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THE CHUD OF THE VODSKAYA PYATINA IN THE LIGHT OF NEW DISCOVERIES

Abstract

The article is on the results of archaeological research concerning the ethnographical settlement of the Balto-Finnic *Vod* nationality (Kingisepp region of the Leningrad district). Here, in the territory of the Novgorod parish (*pogost*) of the XV–XVI centuries known as "Toldozhshky in Chud" a number of medieval burial grounds and contemporaneous villages of the ancestors of the *Vod* of the XIII–XVII centuries AD were discovered.

The burial ground near the village of Valgovitsy was extensively explored. It includes graves marked on their surface by regular placing of stones, by separate boulders or devoid of any stone constructions. Inhumation burials are of either western or eastern orientation. In the graves there are ritual gifts which look like intentionally bent or broken tools.

Funeral dresses of *Vod* women are notable for their great singularity. Characteristic details of their costume were dress pins. Some of them have parallels with antiquities of more western Balto-Finnish tribes but mainly they are local reproductions in iron of Estonian prototypes; local forms of such objects are also widely represented. Breast chains were decorated with bells, animal fangs and different pendants which were imitations of objects known in the South-East Baltic area. The upper part of clothes and the apron were decorated with bronze spirals, bronze or tin rings and semi-spherical plates of tin.

Materials of relics explored in the Medieval *Vod* show close relationship of these people with ancient Estonian tribes. In the XIII–XVI centuries *Vod* ancestors had active social and economic connections with Novgorod, but they preserved their ethnographic manner and singularity which was hardly influenced by the Slaves.

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The Vodskaya Pyatina which was in Medieval times, one of the five territorial subdivisions of the Novgorod Land derives its name, and there is a unity of opinion on this score in the scientific literature, from a Finno-Ugrian tribe mentioned in written sources dating back to the 11th century. This fact points to the important role played by the above-mentioned Finnish language grouping which inhabited the north-western outlying regions of Novgorod's possessions.

In the second half of the 18th – the first half of the 19th centuries the attention of researchers was drawn to this small nationality for the first time (its own-language name was Vatjalaiset,

Waddjalaiset) whose settlements were located south of the Finnish Gulf, in the basin of the Suma river in the environs of Koporye (Fig. 1). At the same time there was advanced and validated the thesis of the genetic continuity between the modern Vodian nationality and the medieval tribe of the *Vod*.

It has been established in the works of linguists that the Vodian language exhibits an undoubted and close proximity to the northern dialect of the Estonian language. At the same time, a number of archaic peculiarities still continue to exist in the language of the *Vod*, which are not to be found in the linguistic heritage of

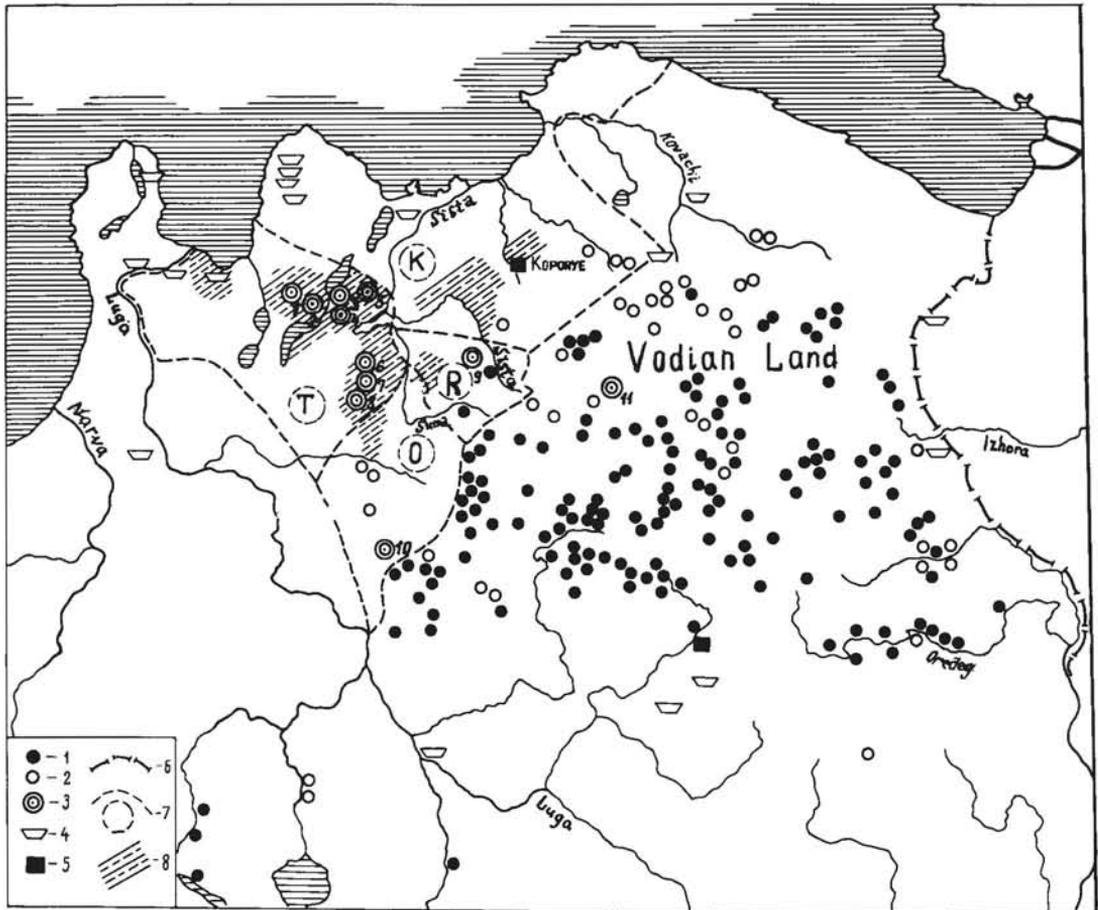


Fig. 1. The North-West of the Novgorod Land. 1 - the investigated barrow cemeteries; 2 - the uninvestigated barrow cemeteries; 3 - the cemeteries of the Vod' (1 - Valgovitsi, 2 - Velikino, 3 - Korvetino, 4 - Verdiya, 5 - Rassiya, 6 - Pumalitsi, 7 - Voinosolovo, 8 - Pillovo, 9 - Unatitsi, 10 - Manuilovo, 11 - Begunitsi); 4 - the cemeteries of the Izhora; 5 - the fortress of Koporye; 6 - the eastern border of Vodian Land; 7 - the western parishes (pogosts) (T-Toldozhcky, O-Opolsky, R-Radchinsky, K-Kargalsky); 8 - the ethnographic zone of the Vod'.

their more western neighbours. Those observations made it possible to advance the theory of the formation of the Vod on the basis of a part of the northern Estonian tribes that had advanced to the east of the Narva river and isolated themselves from the rest of the Estonian groupings during one thousand years of the new era (Ariste 1935; Ariste 1947 35-47; Ariste 1956 6-8). There is also another opinion regarding the genesis of the Vod according to which the nationality was formed on the basis of local tribes of the Neolithic and early Iron Age who ethnically and linguistically were related to the ancient Estonian tribal associations (Moora & Moora 1965 63-85).

Archaeological materials are especially important for the study of the Vod problem. It should be acknowledged, however, that the existing sources determine the debatability of many conclusions regarding the ethnical diagnosis of the remains which are considered to be Vodian. Reliable relics of the tribe dating back one thousand years B.C. still remain unknown at the present time. The main attention has to be given, therefore, to the search for Vodian monuments among the sepulchral relics of the 11th-14th centuries in the Izhor Hills which occupied the major portion of the Medieval Vodian Land. At the end of the last century that over 5000 earth mounds and zhalnik interments

were excavated. The latter are graves dug out in the ground and with boulders laid on the surface.

