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## MATERIAL CULTURAL HERITAGE OF THE XIONGNU EMPIRE

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**Abstract.** This article will tell you about the general results of the archaeological exploration of the field season 2001–2011 on the site of the Gol mod-2-nd in Balgasiin tala. We are finished the big tomb visiting a Xiongnu elite man. The tomb itself is very large in size 86 meters long, 45–46 meters wide, 2–4 meters high and have 30 satellite burial's. We have a radio-carbon date it shows 40–80 years old AD, which that analysis is done in the laboratory NSF-Arizona AMS of the University of Arizona USA. This dating indicates how much greater age compared to the items found so far in the Xiongnu burial in the territory of our country, as well as in the Russian Federation. Another artifact, according to which you can determine the time of burial, is to serve the above-described cups of glass from the times of the Roman Empire. New material evidence has been found for a broad connection between the state of Xiongnu and the old west and east. The number of satellite burials at one large grave of the ruler, the number of horses brought as a sacrifice, about the seventeenth of chariots and carts put into the burial, their gold silver ornaments and articles of bronze and iron, as well as dishes made of clay and other materials indicate that this burial not an ordinary nobleman, but a great ruler, one of the shanyu-kings of the Xiongnu state.

**Keywords:** *Xiongnu, Balgasiintal, Gol mod, Han dynasty, the funeral ritual's and ceremony, burial's, elite tomb, horses brought as a sacrifice, chariots and carts, gold and silver decoration ornaments articles, large jade circle, Roman cups of multi-colored glass*

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## МАТЕРИАЛЬНОЕ КУЛЬТУРНОЕ НАСЛЕДИЕ ИМПЕРИИ ХУННУ

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**Аннотация.** В статье идет речь об общих результатах археологической разведки полевого сезона 2001–2011 гг. на памятнике Гол Мод-2 в Балгазийнтал. Мы закончили большую гробницу, посетив элитного человека Хунну. Сама гробница очень большая по размеру – 86 м в длину, 45–46 м в ширину, 2–4 м в высоту, она имеет 30 сопутствующих погребений. Установлена радиоуглеродная дата, показывающая возраст гробницы – 40–80 гг. н. э. (анализ проводился в лаборатории NSF-Arizona AMS Университета Аризоны США), это указывает на то, что предметы, найденные здесь, имеют гораздо больший возраст по сравнению с находками, обнаруженными ранее в хуннских захоронениях на территории Монголии и Российской Федерации. Другим артефактом, по которому можно определить время погребения, служат стеклянные чаши времени Римской империи. Были найдены новые вещественные доказательства, указывающие на связь государства Хунну со старым западом и востоком. Число сопутствующих захоронений в одной гробнице, количество лошадей, принесенных в жертву, колесницы и телеги, помещенные в погребение, золотые и серебряные украшения, изделия из бронзы и железа, блюда из глины и других материалов – все это указывает на то, что здесь захоронен не рядовой представитель элиты, а великий правитель, один из шаньюев-царей государства Хунну.

**Ключевые слова:** *Хунну, Балгазийнтал, Гол Мод, династия Хань, ритуал похорон, церемония похорон, погребения, элитная гробница, принесенные в жертву, колесницы и телеги, изделия из золота и серебра, украшения, большой нефритовый круг, римские чаши из разноцветных стекол.*

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One of the peoples, who established their state in 400–300 BC on the territory of Asia and left the vivid traces of their civilization, is the Huns. On account of the recording the Huns as “匈奴” Xiong-nu (Hsiung-nu) in ancient Chinese resources, the western scholars and historians named the Huns as “Hunnu” (Khúnnú or Khunnu). In western historiography, specifically in ancient Roman and Greek history, the Huns were named as “Gunn” (Hun) or “Scythians”, which resulted scholars, archeologists and historians write the history of the Huns under various names of Scythians, Hunnu [xju-nu] and Gunn (Hun).

The questions of ‘Who were the Huns? Who were their successors and descendants?’ still are the matters that present historians and archeologists couldn’t solve as final. A scientific hypothesis of world history that ‘Huns are Turkish and Turkish are not Mongols’ still persist valid among many historians of the world, which in one hand does err the ancient history of Mongolia. In the other hand, it is a largely disputable issue to underestimate the ‘history and culture’ of the Mongols through a political-scientific method with an aim to use the history of the nomads with benefits for them.

Unfortunately, it’s evident that most of the scholars and researchers who follow the idea of ‘Huns are Turkish and Turkish are not Mongols’ have never been to our country of Mongolia or they didn’t notice the ancient and present correlations of Mongolian history-culture, customs and traditions.

Although Mongolian historians, including A.Amar (Амар, 1989. P. 31–38), renowned political personality and historian and G.Sukhbaatar (Сүхбаатар, 2000. P. 156–197), eminent historian did prove that the Hun state is the ancestors of Mongolians through certain evidences, Eastern and Western scholars haven’t discerned it yet.

By that time in 400–300 years BC, the territory of the Hun state was totally different than current territorial maps of countries and the historical-cultural heritage and archeological finds created by the Huns

are left on the territory of Mongolia as well as in China, Russia and other Eurasian countries. Certain scholars consider that the Huns migrated from Ordos, south-west of present Mongolia. Ordos was once the native land of Mongolians for generations, from earlier than the period Hun state through Great Mongol State.

The archeological finds yet discovered such as ancient tombs, city ruins and rock drawings (petrogllyph) prove that the Huns were native to the present territory of Mongolia (Fig. 1).

When and how did the study of the history of the Hun state and its archeological finds start? How do the Huns turn out to be our predecessors? It’s already time to respond to those questions. We do consider it’s the time for us Mongolians to answer and disclose these matters to the world.

Eight hundred years ago, Great lord Chinggiskhaan noted in his invitation letter to Ch’angCh’un (QiuChuji) Daoist sage: “It seems to me that since the remote time of our shanyú such a vast empire has not been seen...” (Ли Жичан, 2010. P. 191), which remarkably stated that the Mongols are direct descendants of the Hun state.

This confirms that we, Mongols, were well aware of their history and origin. The Chinese, our southern neighbor, has had a settled way of life with lesser movement or migration, had meticulous methods to preserve their heritage on paper documentation, they were well aware of and used to write down our history. However, in their own distinction, they never forgot to note that ‘the people in the north... are barbarians’ in accordance with Chinese state policy and they has been recording this way in their chronicles for generations.

