Article

The Beginning of Writing Culture among Steppe Nomads[1]

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ABSTRACT

The present study focuses on the prerequisites for the periodization of writing in the culture of steppe nomads, the stages of development of pictographic subject and ideological writing are analyzed. Many petroglyphs, symbols left by steppe nomads, probably reflect their desire to understand the world around them. Authors of articles as part of several expeditions to the complex petroglyphs of Shiveet Khairkhan, Arshan Khad, Khoit-Tsenkher, Baga-Oygur in Mongolia; Bichikt-Bom, Karakol, Bizhikt-Khaya, Bii-Khem, Karasuk in Russia; Ak-Baur, Zhetysu, Tamgaly, Terekti in Kazakhstan. Based on written sources, as well as outdated creativity, commercial from generation to generation, the article analyzes the origins of written nomadic culture.

The authors believe that some historical events are captured in the tradition of the Turkic chronology, such as "Koyan zhylgy ashtyk" (Famine in the year of the rabbit), "Meshin zhylgy sogys" (War in the year of the monkey) and are a reflection of the subject nomadic culture. In the process of research, it was established that the heritage of many petroglyphs and symbols with the ancient Turkic alphabet confirms the cultural and cognitive continuity of the written culture of the nomads.

Introduction

The term 'aleph + beta' (alphabet) originated from the symbols 'aleph' and 'beta', which represent the first two letters of the ancient Greek alphabet. Over time, it has undergone a process of evolution and has become a writing system for the modern alphabet, in which each character is associated with a specific sound. Since the earliest times, humans have been driven to find ways of expressing their thoughts. Based on this need, object-based writing emerged. Conveying thoughts to others through specific objects in an alternative way was a significant change born from thousands of years of human effort. This was because human thoughts were transformed into material objects, which allowed them to be adapted for processing and transportation. Certainly, this means of conveying thoughts had many disadvantages. However, this tool resulted in the emergence of the next period of writing culture, the period of pictographic writing.

In other words, the object-based writing was a prerequisite for the appearance of pictographic writing. Pictographic writing (pictography) is considered a significant achievement in the history of human civilization. The reason is that people use images, which is no longer an item, to convey meaning. This new tool was more precise and effective in conveying ideas than object-based writing. The utilization of pictography created new demands and opened the way for its development at a new level. The development of pictographic writing led to the development of ideographic writing, marking another important stage in the development of written culture. Examples of this ideographic writing can be found in the ancient writings of Egyptian, Cretan, Sumerian, and Chinese cultures. (Iogannes, 1979; Hatice, 2006: 15; Moldabay, 2023).

The Egyptian hieroglyphic script, which was considered a sacred script (god's words), is one of the most significant writing systems of antiquity, dating back to the period between 4000 – 400 BC.

Another ancient autochthonous writing system that is still in use today and does not follow an alphabetical order is the Chinese script. The oldest known forms of the Chinese writing date back to the 18th to12th centuries BC. An analysis of these models demonstrates that the ancient versions of the Chinese script were composed of ideogram-based characters, which were transformed into modern logograms (Iogannes, 1979: 112; Moldabay, 2023).

There are a number of writing systems that have yet to be subjected to further study in the context of the evolution of writing systems. One of such systems is the Turkic Bitig script, the origin of which has not yet been fully studied. This study will focus on the prerequisites of the written culture belonging to steppe nomads, which gave rise to this ancient Turkic script. It will analyze these prerequisites using actual data and materials.

Scientific description of research

We refer to the works of A.B. Adrianov, K.M. Baypakov, V.Yu. Grachev, E.G. Devlet, M.A. Devlet, M.K. Kadyrbaev, V.D. Kubarev, A.N. Maryashev, E.A. Novgorodova, A.P. Okladnikov, E.A. Okladnikova, S.A. Potapov, V.V. Radlov, Z.S. Samashev, L.D. Chadamba, A. Sher, N.

Bazylkhan on petroglyphs and symbols of steppe nomads (Novogradova, 1984; Samashev et al., 2010). And research related to the history of writing of the steppe nomads is carried out by Kh.N. Orkhun, S.E. Malov, V.A. Livshits, G. Klosso, S.G. Guzev and A.S. Amanzholov, K. 1986; Livshits, 1978; Sartqojauly, 2007). The majority of the aforementioned works consider the history of writing from a historical or linguistic perspective. However, there is a notable absence of works that examine writing as a cultural phenomenon.