Various ethno-cultural interpretations of the burial grounds in the Vodian Lands have been proposed by researchers. J.R. Aspelin considered them as belonging to one of the Finno-Ugrian communities identified by him – an "Ingermanlandian one" (Aspelin 1875; Aspelin 1878). A similar view was held by A.M. Talgren who believed that the Medieval culture of the Izhor Hills and the north-eastern Inner Chud Area was formed on the basis of the Vod related to ancient Estonian tribes though that culture had had a powerful effect on Novgorod (Tallgren 1928 19, 20; Tallgren 1938 96–101). A.A. Spitsin who was the first to systematize the materials obtained in the course of mass excavations of the burial monuments in the Izhor Hills preferred a more cautious ethnical attribution. He wrote that "the studied tumuli could well belong to the Russian nationality. But they could also belong to the Vod because the tribe which was from the early times part of the Novgorodian possessions could wholly borrow from the Novgorodians also material items and the funeral rites"; still, according to his views it would be more appropriate to regard the overwhelming majority of the Medieval necropoli of the Vodian Land as Slavic-Russian in origin (Spitsin 1896 36, 37).

Various interpretations regarding the considered burial monuments continue to exist in the literature. According to one point of view, the tumuli in the Vodian land "should mainly be Vodian" (Shaskolsky 1979 46, 47). A number of authors regarded the burial grounds in this region, above all, as monuments of the ancient Russian population (Nosov 1982 71, 72; Konetsky, Nosov & Khvoshchinskaya 1984 161–167). In the opinion of V.V. Sedov, among the burial monuments of the Izhor Hills and the northeastern Chud area one can identify the Vodian Slavic and mixed Slavic-Vodian necropoli (Sedov 1952 72–83; Sedov 1953 190–229; Sedov 1979 78; Sedov 1984 155–161). According to our observations based on excavation materials of recent years certain Finno-Ugrian traditions can indeed be traced in tumulus-zhalnik burials in the Izhor Hills but those traditions can only be a substrate legacy in the ancient Russian culture. (Ryabinin 1981 28–34; Ryabinin 1983a 482–493; Ryabinin 1983b 32–39). With all the existing differences in the ethnic diagnosis of the monuments dating back to the region under consideration researchers agree that the area of the

tumulus culture could not be the territory in which the formation of the modern Vodian nationality took place. Here in the final analysis the Slavic-Russian population became dominant.

Where was the habitation area of the Vod tribe which found itself to the side of the main stream of the ancient Russian colonization and, as a consequence, managed to retain its singularity? In the chronicles relating to the years 1240–1241 there was mentioned apart from the "Vozhans" (probably ethnically mixed with the population of the Izhor plateau) also a certain "Chudtsa" which lived (judging from the context of the chronicles) somewhere in the environs of Koporye – a future centre of the Vodian Land (Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis... 78). It is known that the term "Chud" was widely used by the Novgorodians to denote various tribes of Baltic-Finnish origin. Consequently, the "Chudtsa" of the 13th century was the Finno-Ugrian population which clearly differed from their neighbours – the "Vozhans".

The settlement area of the chronicled "Chudtsa" can be judged on the basis of later historical sources, census and cadaster books which were written at the turn of the 15th–16th centuries and at the turn of the 16th–17th centuries. They mention the parishes which had an additional name "in the Chud" (Nikolsky Toldozhsky and Vozdvizhensky Opolsky or Oporetsky). These occupied the territory between the southern coast of the Finnish Gulf, the lower reaches of the Luga river and the western slopes of the Izhor Hills. According to certain historical data one can establish that both the "Chudian" and the Radchinsky parishes, as well as partially the Kargalsky parishes which were adjacent to them in the north and east in the Vodian Land were no part of the latter and constituted a special territorial formation on the boundary between the Novgorod possessions and predominantly Finno-Ugrian population (Nasonov 1961 120, 121; Kuza 1975 180).

As for the zone in which the Chud under consideration lived evidence to the effect is provided by the spread of Christian names with the addition "Chudin" of which we can read in the census books. The area in which those nicknames with this ethnonymical basis existed is localized within the strip between the western slopes of the Izhor Hills, the Narva river and the southern coast of the Finnish Gulf. In the environs of Koporye, in the territory of the Kargalsky parishes, the peasant "Chudins" came in contact around the year 1600 with the bearers of

the additional nick-name "Izhorianin" ("Izherianin").

Highly indicative is also the personal onomastics of the residents of that region. Despite Christianization of the population and the spread of ethnically impersonal Orthodox names it was precisely here at the end of the 15th and 16th centuries that we can often come across the names which were Baltic-Finnish in character in the Toldozhsky parish "in the Chud", most associated with such onomastics no less than 20 percent of the census population still continued to have such non-Russian names (Gadziatsky 1947 4).

The tribal affiliation of the Medieval "Chud" can be deciphered. It has been established in particular that the Krevings who before the middle of the 19th century inhabited the environs of the Latvian city of Bauska and who spoke the Vodian language still retained a number of Izhor elements in the form of their costume and were the progeny of the lower Luzhsky population who had been driven to Courland by the Livonian knights in the course of their campaign of 1444–1447 (Ariste 1966 105; Shlygina 1977 131, 132). It was this area where already in the middle of the 15th century there continued the process of mixing the Vods with Izhors in the contact zone where those people had the nickname of "Chudin" and "Izhorianin" making it possible in turn to compare the "Chud" with the "Vod".

In the territory of the Chudian parishes, the Vod were seen by the Swedish Bishop J. Getzelius who travelled at the end of the 17th century into the western part of Ingermanland (Mikkola 1932 26–31). Here a major location of the Vodian settlements has been registered (also according to the data relating to the middle of the 19th century) (Köppen 1849; Köppen 1861 41–67, 100–146; Köppen 1867). It is known that the Russians in the 18th century continued to call the Vod by the name of Chud (Opik 1970 85).

Thus, the reconstructed area inhabited by the Medieval Chud was the main zone where the Vodian nationality was formed. It is here that the archaeological remains of the Finno-Ugrian population who retained their ethnocultural singularity must be found. The cartographic analysis which showed the spread of the tumulustype burial grounds clearly shows that Russian agricultural colonization did not extend to a large area located in the zone of modern settlement of the Vod. This area characterized by sand and sandy soils with numerous swamps

could not attract the Slavic settlers who, at the beginning of the second millennium A.D. developed the then most fertile *rendzina* in the Izhor Hills.

Individual groups of the Vod nationality who inhabited the region in question on the boundary with the zone of the solid ancient Russian settlement borrowed from their neighbours the tumulus rite of burial. It is precisely such burial grounds that were analyzed by A.A. Spitsin in a special study, "The Ancient Relics of the Vod", and determined thereby their ethnocultural affiliation which placed them apart from the remaining monuments of the Izhorian Hills (Spitsin 1896 48–52). One of the burial grounds studied near the village of Manuilovo is situated on the territory of the Medieval Opolsky cemetery "in the Chud" and the second one was studied near the village of Voinosolovo – in the Toldozhsky parish "in the Chud".

Near the village of Manuilovo, a total of 45 rather small graves have been opened whose appearance was not so correct and accurate as in the case of remaining tumuli of the Novgorod Land. The interments were made according to the rite of inhumation. In all known cases, the deceased had a western orientation. Of the eight registered female graves a specific collection of artefacts was found in six. The remains of a woollen costume decorated with bronze helixes were twice noted. In five cases, were breast bronze pins with cross-like top to which chains with pendants were fixed. The inventory of the interments included spiral bracelets, wide metal sheaths widespread in the monuments of mainland Estonia, leather belt dividers of the Estonian-Livonian type. In the female costume, such widespread categories of ornaments as temple rings, neck coins, and bead necklaces are not to be found at all. The deceased were sometimes accompanied with deliberately bent or broken instruments of labour – sickles and scythes which researchers dated to the 12th–13th centuries. Judging by the composition of the material complexes, the burial grounds near the village of Voinosolovo functioned from the 12th to the 14th–15th centuries. The specific composition of the inventory was noted in eight female graves. It is represented by several types of bronze and iron breast pins, breast chains with pendants, remains of costume, decorated with helixes, and finds of large bronze helixes.

