

# Stages of settlement in South Primorye (based on materials of Petrovskiy archaeological microdistrict)

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The article analyses the monuments of Petrovskiy archaeological microdistrict which allow defining the stages of settlement and development of Primorye. The Early Metal Age is presented by Petrovka-1 settlement and Petrovka-2, 3, 4, 9 necropoleis. The barrows had stone steles and trenches. The analysis of ceramics and shoulder hoes as well as stratigraphical and planigraphical observations make it possible to relate the monument to the lidovsko-yankovskiy type and to date it to the First century BC. The barrow № 4 of Petrovka-9 necropolis with the fragments of earthen ware of the 10th—12th centuries belongs to the Middle Ages. The late Middle Ages are presented by Petrovka-5, 7, 8. Petrovka-5 is a single-cell furnace for ceramics burning related to the post-state period of the Far Eastern Middle Ages. Ethnographical complex is presented by two monuments: “Under millstone” and Petrovka-6 — their material corresponds to the end of the 19th century.

Petrovskiy archaeological microdistrict makes it possible to conclude that this territory was settled four times by different ethnicities (Early Metal, the end of the First century BC, the Middle Ages, the First century AD, the late Middle Ages, ethnographic time). Stone barrows of the Early Metal Age were most likely built by paleo Asiatic tribes (Jankowski’s culture) who adopted this type of funeral constructions from Siberian and Central Asian tribes; such tradition was widely spread in archaeological cultures of Androno-Karasukskiy and Scythian circle. The mediaeval barrow corresponds to the materials of Monastyrka-3 necropolis left by the representatives of the Mokhesk culture (the Manchu-Tungus people) who lost pottery, ceramic ware. Residential construction of the 19th century was probably used by the Manchu-Tungus peoples in winter during hunting.

**Keywords:** Primorye, periodization, Petrovskiy archaeological sub-region, Early Metal Epoch, Yankovski culture, Mediaeval Epoch, Ethnographical assemblage.

### **Этапы заселения южного Приморья (по материалам Петровского археологического микрорайона).**

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В статье анализируются памятники Петровского археологического микрорайона, позволяющие установить этапы заселения и освоения территории Приморья. Эпоха раннего металла представлена поселением Петровка-1 и курганными некрополями Петровка-2, 3, 4, 9. Курганы имели каменные стелы и ровики. Анализ керамики и плечиковых мотыг, а также стратиграфические и планиграфические наблюдения позволяют отнести памятник к лидовско-янковскому типу и датировать I тыс. до н.э. К эпохе средневековья относится курган № 4 некрополя Петровка-9, в котором обнаружены фрагменты сероглиняной круговой посуды X—XII вв. К позднему средневековью — памятники Петровка-5, 7, 8. Петровка-5 — это однокамерная печь для обжига керамики, относящаяся к постгосударственному периоду дальневосточного средневековья. Этнографический комплекс представляют два памятника: «Под жёрновом» и Петровка-6, — их материал соответствует концу XIX в.

Петровский археологический микрорайон позволяет заключить, что данная территория заселялась четыре раза (ранний металл, конец I тыс. до н.э.; средневековье, I тыс. н.э.; позднее средневековье; этнографическое время) разными этносами. Каменные курганы эпохи раннего металла, вероятно всего, возводились палеоазиатскими племенами (янковская культура), замствовавшими данный тип погребальных сооружений от сибирских и центральноазиатских племён, у которых подобная традиция широко распространена в археологических культурах андропо-карасукского и скифского круга. Средневековый курган соответствует материалам некрополя Монастырка-3, оставленного носителями мохэской культуры (тунгусо-маньчжурами). Конструкционные особенности позднесредневековой гончарной печи свидетельствуют о её принадлежности китайской традиции, скорее всего, печь построили и использовали пришлые китайские ремесленники, поставившие аборигенному населению (тунгусо-маньчжурам), утратившему гончарство, керамические изделия. Жилая постройка XIX в. использовалась, вероятно, местными тунгусо-маньчжурами зимой во время охоты.

