

THE TYPES OF THE GRAVES' CONSTRUCTION OF THE TUMULARY TOMBS OF THE WEST-PODOLIAN GROUP IN THE SCYTHIAN TIME

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The West-Podolian Group of monuments is situated on the banks of the middle part of Dnestr. As a rule they are situated on the line of watershed or on the brink of plateau. They formed groups of 3 - 10 tumuli. There are isolated tumuli. At the present time the height of the tumuli is near 1 m, though we know tumuli of 3 and even more meters.

The main feature of these tumuli is considered to be the use of a great number of stones in the embankments. It is impossible to explain only by the existence there of a natural outcrops of stones. There are tumuli with wooden constructions and earthen embankments. The stone embankments were covered by earth, often timber stones limited it. Some tombs have cromlechs. The central burial was the main. The burials were made on the ancient earth-level or on the stone pavement in a large wooden tomb. There are burials in holes, the bottom and walls of which are faced with masonry and covered by wood on the top.

There are inhumations and cremations in the tumuli. There are known the burials in the earth. The urns were put into small holes. Different funeral ceremonies can be seen in the same groups of the tumuli. The main orientations of the burials are the Northern and West-Northern ones.

There are traced back large wooden tombs, which were put one into another and oriented on the parts of the world in some tumuli (Kruglyk, Dolyniani, Perebikovtsy, Zozulintsy). Wooden floorings and large stone embankments covered these tombs. The funeral ceremony included the burning as a result of which the tombs burned and the stone or earthen embankments had the traces of the fire.

The West-Podolian Group of tumuli of the Scythian time are to be dated by the early Scythian time (the end of the 8th - 5th centuries BC). Variety of tomb construction and funeral ceremonies can be explained by the formation of this group on the territory, which was previously occupied by the Thracian tribes of Chernoleskaya culture under the influence of the tribes of the Middle Dniپر and Bug.