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ABSOLUTE DATING OF THE MOUND №12 AT THE MYNTOBE BURIAL GROUND

Since 2017, the archaeological research has been conducting at the Myntobe burial ground and the adjacent settlement of Kultobe, located in the lower reaches of the Keles River. The research conducted to date, has revealed three types of burial traditions in the necropolis, six construction layers in the settlement and the connection between the necropolis and settlement. In 2023, the excavations were conducted at the mound №12. As a result, "T"-shaped catacomb cemetery was discovered. A skeleton belonging to a young girl was found in the interior of the cemetery (chamber). Due to the moisture of the soil, it turned out that the skeleton was very poorly preserved. Along with the skeleton, torsiya, bowl, a bronze bell and a necklace in the form of a bird were discovered at the mound. These are finds that reflect the worldview and material culture of that time. Objective: The article examines the structure of the mound No.12, the position of the buried skeleton and the burial traditions of the afterlife in general, determines the absolute dating and is aimed at introducing it into scientific circulation. Scientific novelty: based on the analogues of artifacts found at the burial site, the approximate dating was relatively analyzed with the conclusion of the C14 radiocarbon examination, carried out in "TUBITAK MARMA-RA" laboratory in the Republic of Turkey and the absolute dating of the burial was determined. Research method: when writing the article, along with the traditional research method, research methods of natural sciences were used. In addition, the drawings were prepared using ArcGis, AutoCad and ArcMap computer graphics programs. Results: The architectural feature of the mound No.12 in the burial ground, burial traditions, material culture and absolute dating were revealed.

Key words: Keles River, Myntobe, Kultobe, mound, burial ground, settlement, excavation, ceramics.

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Мыңтөбе қорымындағы № 12 обаның абсолютті мерзімдемесі

Келес өзенінің төменгі ағысында орналасқан Мыңтөбе қорымы мен оның маңындағы Күлтөбе қалашығында 2017 жылдан бері археологиялық зерттеу жұмыстарын жүргізіп келеді. Осы күнге дейін жүргізілген зерттеулерді нәтижесінде қорымда жерлеу дәстүрінің үш түрі, қалада алты құрлыс қабаты және қорым мен қаланың арасындағы байланыс анықталды. 2023 жылы қорымдағы №12 обада қазба жұмыстары жүргізілді. Нәтижесінде «Т» түріндегі катакомбалық қабір анықталды. Қабірдің ішкі кеңістігінен (камера) жас өспірім қызға тиесілі қаңқа табылды. Топырақтың ылғалдылығының салдарынан қаңқаның өте нашар сақталғандығы белгілі болды. Қаңқамен қатар қабірден торсық, тостақ, қола қоңырау және құс бейнесінде жасалған алқа табылды. Бұлар сол кездің дүниетанымы мен материалдық мәдениетін бейнелейтін олжалар болып табылады. Мақсаты: Мақалада №12 обаның қабір құрылымы, жерленген қаңқаның жату қалпы мен арғы өмірлік тарту таралғылар тұтастай зерттеліп, абсолютті мерзімі анықтап, ғылыми айналымға енгізуді мақсат еттік. Ғылыми жаңалығы: жерлу орнынан табылған жәдігерлердің аналогтары негізінде болжамды мерзімдемесі Түркия Республикасындағы «ТУБИТАК МАРМАРА» зертханасында жасалынған радиоуглеродтық C14 сараптамасының қорытындысымен салыстырмалы түрде талданып, жерлеу орнының абсолютті мерзімі анықталды. Зерттеу әдісі: Мақаланы жазу барысында дәстүрлі зерттеу әдісімен қатар жаратылыстану ғылымының зерттеу әдістері қолданылды. Сонымен қатар, ArcGis, AutoCad және ArcMap компьютерлік графикалық бағдарламаларды пайдалана отырып сызбалар дайындалды. Нәтижелер: қорымдағы №12 обаның архитектуралық ерекшелігі, жерлу дәстүрі, материалдық мәдениеті мен абсолютті мерзімі анықталды.

Түйін сөздер. Келес өзені, Мыңтөбе, Күлтөбе, қорым, оба, қалашық, қазба, керамика.

