

Lecture 2. The Ancient Culture in Ukrainian Lands.

1. The Specific Features of Primeval Culture in Ukraine.
2. Nomadic Cultures in Ukrainian Steppes.
3. Culture of Ancient City-States on the Northern Black Sea Coast.
4. Ancient Slavonic Culture.

1. The Specific Features of Primeval Culture in Ukraine.

Even in prehistoric times, Ukrainian territory was the seat of a very high culture, the remains of which, now brought to light, astonish the investigator through their loftiness and beauty. In ancient times the early *Greek*, and then the *Roman*, *cultural influences* flourished in the Southern Ukraine.

The social-cultural development of any society is “organic” to the extent that any link in that development arises on the basis of the past achievements and mistakes. This should explain and justify the need of going deep into the past thousands of years, when studying the History of Ukrainian culture. The prehistoric legacy of the Ukrainian people can largely be learned from archeological excavations and the comparative ethnology of peoples living on similar cultural levels in different times. Archeologists have uncovered early human dwellings, clothing, tools, foods and early primitive arts. It helps us to reconstruct the mode of living of prehistoric peoples. Indications of human life and traces of the settlements in the area known at present as Ukraine go back to the *Paleolithic period*. According to man’s changing mode of life and his use of bone, stone, and metal the archeology divided human’s prehistoric past into the *Old Stone or Paleolithic age*, the *New Stone or Neolithic age*, the *Copper and Bronze or Paleometalic age*, and finally the *Iron or Neometalic age*. Each age constituted a number of eras in man’s cultural evolution.

Written sources of ancient times can be used to supplement the knowledge of the Iron age peoples in Ukraine. However ancient written documents could be too poetic and too biased, and clouded by guesswork and myth, in many cases, so only part of them could be regarded as reliable sources. The life of the man is remotely influenced by the stages in the formation of earth. The geological processes affected the

topography and geography of the land and the land, its shape and climate do directly influence the people living there. The differences in ancient climate might have explained why the cultural development of Ukraine was earlier and faster than that of Russia during the ancient times. People arrived earlier in Ukraine and began to cultivate the area at the earlier date because of the southern location, the milder climate and fertile soil.

There are archeological evidences of people inhabiting Ukraine as early as *1 million years ago*. But those human beings were totally different from contemporary man. They lived in primitive herds, tribes were yet unknown. It seemed that prehistoric man did not know how to build dwellings but knew how to use caves for protection against changing weather conditions and wild animals. He used extremely crude stone tools, as, for example, hand-cleaver for hunting, which, perhaps, took a lifetime to make.

The geological processes and the climate were deeply affected by the advancing and retreating glacier, which each time covered only northern parts of Ukraine. The next advance of glaciers in the *Middle Old Stone era* changed the European climate severely, also substantially changing the way of life of prehistoric man. Cold weather forced him either to invent or to perish. The more advanced prehistoric man of that era has been called the Neanderthal man. There are strong archeological evidences of his sites in Ukraine along the Dnieper and Donets rivers and in the Crimea. The *Neanderthal man* dressed in animal skins to protect himself against the cold and other inconveniences as well. Hunting for mammoth, buffalo, deer and bear and trapping were his main occupations and sources of livelihood. His stone and bone appliances were improved, sharpened at the top, as, for example, spearheads and hand-cleavers. The Neanderthal man developed some religious beliefs and burial rituals, indicating, perhaps, an awareness of the immortality of soul. He also worshiped celestial bodies.

In the Late Paleolithic age it retreated finally further and further northwards, and a milder climate developed from 12 thousand years BP starting the *Mesolithic age*. Homo sapiens continued to use stone bone and horn weapons and appliances, yet his workmanship became a far better one and the articles were substantially improved,

indicating a constant, though a very slow cultural evolution. He began to build permanent dwellings, huts, which sometimes were even equipped with heated chambers for cold seasons. The division of labor and specialization was simple (based on age and gender) but effective for the time.

