Z. Samashev
A. Chotbaev
Y. Tolegenov
S. Samashev

https://doi.org/10.52967/3007-6528.2023.1.203.208

Zainolla Samashev[1], archaeology_kz@mail.ru,
Aidos Chotbaev[1], archtopmail@mail.ru,
Yerlik Tolegenov[2], yerlik_t@mail.ru,
Samat Samashev[2], samashevsamat81@mail.ru
[1] Margulan Institute of Archaelogy, Almaty, Kazakhstan;
[2] Berel museum-reserve, Katon-Karagai, Kazakhstan

New researches of the monuments of the Xiongnu-Xianbian time of the Berel burial ground*

This article provides a brief description of the six fences of the Xiongnu-Xianbian period, studied as a result of field research in 2022 at the Berel burial ground. Data analysis allows us to review the results of earlier studies of objects whose dating was determined by the ancient Turkic period. In general, by now about 55 objects of the Xiongnu-Xianbian period have been studied at the Berel burial ground.

Keywords: archaeology, Berel, excavations, expedition, Xianbei

Зайнолла Самашев[1],
Айдос Чотбаев[1],
Ерлік Төлегенов[2],
Самат Самашев[2]
[1]А.Х. Марғұлан атындағы Археология институты, Алматы, Қазақстан
[2] Берел қорық-музейі, Катонқарағай, Қазақстан

Берел қорымының ғұн-сянби кезеңі ескерткіштерінің жаңа зерттеулері

Бұл мақалада Берел қорымындағы 2022 ж. далалық зерттеу жұмыстары кезінде зерттелген ғұн-сянби кезеңінің алты қоршауының қысқаша сипаттамасы берілген. Деректерді талдау көне түркі кезеңімен мерзімделген, бұрынырақ зерттелген нысандардың нәтижелерін қайта қарауға мүмкіндік береді. Жалпы алғанда, қазірге дейін Берел қорымында ғұн-сянби кезеңінің 55-ке жуық нысаны зерттелді.

Түйін сөздер: археология, Берел, қазба, экспедиция, сянби

Зайнолла Самашев[1],
Айдос Чотбаев[1],
Ерлик Толегенов[2],
Самат Самашев[2]
[1]Институт археологии имени А.Х. Маргулана, Алматы, Казахстан
[2]Музей-заповедник Берел, Катон-Карагай, Казахстан

Новые исследования памятников хунну-сяньбийского времени могильника Берел

В данной статье дается краткая характеристика шести оград хунну-сяньбийского времени, изученных в результате полевых исследований 2022 г. на могильнике Берел. Анализ данных позволяет пересмотреть

© 2023 Samashev Z., Chotbaev A., Tolegenov Y., Samashev S.
**The work was carried out as part of the implementation of the tasks of the program of fundamental scientific research of the Committee of Science of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, IRN BR10164221*

результаты более ранних исследований объектов, датировка которых определялась древнетюркским периодом. В целом, к настоящему времени на могильнике Берел исследовано около 55 объектов хунно-сяньбийского времени.

Ключевые слова: археология, Берел, раскопки, экспедиции, сяньби

In the 2022 field season, research on objects of the Xiongnu-Xianbian period continued at the Berel burial ground. They are located 50–60 m north of the Great Berel kurgan (nr. 1), closer to the edge of the terrace (Fig. 1).

Fence 117 (Fig. 2, *2, 3*). Before the excavation, it was heavily turfed. After stripping the upper layer and analyzing the pile of the stones along the periphery of the structure, clear boundaries of the object were revealed. The fence is made of shale rocks, flattened in section, sub-oval shape in plan. It is built of large stone slabs laid horizontally at the level of the ancient ground surface. The walls of the enclosure are built of two rows of masonry. A vertically mounted stone slab measuring 86×24×5 cm is fixed at the southwestern wall of the object. The inner area of the fence is lined with stones of different sizes. Fence dimensions: NE–SW – 3.58 m, SE–NW – 2.67 m.

