

## ADDITIONAL MATERIALS FROM LAKE EL'GYTKHYN, CHUKCHI PENINSULA

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Okladnikov and Nekrasov (1959) have described in some detail in the pages of *American Antiquity* the discovery of early remains in the interior of the Chukchi Peninsula on the shores of Lake El'gytkhyn. They tell (p. 248ff) of the buried cache of stone artifacts, illustrating and describing in detail 20 of the finds, and stating that over 30 other items were deposited in the local museum at Anadyr and had not been examined by them. Some distance down the slope from the cache was a campsite on a terrace (p. 252ff), from which 18 artifacts are described and illustrated.

Information is now available on the additional materials from this locality which are in the possession of the Chukotka Regional Studies Museum at Anadyr: the balance of the objects from the cache, further items from the campsite, and some finds at a third site on a saddle among the hills southeast of the lake. Since the report (Saiapin and Dikov, 1958) is not generally available, the present writer has thought it worthwhile to summarize the data and reproduce the illustrations. Saiapin and Dikov have a somewhat different interpretation of the materials from Lake El'gytkhyn than that set forth by Okladnikov, and the latter has taken issue with them in a subsequent note in *American Antiquity* (Okladnikov, 1960).

The few scattered finds from the third site on the saddle are described as consisting of three large, massive scrapers (*skreblo*) with convex working edges (Fig. 1), a percussion instrument (hammer stone?), and a blank, thought to be for an axe. All of these were made of metamorphic stone foreign to the locality. The so-called *skreblo* are thought to have been "women's knives" for skin working; however, they are apparently not retouched in any way, and Okladnikov (1960) regards them simply as large flakes struck directly from pebbles—what the Yakut call *kuochai*—and nothing of any antiquity.

Among the collection of flakes and debris from the prehistoric campsite by the lake, the following artifacts or recognizable objects are identified and described by Saiapin and Dikov; all are of flint unless otherwise noted: a polyhedral burin with retouched grip (Fig. 2:3); a bifacial burin with facets on each end and a convex retouched cutting edge (Fig. 2:13)—the authors refer to it as a "combination tool of somewhat sketchy character"; a lateral burin on a flake blade (Fig. 2:8); a combination tool of siliceous slate—a crude angle burin with bifacially-retouched cutting edges (Fig. 2:12); a retouched microblade, probably a miniature end scraper (Fig. 2:1); a fragment of a bifacial microlithic artifact with diagonal flaking (Fig. 2:2); a lamelle, slightly retouched (Fig. 2:10); another, unretouched

(Fig. 2:4); a massive triangular object of siliceous slate with two of its lateral edges retouched, thought by the authors to have served as an engraving tool (Fig. 2:11); a chalcedony side scraper (Fig. 3:1); a problematical punch or perforator (Fig. 3:4); and two crudely-worked bifacial tools resembling *skreblo* (Fig. 4). There were also said to be several fragments of the same bifacial objects that were recovered from the cache; these are not illustrated. Typical flakes from the campsite debris are shown in Figs. 2:5,6,7,9 and 3:2,3,5.

We should bear in mind that this lot represents material which the discoverers (who were geologists, it is true—not archaeologists) did not consider worth sending to Leningrad. Aside from the crude polyhedral burin (Fig. 2:3), which shows similarities with forms from the Lena valley, a conservative eye could see in the remainder only a few retouched flakes or blades, several blanks (some with problematical burin facets), a broken fragment or two, and a quantity of workshop flakes—certainly nothing either particularly diagnostic or significant.

There is no reason to question the assumption that the cache is contemporary with this campsite—although the third site on the saddle is probably much later. Okladnikov views the cache and its contents as a craftsman's hoard of blanks for subsequent tool making as needed. The flint, as we have noted, is foreign to the locality, and the view is in accord with known practices in this part of the world. Satapin and Dikov, however, see these bifacial objects as finished tools. On the basis of their study of the remaining 33 specimens in the Anadyr museum, they have classified the latter into six types. The first type (Fig. 5) is regarded as being spear points and meat knives on the basis of symmetrical leaf-shaped form and pointed end (nos. 3 and 4 have lost their tips). The second type they describe as scraper-knives with thin, wide, rounded ends; these could be used as end scrapers, side scrapers, or cutting tools, but not as points. Fig. 6:1 and 2 are especially typical; 3 and 4 are variants. Type three (Fig. 7): knives or side scrapers with two longitudinal working edges formed by bifacial retouch and wide ends (one formed in each case by a transverse blow). Type four (Fig. 8): single-edged knives or *skreblo* with a flat straight back formed by a single longitudinal facet; the latter is retouched in most cases, which to the authors is proof that these objects are purposely fashioned and are not unfinished two-edged points. Type five (Fig. 9): viewed as primarily engraving tools with cutting points and blunted backs—although many could serve other functions as well. Type six (Fig. 10): labelled as "burin-like instruments" from their characteristic facets, but suitable for all-purpose tools.

