

Степные народы Евразии
Том III

Steppenvölker Eurasiens
Band III

CORPVS TVMVLORVM SCYTHICORVM ET SARMATICORVM 1

МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЙ СОЮЗ АКАДЕМИЙ
ИНСТИТУТ ВСЕОБЩЕЙ ИСТОРИИ РОССИЙСКОЙ АКАДЕМИИ НАУК
ЦЕНТР СРАВНИТЕЛЬНОГО ИЗУЧЕНИЯ ДРЕВНИХ ЦИВИЛИЗАЦИЙ
ГЕРМАНСКИЙ АРХЕОЛОГИЧЕСКИЙ ИНСТИТУТ
ИНСТИТУТ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЙ ПО ДРЕВНОСТИ И СРЕДНИМ ВЕКАМ «АВЗОНИЙ»
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СТЕПНЫЕ НАРОДЫ ЕВРАЗИИ

Том III

CORPVS TVMVLORVM SCYTHICORVM ET SARMATICORVM

Под редакцией Аскольда Иванчика и Германа Парцингера



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STEPPENVÖLKER EURASIENS

Band III

CORPVS TVMVLORVM SCYTHICORVM ET SARMATICORVM

Edited by Askold Ivantchik and Hermann Parzinger



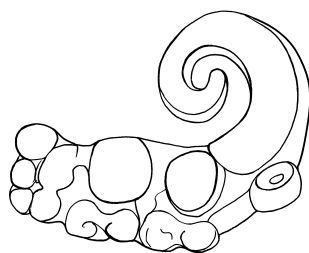
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Владимира Г. Петренко

Краснознаменский могильник

Элитные курганы раннескифской эпохи
на Северном Кавказе



Палеограф 2006
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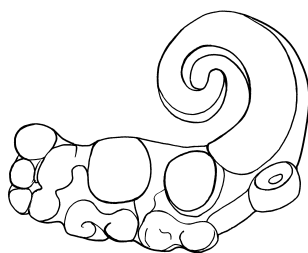
CORPVS TVMVLORVM SCYTHICORVM ET SARMATICORVM

1

Vladimira G. Petrenko

Krasnoznamenskii Burial-ground

Early Scythian Elite Burial-mounds
in the Northern Caucasus



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From the Editors of the Series

This volume ushers in a new series of monographs devoted to the publication of Scythian and Sarmatian burial-mounds. It is impossible to over-estimate the importance of these sites: they constitute our main source of information regarding the history and culture of the ancient nomads of the Eurasian steppes. Mikhail Rostovtsev in his day was already referring to the need to bring out a Corpus of these sites. Since then, a good deal of work has already been carried out: a considerable range of books has been published devoted to the publication of both the famous élite burial-mounds (Solokha, Chertomlyk, Tolstaya Mogila, the Kelermes burial-mounds et al.) and also the more modest burial-mound necropoleis for the common population. Yet the number of excavated burial-mounds of the Scythians and Sarmatians is constantly growing, thanks to the intensive excavations currently being undertaken in the Ukraine and southern Russia. Despite the slower pace of this research in the last decades stemming from the sharp drop in financial support, the investigation of burial-mounds is still going on and yielding new interesting results. The publication of such results, however, all too often fails to keep up with the excavations themselves: many important sites have languished unpublished for decades or are only being published in part in the form of short reports in the academic literature or even in exhibition catalogues, in which attention is focused only on the most eye-catching ‘museum’ objects. Even some of the most famous ‘royal’ burial-mounds excavated as long ago as the 19th or early-20th century (the Aleksandropol, Oguz and Kozel burial-mounds) have not been published in full, not to mention the numerous, no less important (although sometimes less sensational) sites, which have been excavated in recent decades.

We hope, that this new series will go at least some way towards rectifying the situation outlined above. It will include new publications of Scythian and Sarmatian burial-mounds regardless of when they were excavated. The term “Corpus” indicates the endeavour to bring within the framework of this series the largest possible number of publications of burial-mound sites executed in keeping with requirements common to the series as a whole. These are first and foremost the comprehensive nature of each publication (which must include all available information on the site to be published) and its high academic standards. The series cannot, of course, claim to become a “Corpus” in the full sense of the word, i.e. to publish all the burial-mounds. It will not, for instance, include burial-mounds, which have already been published thoroughly and to a sufficiently high academic standard (for example, the above-mentioned Kelermes burial-grounds or Chertomlyk) or those which are due to be published in the future outside the confines of this series.