In the West, Jean-Baptiste Du Halde, French sinologist published his encyclopedic survey anthology of “The General History of China Containing a Geographical, Historical, Chronological, Political and Physical Description of the Empire of China, Chinese-Tartary, Corea, and Thibet; Including an Exact and Par-



**Fig. 1. Dispersal of an elite tomb's on the territory of Mongolia**  
**Рис. 1. Распространение элитных могил на территории Монголии**

ticular Account of Their Customs, Manners, Ceremonies, Religion, Arts, and Sciences: The Whole Adorn'd with Curious Maps, and Variety of Copper-Plates" (Borovkova, 2001. P. 15) in 1738. This compilation of recordings on the history, origin, culture and communications of the nomads in ancient Chinese resources founded the start of specific studies on the history of the Hun Empire. Unfortunately, the western researchers did conduct their studies on Asian history from 'distance' without facing with the Mongols, who preserved their authentic culture and traditions, which led them to perceive the Huns as Turks in traditional western concept, considering the Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan in Middle Asia as Turks. These countries have their independent history, customs and traditions as well as their husbandry engagement that reflect largely and keep certain traces of culture and statehood policy of the Hun State and its following nomadic states to the Great Mongol Empire in their language, culture and way of life in any kind of form. However, these countries indeed, underwent the waves of statehood policy and culture of the Hun State through the succeeding states of Rouran, Turk, Uyghur Great Mongol Empire, but their culture did not affect the Mongols. There's no

evidence of ethnographic-culture and history to correlate and compare the Turkic State established and empowered in 6–8<sup>th</sup> century AD on the territory of Mongolia with present Turkmenistan and Turkey.

The people who developed and spread the geographical knowledge and know-how in Eurasian steppe are the proto-ancestors of Mongolians residing on present territory of Mongolia, namely the creators of Deer stone-Khirigsuur culture in Bronze Age through the nomadic states of Hun, Xianbei (Syanbi), Rouran (Nirun), Turk (Göktürk), Khitan and Great Mongol State. These nomads for generations practiced nomadic pastoralism as the main branch of agriculture and their housekeeping. The mobile and pastoral lifestyle urged the nomads to discover the nature and to find out the border beyond. Thus, the vast steppe of Eurasian has become the main terrain of migration for nomads from generation to generation. The terminology of globalization has served for nomads as nomadic pastoralism and territory for nomadic people of that time.

The Chapter 110 of the Records of the Grand Historian (Shiji) by Sima Qian, ancient Chinese historian, contains a section titled "The Account of the Xiongnu" that specifically addresses the Hun Empire.

This historical narrative of the Xiongnu have characterized them as “[The Huns] dwell in the northern land, wandering from place to place pasturing their animals... The animals they raise consist of mainly horses, cows and sheep. Rarer animals include camels, donkeys, mules, hinnies (khulan), superior stallions and small [wild] horses. They move about in search of water and pasture and have no walled cities or fixed dwellings, nor do they engage in any kind of agriculture. Their lands, however, are divided into regions under the control of various leaders” (Syma Tsyau', 2002. P. 323).

For people of settled way of life, the nomads are seen as wandering people who just ‘follow their animals’. Indeed, the nomads, specifically the Huns were fully cognizant of the climate and weather conditions, its gradual change and local geographic features of nature and they could protect and prevent from natural calamities their livestock by being well aware of which pasture of what herbs and water resources to pasture the livestock in seasons of summer and autumn for rearing and fattening and where to spend the winter and spring to overcome the harshness of weather for keeping the livestock safe and strong. For people who were totally unaware of such knowledge and methods, the nomads were barbarians ‘wandering from place to wherever’ and knowing nothing of walled cities. It’s also written that “They all... From the chiefs of the tribe on down. Everyone *eats* the *meat* of the domestic animals and wears clothes of hide or wraps made of felt or fur” (Syma Tsyau', 2002. P. 323).

Likewise, the subsistence and customs would have seemed unacceptable and primitive to them for they were not aware that how the Huns processed the wool and cashmere and spun threads, how processed the hides and skin of livestock and tailored their clothes, how they supplied the harnesses and household items as well as warmed their dwellings from the raw materials derived from the livestock.

Taming and domesticating the wild animals and developing the animal husbandry as the main practice of socio-economy is one of the greatest achievements of the mankind and is a long-lasting tradition of knowledge and know-how of thousands of years. In originating and developing the animal husbandry, the people of the Hun State discovered the nature and

found out the vastness of the earth. They recognized the earth is not just an assortment of flora and fauna, but is the resource that supplies all the needs of human beings and wildlife. They extracted the non-ferrous and precious metals of copper, lead, gold and silver, discovered the bronze, copper alloy of harder and more durable quality that was used in making weapons, house wares, decorative objects and horse harnesses and made objects of gold and silver for decorative and artistic purposes. In extracting and utilizing the natural resources, the nomads were aware of keeping environmentally harmless without destroying or polluting the pasture grassland, the core basis of the nomadic civilization. The nomads did develop their astronomy by discovering the celestial bodies, correlating and regulating their daily occupations.

The Account of the Xiongnu’ in the Chapter 110 of the *Records of the Grand Historian* by Sima Qian reads, “...Every year in the first month the important people hold a restricted meeting at the Shan-yü’s court, and perform sacrifices. In the fifth month they have a large gathering at Lung-ch’eng, where sacrifices are conducted to the Hunnu ancestors, Heaven and Earth, and the gods and spirits ... At dawn the Shan-yü leaves his camp and makes obeisance to the sun as it rises, and in the evening he makes a similar obeisance to the moon. [ . . . ] Whenever the Hunnu begin some undertakings, they observe the stars and the moon. They attack when the moon is full and withdraw their troops when it wanes...” (Syma Tsyau', 2002. P. 330). It is a clear evidence of how vital the motions and locations of the sun and the moon were for the Huns. “In autumn when the horses are fat, another great meeting is held at the Dai Forest when a reckoning is made of the number of persons and animals”. The ancient Chinese historical resource states that “[the Huns] they have no writing, even promises and agreements are only verbal”; yet it soon after reads that “they note down by making cuts on a piece of wood (ko-mu)” and “their script is ugly as bird claw”. The historical recording also states the diplomatic letters between the Hun State and the Han Dynasty in 162 BC and reached peace settlement through marriage treaty (Syma Tsyau', 2002. P. 336, 338). In like fashion, there are numerous contradictory

facts on nomads in the Records of the Grand Historian by Sima Qian. It's a Chinese way to describe the Huns as savages with no written culture, of whom the strongest tyrannize the weak. This idea is mentioned in the Records of the Grand Historian. It reads "...the young and strong to eat the fatty and delicious food and the elderly to eat what is left over. Thus they value the strong and healthy and despise the elderly and weak..." (Syma Tsyau', 2002. P. 323). Then after few lines, it states that "...The elderly [of the Xiongnu] are unable to fight. Therefore we give their fatty and delicious food to the young and strong, and thus the elderly may be protected and defended..." (Syma Tsyau', 2002. P. 336).

To anyone foreign and of sedentary culture, the nomadic way of life has many to be perceived falsely or considered unacceptable. In accordance with the tradition paying respect to the family host and the guests, it's no custom in a nomadic family to offer and have meal together with elders, wife and children at once. Until present, it's a tradition of paying respect for Mongolians and other felt-walled nations to have meal after having the family host and the guests offered meal. To foreigners, it may seem a custom discriminating and disrespecting the elders, women and children rather than Mongolian way to esteem the men-warriors. There's no definite information recorded on nomadic housekeeping activities of processing the dairy products and other foodstuff, processing animal skin and hides, spinning threads of wool and cashmere, making textiles and other consumption products to supply own needs.