We are illustrating 31 of these specimens—all but two of the Anadyr Museum's collection—so that the reader may judge for himself the validity of any such typology and the propriety of considering these artifacts as finished tools. Okladnikov dismisses them on both counts. Tending to sup-

port his position is the inherent improbability of a hoard of finished implements of such size, whereas accumulations of flint blanks are known from many areas.

As to the age of these Lake El'gytkhyn finds, which on typological grounds have been dated to the late Neolithic and early Bronze period of the Lena valley, Dikov makes the suggestion that human occupation of such a climatically forbidding area as the lake region would most likely have occurred during the climatic optimum.

### *Bibliography*

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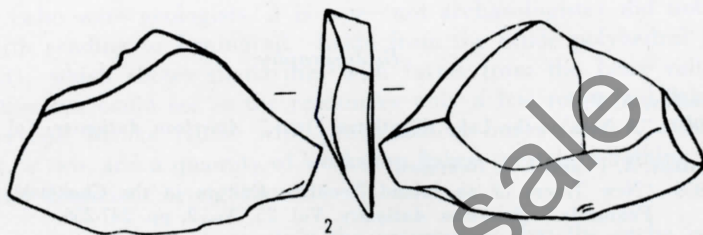
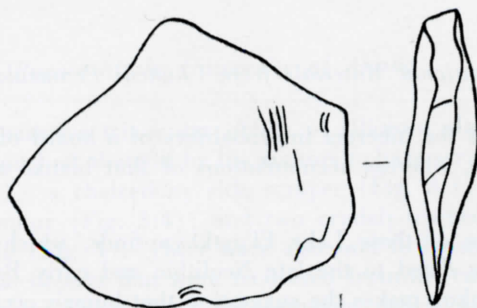


Figure 1.

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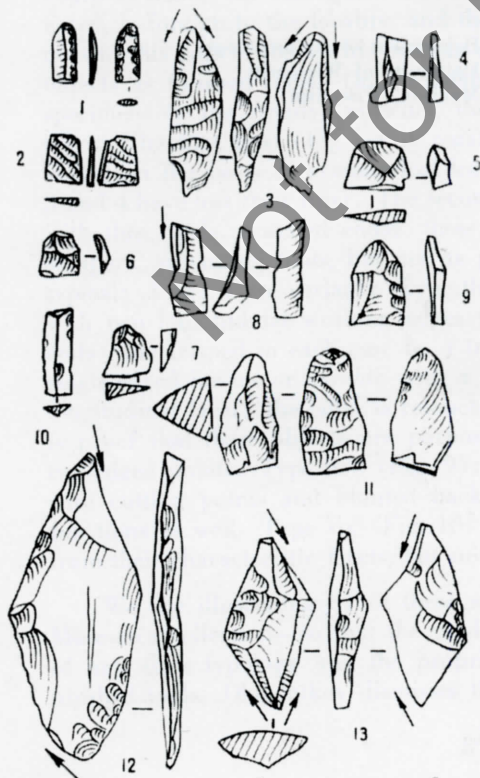


Figure 2.

