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**THE MONGOL CONQUESTS AND THEIR REFLECTION
IN MATERIAL CULTURE OF THE PEOPLES
OF THE MIDDLE VOLGA AND KAMA REGIONS
(THE 13TH – EARLY 14TH CENTURIES)
(ACCORDING TO ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATA)**

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The article considers the beginning of the Mongol invasion of Europe, a key moment in the history of Europe. Written sources contain little information about these events. Therefore, the main sources are the archaeological materials. Archaeological findings help us to reconstruct the process of the conquest of Volga Bulgaria. It was the first State that the Mongols conquered during the Western campaign.

We can find out the nature of the changes in the Bulgar region of the Golden Horde, which occurred during the second half of the 13th century, both by exploring materials of such major Bulgarian cities as Bilyar, Bolghar, Juketau, Iski-Kazan (which became later the Golden Horde urban centers) as well as by studying the materials of rural settlements. If the hillforts' materials indicate both the preservation of pre-Mongol traditions and significant innovations, then the materials of rural settlements are different and very individual. Insufficient research of the Golden Horde settlements does not allow us to make generalizations and detailed analysis. But we can identify a number of leading directions in the different periods of the Golden Horde history on the basis of the excavation of some settlements in the Western Trans-Kama region.

Keywords: Volga Bulgaria, archaeology, ulus of Jochi, Golden Horde, Mongol Empire.

The Mongol conquests and their consequences represent one of the important research topics in the historiography of the Volga region peoples. It was precisely this theme that became the "Rubicon" which divided the concepts of Volga Tatar and Chuvash ethnogeneses in the works of researchers of the end of 19th – the first quarter of the 20th centuries. (A.F. Likhachov, N.I. Firsov, V.F. Smolin, etc.). Through the study of this topic it was developed "Chuvash theory", according to which the descendants of Bulgars migrated to Cis-Volga region after the Mongol invasion preserving their pagan traditions and avoiding Islamization and Kipchakization (modern Chuvashes are their descendants). Whereas the urban Bulgars were strongly affected by new authorities being involved in

the zone of active ethnic mixing. Later they became Kazan Tatars retaining the priority right to be called descendants of the Golden Horde.

In general terms these points of view remained relevant in the 1960–70s when researchers held different points of view in their conceptualization of the Bulgar-Tatar ethnogenesis (A.P. Smirnov; A.Kh. Khalikov). These viewpoints are still relevant even in some recent studies.

It should be noted that it is the Mongol invasion that researchers regard as the main reason for migration of population to the Cis-Kama region from the Trans-Kama region, ravaged by invasion. There subsequently emerged the territory and population of the future Khanate of Kazan – a crucial phase in the formation of contemporary Kazan Tatars.

Sources. Archaeological materials are the major source for period of the Mongol conquests in the Middle Volga region. These materials' accumulation began from the 19th century (they are currently stored in collections of the National Museum of the Republic of Tatarstan, State Historical Museum, and the Hermitage). During the 1940–90s, active archaeological research in the Volga and Kama regions significantly expanded the range of data on this topic.

Territory. We consider archaeological materials from the territory of Volga Bulgaria within those state borders that was marked and entered into scholarly circulation according to a study of R.G. Fakhrutdinov [12].

Systematization of archaeological materials. We attempt both to analyze archaeological materials relating to the period of 1220–1340s by selecting them from the general mass of artifacts of the 12th–13th centuries, and to divide them into several chronological complexes.

1. Pre-Mongol period. The *first complex*: these are the materials of the pre-Mongol period from the first third of the 13th century (up to 1236) – period of the beginning of the Mongol expansion westward. This period is characterized by appearance in the Volga Bulgaria of the articles or imitations of articles originated in Central Asia (Iran) and Asia Minor and *manufactured in the 12th century (12th – early 13th centuries) and even at the end of the 11th – in the beginning of the 12th centuries*: bronze mortars, cast cauldrons, candlesticks, metal mirrors with arabesques, “al-Buraq’s”, and geometrical patterns. In our opinion, to the same period belong some adornments (such as, for example, lapis lazuli pendants) of the Turkic nomads from the Eastern European steppes, dated according to analogies of the 11th–12th centuries. These innovations did not change prevailing complex of household items. However, the influx in the first third of the 13th century of new polyethnic population together with its complex of items became one of the elements of the Middle Volga popular culture, which developed, in turn, in the Golden Horde period.

