

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE COFFIN

Coffin assembly (wood)

12210 W 123 (previously uncatalogued)

Iron fragments associated with the coffin

12209 ILS 766

(MM 389)

Coffin body: cedar (*Cedrus libani* Loud.);¹ corner blocks: pine (*Pinus sylvestris* L.); dark wood of rails: yew (*Taxus baccata* L.); light wood of rails (tentative): boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens* L.); wood slat found on east slope of coffin body (from frame or litter): boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens* L.).

Found at the northwest of the tomb along the north wall.

Color Plates IB, IIA, XVIIA; Figures 79–90; Plates 107–115.

Coffin as placed in tomb. G.P.L. from W edge of W corner blocks to E edge of E corner blocks ca. 2.9 m. G.P.W. from N edge of N corner blocks to S edge of S corner blocks ca. 1.9 m.²

Coffin body. Est.L. as reconstructed ca. 3.27 m. Est.W. as reconstructed ca. 1.07 m. Est.H. as reconstructed ca. 46 cm. East ledge: G.P.L. (edge of ledge to end of fragment, E–W) ca. 96.5 cm; G.P.W. (across ledge, N–S) ca. 107 cm; G.P.Th. (at outer edge) ca. 9 cm. West ledge: G.P.L. (edge of ledge to end of fragment, E–W) ca. 48 cm; G.P.W. (across

ledge, N–S) ca. 51 cm; G.P.Th. (outer edge) ca. 8 cm.

Coffin as assembled prior to the burial. Est.L. ca. 3.27 m. Est.W. between outer faces of corner blocks ca. 1.79 m. Est.H. ca. 46 cm.

Corner blocks. NE corner block:³ G.P.W. (E–W) ca. 50 cm; G.P.W. (N–S) ca. 45 cm; G.P.H. ca. 31 cm. SE corner block:⁴ G.P.W. (E–W) ca. 49.5 cm; G.P.W. (N–S) ca. 45 cm; G.P.H. ca. 30.5 cm. Corner block and fragments:⁵ G.P.W. (E–W?) ca. 50 cm; G.P.W. (N–S?) ca. 38 cm; G.P.H. ca. 23 cm. Corner block(?):⁶ G.P.W. (E–W?) ca. 50 cm; G.P.W. (N–S?) ca. 42 cm; G.P.H. ca. 24.5 cm. Est.W. corner blocks (E–W) ca. 50 cm; Est.W. corner blocks (N–S) ca. 45–48 cm; Est.H. corner blocks ca. 33 cm.

Rails. G.P.L. extant fragments of the long rails ca. 95 cm. G.P.L. extant fragments of the short rails ca. 23 cm. G.P.L. north rail (as found on tomb floor) ca. 1.35 m. G.P.L. south rail (as found on tomb floor) ca. 1.23 m. Est.L. restored rails ca. 1.91 m. Est.H. restored rails ca. 30 cm.

Iron bosses.⁷ G.P.D. ca. 12.5–15 cm.

The remains of the interred king were found lying on a mass of degraded textiles and wood,

¹ For a report on the problems of the identification of the wood species of the coffin, see Blanchette and Simpson, “Soft Rot and Wood Pseudomorphs in an Ancient Coffin.”

² Young gives three different measurements in his field book (*GFB* 63): L. 2.9 m and W. 1.9 m (p. 73); W. 2 m (p. 81); and L. 2.93 m and W. 1.9 m (p. 177). I have used a width of 1.9 m for the purpose of my reconstruction drawings.

³ A sample (GOR-43) was taken from the NE corner block in the 1970s by Peter Kuniholm for his dendrochronological study of the tomb. Kuniholm believed that this block was part of the section of the inner tomb wall that had been cut by the excavators when they entered the tomb. The sample was subsequently reunited with the corner block and can be seen in Kuniholm’s original wrapping at the left rear of the block, shown in Plate 115B. See Kuniholm, “Dendrochronology at Gordion,” 10.

⁴ The entire base of the SE corner block is preserved.

