

## DESHT-I KIPCHAK STONE STATUES

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In comparison with other materials as metal and ceramics, stone is considered to be the firmest one. Thus, it is widely used as realization of fantasy, creativity and vocation for art. It played a great role in material and spiritual cultural lives. There is a number of old relics and monuments, saved till nowadays thanks to their simplicity and overprotection. People reflecting their lives in these handmade stones left an incomparable cultural heritage.

In this article, we will throw light upon Kypchaks' stone art examples dated XI and XII centuries, which were found in Ukrainian steppes, in the region known as Desht-i Kipchak in historiography.

Stone statues used to have various names. They occur as *balbal* in the Orkhon manuscripts.<sup>1</sup> It means scripts or pictures written on stone. It also means hero of war. In Ancient Russia they were called *balvan* (lit. "stupid"). We can see record of it as "Tmutarakanskii balvan" in the *Tale about Knjaz Igor*. These stones are called *taş baba* ("stone father") in terminological literature. And from the XIX century started to be used by scientists as general name of all the ancient stone monuments discovered in steppes of Asia, Southern Siberia, Kazakhstan and Southern Europe. As for the Desht-i Kipchak people, the form "Baba babi" is much more preferable. 50 – 70 % of the statues are figures of old plump women, in Russian called *babushka*, consequently these stones were named *kamenaja baba* ("stone woman").

According to Pletneva, statues found in East Donbas, North Donetsk and on the shores of the Sea of Azov are not just a coincidence, as firstly Kypchaks settled there. During the XI century, Kypchaks used to spent

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<sup>1</sup> Hüseyin Namık Orkun, *Eski Türk Yazıtları*, Ankara 1994.

summers at valleys and winters in Donbas steppes.<sup>2</sup> They also settled in Padansovia.<sup>3</sup> They brought the tradition of statues making from their native land, where, in Asia, before the X. and XI. centuries such statues were found almost everywhere. In the XI and XII centuries Kypchaks inhabited a large territory throughout the European steppes.

There are many works on the Desht-i Kipchak or "kamennie babi" statues. The main problem is to determine surely which people own them: Scythians, Sarmatians, Huns, Goths, Ugors, Pecheneks, Bulgars, Slavs, Mongols or Kypchaks. There is a hypothesis on their belonging to the Bronze Age tribes of the region.<sup>4</sup> From 1885 on, this stone cutting art was usually recognized as traditional art of the ancient Turks. Scientists specified them according to their outlook, type, form, shape, garment, and icon and composition peculiarities. Working on this topic demands profound knowledge of archeology, history, and plastic arts because of the very lack of written sources.

These statues were investigated in many times, though there was only one attempt to give a certain quantity of these stone statues. S. A. Pletneva worked at cartographic system.<sup>5</sup> The Ministry of External Affairs of Russia made the first calculations on April 23, 1843; Pisarov published the results in 1851.<sup>6</sup> 645 of them were found in the Ukrainian lands. But this number was not true and eventual. Between 1903 and 1905 a new calculation was made the Moscow Archeology Society. P. S. Uvarova registered 1113 statues.<sup>7</sup> By 1920 this number grew up to 1300. In 1974 only 644 statues were registered.<sup>8</sup> Nowadays we can see only 730 of the 1650 registered statues. Unfortunately, the exact number of these stone statues is still unknown.<sup>9</sup>

Pletneva is of the opinion that there were much more statues in the ancient times. In the XIX century, there were 428 in Yekaterinoslavye re-

<sup>2</sup> Pletneva, *Poloveckie kamennye iz Vajaniya*, SAI, E 4 -2, Moscow 1974, p.74.

<sup>3</sup> Pletneva, *Polovcy*, Moscow 1990, pp.34-35.

<sup>4</sup> Feodorov – Davidov, *Kochevniki Vostochnoj Evrope pod vlastu Zolotoordinskikh khanov*, Moscow 1966, p.166.

<sup>5</sup> Pletneva, "Poloveckie...", p.74.

<sup>6</sup> Pisarov, "O mesto nakhozhenii kamennykh bab Rossii" *ZRAO*, T. III., Moscow 1851, pp.205-220.

<sup>7</sup> Uvarova, "K voprosu o kamennakh babakh" *TR*. XIII, AS. T II. Moscow 1908, pp.92-96.

<sup>8</sup> Krasilnikov, *Derevnee kamnereznoe izkustvo Luganshini*, Lugans 1999, p.53.

