

Comparison of »Slavic« pots with gender and age of the deceased

Alja Žorž

Within this study I have attempted to determine whether, in Early medieval contexts, we can or cannot trace any links between size of a pot and both gender and age of the deceased. Have Slav people offered pots within graves of their ancestors, and did these pots carry a certain magical message, maybe as a status symbol? Or does the pot rest near the deceased merely from the point of view of use in everyday life, as a private property of the dead, which he will take to »the other side«?

With the results of analysis of the volume of the pots I have answered only a few questions, but guessings, which point out interesting inhumation practices of this time, have appeared. In any case, Slavic pots, in the sense of grave offerings, did certainly have a sort of symbolic meaning.

Presumptions and hypotheses

In my study I have observed varieties of the volume of Slavic pots. With the term »Slavic pots« I have marked Early medieval pots found in regions which have been populated by Slavic people and other populations.

Before the study of the bibliography, I have raised some important questions and hypotheses, for which I have later on tried to confirm or determine the reason why they do not hold true.

The main aim of this research was to find a reasonable link between the volume of pots and factors such as age, gender of the deceased and other offerings found within the graves.

I was interested in the possibility of discovering a linkage between the volume of pots and the quantity of food which the deceased consumed in the time of his life. In this case, men need more energy therefore more food, and should have owned larger pots than women and children. According to this assumption children should own the smallest pots.

So, can we, in graves with adults, find larger pots than in infant and juvenile burials?

In several Slav graves we can find more than one pot, mostly a pair. One is always larger than the other. Maybe that indicates a special meaning.

Finally, in these graves, we find knives, earrings, necklaces, etc. Can we recognize a link between these offerings and variation in sizes of the pots? Are the pots put in graves with other offerings larger and do they indicate individuals of higher status?

I tried to point out that the meaning of pottery in the time of Slavic people (and even before) was as high and significant as the meaning of more »precious« artifacts from

later on, though at first glance ceramic pots seem unimportant and poor, especially as we do not find a lot of different forms and they are not ornamented with complex patterns.

There is one particular problem which appears to be very important in the process of a study like mine: archaeological publications. From the time of the first archaeological publications there seems to be a lot of emphasis on the text and too little on graphic material. We confront the problem of inadequate catalogues or even absence of catalogues. Within studies, like mine, we observe how important it is to publish a qualitative excavation report, from which we obtain information for further researches. We should dedicate more time to finishing precise sketches and photographs and, which is the most important: we should never leave out the scale of graphic material.

With the statistic results I have tried to extract answers to the above-mentioned questions. It was more difficult to extract information due to incomplete descriptions of graves and lack of anthropological studies, but despite all I was able to come to interesting conclusions.

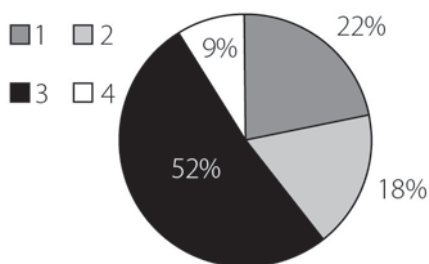


Diagram 1. Number of individuals in graves with pots according to gender.

1 - women, 2 - men, 3 - infants, 4 - unknown.

Diagram 1. Število oseb v grobovih z lonci, po spolu.

1 - ženske, 2 - moški, 3 - otroci, 4 - neznano.

Methodology

For applicable results I needed to collect a sample of pots from at least one hundred burial contexts. I have studied several necropolises with burials in which we can also find pots as offerings.

Regarding information needed I pointed out criteria which were used in the method of selecting specific graves with pots: inventory number, dimensions of vessels, scale, age of the deceased, or anthropological analysis of specific necropolis (Štefančič 1995) and vessel sketch.

I used the program Microsoft Access to record information, which I gained from the literature stated at the end. I composed a specific form which includes a form for calculating the volume of vessels made by Vid Pleterski (Pleterski 2003). I used the Microsoft Excell program for statistic analysis. After analysis of dimensions I have obtained a table including all the information needed for reasonable conclusions.

Whilst gathering the literature needed I was confronted with a lot of difficulties. In numerous cases there was no inventory number by the description of each vessel, so I had to use my own numbering. Sketches were often poor, sometimes just photographs which were unsuitable for further processing and gathering of dimension information. The catalogue of necropolis Ptuj-grad was the only one which included a scale with appropriate

sketches. Nin-Ždrijac was the only necropolis, regarding the ones used in this study, on which they performed anthropological analysis. Information about age of the deceased from other necropolises were only approximate, or the age was described by the terms juvenilis, adultus, maturus. Nevertheless I succeeded in selecting at least one hundred pots for my analysis.

