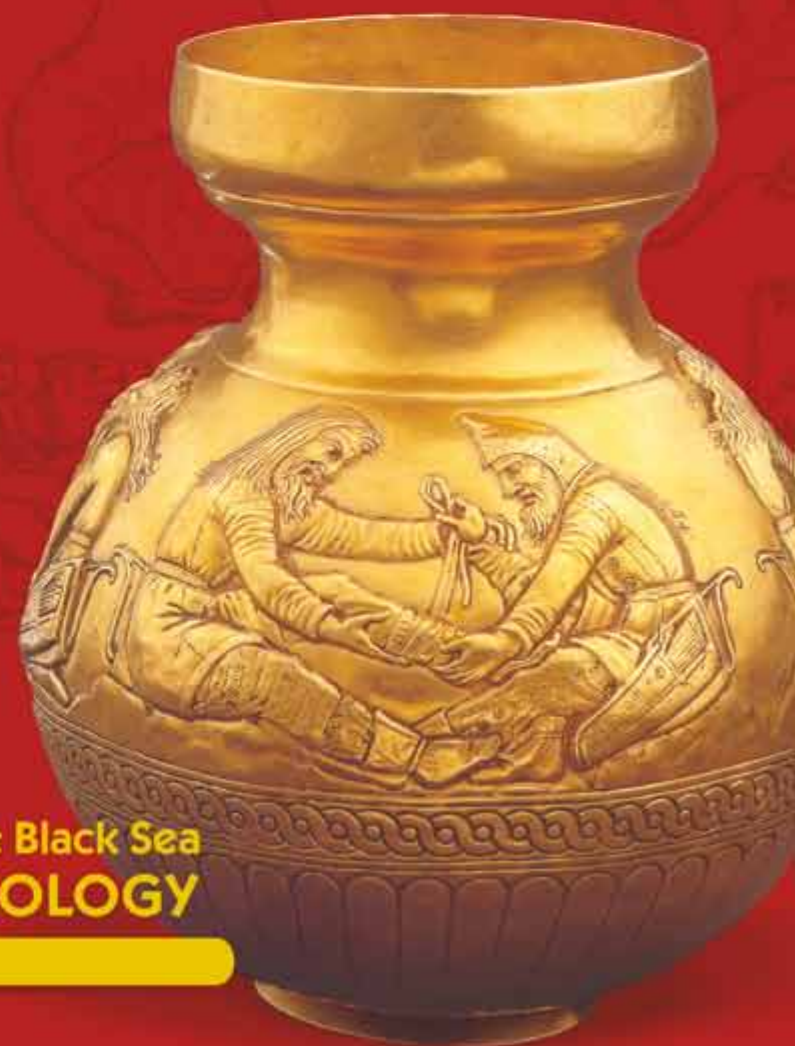


IGOR' KHRAPUNOV

# The Crimea in the Early Iron Age

AN ETHNIC HISTORY



IGOR' KHRAPUNOV • The Crimea in the Early Iron Age

This monograph presents a current view of the ethnic history of the Crimea in the Early Iron Age. The analysis of archaeological sources with attraction of written accounts allows the author to describe material culture of different tribes that populated the Crimea from the eighth century BC to the fifth century AD. The book is intended for historians, archaeologists, teachers and university students, as well as for all those interested in the ancient history of the Crimean peninsula.



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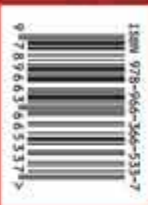


НАСЛЕДИЕ  
ТЫСЯЧЕЛИТИЙ



The Black Sea  
ARCHAEOLOGY

in Translation



Vest-Agder County Council  
V. I. Vernadsky National Taurida University  
Institute of Archaeology of Maria Curie-Skłodowska University  
“Heritage of Millenia” Non-Profitable  
Foundation for History and Archaeology

**IGOR' KHRAPUNOV**

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*AN ETHNIC HISTORY*



The Black Sea  
**ARCHAEOLOGY**

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## Foreword



Igor' Khrapunov



Frans-Arne Stylegar

Vest-Agder County Council (Kristiansand, Norway) and “Heritage of Millennia” Non-Profitable Foundation for History and Archaeology (Simferopol, Ukraine) have decided to undertake this series of publications under the general title of *The Black Sea Archaeology in Translation*. The incentives of this project are obvious: language barrier prevents many experts from getting acquainted with achievements of the archaeologists who study the Black Sea sites and publish the results of their investigations mainly in Russian.

This book, the first in the planned series, was published in Russian in 2004 (*Храпунов И. Н. Этническая история Крыма в раннем железном веке // Боспорские исследования. Вып. VI. — Симферополь; Керчь, 2004. — 237 с.*). The present English edition includes amendments, sometimes important, to reflect the most recent accomplishments of archaeology; all the illustrations are changed, and index of place, ethnic and personal names, as well archaeological sites and cultures, are provided.

We sincerely hope that the new series of books will be helpful for the archaeologists who can read English.

*Igor' Khrapunov and  
Frans-Arne Stylegar  
Series Editors*

## Translation and Transliteration

Certainly, there is a number of transliteration systems — each with its merits and demerits. Our intention was consistency — although it is hardly possible to be consistent in all the cases.

For all the personal, ethnic and geographic names we used the common forms, for example provided by the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Because not every name and term used in this volume can be found in it, it was decided to transliterate them using the method of giving the closest equivalent to Greek, Russian, or Ukrainian pronunciation — similar to the patterns of the Chicago style or the Library of Congress. For example, for Russian alphabet:

<i>a</i> – a	<i>б</i> – b	<i>в</i> – v	<i>г</i> – g	<i>д</i> – d
<i>e</i> – ye (open syllable, or after soft and hard signs) or <i>e</i> (close syllable)				
<i>ё</i> – yo	<i>ж</i> – zh	<i>з</i> – z	<i>и</i> – i	<i>й</i> – y
<i>к</i> – k	<i>л</i> – l	<i>м</i> – m	<i>н</i> – n	<i>о</i> – o
<i>п</i> – p	<i>р</i> – r	<i>с</i> – s	<i>т</i> – t	<i>у</i> – u
<i>ф</i> – f	<i>х</i> – kh	<i>ц</i> – ts	<i>ч</i> – ch	<i>ш</i> – sh
<i>щ</i> – shch	<i>ъ</i> – ‘	<i>ы</i> – y	<i>ь</i> – ‘	<i>э</i> – e
<i>ю</i> – yu	<i>я</i> – ya			

As for the colleagues’ names, there are few cases when we deviated from this pattern — if we definitely know that he or she prefers alternative spelling. And besides, sometimes scholars’ names are given in one form within the paper and in the other in bibliography. A sad but usual situation with people of East Slavonic origin. That is actually because different publishers use different systems of transliteration.

Names of Greek origin are transliterated from Greek (i. e. Tiberios Ioulios Eupatoros), of Latin — from Latin (Julius Caesar), except for those having traditional spelling (Diocletian). A few exceptions are in long citations from primary sources, where place names and ethnonyms are kept in the form provided by English translations of these sources.

As for the origin of many place names in Eastern Europe it is not quite clear whether it is Russian or Ukrainian, and the pronunciations in these languages differ, it is decided to use Russian as the basis. The names of archaeological sites are according to English forms of appropriate place names rather than to Russian adjectives derived from it (i. e. Nogaychi barrow and not Nogaychinskiy).

A few words (mainly terms) that are absent in English are *italicized*.

## Abbreviations

CIL	Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum
IOSPE I <sup>2</sup>	Latyshev B. Inscriptiones antiquae orae septentrionales Ponti Euxini graecae et latinae. Vol. I. Ed. 2. — Petropoli, MCMXVI. — 594 p.
SHA	Scriptores Historiae Augustae
АСГЭ	Археологический сборник Государственного Эрмитажа
ВДИ	Вестник древней истории
ВИ	Вопросы истории
ГИМ	Государственный Исторический музей
ДБК	Древности Босфора Киммерийского, хранящиеся в Императорском музее Эрмитажа. Том первый. — СПб., MDCCCLIV. — 277 с.
ЖМНП	Журнал Министерства народного просвещения
ЗООИД	Записки Императорского Одесского общества истории и древностей
ИАК	Известия Императорской Археологической комиссии
ИГАИМК	Известия Государственной Академии истории материальной культуры
ИИМК	Институт истории материальной культуры
ИРАИМК	Известия Российской Академии истории материальной культуры
ИТОИАЭ	Известия Таврического общества истории, археологии и этнографии
ИТУАК	Известия Таврической учёной архивной комиссии
КБН	Корпус боспорских надписей. — М.; Л.: Наука, 1965. — 951 с.
КСИА	Краткие сообщения Института археологии АН СССР
КСИИМК	Краткие сообщения Института истории материальной культуры
МАИЭТ	Материалы по археологии, истории и этнографии Таврии
МАР	Материалы по археологии России
МИА	Материалы и исследования по археологии СССР
НО	Надписи Ольвии (1917–1965). — Л.: Наука, 1968. — 132 с.
НЭ	Нумизматика и эпиграфика
ОАК	Отчёты Императорской Археологической комиссии
РА	Российская археология
СА	Советская археология
САИ	Свод археологических источников
СГЭ	Сообщения Государственного Эрмитажа
СЭ	Советская этнография



## Introduction

First accounts of written sources about the peoples who populated the Crimea date to the mid-first millennium BC. This is the case of the Taurians and the Scythians, later of the Sarmatians. Archaeological data allow researchers to study the history of these *ethnoi* even in more distant past. According to the archaeological periodisation of antiquity, their cultures belong to the Early Iron Age. The Scythians and later the Sarmatians were the main ethnopolitical power in the south of Eastern Europe for longer than one thousand years. For them, the Crimea was a remote area. The history of the Taurians began and finished in the Crimea. According to all written and archaeological sources, they never passed the borders of the peninsula. In the third century AD, the people of the Gothic tribal union came from the north to the Crimea, as well as the Alans migrated there from North Caucasus.

There are thousands published works, which evidence about undiminished scholarly interest to the history of the Taurians, Scythians, Sarmatians and other populations of the Crimea. Scant information of written sources and large, constantly refilled archaeological materials have been analysed many



times. The comparison of archaeological data with accounts preserved in written sources allowed the researchers to establish that certain archaeological cultures belonged to the Taurians, Scythians, Sarmatians, Alans, and Germanics. In spite of important successes in the study of these *ethnoi*, I should ascertain the absence of generalizing study of ethnic history of the Crimea in the Early Iron Age: scholars usually restrict themselves to investigation of this or that archaeological culture.

The object of this research is history of the Taurians, Scythians, Sarmatians, Germanics, and Alans who lived in the Crimea, as well as ethnic processes developing in result of contacts between these peoples and with ancient Greeks.

Chronological frames of the study are limited, from the one hand, by the eighth century BC, when the Kizil-Koba culture shaped in the foothill area of the Crimea and nomadic burials, considered Cimmerian by many researchers, spread in the steppe, and, on the other hand, by the late fourth or early fifth century AD, when the Huns penetrated into the Crimea thus putting end to the Early Iron Age and starting the new epoch, the Great Migration period.

The problem of relation between concepts (and realities standing behind them) of *ethnos* and *archaeological culture* still not have any theoretical solution. Even more, the concept of archaeological culture is constantly used in specialized literature though it does not have reliable explanation (see details at: Клейн 1991: 125–208). One has to acknowledge that archaeologists do not have necessary methodology and every time ought to make a new decision whether habitat of this or that

*ethnos* coincides with area of this or that archaeological culture.

Methodological difficulties reflect on my work to full extent. Although in relation to the Taurians, Scythians, Sarmatians, Germanics, and Alans they are solved by studies of concrete materials, there is need to make a special note concerning one individual people, the Cimmerians.

For the first time, the *ethnonym* of Cimmerians (Greek Κιμμέριοι; Akkadian *Gimirri*) was recorded in the eighth century BC simultaneously in ancient Greek (Homer) and Akkadian languages. Later on, the Cimmerians were many times mentioned by ancient Greek (Herodotus, Strabo, etc.) and ancient Oriental (Assyrian, Babylonian, Hebrew) sources mainly in connection with their raids into West Asia and Asia Minor. These campaigns started in between of 722 and 715 BC, when the Cimmerians defeated Urartian king Rusa I, and finished ca. 650 BC, when they were crushed by Scythian allies of Assyria. All the sources about the Cimmerians in Asia describe them as nomads who lived from war, who constantly attacked different cities and states, sometime win and sometime lose, and who easily turn from aliens to allies, and vice versa.

Scholars do not have the same opinion about the territory occupied by the Cimmerians. According to one of legend versions reproduced by Herodotus, most people think that Cimmerians populated the north Black Sea steppes in pre-Scythian period. From there they made invasions into Asia via the Black Sea coast of Caucasus (if one believes Herodotus). Some researchers enlarge the territory populated by

the Cimmerians (in the last stage of their history) to include some areas of modern Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria. On the contrast, others make Cimmerian area more narrow, restricting it to modern peninsulas of Kerch and Taman', or only north-west Caucasus, or only the Kerch peninsula (sometimes even only a part of it). The Kerch peninsula always was in the centre of attention of those who are interested in the Cimmerian question because it was related to almost all known Cimmerian place names: Cimmerian Bosphoros (Straits of Kerch), Cimmerian fords, Cimmerian walls, town of Kimmeris, and Kimmerion mountain.

There is a rather popular theory that the Cimmerians never lived in the Black Sea region: their tribal union shaped in the area of Iranian plateau, from where they started their raids reflected in written sources.

The problem of Cimmerian language is far from the final solution. There were hypotheses identifying them with the Celts, Slavs, inhabitants of Caucasus, Germanics, etc. Although nowadays these hypotheses have been considered baseless, some researches still try to revive them. Making note to Strabo's information about joint operations of the Cimmerians and Thracian tribe of the Trerians in the Asia Minor, many researchers have identified the Cimmerians with the Thracians. As the contrast, there is a hypothesis about ally and not relative Thracian-Cimmerian relations. The most widespread is the notion of Iranian-speaking of Cimmerians and hence of their similarity with the Scythians by this important ethnic feature. This hypothesis is

based on successful (but not doubtless) Iranian etymology of names of three Cimmerian kings. No other Cimmerian word is in sources. It is also supposed that Cimmerians is not the name but common noun referring to "mobile troop," so the ethnonym of Cimmerians never existed. Allegedly, it was the name of advanced troops of Scythians who invaded ancient oriental states. In other words, this was tribal name of a group of Scythian tribes and not the designation of individual pre-Scythian population of the Black Sea area.

Unclear localization of Cimmerians gives birth to hardly solved problems of identification their archaeological culture. No site of them has been discovered in West Asia where they certainly lived. Iconography (in Greek red-figure vases and some West Asian metal ware) represents more generalised images of nomads than individual ethnic and cultural types.

There is an opinion once popular that the Koban culture in North Caucasus belonged to the Cimmerians. There also were attempts to connect the Cimmerians with the Catacomb Grave culture or other steppe cultures of the Bronze Age.

A great number of researches consider that the Cimmerians left barrow graves scattered through the Black Sea steppes, which date to the Early Iron Age but still to pre-Scythian period (ninth to the first half of the seventh century BC). At that, it is sometimes underlined that the Cimmerian culture was absolutely different from that of the Scythians, who came from the depth of Asia and replaced the Cimmerians in the Black Sea area in the mid-seventh century BC. The culture of nomads from

the beginning of the Early Iron Age is genetically related to the Timber Grave culture of the Bronze Age, so there is a possibility of studying Cimmerian history (by material remains) from the mid-second millennium BC. Other scholars divide the ninth to the first half of the seventh century BC burials into two groups and think that the first belonged to the Cimmerians and the second to the Scythians (Алексеев, Качалова, Тохтасьев 1993; Артамонов 1974; Дьяконов 1956; Дьяконов 1981; Иванчик 2001; Тереножкин 1976; Lehmann-Haupt 1922; Ivantchik 2001; Chochorowski 1993).

There are graves in Crimean steppe dated to pre-Scythian period of the Early Iron Age. They clearly divide into two groups with different rites. In the first group, burials are crouched on the left side, oriented to the east, though in the second they are extended on the back and oriented to west. According to all the features, these burials belong respectively to the Chernogorovskiy and the Novocherkassk "stage," "period" or "culture" of the population of East European steppe in the pre-Scythian period (Колотухин 2000: 56–58). In the Crimea, there is classical Chernogorovskiy burial near Tselinnoye village (Корпусова, Белозор 1980; Ковалев 2000: 148, 150, 161) and Novocherkassk burial near Zol'noye village (Щепинский 1962). The unclear situation with the *ethnos* of these graves and impossibility to invent new arguments for one of existing hypotheses forced me to refuse of the intention to include Cimmerian chapter into the main body of this book.

Chapters of this monograph are mainly titled according to ethnonyms.

There are two exceptions. Chapter Four is called "The Late Scythians." Historical sources certainly do not know ethnos of such a name. In the third century BC, the Scythians from nomadic people gradually turned to settled farmers living in constant long-term settlements. Deep changes in economy resulted in considerable novelties in way of live, material culture, social relations and religious beliefs; they greatly influenced political history of the Scythians. All these facts allow the scholars to distinguish the last, the final stage of their history that principally differ from previous stages. Artificial ethnonym "Late Scythians" is introduced to underline genetic succession of this people from nomadic ancestors on the one hand and mark core differences from the last stage of the history on the other hand. A rather double situation appears and requires an explanation. Modern historiography supplies the definition Late Scythians with two meanings. Some researchers divide the history of nomadic Scythians into three stages: early (seventh to fifth centuries BC), middle (fifth century BC) and late (fourth to third century BC). This way, some scholars understand the Late Scythians as nomads who lived in the East European steppe in the fourth and third centuries BC. Other researches use identify the Late Scythians with the descendants of nomadic Scythians, who turned to settled way of life in Dobruja, the Lower Dnieper area, and the Crimea from the third century BC to the third century AD. This is a historiographical tradition. Although it has obvious shortcomings, one could hardly change it. So we can only make convention that in this study "Late Scythians" refer to the people who lived in the Crimean foot-

hills and north-west area of the peninsula from the third century BC to the third century AD, and “Early Scythians” to the nomadic tribes of East European steppe in the seventh to fourth century BC.

The title of the sixth chapter, “The Crimean Population in the Second Half of the Third and Fourth Century AD,” is not an ethnonym because of the following circumstances. In the mid-third century AD a new population appeared in the Crimea: the Germanics, who participated in the Goths’ tribal union, and the Alans. This conclusion is drawn against the background of archaeological data. Written sources of the time do not mention these people in the foothill area or south Crimean coast. If ethnological reconstruction is based on a study of material culture only, it will always be not enough reliable, hypothetical only. Besides that, it is not possible to understand which exactly Germanic tribe of the Goths’ union made the cemeteries in the Crimean foothill area and in the south coast. Thus there is no sense to use an ethnonym in the title of the last chapter.

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The life of people depends on nature around them in every period of history. The Crimea is a very small peninsula with its territory covering hardly 26,000 square kilometres (fig. 1). On the north, it joins the continent via narrow Perekop isthmus; it is washed by seas in all three other sides: the Azov Sea and its shallow Sivash gulf on the north-east, Kerch straights connecting the Black Sea and the Azov Sea on the east, and Black Sea on the south-east, south, west and north-west.

Geology and surface relief divide the Crimean peninsula into two unequal parts: flat north occupies about 3/4 of the territory, and south mountains. North Crimea is almost ideal plain that gradually raises southwards. On the west, there is the Tarkhankut peninsula with its hilly surface, and on the east is the Kerch peninsula divided into plain south-west and hilly north-east by low Parpach ridge.

Although today’s Sivash area is a saline semi-desert, in antiquity it was covered with reeds and areas of wood. Areas of sagebrush-fescue steppe are located to the south. Central Crimea is occupied predominately by various types of feather grass. A strip of multi-grass and cereal steppe stretches along the foothill area.

Crimean mountains extend from modern Sevastopol to Feodosiya as a strip about 180 km long and 50 km wide. They consist of three parallel ridges divided by low lands. The most high is the most south ridge called the Main one. In its highest point, Roman-Kosh mountain, it reaches 1,545 m above the sea level. Flat top of the Main ridge is called Yayla; it is covered with multi-grasses. Various peoples used Yayla as pasture since remote antiquity. In between of the south precipices of the Main ridge and the Black Sea, there is the south coast of the Crimea, from few hundred meters to 12 km wide. The Inner ridge is 600 to 750 m high above the sea level. Its sides are covered with many rocky shelters and grottos. Outer ridge is the lowest one. Its medium heights are less than 200 to 300 m above the sea level. North side of the Outer ridge gradually mingles with plain steppe of the Crimea. Tops of

many hills in the Outer ridge are encircled with steep sides, so they are convenient for building fortifications. That is the reason why the Scythians, when turning to settled way of life, often used them to build their fortresses.

There is a strip of foothill forest-steppe covering the Outer ridge and partly north side of the Inner ridge 150 to 350 m above the sea level; it consists of areas of meadow steppe alternating with low woods. North side of the Main ridge and partly the inner ridge 700 to 750 m above the sea level are the zone of oak woods. Forests of beech and hornbeam are located higher.

The Crimea is located in the middle between the pole and equator, in the same latitude with Romania, Serbia, Croatia, North Italy, and South France. Generally, its climate is favourable for man. In the steppe zone, the climate is moderately hot, continental, and dry. South Crimean coast belongs to subtropical zone. Mountainous Crimea is notable for sharp climatic fluctuations. Middle temperature in January is from  $-3.2^{\circ}$  Centigrade in the Crimean plain and  $-3.7^{\circ}$  in the mountains to  $+4.4^{\circ}$  in the South Coast. Middle July temperature fluctuates from  $+15.4^{\circ}$  in the mountains to  $23.4^{\circ}$  in the steppe and  $+24.4^{\circ}$  in the South coast. From the Mesolithic period onwards, the main climatic features and geological structure of the peninsula remain the same, in spite of some fluctuations reflecting in short-term warm snap and cold spells, humidification and desiccation.

All the most important Crimean rivers start on the north sides of the Main ridge. Those that go west of Simferopol (Chyornaya, Bel'bek, Kacha, Al'ma, West Bulganak) flow into the Black

Sea. The most important water system of the Crimea is the Salgir. It is 204 km long, its basin is 3,750 square meters, mid-year water use in the area of Simferopol  $1.5 \text{ m}^3/\text{sec}$ . The Salgir starts at the Angarskiy mountain pass, crosses all the steppe and foothill area and flows into Sivash. More or less large rivers east of Simferopol (Malyy Salgir, Beshterek, Zuya, Burul'cha. Biyuk-Karasu, Kuchuk-Karasu) are right tributaries of the Salgir. Valleys of the said rivers are well saturated, good for farming and, therefore, extremely saturated with sites of different tribes and peoples. Rivers are absent in vast areas of plain part of the peninsula or are beds dry for several months a year.

As for the minerals used in antiquity, I should mention almost inexpensive mines of building stone and salt (in Sivash and numerous salt lakes), as well as iron ores in the Kerch peninsula.

The contrast between environmental zones of the Crimea determines many differences in the economy of its populations. Waterless steppe was unfit for settled population. Its pastures were used by many tribes of nomadic cattle-breeders who changed each other through millennia. Only the Hellenes were successful in use of steppe zone for farming and only its narrow strip adjoining the sea. The population of mountainous and foothill areas traditionally practiced farming and cattle-breeding.



Fig. 1. Geographical map of the Crimea

### Historiography

Historiography of the history of peoples who populated the Crimea in the Early Iron Age and of their material culture is overwhelming. Its special review requires special monographic study. Among the researches on Taurians, Scythians, Sarmatians, Goths and Alans populating the Crimea, there are many dilettantish works that do not desire special analysis. This chapter mentions and examines with more or less details the publications meeting scientific criteria and interpreting namely the problems of ethnic history. Some exceptions are made for the nineteenth century studies. Although they naturally include many out-of-date concepts, they present first attempts of understanding written and archaeological accounts of the peoples that lived in the Crimea. Without them one would not understand the way gone by science to come to modern interpretations.

There is a monograph on the history of research of all the peoples to be discussed in this volume but the Taurians. Its authors have touched different topics including ethnological aspect as one of many others (Колтухов, Юрочкин, 2004).

Because of the absence of comprehensive studies of the ethnic history of the Crimea in the Early Iron Age, it is



reasonable to discuss historiography as separate sub-chapters dealing with individual peoples.

### **I.1. The Taurians**

Thanks to direct information by Herodotus (Herod. *Hist.* 4. 99), the first educated European travellers to the Crimea knew that the Taurians populated Crimean highland in the Greco-Roman period. Frédéric Dubois de Montpereux identified cemeteries of cists as Taurian sites (Montpereux 1839: 11–12). Soon afterwards, a new version was produced: according to it, cists were Celtic altars — it was certainly based on incorrect premises (Фабр 1848). It was rejected once and for all, however, N. Chekalyov who criticised Andrey Fabr still had difficulties in determining the *ethnos* of those who made the cists, so he, with great doubts and no arguments, supposed that these were graves of the Greeks who lived in pre-Celtic period (Чекалев 1867).

First attempts to think of the problem of Taurian origin lead the researchers to the idea that the Taurians descended from the Cimmerians who were pushed to the mountains by the Scythians (Брун 1868: 249; Караулов 1872: 107; Подберезский 1872: 431). This hypothesis received further development (Lehmann-Haupt 1922: 397 f.; Жебелев 1953a: 256; Жебелев 1953b: 336). It seems that we can call it intuitively based on general knowledge of the Black Sea history in the Greco-Roman period. There is no evidence confirming genetic succession of the Taurians from the Cimmerians in written and archaeological sources.

Alexandre Berthier Delagarde discovered a cultural layer full of finds not

far from Yalta. There were more than 1,500 coins from the first century BC to the fourth century AD, various ornaments, cloth details, as well as two types of terracotta statuettes depicting women. In Berthier Delagarde's opinion, Yalta finds were offerings to a sanctuary of female goddess. He was very careful about the ethnic background of those who made this sanctuary and called them "local population" under Bosporan influence (Бертье-Делагард 1907). The scholars who worked with these artefacts later expressed more definite opinion. Against the background of the finds of primitive statuettes allegedly incompatible with established ideas of Greco-Roman culture and the sanctuary location, they considered it a Taurian site (Репников 1927: 139; Тюменев 1949: 85; Шульц 1959: 254–255; Лесков 1965: 186–187).

In 1907 Nikolay Repnikov started his excavation of cist cemeteries in Baydarskaya valley. Among the others, he investigated Mal-Muz, still remaining the only unplundered Taurian cemetery. As it became clear later, Repnikov discovered almost all Taurian types of weapons, horse harness and ornaments in Mal-Muz and other sites. He also recorded distinctive features of the funeral rite: crouched burials and multiple skeletons in every cist (Репников 1909). Nevertheless, I should mention that from modern point of view the publication is of inadequate quality. Many funeral rite features remained obscure. It is not clear also how can the sixth and fifth centuries BC grave goods from undisturbed grave contain bow fibula with returned foot (Репников 1909: 134, рис. 28–29) of Anatolij Ambroz's series I, variant 2



(Амброз 1966: 49) dating from the second half of the first century AD.

In that time Repnikov did not dare to express even presumable opinion about the ethnic background of the people who buried in the cists. He had controversial ideas of the origins of the material culture remains of which were recorded by his excavations. He proposed to search for them both in the Halstatt culture and in the culture of Crimean cists “with crouched and painted skeletons,” that is to say, according to modern knowledge, in the Kemi-Oba culture. As for the chronology of the cists, Repnikov supported earlier Aleksey Uvarov’s idea (Уваров 1887: 33) that they were constructed in the Late Bronze or Early Iron Age (Репников 1910: 19–22). Much later, Repnikov determined five groups of Taurian antiquities, the first one consisting of cist cemeteries. He dated them from the seventh to the fifth century BC and called the Halstatt culture the source of the culture represented by them. It is interesting that four other groups of sites were called “Taurian” by mistake (fortification in Ayu-Dag mountain, outer fortress wall in Ay-Todor cape, and Shaytan-Merdven site) or are disputable (not listed “traces of Taurian settlements” and the sanctuary excavated by Berthier Delagarde near Yalta) (Репников 1927). The problem of the ethnic background of the cist cemeteries located within the main ridge of Crimean mountains and in south coast of the peninsula never appeared after Repnikov’s publication: all the researches acknowledged that they were Taurian.

1918 was the time of the first scholarly discussion of the origin of Taurian

ethnonym. Ivan Tolstoy thought that the name of ταύροι (Greek for *bulls*) had only mythological origin. “*So they called the people of legendary state of fabulous king Thoantes*” (Толстой 1918: 145). Michael Rostovtzeff produced a hypothesis, quite historical but speculative, that became dominant for decades. In his opinion, “Taurians” was Graecised form of some Taurian word that sounded in a similar way (Ростовцев 1918a: 195).

In early 1920s Gleb Bonch-Osmolovskiy discovered more than ten settlements of unknown archaeological culture on the north side of the Main mountain ridge. He called them the “Kizil-Koba culture” according to the first place where found, near Kizil-Koba cave, and supposed that it belonged to historical Taurians (Бонч-Осмоловский 1926: 91–94).

Vladimir D’yakov made a rather detailed study of basic aspects of Taurian history in 1939. In his opinion, mountain conditions of Taurica allowed the mountaineers to keep their ethnic distinctiveness for long. Their economy was based on hunting and fishing supplemented with primitive mattock farming and cattle-breeding. Besides that, the Taurians practice piracy and attacked Greek cities in order to obtain the missing products of farming. D’yakov was in sympathy with the hypothesis that the Taurians descended from the Cimmerians. The Taurians buried in cist cemeteries; they have no connection to the Kizil-Koba culture (Дьяков 1939: 74–80).

In his paper published in 1947 Yevgeniy Krupnov mentioned a possibility of connection between the culture represented by Nesterovskaya cemetery

in Central Ciscaucasia and the Taurian culture in Crimean highland (Крупнов 1947: 104). Later on, this idea was developed by Vladimir Bobin (Бобин 1957) and Крупнов himself (Крупнов 1960: 248, 252, 294) especially against the background of similarity between some bronze ornaments from the Koban culture and Taurian ones.

Immediately after the end of the Second World War, the Tauro-Scythian Expedition of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR supervised by Pavel Shul'ts made special reconnaissances and investigations of Taurian sites. In result of almost fifteen-years-long work of the Expedition, the number of known Taurian antiquities increased many times over. Shul'ts tried to summarise the post-war studies of the Taurians in special paper. In his opinion, the Taurians populated the mountainous and foothill area of the Crimea and produced the Kizil-Koba culture. The dwellers of the foothill area practiced farming, though the residents of the highlands mainly were cattle-breeders in plateaux and mattock agriculturalists. Although the Taurians lead secluded life with rare contacts with Greeks, such contacts, nevertheless, existed. In the foothill area, they were under considerable Scythian influence. Shul'ts outlined five areas where various Taurian tribes possibly lived. He had doubts concerning the origin of the Taurians: he rejected both Cimmerian and autochthonous hypotheses and noted the influence of tribes from North Caucasus and Thrace on the Kizil-Koba culture. Taurian *ethnos* developed in result of mixing of various, local and outside, tribes in the turn of Bronze and Early Iron Ages (in

the very beginning of the first millennium BC); it existed as late as the Early Middle Ages inclusive. Their history could be divided into four periods, with less long stages within each period. He classified Taurian sites and divided them into nine groups (Шульц 1959).

Generally, I should note that Shul'ts's article formulated conclusions on the most important problems and outlined perspectives of studies of various aspects of Taurian history, a part of which was not investigated till now. His study had considerable influence on many researchers who worked later. From the position of modern science, I can underline two main shortcomings of Shul'ts article: first, periods and chronology determined by him were groundless and speculative; second, many mediaeval sites and Roman fortress of Charax were attributed to the Taurian culture by mistake.

There is a particular but important observation made by Ol'ga Dashevskaya. She determined later group of Taurian ceramic ware (with ornamentation made by dentate stamp) and, against the background of such finds in cultural layers, she drew the conclusion that Taurians lived in Greek and Scythian settlements (Дашевская 1963).

Aleksandr Leskov's monograph marked an important stage of the study of Taurian history and archaeology. It presents a collection and analysis of all archaeological data, accumulated by the moment, and written sources accounts. The author of the monograph has defined a new concept of the shaping of the Taurian culture. He reconstructed the migration of a part of inhabitants of North Caucasus mountainous area, i. e.

the people of the Koban culture, to the Crimea in the early first millennium BC. This migration was a gradual infiltration complicated by contacts with the Kuban and Timber Grave (Srubnaya) cultures. In the Crimea, the migrants met small-in-number local population, which also descended from Caucasus migrants who once had brought the Kemi-Oba culture to the Crimea. These rather complicated processes resulted in the shaping of the Taurian culture (Лесков 1965: 146–158).

Leskov has investigated the chronology of the Taurian culture (he also puts down the Kizil-Koba culture to it) in details. Its chronological frames were determined within the ninth to first centuries BC. As for the sites later than the fourth and third centuries BC, of them Leskov could remember only fortification wall in Koshka mountain (fig. 2), which, as it has become clear later, has nothing to do with Taurian cultural layer (Лесков 1965: 113–132). Highland Taurians practiced mainly cattle-breeding, though they were farmers in the foothill area and fishers at the sea coast. Piracy did not play considerable role in their economy. The Taurians permanently were in contact with the Scythians in the frontier between steppe and foothills. He supposed that there was special group of burials combining Scythian and Taurian features. The movement of Scythian kingdom to the Crimea in the third and second century BC started the process of assimilation of the Taurians. Contacts with Greeks, mainly the Chersonesites, were very limited. Taurian cults related to veneration of Virgin goddess and creation of cave sanctuaries were extremely specific (Лесков 1965: 166–190).

Although Leskov's monograph deserves a high praise, I should mention that he uses as sources for Taurian history many monuments that are not Taurian, particularly mediaeval fortifications in the south coast of the Crimea or Roman fortress of Charax.

In 1973 Iosif Brashinskiy demonstrated that Taurians' main occupation, piracy, that impressed ancient Greco-Roman writers and modern researchers after them, was not an extraordinary phenomenon in antiquity and found close parallels among the tribes living under similar natural conditions at nearly the same level of social-economic development (Брашинский 1973).

Vladimir Kadeyev summed up a relatively long discussion about the *ethnicity* of crouched burials in a part of Chersonesos cemetery and proved, rather convincingly, that they belonged to Greeks (Кадеев 1973). Despite of this group of burials was under discussion later as well, champions of "Taurian" or "barbarian" version were not successful in finding new arguments for their opinion (Кадеев 1995).

Ella Solomonik returned to the problem of the origin of the ethnonym of the Taurians and place name of Taurica, which had not been discussed for long. She produced a new, but as speculative as Rostovtzeff's, hypothesis according to which these ethnonym and place name originated from "Tauros," the Greek name for Crimean mountains (Соломоник 1976). Some scholars criticised this interpretation (Тохтасьев 1984: 139).

Askol'd Shchepinskiy published some finds from the south coast of the Crimea and expressed his notion of the



Fig. 2. Koshka mountain  
(photo: Stanislav Shabanov)

ethnicity of cist cemeteries and of the Kizil-Koba culture. In his opinion, there were two *ethnoi* living in mountainous and foothill Crimea simultaneously, who left two different archaeological cultures: Taurian and Kizil-Koba ones. The latter belonged to the descendants of the Cimmerians. In fact, it had only one stable feature — polished hand-made ceramics with incised ornamentation, and occupied the area wider than the Taurian culture, covering the Crimean steppe and even projecting out of the peninsula (Щепинський 1977: 30–38). Later on, Shchepenskiy developed his concept in popular publications.

In 1981, Khava Kris published a monograph where she summarised existing archaeological materials on the Taurians. She made critical analysis of the hypothesis concerning Cimmerian origin of the Taurians and drew the conclusion that it was untenable. In the

scholar's point of view, the Kizil-Koba culture was not made by the Taurians but by an *ethnos* which name did not survive in written sources. Moreover, the Kizil-Koba people had wars with Taurians and devastated their cist cemeteries. The most brilliant feature of the Kizil-Koba culture, that is polished ceramics with incised ornamentation, was introduced in the Crimea by nomadic Scythians who, in their own turn, borrowed it from the population of the forest-steppe area. Both the Taurians and the Kizil-Koba people were assimilated by the Scythians in the fifth century BC (Крис 1981: 52–56).

Valeriy Ol'khovskiy summarised data of written sources about different tribes inhabiting the Crimea including the Taurians. In the same publication, he made detailed analysis of the buri-

als combining Scythian and Kizil-Koba features of funeral rite, which were discussed before. The scholar presented original concept of the formation of the Kizil-Koba culture, in shaping of which, in his opinion, participated the Taurians and another *ethnos* not known to the written sources (Ольховский 1982).

Important results have been brought by the excavations of ancient city of Kerkitis. The distribution of hand-made ceramics with incised ornamentation in layers indicated that the Kizil-Koba people lived in the city throughout the whole period of its existence (Кутайсов 1987).

Aleksandr Shcheglov started from investigation of the relations between the Taurians and the Greeks (Щеглов 1981) and later on published a large paper with a detailed review of written sources and new approaches to complicated problems of Taurian history with use of ethnology's achievements. Particularly, the author paid attention to the necessity of use site's relations to geographical environment in individual areas and regions. He marked four zones, which, in his opinion, had different landscapes and typical features of the sites. The term "Taurians" could denote both ethnic community and multi-ethnic mountaineers who belonged to the same economic-cultural type. Archaeological culture of the Crimean highland was a part of the Kizil-Koba culture revealing economic-cultural type of mountain farmers and cattle-breeders. The Kizil-Koba culture in the Crimean plain had Scythoid image and belonged to nomadic population. By the moment when the Scythians came, the Taurians possibly occupied the whole Crimean peninsula. The tri-

bes of the plain were incorporated by Scythians (Щеглов 1988a). The use of ethnological achievements to analyse specific ancient society seems extremely perspective. Later on, Shcheglov investigated another important aspect of Taurian history. He related the end of the Kizil-Koba culture with the third century BC crises common for the whole Black Sea area. Using epigraphical data, he successfully demonstrated that the Taurians continued to live in the Crimea at least throughout the first century AD, in spite of the fact that they lost specific features of their material culture traceably by archaeological methods (Щеглов 1998a).

Sergey Solov'yov studied hand-made ceramics with incised ornamentation discovered in Berezan' island. It turned out that there were few Kizil-Koba vessels discovered in Berezan'. Almost all of them dated from the second and third quarters of the sixth century BC and, in the researcher's opinion, were transported to the island by persons of Scythian-Kizil-Koba *ethnos* (Соловьев 1995).

Special study of hand-made pottery discovered in Berezan' showed that all the vessels ornamented in Kizil-Koba style were accompanied with ceramic ware typical to the population of forest-steppe Dnieper area. That is the reason why the researcher did not dare to speak of some migration from the Crimea but only of a fashion that reflected cultural relations and interrelations between the Dnieper area and the Crimea (Сенаторов 2005a).

Vitaliy Kolotukhin finished the series of his studies (Колотухин 1982; 1985; 1987; 1990a) with the monograph

(Колотухин 1996) almost entirely dedicated to Taurians' history. In the historiographical review, he made a critical analysis of the hypothesis about non-Taurian origin of the Kizil-Koba culture. The monograph published considerable amount of new materials obtained by its author's excavations. The analysis allowed him to make conclusion very important to our topic. In the late Bronze Age, a part of the population turned to nomadic way of life, though the others consolidated in the Crimean foothill area thus shaping new *ethnos*, which later became known to Greek and Roman writers under the name of the Taurians. One must admit that this hypothesis of the Taurians' origin is grounded by archaeology better than any other. All the elements of the Kizil-Koba culture, which was created by Taurians, similar to the Koban culture and cultures of the forest-steppe area could be explained as the result of interrelations with the Scythians, who translated some types of ornaments and ceramics from one *ethnos* to another. The Taurians populated the whole Crimean peninsula in pre-Scythian period.

Aleksandr Butyagin has published the results of his excavations of subterranean houses and household pits of the Taurians in Nymphaion. This way, similarly to the case of Kerkinitis, he has proved the fact that the Taurians constantly resided in a Greek *polis* (Butjagin 1997).

Vladimir Vlasov has traced the Taurians' stay among the dwellers of Late Scythian settlements till the first century AD in his dissertation according to the data of hand-made ceramics (Власов 1999a).

Sergey Koltukhov has concretised the idea, which has been discussed many times, that there were local differences between areas populated by the Kizil-Koba people; he has singularized a group of graves under barrows in the foothill area of Salgir river valley and has connected it with the Scythians who penetrated into the territory occupied by the Taurians (Колтухов 1999a).

Yevgeniy Rogov has made a detailed investigation of Chersonesos' relations with barbarians, particularly with the Taurians. He mentioned that in Chersonesos there is Kizil-Koba ceramics of both early and late (with combed decoration) types. Although it is not numerous, in the layers of pre-Doric Chersonesos it makes 11.7 % of total ceramic finds. Therefore in the early period the community of Chersonesos was not close to local population. Although Rogov considers the problem of *ethnos* of crouched burials in the north cemetery artificial, he has made detailed analysis of the excavation results and has compared them with all other areas of the urban cemetery. The conclusion is that there was no important difference between the areas of Chersonesos cemetery. Consequently, one could easily to continue the scholar's reasoning to find out that the Greeks buried in the north coast of the ancient Chersonesos. Rogov concludes that only individual barbarians lived in Chersonesos and their influence on the city dwellers' culture was minimal.

In Rogov's observation, there is ceramic ware of Scythian types in Kizil-Koba settlements located close to the *chora* of Chersonesos, so their popula-

tion was mixed. These settlements originated in the fourth century BC. Earlier sites in the Gerakleyskiy peninsula contained only Kizil-Koba ceramics. The idea that neighbouring barbarians depended on Chersonesos community put by works of different scholars is declarative (Поров 1999).

The last idea finds support in the paper published by Vitaliy Zubar' and Evelina Kravchenko in Russian and English versions (Зубарь, Кравченко 2003; Zubar, Kravchenko 2003). They have studied the materials of Oleg Savelya's excavations in vicinity of Chersonesos and have drawn the conclusion that during the exploration of close neighbourhood of Chersonesos the Taurians were forcibly moved out of the Gerakleyskiy peninsula. The sources contain no account of the Taurians' dependency of Chersonesos.

There is a historiographical paper allowing the reader to get some knowledge of the history of research of Taurian antiquities. However, it represents only few aspects of history and archaeology of the Taurians, though the criteria of selection are not understandable. Opinions of scholars with whom the author does not agree are stated with too much bias (Кравченко 2010).

Georgiy Debets got a possibility to study five cranial roofs and foreface of another skull from Cherkes-Kermen cemetery. Against this background, he has drawn the conclusion that, in contrast to the Scythians, the Taurians were mainly brachycephalic (Дебец 1948: 164). K. F. Sokolova has enlarged the number of measurements a bit, but she has supplied the Taurian series with Late Scythian skulls by mistake.

Tat'yana Nazarova had to make this work anew. She has successfully determined nine male and six female skulls from Taurian cemeteries. The only conclusion she could make is absolutely the same as Sokolova's one: Taurians were morphologically mixed population (Назарова 1997: 69). A small number of measurements of Taurian skulls make them statistically incorrect, so they are not useful for any historical interpretation.

\* \* \*

There are cemeteries of specific kind located in the Azov Sea coast in the Kerch peninsula that should be examined separately. They consist mainly of different stone grave constructions without barrow mounds.

In the late nineteenth century, local landowner A. A. Dirin paid attention to unusual stone tombs. He excavated some of them — as best as he could — and even published excavation report (Дирин 1896). Many years after, Leskov excavated two cists encircled with cromlechs near Rybnoye village. He compared them with known Taurian cemeteries and drew the conclusion that both groups of sites were very similar. Having enlarged his argument with the finds of hand-made ceramics with incised decoration (in contrast to other scholars, he considered it Taurian as well) in Nymphaion, Leskov supposed that settled Taurian tribes inhabited coastal areas of the Kerch peninsula in the sixth and fifth centuries BC (Лесков 1961). Irina Kruglikova continued Leskov's investigations near Rybnoye village, but she did not make ethnic attribution of the people who constructed

the cists. She only underlined that these grave constructions are similar to Taurian ones and recorded close economic ties between the residents of the Kerch peninsula and the ancient Greek cities (Кругликова 1973: 165).

Eleonora Yakovenko investigated Scythian barrows in the Kerch peninsula; in the beginning, she probably did not have clear ideas about the ethnicity of the persons buried in stone tombs without barrows. She just wrote that “*burial structures like stone cists and vaults could not be undoubtedly interpreted as Taurian.*” The reason for such doubt was the similarity between some grave goods and Scythian ones, as well as eastern orientation of buried persons recorded by Dirin (Яковенко 1970: 134). Later on, she expressed much more definite opinion ascribing all the cist and vault burials to Scythian population. However, the researcher conceded that there could be few Taurians, who lost their traditional way of life, amidst the Scythians (Яковенко 1974: 58–59).

Valentina Korpusova and R. S. Orlov excavated some stone cists with cromlechs near Zolotoye village and paid attention to their similarity with Sindian funeral constructions (Корпусова, Орлов 1978).

The authors of the monograph concerning Ak-Tash cemetery call those who buried in cists “local non-Scythian population.” They have noticed an important regularity: in the late fifth century BC cists were replaced by vaults intended for repeated burials. The analysis of the burial rite allows them to reconstruct an ethnic process which is called “Scythian assimilation of local population” in one instance and “mixing

of two *ethnoi*” in the other (Бессонова, Бунятян, Гаврилюк 1988: 98, 101, 103). Later on, hypothesis appeared that new *ethnos* consisting of two components developed in the fourth century BC (Бунятян, Бессонова 1990: 23–24).

The most of recently known stone tombs in the Crimean coast of the Azov Sea are investigated by Aleksandr Maslennikov’s expedition. He has drawn the conclusions of his research of these monuments in a special monograph (Масленников 1995). Maslennikov has traced the evolution of the stone tombs from the fifth to first century BC: cists in the full sense of the word; sunken in ground tombs of large slabs or fine stones laid in few courses; tombs with one of their walls of single slab, which could be moved to make extra burials; vaults (Масленников 1995: 29–48). The researcher has compared them with Scythian, Taurian, Kizil-Koba and Scythian-Kizil-Koba burials and has drawn the conclusion that there is no similarity between these groups of sites (Масленников 1995: 58). Earlier, he had doubts in ethnic attribution of the people who buried in cists because he thought that they were either relatives of the Sindians (Масленников 1976: 22) or remnants of the Cimmerians (Масленников 1980: 90; Масленников 1981: 27). However, his final monograph, in spite of negative result of comparative analysis, expresses opinion that in the mid-fourth century BC Azov coastal area was populated by people close to the Kizil-Koba or the Scythian-Kizil-Koba culture (Масленников 1995: 61).

Kolotukhin joins the discussion about the ethnic attribution of cist burials in



Azov coastal area because of the discovery of similar type of tombs in the west coast of the Crimea, near Donuzlav lake. He reconstructed two flows of Taurian migration from the foothill area: the first was to the north-west, the second to the north-east, to the Kerch peninsula. The compact group of the Taurians in the Azov Sea coast preserved their traditions for long, though isolated families and family-tribal groups in Greek cities were quickly assimilated. He especially underlines the peaceful nature of the relations between the Taurians and the Scythians throughout the whole period when the Kizil-Koba culture existed (Колотухин 2000: 69–71).

\* \* \*

The above-made historiographical review allows me to outline some aspects important for studies of *ethnic* history of the Taurians. They are debated by archaeologists for long, sometimes in acute discussions, or, on the contrast, never attracted necessary attention. Particularly, the problem of the origin of the Taurians reveals various approaches. From the moment when the Kizil-Koba culture was discovered the question of the ethnicity of its population was under discussion. Another culture with its genetic roots requiring explanation is presented by specific cemeteries in Azov coast of the Kerch peninsula.

The scholars have paid much attention to the contacts between the Taurians and other peoples, namely the Greeks and the Scythians. Such contacts existed even in spite of Taurians' self-isolation, almost unique for the Greco-Roman period. Their conse-

quences require further studies with attraction of new materials.

Theoretically, the possibility to determine micro-regions within general Taurian area with specific features of their culture and, possibly, of their population is outlined but not realized.

Although striking specificity of Taurian cults attracts attention of both ancient writers and modern scholars, new observations and recent archaeological discoveries make one to make another investigation of this ethnic-differentiating feature of the Taurian culture.

Because of the small number of written sources that survive, the language of the Taurians still remains unclear and almost non-discussed. When Kizil-Koba settlements ceased to exist in the third century BC, almost all archaeological sources allowing one to draw conclusions regarding the ethnic history of the Taurians disappear, so their life in the last centuries BC and first centuries AD never was a subject of special analysis. However, study of the chronology and reasons for disappearance of any people in course of research of its ethnic history is the question of primary importance.

## **I.2. The Scythians**

The first barrow excavated near Kerch, called Kul'-Oba, made researchers familiar with brilliant and original culture clearly distinctive from Greek (fig. 3). Written sources supply evidences that the Scythians lived in the Crimea and on the sides of Cimmerian Bosporos (Herod. *Hist.* 4. 99), so they do not allow doubts in ethnic attribution of those who were buried in the barrow.

Kul'-Oba excavator Paul Du Brux supposed that the vault under the barrow contained burial of a Scythian king with his beloved wife, groom, horse, weapons and all the goods he used during his life (ДБК: XXVI, XXXIV). However, the artefacts of clearly Greek origin discovered in the same burial, Greek letters on goods in beast style, and other features gave birth to ideas about the mixing of Greek and Scythian styles and even of mixing of two different peoples (ДБК: XLVI).

Later on and for a long time, all the archaeologist discovering burials under barrows from the Greco-Roman period in Crimean foothill area and in the Kerch peninsula identified them as Scythian sites and did not think of more precise ethnic character-

istics. Many scholars carefully studied Herodotus' text in order to put the Scythian tribes mentioned by him onto modern geographical map. The Crimea played a noticeable role in such speculations (for the review see: Нейхардт 1982: 31–47).

Aleksandr Spitsyn tried — unsuccessfully for the most part — to answer some questions, important for the ethnic history of the Scythians. He divided all known by the moment graves into nine groups, using constructions of burial structures as classification criterion. Spitsyn considered that the use of stone was the most distinctive feature of Crimean sites. He expressed cautious opinion that these graves originated from Crimean burials from

the Copper Age. It should be mentioned that his famous intuition failed him during preparation of the paper concerning Crimean barrows. He dated many Scythian barrows to the Sarmatian pe-

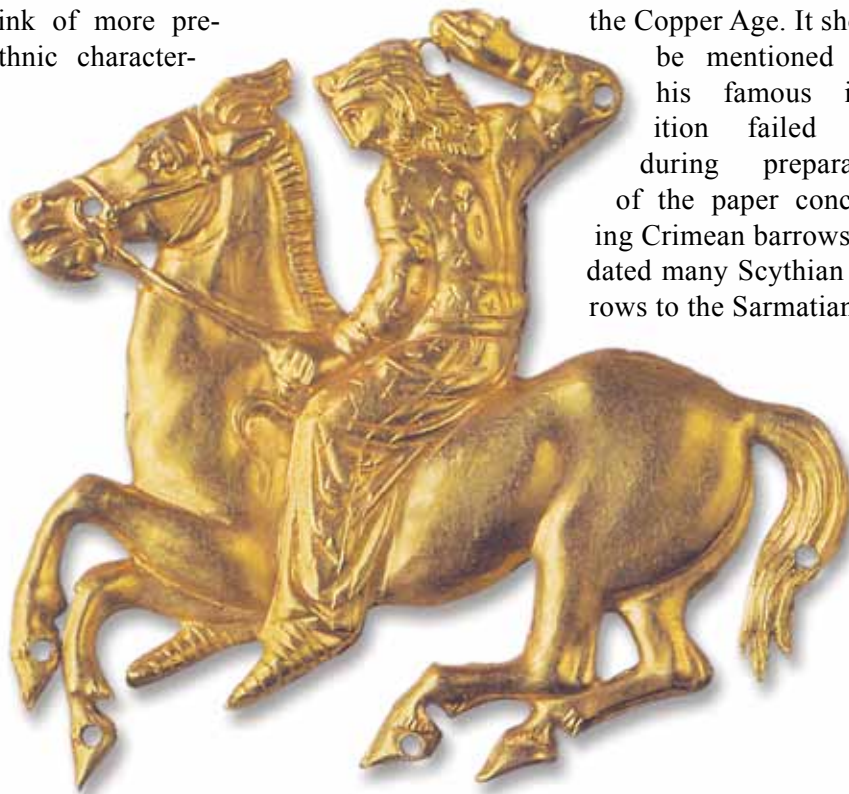


Fig. 3. Gold badge from Kul'-Oba barrow

riod. Confusing the barrow excavated by Yulian Kulakovskiy in Al'ma river valley and Talayeva's barrow, he attributed them to the Kul'-Oba culture and, in result of that, drew deplorable conclusion: "*probably, we'd never know what kind of people it was.*" Generally, Spitsyn thought that the results of excavations of these barrows confirmed his theoretical idea that the Crimean steppe "*could never have special and powerful population, individual history and culture or even a tint of it*" (Спицын 1918). In spite of numerous factual mistakes made from the modern researcher's point of view, this work was the first attempt to establish local Crimean variant of the Scythian culture.

Rostovtzeff interpreted the Scythian culture as a phenomenon homogenous in all its tremendous area. At the same time, the culture of the Scythians was an alloy of heterogeneous elements, with local pre-Scythian element separable worse than others. Various components of the culture appeared in different regions not the same, so Rostovtzeff was able to select several "districts" including the Crimean one. In the Crimea, barrows near Bosporan cities differ from those in the steppe. Although Scythian funeral rite dominated in Bosporan barrows, these graves contained a great number of goods manufactured by the Greeks. In the most rich burials of Kul'-Oba, there were few pure Scythian artefacts together with the following wares: 1) pure Greek; 2) Greco-Iranian; 3) made by Greek artisans to Scythian order (Ростовцев 1925: 302–309, 376–403). Now many positions of Rostovtzeff's monograph

become postulates, which are not disputable.

The next study where the author specially raised most important questions of the ethnic history of the Scythians including Crimean Scythians was published more than 20 years after the Rostovtzeff's "Scythia and Bosphoros." Mikhail Artamonov's idea about the origins of the Scythians is absolutely clear: "*The population of the Crimean steppe should be interpreted as a direct descendent from the population of the Dnieper and certainly of the Crimean steppes in the pre-Scythian period*" (Артамонов 1949: 141–142). Nomads of the Scythian period in the Crimea and in the Dnieper region were ethnically different. Grave constructions are the criterion of this difference: the population of the Dnieper region buried in catacombs though these are almost absent in the Crimea (Артамонов 1949: 142, 157). This way, Artamonov was the first to determine and to describe in details the most brilliant and archaeologically noticeable feature of the Crimean monuments from the age of the climax of Scythia, i. e. the lack of catacombs. In his opinion, west Crimea was a part of the area of nomadic Scythians, so Crimean barrows should be related to this group (Артамонов 1949: 141). The Royal Scythians lived outside the Crimea; they appeared in result of blending of local element (people of catacomb burial rite) and another element that predominated among nomadic Scythians (Артамонов 1949: 149). Archaic shape of royal grave survived longer with nomadic Scythians in the Crimea, though the Royal Scythians replaced it with catacomb in the early

fourth century BC. Dort-Oba barrow in vicinity of Simferopol is the most similar to Scythian king's burial constructions as described by Herodotus (Апрамонов 1949: 139–141, 148).

Viktor Gaydukevich's study summarized all the materials concerning the Scythians who lived in the Bosporan kingdom. He was much more interested in economic and social aspects of the relations between Greeks and Scythians than in ethnical things. He agreed with his readers that "Scythians" would signify all non-Greek population of the Bosporan Kingdom. The local element intertwined with the Greeks to so high an extent that there were good reasons to call Bosporos in the Hellenistic period Greco-Scythian state (Гайдукевич 1949: 71). The Scythians predominated among the residents of Kytai; they left a number of hand-made ceramics, funeral inscriptions with non-Greek names and burials under barrow mounds (Гайдукевич 1949: 183). Gaydukevich interpreted Kul'-Oba burial as Scythian, but not royal one: it belonged to a nomarch. In other words, the barrow did not contain burial of the sovereign of nomadic Scythians; he was the lord of Crimean steppe who probably owned a house in Pantikapaion like Skyles did in Olbia (Гайдукевич 1949: 274–276).

Tat'yana Troitskaya made a special study of Crimean Scythian sites. Although in the first of her works she published a very valuable corpus of Scythian barrows excavated in the Crimea, she almost not studied ethnic problems related to them. She was only doing a search of "local roots" of the Scythians. They were seen in the construction of burial cists, which tradi-

tion originated from the Bronze Age. In the scholar's opinion, these cists reveal the Taurian influence on the Scythian culture, the same as collective burials and pottery with incised decoration do (Троицкая 1951). In the other study, Troitskaya determined two variants of the Scythian culture in the Crimea, central and east Crimean ones. She supposed that the future would probably find out the third variant of Scythian sites in the north-west Crimea. The paper listed main features of central Crimean and east Crimean sites. In Troitskaya's opinion, the central Crimean variant developed in result of the penetration of the Scythians from the Dnieper area to the Crimea from the sixth century BC onward and the assimilation of the Kizil-Koba population by them. Specificity of the east Crimean sites was explained as the result of the Scythians occupied Kerch peninsula coming from the Kuban area and, most importantly, they were under important influence from Bosporan Greeks (Троицкая 1957a).

Boris Grakov viewed the Crimea as a part of ethnically homogenous Scythia. The latter was populated by kindred farming and cattle-breeding tribes. Nomads played leading role in the social and political life. He sharply criticized Dmitriy Kallistov who considered that Herodotus united the Scythians in tribes (ἔθνεα) not by origin but by occupation type, as well as Pyotr Tret'yakov who interpreted Scythia as a conglomerate of tribes of different origin. In Grakov's point of view, the fifth century BC Crimea was occupied by Royal Scythians who bordered with the Taurians and Bosporos. In the late fifth century BC the farm-

ers were forcedly moved to the Crimea where they became tributaries of the nomads. Let me underline one more time that both were Scythians according to Grakov's opinion (Граков 1954: 17–18, 22–23, 25, 31).

L. F. Silant'yeva carefully studied the burials excavated in the nineteenth century in the cemetery of Nymphaion. The researcher followed clear methodological principles. First of all, she determined criteria to attribute graves "with local funeral rite features," then she described these burials in every details, and finally, she made consecutive comparison of these graves with burials discovered in the Dnieper area, the Crimea and the Kuban region, indicating features of similarity and difference (Силантьева 1959: 51–91). It turned out that there is no other group of Scythian barrows with the same rite and grave goods as in Nymphaion barrows. Therefore, she drew the conclusion that the funeral rite of Nymphaion barrows developed in the east Crimea. It was used by Scythians who lived in Nymphaion (Силантьева 1959: 87, 95). Silant'yeva disputed with Troitskaya who supposed that Nymphaion barrows were burying place for local population, which was closer to Kuban area population than to Scythians of the Dnieper area. In Silant'yeva's opinion, the difference between cultural features of the Scythians in the Crimean steppe and in the Kerch peninsula could be explained as the result of various conditions under which the Scythians of the same tribal union, Royal Scythians, lived (Силантьева 1959: 96).

The discovery of the flat cemetery, most early (fifth century BC)

in the steppe area of the peninsula, in Frontovoye I, has great significance for understanding of different processes which took place in the Crimea. Although the excavator Korpusova had difficulties in determining the ethnic attribution of the people who buried there, she hypothesised that there was a group of North Caucasus dwellers who migrated to the Crimea (Корпусова 1972: 41–46).

Yakovenko's monograph summarized large-scale researches of barrow mound burials in the Kerch peninsula inland (figs. 4 and 5). Because of handmade ceramics, funeral rite with barrows and funeral feasts, west orientation of the deceased, and main articles of the material culture, the scholar had no doubt that the barrow mounds covered Scythian graves (Яковенко 1974: 57). Settled way of life and farming made fundamental difference between the Scythians of east Crimea and tribes of the same *ethnos* in the areas to the west. Archaeologically, these differences reflected in some details of funeral rite and mainly in the spread of stone tombs in the Kerch peninsula, which was contributed by local climatic conditions. Recorded in the east Crimea funeral rite was generally the same as everywhere in Scythia. It is possible that the rite of collective burials, which is well-known in the central Crimea, was taken or brought from the Kerch peninsula. Bosporan Scythians had close connections to the tribes of the Sindians and Maiotians (Яковенко 1974: 59, 135–136). The scholar also paid attention to long-known, mainly rich barrows located near Bosporan cities. She considered that most of them



Fig. 4. Bow case from a barrow near Il'ichyovo village. Reconstruction

were Scythian. Yakovenko analysed the results of excavations of Kul'-Oba barrow. Similarly to Rostovtzeff, she set off three groups of funeral rite elements and grave goods in this barrow: Greek, Scythian and made by Greeks for Scythians (Яковенко 1974: 62–71).

Although Anatoly Khazanov's monograph deals mainly with other topics,

there are some observations important for the subject of interest. He paid attention to the fact that Herodotus used the term *ethnos* (ἔθνεα) referring to, with two exceptions, either ethnic group in general or tribal union or isolated tribe. Herodotus used to call all the Scythians *ethnos*, though he also knew six isolated *ethnoi* in Scythia (Kallipidai, Alazones, Scythians Ploughmen, Agricultural Scythians, Nomadic Scythians, and Royal Scythians). The territory of Scythia was certainly larger than the territory of all the six *ethnoi* in total. Similarly to other *ethnoi*, Royal Scythians were specific ethnic unit keeping some distinctive features: ethnic, cultural or political. They could be a union or alliance of several tribes who always acted as a single body against the other Scythians (Хазанов 1975а: 113–116; 281, прим. 11).

Kruglikova published results of many-years-long studies of the farming settlements in European Bosphoros. Her monograph makes the reader familiar with many sources important for reconstruction of the population structure in the Bosphoran Kingdom. The researcher is very careful in cases of ethnological interpretations. In spite of this, great number of hand-made ceramics in the late sixth and early fifth century BC layers of Andreyevka Southern settlement leads her to the conclusion that this settlement was established by the Scythians (Кругликова 1975: 50). In this regard, the excavation of the fourth and third century BC settlements located near modern villages of Mar'yevka and Marfovka brought the results that were more significant. The quality of stonework, special building techniques, large number of hand-made vessels of the



Fig. 5. Bow case from a barrow near Il'ichyovo village. Detail

types excavated in Kamenka site of ancient town in the Dnieper area, and the presence of specially-designed cinder-heap in the settlement near Marfovka village compelled the researcher to think that these ancient villages were populated by the Hellenised Scythians who turned to settled farming (Кругликова 1975: 62–68).

Some new observations are supplied by Maslennikov's monograph. In particular, he mentions that from the

sixth to fourth century the steppe area of the Kerch peninsula was populated by Scythian tribes independent of Bosphoros and turning to farming economy. The neighbourhood of Theodosia was inhabited by Tauro-Scythian population. Frontovoye I cemetery belonged to the eastern group of the Taurians under a certain Scythian influence. In the fourth century BC Pantikapaion, there was rapid increase of non-Greek, especially Iranian names (Масленников 1981: 22, 59).

Yekaterina Kastanayan analysed some problems of the ethnic history in

her monograph on hand-made ceramics in Bosporan cities. In her opinion, vessels with incised decoration belonged to local population. This population was of the Cimmerians who lived in the Kerch peninsula before the Greeks and the Scythians. The Cimmerians and the Taurians composed some cultural unity, which reflected it particularly in making of black-burnished ceramics with incised decoration by both peoples. Kastanayan drew large area of ceramics with incised decoration (from Central Europe to Siberia) and explained it by cultural and economic ties that existed between various tribes including those living in the Crimea. The monograph's author did not dare to prefer one of two possible reasons why shards with incised ornamentation appeared in layers of Greek settlements: either they were produced by non-Greek residents of these cities, or they came to the layers of Hellenic cities by accidents, from the settlements that existed in the same places before the Greek colonization. In the early stage of Bosporan cities, there was small number of Scythians who produced their traditional hand-made ceramics. Early layers usually contained much more Scythian ceramics when Kizil-Koba wares. Polished ceramics with incised ornamentation was expelled by Scythian ware in the fifth century BC (Кастанаян 1981: 20–21, 28, 111–113).

In their fundamental study, Varvara Il'inskaya and Aleksey Terenozhkin described most important Scythian barrows in the Crimea, but they do not find it necessary to enlist their specificity or determine *ethnos* of the buried persons more precisely than only Scythian. In this regard, sites of the Kerch peninsula

made an exception. The researchers determined the ethnic aspect of economic policy of the Bosporan kingdom, namely the one consolidating neighbouring tribes. The rite of making collective burials is stone graves in the Kerch peninsula was explained by stone soil and knowledge of Taurian cists. The culture of farming tribes in the east Crimea was characterized as Scythian on including some Taurian elements and being under huge Greek influence. The cemetery near Frontovoye village was made by the Scythians who lived in the neighbourhood of the Bosporan kingdom. In the fifth century BC, both European and Asiatic sides of Bosporos witnessed the processes that weakened ethnic specificity of cultures of different people thus creating specific Greco-Scythian community (Ильинская, Тереножкин 1983: 206, 208–209, 218).

The authors of the monograph on Ak-Tash cemetery paid much attention to the ethnic history of the east Crimea. They traced the evolution of grave constructions expressing itself in the fact that the cists typical of local population in the sixth and fifth centuries BC were replaced by vaults for multiple burials in the late fifth century BC. Kizil-Koba ceramics with incised ornamentation from the Kerch peninsula, particularly from Ak-Tash cemetery, differs considerably from the so-called Cimmerian ware. When the Scythians took possession over the east Crimea, they met local population of the common origin with the tribes of the highlands. Ak-Tash cemetery was created by closed and settled farming community. Throughout the whole period when the cemetery existed, among the Scythians there were



people of the tradition to create cists, which reflected in individual details of funeral rite. In the Kerch peninsula, two *ethnoi*, local and stranger Scythian one, mixed (Бессонова, Бунятян, Гаврилюк 1988: 49, 70, 98, 101, 103). The latter idea was developed by two researches in joint paper: they ran to the conclusion that in the fourth century BC new ethnos shaped in the east Crimea: it consisted of local farming population and the poorest Scythians who turned to settled way of life (Бунятян, Бессонова 1990: 23–24).

Ak-Tash is the only Scythian cemetery in the Crimea where huge anthropological material (bones of 332 adults and 59 children and teenagers) was obtained and investigated by experts. According to the anthropological research, Scythian component was the main core of the population who buried in the cemetery. We can suppose that the group under investigation included a short percentage of Greeks and Taurians. Considerable typological similarity appears when comparing the series from Ak-Tash with series from Neapolis, as well as those from other Scythian barrows in the Kerch peninsula (Покас, Назарова, Дьяченко 1988: 118, 139, 141, 144). Let us point out that the comparison with Taurian skulls and bone remains from Scythian burials in the Kerch peninsula could hardly be correct. As it has been mentioned above, Taurian series is not representative. Scythian burials under barrows in the east Crimea contained only nine skulls that can be investigated, which are characterised by high degree of individual variability (Герасимова, Рудь, Яблонский 1987: 30).

Vyacheslav Murzin's studies contained an idea especially important for our topic: the shaping of Scythian *ethnos* finished in the fourth century BC: it reflected in the shaping of funeral rite of catacomb burials common to all Scythia. Variability of the seventh to fifth century BC funeral rites is explained as a result of complicated ethnic structure and almost the same social structure of the nomadic society (Мурзин 1990: 31–33, 77–78). If it is the case, Crimean steppe population who never buried into catacombs probably was highly isolated part of Scythian *ethnos*, which did not take part in the processes of integration that finished in the fourth century BC.

Ol'khovskiy tried to trace the dynamics of specific features of the Crimean sites and their difference from the monuments in the area to the north. For the fourth and third centuries BC, he successfully attributed four territorial groups in the Crimea: west Crimean, Sivash, foothill, and east Crimean. It appeared that such a differentiation was possible mainly after funeral structures and, to a lesser extent, after funeral rite. Grave goods from the Crimea from the seventh-sixth and fourth-third centuries BC had insignificant differences, though in the fifth century BC sets of goods in the Crimea and the Black Sea area were very similar, almost identical. The difference between Scythian grave constructions in the Crimea and in other Black Sea areas could be explained because the Crimea was populated both by non-Scythian barbarians and the Greeks (Ольховский 1991: 17, 80, 90, 136, 144, 148).