Socially, these humans of the Upper Paleolithic age lived in tribes, while in many cases probably matriarchy prevailed. Their religious life was more elaborate and quite deeper. Human settlements were scattered throughout the whole Ukraine at that time. Archeologists uncovered many stone and bone tools and appliances, some of them being well ornamented. The richest findings so far have been identified in the Kiev, Mizien, Lubni and Kryvyi Rih regions.

After the last of the ice glaciers had retreated by about 10,000 BCE and had left behind the landscape that exists in Ukraine today, the tempo of man-made changes began to quicken. Indeed, during the Neolithic period mankind experienced more profound changes than in previous two million years. It is in the radically new ways that human developed for feeding themselves that the revolutionary significance of this age lies. Instead of merely gathering and hunting food, human beings had finally learned to produce it.

During the Neolithic period the continuous improvement of the climate conditions apparently facilitated population growth. That growing density of population in relation to primitive methods of production and means of survival, induced a more advanced mode of economic life. The man in Ukraine began to domesticate animals, like dogs, cats and horses; raise cattle, sheep and hogs; initiate farming by raising rye, oats and flax. He already drilled wells for water supply; improved production of appliances and weapons by polishing stones and boring holes. Horn and bone were still used to make useful things, but at the same time man also began to manufacture pottery and dishes from clay and beautify them with simple designs. Production was done collectively in primitive "shops". Simple trading and merchandise exchange by barter began to develop along the water routes. As the population increased rapidly, primitive forms of social and political organization slowly developed. Blood relation and the tribal system became the foundation of the socio-economic organization in the Neolithic age. Agriculture demanded a relatively

large labor force, and people settled down in order to be near their fields. Villages came to the existence, replacing the isolated settlements. Social differentiation came into being gradually. Religious life further developed and burial ritual became more complex.

The Old Metallic Age of Copper and Bronze, about 3000 to 1000 years BCE, was subsequently replaced by the New Metallic Age of Iron. This transition was completed earlier in the South, in Ukraine and the Caucasian regions, than in the rest of Eastern Europe. The Metallic Age was distinctly marked by the use of copper and bronze, and ultimately, of iron to manufacture various utensils, appliances and weapons, and it represented tremendous progress toward the higher stage of development, leading directly to the civilization.

The best known of the early agrarian peoples on the territory of present-day Ukraine were associated with the so-called *Trypillian culture*, which originated along the Dniester, Bug and Prut rivers and later expanded to the Dnieper. It has exhibited close similarities and relations to other Neolithic cultures in Europe.

The name of Tripillian culture was derived from the village of Tripilla, the Kyivan region, where first significant archeological findings of that culture were made by Vikentiy Khvoika. The Tripillian culture was featured by large villages, constructed on the river banks, with as many as 600-700 inhabitants. These villages of long narrow dwellings or many wooden huts in the square form, covered with clay from the outside and largely painted in dark-red inside. The huts were normally divided into three or four rooms, with hearth and chimney. The excavations also indicated a developed religious life, rich in magical rituals and supernatural beliefs such as the faith in life after death. The findings of all kinds of female statuettes point at a great respect paid by the Tripillians to women, and perhaps, at the matriarchal order of that culture, as well.

The Tripillian people were largely agricultural, raising on their fields wheat, rye, millet, barley and other cultures, having used already primitive tools, like stone sickles and hoes, primitive ploughs, drawn by oxen: and along with farming, raising cattle on a large scale, like cows, sheep, hogs and horses. Hence, the material culture of the Tripillians reached a high level of development in comparison with the

previous ages. Yet, above all, the Tripillian population substantially developed the useful arts, ceramics, painting and artistic textiles. The manufactured by hands only all kinds, big and small, of clay animal and female statuettes, dishes, jugs, plates. They were beautifully painted, mostly in the standard manner. Against the light-yellow background a dark-red spiral ornament being dominant. They also used two or three other colors and also painted on the jugs, jars and bowls some plant patterns and ornamented animal and human figures. The ox head with widespread horns, used to ornament the dishes, was one of the popular decorations.

