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Turkic Historical and Cultural Complex of Kazakhstan

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The materials of archeological monuments fully represent the Turkic historical and cultural complex of Kazakhstan. Lasting many years studies of many monuments is the base to conclude that the formation and organization of Western Turkic cultural genesis was happening in the Kazakhstan steppe area of Middle Asia.

The numerous sources such as memorial complexes, sanctuaries with stone monuments, petroglyphs and literary texts of ancient nomads-Turks are the ground of the above-mentioned thesis.

The ethnographic material supports the historic conclusion about the local origin of the Kazakhstan Turks culture and defines (together with archeology data) the general trend of Turks culture development in Earliest Middle Age epoch.

The appearance of Middle Age Turk Civilization was preceded by period of cultural rise of many Asian and Eastern nations.

The development of the Turk speaking states such as Hsiung-nu and Wu-sun, which had already made their contribution in the treasure house of World Culture, led to creation of Powerful Nomads Empire during VI-VIII centuries.

The results of archeological investigation of Wu-sun funeral repast monuments (culture of Wu-sun was preceded by the blossoming of the classical Turk period) showed up the genetic continuity of Wu-sun culture of II-V centuries and ancient Turk

complexes of VI-VIII centuries. As in Wu-suns barrows was found vessels and ear-rings and beads as in the Turks barrows was found too. During the first centuries of A.D., we can observe the process of cultural integration of Hsiung-nu and Wu-sun tribes. This fact is determined on the basis of archeological study of Zhetysu memorial monuments and correlated to ancient literary texts. The neighboring World of Settled Civilizations (China, Sogd, Asia, and India) played an important role in the cultural genesis of ancient Turks and determined the rapid rise and establishment of the nomad's culture as the third component.

The whole set of facts of historical development and establishment of nomads and settled population of Central Asia confirms the interaction between nomads and settled population. The process of genesis of Turk historical and cultural complex on all steps of millennial history, following development of nomad local cultures and formation of it during the epoch is showed in the study of Turk monuments.

The main components of Turk historical and cultural complex are the funeral repast monuments, sanctuaries with stone monuments, petroglyphs and literary texts. The funeral repast monuments on whole territory of Turk residence area on Kazakhstan particularly show that nomads followed the ancient traditions.

According to topographic observations the main quantity of burial mounds is situated in mountains and pre mountains regions and occupied the most prestigious pieces of landscape.

The prevailing majority of monuments look like oval burial mounds with the sizes from 3-5 m to 40-60 m in diameter, and height from 0,3 m to 10-17 m. Embankments were constructed in basic with stone or with certain use of a stone. A few types of burials are revealed: burials in usual hole that was rectangular in the plan, in undercut, catacombs. There is the opinion, that Turk burial rites included joint burial of the deceased and his horse, the place of the horse in the burial chamber was usually separated by a wood partition, stone or by a special additional structure. Described rites included various orientations of skeletons in the

burial chamber. Primary orientation of the dead person with his head oriented to the north, northwest and west, the killed horse was oriented in the opposite direction.

According to established rite, the list of items accompanying the deceased and his (her) place in the burial chamber were strictly regulated and corresponded to a social position of the dead person. Burial mounds of high social class warriors are studied alongside with the numerous ordinary burials. Turk military burials included a complete set of arms: sword or saber, bow and quiver and arrows, military ammunition such as: a shield, helmet, armor, belt set and various small items (steel, knife, lighter) necessary for daily life. Specially shaped earrings are found in men burials, which had only a man (this tradition of way how man worn earrings is well confirmed by described Turk man's stone monuments).

The support of the deceased by food also was the practice of the burial rite. Food and drinks in clay and wooden vessels were put into grave. Bones of sheep, thus, mainly of a back, tail parts of the animal are revealed in Turk burials. Parts of animal together with a small iron knife were put in heads or before the face of the deceased. The resembling structured set of items was revealed in burials of women. Large sets of ornaments and unnecessary presence of horses were found in burials of women. The support of rite food was characteristic of all types of burials. Sometimes the carcass of sheep was buried instead of horse in burials of children. The bones of sheep were found together with stirrups in some cases.