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Абсолютная датировка Кургана №12 Могильника Мынтобе

Археологические исследования на могильнике Мынтобе и близлежащем городище Культобе, расположенном в низовьях реки Келес ведутся с 2017 года. В результате проведенных исследований к настоящему времени определены три типа погребальных традиций, шесть культурных слоев и выявлена связь могильника и городища. В 2023 году были проведены раскопки кургана № 12. В результате обнаружено погребение в катакомбе Т-образной формы. Во внутреннем пространстве (камере) обнаружен скелет молодой девушки-подростка. Скелет плохой сохранности из-за влажности почвы. В качестве погребального инвентаря со скелетом положены фляга, чаша, бронзовый колокольчик и ожерелье-подвеска в виде птицы. Эти артефакты отражают мировоззрение и материальную культуру того времени. Цель статьи ввести в научный оборот сведения о конструкции погребального сооружения кургана № 12, труположении, погребальный инвентарь и данные абсолютной датировки. Научная новизна: на основе аналогий артефактов с захоронения, сопоставлена приблизительная датировка с результатами радиоуглеродной С14 экспертизы, проведенной в лаборатории «ТУБИТАК МАРМАРА» в Турецкой Республике и определена абсолютная датировка захоронения. Методы исследования: В ходе написания статьи наряду с традиционными методами исследования использовались естественнонаучные методы. Чертежи были подготовлены с использованием программ компьютерной графики ArcGis, AutoCad и ArcMap. Результаты: определены архитектурные особенности, погребальная традиция, материальная культура и абсолютная датировка кургана № 12 могильника.

Ключевые слова: Река Келес, Мынтобе, Культобе, погребение, курган, городище, раскоп, керамика.

Introduction

Myntobe burial ground is located on the right side of the middle reaches of the Syrdarya River, at the confluence of the Keles River and Syrdarya. The geographic coordinates of the Myntobe burial ground are: N 41.013238, E 68.626213, the height above sea level is 285 m. More than 650 burial mounds are scattered in the necropolis, which extends for 2 km in the southwest-northeast direction. The diameter of the burial mounds is 6-33 m, the height is 0.65-4.30 m. In the northwest of the burial ground, on the left side of the Keles River, is the ancient settlement of Kultobe (Fig.1). Myntobe burial ground is considered to be the necropolis of the peoples who inhabited the city of Kultobe. Because the settlement residents buried dead relatives in the necropolis located on the other side of the river. As evidence, we can cite the discovery of ceramic dishes found during archaeological research, conducted in the settlement of Kultobe, at the mounds of the Myntobe burial ground. At the same time, the coincidence of the absolute chronology of the continental layers of the settlement

with the burial sites in the burial ground also confirms our opinion. Since 2017, the research has been conducted at the settlement of Kultobe and the Myntobe burial ground by scientists from the Khoja Ahmed Yasawi International Kazakh-Turkish University, the Research Institute of Archaeology, the Al-Farabi Kazakh National University and the Shymkent Pedagogical University (Zhetibayev, 2020: 409-419; Talejev, 2019: 48-62; Eleuov et al., 2020: 195-200; Podushkin, Donetsk, 2018: 99-104; Podushkin, 2019: 153-167; Sizdikov et al., 2023: 192-201). As a result of archaeological research conducted to this day, a large number of cultural layers and burials belonging to the Kangly tribes have been identified and introduced into scientific circulation. The article examines and scientifically formulates the features of architectural construction, burial traditions and material culture of mound No.12, discovered during archaeological excavations at the burial ground in 2023. The main goal of the article is a comprehensive study, comparative and absolute dating and introduction into scientific circulation of the mound No.12 at the Myntobe burial ground.