In most cases, the western scholars followed the misconception on authentic nomadic way of life, their culture, traditions and customs as recorded by Chinese historians in disregard and misunderstanding of the nomads in the north in an underestimated manner; resulting misinterpretation and false translation by westerners, depicting the nomads as "barbarians" for their lacking knowledge and understanding of nomadic people. The fallacy of such historical resources has misled the historians and archeologists of the world for centuries until late 18–20<sup>th</sup> century. A nation that doesn't understand and recognize the culture of other nation would emphasize their incorrect perception directly in their historical resources without any

annotation. We, Mongolians, as well, do not clearly perceive the sedentary culture and their practice in agriculture and we don't know much of their cultivation, harvesting and their culinary art. The Mongols disliked sedentary culture and disfavored living settled and building larger cities. Although the nomads built manufacturing villages, military fortifications and ramparts in correlation with the pastoral nomadism, the settled constructions of the nomads distinguished principally from the cities, walled fortresses and forts of sedentary people.

These are the evidences of historical recordings. The excavation of Hun archeological monuments first started with the anthropological study of 'Ancient inhabitants of Central Asia' by Yu.D.Talko-Gryntsevich, who conducted excavation near Khiagt in the territory of Buryatia, Russia in early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Later, Yu.D.Talko-Gryntsevich modestly recognized what discovery of great vitality he started (Tal'ko-Gryntsevich, 1999. P. 13–42) upon finding out the archeological excavation results of the expedition led by P.K.Kozlov conducted in the territory of Mongolia.

The years of 1924–1925 were the year of discovery in World Hun studies. In 1912, Andrei Ballod, technician engineer of 'Mongol-Or' gold mine undertook an amateurish dig in one of the largest tombs at NoyonUul, but his request to send and study the material objects he excavated to the Russian Academy of Sciences and Geographic Society 'disappeared' with no response. Right at that time, P.K.Kozlov, who was staying in NiislelKhuree (current Ulaanbaatar) in wait for visa issuance to travel to Tibet, met Ejov, who worked with N.Balod (Yusupova, 2003. P. 130–131). Drawn his attention to excavate this Hun cemetery, Russian explorer P.Kozlov could obtain the permission from TseveenJamsran, leading scholar and Researcher and Secretary of Mongolian Institute of Sutra and Literacy (Yusupova, 2003. P. 133). The archeological finds discovered and excavated from the Hun elite tomb at NoyonUula (Yusupova, 2003. P. 953) saved P.K.Kozlov's life, whose expedition had officially been recalled due to accusations made against him for supposed White (anti-Bolshevik) leanings.

Since this discovery, the world was stunned by the history and culture of the Huns and got aware that the Hun wasn't a myth, but a true history. The archeo-

logical finds unearthed from NoyonUul are considered as one of the supreme discoveries in historio-archeology of 20<sup>th</sup> century and are kept as the invaluable precious treasure of the museum fund exposed at the Mongolian-Tibetan Hall of the State Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg, Russia. And the territory of Mongolia is still the native cradle preserving the marvelous heritage of history, culture and archeology of the Hun State.

Since publicizing the archeological finds of NoyonUul in Russia and Japan, the perception that the Huns are the Scythians and Scythian culture had greater influence on Hun culture is still in power.

The history of the Huns, who created the most interesting and complicated past in ancient Mongolian history is still of serious attention and interest in the world. The finest example of Mongolian tradition to honor their history and tradition and their knowledge of their origin and culture is the invitation letter from the great lord Chinggiskhaan to Ch'angCh'un, Daoist disciple. It states: "It seems to me that since the remote time of our shanyǔ such a vast empire has not been seen..." (Ли Жичан, 2010. P. 19, 191), which remarkably noted the history of thousand years. This letter was first translated into Mongolian by N.Ishjamts, renowned historian and academician in 1950s and this translation was included in the book by Ya.Ganbaatar and Ts.Ganbaatar published in 2010.

The issue of the origin of the Great Hun State, recognized worldwide as "Hunnu" and the question of whether the Mongolians are their descendants or not are still unanswered without a final conclusion agreed by international scholars and researchers. The theoretical hypothesis and disputes of "Hunnu is of Turkic origin and the Turks are ethnographically non-Mongols" are still debated. Mongolian historians have noted and proved in their written recordings that the Hun State was a State of Mongols and current Mongolians are the descendants of the Huns with clear evidences for generations.

This time, we again prove that the material culture and archeological finds excavated from the Hun elite interment at Gol Mod II in Balgasyn Tal in the territory of Khanuibagh, Undur-Ulaansoum of Arkhangai province, Mongolia are inseparable part of the cultural heritage of proto-Mongols. The archeological

excavations demonstrate the continuation of historic-cultural and ethnographic cultural heritage and traditions transmitted from proto-Mongols for generations from the ancient times of Bronze Age until present.

The arts of the Huns are the continuation of the ancient arts of Bronze Age in the territory of Mongolia and the Mongolians have inherited the traditions of their arts and culture. It's inevitable that those certain western and Russian researchers who consider the Hunnu-Scythian arts from a different point of view would come to Mongolia, conduct studies personally and they may have the opportunities to correct their mistaken perception. Particular scholars and researchers, who studied the life of ancient nomads, history and culture of felt-walled nations not in Mongolia, but from distance, have made attempt to explain the history and cultural traditions of the Hun State by finding the origin and development of history and culture from outside in accordance with their own points of view. Once such false attitude has been dominant, it's a solemn necessity to search for the great culture of the Hun State and its origin within the history of Mongolians, who have been dwelling as nomads in their native land for thousands of years until present.

Until 18–19<sup>th</sup> century, western historians, who read the mythical history of Xiongnu from ancient Chinese historical recordings, did have doubt on the existence of Hun State in the past. In mid 1920s of 20<sup>th</sup> century, i. e. 1924–1926, the excavation of ancient tomb, relating to the Hun State, located at NoyonUul in Central Mongoliawas conducted by P.K.Kozlov, Russian researcher (*Kratkie otchety ekspeditsiipo issledovaniyu Severnoi Mongolii v svyazi s Mongolo-Tibetskoi Ekspeditsiei P.K. Kozlova*, 1925. P. 1–42). This discovery glorified the name of the Hun State worldwide as a clear evidence of the true existence of the Hun State. The later historical resources, archeological and ethnographical studies once proved that the Hun State did exist and the present territory of Mongolia served as the core center of the Hun State. The people and the elites of the Hun States did not migrate to this land from any other place, but were natives to the land stretching from Altai Mountain range in the west to the Khingan mountain range in the east, from the north of Baikal lake in the north to the Great walls of

China in the south, which have been demonstrated by ancient Chinese historical recordings and the results of archeological studies conducted in the territories of Ordos steppe in Inner Mongolia, China, in Buryatia, Russia and in the territory of Mongolia.

