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THE „COLLATERAL” (FEMALE) BURIAL
AT THE GREAT RYZHANOVKA BARROW

By the end of the nineteenth century, the Great Ryzhanovka Barrow had already been noted in archeological literature, thanks to discoveries made by Julian Talko-Hryncewicz and Godfryd Ossowski. The first investigations at this site were conducted in 1884 by Talko-Hryncewicz¹. Intrigued by the two largest of the 21 barrows located some 6 kilometers south of the village of Ryzhanovka (now Ryzhanivka, in the district of Cherkassy, ca. 150 km south of Kiev), he decided to explore the largest of them, then 7.56 meters high and 30 meters in diameter². To this end, he dug two intersecting trenches through the barrow, each 2.5 meters wide, and deep enough to reach to the base of the embankment. This work did not, however, produce any significant discoveries. Only at the westernmost edge of the barrow, at the original ground level, did he find a collection of horse bones and shattered vessels. Among the latter it was possible to distinguish the fragments of a Greek amphora with light red walls. The appearance of these finds prompted Talko-Hryncewicz to expand considerably the W portion of the trench, deepening it to somewhat less than a meter below the original ground level. Since, however, no further finds were revealed, the dig was halted, without even so much as covering up the trenches.

In the spring of 1887, in this very place, the W portion of the barrow, the ground gave way after spring thaws and rain, opening access to an underground grave chamber through the collapsed roof. From the bottom of the sinkhole that had been created, the local peasants began to extract various objects, including a

¹ J. T a l k o - H r y n c e w i c z, Człowiek na ziemiach naszych, Warszawa-Kraków 1913, pp. 49-50; id., Z moich wspomnień o dawnych archeologach, Wiadomości Archeologiczne VIII, 1923, pp. 181-182.
² G. O s s o w s k i, Wielki Kurhan Ryzanowski według badań dokonanych w latach 1884 i 1887, Kraków 1888, Tab. I.
Greek amphora, a bronze dish, a mirror, and a pin, as well as trinkets of “gold sheetmetal.” These items were purchased, and afterwards, through the mediation of Talko-Hrynciewicz, transferred to the Academy of Arts and Sciences in Cracow, with a request to delegate an expert archeologist to the site where they had been found, in order to commence archeological investigations. Talko-Hrynciewicz, by education a physician and anthropologist (later a professor at the Jagiellonian University), did not want to risk digging up such a significant site on his own, and limited himself to protecting it against robbers.

The archeologist sent to Ryzhanovka by the Academy of Arts and Sciences was Godfryd Ossowski, who arrived at the site in late September of 1887. Accompanied by Talko-Hrynciewicz, he set to work investigating the excavated barrow. On the map he drew up later, the barrow in question is marked “4.” The work was conducted in some haste, and on a rather limited scale, limited primarily to exploring the contents of the accidentally uncovered grave chamber, and examining the architecture of the grave. As a result of these efforts, it was confirmed that there was a “catacomb” grave located beneath the embankment of the barrow, at its westernmost edge. The feature consisted of a grave chamber dug out of the loess substratum, a small underground hallway (“dromos”) leading to the chamber from the north, and a vertical entrance shaft, dug more than 3 meters into the substratum. In the southwest portion of the grave chamber, in a slight depression, there was found the skeleton of - according to Talko-Hrynciewicz’s assessment - a young woman of delicate build, ca. 145 cm. tall. Apart from the skull, which had been removed and destroyed when the sinkhole was plundered, the remainder of the skeleton lay intact. This made it possible to determine that the deceased had been interred in the depression, lying flat (oriented W-E) on a vegetation mat covered with fabric. Scraps of musty cloth were visible on the surface of the skeleton, and among these were numerous gold bands, ornaments for ceremonial dress. Some of these were identified in a place corresponding to their original position, and thus, as might reasonably be inferred, to their original function. The triangular lamellae, for example, lay in three rows, between the bones of the upper arm. The large round azure bands, on the other hand, were distributed in one row, along the line of the hip bones. There were gold earrings lying on both sides of the place where the skull had originally been, as well as two fragments of narrow gold ribbon with small amphora-shaped pendants and gold

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4 Ossowski, *Wielki Kurhan*, Tab. I.
beads. At the level of the neck, then, were found elements of a segmentoidal necklace, with large amphora-shaped pendants\(^{10}\). In all likelihood the “gold sheet metal” items had also been found somewhere near the skull, and had been removed from the grave along with the skull by one of the peasants: that is, a wide ribbon with presentations of dancing Maenads, a long ribbon with embossed vegetative-geometrical-zoomorphic ornamentation, and a narrow ribbon with amphora-shaped pendants\(^{11}\). These doubtless constituted the ornamentation of the ceremonial head covering. A gold bracelet had been placed on the right forearm of the deceased, and there were six gold rings on the fingers. On the left forearm was a silver bracelet and two more gold rings. Two of these rings were made of Panticapaean staters\(^{12}\), presently dated by some to 330-315 B.C.\(^{13}\), by others to 314-304 B.C.\(^{14}\).

