

The armament of the ancient nomads of the Kazakh steppes

The history of the nomads occupying the present territory of Kazakhstan is full of the military conflicts, which are connected with the invasion of new lands and domination over other tribes. War had a considerable impact on a political and economic situation which, in its turn, directly influenced social structure of ancient nomads, thereby defined an important role of the weapon and military equipage which initially were technologically progressing and quickly spreading among other popular subjects. Climatic conditions created the short-term historical moments which were caused by sharp changes in the lifestyle. One of these changes took place in the era considered by us. Probably, it is possible to call such periods as “time of innovations”. This time interval is marked by adaptation of things to cardinaly changed dogmas of the life. Many things were unified, absolutely new products appeared. This process especially concerned subjects of military equipage and weapon. The development of various forms of subjects of arms during a considered era indicates experiments of armorers on improvement and increase of weapon efficiency.

With the development of the remote weapon fight in particular with the development of arrows and bows, the protective equipment has improved. Widely used protective components of equipment made of skin were quickly replaced by armor made of metal plates. Progressive character of that time fully captured the weapon of near fight as well, they were modified, dagger blades were narrowed that promoted the increase of technical properties and efficiency of use.

Ancient nomads exchanged new types of arms and equipment; about what the archaeological materials gained in the territory of distributions of a Scythian-Sakas archaeological, cultural and historical community testify.

Thus, subjects of arms and military equipment are the indicators of political, economic and public relationship of ancient nomads and a chronometer of historical and cultural processes. Therefore a concrete picture of the early periods of development of human society including military science is entirely connected with interpretation of versatile archaeological materials, in particular subjects of arms and military equipment.

The historiography of weapon studies of early nomads of Eurasia begins with the XIX century, from the beginning of studying the Black Sea monuments. Today the materials devoted to subjects of arms and early nomads, military art as a

whole are numerous. They are of various characters, beginning from the simple descriptions and finishing with the development of fundamental problems.

At this stage the historiography of weapon studies can be considered in a chronological framework and on the basis of territorial signs. Studying the history of weapon development in the local framework is divided into chronological periods what seems to be a right thing. As archaeological culture of Eurasia, despite identity of spiritual culture have some distinctions in material culture and the studying of military science of these or those tribes of the early Iron Age is versatile and uneven. No persistent studies of military science generated many problems among which the most actual is the question of the origin of concrete types of weapon. The solution of the matter will help to resolve many problems in historiography of weapon studies.

Detailed typological classification of weapon types (the only representative source) is necessary for reconstruction of military art subjects of the ancient nomads of Kazakhstan, it is important to establish their functional features and also to define two main criteria: the first is the range of arms complex, the second – type of the military organization. Not systematic studies of Kazakh monuments of VIII-VI centuries BC automatically excludes possibility of the quantitative analysis of these subjects.

So far armament supplies were considered as components of funeral stock. These subjects were classified more on the basis of general external signs. There are no archaeological materials on this category in Kazakhstan, but there are some separate works.

Akishev K.A. on the basis of arrow tips typology of Kazakhstan defines their chronological sequence.

Some conclusions about armament supplies of east Kazakhstan were drawn in due time by S.S.Chernikov.

The typology and chronological scale of armament supplies of Central Kazakhstan are made in due time by M.K.Kadyrbayev. Analyzing the extensive material from all regions of Kazakhstan, M.K.Kadyrbayev carries out chronological sequence of the existing arrow tips and daggers. He also defines the territory of distribution of stem two-bladed arrow tips which are rare for Kazakhstan. According to this researcher, early forms of Kazakhstani daggers are close to karasuk ones, but according to results of the spectral analysis they come from local workshops. Daggers from Kazakhstan are used in N.L.Chlenova's

works. She expressed opinion on rather wide blades and the small “thorns” common for daggers of Kazakhstan origin.

