

RITUAL PRACTICES IN THE MOUNDS OF TRIBALS (from the territory of Bulgaria)

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The present paper is devoted to the different kinds of ritual practices observed in the mounds of Tribals in the territory of Bulgaria. At present, the problem of the religious ideas of Tribals has been almost uninvestigated. The analyzing such ritual practices and further investigating the cultural-burial complexes could essentially contribute to clarifying some aspects of the Thracian religious believes.

The ritual practices observed in the mounds of Tribals can be classified as follows: ritual pits under and in the mound pile, fireplaces or signs of the fire observed in the different places of a mound, and sacrifices during or after the burial activities.

Digging pits *under* the mound pile does not belong to the burial activities. The pits were being open for a long period of time and had been used for different rituals. Most probably peoples who then built the mounds over these pits considered them as sacred objects or as the objects enclosing the sacred territory devoted to the rituals related to the fertility cult, the sun cult, etc.

It seems that digging the pits *into* the mound pile had a significant role in burial activities of Tribals. Such sort of pits can be found in various places of a mound and are the secondary objects with respect to the original burial. Some of them had been made *during* the process of mound building and may be associated with the cult of the dead.

The pits dug *after* the mound drifting in the most cases are found in the mound top. At present, associating them with the cults mentioned above is in a sense too speculative so clarifying the purpose of such pits is the subject of further research.

The fire is one of the main elements of the ritual practice of Tribals. The fireplaces or the signs of the fire have been found in almost all investigated mound regardless of whether the grave has been found in the mound or not. The fireplaces have been built during the whole period of the mound drifting and may be viewed as signs of the sun cult, the fertility cult or the home hearth cult, etc.

The Tribals rituals of offering as a sacrifice may be separated into two main groups: offering animals (the most often - horses or dogs) as a sacrifice and ritual breaking the pottery. The first type of sacrifice relates the Tribals to the tradition which was widely spread across the whole Thrace along the centuries. The same ritual was typical for Scythians and other tribes in Eurasia as well.

In the case of a grave mound the ritual breaking the pottery and throwing the pot fragments about the whole mound is most probably associated with the cult of the dead. In case of absence of a burial in the mound this ritual may be associated with the fertility cult when the ritual breaking the pottery may be treated as a symbolic sacrifice intended to provoke the plenty.

The analysis of the ritual practices in the mound of Tribal indicates that thesis is not an isolated phenomenon in the overall Thracian ritual activity. This proves again that the Tribals were a part of the Thracian ethnos and it's culture.

REMARKS ON THE POLITICAL-MILITARY ORGANIZING IN THE MID 4TH CENTURY BC AT LOWER DANUBE

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The second half of the 4th century BC in the Lower Danube was marked with military conflicts among Makedonia, Scythia and Thracian tribes. They have been widely elucidated in historiography however the arrangement of forces is a controversable point; it is supposed or strongly contended the formation in of anti-