I calculated the volume of pots found in nine necropolises. I took into consideration the assumption that the same practices were carried out in all regions inhabited by Slav people, therefore I expanded my sample and used also pots from necropolises North and South of Slovenia. I used information obtained from five graves from Slovenia, Brezje pri Zrečah (Pahič 1969), two from necropolis Ptuj-Grad (Korošec 1950), seven from necropolis Ptuj-Turnišče (Korošec 1953), four from necropolis Zgornji Duplek (Ciglencečki, Knific 1979), and from other European sites: five from necropolis Nin-Ždrijac (Beloševič 1980), twenty-seven from Záhorská Bystrica, Slovakia (Kraskovská 1972), three from Bernhardstahl, Austria (Pittioni 1935), one from necropolis Mikulčice, Czech Republic and forty-two from necropolis Staré Město (Hrubý 1955).

In this way I have studied 91 graves, some of them including more than one vessel, so, altogether, I calculated the volume of 106 vessels.

Results

In 91 graves we find 20 female individuals, 16 male individuals, 47 children and 8 unknown individuals with known age (diagram 1).

First of all, I have classified pots according to gender and within this according to age of the deceased.

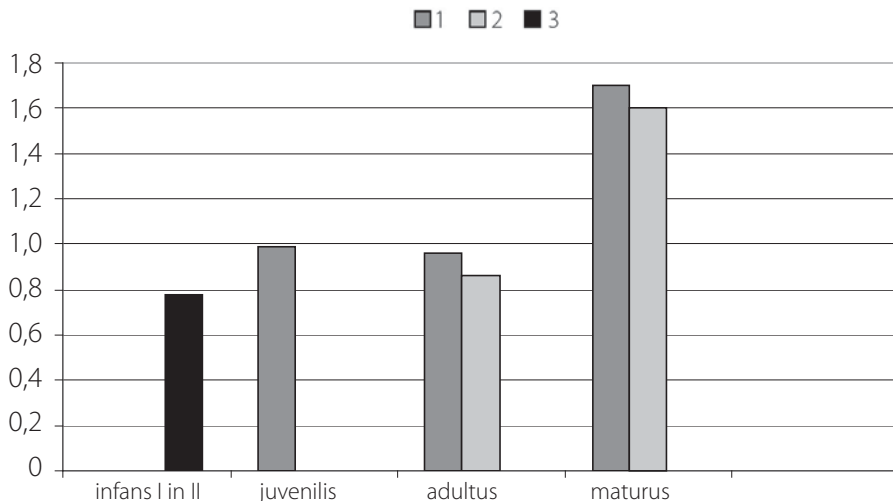


Diagram 2. Average vessel volume in litres according to the age of women, men and infants.

1 - women, 2 - men, 3 - children.

Diagram 2. Povprečna prostornina loncev v litrih glede na starost žensk, moških ter otrok.

1 - ženske, 2 - moški, 3 - otroci.

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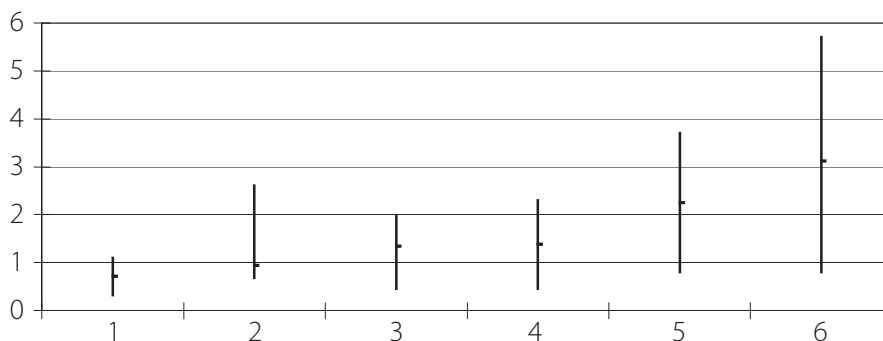


Diagram 3. 1. Span of volume of all vessels in litres according to gender (women, men, children).

1 - infans I in II, 2 - juvenilis, women, 3 - adultus, women, 4 - adultus, men, 5 - maturus, women, 6 - maturus, men.

Diagram 3.: 1. Razpon prostornin vseh loncev v litrih v ženskih, moških in otroških grobovih.

1 - infans I in II, 2 - juvenilis, ženske, 3 - adultus, ženske, 4 - adultus, moški, 5 - maturus, ženske, 6 - maturus, moški.

At women I have selected: juvenilis, 15–21 years, adultus, 21–39 years, maturus, 40–60 years (diagram 2). There were no women of age senilis in the literature studied.

I have extracted men in two classes: adultus 20–40 years and maturus 40–68 years. I was not able to obtain any information about graves from juvenilis period. I combined class senilis and maturus in only one class maturus, because I did not find any major differences between two of these classes, or age information was given in a span from 40–68 years, ages of maturus and senilis class (diagram 2).

I also combined two classes within infant burials: Infans I and Infans II in class Infans 1–10 years (diagram 2).

