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NEOLITHIC MONUMENTS OF MOUNTAINOUS MANGYSTAU (materials of 2018-2019)

In 1966-1969 paleolithic detachment of the Mangyshlak complex expedition of the Institute of geological science named after K.I. Satpaev of the Academy of Sciences of the Kazakh SSR under the leadership of A.G. Medoev conducted research of the Stone Age on the Mangystau peninsula. In addition to the famous complex of Paleolithic sites on the shores of the Sarytash Bay in the Shakhbagata tract, he investigated Neolithic sites in the mountain oases Shair, Tushchibek, Ondy and others along the Western and Eastern Karatau ranges. A.G. Medoev considered them to be the earliest traces of the microlith culture on the territory of Kazakhstan. Due to the untimely death of the researcher, the materials of these monuments were not introduced into scientific circulation. Other researchers of the Stone Age Mangystau did not work in the mountainous part of Mangystau. One of the tasks of studying the archaeological heritage of A.G. Medoev within the framework of the grant theme, was the localization of monuments and collection points of stone artifacts on the ground, determination of their coordinates in the global positioning system, assessment of the possibility of further research of the identified monuments. Research 2018-2019 were focused on the monuments of Tushchibek, Ondy, Shaiyr, Shekata. The article describes the stone artifacts, drawings of the most significant of them. The monuments are almost completely destroyed. The only available source of information about the Neolithic of Gorny Mangystau is the collection of A.G. Medoev, kept in the funds of the Museum of the Paleolithic of Kazakhstan in the KazNU named after al-Farabi.

Key words: Mangystau, Neolithic, stone industry, A.G. Medoev.

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Таулы Маңғыстаудың неолит ескерткіштері (2018-2019 жж. материалдары)

1966-1969 жылдары Қазақ КСР Ғылым академиясының Қ.И. Сәтбаев атындағы Геология ғылымдары институтында А.Г. Медоевтың жетекшілігімен Маңғышлақ кешенді экспедициясының палеолит отряды Маңғыстау түбегінде тас дәуірінің зерттеуін жүргізді. Шахбагат шатқалындағы Сарыташ шығанағының жағалауындағы танымал палеолит ескерткіштерінен басқа, ол Батыс және Шығыс Қаратау жоталарының бойындағы Шаир, Тұщыбек, Онда және басқа да тау оазистеріндегі неолиттік жерлерді зерттеді. А.Г. Медоев оларды Қазақстан аумағында микролит мәдениетінің ең алғашқы іздері деп санады. Зерттеушінің мезгілсіз қайтыс болуына байланысты бұл ескерткіштердің материалдары ғылыми айналымға енгізілмеді. Тас дәуірінің басқа зерттеушілері Маңғыстаудың таулы бөлігінде жұмыс істемеген. Гранттық тақырып аясында А.Г. Медоевтың археологиялық мұрасының зерттеу міндеттерінің бірі ескерткіштер мен жердегі тас артефактілерді жинау пункттерін оқшаулау, жаһандық позициялық жүйеде олардың координаттарын анықтау, анықталған ескерткіштерді одан әрі зерттеу мүмкіндігін бағалау болды. 2018-2019 жылдардағы зерттеулер Тұщыбек, Онда, Шайыр, Шеката ескерткіштеріне назар аударылды. Мақалада тас жәдігерлер, олардың ішіндегі ең маңыздыларының суреттері сипатталған. Ескерткіштер толығымен жойылды. Таулы Маңғыстаудың неолиті туралы ақпараттың жалғыз дерегі – А.Г. Медоевтың әл-Фараби атындағы ҚазҰУ-дағы Қазақстан палеолит дәуірі музейінің қорында сақталған коллекциясы.

Түйін сөздер: Маңғыстау, неолит, тас өнеркәсібі, А.Г. Медоев.

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Неолитические памятники Горного Мангыстау (материалы 2018-2019 года)

В 1966-1969 гг. Палеолитическим отрядом Мангышлакской комплексной экспедиции ИГН им. К.И. Сатпаева АН КазССР под руководством А.Г. Медоева проводились исследования каменного века на полуострове Мангыстау. Кроме знаменитого комплекса стоянок палеолита на берегах залива Сарыташ в урочище Шахбагата им были исследованы неолитические стоянки в горных оазисах Шаир, Тущибек, Онды и др. вдоль хребтов Западного и Восточного Каратау. А.Г. Медоев считал их самыми ранними следами культуры микролитов на территории Казахстана. Из-за преждевременной кончины исследователя материалы этих памятников не были введены в научный оборот. Другие исследователи каменного века не работали в горной части Мангыстау. Одной из задач изучения археологического наследия А.Г. Медоева в рамках грантовой темы была локализация памятников и пунктов сбора каменных артефактов на местности, определение их координат в системе глобального позиционирования, оценка возможности дальнейших исследований выявленных памятников. Исследования 2018-2019 гг. были сосредоточены на памятниках Тущибек, Онды, Шайыр, Шеката. В статье приводится описание каменных артефактов, рисунки наиболее значимых из них. Памятники практически полностью разрушены. Единственный доступный источник информации о неолите Горного Мангыстау – коллекции А.Г. Медоева, хранящиеся в фондах Музея палеолита Казахстана в КазНУ им. аль-Фараби.

