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Paleolithic Ecology And Paleogeography In Uzbekistan

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Abstract

This article provides a comprehensive analysis of the paleogeography and ecology of Uzbekistan's territory during the Early Paleolithic period. It investigates how geological processes and geographical features, such as the Syr Darya and Amu Darya rivers, the Kyzylkum Desert, and the Ustyurt Plateau, shaped the environment for early human settlement. The study synthesizes data from geological, geographical, and archaeological sources, including significant findings from sites like Kulbulak, Selungur Cave, and others across various regions, including the Tashkent oasis and the Fergana Valley. The research highlights the critical role of favorable ecological conditions—such as water sources, flat terrains, and rich organic matter—in enabling primitive hunter communities to settle and thrive.

Keywords

Paleogeography of Uzbekistan, Early Paleolithic Period, Geological Processes, Ancient Stone Age Ecology, Early Human Settlement, Central Asia Archaeology, Kyzylkum Desert, Ustyurt Plateau, Fergana Valley, Tashkent Oasis, Selungur Cave, Kulbulak Site, Acheulean Period, Pleistocene Glaciation, Anthropogenic Landscape.

Introduction

The article examines the paleogeography of Uzbekistan's territory, focusing on the impact of geological processes during the early Paleolithic period. This analysis is based on evidence documented in geological, geographical, and archaeological sources. As illustrated by the physical geography of Central Asia, the principal irrigated agricultural zone of Uzbekistan is situated between the Syr Darya and Amu Darya rivers. This area is distinguished from other historical and geographical regions by the Kyzylkum Plain. Furthermore, the right bank of Khorezm is linked to the southern Aral Sea coast, extending from Shurakhan to the Kyzylkum Desert. The Paleozoic and Cenozoic eras are of particular significance, with the most relevant historical processes occurring in the later Cenozoic era. Geological findings indicate that approximately 4-3 million years ago, the Kyzylkum-Aral and Sariqamish-Aral areas constituted a lowland, which formed a segment of the extensive Great Turan Plain {2} The importance of geological geography and archeological sources in the study of the location, geography and ecology of primitive hunting in the territory of Uzbekistan in the Early Stone Age is enormous. It is possible to involve clarifications in the scientific solution of ecological problems. According to the results of geological and geographical research, there are differences in the geographical location and ecological processes of Uzbekistan. Based on the results of archeology, it is important to study the relationship between man and the environment, peleogeography and anthropogenic landscape factors. Certain regions of Uzbekistan have allowed men to settle and

the geographical features, climate and favorable ecology have allowed them to work and live there.

According to historical data, in the Quaternary period, the Central Asian region was flat during the Danube, Gyunts, and Gyunts-mindel periods, and was covered with ice in the Pleistocene (Glaciers) Mindal, Mindel-riss, Riss, Riss-vyurm, and Vyurm stages (500-10 thousand years). (3). The geographical location of the natural and economic regions of Uzbekistan consisted of mountainous and flat areas. An archeological expedition of various names has been organized in cooperation with the Center and scientific centers of Uzbekistan. Materials obtained during excavations during the field operations carried out by the groups in our country, played an important role in covering the location of mankind in the Early Stone Age, daily life and the history of ethnic processes. It is known from the results of archeological research that in the territory of our country, the mountains and foothills are located around the springs.

Excavations in Uzbekistan in the early Stone Age since the 1960s have uncovered 1 millionyear-old artifacts from hunters who practiced daily around a spring on the left bank of the Kyzylolma River south of the Chatkal Mountains in the Akhangaran Valley of the Tashkent oasis. The results of archeological research show that the area around Kulbulok is open - flat, ecologically friendly, and the spring is rich in organic matter. In the 1980s, U. Islamov carried out excavations in the Selungur cave (length 120, width 34, height 25 m) located in the village of Haydarkon, Fergana Valley. The tools and anthropological items found in the excavations belong to the Kuyi stage of the Ashel period. According to archeological literature, in the territory of Navoi region in the settlements of Uchtut, Ijond and Vaush were found material objects belonging to the Early Stone Age.