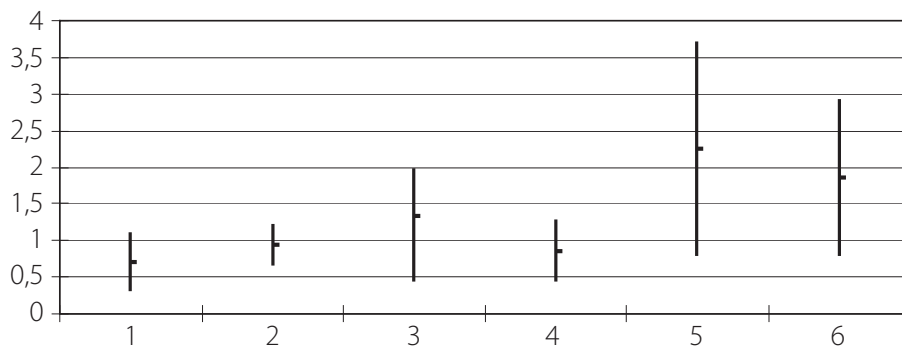


Diagram 3a. 1. Span of volume of all vessels in litres according to gender (women, men, children) including only one vessel.

1 - Infans I in II, 2 - juvenilis, women, 3 - adultus, women, 4 - adultus, men, 5 - maturus, women, 6 - maturus, men.

Diagram 3a. 1. Razpon prostornin vseh loncev v litrih v ženskih, moških in otroških grobovih z le eno posodo.

1 - Infans I in II, 2 - juvenilis, ženske, 3 - adultus, ženske, 4 - adultus, moški, 5 - maturus, ženske, 6 - maturus, moški.

I concluded that the average volume of pots offered in infant burials amounts to 0,78 l, though this includes also graves with two vessels, where one, as a rule, is always larger than the other. If we count out greater vessels we extract an average size of 0,67 l.

Regarding the obtained results, my first hypothesis cannot be fully confirmed. Men and women have possessed larger vessels, but if we compare vessels from female and male burials, we cannot differentiate the dimensions within different female and male age groups. The span of dimensions of pots from female burials is even a bit greater

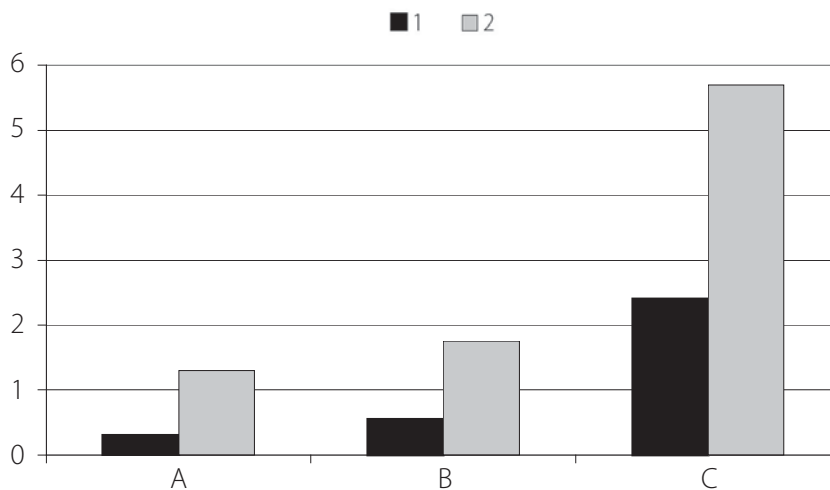


Diagram 4. Average volume in litres, in graves with two vessels, according to gender.

1. Smaller vessel. 2. Larger vessel. A) Infants B) Women C) Men.

Diagram 4. Povprečne prostornine posod v litrih, v grobovih, kjer sta najdeni dve posodi, glede na spol.

1. Manjša posoda. 2. Večja posoda. A) Otroci. B) Ženske. C) Moški.

(diagram 3). According to this statement, the dimension of the pot was therefore not dependent on the quantity of food which the deceased consumed, or it is a consequence of some kind of equality between Slav men and women. Did men and women consume the same quantity of food?

Generally speaking, in female burials we find, larger vessels, but what we have to stress at this point is an alteration which we can observe at age *maturus*, according to female and male burials, and this is even more evident with male pots. Within age group of *adultus* women, the largest size of pot is 1,97 l and within age *maturus* as big as 3,7 l. The largest size of a pot within age group male adults is 1,27 l and *maturus* 5,7 l (diagram 3).

