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SCYTHIAN BARROW NEAR KRASNOHIRKA IVth CENTURY BC

Summary. The article is devoted to the analysis of materials from the excavations of the barrow near Krasnohirka in the Kirovograd region. The barrow belonged to a cemetery consisting of 8 mounds. At the time of the research, the barrow was destroyed as a result of agricultural work. The site excavated in 1983 by an archeological expedition of the Kirovohrad State Pedagogical Institute (now the Volodymyr Vynnychenko Central Ukrainian State Pedagogical University). The research materials are stored in the Ninel Bokii Archaeological Museum. The main idea of the article is analysis these materials in the context of other Scythian antiquities.

Under the embankment was the only burial made in a steppe-type catacomb, the construction of which reconstructed. It belongs to the catacombs, in which the long walls of the chamber and the entrance pit were located on the same axis. Similar structures used in the Northern Black Sea region during the IV century BC.

It is established that the burial was almost completely looted in antiquity. He probably buried with all his belongings on a special wooden deck at the bottom of the cell. It is impossible to establish its exact position. The skeleton of the buried was completely destroyed by robbers. Only the remains of bones and a fragment of a bronze arrowhead were found in the grave. Remains of a wooden tray with sacrificial food and an iron stream from a spear were cleared on the stairs leading to the catacomb. Elements of a horse bridle and fragments of ancient amphorae were found in the embankment. The analogies found by the author of the publication allowed to date the monument to the IV century BC.

We have made some ethnic and social reconstructions. The barrow near Krasnohirka belongs to the group of sites of the Sinyukha basin. At least 16 Scythian burial researched in this region, covering the period of VII–IV centuries BC. It was established that they all belonged to Iranian-speaking nomads. Researchers have long linked the region to the northern border of the Scythian on the Right Bank of Dnieper region.

Analysis of objects of material culture and funeral rites indicates that the mound near Krasnohirka was built over the burial of a nomad. The complexity of the burial structure, the remains of weapons and sacrifices suggest that the owner of the tomb belonged to the military aristocracy. Materials from the excavations of the barrow near Krasnohirka are an important addition to the sources on the ethnic history of the Scythians on the border of the Right Bank Forest-Steppe and Steppe.

Keywords: Scythians, barrow, Krasnohirka, catacomb, funerary ritual, horse bridle.

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СКІФСЬКИЙ КУРГАН БІЛЯ КРАСНОГІРКИ IV СТ. ДО Н. Е.

Анотація. Стаття присвячена аналізу матеріалів з розкопок кургану біля с. Красногірка на Кіровоградщині. Пам'ятка була розкопана у 1983 р. археологічною експедицією Кіровоградського державного педагогічного інституту (тепер Центральноукраїнський державний педагогічний університет імені Володимира Винниченка) під керівництвом Н.М. Бокій. У статті здійснена спроба розглянути матеріали пам'ятки у контексті інших старожитностей скіфського часу.

Під насипом знаходилось поховання, здійснене у катакомбі степового типу. Вона належить до катакомб, у яких довгі стінки камери та входної ями були розташовані на одній осі. Подібні споруди використовувались у Північному Причорномор'ї протягом IV ст. до н. е.

Встановлено, що поховання було майже вицент пограбоване у давнину. Кістяк похованого також був повністю порушований грабіжниками. В могилі знайдені лише рештки кісток та фрагмент бронзового наконечника від стріли. На сходах, що вели до катакомби розчищені рештки дерев'яного підносу із жертвовною їжею та залізний підток від списа. У насипу виявлені елементи кінської вузди та стінки античних амфор. Віднайдені автором публікації аналогії дозволили датувати пам'ятку IV ст. до н. е.

Курган біля Красногірки належить до групи пам'яток басейну Синюхи. Тривалий час дослідники пов'язують цей регіон з північним кордоном розселення скіфів на Правобережжі. Аналіз предметів матеріальної культури та поховального обряду вказує, що курган біля Красногірки був споруджений над похованням кочовика. Тип поховальної споруди, залишки озброєння та жертвоприношень дозволяють припустити, що власник гробниці належав до представників військової аристократії.

Ключові слова: скіфи, курган, Красногірка, катакомба, поховальний обряд, кінська вузда.

Problem statement. In 1983 the archaeological expedition of the then Kirovograd State Pedagogical Institute (Volodymyr Vynnychenko Central Ukrainian State Pedagogical University) carried out the excavation of the Scythian barrow near Krasnohirka village, Holovanivsk District, Kirovohrad Region.

Analysis of recent research and publications. The data for these studies is kept in the Ninel Boki Archæological Museum collection at the University. It is published in one local newspaper publication (Бокій, 1983: 3). The materials of the archaeological site also were published by the author of this article (Панченко, 2015).

Creating a goal. The barrow belongs to an interesting group of Scythian sites located in the basin of the Sinyukha River. At least 17 Scythian burial are reserched here today. They all belonged to the nomads. For a long time, researchers consider this region to be the northern border of the nomadic tribes (Бокій, 1994: 113; Бокій, 2001: 7). The aim of the article is to analyze the materials of the monument in the context of Scythian antiquities on the border of the Right Bank Forest-Steppe and Steppe in Ukraine.