Research methods and sources

In order to achieve our research objectives, we employed a range of methods, including systematization, classification, historical analysis and a general scientific approach. These were applied in both general and specific contexts. The primary object of our research is to study the history of the writing culture of the steppe nomads, and we analyzed various systems within their historical context by citing specific references to historical sources and materials. Our approach to analyzing the types of writing was based on a chronological selection of written data conducting a historical and comparative analysis of these writings.

Analysis

Prerequisite for the history of writing: object- based writing
The need for means of communication, such as words, gestures, and signs, which are essential for the conveyance of meaning, also existed in primitive societies. The leader of these peoples also needed to have information about the community he leads, such as food supply, livestock, population, and military contingent. It was impossible to store such a large amount of information in one person's memory. Poems and epics were employed as a means of preserving and conveying memories of significant events, such as a great victory or a devastating famine that resulted in significant losses to the people. However, the effectiveness of these methods can only be measured in terms of the lifespan of the poet and the narrator.

In response to the demand for symbolic objects that evoke these significant victories and challenges, a primitive means of communication emerged, known as 'object-based writing'. The function of this primitive object writing system of ancient people was to transform momentary information (instant signal) into long-term memory by means of physical elements. This was the genesis of object-based writing in the history of writing. This was a significant advancement for humanity. People had the opportunity to access information not just through spoken language, but also through objects and visual drawings representing objects. For instance, a person who shouts «I'm selling fruits» in a market and displays the fruits on a shelf conveys the same information as a merchant who sketches pictures of fruits and hangs them in front of his shop. The transformation of words into objects and objects into images was the beginning of the writing history. It is important to note that the initial images were imbued with conventional symbolic meanings. The wearing of black clothes is

a conventional symbol of mourning or death within the family, while a wedding ring is a conventional symbol of marital status. The flags of countries and the uniforms of specialized personnel (e.g. guards, medical staff, welders) also fall within this category of object-based writing. Therefore, we still use these types of object-based writing to some extent. There are numerous examples of this object-based writing in the cultures of many nations around the world. Among steppe nomads, even cattle thieves did not steal horses with short tails and cropped manes were sacrificed for a deceased person. In traditional Kazakh society, the Kazakh women's headwear were associated with their status. For example, owl-feathered hat indicated a turban for an unmarried young girl, headscarf signified a married women and a tall white headdress, known as a Kimeshek, was worn by grandmothers. For further insight into the history of object-based writing patterns among the peoples of the world, one may consult the works of scholars such as I. Fridrich, V. Danselyan, and I. Voylenny (Danzel, 1929; Weule, 1915; Iogannes, 1979).

It is evident that individuals have historically attempted to express their ideas through the utilisation of a multitude of objects. The earliest known account of this phenomenon can be found in the writings of Herodotus, who is regarded as the father of history. The Persian king Darius, who invaded the territory of the Sakas (Scythians), received a message in the form of a gift from their leader. The objects used as a means of communication were a bird, a mouse, a frog and five arrowheads. Gobry, who was responsible for conveying the message to Darius, provided the following explanation: "If you don't fly into the sky like a bird, if you don't enter the ground like a mouse, if you don't dive into the water like a frog, you will not be able to escape from these bullets of mine." (Richard, 2013).

Object-based writing has a special feature that can show all the processes of the development of writing system. Although the object itself could not directly convey information, it was used to convey its concepts in an abstract sense and things that sound similar to its name. For example, in steppe nomads, the herders or men of the clan who transhumance livestock to pastures in famine years, send to their clan special grass or tree branches, dried or fresh animal meat, sheep droppings or small stones. The other members of the clan were able to receive messages through these parcels. They determined the location of pastures by means of grass or bushes, the condition of cattle by meat, and the number of livestock by means of sheep droppings or small stones. Through a branch, they were able to determine whether the herders were in a mountainous or forested area; in the steppe region, others could identify their location by a special type of grass. If there were sufficient stock, herders sent dried meat, which was used to signal the condition of cattle by the fatness of the fresh meat. The number of livestock was identified by the number of sheep droppings (multiplied by ten or a hundred), and if there were stones, the exact number was determined.

