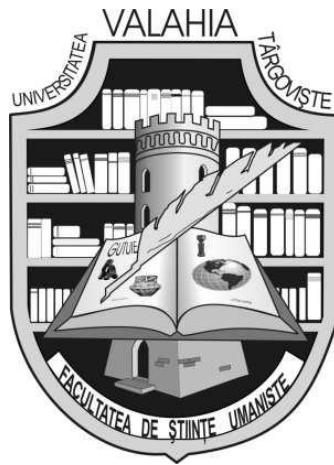


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L'Université Valahia Târgoviște
Faculté de Sciences Humaines**

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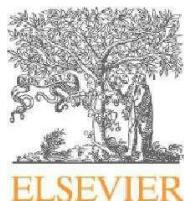
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Archaeological monuments of nomads of the 10th - 13th centuries on the territory of southern Ukraine

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Abstract: The article considers the most characteristic features of archeological monuments, the so - called late nomads of the 10th - 13th centuries on the territory of Southern Ukraine. The problem of studying the history of these peoples, despite a fairly wide range of researchers who have devoted their work to this issue, still remains unresolved and leaves a lot of controversial issues.

The authors determine that the settlement of these territories by a nomadic population in the 10th - 13th centuries took place in several stages. In the 10th - first half of the 11th century the Dnieper steppes were occupied by the Pechenegs and Torks (Guz). This is evidenced, in particular, in his work by the Byzantine emperor Constantine the Crimson; mention of this is in the message of the Khazar kagan Joseph to the dignitary of the Caliphate of Cordoba Hasday Ibn Shafrut; this is confirmed by Russian chronicles.

The presence of Pechenegs in this area is confirmed by archaeological materials. Mostly, these are shallow inlet graves (in the western orientation), with burials of a man with the remains of a horse (skull and limbs) and a small set of equipment (weapons, stirrups, fishing rods) in the mounds of earlier epochs.

Torks appeared in the northern Black Sea region at the beginning of the 11th century. The fact that the Torks were found in the Lower Dnieper is not recorded in written sources, but archaeological finds suggest the presence of these nomads in these areas. Unlike similar Pecheneg monuments, they differ mainly in some features in the design of the burial chamber (the presence of a longitudinal step, a wooden ceiling of the tomb, *etc.*).

Keywords: late nomads, written sources, archeological monuments, Pechenegs, Torks, Polovtsians, Mongol-Tatars

Introduction

The article considers the most characteristic features of archeological monuments, the so-called late nomads of the 10th - 13th centuries on the territory of Southern Ukraine. The problem of studying the history of these peoples, despite a fairly wide range of researchers who have devoted their work to this issue, remains unresolved and leaves a lot of controversial issues.

Soviet and Ukrainian archeology has made a significant contribution to the development of this issue. One of the most common archaeological sources is burial complexes. Together with other archeological material, they are the basis for various historical reconstructions (social, ethnic, and other) of history and life of nomadic communities

of the 10th - 13th centuries on the territory of our country, which, in our opinion, determines the relevance of our chosen issues.

The source base of the study was a set of written sources, which can be divided into several separate groups. The first of them includes the works of ancient authors of the 10th - 13th centuries, such as the works of the Byzantine emperor Constantine the Crimson (mid-tenth century), the message of the Pope's envoys to the Mongol khan, Dominican monks Plano Carpini and Rubruk (mid-13th century) and others. They are mainly descriptive and contain many interesting data about the natural conditions of the southern region of our country and historical events that took place here, the life and customs of the peoples who inhabited it, their relationships, and so on.

The same group includes ancient chronicles. Their information is more dry and specific, mainly related to political events throughout southern Ukraine in the 10th-13th centuries. Despite the relatively incomplete and fragmentary nature of these reports, they are an important addition to the general historical picture of the political life of these territories at that time.

Another important part of the source base of the study is scientific monographs, which in one way or another dealt with the problems of the history of medieval nomads. Some of them, by their nature, are based on the results of many years of research on certain archaeological sites in the Northern Black Sea region. Their information is more specific and is based on a huge visual material collected over many years of purposeful archaeological excavations.

The last and main part of the source base consists of various archaeological yearbooks, collections, magazines, brochures on the pages of which are published scientific articles, reports, reports on the results of archaeological excavations, which were conducted in different years in the region. The pages of these publications provide quite diverse, although not always complete, information for different years, regarding the archaeological research of nomadic monuments.

Methods

In writing the article, traditional methods of historical and archaeological research were used, namely comparative-typological, problem-chronological, generalizing, and descriptive methods, which, in our opinion, allows us to most fully solve the research tasks.