The Hun Empire wasn't established suddenly out of nowhere, indeed it was a state founded on the basis of the rich history and culture of numerous states and tribes of previous eras of Bronze Age. It's certain that the Hun Empire did enrich the former traditions and transmitted their ethnographic and cultural traditions to succeeding states. Having empowered and established a nomadic state in the steppes of North-eastern Asia and expanded into a powerful empire conquering the entire steppe lands of Eurasia, the Hun Empire became the basis for the ancient greater succeeding states of Xianpei, Rouran, Turk, Uyghur, Khitan and Great Mongol.

Following the tradition of the Xiongnu's who crossed the great steppe of Eurasia and discovered the most of the world dry land, the later state's of Rouran and Turk and Great Mongol states conquered entirely these territories of dry land.

A glimpse on the great history and culture of the Xiongnu Empire that created such grand history is presented to delight your eyes and mind. The Huns and their ancestry - proto-xiongnu's, great nomads will definitely take their place on the platform of 'World History'. This we shall accomplish as well. The beginning of this hard and grand work is this book we present to you.

#### **Customs and Traditions of the Interment and Funeral Rites of Hun Elites**

In ancient Chinese historical resources, the recordings on funeral rites of Xiongnu kings and elites and correlated information are found. For instance, in the Chapter 110 of the Records of the Grand Historian by Sima Qian, Chinese historian, it's written that "...In funerals they use coffins and cases containing gold, silver and clothing; but they have no grave-mound, trees or mourning apparel. When a ruler dies, the ministers and concubines who were favoured by him and who are obliged to follow him in death often number in the hundreds or even thousands..." (Syma Tsyang, 2002. P. 330).

Observing the results of the excavations of Hun elites, the tombs of Hun kings and elites are discovered at sites of NoyonUul, Takhiltynkhotgor, Gol Mod, DuurligNars, Gol Mod II on the territory of Mongolia and at Ilim and Tsaram in Buryatia, Russia. Among those archeological sites, large tombs accompanied by attendants numbering more than ten as recorded in the Records of the Grand Historian (Shiji) by Sima Qian, main ancient Chinese historical resource. One of the main representations of the Hun elite cemeteries is the elite burial no. 1 at Gol Mod II excavated in the area of Balgasyntal (Ruin Steppe) in Khanuibaigh of Undur-Ulaansoum of Arkhangai province. It had 30 accompanying burials, all of which, excluding one, were directly correlated to the elite tomb no. 1 (Балгасынталдахь, 2015. P. 30–47).

The funeral rite to accompany the burials along the two sides of the elite tomb is evident. Such funeral rite was first discovered in the funeral rituals implemented at the Hun elite tomb at Tsaram in Buryatia (Minyaev, Sakharovskaya, 2002. P. 88); then is observed at elite interments at Gol Mod II in Arkhangai province in Mongolia (Allard, Erdenbaatar, Batbold, Miller, 2002. P. 637–638) and in TakhiltynKhotgor in Khovd province (Miller, Bayarsaikhan, Egiimaa, Lee Ch, 2007. P. 27–36).

A tomb complex accompanied by hundreds or a thousand burials as written in historical records hasn't been found, it is evident that the funeral rite and tradition to bury offerings of the properties and wealth of the departed Hun elites and to accompany certain number of their servants to the funeral was firmly inherited, performed and transmitted during the entire period of the Hun State.

The Hun elite cemetery at Gol Mod II in Balgasyntal site, comprises over 190 elite tombs yet discovered. The Elite tomb 1 unearthed was approximately 80 meters in length and 40 meters in width when unexcavated. It was covered with topsoil with larch trees and grass grown, particularly the main tomb and the accompanying burials were covered with about 20 larch trees. Twenty seven accompanying tombs were arranged north-south in a lune (crescent) -shaped semi-circular line ordered big-small to the east of the tomb 1. Between the 27 accompanying tombs and the tomb 1, one circular shaped tomb with a diameter of

26 meters was arranged separately at 10 meters from the tomb 1. One small burial is investigated to the west of the tomb 1, but was identified to be not adjacent to the tomb 1 as a result of excavation (Miller, Allard, Erdenebaatar, Lee, 2008. P. 55–70).

A small circular tomb at 10 meters in the north of the tomb 1 and a small circular-shaped tomb at 3 meters to the west were investigated. Thirteen pairs of stone piles or clusters are arranged west-east in two lines in a length of 28 meters starting at additional 10 meters in the north of the accompanying tomb 28 located at the north of the tomb 1, which are the core components of this interment complex (Fig. 2). There was no deposit investigated of burning animal bones or fire between these two stone lines of 13 stone piles. The distance between these stone lines of thirteen pairs of stones was 1 meter.

After finishing the complete stratification removal, the tomb 1 was 86 meters in length, including the access ramp or funerary path, which alone lies 37

meters in length. The exterior western and eastern walls of the main tomb are both 48 meters in length, 3,5 meters in height. The northern wall that demonstrates the width is 46 meters in length and 3.5 meters in height. The western stone slab wall stretches 46 meters in length with a height of 2,0–2,20 meters in height (Fig. 3). The southern side of two joint walls with the ramp and entrance gate is 42 meters in total. The entrance gate or the top part of the trapezoidal ramp is 22 meters in width and the ramp bottom is 8 meters in width. As the stone cluster of the ramp wasn't symmetrically arranged orienting to the south in balance with the stone wall of the main tomb, additional stones were applied outside the ramp to balance symmetrically with the facade of the main tomb. A stone slab longitudinal wall erected vertically runs across the stone cist from the northern wall down to the stone row margin of the ramp. From this longitudinal stone wall, two perpendicular stone walls are arranged west east forming chambers.



*Fig. 2. Satellite burial's elite tomb on the Gol mod-2*  
 Рис. 2. Сопутствующие элитной могиле погребения на Гол Мод-2



**Fig. 3. Elite tomb on the Gol mod-2 in site Balgasiintal**  
**Рис. 3. Элитная могила на Гол Мод-2 на памятнике Балгазийнтал**

It's evident that the stones of the longitudinal wall were arranged in saw set in north-south direction. Up to the facade wall with the ramp, the perpendicular stone walls are arranged for chambers separated west and east.

The tomb 1 was excessively looted with less possibility to identify the funeral rites implemented for the tomb, however the location of the log chamber, remains of coffin and locations of funerary offering of objects, including earthenware and decorative artifacts, its placement of the deceased orientating north and its funerary rite are equitable to that of other Xiongnu cemeteries investigated in former expeditions (Доржсүрэн, 2003. Р. 170–214).