⁵ This corner block was recognized from the end face (Plate 115D), and although it must have been one of the blocks at the west, its exact position could not be determined. A loose fragment with a shallow cutting in its top surface was found on top of this corner block as stored at Gordion (Plate 115A).

⁶ This piece was found with several detached fragments on top; it is preserved as two large individual pieces now butted together.

⁷ The remains of at least four iron bosses are preserved, now deformed and larger than their original size. Radiography was enlisted to try to determine their original size and shape, but nothing of the original iron was observed within the corrosion. These iron bosses have not been included in the new drawings of the coffin, as their position and function are uncertain.

which Young interpreted as a four-poster bed (Color Plates IB, IIA; Figure 3; Plates 107–109). Young thought the “bed” had a headboard, footboard, four cubical corner blocks with bedposts, rails, and a platform made up of five planks, with two more supporting the outer edges of the platform at the sides (see above, pp. 22–28). According to Young’s theory, the headboard and footboard were supported from below by iron bars, which had once been socketed into the sides of the corner blocks. However, it was not clear how the planks were supported, as a strange empty space was noted beneath the area of the iron bars on both the headboard and footboard.⁸ Young thought that the bars must have acted as clamps of some sort to hold the planks of the platform together. Even more curious were the bed rails, which were found lying on the floor after the textiles and bed planks were taken up (Plate 110). Although these had lain beneath the debris, Young thought that they had originally extended up at the sides of the platform. This would have necessitated the side planks falling out, the rails falling off the platform and traveling underneath it, and, finally, the whole bed collapsing on top of the rails.⁹ This interpretation was not viable, as shown by the surviving fragments. However, Young’s careful excavation and commentary, the extensive photographic record, and Dorothy Cox’s tomb plans provided the information needed to determine the correct solution. The “bed” was not a bed, but a massive, uncovered log coffin, which had been used for a funeral ceremony and then disassembled, placed in the chamber part by part. The position of the pieces on the tomb floor yielded a wealth of information, not only about the form of the coffin but also the circumstances of the burial.¹⁰

Form and Function

The king’s coffin had been made from a huge cedar log, hollowed out, with horizontal ledges extending at both ends.¹¹ The “headboard” was actually the ledge at the east end, which had broken off the coffin body and fallen out onto the floor (Color Plate IIA, Plate 108). This became clear when the piece was located at Gordion in 1981, stored with three of the corner blocks and several boxes of unlabeled textiles apparently from the coffin (Plates 111, 112A).¹² The east ledge was found with a long iron bar sitting on its upper surface, which had once been anchored to the wood by five nails with tubular shafts. This was the bar that Young thought had run along the bottom edge of the headboard, supporting it from below and securing the bed planks. The actual purpose of the iron bar was to reinforce the east end of the coffin, in order to keep the log from splitting.¹³ A very degraded fragment of the west ledge was also found at Gordion, associated with pieces of an iron bar that must once have been attached to its upper surface (Plate 112B–C). This was Young’s “footboard,” which was found near the west wall and was taken up when the excavators entered the tomb (Plate 109).¹⁴ The coffin must have had additional reinforcements, as holes also occurred in the lower face of the east ledge, and several loose iron fragments were found among the remains of wood and textiles (Plates 113, 114A–B).¹⁵

The east section of the coffin sloped down from the ledge, tapering to a thin edge near the break at the bottom (Plate 111A). The slope had retained some textile fragments, which remained in place below the iron bar. These were removed and recorded in 1981, revealing the rings of the tree from which the log had been cut (Plate 111B).

⁸ Young, *GFB* 63, 80–81, 179–180. See above, pp. 22–23.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 188–193. See above, pp. 24–25.

¹⁰ Simpson, “‘Midas’ Bed’ and a Royal Phrygian Funeral.”

¹¹ The coffin body was cedar and not yew, superseding Simpson, “‘Midas’ Bed’ and a Royal Phrygian Funeral,” 84. See Blanchette and Simpson, “Soft Rot and Wood Pseudomorphs in an Ancient Coffin,” on the way in which soft-rot degradation in ancient wood can mimic the characteristics of yew.