Thus, the comparative-typological method of research allows to consider together the general set of separate elements and types of the material culture of nomadic burials and to define the most characteristic features of their separate groups on ethnic and chronological signs, to trace dynamics of development of the basic types of armaments, household things, ceramics, burial complexes. The application of the problem - chronological method helps to study the various processes that took place among the nomadic population of the southern territories of modern Ukraine at that time, in a certain time sequence. The descriptive method was used when considering general questions of the history of the late nomads of the southern region in the 10th-13th centuries, which revealed the most characteristic features and features of the studied processes and phenomena. The method of generalization allows forming specific general conclusions from the history of studying the archaeological monuments of the nomadic population of the study area, based on a comprehensive analysis of ancient sources and scientific literature.

The study of the above-mentioned archaeological sites began in the Russian Empire in the late 19th - early 20th century, when some domestic archaeologists conducted the first excavations of burial mounds of late nomads in the Lower and Middle Dnieper. Among other things, there were studies of the so-called Chernoklobutsk mounds in Poros (N. E. Brandenburg, 1908), nomadic burials in the Seversky Donets basin (V. A. Gorodtsov, 1905) and the steppe zone of the Lower Dnieper (D. I. Evarnitsky, 1905).

Further work in this direction was continued during the Soviet era, but it should be noted that for a long time they were limited to the active accumulation of archaeological material and at the same time almost complete lack of generalizing work on this topic. Among the archeological researches of that time, it is possible to note excavations

in the area construction of modern DniproGES (1927-1932), construction of Kakhovka and Molochansky reservoirs in the late 1940 - early 1950s, creation since the mid-1960s in the whole southern region of Ukraine networks of irrigation systems, in the area of which the Institute of Archeology of the USSR Academy of Sciences organized permanent archaeological expeditions, *etc.* During these scientific works, many monuments of late nomads were discovered.

In these conditions, the problem of development of rather effective technique and typological-chronological processing of monuments of late nomads became more and more actual before domestic science that demanded the most urgent decision.

This problem was solved in the second half of the 20th century, when due to the scientific activity of some scientists, the first generalizing works on this issue were published, which were based on a huge accumulated archaeological material. Among them are the works of doctors of historical sciences, professor of Moscow State University, G. A. Fedorov-Davidov, and Professor of the Institute of the History of Material Culture of the USSR Academy of Sciences, S. A. Pletneva.

Thus, the basis of one of the most famous monographs of G.A. Fedorov-Davidov on the above topic "Nomads of Eastern Europe under the rule of the Golden Horde khans: Archaeological monuments", compiled material from more than 1,000 known, at that time, burial complexes, which the author divided into certain chronological periods, highlighting in each of them a typology of some features (G. O. Fedorov-Davidov, 1966).

In studies of S. A. Pletnyova, considerable attention was paid to determining the main features of the funeral rite and material culture of various ethnic groups of the late nomads, and their findings remain relevant today (S. A. Pletneva, 2003a).

In general, the term "late nomads" in modern science refers to several nomadic peoples who successively replaced each other in the steppes of the Northern Black Sea coast during the 10th - 14th centuries. Usually, these include Pechenegs, Torks, Polovtsians, and Tatars (or Tatar-Mongols). In this chronological sense, we can identify three separate periods – Pecheneg-Torks (10 - first half of the 11th century), Polovtsian (mid 11 - first half of the 13th century), and Golden Horde (mid 13 - 14 century).

The presence of Pechenegs in the Northern Black Sea Coast in the 10th - early 11th centuries is confirmed by written sources and archeological materials. In particular, the presence of these nomads in this region is evidenced by the Byzantine emperor Constantine Porphyry in his work "On the management of the empire" (mid-10th century). He directly notes that the Black Sea steppes during this period were occupied by Pecheneg nomads who came here in the late 9th century, from the Volga steppes, where they were displaced by another nomadic association - the Torks. As a result of active military expansion, the Pechenegs managed to seize a huge steppe territory from the Danube to the Volga by the middle of the 10th century and become a significant military and political force in the whole region. The population living on these lands was either destroyed or included in the Pecheneg Union. Thus, this author gives us a description of the country of the Pechenegs, in the period of their highest power. He describes in detail the history of their appearance in the Northern Black Sea, relations with neighboring peoples, and the possibility of using these nomads in the interests of Byzantium. According to him, the Pechenegs were divided into eight independent hordes (fem), four of which were located on this side of the Dnieper River, in the direction of the more western and northern regions, namely: "Fema Haravon borders on ... Ultins ... and other Slavs" (Kostyantyn Porphyrogenitus, 1989, p. 157).

Along with the above-mentioned work, an important source for the study of this issue is the ancient chronicles. They repeatedly reported on the attacks of these nomads on Russia and military clashes with them. Among the most famous events of this time, we can note the death in 972 near the Dnieper rapids, in a battle with the Pechenegs, of Prince Svyatoslav of Kyiv. According to the chronicles, Svyatoslav, who was returning to Russia with his small

army, was blocked by the Pechenegs at the Dnieper rapids. Unable to retreat, this prince was forced to accept an unequal battle and died with his soldiers (L. Makhnovets, 1989).

