

postulated by the 'Kurgan' theory, but the chronology would not oppose the southward transmission from the Andronovo culture to India and Pakistan discussed here.

If Indo-European speech reached the Indian sub-continent from the central Eurasian steppe, it must have done so across the zone of desert settlement which is represented by Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and the Iranian Plateau. The question is how. Up to now no adequate explanation or model has been proposed for this process. That is the other problematic theme which I plan to outline, and about which I hope to learn, at the meetings.

SOME CONCEPTS OF MARGIANA STUDIES

B.N.UDEUMURADOV

(Russia)

1. Margiana archeological monuments being referred to the second millennium B.C. have been studied for a long time and are presently considered as the most investigated ones within Middle Asia. The researchers are facing new objectives and tasks while exercising those operations. However, several concepts are likely to be talked about as far as they are typical for all studies of the Bronze epoch Margiana monuments.

2. The first, and perhaps the most important, concept covers the origin thereof. Despite there are obvious parallels with the Southern Turkmenistan monuments of Kopetdag foothills referred to the Bronze Epoch, there is a direct evidence of the second cultural component related to the ancient civilizations of Mesopotamia. Two components as minimum took part in founding the Margiana culture and civilization. They are as follows: the original local stratum and a new one, which has transformed it. A symbiosis of those components promoted a Margianian phenomenon to be founded. On the other hand, you should remember that quite similar processes were taking place in Bactria, which culture is practically identical to that of Margiana. Otherwise, any territorial borders of those processes were quite extensive and covered the population not only southwards of the Central Asia, but various ancient agricultural communities being a part of the Bactrian impact area.

3. The second concept reflects territorial structure and social hierarchy at Margiana settlements. "The oasis" term being often used by researchers, while identifying a territorial group of monuments, is obviously not far from the ancient period truth. Regarding Margiana it means nine oases, though in fact they might have been more as far as their quantity in our case reflects only a study rate of objects under analysis. It is well known that the first researchers of Margiana emphasized a general regularity for all oases as a certain number of small oasis hills had been grouped around one being central and bigger, as a rule. Gonur-Depe monument is the biggest one in the Murgab delta due to the area occupied. It has been also more studied. As it is certified by archeological artifacts and analogies thereof, the monument might have in fact played a role of Margiana town-forming and ideological center. In fact, it also may be

referred to the matters of cultural, economic and their relevant communications development. But, perhaps, the most important aspect of that centralization was a system of power state institutions' development, which promoted control, management and development of that ancient Oriental oikumen areal. With this regard Margiana of the second millennium B.C. is seen as a mini state of oriental type with an established social structure, which assumes existence of management and ideological institution coordinating the community activities. The system by itself has been famous in the most ancient Egyptian civilizations, as well as in Mesopotamia. However, regarding Margiana, the appearance and formation of state institutions are likely to be considered as a parallel and autochthonous process.

4. The third study concept may be directly connected with a possible amendment (?) of religious views. Its main point implies that following an ordinary worship of mother-goddess cult, Margiana society has accepted or transformed the polytheistic view of existing and the other worlds, with specific personages related to good and evil, light and darkness, heaven and terrestrial items. The appearance of complicated iconographic scenes on seals and amulets indirectly confirms availability of mythology, which has been developed and already formed.

5. Finally, the fourth concept is directly related to identifying Margiana as a detached culture development center, on the one hand, and as a composite element of the whole ancient oriental civilization, on the other hand.

HOLY WORSHIPS AND BELIEFS OF THE ANCIENT CATTLE-BREEDERS OF TURKMENISTAN

HEMRA YUSUPOV

(Turkmenistan)

The originality of Massagets, the ancient cattle-breeders of North-Western Turkmenistan as compared with the other nomads of Eurasian steppes is traced not only in material but in spiritual culture as well. Since VII-VII centuries B.C. it has been shown in the distribution of funeral rites with different types of ossuarial burials but they amount only a small percent of graves of total number of burial grounds with the crypts.

Mainly, the local moulded wear of early forms (Tersakan, Yalkym) was often used as ossuaries. The ossuarial rite has been developed as an addition to a local burial ceremony provided initial cleaning of bones from soft tissue of the crypt and then their collection in ossuaries. In the said region practically there are no crypts with ossuarial burials only. At the same time all burial structures were the place to expose corpses and the "naus" for ossuaries. The mass spreading of ossuaries is observed in the late period. The trough-shaped ossuaries of local production are unique for "Zoroastrian" regions, which were used for burial of osteological material together