attempt was made to take into account the work of every researcher who has contributed to the investigation of issues related to the topic of the research work.

The object and subject of the research. Object of study is archaeological artifacts, discovered from all regions of Azerbaijan. The study of the customs and beliefs of the Turks living in the regions and other countries on the basis of existing archaeological sources, historical facts, ethnographic and folklore materials, by means of mutual comparative analysis constitutes the subject of the research.

As a subject of research, the following issues are highlighted: religious beliefs, mythological and semantic outlooks of the tribes that lived in the area in the Eneolithic and Bronze Ages, examining mythological outlooks on the basis of comparative analysis with the help of archaeological artifacts and folklore materials. Identification of specific and common traditions included in traditions, religious-ideological outlooks.

Goals and objectives of the research. The main goal of the research is to restore the spiritual culture of the ancient Eneolithic and Bronze Age societies of Azerbaijan. In the research work, the comparative identification of the monuments and material culture samples distinguished by their mythological characteristics in accordance with the system of territories belonging to the Turkic tribes is the main issue that determines the dissertation work.

In order to achieve the goal, the solution of the following issues has found its scientific analysis and interpretation in the dissertation work:

–To give a brief overview of the history of the study of the Eneolithic and Bronze Ages of Azerbaijan based on archaeological research and written sources;

–To investigate the household economy, religious-ideological worldviews, cultures, and art of Eneolithic and Bronze Age socie-

¹¹ Quliyev, F.E. Azərbaycanın kurqan qəbirlərində at dəfni / F.E.Quliyev. – Bakı: – Elm, – 2008. – 295 s.

ties based on the studied archaeological monuments and artifacts discovered from them;

- To present specific features of monuments, distinguished primarily with their religious, mythological peculiarities, studied in settlements and gravestones, relating to the Eneolithic and Bronze Ages, observed in the territory of Azerbaijan;

- To provide a comparative analysis of the investigated ancient temples and monuments with similar characteristics in neighboring areas;

- To identify burial customs in graves, distinguished with mythological properties;

- To draw attention to the styles of artistic processing of carving, bone-making, pottery and metalwork products that determine the level of culture and art;

- To examine ritual scenes in compositions related to spiritual culture in rock paintings, to give a semantic analysis;

- To give analysis of the ornaments and images on the material culture samples, which mainly reflect mythological images, in relation to the folklore texts;

- Comparative analysis of numerous material culture examples obtained from some archaeological complexes of Azerbaijan, the South Caucasus, as well as the Near and Middle East from the semantic and mythological viewpoint.

Methods of the research. The methodological basis of the research work is the principles of objectivity based on descriptive, historical-comparative analysis, scientific-critical approach to the cited sources, methods such as analysis and synthesis. Along with using of historic and comparative, theoretical and typological methods in the research process, comparative, systematic analysis and scientific generalization methods were widely applied during the study of the problem.

The method of historical description is important for understanding the essence of the research, to take into account the historical events and truths that happened in the area during the studied periods, and brief information about some tribes that are the bearers of

the historical process. When describing the events, methods such as analysis and synthesis, generalization and drawing conclusions were also used.

The first stage of the comparative historical and typological analysis is the examination of the monuments distinguished by the religious-ideological views of the tribes of the time, as well as the discovery of some characteristic burial customs and their specific features.

The second stage forms the basis of the research. At this stage, by using methods such as the principles of objectivity, description, historical-comparative analysis, scientific-critical approach to the cited sources, analysis and synthesis, and generalization, examples of archaeological material culture distinguished by their mythological, semantic features and artistry were involved. Along with the ethnographic analysis of the archaeological sources, content-based comparisons were also made based on folklore texts and conclusions were drawn.

Main provisions submitted for defense.

1. The subject of the dissertation is framed by the great historical periods starting from the 6th millennium to the 1st millennium BC. In the research work, the monuments distinguished by their mythological, semantic and artistic features were examined step by step according to the period of the monuments found, taking into account the relative chronological framework.

2. The increase in settlement in the area, the expansion of arable lands, the increase in livestock during the Eneolithic period led to an increase in the exchange process, the rise of people's well-being, the emergence of new ethnic cultures, and along with this, religious outlooks, philosophical feelings - animism, dualism, fetishism, etc. leads to the wide development of such views.

3. The enrichment of the religious worldview of the Bronze Age tribes resulted in the creation of the "Sun-Moon-Fire" religious monuments – temples and shrines of great scientific importance in the area.

4. Unlike the Eneolithic period, there occur innovations in the types of grave monuments and burial customs in the Bronze Age.

Influential people in the tribe hold sumptuous funerals in order to ensure the afterlife, which results in the establishment of a “cult of the dead” in the area.

5. The coincidence of anthropological and archaeological evidences obtained from the Neolithic, Eneolithic, Bronze, Iron Age and Ancient cultures and monuments created by our ancestors on the area of the Mesolithic period and the monuments related to those cultures, that those tribes lived in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan and its historical lands, mainly belong to the dolichocephalic (Caspian) human type and it gives reason to say that even the grave monuments where they were buried (kurgan, stone box, etc.) belong to them.

6. The presence of religious ideas related to shamanism in rock paintings of Gobustan (on stone, ceramic and metal products of the studied period) is proved by evidence.

7. Facts prove that cosmogonic myths were the basis of the mythological system in the area in the Eneolithic and Bronze Ages. Cosmogonic myths are connected with ideas such as “the creation of the first human being”, “ancestral cults”, the “trinity” and “quad-ruple” models related to the creation of the world.

8. The development of agriculture in the Eneolithic period led to innovations in people’s worldviews. Fertility cults come to the fore. Eneolithic artisans, who embodied the traditions of Neolithic art, address to the image of the divine woman, which results in the emergence of primitive sculpture in art. Artisans who combined ideological views, philosophical feelings and art in women images create the image of the Mother, which is distinguished by its own mythological features, in a style typical of the period.

9. It is known from the researches that the reflection of belief and worship of animals in grave monuments and shrines intensified during the Late Bronze Age and the Early Iron Age, and this resulted in further sanctification of graves in connection with the belief in spirits.

10. In the research work, along with the study of monuments distinguished by religious-ideological and mythological features, including religious temples, grave monuments, rock carvings, ar-

chaeological material-cultural samples, reflecting the religious beliefs and philosophical ideas of different periods, were generalized in a complex way with folklore texts that come from ancient times.

Scientific novelty of the study. Scientific novelty of the study is, as follows:

1. For the first time in the archaeology of Azerbaijan, mythological and religious views, reflected in archaeological complexes and artifacts, their semantic, artistic properties and symbolic meanings have been studied.

2. Specific and local features of temples, embodying mythological and religious peculiarities based on comparative analysis were identified.

3. It has been determined that religious-ideological outlooks play a certain role in many of the Eneolithic and Bronze Age art fields of Azerbaijan.

4. Sacral peculiarities of some burial customs of the Eneolithic and Bronze Ages were identified.

5. Brief information about native tribes of the territory was provided, taking into account human type, identified during archaeological excavations, conducted in the 20th century within the Azerbaijan Republic and our historic lands in the Western Azerbaijan.

6. Mythological views of certain artifacts, involved for the first time in the research, were extensively analyzed, semantic features were established, comparative analysis between examples from cuneiform sources, myths, tales, legends and epics, based on ancient times was conducted and its pertaining to the Azerbaijan nation was established. Based on comparative analysis of art pottery and metal carving, reflecting mythological views with folklore examples, attempts to restore certain part of several forgotten ancient myths, belonging to the Azerbaijani tribes were made.

7. According to the chronology adopted for the Eneolithic and Bronze Ages on the bases of archaeological researches, starting from the end of the 6th millennium up to the 1st millennium BC, innovations and changes, taking place within framework of primitive community period were traced in chronological order.

It is also necessary to mention, that certain part of those artifacts

is being kept in many museums and private collections all over the world.

It should also be noted that the importance of the many years archaeological excavations conducted in the Eneolithic and Bronze Age monuments of Azerbaijan lies not only in its archaeological research, but also in cultural legacy of tribes, inhabiting in that area during the Eneolithic and Bronze Ages.

Theoretical and practical significance of the research. The theoretical and practical importance of the research is that the obtained scientific results can be applied in the following directions:

–in study of artistic, mythological and semantic peculiarities of artifacts, detected in archaeological monuments of Azerbaijan;

–at recording of multi-volume Azerbaijan history and archeology;

–at scientific interpretation of handicraft, art, economic and cultural relationship of tribes during the Eneolithic and Bronze Ages and recording of generalized works;

–at conducting of classes in Master’s departments on history, culture, arts, philology and other faculties of higher educational institutions;

The approbation and application of the research. The dissertation, reflecting the result of long-term researches (during 2009-2019), was accomplished at the Department of Archaeology and Ethnography of the Baku State University. Reports on main provisions of the research were presented at symposiums of International scale and conferences of Republic and International scope and at scientific theoretical seminars of the Faculty of History of the Baku State University and of the Institute Archaeology, Ethnography and Anthropology of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences. Basic content of the dissertation and results of the research were described in published monographs and scientific articles, devoted to the topic. Main articles and theses of the work were printed in the collections of various international conferences, journals, recommended by the HAC and foreign publications.

Name of the organization, where the dissertation work was

developed. The research was conducted at the Department of Archaeology and Ethnography, Faculty of History, Baku State University.

Structure and scope of the dissertation. The structure and total volume of the thesis. The dissertation consists of “Introduction” (18546 characters), five chapters (the first chapter –24229 characters, the second chapter –60916 characters, the third chapter –61578 characters, the fourth chapter – 44895 characters, the fifth chapter – 286072 characters, the result – 38862 characters), “List of used literature” and “Appendices” (139 characters). The total volume of the thesis, excluding bibliography and appendixes, is 537,767 characters. The structure of the research is consistent with its scientific goals and objectives.

II. THE MAIN CONTENT OF THE DISSERTATION

The relevance and degree of development of the problem, the object and subject of the research, the goals and tasks, the methods of the research, the main propositions defended, the scientific innovation of the research, the theoretical and practical importance, the approbation and application of the research, detailed information about the structure and total volume of the dissertation is given in the “**Introduction**” section of the dissertation.

The history of Azerbaijan resting on ancient times is studied on the basis of archeological and written sources in Chapter I entitled “**Historical review. History of the study of artistic features and religious-mythological views reflected in material culture samples (historical review)**”. It is well-known that the artefacts obtained from the archaeological monuments preserve the era, territory, traditions of statehood, lifestyle, military history, everyday life, and religious-ideological views of the people.