<sup>9</sup> Pisarov, "O mesto nakhozhenij", p.205.

gion, more than 200 in Tavrida, and 644 in Russian and Ukrainian steppes.<sup>10</sup> In 1905, Harlamov discovered 433 statues in Voyskodonetsky vicinities.<sup>11</sup> Bagalaye found 140 stones in Harkov region.<sup>12</sup> In 1879 a huge number of statues were told to be found in Levakovski Bahmut region,<sup>13</sup> though the majority of stones was discovered in Slavanoserbsk region.<sup>14</sup>

330 statues told by Pletneva are now exhibited in national museums of Southern Ukraine. They can also be found in parks, museums, but not in their native steppe-lands.<sup>15</sup> The biggest collections are represented in Dniepropetrovsk (70 stones), Odessa (35), Mariupol (34), Donetsk (27), Karatish (21), Kharkov (26), Berdyansk (14) and we can see some examples of Kypchak works abroad in Moscow (43), GIM (33), Krasnodar (53), Novocherkesk (18), and Taganrog (18). There are 64 stones in the Lugansk Pedagogical Institute; 4 stones in the museum there. A great number of stones are situated to the South of Lugansk, especially Donetsk hills in Sverdlovsk, Krasnodon, Antratsitov, Lutiginsk, Perivalski and Popasnyanski regions (Stanichnoy-Lugansk-Belovotsk-Slavyanoserbskiy-Starybelskiy-Novoaydarskiy-Kremenskoy). Lugansk with its 114 stones ranks second after Dniepropetrovsk, but first one in statues variety category. There are 17 stones in Sverdlovsk city museum, 3 in Pervomaysk, 4 in Simolanivo village, 2 couples in Lisichansk and Antrosit museums. Statues in Starobel and Robenki villages were ruined. Nowadays we can see only 730 of the 1650 registered statues. 920 of them disappeared in the XX century. Scientists suppose that there were 40 000 stones excluding wooden balbals. Pletneva stresses vandalism of thousands of statues in the XIII century.<sup>16</sup>

We possess information only about statues created on the tops of barrows either on some higher places. As example, we can show barrow and

<sup>10</sup> Harlamov, V. A., "O kamennekh babakh Donskoi Oblasti", *TR*, XIII. Asv, Yekaterinoslavye 1905, T. 2, Moskva 1908, p.227.

<sup>11</sup> Bagalej, D. I., "Objesnitelnij tekst k arkheologicheskoi karte Kharkovskoi Gubernii", *TR*, XII. AS, Kharkov 1902, T.1, Moskva 1905; Kirilov, A. L., "Svedenija o kamennekh babakh nakhodashihsa v oblasti Voyska Donskogo" *Arhiv GIM*, 47, pp.434-436; "O starine Donskoi Oblasti" *TR*. VI., AS., T. IV, Odessa 1889.

<sup>12</sup> Levakovski, I. S., "Ob iskopajemyh mednykh iz Delijakh", *Najdennyh Bakhmutskom i Slavyanoserpskom Uyezdakh*, *IOLAE*, T. 35, Moskva 1879, p.131.

<sup>13</sup> Javornickij, D. I., "Kamennei Babe", *Istoricheskii Vestnik*, SPb, 1890, T. XI.

<sup>14</sup> Khlebnikov, V., *Kamennaja Babakh*, Leningrad 1930, T. IV.

<sup>15</sup> Khlebnikov, *ibid*.

<sup>16</sup> Pletneva, *Poloveckie kamennyje*, p.8.

the statue found in Lugansk region. The barrow is situated on the right bank of Severskiy Donetsk River to the west of the village. This barrow includes nine hills. There is a statue on each hill, and there were also found three thumbs near these wall-shaped stones.

Such Ukrainian historians and archeologists as A. V. Tereshenko, D. I. Yavornitskiy, D. I. Bagaley, Y. G. Dashkevich, A. I. Marchenko, L. S. Geraskova, M. L. Shvetsov are well-known art investigators in Turkic stones. They facilitated finding ethnic elements, peculiarities of Kypchaks stone-cutting art tradition. V. I. Vesilovsky's book titled *Kypchak Statues* is among the most important works.<sup>17</sup> According to him, statues found in the Eastern Europe in X-XIV. centuries are sure to belong to Kypchaks. He found some evidence in Nizami and Rubruk's works. There is also number of discoveries concerning classifications and origin of these stone statues.

G. A. Feodorov-Davidov, L. A. Yevtihova, and S. A. Pletneva continued investigations of V. I. Vesilovsky. They found out that garment elements, war ordnance, pots and pans, clothes on these statues are closely connected with each other. Besides clothes, elements the scientists used written sources to fulfill knowledge about stone statues of the Southern Siberia, Kazakhstan and the Central Asia.

We can find some information about Siberian Turks in the Orkhon inscriptions. Unfortunately, they do not give us detailed information. In historical context, works by Nizami and Pope William of Rubruck, who lived in the XIII. century are richer in content. In his poems Nizami depicts some stone statues and the tradition of soldiers' laying gifts to these sacred stones.<sup>18</sup> Another source of information is the notes of William, papal ambassador passing through the Kypchak steppes in 1253: "*Kypchak warriors are making small hills near the sepulchres and erect*

<sup>17</sup> Vesilovski, N. I., "Sovremennoe Sastajaniye Voprosa o 'Kamennih Babakh' ili 'Balbalakh'" *ZOOID*, XXXII, Odessa 1915.