2. The Mongols in Bulgaria. The *second complex* belongs to the period of the Mongol conquest of 1236–1242. It includes items of equipment and outfit of horse and rider represented by *new types that did not occur previously* and appeared as a result of modernization of already existed

types or of borrowing of new ones. By the beginning of the 13th century, most of these items became analogous to those used by nomads of the Eurasian steppes at this time. Extremely rare was the usage of iron horse harness' details and equipment, such as of bridles with plate cheek-pieces, arched stirrups, iron pendants and overlays on the harness and bridle etc., prevailed here since the second half of the 9th century.

Ranged weapons (bows and iron arrowheads) of this time are mainly represented by the forms characteristic for the pre-Mongol period of Eastern European steppes and Volga Bulgaria. Not all items of arms (in particular, arrowheads) and the elements of harness of Siberian origins are connected with the period under consideration. Beginning of their penetration belongs to an earlier period of the second half of the 11th century.

Both the findings' identification in the settlements of this time and subsequent dating of related artifacts with the period of the 1230–40s can be implemented only by a comparison of the *entire* detected complex rather than only on the basis of single findings.

In this connection we should analyze the available facts indicating direct traces of the Mongol conquest. Excavations of the major Bulgar settlements have revealed the layers of conflagration of 1236 on the hillforts of Bolghar, Bilyar, Suvar, and Muromskyygorodok. They are not present on the Russkourmatskoe and Kazan Kremlin hillforts in the Kazanka river basin, nor they exist in a number of Kama region hillforts, such as Juketau.

Part of the settlements ceased to exist before the Mongol invasion, such as Sosnovskoye II settlement on the Sheshmariver [10, p. 120–133]; i.e. their disappearance was not related to the events in question.

Settlements can not provide accurate information being investigated only by archaeological reconnaissance. Although it can be argued that much of the settlements, especially in the central Trans-Kama region, ceased to exist in the aftermath of Mongol campaigns.

Reconstruction of the conquest strategy. Basing on the available data, we can assume that the main blow of Mongol forces fell on the Bulgar territories of the Trans-Kama region and it affected to a lesser extent the Cis-Kama region. This assumption is based on the fact that Trans-Kama region was the strategically important area: here was the highest concentration of population and here were situated major commercial, handicraft, and military centers. Here also was situated the Great city or Bilyar, which became the main object of a military attack.

In the first quarter of the 13th century, Bilyar's mega-agglomeration included both 2–4 hillforts constituting a single fortified area of 4–15 suburb settlements and at least 5 satellite settlements. Nearby were situated Voykinskaya, Maklashevskaya, and Burakovo-Kozhaevskaya settler macro-agglomerations composed of two hillforts that were connected by a common defensive rampart and formed single fortified area. In addition, there were 2–6 settlements, one third of which consisted of satellite sett-

lements. Here also was located Romodanovskaya meso-agglomeration composed of two hillforts, 4–7 suburb settlements, and up to 4 satellite settlements [9, p. 180–193].

Until now researchers have not identified archaeological traces of ethnic Mongols' presence within the Bulgar territory and in its borderlands. However, we can accept as an indirect evidence of their presence here the incidental findings of the copper ongghon in the Samara Bend and bronze Jain Burkhans in the Ural and Middle and Lower Volga regions.

Most probably, at the time of invasion the Mongol armies were located in the area of Ural and Voronezh rivers, respectively to the southeast and southwest of the Bulgars. At this time the Mongol allies were located between the Ik and Belaya rivers. They were a part of Ugrian speaking tribes (early burials in the Taktalachuksky, I Azmetevsky and Derbeshkinsky (?) grounds) [2] and Kipchaks (?) to the south of the Great Cheremshan (beneath barrow burials of the Samara Volga region).

Mongol forces' itineraries. Probably, the Mongol detachments moved on the roads linking separate areas of the Bulgar State.

