

political units and principalities down to the 1st quarter of the VII century B.C. Thus, deadlines for the akinak's functioning – the last quarter of the VIII century B.C. – and use of Hittite hieroglyphes over Near East 1st quarter of the VII century B.C. – are the most acceptable space for Geghovit cave-tomb dating.

It results from this that the high-ranking owner of the mentioned cave-tomb was, at any rate, the contemporary to one of the following kings succeeded each other on the Van-Tospian throne, either Rusa the I (735-714 B.C.) or Argishti the II (713-685 B.C.). In this case he could be the first-hand participant of the military-political events spread widely in Sevan basin and adjacent regions by this time.

EPILOGUE

Results of the archaeological investigation lasted over a century and information extracted from documentary sources give obvious evidence that Sevan basin was an important sphere for economic-commercial and ethno-cultural interrelations and had remarkable significance in historical processes of the Armenian Highland during Bronze-Iron Ages.

Artefacts discovered in Geghovit cave-tomb as well as paleoanthropological, mythological and linguistical commentaries and reconstructions by themselves promote just deep and more comprehensive investigation on the all-round enterprise of Van-Tospian sovereigns in the north-east regions of the Highland.

Place survey and investigation of cuneiform inscriptions from the Sevan basin allow to make a strong probability that localization of Geghovit cave-tomb is not casual one. In fact it was built along the only way with high military importance, leading from the south-west coastal regions of Sevan Lake basin to the metallurgical regions and metal-ores of Zangezur through the Selim pass. This way was distributed by series of intercommunicating fortresses – as were Kotavank, Mtnadzor, Djodjkogh, Geghovit-1, -2, Alberd, Verin Getashen, Karedzi and so on – with the best fortification system intended for effective defence. Importance of this way and needs of its permanent control were confirmed by the fortlet-post built with exclusive aims by “Vantospians” on a point of high strategic significance, on a mound Alberd attested by the Armenian medieval manuscripts.

It is as yet difficult ascertainment whether the high-rank person buried in Geghovit cave-tomb have been a patron or ruler of Alberd Van-Tospian defensive system. More profound and trustworthy information can be produced by further activities of Armenian-Italian joint expedition which is engaged in Alberd fortification problems since 1994 up to now. Thanks to this expedition, actually it is clarified that both the fortress with exceptional role and environs have been remained as an important bridge-head long after decline the Van-Tospian kingdom. Taking into account artefacts discovered by excavations in the area under consideration with strict temporal frame, this point had very high strategic significance both during the years of native Armenian kings of Orontides (Eruanduni Kingdom), Achaemenid rule, and Hellenistic Age, by the next Armenian dynasty of the Artaxiads.

LIST OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL TABLES

Table 1

The map of the Near East (I half of the I millenium B.C.).

Table 2

1. General view of the vantospian (urartian) cave-tomb at Geghovit. 2. Plan. 3. Section.

Table 3

General view of the first hall of the cave-tomb at Geghovit, (after preparation).