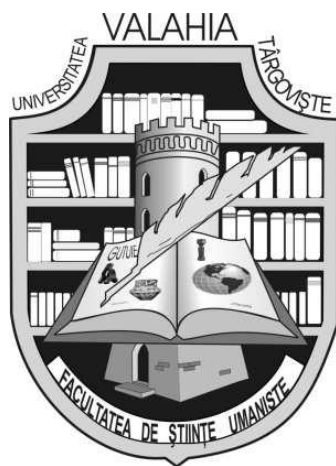


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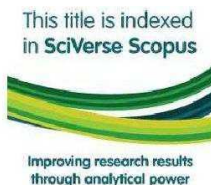
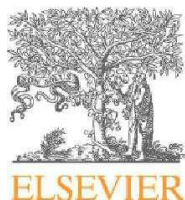
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The specifics of archaeological complex of the site of Krounovka - 23

*Dmitriy Brovko**, *Alexander Mezentsev***, *Alexander Kim****

* Department of registration and protection of objects of the cultural heritage, Government of Kurgan region, Kurgan, Russian Federation.

** Suворov's cadet military college, Ussuriysk, Russian Federation.

*** Vladivostok State University of Economics and Service, Institute of Law, Department of International Relations and Law, t. Vladivostok, Gogol st. 41, Russian Federation; e-mail: kimaa9@gmail.com.

Abstract. Krounovka - 23 can be considered as a unique site in Primorye region of the Russian Far East. This site belonged to Krounovskaya culture, and Soviet and Russian scholars believe that this culture played a significant role in development of the ancient and medieval Far East. Usually archaeologists considered the *kang* system and the different kinds of ceramics as high point of industry of this culture. However, results of the excavation of Krounovka - 23 demonstrated this view was not correct, and that Far Eastern specialists underestimated the industrial level of the Krounovskaya culture. In spite of this, Krounovka - 23 remains as little-known site in the East Asian region. The goal of this article is to discuss about significance of the Krounovka - 23 site and artifacts recovered from this site.

Keywords: Archaeology, history, East Asia, Far East, Krounovskaya culture.

The area of Krounovka River has a large number of the interesting archaeological sites from the different historical periods – from Neolithic settlements to towns of the Jurchen period. This territory is a part of Ussuriysk district of Primorye region (the south part of Russian Far East).

Archaeological studies in this region were started in the 1890s. F. F. Busse, the chairman of the Society for the Study of the Amur Region, was foremost among Russian specialists, who surveyed sites near Ussuriysk at the end of the nineteenth century. His expeditions found many sites from the Bohai and Jurchen periods in the modern Primorye region (F. F. Busse 1888; F. F. Busse, L. A. Kropotkin, 1908).

From 1911 to 1928, another member of the Society for the Study of the Amur Region, the Russian officer A. Z. Fyodorov, excavated a large number of archaeological sites near Ussuriysk (A. Z. Fyodorov 1916); however, his research was not widely circulated. In the period from Stalin's rise to

the Second World War, Russian specialists did not research archaeological sites in modern Primorye region. Fyodorov was executed during the Stalinist purges of the 1930s. Many specialists from Primorye region were arrested and stayed in prisons during for many years or were executed. Political pressure in this period did not allow Soviet scholars to intensively research the distant past of the Far Eastern region. This situation continued until the period 1950 – 1990s. From this time many Soviet and Russian archaeologists (A. M. Kuznetsov, V. E. Medvedev, A. P. Okladnikov, E. V. Shavkunov, V. I. Boldin, A. L. Mezentsev etc.) surveyed and excavated many archaeological sites near Ussuriysk (T. A. Vasil'eva 1989, 1990; A. Kim 2013). The results of their field works were very important for understanding the past of the region. Specialists found a large group of sites from Krounovka archaeological culture to the modern (twentieth century) period. There are many different kinds of sites in this group, from cemeteries to large towns