**Ключевые слова:** Приморье, периодизация, Петровский археологический микрорайон, эпоха раннего металла, янковская культура, средневековье, этнографические контакты.

The course of inhabiting the territory of Russian Maritime district (Primorye) in the ancient past is one of the crucial exploratory problems. Despite rather long-lasting archaeological activity in the region, this problem remains far from being solved. The general foundation for the Primorye's regional periodization was established back in 1950s by A.P. Okladnikov whose scope included sites dated from Upper Paleolithic to Middle Ages [8, p 259]. Peopling of the territory went erratically. No ancient or mediaeval archaeological culture ever happened to occupy every corner of the area, and not many of them coexisted, as our dedicated research projects have shown in an array of regions [4, pp. 3–140; 3, pp. 103–107; 6, pp. 19–24; 2, pp. 120–142; 5, pp. 44–49; 7, pp. 9–34; 1, pp. 9–58]. We must note that the late Mediaeval and New-Time periods have remained archaeologically unexplored and undocumented. Who, if ever, inhabited this territory remains a question without an answer. In this article the authors present an overview of the sites found in Petrovski archaeological sub-region (micro-region), with the hope that it is now possible to find more or less viable answer to the mentioned question, and to start working on relevant periodization.

## GEOGRAPHY

Petrovski archaeological micro-region covers a compact area in the middle reaches of river Petrovka, taking up space between the points located 6.5–10.5 km southeast of Petrovka village's center and 4.0–8.0 km west-northwest of Molenny Mys village. Petrovka river headwaters are to be found in the western ridges of Livadiiski mountain range, while the estuary meets the Sukhodol haven in the northeastern part of Ussury Bay, east of The Muraviyev-Amurski peninsula, 40 km off of down town Vadivostok city. The area administratively is within Shkotovsky District, Primorsky Krai. The Petrovski is named after Petrovka river (designated "river Shituhe" on some older maps) (fig. 1).

While exploring the territory in 1999–2001, V.I. Dyakov and N.B. Leonova discovered nine sites dated to different epochs: Early Metal, Middle Ages, Late Middle Ages, and ethnographic times. Together the sites constitute an archaeological micro-unit, as authors have come to believe, permitting to define stages of peopling of this area.

## EARLY METAL EPOCH

Type sites of this time span are Petrovka-1, 2, 3, 4, and 9. Remains of the settlement of **Petrovka-1** are located on the southeastern slope of a hill 7.5 km east-southeast of its namesake village. Cultural layer consisted of grayish-brown light loam soil, 0.20 m of thickness. It contained handmade pottery tied to Yankovski culture dated from the second half of 1st millennium bc.

**Petrovka-2** is a mound site located on the southern slope of the same hill, in the lower part of Alekseyenko ravine. We have discerned nine mounds, five