Archaeological evidence confirms the presence of these Turkic-speaking nomadic people in the Black Sea region. The "classical" or "pure" Pecheneg burial complexes were characterized by shallow inlet graves, with burials of the horse's head and legs to the left of the man, western orientation of the burial, the presence of tomb symbols (cenotaphs), and a small set of equipment (weapons, stirrups, rods), mounds of earlier epochs. Funeral equipment included: stirrups with a blindfold, ring bridles, short straight sabers, bows with heavy medium overlays, pendants in the form of stylized birds, and more.

In general, the funeral rite of the Pechenegs is quite monotonous and differs only in some details. Thus, a certain group of burials consists of symbolic burials without a man (cenotaphs), with the remains of horses, horse equipment (stirrups, fishing rods), and weapons (remains of bows, arrowheads, rarely - spears and sabers). To another group, we can include ordinary burials of horsemen with a similar funeral inventory. Another group of burials has generally unarmed inventory, limited only by a set of horseman and individual household items (knives, ceramics, *etc.*) (S. A. Pletneva, 1981).

At the same time, according to some studies, among the burials of the Pechenegs, there are graves without any things and the remains of a horse facing south. According to some experts, these details indicate the beginning of the process of spreading Islam in a nomadic environment, which began to penetrate into the European steppe long before the emergence of the Golden Horde (S. A. Pletneva, 1975, p.77).

Despite their activity in the first half of the 11th century as a result of heavy defeats by Russia in 1019 and 1036, as well as internal contradictions, the military power of the Pechenegs weakened and they could not resist the new nomadic union - Torks, which at the beginning 11th century also appeared in the Northern Black Sea region.

The classic Torks burials are united by several common features with the previous Pecheneg monuments. These include the western orientation of the burial, introduction into the funeral set of similar remains of a horse (head and limbs), almost identical (by type) set of inventory, *etc.* Some differences can be traced only in certain features of the funeral rite. Thus, the remains of a horse were placed not next to a person, but on a separate longitudinal step, on the side of it, or special wooden ceiling of the grave (G. N. Garustovich, V. A. Ivanov, 2001, p. 39). In this sense, we can note a very interesting group of burials of 11-12 centuries, found, in particular, in the village of Blagoveshchenko, Kamyanka-Dniprovsky district, Zaporizhzhia oblast. Both Pecheneg and Torks features (Fig. 1) can be traced in the peculiarities of their funeral rites and the set of inventory, which may indicate the beginning of the process of mixing these groups of nomads in our steppes (D. Ya. Telegin, *et al.*, 1977, p. 36-47).

The military activity of the Torks in the Black Sea steppes was, however, quite short-lived, in the middle of the 11th century they and the Pechenegs were absorbed by a new wave of conquerors - the Polovtsians.

In the middle of the 11th - first half of the 13th century, the steppe areas were occupied by the Polovtsians, with whom part of the Pecheneg-Torks hordes mingled. Archaeological excavations confirm the presence of Polovtsians in the entire southern region of modern Ukraine in the middle of the 11th - first half of the 13th century. Polovtsian monuments are represented by burial mounds and remains of Polovtsian sanctuaries and a stone sculpture, the so-called "stone women".

These people were first mentioned in ancient Russian chronicles in 1064. According to the chronicler, this year the Polovtsian ode of Khan Balush approached the borders of the Pereyaslav principality, with whom the Pereyaslav prince Vsevolod Yaroslavych "created peace" and redeemed himself with rich gifts. The chronicle of 1068 also describes the first military raid of the Polovtsians on Russia, as the first evil that the country suffered from these nomads (L. Makhnovets (transl.), 1989, p. 260). Since then, these nomads are repeatedly mentioned in ancient chronicles in the general military-political context of the events of that time.