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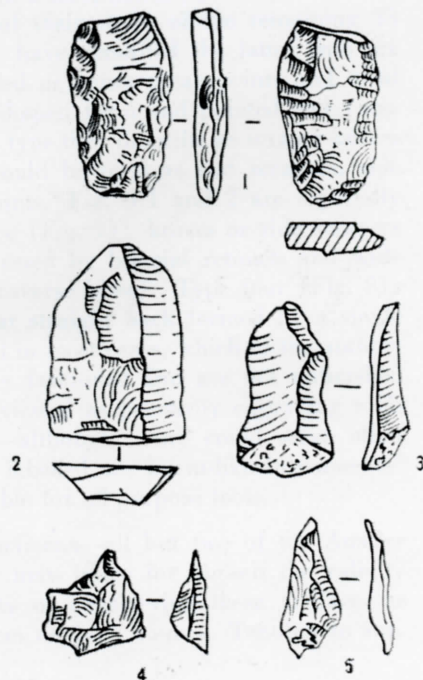


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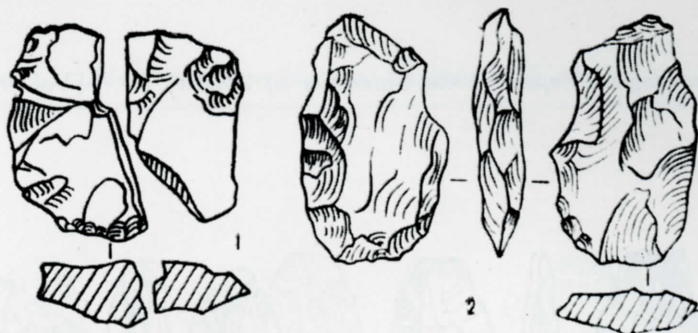


Figure 4.

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Figure 5.

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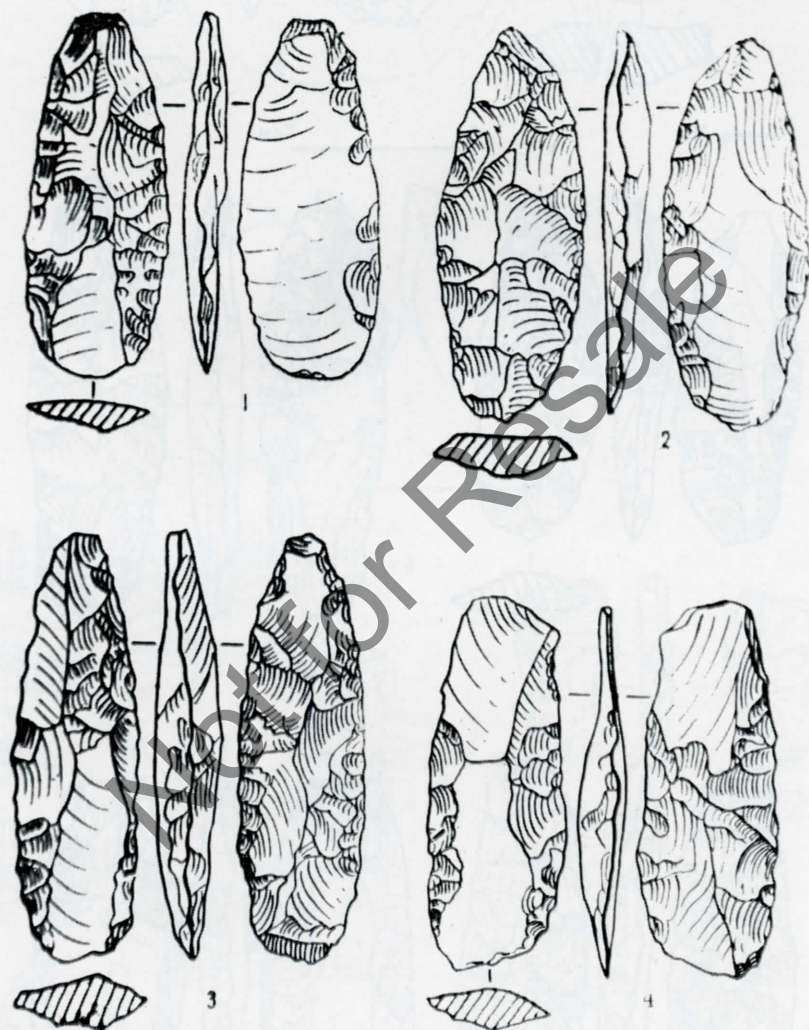