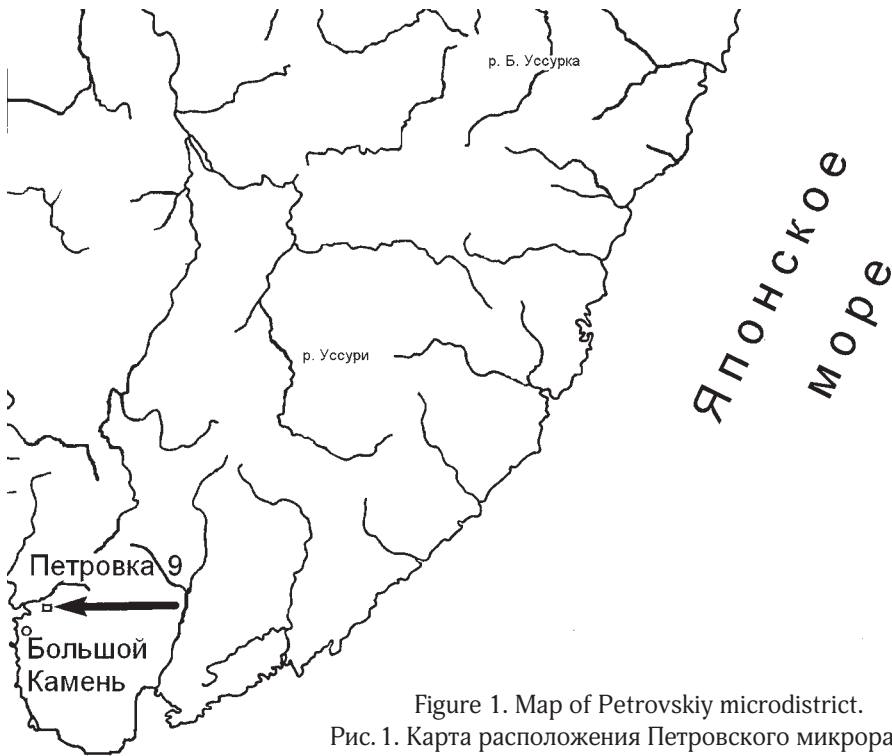


Figure 1. Map of Petrovskiy microdistrict.

Рис. 1. Карта расположения Петровского микрорайона

of which formed a line, while the placement of the rest didn't match any pattern. The mounds were round or oval in shape, and consisted of friable soil. Their sizes varied from  $8.2 \times 6.1 \times 0.3$  to  $4.0 \times 3.6 \times 0.35$  m. We noted a slight central hollow atop each mound sized  $1.6 \times 1.2 \times 0.2$  m surrounded by small ditch 0.5 m wide and 0.1 m deep. Excavated finds included human bones.

**Petrovka-3** is located on the left side of the mouth of Alekseyenko ravine, and contains a single rounded mound with small ditch.

**Petrovka-4** sits on a cape-like protruded slope of the left bank of a creek named Babushkin. This site is a dwelling occupation featuring round-shaped dwelling pits  $6 \times 5$  m in diameter. By samples of handmade pottery, the site is associated with the Yankovski culture, with a date in the 1st millennium bc.

**Petrovka-9** is a spacious mound site located in a floodplain on the left bank of river Petrovka, 9.4–9.9 km from contemporary namesake village.

Excavations on the Petrovka-9 site yielded important inherently unique material interpreted as relating to shrines. Of 17 excavated mounds, 16 are dated to the 1st half of 1st millennium bc. One mound contained data from the Far-Eastern Medievality.

This site does not appear as a single compact unit. Instead, it comprises several grouped or separately located mounds scattered along the floodplain at the left bank of river Petrovka covering the distance of 500 m. 17 mounds are located each on its own elongated oval-shaped raised lot. Those lots are raised very faintly but discernible with their heights nearly 1 m above the adjacent plain (fig. 2, 3, 4, 5).

