

GARAJAMIRLI AND BEYOND: AZERBAIJAN-GERMAN PROJECT. PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE EXCAVATIONS AT GURBAN TEPE AND THE SURVEY IN SEYIDLAR 2023-2024

Jeyhun Eminli¹, Florian S. Knauß², and Matthias Gütte

¹ Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology, Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences, AZ1143, H. Javid Avenue 115, Baku, Azerbaijan

² Antike am Königsplatz – Glyptothek, Katharina-von-Bora-Straße 10 80333, München, Germany

Corresponding authors: Eminli, J.: ceyhuneminli@arxeologiya.az;

Knauß, F. S.: knauss@antike-am-koenigsplatz.mwn.de; Gütte, M. A.: matthias.guette@gmx.de

ORCID:

Eminli, J.: 0000-0003-2144-755X

Knauß, F.: 0009-0005-4035-7842

Gütte, G.: 0009-0002-5814-7788

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Abstract

In recent years, the most extensive architectural complex, the palace on Gurban Tepe, and the largest building of the ancient period, have been uncovered at Garajamirli. It is a centre of power of probably supra-regional importance. Targeted investigations in the last two excavation campaigns provided information on the planning and construction of the large mud-brick building on Gurban Tepe. The construction plan and technical details are modelled on those of the Achaemenid capitals. However, interesting changes to the plan can be observed in several places, which were made at short notice. The builder-owner had to respond to the fact that trained specialists from the empire's centres were no longer available to the desired extent towards the end of the construction work. The discovery of a further architectural complex at Seyidlar, only a few kilometres from the residence at Garajamirli, makes it clear that the Persians developed the Caucasus region much more intensively than previously assumed and known from other parts of the Achaemenid Empire. Finally, a hoard of sigloi from Zaqatala falls within the same time horizon. The coins, minted in the early 5th century BC, could have been brought there by soldiers serving the Great King.

Keywords: Iron Age, Achaemenids, Palace Architecture, Column Bases, Pottery, Sigloi

INTRODUCTION

In 2023-2024, the Azerbaijani-German team led by Jeyhun Eminli and Florian Knauß continued the archaeological investigations at Garajamirli, which had begun in 2006 under the direction of Ilyas Babaev (†), Iulon Gagoshidze and Florian Knauß and had since been continued with brief interruptions from 2018 to 2021 led by Emil Iskenderov (†) (For earlier reports on the excavations at Garajamirli see Babaev *et al.*, 2006; Babaev *et al.*, 2009; Knauss *et al.*, 2010; Babaev & Knauß, 2010; Babaev & Knauss, 2016). The excavation team included Khayala Firuzlu, Matthias Gütte, Leyla Hasanova, Sevinj Huseynova, Namig Huseynli, Kristina Junker, Eva Knauß, Katharina Knauß, and Gregor Lindermayr.

In the decades-long research debate on the extent to which the *imitatio regis* mentioned in Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* (Xenophon, *Cyropaedia*, Book 8, Chapter 6) took place. Whether genuine Achaemenid architecture also spread beyond the

Persian heartland, uncovering the residence at Garajamirli proved to be a game-changer. The largest ancient monumental architecture in the Caucasus region, the mud-brick building on Gurban Tepe, has clearly settled the question (Lordkipanidze, 2000, pp. 9-11; Bill, 2010, pp. 24-25). The latter was sceptical about a permanent Persian presence in the Caucasus region at a time when the site on Gurban Tepe had not yet been uncovered. However, specialists in the field have since recognised that we are dealing with a network of Achaemenid residences, of which Garajamirli is the most impressive to date (see *e.g.*, Khatchadourian 2016, p. 146 with note 43, p. 223; Boucharlat, 2023, p. 45; Messerschmidt, 2021, pp. 676-677). Persian architects and artisans were at work here, and there can be little doubt that it was not a local vassal of the Great King, but a Persian official who resided in the palace on Gurban Tepe. However, even if the results of the excavations so far provide an impressive picture of Achaemenid

rule on the north-western border of their empire, there are still unanswered questions concerning the building and its history that we have tried to clarify in the last two campaigns.