On the left side of the skeleton, even with the head, a collection of finds was uncovered, among which were a bronze situła lying on its side with a silver cup inside. At the point of its widest expanse this cup is ornamented with a gilded frieze depicting running animals (panthers and dogs). A silver kylix was also found here, along with a black-lacquered kantharos, a small embossed flagon (balsamarium) of gray clay, an ivory spindle, and other trinkets. At the edge of the depression in which the body of the deceased had been interred, several scraps of wood (“boards”) were observed, lying on the bottom of the grave chamber. It was probably in this place that the clay amphora, the bronze dish, the spindle, and the mirror had been found during the plundering of the grave in the spring of 1887\(^{15}\). All together, the grave inventory consisted of 449 gold objects, and several dozen others, including silver. These are primarily elements of ceremonial dress, as well as jewelry, a “service” of silver, bronze, and clay vessels deposited in the grave, and other types of grave goods (e.g. toilet articles).

After exploring the contents of the grave chamber and excavating a small segment of the barrow on the north side to identify the entrance shaft and corridor, Ossowski terminated his investigation of Barrow 4, the “Great Ryzhovanka Barrow”\(^{16}\). The only other excavations done at this site by Ossowski\(^{17}\) involved the small Barrow 5, located to the NE of the Great Barrow. Barrow 5 contained three burials: a main burial from the Bronze Age (perhaps from the Yamnaya culture) and two secondary burials, one from the Zhabotin phase (8th century B.C.), and

\(^{10}\) Ossowski, Wielki Kurhan, p. 9.
\(^{11}\) Ossowski, Wielki Kurhan, pp. 6, 9, Table III: 1-3.
\(^{12}\) Ossowski, Wielki Kurhan, p. 21.
\(^{13}\) B. D. Shelov, Monetnoe delo Bospora VI-II vv. do n.e., Moskva 1956, pp. 93, 95-96;
\(^{14}\) V. A. Anochin, Monetnoe delo Bospora, Kiev 1986, pp. 140-141.
\(^{15}\) Ossowski, Wielki Kurhan, p. 9.
\(^{16}\) Ossowski, Wielki Kurhan, p. 11.
\(^{17}\) Ossowski, Materyały do Paleoetnologii, pp. 30-41, Tables VII-VIII.
one from the early Scythian period\textsuperscript{18}. All the materials were then conveyed by their discoverers to the Academy of Arts and Sciences in Cracow, which published a report on the discoveries the very next year\textsuperscript{19}.

The discoveries made at the Great Barrow of Ryzhanovka achieved considerable acclaim and aroused much interest, finding a particularly wide echo among Russian archaeologists\textsuperscript{20}. This found expression in yet another delegation to Ryzhanovka, in 1890. This time the Imperial Archeological Commission in St. Petersburg sent Dimitri Ja. Samokvasov with a commission to investigate the other, as yet undisturbed barrows in the Ryzhanovka group\textsuperscript{21}. Samokvasov excavated nine of them, without, however, making any discoveries that could be considered spectacular, or even important. Among other things, he examined the second of the large barrows\textsuperscript{22}, at that time 7.11 meters high and 28.45 meters in diameter\textsuperscript{23}. This grave had been ransacked in antiquity, however, which in itself may indirectly point to the richness of the grave goods and the high rank of the burial\textsuperscript{24}. This feature should also be associated with the Scythian period, and is probably to be dated to the 5th or 4th centuries B.C. (?)\textsuperscript{25}.