Figure 2. Barrows of Petrovka-9 monument.  
Рис. 2. Курганы памятника Петровка-9

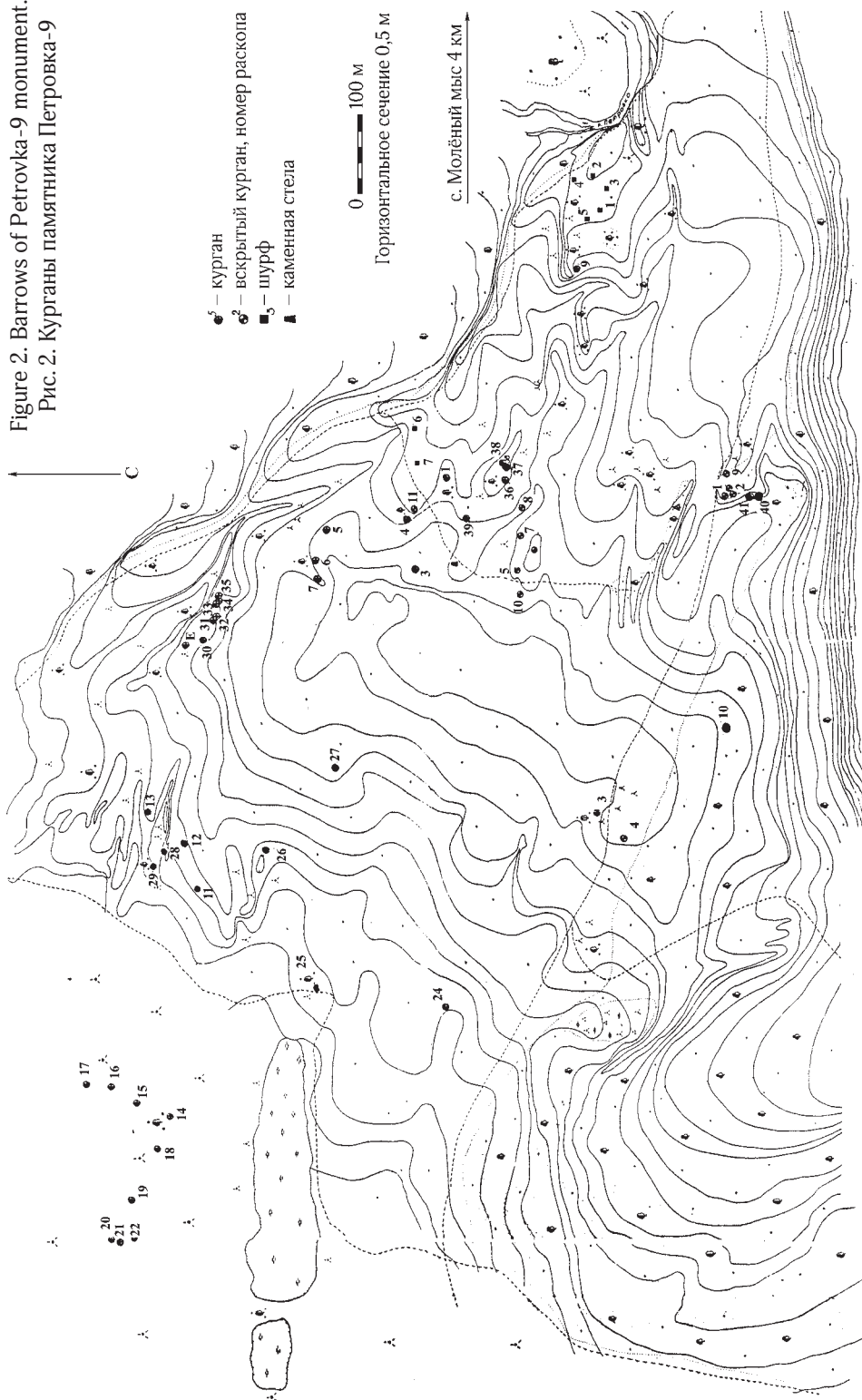




Figure 3. Picture of Petrovka-9 barrow in the Early Metal Age.  
Рис. 3. Фото кургана Петровка-9 эпохи раннего металла

Apparently, the top of each mound was crowned with a stone shaped like obelisk. We found two of such “obelisks” lying under a tree, 7–8 m away from the mounds, where modern locals put them to use as sitting benches. Both of those stones are water-smoothed as they originally come from river deposits. The larger of the two resembles cigar with traces of non-polished hammering on one side. Its length is 0.91 m, width is 0.23 m, and thickness is 0.13 m. The second stone is shorter and wider than the described.

The excavation showed that the creators of the mounds started with preparing the raised lots by cutting their tops off to give them an ellipsoid shape. The outward soil was good for enhancing the peripherals of the lots so as to make the surfaces more flat. That way they created something resembling podiums conspicuously rising above the surroundings. This resemblance is accentuated by surrounding ditches.

