

sympathy before being killed). These sacrifices, together with the raised alters; reservoirs and fires, were essential elements of the world view. It seems that in the formation of Zoroastrianism and the traditional cultures of Central Asia, the ancient Gonur cultural and historical base, though it was not the only source of ritual systems, could at least have served as one of the foundations.

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THE CULTURE OF MARGIANA AND BACTRIA IN THE FINAL BRONZE AGE (EIA) AND IT'S ETHNICAL IDENTIFICATION

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The aim of the work is the reconstruction of the dynamic of cultures and ethno-cultural processes in the region. Many scholars suppose that the pastoral tribes of Eurasian steppes and Central Asia were the ancestors of the Indo-Aryans — the branch of Indo-Europeans which includes three linguistic groups: Dards-Nuristani, Indo-Aryans (West — Persians and East — Saka-Scythians, Khorazmians, Sogdians, Bactrians and oth.). The verification of this hypothesis is very relevant now because the Indo-European speaking population took now the first place in the world: 1.200 millions (Chinese — 1.075 millions only) (Time World Almanach 2000).

The severe criteria of classification let to distinguish in Central Asia the two coexisting cultures: Timber-Grave (Srubna) and dominant Andronovo. They formed on the common base of East European cultures between the Volga and the Urals — Sintashta (Proto-Andronovo) and Potapovka (Proro-Srubna) — in the end of the 3rd — beginning of the 2nd millennium BC.

The population were occupied with metallurgy, stockbreeding (cow, sheep, especially horse). They were the first to use the light chariot — it was very important innovation in the military tactics.

During the 2nd mill. BC the Andronovans step by step occupied Kazakhstan and South Siberia.

Three stage of Andronovans' migration to Central Asia were distinguished. The 1st stage — 19-18th centuries BC: the horse and chariot appeared in Zardcha-Halifa, Dzharokutan and Gonur from the Urals.

The 2nd stage — 16-13 centuries BC: the settling of Andronovan shepherds from the steppes up to Afghanistan (Shortugai). The Srubna wave of migration went

from the Volga. The syncretic monuments were formed in Transcaspians and the Zeravshan and Tazabagyab culture developed near the Aral. Andronovan newcomers established the contacts with the land-tillers of Bactria-Margiana Culture. Some types of migrations can be distinguished: in Uzbekistan (Dzharkutan, Bustan) the Andronovans suppressed the BMAC aborigines (Elite dominance migration); in Tajikistan mixed Bishkent-Vakhsh culture was formed (assimilation type of migration) and Andronovo Culture was influenced by Bishkent (Acculturation).

The IIIrd stage — 13-9 centuries BC — the unified Culture of applied roller pottery formed on Srubna and Andronovo basis in the vast steppe zone from the Danube to the Altaj. The big wave of the bearers of this culture moved to the South of Central Asia. Their huts are constructed above the sites of a fire of destroyed aboriginal settlements (Elite dominance migration).

The applied roller pottery are found in the upper layers of agricultural settlements in Afghanistan (Tillya-tepe and oth.), in Iran (necropolis Giyan), in west Pakistan (Pirak, Mundigak).

Saka and Scythians are the direct descendants of the Roller culture' creators. That gives the grounds to assume that the bearers of the steppe culture of the Final Bronze Age where the West Iranians and their migration to the South to consider as the distribution of West Iranians to the lands where they are inhabited today.

THE GONUR CEMETERY: A STATISTICAL APPROACH TO SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

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The publication of Viktor Sarianidi's report of the cemetery at Gonur provides critical data concerning the social organization of the BMAC.

Excavations at Gonur uncovered a cemetery with the remains of c. 2500 people although 80% of the tombs had been plundered. The remaining 20% of the graves were preserved in situ and have been published in summary form to, as the excavator, suggests, "provide an opportunity to have the factual basis for the data and to progress to a deeper level of interpretation". The purpose of this brief study is to take up the excavator's invitation to attempt a deeper level of understanding by taking a much more quantitative approach to the data in order to:

- 1) review the assessment of the social organization of Gonur presented by the excavator in the light of a closer statistical analysis of the in situ graves;
- 2) attempt to expand out knowledge of the social organization at Gonur by examining some aspects not treated in detail by the excavator;
- 3) consider the reconstruction of the social organization of Gonur in general comparative terms with other societies and the problems of deriving social data from mortuary practice.