Viktor Zin'ko has done an interesting job. He established six farming ter-

ritorial zones in the Bosporan *chora*. Although each zone possessed bigger or smaller number of barbarian dwellers, only the north-west area of the Kerch peninsula (as far as the Uzunlar earthwork) was populated mainly by the Scythians. Scythian cemeteries (Lenino, Kirovo, Astanino, and others) and more than ten discovered unfortified settlements are concentrated in that area. The settlements consisted of isolated homesteads located 30 to 100 m from each other. Ground plan of the homesteads and predominance of hand-made ceramics in the layers determine that the settlements belonged to Scythians (Зинько 1991).

Aleksandr Gavrilov did large excavations in vicinity of modern Feodosiya. He discovered many settlements and excavated some of them. Gavrilov thinks that before the first thirty years of the third century BC these settlements were populated by the Greeks, Scythians and Taurians. Barbarian presence is indicated by hand-made ware. Although shards of Scythian and Kizil-Koba vessels are discovered almost in every settlement, the number of Kizil-Koba pottery is larger in the foothill area, though Scythian pottery is more popular in the steppe area.

The number of such settlements considerably declined in the Roman period. They were concentrated in the foothill area; some settlements were encircled with fortifications. The settlements from the Late Roman period could be attributed to the Late Scythian archaeological culture (Гаврилов 2004).

Kolotukhin's publication enlarged more than twice the number of Scythian burials known in the Crimean steppe. Making an analysis of the ethnic pro-

cesses, he discusses the relations between the Scythians and the Taurians in greater detail than other aspects (see the "Taurian" section of this chapter). Here, let us remark that the funeral rite of ordinary burials from the "Novocherkassk" period is the same as that of Early Scythian monuments; only the in grave goods marked the appearance of the Scythians in the second half of the seventh century BC. It could be a reflection of the Cimmerian tribes' participation in the formation of the population of the Scythian period. The discovery of vaults with repeated burials and the fourth century BC flat cemetery in the central Crimea is very important. Earlier, such monuments of the so early period were known only in the Kerch peninsula. Undoubtedly, they reflect the Scythian turning to settled way of life and various transformations in the Scythian society, including ethnic ones (Колотухин 2000: 68, 72).

To sum up this historiographical review, I can note that the Scythians populated the Crimea from the second half of the seventh to the first half of the third century BC. This is the only fact in the ethnic history that does not raise doubt of scholars. Many of the researches tried to determine the tribal union that dominated in the peninsula. More often, following direct indication by Herodotus (Herod. *Hist.* 4. 20), their answer was: the Royal Scythians, though much rarely, Nomadic Scythians. Differences in the funeral rite and grave goods allow the researches to outline three or four local variants of Scythian culture in the Crimea: east Crimean, central Crimean or foothill one, west Crimean, and that in Sivash

coast. The sites in the Kerch peninsula are most disputable. Scholars sometime determined only Scythians and sometime Scythians and Taurians among the barbarian residents of ancient Greek cities. Selecting from several variants of ethnic interpretation of cist cemeteries in the Azov Sea coast in the Kerch peninsula, recent years scholars make a stop at Taurian or Scythian hypothesis. They also concede that both the *ethnoi* could participate in the formation of the population that created these cemeteries. There also is an opinion that a new *ethnos* developed in the Crimean coast of the Azov Sea with participation of the Taurians and the Scythians.

Nowadays, the most topical is the problem of determination of particulars of Scythian sites located in the Crimean territory and their differences from the monuments investigated in the area to the north. It is also possible to set off local variants of culture typical to this or that area in the Crimea. The most complicated task is the dependency of the cultural diversity of regions from the specificity of the population; it has been discussed many times, but still does not have commonly accepted solution.

### 1.3. The Late Scythians

It was 1827 when Aleksandr Sultan-Krym-Girey purchased several slabs with relieves and inscriptions from Kermenchik settlement located in the suburb of Simferopol. The finds attracted Ivan Blaramberg who came to Simferopol. He made first excavation of the settlement and identified it with Neapolis mentioned in Strabo's *Geography*. These events laid the foundation of study of Scythian antiqui-

ties and were described in scholarship several times (Ящуржинский 1889: 47; Маркевич 1929: 5–7; Высотская 1979: 14; Тункина 2002: 537–546).

The first finds called many specialists' attention to the site of urban settlement in the outskirts of Simferopol. Dubois de Montpereux unearthed one burial vault thus starting researches of the cemetery of the Late Scythian capital (Montpéroux 1843: 387; Кеппен 1837: 351). Uvarov organized small excavation of the ancient city (Уваров 1854: 525–527). All the scholars took Kermenchik settlement for the site of Greek colony (Blaramberg and Uvarov definitely called it the colony of Rhodes) subordinated by Scythians under the king Skilouros.

Few settlements that now can be confidently called Late Scythian were discovered in the first half of the nineteenth century. Two of them, described by Andrey Fabr, are located in valleys of the Zuya and Burul'cha rivers (Фабр 1844: 241–242; Фабр 1859: 16–17); two more sites of Kermen-Kyr and Mamut-Sultan are depicted by Pyotr Keppen (Кеппен 1837: 334–336).

The Taurida Scholarly Archival Commission (henceforth called TUAК according to the Russian abbreviation of its title) was established in 1887. The Commission members carefully looked after buildings that constantly destroyed Kermenchik site of ancient city and cemeteries located close to it. They sometimes successfully made investigations of plundered graves, but more often just collected artefacts taken by robbers but having no value for them (Ящуржинский 1889). These finds were supplied to the TUAК mu-

seum where they formed a relatively large collection of few hundred units (Храпунов, Храпунова, Таратухина 1994: 278). With the active participation of the Commission member, Nikolay Veselovskiy organized excavations in Kermenchik (ОАК за 1889 г.: 21–27) and discovered several barrow burials from the Late Scythian period (ОАК за 1895 г.: 9–10). Although ТУАК had very restricted means, it organized small excavations and reconnaissances. This way, Pyotr Dvoychenko made supplementary investigation of a specific grave near Sably (now Partizanskoye) village (ИТУАК 51: 289–290); a complex of sites was discovered close to Atalyk-Eli (now Solov'yovka) village (ИТУАК 35: 57–58); Arseniy Markevich became the first to describe Kermen-Kyr site of ancient town (fig. 6) (Маркевич 1889); the teacher of Simferopol Male High School G. Timoshevskiy discovered Dzhalman site of ancient town (Тимошевский 1890).

Field researches of the sites, which are now decided to be Late Scythian, never included attempts of their historical interpretation. In the best case, the researchers underlined similarity of this or that find to the ones excavated from Kerminchik site of ancient town thus postulating cultural similarity of the sites. For example, Repnikov included into this number Kermenchik, Atalyk-Eli or Solov'yovka, Dzhafer-Berdy, Mamut-sultan, Tavel', Chatyr-Dag cemetery, and Ay-Todor (Репников 1910: 21–22).

Rostovtzeff became the first one who expressed his view of the Late Scythian history in detail using all the known by

the moment but mainly written sources. He thought that the Scythians concentrated in the Crimea being pressed by the Thracians in the west, by the Celts in the north, and by the Sarmatians in the east; there they created the realm that reached its climax in the second century BC. It was populated by nomads and settled population. He interpreted the capital of the state as a semi-Greek city, later occupied by the Romans. In his opinion, Scythian kings lead movable way of life and episodically visited their capital city (Ростовцев 1918b: 43, 105–106, 157–158). Later on, Rostovtzeff preferred to call the Crimean Scythians “Tauro-Scythians” because among the residents of their realm were the Taurians living in the Crimean highland (Ростовцев 1925: 67).

1920s–1930s investigations of the Late Scythian sites in the Crimea were performed mainly by Nikolay Ernst. He discovered a great number of Late Scythian settlements and made small excavations of some of them (Храпунов 1989a: 113–114; Филимонов, Храпунов 1996: 244–245). Ernst supervised first large-scale research of the capital of the Late Scythian state. As for the material culture of these settlements, he interpreted it as a mixture of Greek, Scythian and Taurian elements. A quite definite complex of the “Neapolis culture” was distributed in many sites of ancient towns in the Crimean foothill area. It was probably formed in relation to the shaping of the Late Scythian state under king Skilouros and his sons (Эрнст 1927: 27–28). Ernst was the first who, in Shul'ts' words, “noticed *inimitable singularity of the culture of the Late Scythians*” (Шульц 1971: 131).



Fig. 6. Kermen-Kyr site of ancient town (photo: Anastasiya Stoyanova)

Sergey Zhebelyov estimated the Late Scythians' historical role in the Black Sea area. He was especially insistent in underlining the mixed Greco-Scythian nature of the Late Scythian kingdom and its aggressive policy aimed at suppression of ancient Greek *poleis* (Жебелев 1953a: 266–268, Жебелев 1953c: 87–91).

Grakov analysed written sources and established the idea that the Scythians existed as “*independent ethnic unit amidst Sarmatian tribes*” to the end of the second century AD or a bit later (Граков 1947a: 83–88).<sup>1</sup> Artamonov analysed the same problem almost simultaneously. Similarly to Grakov, he had no doubts that the Crimea in the Hellenistic and Roman periods was

populated by the Scythians, who were rather concrete ethnic community descending from Herodotus' Scythian nomads. They divided into various tribes, which created their state under Skilouros and had no single power in the Roman period (Артамонов 1948: 69, 75, 77).

The concept that Scythian *ethnos* existed without interruption to the Roman period inclusively was developed by small papers by Grakov and Artamonov; it became the basis to study Late Scythian history and culture. I can say that the efforts of later generations of researches including modern ones were aimed at laying ground below this idea and supplying with extra details using new, mainly archaeological sources.

Grakov created “A short course of Scythia's history based on written

<sup>1</sup> See also: Граков 1947b: 26–27. Although this work states: “...*their* (Scythians' — I. Kh.) *name ceased to be a reality in the third century BC*”, the context allows one to suppose that there was a mistake. Instead of “...*in the third century BC*” there is need to read “...*in the third century AD*.”

sources” to place it in front of his monograph of Kamenka site of ancient town (Граков 1954: 9–32). Despite of the title, till now this and the other study by the same researcher (Граков 1971) still are the most complete description of Scythian history including its *ethnic* aspects and its final stage.

Similarly to Rostovtzeff earlier, Gaydukevich supposed that nomadic Scythians were pressed by their west and east neighbours, therefore they had to leave Black Sea steppes and to concentrate in the Crimea. In the territory of the peninsula, they turned to settled way of life and composed their own state. The Scythians built a number of fortified settlements in the Crimean foothill area, including capital city, which could be identified with Strabo’s Neapolis of the time of Diophantos only with great doubts. Scythian kingdom became an ally of Bosphoros in the Crimean peninsula since the time of Skilouros and Palakos. This state of affairs generally remained till Sauromates II (174/175–210/211 AD) gained decisive victory over the Tauro-Scythians (Гайдукевич 1949: 298, 313, 329–330, 335–336, 531–534). Although Gaydukevich viewed the Crimean Scythians or Tauro-Scythians as a definite *ethnos*, he never discussed it especially.

In 1945, Shul’ts organized and headed the Tauro-Scythian Expedition; it systematically explored Late Scythian sites for 15 years. Although its main object was the site of ancient town on the outskirts of Simferopol, simultaneously it provided large-scale reconnaissance and prospect excavations throughout almost all the foothill and steppe areas of the Crimea. In result, the collection

of sources for the Late Scythian history raised several times. The definition of the “Late Scythians” and its derivations were introduced into scholarly circulation by the participants of the expedition to determine the final stage of the Scythian history when the nomads became residents of long-term fortified settlements.

Few years after the works of the Tauro-Scythian Expedition, large publications appeared based completely or partially on the results of the most recent archaeological researches. Beside others, ethnical history problems were analysed. Solomonik especially underlined that the Scythians actually were the creators of the state and its capital flourishing under Skilouros and Palakos (Соломоник 1952: 120). Dashevskaya studied one of the most ethnologically valuable sources, handmade ceramics. Her most general conclusions come to the capital city was populated by the Scythians throughout all the period its existence. Late Scythian ceramic complex does not reflect contacts with neighbouring Taurian and Sarmatian tribes, but, above all, Late Scythian ceramics considerably differs from the complex of Kamenka site of ancient town, which is reference complex of the Early Scythian period; this allows the researcher to doubt in the generally accepted thesis that a large array of Scythians migrated from the Dnieper area to the Crimea (Дашевская 1958: 268–271). In the monograph published more than 30 years after, the scholar mainly confirmed her previous ideas, but mentioned the similarity of handmade ceramics from settlements in the north-west Crimea and Dnieper area.



Fig. 7. Cemetery of Neapolis.  
Wall of vault no. 9

The latter could be explained as the migration of the Scythians, being pressed by the Sarmatians in the second century BC, to the north-west Crimea. In the author of the monograph's opinion, the Scythians ceased to exist as an *ethnos* in the late fourth century AD because of the Hunnic aggression (Дашевская 1991: 43–45). Let us point one of Dashevskaya's observations, particular but important for our topic. On the material from Belyaus cemetery, she demonstrated that undercut graves, which all the scholars viewed as an outstanding feature of Sarmatian culture, in some cases indicated social and not ethnical difference of the population (Дашевская 1984).

Vladimir Babenchikov published the results of his investigation of the eastern cemetery of the capital of the Late Scythian state (fig. 7). He had no doubts that the Scythians composed the core of this city's population. The spread of Sarmatian types of artefacts was explained as a result of trade contacts, as well as of the presence of the

Sarmatians, specifically the Alans, in the city (Бабенчиков 1957: 139–140).

Nina Pogrebova investigated Scythian nobility burials in mausoleum near the main gate to Neapolis (fig. 8). In her opinion, earlier burials in the mausoleum reflected traditions inherited by the Late Scythians from their nomadic ancestors (burials of horses and groom, weapons, golden badges, etc.). Sarmatian elements of funeral rite did not make a single complex in the mausoleum: they were scattered among various graves. Therefore, when the Sarmatians came to Neapolis, they were quickly assimilated by the Scythians but still preserved some specific features of their culture. Taurian influence appeared in the idea of multiple burials, which in this case were made into wooden coffins, and incised ornamentation, filled with white paste, of two cinders. The mausoleum appeared to contain metal ware of La Tène culture or made after La Tène samples. Her general conclusion was the following: the mausoleum burials belonged to Scythian nobility that was in constant contacts with representa-



tives of other tribes (Порпебова 1961: 179–183).

Shul'ts wrote special paper to sum up the results of six initial years of excavations in the central city of the Late Scythians, which, in his opinion, was certainly called Neapolis in ancient times. The main conclusion about the population structure in the Scythian capital states that “*the city was Scythian during the whole period of its development, both ethnically and culturally.*” In the Hellenistic period, the Late Scythian culture experienced much Greek influence, but it was not possible to call the city Greco-Scythian as many researchers did. The same way, the term “Tauro-Scythians” is not acceptable for the population of the Late Scythian state. Archaeology does not support the presence of the Taurians among the Scythians. Ethnic structure of the Late Scythian capital changed in the first centuries AD because the Sarmatians appeared. There was a burial of Alan commander near the main city gate. Sarmatisation of the Late Scythian culture became especially strong in the third and fourth centuries AD. Neapolis

ceased to exist in the fourth century AD, possibly because of the Hunnic invasion (Шульц 1957а: 76–77, 87–89). Shul'ts refused to relate the fall of Neapolis with the invasion of the Goths into the Crimea. He also spent several pages of his study arguing that the Late Scythian painting influenced fine art of the East Slavs (Шульц 1957а: 89–93). The Goths and Slavs within the appropriate context obviously appeared in Shul'ts' article due to the decision of 1952 scholarly session of the Department of History and Philosophy of the Crimean Branch of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR on the problems of the history of the Crimea. Many scholars got the “Decisions” of the session as orders; there were points directly replied by Shul'ts in his paper: “...2). *Should be careful and versatile study of relations between the rooted population of the Crimea and the farming population of Eastern Europe throughout all the periods, with especial attention to the connections with ancient Slavs;... 8). Against the background of profound study, should be exposure of falsification of history of the Goths as a variant of retrograde Norman theory*” (Айбабин, Герцен, Храпунов 1993: 211).

Significantly, in the other generalising research written many years after, he called the Goths and the Huns the destroyers of the Late Scythian state and did not speak about the Late Scythian art's influence on Slavonic one. Generally, the scholar's ideas did not sustain cardinal changes. He considered the Late Scythian culture the final stage of the Scythian one. Its singularity is explained mainly as the results of the Scythians' turn to the settled



way of life. The Late Scythian culture had elements of syncretism developed under Greek and Sarmatian influence, though this influence “*never destroyed and even strengthened, to some extent, singular fundamentals of the Late Scythian culture.*” Shul’ts identified three stages of the Sarmatian penetration to the Crimea. The last stage started ca. 200 AD: it is related to individual Sarmatian tribe of the Alans. The article provided a detailed comparison of cultural singularities between the Late and Early Scythians and between the Late Scythians in the Crimea and in the Dnieper area (Шульц 1971).

Shul’ts put forward a concept of the Late Scythian history, which was based on Ernst’s idea about the existence of the Neapolis culture and Grakov’s discourse about the continual development of Scythian *ethnos* from the seventh century BC to the third century AD on the one hand, and on considerable new archaeological materials obtained in result of the excavations by the Tauro-Scythian Expedition on the other hand. Many modern scholars agree with its main points.

Shul’ts formulated cardinal problems of the Late Scythian history. Many archaeologists tried to solve these problems against the background of analysis of specific archaeological materials.

Dmitriy Rayevskiy wrote his dissertation about ethnic and social composition of Scythian Neapolis based mainly on the results of the studies in the eastern cemetery (Раевский 1971a). Its main points describing the composition of the city’s population were stated in two papers. Rayevskiy considered that the Scythians, who sustained considerable

Sarmatisation in some periods, made the core of the city population. Their presence is archaeologically documented by the presence of burial vaults, west orientation of the dead, and various details of clothes and other grave goods. The Sarmatians penetrated into the city in the second century BC, however, they were soon assimilated by local population. In the second third of the first century AD, undercut graves appeared and Sarmatian goods widely spread in the cemetery of Neapolis. It means that many Sarmatians moved to the city. They came from the North Caucasus, where they had experienced considerable Maiotian and Greek influence. In the second and third centuries AD, vaults were almost not used, and typical Scythian artefacts almost not appeared in grave goods. The Sarmatians got dominant position. The city fell in the mid-third century AD in result of the invasion of the Goths with active participation of Alans (Раевский 1971b). Turning to the history of Greek-Scythian relations, Rayevskiy mentioned the lack of Hellenic graves in the cemetery of Neapolis. Only anthropological data supplied information that the Greeks lived in the city in the Hellenistic Period. As for Greek elements of the rite, which the author saw in the eastern orientation of the dead and in many goods produced by the Greeks, they spread in the cemetery of ordinary population from the second third of the third century AD. This phenomenon was explained as a migration of a large number of the Sarmatians, who had lived in Bosporos for some time, and had become Hellenised to a great extent. Bosporan king Aspurgos stimulated this migration; he conquered almost all



Fig. 8. Grave goods from the mausoleum of Neapolis:  
 1 – gold eye-plates; 2 – glass and carnelian beads; 3 – gold beads;  
 4, 7–8 – gold medallions; 5 – glass, carnelian and amber beads;  
 6 – glass and amber beads

the territory of the Late Scythian kingdom and put some Hodarzos in the head of it (Раевский 1973).

Tat'yana Vysotskaya wrote much about the ethnic composition of the Late Scythian kingdom. She shared Shul'ts' opinion that the descendants of nomadic Scythians formed the core of its population throughout its history. They were under visible Greek influence in the Hellenistic period and underwent Sarmatisation in the first centuries AD. In the researcher's point of view, Hellenisation had more results for the capital and other large settlements, though Sarmatisation for the periphery of the Late Scythian kingdom (Высотская 1972: 185; Высотская 1979: 191, 197; Высотская 1983a: 19, 25; Высотская 1994a: 141). In many of her studies, Vysotskaya tried to identify features capable of characterising the Late Scythian culture as an individual phenomenon, as well as influence made on it by the Early Scythians and other *ethnoi*.

Late Scythian cultural singularity mainly developed by specificities inherited from nomadic Scythians. It reflected in the construction of fortifications, in buildings like tents, pit-houses and partly sunken in ground houses, in the architecture of the mausoleum of Scythian nobility, in vaults as the main type of burial structures, in filling entrance pits of graves with stones, in preservation of barrow graves, in the rite of making feasts near graves, in putting funeral food at the head of the dead, in the complex of features of early burials in the mausoleum, in several types of hand-made vessels, and in the cloths of Scythian kings de-

picted in reliefs (Высотская 1972: 185; Высотская 1979: 196–197; Высотская 1983a; Высотская 1994b). Vysotskaya listed elements of the Late Scythian culture that were introduced by the Sarmatians: undercut graves, slabbed graves, Sarmatian symbols, ceramic with zoomorphic handles, crossed legs and arms on pelvis of the dead, using of felt bedding and sea-grass in graves, multitude of beads in burials, intentionally broken mirrors, putting one vessel into the other, upside down vessels in graves, log burials. However, in her monograph, the researcher explained that these were not just Sarmatian, but Sarmatian-Maiotian features. The Sarmatians took them from Caucasus when penetrating to the Crimea via Bosporos. Another Sarmatian way to the Crimea was via the Perekop isthmus (Высотская 1972: 182–183; Высотская 1994a: 141). She outlined three stages of Sarmatian penetration into the peninsula. Chronological frames of the first were not very clear, about the third to the first century BC. The second dated to the second century AD. The third dated to the fourth and fifth centuries AD: it was related to the migration of the Alans who introduced polychrome style of artefacts (Высотская 1972: 184). The Taurians populated the capital of the Late Scythian state and the south-west area of the Crimea; they were gradually assimilated by the Scythians. They displayed themselves in some shapes of hand-made vessels and individual crouched burials (Высотская 1972: 182; Высотская 1979: 191). Scythian aristocracy contacted with the Celto-Scythians in the north-west Black Sea

area, so swords and some other bronze ware of La Tène types appeared in the mausoleum. Some hand-made vessels, fireplace stands terminating with ram's heads, golden badges and helmet from the mausoleum as well as individual monuments of Scythian art allowed the scholar to trace the influence of the Thracian culture on the Late Scythians (Высотская 1979: 194–195).

Although Vysotskaya's studies shed much light on the composition of the population of the Late Scythian state, they left enough space for future studies. The thing is that Vysotskaya's rather long lists of features of this or that culture usually do not make the reader understand when they appeared because of the penetration of other *ethnoi* into Late Scythian and when because of cultural borrowings. As a rule, she did not supply the attribution of ethnic features with references to appropriate sources, so her conclusions could hardly be checked.

Irina Gushchina investigated cemeteries in the south-west Crimea, mainly in the Bel'bek river valley. In her opinion, the first centuries AD population of the south-west Crimea was a mix of the Scythians and the Sarmatians. Cemeteries had determinable features of Scythian (filling entrance pits with stones) and Sarmatian burial rites. The latter include undercut graves, south and north orientation of the dead, traces of ritual related to fire, censers and other artefacts of Sarmatian type, tradition to embroider with beads sleeves and hem of robe (Гущина 1967; Гущина 1974: 34, 44; Гущина 1982: 26). One of her studies unexpectedly and without arguments supposes, although with a great caution, that Bel'bek IV ceme-

tery received burials of Roman soldiers (Гущина 1997: 37). In the next article, she clarified that these warriors were not legionaries but soldiers of auxiliary troops or local dwellers related to a Roman garrison (Гущина, Журавлев 1999: 168).

Natal'ya Bogdanova studied funeral rite of the south-west Crimean population and, similarly to Gushchina, drew the conclusion that it was of mixed character. In the second and third centuries AD, the number of Sarmatian features, recorded by excavations of cemeteries, increased in comparison with previous period (Богданова 1982: 38). In the paper summarizing the results of the research of one of the largest cemeteries in the west Crimea, in Zavetnoye village, she mentioned great predominance of Sarmatian elements of funeral rite and grave goods over Scythian. In strict sense, the latter includes only the rite to fill grave pits with stones. This is the background to make conclusion that local Scythians were assimilated by the Sarmatians (Богданова 1989: 61–66).

Shcheglov represented Scythian occupation of Chersonesos fortresses and their settling in the north-west Crimea as almost uninterrupted process that lasted in the third and second centuries BC (fig. 9). This migration started from the Dnieper area, so in the territory of former *chora* of Chersonesos they developed local variant of the Late Scythian culture, more close to the Dnieper variant than to that in central Crimea. Sarmatisation of this area started in the first century BC (Щеглов 1978: 130–135). In Shcheglov's opinion, sedentarisation of the Scythians and their concentration in the Crimea



Fig. 9. Belyaus site of ancient town  
(photo: the author)

were the results of only one political reason: Sarmatian occupation of the north Black Sea steppes. In contrast to the majority of scholars, he did not see the source of these processes in nomadic Scythian society. Shcheglov formulated a problem that is cardinal for the ethnic history of the Late Scythians. There is chronological gap about a century long between the latest early Scythian and earliest Late Scythian monuments, though the continuity between the Early Scythian and Late Scythian cultures is not obvious. Therefore, there is need to search for non-Scythian components in the Late Scythian culture and its population (Щеглов 1988b; Щеглов 1998b).

Aleksandr Puzdrovskiy continued Rayevskiy's research of the Sarmatisation of the Late Scythian capital city. He has added more features to the Sarmatian funeral rite and material cul-

ture attributed by Pogrebova, Shul'ts, Rayevskiy, and Vysotskaya. These include the presence of vaults with funeral chamber located in the same axis with entrance pit. Besides that, Puzdrovskiy has tried to detach graves with several indicators that he calls "Sarmatian ones." There are less than ten such graves. Similarly to Rayevskiy, the researcher has marked three stage of the "Sarmatian expansion" (as he calls it), but he has shifted their chronological frames to some extent. According to his interpretation, a huge mass of the Sarmatians penetrated to Neapolis in the late second and the first half of the first century BC; then in the second half of the first and early second century AD; and then in the late second and early third century AD (Пуздоровский 1989a). In the other paper, Puzdrovskiy presented his view of all aspects of the *ethnic* history of the Late Scythians.<sup>2</sup> He very resistively proposes to "change the established opinion" and states that the "*notion that Scythian ethnos pre-*

<sup>2</sup> There is another large work by the same author, but it repeats the most part of his paper in "Vestnik drevney istorii" verbatim (Пуздоровский 1999b).

*dominates in the Crimea in every stage of the development of multi-ethnic tribal union in the Crimea*” is a mistake. His conclusions are based on the lack of barbarian sites from the second half of the third century BC in the Crimea. In spite of that, the Kizil-Koba population remained in the Crimea. It combined with some Scytho-Thracians who came from the north and groups of people from the east Crimea and Azov Sea coast of unknown origin. The works by Skilouros resulted in this diverse population developed a single *ethnos*; Puzdrovskiy suggests to call them the “Crimean Scythians.” The following history of this population was accompanied by Hellenisation, Thracisation, Celtisation, and especially Sarmatisation. Final lines of the paper inform the reader that the Crimean Scythians did not become a single ethnic community (Пуздровский 1999a: 100–109, 118). However, in the research of political history, Puzdrovskiy undoubtedly calls the population of the Crimean foothill area the Scythians (Пуздровский 2001a).

It 2007 Puzdrovskiy published large monograph discussing burial sites of Crimean Scythia. There he made a brief statement of the ethnic processes which in his opinion took place in the Crimea from the second century BC to the third century AD. Especially insistently he underlines chronological and, consequently, cultural gap between the monuments of nomadic Scythians and those of the Late Scythian culture. The population of the Late Scythian realm shaped of different mixed groups, namely local Scythian-Kizil-Koba and migrant Scythian-Tracian and Sarmato-Maiotian.

From the first century BC onwards, the Late Scythian culture was under great Sarmatian influence, explained as a migration of several waves of nomadic Sarmatians to Crimean foothills. Detailed descriptions of graves, rites and goods make Puzdrovskiy’s monograph the most complete collection of Late Scythian antiquities ever published (Пуздровский 2007, 77, 87, 197).

Yuriy Zaytsev has developed many scholars’ idea that the capital of the Late Scythian state was greatly Hellenised and has hypothesized that the Greeks built the largest houses in Neapolis and resided in them (Зайцев 1990: 92–93). They probably constructed the mausoleum near the central city gate (Зайцев 1992: 97–98). In Zaytsev’s opinion, population of the Late Scythian state consisted mainly of migrants from the east who moved to the Crimea about the mid-second century BC. However their *ethnos* remained unknown, among them there were the Satarches presented by a burial near Chisten’koye village close to Simferopol and the Sirakians of the Kuban area, who supplied the Scythians with one of their nobleman, Skilouros. The migrants from the east assimilated Tauro-Scythians, who did not leave any site dateable to the third or first half of the second century BC (Зайцев 1999: 142–144, 147).

Yuriy G. Vinogradov and Zaytsev published a fragment of inscription, collected of minor shards discovered by the excavation of Scythian Neapolis. For the present topic especially interesting are incompletely preserved but reconstructed with confidence *ethnonyms* of the Thracians and the Maiotians. According to the

published translation, there was a sepulchre of stone erected to the sovereign of Scythia, Argotas by name, erected by a person who did not mention his own name, though listed his own (for some reason, not the deceased's) exploits (Виноградов, Зайцев 2003). Seemingly, it is the first time when epigraphic science has to deal with inscription of such a kind. The publishers call their paper "preliminary" and the reconstruction "variant." Therefore, before the translation is checked by other scientists, I do not dare to use it for any interpretation — certainly despite of obvious desire.

Vlasov has studied considerable array of Late Scythian ceramic wares (fig. 10). His research, based on strict methodological principles, has confirmed some conclusions of his predecessors, as well as has supplied new, sometimes unexpected results. For example, he has discovered rather representative groups of vessels originating from the Zarubintsy culture area, as well as from the Azov Sea coast, the Don and the Kuban areas. It has become clear that some Przeworsk and Wielbark shapes appeared in the Crimea much earlier than it was considered, before the invasion of the Goths. He has successfully traced migrations of various population groups within the Late Scythian area, as well as from the foothill area to Bosphoros (Власов 1997: 294–298; Власов 1999а: 8–20; Власов 2006).

Several words should be said about the sanctuary located at Gurzufskoye Sedlo mountain pass. The publication of this extraordinary monument is far from being complete. Anyway, there is a series of papers presenting indi-

vidual finds and a book by the excavator (Новиченкова 2002). Some archaeologists, more often briefly, have stated their opinion concerning the ethnicity of the people who made the sanctuary. This way, Vladilen Anokhin (Анохин 1989: 60) and Vitaliy Zubar' (Зубарь 1994: 21; 1998: 33) have supposed that it was a sanctuary of the Taurians, who plundered ships with Roman legionaries in 49 AD in particular. According to Natal'ya Novichenkova, the sanctuary was formed by the Tauro-Scythians (Новиченкова 2002: 171–173). It is generally accepted that the Tauro-Scythians were the people of the Late Scythian culture. It is logical that if they possessed the sanctuary in the period of its climax, there should be some traces of the Late Scythian culture. However, this is not the case. Among the multitude brilliant goods excavated, nothing could be related to the Late Scythian culture rather than to Greco-Roman. Although she mentions rare finds of hand-made pottery (Новиченкова 2002: 128–129), no image of it is available, so one can no develop one's own opinion of the ethnicity of the ceramic makers. Total predomination of Greco-Roman goods forces me to interpret the sanctuary in Gurzufskoye Sedlo mountain pass as a site of Greco-Roman culture.

To conclude this historiographical review, I should mention that the concept of the Late Scythian ethnic history that is now predominant in science basically developed in 1960s and 1970s. Its main points are as follows. It was the third century BC when the Scythians, because of Sarmatian pressure, concentrated in the Crimean foothills. They turned to settled way of life and created



Fig. 10. Hand-made vessels from Neapolis

their state. The descendants of nomadic Scythians were those who developed the culture traditionally entitled the Late Scythian one; in the second century BC they enlarged their state with the area of Chersonesos *chora* in the north-west Crimea. In the Hellenistic period, the population of their capital city consisted of the Scythians and the Greeks. The Sarmatians started a large and occurring everywhere migration to the territory of the Late Scythian state from the second century AD onwards. Their number and, consequently, influence on the culture of the population of the foothill Crimea increased until the mid-third century AD. It is often hypothesized that there were the Taurians, Thracians and Celts living amidst the Late Scythians, however, not all the researchers agree with this.

Recently, researches insistently and with arguments pay attention to the chronological gap between the Early Scythian and the Late Scythian antiqui-

ties. For some scholars, this is the background to draw the conclusion about the absence of ethnic and cultural continuity between the Scythians who roamed in the Eastern European steppe from the seventh to third century BC and the dwellers of the Late Scythian settlements. Attempts to find other sources of the Late Scythian culture appeared to be absolutely declarative, with no argument in expressive archaeological materials, the more so in written sources account. The problem of the genesis of the Late Scythian culture and population remains extremely topical.

All the modern scholars relate the final stage of the Late Scythian culture (usually, the *ethnos* is not mentioned in this connection) to the appearance of Gothic tribal union in the Black Sea area. Although there were doubts in this questions expressed in 1950s–1970s,



it seems that they could be explained by ideological rather than scholarly reasons. The later history of the Late Scythian population and its influence on the shaping of cultures and *ethnoi* of later periods remain actually not studied.

The most representative series of Late Scythian bones is obtained by the excavations of Neapolis. There was possible to study nine skulls from the western cemetery, ten skulls from the mausoleum, five skulls from rock-cut vaults, and bones of 74 persons from the eastern cemetery. Generally, this series can be described as mixed. Morphological type represented among the Scythians of earlier period predominates in it. There also is inconsiderable alloy of Greek, Sarmatian and, possibly, Taurian population (Кондукторова 1972: 49–51). Craniological series from the Late Scythian cemetery of Zavetnoye is extremely uniform. The creators of this cemetery obviously made a single population (Мартынов, Алексеев 1986: 41). Considerable degree of similarity between bones from three Crimean Late Scythian cemeteries of Neapolis, Zavetnoye and Belyaus evidences that their main component was the same (Герасимова, Рудь, Яблонский 1987: 21). Morphological similarity of the Late Scythians in the Crimea and in the Lower Dnieper region can be explained as their common descent from nomadic Scythians of the seventh to fourth century BC (Кондукторова 1972: 53; Кондукторова 1979: 61).

Skulls from the mausoleum and carved in bedrock vaults of Neapolis are, on average, smaller than skulls of ordinary population from the eastern cemetery. As usual, high social

classes had better indicator of physical strength. The paradoxical observation of Neapolis skulls confused many researchers, but one should take into account that the series from the mausoleum and rock-cut vaults was very small and statistically unreliable (Мартынов, Алексеев 1986: 41).

#### **I.4. The Sarmatians**

The interest to the history of the Sarmatians, participants in political affairs in the Crimean peninsula, appeared in the early twentieth century due to outstanding epigraphic finds. The decree honouring Diophantos mentions the “people of the Reuxinaloi,” engaged by Scythian king Palakos to participate in military operations in the north-west Crimea against Chersonesos and a troop of Pontic warriors (IOSPE I<sup>2</sup>: no. 352). It was easy to relate this information with well-known text of Strabo about the same events (Strabo *Geogr.* 8. 3. 17). However, Strabo’s text instead of the people of Reuxinaloi mentions the Roxolans headed by Tasios. The ethnonym used by the great geographer became common in ancient literature to signify one of the most powerful Sarmatian tribal unions. It was 1908 when excavations of Chersonesos uncovered a marble slab with the text of a treaty between Chersonesos and Pontic king Pharnakes I. The inscription does not use ethnonyms. It mentions only “neighbouring barbarians” who menaced the city. The first publisher of the Chersonesos inscription, Robert Leper related it to the text of another treaty kept in Polybios. This treaty was concluded in 179 BC between the king Pharnakes I and kings of Pergamon,

Bithynia and Cappadocia. Among those included in the treaty were, of the princes of Europe, “Gatalos the Sarmatian,” and among free cities, Chersonesos (Polyb. *Hist.* 25.2). In Leper’s opinion, Gatalos most likely was an ally of Pontos against Chersonesos, though the treaty discovered in Chersonesos was concluded as a development of the conditions of 179 BC peace: it finished the period of war between Chersonesos and Pontos (Лепер 1912: 32). Later on, both texts were analysed by scholars many times and with different interpretations, but Leper’s study was the first discussion of the Sarmatians as participants of political events in the Crimean peninsula, long before the Scythian-Chersonesos war described in the decree honouring Diophantos.

Rostovtzeff analysed ancient legend of Sarmatian queen Amage who marched into the Crimea by request from Chersonesos. The king of Scythian neighbours harassed Chersonesians. Amage ordered him to stop his raids against Chersonesos, and when the Scythian did not do that, she headed a small troop, seized king’s headquarters, killed those who lived there, and passed the power to the son of killed ruler ordering him to keep off neighbouring Greeks and barbarians (Polyen *Strateg.* 8. 56). Rostovtzeff’s comprehensive analysis of the legend from the point of view of history and source studies lead the researcher to the conclusion that it had been written down by a writer from Chersonesos and reflected real things of the second half of the third or early second century BC. In contrast to Leper, the treaty of 179 BC mentions Gatalos as an ally of Chersonesos, not as its

alien. Chersonesos and Sarmatians had to be in peace relations in the late third or early second century BC because they have common enemy, Scythians. Sarmatians roamed to the west of Azov Sea, the centre of their kingdom was not far from the Perekop isthmus (Ростовцев 1915a: 58–63).

Let us mention another ill-preserved late second century BC inscription from Chersonesos (IOSPE I<sup>2</sup>: no. 353), where Rostovtzeff proposed to reconstruct the ethnonym of Sauromatians or Sarmatians in unclear context, from two symbols (Ростовцев 1915b: 160; Ростовцев 1917: 6).

Such are the first conclusions drawn against the background of written sources analysis. By the way, the collection of the latter is not greatly enlarged till now. Modern researches discuss the history of Sarmatian population of the Crimea with the same epigraphic and narrative accounts as the early twentieth century scholars.

Spitsyn’s paper has historiographical interest as the first attempt to identify the sites of Sarmatian population of the Crimea among the excavated barrow burials (Спицын 1918). However, the researcher did not have necessary archaeological criteria to determine the Sarmatian culture, as all the archaeology contemporary to him, so his attempt was unsuccessful. For now, there is no doubt that all the graves, which Spitsyn interpreted as Sarmatians, were made by Scythians.

After that, researchers did not deal especially with the history of Sarmatians in the Crimea till 1950s. It was only 1956 when Irina Lobova’s (Gushchina’s) candidate’s dissertation “Sarmatians in the

Crimea” was defended. This study completely reflected the particulars of the Sarmatian culture in the Crimea and difficulties met by the scholars who studied it. In the main regions populated by the Sarmatians, i. e. Urals, Volga, north Caucasus, Don, Black Sea, Moldavia, Hungary, archaeologists investigated Sarmatian settlements and cemeteries, there were no such sites in the Crimea. In the peninsula, the Sarmatians settled amidst the Scythians or in the Bosporan Kingdom. Therefore, their culture has to be studied indirectly, via its influences on the culture of the Late Scythians and the Bosporan population. Many students of Late Scythian antiquities worked in this direction (Gushchina, Bogdanova, Rayevskiy, Vysotskaya, Puzdrovskiy), which has been discussed in details in the section concerning the Late Scythians, as well as by historians and archaeologists who investigated the history of the Bosporan kingdom (for the historiographical review, see: Масленников 1990: 9–15; also, Сапрыкин 2006, criticising many concepts by his predecessors).

It was 1974 when Askol'd Shchepinskiy excavated Nogaychi barrow in the north steppe Crimea. There was a secondary burial with numerous precious artefacts (fig. 11). It belongs to the group of the richest Sarmatian graves, some of which were excavated in the Don and South Bug areas. All these burials belonged to women and, as many researchers suppose, to priestesses (Ščepinskiy 1994). Aleksandr Simonenko dated the burials in Nogaychi barrow to the Mid-Sarmatian culture, and namely to the second half of the first or early second century AD (Симоненко 1993: 70–75, 117).

Recently, a revision of all the materials from Nogaychi barrow was done. Funeral rites were reconstructed, grave goods were analysed, and the new chronology of the burial was proposed: first half of the first century BC (Зайцев, Мордвинцева 2003). A discussion started about that (Зайцев, Мордвинцева 2007).

Simonenko's monograph has collected data of all Sarmatian burials in southern Ukraine. It turned out that all the years of investigations in northern Crimea discovered only about ten barrow burials from the first to the first half of the third century AD, which met the criteria of the Sarmatians archaeological culture (Симоненко 1993: 67–75, 95). In his other monograph, Simonenko has studied weaponry and riding horse trappings discovered in the Black Sea area. A great part of them originates from the Crimea (Симоненко 2010).

Let us mention publications of the results of excavations of two sites that supply evidence for the Sarmatian penetration into Crimean foothill area in the late first or early second century AD. These are burials near Konstantinovka village (fig. 12, 12a) in vicinity of Simferopol (Орлов, Скорий 1989) and cemetery of undercut graves sunken into Mamay-Oba barrow, which is located in the lower course of the Bel'bek river not far from Sevastopol (Зубар, Савеля 1989).

This way, modern notion of the Sarmatians is as follows. According to written sources, their first appearance in the Crimea was in the late third or early second century BC. The Roxolans (Roxolanoi) participated in military operations in the north-west of the penin-

sula in the late second century BC. After the end of Diophantos' wars, written sources mentioned the Sarmatians in the Crimean territory only once. There is an inscription discovered in Kerch that mentions the Alans who acted close to Chersonesos in the early second century AD (Виноградов, Шестаков 2005; Сапрыкин 2005).

Archaeological data allow one to trace the Sarmatian penetration into the Crimean foothill area, that is Scythian land, and to the Bosphoran kingdom, from the first to the first half of the third century AD. All modern scholars agree about this point, but their opinions differ when the case of the number and chronology of Sarmatian migration waves, as well as the number of the Sarmatians who lived amidst the Late Scythians and

in Bosphoran cities and towns. There are isolated graves discovered in Crimean steppe thus supplying evidence about very small-in-number groups of nomads who penetrated to the peninsula from the north. Among them is an extraordinary rich burial of Sarmatian woman in Nogaychi barrow.

### **1.5. Crimean population in the second half of the third and fourth century AD**

There is no written source to mention *ethnonyms* of the population of the Crimean inland in the second half of the third and fourth century AD. The Goths are first time mentioned in the sixth century AD (by Procopius of Caesarea), though the Alans in the thirteenth century AD (bishop Theodore's *Alanic epistle*).

However, there are indirect data.

Many ancient writers inform that about the middle of the third century AD the Goths settled in the area of the lake of Maiotis and organized overseas campaigns on Bosphoran ships. This was the background for the nineteenth century scholars to draw the conclusion that the Goths settled in the Crimean peninsula, at least within the Bosphoran kingdom frontiers, in that period.

Alexander Vasiliev summed up the late nineteenth and early twentieth century studies of written sources about the Crimean Goths in



Fig. 11. Nogaychi barrow. Gold brooch with glass and carnelian insets



riod of interest, according to Vasiliev, the Goths penetrated into the Crimea in the mid-third century AD. After that, they started their famous sea campaigns. In the early fourth century, the Goths possessed the whole Crimea but Bosphoros. The latter fell into the Goths' hands in the late fourth century, after 362 AD. In 370s, the Huns came from behind the Cimmerian Bosphoros and passed through the Crimean steppe. They pushed a part of the Goths into the mountains. Vasiliev studied the problem of Christianisation of the Goths throughout its history in every detail.

Kulakovskiy supposed that the Alans penetrated to the Crimea under the in-



Fig. 12. Bronze vessels from the grave near Konstantinovka village

his monograph that now is considered classical. It was published in Russian in the USSR in 1920s (Васильев 1921, 1927) and in English in the USA in 1936 (Vasiliev 1936). Vasiliev investigated the history of the Goths in the Crimea from its very beginning to the thirteenth century AD. As for the pe-

fluence of the Goths. In his paper first published in 1899, he listed two sources that in his point of view evidenced that the Alans were in the peninsula in the third century AD. They are anonymous *periplous* of Pontos Euxeinos and marginalia in Sudak *synaxarion*. According to modern research, this *periplous* was compiled no earlier than the second half of the sixth century (Diller 1952:

112–113; Скржинская 1980: 115); it keeps toponym of Ardabda, that is “of seven gods” in Iranian. It was the name of Theodosia “in Alanic or Taurian language” (Annon. *PPE* 77). The name of the city of Sudak or Sougdaia is etymologized from Iranian “pure” or “holy.” According to marginalia in the *synaxarion* that was kept in Sudak, in the thirteenth century there was a tale in the city according to which it had been founded in 212 AD. Kulakovskiy hypothesized that the Alans gave the Iranian name to the city (Кулаковский 2000: 70–73).

Almost total absence of written sources to reconstruct the *ethnic* situation in the Crimea in the second half of the third and fourth century AD forced us to use mainly archaeological data. The first investigation of a site of the period under interest was made in 1927 by Ernst, who excavated two burial constructions plundered by peasants in the cemetery of Neyzats (Эрнст 2011).

In 1931, 1932, and 1935, Vladimir Blavatskiy excavated a part of the cemetery with cremations located very close to the walls of Roman fortress Charax in the south coast of the Crimea (fig. 13). In order to omit cultural associations with the Roman fortress, it would be better to call this cemetery not Charax but Ay-Todor according to the promontory where it is located. Blavatskiy’s team excavated 33 graves. One of them contained burial of two children and adult person, another grave included single burial — both were according to inhumation rite. All other burials were made according to cremation rite. Calcined bones were often located in urns, which in most cases were amphorae, and partly in pits without urns. These urns were

covered with vessels, or stones, or once with a brick. There were stone pavements constructed above several graves. The burials were accompanied by rather various, but poor grave goods. Besides the funerals, in the excavated area there were several “points,” i. e. sets of pottery shards, animal bones, and, in rare cases, other goods. Blavatskiy dated this cemetery to the first half of the fourth century AD, mainly because of the coin finds. Although he pointed out that the cemetery was used in the period when the south coast of the Crimea belonged to the Goths, he did not think that the site have specific Gothic features. It was created by a “mixed population” of descendants of the Romans and local people (Блаватский 1951). For the evaluation of the results of the research by Blavatskiy’s team, I should mention the following. Firstly, the cemetery was far from being investigated in full: its borders were not even roughly determined. Secondly, only a part of the finds from the graves was published: most of them remained unprinted.

In 1952, there was an event, more political than scientific, that slowed down the research of the history of the Crimean Goths. It was the scholarly session of the Department of History and Philosophy and the Crimean Branch of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR on the problems of the Crimean history. This session’s decisions were undoubtedly inspired by communist authorities; they were formulated as directives and historians and archaeologists understood them in this very way. Under the circumstances of the absolute communist power, non-compliance with such directives threatened the researcher with



Fig. 13. Cape Ay-Todor (photo: the author)

lack of possibility of doing scholarly studies at the very best. The decisions of the session clearly stated the necessity to search for the connection between the Crimean population and the Slavs, as well as to disclose “falsification of the history of the Goths” (Айбабин, Герцен, Храпунов 1993, с. 211–212). The translation from communist to normal language means that researchers should look for the Crimean Slavs rather than the Goths. The results of such guidelines were not late in arriving.

Chyornaya River cemetery is located in vicinity of Sevastopol; it was excavated in 1950 (fig. 14). There was an area with 33 cremations, as well as a large number of burial vaults and undercut graves (Бабенчиков 1963).

Some papers interpreting the cremations in Chyornaya River and Ay-Todor cemeteries appeared before the results of the above investigations were pub-

lished. Yevgeniy Veymarn, Stanislav Strzheletskiy and Aleksey Smirnov assumed that the Chernyakhov culture was created by the Slavs. In their opinion, Crimean burials with cremated remains were similar to the Chernyakhov ones. Consequently, the Slavs penetrated into the Crimea in no later than the third century AD (Веймарн, Стржелецкий 1952; Смирнов 1953).

The results of investigations of Chyornaya River and Inkerman cemeteries were published simultaneously, in 1963. Veymarn dated the Inkerman site to the fourth century AD. He thought that both it and Chyornaya River cemeteries were created by the Late Scythians. The Goths and Huns pushed the population of the Crimean foothill area to mountain valleys, including Inkerman valley; there they assimilated the Taurians who had been living there for ages (Веймарн 1963: 42, 87). Babenchikov investigated Chyornaya River cemetery and dated the site within the chronological frames

from the beginning of the new era to the mid-first millennium AD, though the most part of graves was made from the second to the fourth century AD. He did not express an opinion about *ethnos* of those who buried in Chyornaya River, he just mentioned the similarity of its grave constructions with synchronous sepulchres discovered in Neapolis and later monuments discovered in Suuk-Su type of sites. Although he was very careful, even sceptical, regarding the Slavonic attribution of the cremations, he still thought that there were connections between the population of the south-west Crimea and the middle Dnieper area (Бабенчиков 1963: 122).

Sokolova studied not numerous but very different set of skulls from Chyornaya River and Inkerman cemeteries. They had much in common with Late Scythian skulls and even more in common with Lower Dnieper skulls, than with Crimean ones. General conclusion is that the Late Roman population of Inkerman valley was mixed (Соколова 1963: 124–127).

Another cemetery in the valley of the Chyornaya River, Sovkhoz no. 10 was investigated in 1954–1967. The number of excavated graves, the length of the use, the variety of grave types and pronounced bi-ritualism of the funeral rite makes it a unique phenomenon among the Crimean sites of the Roman period. Although more or less detailed publication of the results of the investigations appeared only in 2005, some papers were published before, mainly to discuss individual categories of the grave goods (Стржелецкий 1959; Анохин 1962; Высотская 1998; Высотская, Жесткова 1999; Высотская 2000; Высотская

2001). Researchers have used them and archival materials to prove their reconstructions of the ethnic history of the Crimea in the Roman period.

The excavation in the territory of the cemetery uncovered 30 cists with 55 ossuaries and 107 urns with calcined bones. 337 urns and two ossuaries were buried outside cists. Besides that, the excavation unearthed pit with 32 urns and nine urns within undercut grave. Inhumation burials were made into 327 graves of various types. Burials were accompanied with manifold grave goods.

The publishers of Sovkhoz no. 10 have dated it from the late first to the fifth century AD. In their opinion, several stages can be distinguished in the history of the cemetery. Differences between the stages are explained as changes of the population. This way, in the first and second century AD the cemetery was used by dwellers of a Greek settlement, which was closely related to Chersonesos. The Romans mixed with local Sarmatian and Alan population buried there in the third century. The second half of the third and fourth century AD burials reveal the appearance of migrants, the Goths (minority), and Sarmato-Alans. Finally, the Alans buried into vaults in the late fourth and fifth century AD (Стржелецкий et al. 2003–2004).

Erast Symonovich made a summary of Chernyakhov vessels discovered in the Crimea. He reckoned that Chernyakhov ceramics got to the peninsula in result of trade contacts rather than migration (Симонович 1975).

It was 1977 when Ivan Loboda published several grave constructions with various grave goods from the fourth century AD that he excavated in Ozyor-





Fig. 14. Chyornaya River cemetery  
(photo: the author)

noye III cemetery. He underlined the similarity of this site with Inkerman cemetery. The difference with the Inkerman consists of a larger number of Sarmatian features of the funeral rite (Лобода 1977).

Vladislav Kropotkin presented a detailed argument for the penetration of the tribes of the Chernyakhov culture to the Crimea. He compared funeral rites, which were uncovered in Crimean cemeteries, with those of the Chernyakhov grave fields, and reviewed the Chernyakhov artefacts found in the Crimea (amber mushroom-shaped, bone pyramidal and metal bucket-shaped pendants, bone combs, shield bosses and handles, some types of buckles and broches). In result, Kropotkin ran to the conclusion that the Goths, who were the people of the Chernyakhov culture, appeared in the Crimea in the mid-third century AD and stayed in the peninsula during the third and fourth century AD (Кропоткин 1978).

Igor' Pioro published a series of papers about the Crimean population in the Late Roman period in 1970s and 1980s. The results of his studies are summarized in the monograph. Pioro analysed sources and historiography of the problem in details. He criticised concepts that the Taurians, Scythians or Slavs lived in early mediaeval Crimea. Pioro undertook a detailed review of Crimean cremations from the Roman period. He determined ritual elements similar to those in the Late Roman sites of Scandinavia, the Wielbark, Przeworsk and Chernyakhov culture. Particularly, he pointed out that there were cists with urn and urnless cremations in Scandinavia, as well as in the Crimea. Pioro compiled a summary of the Chernyakhov artefacts from the Crimea and ran to the conclusion that they penetrated into the Crimea together with the persons who migrated from the area of the Chernyakhov culture. According to him, cemeteries with cremations (Ay-Todor, Chatyr-

Dag, partly Chyornaya River) were made by the Goths, though the cemeteries of vaults and undercut graves (Inkerman, Chyornaya River, Ozyornoye III, Neyzats, and others) by Sarmato-Alans. Tribes of different *ethnoi* in the south-west Crimea were generally called the “Goths.” This population was organized by Chersonesos and placed in vicinity of the city as *phoideratoi* (Пиоро 1990). Later on, he attracted new materials to develop his concept concerning the Crimean Goths, but its main points, at least those concerning the Late Roman period, remained invariable (Пиоро 1999a; Пиоро 1999b; Пиоро 2000).

Konstantin Orlov continued excavation of the cemetery of Ay-Todor started by Blavatskiy. He unearthed a small area of the site with four cremations and one more “point” consisted of fired bones of animal and some other finds. Orlov discovered the most early graves, from the second quarter to the middle of the third century AD (Орлов 1987).

Aleksandr Aibabin published his first study of the chronology of Crimean cemeteries from the Late Roman period in 1984 (Айбабин 1984). Later on, he turned to this topic several times (Айбабин 1987; Айбабин 1990; Айбабин 1996) and finished with it in his monograph, first chapter of which investigated the sites from the period under analysis. The researcher presented his concept of the history of Crimean population in the Later Roman period laconically, literally by a few phrases. In order to lay ground under it, he studied considerable archaeological material, mainly closed funeral assemblag-

es. As it became clear in result, all the Late Scythian settlements fell no later than the mid-third century AD because of Goths’ appearance in the Crimea. Only after that, cremation cemeteries appeared in the south coast of the Crimea, though the cemeteries consisting mainly of vaults and undercut graves developed in the foothill area. The Germanics buried according to cremation rite, though the Alans, who came from the North Caucasus, buried in the vaults. Sarmatians of the Al’ma and Bel’bek river valleys were the only who survived through the Gothic devastation (Айбабин 1999a: 13–36).

Aibabin reconstructed the Germanics’ invasions into the Crimea based on the story told by the thirteenth century writer Zonaras. At first, they took the north-west area of the peninsula, then defeated Late Scythian fortresses in the foothill area, and then proceeded to Bosporos. The appearance of the Germanics was related to the layer of conflagration discovered by the excavations of Pantikapaion. They were not interested in other Bosporan cities. Their first military expedition into the north-west and foothill Crimea was in 252 AD. This date is determinable because of a hoard discovered near Dolinnoye village in the valley of the Kacha river. Their campaign against Bosporos could be dated to 256 AD according to the coins discovered in the layer of fire in Pantikapaion. Because of these events, a part of the Germanics, namely the Trapezitai Goths, found themselves in the south of the peninsula, where they created burials in Chatyr-Dag, Ay-Todor and Chyornaya River cemeteries (Айбабин 1999b).

Anatoliy Ambroz studied Crimean materials against wide chronological and cultural background of Eurasian antiquities. He dedicated a chapter of his doctoral dissertation to them; its revised version was published posthumously (Амброз 1994). He came to almost the same as Aibabin's conclusions on the problem of the chronology of various types of artefacts from the Late Roman period. However, two scholars produced different interpretations of the *ethnic* history. Ambroz did not find space for north Caucasian Alans in the Crimea. Funeral rite, constructions and grave goods in the cemetery of Ay-Todor (Charax) did not find analogies among Germanic antiquities. This cemetery was made by local population under Roman influence coming from Chersonesos. Generally, the cremations in south Crimean cemeteries, constructions of graves, and grave goods radically differ from those of the Chernyakhov, Przeworsk and Wielbark burials. They reveal increasing Chersonesos' influence on local barbarians who escaped death in the mid-third century AD. Although the Goths probably come to the Crimea in the mid-third century AD, they disclose themselves by special decorations of female costume which spread in the fifth century AD. According to archaeological data, before that moment the Crimea belonged to local Scytho-Sarmatian population. The Goths destroyed the Late Scythian kingdom and mixed with remnants of its population. The Romans settled these new barbarians in vicinity of Chersonesos in order to protect it (Амброз 1994: 39, 68)

Ol'ga Gey and Igor' Bazhan analysed funeral rites and grave goods in Ay-Todor and Chatyr-Dag cemeteries.

In their opinion, the rite of cremation without urn recorded in Ay-Todor corresponds to Wielbark rite of the Late Roman period. In the later period, various Lipitsa-Przeworsk features were recorded in this cemetery. The population that created Ay-Todor and Chatyr-Dag cemeteries came to the Crimea in result of "Gothic" invasions. The authors of the monograph did not use *ethnonyms* (Гей, Бажан 1997: 31–34).

Michel Kazanski did a great job to study Germanic antiquities from the Later Roman and Great Migration periods in the Crimea. He made special investigation of the finds from the south-west (better say foothill) Crimea, south coast and Bosporan kingdom. According to him, different Germanic groups penetrated into the south-west Crimea two times. In the middle and second half of the third century AD, these were the people of the Wielbark and possibly Przeworsk culture elements, and in the fourth century AD of Chernyakhov elements. Kazanski assumed that the first group included the Goths, Geruli and their allies, though the second group consisted of the Ostrogothic Greutugi. In other place, he called the Germanics who migrated to the south-west Crimea in the Late Roman period the Goths or some other East Germanics.

Kazanski compared the cemeteries of Ay-Todor and Chatyr-Dag in the south coast of the Crimea with some sites in the Southern and Middle Norway. It came out that cremations in cists or below stone pavements were spread in Norway as well as in the Crimea. They were accompanied by weapons, sickles and horse bits including ritually damaged items. These

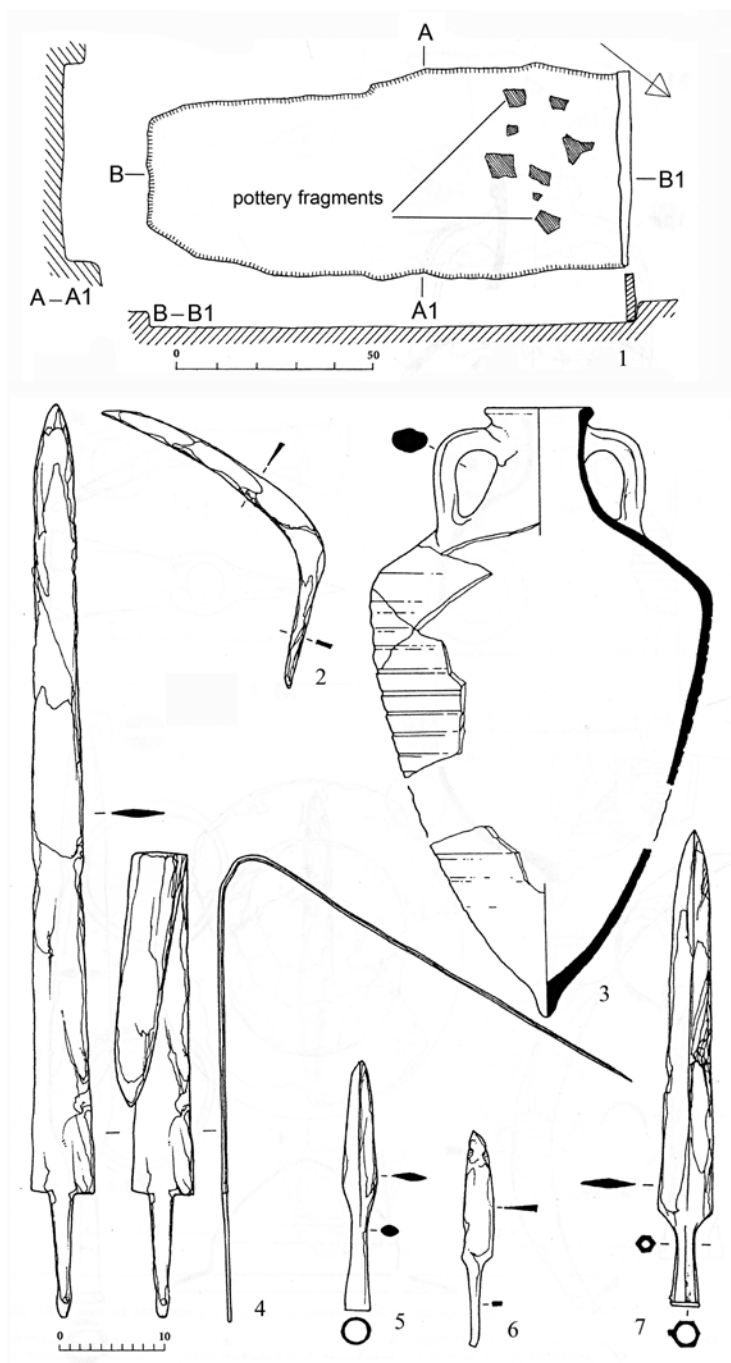


Fig. 15. Chatyr-Dag cemetery. Grave no. 2:  
 1 — ground plan and cross-section of the grave; 2 — sickle; 3 — amphora;  
 4 — sword, bent as it was placed in the grave, and straightened;  
 5 — javelin head; 6 — knife; 7 — spear-head  
 (Мыц et al. 2006: табл. 5, 6)

parallels brought Kazanski to the idea that a group of people migrated from Scandinavia to the Crimea. The descendants of dwellers of Scandinavia and possibly not the first generation of them came to the Crimea. In their road to the Crimea, the migrants contacted with different tribes and integrated some of their representatives. This is the reason for the difference between Crimean and Scandinavian cemeteries. Later, some group from the south coast of the Crimea migrated via Bosporos to North Caucasus, where they became an integral part of heterogeneous population, whom ancient writers knew as

the Eudosians or the Tetraxitai Goths (Kazanski 2002; Казанский 2006).

According to Kazanki's opinion, there Germanic artefacts dating earlier than the fourth century BC are absent in Bosporos. This way, archaeological sources do not reflect the period of the Goths' maritime expeditions on Bosporan ships, which are described by written sources. The number of Germanic artefacts increased during the fourth century AD. The Goths penetrated into Bosporan aristocracy and possibly seized power in Bosporos in the second half of the fourth century AD. The history of the Bosporan Goths finished



Fig. 16. Neyzats cemetery. Pit with vessels (photo: Sergey Mul'd)

when Huns were defeated at Nedao, returned back and took the Goths to the north Caucasus (Казанский 1999).

Sergey Koltukhov and Vyacheslav Yurochkin undertook historiographical review of studies in the ethnic history of the Crimea in the Early Iron Age. Among others, they made a detailed analysis of the publications dealing with Germanic penetration to the peninsula and research of their sites from the Roman period (Колтухов, Юрочкин 2004).

From the time of discovery, the cemetery on the slope of Chatyr-Dag mountain was in the focus of attention of the researchers dealing with the history of the Crimean Germanics. The results of the investigation were published in 2006. In total, 55 graves, each with cremated remains, were uncovered. There were 29 urnless burials in pits, six urnless burials in pits below pavements, four urn burials in cists, four burials in pottery shards within cists, four urn burials in pits, two burials in pottery shards in pits, one urnless burial in pit, one burial probably made in organic container; in one grave cremation was combined with the inhumation, the only one in the whole cemetery; the type of the other grave construction was not determined (fig. 15). The peak of use of the cemetery fell on the period ca. 300 AD. Although the site existed in the third century AD, it is not possible to determine its foundation date more precisely. The number of burials decreased drastically from the mid-fourth century AD. The cemetery ceased to be used in the fifth century AD. The authors of the publication of the results of this cemetery excavation are reasonably careful in the conclusions concerning the ethnicity of the population that



Fig. 17. Neyzats cemetery.  
Hand-made ram-shaped vessels

created it. They analysed hypotheses on the problem in every detail and ran to the conclusion that none of them may be considered proven. In their opinion, the cemetery appeared possibly in result of the Goths' and their allies' penetration into the Crimea in the mid-third century AD. They found Kazanski's idea about

the migration of some people from Scandinavia to the Crimea more probable and better suitable to the chronology of the site. This notion is developed and supplied with more details with the suggestion that mainly men originated from Scandinavia, though representatives of local Black Sea population predominated among the women (Мыц et al. 2006).

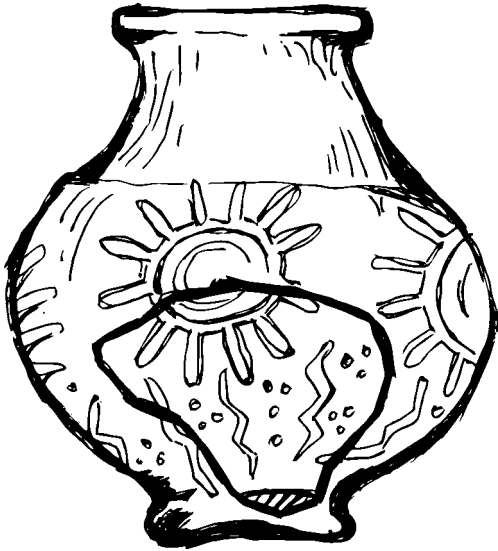
Maxim Levada analysed many Germanic artefacts from the Roman period discovered in the south of Eastern Europe, particularly in the Crimea. He drew the conclusion that not all these artefact belonged to the Goths. Hence, these artefacts supply the scholar with the background to infer that different Germanic tribes penetrated into the Crimea (Левада 2006).

The latter idea is close to Oleg Sharov. In his opinion, the Crimea and Bosphoros in particular received some early Germanics and non-Germanic tribes. The first group of barbarians migrated from far North to the peninsula as late as the second century AD (Шаров 2010). Other researchers have also expressed the idea that the Germanics had found themselves in the Crimea before the migration of the Goths was recorded by written sources in the mid-third century AD. Their opinion was based on the finds of elements of belt sets, several types of ornaments and hand-made vessels dating from the late second and first half of the third century AD (Васильев 2005a; Васильев 2005b; Стоянова 2005: 161; Власов 1999b; Власов 2007).

Special topic to investigate is a small set of artefacts of the “circle of enamels” discovered in the Crimea. The most significant find is openwork bronze plaque

from Neyzats cemetery (Khrapunov 2008: 196–198). It was a part of pectoral ornament typical to the culture of the Balts in the Late Roman period. There is a cross-bar brooch discovered in Chatyr-Dag cemetery. This find allowed Mark Shchukin to reconstruct the route of some Germanic groupings to the Crimea via the Baltic area and forest zone of Eastern Europe, leaving the Wielbark culture area aside (Щукин 2002; Мыц et al. 2006, с. 15, 132–133, 186). Some artefacts of the “circle of enamels” were discovered in Chersonesos (Колесникова 2006, с. 131). Two red-enamelled spurs were discovered in Skalistoye III cemetery (Богданова, Гущина, Лобода 1976: 146).

In recent years, several cemeteries from the Late Roman period were excavated in Crimean foothill area. These researches collected materials much larger than those obtained in previous decades; they allowed the scholars to correct some notions of ethnic processes in the Crimea. The excavations of the cemetery of Neyzats alone uncovered 492 graves in the area of 6,000 m<sup>2</sup> (fig. 16, 17a, b, c; 18, 19). Nevertheless, many questions still remain disputable. Particularly, there are different opinions concerning the ethnicity of the people who created the cemeteries with cremations in the south and south-west Crimea, as well as fields of vaults and undercut graves in the foothill area of the peninsula. The participation of the Sarmatians and Late Scythians who lived in the Crimea for ages in the shaping of the ethnic situation after the invasion of the Goths was almost not discussed.



The first settlements of the Kizil-Koba archaeological culture appeared in the Crimean foothill area in the eighth century BC. Later on, they spread through the whole foothill area from Sevastopol to Feodosiya (fig. 18). Recent excavations in the area later occupied by the Kizil-Koba culture discovered cemeteries of Suuchkhan, Tashly-Bair, Zelenogorskoye and Donskoye from the final stage of the Bronze Age, with grave constructions and funeral rite close to the Kizil-Koba. Specially made investigations have demonstrated genetic continuity of the Kizil-Koba complex of hand-made vessels from the Late Belozyorskaya one (Колотухин 1996: 40, 68–69). Such are the most important facts allowing one to state that the Kizil-Koba tribes descended from the people who lived in Crimean foothill area in the early first millennium BC.