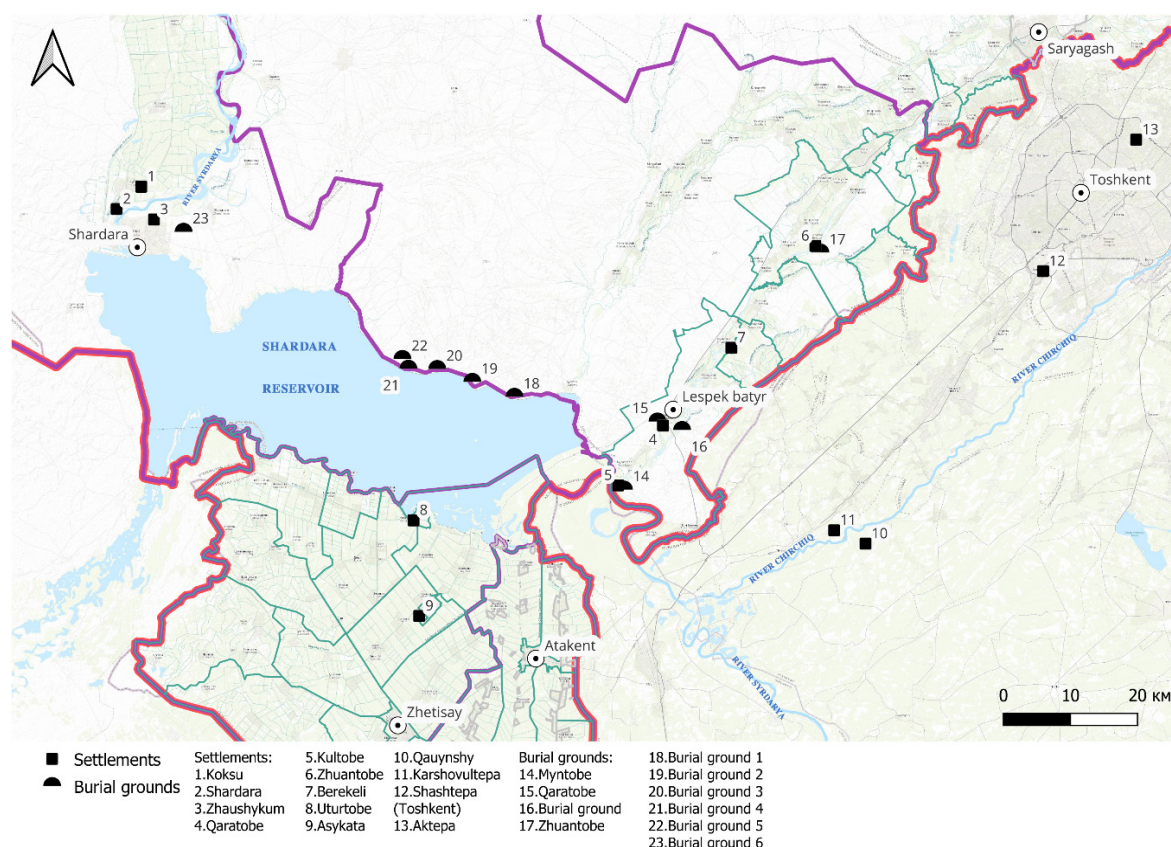


Figure 1 – Map of localization of the city of Kultobe and the burial ground of Myntobe

Materials and methods

The article was written based on the traditional method. First, the description of fresh materials was made. After that, the finds were considered together with analogues to create a relative dating of the mound. With the goal to determine the exact date, the radiocarbon dating of the Tubitak institution in Turkey was carried out. For the clarity of some details given in the article, the images and visual effects were used. In the final part, the results and opinions were discussed. In addition, during the research work, the drawings were prepared using computer graphics programs ArcGis, AutoCad and ArcMap using modern technologies and research methods.

Results

Results of the conducted studies of the mound №12

Before the excavations of the mound №12 in the North-South direction – 8.0 m, in the West-East direction – 8.5 m. At a depth of 0.7 m from

the highest point of the mound, a trace of a dromos was found, directed from south to north. Its length is 3.0 m, the width is 1.2 m, it widens further and reaches 1.4 m on the side of the entrance. Along the eastern wall of the dromos, a tombstone made of a raw brick is placed, the length of which is 1.6 m, the width is 0.65 m. The a tombstone made of a raw brick is located at the height of top 15.0 cm from the floor of the chamber. The floor of the dromos is located at the depth of 1.4 m from the surface of the earth. The dimensions of the chamber are about 2.1 m x 2.2 m. During the cleaning of the interior of the dromos, a bronze bell was found at the mouth of the catacomb tomb, on the floor of the dromos. In the front part of the chamber, a human skeleton of 1.0 m in length was noticed. Due to the very poor preservation of the skeleton, it was very difficult to clean it while maintaining its posture. The skeleton lied on its back in an extended position, with the head facing east (Fig. 2). Near the right femur, fragment of a ceramic dish was placed. During the excavation of the interior, a very small amount of ash residue was removed. Most likely, this was used instead of a fumigation dish. On the

slope of the hill, a ceramic torsyk (dish) was found and on the left side of shoulder – a bowl. In the upper part of the chest, a long bronze bell and a

stone amulet in the form of a bird were found and a bronze ring was revealed in the area of the finger bones of the left hand.



