

**Anthropological material dated to the Gáva culture from the archaeological site
Tiszabura - Nagy-ganajos-hát**

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Keywords: *Gáva culture, biritual burials, anthropology*

9 burials of the Late Bronze Age Gáva culture were excavated in 2010 at Tiszabura – Nagy-ganajos-hát site Nr. 6. The cemetery consisted of 8 cremation graves and a single inhumation burial. It may be assumed that the calcined bone fragments gathered from three different locations within feature nr. 97 derive from the same single individual.

Description of the anthropological material

The anthropological remains are poorly preserved, therefore only limited studies could have been performed¹.

73/179 – 11-14 year old child

In the single inhumation grave of the site, fragmentary skull and fragments of the postcranial skeleton were uncovered. The finds were unsuitable for detailed analysis. Tooth abrasion is of degree I, caries did not occur. The maximum gracile bones may suggest that the buried individual belonging to the Infans II age group was a female.

76/162 – 1-14 year old child

The 200-500 pieces of calcined bone fragments from the grave are white in colour, testifying the extremely high temperature of the pyre. No identifiable parts turned up among the bone fragments. The age determination was based on a small detail of the open cranial sutures and the sizes of the long bone fragments.

78/164 – 1-6 year old child

While the outer part of the calcined bone fragments is generally white, their inner part is black in colour suggesting that burning lasted a relatively short time interval and ended when the heat only partially reached inside the bones. A sum of ± 200 pieces of microfragmented bones were saved from the grave. The age at death was determined by the caput humeri.

79/166 – 16-25 year old female (?)

Even if most of the ± 800 calcined bone meso- and microfragments were black in colour, white details also occurred. The difference in colour testifies the uneven heating of the pyre, or a relatively short interval of burning time. The only identifiable fragment is a part of the os temporale pars petrosa. The sex and age estimation was based on the general characteristics of the bone fragments.

80/167 – 23-39 year old male

Among the ± 1000 mostly black bone meso- and microfragments only a few brownish pieces could be observed. According to the colour of the calcined bones, the intensity of burning was low. Only a few fragments belonged to the skull, mostly smaller details of the postcranial skeleton were preserved. Identifiable pieces of cranial bones were a part of the occipital bone with the processus occipitalis externa, the pars petrosa and some parts of the cranial sutures. From the postcranial skeleton, only some fragments of the vertebrae, the pelvis and the diaphyses of the long bones are preserved. Pathologic changes do not occur on the fragments. Sex determination was based on the occipital bone, age at death was ascertained in the basis of the details of the cranial sutures and the general characteristics of the remains.

From the surroundings of the grave, another two black, calcined bone mesofragments, unsuitable for detailed analysis, were collected.

97/269, 97/201, 97/270 – Individual of indeterminate sex and age

¹ In the course of the analysis, methods of Éry et al. 1963, Johnston 1961, Nemeskéri et al. 1960 and Schour/ Massler 1941 have been applied.

The sum of 50-100 and 10-20 calcined bone microfragments found in the grave were unsuitable for anthropological analysis. Identifiable bone fragment did not occur, thus based on the general characteristics, it is only presumable that the remains located in three places derive from the same individual.

An overview of the anthropological finds of the Gáva culture

Graves excavated at Tiszabura – Zoffmann primarily suggest that this population buried their deceased into biritual cemeteries, however the evidence is so scarce that at the very moment we cannot assume whether there is a connection between the burial rites and the sex or age at death of each individuals. The cremation finds from Tiszabura also testify that the pyres could have been burning only for a short time during the cremation, which was rarely perfect.

For this moment, only a few burials are known from the relatively long-term and widespread Gáva culture, and even less of them have been investigated by anthropologists:

1. Balmazújváros – *Tömöri tanya*: 1 child (Zoffmann, unpubl.)
2. Berettyóújfalu – *Nagy-Bócs-dűlő*: 1 female (Zoffmann 2007)
3. Debrecen-Józsa, *Alsójózsai lakópark*: 3 children, 4 females (Zoffmann, unpubl.)
4. Hajdúdorog – *Szállásföldek-Közép*: 1 female (Zoffmann, unpubl.)
5. Tiszabura – *Nagy-ganajos-hát*, site Nr. 6.: 3 children, 1 male, 1 female, 2 or 4 individuals of indeterminate sex and age
6. Vencsellő – *Kastélykert*: 2 females (Szathmáry 1995-96)². Of the inhumated skeletons only the one from Berettyóújfalu – *Nagy-Bócs-dűlő* has been published yet (Zoffmann 2007). The 39-43 year old female buried there was a representant of a very gracile, short statured, planooccipital brachymorph taxonomic variant (Zoffmann 2007). However, based on the still unpublished, otherwise very fragmentary findings, it seems clear that within the population of the Gáva culture this brachymorph taxonomic variant occurs only in exceptional cases.

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² The archaeological investigation carried out after the first publication of the finds revealed that the burials belonged to the Gáva culture instead of the Nyírség culture (Dani 1999).