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A. F. SHORIN, A. A. SHORINA

THE COMPLEX OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES “KOKSHAROVO HILL — YURJINO SETTLEMENT” AS A SOURCE OF DATA ON THE TRANS-URAL NEOLITHIC

The authors have outlined the main areas of the study performed on a complex of archaeological sites “Koksharovo Hill — Yurjino settlement”. They provided a detailed description of the importance of its materials for the building of the cultural and the chronological scale, particularly for the initial stage of the region’s Neolithization associated with the Koshkino culture population. Using the materials of the site, they demonstrated the possibility of objective comparison of radiocarbon dates obtained for charcoal, and the ¹⁴C, extracted directly from the pottery. As a rule, those dates were not conflicting.

Alexander F. Shorin — Doctor of Historical Sciences, Institute of History and Archaeology, Ural Branch of the RAS (Russia, Ekaterinburg). E-mail: shorin_af@mail.ru

Anastasia A. Shorina — Institute of History and Archaeology, Ural Branch of the RAS (Russia, Ekaterinburg). E-mail: aashor@mail.ru

N. M. CHAIRKINA, O. V. KARDASH, H. PIEZONKA, E. N. DUBOVTSOVA, G. P. VIZGALOV

NEW RESEARCH AT THE EARLY NEOLITHIC COMPLEX SETTLEMENT OF KAYUKOVO 2, WESTERN SIBERIA

The emergence of complex enclosed sites among Stone Age hunter-gatherers in the Western Siberian taiga in the 7th–6th millennium cal BC is an outstanding phenomenon in world prehistory. One of the early complex settlements in the Western Siberian taiga is Kayukovo 2 in the Ob’-Irtys interfluvium. First discovered in 1991, excavations in the 2000s revealed a concentric internal structure with a large sunken-floor building in the centre and four surrounding smaller pit houses. The investigations were resumed in 2018 by an international Russian-German team conducting geomagnetic survey, drillings for geomorphology, and small-scale excavation in one of the house pits. The artefact collection comprises a few lithic finds, including ground tools, bone and antler tools, and ceramic fragments. The absolute chronology of the site is based on a series of radiocarbon dates, among them five AMS dates on charcoal samples from the constructive elements of house 4. The dates indicate a functioning of the site in of the 6th mill. cal BC, underlining its association with the early phase of appropriation of the taiga by Stone Age hunter-fisher-potter communities.

Natalia M. Chairkina — Doctor of Historical Sciences, Institute of History and Archaeology, Ural Branch of the RAS (Russia, Ekaterinburg). E-mail: chair_n@mail.ru

Oleg Kardash — Candidate of Historical Sciences, Surgut State University (Russia, Surgut). E-mail: kov_ugansk@mail.ru

Henny Piezonka — Dr., University of Kiel (Germany, Kiel). E-mail: hpiezonka@ufg.uni-kiel.de

Ekaterina N. Dubovtseva — Institute of History and Archaeology, Ural Branch of the RAS (Russia, Ekaterinburg). E-mail: ket1980@yandex.ru

Georgi P. Vizgalov — Candidate of Historical Sciences, Surgut State University (Russia, Surgut). E-mail: vizgalovgp@mail.ru

The emergence of complex enclosed sites among Stone Age hunter-gatherers in the Western Siberian taiga in the 7th–6th millennium cal BC is an outstanding and unique phenomenon in world prehistory as it is representing one of the earliest instances of communities enclosing and fortifying their settlements worldwide. The early enclosed sites in the taiga are associated with substantial sociocultural and economic changes connected to the first intense settlement in the taiga during the Holocene. It is unclear, however, what has led to such complex hunter-gatherer life ways with new, enclosed settlement types. Given the current, still very limited knowledge on the phenomenon of complex enclosed hunter-gatherer sites of the 7th–6th millennium cal BC in Western Siberia, new fieldwork in combination with multidisciplinary analyses is necessary in order to better understand the sites within their cultural, societal and environmental setting.