Insofar as the aims of this new series coincide to a considerable degree with those of the series *Steppenvölker Eurasiens*, which we started bringing out in 1997, we have decided to publish this *Corpus of Scythian and Sarmatian Burial-mounds* as a sub-section of the former series. As before, the original series will continue to publish works outside the framework of the Corpus, for instance publications not connected with burial-mounds or books which are not publications of a specific site (burial-mound or group of burial-mounds).

This bringing together of Scythian and Sarmatian burial-mounds in a series would naturally not have been possible without collaboration between specialists from a variety of countries and academic institutions. In order to co-ordinate their efforts, a consultative committee for the series is being organized, made up of representatives of various countries and academic institutions, where research is being carried out in the field of Scythian and Sarmatian archaeology. The archaeology of the East European steppes, which for a long time was the monopoly of the former Soviet Union, has increasingly begun to attract the attention of Western scholars. Yet the achievements of Russian-speaking academics, including those which are of interest to scholars representing related disciplines (such as Classical Archaeology and the Archaeology of the Near East) are to date only rarely accessible for their Western colleagues because of the language barrier. For this reason the books in this new series will be published in two versions — one in Russian and one in a West-European language — for the most part English, but possibly in German or French.

The increasingly international character of research into Eurasian archaeology is reflected in the broader range of publishers bringing out the “Corpus”. The German Archaeological Institute and the Centre for the Comparative Study of Ancient Civilizations, Russian Academy of Sciences — former publishers of the series *Steppenvölker Eurasiens* — are now joined by the Institute for Research into the Ancient World and the Middle Ages «Ausonius» in Bordeaux. Furthermore, the whole project is developing under the aegis of the International Union of Academies, which underlines its international character still more strongly. We hope that this series, which begins with the publication of one of the most important sites of the earliest period in the evolution of Scythian culture, will develop successfully and become a convenient and familiar tool for specialists working in the sphere of Ancient History and Archaeology, not only in the Eurasian steppes, but also in the regions adjoining them.

A. Ivantchik, H. Parzinger

INTRODUCTION

1973: “The Building of Communism”, the 2nd stage in the construction of the Great Stavropol Canal (GSC), was approaching a burial-ground consisting of tumuli. The largest burial-mound — 11 metres high — was right on the line of the canal under construction (*Plate 1, 1; 107*). A report to the effect that the burial-mound was being destroyed reached the Institute of Archaeology of the USSR in August, when most of the mound had already been demolished by the builders. The work was carried out with powerful modern machinery and nobody paid attention to the effect that pieces of stone structures were being loaded into BELAZ lorries. When we arrived to assess the scale of the destruction and the scope for investigating the burial-mound, it turned out that there was not even time to go back to Moscow to organize an expedition, since the burial-mound was about to be demolished altogether. All that remained by then of the 11-metre high burial-mound, which had been recorded at the beginning of the construction work, was a rather shapeless mound 2–2.5 metres high, most of which had been flattened by machines of one sort or another. Mechanical diggers had scooped away its surface, picking up earth and loading it straightaway into the stream of lorries that drew up. On the west side a ditch had been dug, while the channel of the canal was moving ever nearer from the East and the South. An archaeological expedition had to be organized “on the hoof”. With the active participation of the G. K. Prave Stavropol Museum of Local History — in particular that of its director G. V. Orlov and deputy-director, V. V. Gosdanker, who both supported the expedition in negotiations with the local authorities and also gave their colleague A. V. Naidenko leave of absence to work at the site, providing him with the basic equipment required — it was possible to start work just a week later. The initial team was, however, extremely small: apart from A. V. Naidenko, who was appointed deputy-director in charge of the expedition, it included A. V. Chernetsov — a senior laboratory technician from the Institute, V. Mezentsev and I. Otyutskii — students from the Stavropol Pedagogical Institute, and the director’s sons A. and V. Skorikov. Advice and assistance for locating the wattle circles in the upper levels of the mound were provided by I. S. Kamenetskii, a member of the research staff from the Institute of Archaeology, when he paid a visit to the excavations. It was not until September that it proved possible to launch into work on a larger scale, when additional archaeologists from the Institute were sent one after the other to work alongside us — Y. Y. Morgunov, A. V. Kuibyshev and G. N. Pronin, followed by architects and then a lorry-load of equipment. In addition, the Stavropol Pedagogical Institute sent a group of students from the History Faculty to work at the site. The managers of the GSC construction project demanded that we complete our excavations that same year. This condition proved impossible to meet and after lengthy negotiations it was agreed that we could have until the summer of 1974 to complete the work. Our attempts to preserve this site, even after it had been established in 1974 that it was unique and of major scientific significance, proved fruitless¹. The managers of the construction project kept demanding that we accelerate the pace of our work, which inevitably meant that our investigations were not as thorough as we would have wished. As a result, the stone cladding of the mound and the moat could only be cleared in selected areas and a whole number of tasks was carried out using machinery rather than manually. Our work was made easier thanks to the high-level skills of the bulldozer-drivers², in particular those of N. Plokhikh. In 1974 the