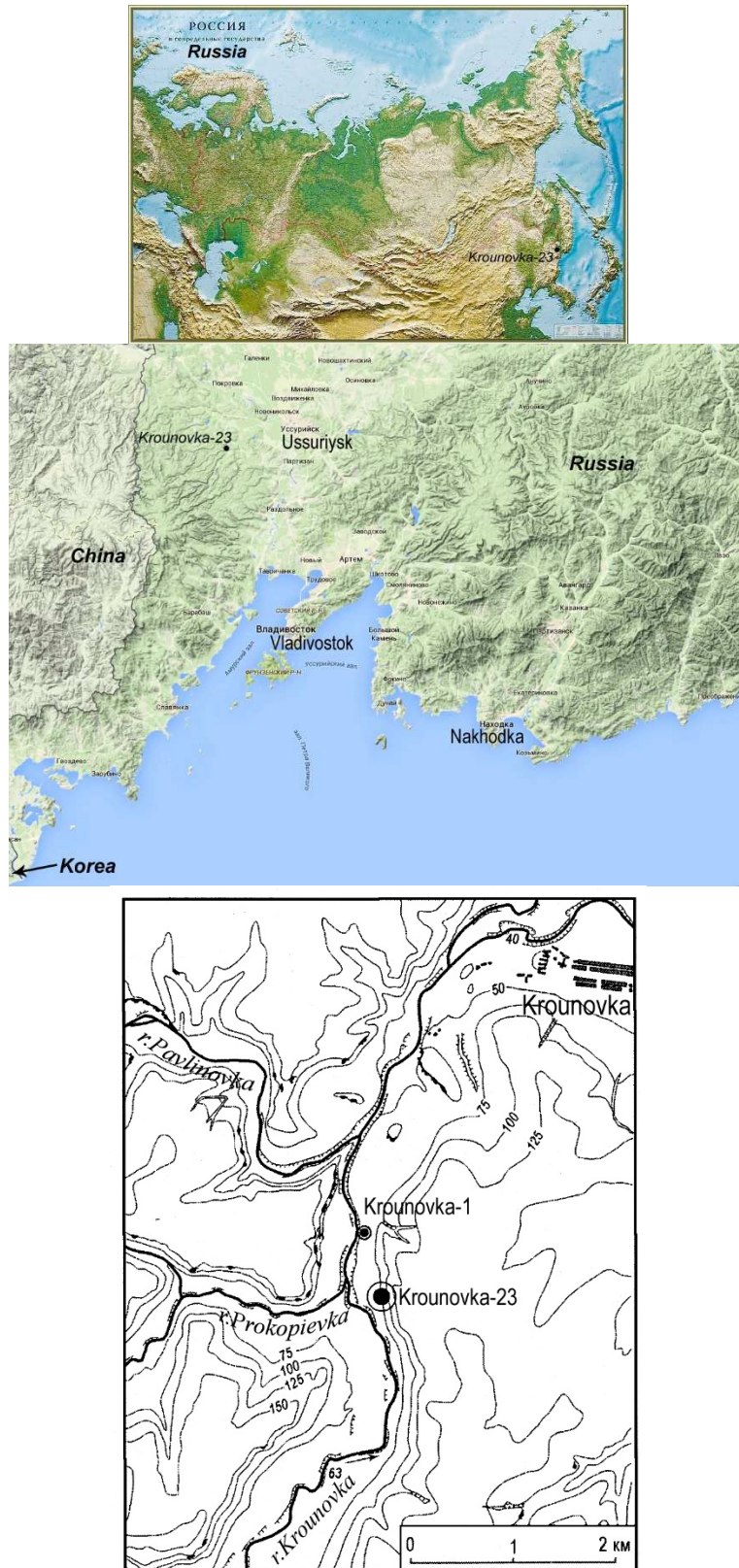


Fig. 1 – Location of Krounovka -23 site

such as the Krasnoiarovskoe and Zapadno-Ussuriyskoe sites (Jurchen period) and temples of Krounovka (Bohai period).

It is clear that the Ussuriysk district is an interesting and important place for research from an archaeological and historical point of the view.

Soviet specialists began to study group of Krounovka sites from 1956 - when archaeologists found site Krounovka - 1 and temple Kopyto. Field expeditions actively researched many sites of this group over a long period of time. At the present time, Russian scholars have discovered nearly 50 sites in what is called the Krounovka group; the sites vary from ancient to medieval periods.