¹² Simpson, *GFB* 175, 1–16. Interpretive comments in *GFB* 175 are here superseded. The boxed textiles appear to

be from the coffin, but as they were not labeled, they cannot be attributed with certainty.

¹³ In fact, when the iron bar corroded, it contributed to the degradation of the wood. See Kohler, *Lesser Phrygian Tumuli*, 183, n. 3, on the problems of using large conifers.

¹⁴ Young, *GFB* 63, 80–81.

¹⁵ The holes in the lower part of the east ledge are indicated by dashed lines in the reconstruction drawings (Figure 79 and, by extension, Figures 81–82). A fragment of iron bar, which may perhaps be associated with the west ledge, retained a tubular double-clenched nail (Plate 113A); on this type of fastening, see Steffy, *Wooden Ship Building*, 46–48. On the iron bosses, *supra* n. 7.

A drawing was made of the east section of the coffin as found in the tomb, the thickness of the degraded bottom was estimated, and the east end was then righted in a reconstruction drawing, indicating its relationship to the SE corner block and suggesting the coffin's original height (Figure 79). This drawing indicates the reason for the empty space "about 20 cm deep" that Young had noticed in the area of the "headboard." He had observed the degraded lower edge at the bottom of the slope, which had tipped up when the end broke off and the ledge fell out onto the floor.¹⁶

Young's deteriorated "bed planks" were actually fragments of the log coffin, which had split apart along the grain and fallen in lengths on the floor. The textile remains had broken along with the wood, suggesting the appearance of planks (Color Plate IB, Plate 107A). The four pine "corner blocks" were not exactly cubical and did not serve as bases for "bedposts."¹⁷ These "posts" were parts of the sides of the coffin, which had fallen out to the north and south. The "post" noted at the east of the SE block was apparently a chunk that had broken off the south wall of the coffin body (Plate 108B, bottom).¹⁸ Crucial to an understanding of the coffin were the shape and dimensions of the "corner blocks" (Plate 115B–D). The inner edges of the blocks were cut off at an angle, as can be seen from the *in situ* photographs (Plates 108, 109B). These blocks were wedge-like supports, intended to be pushed up against the sides of the coffin to stabilize the rounded body. Finally, the "bed rails" were apparently rails, although they were found on the floor of the chamber.¹⁹ More was learned about the pieces and

their placement as they were reconstructed in a series of drawings (Figures 80–90).

The position of the rails and corner blocks on the tomb floor is curious, since it appears to be at odds with their functions. As can be seen from the reconstructed side view of the coffin as placed in the tomb, the blocks are not in their proper arrangement (Figure 80). Those at the east appear to support the body of the coffin, while those at the west were found at the tomb's west wall. The blocks at the west were adjacent to the west ledge and not fulfilling their intended purpose. Only the NE corner block had been placed against the coffin body; the SE block was approximately 10 cm too far to the south (Figure 87). Thus three of the corner blocks were deposited in the tomb without regard for their original use. A study of the rails and their disposition reveals the reason for the blocks' positions.

The remains of the rails were measured by Young as they lay on the tomb floor, and several fragments have been preserved (Plate 114C–D). It was thus possible to reconstruct the rails in drawings and ascertain their original placement. The southernmost rail was found with its east end 45 cm to the west of the SE corner block (Plate 110A).²⁰ A short support lay to the north of the long rail, some distance from it and slightly askew. A notch in the long rail, 28 cm from the east end, indicates the position at which the long rail was joined to the short support.²¹ Young noted that the rails and supports were made from strips of dark and light wood, which have been identified as yew and boxwood