<sup>18</sup> We can find out some information in Günay, Ü. – Güngör, H., *Türklerin Dini Tarihi*, İstanbul 2003. See also Pletneva, *Poloveckie Kamennye*. Nizami says:

*Kypchaks will come here  
They will bow to these statues  
Can come by foot or riding a horse  
Worship these statues  
Stop their horses  
takes an arrow and shoots it into the grass  
all the shepherds passing through this statue know  
that one day they are to sacrifice one sheep of his herd*

*statues turned to the East in the shape of human figures keeping bowl in their hands.*"<sup>19</sup> These are words of two contemporary writers.<sup>20</sup>

Many centuries passed, there are no descriptions of traditions, rituals, holidays of Kypchaks, but stone statues still exist. In 1594 German ambassador E. Lassotta describing the Zaporozhje people writes: "We can see more than 20 stones on barrows and thumbs in Tatars lands." In 1627, *A Big Routes Book* was published in Russia. Stone statues from 3 different parts were shown as so-called destination showing signs.<sup>21</sup> These stones are described in letters of scientists, geographers, and soldiers. In 1738, during the Crimean War days, German doctor Y. Lerhe wrote about women-shaped stones on the northern shores of the Sea of Azov. In 1763 academician G. F. Miller found stone statues while digging some cemeteries.<sup>22</sup> A group of scientists like P. S. Pallas, I. I. Lepkhin, V. F. Zuyev and others give us detailed description of these stones found in the South European part of Russia.

In 1851 was published one of the most important maps. The author was A. I. Piskarev, employee of the Ministry of External Affairs of Russia. Piskarev gave profound description of statues discovered in Russia. In 1871, A. S. Uvarov taking as example 1000 statues classified them into three groups. They were (1) standing, (2) sitting, (3) squatting figures. They were distinguished according to evolution process also: (1) crude workmanship works, (2) relief works. We can see that all these works belonged to one people but in different times.<sup>23</sup>

In the beginning of the XX century, scientists decided to check number of statues given by A. S. Uvarov, and in 1908 found out 1133 stone statues in the Southern Russia.<sup>24</sup> Now women-shaped statues and balbals were topics of prime importance. In 1915, Vesilovsky printed research work about statues situated in the South European steppes.<sup>25</sup> Vesilovsky comparing dressing elements of these statues to clothes of Turkic men and women of the modern times confirmed William of Rubruck's opin-

<sup>19</sup> See in V. D. Rubruk, *Puteshestvije Vostochnie Strany Plano Karpini i Rubruka*, Moscow 1957.

<sup>20</sup> Pletneva, *Poloveckie Kamennee*.

<sup>21</sup> Serbinoj, K. M., *Kniga Bolshomu Cherchezhu*, Moscow-Leningrad 1950, pp.64-65, 68, 86.

<sup>22</sup> Miller, G. F., *Izjasnenie o nekotorykh drevnoshakh magilakh najdennykh*, SPb, 1764.

<sup>23</sup> Uvarov, S. A., *Svedeniya o kamennykh babakh*, TR. I – AS. T. I, Moscow 1871.

<sup>24</sup> Uvarov, *Svedeniya o kamennykh babakh*, pp.92-96.

<sup>25</sup> Vesilovski, "Sovremennoe sastajanije".

ion. Another problem was name of the ethnic group, which these statues belonged to. It still remains as an archeological task.

In 1952, L. A. Yevtikhova in her article "Stone statues of Southern Siberia and Mongolia" brought light to this problem.<sup>26</sup> There were given some archeological facts concerning this topic the first time after the works of Vesilovsky. Furniture, garment elements, war ordnance, pots and pans, decorations were analyzed in details. In 1960-80, statues dated to the XI-XIII. centuries in Eastern Europe were compared to Siberia, Semirechie, Mongolia, Kazakh and Altay statues of the VI-VIII. centuries. We can see its evidences in contemporary literary works. Statues found in Southern and Eastern Europe have much in common.<sup>27</sup> According to common scientific opinion, statues are realistic, three-dimensional, detailed, and posed.

In comparing statues from Western Europe to those from Eastern Europe, the first group is considered to be more developed. So we can see the row starting from the VI-VII. centuries Altay and Mongolia, then Kazakhstan and Semirechie and finally XII-XIII centuries the Eastern Europe. It is a row of the Middle Age Turkic nomadic life.

In 1966, G. A Feodorov-Davidov wrote a book about Turkic migrations during the rule of Golden Horde khans and gave a vivid description of stone statues, their shapes, art tradition and regions where they had been found.<sup>28</sup> After this book had been published, statues belonging to Kypchaks became evident

Pletneva's book under the title "Kypchaks' Stone Statues" written in 1974 is considered to be profound research work.<sup>29</sup> About 1323 statues were used as material for this work, 45 statues from Lugansk region were described and was given an information about shapes of 90 statues. It's one of vital publications in this area.

One can see female attributes in these statues, such as a naked big breast, hips, belly, female clothes, flowing hair, etc. Even female genitals are shown sometimes. However, such gender attributes in male statues can not be seen. As usual these statues have beard and helmet; they can be also dressed in military uniform.

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<sup>26</sup> Jevtikhova, L. A., "Kamennie Izvajaniye Juzhnoj Sibiri i Mongolii", *MIA*, p.24, Moscow 1952.

<sup>27</sup> Grach, A. D., *Drevnie Tjurkskie Izvajaniye Tuvi*, Moscow 1961, p.67.

<sup>28</sup> Feodorov-Davidov, *Kochevniki Vostochnoj Evrope*.