In burials, where we find two vessels, one is always larger than the other, at least twice and at the most eleven times larger (diagram 4). We can observe the »phenomenon« of two pots as offerings in infant burials, in juvenile female burials and male of all ages (diagram 5). In my study sample there were no burials with two pots within female *adultus* and *maturus* age groups. This can be a result of the small sample or indicates a point where

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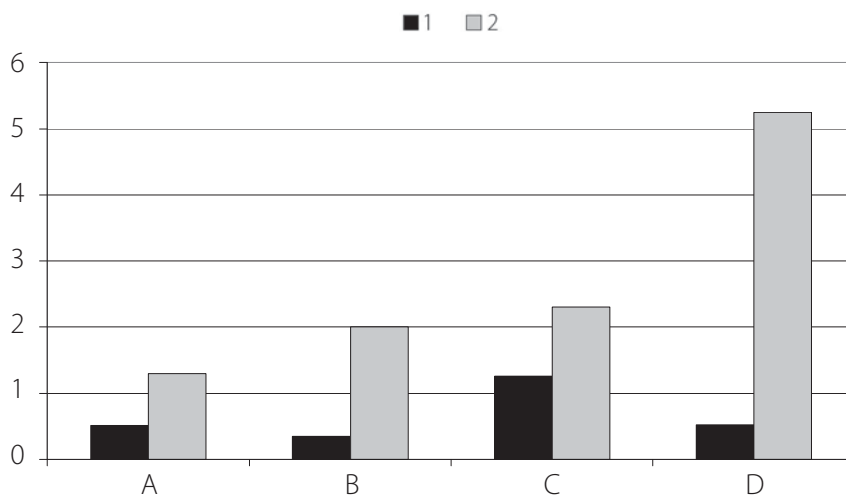


Diagram 5. Average volume in litres, in graves with two vessels, according to age.

1. Smaller vessel. 2. Larger vessel. A) Infans I in II B) Juvenilis, women C) Adultus, men D) Maturus, men.

Diagram 5. Povprečne prostornine posod v litrih, v grobovih, kjer sta najdeni dve posodi, glede na starost.

1. Manjša posoda. 2. Večja posoda. A) Infans I in II. B) Juvenilis, ženske. C) Adultus, moški. D) Maturus, moški.

we can notice a wider cultural pattern. What is remarkable is that in male burials at age maturus, which contain two vessels, the smaller one falls in the span of burials with one vessel, but the larger pot is bigger, in size, than the largest pot added in graves with one vessel in the same age group (diagram 3a). We can conclude that the larger pot (from burials with two pots) certainly had a special meaning.

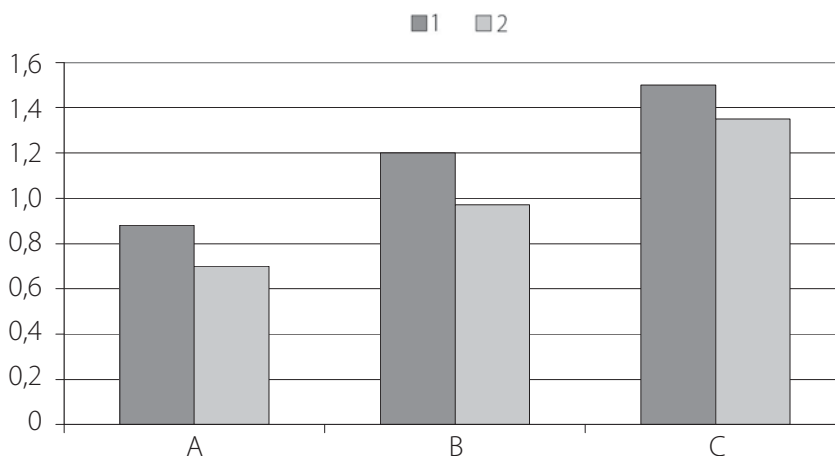


Diagram 6. Average volume in litres, according to gender and other votive artifacts.

1. With offerings. 2. Without offerings. A) Children B) Women C) Men.

Diagram 6. Povprečne prostornine posod v litrih, glede na prdatke in spol. 1. S prdatki. 2. Brez prdatkov.

A) Otroci. B) Ženske. C) Moški.

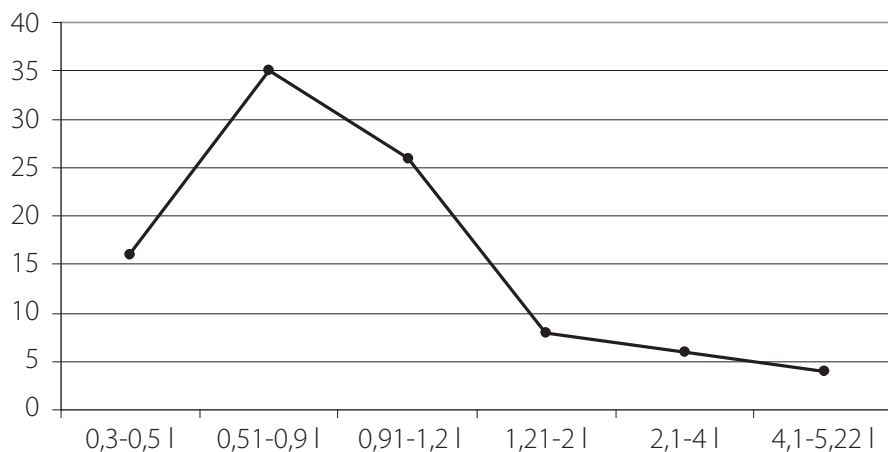


Diagram 7. Graph of all vessel according to classes, in view of average volume of pot in litres.