Intrigued by the earlier Polish discoveries, Samokvasov also attempted to examine the Great Barrow. For lack of funds, however (and perhaps also for lack of consent from the landowner, the Hryniewicz family), his activities in this respect were limited. Nevertheless, he dug several exploratory trenches on the site of Talko-Hryniewicz’s excavations, dug out the bottom of the “catacomb” investigated by Ossowski, and also sifted again through the earth thrown out from the earlier excavations, finding 10 more gold plaques. He also gathered information on the activities of the Polish scientists from witnesses to the discovery of the catacomb grave and participants in the earlier digs. More than a decade later, on the basis of all this information, he questioned the findings of Talko-Hryniewicz and Ossowski, accusing them of faking their investigations\textsuperscript{25}. According to Samokvasov, the activities of the two Poles had been limited to gathering up finds extracted by the peasants, followed by inexpert searching of the grave chamber. In essence, Samokvasov opined that the findings and observations contained in Ossowski’s publications and the accompanying drawings were not credible. In the former’s opinion, Ossowski’s sole aim was to lend the whole action a certain aura of scientific activity, in order to sanction the rights of his employer, the Academy of Arts and Sciences, to the Ryzhanovka finds.

\textsuperscript{19} O s s o w s k i Wielki Kurhan; Materyady do Paleoetnologii, pp. 1-46; Tables I-VIII.
\textsuperscript{20} T a l k o - H r y n c e w i c z, Zmoich wspomnień, pp. 184-190.
\textsuperscript{21} D. Ja. S a m o k v a s o v, Mogily Russkoj zemli. Opisanie arkeologicheskikh raskopok i sobranija drevnostej, Moskva 1908, p. 78.
\textsuperscript{22} no. 12 according to Ossowski, II in Samokvasov’s numeration.
\textsuperscript{23} O t c h e t imperatorskoy Arkheologicheskoy komissii za 1890 god, Sankt-Petersburg 1893, pp. 54-55; S a m o k v a s o v, Mogily, pp. 82-86.
\textsuperscript{24} S a m o k v a s o v, Mogily, p. 85.
\textsuperscript{25} S a m o k v a s o v, Mogily, pp. 78-82.
Quite independently of these revelations, Samokvasov also expressed the conviction that the female burial discovered in 1887 was a “collateral” burial. The slight degree of exploration of the barrow left ample room for the inference that there were yet other graves, and in particular a main burial, located under the central portion of the embankment. Ossowski, too, was fully aware that his survey of the barrow had been incomplete, and suggested what the consequences of that might be. A similar opinion was also expressed by Count Aleksey A. Bobrinskij, a leading expert of the barrows of the right bank of the Lower Dnieper, who in his own work produced what was in fact a full republication of Ossowski’s report. Bobrinskij also discounted the authenticity of the partial excavation of the Great Barrow. He saw in further investigations the opportunity to make more precise findings as to the nature and meaning of the rich burial of this young Scythian aristocratic woman from - as he wrote - a “royal clan”.

Given these facts, it came as no surprise that the joint Polish-Ukrainian Archeological Expedition we organized in 1995 (after the identification of the Great Ryzhanovka Barrow) posed two primary tasks for itself. The first was to verify the investigations of Talko-Hryncewicz, Ossowski, and Samokvasov. The second was to clarify the matter of the possible presence under the barrow of a main burial.

According to the site plan published by Ossowski, the underground crypt of the catacomb grave he investigated was located along the line of the W segment of Talko-Hryncewicz’s trench. In 1887, according to these same data, excavation work was extended N of the crypt, in the NW portion of the barrow, in order to identify the entrance shaft and the dromos. The embankment in this portion of the barrow had indeed obviously been disturbed at some later date, and its configuration indicated that the earth work done here had been intensive (Figs. 1-2).

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26 Samokvasov, Mogily, pp. 80, 82.
27 Ossowski, Wielki Kurhan, p. 41.
28 A. Bobrinskij, Kurhany i sluchmanyia arheologicheskiia nakhodki bliz’ mestechka Smely, II, Sankt-Petersburg 1894, pp. 138-151, Tables XVI-XIX.
29 Bobrinskij, Kurhany, p. 148.
30 This project came into being by virtue of a contract concluded between the Institute of Archeology at the Jagiellonian University in Cracow and the Institute of Archeology at the National Academy of Sciences in Kiev. In the 1995 season, the excavation work was financed by the Jagiellonian University. Honorary patronage over the research was assumed by the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences in Cracow. Among those participating in the excavation work were V. Grigor’ev from the staff of the Archeological Inspectorate for the district of Cherkassy, and archeology students from the Jagiellonian University: Joanna Duda, Anna Gawlik, and Krzysztof Ormian.
31 Ossowski, Wielki Kurhan, Table II:1.
32 Ossowski, Wielki Kurhan, pp. 7-8.
Fig. 1. The Great Ryzhanovka Barrow. Site plan showing the excavations of J.Talko-Hryncewicz, and a W-E cross-section of the barrow, according to G.Ossowski, Wielki Kurhan Ryżanowski według badań dokonanych w latach 1884 i 1887, Kraków 1888, Table II: 1-2.
Fig. 2. Height diagram of the Great Ryzhanovka Barrow, made before the commencement of investigations in 1995, and a N-S cross-section of the barrow.
**Fig. 3.** Cross-section of the barrow (A) and the relative situation of features and archaeological excavations under the western portion of the embankment (B). T-H: excavations by J. Talko-Hryniewicz; O: excavation by G. Ossowski; S: excavations by D. Ja. Samokvasov; 1: mounds of loess clay extracted when the central grave was dug out; 2: ceramic fragments; 3: animal bones; 4: original outline of the barrow erected over the main burial; 5: extent of the additional mound in the NW portion of the barrow; 6: present extent of the barrow embankment.