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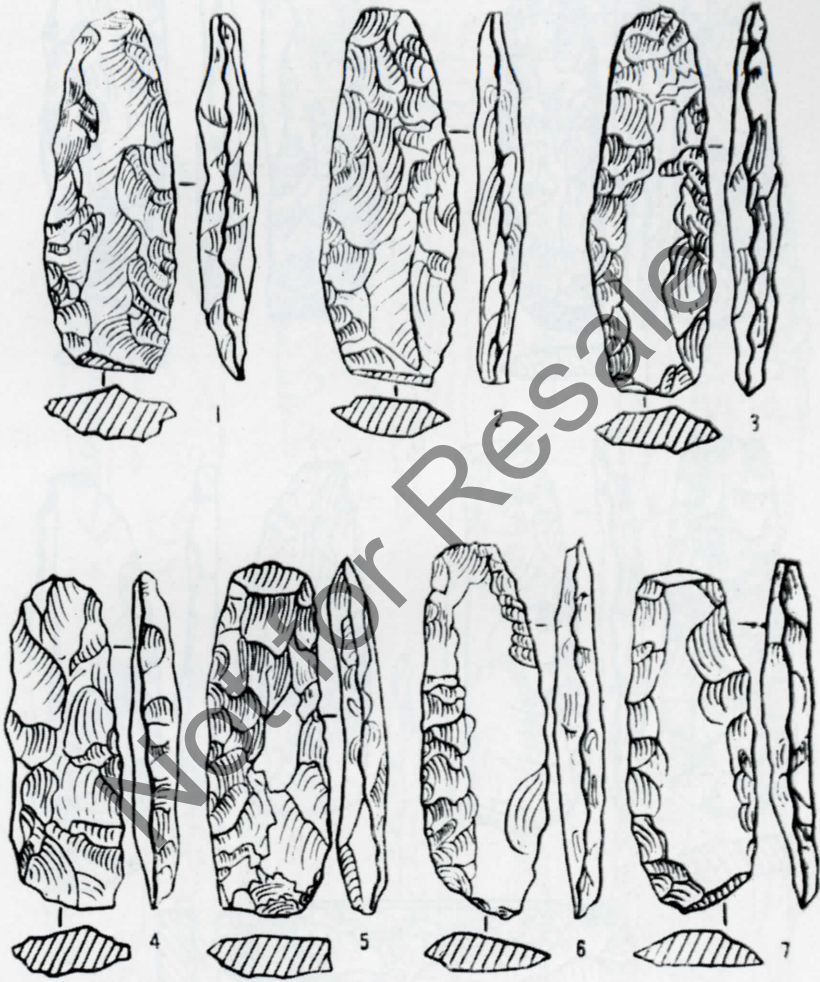


Figure 7.



Figure 8.



