

SPRAWOZDANIA ARCHEOLOGICZNE

INSTYTUT ARCHEOLOGII I ETNOLOGII POLSKIEJ AKADEMII NAUK



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**SPRAWOZDANIA
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INSTYTUT ARCHEOLOGII I ETNOLOGII
POLSKIEJ AKADEMII NAUK

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KRAKÓW 2020

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Dedicated to Professor Jan Machnik for His 90th Birthday

Sergey B. Valchak¹, Sergey D. Lysenko², Nikolai Yu. Gorbol³,
Sergey N. Razumov⁴, Nikolai P. Telnov⁵, Vitalij S. Sinika⁶

GRAVES OF THE BEGINNING OF THE EARLY IRON AGE IN BARROW 1 OF THE “RYBKHOZ” (“FISH FARM”) GROUP IN THE LOWER DNIESTER REGION

ABSTRACT

Valchak S. B., Lysenko S. D., Gorbol N. Yu., Razumov S. N., Telnov N. P., Sinika V. S. 2020. Graves of the beginning of the Early Iron Age in barrow 1 of the “Rybkhoz” (“Fish farm”) Group in the Lower Dniester region. *Sprawozdania Archeologiczne* 72/2, 357-371.

Two graves of the Pre-Scythian period (Chernogorovka culture) from barrow 1 of the “Rybkhoz” (“Fish farm”) group near Glinoe village, Slobodzeya district, on the left bank of the Lower Dniester are considered on the broad background of analogies. The issues of chronology and morphology of some categories of adornments are analyzed. Particular attention is drawn to burial 8 with two bronze temporal pendants. There are no analogies to these adornments in the materials of the Chernogorovka culture. The decorative endings of these pendants resemble the design of the backs of the eastern Mediterranean (“nodular”) fibulae, especially items with three spherical or biconical thickenings. Rings-pendants from burial 14 do not find complete matches among the adornments of the Chernogorovka culture. At the same time, these products are similar to adornments from contemporaneous North Caucasian sites due to their massiveness and non-closed ends. Both graves date back to the 9th – the first half of the 8th century BC.

Keywords: The Pre-Scythian period, the Chernogorovka culture, the North-West Black Sea region, graves, bronze temporal pendants, rings-pendants, astragali

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INTRODUCTION

Studies of archaeological sites of the Early Iron Age on the territory of the northwest Black Sea region have been conducted for over 120 years. During this period, many Scythian, Sarmatian, and Chernyakhov graves were studied in the region. At the same time, very few burials of the Pre-Scythian time (Chernogorovka culture) have been discovered there so far.

Therefore, only 11 graves have been investigated on the left bank of the Dniester over the past 30 years. A barrow with two burials (main and secondary) was excavated near the town of Slobodzey (Yarovoy *et al.* 2002) in 1992. The secondary grave was found near Mokra village, Rybnitsa district, in 1994 (Sinika *et al.* 2016, 73-74, 82-83, No. 64, 65). All other burials that were studied were found near Glinoe village, Slobodzeya district. These included the secondary grave in barrow 1 (Fidelsky and Sinika 2010, 165-166, fig. 16: 1-4), discovered in 1995, and three secondary burials in barrow 4 of the “Sad” (“Garden”) group studied in 2015 (Valchak *et al.* 2019). Two secondary graves in barrow 1 of the “Rybkhoz” (“Fish farm”) group and two secondary burials in barrow 1 of the “Plavni” (“Overflow”) group were discovered in 2019.

Thus, each new burial, which has not yet been put into scientific circulation, deserves meticulous attention and comprehensive study, taking into account the paucity of graves of the Pre-Scythian time.

This paper for the first time publishes and analyzes two graves discovered in 2019 during the excavation of barrow 1 of the “Rybkhoz” (“Fish farm”) group, near Glinoe village, Slobodzeya district, on the left bank of the Lower Dniester. The site was located 2.2 km northeast of the intersection of the Tiraspol-Dniester highway with Lenin street of Glinoe village, and 0.11 km southwest of the Glinoe-Pervomaisk road, on the plateau located on the right bank of the river Krasnaya.

Barrow 1 of the “Rybkhoz” group was excavated in parallel trenches using machines. Five baulks were made along the west – east line. All the baulks were 0.6 m wide. The Central baulk was 40 m long, the 1st North and 1st South baulks were 36 m long, and the 2nd North and 2nd South baulks were 32 m long (Fig. 1). The mound was damaged by deep plowing (up to 0.4 m). Its height from the present surface was 0.6 m. The height of the mound above the ancient horizon was 0.7 m from R_0 at the time of the start of research.

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Twenty-four burials were discovered in the barrow: ten burials of the Pit Grave cultural and historical community, one grave of the Ingul Catacomb culture (?), three burials of the Late Bronze Age, two graves of the Chernogorovka culture, six burials of the Medieval nomads, and two indefinable graves.