For this reason, then, it was decided to investigate the W portion of the barrow first, in compliance with the tasks that had been assumed for the project.

As soon as the humus layer of the embankment began to be removed, the outlines of excavations 2.5 meters wide were revealed, cutting through the barrow from the surface to the very foundation. These were doubtless the exploratory trenches dug by Talko-Hryniewicz, though they are not as regular as stated, and are oriented, not N-S and E-W, as shown on Ossowski's site plan\(^{33}\), but rather roughly NW-SE and NE-SW (Fig. 3). As Talko-Hryniewicz wrote\(^{34}\), the trenches intersected - though not at perfect right angles - within the boundaries of the conical mound of yellow loess clay identified at the base of the barrow. The intersection is not located, however, at the center of the barrow, as on Ossowski's site plan, but rather somewhat N of the center. In addition to the barren loess

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\(^{33}\) Ossowski, *Wielki Kurhan*, Table II:1.

\(^{34}\) Talko-Hryniewicz, *Ossowiec*, p. 49.
mound revealed in the cross-section of the barrow and already identified by Talko-Hryncewicz, two other mounds were discovered nearby (to the W and to the S), lying directly on the original surface of the ground (Photo 1). They surrounded a large, roughly rectangular cavity, 4.5 x 3.0 meters. This cavity was marked by obviously regular edges only against the background of the loess calc. It was joined from the NW by another, roughly oval cavity, 4.3 x 3.6 meters, irregular in outline. There could be no doubt that both these features formed the central grave complex, over which the barrow was erected in its original form (ca. 27 meters in diameter and 10 meters high). The barren loess mounds identified at the base of the embankment and distributed around the rectangular cavity were the heaps created in the course of digging out the entrance shaft (the rectangular cavity) and the underground chamber (the oval sinkhole) of the central grave. Thus the two main goals of the investigations undertaken in 1995 were achieved rather quickly: i.e., it was confirmed that fieldwork was indeed done here by Talko-Hryncewicz, and the main burial of the Great Barrow of Ryzhanovka, located beneath the central portion of the embankment, was identified.

The outline of the grave chamber of the “collateral” catacomb investigated in 1887 was identified along the NW line of Talko-Hryncewicz’s exploratory trench, which is to say, at the place where it is marked on Ossowski’s site plan. To the north of the sinkhole created at the site of the grave chamber, after the embankment and the humus fill had been removed, a band of dark earth took shape. This marked the outer limit of Ossowski’s excavation work to identify the entrance shaft of the “collateral” grave. The removal of the fill from this excavation revealed the roughly circular outline of a tunnel created after the cave-in of the grave chamber, and, to the N, the outline of the entrance shaft (Photo 2). The exploration of the humus fill of the shaft indicated that it had already been investigated by Ossowski. This countered yet another of Samokvasov’s accusations. Ossowski had not, however, conducted his exploration by the “plastic” method, revealing the original walls of the shaft, but dug into the substratum in a mechanical way, in his desire to reach the level of the underground corridor (dromos) as quickly as possible. A careful exploration showed that in reality the shaft was something along the lines of a diagonal descent by “stairs” (Figs. 4-5), which at the depth of ca. 3 meters below the original ground level crossed into a short underground corridor, slightly descending in the direction of the grave chamber. This is an essential correction to the schematic site plan as published by Ossowski, where the entrance to the catacomb is a vertical shaft, while the horizontal dromos was supposed to be some 6 meters long. The height of the corridor—which in fact is

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35 The main (male) burial at the Great Ryzhanovka Barrow was investigated in the 1996 season. It turned out that the grave had not been plundered by grave robbers, either in antiquity or in modern times, and so it was found intact, apart from the collapse of the roof of the grave chamber. At present the results of these investigations are being written up and prepared for publication.