Clearly, many sites from them are very interesting, but Krounovka - 23 can be considered as the unique settlement for ancient period in this district. Russian scholars believe that this site can be considered as the most interesting geo-archaeological complex too. Krounovka -23 was excavated by Russian specialists in 1990 – 2000s.

Krounovka - 23 is situated near Krounovka River, 300 meters from Krounovka - 1 site in southeastern direction (Fig. 1, 2). This site is located in two places: in the 13 - meters and 5 - meters terraces of the plateau slope, which is situated on the right side of the valley of the Krounovka River. The height of plateau is nearly 10 meters.

This site was found by inhabitants of Krounovka village in the 1990s, when they wanted to use land for private purposes. They paid attention to the lowered air temperature amongst the rock and found ceramic artifacts. After this, specialists from the Russian Academy of Sciences arrived in Krounovka and identified this place as a potential archaeological site. Thereafter, one of co-chairs of 'Rezerv' (club of young archaeologists from Ussuriysk city), Dmitriy Vital'evich Brovko (Дмитрий Витальевич Бровко), with group of the students from high schools from the same city began to excavate the site. In the process of the excavation of Krounovka - 23, Russian archaeologists invited different specialists from other, non-archaeological fields, for scientific expertise because artifacts and information from this site needed to be subjected to analysis by specialists of the some kinds of the natural science. This will be considered in more detail below.

In the 13 - meters terrace the Russian archaeologists found hollow of the sub squared

form, which had dimensions of 1, 3 m by 2, 2 m, and a depth of 0, 4 m (Fig. 3). In the process of field research of this place, scholars found a small number of artifacts, which can be considered as materials from the Yankovskaya and Krounovskaya cultures. So, as we can see, the Krounovka - 23 site can be considered as place for two cultures at this time. Therefore, we believe that must give some information about these archaeological cultures.

Yankovskaya culture existed for around four centuries, during the period of 9 - 5th centuries BC (A. P. Okladnikov, 1959; A. P. Okladnikov, A. P. Derevianko, 1973). Sites of this culture were found only in the south areas of modern Primorye region of the Russian Far East. As a rule, Yankovskaya settlements were located near the sea coast or big rivers. This culture was named by M. I. Yankovskij - Russian scholar, who was the first person, interested to study of past of Primorye region and found first site of this culture. According to information retrieved from excavated archaeological sources, people from the Yankovskaya culture lived in semi-dugout dwellings. Russian scholars have contrasting opinions regarding the specifics of this culture - some specialists believe that Yankovskaya culture belonged to the Bronze Age, but other scholars to the Iron Age. On the one hand, persons from this culture used some iron tools, and were familiar with agriculture and cattle-breeding. On the other hand, Yankovskaya settlement material culture was dominated by stone tools, and inhabitants paid more attention to hunting and other similar kinds of human activity. Russian archaeologists found a number of the bronze artifacts in these sites, but these tools are few and came from other regions. Many stone tools from the sites were imitations of bronze instruments - probably, persons of Yankovskaya culture did not have bronze (the same situation can be observed in recent days in Primorye region - Russian scholars could not find bronze), but valued such goods very highly.

Inhabitants of Yankovskaya settlements very actively produced some kinds of ceramics. Russian archaeologists found in the sites of this culture a number of artifacts composed of bone materials. Near some settlements of this culture, located on the sea coast, Russian specialists found a large number of remains from shell mollusks. Therefore, Yankovskaya culture was subsequently dubbed a