¹⁶ Young, *GFB* 63, 80–81, 179–180. Young noted the same kind of empty space in the area of the footboard, with holes spaced 16 cm apart in the "planks" above the space. These indicate an iron band for reinforcement, either the iron bar that was attached to the west ledge or an additional band around the exterior of the coffin body.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 177–178. See above, pp. 22–23, 25–26. The corner blocks did have shallow cuttings in their upper surfaces, as indicated by a fragment found with a corner block that shows this cutting (Plate 115A). It is not clear what these cuttings were used for; they may have held patterned inlay, although no evidence survives of such decoration. One might speculate, again without evidence, that they served as receptacles for incense or other funerary paraphernalia. Incense and spices were widely used as offerings throughout the ancient world, as attested in texts and depictions. See, for instance, 2 Chronicles 16.14 (royal burial), Exodus 30.1–9 (burning of incense in the Tabernacle), and Pliny, *Natural History* 12.52–71 (Arabian incense). The possibility remains that the circular cuttings were beddings for some sort of posts, which were used for the funeral ceremony but not placed in the tomb. The corner blocks were pine and

not yew, superseding Simpson, "'Midas' Bed' and a Royal Phrygian Funeral," 84. *Supra* n. 11.

¹⁸ Although it did not have a finished surface, this fragment is the most regular of all the candidates for a "bedpost." The roll of fabric found near it had apparently been wrapped around its western end. Although this piece had most likely broken off the side of the coffin body, alternatively, it might have been a separate element, inserted into the adjacent circular cut-out in the east ledge in order to secure the textiles at the southeast end of the coffin.

¹⁹ Although the function and position of the "rails" is not certain since the sides of the coffin were not preserved, the way that they have been reconstructed here seems to be the best of the possible options. See below and Figures 82, 89–90.

²⁰ Young, *GFB* 63, 189, and see above, p. 24. The squared east end of the long rail was found 45 cm to the west of the west face of the SE corner block.

²¹ As shown in the photograph, the notch was cut in the dark strip at the north of the pair of long strips representing the southernmost rail.

(tentative).²² These were pinned together in a kind of “five-layer sandwich,” composed of three light and two dark strips, for a combined width of ca. 7.5 cm (Figure 3D). The southernmost rail was preserved to a length of 1.23 m, as reconstructed in Figure 84.²³

The northern rail was found with its east end set against the NE corner block (Plate 110B).²⁴ Two short supports were lying perpendicular to the long rail, still in place on the floor. According to Young’s measurements, the first support lay 28 cm from the east end of the rail, and the second was 60 cm to the west of the first (Figure 84).²⁵ Assuming that the arrangement was symmetrical, Young restored a third short support 60 cm to the west of the second, which produced an estimated length of 1.95 m for both of the long rails.²⁶ Based on these approximate measurements, the rails could be reconstructed to their full length as they had been placed on the tomb floor (Figure 85). Evidently both rails had been set down between the corner blocks, but the southern rail had been pulled to the west. The NW corner block was also found slightly askew. These anomalies suggest the likely sequence in which the parts of the coffin were deposited in the chamber at the time of the burial.

As the tomb had no doors, the coffin and king must have been lowered into the chamber, along with the other grave goods.²⁷ First, the two western corner blocks were set down against the west wall, with the NW block in the corner of the chamber. The rails were placed on the floor, with their west ends against the east faces of the corner blocks. The eastern blocks were then set down at the ends of the rails. The huge coffin body

was lowered into the tomb with ropes, which may have passed through the circular cutouts in the horizontal ledges. The massive log coffin was positioned on the floor between the corner blocks and pushed against the west wall. During this process, the south rail was kicked in by one of the workmen, and the coffin landed on the short supports, dragging the rail with it as it was moved to the west. After the pieces were in place, the body of the king was let down onto the coffin. There is evidence among the remains of the east ledge as to how this might have been done.

Found in 1981 beneath the textile debris on the slope of the east section was a boxwood slat, which is indicated in the reconstruction drawings (Figures 79, 81, 83–86). This was apparently part of a frame for a litter on which the king had lain. Small wood fragments discovered on top of the SE corner block may have belonged to this frame (Plate 108B, left). The roll of cloth to the west of the iron bar, mentioned by Young and visible in the photographs, seems to have been draped over the end of the litter.²⁸ The boxwood slat was found below a layer of reddish purple textiles, which had covered most of the remains of the coffin (Color Plate IB). Between the slat and the wood of the slope were a few layers of gold-colored fabric.²⁹ More of this golden cloth was found lying on the slope between the slat and the iron bar; one chunk exhibited 22 layers of fabric. The coffin textiles have now been analyzed in connection with the present study (Appendix 8).