Excavation on the Gurban Tepe

The ground plan of the palace on Gurban Tepe (Fig. 1), dating back to around 480/70 BC, was almost completely known from previous excavations. However, we had set ourselves the goal of clarifying the last remaining unanswered questions about the architecture of the palace on Gurban Tepe. This concerned the design and function of individual rooms (for the characterisation and functions of Iron Age palaces, see Nielsen 2001; Knauf & Mattern, 2013), the construction planning process, and the execution of various trades, as well as access to the building from the east. Targeted exploratory excavations were undertaken for this purpose. In general, this confirmed the picture already gained during earlier campaigns: the large mud-brick building was erected on virgin soil, which had been cleared of vegetation and levelled before construction, as evidenced by ash and charcoal remains. Charcoal fragments under one of the column bases provided a radiocarbon date around 480 BC. The site must therefore have been levelled for the palace's construction at this time. The original ground plan, as indicated by the gravel foundations of varying thickness, was modified in a few details during the construction phase. After completion of the shell, skilled workers were only available to a limited extent, as evidenced by the varying quality of workmanship, particularly in the ornamentation of the column bases. Later alterations are not recognisable. Pottery and other small finds on the clay floors from the construction period were again extremely sparse. In contrast, in the ruins of the abandoned palace in 2024, we again found hearths and pottery from two successive post-settlement phases of the late Iron Age. (For the post-settlement phases, *cf.* Babaev *et al.*, 2006, pp. 296–299, 316–318; Babaev & Knauss, 2016, pp. 163–164, 173–175). Individual objects were buried in the recent past (20th century). It cannot be assigned to any recognisable context.

Strength and Appearance of the Outer Walls

The laying of the mud bricks for the outer walls exhibited peculiarities at various points of the

palace, which gave rise to fundamental considerations. In former years, particularly in wall M6 in the west, we observed that the two outer rows of seven lines of bricks were separated from the others by a continuous joint. In contrast, at M11 in the south, we could no longer find any regular mud bricks on the outer edge of the wall, but only a homogeneous mass of rammed earth.

A sounding in the south-west corner in area Q7 showed the same findings in 2023. We observed the continuous joint here in both M6 and M11 (Fig. 1). It was also evident that the two outer lines of mud bricks only begin at a level of approximately 0.50 m above the floor (Fig. 2), but at this point, they rise to a height of at least 0.91 m. In 2024, a sounding in the north-east of the complex, in area W14, confirmed this finding. There, too, the regular outer wall M9 is “only” five mud bricks thick (Fig. 3). Thus, our hypothesis that the outer wall, which was five mud bricks thick throughout, was fronted by a “banqueting wall” of considerable height is correct.

Change of Plan in Room XXI (Three-Column Hall)

The finding in R. XXI (Room XXI) with three columns in a row, which are not precisely on the same axis, was unusual from the outset. Another special feature is that the floor level in this three-column hall is almost half a meter higher than in the neighbouring rooms. Even though a slight south-north gradient can generally be observed in the palace complex, this finding stands out. As we already knew from an earlier sounding that the eastern of the three torus bases with stepped plinth (B19) did not have a horizontal underside, we suspected there had been a change of plan during the construction process. In fact, in 2023, during a limited deep trench in area R9, we encountered the circular gravel foundation of a bell base roughly centered between B19 and B28 at a height level that corresponds fairly closely to the access areas in rooms R. II and R. V (Fig. 4). The foundation also lies precisely on the axis of the column bases B2, B1, B21 and B11 in the neighboring rooms to the north (*cf.* Fig. 1). The gravel foundation correlates in terms of level with a door hinge stone in the spandrel of the northern door cheek. Both belong to a first draft plan, which was realised at least up to the foundation. Above this, we found another hinged door, stone levelled with the lower edges of the three, finally offset torus bases.



Fig. 1. Gurban Tepe, floor plan 2024.



Fig. 2. Gurban Tepe, area Q7, lowest mud brick layer in the south-west corner of the complex



Fig. 3. Gurban Tepe, area W14, room R. XXXV, viewed from the south.

A double column position with bell bases was initially planned in R. XXI, as realised in R. XXXIV, but this was not executed. Instead, three torus bases

were moved here, but these were not yet completed, i.e., they were not levelled horizontally on the underside. To be able to use them at all, they had to be placed in a deep bed of clay. It is possible that the inadequate stonemasonry also explains the later cracking of two bases (B28 and B32) in this room. The reasons for the change of plan can only be surmised. Likely, there were not enough finished bell bases for R. XXI when the columns had to be moved there. It can also be observed in other areas of the palace – for example, in R. V or R. XXXIV – that experienced stonemasons were not available on Gurban Tepe until the building was completed (Babaev & Knauss, 2016, p. 164, with Figs. 22–23). Whether they were needed elsewhere from a particular point in time or were absent for health reasons must forever remain an open question. In any case, they made do with half-finished workpieces in some rooms or had the bases completed by less experienced workers. In room R. XXI, they were perhaps concerned that the unstable bedding of the bases might prove inadequate – after all, there was another inhabited room above it – and tried to make up for this deficiency with an additional base. This solution met the users' requirements. Also, it proved to be "load-bearing" in the literal sense, as the excavation findings show that the ceiling only collapsed with the general decay of the building, after the original occupants had left the palace for some time.



