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THE ATTRIBUTION AND DATING OF NOMAD'S MATERIALS FROM NORTHERN CRIMEA

Summary. The nomad burial discovered in 1989 near Stolbovov village (Djankoy district, Crimea) is specific example of monumentum of ancient nomad groupes of the second millenium (10th - early 11th centuries). The arche ological and radio-carbon investigations were performed to solve ancient ethnocultural problems.

POCHODZENIE I WIEK ZNALEZISK POCHODZĄCYCH Z KOCZOWISKA NOMADÓW Z PÓŁNOCNEGO KRYMU

Streszczenie. W pobliżu miejscowości Stolbovov (okrąg Djankoy na Krymie) odkryto w 1989 roku cmentarzysko średniowieczne, identyfikowane kulturowo z Nomadami. W skali obowiązujących aktualnie schematów rozwojowych rytuałów pogrzebowych danych społeczeństw, poszczególne cechy obiektu (zabiegi rytualne, wyposażenie) można było datować na wiek X–XIII AD. Podjęta próba uściślenia rzeczowej chronologii w wyniku datowania radiowęglowego wnosi istotną konkretyzację sytuując cmentarzysko w połowie wieku XII.

1. Introduction

Dating of antiquities of East-European steppes may be characterized by a very specific peculiarity, imposed by serious difficulty in establishing an unambiguous bilateral correspondence of chronological and ethnocultural interpretation. In this region consistent changing of nomad groups (well-fixed in written sources) made researchers take under consideration each new appearance of them as next stage of history. That's why the attribution of ethnocultural belongings to studied objects became one of the most important goals of investigation. However, often integration processes and extremely sporadic location of steppe's peoples make it difficult enough. This fact either problems of

more close dating, force to look attentively at material culture, focusing on items with significant changes of morphological signs. So far as problems of such periodisation demands of many-sided confirmation, including of scientific methods became quite perspective, especially, new technological developments in field of radiocarbon dating.

2. Archaeological setting

The nomad burial, which was discovered in 1989 near Stolbovov village (Djankoy district, Crimea, excavations by V. A. Kolotukhin) is a specific example of monument with complete number of mentioned tasks. During excavations of ancient barrow soil burial (which was made in early barrow later) was uncovered. It is oriented in the WE direction and has small longitudinal hollows. In the western side of burial there were separate bones and skull of elderly person, which were piled up in compact small heap. Possibly, this testifies the secondary origin of the burial. We will take under consideration the most significant funerary offerings in some passages.

The orientation of tomb is very important sign for typological interpretation of object. In this monument fragments of skeleton remains in re-deposited condition. So it is quite difficult to make a choice between eastern or western direction of the tomb. And only the chain-mail, which is rolled up with the helmet in south-western corner of burial makes it possible, because it was a tradition to put it by the deceased's pillow. Eastern orientation was typical for monuments of the more ancient nomad groups of the second millennium, which correlates with pechenegian tribes of 10 th - early 11th centuries and also with 11th century's burials of gooz's tribes. It's necessary to underline that elements of pechenegian ceremony were included into mixed ritualism of east-european steppes, remaining quite steady typological characteristics (Pletnieva, 1981, p. 219). The usage of hollowed-out wooden log or box as coffin (which sometimes were substituted with coat of boards) and also eastern orientation belongs to mentioned signs. In studied burial the wood decay were fixed all over the floor of the tomb. Besides that, among finds there were rough iron crutches, used as junctions of boards. On the floor there was also a coat of a chalk and charcoal. Such elements are known in burial ritual of the Volga Basin since the end of 11th century till 12th century (Fedorov-Davydov, 1966, p. 130). Another one example of similar traditions of this region is the fragment of plaster clay vessel from top part of the content, which has analogies among the 11th - early 12th century finds of the Surkel (Belay Veja) (Pletnieva 1981).

Stirrups, which have been found regularly in nomadic tombs are objects with high dating qualities. And usually there are any problem with their typological dividing into separated chronological groups. Double specimens from this complex have nearly-round

arcs with a slot for fastening and broad footboards with relief borders on a perimeter and round ledges on arcs ends.

Such stirrups belong to IX - AK type (Kirpichnikov, 1973) or to IV - GF-D type (Fedorov-Davydov, 1966), dated to AD 1150 - 1250, though there are individual specimens of XIth - XIIth centuries (Kirpichnikov, 1973). Mentioned stirrups, which were oriented to shoes without hard sole are discarded to spurs, which are fragmentary represented in burials and have been as rarities of nomadic material culture. The reconstruction of remaining fragments gives possibility to realise their accordance to IV - AK type, which was wide-spreaded at the territory of Ancient Rus during XIIth - first half of XIIIth centuries (Kirpichnikov, 1973).

Under eastern wall of the tomb large reveted copper vessel with the cover and iron handles was found. Large metallic vessels of similar producing accompanies burials of the second half of XIIth - XIIIth centuries. But they have not reliable signs for dating.

The helmet, which has already mentioned, belongs to wide chronological period. It was made from 4 reveted plates. Rolling up chain-mail, gathering with the helmet consists of rings of size, which is typical for XIth - XIIIth centuries. The manner of chainmail's plaiting is unreconstructable through its poor condition. Byzantine pear-shaped amphora with high handles, which was uncovered beside the helmet (NW corner) may belong to long-lived type. For example, analogies from the Dnieper region is connected with coats of XIIth century (Barnea, 1954), and some of Kherson's specimens dated to XIVth century.

Several harness's attributes in extremely bad condition (fragmented bits and iron saddle-bow) are good objects for close dating. Saddles with high forging front saddle-bow are more typical for the period, which is connected with such tribe as „polovtsy” (another one - komany).

Among row of finds the lengthening-egg-shaped spearhead stands out. According to steady classification it belongs to IV - A.K. type (Kirpichnikov, 1966). Most of published spears of such type dating to XIth - beginning of XIIth centuries and are located, mainly, in north-western lands of the Rus. Some specimens, which were known in the Ros Basin monuments of „tchernie klobuki” tribe's union (tribes of „black caps”) correlate with XI century's items (Pletnieva, 1973).

3. Summary and conclusions

Generally, specimens from the above monument give an opportunity to come to interesting conclusion that the availability of spearhead and plaster vessel, with upper typological dating to the first half of XIIth century, accompanying with things, which been never dated earlier than the second half of XIIth - XIIIth centuries gives arguments for

closer average dating of the complex.

Results of carbon dating, which has been made in the Department of Environmental Radiogeochemistry (laboratory No. KI-5490) have become a complementary confirmation of such point of view. The investigation of examples, which were received from a fragment of the cloth with weight nearly 1 g gives a date, which is close to 1150 year (possible deviation is 35 years). So, mixed elements of a ritual, unexpected combination of items and results of improved natural scientific methods give a unique possibility for mentioned complex to receive a compact period as the middle of XIIth century instead of traditional chronological dating.

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Streszczenie

Wiek datowania radiowęglowego (nr lab. próbki KI-5490) uzasadnia uściślenie ram chronologicznych współwystępowania zestawu archeologicznych datowników kultury średniowiecznych koczowników pontyjskiego stepu – Krymu.

Badana próbka, która stanowi fragment ubrania o wadze około 1 g, posiada wiek kalendarzowy 1150 AD obarczony błędem ± 35 lat. Mając na uwadze złożoną wymowę archeologicznych datowników obiektu, uściślenie radiowęglowe ram jego chronologii nabiera szczególnego znaczenia; stymulując nadto głębszą refleksję nad potrzebą rewizji warsztatu archeologii średniowiecza.