The first paragraph of Chapter I, entitled “**A brief overview on the history of the study of the Eneolithic and Bronze Ages**” contains information about written and archaeological sources. In Sumerian, Assyrian, Babylonian and Akkadian cuneiform sources

about the area, information about the ethno-political unions that lived in the area - Lullubi, Kuti, Turukku, etc., the existence of large tribal unions, the management system and statehood traditions are brought to the fore. Information about monuments and artifacts found in archaeological sources about statehood and power structures is provided. Cuneiform sources once again confirm that the history of Azerbaijan is closely connected with the history of the countries of the Ancient East and mainly illuminate the areas around Lake Urmia. In the 3rd millennium BC, the emergence of state structures with different names was observed in Azerbaijan. The country of Aratta, one of the first state structures, was located on the territory of Azerbaijan. Although there is enough information about the Su and Turukki tribes in some sources, very little information was given about the northern regions in cuneiform sources.

Based on his own long-term archaeological researches, H.F.Jafarov writes: *“Sufficient information is available in the Azerbaijan history books about initial “state structures” of class societies such, as Aratta, Lullubi, Kuti in the Southern Azerbaijan, located in modern Iranian territory. However, it is impossible to state the same about the Northern Azerbaijan. One shouldn’t disregard formation and further intensification of social and civil inequality within preconditions of establishment of the first states, existence of family unions, merging several tribes, concentration all power branches by leaders of family unions in own hands and development of other factors in social-economic basis. Elements from short enumeration were observed in monuments of the Early Bronze Age in Azerbaijan”*.¹²

Researches, conducted by B.A.Kuftin in monuments of Kur-Araz culture, are of certain interest. As a result of his archaeological research in the areas, he came across an ash layer in a certain layer of Kura-Araz culture monuments. The researcher came to the con-

¹² Cəfərov, H.M. İbtidai-icma quruluşu, yoxsa sinifli cəmiyyət // – Bakı: 2006-2007-ci illərdə Azərbaycanda aparılmış arxeoloji və etnoqrafik tədqiqatların yekunları, – Nafta-Press, – 2007. – s. 41-42.

clusion that there was a unique culture of ash hills in the South Caucasus dating back to the Early Bronze Age, distinguished by its unique pottery. Taking into account that almost all the monuments belonging to this culture were discovered in the Kura-Araz basin, the researchers called it by the same name. Apparently, although the researcher gave information about the ash layer, for some reason he did not even notice that the monuments belonging to the same period and culture were covered with an ash layer.

As known from archaeological and written sources, the formation of early tribal unions in Azerbaijan and its historical lands in the 3rd millennium BC, is observed with the formation of state structures with different names in Azerbaijan. Against the background of social and civil inequality, tribal unions are becoming increasingly stronger, as a result of the development of cattle breeding and agriculture, tribal leaders are accumulating wealth in their hands. The development of all these on the socio-economic ground undoubtedly led to the increase of conflicts and raids with neighboring tribes. The country of Aratta, one of the first state structures, was located in the historical lands of Azerbaijan. Its territory covered the southern and southeastern parts of Lake Urmia. Texts related to this country (first half of the 3rd millennium BC) are reflected in several Sumerian epics.¹³ Assyrian and Urartian cuneiform inscriptions indicate, that early Sumerian states established political and economic relations with ancient Azerbaijan territory (mainly, in the basin of Urmia Lake) (3rd-1st millennia BC).¹⁴

For the same reason, town-fortresses fortified with defense walls were built in the area, and there was a need for dwellings fortified with fortress walls.

Naturally, valuable facts obtained, as a result of archaeological excavations conducted for many years in the territory of Azerbaijan (the Bronze Age): material and cultural monuments (habitations, temples, fortresses, magnificent kurgans, obsequial rites etc.),

¹³ Azərbaycan tarixi (ən qədim zamanlardan XX əsrədək). Ali məktəblər üçün dərslik / – Bakı: «Çıraq» nəşriyyatı, – 2011, c. I, – s. 64-70.

¹⁴ Azərbaycan tarixi (ən qədim zamanlardan XX əsrədək). Ali məktəblər üçün dərslik / – Bakı: «Çıraq» nəşriyyatı, – 2011, c. I, – s. 64-70.

artifacts (bronze crown, lance heads, flags, different types of arms, lances, swords, cudgels, daggers, battle axes, etc.), information, described in cuneiform sources (battles, waged in the area, spoils of war), social inequality, traced in monuments, existence of power structures, population density (any artefacts, traced in the grave-stones and connected with formation of the class society in the 2nd millennium BC), high development level of craftsmanship, art, philosophical senses (pottery, metal working), household development (sedentary farming culture and cattle breeding), various types of items of household and religious nature, discovered among artifacts, flags, weapons of various types, stamps, detection of pinters of various forms of tokens, proved that the area had administrative management structures. Archaeological sources of such type repeatedly witness on establishment of strong tribal confederations, existence of cities and states, formed on base of high culture in the territory during 3rd -2nd millennia BC.

The second paragraph of **Chapter I** of the dissertation, entitled: **“History of study of semantic and mythological peculiarities reflected in archaeological artifacts”**, is devoted to study of spiritual culture at exploration of the Eneolithic and Bronze Age archaeological monuments.

Y.N.Hummel’s work, called “Archaeological Essays” (in Russian), J.A.Khalilov’s “Bronze belts, discovered in Azerbaijan”, R.B.Geyushov’s article “Archaeology and religion”, I.M.Jafarzadeh’s “Gobustan (rock paintings)”, Q.Q.Aslanov’s “The Bronze Age halberd axes in Azerbaijan”, M.A.Husseinova’s “East Transcaucasia pottery during the Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages (14th-9th centuries BC)”, “Cult objects and power symbols in the monuments of the Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages”, G.P.Kesemenli’s “Monuments of the Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages of Dashkesan region”, V.B.Bakhshaliyev’s “Spiritual culture of ancient tribes of Nakhchivan”, H.F.Jafarov’s “From the history of formation and development of horse breeding and horse worshipping in North Azerbaijan”, N.A.Museibli’s “Gemigaya”, H.G.Gadirzadeh’s articles, entitled “Views on issue of the Life Tree and cult of the Goat in Gemigaya”, F.E.Guliyev’s “Horse burial in the kurgans of Azerbaijan”, the author’s mon-

ographs entitled “Artistic bronze products of Khojaly-Gedabey culture tribes (14th-7th centuries BC)” and also “Ideological views of the tribes of the Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages in Azerbaijan”, “Ancient Azerbaijani women images, as a piece of art”, “Warfare of the Bronze Age tribes in Azerbaijan”, “The Life Tree” symbol in artifacts of the Bronze Age in Azerbaijan”, “The Cult of the Red deer in beliefs of the Eneolithic period and Bronze Ages in Azerbaijan”, “The Wolf image in material culture of Azerbaijan during the Bronze Age”, “Signs of the Fire cult in religious worldviews of the Bronze Age tribes”, “Beliefs, traced in burial customs of the Eneolithic period”, “Traces of belief in Bull (ox) in archaeological monuments of Azerbaijan”, “Mythological peculiarities in bull and dog burials of ancient tribes in Azerbaijan”, “The Cult of the Goat traces in archaeological monuments of Azerbaijan”, “The Cult of the dead and dolichocephalic findings” (based on archaeological excavations, conducted in Azerbaijan and its historical territories), articles, “Evidence of shamanism in Gobustan images”, etc. are among the researches, characterized by interesting scientific evidence at study of the problem of spiritual culture and represent great scientific value.

As a whole, the importance of archaeological research in the study of the religious-ideological worldviews of the ancient tribes of Azerbaijan is great. As it can be seen, the scientific considerations based on the artifacts, which are the product of the creativity and religious views of the ancient tribes, are invaluable sources for revealing the secrets of the spiritual culture of the Eneolithic and Bronze Age tribes that have not reached our time.

Chapter II of the dissertation, entitled “**Classification of monuments reflecting worldviews and ideology of the Eneolithic and Bronze Age societies**” consists of three paragraphs. The household monuments of the Azerbaijani tribes of the Eneolithic and Bronze epochs, its peculiarities and ideological worldviews, reflected in them, are described in the first paragraph, entitled, as “**Some of the Eneolithic and Bronze Age household monuments, their peculiarities, areas of spread and ideological views reflected in them**”.

It is well known that construction is one of the oldest areas of human activity. This is repeatedly observed on remains of many

ancient settlements, studied in the area. Archaeological excavations, conducted in the area, provide valuable information about the way of generation and formation of ancient houses.

As we know, the development of productive forces in the Eneolithic period laid the foundation for the accumulation of surplus products and the collapse of the tribal structure. This process was also manifested in the planning of the houses formed in the Eneolithic period. Instead of the large community house of the Neolithic period, residential houses designed for one family with their own yard and farm buildings have already appeared. The excavations in Late Neolithic and Eneolithic settlements such as Shomutepe, Gargalar tepesi, Toyra tepe, Kultepe I, Ilanlitepe, Leilatepe and others show that the thoughts of ancient people for settlement were at such a high level. It is known that the residences of the period were built mainly in circular style - cylindrical and conical, and sometimes rectangular. Houses with a circular plan are also found in the Khassun (Khassun I), Khalaf (Sammara, Yariimtepe II) and Ubaid culture monuments of Mesopotamia.¹⁵

In the regions of Azerbaijan, archaeologists have researched and studied hundreds of settlements built on the same plan from the Eneolithic and Bronze Age. Beginning from the 3rd millennium BC, progress in architecture took place in the territory of Azerbaijan, proto-town dwellings and defense architecture developed.

This paragraph is about the architectural art of the Azerbaijani tribes, which has come a long way in architectural style and construction planning, and its contemporary parallels in the Middle East. This is confirmed by the Goytepe settlement of the Neolithic period, which was studied in the territory of Tovuz district. Among the interesting findings from the monument, the remains of the defensive walls attract attention. Such fortification devices have not been found in synchronous monuments so far.¹⁶

Fortified cities and cyclopean structures of the Bronze Age in the

¹⁵ Археология зарубежной Азии / Москва: Высшая школа, – 1986. – с. 52-62.

¹⁶ Мещанинов, И. И. Циклопические сооружения Закавказья // ИГАИМК, Ленинград: Печатный двор, – XIII, в. 4-7. – 1932. – с. 14.

ancient Azerbaijan represented importance for defense. The construction style of these architectural monuments was based on use of slab (slightly hewed stones in some cases) and raw brick material rested on stone foundation. These magnificent monuments, inherited from our ancestors, indicate not only our once-luxurious past, but also keep alive thousands of years of military history.

Researches of the Middle and Late Bronze Age fortresses, studied in the area hitherto, indicates that people didn't lead a quiet life during researched historical periods. This is repeatedly supported by burial of horses, discovered in graves of militaries, a large variety of weapons, pictures of two-wheeled chariots and bronze belts with indication of battle scenes on them. However, majority of fortresses, built in that area, reflects peace-loving policy of local tribes.