The people of the Tripillian culture maintained contacts with Asia Minor, Thessalonica, Transylvania, Caucasia and Transcaucasia, which only contributed to a further growth of their culture. The first mechanical device in Ukraine – a drill for boring holes in wood and stone – appeared among the people of the Trypillian culture. Another innovation, probably imported from Asia, was the use of the first metal – copper.

With the advent of the metals in Ukraine, at first the copper tools, axes, chisels and hammers, apparently the over-all cultural level of the country declined under the impact of invasions of the nomadic hordes, the economic life of which was based primarily on cattle raising, while farming as a higher stage of material civilization disappeared for a while altogether in that area. The remnants of the ancient copper mines of that age were identified in the Donets River regions. Yet, for a long time in Ukraine, along with the copper, stone (flint) and bone tools and appliances were also in use, before the Metallic Age really took over. Subsequently, copper was mixed with lead, and a stronger alloy, called bronze, became the leading metal, employed for making weapons and appliances. At the end of the Bronze Age, the cultural level of the ancient population of Ukraine increased again. The bronze techniques reached a rather high level with several cultural centers in the upper-Dniester, Lviv, Rivne and Uman regions. The economic life was featured by primitive farming and cattle raising, while ceramics evolved further and achieved new artistic heights.

2. Nomadic Cultures in Ukrainian Steppes.

The appearance of nomads in Ukraine dates back to the 2nd millennium BCE. A vast territory of Ukraine is a part of Eurasian steppe. This territory of open steppe and forest steppe is dissected by the great rivers of the Dnipro, Bug, Dniester and the lower reaches of the Danube. Different nomad peoples dominated Southern steppes in Ukraine until 18th century CE: unnamed in deep prehistory but later appearing in historical texts as Cimmerians, Scythians, Sarmatians, Alans, Huns in ancient era, and Magiars, Bulgars, Kumans, Mongols, Tatars etc. in medieval. All of these steppe communities made some impact on developing European culture.

Nomad distinctive lifestyle is worth studying. Nomads enriched the world culture in many ways: cattle breeding, horse riding, cavalry military tactics and weapons, transportation, clothes and art. They've influenced Ukrainian economy, vocabulary and artistic traditions. It is unknown what the original ethnic substratum of Ukraine was in grey antiquity. Yet, one may conclude that the fundamental ethnic stock in Ukraine for many centuries was Iranian-Arian.

A distinctive pastoral way of life, based on the maintenance of herds of domesticated animals, emerged in the steppes of Ukraine in about 3000 BCE. For roughly two millennia, while raising their herds in the Eurasian steppe, the nomads-to-be also engaged in agriculture and were semisedentary. Sometime around 1000 BCE the pastoralists became true nomads and began to roam the steppe in a systematic search for pasture. In the course of this transition, the nomads developed several characteristic features. Most noteworthy was their propensity for warfare. In order to protect their herds and obtain new pastures, fighting skills became an essential requirement of their lifestyle. Frequent conflicts as well as the need to organize the efficient movement of many people over vast distances encouraged the development of tribal aristocracies.

Approximately at that time, between 1,500 and 700 BCE, Ukraine was invaded and settled by new people, *the Cimmerians*, an Iranian ethnic group, which belonged to the Indo-European family of peoples. The Cimmerians were the first inhabitants in Ukraine whose name is known to us. Their settlements spread from the Carpathian

mountains and the mouth of the Danube River to the Kuban region beyond the Azov Sea.