Bulgar northern areas did not pose any military threat to the Mongol forces. Judging by the results of excavations of Alekseevskoe hillfort and VI Alekseevskoe, Murzihinskoe, and Ostolopovskoe settlements [7], the castles, small towns, and part of fortified rural estates in the left bank of the Kama lower reaches were significantly damaged during the second half of the 12th century and had no serious military potential. Probably, the Mongols did not cross Kama river in 1236, since researchers have not identified traces of a military incursion into the nodal areas of trade and economic arteries between the Cis-Kama and Trans-Kama regions, situated in the crossing points of Kama river, which were protected by a whole system of fortified outposts since the middle of the 11th century [5, p. 111–134; 9, p. 180–193; 11, p. 191–194].

Juketau was the largest city on the Bulgar eastern border. It was situated at the crossroads of trading routes going from the south (on the left bank of the Sheshma) and from the east, out of lands of the Ugric tribes' habitat (downstream of the Kama). In addition, it was practically the only road that skirted the forest impassable for cavalry and situated between the Sheshma and Ik rivers. Therefore, the Mongols could not leave Juketau in their rear. At the same time, excavations of the hillfort and adjacent settlements did not reveal clear traces of the military debacle [4, p. 286–293] and possibly the city surrendered without fight.

On the southeastern route along the Sheshma was located a large number of small towns, fortresses, and castles stretching along the watershed, on the edge of terrace above the floodplain from the mouth of the Sheshma down to its midstream. This system began to be formed from the late 10th century, when there appeared a majority of open settlements and well fortified castles began to be erected (mainly in the 11th century),

ranging from 3900 to 24 000 sq. m. (Utyashkinskoe, I–III Novosheshminskoe, I–II Ekaterinoslobodskoe hillforts). By the 12th century, almost continuous band of settlements stretched on the left bank of the Sheshma and in the mouth part of its tributaries with the centers in small towns, which constituted a single and well-structured system of defense.

It also included several fortified lines: in ancient times the earthworks were connected with small towns by abatises. One of them, the Elkhovskoye hillfort with a circular defense system interlocked with an earthen rampart, which extent now (after reconstruction of the 17th–18th centuries) amounts to 7861 m. It was located on the right bank of the Elkhovka river, the left tributary of Sheshma. Moreover, almost uninterrupted strip of unfortified settlements is situated both on the left and right sides of the river. From the south they were “covered” by another fortified band – an earthen rampart situated near the present regional center of Novosheshminsk.

This earthen rampart was completed in the western part by the powerful castle situated on an area of 15 600 sq. m. to the north-north-east of the Sloboda Ekaterininskaya village, in upper reaches of the Studenezh stream. Its small platform had two ramparts and three ditches with one passing. The lower part of the ramparts’ mound was strengthened by limestone slabs taken from the bottom of ravines. It is possible that the ramparts were strengthened by the stone lining from their outer side. Probably, such a defense system was complemented with wooden structures, making this foothold a powerful obstacle to any enemy. Around the citadel stretched a handicraft quarter over more than a kilometer away.

Except the Sosnovskoye II hillfort, excavations of these monuments have not been conducted [10]. Therefore, it is impossible to draw conclusions in respect of these monuments, except that most of them operated in the 12th century. Presumably, these fortified areas were not developed in anticipation of the Mongol invasion, but for defense against the other adversaries (Polovtsi?) who operated very actively. Probably for this reason, a significant part of the fortresses and castles was ruined before the Mongol invasion and, in fact, could not seriously impede the movement of Mongol forces.

Overland route to the west, leading to the central regions of Bulgar State, was under control of another hillfort located in the upper reaches of the “Obvalny” ravine, on the left bank of the Cheremukha river, the left tributary of Sheshma. Here, on the broad promontory with a wide area of 11600 sq. m., was situated the Bulgar stronghold protected from the ground side by a double line of ramparts and moats. Virtually, all sides of hillfort are surrounded by settlements – the remnants of suburb and adjoining villages. Minor capacity of the defences and their weak hillfort show that in the military sense this object was of secondary or rather supplementary importance and to a greater extent it performed administrative and communicative role. An inexpressive content of findings from this monument also

supports the view of lesser role of this settlement in comparison, for example, with the Ekaterinoslobodskoe hillfort. A small town near the contemporary village of Saklyk on the Sheshma was situated nearly on the most southeastern point of the Bulgar frontier.