The second paragraph of **Chapter II** is entitled **“The Eneolithic and Bronze Age temples and material and cultural monuments, connected with religious and secular views in the Azerbaijan territory”**. This paragraph is devoted to temples, established considering religious views of the Eneolithic and Bronze Age tribes of Azerbaijan. This paragraph draws parallels with temples, studied at historical lands of Azerbaijan and neighborhood areas, similar features were brought to foreground, and attempt to determine the period of establishment of ancient temples in the area is made. As it is well known, beliefs in the “Sun-Moon-Fire” cult were widely spread in the archaeological monuments of the Eneolithic period and Bronze Ages, studied in the area.

Worshipping of the Sun, the Moon and the Fire by tribes, inhabiting in the existing societies, was reflected through the sun and moon engravings in studied temples, idols, pictures of fortune's wheel, hearth devices, fire ash detected in graves of Kamil tepe I, Garakopek tepe, Ilanli tepe, Baba dervish, Makhta I, Sarkar tepe, Sary tepe, Hasanli IV settlements, located in the territory of Urmia Lake, pottery obtained from kurgans and other graves, as well as o artistic bronze goods, sun and moon images on material cultural monuments studied in Ghoy-Ghol, Ganjachay and other areas prove it.

Archaeological researches indicate that places of worship were also discovered in necropolises. Thus, a structure, used, as a place

of worship, was discovered in the Pulovdag necropolis of Nakhchivan. Taking into account a circular shape and stone floor, the researcher came to conclusion that the building served, as a as a place of worship, i.e. the Temple of Fire.¹⁷

“Sun-Moon-Fire” temples can also be found in Western Asia, Central Asia and other areas. “Sun-Moon-Fire” temples of Mesopotamia and Turkmenistan have close analogy with Azerbaijani temples. This type of temples discovered in Mesopotamia, Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan are distinguished due to their anthropomorphic features.

Mesopotamian and Turkmenistan temples are without steps, resembling ordinary residential houses. Rituals for mother, who was a procreation goddess and goddess-mother, were performed in the ancient society, in those temples.¹⁸ Similar features were observed in Azerbaijani temples. Azerbaijani temples differ from Mesopotamian and Turkmenistan temples with structure and have steps.

Turkmenistan temples and praying houses, interior of temples along with temples and praying houses in Baba dervish, Garakopek tepe, Makhta I, Sarkar tepe, Sary tepe etc. located in Azerbaijan, reflect symbols with the same characteristic features, beliefs of human beings concerning design of interesting, intricate structures and composition decision. Presence of idols, associated with belief in the Sun in some of these praying houses and temples and its decoration with images, embodying the Sun, bull’s horns and symbolic engravings of the bull, symbolizing belief in the Moon, repeatedly justifies its belonging to “Sun-Moon-Fire” praying houses and temples.

The third paragraph of **Chapter II** is called **“Reflection of shamanism in the material culture of Azerbaijan”**. In this paragraph, for the first time, detailed information is given about the

¹⁷ İbrahimli, B.İ. Naxçıvanın tunc dövrünə aid müqəddəs yerləri haqqında // Azərbaycan arxeologiya və etnoqrafiya elmlərinin inkişafında Naxçıvan məktəbinin rolu. Elmi Konfransın Materialları, – Bakı, Afpoliqraf, – 2014. – s. 83.

¹⁸ Məmmədova, G.H. Qədim və erkən orta əsrlərdə Azərbaycan memarlığı / G.H. Məmmədova, S. Hacıyeva. – Bakı: Şərq-Qərb Nəşriyyat Evi, – c.I. – 2013. – s.25.

presence of ideas about shamanism in the rock paintings of Azerbaijan.

So, in connection with the beliefs of the time, shamans undoubtedly played the main role in the rituals performed during the funeral. According to primitive religious ideas, shamans played the role of mediators between the gods and the soul of a person who had passed away, provided the comfort of the afterlife, protected him from evil spirits, and helped him to be reborn.

For the first time, detailed information about shamanism in rock paintings of Azerbaijan is given in the dissertation work.

So, in connection with the beliefs of the time, shamans undoubtedly played a key role in the rituals performed during the funeral. According to primitive religious imaginations, shamans acted, as a mediator between the gods and the soul of the deceased, providing comfort to the Other world, protecting him from evil spirits and helping him to be reborn.

Isaq Jafarzadeh's views attract interest on this point. He made the following conclusion concerning "hunting scenes" on rock paintings of the Iron and Bronze Ages: *"Gobustan area, with concentrated rock paintings, was a place of worshiping. Thus, rock paintings, created by priests of that time, in addition to sign of primitive witch crafting, were connected with life of hunters of that time and were purposed to ensure success in hunting"*.¹⁹

Compositions with shaman images were discovered on Beyuk dash 2, 52, 201 (a), Yazili tepe 14, 53 and other series of Gobustan rocks. Images of a shaman with raised hands, aspiring to establish contact with cosmic space, and/or shaman, performing a ritual by means of shaman drum and trying to be in touch with god, is depicted in those images, embodying witchcraft and cosmogonic worldviews. These images repeatedly give the impression of that area, being a ritual place.

Bahlul Ibrahimli also shares his interesting views on this problem: *«He mentions that, as a result of archaeological excavations, conducted in the Valley of Gilan River, sufficient number of artifacts, allowing*

¹⁹ Джафарзаде, И.М. Гобустан. Наскальные изображения / И.М.Джафарзаде.– Баку: ЭЛМ, –1973. – с. 27.

*settling this problem, was obtained. Images from Gemigaya, located near the Gilan river mouth might be considered, as a sacred place not only for tribes, inhabiting in the Nakhchivan region, but also for all neighboring tribes, living in the middle stream of Araz River. Sufficient number of rock paintings is connected with no longer extant myths of ancient tribes, inhabiting in the territory of Nakhchivan. Several structures, discovered in the area of location of rock paintings, were places of worship. Sacred rites were performed in Gemigaya, which served, as a pasture place for semi-nomadic cattle breeders.*²⁰

Like in Gemigaya, round structures and cromlech-covered burial kurgans were observed in rocky areas of Gobustan.²¹ Our research indicates on widely spread beliefs of ancient Turkic tribes on Bronze Age rock paintings. Thus, compositions with various plots, connected with zoomorphic and ongon (totemism) conception of shamans were detected in rock paintings. Certainly, those rock compositions reflect performance of rituals. Tambourine stones and altars were not accidental in the territory of Gobustan and were purposed for shamans with aim to perform sacred rites.

Some researchers suppose that shamanism takes its roots since the Neolithic and Bronze Ages. The first written information about professional shamanism of the Southern Siberians (ancient Turkic-Tugyu and ancient Khakass people) is attributed to the 6th-7th centuries. This lays basis for suggestion that ancient Turkic peoples of the Southern Siberia benefited from shamanism during very early times too. Like one of traditional worldviews of Siberian peoples, shamanism was not only the main form of world understanding, but at the same time regarded a human, as a part of the universe – the cosmic space.²²

Thus, rock paintings in Gobustan, Gemigaya and our other

²⁰ İbrahimli, B. İ. Naxçıvanın tunc dövrünə aid müqəddəs yerləri haqqında / Azərbaycan arxeologiya və etnoqrafiya elmlərinin inkişafında Naxçıvan məktəbinin rolu. Elmi Konfransın Materialları, – Bakı, Afpoliqraf, –2014. – s.82.

²¹ Muradova, F.M. Qobustan / F.M. Muradova. – Bakı: Elm, – 1979– s. 12-16.

²² Шаманизм народов Сибири. Этнографические материалы XVIII-XX вв.: Хрестоматия / Сост., вступ. ст., исслед., прилож., заключ., подбор илл. Т. Ю, Сем. – СПб: Филологический факультет СПбГУ, 2006. – 664 с. ISBN 5-8465-0424-8.

territories, embodying rituals, held in the area prove that these ideas are unfounded and not based on any scientific evidence. It is well known that many tribes, existing during primitive community era, including Turkic tribes, didn't bypass shamanism in their primitive worldviews.

As we know, shamanism is considered one of the forms of religion that continues to live today among some Turkic peoples. Apparently, the images found in Gobustan, Gemigaya and other areas are not only the product of religious ideas, they also keep alive the ancient art of Azerbaijan.

Chapter III of the dissertation, entitled **“Ideological views and beliefs, reflected in the grave monuments of the Eneolithic and Bronze Ages”**, consists of three paragraphs. The first paragraph of Chapter III is entitled **“Grave monuments of the Eneolithic and Bronze Ages and religious-ideological views observed in the monuments”**. This chapter contains religious worldviews of societies, studied in connection with the other world. Numerous archaeological researches, carried out in gravestones of Azerbaijan, indicate on presence of such views, like animism, dualism, fetishism during the burial customs of tribes, which settled there. Grave types, specific for the territory, anthropological remains and artifacts discovered in graves are considered, as valuable sources for study of ethnicity, social, economic, religious and cultural life of people, inhabiting at that period.

Archaeological research works were carried out in the graves found in the Eneolithic settlements of Azerbaijan and in different types of grave monuments belonging to the Bronze Age - kurgans, stone boxes and earthen graves. Analogues of grave monuments in the Eneolithic period settlements can be found in Turkey, Central Asia, Iran, the Caucasus and other countries. Investigations conducted revealed application of ochre as a sign of “Sun-Light” in great number of graves, and replacement of this tradition with fire in the later stage.

As continuation of Eneolithic burial traditions in the Bronze Age grave monuments, custom of burying people together with animals became more popular.

The study of grave monuments once again shows the presence of property and social inequality in the Bronze Age.

This paragraph provides information on the acquisition of an-

thropological remains of grave monuments and the carriers of those monuments, which have been studied in the territory of the modern Republic of Azerbaijan and its historical lands.

Based on archaeological and anthropological evidence, we can say that the tribes settled in the historical territories of Azerbaijan were one of the carriers of the cultural achievements that existed in Eastern Asia from ancient times and were generally a part of the cultural world in those times.

Comparative analysis of the studied kurgans in the area shows that they belong to the local area and have similar characteristics. In most of the kurgans, human remains with a dolichocephalic skull structure, buried on their backs, mainly belonged to the tribe heads, and the skulls of those who were buried in a prostrate position around him were reflected in the research. Similar characteristic features are observed in the grave types and burial customs studied in Goy-Gol, Ganja-chay, Ganja, Garabagh, Western Azerbaijan kurgans. Probably, those burial customs keep alive the religious worldviews of the tribes that were carriers of the same ethno-culture.

It is also worth noting that the Bronze Age kurgans were erected in honor of the influential people in the tribe.

As already seen, the researches of anthropologists in the monuments studied in the area have determined the ancient type of the aboriginal population of Azerbaijan.