The Cimmerians were the first pastoralists in Ukraine to make the transition to the nomadic way of life. They mastered the skill of horseback riding and employed it in warfare. Because their contacts with the skilled metal workers of the Caucasus, the Cimmerians introduced the Iron Age to Ukraine. The use of copper and bronze was replaced by iron. According to *Antonovych*, iron came to Ukraine from Central Asia, and for that reason it spread in Ukraine sooner than it became popular in West and Central Europe. The era was featured by further progress in farming and cattle raising in the economic aspect, and the replacement of the matriarchate by the patriarchate, the priority of men over the women, in the social aspect. Rich archeological excavations of numerous burial grounds from that period give an ample of the iron civilization on the Ukrainian territory, uncovering widespread Hellenic, Central Asiatic and Siberian influences, with new forms of burial and new forms of arts, such as jewelry of Hellenic origin and rich ornamentations, made from bronze, gold, silver and bone, either coming from Asia or manufactured under the impact of the Asian influence. The growing importance of mounted warriors led to social changes such as the breakdown of extended family units and the evolution of a military aristocracy. They had rather strong political organization with tribal “chieftains” of considerable power. The Cimmerians built fortresses, and developed religious beliefs, indicated by burial ritual of their own. Their economy was based on large-scale cattle raising, and during their stay the transition from the bronze to iron civilization was accomplished in Ukraine. The Cimmerians developed ceramics with colored encrustations, and were involved in constant cultural and commercial relations with Caucasia, Transcaucasia, and Asia Minor in the East, and Silesia in the West.

In the early 7th century BCE, when the *Scythians* appeared in the Ukrainian steppe, the more sophisticated societies around the Mediterranean took notice, as these words from the Old Testament attest: “Behold! A people comes from the north. They carry bows and short spears. They are most cruel and merciless. Their voices roar like the sea, they prance about on their horses, moving in unison like one man. They are an ancient people, coming from afar and no one knows their language. Their

people devour your crops and bread; they destroy your sons and daughters; and they consume your sheep and cows, your grapes and vineyards. And the cities on which you base your hopes, they destroy with the sword". After ravaging much of the near East, the Scythians finally settled in the steppes north of the Black Sea where they established the first major political organization based on the territory of Ukraine.

The Scythians, probably of Iranian stock, retreated from their original lands under the pressure of Eastern hordes from Asia, and dominated the Ukrainian regions for some five hundred years. At the time the Scythians dominated the Ukrainian steppes, the Greeks began to settle along the northern shores of the Black Sea, and develop their commercial and cultural centers there. Among the Scythians, a patriarchal system prevailed with already substantial social differentiation, resulting in the development of wealthy noble families with social prestige and political influence. They were numerous, well-armed, and well-disciplined army of horseman. To develop warlike instincts, Scythian warriors were encouraged to drink the blood of the first enemy they killed, to make gold or silver-mounted chalices out of an enemy's skull, and to take scalps. Fierce and ruthless towards their enemies, these nomads were intensely loyal to their comrades, whose friendship they valued above all else.

Scythian culture was very much a man's world. Descent was traced according to the male line, property was divided among sons, and polygamy was the norm. Junior wives were sometimes killed and buried along with their deceased husbands. The Scythian religion continued to develop on the Iranian base with the admixture of the totem approach of cattle raising societies. Also the burial ritual, either by cremation or by entombment, further evolved. Some of their rituals were then taken over by the Antes and Slavs in Ukraine. The wealthy Scythians built the graves in the form of rather large structures.

The rich stratum of the Scythian society wore costly clothing with gold and silver ornamentations and possessed expensive arms and weapons. The Scythians develop the art of ceramics above the previous levels of achievement, with a strong Hellenic influence, manufactured large amphorae to keep water, wine and grain, produced beautiful dishes with the use of the potter's wheel. Beautiful jewelry of

copper, gold and silver was first made for the Scythians by the Greek masters, depicting the scenes either from the Greek or the Scythian life-style, while later on the Scythians themselves tried the art of making jewelry with success. The Scythians had the highly original decorative style of art, characterized by animal motifs. It skillfully rendered dynamic, flowing images of deer, lion, and horses of striking grace and beauty.

In the third century BCE the *Sarmatians*, another powerful nomadic people from the east, overwhelmed and assimilated most of the Scythians, only a remnant of whom managed to find refuge in the Crimea, where their descendants continued to live until the 3rd century CE.

