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ON PROBABILITY OF SINGLE CULT COMPLEX OF ACHILLES IN LOWER BUH REGION IN ARCHAIC TIMES (BEREZAN – BEIKUSH – VELYKA CHORNOMORKA II)

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The discoveries at Cape Beikush allow us to significantly expand and refine our understanding of the nature and extent of local influence on the archaic cult of Achilles in the Northern Black Sea region. The decisive factor in the formation of the archaic cult of Achilles in the Northern Black Sea region at the initial stage was the meeting of the colonists with a powerful ideological phenomenon – the veneration of the local tribes (relic Aryans) almost continuously, since the IV millennium BCE, AXI-the Serpent – the first Ancestor and personification of the Indo-European worldview born in the Northern Black Sea region.

The earliest archaeological evidence of the Achilles worship in the Northern Black Sea region dates from the end of the VII – early VI centuries BC and is associated with a cult complex of Achilles in the Lower Buh region ('Lower Pobuzhzhia'), combining Berezan', Beikush and Velyka Chornomorka II. This allows us to distinguish a special and earliest stage in the development of the cult of Achilles in the Northern Black Sea region: the end of the VII – early V centuries BCE, when the sanctuary of Achilles on Beikush ceased to exist. After that, in other places of Achilles' worship in the Northern Black Sea region, the «Serpent» features of the cult of Achilles on Beikush were no longer repeated. In other words, the image and cult of Achilles was no longer associated with serpents. This indicates a gradual loss of syncretism of these images and cults due to the decline of local, «barbaric» influence on them after the 5th century BCE.

This is also due to the fact that AXI-the «Serpent-ancestor» was for the Greek colonists, obviously, an alien deity. The subsequent transfer of the center of the veneration of Achilles to the Island of Levke seems to be the realization of the need to bring the cult important for further colonization (to completely abandon the cult of AXI-the Serpent – the «master» of the Northern Black Sea Region to the colonists, surrounded by «barbarians», was clearly unprofitable) in accordance with the already existing legends about the White Island and Homer's Achilles, as well as with the «norms» of the Delphic oracle, which clearly did not meet the «barbarian» Beikush. The appearance in Roman times of the cult of Achilles Pontarchus – the «Lord of the Black Sea» and God cannot be explained by anything other than the great importance of the prototype of Achilles in the Northern Black Sea region in previous times, from the beginning of the formation of the Indo-European community.

Keywords: *the cult of Achilles, the Northern Black Sea region, the serpent, the Supreme God, the Indo-European community*

The cult of Achilles, which had unique features in the Northern Black Sea region, has been studying for over two hundred years. Nevertheless, to this day, many of its issues have not yet been finally resolved and are the subject of discussion. In recent years, it has become possible to a considerable degree to shake the positions of supporters of a purely Greek origin of the cult of Achilles in the Northern Black Sea region, and to show the syncretic nature of this cult, with significant local influence. The general research

guideline, that led to such results, was exhaustively defined by I.Yu. Shaub: «The problem of reconstructing the religious beliefs of the northern Black Sea states population is extremely complicated by a number of circumstances, primarily the heterogeneity of this population, since it included not only multi-tribal barbarians but also 'multi-tribal' Greeks, the natives of different Asia Minor policies, very different from each other in their culture, including pantheons… No need to strive at any cost to prove the presence of barbarian origins or features in this or that phenomenon of the religious life of Greek colonists of the Northern Black Sea region, but comparing what is known for certain about these cults and rituals with what we know about the sacred sphere of the population of the metropolises of the Black Sea colonies, special attention should be paid not to points of similarity, but distinctive features. When trying to explain a series of facts of the undoubted difference between the pantheons of the colonies and the pantheons of their metropolises, it is natural to look for the reason of this phenomenon, first of all, in the influence of the environment in which the Greeks found themselves in their new homeland, that is, in the influence of the world of barbarians»[1].