¹ Official requests signed by Academician B. A. Rybakov, the then Director of the Institute of Archaeology of the USSR Academy of Sciences, were sent to the Ministry of Culture, addressed to Minister E. A. Furtseva, and also to the Ministry of Land Improvement.

² Machinery for this work was made available by the managers of the GSC project. They also placed at our disposal soldiers from a construction battalion to provide extra manpower for the excavations.

following members of the research staff from the Institute's Scythian-Sarmatian Section took part in the work of the Expedition at various times: I. S. Kamenetskii, V. I. Kozenkova, A. I. Melyukova, M. G. Moshkova, A. I. Puzikova, post-graduate V. A. Korenyako and a number of other scholars from the Institute of Archaeology in Moscow — S. N. Mikhailchenko, Y. Y. Morgunov, Y. M. Paromov. Y. Y. Morgunov carried out all the photography work and Y. M. Paromov made most of the drawings of the structures in Burial-mound 1. A helicopter was used for taking general views of the site. In 1974, in view of the fact that a significant number of local inhabitants from within the Stavropol area were visiting the site, V. A. Blokhina (née Rakova) — a member of staff from the Stavropol Museum — was brought in to guide them round.

In the years that followed (1975, 1978, 1979) properly planned excavations of the remaining mounds in the burial-ground were carried out. In 1975 S. N. Korenevskii and S. N. Mikhailchenko from the staff of the Institute of Archaeology took part in this work and also two post-graduates — E. V. Perevodchikova and in 1979 A. S. Surazakov. Students from the History Faculty of the Stavropol Pedagogical Institute also took part in the work of the expedition, some of whom were to link their futures with archaeology to one degree or another in their subsequent careers, namely I. V. Otyutskii, N. A. Okhonko and Y. N. Litvinenko. As we express here our sincere gratitude to all those who took part in the excavations at the Krasnoznamenskii burial-ground, we should like to stress that without the selfless help and advice from our colleagues in the Scythian-Sarmatian Section at the Institute in 1973–1974, when a unique and complex site had to be investigated in a race against time, the task would have been virtually impossible.

Apart from the Stavropol Local History Museum we were afforded major organizational and, in a number of cases, also financial help for the Expedition's work by local and district organizations such as: the Cultural Department of the Communist Party's Executive Committee for the Stavropol region, the Stavropol section of the organization responsible for the protection of monuments (VOOPIK), the Executive Committee and District Committee of the Communist Party for the Alexandrovsk District, the Alexandrovsk branch of the Stavropol Museum, the Cultural Department of the Alexandrovsk District Executive Committee of the Communist Party and many others.

The whole of the Krasnoznamenskii burial-ground was excavated in the course of six field-seasons in 1973, 1974, 1975, 1978, 1979 and 1980. Information about the excavations was published in reports about the archaeological discoveries brought out after each field season³. Certain questions relating to each of the burial-mounds as a whole and also to details of the funerary rite and grave-goods in the burial-ground were discussed in papers delivered at conferences and meetings of the Scythian-Sarmatian Section and also in academic publications⁴. Evidence relating to the burial-ground was also included in a number of general works on the archaeology of the region in question⁵. There has not yet, however, been a complete publication of the results of the excavations of all the burial-mounds found near the Krasnoe Znamya Farmstead.