Presentation of the main research material. In the early 1980 s near the village a combine caved in on one of the barrows during crop harvesting in the then Ernst Thälmann Collective Farm fields. In spring 1983 the archaeological expedition with Ninel Bokii in charge began its work in field. As the result of this work all barrows located on the communal farm fields as well as excavated Barrow 7 were registered.

Barrow 7 was located 2 km away from the village to the southwest on the left bank of the Synytsia River (between Synytsia and Southern Buh rivers) and belonged to the group which consisted of 8 mounds (Бокій, 1983: 3).

According to the oral information provided by local residents in the 1960 s the height of the barrow reached 3 m. At the time of excavation its height was already 1.2 m and its diameter was 20 m. The excavation was conducted by means of bulldozer.

A clay outbreak 5.0–5.5 m in diameter was recorded at a depth of 0.3–0.4 m. The thickness of the outbreak in the central part reached 0.9 m. Beyond its main body the clay of the outbreak was spread in a thin layer up to 10 m in diameter (Fig. I, 1).

Horse mouthpieces and an iron knife were found under the barrow at a distance of 1.5 m to the northeast from the centre of the pit. A fragment of amphora was found in a mound, in the western part of the barrow.

A catacomb was excavated under the barrow. The entrance pit, recorded at the

depth of 1.8 m, was filled with yellow clay. The pit is oriented West – Southwest – East – Northeast. The dimensions of the pit are: length – 2.6 m, width – 1.55 m, depth – 4.1 m. There was a pillar shaped mainland step in the north-western corner of the pit. The step had a subrectangular shape 0.4–0.5 m x 0.75–0.85 m in size, its height was 2 m.

Three steps under the eastern wall were also detected. The first, 0.6 m wide, was reentered at the depth of 3.35 m. The second, 1 m wide, – at the depth of 3.7 m. The third, 0.8 m wide, – at the depth of 4.1 m. The steps were carved not across the entire width of the pit, but in a semicircle under its western and northern walls. An earth trench was dug at the foot of the step, 0.1–0.15 m wide, filled with a large quantity of wood from a barrier that blocked the entrance to the catacomb.

A robber hole was detected in the northern wall of the pit at the depth of 2.5 m, 0.6–0.7 m in diameter.

The entrance to the catacomb is in the western wall of the entrance pit. The height of the entrance is 1.5 m, its width – 1 m.

The burial chamber has a subrectangular shape with a rounded step from the south. The dimensions of the pit are: length – 4 m, width – 2.8 m, depth of the catacomb bottom – 4.5 m. The back wall of the catacomb is vertical and lateral ones, northern and southern, are slightly sloped, the depth of the deviation is 0.25–0.35 m. A robber hole entrance, connected to the first one, was recorded in the northern wall. Probably, at first, the robbers got into the entrance pit and then dug a hole to the catacomb. The diameter of the opening is 0.5–0.55 m at the height of 1.3 m from the bottom. The burial is ransacked. The bottom of the catacomb was covered with a plank layer. The remains of four transverse and four longitudinal planks under northern wall were preserved. The position of the skeleton is impossible to identify. Only a humerus, a few vertebrae and fragments of ribs were preserved at the bottom. All other bones were found in the robber hole. Eight iron staples and an iron tube were detected on the stairs leading to the burial chamber and at the entrance to the catacomb, in the middle of the tomb a fragment of bronze artefact in a corroded condition was found (an arrow?) (Бокий, 1983).

Let's take a closer look at the discovered artefacts. Horse mouthpieces are represented by a set of bits, a bit section and four psalia.

The bits are looped, outside and inside loops are located near a rod (Fig. I, 5). The section rods are round in cross section, winding. On the outside loops are triangular brackets for mounting straps. The length of each section is 10 cm, the rods cross section thickness is 1.2 cm, the height of brackets is 5 cm. According to O. Mohylov their twisted shape strengthened the bits and improved control of the horse (Могилев, 2009: 22). Similar bits with twisted rods were found in the Right-bank Ukraine in Barrow 6 near Stare village (Фялко, 1994: Табл. 14, 1), in the Left-bank Ukraine – in a barrow near Volkovytsi village (Ильинская, 1968: Табл. XXXIV, 6). In the Middle Don a set of similar bits was recorded in Barrow 1/12 near Chastyie Kurgany (Либеров, 1965: рис. 23, 33). The same bits with triangular brackets were found in the Right-bank Ukraine in the burial of IV BC, inside Barrow 63 near Bobrytsia (Бобринской, 1901: 96). Analogical brackets occur in steppe barrows of IV BC from the Northern Black Sea Region – Tovsta Mohyla

(Мозолевський, 1979: Табл. 18, 2), Melitopol Barrow (Тереножкин, 1988: рис. 152, 5), Vratoliubivka Barrow (Куйбишев, 2009: рис. 21, 3). Chortomyk (Алексеев, 1991: кат. 4, с. 148).