V.P. Yailenko who showed the local Indo-European origins of this cult and the uniqueness of its connection with serpents, made a significant contribution to the study of the cult of Achilles in the Northern Black Sea region. In general, this prominent scientist quite deeply in linguistic sense analyzed the connection between the cult of Achilles and serpents, and the most important conclusions of this can be summarized as follows: 1) the cult of serpents was widespread among the indigenous Indo-Aryan population of the Lower Buh region and the Lower Dnipro region; 2) that cult was associated with Achilles; 3) nowhere else in Greece the cult of Achilles was associated with serpents[2]. However, at the same time, V.P. Yailenko, unfortunately, did not provide any archaeological evidence for the first two conclusions, except for Beikush graffiti. Moreover, without identifying the real origins of the Indo-European cult of serpents and its ideological essence, V.P. Yailenko, unfortunately, came to trite explanation, mismatching his standards of outstanding scholar, but rather popular in the second part and among his principled opponents, the supporters of the pure Greek origin of the cult of Achilles in the Northern Black Sea region: «The abundance of serpents gave rise to their cult in India, and the same was the reason of their cult in the Lower Dnipro region and the Lower Buh region»[3].

V.G. Lazarenko, without reference to the works of V.P. Yailenko, had analyzed the connection between the image of Achilles and serpents, initially basing on the works of I.Yu. Shaub who insisted on the 'serpent' essence of Achilles much earlier than V.P. Yailenko and till that time he had mostly completely substantiated the local influence on the formation of the cult of Achilles in the Northern Black Sea region. The main conclusion of his comprehensive study of the evidence of the 'barbaric' components of the worshipping of Achilles here was that «in his origins Achilles was a god, most likely a

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[1] Шауб И.Ю. О греко-варварских контактах в религиозной сфере в Северном Причерноморье (VII – начало III вв. до н.э.) // Вестник Санкт-Петербургского университета. Серия 2. История. Вып. 1. Санкт-Петербург: Изд-во С.-Петербургского университета, 2008. С. 116-117.

[2] Яйленко В.П. Очерки этнической, политической и культурной истории Скифии VIII-V вв. до н.э. Москва: Onebook.ru, 2013. С. 64-101.

[3] Яйленко В.П. Скифский Ахилл в Северном Причерноморье VIII-V вв. до н.э. и его индоарийские истоки. Древности Боспора / А.А. Масленников (глав. ред.). Москва: Институт археологии РАН, 2013. Т. 17. С. 393.

dying and resurrecting deity, and a companion of the Great Goddess»[4]. But the issue of local influence on the formation of the cult of Achilles in the Northern Black Sea region was considered by V.G. Lazarenko in a broader aspect, additionally basing on the findings of archeology of the Northern Black Sea region dated to the Eneolithic and Bronze Age, in terms of the cult of serpents and connection of its emergence and spreading with the early Indo-European migrations. The scholar paid special attention to considering the Indo-European aspects of the image of the Serpent. In addition, as V.G. Lazarenko thought, it was also necessary to comprehensively and critically consider A.S. Rusiaeva's and S.B. Buiskich's interpretation of archaeological sites associated with Achilles, especially with Beikush sanctuary, as well as, of course, simultaneously conduct a comprehensive analysis of the other point of view.

At the same time, V.G. Lazarenko considered the most important the study of the earliest stage, that is, the very emergence of the cult of Achilles in the Northern Black Sea region, since its further development here by the Greeks does not cause doubts. All this is the main difference between the results gained by V.G. Lazarenko and the conclusions of V.P. Yailenko), who absolutely correctly noted the starting point (source) of the proving of local origins of the cult of Achilles in the Northern Black Sea region (indisputable similarity of the name of Achilles and ancient Indian áhi – 'serpent'), pointing out the uniqueness of the connection of Achilles with serpents on Beikush in comparison with the rest of Greece and even speaking about the Indo-European origins of the cult of Achilles, limited himself only to the ancient period of the Northern Black Sea region and did not study the previous periods of the development of the cult of serpents in this region, where, as is known, the Indo-European community was formed and began to decay.

Therefore, in order to specify the genesis of the cult of Achilles in the Northern Black Sea region, V.G. Lazarenko undertook the following: 1) study of the spreading and ideological content of the cult of serpents in the period preceding the colonization of this region by the Greeks; 2) a deeper than before, analysis of ancient records on the connection of the image of Achilles with Cimmeria and Scythia; 3) demonstration of all this in close connection with the Indo-European subject matter. As a result, V.G. Lazarenko showed the uninterrupted existence of the cult of serpents in the Northern Black Sea region in the 4th – 1st millennia BCE with its spreading at the time of the early Indo-European migrations[5] (i.e. migrations of the bearers of the Aryan haplogroup R1a) from the Danube-Carpathian region to the east and south, which served as the basis for the formation here of the early Indo-European notions about Áhi-Serpent (the Supreme Deity and the First Ancestor), as a possible prototype of Achilles[6]. At the

[4] Шауб И. Ю. Миф, культ, ритуал в Северном Причерноморье (VII-IV вв. до н.э.). Санкт-Петербург: Изд-во С.-Петербургского университета, 2007. С. 182-198.

