
INVESTIGATIONS OF TUMULUS 1 FROM THE SBORYANOVO HELLENISTIC NECROPOLIS

DIANA GERGOVA, MOMCHIL KUZMANOV

(Summary)

The excavations were held in 1998-1999. The tumulus belongs to the Western Necropolis of Sbornyanovo. It is 8 m high and was object of illegal interventions in the past. The preliminary geophysical investigation found an anomaly in its SW part. There was discovered a big heap of stones, some of them with traces of treatment. Beneath the stones was uncovered a rectangular construction, consisting of chamber and a dromos, made of rude, only partly treated stones, bound with clay. The dimensions are 3,90×7,90 m, the preserved – 1,40 m. Probably it was a tomb and inside there was a lining. The roof most probably was made of wood. Obviously the tomb was destroyed in the antiquity and then due to ritual reasons it was covered with the stone heap.

Among the stones were found animal bones, pottery sherds, small iron objects and a golden application with grain decoration. One of the most interesting finds is a stone plate with rectangular carvings – “draughts”. Similar carvings usually are related to the Bulgarian Medieval age, but the geometrical ornament is similar to that on the clay escharae from the Hellenistic period too. This is one of the few portable stone altars from the Hellenistic period.

Outside the tomb were discovered two other graves with cremation. Grave No 1 was situated east from the tomb. The burned bones of a male were set in a bowl, covered with another vessel. Inside the bowl were found a bronze bracelet and 15 golden beads. They are very fine – 11×5 mm and 0,38 g weight and belong to typical Hellenistic necklace, but usually worn by women. Grave No 2 was situated west from the tomb. The burned bones of a child were set in an amphora, lying with mouth facing south.

In front of the tomb there was a stone pavement, with a lot of animal bones (a trisna) and many pottery sherds, including a handle of amphora from Thassos with a stamp – trident. On the pavement was found a bronze coin of Lysimachos, dated 301-281 BC.

The tumulus was a burial complex with a tomb and two or more additional funerals, all dating from the Early Hellenistic age and more precisely to the first half of 3rd c. BC.