For almost four hundred years, from the 2nd century BCE to the 2nd century CE, the Sarmatians, who emerged from the lower Volga region, dominated the steppes north and east of the Black Sea. Like all nomads of the Ukrainian steppes, the Sarmatians were not a single, homogeneous tribe, but a loose federation of related and frequently feuding tribes, such as the Iazygians, the Roxolanians, and the Alans.

From the fragmentary information available about the Sarmatians, it is evident that they looked like and lived much like the Scythians and other Iranian-speaking nomads. A contemporary wrote about the Alans that “they are tall and handsome, their hair tends to be blonde and the ferocity of their glance inspires dread”. Their dress consisted of long billowy trousers, leather jerkins, and soft leather boots and caps. Meat, milk and cheese constituted the basis of their diet. They lived in tents, that were mounted on two or four-wheeled platforms. A striking Sarmatian peculiarity was the prominent role played by their women. The Sarmatian way of life was apparently featured by the high family and social position of women. According to a legend the Sarmatians were the offspring of a union between the Amazons and the Scythians. So Sarmatian women followed “the ancient Amazon mode of living, going out on horseback to hunt, joining their husbands in war and wearing the same dress as the men”. Archeological evidence indicates that Sarmatian women were often buried with their weapons and that they frequently performed important religious functions.

The Sarmatians were nomads who did not know any farming and lived by hunting, fishing and raising cattle and horse. When war did not provide them with all their material needs and desires, the Sarmatians engaged in trade. Their caravans ranged far and wide, bringing to Tanais, their capital on the Don River, silks from China, crystal from the Caucasus, and semiprecious stones from Iran and India. The Sarmatians gave the name for the land “Sarmatia” or “Savromatia”, “Roxolania” for a considerable length of time.

Then, during the first two centuries CE, numerous barbaric and nomadic tribes of Celtic, Mongol and other ethnic origins, invaded Ukraine but never stayed long. In the third century CE the Goths of Germanic extraction came from the West and established a relatively strong state on the banks of the Dnieper river with its capital of Danparstadt. Having stayed for a considerable time in the Black Sea steppe regions, the Ostgoths fell under the impact of the Pontian civilization and joined the Pontian cultural complex. Local craftsmen manufactured for the Gothic lords jewelry and artifacts from gold and silver, ornamented with precious stones, which were liked by the Goths very much. Traditionally in these ornaments the animal motifs prevailed. Having defeated the Goths in 375 in their march westwards, the Huns, the people of the Turkish-Mongol ethnic extraction, dominated Ukraine for a while.

3. The Culture of Ancient City-States on the Northern Black Sea Coast.

The sea as well as the steppe brought newcomers to Ukraine. By about 1000 BCE the tiny Greek mainland had become overpopulated by its extraordinary creative, dynamic and adventuresome people. Lacking adequate opportunities at home, many Greeks spread out along Mediterranean, Aegean, and Black Sea coasts in a far-flung colonizing movement. In the words of Plato, from Gibraltar to the Caucasus, the Greeks ringed the seas like “frogs sitting at the edge of a pond”.

On the Greek mainland and the Aegean coast of Asia Minor Greek civilization was emerging by the eighth century and over the next two centuries the politico-cultural system of the city state was transported to the Black Sea and transplanted in similar environmental niches on distant littorals.

The first Greek settlers arrived at the northern shores of the Black Sea at the beginning of the Iron Age, and established there permanent colonies. Some of those colonies were established as early as the beginning of the seventh century BCE, others in the fifth century BCE and even later. By the end of the sixth century BCE the northern littorals of the Black Sea were covered by numerous, larger and smaller, Greek settlements and towns, from which Tyras at the mouth of the Dniester River, Olbia on the banks of Bug River, Chersones in the western part of the Crimean Peninsula, Theodosia in the eastern region of the Peninsula, Ponticapeon at the Kerch Strait, Phanagoris across the Strait, and Tanais at the northern end of the Azov Sea and the mouth of the Don River were the most important ones. For the next thousand years, these cities would serve as the outposts of urban civilization in Ukraine. Most of them were separate political entities, city-states, but culturally, religiously, socially and otherwise they were inseparable parts and components of the Hellenic world, which kept in close touch with the mother-cities, like Miletus, Delos and Athens, and the whole Greek community at large. They even took part in the all-Hellenic sport events.