In this way, a connection was established between the object writing and its sounding, and it can be seen that the main purpose of writing has been achieved in practice. Thus, the earliest form of writing, to a certain extent, becomes a phonetic sign through a sound rebus. This complex phenomenon is referred to as the ponetization of writing symbols. It can be

observed that the images and graphics utilized during this period serve not only to convey the meaning of the object in question, but also to establish a correlation between the object and another object that shares a similar name within the linguistic context. (Eskeeva, 2002: 5).

In the above example, despite the fact that there is no difference between the object used in practice and its essence, the main purpose of the object is to indirectly convey the idea and provide information based on the abstract concept in the cognition of that ethnicity. Theses information have mostly been preserved through mnemonic system, by identifying objects through signs, or through oral literature and history in particular linguistic memory system. Mnemonic system is a system of methods that provides the successful and effective memorization of information. The main idea is to divide a long story into specific features and to remember the entire story using a single symbol or image that shares those features. For example, memorization played a special role in the oral literature of the Kazakh people. That is reason that Kazakh people have a well-developed tradition of oral literature. Our ancestors retained memories of special events by associating specific years with notable occurrences. For example, "The Famine of the Year of the rabbit", "The massacre of the Year of the Monkey" were memorized on the basis of specific features, and presented based on the narrator's proficiency. For this reason, many of our oral literature genres have multiple versions. The reason is that they were processed and changed by performers in different stages.

Pictographic writing

We have mentioned that there is a very minor difference between object-based writing and pictographic writing. For example, there is no variation in the delivery of information between the name of camel farm and the image of a «camel» on entrance gate. Especially for indigenous primitive people, in terms of information perception and meaning, there is likely no difference between the image of a camel and a real camel. But in terms of the development of the history of writing, the transformation of an object into a picture is a very significant progress. Through this progress, the object was separated from its essence and transformed a symbol (image). Thus, they became transferable by drawing on any board, stone or paper. It is also worth to mention that other types of messages, such as gestures, can be «written» by pictographic writing. If we draw a picture of a lake by pointing the picture of the index finger in a certain direction, it can be deduced that walking in this direction leads to the lake.

Photographic writing should not be confused with drawing, but the line between them is not clear. A drawing is a representation of a product of thoughts and things seen, experienced, with the aim of becoming an object of artistic and aesthetic excitement. And in photographic writing, the art of conveying the aesthetic is not so important in most cases, it is only a means of conveying the message. But both Photographic writing and drawing depend on techniques of representation. They both use imaging techniques.

We can observe numerous petroglyphs belonging to these writing types in the Eurasian steppe regions inhabited by ancient Turks. In particular: Shiveet Khairkhan, Arshan Khad, Biluut-