The ditches are perfectly oval-shaped in plan; each one surrounds its pedestal. The oval is not closed. At the east side there is a 0.7-m-wide-gap. In cross-section, the ditches are segmented; the depth varies from 0.1 to 0.25 m. The width at the time of construction reached 2.0 and even 2.5 m on the north side while on all other sides it is 0.5–0.7 m. The relative height of the mounds is 0.3–0.4 m, diameter of the base is nearly 6.5 m.

In central part of upper level of each mound the rock pieces made up a dense filling, almost without presence of soil between pieces. The farther away from the center, the looser was the filling (more soil inclusions).

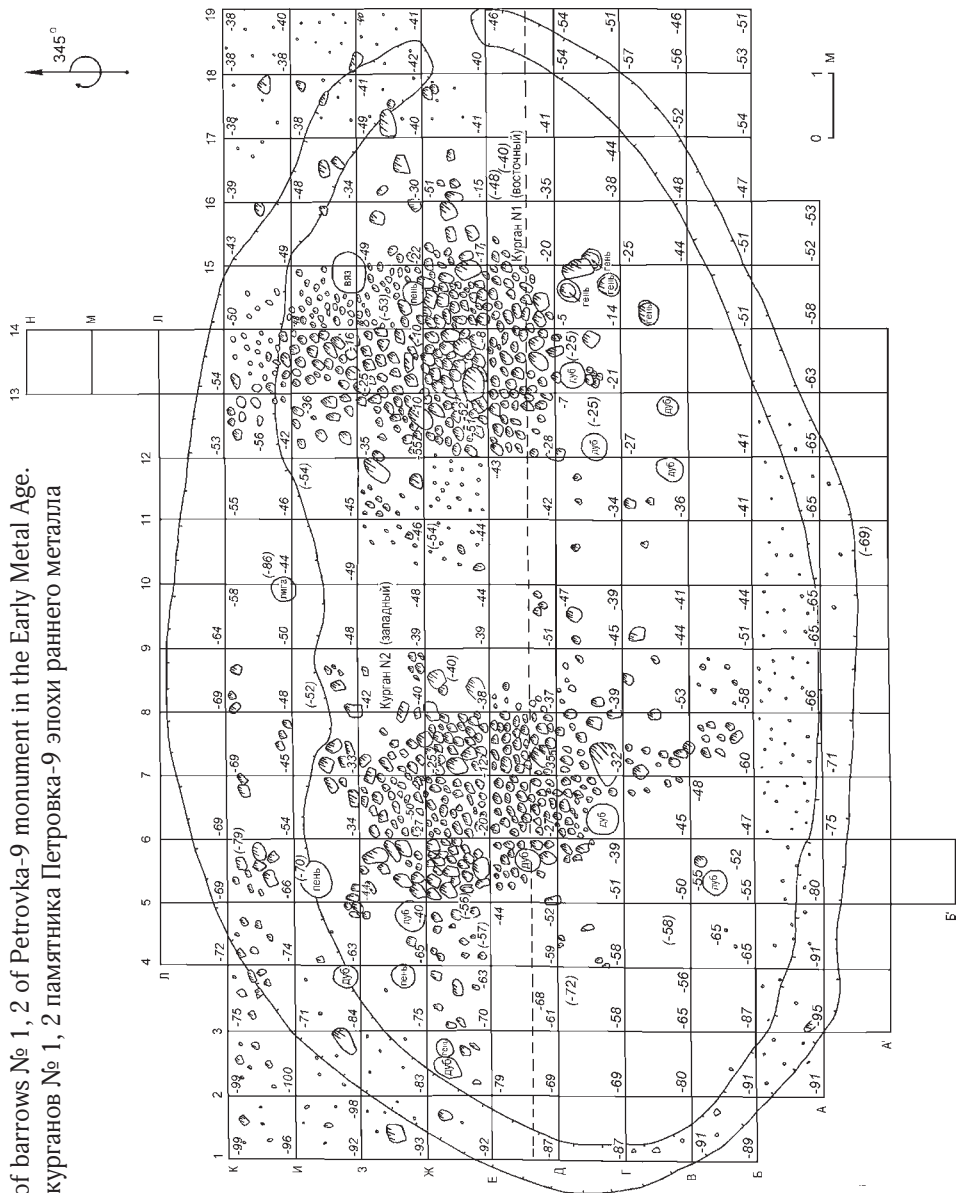


Figure 4. Plan of barrows № 1, 2 of Retrovka-9 monument in the Early Metal Age.  
Рис. 4. План курганов № 1, 2 памятника Петровка-9 эпохи раннего металла