MATERIALS FROM THE GRAVE 8

Grave 8 (secondary) was found 8 m north of R_0 . It was made in the undercut in the northern part of the barrow (Fig. 1; 2: 1). The burial chamber partially overlapped an earlier burial in a rectangular pit oriented along a west-east axis, which belongs to the Pit Grave cultural and historical community of the Early Bronze Age.

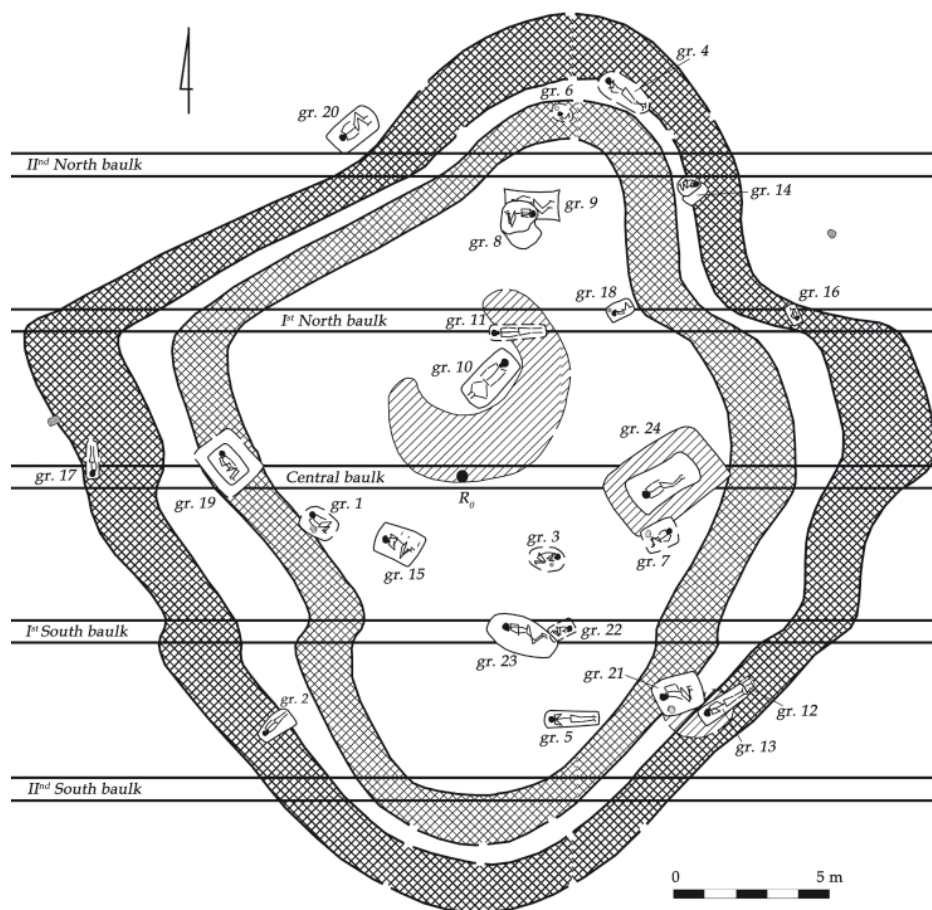


Fig. 1. Plan of barrow 1 of the “Rybkhoz” (“Fish farm”) cemetery near Glinoe village on the left bank of the Lower Dniester (illustrated by S. N. Razumov)