Some elements of Finno-Ugrian origin were also discovered in other burial grounds which were studied at the end of the 19th century in the zone of Vodian settlements. In certain inter-

ments near the villages of Pumalitsi, Pillovo and Unatitsi, territorially close to the Toldozhsky parish there were finds of the ornamentation of a female costume with helixes, as well as iron breast pins, and other decorations whose closest analogues had been found earlier in the Estonian burials.

In the years between 1983 and 1984, the author undertook a comprehensive study of the region which was part of the Toldozhsky parish "in the Chud". Near the villages of Bolshaya (Chukhonskaya) Rassiya, Velikino, Korvetino, Verdiya and Valgovitsi inhabited still in the 19th century by the Vod the burial monuments were openly known among the local populations as "Swedish graves". Topographically, they all have a similar position occupying the sandy ridges above the ground near lakes and small rivers. Most of the graves are marked on the surface with closed stone fences or with separate boulders. The studies carried out demonstrate, however, that some interments had no surface signs and were common sub-surface graves. The discovery of these remains confirms the conclusion made by G. Ränk who wrote about a possible spread among the Vod of the interment without tumuli and the presence among the local population of cemeteries without any visible external signs or graves having surface stone structures (Ränk 1960 11, 12).

Excavations were mainly carried out near the village of Volgovitsi where, apart from the burial ground, a medieval settlement was identified. The complex of monuments is located north of the village on an expansive range adjacent in the west to the lowland and the swampy terrace around the lake of Khabolovo. The settlement and the burial ground occupied two neighbouring sandy ridges in this area. They were separated from each other, at a distance of about 100 m. The settlement had the following dimensions: 130×140 m with an area of 1.8 ha. The material excavated in the territory of the settlement consists of fragments of Medieval earthenware and iron slag. It should be noted that the traces of iron-working (slag, fragments of clay nozzles of open-hearth furnaces) were also noted among the finds of other settlements discovered in the zone of the Vod settlements (Voinosolovo and Ranolovo). According to the data contained in the census books, and relating to the late 15th the early 16th century, it is well known that the inhabitants of those villages specialized in mining and smelting iron from the ores found in the bogs. For example, in the village of Volgovitsi, there was at that time ten

furnaces and six in the village of Voinosolovo (Bernadsky 1961 99–106; Agrarnaya istoriya 1971 300–303, 309).

At the present time, the burial ground is overgrown with a mixed forest and bushes. Its area can be determined on the basis of the available separate stones seen on the surface. On the upper site of the sandy ridge one can see oval and round stones. They surround small grave mounds which do not exceed in height the upper level of the surfacing stones. The major part of the cemetery is occupied by graves without earth mounds. Judging from the distribution of surface stone structures the burial ground was located on top and along the slopes of the hill and in the western direction it was limited by the sharp and precipitous edge of the ridge. The length of the burial ground from north to south is 55 m and from east to west 60 m, and its area is equal to about 3,000 square meters.

During excavations in various parts of the site 85 funeral complexes were examined. The interments were made in accordance with the inhumation rite. Most of the dead had a western orientation, but in three cases there were skeletons whose heads were turned to the east. Many interments had instruments, tools and implements: scythes and sickles, and also knives most of which were pre-bent or broken. Most often, such instruments were brought as part of the funeral ritual and were found on the surface of the grave mound; however, they were also noted in interments. Besides, one could come across sherds of earthenware on the surface of the grave mounds, whereas within the enclosures (fences) of two male interments were pieces of iron slag or clay nozzles of the open-hearth blomerics brought as part of the funeral ritual.

The main excavations were carried out at site 1 where the northern slope of the hills was fully examined from top to bottom (Fig. 2). 68 interments were excavated (25 female, 31 male and 9 children). Near the male skeletons an inventory of artefacts is absent or is represented only by tools, implements and knives. In the female graves were remains of unposing and specific funeral costumes. The nature of these can be judged on the basis of the most representative complexes whose description is given below. The evidence concerning the interments is given in the chronological order of cemetery growth which expanded from the upper part of the ridge down its slopes.

Interment 64 (Fig. 3) has individual boulders on its surface. It was found in the burial

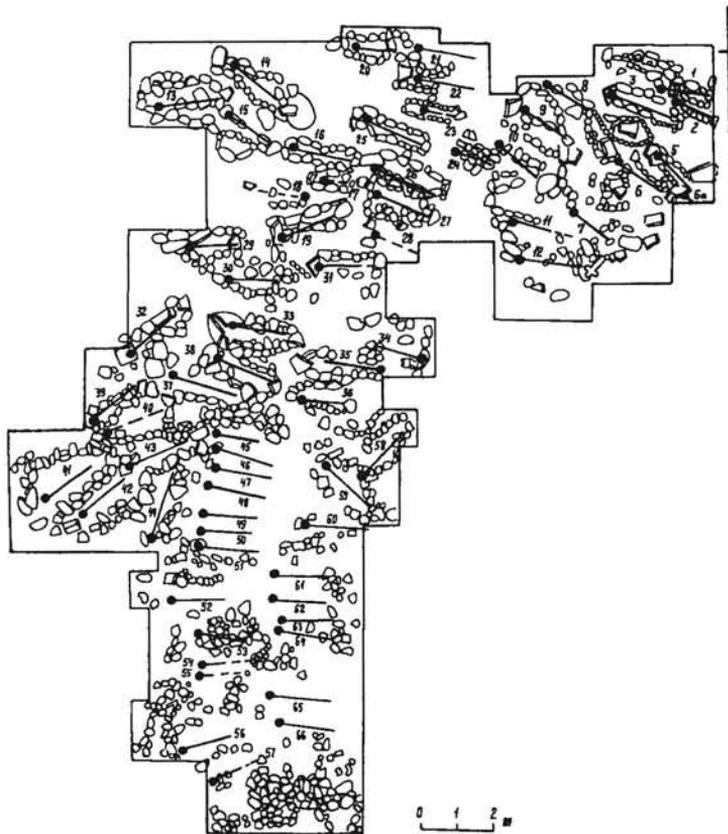


Fig. 2. The cemetery of Valgovitsi. Plan of stone constructions and the distribution of burials in the section 1.

pit, being rectangular in shape and traced only partially. The dimensions of the grave are 2.0×0.6 m. Its depth from the surface is 0.75 m and from the bottom of the stone layer about 0.5 m. A female corpse was found with the head turned to the west (270°). The skull is turned to the right and the arms are laid on the lower part of the chest while the legs are stretched out. Near the left collar-bone iron pins with plate-like heads are located. Fixed to these was a bronze chain 0.75 m in length with nine pear-shaped bells suspended. The other end of the chain came close to the right collar-bone and was fixed to the clothing by means of a woollen cord (Fig. 4,1). Along the femur nearer to the knees there was a border of bronze helixes with tin rings. Near the right leg there was a knife with a broken blade, and on the right of the leg there was a sickle broken in two.