Tolgoi, Bichigt Ulaan Khad, Hoyt-Tsenkher, Baga-Uygur, Chandaman, Chuluut, Yamany-us, and ect. incriptions in Mongolia; Bichikt-Bom, Karakol, Kalbak-Tash, Katun, Kuilyu, Kurman-Tash, Kuyus, Kyzyl-Zhar, Ukok, and Turochaksk inscriptions in the Altai mountainous region of Russia; Alaga, Aldy-Mozaga, Bizhikt-Khaya, Bii-Khem, Mortuk, Dogee-Baary, Ime, Kara-Bulun, Kazyrgan mound, small Bayan-Kul, Mugur-Sarkol, and Okunevsk petroglyphs in Tuva region; Orta-Sarkol, Saamchiyr Uzhu, Syyn-Churek, Ustyu-Mozaga, Ustyngyi-Sarkol, Khaya-Bazhi, Herbis, Eerbek I– IV, Yamalyk, Chailag-Khem, Shanchig, Sholde-Tei inscriptions; Onezhsk inscriptions in Karelia region; Kyzyl-Khaya in the Krasnoyarsk Krai region; Bolshaya Boyarsk Inscriptions, Karatag, Krasny Kamen, Lensk Petroglyphs, Suleksk and Shalobolinsk Inscriptions; Oglakhtinskaya, Tepsei, Ulazy, Khana-Shulun Inscriptions; Karasuk Inscriptions in the Khakassia Region; Oglakhty, Podkamen, Sunduki, Ust-Tyuba, Khizyn Khyr Inscriptions; Beshegtuu, Naushki, Tsagan-Zaba, Selenga, Subuktuy, Suleksk inscriptions in the Zabaikalsky Krai region; Shaman-gora, Kharankhoi inscriptions; Shishkinsk inscriptions in the Irkutsk region; Novoromanovsk petroglyphs in the Kemerovo region; Belaya, Bilaban, Zenkovsk inscriptions in the Ural region; Zmiyev Kamen, Irbit, Isakovsk inscriptions; Iset, Karaulny Kamen, Maskalsk I; Sokolii Kamen, Ufa, Tagil, Chusovaya, Yuruzan inscriptions; Ak-Bauyr, Arpaozen, Bayan-zhurek, Zhailau, Zhaisan, Eshki-olmes, Koybagar, Kuljabasy, Oi-Karatau, Zhetysu, Tanbaly, Terekti Aulye petroglyphs in Kazakhstan; Saimaly-Tash, Suleyman-Too petroglyphs in Kyrgyzstan; Karakiyasay, Sarmyshsay petroglyphs in Uzbekistan; and Gobustan petroglyphs in Azerbaijan (Shajmerdinova, Moldabay, 2023).

In conclusion, pictographic writing also prioritizes the meaning of the message like object-based writing, rather than the sound of the message to be conveyed. However, it can be replaced with another word which sounds similar, using a phonetic rebus even if there is no semantic connection between the non-depicted, illustrative and metaphorical words. The need for such a replacement probably arises mainly when writing human names. As an example, the primitive pictographic writing of the Aztecs can be cited. The message is conveyed through images: the bow and arrow represent war, the lion and heart represent the human name or nickname «Arystanbek” (Lionheart or Lion-hearted), the skull represents death, and the weeping eye represents a widow.

We should consider the symbols preserved until today by nomadic peoples, as a special type of ideographic writing. These symbols are found in all ancient cultures, especially they widespread and preserved among nomadic peoples. For example, the ownership marks that branded on the flanks of livestock, painted on or carved into objects.

Among Sedentary peoples, the earliest symbols were found among the Babylonians and Hittites in ancient Eastern culture. The house symbols referred to as house marks, which were found in the land of Turkish Republic, known as Asia Minor and in the northern and eastern coasts of Germany, can be considered ideographic signs that indicate the occupation of the owner or family. The sickle – the plowman, the mill – the miller, the hammer – the blacksmith, the ax – the carpenter, and the key – revealed the head of the town. In other words, these symbols were true ideograms. However, among these symbols, there are also some symbols

whose exact function and meaning have not been revealed. It is not yet determined, whether these symbols in the form of unintelligible geometric shapes represent a modification of the image or are arbitrarily selected non-figurative icons. These house symbols later in a certain sense played the role of monograms (signatures) of their owners: previously illiterate people used them as simple letters when signing documents, and the wealthy used these symbols as seals.

The above-mentioned signs served as abbreviations of names or surnames, while the other signs used by criminals were a means of 'condensing' all the events they had experienced. These marks on the body parts of criminals are known throughout the entire criminal world and served as a means of conveying the first information about the owner of these marks. Comprehensive and detailed information about the marks in the criminal world can be found in I. Grob's work 'Archives of Criminal Anthropology and Criminology' published in 1899 (Grob, 1899). Ancient primitive peoples also have the methods of representing events by means of short pictures. The North American Indians, for example, have an abridged pictorial chronicle called the 'Winter Count'. In this chronicle, the most important event of the year is recorded as follows (see Picture 1).

Fig. 1. Lone Dog, winter count. Sioux. NA.702.5

We know that the ancient Turks, and later the Kazakhs, used to date events based on known occurrences up until the 19th century. Ancient Turkic writings sometimes mention the course of events instead of the year. For example, in the history of Kazakhstan, there are year dates based on such events as 'Aktaban Shubyrundy' (Kazakh famine), the year of the Dzungar invasion, and the year of Tauke's reign, and so on.