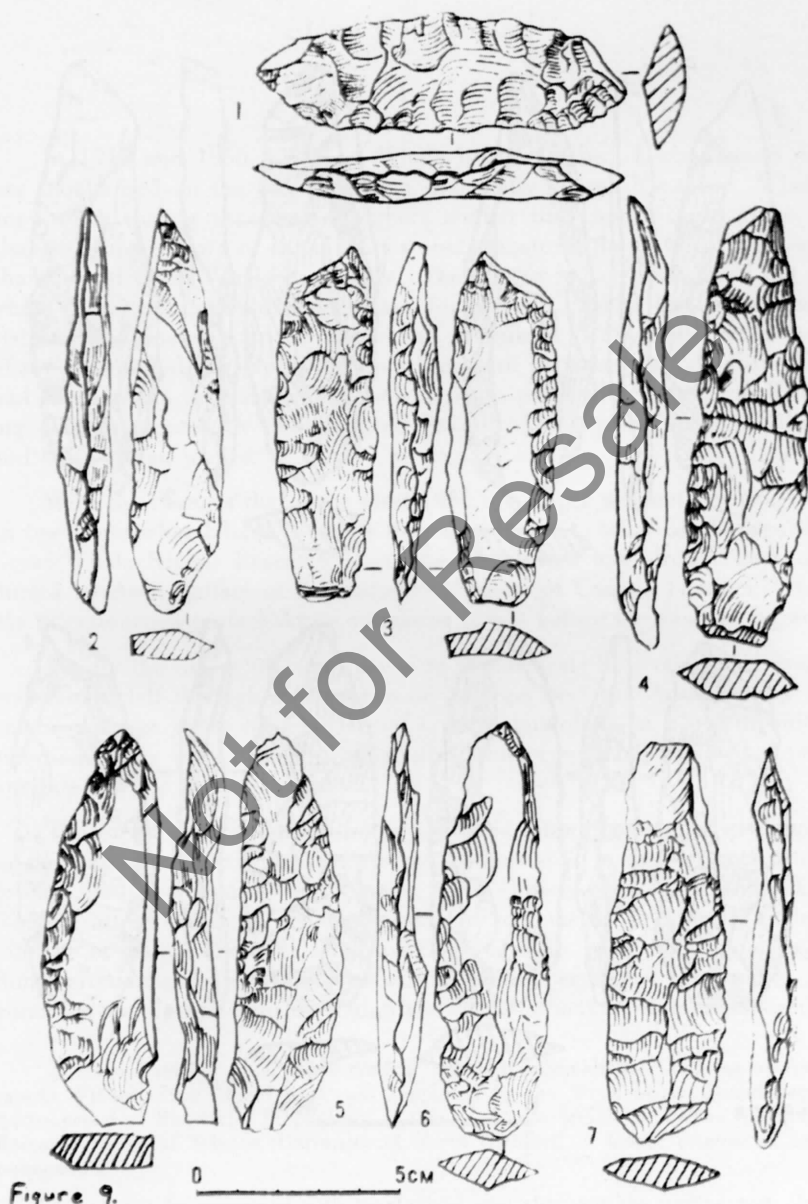


Figure 9.

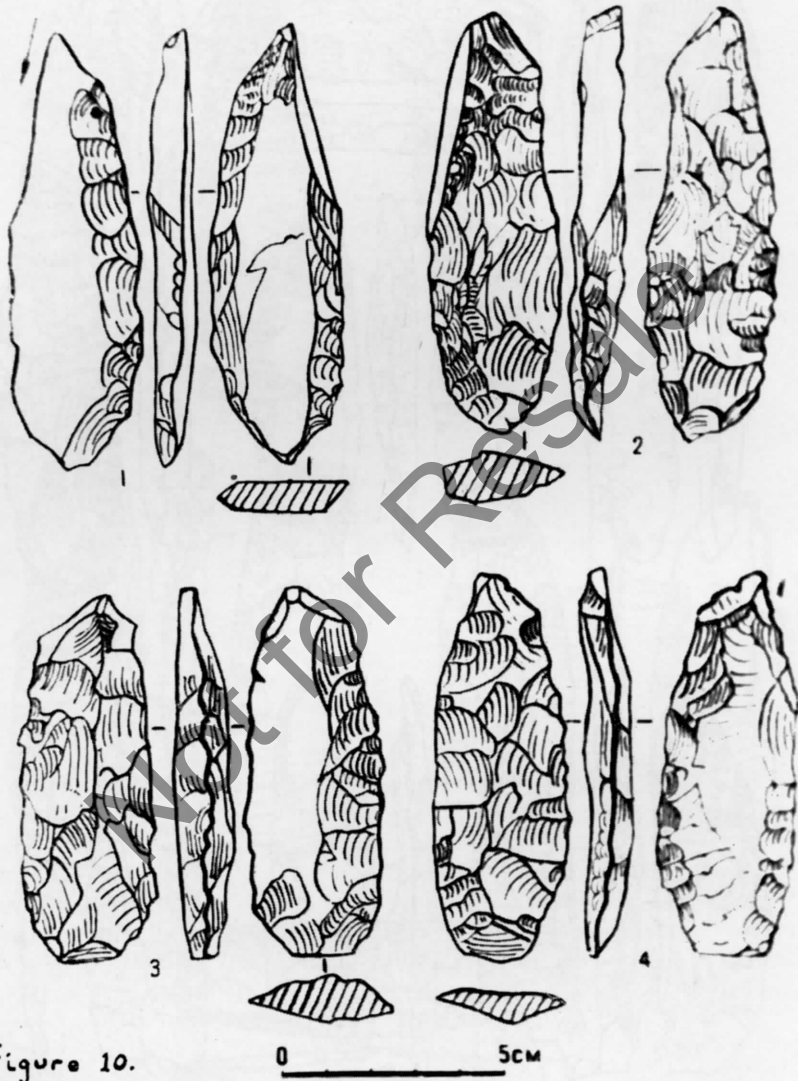


Figure 10.