The horse equipment corresponded to a social rank of the owner. According to excavations, the saddled and bridled horse was put in burials of Turk warriors. Saddles, stirrups, various items of bridle equipment (cheek-piece, bone and metal clasps, buckles), have allowed us to reconstruct battle horse equipment of ancient Turk, which accompanied with the owner in other world.

For instance, in the surroundings of Almaty, in the region of the Mountain Giant the burial is investigated. On the basis of list of items that were found in burial it is possible to make a

conclusion that Turk warrior was buried there. The types of burials described were well investigated on the materials of monuments of East Kazakhstan by F. Arslanova. Results of work by the author have allowed us to reconstructed burial rite of nomads during VII-VIII, IX-XII centuries A.D. A.H.Margulan discovered and investigated burial mounds of XIV century on territory of Sary Arka (Central Kazakhstan). Plenty of under barrow graves of different periods of Turk epoch are studied on territory of the Western Kazakhstan and Zhetysu (South and East of Kazakhstan). The Turk burial rite is well studied on data of monuments of the all steppe zone of Eurasia.

According to traditional perceptions of the scientists – archeologists, the Turk burial rite included joint burial of the horse and the deceased. From our point of view this characteristic does not reflect an objective situation about burial practice of Turks in general. Historical process of the cultural genesis of nomad Turk tribes had wide spatial - temporary borders. That's why the described type of burial characterized only one of the East Turk tribes. Also we are not able to make conclusions about culture of all Turk area.

Our researches have shown that already during classical ancient Turk period, the time of Turk Kaganate, the burial rite of Zhetysu Turks was different from the burial rite of Altai and Southern Siberia Turks. As a whole, at an early stage of development of Turk culture, Turks A-Shina did not bury members of their tribes with a horse. Results of numerous archeological excavations of monuments of ancient and medieval periods have shown, that monuments, in which a horse was present, are not that frequent (single cases). The analysis of burial rite of Zhetysu Turks proves that this rite was rather the exception of the rules for South East of Kazakhstan. There is an opinion that the joint burial of the warrior and his horse is a reflection of the process of military-political activity of Turks. Such burials, investigated in the territory of Central Asia, can testify about historical events, like mass tribe migrations. On the other hand, the rite described above directly reflects the mentality of the

medieval nomad. They believed that the force and warlike spirit were embodied in a two-unity of a hero image, having been in a saddle.

The theme of unity of warrior and his horse is wonderfully developed in the medieval nomads-Turks art, and rock art. As though marking the territory, Turks have left thousands of drawings on rocks in mountains of Southern Siberia, Altai, East Kazakhstan, Sary Arka, and Zhetysu. The powers of first Kaganats, the force of warlike nomads were the basic themes of rock drawings: warrior with the weapon and with standard in a hand was represented more often sitting on a battle horse.

Details of a protective costume, weapon items, warrior and his horse were highlighted. The complete set of battle equipment included a sphere conical or sharply conical helmet, in some cases with a plum on the top. Researchers also discovered separate drawings with "horned" helmets. Long caftans of warriors, were made of hauberk or plates. The equipment of battle horse consists of a saddle, stirrups, and belts of breast and under tail belts, bridles, horse cloth. Materials burial mounds together with rock drawings have allowed reconstructing equipment of medieval warrior and his battle horse.

The special attitude to an image of hero and his horse, acting together as the equal in rights partners, is underlined in all monuments of material and spiritual culture of Turkic. Both of them are described in poems. The hero and his horse are inseparable even after death: the horse accompanies with the owner in the other world in the epos. Burial rite confirms the validity of the described tradition. It was the feature of medieval Turk culture.