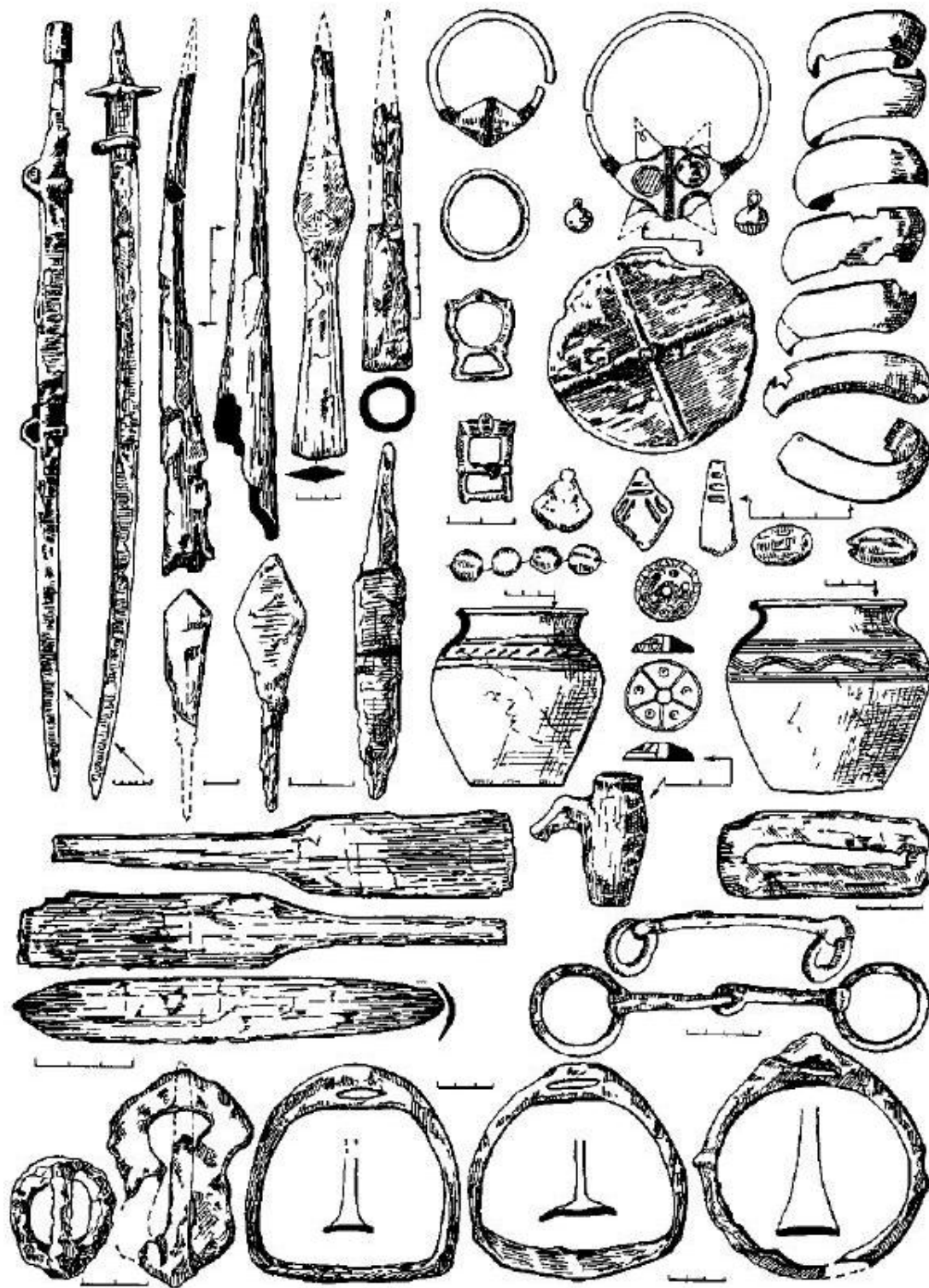


Fig. 1 - Items from the Pechenezh (chernoklobutskikh) burials excavated by N. Ye. Brandenburg (after S. A. Pletneva, 2003b).

For the "classical" funeral rite of the Polovtsians, the presence of stones (crepis) in the construction of the tomb is characteristic; the dominance of the eastern orientation of burials; placing in the grave, next to a man, a whole skeleton of a horse or his stuffed animal. Funeral inventory items are characterized by long curved sabers, oval armchairs, silver and iron "rods", earrings with a fake biconical bead, and more (D. Ya. Telegin *et al.*, 1977, p. 182).

In general, the nomads of this time had different features of the funeral rite, among which the most common, we can identify the following:

- inlet graves in the mounds of earlier epochs in simple rectangular or oval burial pits. The deceased was buried in an extended position on his back, most often in a coffin or in a wooden cemetery; often burial is accompanied by horse bones lying in anatomical order;

- burial in a rectangular pit with a step on which, as a rule, the horse was placed; the deceased was laid stretched out on his back in a coffin or on bedding;

- burial with wooden decking;

- burial in graves with linings;

- burial without a horse (A. G. Atavin, 1984, p.37-52).

Men's Polovtsian burials were accompanied to the afterlife by horse burials with horse equipment, weapons, and various equipment. Horse equipment consists mainly of iron rods and stirrups. The weapon is represented by curved swords (have a long, narrow, and sharp end, as well as a bent iron ephesus); birch and leather quivers, bows with bone plates, arrows, spears, knives. A distinctive feature of many Polovtsian military burials is boilers among the funeral inventory - as a symbol of power. They are known today in a very small number of burials and were always accompanied by sabers, quivers, daggers, helmets, chain mail, spearheads, or darts. In addition to armor and weapons, glass and silver twisted, Byzantine amphorae, and Byzantine brocade was found in burials with cauldrons (Fig. 2).