One of the early complex Stone Age settlements in the Western Siberian taiga is Kayukovo 2 in the Ob'-Irtysh interfluvium. The site is located on an elongated sandy ridge on the watershed of the upper reaches of the Bol'shoj Salym river and the middle reaches of the Bolshoj Yugan river (left tributaries of the River Ob'). Administratively, this territory is part of Nefteyugansk region of Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug-Ugra in Russia. In 1991, the site was first discovered and has been named Kayukovo after the Khanty family living near this archaeological site in the Punsu yurts. Kayukovo 2 consists of an enclosed settlement site c. 35 m in diameter; an adjacent open settlement c. 50 m to the west is named Kayukovo 1. Initial excavations at Kayukovo were conducted in 2000–2004 [Ивасько 2002; Северная археология 2010]. The investigations were resumed in 2018 by an international Russian-German expedition. The team conducted geomagnetic survey, drillings for geomorphology, and small-scale excavation in one of the house pits at Kayukovo 2.

The enclosed settlement of Kayukovo 2 has a sub-circular layout with surface features indicating a concentric internal structure: A large sunken-floor building in the centre is surrounded by a ring of four smaller pit houses. The complex is encompassed by a bank; excavations also revealed a surrounding ditch. The central building and two of the smaller structures were partially excavated, revealing square house pits with burnt structural elements of walls and roofs indicating destruction by fire. During the new investigations in 2018, the excavation of house pit 4 was completed down to subsoil. A corridor connecting the dwellings and possibly encircling most of the site was identified. A western entrance to the internal platform that was marked with two fireplaces was also discovered. The buildings are interpreted as square or rectangular pithouse type dwellings with wooden carcass constructions, heated by central fireplaces.

The artefact collection comprises a few lithic finds, including ground tools, bone and antler tools, and ceramic fragments. The pottery has a specific character with flat as well as conical bases, pronounced profiles and impressed ornamentation. During the new excavations in House pit 4 in 2018, the remains of at least 18 vessels came to light, among them one with a rounded base, further fragments are associated with a corridor and the central large house pit (constructions 6, 7,) that were partly exposed in the excavation trench. Typological similarities of the ceramic complex from Kayukovo 2 exist with the material from Barsova Gora II/9b and Mikishkino 5 [Ивасько 2008] at the Middle Ob' [Чемякин 2009, с. 200–212], with pottery from certain constructions at the Early Neolithic fortified site of Amnya 1 (houses 1, 4 and parts of the defensive system; [Стефанов, Борзунов 2008, с. 93–111] and also with material from Sumpanya III [Ковалева 2008, с. 123–134] and the ritual mound of Chertova Gora [Сладкова 2008, с. 147–158] in the River Konda basin region. New finds from the Baraba steppe also show similarities concerning the overall morphology and decoration of the vessels [Молодин и др.

2018]. The absolute chronology of the site is based on a series of radiocarbon dates, among them five AMS dates on charcoal samples from the constructive elements of house 4. The dates indicate a functioning of the site in of the 6th mill. cal BC, underlining its association with the early phase of appropriation of the taiga by Stone Age hunter-fisher-potter communities.

The architectural layout of the residential complex of Kayukovo 2 appears at the moment unique among known settlements of Neolithic hunters and gatherers in Western Siberia. In 2018, however, about a hundred kilometers east in the middle reaches of the Bolshoy Yugan river, a similar and synchronous archaeological site, Kachnisap 2, was discovered, indicating that the specific site type recorded at Kayukovo might belong to a more widespread yet unexplored architectural phenomenon. On the basis of a complex of original features (planning organization of the settlement, architecture of residential buildings, as well as original ceramics, specific form of stone tools) a specific Kayukovo cultural type has been suggested [Ивасько 2008]. Further field work and multidisciplinary analytical work is needed in order to trace socio-cultural networks connecting the remote taiga regions among each other and with other areas further south, west and east. An important open question that needs to be followed up with targeted research agendas concerns the role of environmental change for the developments that lead to the emergence of complex settlements among Early Holocene Stone Age foragers in this part of the world.