Some of these colonies were big cities with several market places, paved streets, stone walls and fortifications, beautiful temples, public buildings and lavish private houses, sports stadiums; they were real cultural centers with scholars, writers and schools, disseminating the fruits of the Hellenic civilization.

These colonies were also ruled according to the Hellenic patterns as the city-states communities, largely by people's meetings and a senate of city's elders, and four archonates at the top of administration. Of course, there were deviations from that constitutional standard structure of government. At times "tyrants", one-man rule, captured the city-state government in some Greek community and ruled it despotically, until they were forced to step down. There were also other modifications. Smaller colonies were at times overrun by large and powerful city-states, annexed by them and governed at will. Those city-states had a well-developed economies, based on manufacturing and trading, and in most cases they coined their own money of silver and gold to facilitate their large-scale commercial activities. Their economic significance for the Greek mother-land was enormous, since they

were marketing middle-men between Greece and the “barbarian” peoples of the North. Since Greece proper was always short of food, the Black Sea colonies supplied the mother-land with grain, fish and slaves, while selling to the North the Greek products of wine, textiles, fine garments, cheap and costly, copper, gold and silver jewelry and weapons.

By the way of numerous Greek colonies, which for many centuries existed as either independent or autonomous city-states on the northern banks of the Black Sea, in the Crimean Peninsula, and the banks of the Azov Sea, the Hellenic and then the Hellenistic culture, trade relations and institutions affected deeply and thoroughly the ethnic elements, which at different periods of ancient history were predominant in Ukraine, while its static ethnic substratum was permanently exposed to the Greek influences, which, according to the archeological and historical sources, reached territorially as far as the northern forest belt of the country. Each of those ethnic groups, the Cimmerians, Scythians, Sarmatians, Alans, Ostgoths, Antes or Slavs, was not free from the powerful effects of the Greek civilization.

The Greek or Hellenic era in southern Ukraine left a lasting and indelible imprint on the Ukrainian people. The Hellenic culture, doubtlessly, fortified the growth of Ukrainian individualism, love for freedom, preference for the democratic way of life, and cultural creativity, which all crystallized later on. Then, the ancient familiarity with the Hellenic and Hellenistic civilizations and the Hellenic people facilitated the tendency of the Ukrainian-Rus’ society of the ninth to thirteenth century to lean on and to absorb the Byzantine civilization, which in its own way had enormous impact upon the evolution of the Ukrainian nation.

4. Ancient Slavic Culture.

Natural conditions the Ukrainians live in nowadays were formed approximately 8–10 thousand years BP after the disappearance of the last glacier. Forest-steppe zone have become the dominant landscape of the country.

Slavs are one of the largest groups of ethnically and linguistically related peoples in Europe. They belong to the Indo-European linguistic family and are descended from the ancient Slavs mentioned in Greco-Roman and Byzantine

sources. Occupying eastern and southeastern Europe, they are usually divided into the *East Slavs* (Ukrainians, Russians, and Belarusians), West Slavs (Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, and Wends), and South Slavs (Bulgarians, Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, and Macedonians).

The original homeland of the ancient Slavs has not been identified, but by the beginning of the 1st millennium BCE they were the dominant population in the region extending from the Elbe River and the Oder River in the west to the upper Dnieper River in the east.