In contrast to the steppe zone where the turn from the Bronze to Early Iron Age is recorded by innovations in material culture and cardinal change in the life style of the population (a large part of it became nomads), nothing similar happened in the Crimean foothills. Unfortified and mostly single-layer settlements of the Late Bronze Age have no principle difference from Kizil-Koba



sites. Changes in material culture, primarily in the shapes and correlation of shapes of hand-made vessels, look like a continual evolution. Traditions of the production of stone tools was conserved. Flint implements, stone axes and other artefacts from the excavations of Kizil-Koba settlements have no visible difference from the goods discovered in the Bronze Age sites. Horse harness and weapons were completely borrowed from the steppe and reflected the evolution of steppe types.

It would be rather hard to draw conclusions about the chronology of the Kizil-Koba tribes settling throughout the foothill zone and about the appearance of the most part of settlements. The problem is that the chronology of the Kizil-Koba culture is investigated imperfectly. Narrow-dateable categories of goods, characteristic of this culture only, are almost entirely absent. Single-layer settlements do not allow the application of stratigraphic method. Almost all the cemeteries are plundered, so most part of burials are deprived of status of closed archaeological assemblages. Generally accepted opinion that hand-made vessels with incised ornamentation appeared in the Kizil-Koba settlements

in the Scythian period (Крис 1981: 11; Колотухін 1990b: 110) turned out to be a mistake (Власов 1997b: 20). Actually, the ware decorated in such a way became well known due to the excavations of Crimean Bronze Age settlements of Druzhnoye 2, Fontany, Petrovskaya Ravine, Chuyuncha, Kirovskoye, etc. It has also been discovered in Kizil-Koba sites where the earliest imported ware in this culture is unearthed, for example in settlements of Uch-Bash and Kizil-Koba. There are cases of ceramic vessels with cordon decorations, considered early type, discovered in the same household pit with ware with incised ornamentation, as well as some vessels were decorated with cordons and incised lines together (Храпунов, Власов 1995: 14). The Scythians outside the Crimea did not know such pottery. Taking the above mentions continuity of the Kizil-Koba culture from the Late Bronze Age cultures we logically may conclude that the tradition to decorate polished vessels with incised ornament filled with white colour never interrupted in the Crimea at the turn of the Bronze and Early Iron Age. The Scythians did not transported hand-made vessels from Ukrainian forest-steppe area to the Crimean foothills:

- 1 — Koloski
  - 2 — Urkusta
  - 3 — Beloglinka
  - 4 — Kholodnaya Ravine
  - 5 — Karagach
  - 6 — Ashlama-Dere
  - 7 — Otar-Alan
  - 8 — Cherkes-Kermen
  - 9 — Uch-Bash
  - 10 — Karan' 2
  - 11 — Mat-Muz
  - 12 — Koshka
  - 13 — Yalta sanctuary
  - 14 — MAN cave
  - 15 — Yeni-Sala 2
  - 16 — Kizil-Koba
  - 17 — Druzhnoye 1
  - 18 — Shpil'
  - 19 — Druzhnoye 2
  - 20 — Dzhapalakh
  - 21 — Chuyuncha
  - 22 — Ayvazovskoye
  - 23 — Otvazhnoye
  - 24 — Kapak-Tash
- Greek Cities

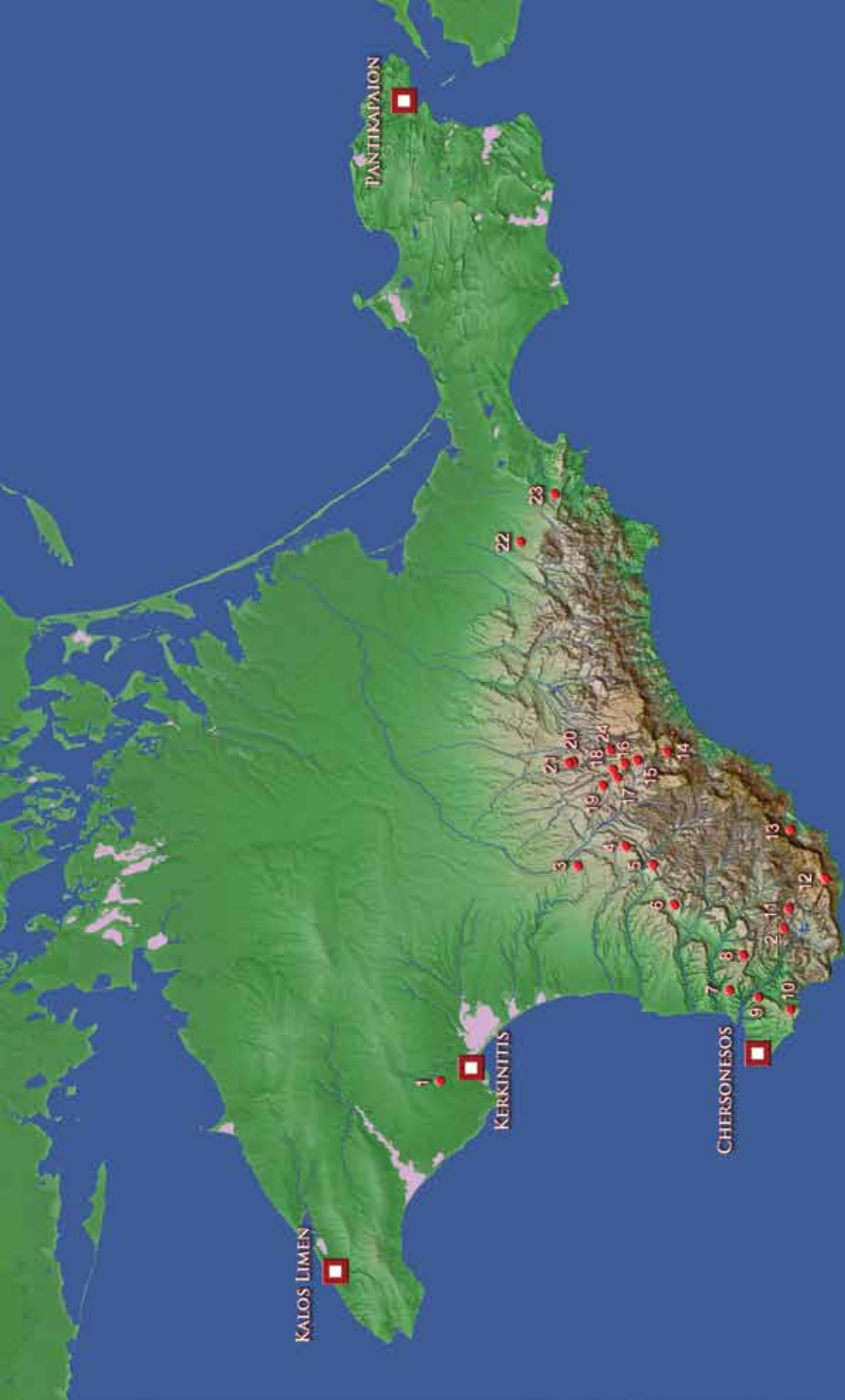


Fig. 18. Taurian sites mentioned in this volume

they were the customers of ceramic ware made by the tribes of the Kizil-Koba culture.

For now, the only definite chronological feature of the Kizil-Koba ceramic vessels is the ornamentation with fine-toothed stamp (Дашевская 1963). According to the finds of vessels with such decoration together with Greek amphorae, the tradition of fine-toothed stamp originated from no earlier than the fourth century BC and existed to the end of the Kizil-Koba culture. However, there are only few Kizil-Koba settlements and no cemeteries with finds of such ceramic ware (Колотухин 1996: 44, 59–60). It is discovered by excavations of the Late Scythian (Храпунов 1991: рис. 14; Храпунов, Мульд 1993: рис. 9. 8) and ancient Greek (Кутайсов 1987: рис. 6. 2; 9; Stolba 2002: 185, pl. 129, D 104) sites.

Actually, the entire chronology of the Kizil-Koba culture is based on the finds of pre-Scythian or Scythian weapons or horse-harness, depending on the period of existence of a settlement or a cemetery. Such finds are very rare in settlements, though cemeteries, with only one exception, contained no artefacts from the pre-Scythian period. The situation slightly changed in the fourth century BC, when Greek pottery including stamped amphorae appeared in Kizil-Koba settlements.

Taking the fragmented and too wide dates of individual sites, we can reconstruct the dynamics of the migration of the Kizil-Koba tribes to the foothill area. The earliest finds of the Kizil-Koba culture date from the eighth century BC; these bone cheek-pieces and arrow-heads and one bronze arrow-head are

concentrated in three sites: Uch-Bash, Kizil-Koba, Druzhnoye 1 (settlement and cemetery) (Власов 1997b: 16–19). The first is located in the south-west Crimea near Sevastopol, the others the central foothill area, in Salgir river valley. The rarity of finds from the pre-Scythian period can be explained probably as the population of the steppe zone of peninsula was too small, so the contacts between steppe and foothills were rare. Therefore, some or even many sites without distinctive chronological indicators could be from the pre-Scythian period. Vitaliy Kolotukhin enlarged this list with cemeteries of Chuyuncha, Otar-Alan and in ridge E of Cherkes-Kermen hill. He did not attribute settlements of Karagach and Kholodnaya Ravine to the pre-Scythian period probably because of the presence of ceramics with incised decoration, which he traditionally connected with the Scythians. He thought that all other features of the ceramic complex, as well as a bone tool from Kholodnaya Ravine corresponded to the pre-Scythian period (Колотухин 1996: 57). The finds from two cists in the cemetery of Druzhnoye 2 seem to be very early, approximately synchronous to Kelermes barrows in Ciscaucasia. They were bronze horse-bits with stirrup-shaped ends, two-plate arrow-head with pin and laurel-leaf head, and cast bronze badge with loop on its back side (Колотухин 1996: 58–59). Such are not numerous data that allow me to state that in the eighth and seventh centuries BC central and south-west foothills of the Crimea were populated with tribes of the Kizil-Koba culture.

Evelina Kravchenko has investigated materials obtained by Stanislav

Strzheletskiy's excavations of Uch-Bash settlement. She also did a small excavation of this settlement. As far as one can understand from her brief explanation, she thinks that the Kizil-Koba culture dates from the Late Bronze Age and the beginning of the Iron Age; it was not created by the Taurians (Кравченко 2005; Кравченко 2009a). There is only one paper with detailed publication of ceramic ware discovered on the floor of a house in Uch-Bash; it leaves doubts concerning the correctness of the chronology established.<sup>3</sup> According to Kravchenko, this ceramic ware dates from the Late Bronze Age. However, she has not supplied any convenient argument for this chronology. These vessels have analogies both in the sites from the Late Bronze Age and the Kizil-Koba culture. Kolotukhin wrote several papers stating that some Kizil-Koba pottery forms genetically originated from the Bronze Age vessels. There is no other datable artefact among ceramic fragments published by Kravchenko. Another observation of her is important. She has found analogies for many Uch-Bash vessels in the regions populated by the Thracians (Кравченко 2004). This way, the foundation date of Uch-Bash settlement remains not discovered conveniently. It is generally accepted, however, that this was one of the earliest settlements of the Kizil-Koba culture. There would not be a surprise if it appears to have vessels of both Bronze and Early Iron Age.

The overwhelming majority of settlements and cemeteries dates from the sixth and fifth centuries BC. They are located as a continuous strip from Sevastopol on the west to Staryy Krym and Koktebel' on the east. Khava Kris's corpus listed about 50 sites in the foothill area (Крис 1981: 58–60). Since that, accounts of many newly discovered settlements and cemeteries were published. The existing data mainly concern excavated objects and to a lesser extent reflect the salutation of foothill Crimea with Kizil-Koba sites. Ceramic ware with incised decoration is spread actually everywhere in this area. In the upper stream of the Malyy Salgir river, near Druzhnoye village, in the area of about one square kilometre, there were several-year-long archaeological investigations of sites from different periods, as well as regularly observations over earthworks. General conclusion is that in this territory there were two cemeteries and three settlements with hundreds of household pits and so many other sites that it is not possible to remove soil from a few square metres without finding fragments of Kizil-Koba vessels. Another circumstance is also evident. When studying sites of different periods and cultures in the Crimean foothill area, archaeologists almost always mention finds of Kizil-Koba vessels (see for example: Высотская 1972: 36; Богданова, Гущина, Лобода 1976: 124; Храпунов

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<sup>3</sup> Author has no doubt that she is dealing with a close assemblage. In other words, all the vessels under publication were in the house in the moment when it collapsed. This statement contradicts to the fact that, apart from few scoops and cups of a small size on the floor of the house, there were multitude of fine shards of vessels, which were not assembled into complete forms. Another interpretation of this situation is more probable. The house was abandoned for some time, so its walls fell on a layer of rubbish collected in the room.

et al. 1994: 89; Храпунов 1991: 4–5). It is possible that in the sixth and fifth century BC there were few hundreds of settlements spread in the area of about 6,500 square metres. No doubts, they did not exist simultaneously. The more so, cultural layers there are not deep, so life was very short in the same place. However, the population density was still high even under such conditions. Obviously, foothill Crimea was the territory where the core of the Kizil-Koba *ethnos* shaped. The people of this culture migrated to other regions from that place.

The fourth century BC settlements are dated mainly by the finds of ancient Greek ceramics. Several sites of the type are discovered in the south-west Crimea, in the frontier of Chersonesos' *chora*; side by side with amphora, there were fragments of black-slip and other wheel-made ceramics (Сенаторов 1998, with necessary bibliography). It is possible that one of the settlements in the Bel'bek river valley dates from the third and second centuries BC because of expressionless shards of Rhodes amphorae (Савеля 1974). Some household pits discovered in the Gerakleyskiy peninsula contained shards of both Kizil-Koba and ancient Greek ceramics that were preliminary dated to the fifth century BC (Савеля 1997: 88–89). In the east border of the area of the Kizil-Koba culture, close to the modern town of Staryy Krym, excavations uncovered a marginal area of Ayvazovskoye settlement. Its household pits contained an expressive set of Kizil-Koba vessels and shards of amphorae from various centres (Кругликова 1975: 72–75). Although ancient Greek ceramics was

sometimes found around cist cemeteries in the central area of the foothills (Лесков 1965: 82–85, 90, 168–169, 183), the pictures of this ware were almost not published. The exceptions are two stamped fragments of Herakleian amphora (Лесков 1965: рис. 32, 30, 31). One of them is discovered in Dzhapalakh plateau, though captions to illustrations say nothing about the origin place of the other.

The excavation of Shpil' settlement in the upper reach of the Malyy Salgir river uncovered fragments of several dozens of amphorae from Herakleia, Chios, Phasos and Chersonesos (fig. 19–21). Four Herakleian pieces have complete stamps. The amphorae date within the fourth century BC; total number of finds is bigger than discovered in all other Kizil-Koba sites together (Храпунов, Власов 1995: 19–21; Храпунов, Власов 1996–1997: 181–183). Finds from two household pits supply more precise chronology: in the first case, 390s, and in the second, about mid-fourth century AD (Монахов 1999: 208, 331, 333–334).

This way, the fourth century BC settlements were obviously scattered through the whole area of the Kizil-Koba culture. Although their number is small, some sites without amphora fragments could be dated to earlier period by mistake. It is demonstrative in this sense, that the finds in Schpil' settlement include some types of goods, such as vessels decorated with cordons and flint tools, which are traditionally dated to the most early stages of the Kizil-Koba culture, found together with the fourth century BC amphorae. Ceramic vessels decorated with impressions of



Fig. 19. Shpil' settlement.  
Stamp on Herakleian amphora  
with names FILINOS / ARTE



Fig. 20. Shpil' settlement.  
Englyphic stamp on Herakleian amphora:  
ivy leaf with a bunch of grapes within



Fig. 21. Shpil' settlement.  
Stamp on Herakleian amphora  
with name of official Orthesilas

fine-toothed stamp from several places in the foothill area also date from earlier period (Колотухин 1996: рис. 46–47). Anyway, Crimean foothill area in the fourth century BC was probably populated less densely than in previous period. The same is evidenced by the fact that cist burials became extremely rare in the fourth century BC. There is a cemetery in the south-west Crimea called Urkusta that probably functioned in this century. Although it was plundered, excavations uncovered shards of the fourth century BC amphorae within fences around cists, above the pavements (Лесков, Кравченко 2007: 12–13, 19). For now, it is the only such case. Future discoveries would probably find more cists from the fourth century BC, but there will hardly be many such monuments.

The Kizil-Koba culture is a special phenomenon. It sharply differs from cultures of its neighbours, the Hellenes and the Scythians. If one finds conceivable that, theoretically, territory populated by *ethnos* can coincide with the area covered by archaeological culture, the Kizil-Koba culture would be an impressive example of such a coincidence. Its typical features display themselves as follows.

Settlements were unfortified and short-term. Residential and household buildings are discovered on a few of them. In Uch-Bash site, there were wattle-and-daub houses with ground floors and fireplaces (Лесков 1965: 29). The remains of buildings sunken 0.2–0.3 m below daily surface level are discovered in Ashlama-Dere site (Крис 1981: 13) and in Karan' 2 settlement not far from Balaklava (Сенаторов

1998: 9).<sup>4</sup> Both type of buildings are absolutely non-specific, they find analogies in Early Iron Age sites in huge territories and in different cultures. Another circumstance is much impressive: in most cases, excavations do not uncover traces of buildings. The investigation of Shpil' settlement discovered 110 household pits in the area of about 5,000 square metres, though not all the settlement area was excavated. There was no cultural layer or trace of building in between of the household pits. Although no other Kizil-Koba settlement was investigated in so wide area as that on the side of Shpil' hill, the general image is typical: excavations discover household pits in every settlement, though remains of dwellings only in a few cases. It is probable that the people who created this type of sites lead relatively movable way of life: they travelled from one place to another taking with them light dwellings, remains of which could not be traced archaeologically.

The main contents of cultural layers in the Kizil-Koba settlements are shards of hand-made vessels (fig. 22). They are of different shapes and are ornamented in different ways. Scholars have probably made correct observation of the gradual replacement of cordon ornamentation with incised, but this is only tendency: vessels decorated with borders sometimes appeared in the same complexes with vessels or-

namented with incised lines. Almost all the settlements from the sixth century BC onwards contain ceramics of Scythian shapes together with Kizil-Koba vessels. Generally, the ceramic complex is a specific phenomenon: it can not be related to a single known ceramic tradition and can be used as the most distinctive ethnological characteristic of the Kizil-Koba culture (for reviews of Kizil-Koba ceramic ware see: Крис 1981: 20–33; Колотухін 1990b).

The finds of worked flints and other kinds of stone supply the Kizil-Koba culture with certain degree of archaism. Flint insets for sickles, knife-shaped pieces, nuclei, various flakes with re-touched edges, and stone axes sometimes remain goods from the Neolithic or even Mesolithic period. In spite of that, they are discovered by excavations of almost all the settlements from every stage of the Kizil-Koba culture. Such a set of tools is not typical to any other Early Iron Age culture in the south of Eastern Europe (Крис 1981: табл. 6–7).

Kizil-Koba cemeteries are stone cists, often encircled with rectangular fences. The space within fences was filled with fine stones (figs. 23, 24). Almost all cists were plundered, so the position of buried persons was recorded in rare cases; in all such cases, burials were crouched. Single burials within a cist are extremely rare; Chuyuncha cemetery has double burials; multiple burials are the usual

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<sup>4</sup> New studies have not supported the interpretation that subterranean houses above tuff platform near Kizil-Koba cave belonged to the Kizil-Koba culture (Колотухін 1996: 26).

Although there is a number of subterranean houses uncovered by excavations of Tau-Kipchak settlement located in the Zuya river valley, the publication supplies the chronology that is fantastic for the Kizil-Koba culture and misses pictures of artefacts, so it cannot be used for any interpretation (Махнева 1988: 129–134). This was probably the reason why Kolotukhin did not include it to his generalizing study (Колотухін 1996).



Fig. 22. Vessels of the Kizil-Koba culture

type. Orientation of the dead is changeable: all the directions but western are known. If there was no more space for new burials in a funeral construction, they removed bones leaving only skulls.

Among the grave goods, there is need to pay attention to numerous group of bronze ornaments which is inherent to this culture only (fig. 25). It includes necklets and different types of temple pendants, ear-rings, finger-rings, signet-rings, bracelets, and badges. Besides that, there are bronze pins, beads, shells (fig. 26), arrow-heads, swords, knives, horse-bits, snakestones, ceramic vessels, and other artefacts. Grave constructions, funeral rites and grave goods actually make a set of very original features to distinguish the Kizil-Koba culture among all others (for the general

characteristics of the Kizil-Koba cemeteries see: Лесков 1965: 50–85; Крис 1981: 38–43; Колотухин 1996: 30–34).

Most likely, the Kizil-Koba tribes did mattock farming and pastoralism. All the researchers agree with that conclusion. It is based on the topography of settlements, the presence of pit graves and insets for sickles in every settlement, as well as osteological and palaeobotanical finds. They cultivated wheat, barley, kidney bean, and pea. Sheep and goats predominated in herd; they also bred cows and a small numbers of pigs. The finds of Kizil-Koba ceramic vessels in many rock grottoes have been interpreted as traces of sites where shepherds stood when driving the cattle to moun-



tain pastures. In the coastal area, they fished sea molluscs (Шульц 1959: 264; Лесков 1965: 169–170).

Scholar's attention is always attracted by self-sufficient, closed nature of the economy of tribes in the foothill area towards Greco-Roman cities. We have almost no account of trade or other contacts between the population of the Crimean foothill area and the Greeks before the fourth century BC. The only category of artefacts of clearly Greek origin are beads, discovered in many cists. In this regard, the Kizil-Koba culture holds very singular position. Almost all barbarian cultures in the north Black Sea area were under noticeable Greek influence. Such a state of affairs changed a bit in the fourth century BC. The settlements in vicinity of Chersonesos *chora* received goods in amphorae and ceramic table ware rather regularly. Similar situation has been recorded close to Bosporan borders according to the results of the excavations of Ayvazovskoye settlement. Greek products, only those transported in amphorae, still were a rarity in the inland in the fourth century BC.

The excavation of Shpil' settlements stands out of this background: there the fourth century BC shards were mass material. The finds of amphorae from Shpil' settlements actually look like a homogeneous assemblage. It is possible therefore that the residents of the foothill area received some Greek cargo in amphorae at once (possibly, it was a plunder). According to the results of excavations of other settlements, they were not often successful in such deeds.

The Kizil-Koba people possibly kept up constant contact with the Scythians rather than with the Greeks. These con-

tacts are evidenced by the presence of ceramics of Scythian shapes in almost every settlement. Horse bits, cheek-pieces, swords, arrowheads and even clasps for bow-cases from the Kizil-Koba sites are absolutely the same as Scythian finds, so they were probably made by the Scythians. However, the funeral rite used such artefacts not like in the steppe: arrowheads are found in graves as isolated specimens and, with one exception (Колотухин 1996: 34), they do not compose quiver sets like Scythian ones. Scythians obviously received black-burnished vessels with incised ornamentation from the foothill area.

The finds of Kizil-Koba vessels in steppe barrow burials have been often interpreted as an indicator of Taurian presence in Scythian environment (Ольховский 1982: 72–73; Ольховский 1990: 34–36). One can make some conclusion according to the published ceramic vessels with incised ornament from steppe burials (Ольховский 1991: 86, 90–93, 141; Колотухин 2000: 59–62). Kizil-Koba ceramics appeared: a) everywhere in steppe area of the Crimea; b) in all types of burial structures but catacombs; c) throughout all the period of existence of nomadic Scythian culture; it is absent only in the most late burials of it; d) in graves with other elements of funeral rite being typical Scythian; e) both in poor graves, where it is the only type of grave goods, and in relatively rich burials.

The number of Kizil-Koba vessels in Scythian graves is larger than that of other hand-made ware. Far north of the Crimean peninsula, a small number of it is discovered in the sixth century BC layers in Berezan' and other settlements in



Fig. 23. Kapak-Tash cemetery.  
Grave constructed in the form of a cist  
(photo: Tatjana Smekalova)

vicinity of Olbia (Гаврилюк, Отрешко 1982: 84–86; Соловьев 1995). Kizil-Koba vessels did not penetrate outside the Crimea in the fifth century BC and later.

The distribution of finds shows that the Scythians of the Crimea exchanged the ceramics or received it from the Taurians in some other way. Taurian workshops were the main source of hand-made ceramics for the Scythians. Probably only those tribes who were able to establish direct contacts with the Taurians could receive incised ceramics from the fifth century BC onwards. It did not become a product of intertribal exchange among the Scythians, so it did not come out of the peninsula.

As a rule, Scythian burials with polished ceramic ware do not possess other features of the Kizil-Koba culture.

Consequently, these graves contained burials of the Scythians who received ceramic vessels from the Taurians. The study of those burials does not give us an opportunity to draw the conclusion that there was Scythian-Kizil-Koba *ethnos*. One can only state that there were connections, probably reflected in exchange trading between the Scythians and the Taurians.

There is one micro-region distinctive in that connection. It consists of a small, less than 10-km-long area in the Salgir river valley, in the foothills, between the south edge of Simferopol and Pionerskoye village (Колтухов 1999a). The investigations uncovered specific, homogeneous cluster of graves

that allow the researchers to see that a small Scythian group penetrated into the foothill area via the Salgir valley in the sixth century BC. These Scythians soon lost some features of their traditional spiritual and material culture under new ecological conditions and in the environment of the Kizil-Koba people who lived in this area for long. It is quite probable that there were inter-ethnic contacts south of present-day Simferopol, in result of which new marginal groups appeared combining Scythian and Kizil-Koba elements in their culture (Храпунов 2001a: 516).

In some researchers' opinion, the penetration of the Kizil-Koba people into Scythian environment is recorded by the sixth century BC double burial in barrow no. 5 near Koloski village north of Yevpatoriya. There was prone on the back male burial accompanied by arrows, though crouched on the left side female burial had several ornaments and vessel of Kizil-Koba type (Ольховский 1982: 72–73, рис. 2. б; 5. б, в). It is possible that burial according to similar ritual was made in a barrow near Beloglinka village north of Simferopol, but this not clear due to the burial was destroyed (Троицкая 1957b).

This way, the penetration of the Kizil-Koba culture into steppe is ill-represented in archaeological material. At any rate, it is obvious that the presence of one Kizil-Koba feature like ceramic vessels does not give researchers the background to draw conclusion that the people of the Kizil-Koba culture penetrated into Scythian environment. The same way, the presence of Scythian weapons in every Kizil-Koba cemetery does not mean that some Scythians be-

came mountaineers. Such finds indicate that there was inter-tribal exchange of necessary goods and that nomads did not have developed ceramic production, though foothill population did not have weapon production.

Only a few words could be said about spiritual culture of the Kizil-Koba people. Some Crimean caves contained shards of ceramics typical of their culture, as well as human and animal bones. There was a stalactite headed by skull of animal in Yeni-Sala II cave and images of human face and cross on the wall of MAN cave. This is the background for scholars to think that caves housed sanctuaries of cattle-breeding cult (Щепинский 1963; Щепинский 1966: 141–146; Лысенко 2003). Actually, it is hard to imagine that cold and wet caves were used in some other way. However, the presence of shards of vessels from other periods in the same caves leaves the problem of the chronology of bones and rock images open.

Household pits in Schpil' settlement contained few dozens of artefacts of ill-baked clay including anthropomorphic and zoomorphic figurines (fig. 27). To discover the purpose of these artefacts, we have compared them to analogous items uncovered in Eastern European forest-steppe area and in Thrace (Храпунов, Власов, 1995: 21–26; Храпунов, Власов 1996–1997: 183–184). There is no doubt that they were used in cult sphere. Because of the archaeological context of the finds in forest-steppe area, it is possible that they were related to cult of fireplace. All these artefacts are discovered in settlements of people, whose economy was based on farming, so it is also possible

that clay articles were related to cult of fertility of land. It is hard to take more precise interpretation of their purpose, because images of people, animals, balls and sticks allow different interpretations.

In the sixth century BC, tribes of the foothill area started settling in different directions. The greatest stream of migration was directed to the main ridge of Crimean mountains and the south coast. Cist cemeteries appeared everywhere in this region (including Baydarskaya valley). Kris' corpus lists more than 40 cemeteries (Крис 1981: 57–58). Most features of grave constructions, rite and grave goods of these burials are analogous to foothill graves, the differences are only in details: 1) they are laid of more monumental stone slabs; 2) only repeated burials are recorded (one cist of Mal-Muz cemetery contained 68 skulls), no individual or pair graves; 3) ceramic vessels were never used as grave goods. All the cemeteries date from the sixth and fifth century BC. There are only few simultaneous settlements discovered in the south coast of the Crimea. One of them, located atop Koshka mountain in Simeiz, was excavated. The excavation uncovered stone constructions in the area of 1.5 hectares; according to Shul'ts' opinion, they were related to the layer containing Taurian ceramics. Some houses with lean-to roofs were annexed to projections of bedrock and had only three walls; others had covering supported by wooden pillars. Floors were of ground in all the cases; on the floors were fireplaces lined with stones. There is a cemetery of cists located in immediate vicinity of the settlement (Шульц 1957b: 63–64). Shul'ts probably related

fortification wall on Koshka mountain with Early Iron Age settlement by mistake; it was constructed in the Middle Ages. Lev Firsov used stratigraphic data to raise doubts in Taurian attribution of the dwellings. He drew profiles of hand-made vessels from Koshka that were absolutely not similar to typical Kizil-Koba ware (Фирсов 1990: 297–331). Therefore, the archaeological situation of Koshka remains unclear before new excavations are done. The only doubtless fact is that there was a Taurian cemetery near the settlement; let us hope that Shul'ts correctly attributed ceramic vessels discovered by him to the Kizil-Koba culture. Although Kizil-Koba ceramics have also been found in several places in the south coast (Жук 1994; Жук 1997), there were only reconnaissances so one can say nothing about the features of those settlements.

All the scholars have no doubts that the sixth and fifth century BC sites in the main ridge of Crimean mountains and in the south coast were made by the Taurians. This conclusion appears from rather clear localization of the Taurians by Herodotus (*Hist.* 4. 99). Herodotus described the Taurians as the residents of Crimean mountains in the mid-fifth century BC in relation to the episodes of Scytho-Persian war of the late sixth century BC. Therefore, the sixth and fifth century BC sites in Crimean mountains, which compose a single archaeological culture, are made by the Taurians. Other, independent from Herodotus, sources also confirm the localization of the Taurians in the Crimea. Particularly, Strabo leaves them the coast from the harbour of Symbolon Limen to Theodosia (Strabo *Geogr.* 7. 4. 2–3). It



Fig. 24. Taurian settlement near Mackenzie's farm close to Sevastopol. A cist (photo: the author)

is evident from a Bosphoran inscription of the age of Pairisades I that the Taurians have immediate border with Bosporos (КБН: no. 113).

Less is known about the economy of the population of the main ridge of Crimean mountains. The small number of their settlements (though there are dozens of cemeteries) is striking, especially in comparison with Crimean foothill area. Taking this instance into account, as well as Pseudo-Skymnos notes that the "*Taurians... love nomadic life in mountains*" (Ps.-Scymn. *Peripl.* 831–832) and environmental conditions that make farming extremely difficult, the scholars usually hypothesized that

the Taurians practiced transhumance (Лесков 1965: 167–168; Шульц 1959: 265). Archaeology uncovers their contacts with the Greeks only as the presence of glass beads in the cemeteries. As the Scythian penetration deep into the mountains has not been recorded, one should suppose that horse harness and weapons of Scythian types analogous to those discovered in the Kizil-Koba cemeteries came from the foothill area.

Herodotus was the first to accuse the Taurians of doing robbery and pirating as their main occupation: "*The Taurians... live entirely by war and plundering*" (Herod. *Hist.* 4. 103). Thus Herodotus laid the foundation for the tradition concerning the Taurians that became basic for almost all Greco-Roman writers. In most cases, they reproduced Herodotus with more or less



Fig. 25. Bronze ornaments and arrowheads from Taurian cemeteries

details, or imagine their own pseudo-Taurian plots. Among the others are famous Euripides' *Iphigenia among the Taurians* and some episodes of Ovid's *Letters from the Pontos* (Скржинская 1988; Подосинов 1985: 127, 218).

However, there were writers independent from Herodotus who specially described this feature of the Taurians. Strabo even mentioned the most dangerous place where “*the Taurians, a Scythian tribe, used to assemble their bands of pirates,*” i. e. the harbour of Symbolon Limen (Strabo *Geogr.* 7. 4. 2). Diodoros Sikeliotes in-

forms that the Bosphoran king Eumelos (BC 310/9–304/3) successfully struggled against Pontic pirates including the Taurians (Diod. *Bibl. Hist.* 20. 25). This fragment of Diodoros' text originates probably from some local Black Sea text and thus can be considered the most reliable (Струве 1968: 147). No archaeological evidence of Taurian piracy has been found. As it has already been mentioned, their cemeteries possess no other artefacts manufactured by the Greeks but beads.

Pirating is related to Taurian religion. They sacrificed Greek sailors to their goddess Parthenos (Virgin) in her sanctuary on a steep cliff above the sea. Taurians set up the heads of captivated enemies on poles above chimneys thus making them protectors of their houses (Herod. *Hist.* 4. 103). The fourth century AD writer Ammianus Marcellinus says that the name of the goddess, to whom strangers were sacrificed with their heads nailed to the walls of her sanctuary, was Orsilochē (*Res Gestae* 22. 8. 34).

Actually, we can spread all the written sources' evidences about the Taurians on the population of foothill area as well. At least Herodotus' localisation of the Taurians includes the foothill province of the Crimean mountains as well. In spite of this, scholars have been discussing the ethnic attribution of the Kizil-Koba culture for ages. The first reflection on recently discovered sites conducted Gleb Bonch-Osmolovskiy to the idea that the Kizil-Koba culture was created by the Taurians (Бонч-Осмоловский 1926: 93). Later on, this concept gained support from many researches working with abundant archaeological materials. However, in 1930s Vladimir D'yakov noted that archaeology contradicted to written sources and hypothesized that the Kizil-Koba culture had never belonged to the Taurians (Дьяков 1939: 80). This point of view also finds its champions who added more arguments. The discussion of the ethnic attribution of the Kizil-Koba culture has been enlightened in scholarship in details (Лесков 1965: 10, 12; Крис 1981: 6–7; Колотухин 1985: 34–35; Колотухин 1987: 6–7; Колотухин 1990а: 93–94), so here I can restrict myself to the conspectus of argu-

ments of those who support both hypotheses. The researchers who acknowledge the Taurian attribution of the Kizil-Koba culture usually base their argument on the following facts.

1. Narrative and epigraphic sources before the second century BC did not mention any people living in the Crimean mountains and foothills other than the Taurians.

2. Cemeteries of stone cists in the mountains and in the foothill area have very similar burial constructions and funeral rites.

3. Almost all the types of artefacts discovered by excavations of cist cemeteries on the south coast are also found in the Kizil-Koba cemeteries.

Champions of the hypothesis that the Kizil-Koba culture was created by some people whose *ethnonym* did not survive in written sources use the following arguments.

1. Archaeological account of the Kizil-Koba people as farmers and cattle-breeders does not correspond to written sources that call them pirates and plunderers.

2. There are differences between grave constructions and funeral rite in the foothill area on the one hand and in main ridge of the Crimean mountains and the south coast on the other.

3. Taurian cemeteries do not contain polished ceramic vessels with incised ornamentation, the most distinctive feature of the Kizil-Koba culture. It is hard to make a comparative analysis of the materials from the excavations of the Kizil-Koba settlements because there is only one generally accepted Taurian settlement, the one located in Koshka mountain.



Fig. 26. Shells from Taurian cemeteries

There is a “compromise” solution for the above-mentioned problem: the genesis of the Kizil-Koba culture was connected to the Taurians and another, unidentifiable ethnic component (Ольховский 1982: 76).

Arguments of both sides of this discussion on the *ethnos* of the Kizil-Koba culture are grounded by hard facts. On the first look, these facts contradict to each other and allow one to make opposite conclusions. Although now the trend to consider the Kizil-Koba culture Taurian one predominates in scholarship, champions of it cannot ignore the differences between the sites in mountains and foothill area, as well as contradiction between written tradition and archaeology.

In order to harmonize all the facts in possession within single hypothesis, there is need to turn to the concept of economic-cultural type, which is widely used by Russian-speaking ethnologists.

Economic-cultural type means historically established type of economy and culture out of connection to ethnic features of the people who created this complex (Левин, Чебоксаров 1955: 4, 7).

The formation of various economic-cultural types mainly depends on natural-geographical conditions of living and level of social-economic development of *ethnoi*. There are many examples when the habitat of an *ethnos* developed various economic-cultural types and consequently features of material culture (Арутюнов 1989: 42–43). Social and family ties, pre-state organization, and common identity expressed in *ethnonym* continue.

Archaeology uses to find features of material culture, though other factors



equally important for the life of *ethnos* are not recorded as a rule. That is why many researches consider that the identification of the concept of *ethnos* with economic-cultural type is principally impossible. At least, such a coincidence is a relatively rare exception (Арутюнов, Хазанов 1979a: 85). Even the entire cultural complex rarely corresponds to the limits of *ethnos*, the more so individual elements of archaeological culture like funeral rite or pottery complex (Арутюнов, Хазанов 1979b: 142). On the contrary, economic-cultural type is by definition inseparable from the culture of this or that area. Thus, archaeological sites, as a composition of remains of ancient culture, often allow one to reconstruct economic-cultural type of their population.

If one applies these theoretical speculations to concrete archaeological material related to the topic under discussion, one can draw the following conclusion. The Taurians were the *ethnos* shaped by consolidation of a part of tribes living in Crimean foothill area in the Late Bronze Age. Initially, they concentrated in the foothill area of the Crimea and practiced farming and pastoralism. In the sixth century BC, some Taurian tribes migrated to the mountains and south coast of the Crimea, and in this environment shaped an economic-cultural type related to transhumance and obviously pirating. Difference in economy and certain territorial independence resulted in the development of specific features of their material and spiritual culture. This way, the sixth and fifth century BC Taurians were divided into two sub-ethnic groups corresponding to two economic-cultural types. In the fourth century BC, there

was a back flow of the population and a new consolidation of Taurian tribes against the background of settled farming and cattle-breeding economy.

The Greeks called the dwellers of Crimean mountains and foothills the Taurians, and in no other way. The researches repeatedly paid attention to Herodotus' note of "*the kings of the Taurians*" (Herod. *Hist.* 4. 102) and Ammianus Marcellinus' reference of the Taurians "*divided into various kingdoms, among whom the Arichi, the Sinchi, and the Napaei are terrible for their ruthless cruelty*" (Amm. Marc. *Res gestae* 22. 8. 33). This is the background for the conclusion of the ethnic heterogeneity of the Taurians: they were probably divided into different tribes (Шульц 1959: 236–237, 265). Theoretically, this conclusion does not provoke controversies. In this connection, I should underline that ethnologists have recorded "ethnic fluidity" of all the tribes in the world, their weak discreteness by many important ethnic indicators, easy passage of clans and other groups of persons from one tribe to another (Арутюнов, Хазанов 1979a: 83). Cultural processes (especially in material culture) are much less dynamical than ethnic. We can say that common material culture creates a possibility for easy ethnic transformation (Арутюнов 1989: 44). One should not forget that tribal structure was not universal in prehistory (Хазанов 1975b: 124; Арутюнов 1989: 43–44). Therefore, archaeological methods are still not able to locate individual Taurian tribes, and such attempts may not have future perspective. Taking the level of our knowledge into account, it will be correct to call the eighth to fourth cen-

tury BC dwellers of mountainous and foothill Crimea the Taurians, as ancient Greeks did.

Unfortunately, almost nothing is known about the language spoken by the Taurians. No Taurian word survived but probably their self-name of the people in other-language Greek sounding. There were many attempts to relate the Taurians with the Indo-Aryans who settled in the Crimea, grounded on the analysis of linguistic material (Трубачев 1999a; 1999b), but they were not successful (Грантовский, Раевский 1984; Откупщиков 1988). If one accepts that the Taurians descended from the tribes of the Timber-Grave (Srubnaya) culture, one can build the following speculation. These tribes played an important role in the *ethnogenesis* of the Scythians and Cimmerians. Almost all the researches agree with this conclusion, especially regarding the Scythians. The Cimmerians and Scythians were Iranian-speaking, consequently, it is quite probable that the people of the Timber Grave culture spoke one or few languages of Iranian group of Indo-European language family (Отрошенко 2002: 21). This conclusion is supported by the coincidence of the area of the Timber Grave culture and Iranian hydronyms (Членова 1984). Hence, the Taurians and the descendant of the Timber Grave culture could speak some Iranian language.

An anonymous *periplous* of Euxei-nos Pontos keeps the place name of Ardabda, that is “of seven gods” in Iranian (Anon. *PPE* 77). This was the name of Theodosia in “Alan or Taurian” language. Alan language undoubtedly belonged to the Iranian group. Taurian language could also be attributed to this

group, if there was a real similarity between the two languages. However, other interpretations are also possible. For example, this language could be called “Taurian” in the sense it was used by the Alans who lived in Taurica (foothill and mountain part of the Crimea). Although Ellis Minns supposed that the Taurians were Iranian-speaking because of the name of Ardabda (Minns 1971: 101), in the other place he suggested more probable to derive this place name from Alan language (Minns 1971: 555).

Taurian migration southwards, to the mountains is reliably identified by written and archaeological sources. Their migration to the north steppe is reconstructed by archaeology only, so it is under scholarly discussion.

First, there is a distinctive, compact group of cemeteries of cists and other types of stone grave constructions in the Azov Sea coast of the Kerch peninsula. Vast Scythian steppe separates them from the Kizil-Koba settlements. The earliest of the Azov Sea coast sites are flat cist burials dating from the turn of the fifth or early fifth century BC (Масленников 1995: 33). Therefore, they must be used in discussion of the origin of the population that created the cemeteries in the Azov Sea coast. They are clearly similar with the Kizil-Koba funeral constructions in the Crimean foothill area. This similarity reflected in the type of grave constructions, making cromlechs around them and filling space in between cromlech and stone cist with fine stones, repeated burials in one cist, most simple forms of bronze ornaments (rings, bracelets, beads, etc.), shards of hand-made ceramics with incised ornamentation — although they were rare

in the Azov Sea coast. The absence of settlements makes the Azov area close to the mountains and south coast of the Crimea, but there are considerable differences between them. Particularly, in the Azov coast the dead were extended on back, with the head to the west, though according to the cemeteries in Crimean mountains the Taurians buried in crouched position on a side, with the head to the north, south or east but never to the west. Moreover, in the Azov coast there is no typical Taurian set of bronze ornaments, but there are artefacts produced by the Greeks and Romans (pottery, mirrors, finger-rings with panels), absent in Taurian cemeteries. Differences exist in the form of cromlechs: in the Azov coast, there are cromlechs in full sense of the word, though most often type in the mountains is rectangular fence.

It is possible to discuss, as many researchers do, the significance of every feature for ethnological reconstructions. However, it is doubtless or at least very probable that the tradition of building cists encircled with cromlechs, filled with rubble, was taken from the area of the Kizil-Koba culture. Otherwise, one has to suppose that this very specific rite developed independently among the Scythians, who were turning to a settled way of life, and the Greeks, who moved from recently established cities on the coast of Cimmerian Bosphoros. Both the suggestions seem unreal, though people of other cultures are not known close to the Azov Sea coast of the Kerch peninsula. This is the background for the conclusion that in the late sixth or early fifth century BC some groups of Taurians migrated from the foothills to the north of

the Kerch peninsula (fig. 18). Although they did not probably have an opportunity to keep contacts with the tribes in the foothill area, they established various relations with the Scythians and Greeks. Their culture developed independently of the Kizil-Koba till the first century BC (Масленников 1995: 56–68).

Close to the west Crimean coast, near Donuzlav lake, Kolotukhin discovered and partly investigated a cemetery of cists encircled with stones, without barrow mounds (Колотухин 2000: 41–43). Although all of them are plundered, isolated finds date them from the fourth century BC. The similarity of these construction with the Kizil-Koba ones and the lack of analogies in other cultures allows the scholar to hypothesise that there was a group of the Taurians that migrated westwards.

In recent years, Tatjana Smekalova's reconnaissances in the Tarkhankut peninsula have discovered a multitude of cists in mounds laid of stone and settlements located nearby (Смекалова 2010a). Visually, they have much alike with the sites discovered by Kolotukhin near Donuzlav lake. Their cultural and ethnic attribution requires archaeological excavations.

The Taurians probably lived in Bosphoran cities. Their presence is indicated by polished ceramic vessels with incised decoration. Excavation of every Bosphoran city discovers a small number of it; the largest number is unearthed in Nymphaion (Кастанаян 1981: 12–28; Сенаторов 2005b, 2006, 2007). Excavations in Nymphaion uncovered two subterranean houses and related to them pits from the sixth century BC. The number of Kizil-Koba ceramics



Fig. 27. Shpil' settlement. Zoomorphic ceramic figurines

from them is a little bit smaller than of amphora shards and much bigger than of shards of other vessels. There also were flint tools (Butjagin 1997: 64, 66–67). The composition of finds allows one to conclude that the Nymphaion pit-houses were populated by the Taurians, the people of the Kizil-Koba culture. The Taurians' status in Bosporan cities remains obscure. The find of gravestone with epitaph in verse for a Taurian having Greek name Tichonos in Pantikapaion (КБН: no. 114) evidences that at least some of them became members of civil community. Under the circumstances of ancient Greek city, the Taurians were obviously assimilated by the Greeks and lost their ethnic specificity.

The problem of existence of Taurian settlements at places where ancient Greek cities would be erected in the future remains unsolved. There is no case when the Kizil-Koba cultural layer was reliably discovered below the earliest Greek layer. Therefore, in spite of such a discovery is possible in the future, for now we have to acknowledge that the Taurians came to Greek cities that already existed.

North-west Crimea probably developed the situation similar to that

in Bosporos. There are no Kizil-Koba settlements, though polished ceramic with incised ornamentation have been excavated in almost all Hellenic settlements (see for example: Латышева 1997; Беловинцева, Попова 2007). It is relatively numerous in Kerkinitis, though there was 219 shards of 63–65 conventionally complete vessels. Ceramics of interest is excavated from all layers of the ancient city, but mainly from early deposits dated from the fifth to mid-fourth century BC (Кутайсов 1987; Кравченко 2009b). In the late fourth to the first half of the second century BC layers in Tarpanchi settlement hand-made ceramics (of Scythian and Kizil-Koba types) makes 3–4% of total number of ceramic shards. Shcheglov made an interesting observation that the Kizil-Koba people used crashed sea shells to binder vessels. Hence, these vessels were produced at place and were not transported, for example from the foothill area (Щеглов 1973: 10–11). Kizil-Koba ceramics was also found by excavations of a farmhouse from the late fourth and early third centuries

BC in Panskoye I settlement. It differs from more multitude Scythian vessels morphologically and technologically (Stolba 2002: 188).<sup>5</sup> No other feature of the Kizil-Koba culture was discovered by excavations of Greek settlements in the north-west Crimea. Therefore, in this case we can only state that a small number of the Taurians lived in the ancient Greek settlements.

The Taurians' relations with Chersonesos developed in special way. The excavations of the city uncovered inconsiderable number of Kizil-Koba ceramics; according to Yevgeniy Rogov's data, it concentrated mainly in the earliest layers accumulated before the Doric colonization of the south-west Crimea (Поров 1999: 123). Sergey Senatorov originally counted only 14 Kizil-Koba shards discovered by the excavations of Chersonesos (Сенаторов 2000). Later on, he enlarged his database with 103 fragments from the late sixth to the first half of the fifth century BC layers and from the second half of the fifth to the first half of the fourth century BC layers (Сенаторов 2003). Chersonesos ceramics already published includes both

typical Kizil-Koba and Scythian shapes. Many fragments cannot be interpreted in other way than they are handmade because they are so small. Therefore, in order to characterize Senatorov's ceramic collection in general, one should call it hand-made or barbarian rather than Kizil-Koba. However, joint finds of Scythian and Kizil-Koba vessels are normal for the settlements in the area of the Kizil-Koba culture. In general, inconsiderable materials in possession create an impression that there was a Kizil-Koba settlement at place of Chersonesos (Senatorov has also supposed that). When the city was founded, the people of the Kizil-Koba culture continued to live in it, probably for a very short time. There is no other account concerning the Taurian presence in Chersonesos.<sup>6</sup>

Outside the city, the Chersonesites pushed the Taurians off the Gerakleyskiy peninsula, partly subordinating and enslaving them according to the Doric colonization model (Щеглов 1981: 212–215; Даниленко 1993: 235–238). However, the latter hypothesis is built on still unpublished materials of investigation of Taurian settlements in

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<sup>5</sup> The results of excavations in Panskoye are also interesting because there was a layer from the Hellenistic period containing fragments of vessels decorated with separated cordons and ceramics with incised ornamentation (Stolba 2002: 184, pl. 123, D. 68; 124, D. 69–70). As it has already been said, the latter ornamentation technique was considered a chronological feature characteristic of the Kizil-Koba ceramics from the pre-Scythian period until recently.

<sup>6</sup> Excavations in the north area of the site of ancient Chersonesos uncovered a cemetery with graves without goods or with very poor burials. Almost half of the dead were put into graves in crouched position, so many researchers supposed that this cemetery was created by the Taurians who lived in Chersonesos. Vladimir Kadeyev has made careful analysis of every part of the funeral rite and has convincingly proved that the cemetery belonged to the Greeks (Кадеев 1973). A small number of crouched burials was uncovered in many Greco-Roman cities. Almost all of them do not contain grave goods, so there is no background to determine the chronology and ethnicity of buried persons. Crouched position may signify low social status of the dead (see for example: Грач 1981: 265). There is a hypothesis that crouched burials belonged to the Carians who migrated to the north Black Sea area with the Greeks.

vicinity of Chersonesos, so it could not be checked; this is just a logical speculation, with no archaeological data behind.

The Taurians continued to live and even used Greek vessels in the immediate vicinity of the Gerakleyskiy peninsula, which was plotted by the Chersonesites. However, the nature of their relations with Chersonesos still remains unknown. This phenomenon is underlined by the following fact. One of a few excavated settlements in the border of Chersonesos' *chora* contained many shards of amphorae, but none of them was manufactured in Chersonesos (Сенаторов 1998: 10).

The coincidence of names of their major goddesses hints on some relations between Chersonesos and the Taurians. Researchers have rightly underline the absence of any barbarian feature of Chersonesos' patroness Parthenos, who was a hypostasis of Artemis (Русяева, Русяева 1999, with bibliography). However, the unique coincidence of names of female deities of two neighbouring *ethnoi* could hardly be an accident. Taurian deity appeared much earlier than Doric Chersonesos was established, so we can suppose that the honouring of Parthenos among the Greeks and supplanting the name of Artemis by this *epiklesis* happened because of Taurian influence. As the Taurian Parthenos ("Virgin" in Greek) was definitely alien to the Hellenes, receiving Greeks in sacrifice, though the cult of Chersonesos' Parthenos was absolutely Hellenic, I can produce the following speculative idea. Fate had driven the Greeks to be the neighbours of barbarians, who killed their fellows in honour of the blood-thirsty goddess, so the Greeks intention-

ally called their protector deity the same as the Taurian one. One of the most important functions of their Parthenos was to save the Chersonesites of barbarian danger, so she must show her power and dominance over the alien Taurian Virgin of the same name. According to some inscriptions from the Hellenistic period (IOSPE I<sup>2</sup>: nos. 343, 352) and works by historian Syriskos that did not survive (IOSPE I<sup>2</sup>: no. 344), Parthenos regularly save the Chersonesites, so they were not disappointed in their forefathers' choice. The above-said implies on, in contrast to other north Black Sea *poleis*, Chersonesos was closed for the Taurians, as well as for other barbarians.

The Kizil-Koba culture ceased to exist in no later than the third century BC. Logically, it disappeared in relation to general Black Sea crises of the early third century BC (Щеглов 1998a: 69–70). This way, we almost lost archaeological sources for the history of the Taurians. However, it does not mean that they ceased to exist as an *ethnos*. The Taurians are mentioned in absolutely reliable sources from the second century BC to the second century AD.

The decree honouring Diophantos mentions the Taurians who lived in vicinity of Chersonesos. This Pontic commander subdued them in the late second century BC (IOSPE I<sup>2</sup>: no. 352). Two inscriptions dedicated to Bosporan king Aspourgos state that he conquered the Scythians and Taurians (КБН: no. 39–40). One of these inscriptions is dated to 23 AD; Aspourgos reigned from 10/11 AD, so the Taurians were conquered in between of 10 and 23 AD.

Although not forever. According to another inscription, they were sub-

duced by another Bosporan commander whose name did not survive. Sergey Saprykin rightfully thinks that this happened in the second half of the first decade of the second century (Сапрыкин 2005: 73). The inscription clearly distinct the Taurians from the Scythians, which took war with the commander as well, though he probably not conquered them. Therefore, in the early second century AD the Taurians existed as independent *ethnos* and obviously possessed some compact territories. It could be supposed that they lived somewhere not far from the Bosporan frontier. If they lived somewhere far away, with Scythian territories in between them and Bosphoros, it would be hard to defeat them, as well it could be senseless, in contrast to rebellious Scythians.

There is a tombstone from Chersonesos, for two freedmen, at least one of whom was killed by the Taurians. Although the tradition dates this inscribed stone to the first century AD (Соломоник 1983: no. 13), there also is another chronology, of the second half of the second century AD (Зубар 1990: 108–109). According to Tacitus, in 49 AD several Roman ships on their way back from Bosphoros wrecked at Taurian coast. The barbarians killed almost all the shipwrecked Romans (Tacitus *Ann.* 12. 17).

The Bosporans and Chersonesites must know well their enemies and neighbours; as it comes from inscriptions, they still distinguished the Taurians and Scythians in the second century AD. So when Igor' Pioro ig-

nored epigraphic sources and supposed that the name of the Taurians in the Roman period referred to other (it is not known to which exactly) tribes or was used as a tradition in literature (Пиоро 1998), he was not correct.

From the first century AD onwards, narrative and epigraphic sources (Pliny the Elder was the first) used a new *ethnonym* of “Tauro-Scythians” or “Scytho-Taurians” for the Crimean population (Соломоник 1962a). Its appearance most likely reflected the process of mixing of two *ethnoi*. In the last centuries BC and the first centuries AD, Crimean foothill area housed numerous Late Scythian settlements, though there was no contemporary site in the mountains; thus, the Taurians were among those settlements' residents. Assimilation that gave birth to artificial Tauro-Scythian ethnonym developed gradually. The Bosporans and even the Romans of Chersoneson garrison, who conducted wars with their neighbours, distinguished them from each other. For writers who lived far from the Crimea in the first centuries AD, the Taurians existed no more, only Tauro-Scythians survived.<sup>7</sup> This process could start in the second century BC, when the sourced began to call the Taurians a “Scythian tribe” (Столба 1993: 57).

One can expect that the reconstruction of the ethnic history of the Crimea in the first centuries AD according to written sources would be confirmed by materials excavated from Late Scythian sites. However, these expectations dem-

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<sup>7</sup> Saprykin wrongfully follows them when repeatedly uses the ethnonym of Tauro-Scythians in his commentaries to the inscription of Pantikapaion (Сапрыкин 2005). The creators of the inscription did not know this ethnonym and called every people with its own name.

onstrate their value to a small extent only. Traces of Taurian presence as isolated finds of ceramics, worked stones and ornaments are recorded by excavations of many Late Scythian sites. No Kizil-Koba layer was found, so it became not clear whether the Taurians remained in their settlements when the Scythians came, or the Scythians populated areas already left by the Taurians (Храпунов 1991: 4–5).

Taurian influence appears in construction of some Late Scythian graves and in details of their funeral ritual. Perhaps the most expressive burials of the type were excavated in Tavel' manor at the foot of Chatyr-Dag mountain (Храпунов 1995: 59–63).

Vladimir Vlasov has analysed handmade vessels from Late Scythian settlements and cemeteries; his conclusions are as follows. In early layers and graves dating from the second half of the third to the first half of the first century BC, a considerable percentage of finds consists of the ceramics inheriting Taurian tradition. Its number considerably declined after the middle of the first century BC, and its completely disappeared in the first century AD (Власов 1999a: 9–12).

The combination of Taurian and Scythian elements in Tavel' barrows as well as the dynamics of Taurian tradition in pottery making confirm the conclusion that has been made against the study of written sources: the Taurians were gradually assimilated by the Scythians, and this process finished probably in the first century AD.

Several graves constructed as vaults covered with low barrow mounds have been uncovered in vicinity of Feodosiya, close to Otvazhnoye village. These

vaults looked like pits with walls lined with stonework. They were entered through passages limited with stones on both sides thus imitating *dromoi*. Each grave was encircled with cromlech; the space between the cromlech and vault was filled with fine stones. These vaults were intended for multiple burials accompanied with poor grave goods (bronze ornaments, mirrors, beads, red-slip vessels, shard of "Megarian" bowl, Scythian arrow heads). The chronology of the vaults, or to be more precise that of the vault in barrow no. 3 that contained more or less expressive materials, raised a scholarly discussion. The excavator Yevgeniy Katyushin has dated it from the first century BC to the early second century AD (Катюшин 1996), though Sergey Koltukhov from the last quarter of the third or first quarter of the second century AD to "rather early first century BC" (Колтухов 2001: 64–65). A detailed analysis of grave goods is not appropriate here, but let us point out that the period when the vault in barrow no. 3 was certainly in use could be determined only as the second and first centuries BC. Grave constructions in vicinity of Feodosiya are analogous to vaults encircled with cromlechs in the Azov Sea coast barrows from the fifth to the first century BC. As it has already been discussed, the cemeteries in the Azov Sea coast were created by a group of Taurian migrants from the Crimean foothill area. Possibly, there was a migration in reverse direction in the second and first centuries BC. Otherwise, it would be difficult to understand the similarity of grave constructions when the grave goods changed (the latter is quite explainable by chronological rea-



sons). The population of the Azov Sea coast had some reasons to cross the Kerch peninsula from the north-east to south-west. They stopped in the foothill area, once left by their forefathers. They successfully lived as a closed group for a relatively long period, prolonged enough to make 39 burials in a vault, keeping their cultural originality, particularly expressed in creation of grave with constructions having no analogy in synchronous antiquities of the Crimean foothill area.

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In short, I can give the following account of the ethnic history of the Taurians. The people later called the "Taurians" by the Greeks shaped in the Crimean foothill area in the eighth century BC. In the sixth century BC, the Taurians densely occupied the foothills, though some of their tribes moved to the main ridge and the south coast of the Crimea. The latter formed a special economic-cultural type. It was probably the sixth or fifth century BC when the Taurians divided into two sub-ethnic groups corresponding to different economic-cultural types. Intensive contacts between the tribes in the mountains and those in the foothill area never interrupted. Material and spiritual culture of the Taurians has outstanding singularity, bearing only inconsiderable similarity with the culture of neighbouring Scythians. Small groups of nomads penetrated into contact zone in the foothill area and mixed with the Taurians.

In the late sixth or early fifth century BC, a group of the Taurians migrated from the foothills to the Azov Sea coast of the Kerch peninsula. This special

Taurian enclave was separated from the foothills initially by areas where nomadic Scythians roamed and then by Scythians settlements, and existed to the first century BC. The culture of the Azov Sea coast population transformed due to internal regularities and also under the influence of the Greeks and Scythians, but without an influence from mountain and foothill tribes.

In the fourth century BC and by unknown reasons, the Taurians left the main ridge of the Crimean mountains and concentrated in the foothills. They established interrelations with the Greeks, probably, as a mutually profitable exchange of goods. In the same century, a group of the Taurians migrated to the north-west, to the coast of Donuzlav lake.

The Taurians became residents of all the Greek *poleis* located in the Crimean coast, probably since they were founded. Although one can only guess which reasons forced the Greeks to attract the Taurians to their cities, it is obvious that these reasons lost their urgency in course of the *poleis* development, so new barbarian contingents did not immigrated, and the Taurians were gradually assimilated by the Greeks.

The Black Sea crises of the early third century BC broke the integrity of Taurian *ethnos*. According to fragmented data of written and archaeological sources, the Taurians lived amidst the Late Scythians and were finally assimilated by them in the first century AD.



Written sources extremely rarely mention the Scythians who lived in the Crimean peninsula, so one could study their ethnic specificity only against the background of the particulars of their material culture and funeral rite (fig. 28).

In Crimean steppe, there were two Scythian burials dated from the second half of the seventh century BC with confidence. The first one was excavated in Temir-Gora barrow near Kerch (OAK за 1870–1871 гг.: XX; Яковенко 1972). The burial was made into a large, filled with stones pit. The grave goods contained painted vase of Greek manufacture (fig. 29) (Копейкина 1972) and beast style artefacts (fig. 30), which belonged to the earliest specimens of the type (Яковенко 1976: 128–129). The second burial was discovered in a barrow near Filatovka village in the very north of the Crimea (Корпусова 1980). Although it was almost destroyed, it contained Rhodian-Ionian painted *oinochoe*. Temir-Gora vessel dates from early 640s BC and Filatovka vase from 635–625 BC; they were produced far from the Crimea, so they could come to Scythian graves a bit later.

It is quite probable that burials in undercut graves excavated in barrows near Chernozomnoye and Grigor'yevka

villages in the very middle of Crimean steppes, as well as the burial sunken into Bronze Age cultural layer in Kirovo settlement in the Kerch peninsula have similar chronology. However, bone clasps from these burials do not have narrow date, so they can originate from the second half of the seventh or the first half of the sixth century BC with equal probability (Лесков 1970: 15, 47; Колотухин 2000: 16–17, 37).

These graves are isolated, so in the second half of the seventh century BC nomads of the Scythian culture, which shaped shortly before that, rarely penetrated into the Crimean steppe area. The same situation occurred in the Black Sea area as a whole: in the seventh century BC, there were isolated graves with all the features of the Scythian culture, though separated by considerable distances (Мурзин 1984: 46–47).

The state of things in the Crimean steppe hardly changed in the sixth century BC. There were isolated graves under barrows, most often secondary, made into simple pits or undercut graves. In total, there are about 20 sixth century BC graves discovered in the Crimean steppe. In most cases, they date from the second half of the seventh to the first half of the sixth century BC, from the

second half of the sixth to the first half of the fifth century BC, from the late sixth to early fifth century BC, etc. It means that the actual number of the sixth century BC graves was even smaller. They never compose a cemetery being evenly scattered through the plain area of the peninsula. Almost all the burials were made in prone position on the back, with the head to the west. Grave goods were poor, including arrows, swords, spindle whorls, whetstones, knives, some bronze ornaments, hand-made vessels, and remains of funeral food (Ольховский 1991: 80–85; Колотухин 2000: 58–59). A burial of heavily-armed warrior in a barrow near Vishnyovka village in the very north of the Crimea (fig. 31), that could also be dated from the early fifth century BC, stands out against this background (Андрух 1988; Колотухин 2000: 59–60). Generally, the sixth century BC Scythian sites in the Crimean steppe have no difference with those located to the north of the peninsula.

In the sixth century BC, the Scythians penetrated into the foothill area, particularly via the Salgir river valley, where they formed population groups combining Scythian and Taurian elements in the material culture and funeral rite (for more details see the “Taurian” chapter).

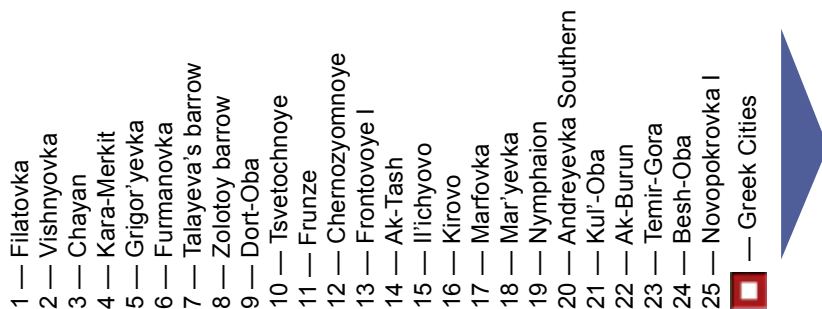
- 1 — Filatovka
  - 2 — Vishnyovka
  - 3 — Chayan
  - 4 — Kara-Merkit
  - 5 — Grigor'yevka
  - 6 — Furmanovka
  - 7 — Talayeva's barrow
  - 8 — Zolotoy barrow
  - 9 — Dort-Oba
  - 10 — Tsvetochnoye
  - 11 — Frunze
  - 12 — Chernozymnoye
  - 13 — Frontovoye I
  - 14 — Ak-Tash
  - 15 — Il'ichyovo
  - 16 — Kirovo
  - 17 — Marfovka
  - 18 — Mar'yevka
  - 19 — Nymphaion
  - 20 — Andreyevka Southern
  - 21 — Kul'-Oba
  - 22 — Ak-Burun
  - 23 — Temir-Gora
  - 24 — Besh-Oba
  - 25 — Novopokrovka I
- Greek Cities
- 



Fig. 28. Scythian sites mentioned in this volume

Hand-made vessels from the earliest layers in Bosporan cities and rural settlements allow the researchers to suppose that the Scythians resided there. However, it is still not possible to determine concrete type of interrelation of the Hellenes and barbarians. Shards of hand-made ware predominate in the earliest layers, from the late sixth to early fifth century BC, in Andreyevka Southern settlement, so the Scythians composed the majority of its population (Кругликова 1954: 81; Кругликова 1975: 34, 37–38, 40, 42, 50; Кастанаян 1981: 111–113).

Despite of a very few Scythian burials from the sixth century BC, which evidences that the population was extremely small, there is no doubts that only the Scythians populated the Crimean steppe. Herodotus states that they were the neighbours of the Taurians (Herod. *Hist.* 4. 102, 119). According to Herodotus, the Taurians lived in the mountains and foothills of the Crimea (Herod. *Hist.* 4. 99), so they could be the neighbours of the Scythians only if the latter possessed the steppe area of the peninsula. It is the case when the Scythians prepared themselves to the war with Darius I Hystaspes, i. e. of the late sixth century BC. Another information of Herodotus dates from the early sixth century BC when the Scythians returned from their campaigns in Asia.

The Scythians blinded their slaves. When they left for the war in Asia, a new generation appeared from these slaves and Scythian wives. These young decided to oppose the entrance of the Scythians when they were coming back home. Children from the Scythian women and blind slaves dug “*a broad ditch from the Tauric mountains to the Maiotis*

*lake, at the point where this is broadest*” (Herod. *Hist.* 4. 3), i. e. approximately across Ak-Monay isthmus, which separates the Kerch peninsula from the rest of the Crimea. Despite of many battles, the Scythians were not able to defeat young slaves. Finally, they put aside their spears and bows and armed themselves with whips to let the slaves remember their origin. This tactics was so successful that the slaves ran away. Although the legend of the children of blind slaves could be interpreted in different ways, this episode took place in the Crimea.

The number of Scythian burials in Crimean steppe considerably increased in the fifth century BC, absolutely corresponding to the situation in the Black Sea area (Виноградов, Марченко 1991: 149–150). Excavations uncovered more than 50 burials made into simple pits in ground, undercut graves and stone cists. Apart of a few exceptions, the dead were laid stretched on back with heads to the west. In comparison with previous period, even ordinary burials contained larger set of grave goods. Besides funeral food, these graves possessed arrows in quivers, short swords (*akinakai*), much rarely spears. Horse harness details are decorated in beast style. There were iron knives and awls, stone whetstones, clay spindle whorls. There also were a few ornaments: bronze rings, earrings, bracelets, as well as glass beads. Greek tableware became an ordinary find; amphorae appeared in a few cases. Ordinary burials contained grave goods generally similar to those discovered in synchronous Scythian burials outside the Crimea (Ольховский 1991: 86–91; Колотухин 2000: 60–62).