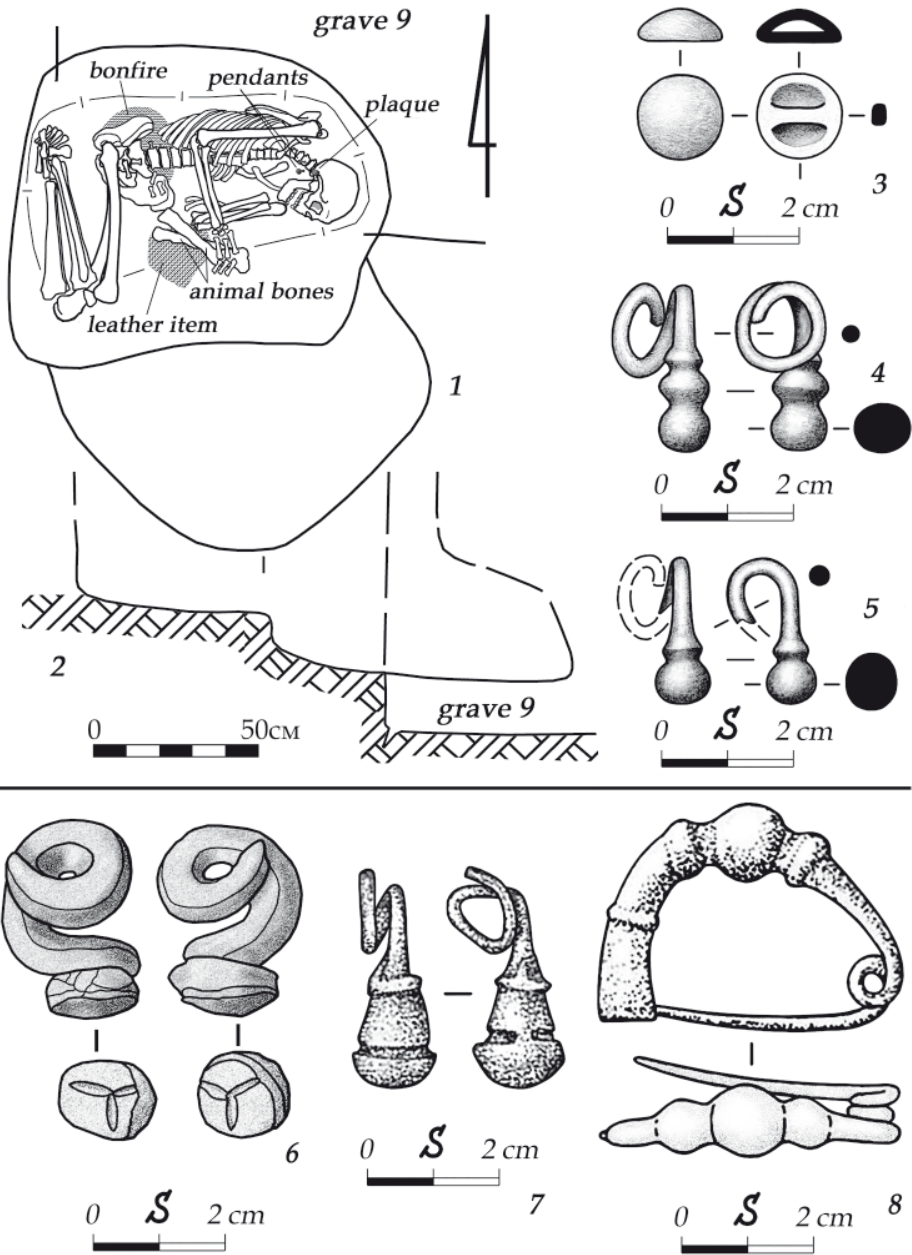


Fig. 2. Grave Glinoe/Rybkhov 1/8: plan (1) and section (2) of the burial (illustrated by S. N. Razumov), 3 – bronze plaque, 4, 5 – bronze temporal pendants (illustrated by S. D. Lysenko), 6 – bronze temporal pendants from burial Tselinnoe 16/3 (after Makhortykh 2005, fig. 153: 4, 5), 7 – bronze pendant from the Cozia settlement (after Kashuba 2000, fig. XXVII: 43); 8 – bronze “nodular” fibula from the Brad settlement (after Kašuba 2006, Abb. 3: 1)

The entrance pit had a rectangular shape with dimensions of 1×0.75 m and a depth of 1.14 m from R_0 , and was oriented along a NW-SE axis. It was fixed at the level of -0.94 m from R_0 .

There was a *burial chamber* of irregular, sub-trapezoidal shape, with dimensions of $1.1-0.5 \times 0.9$ m along the bottom and a depth of 1.33 m from R_0 , oriented along an east-west axis to the north of the entrance pit. The chamber vault was preserved to a height of about 0.4 m above the bottom. The chamber is separated from the entrance pit by a step with a height slightly greater than 0.2 m.

The skeleton of the adult person lay on the bottom of the chamber in a medium-crouched position on the left side, head to the east. The right hand was bent at the elbow at a right angle, and the wrist overlapped the elbow joint of the left arm, which was strongly bent at an acute angle. The left hand was located near the chin. Earth-moving animals moved phalanges of the left hand into the pelvic area. The femora were located almost at right angles to the axis of the spine; the tibiae were strongly bent at an acute angle. Two long bones of cattle were lying under the right hand.

The layer of brown organic decay from a mat, 1×0.5 m in size, was noted under the skeleton. Remains of a bonfire, in the form of a round ash spot and burnt clay, with a diameter of about 0.25 m, were recorded under the pelvis.

Composition and location of grave goods. The decayed remnants of a leather product, sub-triangular in plan, with dimensions of about 220×180 mm and a thickness of about 10 mm, was found in front of the skeleton. The bones of an animal were located on top of it. Two bronze casted pendants were found in the cervical vertebrae, the right one lying on the skull, and the left one lying under it (1, 2). A bronze plaque lay at the right temple (3).

Description of the finds

1. Bronze temporal pendant (right). The suspension is made of a rod, round in cross-section and tapering to the end, which was spirally twisted into an incompact ring in one and a half turns. Three thickenings are vertically located at one end; the upper two are biconical, the lower is spherical. The total dimensions of the product are $26 \times 14 \times 15$ mm. The diameter of the ring is 14 mm. The diameter of the rod is 2.8-4 mm. The total length of the decorative end is 16 mm; the diameter of the thickenings is 6 mm, 8×9 mm, and 8×9 mm (Fig. 2: 2).