At the level of the ancient horizon, a grave pit has been identified, oriented NE–SW. There was a stone box in the grave, on the floor of which a horse was laid with its legs bent under its belly. The animal is oriented

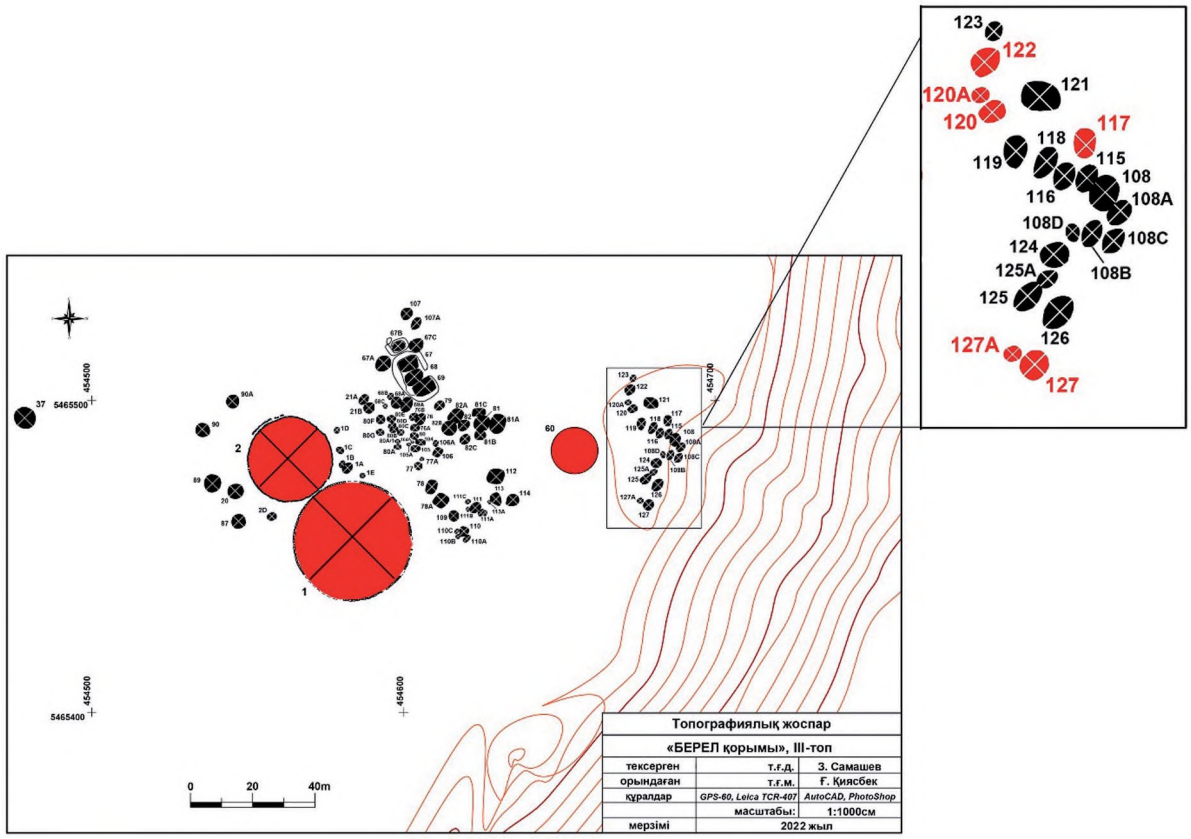


Рис. 1. Могильник Берел. План погребально-поминальных памятников сяньби
1-сур. Берел қорымы. Сяньби жерлеу-ғұрыптық ескерткіштерінің жоспары
Fig. 1. Berel burial ground. Plan of Xianbi funerary and memorial archaeological sites

with its head to the northeast. In a stone box made of 10 vertically mounted slate slabs, there were the remains of an adult man laid on his back. The left arm is slightly bent at the elbow, the hand rests on the pelvic bone, the right – along the body. The buried man's head is oriented to the southeast. There is no accompanying inventory.