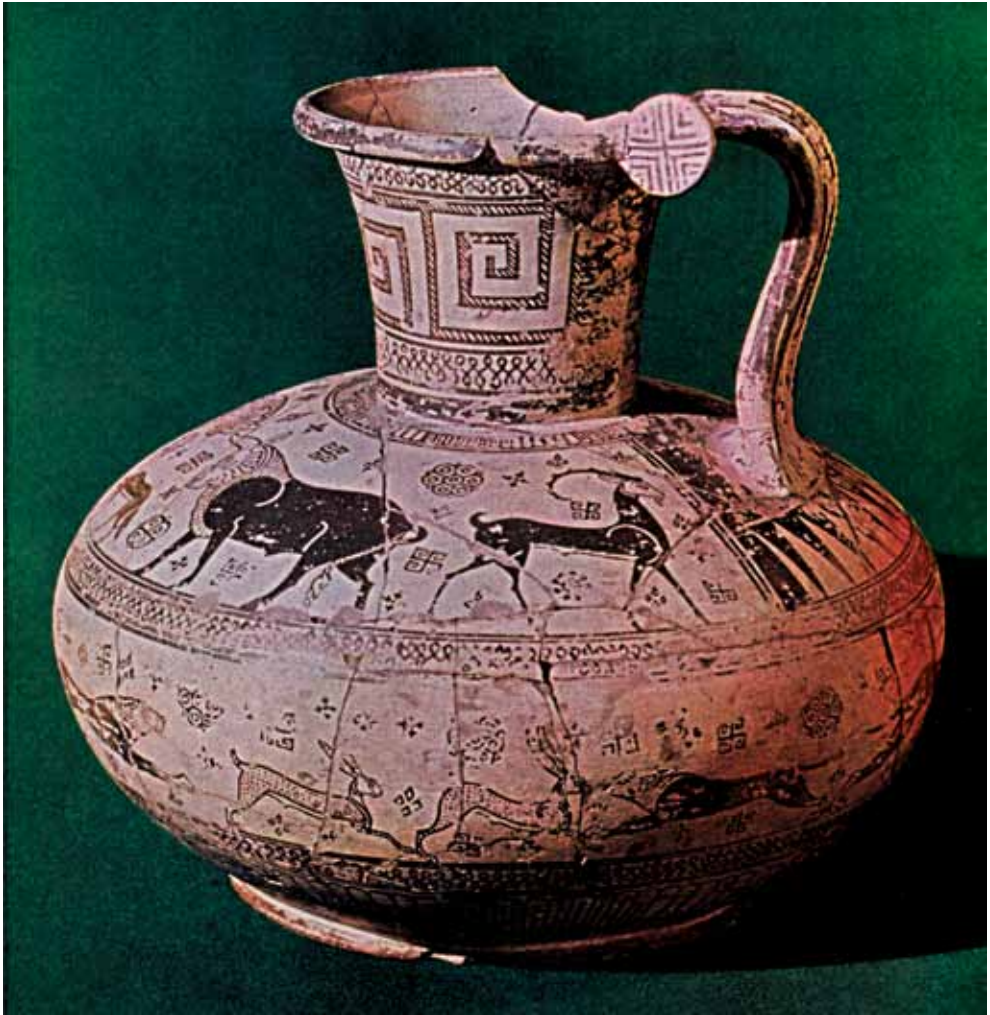


Fig. 29. Vessel from Temir-Gora barrow

Among the graves excavated in the open steppe, there was outstanding one in Kara-Merkit barrow. The finds include gold appliques for wooden vessels decorated in beast style, sword, cuirass, 250 arrowheads, and bronze *kyathos*. Especially interesting is a badge depicting elk's head. Such badges were used to decorate horse harness and weapons only in the fifth century BC (OAK за 1882–1888 гг.: XCI–XCII).

Although ordinary Scythian burials from the fifth century BC are not

known in the Crimean foothills, more exactly, in the border between the steppe and foothill area, there were two outstanding sites. Zolotoy barrow is located about 5 km north of Simferopol. The excavation did not trace the grave. Buried person laid on composed armour or, as some scholars interpret it, shield. He wore gold neck-ring, and gold plate covered the bottom part of sword scabbard. There were about 200 arrows in

quiver, and different artefacts in beast style, as well as ancient Greek pottery. The burial dates from the early fifth century BC (Колтухов 1999b; Смекалова 2009: 102–105). Because of the rich and various grave goods, it occupies an outstanding place among synchronous Scythian graves. Varvara Il'inskaya and Aleksey Terenozhkin compared it to Ostraya Mogila barrow excavated in Dnepropetrovsk administrative area (Ильинская, Тереножкин 1983: 109).

Another barrow from the first half of the fifth century BC was excavated in the interfluvium of the Al'ma and Kacha rivers, near modern Furmanovka village. Rectangular pit was sunken into barrow from the Bronze Age, covered with wooden platform and heaped by stones above. The burial was oriented to the east, a rare instance in the Crimea. The dead was accompanied with weapons, two horse-harness badges in the form of beasts rolled into a ring and decorated with extra figures (fig. 32), as well as with a small axe made according to the traditional Scythian beast style (Колтухов 1998). Although this grave did not contain precious artefacts, badges of high artistic quality and especially axe-sceptre probably indicate the burial of outstanding Scythian nobleman.

Excavations at the border of the Bosporean kingdom, in Ak-Monay isthmus uncovered Frontovoye I cemetery. It consisted of simple pit graves containing burials with heads to the west. Excavated grave goods (*akinakai*, arrows, knives, bronze ornaments, beads, snakestones, horse harness badges, mirrors, spindle whorls, three hand-made vessels, remains of funeral food, etc.) are typical of ordinary Scythian burials.

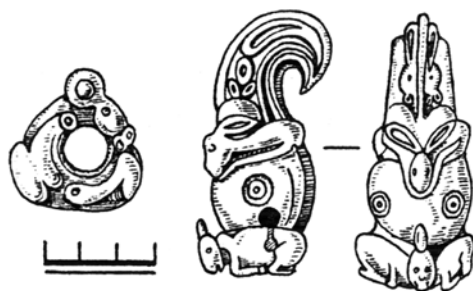


Fig. 30. Bone artefact from Temir-Gora barrow

als. This cemetery differs from other Scythian sites because of repeated burials in the same grave and the absence of barrow mounds. Both factors indicate that the population was sedentary (Корпусова 1972: 41–46). The earliest burials date from the fifth century BC, hence it was the initial period of the formation of specific ethnographic group of settled Scythians who created numerous sites from the fourth century BC, located mainly within the limits of the Bosporean kingdom.

Excavations in the Kerch peninsula uncovered several graves from the fifth century BC, with no principle differences from nomadic burials in the Crimean steppe. Among them, there is an undercut grave sunken into Bronze Age barrow in the Ak-Tash cemetery. Grave goods consisted of weapons, horse-harness details including nose-plate and cheek-plates in the beast style, wooden bowl with silver-gilt cover decorated with figure of animal, ancient Greek ceramic vessel, and other artefacts (Бессонова, Скорый 1986). Stone tomb in barrow no. 1 near Il'ichyovo village contained gold neck-ring, plate with image of deer, funnel-shaped ornament of *gorytos* (sheath for

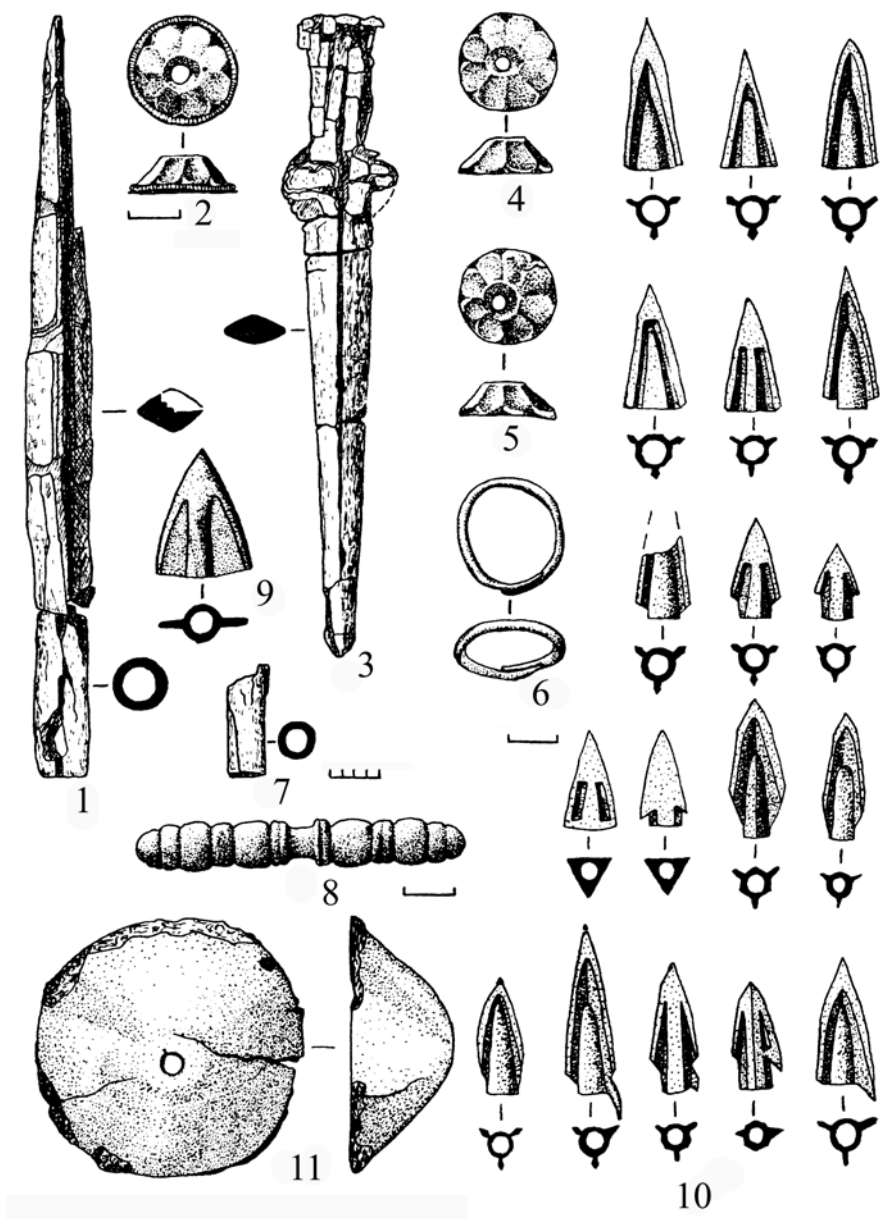


Fig. 31. Grave goods from grave no. 16 in a barrow near Vishnyovka village:  
 1 — spearhead; 2, 4–5 — appliqué badges; 3 — sword; 6 — ring;  
 7 — spear butt; 8 — clasp; 9–10 — arrowheads; 11 — conical artefact;  
 1, 3, 7 — iron; 2, 4–6 — gold; 8–10 — bronze; 11 — iron and gold  
 (Колотухин 2000: 8, рис. 2)



bow and arrows), and two quiver plates, one ornamented with a scene of monsters tearing each other (Лесков 1968). Although the grave was plundered, the remains of grave goods that survived suggest that it was one of the richest amidst synchronous Scythian burials.

There was a barrow 8.5 m high, erected above stone tomb in the west side of Cimmerian Bosphoros, in Ak-Burun cape. Although this tomb appeared to be plundered, two accompanying horse burials contained a relatively many details of horse trappings, decorated in the beast style (Яковенко 1974: 103–106). No horse burial of this period is known in the Crimea outside the coastal area of the Kerch peninsula.

In the cemetery of ancient city of Nymphaion, Scythian burials were made under barrow mounds, in stone (once in raw-brick) tombs, heaped with stones from above. The dead were put into wooden sarcophagi, with the heads to the east. Scythian burials differ from Greek ones located nearby because of their gold neck-rings and sewing badges, horse harnesses with many pieces in beast style, and horse burials accompanying main graves. Besides that, the graves contained swords, arrows, cuirasses and many Greek artefacts — ornaments, red-figure and simple black-slip ware, bronze vessels, etc. (Силантьева 1959: 51–91). Nymphaion graves differ from other Scythian because of dominant east orientation (by the way, it is extremely not typical in the Crimea) and practise to bury into wooden sarcophagi.

There probably was a detached Scythian group living in Nymphaion or its close vicinity in the fifth century BC. Their spiritual and material culture visi-

bly changed because of Greek influence. Close contacts between the Scythians and Nymphaion could be explained by political reasons. When the Scythians buried in its cemetery, this was the only Greek settlement in the Kerch peninsula independent of the Bosphoran kingdom. With support from Athens and other members of Athens Sea Union, Nymphaion could need an ally living in its close vicinity. The Scythians became such an ally; they might be specially invited; they soon accepted some Greek traditions. In result, this group of nomads became visibly different from their tribesman by archaeologically researchable features. When Nymphaion left Athens Sea Union and became a part of the Bosphoran kingdom in the late fifth century, it did not need allies anymore, so the Scythians returned to the steppe or at least ceased to bury in the city cemetery.

There is direct information from Herodotus that the Scythians populated “*the whole district lying west of the Cimmerian Bosphorus*” (Herod. *Hist.* 4. 99). Sometimes, when the sea froze, they could cross the straits upon the ice thus reaching the country of the Sindians (Herod. *Hist.* 4. 28). Despite on the fact that some barbarians resided in Greek cities like in the case of Nymphaion, the nomads of the steppe permanently menaced the Greeks. The Scythians attacked ancient Greek settlements in the European side of Cimmerian Bosphoros, for example Myrmekion in early fifth century BC; in result of that, for fortification walls were erected there (Виноградов Ю. А. 1992: 107). Some researchers think that namely the Scythian danger forced the an-



Fig. 32. Bronze badge from Kulakovskiy's barrow

cient Greek *poleis* to establish a military union ca. 480 BC (Виноградов Ю. Г. 1983: 416–417). However, not every scholar agrees with this interpretation (Васильев 1992).<sup>8</sup>

Yuriy A. Vinogradov have supposed that barrows with rich barbarian graves from the fifth century BC are not acci-

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<sup>8</sup> Aeschines' oration against Demosthenes can be used as another source on the active contacts between the Bosporan Greeks and Scythians (Aesh. *Orat.* 3. 171–172). This Athenian orator informs about certain Gylon, who betrayed Nymphaion, so the city left Athens Sea Union and was annexed by the Bosporan kingdom. After that, Gylon escaped to Bosporos and married a noble Scythian lady, who later became grandmother of the famous orator Demosthenes. It happens in the late fifth century BC. The value of Aechines' information for the present topic loses some value be-cause it is not quite clear where this Scythian lady lived, in Pantikakapion or in Kepoi (in the Asian side of Cimmerian Bosporos. If the latter is true, she had nothing to do with the Crimea. There is abundant scholarship about the betrayal of Gylon and related events (for very detailed review of sources and historiography see: Шелов-Коведяев 1985: 90–115).

dently located close to the most important cities of Bosphoros. They reflect each city's desire to have some tribes as allies. If such attempts were successful, barbarian chiefs received possibilities to live in these cities. The practice to engage barbarians as allies of only this or that city finished when centralized Bosphoran realm was created; according to Yuriy Vinogradov, it happened in the late fifth century BC (Виноградов Ю. А. 2001).

In spite of almost entire absence of written sources, there were two traceable tendencies in the fifth century BC, which would develop to full extent in the next century. First, the process of Scythian sedentarisation started. It finally finished with the formation of an ethnographical group having special material and spiritual culture, and possibly ethnic identity. Second, some nomadic groups established close contacts with the Greeks and even lived amidst them. In result, the formation of a specific culture started: it was typical to Bosphoros only and combined Greek and Scythian elements.

There is a message scratched on amphora shard, that has been found in the west coast of the Crimea (Соломоник 1987: 114–125). Besides other facts, the author of the epistle ask the addressee to learn who is departing to Scythia or who will pay tribute to the Scythians. Despite doubtless interpretation, this document is extremely valuable. It uncovers that there was not only state's, but also private interest to the Scythians (it is private message), and contacts with the Scythians were usual way for the residents of Kerkitis in the fifth century BC.

The Scythians were not totally the same in respect of *ethnos*. In the leg-

endary period of their forefathers, they were divided into tribes of the Auchatai, the Katiaroi, the Traspies and the Paralatai. All together were named Skolotoi, though Scythians were their Greek name (Herod. *Hist.* 4. 6). In the time of Herodotus, among the Scythians there were the Kallipidai, or Hellenic Scythians, the Alazones, the Scythian Ploughmen, Agricultural Scythians, Nomadic Scythians and Royal Scythians (Herod. *Hist.* 4.17–20). The territory where the later lived Herodotos described in the following words: “*On the opposite side of the Gerrhos is the Royal district, as it is called: here dwells the largest and bravest of the Scythian tribes, which looks upon all the other tribes in the light of slaves. Its country reaches on the south to Taurica, on the east to the trench dug by the sons of the blind slaves, the mart upon lake Maiotis, called Kremnoi, and in part to the river Tanais*” (Herod. *Hist.* 4. 20). It comes from other sections of the *Histories* that under “Taurica” Herodotus means Crimean mountains and foothills (Herod. *Hist.* 4.99), and the trench dug by the descendants of blind slaves was near Ak-Monay isthmus (Herod. *Hist.* 4. 3). These were the south and south-east limits of the Royal Scythians' country. Taking into account the difficulties with localization of river Gerrhos and mart Kremnoi, I can that in the fifth century BC the Royal Scythians populated Crimean steppe (but not the Kerch peninsula) and some areas to the north of it.

The analysis of Herodotus' account allows us to identify three levels of ethnicity of the north Black Sea nomads. Macro-endoethnonym “Skolotoi” and

exoethnonym “Scythians” probably recorded the understanding of the commonality of most important ethnic features of all the population in the north Black Sea steppe. The ethnic communities or “tribes” by Herodotus (Royal Scythians, Nomadic Scythians, etc.) were not tribes in our modern sense. They occupied vast territories, so they were tribal unions. The Royal Scythians always acted as a single unit and contrasted themselves with other Scythians (Хазанов 1975a: 281). However, their particulars reflect in the elements of culture unidentifiable archaeologically. Theoretically, there could be different reasons of the development of these large tribal unions: political, economic, genetic. Sources contain no data allowing us to solve this problem.

There probably were tribes in the full sense, but they were not mentioned by Herodotus and other writers. Graves of their chiefs were obviously accompanied with precious and other socially important artefacts, like those discovered in Zolotoy, Kara-Merkit and Il'ichyovo barrows, as well as in the barrow excavated by Yulian Kulakovskiy in the interflow of the Al'ma and Kacha.

The number of Scythian burials in the Crimea became significantly bigger in comparison with previous hundred years in the fourth century BC. It was the time when considerable differences appeared between the sites in the Crimea and in the areas to the north. Besides that, local particulars of Scythian culture are traced in different areas of the Crimea.

The most important feature of Crimean sites is in the almost complete ab-

sence of catacombs, which became dominant type of graves in the steppe north of the Perekop isthmus. In order to save ourselves of terminological problem, I should say that this is not the case of undercut graves, but actually of catacombs or ground vaults as they are called sometimes. In these graves, burial chamber was dug in the short wall of entrance pit. These were catacombs of types II and III according to Boris Grakov's classification (Граков 1962: 84).

There are several catacombs discovered in the Crimea. Almost all of them concentrated in the very north of the peninsula, near the Perekop isthmus (Скорый 1982; Колотухин 2000: 11–12). A few exceptions are catacombs excavated in the inland of steppe, near Frunze village in Nizhnegorsk district (Гаврилов 1993), Tsvetochnoye village in Belogorsk district (Пуздоровский, Тоцев 2001: 154–155), and in the Kerch peninsula (Колтухов 2005: 262–266).

There probably was an obstacle for the penetration of the people of catacomb rite to the Crimea. This can be logically explained by ethnic differences. The tribes of the Crimean steppe did not adopt the rite spreading from the north and requiring changes in religious beliefs. In the fourth century BC, they still buried their tribesmen according to the rites developed in their environment long ago. It seems that the steppe area near the Perekop isthmus was a zone of unstable population coming from the north (Ольховский 1991: 138). Catacombs near Frunze and Tsvetochnoye villages evidence that in very rare cases people of the new for the Crimea funeral rite had possibilities to roam in the inland of the peninsula.

In the central and west areas of Crimean steppe, there were burials in rectangular pits, undercuts and cists. There is no sense in counting the number of various types of grave constructions, because first and second types were not always separated during the excavation (Колотухин 2000: 60). We can say approximately that there was the same proportion of every type. Wide use of stone tombs is another important feature of Crimean sites from the Scythian period. As a rule, the dead were put into grave stretched on back with the head to the west. West orientation with variations makes more than 80%; in the Crimea, this indicator is greater than in other regions of the Scythian culture (Ольховский 1991: 154). There are no important differences between the grave goods discovered on the north and on the south of the Perekop isthmus.

In recent years, the excavations in the central and west Crimea uncovered stone and ground vaults with multiple burials under barrows, as well as a flat cemetery from the fifth and fourth century BC (Колотухин 2000: 64–66; Гаврилов, Колотухин, Колтухов 2002; Колтухов 2005). Burials of the type could be made by people who either lead settled way of life or made roams along a short, close route. The second is more probable because no settlement with pronounced cultural layer is discovered near the mentioned graves, though farming in the inland steppe was not effective until the nineteenth century. Let us also mention that grave goods in these burials are poor: this is the sign of low social and property status of the dead.

West Crimea is the place of maximum concentration of Scythian statues among

the whole north Black Sea area. In the Crimea, they are also scattered unevenly. There are only few such monuments discovered in the most part of Crimean steppe and in the Kerch peninsula and no one in the foothill area, but 23 statues in the north-west of the peninsula. Some of them are distinguished with extremely high quality of surface treatment and attributes depicted with minor details. Several monuments present really sculpture “in the round” rather than traditional barbarian anthropomorphic steles. They were possibly made by Scythians taught by Greek artisans or Greeks living in Kerkinitis and Kalos Limen.

All the researchers think that stone statues are one of the most distinctive ethnographic features of the Scythian culture. Although the reason why they concentrated in west Crimea are disputable, this fact, first, supplies an evidence of the ethnicity of the people populating the Tarkhankut peninsula and vicinity of Kerkinitis and, second, underlines cultural specificity of this area and separates it from other countries populated by the Scythians (Ольховский, Евдокимов 1994: 29–34; Бессонова 2002).

Chayan barrow, located probably somewhere in vicinity of Yevpatoriya, was looted in the late nineteenth century. The most part of goods from the barrow disappeared without leaving a trace; only four artefacts became available to experts: gold neck-ring, diadem, bowl and sword scabbard plate (Shcheglov, Katz 1991). The surface of the scabbard plate is almost entirely covered with pictures of battling Greeks and barbarians, thus illustrating the Greeks’ notion of the Trajan war (fig. 33). The scabbard plate from the north-west Crimean is

not unique: two almost identical artefacts were discovered in Chertomlyk barrow in the Dnieper area and in 8<sup>th</sup> Pyatibratnyy barrow in the Lower Don region. The same burials contained gold *gorytos* plates, also decorated with scenes of the Trojan Cycle. Absolutely analogous *gorytoi* were discovered in Melitopol'skiy and Il'inetskiy barrows (forest-steppe Bug area) and in Vergina tomb, where the Macedonian king Philip II was probably buried.

This series of extremely interesting finds, stylistically and probably semantically close to each other, attracted scholars' attention many times. It has been supposed that all the artefacts with Trojan scenes were produced simultaneously in Greek, possibly Bosphoran workshops, and were intended as diplomatic gifts for Scythian chiefs (Алексеев 1992: 131–138). Such precious presents were certainly made to outstanding representatives of Scythian nobility. Therefore, the finds from Chayan barrow allows one to suppose that west Crimea was a place where a “*basileos*” of some large nomadic tribal union roamed.

Written sources say almost nothing about the Scythians living near the west Crimean coast. One can only remember the famous civic oath of Chersonesos (fig. 34). Its text states that the citizens greatly feared for Kerkinitis, Kalos Limen and the “*grain... that comes from the plain.*” The oath compilers use the word “plain” for the north-west Crimea, and the Scythians could be the only real menace to the region (Жебелев 1953d).

Two types of coins minted in Kerkinites attract attention. The first obviously dates from the mid-fourth cen-

tury BC and has goddess on the obverse and Scythian rider on the reverse. The second dates from the late fourth century BC and has sitting Scythian on the obverse (fig. 35) and horse on the reverse. Clothes, hair-dresses and weapons undoubtedly describe the *ethnos* of the figures on coins. Therefore, we have documentary evidence of close interaction between the residents of Kerkinitis and the Scythians. However, there still is a discussion concerning the reasons of the appearance of these coin types and the attribution of the figures (for the detailed review of scholarship see: Кутайсов 1992: 140–162; Stolba 2007). Vladimir Stolba has noticed that archaeological excavations do not record the presence of barbarians in Kerkinitis apart from some pieces of hand-made ceramic ware (Stolba 2007: 94).

Smekalova has compiled a map (Смекалова 2011: рис. 106) clearly indicating that the Crimean foothill area, as well as the Kerch and Tarkhankut peninsulas, was the territory of maximum concentration of barrows in the Crimea (fig. 36). However, these barrows were excavated mainly in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. From our modern point of view, the results of the investigations are documented insufficiently. Therefore, in most of cases, one can make only a very general idea of the sites in the foothill area (Троицкая 1951: 90–93, 100–102). Features of burial constructions make the foothill burials different from those in the steppe. Almost all of the burials are made into rectangular pits, lined and covered with stone and wood. Grave goods consist of common north Black Sea artefacts. There are two barrow burials located close to the

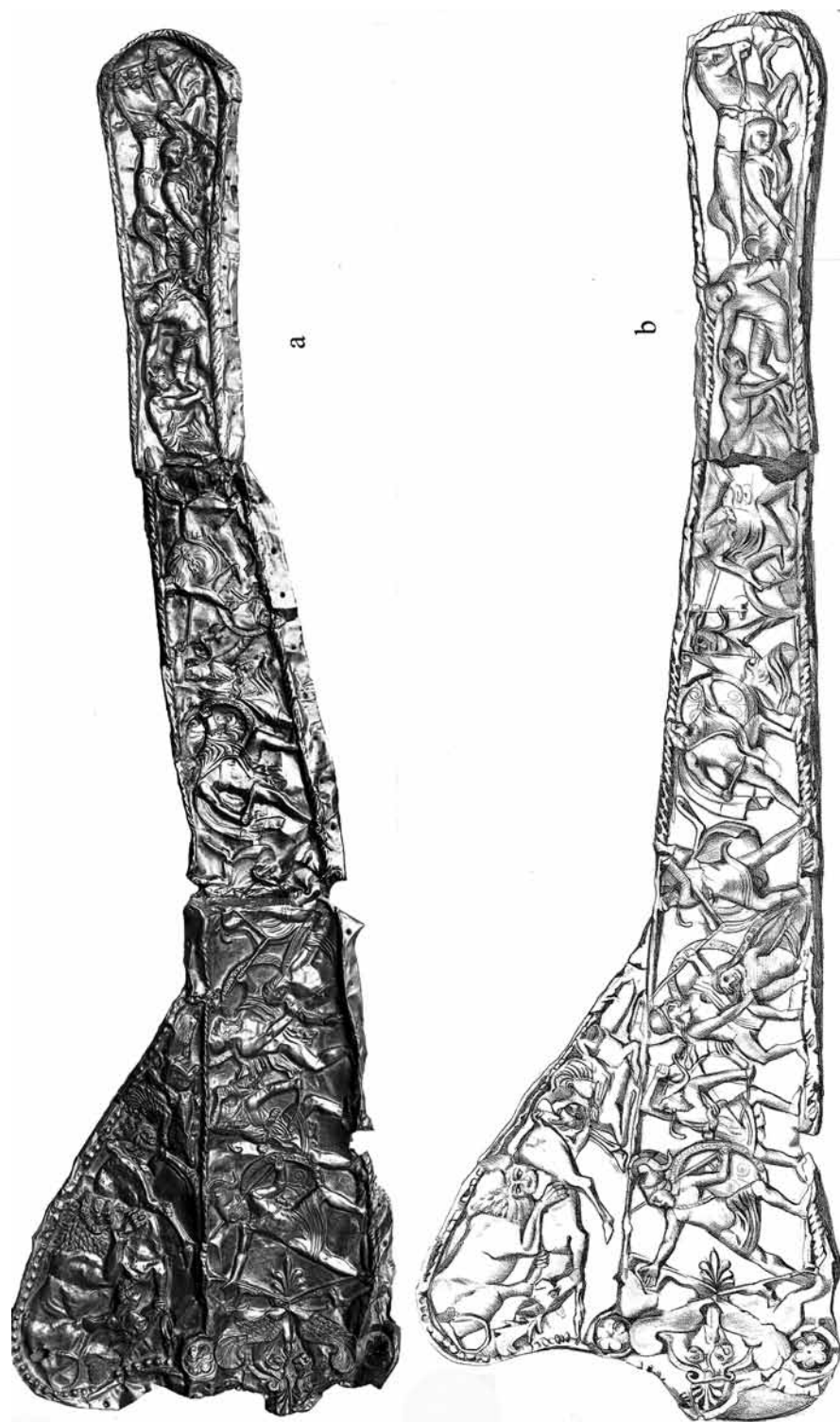


Fig. 33. Gold scabbard plate from Chayan barrow. Photo and line drawing (Смекалова 2011: рис. 113)

north edge of modern Simferopol outstanding because of the grave construction and grave goods. Dort-Oba barrow was more than 4 m high; its mound was encircled with strong stone revetment. The grave consisted of large pit lined with logs and stones. Top wooden cover of the grave was probably heaped with stones above. In the wooden tomb was felt baldachin. The dead was stretched on the back with the head to the west, laying in a special cavity dug into the floor of the grave. Grave goods include armour, sword, quiver with arrows, and *gorytos* decorated with gold beast-style plate. The clothes of the dead were embroidered with gold badges. Spears were driven into the floor of the grave. Besides that, there were remains of funeral feast and amphorae (OAK за 1892 г.: 6–10). Stamps on Herakleian amphorae date from the late 390s or early 380s BC (Монахов 1999: 209–210). According to Mikhail Artamonov, Dort-Oba barrow corresponds to Herodotus' description of king's burial to the maximum extent. In his opinion, the visible difference between written source account and the archaeological site could be explained because the barrow was constructed later than the age of Herodotus, in the fourth century BC, and might belong to a chief of less power than the one whose funeral was described by the Greek historian (Артамонов 1949: 139–141).

The so-called Talayeva's barrow was more than 3 m high, being encircled with stone revetment. The burial was made into large grave lined with stone slabs (fig. 37). Wooden cover was covered with stones above. The dead person laid on the back, with the head to the west, and wore composite armour and composite belt.



Fig. 34. Civil oath of Chersonesos





Fig. 35. Coin of Kerkitis

There was gold neck-ring on the neck. Iron axe with handle entwined with gold band remained on the waist. Near it laid whetstone set in gold ornamented plate. There were two spears and three javelins to the right of the buried person and arrows to the left. Amphorae stood in three corners of the grave, the fourth corner was occupied by stone-laid platform with remains of funeral food and knife on the top. Besides that, the grave contained ceramic vessels, bronze helmet, bone *rhyton* decorated with silver ornamented plate, and other goods (ОАК за 1891 г.: 76–79; Манцевич 1957; Смекалова 2009, 89–92). One Sinope and two Phasos amphorae date the burial to 360s BC (Монахов 1999: 400–402).

Particulars of the grave constructions from the fourth century BC sites in the Crimean foothills do not have analogies outside the region, so they could determine a special local variant of the Scythian culture. There probably were tribes roaming in the frontier between steppe and foothills who understood their difference from northern neighbours. Their chiefs are buried in Dort-Oba and Talayeva's barrows.

There is a special group consisting of the barrows located in Besh-Oba plateau and in Ak-Kaya plateau (the latter is separated from the former by a small depression) (fig. 38). Boris Mozolevskiy was the first who paid attention to these barrows. He thought that they formed a cemetery of nobility of the Royal Scythians (Тереножкин, Мозолевский 1988: 213; Мозолевский 1990: 131–136). Barrow groups in Ak-Kaya and Besh-Oba actually deserve attention. In a distance of about 7 km, there are 10 barrows from 6 to 10 m high and 50 to 60 barrows from 0.2 to 3.0 m high (fig. 39). The place selected for the cemetery finds no analogies in the Crimea and possibly in all the Scythian area. Both plateaus are the most remote ridges of the Crimean mountains with entire plain stretching to the north of them. The barrows are visible from the steppe from the distance of dozens kilometres due to the natural elevation of the plateau. Continuous wall of the Crimean mountains on the south makes the background. From the plateau, there is grand scenery of mountains on the south and steppe on the north. The size of the barrows and the place selected for them leave no doubts in the high social status of the dead buried there. Generally, the excavated materials confirm this conclusion. Although the investigation of big barrows does not finish yet, its results are partly published, so our knowledge of the cemetery is rather superficial.

However, it is understandable that the cemetery was created and used throughout the fourth century BC. The main burial construction in Besh-Oba IV barrow could be called catacomb according to formal matters. It consists of entrance pit, short *dromos* and burial chamber.

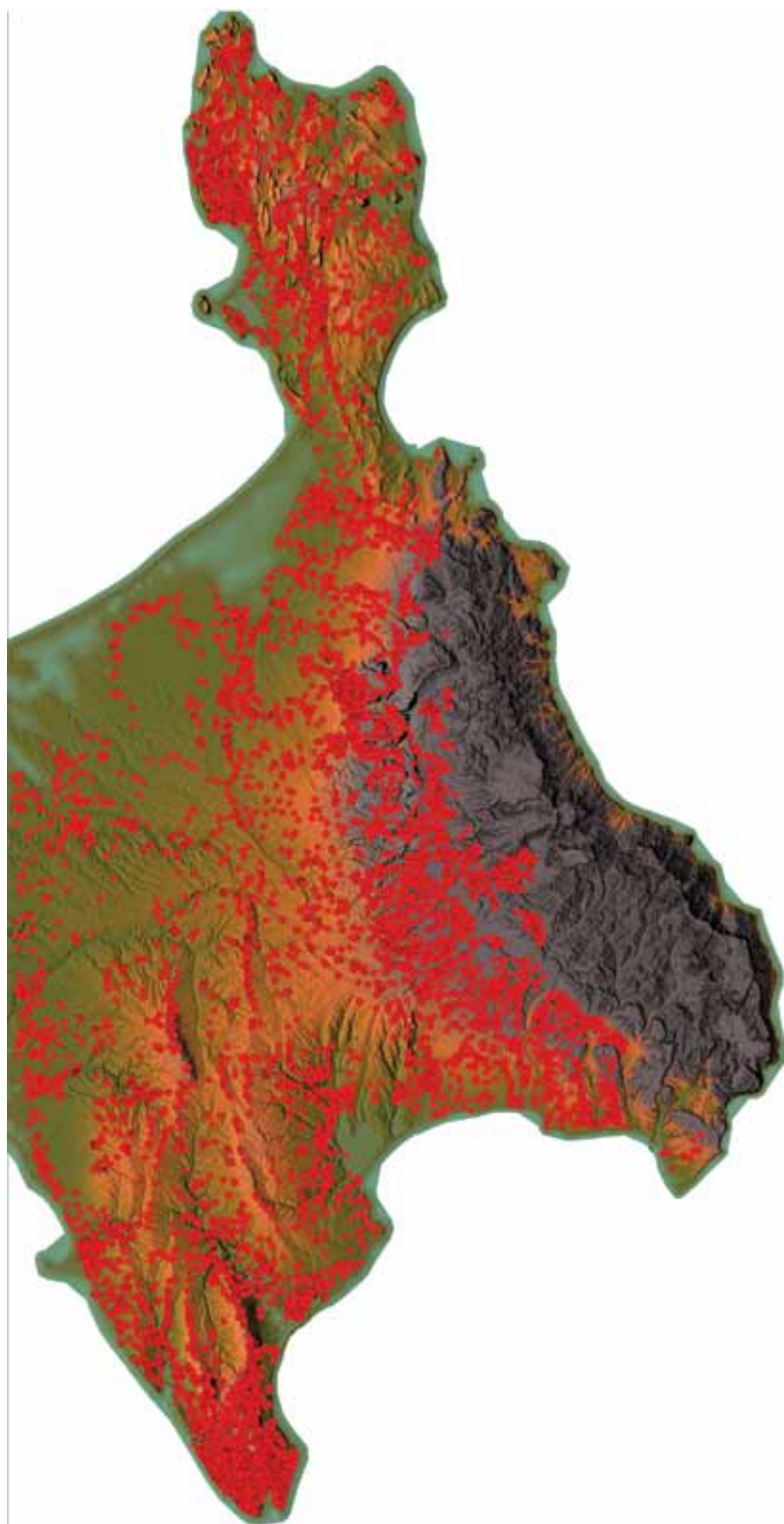


Fig. 36. Distribution map of Crimean barrows (Смекалова 2011: рис. 106)

It considerably differs from classical Scythian grave because of the presence of monumental stone burial vaults constructed inside, paved floor of the burial chamber, wooden door opening to it, and wooden covering. There was secondary grave sunken into the same barrow: a large two-chambered stone vault with log covering (Колтухов 2005: 267–271; Колтухов, Мыц 2001: 32–36).

The main grave of three-metre-high barrow Besh-Oba I/1 has not survived. In the mound, there were stone vault, another stone tomb, and pit grave (Колтухов 2006).

Besh-Oba IV/2 barrow is 1.5 m high. The main burial was made into pit grave covered with slabs. It was accompanied with three burials of horses. Later on, stone vault was sunken into the mound,

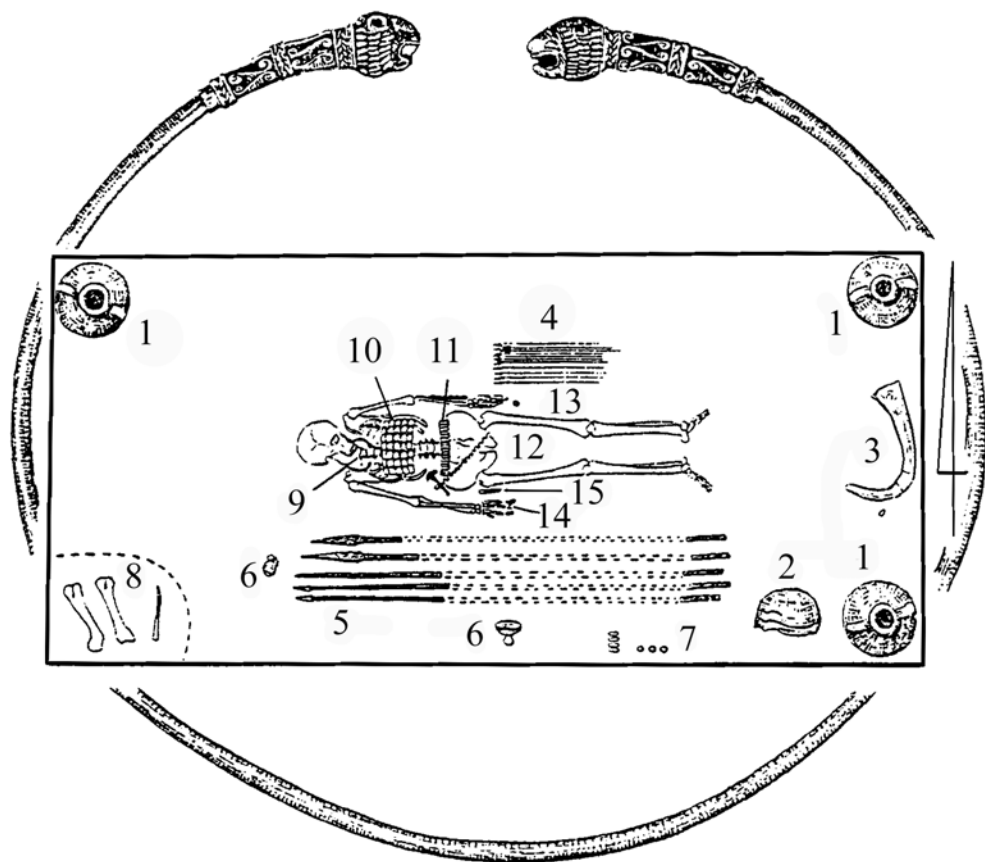


Fig. 37. Ground plan of the burial in Talayeva's barrow:

- 1 — amphorae; 2 — bronze helmet; 3 — antler with silver appliqué;
  - 4 — arrowheads; 5 — spears and javelins with iron heads and butts;
  - 6 — ceramic vessels; 7 — iron beads;
  - 8 — iron knife with bone handle (animal bones behind);
  - 9 — gold neck-ring; 10 — bronze armour plates;
  - 11 — bronze belt plates; 12 — gold band for battle-axe handle;
  - 13 — silver finger-ring; 14 — gold ring; 15 — whetstone set in gold
- (Манцевич 1957: рис. 1;6)

with repeated multi-tiered burials. They started to bury into it in the fourth century BC and continued even in the Late Scythian period (Колтухов 2001: 65–70; Колтухов 2007).

Available information on incompletely excavated and incompletely published monuments of the site allows me to conclude that barrows of Besh-Oba and Ak-Kaya belonged to the Scythian culture in the period of its climax. The size of Besh-Oba IV barrow, complication and size of its grave constructions inform that it contained burials of aristocrats of high rank. Such a funeral practise has no analogies in the Crimea or outside of it.

Due to Aleksandr Gavrilov's investigations, we get knowledge of group of sites stretching from vicinity of modern Feodosiya northwards to Sivash. They date within the fifth to the first quarter of the third century BC, being unfortified settlements of farming population. The

ethnicity of residents is hard to be determined. Gavrilov supposes that there were the Hellenes, Scythians and Kizil-Koba people. The main indicator in this case could possibly be the interrelation of different types of ceramic vessels. Ceramic assemblage of the best-studied settlement Novopokrovka I is as follows. There were many fragmented amphorae (including 669 stamps); shards of hand-made vessels make 11.5% from total number of ceramic fragments, though Greco-Roman wheel-made pottery consists of a few finds. Similar picture is on other settlements in this area. Complete dominance of hand-made vessels above wheel-made ware (but amphorae) is certainly typical of barbarian settlements. The case of Greco-Roman settlements is contrary. Hand-made vessels include both Scythian and Kizil-Koba forms. The farther from the mountains is the settlement, the number of Scythian ware is larger, though that of Kizil-Koba is



Fig. 38. Ak-Kaya plateau (photo: Stanislav Shabanov)



Fig. 39. A barrow in Besh-Oba plateau  
(photo: the author).

smaller. The population of this area possibly consisted of the Scythians and the Kizil-Koba people. We can only guess their proportion and the degree of assimilation (Гаврилов 2004).

Not far from the settlements, there were barrows with repeated burials in secondary graves from the fourth century BC. They were accompanied with poor grave goods. Various ornaments are Scythian or the types used both by the Scythians and the Kizil-Koba people. There is no ornament typical to the Kizil-Koba culture only, but there is a shard of Kizil-Koba vessel. There also are goods of undoubtedly Greco-Roman origin. Vault of stone and raw brick probably indicates some Greco-Roman influence. This way, the study of the graves confirms the conclusion of the different origin of the barbarians living near the western frontier of the Bosporan kingdom, which was made against the background of the research of the settlements (Гаврилов, Крамаровский 2001; Кропотов 2009).

The Kerch peninsula is a specific region requiring special analysis. In contrast to the rest of the Crimea, it was deeply saturated with settlements of the people who practiced farming and settled cattle breeding. Scythian sites concentrated in the north-west area of the Kerch peninsula (Зинько 1991: 39–40). Scythian settlements consisted of houses relatively distant from each other. Stone walls of houses are laid with typical barbarian irregular masonry. Apart from amphora, ceramic finds include mainly shards of hand-made vessels of Scythian types. Cinder-heaps are discovered in many settlements. One of them (near Marfovka village) was encircled with stonework (Кругликова 1975: 67). Careful treatment of cinder from home fireplaces was typical of the Scythians. They venerated Tabiti (analogous to Greek fireplace goddess Hestia) more than other deities, and sworn by gods of king's fireplace in especially solemn cases (Herod. *Hist.* 4. 59, 68, 127). The Scythians lived not only in the north-west of the Kerch peninsula, but also in other farming settlements, as well as in cities. They

were not a majority there and were Hellenised to different degree.

In the Kerch peninsula, there were numerous barrow cemeteries. Most of them belonged to ordinary Scythian population (Яковенко 1970; Яковенко, Черненко, Корпусова 1970; Яковенко 1974: 38–61; Колтухов, Колотухин 2007). In some cases, barrow mounds cover pits with walls lined with stones, though more popular types were stone cists or vaults laid of stones, with specially designed entrance. There also are the so-called “ground vaults” with stone covering. They are rectangular graves covered with slabs entered through pits sometimes filled with stones. The latter feature was extremely rare among nomadic Scythians but later became one of distinctive features of the Late Scythian culture. There are few ground vaults or catacombs of the same types as among the Scythians but located outside the Crimea. These tombs were intended for multiple burials. Each tomb probably belonged to a single family. Inner space of the grave was gradually filled with remains of the dead relatives. If there was no more empty space, they moved the bones of previously buried to a wall and used the free space. Grave goods were very poor: usually arrows and fine ornaments (beads, rings, finger-rings, temple pendants, and bracelets). The finds also include knives, spindle whorls, mirrors, hand-made Scythian and wheel-made Greek pottery, and spearheads. The finds of amphora shards in barrow mound evidence that funeral feasts were arranged. No doubts, these burials belonged to the Scythians who settled within the limits of the Bosporan kingdom but

still kept their traditional rites related to construction of barrow mounds.

Investigations of cemeteries of some Bosporan cities uncovered barrows that visibly differed from the above mentioned but also belonged to the Scythians (Ростовцев 1925: 161). Most of them were excavated in the nineteenth century, so the results are ill documented, as well as some burials were plundered. These barrows were few meters high. They were constructed above monumental vaults with stepped covering laid of well-dressed stone slabs. Grave goods included traditional Scythian artefacts as well as precious goods produced by ancient Greek artisans upon Scythian order. An extraordinary place is occupied by Kul’-Oba barrow located in the cemetery of Pantikapaion. This is the only Crimean barrow to stand in the line of the richest royal barrows of Scythia, most of which are located in the area of the Dnieper streams.

Paul Du Brux excavated this barrow in 1830. Complicated history of the excavations that finished with plunder of one burial resulted in the scholarly discussion on the reconstruction of burial structure and funeral rites (ДБК: XIV–XXXIV; Гайдукевич 1949: 267–277; Яковенко 1974: 61–65; Брашинский 1979: 38–60; Ильинская, Тереножкин 1983: 211–212; Тункина 2002: 162–166; Власова 2006; Журавлев, Новиченкова 2009; and many others).

Kul’-Oba burials were made into almost square tomb with sides longer than 4 m. It was covered with stepped vault five metres high. There was *dromos* leading to the vault. The whole construction is of excellently dressed large stone slabs. In the stone vault, there probably was

some wooden construction with textile drapery decorated with golden badges.

The main male burial, probably of a king, was made into cypress sarcophagus. Clothes and hair-dress (pointed cap) of the dead were embroidered with gold badges with relief images. Twisted gold neck-ring with riding Scythian figures on its ends was put on the neck. There were gold bracelets on hands and arms. The dead person was accompanied with valuable weapons: *akinakes*, *gorytos* and whip. Near the king, there were gold *phiala* ornamented with relief pictures and whetstone set in gold.

Female burial was placed on wooden bed. On the neck of the buried lady, there were neck-ring with sculptured lion's heads on its ends and necklace of high artistic quality, though her arms were decorated with bracelets. All the artefacts were of gold. The finds included two pairs of solid gold temple-pendants, one depicting Athena's head, a copy of Phidias' chrysoelephantine statue standing in the acropolis of Athens. Bronze mirror with the handle covered with gold foil was near the head. Ball-shaped electrum bowl decorated with relief pictures of Scythians stood between shins (figs. 40–42).

In the vault, there was another burial sometimes interpreted as servant's. In the corner of the vault, there was cavity with horse bones, spears, bronze greaves, and helmet. Various vessels stood along the walls: amphorae, bronze

cauldrons with ram bones, and silver set (basins, cups, *rhyta*, plate, *kylix*). Some silver vessels were gilded and decorated with relief pictures (fig. 43).

Under the floor of the vault, near the entrance, there probably was a grave destroyed by plunderers. It contained different gold artefacts including badge in the form of deer with pictures of other beasts on its body. Although the badge is made in Scythian beast style, there is partly preserved name of Greek artisan on it.<sup>9</sup>

The latest of finds with relatively exact chronology from Kul'Oba is stamped amphorae of Phasos; Iosif Brashinskiy dated it to the late third or fourth quarter of the fourth century BC (Брашинский 1975: 37). However, this chronology seems a bit high for the whole set of grave goods. That is the reason for the idea that male and female burials were not synchronous. Male burial dates from the first half of the fourth century BC, though female from 340–320 BC (Алексеев 1992: 156–157).

Kul'-Oba burials demonstrate the combination of features of the Scythian and Greek cultures. Scythian rites include making barrow mound, burials of servant and horse, great number of badges sewn to clothes, *akinakes*, *gorytos*, snakestone, whip and cauldrons with funeral food. These artefacts, as well as the mirror accompanying female burial, are of typical Scythian forms. Ball-shaped bowls of precious metals,

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<sup>9</sup> There is an opinion that this badge was manufactured in the first half of the fifth century BC, long before the burial where it was found (Королькова, Алексеев 1994). I think that more grounded is the hypothesis by Artamonov (Артамонов 1986), that was supported by Yelena Perevod-chikova (Переводчикова 1994: 145–146): it explained archaic features of Kul'-Oba badge because Greek artisan tried, and not always successfully, to follow classical images of Scythian beast style.

like that standing near the feet of buried woman, are relatively popular attribute of rich Scythian graves. Hairstyles and clothes of persons depicted on the cup and badges are undoubtedly Scythian. Barbarians of high social status used to wear neck-rings. One should not forget to mention artefacts decorated in the beast style, which is ethnographical attribute of Scythian culture.

There is no doubt that the Greeks participated in the creation of the complex of Kul'-Oba. According to the stone-processing techniques and stone-laying techniques, they built the vault. According to Hellenic rite, female burial was made into sarcophagus, shape and decoration of which finds numerous analogies in Bosporos and other Greek states. All the artefacts of precious metals were made by Greek artisans; sword scabbard and deer-shaped badge were marked by their names. They specially produced some items for Scythians and decorated them in beast style; others, such as necklace and temple pendants, were samples of proper Greek art.

Generally, Kul'-Oba barrow well illustrates an idea of rich and very noble Scythian, probably a king, who had very close relations with Pantikapaion and could even live in the city. Let us point out that the above-mentioned elements of Greek culture were concentrated mainly in female burial.

Written sources inform about armed contacts between the Scythians and the Bosporan Greeks. In the first quarter of the fourth century BC, the Scythians supported the king Leukon in his hard war with Theodosia and contributed much to the annexation of the city by the Bosporan kingdom (Polyaen

*Strateg.* 6. 9. 3–4). This was the background to hypothesize the existence of treaty of alliance between Leukon I and Atheas, according to which the Scythians provide Bosporos with their military assistance, and Greeks pay tribute to their allies (Яковенко 1986: 47f). However, arguments for this hypothesis are among those not provable nor disprovable.

Pseudo-Demosthenes' oration against Phormion mentions the war between a Scythian king and Pairisades I (Demosth. *adv. Phorm.* 8). This event took place a bit earlier than 328 BC (Алексеев 1992: 134).

Thirty thousand Scythian mercenaries took part in the war of 310/09 BC on the side of Bosporan king Satyros against his brother Eumelos. When Satyros died of wounds, his third brother Prytanis tried to inherit him. However, he failed, fled to the Asian side of Bosporos, and was killed there. Eumelos entered Pantikapaion and killed all the relatives of his brothers but one person. Satyros' son Pairisades escaped death and, on horseback, ran to Scythian king Agaros, where he took refuge (Diod. *Bibl. Hist.* 20. 22–24). If we understand Diodoros literally, Agaros roamed somewhere close to Pantikapaion, unlikely outside the Crimea.

The Scythians' inter-ethnic contacts in the Kerch peninsula were not restricted to the relations with the Greeks. There was a group of Taurians living in the Azov Sea coast from the sixth century BC; they were migrants from the foothill area (see the "Taurian" chapter for the details). The first stage of the interaction of two ethnic groups, settled Taurians and nomadic Scythians, was stimulated











Fig. 43. Silver rhyton from Kul'-Oba barrow

by differences of their economy, so they need to exchange products. Although concrete mechanisms of this process remain unknown, grave constructions and funeral rites of the cemeteries in the Azov Sea coast transformed in a way that, according to some scholars, a new *ethnos* developed with participation of the Taurians and the Scythians to the fourth century BC (Бунятян, Бессонова 1990: 23–24).

\* \* \*

To sum up, the history of the Scythians in the Crimea could be described in the following way. In the seventh century BC, few-in-number nomadic groups bearing the Scythian culture (it was shaped shortly before that) penetrated into the steppe area of the peninsula. One of permanent Scythian roaming

Fig. 40, 41, 42. Electrum vessel from Kul'-Oba barrow

routes linking the Dnieper area and the Kuban area could pass through the north Crimea (Вахтина et al. 1979; Вахтина 1991). Generally, Crimean steppe was empty land missing permanent population in the seventh century BC.

Although in the sixth century BC the population of the steppe considerably rose in comparison with previous century, it still was extremely rare. Graves with poor and uniform grave goods do not allow one to determine ethnic or social differentiation of the nomads.

In the fifth century BC, a large number of Scythians constantly roamed in Crimean steppe. Written sources allow us to include this region to the area where the Royal Scythians lived; they were a tribe (according to Herodotus) or tribal union (according to modern ethnological terminology). Burials with rich prestigious artefacts obviously supply evidence that Scythian society had internal differentiation and was divided into tribes. As for the inter-ethnic relations, two trends could be mentioned. In the foothill area, the Scythians contacted only with the Taurians. In result, the Taurians were armed exclusively with Scythian swords and arrows, though Taurian ceramic vessels appeared in Scythian burials. The fifth century BC marked doubtless evidences of Scythians' permanent contacts with Greek *poleis* both in the west (Kerkinitis) and east (Bosporos) of the peninsula, where the process of sedentarisation of small Scythian groups started.

The fourth century BC witnessed a jumping raise of the population of the steppe. Particulars of the culture of the foothill, central and west Crimea popu-

lation allow us to draw the conclusion that they were ethnically different from the Black Sea steppe population. In the foothills, local variant of the Scythian culture developed; it probably reflected the separation of some tribes that roamed in the area. North Crimea was a zone of instable population that periodically came from the north.

An ethnographical group of the Scythians developed in Bosporos, differing from most of their kinsmen by the way of life and therefore the particulars of their material and spiritual culture. Extremely rich barrows of Chayan and Kul'-Oba supply evidences that there were various large tribal unions in the Crimea.

Contacts between the Scythians and the Taurians continued near the foothill area with the same results as in previous century. A group of the Taurians who lived in Bosporos consolidated with the Scythians. In result of stable relations with the Greeks some types of Greek-made artefacts actually became inalienable elements of the Scythian culture. Bosporan kings were in permanent contacts with Scythian nobility, thus having a possibility to attract large nomadic contingents for the war.

Especially active were ethnic processes in the periphery of barbarian world, in the zone of contacts with Greeks and the Taurians. The most part of steppe Scythians demonstrated stability of their traditions and permanency of nomadic way of life from the seventh to the fourth century BC.

## The Late Scythians



The earliest finds discovered by excavations of the Late Scythian sites date from the fourth century BC (**fig. 44**). There are more than forty stamps on roof-tiles from Sinope discovered in the capital of the Late Scythian state, which date to the second half of the fourth century (Брашинский 1963: 142; Высотская 1978: 77–78; Голенцов, Голенко 1979: 74). However, the Sinope stamps do not convince all the scholars that they determined the beginning of living at the place of the Late Scythian capital. Anatoliy Golentsov and Vladimir Golenko paid attention to about fifty-year-long chronological gap between the Sinope and the earliest Rhodes stamps in the collection published by them. In their opinion, during the wars with Chersonesos in the late third and second century BC the Scythians took roof-tiles from plundered Greek settlements or purchased them (Голенцов, Голенко 1979: с. 78). In this case, the Scythians intentionally select and take away from Greek settlements only one-hundred-year-old roof-tiles. It does not look like a probable version.

Recently Yuriy Zaytsev have expressed a detailed reconstruction of the foundation date of Scythian Neapolis. According to him, the settlement at place where the future capital of the Late

Scythians would be located appeared in the second quarter or the middle of the second century BC (Зайцев 2003: 42). Although he certainly knows the above-mentioned Sinope stamps, as well as about 30 Chersonesos stamps on amphora handles, including those from the fourth and third centuries BC, he refuses to use them as an argument for the foundation date of Neapolis (Зайцев 2003: 13). Zaytsev's first argument is that Sinopean and Chersonesos stamps are often found together with Rhodes stamps from the second half of the second century BC; his second argument is the above-cited opinion by Golentsov and Golenko.

The first argument is doubtful. As of any long-term settlement, every layer of Neapolis contained a "residual" of earlier material. A different matter, the excavated areas do not have layer with chronology corresponding to Sinope and Chersonesos stamps. Let us also note that Zaytsev mentioned not all the finds from Neapolis excavations dating earlier than the data of the settlement foundation proposed by him. It is the case of amphorae shards from various centres, including stamped piece from Sinope,

and rather large collection of fragments of black slip vessels (Высотская 1979: 130–138; Вдовиченко 2003: 9). This way, the researcher omits this large group of sources, because it does not meet his ideas about the chronology of the foundation of the settlement. He even does not dare to explain how hundreds of amphorae, big quantity of roof-tile, and tableware produced many decades earlier appeared in recently established settlement.

There is a very interesting layer with the Kizil-Koba ceramics discovered in the north tip of the promontory where the ancient town is located (Зайцев 2003: 16). Although the finds of the Kizil-Koba ceramics during excavations of the Late Scythian sites are the most usual thing, there is no case with the Kizil-Koba layer below Late Scythian. Therefore, it is still not clear whether the people of the Kizil-Koba culture, the Taurians, remained in place when the Scythians arrived, or the Scythians settled in places that had already been left by the Taurians. Zaytsev has no doubts that the second interpretation is correct. However, the short description of the layer with the Kizil-Koba

- 1 — Tarpanchi
  - 2 — Belyaus
  - 3 — Southern Donuzlav
  - 4 — Chayka
  - 5 — Kara-Tobe
  - 6 — Ust'-Al'ma
  - 7 — Bel'bek IV
  - 8 — Kol'chugino
  - 9 — Bulganak
  - 10 — Al'ma-Kermen
  - 11 — Zavetnoye
  - 12 — Chisten'koye
  - 13 — barrow no. 2 in Cherkes' land
  - 14 — Kermen-Kyr
  - 15 — barrow no. 1 in Pastak's land
  - 16 — Scythian Neapolis
  - 17 — Fontany
  - 18 — Levadki
  - 19 — Dzhalmán
  - 20 — Mamut-Sultan
  - 21 — Opushki
  - 22 — Besh-Oba
- Greek Cities  
 sanctuary Gurzufskoe Sedlo



Fig. 44. Late Scythian sites mentioned in this volume



ceramics supplied by him raises questions that do not have answers at least until he makes full publication of the results of his excavation. For example, the place selected by the Taurians for their settlement makes a surprise. All the late Kizil-Koba sites are located in another topographical situation (Колотухин 1996: 25), like the Kizil-Koba settlements on sides of the hill, which top was later occupied by Neapolis. Climbing on waterless steep promontory had sense only if there was need to build fortifications, though fortifications are not known in the Kizil-Koba culture. According to Zaytsev's description, the layer contained about thirty shards with incised decoration and multitude of amphorae from different centres. Such a combination of finds is not typical to the Kizil-Koba settlements. In all the cases, the number of shards of hand-made vessels is many times bigger than amphora fragments. There certainly were other finds discovered in the layer, particularly fragments of hand-made vessels without incised decoration. How many and which types? The monograph gives no reply. It is a pity, because this is the only background to attribute the culture, people of which produced the layer under discussion. For now, its Kizil-Koba attribution is far from being convincing.

From all the above-mentioned, I can draw general conclusion that the traditional interpretation is still valid: in the fourth and third centuries BC a settlement, still not discovered, occupied the place of future capital of the Late Scythian state.

The excavations of Bulganak (Храпунов, Мульд 1993: 8–9) (fig. 45) and Кермен-Кур (Пуздровский 1989b:

137; 2008: 274) sites of ancient towns revealed a small number of finds from the fourth century BC, mostly amphorae, including those with stamps, and black-slip pottery. In all three above-mentioned settlements, there were finds of shards of amphora and black-slip ceramics from the third century BC. This way, 16 of 27 datable amphora stamps from Bulganak site of ancient town were impressed in the third century BC (Храпунов, Федосеев 1997: 103). Apart from the largest Late Scythian fortresses, the fourth and third century BC finds have been obtained from reconnaissances of many small settlements in central and east Crimea (Колтухов 1999c: 20–23).

There are two archaeological facts that do not allow one to take the problem of establishment of the Late Scythian settlements out of discussion. Firstly, no Late Scythian site has a layer from the fourth and third centuries BC. In all the cases, the lowest deposits contained earlier finds together with the second century BC materials (Храпунов 1991: 8–9; Зайцев, Пуздровский 1994: 232; Зайцев 1995a: 71). Secondly, the excavations of cemeteries near the Late Scythian settlements never uncovered burials from earlier than the second century BC.

There are graves from the early stage of the Late Scythian period in barrows in Crimean foothill area. The barrows of Tavel' have already been discussed in the "Taurian" chapter. Nikolay Veselovskiy uncovered barrow no. 2 in S. I. Cherkes' land and barrow no. 1 in A. I. Pastak's land, both to the north of Simferopol (Веселовский 1985: 35; ОАК за 1895 г.: 9–10; Смекалова 2009:

94–99). There were tombs of ill-dressed limestone below barrow mounds. One of the tombs contained 173 human skulls, another more than 100 skulls.

The report just lists the finds uncovered by the excavation. Their composition actually does not contradict to our notion of the grave goods usually discovered in the Late Scythian burials. Barrow no. 2 in Cherkes' land contained, side by side with others, shards of black-slip vessels, bronze arrow-heads, censers with holes in neck, and *balsamarium*. Such a set of finds indicates the third and second centuries BC as the most probable date. Black slip salt-cellar dates from the second half of the fourth century BC (Полин 1992: 42; for drawings of some artefacts see: Троицкая 1957c: рис. 6; 7; 8a; 9). Although the finds from barrow no. 1 in Pastak's land are less chronologically indicative, bronze arrow-heads and the "*construction and contents of this tomb, which are absolutely similar to those of Cherkes' tomb in barrow no. 2*" (Veselovskiy) allow one to suppose that the chronology of both barrows is similar.

Excavation of Besh-Oba IV/2 barrow uncovered stone tomb containing remains of at least 24 persons buried in eight tiers. Poor grave goods date from the fourth to the second century BC (Колтухов 2001: 64–70). As far as one can understand from a brief publication, there were more burial structures of the type in vicinity (Колтухов, Мыщ 2001: 39–40).

Barrows with repeated burials in stone tombs are not related topographically with any of known Late Scythian settlements: they are located few kilometres far from the nearest Late Scythian settlements.

This way, we can interpret the third century BC as the period of transition when the Scythians settled thus making background for the shaping of the Late Scythian culture. This century was the time when general north Black Sea crisis happened: it appeared in the end of the rite of barrow burials in steppe (Полин 1992: 101), in the fall of country settlements in all Greek states in the Black Sea area (Крыжицкий et al. 1989: 100–101; Масленников 1998: 78, 83, 86–88; Щеглов 1978: 128), in the disappearance of the Kizil-Koba settlements and cemeteries (Щеглов 1998a), in the cease of life in settlements and in the end of the tradition to bury below barrows in the forest-steppe zone (Медведев 1999: 145–149). The data in possession allow one to guess that there were two groups of populations in the Crimea. The first group created repeated burials in stone tombs below barrows, the second populated hilltops where Late Scythian fortifications appeared later on. It is not clear whether these groups were of different *ethnoi* or economy types. The Scythians and the Taurians could participate in the shaping of both groups, as it has been discussed in the "Taurian" chapter against the example of Tavel' barrows. The finds from the fourth to second century BC settlements could not be separated by stratigraphy, so one cannot define elements of the material culture, like hand-made vessels, important for the determination of *ethnos* of the population and typical precisely to the third century BC.

Unclearness of the archaeological situation corresponds to the state of written sources. There is only one inscription from the third century BC discussing the



Fig. 45. Bulganak site of ancient town  
(photo: the author)

barbarians who lived near Chersonesos. They attacked the citizens who came out of the city walls (IOSPE I<sup>2</sup>: no. 343). The inscription does not contain *ethnonyms*, so one can only suppose, by logic, that the author had in mind the Scythians and Taurians. Yuriy G. Vinogradov used squeeze to read letters he reconstructed into the *ethnonym* of the Sarmatians. They are opposed to the barbarians who

attacked the Chersonesites. The context is obscure due to bad preservation of the document (Виноградов 1997: 115), so if Vinogradov's reconstruction is correct, it will still remain unknown whether the mentioned Sarmatians lived in the Crimea or outside of it.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Vinogradov told us a story that the Scythian and Taurian pirates captured the Chersonesites who were collecting grapes. After that, they unsuccessfully tried to sell the captives to the Sarmatians (Виноградов 1997: 115–120; Виноградов 1999: 61). This interpretation seems just like a fairy tale. According to his reconstruction of the events, barbarians made the harvest collectors captives, studied routes of Sarmatian invasions, and went to the limits of Bosporan state thus crossing the Crimean peninsula from west to east. Forced by Philhellenic feelings, king Pairisades II sent his warriors who successfully returned the Chersonesites back to their fatherland. It is not clear why the pirates took risk when advancing to Bosporos and did not go to the Perekop isthmus: when the Sarmatians came to the Crimea, they were not able to omit the isthmus. Vinogradov logically supposed that grape harvesting in Chersonesos was in August and September; according to his non-grounded opinion, the pirates went to sell captives in late autumn or early winter. If it was the case, they had to feed and clothe their captives (because they certainly not collected grape with winter clothes), including women and children, for two or three months, as well as took them somewhere outside settlements, where the barbarians frightened to return because of possible Chersonesos' revenge, as the commentator of the epigraphic documents thinks. So the cost of live trade went high (for the expense of provisions, cloths and trade resources required for guarding), though its price went low (the stay enslaved certainly influenced the quality of slaves), and the Scythians and Taurians wanted to exchange it for cattle somewhere in open steppe. They had to rely on the noble-

About a hundred years after the above-mentioned inscription, Chersonesos made a treaty with the Pontic king Pharnakes I. It was aimed specifically against the tribes dangerous for Chersonesos. Pharnakes promised his help “*if neighbouring barbarians started a foray against Chersonesos or the country under the Chersonesites’ power*” (IOSPE I<sup>2</sup>: no. 402). We can see that here Crimean population also did not have a proper name: it was generally called “barbarians.”

Ethnonyms appeared in written sources describing military operations in the Crimea in the late second century BC. The authors of the decree carved in the base of statue for Pontic military leader Diophantos (IOSPE I<sup>2</sup>: no. 369) used the ethnonym “Scythians” several times, to indicate the main enemy of Chersonesos and Pontic army. Palakos is called the “Scythian” king. The Scythians had their “royal” fortresses of Khabaioi and Neapolis, located in the heart of Scythia, and probably some other forts; Diophantos set at them in his second campaign, which started so unhappy. Headed by Saumakos Scythians rebelled in Bosporos and killed the king Pairisades. The decree mentions two peoples other than the Scythians. According to the context, the Taurians lived somewhere very close to Chersonesos; Diophantos subdued them. In the bat-

tle near Kalos Limen, the most bloody battle of that war, joint forces of the Chersonesites and the Pontians defeated “the people of Reuxinaloi,” attracted by Palakos as allies. Let us note that the authors of the document clearly separated all the three peoples. The Taurians did not fight together with the Scythians: they were a victim of circumstances, because Palakos decided to attack the army of Diophantos in the area populated by them. It is also important to mention that the document uses ethnopolitical term “Scythia”: Diophantos reached the middle of it during his first campaign.

When Strabo described the same events as the decree honouring Diophantos, he called Skilouros and his sons headed by Palakos “Scythians” (Strabo *Geogr.* 7. 4. 3). As for the allies of Palakos, smashed by Diophantos, he called them the “Roxolanoi” (not the “people of Reuxinaloi” as in the decree honouring Diophantos) (Strabo *Geogr.* 7. 3. 17). Later on, this name became traditional in Greco-Roman literature.

Sergey Tokhtas’yev has acutely opposed the generally accepted opinion that the Reuxinaloi and the Roxolanoi are the same. He points out that these ethnonyms “could be derived from the same Iranian pre-form in no way, and therefore cannot be a name for the same people” (Тохтасъев 2005: 294). In spite of this, it is obvious that both Strabo and

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ness of their partners who, first, should take necessary quantity of cattle with them when going on foray, and, second, refuse of provoking idea to kill the pirates and took their captives. Vinogradov thinks that neither the Sarmatians nor the Scythians or Taurians had a chance to sell Greek slaves in the Black Sea markets. Consequently, the Sarmatians had to have practice Greek labour, which was not mention in written or archaeological sources. Theoretically, we can imagine how could they use female slaves, but what for did they need children? Meanwhile, the pirates passed children through the whole Crimea and planned to imprison them until the Sarmatians come, because Bosporan warriors successfully liberated them and sent to Chersonesos.

the decree mention the same event with the same participants.

