



BİSHRELT-AM BÖLGESİNDEKİ XIONGNU MEZARI

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ÖZ

Ulaanbataar'ın Nalaikh bölgesinde Xiongnulara ait Bishreltyn-Am Mezarlığı 2013'te keşfedilmiştir. Moğolistan Bilim ve Teknoloji Üniversitesi ve Moğolistan Askeri Müzesinin ortak keşif heyeti Bishreltyn-Am bölgesinin en büyük mezarlığını kazıyla çıkarmıştır. Bu mezarda 40-45 yaşlarındaki bir adam silahlarıyla birlikte iki kat tahtadan yapılmış bir tabutta gömülü ve tabutun üzerinde ise kurban edilmiş farklı hayvan kafaları bulunmakta idi. Fakat ilk çağlardaki diğer Xiongnu mezarları gibi mezar soyulmuş ve bozulmuş halde idi.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Mezarlık, Xiongnu, Bishrelt-Am bölgesi

XIONGNU GRAVE IN BISHRELT-AM SITE

ABSTRACT

There was discovered Xiongnu's Bishreltyn-Am burial site in Nalaikh district of Ulaanbaatar in 2013. And joint expedition of Mongolian University of Science and Technology and Mongolian Military Museum excavated the biggest grave of Bishreltyn-Am site. In this grave was buried 40-45 years old man with his weapons in double wooden coffin and sacrificed with different kinds of animal heads in top of coffin. But the grave was robbed and broken as other Xiongnu graves in early time.

Keywords: Burial site, Xiongnu, Bishrelt-Am site

The Mongolian University of Science Technology in cooperation with Mongolian Military Museum implemented joint archaeological research project entitled "Archaeological monuments in Tuul river basin". The Archaeological and Ethnological joint expedition within the research project carried out archaeological excavation common people graves at Bishreltyn-Am site (2014). The Bishreltyn-Am site is located in the northeast valley of the Bishrelt davaa (Bishrelt passage) situated between Nalaikh district, Ulaanbaatar city and Erdene soum, Tuv aimag.

During the field research the expedition team conducted archaeological survey along the Tuul river between Bishreltyn Davaa and Ar Janchivlan and discovered 29 graves (26 xiongnu graves). We made mapping of the site and excavated just one Xiongnu grave. The Bishreltyn am site was discovered and documented in 2013 by archaeological team from MUST (Ch.Vanchigdash, 2013) and subsequently (2014) during archaeological conservation fieldwork the archaeological team from MAS visited and re-examined the site and mentioned the site as "Xiongnu cemetery" in the report (A.Enkhtur, 2014)²

Grave 1. The excavated grave is biggest one among graves and located in the center of cemetery. The ovoid shaped grave with dorm was fully covered by stone (size 10m-12m). In the center of the stone cover there was slightly visible rectangular construction with size 5m-3.1m (Fig.1). We cleaned surface soil with size 12x18 m, and

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there was found fragment of right rib of horde or cattle and a potter's piece at the H8 section and two pieces of potters at H10 section (Fig.2, 12).

After cleaning surface soil and cover stones was continued digging right side of the grave and was unearthed horse's ankle bone in the depth of 60 cm, potter's bottom in the depth of 1.1 m and seen slight visible burial spot in the depth of 1.17 m at the H10 section. After horizontal profile mapping of the grave construction we cleaned left side of the grave and continued digging with size 5.1x5.1 m in center of the grave and found burial spot in the depth of 1.3 m.

During the excavation of the grave were found ankle bone of horse in the depth of 1.2 m, teeth of horde in the depth of 1.3 m, horse femur in the depth of 1.3 cm, piece of bone artifact in the depth of 1.3 m, and fragment of horse femur in the depth of 1.49 m at H11 section.

In the level the burial's size and form was changed (3.3 m in length and 1.8 m wide). In the depth of 1.3 m there was found stones layer which was documented as layer-1 and in the depth of 2.1 m was 2nd stones layer with small stones and photo and drawing documentation of both layers were made.