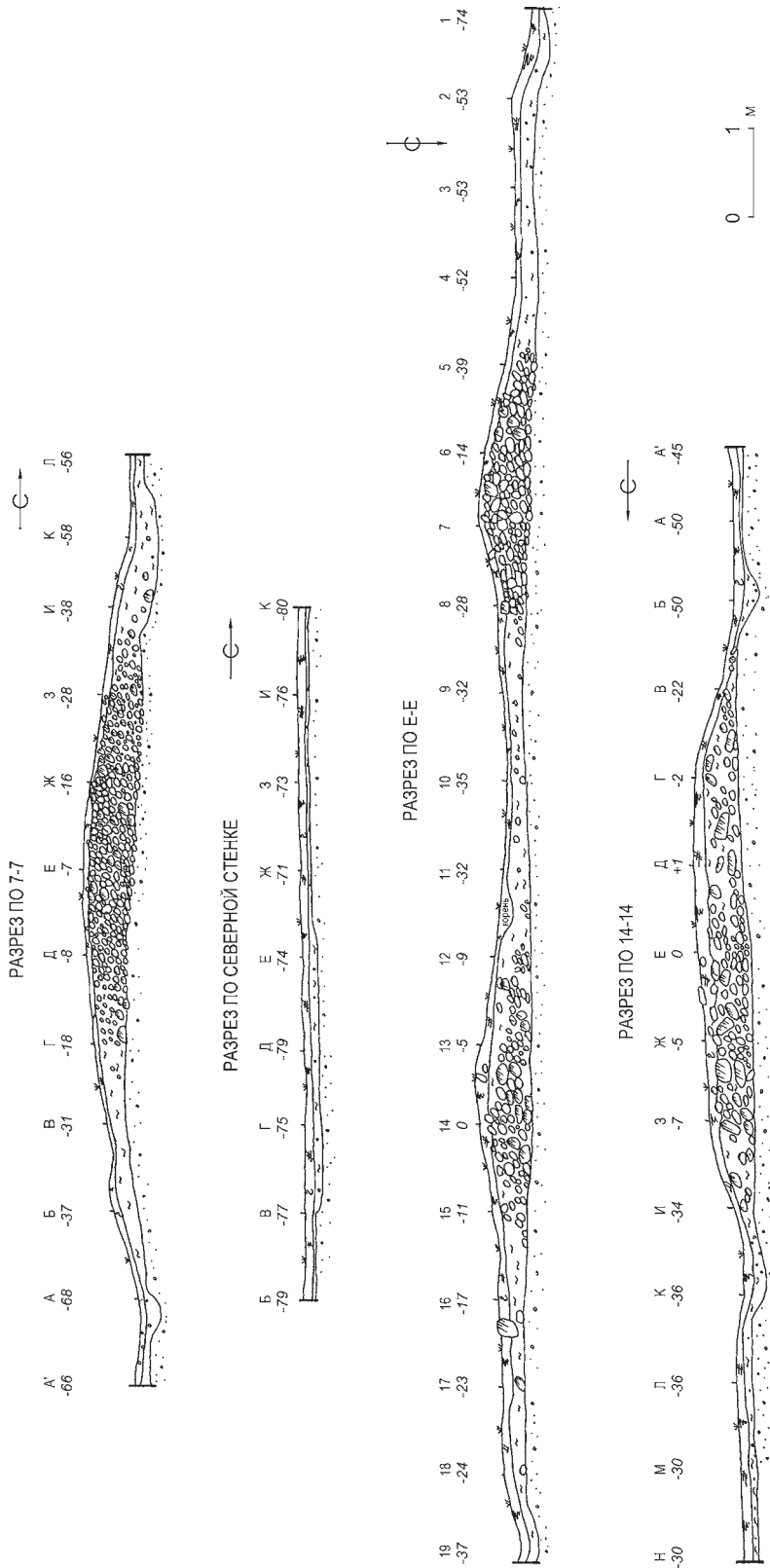


Figure 5. Sections of barrows № 1, 2 of Petrovka-9 monument in the Early Metal Age.  
 Рис. 5. Разрезы курганов № 1, 2 памятника Петровка-9 эпохи раннего металла



Individual stones did not differ in size though. Middle-sized prevailed: 15×17×10 cm; 18×22×12 cm; 20×25×15 cm. Occurring occasionally were sizes 22×34×18 cm and 5×4×2 cm. Despite partial disfiguration of the mound, it was obvious that builders mixed stones with brown and light-brown sandy loam. Virtually all stones bore traces of having got heated, and were covered with soot.

Under the upper level of stones we found pottery shards with raspberry-red surface including vessel shoulders with three or five incised lines. Other finds included lithic “shouldered” hoe produced by hammering.

Underneath the stone mounds we found stone circles 3.5×3.2 m in diameter made up of medium-sized (20×10×8 and 17×8×6 cm) stones partially sunk into soil. We’ve come to think that these circular platforms exhibit the initial dimensions of the mound bases. Isolated pieces of charcoal occurred inside the stone circles.

After having removed all stones and clearing up the area, we saw oval grey spots on the ground. The grey color varied in shade, and the edges were fuzzy. The depth of the soil under the spots was less than 0.22 m, and the bottom was flat. Our analysis of the soil that filled the spots in some cases (east mound in particular) showed presence of bones (vertebrae and fragmentary pelvis).