The reddish or maroon textiles on which the king’s body had lain have been identified tentatively as felt, although because of the degraded condition of the material, the identification can-

²² The dark wood of the rails was easily recognizable when the fragments were found at Gordion. However, the light wood was essentially gone, except for a few small light-colored pieces found together with the dark wood. Samples of the dark and light wood were analyzed and identified as yew and boxwood. However, since the light wood had degraded into unrecognizable fragments, it is not certain that the samples analyzed were actually from the rails.

²³ Young, *GFB* 63, 188–189. Although given as 1.33 m in one typed transcript of *GFB* 63, the actual field book measurement is 1.23 m. The western end of the long rail at the south was badly deteriorated.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 191–192.

²⁵ “These lay the one 28 cm from the E end, the second 60 cm to the west of the first.” Young, *GFB* 63, 192. It is possible that the first 28 cm measurement refers to the distance between the end of the rail and the first notch, as this same distance is recorded for the southern rail.

However, the 28 cm measurement might have been taken from the end of the rail to the first preserved piece of the first short support as it lay on the floor. It is not clear whether Young’s second measurement of 60 cm was taken between the first and second notches or between the preserved pieces of the supports as they lay on the floor. See above, p. 24. As the latter seems more likely, I have based my reconstruction drawings of the rails on this premise.

²⁶ *Ibid.* I have calculated a restored length of ca. 1.91 m and used this measurement for my drawings. The total length was given as 1.985 in Young, *Gordion I*, 189, which was calculated according to a different understanding of the way in which Young took his measurements.

²⁷ See above, p. 8.

²⁸ A similar roll of cloth was noted in the area of the footboard. Young, *GFB* 63, 79. See above, pp. 22–23.

²⁹ For the early assessment of the dense, maroon-colored material and the yellow-brown woven cloth found beneath it, see above, p. 8.

not be considered conclusive (Plate 154C–D).³⁰ The red colorant has yet to be determined, although, as with the textiles from the NE corner of the tomb, there is no evidence of Tyrian purple. This maroon “felt” is comparable to the reddish material associated with the stools and chair from the NE corner. Twining has been recognized also among the coffin textiles, suggesting the possibility of lofted batting.³¹ The gold-colored fabric found below the felt is a balanced plain weave of bast plant fiber (Plates 153, 154A–B). Thus Young was probably correct in his observation that the gold woven fabric was linen. Although this fabric was found in proximity to the iron bar, its color was apparently not the result of migrating iron corrosion. Instead, the cloth was found to be coated with a colorant containing the mineral goethite, which produced a uniform, bright gold color.³²

Most of these beautiful textiles had overlain the frame of the litter, supporting the king’s body as it was lowered into the chamber. The frame and textiles had also served a second purpose, as did the other parts of the coffin. The disposition of the pieces in the tomb, arranged without regard to their intended purpose, indicates that the coffin must have been assembled elsewhere prior to the burial. If the elements are reassembled, in effect, according to their original functions, the entire coffin can be reconstructed in drawings (Figures 82, 86, 89–90). In the drawings, the corner blocks have been moved in to support the coffin body, and the rails have been set into the sides.³³ The result is a sort of bier, which was used for the funeral. The body of the king lay at the top of the bier, supported on a frame that was covered with textiles. The rails protected the body as did the blocks, keeping the onlookers at a distance. Only after the viewing and funeral was the coffin dismantled for the burial. The other pieces of furniture found in the tomb were also likely related to the ceremony. The serving stands and banquet tables, along with the bronze ves-

sels and food remains, suggest that a funerary meal was served and the remains interred with the king. The food and drink residues have been analyzed, and the menu of the banquet can be determined (see Chapter 8 and Appendix 5).