The indissoluble connection between rider and his battle horse is sung in epos. There is underlined blood relation; a horse often was born in the same day with hero. Manas's horse named Ak kula was born on the same day with hero. Ker Ogly and his horse Gerata are not only coevals, but also foster brothers. The relationship of Kazakh epos hero Koblandy with his horse Taiburyl is expressed in mutual understanding and sympathy, so

the sudden lameness of the horse cause hero understanding of coming misfortune. There is the "patron" of a hero Kogudei Mergen, are mare, mother of a gray foal with four ears, hero's coeval (was born in the same day with hero) in the Altay epos "Maadai Kara". Then the foal was becoming hero's battle horse later. The connection between hero and horse is so indissoluble, that the wreck of the horse deprives the hero of a force of internal resistance, though biologically the horse's life expectation is about three times shorter, than man. Ak kula, Manas battle horse is killed and, his owner thinks that everything is finished for him - he has lost "the wings"; the enemies cut Girat's sinews, and his owner Ker Ogly stops to defend himself and goes to the enemies hands; he is nothing without Girata. Koblandy have wounded during the battle with kyzylbashi, the enemies could not catch Taiburyl, which flew up and, jumped over the heads of the numerous enemies, rushed with a bad message to Kortka Slu.

Runic literary texts are the brightest pages of ancient Turk, and Turkic culture. Turkic runic scripts were widely spread in Eurasia from Eastern Mongolia to Dunai valley. Turkic runic scripts have very wide chronological range and different ethnic origins. The Turkic scripts were opened in Siberia for the first time, and then in Mongolia, the scripts were decoded by V. Tomsen later (1893), and published by V.V. Radlov for the first time (1894). Mysterious Turkic scripts have allowed descendants to understand perceptions of world of medieval nomads.

Literary Turkic texts were sprung up during establishment of Turk Kaganats, about VI-VIII centuries; they existed during XI-XV centuries too. Language, on which are written Turkic texts, including epigraph texts, were named "ancient Turk" language. Runic Turkic alphabet, preceded by Sogd skripts. Turk ambassador, Maniah, sogd citizen delivered the letter, message from cagan to a court yard of the Justin II, emperor in Byzantine, 568 A.D. It was written by Scything scripts according to testimony of Menandr, Byzantine historian. The inscription on Bugut stele in memorial temple of Taspar Kagan (572-581) is made on Turkic language by sogd scripts.

Bus-relief image of wolf, with man under it paunch on the body of the Bugut stele, is confirmation of the legend about a Turk origin. According to available information we know that there were gold wolf heads on the top of standards of Turkic Kagans, and the bodyguards named as wolfs. Mythological plots on monuments of cagans, were usual and quite clear for people of that epoch. For instance, the image of a bird was on the top of Kul Tegin monument, it embodied, apparently, "heaven spirit", and Turk patron.

New scripts were created on base of Sogd alphabet; it was well adapted to fix it on a wood and stone. The new scripts – ancient Turk alphabet has appeared in Turkic environment not later than in first half of VII century in. It consisted originally from 37 or 38 not linked to each other geometrical signs.

The classification of runic monuments on region, historical and political, of genre ones has become the basis for historiography study of runes. The localization of runic scripts finds in areas of cultural and political centers of the Turkic states, despite huge area of distribution of Turkic states, facilitates their grouping. Practically all periods of history of Turkic states had been reflected in monuments of ancient Turk scripts. A large part of inscriptions from territory of Northern Mongolia and Altai are monuments of Eastern Turkic Kaganate. Rock inscriptions and Sudzhin stone of a Kyrgys Kaganate are investigated in Enisei valley, period, VIII-X as well as Lena-Baikal group of inscriptions. All of them are monuments of the tribe union Kurykan (VIII-X AD.). Western Turks Kaganate inscriptions are coming from Semireche-Zhetysu (Talas river valley) and Fergana. The collection of discoveries of ancient Turk inscriptions related to Western Turkic Kaganate (on ok budun - the people of ten arrows) has replenished with new data from territory of Kyrgyzstan. There are new findings of Turkic runes in archeological expedition studying Turkic memorial monuments of Chu valley, surroundings of Merke village, in the Kazakhstan part of steppe. (See a photo). Selengin stone, Karabalgasun, Terhin, Tesin inscriptions, (dated the second part of VIII- by beginning IX A.D.)

