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**CHEST-PIECES OF THE ELOVKA SETTLEMENT:
LATE BRONZE AGE
(BASED ON THE MATERIALS OF THE SITES NEAR
THE VILLAGE OF ELOVKA, TOMSK REGION)**

Sergey S. Tikhonov

Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of SB RAS, Novosibirsk, Russia;

semchi957@gmail.com, <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6909-0727>

Abstract. This article is one of a series of works by the author about the Elovka settlement. This relates to the beginning of the discussion, started by I.V. Kovtun, about the cultures of the Late Bronze Age in the Upper Ob region. The Elovka settlement, which is one of the main sites for the archaeology of the Late Bronze Age of this region, unfortunately, has been studied only by excavations, but not in the office. Therefore, colleagues may have a misconception about the cultural and chronological settlement complexes of this site, which can lead to misinterpretation of the materials. Partially correcting this situation, the author publishes materials from the excavations by V.I. Matyushchenko 1982. This article discusses a small collection of bone cheek-pieces found in 1982 by V.I. Matyushchenko during the excavations of the Elovka settlement. It should be noted that cheek-pieces are missing at both Elovka burial grounds. By analogy with the settlement of Kamenny Log-I (Middle Yenisei), its can be dated to the 10th–9th centuries BC. This may be important for dating of some sections of the settlement. Blanks and whole products testify to the process of their manufacture, starting with cutting the bone and ending with polishing. Some technological details suggest the presence of specialized tools. For example, thin drills (from 2.2 mm in diameter). Straps of different widths were used to fasten cheek-pieces.

Keywords: one cheek-pieces, Elovka settlement, Late Bronze Age, Upper Ob region, bone processing technology

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ПСАЛИИ ЕЛОВСКОГО ПОСЕЛЕНИЯ: ПОЗДНИЙ БРОНЗОВЫЙ ВЕК (ПО МАТЕРИАЛАМ КОМПЛЕКСА ПАМЯТНИКОВ У Д. ЕЛОВКА ТОМСКОЙ ОБЛАСТИ)

Сергей Семенович Тихонов

Институт археологии и этнографии СО РАН, Новосибирск, Россия;
semchi957@gmail.com, <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6909-0727>

Резюме. Данная статья является одной из серии статей автора о Еловском поселении. Это связано с началом дискуссии, начатой И.В. Ковтуном, о культурах эпохи поздней бронзы в Верхнем Приобье. Еловское поселение, являющееся одним из основных памятников для археологии эпохи поздней бронзы указанного региона, к сожалению, изучено только раскопками, но не в кабинете. Поэтому коллеги могут иметь неправильное представление о поселенческих культурно-хронологических комплексах этого памятника, что может привести к неверной интерпретации материалов. Частично исправляя эту ситуацию, автор публикует материалы раскопок В.И. Матющенко 1982 г. В данной статье рассмотрена небольшая коллекция костяных псалиев, найденных в 1982 г. В.И. Матющенко при раскопках Еловского поселения. Отмечу, что на обоих еловских могильниках псалии не отсутствуют. По аналогии с поселением Каменный Лог-I (Средний Енисей) их можно датировать X–IX вв. до н.э. Это может быть важным при датировке некоторых участков поселения. Заготовки и целые изделия свидетельствуют о процессе их изготовления, начиная с раскроя кости и заканчивая полировкой. Некоторые технологические детали позволяют предполагать наличие специализированных инструментов. Например, тонких сверл (от 2,2 мм диаметром). Для крепления псалиев применялись ремни разной ширины.