In the depth of 2.4 m there was displayed fragment of wooden coffin in the left and right of head side of the burial spot and wooden coffin's part with very poor preservation and sheep skull, human skull in the left side of burial spot, pieces of iron artifacts (Fig.13.). Also coffin's cover in the depth of 3.03 m was discovered. When the excavation depth reached 3.22 m it was very clear that the grave had double coffins. Outside coffin was very poor preservation and made board with 7 cm wide, 95cm long and 6 cm thick. The inside coffin's each side frame were made a board with 5 cm wide, 0.5 cm thick and floor and cover made two boards. The coffin's size was 190 cm long, 5 cm tall and 51 cm wide in head side and 42 cm in leg side. In the level were found arrow piece, small bell and pieces of the iron artifacts.

The human skull, upper part and arm's bone lied in chaos on the cover of coffin and horse and sheep skulls and other bones were unearthed in between top side of the coffin and burial spot. This condition of all remains show that the grave was looted by robbers before unknown time. In the grave were uncovered 6 sheep skulls with horn, a horse skull, 2 circle shaped iron artifacts from both outside of coffin's wall, 4 arrow head, iron artifacts pieces. Also were found human pelvis and lower limb bones which was in anatomical position, and two flat iron artifacts.

The artifacts

Potter fragment, H8 section. 15 cm deep. 2 fragment of Brown colored potter. 1st fragment size 3.7x1.2x0.7 cm, 2nd piece 3.6x2.1x0.9 cm. Due to these potter was made of rough clay. External and internal surface of potter had brown color (*fig. 11*).

Potter fragment, H10 section. Dark brown colored 2 pieces. 1st piece triangular shaped, 5.2 cm long, 3.2 cm high, 0.8 cm thick. On the surface there was seen some footprints of soot and smoke. 2nd piece's had brownish color and with 3x3.3x0.8 cm size (*fig. 12*).

Bone artifacts, 330 cm. It was found in the depth of 330 cm. 2 needle shaped artifact with hole at the one of ends (*fig. 13*).

Coffin's Lower part: 278 cm. 3 pieces of iron artifacts. 1st artifact triangular shape and sharp point and 3 cm long. 2nd findings-triangular shape and 5.7 cm long. 3rd artifact - trapezoid shape and 4 cm long, size: 3.8x3.5x1 cm (*fig. 14*).

Iron artifact. 330cm. The Circle shaped iron artifact was made of 0.4 cm thick iron wire. The artifact was 6.4 cm long iron wire double twisted (*fig. 15*).

Bronze bell. It was found in depth of 330 cm and left side of human remains. The bell has 3 cm height, the edge of the bell has ovoid shape and it's size 2.8x2.5 cm. On the top of the bell there is hole with 0.3 cm diameter (*fig. 16*).

Glued bone of Bow tips: depth 330sm, four glued bone pieces of a bow tips and eight broken pieces of the bow were found in the west corner of casket' foot side. There is nothing special patterns on the glued bones. But in inside, we can see lattice design. The first glued bone: length=11.4sm, width=1.8-1.1sm, thick=0.5-0.2sm. There is a mark which made by bowstring in the next to the bow groove and outside of the glued bone. The bow groove depth is 0.4sm. The second glued bone: length=11.4sm, width=1.8-1.2sm, thick=0.5-0.2sm. Also, there is another mark which made by bowstring in the next to the bow groove and outside of the glued bone. The bow groove depth is 0.4sm. The third glued bone: length=8.7sm, width=1.7-1.2sm, thick=0.4-0.2sm, a sharp of the bow groove was broken. The bow groove depth is 0.5sm. The fourth glued bone: length=11.2sm, width=1.7-1sm, thick=0.4-0.2sm and the bow groove depth is 0.5sm (*fig. 17*).

Potters fragments: Two pieces of brown colored potter finding were found in depth of 1.1 m. The potter fragments had ash and smoke footprints. One's size: 10.4 x 7.4 cm x 1.1- 0.9 cm and another one 9.5x5x1- 0.8 cm (*fig. 18*).

Rectangular shaped iron artifact: It was found near low part of the coffin in depth of 2.78 m. It's size: 2.9-2.2 cm. and purpose unclear (*fig. 19*).

