

# Anthropological Investigations of the Cremated Remains of the Kurgan 1. of Bratovo (The Carpatian Ukraine)

LÁSZLÓ SZATHMÁRY

The Kurgan 1. near Bratovo (District of Vinogradov, The Carpatian Ukraine, Soviet Union) was unearthed by V. G. Kotigorosko. On the basis of the archeological furniture of the five cremated burials of the kurgan dates back to the late 2nd and early 3rd centuries A. C. (KOTIGOROSKO 1979, 1988).

Four of the five cremated burials were found within a 8,8×4,8 m pit with the fifth one lying the North-Eastern corner of the pit. Of the four burials two were found in urns and two without urns. The one outside the grave was also placed there according to the urnless rite.

Thus, I was in the position to carry out anthropological examinations on the skeleton remains of two burials in urns (numbered with Arab figures) and three burials without urns (Roman figures).

The analysis was based on the viewpoints and qualitative categories established by BREITINGER (1959), BROTHWELL (1965), CAMPS (1953), CHOCHOL (1958, 1961), GEJVAL (1948), GRIMM—THEIS (1964), KLOIBER (1956), LISOWSKI (1956), NEMESKÉRI—HARSÁNYI (1968) and SCHAEFFER (1960).

The determination of age at death was made possible only by the degree of endocranial suture closure (NEMESKÉRI—HARSÁNYI—ACSÁDI 1960, ACSÁDI—NEMESKÉRI 1970) and abrasion (KÖRBER 1957).

Detailed observations:

*Urn 1.*

Weight: 4,5 g. Quantity: 90 pieces. Microfragmented. The fragments are not deformed, of greyish-whitish colour, their clangour is sharp, lumpily broken, split longitudinally, their cracks are vaulted. The degree of cremation is mediocre. The following identifiable parts were available for qualitative examinations: neorocr. (5), vert. th. (1), humerus (2), tibia

(1). Tooth: I (1), P (1), M (2) — all fragments. Sex: female. Determination of sex was uncertain. Age at death: between 25—50 years since maximum abrasion is of degree 2.

The general appearance of skeleton fragments are graceful, muscle-reliefs are weak.

#### *Urn 2.*

The skeleton fragments of a cremated animal were found in Urn 2. Weight 133 g. Quantity: 600 pieces. Meso-macrofragmented. Fragments are not deformed. The frame looks rather broken than burnt. Cremation is only singe-like. Fragments give blunt sound, lumpily broken.

#### *Grave I. (without urn)*

South-East of Urn 2.

Weight: 27,5 3. Quantity: 140 pieces. Meso-fragmented. Some fragments of the top of the crania are bent at some angle, fragments of limbs are not deformed. Colour: greyish-whitish and light-brown. Fragments give blunt sound except for a few small pieces giving sharp clangour. Lumpily broken, cracks vaulted. Remarkably different degrees of cremation; generally weak, even unsatisfactory with some anthropologically unidentifiable pieces. The following fragments were evaluable qualitatively: neurocr. (20), humerus (2), femur (1), tibia (18), fibula (1).

Sex: male. The determination of sex belongs to the „very likely” category. Age at death: 30—60 years (sutura occipitalis pars lambdoidea: Phase II.).

The general appearance of the skeleton is robust, muscle-reliefs are powerful. Conspicuous is the large number of fragments of tibia and crania. This may refer to the fact that the higher temperature part of the fire burnt the trunk of the body for a long time. The skull and the legs were not under such a heat effect.

Pathology: its left clavícula diaphysis is cracked, and reossified in slight dislocation.

#### *Grave II. (without urn)*

South-East of Urn 1.

Weight: 39 g. Quantity: 180 pieces. Mostly meso-fragmented. The fragments are not deformed, their colours are greyish-white and sand-yellow. Some skull fragments are grey-black which refers to short flames and long glowing. Give sharp sound, broken into lumps. The portion of

longitudinal and transversal splits is remarkable. Cracks are vaulted. Cremation unsatisfactory, weak. Identifiable fragments are the following: neurocr. (16), viscerocr. (2), vert. lumb. (1), humerus (3), radius (2), ulna (1), pedes (2). Sex: female. Degree of certainty of determination: „possible”. Age at death: 23—40 years (sutures around vertex: Phase I). The general appearance of the skeleton is robust, muscle-reliefs are mediocre. Diameter of capitulum ulnae dorso-volaris: 14 mm.

### *Grave III. (without urn)*

North-West of pit.

The burnt remains in the round hole form two separate layers. The upper and lower layers comprise the components of the same skeleton. Fragments of completely ossified parietal sutures can be found both in the upper and the lower layers and degree of indentation serration represent the same anatomic variation in both layers (AUGIER 1931, BENNETT 1965).