Ключевые слова: Мангыстау, неолит, каменная индустрия, А.Г. Медоев.

Introduction

The Mangystau Peninsula remains the most important region for solving global problems: the evolution of ancient hominids, their dispersal across the globe, adaptation to the changing ecological conditions of the Pleistocene and Holocene. These problems were first raised by the outstanding researcher of the primitive history of Kazakhstan, Alan Georgievich Medoev. In 1966-1969 he was the first to identify and investigate various Stone Age sites on the peninsula, revealed the patterns of their placement and proposed a geochronological scheme for the development of Stone Age cultures in the region. Thus, the scientific literature includes the names of the Paleolithic cultures Protolevallois-Achel, Levallois-Achel I and II, Shahbagata I (Late Paleolithic), Shahbagata II (Epipaleolithic) (Medoev, 1982).

A.G. Medoev also discovered Neolithic sites in the mountain oases Shair, Tushchibek, Ondy and others along the Western and Eastern Karatau ridges of the Mangistau region. A.G. Medoev considered them to be the earliest traces of the microlith culture on the territory of Kazakhstan. He considered the tips of the Capsian type and the arrowheads of the Geluan type to be the most notable tools at these sites (Medoev, 1979: 21).

Unfortunately, due to the untimely death of the researcher, the materials of these sites were not introduced into scientific circulation, only mentions in publications, brief notes in field diaries and other archival materials have survived (Medoev, 1968). One of the tasks of studying the archaeological heritage of A.G. Medoev within the framework of the grant theme: “Paleolithic of the Mangystau (introduction of A.G. Medoev’s collections into scientific circulation and their modern interpretation)”, was the localization of monuments and collection points of stone artifacts on the ground, determination of their coordinates in the global positioning system, assessment of the possibility of further research identified monuments.

Methodology

According to archival records, were identified the main collection points for stone tools, were examined springs and gorges along the Western and Eastern Karatau ranges. Were localized the Archaeological sites and locations (Fig. 1) and was carried out the selective collection of stone artifacts from the day surface. Stone artifacts were subdivided into series according to their preservation, their technical and typological description was made.