The second paragraph of **Chapter III** is called “**Cosmogonic worldviews in burial customs of Eneolithic and Bronze Age people**”. In the second paragraph of Chapter III, there is information about cosmic concepts in funeral customs. According to S.M.Gaziyev, funeral ceremonies differed from each other based on their religious beliefs, not the ethnic diversity of tribes and peoples.²³

Due to the aspect of burying the dead in the place of residence, the monuments of Kultepe, Alikomek tepe, Chalagan tepe

²³ Qaziyev, S.M. Qəbələ ərazisinin qədim dəfn mərasimləri haqqında // – Bakı: Azərbaycanın Maddi Mədəniyyəti, – Azərbaycan SSR EA nəşriyyatı, – c. VI. – 1965. – s. 238.

are connected with the monuments of Yanig tepe and Haji Firuz located in the area of Lake Urmia.²⁴

For example, traces of red ocher can be found in some grave monuments of the Eneolithic period. The sprinkling of red ocher on deceased people during burial is observed in most of the studied Eneolithic grave monuments in Azerbaijan. Many researchers rightly connect this type of burial custom with the “Sun” and “Fire”. It is known from archaeological researches that the Azerbaijani tribes worshiped “Sun, Moon and Fire” long before they adopted Islam. They accepted “Sun” as the “Chief God” in their religious-mythological thoughts. For the same reason, starting from the Eneolithic period, various rites and ceremonies related to the sun were held; dead people were buried with these thoughts, and red color was used as a symbol of the “Sun” in funeral ceremonies. The signs of finding the “Sun” and the “Cosmic World” in general are also observed in the planning of the Neolithic, Eneolithic and Bronze Age architectural monuments of Azerbaijan. Sprinkling of red paint on people who were sent to the afterlife is considered one of the attributes included in the Eneolithic and Early Bronze Age burial customs of Azerbaijani tribes.

Under the Sary choban earth kurgan of Aghdam district, the burial chamber and the whole complex consisting of five graves are arranged in the shape of a regular cross.²⁵

During the archaeological researches, burial customs performed in the form of a “beam system” were found in some grave monuments. Thus, collective burial custom was recorded in Chilakhan stone box grave No. 4. In the central part of the grave, the bones of a young boy were placed in a straight position. Four human skeletons revealed in the grave were found with their legs

²⁴ Mahmudova, V.Ə. Azərbaycanın ilk oturaq əkinçi-maldar tayfalarının qəbir abidələri (b. e. ə. IV-IV minilliklər) / V.Ə. Mahmudova. – Bakı: Elm, – 2003. – s. 36-37; Mahmudov, F.R. Əlikömək təpəsində arxeoloji qazıntuların ilkin yekunları // – Bakı: Daş dövrü və Azərbaycanında eneolit.(Elmi əsərlərin tematik məcmuəsi), – Bakı Dövlət Universiteti nəşriyyatı, – 1984. – s. 62.

²⁵ Джафаров, Г.Ф. Курган эпохи поздней бронзы Сарычобан // – Москва: Российская Археология, – Наука, – 1993. №3, – с. 191-207.

pointing towards the center in the form of a ray, towards the skeleton located in the middle part, and another skeleton was found sitting. F.I.Mahmudov noted that this type of burial custom is found in Dovshanli kurgan No. 2 of Garabagh. The cover of the kurgan (12th-11th centuries BC) located on the left bank of the Khachin River was registered in the depth 3 m of the man-made pavement, which radiated from the center in three directions.

The researches of the later periods, including the same type of burial custom born from primitive religious ideas in the kurgans and stone box graves found in Ghoy-Ghol, Garabagh and Talish area, allow us to suggest that those researches and results are true. Undoubtedly, according to the beliefs of the time, the burial custom of the beam system in the graves studied in the mentioned areas was related to the belief of the Sun. Burial in this way was probably intended to create a connection between the two worlds of the dead person.

Thus, besides being one of the most common symbols in mythical and religious systems, the “ray” has occupied an important place in the symbolism of many cultures of Azerbaijan and the peoples of the world.

A large number of kurgans symbolizing the Moon cult in the area have been studied by archaeologists. Among them are Chinar-tepe, Beyuk Kesik I, Poylu I, II, Gala-yeri, Soyugbulaq, Zayamchay (No. 119), Dashkasan (No. 1), Sheki (Kudurli No. 2), Shamkir (Kechili No. 1), some kurgans in Khachbulag are covered with stone. cover, the stone cover of graves No. 5, 79 and 80 in the Tovuzchay necropolis of Tovuz district has a crescent shape.

Arched, crescent-shaped stones were found on the inner covers of Soyugbulaq kurgan graves. In kurgan No. 5, below the crescent arrangements, a man was found lying on his right side towards the southeast with his arms and legs folded.

As it is known from the researches, in the Bronze Age in Azerbaijan, the ideas about the afterlife were so strong that already the tribes of this period built different types of grave monuments for dead people and held sumptuous funeral ceremonies. Burial in the graves was carried out mainly in a bent, lying position. Thus, the

burial customs performed in burial kurgans, stone box-cromlechs and earthen graves, which are among the grave types of the Bronze Age, are of interest. Due to the emergence of a class society, the preference of some tribes for sumptuous burial customs led to the widespread use of cults in funeral customs during the Bronze Age and its late stage, the increase in animistic views of the Bronze Age tribes, and eventually led to the conversion of graves into sacred places.

D. Derjavin shows that the custom of burial on the back with folded knees belongs to the Sumerian culture and covers a wide area.²⁶

In general, although funeral ceremonies held in the Bronze Age were basically the same regardless of the type of grave, the position of the deceased in the tribe was always important. Making the graves of tribal chiefs in a sumptuous shape was undoubtedly related to the survival of his soul after his death, as well as to the preservation of his power.

Chapter IV of the dissertation is entitled “**Development of handicraft and decorative features in handicraft products**”. The chapter consists of four paragraphs. In this chapter, in general, the reflection of the mythological features on the decorative processing methods and material culture samples of the Eneolithic and Bronze Age is brought to attention through colors. Research shows that many elements resulting from those achievements have been reflected on material culture samples as a part of spiritual culture from time to time - through patterns and compositions with various plots.

As it can be seen, regardless of whether the studied grave monuments are distributed in mountainous or plain zones, we witness that they benefit from the same ideological worldviews.

The first paragraph of **Chapter IV**, entitled “**Stone carving, cult stone figures, and interpretation of carving on stone objects**” is devoted to the area of stone carving and its important role in religious worldviews of people of that time. This chapter also

²⁶. Державин, В.Д. Курганы эпохи бронзы. у.с. Бутори в Молдавии //— Москва: СА— Наука, — 1976. №2, — с. 118-124.

highlights stone idols and shamanism related to Turkic tribes. Thus, as a result of the development of archaic carving as an art form, images engraved on stone by the method of carving, hewing and incision on stone appeared during the later historical periods. Rock paintings of Gobustan, Gemigaya, Kalbajar mostly attract attention with their artistic content.

The first pictorial art works were recorded in the Beyuk dash rocks of Gobustan on monuments of the 8th-6th millennia BC. Stone carving art in Gobustan goes beyond rock paintings. Thus, in some of Gobustan kurgans, stones with images and stone statues – idols were placed on graves, like objects. Among those kurgans, kurgan No.3, dating back to the 3rd millennium BC causes interest. An oblong flat idol with a human figure, carved on both sides in a vertical position, was detected among covering stones on the western side of the kurgan.²⁷

A male idol was discovered on a stone cover of the kurgan in the Absheron district.²⁸ As it is seen, the wide spread of rituals in Gobustan at that time was undeniable. The grave monuments studied in the area and the burial customs observed in those monuments prove this once again.

Gobustan, Absheron idols and rock paintings prove that in almost all existing societies, art played the role of propagandist of religion.

Although some researchers at least accept that rituals took place, nevertheless they claim that Gobustan images were painted just by shepherds and/or by people, inhabiting in the area.

The second paragraph of **Chapter IV** is entitled “**The artistic bone working art**”. This paragraph contains information about the bone working art. As far, as we know, roots of the first bone working art in Azerbaijan are connected with ancient Stone Age. The bone carving art, like pottery, metal working, and stone carving art became one of handicraft areas of tribes during the Eneolithic and

²⁷ Muradova, F. M. Qobustan. Azərbaycan SSR Elmlər Akademiyası Tarix İnstitutu Arxeologiya və Etnoqrafiya Sektoru. Bakı, Elm, 1979, s. 37-39, 42.

²⁸ Əliyev, İ.N., Abdullayev F.İ. Naməlum Abşeron. Bakı, Digital Age, 2011, s. 67.

Bronze Age. Examples of bone carving art are represented mostly in labor tools.

These tools include items made of bone and horn. Along with various labor tools, they also include various types of household items and items purposed for performance of rituals. Anthropomorphic statuettes, hewed from bone are among interesting findings. Sometimes there are material-culture samples worked on bone objects by incision and hewing. Bone products, mainly made as pendants and work tools, gave way to decorative items and developed as a small area of artistic craftsmanship in the Bronze Age. Some of the obtained bone products are connected with the religious beliefs of the people of the time.

The third paragraph of **Chapter IV**, entitled “**Development of pottery and application of various technical methods in manufacture of pottery with artistic design**”, is devoted to pottery production areas and to history of its development during the Eneolithic and Bronze Ages. Methods of technical processing of pottery art are traced on pottery kilns and ceramic goods and decorative features, reflected on examples of pottery art, came to the foreground.

Starting from the 5th-3rd millennia BC availability of deposits, abundant with clay and fuel types with high thermal efficiency, laid the foundation for the development of ceramic art in the area. In this regard, in contrary to the Neolithic period the ceramic art ceramic art was developed more in the Eneolithic and Bronze Ages, played an important role in the life and household of ancient tribes. Conducted archaeological research indicates that use of pottery kilns in the Eneolithic and Bronze Ages led to spread of the ceramic art to wider territories. Remains of ceramic kilns were discovered in many studied monuments. For example, during excavations, just, of the Eneolithic Alikomek tepe settlement, ceramic kilns with 14 common and complex structures were detected.

By emergence of potter's wheel at the end of the Eneolithic period, ceramic production made on potter's wheels was developed and tidy and effective appearance of pottery led to artistic development in the craft of the Bronze Age.

Fragments of pottery workshop were discovered from the

middle Bronze Age layer of Kultepe II. Two marble stone and bone tools with sharpened tip were discovered from the workshop. Numerous fragments of pots, decorated with grey-black colored incision and punching methods, were discovered there.²⁹

Reveal of pointed bone tools and pots with incised ornaments from the workshop demonstrates using of tools at application of ornaments on pots.

It is obvious, pottery workshops, discovered from the Eneolithic and Bronze Age monuments, pottery kilns and ceramic waste observed in these hearths of handicraft, tools applied at manufacture of ceramics, repeatedly confirm that these areas were one of the ceramic centers of the Middle East during ancient times.

Appearance of the potter's wheel allows making fine pots. Namely, due to that reason, craftsmen of that period made pots in different shapes by means of pottery wheel, after it was ready, surface of pots was covered with engobe, decorated with paint and incised ornaments, in some cases interior part of the engraved ornaments was inlaid with white engobe.

