

THE METAL AGES AND MEDIEVAL PERIOD

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**A FUNERARY COMPLEX OF THE SINTASHTA AGE
AT MALOYULDASHEVO I, WESTERN ORENBURG REGION***

A collective burial of three persons excavated at Maloyuldashevo I, southern Urals, and dating to the Sintashta period, is described. Both the funerary rite and burial goods evidence an admixture of various contemporaneous traditions such as Sintashta, Potapovka, and Abashevo, as well as earlier traditions of the Volga-Ural region.

Keywords: Late Bronze Age, southern Urals, Sintashta, burials.

Introduction

The ancient settlement of Maloyuldashevo I in the Krasnogvardeisky District of Orenburg Region (Fig. 1, *A*) (Evgenyev, 2014) was investigated through salvage excavations caused by the danger of site destruction during road construction. The settlement was located on a gentle slope of the first flood-plain terrace on the right shore of the Tok River (the basin of the Samara River) at the foot of syrts (Fig. 1, *B*). The excavation in the southern part of the settlement consisted of 15 sections (760 m²). Three chronological groups of materials have been identified: 1) a lower Neolithic cultural layer; 2) a burial of the Sintashta period; and 3) an upper cultural layer belonging to the Timber Grave culture. The aim of this article is to present and analyze the materials of the burial complex, which is relatively rare for the territory of the Southern Urals.

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Funerary rite

The burial was discovered in sector VI at a depth of 360–379 cm from the ground level. The outline of the grave pit was not visible. The burial was collective and included three adults (Fig. 2). Skeleton No. 1 belonged to an elderly male*. The elderly male was buried in a crouched position on his right side with his head directed to the north. The arms of the buried were bent at the elbows in such a way that the hands were placed at the level of the shoulders; his legs were slightly bent at the knees and crossed (the left tibia lay across the right tibia). A clay pot (No. 1) stood to the left of the skull (immediately adjacent to the facial bones). The heel bone of a bovine animal** was located to the right of the facial bones. A bronze awl (No. 1) was found in the area of the elbows. Skeletal remains

*Anthropological identification was made by A.A. Khokhlov (Samara).