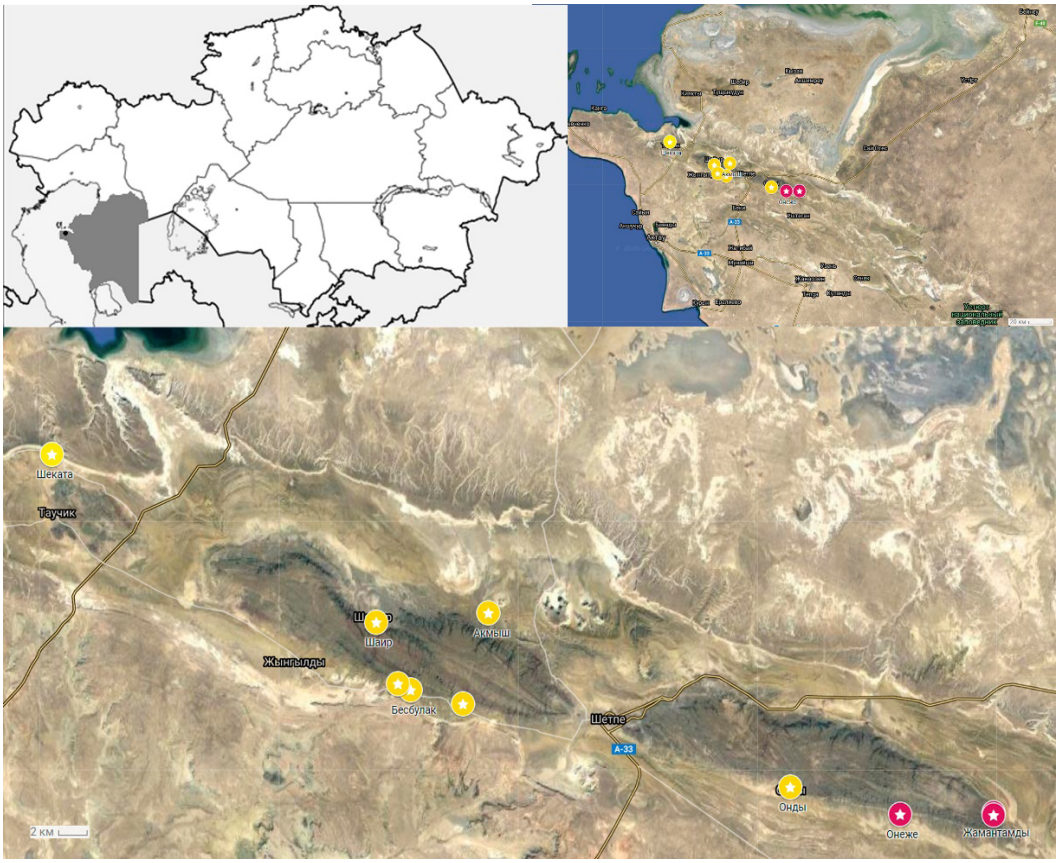

Figure 1 – Layout of monuments.

Materials

On the outskirts of the village Tushchibek, on the southern slope of the Karatau ridge, near the well found the stone artifacts. The remains of the site, which can be explored, occupy an area of about 160x100 sq.m, the rest is plowed up, occupied by vegetable gardens and orchards.

The collection of artifacts from the Tushchibek site consists of 61 items. Stand out non-deflated, weakly deflated, moderately deflated and highly deflated artifacts. The raw material for their manufacture was chalcedony of beige, gray, less often brown.

Two specimens were classified as undeflated. The first it is a distal fragment of a plate with next proportions: width – 19 mm, length – 30 mm, and depth – 3 mm. Second, it is a fragment of a secondary flake 28x24x2 mm in size.

Weakly deflated series (33 pieces). Tools are few in number (11 pieces). They are mainly made from the sections of the plates:

- end scraper on a plate with retouched edges. Workpiece – a medial fragment of a plate with a symmetrical dihedral back, dimensions 45x25x7 mm. Along the edges traced observe semi-abrupt retouch, on the edge, beveled to the right, retouch of medium and small sizes (Fig. 2: 2);

- incisives (3 pieces). The first incisive is a double from a medial fragment of a plate with a dihedral asymmetric back, measuring 24x27x7 mm. Burin blows were applied from above, from the distal straight break, to the edges blunt with facial retouching with a slope to the ventral side (Fig. 2: 9); the second – from the proximal fragment of the plate with dimensions 19x20x9 mm. Burin blows were made from a straight distal fracture to the right edge (Fig. 2: 13); the third incisive is on a plate (medial fragment) with retouched by observe retouch edges, asymmetric tetrahedral back, dimensions 22x19x4 mm. Burin blows were made from a straight distal fracture to the right edge (Fig. 3: 6);

- a notched tool from a secondary flake of a fan-shaped form, measuring 23x32x6 mm. The striking platform was removed, in its place a notch was formed with parallel shallow deep vertical retouching (Fig. 2: 10);

- symmetrical petal-shaped uniface, dimensions 99x74x23 mm. The back is half-crusty, upholstered convergently. The ventral surface is curved, and the impact axis and the flake axis do not coincide by 30 °. Convex edges are trimmed and corrected with semi-steep medium and fine retouch (Fig. 2: 1);