Most of these burials took place in mounds of earlier epochs, mounds of earth and stones were poured over especially wealthy Polovtsians, and a stone sculpture was placed on top of them.

Women's burials are also quite common. Many of them have a relatively rich funeral inventory: earrings, breast ornaments, pendants, metal mirrors, rings, sometimes twisted hryvnias (symbols of power), which indicates a fairly high position of women in Polovtsian society (V. D. Baran *et al.*, 1986, p. 509-510).

An interesting element of the Polovtsian funeral rite is also the presence of a stone sculpture or "stone women", which were installed on top of the mounds. However, this custom was not widespread among all Polovtsians, but only on the left bank of the steppe zone of Ukraine, which again indicates the heterogeneity of the Polovtsian hordes, which included different nomadic ethnic groups. These stone sculptures have undergone their evolution from sculptures with a barely defined face without arms to statues with clearly defined sexual characteristics, the presence of hands, a vessel at the level of the abdomen. Sometimes the stone "grandmothers" were almost portraits, although, at the end of the 12th century, both male and female sculptures began to show a certain primitivism. Stone "women" are not only tombstones, but they are also objects of worship (often they were installed in sanctuaries). All this indicates the presence of the Polovtsians quite developed beliefs and rituals associated with the cult of ancestors (S. A. Pletneva, 1981, p. 511).

Polovtsian stone statues were erected over cemeteries, as Rubruk wrote in the 13th century: "Kumans pour large mounds over the buried and install a statue, which faces east and holding a bowl in front of the navel" (N. P. Shastina, 1957, p. 52).

Polovtsian statues are distinguished by good quality of carving, modeling of the human physique and its parts. There are several types of sculptures: standing, sitting, waist, images with and without hands, with and without a background. The large number of female statues, which even outnumbered them, also testifies to the high position of women in Polovtsian society (Fig. 3).