<sup>29</sup> Pletneva, "Poloveckie Kamennee."

There are some statues with which gender is not evident. Such vagueness is seen in statues from the Kars/Arpaçay region cemetery, each statue having some certain symbol, which shows its belonging to female or male gender.<sup>30</sup> But there were also found both-gendered statues. Male statues dating the XIII century had female attributes like big breast.

As before stated, one of the most important maps was published in 1851 by Piskarev of the Ministry of Eternal Affairs of Russia. He gave profound description of the Desht-i Kipchak statues discovered in Russia. In 1974, Kypchak balbals catalogue was published as journal. There was information about statues saved till 1970. 45 of the 1323 statues published in this catalogue were found in Lugansk region.<sup>31</sup>

Despite the attempts of A. S. Uvarov and V. I. Vesilovsky to classify these stones, this problem still remains. However, at least, the evolution process is determined.<sup>32</sup> Uvarov divided the statues into three groups: sitting, standing and smooth. He also divided them as male and female ones. The smooth statues belonged to an earlier period, sitting figures and sphere-shaped are dated to the IV-V. centuries and later periods.

Soon, after 100 years passed, G. A. Feodorov-Davidov classified statues according to their poses, stressing that sitting and standing poses are samples of the Kypchaks' later period.<sup>33</sup> Pletneva pays great attention to gender attributes of the statues. People taken as model for these statues are social, political, religious men and women according to Pletneva.<sup>34</sup> She divided all the statues to male and female. The second category is poses of these statues, sitting, standing and smooth without any special attributes. The number of statues is almost equal in all these groups. They are also divided to three groups according to their outlook.<sup>35</sup> But Krasilnikov's research work shows that it is not the eventual number, there are even more shapes.<sup>36</sup> We can see also a titanic research work about stone

<sup>30</sup> Altınkaynak, E., "Arpaçay Mezarları ve Mezar Şekilleri" *Anayurttan Atayurda Türk Dünyası*, 18, Ankara 1999.

<sup>31</sup> Pletneva, "Poloveckie Kamennye", pp.95-97.

<sup>32</sup> Uvarov, "Svedeniya o kamennikh babakh".

<sup>33</sup> Feodorov-Davidov, *Kochevniki*, pp.167-186.

<sup>34</sup> Pletneva, "Poloveckie Kamennye", p.60.

<sup>35</sup> Pletneva, "Poloveckie Kamennye", p.55.

<sup>36</sup> Krasilnikov, *Derevnye Kamnereznoye Izkustvo Luganshiny*, p.22. Types and peculiarities of the statues: I. Statues with flat form, II. Statues in form of column, early period, to the waist, III. Sitting figures with round shapes, IV. Squatting figures with round shapes, V. Sitting figures with round shapes, VI. Standing figures with round shapes dated later period, VII. Statues of other types, VIII. Half statues.

cutting art tradition of nomadic tribes inhabiting Eurasia in late period written by Geraskova.<sup>37</sup>

Uvarov worked only on sitting statues. A type of male with female breast is the result of religious influence. In Turkic legends and epic stories, bogatyr with female breast symbolizes a great power and vita. In Turkic legends bogatyr after sucking his mother becomes stronger, and is ready to fight. For instance, Oguz sucks his mother only once, then he demands meat and wine.<sup>38</sup> It is likely connected with protective spirits.<sup>39</sup>

According to Pletneva, stone cutting art started to regress when Kypchak rule in the East European steppes came to an end. It is the last phase of evolution process of this art tradition, but there is a probability of statues being ruined during the Mongol invasion. We can connect regress of the Kypchak art with hostilities in the XIII. century. So, they started to fight against the Mongols. Pletneva considers all the statues erected in that period were to commemorate soldiers.

In the XI-XII centuries, faces of the statues started to become rounded. From the beginning to the middle of the XIII. century, we can see modern tendencies in the Kypchak art, faces become rounded, composition is more complete, but it develops before the middle of XIII century. The XII and XIII. centuries mark the height of mastery for Kypchaks. During this period, they owned large territories in the Eastern Europe (380,000 square km.). It was a period of feudal rulers.<sup>40</sup>

Using topography of Padansovje, winter sacred places, chapel, stone fireplaces, workshops of Kypchaks inhabiting Nizhnedonetsk and Donetsk were found<sup>41</sup> in the cities Sverdlovsk, Antratsosk, Krasnodonsk, Perevalskoe, Popasnanskoe situated in the north mountains range. Female attributes of the statues are clothes, hair and decorations. There are some differences between woman and man shaped statues. Even if clothes, shalvars, shoes look alike, only male could have a military uniform on. Women shaped statues have decorative headdresses.

Statues possess such male attributes as caftan, trousers-shalvars, shirt, sash, short boots, hat, and helmets for soldiers, chain mail, saber, arrow, and dagger. They even had daily attributes: Knife, lighter, hairbrush, pin,

<sup>37</sup> Geraskova, L. S., *Skulptura Srednovichnih Kochovikov Stepive Shidnoi Yevropi*, Kiev 1991.

<sup>38</sup> Togan, Zeki Velidi, *Oğuz Kagan Destanı*.