The division of the ancient Slavs into various branches and tribes began in the 2nd to 4th centuries CE, when the Germanic tribes, such as the Goths, moved south and split the Slavs into eastern and western groups. Then, at the end of the 5th century, when the Huns had been overcome, the Slavs expanded southward. In the south they formed two tribal confederations, of the *Antes* and the *Sklavenes*. Soon those disintegrated into separate tribes, including the *Polianians*, *Siverianians*, *Derevlianians*, and *Volhynians*. Some of those tribes were later brought together under Kyivan Rus'. Thus the prehistoric period lasted from the remote times of Slavic Settlements of the Ukrainian territories, until 860 CE when Ukraine entered the historical-political scene of Europe. The Antian era and the existence of the Antian political organization, fifth-seventh centuries, was the peak of the period. The event of 860 CE was marked by the large-scale military expedition of the two Kyivan chieftains, Askold and Dir, against Constantinople. In this period Slavic distinctive social and economic evolution was formed.

Various East-Slavic tribes, living in Ukraine in the 6th to 8th centuries, were highly advanced in cultural respects. They had evidently made permanent settlements and considered this country their permanent abode. They were a relatively peaceful people who practiced farming and animal husbandry and developed handicrafts and trade. Agriculture had become their chief means of existence and was at high level of development even in the more distant and inhospitable sections of the northwest. Cattle-raising, fishing and hunting, though practiced to a considerable extent, had already become of secondary importance as

compared with agriculture. The region was characterized by a united system of commercial, economic and cultural communications.

The religion of East-Slavic tribes was animistic: they worshiped ancestors and various spirits in nature and a pantheon of heavenly deities. The 12th- to 13th-century Kiev Chronicle enumerates seven Russian pre-Christian divinities: Perun, Volos, Khors, Dazhbog, Stribog, Simargla, and Mokosh. An earlier text mentions Svarog, apparently the son of Dazhbog. Of all these figures only two, Perun and Svarog, are at all likely to have been common to all the Slavs. There are some oral remnants of the old pagan times including carols, spring, harvest, wedding and other songs, many tales with traces of the pre-Christian beliefs and traditions.

Finally, the third and fourth quarters of the first millennium CE was the time of the so-called Slavonic Resettlement during which the Slavs assimilated the local substrate population absorbing their millennial cultural heritage. The enormous impacts of the Hellenic, and then, the Roman cultures, influenced the formation of the national characteristics and the historical fortunes of the Ukrainian people. Another powerful force, which deeply affected the early history of the Ukraine, was the impact of the steppes, with all those numerous peoples who moved through the steppes in the course of the centuries, and left their imprints, either more or less penetrating, and contributed in various ways to shaping the national characteristics and cultural trends of the future Ukrainians. Their influence should neither be ignored, nor underestimated.

Checking comprehension:

1. Why the territory of Ukraine is considered to be a seat of different culture since prehistoric times?
2. What are the main sources of our knowledge about the prehistoric and ancient cultures in Ukraine?
3. Describe the archeological periodization of prehistoric times.
4. What did the life of human beings look like in Paleolithic or Old Stone Age?
5. Describe the changes in culture during the Mesolithic period.
6. What drastic changes happened during the Neolithic period?

7. Describe the Tripillian culture in Ukraine. What makes the Tripillians so special in the history of culture?
8. How did the Cimmerians enrich the cultural life of Ukraine in ancient times?
9. What was the Scythians' mode of life? What are they famous for?
10. Describe the distinctive culture Sarmatian tribes had.
11. What were the reasons of Greek colonization in Ukraine?
12. What did you find out about East-Slavic culture? Describe the changes in the life of the East-Slavic tribes during the first millennium CE, and their religious beliefs.

Questions to discuss:

1. Do you think it is necessary to learn about prehistoric times and peoples when studying and dealing with contemporary cultures, i. e. Ukrainian culture?
2. It is essential to understand the source of our knowledge about primeval culture. Do you agree? Give your arguments, please.
3. Consider the role of nature in the life of prehistoric human. How did nature affect the prehistoric culture? Does it influences human life and culture the same way nowadays?
4. Name as many the nomadic tribes of Ukrainian Steppe as you can. What do they have in common? Why did these nomadic cultures disappear from Ukraine?
5. Describe the impact the Hellenic civilization had on both world and Ukrainian culture.