Fence 120 (Fig. 2, *6, 7*) is made of slate slabs. Inside the fence (dimensions: NE–SW – 3.15 m, NW–SE – 1.97 m) at the level of the ancient horizon, an overlap of a stone box made of large slabs was recorded. In the stone box, there was the skeleton of an adult, on his back, with his head oriented towards NE. Four cowrie shells and about 10 paste beads are found next to the skull; another one is on the left side of the temple. In the area of the nasal bones, there is a bronze artifact. Several beads were also cleared between the cervical vertebrae and the clavicle. Near the left forearm, a large brown bead measuring 3×2.7 cm with a through hole was found. At the left wrist, there is a brown bead with a diameter of 0.5 cm. A similar bead is fixed between the buried man's right hand and the wall of a stone box, 4.5 cm in diameter, 1.8 cm thick, 0.7 cm hole diameter. Under the skull: a cowrie shell, a bronze product, an object similar to a spindle whorl.

The **fence 120A** is made of rough stones of mountain slate, flattened in cross-section, and rectangular in plan; it is made up of larger stone slabs laid horizontally at the level of the ancient ground surface. The walls of the fence are lined with several rows of stones. Inside, the fence is filled with crushed stones of different sizes; river boulders of different sizes are also found. Fence parameters: NE–SW – 2 m, SE–NW – 1.50 m. During the deepening into the inner area of the fence at 15–17 cm from the level of the ancient horizon, the destroyed ceiling and walls of the composite stone box were revealed. The inter-grave structure is oriented with a long axis along the line of the NE–SW (length – 1.4 m, width – 0.62 m). At the bottom of the stone box in its northeastern part, a skull was revealed, facing east. Ribs and other fragments of the buried man's tubular bones were scattered around the perimeter of the pit. Judging by the size of the burial chamber, it can be assumed that the burial is for a child.

Fence 122 (Fig. 2, *8*). The ground structure is composed of crushed flat stones of rectangular shale rock. The fence is made up of larger stone slabs laid flat. The walls of the fence are lined with a single row of stones. The inner area of the fence is filled with crushed stones and partially boulders of various sizes. Fence parameters: NE–SW – 2.8 m, SE–NW – 1.7 m. During the clearing the inner part of the fence a grave spot was revealed at a depth of 20–23 cm from the ground surface, oriented with a long axis of NE–SW – 2 m, SE–NW – 0.7 m.

In a grave at a depth of 0.45 m from the ground surface, a human burial in situ was found. The buried man is laid on his back, his arms are stretched out along the body, his head is oriented to the northeast. In the left eye socket of the skull, a bronze artifact with attachment holes was found, while in the area of the lower jaw, there is a brown-colored bead.

Fence 127 (Fig. 2, *4, 5*) measures 3.95 m (NE–SW) × 2.9 m (SE–NW); sub-oval shape in plan, it is made of flat stones of shale rock. In the center of the fence, on the overlap of the grave pit, the burial of a horse, laid on its left side, with its head oriented to the northeast, has been cleared. The skeleton of the animal has been preserved in anatomical order. The hind legs are tucked under the belly, the front legs are fixed in the area of the cervical vertebrae. The remains of a man oriented with his head to the northeast are recorded in the box.

The **fence 127A** (Fig. 2, *1*) is constructed of flat stones of shale rock, sub-oval shape in plan. The inner area is filled with crushed stones with a rare inclusion of boulders of different sizes. Fence dimensions: NE–SW – 2.9 m, SE–NW – 2 m. At the level of the ancient horizon, a stone box was revealed, at the bottom of which a human skeleton lay on his back, the right arm along the trunk, the left bent at the elbow joint and the hand is located on top of the pelvic bones. The buried one is oriented with his head towards the NE. Judging by the position of some of the bones, the originally buried one could have been laid on his right side. The accompanying inventory is not marked.

The research results presented in the article relate to one of the most poorly studied periods in the archaeology of Central Asia – the Xianbian period. The conducted research allowed not only to discover evidence of the presence of the Xianbian formation on the territory of Kazakhstan, but also helped to expand the boundaries of this community. Archaeological work in recent years shows that this association of nomadic tribes penetrated into the upper reaches of the Bukhtarma River in the 1st part of the 1st millennium AD and partially settle in the southwestern periphery of Altai.

