



## ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

# Project Ukiani: The importance of Armenian gold for Bronze Age Caucasia

*KUNZE R.*<sup>1\*</sup>, *BOBOKHYAN A.*<sup>2</sup>, *MELIKSETIAN K.*<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Martin-Luther-University Halle-Wittenberg, Halle, Germany

<sup>2</sup> Institute for Archaeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia, Yerevan, Armenia

<sup>3</sup> Institute for Geological Sciences, National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia, Yerevan, Armenia

\*Corresponding author

## Abstract

The Gegharkunik region, on the south-eastern edge of Lake Sevan (Armenia), is a part of the southern Caucasus uniquely suited to demonstrating the intensive interaction between prehistoric settlement and gold mining. Initial approaches have revealed outlines of prehistoric settlement patterns, which can be related to contemporary gold mining in a clearly delineated natural corridor along this supra-regional communication and trade route. The spatial distribution of placer gold and its quantity suggest that prehistoric gold extraction was possible from the sediments of the rivers in the study area. The presence of placer gold in several local rivers, as well as ancient mining traces, has already been demonstrated. The gold deposits can be clearly distinguished from other South Caucasian gold deposits on the basis of their major and trace element concentrations. More than 80 gold objects from various recent excavations and museums have been geochemically analysed. Conclusions can be drawn about the possible origin of the Bronze Age gold from Armenia, together with the geochemistry of natural gold in the area. The presentation will give an overview of the results of a joint Armenian-German project in Eastern Armenia with a special focus on gold analysis using laser ablation ICP mass spectrometry.

## Keywords

Armenia, Gold analysis

## Session

1. Advances in Near Eastern Archaeology

## Type of paper

Oral presentation