Fig. 4. Gurban Tepe, area R9, gravel foundation of a bell base in R. XXI between torus bases B28 (left) and B19 (right)

Unusual Building Finds in the North-East of the Palace (Area U/V/W 13/14)

The interior design in the north-east of the palace (Fig. 1) deviates significantly from the clear order of the south wing, with almost five identical groups of rooms accessed from a corridor (R. XVIII). In particular, the northern corridor R. X does not extend to the outer wall M15 at its eastern end, as in the south. However, a room R. XXII, which, like R. XXXV, functioned as an adjoining room to the larger two-column hall (R. XXXIV) and was also only accessible via the latter (Fig. 5). A total of six rooms in the north-east of the complex – in addition to the aforementioned group of rooms, the two-columned room R. XXXVI with the rear chamber R. XXXIX and room R. XXXIII – can only be accessed via the same entrance from the northern corridor (R. X) (Fig. 1). It therefore seemed obvious to us that the passage from corridor R. X to the elongated room R. XXXIII was once closed by a door. However, a corresponding sounding in 2023 showed that this was not the case (Fig. 6). We must admit that the system in which doors secured specific entrances, while others were not, is not self-explanatory.

It is unique that a comparatively small columned hall (R. XXXIV) has two adjoining rooms. We therefore wanted to clarify whether there was any evidence of special use in R. XXII. However, the complete uncovering of the floor – a grey clay screeds several centimetres thick – revealed neither installations nor small finds that would indicate a special purpose. Furthermore, this side room was not separated from the two-column hall R. XXXIV by a door, as revealed by a small, deep trench in the south-west of the passage.

The north-eastern corner room R. XXXV has the appearance we expected (Figs. 3, 7). It has no columns and can only be entered through an entrance in the south-east from room R. XXXIV. However, we could not find evidence of a staircase, which we thought was possible. There was therefore only a single staircase to the upper floor in the south-west corner of the building in room R. XXV (Babaev & Knauf 2016, 158–159 with Fig. 25). In the southwest of R. XXXV, in a hearth that must be assigned to the later of the two post-settlement phases (2nd/1st century BC), we found an almost completely preserved coarse cooking pot (Fig. 8).



Fig. 5. Gurban Tepe, area U 13/14, room R. XXII from the east.



Fig. 6. Gurban Tepe, area V13, passage from corridor R. X to room R. XXXIII



Fig. 7. Gurban Tepe, area W14, room R. XXXV from the southwest.



Fig. 8. Cooking pot (small find no. 3) from a hearth in R. XXXV, post-settlement phase, 2nd/1st century BC.

Investigation of Wall M7

Finally, in area U11, we dismantled the footbridge we had left standing during our 2011 investigations. This allowed us to rule out the possibility that there had been an entrance from corridor R. X to the large audience chamber (R. IX) after all. Therefore, the large reception hall could only be accessed from the vestibule in the east (R. XXVI) and through the narrow passageway in the north-west.

To date, we have no written sources on this once undoubtedly important complex that would help us to gain a deeper understanding of Persian rule in this region. Although we must assume that various rooms of the palace on Gurban Tepe served administrative purposes, there were no seals among the sparse material of small finds, nor were we able to observe inscriptions – for example, on the limestone column bases – that provided clues as to the owner of the house and the name of the site. Previous campaigns did not realise our vague hopes of finding a foundation deposit with corresponding information. In 2023, a sondage aimed at this in a conspicuous place in M7 in area U11 unfortunately remained unsuccessful.

Preparation of the Limestone Bases After Their Relocation (Exposure of B41 IN R. V)

In the six-column hall R.V., we have observed different stages of work on the limestone torus bases in recent campaigns. This led us to consider that the stonemasonry work in the palace was interrupted at an arbitrary point in time by external influences and was no longer completed because the stonemasons were no longer available. At the last remaining base in the room, we now hoped to find a more advanced state of work than at B31 and even more so at the still completely unfinished bases B5, B6, B9 and B10 (Babaev & Knauss 2016, p. 158, 164, Figs. 22–23). Unfortunately, it turned out

that B41 was also in the same unfinished state as the four southern bases (Fig. 9). The stonemason was therefore called away just as he was preparing to finish B31. This also suggests that only a few, possibly just one, competently trained specialist was available on site in the final phase. Just above the inspection area, we observed fragments of charred wooden beams and ash, probably from the room's ceiling, as in previous campaigns in other parts of the R. V.