#### **Funeral rites of Xiongnu King Interment**

The grave pit of the interment entombing the departed is 21 meters in depth down to the bedrock, inside which a wooden chamber with a dimension of 6m x 8m was built of larch logs of 25–30 cm in diameter. The wooden burial chamber is enclosed with blocks of schist 1 meter in depth. On this stone slab layer, a funeral rite of large fire was implemented, resulting a coal layer of 1 meter in thickness. On this coal layer, 16–17 chariots utilized by the Xiongnu king

were internationally broken and burnt. This quantity was reckoned by calculating the unearthed wheel hubs, axle end pieces, beams, bronze and iron parts of the chariots. One wooden chariot was accompanied unburnt, which is a lacquered thin chariot of Chinese Han Dynasty. This chariot, possibly, was not a transportation vehicle for utilization, but may be presented from Han Dynasty in dedication to funeral rite of the Xiongnu king. This chariot was placed intact on the stone slab layer atop of charcoal layer, but it was apparent that its left wheel and wagon were broken during the excessive looting. Observing the funerary architecture atop the interment, it's evident that the grave pit was fenced with stone slabs as enclosure and finalized at the dromos. At 16 meters below the ground in the northern part of the burial mound, about 30 horses and 5–6 horned sheep or goat are sacrificed as zuldofferings, all of which heads oriented north.

Zuldin is a traditional Mongolian cuisine of sheep head, neck, short ribs, five internal organs of heart, lungs, liver, kidney and spleen, skin and four shanks. Offering zuldin funeral rite has been a customary sacrificial rite of interments performed since ancient

times, particularly from the period of proto-Hun Deer Stone Culture and Khirigsuur Culture of Bronze Age.

The traces of looting by penetrating to the wooden chamber at the southeastern corner are observed. The log wooden chamber was collapsed down to the bottom due to the looter's rectangular hole at the corner and the pressure of overtop layers of sand and blocks of schist 18-20 in thickness that down weighed the chamber for over 2000 years. During the excavation process, it's exposed that in the center of the wooden chamber, a wooden coffin was placed, which was totally destroyed at hands of looters. Even the golden foil ornaments on the outer wall of the thin board coffin were stripped off. Remains of human skull and femur were unearthed and the funeral assemblage of the objects the king used, a variety of vessels, bronze pots, bronze offering tea-pots, bronze plates, bronze ware, earthenware, chariot horse harness ornaments and fittings made of gold, silver and bronze was placed in the exterior side of the coffin. In the west side of the coffin, the two bronze pots, two bronze pots, two bronze teapots, a bronze plate and a bronze vessel were places, while five to six large clay vessels, glass and jade cups were placed at the top or north side of the coffin. In the exterior corridor in the east side down to the wooden chamber wall, the gold, silver and bronze ornaments of horse harnesses and fittings of breast collar and cruppers, bridle and girth were positioned in north-south direction. All the accompanied objects were broken at hands of looters of due to collapse of wooden chamber.

Outside the monumental burial mound of the Xiongnuking, a graveyard of 29 accompanying tombs is located, of which one contained a headless horse burial, while other being human burials. As all the accompanying tombs were looted heavily, no possibility was given to provide sufficient information on humans buried insatellite tombs. However, according to the anthropological studies, the bone remains unearthed from 23 burials out of 28 burials identified the bone remains of 23 persons aging from 1 to 50 (Miller, Allard, Erdenebaatar, Lee, 2008. P. 55–70). The four burials had no remains or traces of human. The funerary assemblages of the satellite tombs were completely damaged, which made impossible to identify

whether the departed persons in the satellitetombs were killed intentionally or died a natural death.

The traces of killing the humans for accompanying the Xiongnu tombs of ordinary people were observed at BurkhanTolgoiXiongnu tombs in Egiin Valley in Khutag-Undursoum, Bulgan province and Xiongnu cemetery at Oortsogtolgoi in Battsengelsoum, Arkhangai province; thus it's evident that everyone, without depending on social rank, position and wealth, had human sacrifice of their wife, child, slave, servant or attendant to their interments or afterlife.

The Xiongnu elite cemeteries appear similar to the elite tombs of Chinese Han Dynasty. On account of numerous outer and inner factors of that time, the funeral rites and interment constructions of the ordinary Xiongnu's and Xiongnu elites undertook certain changes. As the Xiongnu State and Han Dynasty were states of equity status, the two countries had close contacts in politics-economy and agriculture-culture, resulting mutual economic and cultural influences. One of such integration is the deep grave pit similar to the typical Han-style "elite" interment. A variety of objects of Han origin, including lacquer wares of cup, plate, bronze mirrors and chariots are found among the funeral assemblages accompanied to both the Hun elite tomb and its accompanying burials.

#### **Material Culture of the Xiongnu's**

The buried artifacts accompanied to the Xiongnu interment are the objects that the departed used and are the evidence inseparably related to the shamanic rituals to sacrifice these objects to use in their afterlife after death. In burials of infants, the objects are offered in less quantity with a few numbers of livestock. In case of sacrificing animals to such infant burial, the sacrificial animals are mainly young and newborn animals. It demonstrates that the properties one collected in one's life is directly correlated to the person's age and social rank and position.

The buried objects accompanied to the Xiongnu elite tomb 1 that were excavated at Gol Mod II in Balgasyn Tal in Khanuibagh, Undur-Ulaansoum of Arkhangai province are the material evidences in abundance to prove that the departed person was a Xiongnu elite, specifically ranking as a king. Although it was looted excessively and it's impossible to find out

what were looted, the vessels, decorative objects of the elite and the decorative horse harnesses, in accordance of their quality, quantity and both in appearance and context, definitely demonstrate that it is a tomb of a Hun king ordained from Heaven.

The main representation of the decorative objects survived looting is the jade disk, 23 cm in diameter, with a circular opening in the center.

#### Jadedisk

Researchers propose diverse hypotheses about the original function and significance of the jade disk. This jade disk is made of jade, 22,8 cm in height and 18,5 cm in diameter. The jade disk is crowned with two confronting felines sinking their fangs into the circle in the middle that's 2 cm in diameter. The crowning figures are 15 cm in width and 4,5 cm in height, where the two confronting felines are depicted symmetrically in the same size and shape. The chest, fore legs, hind, hind legs and the tail of both felines are ornately engraved in exquisitely curlicue pattern. A round circle with a diameter of 11,5 cm is engraved in relief on the jade disk, of which outer and inner circles, nine carnivores are engraved in relief to both sides of the disk. For instance, the chest of a carnivore is engraved on one side and its hind part is engraved in relief on the other side. The inner circle has 112 knob-like grain patterns in relief on one side and 126 knobs on the other side (Fig. 4).

This jade artifact is an object reflecting the cultural influence of Han Dynasty; nevertheless the geologists prove that such whitish jade is the iron-rich jade found in abundance at Mongol Altai mountain range. The engraving in relief on jade disk certainly depicts the ornate zoomorphic design of the nomads. Comparing this disk to the jade *pidisk* of similar date, particularly that related to the Han Dynasty period (Jades of Han Dynasty, 2005. P. 47–53), any jade object of the same shape and design as the jade disk unearthed from the Xiongnu elite tomb 1 at Gol Mod 2 hasn't been discovered to date.

