

Szathmáry László:

Divergency of the Celts and Scythians in the Territory of Hungary

Relying on the archaeologically authentic Scythian and Celtic cranial finds the study makes an attempt at estimating the diversity of these two ethnic groups.

Actually, the question is whether the different origin of the Celts and the Scythians can be verified by means of craniological methods.

Material

The examinations were based on the following database:

Scythians		
Locality (References)	Males	Females
Csanytelek (Bottyán 1943)	1	1
Dormánd-Hegyipuszta (Éry 1991)	1	–
Füzesabony (Éry 1991)	6	13
Maklár-Kospérum (Éry 1991)	–	1
Mátraszele (Bottyán 1943)	1	–
Sirok-Akasztómály (Éry 1991)	–	4
Szabadszállás (Dezső 1966)	20	16
Szentes-Jaksorpart (Bottyán 1943)	1	2
Tarnabod (Éry 1991)	3	–
Tarnaörs (Éry 1991)	3	–
Tápé-Lebő (Nemeskéri-Deák 1954)	2	–
Tápiószele (Bottyán 1943)	4	8
Altogether	41	45

Celts		
Locality	Males	Females
Apátipuszta (Nemeskéri-Deák 1954)	2	–
Cakóháza (Nemeskéri-Deák 1954)	1	–
Csabrendek (Nemeskéri-Deák 1954)	1	–
Cserszegtomaj (Nemeskéri-Deák 1954)	4	–
Dunaijváros (Nemeskéri-Deák 1954)	1	–
Görbő (Nemeskéri-Deák 1954)	1	–
Hódmezővásárhely (Nemeskéri-Deák 1954)	–	1
Kemenesmihályfa (Nemeskéri-Deák 1954)	1	–
Koronc (Nemeskéri-Deák 1954)	1	–
Kölesd-Lencse psz. (Hankó-Kiszely 1967)	5	3
Kurd (Nemeskéri-Deák 1954)	–	1
Lovasberény (Nemeskéri-Deák 1954)	1	2
Pelypuszta (Nemeskéri-Deák 1954)	1	–
Sávoly (Nemeskéri-Deák 1954)	–	1
Zichyújfalu (Éry 1984)	–	2
Altogether	19	10

Method

Twelve of the cranial measurements were used for the examinations:

Greatest cranial length (after Martin - 1928 -, No. 1=M1)

Nasion-Basion length (M5)

Greatest breadth (M8)

Minimum frontal breadth (M9)

Basion-Bregma height (M17)

Porion-Bregma height (M20)

Bizygomatic breadth (M45)

Upper facial height (M48)

Orbital width (M51)

Orbital height (M52)

Nasal width (M54)

Nasal height (M55)

Because of the too many missing data in the case of females, the measurements M20 and M48 had to be omitted and this way only 10 dimensions could be made use of.

The estimation of missing data was performed by Dear's method (1959). The two samples were compared according to sexes by applying a discriminant analysis.

Results

The diversity of the sample composed of the two groups can be characterised by one significant canonic discriminant function.

The two paleoethnic components can be most clearly separated according to the two orbital dimensions (M51 and M52) as well as to the nasion-basion length (M5).

Now, it is the classification results that are the most interesting for us:

Classification results — Females			
Actual group	Cases	Predicted groups	
		Celts	Scythians
Celts	10	9 (90,0%)	1 (10,0%)
Scythians	45	8 (17,8%)	37 (82,2%)

Pct. of correctly classified cases: 83,6%.

Classification results — Males			
Actual group	Cases	Predicted groups	
		Celts	Scythians
Celts	19	17 (89,5%)	2 (10,5%)
Scythians	41	2 (4,9%)	39 (95,1%)

Pct. of correctly classified cases: 93,3%.

It is very surprising that the Scythian and the Celtic skulls present extremely different variations.

In the case of females, nearly each of the 10 Celtic cranial finds manifest, a specific habitus while only 8 out of the 45 Scythian skulls show some similarity to the Celtic sample. Consequently, the number of the correctly classified cases is really great: 83,6 per cent. With the males this percentage is somewhat higher: 93,4.

17 out of the 19 Celtic Endings are typical of their own sample. And, at the same time, 39 out of the 41 Scythian skulls are typical of their own sample. This

clear manifestation of harmony is definitely unusual with samples of such a small number.

That is why we may assume with good reason that both ethnic groups may have had their own special craniological profile.

In this way, if an Iron Age finding without grave-goods got dug up, we have a fair chance of deciding successfully which of the two above mentioned groups it may be assigned to.

Discussion

Since our anthropological investigations presented now, cover only the two ethnic groups discussed above, we

have no essential proof disposable for paleoethnic grouping in the case of populations different from these. Anyway, the representativity of samples is greatly decreased by the custom of cremation.

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