Fig. 9. Gurban Tepe, area V9, torus base B41 in the six-column hall R. V.



Fig. 10. Gurban Tepe, area R12, bell base B38 in room R. XXVII.

Room XXVII with Room XXX at the Rear

Finally, room R. XXVII is also a special case. Initial investigations in earlier years had shown that this room, unlike the other four neighbouring rooms to the west and east of R. XXVII, did not have a double colonnade. Since the 2018 campaign, however, we have known that a single-column hall was originally also planned for room R. XXXIV in the north-east corner of the palace, but was not realised for unknown reasons. In 2019, we had

already uncovered the central bell base B38 (Fig. 10) using a sounding in R. XXVII. By completely uncovering this room and the adjoining chamber R. XXX to the south in 2023, we not only wanted to make one of these groups of rooms characteristic of the south wing visible in its entirety (Fig. 11), but also to answer the previously unanswered question of whether these rooms were closed off by doors. Finally, we hoped to find indications of the original function of these two rooms on the floor. Unfortunately, we did not find any remains of installations or minor artefacts that would allow us to make a statement in this regard. We can only explain the characteristic paucity of finds in all the rooms of the palace – which stands in striking contrast to the wealth of pottery finds in the contemporaneous settlement of Dara Yatakh and the Northern Complex – by an orderly departure of the former inhabitants and by the assumption that carpets lay on the floor in almost all the rooms. At the same absolute height level as in the audience hall (R. IX), a several-centimetre-thick, hard grey clay layer formed the walking surface here, as in the other rooms uncovered so far. The floor showed traces of fire or small charcoal remains in a few narrowly defined places. In the north-west corner of R. XXVII, we found a door hinge stone (Fig. 12), which obviously did not exist in the passageway to the rear chamber R. XXX. The cylindrical door hinge stone has a diameter of 44 cm and a height of 33 cm. The surface is smoothed and shows traces of use, while the non-visible outer side is roughly pointed. A round area with a diameter of 17 cm is initially recessed by 2 cm at the upper edge. This contains a further, non-centred hollow with a diameter of 10 cm and a depth of 6 cm.

Bell base B38 (Fig. 10), exposed during the 2023 excavation of room R. XXVII, was recovered the following year due to its fragile state of preservation (The different base types and their variants from Garajamirli were recently described and analysed in detail; Knauf & Gütte, 2021, pp. 221–225, Figs. 2–5). It lay on a pebble foundation, approximately 30 centimetres thick. It was taken to the Archaeological Museum of Baku after the excavation work was completed.



Fig. 11. Gurban Tepe, area R11/12-Q11/12, space group R. XXVII/R. XXX with bell base B38.



Fig. 12. Gurban Tepe, area R12, door hinge stone.

Eastern Entrance to Portico R XXVI

With its portico of 6 x 2 columns, the eastern facade of the palace on Gurban Tepe made an imposing impression on visitors approaching from the propylon on Ideal Tepe (Fig. 13). In some Achaemenid complexes in Iran, however, the building rises above its surroundings with a base or at least has a staircase leading up to the entrance hall. Furthermore, the entrances there – for example, in Qal'eh Kali (Dusting 2014, pp. 51–53, Fig. 5.4, 5.5) – are often flanked by low limestone walls. An initial sounding ten years ago did not reveal any evidence of a lower “road level” in the east. Two sondages in R14 and U14 should now clarify the appearance of the main entrance to the

palace. The excavation findings are clear: the portico – like the entire building – is at “street level”, and there is no evidence of paving or gravel on the path to the propylon. However, it does not seem impossible that large fragments of smooth limestone slabs, which were not found in situ but only 1.00 meters east of the portico corner M13/M17 (Figs. 14a-b), once belonged to an enclosure of the entrance hall.