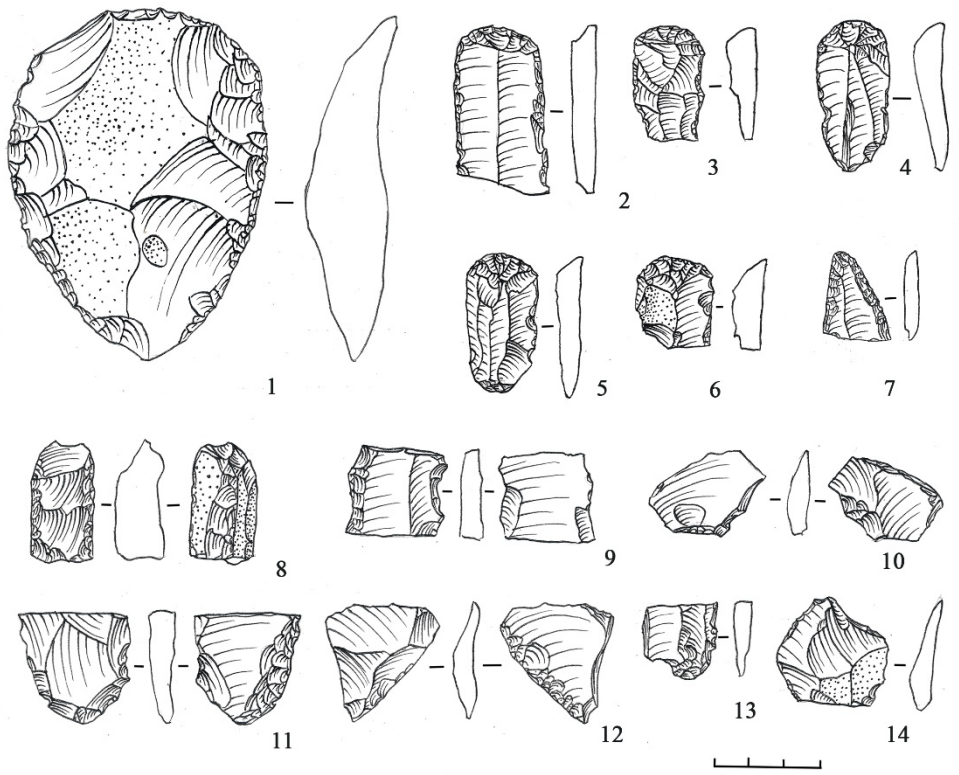

Figure 2 – Location of Tushchibek. Stone artifacts

- blades with retouched edges (5 pieces) are 12 to 18 mm wide and about 4 mm thick. The backs are triangular asymmetrical. The nature of retouching is varied: opposing micro-retouching for the first plate, front micro-retouching for the second, dulling front for one edge, alternating utilization micro-retouching for the third; obtuse on one edge and opposite sharpening – on the other – in the last two (Fig. 3: 2,3,7,9,12).

Production wastes (22 pieces) are represented by fragments of blades without secondary processing (8 pieces), 12 to 24 mm wide, mainly with trihedral asymmetric backs; secondary flakes, whole (3 pieces) and fragmented (9 pieces), 20-30 mm long, only one fragment has dimensions: 46x33x3 mm; a fragment of a semi-marginal flake measuring 14x22x7 mm and a triangular fragment 41x15x12 mm.

The moderately deflated series also does not contain cores, but it contains more tools.

Tools (14 specimens):

- single straight side-scraper with back retouch, 34x31x6 mm from a fragment of a secondary flake, backward subparallel shallow retouch (Fig. 2: 12);

- scrapers (4 pieces) made of massive plates. The first is on a distal fragment of a plate with a symmetrical dihedral back, oval in shape, measuring 25x21x9 mm (Fig. 2: 6). Blade retouching of medium size, on the left edge – alternating micro-retouching. The second scraper was made on the base of a ribbed plate with medium-sized face steep retouch. The distal end is thinned by a facial cleavage, on the edges there is a dense facial micro-retouch. Dimensions: 31x19x10 mm (Fig. 2: 3). The third scraper was made from a proximal fragment of a plate with a tetrahedral asymmetric back, 38x19x6 mm in size (Fig. 2: 5). Blade retouch is parallel, parallel, of medium size; small marginal retouch is also present on the right edge of the tool. The fourth scraper is also formed on

the proximal fragment of the plate with a triangular symmetrical back. Retouching on the left-beveled blade, subparallel, steep, medium-sized. On the left edge – front micro-retouch. Dimensions: 41x19x7 mm (Fig. 2: 4);

- triangular product with dimensions 31x16x13 mm (Fig. 2: 8). One facet is convex with transverse negatives on the left and retouching along the edges, the other two facets are crusty, one with retouching, the third – without any corrections at all. On the distal there is a triangular point;

- a blank of a bifacial arrowhead is made of a medial fragment of a plate with dimensions of 30x30x6 mm. The base is broken off, along the edges, opposite and reverse retouching, at the tip – a beak with opposite retouching of medium and small sizes (Fig. 2: 1);

- plates with retouched edges (6 pieces) are not standard. The first, on a distal fragment, measuring 25x18x3 mm, was corrected with fine facial retouching, which highlights a narrow stigma (Fig. 2: 7); The second, medial fragment, measuring 21x14x5 mm, was corrected with reverse subparallel fine retouching (Fig. 3: 11); In the third fragment, also medial, measuring 18x22x4 mm, both edges are blunted by facial shallow and micro-retouch (Fig. 3: 10); In the fourth fragment, the proximal one, measuring 33x27x9 mm, only the left edge was blunted with facial retouch (Fig. 3: 4); In the fifth fragment, the proximal one, 38x19x6 mm in size, facial micro-retouch is visible on both edges (Fig. 3: 1); The sixth fragment, also proximal, with a symmetrical tetrahedral back, dimensions 24x26x4 mm, on the left is blunted with small back retouch (Fig. 3: 8) ;;

- a semi-marginal fragmented flake, 29x30x6 mm in size, has a facial micro-retouch of utilization on the sharp convex left edge (Fig. 2: 14).