[5] Let's recall that the term 'Indo-European' itself is linguistic, not archaeological. The Indo-European languages in Eastern Europe, Iran, and India in ancient times are associated only with bearers of the haplogroup R1a. Haplogroup R1b began to 'associate' with the Indo-European languages only starting from the first millennium BC, even, possibly, from the second half of it, when representatives of R1a began to repopulate Europe (Клёсов А.А. Гаплогруппа R1b. Часть 2. Гаплогруппа R1b по странам и регионам // Вестник Российской академии ДНК-генеалогии. 2010. Т. 3. № 3. С. 406-475). Therefore, it is important to highlight the concept of the 'early Indo-Europeans' (and, accordingly, the 'early Indo-European migrations') when we discuss migrations of the 4th – 2nd millennia BCE, and not talk about 'Indo-Europeans' and their migrations in general, for not to cause confusion of concepts.

[6] Лазаренко В.Г. Культ Ахилла как отражение процессов формирования индоевропейской общности в Северном Причерноморье // Матеріали ІІІ Міжнародної науково-практичної конференції «Аркасівські читання» (26-27 квітня 2013 р.) / Відп. за вип. Ф.І. Кокошко. Миколаїв:

same time, V.G. Lazarenko took into account that «a linguistically indisputable fact is the existence of the Greco-Indo-Iranian community[7], which makes the ancestors of the ancient Greeks of the end of the 4th – the beginning of the 3rd millennium BCE to be placed not at all in Central Europe, but rather in the west of the Black Sea region steppes»[8]. In addition, linguistic studies have shown the proximity of Aryan and Greek languages in the Northern Black Sea region by the beginning of the 2nd millennium BCE[9].

Based on a critical analysis of a sufficient array of ancient literary sources, archeological and linguistic data, V.G. Lazarenko presented a detailed substantiation of the syncretic nature of the early stage of the cult of Achilles in this region and made the following conclusions[10]:

1) the opinion about the exclusively Miletus (Greek) origin of the cult of Achilles in the Northern Black Sea region seems untenable because, in Miletus (as well as in Ionia as a whole), the developed cult of Achilles is confirmed by neither ancient sources (the record on the presence of Achilles spring in Miletus does not at all indicate the presence of his cult here[11]), nor archaeological data;

МНУ ім. В.О. Сухомлинського, 2013. С. 61-64; Лазаренко В.Г. Образ Змея и архаический культ Ахилла в Северном Причерноморье // Новый Гермес. Вестник античной истории, археологии и классической филологии. Вып. VII / Глав. ред. А.Б. Егоров. Санкт-Петербург, 2015. С. 30-54; Лазаренко В.Г. Семантика изображений змей и следов человеческих стоп в Северном Причерноморье эпохи бронзы // Матеріали Міжнародної наукової конференції «Проблеми вивчення та охорони пам'яток первісного мистецтва півдня Європи (кам'яний вік – епоха бронзи)». Запоріжжя: Дике Поле, 2015. С. 59-70; Лазаренко В.Г. Культ змей в Северном Причерноморье IV-I тысячелетий до н. э. // Вісник Національного історико-археологічного заповідника «Кам'яна Могила». Вип. I / Відп. ред. Я.Б. Михайлов. Запоріжжя: Дике Поле, 2016. С. 37-48; Лазаренко В.Г. К дискуссии о происхождении архаического культа Ахилла в Северном Причерноморье // Емінак: науковий щоквартальник. 2016. № 2 (14). С. 7-20; Лазаренко В.Г. «Софиевский змей» – уникальный памятник Северного Причерноморья // Вісник Національного історико-археологічного заповідника «Кам'яна Могила». Вип. II / Відп. ред. Я.Б. Михайлов. Запоріжжя: Дике Поле, 2017. С. 53-61; Лазаренко В.Г. Культ змей и ранние индоевропейские миграции // Вісник Національного історико-археологічного заповідника «Кам'яна Могила». Вип. III. Запоріжжя: Дике Поле, 2018. С. 115-128.