Observing the rituals of ancient Chinese dynasties, such jade disks are explained diversely as a symbolic object to purify the path of the departed, an object of honor to accompany the king or elite or as a sacrificial object of offering rites. This jade disk, fortunately survived the looting for being attached to the coffin wall may have served as a ceremonial item to demonstrate the power and the rank of Hun king at that time. Although formerly, broken pieces of a circular-shaped jade object were excavated from the Hun elite tomb 1 at NoyonUul in Mongolia, they weren't as large as this jade disk in size. Broken pieces of a circular-shaped jade object unearthed from the Hun elite tomb 2 at DuurligNars in Bayan-Adargasoum of Khentii province, Mongolia, were studied in comparison to the jade culture of ancient China and the researchers correlated it to the ceremony of the funeral rites of



*Fig. 4. Large Jade of the Xiongnu from elite tomb*  
*Рис. 4. Большой хуннский нефрит из элитной гробницы*

Han Dynasty (Eregzen, 2011. P. 132–141). We propose, the jade disk excavated from the Xiongnu elite tomb 1 at Gol Mod II in Balgasyn Tal site was, functionally, used as the representation of the power and glory of the Xiongnu king, but is not related to the customs of ancient Chinese Han Dynasty. Certainly, a tradition of decorating the belt of Mongolian great king's with similar large-sized circular jade object is known.

This jade disk that was cleaved to the left wall of the wooden coffin and fortunately survived intact the looting may have been placed near the waist or hip of the Xiongnu king. Although it was offered to the sacrificial funeral rite to accompany the departed, this jade disk was intact, but not intentionally broken, which exposes a different custom than accompanying the jade or bronze mirrors fragmented to the interments of ordinary people and Xiongnu elites.

#### **Golden ornaments: Circular golden plate with a figure of Bers**

A mythological creature called among Mongols as Bers is embossed in relief in accordance with their depiction in their imaginative fantasy. It's believed that this creature is of extraordinary power to reach the far distance in an instance. The most powerful piece in Mongolian chess is called with the name of this creature as Bers. This golden plaque is 13 cm in diameter and the creature depicted has a single horn, head of roaring-leopard, dragon neck and four legs of tiger, the most powerful animals on earth, where standing on two forelimbs and two hind legs pulled and raised upward. This mythological creature has wings on its left and right shoulders and its tail, though seen like a bird wing, is coiled around its body, apparently recognizable as a tail. The tip of horn, ears, neck, tail parts and knee joints are adorned with inlays of turquoise and carnelian gems. In depicting the ribbed horn in coiled shape, nine ridges are embossed from the core of the horn to the tip. This symbolic creature of power is depicted facing leftward with its tail wrapped around its body encircled amid floral patterns. Its two forelegs are in standing posture and the hind legs are raised upward with its paws bent. The leaves and petals of the floral motif are embossed and accented with inlays of turquoise and chalcedony gems in bezels (Fig. 5).

#### **Pear-shaped golden breastplate plaque with figures of a pair of Bers (Tending of leftward)**

Golden plaque in a distorted ovoid shape with a length of 17,5 cm, a width of 6,5 cm in its bulged base and 5 cm in its tapered part. On this golden ornament, a pair of Bers, leopard-headed and dragon-necked mythological creatures are depicted, one with horn and the other without. These creatures are depicted en face with their heads flamboyantly embossed and their bodies tending rightward amid floral patterns. The creature beneath has a larger body and mane with no horn and the creature above has a smaller body and horn. Two mythological creatures and the floral motifs of five-petaled round flower and six-petaled leaf-shaped flowers are punctuated by turquoise and chalcedony inlays. Depiction of these creatures with and without horn evidently demonstrates the context of a couple of masculine and feminine creatures. The horned creature is feminine with smaller body and its ribbed horn has three ridges. The maned creature is the masculine with larger body in bezels (Fig. 6).

#### **Golden shaffron plaque with a figure of a horned feline**

This golden harness ornament with a length of 28,2 cm, depicts a crouching leopard with a four-ridged single horn and its head turned back. The upper part with the depiction of leopard head is 3,5 cm in width and the lower part with the depiction of tail is 2,5 cm in width. This single-horned mythological leopard is depicted elaborately in a crouching posture, where its chest and hind are embossed ornately. Its forelegs and hind legs are evidently in a crouching pose with its paws squeezed and stretched. The neck is stretched with its head turned back. The muscular parts of chest, hind and legs and the tip of the tail were accented with turquoise and chalcedony inlays. The leopard in move is embossed in relief amid floral motifs of five-petaled circular flowers and six-petaled leaf-shaped flowers. The of flowers were adorned with turquoise and chalcedony gems in bezels.

#### **Golden harness ornament**

It's a stretched oval 3,8 cm in length, 1,8 cm in width. The front of this golden plaque depicts a



**Fig. 5. Round big golden decoration with a unicorn panther \bers\  
Рис. 5. Круглое большое золотое украшение с однорогим барсом**



**Fig. 6. Pear shaped golden decoration with a double panther \bers\  
Рис. 6. Грушевидное золотое украшение с двойным барсом**

mythological Berscreature with a single ribbed horn of three ridges, roaring leopard head, dragon neck and tiger legs, of which two fore limbs are in a standing posture and two hind legs are pulled and raised upward. This mythical creature has wings on its left and right shoulders and its tail, though seen like a bird wing, is coiled around its body, apparently recognizable as a tail raised upward. The tip of horn, ears, neck, tail parts and knee joints are adorned with inlays of turquoise and carnelian gems. In depicting the ribbed horn in coiled shape, nine ridges are embossed from the core of the horn to the tip. This symbolic creature of power is depicted facing leftward with its tail wrapped around its body encircled amid floral pattern. Its two forelegs are in standing posture and the hind legs are raised upward with its paws bent. The leaves and petals of the flower motif are embossed and accented with inlays of turquoise gems in bezels (Fig. 7).

#### **Golden harness ornament**

It's a stretched oval 3,2 cm in length, 1,3 cm in width. The golden plaque is plain with no motif or pattern embossed. Semi-circular chased golden ornaments in relief with a diameter of 3,5 cm. This ornament depicts a single-horned recumbent leopard amid elaborately embossed floral motifs of five-petaled and six-petaled oval-shaped flowers. The flower petals,

leopard muscles and horn are punctuated with inlays of turquoise gems in bezels (Fig. 8).

#### Oval golden harness ornament

This buckle-shaped golden plaque is 3,6×2,8 cm in dimension. The loop front, 9mm in width, of the oval-shaped opening is adorned with flamboyantly embossed four floral motifs of two circular five-petaled flowers and two oval-shaped eight-petaled flowers. The flower cores were punctuated with inlays of turquoise and chalcedony gems in bezels. The set of this golden ornaments comprises 11 pieces of the same shape, size and depiction (Fig. 9).

#### Lune-shaped golden harness ornament

The crescent plaque is 4,5 cm in length and 1,9 cm in width. It depicts a nine-petaled leaf-shaped flower in the center between two circular five-petaled flowers, all embossed in relief. The cores of flowers are adorned with turquoise inlays in bezels. The set of this ornament comprises 4 pieces of the same shape, size and depiction (Fig. 10).

#### Golden harness buckle

1. It's a girth buckle of 5,5 cm in length and 2,5 cm and 3,5 cm in width. It has a bronze tongue and is adorned with floral pattern and inlaid with tiny turquoise gems in bezels (Fig. 11, a).

