NEW EVIDENCE OF THE SCYTHIAN-TYPE CULTURE OF TUVA

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The archaeology of Tuva is and will remain mainly an archaeology of barrows, for in this republic the number of barrow burials many times exceeds that of all other groups of archaeological monuments. First archaeological excavations in the region of Uryankhaj (the old name of Tuva) were undertaken by A.V. Adrianov: in 1915-1916 he spent two seasons working on the left bank of the Ulug-Khem (Enisej) and in the valley of the Bij-Khem (Great Enisej) as well as by the river of Ujuk. L.R. Kyzlasov who has thoroughly studied the scientific legacy of A.V. Adrianov states that only six of the sixty burials excavated at that time could be attributed to the Scythian period. Archaeological investigations in Tuva were further continued by S.A. Teploukhov, then the most prominent specialist in the field of the South Siberian archaeology. Teploukhov's first journey to Uryankhaj took place in 1913. In the course of several later seasons he excavated more than 160 different archaeological monuments in the valleys of the Ulug-Khem, Khemchik, Chaa-Khol', on the southern slopes of the Tannu-Ola mountain range and in the Turan-Ujuk basin. Many of the barrows he excavated were of the Scythian period. Teploukhov himself called them "monuments of the period preceding the time of the Great Migration". As one of the principle branches of the science of local archaeology the Scythian archaeology of Tuva actually took shape only in the 1950s when professional archaeologists like S.I. Vainstein, A.D. Grach and L.R. Kyzlasov started to work there. After excavating a burial complex of the Scythian time near to Mount Kazylgan Vainstein suggested the name of the Kazylgan culture for the Scythian-type culture of Tuva. Earlier on, five barrows had been excavated by him on the river Ij in the Todzhin region, as well as the burial complexes of Ozen- Ala-Belig and Kokael', the last one is known better for its Hunno-Sarmatian burials though Scythian burials in log-huts are also present here. On the basis of these and of some other material available to him S.I. Vainstein dated the Kazylgan culture within the span of the 7th-3rd cent. B.C., dividing it into four stages: the first, 7th-6th cent. B.C., to which the earliest Scythian-type burials could

be attributed; the second, the Kokael’ stage, 6th-5th cent. B.C.; the third, Kazylgan stage, 5th-4th cent. B.C., and the fourth, Ozen-Ala-Belig stage, 3rd cent. B.C.

Almost at the same time, in 1958, L.R. Kyzlasov invented another name for the Scythian culture of Tuva: the Ujuk culture, referring to a large number of excavated burials of that period “producing good results” in the Ujuk valley. He divided the Ujuk culture into two stages: the early stage (7th-6th cent. B.C.) and the late stage (5th-3rd cent. B.C.). He introduced as well his own typological classification for the barrows of the later group, dividing them into six main types, differing slightly in the construction of their burial chambers and mounds. These differences were regarded by him as evidence that the burial monuments in question had been left by different ethnic groups who had inhabited Tuva in the Scythian period.

Kyzlasov’s point of view is shared by M.H. Mannai-Ool who, starting in 1960, conducted excavations in various regions of the republic, though concentrating his attention on Scythian monuments. Mannai-Ool has summarized the material collected by 1967 in his monograph: Tuvă in Scythian Times. According to him the Ujuk culture should be divided into three stages: the first, 7th-6th cent. B.C., the second, 5th-4th cent. B.C., and the third, 4th-3rd cent. B.C. He, moreover, divided the Ujuk barrows into eight main types and eight subtypes creating a highly detailed typology for them. This included all possible burials in log-huts, cistae, stone chests and pits covered by barrows constructed of earth and stones, encircled with a round or a rectangular fence, as well as graves with nothing to mark them above ground-level.

From 1971 to 1974 M.P. Gryazov and M.H. Mannai-Ool investigated the great barrow of Arzhan in the centre of the Ujuk basin. Even though half

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