Summarizing the research, it is possible to state, that examples of ceramic art, created by the Azerbaijani artisans of the ancient period in different genres and styles, represent the article of creative world of people, possessing different philosophical views, worldviews and approaching to realities of life, to world events, to mysteries of the universe from different points. Those artifacts attract attention through distinction from each other, its authenticity, variety of styles and, at the same time, preserve numerous mythological values. Each of these extracted craft works has its individual meaning, own plot line, specific history.

The fourth paragraph of **Chapter IV** is entitled “**Metalwork and technical methods, applied for making of artistic metal items**”. This paragraph provides information on studied raw material bases, relating to the metallurgy, applied in that area, new technical achievements, obtained in this field.

Ancient hearths of the 5th-4th millennia metal working, dis-

²⁹ Əliyev, V. Qədim Naxçıvan / V. Əliyev. – Bakı; Elm, – 1979. – s. 31-35.

covered in the area, proved that Azerbaijan was one of the ancient metallurgical centers. Concerning this matter, Leilatepe settlement (5th-4th millennia BC) may be considered, as the oldest center of metalwork in the Southern Caucasus. Based on archaeological excavations of the area, hearth traces of metalwork, remains of arsenic, nickel-mixed metal fragments and four-edged awls were detected in one of houses.³⁰

Extraction of bronze is one of the greatest achievements of human beings. Fragments of a kiln with metal working, detected in Kultepe II, reveal application of artificial blowing technique during metal smelting. Pointed bellows, served for increasing of temperature by means of artificial blowing, were detected in Kultepe II, Makhta I, Baba dervish, Misharchay, Goytepe and Yaniq tepe (in the South Azerbaijan – Iran). Increasing and regulation of temperatures expanded abilities of ancient metallurgists, created conditions for extraction and melting of sulfide ore, located in the depth of deposits.³¹

Clay crucibles and clay molds, used at metal casting, were also observed in vicinity of hearth structures of metalwork, studied in the Azerbaijan territory. Application of different technical methods on bronze articles, made already during the Bronze Age, required long-term experience and skills from artisans. Though some of these methods were known to the craftsmen of the Eneolithic period, by leaning on ancient traditions and, as a result of application of new methods, craftsmen of the Bronze Age, brought innovation to artistic metalwork of Azerbaijan enriched the handicraft area.

Chapter V of the dissertation is entitled “**Classification of religious and mythological views, reflected in the archaeological heritage of Azerbaijan**”. The chapter consists of seven paragraphs. This chapter is primarily connected with philosophical and mytho-

³⁰ Махмудов, Ф.Р., Мунчаев Р.М., Нариманов И.Г. О древней металлургии Кавказа // Ф.Р.Махмудов, Р.М.Мунчаев, И.Г.Нариманов.– М.: СА, –Наука, – 1968. № 4, –с. 16.

³¹ Seyidov, A.Q. Naxçıvanın qədim metalı / A.Q. Seyidov, Ə. Həsənova. – Bakı: Elm, – 2005. – s. 68.

logical views of ancient societies, discovered at archaeological heritage of Azerbaijan and it is the main contents of the dissertation. Reflection of mythological and semantic peculiarities in artifacts, of the Eneolithic and Bronze Ages, cosmogonic worldviews of ancient people, various ideas and ceremonies, relating to ancestral cult are reflected here. Archaeological artifacts are interpreted and comparatively analyzed with folklore texts.

The first paragraph of **Chapter V** is entitled **“Reflections of semantic and mythological worldviews in the archaeological heritage of Eneolithic and Bronze Age societies”**. This paragraph provides information about religious-mythological views. As it is known, the archaeological heritage of Azerbaijan is a relic of millennia and preserves ancient traditions as well. The Lullubi, Kuti, Su, Turruki, Avshar and other (names unknown to history) tribes that participated in the formation of the Azerbaijani people during the Bronze Age, and perhaps even before that, brought their high mythological culture to the ancient heritage of Azerbaijan. As far, as we know, myths form the core of spiritual cultures of ancient tribes, generated from their philosophical worldviews and were characteristic for all periods of human society.

If the material culture samples of the Eneolithic period that we studied contain simple geometrical symbolic signs and patterns with semantic meaning, then already in the Bronze Age we are witnessing the creation of compositions with religious content and mythological compositions with complex content reflecting celestial bodies. In general, the decorative motifs of the material culture samples obtained during the archaeological excavations in the territory of Azerbaijan were not accidental, they arose in accordance with the mythical thoughts and artistic taste developed in the ancient society during the centuries, and in the subsequent historical stages, they gave invaluable works of art to the world culture.

On the base of conducted researches, it became apparent that plenty images inherited to us from tribes of the Eneolithic and Bronze Ages (observed on artifacts), possessed aesthetic functions and were created in association with primitive religious beliefs.

The second paragraph of **Chapter V**, entitled **“Semantic pe-**

cularities in material culture samples of Azerbaijan”, illustrates semantic peculiarities of the artifacts, obtained in the area. As is known, some of the ornaments of the Eneolithic period are based on Neolithic traditions. The images are closely related to the semantics and mythological features of the period, and can be considered a source of information provided by signs and patterns as well as an expression of the aesthetic thought that was developing. In the studied periods, ideas related to cosmic worldviews become a part of the worldviews of people of the Eneolithic period. This manifest itself in crescent and circle symbols on material culture samples. Crescent-shaped signs are mainly found on clay vessels. In connection with “generation growth” belief, “nipple-shape” images were also encountered on dishes. Relating to “productivity” belief, spike-shape decoration elements on female figurines and clay vessels were prevailing. The first “triangular” shaped samples, incised and carved decoration patterns are found on hand-made ceramics and on female statuettes of the Eneolithic period. Rhombic, parallel and horizontal lines are more preferred on painted vessels belonging to the Chalcolithic period.

“Reflection of cosmogonic worldviews in artifacts, its content and significance” is examined in the third paragraph of Chapter V.

As we mentioned, the solar belief, which became an attribute of Eneolithic grave monuments, was formed on the basis of the development of the way of life from the Bronze Age. The worship of individual forces of nature and celestial bodies increases in religious imagery, and as a result, the tribes living in the area worship all the forces of nature, including the Sun, Moon and Fire. The decorative application of ancient tribes’ worship of the sun and fire takes place in the form of patterns and symbols in art and is mainly expressed on artistic products and religious places of worship.

The ideas about the sun, included in the system of cosmogonic worldviews, are connected with the belief that arose from religious factors in the beliefs of the Azerbaijani tribes. The sign “Fortune’s wheel” finds its expression in material culture in various forms (circle, spiral, similar to a wheel model and

“Fortune’s wheel”). The winged and wingless “Fortune’s wheel” sign, which symbolizes the sun, is considered one of the most widespread symbols in monuments related to ancient mythical and religious meetings. In addition to being a symbol of the creation of mankind, the winged “Fortune’s wheel” sign also represents the rotation of the wheel of the fortune in ancient religious concepts.

Images symbolizing the sun can also be found in the stone arrangement of kurgans and cromlechs.

In the cosmogonic views of the Azerbaijani people, there are also extensive ideas about the Moon. The moon is interpreted as the embodiment of night light and initiation of men. Images of the moon are currently considered sacred symbols in the religious worldviews of the Turkic peoples.

In the territory of Azerbaijan, there are also grave monuments that symbolize the signs of the “Moon” cult and are represented by an astral element (Moon) on the surface and inside.

Grave covers (in kurgans) with the image of “Moon” worked with stone arrangement, and the crescent arrangement of stones and vessels inside the grave chambers can be considered typical for grave monuments of the Late Bronze, Early Iron and Antiquity period in Azerbaijan too. It is apparent, that cult, specific for Eneolithic gravestone, goes back even to more ancient periods. Thus, the “Moon cult” was more relevant for the Eneolithic, Bronze, Iron and ancient periods of Azerbaijan, although it changed its content and in some cases its form, nevertheless it was considered, as one of the sacred symbols at the later historical period, i.e. after adoption of Islam.

During the study of archaeological monuments, we witness that the “Moon” cult found its way into the totemistic views of the Azerbaijani tribes. That cult symbolizes their connection with the cosmic world as an ancestral cult, expressing animal bodies - mainly in the head and back areas - through various images and symbols.

The image of the moon finds its expression among the attributes of the “Tree of Life”, which is included in Turkish mythology as the axis of the world. In ancient mythological images, the Sun is

depicted on one side of the “Tree of Life” and the “Moon” on the other side. Myths, connected with the Moon and symbols depicting the crescent, may be considered, as the oldest and the most valuable sources of information about the beliefs of the ancient inhabitants of Azerbaijan in the Moon.

The “Moon cult” is associated with Oghuz Khagan in beliefs of many Turkic peoples and philosophy of ancient Uyghurs. Oghuz’s mother is embodied in the Ay Qagan image and his father is personified in the Bull’s image in the saga. Birth of a human in hero image out of the light is reflected mostly in the “Oghuz Khagan” saga. Oghuz Khagan is presented in sagas, mainly in images created from the marriage of the Moon and the Bull.

The connection in these epics shows itself in the images and figures of bulls with crescent horns on the samples of material culture obtained from the territory of Azerbaijan. Perhaps, for the same reason, in the depictions of bulls with crescent horns on Bronze Age art samples, in burial customs accompanied by the belief in bulls, we find signs of the ancestor cult of the ancient Turkic-Oghuz tribes - the Oghuz Kagan.

Five, six, seven, eight, etc., angled star images which are placed as filling elements on the bronze age artifacts of Azerbaijan are common.

On the whole, these images have great religious and ideological significance in the life of ancient tribes. Those symbols keep alive the symbology of the tribes of the time related to the cosmic world.

“Reflection of ancestral cults in material culture of the Eneolithic and Bronze Ages, their content and essence” is highlighted in the fourth paragraph of **Chapter V**. Images, representing wild, domestic animals, birds and fantastic creatures became an important, constituent part of mythological worldview of that time. Beliefs related to the “Earth cult”, expressed in the religious worldviews in the Eneolithic period, were formed in connection with the land cultivation by the ancient tribes and integrated ideas of land, fertility and growth.

The reflection and worship of animals in grave monuments

and temples got stronger in the Late Bronze than in the Eneolithic, Early and Middle Bronze Ages. Due to this reason, graves turn to the sacred places at that period.

Unlike the Azerbaijani monuments of the Eneolithic period, traces observed on gravestones, relating to the ancestral cult, were encountered more frequently in the archaeological monuments of the Bronze Age, Iron Age and antiquity. “Cult of the dead”, widely spread among the religious and mythic beliefs of tribes, is also displayed in burial ceremonies, expressed in gravestones, relating to animals. This point once more indicates about spread of ancestral cult and religious ideas in the area. Those religious ideas were represented by artists and craftsmen of later periods in the form of compositions of various plots and figures, related to expression of shamanism on artifacts and rock paintings. It is apparent, archaeological sources contain valuable information about religious and ideological worldviews of ancient people.