2. Bronze temporal pendant (left). The suspension is made of a rod, round in cross-section and tapering to the end, which was spirally twisted into an incompact ring for more than one turn (part of the ring is broken off). Two thickenings are vertically located at one end; the upper is biconical, the lower is spherical. Suspension length is 22 mm. The diameter of the ring is 13 mm. The diameter of the rod is 3-3.5 mm. The total length of the decorative ending is 10 mm; the diameter of the thickenings is 6 mm, and 8×9 mm (Fig. 2: 3).

3. Bronze convex plaque. The item is round in plan and segmental in cross-section. The eye is casted, and is rectangular in cross-section. It is located in the same plane as the lower part (“hidden loop”). The diameter of the plaque is 13 mm; the height is 5 mm. The plate thickness is 2 mm. The dimensions of the eye section are 3 × 2 mm (Fig. 2: 4).

ANALYSIS OF THE FUNERARY RITE AND GRAVE GOODS

Burials in undercuts in the Pre-Scythian period are quite common (Goshko and Otroshchenko 1986, 174-175; Makhortykh 2005, 54-55, 98), but they are also known in the previous period. Thus, graves in undercuts are widespread in the Dnieper-Prut Babino culture of the transition from the Middle to the Late Bronze Age (Dvornichenko 1968, 5-15; Sharafutdinova 1982, 48-51, 141; Savva 1992, 71; Litvinenko 2009, 8-9). The literature also mentions burials in undercuts during the final period of the Late Bronze Age, attributable to the Belozerka culture (Otroshchenko 1986, 131-132; Vanchugov 1990, 52, 56). However, after closer examination, this attribution becomes unreliable, and all of the “Belozerka” complexes with undercuts actually belong to the Chernogorovka culture of the Early Iron Age. Thus, V. V. Otroshchenko concluded that “the carriers of the Belozerka culture did not bury their dead either in the undercuts or in the catacombs”, having analyzed all cases of “Belozerka” burials with undercuts and cases of direct stratigraphy of Belozerka and Chernogorovka graves (Otroshchenko 2001, 191).

The funerary rite of burial 8 in barrow 1 is distinguished by some peculiarity in the position of the left hand, the wrist of which was located in the front of the skull. The position of the hands near the face is more characteristic for the steppe sites of the Bronze Age, but occasionally finds correspondence among Pre-Scythian burials. In particular, the position of the left hands near the face was noted in the graves Krasnoe 1/7, on the left bank of the Lower Dniester, and Kalinovka 1/2, on the left bank of the Lower Bug (Makhortykh 2005, fig. 97: 1, 105: 1, 2). An individual with both arms bent at the elbows and placed towards the face was found in the burial Orlovka 1/8, on the left bank of the Lower Danube, and in the grave of Balka Bashmachka (stone construction 4) on the right bank of the Lower Dnieper (Makhortykh 2005, fig. 54: 1, 2, 122: 1, 2).

Bonfire remnants found under skeletal remains have been recorded in the north-western Black Sea region to date only in the secondary Pre-Scythian (Chernogorovka) burial 13 in barrow 4 of the “Sad” (“Garden”) group, near Glinoe village on the left bank of the Lower Dniester (Valchak *et al.* 2019, 141). We should note that this grave was studied in a mound located 1.7 km northwest of barrow 1 of the “Rybkhoz” group. However, other manifestations of the use of fire in the funerary rite are known in the region. The burning of wooden supra-burial structures and the partial cremation of the deceased (“bones were burned to black”) were recorded in the widely known grave Slobodzeya 3/3, which was the main burial in its barrow (Yarovoy *et al.* 2002, 292-293, fig. 3). This grave is located

11.83 km northwest of barrow 1 of the “Rybkhoz” group. Barrow 1 of the Zalts cemetery, on the left bank of the Kuchurgan firth (Odessa region, Razdelnaya district, Limanskoe village), was located at the same distance, but to the east-south-east of our mound. Traces of partial cremation (“the right calcaneus is burned”) were noted there in grave 1 (Ivanova *et al.* 2005, 9).

Traces of burning of funerary structures were noted outside the northwest Black Sea region in the Chernogorovka graves in barrows 2, 4, and 5 near Cotiujeni village (Sholdanesti district) on the right bank of the Middle Dniester (Levitsky and Kashuba 2011, 240, fig. 2), in Vysokaya Mogila 1/5 (Zaporizhzhya region, Vasilyevka district, Balki village) and in Zolotaya Balka 14/3 (Kherson region, Novovorontsovsky district) on the left bank of the Lower Dnieper (Makhortykh 2005, 324, 333). Partial cremation was recorded in the Sokolovo II 3/4 burial (Dnepropetrovsk region, Novomoskovsky district) in the Orel-Samara interfluvium. “The bones of the limbs, thoracic region, and sinciput are noticeably burned” (Makhortykh 2005, 359). Coals were discovered in the filling of the Kolpakovka III 1/1 burial (Dnepropetrovsk region, Magdalinsky district) on the left bank of the Lower Dnieper (Makhortykh 2005, 338).