Ключевые слова: костяные псалии, Еловское поселение, эпоха поздней бронзы, Верхнее Приобье, технология обработки кости

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Introduction

Almost 65 years ago, a young Tomsk archaeologist V.I. Matyushchenko on the left bank of the Siman (channels of the Ob River) near the village of Elovka, Kozhevnikovsky District, Tomsk Region, found an interesting and rich in finds archaeological complex of the Late Bronze Age. In the course of many years of work, it became clear that the settlement and two burial grounds belong to the Late Bronze Age. The materials of the sites were so expressive and original that its served as the basis for identifying the culture of the Bronze Age, which the researchers called the Elovsko-Desyatovskaya, Elovskaya, Elovsko-Irmenskaya. For almost a quarter of a century, archaeologists from Barnaul, Kemerovo, Novosibirsk, Moscow, Tomsk, Tyumen and other cities have had lively discussions about the origin of culture, its place in the cultural-chronological scale of the Upper Ob region antiquities, typology and classification of cultural materials, etc. Among them, first of all, I will name V.V. Bobrov, M.P. Gryaznov, V.A. Zakh, Yu.F. Kiryushin, S.A. Kovalevsky, M.F. Kosarev, A.V. Matveev, V.I. Matyushchenko, Yu.I. Mikhailov, V.I. Molodin, O.I. Novikova, V.A. Posrednikov, E.A. Sidorov, T.N. Troitskaya, A.B. Shamshin, whose works fully studied the Late Bronze Age of the Upper Ob region.

Of course, other specialists also participated in this. Approximately by the mid-1980s – early 1990s, the positions of scientists were expressed. They were published in monographs, series of articles, and defended as candidate and doctoral dissertations. But somehow, gradually, the Late Bronze Age of the Upper Ob region began to receive less and less attention, and the attention of specialists was turned to other problems of archaeology.

However, recently an archaeologist from Kemerovo I.V. Kovtun again drew the attention of his colleagues to the Late Bronze Age of the Upper Ob, Salair and Tom regions, highlighting the Tanai archaeological culture (Kovtun, 2020a, pp. 20–42). His works forced me to consider the existing concepts of the emergence and development of the Korchazhkinskaya once again, Elovskaya (Yelovsko-Irmenskaya), including those sites that were attributed to the “taiga” Elovka, and the Irmenskaya cultures. To be honest, I did not see, and I still do not see any grounds for singling out a new culture (Tikhonov, 2021, pp. 7–18). But I.V. Kovtun tirelessly finds more and more new facts to attract the attention of colleagues to the Late Bronze Age in general, and the Tanai culture in particular, thereby inviting them to the discussion (Kovtun, 2020b, pp. 285–287; 2022a, p. 278–282; 2022b, pp. 5–41).

In my opinion, only ceramic material is not enough to highlight the archaeological culture. It may be objected to me that this happens in Russian archaeology. I don't deny it. But in one of the conversations with M.F. Kosarev during his stay in his expedition to Cheburga near Tobolsk in 1983, I asked him why he pays so much attention to the Elovka ceramics, identifying it as almost the most important archaeological source. He answered me that when he, being still aspirant, worked in Ket river basin, he did not find anything there except ceramics. Therefore, there was nothing more to write about. Well, he used to putting ceramic dishes at the forefront. Perhaps, with his light hand, such an approach took root among archaeologists of the 1970s and later? But after all, in the Late Bronze Age of the Upper Ob region there are hundreds of archaeological objects excavated to varying degrees, including over a wide area. And the number of tools, weapons, burials, etc. large enough to describe the culture. Another thing is that not all materials are published. And this applies even to the eponymous complexes Irmen-I, Korchazhka-V, the Elovka settlement, and sites on Lake Tanai.

Discussion of the Material

Unfortunately, death prevented V.I. Matyushchenko from finishing work on the manuscript of the book about the Elovka settlement. His students, who worked with him on a grant, prepared a report for the Russian Humanitarian Foundation. The monograph was promised to be published, and they have been promising for almost 20 years. In order to somehow close this gap, as far as possible, I publish the materials of Elovka, found by V.I. Matyushchenko in 1982 (Tikhonov, 2021, pp. 7–18; 2022a, pp. 449–454; 2022b, pp. 250–258; 2022c, pp. 766–769; 2023, pp. 148–159; Tikhonov, 2022, pp. 81–87). In this paper, bone cheek-pieces will be considered.