**Archaeozoological identification was made by N.V. Roslyakova (Samara).

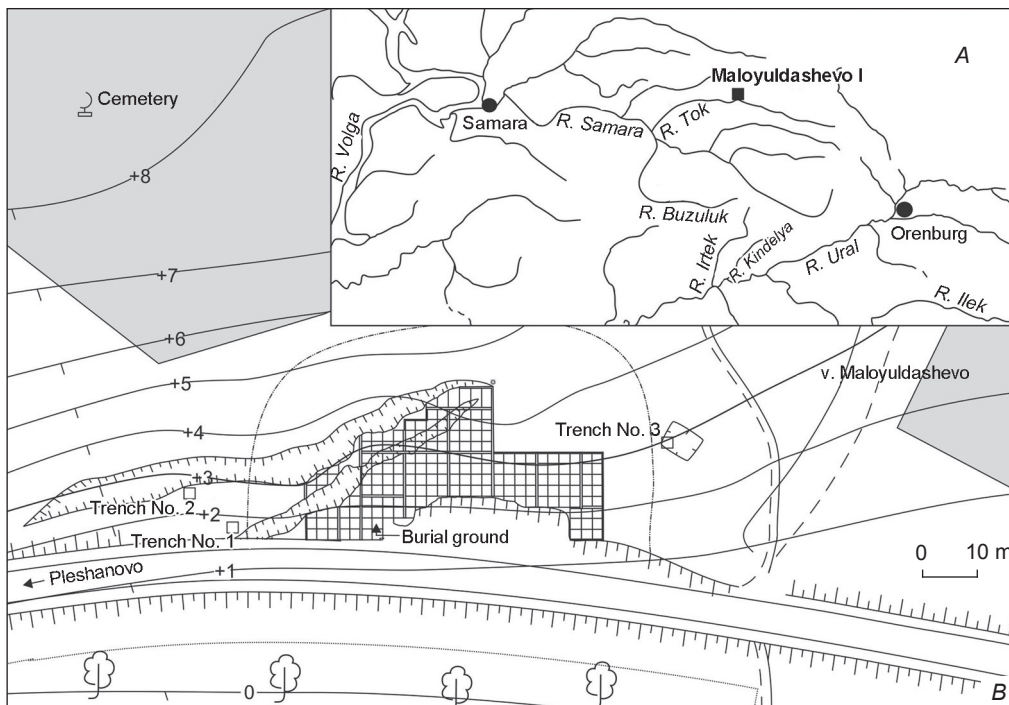


Fig. 1. Location of the ancient settlement of Maloyuldashevo I on the map of the Southern Urals (A), and plan of the settlement (B).

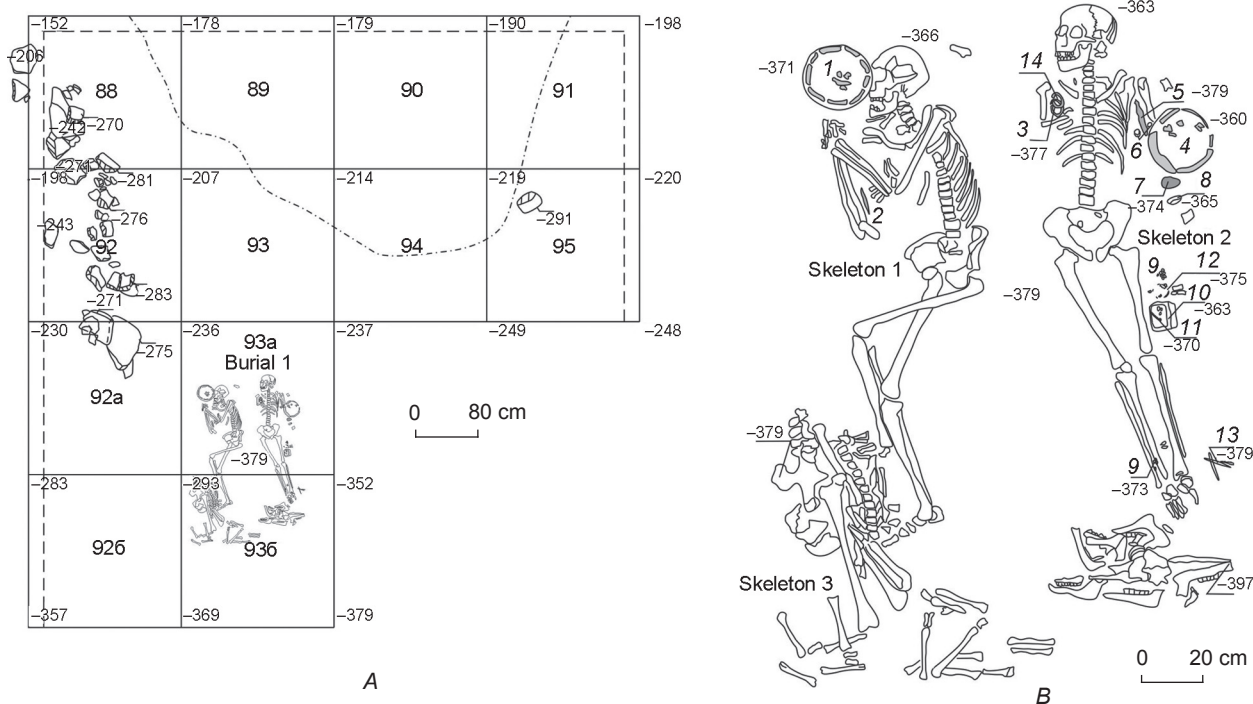


Fig. 2. Location of objects in the excavation (A) and the plan (B) of the burial.

1 – vessel 1; 2 – bronze awl 1; 3 – bronze bracelets; 4 – vessel 2; 5 – bronze knife; 6 – bronze rings; 7 – piece of resin; 8 – bone disk; 9, 11 – bronze adornments; 10 – vessel 3; 11 – bronze awl 2; 12 – object made of birch bark and bronze revetments; 13 – bone tools; 14 – boar tooth.

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