However, most interesting for us are the three Chernogorovka funerary structures, in which the same rite is recorded as in the Glinoe/Sad 4/13 and the Glinoe/Rybkhoz 1/8 burials on the left bank of the Lower Dniester. A two-layer bedding was noted under the skull of the deceased in the complex Zvonetskoye I 15/2 (Dnepropetrovsk region, Solonyansky district) on the right bank of the Lower Dnieper, “consisting of ash and small fragments of calcined bones, covered with a thin layer of chalk,” in addition to burnt soil and coals in the fill of the undercut (Makhortykh 2005, 330, fig. 87: 1). “The highest concentration of charcoal and granules of burnt soil, which were also included in the fill of the grave and, probably, taken from the funeral feast bonfire” was found under the skeleton in the burial Peschanka 1/5 (Dnepropetrovsk region, Novomoskovsky district) in the Orel-Samara interfluvium (Makhortykh 2005, 350-351, fig. 123: 5). Finally, the bottom of the structure was “sprinkled with ash and lime” in the eponymous site Chernogorovka 1/2 (Donetsk region, Seversk city) in the Middle Seversky Donets region (Makhortykh 2005, 365).

Here, we can only add that the burning of the bottom of the pit is also mentioned for two burials of the flat cemetery Cartal III on the Left bank of the Lower Danube (Bruyako 2013, 176).

The grave goods from the burial Glinoe/Rybkhoz 1/8 are quite remarkable. The bronze plaque with a hidden loop discovered here finds many analogies among the adornments of the Koban culture of the North Caucasus, starting from the turn of the 2nd-1st millennium BC and throughout the 8th-7th centuries BC. (Kozenkova 1998, 36-37, tab. X: 3). V. I. Kozenkova considers them “buttons”, but it seems that the plaques served as an integral part of the sewed and fixed decor of clothing items. There are sometimes several exemplars present in certain graves. Their use would be very difficult as buttons with a hidden loop

(Kadieva *et al.* 2020, 171-172, fig. 2: 1-6). In the case under consideration, the plaque could serve as a decoration for a headdress or a band-crown made of organic material (Goshko and Otroshchenko 1986, 176).

Temporal pendants or earrings, analogous to those found in burial 8 of barrow 1, are not known to us in the Pre-Scythian sites on the southern edge of Eastern Europe (including the forest-steppe zone and the North Caucasus). They only vaguely resemble the Pre-Scythian items of precious metals and bronze, which have disc-shaped endings that are ornamented with three lines diverging from the center (Fig. 2: 6). Such pendants (“lamb horns”) are well known in the steppe sites of the Chernogorovka culture of the Lower Dnieper region (Dubovskaya 1993, 143-144; 1994, 23, fig. 4: 32-35; Makhortykh 2005, 69-70, 105, fig. 30:18-20, 35; Tarasova 2004, 24-25; 2005, 122-126, fig. 1-4). Chernogorovka pendants differ fundamentally from pendants from “Rybkhoz” by the shape of their decorative endings. We also could not find direct analogies in the more eastern regions.

We identified only one piece of jewelry that could conditionally be considered a close analogy to our pendants at Pre-Scythian sites of the northwest Black Sea region and the Balkan-Danube region as a whole. The item in question is from the layer of the Cozia settlement (on the right bank of the Middle Prut, Romania, Iași County, Costuleni commune) of the Cozia-Saharna culture (Fig. 2: 7). The find was initially interpreted as a fragment of the back of a “nodular” fibula (Kashuba 2000, 327, fig. 27: 43; Kašuba 2006, Abb. 7: 1). M. T. Kashuba dates the find to the first half of the 9th century BC (Kashuba 2000, fig. XXXIX: 13; Kašuba 2003, fig. 9: 7). Temporal adornments from the Glinoe/Rybkhoz 1/8 complex unequivocally allow us to consider the find from Cozia as a pendant.

The style of the decorative endings of the pendants from “Rybkhoz” and Coziaresemble the design on the backs of the Eastern Mediterranean (“nodular”) fibulae, especially the exemplars with three spherical or biconical thickenings (Fig. 2: 8). Similar fibulae were dated by researchers in different ways: HaC (Vinski and Vinski-Gasparini 1962: 276, 279, Sl. 95, 99, 108); 9th-7th centuries BC (Gergova 1978, 297-298, Tab. I: 7,15); 8th century BC (Toncheva 1980, 68-69, Pl. XXVII: 7, 8, 10); 10th-9th centuries BC and the beginning of the 8th century BC (Melyukova 1979, 30, fig. 5: 17); HA B₃, or 8th century BC (Chochorowski 1993, 165, 191, 193, ryc. 26: 6, 40: 2); the first half to the middle of the 9th century BC (Kashuba 2000, fig. XXXIX: 12, 14; Kašuba 2003, fig. 9: 8); and the second half of the 10th to the 9th century BC (Kašuba 2006, Abb. 13). In most cases, all these dates coincide with the Pre-Scythian period in the North Black Sea region. The most eastern find of such a fibula comes from the cemetery of the Koban culture Kumbulta in the mountains of North Ossetia (Gergova, 1978: 297-298, Tab. I: 15).