Since this burial-ground was the first Archaic Scythian site in the Northern Caucasus to be systematically excavated, it attracted the attention of many scholars, who used pieces of information about it drawn from short reports in their overviews of the history of the Scythians in the Northern Caucasus⁶ or referred to specific objects⁷. References were also made to aspects of the chronology of the site⁸ and interpretations of individual objects⁹.

Yet in view of the brief nature of the publications which had appeared and for other reasons as well, the information cited by certain scholars proved on occasions to be imprecise, if not worse. Here I shall only list a short range of examples. In a monograph brought out by V. A. Ilinskaya and A. I. Terenozhkin¹⁰ the mounds in the burial-ground were divided into two groups: the "Great Stavropol Burial-mound" (No. 1) of no specified location and "three burial-mounds at the Krasnoe Znamya Farmstead near the town of Stavropol", while, in actual fact, the burial-ground lies 100 kilometres from the town of Stavropol. In his book S. V. Makhortykh¹¹ puts forward a suggestion that "bone cheek-pieces made of wild-boar tusks with gold bands round them in the middle" from the southern grave in Burial-mound 1 were used "to replace metal plaques and casings", while the fact that they had been laid out on the muzzles of horses removes any doubt that they were cheek pieces: the four holes noted by S. V. Makhortykh provided for fastening with rivets, which would have been passed through some no longer extant filling of the hollow part of the boar tusk. He also describes with a similar lack of precision Burial-mound 1 and the burial structures in the burial-ground, which leads to superficial comparisons¹². V. Y. Murzin writes that there was an earthen rampart ringing Burial-mound 1, referring to non-existent data in the annual publication *Archaeological Discoveries*¹³

³ Петренко *et al.* 1974; Петренко 1975; Петренко *et al.* 1976; Петренко 1979; 1980; 1981.

⁴ Петренко 1975а; 1976; 1979а; 1980а; 1980а; 1982b; 1983; 1984; 1986; 1994.

⁵ Петренко 1986а; 1989; 1990; 1994; 1995.

⁶ Мурзин 1978; 1984; Ильинская, Тереножкин 1983; Махортых 1991.

⁷ Переводчикова 1980, 26, 36, Рис. 5, 7; Черненко 1981, 41, Рис. 25.

⁸ Полин 1987, 17–19; Коссак 1987, 81–83; Медведская 1992, 87–94; Алексеев 1992, 55; Корняко 1990.

⁹ Бессонова 1983, 40.

¹⁰ Ильинская, Тереножкин 1983, 51–52.

¹¹ Махортых 1991, 70.

¹² Махортых 1991, 18, 20, 21, 23 и. а.

¹³ Петренко *et al.* 1974; Петренко 1975.



In Conversation with the USSR Minister of Land Improvement, 1974.

regarding a sacrificial complex “next to the *krepis*” and not inside it and, in a way that does not seem justified to us, compares the wattle circles of this burial-mound with structural elements of Burial-mound 4 near the village of Goity¹⁴. G. Kossack, in his work on the sources for the Scythian-Iranian Animal Style, while attaching major importance to the stylistic features of depiction, proceeds, with no justification, to compare a strap-separator with the head of a griffin-ram (*Plates 48, 74; Cat. 62*) from Burial-mound 1 with coarse, primitive imitations of that figure in the burial-mounds of the wooded steppe west of the Dnieper¹⁵, although almost exact parallels for the strap-separator are to be found among the classical examples of the motif in question from Burial-mounds Nos. 1/V and 2/V in the Kelermes burial-ground¹⁶.

Archaeological excavations began in the steppe zone of the region round Stavropol comparatively late. The first evidence about the discovery of antiquities came from the office of the Commander-in-chief of the civil service in the Caucasus. In 1885 a report was submitted to the Archaeological Commission about the find of a number of objects, which included a “copper object resembling a plate with a handle [found] ... during ploughing work ... in the steppeland around Krymgireevskoe”¹⁷. This turned out to be a beautifully fashioned bronze mirror of the “Olbian” type, which is now kept in the State Hermitage Museum¹⁸. There were other reports as well regarding finds of arrow-heads, small items of jewellery and so on.