Figure 2 – Mound №12. View of the skeleton after cleaning

Artifacts found in the chamber

Ceramic torsyk found in the chamber

Ceramic torsyk. The sides are spherical. The edge was square in section. Protruding outward. The neck is short and wide. It was slightly inclined. The surface is covered with light engobe and covered with brown engobe (Fig. 3). The dimensions of the dish: height – 16.4 cm, edge – 8.2 cm, base diameter – 15.8 cm.

This type of dish is most common in Kangly period in Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and the Western region of Kazakhstan. In recent years, a red engobe torsyk was discovered in the central part of Mongolia at the mound No.28 in the Ulaan Khoshuun necropolis in Tamerin. The researcher, having connected this dish with the Kangly tribes in Central Asia, noted that this dish was brought to Mongolia by the Hunnic warrior in the 1st century BC (Tsagaan, 2023: 210).

In 1938-1939, in the Kenkol burial ground on the left bank of the Talas River, A.N. Bernshtam carried out excavations and discovered torsyk at the mound of the catacomb No.10. The researcher

briefly described this in his work. The burial ground was attributed to the Huns (Bernshtam, 1940: 33). In 1956, 1957 and 1960, in the Talas steppes, I. Kozhamberdiyev, conducting research, discovered numerous catacombs. As a result, material finds and spiritual values were discovered. The author noted that the surface of a ceramic torsyk, found in the Talas steppe, was covered with white engobe and a wavy pattern was applied to the surface of one torsyk. Finally, he drew attention to the similarity with the torsyk in Shirin-Say (Kozhomberdiyev, 1963: 33).

In the south of Kyrgyzstan, in mound No.7 in the Karamoinak necropolis, the torsyk was discovered, one surface of which was flat and the other was spherically convex. When the torsyk was placed on the ground with a smooth surface, it was observed that the neck was turned downwards at approximately 40-45° (Zadneprovsky, 1960a: 48). In Kyrgyzstan in the mounds No. 6, No. 9, No. 22, No. 26 and No.29 of Kairagach burial ground nine torsyks were also discovered. Of these, four were large in volume and had white engobe applied to the outer

surface. Five torsyks are smaller in size and have handles. A hole is made in the handle on which a rope was tied. The outer surface of torsyks of these group is covered with brown and red engobe [Zadneprovsky, 1960: 97-98].



Figure 3 – Mound №12. Ceramic torsk found in the chamber

During economic work in the area of the Ayr-tam site in northern Bactria, the human skeletons were discovered. In 1966, the Khamza Institute of Art History built a 20x20 m excavation site at this site and discovered 10 burials. At the site of burial No.6, a spherical torsk was found, the outer surface of which was covered with a reddish-brown engobe (Turgunov, 1968: 51).

In 1974, I.N. Medvedskaya while conducting archaeological research at the site of burial No.43 of the Beshkent necropolis in the Beshkent steppe, discovered a round torsk (Medvedskaya, 1979: 110). In 1975, this researcher discovered the torsk of the same shape at the mound No.46 and introduced it into scientific circulation (Medvedskaya, 1980: 110). In 1981, during the research work of A. Mirbabayev in the Tangiya Surkh necropolis in Tajikistan, many ceramic dishes in the shape of a torsk were discovered. In the article, the researcher described these dishes as “mustakhara”. The shape is spherical. The surface, conventionally described as a “bottom”, is smooth. In standing position, the edge is directed downwards by about 70° (Mirbabayev, 1988: 70). The last two torsk described above, differ in shape from the torsk, discovered at the Myntobe burial ground. In Tajikistan, at the necropolis of Kalantar-Khon in the Isfarinsk district, six torsk

were found. B.A. Litvinsky dated the overwhelming majority of the burial mounds in Kalantar-Khon to the 3rd-5th centuries on the basis of an iron arrowhead with three-winged handle found in this burial (Litvinsky, 1956: 78). The torsk found at this burial are similar to those found at the Myntobe burial ground. In 1956, the burial mounds located east of the village of Sazagan, 27 kilometers southwest of Samarkand, were investigated. T-shaped catacombs similar to those at the Myntobe burial ground were discovered from the mounds formed by a stone embankment at this site. The torsk was found to the left of the skeleton at the mound No.1. The height is 22 cm, the width from the flat surface to the middle point of the protruding surface is 17.5 cm. The diameter of the smooth surface is 16 cm. The diameter of the mouth is 8.5 cm. One surface of the torsk is convex in the form of a ball, the other surface is smooth. The neck is short, the edge is bent outward. A light gray engobe is applied to the outer surface (Obelchenko, 1966: 68). The shape of this torsk is similar to the shape of torsk from Myntobe burial ground.