Interment 61 has no distinct stone setting either. The burial pit is rectangular in shape, and can be traced partially (Fig. 3). Its

dimensions are 2.04 and 0.6 m. It is 0.8 m deep from the surface and 0.6 m from the bottom of the stonelayer. The interment is that of a woman and it has a western orientation. The skull is turned face upwards, the arms are laid on the lower part of the chest and the legs are outstretched. Near the left collar-bone there was an iron pin with a flat head from which was suspended an iron ring and a bronze chain about 1 meter in length. From the chain hung nine pear-shaped bells (Fig. 5,3). In the middle of the chain, there was a bronze open-work disc-shaped chain divider of discoid shape broken and repaired in ancient times. The other end of the chain was near the right collar-bone and was fastened to the costume by a woollen cord. One more pear-shaped bell was found near the lower jaw bone of the dead woman. On the chest, there remained tin oxide remains, separate round-shaped tin plates, bronze rings and spirals, which were used for ornamenting the costume. On the left hand there was a silver plate-like ring. Near the

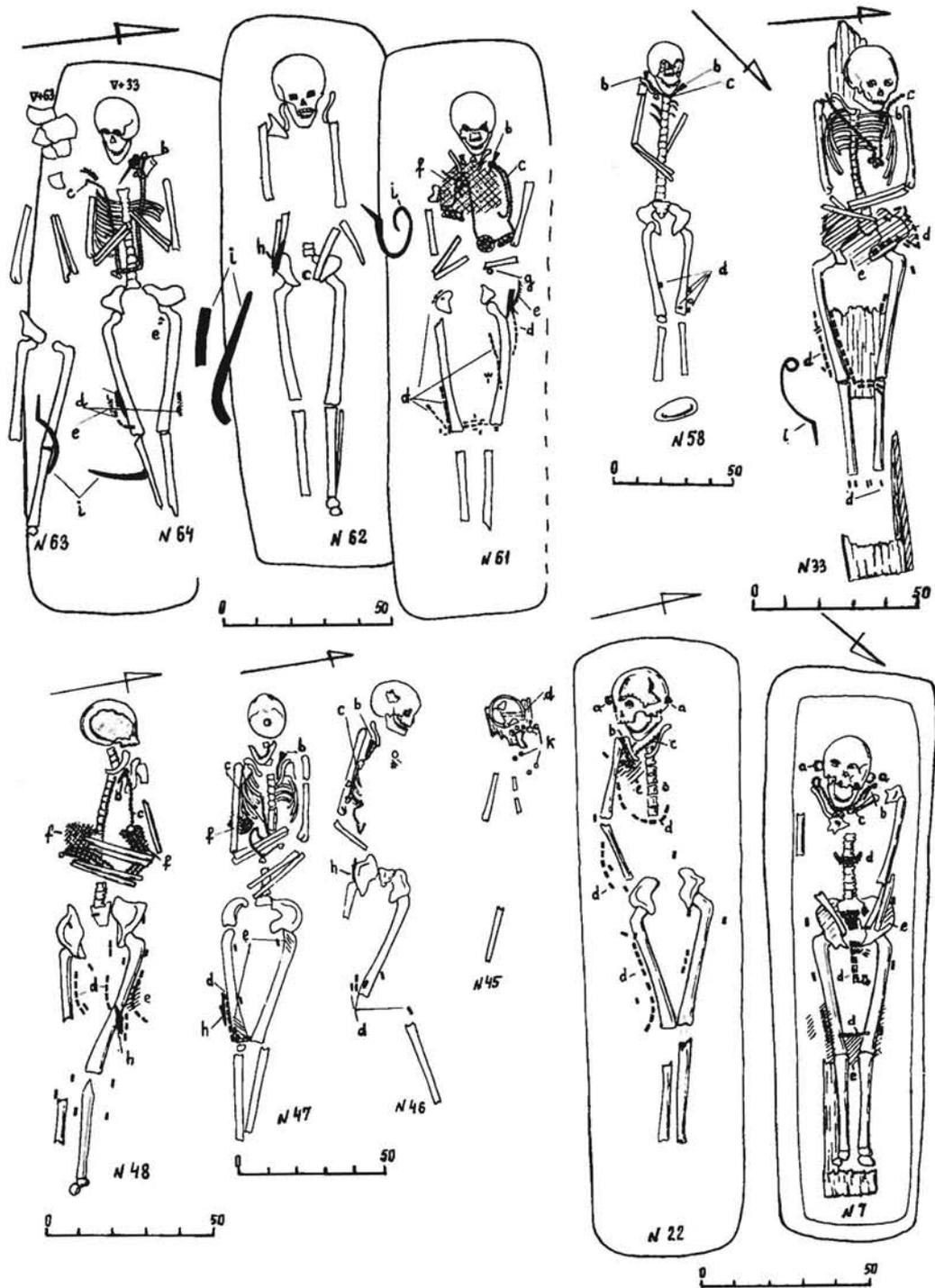


Fig. 3. The plans of the burials. *a* – temple and forehead ornaments (pendants); *b* – pins, *c* – chains; *d* – spirals; *e* – tin oxide; *f* – sersed tin plates and rings; *g* – finger-rings; *h* – knives; *i* – tools, *k* – beads.



Fig. 4. The burial goods of the female graves. 1 – burial N64; 2 – N46; 3 – N58.

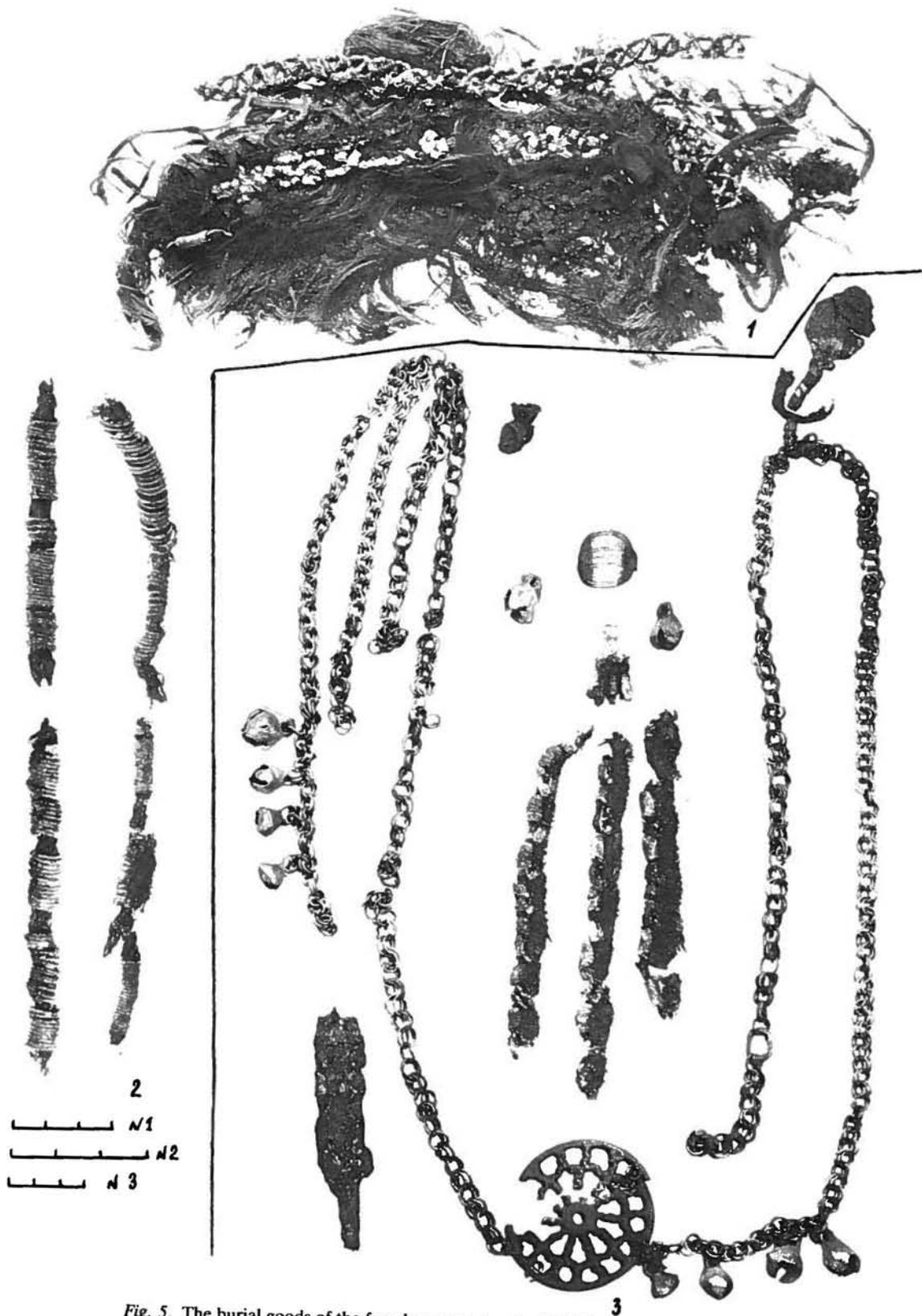


Fig. 5. The burial goods of the female graves. 1 – burial N18; 2 – N22; 3– N61.

pelvis, and along the legs up to the knees there was a metal bordering of bronze spirals and tin rings, strung upon a woollen cord. Near the left femur was a knife and to the right of the skeleton a deliberately bent sickle.