Somewhat earlier in 1880–1881 near Stavropol excavations had been carried out by General Erkert¹⁹. The first burial-mound, which was excavated to the South of the town, yielded up an interesting 5th-century complex. It has gone down in a number of studies as the 1883 Burial-mound²⁰. The second of the burial-mounds, which he excavated, was found two kilometres to the South-east of the town: it was 3 metres high and contained a damaged burial with traces of charring complete with large earthenware pots bearing carved decoration, which were similar to the vessels found in the Krasnoznamenskii burial-ground²¹. The skeleton had been laid out on its back, fully extended and with its head pointing west. The mound over the burial was covered with stones. It can be assumed that the burial-mound would also have contained some kind of stone funerary structure, yet because the description is so unclear it is not possible to state anything definite.

An attempt to investigate the burial-mounds in the northern part of the Stavropol region systematically was undertaken by N. I. Veselovskii in 1910, but it did not reap any kind of interesting results. Veselovskii carried out excavations in various parts of the area, in the villages of Alexandria, Orekhovo, Vysotskoe and various other places, but the Bronze-Age burials found there did not arouse the interest of the excavator and subsequently no further efforts were made to start the excavations up again²².

¹⁴ Мурзин 1982, 58; idem 1990, 47; Марковин 1965, 166–167, Рис. 7.

¹⁵ Коссак 1987, 83.

¹⁶ Galanina 1997, Taf. 21, 22.

¹⁷ The village of Krymgireevskoe is located approximately 30 kilometres south of the Krasnoe Znamya Farmstead.

¹⁸ Бобринский 1901, 68–69, Рис. 18.

¹⁹ *ZfE*, 15, 1883, 170–174.

²⁰ Виноградов 1972, 34; Ильинская, Тереножкин 1983, 52.

²¹ *ZfE*, 15, 1883, 174, Рис. 1 а–с, 2.

²² *ОАК* 1909–1910, 157–160.



Contruction works near the excavation site, 1974.

In the 1920s surveys and excavations in the area were carried out by G. N. Prozritelev, who headed the Museum of the Northern Caucasus. Prior to the publication of the report of the work carried out in the Stavropol area in 1924, he wrote: “It would be hard to find another place where treasure-hunting is so well developed as in the Stavropol province. Here legends are passed down from one generation to another, from father to son, about hoards and the burial-mounds are torn apart on the basis of ‘hoard clues’. While searching for gold, the treasure-hunters destroy everything else, attaching no importance to it. No bans are any good and the only way to combat this evil is to carry out proper systematic surveys and excavations”²³. In 1924 G. N. Prozritelev completed the excavation of a burial-mound, which “treasure-hunters had begun to dig up and after them members of the militia finished the work”²⁴. The burial-mound was situated approximately 20 kilometres south of what was then the boundary of the town of Stavropol. G. N. Prozritelev was unable to understand the structure of the looted and damaged stone funerary structure, but he correctly identified it as relating to the Scythian period²⁵. All the objects found in the burial-mound have since been lost. The pottery which was published by A. A. Iessen²⁶ was missing from the Museum collection as early as 1956, but even the objects which were still extant remained unpublished²⁷. The very small photograph still to be found in the archive of the Institute for the History of Material Culture in St. Petersburg (IIMK) does not provide a sufficiently clear impression of the lost objects. For this reason, the date of the assemblage in question, which has been discussed on various occasions since²⁸, has still not been narrowed down and is thought to be between the second half of the 7th century BC and the middle of the 6th century BC.

The first general assessment of the Early Scythian sites in the Northern Caucasus, and in particular those from its central foothills was provided by A. A. Iessen²⁹. After singling out the earliest stage in the development of Scythian culture, he suggested that it should be divided into two chronological periods — “one immediately pre-dating the Kelermes site and a still earlier one, which preceded the first”³⁰. Iessen included the following key sites in the pre-Kelermes group in the foothills of the Central Caucasus: the complex from the Alexeevskii Farmstead, the above-mentioned burial-mound excavated in 1924 near the town of Stavropol and “several burials in Mozdok”. He dated these to the second half of the 7th century or to the very beginning of the 6th century BC³¹.

²³ Архив ИИМК, 1925, дело № 32.

²⁴ Архив ИИМК 1924, дело № 151; 1925, дело № 32.

