

FUNERAL CEREMONY OF THE FAMILY PLACE OF OLBIO NECROPOLIS

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In 1990 in Olbio Necropolis there was excavated a family-tribal plot, dated to the end of the 5th – beginning of the 1st century BC. On the plot first there were opened complexes, connected with funeral rite of classical and Hellenistic time, situated tightly.

According to the ancient Greek funeral rite, the duty of alive was to satisfy the demands of dead in food and drinks. It was considered that if sacrifices stopped near the graves, the souls of dead came out of graves and became wandering shadows (ghosts), reproaching alive in impious deeds and revenging upon them for that. The funeral feast rite is connected with the soul come back to the grave and restored peace between it and alive. Funeral feasts bloody and bloodless were committed just after funerals and on the days of visiting graves in the form of the sacrifice and libation at the funeral fire; the libation and sacrifice without fire. Alive didn't have power to touch sacrifice food and drinks (Luc., De Luc., 13, V, 31).

On the family-tribal plot, for committing funeral feast, there were used special cult erections, altars, pits and ditches. On this plot there were excavated three types of altars.

The first type of altars is limestone sacrificial tables, the upper plate of those had cup-shaped deepening from one to three, in the shape they resemble an inner part of cups-phial, used in cult goals. Part of them had furrows for flowing, on this plot there were excavated four of these altars. Sacrificial tables together with funeral erection symbolized domestic life and housing. Besides they were used in Hecht cult and the cult of Htonic gods. This type of altars was used as the grave protection.

The second type of altars is those, piled up of stones. Unusual small altar of this type stood near of three sacrificial tables, used for the second time. Red-figured *pelica* of Bospor type and *oinochoe*, dated to the middle of the 4th century BC.

The third type is clay small altars. Step-typed clay altar, where sacrificial food was burnt, stood on the 4th century B.C. grave. Beside, next to it the libations were committed. For this in the southeastern corner of the altar the hollow-amphora leg was dug into and it was connected with a sacrificial furrow, which had the flow to the grave.

For libations near graves there were settled special erections-pits-botroces and sacrificial furrows. Professor B. Pharmakovsky noticed that one of the peculiarities of Olbio necropolis is the large quality of *botroces*. Five ones were dug out on the family-tribal plot, two of them had the flowing of sacrificial furrows not only libations were committed, but also the rest of sacrificial food was placed (Ath., IX, 410; Hom., Od., XI, 24; Luc., Char., 22).

Libations and sacrifices were committed over special furrows, which were typical for an ancient Greek funeral rite of the 8th - 4th centuries BC. On the plot nine sacrificial furrows were opened. Three of nine furrows were impacted by sand and clay. In all probability, the blood of sacrificial animals flew along them and then meat was thrown into them and *botroces*, after that furrows were impacted tightly, because it was considered that the touch to sacrificial food profaned alive.

Amphorae or their fragments (mouths or lower parts without legs) were used as *botroces*. Sometimes they closed the entrance into a small crept made in the ground in the 4th century BC. Mouths of amphoras in some cases were risen above the entrances to the crept and were on the ground.

One of the peculiarities of the plot is the big quantity of amphoras. They were found in twenty of forty excavated graves. Totally on this plot there were opened five funeral places with amphoras.

Amphoras played one of the leading roles in the funeral rite. They accompanied the diseased into the beyond the grave world and were filled with water or wine, according to the views of dead person or his relatives. Perhaps worshipers were given amphoras with wine, because according to Dionis cult the young god gave immortality to drink people. Worshipers of Elevein's mysteries and Orphiko-Pephagor studying, who were known in Olbio too, probably, poured either wine on water, which gave immortality as well as wine and cleared dead and alive.

Amphoras had their own symbols in funeral rites. Many peoples used conceptual man's figure as the prototype of the form of the dishes. Ceramic dish is not only closed environment, but also a model: the form of amphora is much closed to a woman's figure. Probably, it was the reason to bury infants in amphoras. This rite was widely spread in Olbio necropolis.

An unusual cult erection for libations was opened on this plot. The place for committing the funeral repast ritual was marked by two raw-walls, oriented along the North - South line. This erection resembles the entrance into labyrinth. From the eastern side under the Northern wall of labyrinth red-clayed painted *oinochoe* of Olbio production, black lacquered cup (*bolsal* type) and cup-*kantharos* lied bottom up, and from the western side there was reliculated *lekiph*. The Complex is dated to the middle of the 4th century BC.

Ancient Greek funeral rite didn't accept vessels, used for libations to be brought from Necropolis. On the plot there were found vessels, left near the graves after committing of this rite: two amphoras, four cups-*skyphos*, two *oinochoes*, a grey clayed jar and *pelica*. All cult erections of this plot are dated to the 4th century BC. They have analogies in Greek Necropolis as well as in Necropolis of Northern Black Sea Region. Thereby, Olbiopolits in the 4th century B.C. totally followed the ancient Greek funeral rite.