36 O s s o w s k i, Wielki Kurhan, Table II:1; cf. Fig. 3.

37 O s s o w s k i, Wielki Kurhan, pp. 8-9, Table II.3.
Fig. 4. Great Ryzhanovka Barrow. N-S cross-section of the barrow, and the site plan of the "collateral" catacomb, according to G. Ossowski, Wielki Kurhan Ryzanowski według badań dokonanych w latach 1884 i 1887, Kraków 1888, Table II: 3-4.
Fig. 5. Site plan (A) and longitudinal cross-section (B) of the "collateral" catacomb. 1: level of the excavation humus; 2: presumed height of the vaulting in the grave chamber; 3: layer of clodded loess lying on the stairs of the entrance shaft and on the bottom of the grave chamber.
only an isthmus between the descent to the underground level and the grave chamber - is specified by Ossowski at 1 meter, but this proved difficult to verify. After he had explored the fill of the underground corridor, its natural loess vaulting subsided, distorting the original parameters. The present height of the corridor, as confirmed in the course of the excavations, is ca. 0.5 meters.

The investigations also lent credence to the somewhat unclear and imprecise information given by Ossowski regarding changes in the orientation of the descent to the catacomb, and also the dromos, in relation to the grave chamber. Indeed, they turn twice, once at the level of the stairs, and the second time in the dromos, just before the grave chamber (Figs. 5-7).

The observations made in the preserved lower portions of the grave chamber and its bottom give grounds to suppose that Ossowski limited himself to exploring the sinkhole that filled the crypt after the cave-in of the loess roof, without touching its walls. Here and there on the loess walls there are still visible the negative imprints of a narrow pick-axe-like tool with a straight edge, which was used in digging the catacomb. Thus it may be supposed that the present form and cubature of the grave chamber correspond to its original parameters, and were not deformed by Ossowski. This does not, however, lead to a confirmation of the assessment made by Ossowski, who represented the crypt on his drawings as a regular, rectangular room, clearly distinct from the dromos. In reality, the chamber had an irregular, trapezoidal shape (with maximum dimensions of 3.1 x 3.0 meters), and an uneven bottom. Its SW portion was 20-25 cm deeper, falling to the level of ca. 3.6 meters below the original ground level. It was separated from the dromos on the north side by a transverse groove, which in fact had been identified by Ossowski. This was the foundation groove of the wooden wall that originally closed off the entrance to the crypt and protected it against being filled in after the ground over the dromos and the entrance shaft was caved in. The remains of the clodded loess that lay especially on the stairs and in the dromos proved that the entrance to the dromos was filled in using the earth that had been excavated when the grave was dug.

The task of determining the height of the grave chamber, on the other hand, was fraught with difficulties. The configuration of the better preserved portions of the walls suggested for all practical purposes two possibilities: ca. 2.5 meters (which, however, would seem to be virtually impossible, in view of the overly thin roof), or ca. 1.7 meters. Upon analysis of the drawings published by Ossowski, the latter hypothesis seems more likely.

The black humus fill of the grave chamber did not contain any finds that would belong to the rich inventory of the burial of the Scythian "princess." Finds were

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38 Ossowski, Wielki Kurhan, p. 16, Table III.1.4.  
39 Ossowski, Wielki Kurhan, Table II.1.4.  
40 Ossowski, Wielki Kurhan, pp. 9,11, Table II.1.4.  
41 Ossowski, Wielki Kurhan, Fig. 8, Table II.2-3.
uncovered only in the layer of clodded loess lying on the bottom of the grave chamber, in the vicinity of the transverse groove (Photo 3-5). These consist of yet another gold ring made from a Panticapaean stater, a golden rosette (2.0 cm in diameter), a small round plaque of gold foil (1.4 cm in diameter), and a triangular plaque, also of gold foil (1.8 cm. tall). These are all forms present in large quantities among the materials from Ossowski’s investigations (Photo 6)\textsuperscript{42}. The fact that these artifacts were overlooked is probably the result of the hasty and none too careful exploration conducted by Ossowski and Talko-Hrynciewicz, who were working, after all, in very difficult conditions (at the bottom of a tunnel over 6 meters deep). Most likely these items were trampled into the layer of loess rubble lying on the bottom of the chamber, in the place that is most inconvenient to work because of the low vaulting, which drops at the transition from the chamber to the dromos to the height of one meter. According to Ossowski\textsuperscript{43}, the earth removed to clear out the grave chamber was transported to the outside through the dromos, and then by a slanted ramp cut out in the fill of the entrance shaft. In any event, the remains of the pile made at that time on the surface of the barrow were identified during the present investigations, on the north side of the entrance shaft. This exploration technique also explains the presence of further finds discovered this time in the vicinity of the entrance shaft. They were identified on the surface of the layer of loess rubble that originally filled in the entrance shaft and was left in situ by Ossowski, and lay at the “trampling” level creating in the course of transporting the excavated earth from the grave crypt; no doubt they found their way here with the loess rubble from the bottom of the chamber that was spilled along the way out. These finds include yet another triangular band of gold foil (1.7 cm tall), found on the lowest step of the entrance shaft, and two round golden plaques (1.4 cm and 1.0 cm in diameter respectively), found in the vicinity of the trough-like depression at the entrance to the shaft. This latter form is also very heavily represented among the materials from Ossowski’s investigations\textsuperscript{44}.