Immediately east of the outer wall M15 in area U14 at approximately 7.00 meters north, we uncovered a burnt surface (Fig. 15) on which several fragments of a beautiful carinated bowl (Fig. 16) lay, the shape of which follows Achaemenid models. Stratigraphically, it belongs to a younger occupation horizon, which can be assigned to a period when parts of the palace had already fallen into ruin. In the flat excavated surface of the southern part of area U14, as well as in the southern and eastern profiles, there are signs of collapsed mud brick walls (Fig. 17). An older firing horizon, visible in the same southern profile, runs from the west, from the running horizon of the enclosure, diagonally upwards over the bricks to the east. A deep trench in U14 on a small area to the east of M15 uncovered charcoal and ash under the palace's walking surface, obviously from the slash-and-burn clearing and levelling of the building site before the actual start of construction work.



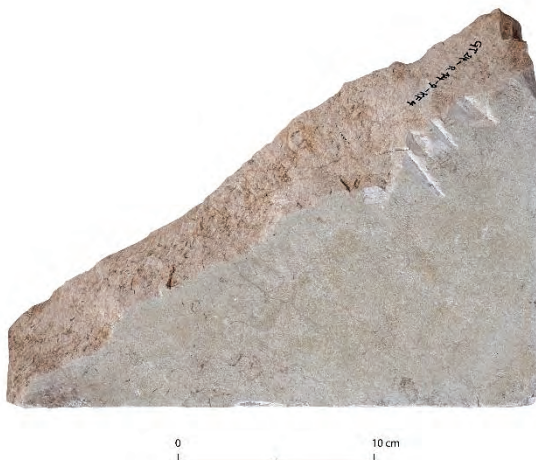
Fig. 13. View of the propylon on Ideal Tepe from the east and the palace on Gurban Tepe in the background, reconstruction drawing by T. Bitterer/F. Haschner/F. Knauf (2013).



a



Fig. 15. Gurban Tepe, hearth east of M15 (area U14).



b



Fig. 16: Carinated bowl with handle, from the hearth east of M15 (area U14).

Fig. 14 a-b. Fragments of two rectangular limestone slabs from Area R14.



Fig. 17. Gurban Tepe, area U14, planum, as well as south and east profiles from the north: The oldest fire horizon overlies truncated mud bricks, while the younger ash layer correlates with the hearth in Fig. 15.



Fig. 18. Gurban Tepe, area R14, wall corner M13/M17 from the east; in front of M17, a skeleton is visible in the profile, approximately 0.70 meters above the walking surface.

In front of the south-eastern corner of the vestibule (Fig. 18), we found a burial without remains of clothes or grave goods. The upper edge of the burial pit lies clearly above the two known post-settlement horizons, dating to the 4th/3rd and 2nd/1st centuries BC. A more precise dating was not possible. In this area, we excavated a hard clay floor over a layer of fine pebbles, which served as a running horizon, on which the mentioned fragments of limestone slabs (Fig. 14a-b) were found in a secondary layer.

Pottery

The pottery found on Gurban Tepe during the last two campaigns (Figs. 19-22) corresponds to the spectrum known from earlier years: predominantly red, hard-fired wares; the open shapes, in particular, show a clear relationship to Achaemenid bowl forms. A few exceptionally high-quality examples are made of excellent clay and have skinny walls. In rare cases, they have a red coating. However, we found hardly any significant pottery on the floors of the palace building. Most of the finds come from later layers of the post-settlement phases, which we would provisionally like to assign to the period soon after the building was abandoned in the late 4th century BC and to a significantly later period (2nd to 1st century BC). While the beautiful carinated bowl (Figs. 16, 20.2)

and the cooking pot (Figs. 8, 22) from U14 and W14 can each be linked to a post-Achaemenid horizon, the rest of the pottery can hardly be assigned stratigraphically with certainty.

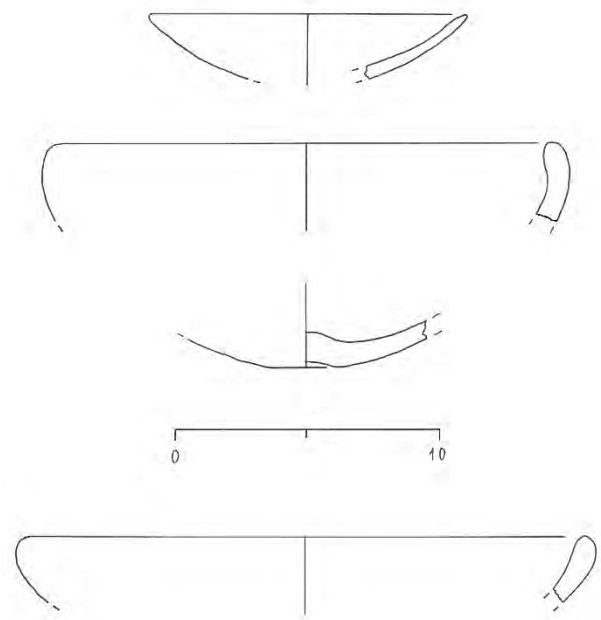


Fig. 19. Gurban Tepe 2023, bowls (open shapes).