Comparanda

As the Tumulus MM coffin was not a bed, it was not at all comparable to the bed from Tumulus P, although the two pieces were discussed together in the commentary section of *Gordion I*.³⁴ Also unrelated was the “sarcophagus” found in Tumulus K-III.³⁵ This piece is now too fragmentary for its form to be understood, and although it may have been some kind of “bed,” it was surely not a log coffin. However, at least one other coffin was excavated at Gordion. A covered log coffin was found in Tumulus B, dating to ca. 630 B.C.³⁶ The Tumulus B coffin was apparently made from one great cedar log, cut in half and hollowed out, with half the log used for the body and the other half for the lid. Both the coffin and lid had short ledges on both ends, with iron nails noted in the ledges of the lower section, possibly for the attachment of iron bars.³⁷ Fragmentary iron banding was found in the vicinity of the Tumulus B coffin, and lead was used to fill cracks in the log where it had already split. Several other Gordion tumuli may have contained log coffins, on the evidence of iron bands or lead, including Tumulus S-1 (early seventh century B.C.) and Tumulus C (sixth century B.C.).³⁸

Two other Phrygian sites have yielded the remains of what seem to be log coffins. In an Ankara tumulus in the area of the Atatürk Mausoleum (Tumulus 1), a section of half a log was found in the NE corner of the burial chamber. The excavators interpreted this piece as a bench or banquette (*Bank*), but it may have been part of the sloping end of a log coffin. The *Bank* had a kind of ledge that had fit over the top of the

³⁰ Appendix 8, samples 2003-Tx-2, front; 2003-Tx-3; 2003-Tx-4; 2003-Tx-5.

³¹ See above, p. 114.

³² Appendix 8, samples 2003-Tx-1; 2003-Tx-2, back.

³³ The original position of the blocks was determined for the purpose of the drawings through the construction of a scale model of the blocks and coffin body.

³⁴ Young, *Gordion I*, 259–260.

³⁵ Körte and Körte, *Gordion*, 43 ff., figure 6.

³⁶ Young, “Gordion—1950,” 13–15, plate 6. Kohler, *Les-*

ser Phrygian Tumuli, 11–12, 17–18, figure 7, plates 5–6.

³⁷ Kohler, *Lesser Phrygian Tumuli*, 12. Young had believed that the iron was used to secure the bottom of the coffin to the top, although by analogy with the Tumulus MM coffin, the iron may have been used to reinforce the logs to keep them from splitting.

³⁸ See Kohler, *Lesser Phrygian Tumuli*, 183–185, for a list of tombs that may have contained log coffins, based on finds of iron and lead.

low wall of the wooden chamber.³⁹ Found in another Ankara tumulus burial (METU II) were iron bands and T-shaped lead bars, which may be evidence of a log coffin.⁴⁰ At Bayındır in the region of Elmalı, the occupant of Tumulus D was apparently buried in or on a log coffin, to judge from the wood fragments and two iron bars found at the north of the tomb.⁴¹ The burial contained many fine artifacts, including two silver belts and other ornaments; silver and bronze bowls, small cauldrons, ladles, and fibulae; and one silver and three ivory statuettes.⁴² According to the excavator, the finds at the south of the tomb may be the remains of offerings and a feast.

Log coffins were used in many areas of the ancient world and are well attested in northern Europe. Numerous European examples have been recovered from Bronze Age burial mounds in Denmark.⁴³ These coffins were made from oak tree trunks that had been split lengthwise and hollowed out, with half the log used for the body of the coffin and the other half for the lid.⁴⁴ The Danish coffins and their contents were particularly well preserved due to the composition of the bog water that had permeated the earth.⁴⁵

Log coffins were also found in the tombs of Pazyryk in Siberia, which yielded a wide variety of organic objects that had survived encased in ice. Barrows 1–5 contained log coffins made from larch trunks up to one meter in diameter.⁴⁶ The lower part of each coffin was cut from a log and hollowed out. The lid was much shallower than the lower section and fit over its edges like a cap. The coffins had no ledges, although the wood at the ends was much thicker than that of the side walls. The excavator thought that the coffins had been lowered into the tombs by means of thick cords that had been passed through lugs carved at the ends.⁴⁷