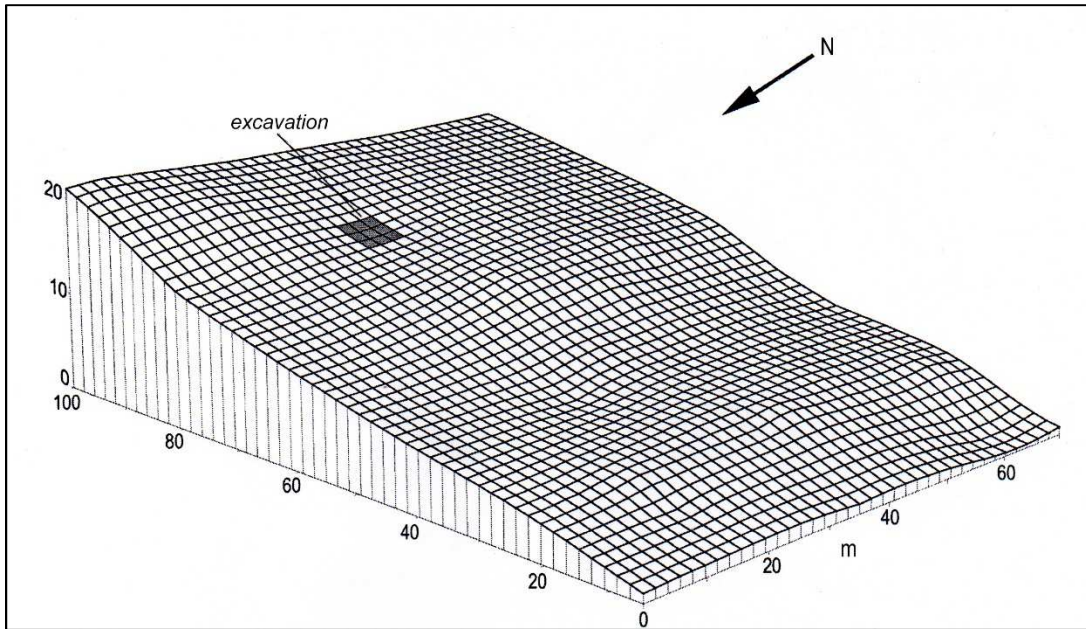


Fig. 2 - Krounovka -23 site: location in the site of the excavation and the surface of the ancient settlement

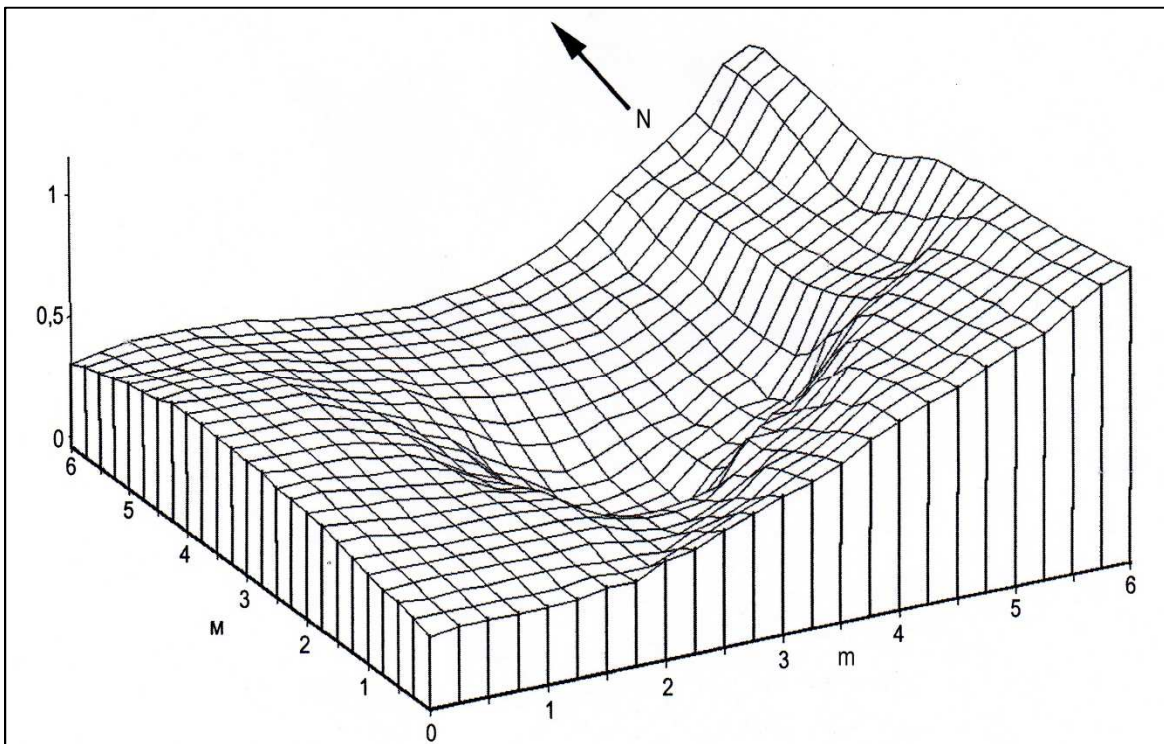


Fig. 3 - Fig. 2 - Krounovka -23 site: location in the site of excavation

“culture of shell heaps”. Some Russian scholars believe that people of this culture could have been known in Chinese annals as the Sushen people (in Korean – 숙신, in Chinese - 肅慎, in Russian - Сусэни) or Поу (D. L. Brodianskij 1987).

