

## **Steppe civilization of Kazakhstan**

A variety of natural zones and landscapes contributed to occurrence and development of various types of an economy in the population beginning from extreme antiquity that in many respects defined the specificity of cultures formed here. One of such major features is close interaction of the population of agricultural oases and cattle breeding steppe.

Archaeological monuments of Kazakhstan reflect such feature of culture-genesis as interaction of various traditions in its various levels – epoch-making, regional and local.

The cultural variety of Kazakhstan is of ancient tradition. Thus, already during an epoch of the lower paleolith two basic areas of formation of the ancient person culture were defined. Two directions in development of lower-paleolith cultures can also be marked out. Choppers of Karatau approach with stone tools from areas of South East Asia whereas the stone industry of northern areas of Kazakhstan develops differently.

The role and value of Kazakhstan amplify with opening of metal mining and metallurgy, approach of eneolith and Bronze Age, with formation of Andronovo herdsman-agricultural cultural generality.

In eneolith time, in Kazakhstan steppe and forest-steppe the transition from hunting and collecting to manufacturing forms of household, to agriculture and cattle breeding can be observed.

The cattle breeding, or, to be more precise, the horse breeding, was the basic farm pattern among the population of Botai eneolith settlement in Petropavlovsk, the Irtysh region existing in the second half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC. Nowadays archaeologists discovered a big group of settlements relating to original “Botai” culture.

Inhabitants of horse-breeding settlements lived in semi-dugouts with walls made of beaten clay; roofs were constructed from trees trunks and branches which filled up by a layer of the earth.

Most likely, at this time the mechanism of interaction of northern agricultural cultures of Kazakhstan and settled agricultural cultures of Central Asia had a type of cultural interferences and contacts. Probably, as a result of such contacts which have especially amplified during a time of Namazga V-VI, horse breeding and camel-breeding becomes popular in the south of Central Asia. In turn, the Kazakhstan tribes borrowed from Central Asia the technique of a construction of dwelling walls from beaten clay.

As it is now established, the cattle breeding have passed two stages of its evolution before transition to the nomadic form. The first stage (XVII-XV centuries BC) – the period of Early Bronze – is characterized by such form of cattle breeding which is called a settled one, household or herdsman. The prevalence of horned cattle herd is its main feature.

The level of society development was high, protocities of Arkaim type appear at this time. Powerful fortification, presence of the sites occupied by handicraftsmen, irrigational agriculture in the district of protocities and developed art was characteristic of these.

At the second stage (XIV-XI centuries BC) – the period of Middle Bronze – changes in herd structures are observed. The quantity of bones of a horse and a sheep – animals adapted for self-getting of forage and for long transitions increases – among the archaeological material found during excavation of settlements increases. Even earlier human has trained a horse to riding. Thanks to fast moving ability, people have managed to include extensive spaces of steppes and semi-deserts into sphere of their activity and this has caused a growth of a livestock of cattle. The house cattle breeding has outgrown into mountain pasture in case with which the pastures are divided into winter and summer pastures.

In general, during this period the economy of the tribes occupying Kazakhstan remains cattle-breeding and agricultural.

Archaeological materials provide data on a cultural generality of steppe tribes which have left some archaeological monuments –settlements and burial grounds. Extensive spaces of Kazakhstan and Central Asia has Andronovo regional

culture for which such general signs as cattle –breeding and agricultural economy are characteristic; development of mining, metallurgy and bronze metal working, similar shape of material culture, burial ceremony, close ideological representations.

Within the framework of Andronovo cultural generality a number of local variants – central-Kazakhstani, East-Kazakhstani, Semirechenskiy, Tazabagyabskiy and Karakum can be singled out.

During Bronze Age such phenomena as accumulation of wealth, increasing of social and property inequality, military science and wars begin to emerge and interact with each other.

In due time, researchers paid attention to group of goblet-shaped vessels of late bronze epoch from Kazakhstan presented by isolated copies (Dandybai, Tautary, Tegisken). Goblet-shaped vessels are widely presented in ceramic complexes of ancient-agricultural cultures from the period of Namazga IV to Namazga VI, i.e. earlier than in Kazakhstan. All this allows considering that the modelled goblet-shaped vessels in a steppe zone of the Eurasian steppes including Kazakhstan have appeared as an imitation of the South Central Asian goblets and vases made on a potter's wheel. At the same time, as a result of improved contacts of steppe and southern tribes owing to steppe tribes group advancement to the south in settlements of Southern Turkmenistan and Afghanistan the ware characteristic for Andronovo cultural generality begin to spread.

Especially bright evidence of interference is presented by materials of a burial ground in Northern Tegisken.

In their layout features the monumental funeral constructions of Tegisken are close to the stone mausoleums of the late bronze period of the Central Kazakhstan (Begazy-Dandybai). Ceramics of the mausoleum is also similar to one from Begazy-Dandybai. At the same time, the Central Asian building tradition of mudbrick architecture was used during construction of Tegisken tombs. Circular ceramics is also borrowed from the south.