[7] In recent years, the works of A.K. Shaposhnikov and V.P. Yailenko have shown that Iranian lexemes in the Northern Black Sea region are extremely rare while having at the same time a later origin. Thus, today we should talk not about the Greco-Indo-Iranian, but about the Greco-Indo-Aryan community in the Northern Black Sea region.

[8] Гиндин Л.А., Цымбурский В.Л. Прагреки в Трое (Междисциплинарный аспект) // Вестник древней истории. 1994. № 4. С. 29.

[9] Порциг В. Членение индоевропейской языковой области / Пер. с нем. Изд-е 2-е, исправл. Москва: Едиториал УРСС, 2003. С. 238.

[10] Лазаренко В.Г. Ранний период архаического культа Ахилла в Северном Причерноморье // Новый Гермес. Вестник античной истории, археологии и классической филологии. Вып. VIII / Глав. ред. А.Б. Егоров. Санкт-Петербург, 2016. С. 59-60.

[11] The only record that somehow links Achilles with Miletus was made by Greek writer of the 2nd – 3rd century CE Athenaeus, who points out: «Aristobulus Cassandreus writes that in Miletus there is a spring called Achilles, the flowing water of which is very fresh, but the stagnant water is very salty. The Milesians say that Achilles bathed in this spring after the killing of Trambelus, the king of the Leleges» (Афиней. Пир мудрецов. Книги I-VIII / Пер. с др.-гр. Н.Т. Голинкевича. Москва: Наука, 2003. С. 62). As you can see, there is not a single word about the heroon of Achilles in Miletus in the work of Athenaeus, to whom the supporters of the existence of the cult of Achilles in Miletus refer! But it is known that Achilles erected on Lesbos a mound-heroon to Trambelus, who was killed by him (Парфений. О любовных страстях / Пер. с др.-гр. В.Н. Ярхо // Вестник древней истории. 1992. № 2. С. 236-248). So, the attempts to substantiate the presence of the cult of Achilles in Miletus seem to be nothing more than a random mixture of information about Trambelus's heroon, erected by his killer Achilles on Delos, with a spring in Miletus, in

2) the decisive factor in the formation of the archaic cult of Achilles in the Northern Black Sea region at the initial stage was the meeting of colonists with a powerful ideological phenomenon – worship by local tribes (relict Aryans and, probably, Thracians) almost uninterruptedly, starting from the 4th millennium BCE, Áhi-Serpent-First Ancestor (and in its origins – the Supreme God) and the embodiment of the Indo-European worldview appeared in the Northern Black Sea region;

3) the ceasing of the existence of the Beikush sanctuary at the beginning of the 5th century BCE and the absence of 'serpentine' components of the cult of Achilles in other places of the Northern Black Sea region can be explained by the fact that Áhi – 'Serpent-First-Ancestor' was for the Greek colonists, obviously, already an alien deity;

4) the subsequent transfer of the center of worshiping of Achilles to the island of Leuke seems to be the realization of the need to bring the cult, important for further colonization, (it was clearly unprofitable for the colonists surrounded by the 'barbarians' to abandon completely the cult of the Áhi-Serpent – the 'master' of the Northern Black Sea region) in accordance with the already existing legends about the White Island and Homeric Achilles, as well as with the 'norms' of the Delphic oracle, which the 'barbarian' Beikush obviously did not meet;

5) the emergence then, already in Roman times, of the cult of Achilles Pontarches, 'Lord of the Black Sea' and God cannot be explained by anything other than the enormous significance of the preimage of Achilles in the Northern Black Sea region in previous times, from the beginning of the formation of the Indo-European community.