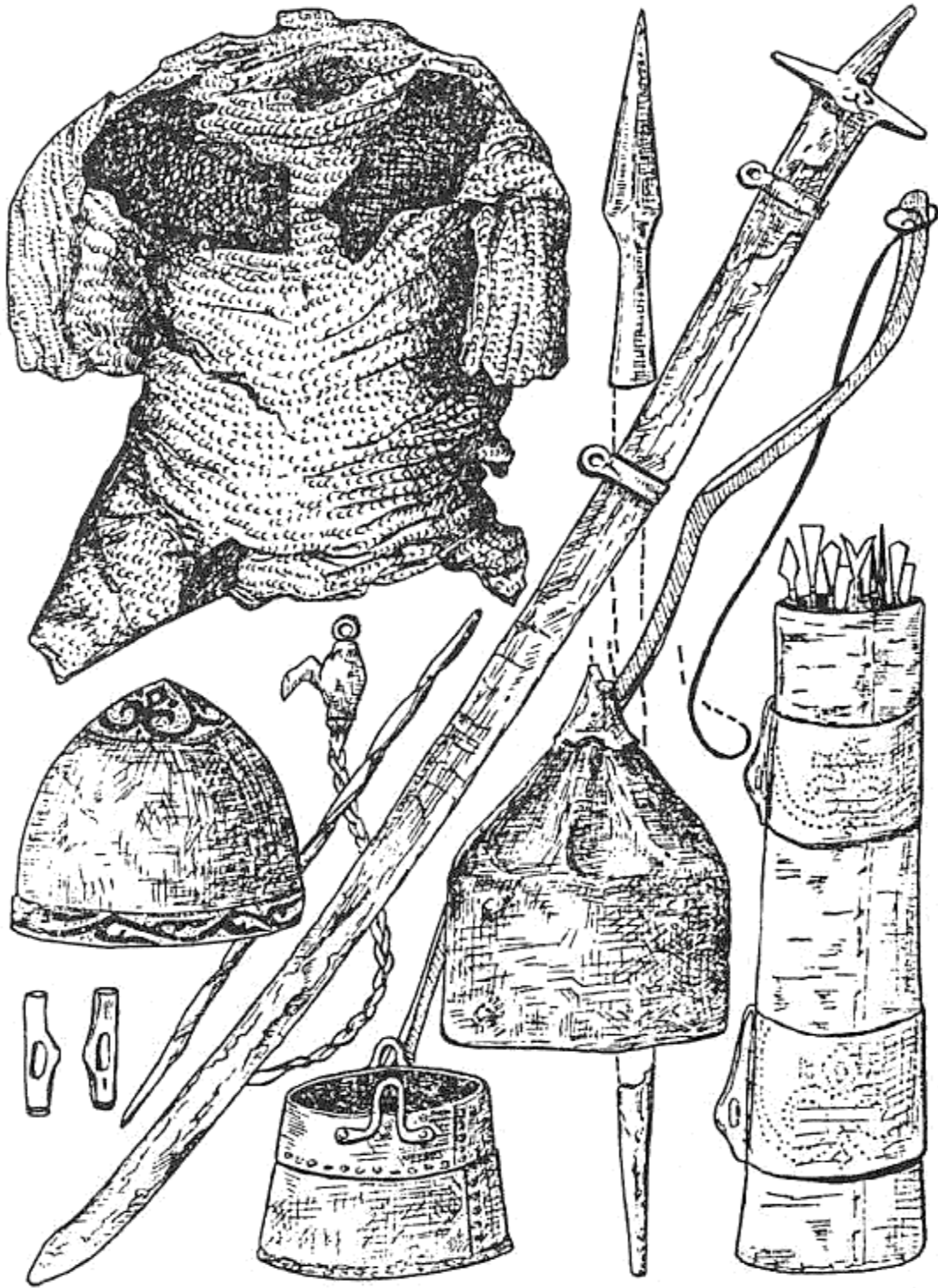


Fig. 2 - A characteristic set of weapons from the burials of warriors of the Polovtsian time (after S. A. Pletneva, 1990).

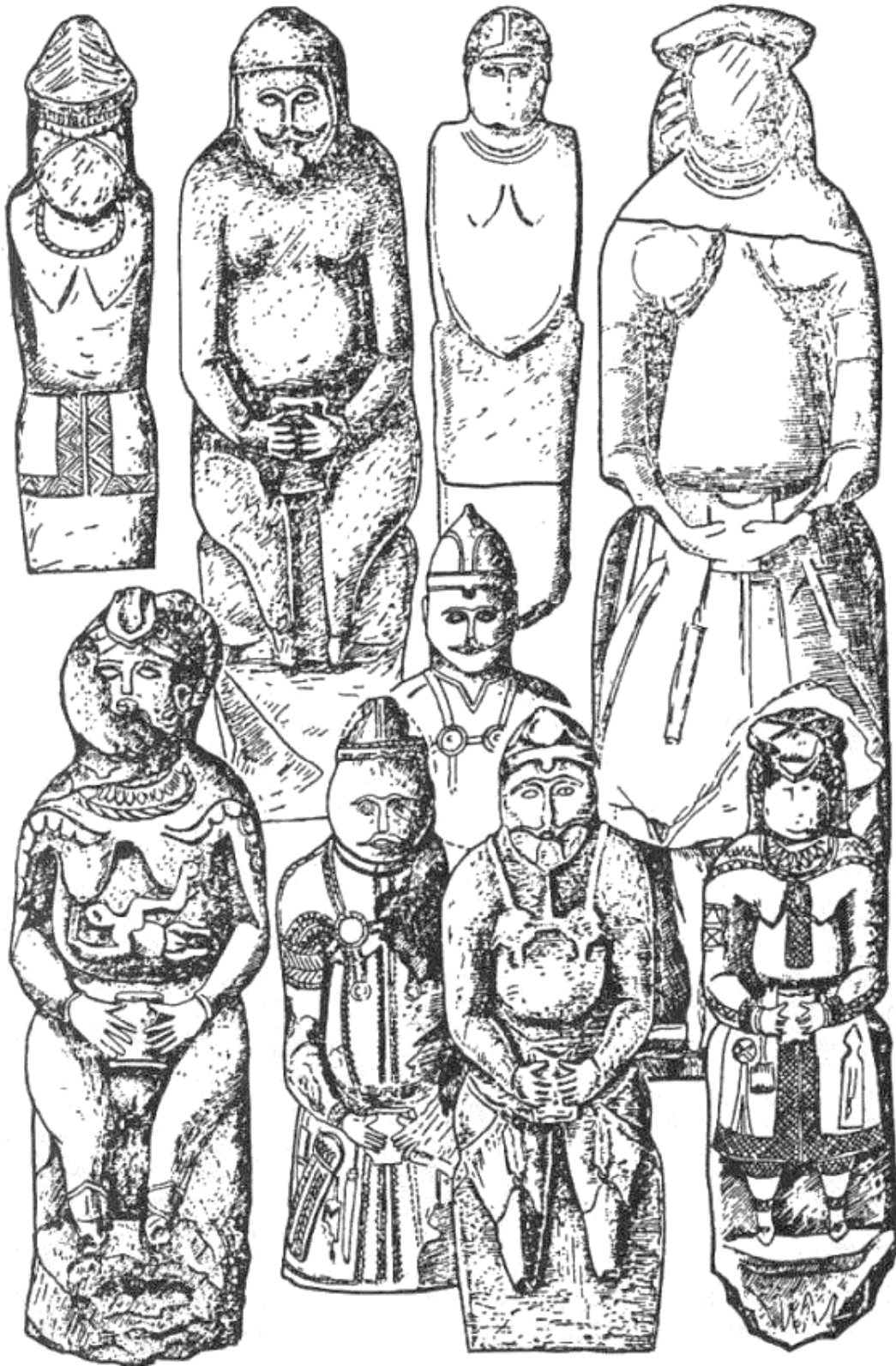


Fig. 3 - Stone statues (second half of the 12th - 40s of the 13th century) (after S. A. Pletneva, 1990).