<sup>39</sup> Ögel, Bahaeddin, *Türk Mitolojisi*, İstanbul 1994.

<sup>40</sup> Pletneva, "Poloveckie Kamennye", p.23.

<sup>41</sup> Pletneva, "Poloveckie Kamennye", pp.19, 23.



and instruments and sometimes mirror. Some of these statues have long 2-3 plaits under the hat. Women shaped statues have different headdresses, bright decorations, and plaits. There are six types of female headdress.<sup>42</sup> There are some common points with male clothes. They have caftan with embroidery, trousers-shalvars, short soft boots. Decorations are shown perfectly. There are six kinds of necklace. These statues may have amulets, bracelets and etc. also daily used knife, hairbrush, pin, instruments and mirror. As for clothes, all the Turkic tribes have much in common

The most widespread element is 'kase' (cup). It is kept on waist level and has a symbolic meaning. There are five kinds of kases: in the form of cylinder, round, cylinder like, cone, and glass shaped. These cups' outlook peculiarities are not as important as the aims of their usage. Some scientists consider this cup with water to be symbol of eternal life. Some of scientists suppose them to have sacred ashes of their dead relatives or their saints. Another group considers it to be attribute used at rituals.

Ethnographer and archeologist Bernshtam says that cup is a great symbol of respect to the relatives and shows the strength of family ties.<sup>43</sup> Some of the statues had cup in one hand and bird in the other. This bird is a symbol of dead man's soul. L. R. Kyzlasov gives us a theory concerning these attributes. He thinks that religious people used this cup to eat and to drink. According to their ritual, spirit of dead person materialized in this statue should have been together with relatives.<sup>44</sup> Relatives talking to the spirit of the dead person were eating and drinking with him. They made a fire in the legs of his statue and make a sacrifice. They believed bad spirits to disappear at that moment and expiate sins. Cylinder kase had seeds planted into the ground. Kypchaks did not have cup shaped kase. They had some elements of rectangle. Sometimes we can see even kases in a form of jug. The ceramic elements are met rather rare in the XII-XIII. centuries.

All the scientists were interested in two main topics. Who these statues were made for: to commemorate dead soldiers or they are statues of their enemies? The second one is the reason of their erecting statue in one concrete place and their importance and the role in religious rituals?<sup>45</sup>

<sup>42</sup> Pletneva, "Poloveckie Kamennye", pp.51-52.

<sup>43</sup> Bernshtam, A. N., "Istoriko-arheologicheski ocherk Tsentralnogo Tijan-Shane i Pamiro-Altaya" *MIA*, VIP, 26, Moscow - Leningrad 1952, pp.9-10.

<sup>44</sup> Kyzlasov, L. R., "O naznachenije drevnie Turkskikh kamennykh izvajani", *Izobrazhajushykh Ludej*, SA, 1964, No: 2, p.36.

<sup>45</sup> Chirikov, G. S., *Kamennye babi v Kharkovskoj Guberniji*, Kharkov 1901, pp.8-9.

Pletneva resists on Kypchaks' erecting their statues according to some rules. As usual they erected them on top of kurgans. These kurgans are relicts of the Scythian cultural heritage or even remains of the Bronze Age culture. Taking into account that statues were mainly built on kurgans, there is sure to be connection between them in the XIX. century also. Kurgans were considered to be left from the Bronze Age and Scythian times. In 1901, during the XI. Session of the Kharkov Archeological Community was taken a decision to find out certain number of the kurgans, where stone statues had been built. And during 1893-1914, approximately 50 kurgans were discovered. According to the research work results these statues are doubtlessly have nothing in common with sepulchers of nomadic tribes. For instance, in 1905 Trefilyev researched two kurgans. He found some subjects belonging to Turkic tribes dated to the X. and XI. centuries and the Bronze Age, but not to Kypchaks. In the beginning of the XX. century, Gorodsov investigated eight new kurgans, but there were no tracks of Kypchak culture in six of them.<sup>46</sup> Vesilovsky told that statues had nothing in common with those sepulchers.<sup>47</sup> He protected Rubruck only in following items.

In Pletneva's point of view, after 950 kurgans had been dug, all of them had sepulchers, but not stone statues. So according to this fact statues were not used as gravestones in Kypchak culture. Provalsky did not find any stone statues by investigating kurgans and cemeteries in steppes. But there are some stone statues found on common Kypchak cemeteries erected in honor of noble men.<sup>48</sup> Provalsky discovered some statues and stonewalls looking like chapel.<sup>49</sup>

The splendid number of statues was discovered in Provalja district of the Lugansk region. Every fifth of all the statues registered in the catalogue had been found there. May be in vicinity of the King rocks stone fireplaces or workshops were founded primarily. Such workshops are supposed to be permanent, but built inside the chapels.

Everybody should not obviously erect balbal in honor of their dead person. It was all depended on economic conditions. It became evident

<sup>46</sup> Pletneva, "Poloveckie Kamennee", p.72.; Krilova, L. P., *Kammenaja Babi Kata-log*, Dnepropetrovsk 1976, p.11.

<sup>47</sup> Vesilovski, "Sovremennoe sostojannie".