Diagram 7. Graf števila vseh posod, po razredih, glede na povprečno prostornino posode v litrih.

Generally, the span of vessel sizes is much bigger in male than in female burials (diagram 3). Perhaps there is a link between size of the vessel and size of the deceased. Unfortunately I could not verify this assumption, as from accessible literature it was not possible to obtain information about the size of the deceased.

If we compare graves with and without other votive artifacts (earrings, necklaces, knives) we find no differences. In graves without other offerings the sizes of pots, according to all three gender groups, are a bit smaller, but in my opinion this is a consequence of a smaller sample of graves with other votive artifacts.

According to the average volume of pots, infants have smaller pots than adults (diagram 2).

Discussion

Although I was, at first, skeptical about the link between size of vessels and gender and age of the deceased, the results of this study show that there was certainly some kind of a pattern used in Slav burial practices, especially in the case of offering the ceramic pots. There is no doubt that the largest pots were added in burials of the oldest members of the community. Also, in burials consisting of two vessels, one was, as a rule, always greater than the other. Nevertheless I cannot distinguish any mentionable differences between size of the pot and gender of the deceased, which might be a consequence of the inadequate study sample.

It is difficult to say what was the motive for offering vessels of different sizes in Slav graves. Perhaps the oldest person owned larger pots as their importance in the society was higher. In this way, the vessel would be used as a status symbol. Or were older people served in larger pots as a sign of respect. Or something third?

It is necessary to emphasize that the size of pots does not increase evenly, but we can observe an important difference in maturated age group. The pots' volume is, in this case, at least two times larger. Considering that this change is seen both in female group and

in male group, the remark could indicate some kind of cultural pattern. These individuals evidently had a special role in Slav communities.

We can also observe a distinctive pattern in the case of burials with two vessels. One is, as a rule, always larger than the other. If we compare pots' volumes from burials with two vessels (Diagram 4 and 5) with the span from burials with only one vessel (diagram 3a) we come to an interesting conclusion. Volumes of larger pots from burials of men in all age groups do not fall in to the span of burials with one or two pots. A larger pot evidently had a special meaning in relation to juvenile women, infants and also men. Nevertheless, a smaller pot was probably added as a part of private property (pot which was used in everyday consuming of food) and the larger one had more significance, probably a symbolic meaning.

If we link these results to a statement that we cannot find the larger vessel in burials with deceased women of age juvenilis and older, we find out that the largest pot might have symbolized an adult woman. In the case of infant and juvenile women burials it could have been used as a symbol of mother and in the case of men aged *maturus* or *adultus* it could have symbolized mistress of the house or wife. In this way mother, wife and housekeeper could offer support and family protection to her family also in afterlife.

Indeed there is another question that stands out considering the statements above: what was a symbol of men's protection and power in women's burials? Probably a different votive artifact. Maybe a ring, symbol of eternal matrimony, which as a rule cannot be found in male burials.

Also in infant graves, on average, we find smaller pots than within adult burials. We can perceive a certain pattern, which might indicate physical smallness or lower status.

In my opinion, we certainly cannot linearly link volume merely to the quantity of food which the deceased consumed everyday throughout his life. The differences between sizes of vessels in male and female burials should in consequence be greater. Likewise, the pattern seen in offering two pots in the same grave indicates no link to quantities of food consumed by the deceased.

Difference in sizes of pots undoubtedly points out certain patterns in burial practices which are connected to social diversity of the deceased and their status level in the Slav community. Moreover, the vessel itself might represent a person – in this study case, exclusively a woman – in the sense of family as a sacred group of relatives.

Burial practices, including offering pots, have been carried out since the Neolithic. This time is characterized by pottery ornamented with complicated patterns, signs. Pots with symbols, as "face symbol", added to Neolithic burials, have certainly played a significant role in that time and society (Gonçalves 1999). Also Shanks and Tilley (1992) have in the conclusion of the publication of Swedish middle-neolithic ceramics pointed out the linkage of pots and meaning, as symbolic (fertility, life, death,...etc.). The ancient custom of adding different pots to graves is carried on also in the period of Slav people.

In conclusion we can say that pots carry information about complicated social relations, part of which were the deceased whilst still living, and reflect the way in which close relatives of the deceased comprehended the situation and status of the dead.

Acknowledgments

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Primerjava prostornine "slovanskih" loncev s starostjo in spolom pokojnika v grobu

Alja Žorž

Predpostavke in domneve

V svoji raziskavi sem opazovala raznolikosti prostornine slovanskih loncev, najdenih v grobovih. Z izrazom »slovanski« sem označila zgodnjersrednjeveške lonce z ozemlja, na katerem so v tem času živeli Slovani skupaj z drugimi ljudstvi.