Material objects belonging to the lower stage of the Ashel period were found in the cultural strata of Esen-2.3, Korayuduy and Churuk-12 settlements around the real Shakyrakhta basin of Ustyurt (7). Researchers note that Central Asia in early Paleolithic settlements has also been studied in other historical geographical areas. For example, in the Vakhsh Valley of Tajikistan, in the area adjacent to the eastern shore of the Caspian Sea, Karatangir, Yangaja, in Kyrgyzstan, the Onarchadarya River, in front of the Karatog in southern Kazakhstan, the settlements of the Ashel period were found. (8) While the historical and cultural regions that make up the territory of Uzbekistan formed as a result of geological processes were one of the geographical locations, it is not difficult to observe the degree of difference in geographical location in natural physical cartography. In addition to the main territory of Uzbekistan, the paleogeography and ecology of the Fergana and Tashkent valleys, as well as the leftbank serum of Khorezm, are radically different. The physical and geographical features of the Ustyurt Plateau, located in the western part of Uzbekistan, are radically different from the historical and geographical regions. The Ustyurt Plateau is located between the Caspian and the Aral Sea, with a total area of 200,000 m2 and 70.3 thousand km2 of Karakalpakstan;

It is known from the results of archeological research that the climatic conditions and ecological situation of the Ustyurt Plateau during the Pleistocene glaciers have the potential to be assimilated by humans. According to historical data, in the lower stage of the Ashel period, the Ustyurt Plateau was located along the shores of the rivers, which were drained by humans around the Shahpakhta basins. So, one of the most important geographical features of Ustyurt is the absence of low and high mountains, rivers. The

geographical position and ecology of the land surface, which is connected to the Ustyurt Plateau by its southern and south-eastern sides, are radically different.

First, the geographical features of the north-western and north-eastern regions were explained by the Sultan-Uvays mountain range, the Karatag Kokcha mountain range. In the VI-IV millennia BC on the right bank there were low-lying Kyzylkum barkhans, several reservoirs from Shura khan to the Aral Sea. Later paleogeography of the Khorezm-Tashhavuz plain was formed here.

The geographical position of the western part of the Zarafshan valley, which is connected to the coastal zone of Khorezm, is represented by the Kyzylkum formations, the Zarafshan river and its tributaries, large and small water basins. Its northern, north-eastern and north-western regions are mountainous. Only the southern part has a plain on the surface of the territory. It is the eastern geographical feature that is reflected in the Tashkent Valley. In other words, the Tashkent-Mirzachul lowland is a mountainous region located in the middle part of the Syrdarya, in the lower part of the Chirchik and Akhangaron valleys. The geographical position and paleography and ecology of the valley are determined by the Chirchik and Akhangaron valleys.

The Fergana Valley stands out in the manifestation of the geographical features of Uzbekistan. The Fergana Valley is located between the Tianshan and Alay Mountains, surrounded by mountains and has a unique geographical environment, natural conditions and ecology (12)

The content of the above historical data allows us to conclude the following:

- The final conclusions about the paleogeography and ecology of the first Stone Age, which is the first stage in the history of the primitive community system.
- People of the Early Stone Age are located in areas adjacent to the shores of caves, springs and reservoirs in certain areas with favorable geographical environment, climate and ecology. As a result, ethnic processes have defined geographical areas.
- The geographical features of mountains, foothills, reservoirs and springs have led to the settlement of mankind in this area.
- The location of the settlements depended on the geographical location, ie in the mountainous areas their location was at an altitude of 1800-2000 m above sea level, and some of them were flat connected to the foothills and reservoirs.
- The mountainous and plain environment, geography and nature of Uzbekistan are at the level of satisfying the needs of mankind in food.
- As a result of research conducted in the early Stone Age settlements of Uzbekistan, there were conditions and economic and environmental factors that led the first hunters to lead a daily life.
- Materials from the settlements are an important source in the coverage of the Early Stone Age peleogeography and ecology. Based on these sources, it is possible to study the processes of human settlement in geographically distant regions.
- The Early Stone Age led to the creation of its cartogeography based on paleogeography and ecology of natural economic features.

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