Three wings iron arrow head: Five arrow head were found in right side near human remain in depth of 3.3 m. Size of one of the arrow heads is 9 cm 0.4 cm thick wings.

The Xiongnu cemetery at Bishreltyn Am is located south slop of small hill situated north of high mountain and the geographic location of the site show similarity to location of the other Xiongnu cemetry sites with dew graves in Mongolia. Due to previous studied of Xiongnu graves that the sote with round shaped graves are located on south slop of the mountain. However, the Xiongnu cemetery with more than 100 graves (Khudgyn Tolgoi, Tamiryn Ulaan Khushuu, Nukhmyn am, Solbi Uul, Burkhan Tolgoi sites) is situated on terrace or valley of the mountain. The Xiongnu cemetery with few graves at Bishreltyn Am, Elst-Ar are located southeast or south slop and foothill.

The Xiongnu grave-1 from Bishrelt site had coffin made double board. This kind of coffin was found from many Xiongnu graves. In the regard we can conclude that the double board coffin was more popular among the Xiongnu population. Archaeologist Ts.Dorjsuren classified Xiongnu grave as nobleman grave and common people graves. Subsequently, scholar Ts.Turbat excavated 153 Xiongnu graves and classified into 3 groups: such as 3-5 m, 5-8 m and more than 8 m (Törbat Ts., 2004, p. 37) by size of round shaped external stone construction of Xiongnu graves. Nevertheless G.Regzin noticed that it is not possible to classify just using the external stone construction size of grave ... and many graves with diameter of 10-15 m, even most of graves with 20-25

diameter found at Khudgyn Tolgoi and Solbi uul sites are located in Khoit Tamir river valley (Eregzen G., 2007)

Sacrifice: Mostly horse, kettle, sheep and goat skeleton are found from Xiongnu graves. It is related to sacrificial beliefs of ancient habitants. Sacrifice is beliefs to after life of the dead person. In the Xiongnu grave-1 from Bishreltyn-Am site were found 6 heads of sheep, a horse head, neck vertebrae, tibia, heels bone. It means that people who participate in funeral ceremony put 6 sheep, a horse in the dead person's grave and all sheep head with horn. Based on the sacrificial finds we can notice following:

1. Sex of sacrificed sheep with horn are determined male. It may be symbolized the sex and social status of dead person.
2. Xiongnu people sacrifice animal with horn may be related to symbol of power (Sükhbaatar G., 1980)

Weapon: According to historic sources Xiongnu people used different kind of weapons. The excavation of Xiongnu graves in Mongolia and surrounding territory were found iron sword (Tseveendorj D., 1990) (Batsaikhan Z., 2002) (Ölziibayar S., 2006), knives (Batsaikhan Z., 2002) (Ölziibayar S., 2006), iron head of spear (Alekseyev I.V., Khudyakov Yu.S, Tseveendorj D., 1985, p. 133), bone part of bow (Amartüvshin Ch., 2011), different kind of arrow heads (Törbat Ts., Amartüvshin Ch., Erdenebat U., 2003) and so on. We found bone part (blinds) of bow, three iron arrow wings head. The findings are more common with Xiongnu artifacts found in Mongolia and surrounding territories. Due to statistics that 77% of all bow blinds found from men grave of male, 17% - from women graves, 87% of arrow head from men graves and 10% from women graves and 3% from graves of children (Törbat Ts., 2004). That fact show that bow and arrow played very important role in life of Xiongnu population (Ochir-Eddene N., 2013).

Animal equipment: In the grave were found bronze bell and iron artifact with rectangular shape. Similar bronze bell was found from Xiongnu graves excavated in Mongolia (Noyan Uul, Egiin Gol and Tamiryn Ulaankhoshuu sites), Altai, Transbaikalia North China. Some scientist concluded that the bell was hanged on horse's neck. Archaeologist Z.Batsaikhan suggested that the bell used not only for horse but it may had another propose and classified into two typed: bell without ornament and with ornament on both sides (Batsaikhan Z., 2002, pp. 91-92).