There is an ill-preserved inscription about a struggle for Kalos Limen, of the chronology very close to the decree honouring Diophantos (IOSPE I<sup>2</sup>: no. 353). It contains clearly legible ethnonym of the Scythians. Only two letters remained of the name of another people; Michael Rostovtzeff proposed to add more letters to read the whole word as “Sauromatians” (Ростовцев 1917: 6) or Sarmatians (Ростовцев 1915b: 160).

Several short accounts of written sources date back from the period when the Scythians became the subjects of the Pontic king Mithridates VI Eupator, that is the late second century BC, to 63 BC when Mithridates committed suicide. Memnon in his treatise “History of Herakleia” twice mentioned Scythian kings in plural: the Romans obliged Mithridates “*that he should restore to the kings of the Scythians their ancestral territory*” (Memn. *Heracl.* 22); later, this king “*sent envoys to the kings of the Scythians*” (Memn. *Heracl.* 29). In 86 BC, the Roman commander (and later dictator) Sulla accused Mithridates that he, “*although not yet at war with any nation, sought the alliance of the Thracians, Sarmatians, and Scythians...*” (Appian *Mithr.* 57). One can imagine the nature of this alliance from Mithridates considered Scythians among his friends “*ready to obey his every command*” (Appian *Mithr.* 15). Plutarch informs that among the captives led in Pompey’s triumph were “*Scythian women,*” probably wives of Mithridates (Plut. *Pomp.* 45. 4). Another Roman historian Appian wrote that

Mithridates “*sent some of his daughters in charge of eunuchs to be married to the Scythian princes*” (Appian *Mithr.* 108). Sometimes, the Pontic king sent “*gold and other presents*” to the Scythians (Appian *Mithr.* 78). According to Justin, Mithridates “*had an army from Scythia*” (Just. *Hist.* 38. 3).

Therefore, written sources inform that in the late second century BC the Scythians populated the Crimean peninsula but the Greek states. They occupied a compact area which is called “Scythia” in the decree honouring Diophantos. They lived in fortresses and had kings. Ancient writers distinctly separated the Scythians from the Taurians and Sarmatians.

The sources hint that the Scythians were not homogenous ethnically and probably divided into tribes. Strabo informs about the sons of Skilouros, 50 in number according to one account or 80 according to the other. All of them built fortresses and waged war with Mithridates (Strabo *Geogr.* 7. 4. 3, 7). These sons were not necessarily own children of the Scythian patriarch. It could be the name of leaders of some territorial and administrative units (Щерлов 1988b: 34), or, more likely, of tribal chiefs united around the most powerful of them during the war.

Memnon’s account of Scythian kings in plural conducted V. Karasyov to the idea of the existence of several Scythian kingdoms (Карасев 1969: 8–9), though according to Anatoly Khazanov Scythian state divided into districts (Хазанов 1975a: 198). There also are important reasons for the interpretation of the Scythian kings as chiefs of different tribes.

The decree honouring Diophantos mentions Scythian royal fortresses of Khabaioi and Neapolis (IOSPE P: no. 352); Strabo mentions these two fortresses along with Palakion (Strabo *Geogr.* 7. 4. 7). There is a fragmented decree from Chersonesos honouring a person who “advanced against Napites fortress” (Соломоник 1964: 9–10). This way, we know names of four Late Scythian fortresses.

Names of two of them, Palakion and Napites, are interesting for the ethnic history of the Scythians. Diodoros Sikeliotes tells a version of origin of this people informing that the legendary ancestors of the Scythians were brothers Palos and Napes, and the peoples of the Palians and the Napians descended from them. The descendants of Palos and Napes migrated from the North Caucasus and conquered a large country from Tanais to Thrace (Diod. *Hist.* 2. 43. 3–4).

Pliny says that the Napians were destroyed either by the Palians (Plin. *Hist. nat.* 6. 22), according to one account, or by other Scythian tribes, according to another (Plin. *Hist. nat.* 6. 22). Stephen of Byzantium got information about settlement of Napites and ethnic name of Napittoi in Scythia (s. v. Νάπις). This way, it is the case of a strong tradition of Greco-Roman historiography of the prominent role played by the Palians and the Napians in the history of Scythia.

According to the fortress names, the belonging to one of these tribes was apprehended in the Late Scythian period. Appropriate ethnic name probably reflected in the name of Palakos, one of Scythian kings. Adjective derived from the name of this king remains (without

context) in the epitaph of an Armenian bowman buried in Chersonesos (Макаров 2005: 243). One must also remember the Napians, Taurian “kingdom” or tribe according to Ammianus Marcellinus (Amm. Marc. *Res Gestae* 22. 8. 33). Ammianus lived in the fourth century AD, so he could take this data from later sources, that recorded the process of integration of the Scythians and the Taurians, when Scythian ethnonym spread to this mixed population.

Etymology of the ethnonym “Napians” and words of the same stem is interesting. As Vasilii Abayev put it, in Ossetian, *Naf* is the name of a deity (probably tribal) and of a holiday. *Naf(f)* means navel and originates from Arian \**nabh-*, Indo-European \**nobh-*, i. e. “navel,” later “kinship.” In this case, Ossetian *f* originates from *bh* and not from *p*, as usual (Абаев 1973: 148–149). In his other study, Abayev mentions that Ossetian is the only Iranian language where *p* became *f* in all the cases. This phoneme could be dated from the second to the fourth century AD and could be related to the influence of Germanic languages, most probably Gothic (Абаев 1965: 33–35). If the common rule (*p*→*f*, not *bh*→*f*) in case with *Naf*, it would be possible to imagine the transition of *Nap* to *Naf*, so the origin of words with stem *Nap* is to be related with the idea of kinship or kinship relations, which is a very good name for a tribe.

Dmitriy Rayevskiy used Avestan *nafa-* and mid-Persian *vaβ-*, i. e. “relatives, community,” or “navel-string” to suppose that in Scythian language the word “Napians” referred to a collective like *patronymia* (a group of families with common name derived from

a forefather) (Раевский 1977: 186; cf.: Луконин 1987: 114). In his opinion, “Palians” and “Napians,” according to tripartite division of society typical to Indo-European peoples, referred to two social layers, warriors and community members, the Kshatriyas and the Vaisyas (Раевский 1976: 105; Раевский 1977: 77). However taking all the afore-said into account, there are more arguments to think that the “Palians” and the “Napians” were ethnic terms rather than social.

Oleg Trubachyov suggested another etymology. In his opinion, *nap* stem means “smaller, younger ones” (Трубачев 1999с: 197). This interpretation corresponds well to Diodoros’ story of two brothers, of whom Napes probably was the younger.

Finally, I should mention Andrey Beletskiy’s study analysing ancient Greek, and not Indo-European, linguistic materials. In his opinion, in the core of the place name mentioned within the phrase ἐπὶ Νάπιταν φρούρι[ον] could be ancient Greek *νάπη* or *νάπος* with semantic sense “forest valley” (Белецкий 1969: 205). In this case, we are dealing with the term theoretically good to refer to a fortress, though inappropriate for ethnonyms.

The second century BC ethnonyms of the Crimean population was not restricted to the Scythians and Taurians. There is an inscription discovered in Neapolis that mention “piratic Satarchaioi,” who were defeated by Posideos son of Posideos (IOSPE, I<sup>2</sup>: no. 672). Scholars have identified these Satarchaioi with the Satarches known from some written sources (Десятчиков 1973). Domitios Kallistratos, as reproduced by Stephen

of Byzantium (Steph. Byz. *Ethnica* s. v. *Τάφραι*) and Pomponius Mela, localized this tribe in the northern tip of the Crimean peninsula (Mela *Chorogr.* 2. 2–4). It seems that the Greeks sometimes called the Satarches the “Taphrians” according to the place of their residence, near ancient ditches (Столба 1993: 59). Although different opinions have been expressed about the ethnicity of the Satarches, none of them is proved. Attempts to relate the Satarches with some known archaeological sites are also unsuccessful (Щеглов 1998b: 143–146, with necessary bibliography). This way, regarding the Satarches, we can only say that they appeared in the north Crimea under Skilouros, were not his subjects and differed from the Scythians ethnically.

Following Shcheglov, let us turn the attention to the names of two goddesses. The first, Dithagoia, was carved on marble table dedicated to this goddess in the sanctuary located in the acropolis of Pantikapaion by Senamotis, daughter of Skilouros. The second name, Targa, was scratched on a few shards discovered in the second century BC sanctuary in the Tarkhankut peninsula in the north-west Crimea. Both names cannot be etymologized from Iranian languages, so they can allude to certain non-Scythian elements in the Crimean population (Щеглов 1998b: 148–149).

There were some Greeks living among the Scythians in the second century BC. This is doubtless for the case of the Late Scythian capital. Merchant Posideos of Olbia erected four statues to Greek gods in Neapolis (IOSPE I<sup>2</sup>: nos. 670–672; Дашевская 1960; Соломоник 1962b: 36–41). Presumably, he played an

outstanding role in the king Skilouros' court being a counsellor and navarch of the Scythian king (Виноградов 1989: 241–246). Another Greek, Eumenos by name, decorated a building located not far from the city gate and containing a statue of Demeter (СОЛОМОНИК 1958: 312).

The Scythians also lived in Bosporos, amidst the Greeks. Indisputable fact is that Scythian princess and daughter of Skilouros Senamotis was married to a Bosporan aristocrat in Pantikapaion (Виноградов 1987). The second husband of Bosporan queen Kamasarue was a man with Iranian name Argotas (КВН: no. 75), probably representing the dynasty ruling in Scythia (Виноградов 1987: 61). His name is preserved in poetic inscription discovered in Scythian Neapolis (Виноградов, Зайцев 2003). The decree honouring Diophantos speaks of the Scythians who, headed by Saumakos, rebelled in Bosporos, killed the king Pairisades and took possession of Pantikapaion and Theodosia for some time. Researchers have been discussing the number of Saumakos' Scythians, their social status, reasons for and aim of their rebel for ages. Most colleagues think that it was the rebel of the Scythians who lived in Bosporos permanently. There also is another interpretation that Saumakos headed a troop that invaded the Bosporan kingdom from Scythia. So neither him nor his subordinates could be interpreted as permanent residents of Greek *poleis* (the latest work on the topic with summary of some results of previous discussion: Гаврилов 1992).

To sum up the review of written sources, I should underline again that they almost not mention Crimean population in the third and most part of the

second century BC. In a very few cases, they use the term “barbarians” rather than definite ethnonyms. Synchronous archaeological sites are very rare and uninformative, at least for ethnic attributions. I can hypothesise *a priori* that the third century BC north Black Sea crisis revealed, among other aspects, the decrease of the number and the increase of mobility of the population. The latter circumstance must result in growing number of contacts between different groups, not necessarily of the same *ethnos*. Probably, the Greeks not always understood the instable ethnic situation and applied the correct name of barbarians to the tribes they were dealing with.

The situation drastically changed by the second half of the second century BC. There is unprecedented in the Late Scythian history number of written sources describing the end of the century. This is not a surprise. The Late Scythians participated in the struggle between superpowers initially as enemies and later as allies of Mithridates VI Eupator. Once the Scythians became often guests of Hellenic literary works and scholarly treatises because of their victory over Darius. Their participation in the events of the age of Mithridates attracted attention from Roman historian. Not accidentally Justin says that Mithridates appealed to his warriors before the third war with the Rome comparing himself with Darius and Philip of Macedonia thus underestimating their successes and raising his own (Just. *Hist.* 38. 7).

By that moment, Greco-Roman writers including those who lived in the Crimea had no doubts concerning the ethnicity of the residents of the inland. They use the ethnonym of the “Scythians” re-



ferring to them many times and in many contexts. They populated the country called Scythia by the authors of the decree honouring Diophantos. When it was the case of other tribes including the Sarmatians (Sauromatians) or Roxolans allied to the Scythians, neutral Taurians or alien Satarches, ancient writers clearly separated them from the population of the Scythian kingdom, having their own names. Barbarians who lived amidst the Greeks like in the case of Saumakos in Bosphoros were called the Scythians as well.

The process of consolidation of various tribes probably finished in the Crimea in the second century BC. In spite of hardly but still definable by written sources tribal difference, the population of the Late Scythian kingdom understood themselves as a single people, the Scythians. Although it is not known whether there was endoethnonym corresponding to the exoethnonym of the Scythians, considerable differences in the identity of various population groups could hardly remain unnoticed by various observers, among which should be, willy-nilly, the Chersonesites, as they did not leave unnoticed ethnic features of, for example, the Taurians.

The sources have not kept even a tint of which exact tribes concentrated in the Crimea in the period of the formation of the Scythian kingdom. However, the ancients unanimously supply its population by the ethnonym leaving no doubts that they were descendants of the Scythians that roamed in the Black Sea steppes to the fourth century BC inclusively. Therefore, some researchers' attempts to call the population of Skilouros' kingdom in other way are

senseless (Пуздровский 1999а: 109; Зайцев 1999: 142–144, 147). They are even not able to invent a name for this population other than the ancient writers' version. Such are the conclusions drawn against the background of written sources.

Archaeology presents the second century BC Late Scythian culture as a specific phenomenon. The largest of their fortified settlements, Neapolis, Bulganak and Kermen-Kyr, existed in this century (figs. 46–47). In all three cases, they choose promontories above river valleys, protected with natural precipices or steep slopes from three sides, for building fortifications. Defensive structures were erected where the promontory met plateau. There were stone wall in Neapolis, moat and rampart where stone wall with towers was built later in Kermen-Kyr, and rampart in Bulganak, viewed by Pavel Shul'ts and later destroyed by agricultural works. Investigations of Kermen-Kyr and Bulganak sites of ancient towns revealed walls forming the second line of defence and extra protection of the promontory tip, the so-called acropolis (fig. 48).

Initially, fortification walls had three-layered vertical cross-section, and later were widened with extra-built rings of masonry. In all the cases, the walls were strengthened with towers filled with rubblework inside. Defensive structures were laid with irregular masonry of undressed or roughly-cut stones. In front of the main defensive wall of Neapolis probably was an advanced wall (Высотская 1979: 37–43; Храпунов, Мульд 1993; Колтухов 1999с: 29–44).

The Scythians established their settlement in the mouth of the Al'ma river

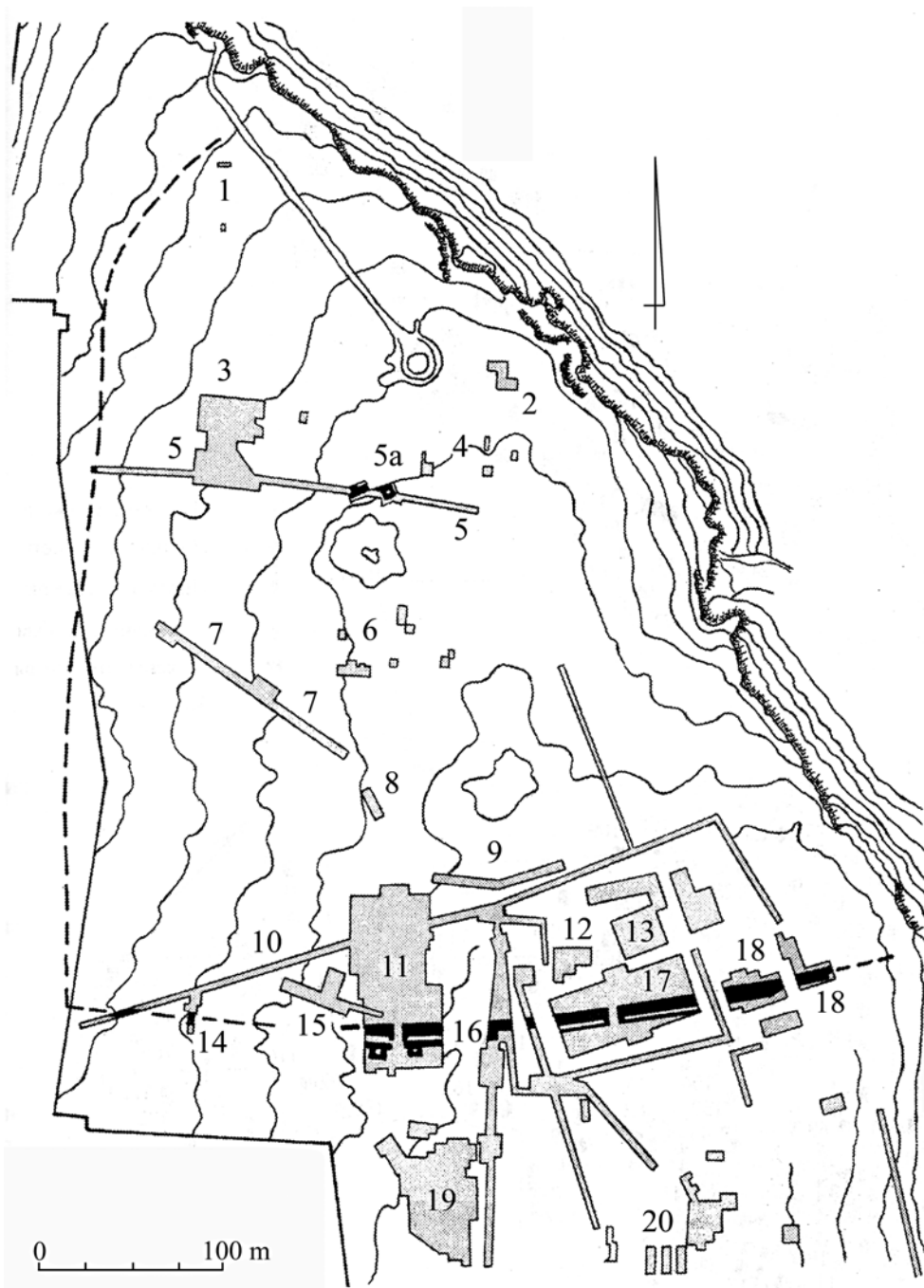


Fig. 46. Plan of Scythian Neapolis  
(Зайцев 2003: рис. 5)

in the late second century BC, probably after they took possession of all the Greek settlements in the north-west Crimea (fig. 49). It was protected with rampart with both ends adjoining precipices and an angle projecting into the field side (Высотская 1994a: 12–14).

The Scythians took Greek settlements in the north-west Crimea and built their own fortifications in the form of stone walls with towers or moats and ramparts instead of destroyed constructions. Belyaus site was the only place where they initially used Greek fortifications, probably well-preserved (Дашевская 1990: 144, 151, 152).

Excavations of Neapolis uncovered a number of buildings from the Hellenistic period (fig. 50). They are mainly two- or three-room houses with rectangular ground plan. The rooms are stretched along one axis. Doorways were traced in house R, so it became clear that three rooms composing it did not have direct functional connection. Door of every room was located in north outer wall and probably lead to the courtyard. Floors were of soil or paved clay. Dadoes were constructed of undressed stones, walls of raw-brick, roofs were often made of organic materials. Rich houses have

plastered walls with fresco decorations and tiled roofs. Sometimes subterranean rooms were carved into bedrock below the floor of a house (Высотская 1979: 74–80).

The first of the so-called *megaron* houses including the largest one were constructed in the second century BC. They were built according to the same principle: the house consisted of main room of a large size and a small vestibule separated by a wall with doorway (Зайцев 1995b). Walls were laid of undressed stone and raw brick. Sometimes they were plastered and painted from inside. Floors were paved with clay. Rich buildings had tiled roofs (figs. 51–52).

There is a singular house excavated in Neapolis: it was built in pure Greek style, with some reconstructions. It consisted of two porticoes connected with a wall. Porticoes were built in Doric style (a capital was excavated) with use of rusticated ashlar. The roof was tiled. Bronze and marble statues, dedicative inscriptions and reliefs were probably placed into this house (Высотская 1979: 58–59).<sup>11</sup>

Besides aboveground buildings, there were subterranean houses of rectangular and circular ground plan in the city and

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<sup>11</sup> Zaytsev calls this house the “parade façade of the South Palace” and suggests a graphic reconstruction of it (Зайцев 2003: рис. 27; 48). This “parade façade” was a two-storey house crowned with parapet. On the north, very close to it, there was another house R with façade to the opposite direction, to the north. The monograph does not supply any background for such a reconstruction. Surprisingly, according to Zaytsev’s reconstruction, this fundamental façade did not have any door. The latter feature can probably be explained because there was no doorway in the monumental wall discovered in that place. In this respect, the former reconstruction of this building as solid wall terminating with portico on either end seem more reliable. However, they were not supported by any detailed architectural and archaeological argument as well.

If the “parade façade of the palace” “*had the appearance of a wall with projecting pylons*” (Зайцев 2003: 24), it is not clear why the graphic reconstruction has two lines of windows drawn. Such a wall with windows being an independent house seems to be something new in architecture.

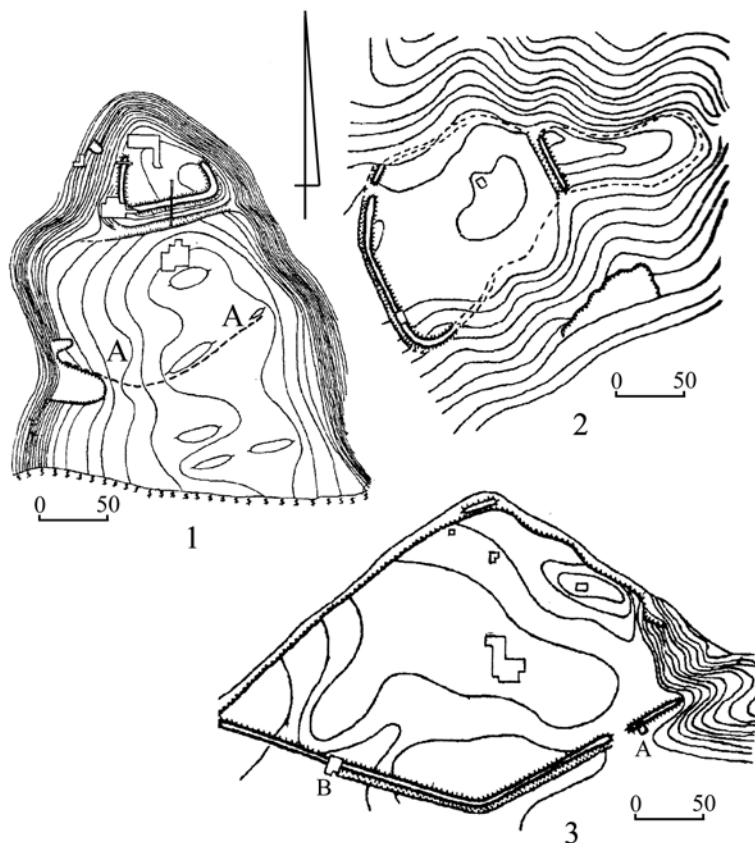


Fig. 47. Plans of Late Scythian towns:  
 1 – Bulganak; 2 – Kermen-Kyr;  
 3 – Ust'-Al'ma  
 (Колтухов 1999с: рис. 67)

suburban territory (Высотская 1979: 81–83). First residents of Bulganak settlement used a small oval subterranean house; it was covered with rubbish in the second century BC (Храпунов 1991: 19, 27). After conquering Kerkitinitis about the mid-second century BC, the Scythians lived there in subterranean houses for some time. After that, they built ground houses, carelessly and probably quickly laid of stones taken from destroyed Greek houses. Scythian settlement at place of the Hellenic city was destroyed most likely in the late second century BC in course of Diophantos' wars (Кутайсов 1990: 113–122).

Principles of architecture and planning, as well as building technologies

used by the Scythians in their fortifications, residential and public buildings were specific, typical only to the Late Scythian culture. The Greeks were the only people from which the Scythians could borrow some architectural and building technologies. However, the only common feature of Greek and Scythian systems of fortifications were stone walls and towers. It looks like the Scythians knew only the outer look of the fortifications of ancient Greek *poleis*. Anyway, two parallel frontal de-

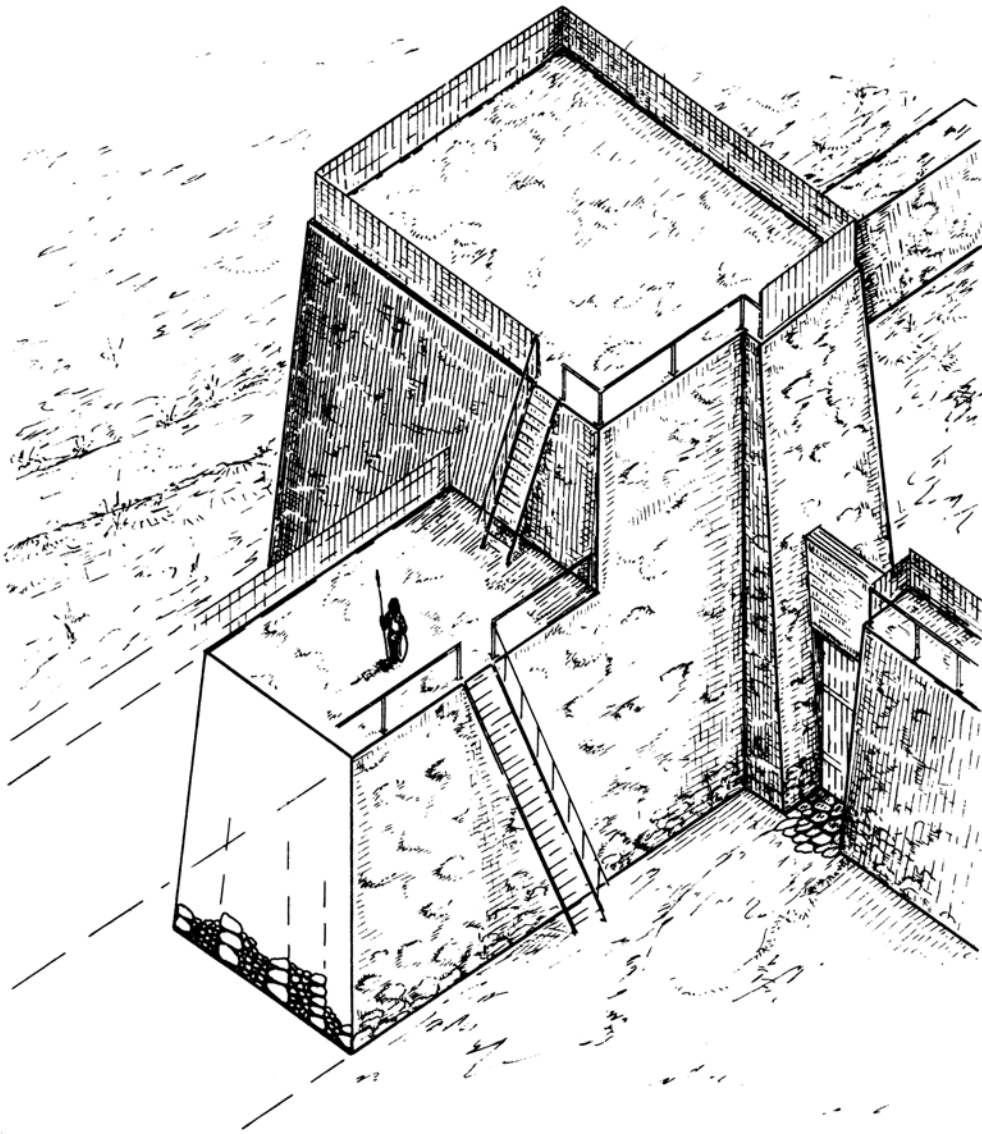


Fig. 48. Bulganak site of ancient town.  
Tower near the entrance to acropolis  
(reconstruction: Sergey Mul'd)

fensive lines, the lack of dressed stones in masonry, the idea to fill the towers with rubble inside, as well as multiple reinforcements of the walls with extra masonry rings clearly indicate non-

Greek origin of their architects and builders.

However, the regular use of these techniques recorded by excavation of various sites is one of the features allowing us to interpret them as a single archaeological culture. The excavation of the ancient wall in Bulganak site uncovered that it had uneven width, with



Fig. 49. Ust'-Al'ma site of ancient town and cemetery. Viewed from space

0.4 m difference between its west and east sections. This feature could be possibly explained as the builders had not necessary experience or necessary tools. The Scythians' inexperience in building of defences could also be viewed in the location of household pits just near the inner face of the wall. These pits should hamper the defenders of the fortress to make quick moves (Храпунов, Мульд 1993: 12). The main city gate of Neapolis could not be constructed by an ancient Greek architect: the towers were located close to the gateway, without any connection with the city (Крыжицкий 1993: 220). The only fortification element certainly borrowed by the Scythians from the Greeks was the advanced wall in front of the main wall of Neapolis.

Fortification ramparts and moats in front of them do not allow one to determine the *ethnos* of their builders. It would be easy to find analogies in many Eurasian cultures within large territorial and chronological frames.

As for the aboveground houses, there was specific *megaron* type. In the Black Sea area in the Greco-Roman period, such buildings are known in the Late Scythian settlements only, so the researchers studied them time and time again. There are two main points of the discussion: architectural prototypes of the houses of *megaron* type and their function. Pavel Shul'ts supposed that the Scythians could find architectural prototype in Greek temples *in antis*, though that such an idea could also originate in Scythian environment. In his opinion, the *megara* were partly cult buildings and partly residential houses (Шульц 1971:

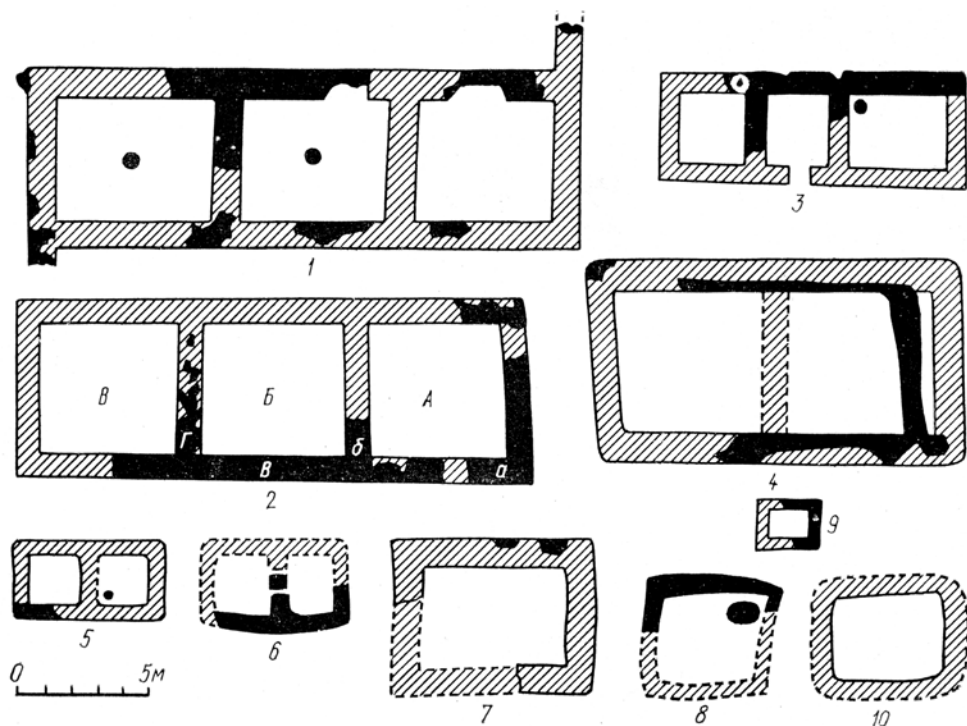


Fig. 50. Neapolis. Ground plans of residential buildings (Высотская 1979: рис. 23)

135). Tat'yana Vysotskaya had no doubts that all the *megaron* buildings were cult spaces. She developed Shul'ts idea and connected their origin with temple *in antis* (Высотская 1979: 68–69). Zaytsev have shown convincingly that the *megaron* buildings were built in all the territory of the Late Scythian capital during all the periods of its existence, for various purposes (Зайцев 1995b: 96–97). Sergey Kryzhitskiy have analysed the buildings under discussion as a striking feature of non-Greco-Roman tradition. Greek *poleis* had no analogy to the *megaron* buildings, even no such a principle of planning. The idea of *megaron* probably developed in Scythian environment

independently (Крыжицкий 1982: 145; Крыжицкий 1993: 226–228, 231).

Stone and raw-brick houses of rectangular ground plan have elementary planning and building technology, but nothing to do with Greek buildings. The so-called “house with porticoes” is another case. Apparently, there is no exact analogy to the house in the shape of a wall terminating with portico in either side seems to be unknown. However, the idea of making gallery limited with columns on three sides, with use of Doric order elements, was probably borrowed by the Scythians from the Greeks. Hellenic influence was probably related with the tradition of painting walls of houses with bright colours.

The Scythians applied some techniques, although rather elementary, to construct fortifications, residential and

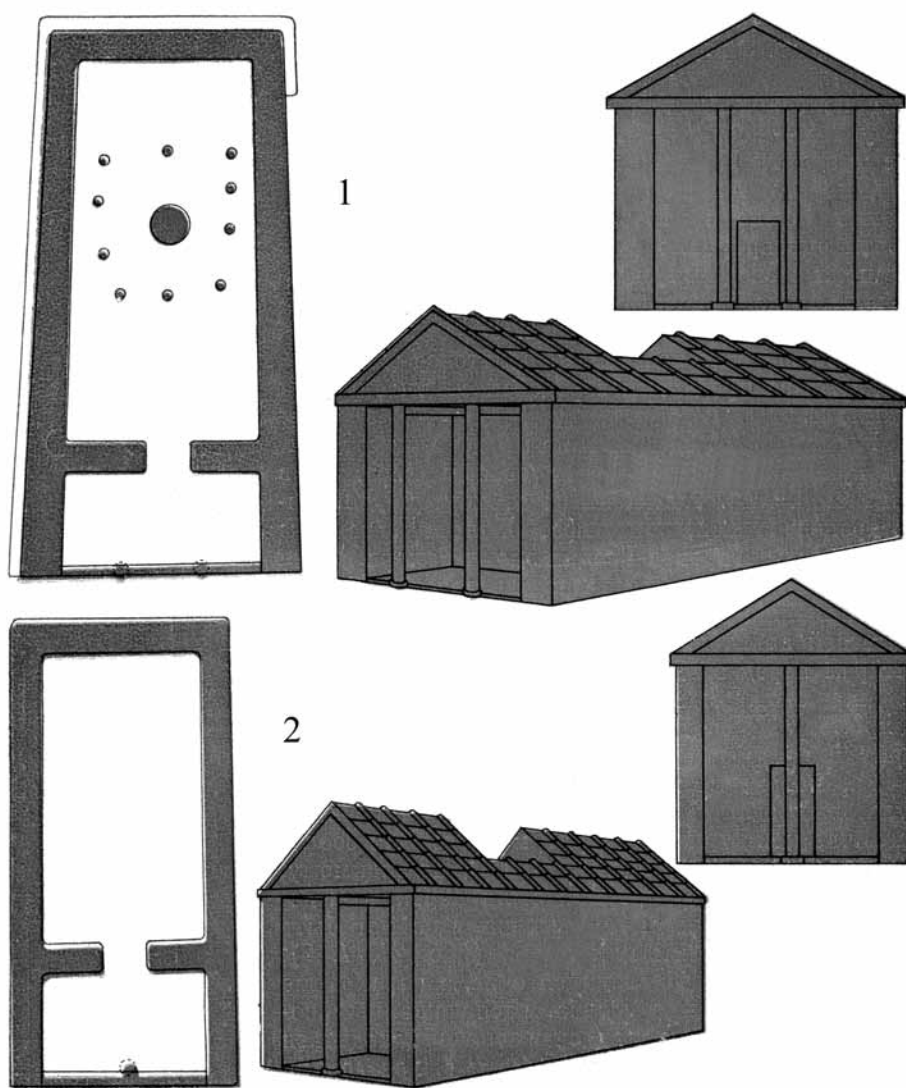


Fig. 51. Neapolis. Megaron buildings. Ground plans and cross-sections (Высотская 1979: рис. 21)

economic buildings. They did not know how to dress building stones carefully, so they had to invent a method of strengthening corners of houses with large Г-shaped stones (Высотская 1983a: 8). Sometimes they made joining banks of huge stones within the wall for better connection of its faces (Высотская 1979: 38). Another specific Scythian building technique was also recorded: they made ashy sub-layers

below clay-paved floors to enhance hydro- and thermo-isolation of rooms and to protect them from animals, insects, maggots and lizards (Припусков 1957; Кутайсов 1990: 115).

The search for prototypes of the Late Scythian buildings among the monu-



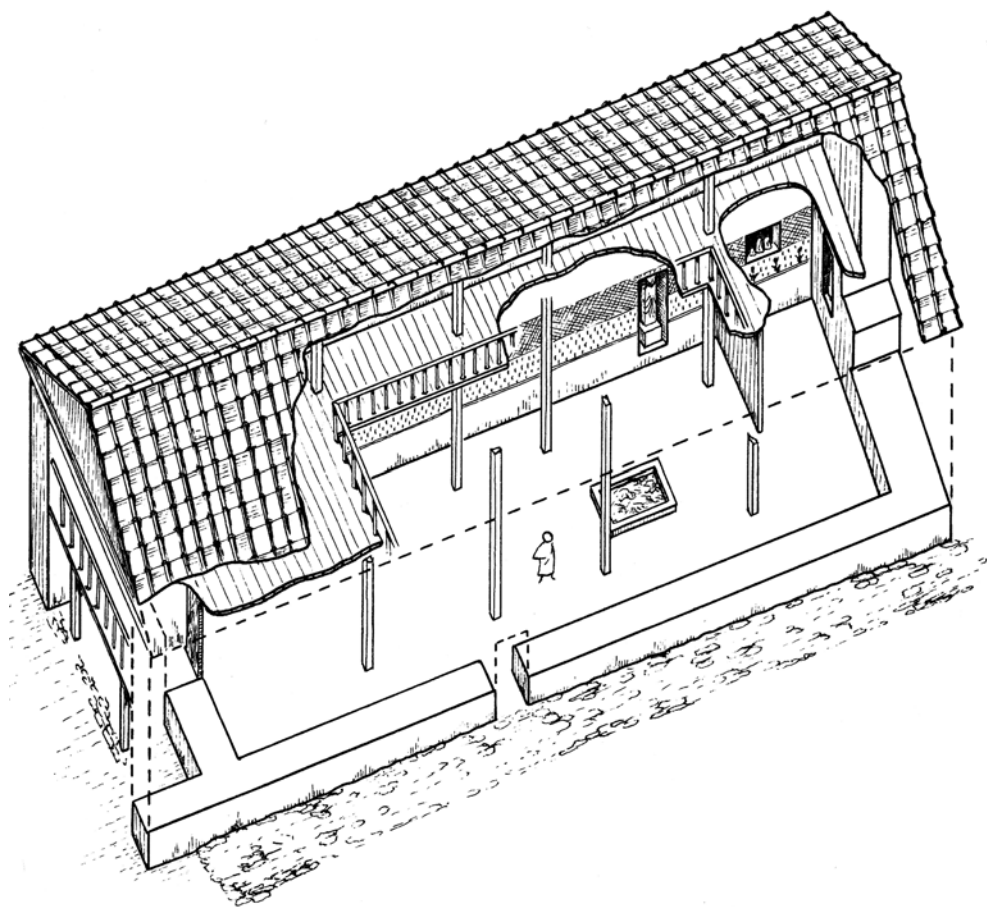


Fig. 52. Neapolis. Megaron building  
(reconstruction: Yuriy Zaytsev)

ments of Early Scythian period brought no results. Remains of buildings recorded by excavations of Kamenska (Граков 1954: 60–63) or Yelisavetovka (Марченко, Житников, Яковенко 1988: 67, 73) sites of ancient towns are of simplest types, typical to many peoples who turned to settled way of life. However, one can make a note that light wattle-and-daub buildings in Kamenska site or large pit-houses of Yelisavetovka site have no analogies among the Late Scythian buildings, though small circu-

lar pit-houses and rectangular houses of stone and raw-brick of Yelisavetovka site are similar to the Late Scythian ones.

Pit-houses with circular, oval or rectangular ground plan are known in all the Late Scythian sites in the Crimea excavated in wide areas (fig. 53). The tradition of houses sunken into ground existed throughout the whole period of the Late Scythian culture (see for example: Высокская 1979: 81–83, 85; Высокская 1988; Кутайсов 1990: 113–115; Храпунов 1991: 27; Храпунов at al. 1994: 91; Уженцев 1994). Pit-houses are often interpreted as temporary dwellings (Кутайсов 1990: 115). It probably was

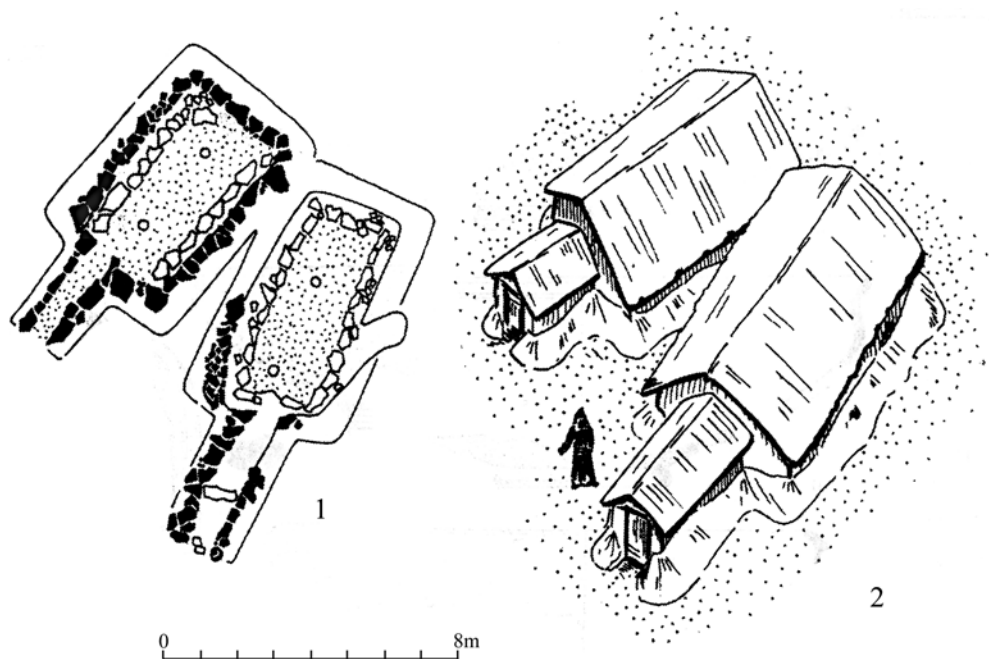


Fig. 53. Pit-houses  
in suburban area of Neapolis  
(Зайцев 2003: рис. 100)

sometimes the case: for example, in Kerkinitis, or when the first residents of Bulganak site constructed a pit-house on the side of the hill before making long-term dwellings on its top. However, pit-houses were generally constructed as long as the Late Scythian settlements existed and were used as residence similarly to aboveground houses.

Circular pit-houses lined with stones are often called *yurts* (Высотская 1979: 83; Дашевская 1989: 130). This Turkish term is hardly appropriate. Vadim Kutaysov has criticised it with arguments: he has paid attention that *yurts* were probably invented more than five hundred years after the Late Scythian circular pit-houses (Кутайсов 1990: 113). I would like to add that in the most cases the type of covering of circular pit-house remains undiscovered, so one can hardly imagine whether they looked like *yurts* or not.

However, there is a building discovered in the settlement of Kara-Tobe with undoubtedly tent-like covering, similar to *yurt*, because of two lines of post holes forming an angle (Шульц 1941: 273). Excavations of Southern Donuzlav fortified settlement uncovered a pit-house probably of the same construction because it has a post hole in the centre (Дашевская 1967: 69–70), and more such cases were found in Kalos Limen (Уженцев 1994: 249). However, these constructions were not covered with skins or felt as in real *yurts*: in Southern Donuzlav there were remains of clay coating with traces of wigs.

The idea that circular pit-houses were a remnant of nomadic life of the Scythians (Шульц 1941: 274) or

Sarmatians (Щеглов 1970: 24; Щеглов 1978: 85) seems not well grounded. Firstly, the duration of pit-houses would allow one to suggest that either the nomads continued settling in Scythian settlements from the second century BC to the third century AD, or semi-nomads permanently lived there, though it is not supported by written sources. Secondly, and as it has already been discussed, pit-houses also had ground plans other than semi-circular, though constructions of other shape could hardly be related to nomadic way of life. Thirdly, pit-houses are known in many cultures having nothing to do with nomadism. For example, they existed in Greek cities, especially during the formation of *poleis* (Крыжицкий 1982: 11–14). Pit-houses probably were a type of dwelling meeting the needs of the Scythians, therefore they became important element of the Late Scythian archaeological culture.

The analysis of hand-made pottery from the layers deposited in the Late Scythian settlements mainly in the second century BC, before the army of Diophantos took them, allowed Vladimir Vlasov to draw some important conclusions. It appeared that about a half of earliest Late Scythian vessels did not have prototypes in other cultures. About one fifth of the vessels shows direct dependency of the ware typical to usual Scythian barrow burials from the fifth and fourth centuries BC. There also is a rather representative group of ceramics (ca. 10 %) either analogous to Taurian ware or combining Taurian and Late Scythian ceramic traditions. Few vessels have analogies in the Zarubintsy culture. Two jugs and nozzled lamps were made

under the influence of ancient Greek samples (Власов 1999a: 9–10).

In general, the study of hand-made ceramics demonstrates that the descendants of nomadic Scythians predominated among the residents of the Late Scythian settlements in the first stage of their history. Besides them, the Taurians probably took part in the formation of the Late Scythian culture and were assimilated. The proper Late Scythian tradition of making hand-made vessels started in the second century BC. It reflected in the appearance of many ceramic shapes without prototypes or analogies in other cultures. A few finds of vessels of specific forms allow one to suppose that small collectives of the people of the Zarubintsy culture penetrated into the Crimea (Власов 2001a: 177).

Besides hand-made ceramics, layers of Late Scythian settlements are saturated with shards of Greek-made pottery, particularly amphorae, black-slip and simple wheel-made ware, as well as “Megarian” bowls. There also are Greek lamps, altars and terracotta statuettes (Зайцев 1990: 89–90).

Excavations discovered very few Late Scythian burial structures from the second century BC. Among them is the Scythian nobility mausoleum near the city gate of Neapolis. It was a rectangular building with the lower part of it constructed similarly to the defensive walls, of undressed or slightly dressed stones, though its top part was laid of sun-dried bricks. All the inner space of the mausoleum was used for burials. There were stone tomb with very rich, probably royal burial, carved wooden construction (fig. 54), and 37 wooden coffins placed in few tiers. Besides that,

four horses and dog were buried below the floor. One more dog was immured in the wall above the door (Шульц 1953; Погрёбова 1961; Зайцев 2001).<sup>12</sup>

Although the chronology of the earliest burials in the mausoleum is disputable, there is no doubt that the building was constructed in the second century BC (Погрёбова 1961: 175). This unique construction has no analogy in the Late Scythian sites, as well as in world archaeology. The same could be said about the stone tomb, the most ancient construction in the mausoleum. Although early Scythian tradition probably reflected in hundreds of gold badges, big number of weapons and burials of

horses, there is actually nothing to compare with the burial in the stone tomb. The sword of the Middle La Tène type, Etruscan mirror and helmet appeared among the Scythians probably in result of different, including inter-ethnic contacts, that became especially intense under the reign of Mithridates VI Eupator (Raev, Simonenko, Treister 1991: 470; СИМОНЕНКО 1998: 186).

Only a few burials in flat cemetery of Neapolis, the earliest ones, could be dated from the second century BC. All of them were made into vaults. Excavation methods were imperfect, therefore the details of grave constructions are not necessarily understandable now. In most cases, vaults

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<sup>12</sup> The comparison of archival documents with published account conducted Zaytsev to the conclusion that the notion of this outstanding complex, developed by previous researchers' against the background of the publications, did not correspond to the real situation of the burials (Зайцев 2001). Detailed analysis of the field documents that survived allowed him to clarify the ground plan of the most rich burial in the stone tomb, as well as to propose a new reconstruction of the funeral rite and the sequence of rituals related to it. The first-hand investigation of the finds from the complex supplies the researcher with arguments for a new reconstruction of some artefacts well-known in previous publications (according to Zaytsev's reconstruction, the helmet was of other shape, there was a long La Tène sword assembled of fragments earlier interpreted as two short swords, etc.).

Zaytsev proposed a new interpretation of carved wooden structure that was graphically reconstructed by Oleg Dombrovskiy and was interpreted in the first publications as a sarcophagus with rich burial of a woman, plundered in ancient times. In Zaytsev's opinion, this construction was parade throne bed, on which the dead person was transported into the mausoleum and remained until he was put into the stone tomb. Zaytsev's paper publishes drawings of plaster casts of monster-shaped wooden details that greatly differ from Dombrovskiy's reconstructions. It should be mentioned that visual survey of the plaster cats, which now are in the collection of the Central Museum of Taurida, allows one to refuse Dombrovskiy's reconstructions.

Comparison of all the data of the burial, stratigraphic and architectural features of the mausoleum and adjoining buildings in author's possession with the chronology of historic events allows Zaytsev to agree with the scholars' considering that the burial in the stone tomb belonged to Skilouros. It should be mentioned that it is not clear how the records were made when uncovering the burials. Therefore, when Zaytsev publishes not authentic drawings but reconstructions made against the background of studies of field materials, it requires much trust from the reader.

Although one can make different opinions of the reconstruction proposed by Zaytsev (some of them are reliable, others seems improbable, like the process of pressing Skilouros body into a hole made after one of the slabs covering the stone tomb fell down), his work forces us to think again about elementary archaeological things: that excavation and cleaning must be careful, though the objects under investigation must be recorded as full and as precise as possible. Otherwise, similarly to the case with Neapolis mausoleum, next generations of researchers would face very difficult problems, some of which could hardly be solved in principle.

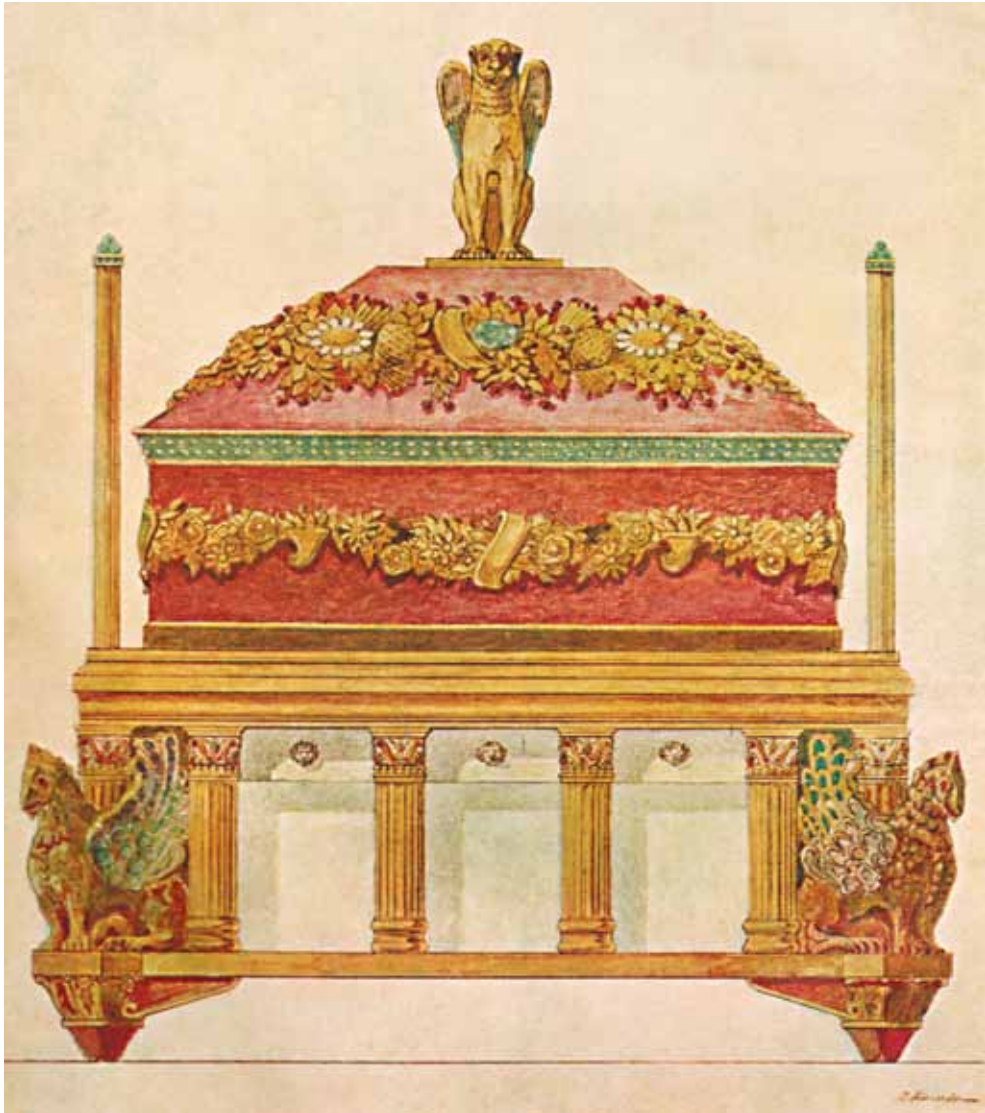


Fig. 54. Sarcophagus  
from the mausoleum of Neapolis  
(reconstruction: Oleg Dombrovskiy)

consisted of circular or oval burial chamber and rectangular entrance pit that was filled with stones (Сымонович 1983: 101). The latter detail characterizes the Late Scythian burial constructions, both vaults and undercut graves, throughout the whole period of their existence.

Five early complexes from the cemetery near the site of fortified settlement of Belyaus in the north-west Crimea are studied more accurately and, what is most important, better published (Дашевская, Михлин 1980; Дашевская 2001). These vaults have rectangular entrance pit and oval burial chamber with its long axis perpendicular to the long axis of the entrance pit (fig. 55). Burials

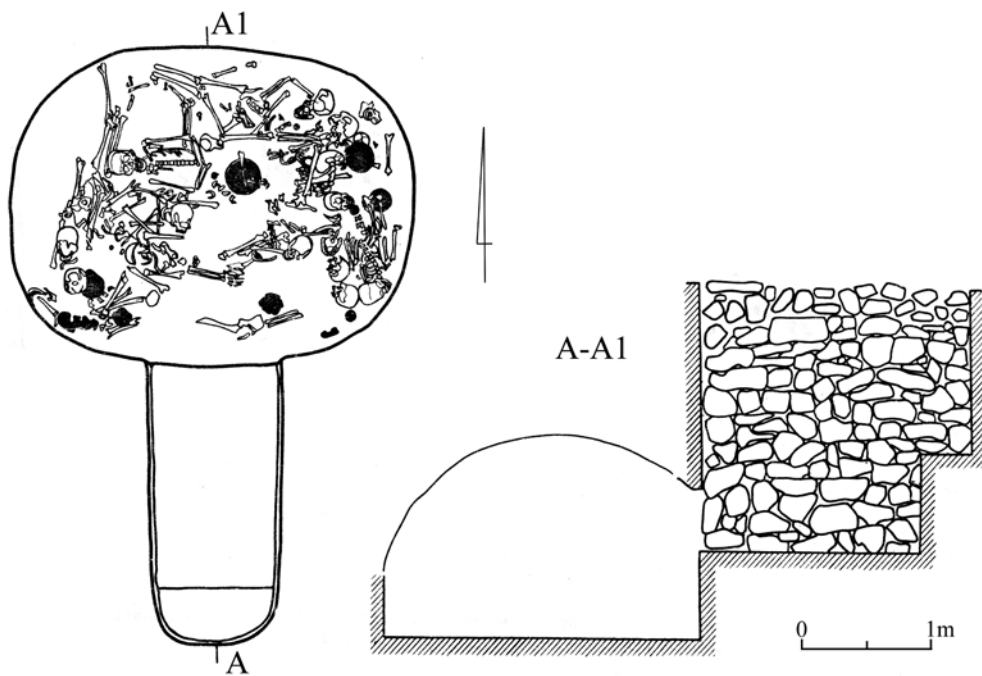


Fig. 55. Cemetery of Belyaus.  
Ground plan and cross-section of a vault  
(Дашевская 1991: табл. 40,6)

were made as several tiers, bones of the dead were often moved. Entrance pits were filled with stones and separated from the burial chamber with large stone slabs. Burials were accompanied with spear-heads, socketed iron arrowheads, Greek made wheel-made pottery, fibulae of La Tène types, brooches, bronze ornaments, belt-ends and buckles, knives, spindle whorls, and beads. All the mentioned features of burial constructions and funeral rite, as well as main categories of grave goods would become traditional for the Late Scythians in the next centuries, with natural variation of types of goods through time.

There is information that burial structures where in one or two long sides of entry pit there were entrances to oval burial chamber placed parallel to the pit have been uncovered in Belyaus cemetery. These graves were intended

for repeated burials. According to Ol'ga Dashevskaya, they contained the earliest burials in the cemetery. These complexes are still not published in full, so one cannot analyse their details (Дашевская, Михлин 1983: 138; Дашевская 1991: 25, табл. 40. 1). In the late third or early second century BC, very few undercut graves appeared in the cemetery of Belyuas. So an early date is indicated by black-slip bottle uncovered in one of the graves (Дашевская 1984: 55).

The excavations of the cemetery of Kerkititis uncovered stone vault constructed by the Greeks in the late fourth or first half of the third century BC. The Scythians conquered the city and used the vault to bury their tribes-

men. Late Scythian grave goods that remain allow one to date the burials from the second to the first half of the first century BC (Михлин, Бирюков 1983: 42). Mark Shchukin dated one fibula to stage B2b of La Tène period (280–240 BC) (Щукин 1994: 100). It is possible to make the chronology of Late Scythian burials more narrow because of one known fact from the history of Kerkititis. The Scythians seized the city in the second half of the second century BC, and finally left it in the end of this century (Кутайсов 1990: 25, 32, 159). Probably in the short period about few decades long in the second half of the second century BC when they were almighty masters of Kerkititis they plundered the Greek vault and made few burials into it. Archaeological materials from the vault do not contradict to this chronology. The finds in the grave under discussion include noticeable bronze artefact in the form of socket ending with two nozzles crowned with image of camel's heads. Although the function of this item remains unclear, it is well known that similar artefacts were rather popular attribute of Scythian burials from the fourth century BC, as well as from earlier period (Фиалко, Болтрик 2000). This is particular case of the preservation of a tradition of the Early Scythian culture in the Late Scythian one. There also are artefacts similar to that from Kerkititis unearthed in the mausoleum (Погребова 1961: рис. 28. 2) and flat cemetery (Сымонович 1983: табл. XLV. 25) of Neapolis.

The earliest burials in the cemeteries of Fontany and Levadki were made into grave constructions of a special type. At

the moment, I do not have an opportunity to fix the confusion of terminology appeared in scholarship because one term was used referring to graves of different types and different terms were used referring to the same type of graves, so let us call them conveniently “catacombs” to distinguish from vaults and undercut graves.

This type includes grave no. 5 in Fontany cemetery (figs. 56–57) and graves nos. 17 and 18 in Levadki. They consist of rectangular entrance pit filled with stones up to the top and two oval burial chambers carved into long walls of it. Entry pit was connected with burial chambers by entrances 0.6–1.9 m long and 0.4 m high (these entrances mainly differ catacombs from undercut graves). Burial chamber was as a rule intended for multiple and multi-tiered burials; bones of the dead were removed.

Grave no. 5 in Fontany should be dated from any period within the fourth to second century BC due to its poor grave goods, consisting mainly of three-vane arrowheads and beads (Храпунов 2008a: 7–10).

Graves nos. 17 and 18 in Levadki are located 10m far from each other and could hardly be separated by a long period of time. Grave no. 17 is dated by only because of an iron buckles with immovable tongue (one in each burial chamber). Therefore, one can only state that the burials could be made in any period from the third to the first century BC (Абрамова 1993: 83; Скрипкин 1990: 97, 164). In the north burial chamber of grave no. 18 contained there was a brooch from the second half of the second or the first half of the first century BC (Михлин 1980: 199; Дашевская,

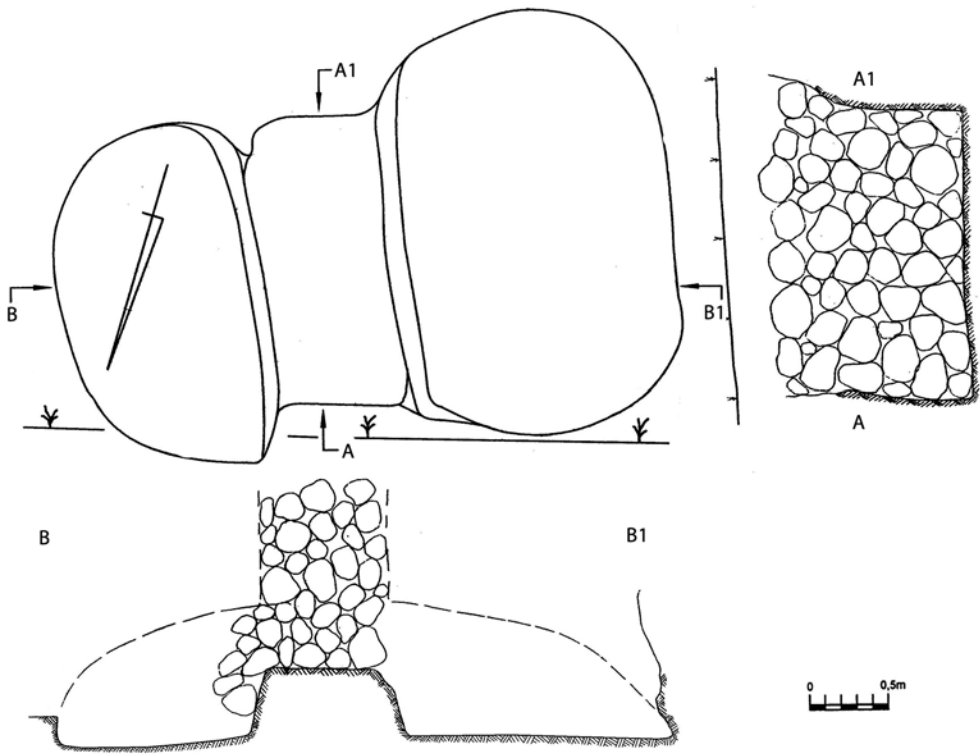


Fig. 56. Fontany cemetery.  
Ground plan and cross-section  
of a catacomb

Михлин 1983: 139–141). Taking into account that there were only two burials in this chamber, we should date two iron arrowheads from it to the same period. Unornamented censers similar to the one from the south burial chamber of grave no. 18 (fig. 58) were produced from the fourth to the first century BC (Власов 1997а: 280–281). Arrowhead from this burial chamber belongs to the type dated to the second century BC by Konstantin Marchenko according to analogies from Sarmatian territories (Марченко 1996: 60–65). Mirrors (fig. 59) are most close typologically to the finds from the second and first century BC vaults in the cemetery of Neapolis (Сымонович 1983: 44–45, 57–58, 101). However, one has to take into account that the Scythians made mirrors with

iron handles in the fourth century BC; despite of their technological difference from the artefacts discovered in Levadki, I can hardly imagine interruption of this tradition. This way, the second century BC is the most probable date for the catacombs constructed in Levadki. It is also possible, especially because the burials were multiple, that some of them were made earlier or later.

In comparison of the finds from Fontany and Levadki, almost total difference of collections of beads gazes into eyes. The beads discovered in Fontany were undoubtedly used earlier than the beads from Levadki. There should be a relatively long period between the last



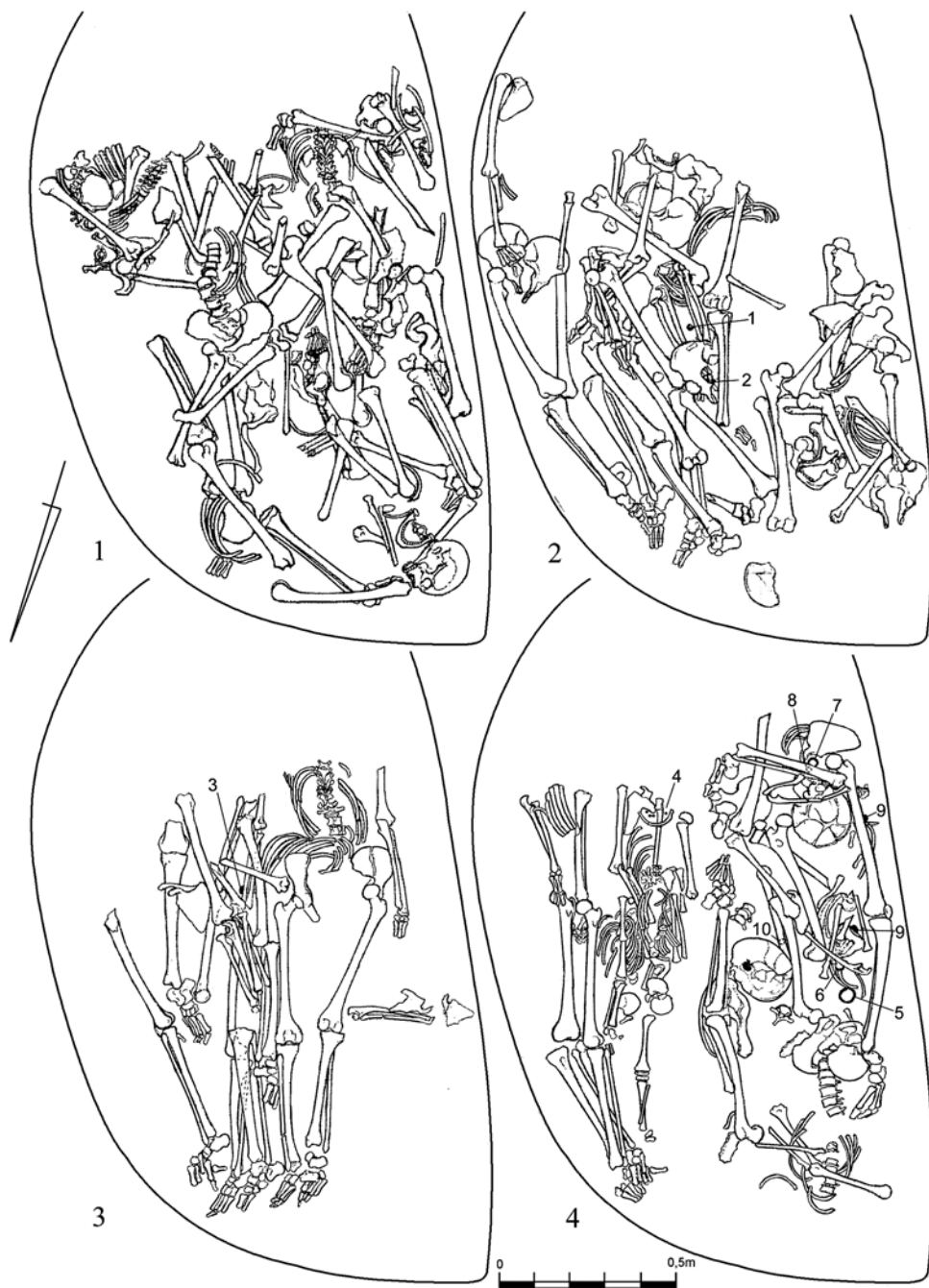


Fig. 57. Fontany cemetery.  
Burials in different tiers of the catacomb

burial in Fontrany catacomb and the first burial in Levadki catacombs, so that more than ten types of beads came out of use. Fontany catacomb was probably used for a long time because more than 20 persons were buried there. If we accept the second century BC as the most probable date for Levadki burial, we have to acknowledge that either all or some burials in Fontany catacomb were made in the third century BC.

There are graves of analogous construction, synchronous to those excavated in Fontany and Levadki, discovered in the Late Scythian cemetery of Belyaus, in a barrow near Chisten'koye village, and in Bosporan cemetery of Zolotoye. As it has already been mentioned, Dashevskaya's account states that they were used for most early burials in Belyaus cemetery dating from the second century BC (Дашевская, Михлин 1983: 138; Дашевская 1991: 25, табл. 40.1).