Habdulina M.K. considers armament supplies of Northern Kazakhstan as separate category of funeral stock though chronological, typological aspects are worked out as well as their analogies. The results of the carried-out spectral analysis made by M.K.Habdulina shows that the comparative and typological method determines forms of the arrows existing in VIII-VII centuries BC. In her opinion, socketed two-bladed, bronze spear of arrow tips are connected with Andronov tradition and were not produced from the end of VII century BC.

Materials from the barrow Uygarak allowed O.A.Vishnevskaya to make a detailed typological deal of armament supplies of Aral area occurring in VII-VI centuries BC. On the form and type of heading these armament suppliers are similar to ones from Western Kazakhstan.

Arrow tips of Kazakhstan were described in the works of I.N.Medvedskaya, where chronological sequence is tracked, the distribution map and the table of mutually occurrence of various types are made.

During the Eneolithic different types of the metal weapon appeared, which for a long time served as a defining factor of historical and cultural formations.

Historical processes formed canons on the basis of which the public relations of the population among which, perhaps, the military system took a special place.

Prevalence of military system in society led to the emergence of standing army which, in return, became the guarantor of safety. The military organization consisting of trained soldiers, armed with different types of the weapon, formed a skeleton which at various moments increased due to population mobilization.

The military contingent grew together with the state formations which became really powerful. As a rule, this process is caused by the increase in a role of the militarized layer in society which created prerequisites for the intensive growth of quantity and quality of the weapon. Technical properties of the weapon were improved and adapted for cardinal new tactical methods of conducting military operations in certain situations. The complicity of conducted combat operations opens big open spaces for innovations in the field of attack and defense tactics. Such reforms in military brought amendments into the army organization. As a part of army the new types of army military forces appeared, strengthened by transport. Chariots began to be used as means of transport, data

about which is often met on rock paintings of that time. On the majority of them easy two-wheeled hunting and fighting chariots are shown.

The constant attacks compelled to consider the defensive opportunities of settlements. In XVII-XVI centuries BC in the steppe, forest-steppe zone from Ural to Irtysh, there were settlements, rectangular and round in the plan surrounded by defensive fortifications –walls with a wooden paling and ditches, towers and complex constructions. The strengthened settlements have the area from 6 to 20 thousand sq.

The settlement Toksanbay on Ustyurt can be carried to a number of the centers which were built taking into account defensive character of a landscape. There are no defensive walls in this settlement, but thanks to its arrangement on outlier in walls there was no need of having them. The population of this settlement was militarized and numerous findings of arrow tips as well as the bone shield cheek piece used for management of draft horses of fighting chariots specify.

During the period of early metallurgy the economic inequality becomes evident between different territories which were the next reason further development of armament supplies.

From the very beginning of the Bronze Age at the boundary of the first or second quarter of II thousand BC the weapon becomes stronger and more effective in the Eurasian steppes and the military science transfers to a new level. Stone arrow tips, spears and knives gradually give the way to products made of bronze, but there forms which change over time. The bronze weapon was a well-tried remedy of attack and protection.

Armament suppliers of the Bronze Age of Kazakhstan are presented generally by arrow tips, spears, axes and daggers. The basis of a collection of armament supplies of this era is made by arrow tips. Tips are mainly made of silicon, bone, bronze and wood.

The nomad society had many military conflicts which led to the invasion of new lands, creation of tribal confederations and proto-states. Ancient nomads adopted new types of war equipment from each other, about what the archaeological materials, the distributions of cultural and historical formations of the sakas world gained from the territory, specify. At that time, new main forms and types of weapon with an enclosed potential for future unifications developed. Subjects of arms are presented by traditional types of remote and near fight. During the early sakas period there were socketed two-bladed and shaft of arrow tips.

Armament supplies of near fight are rarely met. Daggers are made of bronze, cross hairs are spiked and roof-shaped. In the considered region in VIII-VII centuries BC, there were bronze daggers with roof topping and rectangular cross hairs. One of weapon types of near fight is cheek piece, but they, as well as a spear were small for that time in the territory of Kazakhstan.