It is more than probable that the Mongols did not conquer this area entirely. For at least, the available archaeological evidence does not allow us to assert unequivocally that these settlements were devastated at this time.

Most likely, after had passed along the Kama floodplain through Juketau, the Mongol troops bypassed these fortresses from the rear cutting them off from the central areas and thereby depriving them of the opportunity to adhere to a common defense strategy. After the Mongol invasion, these settlements gradually fell into decay, except Juketau and Tubulgatau (near the village of Tubulgatau (Nikitino) of the Novosheshminsky region of Tatarstan).

The route along the Tolkishka river was the probable direction of motion of the Mongol-Ugric detachments from the northeast to the central regions of Bulgaria. Here was located the guard point and hillfort with suburb-settlement near the village of Maly Tolkish, from which it was possible to reach Juketau by land route through the watershed and bypassing the Malopolyanskoe settlement, which, in turn, was located in the upper tributary of the Prosti river, the left tributary of Sheshma. On the land route to the Kama river stood a small town situated in the upper tributary of Tolkishka near the village of Staroe Romashkino.

The second route of the Mongol troops could pass along the left bank of the Kama to the confluence of the Volga and Kama and continue along the Aktai to Bilyar. It should also be noted that in this territory (Western Trans-Kama) it was built a very extensive network of castles and fortresses, which defined the boundaries of small districts in the most populated part of the State. They were not directly linked to the river system (basins of the Bezdna and Aktai rivers), despite the natural dependence from this system. The small towns, which were in the communal or private possession, functioned as district centers. We can not make any serious conclusions regarding these towns since they are poorly studied by archaeologists. However, it should be noted that most of them had impressive strengthenings, which encircled the area of low river terraces or ravines on the continental plateau, such as the Aksubayevskoe or Starotatadamskoe hillforts. Most likely, they also were not destroyed during the campaign of 1236.

A small town situated near the former village of Krasny Klyuch and contemporary village of Koshki, functioned both as a core element of economic and, apparently, trade zone in the upper reaches of the Bezdna, a left tributary of the Kama River, and as a sort of liaison between the cities of Suvar, Bolghar, and Juketau. It occupied a vast area of the overmeadow terrace rising from the river to the watershed. Judging by lifting material, the settlement was stretched on several acres. Its fortifications

were built only from the ground side. Whether they were built from the other sides, is not known. Archaeological excavations here have not been conducted.

Another Bulgar fortified center consisting of two small but perfectly protected fortresses, was located on the way to the central regions of the country near the contemporary village of Voykino in the Spassky district of the Republic of Tatarstan. On the riverside the territory of small towns was protected by sheer coastal steeps. The multiple-row system consisting of earthen ramparts and ditches was built on the ground side and was complemented by wooden fortifications. The hillforts were connected by a single earthen rampart. We can assume that construction of this defensive system was not completed since there is no trace of the long-term residence between fortifications (cultural stratum is almost completely absent), part of the fortifications of the fortress is not completed, and behind the earthen ramparts' line of one hillfort archaeologists have found a large number of arrowheads dating back mostly to the 11th century and partially to the 11th – beginning of the 12th centuries. It is interesting that the suburb of hillfort was not included in new defense system at all.

The abundance of various findings suggests both the importance of military-strategic and commercial position of this settlement complex on the internal land and river route and the most probable passage of the Mongol detachments across this complex.

Thus, we can assume that the coalition (Turko-Mongol-Ugric) units of invading army moved towards the Great city or Bilyar (now the forthill of Bilyar) from the northeast along the Kama floodplain, through Juketau and its region and bypassing the middle reaches of Sheshma. Part of the Mongol troops concentrated in the upper reaches of the Bolshoy Cheremshan far from the Bulgar fortified centers and then moved towards Bilyar from the southeast and south along the tributaries, through the Samara Bend (the ongon find near the village of Malaya Ryazan [3, p. 111, figure 6]). The Mongol troops that encamped in the steppes along the Voronezh River and united with allies (the Mordovians, Ugrs, Cumans), attacked from the southwest the Posurie and Bulgar cities situated on the right bank of the Volga. Then most of them passed to the left bank of the Volga in the region of the Muromsky gorodok and moved toward Bilyar along the Maly Cheremshan. Most likely, the Mongols ravaged more thoroughly the floodplain and littoral areas along the Volga and the mouth of the Kama, a strategically important region for the Mongol cavalry.

