

S15B. Session: *Man and his companions (horse and dog) in Eurasian Graves (3rd mill. BC-1st mill. AD)*

Organizers: Valeriu Sîrbu, Cristian Schuster (Romania)

GRAVES OF HORSEMEN IN LATE HALLSTATT PERIOD SOUTH OF CARPATHIANS, WITH SPECIAL REGARD
TO THE NECROPOLIS FROM VALEA STÂNII (ROMANIA)

Dragoş Măndescu (Romania)

Abstract

The paper focuses on the graves of mounted warriors in the archeological group Ferigile (south of the Carpathians, the 7th-5th centuries BC), especially on the incineration necropolises from Ferigile, Tigveni, Cepari, Rudeni and Curtea de Argeş, and offers a detailed look at this kind of spectacular tombs from the newly investigated necropolis at Valea Stâniei (Argeş County). I will try to follow first of all quantitatively the spread of the tombs of horsemen in the whole Ferigile group and the way of funeral expression of the presence of the horse in the grave of the rider warrior (usually a symbolic presence). Then I will insist on the situation illustrated by the incineration necropolis from Valea Stâniei. They are presented the clues that allow the attribution of some of the graves to the elite group of mounted warriors: not only the horse-harness parts deposited as a grave goods, along with weapons, but also some pits with ashes and animal (including horse) cremated bones placed at the fringes of graves. The rarity of this kind of occurrence could indicate eventually a much closer connection between man and animal. The analysis of the horse-harness elements attests to large-scale supraregional contacts, at the interference between the Thracian, Scythian and Illyrian cultural milieux.

Dragoş MĂNDESCU
Argeş County Museum
Piteşti – ROMANIA
dragos_mandescu@yahoo.com