2. It's a girth buckle of 4,5 cm in length and 2 cm and 3 cm in width. It has a bronze tongue and is adorned with floral pattern and inlaid with tiny turquoise gems in bezels (Fig. 11, b).

3. It's a girth buckle of 5,5 cm in length and 2,5 cm and 3,5 cm in width. It has notongue and is adorned with floral pattern and inlaid with tiny turquoise gems in bezels (Fig. 11, c).

4. It's a girth buckle of 5 cm in length and 2 cm and 3 cm in width. It had a bronze tongue, now missing, and is adorned with floral pattern and inlaid with tiny turquoise gems in bezels (Fig. 11, d).

#### Silver harness ornament with a figure of leftward-facing unicorn. Unicorn

On a silver plaque of rhombic ovoid shape, a single-horned unicorn with a height of 17,5 cm is depicted flamboyantly in a standing posture facing left-



Fig. 7. Golden decoration with a single horn panther  
bers)  
Рис. 7. Золотое украшение с однорогим барсом



Fig. 8. Golden decoration with a tiger  
Рис. 8. Золотое украшение с тигром



Fig. 9. Oval golden harness ornament a eight-petaled  
flowers  
Рис. 9. Овальная золотая упряжь, украшенная вось-  
милепестковыми цветами

ward amid curly cloud motif in a remarkably artistic manner. The silver plaque is slightly broken in the right side, which made the right hind leg bent and raised invisible. The throat mane, neck, chest and hind muscles are embellished in an extraordinary design in repousse. The tip of the ribbed horn is curled up and the seven ridges of horn are exquisitely shown in relief. Its two pricked ears are pinned back and forth (Fig. 12, a).

**Silver harness ornament with a figure of rightward-facing unicorn. Unicorn**

On a silver plaque of rhombic ovoid shape, a sin-

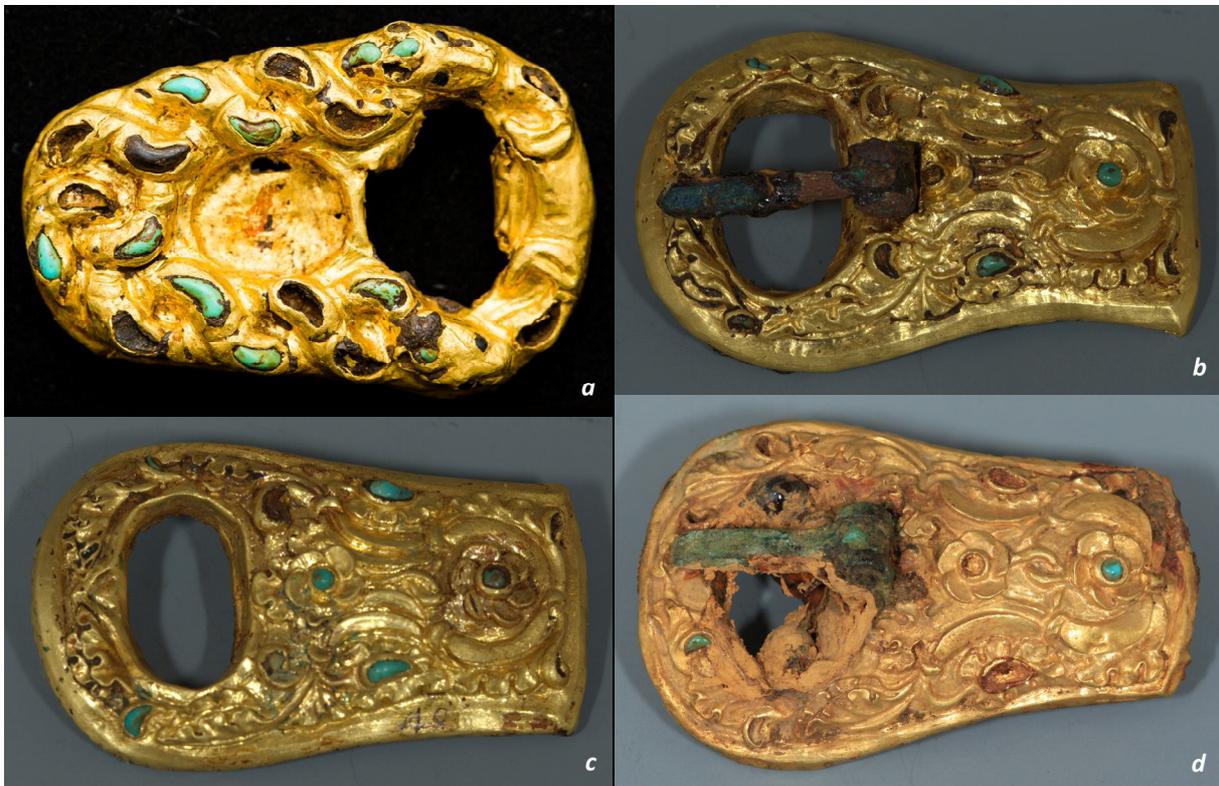
gle-horned unicorn with a height of 17,7 cm is depicted flamboyantly in a standing posture facing rightward amid curly cloud motif in a remarkably artistic manner. The unicorn is standing on its left foreleg and right hind leg, with its right foreleg and left hind leg bent and raised upward. The throat mane, neck, chest and hind muscles are embellished in an extraordinary design in relief. Holes appear on muzzle, shoulder and the jaw due to wear. The tip of the ribbed horn is curled up and the seven ridges of horn are exquisitely shown in relief. Its two pricked ears are pinned back and forth (Fig. 12, b).

**Circular silver harness ornament with a figure of a unicorn antelope**

1. The circular silver ornament plaque depicts a single-horned unicorn antelope with its head reclined in a standing posture facing leftward in an outstandingly artistic manner. The unicorn-like antelope is standing on its left foreleg and right hind leg, with its right foreleg and left hind leg bent and raised upward. The curvilinear indented lines mark the curly manes on jaw, throat and chest and the muscles of shoulder and hind are embellished in repousse. The tail hair is



**Fig. 10. Lune-shaped golden harness ornament**  
**Рис. 10. Лунообразный золотой орнамент**



**Fig. 11. Golden harness buckle**  
**Рис. 11. Золотая пряжка**



**Fig. 12. Pear shaped silver decoration: a – with a unicorn goat; b – with a unicorn antelope**  
**Рис. 12. Грушевидное серебряное украшение: а – с однорогим козлом; б – с однорогой антилопой**

also accented with lines seen between its hind legs. The antelope figure is surrounded by thick cloudy motifs (Fig. 13, a).

2. The circular silver ornament plaque depicts a single-horned unicorn antelope with its head reclined in a standing posture facing rightward in an outstandingly artistic manner. The unicorn-like antelope is standing on its right foreleg and left hind leg, with its left foreleg and right hind leg bent and raised upward. The curvilinear indented lines mark the curly manes on jaw, throat and chest and the muscles of shoulder and hind are embellished in repousse. The tail hair is also accented with lines seen between its hind legs. The antelope figure is surrounded by thick cloudy motifs. This silver plaque was cracked in the middle due to heavy pressure (Fig. 13, a).