The two coffins of barrows 1 and 2 were covered with strips of birch bark, arranged diagonally and intersecting to form a pattern of lozenges. These coffins were also decorated with leather appliques in the form of animals.⁴⁸ For the coffin from barrow 1, the patterns had been attached to the coffin body without regard for its lid: when the lid was in place, the decoration was partly covered.⁴⁹ This suggests that the coffin may have had two functions, with the open coffin first used in a funeral ceremony in which the deceased had lain in state. After the ceremony, the coffin could have been closed and lowered into the tomb. Log coffin burials occur elsewhere in the Altai mountain region and in Tuva in southern Siberia, notably at Bashadar,⁵⁰ Tuekta,⁵¹ and the Great Kurgan at Aržan.⁵²

The Tumulus MM coffin finds counterparts over a wide area, from Scandinavia to the Far East. It seems likely that log coffin burials were more common than one might imagine from the surviving remains. In most situations, the wood coffins would have deteriorated in the earth, leaving little or no trace. Exceptions occur only when conditions at the burial sites allow for the preservation of organic materials. This is the case with the “coffins” from Qäwrighul and other sites in Central Asia, which consisted of wood planks to protect the body, without bottoms and often without lids. Pieces of these coffins survived due to the arid conditions and were eventually exposed by wind erosion.⁵³

Traditional log coffins are still made today in Luidao, China, although the craft has been diminished by a government ban on their sale. The Luidao coffins are hewn from cedar logs, which are known to resist moisture and decay, although the harvesting of cedar is strictly controlled in an effort to curtail deforestation. Despite the current

³⁹ Özgüç and Akok, “Ausgrabungen an zwei Tumuli,” 60; figures 5, 10, 12–13. Broken pottery vessels found on the floor to the west of the *Bank* may argue against this interpretation.

⁴⁰ Kohler, *Lesser Phrygian Tumuli*, 184, n. 8. Buluç, *Ankara Frig Nekropolünden Üç Tümülüs Buluntuları*, 24.

⁴¹ Dörtlük, “Elmalı Bayındır Tümülüsleri,” 173.

⁴² Özgen and Özgen, *Antalya Museum*, 32–49, nos. 32–39, 41–42, 45–46, 48–59. Özgen and Öztürk, *Heritage Recovered*, 27. The occupant of Tumulus D has been identified as a woman.

⁴³ Glob, *Denmark*, 128 ff. Glob, *Mound People*, plates 2, 5–6, 14–16, 20, et al. For new information on the oak coffin burials from Denmark, see Randsborg and Christensen, *Bronze Age Oak-Coffin Graves*.

⁴⁴ Glob, *Denmark*, plates 51 and 52.

⁴⁵ Glob, *Mound People*, 17.

⁴⁶ Fourth-third centuries B.C. Rudenko, *Frozen Tombs of Siberia*, 14, 28 ff. See plates 5 (barrow 1), 18 (barrow 3), 19 (barrow 4), and 29–30 (barrow 5). The bodies had lain with their heads toward the east.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 29, plate 37c (barrow 1).

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 29–31. The coffin from barrow 1 was decorated with appliques of cocks, and that of barrow 2 with deer.

⁴⁹ The edges of the coffin from barrow 2 had been damaged by robbers, so the leather decoration survived only at the ends. It is not clear whether the lid covered the appliques on this coffin.

⁵⁰ Rudenko, *Culture of the Population of the Central Altai*, plates 26–27.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, plate 54.

⁵² Grjaznov, *Der Grosskurgan von Aržan*, figures 3, 6–8.

⁵³ Barber, *Mummies of Ürümchi*, 80–81, 95, 102–105.

restrictions, there is still a demand for traditional log coffins in the city, which reportedly rose to fame when the body of a great ninth-century poet was preserved in a Luidao cedar coffin, “as fresh as the day he died.”⁵⁴ There were surely important reasons for ancient log coffin burials beyond the preservative properties of the wood used to

make them—perhaps relating to their boat-like shape or the symbolic significance of trees. Although this cannot now be determined for the Tumulus MM coffin, details of the interment allow the funeral ceremony to be reconstructed (see Chapter 8).

⁵⁴ Bradsher, “More Than a Billion Chinese but So Few Coffins.”