Neither object-based writing nor pictographic writing truly constitute «writing» it in the conventional sense. The reason is that these writing tools do not convey thoughts or spoken words precisely as they sound, but only provide a general, approximate version.

In the present era, the term 'writing' encompasses any medium that accurately conveys thoughts or spoken messages, regardless of whether it is word-based, syllabic, or alphabetic. However, a paucity of empirical data hampers our ability to conduct a comprehensive investigation into the evolution of writing. Consequently, our research is largely based on theoretical assumptions. Nevertheless, we do draw upon the findings of previous scientific works and research on the history of writing to support our arguments. The stages of writing development appear to be relatively straightforward for those engaged in amateur research. It is assumed that thought writing emerges as a consequence of the evolution of ideographic or phrasal writing. In the context of the evolutionary development of ideographic writing, syllabic writing was formed through the segmentation and symbolisation of individual words. The intricate evolution of syllabic writing subsequently gave rise to phonetic or alphabetic writing systems, wherein symbols were employed to represent more discrete sounds. In his work, The Development of Writing, the German scholar K. Zete demonstrated the evolution of Egyptian writing and coined the term «natural progression development of writing» (Kurt, 1939). However, in our academic assessment, the history of the development of writing cannot be as simple and consistent as previously stated. The systematic division of words into syllables or sounds is a highly complex process. Therefore, it is evident that the acquisition of this knowledge by humanity was formed on the basis of long developmental stages.

It is therefore necessary to consider each stage of writing development individually, based on previously established theories, before examining the historical development of writing systems. In this regard, the precise writing standards and research results of scholars, together with our own research analysis, allow us to refine and optimize the history of writing, starting from non-phonetic ideographic writing to alphabet writing.

In ideographic writing, a single image can convey a simple or complex idea. This idea may align with the intended sentence, but is not always an exact match. To read such a message, it is not necessary to know a specific language, because the message is conveyed through pictures and does not require linguistic elements. However, individual words of particular importance can be isolated as special units and marked with special symbols to convey a whole meaning and it's may possible to help to convey thoughts effectively. Therefore, as the importance of words increases, the shift from ideographic writing to word-based writing is probably influenced by the desire to convey key words in the message.

In the context of word writing, each individual word is represented by a unique pictographic symbol. This constitutes a highly significant advance over the field of ideographic writing.

This is because spelling encodes not the general meaning of the thought, but the precise meaning of the word. Since the image initially conveyed the concept and the sound was not taken into account, it can be theorized that the inflectional elements, case and personal endings, have not yet been recorded in writing. Although the order of words was determined by the order of images, the relationship between words in a sentence was still primitive. This is the reason why those who want to understand the message in a clear and precise way have created a demand for the grammatical structure of the language.

Furthermore, a number of challenges emerge in the transmission of meaning in written form, particularly in the context of word-based communication. The use of images allows for the straightforward depiction of concepts that are specifically perceived by the mind. This includes a diverse range of entities, such as humans, birds, dogs, horses, crickets, and objects like the sun, moon, and trees. Additionally, actions such as 'crying,' 'laughing,' 'jumping,' 'flying,' and 'drinking,' as well as verbs in general, can be represented by pictures, even when they are complex. To illustrate, the action of crying can be represented by a drawing of a person with tears falling from their eyes, the act of flying can be depicted by a person with wings, and the action of drinking can be shown by a person holding a pitcher to their mouth. In practice, however, for the sake of simplicity, a part is drawn instead of the whole, provided that this part represents the entire concept. For example, a spear represented all weapons, and a tree represented a forest. However, conveying concepts and actions that cannot be perceived by our senses, such as 'managing', 'thinking', 'speaking', presents a challenge. In that case, can a way out of this situation be found using descriptive pictures. For example, the Egyptians attempted to convey the concept of authority and governance with the image of a person holding a scepter, the action of telling or speaking with the image of a person holding two hands to their mouth, or simply with an image of a mouth, the image of a person resting their chin on their hand to convey the action of thinking, and the action of hearing with the image of a person holding a hand to their ear. The most significant phenomenon during this period was the emergence of a part in place of a whole. To represent the action of «walking,» it was not necessary to depict the entire figure; instead, the image of two legs in the act of walking was sufficient. These writing symbols were not yet far from pictographic writing, with each symbol denoting only the image depicted and the type of writing that marked its sound not yet available.