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Н. М. ЧАИРКИНА, О. В. КАРДАШ, Х. ПИЕЦОНКА, Е. Н. ДУБОВЦЕВА, Г. П. ВИЗГАЛОВ

НОВЫЕ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЯ РАННЕНЕОЛИТИЧЕСКИХ КОМПЛЕКСОВ ПОСЕЛЕНИЯ КАЮКОВО 2 В ЗАПАДНОЙ СИБИРИ

Появление первых городищ охотников-собирателей каменного века в Западно-Сибирской тайге в VII–VI тыс. до н. э. является выдающимся явлением доисторического мира. Одним из ранних городищ в Западно-Сибирской тайге было Каюково 2 в междуречье Оби и Иртыша. Памятник открыт в 1991 г. Раскопки, проведенные в 2000-х, позволили выявить круглоплановую внутреннюю структуру с крупным заглубленным строением в центре и четырьмя более мелкими землянками по периметру. Изучение памятника было возобновлено в 2018 г. Совместной российско-германской группой

археологов была проведена геомагнитная съемка, исследование геоморфологии, и ограниченные по объему раскопки на одной из землянок. Коллекция артефактов содержит несколько каменных шлифованных орудий, орудия из кости и рога, и фрагменты керамики. Абсолютная хронология памятника основана на серии радиоуглеродных дат, включая пять AMS дат, полученных для образцов древесного угля из структурных элементов строения 4. Даты указывают на функционирование памятника в VI тыс. до н. э., что подтверждает его связь с ранним этапом освоения таежной зоны сообществами охотников-рыболовов-гончаров каменного века.

Чаиркина Наталия Михайловна – д.и.н., Институт истории и археологии УрО РАН (Россия, Екатеринбург). E-mail: chair_n@mail.ru

Кардаш Олег Викторович – к.и.н., Сургутский государственный университет (Россия, Сургут). E-mail: kov_ugansk@mail.ru

Пиецонка Хэнни – Др., Кильский университет (Германия, Киль). E-mail: hpiezonka@ufg.uni-kiel.de

Дубовцева Екатерина Николаевна – Институт истории и археологии УрО РАН (Россия, Екатеринбург). E-mail: ket1980@yandex.ru

Визгалов Георгий Петрович – к.и.н., Сургутский государственный университет (Россия, Сургут). E-mail: vizgalovgp@mail.ru

A. KHRAMTSOVA, E. L. KOSTYLEVA, B. KRAUSE-KYORA, J. MEADOWS, H. PIEZONKA,
M. V. DOBROVOL'SKAYA, S. V. VASILIEV, E. V. VESELOVSKAYA, A. V. UTKIN

HUNTERS, HERDERS, HEALTH: NEW BIOMOLECULAR AND PALAEOGENETIC RESEARCH ON THE LATE STONE AGE BURIALS AT SAKHTYSH, CENTRAL RUSSIA

The late 4th to 3rd mill. BC in the East European forest zone is characterized by dramatic changes mirrored in material culture, burial customs, and supra-regional contacts of local groups. These transformations are for example reflected in interactions between Volosovo culture hunter-fisher-gatherers and newcomer pastoralists from the forest and forest-steppe zone represented by the Fatyanovo and Balanovo cultural types. Presumably, the contacts had diverse character: cultural influences are visible in borrowed elements of ceramic decoration, modification of certain stone tool types, the increase of copper artefacts, and in the beginning of pastoralism. However, the spread of knowledge was possibly accompanied by violent actions, as reflected by the emergence of mass graves in the Upper Volga region with individuals who died violent deaths. Another possible interpretation of the graves involves epidemics triggered by the spread of infection. In this paper we present and discuss new archaeological, palaeopathological and palaeogenetic analyses on material from the Sakhtysh burial sites, investigating the nature of contacts between the respective forager and pastoralist societies more precisely. We will also discuss the potential of mass graves as a source for interdisciplinary reconstructions.

Anastasia Khramtsova – Graduate student, University of Kiel (Germany, Kiel).
E-mail: khramtsovaanastasia@yandex.com

Elena L. Kostyleva – Candidate of Historical Sciences, Ivanovo State University (Russia, Ivanovo).
E-mail: elkos-ty-le-va@mail.ru

Ben Krause-Kyora – Dr., University of Kiel (Germany, Kiel).
E-mail: b.krause-kyora@ikmb.uni-kiel.de

John Meadows – Dr., University of Kiel; Center for Baltic and Scandinavian Archaeology (Germany, Kiel; Schleswig). E-mail: jmeadows@leibniz.uni-kiel.de

Henny Piezonka – Dr., University of Kiel (Germany, Kiel). E-mail: hpiezonka@ufg.uni-kiel.de