Interment 58 (Fig. 3) is marked with a close foundary of boulders, placed along the longitudinal SW-NW axis. Inside the foundary, immediately under the turf was a broken and bent sickle. The contours of the of the grave pit cannot be traced. At a depth of 0.10 m from the surface and at 0.6 m from the bottom of the stone layer a woman's body was found. Its head was turned to the south-west (220°). The skull is somewhat turned to the left, and the right hand which has been preserved anatomically is laid in the lower part of the chest and the legs are outstretched. The breast ornamentation consists of two iron pins with helix heads located in a pair and connected with a bronze chain 0.18 m in length; three pear-shaped bells are fastened to the chain (Fig. 4,3). Along the legs, there were the remains of the metal bordering of a costume consisting of bronze spirals and tin rings strung on a woollen cord.

Inhumations 45–50 form a compact group of closely positioned interments (Fig. 3). Surface stone structures in this section are absent and the contours of grave pit cannot be traced.

Interment 45 (a child's) was at a depth of only 0.18 m from the surface. It is a poorly preserved skeleton of a girl whose head was turned to the west (with an inconsiderable shift to the north). Under the destroyed skull there were remains of disintegrated timber. Under the skull there was also noted a stain from disintegrated tin ornaments and on the edge of the stain there was located a row of small bronze spirals; it is evident that this was the bordering of the shroud. Near the skull there was a ring of bronze wire and fragments of tin pendants. Here and in the area of the chest there was a group of ten spherical beads of dark non-transparent glass.

Interment 46 (female) is located 0.3 m south from the child's interment at a depth of 0.2 m from the surface. The head is turned to the west (285°). The skull is turned to the left, the right arm which is anatomically preserved is laid upon the waist and the legs are outstretched. Near the right collar-bone, there was a bone pin with an eye in the upper portion to which there was fastened a bronze breast chain 0.43 m in length. Suspended from the chain were two pear-shaped bells and a solid bronze ornament which, in all probability, was a local imitation of chain

holders which were used by the Finno-Ugrians of the south-eastern Baltic area (Fig. 4,2;6,12). Near the right femur under the pelvis was a knife. On the chest near the jugular vertebrae was a small stain from disintegrated tin ornaments and a bronze ring with a flat round surface. The bordering of the lower part of the clothing was represented by bronze spirals found near the knees of the deceased.

Interment 47 (female) was located in the immediate vicinity of the above interment, south of it and at the same depth from the surface. The head of the deceased was turned to the west (280°); the skull was in such a position that the jugular orifice was turned upwards; the right hand was laid on the chest while the left hand was on the waist. The legs were outstretched. Near the left collar-bone, was a corroded iron pin with the breast bronze chain 0.59 m in length fastened to it; two pear-shaped bells hung from the chain. On the right side of the breast, were the remains of disintegrated ornaments, represented by tin oxides and separate preserved plates round in form and with an eye on the reverse side. Next to them, as a semi-circular snippet of thick felt red in colour and decorated on both sides with similar plates. Along the legs, upon the knees there was preserved the bordering of the costume from bronze spirals together with collections of tin rings. Near the right leg was a knife.

Interment 48 (female) is located next to interment 47 at the same depth (0.18–0.2 m). The head of the deceased is turned to the west (284°). The skull was turned to the left, the arms were laid on the lower part of the chest and the legs were outstretched. Near the left collar-bone, there was an iron pin with a loop-like head to which was fixed a bronze breast chain. This impressive ornament consisted of two to three rows of chains connected with each other by means of large wire rings. Suspended from the ornament were ten pear-shaped bells and the perforated fang of an animal. In the middle of the chain there was a bronze open-work chain divider of discoid shape. The other end of the chain was fixed to the costume near the right shoulder with the aid of a woollen cord (Fig. 6,11). In the lower part of the chest were the remains of metallic ornaments. It was possible to establish that the thin woollen fabric was decorated with round tin plates sewn to it and alternating with the rows of bronze and tin rings passed through the fabric and through them on the outer side of the costume were bronze small-size rings which also passed through the fabric. On the left side of the chest was a semi-circular piece of thick felt red in colour and ornamented from both

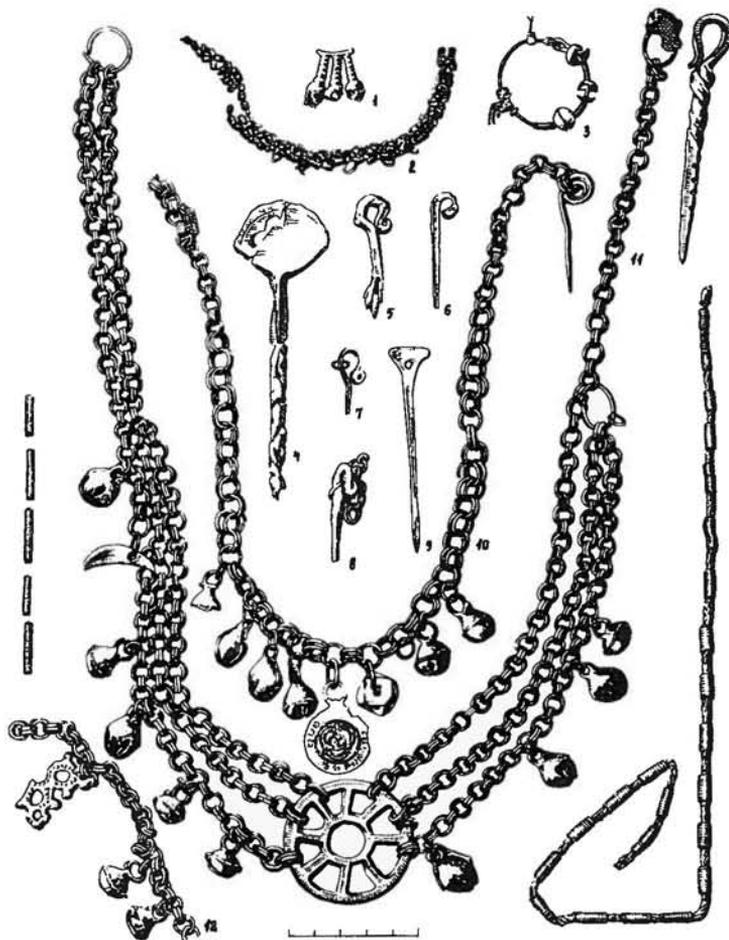


Fig. 6. The burial goods of the female graves. 1,8 – burial N22; 2,3,10 – N7; 4 – N40; 5 – N14; 6 – N29; 7 – N16; 9 – N6; 11 – N48; 12 – N46.

sides with tin plates. The clothing from the pelvis to the knees was edged with a bordering of bronze spirals strung upon a woollen cord and alternating with groups of tin rings.

Interment 49 (male) was located next to interment 48 and south of it. It has the same elevation but as a result of the natural drops in relief its depth from the surface is already 0.55 m. The head of the deceased was turned to the west (208°). The deceased lay with his face upwards and the anatomically preserved arm was bent in the lower part of the chest. The legs were stretched out. Near the legs there was a disintegrated plank of wood (of $0.2 \times$ and 0.1 m).