As far as we know, the flat burial ground at Kartal III is the closest site to the “Rybkhoz” cemetery in which such fibulae were found. This archaeological complex is located 185 km southwest in a straight line from the “Rybkhoz” barrow group. The cemetery and the settlement date back to HaB₂/B₃ – C₁, the period of the “Middle Hallstatt” (= Pre-Scythian period) in the framework of the (10th) 9th-8th centuries BC (Bruyako 2013, 169-171, 178-181,

186, fig. 8: 1, 4; 2017, 312). The orientation of those buried in the south-southeast sector of Kartal III should be noted (Bruyako 2013, Table 3), as it may indicate the legacy of the Belozerka traditions in the funerary rite.

The Cozia settlement is located 152 km to the northwest of our site, on the right bank of the Middle Prut, from where the closest analogy to the pendants from the grave Glinoe/Rybkhoz 1/8 on the left bank of the Lower Dniester comes. At the same time, the nearest site of the Cozia-Saharna culture is the settlement of Brad (Romania, Bacau County, Negri commune) on the left bank of the Siret, where nodular fibulae were discovered. It is located 220 km west of the “Rybkhoz” barrow group.

Thus, we can carefully date grave 8 of barrow 1 of the “Rybkhoz” group to the Pre-Scythian time – most likely, back to the period from the 9th to the first half of the 8th century BC.

MATERIALS FROM THE GRAVE 14

Grave 14 (secondary) was found 12 m northeast of R_0 . It was made in the undercut, on the edge of the circular ditch surrounding the burials of the Early and Middle Bronze Age (Fig. 1; 3: 1, 2).

The entrance had a rectangular form with rounded corners. It was oriented along a north-east – southwest axis, and fixed at a level of -1.1 m from R_0 . Its size was 0.75×0.5 m, and its depth was 1.29 m from R_0 .

The burial chamber of an irregular, sub-trapezoidal shape, with dimensions of 0.67×0.4 - 0.6 m along the bottom and a depth of 1.45 m from R_0 , was made to the northwest of the entrance pit and was oriented along a northeast-southwest axis. The chamber vault was preserved to a height of about 0.45 m above the bottom. It was separated from the entrance pit by a step about 0.25 m high.

The skeleton of a child (about 5-6 years old) lay at the bottom of the chamber in a medium-crouched position on the left side, head to the east. The right arm was bent at the elbow at a right angle, and its wrist, which was destroyed, lay on the left elbow joint. The left arm lay, probably, in front of the chest and was bent at the elbow at an acute angle, while the wrist was likely be near the chin (offset by a hole). The left femur was at a right angle to the spinal column, and the tibia was at an acute angle to it. The bones of the right leg, which were at an acute angle to the spinal column, were tightly pressed each to other and overlapped the upper part of the left femur. The decay under and around the skeleton was not found (Fig. 3: 1).

Composition and location of grave goods. The set of six astragali of small cattle (4) was in front of the skeleton, between the pelvis and chest. A bronze pendant was found at the frontal bone (1). Bronze temporal rings (2, 3) lay near the skull, one of them being near the right clavicle, and the other under the skull.