The finds that included handmade pottery with particular décor, “shouldered” hoes, as well as stratigraphic and planigraphic observations, permitted to attribute the site to Lidovski-Yankovski type with a date in the 1st millennium bc.

## MEDIAEVAL EPOCH

Mediaevality is represented in Barrow No. 4 at the necropolis site of **Petrovka-9**. Barrow No. 4 was oval in plan, 4.0×3.5 m in dimensions. The central part of the Barrow’s filling consisted of densely lying horizontal boulders and large pebbles. We noted two big flat stones at the very base of the Barrow. The southern and western sides bordered with condensed accumulation of gravel and pebble deposits, while northern and eastern sides were edged by viscous brownish-yellow sandy loam. After having removed the upper part of the Barrow in the southern corner of the excavation, we discovered a burial spot, sub-rectangular in shape, filled with dark brown sticky sandy loam with inclusions such as boulders and large pebbles. The height of the Barrow above the burial spot was 0.47 m. The dimensions of the spot were 1.65×0.75 m. The spot was oriented northwest to southeast. In the northern part of the spot we noticed the presence of fat black sandy loam with an inclusion of two tiny charcoal pieces. On the southwest this burial spot was edged by compressed (intentionally trampled?) layer of yellowy brown sandy loam with an insignificant admixture of gravel. The Barrow yielded shards of wheel-made gray-clay pottery dated to 10–12th centuries suggesting the post-Bohai and pre-Jurzhen times.