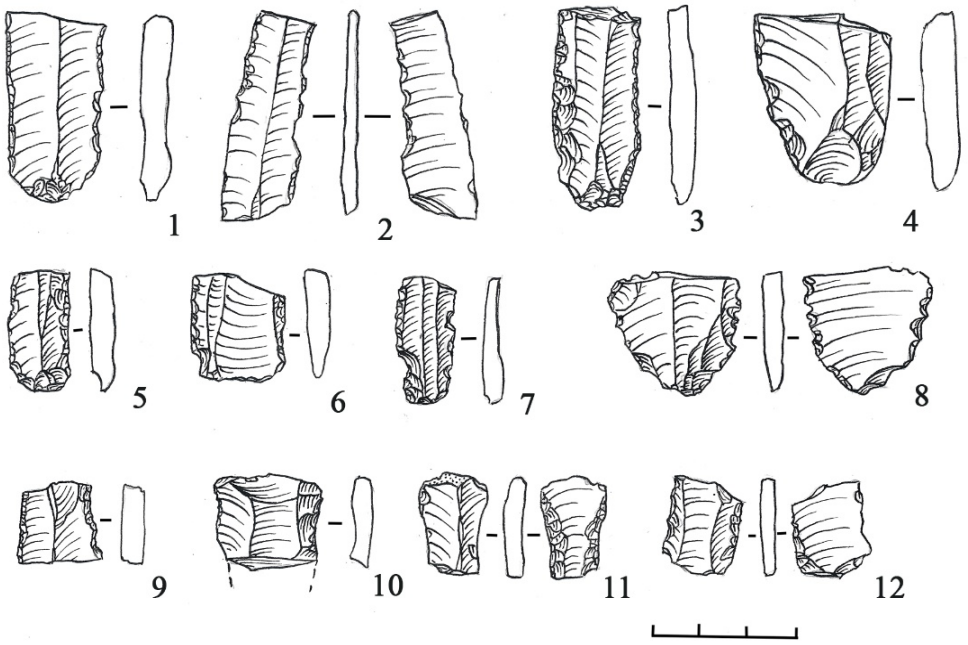

Figure 3 – Location of Tushchibek. Stone artifacts

Production wastes (10 pieces) are represented by fragments of plates without secondary processing (3 pieces), 19 to 34 mm wide, predominantly with irregular asymmetric backs, intact secondary flakes (2 pieces) and fragmented (3 pieces), 20 -30 mm, a fragment of a semi-marginal flake measuring 29x24x13 mm and a triangular fragment 23x16x13 mm in size.

Highly deflated items (2 pieces) – proximal fragments of plates with dimensions of 32x26x8 and 24x12x5 mm. In the last fragment, the facial small and micro-retouch covers both edges (Fig. 3: 5);

At the Ondy site, on the plowed surface near the village, on the road, around the spring, were collected the stone artifacts (64 pieces). According to the degree of preservation, they are divided into

4 series: non-deflated, weakly deflated, moderately deflated and highly deflated. Almost all artifacts are made of light beige chalcedony, covered with a thick white patina, with rare exceptions that will be discussed in important cases.

Non-deflated artifacts (3 pieces) are represented by two fragments of secondary flakes 24x21x6 and 19x21x6 mm in size and a proximal fragment of a trapezoidal plate with a tetrahedral asymmetric back. The striking platform is thinly faceted and convex; the micro-retouch of utilization is visible at the edges. Dimensions: 32x19x5 mm.

Weakly deflated artifacts prevail, 35 of them. The collection contains one core, cone-shaped for blades, damaged in the process of recycling. Dimensions: 58x41x33 mm. On the front, negatives of plates 8-10 mm wide have been preserved (Fig. 4: 2).