The necessity for precise communication, particularly with regard to the challenge of accurately transcribing proper names, has given rise to a demand for phonetic coding, or phonetic writing. In order to ascertain whether the individual depicted with a scepter represented a monarch or a leader, and whether the person with their mouth closed signified a speaker or an eater, it was necessary to distinguish between the two images. Based on this, the writing system began to be used that based on rebus. To illustrate, the name 'Arystanbek' was represented by images of a lion and the title 'bek.' Over time, this rebus system underwent further evolution, with the initial syllables of pictographic symbols becoming the basis for its structure. It is evident that this rebus system was also used in human culture during the

period of object-based writing. For example, the message 'a bird, a mouse, a frog and five arrowheads' sent to the Persian king Darius, who invaded the territory of the Saka (Scythian) leader, described in the previous sections, was based on this rebus system. In other words, a bird was used as a symbol of flight, a mouse to represent entering the earth, a frog to signify diving into a lake, while a bow was used to represent death. This rebus system for object-based writing is also useful for pictographic writing. This was the initial shift towards phonetic writing.

In pictographic writing, concrete terms that can be perceived by our senses are represented by drawing them fully or partially, whereas abstract concepts are represented using the rebus system based on how they sound. This practice is found in various regions of the world. The trinity of image-symbol-sound rebus represents the most significant elements of this period of writing history. Indeed, as we observe the process of writing formation, we consistently see these three elements together in the developmental stages of writing history. It is evident that the rebus played a significant role in the evolution of writing history, particularly in the transition from object-based writing to ideographic writing. It was challenging to progress from one stage of writing development to another. It is evident that identifying words as a component of thought was a significant hurdle for primitive thinkers in ancient times. A new element required a substantial period of adaptation and replacement of the previous element. We observe that ideographic writing and word writing coexisted for an extended period in numerous cultures (Iogannes, 1979; Moldabay, 2023).

Rebus is the initial step in the phonetic structuring of written language. n the earliest stages of written communication, the inability to convey the full range of sounds in a language presented a significant challenge. In the earliest stages of phonetic transcription, an attempt was made to convey similar sounds in a word by dividing complete words. This indicates that the decomposition of the word into its constituent phonetic components was not yet fully implemented. Following considerable effort, people began to recognise the concept of the 'syllable' as a constituent part of a word. Mastering the concept of the «syllable» presented a significant challenge for humanity. This is because the very nature of a syllable is devoid of inherent meaning; it is an abstract construct that was initially beyond the comprehension of early humans. The structure of words within a language was of paramount importance in the utilisation of syllables. It is evident that the development of writing was greatly influenced by the emergence of increasingly convenient monosyllabic roots, characterised by a variety of structures, including CV, VC or CVC. This is due to the fact that syllables such as CVCCC and CCVCC are seldom employed in the context of rebus word coding. Consequently, in the evolution of written language, in contrast to inflectional languages, agglutinative languages retain the root structure while modifying it through the addition of endings. This seems to be one of the most ancient characteristics of language. To illustrate, the German word 'Rathous' (municipality) is an example of an inflectional language. It can be rendered in the form of a sound rebus using the pictorial symbols 'Rad' (wheel) and 'Haus' (house). Similarly, the German word 'beraten' (to advise) (be-RAT-en) employs the same usage of 'rat'. However, it

is challenging to represent the initial and third syllables, 'be' and 'en,' in writing. It can only be labelled as 'beer - rat – ten' in a similar sounding manner. Furthermore, in the Sumerian script, which is recognized as an agglutinative language, the word 'mu' marks the meaning of weed and was easily used to mark the -mu sounds in other words. For example, mudu (he built) can represent the syllable mu in writing. However, users of the script initially did not immediately use the syllable in all writing. This can be observed in the case of cuneiform writing, which was a widely used script in Asia Minor. The ability to pronounce words by breaking them into syllables represents a significant advancement in human writing culture. It would be inaccurate to suggest that the ability to distinguish sounds became easier after the distinction of syllables was introduced. It is important to note that the West Semitic script, which is regarded as the progenitor of the scripts prevalent in Western culture, was initially developed based solely on consonant sounds. Subsequently, the Greeks adapted this script to incorporate vowel sounds. For further insight, one may refer to the works of K. Zete and I. Friedrich, who were among the first to document the history of writing (Iogannes, 1979: 41-47; Moldabay, 2023).