Household items:

One of most popular findings from Xiongnu common people graves is whole ceramics and pieces of ceramic. The ceramic remains give us a lot of information on its shape, propose and technology. We found 6 ceramics fragments and some bone items in grave-1 at Bishreltyn-Am site. It was not possible to construct original shape of the ceramics.

Findings with unknown purpose: It was not possible to reconstruct original shape and usage purpose of some bone and iron findings from grave -1 at Bishreltyn-Am site. In comparison with Xiongnu graves in Mongolia and surrounding territory the Bishreltyn-Am grave-1 is average monument by its size and depth. Also the grave's

internal construction (souble coffin), findingd was similar with most of graves excavated in Mongolia and includes to the type of graves with wooden board frame and board coffin. Anthropological study of human remains show that in the grave was buried 40-45 years old man.

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Улаанбаатар, Налайх,
Бишрэлтийн ам



Figure 1. Xiongnu burial site on Bishreltyn-Am

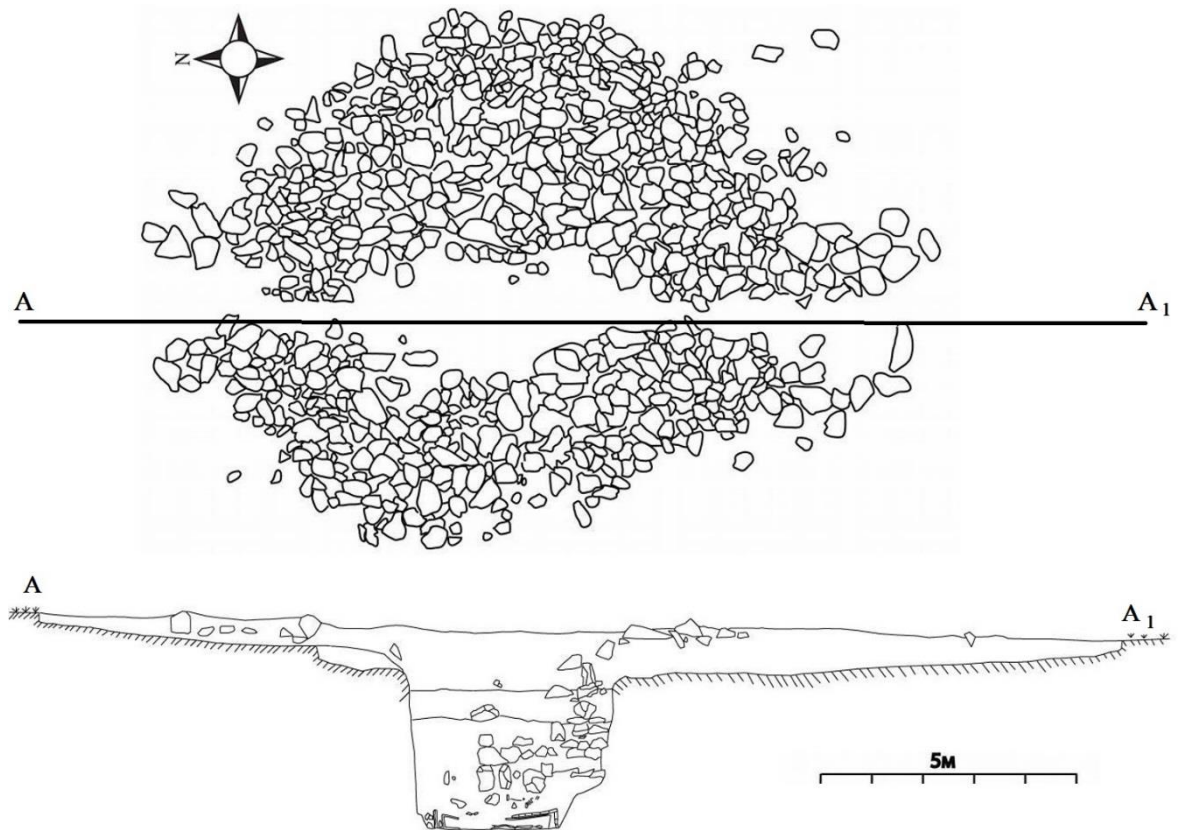


Figure 2. Grave -1

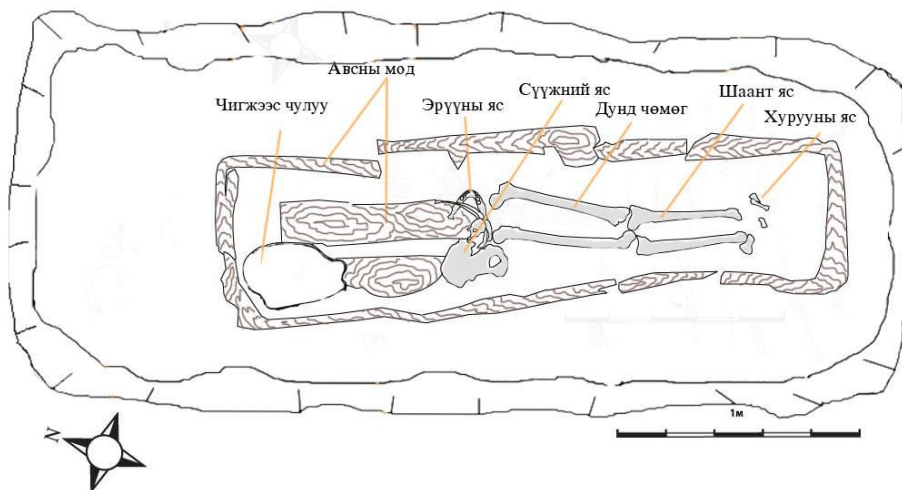


Figure 3. Wooden box and skeleton of grave -1