New data were obtained during the survey of the Askertobe burial ground, 4-4.5 kilometers southeast of the village of Kokpatas in the Navoi region. One tomb was found at this mound, the inner surface of which was covered with stone slabs. Individual human bones, scattered throughout the mound, fragments of an iron sword and dagger, remains of a bone bow and parts of a ceramic torsk were found inside the tomb. One surface of this torsk was flat and the other was spherically convex. In shape, it is similar to the dishes from Myntobe. Based on finds the researchers dated this mound to the 1st century (Manilov, 1992: 62).

In the catacomb graves of the Aktam necropolis of the Pskent region of Uzbekistan, a large number of ceramic dishes were found. Among them, the torsk, bottle, jug and bowls. One surface of the torsk, found there, was flat and the other was convex like a sphere. On the convex surface of the torsk found at the mound № 3, several rows of circular lines were applied. Researchers noted that this torsk is similar to the dishes from the necropolis of Zhaushykum, Jun and Akzhar and dates back to the 2nd – 3rd centuries BC. S.B. Lunina provides the following information with reference to Litvinsky B.A. She noted that torsk were widespread in necropolises and settlements in the 1st half of the 1st millennium BC. At the same time, one surface is smooth and the other has a spherical convex shape torsk were spread in the Kauyinsky culture (the 1st period of the Kauyinsky culture the 1st – 4th centuries AD

and the 2nd period of the Kauyinsky culture the 2nd-5th cc. AD) (Lunina, 1983: 40).

In 1971, 1972 and 1973, the research was conducted at the necropolis of Tumek-Kichijik, located in the north of Turkmenistan. As a result, it became known that burials at this necropolis were carried out in indirect tombs and catacomb tombs. During the examination of the mound No.39, an additional grave was discovered. Researchers found many afterlife items during clearing of the inner part of the tomb. Among the found items are a bronze seal, a fragment of a female statuette made of alabaster, a bronze earring, beads made of bone and glass, a bronze button, a top of spindle, an iron arrowhead with a three-winged handle, the remains of a wooden bowl, sheep rib bones, a shoulder blade, a ceramic torsyk and other items. Nude figurines were found in the middle cultural layers of the settlement (2nd – 3rd centuries BC) and were widespread in the Central Asian region during the Kushan period. It has also been noted that in terms of the dating of smaller iron arrowheads with three-winged handle (with the same length of the handle with the top or slightly shorter) there are two opinions. According to the first opinion, arrowheads of this type went out of use in the 1st century BC, according to the second opinion – in the 3rd – 4th centuries BC (Lohovic, 1979: 135).

One of the analogues of the torsyks at the Myntobe burial ground was found at the mound No.80 of the Zhaushykum burial ground in the Shardara region. In this place, the torsyk is handmade. One surface was smooth and the other was slightly convex. The neck was wide, with a reddish-yellow engobe applied to the front side. The convex surface was crosswise applied with engobe. Researchers note that this torsyk is similar to those in Yangi-Yul, Vrevsk, Kauynshy, Kojabami, Shirinsay and Kairagach (Maksimova et al., 1968: 215). Such torsyks were also found in the Borizhar necropolis on the bank of the Arys River. They are kept in the Shymkent Museum of the History and Local Lore. One surface was flat and the other was convex like a sphere. The torsyk, registered in the museum's inventory card under №24.486, is dated to the 2nd-4th centuries BC. The shape of the torsyk from burial ground №37 differs from the shape of the first. One surface was smooth and the other had an egg-shaped protrusion. This torsyk is registered in the museum's inventory card under № 22.644 and is dated to the 2nd-4th centuries AD.

In the lower reaches of the Syrdarya River, several torsyks were found at the Zhetyasar site №9. One of these torsyks was egg-shaped. The surface was covered with brown engobe. A spiral pattern

was applied to the spherically convex surface (Levina, 1971: 24). This torsyk differs in shape from the torsyk from Myntobe burial ground.