However, in addition to this, there is a need to solve two more important problems: about the possibility of determining the chronological framework of the earliest stage of the cult of Achilles in the Northern Black Sea region; about the possibility of the existence at that time of a single cult center of Achilles in the Lower Buh region. But the adequacy of the interpreting the results of archaeological studies of the ancient sites of Berezan and the area around it will be significantly limited if the results of geomorphological studies of this region are not taken into account. And the significance of these results is very high. So, V.G. Zubarev points out that «Berezan Island, at least up to the 5th century CE, most likely, did not exist. It was connected to the mainland, and the drowned part of the land is located between the present time island and the Ochakiv coast»[12]. M.A. Ahbunov, based on the fact that here «in the first centuries of our era, the sea level was not less than 3 m lower than the modern one», believes that «the available data convincingly show that in the first centuries of our era, Berezan was still a peninsula»[13].

This makes it possible to consider differently the data on the cult places of Achilles in the Lower Buh region. It will be recalled that these include Berezan, cape Beikush at Berezan estuary, and the settlement of Chornomorka II. Despite their rather close proximity to each other, they are usually considered as independent sites with purely Greek evidence of the worship of Achilles there. However, the indicative finds on Beikush[14], which showed the indisputable connection of the image of Achilles with

which Achilles washed himself after the killing in order to 'wash away' the grave sin of killing his distant relative, which is clearly not a reason for organizing a cult place.

[12] Зубарев В.Г. Историческая география Северного Причерноморья по данным античной письменной традиции. Москва: Языки славянской культуры, 2005. С. 171.

[13] Агбунов М. В. Античная география Северного Причерноморья. Москва: Наука, 1992. С. 164.

[14] Русяєва А. С. Культові предмети з поселення Бейкуш поблизу о-ва Березань // Археологія. 1971. № 2. С. 22-29; Буйских С.Б. К истории открытия Бейкушского святилища. Северное Причерноморье в античное время. Киев: Институт археологии НАН Украины, 2002. С. 21-32.

serpents, made it possible to expand considerably the understanding of the nature and extent of local influence on the archaic cult of Achilles in the Northern Black Sea region.

V.G. Lazarenko previously emphasized the originality of the sanctuary of Achilles on Beikush in terms of the undoubted presence of 'barbarian' elements of the cult, unique for Greece, its connection with serpents, as well as the uninterrupted existence of the cult of serpents in the Northern Black Sea region, starting from the 4th millennium BCE, and it became the basis for the formation of the cult of Áhi-Serpent, the First Ancestor and Supreme God of the early Indo-Europeans (Aryans)[15]. The same process can be considered as the formation of a pre-Greek image of pre-Achilles, the existence of which was convincingly shown by V.N. Toporov[16].

Further research by V.G. Lazarenko intensified and expanded the conclusions of these works[17]. As a result, it became clear that we should not talk about the Milesian import[18] of the cult of Achilles into the Northern Black Sea region, but about the merger at an early stage of worship by the first Greek colonists of Achilles not in the image of the hero of the Trojan War, but in the image of the folk (native) god – the Serpent-Ancestor, with the cult of the Áhi-Serpent of the local population, relict Aryans, who worshiped the Supreme Deity and the First Ancestor in the form of a Serpent.

Notions about that probably existed among the Greeks uninterruptedly since the time of the Greek-Aryan community in the Northern Black Sea region and were preserved during migrations, as evidenced by the example of Epirus with the cult of Achilles Aspet (Unknowable, Everlasting)[19]. Let us emphasize that such epithets may be typical not just for a hero, even a great one, but they are quite appropriate for a god, the personification of notions of an almost cosmic scale, including the Serpent as the Supreme Deity. Then these notions degraded to the idea of serpents as domestic gods but showed up on a larger scale during colonization, when the Greeks, in fact, returned to the land of their distant ancestors, the early Indo-Europeans, and met their distant relatives, the relict Aryans.

We are talking about those who remained here after the departure of the general body of the Aryans to the southeast and east in the 3rd millennium BCE. They formed a fairly extensive enclave in the Northern Black Sea region (the Dandarii, Taurus, Achaeans, Sindi, Meots), which continue to exist in historical times from modern Odesa to Krasnodar Krai, as well as in the Crimea. And, according to O.N. Trubachov, «Old Scythia in the North-Western Black Sea region could have been such a relict enclave. It was some kind of the rest of the people that separated and left for the southeast. The name 'Old Scythia' by Herodotus (IV, 5) is equivalent to the sea coast of Odesa and Karkinit bays»[20].