Preden sem se lotila preučevanja gradiva, sem si zastavila glavna vprašanja in domneve, ki sem jih kasneje skušala potrditi ali pa ugotoviti, zakaj ne držijo. Glavni cilj je bil najti smiselno povezavo med prostornino slovanskih loncev, ki so bili pridani v grobove, ter dejavniki, kot so: starost in spol pokojnika ter pridatki, ki jih prav tako najdemo v grobovih.

Zanimalo me je, če je velikost oziroma prostornina lonca vezana na količino hrane, ki jo je pokojnik zaužil v času svojega življenja. Če je temu tako, potem bi moški, ki so potrebovali več energije in s tem tudi več hrane, morali imeti v lasti večje posode kot ženske in otroci. Iz tega sledi, da bi v otroških grobovih pričakovali najmanjše posode.

Vprašamo se lahko: ali so starejšim osebkom pridajali v grob večje posode kot mlajšim?

V posameznih slovanskih grobovih se večkrat (kot pridatek) pojavljata dve posodi. Ena je vedno večja od druge. Morda to kaže na poseben pomen.

Nenazadnje pa kot pridatke v teh grobovih najdemo tudi nože, uhane, ogrlice itd. Ali lahko opazimo povezavo med le-temi in različno prostornino loncev? So posode v grobovih z drugimi pridatki večje in so morda v teh grobovih pokopani ljudje, ki so imeli v času življenja višji status kot drugi?

Želela sem pokazati, da je lončenina v arheološkem času Slovanov prav tako pomembna kot ostali, bolj »dragoceni« pridatki, čeprav se na prvi pogled morda kaže pusto, saj lonci niti nimajo posebnih oblik in niso okrašeni z zapletenimi vzorci.

Poseben problem predstavljajo arheološke objave. Že od prvih arheoloških objav preveč časa posvetimo besedilu in vse premalo slikovnemu gradivu. Problematična je pomanjkljivost ali celo odsotnost katalogov. Pri raziskavah, kot je moja, se pokaže kako pomembna je kakovost izvornih poročil z izkopavanj, iz katerih črpamo podatke za nadaljnje raziskave. Pri izdelavi kataloga bi morali več časa posvetiti natančni izdelavi risb in fotografij, in kar je najpomembneje, nikoli ne bi smeli pozabiti na merilo! Brez merila so še tako dobre risbe kot dragoceni pridatki brez arheološkega konteksta.

S pomočjo statističnih podatkov sem skušala odgovoriti na zgoraj navedena vprašanja. Zaradi nepopolnih opisov grobov in pomanjkanja antropoloških raziskav je bilo moje delo oteženo, a mi je kljub temu uspelo priti do zanimivih zaključkov.

Metodologija

Za uporabne rezultate sem potrebovala vzorec prostornin posod iz vsaj stotih zgodnjersrednjeveških grobov. Preučila sem več grobišč z grobovi, v katere so bili pridani lonci.

Glede na podatke, ki sem jih potrebovala, sem si postavila nekaj glavnih kriterijev za izbor, ki so jih izbrani primeri morali vsebovati: inventarno številko posode, mere posod,

merilo, spol pokojnika, starost pokojnika oziroma antropološko raziskavo grobišča (Štefančič 1995) ter risbo posode.

Za vnašanje podatkov, ki sem jih pridobila z raziskavo posod v literaturi, sem uporabila program Microsoft Access. Obrazec za izračun prostornine zgodnjerednjeveških loncev, ki ga je sestavil Vid Pleterški (Pleterški 2003), sem vnesla v obrazec, ki sem ga v Accessu sestavila sama. Statistično analizo sem opravila s programom Microsoft Excel. Tako sem dobila tabelo vseh grobov z zgoraj navedenimi podatki, ki so bili ključni za mojo raziskavo.

Ob zbiranju literature sem naletela na več težav. Pri opisih posod velikokrat ni bilo inventarne številke posode, zato sem uporabila svoje oštevilčenje. Risbe posod so bile slabe, včasih so objavljene le fotografije posod brez risb. Te fotografije so bile neprimerne za obdelavo in pridobivanje podatkov, ki sem jih potrebovala za izračun prostornine posode. Le pri slovenski objavi grobišča Ptuj-Grad je bilo k risbam priloženo merilo. Od upoštevanih grobišč je bila le za grobišče Nin-Ždrijac narejena podrobna antropološka analiza. Podatki o starosti pokojnikov iz drugih grobišč, ki sem jih zasledila, so bili le približni oziroma je bila starost omejena s pojmi juvenilis, adultus, maturus. Vseeno se mi je posrečilo, da sem iz objav izluščila vsaj sto slovanskih loncev za analizo.