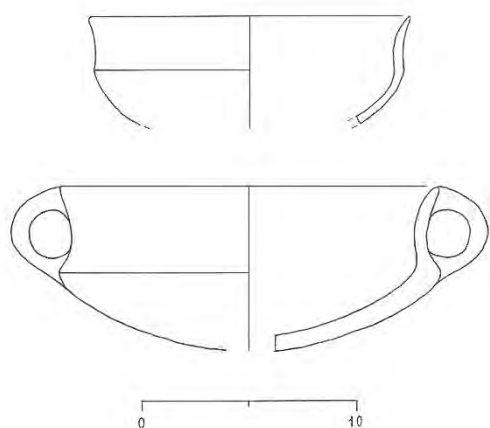


Fig. 20. Gurban Tepe 2024, bowls (open shapes).

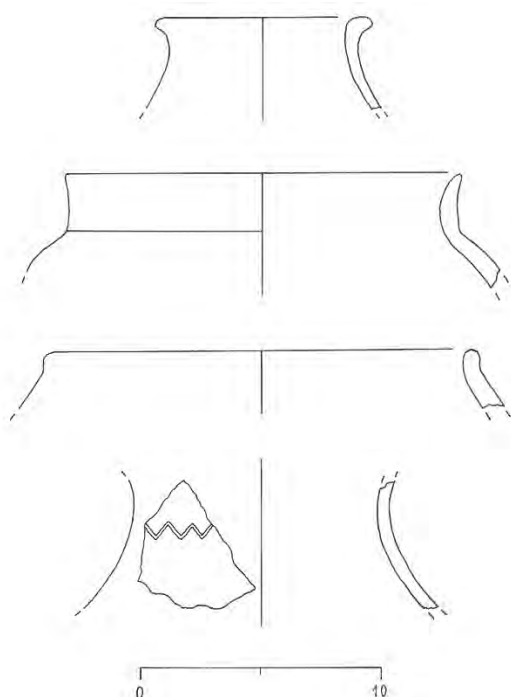


Fig. 21. Gurban Tepe 2023-2024, closed shapes.

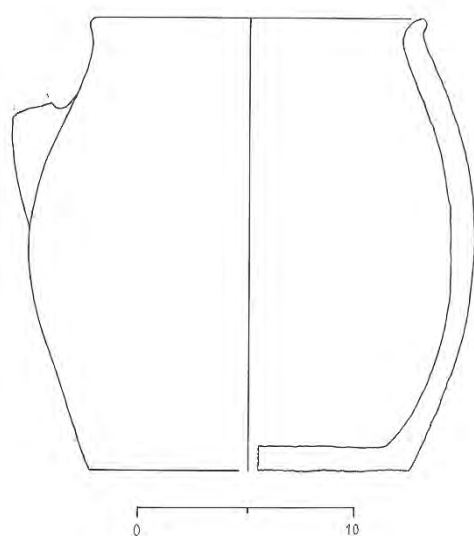


Fig. 22. Gurban Tepe 2024, cooking pot.

Site Inspection Near Seyidlar

As early as 2014, we were made aware of a torus fragment, a find at Seyidlar – about 6 km south-east of Gurban Tepe (Figs. 23) (Knauß & Gütte, 2025, p. 75; Knauß, forthcoming). In 2021, Emil Iskenderov and Jeyhun Eminli inspected several limestone bases in the Seyidlar village, following information provided by the local population.

With the kind support of the regional administration in Samukh (Mrs. Kamala Khalilova), we revisited the storage sites of the impressive finds in 2023. We documented the already known bases (Fig. 24) as well as another bell base (Fig. 25) in the village of Seyidlar. We then conducted site inspections at two locations that a resident, Hamid Hasanov, kindly brought to our attention. At a site approximately 950 m north of Seyidlar – hereafter referred to as Seyidlar A – we encountered a large number of large limestone fragments on the edge of the path (Fig. 26). On the harvested field, we then picked up numerous sherds of red, beige, and light grey ware, as well as other limestone fragments, some of which were worked. The pottery, especially fragments of drinking bowls and pithos sherds, can be dated to the late Iron Age and shows striking similarities with the material found in Garajamirli. Some of the sherds can be definitively linked to the Achaemenid period (Fig. 27, 1-2).