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[15] Лазаренко В.Г. Образ Змея и архаический культ Ахилла в Северном Причерноморье // Новый Гермес. Вестник античной истории, археологии и классической филологии. Вып. VII. Санкт-Петербург, 2015. С. 30-57.

[16] Топоров В.Н. К реконструкции «прото-Ахилла». Балканы в контексте Средиземноморья: Проблемы реконструкции языка и культуры. Москва, 1986. С. 25-37; Топоров В.Н. Об архаическом слое в образе Ахилла. Образ-смысл в античной культуре. Москва: ГМИИ, 1990. С. 64-95.

[17] Лазаренко В.Г. Ахилл – бог Северного Причерноморья. Николаев: ФОП Гудым И.А., 2018. 416 с.

[18] Let us repeat that in Miletus (as well as in Ionia as a whole) any developed cult of Achilles is not confirmed either by ancient sources or by archaeological data.

[19] In A.D. Veisman's dictionary, the word ἄσπετος is interpreted as «unspeakable, immeasurably large, immeasurable, endless» (Вейсман А.Д. Греческо-русский словарь. Санкт-Петербург, 1899. С. 207). Liddell-Scott's authoritative dictionary gives an even broader interpretation of the word 'aspet': «unspeakable, unutterable; in the main sense, it is unspeakably great, unspeakably large; less often it is endless, countless» (Liddel H.G., Scott R. Greek-English Lexicon. Eighth edition, revised throughout. New York, Chicago, Cincinati: American book company, 1901. P. 233).

[20] Трубачев О.Н. Indoarica в Северном Причерноморье. Москва: Наука, 1999. С. 99-102.

Those tribes of relict Aryans formed the basis of the 'barbarian' population of the Northern Black Sea region, contemporary with the modern Greek colonists. The alleged 'sudden' emerge in Roman times of the cult of Achilles Pontarches, 'Lord of the Black Sea' (no longer a hero, but a god!), which so much surprised Western experts, centered on Berezan (as evidenced by the overwhelming number of dedication to Achilles Pontarches just at this site) cannot be explained by anything else than the enduring and most ancient local notions about the Áhi-Serpent, the Supreme Deity and the First Ancestor. And it is obvious that it was not «the Milesians who spiritualized Achilles to God», as Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff believed, but the Milesians, who knowing, of course, only the Homeric hero Achilles, encountered in the Northern Black Sea region an important and ancient local deity Áhi-Serpent. This also explains the stability of the cult of Achilles in the Northern Black Sea region for almost a millennium.

S.B. Buiskykh wrote: «Now it has been reliably determined that the existence of all the main sites of the settlements at Berezan estuary (Viktorivka-I, Kaborha-I, Velyka Chornomorka-II, Beikush) have a single starting point of establishing here – the first quarter of the 6th century BCE»[21]. At the same time, just in the earliest layers, the artifacts were found that determine the uniqueness of the character of the worship of Achilles on Beikush, including graffiti, with dedications to Achilles, some of them with images of serpents[22]. A.I. Ivanchyk supposes: «Judging by the material, this sanctuary functioned from the second quarter or even from the beginning of the 6th century BCE»[23]. This is fundamentally important since very similar to Beikush's short graffiti with dedications to Achilles (A, AX, and AXI) were also found not only in the settlement of Velyka Chornomorka II, which is close to Beikush, where they are dated to the second half of the 6th century BCE[24], but they are also found in sufficient quantities in the layers of the end of the 7th – the end of the 6th century BCE on Berezan[25].

At the same time, it is very essential that the island of Berezan, located just a few kilometers from Beikush, was connected to the coast in archaic times, and until the first centuries of CE was part of the peninsula. This, in turn, allows us to assume the existence of a single, and the earliest in the Northern Black Sea region, the cult complex of Achilles (Berezan – Beikush – Velyka Chornomorka II). V.V. Krutilov back in 2016, in a personal conversation, not only fully supported this idea of ours, but also suggested adding the settlement of Viktorivka I, located on the opposite to Beikush cape bank of Berezan estuary, to the supposed archaic time cult complex of Achilles. The reason for this, as V.V. Krutilov said, was a graffito depicting the letter A, found in the ash pit of this

[21] Буйських С.Б. Ольвія та Березань в контексті заснування іонійського колоніального поліса в Нижньому Побужжі // Музейний вісник: науково-теоретичний щорічник. 2012. № 12. С. 53-55.