Formation of the early-nomadic cultures genetically connected with an epoch of bronze and being an epoch-making type of culture was the major event in world history.

Emergence of nomads in steppes and plateaus of Eurasia marked the approach of a new historical epoch.

Place where cultures of early nomads were formed is the great belt of steppes which in a latitude direction is stretched from the middle Danube to the Chinese agricultural plain including the deserts of Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Gobi and Taklimakan. In meridian direction this belt is cut into three parts by spurs of Altai and Tien-Shan, Ural Mountains and Caspian Sea (Mongolian, Kazakhstan and Black Sea steppes).

In the Asian part of a belt of steppes the regional cultural generality including a number of local cultures was generated: Tasmolin of the Central Kazakhstan; Saks and Kangui of the Southern Kazakhstan; Saks and Wusun of the Zhetysu; Savromat and Sarmatians of Southern Ural region and Western Kazakhstan.

Formation of the early-nomadic societies has caused sharp changes in a life of a considerable part of the population of steppe areas. Transition to nomadic cattle breeding designated large economic progress and was a step forward in growth of productive forces. New farm patterns have allowed receiving the maximum additional product at existing level of technical development. Possibility of accumulation of an additional product and its assignment has increased. The cattle and cattle breeding products have got an exchange value and have created conditions for an exchange between cattlemen and farmers.

There is a decomposition of primitive-communal relations, there is a military democracy and there are breeding unions and the states.

On its consequences the transition to mobile cattle breeding played not a smaller role than so-called city revolution promoting the formation of economic and cultural bases of a civilization among farmers.

Economic and social changes in a society of cattlemen led to the emergence of a whole stream of various innovations. Thus, the preconditions for development of fast contacts, especially in connection with a domestication of a horse for riding at this particular time, have been created. The breed of race horses known from excavations of Pazyryk has been bred.

The military science playing an important role in social evolution, a political history and life develops especially fast among nomads.

Early-nomadic societies of Eurasia and Kazakhstan have passed through a number of periods during their development. Now, based on materials of archaeological researches it is possible to mark out three of them. Contours of the first of the most ancient “proto-Sak period” can be outlined, when there is a transformation of societies of steppe cattlemen into cultures of early nomads and an early stage from VII centuries BC.

The second period is a period of V-III centuries BC: Tasmolin culture of V-III centuries B; the Western Kazakhstan V-IV centuries B; Berel stage in East Kazakhstan; V-IV centuries BC, late-Sak period in Zhetysu: V-III centuries BC. This period is characterized by intensive social differentiation of tribes typologically reminding the formation of early-class societies in the settled oases. Ideological efforts have been directed on a glorification of the figure of tsar-governor, tsar-priest. Sak triad develops as one of the leading cultural standards uniting the standard patterns of arms, horse harness and art monuments. Monuments of this period are well studied in Zhetysu where Besshatyr barrows and Issyk barrow were excavated supplied the exclusively valuable information for studying of social, cultural and spiritual life of Saks.

The silver cup with an inscription on it that was found in the burial of Issyk barrow testifies to high level of development of Saks societies in Zhetysu. This finding together with others has provided the researchers of Sak culture in Zhetysu with a possibility to raise the question about the origin of statehood of Saks, about Saks state.

The third period begins from III-II centuries BC and proceeds to III-IV centuries AD. At this time all territories suitable for nomadic cattle breeding began to be cultivated as much as possible, the population sharply increases and this is testified by huge barrow necropolises, there state associations of Wusun in Zhetysu, Kangui in Southern Kazakhstan, Sarmatians in the western Kazakhstan. Mass movement of nomads grow, the new cultural standards transforming the early-nomadic traditions are developed.

The Nomad culture of epoch-making type played an important role in a world history. All ancient civilizations adjoining the steppe to some extent came under influence of the Nomadic world and in turn, influenced it.

Summarizing the aforesaid, it is necessary to ascertain the following. In our opinion, specifications of historical terminology and a definition seem urgent to us. It is thought that the terms “nomadic culture”, “nomadic civilization” are not absolutely correct. It will be more adequate to talk about the “steppe culture and civilization” which means not only Nomadism but also a settled way of life; not only cattle breeding but also agriculture and city life. It is proved that Saks, Wusuns, Turks and Kazakhs are not only Nomads. After all, this so-called “exclusive Nomadism” fuels the debates about the empty lands of Kazakhstan, about ephemerality of cultures of nomads. Nomadism is only a part of steppe economy, life and household, a part of an original steppe civilization of Kazakhstan.

*Used materials:*

- 1. Treasure of ancient and medieval Taraz and Zhambyl region / K. M. Baipakov, G. A. Kapekova, D. A. Voyakin, A. N. Maryashev.*