Interment 50 (male) is located south of the above interments and at the same depth. The orientation was western (278°); the skull was turned to the right, the left arm was probably

laid upon the pelvis and the legs were outstretched. To the right of the skeleton, was a deliberately bent iron scythe.

Near the leg of the deceased was a skull (50a). The skull was on its face to the west of the head of the male interment and lay on the left temple. Under the skull were two upper jugular vertebrae, next to them under the lower jaw bone were two beads of dark untransparent glass and also a round tin pendant with a relief ornament. In all probability the female skull was interred additionally in the male grave.

Interment 41 is marked with a closed boundary of boulders. Inside it under the turf was a broken sickle. The grave pit cannot be traced. A female skeleton was found at a depth of 0.25 m from the surface and 0.15 m from the base of the stones. The head of the

deceased faces west (265°), the skull is turned to the left and the legs are outstretched. Near the right collar-bone was an iron pin with a loop-like head to which was fixed a chain 0.25 m in length suspended from the chain were a pear-shaped bell, two bell-shaped pendants and one umbone-shaped bronze pendant and a perforated fang. To the right from the waist were the remains of the tubular needle holder of bone with a circular ornament. On the knuckles were three bronze plate-like rings. Along the legs from the pelvis to the knees could be traced the bronze spiral bordering of the clothing.

Interment 22 (Fig. 3) was near the northern boundary of the excavations at the outskirts of the burial field. The interment has a stone boundary (which does not form a closed system). At a depth of 0.5 m from the surface and 0.3 m from the bottom of the stone layer, was a female inhumation in a rectangular pit. The skeleton was not at the bottom of the grave but in its sand fill which was 0.2–0.25 m thick. The deceased was turned with its head facing west (280°), the skull was turned to the right and the right arm which was anatomically preserved was laid on the pelvis. The legs were outstretched. Near the right temple was found a wire forehead ring strung with empty bronze beads and near the left temple a pendant of tin in the form of a semi-circle with three pivots directed outwards (Fig. 6,1). Near the right collar-bone, was an iron pin with a loop-like head to which was fixed a bronze chest pin with four pear-shaped bells (Fig. 6,8). On the right side of the chest there oxide from disintegrated tin ornaments was found. The clothing on the chest was edged with a row of bronze spirals. The same bordering of bronze spirals and tin rings was used also on the lower part of clothing from the waist to the knees (Fig. 5,2).

Interment 7 (Fig. 3) is also located on the slope of the ridge, and it was topographically close to the edge of the burial ground. On the surface it was marked with a number of stones which did not form a closed perimeter. Near the south-eastern edge of the grave there were three vertically placed large boulders and also a fallen stone cross which had been earlier positioned of the legs of the dead man. The grave dug out for the body was as far as the depth is concerned sharply different from the rest of the grave pits examined in the medieval cemetery (0.2 meters from the surface and about 1 meter from the base of the stone perimeter). At the bottom of the pit was found a woman's inhumation with a north-western orientation (320°) measuring 1.8×0.5 m. The skull is turned with the face upwards, the arms are laid on

the pelvis and the legs are outstretched. Near the temples were found wire rings strung with bronze empty beads; there have been preserved the remains of woollen cords by means of which those ornaments were fastened to the head-dress (Fig. 6,3). Near the left collar-bone was a bronze pin with a spiral head to which there was fixed a breast chain 0.5 m in length. The chain whose other end was connected to the costume at the right shoulder by means of a cord was fitted with various pendants: five bells and a smaller bell, a crystal bead, a fang of an animal and a copper coin with an eye soldered on (Fig. 6,10). On the chest was the semi-circular bordering of the cut of clothing made of intertwined spirals (Fig. 6,2). Also noted was the bordering of the lower part of the funeral costume with small bronze spirals and tin rings. Another group of helixes alternate with rows of pin rings and end in flat coverings of silver which were found between the legs of the deceased. It is possible that this was the bordering of the hanging head cover. Near the legs of the skeleton and long the right foot were found the remains of disintegrated wood.

The above description of the 12 funeral complexes excavated in various places of site 1 can provide an adequately clear picture of the nature of the funeral rite and the inventory of the interments. Excavations also included somewhat different of funeral structures situated on the opposite (southern) slope of the ridge near its summit – small-size earth mounds enclosed along the perimeter by a ring of boulders. Here at site 2 eight inhumations of western orientation were excavated. Seven of them were male and children's inhumations and the assemblage of grave-goods included only knives and tools; the latter were also bent or broken. The only female inhumation in terms of the character of the head-dress differed in no way from the assemblage in the graves excavated at site 1 (iron pin, breast chain with bells and the spiral bordering in the lower part of the costume). The male and female inhumations opened in other parts of the medieval cemetery were similar in character.

The ethnographic features which characterised the collective of people who lived in the district of Volgovitsy are manifest, above all, in the female funeral costume. Despite the essential differences in the elements of the metal head-dress, the costume as a whole is a unique and integral complex. The bronze chains which occupied the central position on the breast were an

almost constant appurtenance of the costume. Usually, one end of the chain was fixed to the pin which was positioned near the shoulder, while its free end was connected to the costume near the other shoulder by means of a woollen cord. In certain cases pins worn in pairs were also noted. Among other things these served as chain holders. Typical of the female costume was also the bordering with bronze spirals and tin rings in the lower part of the costume – in all probability the foreapron. The fabric on the breast was ornamented with small-size tin plates which were semispherical in form, bronze rings and spirals. It is to be noted that the presence in one of the latest inhumations (grave 7) of the semi-circular bordering of the intertwined spirals indicate some chest element of the costume. It is probable that the latter was a circular collar known from the festival costume of the Vod on the basis of ethnographic data of the late 18th century (Shlygina 1977 1307). In individual cases there was observed the utilization of small-size spirals for ornamenting leather footwear – *porshny* or soft slippers with slits along the upper edge for tightening them near the ankle. The application of a metal decor in the woman's head-dress was noted twice. Thus, in grave 18 was an inhumation with an eastern orientation. On the skull of the skeleton were preserved the remains of a leather ribbon base which embraced the back of the head portion of the brain at the temples and was ornamented with two rows of intertwined spirals (Fig. 5,1). The rare occurrence of such decorations can by no means be explained by their utilization in the head-dress of a definite sex-age group, viz, girls who reached bridal age. This proposition is based on the fact that in one case the bordering of the head with spirals was observed in the inhumation of a girl teenager while on the skull of interment 18 there were preserved long locks of hair. According to historical data relating to the sixteenth century, the Vod exhibited the custom of cutting or even shaving hair when a woman was married (Köppen 1851 42). This long-held tradition persisted almost to the end of the 19th century (Shlygina 1977 128, 129).

The Finno-Ugrian character of the costume complex found in the inhumations of women of medieval Valgovitsy does not raise any doubts. Only individual and lesser categories of the assemblages display parallels with the culture of the Novgorod territories including the Izhor Hills. Among these are bronze and silver finger-rings (plate with a cleared middle portion and with cambering ends and a narrow ribbon that in

solid and oval-plate shaped) and ornaments of the forehead and temple.

The bead rings discovered in two inhumations were formed by a bent wire with bronze beads consisting of two hemispheres strung on them (by three or four copies); one end of the ring looks like a loop turned inside while the second end is completed by a spread plate shield round or rhomboid in form with an opening in the middle. The loop end was either immediately locked on the plate shield or was connected with the latter by means of wire rings. The temple and forehead ornaments were fixed to the head-dress by means of a woollen cord.

As far as the character of patterning the ends of the wire is concerned as also the type of beads, the finds reveal an undoubted typological similarity with multi-bead rings widespread in the north-west of the Novgorod Land at the turn of the 13th–14th centuries (Kolchatov 1984 170–176) and classed by V.V. Sedov as belonging to the most representative indicators of the culture of the medieval Vod (Sedov 1963 193–195). However, there is a feature which differentiates a part of the finds from the rest of the multi-bead rings: the heads on the samples found in Volgovitsy are not freely strung upon the base but are rigidly fixed to it by means of wound wire. This feature places them in close proximity to the bead rings of conventional ancient Russian types (Levashova 1967 18–23).