Figure 4. Grave -1 on Bishreltyn-Am site



Figure 5. External stone construction of grave -1



Figure 6. Grave -1. Excavating

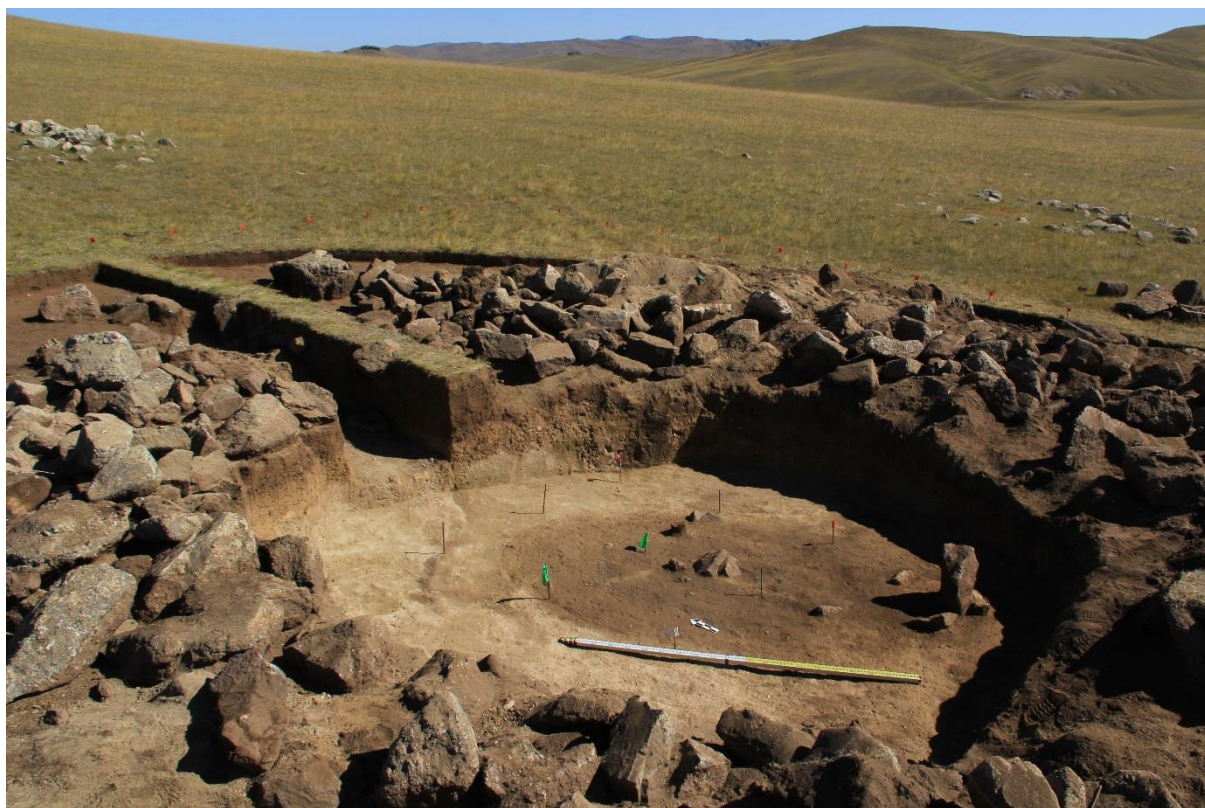


Fig 7. Burial spot of grave -1



Figure 8. burial



Figure 9. Wooden box and remain of human



Figure 10. Rebury



Figure 11. Potter fragments



Зүрэг 12. Potter fragments



Figure 13. Bone artifacts



Figure 14. Iron artifacts



Figure 15. Iron artifact

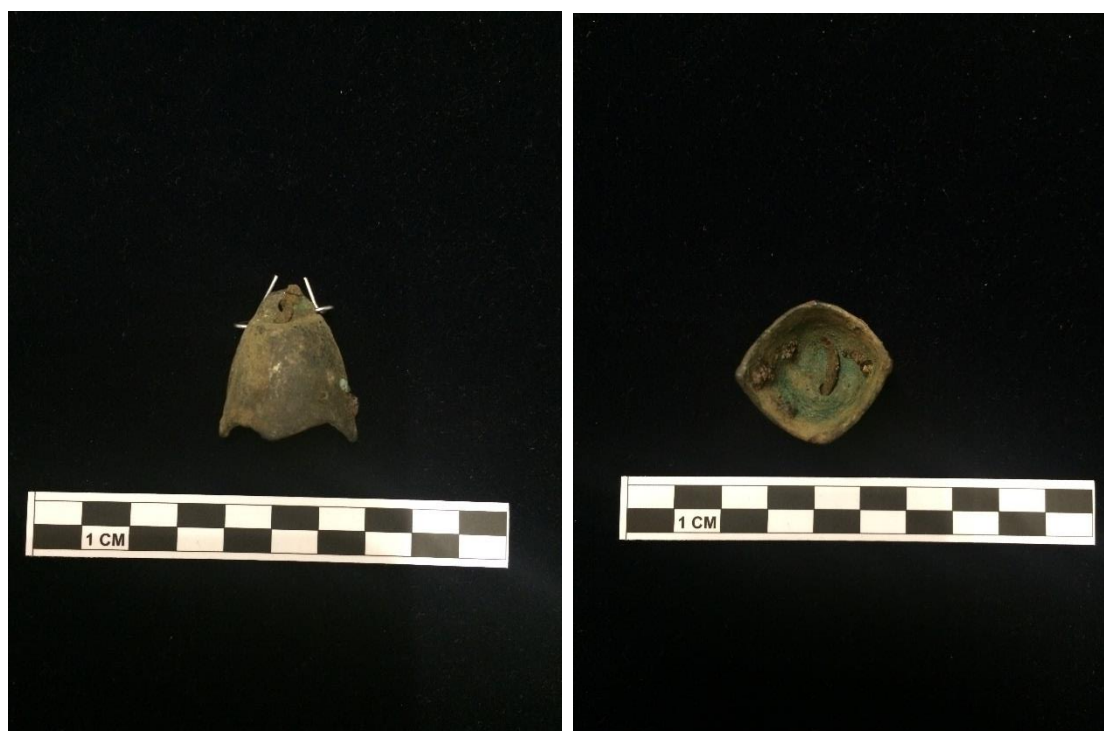


Figure 16. Bronze bell



Figure 17. Bow stickers



Figure 18. Ваарны ёроол



Figure 19. Iron artifact



Figure 20. Three wings iron arrow head