The research on **“Women’s, men’s cult and ceremonies in the ancient material culture of Azerbaijan”** is described in the fifth paragraph of **Chapter V** of the dissertation. As it was mentioned, development of farming household during the Eneolithic period led to emergence of productivity cults. Artisans of the Eneolithic period, representing traditions of primitive sculpture, which were formed on basis of art of Azerbaijani tribes of the Neolithic period, remained loyal to their religious beliefs, specific to the matriarchate and addressed to image of goddess in the art. Artisans, capable of integrating in female image ideological views, philosophical believes and art, brought an image of a mother to the foreground in a way specific to that period, distinguished by its authentic, mythological peculiarities.

Along with presence of ritual elements, held in temples, such type of sculptural samples, involved into study, as a constituent part of spiritual culture of tribes of that period, complemented each other, namely in female statuettes. It should be appropriate to mention, in addition to possession of religious and mythological peculiarities, female statuettes of the Eneolithic period preserved religious infor-

mation and ideological worldviews of that period too.

Emergence of the patriarchal khaganate pushed already the way for creation of a new image in decorative applied art of the Bronze Age. The image of a man comes to the foreground in the art. As a result of man worship, images, relating to him, occupy much more place among the artifacts.

The sixth paragraph of **Chapter V** is called “**Reflection of animal cults in the material culture of Azerbaijan**”. This paragraph provides information about animal cults that were included in the beliefs of people living in ancient societies.

In the studied period, one of the animals that are distinguished by their mythological characteristics is associated with the bull. In that period, the ox, one of the bovine animals, was used as the first means of transport at wooden plough farming and to ensure the movement of loaded carts in the field farming, facilitated labor activity of the agricultural tribes of the time was illuminated, which led to belief in the power of the ox, the worship of it, and the mythicization of these or other animals in the imagination of people in later periods.

During the archaeological research conducted in the Eneolithic monuments, many clay figures of bulls were found.

Confirmation of the Ox belief is shown in rock petroglyphs, temples, etc. Bull images are represented by fantastic images on Late Bronze Age belts. They are depicted with crescent horns in different movement dynamics. Some of the furnace devices obtained from the territory of Azerbaijan were directly made in the shape of a bull's head or decorated with bull's horns.

During the excavations of the kurgan of 15th-14th centuries BC in the Oghuz district of Azerbaijan the archaeologist N.Mukhtarov discovered very skillfully and elegantly made golden figure of Bull's skull, which was a power symbol. Besides noting that the figure belongs to the tribes living in the area, the researcher came to the conclusion that there was a high level of statehood and developed economic progress in the area at that time. The figure of Bull skull obtained from ancient Mingechevir was golden plated. A single triangle was incised on Bull's forehead has the same features,

possessed on spearheads, obtained from Dovshanly (Garabagh), Southern and Western Azerbaijan territories.³² The single triangle on the ox's forehead not only carries the symbol of power of the tribes belonging to the same ethnic group that lived in the area, but also evokes thoughts that the "Trinity Model of the World" in the beliefs of the ancient Turkic tribes consists of three parts. In the Trinity model, the upper world is heaven, the middle world is the earth, and the lower world is explained as the other (afterlife. This once again proves that bull head-shaped lances were a symbol of power.

Mythological ideas about Oghuz Khagan, which are widespread in the beliefs and mythology of Azerbaijani tribes, have not bypassed the burial customs, probably the tribes who were the bearers of those religious-mythological worldviews connected the burial of the ox and the custom of placing the head and legs of the ox in the grave with the ancestor cult.

In the burial customs of the Bronze Age of Azerbaijan, the luxurious burial custom of an ox was found. The grave accompanied by the burial of an ox is known from the Khojaly kurgan No. 2 studied by E.Resler. The skulls of the two bulls buried here were decorated with bronze (resembling a cover).

No doubt that the luxurious burial of the bulls and the flat structure (circular) bronze heads placed on their heads wasn't accidental, and expressed the cult of the moon and the ancestors. The worship of the bull can be considered a funeral custom that arose in connection with the belief in its spirit. The custom of placing the body parts of an ox in the grave is found in many grave monuments of Azerbaijan. At first, this belief was associated with the ideas of agriculture in the minds of ancient tribes, but in later times, the bull-ox cult entered the life of ancient tribes as a totem. The confirma-

³² Avşarova, İ. N. Xocalı-Gədəbəy mədəniyyəti tayfalarının bədii tunc məmulatı (e. ə. XIV-VII əsrlər) / Avşarova İ. N. – Bakı: Nurlan, – 2007. – s. 149; İbrahimov T. Azərbaycanın qədim heykəltəraşlığı / İbrahimov, T. – Bakı: Şərq-Qərb, –2013.–s. 65; Мартиросян, А.А. Армения в эпоху бронзы и раннего железа / Мартиросян А. А. – Ереван: Издательство АН Армянской ССР,– 1964.– s. 147, tab. XIV.

tion of this shows itself mostly in the monuments related to the burial of the bull.

Thus, in the mythical thinking of the Oghuz Turks, Oghuz is depicted in a semi-zoomorphic image that arose from the marriage of the Moon and the Ox. It is for this reason that the hearth devices of the “Sun-Moon-Fire” temples in the territory of Azerbaijan are decorated with ox horns, and bronze belts belonging to Khojaly-Gedabey culture tribes are decorated with images of crescent-horned oxen.

And what about the appearance of Oghuz Khagan (in mythological ideas of ancient Turks) he was described as follows: *“His legs were like the legs of a bull, his waist was like the waist of a wolf, his shoulders were like the shoulders of a sable, his chest was like the chest of a bear”*.

Oghuz-Khagan married the daughter of universe, who descends from heaven to earth in the light of dawn. This girl symbolizes Earth and water. Oghuz -Khagan’s marriage with that girl gave birth to three sons - Sun, Moon and Star. His second wife descends from heaven to earth with a very strong blue light. This girl symbolizes the Sky-divinity and the Sky-air. Three more sons were born from his marriage with this girl – the Sky, the Mountain and the Sea.³³

It is likely that the burial of the bull and the various types of burial customs accompanied by placing the body parts of the bull, including the legs, in the graves found in the Bronze Age were connected with the religious and mythological beliefs of the time and preserve the signs of the ancestor cult. The continuation of the tradition - burial customs related to the ox can also be found in the ancient grave monuments of Azerbaijan.

V.A.Kuftin associated this type of kurgans to burial customs of Anatolia and Mesopotamia. During archaeological excavations, conducted in many places, including banks of Don River in Kostenko and in Avdeyev dug-houses near Kursk, practice of

³³ Мифы народов мира. Энциклопедия (в двух томах) / – Москва: Советская Энциклопедия, –т. II. –1992. – с. 240.

burying heads of musk sheep and bulls in corners of houses was observed.³⁴

Figuratively researching the beliefs related to the ox that arose in primitive imaginations, we see that the philosophical feelings and religious views of people, relating to idea of life and Oghuz Khagan and his sons, born from that marriage reflected in images, are connected primarily with generation of universe in the Turkish mythology.

The brave Gayomard's image is presented, as the first human and the ancestral cult in mythology of certain tribes, inhabiting in the territory of ancient Iran. His name is associated with name of Mard (Amard) tribes and with cult of the bull. He is considered, as the ancestor of Mard tribes. The etymology of his name is a human-bull. This mythic image is known on both shores of the Caspian Sea, including Khorezm. It is also associated with rituals, relating to cattle-breeding.³⁵

According to ancient Egyptian and Sumerian mythology, bull's images were depicted, as appearance of gods on the Earth. Ox-bull descriptions of the 3rd-1st millennia BC, were represented, as the "Moon goddess" in mythological thinking of ancient Egyptian, Turkic, Sumerian-Akkadian, Iranian and Central Asian tribes.³⁶ It is evident from above mentioned, Azerbaijani tribes also worshiped the bull, as the "Moon goddess".

Starting from the Bronze Age up to Middle Ages the Bull skull, legs and horns were placed, as a totem attribute, an ancestral cult and a symbol of power in different types of monuments, including gravestones and temples, fortress walls. Myths, connected with the Bull's (ox) cult were also emerged in those times in the Azerbaijani mythology, as a result of philosophical feelings.

³⁴ Куфтин, Б.А. Археологические раскопки в Триалети / Б.А. Куфтин. – Тбилиси, – Изд-во АН Груз. ССР, – 1941; Соколова, З. П. Культ животных в религиях / З. П. Соколова. – Москва : Наука, – 1972. – с. 40.

³⁵ Ельницкий, Л.А. Скифские легенды как культурно-исторический материал // – Москва, – Советская Археология, –Наука, – 1970, № 2, – с. 69.

³⁶ Мифы народов мира. Энциклопедия (в двух томах) / – Москва: Советская Энциклопедия, – т. I. –1991. – с. 203.

Confirmation of all the above-said is found in the bas-relief on the double castle gate of the 15th century Shirvanshahs palace. In the bas-relief, we find the head of a sacred bull, on it are the images of “Moon”, “Sun”, and two lions protecting the sacred bull on the right and left sides. Although thousands of years have passed since the Bronze Age, in the bas-relief on the double tower gate of the 15th century Shirvanshahs palace, as a continuation of the tradition, we are still faced with the image of the sacred bull's head, which is the cult of power and ancestors, and its attributes, the Moon and the Sun.

Beliefs related to the dog cult are also widespread in the religious worldviews and burial customs of the Azerbaijani people. The images of the dog were drawn and figures were made.

As we know, burial customs related to the dog cult are also common in the area. In two of the graves studied in the Eneolithic layer of Kultepe settlement I in Nakhchivan, a dog was buried at person's foot.

The Azerbaijani tribes who lived in the Bronze Age and Antique times also gave importance to dog burial as a sign of cult in their burial customs. As a continuation of the tradition, the skeleton of a dog is found in graves, usually at the feet of the buried person, in a sitting position.

A wolf is considered, as one of main characters in mythology of the Turkic peoples. This image, presented, as a grey wolf (Bozkurt) and simply, as a wolf, was raised to level of ancestors and totem in worldviews of the Turkic peoples. Records of the Blue Turks about Kul Tigin narrate: *“When the blue sky above and the reddish-brown earth below were created, human beings were created between these two. My grandfathers- Bumin Kagan and Istami Kagan ruled over the human beings. Bumin's ancestors were descended from wolves. This accounts for the fact, that the first ancestors were connected with a totem”*.³⁷

Descriptions related to beliefs are also found in the images

³⁷ Hüseyinoğlu, K. Mifin mənşəyi, mahiyyəti və tipologiyası/ Hüseyinoğlu K. – Bakı: Elm və Təhsil, –2010, –s. 49.

traced in archaeological material-culture samples. Among those images related to the belief of the wolf are often found. Thus, the bronze belt symbolizing the worm totem (Late Bronze - Early Iron Ages) was obtained during archaeological excavations in the territory of Gazakh district.