In the South Ural region, 7 torsyks have been found at the Sarmatian period sites. In 2006, V.N.Vasiliyev published the article on this subject "On the chronology of the pack flask of early nomads in the South Urals". In the article, the torsyks were divided into two types depending on their specific features. The first type included torsyks with handles, both surfaces were slightly convex. The torsyks found at the Temir burial ground and mound №10 of the Filippovsk necropolis were classified as this type. The article notes that these torsyks date back to the 5th – 4th centuries BC (Vasiliyev, 2006: 58).

Torsyks were widespread in the eastern regions from the ancient time. Torsyks with two handles were found in the cultural layer II-a of Shah Tepe which dates back to the 3rd-2nd centuries BC. Dishes of similar shape and torsyk with two handles were identified from the layer of Gissar III-c and from the necropolis of Tepe Sialka B. Torsyks are also widespread in the Iranian region. During the excavations in Persepolis, three different torsyks were revealed. The torsyk belonging to type 1 has two handles and hole for tying a rope. One surface was slightly smooth. The torsyk belonging to type 2 does not have a handle. One surface was slightly smooth. The torsyk belonging to type 3 does not have a handle. One surface is quite smooth. In the cultural layers of the Seleucian and Parthian periods in Mesopotamia, solid torsyks with two handles have been found. However, in Dura-Europos, fragile torsyks predominate. A bluish-green solid torsyk with two handles from the necropolis of Khas-Kariz in southern Turkmenistan is associated with the production of ceramics of Parthia (Western Parthia?). Compact torsyks decorated with ornamentation were mass-produced in the region of Northern India at the beginning of BC.

Richly decorated torsos were widespread in the Khorezm region in the 4th – 2nd centuries BC. At the beginning of our epoch and in the first half of the 1st millennium BC, the torsyks with or without handles were widespread in the settlements with necropolises (Litvinsky, 1973: 136).

Ceramic bowl found in a chamber

Ceramic bowl. Stone, mica and organic matter are added to the mix. It refers to the open-type dishes. The walls were straight and inclined. The edge was rectangular in cross-section. The bottom was wide and thickened. The surface was covered with light-brown engobe. The height of the bowl is 6.3

cm, the diameter of the edge is 13.0 cm, the diameter of the bottom is 8.5 cm.

One of these dishes was found at burial site No.28 in the Shirin-Say necropolis in Uzbekistan. The base of this bowl is smooth. The walls were inclined outward. The outer surface is covered with red engobe (Gaidukevich, 1952: 346).

In 2017, the during excavations at the mound No.3 of the Myntobe burial ground, the analogue of the bowl, the description of which was compiled, was discovered. This bowl is handmade. The edge is straight (simple edge) and the bottom is flat. The diameter of the edge is 18 cm, the thickness is 0.6 cm, the diameter of the bottom is 11 cm, the height is 7.5 cm. Traces of soot are preserved on the outer and inner surfaces of the dish. Looking at the places where the fire has not faded, it can be assumed that the dish was originally gray (7.5 YR 8/1). As a result of macroscopic analysis, it turned out that a large amount of small stone, mica, a small amount of large stone, lime, grass were added to the dish and it was poorly burnt. In 2022, the Tubitak laboratory conducted radiocarbon dating of the teeth of skeleton to determine the time of this mound. As a result, it was established that the absolute age is 184±25 years.

Bronze bell, found in dromos

The bell is cast in bronze and has the shape of a round cone. There is a loop for hanging a tab. The surface is decorated with vertical recesses. Size: height – 2.0 cm, diameter – 2.0 cm.

Bronze bell, found in a chamber

Bronze bell has a round conical shape. A thin wire is welded horizontally to hang a tab inside the body. The tab is 2.8 cm long and 8.0 cm wide, it is made of a thin plate divided by recesses into 2 parts. There is a loop on which a rope was tied. The surface is decorated with inclined recesses. Size: total height – 3.6 cm, diameter – 1.7 cm, body height – 1.7 cm.

The analogue of this bell was found near the skeleton at the mound No.106 of the Zhaushykum burial ground in Shardara. This bell has a round cone shape, a loop is fixed to the top on which a rope was tied (Maksimova et. al., 1968: 259).