²⁵ Прозрителев 1924, 67–69.

²⁶ Иессен 1954, 117.

²⁷ Минаева 1956, 332.

²⁸ Виноградов, Дударев 1983.

²⁹ Иессен 1953, 1954.

³⁰ Иессен 1954, 116.

³¹ Иессен 1954, 116–119; Иессен, Пиотровский 1940.

Subsequent finds, both of individual objects and assemblages of objects, were mainly of the chance variety. In 1953 T. M. Minaeva finished excavating a burial in a burial-mound near the town of Stavropol dating from the late-7th century BC, which she dated to the 6th century BC³². V. A. Ilinskaya assigned the same date to that burial on the basis of analysis of the arrow-heads found in it, although she did note that some of them were of the Zhabotin type³³. In the last book she wrote, together with A. I. Terenozhkin, Ilinskaya dated the burial to the end of the 7th century BC³⁴. With a reference to T. Minaeva, V. Y. Murzin dated the burial-mound to the very end of the 7th century BC or beginning of the 6th³⁵ and S. V. Makhortykh dated it to the 7th century BC³⁶.

In 1968 an Early Scythian burial under a burial-mound was discovered during earthworks on the north-west edge of the town of Stavropol. Excavation of the already damaged monument was carried out by A. L. Nechitailo, but, unfortunately information about the site only appeared in the periodical press. A. L. Nechitailo reported that, according to the workmen employed at the site, there had been a human skeleton in the grave pit laid out on its back and with its head pointing south-east. Near the head there had been an iron spear-head and an iron sword 70 cms long with a heart-shaped cross-guard. Further work had shown that there had been at least two, and possibly three skeletons in the grave. In addition, an iron bar-bracelet with overlapping ends and sherds from a badly fired grey-clay pot with a rough surface were found, but in a disturbed state. The most important of the deceased, to whom the workmen had referred, had been laid out in the northern part of the grave together with a horse. A. L. Nechitailo reported another chance find as well. While a bulldozer had been levelling the area near the burial discovered under the burial-mound, a second small burial-mound was demolished. The deceased in it had been buried with an iron dagger 30 cms long and with a heart-shaped cross-guard and a two-horned pommel. Both burials were dated by Nechitailo to the 6th century BC³⁷.

Materials from the Scythian period, which were held in the Stavropol Museum in 1956, have been published by T. Minaeva³⁸. They probably included incomplete ranges of grave-goods from the warriors' burials found at the Alexeevskii Farmstead³⁹ and near the village of Sotnikovskoe: the same applies to a whole range of chance finds of military accoutrements from the Early Scythian period — swords, arrow-heads, bits and cheek-pieces. In the years that followed, individual specimens of weaponry from the Early Scythian period went on being acquired by the Museum: bronze bi- and tri-lobate arrow-heads and stone sculpture were found in the area around the Stavropol stud-farm and the village of Tatarka near Stavropol and from the town itself iron daggers with bar-shaped pommels and with kidney-shaped or butterfly-shaped cross-guards. From the above details it is clear that isolated burials excavated prior to our work and chance finds reflected the fact that there had been groups of Scythians in the steppes around Stavropol in the 7th and 6th centuries BC and that in most cases these had consisted of mounted warriors.

All nomad burials in the Stavropol Plateau and the adjacent areas of Kabardino-Balkaria, Chechnya, Ingushetia and parts of Karachaevo-Cherkessia found prior to the early 1970s, had been listed and analysed in a publication by V. B. Vinogradov⁴⁰. His contribution to discussion of the sojourn of the Scythians in the Central and North-eastern Caucasus remains the most significant to this day. Unfortunately, the vast majority of the materials, which were known about at the time when he was writing on this subject, come from scattered sites which had been excavated randomly by amateurs or from those which had been investigated properly, but after looting. This meant that it was often not possible to gain a clear idea as to the nature of the funerary structures and the funerary rite and this made any ethno-cultural identification difficult.