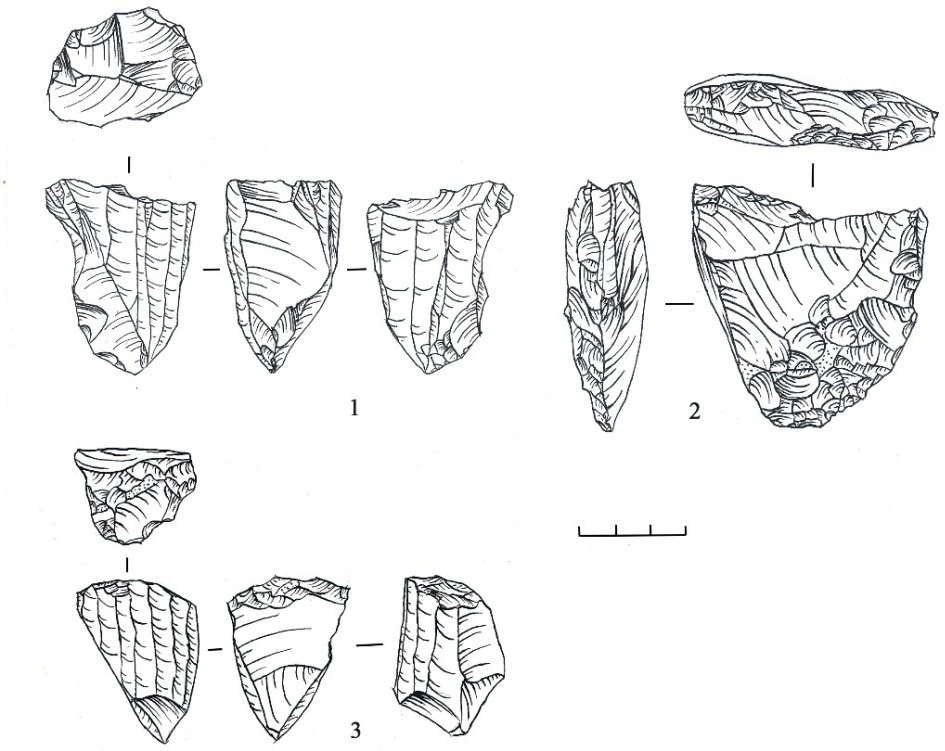

Figure 4 – Location of Ondy and Shekata. Stone artifacts

Tools (5 pieces):

- scrapers (3 pieces). The first is made of a semi-edge diamond-shaped chip, measuring 20x22x5 mm. The blade has lancet outlines, on the edges there are small opposing and facial irregular retouching (Fig. 5: 15); the second scraper is also made of a semi-marginal flake, petal-shaped, measuring 36x21x9 mm. The distal end has the shape of a stigma, with medium-sized reverse sub-parallel retouching; the third, from a fragment of a secondary trapezoidal flake, 24x31x6 mm in size. The blade is formed on the left edge with facial subparallel fine retouching (Fig. 5: 13);

- retouched flakes (2 pieces), secondary, subrectangular and oval, 37x35x7 mm and 22x21x5 mm in size (Fig. 5: 6).

This series is dominated by production wastes and fragments of tools: blades without secondary processing (4 pieces) are represented by proximal (2 pieces), medial and distal fragments. The width of the plates ranges from 8 to 18 mm. In one fragment the dorsum is trihedral and symmetrical, in the rest it is irregular; whole secondary flakes (6 specimens) are very small, the largest is 34x33x5 mm. Subparallel and convergent cutting of the backs is noticeable; fragmented secondary flakes (6 specimens) are even smaller, not exceeding 27 mm in length; – semi-marginal flakes: whole, 49x55x12 mm in size and fragmented, 30x32x7 mm; fragmented marginal flake, 12x25x6 mm in size; scales (2 pieces), dimensions 9x12x2 and 12x13x4 mm; – small fragments, undiagnosed (8

pieces). The dimensions of the largest are 34x13x6 mm, the smallest – 10x10x4 mm.

The moderately deflated series consists mainly of production wastes: undiagnosed triangular debris, dimensions 48x26x18 and 29x14x9 mm; a core-shaped triangular fragment with dimensions of 40x30x16 mm; semi-marginal flakes, intact (1 piece) and fragmented (2 pieces), not expressive, measuring 21x20x5mm, 12x14x5mm and 19x11x5 mm; secondary whole flakes (5 specimens), the largest 41x42x10 mm, the rest half as small; secondary fragmented flakes (6 specimens), no more than 36 mm in size; ribbed chips – chips from the edge of the striking platform of a prismatic core, dimensions 39x32x9 mm and 16x11x6 mm.

End-scraper from a large flake, 73x68x21 mm in size. The front is ribbed, several plates have been removed from it. The counterfond is massive, formed by the "deviated" distal end of the cleaved blank. The striking pad is bounced and slightly retouched on the left. The laterals are the edges formed by the dorsal surface of the blank flake with convergent edging and the ventral surface. A scraper blade with large facial widespread retouch is formed on the distal (Fig. 4: 1).

