

**BURIAL MOUNDS OF THE SCYTHIANS-NOMADS NEAR VILLAGE STEBLEV
(THE RIGHT-BANK UKRAINIAN FOREST-STEPPE)**

Sergei SKORYJ

1. One of the most important problems in the study of the ethnocultural history of the Ukrainian Right-Bank Forest-Steppe is identification of two main groups of archaeological relics: those left by aborigines and those left by alien nomad tribes. Being particularly specific, burial relics, especially sepulchers excavated entirely, are of primary significance.

2. One of these relics is the narrow necropolis near village Steblev which is located on a comparatively high right bank of the Ros river and consists of 15 graves, 11 of which belong to the first half of the 5th and first half of the 4th century BC.

The burial mounds were ploughed up, so the height preserved is 0.3 - 2.5 m and diameter of 12 - 35 m. Each mound consisted, as a rule, of one grave. We have investigated 12 graves altogether, one grave contained a paired horse interment. Burial constructions are simple soil pits or vaults either of a rectangular or of a square shape, 6 - 26 m² in size, ceiled by wooden blocks which sometimes were combined with complex over-grave constructions made of soil and wood (the tent-like shape included). Remains of 14 people (8 men, 4 women, 1

teenager, 1 skeleton is not recognized) were found in partially destroyed and robbed graves. The deceased lays stretched on their backs, orientation being unstable.

3. Diverse stocks, including numerous weapons even in women's graves, were found in the barrows: arrow-heads, spears and darts, swords, lamellar armors.

4. The small number of burial mounds with large graves and complicity of certain burial structures, horse interments or harness accompanying people graves, very interesting stocks prove that the Steblev necropolis is the burial place of chiefs of a tribe which inhabited the river Ros basin.

5. An analysis of burial rites in the Steblev sepulcher against forest-steppe and steppe graves of the Scythian epoch demonstrates some properties which find appropriate analogies in the Scythian graves in steppes in the Northern Black Sea areas which are not bound up with the forest-steppe burial ceremony.

6. The Steblev findings confirm that certain nomadic Scythians penetrated to the southern territories of the Right-Bank Forest-Steppe in the first half of the 5th century BC.