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[23] Иванчик А. Накануне колонизации. Северное Причерноморье и степные кочевники VIII-VII вв. до н.э. в античной литературной традиции: фольклор, литература и история. Берлин, Москва: Палеограф, 2005. С. 73.

[24] Отрешко В.М. Граффити, найденные на поселении Большая Черноморка II в 1973 г. Некоторые вопросы археологии Украины. Киев: Вища школа, 1977. С. 41-42.

[25] This V.V. Krutilov's message, Head of the Berezan archaeological expedition of the Institute of Archeology National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine in 2004-2019. Together with him, we planned to conduct a detailed study of the unpublished Berezan graffiti stored at the Institute of Archeology National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, in terms of their connection with the cult of Achilles, but the untimely death of V.V. Krutilov did not allow this to be done.

settlement[26]. However, we think that at the current stage of the study of this settlement, this is still not enough for its unconditional inclusion in the discussed cult complex. Although this is rather possible since the researchers of Viktorivka I quite reasonably consider Beikush ash pit, located in latitude less than 1 km to the south, to be the closest analogy to Viktorivka ash pit. In addition, they emphasize: «Their similarity with each other seems quite possible. It is noteworthy that both sanctuaries were clearly visible from Berezan settlement and were at approximately the same distance from it»[27].

All of the above allows us to draw the following conclusions:

1) the earliest archaeological evidence of the worship of Achilles in the Northern Black Sea region dates back to the end of the 7th – beginning of the 6th century BCE; they are associated with a rather probable cult complex of Achilles in the Lower Bug region, which unites very close geographically Berezan, Beikush, and Velyka Chornomorka II;

2) this makes it possible to single out a special and earliest stage in the development of the cult of Achilles in the Northern Black Sea region: the end of the 7th – the beginning of the 5th century BCE; it is emphasized by the uniqueness of the 'serpentine' features of the worship of Achilles on Beikush comparing to other places of the region later on.

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[27] Ibid. С. 43, 45.

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Про можливість єдиного культового комплексу Ахілла у Нижньому Побужжі архаїчного часу (Березань – Бейкуш – Велика Чорноморка II)

До цього часу залишилися невирішеними два важливих завдання щодо культу Ахілла у Північному Причорномор'ї. По-перше, чи можливо визначити хронологічні рамки раннього етапу цього культу в даному регіоні. По-друге, показати можливість існування на той час єдиного культового центру Ахілла у Нижньому Побужжі. Адекватність інтерпретації результатів археологічних досліджень античних пам'яток Березані та її округи буде суттєво обмежена, якщо не враховувати результати геоморфологічних досліджень даного району, що показують його стан у давнину. Нинішній острів Березань в архаїчний час і до перших століть нашої ери був частиною півострова.

Це дає можливість по-іншому розглядати дані про культові місця Ахілла у Нижньому Побужжі. Нагадаємо, що до нього належать Березань, мис Бейкуш на Березанському лимані та поселення Чорноморка II. Незважаючи на досить близьку схильність один до одного, вони зазвичай розглядалися як самостійні пам'ятники, що мають суто грецькі свідчення про відправлення там культу Ахілла. Однак знакові відкриття на мисі Бейкуші у Березанському лимані, що показали безумовний зв'язок образу Ахілла зі зміями, дозволили значно розширити уявлення про характер і розміри місцевого впливу на архаїчний культ Ахілла у Північному Причорномор'ї.

Нашим дослідженням показано, що ранні археологічні свідчення поклоніння Ахіллу в Північному Причорномор'ї датуються кінцем VII – початком VI ст. до н.е. Вони пов'язані з імовірним культовим комплексом Ахілла, що об'єднує дуже близькі територіально Березань, Бейкуш і Велику Чорноморку II. Є можливість виділити у розвитку культу Ахілла у Північному Причорномор'ї особливий і ранній етапи: кінець VII – початок V ст. до н.е., коли Бейкушське святилище припинило своє існування. Це підкреслюється неповторністю надалі в інших місцях «зміїних» рис відправлення культу Ахілла на Бейкуші.

Ключові слова: культ Ахілла, Північне Причорномор'я, змій, Верховний Бог, індоєвропейська спільнота

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