One section of looped bits with straight rods, round in cross section, was also found in the barrow (Fig. I, 6). The dimensions are: height – 10 cm, cross section thickness – 0.8 cm. Similar findings are commonly known from Scythian monuments. They appeared in Scythian environment in middle 7th century BCE and were still in use until 3rd century BC (Могилов, 2008: 46). In the Right-bank Ukraine such bits have been also found in Barrow 490 near Makiivka (Петренко, 1967: рис. 5, 1) and in Mederove Barrow (Бокий, 1974: рис. 4, 7). They are also known from the Left-bank Ukraine: in Barrow 2 near Budky village (Ильинская, 1968: рис. 19), near Khutir Shumeiko (Ильинская, 1968: рис. 24). In the Middle Don sets of such bits have been discovered in Barrow 1 by Chastyie Kurgany and in Barrow 7 near Russkaya Trostianka village (Либеров, 1965: Табл. 22, 1, 26).

Two pairs of psalia belong to the straight iron two-hole psalia according to the classification of Oleksandr Mohylov (Могилов, 2008: 38–39).

The first two are of iron two-hole psalia (Fig. I, 8) type with squat proportions and have rounded flat heads at the end of rods (Могилов, 2009: 38). Their dimensions are: length – 13.0–13.3 cm, thickness of the rod cross section – 0.8–0.9 cm, heads diameter – 1.5–1.7 cm. Similar psalia appear in the second half of the 5th century BCE and were widely used in the 4th century BC (Могилов, 2008: 38; Петренко, 1961: 37). In the Right-bank Ukraine their analogues have been known from Barrows 63 near Bobrytsia village, 487 near Kapitanivka village, 490 near Makiivka village and others (Петренко, 1961: 37, Табл. XXVI, 1, 2, 21; Ильинская, 1968: Табл. 11, 1). In the Left-bank Ukraine, such psalia have been found in Barrow 7 (Stare Poultry Farm] (Ильинская, 1973: рис. 1, 2). Similar things are also known from the Middle Don Barrow 29/21 near Mastiugino village (Либеров, 1965: рис. 2, 160).

The other pair of psalia belong to straight two-hole rod psalia type (Fig. I, 7). Their dimensions are: length – 13.0 cm, rod cross section thickness – 0.8 cm. They were quite wide-spread in Scythian times, appearing in the end of the first half of the 6th century BC for the first time and remaining in use until the beginning of the 3rd century BC (Могилов, 2009: 39).

The fragment of the knife found together with horse mouthpiece is made of iron and has a crooked backside (Fig. I, 4). Its handle is broken off. The knife's dimensions are: preserved length – 7.5 cm, cross section thickness – 0.3 cm.

The iron staples from the burial have subrectangular shape measuring 3.5 x 4.0 cm. Traces of wood have been preserved on some of them. Similar staples are often found in Scythian burials of the IV century BC where they were used for strengthening wooden layings or trays with food offerings. However, earlier products of the Middle Scythian period are also known (Бокий та ін., 2013: 21). Their list is now supplemented by products from the village of Vasyne (Козир та ін., 2019: 310).

The tube, found in the tomb, is made of entire sheet of iron and has «wine-glass» form (Fig. I, 9). Its dimensions are: tube's length – 11.0 cm, diameter – 1.7–3.0 cm. Similar finds are more inherent to the Middle Don (Мелюкова, 1964: 45;

Табл. 13, 12–13), however they also occur along the Dnipro River valley (Петренко, 1967: Табл. 36, 11; Фиалко, 1994: рис. 4, 2).

Regarding the funerary ritual, the catacomb studied in barrow belongs to Type II Var. 1A, according to the V. Olkhovskiy's classification – long axes of entrance pit and chamber are located abreast (Ольховский, 1991: Табл. 2). Similar catacombs appeared in the Northern Black Sea Region in the first half of the 4th century BC and existed here throughout late Scythian period (Ольховский, 1991: 35). Using of wood laying in burial chambers is one of traditional elements of Scythians burial customs. The grooves in catacomb stairs were quite often used for reinforcing these barriers (Ольховский, 1991: 30). The bone remains in tomb and robber hole allow to claim that custom of corpse positioning on wood laying preserved near north-eastern chamber wall was used in this chamber. Such layings which cover the part or whole bottom of burial structures are known to the Scythians in the 5th century BCE (Ольховский, 1991: 67), but are more common in burials of middle and upper classes of Scythians society since the 4th century BC (Ольховский, 1991: 105).

Conclusions of this study. Burial customs and finds from the barrow near Krasnohirka village allow us dating the archaeological monument site to the 4th century BC. The discovered artefacts are only part of accompanying tomb goods that were probably much richer. It confirms the fact of robbery of the tomb at depth of 4.5 m in ancient times. The remains of the funerary structures allow us assuming that the buried person belonged to middle or upper class of the Scythian society.

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