11 'TIL DEATH DO US PART: EXPLORING THE BIOLOGICAL RELATEDNESS OF DOUBLE BURIALS IN IRON AGE EUROPE

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Abstract format: Oral

Advances in ancient DNA analysis have revolutionised our ability to study the relationship between biological relatedness and socially constructed kin. Using data from the COMMIOS Project, this paper will explore the potential of ancient DNA evidence to shed light on the phenomenon of double burials. Genetic data have already confirmed the biological relatedness of individuals in so-called 'mass graves', which suggest a single, often violent, mortuary event followed by quick (and likely unceremonious) 'disposal'. Double burials, however, so often cited in the literature, pose different challenges in their interpretation. Who were these individuals and how is it that they were interred in a single grave? Was their burial governed by tempo: by which any individual(s) who died around the same time shared a grave (and associated funerary rites)? Or do these graves represent designated family plots, necessitating either the re-opening of existing graves or the curation of one or more bodies before final deposition? Only a truly multidisciplinary approach which includes osteological, taphonomic, histological, archaeothanatological and now ancient DNA evidence can move us closer to unpicking the complex stories of Iron Age life and death.

12 LIFE WITH AN ARROW IN THE SKULL: A SCYTHIAN WARRIOR AT THE NORTHERN BLACK SEA REGION CROSSROADS

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During the Early Iron Age, the Northern Black Sea region was a unique contact zone between nomads, constantly moving along the Great Steppe following the sun, and Greek navigators, who expanded the borders of the ecumene and settled local sea coasts. The warlike tribes of the Scythians created a state entity on this territory, leaving behind the most vivid trace.

Combat injuries, as a manifestation of the military character of Scythian regular life, are recorded in human remains. Most often the wounds were inflicted by arrows. However, recorded cases of an arrow injury to the skull are rare. A Scythian warrior who survived such injury, and maybe fought many battles after, is unique. The skeleton of the 40-45 years old male comes from the burial of the 4th century BCE at the "Kanfarka" cemetery. The man belongs to the local sharply dolichocranic and broad faced Caucasoid group. He was wounded in the parietal bone, the arrowhead was broken off, and only its fragment point remained in the skull. The latter did not damage the brain but caused a small subdural hematoma. Despite the possible neurological problems caused by trauma to the skull, the warrior did not stop his physical activity. This is evidenced by traces of later injuries and pathologies on his skeleton.

The cemetery is located on Khortytsia – the largest island of the Dnipro River. The peculiarities of the burial construction, custom, and burial place give the case uniqueness. The island was one of the few places of convenient crossing between the banks of Dnipro, it was located at the end of the waterway that connected the deep steppe regions with the Black Sea and the Greek colonies. It was situated at busy crossroads of trade and nomadic routes and had significant strategic importance.

13 DINING IN TUVA: DIET AND MOBILITY IN A LATE IRON AGE AGRO PASTORAL COMMUNITY OF SOUTHERN SIBERIA (2ND-4TH C. CE)

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The traditional concept of „nomadic" cultures as mobile and economically simple is nowadays increasingly displaced by more nuanced interpretations. Much of the scientific literature on diet and mobility of Eurasian pastoralist populations focuses on the Bronze Age and Early Iron Age. As a result, the relative underrepresentation in these analyses of more recent contexts hampers a full discussion of possible chronological trajectories. This study explores diet, mobility, and their social correlates at Tunnug1 (Republic of Tuva, 2nd-4th centuries CE) on a set of 65 humans and 12 animals by means of a combined analysis of stable isotopes of carbon, nitrogen and sulfur (δ13C, δ15N, δ34S) from bone collagen and their comparison with the available anthropological, archaeological, and archaeothanatological evidence from the site. Demographic and isotopic patterns were compared using nonparametric tests and Bayesian models. Finally, isotopic data were compared with evidence of intentional perimortem skeletal injuries and funerary features. The results suggest that: 1) diet in Tunnug1 was mainly based on C4 plants (probably millet) and