Still another variety of temple and forehead ornaments is represented by two discoveries of wire earrings in the form of a question mark which began to appear in Novgorod from the beginning of the 14th century (Sedova 1981 16). This type of artefact which is eastern in origin, became rather widespread in later burial remains of the Novgorod Land (Ryabinin 1980 76–82). There can be no doubt that the local form of relics included the solid tin pendant which together with the multibead rings represented a collection of temple and forehead ornaments from interment 22.

No bracelets or fibulas were found in the burial ground. The discoveries of beads were very insignificant in number and they were mainly utilized only as pendants or chains. The specific composition of the inventory makes the solution of the question regarding the chronology of the cemetery difficult. The question is not made clearer by datings and the utilization for this purpose of the great number of pendants – bells which were fastened to chest chains. They are all represented by later varieties which were widespread in the north-west of the *Rus* not earlier

than the end of the 12th century. The upper chronological limit of their use remains unknown.

Therefore, the only coin find (grave 7) is of special interest. According to the view expressed by Sokolovsky of the Institute of History of the Estonian SSR the coin represents a counting penny and was minted in Nuremberg in the middle of the 16th century. Proceeding from the fact that the coin has a plate ear riveted to it and was used as a chest ornament the very interment can be related to a somewhat later period though hardly later than the 16th century.

To what extent can this date be used for determining the chronology of the entire examined part of the burial ground which evidently contains interments made in different times? In describing grave 7 we already noted its peculiarities which place this complex apart from the rest of the burial structures. What draws attention above all is the great depth of the burial pit a typical of the site under consideration. Still more indicative is the presence near the legs of the inhumation of a stone cross of the so-called "Novgorod type" – direct evidence of the growing process of christianization of the local population. And lastly the topographical position of this grave on the slope of the ridge and its proximity to the periphery of the cemetery makes it possible to arrive at the conclusion that it belonged to a later stage in the use of this burial ground.

When we turned to the funeral materials relating to interments located higher on the slope of the hill and on its summits we can note that it was precisely in them that all known discoveries of plate finger rings with the wide middle including the transverse shield rings are represented. According to our observations which are based on the results of many years of excavations of the burial grounds in the Izhor Hills dating back to various times, finger rings of this type completely disappear from use in the 14th century (Ryabinin 1983 35–38). We would also like to note the only find of a bronze cross-like pin in complex 64 on the summit of the range ridge (Fig. 4,1). Evidently it represents a later sample of pins having such a form and most widely represented in the monuments of the ancient Estonian tribes from the twelfth to the beginning of the 13th century (Selirand 1974 316–318, tahv. XXX, 1,3,4). All this makes it possible to assume that the earliest examined complexes of the burial grounds are no later than the 14th century and that the cemetery continued to function at least to the end of the 16th century.

Moreover, there are later inhumations of the 17th century because the grave stone-settings on the northern slope of the hill were fixed and they were considerably lower than interment 7.

This late dating is of special interest ethnoculturally and historically. It documents for the developed and late Medieval period the existence in this area of an ethnographic settlement of the Vod belonging to a special Finno-Ugrian grouping which exhibited specific elements of funeral rites and singular material culture in which the preservation of a number of rather archaic Baltic-Finnic traditions could be observed. Up to the 16th century the ancient tradition of utilizing chest pins in the woman's costume remained. It is only individual bronze pins (cross-like and with a spiral at the end) that have their direct analogues in the medieval finds of the Estonian tribes but in relation to them they seem to be clear survivals. In consequence of the fact that jewelry production of such articles among the population of the southern-eastern Baltic area had long since ceased, the people near the Chudian parishes continued to make the traditional forms of costume ornaments from local iron. Apart from clear imitations whose prototypes could be seen in several earlier articles of non-ferrous metals among the western neighbours of the Vod use was made of pins which are striking in their archaism. In particular, the large iron pins with disc-shaped heads, discovered in the preceding times in the burial ground near the village of Voinosolovo and also in the Volgovitsy inhumations (Fig. 6,4) were classified by M. Schmiedehelm on the basis of analogies as belonging to the relics of the early Iron Age (Schmiedehelm 1934 106–112). This provided grounds for A.M. Tallgren to date the Voinosolovo necropolis to the year 500 AD (Tallgren 1938 97). Although it was already Schmiedehelm who assumed that the Baltic articles in the Vodian medium retained the ancient form to a later date.

Certain archaic features can also be seen in agricultural implements (Fig. 7). The latter are mainly represented by rather modern types of scythes and sickles which were modern for the 14th–16th centuries but sometimes sickles of different forms were brought as ritual articles to the graves. The sickles of this shape already fell out of use in the second half of the first millennium A.D.

The noted facts regarding the long survival in the culture of the western group of the Vod of ancient Baltic material elements can be compared with the conclusions of linguists regarding

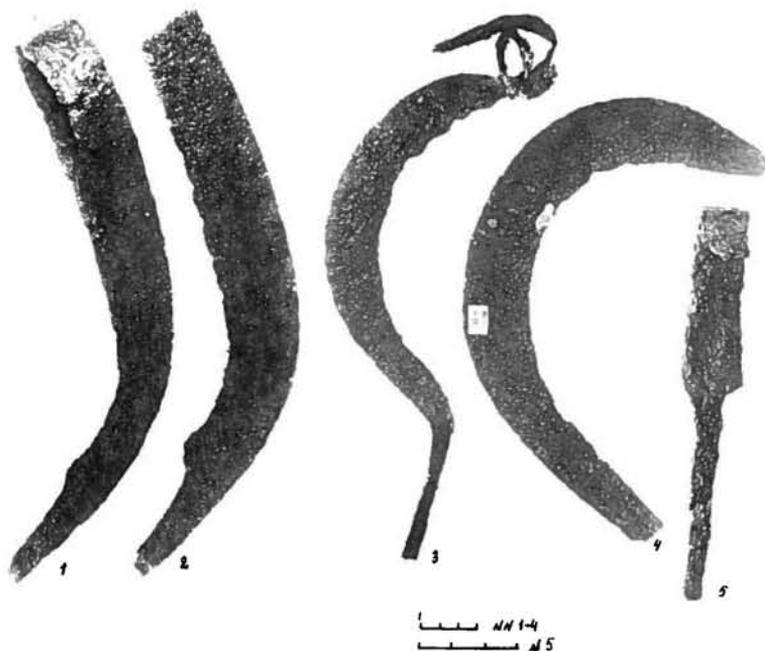


Fig. 7. The tools and other things. 1,2,4 – the ritual offerings to the graves; 3 – burial N33; 5 – burial N2.

the preservation in the Vod language of a number of archaic peculiarities which cannot be found in the language of Northern Estonians which was closely related to the Vod language. It is evident that the conservation of linguistic and cultural features was determined by a certain isolationism of the ancient Vod from their Baltic neighbours and a somewhat slower rate of the development of the Vod in the pre-Russian period.

The preservation of many pagan traditions among the local population for a long time can be determined on the basis of the materials of the burial ground in question. It was still in the 16th century that there existed the practice of laying, either together with the dead, or upon the graves the instruments of labour which were often deliberately bent or broken. This damage of the tools was connected with a number of pre-Christian beliefs. Such elements of the funeral rite as placing of corpses with their heads turned to the East, placing of only the skull into the grave, and so on, may also be considered pagan. It is only in individual cases that the arms of the dead were crossed upon the breast, as it is prescribed by the Church, but mainly even in later inhumations the arms were laid on the breast or in the region of pelvic bones. And last-

ly, the custom of inhuming the head in the festive dress can also be considered pagan in its basis. This dress was decorated with metal ornaments including chest chains with pendants which bore pre-Christian symbols.