Izračunala sem prostornino loncev iz devetih najdišč. Upoštevala sem predpostavko, da so tudi drugod, kjer so živeli Slovani, v istem času veljali podobni običaji, zato pri analizi prostornine loncev nisem uporabila le najdišč iz Slovenije, temveč sem vzorec razširila tudi na druga evropska zgodnjerednjeveška najdišča. Iz Slovenije sem uporabila pet grobov z Brezja nad Zrečami (Pahič 1969), dva grobova z grobišča Ptuj-Grad (Korošec 1950), sedem grobov z grobišča Ptuj-Turnišče (Korošec 1953), štiri z grobišča Zgornji-Duplek (Ciglencečki, Knific 1979), ter z drugih evropskih najdišč: pet grobov z grobišča Nin-Ždrijac, Hrvaška (Belošević 1980), sedemindvajset z grobišča Záhorská Bystrica, Slovaška (Kraskovská 1972), tri z grobišča Bernhardsthal, Avstrija (Pittioni 1935), enega z grobišča Mikulčice, Češka, ter dvainštirideset z grobišča Staré Město (Hrubý 1955).

Tako sem preučila 91 grobov. Nekateri so vsebovali več kot eno posodo, tako da sem izračunala prostornino za 106 posod.

Rezultati

V 91 grobovih je bilo 20 oseb ženskega spola, 16 oseb moškega spola ter 47 otrok, 8 pa neznanega spola, vendar z znano starostjo (diagram 1).

Posode sem najprej razvrstila glede na spol, znotraj tega pa še glede na starost pokojnika. Pri dvojnih grobovih je bilo jasno, h komu spada katera posoda, zato sem jih prav tako lahko razvrstila glede na starost in spol.

Pri ženskah sem izluščila tri razrede: juvenilis, 15–21 let, adultus, 21–39 let, maturus, 40–60 let. Žensk starosti senilis v obravnavanem gradivu ni bilo (diagram 2).

Pri moških sem pridobila dva razreda: adultus 20–40 let in maturus 40–68 let. Podatkov o grobovih iz juvenilnega obdobja v grobiščih, ki sem jih uporabila, namreč nisem našla. Razred senilis in maturus sem združila v maturus, ker med tema dvema razredoma ni bilo večjih razlik ali pa je bila pri posameznikih starost podana v razponu od 40 do 68 let, kar spada v razred maturus in senilis (diagram 2).

Pri otrocih sem prav tako, glede na dobljene podatke, združila razreda infans I in II v razred infans: 1–10 let (diagram 2).

Povprečna velikost posod pri otrocih je 0.78 l, vendar ta vključuje tudi grobove z dvema posodama, kjer je ena praviloma večja od druge. Če odštejemo večje posode, je povprečna velikost 0.67 l.

Rezultati kažejo, da prva od mojih domnev ne drži popolnoma. Moški in ženske so imeli večje posode kot otroci, vendar so velikosti, če jih primerjamo med posodami v ženskih in moških grobovih, enake v posameznih starostnih obdobjih. Razpon je pri posodah v ženskih grobovih celo malenkost večji (diagram 3). Potemtakem velikost posode v grobu ni bila vezana samo na količino hrane, ki jo je pokojnik zaužil (pri enem obroku v času življenja), saj bi tako posode v ženskih grobovih morale biti manjše kot v moških. Morda pa so v tistem času ženske in moški zaužili enako količino hrane?

Na splošno pri starejših osebkih najdemo večje posode, vendar je potrebno poudariti veliko spremembo, ki se zgodi v starosti matusus tako pri moških kot pri ženskah in je pri moških še bolj očitna. Pri ženskah adultus je velikost največje posode 1,97 litra, pri ženskah matusus pa kar 3,7 litra. Pri moških adultus je največja posoda 1,27 litra, pri moških matusus pa 5,7 litra (diagram 3).

V grobovih, kjer sta pridani dve posodi, je v vseh primerih ena veliko večja od druge, vsaj dvakrat in največ enajstkrat (diagram 4). Dve posodi najdemo v otroških grobovih, pri juvenilnih ženskah in pri moških vseh starosti (diagram 5). Pri ženskah adultus in matusus v mojem vzorcu ni bilo grobov z dvema posodama. To je lahko posledica premajhnega vzorca ali pa se tu kaže širši kulturni vzorec. Zanimivo je tudi, da pri moških v starosti matusus, kjer najdemo dve posodi, manjša posoda pade v razpon grobov z eno posodo, večja posoda pa ima večjo prostornino od največje prostornine posod pri grobovih z eno posodo v istem starostnem obdobju (diagram 3a). Pri moških v starosti adultus manjša posoda spada v razpon, prostornina večje pa je lahko skoraj dvakrat večja (diagram 3a). To kaže, da je imela večja posoda v grobovih, kjer sta pridani dve posodi, zagotovo poseben pomen.

Razpon velikosti posod je v moških grobovih večji kot v ženskih (Diagram 3). Morda je velikost posod povezana tudi z velikostjo pokojnika. Žal te domneve ni bilo možno preveriti, ker s pomočjo uporabljene literature ni bilo mogoče pridobiti podatkov o velikosti pokojnikov.

V grobovih, kjer so še drugi pridatki (nož, uhani, ogrlice), ni videti razlik (diagram 6), če prostornino posod primerjamo s tistimi v grobovih brez pridatkov. V grobovih brez pridatkov so prostornine tako pri otrocih, ženskah in moških malo majše, vendar menim, da je to posledica manjšega vzorca grobov brez pridatkov.