The burial-ground near the Krasnoe Znamiya Farmstead published in this volume was the first Early Scythian burial-ground to be excavated fully in the Stavropol Plateau. As will be pointed out below, it existed over only a short period of time: this enables us to examine the diversity of forms, in which various aspects of the funerary rite manifested themselves, within a narrow time-band and also to demonstrate the unusual nature of this burial-ground and the place it assumes among the small number of sites from this period already known to us. This burial-ground dates from the period of the Scythians' early history, which has not yet been investigated in adequate detail. Thorough investigation of all possible aspects of the material culture of this period, even within a narrowly defined area, will help clarify questions as to the origins of Scythian culture, its chronology and links with the civilizations of the Near East, both in the sphere of material culture and ideology.

³² Минаева 1956, 331; eadem 1965, 36, рис. 9.

³³ Ілїнська 1973, 191.

³⁴ Ильинская, Тереножкин 1983, 51.

³⁵ Мурзин 1978, 26.

³⁶ Петренко 1983, 64; eadem 1990, 65–72; Махортых 1991, 115.

³⁷ Нечитайло 1968.

³⁸ Минаева 1956, 329.

³⁹ T. M. Minaeva (1956, 331) registers the following find details:

“No. 3586... a find from near the Alexeevskii Farmstead near Kazinskoe village in the Kursavskii District of the Stavropol Region”; similar details were indicated by A. A. Iessen (Иессен 1954, 117–118). In subsequent works, however, the find is already listed as a burial-mound (Виноградов 1971, 4; Виноградов, Дударев 1983, 51; Мурзин 1978, 25; Махортых 1991, 43) or as a burial-mound near Stavropol (Ильинская 1973, 18; Ильинская, Тереножкин 1983, 18, map on page 22).

⁴⁰ Виноградов 1972.



At the excavations of the Burial-mound 1, 1974.

The difficulties which arose in the course of this work can be explained first and foremost with reference to the looting and damage the graves have undergone, which in their turn have made it impossible to clarify fully such important aspects of funerary practice as the funerary rite, the range of grave-goods and their position within the graves. The lack of such data has made it impossible to find a comprehensive solution to many questions facing the researcher, in particular questions concerning the relations between the local farming population (representatives of the Koban Culture) and the Scythians. This means that any of the conclusions proposed in the general analysis at the end of this study can only be preliminary. The ethno-cultural identity of the burial-ground under discussion is difficult to determine in view of the extremely small quantity of Scythian sites known to belong to the same period within the territory of the North Pontic region, particularly within the confines of its steppe zone⁴¹, which leads many to extend the chronological range of their study, so as to be able to compare the materials from the burial-ground with materials that are known to be definitely Scythian.

In the foothills of the Central Caucasus, on the other hand, several Early-Scythian burial-grounds and individual burial-mounds were excavated after the excavations at the Krasnoznameniskii burial-ground had been completed, including some that had functioned over a long period of time. Chance finds were also made and the main ones are listed below.

In 1975 a team from our Expedition, led by V. A. Korenyako, excavated a burial-mound on the north bank of the River Kuma at the eastern edge of the village of Novozavedennoe in the Georgievskii District of the Stavropol Region, in which a looted burial was found containing an Assyrian bowl of the 7th century BC (the date of the burial according to V. A. Korenyako, was the 6th century BC), which would appear to have belonged to a Scythian horseman⁴². In 1985 the Krasnoznameniskii Expedition discovered a second burial-ground of the Scythian period at the north-western edge of the same village — Novozavedennoe II. As excavations between 1985–1998 were later to show, this was a necropolis of an élite clan or tribal group of nomads, which had inhabited the area in the 7th and early-6th century BC. Our expedition did not succeed in discovering any other burial-grounds on the Stavropol Plateau consisting of burial-mounds and dating from the Scythian period. An attempt to find some near the Alexeevskii farmstead (now village) in the Kursavskii District did not yield the desired results, despite the find of a Scythian stone sculpture in a burial-mound near the village of Vorovskoleskaya⁴³.

⁴¹ Мурзин 1982, 48; Ольховский 1978; idem 1991, 56; Черненко *et al.* 1986, 345.

⁴² Кореняко 1976, 128; idem 1981, 67–68.

⁴³ Петренко 1986а.

In 1984 an expedition organized by the G. K. Prave Museum and led by N. A. Okhonko excavated a burial-mound on the south-west edge of the town of Stavropol: it contained stone structures under the mound which were similar to those in Burial-mound 1 near the Krasnoe Znamya Farmstead. The date of its erection was initially defined as the late-7th or early-6th century BC⁴⁴. It is highly likely that it was part of the same burial-ground as the 1924 burial-mound.