## LATE MEDIAEVAL EPOCH

Representations of this time period are found on the sites of Petrovka-5, 7 and 8. **Petrovka-5** is located on the second-level floodplain terrace and contains a unique construction: a kiln that appears to have been hastily abandoned precisely as its last working cycle concluded, with the chamber full of pottery (fig. 6). Preserved in good condition, the kiln permitted to analyze and document its technical details. This pottery kiln stands on a relatively flat platform paved with baked bricks. The kiln is horseshoe-shaped in plan. The southern wall is straight, the rest are rounded, and the dimensions are 2×2.3 m. The furnace is built into the northern wall. Overall orientation of the kiln is northwest to southeast. The chamber is single. This particular site is a systemic part of specialized industry for producing ceramic kitchenware and roof tiles. Far East yielded very scarce number of this kind of finds so far, and this kiln is actually the very first of its type plus in a much better condition than anything previously recorded. Judging by ceramics, we've attributed this site to post-state period of the Far-Eastern medievality, not earlier than 14th century ad. By type, this kiln corresponds to the circular Chinese counterparts, not the elongated Korean ones. At the same time, discovery of a kiln in itself immediately testifies to the fact that ceramic industry did not vanish in Primorye even after the workshop centers



Figure 6. Picture of a late-medieval ceramic kiln of Petrovka-5 monument.  
Рис. 6. Фото позднесредневековой печи для обжига керамики памятника Петровка-5

of the Bohai (발해;渤海; 697–927), Jin (金; 1125–1234), and Eastern Xia (東夏; 1217–1234) States were demolished. However, judging by pottery shapes and manufacturing techniques we cannot say that the kiln was owned by indigenous (Tungus-Manchurian) craftsmen.

**Petrovka-7** is located 0.5–0.6 km south-southwest of the Petrovka-5 site, sitting almost on top of a hill. The site comprises two oval depressions (11×6 and 12×9 m) placed eight meters from each other, and horseshoe-shaped earthen walls 20 m downhill. The opening in each wall is oriented to north-northeast with a circular platform outside, sized 2×1.8 m. The center of the platform features a hole — a trace of a pole 0.25 m in diameter, 0.20 m in depth. Between the platform and the hill slope there are four horseshoe walls that encircle the platform, with little ditches between them. The width of the walls at the base is 0.5–1.0 m, the height is 0.3–0.5 m, and the distance between them is 0.3–0.8 m.

**Petrovka-8.** This site is located on the northwestern slope of Mount Uscherbia, to the right from the Romanov Rov ravine. The flatter part of the slope yielded a sub-rectangular stone slab sized 0.8–1.0×0.6–0.7 m. The slab lay upon a heap of tightly packed little stone plaques, each 0.1 m thick. We discerned a road going downward from the slab toward the ravine. This site might somehow be tied to other Late-Mediaeval relics, possibly possessing sacral qualities of some sort (could be a dolmen).

## ETHNOGRAPHICAL ASSEMBLAGE

Ethnographical assemblage is found on the site named “Pod Zhernovom” (“Under-the-Millstone”) and complemented by an object designated “Petrovka-6”.

The **Pod Zhernovom** site occupies the southeastern part of the subject region. The dedicated excavations yielded a stone grinder (hence “Millstone”), a glazed shard, two bones, and a piece of metallic artifact. Stone grinders of the type have a long history of usage since Medievality (Bohai culture) into the 20th century. However, the fact that the one we’ve found is part of the above mentioned assemblage suggests that this millstone should be dated to 19th century ad (fig. 7).

**Petrovka-6** is located in the Romanov Rov ravine on the first-level flood-plain terrace of a creek; two meters lower than Petrovka-5 by relative elevation, roughly 100 m away northeasterly by surface distance. Excavations revealed a section of subterranean kiln and a chimney. Nearby, we found traces of some light weight above ground construction, possibly a hut or fángzi (房子). The cultural layer 0.20–0.28-m-deep consisted of calcined orange sandy loam with admixture of soot and charcoal, and gray-brown humus-rich loam. Diagnostic assemblage included shards of homemade pottery and glass permitting to date the complex roughly to 19th — the beginning of 20th century.



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