<sup>48</sup> Gladkikh, M. I., Pislarij, I. A. et all, "Raboty Severiskodonetskoj Ekspedicij", AO, 1973, Moscow 1974, pp.267- 268; Pislarij, I. A., Filatov, A. P., *Tayny Stepnykh Kurganov*, Donetsk 1972.

<sup>49</sup> Geraskova, L. S. - Pislarij, I. A., "Raboty v Provalskoj Stepi", AO, 1978, Moscow, 1979.

that women-shaped stone statues commemorated their ancestors. Garment elements of the statues found in Kypchak cemeteries looked like clothes of well-to-do people of those times.<sup>50</sup> That fact that Kypchaks erected stone statues of their enemies is fixed in the South Siberian manuscripts. For instance one Mongolian tribe known as Tuku dug stones on the graves. According to the Tuvinian epic stories, during the wedding ceremony people measured heroism of the bridegroom by number of statues of all the enemies he had killed. Here is an answer of Rubruck to question concerning reasons of digging those statues: "Kumans after making a hill, where a dead person is buried, also erect a statue in his honor." It is stressed that they did not erect stone statues of the dead person, but statues in his honor.

Another group of scientists have a little bit different point of view. It is not an opposite of these two theories, but their evolution. According to the following theories, Turkic tribes had abundant morning ceremonies that times. We can divide it into two periods of their nomadic life. During the first so-called "Asia" period vertical rock-shaped human statues and plates symbolized their enemies. During the second one when Turkic tribes moved to the West Eurasian steppes and had some religious metamorphoses, the balbals became symbols of the dead people themselves.

In the XX. century, with assistance of the Archeology Committee, archeologists arranged some research works of the statues erected on the kurgans. As the majority of the statues dated to the Bronze Age, only few of them belonged to Pechenegs, Kypchaks and other Turkic tribes. The results of that research work showed that there were no grave-stone statues belonging to Kypchaks. In those times Kypchaks preferred tops of the hills or kurgans to erect their stone statues. There were also statues erected on the roads and crowded places.

There were singular statues and group statues of two up to 20 figures discovered over there. We can see some information about group statues consisting of male and female in scientific work called "Kniga Bolshogo Cherchezha" (The Book of Big Drawings). There is surely to be question whether women and men had not been buried together. Unfortunately we have not found answer yet. Garatsov arranged some scientific expeditions to the Eastern Europe regions and classified these statues according to various shapes. Feodorov-Davidov called a group of stones as chapel. He came to such conclusion after he had discovered remains of sacrifices

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<sup>50</sup> Pletneva, "Poloveckie Kamennee", p.32.

near the stone statues.<sup>51</sup> People mainly sacrificed bull, sheep, and dog. Kypchaks like all the other Turkic tribes had some totem animals. For example, names of khans Kobek and Konchak mean male and female dog. Dog skeletons are supposed to be found on their cemeteries.

Some of such chapels were found in the center of mountains row in Donetsk, Rostov and Lugansk regions in the village of Novoselovka, region of Telmanovski, Stari Beshevski region in the village of Kamenka, Sverdlovski region in the village of Astahly, Lutuginski region in the village of Poliyevka, Sverdlovski region in the village of Provalje, Rastovskij region in the village of Livenitsovka.<sup>52</sup> These chapels were brought to Europe by nomadic tribes from Siberia and Middle Asia. In the VI and VIII. centuries stonewalls without roof were built around the stone statue.<sup>53</sup> The ceremony of sacrifice took place over there. The same ritual is observed in culture of Kypchaks inhabiting Europe in the XI-XIII centuries. The stone statues were erected in the chapels far from the cemeteries. Nizami shows us that ritual of sacrifice was held in honor of these statues, people asked them for the help, for strength and power in struggle against their enemies.<sup>54</sup> These stone statues are different in size. The most plain of them were found in Sverdlovsk region village of Cheremshino and Zimovki. Faces of these statues look to the East. And there are no stonewalls on kurgans.

The second type of statues is oval and round pyramid built right in the middle of the chapel. The ritual of sacrifice was held there (Sverdlovsk region village of Astahovo). The third type is rectangular chapel surrounded by stonewalls overlooking four parts of the world. There is a statue in the middle, and some area for sacrifice around it.

Sometimes walls looking at east were double. There were statues in the middle and along the edges. We can see also fireplaces and places for sacrifice nearby.<sup>55</sup> The variety of Kypchak chapels is determined by social level of the society. They are family, dynasty, military chapels, etc.

<sup>51</sup> Feodorov-Davidov, *Kochevniki*, pp.191-192.

<sup>52</sup> Guguyev, Y. K., Gurkin, S. V. "Poloveckoe svetilishi seredinij XI. nachala XIII. na Pravuberezhie Dona" *Sbornik 'Drevnosti Dona'*, VIP I. , Azov 1992, pp.114-141.

<sup>53</sup> Grach, *Drevne Tjurkskie izvajanija Tuvi*, p.55; Sher, Y. A., *Kamennje izvajanija Semirech'ja*, Moscow-Leningrad 1966, p.20; Kyzlasov, L. R., *Istorija Tuvi sredneja veka*, Moscow 1969, p.29.