are monuments of Uigur Kaganate. East European runes, North Caucasus inscriptions looking like runes, wooden stick from Semireche testify the wide distribution of runic scripts on territory of Hazar Kaganate. Inscriptions on bronze mirrors from Irtush confirm the use of runic letters among the Kimaks.

Turkic sculptures are bright historical document, unsurpassed on force of the creative contents, illustrative of the idea of heaven destiny. In the Middle Ages Turks-nomads built temples - sanctuaries in honor of worshipped ancestors, heroes, and fearless tribe warriors. These sanctuaries were in the whole territory of Eurasia. They usually constructed them in fertile land with good pastures and pure water. Sanctuaries were more constructed in mountains, foothills, and mountain pastures.

The numerous memorial monuments of ancient Turks with stone statues established in the east part of rectangular mortuary enclosure were discovered and studied by researchers. The Turks marked their clan territories with such monuments. The sanctuaries with statues were discovered near Ulytau foothills (Central Kazakhstan), in Altai mountains (East Kazakhstan) and Dzhungar, Zailiysky, and Kyrgys Alatau (South and East Kazakhstan).

They changed the types of designs in various periods of history, but the initial idea of the sanctuary remained the same. Sanctuaries looked like a barrow or enclosure constructed of stone; there was a statue on the east part of sanctuary. Likely, the quantity of statues installed on barrows varied depending on a type of a design, as well as the content of rites accordingly to clan sanctuary functions.

One of magnificent monuments is a sanctuary, created by Zhetysu Turks, which functioned during almost whole millenium. It is a marvel that it remained on the alpine pastures of the Kyrgys Alatau, near Merke River, in the Zhambyl area. The Merken complex of memorial Turk monuments includes series of various types of ritual constructions, reflecting different periods of a Turkic history. The purpose of these temples, were objects of

worship and places for ceremonies. Barrows with nomad statues occupy the most prestigious sites of a microlandscape.

The stone sculptures of medieval nomads, revealed during researches, were transferred from initial locations and were taken to museums. Museum collections were enriched with statues, which were found by chance. There are unique statues of powerful Turks in museums of Almaty, Zhambyl, Semipalatinsk and some small towns of Kazakhstan.

The way that Turks reflected themselves in stone sculptures varied in different periods of Turk epoch. Ancient sculptors followed traditions, creating a heroic image of a great ancestor, emphasizing not only individual portrait characteristics, but also added a certain set of items: a vessel in the hands of this type of statue was in the right hand, there was the weapon in the left hand. Besides, details of a costume, belt set, which exceptional functional purpose, carried out also a sign function, defined the social status of the Turk. The images of braids and earrings on the statue were also the signs of a cultural and ethnic status of the nomad. There were not any female statue of VI-VIII A.D. among ancient Turk statues.

There is another type of sculpture discovered in Kazakhstan; it is different, from the image described above of a heroic ancestor. It is a stone statue of the people with the images of birds in the right hand. The sculptures with birds in a hand are not numerous. It is hard to analyze the meaning of images but the statues with birds can be male as well as female ones. Raven, on clan sign of A-shina and A-shide tribes, hawk and falcon, or gyrfalcon on the clan sign of Oguz tribe, images of warriors hunters, with birds in hands on the rocks, as well as image of Koblandy hero with a bird in a hand, testify about already known image of valorous hero.

At the same time, we can observe that there are only sad - mournful expression, without warlike spirit on the face, and headgear of the person, on female statues with bird images not detailed shown. It means we need carefully to interpret and analyze the bird image on Turkic statues. To solve the problem of

genesis of a described type of sculpture in Turkic art we have to use all the information about history of a material and spiritual culture of Turkic of Central Asia.