**Circular silver harness ornament with a figure of a single-horned goat**

1. The circular silver ornament plaque is 13 cm in diameter and is framed by tiny embossed dots. This plaque represents a single-horned bleating goat with its ears pinned back and forth in a standing posture

facing leftward very naturalistically in an extraordinarily artistic manner. The single horn is curled up and the seven ridges of the ribbed horn are shown chased in lines. The curvilinear indented lines mark the manes on jaw, throat, chest, shoulder and hind that are embellished in repousse. The tail hair is also accented with lines seen between its hind legs. The muscles on shoulder and hind legs are embossed elaborately in chased relief. The leftward-facing single-horned goat is standing on its left foreleg and right hind leg, with its right foreleg and left hind leg bent and raised upward. The goat figure is surrounded by thick cloudy motifs (Fig. 13, b).

2. The circular silver ornament plaque is 13 cm in diameter and is framed by tiny embossed dots. This plaque represents a single-horned bleating goat with its ears pinned back and forth in a standing posture facing rightward very naturalistically in an extraordinarily artistic manner. The single horn is curled up and the five ridges of the ribbed horn are shown chased in lines. The curvilinear indented lines mark the manes on jaw, throat, chest, shoulder and hind that are embellished in repousse. The tail hair is also accented



**Fig. 13. Round big silver decoration:** a – with a unicorn antelope; b – with a unicorn goat  
**Рис. 13. Круглое большое серебряное украшение:** а – с однорогой антилопой; б – с однорогим козлом

with lines seen between its hind legs. The muscles on shoulder and hind legs are embossed elaborately in chased relief. The single-horned goat is standing on its right foreleg and left hind leg, with its left foreleg and right hind leg bent and raised upward facing rightward. The goat figure is surrounded by thick cloudy motifs (Fig. 13, b).

**Bronze chariot ornament with a figure of single-horned Bers**

This four-sided bronze ornaments are found in a quantity of four, of which three are complete and one broken. The rectangular-shaped four-sided bronze ornament is 17,5 cm in height and 6,5 cm in width. Each side of this decorative ornament on chariot poles

is embellished with each different design of mythological creature called Bers in relief in a remarkably artistic manner. Side A. The mythological creature of Bersis depicted in a writhing pose entwined amid curly cloud motif. It stands on cloudy motif with its two hind legs, its tail wraps around the cloud motif. Two forelegs also step on cloudy motif and its chest turned reverse. Its neck turns reverse with its head en face. The en-face head has a ribbed horn with three ridges, two pricked ears and opened mouth peering through the entwined cloud (Fig. 14).

Side B. It depicts a leftward-facing Berserect on its two fore legs and sitting on its two hind legs on a flat board amid curly cloud motifs. Its tail is hanging down looped at the tip and its head is turned back-

ward with one horn and pricked ears. It has wings on shoulders.

Side C. It depicts a *bers* with its chest rising upward, but sitting on its two hind legs on a small flat board amid curly cloud motifs. Its right foreleg steps on cloud motif and its left foreleg is bent upward. It has a long ribbed horn with four ridges, two pricked ears and wings on shoulders.

Side D. Amid cloudy motif, a *bers* stands on its right fore- and hind legs, with its left fore- and hind legs net upward. Its head is turned back and has a long ribbed horn with four ridges, mane on the neck and two pricked ears.

#### **Bronze ornament with a figure of tiger head**

This squarish ornament is 8 cm x 7,5 cm in size

and depicts an en-face tiger's head. It has a flat loop of 1,5 cm x 1,5 cm in size. This chariot ornament depicts the features of a feline face naturalistically with pricked ears and protruded eyes (Fig. 15).

#### **Roman glass bowl**

The ancient Roman dichroic glass cup was unearthed from the adjacent tomb no. 30 of the Noble tomb no. 1 in Gol Mod archeological site. Its rim is 7,5 cm in diameter, 6 cm in height and 10 cm in diameter in its spherical belly. It's a deep navy blown glass with white stripes fused vertically on ridges. After finishing the white stripes, the melt white glass is poured on the bottom of the glass cup. The spherical belly of the cup was pinched when hot for raised vertical decorative ridges. It has a capacity of 250 ml.



*Fig. 14. Bronze decoration with a unicorn panther (bers)*

*Рис. 14. Бронзовое украшение с однорогим барсом*

Observing the glass cup and other broken pieces of glassware excavated from the adjacent tomb no. 30 of the Noble tomb no. 1 in Gol Mod archeological site, three kinds of ancient Roman glassware were unearthed, of which this glass cup is in complete condition and the other two shattered into pieces impossible to restore. However, the shattered rim, belly piece and bottom of a pink-colored broken cup is exactly the same as the Roman cup kept at Bonn Museum, Germany with its pattern, shape and decoration (Fig. 16).

### Conclusion

The complex of burial places for kings and nobles of the Xiongnu in the Balgasiintal site in the valley of the Hanui River in the Arkhangai aimag, called the "Gol mod-2", was the first large grave complex that was investigated by Mongolian archaeologists independently, without the participation of foreign colleagues. The works on these graves, revealed in the first in 2001, were carried out systematically, with observance of all archaeological excavations for several years. This excavation was an example of a full-fledged complex study of the historical monument and the Xiongnu archeology.

I would like to briefly mention some features and differences revealed in the result of research of artifacts discovered during the excavation of the first large burial in the Gol mod-2 in Balgasiintal site.

Firstly, we made a detailed survey of localities, on which are located more than 200 burials of Xiongnu kings and nobles, which can serve as a good guide for subsequent researchers to properly organize excavations.

What is new for us is that the first excavations of the main grave of the Huns ruler were carried out simultaneously with 30 satellite burials. The methodological basis for such a work was half-researched by Russian archeologist S.S. Minyaev. Also, the first excavations of the Xiongnu nobility in Mongolia were carried out by Mongolian archaeologists independently. The present work continued for eight years, from 2002 to 2011.

As a result of these studies, a number of moments of the history of the Xiongnu Empire from the II century BC were specified, before the I century AD. New material evidence has been found for a broad

connection between the state of Xiongnu and the old west and east. The number of satellite burials at one large grave of the ruler, the number of horses brought as a sacrifice, about the seventeenth of chariots and carts put into the burial, their gold silver ornaments and articles of bronze and iron, as well as dishes made of clay and other materials indicate that this burial not an ordinary nobleman, but a great ruler, one of theshanyu-kings of the Xiongnu state.

Were placed in the burial of a large jade circle,



*Fig. 15. Bronze decoration with a tiger*  
*Рис. 15. Бронзовое украшение с тигром*



*Fig. 16. Roman glass*  
*Рис. 16. Римское стекло*

most likely refers to the Han dynasty time, on the flat sides that are skillfully engraved animal silhouettes, as well as Roman cups of multi-colored glass. By the

number, and such skillfully executed artifacts, the present burial is unmatched in the history of archaeological exploration of Mongolia.

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