An interesting discovery was also made in the vicinity of the dromos, on the east side, just in front of the groove for the wall that closed off the entrance to the grave crypt. In the layers of loess rubble were found more than a dozen fragments of delicate, tiny, strongly moldered human bones, and three fragmentarily preserved human teeth from a person 12-14 years old\textsuperscript{45}. The remains of this skeleton could not have been moved from the depression under the southwest wall of the grave chamber, where the richly-accoutered female burial was found, but rather lay in situ. It would seem likely that there was a second burial at this place, a young girl (?), perhaps a maidservant ritually killed during the funeral ceremony. In all likelihood, certain elements of the grave inventory originating

\textsuperscript{42} O s s o w s k i, Wielki Kurhan, Table III:12-13, 16-17, 23-34.
\textsuperscript{43} O s s o w s k i, Wielki Kurhan, p. 9, Table II:3/1-1.
\textsuperscript{44} O s s o w s k i, Wielki Kurhan, Table III:20.
\textsuperscript{45} The identification was made by Dr. Henryk Głáb from the Anthropology Section at the Jagiellonian University.
Fig. 6. Site plan and view of the grave chamber in the "collateral" catacomb, according to G. Ossowski, *Wielki Kurhan Ryżanowski według badań dokonanych w latach 1884 i 1887*, Kraków 1888, Table II: 4, Fig. 8.
Fig. 7. Reconstruction of the appearance of the “collateral” catacomb of the Great Ryzhanovka Barrow, produced by J. Poleski.
Photo 1. N-S cross-section of the Great Ryzhanovka Barrow. In the center are visible the cones of the heaps created during the digging of the central grave. Between them, caught in cross-section, is the corner of the entrance shaft, with the subsided base of the embankment over it. In the background, the cone of the loess heap bisected by Talko-Hrynciewicz’s trench.

Photo 2. The “collateral” catacomb in the initial phase of exploration. In the foreground, the sinkhole of the grave chamber; in the background, the entrance shaft; in between, the vaulting over the dromos.

Photo 4. As above: obverse of the coin with Pan’s / Satyr’s head.
Photo 5. Gold plaques from ceremonial dress.

Photo 6. Gold rings discovered in the "collateral" catacomb (1887). In the middle two objects made of a Panticapaean staters.
from Ossowski’s investigations, such as the rather plain bracelet made of bronze wire, or the modest ring with a limestone setstone, constituted the grave goods of this second burial. Their modest standard contrasts in a striking way with the ostentation of the ceremonial dress and jewelry of the “princess.” The discovery that a “maidservant” was also buried here is of essential significance for the evaluation of the social status of the aristocratic Scythian woman buried in the “collateral” catacomb of the Great Ryzhanovka Barrow.

After the body of the “princess” had been interred, and the grave chamber sealed with the wooden wall, the body of the “maidservant” was put in front of the wall, and the dromos and entrance shaft were filled in with loess clay. Everything indicates that the grave survived intact (un-plundered) to the nineteenth century. The shortfalls in the grave inventory, which appear to be slight (especially in reference to the set of ornaments on the ceremonial dress), are the result of the theft and sale of gold objects by the accidental discoverers, and of the rather careless exploration.

Planigraphic and stratigraphic observations indicated that the underground “collateral” grave was located, to be sure, under the edge of a barrow erected earlier, but the entrance to the grave was situated outside the barrow, 3-4 meters away. It was in fact an essential element of the funeral ceremony to expand the barrow (pile it higher) on its northwest side, such that the entrance to the catacomb was also located under the embankment. As a result the diameter of the barrow on the NNW-SSE axis grew to ca. 33 meters. It is not impossible that this expansion was also perceptible in the shape of the embankment’s surface. This is indicated by the remarks of Talko-Hrynczewicz and Ossowski, who speak of a “hump” or “rise” visible on the NW side of the embankment. The nature of the boundary (the lack of a clearly delineated humus level) between the surface of the old embankment and the new one suggests that these two events were separated by no more than 3-4 years. The fact of the deliberate joining of the old embankment and the new one clearly emphasizes, moreover, the existence of some sort of social bond between the persons buried in the central and “collateral” graves.