Practically from the moment of the first scientific research, starting in 1998, we have recorded Xianbian funerary and memorial objects within the near-kurgan space of elite monuments of the Berel burial ground. Initially, they correlated with the early Turkic period, but later accumulated data made it possible to correlate these objects with the circle of burials of the Xianbian time [Samashev et al. 2019]. Taking into account the fact that such a concept and direction of search have been completely absent in domestic scientific developments so far, we have for the first time begun research on wide areas at the Berel burial ground. At the same time, there was a need for a more thorough analysis of the research materials obtained earlier (before 2015), which were attributed to the early Medieval era, for chronological and ethnocultural attribution [Samashev 2010].

As is known, a number of burials of this time in Altai, in particular, the Berel burial ground, A. Gavrilova combined into the Berel type of graves and dated them to the 4th-5th centuries AD [Gavrilova 1965: 54–57]. A distinctive feature of the graves under consideration was considered to be a stable burial rite with a horse and mainly the latitudinal (eastern) orientation of the buried. It is worth noting that the Berel complex, based on the finds of three-pointed arrowheads with horn nozzles-whistles, as well as bone spring buckles with a rounded upper part, approached the early Turkic time, on the contrary, the absence of stirrups in the burials served as evidence in favor of its antiquity [Savinov 1984: 29-30]. Currently, the question of the ethnocultural affiliation of the Berel type of graves is still open.

As already mentioned, the main part of the funerary and memorial objects of the Xianbian time of the Berel burial ground, identified to date, is located around two “royal” barrows (nr. 1, 2) of the Pazyryk period, at the edge of the third floodplain terrace of the Bukhtarma river. According to preliminary estimates, as a result of archaeological work on the burial ground area, only 55 objects have been investigated. Of these, 35 burials, 20 ritual layouts, which, according to the characteristic elements of ritual and accompanying inventory, belong to the Xianbian time. In general, the obtained archaeological sources make it possible to identify similarities and differences between the studied objects in order to restore certain aspects of the development of the material and spiritual culture of the ancient population of the southwestern Altai of the studied historical period.

The tradition of compact placement of funerary and memorial objects within separate groups probably reflects their chronological proximity and is characteristic of many monuments of Altai of the Xianbian period. In general, spatial by dense concentration of structures in the cemetery area, with objects arranged in tight rows, is a feature documented in synchronous sites in Mongolia, Trans-Baikal region, the Tesinkaya culture of Khakassia, Kokel, and Ulug-Khem cultures of Tuva [Tishkin et al. 2018].

Thus, the archaeological sites explored at the Berel burial ground in 2022 complement our understanding of the funeral rites and the subject complex of the Xiongnu-Xianbians.

→

Рис. 2 Погребения сяньби, исследованные в 2022 году:
1 – ограда 127А. Погребение человека в каменном ящике; 2 – ограда 117. Сопроводительное захоронение лошади, уложенное на плиты перекрытия; 3 – ограда 117. Погребение человека в каменном ящике; 4 – ограда 127. Захоронение коня, совершенное поверх перекрытия каменного ящика с погребенным человеком; 5 – ограда127. Погребение человека в каменном ящике, на перекрытие которого лежал конь; 6 – ограда 120. Погребение человека в каменном ящике; 7 – ограда 120. Украшения, найденные возле черепа и шейных позвонков женщины; 8 – ограда 122. Погребение в грунтовой яме

2-сур. 2022 жылы зерттелген сяньби жерлеу орындары: 1 – 127А-қоршау. Адамды тас жәшікке жерлеу; 2 – 117-қоршау. Жылқыларды аражабын плиталарға жатқызып бірге жерлеу; 3 – 117-қоршау. Адамды тас жәшікте жерлеу; 4 – 127-қоршау. Жылқыны адам жерленген тас жәшіктің үстіне жерлеу; 5 – 127-қоршау. Адамды жабынның үстінде жылқы жатқызылған тас жәшікке жерлеу; 6 – 120-қоршау. Адамды тас жәшікке жерлеу; 7 – 120-қоршау. Әйелдің бас сүйегі мен мойын омыртқаларының жанынан табылған әшекейлер; 8 – 122-қоршау. Шұңқырда жерлеу