The image a bird was the symbol the dark blue sky and heaven spirit, patronizing Turks according to Turkic perceptions. There were legends about an origin of Kok Turks and A-shina tribes: raven and she-wolf rescue ancestors.

The sources of an image were formed together with the establishment of the A-shina tribe, and the bird that was the symbol of heaven blessing, then became the tribe symbol of Kok Turks; they got the right to be head of dynastic clan. This image could gradually become one of symbolical signs – the clan signs of Turkic elite.

There is another plot that is chronologically connected to the period IX-XI and represented in Kazakhstan; it is present in the Kypchak sculpture, and in the polovets sculpture of the South Russian steppes XI-XII centuries. Stone statues of kipchaks were constructed in the center of barrows by one, in pairs; or sometimes it was series of statues, established on one monument. According to ethnic and cultural canons, the image of an ancestor highlighted individual portrait features (on man and on woman), also there was the image of a vessel, supported by both hands, at stomach level. Female statues differed from the male statues by form and type of headgear (more often it is image of kimeshek; kimeshek is headgear of Turk married women, covered hair, occasionally it was saukele - high conic headgear of daughter in law or tyubeteyka), also there were breast image, grivna image, images of pendants on the female statues. Men statues are more avaricious. Except a vessel there were sometimes crossed legs, headgear (takiya), moustaches on men statues.

Types of nomadic sculpture are closely interconnected with types memorial monuments. Except as described above, the most typical Turk statues, monuments with single female statues are well investigated. As a rule, they are established in outhouses, near to stone barrows on the East side. Female statues on such monuments are images, shown only above the chest; we can

observe headgear, some of them have vessels in their hands. The ethnic and cultural, chronological characteristic of this type of monuments is not developed. There is no proof that such types of monuments belong to kimaks. These types of monuments also need additional study

There is no analysis of meaning of female image in Eurasian nomad art, no chronology and understanding to what time we can relate them. Most of them were discovered in Kazakhstan and Kyrgistan.

As a hypothesis, probably, we can assume, that the basic idea of creation of a female sculpture, (more typical for Zhetysu) are interconnections of perceptions, between nomads and settled populations. It could push nomads to create the image of Umay the goddess of fertility, a patroness of a cattle people and clan. It is possible that traditional images of goddesses, (earth, moon, fertility and etc.) created in Middle Ages already had deep roots on Central Asia. They served as models for Turk goddess Zher su (Umay). However, conservative perceptions of nomads and peculiarities of steppe mentality, led to creation of the special type of art, brightly expressed in a female sculpture, They were spread in rite monuments of Kazakhstan and then in Polovcians (Qipchak) sculpture of Southern Russian steppes.

We can observe the periods of development of cultures of Turkic ethnic groups, during further establishment of Turkic states: the Tyurgesh, the Karluk in Zhetysu, the Oguz - Zhetysu, South and West of the Kazakhstan, Uigurs and Kyrgyzs in Southern Siberia, The Kimaks on Irtysh river, Hazar on Volga river, Kangly and Qipchaks in Deshti-Qipchak, Polovcians of Southern Russian steppes, Cumans in Caucasian, Seljuk people in Asia Minor. The traditions of nomads and settled populations mixed, mutually enriching each other, on the global arena. Nomadic Turkic comprehended geographical spaces, acquired advanced achievements of various world cultures in the field of spiritual knowledge, transferred the experience but they always stood on their initial priorities. The idea of a Heaven-Earth origin of Turkic people, formed in alma-mater, Altai and Tyan Shan

region, accompanied Turks everywhere, and was a basis of self-consciousness of the people. Perceptions about heaven mountain bosom of which gave a birth to Turkic tribe, about Tengri and Umay, giving them KUT (well-being), were kept by nomads and were transferred from generation to generation during milleniums.

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