PROBLEMS OF THE GENESIS OF CULTURE OF THE HUNNIC PERIOD IN THE ALTAI MOUNTAINS

YU.S. KHUDYAKOV

Questions about the formation of the culture of the Hunnic period in the Altai Mountains are very important for understanding the peculiarities of the process of the replacement of Scythoid culture by those of the Hunnic and Sarmatian types in the nomadic world of the Eurasian steppe belt. For a long time they were considered from the perspective of the historical destiny of the Pazyryk culture and its bearers. M.P. Gryaznov dated the monuments of the Shibe stage to the 2nd cent. B.C. - 1st cent. A.D. S.V. Kiselev suggested dating all the Pazyryk barrows to the Hunnic-Sarmatian times. S.J. Rudenko objected to this, since he held the view that all the big Pazyryk barrows should be dated to the Scythian times. He believed that the bearers of the Pazyryk culture may have migrated to Eastern Kazakhstan or the West Siberian steppes at the end of the 1st mill. B.C. Having studied the chronology of the Shibe barrow, the materials from which made it possible to single out the Shibe stage, L.L. Barkova has come to the conclusion that the barrow should be dated to not later than the 3rd cent. B.C. The repeated analysis of the material from the big Pazyryk barrows made by L.S. Marsadolov confirmed their dating to the Scythian times. In recent decades material from the excavations of ordinary nomads' burials have been widely used for solving the problems of the chronology and periodization of the Pazyryk monuments. D.G. Savinov attributed a number of barrows of the Uzuntal monument to the final stage of the culture of the early nomads of the Altai Mountains and dated them to the 2nd-1st cent. B.C. L.R. Kyzlasov suggested that this stage be called Ulandryk. V.D. Kubarev agreed with the dating suggested by D.G. Savinov, but he spoke against renaming the Shibe stage since in his opinion it would lead to confusion. The material from the excavated monuments of the end of the 1st millennium in the Altai mountains were systematized by A.S. Surazakov. Later he suggested dating the monuments of the “later period” of the Pazyryk culture to the 3rd-2nd cent. B.C. V.D. Kubarev accepted the dating in his latest works. V.A. Mogil’nikov and A.S. Surazakov hold the view that the burials in stone boxes belong to the Kara-Koby culture. V.D. Kubarev sharply opposed this, though he failed to provide convincing arguments. In the 1970s on the territory of the Altai
Mountains monuments of the Hunnic culture were discovered. D.G. Savinov found fragments of Hunnic pottery in the mound of one of the barrows of the Uzuntal complex. V.D. Kubarev and A.D. Zhuravleva studied the Hunnic pottery kilns in the basin of the Yustyd. These finds confirmed the assumptions about the incorporation of Altai into the Hunnic empire and the possibility of a direct impact of the Hunnic culture on that of the indigenous population. Classifying the medieval Altai burials, A.A. Gavrilova singled out the monuments of the first half of the 1st mill. A.D. and attributed one of the Pazyryk graves to the Odintsovo type and a number of graves from Berel’ and Katanda to the Berel’ type. Later the identification of the Odintsovo type monuments in the Altai mountains was not corroborated. The Berel’ type monuments have not been sufficiently studied yet. The gap was not filled by the material of S.S. Sokorin’s excavation of the Babykty’yul’ and Pazyryk barrows who examined a few burials of the first half of the 1st mill. A.D. The situation began to change in the 1980s. As a result of work by A.S. Vasyutin, V.N. Yelin, A.M. Ilyushin monuments of the pre-Turkic period were identified at the Kok-Pash monument in Eastern Altai. The excavations of G.D. Globa of the Bely Dom tumulus and Yu.T. Mamakov of the Bulan-Koby IV monument yielded material referring to the first centuries A.D. V.N. Yelin, Yu.T. Mamadakov, A.S. Surazakov offered their versions of the periodization of the archaeological complexes of the first half of the 1st millennium. During the large-scale excavations in the middle part of the Katun’ in the 1980s a number of monuments belonging to the first half of the 1st mill. A.D. were uncovered. The work of A.S. Surazakov at the Airydash I tumulus, V.D. Kubarev at the Bike tumulus, M.V. Moroz and Yu.S. Khudyakov at the Ust’-Edigan tumulus, Yu.F. Kiryushin, A.A. Tishkin, Yu.T. Mamadakov at the Tytkesken’ VI tumulus replenished the fund of archaeological sources. V.I. Sosnov and A.V. Ebel’ studied the material from the excavated monuments of Verkh-Uimon and Chendek in the upper reaches of the Katun’.

In dating the “Pre-Turkic” monuments researchers confine themselves to the second quarter of the 1st mill. A.D. In determining the chronology of the Bulan-Koby type of complexes there is a much greater divergence of opinions. G.D. Globa dated the Bely Dom II complex to the 2nd cent. B.C. - 5th cent. A.D. Yu.T. Mamadakov first dated the Bulan-Koby IV monument to the second half of the 1st mill. B.C. and then to the 1st cent. B.C. - 2nd cent. A.D. However, he places the Bulan-Koby culture with the first half of the 1st mill. B.C. V.I. Sosnov and A.V. Ebel’s share his point of view. V.D. Kubarev is inclined to date the Bibike monument to the 3rd-5th cent. A.D. and synchronize it with the material of the transitional stage of the upper Ob’ culture.