

## ARCHAIC ELEMENTS IN ACHEULEAN OF THE CAUCASUS

V.P. Lioubine, E.V. Beliaeva

---

1. Spatial distribution of Acheulean sites and especially of those with numerous bifaces in the Caucasus indicates that Acheulean people started to occupy the Caucasus isthmus from the South, i.e. from the Transcaucasian volcanic upland. There there is a considerable number of open air occurrences situated often at an altitude of 1500-2500 m (Satani-Dar, Djraber, Areguni-Blur, Chikiani, Persati etc). Some of them contain a number of sufficiently archaic tool forms.

2. Presence there of this kind of sites suggests that the early period of the Acheulean settlement in the Caucasus appeared to coincide with some warm phase of Pleistocene. Since the lowermost levels of Acheulean cave sites occupied most likely later are assigned to the upper part of Cromerian (TL and ESR dates around 600 Kyr BP, pollen and faunal data) it is permissible to assume that the initial arrival of Acheuleans to the Caucasus might take place as early as during one of the earlier warm phase of Cromerian.

3. As the most archaic elements of the Caucasian Acheulean one may regard a few thick, roughly fashioned, rounded and weathered bifaces which have been found at the open air occurrences of Satani-Dar and Chikiani (Transcaucasian upland), Yashtukh (Black Sea-side) and Ignatenkov Kutok (North Caucasus, the Kuban river basin). In particular, the finds from the latter, according to S.N. Zamiatnin, M.Z. Panichkina and N.D. Praslov, were associated originally with the pebble bed where there were also such faunal remains as *Elephas meridionalis*, *Rhinoceros etruscus*, *Equus stenonis* etc. This may be treated as traces of some early Acheulean industries penetrating the North Caucasus.

4. As to the Acheulean cave sites the most archaic lithic assemblage appears to be presented by a number of rounded artifacts found in the Bed VI of the Azykh cave (rough bifaces, choppers, cleaver-like tools, heavy duty scrapers etc.).