Krounovskaya culture existed in the south part of the Russian Far East from the 8th century BC until the 3rd century AD (Z. A. Kovaleva, S. V. Plohih 2002; A. P. Okladnikov 1959; A. P. Okladnikov, A. P. Derevianko 1973). This culture was named by the village of Krounovka, Ussuriysk district, Primorye region. Soviet archaeologists

found the first site of this culture near Krounovka village. Russian scholars do not have one opinion about the origins of this culture. Discussion about this culture continues to the present day. Some scholars believe that people from Krounovskaya culture had their origins in Yankovskaya settlements. Other specialists think that these people arrived in Primorye region from other areas. However, other Russian archaeologists content that the Krounovskaya culture was established near Hanka Lake and had domestic origins.

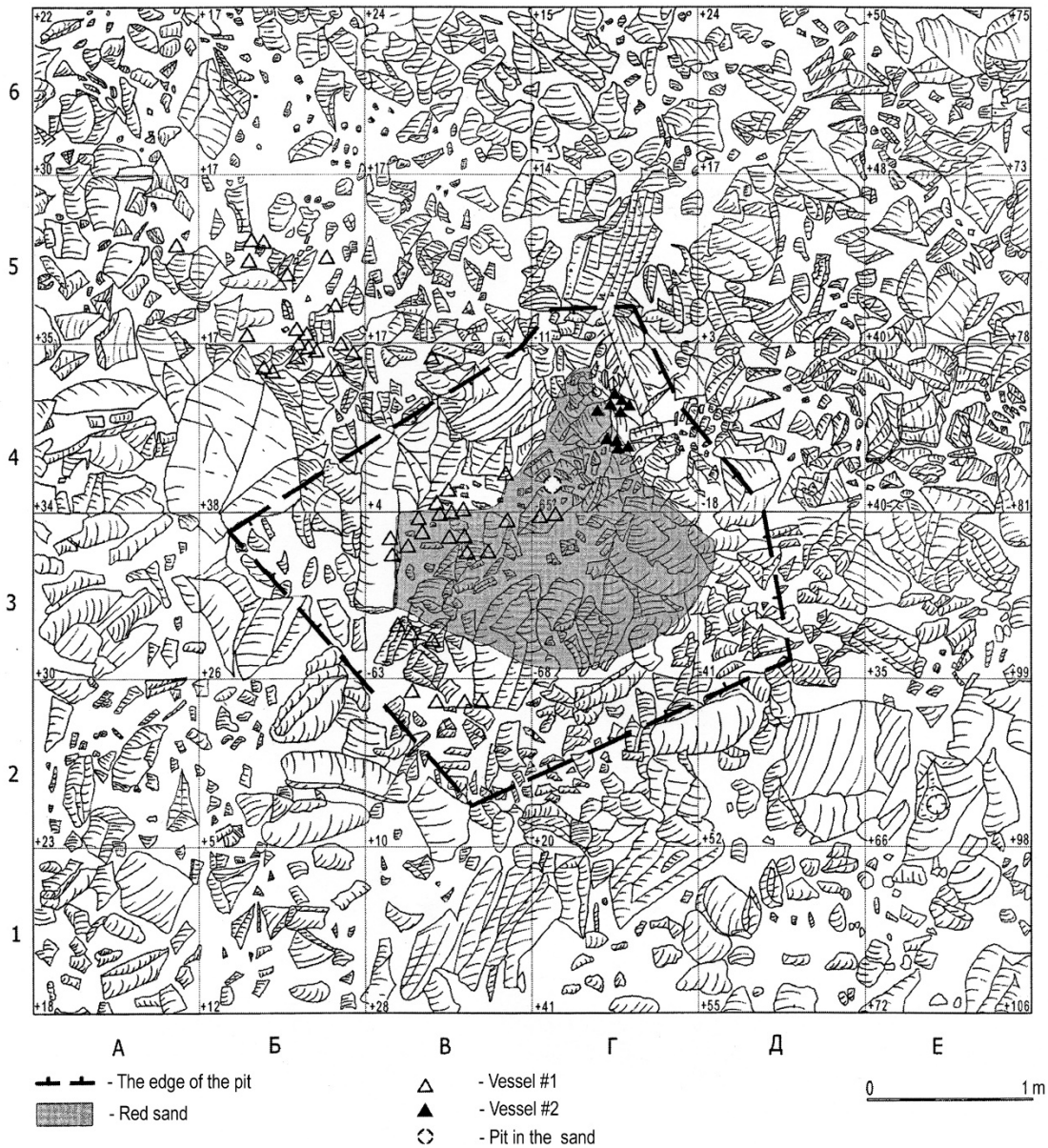


Fig. 4 - Plan of excavation at Krounovka-23 site.

This culture had settlements not only in Russian territory (the south part of Russian Far East), but in areas of what is now North Korea and Northeastern China as well. People from this culture started to use *kang*, a heating system, which is located under the floor. The *Kang* system is very popular in the East Asia and is still used. Russian archaeologists found in the sites of Krounovskaya culture a small number of bronze tools, but we can see that Krounovka people used iron tools more than inhabitants from Yankovskaya culture. Moreover, they used bone tools, but these artifacts were better than Yankovskaya bone artifacts. Krounovskaya people produced a large number of the different kinds of the ceramics. Agriculture and cattle-breeding played an important role in this society.

Scholars from Russia, China and Korea have discussed about the ethnic origin of people from Krounovskaya culture. Some specialists believe that these people were called as Woju (in Chinese - 沃沮, in Korean - 옥저, in Russian - Воцзюй); probably, Woju from Primorye region belonged to North Woju. As is known, Woju divided in Eastern Woju and North Woju) in Chinese annals. But other scholars speculate that the people of Krounovskoe culture belonged to another ethnic group, known in the Chinese annals as Ilou (in Chinese - 挹婁, in Korean - 음루, in Russian - илоу (A. P. Okladnikov 1959; A. P. Okladnikov, A. P. Derevianko 1973).