Glede na povprečno prostornino loncev pa imajo otroci manjše posode kot odrasli (diagram 2).

Razprava

Čeprav sem bila sprva skeptična, da obstaja povezava med velikostjo posod in spolom ter starostjo pokojnika, so rezultati pokazali, da so "Slovani" vendarle pridajali lonce v grobove po nekakšnih pravilih. Zagotovo so imele nastarejše osebe največje posode. V grobovih z dvema posodama je ena vedno večja od druge. Vseeno pa ne vidim večjih razlik med prostorninami posod glede na spol pokojnika. Morda je to posledica premajhnega vzorca.

Težko bi določili vzrok za različno prostornino posod v grobovih. Morda je imel starejši pokojnik večji pomen v času življenja in so mu zato dali v grob večjo posodo. Na

tak način bi posoda v tem času izražala status pokojnika. Morda pa so starejšim ljudem stregli hrano v večjih posodah v znak spoštovanja. Ali kaj tretjega?

Potrebno je poudariti, da prostornina posod s starostjo ne narašča enakomerno, temveč se v starosti matusus kaže velika sprememba v velikosti loncev. Prostornina loncev se zveča vsaj za dvakrat. Glede na to, da se ta sprememba pojavi tako pri ženskah kot pri moških, bi to lahko kazalo na neki kulturni vzorec. Očitno so imele osebe te starosti določen pomen v skupnosti.

V primeru grobov, ki imajo pridani dve posodi, se je prav tako pokazal zanimiv vzorec. Od dveh pridanih posod je ena vedno večja kot druga.

Če primerjamo prostornine posod v grobovih z dvema posodama (diagram 4 in 5) z razponom prostornin posod iz grobov z eno posodo (diagram 3a), pridemo do zanimivega zaključka. Prostornine večjih posod v moških grobovih vseh starosti ne padejo v razpon posod grobov z eno ali obema posodama. Večja posoda je očitno imela poseben pomen tako pri ženskah starosti juvenilis ter pri otrocih kot tudi pri moških. Potemtakem je bila manjša posoda verjetno pridana kot del osebne opreme (lonec, ki ga je pokojnik, v času življenja uporabljal za uživanje hrane), večja pa je imela simbolni pomen.

Če ta rezultat povežemo z ugotovitvijo, da večje posode ne najdemo v grobovih žensk od starosti juvenilis naprej, ugotovimo, da bi večja posoda morda lahko simbolizirala odraslo žensko. V primeru otroških grobov in grobov žensk juvenilne starosti kot simbol matere, v primeru grobov moških osebkov starosti adultus in matusus pa gospodinjo, ženo. Tako bi mati, žena in gospodinja tudi v posmrtnem življenju svoji družini nudila oporo in družinsko zaščito.

Seveda pa se postavi vprašanje, kaj je simboliziralo moško zaščito in moč v ženskih grobovih. Verjetno pridatek druge vrste, morda prstan, simbol običajno večne zveze, ki ga v moških grobovih praviloma ne najdemo.

Tudi pri otrocih najdemo v povprečju manjše posode kot pri starejših. Kaže se neki vzorec. Morda so posode manjše, ker je bil osebek fizično manjši ali pa ker je imel nižji status?

Menim, da prostornine posod v grobovih vsekakor ne moremo premočrtno povezovati samo s količino hrane, ki jo je pokojnik v času življenja zaužil vsak dan. Potemtakem bi morale biti razlike v prostorninah posod med moškimi in ženskimi grobovi veliko večje. Prav tako vzorec, ki se kaže pri pridajanju dveh posod v grob, ne kaže nobene povezave s količino hrane.

Razlika v prostorninah posod zagotovo kaže na neka pravila pridajanja in vzorce, ki so povezani s socialno raznolikostjo pokojnikov in stopnjo hierarhije v »slovanski« skupnosti. Poleg tega prostornina posode na simbolni ravni morda predstavlja neko osebo, v tem primeru izključno žensko, v družini.

Ljudje so posode pridajali v grobove že od neolitika naprej. Iz tega časa lahko najdemo zapleteno okrašeno lončenino. Posode s simboli kot na primer »simbol obraza« so kot pridatek v grobovih zagotovo igrale posebno vlogo (Gonçalves 1999). Neolitske keramične posode sta s posebnim pomenom (s plodnostjo, življenjem, smrtjo...itd.) povezala tudi Shanks in Tilley (1992) v zaključku objave raziskave švedske srednje-neolitske keramike.

Starodavni običaj prilaganja različnega posodja v grobove se nadaljuje tudi pri Slovanih. Kot smo videli v tej študiji, so lahko posode iz slovanskih grobov nosilci podatkov o zapletenih družbenih odnosih, v katerih je sodeloval pokojni za časa svojega življenja, in odražajo dožemanje položaja pokojnega s strani njegovih bližnjih.