3. Effects of the conquest. So far, antiquities of the following period (1240s – 1310s) are largely considered as a single array throughout the 13th century. The material culture of population of the former Bulgar State, which retained the basic features of previous epoch in the first decades after invasion, began to change in the new economic conditions of the second half of the 13th century. This process was slow and proceeded unequally depending on the extent of the damage caused by the conquest

and the role of a particular region or area in the framework of the new (Mongol) administrative structure. Essentially, the territory of the former Bulgar State became a raw materials' appendage of the lower Volga cities: a pasture-land and supplier of grain and workforce.

The inclusion of foreign ethnic components influenced both the formation of material culture of the Bulgar region in the Golden Horde period on the whole and, primarily, the culture of peripheral Golden Horde cities.

Archaeologists define these components on several grounds:

1. particular residential complexes (houses with earthen heated couches);
2. features of the funeral and commemorative cult;
3. adornments and details of clothing.

New population and imported social structures shaped not only the social fashion in different areas of culture (material and spiritual) stimulating precisely that sphere of production, which ensured their demand, but also gave birth to a completely different development trends in the field of culture and production. All this led to a fairly rapid change of the leading fashion elements of the elites and affected new trends in the handicraft and cultural development of the conquered lands.

4. City building in the Bulgar region during the Golden Horde period. In comparison with the pre-Mongol period, the tradition of *urban planning culture* in the Bulgar area underwent several changes. The traditional Bulgar fortress-city with walls limiting its area together with the suburb-settlements and "satellite"-settlements, partially transformed into "open" urban-type settlements, which bore the character of handicraft and administrative centers (for example, the Suhorechenskoe settlement).

Surviving fortifications in the cities recovered after the invasion (Bilyar, Bolghar) or functioned continuously since the pre-Mongol time, virtually ceased to perform the tasks of defense. Many hillforts fell into disrepair (the Barskoe Enarusskino, Tankeevskoe I and II, Nizhnekacheevskoe, etc.), even though life in their "suburbs" did not stop and sometimes was considerably activated (Juketau). In these cases it would be more correct to say that life at the hillforts became less intense, as they continued to be used as a living area (the hillforts of Juketau, Novoe Mokshino).

At the same time, the traditional practice of castle construction in the Bulgar region did not cease entirely in the 14th century. Several fortified settlements were constructed during the Golden Horde period in the Cis-Volga and Cis-Kama regions (the Syukeevskoe and Kamaevskoe hillforts).

The Bolghar's way of development during the Golden Horde period was quite specific, but much similar to the development of large cities in the Lower Volga region [14, p. 10–16]. The variety of urban planning trends in the Bulgar region indicates the features that distinguish the Bul-

gar city both from the cities of contemporary Rus', where, according to V.L. Egorov, were conducted the purposeful urban policies, and the Golden Horde, where the cities emerged "as a product of the natural development of the State" [1, p. 267]. However, the urban planning of ancient Rus' of the 13th–14th centuries reveals the greatest affinity (for example, in the features of construction, predominance of wooden buildings, etc.) with Bulgar cities of the Golden Horde period. Besides similar natural and geographical conditions, in both cases the pre-Mongol tradition of urban culture undoubtedly played a role in the manifestation of this similarity, when the city developed as a poly-functional organism [1, p. 268–269].

Judging by the nature of material culture of the investigated Golden Horde settlements, administrative arranging as a whole and of the cities in particular demonstrate a different level of the cities' inclusion in the "imperial economy". Researchers distinguish several types of the Bulgar cities of the Golden Horde period.

The *first type* – the "open" cities, centers of major administrative and economic regions: after the time of "Great troubles" of the 1360–70s, Bolghar and Juketau segregated into independent "semi-States" and had specific features in the shape of the material culture (particular style of the epitaphic stone carving and language and of the basic types of crockery, etc.).

"Grown" from the pre-Mongol period, these cities partly preserved the planned structure of the previous time. Although these cities do not have the fortified Kremlin (obviously, the Juketau hillfort did not performed this function), they are traditionally marked with the historical center, around which the urban areas are located according to the concentric or the linear scheme.