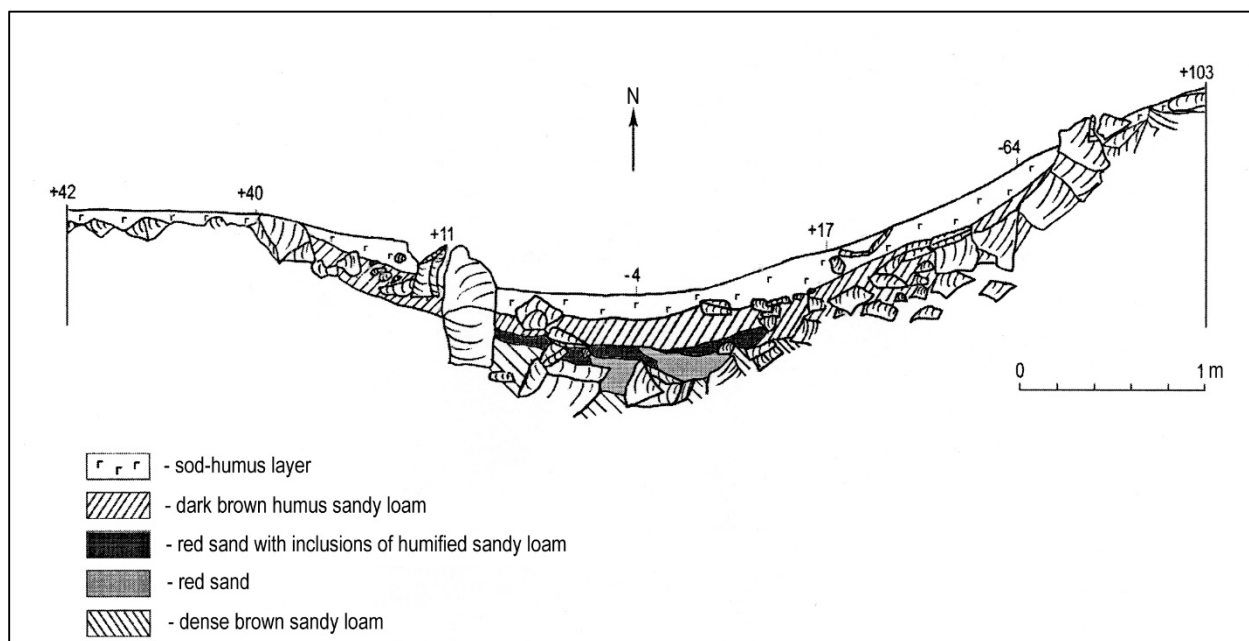


Fig. 5 - Stratigraphic section along line 4-A-E of excavation at Krounovka-23

People from this culture did not have towns, an administrative system, organized industry or army. A large number of the settlements have been excavated, and the results suggest that these people lived in tribes or relative clans in settlements.

Russian specialists very actively excavated area of hollow and neighboring places in Krounovka - 23. As result of fieldwork, we received following pictures (Fig. 4, 5). We pay attention to interesting construction, which indicated in the figures.

The ditch of the construction has a stone base.

Clearly, borders of the ditch were limited by big stones. A part of this stone construction was built by human - probably, inhabitants of the site. In the process of fieldwork, the Russian scholars excavated five layers of stone in the ditch. The stones from high and middle layers in this place indicated as items, which located in ditch after the built of construction and without of activity by human (probably, after destruction of the settlement). It had traces of the corrosion and exfoliation. However, stones of the floor of the construction did not have the same traces. Clearly,

these stones received some processing from human. However, we can see in this floor some places with sand, sometimes with trace of the soot and small fragments of charcoal. Probably, it was the result of fire. However, there are no traces of construction of the hearth or *kang*. Thus, it seems that the fire caused the destruction of this complex and settlement.

Usually, Russian archaeologists have found a large number of the artifacts in settlements of Krounovskaya culture. However, in Krounovka - 23

a number of tools of the ancient inhabitants were also excavated. Russian specialists found fragments of two vessels (Fig. 6). It is not clear when these vessels were made, but the method of the production of the both vessels was very similar to ceramics, which were produced by people from Krounovka culture. Moreover, we can see analogs to ceramics from this culture. According to the identification of the ceramic materials, we can consider Krounovka - 23 as a site of Krounovka culture.

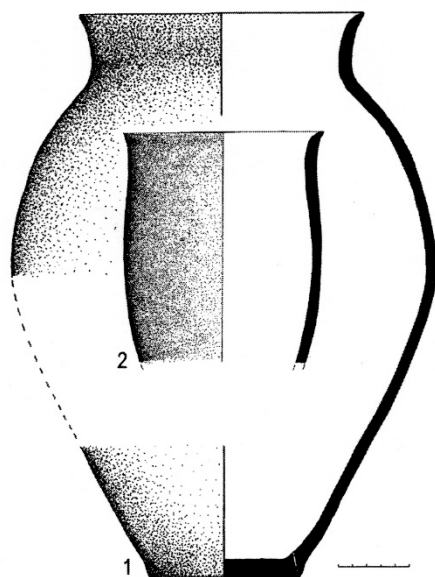


Fig. 6 - The two vessels discovered in site.

In process of the reconstruction, we can surmise that this construction had depth minimum of 0,7 - 1 meter, square of the ditch was minimum of 4 square meters. All corners of this construction were directed to four sides - north, west, east and south. The entrance in construction was from north direction. The floor was covered by yellow materials; according to results of the chemical analysis of this place, probably, it was a mix of the river silt with sand.