As we mentioned above, ancient myths describe the fox image, as a female, and the wolf, as a male. As it is indicated above, Oghuz was described with waist resembling a wolf's waist. As Oghuz was a chief ongon of united tribes, he also reflected the peculiarities of the ongons of some tribes. Undoubtedly, ancestors of the ancient Turks, considered by them, as "wolves", additionally to ancestral cult, formed with cosmogonic cults in connected way, tribes of that time followed the aim to prevent drought by means of that cult. When the Wolf was presented to Oghuz in the legend about Oghuz, it descended inside a ray from the sky and helped Oghuz in hard times. He went to the frontier side of Oghuz's army and led it through difficult roads. The wolf's link with the beam is a very interesting mythological phenomenon. Oghuz Khagan's son Deniz Khan's ongon is also a blue wolf, descending from the sky inside a ray.

The wolf and the lion were the symbol of the sun, the embodiment of animals in beliefs of Turkic speaking peoples, including the Azerbaijani Turks³⁸. It is apparent, the Oghuz's image is an image of semi-totem, semi-god.

When the Oghuz people were asked about their ancestors in "Dede Gorgud" epic poem, they told confidently: we are descendants of the Lion, the Wolf, the Bull, the Horse and the Deer. The epic poem "Dede Gorgud" reflects the ideas about the wolf. The saga tells about the robbery of Gazan khan's house: *"He crossed the water and at this time he met the wolf. Blessed was the face of the wolf, he said, let me talk to the Wolf, let us see what the lady learned; Gazan is the Moon. You informed me about my army, didn't You! Let my luckless head be sacrifice to you, my Wolf!"*³⁹

³⁸ Seyidov, M. Qam-Şaman və onun qaynaqlarına ümumi baxış/ Seyidov M. – Bakı: Gənclik, –1994. – s. 29.

³⁹ Kitabı-Dədə Qorqud / –Bakı: Gənclik, –1971. – s. 35-36.

One of images, changing its representation in mythology, was the Goat. As far, as we know, the goat is associated with the idea of reproduction in mythology of the Azerbaijani people. Namely, due to this reason, the goat is reflected in mythology, associated with gods and mythological creatures. Images of goats found on material culture samples were mainly expressed in the compositions related to the symbol of reproduction and fertility. Next to the images of goats, and sometimes on them, there is a symbol of the zodiac. This once again proves the connection of goats with the cult of the sun.

Among all other animals a goat prevailed in sacrifice to the gods at burial customs of the ancient Azerbaijan. During ancient times horns of mountainous goat were considered sacred among Azerbaijani, Turkmen, Uzbek, Kyrgyz and other tribes. Since the Stone Age a goat's horns were laid in the grave (in the Teshik Tash Cave, in Uzbekistan), an attribute of goats in rituals, related to the Other world.

Beliefs, that a goat played an important role in worldview of the ancient Turks, its symbol of fertility, its horns, possessing divine, evil spell and reducing evil properties, are available. In many cases, a goat was a symbol of power, carrying a sign of invincibility. In connection with belief in a goat we find useful to point out an important fact.

M.A.Seyidov writes that “the horse in the Bashadar kurgan was buried in the space-suit”. The mythification of the horse with a goat's head or horn was depicted in the image on the crown of the “prince in golden dress”, discovered from the Issyk kurgans. In Pazrik kurgans, horses are also mythologized with goat heads.

Likening a horse head with a head of such animals as a goat, sheep, deer is typical from standpoint of the ancient Turkish history and ethnography. In the epic “Dede Gorgud”, which is a common mythic image for the Turkic peoples, Dede Gorgud, who went to seek Banu chichek's consent to marry Beyrek, two splendid horses from Bayandir khan's stable were presented. One of those two splendid, swift-footed horses from Bayandir khan's stable was a yearling sheep-headed stallion Duru and the other - Kecher, stallion

with the Goat head.⁴⁰

Likening the head of a horse to the head of an animal such as a goat, sheep, or deer is typical from the viewpoint of ancient Turkish history and ethnography.

The goddess Umay, who has a place in Turkish mythology, is depicted with goat legs. Apparently, presentation of horses and goddesses in ancient Turkish mythology with goat symbol was undoubtedly associated with the Sun god. Thus, in Turkish mythology, there are various mythical ideas about the horse and goat carrying the symbol of the Sun.

The Horse cult was expressed in religious and ideological thinking of the Turkic peoples since ancient times. Images of horses on burials, graves, material culture samples, folklore texts, including tales, legends, epics are widely spread among the Turkic peoples.

Based on all horse skeletons and horse armors, discovered during excavations in archaeological monuments of the 2nd millennium BC, researchers indicate that horse-breeding was highly developed in Azerbaijan at that time (especially, end of the 2nd – beginning of the 1st millennia BC).

In the grave monuments studied in the territory of Azerbaijan, the burial custom of cutting off the heads of horses has also been found. Horse worship is also manifested in various material and cultural examples obtained from the territory of Azerbaijan.

Mythological horses were depicted on artifacts in sagas, tales and myths of Azerbaijan and ancient East. Horses were displayed, like a symbol of happiness, dignity and mythological creatures in many folklore texts of Turkic peoples. In Azerbaijani mythology, horses are sometimes depicted with winged images. There is no doubt that were in connection with the sky, and they myths with solar lines and holiness.

It is evident, winged horses were associated with heavenly and divine forces in mythological thinking of the Turkic peoples

⁴⁰ “Kitabi-Dədə Qorqud” dastanı. Bibliografıya. Bakı-2015.URL: <https://www.arxiv.mtx.az>.pdf> Kitabi-Dədə Qorqud, s. 41.

and were included into range of animals, loved and distinguished by the chief God-Creator.

Cult of the Horse in religious worldviews of the ancient Turkic tribes, like a totem, was represented as a symbol of spiritual energy, physical force, honor and dignity.

In Azerbaijani petroglyphs - a part of the images, which are very widespread on the rocks, are closed with images of deer. Compositions depicting deer often include the symbols of “Sun” and “Tree of Life”. This is a sign of the connection of the deer with the “Sun” and the “axis of the world”.

Deer's image, symbolizing power and ancestral cult, was also reflected on tug flags. This type of flags might be considered, as the ancestral symbol of tribes, inhabiting in that area. One of such tug flags was revealed in Qaraja Emirli kurgan, relating to the 15th-14th centuries BC in Shamkir district.

Tug flags with deer images on were also observed in Western Azerbaijan. Generally, a deer, which was typical for that area, symbolized an image of the ancestral cult, the Sun and the power. Religious beliefs of the Bronze Age tribes of Azerbaijan were also reflected in burial customs.

The custom of deer burial is known from Late Bronze Age grave monuments No. 148 and 150 located in the southwestern part of Khanlar (Ghoy-Ghol) district. A pair of deer skeletons was discovered in the frontier part of the symbolic wooden cart model in grave No.150. The deer's horns were decorated with white paste beads and bronze half-moons.⁴¹ Probably, this burial custom was related to the belief in deer at that time, as well as to the “ancestor cult” and had a ritual character. For the same reason, its images were drawn and his figures were made.

Among artifacts, belonging to farming and cattle breeding tribes, inhabiting in the territory of Azerbaijan, many figures of rams, images of rams and ram horns, symbolizing a ram are encountered. Horns of animals were mainly considered, as a symbol

⁴¹ Гуммель, Я. И. Раскопки к юго-западу от Ханлара в 1941г. // – Москва: Наука, –Вестник древней истории , –IV т. –1992., –с. 11.

of power in the ancient East. Perhaps, namely due to this reason, a symbol of the ram's horn was reflected, as a stamp of farming and cattle breeding tribes on a pottery and other artifacts of ancient times.

Strong belief in ram is repeatedly proven by ram figures, observed in the territory of Azerbaijan and ram images on the rock No.15 of the Kichik dash monument in Gobustan. The images of two rams are depicted on that rock. Two lines of angle, forming zigzags, completed them in original way. The inside part of a zigzag in the first line on a ram, strolling in front is filled with dots. This gives a special appearance to the image.⁴²

Ram bones are often encountered in the Bronze Age graves. Basically, rams and goats are considered, as animals of the Earth gods in mythology.

There are many legends about a ram in Azerbaijani fairy tales. Two images of rams- a black and white ram, are expressed in fairy tales. In those dualistic views the black Ram, accompanying a human to the other world and the white Ram, leading a human to the world of light are in the images, presented in mythology. The ram image also symbolizes cults of the "Moon and the Sun" in worldviews of ancient societies.

The Cat image was discovered in grave monuments and in rock compositions. Indications of cult of the cat were detected in Bronze Age kurgan graves in Azerbaijan. Cat bones, including grave No. 206, were observed in some graves in the Ghoy-Ghol district.

It is known, that a tortoise image symbolized a disk of the Sun in mythology of Asian peoples. Cult of the tortoise was also widely spread in the ancient China, Greece and other countries. Existence of this cult is quite natural for farming and cattle-breeding tribes. The point is that their household was directly associated with sun and nature. All this indicates that the tortoise image symbolized both the Sun and the Fire.

⁴² Джафарзаде, И. М. Гобустан (наскальные изображения) / Джафарзаде И. М. –Баку: ЭЛМ, –1973. – с. 324.

During the study of some graves in the Ganjachay area, a tortoise shell was discovered near a human skeleton.

A dragon and a snake are considered, as one of the most widely spread images in the decorative art of the Bronze Age in Azerbaijani. Dragon and snake images, reflecting religious beliefs of the tribes of the time, embodied material and cultural expression in negative and positive images, participating at development of religious-ideological views, art, mythological-philosophical thinking.

A snake image is very common on surface of artifacts, including bronze belts, bracelets, pottery items and rock paintings.

Along with domestic animals, images and figures of wild animals are frequently encountered in the archaeological monuments of Azerbaijan. A certain part of those images is associated with a lion image, as a symbol of “power and authority”, and was widely used in the religious and ideological worldviews of the Bronze Age.

Lion figures, preserving spiritual and cultural heritage of the Azerbaijani people, are also widely spread in the area. One of such figures - the most interesting discovery related to cult of the lion is known from the Qaraja Emirli kurgan in Shamkir district.⁴³ This is a bronze bowl with a lion figure dating to the 15th-14th centuries BC. This unique finding is a symbol of power and embodies high artisan culture of tribes, inhabiting in the Bronze Age in Azerbaijan. A tug flag, embodying the symbol of both cult of the lion and the power, is reflected in a lion figure, standing proudly above a man.

Lion images are also encountered on Azerbaijani rock paintings and metal items.

New works of art, distinguished by their philosophical and mythological peculiarities in worldviews of the ancient tribes, inhabiting in the territory of Azerbaijan, appeared in the end of 2nd millennium- the beginning of the 1st millennium BC. Vultures and gryphons are among synthetic images, created on base of unity of body parts of images of different animals.