Urbanic craft and culture of these cities had the "imperial" mark, especially conspicuous in urbanic adornments and costume details, which were shaped by the all-imperial canons of "fashion" (such as the hats with metal tops, earrings in the form of the question mark, cult objects).

It may be also noted among the adornments that remained in use from the pre-Mongol period but continued to evolve, the crescents and noisy pendants penetrated from the Volga-Finnish territories in the already established form. However, we should note that *during the Golden Horde period the Bulgar adornments (like many other elements of material culture) do not typologically add up to the evolutionary series demonstrating only variations of the already existing styles or the slight upgrading*. The ethnic elements also manifest themselves in the sphere of costume adornments: so, on the bracelets with the lion head appears the rope imitation and the lion guises acquire the features of stylized ornament.

The Bulgar urbanic costume of the Golden Horde period lost almost all of its components of the previous time: neck adornments, necklaces with pendants, twisted bracelets, characteristic finger rings with niello.

Innovative technologies in urban craft manifested themselves in mass production of cast iron cookware, mainly of boilers, and in the modification of some types of copper boilers (the types M-9-M-12) [6, p. 34-37], as well as of copper kumghans. The art metal such as the bowls, cups, and dishes, was mainly imported from the eastern Iran.

Researchers detect the handicraft standards applicable to the small household items that were reproduced by dozens. Those are, for example, the miniature bronze locks in the form of horse figurines, metal mirrors, some of which were fabricated directly in Bolghar.

The production of armament items sharply reduced on the periphery of the Golden Horde. Demilitarization was typical for the capital cities of the Golden Horde [1, p. 269]. There is no reliable information on the manufacture of defensive armament: the helmets and armors in use were mostly of the Iranian and Lower Volga manufacturing. An ammunition and arms of lightly warrior (of an archer) could be produced in Bolghar: the bows with bone plates, bone rings for shooting. In assortment of the Bulgar blacksmiths were iron arrowheads, mostly of II, V, and VI groups [8, p. 138-140], and peakheads.

The second type of peripheral Golden Horde city is presented by the city of Iski (Old) Kazan archaeologically composed of the Russkourmatskoe settlement and Kamaevskoe hillfort[13]. As in the previous case, it emerged on the basis of pre-Mongol urban settlements, but with certain differences.

This is a city with a distinct administrative and military center – the Kremlin (Kamaevskoe hillfort), and an extensive craft-trade suburb, practically marginalized in geographical terms (the Russkourmatskoe and Tatarskourmatskoe settlements). Its special feature is that the Kremlin was built much later than the Russkourmatskoe settlement, which existed since the pre-Mongol period (without break).

Its material culture (especially of its unfortified parts) is more traditional and contains a significant number of elements of the previous epoch. Cultural and symbolic models (elite adornments, military paraphernalia, ceramics, etc.) that are typical for major centers such as Bolghar and Juketau, are less expressed in the material culture of Iski Kazan (they are more common in the Kamaevskoe hillfort).

Apparently, the trend towards decentralization at the level of peripheral regions and its inland areas resulted in the *third type* of the small Golden Horde towns such as the Syukeevskoe and Kazan Kremlin hillforts. They are characterized both by the presence of representation of the military and administrative authorities (for example, in Kazan) and the weakly expressed elements of trade and craft activities (absence of the handicraft suburbs). In archaeological terms, on these monuments, as a rule, are present the quite expressive numismatic findings, fragments of imported Kashin and glazed vessels, arms, etc. But there is almost no trace of the handicraft production or it is weakly expressed.

A certain tendency of the cities' emergence can be traced back to the major craft-trade settlements of "urban type", such as of Chakma. These are polyfunctional handicraft centers serving the rural district for several tens of kilometers. Their peculiarity was the almost complete technological cycle – from smelting to the manufacture. Usually, they specialized in the manufacture of one or more kinds of production. It could be an iron / blacksmith or ceramic production.

5. Rural settlements in the Bulgar region of the Golden Horde period. An "internationalism" of the Golden Horde urban culture inevitably influenced the surrounding countryside and primarily the formation of its material culture. The serially produced domestic products and adornments are characteristic both for the city and its immediate neighborhood.