In the process of consideration of the materials on the floor of stone construction, the large number of organic traces and fragments of the charcoal in the corners were found. Analysis of the charcoal gave information that part of the construction was built from wood. Probably, roof and parts of the walls were wooden. Organic traces belonged to kinds of the food – meat, fish and products of the agriculture. Therefore, it can be surmised that this

place was a food storehouse. However, the most interesting results were received from analysis of the temperature's situation in this object*. In the process of excavation of Krounovka - 23 in 1999 temperature in the floor of this construction was checked every day four times (morning, afternoon, evening and the night) in June and July. However, temperature was stable ± 2 Celsius degrees. This phenomenon is most interesting and was mirrored by checks of temperature in this place during 3 months – from June to August at period of 2000 - 2004. So, temperature's regime was considered during every summer of the each six years of the observation in situations when weather in the district was not stable. In spite of this, temperature in the floor of construction does not changed ± 2 Celsius degrees. Thus, as we can see, temperature remained stable in the hot summer months. Moreover, temperature in the construction did not

changed in rainy and cold periods of the summer. Accordingly, we can consider useful of this construction for ancient people - in spite of the destruction of the wooden part of the complex, stone base holds cold temperature during summer period of the 2000 years.

Of course, we cannot check temperature in this complex in the winter, because we did not have possibility for this monitoring, but we believe that it was not important for understanding of the functions of this construction; certainly, in the winter periods ancient people did not need in this place for preservation of the food. Clearly, we cannot estimate the temperatures in this place 2000 years ago. Mr. Brovko considered temperature regime + 2 degree as most probable temperature for this complex at the time of existing of Krounovka - 23. However, we must considered another situation - as we can see, in this complex were found a large number of the traces of the wood. Certainly, part of the construction was wooden. Clearly, it was influenced the circulation of the air and changed temperatures inside the complex. Moreover, + 2 degrees is not enough for the preservation of food for extended periods of time. In addition, according to archaeological information from this site, the place appears to have been used for the storage and preservation of food.

Clearly, the inhabitants of this settlement very effectively used some geographical specifics of area.

During four years, we intensive researched of the specifics of this construction and can surmise about geographic conditions of the site. This site situated in the place, which has interesting geomorphological conditions. We found base of stone talus (width near 30 - 40 meters). Probably, this talus blocked by *kurumnik* (scattering of big stones, it was origin from Pleistocene period) and finally changed morphology of the second terrace of the site. As results of the analysis of the micro-relief (Fig. 2) and additional research, we can see the traces of *kurumnik* in the lower 5 - meters terrace. The trace of *kurumnik* in this site was near 10 meters in width, it is located directly under excavated complex. The some cavities remained among big stones and in these places water and air can be located during a long time. After fall rains water moved in the depth of these cavities and can be frozen in late fall period at short period. Moreover, flood of the water was blocked by stones and other

natural materials. Clearly, this water thawing very slowly it's gave influence to air. In the stones of talus we can see traces of the ice. As result, this place contained a cold temperature during summer. We can guess that wooden part of the complex gave important influence for this situation and stopped process of the warming. Clearly, on the base of results of the current research, we can see that stone construction can preserve cold temperature and it was enough for food. Clearly, wooden construction had functions for support cold condition in this place.

In the process of research of this site we have another question about situation with this settlement. Clearly, this settlement was not large, but inhabitants of this place used this stone-wooden construction for food. Therefore, we consider two variants for understanding this settlement. First - it was inhabited place for people from Krounovskaya culture. But we cannot understand how a small number of people can build so complicated complex. Second - it was temporal settlement of the ancient human only for summer period. However, this ancient refrigerator-like storage facility was too small to be used by a large number of users. Probably, it was only one of many places for the preservation of food, but we can't find other similar refrigerators. Of course, they could have been destroyed by human or natural conditions. But we believe that field research of neighboring areas can be useful for understanding of the local type of Krounovskaya culture because we can find further information.

So, as we can see, inhabitants (or users) of Krounovka - 23 well knew the specifics of this place and made use of them. Moreover, they improved construction and built the some wooden parts of the complex, probably, for control the circulation of the air and further maintain of the cold temperature. Therefore, this construction became ancient analog of the refrigerator. We do not have exact information about the time the complex's construction nor when it was used. Nevertheless, we can consider this refrigerator as very useful construction for inhabitants of the Krounovskaya settlement. However, traditions of the using geographical specifics of the relief for establishment natural refrigerators did not used by other people from same culture - Russian scholars excavated many sites of the Krounovskaya culture in Primorye region, but could not find other similar complexes.

Moreover, this tradition did not leave traces in cultures of the medieval period of the Primorye region, i.e. the Mohe, Bohai and Jurchen.

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