Zagaly village is located in Julfa district of Nakhchivan. Two

⁴³ Quliyev, F.E. Azərbaycanın kurqan qəbirlərində at dəfni. Azərbaycan Milli Elmlər Akademiyası Arxeologiya və Etnoqrafika İnstitutu. Bakı, Elm, 2008, s. 295.

bronze gryphons were accidentally discovered in Zagaly village. Upper part of the gryphon resembles an eagle's head and lower part - legs of both an eagle and a lion. Thus, an analogue of the Zagaly gryphons was encountered on a gravestone inscription, discovered in a place, called Suzdan Kudurru, belonging to Sumerian-Akkadians. The inscription was attributed to the 12th century BC.⁴⁴ The gryphon on the right side, looks like Zagaly gryphons. One may state, that Zagaly gryphons may be attributed to the earlier ancient period, to the Late Bronze Age. On the whole, gryphon's head part resembles the eagle's head and its body and feet look like lion's feet. Gryphons, also considered as a mythic image among the ancient Azerbaijani tribes and symbolized power and authority. Specialists refer Zagaly gryphons to the Late Antique period.⁴⁵

Thus, based on the obtained materials, we can say that the depictions of gryphons entered into the art and mythology of Azerbaijan still during the Bronze Age, as a result of influence of Sumerian-Akkadian art and mythology, and as Ahriman's image in "Avesta" at later historical periods.

Artifacts depicted a bird on are frequent among archaeological material – cultural samples of ancient Azerbaijan. Many bird images and figurines, encountered in the area were in some cases presented in conditional and schematic way. Birds, displayed in archaeological monuments, fairy tales and legends of Azerbaijan do not exist in the life, symbolic and fantastically depicted mythological fictitious beings.

During research period, bird images associated with presence of a spirit, were widely spread in mythological thinking of people. In some cases, human soul is compared with a bird in mythological texts and folk narratives. Immortality of a soul and its flight into endless space is widely interpreted in world my-

⁴⁴ Мифы народов мира / Энциклопедия, Москва, – Советская Энциклопедия, – т. I. 1991.

⁴⁵ Əliyev, V.H., Ağazadə, T.D. Zağalı kəndindən tapılmış tunc qrifon haqqında //– Bakı: Elm, –Azər. SSR EA Xəbərləri, –1986, №3, –s. 75, 79.

thology. Bird images were expressed, as gods during ancient times. For this reason, bird images, resembling the god and its angels were widely spread on artifacts.

Birds are also represented, as ancestral cult in Azerbaijani mythology. The Simurgh bird, associated with the light, the fire and the other world, and presented in mythology of the East and Azerbaijan, is one of them. Interesting legends and myths about birds are presented in ancient Azerbaijani mythology. Most of these legends are about the Simurgh bird, a syncretic figure, to whom man hopes for help in times of need.

In the epic “Oghuz Kagan”, the ongon of all the sons of Oghuz are wild birds.

In Azerbaijani mythology, eagles and falcons are the symbols of power and authority. In material culture, the spirit of shahs is mainly represented in the image of an eagle. Falcons are more prominent in the ancestral cult of Oghuz tribes. For example: the white falcon is considered one of the ongons of the Avshar tribes. Perhaps, it is for this reason that bird images are also found on the tug flags, which are considered to be attributes of military work in Azerbaijan.

Tug flags with bird figures obtained from Shamkir and Western Azerbaijan are also valuable sources that indicate the existence of the bird-ancestor cult in the area.

The seventh paragraph of **Chapter V**, deals with the study of **“Reflection of the symbols of the “The tree of Life” in material culture”**. One of the images characteristic of the ancient Turkish and Azerbaijani Bronze Age art samples is the symbol of the Tree of Life, which means the existence of “axis of the world”, has a wide place in the mythological worldviews of the Bronze Age tribes, and includes genealogical and semantic ideas. This description occurs within compositions on material-cultural samples (on rock, ceramics, metal products). Although the ethnological symbol “Tree of Life” is considered metaphorical due to its mythological features, it is figuratively and semantically connected and complements each other on material-cultural samples.

As it is known, in the epic “Oghuz-name” (according to the mythical thinking of Turkic-speaking tribes), Oghuz’s second marriage with the goddess of trees and plants is reflected.

In the mythical saga of the Yakuts about the “Aghoghlan (White Boy)”, the Great Tree embodies the image of a god, a goddess, and also appears in the saga as the bearer of the “Holy Spirit”. She is the owner of the “axis of the world”, the creator of the world and the first man, the goddess of reproduction. Her hair is compared to the moon. Perhaps she is the goddess “Umay” herself. It is known that the cultural heroes who appear in the images of “god” in Turkish folklore examples are concentrated under different names in mythology.

In Lachin district of Azerbaijan, the Albanian temple called “Aghoghlan” belonging to the ancient period remains today. Considering the ancient legends of Turkic tribes living in the area (who adopted Christianity) in ancient times, it can be assumed that the temple was built on the site of an older polytheistic temple. So, as we mentioned, ancient Albanian temples were built mainly on ancient polytheistic temples.

As for the concept and origin of the “Tree of Life”, it should also be mentioned that description was directly connected with religious ideas of the Bronze Age tribes. This cult lost its original essence to some extent in many regions and Western region of Azerbaijan and was formed in their traditions, post-Islamic religious thinking and became «shah raising» attribute (presentation of a small tree with sweets, sugar and different fruit tied to its branches) of wedding ceremonies. This custom is still preserved in many regions of Azerbaijan nowadays. It is necessary to mention, that this symbol is still used in design of various art works.

In the “**Conclusion**” section of the dissertation the research work was summed up and the investigations were generalized. The research showed that economic changes in the area, social and political events, and cultural processes, religious and ideological views are observed more explicitly and imaginatively in archaeological monuments and material-cultural samples discov-

ered in these monuments.

The formation of early tribal unions in Azerbaijan and its historical territories in the 3rd millennium BC, was accompanied by emergence of various state structures with different names, caused great changes in the economic, social, and political life of the territory and the increase of inter-tribal conflicts.

Thus, during the archaeological excavations, among the monuments of various stages that show the construction creativity and planning of the tribes that lived in the Eneolithic and Bronze Ages, there are many monuments distinguished by their rich cultural layers and material resources.

Starting from the Eneolithic period, great changes are taking place in the ancient society of Azerbaijan, which worships the Sun, Moon and Fire, chapels and temples are built and religious ceremonies are held in connection with fire worship.

Human remains belonging to the Caspian (Oghuz) anthropological type are found in most of the grave monuments studied in the area (Mesolithic, Neolithic, Eneolithic and Bronze Ages). This is considered an invaluable source in determining the ethnicity of the tribes living in the area.

The existence of a class society and the rise of the welfare of a certain part of the people are clearly manifested in the grave monuments. Various beliefs such as animism, dualism, and fetishism related to the world of the afterlife, as well as ideas related to sun, moon, and fire worship, are further strengthened in funeral customs.

As in the case of peoples with a rich mythological system, the archaeological heritage of the Eneolithic and Bronze Age tribes of Azerbaijan is dominated by cosmogonic worldviews and myths about the creation of the world.

Crescent and sun-shaped images, which characterize the cosmic world and creation, are often found in the stone arrangement of the grave monuments studied in the area, on the material culture samples.

In the graves studied in the Eneolithic layers of the Kultepe, Alikomek tepe, Chalagan tepe, and Baba dervish

monuments, red ocher is sprinkled on the dead people as a sign of “sun-fire” (with the aim of expelling the soul from evil forces). As a continuation of the tradition in the Bronze Age, that religious worldview resulted in people lighting fire in graves as a sign of “sun-light”.

Burial customs of tribal heads in Borsunlu, Beyim sarov, Sary choban, Ordekli, Qaraja Emirli and other kurgans are considered, as valuable sources, reflecting high development level of power structures and religious worldviews, burial customs and presence of Azerbaijan’s relationship with the ancient East at that time.

“Cult of the Dead”, widely spread in inter-tribal religious and mythic beliefs, is also apparent in burial customs, encountered in animal grave monuments. This is evident by spread of ancestral cults and religious imaginations in the area, where gravestones eventually became sacred places. Signs of lavish burial of animals, traces, associated with ancestral cult, were quite frequently encountered in the Bronze Age archaeological monuments of Azerbaijan.

Production waste and tools found in ancient production centers once again show that these areas were one of the centers of pottery and metalworking in the Middle East in ancient times. The spiritual heritage of the tribes that created that material culture is mainly characterized by residences, grave monuments and the art examples of pottery, metalworking, stoneworking, boneworking obtained from those monuments and the technical achievements gained in these fields.

The ancient decorative applied art of Azerbaijan mostly embodies the religious worldviews and artistic taste of the tribes. The images on the material culture samples mainly contain ancient symbols (people’s attitude to the cosmic world, nature, etc.) and mythological views. The opening of those symbols and mythological views means the restoration of the ancient spiritual culture of the Azerbaijani people.

Studies show that the beliefs of ancient Turkic-speaking tribes are widely included in the rock paintings. Various plot

compositions related to the concept of zoomorphism and ongon (totemism) of shamans can be found in the rock paintings.

Artisans who were able to bring together ideological views, philosophical feelings and art through the images of women found in the archeological monuments of the Eneolithic period bring to the fore the image of the mother in an abstract form, distinguished by its own mythological features, in a manner typical of the period.

The examples of religious art involved in the study, besides being elements of rituals held in temples, complement each other as a part of the spiritual culture of the tribes of the time, precisely in the female figurines. In the Eneolithic period, along with female figurines, figures of consecrated animals, including oxen, were made. It is observed that these figures were used in the performance of religious rituals. This is confirmed again by the burnt animal figures in the shrines.

In the studied periods, ideas about the “Creator of the Universe” and “Sun-Moon-Fire”, animals, birds, mythological synthetic beings and the “Tree of Life” become an important component of the religious-mythological outlook. For the same reason, their images are given an important place in material culture. Concepts about ancestors are brought to the fore.

From cultural heroes in folklore texts and ancestral artifacts found in archaeological monuments, it is known that archaic epics contain philosophical thoughts related to the creation of the world and man. The studies show that there is a general connection between the mythological worldviews of the ancient tribes (meaning material and spiritual culture) and the folklore texts. This gives reason to say that all-Turkish epics are based on older times.

The comparative analysis of material and spiritual cultures shows that there were changes in the social structure in Eneolithic and Bronze Age societies.

Thus, archaeological excavations, conducted for a long period in the area, confirm heritage relationship of cultures of periods, studied here and its predominant formation on local back-

ground. Researches indicate that bulls, lions, horses, goats, deer, wolves, tortoises, dogs, snakes, dragons, fish, birds, trees and other images were widely used in archaeological monuments and folklore texts. Although images were presented in different way in mythology, they were characterized in the same way, all of them were eventually completed with “Creator of the Universe” and the “Sun-Moon-Fire” gods, turn into one cult connected with Universe and individually with Creation, formed, as one of specific features of spiritual culture of ancient tribes.

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