In 1988, 1990 and 2004, the excavations were carried out at the Kokyrtobe necropolis in the Otyrar district, valuable data were obtained related to burial traditions and material culture. It should be noted that burials in the Kokyrtobe necropolis were carried out in a reed box. A female skeleton was excavated from burial site No.43, lying on her back in an extended position. The skeleton's head was facing southwest. A bronze mirror, a jug with a red engobe spout, rock crystal and carnelian beads, a bronze

goat-shaped object and a bronze bell were found along with the skeleton.

The research conducted at the mound №56 of this burial site were fruitful. From this site, one young adult skeleton, lying on its back in an extended position, was excavated. During the excavations, it was discovered that the skeleton's right leg was missing. A bronze bell, a rock crystal bead and a bone amulet were found near the skeleton, whose head was facing southwest. Other information related to the bell was obtained from the mound №71. The skeleton in this site was also lying on its back in an extended position. The head was facing southeast. Bronze mirrors, carnelian beads, bronze earrings, bronze bells and other objects were found at the tomb. Researchers note that the analogues of bronze bells found at the burials No.56 and No.43 are widespread in the western regions of Fergana between the end of the 1st millennium BC and the 7th centuries BC (Baypakov et. al., 2005: 91). The example of this is burial mound No.3 of the Borizhar necropolis, located on the bank of the Arys River. The catacomb tomb, discovered at this burial ground, is conventionally designated as No4. After cleaning the interior of the chamber, four skeletons were identified. Three of them retained their anatomical position. The legs are slightly bent at the knees. Smaller beads, a fragment of an earring, a bronze wire, a bracelet made of shell, an iron buckle, four ceramic dishes, a bronze bell and other items were revealed at the tomb (Baypakov et. al., 2005: 91). Archaeologists, conducting research at the Zhuantobe burial ground near the Borizhar burial ground, came across burials built from raw bricks and pakhsa. This type of tomb is called a naus in scientific literature. During excavations at the naus No.70, human skeletal bones with two chambers, carnelian beads, cowrie shell, bronze twisted earrings, bronze bells, etc. were found (Baypakov et. al., 2005: 124).

At the Kultobe burial ground on the bank of the Arys River, long-term research was conducted by A.N. Podushkin. Data on the topic under consideration were obtained from mound No.5 in this necropolis. Before the excavations, the diameter of the mound was 25-28 m, the height was 2 m. After clearing the mound, a catacomb tomb in the shape of "T" letter was discovered at the depth of 3.4 m from the surface of the earth from the southeastern sector. Four skeletons were removed from the interior of the tomb. Together with the first skeleton, a bronze bell and pendant with the image of a bird were found. Also, a bronze bell was found near the left hand of the third skeleton lying in the same tomb (Podushkin, 2000: 81-82). The

practice of putting a bronze bell on the grave is also widespread in the Sarmatian culture of the Western region of Kazakhstan. The bronze bells were found at the burials of the burial ground Karasu No.4 in the Ural region, mound No.6 (Kushayev, Zhelezchikov, 1974), burial ground Buldurty No.2, mound No.2 (Sdykov, Bisembayev, 2004), Lebedevka 1 burial ground, mound No.2, (Bagrikov, 1966), Lebedevka 6 burial ground, mound No.39, burial No.2 (Zhelezchikov, Krieger, 1979) and necropolis Oblovsky No.1, mound No.7 (Sdykov, et al., 2005). Archaeologists believe that during the late Sarmatian period (2nd-4th centuries BC) bronze bells began to be widely used.

The data provided indicate the use of bronze bells in the burial rites of the tribes of the Middle Syrdarya and the Western region of Kazakhstan. But it is unclear what lies behind this practice. Moreover, the fact that written data (runic inscrip-

tions) related to tribes are not so widespread leads to difficulties in drawing accurate conclusions related to burial traditions. Therefore, only through a comparative analysis of archaeological materials we can reconstruct the burial traditions of nomadic tribes inhabiting Kazakhstan and adjacent regions.

Bronze bells were used by different tribes for different purposes in certain periods. In many civilizations, the sound of a bell was believed to have a special power, capable of calling gods, performing magic, chasing away evil spirits and causing rain. Some peoples of our time rang the bell during funeral (Internet, 2024). Although it is unclear at what stage of burial and for what purposes the bells found in the middle reaches of the Syrdarya and Western Kazakhstan were used, the examples of bells allow us to predict whether the bells were used as the protection from evil spirits or during the transportation of corpses.