In addition to burial mounds, some finds of Polovtsian sanctuaries belong to the same period. Thus, a typical example may be 2 similar findings during the excavations of the famous Chingul mound. One of them, the sanctuary no. 1, was a separate part of the remains of the foundation, of several rows of limestone up to 0.64 m. Its overall dimensions were 3.6 x 3.2 m. At a height of 0.4 m, the limestone masonry was supplemented by a wall of granite blocks, which was divided into two parts by a passage. In the middle of the building, the remains of a hearth with a diameter of one meter were also found (V. V. Otroshchenko, Yu. Ia. Rassamakin, 1987, p. 82-83).

In the middle of the 13th century, the northern Black Sea coast was conquered by the Mongol-Tatars and became part of the Golden Horde, but this circumstance did not have a significant impact on the ethnic composition and cultural traditions of the region. The new conquerors quickly dissolved into the total number of local nomads. Data from modern archeology show that the nature of the funeral rite retains the main features of the Polovtsian period. At the same time, the ritual of erecting stone statues and shrines disappears. The only burial of the Polovtsian aristocracy in modern Ukraine, the Chingul Mound, which dates back to the middle of the 13th century and stands somewhat apart from the bulk of burial monuments, belongs to the same period.

It stands out, among others, the complexity of the funeral rite and the richness of inventory. The burial chamber was covered with a double wooden deck, around which were placed the graves of 5 horses, in identical poses (on the belly, with legs bent under them), heads to the main grave. The latter was covered with a wooden double-deck, between which the remains of 10 rams were found. The burial pit itself (4.35 x 2.1 m) is oriented along the west-east line. At its bottom was a 2.5 x 1.1 m wooden oriental sarcophagus with a human skeleton facing west. Remains of rich clothes (embroidered with gold plates and beads caftan; brocade; belts decorated with silver plates and buckles; fabric hat with sewn silver plates) have been preserved on it. The funeral inventory included weapons (helmet with half mask and barmitz, chain mail, shield, saber, dagger, quiver, arrowhead), gold scepter, and other items (Fig. 4) (V. V. Otroshchenko, 1986, p. 70-74).

At the same time, new features can be traced in other burials of the nomadic population of this time. They touched on the use of a wider range in the orientation of graves, a set of funeral equipment (bone plates, quivers with original ornaments, rings, tweezers, ceramic necklaces and buttons covered with blue glaze, *etc.*). According to some researchers, their appearance is due to the new nomadic ethnic groups who came to the Northern Black Sea coast with the hordes of Batu Khan and settled here, gradually mixing with the local nomads. At the same time, the number of burials without horses with rather poor inventory, dating from the middle to the second half of the 13th century, is increasing sharply, which may be due to the general deterioration of the social and economic situation of the Polovtsians under the Golden Horde khans. Another group without inventory burials, with an orientation to the east, which has been spreading since the end of the 13th century among the nomadic population, can again be associated with the gradual spread of Islam among them (M. V. Yelnykov, 2006).

Conclusions

Written sources of the 10th - 13th centuries repeatedly mention the territory of the South of modern Ukraine as an integral part of it, in the context of general political events of that time. Most of these reports are usually fragmentary and fragmentary, but they are an important source for studying the history of the region. Based on the given sources it is possible to trace the process of relations between Kyiv Rus and nomadic tribes, the influence of the latter on the formation and development of this state, *etc.*

The first archaeological excavations of the nomadic population of the 11th - 14th centuries in the Lower Dnieper were conducted in the late 19th century. Archaeological excavations at that time had a limited scale and insufficient scientific basis. In addition, there was no appropriate method of field research, but they marked the beginning of the study of this region and the process of accumulation of scientific material.

The vast majority of such discoveries were made in Soviet times, mainly in the middle - second half of the 20th century. This was due both to the relevant state policy on the general development of archaeological science in the country and to large-scale reclamation works, which were carried out at that time in the south of modern Ukraine. At the same time, Soviet scientists made the first attempts to generalize and introduce a classification of the found archaeological material (works by S. A. Pletneva, G. I. Fedorov-Davidov, and others). The classification system developed by them to determine the ethnicity of the burial monuments of the late nomads of the 10th-14th centuries remains relevant today.