There are 8 products in total. Its small number does not allow us to consider the patterns of its location in the cultural area in terms of depth of occurrence and in relation to other objects (dwellings, pits). The surviving parts suggest that they are all three-hole with subrectangular holes in the same plane of the rod. Colleagues who have specially studied cheek-pieces believe that «...at the turn of the 10th / 9th centuries. BC e. in Southern Siberia, there is a fairly rapid constructive transition from cheek-pieces with three main fixing holes located in two different planes ... to cheek-pieces with three holes on the same plane of the rod ... If in the

10th–9th centuries. BC cheek-pieces with podoval and subrectangular shape of holes mainly dominated, then by the turn of the 9th / 8th centuries BC cheek-pieces with rounded holes began to predominate» (Marsadolov, 2022, p. 67). Those by analogy, the elovka's cheek-pieces can be dated to the 9th century.



The cheek-pieces of the Elovka settlement

Псалии Еловского поселения

A cheek-piece blank (Fig.-1) 13.4 cm long has been completely preserved, and one cheek-piece (Fig.-2) 11.2 cm long. The rest of the items are fragmentary (Fig.-3–9). The process of their manufacture was as follows. The bone cut into a «parallepiped» was drilled along the edges and in the center with a drill with a diameter of 4.8 mm. Judging by the even hole,

the drill was not conical, and the hole was made on one side, and not drilled on both sides. During the manufacture of the preserved workpiece, the drill in the central hole «led away». Therefore, it had to be drilled further (Fig.-1). Then, with some tool (file? chisel? knife?), the jumper between the marked holes was removed. It turned out a cheek-piece with sub-rectangular holes 16×8 mm in the center, and approximately 10×6 mm along the edges. Those need were belts of different widths? After polishing, the product was ready.

A fragment of a cheek-piece with an interesting design feature has been preserved. A hole with a diameter of 2–2.2 mm was drilled in it perpendicular to the plane with holes for belts, into which a spike was inserted (Fig.-6). I can assume that this was done for additional fixation of the belt.

Chest-pieces could be made from obsolete objects, for example, from bow end plates (Fig.-7–8). This is indicated by protrusions and grooves characteristic of some end plates on the end parts of the cheek-pieces. In this case, the distance between the centers of the holes was less (Fig.-7) than “normally” made cheek-pieces (Fig.-1–2).

Note that the end parts were designed differently (Fig.-2–9). This may indicate the taste preferences of the craftsmen, but I do not think that this is a typological feature.

Two cheek-pieces were broken near the central hole (Fig.-3, 6). If we compare this fact with a crack in the end part of the cheek-piece in Fig.-2, it can be assumed that here they experienced a strong load, and gradually broke down.

An interesting hole is on one of the cheek-pieces (Fig.-4). This is a round hole, and with a chamfered (countercoated). Such holes begin to prevail at the turn of the 9th / 8th centuries BC (Marsadolov, 2022, p. 67).

Conclusions

It is definitely possible to speak about the date of cheek-pieces with subrectangular holes in the same plane — the 10th–9th centuries BC. In the future, this will allow correcting the dating of individual parts of the cultural layer. The sequence of cheek-piece manufacturing — cutting the bones, drilling holes, cleaning the lintels, polishing — suggests the presence of specialized tools. The different lengths of the holes (the central one is longer) allow us to make an assumption about the different width of the belts for controlling the horse. For the manufacture of cheek-pieces, objects that were out of circulation could be used. In this case, they were smaller than «normal» cheek-pieces, which is clearly seen from the distance between the centers of the holes. A small collection of cheek-pieces from the Elovka settlement needs further study.

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE AUTHOR / ИНФОРМАЦИЯ ОБ АВТОРЕ

Sergey S. Tikhonov, Candidate of Historical Sciences, Associate Professor, Senior Researcher Omsk Laboratory of Archaeology, Ethnography and Museum Studies, Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of SB RAS, Omsk, Russia.

Тихонов Сергей Семенович, кандидат исторических наук, доцент, старший научный сотрудник Омской лаборатории археологии, этнографии и музееведения Института археологии и этнографии СО РАН, Омск, Россия.

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