Figure 4 – Mound №12. Bird shaped necklace

Necklace (amulet) in the form of a bird found in a chamber

A miniature necklace with an image of a bird is made of stone (Fig. 4). It is a unique decoration. After all, the main features of the bird, body, tail, eyes, beak are well defined. The necklace has a hole for a rope. Height – 10.0 mm, thickness – 4.0 mm. The analogue of this necklace was found on the bank of the Arys River near the 1st skeleton at the mound No. 5 of Kultobe burial ground (Podushkin, 2000). The

body and form of the bird is similar to the necklace from Myntobe burial ground. Such a necklace made of bronze was found at the settlement of Karak-Asar of the Zhetyasar culture. L.M. Levina described it as an amulet necklace and dated it to the 1st century AD (Levina, 1992: 71). In 2023, within the framework of the target funding program “The Hun-Sarmatian era in the history of Kazakhstan: interdisciplinary research, analysis and reconstruction”, the excavations were carried out at the mound No.7 and No.17

at the Akbulak II burial ground in the Aktobe region. Numerous necklaces with images of birds were found on the neck and chest of skeleton at the mound No.7. The researchers dated the burial tradition and finds to the 2nd – 3rd centuries BC using materials and comparison of some Sarmatian periods in the South Ural region.

Absolute dating

To determine the absolute dating of the mound No.12 of the Myntobe burial ground, a tooth sample

was taken from the skeleton of the catacomb grave of the mound No.12 for the purpose of radiocarbon analysis of C14 and the analysis was performed in “TUBITAK MARMARA” laboratory in the Turkish Republic. This document is registered as KTB-K10 in “TUBITAK MARMARA” laboratory. According to the results of the analysis, the mentioned burial belongs to 115-224 ± 23 years AD, that is, the beginning of the 3rd century (Table 1. TÜBİTAK-29109288-125.05-4108/28189).

Table 1 – C14 analysis results

Sıra No	Lab. No:	Müşteri No:	Karbon 14 Yaşı (G.Ö.)	Örnek Türü	Ön işlem	Takvim Yaşı Aralıkları (2σ)
1	TÜBİTAK - 3131	KTB-K4	1847±24	Diş	Kolajen - Ultrafiltrasyon	MS 127 - 242 (%95,4)
2	TÜBİTAK - 3132	KTB-K5	1937±24	Diş	Kolajen - Ultrafiltrasyon	MS 18 - 169 (%92,5) MS 185 - 203 (%2,9)
3	TÜBİTAK - 3133	KTB-K6	1895±26	Diş	Kolajen - Ultrafiltrasyon	MS 74 - 220 (%95,4)
4	TÜBİTAK - 3134	KTB-K7	1905±24	Diş	Kolajen - Ultrafiltrasyon	MS 69 - 212 (%95,4)
5	TÜBİTAK - 3135	KTB-K8a	1847±25	Diş	Kolajen - Ultrafiltrasyon	MS 126 - 244 (%95,4)
6	TÜBİTAK - 3136	KTB-K8b	1902±24	Diş	Kolajen - Ultrafiltrasyon	MS 71 - 214 (%95,4)
7	TÜBİTAK - 3137	KTB-K10	1885±23	Diş	Kolajen - Ultrafiltrasyon	MS 83 - 96 (%3,8) MS 115 - 224 (%91,6)

Karbon 14 Yaşı (G.Ö.): Numunede ölçülen ¹⁴C miktarına bağlı olarak delta ¹³C düzeltmesi yapılmış Karbon-14 yaşıdır.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be noted that the features of the structure of mound No.12 of Myntobe burial ground are similar to the burials of the Khanty period in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. Catacomb graves in the shape of the letter “T” were also found in the Otyrar district, on the banks of the Arys River and in the lower reaches of Syrdarya. The number of archaeological studies conducted at the Myntobe burial ground is quite small. Therefore, the exact dating of the mounds is still unknown. To shed light on such problems, the radiocarbon analyses

have been carried out on the teeth of skeletons excavated in recent years. Among them is the mound № 12. As a result of laboratory tests on the mound № 12, it was determined that it belongs to 115-224±23 years BC. At the same time, the analyses of other mounds show that the earliest burials in Myntobe date from 18 years AD and the last one 318 years AD. Future research may change this chronological limits.

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