Approximately 250 meters north of Seyidlar – we have provisionally designated this site as Seyidlar B. We also found pottery sherds on the surface that can be dated to the Late Iron Age. However, the frequency and quality of the ceramic material at this site cannot be compared with Seyidlar A.

In 2024, during a meeting with Mr. Saidov from *British Petroleum*, it was clarified that approximately 20 years ago, as part of the archaeological investigations preceding the construction of the BTC pipeline, the site we refer to as Seyidlar A, located 950 meters north of the village, was also investigated. Many of the finds observed there the previous year were likely already unearthed. The comparison of the excavation areas of these investigations at the beginning of the 2000s with our inspection in 2023 made it clear that a new excavation there would be pointless, as large parts of the site had already been ransacked.

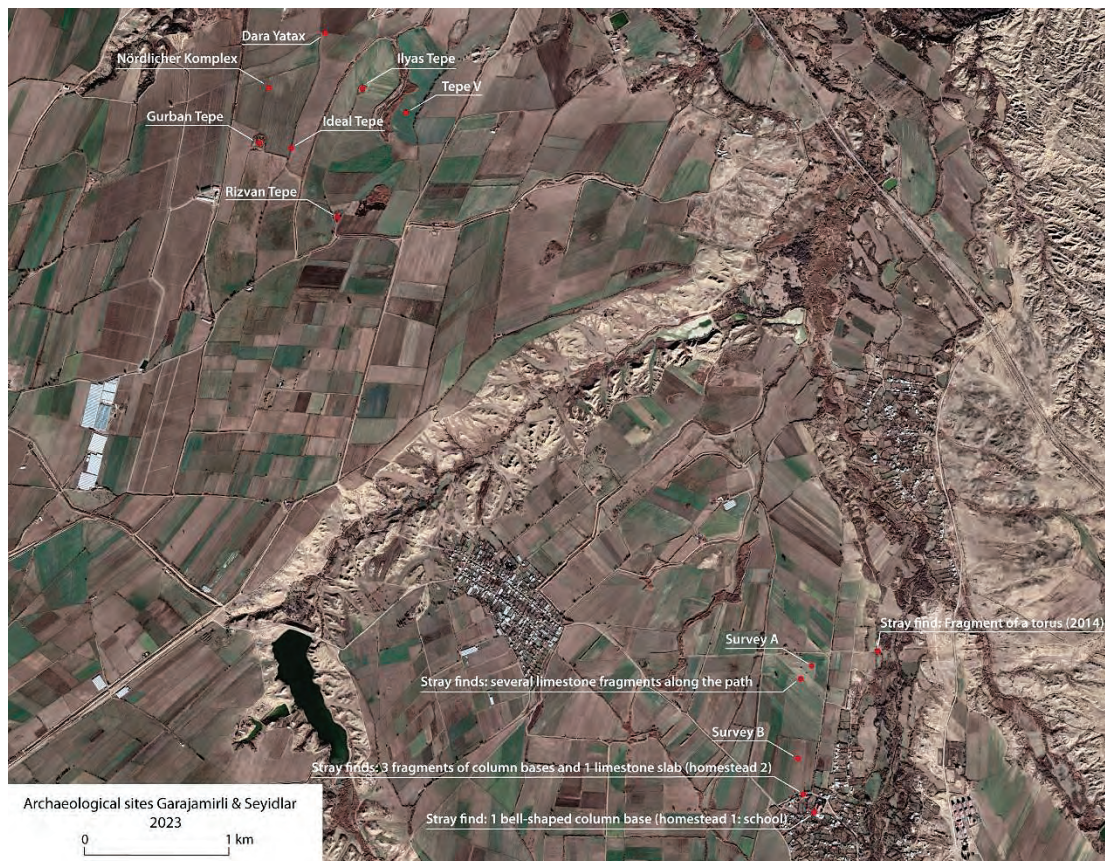


Fig. 23. Find spots near Garajamirli and Seyidlar.



Fig. 24. Seyidlar, fragment of a torus base in the garden of an unknown person.



Fig. 26. Seyidlar A, farmland with numerous surface finds of Late Iron Age pottery and worked limestone.