A complex of secondary burial sunken into barrow excavated near Chisten'koye village is of considerable interest (fig. 60). The barrow was located about 4 km north-west of Fontany cemetery and 5 km north-east of Levadki cemetery. The secondary grave consisted of oval entrance pit with short *dromos* carved into its long wall; it finished with oval burial chamber located parallel to the entrance pit. Human burial in the burial chamber was accompanied with sword, spears, arrows with iron socketed heads, beads, two vessels manufactured by ancient Greeks, and some other goods. In the entrance pit, there was a burial of horse accompanied with nose-plate, two cheek guards and bits with cross-shaped cheek-pieces (Колтухов,

Тощев 1998: 42, 46, рис. 21–22; Зайцев Колтухов 2004).

Grave construction from Chisten'koye is analogous to the earliest graves of Belyaus and those excavated in Levadki and Fontany. However, individual burial in barrow mound and horse in the entrance pit indicate that the person buried in Chisten'koye was a nomad. The complex of artefacts from the grave of study makes it close to specific group of monuments excavated in the north-west Black Sea area, Moldavia, Kuban region and Don area. Sets of weapons, horse harness and other artefacts placed close to each other were discovered in Velikoploskoye, Bubueci, Mar'yevka and other places. Burial constructions were not recorded (for the review see: Щукин 1994: 97–98). Spears, socketed iron arrowheads, horse bits with cross-shaped cheek-pieces, and horse front/nose covers are typical of these complexes. The similarity of ornamentation of two plates from Bubueci and cheek-pieces from Chisten'koye gazes into eyes. At the same time, this way we can understand the purpose of Bubueci finds that raised discussion (Нефедова 1993: 18). All the mentioned complexes of artefacts date within the third and second centuries BC. *Ethnos* of their owners is not determined. Yelena Redina and Aleksandr Simonenko have a special opinion. They suppose that the discussed assemblages developed in early first century BC and belonged to Sarmatian soldiers of Mithridates VI Eupator (Редина, Симоненко 2002: 86). It is interesting that artefacts laid nearby have different origin. Horse bits with cross-shaped cheek-pieces are often called “Kuban” after the place where most finds are con-



Fig. 58. Levadki cemetery.  
Grave 18. Censer



Fig. 59. Levadki cemetery.  
Grave 18. Mirror

centrated (Лимберис, Марченко 1989: 124), though slit head motif of cheek-pieces from Chisten'koye and Bubueci is certainly Celtic (Мордвинцева 2001: 112–113). Instable situation in the north Black Sea steppe with active migrations of different populations probably contributed to the formation of this unusual combination of goods.

Of the items allowing one to date the complex from Chisten'koye most distinctive are horse harness and *unguentarium* are most distinctive. The picture of corroded cheek-pieces in the publication does not allow one to understand their details and their type. Small cross-shaped cheek-pieces were obviously used from the second half of the fourth to the early second century BC. The earliest frontlets of the type like in

Chisten'koye originate from complexes with amphorae from the second half of the fourth century BC (Марченко 1996: 72, 77; Канторович 2007; Симоненко 2010: 156–161, 186–191). *Unguentarium* bottle from Chisten'koye belongs to form 1 of Virginia Anderson-Stojanovič's classification. Early specimens of this form have globular body and short stem. They date from the mid-fifth and fourth centuries BC and greatly differ from Chisten'koye vessel. Other variants of form 1 were in use simultaneously. Form 2 replaced form 1 in the second half of the first century BC (Anderson-Stojanovič 1987: 106–111). This way, Chisten'koye *unguentarium* dates within the third to the first half of the first century BC. If we analyse Black Sea materials, *unguentaria* like that from

Chisten'koye are of the type widespread in the third century BC; the latest pieces were possibly produced in the early second century BC (Парович-Пешикан 1974: 110; Марченко 1996: 41). This way, I think that the chronology offered by the publishers for Chisten'koye complex, i. e. the third quarter or the second half of the second century BC (Зайцев, Колтухов 2004: 248), is too late. Most likely, the burial was made in the third century BC.

There is one artefact from Chisten'koye grave, sword with ring pommel, that can raise doubts in the early chronology of the complex. It is generally accepted that swords of this type spread from the first century BC onwards. However, in Chisten'koye there were only extremely ill preserved remains of a sword that could not be extracted from the grave. This circumstance raises doubts concerning the exactness of the attribution of the type of

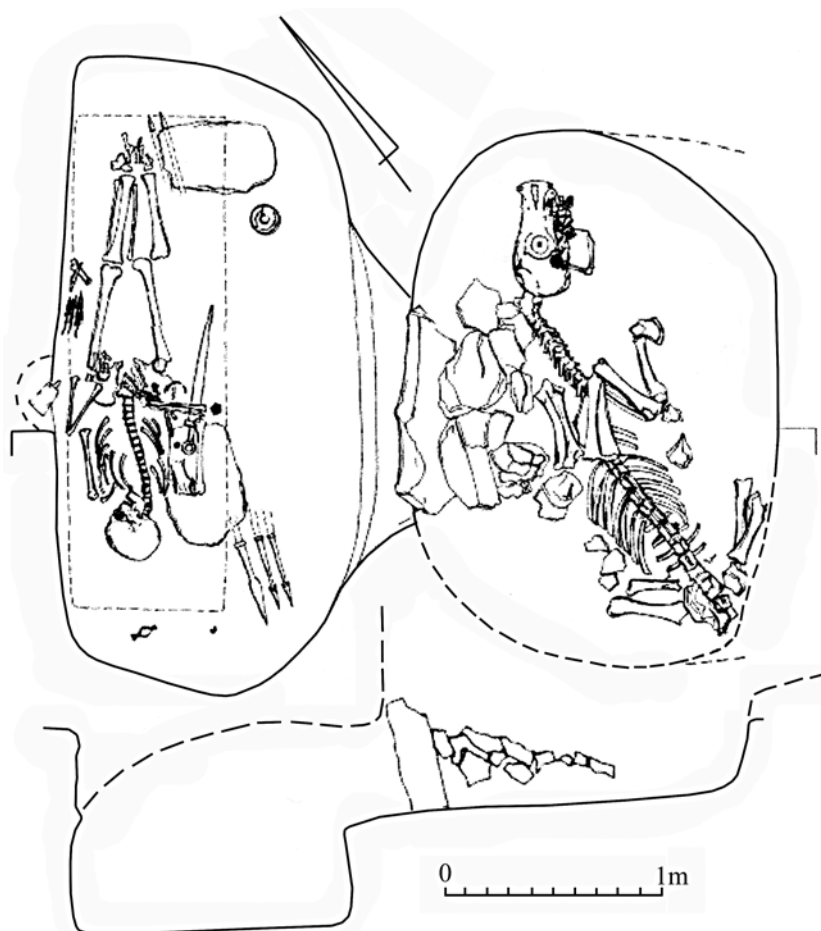


Fig. 60. Ground plan and cross-section of burial 2 in a barrow near Chisten'koye village (Зайцев, Колтухов 2004: рис. 2)

the artefact. It is also possible that the sword had, for example, crescent pommel. Historiography knows the case when ill-preserved crescent pommel was incorrectly interpreted as ring pommel (Симоненко 1993: 24). Besides, there are known, although a few, finds of swords with ring pommel in the third century BC complexes (Хазанов 1971: 8–9; Скрипкин 1990: 122–124).

Excavations of the cemetery of Zolotoye uncovered catacombs (nos. 14, 44, 88, 167 and most likely nos. 47, 48, 80) with construction analogous to catacombs from Fontany and Levadki. Valentina Korpusova calls them “ground vaults of the second type.” They contained the earliest burials in the cemetery (from the second and first centuries BC). One grave construction (no. 44) consists of entrance pit and two burial chambers, others of entrance pit and single burial chamber. Each catacomb contained multiple burials; bones of previous were moved. Important difference from the rite recorded in Levadki and Fontany is that entrance pits of the catacombs were not blocked with stones (Корпусова 1983: 19, 20, 74, 100, 102, 103, 106, 111, табл. IX; XIII. 13–19; XXIV; XXV. 11–19; XXXII. 6–8; XXXIII. 1–5; XLV. 4–11).

It was very inconvenient to use the catacombs like excavated in Fontany and Levadki. The most important difficulty during the burial was made by narrow entrance from entry pit to burial chamber. It is hard to imagine the process of multiple burials when they have literally to pull the dead through chinks 0.4 m high. Much labour should be invested for digging burial chambers when they had to use of such narrow and inconvenient entrances. The

construction of a grave, so irrational to common sense, probably required a serious ideological background. One can hardly imagine that these specific burial constructions developed convergently in different cultures. Therefore, the discovery of catacombs earlier than Crimean structures in the same or neighbouring territory would allow one to infer the cultural or even ethnic continuity of the population.

The search of the source of the tradition to construct catacombs similar to those discovered in Levadki and Fontany gives the only positive result. Graves with parallel location of entrance pit and burial chamber and with *dromos* in between are known, although in a few cases, under Scythian barrow mounds from the fourth century BC. They correspond to catacombs of type I, variant 2 according to Valeriy Ol’khovskiy’s classification of Scythian burial constructions (Ольховский 1991: 27).

In the central Ciscaucasia, catacombs with narrow passages between entrance pit and burial chamber, according to not numerous published materials, appeared a bit later than in the foothill Crimea and were used in the second half of the second and in the first century BC, i. e. synchronous with the most late Crimean burials of the type. The question of their origin remains open for the researchers of Caucasian antiquities. However, these graves with parallel location of entrance pits and burial chamber most likely came to North Caucasus from the world of nomadic Scythians or other barbarian non-Sarmatian tribes. Among the Sarmatians, undercut graves became widespread only in the first centuries AD. To be true, I should note that the

construction of grave with narrow entry-way from the entrance pit to the burial chamber is reliably recorded only once among the burial constructions of the second half of the second or first century BC (burial no. 17 of Chegem cemetery). In other cases, excavations uncovered only grave chambers with step along a long wall. Therefore, it remains unclear when it is the case of grave constructions of the type under discussion and when of usual undercut graves (Абрамова 1993: 22–24, 102, 103, рис. 2).

The small number of sources makes any conclusion on their background doubtful. In spite of that, if we accept that correlation between Early Scythian and Late Scythian types of grave constructions is not accidental, I can build the following speculation. The tradition of building catacombs of the type described above was not lost in the period of disintegration of nomadic society of the Scythians. Particularly, it remained among the tribes who turned to settled way of life in the Crimea. Strange to nomadic Scythians features of the funeral rite, repeated burials and entrance pits filled with stones, probably shaped in the process of sedentarisation.

Catacombs of Ol'khovskiy's type I.2 were never recorded in the Crimea in the Early Scythian period. According to that, one should suppose that some groups of population migrated to the Crimea from the outside of the peninsula. The same concerns much more popular both in the Early and Late Scythian cultures vaults with perpendicular location of entrance pits and burial chambers. Catacombs were also used by the population preserving nomadic way of life after the collapse of Scythia, as we know from

the burial in barrow near Chisten'koye village. It is quite probable that some people separated from these nomads and became settled. Taking into account that burials in Fontany, Levadki and Chisten'koye were very closely located, literally neighbouring to each other, as well as approximate synchronism of the catacombs in Chisten'koye and Fontany, it is obvious that the population that settled in the foothills kept contacts with the nomads.

In the first and second centuries of the Late Scythian culture, catacombs were used as burial structures together with much more popular vaults of the so-called T-shaped construction. In the first century BC, catacombs ceased to be constructed, at least we do not know graves of this type later than those excavated in Levadki.

Grave goods from Levadki catacombs demonstrate various sources of formation of the Late Scythian culture. One group consists of traditional local barbarian ornaments of bronze, iron, silver and gold. A part of them, as well as numerous beads, was probably made in ancient Greek workshops. Another group of artefacts reflects the beginning of the Sarmatian period in the north Black Sea area. Socketed iron arrowheads and iron buckles with immovable tongue were distributed everywhere in the area populated by the Sarmatians and in vicinity of it. The third group demonstrates the continuity of Scythian tradition in the Late Scythian culture. It includes bronze mirrors with iron handles and hand-made censer. However, we should remember that the censer contained fired pebbles. It seems as this rite is recorded only in north Caucasus. There many

burials contained vessels with pebbles, certainly of the types absolutely not like the Crimean censer.

It would be rather hard to explain the appearance of catacombs in Bosphoros, in Zolotoye cemetery. Since we know only one source of the distribution of burial structures of this type, the Scythian culture in the fourth century BC, the appearance of catacombs in Bosphoros should be related to the penetration of disintegrated remains of nomadic Scythians to the Kerch peninsula. Conditions of their sedentarisation, their natural and *ethnic* environment were other than in the Crimean foothills, they expressed particularly in the absence of stone fill of entrance pits. The latter feature is necessary for the earliest Late Scythian graves of different types and is recorded throughout the whole history of the Late Scythians.

Catacomb burials are certainly not the only and probably not the most demonstrative feature of the Late Scythian culture allowing one to reconstruct its genesis. However, we can easily analyse them as a type of very small group of sources, study of which allows one to make notion of the beginning of the Late Scythian history as well as of the problem of the third century BC crisis in the whole north Black Sea area (Храпунов Мульд 2004: 262–263).

The earliest of Late Scythian graves could be divided into two groups according to the degree of possibility of ethnological reconstruction. The first group consists of Neapolis mausoleum and stone vault in the cemetery of Kerknitis. The mausoleum is unique and the vault was constructed by the Greeks, so the information regarding the *ethnic* history of the Late Scythians could not

be extracted from the study of these monuments. Another group consists of vaults with perpendicularly located long axes of entry pit and burial chamber, as well as the graves called “catacombs.” The same as Late Scythian vaults make a relatively popular but not the most numerous group of graves of the north Black Sea Scythians in the fourth century BC. They correspond to Grakov’s type III of catacombs (Граков 1962: 84) and Ol’khovskiy’s type III, variant 1 (Ольховский 1991: 28). It has already been discussed that burial structures with entryway in long wall of entrance pit are extremely rare, but they have also been found below the fourth century BC barrow mounds. This way, both types of graves demonstrate the continuity of the Late Scythian cultural tradition from the Early Scythian.

However, catacombs of Ol’khovskiy’s types I.2 and III.1 were never recorded in the Crimea in the Early Scythian period. This feature allows one to suppose the migration of a some population groups to the Crimea from the outside of the peninsula in the period of formation of the Late Scythian culture. The construction of the undercut grave from Belyaus cemetery is the same as numerous fourth century BC burials uncovered in the Crimea and outside it. It corresponds to Grakov’s catacomb type I (Граков 1962: 83) and Ol’khovskiy’s catacomb type I, variant 1 (Ольховский 1991: 27). Strange to nomadic Scythians features of the burial rite, i. e. repeated funerals and many tiers of burials, as well as entrance pits filled with stones, were probably shaped among the Late Scythians during their sedentarisation.

The comparison of the results of analysis of written and archaeological sources on the early period of the Late Scythian history makes me to conclude that their data are very reliable. In the third century BC, when minimal number of archaeological sites existed, Crimean barbarians are mentioned in the only inscription, in the most general view, without ethnonyms. The state of affairs considerably changed in the second century BC. Settlements in the foothill area collected impressive cultural layers. The Scythians took possession of all settlements in the former *chora* of Chersonesos in the north-west Crimea. They built fortifications, residential and public buildings with use of specific architectural planning and construction techniques. The complex of hand-made ceramics typical of the Late Scythians only was developed. Graves were investigated near the settlements. We can state that the Late Scythian culture with its definite set of features shaped in the second century BC. The definition of the "Late Scythian culture" seems very successful. It reflects, on the one hand, the continuity from the Early Scythian culture and, on the other hand, important transformation of the culture when the Scythians turned to settled way of life and attracted some elements from other *ethnoi*. Nomadic Scythian tradition reflects mainly in basic Late Scythian types of grave constructions: vaults or catacombs without barrow mound. At the same time, funeral rite sustained important changes under the circumstances of settled way of life. Late Scythian hand-made ceramic ware is generally rather specific, though vessels repeated early Scythian shapes. Besides that, there was

rather important influence of the Taurian tradition and subtle influence of the people of the Zarubintsy culture.

The presence of the Greeks in Neapolis is expressed in the making of sculptures, reliefs, and inscriptions in Greek language, fresco painting of house walls, and some cult artefacts. Three artefacts, La Tène sword from Neapolis mausoleum and horse cheek-pieces from Chisten'koye burial could be interpreted as Celtic influence on the Late Scythian material culture rather than the evidence of the Celts' stay in the Crimea.

The comparison of written sources with archaeological data discovers that they a bit later than the described events. There is inscription dated from ca. 179 BC (IOSPE I<sup>2</sup>: no. 402) that mentions only "barbarians." In the middle of the century, many narrative and epigraphic sources called the Crimean dwellers the "Scythians"; they populated the land called "Scythia" by the decree honouring Diophantos. This way, the ancients determined the ethnonym to be selected for the population of the Crimean inland: they were the Scythians. There are some indirect evidences that the Scythians were divided into several tribes. Besides them, there were the Taurians living somewhere in vicinity of Chersonesos and the Satarches on the north of the peninsula. There are inscriptions supporting archaeological data about the Greek residents of the Late Scythian capital.

The consolidation of the Scythians in the second century BC was obviously backed by the fact that the Late Scythian settlements in the Crimea were located within a single state. Many scholars of ancient north Black Sea area discussed



the Late Scythian state with more or less details. Only Vladimir Ravdonikas had doubts in the fact of its existence (Равдоникас 1932: 76), though Pavel Shul'ts once expressed a more accurate opinion: *“this culture had clearly expressed features of urbanism, that was turning into civilization”* (Шульц 1971: 129). There are different opinions regarding its individual features (Храпунов 1992: 86).

The Late Scythians possessed a relatively compact territory including foothill and north-west Crimea (fig. 46). In case of military conflicts, they struggled as a single political power headed by king, who resided in a large town located in the very middle of the peninsula. Royal power was inherited by son from father. The king minted coins with his name (fig. 61), arranged important buildings and leded the army. Residents of the Late Scythian settlements had different social and property status. Most part of the population consisted of freedman doing farming and craft production. They belonged to different levels of wealth and took various positions in the society. Aristocracy played the leading role in the political and economic life. As it has already been stated, supreme power belonged to the king. Such are the features indicating the existence of the Late Scythian kingdom (Храпунов 1992: 88–90).

Most scholars studying the Late Scythian history think that the Late Scythian state included both the Crimea and the Lower Dnieper region (Соломоник 1952: 237; Елагина 1958: 56; Погребова 1958: 237; Вязьмитина 1962: 233; Высотская 1979: 200; Сапрыкин 1986: 205; Щеглов 1988b: 33;



Fig. 61. Coin of Skilouros (Stolba 2007: fig. 9)

Виноградов 1989: 231). This hypothesis is not supported by more or less convincing arguments, though is based on two premises. The first is the closeness of material culture of two regions. The second and most important is Strabo's remark concerning Little Scythia (Strabo *Geogr.* 7. 4. 5). Here is this passage as translated by H. L. Jones.

*“It (Crimean peninsula — I. Kh.) is held by the potentates of the Bosporus, though the whole of it has been devastated by continuous wars. But in earlier times only a small part of it — that which is close to the mouth of Lake Maeotis and to Panticapaeum and extends as far as Theodosia — was held by the tyrants of the Bosporians, whereas most of it, as far as the isthmus and the Gulf of Carcinites, was held by the Taurians, a Scythian tribe. And the whole of this country, together with about all the country outside the isthmus as far as the Borysthenes, was called Little Scythia.”*

In this context, the indication of the area of “Little Scythia” can be interpreted both in ethnographic, geographic and political sense. It is easy to invent a speculation for any of these suppositions. In order to confirm one of them, there is need to use data derived from other sources. However, it seems that none of them contains even a hint that

the Dnieper Scythians were a part of some state. All the sources giving the scholars a background for the conclusion that the Late Scythian state was located in the Crimea are related only to the Crimea and not to the Dnieper area.

There is another important circumstance against the idea that the Crimea and the Dnieper area were parts of the same state. Two latest “isles” of the Scythian culture had in between of them vast steppe areas populated by the Sarmatians, who, as we know from written sources, were friends of the Scythians not all the time. As Shul’ts put it: “*Once I dreamt to find Scythian settlements in steppes and coast of Tauria thus making the territory of Little Scythia (Crimea, Tauria, Dnieper) a single unit. Nothing came out of it. Two large zones of settlement were divided by nomadic world in antiquity*” (Шульц 1971: 129).

Under these conditions, contacts between the Crimea and the Dnieper area could be in two ways: by sea, via Olbia, especially when this city was subordinated to Skilouros, and through the steppe, only when the Sarmatians kept friendly relations with the Scythians. For example, both ways could be in use in the late second century BC. However, the contacts between two zones of distribution of the Late Scythian culture were only episodes; they never make remote Dnieper area working properly as a component part of the state. It is indicative that in Agrippa’s map, that was probably composed against the sources from Caesar’s age, region IX included *Sarmatia* and *Scythia Taurica*. The border between them laid immediately north of the Perekop isthmus. Hence, *Scythia Taurica* included only

the Crimea (Ростовцев 1925: 44–45).

The similarity of the material culture is reliably testified by excavations of the Late Scythian sites in the Crimea and the Dnieper region. However, there is need to search for the explanation of this fact in the close historical conditions under which the culture developed rather than in political union (Храпунов 1989b). This way, we have to accept that the idea of two component parts of single Late Scythian state is not reliably supported by the sources.

After the death of Mithridates VI Eupator in 63 BC, the Pontic realm collapsed and the Late Scythians naturally became free of inequitable alliance with it. They still kept Crimean foothills in their hands as well as western and north-western parts of the Crimea including the former *chora* of Chersonesos but the Gerakleyskiy peninsula in immediate vicinity of the *polis* (fig. 46). In the north-west Crimea, they continued to live at places of former Greek settlements; their eventful life is evidenced by huge cultural layer. The only exception was Kerkinitis where the Scythians never returned after the defeat from Diophantos. Old settlements in the central and south-west Crimea (Neapolis, Kermen-Kyr, Bulganak, Ust’-Al’ma, etc.) continued to function. The first century BC and the first century AD layers are incomparably thicker than layers from the previous period. Many Late Scythian settlements appeared after the wars of Diophantos (fig. 62); one of them, in Al’ma-Kermen (fig. 63) was founded probably immediately after the war (Храпунов 1986: 284). The results of the excavations of these settlements correspond to those obtained from the investigations of cem-



Fig. 62. Argin site of ancient town  
(photo: the author)

eteries. There were large cemeteries of hundreds of burials existed from the first century BC onwards.

Therefore, if one takes into account the results of excavations, the flourishing of the Late Scythian kingdom started after the Scythians recovered from the defeat. They did not need much time for that. Anyway, archaeology does not record any decline or gap in the Late Scythian sites (Храпунов 1991: 25–26).

Written sources from the first century BC and the first century AD contain brief accounts of the Scythians, mainly in relation to military conflicts. In autumn of 47 BC, the Scythians were allies of Pharnakes in his struggle for Bosphoran crown (Appian. *Mithr.* 120). The funerary inscription of the emperor Augustus in the lists of his deeds mentions the peoples who “*asked for our friendship via their ambassadors.*” Among them, there were the Scythians and Sarmatians independently; many Greco-Roman writers mention Scythian and Sarmatian ambassadors to Augustus (Граков 1939: 276).

As for the reasons that forced the Scythians to send this embassy, we can hypothesise that there were problems in relations with Bosphoros, so the Scythians tried to fix them with the help from the Romans. There are indirect indications of that in two inscriptions, where, along with other facts, there is information that the Scythians and Taurians became subordinated to the king Aspouros (КБН: nos. 39–40). One inscription has exact date of 23 AD, Aspouros’ reign started in 10/11 AD, therefore, the Scythians and Taurians were conquered between 10 and 23 AD. As for the inscriptions of the Bosphoran kings’ victories over the Scythians, mentioned above and discussed below, there is need to make a remark concerning the character of the sources. If one follows the inscriptions exactly, one would have to accept that the Bosphoran kings continuously, one after another, triumphed over the Scythians throughout the first and second centuries AD. New and new victories became necessary only if there were defeats between them, which certainly were kept in silence, if possible. As Rostovtzeff put it, “*after some suc-*



Fig. 63. Al'ma-Kermen site of ancient town  
(photo: the author)

*cesses in struggle against them* (Tauro-Scythians — I. Kh.), *Bosporan kings could allow themselves a cheap pleasure of adding their name to the title*” (Ростовцев 1925: 67). Epigraphic documents of such a kind only evidence that in the given period the relations between the Scythians and Bosporos were often hostile, periodically resulting in military conflicts.

In the late first century BC and the first century AD, the Scythians were mighty enough to open two fronts of military operations against Bosporos and Chersonesos. There is an inscription from Chersonesos (IOSPE I<sup>2</sup>: no. 355) with the chronology raising discussion among the researchers. Palaeographic and other features allow one to date it from the age of Augustus to the reign of Tiberius (Кадеев 1981: 15; Соломоник 1984: 9, with preceding bibliography). Surviving fragments of the document concerns the outside danger to the city in the period of internal feuds. There is another inscription of worse preservation (IOSPE I<sup>2</sup>: no. 369), always dated from the first century AD, though narrower chronologies of it were offered (Соломоник 1984: 9; Зубарь 1994: 27). It also talks of re-

bels within the city and outside danger. Almost all the scholars think that the enemies threatening Chersonesos were the Scythians. The epitaph of Tiberius Plautius Silvanus mentions an ethnonym. The legate of Moesia “drove the king of the Scythians off Chersonesos that is behind Borysthenes” (CIL 14: no. 3608). It happened ca. 63 AD (Шелов 1981: 54).

According to the above-mentioned Agrippa’s map, in the first century AD the Romans apprehended the entire Crimean peninsula as *Tauric Scythia*. However, Crimean Scythians divided into tribes similarly as in the age of Skilouros and Palakos. Pliny directly speaks of that:

“At the river Carcinites, *Scythia Taurica* begins, which was once covered by the sea, where we now see level plains extended on every side: beyond this the land rises into mountains of great elevation. The peoples here are thirty in number, of which twenty-three dwell in the interior, and six cities: *Orgocyni, Characeni, Assirani, Stactari, Acisalitae, Caliordi*. The *Scythotauri* possess the range of mountains: on the west they

*are bounded by the Chersonesus, and on the east by the Scythian Satarchæ*” (Plin. *Hist. Nat.* 4. 85).

None of these tribes is known except for the “Scythian *Satarchæ*,” probably corresponding to the Satarches of other sources. “*Stractari*” are sometimes interpreted as a town of the Satarches (Скржинская 1977: 46). However, the passage cited allows one to draw the conclusion that the Scythians were divided into tribes at least to the first century AD.

The material culture of the Late Scythians in the first century BC and the first century AD has been studied due to the excavations of numerous sites located in the foothill and north-west Crimea. All the settlements founded in the previous period still functioned, and new sites appeared as well. Especially interesting of the latter are those established in the south-west Crimea. Earlier sites are not known in this part of the peninsula. The Late Scythians probably started to settled there from the first century BC.

Fortifications did not sustain principle changes in the first century BC and the first century AD. They certainly were rebuilt and renovated, but principles of architectural planning, building and masonry technique, as well as building materials remained as before. As a tendency, we have to note increase of the number of moats and ramparts, often with the wall on top. In the acropolis of Bulganak fortified settlement, they destroyed defensive walls that existed in the second and first century BC and built rampart above its ruins, dug moat in front of it, and constructed a new wall on top of the rampart (Храпунов, Мульд 1993: 11). The same picture was traced in the acropolis of Kermen-Kyr forti-

fied settlement (Колтухов 1999с: 40).

There was an interesting modification of this system in some settlements in the north-west Crimea, where ramparts were annexed to walls of stone houses, which could be used as fortification in case of danger, thus fulfilling the same tasks as walls atop ramparts in acropolises of Bulganak and Kermen-Kyr fortified settlements (Щеглов 1978: 67). Ramparts of Southern Donuzlav and Belyaus fortified settlements were faced with stones on the outer side (fig. 64). In Belyaus, there was a stone bridge constructed across the moat (fig. 65), a unique construction for the Late Scythian culture (Дашевская 1964: 54–55; Дашевская 1990: 146–149).

Some settlements were still protected by stone walls put on buried soil. This is the case of Neapolis where moat and rampart could not be constructed because the town was built just on limestone cliff. So they used old fortification with slight modification (Колтухов 1999с: 36). Natural conditions, namely the location near seaside dunes, explain the absence of moat near the fortifications of Chayka settlement (Щеглов 1978: 66). Defensive wall without moat and rampart fortified the north-west area of Al'ma-Kermen settlement established in the first century BC (Высотская 1972: 36–37). There was a moat dug in front of the fortification wall of Tarpanchi settlement (Щеглов 1978: 70–71). This way, one can say that Late Scythian fortifications used various combinations of three constructive elements: stone walls with towers, moats and ramparts, similarly to the second century BC.

Residential, public and economic buildings discovered in the settlements



Fig. 64. Belyaus site of ancient town.  
Defensive rampart and moat  
(photo: the author)

in the central and south-west Crimea are notable for by their simple planning. There were rectangular stone houses with one or two rooms, *megaron* buildings, as well as circular or rectangular subterranean houses. The houses include household fences and, sometimes, fireplaces (fig. 66). However, there often were no fireplace, it was obviously replaced with thick-walled braziers with high sides, many shards of them were found in cultural layers of settlements. Particular feature of Late Scythian pit house was almost necessary step, often called “bench,” located along the walls. Excavations of all the settlements located in the discussed region uncovered cinder heaps (in Neapolis, it was few metres high above the present daily surface), as well as numerous household pits (Высотская 1979: 83–87; Высотская 1988; Высотская 1994a: 18–25; Храпунов 1991: 26–27).

Late Scythian house building has some distinctive features in the north-west Crimea. After the conquest of the settlements in the Greek *chora*, the Scythians in some cases accustomed to the traditions of planning of Greek farmhouses and built their own houses according to them. Such is the house with buttresses in Tarpanchi fortified settlement (Щеглов 1978: 84–85).

In the settlement of Chayka, the Scythians kept its division into quarters from the Greek period. The centre of their settlement became fortified and reconstructed Greek house separated from neighbouring buildings by streets. Within the quarters, they built numerous, located very tightly, small rectangular houses instead of Greek structures. Some of them were two-storey, according to re-

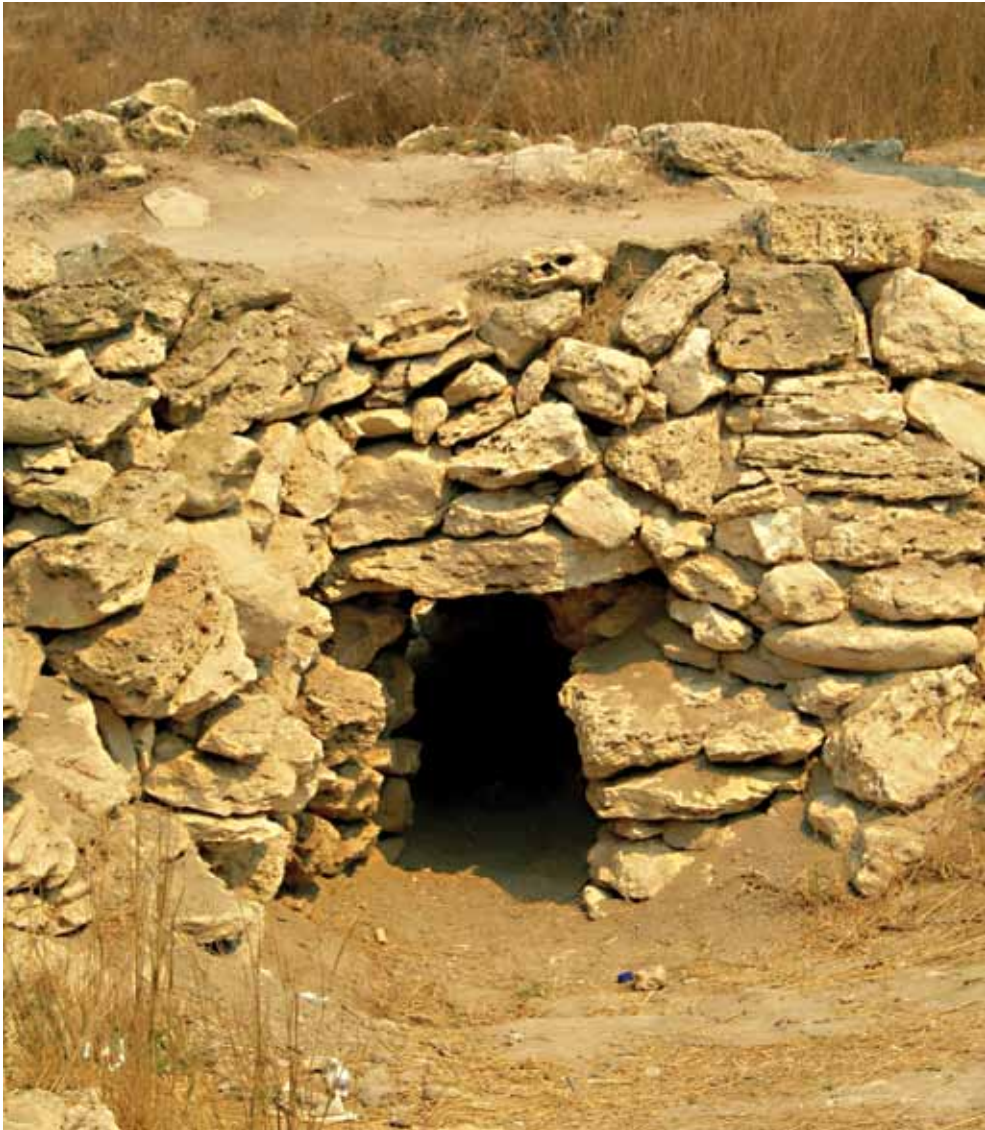


Fig. 65. Belyaus site of ancient town.  
Bridge over the moat  
(photo: the author)

mains of steps. Courtyards and division walls between quarters were paved with stones (Яценко 1970; Яценко 1983; Попова 1991). The above-mentioned features of the north-west Crimea settle-

ments were not recorded in other areas of the Late Scythian culture. At the same time, in the north-west Crimea there were rectangular stone houses and subterranean buildings (fig. 67), common for all the Late Scythian area (Уженцев 1994: 243–246).

Thick cultural layers collected in the Late Scythian settlements in the first



Fig. 66. Ceramic cooking stand from Neapolis

century BC and first century AD mainly consisted of shards of various ceramic vessels. Among them, there were many Greco-Roman types, mainly amphorae and red-slip ware (fig. 68), that most likely reflect constant trade contacts between the Scythians and ancient Greek *poleis* in the north Black Sea area. Fragments and complete forms of hand-made vessels are most interesting for our topic.

Vlasov has selected 377 pieces that could be analysed and date from the second half of the first century BC to the late first century AD. More than one third of them were vessels typical of only to Late Scythian archaeological culture. An important group consisted of hand-made vessels imitating wheel-made samples of ancient Greek origin. The tradition of making vessels of the shapes developed in the Early Scythian period continued. About 10% of ceramics consists of pure Sarmatian or symbiotic Scythian-

Sarmatian products. There was a noticeable diminishing of the percentage of Kizil-Koba hand-made vessels, though the interrelation of Taurian and Late Scythian traditions declined. This ware completely came out of use by the late first century BC. On the contrary, the number and variety of hand-made ware of the Zarubintsy culture type increased a little in comparison with the previous period. There are a few vessels earlier typical of the Bug area only, as well as of the North Thracians (Власов 1999a: 11–13).

The analysis of the hand-made ceramic ware allows one to make obvious conclusions. Specific Late Scythian culture of the period of climax preserved the Early Scythian tradition. The Taurians living amidst the Late Scythians were gradually assimilated; this process finished by the late first cen-



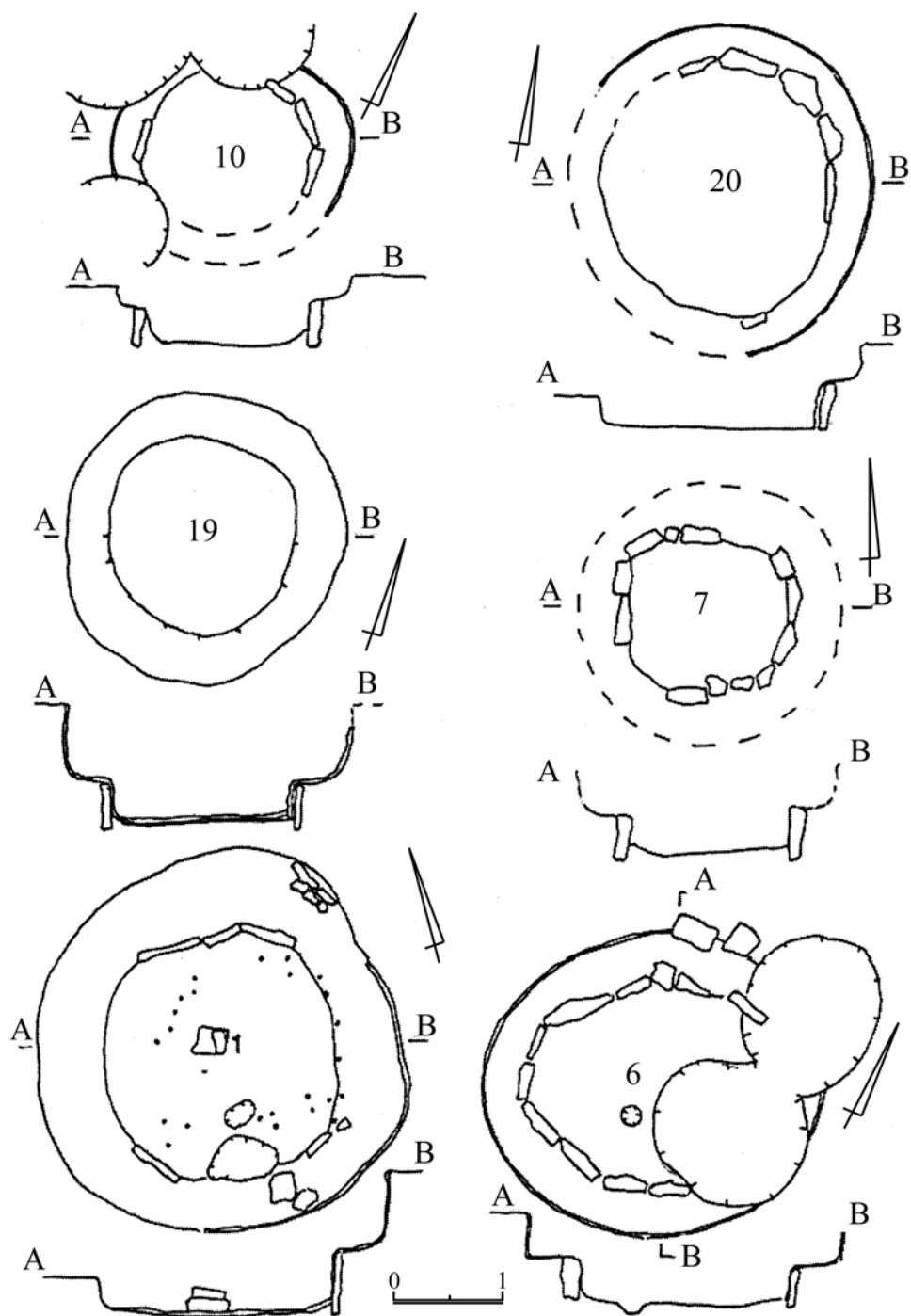


Fig. 67. Kalos Limen. Ground plans and cross-sections of subterranean houses (Уженцев 2006: рис. 52)



Fig. 68. Red-slip vessels from Neapolis

ture AD. At the same time, new migrants appeared amidst the Late Scythians. Small groups of migrants came from the areas adjoining the Dnieper and South Bug. Considerably larger number of the Sarmatians migrated to the Crimea and became residents of the Late Scythian settlements.

The mausoleum near the main gate of Neapolis was intensively used in the first century BC and the first century AD. It was the time when its inner space was filled with wooden coffins placed in few tiers (Порпецова 1961: 176–178).

The most popular burial structure in the Late Scythian cemeteries were vaults dug into soil. They usually have rectangular in plan entry pits. A small hole

was made in crosswise wall of entrance pit to dig vaulted chamber. Entrance pit and burial chamber were located transversely. Entryway to burial chamber was closed with stone slabs. As a rule, entrance pit was filled with stones.

Vaults were family tombs. Some of them were used for two centuries. Burial chambers contained from two or three to tens of skeletons. In order to free space for new burials, earlier buried remains were shifted aside or, in some cases, the chamber was cleaned leaving only skulls. Multiple burials were widely practiced with putting the dead above those who were buried before. As a rule,



Fig. 69. Opushki cemetery.  
Burials in vault no. 22  
(photo: Sergey Mul'd)

the burials were accompanied with poor but various grave goods (Мульд 1996: 279–280). Such grave constructions were uncovered in Neapolis (Сымо-

нович 1983: 101), its close neighbourhood (Колтухов, Пуздровский 1983; Пуздровский 2003), cemeteries of Ust'-Al'ma (Высотская 1994а: 51–53), Dmitrovo (Высотская, Махнева 1983: 66–73), Kol'chugino (Храпунов, Ма-

сякин, Мульд 1997: 123,124), Levadki (Храпунов, Стоянова, Мульд 2001: 160–161), Кара-Тобе (Внуков, Лагутин 2001), etc.

Although constructive details allow one to include vault no. 42 in the cemetery of Opushki to this group, it has specific features of burial rite. First, great number of buried persons (figs. 69–76). There were at least 125 or maximum 137 burials (one cannot state more precisely because the vault is partly plundered). Before the excavation of this vault, maximum number of burials into the same Late Scythian grave was 52 (Высотская 1994: 50). Second, there were burials made into the entrance pit together with those made into the chamber. For this purpose, they had to remove covering slab from the entrance to the burial chamber and put it to the beginning of the entrance pit. This way, typical Late Scythian tradition of using the grave for multiple burials in several tiers, which was likely based on ideology, was followed, though with modification in a way unique for the Late Scythian culture.

The great number of persons buried into the same vault makes one think of the size of the collective that buried their relatives there. If we compare anthropological data with archaeology, we will see that for about 200 years, and this is maximum period possible, they buried a little bit more than 100 persons into the vault. This way, burials were made more often than every second year. One should also take into account that the number of children buried into the vault was small. Taking into account high mortality of children in antiquity, one should think that children were buried

separately in most cases. Excavations near vault no. 42 uncovered an area of synchronous children burials in special graves. We do not know the reason why sometimes they buried children separately and sometimes together with the adults. It is interesting that this vault did not contain burials of senile persons. Only one skull could be attributed to the age of 45–50 and one more to 40 years. Average age of the buried persons (except for children) was less than 30 years. Therefore, it was a relatively big group considering it necessary to bury their relatives in the same place for a long time. This need was so important that they had to break the tradition in order to satisfy it: when there was no more space in the chamber, they started to bury in the entrance pit. No family, even the large one consisting of three generations of relatives, could exist for long if they had to bury a relative more often than every second year. Obviously, this vault was used by a collective larger than a family, possibly by a kindred or clan (Храпунов, Мульд, Стоянова 2009).

In the period under analysis, undercut graves appeared in every Late Scythian cemetery. Researchers unanimously relate the spread of the graves of this type with Sarmatian migration (Раевский 1971b: 149; Гущина 1967: 43; Богданова 1982: 33).

The earliest undercut graves in the Late Scythian cemetery were excavated near the village of Kol'chugino. There were six such burials in total. Each consisted of entrance pit filled with stones and single undercut. Barriers of large stone slabs separated the undercut from the entrance pit. Such grave



Fig. 70. Opushki cemetery. Beads



Fig. 71. Opushki cemetery. Beads and pendants



Fig. 72. Opushki cemetery. Mirrors

was intended for burial of one, two or three persons. Paired and triple burials were arranged in two tiers. The burials were accompanied by few red-slip and hand-made vessels, arrowheads, fibulae, buckles and some other goods. There was multitude of beads used in necklaces, hand and leg bracelets, as well as



Fig. 73. Opushki cemetery. Mirror pendant

to embroider clothes. There were animal bones and knives placed into bowls.

The combination of datable artefacts allows one to date the undercut graves of Kol'chugino to the first half of the first century AD. Later on, undercut graves became an inalienable element of the Late Scythian culture. However, here is almost the first archaeologically determinable group for the Sarmatians who penetrated into the area populated by the Late Scythians.

Most part of burials in Kol'chugino was made into common Late Scythian vaults. Undercut graves are located as a compact group separately from vaults (fig. 77). They have much larger percentage of weapon burials. Two graves (nos. 5 and 13) contained hand-made vessels: they are not common for the Late Scythians, but greatly similar to ceramic ware discovered in the North Caucasus and in other areas populated by the Sarmatians.

The compactness of the area with undercut graves, its isolation from the area with vaults, uniformity of the funeral rite recorded in it, the presence of a large number of weapons, not normal for the Late Scythians, vessels of shapes similar to the types distributed in the Lower



Fig. 74. Opushki cemetery. Knobbed rings

Don area and North Caucasus, as well as derivatives from “Marcomanian” buckles that were not spread in the Late Scythian environment allow one to suppose that initially the Sarmatians differed from the majority of dwellers of the Late Scythian settlement by many features of their material and spiritual culture and understood these differences. The excavations of the cemetery near Kol’chugino village probably registered the stage of interrelation of two *ethnoi* before active assimilation started (Храпунов, Масякин, Мульд 1997).

Undercut graves appeared in all the Late Scythian cemeteries from the mid-first century AD (Пуздровский 2007: 109). Rich burials concentrated in a sec-

tion of Ust’-Al’ma cemetery and were of considerable interest. They were made in the first century AD into usual Late Scythian vaults and are accompanied by different goods, which as a rule have analogies in rich burials of the Middle Sarmatian culture (figs. 78–80) (Loboda, Puzdrovskij, Zaicev 2002). It is probably an example of cultural or even *ethnic* syncretism, so typical in the Late Scythian culture.

Besides vaults and undercut graves, burials were made into rectangular pits. They were often filled with stones; in some cases, layers of stone alternated with layers of soil. Some graves had



Fig. 75. Opushki cemetery. Buckle





Fig. 76. Opushki cemetery. Fibulae

ledges along long walls for placing wooden or stone cover; the earliest of them dated from the second half of the first century AD (Богданова 1989: 18–21; Высотская 1994а: 55–57; Firsov 1999: 3; Zhuravlev 1999: 19).

All the Late Scythian cemeteries contained child's burials. Besides that, children were buried in amphorae, handmade vessels or simple graves sunken into cultural layer in the settlement area. Excavations of almost all the Late Scythian sites uncovered child's burials (see for example: Высотская 1972: 38–39; Щеглов 1965: 146; Храпунов 1991: 12–13; Пуздровский 2007:

112–113). This phenomenon has been usually related to the influence exerted on the Scythians by ancient Greek centres, where vessel burials of children were uncovered by excavations of many cemeteries (Бунятян, Зубарь 1991). However, this is not the only possible explanation.

The difference is that the Greeks buried children into vessels only in cemeteries, though the Scythians almost entirely in settlements. Amphora burials in the Late Scythian cemeteries are extremely rare (Богданова 1989: 24; Пуздровский 1987: 205–207; Зайцев *et al.* 2005: 175). There are children burials

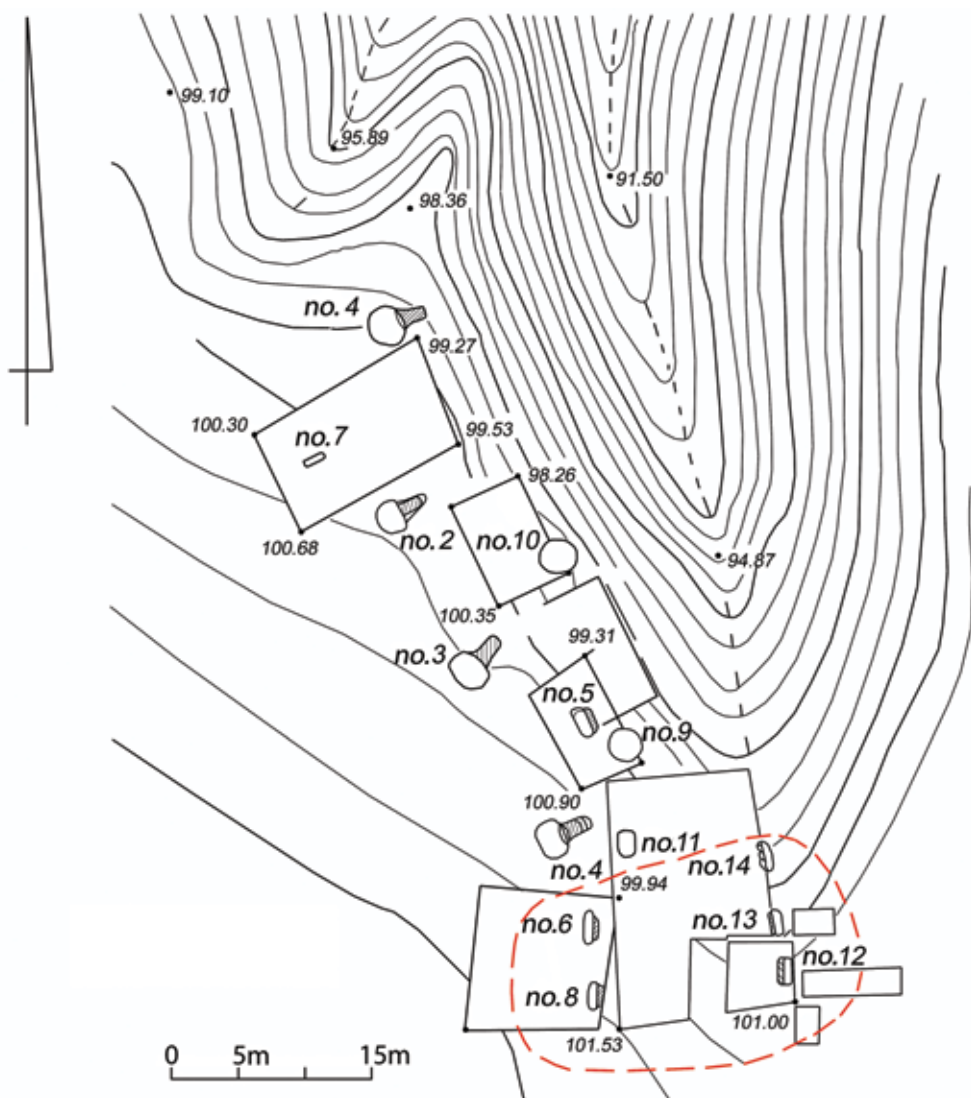


Fig. 77. Kol'chugino cemetery. Plan.  
Dashed line indicates the area  
with burials in undercut graves

excavated in a cultural layer in the Early Scythian Kamenka site of fortified settlement (Граков 1954: 56). Therefore, it could be the case with the preservation of an old Scythian tradition. Most likely, the rite to bury children in the settlement area is a phenomenon typical of a certain stage of social development, widely spread among different tribes when they turned to settled way of life, most often to farming.

Generally, the period of the first century BC and the first century AD could be characterised as the time of calm evolutionary development of the Late Scythian culture. The architecture of fortifications, residential and economic buildings, hand-made ceramics and gra-



Fig. 78. Ust'-Al'ma cemetery.  
Fragments of wooden artefacts

ve constructions demonstrate the continuity of traditions shaped in the second century BC. The most outstanding innovation was the appearance of undercut graves in Late Scythian cemeteries in the first century AD. They were probably used for burials of the Sarmatians whose migration was not recorded by

written sources that survived. In the given period, the Scythians kept the territory acquired in the second century BC; they neither enlarge nor lose it.

There could be some unimportant and short-term Scythian migration eastwards, to the territory of the Bosporan state in the first century BC. It is indicated by the results of the excavations in Polyanka settlement, a room annexed

to Uzunlar earthwork, and Kutlak fortress. The settlement was covered with houses, which ground plan and masonry technique were not typical of Bosporos. Its cultural layer was saturated with fragments of hand-made ceramic ware. “Barbarian” appearance of Polyanka settlement allows the researchers to infer that it was made by some population kindred to the residents of central Crimea (Масленников 1990: 92–93; Масленников 1989: 44).

There was a small garrison stationed in the second half of the first century BC in the room annexed to Uzunlar earthwork; it produced hand-made ceramics, similar to that discovered in Neapolis and other Late Scythian settlements (Масленников 1994: 180–182).

Expressive and specific assemblage of hand-made ware from Kutlak fortress in the southern frontier of the Bosporan kingdom reflects local barbarian traditions (Ланцов, Юрочкин 2001; Ланцов, Юрочкин 2006: 109–117). The fortress existed for a short time within the second half of the first century BC. Sergey Lantsov identified it with Arrianos’ “abandoned port of Scytho-Taurians” (Ланцов 1999).

The location, functional purpose and synchronism of the sites near Uzunlar earthwork and Kutlak allow one to suppose that Bosporan kings involved Crimean barbarians as frontier garrisons. Such a need appeared in the first century BC and disappeared soon. If this assumption is correct, it makes an indirect evidence that the Late Scythian population was not homogenous. The garrisons encamped in Uzunlar earthwork and on the shore of Kutlak bay were recruited from the Late Scythians

to protect Bosporan frontiers from their own tribesmen.

It was the late first or early second century AD when the residents left almost all the settlements in the north-west Crimea. Such large settlements as Kalos Limen, Belyaus, Southern Donuzlav, and many others ceased to exist. Probably the same happened to Chayka settlement a bit earlier. The only exceptions in this area were Tarpanchi settlement, where fortifications ceased to exist (Щеглов 1978: 39, 43), and sanctuary on the embankment between Saki lake and the Black Sea (Ланцов 2001: 81).

The most part of Bulganak settlement in between of two lines of fortifications was abandoned in the same period. The population concentrated in a small acropolis, filled it with stone houses, and lived there for a half of century. Another settlement in West Bulganak river valley, named Kol’chugino, also became depopulated in the late first or early second century AD, according to the results of the excavations of its cemetery (Храпунов, Масякин, Мульд 1997: 124).

This way, north-west Crimea and the valley of the West Bulganak river in the central Crimea were deserted. However, there was no trace of devastation in these settlements that could be related to a war. Great fires enveloped settlements of Ust’-Al’ma (Высотская 1983b: 114) and possibly Neapolis (Колтухов, Махнева 1988: 155) that anyway continued to exist till the mid-third century AD. There were attempts to explain the fall of the settlements in the north-west Crimea as a result of wars between the Scythians

and Bosporos (Дашевская, 1971: 155), campaign of Tiberius Plautius Silvanus (Щеглов 1978: 135; Михлин 1980: 211; Зубар 1988: 24), or intertribal violence amidst the Scythians (Высотская 1983b: 114).

The life of the Late Scythian settlements in the Dnieper area probably ended in the early second century AD. This is recorded by excavations of Lyubimovka (Дмитров, Зуц, Копилов 1961), Gavrilovka (Погребова 1958: 173–232), Zolotaya Ravine (Вязьмитина 1962: 221) and Nikolayevka (Гошкевич 1913) sites of ancient towns, as well as the cemeteries in Zolotaya Ravine (Вязьмитина 1972) and Nikolayevka–Kozatskoye (Гей 1986: 84–85). Only Znamenka settlement ceased to exist a bit earlier (Погребова 1958: 108, 164), though the history of Krasnyy Mayak cemetery ended later (Гей, Бажан 1993: 57). Many researchers relate the fall of the settlements in the Dnieper area to the Sarmatians (Погребова 1958: 237; Вязьмитина 1962: 227; Щукин 1970: 67). We should note that there is no trace of devastation related to the capture of settlements by enemies in the Dnieper area as well.

A small number of Scythians probably left the Dnieper area and migrated to the north-west Black Sea, where typical Late Scythian cemetery of Mologa II was excavated (Гудкова, Фокеев 1982). About this time, some barbarians of the culture that could be righteously called the Late Scythian populated the territory of Hellenic city of Nikonion abandoned long before (Бруяко, Дзиговский, Секерская 2008: 178–180).

Archaeological researches have accumulated data allowing one to state

that some events related to active military operations happened in the north Black Sea area in the late first and early second century AD. These events probably touched the Late Scythians, as well as Bosporos and Olbia.

If one supposes that more or less synchronous devastations in the north Black Sea sites happened in result of the same historical event and not of different but almost simultaneous ones, as the archaeological sites could be interpreted, this event could be a certain migration of Sarmatian tribes. Although this assertion has no reliable support from written sources, in the given period the Sarmatians were the only power in the north Black Sea area capable of simultaneous actions in the large territory from the Caucasian coast of the Black Sea in the east to the Dnieper and Bug areas in the west (Храпунов 1990).

There is an inscription from Pantikapaion (Виноградов, Шестаков 2005; Сапрыкин 2005) supplying an indirect evidence that the Sarmatians, whose aggression I just call the reason of the devastation of the north-western Crimea in the late first and early second century, could be a little more definitely called the tribal union of the Alans. Anyway, the fall of the fortresses and the abandonment of this area by the Scythians took place approximately (because it is the case of archaeological chronology) in the time when the inscription recorded the presence of the Alans in the west Crimea.

The outflow of the population from deserted lands of the north-west Crimea was probably related to the raise of population density in the foothill area. Many very small, almost without cultural layer,



Fig. 79. Ust'-Al'ma cemetery.  
Badges that embroidered a gown

fortifications encircled with large unfortified settlements appeared in the central and south-west Crimea. Fragments of ceramic vessels allow one to date these refuges from the second and third century AD (Высотская 1972: 66).

In the first quarter of the second century AD, the Scythians appeared in Bosphoran inscriptions. Their ethnonym is kept by

inscription in honour of a man who acted mainly in the early ages of Sauromates I (93–123 AD) (Виноградов, Шестаков 2005; Сапрыкин 2005). He waged war against the Scythians but did not subdue them, in contrast of the Taurians.

Yuriy G. Vinogradov and Saprykin after him reconstructed the name of the Scythians in lacunae two times more. If these reconstructions are correct, the Bosporan military leader raided against the Scythians crossing Taurica from Bosporos to Chersonesos.

According to the reconstructed fragments of the inscription and Saprykin's interpretations (Сапрыкин 2005: 62), the Bosporan general, before leaving on campaign, received the oath of fidelity from some kings. Possibly, this is the case of another hint on tribal heterogeneity of the Scythians when some tribes were allies and others were enemies of Bosporos.

This inscription stands in a line with few documents from the first and second centuries AD (КБН: nos. 32–33, 39–40, 1237), set up in honour of victories by Bosporan kings over the Scythians. In this case, it was the only time when the Bosporans were not headed by their king and the only time when they did not triumphed over the Scythians.

Sauromates I had to change the situation himself; for that victory over the Scythians he was honoured with inscription (КБН: no. 32). The fruits of this victory, however, appeared to be short-term. Very soon, and namely in 123 AD, the heir of Sauromates I, Kotys II had to start a new war against the Scythians; there is an inscription stating that this war was successful (КБН: no. 33).

In the reign of Antoninus Pius (138–161 AD), some Tauro-Scythians attacked Olbia. The city was endangered so seriously that the Olbians had to appeal the emperor for help. The Romans in cooperation with Olbian militia defeated the barbarians. In result,

the Tauro-Scythians had to conclude unfavourable treaty backing it by sending captives (SHA *J. Capit., Ant. P.* 9. 9). Although the information from the source was discussed by scholars many times (Латышев 1887: 190; Ростовцев 1915в: 13; Буйских 1991: 134; Зубарь 1997; Зубарь 2003–2004: 443; Пуздровский 2001а, 109; Внуков 2006: 149; Храпунов 2007: 120; Симоненко 2010: 242–243), it remains unclear whence came the Tauro-Scythians to attack Olbia. This ethnonym as often used referring to the Crimean population, thus making it probable that the source of danger for the Olbians was located in the peninsula. For example, Olbia could be attacked by the residents of the north-west Crimea who left the place where they lived earlier. However, the accounts by Dionysios Periegetes (*De Situ* 298–320), Ptolemy (*Geogr.* 3. 5. 11, 25; 10. 5. 2), as well as Eustathios (*Shol. ad Dion. Perieg.* 303–306) placed the Taurians or Tauro-Scythians near the Achilles' Run, so some Crimeans by origin could leave near Olbian *chora* in the second century AD. Though no confirmation of the migration of the Crimean population outside the peninsula can be found in archaeological materials.

Written sources on the history of the Late Scythians have a seventy-year-long gap. After above-mentioned inscriptions of victories of Sauromates I and Kotys II, the next time Scythians are mentioned in the inscriptions dated back to 193 AD (КБН: no. 1237). However, if one takes into account archaeological data, the second century AD signified not only wars between the Scythians and Bosporos but also important ethnic changes in the foothill area of the Crimea.

The tradition to bury in vaults gradually declined in the cemeteries adjoining the largest Late Scythian settlements of Neapolis and Ust'-Al'ma (Сымонович 1983: 101; Высотская 1994a: 138). Let us remember in this connection that vaults were used for the overwhelming majority of Late Scythian burials in the first century BC and the first century AD. Instead of the vaults, they started to use undercut graves and, much rarely, ledged graves. All the researchers relate the spread of burial constructions of these types with Sarmatian penetration into the area occupied by the Late Scythians. Simultaneously, many features of Sarmatian culture were recorded in graves located near Late Scythian settlements: the custom to embroider edges of female clothes with beads, pendant mirrors, Sarmatian symbols on various artefacts, hand-made censers, etc.

The number of Sarmatian burials in Late Scythian cemeteries in the Late Sarmatian period increased abruptly thus allowing the one to state that a mass of the Sarmatians migrated into the Crimea. Lower chronological frame of the Late Sarmatian culture is usually established close to the beginning of the Marcomanian wars.

In the Crimea, the borderline between the Middle Sarmatian and Late Sarmatian cultures probably has a historical date. I mean the decree of 174 AD discovered in Chersonesos honouring the procurator of the province Moesia Inferior Titus Aurelius Calpurnianus Apollonidus and his wife Aurelia Paulina. The preserved part of the document does not state the reasons that forced the procurator to leave the battle ground at the height of Marcomanian wars and to go to



Fig. 80. Reconstruction of a female costume according to the materials of Ust'-Al'ma cemetery (Крупа 2007: рис. 2)

Chersonesos. At any rate, the researchers unanimously explain the reasons for the visit of this official of high ranking as the need to protect Chersonesos from neighbouring barbarians, though the publication of the decree signified successful finish of his mission (Антонова, Яйленко 1995: 71 f; Виноградов 1996: 57–58).

There is another inscription confirming that Chersonesos was in a hard time; it dates from almost the same period and honours a citizen who, among



other deeds, repulsed crowds of enemies (Граков, Виноградов 1970: 127–128). Although numerous Late Sarmatian complexes from the Late Scythian cemeteries could not be dated more precisely than the late second or the first half of the third century AD, it is reasonable to suppose direct connection between Calpurnianus Apollonidus' campaign and the penetration into the Crimea of new hoards of nomads bearing the Late Sarmatian culture.

Considerable change of the funeral rite and grave goods did not reflect in the appearance of Late Scythian settlements. All the Late Scythian centres that survived through the events of the late first and early second century AD continued to function without any gap in the second and first half of the third century AD. Fortification, dwelling and economic buildings were erected according to the tradition that existed in Scythian environment for ages. Undercut graves, the type of Sarmatian origin, received in Late Scythian cemeteries a feature not typical to the Sarmatians: entrance pits were usually filled with stones from up to down. Filling entrance pits with stones was the rite typical to the Late Scythian culture from its beginning. Probably, this was a reflection of cultural dependency of the Sarmatians living in Late Scythian settlements from the population of other ethnic type. However, the combination of various elements in one burial structure could be interpreted as a particular reflection of syncretism of the Late Scythian culture.

The study of hand-made ceramic ware from Late Scythian settlements and burials from the late first to the mid-second century AD obviously demon-

strate the continuity of the most types of vessels from ceramic assemblage of the previous period. In the same time, about one sixth of the vessels are analogous to Sarmatian ware distributed in the Volga area, Kuban and Ciscaucasia. Some shapes supply evidence that population groups migrated to the Crimea from the Lower Dnieper area, which was not noticed by other sources (Власов 1999a: 13–14).

This way, the main contents of ethnic processes in the Crimean foothills in the second century AD could be characterized as Sarmatisation of the Late Scythian population. It became especially apparent as the change of many burial rites. However, the culture represented by the materials from settlements should be called the Late Scythian. My general conclusion is as follows. The Sarmatians penetrated into the Crimea from the north and east: they went through the steppe area of the peninsula without stops and finished their migration in the foothills. They populated Late Scythian settlements without conflicts or other turbulence for local population. The integration of two ethnic components, Late Scythian and Sarmatian, passed under such circumstances. In result, a syncretic culture shaped to become typical of the sites from the second century AD.

In the very end of the second or early third century AD the Romans gained a foothold in the Late Scythian territory. Even earlier they penetrated into the country occupied by the Late Scythians, for example, according to the evidence of a coin hoard hidden in the bank of Saki lake after 75 AD by a Roman legionary (Гилевич 1965). However, only in the

period under discussion the Romans successfully occupied the Scythian settlement of Al'ma-Kermen by pushing out its previous dwellers completely or partly.

At the place of destroyed Scythian houses they built a large construction with walls decorated by fresco paintings, and on the side of the hill occupied by the settlement they placed the glass-making workshop. Vysotskaya dated the period of the Roman presence in Al'ma-Kermen very widely: from the first quarter of the second to the first quarter of the third century AD (Высотская 1972: 58). I think we can make this chronology much tighter.

As far as we can judge by the excavator's description (Высотская 1972: 40–57), dating materials are amphorae sunken into the vaulting of glass-making kiln, coin of Marcus Aurelius discovered in the same vaulting, and roof tiles with stamps of *legio XI Claudia*. The coin excavated together with amphorae determines only *terminus post quem*. The amphorae belong to Dmitriy Shelov's type D (Шелов 1978: 19). They were produced throughout the third century AD (Храпунов, Масякин 1997: 167–168). There is no complex with such vessels from the second century AD. A *vexillatio* of *legio XI Claudia* was sent from Lower Moesia to Chersonesos in the very end of the second century AD (Зубарь 1994: 51–52). The Roman troop in Al'ma-Kermen was certainly formed in Chersonesos. Therefore, the Romans took possession of the Scythian settlement in no earlier than the early third century or, less probably, in the final years of the second century AD.

Al'ma-Kermen settlement collapsed in conflagration in no later than the mid-

third century AD. The Romans left it much earlier. Anyway, by the period of the destruction the fresco house already belonged to the local population and not to legionaries, and was used as an economic structure (Высотская 1972: 58–60). Most likely, the Romans spent 10 to 30 years in Al'ma-Kermen from ca. 200 AD.

The relations between the Romans and Crimean barbarians had specific character being principally different from, for example, relations between the same barbarians with the Greeks from the north Black Sea *poleis*. All written sources that survived, and namely the above-mentioned account by Tacitus about the legionaries killed in the Taurian coast, a gravestone of freedman killed by the Taurians, the epitaph for Tiberius Plautius Silvanus, and the decree for Titus Aurelius Calpurnianus Apollonidus witness only armed conflicts between the Romans and barbarians. This list could be enlarged by two more inscriptions on gravestones of legionaries who served in Chersonesos and were obviously killed in battles with local tribes (Соломоник 1983: 63, 65).

Written and archaeological sources in possession contain no information of peaceful contacts between the Romans and the Late Scythians. The Romans' short-term stay in the Crimea probably did not reflect in the ethnic situation in the foothill area. It is interesting that the Late Scythians used Roman goods that rarely appeared amidst them not for original purposes but as ornaments, pendants or amulets (Масякин 2007: 132).

The ethnonym of the Scythians was used last time referring to the people that really existed in a Bosporan inscription

dated from 193 AD. This is a part of the *presbeutes* of Tanais dedication to Zeus, Ares and Aphrodite; its fragments that survived states: "...having conquered the Sirakians and the Scythians and having annexed Taurica by treaty..." (КБН: no. 1237). According to Vitaliy Zubar', the inscription mentioned a treaty concluded between Rome and Bosporos. It divided the spheres of influence in the Crimea between two powers. The Scythians were not a subject of the treaty as they were defeated in the Bosporan war (*bello Bosporano*). The latter is known because of the find of a dedicative inscription by the participant of that war, soldier of *legio I Italica*, from Bulgarian Pliska (Зубар 1991).

The Scythians probably lost their political independence in result of the events in the late second century AD. The Late Scythian state was absorbed by Bosporos. An inscription calls the Bosporan king Rheskouporis III (210/11–226/27 AD) "*the king of all Bosporos and the Tauro-Scythians*" (КБН: no. 1008). Rheskouporis III possibly invaded Scythia several times, as we can guess because of the chronology of coin hoards discovered in the Late Scythian territory. There are three such hoards; all were hidden in the late first quarter of the third century AD probably because of some military danger. One hoard was discovered in Neapolis, and two hoards more in vicinity of this town, near Tatar villages of Chokurcha and Beel' (Кропоткин 1961: 63–65).