The last act of the mourning ceremony was the funeral repast. Its remains, in the form of consumption refuse (horse bones) and fragments of wine amphorae, were discovered on the north and west sides of the “collateral” catacomb, on the edge of the already expanded barrow.

The verification work done in 1995 in the western portion of the Great Ryzhanovka Barrow indicates that the accusations voiced by Samokvasov against the investigations of Talko-Hrynczewicz and Ossowski were in most cases groundless. This pertains to the fact that exploratory trenches were indeed dug by Talko-Hrynczewicz, and to the scale and course of Ossowski’s investigations:

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46 Samokvasov, Mogily, p. 81; Talko-Hrynczewicz, Z moich wspomnień, p. 181.
47 Talko-Hrynczewicz, Z moich wspomnień, p. 181.
48 Ossowski, Wielki Kurhan, p. 4, Table II: 2/g.
hasty, to be sure, but relatively systematic. According to Ossowski’s account, his work included both the survey excavation of the entrance shaft and the dromos, and the quite systematic exploration of the grave chamber fill. It should be emphasized, however, that many things in the account left by Ossowski, and especially on the site plans and drawings he published of the barrow and the catacomb, are unclear and imprecise. In particular, the boundaries of the digs and the form of the “collateral” grave are presented in an idealized fashion, not corresponding to the actual reality. There are obvious imprecisions, as well, in the marking of the directions of the compass. Samokvasov was also correct in asserting that the extent of excavation work done by Ossowski in the area of the “collateral” catacomb was considerably less than is indicated on the site plan he published.

All these shortcomings do not, however, basically diminish the cognitive value of the investigations done by both Talko-Hrynciewicz and Ossowski, or the accounts they left behind. The investigations also confirmed, to the full, Samokvasov’s conjecture that there was a main burial under the central portion of the barrow. It cannot be precluded, incidentally, that under the as-yet-uninvestigated E portion of the barrow there are also other accompanying burials.

The female burial from the Great Ryzhanovka Barrow, located in a forest-steppe zone, is obviously connected to the Scythian cultural phenomena of the steppe zone. Arguments for this assertion are provided by, for example, the catacomb shape of the grave foundation, widely known from the lands of the Scythian steppes. Another characteristic of grave architecture of steppe provenance is also the fact - discovered both in the case of the main embankment and the additional mound associated with the “collateral” burial - that the barrow was erected from rolls of sod. This characteristic is connected with ancient traditions in grave architecture on the Eurasian steppes, and is often observed in the Scythian milieu of the Black Sea zone, especially in the barrows of the Scythian aristocracy. In some barrows (as in the Great Ryzhanovka Barrow) only part of the embankment is erected from rolls of sod, e.g. Mordvinovskij Kurgan 1, Bashmachka, Strashna Mogila, and especially central: Melitopol’skij

50 Ossowski, Wielki Kurhan, pp. 7-11.
51 Samokvasov, Mogilë, p. 80.
52 Ossowski, Wielki Kurhan, Table II:1.
53 Samokvasov, Mogilë, p. 80.
54 This refers in particular to burials of the “duke’s” saddle horses, and - perhaps - the members of his retinue.
56 N.E. Makarenko, Pervyj Mordvinovskij kurgan, Gernes, 12, 1916-1919, p. 11.
Kurgan\textsuperscript{58}, Oguz\textsuperscript{59}, Berdiianskij Kurgan\textsuperscript{60}. Sometimes the entire embankment is erected in this way, e.g. Gajmanova Mogila\textsuperscript{61}, Chertomlyk\textsuperscript{62}, or Zheltokamenka\textsuperscript{63}. It is possible to hypothesize that this element of the funeral ceremony was intended to symbolize in a condensed form the pasture lands belonging to the deceased, and thus served as sort of addition to the rich grave inventory\textsuperscript{64}.

