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**Subject: History of Azerbaijan**

**Lectury 1**

**Azerbaijan in the Ancient period**

**Plan:**

1. The stone age in Azerbaijan
2. The copper, bronze and iron ages in Azerbaijan
3. The collapse of the Primitive Communal System in Azerbaijan

**1-Prehistoric period of Azerbaijan**

Prehistory refers to the initial stage of human society. This is the period that begins with the appearance of human beings and finishes with the invention of writing,known mainly through archaeological discoveries.As with many other countries,prehistoric continued to exist for a long time in Azerbaijan(from the first appearance of the first human beings(approximately 1.5 million years ago) to the emergencence of large tribal groupings and early stage formations(3rd-1st century BC)).Now about the periodization of history:The Stone Age,The Bronze age and the Iron age.The main subdivisions of the Stone age are:

The Paleolithic(The Old Stone Age)-lasting 1.5 million years ago to the 12th century BC.

The Mesolithic(The Middle Stone Age)- 12th-8th millenum BC.

The Neolithic(Nes Stone Age)-7th-6th millenium BC.

The Eneolithic(Copper-Stone Age) or Chalcolithic Age-6th-4th millenium BC.

The Bronze Age lasted from 4 th millenium BC to the end of the 2nd millenium BC.The Iron Age is dated from the 2nd millenium BC.Prehistoriy has undergone 3 stages of development:

-The earliest hominid groups , -Tribal communitie ,-The end of prehistoriy and the emergence of early state formation

The Paleolithic period subdivided into The Lower , Middle and Upper paleolithic:

**1-The Lower Paleolithic** is dated from 1.5 million to 100 thousand years ago. Azykh Cave is only Lower paleolithic site in Azerbaijan where the most aincent tools were found.All these tools are belong to “Guruchay culture” and give us evidences about “Homo Habilis” who lived in Azerbaijan 1.5 million years ago. “Homo Habilis”-capable man-refers to the first human being who was able to made tools and use them.Also in there scientists found an extremely aincent hearth(700,000 years ago).It means that aincent peoples could made and control fire.The fragment of jaw bone of a humanoid was found in here under the upper layers.And it was dated to 350-400 thousand years ago. The person to whom belongs this bone belonged is called “Azykhantrop”.

**2- The Middle Paleolithic**(about 100-40 thousand years ago) is also called the Mousterian period (Mustye dovru).The people this period made sharp-edged stone tools manufactured from flint and obsidian. They were used for hunting. In this period ,there is also special division of labour. In Taghlar cave the traces of a hearth was found. The hominids of the Middle Paleolithic era are called Neanderthlals.

**3- The Upper Paleolithic** -dates to between 40-12 thousand years ago. This period is characterized by the emergence of tribal communities in the territory of Azerbaijan and roughly coincides with the appearance of modern humans-Homo Sapiens. Also women played a leading role until the late Eneolithic(6th millennium BC).Unlike men, who were involved in hunting and fishing activities ,women were busy with gathering food ,engaging in daily household chores, protecting the fire and taking care of children. For these facts, more important role was belong to women(mothers).For this cause it is assumed that a matriarchy may have existed and that women ruled.

**4-Mesolithic period-**(12th-8th millennium BC). Bows and arrows are invented during this period .People`s hunting skill also developed. The invention of bows and rows paved the way for the domestication of wild animals. This period gave rise to cattle breeding and land cultivation also. If we want to investigate this period, we must focused on Damjily and Gobustan caves. In the Gobustan there are many kinds of drawings . And with these drawings scientists say that hunting and fishing were the major occupations of the ancient inhabitants of Gobustan. Those people also believed to afterlife and, buried their relatives near the houses with their household items. Small-sized tools-microliths are also include in this period.

**5-The Neolithic period(7th-6th millennium BC) –** The emergence of production ,the cultivation of crops, and the domestication of certain animals(an economy based on production) is referred to as the “Neolithic revolution” in academic literature . Neolithic peoples were skilled farmers , manufacturing a range of tools necessary for drilling and grinding stones. The archaeological discoveries in Ganja -Khanlar(Goy gol) region testify that Neolithic humans already knew how to fabricate trough(traf) -shaped stones and to make a hole in it by drilling. Hoe farming is also include in this period. Also The Haji Firuz monuments in Yanigtepe, Sulduz steppes near the city of Tabriz testify to the spread of sedentary life and agriculture. Pottery(even by the end of the Neolithic they became painted),Weaving,building and masonry work known as “domestic craft” in Azerbaijan, appeared in the Neolithic period as well.

**6-The Eneolithic period(6th-4th millennium BC) –**  The flourishing of tribal communities as a result of increased food producing activities coincides with this period. Also artificial irrigations in Shahtepe are include in this period. People of this age used wells ,pottery items and places built of mud brick to store the grain. Grape seeds found in the Shomutepe and Alikomektepe areas testify to the origin of viticulture in Azerbaijan during the Eneolithic. The Eneolithic is the first ever period when people become familiarized with metal. For this cause, the most ancient copper products in the Caucasus region were discovered in Azerbaijani territory. 20 small copper products made by cold forging were found in Kultepe, Alikomektepe, and other sites. Also the increased role of men in prehistoric society led to a shift from matriarchy to patriarchy in this period. It was customary in Azerbaijan to bury a dead body inside home or under its walls. This ritual was practiced in many parts of the ancient East. Dead bodies painted with ochre(okr). Also the resemblance of the majority of these funerary monuments testifies to the social equality in that period.

**7- The Bronze Age** subdivided into the Early, Middle and Late Bronze ages. –

**The Early Bronze Age-** (4th-3rd millennium BC)This age is referred also “Kur-Aras culture”.This age is characterized by the spread of people from densely populated areas to valleys and futhils. Hoe-farming was super seded by plough-based cultivation (arable farming )at the first half of the 3rd millennium BC. Artificially irrigated agri culture was introduced in plain areas whereas rain -fed cropping was wide spread in futhils and in mountaionous areas. Also nomadic or pastoral farming include in this period. Also the first social division of labour in prehistory was appeared in The Early Bronze Age. It likely arose from the development of crop cultivation and livestocks raising as separate farming areas .In this age prehistoric inequality also appeared, like the lullubis and the gutians in the south part of Azerbaijan.

**The Middle Bronze Age-** (the late 3rd millennium BC-1st half of the 2nd millennium BC)- is distinguished by the presence of multifaceted and craftmanship works. The next great division of labor took place: handicrafts separated from agriculture Pottery was found in the Kultepe II .The investigation of Middle Bronze Age human settlements in Nakchivan provides evidence about the formation of the most ancient urban culture that existed in the Orient. Crop cultivation in the Middle Bronze Age was largely based on artificial irrigation. Plough agriculture was introduced in order to grow wheat, barley and millet. The society of this period was divided according to the following estates: wealthy ,handicraftsmen and peasants(farmers and herdsmen).

**The Late Bronze, Early Iron Ages-** (The 14th-7th centuries BC).In this age, tribal chiefs became separated from other members of tribes and the inequalities in wealth among families became more and more pronounced. This continued until the end of the of the prehistoric period. War developed into the main profession by which men were able to generate wealth. The expanded use of irrigation in this period facilitied the development of gardening, horticulture, and viticulture. Image of wheels have been depicted on bowls found in Hajibulag (Qazakh). By the end of the 2nd millennium BC , iron production in Azerbaijan was based on the cold forging technique. The period saw extensive developments in iron metallurgy and metalworking.