
THE CONQUERED SPACE (THE BRONZE AGE IN DOBRUDZHA)

I VO P O P O V

(S u m m a r y)

The earliest wave of nomadic peoples that swept across the regions of Dobrudzha, Muntenia, Northeast Bulgaria and, to a lesser degree, Thrace, at the end of the 5th century B.C. destroyed the magnificent cultures of the late Chalcolit. The changes in the climate can be regarded as the main reason for that invasion of tribes from the steppes. These changes led to a colder and drier weather, a rise in the level of the world ocean of more than three meters, and the transformation of the driest parts of the steppes into semi-deserts.

Another important factor for the invasion from the steppes were the rich metallurgical centers in Europe. The archaeological data prove that first wave, which is different from the later invasion of the bearers of the pit grave culture.

After the demographic and economic collapse came the so-called Transitional period, which lasted for half a millennium, and during which ethnocultural communities were formed. It was in this period that the formation of the Thracian ethnos began. As regards the structure of the society in the 3rd century B.C., one of the main indicators is the burial customs.

The idea for the erection of burial mounds itself already speaks of a social hierarchy and the formation of tribal aristocracy. More and more scientists make a connection between the appearance of the pit grave culture and the so-called process of Indo-Europeanization in this part of Europe.

The change in lifestyle at the beginning of the Bronze Age (from a nomadic to a settled one) changed the world view as it built the concept of a center around which all that was known or recognizable was concentrated.

Such centers in the settlements of this age were the places of cult, while the fireplace had the same role in the house. The fireplaces were the sacred centers of the home, as is shown by the number of child burials under them. The home can be perceived as a microcosm, a new construction and harmonization of the world.

The conquering of the sacred space is understood as the orientation of objects and believers in it. It was adopted when a certain group of people was the owner of the territory. The dwelling places, households and places of cult were organized in this territory.