Fig. 25. Seyidlar, bell base in the garden of Teyyub Alekberov

This leaves us with the somewhat unsatisfactory finding that, although we can state that there was monumental architecture at Seyidlar, its appearance, function, and exact date can no longer be determined with certainty. However, the pottery collected in 2023 and the architectural fragments found there suggest that it was approximately contemporaneous with the residence at Garajamirli or an approximate dating to the 5th to 4th century BC. A monumental building can be assumed to have a high probability due to the high-quality building sculpture.

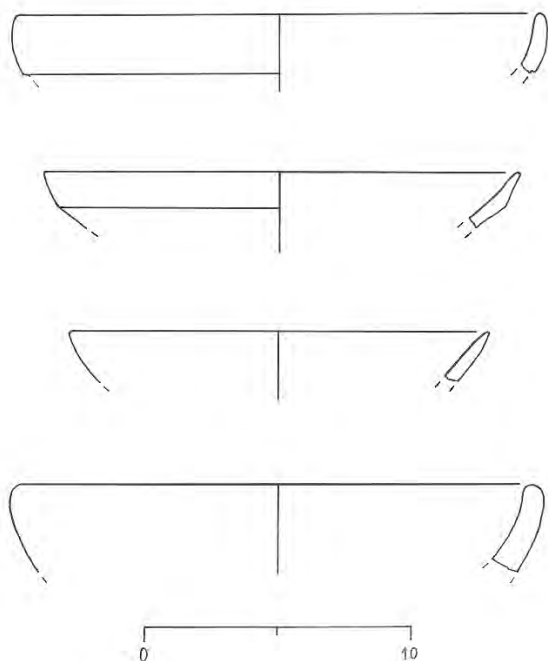


Fig. 27: Seyidlar A, bowls (open shapes).



Fig. 28: Coin hoard from Zaqatala, 48 of formerly 53 Sigloi.



Fig. 29: Hoard from Zaqatala, Siglos no. 17, face and back side.

Hoard Found at Zaqatala

By a lucky coincidence, we were introduced to the collector Mezakhir Gurbanov in Ganja, who presented us with a hoard of 53 sigloi (Fig. 28-30) from his coin collection. The man who found these coins years ago near Zaqatala in north-west Azerbaijan has unfortunately passed away. The sigloi, which were probably minted in one of the Western satrapies, are the first known Achaemenid coins to be found in Azerbaijan. Most of these coins from this hoard are *fourrées* (*subaerati*), with only three specimens having the regular nominal weight. The coin types suggest a minting date of around 480 BC, while the wear and counterstamp indicate that the hoard was deposited between 450 and 420 BC. This coin find highlights the significant Persian presence in this region during the first half of the 5th century BC, as documented in architectural monuments, as sigloi were typically minted to pay Greek mercenaries serving the Great King. A comprehensive scientific analysis and publication of this significant discovery are currently underway.



Fig. 30: Hoard from Zaqatala, Siglos no. 22, face and back side.

CONCLUSIONS

In international research, the discovery of the residence at Garajamirli has radically changed the historical picture of the Caucasus region for the period from the late 6th to the end of the 4th century BC. Experts in various international publications and congresses worldwide have recently emphasised its extraordinary scientific significance. The central building at Garajamirli, the palace on Gurban Tepe, provides surprising insights into the planning and construction of such an enormous complex. It can be seen that, although the design was modelled on Persepolis, various changes were made to the individual rooms during the construction period. The reasons for this can only be surmised at this point.

The palace on Gurban Tepe is the largest known antiquity building in the entire Caucasus region

(Azerbaijan, Georgia, Armenia). It is exceptionally well preserved. Therefore, a complete and permanent uncovering and presentation under protective architecture would be desirable for monument preservation and touristic aspects.

The survey findings at Seyidlar A can be described as downright sensational. The density of monumental structures from the “ancient period” is unrivalled outside Iran. It is clear that this region was well-developed and must have been connected to international transportation routes. Unfortunately, the appearance (ground plan) and function of the complex at Seyidlar A, as well as its relationship to the residence at Garajamirli, cannot be clarified in detail, as the site was investigated years ago during the construction of the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline. Topography and comparisons with sites in Chaboukiani (Georgia) and Persis suggest that it could have been either a station on the famous Persian overland roads or a pavilion in a game park.

Investigations into the immediate and broader surroundings of the Garajamirli residence are essential for a deeper understanding of the region’s historical processes. A site south of the Kür settlement and the archaeological settlement Galaboynu near Naftalan offer promising options for considerably expanding our knowledge.

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