<sup>54</sup> Krasilikov, *Derevneje kamnerezhnoe izkustvo Luganshini*, p.37.

<sup>55</sup> Guguyev, Gurkin, "Poloveckoe svetilishi...".

The most beautiful chapel of Lugansk is situated in Astahly village.<sup>56</sup> Kurgan dated to the Bronze Age was found there. Kypchaks built the chapel in the form of square with 16 meters diameter. There was a statue right in the center of the square. The third statue in this chapel was cut to small pieces. Other two sitting statues were figures of enemies. And they had helmets on. These statues were brought to school in Sverdlovsk region village of Novoborovicy. Almost the same chapel was discovered in Polijevka village. Remains of it are exhibited in Lugansk Pedagogical University.

As far as we can judge, Kypchaks were using these statues during their religious rituals and these chapels used to be their first sites. They were primarily used to worship their ancestors, show their respect to totems, to pray Mother priestess (Umay Ana). Sometimes statues had the same features as the dead person, for instance man-shaped statue found in the village of Prichepilovka.

Prevalence of family ideology is reflected in woman-shaped statues. This group of statues is dated to the Stone Age times of matriarchy. But Kypchak statues appeared in the period of patriarchy. It is curious to know the main reason of erecting woman-shaped statues and their significance. Probably these statues could be symbols of family ties or even represent maternal ancestors. There is also an idea that they can be statues of respectable women or mothers of warriors. In 1971 a statue of women keeping a child in her arms was found in Perebalski region village of Chernuhino.<sup>57</sup> Despite of looking like other statues this one has some extraordinary features. The statue has some original headdress. All the details of the statue are made with great mastery. One more interesting thing is figure of baby laying in the stomach. Despite of the period of patriarchy this child is not a boy, but a girl. This statue has a great significance from cultural, religious and art points. A woman has a dress stressing her female shapes. We can see her breast-feeding a little child. It's sure to be connected with giving life to generations to come. It can be also statue of woman died with a child or during pregnancy period. We can see that Kypchaks had matriarchy in social structure.

Statues generally had sitting or squatting poses. According to G. A. Feodorov-Davidov poses depend on chronological system.<sup>58</sup> This theory

<sup>56</sup> Shvecov, M. L., "Poloveckie svetilisha", SA, 1979, No 1, pp.206-208.

<sup>57</sup> Pletneva, S. A., "Zhenskaja Poloveckaja statuja s Rebenkom", SA, 1979, No.1; Geraskova, L. S., "Poloveckaja statuja iz S. Chernukhino, SA, 1974, no 3.

<sup>58</sup> Feodorov-Davidov, *Kochevniki*, p.184.

shows that poses differed in connection with social level. Standing poses of male-shaped statues belong to captains or officers, squatting or sitting poses to common people. They do not have any weapons but kese (cup), knife and hats instead of helmets. It is sure to be identification of social groups in Kypchak society. As concerns woman-shaped statues, the situation is almost the same. Standing statues show belonging to well-to-do social groups. There are necklace on breast, neck and hair, earrings, precious stones and rings. They have also mirror, hairbrush, kese and etc. Statues with standing poses are more decorated than half-bounded or sitting one. Masters contributed more skills towards them.

So, did the Kypchaks' lowest level of population build balbals to their ancestors? It is quite possible. They were made of wood and stone. And have very plain forms. Rubruck gives some information concerning idols found in houses.<sup>59</sup> Kypchaks inhabited Ukrainian steppes were rich and noble. Balbals erected in groups were dug on roads in order the entire passing people to revere and make a sacrifice. Then, these places were used as chapels. With the time passing, worshiping ancestors turned to honoring noble men and feudals. But in the middle of the XIII. century Mongol invaders started to exterminate well-to-do Kypchak families. After leaders and chiefs had been killed, statues were ruined. Most of them were destroyed and dug in the chapels.

Though years and centuries passed, some traditions of great respect to ancestors still remain in Russian and Ukrainian cultures. They could even idolize Kypchaks' noble men. Every spring countrymen of Sakolniki village in Slavanoserpski region decorate these statues with flowers. They believe in idols' power to bring happiness and prosperity. People from village of Kamenka Vutiginski region have a strong belief in their "Katjas" protective power.

We can classify statues according to materials. Mostly statues were made of two types of materials: volcanic and sedimentary rocks. Some scientists supposed these materials had been brought from far regions, Mongolia for instance, but they appeared to be wrong. According to geological research work, such materials were found in the Lugansk and Donetsk regions.<sup>60</sup>

In the XIII. century Mongolian invaders aroused hostile attitude to these statues. During research works, almost all of them were found buried in kurgans by Kypchaks or probably destroyed by Mongols. Each of

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<sup>59</sup> Rubruk, *Puteshestviye*, p.94.

<sup>60</sup> Krasilnikov, *Derevneje kamnereznoe izkustvo Luganshini*, pp.50-53.

these points of view is right. But Kypchaks themselves mostly ruined statues.<sup>61</sup> If the statue was done of sand or soil they cut it into small pieces,<sup>62</sup> if it was done of stone or other firm materials they cut its head and then dug. We can see that invaders absolutely destroyed Kypchaks' culture. Another reason can also be spreading of Islam, brought by Mongols to the Kypchak lands. The XIII. century is fatal for Kypchak culture.