All this can serve as a clear illustration of the data contained in the medieval written sources regarding a prolonged survival of pre-Christian traditions in the north of the Novgorod Land, especially in the Chud and Izhor churchyards. In the message charters of Archbishops Makary and Feodosy of Novgorod which were drawn up in the years 1534, 1535 and 1548 one can come across the Toldoshky parishes and mentions about peasants not going to Church but worshipping together with *Arbui* (arpa) priests the sacred trees and stones at their shrines. The Novgorod clergy regarded as an expression of paganism also the fact that the local residents continued to inhumate their dead not in Christian cemeteries near churches which were available in administrative centres but next to their settlements in tumuli and burial grounds; the funeral rites were performed in cemeteries by the Chudian *Arbuis*. The priest Ilya was sent as a missionary to "the Land of the Chud and Izhor" and resorted in his actions to the support of real military force –, "boyar sons". Pagan sanc-

tuaries were destroyed while the clergy and those peasants who continued to adhere to the old beliefs were subjected to reprisals including exile to Novgorod. However such drastic measures did not fully achieve their aim. In any case, Archbishop Feodosy while sending Ilya to the north of the Novgorod Land in the year 1548 found it necessary to point out again the major tasks involved in the Christianization of the local population: destruction of sanctuaries and discontinuation of inhumations in the cemeteries near settlements (Dopolneniya... 1846 27–30; Polnoye sobranieye... 1851 73, 74; Köppen 1851 42).

The burial ground near the village of Valgovitsy located far from administrative and church centres belonged precisely to those cemeteries whose functioning provoked discontent of the Novgorod clergy. The tumuli mentioned in the message charters were not present there, but ground graves most of which were marked with stone structures could easily be compared to the pagan "Kolomische" ("burial grounds") mentioned in the medieval written sources (Estonian "kalm", "kalmistu", Finnish "kalma", "kalmisto") (compare: Popov 1981 67, 68). The activities of the missionaries in the middle of the 16th century did not result in the abandoning of the rural cemetery. However, a certain strengthening of the Christian traditions in the funeral rite can be observed in this period (an example is provided in particular by grave 7).

According to the data of census books for the year 1500, ten out of 27 house owners of the settlement continued to bear names and nicknames of the Baltic Finnish character, the remaining ones had Christian names which were ethnically indifferent (Novgorodskiye pistsovye knigi... 1868 912, 926, 927, 931, 932). Probably in the 14th–16th centuries among the residents of Valgovitsy there were already Russians who came from the neighbouring territories. It is not yet possible to separate definite Slavic inhumations in the studied part of the burial ground but the latter can well be represented among those without an assemblage of artefacts or having only instruments of labour and the western orientation. In this respect, special attention is deserved by the compact and topographically separate group of earth mounds with the ring type facing of boulders which was partially studied at site 2 and which is typologically different from the remaining funeral complexes. It is to be noted that it was here that predominantly male inhumations were found.

Even recognizing the possible presence of the

Russian ethnic element among the late medieval Valgovitsy residents one can hardly speak of the significance of that element. The entire aspect of the local material culture, a woman's head-dress and the peculiarities of the funeral rite point to the predominance here of the Finno-Ugrian (Vodian) population. Moreover, the conservative nature of the Baltic-Finnish traditions noted here would seem to document a certain isolationism of aboriginal inhabitants of the region from external impulses, the existence of separate Finnic language 'islet' lost among the lowlands and swamps as a consequence preserving archaic features of its social-economic way of life.

In reality, as far as the epoch of the 15th–16th centuries is concerned, we come across here with a most interesting historical phenomenon, the presence on the one hand of a definitely conservative tradition and, to a certain degree, archaic culture, and on the other hand an economy developed and progressive for its time. It was here in the Toldozhsky parish "in the Chud Land" that the largest settlements were localized which were sharply distinct against the backgrounds of the small numbers of houses in the villages of the Novgorod Land. For example in the medieval settlements of Voinosala (Voinosolovo) and Pilola (Pillovo), next to which there were found burial grounds with an undoubted Finno-Ugrian basis from around the year 1500 71 and 65 house owners were recorded respectively. If the average family was five in number it can be established that in the village of Voinosolovo there lived about 355 persons, in Pillovo 325 and in Valgovitsy 130–140 persons. The residents of Valgovitsy, Velikino and Rassiya (in the proximity of women cemeteries of the "Chudian" type were found) specialized in iron smelting from bog ores. From there the raw material went to the villages of Voinosolovo and Pillovo where various iron articles were made in 20 smithies. As far as the level of development of iron-processing in this region is concerned, one can judge at least by the fact that in all town centers of the Novgorod Land apart from Novgorod itself the smiths were numbered not by the dozen but by individuals. The products made by the smiths of the Toldozhsky parish included household and economic articles and even plough-shares. These products were sold on a wide external market and met the demand of the entire population of more western Russian parishes of the Vodskaya Pyatina (Bernadsky 1961 100–106).

The development of production for mining and processing iron directly affected the econo-

mic life of the region. Suffice it to note that the owners of ten furnaces in Valgovitsy paid their quit rent to landowners not only in money (Agrarnaya Istoriya 1971 ... 301) but in kind. However this pursuit was not separate from agriculture. Evidence to this effect is provided by the many finds of sickles and scythes in the burial ground and the same fact is documented in the written sources. It is indicated in the census books that the people living near "the Chudian parishes" grew rye, oats, barley and flax and cut hay for their domestic livestock. Among the products used for quit rent by the peasant population of this territory mention is made of beef, mutton, chicken and also cheese and beer. A conclusion can be made that in the period under consideration the economic life of the zone in which a predominantly Vodian population lived was complex in character and combined in itself industrial and agricultural activities and was not lower than the level of development of the most advanced regions of the north-western Rus.

In conclusion we would like to dwell on one important cultural historical aspect of the Vodian problem, connected to the character of the most ancient remains of the medieval Chud and comprising possibly one of the tribal subdivisions (the western one of the vast Vodian formation). In the burial ground near the village of Volgovitsy early inhumations have not been discovered though all the sections of the cemetery were examined. Trial excavations near the village of Verdiya yielded results which probably do not go beyond the chronological boundaries established above. The Chudian relics of earlier times in this region were discovered somewhat later, at the boundary with the zone of the mass ancient Russian settlements in which individual collectives of the Chudian (the western) grouping adopted most early the practice of inhumation under artificial field mounds (the tumulus type burial ground near the village of Begunitsy which was excavated by us and also the above mentioned necropolis near the village of Manuilovo).

What could the Vodian interments dating back to the first and the beginning of second millennium A.D. be like? We would like to hope that an answer to this question will be obtained in the course of subsequent field excavations in the area of the Chudian parishes. But now we can express only certain assumptions based on the retrospective analysis of the funeral rite used at the Valgovitsy burial ground. The interments examined here are located mainly at a small depth and the appearance of considerably larger

grave pits is associated here with the process of christianization. There were registered cases of a partial filling of graves before the inhumation was performed. Many skeletons opened in the earlier part of the necropolis on the summit of the ridge resemble surface inhumations which were located at a depth of up to 0.2 metres from the present surface. It should be noted that the facing stones were sometimes found at the same level with the skeletons. The regular stone structures at Site 1 which form a solid system of enclosures on the slope of the hill and are closer to the earlier nucleus of the burial grounds change into a formless conglomeration of boulders or are generally devoid of external features. Thus, we can say that retrospectively at the early stage of the ethnical history of the Vod one can speak about a possible spread among them of surface inhumations (probably represented by cremation), which did not have stone structures or were marked with boulders which were distributed haphazardly. In the latter case the identification of such remains especially if we assume that in the ancient period the ritual placing of instrument of labour on graves was absent seems very difficult.

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ABBREVIATIONS

- ESA = Eurasia Septentrionalis Antiqua
 SMYA = Suomen Muinaismuistoyhdistyksen Aikauskirja
 КСИА = Краткие сообщения Института археологии АН СССР