The widening of the Bosporan kingdom under Sauromates II and Rheskouporis III is indirectly evidenced by inscriptions with names of these kings discovered relatively far to the south

and west of usual Bosporan borders: in Partenit (КБН: no. 955) and Staryy Krym (КБН: no. 953). Researchers have dated small fragment of inscription from Sudak to the age of Sauromates II as well (Саприкин, Баранов 1995). Although all these epigraphic documents were found out of synchronous archaeological context, there is an impression that the account of victories of Sauromates II and Rheskouporis III over the Scythians and Tauro-Scythians coincided with the finds of their inscriptions outside the traditional Bosporan area was not accidental.

Despite of the probable loss of political independence and subordination to Bosporos, the Late Scythians still lived in the Crimean foothills in the third century AD. Any Late Scythian settlement ceased to exist under the reign of Sauromates II and Rheskouporis III. Most of their hand-made ceramic ware still had traditional Late Scythian shapes. The number of vessel of Sarmatian origin and of those combining Sarmatian and Late Scythian features shortly increased (Власов 1999а: 14–16). Vlasov has noted an absolutely new phenomenon in the complex of hand-made ceramics from Late Scythian settlements. Several vessels from Neapolis, Al'ma-Kermen and Tarpanchi have exact analogies in cemeteries of the Wielbark and Chernyakhov cultures. These finds date from the first half of the third century AD. Therefore, the Germanics penetrated into the Crimea earlier than it was usually supposed, i. e. before the period of Gothic invasions in the mid-third century AD, and started peaceful contacts with the Late Scythian population (Власов 1999b; 2007).

In the late second and early third century AD, hand-made ceramic ware of Late Scythian shapes was rather spread within the limits of the Bosporan kingdom. This circumstance could be explained by the hypothesis that a part of the Late Scythians migrated to the Kerch peninsula and even to the Asian side of the straights of Bosporos probably because the Late Scythian kingdom was subordinated by Sauromates II and Rheskouporis III (Власов 2006).

Modern excavations investigated cemeteries that belonged to Late Scythian settlements and functioned in the period under discussion: Neapolis (Сымонович 1983), Ust'-Al'ma (Высотская 1994a; Труфанов 2010), Zavetnoye (Богданова 1989; Зайцев et al. 2007; Волошинов, Мяскин 2007) and Levadki (Храпунов, Стоянова, Мульд 2001). In the late second and early third century AD they got Sarmatian appearance. Burials into vaults almost ended, new vaults were not created. Burials were made into undercut, slabbed, pit, and ledged graves.

Main chronological reference point allowing one to date the burials from the first half of the third century AD are one-piece fibulae with returned foot of variant 4 and 5, the so called Inkerman type, and violin fibulae (Амброз 1966: 47, 50–52). Other types of clasps are much rarer. Graves often contained red-slip bowls and jugs with funeral food and sometimes hand-made and glass vessels. Buckles with thickened front side of the frame usually have bent tongues that did not project behind the frame. All the mirrors belong to Khazanov's type IX (Хазанов 1963: 66–67). Beads were used to embroider different parts of

clothes and to make bracelets and necklaces. Caskets with fine goods stood at the head of the dead. Various ornaments included finger-rings and bracelets terminating with snake heads, as well artefacts in the form of knobbed rings, bracelets and pendants (Храпунов 1999a: 263). This group differs from Sarmatian burials in the steppe with a few features, particularly, the absence of barrow mounds, great number of artefacts of Greco-Roman origin, as well as the filling of almost very pit grave and entrance pit of undercut grave with stones.

The final of the Late Scythian settlements is represented by impressive layers of destruction, conflagrations and burials related to them and made without traditional rituals. These layers are discovered in Neapolis (Высотская 1979: 200–204; Зайцев 1995a: 81, 86), Ust'-Al'ma fortified settlement (Высотская 1994a: 28, 145), Al'ma-Kermen (Высотская 1972: 36, 61) and Dobroye (Пуздровский 1988: 161).

Archaeological assemblages reflecting the last stage of the above-mentioned settlements are uniform. They include light-clay narrow-neck amphorae of type D, amphorae with funnel neck, wide-neck red-slip amphorae of Bosporan types, sets of red-slip and hand-made pottery of the same type, as well as few metal artefacts with exact analogies in the most late graves of the cemeteries. Such an assortment of finds and the absence of artefacts typical of the second half of the third century AD means that the Late Scythian settlements were devastated about the mid-third century AD.

They were certainly conquered and destroyed by some military operations.

It is not clear whether the human remains discovered in upper layers of Neapolis, Ust'-Al'ma and Al'ma-Kermen belonged to the occupants or to the defenders, but after them life never returned to those places.

Approximate coincidence of archaeological date of the abandonment of the territories occupied by the Late Scythians with the account of written sources about the penetration of the Goths into the north Black Sea area makes all the modern scholars think that the participants of Gothic tribal union destroyed Late Scythian settlements (Высотская 1979: 204).

In relation to the ruin of the last Late Scythian settlements one can pay attention to very specific cemeteries discovered in caves. They are located in hardly accessible places, in the mountains, far from settlements. The most distinctive site of the type is Glazastaya Cave located on the side of Karabi-Yayla mountain ridge. Excavations uncovered about 40 graves of men, women and children. Near the entrance to karstic cavity with burials, there were skulls of rams, goats and deer placed on stones. Legs of these animals laid nearby. Grave goods consist of bronze ornaments, numerous beads, two hand-made vessels and some other artefacts. All the excavated artefacts correspond to the finds from Late Scythian settlements and cemeteries. Besides that, in the cave there were 14 worn-out bronze coins of Bosphoros used as pendants. The latest were minted in 220s AD. There are finds of similar chronology made in other Crimean caves (Лысенко 2003).

The sites like Glazastaya Cave could be interpreted in different ways. The

similarity of the finds to grave goods from the final Late Scythian burials and artefacts from top layers of Late Scythian settlements allows one to suppose that those who buried in the caves were the persons escaped to the mountains when the Germanics crushed the Late Scythians or a bit later.

Defeated by the Goths, the Scythians lost their common territory, material and spiritual culture. This way, they ceased to exist as a single *ethnos*. This conclusion seemed absolutely correct several years ago. Now we can introduce some minor corrections into it. They are related mainly to the results of our excavations of a settlement in Barabanovo ravine located in the very centre of the Crimean foothills (fig. 81).

The investigation of this settlement allows us to attribute it to the Late Scythian archaeological culture. This conclusion is based on the technique of stone masonry, great number of household pits and a subterranean house, burials of children in a cultural layer, similarity of amphorae, red-slip and especially hand-made vessels from the site of Barabanovo Ravine with wares from Late Scythian settlements. Another typical feature of the Late Scythian culture is fragments of hand-made braziers and earthenware fireplace stands terminating with ram's heads, as well as many other artefacts discovered in Barabanovo Ravine settlement.

The main difference between this and other Late Scythian settlements is its chronology. The cultural layer accumulated on the side of Barabanovo ravine from the second to the fourth century AD. According to the excavated area, the life on the settlement was most in-



Fig. 81. Barabanovo ravine  
(photo: Aleksey Pasumanskiy)

tensive in the third century AD, though it undoubtedly continued in the fourth century AD as well. Consequently, the population of this area survived when other Late Scythian settlements declined (Храпунов, Власов, Смокотина 2007; Храпунов et al. 2009).

Investigation on the side of Tarak-Tash hill near modern town of Sudak discovered two sanctuaries. Only a brief information about this excavation is published, so one cannot draw a conclusion concerning the culture and ethnic attribution of these sites. It is only evident that these sanctuaries did not belong to the Greeks or Romans: they were used by barbarians and still functioned after the mid-third century AD, when the Late Scythian culture ceased to exist (Мыц et al. 2007; Шаров 2009).

The name of the Scythians existed in written sources long after. Ill-informed writers used it for the Goths, Huns, Khazars and Slavs when they appeared in the Black Sea coast. The north Black

Sea area was often called Scythia. It was nothing but a reminiscence of millennium-year-long history of that famous people.

\* \* \*

General north Black Sea crises of the mid-third century BC resulted in the decline of the population and increase of its mobility. At the same time, the sedentarisation of small nomadic groups occurred in the Crimean foothills. Taking scanty archaeological data into account, I can interpret the third century BC as the period of transition when the Scythians became settled farmers and developed background for the shaping of the Late Scythian culture. The Greeks not always understood this instable ethnic situation, so they had to use general term “barbarians” for the tribes they were dealing with.

The situation considerably changed in the second century BC. In this period, Greco-Roman writers unanimously called the residents of the Crimean inland the “Scythians.” The decree honouring Diophantos named the land populated by them “Scythia.” In the foothill area, there were numerous settlements with thick cultural deposits. All the settlements in the former *chora* of Chersonesos fell into the hands of Scythians. They built defensive, living, economic and public buildings applying specific principles of architectural planning and building technologies. Graves were investigated near the settlements. In the second century BC, the Late Scythian culture shaped with its definite set of features. The formation of the Late Scythian state strengthened the consolidation of different tribes. Although its population kept tribal differences, they identified themselves as a single people, the Scythians.

The first century BC and the first century AD could be called the period of calm evolutionary development of the Late Scythian culture, the period when it flourished. In the first century BC, they populated the south-west Crimea; possibly, there was a short-term migration of the Scythian to the east. Architecture of fortifications, residential and economic buildings, as well as hand-made ceramic ware and burial structures reveal the continuity of the tradition developed in the second century BC. The Sarmatians settled amidst the Scythians in the first century AD. Some of them developed populated the areas that had no residents before, others lived in the Late Scythian settlements.

In the late first or early second century AD the Scythians left the north-west

Crimea and the Bulganak river valley probably because of Sarmatian invasion. The main contents of the ethnic processes in the foothills of the Crimea in the second century AD could be characterized as the Sarmatisation of the Late Scythian culture because a large number of the Sarmatians penetrated into the Late Scythian territories. The Sarmatians probably passed through the steppe area of the peninsula without delay and conflict with local population and settled in the Late Scythian settlements in the foothill area. Two ethnic components, Sarmatian and Late Scythian, integrated under these conditions. The result was the shaping of a syncretic culture typical of the second and third century AD sites. The Romans stayed in the Late Scythian territories for a short time, and it did not have effect on the ethnic situation in the foothill area.

Last time the ethnonym of the Scythians was used referring to a really existing people in a Bosporan inscription from 193 AD. In the late second and early third century AD the Bosporan kingdom possibly enlarged its territory on account of Scythian lands, and the Scythians lost their political independence. However, Scythian settlements existed till the mid-third century AD. Members of Germanic tribes appeared among their residents, though the Scythians settled within the limits of the Bosporan kingdom. In the mid-third century AD, the Scythians were defeated by the Goths, lost their common territory, material and spiritual culture, and thus ceased to exist as an *ethnos*.

## The Sarmatians



The ethnonym of the Sarmatians has been reconstructed in the so-called decree about carrying Dionysos from Chersonesos (IOSPE I<sup>2</sup>: no. 343). This inscription was probably carved in the late first quarter of the third century BC. Although it is not clear how far from Chersonesos lived the Sarmatians, mentioned by the decree, due to bad preservation of the monument, they are opposed to other barbarians that attacked the Chersonesites who left the walls of Chersonesos (Виноградов 1997: 115).

According to Michael Rostovtzeff's interpretation of a legendary account, in the late third or early second century BC Sarmatian queen Amage attacked the headquarters of a Scythian king located in the Crimea (Ростовцев 1915a: 58–63). The treaty of 179 BC mentions Sarmatian king Gatalos in the same context with Chersonesos (Polyb. *Hist.* 25. 2). Gatalos' role is interpreted in different ways. He could be alien (Лепер 1912: 32) or ally (Ростовцев 1915a: 60) of Chersonesos. According to Sergey Polin, Gatalos headed the Sarmatians from the Kuban river, and Amage's raid against the Crimea should be dated to the first century BC, because there is no Sarmatian burial from the precious period in the north Black Sea area (Полин 1992: 90–94). Although I do not want



to make a detailed evaluation of this hypothesis, let me note a circumstance important for the topic of interest: the areas where the Sarmatians permanently roamed were located outside the Crimea in the ages of Amage and Gatalos.

Strabo informs that Sarmatian tribe of Roxolans participated in a war in the Crimean territory in the late second century BC (Strabo *Geogr.* 7. 3. 17). Fifty thousand Roxolans headed by Tasios were allies of Palakos, struggled against Pontic commander Diophantos and were defeated. The decree honouring Diophantos discusses the same events, but calls the Sarmatians the “people of Reuxinaloi” (IOSPE I<sup>2</sup>: no. 352).<sup>13</sup> Due to Strabo’s *Geography*, we know that the Roxolans permanently lived in the steppe north of the Crimea (Strabo *Geogr.* 2. 5. 7; 7. 2. 4; 7. 3. 17). They were probably attracted by Palakos for the period of the war, and left the peninsula when defeated by Diophantos. Anyway, they were not mentioned in other contexts related to the war between the Scythians and Chersonesos.

The description of the wars of Diophantos is the first and last time when the Sarmatians are mentioned in a reliable written source as acting in the Crimea. No other epigraphic or narrative document states that this people was in the Crimea but an ill-preserved inscription from Chersonesos (IOSPE I<sup>2</sup>: no. 353), synchronous to the decree honouring Diophantos, where the ethnonym of the Sarmatians or Sauromatians is reconstructed from two symbols (Ростовцев 1915b: 160; Ростовцев 1917: 6). However, there is an inscription from Pantikapaion that mentions the Alans as

a power in the Crimea in the early second century (see below).

According to the data cited above, in the second century BC the Sarmatians did not live permanently in the Crimea; they made short-term raids into the peninsula in case of extraordinary events. Episodes of short-term appearances of the nomads did not leave traces that could be studied by archaeological methods.

The first material evidence of the Sarmatian presence in the Crimea comes from the late first and first half of the second century BC layers in Late Scythian settlements of Neapolis and Bulganak. There are a few shards of the so-called ribbed censers, which were extremely typical of the Sarmatians (Власов 1999a: 10). Small Sarmatian groups probably started to live in Late Scythian settlements during the wars of Diophantos or later, when Crimean Scythia was an inferior ally of Mithridates VI Eupator.

Nomadic burials in Crimean steppe appeared only in the Middle Sarmatian period (the first and first half of the second century AD), after a long gap that started as early as the third century BC. Aleksandr Simonenko has collected information about ten burials of the type. All of them were sunken into Bronze Age barrows, with grave pits almost untraced, orientation mainly in the north sector, and poor grave goods (Симоненко 1993a: 67–70).

Burial in Nogaychi barrow stands out against this background (fig. 82). It was made into the mound constructed in the Bronze Age. The burial construction was a painted wooden rectangle. The head of the buried lady was oriented to the

<sup>13</sup> For the special Tokhtas’ yev’s opinion concerning this, see the Late Scythian chapter.

north; the grave was accompanied with various goods, many of gold and silver (figs. 83 and 84). Some of them are real masterpieces of ancient jewellery art (Симоненко 1993а: 70–75; Šćepinskij 1994; Зайцев, Мордвинцева 2003). An outstanding role of the buried lady from Nogaychi barrow comes from the fact that her grave contained precious items that were already ancient when the grave was constructed, so they had especial value for those who arranged the funeral (Трейстер 2000).

The chronology of Sarmatian burial in Nogaichi barrow raised discussion among the researchers. Simonenko dated it to the second half of the first or early second century AD (Симоненко 1993: 117), though Yuriy Zaitsev and Valentina Mordvintseva to the beginning or the first half of the first century BC (Зайцев, Мордвинцева 2003: 97; Зайцев, Мордвинцева 2007). In the latter case, Nogaychi barrow seems vary singular: there was no monument synchronous to it in the Crimean steppe. The problem may be that the low chronological frame of the Middle Sarmatian culture was considered too late. If this is the case, the Middle Sarmatian burials in the Crimea will occupy a chronological period longer than 200 years.

The group of steppe graves from the Middle Sarmatian period published by Simonenko could be enlarged with three sites more. There is a sword with ring pommel uncovered outside burial in barrow no. 5 near Risovoye village (Щепинский, Черепанова 1969: 160, рис. 60.8).

In 1931, a burial was excavated in the mound of a barrow in the lower reach of the Salgir river, near Sheykhlar village. Let me cite its description according to

Nikolay Ernst's report. The barrow was 2.05 m high. The grave was secondary, with its contours not traced in the mound. Burial was prone on the back, with the head oriented to the north-east. Near the right leg, there was *patera*: “*blackened, imitating black-slip <vessel>, of poor Late Hellenistic workmanship.*” It contained a bronze mirror. Fine red-slip single-handled jug of early Roman type stood to the right of the skull. Iron knife was unearthed near the left foot. Fine amber barrel-shaped beads were discovered below the right hand. Among all the drawings of artefacts, only primitive pictures of *patera* and jug survived (Эрнст 1931. Отчет, лл. 13, 14. For the burial near Sheykhlar village see: Троицкая 1951: 92; Дашевская 1991: 52). Photographs and description of *patera* are published by Tat'yana Troitskaya (Троицкая 1957с: 189, рис. 13).

One more secondary burial was excavated in a barrow near Yemel'yanovka village. Only upper part of the skeleton survived, with the skull oriented to south. Fine jet-stone beads were uncovered amidst cervical vertebrae, and hand-made ornamented mug stood near the left arm (Колтухов, Тощев 1998: 69). This vessel has exact analogies in the Sarmatian sites of the North Caucasus (Власов 1999а: 11).

With these small additions to Simonenko's list, there were thirteen Middle Sarmatian burials in the Crimean steppe. It is indicative that excavations uncovered hundreds of barrows in this area and thousands of burials were published (Щепинский, Черепанова 1969; Курганы степного Крыма 1984; Колтухов, Кислый, Тощев 1994; Колтухов, Тощев 1998; Колотухин 2000; Колотухин, Тощев 2000). The number

of sites of the Sarmatian culture is smaller than of any other culture from the Bronze Age and Early Iron Age. There probably was no permanent population of the Sarmatians in the steppe areas of the Crimea. The nomads penetrated into the peninsula from the north and rushed to the foothill area where we know numerous monuments created them.


According to the results of archaeological investigations, in the Late Sarmatian period Crimean steppe was deserted area without any population. For now, there is only one burial that could belong to the Late Sarmatian rather than to the Middle Sarmatian period, however not without doubts (Симоненко 1993: 98). It was the time when hundreds of the Sarmatians were buried in the foothill area, as it would be discussed later.

Some Middle Sarmatian secondary burials in barrows were uncovered in the borderline between the steppe and foothills: Il'ich collective farm, Fifth Kilometre near Bakhchisaray, Dolinnoye, Reveliotti's farmstead, Comin-

tern state farm. They are usually included into collections of Late Scythian antiquities because of their location in the area of the Late Scythian culture (Высотская 1972: 69–72; Дашевская 1991: 52–53). However, single secondary burials in barrows were not typical to the Late Scythians. They were not related to settlements topographically, and had all the features of ritual and grave goods of the Middle Sarmatian culture.

A burial discovered near Konstantinovka village should be added to the above mentioned. The type of grave and location of skeleton were not discovered. Its isolation from Late Scythian settlements and cemeteries, as well as three bronze vessels among the grave goods allow the researches to attribute the dead to Sarmatian *ethnos*. Sets of bronze vessels were often found in rich Sarmatian burials, though they were not typical to Late Scythian graves (Орлов, Скорий 1989: 72–73).

Besides individual burials in barrows, there are two small cemeteries

- 1 — Chyornaya River
  - 2 — Inkerman
  - 3 — barrow near modern Fraternal cemetery
  - 4 — Bel'bek IV
  - 5 — Mamay-Oba
  - 6, 7 — Bel'bek I, Bel'bek III
  - 8 — Suvorovo
  - 9 — Tas-Tepe
  - 10 — Krasnaya Zorya
  - 11 — Dolinnoye
  - 12 — barrow in Reveliotti's faemstead
  - 13 — Fifth Kilometre
  - 14 — Comintern state farm
  - 15 — Tankovoye
  - 16 — Bel'bek II
  - 17 — Il'yich collective farm
  - 18 — Ozyornoye III
  - 19 — Skalistoye II
  - 20 — Skalistoye III
  - 21 — Konstantinovka
  - 22 — Bitak
  - 23 — Opushki
  - 24 — Druzhnoye
  - 25 — Pereval'noye
  - 26 — Neyzats
  - 27 — Vishnyovoye
  - 28 — Kurskoye
  - 29 — Nogaychi
  - 30 — Sheykhlar
  - 31 — Yemel'yanovka
  - 32 — Risovoye
- Greek Cities
 


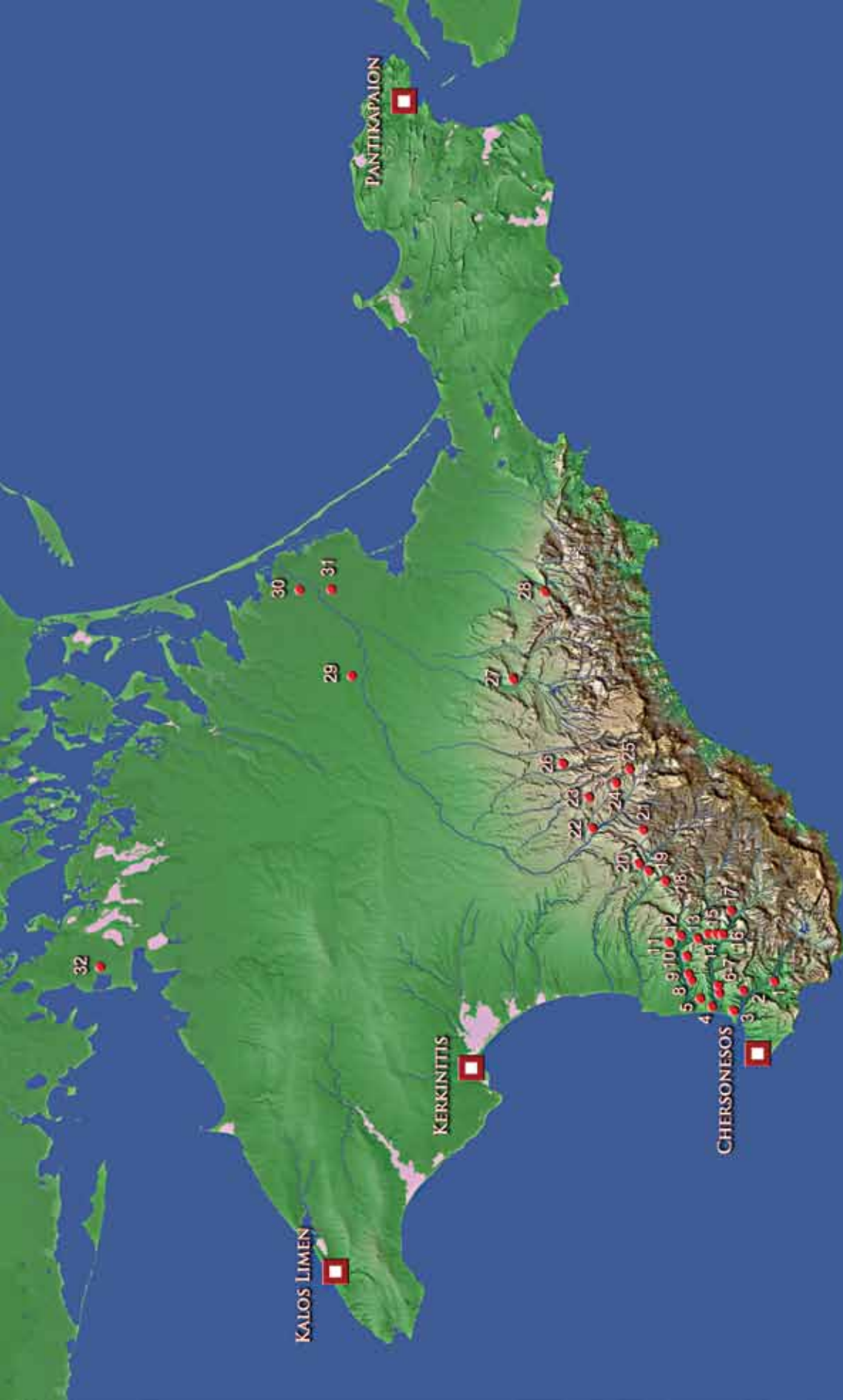


Fig. 82. Sarmatian sites mentioned in this volume



Fig. 83. Nogaychi barrow. Gold neck-ring

of undercut graves sunken into barrow mounds, discovered in the south-west Crimea, in vicinity of Sevastopol. Eight graves were excavated in Mamay-Oba barrow, but we must take into account that considerable part of the mound was destroyed before archaeological investigation started (Зубар, Савеля 1989). Nikolay Pechyonkin uncovered six graves in a barrow near modern Fraternal cemetery (Печенкин 1905: 34–37; Высотская 1972: 71). The mound was excavated by trench, so most part of it remained unexplored. In both cemeteries, the dead were oriented with the head to south-east and south-west. Grave goods included various metal ornaments, mir-

rors, beads, knives, fibulae, caskets and numerous red-slip vessels. The barrow near Fraternal cemetery also contained hand-made censers. It is difficult to date the monuments because goods from Mamay-Oba were not published according to complexes, and the publication of the excavation of the barrow near Fraternal cemetery does provide enough details, necessary drawings and pictures of many items. However, there is no doubt that both cemeteries were used in the first century AD. It is possible that burials in the barrow near Fraternal cemetery appeared from the first century BC, though graves in Mamay-Oba were arranged in the second century AD as well. The abundance of red-slip ware, not usual for Sarmatian monuments in



Fig. 84. Nogaychi barrow.  
Gold and rock crystal brooch

steppe, is obviously because both cemeteries are close to Chersonesos.

The presence of isolated Sarmatian burials in barrows in the south-west Crimea can be explained probably as result of the penetration of a few nomadic groups into the area. For the first time, they did not change their traditional way of life in the foothill area. Small cemeteries with traditional barrow mounds appeared during the sedentarisation, when the length of seasonal migrations shortened, and the possibility to bury near tribesmen appeared. At the same time, the Sarmatians who buried in barrows of Mamay-Oba and near Fraternal cemetery did not stay long in the same place: they did not left settlements with expressed cultural layer.

Various groups of archaeological materials provide a possibility to trace the penetration of the Sarmatians into the population of Late Scythian settlements in the foothill area. An appreciable number of shards of hand-made vessels of Sarmatian types appears in cultural layers generally dated from the first century

BC and the first century AD. This group of ceramic ware is also in later deposits, including the highest of them. Besides that, special pottery shapes developed combining both Scythian and Sarmatian features (Власов 1999a: 11–14).

Ceramic ware with its prototypes and parallels in the Lower Don and Kuban area should be analysed within the same context. Most likely the tradition of making these vessels penetrated into the Crimea with the Sarmatians. The maximum number of ceramic ware of Lower Don and Kuban area types was discovered in the layers from the first century BC and first century AD; its number decrease in the layers from the second and third centuries AD (Власов 2001b: 26–28).

Apart from ceramics, another indicator of Sarmatian presence in the Late Scythian settlements are the so-called Sarmatian symbols (figs. 85–86). They are inscribed on walls of houses,

stone slabs, vessels and other artefacts from the excavations of many settlements (Соломони́к 1959; Драчук 1975; Яценко С. А. 2001).

In general opinion, the Sarmatians' life amidst the Late Scythians could be easily diagnosed by undercut graves in the Late Scythian cemeteries (Гущина 1967: 43; Раевский 1971b: 149; Богданова 1982: 33). The earliest of these burial constructions were uncovered by excavations of Belyaus cemetery. They date from the second and first centuries BC. Almost all the undercut graves in Belyaus contained burials of children accompanied with poor grave goods. Burials in undercut graves appeared in other Late Scythian cemeteries much later. Taking the popularity of undercut graves in Scythian environment as early

as the fourth century BC into account, one can suggest that there was a group of people living in Belyuau, who never lost this tradition inherited from their ancestors. In their environment, undercut graves were aimed for burials of tribesmen of the same *ethnicity* but having social differences (Дашевская 1984: 57).

Undercut graves widely spread in all the cemeteries in the first century AD. The earliest of them date from the first century AD, they are discovered in Kol'chugino cemetery (Храпунов Масякин, Мульд 1997: 124–125). In the largest Late Scythian cemeteries of Neapolis and Ust'-Al'ma, the tradition of making undercut graves was not recorded, in the first case, for about 250 years and, in the second case, for 150 years after the settlements were estab-

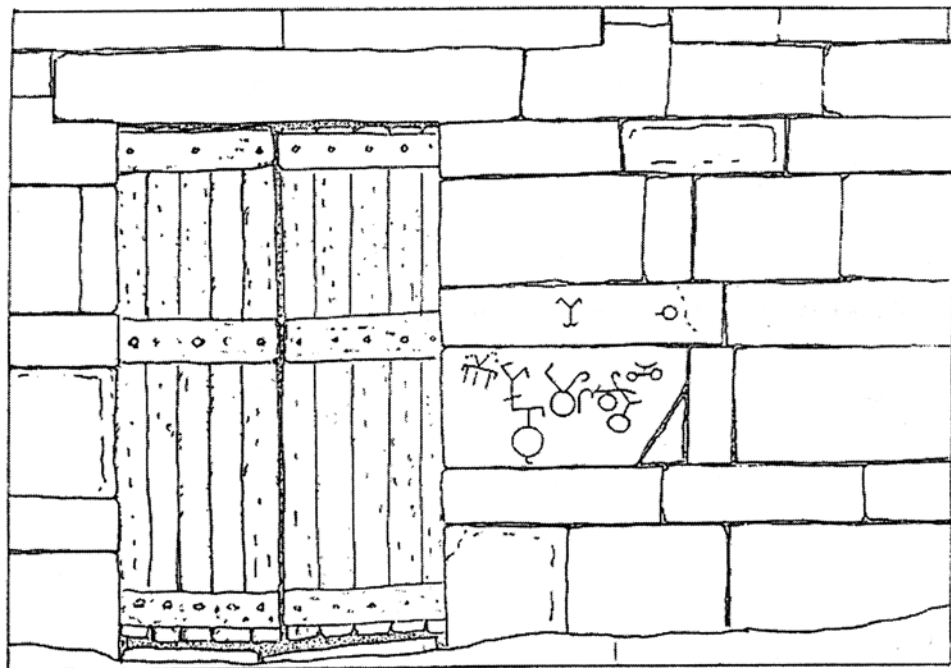


Fig. 85. Defensive wall of Kalos Limen with Sarmatian symbols scratched on it (Уженцев 2006: рис. 68)

lished. Therefore, the appearance of a large number of undercut graves in these cemeteries from the middle of the first century AD onwards was probably related to the inflow of a new population. In the second century AD, undercut graves gradually become the most popular type of burial constructions in the Late Scythian cemeteries.

Undercut graves were widely used by nomadic population of Eastern European steppe in the Middle Sarmatian and especially Late Sarmatian period (Мошкова 1989a: 179; Мошкова 1989b: 192; Симоненко 1999: 9, 14). So it would be logical to suppose that the tradition to bury in undercut graves appeared in the Crimean foothill area together with the Sarmatian migrants to this region. Judging by the grave goods, typical Scythian weaponry, costume details, ornaments, mirrors, and horse harness were replaced by typical Sarmatian artefacts. Many graves excavated in the Late Scythian cemeteries did not differ from steppe Sarmatian by their constructions, most elements of funeral rite, and grave goods.

However, the culture of those who buried in undercut graves in Late Scythian cemeteries was not the same as that of the population of Eastern European steppes. Some of its features are explained by sedentarisation of those who were nomads not so long ago. For example, the rite to cover graves with barrow mounds totally disappeared. Orientation of graves follows the tradition of this or that cemetery and often does not coincide with meridional orientation that predominated in the Middle and Late Sarmatian periods. The most of Crimean cemeteries are located in more or less steep slopes. It is technically impossible to build chambered grave, under-



Fig. 86. Silver horse harness badge with Sarmatian symbol from Neyzats cemetery

cut grave or vault crosswise the slope. Therefore, all the burial structures were carved along the slope, so their orientation followed topographical conditions rather than ideological traditions. This is the reason to forget about orientation as a feature important to determine *ethnicity* of the buried person. Entrance pits of undercut graves were almost always filled with stones in the Crimea, though there is no such case in steppe Sarmatian burials. The rite to fill entrance pits of graves of different types with stones is a distinctive feature of the Late Scythian culture



from the very beginning. Consequently, undercut graves with entrance pits filled with stones are very expressive example of the interrelation of two traditions, Late Scythian and Sarmatian.

The Sarmatians who buried in Late Scythian cemeteries where the residents of nearby settlements, with material culture having hardly recognisable features of the Sarmatian presence. Traditional Late Scythian fortifications, residential and economic buildings do not reflect the presence of the Sarmatians, as it has already been said, and that is not a surprise because the Sarmatians did not have historical experience of settled life.

The Late Scythian culture in the last two centuries of its history was a syncretic phenomenon. The Sarmatian culture was one of the phenomena that shaped it. However, when dealing with the materials from Late Scythian settlements and cemeteries, one cannot be always sure that this or that house belonged to a Sarmatian family, that a Sarmatian and not a descendant of nomadic Scythians was buried into this grave, and that this artefact was a property of Sarmatian man or woman. We can only state visible influence of the Sarmatian culture on the Late Scythian and Sarmatian presence among the residents of Late Scythian settlements in most general terms.

Written sources accounts are very important. After the events of the age of Diophantos, they kept silence about the Sarmatians as permanent residents of the Crimea or when they came to the peninsula for a short time. All the ancient writers without exception make difference between the Sarmatians and the Scythians. There is no composite ethnonym like Tauro-Scythians, such as Scytho-Sarmatians. A famous inscrip-

tion of the emperor Augustus enlists his deeds and mentions different peoples who “*asked for our friendship via their ambassadors,*” with the Scythians and the Sarmatians independently. Scythian and Sarmatian ambassadors to Augustus are mentioned by many writers (Граков 1939: 276). Lucius Ampelius who lived ca. 175–267 AD wrote of the peoples who were not subdued by the Romans before the age of Trajan: the Indians, Parthians, Sarmatians, Scythians, and Dacians (Luc. Amp. *Lib. Mem.* 47. 1. 6). The Sarmatians and Scythians were attracted by Pharnakes during his struggle for Bosporan crown with Asandros in the first century BC (App. *Mithr.* 120). The map of Agrippa, compiled probably from the sources from the first century BC differs Sarmatia and Tauric Scythia. The limit between them went just behind Perekop isthmus (Ростовцев 1925: 44–45).

There is an outstanding inscription about the events in the Crimea discovered in Pantikaraion (Виноградов, Шестаков 2005; Сапрыкин 2005). Its greatest value for the present topic is that it mentions the Alans in the territory of the peninsula for the first and last time before the thirteenth century AD.

This inscription actually mentions the Alans two times, but in the first case, according to convincing suggestion by Saprykin, they participated in the events in the Asian side of Bosporos in 80s AD (Сапрыкин 2005: 59). However, I should underline that this is not indicated in the inscription directly. A short time after, the Alans appeared in the Crimea, near Chersonesos.

One can not understand from the inscription whether the Alans were permanent residents of the Crimea in this mo-

ment or they came there for a short time, in course of some extraordinary events. The latter idea appeared by analogy with the late second century BC events when the Roxolans came to the Crimea by Scythian request and left the peninsula after they were defeated in war. If one follows Saprykin's reconstruction, the Alans could come to Chersonesos in order to make an alliance with Scythian and Taurian kings (Сапрыкин 2005: 62).

With a great degree of confidence, we can conclude that the Alans penetrated into the Crimea from the north rather than from the east. Being recently defeated by Bosporan army, they could probably have no chance to pass through the territory of that state.

The analysis of the inscription text allows Saprykin to draw the conclusion important for both the history of the Crimea and for the understanding of the ethnonym of Alans. This conclusion should be cited, and I fully agree with it:

*“Obviously, co-rulership amidst the Alans is reflected by the text of the enkommion that uses the expression ‘kings of the Alans.’ Anyway, this source leaves no doubts that the attempts to interpret the Alans as not the tribe but as aristocratic sub-layer of nomads alike military caste are groundless, because it definitely was a Sarmatian tribe playing important role in the political life of the north Black Sea area in the last quarter of the first century AD and having its own chiefs”* (Сапрыкин 2005).

Similarly to other written sources clearly separating the Sarmatians from the Scythians, this inscription also does not confuse ethnonyms, so the authors of the document discuss the Alans, Scythians and Taurians as absolutely independent peoples.

This way, it becomes clear that the ancients considered all the population of the Crimean foothill area in the first centuries AD the Scythians. The Sarmatians were clearly different and lived separately, outside the Crimea. Probably, in reality there were more important differences between these two peoples allowing the observer to make ethnic attribution of the population, than common elements of material culture, easily traceable archaeologically and thus misleading modern researchers.

Although there were several attempts to trace stages, or as they are sometimes called, “waves” of Sarmatian migration (Раевский 1971b: 150–151; Высокская 1972: 184; Пуздровский 1989a: 39), they could hardly be called fruitful. The main problem of schemes of sketches of the kind is the impossibility to find the periods within the first to third century AD, when the Sarmatians did not penetrate into the Crimea. Such periods are untraceable by archaeological materials, so stages of migration could not be separated.

Nothing prevents us from reconstruction of Sarmatian migration to the Crimea as a permanent process. There probably were some migration booms, but we cannot find them by archaeology and written sources are missing. During the period of the Sarmatians' stay in the Crimea, main types of grave goods changed only once, in the second half of the second century AD, in the transition from the Middle to the Late Sarmatian culture. This process enveloped the whole steppe zone of Eastern Europe. There was no change of population in the Crimea, in contrast to the Black Sea area and adjoining territories, where people of the Late Sarmatian cul-

ture pressed out the tribes who lived there before. None of the cemeteries of the Middle Sarmatian period ceased exist simultaneously with the spread of the Late Sarmatian culture. The excavations of Late Scythian settlements do not discover traces of war in this period. Probably the appearance of new barbarian crowds influenced ancient Greek *poleis*, particularly Chersonesos: to save this city, the procurator of Moesia Inferior Titus Aurelius Calpurnianus Apollonidus came to the Crimea in 174 (Антонова, Яйленко 1995).

In relation to the problem of the Sarmatians' migration in the Crimea, we should pay attention to few more cemeteries located in the valleys of the Al'ma and Bel'bek rivers: Skalistoye II and III, Bel'bek I, II, III and IV, and Tankovoye (Богданова, Гущина 1967; Богданова *et al.* 1976; Гущина 1970; Гущина 1974; Гущина 1982; Вдовиченко, Колтухов 1994) (fig. 82). None of them has been investigated completely. In the excavated areas, there were neighbouring undercut, pit, slabbed and ledged graves. There is a group of burials with grave goods from the first century AD discovered in Bel'bek IV cemetery. It was also used in the second and first half of the third century AD. Other cemeteries appeared in the second century AD. Excavations of Skalistoye II uncovered a small area of 16 undercut graves of the same type, dating within the limits of the second century AD. Several graves in Tankovoye were saved from plunder; they date from the first half of the third century AD. Grave goods from Skalistoye III, Bel'bek II and Bel'bek III belong to the Late Sarmatian period. All the mentioned cemeteries except Skalistoye II, as far as we can infer from

a small area excavated in it, ceased to be used in the mid-third century AD. However, there are some doubts concerning their final date, because grave goods from the first and second half of the third century AD cannot always be differentiated (cf.: Айбабин 1996: 294).

The cemetery of Bel'bek I has some distinctive features. Among them are the dominance of slabbed graves though undercuts are absent, as well as three cremations. Together with usual Late Sarmatian grave goods, there was a glass vessel decorated with drops of blue glass, which cannot be dated earlier than the late fourth century AD (Печенкин 1905: 31–34; Гущина 1974: 32, 46–48, рис. I, II).

Although all the researches note the Sarmatian nature of the cemeteries located in the Al'ma and Bel'bek river valleys, they, nevertheless, include them into their generalising studies of Late Scythian antiquities (Высотская 1972: 72–76, 78 f.; Дашевская 1991: 26). Meanwhile, these sites differ from Late Scythian ones because of many features. Firstly, these cemeteries are not related to settlements. Secondly, they do not include vaults, the most typical Late Scythian grave constructions. Thirdly, there are very rare, but recorded in Bel'bek I, Tankovoye and Skalistoye III burials of cremated remains, which are not known to the Late Scythians.

These few cremations probably belonged to the Germanics, who penetrated into the Crimea earlier than most of their relatives. This case will be discussed later. The lack of vaults can be explained because the practice of such graves among the Scythian was coming to end in the first centuries AD. However, the earlier area of Bel'bek IV

cemetery is synchronous to many Late Scythian vaults. So the main reason of the absence of vaults should lay not only in chronological but also in cultural and ethnic features of the population. In comparison with Late Scythian, the most important seems the fact that settlements where lived those who buried in the mentioned cemeteries are not discovered. Therefore, the adaptation of the Sarmatians penetrating from the steppe to the foothill area included two ways. Some became residents of Late Scythian settlements, others settled in the areas not occupied by the Late Scythians. Nothing important could be said about the life and economy of the latter. They did not have long-term settlements, but we cannot call the population of the Crimean foothills nomads. These persons probably moved along close short routes. They did not stay for long in the same place, and lived in some light structures, that did not leave archaeologically determinable traces. The length of the route was so that when some of the collective members died, they were able to return to the tribal cemetery.

Especial place among the cemeteries is occupied by the site of Opushki located approximately 10 km east of Simferopol. Despite of special searches, the settlement of this cemetery has not been discovered yet. The cemetery is studied fragmentary. It consisted of hundreds of graves, but the excavations uncovered only 79, located in different areas. So, now one could hardly make a general notion of the history of the site. Nevertheless, it was obviously used from the first century BC to the fourth century AD. There is no other barbarian cemetery in the Crimea that functioned throughout the whole period. The chro-

nology of Opushki cemetery allows one to suppose that migration processes related to the inflow of new population or outflow of old population, though important historical events recorded by written sources not always resulted in the cease of use of some cemeteries and appearance of others.

Among the burial constructions under study there were typical Late Scythian vaults, burials of the Middle and Late Sarmatian archaeological cultures, vaults from the fourth century AD, with construction indicating the appearance in the Crimea of ancestors of mediaeval Alans of Caucasus, as well as one cremation of Germanic tradition (Храпунов, Мульд 2005).

Undercut grave no. 1 is especially interesting for the present study. It contained a set of weapons and details of horse harness typical of the Middle Sarmatian archaeological culture (Храпунов 2007a). Grave no. 1 of Opushki dates back to the second century AD, most likely to the second and third quarters of the century. Many iron artefacts were plated with silver-gilt foil.

Grave goods in this grave make it close to burials of warrior horsemen, discovered in the steppe of the Black Sea and Azov Sea coasts. As a rule, they were accompanied with long sword without metal pommel and crossbar, short sword with ring pommel, arrows with iron stemmed three-vane arrowheads, and sometimes with bone-plated bows. The horse harness is represented by bits, cheek-pieces, belt-ends and strap-distributors, clamps, *phalerae*, and some other details. Most part of them is made of iron, many pieces are plated with gold or, rarely, with silver. The style of iron artefacts plated with

gold foil was popular in the late Middle Sarmatian and early Late Sarmatian periods. Later on, iron artefacts were replaced with silver or bronze pieces with cut or grind-off edges. This “faceted” style is the most impressive feature of the Late Sarmatian archaeological culture. Styles changed gradually, so there are assemblages with faceted artefacts and goods covered with gold foil. Grave goods from burials with gold-plated iron ware were represented by a definite and organic set of finds, though their combination never repeated in burials (Гугуев, Безуглов 1990; Максименко, Безуглов 1987; Курчатова, Бубулич 2003).

Besides Opushki, gold- or silver-plated ware was discovered in other Crimean assemblages, i. e. graves nos. 114 and 120 in Bitak cemetery (Пуздоровский 2001b: 129, 133) and grave no. 123 in Bel’bek IV cemetery (Ахмедов, Гущина, Журавлёв 2001).

After the style of faceted silver and bronze ware spread among the entire steppe populated by the Sarmatians in the late second century AD, same artefacts immediately appeared in the Crimea as well.

This way, Crimean cemeteries from the Middle and Late Sarmatian periods are close to steppe barrow graves because of the construction of graves, funeral rites and grave goods, as well as, probably the most important, because of their main art styles.

Despite of the similarity of grave structures, funeral rite and grave goods to Sarmatian ones, the cemeteries in the Crimean foothill area have specific features separating them from nomadic burials in the steppe. All of them are flat. Similar to Late Scythian constructions, entrance pits of the graves were usual-

ly blocked with stones. Slabbed graves were rather widespread, although they were not typical to the Sarmatians. Wide grave pits are absent, though they have investigated in all the area of the Middle Sarmatian culture. Artefacts produced by ancient Greeks and Romans, mainly by the Chersonesites, were used as grave goods much wider than in steppe.

The above-mentioned specificities allow one to infer that Crimean sites are a local variant of the Middle Sarmatian and, later, of the Late Sarmatian culture. It shaped as a result of the Sarmatian penetration into Crimean foothills from the steppe area, their gradual sedentarisation and constant contacts with the Late Scythians and Chersonesos.

Theoretically, the similarity of cemeteries in valleys of the Al’ma and Bel’bek rivers with those annexed to Late Scythian settlement allows another possibility of the formation of the population that created them. And namely, that a part of the residents of settlements turned to nomadic life. There is neither direct no indirect argument for the above suggestion, however there is no fact against it.

The Sarmatians settled in the Crimean foothill area and created another group of sites that was never analysed before in this connection. There are cemeteries of Neyzats, Druzhnoye, Ozyornoye III, Kurskoye, Suvorovo, Inkerman, and Chyornaya River (Храпунов 2002; Лобода 1977; Труфанов 2004; Труфанов, Колтухов 2001–2002; Зайцев 1997: 102–114; Зайцев, Мордвинцева, 2003; Юрочкин, Труфанов, 2003; Веймарн 1963; Бабенчиков 1963) (fig. 82). This group could probably be enlarged with the cemeteries of Pereval’noye, Krasnaya Zarya, Tas-Tepe, and Vishnyovoye, but

the results of these excavations are published so fragmentary that it is not possible to make a unified notion of these sites (Пуздровский 1994b; Белый, Неневоля 1994; Неневоля, Волошинов 2001; Пуздровский, Зайцев, Неневоля 2001).

The most striking feature of these cemeteries is burial vaults of a special construction, not recorded in the Crimea before. They would be described in details below. Besides these burial vaults, there were undercut, pit, slabbed and ledged graves, as well some other types of funeral constructions. The lower chronological limit of these cemeteries is usually determined as close to the mid-third century, and their origin was explained as the invasion of the Alans from the North Caucasian, who were allies of the Goths, to the Crimea (Айбабин 1984: 118; Айбабин 1987: 193; Айбабин 1990: 66; Айбабин 1999a: 30).

Recent years excavations allowed me to clarify the chronology of the appearance of these cemeteries and genesis of the population that created them. The most numerous and indicative materials allowing to solve this problem were obtained by excavation of the cemetery of Neyzats. It is located in the very centre of the Crimean foothill area, 20 km east of Simferopol, on the side of Tashly-Bair hill that limits the valley of the river Zuya on the east. The site was discovered in 1927 when Nikolay Ernst investigated graves destroyed by peasants. Three vaults more were uncovered by the Expedition of the Institute of Archaeology of the Academy of Science of Ukrainian SSR in 1957 and 1969. The results of this excavation were partly published (Эрнст 2011; Высотская, Махнева 1983: 73–79).



Fig. 87. Amphora from Neyzats cemetery

The site is excavated regularly from 1996 onwards. These investigations uncovered 492 graves, including 78 vaults, 167 undercut graves and 247 pit graves (Храпунов 2011a). Generally, the cemetery dates from the second to the late



Fig. 88. Gold badges for sewing on cloths and beads from Neyzats cemetery

fourth century AD. There is an early group of burials in a few vaults in relation to the problem of the Sarmatian migration to the Crimea.

The earliest graves are uncovered in the north edge of the excavated area of the cemetery. They were made into undercut or pit graves. Grave goods included iron details of horse harness plated with thinnest gold or silver foil, sword with ring pommel, early types of strongly profiled Black Sea fibulae, narrow-neck light-clay amphorae of type C (fig. 87), gold badges (fig. 88), bells



Fig. 89. Bronze bells from Neyzats cemetery

(fig. 89), anthropomorphic bronze pendants (fig. 90), Sarmatian hand-made censers (figs. 91–94), glass vessels, and other artefacts. No doubts, these wares belonged to the Middle Sarmatian archaeological culture. Absolute chronology of most of them is the second and third quarter of the second century AD. The number of graves from this period is not large, it is about thirty or forty. The exact number could hardly be counted because there are many plundered graves in the north area of the cemetery, and some contained any pronounced grave goods. Only one assemblage of this group has already been published (Шабанов 2010).

In the second half or late second and the first half of the third century AD, burials were made mainly into undercut and pit graves. Excavations uncovered several vaults synchronous to them as well. The most part of graves in the cemetery of Neyzats belong to this period. Graves were often accompanied with red-slip bowls containing animal's bone and knife. Besides the bowls, undercuts contained red-slip jugs and, much rarely, hand-made and glass vessels.

The chronology of these graves is mainly based on finds of fibulae. There



Fig. 90. Bronze anthropomorphic pendants from Neyzats cemetery

are many finds of bow-shaped one-piece fibulae with returned foot (Ambroz's group 15, series I, variants 4 and 5), the so-called Inkerman fibulae (group 15, series II) and violin fibulae (group 14) (Амброз 1966: с. 47, 50–52). There are much smaller number of fibulae with scroll or knob on the end of receiver, fibulae of strongly profiled Black Sea types, and a few other clasps. There were several coins from that period (Храпунов Н. 2009). Excavations uncovered more than 40 mirrors of the type Khazanov IX with ornamented backside. In many graves, there were small boxes, their iron and bronze fragments remained.

As a rule, silver and bronze buckles have frame with thickened front side. Very often, they have curved tongue, which never extends beyond the front side of frame and never has stepped cut on the back. The latter features appeared in the second half of the third century AD and became predominant in the fourth century AD.

Bells are almost inalienable element of grave goods in female and child graves. Horse harness is represented by buckles, strap-ends, different appliques, badges, pendants (figs. 95–96) and other artefacts.

Generally, I can point out that numerous analogies in Sarmatian barrow burials and stylistic peculiarities of artefacts supply evidence of permanent contacts between the population of the Crimean foothills and the population of steppe areas of the north Black Sea area and North Caucasus. I am convinced that trappings of mount horse were almost identical in the vast area from Kazakhstan on the east to Danube on the west including Ciscaucasia and the Crimea throughout the Late Sarmatian period.

However, as it has already been noticed long ago, each rider equipped his horse with trappings having small in-





Fig. 91. Hand-made censer from Neyzats cemetery

contained thousands of beads (fig. 97). Among various ornaments, the most numerous group consists of finger-rings and bracelets with ends terminating with snake's heads. There were specific female and child headdresses with use of bronze details. Rare finds were weapons (several daggers, two arrowheads, two shield bosses, one shield grip, and axe). There is a unique knife with zoomorphic handle (fig. 98). As for the style, the period of the late second and first half of the third century is characterized by wide use of faceting. Many silver and bronze artefacts were decorated in this jewellery technique. Several assemblages from the Late Sarmatian period in the cemetery of Neyzats are published (Кропотов 2001; Стоянова 2005; Храпунов 1998, 1999а, 2003, 2004b, 2006а, 2007b; Храпунов, Мульд 2000, 2004; Khrapunov 2005).

Types of grave constructions and grave goods from the early chronological horizon of the cemetery from the second and third century AD almost

dividual features (Мошкова 1978: 76; Безуглов 1988: 110). These features include: a) various combinations of elements of horse harness common to the culture; b) use of rare or even unique artefacts; c) constructive or ornamental specificities of similar artefacts (for example, loops could be sold to *lumula* pendants or riveted to them, buckles could have cut or plain frames, strap ends of similar shape could be faceted or plain, etc). These specificities were probably not visible from the outside, so all the horses looked alike for the people around.

In result of the right to embroider clothes with beads, in some graves



Fig. 92. Hand-made censer from Neyzats cemetery

entirely correspond to Sarmatian burials in the south of Eastern Europe and North Caucasus. The only important difference is that the cemetery of Neyzats does not have burial mounds. It could be explained because of a change of the way of life of the Sarmatians, their sedentarisation, when they penetrated into the foothills via the valley of the Zuya river. Under new circumstances, they got a possibility to inter their tribesmen close to those died before.

The Sarmatians of the Zuya river valley did not lose close connections with steppe nomads. All the cultural changes in the steppe in the second half of the second century AD when the Middle Sarmatian culture was replaced with the Late Sarmatian one were immediately accepted by the population of Crimean foothills.

The comparison of funeral rites and grave goods in early burials of Neyzats with synchronous burials in Late Scythian cemeteries and those in Skalistoye and Bel'bek shows that they were almost the same but only one important difference. Entrance pits of Neyzats graves were not filled with stones, though this tradition was as a rule followed in graves near Late Scythian settlements, as well in cemeteries of Skalistoye II, Skalistoye III and Bel'bek II–IV. It was most often broken by the people who buried in Zavetnoye cemetery, where about a half of entrance pits was covered with stones (Firsov 1999: 3). It is the background to think that there was a group of the Sarmatians who penetrated into the foothill area via the Zuya river valley and did not establish close contacts with the Late Scythians. A certain reticence of this group is also evidenced by the rite of making ledges



Fig. 93. Hand-made censer from Neyzats cemetery

along the long walls of graves. It is recorded many times in Neyzats, though not known in any other cemetery.

There are early areas recorded in other cemeteries of the same type as Neyzats. Grave no. 67 was excavated in Druzhnoye. Every of its two undercuts have three tiers of burials, separated with ground sub-layers, so we can make detailed differentiation of grave goods. The combination of three fibulae of Inkerman type, mirror with side loop, bracelet with ends in the form of snake's heads, red-slip plate with vertical side ornamented with concentric circles of dashes on the bottom, and many other artefacts dates the lower tier of burials to the first half of the third century AD, most likely to the second quarter of the



Fig. 94. Hand-made censors from Neyzats cemetery

century (Храпунов, Масякин 1998).

Another early and semi-destroyed undercut grave from Druzhnoye has been investigated by Aleksandr Aibabin (Айбабин 1994: 92 f., 97 f.). Topography of the site evidences that its most ancient part was destroyed by modern earthworks. Cultural-chronological horizon from the late second and first half of the third century AD is well represented in undercut graves of the cemetery of Kurskoye (Труфанов 2004). In the cemetery of Suvorovo, undercut, slabbed and simple pit graves, particularly nos. 5, 6, 9, 23, contained expressive grave goods from the first half of the third century AD (Зайцев 1997). There are burials from the same period and of the culture in Chyornaya River cemetery, for example nos. 19, 22, 30, 36 (Бабенчиков 1963). That the most part of Inkerman cemetery did not preserve (Веймарн 1963: рис.1), though only a few burials were excavated in Ozyornoye III (Лобода 1977), it is pos-

sible that modern works destroyed early areas of these cemeteries.

Taking the aforementioned facts into account, I can divide the monuments of the Sarmatian migrants into the foothill Crimea, excluding individual burials and small cemeteries under barrow mounds, into three groups: group I consists of burials made in Late Scythian cemeteries, group II of cemeteries of Skalistoye II and III, Bel'bek I–IV, and Tankovoye, and group III of sites of Neyzats, Druzhnoye, Suvorovo, Chyornaya River, etc. All three groups have similarity of funeral constructions, rite and grave goods. However, there also are differences. Group II differs from group I mainly because of the absence of long-term settlements related to these cemeteries. Group III corresponds to group II according to this characteristic, though its specificities reveal in other things. First, entrance pits of this group were never filled with stones. Second, the most distinctive feature of this group is the presence of vaults of special construction, which will be discussed in de-



Fig. 95. Silver horse harness pendants from Neyzats cemetery

tails later on. Third, cemeteries of group III were used much longer than those of groups I and II.

Archaeologically traceable features of each group of sites are probably explainable by historical reasons. The lack of settlements near the sites of group II evidences that people who buried in these cemeteries lead mobile life. They could be the Sarmatians who came to the Crimean foothills from the north and contacted with residents of Late Scythian settlements. In result, their religion, requiring to block graves with stones every time, changed. I can suppose *a priori* that this rite, strange for steppe Sarmatians, was aimed to keep harmful soul of the dead in the grave, not allowing its return to the world of living beings.

Theoretically, it is possible that the cemeteries of group II belonged to the Sarmatians, who lived in Late Scythian settlements for some time and then, by unknown reasons, changed their way of life.

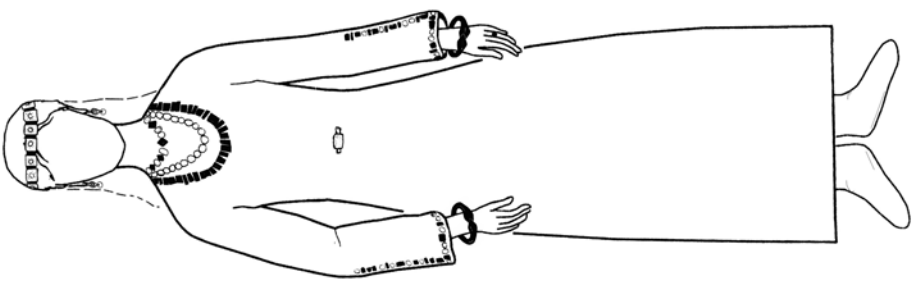
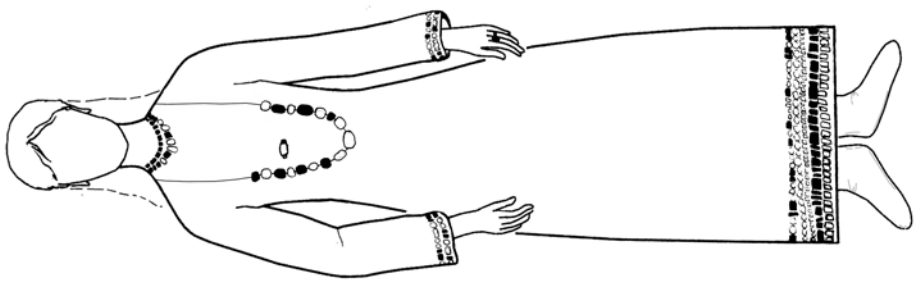
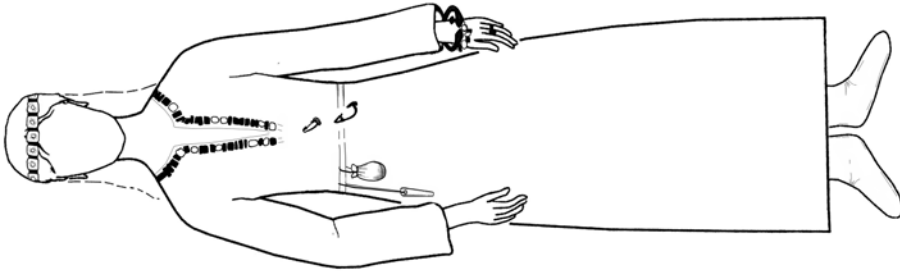
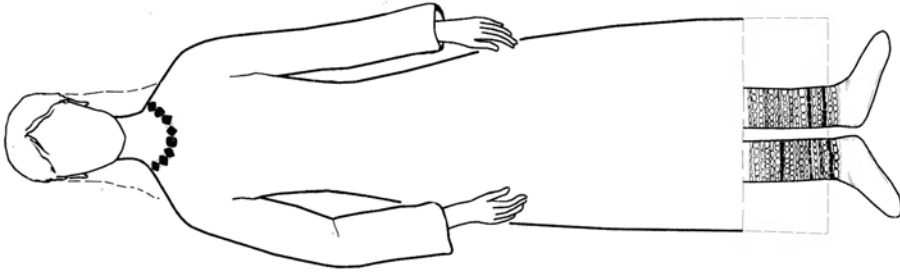
If the correlation of distinctive features of the cemeteries of group III is not accidental, one can build the following speculation. The Sarmatians who made them did not have close relation to the Late Scythians. In contemporaries' eyes, they differed from the dwellers of Late Scythian settlements and people who

buried in cemeteries of Skalistoye and Bel'bek. They were not enemies of the Goths and their allies, so they survived through the events of the mid-third century AD. The latter could probably be favoured by the penetration of the Alans from the North Caucasus to the environment of the people who created group III cemeteries in the first half of the third century AD, as it will be demonstrated below.

The vaults from Neyzats and other sites of this culture considerably differ



Fig. 96. Bronze zoomorphic horse harness pendants from Neyzats cemetery



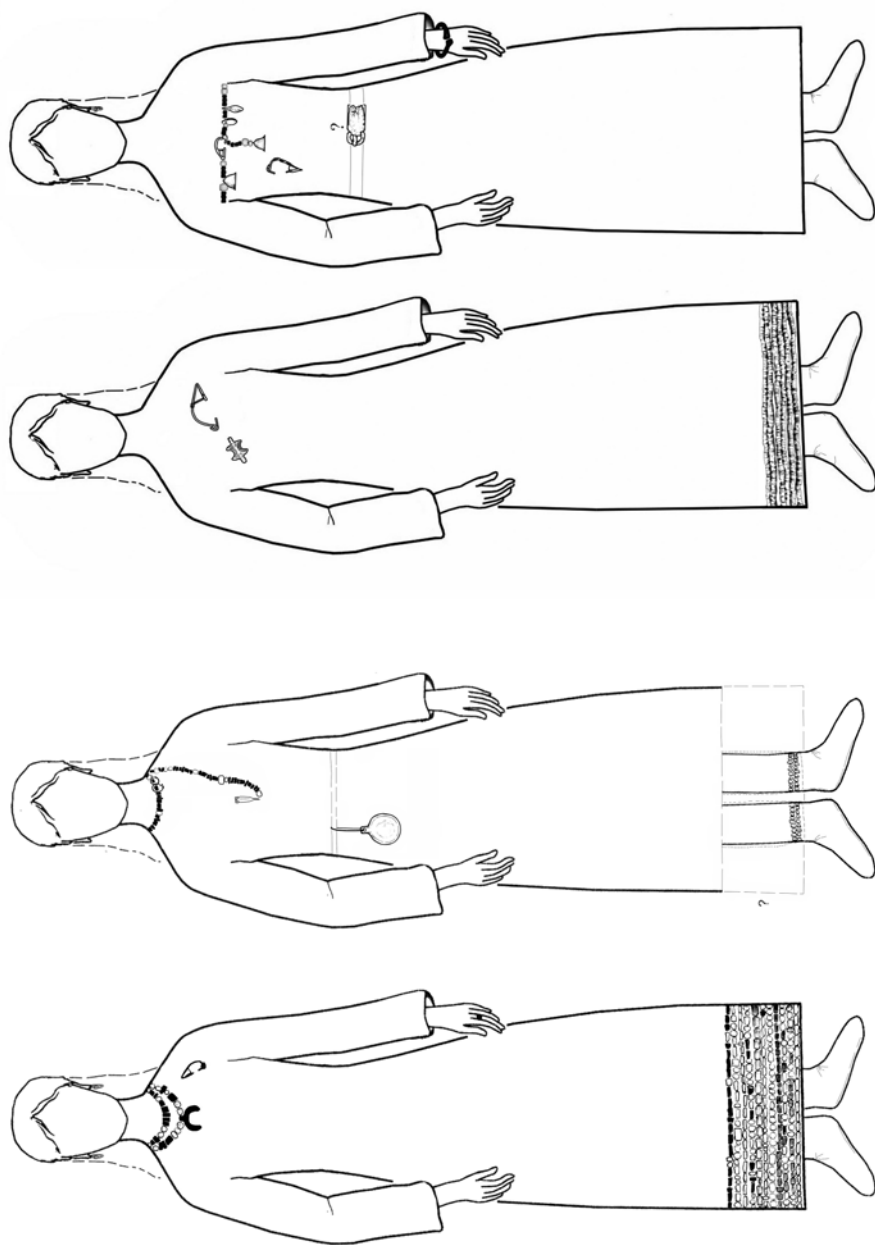


Fig. 97. Possible reconstructions of female costumes according to the burials in Neyzats cemetery (Стоянова 2011: рис. 4–7)



Fig. 98. Iron knife with bone zoomorphic handle from Neyzats cemetery

from Late Scythian ones that preceded them in the Crimea. Late Scythian vault consisted of short entrance pit with rectangular or round ground plan, very often blocked with stones, and oval, circular or sub-rectangular burial chamber with multiple burials located in few tiers (Сымонович 1983: 28–58; Высотская 1994а: 50–55). There was an aperture, the entrance to burial chamber, in one of short walls of the entrance pit. Vaults in the cemeteries of group II differ from Late Scythian with their longer entrance pit without stone fill, rectangular or trapezoid ground plan of burial chamber, presence of short *dromos* connecting entrance pit with burial chamber, and single tier of burials (Мульд 1996: 284).

The earliest vaults with narrow and short *dromoi* have been discovered in the Central Ciscaucasia (Керешов 1988: 103). They changed but kept this important constructive detail and existed in the north Caucasus to the Middle Ages, being an inalienable feature of the Alan culture (Кузнецов 1973: 62 f.). Crimean and Caucasian, especially located in Trans-Terek area, Late Roman vaults have almost analogous construction: the only difference is vaulting of burial

chamber in Caucasus, most often pointed (Абрамова 1997: 9–25). Besides that, Ciscaucasian vaults were covered with barrow mounds, and their small burial chambers contained burials one or two persons (Абрамова 1997: 52–76; Габуев Малашев 2009: 106–114, 144–162; both monographs include detailed review of sources and secondary literature).

Scholars paid attention on the similarity of North Caucasian and Crimean vaults long ago, supposing a migration of North Caucasian Alans to the Crimea against this background (Айбабин 1987: 192; Айбабин 1990: 66; Пиоро 1990: 139). Marina Moshkova and Vladimir Malashev criticised the suggestion that the tradition of making vaults of special construction was introduced in the Crimea by North Caucasian Alans (Мошкова, Малашев 1999: 195–197). They have underlined some differences between Crimean and North Caucasus vaults: the absence of barrow mound, location of the dead with legs to the entry to the burial chamber, multiple burials in each vault, and flat ceiling of burial chamber. They do not think that *dromos* between entrance pit and burial chamber is a culturally important feature.

I can state counterarguments. The main is that there was no tradition of vaults with long entrance chamber, short

*dromos* and rectangular or trapezoid burial chambers in the Crimea before the third century AD. Late Scythian vaults of previous time have all the parameters different (Храпунов 2002: 73–74).

In contrast to Moshkova and Malashev, I think that short *dromoi* should be interpreted as a feature of primary importance for ethnic and cultural interpretation. Narrow *dromos* made considerable technical differences when digging burial chamber and carrying dead persons and, sometimes, sacrificed horses into it. The latter had to be cut into pieces, and then put in relative order in the chamber. Therefore, the need to make *dromos* should have important ideological explanation. We can hardly imagine that an idea requiring similar realization appeared convergently in the Crimea and Caucasus. It would be more logical to explain the appearance of such vaults in the Crimea as a migration of the people of such tradition. As earlier and synchronous to the Crimean vaults with *dromoi* are discovered in Caucasus, one should search for the territory from whence Crimean migrants originated there. Let me remind again that there was no prototype of such burial structures in the Crimea.

Clear similarity of Crimean and Caucasian vaults allow me to say that the features listed by Moshkova and Malashev are of secondary importance. The lack of barrow mounds, large size of burial chambers and multiple burials in the Crimea could be the result of sedentarisation of population. With lesser degree of certainty, the tradition to put the dead with legs towards the entrance of burial chamber could appear because the chambers became larger. Besides, in many cases in the Crimean the dead

were placed perpendicularly to long axis of burial chamber, as in Caucasus. It was in the only non-plundered vault of Inkerman cemetery (Веймарн 1963: 33), in all vaults of Chyornaya River cemetery (Бабенчиков 1963: 113–119), in cemeteries of Krasnaya Zarya (Неневоля, Волошинов 2001: 141–143) and Suvorovo (Зайцев, Мордвинцева 2003b).