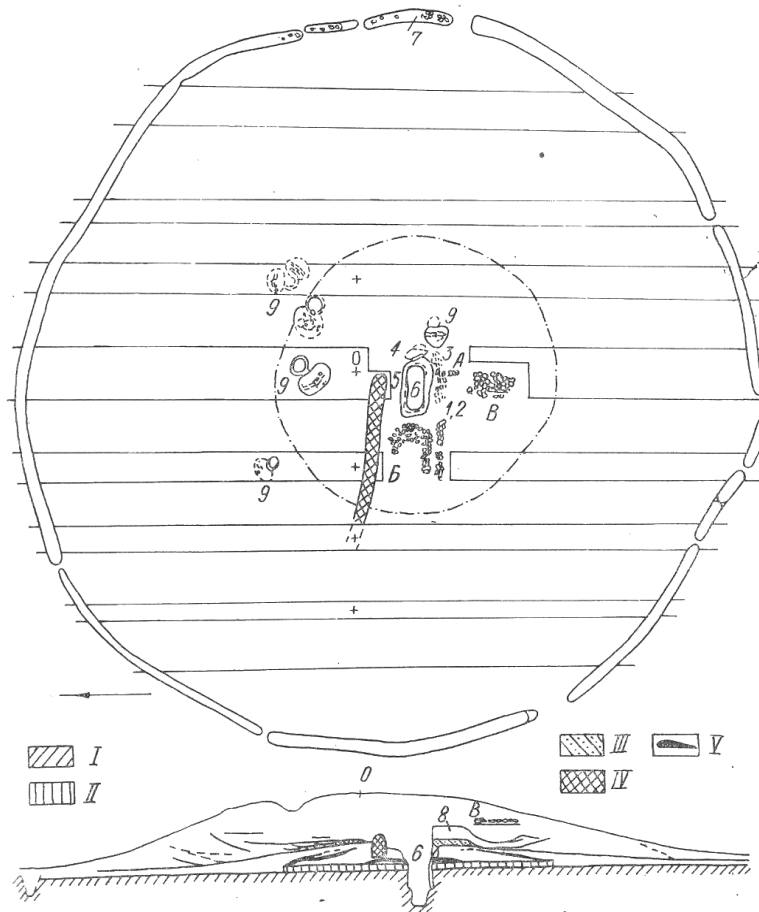


Fig. 4 - Scheme of a Polovtsian burial in the Chingul burial mound

I - mainland; II - buried chernozem; III - layer of clay around the burial 3 (Polovtsian); IV - late excavation; V - emissions of continental clay from burials; A - stone fence; B - building 1; B - building 2; 1-5 arrangement of horses; 6 - burial 3; 7 - fragments of amphorae in the ditch; 8 - elevation above the burial; 9 - burial of catacomb culture in the mound (V. V. Otroshchenko, 1986).

The settlement of this southern territory of our country by the nomadic population in the 10th - 12th centuries took place in several stages. In the 10th - first half of the 11th century the Black Sea steppes were occupied by the Pechenegs and Torks. This is evidenced by contemporary written sources and relevant archaeological material. In the latter case, it is mostly shallow inlet burials of riders in the mounds of earlier eras with the remains of a horse (skull and limbs) and a small set of equipment (weapons, stirrups, fishing rods, *etc.*).

Archaeological monuments of nomads of the 10th - 13th centuries on the territory of southern Ukraine

In the middle of the 11th - first half of the 13th century, the steppe areas were occupied by the Polovtsians, with whom part of the Pecheneg-Torks hordes mingled. The monuments of this time are represented by burial mounds (entrance and main), the remains of Polovtsian sanctuaries, and a stone sculpture ("stone women"). The character of the Polovtsian funeral rite differs considerably, in many cases it has features of the previous time (western orientation of burials, the presence of a wooden ceiling in the tomb, *etc.*), which indicates the heterogeneity of the nomadic population of this region during this period.

In the middle of the 13th - 14th centuries, the southeastern part of the Lower Dnieper was captured by the Mongol-Tatars and became part of the Golden Horde, but this circumstance did not have a significant impact on the ethnic composition and cultural traditions of the region. Much of the burial monuments of this time retain the basic features of the Polovtsian period, at the same time the custom of erecting stone statues and sanctuaries disappears, and the number without inventory burials increases sharply.

At the same time, the new features traced in the nomadic burial complexes of this time directly indicate the presence of new nomadic ethnic groups, which came as part of the Mongol-Tatar troops and gradually dissolved among the nomadic population.

Thus, the study of archaeological monuments of the late nomads of the South of modern Ukraine allows us to conclude that there are quite complex ethnocultural, migration, and assimilation processes that took place in their environment throughout the 10 - 13 century AD.

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