The presence of these two layers calls attention to the repeated collection of the remains. If we analyse the ratio of identifiable frame components in the layers, we might throw some light on the system of collection.

Lower layer: neurocr. (62), viscerocr. (2), costae (2), radius (1), tibia (3).

Upper layer: neurocr. (12), humerus (1), femur (2), tibia (5), fibula (1), pedes (1). Thus, they first collected the elements of the skull which formed the lower layer. In the upper layer the portion of elements of limbs is remarkably larger.

Weight; upper layer: 18,5 g, lower layer: 25 g. Total: 43,5 g. Quantity; upper layer 170 pieces, lower layer 300 pieces. Total: 470 pieces. Mesofragmented. Two rib fragments twisted with divergence in axis, the rest is undeformed. Colour: greyish-white; fragments give sharp sound, mostly lumpily broken. Longitudinal and transversal splits occur in all anatomic regions. Cracks are generally shell-like. Cremation of frame is mediocre. Sex: female. The degree of certainty of determination: „probable”. Age at death: 40—80 years. (Sutura coronalis pars bregmatica IV. sutura sagittalis pars media IV, sutura lambdoidea pars lambdoidea et media III. Oblit coeff.: 3.5).

The general appearance of frame is moderately robust, muscle-reliefs are moderately expressed.

Thus, a graceful female was found in Urn 1. of Kurgan 1. at Bratovo; an animal in Urn 2.; in Grave I. without urn a robust male was found; in Grave II. without urn there was found a masculine female

from the point of view of robusticity; in Grave III. without urn there were found the remains of a moderately robust female.

The cremation of skeletons is mediocre, or less than mediocre. The bones of the animal in Urn 2. are hardly singed. The fragments of human bones are generally greyish-white with some tint of brownish-yellow. They give sharp sounds, but they are lumpily broken. Radial splits rarely occur even on the fragments of crania. Cracks are generally vaulted, deformation is insignificant.

Characteristic cremation rites can be substantiated to some extent only in the case of Grave I. and III. without urn. In these two cases the fragments of the skull and the limbs form a clear majority which may refer to the slighter degree of cremation of these parts of the body. The center of the fire or glowing embers must have been about the trunk and the body was cremated without mutilation. Since we cannot find similar phenomena with other graves, we must not exclude the possibility that occasionally the body was placed differently on the pile.

The two layers of Grave III. are of special interest in which they first collected and buried mainly the fragments of the skull and later those of the trunk.

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*Embertani vizsgálatok a bányú (bratovoi) 1. kurgán (Kárpátukrajna) hamvasztott csontvázletein*

A bányú 2—3. századi kurgánt V. G. Kotigorosko tárta fel. Az öt hamvasztásos temetkezés közül négy egy 8,8×4,8 m-es sírgödörön belül volt, egy pedig a sírgödör ÉNy-i sarka mellett feküdt. A sírgödör belüli négy temetkezés közül kettő urnás, kettő pedig szórthamvas. Szórthamvas rítusú a sírgödörön kívüli temetkezés is.

Az antropológiai vizsgálat eredményei szerint az I. urnában egy gracilis nő (23—50 éves), a 2. urnában egy kutya nagyságú állat, az I. szórthamvas sírban egy erőteljes férfi (30—60 éves), a II. szórthamvas sírban egy robuszticitás szempontjából masculin nő (23—40 éves), a III. szórthamvas sírban pedig egy közepesen erőteljes nő (40—80 éves) hamvai voltak. A csontvázak kiégetettsége közepes, illetve a közepesnél gyengébb. A 2. urnában levő állatcsontváz maradványai alig pörköltek. Az emberi váztöredékek általában szürkésfehérek némi barnássárga színárnyalattal. Hangzásuk éles, de darabos törésűek. Sugaras hasadás még a koponyafragmentumokon is csak elvétve fordul elő. A repedezettség ívelt, a deformáció nem jelentős.

Jellegzetes hamvasztási rítusra csak az I. és a III. szórthamvas sír esetében lehet bizonyos mértékig következtetni. E két esetben ugyanis

az agykoponya és az alsó végtagelemek töredékei vannak túlsúlyban, ami feltehetően az említett testtájak gyengébb égetettségével függ össze. A tűz, illetve a parázs központja tehát a törzs táján lehetett, és a halottakat csonkítás nélkül hamvasztották. Miután a többi sírnál hasonló jelenséget nem tapasztalhatunk, fenn kell tartanunk annak a lehetőségét, hogy a tetemeket esetenként eltérő pozícióban helyezték el a máglyán.

Különösen érdekes a III. szórthamvas sír kétrétegű temetkezése, melyben előbb főként a koponyaelemeket, később pedig a törzs hamvait gyűjtötték össze, illetve temették el.

Szathmáry László