The change of vaulting from pointed to flat type does not have reliable explanation. I can only suggest *a priori*. For example, one can pay attention to the difference between Crimean and Caucasian soils or to the difficulties related to construction of pointed vault above large burial chamber. Anyway, Moshkova and Malashev are probably not right supposing that *dromos* is related to pointed vault: no vaults are pointed in the Crimea, though *dromos* is inalienable feature of them. Even if one accepts this doubtful explanation, it will turn to be another argument for the north Caucasian origin of the prototypes of Crimean vaults. Caucasian *dromoi* were necessary because of construction; after the migration to the Crimea, the people did not have practical need but still construct them because of ideological reasons, for example, the idea of a transitional space between sacral and profane worlds. Although the excavators of Suvorovo cemetery have described the ceiling of burial vaults uncovered there as pointed, in the published cross-sections they look like flat ceilings (Зайцев, Мордвинцева 2003b).

Hypothetical migration of the ancestors of North Caucasian Alans, even if do not discuss other synchronous north Caucasian cultural impulses, is the only grounded explanation of the appearance



of short-*dromos* vaults in the Crimea in the third century AD.

It is important to note that rare vaults from the Late Sarmatian period in the north Black Sea steppe have absolutely another construction when Crimean vaults (Simonenko 1995: 347–350). This way, North Caucasus remains the only territory from where the idea to create vaults with *dromos* penetrated to the Crimea.

The migration of the Alans to the Crimea and, respectively, the appearance of vaults with short *dromos* in the peninsula has been usually related to cardinal ethnic and political changes in the Black Sea area in result of the Gothic invasions in the mid-third century AD (Айбабин 1999a: 36). In generally, it is correct. Such vaults became the main type of grave construction among the Crimean foothill population in the fourth century AD. Other cultural traditions were imported to the Crimea from the North Caucasus and spread together with them. Recent years of excavations in Neyzats allowed me to introduce some corrections to the existing notion about the Alans' migration to the Crimea. Investigations of the cemetery uncovered a few burial vaults constructed before the Gothic invasions, in the first half of the third century AD (Храпунов, Мульд 2004; Храпунов 2006b; Храпунов 2011b).

Probably, there was a small group of migrants who made a few monuments, including Neyzats vaults and, possibly, one plundered vault in the cemetery of Scythian Neapolis, dated by coin of Septimius Severus (Дашевская 1951; Пуздровский 1994a: 121). Let us note that it differs from other vaults in Neapolis cemetery by its construction, chronology and topography, being located on the edge of the cemetery.

The first Alans in the Crimea settled in the foothill area together with the Late Scythians and Sarmatians. Particularly, it comes from the location of isolated burials amidst multitude of undercut and simple pit graves from the late second and first half of the third century AD in the cemetery of Neyzats. When the mass migration of the Alans started after Gothic invasion, their adaptation in new areas was supported by their tribesmen who lived there for more than fifty years.

Two more assemblages from Neyzats allow us to turn to the problem of the first contacts between the Sarmatians and Germanics in the Crimea. Undercut grave no. 152 contained bronze shield boss, though vault no. 306 iron shield boss and shield grip. In both graves there were many grave goods, typical of the Late Sarmatian culture. Burial with shield boss from grave no. 152 dates back to the first half of the third century AD (Храпунов 2003; Khrapunov 2005). The tier of burials with shield grip and boss from grave no. 306 generally dates back to the third century AD.

Shield boss from grave no. 306 belongs to Martin Jahn's type 7a (Jahn 1916: 175–178, Taf. III), type I typical of the group Gutteberg of Germanic weapons from Norway (Bemmann 1994: 183; Bemmann, Hahne 1994: 297–299, 458, 460), and type 3b of shield bosses from Illerup bog in Denmark (Ilkjaer 1990: 35, 330). Kazimierz Godłowski attributed analogous shield bosses to groups 4 and 5 of the Przeworsk burials with weapons (Godłowski 1992: 80, 82, ryc. 2. 1, 3. 1–2). The mentioned types of shield bosses were popular in the second and early third century AD (stages B2b–C1a of European timeline).



Fig. 99. Bronze shield boss from Neyzats cemetery

Bad preservation of shield grip makes it difficult to attribute it to any type. It is similar mostly to grips of type IV from Norway (Bemmann, Hahne: 480–481, Abb. 95) and probably corresponds to Jørgen Ilkjær's type 5c (Ilkjær 1990: 36, Abb. 23. 200). In Scandinavia, shield grips of type 5c date within the second half of the third or fourth century AD (stages C2–C3). Similar grip was discovered in grave no. 3 of Chatyr-Dag cemetery, which dates from the second half of the third or early fourth century AD (Мыш et al. 2006: 123, 153). Neither in Scandinavia nor in the side of Chatyr-Dag mountain such a grip was accompanied with shield boss of 3b type analogical to that from grave no. 306 of Neyzats. However, as already mentioned, the grip

preserved badly so the attribution of its type could be incorrect.

The defect of the shield boss from grave no. 152 (it misses great part of its peak) complicates its attribution according to existing classifications (fig. 99). It could probably be of the same type as shield boss from grave no. 306 or any other similar type or variant. Its individual characteristics resemble shield boss from Thracian interment in Karaagach (Велков 1928–1929: 24, обр. 24), as well as shield boss from Hauran, Syria. Karaagach shield boss dates back to stage B2 (80–160/180 AD), though the find from Hauran be-

longs to type Vermand according to Michel Kazanski (1994: 436, 446–447). However, Vermand shield bosses do not have peaks. Anyway, it is obvious that shield boss from grave 152 should be dated before the mid-third century, when shield bosses of different, conical or hemispherical shape without peak became popular.

Many scholars think that shield bosses came to the Black Sea area and the Crimea mainly with the Germanics during the Gothic invasions (Šćukin 1993: 326; Каргопольцев, Бажан 1992: 118). Actually, shield bosses are very rare in Sarmatian graves, so it is explained, quite logically, as borrowing from outside. The Late Scythians did not have shield bosses at all. In the cultures developed with participation of the Germanics, there were many shields with bosses. It is interesting to note, however, that no shield with boss like that from Neyzats appeared in the Chernyakhov culture, which was most close to the Crimea, as well as in Sarmatian or Crimean sites (see the list of such finds at: Kazanski 1994: 436–448).

The nearest territory with analogous finds was occupied by the Przeworsk culture. Shield boss from grave no. 306 is exact analogy to the Przeworsk finds. However, shield boss from grave no. 152 is made of bronze, and all the shield bosses of the Przeworsk culture are iron. As it has already been said, shield boss from grave no. 306 dates from the second or early third century AD as the latest. Defect on the find from grave no. 152 allows wider chronology, but at any rate before the mid-third century AD. I have to underline again its similarity to shield boss from Karaagach. Kazanski has paid attention that shield boss from

Kallisthenes' grave in Kerch appeared in the Crimea long before the Goths and their allies came to the peninsula (Kazanski 1994: 436, 463). Most likely, both shield bosses of Neyzats appeared in the Crimea before the invasions of the Goths recorded by written sources. Taking the material of which shield boss from grave no. 152 was made into account, it is also possible that it was Roman rather than Germanic.

Shield boss from grave no. 152 was not accompanied by other weapons. Bartosz Kontny paid attention to the fact that the Przeworsk burials of the late Roman age and early Great Migration period contained fragments of shield bosses and shield grips as the only weapons in almost every third weapon grave. It is clear that in real life shield could not be the only weapon of a warrior. In a grave, it played a symbolical role of protector (Kontny 2004: 157). This interpretation could also be used for the find from Neyzats.

We can pay attention to another interesting category of finds. In the cemeteries of Neyzats (Храпунов 1999: 263, рис. 4. 8; Храпунов 2007b; 34, 42–45, рис. 9. 9), Bel'bek IV (Ахмедов, Гущина, Журавлев 2001: 183, рис. 9. 3–6), Skalistoye III (Богданова, Гущина, Лобода 1976: 146, рис. 4. 19–45), Chyornaya River (Бабенчиков 1963: 108), Zavetnoye (Зайцев et al. 2007: 259, рис. 27. 24), Bitak, and Ust'-Al'ma (Пуздоровский 2007: 138) there were artefacts composed of iron rings entwined like chain mail. They are 2 to 7 cm long. Excavations discover one to four pieces a grave.

In all reliable cases, artefacts of entwined iron rings were in female graves. As a rule, these burials were made into

undercut graves and dated from the second and the first half of the third century AD. Location of these iron artefact in regard to skeleton is uncertain.

All the researchers who excavated artefacts under analysis suppose that they were fragments of chain mail. However, I have reasons to doubt this conclusion. They are based on the facts that iron ring artefacts are only in female graves and their size is small. It is obvious that this is not the case of small fragments of larger artefacts but of small objects put into graves.

The publishers of grave no. 223 in Bel'bek IV cemetery pay attention to the existence of composite armour of metal plates and chain mail. In their opinion, we are dealing with fragments of such artefacts in Crimean graves. Anyway, I should point out that metal plates were never discovered in the Crimea, though artefacts of iron rings are too small for composite armour.

Analogous finds are discovered in some vaults of the "Golden Cemetery" in the Kuban area. In some cases, there were small artefacts of entwined rings in the same burials with armour plates and scales. This is the reason for the conclusion that composite armours were in use in the Kuban area in the Roman period. However, these vaults were plundered and necessary field documents are absent, so there are many possibilities for different hypotheses. We can not locate artefacts of interest and relate them to this or that burial (Хазанов 1971: 60–62; Гущина, Засецкая 1994: 10–11).

More analogies that I consider even closer are in the area of the Przeworsk culture. There were iron goods analogous to the Crimean in many female burials from horizon B2/C1, in other words,

they date from about last four decades of the second century AD. A hypothesis states that the Germanics during the Marcomanian wars took mails off killed Romans, and their women used these fragments as amulet ornaments with traditional protective function (Kontny 2004: 155).

The similarity of artefacts, their specificity, synchronism, as well as relation to female graves, despite of remoteness of the territories, allows me to suppose contacts between the populations of the Crimean foothills and modern Poland territory. Taking the absence of similar finds in intermediate territories into account, such contacts could be called immediate rather than indirect.

The function of the artefacts of intertwined iron rings remains unclear. The only understandable thing is that they are inalienable element of the material culture, or, precisely, of female subculture of the population of Crimean foothills in the Roman period (Храпунов 2010).

Crimean Sarmatian or Alan graves often contain Germanic artefacts. There are shield bosses and handles, bone combs, pail-shaped and axe-shaped pendants, bone pyramidal and amber mushroom-shaped pendants, fibulae with curved bow and returned foot, and ceramic vessels (for lists of finds see: Кропоткин 1978; Пиоро 1999а: 234; Юрочкин 1999).

It is hard to reconstruct the nature of Sarmatian-Germanic contacts against the background of these finds. They could appear amidst the Sarmatians in result of wars, trade or migration of some Germanics into Sarmatian environment. The latter phenomenon is better indicated by another group of sources. In Sarmatian according to all features

cemeteries of Skalistoye III, Tankovoye, Bel'bek I, as well in Opushki cemetery, there are a few cremation, absolutely not typical to the Sarmatians in contrast to the Germanics (Богданова, Гущина, Лобода 1976: 124, 147; Вдовиченко, Колтухов 1994: 85–86; Гущина 1974: 32, 47; Храпунов, Мульд 2005). In the cemeteries of Sovkhoz no. 10 and Chyornaya River, urns with cremations stood in some undercut and other graves of Sarmatian constructions (Пиоро 1990: 91–93). The combination of funeral rites of different origin within one cemetery or one burial construction probably informs that some Germanic groups lived amidst predominating Sarmatians.

The overwhelming majority of Germanic goods in Crimean cemeteries dates from the second half of the third and fourth century AD. Some of them, however, appeared in the Crimea before the Gothic invasions. There are gold pail-shaped pendant decorated with granulation from Bel'bek III cemetery (Гущина 1974: рис. V. 20) and few hand-made vessels from top layers of Late Scythian settlements (Власов 1999b). A small group of early Germanic finds is now enlarged by shield details from Neyzats. Urn cremations from Skalistoye III and Tankovoye also date back to the first half of the third century. This group of sources reflects the period of peaceful relations between Crimean population and migrants from the north-west, that finished in the mid-third century AD with Gothic invasion and huge Germanic migration to the north Black Sea area.

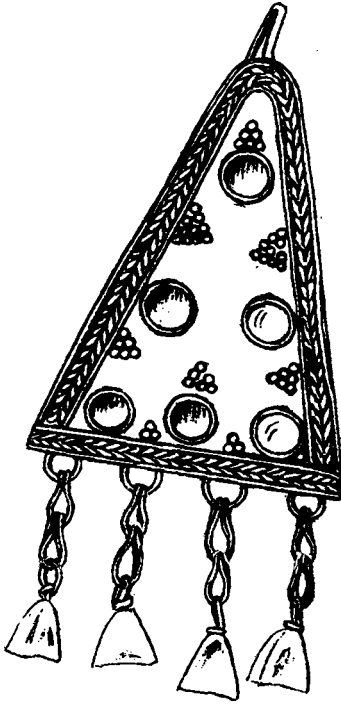
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The Sarmatians came to the peninsula sporadically, in relation to extraordinary

events in the second half of the third and the second century BC. In the first and second centuries AD, some Sarmatian groups roamed in Crimean steppe, however this region generally remained a zone of instable population. They were more attracted by Late Scythian settlements in the Crimean foothills. They became residents of Scythian settlements and supplied their culture with specific “Sarmatised” outlook. Sometimes the Sarmatians composed compact groups of population living separately from the Scythians. The process of these nomads' turning to settled way of life is documented by a few barrow burials and small cemeteries in burial mounds, discovered in the foothill area.

In the Late Sarmatian period, they did not make barrow burials. However, the Sarmatians continued to penetrate into the foothill area. New migrants buried in cemeteries differing from those existed earlier by some archaeological features. In the first half of the third century AD, small groups of the Germanics penetrated to the Crimea probably from the north, and the Alans migrated there probably from the east. Both *ethnoi* settled together with the Sarmatians and buried in the same cemeteries. In the mid-third century AD, a considerable part of the Sarmatians was destroyed, together with the Late Scythians, by the participants of Gothic invasions. However, foothill area was not abandoned. The people who buried in Neyzats and other cemeteries of this culture continued living in that area after the mid-third century AD.

### Crimean Population in the Second Half of the Third and Fourth Century AD



Important political and ethnic changes happened in the Crimea in the mid-third century AD. Their most striking archaeological reflection was the fall of Late Scythian settlements and in the appearance of cremation cemeteries (fig. 100).

Two cremation cemeteries of Ay-Todor (Блаватский 1951; Орлов 1987) and Chatyr-Dag (Мыц et al. 2006; Шаров 2007) were discovered in the south coast of the Crimea. As it has already been said, Ay-Todor cemetery consisted of more than 30 cremations and three inhumations. Chatyr-Dag cemetery contained only cremations. Most part of calcined bones were buried in urns. In Chatyr-Dag cemetery, urns were placed in cists, as well as in pits covered with stone pavements (figs. 101–102). In Ay-Todor cemetery, there were no cists, and urns stood in pits. Both cemeteries contained urnless burials of calcined bones in pits.

Chyornaya River cemetery was biritual. Although most part of burials were inhumations in vaults and undercut graves, there also was an area with 33 cremations (Бабенчиков 1963: 119–

121). In four cases, calcined bones were probably buried in shallow pits (graves nos. 30–33). The rest of cremations were made into urns of amphorae and handmade vessels. One urn was placed in a cist of stone slabs (grave no. 10), four urns stood in pits with walls lined with fine stones (graves nos. 1, 3, 6, 14), others were simply sunken into ground. Grave goods consist of mainly red-slip vessels and few other artefacts. Many burials did not contain grave goods (Бабенчиков 1963).

The cemeteries in the south coast contain rather various grave goods. There were red-slip and glass vessels, swords, spears, sickles, metal details of shields, buckles, horse bits, fibulae, and a few ornaments. Specific feature of these cemeteries is large number of coins (up to nine pieces in a grave).

There is no doubt that the graves excavated by Viktor Myts and his team in the side of Chatyr-Dag mountain date back to the second half of the third or fourth century AD. However, there is one burial, probably in the cemetery area, discovered in 1877: it was accompanied by “worn-off coin” from the fifth century AD, according to F. A. Rebets’ attribution (Мыц 1987: 144–145, 160; Мыц *et al.* 2006: 5). In the area of the cemetery but out of complex, a fibula of “Pil’viny” type, probably from the same century, was found (Мыц *et al.* 1997: 213; Мыц *et al.* 2006: 134).

The chronology of Ay-Todor cemetery raised a discussion among the scholars. Aleksandr Aibabin dates the foundation of the cemetery to the mid-third century AD (Айбабин 1999а: 15–16). The earliest grave no. 34 was accompa-

nied with Chersonesos coin from 211–217 BC, bow fibula with returned foot of Inkerman series with entwined back, and other finds that gave Konstantin Orlov reasons to date the burial to the second quarter of the third century AD (Орлов 1987: 116). Ol’ga Gey and Igor’ Bazhan date the burials excavated by Orlov from the second quarter to the late third century AD (Гей, Бажан 1997: 33).

Fibulae with wire bow, long spiral winding and bottom string of the same type as the find from grave no. 34 in Ay-Todor were in burials of cemeteries of Skalistoye III, Tankovoye, and are especially numerous in the cemeteries of Bel’bek III, Chyornaya River, Sovkhoz no. 10. It should be noted that they are absent in burials of the cemeteries of Neapolis and Ust’-Al’ma. In grave no. 18 of Bel’bek III cemetery, similar fibula was accompanied with bow fibula with returned foot of series I, variant 5, from the first half of the third century AD and coin from the early third century AD (Гущина 1974: 54, рис. VII. 2, 4), and in grave no. 5 with hinged metal artefact with rings (Гущина 1974: рис. IV. 20, 23). Similar to the latter artefacts are found in some Crimean burials with coins from the first half of the third cen-

- 1 — Chyornaya River
  - 2 — Sovkhoz no. 10
  - 3 — Inkerman
  - 4 — Suvorovo
  - 5 — Krasnaya Zorya
  - 6 — Dolinnoye
  - 7 — Ozyornoye III
  - 8 — Mangush
  - 9 — Ay-Todor
  - 10 — Chatyr-Dag
  - 11 — Druzhnoye
  - 12 — Neyzats
- — Greek Cities





Fig. 100. Sites from the second half of the third and fourth century AD mentioned in this volume



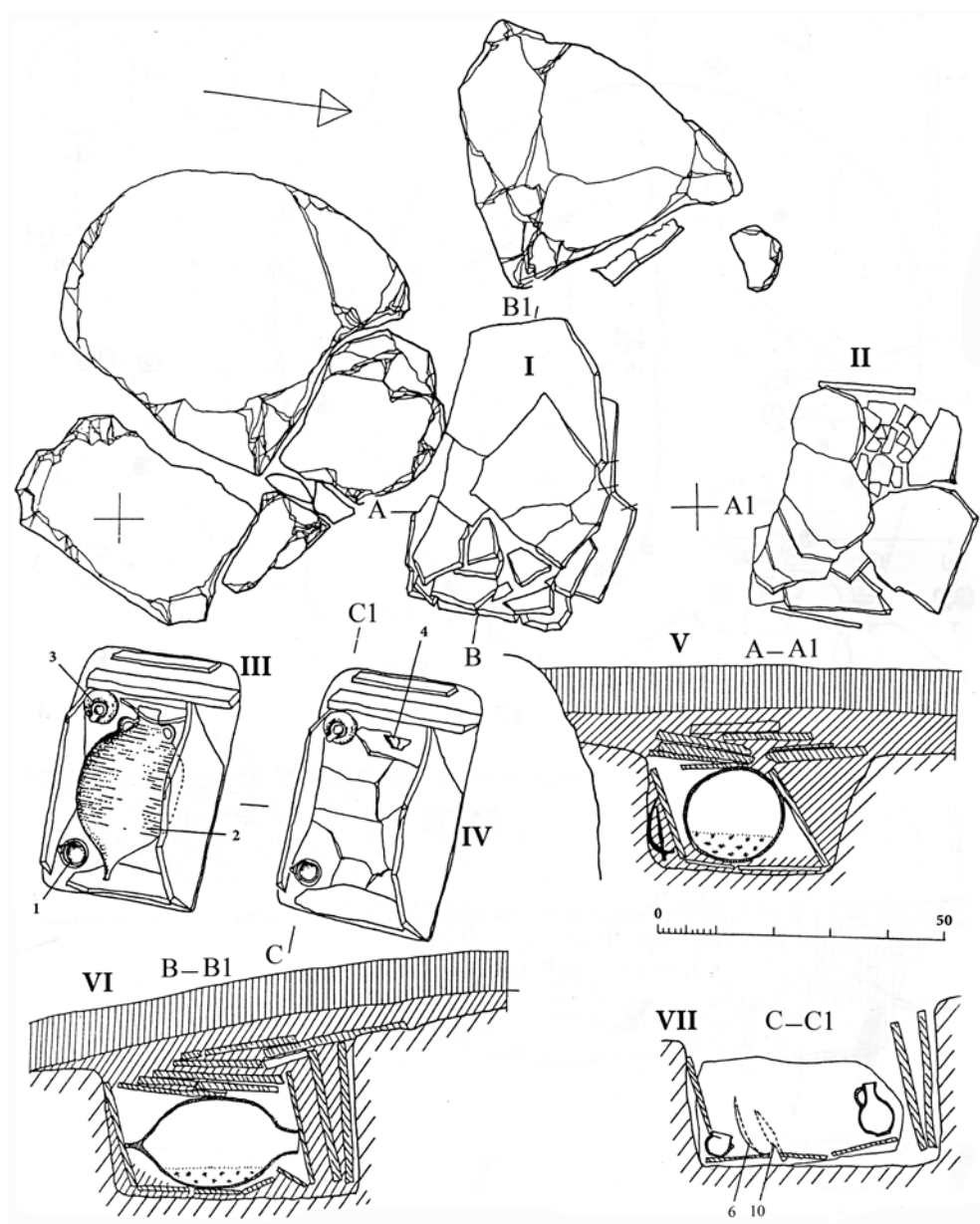


Fig. 101. Chatyr-Dag cemetery. Grave no. 55. Ground plans and cross-sections:

I — covering slabs;

II — second level of covering slabs;

III — grave infill;

IV — ground plan of the grave after the urn amphora was removed;

V – VII — cross-sections;

1 — cup; 2 — urn amphora; 3 — jug; 4 — bowl; 6 — sickle; 10 — spearhead

(Мыц et al. 2006: табл. 51)

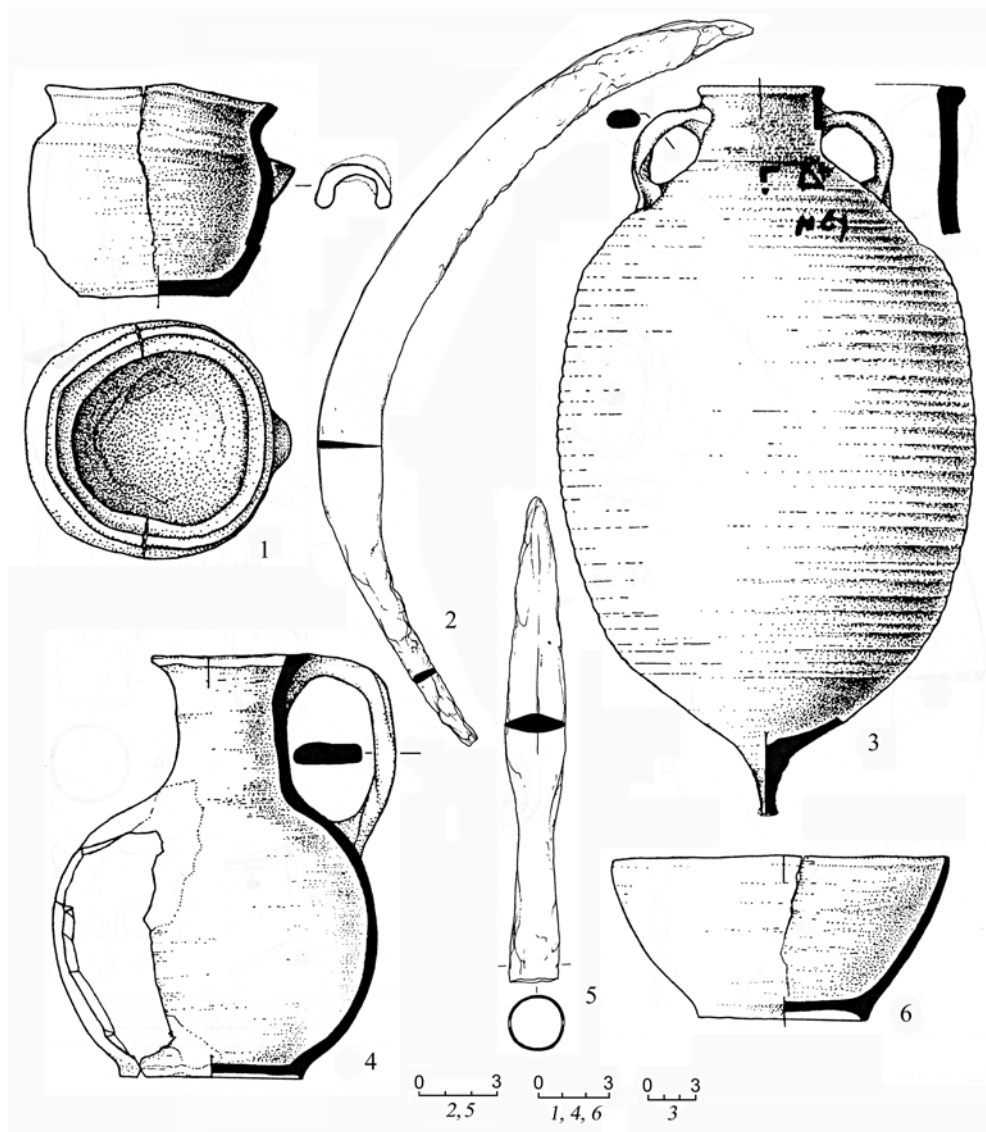


Fig. 102. Chatyr-Dag cemetery.  
 Grave no. 55. Grave goods: 1, 4, 6 — hand-made vessels;  
 2 — sickle; 3 — urn amphora; 5 — spearhead  
 (Мыц et al. 2006: табл. 52—53)

ture AD (Вдовиченко, Колтухов 1994: 85; Труфанов 1999: 227–228). In grave no. 13 of Bel'bek III cemetery, fibula of the type of interest was accompanied with red-slip cup of rare shape (Гущина 1974: рис. VI, 2, 4). Analogous cup was found in a closed assemblage in the layer of destruction of Al'ma-Kermen site of ancient town dated back to the mid-third century AD (Высотская 1972: рис. 29, 6). Fibula with spiral winding on the bow was discovered in grave no. 35 of Chyornaya River cemetery together with coins of Gordian III (238–242 AD) and goods from the second half of the third century AD (Амброз 1989: рис. 2, 25–28; Айбабин 1990: рис. 2).

Perhaps, fibulae of the type were most popular in the second quarter and middle of the third century AD (Храпунов, Масякин 1998: 143). This period should probably include grave no. 34, the earliest in Ay-Todor cemetery. The earliest amphorae used as urns in Chyornaya River and Chatyr-Dag cemeteries date back to the third century AD (Айбабин 1999b: 244).

The researchers suggest the cause-effect relationship between the archaeological date of appearance of cremation cemeteries and “historical” date when the Goths penetrated into the north Black Sea area. Aibabin has used indirect data to reconstruct two Germanic invasions, of the Goths and the Boranoi, into the Crimean peninsula in 252 and 256 AD (Айбабин 1999b). It is supposed that the coin hoard discovered near Dolinnoye village in the Crimean foothill area with its latest coin from 251 AD and brooch, unusual for the Crimea but having analogies in the Danube area,

was hidden by a participant of a Gothic raid (Пиоро, Герцен 1974).

The strongest argument for the Germanic attribution of the above-mentioned cremation cemeteries states that funeral rites related with burning the dead were not known in the Crimea before. Urns and pits with calcined bones radically differ from typical Crimean simple pits or chamber graves with inhumations. It is logical to explain the appearance of a new type of cemeteries as the inflow of population from outside. Greco-Roman *poleis* could not be the source from where new rituals originated. First, Greco-Roman cremations differ from those recorded in Ay-Todor, Chatyr-Dag and Chyornaya River with many features. Second, only 7% of burials from the Roman period in Chersonesos, the closest to these cemeteries Greco-Roman centre, were cremated, and there this tradition ceased to exist in the mid-third century AD (Зубарь 1982: 58).

Another popular argument of the researchers, that Crimean cemeteries were similar to the sites of the cultures developed with participation of the Germanics, looks less convincing. They have given many examples of similarity between funeral rites recorded by excavations of Crimean cemeteries on the one hand and burial sites of the Chernyakhov, Wielbark, and Przeworsk cultures, as well as Scandinavian monuments on the other hand (Kazanski 2002). However, the number of differences is not less, and, more importantly, none of Crimean cemeteries could be attributed to this or that archaeological culture. Funeral rite of Crimean cremation cemeteries

combines Greco-Roman, Sarmatian and Germanic features.

The cemeteries in the south coast of the Crimea, as well as the area with cremations in Chyornaya River cemetery, were used in the Late Roman period (Айбабин 1999b: 246). Synchronous written sources say nothing about the Germanics in the south coast. It was the time when Goths probably lived in Bosporos (Казанский 1999: 282–286), but there was no cemetery with cremations. One should remember Procopius of Caesarea who in his *Buildings* describes the region “called Dory, where the Goths have lived from ancient times” (Procop. *De aed.* 3. 7). There is long discussion concerning the location of Dory (see for example: Пиоро 1990: 58–74). Anyway, it was obviously in the south or south-west Crimea, i. e. in that very place where they had buried according to cremation rite years ago. However, it is not quite clear what were the “ancient times” for the sixth century AD writer.

The above indirect data make the most probable the hypothesis that cremation cemeteries were created by the Germanics who came to the Crimea about the mid-third century AD. Alternative interpretation that the cremations were of local population (Блаватский 1951: 274, 290; Орлов 1987: 131; Амброз 1994: 39) is disproved by the lack of the tradition to bury cremated remains among the Crimean population in the previous period.

In the foothill Crimea, cemeteries that appeared earlier, i. e. Druzhnoye, Neyzats, Chyornaya River, Suvorovo and others, were still in use in the new age opened by Gothic invasion. It would

be convenient to discuss them on the example of totally investigated Druzhnoye cemetery (fig. 103). The excavations on the territory of the site uncovered 24 vaults, 29 undercut graves, 13 pit graves with human and 14 with horse burials (Храпунов 2002).

There are a few assemblages from the second half of the third century AD discovered in the Crimea and in Druzhnoye in particular. A relatively impressive set of grave goods was in undercut graves no. 24 and no. 2, from a bit later period.

Grave no. 24 contained the richest burial in the cemetery (fig. 104). There was burial of a woman accompanied with gold earrings and silver bracelets decorated with large carnelian insets (fig. 105). Silver hinged artefact and ritual knife decorated with silver hanged from the belt. The clothes were fastened with silver fibula with ring put on it. Beads composed necklace. Wooden casket framed in bronze plates stood behind the head. It contained silver coins of Gordian III minted in 241–243 AD, Philip I of 247–249 AD, and Trajan Decius of 249–251 AD (fig. 106). Mirror pendant was unearthed near the right forearm. Grave goods allowed me to date the burial from the period about the mid-third century AD (Храпунов 1994; Храпунов 2002: 21–22, 69).

Burials in grave no. 20 with two undercuts were a bit later. There were three burials made into the same undercut, accompanied with amphora, red-slip jug, coin of Gallienus (253–268 AD), neck-ring, belt-end, fibulae, buckles, bracelets, beads, and other artefacts. These grave goods determine the period when the burials were made, probably within the



Fig. 103. Druzhnoye cemetery  
(photo: the author)

last thirty years of the third century AD. A child was buried into the other undercut. The set of ornaments is interesting because it combines Sarmatian *lunula* pendants with amber mushroom-shaped and stylized-axe-shaped pendants, related primarily to the circle of Germanic cultures (Храпунов, Масякин 1997; Храпунов 2002: 19–20, 68).

Graves nos. 20 and 24 from Druzhnoye represent the material culture of the Crimean population in the second half of the third century AD in full, and if we enlarge this list with grave no. 9 (35) of Chyornaya River cemetery (Бабенчиков 1963: 97–100) and graves nos. 139 (Храпунов 2004) and 152 (Храпунов 2003; Khrapunov 2005) of Neyzats, we will be able to call this representation almost exhaustive. Undercut graves and grave goods from them dem-

onstrate total continuity from the monuments of previous period. The production and use of the most types of goods that appeared in early Late Sarmatian period continued. As for innovations, I should mention, first of all, the replacement of one-piece bow fibulae with two-piece items, as well as the spread of gold and silver ornament decorated with large insets of carnelian, or, rarely, glass, late variants of narrow-neck light-clay amphorae of type D, and coins. At the same time, many types of artefacts used in the first half of the third century AD were still in use in the second half of the century. Therefore, the graves missing goods with narrow chronology could not be attributed to the first or second half of the century with confidence. Burial structure and funeral rite did not sustain important change. Consequently, there was no inflow if a new population into Crimean foothills just after the invasions

of the Goths. The descendants of the Sarmatians that buried in the cemeteries of Druzhnoye, Neyzats and others long before the period of Gothic invasions continued to live there. However, the population greatly decreased according to the archaeological data. The number of graves that could be dated from the second half of the third century AD is much smaller than those from the first half of the century.

Vaults existed in the second half of the third century AD together with undercut and pit graves. Few of them contained goods from the third century AD. The best sample of such grave construction could be vault no. 21 from Druzhnoye cemetery. It contained narrow-neck light-clay amphora of type D and belt-end, both from the third century AD. Two pairs of silver earrings were made in the same style that just mentioned bracelets from grave no. 24. They were especially widespread in the second half of the third century AD. The same is the date of silver fibula and a buckle. Another fibula is from the second half of the third or the first half of the fourth century AD. At the same time, the vault contained goods undoubtedly from the fourth century AD: two silver and one bronze buckles, sword, and iron fibulae. Glass tumblers of the type discovered in the vault appeared in the Crimea in the third century AD, but were especially popular in the next century. The set of beads attributes the vault to the earliest group of burial structures excavated in Druzhnoye. This way, the complex of finds clearly demonstrates that the vaults appeared in the second half of the third century AD

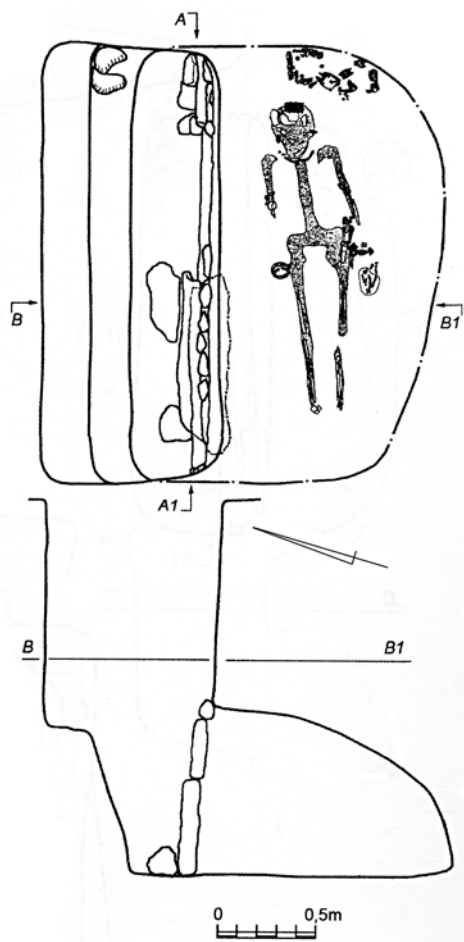


Fig. 104. Druzhnoye cemetery. Undercut grave no. 24. Ground plan and cross-section

and functioned in the fourth century AD (Храпунов 2002: 20–21, 68).

More third century AD finds were excavated from two plundered vaults in Druzhnoye. Vault no. 9 contained silver belt-end and fibula, and vault no. 39 bronze *lunula* pendant and two iron fibulae (Храпунов 2002: 67, 69). Here I should mention that the excavation of Neyzats cemetery unearthed at least three vaults where they buried



Fig. 105. Druzhnoye cemetery. Bracelets and earrings. Gold, silver, carnelian

throughout the third century AD. Two of them are published (Храпунов 2006b; Храпунов 2011b).

Such are the few materials from the second half of the third century AD, discovered only in three vaults of Druzhnoye cemetery, though the same graves were still used to bury in the fourth century AD. Other 21 vaults contained grave goods dated from the fourth century AD.

All vaults belong to the same type (fig. 107). Each consists of entrance pit, *dromos* and burial chamber. Entrance pits have rectangular ground plan, 2.3–2.8 x 0.65–1.3 m. They are oriented from the south-west to the north-east. Sometimes, there were two or three steps in the wall of the entrance pit opposite to the *dromos*. In some cases, long walls of entrance pits had undercuts for cenotaphs, covered with strong stone barriers.

The *dromoi* were carved into north-east walls of entrance pits. They are narrow (0.6–0.8 m) and short (up to 0.4 m.), with semicircular vaulting 0.6–0.7 m high. Entries to *dromoi* were blocked with large stone slabs, with chinks covered with fine stones.

Floors of burial chambers were 0.15–0.30 m lower than *dromoi*, with passages arranged like steps. Burial chambers had rectangular or trapezoid ground plan, 2.5–2.8 x 2.9–4.1 m, with axis perpendicular to long axis of entrance pit. Burial chambers were less than 1.2–1.3 m high, often with niches carved into walls 0.7–0.8 m above the floor. As usual, there was only one niche, opposite to the entrance, but we know some cases when two or three niches were made in a chamber.

Excavations of non-plundered vaults discovered three to ten skeletons (usually six to eight) in each construction. Burials were made in prone position on the back, with the head to the north-east,



Fig. 106. Druzhnoye cemetery. Silver coins of Gordian III (241–243 AD), Philip I Arab (247–249 AD), Trajan Decius (249–251 AD)

rarely to the south-west, i. e. with feet or heads towards the entrance. In rare cases, the latest buried person was placed perpendicular to the entrance. One vault contained two tiers of burials.

Ceramic vessels were usually placed near the wall opposite to the entrance, as a few lines and tiers (up to 50 artefacts in a vault). Sometimes, they were near the entry or close to skeletons. They contained bones of animals, birds and fishes, and eggshells. Numerous ornaments, details of costume, tools, weapons and horse harness were discovered on the bones or near them (Храпунов 2002).

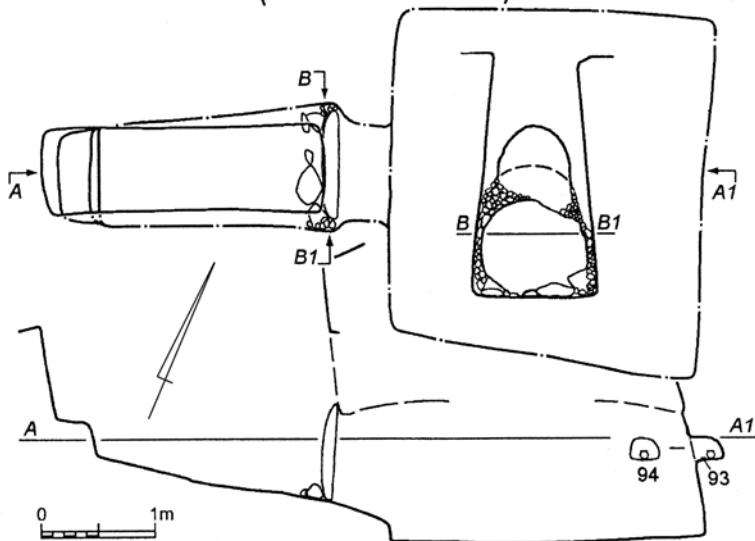
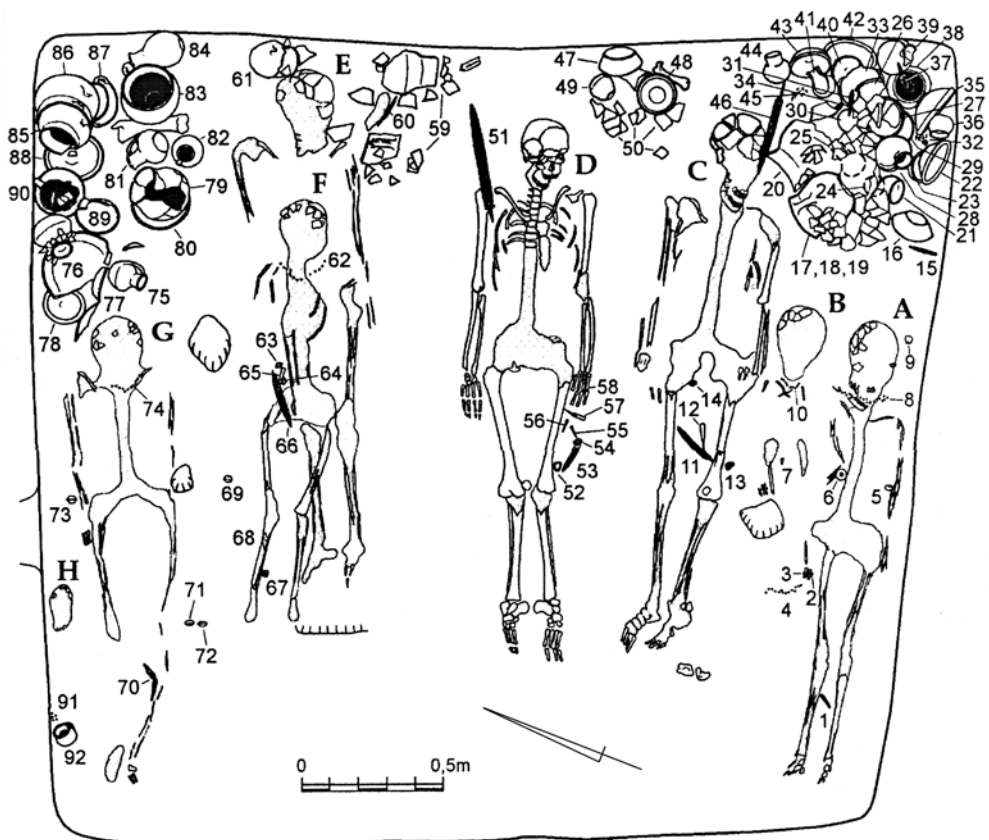
Simultaneously with vaults, they buried into undercut graves, which had the same construction as earlier structures, but contained the fourth century AD grave goods. Examples of such grave constructions are graves nos. 5, 36 and 42, typical for Druzhnoye cemetery (Храпунов 2000).

I can make some conclusions concerning the *ethnos* of the people who created the cemetery against the study of the graves. As it has been discussed in details in the previous chapter, the vaults similar to those excavated in Druzhnoye were most likely introduced in the Crimea by the Alans who migrated from the north Caucasus. Having agreed with the

migration of North Caucasian population to the Crimea, we should pay attention to the absence of undercut graves in the north Caucasus. It looks that we can say that it was the only territory populated by the Sarmatians where undercut graves were not popular (Абрамова 1993: 129; Абрамова 1997: 25, 44, 97). Khumara cemetery is the only one Caucasian site with undercut graves (Абрамова 1997: 48). It is located in the upper reaches of the Kuban' river, where stone vaults predominate, though carved into ground catacombs, or vaults, prevailed to the west and east of it. Against this background, I can suppose that some group of steppe Sarmatians who buried in Khumara cemetery migrated to the upper reaches of the Kuban' river.

The combination of vaults and undercut graves in Druzhnoye and many other Crimean cemeteries allows me to state that there were two ethnic components participating in the shaping of the population that made this cemetery. One component consisted of the Alans, another of descendants of the Sarmatians





who lived in the Crimea long before the migrants came from the north Caucasus.

Beside the Crimea, there is another region where in the second half of the third and fourth century AD they buried in undercut graves and vaults, that is Lower Done area. In some cases, entrance pit and burial chamber of vault was connected by *dromos* like in Crimean cemeteries similar to Druzhnoye, or in central Ciscaucasia (Безуглов, Копылов 1989: рис.1. I; Parusimov 1997: Abb. 2. 15). Researchers have explained the appearance of compact group of vaults with goods, mainly ceramics, of Caucasian types in the Lower Don area, as a migration from Caucasus (Безуглов, Копылов 1989: 181). Therefore, the construction of burial structures allows one to suppose a migration of population from foothill area of the North Caucasus in two directions: to the Crimea and the Don area. In both areas, the newcomers integrated into local Sarmatian environment. In re-



Fig. 108. Neyzats cemetery. Burials of horses

sults, in the areas around the Tanais the vaults changed in comparison with their Caucasian prototypes acquiring some steppe features (according to Bezuglov and Kopylov), though the local rite to bury into undercut graves remained as well. Ammianus Marcellinus probably knows this heterogeneous population

Fig. 107. Druzhnoye cemetery. Vault no. 66.

Ground plans and cross-sections. A–H — burials.

- 1, 68 — fragments of iron items; 2–3 — bronze finger-rings;
- 4, 8, 10, 62, 74, 91 — beads; 5–6, 9, 69, 71–73 — ceramic spindle whorls;
- 7 — fragment of mirror; 11, 15, 31, 34, 37, 53, 60, 66, 70 — iron knives;
- 12, 57, 65 — iron awls; 13–14, 52, 54 — iron buckle;
- 16–20, 22–25, 27–29, 33, 36, 38–39, 41, 44, 47–50, 59, 61, 75–76, 79, 81–83,
- 85–87, 89–90, 92 — hand-made vessels;
- 21, 26, 30, 35, 40, 42, 43, 77–78, 80, 84, 88 — red-slip vessels;
- 32, 45 — glass vessels; 46, 51 — iron swords; 55–56 — bronze item;
- 58, 63–64, 67 — bronze buckles

as the Alans “*who are called Tanaitae*” (Безуглов 1990).

Some vaults of Druzhnoye cemetery had undercuts carved into walls of entrance pits (Храпунов 1999b: рис. 1.1). In cases when the graves escaped plunder, we were able to see that these undercuts were cenotaphs. There probably was a space for dead relative if they were not able to bury him, as it was not possible to make cenotaph in burial chamber (Мульд 1996: 284). The rite of making undercuts in entrance pits is local. It is recorded in three cemeteries located close to each other: Druzhnoye, Pereval’noye (Пуздровский 1994a: рис. 5. 2–3), and Neyzats. In Neyzats, undercuts were never cenotaphs, but contained burials of humans or horses.

14 standard horse burials in pit graves are a unique phenomenon. Unfortunately, the absence of grave goods does not allow one to date them, though their location within the cemetery makes it impossible to relate them with human burials. The remains of cut into pieces and than re-assembled body of a horse in funeral chamber of vault no. 78 (Храпунов 2002: 33, рис. 58) find the only analogy in vault no. 4 of Neyzats cemetery (Храпунов 2008b, 360).

Among the sites of the same culture and chronology as Druzhnoye, only Chyornaya River and Neyzats contained horse burials. In Chyornaya River, there was a grave specially prepared for burial of horse with bits; another grave contained burial of standing horse (Бабенчиков 1963: 121). The excavations of Neyzats cemetery uncovered burials of horses with foals, without goods, in simple pits (fig. 108). In grave

no. 56, there was specially arranged step with groove for horse’s head. This butial was accompanied with details of horse harness (Мульд 1999: 188–189). The same construction was discovered in the cemetery of Bitak (Пуздровский 2001b: 123).

Particulars of funeral rite supply us with some background to reconstruct the *ethnos* of the buried persons. All the swords discovered in Druzhnoye are of Anatoly Khazanov’s type 5 (Хазанов 1971: 17). Overwhelming majority of such swords has been found in the Crimea and in the North Causasus (see the corpus at: Soupault 1996). In both regions, they were specifically used in burial rite. All the specimens discovered *in situ* were on the head or on shoulders of the dead. The exception is when one skeleton has two swords, like once in Ozyornoye III (Лобода 1977: рис. 3. б) and once in Neyzats (Храпунов 2008b: 358). In this case, two swords laid near both tibiae with handles near belt, and one or two are on the shoulders. The specificity of this rite inclines us to think that these people migrated from one area to the other (fig. 109).

Some old Sarmatian traditions probably interrupted about the mid-third century AD. For example, ring put on fibula and clothes embroidered with beads have been discovered only in the earliest burials of Druzhnoye cemetery. In the fourth century AD, beads were rarely used as decoration of child’s cloths.

One can find parallels with the circle of Germanic cultures in the funeral rite of grave no. 47, where the dead was deprived of skull and arm, and in grave no. 43, where the burial was made on belly,

with the face down (Храпунов 2002: 25–26; рис. 30. II; 36). Both rites are recorded among the Germanics archaeologically and by written sources. They are interpreted as actions performed on people who were dangerous for society (Мончинска 1997: 207–209).

In vault no. 78, there were two shells with bronze rings pierced in them, located between legs of a buried woman (Храпунов 2002: 34; рис. 184, 1, 2). Similar finds are discovered by excavations of sites of the Sarmatian culture, located in Hungarian territory (Zoltai 1941: Taf. VIII. 53; Juhasz 1978: Taf. IV. 6; Vaday 1985: Abb. 8, 10, 12, 13; Vaday 1989: 281, 289, Taf. 149. 8; 153. 6; 157), as well as the Wielbark (Bierbrauer 1994a: 56, Abb. 2) and Chernyakhov (СЫМОНОВИЧ 1975: 204, 211, рис. 4. 2; Романова 1988: 138, рис. 9, 11, 12; Bierbrauer 1994b: 86, fig. 123g) cultures. This area should be analysed within the context of Sarmatian-Germanic contacts. The Sarmatians probably borrowed the custom of using shells with wire rings pierced into them from the Germanics and not vice versa, because it is not recorded amidst the Sarmatians outside the zone of contacts with the Germanics. For my current purpose, it is important to note that in the Chernyakhov cemeteries of Ryzhichanka and Furmanovka shells are found between legs of buried ladies like in Druzhnoye (Винокуп 1979: 120, рис. 14.8; СЫМОНОВИЧ 1988: 158,

рис. 14. 6, 10). As Oksana Bobrovskaya has observed, shells were distributed in the Chernyakhov graves in the second half of the fourth century AD (Бобровська 1999: 91).

The excavations of this cemetery unearthed different types of artefacts that were widely used in Sarmatian environment. According to them, the Sarmatians possibly were amidst the population who made the cemetery. Such are hemispherical badges, mirrors with side eyelet and loop in the centre of the backside of the disk, rings with clamp, various belt-ends, appliques and clips, *lunulae*, knobbed pendants, and bow fibulae with returned foot (Храпунов 1999b: 149–151).

The origin of other types of goods is related to the territories north-west of the Crimea, which were populated mainly by the Germanics. Among them, there are bone combs, axe-shaped, pail-shaped and amber mushroom-shaped pendants, as well as few wheel-made vessels (Храпунов 1999b: 151–152).

Iron two-piece warrior fibulae were most probably produced in the Crimea, after the samples of two-piece warrior bronze fibulae that appeared in Northern and



Fig. 109. Neyzats cemetery. Sword



Fig. 110. Druzhnoye cemetery.  
Three-handled hand-made vessel

Central Europe. The overwhelming majority of buckles and fibulae with curved bow and returned foot could hardly be separated from artefacts widespread in the area of the Chernyakhov culture. The most important is that they similarly and simultaneously developed in both regions. There are two possible explanations of this fact: either the brooches and buckles were produced in centres trading with Crimean foothill population and people of the Chernyakhov culture, or there were constant contacts between two regions. Sites of the Chernyakhov, Wielbark and Przeworsk cultures contain many types of beads similar to those

from Druzhnoye. Especially demonstrative are very typical to the Chernyakhov culture necklaces in blue, as in some female burials from Druzhnoye (Хайредино́ва 1995: 78).

The comparison of Sarmatian and Germanic elements recorded by the excavations of Druzhnoye cemetery discovers their different value for ethnic reconstructions. Sarmatian influence reflects in construction of graves, funeral rite and complex of artefacts, though Germanic influence appears only in some types of funeral rite and probably in shells discovered between knees of the lady buried in vault no. 78.

Archaeologist uses to find a source for ethnological reconstruction in hand-made ceramic ware. There are 432 hand-



Fig. 111. Neyzats cemetery.  
Hand-made vessel

made vessels discovered in Druzhnoye, all published and studied by Vladimir Vlasov (Власов 1999с).

Generally, the complex of hand-made vessels from Druzhnoye is a unique phenomenon: it cannot be attributed to a known ceramic tradition. Apart from the vessels without analogies or, on the contrary, distributed in large areas for a long period, there would be few shapes of various types capable of analysis. Among them, the largest group (49 specimens) consists of ceramics of North Caucasian origin, which appeared in the Crimea when the Alans penetrated into the peninsula (Власов 2003: 110). Considerable groups are of ware of Bosporan and Late Scythian

origin. The number of Sarmatian vessels is much smaller. Some vessels have parallels in the Przeworsk, Wielbark and Chernyakhov cultures. The analysis of hand-made ceramic vessels supply evidence that those who produced it were of different ethnic origin and culture (Власов 1999в: 353).

The finds of three-handled hand-made vessels are very interesting (fig. 110). Three of them were discovered in Druzhnoye (Власов 2000) and one in Красная Заря (Неневоля, Волошинов 2001: рис. 6). Although they do not have direct analogies, their



Fig. 19. Neyzats cemetery. Gold earrings

shape and incised ornamentation is most close to three-handled vases of the Chernyakhov culture. There also are important differences. First, Crimean vessels are hand-made, not wheel-made, as most part of the Chernyakhov vases; second, places where handles meet body of Druzhnoye vessel are decorated with relief cordon, and this specific technique was many times recorded in Druzhnoye; and finally, handles of Crimean vessels terminate with zoomorphic applications — this decorative technique was not known to the people of the Chernyakhov culture. It is the impression that these vessels were made by local craftsmen, who knew the Chernyakhov three-handle vases; by the way, such a vase was excavated in a vault of Krasnaya Zarya cemetery together with the hand-made vessel.

The only cultural-chronological group of monuments with really large number of analogies to Druzhnoye ceramics is formed by the cemeteries in the central and south-west Crimea, of the

same culture and chronology. However, there are some differences within this group. Ceramic assemblages from Druzhnoye and Neyzats (fig. 111), each including hundreds of vessels, are very similar to each other, differences are only in details, mainly ornamental. Set of hand-made vessels from Ozyornoye III and a few artefacts from Mangush (Высотская 1972: рис. 8) corresponds to the finds from Druzhnoye almost entirely. Much different from the mentioned sites are, according to hand-made ware, Chyornaya River and Inkerman cemeteries, located close to each other and in vicinity of Chersonesos.

\* \* \*

Taking all the discussed above into account, ethnic history of the population of the Crimean foothill area in the Late Roman period could be stated as follows.

By the mid-third century AD, the foothills were populated by the Sarmatians and the Late Scythians. Both peoples were crashed by invasions of the Goths. The Sarmatians who buried in the cemeteries of Druzhnoye, Neyzats and others survived, but their number declined. Important ethnic transformations in the Crimea about the mid-third century AD are marked by the fall of all the Late Scythian settlements and cease of use of many Sarmatian cemeteries in the foothills, as well as the appearance of cremation cemeteries in the south coast and the south-west Crimea. The sites of Ay-Todor, Chatyr-Dag, as well as the cremation area of Chyornaya River cemetery were made most likely by the members of Gothic tribal union who settled in that

areas. According to the location of the sites, the south coast was populated by the Germanics and the foothills by the Sarmatians who survived after the Gothic invasions.

In the late third century AD, the Alans migrated from North Caucasus and joined the Crimean Sarmatians. The Alans' adaptation in new places became easier because of a small number of their tribesmen living in the foothill Crimea from the first half of the third century AD. The expansion of the Goths into Bosphoros probably contributed to the decline of this state and opened the way through its territory for the Alans.

The mass of the Alans could go through Bosphoros after the final of the first and most active stage of the Gothic aggression (it was marked by the Germanics' raids on Bosporan ships across the Black Sea). An inscription of the "*chief translator of the Alans*" from Hermonassa (КБН: no. 1053) evidences that a great number of the Alans lived in Asian Bosphoris or near its borders in the early third century AD.

The Alans buried into vaults of special construction. We can possibly hypothesise the consolidation of two ethnic groups in the foothill Crimea or even the unfinished process of assimilation of the Sarmatians by the Alans. At any rate, in the fourth century AD much more burials were made into the vaults than into undercut graves. According to some types of hand-made vessels, the Alans came through Bosphoros and took a group of Bosporan population with them. Other types of vessels allow us to suppose that the Alans in the foothill Crimea met the descendants of the Late

Scythians defeated in the mid-third century AD.

During the whole period under analysis, the population of central and southwest Crimea permanently was under influence of constant, probably mainly trade, contacts with ancient Greek cities. Many Greco-Roman artefacts actually became inalienable parts of the local culture.

Various Germanic elements, especially in details of costume and ornaments, are recorded from the third century AD, and mainly in the fourth century AD. However, the nature of the contacts between the central Crimea population and the people of Germanic circle of cultures remains untraced. In the southwest Crimea, close to Chersonesos, the Germanics, Sarmatians and Alans buried their tribesmen in the same cemeteries, where elements of funeral rite of different origin could combine in one grave.

The end of the cemeteries of Druzhnoye, Neyzats and others of the same culture chronologically coincides with the appearance of the Huns in the north Black Sea area. The invasion of these nomads or its threat probably forced local populations to leave their homeland. The life continued uninterruptedly in the valley of Inkerman, where the cemeteries of Inkerman and Chornaya River were still used in the Hunnic period.



## The Conclusion

The tribes of the Crimea differentiated in the late Bronze Age or early Iron Age. A part of them populated the steppe and turned to nomadic way of life, though the others concentrated in the foothill area. According to many modern researchers, Crimean steppe was a periphery of the area populated by historical Cimmerians. In the foothills, the Kizil-Koba culture shaped in the eighth century BC. It was by the people called the Taurians by ancient Greeks. Foothill population kept contacts with the peoples of the steppe, not so numerous in that period. These contacts could be reconstructed by a few finds of weapons and horse trappings discovered by the excavations of the Kizil-Koba sites.

In the second half of the seventh century BC, Crimean steppe became the place where the Scythians roamed. In the sixth century BC, their small groups penetrated into Crimean foothills via river valleys. There they constantly contacted with neighbouring Taurian tribes. The result was the shaping of population groups with the culture combining the Scythian and the Kizil-Koba elements. They created burials excavated in the Salgir river valley.

In the sixth and fifth centuries BC, Crimean foothills were densely populat-

ed by the Taurians. The core of their *ethnos* concentrated in this area; thence the Taurians migrated in different directions. The biggest migration flow was directed southwards, to unpopulated main ridge of the Crimean mountains and the south coast of the Crimea. Archaeological culture of the Taurians in the south coast and mountains consists of numerous cist cemeteries. There were two sub-ethnic groups corresponding to two economical-cultural types: in the mountains and south coast, they practiced transhumance, though in the foothills farming and settled cattle-breeding.

In the late sixth or early fifth century BC, a group of the Taurians migrated from the foothills to the Azov Sea coast in the Kerch peninsula. This Taurian enclave existed to the first century BC. According to the features of their culture, the Azov Taurians did not have possibility of keeping contacts with their tribesmen in the mountains and foothills. At the same time, they permanently interacted with the Scythian population of the Kerch peninsula and the Greeks in Bosporan cities and villages. In result, an ethnographic group of the Taurians developed, with specific features of spiritual and material culture.

The Taurians became residents of ancient *poleis* in the west side of the straights of Cimmerian Bosphoros since they were founded in the sixth century BC. The same was the case of Greek Kerkitis, established in the fifth century BC in the west coast of the Crimea. Reasons and mechanisms of the Taurian presence in Greek *poleis* and their status remain obscure. The only clear thing is that they were gradually assimilated by their Greek environment.

Taurian tribes in the mountains and foothills in the sixth and fifth centuries BC differed from other Black Sea barbarians by their extreme isolation from ancient Greek *poleis*. According to archaeological data, contacts between the residents of Crimean foothill area and Greek cities in the north Black Sea area were not traced to the fourth century BC.

The Taurians kept permanent contacts with the Scythian population of Crimean steppe. Most often, there were trade exchanges, in result of which the Taurians received Scythian weapons and horse harness, though the Scythians got the Kizil-Koba ceramic vessels with incised decoration. The Scythians periodically penetrated into the territory occupied by the Taurians. Some of them became residents of Taurian settlements, so their cultural layers contained hand-made ceramics of Scythian shapes. Others, as it has already been said, lived compactly and under huge Taurian influence.

In the fifth century BC, Crimean steppe became an area of permanent roams of the tribes that participated in the alliance called the Royal Scythians by Herodotus (*Hist.* 4. 20). Burials of their chiefs were discovered in the foothill and north-west Crimea as well as in the Kerch peninsula. The Scythians entered into various relations with ancient Greeks both in the west and east of the peninsula. They had a possibility to move unimpeded and to bury their tribesmen in the territory of the Bosporan kingdom. There was a large Scythian group living in the city of Nymphaion or its close vicinity. By the fifth century BC, the process of sedentarisation of the Scythian in the frontiers of the Bosporan kingdom was recorded for the first time. Judging by the history of Gylon, marriages be-

tween Greek men and Scythian women were a usual thing. These processes resulted in the beginning of the shaping of specific Greco-Scythian culture, inherent in Bosporos only.

In the period of climax of Scythia, the fourth century BC, its tribal differentiation became more evident than in the previous period. Crimean Scythians differed from the nomadic population of the steppes north of Perekop isthmus because of some important features of funeral rite recorded by archaeological methods. The extreme north of the Crimean peninsula was a zone of instable population that episodically penetrated there from the steppe north of Perekop. The tribes roaming on the border between steppe and foothills created their local variant of the Scythian culture. They probably understood their difference from their northern neighbours. Specific ethnographic group of the Scythians lived in Bosporos. They lived compactly in the north-west of the Kerch peninsula and amidst the Greeks in many *poleis* and villages. Settled way of life with farming and cattle-breeding, as well as various degrees of Hellenisation distinguished the Bosporan Scythians from their tribesmen who roamed in the north Black Sea steppe. The most outstanding monuments of the original Bosporan Greco-Scythian culture date back to the fourth century BC. Besides the Greeks, the Scythians importantly influenced the descendants of the Taurians who populated small areas in the Azov Sea coast in the Kerch peninsula.

In the fourth century BC, the Taurians left the main ridge of the Crimean mountains and concentrated in the foothills. Thence a part of them migrated to the north-west, to the upper reaches

of Donuzlav lake and, possibly, to the Tarkhankut peninsula. In contrast to previous period, the residents of the foothill area established contacts with ancient *poleis*.

The third century BC north Black Sea crisis reflected particularly in almost entire stop of the practice to bury below barrows in Crimea steppe and in the disappearance of the Kizil-Koba culture in the foothills. This period was almost not described by written or archaeological sources. Most probably, the population considerably decreased and its mobility raised in the third century BC. This period could be called the transition, when the Scythians began to settle in the central Crimea thus making a background for the shaping of the Late Scythian culture. If the reconstruction of the ethnonym mentioned in the “decree honouring the transportation of Dionysos” (IOSPE I<sup>2</sup>: no. 343) is correct, the end of the first quarter of the third century BC was likely the first time when the Sarmatians appeared within the context of events in the Crimea.

In the second century BC, the Scythians conquered the north-west Crimea from the Greeks and populated it and the foothill area. When different tribes became the single state, it contributed to their consolidation. The authors of the decree honouring Diophantos called this realm Scythia. The descendants of nomadic Scythians formed an *ethnos* that all the sources called the Scythians and modern researchers the Late Scythians in order to separate them from the nomads who dominated over the north Black Sea steppes from the seventh to fourth century BC. They created original Late Scythian culture known from the excavations of many settlements and

cemeteries. Although this culture was uniform and the Late Scythians understood their unity, the analysis of written sources allowed me to suppose that they divided into tribes.

Besides the Scythians, the population of the Late Scythian capital included the Greeks, as it was recorded in epigraphic monuments and archaeological materials. The Taurians occupied a compact territory close to Chersonesos. They also lived among the Scythians in the settlements in the central Crimea. There also were weak traces of migrants from the Dnieper area, the people of the Zarubinty culture.

In the second century BC, the Sarmatians, particularly Roxolans, invaded the Crimean peninsula several times. After the end of the war, they returned back to the north, though in the period of the wars of Diophantos few of them became residents of the Late Scythian settlements. The Satarches populated the north of the Crimean peninsula. Although this tribe is not identifiable archaeologically, it is known from written sources.

In the first century BC, there was no important change in the ethnic situation in the Crimea. I can mention only the migration of the descendants of the Taurians, who lived in the Azov coast of the Kerch peninsula from the fifth century BC, to the area occupied by the Late Scythians in vicinity of Theodosia.

In the early first century AD, archaeology recorded the appearance of the Sarmatians in the Late Scythian settlements. In the second half of the century, they permanently lived amidst the Late Scythians everywhere. Small Sarmatian cemeteries appeared in the foothill area thus demonstrating changes in

Sarmatian way of life when they turned to roaming along a short, close route. There was no permanent Sarmatian population in the steppe. Small number of barrow burials in the steppe evidences that the Sarmatians visited this region for a short time. They probably came to the Crimea from the north and, without staying in the steppe, penetrated to the foothills where the Late Scythians lived.

In the late first or early second century AD, there probably was a large migration of Sarmatian tribes that involved the entire north Black Sea area and resulted in the shortening of the Late Scythian territory. The Late Scythians left the north-west Crimea and concentrated in the foothills. This was the period when the Late Scythians finally assimilated the Taurians. In the early second century AD, the Alans were mentioned in the Crimean peninsula for the first and last time before the thirteenth century AD.

In the second century AD, because of permanent inflow of the Sarmatians into the foothill area, they integrated with the Scythians within the Late Scythian settlements. Archaeologically, this process is reflected in the end of using vaults, traditional Scythian type of burial constructions, and the appearance of undercut graves typical of the Sarmatians, as well as in the change of many types of artefacts used as grave goods. The Sarmatians lived amidst the Late Scythians and separately, so we can determine different groups according to the degree of Late Scythian influence on them.

Under specific geographical conditions of foothills and in relation to their permanent contacts with the Scythians, material and spiritual culture of the

Sarmatians transformed to a certain degree in comparison with the culture of their tribesmen in steppe area who lead nomadic way of life.

In the late second century AD, the Late Scythians probably lost their political independence but still kept their unique culture and probably ethnic identity. The Romans penetrated into the territory populated by the Scythians. Their interrelation with the barbarians probably was restricted to military conflicts and did not influence the ethnic situation.

In the first half of the third century AD, new participants of ethnic processes appeared in the Crimean foothill area together with the Scythians and Sarmatians. Excavations of upper layers of some Late Scythian settlements uncovered shards of hand-made vessels having analogies only among the Wielbark and Przeworsk antiquities. In Sarmatian cemeteries, there were a few burials with cremated remains and Germanic goods. These facts probably mean that the first members of the Germanic tribes came to the territories possessed by the Scythians and Sarmatians.

Excavations of Sarmatian cemetery of Neyzats and the cemetery of the largest Late Scythian settlement of Neapolis uncovered burial vaults of the construction not typical of the Crimea. Most likely, they were introduced by the Alans, who migrated to the Crimea from the North Caucasus.

Late Scythian migration eastwards is recorded: it was directed to Bosporos, both into its European and Asian side, as far as one could judge by the distribution of shapes of hand-made ceramics.

Considerable ethnic transformation happened in the Crimea in the mid-

third century AD. The Goths and their allies destroyed almost all the Late Scythian settlements. Their residents scattered. A few small Late Scythian communities survived in some foothill areas. Obviously, we can state that the Scythians ceased to exist as an *ethnos* from that moment. Many Sarmatian communities were destroyed or pushed out of the foothill Crimea simultaneously. However, some Sarmatian collectives, and namely those who did not keep close contacts with the Late Scythians, survived and continued living in the valleys of Crimean rivers.

About the mid-third century AD, the Germanics settled in the south coast of the Crimea and in the south-west of the peninsula, where they made cremation cemeteries. The foothill area was populated by the Sarmatians: their number was smaller than in the previous period. From the late third century AD, an inflow of the Alans from the North Caucasus was recorded in Crimean foothills; they probably came through Bosporos. Their number considerably raised in the fourth century AD. Although the consolidation of the Alans and Sarmatians actively developed throughout the fourth century AD, it probably did not finish. In the very end of the fourth or early fifth century AD, they moved to new areas probably because the invasion of the Huns into the Crimean peninsula.

In the fifth century AD, the Alans and Goths participated in the formation of mediaeval Crimean people. The Huns roamed in the steppe. The new period of the Great Migration started.

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