Tools (3 pieces):

- an angular cutter made from a flake of a secondary rhomboid shape, measuring 17x20x5 mm. The incisor in the upper right corner is formed by an incisal cleavage on the distal on the right, from a retouched notch in the upper part of the right margin;

- a combined tool: a side scraper on the left edge + a concave scraper on the distal + stigma on the right edge. Dimensions: 35x37x12 mm (Fig. 5: 11);

- plate with retouch – is a trapezoid with damaged edges. The left edge is concave, retouch is front, the right is curved. One base is blunt, the other is sharpened. Dimensions: 32x28x8 mm (Fig.5: 14).

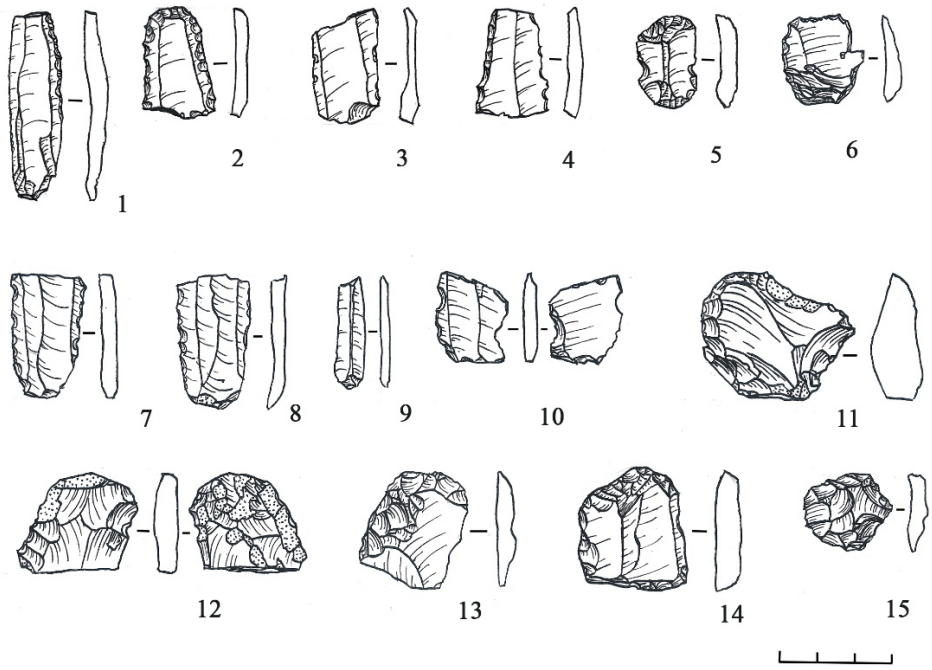

Figure 5 – Location of Ondy and Shekata. Stone artifacts

Highly deflated objects (3 pieces): a fragment of an arrowhead, bifacial, heavily damaged, measuring 29x25x7 mm (Fig. 5: 12); a secondary rhomboid flake, 35x34x10 mm in size, with a convergent facet of the dorsum; and a medial plate fragment, 22x16x6 mm in size, severely damaged.

The technical and typological analysis of the inventory shows that, despite the different preservation of the artifacts, they all belong to the same Holocene complex, and the different degree of preservation depends on the taphonomic conditions.

At the village of Shaiyr, was made selective collection. The collection consists of 12 items.

Weakly deflated artifacts are represented by one weapon and six production waste:

The tool is a scraper made of a medial fragment of a plate covered with white patina, measuring 32x19x6 mm. Along the edges – very fine facial and alternating retouch applied over the patina.

Waste: a fragment of a plate, medial, 12x14x2 mm; secondary flakes are intact (3 pieces), no more than 38 mm long, fragmented (1 piece), 22x11x4 mm in size; a semi-marginal fan-shaped flake, 32x35x12 mm in size.

The production wastes (4 pieces) are classified as a moderately deflated series: a fragment of a plate, proximal, 26x20x7 mm in size, a secondary whole leaf-shaped flake, 28x25x11 mm in size, a fragment of a semi-marginal flake with dimensions of 24x28x7 mm and a triangular fragment, 54x38x35 mm in size.

Only one scraper from the medial fragment of the plate, 22x16x3 mm in size, was strongly deflated (covered with a thick yellowish patina). The base is broken off and corrected with reverse scaly vertical retouch. Blade retouch is parallel sheer. On sharp edges – alternating micro-retouch.

12 artifacts were collected at Shekata's parking lot.

The non-deflated series consists of one proximal plate fragment with dimensions of 29x17x4 mm.

Weakly deflated series (8 pieces).

The tools (3 pieces) are all represented by retouched blades made of: 1) a medial fragment, 30x19x3 mm in size, oval. Small facial retouch covers both edges and distal (Fig. 5: 2); 2) a medial trapezoidal fragment measuring 29x19x5 mm. The left edge is blunted with facial retouch, the right edge is sharp (Fig. 5: 4); 3) a proximal fragment measuring 50x13x5 mm with very fine facial retouch along the right margin (Fig. 5: 1).