Results

As a result of the study, we sorted and analyzed data related to the history of writing in the territory inhabited by ancient steppe nomads, relating to the periods of subject writing, pictographic writing and ideographic writing. The relationship between these writing types and the knowledge of the steppe nomads was also examined. The objective was to demonstrate that these prerequisites for writing constituted the foundation of ancient Turkic writing. It was also sought to prove that the steppe nomads had every reason to create their own writing, based on data relating to the initial stages of the history of writing. Furthermore, the aim was to ascertain whether the archetype of tribal symbolism, denoting property rights in ancient Turkic legend, contains the knowledge of nomads and the presence of elements of visual writing in the archetype of writing.

Conclusion

The Turkic peoples have a long and distinguished history, and it is notable that they have also made significant contributions to the development of writing systems. From the Neolithic period onwards, the region inhabited by nomads saw many efforts at writing, leaving numerous traces. The existence of numerous petroglyphs and cave paintings provides compelling evidence to this effect. Subsequently, these images were accompanied by the introduction of sacred symbols. This was the consequence of the recognition of a potent force in human civilization and the philosophical desire of mankind to understand nature Subsequently, the conceptualization of the 'I' led to the dissemination of symbols representing property rights. A considerable number of these symbols are known to have

originated from the Proto-Turkic and Turkic periods. It is documented that the Kazakh people employed symbols to demarcate the territory of each clan's property and authority until relatively recently. In a nomadic society, clan symbols serve to identify and represent tribal and regional administration. The distinctive marks placed on livestock, which constituted the primary source of wealth for the nomads, served to indicate the clan to which the animal belonged. The ear tag, in addition to this, also identified the tribal ownership of the animal. The formation of centralized administrative systems gave rise to the emergence of symbols of authority that represented the community. Subsequently, the members of this ruling dynasty demonstrated their legitimacy by incorporating additional elements into the primary symbol of authority, thereby establishing their lineage. This was a distinct form of writing culture. The emergence of centralized power structures, such as the Hun and the Saka states, likely contributed to the growing demand for writing. They appear to have endeavored to develop their own scripts, drawing upon the established symbols of property and authority. The initial stages of this process can be observed in the Hun and Saka periods, as evidenced by inscriptions on a silver bowl discovered at the Esik fortress and a bone necklace unearthed in Kereku, Kazakhstan. However, it can be seen that writing was highly respected during this period, considered a key to the secretive and mysterious world, and only certain individuals had the right to engage with it. Therefore, the paucity of written samples belonging to this period can be explained. This phenomenon is common to all the earliest writing systems in the autochthonous world. However, the exact key to the inscription of this period has yet to be found. The scarcity of written patterns, the lack of clarity regarding the exact language used during this period, and the uncertainty about which stage of writing development they belong to (such as pictographic writing, ideographic writing, syllabic writing, or alphabetic writing) prevent us from formulating a precise production. Nevertheless, an exhaustive examination of all available data pertaining to petroglyphs, symbols, and written records unearthed in the territories inhabited by steppe nomads has led us to conclude that the writing culture of the ancient Turks commenced considerably earlier than was previously assumed. This finding provides a robust basis for attributing the authorship of their indigenous writings to them. The petroglyphs and symbols that have been preserved from this era are regarded as a fundamental precursor to the development of systematic writing. Consequently, the steppe nomads, who have left an invaluable legacy in this regard, occupy a unique position within the broader context of world writing culture. They have left behind a substantial corpus of primitive written samples that span the entire history of writing. The old Turkic script, with its origins dating back thousands of years, can be viewed as a testament to their aspiration for cultural advancement.