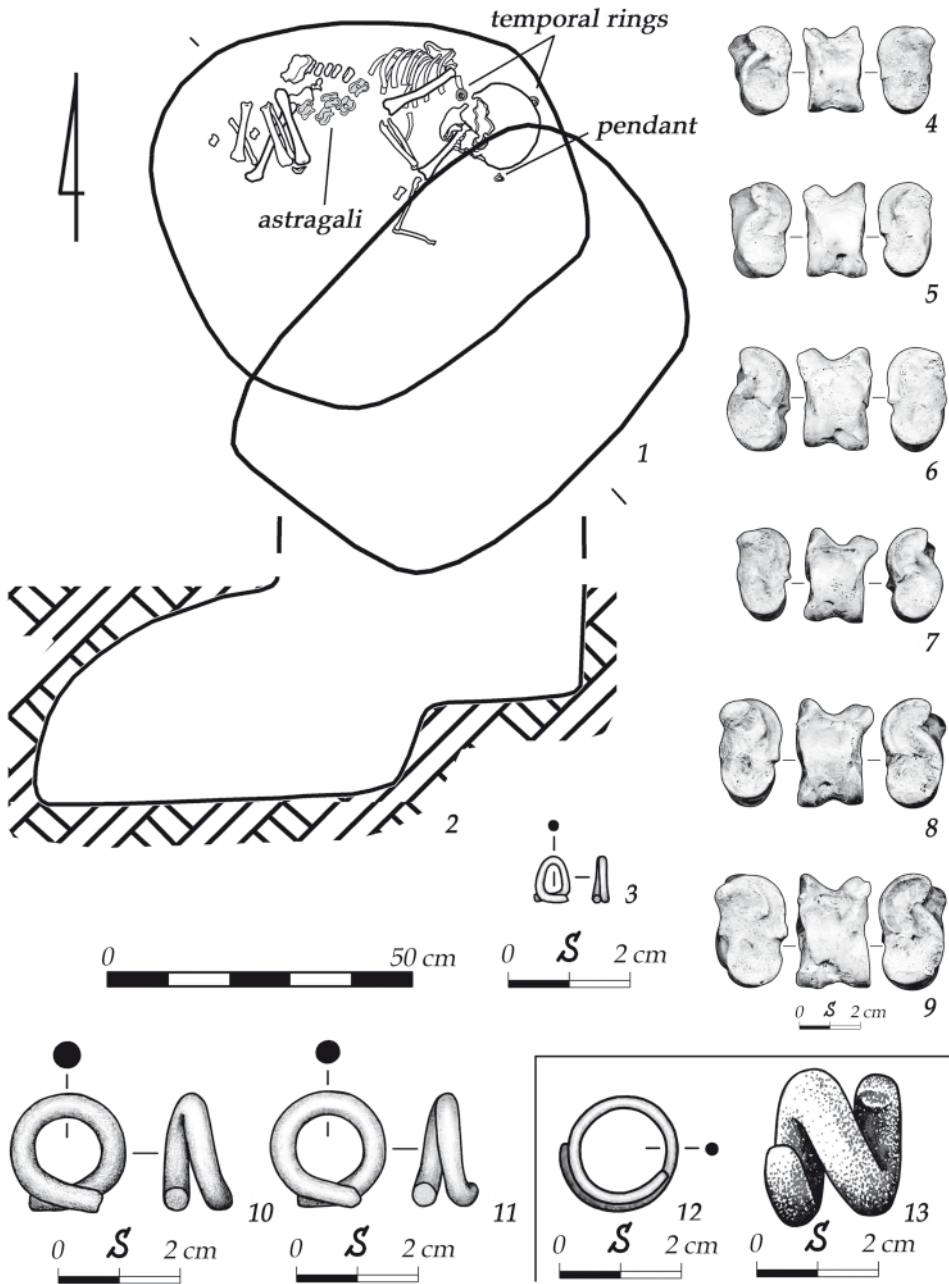


Fig. 3. Grave Glinoe/Rybkhov 1/14: plan (1) and section (2) of the burial, 3 – bronze ring-pendant, 4-9 – astragali, 10, 11 – bronze temporal rings-pendants; 12 – bronze temporal ring-pendant from the burial Trapovka 16/9 (after Vanchugov et al 1976, fig. 3: 7); 13 – bronze ring-pendant from the Serzhen'-Yurt settlement (after Kosenkova 2001, fig. 36: 8)

Description of the finds

1. Bronze ring-pendant with ends extending one after another. It is made of a rod with a round cross-section, twisted into a ring in 1.25 turns. The diameter of the ring is 7.5×6 mm; the diameter of the rod is 1.5 mm (Fig. 3: 3).
2. Bronze ring-pendant with ends extending one after another (near the back of the head). It is made of a rod with a round cross-section, twisted into an incompact ring in 1.2 turns. The diameter of the ring is 19 mm; the diameter of the rod is 4 mm (Fig. 3: 10).
3. Bronze ring-pendant with ends extending one after another (under mandibula). It is made of a rod with a round cross-section, twisted into an incompact ring in 1.2 turns. The diameter of the ring is 19 mm; the diameter of the rod is 4.5 mm (Fig. 3: 11).
4. Six astragali of small cattle (three of them are right and the other three are left). Sizes are from $28 \times 20 \times 19.5$ mm to $38 \times 25 \times 22.5$ mm (Fig. 3: 4-9).

ANALYSIS OF THE FUNERARY RITE AND GRAVE GOODS

Certain features of the funerary rite in the grave Glinoe/Rybkhoz 1/14 find numerous analogies among the Pre-Scythian sites in the south of Eastern Europe (Valchak *et al.* 2019, 164-165). These include the undercut construction, the eastern orientation, the positioning of one of the wrists near the elbow joint or lain on top of the wrist of the other hand.

Temporal pendants made of a bronze (and other metals) rod twisted in the form of a ring, with the ends of the rod extending one after the other, are an enduring attribute of graves, from the Early Eneolithic to the beginning of the Early Iron Age. Such items are known from sites of various archaeological cultures in the vast expanses of Eastern Europe and cannot help to establish any narrow chronology if there is no other characteristic inventory in the complex.