The Great Ryzhanovka Barrow also resembles many barrows of the Scythian aristocracy from the steppe zone in terms of the dimensions of the embankment (7.56 meters high in 1884). One might mention here, for example, such features as Mordvinovskij Kurgan 2 (6.40 meters), Geremesov Kurgan (6.50 meters), Mordvinovskij Kurgan 1 (7.00 meters), Strashnaja Mogila (7.00 meters), Malaja Lepeticha 2 (7.45 meters), Gajmanova Mogila (8.00 meters), or Babina Mogila (8.15 meters)\textsuperscript{65}. With respect to the depth of the grave chamber of the “collateral” burial, an analogy is provided in turn by such rich barrows as Deev Kurgan, Gajmanova Mogila, Chmyrjova Mogila - all 4.00 meters deep - and Malaja Lepeticha, which is 3.90 meters deep\textsuperscript{66}.

The high social status of the Scythian woman buried in the “collateral” catacomb at the Great Ryzhanovka Mound is also confirmed by the very extensive grave foundation, and by the numerous, diverse, and valuable inventory. Certain elements of this inventory, such as the gold plaques on the head covering, the jewelry, or the silver vessels, also find close analogies in the barrows of the Scythian aristocracy from the steppe zone. One’s attention is drawn here especially by the plaque on the ceremonial head covering, in the form of a wide ribbon depicting dancing Maenads. Similar finds are known only in four barrows of the Scythian aristocracy (Gajmanova Mogila, Deev Kurgan, Denisova Mogila, and Pesochin Kurgan 8), and from the grave of a female Sindian aristocrat in the Bolchaja Bliznitsa on the Taman’ peninsula\textsuperscript{67}. According to S. S. Bessonova\textsuperscript{68}, women whose head coverings were adorned with representations of dancing Maenads were priestesses, from aristocratic barbarian - primarily Scythian - clans. Similar ideological considerations can also be used to explain the presence in the

\textsuperscript{58} A.I. Terenozhkin, B.N. Mozolevskij, Melitopol’skij kurgan, Kiev 1988, p. 152.
\textsuperscript{60} Yu. V. Boltrik, E. E. Fialko, N. N. Cheredinchenko, Berdiianskij kurgan, Rossiskaja Arkeologija 3, 1994, p. 140.
\textsuperscript{61} V. A. Illinskaja, A. I. Terenozhkin, Skifija VII-IV vv. do n. e., Kiev 1983, p. 144.
\textsuperscript{64} R. Rolle, Totenkult der Skythen. Das Steppengebiet, I. 1-2, Berlin-New York 1979, p. 42; 1980, p. 34.
\textsuperscript{65} A. I. Terenozhkin, B. N. Mozolevskij, Melitopol’skij kurgan, Kiev 1988, tables 3-4.
\textsuperscript{66} B. N. Mozolevskij, Tovsta Mogila, Kiev 1979, p. 150, Table 1.
\textsuperscript{67} S. S. Bessonova, Religioznije predstavlenija skifov, Kiev 1983, pp. 74-76.
\textsuperscript{68} Bessonova, Shkodo odnogo skifo-ells’kogo kul’tu IV st. do n. e. (in:) Doslidzhennja starohitnosti ukraini, Kijv 1993, p. 6.
inventory of the female burial at the Great Ryzhanovka Barrow of as many as three rings made of gold Panticapaean staters, with a representation of the head of a bearded Pan or Satyr on the obverse (Photo 3,4,6). An obvious link between the female burial from the Great Ryzhanovka Barrow and the nomadic world of the steppe has already been stressed many times in the literature. A. J. Alekseev included it in the circle of Scythian steppe sites from the last three decades of the fourth century B.C. There can be no doubt that this site also represents a wider horizon of nomadic Scythian burials from the forest-steppe zone, dating from the fifth and fourth centuries B.C., where the deceased are interred in catacomb graves. The appearance of this type of burials in the region of the right bank of the Lower Dnieper is a reflection of the late transplantation of the nomadic steppe lifestyle in the Scythian period. In the latter half of the fourth century B.C., the southern portion of the forested steppe on the right bank of the Lower Dnieper certainly formed part of the so-called “Greater Scythia”.

There is a great deal of data, however, arguing for dating the female burial at the Great Ryzhanovka Barrow to the first half of the third century B.C. It would seem that the Scythian lifestyle maintained its presence and significance in this territory significantly longer than had previously been assumed, despite the political crisis on the Scythian steppes towards the end of the 4th century B.C. The presence of the Great Ryzhanovka Barrow is a clear manifestation of this phenomenon. Burials of this rank were not placed, after all, outside the areas of the inhabited world that were subject to the authority of the nomadic Scythian clans.

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74 Skoryj, Die Frage, p. 162.

75 The issue of dating the Great Ryzhanovka Barrow will receive treatment in a separate work.