

**BURIALS OF SCYTHIAN WARRIORS FROM NORTH-WEST CRIMEA**

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On the Crimean territory the scythians have lived from the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC up to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD. Many aspects of their live activities remain unknown because of irregular studying of the monuments on these territories.

The least studied territory is Tarhankut region (oblast). Here the least number of monuments were investigated comparing to East and Central Crimea. The interesting data were obtained by the excavations in 1993. The examined (in this work) four Scythian burials were let into the centers of the mounds of Bronze Epoch, disposed in the groups between Slavnoye and Ryleevka villages. The burial constructions in two cases were not traced, other two were represented by the pit of oval shape and the catacomb. One burial was ruined in the antiquity, another- during a modern period, but the funeral rite was recorded for all complexes.

The skeletons lied stretched on the back, with head orientation toward west with deviation. In two cases left hands were bended in elbow and laid on pelvis, in another- the right leg was bended and in other- the legs were laid in rhomb position. All the burials were accompanied by parting food and knife.

The inventory accompanied the skeletons gives an evidence about the burials of light and heavy-armed warriors.

In one burial (1/1) the iron armour, spear-head and bushes of two spears, two bronze vorvorki (cone shaped object with a hole) and two arrow-heads were found. In the burial (2/2) there were spears, two-razored bronze axe, a bronze vorvorka, a quiver with 85 arrows. In the burial (3/2) a quiver with 12 arrows and a flag-stone were found. The most representative inventory was in the burial (4/2), which included a sword, a spear, an amphora and a bridle collection with 8 bronze plates having the shape of fishes, a vorvorka and a bronze plate shaped as unlocked triangle.

The armour collections are characteristic for Scythians in the end of 6<sup>th</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> centuries BC. They are known in nearly 400 burials now.

The swords with antenna pommels in the shape of eagle or gryphon head are rare and met usually in the complexes of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC.

Sufficiently rare artifacts are bridle plates in the shape of sturgeon fishes. The images of fishes (variants: a bird, biting a fish; a fish, biting a mythical animal) are known on the cult objects (gold brackets on wooden bowls, sheathes of swords, metal vessels, horse harness, Greek coins, etc.), dated 13<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> centuries BC and have a wide habitat of spreading (Iran, Siberia, North Black Sea, Mediterranean regions and Thrace). The main quantity of close type images are known among the Scythian monuments in the North Black Sea region in the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC.

The bronze two-razored axe is an unique artifact. The iron two-razored axes of the other type are known in two burials. A votive two-razored axe was found at the ancient monument near Chertovatoe village. As an analogy we will show the image of pole-axe on the statue from Sibioara. The production of bronze two-razored axes had practice in Greece. The similar iron articles were found in great number on Thracian monuments. The limited circle of artifacts gives an evidence about non-widespread such a type of weapons in Scythia, though Herodotus passages give an information about their acquaintance with it (IV,5; IV,70; VII,64). It is quite permissible to suppose both local origin of a given object and borrowing of its shape or to speak about its coming from Greece or Thrace.

The spear and the arrow-heads are typical for Scythian complexes of the 6<sup>th</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> centuries BC, mainly for the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC. Narrower dating is given by the amphora "aeginskiy type" (the second quarter - half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC).

So, the examined group of burials, dated in the whole 5<sup>th</sup> century BC, maybe the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup>

century BC, from one side increases the collection of rare Scythian artifacts, from other - gives an evidence about one of the periods of mastering Crimea by Scythian tribes, which moved in this case towards the peninsula from North Black Sea steppes.