Әдебиет

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Дала көшпелілеріндегі жазу мәдениетінің бастаулары

Аннотация. Мақалада дала көшпелілері мәдениетіндегі жазу кезеңдерінің алғышарттары қарастырылып, затты жазу, суретті жазу және ой жазу кезеңдеріне тиесілі материалдарға талдау жасалады. Дала көшпелілері қалдырған көптеген петроглифтер, таңбалар олардың жазу мәдениетіне деген талпынысын білдірсе керек. Мақала авторлары Моңғолиядағы Шивээт Хайрхан, Аршан хад, Хойт-Цэнхэр, Бага-Ойгур, Ресейдегі Бичикт-Бом, Қаракөл, Бижикт-Хая, Бии-Хем, Қарасұқ жазбалары, Қазақстандағы Ақ-Бауыр, Жетісу, Таңбалы, Теректі Әулие петроглифтеріне байланысты экспедициялар құрамында болып, аталмыш жазбалармен тікелей жұмыс жасаған.

Сақтарға қатысты затты жазу кезеңіне тиесілі ақпараттарды грек деректері негізінде талдап, сол кезеңнен бүгінгі күнге дейін кейбір затты жазу элементтерінің жалғастығына қатысты деректер ұсынады. Көшпелілер танымындағы жыл қайыру дәстүрі бойынша: «қоян жылғы жұт», «мешін жылғы қырғын», т.с.с. деректердің сонау затты жазу кезеңінен қалған жалғастық екендігін алға тартады. Осы затты жазу, суретті жазу кезеңдері көне түркі бітіг жазуының алғышартын жасағандығына сенеді. Көптеген петроглифтер мен таңбалардың көне түркі бітіг жазуы әріп таңбаларына ұқсастығының басты себептерінің бірі осы мәдени-танымдық жалғастық болса керек. Осы мақаламыз арқылы жазу тарихи кезеңдерінің барлық үлгілері дала көшпелілері өмір сүрген аймақтарда кездесетіндігін ескере отырып, аталмыш кезеңде қолданылған элементтердің көне түркі жазуының қалыптасуында маңызды рөл атқарғанына және әлемдік жазу мәдениетінде дала көшпелілерінің өз орны бар екендігіне көз жеткіземіз.

Кілт сөздер: мәдениет, жазу тарихы, петроглифтер, таңбалар, дала көшпелілері, жазу дәстур сабақтастығы, бітіг, әліпби, түркі халықтары.

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Истоки письменной культуры у степных кочевников

Аннотация. В статье рассматриваются предпосылки периодизации письма в культуре степных кочевников, анализируются этапы развития пиктографической предметной и идеографической письменности в степной культуре. Многие петроглифы и символы, оставленные кочевниками, вероятно, отражают их попытки передать информацию той эпохи и стремление к познанию окружающего мира.

Авторы статьи были участниками нескольких экспедиций и исследовали петроглифы, знаки-символы Шивээт Хайрхана, Аршан хада, Хойт-Цэнхэра, Бага-Ойгура в Монголии; Бичикт-Бома, Караколя, Бижикт-Хая, Бии-Хема, Карасука в России; Ак-Баура, Жетысу, Тамгалы, Теректи в Казахстане. На основе письменных источников, а также устного творчества, передаваемого из поколения в поколение, в статье рассматриваются истоки письменной кочевой культуры. Изучение античных греческих источников позволило иследовать петроглифы и пиктограммы сакской эпохи и рассмотреть преемственность некоторых традиций и элементов пиктограммно-идеографической письма в древнетюркской письменности, в частности, и в целом в тюркской письменной культуре.

Авторы статьи также утверждают, что некоторые исторические события тюркских народов запечатлены в традиции летоисчисления, таких, как «Қоян жылғы аштық» (Голод в год кролика), «Мешін жылғы соғыс» (Война в год обезьяны) и являются отражением предметной кочевой культуры. В процессе иследования установлено, что схожесть многих петроглифов и символов с древнетюркским алфавитом подтверждает культурно-познавательную преемственность письменной культуры кочевников.

Ключевые слова: культура, история письменности, петроглифы, символы, степные кочевники, преемственность письменной традиции, руника, алфавит, тюркские народы.

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