Fig. 2. Xianbi burials investigated in 2022: 1 – fence 127A. Burial of a man in a stone box; 2 – Fence 117. Accompanying burial of a horse laid on slabs; 3 – fence 117. Burial of a man in a stone box; 4 – fence 127. Burial of a horse, made on top of the overlap of a stone box with a buried person; 5 – fence 127. The burial of a man in a stone box, upon of which a horse was laid; 6 – fence 120. The burial of a man in a stone box; 7 – fence 120. Jewelry found near the skull and cervical vertebrae of a woman; 8 – fence 122. Burial in a ground pit



1



5



2



6



3



7



4



8

ӘДЕБИЕТ

Гаврилова А.А. Могильник Кудыргэ как источник по истории алтайских племен. М., Л.: Наука, 1965. 145 с.

Савинов Д.Г. Народы Южной Сибири в древнетюркскую эпоху. Л.: Изд-во ЛГУ, 1984. 174 с.

Самашев З., Базылхан Н., Самашев С. Древнетюркские тамги. Алматы: Abdi company, 2010. 168 с. (на рус., каз. и англ. яз.)

Самашев З., Кариев Е.М., Ерболатов С.Е. Хунну-сяньбэйский культурно-хронологический горизонт Береля // Маргулановские чтения–2019: м-лы Междунар. археол. науч.-практ. конф., посвящ. 95-летию со дня рождения выдающегося казахстанского археолога К.А. Акишева (г. Нур-Султан, 19–20 апреля 2019 г.) / Отв. ред. М.К. Хабдулина. Нур-Султан: ЕНУ им. Л.Н. Гумилева, 2019. С. 385

Тишкин А.А., Матренин С.С., Шмидт А.В. Алтай в сяньбийско-жужанское время (по материалам памятника Степушка). Барнаул: Изд-во Алт. ун-та, 2018. 368 с.

REFERENCES

Gavrilova, A. A. 1965. *Mogilnik Kudyrge kak istochnik po istorii altayskih plemen (The Kudyrga burial ground as a source for the history of Altai tribes)*. Moscow-Leningrad: “Nauka” Publ. (in Russian).

Savinov, D. G. 1984. *Narody Yuzhnoy Sibiri v drevnetyurkskuyu epohu (The peoples of Southern Siberia in the ancient Turkic era)*. Leningrad: Leningrad State University (in Russian).

Samashev, Z., Bazylkhan, N., Samashev, S. 2010. *Drevnetyurkskie tamgi (Ancient Turkic Tamgas)*. Almaty: Abdi company (in Russian, Kazakh, and English).

Samashev, Z., Kariev, E. M., Erbolatov, S. E. 2019. In: Khabdulina, M. K. (ed.) *Margulanovskiye chteniya–2019 (Margulan Readings–2019)*. Nur-Sultan: L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University, 385–394 (in Russian).

Tishkin, A. A., Matrenin, S. S., Schmidt, A. V. 2018. *Altay v syanbiysko-zhuzhanskoe vremya (po materialam pamyatnika Stepushka) (Altai in the Syanbi-Jujan Time (Based on the materials of the Stepushka Site)*). Barnaul: Altai State University (in Russian).

Мүдделер қақтығысы туралы ақпаратты ашу. Авторлар мүдделер қақтығысының жоқтығын мәлімдейді. / Раскрытие информации о конфликте интересов. Авторы заявляют об отсутствии конфликта интересов. / Disclosure of conflict of interest information. The authors claim no conflict of interest.
Мақала туралы ақпарат / Информация о статье / Information about the article.
Редакцияға түсті / Поступила в редакцию / Entered the editorial office: 03.03.2023.
Жариялауға қабылданды / Принята к публикации / Accepted for publication: 07.04.2023.
Авторлар жұмысқа бірдей үлес қосты. / Авторы внесли равноценный вклад в работу. / The authors have made an equal contribution to the work.