In 1989 objects were brought into the Stavropol Museum from a destroyed burial in the vicinity of the Ust-Nevinskii Farmstead in the Kochubeevskii District. They originated from a burial-mound at the top of which there had been a Scythian stone sculpture. The deceased in this burial had been laid out with the head pointing SSW and buried with gold plaques executed in the Early Scythian Animal Style and also with weapons which included 29 bronze bi-lobate arrow-heads dating from the 7th century BC⁴⁵.

Of particular interest in relation to our subject are the materials from the fully excavated burial-ground near the village of Nartan not far from the town of Nalchik in the plain zone of Kabardino-Balkaria, which consisted of 24 burial-mounds. The first scholar to investigate this burial-ground defined its ethnic origin as “Scythian” in the broad sense of that term, implying that it was possible to include in it other groups of nomads as well, and he also defined the date of the erection of the burial-mounds as a period extending from the middle of the 7th to the end of the 6th or beginning of the 5th century⁴⁶. Another view as to the cultural and ethnic identity of this site was voiced by M. P. Abramova and V. I. Kozenkova, who believed that it belonged to a group “ethnically linked to some tribal grouping from the mountains”, but which, because of its close territorial contacts, had adopted in the course of one generation elements of Scythian culture, and later on elements of the culture of first the Sauromatians and then the Sarmatians⁴⁷. Subsequently M. P. Abramova was to specify more clearly her view of these sites. She wrote: “The rite involving the use of burial-mounds, the presence of horses in the burials and the fairly rich grave-goods — first and foremost weaponry — make it possible to interpret the Nartan and Nalchik burial-grounds as cemeteries for representatives of nomadic tribes or their descendants. Yet the flexed position of the deceased testifies to the fact that this warrior nobility failed to retain its steppe-land traditions in their pure form. While dwelling in the territory of the foothills of the Central Caucasus surrounded by local settled tribes, this warrior nobility mingled with the latter and adopted certain features of their culture”. The result of these mutual influences was “the formation of a population group, which was totally new as regards its ethnic composition”⁴⁸. Most researchers, when taking into account the cultural traits characteristic of this burial-ground, decided it was Scythian⁴⁹. In this context I shall merely note that it is precisely the earliest burials in the Nartan burial-ground (Burial-mounds 12, 13, 14, 16, 19, 20, 21) which contain the maximum number of features similar to those of Early Scythian burials, both with regard to burial structures and also to the funerary rite and grave-goods, which include articles decorated with motifs characteristic of the Scythian Animal Style.

Study of the material from the above-listed sites including the Krasnoznamenskii burial-ground has made it possible via documentation to confirm that the nomadic population of the steppes was a constant presence in the territory of the foothills of the Central Caucasus after the middle of the 7th century BC and to establish an early date for the appearance of the burial-ground and the uninterrupted development of most varieties of funerary structures and grave-goods, both within the territory of the burial-grounds and for the region as a whole⁵⁰. The most recent comprehensive study on the Northern Caucasus was the monograph by S. V. Makhortykh⁵¹ in which all Scythian sites were discussed as part of a single system. This work also includes some incomplete data on the Krasnoznamenskii burial-ground.

The object of this book is to publish in full this unique site, something that the Krasnoznamenskii burial-ground remains to this day. The work was completed in 1999 but there were delays in its publication for a number of reasons. More recent research concerning the Early Scythians was not taken into account.

⁴⁴ Охонько, Петренко 1992.

⁴⁵ Соломатина 1995, 105–109; the Early Scythian stone sculpture from the village of Tatarka was also published there.

⁴⁶ Батчаев 1985, 51–53.

⁴⁷ Абрамова, Козенкова 1985, 3–5.

⁴⁸ Абрамова 1990, 116–119.

⁴⁹ Алексеев 1992, 49–50; Махортых 1991; Мурзин 1990, 48–49; Galanina 1997, 210; Петренко 1989, 216–219.

⁵⁰ Батчаев 1985; Мурзин 1978; Петренко 1983; eadem 1989; eadem 1990; Махортых 1991; Petrenko 1994.

⁵¹ Махортых 1991.