The regularity in suburban resettlement and placement of population outside urban agglomerations established in the pre-Mongol period, changed in the Golden Horde epoch. More expressed became the economic specialization, which had developed earlier in the framework of a unified economic structure of the pre-Mongol Bulgaria. The villages located in the Kama and Volga floodplains specialized in the cattle breeding (where the sheep and horse breeding prevailed). The villages situated in the basins of small rivers had the prevailing complex, that is agricultural and pastoral character. Unlike the ancient Rus', the Bulgar-Golden Horde rural settlements were located primarily in the river valleys. The watershed settlement type is practically nonexistent.

6. On the ways of development of the Golden Horde culture in the Middle Volga region.

The nature of changes that occurred in the Bulgar region of the Golden Horde during the second half of the 13th century, can be clarified based both on the materials of the major Bulgar cities, which later became the Golden Horde centers – Bilyar, Bolghar, Juketau, Iski-Kazan, and on the materials of the rural settlements. If the hillforts' materials indicate the persistence both of the pre-Mongol traditions and significant innovations, then the materials of rural settlements varied and are very individual. Since the villages of the Golden Horde epoch remain understudied, we can not draw generalized conclusions and produce a detailed analysis. But we can define a number of the leading trends in different periods of the Golden Horde history basing on the examples of several already investigated settlements in the western Trans-Kama region.

At the *first stage* of the existence of the Mongol Empire, the material culture of its peripheral areas and, in particular, of Bulgaria was not restricted to a single line of development. We may suggest that initially the previous forms of production of the pre-Mongol period developed and evolved independently, but subsequently they were replaced by the mass production of the Lower Volga centers.

New situation began to emerge in the first half of the 14th century, when the territory of the Middle Volga region was fully integrated in the

administrative and political structure of the Golden Horde. During this period the regions with customary land use (agriculture and cattle breeding) emerged and the areas of “alienation” involved in the sphere of nomadic pastoralism. Such changes took place in the “Tatar land” of the Trans-Kama region with ethnically marginalized populations that preserved its ethnic and cultural specificity of the material culture, funeral rites, and traditional lifestyles. Multicultural integration of these populations proceeded slowly and in a variegated way (judging by identification of the single graves in the rural and urban Muslim cemeteries).

Beginning with the 1360s, evolutionary and integrative processes took a different character due to the influx of a new population from the Lower Volga region and the east. The detailed nature of interaction is still unclear because of the limited archaeological material. But it is obvious that the ethnic and cultural separateness of these groups from the Bulgar indigenous populations was significant enough. At the same time, there appear common features of the material culture that developed on the territory of the Golden Horde during the previous time. Thus, in the 14th century began and then entrenched division of the territory of the Middle Volga region in the administrative and economic zones, which continued to exist in the form of “darughas”, that is the specific areas of the later Golden Horde and Kazan khanate periods.

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**МОНГОЛЬСКИЕ ЗАВОЕВАНИЯ И ИХ ОТРАЖЕНИЕ
В МАТЕРИАЛЬНОЙ КУЛЬТУРЕ НАРОДОВ
СРЕДНЕГО ПОВОЛЖЬЯ И ПРИКАМЬЯ
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Статья посвящена рассмотрению ключевого момента в истории Европы – началу монгольского вторжения в Европу. Письменных сведений об этих событиях сохранилось мало. Поэтому главными источниками являются археологические материалы. Археологические находки помогают реконструировать процесс завоевания Волжской Булгарии. Это было первое государство, подчиненное монголами в Западном походе.

Выяснить характер изменений в болгарской области Золотой Орды происходивших на протяжении второй половины XIII в. можно по материалам крупных болгарских городов, ставших затем золотоордынскими центрами – Биляру, Болгару, Джукетау, Иски-Казани, а также по материалам сельских поселений. Если материалы городищ свидетельствуют о сохранении как домонгольских традиций, так и о существенных инновациях, то материалы сельских поселений различны и очень индивидуальны. Слабая исследованность селищ золотоордынской эпохи не позволяет делать обобщения и детальный анализ, но на примере нескольких изученных раскопки поселений в Западном Закамье можно определить ряд ведущих направлений в разные периоды истории Золотой Орды.

Ключевые слова: Волжская Булгария, археология, Улус Джучи, Золотая Орда, Монгольская Империя.

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