Various types of rings-pendants, made with different metals, and with ends that face one another, are known at the sites of the Belozerka culture: Strumok 7/1 (Odessa region, Tatarbunary district) and Krinichnoe (Odessa region, Bolgrad district) on the left bank of the Lower Danube, and Kochkovatoe (Odessa region, Tatarbunary district) in the Danube-Dniester interfluvium (Vanchugov 1990, 95, 97, fig. 35: 14, 15, 37: 10). They were also found in the Pre-Scythian sites of the North Black Sea region: Slobodzeya 3/3 on the left bank of the Lower Dniester (Yarovoy *et al.* 2002, 295, fig. 6: 3); Zimogorye 2/5 (Lugansk region, Slavyanoserbsk district) in the Middle Seversky Donets region (Makhortykh 2005, 69, 105, fig. 30: 9, 32); and Shakhaevsky-I 7/5 (Rostov region, Bagaevskaya district) in the Don region (Lukyashko 1999, 82, fig. 70: 2), as well as sites in the steppe (Valchak 2013, 52, fig. 3: 4) and mountain areas of the Northern Caucasus (Kozenkova 1998, 34-35, tab. IX: 10, 12).

The rings-pendants with non-closed and converging ends are, in most cases, rolled rather haphazardly and asymmetrically. A ring-pendant found on the skull in burial 9 of barrow 16 near Trapovka village (Odessa region, Tatarbunary district) in the Danube-Dniester interfluvium (Vanchugov *et al.* 1976: 219-220, fig. 2: 3, 3: 7) is the closest analogy to the finds from “Rybkhoz”. The diameter of the ring is 1.8 cm; the diameter of the rod is 0.2 cm (Fig. 3: 12). This ring is almost the same as ours in terms of its diameter and the precision of its manufacture. However, it is made of a rod two times thinner than the rings from the “Rybkhoz”.

The exact ratio between the diameter of the rod and the relatively small diameter of the temporal rings from the Glinoe/Rybkhoz 1/14 complex makes them appear quite massive. In addition, these rings have two more features that are not characteristic for most such products of the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age of the North Black Sea region. These features are the distance between the ends of the ring (noticeable when viewed from the side) and the truncation (sharp chopping off) of the ends of the rod from which they are made. This combination of features (visual massiveness, flattening of the ends, the distance between the ends) draws our attention to the materials from the North Caucasus, where such finds are not uncommon. Thus, a massive ring-pendant of 1.7 turns, between the ends of which there is a gap, was part of a hoard of adornments found within the V lower horizon of the Koban culture settlement of Serzhen-Yurt (Chechnya, Shali district – Fig. 3: 13). The hoard is dated to the 10th-8th centuries BC (Kozenkova 2001, 80, 110, fig. 36: 8). The combination of general massiveness with the flattened (as if chopped off) ends is quite typical for Koban culture bracelets, characterizing the general style of certain categories of adornments in the region (*e.g.*: Kozenkova 2004, Pl. 34, 35).

We emphasize that the presence of a gap between the ends of the ring (noticeable when viewed from the side) is one of the characteristic features of the rings in the pendants from the grave Glinoe/Rybkhoz 1/8, as well as for the Chernogorovka pendants in the form of “lamb horns”.

The bronze pendant found at the frontal part of the skull is a little more informative. It may have served as a clip for a leather crown, or as a decoration of a headdress. Such a situation was recorded in the Pre-Scythian graves of the Chernogorovka culture of the North Black Sea region (Goshko and Otroshchenko 1986, 176; Makhortykh 2005, 68-69) and the steppe Ciscaucasia (Korenyako 1982, 65-66, fig. 2: 5, 6) many times.

The astragali from the burial Glinoe/Rybkhoz 1/14 are also a relatively infrequent, but characteristic find at the sites of the Pre-Scythian period (Makhortykh 2005, 70). They were also found in the flat graves of the Kartal III (Bruyako 2013, 175-176). Additionally, astragali are also known in Bronze Age burials. They are present in Pre-Scythian graves in an amount from one to several specimens. We should note that in 2019, three astragali were found in the area of a child’s spinal column in secondary burial 1 of barrow 1 of the “Plavni” (“Overflow”) group near Glinoe village, on the left bank of the Lower Dniester. In this grave, the child lay in a strongly crouched position with his head to the southeast.

However, the absence of other finds prevents us from definitively attributing this burial to either the Bronze Age or the Pre-Scythian period. At the same time, there is no doubt that the grave was constructed during one of these periods.

Thus, the grave goods and the position of the deceased make it possible to attribute the Glinoe/Rybkhoz 1/14 burial to the Chernogovka culture, and to date it between the 9th and the first half of the 8th century BC.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we should draw attention to some general regularities in the funerary rite of burials 8 and 14 from barrow 1 of the “Rybkhoz” group. Both of them were sunk into the northern floor of the mound. Entrance pits of both graves are located southeast of the burial chamber. The position and orientation of the deceased are similar. All of this suggests that both burials were sunk into the Bronze Age barrow in a rather narrow chronological range. They are interconnected, and represent a single “cemetery” of the Chernogorovka culture.

There are reasons to consider grave 8 somewhat earlier than burial 14. However, a larger sample of such sites and finds from the North Black Sea region, as well as throughout Eastern Europe as a whole, is necessary for a deeper substantiation of this thesis.

It seems that the features of the funerary rite and the inventory of each of the published graves will be useful in the future in determining the cultural and chronological position of such sites.

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