Production waste (5 pieces): a medial fragment of a plate measuring 45x24x7 mm, with a trihedral symmetrical back, a spall of revitalization of the distal end of a cone-shaped core, measuring 40x37x25 mm, the back is a tetrahedral peak; fragment of ribbed plate, 34x17x7 mm; a fragment of a secondary flake, 18x17x6 mm in size and an oval semi-marginal flake, 36x20x7 mm in size;

Medium deflated series (3 specimens): fragmented, trihedral core, 46x34x31 in size (Fig. 4: 3); a scraper from a proximal fragment of a plate, measuring 25x15x5 mm, with a working blade strongly beveled to the left (Fig. 5: 5); The chip from the front of the core is trapezoidal, with subparallel negatives of chips on the remainder of the front, dimensions 51x43x14 mm.

Discussion

The first finds of stone tools on the territory of Mangystau were made in the 19th century (Alpysbaev, 1970). The first professional archaeological research was carried out in 1966-1969. Paleolithic detachment of the Mangyshlak complex expedition of the Institute of geological science named after K.I.Satpaev of the Academy of Sciences of the Kazakh SSR under the leadership of A.G. Medoev. A huge number of Stone Age sites have been identified in the chronological range from the ancient Paleolithic to the Neolithic (Medoev, 1982).

Other archaeologists also worked on the peninsula: the Caspian detachment of the Astrakhan expedition of the Leningrad branch of the Institute of Archeology (LOIA) of the USSR Academy of Sciences under the leadership of A.N. Melent'ev (in 1968-1970, 1972) (Melent'ev, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1972a, 1972b, 1972), the Volga-Ural expedition of the Institute of Archeology of the USSR Academy of Sciences in conjunction with the Faculty of Geography of Moscow State University under the leadership of L.L. Galkin (Galkin, 1978, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1985). In the late 80s – until the mid 90s, as part of the West Kazakhstan archaeological expedition under the leadership of Z. Samashev, teams for the study of the Stone Age of Mangystau and Ustyurt worked under the leadership of A.A. Astafiev and L.L. Galkin (Astafiev, 1989, 1993, 1996, 2001; Galkin, 1993). 1998-1999 The region was visited by the Joint Russian-Kazakh archaeological expedition led by A.P. Derevianko and Zh.K. Taimagambetov (Derevianko et al. 1999).

Despite a considerable number of archaeological expeditions that have explored the region, a large number of discovered monuments of the late stages of the Stone Age, they are practically not introduced into scientific circulation. The only exception is the monograph by A.E. Astafiev, dedicated to the most significant Holocene monuments and cultures, which he identified, mainly in the coastal zone of the peninsula (Astafiev, 2014). The rest of the sites and locations are known only from archival materials and preliminary publications. The storage location of the collections obtained at these locations is currently not known, and it will take considerable effort and time to find them.

The mountainous part of the Mangystau Peninsula (Karatau Ridge) remained uncovered by research. Collections obtained as a result of the works of A.G. Medoev and stored in the funds of the Paleolithic Museum of KazNU named after al-Farabi, are currently the only accessible for study of the Neolithic and Eneolithic (or the culture of microliths, according to A.G. Medoev) of Mountainous Mangystau.

In 2020, the study of the present artifacts from the sites from mountains in the Mangystau region was planned using morphological and technological, diacritical and multidisciplinary technological and use-wear approaches (Osipova, 2020; Goraschuk, 2020, a, b). During these studies, a lot of valuable information about periodization, relative chronology, lifestyle, cultural ties between Mesolithic and Neolithic tribes from the Northern Caspian Sea region, was obtained. The study is based on materials from the sites with a destroyed cultural layer (Goraschuk, 1998; Goraschuk, Komarov, 1998; Goraschuk, 2006). Although, the work was rescheduled to the nearest future due to force majeure caused by prologed quarantine measures.

Results

The Stone Age sites, opened in 1966-1969 A.G. Medoev, along the foothills of the Karatau ridges with the presence of a large amount of lifting material (cores, scrapers, retouched plates, punctures, etc.) are currently in emergency situations. In 2018-2019 selective collections were made on them to confirm the correct localization of the monuments and the almost complete loss of these archaeological sites was stated.

Archaeological work by A.G. Medoev and other researchers was carried out at a sufficiently high methodological level at that time. The collection of stone material from sites with a surface cultural horizon was carried out in sufficient detail. This was shown by our field observations. Therefore, the unique collections of stone industries collected in the last century are of particular importance – this is an irreplaceable source for studying the country's ancient past.

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