In the XV. and XVII. centuries, statues were used as road signs in steppes. In the XVIII. and XIX. centuries, they were used as building materials. After Turkic lands in the Northern Black Sea steppes were occupied, statues were ruined. The most beautiful of them decorated houses of rich and prosperous men in South Russia and Ukraine. About 15 of those statues were discovered near the lake in vicinity of Elin Bor and Krivorozhie Lugansk region. Old legends say that they are still in clay of the lake. One of these statues was brought to Lugansk museum. According to sources of the 1790's, some of statues were damaged while transportation from their original places to residences.<sup>63</sup> V. Pasek requires information about 30 statues broken in the detached Shdlovski house in the Harkov region.<sup>64</sup>

In the XVII. and XVIII. Centuries, Ukrainian and Russian Cossacks ruined thousands of kurgans and used statues as gunpowder and building materials. There are also tracks of treasure-seekers. Orthodox churches supported destroy of idols as well. People started to believe that these statues were figures of frozen men who disobeyed God's word. People who believed in these idols were punished by the Church.<sup>65</sup>

In the second half of the XIX. century hostile attitude towards the statues changed. And they started to be used as building materials, animals' grass cups, water cups, fence and etc. In valleys balbals served as resting place for shepherds and scratching place for animals. It used to be a target-board for thieves had been kept. One can see that they were largely used in various spheres of life. We can not estimate even approximate damage. Lots of stones were used for building roads. Under Katherine the Great, thousands of kilometres of these roads were built of

<sup>61</sup> Chirikov, G. S., *Kamennye baby Kharkovskogo Gubernii*, Kharkov 1901, p.10.

<sup>62</sup> Shvecov, M. L., "Polovecie Svetilisha", SA 1979, No.1, pp.206-207.

<sup>63</sup> Gatry, M., *Puteshestvie v godakh 1795 – 1796 cherez Tavrii ili Krym k drevnemu Bosporskomu Carstvo*, London 1802, pp.405-408.

<sup>64</sup> Chirikov, *Kamennye babe*, p.12.

<sup>65</sup> Knjazhevich, D., "Kamennèe Babe", *ZOVID*, T I, 1848, p.597; Tereshenko, A., "Ocherki Novorosijskogo Kraja", *JMNP*, CH, 79, 1853, NO. 8., p.44.

statues.<sup>66</sup> Writers of that times depicted these statues as ghosts frightening peaceful people. That is why they were ruined in all parts.<sup>67</sup> In the XIX. century scientists and historians V. V. Passek, A. V. Treshenko, G. S. Chirikov, D. Y. Samajlov, D. I. Yavornickij, N. E. Brandenburg, A. I. Piskarov, A. S. Uvarov, N. I. Vesilovski, V. A. Garacov insisted on protection of these historical monuments. In the Tsardom times, this idea was not welcomed. On December 1843, The Empire Academy received an application concerning measures to protect the statues. But still people continued to destroy them.<sup>68</sup> Only in 1843, after Piskarev registered all the statues, vandalism was stopped.<sup>69</sup> Even under protection of Russian and Ukrainian museums, statues continued to disappear. While erecting a monument to Knjaz Igor in 1995, stones of balbals were used. Project expert I. M. Chumak, himself being a sculptor, facilitated destroying of historical monument. These statues should have been ruined for the reason that they were examples of Turkic cultural inheritance.

One can not imagine Eastern and Southern parts of Eastern Europe without Turkic culture. Turkic tribes continuously moved from Asia to Europe. A lot of European countries were influenced by their culture. In the steppes between Volga and Danube, about 2000 nomadic graves were found. They mostly belong to Kypchaks. Garment elements, weapons, pots and pans are examples of Kypchak cultural history. Research works of these statues brought the light to rich cultural inheritance of Kypchaks.

We could see thousands of statues standing in all places in the XIII century. But being greatly damaged and ruined in the XIX. and XX. centuries, only 1400 of the statues remained up to this day. We could see even less, if scientists of the XIX century did not make every attempt to protect them. In 1970, collection of statues was opened in the Lugansk Pedagogical University. We can see samples of the Kypchak art, culture and civilization. Shapes of statues, variety of garment elements amazed us greatly. Everything, clothes, garment, decorations, shoes, headdresses give us information about Kypchak culture. There is no doubt that no written sources could describe it as vividly as it is done by statues.

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<sup>66</sup> Treshenko, A. O., "O magilnikh nasypakh i kamenneh babakh v Ekaterinoslavskoi i Tavricheskoi gubernijakh, *UOISR*, 1866, IV, p.15.

<sup>67</sup> Rodozhidskij, I., "Nechto o kurganah" *Syn Otechestva*; Chast 97, SPb. 1824, pp.114-115.

<sup>68</sup> Vesilovski, N. I., "Sovremennoe sastayaniye", pp.419-421.

<sup>69</sup> Pisarov, "O mesto nahozhdenij".